

The Complete
EEBO-TCP
Unformatted
Puritan *and*
Non-Conformist
Collection v-2.0
Vol. 6
Ashe –
Attersoll pt.1

*Compiled & Updated by
David Jonescue, Logan West,
& Alex Sarrouf 2022-23*

The Complete
EEBO-TCP
Unformatted
Puritan *and*
Non-Conformist
Collection *v2.0*
Vol. 6
Ashe –
Attersoll pt.1

*Compiled & Updated by David Jonescue,
Logan West, & Alex Sarrouf 2022-23*

Project Note – V2

This Work is Licensed Under 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

The initial content of this document was downloaded from the Early English Books Online (EEBO-TCP) website. The books were transcribed in a character for character manner and since there was no standard spelling during that time, it can be a bit cumbersome to read, with variations such as "unlesse", "vnlesse", and "vnles" appearing regularly.

With that in mind, this project is intended to clean up those books as much as possible and make them more accessible to the interested reader. A list of variant spellings and their corrections was utilized to clean up the text, but this is only as comprehensive as the list itself. Because of the nature of the original transcription, some words have missing characters or places where the original language (e.g., Greek) was not transcribed. The original text also contained linked footnotes and these have not been incorporated. *Included in these works are some, but very limited text taken from other public domain sources.*

Although this is admittedly no substitute for a properly proofread and scholarly edition, we believe that the result is a body of work which is far more accessible, particularly for searching and reading, than its predecessor (though our thankfulness for EEBO-TCP cannot be expressed.) The documents have been cleaned and presented to the best of our present ability, in what we hope is a pleasing and useful format for the vast majority of Christian brothers and sisters who desire to access and read these spiritually nourishing works.

For the sake of this collection, it has attempted to take a traditional theological as well as historical approach to Puritan research, meaning that, while there were some Arminian Puritans, those have been omitted if observed, and also, while there were other Non-Conformists that were Catholic, Quaker, Brownist, Pilgrims, etc., this collection has tried to observe only works from theologically reformed Puritans; Baptist, Presbyterian, and Congregational Non-Conformists; as well as CoE or Anglican clergy that were sympathetic or assistive to the Puritan cause. Furthermore, this collection only contains works from the period between 1500-1700, not just because that is the standard historical period of Puritanism, but because this is also the limit of the works found on EEBO-TCP. This is not an exhaustive collection of Puritan/Non-Conformist works, but a collection of those pertinent works which were located on EEBO-TCP which enables the searching thereof by their conversion from facsimile to text. The reason the alphabetical flow of the authors in these titles are not perfectly in order, is because many names were added well into the compiling of these texts, and we had to choose between prolonging publication to start over, or continue and publish with the names somewhat out of order.

Finally, please forgive our eagerness in the midst of imperfection in offering such an errant publication. Given the sheer number of texts, time constraints, and other duties; this is the best we can offer for now; yet, knowing the spiritual treasures within these pages, we pray that this effort, though feeble, will still result in the edification of His Church, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the glorification of our Gracious God. ****All of the text and titles included in these works are in the public domain, and can be used in any way; for profit or otherwise, by anybody or entity. Only this specific derivative and creative work is bound by the creative common license listed above.* -- Soli Deo Gloria

David Jonescue
Source Retrieval /
Document Preparation

Logan West
Programming /
Word Replacement List

Alex Sarrouf
Initial & Eventual
Word Replacement List

Table of Contents

Simeon Ashe, d. 1662.....6

P-SA-1. A letter of many ministers in old England requesting the judgment of their reverend brethren in New England concerning nine positions written Anno Dom. 1637 : together with their answer thereunto returned, anno 1639 : and the reply made unto the said answer and sent over unto them, anno 1640 - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662., Rathband, William, d. 1695.....6

P-SA-2. A svpport for the sinking heart in times of distress, or, A sermon preached in London to uphold hope and allay fear January 4th which was a day of great trouble and deep danger in the city - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662.....84

P-SA-3. A true relation, of the most chief occurrences, at, and since the late battle at Newbery,: until the disjunction of the three armies, of the Lord General, the Earl of Manchester, and Sir William Waller, together with the London brigade, under the command of Sir James Harrington. Published upon necessity, both to undeceive the mistaken multitude, and to vindicate the Earl of Manchester, from many undeserved aspersions commonly cast upon him, either through ignorance or prejudice. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662..... 105

P-SA-4. Christ the riches of the Gospel, and the hope of Christians. A sermon preached at the funeral of Mr William Spurstow the only child of Dr Spurstow at Hackney near London, Mar. 10. By Simeon Ashe preacher of the Gospel, and lecturer there. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662..... 115

P-SA-5. Good courage discovered, and encouraged: in a sermon preached before the commanders of the military forces, of the renowned city of London. In the parish church of Great St. Helens. May the 17. 1642. By Simeon Ash, preacher in London. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662., England and Wales. Parliament..... 144

P-SA-6. Gray hayres crowned with grace. A sermon preached at Redriff, Aug. 1. 1654. at the funeral of that reverend, eminently learned and faithful minister of Jesus Christ Mr Thomas Gataker. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662..... 166

P-SA-7. Living loves betwixt Christ and dying Christians A sermon preached at M. Magdalene Bermondsey in Southwark, near London, June 6. 1654. At the funeral of that faithful servant of Christ Mr. Jeremiah Whitaker, Minister of the Gospel, and pastor of the church there. With a narative of his exemplarily holy life and death. By Simeon Ashe, his much endeared friend and brother. Together with poems and elegies on his death, by divers ministers in the city of London. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662.225

P-SA-8. Real thankfulness, or, A sermon preached in Paul's church, London, upon the second day of November, 1645 at a public thanksgiving for the taking in of the towns and castles of Caermarthen and Mounmouth in Wales, it being the first Lord's-day after the inauguration of the Right Honorable Thomas Adams, now lord major of that famous city - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662.....296

P-SA-9. Religious covenanting directed, and covenant-keeping persuaded: presented, in a sermon preached before the Right Honorable Thomas Adams Lord Major, and the right

worshipful the sheriffs, and aldermen his brethren, and the rest of the Common-Council of the famous City of London, January 14. 1645. Upon which day the solemn League and Covenant was renewed by them and their officers, with prayer and fasting, at Michael Basing-shaw, London. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662..... 315

Bartholomew Ashwood, 1622-1680. 331

P-BA-1. The best treasure, or, The way to be truly rich being a discourse on Ephes. 3.8, wherein is opened and commended to saints and sinners the personal and purchased riches of Christ, as the best treasure, to be pursu'd and ensur'd by all that would be happy here and hereafter - Ashwood, Bartholomew, 1622-1680. 331

P-BA-2. The heavenly trade, or the best merchandizing the only way to live well in impoverishing times. A discourse occasioned from the decay of earthly trades, and visible wastes of practical piety in the day we live in, offering arguments and counsels to all, towards a speedy revival of dying godliness and timely prevention of the dangerous issues thereof impending on us. By Bartholomew Ashwood Minister of the Gospel. - Ashwood, Bartholomew, 1622-1680. 542

William Attersoll, d. 1640 756

P-WA2-1. A commentary upon the epistle of Saint Paul to Philemon Wherein, the Apostle handling a mean and low subject, entreating for a fraudulent and fugitive servant, mounteth aloft unto God, and delivereth sundry high mysteries of true religion, and the practice of duties œconomically. Political. Ecclesiastical. As of persecution for righteousness sake. ... And of the force and fruit of the ministry. Mouing all the ministers of the Gospel, to a diligent laboring in the spiritual harvest ... Written by William Attersoll, minister of the word of God, at Isfield in Suffex. - Attersoll, William, d. 1640..... 756

P-WA2-2. A commentary upon the fourth book of Moses, called Numbers Containing, the foundation of the church and common-wealth of the Israelites, while they walked and wandered in the wilderness. Laying before us the unchangeable love of God promised and exhibited to this people ... Herein also the reader shall find more then five hundred theological questions, decided and determined by William Attersoll, minister of the word. - Attersoll, William, d. 1640., Attersoll, William, d. 1640. Pathway to Canaan., Attersoll, William, d. 1640. Continuation of the exposition of the book of Numbers. 1323

Simeon Ashe, d. 1662

P-SA-1. A letter of many ministers in old England requesting the judgment of their reverend brethren in New England concerning nine positions written Anno Dom. 1637 : together with their answer thereunto returned, anno 1639 : and the reply made unto the said answer and sent over unto them, anno 1640 - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662., Rathband, William, d. 1695.

A LETTER OF MANY MINISTERS IN OLD ENGLAND, Requesting The judgment of their Reverend Brethren in *New England* concerning Nine Positions.

Written Anno Dom. 1637.

Together with their Answer thereunto returned, *Anno 1639.*

And the Reply made unto the said Answer, and sent over unto them, *Anno 1640.*

Now published (by occasion mentioned in the Epistle to the Reader, following in the next page,) upon the desire of many godly and faithful Ministers in and about the City of *London*, who love and seek the truth.

By *Simeon Ash*, and *William Rathband*.

1 Thes. 5. 21.

Prove all things; Hold fast that which is good.

LONDON, Printed for *Thomas Underhill*, at the sign of the Bible in great Woodstreet. 1643.

I Have diligently perused this Reply to the Answer, of the Ministers of New-England, to the nine Positions which I have approved, and judge very necessary, and seasonable to be Printed, and published, July the fifth, 1643.

James Cranford

Rector of Christophers London.

Errata.

PAge 22. Marg. read Romae. p. 33 line 27 r. society. p 37. l. 21. r. Of all true Churches. p 37. l. 3. r. parium. p. 47. l. 41 r. saith. p 48. l. 30. r. quin. p. 50. l. 31 r. Ordinance. The faults escaped in the quotation p. 5. in some Copies, the reader is desired to correct by Beza de Presb. p 57 l. 7. r. is the same. p 61 l 25. r. Objection. p. 61. l. 28. r. were dispensed. p 64 l •4 r. which without. p. 67. l. 14. r parium. p. 67 l. 29▪ r. therefore to them, p. 6. l. 28. r. with Christ.

To the Reader.

Good Reader,

Vpon the receipt of the Answer returned unto the Nine Positions, Master *Ball* moved by the request of Brethren, drew up this reply, which upon perusal and joint approbation, was directed unto the reverend Elders of the several Churches in *New England*. The Reply sent miscarrying in the hand, to which it was committed, though both Letters and printed Books trusted in the same hand were delivered: Hereupon another Copy was from *New England* desired, and accordingly prepared in the year following. In the mean time, the Answer being tendered to the Press, it was judged more meet to keep the Reply in readiness to attend the publishing of the Answer, then to part with it in the other way. This intelligence was the last year conveyed into *New England*, since which time, there hath been an expectation to see that in Print, which now is sent abroad to open view. By this Relation it is manifest who are volunteers, and who are pressed to come forth as defendants in these Controversies. These differences betwixt the loving Brethren of old *England* and New, had not been made thus notorious, if some who cry up the Church way in *New England*, as the only way of God, had not been forward, to blow them abroad in the world. But surely the providence of God is remarkable in bringing these questions into debate at this time. When the Ministers of the Gospel from all the Counties in the Kingdom are called together by both houses of Parliament, to consult about the healing of our breaches, which are very many and dangerous: The Copy of this Reply being committed to our custody we are necessitated to appear in the publication of it: yet we shall preface nothing concerning the Treatise it self, because our known respects to the reverend and judicious Author will tender us partial, and our testimony can add no credit to his works which withal indifferent Readers will plead sufficiently for their own acceptance. If this discourse shall add any discovery of light unto them, who desire a sound judgment in the controversies here agitated, our end is obtained, and our prayers answered, who are.

Thy Servants in and for the truth,

- Simeon Ash,
- William Rathband.

The Letter of those Ministers in *England*, who requested to know the judgment of their Brethren in *New England*, in Nine positions, wherein the reasons of this their request, are truly reported.

(Reverend and beloved Brethren)

WHiles we lived together in the same Kingdom, we professed the same faith, joined in the same Ordinances, labored in the work of God to gain souls unto his kingdom, and maintained the purity of worship against corruptions, both on the right hand and on the left. But since your departure into New England, we hear (and partly believe it) that divers have embraced certain vain opinions, such as you disliked formerly, and we judge to be groundless and unwarrantable. As that a stinted form of prayer, and set Liturgy is unlawful; That it is not lawful to join in prayer, or to receive the Sacrament, where a stinted Liturgy is used. 3. That the children of godly and approved Christians, are not to be Raptized, until their parents be set members of some particular congregation. 4. that the Parents

themselves, though of approved piety are not to be received to the Lord's Supper, until they be admitted as set members. 5. That the power of Excommunication, &c. is so in the body of the Church, that what the major part shall allow, that must be done, though the Pastors and Governors, and part of the assembly be of another mind, and peradventure, upon more substantial reasons. 6. That none are to be admitted as set members, but they must promise, not to depart, or remove unless the Congregation will give leave. 7. That a Minister is so a Minister to a particular Congregation, that if they dislike him unjustly, or leave him he ceaseth to be a Minister. 8. That a Minister cannot perform any ministerial act in another Congregation. 9. That members of one Congregation may not communicate in another.

These and other such like (which we omit to reckon up) are written and reported to be the common Tenants in New England, which are received with great applause, maintained with great confidence, and applauded, as the only Church way, wherein the Lord is to be worshipped. And letters from New England have so taken with divers in many parts of this Kingdom, that they have left our Assemblies because of a stinted Liturgy, and excommunicated themselves from the Lord's Supper, because such as are not debarred from it. And being turned aside themselves, they labor to ensnare others, to the grief of the godly, the scandal of Religion, the wounding of their own souls (if they did advisedly consider the matter) and great advantage of them, that are wily to espy, and ready to make use of all advantages to prejudice the truth. (Beloved brethren) if you stood in our places, we are well assured it would be no small grief unto you, to hear and see the people led afide to the disgrace of the Gospel, upon weak and groundless imaginations, and in rash and inconsiderate zeal to deal with that which is of God▪ as if it were of man. And if it be to us grief of heart to hear that you have changed from that truth which you did profess, and embrace that for truth which in former times upon sound grounds you did condemn as erroneous, we hope you will not be offended. You know how oft it hath been objected, that Non-conformists in practice are Separatists in heart but that they go cross to their own positions, or smother the truth for sinister ends. They of the Separation boast that they stand upon the Non-conformist's grounds. A vainglorious flourish and sleight pretence. But both these are much countenanced by your sudden change if you be changed, as it is reported. How shall your brethren be able to stand up in the defense of their innocence and the uprightness of their cause, when your example and opinion shall be cast in their dish? Must they leave you now, with whom they have held society? Or will you plead for Separation, which you have condemned as rash and inconsiderate? You know that thy who have run this way have fallen into manifold divisions, and may not you justly fear, lest the same befall you? Some warnings you have had already, and have you not cause to fear every day more and more? Error is very fruitful and will spread apace. A crack in the foundation may occasion a wide breach in the building, where there will not be means, or mind to amend it. Experience every day may tutour us herein. But to let pass all inconveniences, our request in all meekness and love is, that if these, or any of the forementioned opinions be indeed your Tenants you would be pleased to take a second review of your grounds, and send us your strongest reasons that have swayed you in these matters: and if we shall find them upon due examination to be such as will carry weight, we shall be ready to give you the right hand of fellowship; if otherwise you shall receive our just and modest animadversions in what we conceive you have erred from the truth. You will not judge, if we cannot apprehend the strength of your grounds, it is because we love not the truth, or be carried with by-respects (though these conceits prevail too much:) Such rigid and harsh censures, cannot lodge in

meek and humble breasts. Weighty reasons promote the truth not unadvised judging. You yourselves have judged that to be error, which now you take to be truth when yet you were not blinded with by-respects, nor hudwinked your eyes, that you might not see the light. And if you have just warrant from God to pull down what you have built, and to build what you have pulled down, we desire you would lovingly and maturely impart it▪ for as yet we have scene none, which we are not ready to prove, and show by the rule of truth to be too weak to carry any burden.

We adore with you the fullness of the Scripture, and we know the Counsel of the Lord shall stand: if you can show that you walk in the ways of God, we shall heartily rejoice to walk with you: but if you have turned aside, we shall earnestly desire that you would be pleased seriously to consider the matter, and speedily reform, what is out of order. Thus not doubting of your favorable interpretation of this our motion, for the preventing of distraction, maintenance of peace, and searching out of the truth, whereby we may be directed to live to the praise of God the good of his people, and comfort of our souls, beseeching God to lead and guide us into all truth and holiness, and keep us blameless until his glorious appearance, we rest

Your loving Brethren.

An Epistle written by the Elders of the Churches in NEW-ENGLAND, to those godly Ministers fore-mentioned that sent over the Positions.

Reverend and beloved Brethren:

IN these remote Coasts of the earth, whereunto the good hand of God hath brought us, as we do with much comfort of heart call to mind the many gracious blessings, which both with you, and from you, we enjoyed in our Christian and holy communion, (the memory and fruit whereof we hope shall never be blotted out) so we have also seen cause to look back to our former administrations there, and to search and try our ways; that wherein soever we have formerly gone astray, we might judge ourselves for it before the Lord: And that seeing now God hath set before us an open door of liberty, we might neither abuse our liberty in the Gospel, to run out into any groundless unwarrantable courses, nor neglect the present opportunity to administer (by the help of Christ) all the holy ordinances of God, according to the pattern set before us in the Scripture; In our native Country, when we were first called to the Ministry, many of us took some things to be indifferent and lawful, which in after-times we saw to be sinful, and durst not continue in the practice of them there; Afterwards some things that we bare as burdens, that is, as things inexpedient, though not utterly unlawful; we have no cause to retain and practice the same things here, which would not have been not only inexpedient, but unlawful: such things as a man may tolerate when he cannot remove them, he cannot tolerate without sin, when he may remove them; Besides some things we practiced there (which we speak to our shame and grief) which we never took into serious consideration whether they were lawful, and expedient or no, but took them for granted, and generally received; not only by the most Reformed Churches, but by the most godly and judicious servants of God amongst them; which nevertheless when we came to weigh them in the balance of the Sanctuary, we could not find sufficient warrant in the Word to receive them, and establish them here: of one of these three kinds will these our

present practices appear to be, which you call our new opinions, or, Innovations here; except it be some few of them, which though they have been reported to you to be our Judgments and practices, yet are indeed far from us: The partieulars are too many, and too weighty to give you account of them, and the ground of our proceedings about them in a Letter. But to give you (if it be the will of God) the better satisfaction, we have sent you a short Treatise touching each particular, that according to your desire you might understand from us how far we do acknowledge any of these tenets, and upon what ground, hoping that according to your promise, if upon due examination you shall find any weight in them, you will give us the right hand of fellowship. But if otherwise, you will send us your just and faithful animadversions, and we do not suspect your loves to the truth, or your sincere speaking according to your conscience in the sight of God. Neither tax we you as siding from the truth with by-respects, whereof you complain, verily we abhor such rash, harsh, and presumptuous notoriousness, we see as much cause to suspect the integrity of our own hearts, as yours; and so much the more, as being more privy to the deceitfulness of our own hearts than to yours. And we cannot but with much thankfulness of heart acknowledge the many rich precious treasures of his grace, wherewith the Lord hath furnished sandrie of you above your Brethren, which causeth us with great reverence to accept, and receive what further light God may be pleased to impart unto us by you. But as we have believed, so have we hitherto practiced, and so have most of us spoken this our Answer to your particulars, most of us we may say, because there wants not some Brethren amongst us who proceed further, even to look at all set forms of Prayer invented by men of another age or congregation, and prescribed to their Brethren to be read out of a book for the prayers of the Church, as Images, or Imaginations of men, forbidden in the second Commandment; But as we leave them to their liberty of their own judgments without prejudice, so do we also concur with the rest of them, so far as we all go in bearing witness against any set forms, or the corruptions in them; In dispatching whereof, we have been the more slow because it behooved us first to inquire into, and to settle some controversies amongst ourselves, before we could well attend to entertain discourse about foreign questions which do not so nearly concern our present estate and practice. Besides your Letters being sent to the Ministers of the Churches, and some of us dwelling far asunder, it was not an easy thing for all of us often to meet together to consider of these Questions, much less to resolve upon one just answer. But having at length (by the assistance of God) brought our Answers to this issue, we commend it to the blessing of the Lord, and in him to your Christian, and judicious consideration; where if all things be found safe, and duly warranted from Scripture grounds; do you also as seemeth vigilant Watchmen of the Lord's flock, and faithful witnesses to God; If anything seem doubtful to you, consider and weigh it very well before you reject it: If anything appear to be unsound, and dissonant from the Word (which we for our parts cannot discern) we shall willingly attend to what further light God may send unto us by you: In the mean while we entreat you in the Lord, not to suffer such apprehensions to lodge in your minds, which you intimate in your Letters; As if we here justified the ways of rigid separation, which sometimes amongst you we have formerly borne witness against: and so build again the things we have destroyed; you know they separate from your Congregations, as no Churches; from the Ordinances dispensed by you as mere. Antichristian, and from

yourselves as no visible Christians. But we profess unfeignedly, we separate from the corruptions which we conceive to be left in your Churches, and from such Ordinances administered therein as we fear are not of God, but of men; And for yourselves, we are so far from separating as from no visible Christians, as that you are under God in our hearts (if the Lord would suffer it) to live and die together; and we look at sundry of you as men of that eminent growth in Christianity, that if there be any visible Christians under heaven, amongst you are the men, which for these many years have been written in your foreheads (*Holiness to the Lord*) which we speak not to prejudice any truth which ourselves are here taught and called to profess, but we still believe though personal Christians may be eminent in their growth of Christianity: yet Churches had still need to grow from apparent defects to purity; and from reformation to Reformation, age after age, till the Lord have utterly abolished Antichrist with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming to the full and clear revelation of all his holy Truth; especially touching the ordering of his house and public worship; as a pledge of this our estimation of you, and sincere affection to you, we have sent you these Answers to your demand, and shall be ready, by the help of Christ, to receive back again from you, wise, and just, and holy Advertisements in the Lord.

Now the Lord God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, your Lord and ours; lead us all unto all Truths, purge out all Leaven out of his Churches, and keep us blameless and harmless in his holy Faith and fear, to his heavenly kingdom, through him that hath loved us; In whom we rest,

Your very loving Brethren, the Elders of the Churches in *New-England*.

Reverend and dearly beloved Brethren,

IT is not to be doubted but while we live here, we shall have just cause to search and try our ways, look back upon former courses, and call things done to more strict examination. For being over-clouded with ignorance, compassed about with infirmities, and beset with many temptations to sin, knowing what we know best, but darkly and in part, no marvel, if in many things we offend ignorantly, of frailty for want of due consideration, rashly mistaking Error for Truth, condemning Truth for Error, suspecting evil without cause, and not suspecting where is just reason, drawing erroneous conclusions from sound principles, and maintaining truths upon weak grounds; so that in examination of our ways, and endeavors of their Reformation we had need to look warily, that we turn not to the right hand or to the left, for in the one we add to the Word of God, as well as in the oother, and of ourselves are apt to strike aside to both. A loose conscience will be profane, a tender, scrupulous. It stands us therefore upon to have ourselves in suspicion, in as much as experience teacheth that many have swerved from the path of sound peace and comfort on each hand.

Wherefore (*Beloved Brethren*) if since your coming into *New England*, upon serious Review of former actions you have discovered any truths heretofore not taken notice of, we shall be so far from rejecting them because of your former judgment and practice, that we shall heartily desire to know and embrace the same with you, and bless God for you as the happy instruments of his glory, our Instruction & the advancement of the truth. But if the

discoveries be of the like nature with the positions mentioned in the Letter; as before, so still, we conceive them to be new opinions, and not warranted by Scripture, which is the true Antiquity.

Opinions we say, not practices, for not changing your opinion, you might lawfully alter your practice; nay, what you did tolerate formerly as a burden, in case not free, you might well forgo being at your liberty. Your judgment being the same, you might use your liberty in forbearance of a set Liturgy, and yet retain the same judgment of a stinted Liturgy, that you had before; you might forbear for a time upon special Reason (such as present state and occasion might suggest) to receive to the Sacrament approved Christians, not set members of a particular Congregation; as some Brethren do) who yet dare not think it unlawful to communicate with such in the act of worship, or deem it just and right altogether to debar them, as having no right nor title to those privileges of the Church. It is your opinions whereto we had respect, not simply your practice. It never entered into us to persuade you to a set Liturgy, much less to complain that you had not accepted ours. But that all stinted Liturgies should be condemned as devised worship, and so condemned as that none may lawfully be present at, or partake of the Sacraments administered in a stinted or devised form, this we called a new opinion.

Neither do we mention it because we knew it to be the private opinion of some Brethren among you, whom we had left to the liberty of their own judgment, so far as the maintenance of the Truth, and a just call did not engage us: but because it was cried up, and advanced with all diligence, and endeavor of some among us standing affected *New England*-ward, as if a chief point of holiness consisted in separation. You know how great a fire a little sparkle kindles. And seeing this Distraction and Rent had its original, growth and continuance from some Brethren in those parts, or affected to that way, when in loving and friendly manner we could neither receive grounds at home for our conviction, nor procure just satisfaction to the contrary; what could we do less then call upon you jointly to know your judgment, and either by sound proof to be by you convinced (if happily you should approve their separation (which we esteem groundless, rash, unlawful, and prejudicial to outward peace) or being backed by a testimony of its dislike from you, we might the better be both encouraged, and furnished to endeavor the quenching of that fire which was kindled but in too many places,

In other particulars also, we conceive, you go beyond Commission given of God: granting them authority to whom God hath not committed it, debarring others from the privilege of the Sacraments, who have title thereto by the Covenant of grace.

Your love in that you were pleased to signify first your kind and respective acceptance of our Letter, and now also to send us an answer thereto, we acknowledge it with all thankfulness, and shall endeavor (through the grace of God) to return like affection in truth of heart, if in measure we fall short. Of your respect to us in particular, we make no question, your expressions are beyond that we could expect, as also what we dare own. But we humbly beseech the Lord to direct, uphold, and guide us, that in some measure we may walk worthy of our vocation, and approv ourselves faithful to your consciences.

It was one end of our writing to be satisfied in this point, whether you approve the ways of Separation (whereof we complain) and their courses who labored with all their might, (when they conceived hope to be heard) to persuade thereunto. Against which (if we knew your judgment) you testified among us.

You know they that separate are not all of one strain and temper. Some deny all communion with us public and private, some admit of private, but deny all public, and some join in Prayer before, and after Sermon, as also preaching of the Word (because in their esteem, this may be done without communion in a Church-way) but refuse to partake of the Sacraments. All which Separations we judge uncharitable, contrary to the Commandment of Christ, and have ever thought that you (whilst with us) and we were of one mind herein.

If of late we have conceived fears of some of you (dear Brethren) as leaning too much to what formerly you disliked, we beseech you weigh what urgent and pressing Reasons forced us thereunto, and we shall most gladly (we heartily desire you to rest assured) lay hold of every line and syllable, that may tend to dislodge such apprehensions.

For as we conceive, the dispute to be unreasonably moved, the Rent offensive, the opinions themselves prejudicial to the cause of God, and the advancers thereof to have passed the limits prescribed by God; so we shall esteem it an inestimable blessing, if (now what hinders being removed) we might join with one heart and soul, in one way of God to promote his glory, and seek the good of his Church and people.

We trust in the Lord, we should not draw back in any course wherein we may see the Lord going before us, nor be an offense to any to keep the Lord's way; we seek the truth, and are persuaded it is the cause of God which we defend: we plead for Communion with the Churches of Christ, no further then they hold communion with Christ, still desiring *to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, with yourselves and all others*, who walk in the right way of truth, peace and comfort.

How the Lord may be pleased to deal with us, or dispose of us we know not (his blessed will be done.) But of this we are resolved, through his grace, not willingly to raise trouble or dissent among you, if through ignorance or infirmity we shall not so fall in, as to be of one mind with you in these matters. And here we desire you to consider that in these particulars you dissent as much one from another as we dissent from you, and that wherein we dissent from you (and perhaps from the lesser part of you) you dissent from the judgment and practice of all Reformed Churches.

This we speak not to prejudice your cause, but to entreat your serious re-examination of what you have sent us, and this trial thereof, by the Touchstone of the Word. For if we mistake not, in many things it will not abide the Test.

You have written in great love and tenderness, that your Positions might be so scanned, and we shall endeavor with such affection to try all things, and hold fast that which is good. And now (beseeching the guidance of the Spirit) with your leave, we shall endeavor to deal fully and plainly, as the nature of the cause requireth, entreating you impartially to consider the

grounds whereupon we, go and weigh what we shall say in the balance of the Sanctuary. The Lord of his rich mercy in Jesus Christ, direct us in discerning what is right and pleasing in his sight, Cast offenses out of the Church, close up Rents and Divisions, reveal his Truth more and more, set up and maintain the purity of his own Ordinances, unite the hearts of his people to the love and fear of his holy Name, teach us self-denial, and keep us blameless to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

I POSITION. That a stinted form of Prayer and set Liturgy is unlawful.

Answ.

BEfore we proceed to declare ourselves concerning this position: It will be needful that something be premised, for the explication of the terms thereof. We suppose,

1 By a Liturgy and form of Prayer, you mean not a form of private Prayers composed for the help and direction of weaker Christians: but the *System* or body of public Prayers generally used in the English Parishes, compiled for the Churches use by other men not infallibly guided by God, to be said or read out of a Book by their Ministers as the Churches Prayers. And that this is your meaning, may appear from your Letter itself, wherein you complain that divers in many parts of that Kingdom have left their Assemblies, because of a stinted Liturgy. Now we know not of any other stinted Liturgy from which the people do absent themselves, but only that which is in use in the English Churches.

For as for a form of Prayer in general, we conceive your meaning cannot be of that. For it is evident that many Preachers constantly use one set form of Prayer of their own making before their Sermons, with whom the people refuse not to join.

2 By stinted and set, you mean such Prayers, as are so imposed upon the Churches and Ministers, as that they are limited to that very form of words expressed in the Book without addition, diminution, or alteration; for that Liturgy and form among you, is in this sense set and stinted.

3 By unlawful, you mean that we looking at that form, as swerving from the Rule; neither dare first practice it ourselves, nor secondly approve the use of it by others.

This being the true state of the question, so far as it appears to us, from the letter. We answer, 1 For our own practice, the Churches here do not use any stinted form of Prayer and set Liturgy, for these and other such Reasons. 1 Because we find no necessity of any stinted Liturgy to be used among us, by virtue of any divine precept. And seeing the Commission of the Apostles limited them, to each men to observe and do only what Christ did command them in matters of this nature, *Math.* 28. 20. Who are we and what are our Churches, that we should presume above this Commission? And, we hope, it will not be offensively taken by any godly Brethren, That we stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free in this, as well as in all other things.

Secondly, because the lawfulness of set forms and stinted Liturgies is questioned and doubted of by many faithful servants of God: whereas for Church-officers to edify the Churches by their own gifts, as well in praying as in preaching, all sorts without controversy grant it to be lawful. Now spiritual prudence guideth believers, when two ways are set before them, one doubtful though ventured on by some, the other certainly safe and good, though neglected by many, to choose that which is safe, declining the other.

Thirdly, Because Primitive patterns of all the Churches of God in their best times (when as touching this point they kept the rule in their eye) whether Jewish before Christ, or Christian above a 100 years after Christ, yield not the least footstep to show us another safe way to walk in, then this w^{ch} we have chosen. As for after times towards the end of the second, and beginning of the third Century, we know how far the Churches were then degenerated and declined from the first purity; neither do we marvel at it, seeing in the Apostles time the mystery of iniquity began to work, and it was then foretold, that the power of godliness would be in aftertimes exchanged for empty forms. In which respect, we look not at them as our guides neither in this, nor other particulars not warranted by the Rule, herein following the advise of *Cyprian*, who himself saw the corruption of those times, *Non est attendendum quid aliquis ante nos faciendum putaverit, sed quid qui ante omnes est Christus fecerit & faciendum praeceperit.*

To conclude, seeing our Christian liberty freeth us from binding ourselves to any religious observances, whereunto the written word doth not bind us. And seeing spiritual prudence directs us to choose those ways, which on all hands are confessed to be safe, avoiding those that be doubtful and hazardous. And seeing it will not be safe for us, needlessly to swerve from the constant practice of all Churches that are recorded in Scripture, and there held forth as a cloud of Witnesses for us to follow in matters of this nature, we therefore may not, do not, dare not use set forms of Prayers and stinted Liturgies in these Churches.

More particularly, in that we do not use that form of Prayer and stinted Liturgy, which is in use among yourselves: these and such other like Reasons have induced us thereunto. 1 The many and just exceptions whereunto that Liturgy is liable both for matter and manner; for the proof whereof we refer you to those faithful servants of God, who have gone before us in witnessing against the same: Amongst others to Master *Cartwright*, and the Abridgment.

2 In as much as that Liturgy was never commanded of God, and hath been greatly abused to Idolatry and Superstition, and is not of any necessary use, and therefore we are afraid to bring it into the Worship of God, as knowing the jealousy of the Lord, in matters of this nature; *Exod. 20*, and how strictly he commandeth his people, that all monuments and remnants of Idolatry and Superstition should be abolished from among them, *Deut. 5. 25, 26. Exod. 23. 13. Isaiah 30. 2. 2 Cor. 6. 17*. In which respect the holy Ghost hath greatly commended *Jacob, David, Jehu Hezechia* and *Josiah* for taking away the remembrance of such things, *Gen. 35. 2, 4. Psal. 16. 4. 2 King 10. 26, 27. & 18. 4. & 2. all the Chapter*. And where other Kings of *Judah* came short of the like zeal, the Scripture notes it as a blemish in them that the high places were not taken away, albeit the people did not sacrifice in them to false gods, but only to the Lord, *2 Chron. 15. 17. & 20. 33. & 33. 17*. Yea, moreover, it appeareth by the Scripture, that some

things that had a good Original and use (if they be not still necessary and commanded of God) are unlawful when once they are known to be defiled by Idolatry, and abused to it, 2 King. 18. 4. Hos. 2. 16, 17. As the brazen Serpent was at the first an Institution though but temporary: but when the children of *Israel* burned Incense to it, *Hezekiah*, is commended for breaking it in pieces, and the Lord witnesseth of him that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and according to his Commandment, which he commanded *Moses*, 2 King. 18. 3, 6. how much more in the like case ought other things to be removed, which never were commanded of God, but only were devised by men? And that that Liturgy hath been superstitiously abused, may be clear to any that shall consider that it is the same for substance that was used in the days of Popery. And therefore when the Papists in *Devonshire* and *Cornwall*, had made a Commotion and Rebellion upon the change of Religion, in the days of King *Edward* the Sixth. It was told them by the King, for the pacifying of them: *That it was the self-same Service in English, which had been before in Latin: and if the Service of the Church was good in Latin, it remaineth good in English, for nothing is altered: Fox Acts and Monuments, Edward 6.* And Pope *Pius* the fifth did see so little variation in it from the Latin Service, that had been formerly used in that Kingdom, that he would have ratified it by his authority, if *Q. Elizabeth* would have so received it. And many of the people put such holiness in it, that they think God is not rightly worshipped, nor his Sabbath well observed, nor the Sacraments sufficiently administered, if there be no reading of that Service. And others put such holiness and necessity in it, that they prefer it before God's holy Ordinance of preaching the Word. In so much as the Ministers are in the danger of being called in question, and of being censured, if they do not read that Liturgy every Lord's day without omitting any part thereof, either in respect of preaching or otherwise.

3 In regard of the many woeful scandals, and dangerous consequences of using that Liturgy, of which we suppose you are not ignorant.

To mention but two, *Viz.* The hardening of Papists who are emboldened to think better of their own Breviaries, Mass-Books, Portuisses, seeing that Liturgy hath been extracted out of those books, and rather fetched from them then from the forms used in any of the reformed Churches.

2 The countenancing and establishing of an unlearned Idol Ministry, of not-Preaching curates, Non-residents, Pluralities, &c. in whose skirts is to be found the blood of so many men's souls living and dying in their sins, while they ignorantly content themselves with, and harden themselves in some empty forms of Religion and blind devotion, which are begotten and cherished chiefly by such prayers and ministers. Neither is there less scandal hereby (we mean not only taken but given) then by the eating of an Idolathite, in the Idols Temple condemned by the Apostle 1 Cor. 8. 7 10. For if the eating of an Idolathite by him that had knowledge, and knew that an Idol was nothing, and that all meats were lawful, did embolden others to honor the Idol, and therefore was a scandal given, so also it is in this case.

4 Seeing that book is so imposed as that the minister in reading of it, is limited to the very words set down without any diminution, addition, or alteration; therefore we dare not use it.

For 1 The Lord himself hath not limited his people to his own forms and therefore we see not, how it can be lawful to be limited to other men's forms; For in thus doing we should subject ourselves to the exercise of such an authority and power of the Prelates, as in this case puts forth a stronger act of limiting power then Christ himself, who doth not limit us to those forms, which himself hath set down in Scripture: For though we acknowledge the Lord's prayer and other forms set down in Scripture, may be lawfully used as prayers (due cautions being observed) yet there is not a limitation lying upon the Churches in the use of those prayers. And therefore we do not find that the Apostles ever used that form taught by Christ in those very words, much less limited themselves to it, when they prayed, nor did they teach the Churches so to do.

2 If the Lord would not have us limit ourselves in our own forms, whiles we are exercising our own gifts (which he hath specially sanctified to edify his Church *Act. 6. 4. Eph. 4. 8. 1 Cor. 12. 7.*) least we should quench or at least straiten his spirit in prayer, *1 Thes. 5. 19.* would he then have us limited to other men's forms, which have not been in like sort sanctified of God, but will rather quench or straiten the spirit of God, whiles we are so limited to them?

3 The entertainment of this form hath been a manifest snare unto the Churches who upon the same ground on which they have received this form into the desks have been limited to others in the pulpit, by means whereof the poor Church of Christ hath been wholly deprived of the public use of the Ministers gifts in prayer, and the spirit of prayer in the Ministers in public, hath been greatly restrained.

As for our Judgment concerning the practice of others, who use this Liturgy in our native Countrie, we have always been unwilling to express our minds there against unless we have been necessarily called thereunto, and at this time we think it not expedient to express ourselves any further concerning this matter, as loath to intermeddle with the affairs of other Churches, but contenting ourselves with, and blessing the Lord for those liberties which we, by the mercy of God, do here enjoy, reserving also due reverence to the judgments of our beloved brethren and deer Countrymen, who may concerning this matter be otherwise minded.

Reply.

THis position cannot bear that meaning which you give it, if you take it according, o our minds, and the plain construction of the words. We never questioned why you made not use of a stinted Liturgy, much less why you did not wholly and in every part tie yourselves unto, and approve of that form in use amongst us. You might well think we had little to do to put forth such a demand, *viz.* whether you think it lawful to approve in others and practice yourselves, what swerveth from the rule, and we think it strange you should give our words such a meaning.

The thing we craved resolution in was, whether in your judgments all stinted and set forms of prayer and Liturgies be unlawful. The reason hereof was because in writings from *New-England*, we had seen all set liturgies, and set forms of prayer condemned as devised worship which God would not accept, and partaking in the Sacraments of the Supper in our

assemblies, therefore disallowed, because administered in a stinted Liturgy, which things were received with such likeing among some brethren with us, and by them imparted and recommended to others, that they occasioned that rent and distraction whereof we complain.

It is true, the people among us separate from our form of prayer or liturgy, but the reason hereof is because it is stinted, not because this or that or ours in particular.

You confess you want not some brethren among you who look at all set forms of Prayer invented by one of another age or congregation, and prescribed to their brethren, to be read out of a book for the prayers of the Church, as Images and Imaginations of man forbidden in the second Commandment, and that the lawfulness of Liturgies, and set forms is questioned and doubted of by many faithful servants of God, such also as come over occasionally, who withdraw themselves from the Sacraments in the congregation, do it on this pretence, that a stinted Liturgy is a human invention. And if we examine the reasons brought against stinted forms and Liturgies, we shall find them to strike at all forms and Liturgies though devised by men of the same age and congregation, and to be used but now and then, or but once on set purpose, and that either in public or in private, as elsewhere we may have occasion to show.

You say it is evident, many Preachers constantly use a set form of Prayer of their own making before their Sermons with whom the people refuse not to join; And you know (we doubt not) that such set forms are disliked also. And if the grounds be examined (in our understanding) they make as much against the one as the other. View but the reasons why you admit not a stinted Liturgy and form of prayer, and see whether the two last will not in the same terms directly conclude against both. But what ever is to be thought herein, or whether men's practices agree with their opinions we now dispute not. This is plain and manifest, that men's opinions are to be judged by their express words and reasons, not by their practices. The Brownists (as they are commonly called) can separate from no stinted Liturgy amongst us, but that which is in use, and for ought we know they may join with their own Pastors, though they oft use the same form of prayer in whole or in part, in thanksgiving before meat, or in prayer before Sermon, or the like. And yet their opinion is that all stinted Liturgies and set Forms of prayer be unlawful, human inventions forbidden by the second Commandment.

But if anything had been left doubtful in the Letter, that it might be strained to another sense, either because we were short in expression, or many of you not informed in the passages which gave occasion to the question, it is well known what the words mean in ordinary construction. And we doubt not but many brethren among you, might and could fully inform you of our meaning that there need no such straining to find it out.

That which followeth in your answer to the position (as you interpret it) we pass over, because it is not to the matter intended. And we are as unwilling to trouble you with the affairs of other Churches taking you from your own weighty occasions, as you are unwilling to be interrupted. Only in regard of promise, and because plain dealing serves to maintain love, we think good to advertise you these few things.

1 That your reasons why you accept not of a stinted Liturgy be ambiguously propounded, for sometimes you plead only for your liberty herein, and that a stinted form is not necessary, and sometime you speak so, as they that look at Stinted Liturgies, as Images forbidden in the second Commandment will easily draw your words to their meaning.

2 The reasons you bring against a set form of prayer or Liturgy do hold as strong against a set form of Catechism confession and profession of faith, blessing, baptizing and singing of Psalms.

3 We have not called upon you at this time to witness for, or against the corruptions in the Communion-Book. This you fall upon by straining the sense of our demands contrary to the true meaning thereof.

The reasons which you bring against it, we cannot approve them all; The exceptions which have been taken both from the matter and manner thereof we know: But to esteem the whole for some corruptions found therein, a monument of Idolatry, that we have not learned.

The Argument in the abridgement which is used against conformity to the Ceremonies did not in their judgment who were authors of the Book hold against the Liturgy, of which opinion we are also.

4 If these reasons be intended only to show why you receive not our form of administration, it is that which (we are persuaded you know) we never required of you. If to disallow the use of the Book amongst us altogether in things lawful, good and pertinent, they will not hold weight.

5 You are generally (as you say) loath to meddle with the affairs of other Churches, unless you have been necessarily called thereunto. But when some upon the request (as we suppose) of private friends, and others out of their zeal and forwardness have labored to draw many to separation from the Sacrament, because ministered in a stinted Liturgy: we cannot apprehend any just ground of this apology. The Rent is wide, and some brethren had their hands deep therein, which made us at this present to crave your judgments, and the reasons thereof to make up the breach.

6 *I. D.* objecteth to *Master P.* that his manner of preaching was disorderly in carrying that matter, he speaks of, to the Classes, before he had declared to the Church the equity of his refusing the Ministers desired by the Scriptures. And may not we with like reason object, that this manner of proceeding is disorderly in seeking to draw men to Separation, because of stinted Liturgy, before you had shown to us or other brethren (whom it may concern) by Scripture, or reasons drawn from thence, that a stinted Liturgy was unlawful? but of this we may entreat more fully elsewhere.

II. POSITION. That it is not lawful to join in prayer, or receive the Sacraments where a stinted Liturgy is used, or as we conceive your meaning to be in this, as in the former question viz. where, and when that stinted Liturgy is used.

Answer.

IT seemeth by this your letter, the ground of this Position hath been the separation of divers from your assemblies, because of a stinted Liturgy: and we are not ignorant of the rigid separation of divers people, who withdraw themselves from an able faithful ministry, as no ministry of Christ, and from their godly congregations as no Churches of Christ; because of some corruptions from which (through want of light, not love of the truth) they are not thoroughly cleansed. Against which practice we have ever witnessed.

As for our Judgment concerning the Position it self, we would promise two things; First concerning the persons reading this Liturgy, which may be either an ungodly or unable Minister, or an able and a godly.

Secondly, concerning the Liturgy it self, which may be either of the whole or some select prayers, which may be conceived to be the least offensive.

Now if the question be of joining in prayer with, and when that whole Liturgy is used, or where that which is used, is read by an unable and ungodly Minister, we then see not how it can be lawful to join in prayer in such cases; For

1 The prayers of the Minister are not his private prayers, but the public prayers of the whole assembly, whose mouth he is to God. And when the prayers offered up by the Minister, as a living holy, and acceptable service to God, are not through human frailty, but otherwise for matter and manner corrupt, we see not what warrant any one hath to join with such prayers, *Mal.* 1. 13. 14.

2 When men join therein with an insufficient Ministry, they do not only countenance them in their place and office, whom the Lord hath rejected from being his Priests. *Hos.* 4. 6. but also set up those Idols and means of worship to edify themselves by, which God never appointed in his holy word *Ezeck.* 11. 17.

But if the question be of joining in some few select prayers read by an able and painful Minister out of that book as on the one side we are very tender of imputing sin to the men that so join: so on the other side, we are not without fear, least that such joining may be found to be unlawful: unless it may appear that the Ministers with whom the people have communion in reading those prayers do neither give any scandal by reading of them nor give unlawful honor to a thing abused to Idolatry, and superstition, nor do suffer themselves to be sinfully limited in the reading of them.

Reply.

Sufficient hath been spoken of the meaning of the position and the grounds thereof and if we have not mistaken your judgment & practice both, you have born witness against both that you call the rigid separation, and this more moderate also; And we humbly wish, the moderate do not degenerate into the rigid ere long. It is very strange, if they take not great encouragement upon your grounds. The truth of our ministry, Churches, Ordinances, and calling is questioned, and where men will stay the Lord knoweth, and what more common

then that our Liturgy is unlawful, because it is the devise of man; The Author (or publisher at least) of a letter against our Service book beginneth with such like distinction.

Against this Prayer-book (saith he) divers have pleaded in a different manner. First some arguments are proper to the Separatists *qua tales*, viz. that it is offered in a false Church; 2. By a false minister; 3. In the behalf of the subjects of the Kingdom of Antichrist. These are properly theirs, being the grounds whereupon they make a total separation from all the Churches in this Land, as no Churches of Christ. These I approve not, yet note them that ye may see upon what different grounds, the same Position is maintained by several persons, and that ye may be delivered from the prejudice, which hinders many from receiving those truths, because they fear the reproach of Brownism.

Secondly, there are other grounds which are common to all that plead for the the purity of Christ's ordinances, and which do not necessarily infer such separation, but only serve to show the unlawfulness of that practice, and our communicating therein.

Thus the Epistle wherein the same distinction of separation is noted: but how truly, let the indifferent judge. If none must be counted Separatists, but such as have pleaded against the book of Common prayer as unlawful, because offered up in a false Church, &c. then are there none such in the world, that we have known or heard of: for it is apparent they cast us off as no Churches of Christ, because our Service is a human devise, will-worship, Idolatry; And not on the contrary, that our Service is will-worship, or Idolatry, because our Churches are false Churches. Against all Communion with us they plead, because we are a false Church, but against our stinted Liturgy they argue not in that manner.

The grounds on which that Author builds (which he saith are common to all, that plead for the purity of God's ordinances) are one and the same with the grounds of the Separatists, shafts taken out of the same quiver and peculiar to them, some few brethren only excepted, who of late have looked towards that opinion. See how affection will transport. Those reasons shall be common to all that plead for the purity of Christ's Ordinances, which were never taken to be sound and true, either by the reformed Churches abroad, or by the godly Brethren at home, whether now at rest with the Lord, or for the present living, or yet by the most of the brethren among whom they live, and with whom they hold society, or by any minister or Society which did hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace for the space of this 1400 years and upwards, by your own confession, unless within these few days, and that by a few only. If this be not to strengthen the hands of the Separatists, or at least, to lay blocks of offense in their way, what is? As yet we think most of them that have separated, are not so far gone, as to condemn all our Assemblies as no Churches of Christ, but we judge they have proceeded further then Christ the Lord and Savior of his Church hath given them commission or allowance, that the grounds whereon they build are unsound, and such as make way for further danger, if the Lord prevent not. And that the reasons mentioned in the letters are the proper grounds of Separatists, and not common to all them that seek the purity of religion, for they are not approved by yourselves: and if all this tend not to turn them who halt, out of the right way, we heartily entreat you to consider.

Your judgment concerning the Position, you deliver in three propositions (for so many they be for substance) In respect of the persons reading the Liturgy, or the thing it self that is read. As if any part of the Liturgy be read, (put case some few selected prayers only, by an unable and ungodly minister: it is unlawful (say you) for the people to join in that case. But if it be unlawful for the people to join, when an ungodly minister readeth some few select prayers, it is either in respect of the Minister, or the prayers themselves. Not of the prayers themselves, for they be select and choice, faultless both in respect of matter and manner, as it is taken for granted, unless this distribution be to no purpose; if in respect of the Minister, then it is not lawful to join with such a one in any ordinance of God whatsoever. For if the Minister make it unlawful, then all communion in any part of God's worship, with such Ministers is unlawful, and so the Church in all ages of the world, the Prophets, our Savior Christ, the Apostles, and the faithful in the primitive Churches sinned, in holding Communion with such, when the Priests were dumb dogs that could not bark, and greedy dogs that could never have enough; when the Prophets prophesied lies, and the Priests bare rule by their means; when the Priests bought and sold Doves in the Temple, and took upon them to provide such things for them that were to offer; when the Pharisees corrupted the Law by false glosses, taught for doctrines men's precepts, made the commandments of God of none effect through their traditions, under pretence of long prayer devoured widows houses, taught the Law, but practiced it not; when they were such, and did such things, they were ungodly Ministers; But we never find that the Prophets, our Savior, the Apostles, did either forbear themselves, or warn the faithful not to communicate with such in the ordinance of worship. We read our Savior charged his Disciples, to beware of the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees, to let them alone, because they were the blind leaders of the blind, but he never forbade to communicate with them in the ordinances of God. It is not then for private Christians to withdraw themselves from the ordinance of worship, and communion of the Church, because such are permitted to deal in the holy things of God, whom they judge or know unfit: when men join in the worship of God with unworthy Ministers, they do not countenance them in their place and office, but obey the commandment of God, who requires their attendance upon his highness in that way and means.

To go no further then the text you quote, *Because thou hast despised knowledge, I will also reject thee, &c.* Properly the text is spoken of the ten tribes called *Israel*, and the Priests among them who worshipped the Calves which *Jeroboam* had set up, whom the Lord threateneth to reject, because they had rejected knowledge being either willfully ignorant, or withholding the truth in unrighteousness. Whether they were for the present absolutely rejected, or the Lord threatens only to reject them we will not dispute.

This may suffice that it is not to be found either in this or any other Text of Scripture, that the people joining in the true Worship of God, with unworthy Ministers, do countenance them in their place thereby. On the contrary, if you will extend this Text to all unworthy Ministers of what sort soever, whom the word of truth doth condemn as not approved Ministers of God, the Scripture teacheth evidently not only that the people by joining do not countenance them in their place and office, but that they must and ought to join with them

in the worship of God, and in separating from the Ordinance they shall sin against God, much less then do they in such joining set those Idols and means of worship, which God never appointed in his Word. For the worship is of God, and the Ministry is of God, the person unworthily executing his place, is neither set up by some few private Christians, nor can by them be removed. And warrant to withdraw themselves from the worship of God, because such as ought not, are suffered to entermeddle in the holy things of God, they have none from God. Dumbe Dogs, greedy Dogs, Idol-sheepheards, false Prophets, Strangers, are unworthy Ministers, but they that communicate with such in the ordinance of worship, are never said to set up Idols or means of worship which God never appointed. The sheep of Christ will not hear strangers in the Lord's sense, but outwardly they heard those strangers preach (if the Scribes and Pharisees were such) and by hearing them discovered them to be strangers, i. e. false Prophets; Some strangers at least, of whom our Savior speaks, were of the true Church, and of *Israel*, but brought false doctrine tending to kill the soul, such strangers none should hear, that is, believe and follow: but as they be tolerated in the Church, so they may hear them, so long as they bring the truth. Unworthy Ministers are no Ministers for themselves, but they are Ministers for the people of God, that is, so long as they be in the place of Ministers, the acts of their administrations are of force to the faithful, if they observe the form of administration prescribed by Christ; for Christ's Ordinances have their efficacy from him, not from them that serve about them, and evil Ministers minister not in their own name, but in Christ's and by his Commission.

It hath evermore been held for a truth in the Church of God, that although sometimes the evil have chief authority in the ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet for as much as they do not the same in their own name but in Christ's, and minister by his Commission and Authority, we may use their Ministry both in hearing the Word, and receiving the Sacraments; neither is the effect of Christ's Ordinance taken away, by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith, and rightly do receive the Sacraments administered to them which are effectual; because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men.

Beza de Presbyt. et excōmunicat. p. 25 26. Ista vero, quia nonnulli à sacris caetib. & sacrament. usu propter aliorum vitia ultro abstinent i. e. seipsos excommunicant magnam reprehensionem merentur.

The reasons whereby the ancient Churches condemned the Donatists and Catharists for their voluntary and seditious separation and the moderne Churches condemn the Anabaptists for their unwarrantable departure from, and so renting of the body of Christ, will hold against separation from the prayers of the congregation, because they are read by an ungodly minister.

The second proposition. Where the whole Liturgy is used, though by an able and godly Minister, it is not lawful to join in prayer in that case. Herein we cannot be of your judgment; for in the times of the Prophets, and our Savior Christ, as great abuses, no question, were found in the Church of the Jews in the administration of holy things of God as can be imagined in our Liturgy or form of prayer: but the Prophets and our Savior who taught the people to keep themselves pure and undefiled, never taught them to separate

from the administration of the holy things of God. And if the presence at our forms of prayer be not lawful by reason of the corruptions alleged, there can be no visible society named throughout the world since 200. years after Christ or thereabouts, wherein a Christian might lawfully join in Prayer, reading the Scripture, hearing the word or participation of the Sacraments. For compare the doctrines, prayers, rites at those times in use in the Churches with ours, and in all these, (blessed be the name of the Lord) we are more pure then they. But no man will be so bold (we hope) as to affirm the state of the Churches within 200. years after Christ, to be so miserably decayed that the faithful could not without sin hold communion with them in the aforesaid ordinances. The prayers of the Minister, whether conceived or stinted in a set form, be not his private prayers, but the public prayers of the whole assembly, whose mouth he is to God both in the one and the other. But you will not say, the people ought not to join with their Pastor in the public assembly, if ought be amiss in his prayer for matter, or manner, or both. It is all one to the people in this case, whether the fault be personal (as some distinguish) or otherwise known beforehand or not known: For if simple presence defile, whether it was known beforehand or not, all presence is faulty. And if simple presence defile not, our presence is not condemned, by reason of the corruptions known, whereof we stand not guilty, whether the corruption be through human frailty or not, it is not in us to enquire, but rather whether we be called to come, and the faults such as one Christian cannot or must not tolerate in another without breach of charity. For if the error be such as may be tolerated, and I am called to be present; by such fault I am not defiled though known before. If the error be such as in conscience may not be tolerated, though not known before hand, I am bound, if present some way to profess against it. This distinction of personal and ministerial faults in this case until it be cleared by some Text of Scripture or sound reason from the word, must go for the devise of man.

A Church, a Minister, or a Christian may be stiff in an error (being misperswaded it is a truth) after many means long used to convince them, with whom yet we must hold communion in the ordinances of Religion: and the error may be such as we cannot without hypocrisy or denial of the truth hold communion, though such means of conviction have not gone before. But the corruptions alleged against our form of prayer for matter or manner, are such as one Christian may and must tolerate in another where he hath no power to redress them.

Hath not Christian wisdom and experience of human frailties lessoned you (deer brethren) to bear one with another in matters of greater consequence then any have or can be objected truly against the form of prayer in use among us? And why such corruptions should not be ascribed to human frailty; we see not: For if a godly Minister make use of a book in things which he judgeth lawful for matter and manner, the corruption in him that useth it according to his judgment, from what cause can it spring but human ignorance and frailty? We rest assured you question not the integrity of many, who make much more use of the book then only in a few select prayers. From the bottom of our hearts we desire and pray that God would remove out of his Church and worship whatsoever offendeth for matter or manner, and that all things may be so done, not only that they may be tolerated but that they might be approved in the conscience of all men. But we are persuaded that not only

some few select prayers but many prayers & other exhortations may lawfully be used, with fruit and edification to God's people.

To aggravate faults especially when it tends to draw away people from the Ordinances of God, is no less fault then to excuse them, it may be greater, and therefore we dare not esteem the prayers read by a godly and faithful Minister according to the book in use among us, a corrupt sacrifice whether in such as read them, or them that be present. In them that join according to Christ's command (and liberty of absence from Christ hath not been shown) notwithstanding the corruptions, we hold the prayers to be an holy and acceptable sacrifice to God, and pleasing to Jesus Christ. The corrupt sacrifice is that, which the deceiver bringeth voluntarily, and out of neglect, having a male in his flock: but the faithful bringeth himself and his godly desires according to the will of God, and as for corruptions, whether respecting matter or form, they are none of his, they cleave not to his Sacrifice to stain or pollute it. As for the Text of the Prophet *Mal.* 1. 13, 14. it is cited by many in this business, and to many purposes applied, but we cannot find that in the Prophet for which it is here brought, *The deceiver is accursed that offereth a corrupt thing to the Lord.* This we read and believe, but that a godly man, being present at this form of prayer among us, read by a godly and faithful Minister, is the deceiver, who offereth a corrupt thing unto the Lord, that is not proved. No argument can be brought from this place to the purpose, but by analogy, which is a kind of arguing of all other most ready at hand, but liable to most exceptions, and apt to draw aside, if great care be not had, (which in this place we find not) to take the proportion in every material point just and right. And we desire such as allege this passage of Scripture against simple presence at the prayers of our Liturgy, advisedly to consider whether God allow them to make such application of his truth which we much doubt of, to say no more.

Your third proposition. That as you are very tender of imputing sin to those men that join in some select prayers read by an able and godly Minister: so on the other side you are not without fear, least such joining may be found unlawful, unless it may appear that the Ministers with whom the people have communion in reading those Prayers, neither give any scandal by reading them, nor give unlawful honor to a thing abused to Idolatry and Superstition, nor do suffer themselves to be sinfully limited in the reading of them.

1 We cannot conceive how you should imagine the practice of a godly Minister in reading some few select prayers to be scandalous or offensive in their congregations when the people generally, not in their assemblies only, but throughout the whole land, were persuaded of the lawfulness of that course till now of late some have been drawn away to separate, who yet by warrant of Scripture produce nothing of weight to countenance that practice.

2 If the book should be as you take it an idolatrite, latent offense doth not oblige. If any man say unto thee, this is sacrificed to Idols, eat it not, so that if it do not manifestly appear that this practice is scandalous; it is not lawful for the people to withdraw themselves.

3 The book (we speak of the Liturgy so far as it is sound and good) by your confession is no Idolathite, neither was it taken out of the Mass-book in such sense as you object, but rather the mass & other Idolatrous prayers were added to it, for popery is as a scab or leprosy cleaving to the Church, and many truths belonging to the Church as her proper legacy were stolen and heaped together in that den. And why the true man may not challenge his goods where ever he finds thē, or the thief plead title to the true man's goods by prescription, we know not? It is no hard task to show that our Service-book was reformed in most things according to the purest Liturgies which were in use in the Church long before the mass was heard of in the world. And if that could not be shown, yet forms of speech generally taken (we speak not of this or that special word or phrase) is no more defiled by Idolatry then the light air, or place where Idolatry is committed. It is not unlawful to pray, Lord help, or Lord have mercy, or to give thanks, praised be God, because the Papists say, *Lady help*, or, *praised be God and the Virgin Mary*.

Fourthly, Put case the Minister in reading such prayers gives offense, or attributes unlawful honor to a thing abused to Idolatry and Superstition, or suffer himself to be sinfully limited in the reading of them, what is that to the faithful? This can be no just ground of the people's not joining with them in the worship of God, for that offense is personal only, and not the sin of them that be present, they join in prayer only, and not in his reading or limiting himself. Not to say that every particular person must be herein both accuser and Judge. If he give offense must they stumble at the stone, and separate from the ordinance of grace? we should rather think it is their duty to look unto their feet, that they go not awry. Let it be shown out of the Word of God, that either the Minister is guilty of giving unlawful honor, or that the people may lawfully withdraw themselves in case he should do so, and we will then say as you do, but until that be proved, (being pressed and called to proffer our judgments) we believe that separation is scandalous and sinful, never taught of God, nor confirmed by the approved example of the godly in any age or time of the Church: yea, against the positive Law of God, injurious to the Churches distracting Christians, bringing contempt upon the Ordinances of God, and defrauding believers of the spiritual food of their souls, which is indeed to infringe their Christian liberty, and what ever may be thought of it now, in former times it hath been accounted no small offense.

Fifthly, if this and such like scruples make it unlawful to join in the ordinance of worship, we must hold communion with no society under heaven. For may not the brethren which hold all stinted Liturgies, and set forms unlawful say with like strength of reason, It is unlawful to join in conceived prayer with others, if either they give too little honor to it, as deeming the other lawful, or sinfully limiting, or suffering themselves to be limited to one stinted form, though conceived at first by them selves? And may not the brethren who hold a stinted form lawful in like manner object? It is unlawful to join in prayer with them because they attribute too much honor to conceived prayer, as making their device and method the worship of God? And may not the Brethren which hold it lawful to use some selected prayers according to the forms among us, upon the same grounds condemn communion with both sorts? and all of them one with another, because they either limit themselves too much, or too little? You say in the exposition of the first position, many

Preachers constantly use a set form of prayer of their own making before their Sermons, must you not say upon this ground, that it is unlawful to join with them, because they sinfully stint themselves? In probability a Christian may presume, that in the public worship of God, there will be through human ignorance & infirmity somewhat amiss for matter, or manner, or both, & that upon this ground, he must join with no society in any part of God's worship at all.

The advancing of every small difference to this height, is that which will bring all to confusion, if men walk uniform to their own principles. It is well observed by Master *I. Da.* that unless men will yield so much favor each to other in some difference of opinions, a dissolving not only of Churches, but of human societies also must necessarily follow, & not only not two Ministers, but not two men should live together, which were to put off even humanity it self.

Sixthly, we have credibly heard that you hold fellowship with professed, rigid Separatists without any acknowledgment of their error, and receive them as members, or communicate with them in the privileges of the Church, though you profess you approve not their opinion or practice. And if in godly wisdom, you can see grounds to join with them, we marvel you should be so timorous in this particular.

Seventhly, if you judge the practice of such godly Ministers, scandalous to them that separate from the ordinance, because it is not administered in this, or that but in a stinted form. It is a scandal taken, and not given; and by forbearing, if to confirm men in error, be to scandalize them, they should offend them the more: yea, they should prejudice the truth, and it might be an occasion to beget needless scruples in others, and draw them ignorantly from the fellowship of the Saints in the holy ordinances of God, and strengthen them who by your own confession, are run too far into Schism already.

III POSITION. That the children of godly and approved Christians, are not to be baptized until their parents be set members of some particular Congregation

IV POSITION. That the Parents themselves, though of approved piety, are not to be received to the Lord's Supper, until they be admitted as set Members.

Answ.

These two Positions may be maintained with one and the same defense, being somewhat coincident, and therefore we join them as if they were but one. Therefore to prevent all mistakes, it may please you to take notice that we are not of their judgment who refuse all religious communion with such as are not Church Members, nor do we appropriate communion in this privilege of the seals only to the Members of our own Churches, excluding all other Churches of Christ from the same, though they may be through error or human frailty defective in some matters of order, provided that the liberty of our Churches be preserved, of receiving such satisfaction as is meet (as well by Letters of recommendation, or otherwise if it be requisite) concerning those whom we admit unto fellowship in the seals. For as we account it our duty to keep the unity of spirit inviolate with

any, in whom we discern any fruits of the spirit, so we hold ourselves bound to discharge this duty, according to order. Spiritual communion in prayers, holy conferences & other religious actions of like nature we maintain with all godly persons, though they be not in Church order: But Church communion we hold only with Church members admitting to fellowship of the seals the known and approved, & orderly recommended members of any true Church. But into fellowship of the censures, admittance of members and choice of Officers, only the members of that particular Church whereof they and we (any of us) stand members. These things being premised, the considerations whereupon our judgment and practice is swayed for administration of the Seals only to such as are in order of a true visible Church are these that follow.

Reply.

WHAT is here premised to prevent all mistakes, doth seem more to raise then to abate scruples if we mistake not your meaning. You refuse not all religious communion with all that are not Church members, and so much they profess, who formerly have gone for, and professed themselves Separatists from our Assemblies. You do not appropriate this privilege of the Seals only to the members of your own Churches, excluding all other Churches of Christ from the same; If your meaning be only this, that you deny not the Sacraments administered in other Churches to be the true Sacraments of Christ for substance, then you ascribe little more to the Churches of Christ in this, then to the Synagogue of Satan, the Church of *Rome*. For you will not deny Baptism administered among them to be true for substance: If you deny not to have fellowship with them in the Seals, and to admit them to the Sacrament, and to communicate with them: then either your judgment is contrary to your practice, or you exclude the Churches of *England* from the number of true visible Churches of Christ, which is to destroy what you formerly built, and here profess. All possible care to keep the Ordinances of God from contempt, we allow and commend, provided you go not beyond the Lord's warrant, and deny not the privileges of the Church to them, to whom they are due by divine appointment, nor the name and title of Church to those societies, which God hath plentifully blessed with means of grace, have received the Tables and Seals, and have entered into Covenant with his Highness. Your liberty to receive such satisfaction as is meet, is not called into question, nor whether you are to keep the bond of the Spirit inviolate according to order. But whether this be to keep the bond of the Spirit inviolate (*viz*) to exclude from the Sacrament true visible believers or known recommended Christians, formerly members of visible Churches among us; and their children; because they are not members (as you speak) in Church Order. And whether God alloweth to put this difference between Church members of your societies & other visible believers walking in holiness, though not admitted members of any society according to your Church order, as to receive the one, though members of another society, unto the Seals, and to debar the other and their children. These are the things to be considered in these present positions. And first we will examine your Reasons for your judgment and practice by themselves, and then so far as we judge meet, try your answers to the objections you make against it.

1 Consideration.

THE Seals Baptism & the Lord's Supper are given to the Church, as a privilege peculiar thereto in ordinary dispensation. Indeed the preaching of the word is not so, being an ordinance given not only for the edifying of the Church already gathered but also for the gathering of men to the Churches that yet are without: whereas the dispensing of the Seals is God's Ordinance, given only for the edifying of the Church being gathered, and not for the gathering of it: And because there is now, no universal visible Church on earth wherein the Seals are dispensed, there being no place, nor time, nor Officers, nor Ordinances appointed in the New Testament by Christ our Lord, for any such Assemblies as the Jews had under Moses.

It remains that the Christian Churches, whereunto these privileges were given, are congregational, consisting only of so many as may and do meet together ordinarily in one place for the public worshipping of God, and their own edifying.

Hence it is that we read so much in the New Testament of the Churches in the plural number, the Churches of Christ, the Churches of God, the Churches of the Saints: and not only when they were of divers Nations, the Churches of the *Gentiles*, but also of the same Nation, The Churches of *Judea*, and not only when that Country was of large extent and circuit, the Churches of *Asia*, but also of a small part of the Country, The Churches of *Galatia*: yea, when congregations in several Cities are spoken of, They are called Churches, as the Churches of *Jerusalem*, the Churches at *Antioch*. To wind up all, seeing the Churches in the Gospel are congregational, and that Baptism and the Lord's Supper (being Church privileges) belong only to the Churches, it will follow, that as City privileges belong only to Citizens and their children: so baptism and the Lord's Supper being Church privileges, belong only to the members of particular Churches, and their seed. And that seeing *sigillum sequitur donum*, to apply them to others what is it but to abuse them? As a seal of a corporation is abused if added to confirm the grant of privileges which are peculiar to any Town corporate to one that being no free-man of that corporation is uncapable thereof.

Reply.

IF by the Church be understood the Society of men, professing the entire faith of Christ, the seals are given unto it as a peculiar privilege; but if by the Church you understand only a congregational assembly in Church order, the seals were never appropriated to it. But to examine everything in order as it is propounded.

1 The Seals, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, are given to the Church as privileges peculiar thereunto, not only in ordinary (as you say) but also in extraordinary dispensation. True baptism is not without the Church, but within it; an ordinance given to it, and they that are baptized, must needs be of a Church. The Sacraments are the seals of the Covenant to the faithful, which is the form of the Church, and when for substance rightly used, tokens and pledges of our spiritual admittance and entertainment into the Lord's family, and Symbols or testimonies whereby the people of God are distinguished from all other Nations. This is most certain, as in the ordinary; so in the extraordinary dispensation of the Seals, as is

confirmed by the Texts of Scripture alleged in the Margine. For the Apostles (as you say) dispensed the seals in an extraordinary way, but the seals dispensed by the Apostles were Seals of the covenant, privileges peculiar to the Church, privileges of spiritual admittance and entertainment into the Lord's family.

And when you say the dispensing of the Seals is an Ordinance given only for the edifying of the Church being gathered, and not for the gathering of it, must it not be understood in extraordinary, dispensation as well as ordinary: To what pupose then are those words (in ordinary dispensation) added to the proposition? if thereby you would intimate that the Sacraments be not the peculiar privileges of the Church, and Seals of the Covenant in extraordinary dispensation, it is evidently cross to the Text you cite, and to yourselves afterward. If your meaning be, that in ordinary dispensation the Sacraments do of right belong to them only, who be set members of a visible congregation, it is all one with the conclusion, that which is in question and should be proved, and that which this very Scripture doth plentifully disprove'; for they that were baptized were not set members of a particular congregational Church whereunto they were baptized, nor in a Church way before baptism (as is evident and granted by the most of yourselves) but by baptism solemnly admitted into the Church, and then it is not for your purpose; or they were set members (as some of the brethren seem to contend in answer to the objection framed against this consideration) and then the words are more then superfluous. Added, they were to prevent the objection which you foresaw might be made from the Apostles practice and example but so as they cut asunder the sinews of the consideration it self, and make it of no force. For as those believers were of the Church: so are approved Christians and their seed among us: therefore the privileges of the seals belong unto them.

2 And as the seals: so is the word of salvation preached and received a privilege of the Church. If by the preaching of the word you understand nothing but the tender of salvation or the publishing of the will of God, concerning the salvation of man, whether by private or public persons; it is not proper to the Church but an ordinance given for the gathering of men to the Church, and not only for the edifying of the Church. For the Apostles first preached to the Gentiles when Infidels, that they might be converted; And we doubt not but a Minister or private Christian coming into a country of Infidels, may as occasion is offered, and as they shall be enabled, instruct and persuade them to receive the faith of Christ: but if by the preaching of the word be meant the giving of the word to a people, to abide and continue with them, and consequently their receiving of it at least in profession then it is proper to the Church of God.

The word makes disciples to Christ, and the word given to a people is God's covenanting with them, and the people's receiving this word and professing their faith in God through Jesus Christ is the taking of God to be their God. The laws and statutes which God gave to Israel, was the honor and ornament to that Nation, and a testimony that God had separated them from all other people, even the Gentiles themselves being Judges. The word of reconciliation is sent and given to the world reconciled in Jesus Christ, and they that receive the doctrine, law, or word of God are the Disciples, servants and people of God.

In your second consideration you intimate that there is a twofold preaching, the one by office and authority, the other in Common charity, or how ever else it may be called. For thus you write. God hath joined to preach (*viz* by office) and to baptize together, therefore we may not separate them. Now to preach unto, that is to instruct or counsel in charity is a duty which may be performed to an infidel, but to preach by office is proper to them that are called to that office: and so to be taught and instructed by Officers in the Church is proper to the Church.

To have pastors who shall feed with knowledge and understanding is a gift of matrimonial love which God vouchsafeth unto his Church. The Apostles first gathered Churches and then ordained elders in every City or Church; so that it is proper to the Church to be fed and guided by true spiritual pastors who teach and bless in the name of the Lord. And if the word preached and received be a certain note of the true Church, they that have intyrelly received the word of salvation and have Pastors godly and faithful to feed and guide them, they and their seed have right and interest unto the seals in order.

Moreover the true worship of God is an inseparable and infallible mark of the true Church of God, for where Christ is, there is his Church. This is the prerogative of the church. The Prince shall be in the midst of them, and he shall go in when they go in, &c. And Christ saith, where 2. or 3. are met together in my name there am I in the midst among them. And for certain they are gathered in the name of Christ that being lawfully called do assemble to worship God and call upon his name in the mediation of Jesus Christ. In times past, the Church was acknowledged by the fear of God, and entyre Service of his Majesty, by the professing of the true faith and faithful calling upon God's name. The signs of Apostolic Churches are these. The continuance in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and breaking of bread and prayer. And if faith, true and lively (though mixed with many doubtings and errors) make a man a living member of Jesus Christ, the entyre profession of true faith joined with holiness of life in some measure answerable thereunto, makes a man a true member of the visible Church. And if the feales belong to the Church in right and orderly dispensation, they that join together in the true worship of God, according to his will, with godly and faithful pastors, they have right and title to the Sacraments according to divine institution.

Thirdly, that there is now no visible Catholic Church in your sense will easily be granted. *i. e.* there is no universal society consisting of all such as are accounted or to be esteemed Christians, subjected to one or many universal Pastors or guides, wherewithall subordinates must communicate in some sacred things which may make them one Church and which may and can be performed by that universal and head Church only. Such an universal Christian Church Christ never ordained, no not in the days of the Apostles, to whom all the care of all the Churches, was committed. The Churches planted by the Apostles had all the same substantial laws and customs, the same guides and officers for kind, the same ordinances of worship and means of Salvation: But one flock or Society in the fore mentioned acceptation they were not, because they were but subordinate to one visible head, Christ, with which they were to hold union and communion in some worship to be performed by them all

jointly assembled at some special solemnity, nor subjected to the government of any supreme tribunal constantly to be erected and continued among them.

Nevertheless, in some respects of reason, the visible Church, may be called the Church, sheepfold or flock of Christ; for if the whole society or body mystical of Christ be one, this Church militant in like sort is one: the unity of which society consists in that uniformity, which all several persons thereunto belonging, have by reason of that one Lord whose servants they all are, and profess themselves, that one Spirit whereby they are animated as the body by one soul; whereby they believe in Christ, and which they acknowledge and profess, that one Baptism inward and outward, whereby they put on Christ, and are initiated.

This society is one in the inward fruition and enjoying of the benefits of Christ's Death and Resurrection, and in outward profession of those things which supernaturally appertain to the very essence of the Church, and are necessarily required in every Christian, this acceptance of the word is not unusual in Scripture. As God hath set some in the Church. His bodies sake which is the Church. The Church *viz.* whereof *Paul* was made a Minister, and whereunto the rest of the Apostles were ordained, which was the Catholic visible Church, the society of men professing the faith of Christ throughout the world, divided into many particular Churches whereof some are pure, others impure, some more, others less sound. Hereunto it may be added, that every multitude and society of believers are indefinitely called the Church, I persecuted the Church of God. The house of God which is the Church of the living God. In which sense all the Churches in the world may truly be called one. And thus the Apostle *Peter* writing to many dispersed Churches, who could not assemble in one place nor be fed by one Shepherd, speaketh of them singularly as one flock. Feed the flock of God which is among you. But that flock are the strangers dispersed through *Pontus, Galatia, Asia, Cappadocia, and Bythinia*, which could not possibly join together in the Ordinances of Worship, or make one distinct congregated assembly. And if the Catholic Militant Church be one Society, the Seals that are given as a prerogative to the Church are given unto it, and the true Members of the Catholic Church have right and title to them in due order, though they be not admitted into the Church fellowship you speak of.

For as the flock or society is one: so is the Ministry, Faith, Covenant, and Sacraments, which are given as a communion prerogative unto the whole Church, and not appropriated to this or that part or member, as separated from the whole; which is further evidenced hereby, that sometime it hath, and too often it may fall out, that a Christian may be a true member of the universal visible Church (*i. e.* he may hold, profess, and maintain that holy Catholic Faith, pure, and undefiled, without which no man can be saved) who for the present is no actual member of any particular or visible society in Church order. As for example, a man may be cut off by Excommunication, from all commerce with the present visible Church wherein he was bred and born, when he is not cut off from the Catholic, Orthodoxall Church. He may be deprived of participation of the Ordinance in every particular society, when his right and title to them is much better then these who have most injuriously cast him out, or debarred him of the means of salvation.

The communion of Saints, whether visible or invisible is the effect and property of the Church Catholic, and agreeth to the several parts and members thereof, as they be members of that body under the head, and if particular Churches have communion together it must of necessity be, that they be parts and members of the whole body which is one.

4. Though there be no universal congregation or assembly nor can be imagined, yet there are and have been many visible assemblies or societies, true Churches of Christ, to whom the Prerogative of the Seals is given, which have not been united and knit together, in Church-order into one congregational body or society, For every society in covenant with God is the true Church of God: for what is it to be the flock, people or sheep of God, but to be the Church of God? And where there is a Covenant, there is the people of God. They that are of the faith of *Abraham*, are the children and seed of *Abraham*, and within the Covenant of *Abraham* (though but two or three) and so of the same Church with him by that covenant. The communication and accepting of the tables of the covenant is an undoubted token of a people in covenant or confederate, but every society professing the true and entire faith, joining in prayer and thanksgiving, receiving the truth of God to dwell among them, and in some measure conforming themselves to the obedience of God's Commandments, is in covenant with God. It is simply necessary to the being of a Church that it be laid upon Christ the foundation, which being done, the remaining of what is forbidden, or the want of what is commanded, cannot put the society from the title or right of a Church. For Christ is the foundation and head corner stone of the Church, and a people coming unto Christ, united unto him, built upon him, having communion with him and growing up in him, are the true Church of God: and if the seals be annexed to the covenant by God himself, as we cannot deny a people in covenant to be the Church, so we must not deny their right and title to the Sacraments. If therefore the meaning of the proposition be, that the seals be given to the Church, that is, to true and sound Christians, and people in covenant with God, as a privilege whether in ordinary or extraordinary dispensation we accept it as good and sound, but it makes against your judgment and practice in keeping away such as have right and title to the ordinances. If you mean the seals are given to the Church, that is, only to set members of some particular society combined by covenant (as it is among you) we cannot receive it, because it implieth a distinction not taught in Scripture, and cross to yourselves. And for the thing it self the Scripture hath nothing but many things against it as hath been shown.

5 If it be granted that the seals are the prerogative of a particular visible Church, known and approved Christians among us, and their seed are members of true and visible Churches, and so to be esteemed among you before they be entered into Church membership as you call it. For every society professing the entire and true faith, and joining together in the right use of the Sacraments in matters substantial is the true Church of God, and every visible believer receiving the word and professing the true entire faith, admitted to the right and lawful participation of the Sacraments is a visible member of the true Church, if he have neither renounced that society, nor deserved justly to be cast out by excommunication or Church censure. For the entire profession of the truth, the dwelling of the truth among men, the right use of the Sacraments (which is ever joined with truth of Doctrine, and to be esteemed by it) is proper to them that be in covenant with God, And they that truly partake of the

Seals must needs be of a Church, for the seals are not without but within the Church an ordinance given unto it, and if they be true members of the true Churches of Jesus Christ, other Churches, are bound to hold communion with them in the ordinance of worship as divine providence shall minister occasion.

In answer to the ninth position you say the members of other Churches, well known and approved by virtue of communion with Churches, do mutually and with good acceptance communicate each of them at others Churches, even so often as God's providence leads them thereunto, and themselves desire it. In your preface to this consideration, you say you admit to fellowship of the seals, the known, approved, and orderly recommended members of any true Church, and if known and approved Christians, members of our Churches coming over into *New England*, shall desire either to have their children baptized, or to be admitted themselves to the Lord's Supper before they be set members of any society these, we desire to know upon what grounds from God you can deny them, if you acknowledge our Churches, Ministry, and Sacraments, to be true and of God (as you profess) and the members of the Church be known and approved, orderly recommended unto you.

It is the privilege of Christians baptized themselves, and walking in the faith, that their children should have right to baptism in all true Churches in the world. It is the privilege of Christians lawfully and justly admitted to the Lord's Supper in one visible Church, and walking in covenant with God, that they have right to this privilege in all Churches professing their entire faith, and you must show just and sound reasons from God of your judgment and practice in debarring their seed from baptism, and parents themselves from the Supper, or else (to use the words of a reverend Elder among you, in a case of less importance, and not concerning so many) you will be found guilty of adding to the words, and making eleven Commandments, and setting up human customs, and selfwill against God's appointment. For the Sacraments are given to the Church as a privilege peculiar thereunto, but you deny this privilege to the true visible members of the Church, (as yourselves confess.) For if the Ministers be the Ministers of Christ, and their congregations the Churches of Christ, then known and approved Christians are members of the Church. In your opinion the members of the Jewish Church might be received unto baptism, upon confession of the Christian faith, before they were entered into Church fellowship, and it is more then strange to us that you should not think the true visible members of the Churches of Christ to have as much title and interest to the Seals, as the members of the Jewish Church to the Sacrament of Baptism.

6 The distinct Churches mentioned in the New Testament, it is not certain that they were congregational societies consisting only of so many as might and did meet together ordinarily in one place at one time for the public worship of God, and their own edification, and if this were granted it would not carry the weight that was laid upon it, But because it may make way for the clearing of some other points pertaining to discipline and Church orders, we entreat leave to set down, and desire you to examine what may be objected against it. We will not insist upon this that the least circuit wherein there is mention of Churches is ample enough to contain some diocesses and the least City, populous enough to

make many numbersome congregations. Nor upon this, that to meet at one time and one place, as one assembly is a thing merely accidental to the unity of the Church and society Ecclesiastical which is still one, when they are dispersed asunder, and no particular man of that society at first remaining now alive. The number of believers was so great in some Cities as they could not conveniently meet in one place as one assembly to worship the Lord according to his will and for their edifying. That there was a Church gathered in the City of *Samaria* by the ministry of *Phillip* will not be denied, for they received the word and were baptized, but that the Church in that City was only a congregational assembly is more then can probably be concluded out of Scripture. For the whole City or the greatest part could not ordinarily assemble in one place to their edification: But the whole City of *Samaria*, in a manner, (as it is probable) embraced the faith. As the whole City from the least to the greatest had given heed to *Simon Magus* before, so to *Phillip* now when he preached Christ, And the Text saith expressly that *Samaria* received the Gospel.

The Christian Church at *Jerusalem* was one and distinct, but it grew and increased first to 3000. then to 5000. afterwards multitudes of men and women were added, and the multitude of Disciples increased; it is also noted that a company of the Priests received the faith. The Syriac hath it of the Jews, (*scil.*) inhabiting Judea, but the *Greek, Arabian, vulgar, Chrisostoms & Ethiopians* approve the former, and the number of the Priests was not small: there is mention also of millions of believers. And when all the Apostles, or the greatest part of them remained at *Jerusalem* for a time continuing in the ministry of the word and prayer, and that they might do it the more earnestly and diligently, left the care of the poor to others: how can we think but that Church did grow exceedingly, and the number of believers there to be more then could fitly meet ordinarily in one congregation. Without question the number of believers in *Antioch* was not small, of which it is said expressly, that a great number believed, turned to the Lord and that a great multitude was added to the Lord by the preaching of *Barnabas*, and that *Paul* and *Barnabas* continued there one whole year preaching the word of God, and teaching the multitude, so that the Disciples were first called Christians at *Antioch*. After that this Church was visited by *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who continued there teaching and preaching the Word of God with many others also, and may we not think that this Church did quickly rise to such bigness that they could not well assemble in one congregation as now we call them?

It will easily be credited that the number of believers was not small at *Ephesus*, if we call to mind that when *Paul* had been there but two years, all they that dwelt in *Asia* had heard the word of the Lord both *Jews* and *Grecians*, that a great door and effectual was opened to him at *Ephesus*, That the art for making Shrines, and *Dianaes* Temple was in danger to be set at naught, and that those that had used curious arts, came and burnt their books in the sight of all men, which could not be done without great danger unto the Church, unless a great part of the City had believed. Where a Church did comprehend a City with its Suburbs and the Country circumjacent, *i. e.* the believers who professed the faith within that circuit. It might well be that the number did so increase through the extraordinary blessing of God, which accompanied the preaching of the word in those primitive times, and first planting of the heavenly Kingdom, that they could not well meet ordinarily in one place, and yet continued

one Society. For when a number is gathered in small Villages, or some added to the number already gathered, it is not meet they should be neglected because small, nor divided from the body, because the number not competent to make an entire and perfect body of it self. The increase of the Churches doth require an increase of Elders, and (if they grow to bigness more then ordinary) an increase of places for their assembling, when the essence of the visible Church is not changed, nor one multiplied or divided into many. And it is more available for the good of the Church, and further removed from all ambition, if the Society shall assemble occasionally in divers places as parts and members of the body, then to constitute a distinct free Society consisting of a few Believers, not fit to make up an entire body contrary to the precedent examples of the Apostles. In times of grievous and hot persecution the Churches of God could not assemble in any great number in public places, but have been compelled to meet in Woods, Caves, Dens, and dark corners, as the Lord hath offered opportunity, one and the same Society in sundry places: So that either it is not essential to the Church to meet together in one place ordinarily, or their Society is broken off by persecution, when their meeting together in one place is interrupted. It is said by some where the Church grew greater, sometimes by the sudden and extraordinary conversion of more then could well so assemble, then was there presently a dispersion of the former, and a multiplication of more particular Assemblies. But in the Scriptures quoted no such thing doth appear, but rather the contrary as hath been proved. In aftertimes when the Church was within the Cities as of *Rome, Ephesus, Alexandria, Carthage, Jerusalem, &c.* the number of Believers did greatly exceed the bigness of a convenient and fitting assembly which might ordinarily congregate in one place to worship God according to his appointment when the Church was but one.

Seventhly Seeing then both the Seals in ordinary and in extraordinary dispensation belong to the Church, *id est*, to the faithful, and repentant, taught made Disciples, who have received the word, believe, and profess the faith, have received the holy Ghost, and walk in obedience, who are members of other visible Churches, or to be made members of a visible Church for the time being, by admittance unto the Sacraments, and not unto set members of congregational assemblies only. And seeing the godly and faithful Ministers among us are the true Ministers of Christ, and their godly congregations, true Churches, and known, and approved Christians, true members of visible Churches formerly baptized, and admitted to the Lord's Supper. This consideration is of no weight to justify your opinion and practice in debarring known and approved Christians, professing the faith, members of the true visible Churches amongst us from the Lord's Supper, or their seed from Baptism, because they be not yet received as set members of some particular cōgregation amongst you: And if such Believers are not to be received to the Seals, we desire you to consider if ever the Sacraments of the New Testament, were rightly dispensed in the Church of the New Testament from the first Plantation thereof unto this day.

The Seal doth follow the grant, and as the Seal is profaned, if it be put to a false grant or Charter, so are the faithful wronged if the Seal in a lawful way desired, be denied to them that have received the grant, *i. e.* have right unto Jesus Christ, and communion with him. But the faithful who have received the word with gladness, believe, and profess, be members

known and approved by other visible Churches, or such as desire to be admitted members of that visible Society for the time by communicating in the ordinance, are already partakers of the grant or charter, have right and interest in Christ, may lawfully desire the Seals, and may be admitted as members for the time being of that particular Society. Therefore to debar such, from the Lord's Supper, and their seed from Baptism, is against the Law of nature, and the positive Law of God, an injury to the faithful and their seed, a wrong to the Catholic visible Church, that particular society, and the Pastors themselves that so debar them. They sinned grievously who deferred Baptism to the end of their life, and the negligence of Pastors and Teachers who did not instruct the ignorant and reprove the superstitious, was great. And is not the severity in debarring such as crave and desire to be admitted to the Seals an injury to be reprehended?

Answ. 2 Consider the ordinary administration of the Seals is limited to the ministry and the ministry to a particular Church; therefore the seals also must necessarily be proper to the Church and to the members thereof.

1. That the administration of the seals is limited to their Ministry is evident from the first institution *Math.* 28. 19. where God hath joined (to preach) *viz.* by office, and (to baptize) together, therefore we may not separate them. For howsoever: any man may by the appointment of the Lord and Master of the family, signify his mind and deliver his message from him to the family, yet the dispensing of a fit portion of food to everyone of the household is a branch of the stewards office. Indeed the keys are given to the whole Church yet the exercise and dispensation of them in this as well as in other particulars is concredited to the Ministers who are called to be 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. And no Church office can be orderly performed by any, but one that is called thereunto nor will God vouchsafe his presence, and blessing (whereupon all spiritual efficacy depends) in an ordinance dispensed, but when it is dispensed by those whom he hath ordained and appointed thereunto.

2. That the ministry is limited to the Church appears as from evident texts of Scripture: so also upon this ground. 1 The office is founded in the relation between the Church and the officer, wherefor take away the relation, and the office and the work ceaseth.

For where he hath not power, he may not do an act of power, and he hath no power where he hath not a relation by office. Herein the proportion holdeth between an officer of a town corporate, and of a Church that as the power of the former is only within his own corporation: so the power of the latter is confined to his own congregation.

Reply.

The proposition is granted that the dispensation of the Sacraments in the New Testament both ordinary and extraordinary is limited to the Ministry. But in that you allege for confirmation, some things may be noted.

1 The first institution of Baptism is not contained in that passage *Math.* 28. 19. but confirmed; For the seals of the New Testament were instituted by Christ before his death,

and his disciples had baptized many which they could not do before the institution of the Sacrament. Secondly we see not how you can apply that text to Preaching by office, which according to our exposition must be a dispensing of a fit portion of food to everyone of the household. For it is plain the Apostles were sent forth to preach to every Creature or unto the world, to convert men unto God, to make them disciples and not to preach unto disciples only, or members of the household. The Apostles certainly had authority, and preached by authority, but they preached not to Infidels and Heathens, as to disciples or members of the Church, much less did they give a portion to them as to the household which is the preaching by office, which you acknowledge. Thirdly if under the power of the keys you comprehend preaching by office, dispensing the seals, casting out, and receiving again into the bosom of the Church we deny the power of the keys to belong to the Church or community of the faithful: we cannot find in Scripture that Christ ever granted such power to the faithful, as faithful joined together in Covenant in those passages which speak of this power, the execution of this authority is given to them to whom the authority is committed.

If the power of the keys be given to the whole Church the Apostles themselves must derive their authority immediately from the Church, and not from Christ, for the power must be derived from them, unto whom it was given; but their power, and authority was not from the Church, but from Christ immediately. And if the dispensation, and exercise of the keys, be concredited to the Ministers; Doth it hold in all things or only in the dispensation of the Sacraments, and preaching by office? Do they dispense the seals as the Stewards of Christ, from whom they receive their authority immediately or as the servants of the Church, from which they derive their authority? If in the first sense; the power of the keys is not in the community of the faithful. If in the second, the office of a Minister is not the immediate gift of Christ, nor the Minister, so much the servant of Christ, as of the Church, from whom he must receive laws, in whose name he must do his office, and to whom he must give an account. We could wish you had explained in what sense, you hold the dispensation, and execution of the power of the keys is concredited to the Ministers, and by whom. For if the community of the faithful have to do in all matters concerning the body, to admit members, and cast them out, to make and depose Ministers, to bind and loose by authority derived from Christ, we cannot see how in your judgment the dispensation, and execution of the power of the keys is concredited to the Ministers.

Fourthly That which you add, that God will not vouchsafe his presence and blessing to an ordinance but when it is dispensed by those, whom he hath ordained and appointed thereunto, must be warily understood, or it may occasion errors and distractions not a few, You know what corruptions soon entered into the Church of God, both in respect of Doctrine, Worship, Offices, and entrance thereunto, and how ready and apt is the conclusion from your words, That Christ hath not vouchsafed his presence, and blessing in his Ordinances to his Church? But of this before.

And on the contrary, seeing God hath vouchsafed his blessing in his Ordinances dispensed by yourselves, when you stood as visible Ministers in the congregation, and Churches of old

England, you must confess, did approve both your standings and his Ordinances dispensed by you.

Secondly, as for the Assumption, that Pastors and Teachers are limited to a particular charge or society; but that flock is not ever one congregational assembly meeting in one place, neither the band so straight, whereby they are tied to that one society, that they may not upon occasion perform some Ministerial Act or Office in another congregation, or to them that be not set members of their proper assembly. For first to dispence the Seals of the covenant is a ministerial act, an act of Office, and not an exercise of gifts only: But the Pastors of one Assembly may dispence the Sacrament to the set members of another society upon occasion, as you confess in this and in your answer to the ninth position.

And if the members of one Church may lawfully upon occasion receive the Sacrament of the Supper in another society from the Pastor thereof, then may the Pastor of one congregation perform a Ministerial act to the members of another, and if to the members of another then in another congregation with consent, and upon occasion.

Secondly, As the Ministers are exhorted to feed their fleek: so is every Christian and Minister to try and examine himself whether he be in the faith, but you will not allow this conclusion. I must examine myself. *Ergo* no man is debarred from the Sacrament for his unworthiness, or to be tried or examined by others, to be observed, admonished, and brought to repentance for notorious sin. No more can it be rightly gathered from the former passages of Scripture, that the Minister is not upon occasion to perform any Ministerial act to any other people or society, because ordinarily he is to attend his own flock.

Thirdly, As the Ministers have peculiar relation to their particular flocks, so the people unto their particular Ministers, unto whom they are ried in special manner, as to their Overseers, who must give account for theirsculs. And if this peculiar relation betwixt the people & the Minister doth not hinder the people from receiving the Lord's Supper at the hands of another Minister; nor the minister from performing the Ministerial act to the members of another congregation. Neither doth his peculiar Relation to his own flock hinder him, from administering unto others upon just occasion being entreated thereunto. As the combining of the people to their peculiar Minister, doth not quite cut off their communion with other Ministers: so neither doth the restraining of a Minister to a peculiar flock quite cut him off from administering upon occasion: unto another people. *Paul* appointeth the *Ephesian* Elders unto the care & charge only of their own particular flock, but so to attend them ordinarily according to the rules of the Scripture; that as occasion was offered, might perform some Ministerial acts in another congregation. The taking heed unto their flocks which *Paul* requires in this place doth comprehend under it the administration of the Word, Prayer, and Sacrament, and if it must be restrained to their own particular Churches only, it is unlawful for a Pastor to preach or call upon the name of God in any public Assembly save his own, upon any occasion, as these be duties prtaining to common confession or profession of faith. Ordinary Pastors and Teachers it is true, are not Apostles, who are to go from place to place, from Country to Country, to plant and erect Churches, but they are tied ordinarily to one flock, as the Text proveth, and to which purpose it is commonly cited. But that a Pastor is so

tyed to his flock, that he can perform no ministerial act to any other upon any occasion that it proveth not, nor can we find that it was ever so understood by Divines ancient or modern. *W. B.* telleth us, the learned bring these allegations to this purpose. But the author in alleging the consent of the learned was very careless or much abused, for there is not one that speaketh to the purpose. *I. D.* disclaimeth that position; and for the rest it is a matter notorious, they were never thought to be of that opinion; and we doubt not if any could be named to free this allegation from suspicion of Novelty, you would have cited one or more as you have done in that which followeth.

Feed the flock of God (saith *Peter.*) But he speaks of all those dispersed Churches to whom he writes, which he calls a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, a peculiar people: And in some respect of reason, under which we may apprehend them, are one flock, but not really as combined under the same Pastor, or meeting in one place. And as these dispersed believers, or societies make one Flock: so the Ministers attending their flocks or societies, and the Ministry exercised by them is, or maketh one.

4 A Minister chosen and set over one society, is to look unto his people committed to his charge, and *feed the flock over which the Lord hath made him overseer*, but he is a Minister in the Church Universal, for as the Church is one, so is the Ministry one, of which every Minister (sound or Orthodox) doth hold his part, and though he be Minister over that flock only which he is to attend, yet he is a Minister in the universal Church. The functiō or power of exercising that Function in the abstract, must be distinguished from the power of exercising it, concretely, according to the divers circumstances of places. The first belongeth to a Minister everywhere in the Church, the latter is proper to the place and people where hedoth minister. The lawful use of his power is limited to that congregation ordinarily. The power itself is not so limited and bounded. In Ordination, Presbyters are not restrained to one or other certain place, as if they were to be deemed Ministers there only, though they be set over a certain people. And as the faithful in respect of a community betwixt them, must and ought to perform the Offices of love one to another, though of different societies, so the Ministers in respect of their communion, must and ought upon occasion to perform ministerial Offices towards the faithful of distinct societies.

5 If this be not so, what shall become of the poor flock when the Pastor is driven away by personal persecution, so that he cannot, if others may not afford them help and succor: what when the congregation it self is dispersed, must no shepherd receive them into fold, when they are driven from their own, or neglected by him?

6 If the Pastor may be absent from his flock upon necessary, just, and weighty occasion, respecting his own good, the good of that society, or the common good of Churches consociate, then may the Pastor, the society, the Churches procure some man to supply the defect, and do the office of a Pastor, preach the Word, pray, and as occasion is offered, administer the Sacrament in that Congregation unto that Assembly until their Shepherd shall return. Shall the people be left as sheep without a shepherd; because for the good of the Churches their own shepherd is called from them for a time, that he might return with greater joy and comfort?

The Pastor is appointed to feed his own flock, and yet for the good of the whole Church he may be called to leave, if not the care, yet the over-sight of his flock fought a while; and by the same reason a pastor of another flock or congregation may perform the office, and do the acts of a Minister in his congregation during absence: Yea if for the good of the Churches he be called away, do not the Churches stand obliged in conscience to provide that the flock sustain no hurt by his absence which possibly ye cannot do if one Minister may not perform a Ministerial act in another Congregation.

7 If the Prophets of one Church may prophesy in another, and apply their doctrines, exhortations and prayers to any of the occasions of the Churches where they speak, whereof they are not set members, what hinders why the Pastor of one congregation, may not preach and pray, administer the Sacraments in another? The pastor of one congregation is appointed to his peculiar charge but he is a Minister in the universal Church, as well as the Prophets of one Church may be called Prophets of the universal Church by virtue of that Communion which all true Churches have one with another. Without consent the Prophet may not prophesy by exhortation, and with consent the Pastor may administer the Sacraments.

8 In the Primitive Churches when Elders were ordained in every City, they were not only to look to their flock but endeavor the conversion of poor Infidels among whom they lived, and the enlargement of Christ's Kingdom, for the work of the Lord must be done in its season, and then was the time of the calling of the Gentiles:

It was not their office proper and essential to travail from Country to Country as did the Apostles, nor were they pastors of the Infidels, but by private instruction and public teaching (if any of them would be penitent) they were to labor the coming of them to God. And these Infidels converted to the saith were to be baptized of the Elders ordinarily in those Cities, though the number might be so great as they could not well meet in one Congregation, nor be subject to the same Pastor; for either they must be baptized by the pastors among whom they lived, (being converted to the faith) or continue unbaptized until they were a number convenient to make a distinct society, or grow together into one body, and to elect and choose their own Minister by whom they may be baptized: But that either they must stay so long without baptism, or that a society of unbaptised men had power in those times to elect and choose their Minister, by whom they should be baptized is contrary to all presidents in Scripture.

9 And so if a Pastor may not perform a ministerial act to any other person or people but his own flock only, then a company newly converted from infidelity, which cannot join themselves as set members to another assembly, must remain unbaptised till they have chosen their Minister to do that office. Then must the people thus converted wait officers till there be among themselves able men to pray, preach, exhort in the congregation at the ordination of their Minister, or (if that may be omitted) till there be fit men among them to examine the fitness of him that is chosen.

10 If subtle Heretics arise, and seduce, and draw away many from the faith, and the body of the society be not able to convince them, either they must be let alone or cast out without conviction, for neighbouring Ministers stand in peculiar relation to their flocks only, and must not meddle beyond their calling according to your tenent.

11 There is no precept or example in Scripture more to warrant the admitting of a set member of one congregation unto the Supper in another, or the baptising of his child, occasionally in another assembly then there is for receiving of known and approved Christians and their seed that are not set members. The Pastor is no more the pastor of the one then of the other, nor the one more of his flock then the other, neither of them set members, and both sorts may be members for the time being, and they most properly who are of longest abode among them. But as we hear it is frequent among you (as at *Dorchester, &c.*) to baptize the children of another Assembly, and usually you admit to the Supper of the Lord, members of other Churches, and therefore the Minister is not so limited to his particular Church or flock but he may dispence the seals to others, which in this consideration is denied.

12 If the want of one Officer in a Congregation for a time may be supplied by another, as the want of the Doctor, Ruling Elder, or Deacon, by the Pastor; why may not the defects of some Congregation or Christians be supplied by Pastors or Ministers of another Congregation, when they are requested and desired? the mind herein is godly, and the means lawful, and well pleasing unto God.

13 And if a Synod consisting of sundry members of particular Churches, met together in the name of Christ about the common and public affairs of the Churches shall join together in prayer and communion of the Supper, we can see no ground to question it as unlawful, although that Assembly be no particular Congregation or Church, hath no Pastor over them, make not one Ecclesiastical body as a particular Congregational Church, unless it be for the time only. The Minister therefore may do an act of office to them that be not set members of his flock as he may stand in Relation to them for the time.

14 Your comparison betwixt an Officer of a Town Corporate, and of a particular Congregation is not alike, unless you will say that a member of another Corporation occasionally coming into the Town, is thereby a member of that Society, and subject to the authority of the Officer. For so you profess that the members of one Society may occasionally communicate with another, and so be subject to the Pastor for the time being, which if you grant, it overthrows the whole strength of this consideration. Howsoever the comparison it self is very perilous if it be pressed. For if the Officer of a Town Corporate, presume to do an act of power out of his own Corporation, it is a mere nullity, but if a Minister of the Gospel dispence the Sacrament of Baptism, or the Lord's Supper to believers of another Society (though done without consent) it was never deemed or judged a nullity in the Church of God. Let the comparison hold good, and most Christians have cause to question whether they be truly baptized, or ever lawfully received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. If it may not be doubted, whether ever the Sacraments of the New Testament were truly or by authority dispensed, especially if we consider what follows in the other

considerations. This Argument from comparison is very usual in the Writings of Brethren against communion with our Churches, but for the most part greatly mistaken, to say no more.

Answer 3 Consideration.

Circumcision and the Passover were to be administered only to the members of the Church. Ergo, Baptism and the Lord's Supper is so to be administered also. The consequence is made good by the parity of these Ordinances. For if the Argument hold strong for the proof of *Paedo-Baptism* which is taken from the circumcision of Infants, why may we not as well infer a necessity of Church membership to Baptism, from the necessity of it to circumcision. And that Circumcision was peculiar to the Church members of the Church, may appear in that persons circumcised, & only they, might eat the Passover, and they only might enter into the Temple, which were the privileges of Church members. In our answer to the second Objection against the first consideration we have shown that Circumcision was not administered to all that were under the Covenant of Grace (which all believers were) but only such of them as joined themselves to the Church, at first in *Abraham's* family, whereunto Baptism doth so far answer that the Apostle counteth these express equivalent to be circumcised in Christ with circumcision made without hands, and to be buried with Christ in Baptism. Indeed, in some things they differ as only the Males were circumcised, whereas with us Females are also baptized. The Reason is because God hath limited Circumcision to the Males, but under the Gospel that difference is taken away. Again, Circumcision was administered in the private family; but Baptism, only in the public Assemblies of the Church. The Reason of this difference is, because they were bound to circumcise the Males on the eighth day, but that could not stand with going to the Temple which was too far off, for the purpose, to bring every child thither from all parts of *Judea* to be Circumcised the eighth day. Nor had they always opportunity of a solemn convention in the Synagogue on every eighth day; when some child or other might be to be circumcised. But there is no precise day set down so Baptism, nor are opportunities of public Assemblies so remote where Churches are kept in a congregational frame, but that every first day of the week Baptism may be administered if it be required. Again, for the Aforesaid Reason, Circumcision required not a peculiar Minister (for ought we find in Scripture) but it is not $\langle \diamond \rangle$ in Baptism, as was showed in the second Consideration. But no good Reason can be given, why, in this they should not both agree, viz. that they are both to be dispensed only to members of the visible Church, as it hath been proved in the first Consideration.

Reply.

THis whole Reason as it is propounded makes only against it self; who ever thought that the Seals of the Covenant were not proper to confederates or the Church of God? But of old all visible Believers under the Covenant of Grace walking in holiness, were of the visible Church, and in Church Order according to the dispensation of those times, though not joined in external society with the Family of *Abraham*. And to exclude *Melchizedek* or *Job*, because they were not members of the visible Church, when yet they were visible Believers under the Covenant of Grace, and in Church Order as those times required, is well-nigh a

contradiction, And so it is to debar known and approved Christians members of our Congregation, and their seed from the Seals, because they be not of the visible Church, for they are members of the Church, and so to be held and esteemed all true Churches and members of the Church, The true & proper meaning of this Consideration, is that as Circumcision and the Passover were not to be dispensed to all visible Believers under the Covenant of Grace, but only to such as were joined to *Abraham's* Family, or to the people of the God of *Abraham*, no more may Baptism and the Lord's Supper be administered to any Believers now, unless they be joined to some particular Congregation in Church Membership, or unless by solemn Covenant, they be set members of some particular Assemblies.

The strength of this Consideration stands in the parity which is betwixt the Sacraments of the Old and New Testament, Circumcision and Baptism, for *parum par est ratio*, but this parity is not found in everything (as is manifest by the particulars alleged in the Consideration itself.) And we must justly require some reason to prove them like in that particular, but to unfold it more fully, we will consider three things. First, how far an argument may be drawn soundly from one Sacrament to another, or wherein the Sacraments agree, and wherein they differ. Secondly, What we are to think of the proposition itself. Thirdly, whether the Reason of Circumcision and Baptism be one in that particular.

First the Sacraments of the Old Testament and the new agree in their Common author, nature and end, and therefore what is spoken of one in respect of the common author, nature and end that doth hold true of everyone. If Circumcision be of divine institution a seal of the Righteousness of faith, and of the Covenant of grace, a Sacrament in general is an ordinance divine, a seal of the Covenant proper and peculiar to them that be confederates. But what is peculiar to one Sacrament that agreeth not to another. What is proper to the sacraments of the old Testament, in respect of the manner of dispensation that agreeth not to the new, as if the Sacraments of the Old Testament be with blood, obscure in signification, painful or use, peculiar to one Nation, and to be abolished, the Sacraments of the New Testament must be without blood, clear for signification, easy for use, universal to all Nations, and perpetual to continue in the Church forever.

Circumcision and Baptism are both Sacraments of divine institution, and so they agree in the substance of the things signified, the persons to whom they are to be administered, and the order of administration, if the right proportion be observed. As circumcision sealed the entrance into the covenant the righteousness of faith, and circumcision of the heart: so doth Baptism much more clearly: As *Abraham* and his household, and the infants of believing Jews were to be circumcised, so the faithful, their families, and their seed are to be baptized. None must eat the passover who was not circumcised, women excepted, who were circumcised in the males. Nor may a man unbaptized be admitted to the Lord's supper. Circumcision was but once applied by God's appointment and the same holds in baptism according to the will and good pleasure of God: But circumcision and baptism agree not in their special form, and manner of dispensation appointed of God. And in these things a reason cannot be drawn from the one to the other affirmatively. The males only were to be circumcised as only

capable of that sign: but males and females both ought to be baptized. The infants males were to be circumcised the eighth day because seven days they were legally unclean. But the seed of the faithful are not to be reputed unclean. *Ergo*, no set time is appointed for baptism. Circumcision as other Ceremonies did distinguish the Jews from the Gentiles; but Christ now of two hath made one. Circumcision signified Christ to come, Baptism is the seal of the New covenant made in Christ already come. And so in the degree of grace given, some difference may be put: The other differences alleged in the considerations with the reasons thereof are not so clear and undoubted: for Baptism is not tied to the first day of the week: and the Jews might gather an Assembly on the eighth day as occasion required, and it might be appropriated to the Priests and *Levites* though done in private: But in whatsoever they agree or differ we must looke to the institution and neither stretch it wider, nor draw it narrower then the Lord hath made it. For he is the Institutor of the Sacraments according to his own good pleasure. And it is our part to learn of him, both to whom, how, and for what end the Sacraments are to be administered, how they agree, and wherein they differ. In all which we must affirm nothing but what God hath taught us, and as he hath taught us.

Secondly, as for the Proposition it self; certain it is, Circumcision and the Passover were to be administered only to the visible members of the Church, *i. e.* to men in Covenant, professing the true faith; But that in *Abraham's* time none were visible members of the Church, which joined not themselves in Church orders to the family of *Abraham*, we have not learned. In the first Institution of Circumcision, we find that God gave it to *Abraham*, as the Seal of the Covenant formerly made with him: But of any Church covenant or order whereunto *Abraham's* family should enter before Circumcision we read not. *Melchizedek*, *Lot*, *Job*, &c. were not only visible Believers under the Covenant of grace, but visible members of the Church, according to the order and dispensation of those times. We read not (you say) that *Melchizedek*, *Lot* or *Job* were circumcised, but that is no good reason to infer negatively that they were not Circumcised. We read not that *John* the Baptist, or the Apostles, or the 500. brethren were Baptized, we must not forthwith conclude, that they were not initiated by that seal. Moreover, if they were not Circumcised, it may be the Institution of that Sacrament was not known unto them, or the Author of Circumcision (upon whose will and pleasure they must depend) did not command it unto them, or require that they should join themselves in Covenant with *Abraham's* family: and in that case if they had Circumcised themselves they had transgressed. But then the reason why they were not circumcised was not this, that they were not (as you speak) in Church order: but because Circumcision was appropriated to *Abraham's* family by divine Institution in some special and peculiar respects belonging to the manner of Administration. After the Church of the Jews was constituted (when we can no more imagine that there was a Church among the Gentiles, then that there are Christians among the Barbarians at this day) we find none must be admitted to the Passover that was not first Circumcised, but nothing was required of a stranger to circumcision, but that he profess the true faith, and a vouch the God of *Abraham* to be his God, which of necessity must be done before he could be reputed a visible Believer, or under the Covenant of promise.

Thus a learned and reverend divine, Circumcision was a seal of the covenant, that God made with *Abraham* concerning Christ that should come as concerning the flesh of *Isaac* and so of *Jacob* of whom were the 12 tribes who were the Israelites, &c. *Rom.* 9. 4. 5. So that as in *Abraham's* time none were bound to be Circumcised but those that were of his family as being borne there or bought, and so brought thither which were not of his seed: So afterwards none were bound to be Circumcised which were not borne in the family of *Jacob* and *Patriarchs*, or joined to them. And after their coming out of *Egypt* none were bound to be Circumcised but the children of the Jews (then the only Church of God,) and those that desired to join unto them. The sum is thus much, God gave circumcision to *Abraham* as a seal of the Covenant but whether it was given to other believers in his time it is (at least) a thing uncertain. And if they were not Circumcised it was by reason of the special Institution of God, and peculiar manner of administration of the Covenant of promise which in some respect was proper, to the family of *Abraham*, and not common to all the visible members of the Church at that time in Church fellowship and order. Afterwards when there were none in covenant but the seed of *Jacob* or strangers professing the faith of *Abraham*, circumcision was not to be administered to any man who was not in Covenant nor any man to be admitted to the Passover who was not circumcised. This is the most that can be said with any probability: But hence it will not follow by just analogy or proportion, that the seed of the faithful must not be admitted to Baptism, or visible believers be received to the Lord's Supper unless they be set members of some particular congregation united in Church order. Thirdly, presupposing therefore that *Melchizedek*, *Lot* and *Job*, were not Circumcised, we say there is not the like reason of Circumcision and Baptism in this particular. For, first if Circumcision was ever appropriated to the family of *Abraham*, and might be communicated to other visible Believers, it was in the first Institution and administration; but in the first Institution and administration of Baptism, it was not observed that believers should be first gathered into a political body or Christian church membership, and then baptized. *John* the Baptist baptized such as came to him confessing their sins. The Apostles baptized Disciples, such as gladly received their doctrine, believed in Jesus Christ, and received the gifts of the holy Ghost, before they were gathered into Christian Church order, or made fit members of a Christian congregational Assembly.

2 If Circumcision was by special Institution given as a privilege to the Males of *Abraham's* Family, *Melchizedek*, *Job*, *Lot*, and other visible Believers were not bound to join themselves as members to *Abraham's* family, or desire and seek to be circumcised: But they that have received the doctrine of salvation, believe Christ, and profess the faith, are bound to seek, and desire the privilege of the seals in an holy manner.

3. *Melchizedek*, *Job*, and *Lot* were not only visible believers, but visible members of the Church, according to the manner of dispensing in those times: but the Seals (as you confess) belong to all believers knit together in Church-Covenant.

4. If circumcision be appropriated to the family of *Abraham*, it is because the Covenant sealed by circumcision is peculiar to *Abraham's* posterity, (*sc.*) that Christ should come as

concerning the flesh, of *Isaac*. But Baptism is the seal of the Covenant of grace without any peculiar or special tie or respect.

5. You contend, that Baptism did belong to such believers as were members of the then Jewish Church, which cannot stand, if *Abraham's* family did answer to a Christian society or congregational Assembly; Just reason therefore may be given why circumcision was dispensed only to the males of *Abraham's* family, when baptism is not to be limited only to the set members of a particular society; and if this consideration be applied to the purpose, instead of saying, Circumcision and the Passover were to be administered only to the members of the Church, you must say Circumcision was to be desired of or administered unto all the true approved visible members of the Church. And if there be the same reason of both, then all visible approved members of the Church must not desire nor be admitted to the seals, but this conclusion you will not acknowledge.

Answ. 4. Consideration.

They that are not capable of the Church censures, are not capable of the Church privileges. but they that are not within Church-Covenant are not capable of Church censures. *Ergo*. The proposition is evident, The Assumption may be proved, 1 *Corinth*. 5. 12. What have I to do to judge them that are without. Now to be without is not only the case of Heathens and Excommunicates, but of some believers also, who though by external union with Christ they are within the Covenant of grace, yet being not joined externally to the visible body of Christ (a particular Church) are in regard of visible Church communion said to be without. To this purpose is this text alleged by other Divines also, as Dr. *Ames* Cas. of consci. l. 4. c. 24. q. 1. resp. 5.

Reply.

First, men are capable of Church censures in two respects, either in having the power of the keys, and authority to dispense them according to God, or as subject to the censures of the Church. In the first sense, many are capable of Church privileges that are not capable of Church censures, as the seed of Christian parents, children and women. You say you admit to the seals the known and approved, and orderly recommended members of any true Church: but to fellowship in the censures, admittance of members, and choice of Officers only, the members of that particular Church whereof they and we (any of us) stand members. In the second sense also many are capable of Church privileges who are not subject to Church censures: as the children of Christian parents are capable of baptism, the known and approved members of any true Church are capable of the Seals in other Congregations among you who are not subject to the censures of that other Society. Spiritual communion in public prayer is a Church privilege, which is not denied to visible believers and godly persons, though not in Church order, and so not in subjection in your sense to Church censures.

Secondly, a person baptized is not baptized in that particular congregation only, but into all Churches, and every particular Church where he cometh he hath all the privileges of a baptized person in respect of his baptism, and is so to be esteemed by them. Now the

privilege of a baptized person who is able to examine himself, and walketh in the truth, is to be admitted to the Lord's Supper. All circumcised persons had right thereby to eat the Passover in any society, in the place which God should choose to put his Name there. *Exod. 12. 4. 47. Deut. 16. 1, 2.* So all baptized persons have true and entire right to the Lord's Supper in every true Church where God hath set his Name.

Thirdly, there is not the same reason of every Church privilege, for one may have right to some, who is not to meddle with others. The members of one society may hear the Word, join in Prayer, and receive the Sacraments in another, when they are not to meddle in the election and ordination of their teachers. The Ministers of the Gospel may preach the Word, and administer the Sacraments in another congregation, and hereto he needs no other calling but that God offers an opportunity; there is much need of his help, and he is entreated, or hath leave from them in place or office; but he is not to admit members into the society, or cast them out that be admitted. And if the Pastor of one Church shall preach or administer the Sacraments in another, contrary to the liking and approbation of the Society and Governors, though the act be irregular, it was never esteemed a nullity; but if he shall presume to excommunicate the members of another society, without the consent of the Church, and approbation of Pastors and Teachers, under whose charge and jurisdiction they live, it hath been judged a mere nullity. Therefore the proposition is not so evident as to be taken without proof, that they have no power to admit a believer into communion in any Church privilege who have no power to excommunicate.

Fourthly, that visible believers baptized into a true Church professing the true faith, and walking in holy obedience, and godly conversation, that they and their seed should be judged such as are without in the Apostles sense, because they be not externally joined as set members to some particular congregation in Church-Covenant is affirmed, not proved.

1. It hath, and may fall out many times through the ignorance, rashness, or pride of a prevailing faction in the Church, that the true members of the Catholic Church, and the best members of the orthodox visible flock, or congregation of Christ may be no members of any distinct visible society. And shall their posterity be esteemed Aliens and Strangers from the Covenant, and debarred from the Sacraments, because their parents are unjustly separated from the inheritance of the Lord? Surely as parents unjustly excommunicated do continue still not only true members of the invisible body; but visible members of the flock of Christ: so the right of Baptism doth belong to the Infants of such parents, though not actual and constant members of this or that present assembly in Church order.

2. If they be without, because no members of a politic body or spiritual fellowship: then all members which are of one society are without to another: For they that be not of the body are not capable of Church censures, or subject to the authority one of another. And so not being under the judgment of that particular Church to it they are without; whereas in ancient and moderne times distinct Societies did communicate together, admit and receive each other as brethren, to testify their fellowship in the faith. If the reason whereupon the Apostle saith the Church of *Corinth* was not to judge them that were without, was because they were not within the Church of *Corinth*, and so not under their censure or judgment: this

holds true of them that be of another society admitted to the Sacrament, as well as of such as be no set members desiring to be received to the Lord's Supper.

3. (The fornicators of this world) do they not explain whom the Apostle pointeth unto by the title of being without, *ver.* 10. 11. such as had not received the covenant of grace.

4. Church order is necessary we deny not; but this order that a man should be a constant and set member of a particular society by covenant, to make him a true member of the visible Church, or to give him title or interest to the public order, this is not taught of God.

5. *Paul* divides all men into two ranks, the first and greater without; the last and lesser within: but that believers who have received the holy Ghost, and have been baptized into Jesus Christ, that they and their children should be reckoned among them that are without, that we read not in this nor any other Scripture, but in phrase of Scripture heretics themselves are within the Church.

6. The believers not yet gathered (as the godly learned think) into a certain distinct body are called believers, brethren, disciples; but that they should be comprehended under them that are without, it hath not been believed in the Church.

7. Without (saith the Apostle whether alluding to this place or not, let others judge) are dogs, enchanters, whoremongers, not such as are called faithful and holy, walking in integrity, believing in and professing Jesus Christ to be their Savior.

8. They that are without in the Apostles sense are Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but we hope you will not pass such rash and unadvised censure upon your brethren, who be not gathered into your society as set members.

9. Let the interpretation stand, and he is without, not only who is no set member of some congregational Assembly, but he that is not subject to the censure of the community of that particular combination few or many, with, or without Officers. And so all the reformed Churches in the world who ascribe the power of the keys to the Presbitry or Classes, and not to the community, and some amongst yourselves (if not the most) shall be without also.

And therefore we cannot think approved Christians desiring to be received unto the Sacrament, either to be without, or incapable of Church censures for the time being if they should offend, though not set members of any particular congregation: for desiring baptism for their children or themselves to be admitted to the Lord's Supper for the time they put themselves under the ordinance of Jesus Christ there. And as they are members for the time, so they might be proceeded against according to the rule prescribed by our Savior, as they would proceed with an offending member.

10. If upon just and good reason a passage of Scripture can be cleared to prove that for which it was never alleged by any writer, we are not to except against any truth of God, because it wanteth man's testimony. Only if we desire credit in such cases, our reasons must be weighty and convincing. But for your exposition of this text of Scripture, as yet we have not

observed one substantial ground, or approved author to be alleged. Doctor *Ames* showing the necessity of Christians joining themselves to some particular Church, giveth this reason, *Quoniam alias fieri non potest quod conturbentur signa illa quibus fideles ab infidelibus discerni possunt.* 1. Cor. 5. 12. But herein Dr. *Ames* manifestly showeth that by them that are [without] heathens, and unbelievers must be understood, and not believers and godly men though of no particular settled society for the time, for thus we conceive he argueth. The signs and evidences whereby the faithful are to be discerned from unbelievers, must not be confounded: but unless Christians make themselves actual members of a Society or Church, the signs whereby the faithful are discerned from unbelievers, will be obscured and darkened. And if this be his reason how can that text of Scripture be alleged for confirmation, unless by [men without] Infidels be understood. Again Doctor *Ames* in the same book, *lib. 4. ca. 27.* speaking of Infants to be received, it is required (he saith) that they be in the covenant of grace in respect of outward profession, and estimation in respect of their parents, and that there is hope they shall be instructed and brought up in the same covenant. 2. That Baptism doth most properly belong to those infants whose parents, at least one of them is in the Church, and not without, because baptism is a sign and seal of the covenant of grace. 3. That children that are cast forth are in charity to be esteemed the children of Christian parents, when there is no just cause of presuming the contrary, that in admitting unto baptism a difference must be put between the Infants of those who in some sort belong to the Church, but openly break the covenant of God, and the children of others.

1. Because a distinction must be observed in holy things between the clean and unclean; seeing else the ordinance of God cannot be preserved from all pollution. To say nothing of that which he addeth touching the baptism of Infants borne in fornication, excommunication, and Papists, which is more then sufficient to clear his meaning in the former passage. To this may be added that he holdeth it not necessary that Christians should gather themselves into a particular society, but as opportunity and occasion should offer itself. So that it was never his mind to censure them who be not gathered into Church-Covenant, because they want means or opportunity as men *without* in the Apostles sense.

His judgment is further manifested in his second Manuduction, *pa. 33.* So many parish Assemblies of *England* (saith he) as have any competent number of good Christians in them, united to worship God ordinarily in one Society, so many have the essence and integral form of a visible Church, and all they have entire right to Christ, and to all the means of enjoying him, how ever they are defective in the purity of their combination, and in the complete free exercising of their power, whereupon a reverend Elder now among you draws this conclusion, *Ergo* to dischurch them wholly, and to separate from them as no Churches of Christ, or to deny baptism to the Infants of their known members is not warrantable by any rule of Scripture that I know, nor justified by any assertion or practice.

Answ. 5. Consideration.

WE may add hereunto for a fifth Consideration, the evil and pernicious consequences of extending communion in Church privileges beyond the bounds of Church fellowship: for thus, 1. The extraordinary office of the Apostles, and the ordinary office of Pastors and

Teachers will be much confounded, if the latter be as illimited as the former in the execution of their office beyond the bounds of their own particular Churches. 2. The distinction of Church assemblies from the confused multitude is abrogated, if without membership in a particular Church the parents may communicate with the Churches in the Lord's Supper, and their seed in baptism. 3. The Church shall endanger the profaning of the seals, and want one special means whereby the grace and piety of men may be discerned and made known; for if without respect to their Church estate men of approved piety (as you say) are to be admitted to fellowship in the seals, how shall their piety be approved to the Church not by their own report of themselves alone without attestation of such as are approved by the Church; and how can such bear witness to their approved piety, who against light refuse to profess subjection to the Gospel of Christ by orderly joining themselves in fellowship with some approved Church of Christ as members thereof when they have opportunity thereunto, seeing such fellow-ship is an action of piety required of all believers in the second Commandment; and true piety frameth men's spirits to have respect to all God's Commandments. And we have had much experience of it, that men of approved piety in the judgment of some have been found too light, not only in the judgment of others, but even of their own consciences, when they have come to trial in offering themselves to be members of Churches, with such a blessing hath God followed this order of taking hold of Church-Covenant by public profession of faith and repentance before men be admitted to the seals; but this means of discovery of men's piety and sincerity would be utterly lost, if men should be admitted unto the Lord's table without entering in Church-fellowship.

Reply.

IF it be repugnant to Divine Institution to admit of approved Christians lawfully baptized, walking in the faith, members of the visible Churches, and partakers of Church privileges among us to the Lord's Supper, or their children to baptism, because they be not entered into Church fellowship according to your order, then it is unlawful though no such evil consequences are to be feared.

But if by accident some abuse should fall out, the evil is to be prevented by all lawful means: but the faithful are not utterly to be debarred of the order of God, whereto they have right and title by his free grant and gracious invitation. And no question but the seals of the Covenant may be profaned many times when it is not in the power of the dispensers to put back or expel such as profane them. If the Congregation shall admit of, or tolerate an unworthy member, the Churches privileges are profaned; and yet we conceive you will say the Pastor is not faulty in receiving him, when the Church doth tolerate unworthily, if he do what pertaineth to his office to keep the holy things of God from contempt. But in the case propounded there is no fear or danger of such consequences necessary to follow: for the question is not of all sorts at randame, but of Christians professing the faith entirely, lawfully baptized, known, and approved to the consciences of the wise and judicious visible members of the Churches of Christ among us often admitted to the Lord's Table, whether these either sufficiently known unto you, or orderly recommended may upon desire and suite themselves be admitted to communicate in the Lord's Supper, and their children to be

baptized, what fear is there now that the extraordinary office of the Apostles, and the ordinary office of Pastors and Teachers shall be much or little confounded? Is this to take as illimited power as the Apostles did in the execution of their office? How shall this tend to abrogate the distinction of Church Assemblies from the confused multitude? or how is the profanation of the seals thereby endangered?

You ask if without respect to their Church estate men of approved piety (as we say) are to be admitted into fellowship in the seals, how shall their piety be approved to the Church, not by their own report of themselves alone, &c. Do not you say the same, That there be many godly persons, and of approved piety among us, who are not approved by their own report of themselves (unless ye will take their wisdom, faith, patience, courage, constancy, and holiness of life for their report) approved, we say by as ample and sufficient testimony as the Apostles exacted of them whom they received into Church fellowship, or can be required of members admitted unto the privileges of the Church, if men will follow the Lord's direction, or as you can give to ordinances members of your societies. You profess high respect of your brethren in old *England*, but it seems you judge them insufficient to give orderly testimony of the sincerity and uprightness of approved Christians, well known unto them, and living among them, which two cannot well agree. We speak not of such who against light refuse to profess subjection to the Gospel of Christ to join themselves orderly in fellowship with some approved Church: But of such as do with all readiness profess subjection, and walk accordingly, and heartily desire to join themselves to the most pure and complete Churches so far as they are taught of God, or have opportunity thereunto. And if exception be taken against them only, who refuse against light to submit themselves to the Gospel; by what rule do you proceed when you judge men to refuse against light, or debar them who do not refuse against conscience, but for lack of opportunity. No doubt (as you say) but now and then a man of approved piety in the judgment of some may be found too light, yea and in the judgment of his own conscience when he hath come to trial. And no question but many have been admitted by the Church, who indeed and truth are much too light; and some refused who deserved better then they that cast them off, we will not dispute what errors have been committed, nor what blessing ye have found upon your proceedings; we heartily beseech the Lord to keep your congregation pure, make his ordinances more and more effectual, go before you in the way wherein you should walk, and multiply his mercies upon you in the same. But this we are persuaded, and therefore we speak, that in debarring godly Christians from the Lord's Supper, and much more the children of those parents who are in covenant with God, from holy baptism you exceed your commission you have received from God, and go beyond your due bounds. And notwithstanding your circumspection more worthy and faithful Christians have been denied when of less worth, and meaner sufficiencies have passed, and been by you received.

Answ. 6. Consid.

NOne have power to dispence the Seals but they that are called to the office of Ministry; and no man can be so called till first there be a Church to call him, seeing the power of calling Ministers is given by Christ unto the Church; and thence it follows, that all those that desire

to partake of the Seals, are bound to join themselves in Church state, that so they may call a Minister to dispense the Seals unto them. And this duty by the appointment of God lieth not only upon some Christians, but equally upon all: *ergo* no Christian can expect by the appointment of God to partake in the Seals till he have joined himself in Church fellowship, and in the call of the Minister. And indeed seeing a Church, and a Minister called by the Church, is of such necessity for the dispensing of the seals, it may seem unreasonable that some Christians should be bound to become a Church, and to call a Minister that so the seals may be dispensed, and other men (when this is done) have equal liberty to the seals who refuse to join unto the Church.

Reply.

THIS conclusion is not to the question propounded, for we speak of such as cannot, not of such as refuse to join themselves unto the Church; or if they do not join, it is not out of contempt or willful neglect of God's ordinance, or desire of carnal liberty, and not to be in subjection to Christ, but for lack of opportunity, or through their fault that should admit them but do not. For if in any of your Churches you shall require more of members to be admitted than Christ the chief Shepherd of the flock doth, or press that upon their consciences which they cannot consent unto, if they shall sit down quietly for the time and serve God in private, when they cannot enjoy Church privileges, it is your fault and not theirs. And they may more justly challenge the Assemblie as injurious and tyrannical, then you them as willful despisers of God's ordinance. We accuse not the wisdom and discretion of your Churches, but we know the zealous multitude may sometimes be rash; And when a reason is craved of your judgment, why you do debar the most known and approved Christians which come over, and their children from the seals of the covenant, we dislike you should put this note upon them, as if against light they refused orderly to subject themselves to the Gospel of Jesus Christ: What warrant you have thus to censure, what use of this manner of dispute we leave it to your godly wisdom to judge. In the Consideration itself there are many Propositions couched together, which we must examine severally as they have reference to the conclusion intended, and then try whether it can be raised from them.

The first Proposition, That none have power to dispence the Seals, but they that are called to the office of Ministry, is freely granted.

The second, That no man can be so called till first there be a Church to call him, needeth explication. For by the Church you must understand the community of the faithful, as they are one body, without officers or guides. And such a Church there cannot be without a Ministry to call and admit them into Church-fellowship. The Apostles baptized not themselves, but by the help of others, & those not called of the people to be baptized, 1 Cor. 1. 17. The Apostles appointed by electiō, Elders in every city or Church. And so there was a Church before Elders were set over it, but this Church was a society of believers by baptism admitted into Church-fellowship. There can be no Church to call a Minister to feed the flock, and dispence the seals, till they have received the doctrine of salvation entirely, and by the seal of initiation be solemnly received into the society of men professing Christ. A company of men converted to the faith being unbaptized, may and ought to desire baptism, but they

have not power to elect and choose one among themselves to dispence the seals unto the rest for ought is to be found in Scripture: The Churches constitution into which Christians are to gather themselves must be Apostolical, and not one day or hour younger in nature and form of it, thus the first Church of the New Testament. But it can never be shown in Scripture that any society of unbaptized persons did first choose from among them a Pastor or Teacher by whom they might be baptized: you cannot produce one example or other proof in the Scripture, of one man teaching the Gospel ministerially but he was baptized, and a member of a true Church, or of a society who made choice of a Pastor and teacher, but they were baptized persons.

The third Proposition, That the power of calling Ministers is given by Christ unto the Church, must also be rightly understood: For by the Church must be meant the society of the faithful, not only engrafted into Christ, set into the state of salvation, and made heirs apparent of everlasting blessedness, but solemnly entered and enrolled into the society of Christ's flock, and acknowledged members by free admission into the Seals of the Covenant. Again, by the Church if we speak of ordinary calling, must not be understood of the faithful alone, but their guides and officers together with them, who are to go before the rest, and to direct and govern them in their choice. Neither can we say, that any two or three believers linked together in society do make such a Church, as to whom the calling of the Minister doth belong: but that right was given by Christ to such Churches as were gathered and established by the Apostles. The Church hath a Ministry of calling one whom Christ hath described, that from Christ he may have power of Office given him in the vacant place. But the office, gift, and power of the Ministry, is immediately from Christ and not from the Church. The Church doth neither virtually nor formally give power to her Officers but ministerially only, as ministering to him who hath power and virtue to confer it. And this right of election is so given to the community and body of the people, that if they have consented to give away their right, or if it be taken injuriously from them, the calling of the Minister notwithstanding may be true, and ministerial acts done by him that is thrust upon the people without their consent may be effectual to their salvation. A wrong it is altogether to debar the godly of their consent in the calling of such as must watch for their souls; but it makes not the calling it self a mere nullity; for then many Churches in the world within a few hundred years after Christ should have wanted both ministry and Sacraments, and they would have been altogether destitute of both ministry and Sacraments for many hundred years.

The fourth, That all those who desire to partake in the Seals, are bound to join themselves together in Church-state, that so they may call a Minister to dispence the Seals unto them, will not follow from the former rightly understood. We deny not but Christians are bound to join themselves together in holy fellowship, if God give them opportunity: but they must partake in the Seals before they can join themselves together in Church-state. And such as for lack of means and opportunity cannot join themselves into such an estate, or be dispersed by persecution, or be destitute of Pastors and Teachers, may for a time desire and seek to have the seals dispensed unto them by the Pastors and Teachers of other Societies, with whom they hold communion in the faith. The people also who are deprived of right and

liberty to choose their Pastor, may desire and seek to have the Seals dispensed unto them by him who is set over them. If a company of Infidels should be converted to the faith, they must desire to partake in the ordinances of grace before they could join together in a Church-way to call a Minister of their own, who might administer the Sacraments unto them. To make Disciples and baptize are joined together. And if these Propositions be allowed for current, a nation or people plunged into Idolatry or Infidelity, or otherwise dischurched, cannot by ordinary means recover into a Church-estate, wherein they may lawfully and according to God's appointment desire or expect that the Seals of the Covenant should be dispensed to them.

The fifth Proposition riseth beyond measure, that no Christian can expect by the appointment of God to partake in the Seals till he have joined himself in Church-fellowship and the calling of the Minister. We conceive you will not say that children and women have to do in the call of the Minister (for women they are debarred by their sex as from ordinary Prophesying, so from any other dealing wherein they take authority over the man) If some part of the Congregation do not consent in the election of Pastors or Teachers, have they not right to expect to have the Seals of the Covenant dispensed to themselves or their seed? If the people be deprived of that liberty to choose or call their Minister, must they separate from the ordinances of worship there dispensed, and from the Congregations as no true Churches? If some persons by the providence of God live in such places where they cannot join in Church-fellowship and call of the Minister (as suppose the Christian wife, child, or servant) nor lawfully remove to any such Society must they and their children live as strangers and aliens from the Covenant of grace, wherein they may not expect to partake of the Seals▪ If Infidels be converted to the faith, must they not partake in the Seals, because they cannot join in Church-fellowship and call of the Minister, before they be admitted to Baptism?

Here you say the people must join together in the call of the Minister, before they can lawfully desire to be admitted to the Seals. And another hath zealously affirmed (It is a presumptuous sin in any to choose an Officer not trained up and tried (*scil.*) in the debating, discussing, carrying, and contriving of Church-affairs, as also in admonition, exhortation, and comfort, publicly occasioned and so manifested) Lay these two together, and let it be considered how long many a poor soul converted to the faith must be compelled to want the comfort of God's ordinances. Besides, if a people be joined together in Church-fellowship, and have called a Pastor to feed and watch over them, we desire (not words but) proof why the poor dispersed Christians wanting means or opportunity to join themselves together into society, ought not to desire, and that others be not bound in conscience to afford them the comfort of God's ordinances.

If the Propositions may stand for good, I fear we shall scarce find that ever in ordinary way, the Sacraments were lawfully dispensed or received in the Christian Churches of God since the first foundation of them. Now the premises being liable to so many exceptions, the conclusion to be laid upon them, will fall of it self. And thereunto we oppose the direct contrary. That Infidels converted to the faith, or godly Christians, formerly visible believers,

known and approved members of Congregations professing the entire faith, and joining together in the lawful use of the Sacraments for substance according to the Institution, may and ought to desire and expect the Seals of the Covenant to be dispensed to them, and to their seed, though for the present they be not joined into such Church-state and call of Ministers as you require.

Answer 7. Consideration.

THat our practice may not be censured as novel and singular, give us leave to produce a President of the like care observed and approved by public countenance of State in the days of *Edward 6.* of blessed and famous memory, who in the year 1550. granted *Johannes Alasco* a learned Noble man of *Poland* under the great Seal of *England*, liberty to gather a Church of strangers in *London*, and to order themselves according as they should find to be most agreeable to the Scriptures. Among other godly orders established in that Church, that which concerned the Administration of Baptism to prevent the profanation of it we will repeat in *Alascoes* own words. *Baptism in our Church (saith he) is administered in the public Assembly of the Church after the public Sermon: for seeing Baptism doth so belong to the whole Church that none ought to be driven thence, which is a member of the Church, nor to be admitted to it who is not a member of it, truly it is equal that that should be performed publicly in the Assembly of the whole Church, which belongs to the whole Church in common.* Again, he addeth; *Now seeing our Churches are by God's blessing so established by the Kings Majesty, that they may be as it were one parish of strangers dispersed throughout the whole City, or one body corporate (as it is called in the Kings grant) and yet all strangers do not join themselves to our Church, yea there are those who while they avoid all Churches, will pretend to the English Churches that they are joined with us, and to us that they are joined to the English Churches, and so do abuse both them and us, lest the English Churches and the Ministers thereof should be deceived by the impostures of such men (and that under color of our Churches) we do baptize their Infants alone who have adjoined themselves to our Churches by public confession of their faith, and observation of Ecclesiastical discipline. And that our Churches may be certain that the Infants that are to be baptized are their seed, who have joined themselves thereto in manner aforesaid, the father of the Infant to be baptized (it possible he can) or other men and women of notable credit in the Church, do offer the Infant to Baptism, and do publicly profess that it is the seed of the Church, yet we suffer no stranger to offer Infants to Baptism in our Churches, who hath not made public profession of his faith, and willingly submitted himself to the Discipline of the Church, lest otherwise they who present their children to Baptism, might in time plead that they belong to our Churches, and so should deceive the English Churches and their Ministers.* To those which presented Infants to Baptism, they propounded three questions, the first was; *Are these Infants which ye offer the seed of this Church, that they may lawfully be here baptized by our Ministry? &c.* Answer, *Yea.* This Instance is the more to be regarded, because *Alasco* affirmeth in the preface of that Book, that this liberty was by the King granted to them out of his desire to settle alike reformation in the *English Churches*, which in effect you see the same with our practice in this particular.

Reply.

The practice of the Church of strangers in *London*, recorded by *John Alasco*, is far different from your judgment and practice, not in some by-circumstances, but in the main point in question; for your judgment is that true visible believers, baptized and partakers of the Lord's Supper in other Churches not yet gathered into Church-estate or fellowship, have no right or interest in the Seals, (they nor their seed) But this Church of strangers held no such opinion as their own words (which you have omitted) do plainly speak. And *Paul* testifieth (say they) that by Christ's Ordinance the Church it self without exception of any member of it, is to be accounted clean or holy by the ministry of Baptism. Whence we may easily see, that Baptism doth neither belong to those who are altogether without the Church, nor to be denied to any member of the Church. Secondly, They held communion with the Church of *England* as one and the same with theirs. For so they profess: Yet nevertheless, that we may openly show that the *English* Churches and ours are one and the same Church (though we differ somewhat from them both in language and Ceremonies) We do not refuse that the *English* may as public witnesses of the Church offer the Infants of our members to Baptism in our Churches, if they have both the use of our language and a certain testimony of their piety. As in like manner our members are accustomed to offer the Infants of the *English* to Baptism in the *English Churches*. If your judgment be this of the *English Churches*, your judgment in acknowledging us members of true Churches, and practice in debarring visible believers and their seed from the Seals, are opposite the one to the other. Thirdly, This order was observed by them to prevent the impostures of some, who whilst they avoided all Churches, pretended to the *English*, that they were joined to the strangers, and to the strangers that they were joined to the *English*. But you debar known Christians who desire to join themselves with you, not to prevent impostures of them who avoid all Churches: yea, you debar them as men having no right to the Sacraments, because they be not in Church-fellowship: and herein you can show no president ancient or moderne, either from Scripture or Monuments of the Church: And as your practice is without example, so without warrant from the word of God. And this is the main reason why we cannot consent unto you in this particular which we thus propound.

1 Reason.

THat sacred order which God hath set in his visible Church for all his Saints to keep and walk by, that is religiously to be observed. But for men to set up that as a necessary order which God never allowed, approved, or commanded, is great presumption. Now the Lord hath not ordained that a man should be a set member of a particular Society, or body politique of faithful people joined together in spiritual Church-fellowship by Covenant, before he be admitted unto the Lord's Supper, or that the parents should be actual visible set members of some particular distinct body before their children be baptized. They that believe in Jesus Christ have received the word of promise and walk therein, they and their children are within the Covenant, and have right and title to the Seals of the Covenant, but in their order, the infants to baptism, parents baptized, to the Lord's Supper. And if in that state by divine grant they have interest to the Sacraments, the Church in debarring them because they be not yet grown into one distinct separate society of mutual covenant, doth exceed the bounds of her commission. For a ministerial power only is committed to the Church to admit or

refuse them who are to be admitted or refused by authority from God: But the Church if she thrust believing parents from the Supper of the Lord, and their seed from baptism; she denieth these benefits to them who by the grace and gift of God have lawful right and title thereto.

1. For first, the baptism of *John* was true baptism, and truly administered by him: And they that were baptized by him received the seals of the Covenant, and were esteemed members of the visible Church: But *John* never demanded of them who came to his baptism whether they were entered into spiritual fellowship by mutual covenant one with another. This was not then known to be a necessary and essential point in the lawful, due, and orderly administration of the Sacrament. The disciples of our Savior made and baptized disciples professing the faith, but not combined into Church-state or fellowship. The Apostles commission was first to teach the Gentiles, and then to baptize them having received their doctrine. And this they carefully observed in the execution of their ministry upon grounds and reasons common to them and us: for as soon as any man or number of men gladly received the doctrine of salvation, and gave their names to Jesus Christ, if they desired to be baptized forthwith they accepted them, never excepting, that they were no set members of a distinct visible congregation. When the first 3000. converts, being pricked in their consciences, came to *Peter*, and the rest of the Apostles, saying. *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* *Peter* returns this answer, *Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the Name of Jesus, &c. For to you is the promise made, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, &c.* As soon as the Samaritans believed, *Philip* who preached the things that concerned the kingdom of God, they were baptized both men and women. When the Eunuch asked of *Philip*, *See here is water, what doth let me to be baptized?* he answereth not if thou beest first received as a set member into a visible congregation thou mayest: but if thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. *Can any man forbid water* (saith *Peter*, speaking of the Gentiles upon whom was poured the gift of the holy Ghost) *that these should not be baptized who have received the gift of the holy Ghost as well as we?* At that time it was not held a bar sufficient to keep them from the Sacrament of baptism, because they were not set members of a distinct society, which had it been essential to the lawful and orderly administration of the Sacraments, questionless it had been observed in the first Institution and administration of them. *Ananias* baptized *Paul* before he was any set member of a congregational Assembly. *Lydia* and her household, the Jailor and his house were baptized without regard to their Church-estate. For in the same night which he was converted, he was baptized with all his household. And this was done not by the Apostles only upon special dispensation, but by others upon grounds and reasons common to them, and all ages, viz. because they were disciples, believed, gladly received the Word, had received the holy Ghost, were called, and the promise was made to them, and to their seed, even to all them that were afar off.

Now if the Apostles dispensed the seals to them that were not in Church-fellowship upon common grounds, it is not essential to the lawful dispensation of the seals, that all partakers should be under such a covenant. If the baptized disciples, believers, such as gladly received the Word, and had received the gift of the holy Ghost, then the seals of the Covenant belong unto such, and by the grace of God they have right and title unto those privileges.

2. As we received the Sacraments from God by divine Institution; so must we learn from him, how and to whom the same are to be administered, observing what he hath commanded without addition or diminution. But we have learned from Christ the Author of Baptism, and the constant practice of the Apostles (the first dispensers of these holy seals who best understood the mind and pleasure of the Lord herein) that such as be called of God to whom the promise is made, who have received the gifts of the holy Ghost, believed in the Lord Jesus, professed their faith in him, and repentance for sins past with purpose of amendment for the time to come, that such have right unto, and desiring it ought to be received unto Baptisme, and are greatly wronged if they be deprived of that unspeakable benefit.

3. By a lively faith a man is made a living member of Jesus Christ, and hath internal communion with him by the entire profession of Christian faith joined with conformity of life in righteousness, and holiness, and fellowship of love, he is a member of the visible congregation or flock of Christ, though no set member of a free distinct independent Society. And Baptism is the seal of our admission into the congregation or flock of Christ; but not evermore of our receiving into this or that particular society as set members thereof. This latter is accidental to baptism, not essential. It may fall out to be so, but it is not ever necessary; nor is the Sacrament to be denied, nor can we say it is imperfectly administered where it cannot be attained. For the Catholic Church is one entire body, made up by the collection and agregation of all the faithful unto the unity thereof; from which union there ariseth unto everyone of them such a relation to, dependence upon that Church Catholic as parts use to have in respect of the whole. And this holds true, not only of sound believers in respect of internal fellowship with Christ their head, and so one with another; but of all men professing the true and entire doctrine of faith and salvation in respect of them that hold and profess the same faith of Christ, and worship God according to his will; whereupon it followeth that neither particular persons, nor particular guides, nor particular Churches are to work as several divided bodies by themselves, but are to teach, and be taught; and to do all other duties as parts conjoined to the whole, and members of the same flock or society in general: And so believers professing the faith, and walking in holiness, may and ought to be admitted to the Seals as actual members of the Church of Christ, and sheep of his pasture, though not set members of one congregational Church.

4. Not to insist upon this here, that it hath and may fall out many times through ignorance, rathnesse, or pride, of a prevailing faction in the Church, that the true members of the Catholic Church, and the best members of the Orthodox visible flock, or Church of Christ, may be no actual members of any distinct Society, and shall they for this be accounted men out of Covenant, and their posterity be esteemed aliens and strangers: but if they be in Covenant, then are they holy in respect of the Covenant, and their children holy as pertaining to the Covenant, and have right to the Sacrament of initiation. Thus Mr. *Rob.* frameth the argument. The Sacrament of Baptism is to be administered by Christ's appointment, and the Apostles example only to such as are (externally, and so far as men can judge) taught and made disciples, do receive the Word gladly, do believe, and so profess, have received the holy Ghost, and to their seed. And thus the Church of God ever since the Apostles days understood the covenant and promise, and their practice in receiving

believers and their seed to the Seals of the Covenant was answerable, as might be shown at large, if it was not a thing confessed. Hereunto you answer.

Answer.

Where the holy Ghost is given and received (which was the case of the Centurion) and where faith is professed according to God's ordinance (which was the case of the rest) there none may hinder them from being baptized, viz. by such as have power to baptize them. In the Instances given baptism was administered either by Apostles or Evangelists, not ordinary Pastors: the persons baptized, if they were members of Churches, had a right to baptism in their state, and the Apostles being Officers of all Churches might dispense the seals to them where ever they came, which yet will not warrant ordinary Officers to do the same. Nor is it improbable but that all these were in Church-order, *Aret*, on *Act. 18. 1.* is of opinion, that the Centurion had a constituted Church in his house; the Eunuchs coming to Jerusalem to worship, argueth him to be a Proselyte, and member of the Jewish Church not yet dissolved: and therefore upon the profession of the Christian faith capable of Church privileges at that time. As for *Lydia* and the Gaylor it appeareth that in the beginning of the Gospel there was a Church at *Philipp* which communicated with *Paul* as concerning giving and receiving: As he expressly saith, before his departure was from *Macedonia*, which departure was immediately upon the Gaylor's conversion. In which respect what should hinder that *Lydia* and the Gaylor should first be joined to the Church, and then to be baptized though it be not mentioned in that story? As neither there is mention of a Christian Church, which *Paul* mentioneth in his Epistle to the *Philippians*. At least it is probable that *Lydia* was a member of the Jewish Church, because she is said to be one that worshipped God. But if any man think they were not members of any Church yet baptized, though we see not how it will be proved, yet if it were so, the object doth no whit weaken the argument, which speaketh of the ordinary dispensation of the seals, and not of what was done in an extraordinary way. So that suppose that in the cases alleged, baptism dispensed to some that were not in Church-fellowship, yet the examples of the Apostles and Evangelists in so doing will not warrant ordinary Pastors to do the like. The reason of the difference why Apostles and Evangelists might administer Baptism out of Church-order, whereas Pastors and Teachers may not, is double. 1. Because their calling gave them illimited power over all men, especially Christians wheresoever they came. But we do not find that ordinary Pastors and Teachers can do an act of power, but only over their own Church, which hath called them to watch over them in the Lord. 2. Because they were assisted with an immediate direction and guidance of the holy Ghost, in the places of their administration in the cases alleged. But ordinary Church-Officers are to walk according to ordinary rules of the Scripture in the dispensation of the Seals, and not to expect immediate inspirations and extraordinary revelations for their help in such cases. This difference between Apostles and ordinary Church Officers must needs be acknowledged, or otherwise a man might from their example justify Baptism in private houses.

Reply.

THis Answer stands of many parts, wherein things doubtful are affirmed, and that which more weakeneth the force of the consideration before alleged, and the Answer it self, then of the reason whereunto it is applied. For

First, If where the holy Ghost is given and received, and where faith is professed according to God's ordinance, there none may hinder them from being baptized, viz. by such as have power to baptize them: Then either men that have received the holy Ghost, and profess the faith, be members of the Church, or Baptism is not a privilege of the Church, then it is not essential to the first Institution of Baptism, that it should be dispensed to none but such as were entered into Church-fellowship, or were set members of a congregational Assembly. Then the Apostles in dispensing the Seals unto such, or commanding them to be dispensed, did walk according to the rules of Scripture, and upon grounds common to them and us, viz. they admitted them unto the Sacraments who had right and interest to them, according to the mind and pleasure of the Institutor, not extraordinarily revealed, besides the common rules, or by special dispensation and prerogative excepted from the common rule, but made known in the Institution it self. And then the difficulty remaining is only this, whether a Pastor or Teacher hath authority from Christ to dispence the Seals of the Covenant to one who hath right and title to them, and doth orderly desire that benefit because he is not as yet received as a set member of that particular society which your practice in admitting of set members of other Congregations unto the Seals doth manifestly convince. For if both have equal interest unto the Seals, the Pastor upon lawful suite and request hath equal authority to receive the one as well as the other.

Secondly, In the particular Instances given, it is not probable that Baptism was evermore administered by Apostles or Evangelists; For before the death of Christ, the Disciples baptized when they were properly neither Apostles nor Evangelists: After the death of Christ (not to insist upon conjectures whether any assisted the Apostles in the baptizing of the first three thousand converted) it is not certain, whether *Peter* baptized *Cornelius* and his family, or commanded others then present with him to baptize them: the words may be read: *Et jussit eos baptizari in nomine Domini. Syr. & Arab. Praecepit eis ut baptizarentur.* The Interlineary gloss leaveth it doubtful, *Associis suis vel a scipso.* Others are of opinion that *Peter* did baptize them himself. It cannot be proved that *Philip* and *Ananias* were both Evangelists, when the one baptized the *Samaritans* and the *Eunuch*, the other *Paul*. *Paul* himself baptized but a few as he testifieth of himself, and reason to convince that others converted by his preaching were baptized by Evangelists, we know not any. And if *Philip*, *Ananias*, and others might baptize such as had right and title to the Seals, being as yet no set members of any particular Congregation: and a Congregation destitute of their proper Pastor, may desire another to baptize their Infants, and dispence the Sacrament of the Supper to them in that their necessity. And if the members of one Congregation may lawfully communicate in another, then may the Pastors of particular Congregations upon occasion admit to the Seals of the Covenant such known and approved Christians, as have right and title thereunto, and duly and orderly require the same; for of all these the reason is like and perpetual.

Thirdly, It is very improbable that the persons baptized, were in Church-state or order. If they were members of the Jewish Church not yet dissolved, this is not to the purpose; for men have not right to Baptism, because they were members of the Jewish Church, but because Disciples and (as you say) joined together in Covenant, and have fellowship and calling of their Minister, who is to dispence the Seals unto them. And Baptism is the Sacrament of initiation, not into the Jewish but the Christian Churches. Secondly, when you say, *the Seals in ordinary dispensation are the privileges of the Churches. There are no Ministers but of particular Churches. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are to be administered only to the members of the Church. No society may lawfully desire the Seals, unless they have joined in the choice and calling of their Minister. Believers not yet joined in Church-order are without.* Do ye not in all these understand a Christian society, united in a Church-way, &c. which cannot agree to the members of the Jewish Church, not yet dissolved. Thirdly, The constitution of the Church (saith M^r. Robin.) is the orderly collection and conjunction of the Saints into and in the Covenant of the New Testament; but the members of Jewish Churches not yet dissolved, were not in such constitution. If the Eunuch and Centurion were proselytes and members of the Church of the Jews; The Samaritans whom *Philip* baptized were not so. And that any Gentiles, or the Gailor whom *Paul* baptized in the Apostles times, were set members of a Christian Assembly before baptized, is very strange If there was a Church at *Philippi*, yet the Gailor who was baptized and converted the same night, could not be a set member by solemn admission before Baptism. It is said the Apostles baptized these persons in an extraordinary way. But in this practice of the Apostles two things are to be considered. 1. The circumstance of the action. 2. The quality or substance of the act. In some circumstances the baptizing of some of these persons might be extraordinary, but the substance and quality of the action was grounded upon rules perpetual and common to us with them.

1. That is done in an extraordinary way, which by peculiar privilege of dispensation is made lawful to someone or few men, which is unlawful to all others, not having the same dispensation, but where the ground and reason of the action is common: we must not conceive the thing to be done in an extraordinary way by special dispensation. What was done by the Apostles upon special revelation and immediate direction, besides the ordinary and common rule, in that we are not to imitate or follow them, because we have not their warrant. But what they did upon reasons and grounds reaching unto us no less then unto them, in that we have the same liberty, allowance, or commandment that they did walk by. In one and the same action there may be and oft is something ordinary, something extraordinary or peculiar to special times or persons. So it was in the Apostles administration of the Seals: but in every place where they came by illimited power (as you speak) they did baptize Disciples, if they did baptize; this was proper to them, and could not be communicated to any others by them; For there is no passage of Scripture which teacheth this, that one Officer may communicate his power to another, or do that which particularly belongeth to his office by a Deputy: But that they baptized believers professing their faith in the Lord Jesus, and repentance towards God, such as had gladly embraced the Word, and received the gifts of the holy Ghost: this was common to them with all Pastors and Teachers, because they did it, not by power illimited or special dispensation, but upon this standing

perpetual reason, that *the promise was made to them and to their seed, and to as many as the Lord shall call, that they had received the holy Ghost, and the kingdom of heaven belonged to them.* And if the grounds and reasons of their practice be common reaching to us, no less then unto them, the practice it self was not extraordinary. To say nothing that this Answer will not stand with the former; for if the parties baptized were set members of particular Societies, the Apostles did not baptize them in an extraordinary way, they did it by the guidance and direction of the Spirit, that is true, but not by guidance of dispensation, or prerogative, whereby that was made lawful without such inspiration had been unlawful. But they were infallibly guided to do that which was according to the word of God, and might stand for our direction: that in case it be orderly desired a Pastor hath authority in his own Congregation, to receive known and approved Christians to the seals of the Covenant, hath been proved before. If the Apostles dispensed the seals only to the Church, Disciples, faithful, who received the doctrine of salvation with gladness of heart, and were partakers of the holy Ghost, then they dispensed the seals in an ordinary way, for such have title and interest to the seals by the Institution and appointment of God. And every Pastor by his Office may and ought to dispence the seals unto such, within the bounds and limits of his calling: But the Apostles dispensed the seals only to the Church, Disciples, faithful, &c.

2. An Argument followeth necessarily from particular example to a general; when one particular is proved by another particular, by force of the similitude common to the whole kind, under which those particulars are contained: But the practice of the Apostles in baptizing Disciples and faithful, by force of similitude common to the whole kind, agreeth with the practice of Ministers receiving to Baptism the seed of the faithful, though as yet not set members of any particular society, In some circumstances there may be difference when yet the reason is strong, if the difference be not in the very likeness it self whereupon the reason is grounded. One circumstance that is material to the point may overthrow the likeness pretended, and twenty different circumstances, if they be not to the point in hand make no dissimilitude. Now in this matter we speak of, no circumstance is or can be named why we should think it lawful for the Apostles to baptize Disciples as yet being no set members of particular societies, and the same should be unlawful in all cases for ordinary Pastors in their particular Congregations, though it be desired.

3. What is done by extraordinary dispensation, that is lawful for them only who have received such dispensation, and by them cannot be communicated to others. But the Apostles baptized by others seldom by themselves, as hath been shown.

4. We might urge the rule which a reverend Elder among you, giveth in another matter, (*scil.*) Those examples which are backed with some divine precept, or which are held forth in the first Institution of an ordinance, being part of the institution, or which were the constant lawful actions of holy men in Scripture, not civil but sacred so bind us to imitation, as that not to conform thereunto is sin. For the Assumption to this Proposition, it is plain and natural: But the practice of the Apostles in receiving the faithful, Disciples, &c. is backed with divine precept, held forth in the first Institution, and was their constant lawful practice, agreeable to the practice of all others who were employed in that service; *Ergo*, &c.

5. In the first consideration, you prove the Seals to be the privilege of the Church in ordinary dispensation, by this passage of Scripture, *Then they that gladly received the Word were baptized:* but if Apostles baptize by extraordinary dispensation in your sense this testimony is insufficient for that purpose.

2 Reason.

Our second reason. In due order, the Seals belong to them to whom the grant is given, viz. Baptism to the seed of the faithful, and the Lord's Supper to believers, able to try and examine themselves: But the grant is vouchsafed to the faithful and their seed, forgiveness of sins, sanctification, adoption, and what other good things are promised in the covenant of grace are the grant or good things sealed in the Sacrament. But those are granted to believers according to the covenant; and they are so linked together, that under one promised all are understood; and if one be vouchsafed, none is denied. When God promiseth to circumcise the heart, the forgiveness of sins is implied. And when Circumcision is said to be the Seal of the righteousness of faith, the circumcision of the heart by spiritual regeneration is included. To whomsoever then the spiritual gift, or inward grace of the covenant is given and granted, to them the Seals of that gift and grant doth belong in their due order. But the spiritual gift or grace which is the thing signified in the Sacrament, is freely granted to true believers, who have received the doctrine of salvation, and walk in the ways of truth and righteousness, therefore the privileges of the Seals belong unto them. To this you answer.

The scope of the Apostle in the place, *Rom. 4. 11.* is not to define a Sacrament, nor to show what is the proper and adequate subject of the Sacrament; but to prove by the example of *Abraham* that a sinner is justified before God, not by works but by faith. Thus as *Abraham* the Father of the faithful was justified before God, so must his seed be (that is, all believers whether Jews or Gentiles, circumcised or uncircumcised) for therefore *Abraham* received circumcision which belonged to the Jews to confirm the righteousness which he had before, while he was uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of both: but lest any one should think his circumcision was needless if he was justified by faith before circumcision; he addeth that his circumcision was of no use as a seal to confirm to him his faith, and the righteousness which is by faith: yet as Justification is not the only thing that Circumcision sealed, but the whole Covenant also made with *Abraham* and his seed was sealed thereby; so *Abraham* is to be considered in using circumcision not simply, or only as a believer without Church relation, but as a confederate believer, and so in the state and order of a visible Church. Though the Apostle maketh mention of the righteousness of faith as sealed thereby, which was not that which served for his purpose.

Now that Circumcision also sealed the Church-Covenant, may appear from *Gen. 17. 9. 10, 11.* where you may find that *Abraham* and his seed, though believers, were not circumcised till God called them into Church-Covenant; and there is the same reason & use of Baptism to us which serveth to seal our justification as circumcision did, yet not that alone, but also the whole covenant with all the privileges of it, as Adoption, Sanctification, and fellowship with Christ in affections, and the salvation of our souls, and the resurrection of our bodies. And

not only the covenant of grace which is common to all believers: but Church-Covenant 1 Cor. 15. 19. Covenant also which is peculiar to confederates. According to that of the Apostle, *By one Spirit we are baptized into one body*, 1 Cor. 12. 13. And by one body he meaneth that particular Church of *Corinth* whereunto he writeth and saith, *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular*, ver. 27. And *ergo* Church-membership is required as well to the orderly partaking of Baptism as it was of Circumcision. Nor do we find that circumcision was administered to all that were in the Covenant of grace (as all believers were) but only to such of them as were joined to the people of the God of *Abraham*. *Melchizedek* was under the covenant of grace, so was *Lot*, so was *Job* and his four friends; yet we nowhere read that they were circumcised, nor do believe they were. So that if Circumcision was administered to none but those that were joined together in *Abraham's* family, and to the Church of God in his seed, then may not baptism in ordinary course be administered to any believers now, unless they be joined to the Church of Christ, for *parum par est ratio*. But the first is true, *Ergo*, the second also.

Reply.

The particulars in this Answer hath been examined already, and might have well been passed over, because it is tedious to repeat the same things again and again. Two things are affirmed by you.

1. That the scope of the Apostle, *Rom.* 4. 11. was not to define a Sacrament, nor to show what was the proper and adequate subject of a Sacrament. But this weakeneth no part of the argument, for if the Apostle do not fully define a Sacrament, nor mention every particular benefit or prerogative sealed in the Sacrament; yet he showeth sufficiently to whom the Sacraments in due order do appertain, even to the heirs of salvation, to them that are justified by faith, and walk in the steps of our Father *Abraham*. And thus we argue from the text of the Apostle. They that are partakers of the good things sealed in the Sacrament, to them belong the Seals of the Covenant, according to God's Institution. But they that are justified by faith are partakers of the good things sealed in the Sacrament, to them belong the Seals of the Covenant according to God's institution. If Justification be not the only thing that Circumcision sealed, this is nothing to the point in hand. For the gifts of the holy Ghost is not the only thing that is sealed in Baptism: But you confess in your Answer immediately going before, that they have right to baptism who have received the holy Ghost; and the reason is the same of Justification. Besides if Justification be not the only thing that is sealed in the Sacrament, it is one principal thing which doth infer the rest. For the blessings of the covenant of grace in Christ are inseparable; where one is named, others are implied: and where one is given, no one is absolutely wanting. *Christ is made of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*: whom God doth justify, them he doth sanctify, and them he will glorify.

2. The second thing you affirm is, that not only the covenant of grace which is common to all believers; but Church-Covenant also which is peculiar to confederates is necessary to the participation of the Seals. This sense your words must bear, or else they reach not the point in hand: but this is that which should be proved substantially, and not barely affirmed; and

which (as we conceive) is contrary to the first institution of the Sacrament, and the lawful practice of *John the Baptist*, our Savior Christ, his Apostles, and all others who are recorded lawfully to administer the Seals. In *Gen. 17.* we find the first Institution of circumcision recorded, and that it was the seal of the Covenant to *Abraham* and his seed, to them that were borne in his house, or bought with his money: but we find no mention of any Church Covenant besides the covenant of promise which God made with *Abraham*. There is no mention of any Church-order into which *Abraham's* family was now gathered more then formerly. God gave circumcision to *Abraham* and his seed as a seal of the righteousness of faith; but that this family was first gathered into Church-order as you speak we cannot believe, because the Scripture saith it not whether *Lot, Job, Melchizedek* were circumcised or not, we will not dispute; but if they received not the seal, we cannot think the reason to be because they were not in Church-order as those times required, if any such thing had been required, we cannot think that either they were ignorant of it, or that they walked against their light: But accordiug to the dispensing of those times we judge as they were visible believers, so they walked in that Church fellowship which God prescribed; and therefore if circumcision had been the seal of such Church-Covenant as you conceive, it should have been given to them no less then to *Abraham's* family. But of this sufficient is said before. As for Baptism it is the seal of the whole Covenant, which the passages quoted prove it to be. Whether it be the seal of our fellowship which Christ in affliction, and the resurrection of our bodies, we leave it to your consideration: but that it should be a Seal of a Church-Covenant which is peculiar to confederates, that to us is very strange. That it is a solemn admission into the Church of Christ, and that of necessity it must be administered in a particular society (though in the passage to the *Corinthians* the mystical body of Christ be understood) will easily be granted. But that it is the seal of any other covenant but the covenant of grace we cannot digest.

The Sacraments are of God, and we must learn of God for what end and use they were ordained. But by the Institution of Baptism recorded in Scripture we have learned it belongeth to the faithful, to disciples, to them that are called of God: and as for any other covenant necessary to the right participation of the Seals, there is deep silence of it in the Institution, in the lawful and approved practice of the first dispensers of these sacred mysteries. Enough hath been said to this matter already, but we will conclude it with the words of that reverend Author whom we have cited many times before upon occasion. *Afterwards (saith he) John the Baptist walked in the same steps, and by the same rule administered baptism in the Church whereof he was a member, required of all that came to his baptism a profession of repentance, and amendment of life for remission of sins whereof baptism was a seal, and preached Christ to them.* This order our Lord Jesus Christ after his resurrection established to continue in the Christian Churches, giving a commission to his Disciples to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, and to gather all such as should believe through the world, as a testimony to them, that the righteousness of faith did belong to them also, and not to the Church of the Jews only. Accordingly the Apostles and servants of Christ were careful to observe this rule in their administering baptism. Thus *Peter* when he saw those three thousand souls pricked in their hearts, preached unto them concerning repentance, remission of sin, Christ, the

promise, baptism, faith, amendment of life, baptized those that gladly received his word, and testified the same by joining together in the possession thereof. The same course *Philip* took with the Church that was gathered in Samaria, where many were baptized, but none till they professed their belief of the Gospel, and their receiving of the Word of God. And therefore it is said expressly, *When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women.* When *Ananias* was commanded to go and baptize *Paul*, he objected against it at first, till the Lord assured him that he was one to whom the Seal of the Covenant belonged, and then he went and did it.

When *Peter* and those that came with him saw that the holy Ghost fell on *Cornelius*, and those that were assembled at that time in his house, whilst he spake these words, *To him give all the Prophets witness, that through the Name of Jesus whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.* *Peter* demanded, *Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the holy Ghost as well as we?* In this catalogue we see profession of faith and repentance required in them that were admitted to partake in the seals; but there is not a word of Church-Covenant, either in the Institution or administration of the Seals before they were admitted to them. That Christians are solemnly engrafted into the body of Christ, and into particular Societies by the Seals, is a truth acknowledged on all sides: but that ever it was deemed necessary, that a Christian should be a set member of a particular Congregational Church before he were admitted to the Seals, or that by divine institution any such thing is ordained as necessary thereunto, that upon the grounds before mentioned we deny, and cannot account it less then an addition to the institution. For if the Sacraments be seals of the Covenant of grace, and baptism by divine Institution belong to Disciples, faithful, Saints, who have gladly received the Word of grace, are justified by faith, sanctified by the Spirit, adopted to be the children of God by grace, and heirs apparent to the kingdom of heaven; then to debar such from the Seals, and their seed from Baptism, because they be not in Church-Covenant (as you speak) is an addition to the ordinance of grace, and many ways injurious to the people of God.

V. POSITION. That the power of Excommunication is so in the body of the Church, that what the Major part shall allow must be done, though the Pastors and Governors and the rest of the Assembly be of another mind, and that peradventure upon more substantial reasons.

Answer.

IF the Question had been, Whether the power of Excommunication lies in the body of the Congregation, consisting of officers and members; our Answer should be Affirmative, and according hereunto is also our practice, and we hope your judgment and ours are not different herein: But seeing the Question is, *Whether it is so in the body of the Congregation, that what the Major part doth allow that must be done, though the Pastors and Governors, and the rest of the Assembly, do dissent upon more substantial reasons.* Our Answer is Negative, viz. that the power of Excommunication is not sealed in the Congregation, neither ought it to be so in any of the Churches of the Lord Jesus, who ought not to carry matters by number of votes against God, as this Position implieth, but by strength of rule and reason according to God.

The power of the Apostles was not to do things against the truth but for the truth, 2 Cor. 13. 8 and not for destruction, but for edification, 2 Cor. 10. 8. And the same may be said concerning the power which God hath given to the Church, and if any Church among us have swerved from the rule (which is more then we know) we do not allow them in such a practice, but should be ready as the Lord should help to convince them of their sin therein.

Reply.

THIS Question is much mistaken, for the demand is not whether in the Congregation matters should be carried by number of votes against God, as you interpret the Position, but whether the power of Excommunication so lie in the body of the Congregation as that sentence must proceed *in externo foro*, according to the vote and determination of the *Major* part, and so whether power of admission of members do so reside in the community, as that they must be refused whom the *Major* part refuse, though the Pastors and Governors and part of the Congregation be of another judgment, and he admitted whom the *Major* part doth approve. And though the Church hath received no power against God, but for God, yet in the execution of the power no doubt the members of that Church may be of different judgments and affections, wherein the one side or other doth err, and is deceived. Now the Question hereupon moved is, whether the power of the keys be so given and committed to the society of the faithful, as that in external Court that act or sentence must stand and be in force which the greater part shall determine amongst them which hold the power of the keys to be given to the Church. Some distinguish betwixt the power itself w^{ch} they give to the Church, and the execution and exercise of it, which they confine to the Presbytery: Others give the power of the keys with the exercise thereof to the whole body of the Church, or if in the dispensation they attribute anything to the Officers, it is but as servants of the Church, from whom they derive their authority. By *Church* also some understand the community of the faithful, together with their officers and guides. And here lieth the stone at which they of the Separation stumble, and which we conceive to be your judgment and practice, wherein we required your plain answer, with your reasons, but have received no satisfaction. You refer us to M^r. *Parkers* reasons to prove the power of the keys to belong to the whole Church, who are of far different judgment from M^r. *Parker* in the point it self. And if your judgment and practice be according to that of the Separation (which we fear) you dissent from him, and we cannot but dissent from you upon these considerations.

1. No power agreeth to the multitude or community of the faithful, but that which is given them of the Lord by his positive Law; For the whole spiritual power for the gathering and government of his Church is given to Christ as Mediator. And if the power of the keys be derived from, and communicated by Christ unto his Church, of necessity it must draw its original from divine positive Law, and can agree to none but as it is communicated. But the communicated power of the keys with the execution thereof, Christ hath not given immediately to the whole multitude, but to some persons and Officers designed and appointed thereunto. Peruse the several passages of Scripture, wherein power and authority of preaching the Gospel, administering the Sacraments, binding and loosing is given to the Church: and it is apparent that distinct several persons are spoken of, and not the whole

community; *Go teach all Nations, and baptize them, &c. Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted, &c. Feed my Lambes, feed my sheep, &c.* Were these things spoken to the whole community, or to special persons?

2. If Christ gave this power to the community, was it from the beginning of the Church, or took it effect after the Churches were planted and established by the Apostles. Not the first, for then the Apostles themselves should derive their power from the community and society of the faithful, which they did not, but from Christ immediately, both in respect of gifts and graces, their calling it self, and the designation of their persons.

It is said the power of the keys given to the Apostles was given to the Church, *In tuitu ejusdem tanquam finis & totius*. And it is true the Apostles were given to the Church, and the power they received was for the good of the whole; but this is not enough. That power may be said to be received immediately by the Church, as the first receptacle of it, and from it derived to others. But this power must be in the community as the first subject, from whom it cometh to the Officers. As the power of seeing is not only given *in tuitu hominis*, as the end of it, and the *totum* to whom it agreeth, but is *in homine* as the first subject from which it cometh to the eyes. The Apostles and other Governors were given of Christ for the Church as for their end, and all their authority was given unto them for the Church as for the whole: but the authority it self was immediately derived from Christ, and is not in the Church as the immediate subject, nor derived from the Church, but from Christ the King of the Church. The authority of Governors is given of Christ for a gift to the Church, but not for a gift absolute, that it may reside in the power of the whole Church, to whom it is given, but for a conditional gift communicated to the Governors themselves for the good of the whole. It is one thing then to ask for what end or use the keys are given, another to whom. To everyone is given the declaration of the Spirit for profit, *i. e.* for the good of the Church. But was this gift given to the community of the faithful first and immediately? No; By gift and possession it was given to some, but for use and profit it was public.

After the Churches were established it took not effect; for then it must be shown where Christ committed the power of God, first to the Apostles, and after to the community of the faithful. But that is nowhere to be found in holy scripture. The Ministers and guides of the Church were immediately of Jesus Christ, from whom immediately they derive their power and authority, by whom they are set over their charge, in whose Name they must execute their office, whose Stewards, Legates and Ambassadors they are, and unto whom they must give an account. Yea, Pastorship is the gift of Christ no less then Apostleship, and that the more because it is perpetual in the Church; every Pastor is not immediately called, but the Office and order of Pastors, the calling, authority and jurisdiction is immediately from Christ, and not from the Church: The Steward is appointed of the Master of the family alone, and hath all his authority and jurisdiction from him: Every Ambassador in the cause of his ambassage doth immediately depend upon him from whom he is sent. But if the function, order and authority of Pastors and Teachers, be immediately from Christ, then it is not received from the Church as the immediate receptacle. Thus Protestant Divines dispute against Papists. If Bishops receive their power and authority of exercising immediately from

Christ, by mandate, mission, and commission from him, then they derive it not from the Pope. And if Presbyters receive their order jurisdiction and power of execution from Christ by his mandate and Commission, then they receive it not from the Bishop. And by the same reason, if the power of the keys be the immediate gift of Christ to his Ministers, then they derive not their power and authority from the people. It is usually objected that the Church cannot convey what she never had, but the people may Elect their Pastor. Whereunto the answer is direct and plain. Nothing can give that which it had not formally or virtually, unless it give it as an instrument ministering to one who hath it, but so it may give what it never had, nor is capable of. A Steward may give all the offices in his Masters house, as ministerially executing his Masters pleasure. Electors have not evermore authority over him whom they elect: but power and authority only to apply that power to him whom they choose. The power and authority whereunto a Minister is elected, is not in the people that elect him, but from Christ the King and head of his Church, who out of power doth confer that office upon him. If we consider what men give, or give not universally, it must be deemed that any men can make Ministers, because they give not the office, gifts, or authority, which are from Christ alone.

3. If Ecclesiastical and spiritual power be in the multitude and community of the faithful, the Church doth not only call, but make Officers out of power and virtue received into her self, and then should the Church have a true lordlike power in regard of her Ministers.

For as he that will derive authority to the Church maketh himself Lord of the Church: so if the Church derive authority to the Ministers of Christ, she maketh herself Lady and Mistress over them in the exercise of that authority over them. For all men know it is the property of the Lord and Master to impart authority. Did the Church give power and authority to the Pastors and Teachers, she might make the Sacraments and preaching which one doth in order no Sacraments, no preaching. For it is the order instituted of God that gives being and efficacy to these ordinances. And if the power of ruling, feeding, and dispensing the holy things of God, do reside in the faithful, the Word and Sacraments in respect of dispensation and efficacy shall depend upon the order and institution of the Society. If the power of the keys be derived from the community of the faithful, then are Officers immediately and formally servants to the Church, and must do everything in the name of the Church, Rule, feed, bind, loose, remit and retain sins, preach and administer the Sacraments, then they must perform their Office according to the direction of the Church more or less, seldom or frequent, remiss or diligent. For from whom are they to receive direction how to carry themselves in their Office but from him or them from whom they receive their Office, whose works they do, and from whom they expect their reward? If their power and office be of God immediately, they must do the duties of their place according to his designment, and to be accountable unto God: But if their power and function be from the Church, the Church must give account unto God, and the Officers unto the Church whom she doth take to be her helpers.

If it be said that God will have the Church to choose Officers to execute the power committed unto her. The answer is, either God will have her elect officers of his designment to do his

work according to that power which he shall give them, and by his direction, and then they are God servants, and not the Churches, and receive their charge and function immediately from God, and not from the people: or he leaveth it to the arbitrament of the Church, to choose according to their pleasure such as must receive charge and authority from her. And then they must execute their office in her name so as shall seem good unto the Church, and neither longer nor otherwise. For if the Ministers of the Church be subject to God and Christ by the intervention of the people only, they have it from them, and not from God: but they preach or administer the Sacraments, rule, or feed, and if they depend immediately upon the faithful, viz. two or three gathered together in covenant, they must draw what in order they are to preach unto them in the name of the Lord; For from him must the Ambassador learn his errand from whom he receiveth his Commission. We forbear to press the confessions and reasons of such as maintain this opinion, that the officers of Christ be both of and for the people, and that in relation as the officers are called servants, the Church may be called Lord.

4. Moreover if the power of the keys be given first and immediately to the community of the faithful, what reason can be alleged why in defect of Officers the Church might not rule, govern, feed, bind, loose, preach and administer the Sacraments, or if any fail in any office, why she might not supply that want by her power. For the power of the keys doth contain, both authority and exercise, power being given to this end, that it might be exercised as it is vouchsafed. But the Church when she is destitute of Officers, cannot exercise those acts of rule, nor by her power supply the want of any Officer. Only she hath a ministry of calling one whom Christ hath described, that from Christ he may have power of office given him in the vacant place. For these reasons (not to insist on anymore) we judge the multitude or community of the faithful not to be the immediate receptacle of Ecclesiastical authority, and so the power of excommunication not to belong to them. If consent of the Churches of God be asked in this point (to omit others) the Churches of Scotland speak fully and expressly for us, in the second book of *Disci. cap. 1. The Church as it is taken for them that exercise spiritual functions in the congregation of them that profess the truth, hath a certain power granted by God according to which, it useth a proper Jurisdiction and government exercised to the comfort of the whole flock. Power is an Ecclesiastical authority granted by God the Father through the Mediator Jesus Christ unto his Church, gathered, and having its ground in the word of God, and to be put in execution by them unto whom the spiritual government of the Church by lawful calling is committed. The policy of the Church flowing from this power is an order or spiritual form of government which is exercised by the members appointed thereto by the Word of God, and therefore is given immediately to the office-bearers by whom it is exercised to the weal of the whole body.*

Ut universam scripturam evolvat D. Erastus, nunquam tamen inventurum verba Ligandi, & Solvendi aliis quam publico ministerio fungentibus, & quidem met aphorice, divinae videlicet & spiritualis potestatis respectu, tribui. Sunt enim judicialia haec verba. &c. Beza de Presb. p 60. See Helvet. conf. ca. 18. Sect. Nunc ergo, &c. Belgic. confess. art. 3. Argentinens. conf. art. 13. Bohem. confess. art 14.

VI. POSITION. That none are to be admitted as members but they must promise not to depart or remove unless the Congregation will give leave.

Answer.

Our Answer hereto is briefly this. We judge it expedient and most according to rule, that such brethren as are in covenant with the Church, and ours as fellow-members, and have committed their souls to our charge as Ministers, should not forsake our fellowship, nor abruptly break away from us when and whither they please; but first approve themselves therein to their brethren's consciences, and take their counsel in so weighty a matter. For which we propound to confider these two reasons following. The former is drawn from the nature of the Church-Covenant, which consists in these four particulars.

1. Every member at his admission doth openly profess, and solemnly promise, that by Christ's help assisting, he will not only in general give up himself (as to the Lord to be guided by him, so) to the Church according to God to be directed by it, which is no more then the members of the Church of *Macedonia*, did in a parallel case, *2 Cor.* 8. 5. but also in particular, that he will perform all duties of brotherly love and faithfulness to all the members of the body, as of diligent watchfulness over all his brethren, thereby to prevent sin, so of faithful admonition after their falls to regain them to the Lord, from their sin, the former being enjoined, *Hebr.* 3. 13. And the want thereof deeply condemned in *Cain*, that would not acknowledge that duty of being his brothers keeper, *Gen.* 4. 9. the latter given in charge to the Church-members of Israel by the hand of *Moses*, *Levite.* 19. 17. and so by Christ himself, *Matth.* 18. 15. And by *Paul* also to the *Galat.* c. 6. 1, 2.

Secondly, the engagements are not made only by the members admitted into the Church, but by the Church back again to the member. So that thereby the whole Church in general, and every member thereof in particular, stand as well in conscience bound to perform all duties of love and watchfulness to him, as he doth to them; And this we do according to the golden rule of love and equity enjoined by our Savior, *Matth.* 7. 12. fearing that contrary practice of Scribes and Pharisees so much condemned by Christ, of laying greater burdens upon others, then we ourselves are willing to undergo. *Matth.* 23. 4.

3. These promises thus lawfully and mutually made, that member, as also the whole Church, are bound not only everyone for himself, actively to perform them, but passively also to suffer his brethren to do those offices upon and towards himself: If he neglect the former, he shall falsify his covenant so solemnly before God, Angels, and men made, and so not only break promise to his brother, contrary to *Psal.* 15. 4. but also in some sort commit the sin of *Ananias* and *Sapphira* in lying against the holy Ghost, condemned and punished severely by God's own hand, *Act.* 5. 3. 5. 10. If he fail in the latter, he shall not only be guilty of the same sin of breach of Covenant with God and man as in the former; but shall also be guilty of this folly of despising counsel so much condemned, *Prov.* 12. 15. and 1. 7. and shall also proclaim this his folly and pride by showing to all the Church that he is wise in his own eyes, and leans to his own wisdom both reprov'd, *Prov.* 3. 7. and 23. 4. Seeing need of no further light to be held forth by his brethren, then what he apprehends himself, which is one of the greatest properties of folly.

4. From all these things premised, it appears that we can do no less (and yet we do no more) then require a member before he depart according to our covenant thus lawfully, deliberately, and mutually made, to express to his brethren his desire of departing, and the place and society to which he tends, whether to a godly Church where he may be edified; or to some corrupt Assembly where he may be destroyed. And 2. his grounds and reasons which move him so to do, which if they hold good being scanned by the Word, he may be not only confirmed in his way by the consent and advise of many, but counseled also how to manage his departure for his best comfort. And so after all, solemnly with the whole Churches prayers, and blessings in the name of Christ dismissed: But if his grounds either be none at all, or weak and sinful, and that his desire of departing savors of self-will, inordinate love of gain, rash precipitancie, or a spirit of schism, more strongly then of sound reason, then what can we do less without breach of Covenant, then in love and tenderness show him his weakness, dissuade him from his purpose, and refuse to consent. Yet if after all this we see his spirit steadfastly and stiffly bent for a departure, then though we dare not act against our light by consenting or counseling, yet if his sin be not apparent, and danger eminent, we use rather (through indulgence in cases of like nature) to suspend our vote against him, as not willing against his will to detain him, abhorring to make our Churches places of restraint and imprisonment. But if any should object that this argument holds firm where this Church-Covenant is allowed to be lawful, but with some it is questioned, and with them it avails not. *Ans.* Some indeed have questioned the necessity of our Church-Covenant, but none (we hope) of these our reverend brethren that we write unto do question the lawfulness of such a Covenant being nothing else for the matter of it, but a promise of doing such Christian duties as the Gospel of Christ requires of all Saints in Church-estate; for we do not herein promise to perform any new duty to our brethren which was not before commanded us of the Lord, but only revive and renew our purposes afresh of performing such duties unto that particular body into which we are then incorporated as were before enjoined in the Word, as to love each other, and to watch over each other out of love for their good, to be ready to give counsel to, and to take counsel from each other, to prevent sin in them, or to gain them from sin. All which are plentifully and frequently held forth in the Scriptures; for the defect of which care and watchfulness, all the body shall be wrapped in the same guilt & punishment with the member that commits the sin, as the whole Church of *Israel* was in *Achan's* sin and punishment.

Secondly, Its a thing very reasonable, and a known fundamental rule in all societies, that he that is incorporate thereto, and so participates of the privileges thereof, should engage himself to conform to all such lawful rites and orders as are expedient for the well being of that society, the contrary whereto will be a thing injurious in him to offer, and confusion to themselves to accept.

The second ground is drawn from the necessity that may fall upon the body if every particular member should depart at his own pleasure. For as every society, so much more a Church of Saints, both from principles of nature and Christianity also, not only lawfully may, but in duty are bound to endeavor the preservation of it self, and *Ergo* timely to foresee and wisely to prevent all such things as would bring destruction to it self. Now if any member

might, when, whither, and wherefore he please without consent of the Church depart away from it, this may by unavoidable consequence dissipate the whole; for if one man may so depart, why may not another also, though never so useful in that body, and whose absence might much shake the well-being of it: and if one why not two, six, ten, twenty as well? For where will ye stop seeing any may plead the same liberty, and if members may so do why not the Pastor and Teacher also? Seeing they are tied to him by the same relation that he is to them, and so the principalls falling, the whole building must down: and if this may be so in one Church, why not in all, and so Christ should have no settled Church on earth.

Reply.

IT is one thing abruptly to break away when and whither they please, and forsake fellowship, another thing not to depart or remove habitation, unless the Congregation will give leave. Also it is one thing mutually to compound and agree not to depart from each other without consent and approbation, another to require a promise of all that be admitted into society, that they shall not depart without the Churches allowance. If such a promise be required of all members to be admitted, we cannot discern upon what grounds your practice is warranted. First, you exclude all such as be not set members from the Sacrament of the Supper, and their children from Baptism, and yet hinder them from entrance into Church society, because they cannot promise continuance in the place where they are resident for the present. Here we desire to be satisfied from the word of God by what you require it. Did the Apostles ever stipulate with such as desired to be baptized, that they must abide in particular society, and not remove thence without approbation from the Church? or did they deny the seals unto them, because they could not make any such promise? Was it ever heard of in the Church of God from the beginning thereof unto this day, that any such thing was propounded unto, or required of, members to be admitted into Church-fellowship? That Church Covenant which is necessary was not in use in the Apostles times, but the Covenant they entered into bound no man to this condition for ought we read. They did not prescribe it, no Church ever yet covenanted it as necessary to the preservation of the body.

Secondly, It pertains not to the whole Congregation to take notice of, be acquainted with, or judge of the cause of every particular members removal. May not a servant remove from his Master to another Congregation? or the father bestow his son or daughter in marriage to one of another Congregation, but the whole Church must be called to council in this matter? If the Assembly once grow to be populous, of necessity they must be negligent in, or weary of such an heavy task; and for the present, for everyone to challenge so much authority over other is usurpation. Let it be shown that ever by divine right this power was committed to the Church, and then we will confess it to be expedient and necessary. But till then we think the Church is over ridged in exacting such a condition of the members, and the members themselves go beyond their measure as busi-bodies in other men's matters, and things whereof they are not well able to judge many times, if they arrogate such power unto themselves we allow not rashness, or precipitancy, pride or self-conceitedness, we know it is meet that weighty matters should be managed by Council, but it is not necessary to bring

every particular thing to the whole Church. *In the multitude of Counselors there is peace*, but over many Counselors oft causeth distraction, and different apprehensions breed delays. The nature of your Church-Covenant, as you describe it, inferreth not a necessitie of bringing every such business unto the Church; for you bind yourselves mutually to watch over one another, and in love to admonish one another in the Lord, to prevent sin and to encourage in well-doing, as it concerneth every man within the limits of his place and calling. But this essentially tieth not any man to a perpetual residence in one place, for then even occasional absence should be a breach of Covenant, unless it be by consent and approbation of the Church.

You say in your Covenant you promise to perform no new duty to your brethren which was not before commanded of the Lord, but only revive and renew your purposes afresh of performing such duties to that particular body into which you are then to be incorporated, as were before enjoined in the Word. But in the word of truth, it is not commanded either expressly or by consequent, that no member of a Congregation should remove, or occasionally be absent from the place of his habitation, before he have acquainted the Church whither he goeth, and upon what occasions, and whether the place be dangerous, where he is likely to be infected; or safe, where he may be edified. These things are matters of weight and to be undertaken with advice, but the knowledge thereof belongeth not to every particular member of the society. And the Church shall burden her self above measure if she take upon her to intermeddle in all such occasions. Neither is it safe to commit the determination of such matters ever to the vote of the multitude, or weight of reasons, as they shall apprehend the matter. And if such business must be determined on the Lord's day, and to go before the administration of the Word, Sacraments, and alms, least the holy things be polluted by notorious obstinate offenders, we fear the time appointed for the exercise of Religion shall be profaned with unseasonable disputes. Instances might be alleged, if it were a matter to be insisted upon.

As for the Covenant it self which you mutually enter into, if therein you exact nothing but what God requires both for trial and stipulation, far be it that we should disallow it, but if ye contstrain men to meddle with things that belong not to them, and wind them up higher then God would, and strain everything to the pitch that you seem here to do in this branch a godly and sober mind may well pause before he make such promise. All members of the Church are not equally necessary to the preservatiō of the whole body; & if to the removal of some, it were expedient to have the consent, not only of the whole society, but of neighbouring societies, Ministers especially, it is very much to draw this to the removal or abode of every particular member. And if any man shall not intermeddle with every business of this kind, as questioning whether it doth belong to him or no, or not ask the advice of the whole society, as knowing the most to be unfit to counsel in such a case, doth he break his Covenant therein, and so commit a sin in a sort like the sin of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*? Judge yourselves if in other cases you would not censure this to be an high incroachment upon Christian liberty, and a strict binding of men's consciences by human constitutions. May you not expect to hear from your own grounds that herein you have devised an expedient, or necessary rite or custom to preserve the unity, and prevent the dissolution of the body,

which never came into the mind of the Lord Jesus, the Savior of the Church, and that in so doing (if your exposition will hold good) you break the second Commandment. Rites and customs expedient to prevent confusion for the time, let them be observed as customs expedient, and what God requires in the examination or admission of members, let that take place according to the presidents given in the Scriptures, and the constant practice of the universal Church in the purest times. But to press customs only expedient for the time, as standing rules necessary at all times, and for all persons, to put that authority into the hands of men which God never put upon them, to oblige men to intermeddle further in the affairs of men, then the Word doth warrant, to bind the conscience, and that under so heavy a penalty as the sin of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, where God hath not bound it, and to debar known and approved Christians from the Seals of the Covenant, because they cannot promise as settled members to abide and stay in the society, unless they shall obtain leave of the Congregation to depart, and to charge them in the mean season to be men, who against light refuse subjection to the Gospel; this is that which we cannot approve, which yet we suspect will follow from your judgment, and desire to be resolved of in your practice. And here we entreat leave to put you in mind of that which you have considered already, *schil*. That the Church and every member thereof hath entered into Covenant, either expressly or implicitly to take God for their God, and to keep the words of the Covenant and do them, to seek the Lord with all their hearts, and to walk before him in truth and uprightness: but we never find that they were called to give account of the work of grace wrought in their souls, or that the whole Congregation were appointed to be Judge thereof. *You standall of you this day* (saith *Moses*) *before the Lord your God, &c. that thou shouldst enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God*. All the people that were borne in the Wilderness *Joshua* circumcised, but it is incredible to think that among that great multitude, there was not one who did not give good testimony of the work of grace in his soul: We read often times that *Israel* after some grievous fall and revolt, renewed their Covenant, to walk with God, to serve him only, and to obey his voice, as in the days of *Joshua*, the *Judges*, *David*, *Samuel*: Also *Joash*, *Josiah*, and *Nehemiah*, &c. But no particular enquiry was made, what work of grace God had wrought in the hearts of every singular person. But the confession and profession of obedience was taken. When *John the Baptist* began to preach the Gospel, and gather a new people for Christ, he admitted none to Baptism but upon confession of their sins; but we read of no question that he put forth unto them to discover the work of grace in their souls, or repelled any that voluntarily submitted themselves upon that pretence. It appeareth many ways that when the Apostles planted Churches, they made a Covenant between God and the people whom they received. But they received men upon the profession of faith, and promise of amendment of life, without strict inquirie what sound work of grace was wrought in the soul. In after ages, strangers from the covenant were first instructed in the faith, and then baptized upon the profession of faith, and promise to walk according to the covenant of grace. Now the profession at first required of all that were received to baptism was that they believed in the Father, Son, and holy Ghost. This was the confession of the Eunuch when he was baptized, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*. The Creed is honored of the ancients with glorious titles, as the rule of faith, the sum of faith, the body of faith, the persuasions of faith: but by the Creed they understand that rule of faith, and law of faith, and institution of Christ which was then given when he

was about to ascend into heaven, and commanded his disciples, saying, *Go teach all Nations, &c.* It is true, that in after times as occasion required some other Articles were added as explanations of the former, to meet with the heresies of the times which began to trouble the Church. But for substance of matter in things to be believed, the Church never required other acknowledgement of them that were to be received into the congregation of Christ's flock, and admitted into her communion. And for things to be done, or the practical part, she requireth of them that were to be received to baptism an abrenuntiation of the devil, the world, and the flesh, with all their sinful works and lusts.

The first principles then of the doctrine of Christ being received, and the foresaid profession being made, the Apostles, and the Church following the example of the Apostles, never denied baptism unto such as sought or desired it. If this be the Covenant that members admitted into Church-fellowship do enter into, and this be all you require of them whom you receive, you have the practice of the Apostles, and the whole Church in after ages for your president. But if you proceed further then thus, and put men to declare what work of grace God hath wrought in their soul, in this or that way, which perhaps is not determined by the word of grace, at least not agreed upon among yourselves, we beseech you consider by what authority you do it, and upon what grounds you stand. But we will enter no further upon this matter, because it comes not within the compass of these Positions, and to attribute so much to private letters, as to make them the ground of another dispute we may not.

VII. POSITION. That a Minister is so a Minister of a particular Congregation, that if they dislike him unjustly, or leave him, he ceaseth to be a Minister.

Answer.

Our Answer to this consists in two branches. 1. In case a Minister be set aside by the Church merely through his own default. 2. By the Churches default without any desert of his. In the former case it is evident he ceaseth to be a Minister to them any longer, as appears in four conclusions.

1. It is clear from the Word, that a Pastor or Teacher in these days hath no Apostolical power over all Churches, but only limited to that one Church where God hath set him. *Paul* gives not the Elders at *Ephesus* a general Commission to go teach all Churches, but to go feed that one flock over which the holy Ghost hath made them over-seers. *Act. 20. 28.* So *Peter* gives direction to Elders to feed that flock of God only which was among them, and take the oversight thereof. *1 Pet. 5. 2.*

2. It is as clear that all this power of feeding which the Minister hath in that Church is nextly derived to him from Christ by the Church, who hath solemnly called him to the work, and promised to obey him therein: for if he have it elsewhere, it must be either from Christ immediately, or from some other men deputed by Christ to confer it on him, or he must take it up of himself. Not the first, for that was proper to the Apostles or Apostolical men, therefore *Paul* proving his Apostleship, saith he was called *not of men, nor by men, but by Jesus Christ himself. Gal. 1. 1.* Not the second, for we never read in God's Word that any ordinary

Officers, or other besides the Church, that had any Commission given them from Christ to call Ministers unto Churches. Not the third, for no man taketh this honor, viz. of a Priest under the Law, or of a Minister under the Gospel, but he that is called of God, *Hebr. 5. 4.* Therefore it must needs be from Christ by the Church.

3. As the Church in the name of Christ gave this power to a Minister to be what he is, and do what he doth amongst them: when such a Minister shall make and manifest himself apparently, unworthy, and unfit to discharge the place, which they thus called him unto, so that they may discern that Christ the head of the Church hath refused him, from being a Minister unto him, they may then upon as good grounds depose him from it, as they called him to it.

4. When a Church hath thus in Christ's name put forth this power of shutting, as before it did of opening to a Minister, then he must cease to be a Minister unto them anymore, for we know no such indelible character imprinted upon a Minister, that the Ministry ceasing, the Minister ceaseth also.

2. In case the Church shall without cause, or sufficient weighty cause, rashly or willfully set him aside whom Christ hath set over them, and whom they so solemnly called, and promised before the Lord to submit unto, and so abuse their power given them by Christ; it is doubtless a very great wrong unto the Minister, and sin against Christ himself before whom it was done; and not only Christ himself will take it ill at their hands, for such contempt done to him in his Ministers according to Christ's speech, *Luke 10. 16. He that rejecteth you, rejecteth me.* And God's speech, *1 Sam. 8. 7. They have not cast off thee but me.* But even other Churches also may admonish them. And if they prove obstinate therein, withdraw the right hand of fellowship from them; and concerning the Minister himself thus deposed, seeing it is done not by Christ, but by the Church without Christ, yea against the mind of Christ, we conceive though he be by them deprived of the execution of his ministry among them, yet until he accepts of a call to another people, he doth yet still remain a Minister of Christ, in whose account (notwithstanding such deposition) he hath true right of administration among that people.

Reply.

The question is of Ministers unjustly forsaken, or driven from the Church or congregation: and your answer is for the most part of Ministers set aside or deprived through their own default. We never purposed to speak one word for any unworthy Minister whom Christ hath put out of office, and therefore your labor to prove that such justly rejected by the Church are no longer Ministers might well have been saved. But sitting them aside, we will in few words examine your conclusions upon which you bind the certainty of that sentence you pass against them.

First, it is certain and clear from the Word, that a Pastor or Teacher neither in these days hath, nor in any other age of the Church, ought to have Apostolical power over all Churches. The Apostles had only power to serve the Church with the personal service of their Apostleship. But pastoral power of ordinary Ministers or Teachers they never had: and if the

Apostles had not the power of ordinary Ministers, much less can Pastors receive the power of Apostles, for Christ gave both the one and the other order. But as the Apostles were not Pastors of that Church to which they preached, and among whom they continued for some space; no more do Pastors become Apostles if they preach the Word, or dispense the Sacraments to another flock or people beside their own, whereof they have the special oversight. But of this matter we have spoken before, and of the texts of Scripture here alleged, therefore we will not repeat what hath been said already: only it seemeth somewhat strange, that you should cite those texts of Scripture, as if the Apostle had said, feed one flock, or feed that flock of God only. For we find the word (one) or (only) neither in the text expressly, nor in the sense for which it is here alleged, viz. as if he might not perform any ministerial act in another Congregation upon any occasion whatsoever.

Secondly, the power of feeding which the Minister hath is neither confined to one society only, nor nextly derived to him from Christ by the Church. The office and authority of a Pastor is immediately from Christ. The deputation of the person which Christ hath designed is from the Church ministerially, but neither virtually nor formally. The consent of the people is requisite in the election of Pastors and Teachers we grant, the direction of the Elders going before or along with them; but the authority, office, and gift of a Pastor is not from the people or Elders, but from Christ alone. When an Apostle was to be chosen in the place of *Judas*, *Act. 1. 22, 23.* no one had the handling of that business, but *Peter* declared unto the brethren present, what an one ought to be taken, and they present two, whereof one was elected by lot. In this example some things are extraordinary, for one only was to be chosen, and that immediately by God himself: and some things ordinary for our imitation. For if *Peter* would do nothing without consent of the disciples, then may not ordinary elections be passed without consent and approbation of the Church, but it is not a popular election, not governed by the fore-direction of Elders, which is concluded from this passage of Scripture: but a Church election by the free consent, and judgment of the faithful with the fore-leading of the Presbyterie. When Deacons were to be chosen, *Act. 6. 1. 6.* in the Church of Jerusalem, it was done by the consent of the Church. The mutiny of the *Hellenists* against the *Hebrews* occasioned that election, but was no cause why it was made by free consent. The Apostles show what persons must be chosen, and whoever thought the Church was left at liberty to choose as she please without direction. But in this election the people did first choose, the Apostles only directing whom the people ought to make choice of: when most commonly the Apostles instructed the people, and went before them in the election, and they consented. *Act. 14. 23.* The Apostles by consent chose Elders, and so in every matter of great importance belonging directly to the whole body of the Church, whether severally in one congregation, or jointly in many, the consent of the faithful by observation of the Apostles was required. *Act. 11. 22.* and *15. 22.* and *16. 4.* *1 Cor. 8. 19.* But in the primitive times after the Apostles, one Church might elect and choose a Pastor for another. As *Ignatius* exhorts the *Phyladelphians*, that they would elect a Pastor for the Church of Antioch. And so when the East Church was infected with Arianism, *Basil. epist. 69. 70. 74.* thought it a fit means to remove the heresy, if the Bishops of Italy being sent thither did condemn the heresy, and he imploreth the aid of the Bishops of Italy, France, and all the East. *Cyprian* saith, all Bishops *sunt mutuae concordiae*

glutine copulati: that if any hold heresy the rest should help. It would be too long to reckon up examples which in this case might be produced. If here it be questioned whether your election of the people be essential to the calling of a Minister: We answer. 1. A thing is essential two ways. First, as absolutely necessary, so that the thing can have no existence without it. Secondly, as necessary to the integrity of the thing, so that it is maimed without it.

Again, either the people be few in number, and simple apt to be led aside, unable to judge of the sufficiency of their Minister, or they be more in number, increased in wisdom, sound in faith, and able to discern betwixt things that differ. In the first sense the election of the people is not necessary or essential; But in the second we cannot say he is no Minister that is not chosen by the people, but his calling in that respect is maimed. If the people be few and simple, apt to be deceived, they stand in more need of guidance and direction, both from their own Elders, and other Churches. If the people be many in number, full of wisdom and understanding, their liberty to choose is the greater; and it is the greater wrong to be deprived of it. The practice of the Apostles and the primitive Churches for many ages will confirm this; for sometimes men were propounded to the Church to be chosen: Sometimes the choice was wholly left to them: and was not that for our direction, that more liberty is given where the danger is less, and more restraint and caution used where the danger is more apparent, that if they be left to themselves, either an ill or unfit choice will be made? In reason this is evident, for the child's consent is required in marriage, but the more able he is to choose for himself, the more liberty may parents grant, the less able, the more watchful must they be; and so in this business. Brotherly society requires that we mutually exhort, admonish, reprove and comfort each other as occasion requires, and as need requires. It is a duty of Neighbor-Churches to lend their help to their brethren in the choice and election of their Minister. When the Scripture willeth that one should admonish another, it is not only a command to every singular man towards his fellow, but also to any whole company too: another society *Bellarmino* asketh, *quo jure unus populus Episcopum alterius populi elegere potest?* *Junius* answereth; *Certe charitatis jure & communionsanctorum.* And *Paul* when he teacheth that all the faithful are members of one mystical body of Christ, who ought to have a mutual care one of another, laid the foundation of this policy.

It is a blemish in the calling of a Minister, if either the people be not fit to choose, or being fit they be shut forth from the choice, but this maim doth not make a nullity in his calling; for in every true Church where the word is preached and received, and the Sacraments for substance rightly administered, there is a true and lawful Ministry, and a true and lawful calling of that Ministry, though in some things defective. In the Church of God all sound and saving truth is to be found, for it is the pillar and ground of truth, and where the true profession of all saving truth, with the right use of the Sacraments for substance is to be found, there is the Church, which ordinarily cannot be had, maintained and continued without a lawful Ministry, nor that without a calling. The saving truth of God & a lawful Ministry, are both essential to a true Church. Something of this remains in every complete society that hath anything of the Church; and for essence and substance they are true in every true, lawful, complete society. The profession of the truth may be true and sound in all

necessary and fundamental points, though mixed with diverse errors, and the Ministry for truth and substance lawful, though many ways deficient. In the true Church there is a true Ministry, but the true Church hath continued there by the blessing of God, where the election of Ministers hath been given away by the people, or taken from them. In the primitive Church, when the people had a voice in the choice of their Pastor, oftentimes there were factions in the Church, the people stood against their guides and challenged the whole power of election to themselves. Sometimes they were divided among themselves. Sometimes they gave away their power, at least in part, and sometimes Ministers were set over them without their council and advice, whose Ministry notwithstanding was not reputed void and of none effect. If it be objected that many things were amiss in those primitive elections, what will follow thence, but that the Ministry may be lawful and good, where there be many wants in the manner of calling? If this be not granted, what shall be done when the people and their Elders be divided in the choice of a fit Officer. If the people prevail against their Elders, he whom they choose is no Minister to them, because not chosen by their suffrages: if the Elders against the people, he whom they approve is no Minister unto theirs, because not chosen by their suffrage; And so if there be dissention they must separate from, or excommunicate one another, because he is no Minister to the one whom the others approve. The Orthodox Pastors did profess, so that the *Donatists* would return to the true and Apostolical doctrine, they would not disallow their Bishops, that they might understand that Catholics did not detest Christian consecration (as *Augustine* speaks) by human error. The high Priesthood was bought and sold for money, and sometimes made annual, and every year new high Priests created, *Sicut isti praefecti quos singulis annis promutant reges*, as *Sol: Jarchi* saith. That as every man would lay out more or less money, he should get or lose the Priesthood, which may be seen in the examples of *Jason* or *Menelaus*.

Nevertheless, so long as the *Jews* continued the true Church of God, the Priesthood was true also. The reformed Churches who have separated from the abominations of *Rome*, profess the first reformers among them received some ordinary calling in the Roman Synagogue. They that think the basest of *Rome*, will acknowledge Baptism unduly administered by Priests or Jesuits, to be for substance the holy Sacrament of Christ. And if the Baptism of God may be derived from the Ministry, it is no absurdity to think that the first seekers of reformation derived authority from Christ to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments by them, as Stewards used of God to set them in that office: for the seekers of reformation derived their authority from God, and that which is instituted by Christ, is not made void by the corruptions of men.

The third and fourth consideration we will pass over, because from what hath been spoken, it is easy to understand in what sense they may be admitted, and in what denied, and we have no desire to trouble you with the examination of that which falleth not into question.

As for the second branch of your Answer, that in case the Church shall without cause, or without sufficient weighty cause, rashly or willfully set him aside whom Christ hath set over them, yet he still remains a Minister of Christ (until he accepts of a call from another people) in whose account, notwithstanding such Depositions, he hath true right of administering

among that people: We know not well your meaning; if this be your mind that a Minister lawfully called and set over one Congregation, is to be esteemed a Minister in the usual Church, as the particular Church hath unity with, and is part of the universal or Catholic: and as a party baptized is not baptized into that particular Congregation only, but into all Churches; and that the Ministry is one, *Cujus à singulis in solidum pars tenetur*, as *Cyprian* speaks; and therefore though the Minister be unjustly cast off by one Congregation, yet he is not to be esteemed as no Minister, we freely consent. But if your meaning be that he is only by right a Minister of that particular Congregation, because unjustly deposed, as formerly in the execution of his office he was a Minister to them only, and to none other society whatsoever, or in what respect soever; your opinion is contrary to the judgment and practice of the universal Church, and tendeth to destroy the unity of the Church, and that communion which the Churches of God may and ought to have one with another; for if he be not a Minister in other Churches, then are not the Churches of God one, nor the Ministers one, nor the flock which they feed one, nor the Communion one which they have each with other. And if the Pastor derive all his authority to feed from the Church, when the Church hath set him aside, what right hath he to administer among that people. If they err in their deposition, it is true they sin against Christ. But as they give right to an unworthy man to administer among them, if they call him unjustly, so they take right from the worthy if wrongsully they depose him. The Minister is for his Ministry the office for the execution, and so the Pastor and the flock are relatives: And therefore if their Election gave him authority among them to seed, their casting him off hath stripped him of the same power which formerly they gave him. And his ministry ceasing, he should cease to be their Minister, if he stood as Minister only to that Congregation in every respect.

Whit. depont. q. 4. Sec. 10. pa. 559. Certe lex naturae & ratio clamitat cujus est instituere ejus est destruere, sive destituere, ad quem institutio pertinet ad eundem destitutionem, seu destructionem pertinere. Rob. aga. B. p. 214. If the Congregation may choose and elect their Governors, then they may refuse and reprobate them.

VIII. POSITION. That one Minister cannot perform any ministerial act in another Congregation.

Answer.

IF you take ministerial act improperly as sometimes it is taken by some, only when the Minister of one Church doth exercise his gifts of praying and preaching in another Church, being by themselves so desired. Then we answer, in this sense a Minister of one Church may do a ministerial act in another, which he doth not perform by virtue of any calling, but only by his gifts; and thus upon any occasion we mutually perform those acts one in another's Churches: But if you mean by ministerial act, such an act of authority and power in dispensing of God's ordinance as a Minister doth perform to the Church, whereunto he is called to be a Minister; then we deny that he can so perform any ministerial act to any other Church but his own, because his office extends no further then his call. For that solemn charge, *Act. 20. 28.* is not to feed all flocks, but that one flock only, over which the holy Ghost hath made them over-seers. If the question were propounded to any Minister so exercising

in an others Church, which was once to our Savior by the chief Priests and Elders: *By what power doest thou these things, and who gave thee this authority?* let that Minister whosoever he be, study how to make an answer.

Reply.

THE preaching of the Word, public prayer in the congregation met together solemnly to worship God, and the administration of the Sacraments, are acts properly ministerial (if any other) to be performed by power and authority from Christ, as you acknowledge, for the preaching of the Word, and dispensation of the Seals in your second Consideration. But these acts one Minister may perform in another Congregation, or towards the members of another Church. You know by whom your question hath been propounded touching one Ministers exercising in another Ministers Church, and how it hath been answered; and if you see more light and truth then formerly, we would desire you substantially to confute what answers some of you have returned to that demand. *To admit (saith Mr. J. D.) those that are known members of another Church to Communion in the Sacraments upon fitting occasions I hold lawful, and do professemy readiness to practice accordingly. Again, I conceive that (besides my membership else where, and theright which those Churches give to known passants of being admitted to the Communion for a short time) both himself and the whole Church acknowledge me for a member with them for the time of my abode in that service, which they testified by desiring the help of my public labors, and their cheerful admittance of me to that ordinance during that time without the least scruple.* And if a Minister may pray, preach, bless the congregation in the name of the Lord, and receive the Sacrament with them, being thereunto requested; we doubt not but by consent of the Pastor and the Congregation he may lawfully dispense the Seals amongst them also as need and occasion requires.

That distinction of preaching by office, and exercising his gifts only, when it is done by a Minister, and desired of none but Ministers, and that in solemn, set, constant Church-assemblies, we cannot find warranted in the Word of truth, and therefore we dare not receive it.

FINIS.

P-SA-2. A svpport for the sinking heart in times of distress, or, A sermon preached in London to uphold hope and allay fear January 4th which was a day of great trouble and deep danger in the city - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662.

A SVPPORT FOR the sinking Heart in times of distress. OR A SERMON PREACHED in LONDON, to uphold hope and allay fear, *January 4th*. Which was a day of great trouble and deep danger in the City.

By SIMEON ASH.

PROV. 25.11.

A Word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold, in pictures of silver.

LONDON Printed by G.M. and are to be sold by *Thomas Underhill*, at the sign of the Bible in *Woodstreet* near the Counter, MDCXLII.

To the Christian Reader.

THE seasonableness of this Sermon occasioning warm workings in the hearts of many who heard it preached, the Author of it was persuaded to print it: but he judging it unworthy such public view, returned a denial unto those desires of his friends. Afterwards understanding that a Copy taken by short hand from his mouth, would be made common, he rather chose to peruse and correct it, then to expose himself and the reader unto greater wrong. Hereupon sundry phrases are filed, and some Scriptures lay'd more open, other additions or amplifications are not very many, but thou now hast the body of the Sermon, both for matter and method, as it was first delivered. When thou meetest with wants and weaknesses, remember that not the confidence of the preacher, but the importunity of some of his heareres, hath made this discourse thus public. If by means hereof, thy soul shall receive any spiritual edification, and grow more able with hope and comfort, to thrust through straits in Heaven way; give God the glory of all his gracious workings upon thy spirit by Jesus Christ.

Martis.17. 1641.

IT is this day ordered by the Committee of the House of Commons in Parliament concerning Printing; that this Book, entitled *A support for the sinking heart in times of distress*, be printed.

JOHN WHITE.

GEN. XXII. XIV.

In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

INterpreters call this Text a Proverb, the interpretation whereof is to be fetched from the occasion of it.

God by way of trial did put his servant *Abraham* upon a sad task, a dead service, commanding him to make a burnt offering of his son, his son *Isaac*, the son of his age, and the son of God's promise.

Take now thy son, thy only son Isaac whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering.

How heavy this work was likely to be upon *Abraham's* heart, I leave it to the judgment of any affectionate father, when he hath seriously perused the law of the Lord concerning burnt offerings.

The offering being slain it was to be cut in pieces, the wood being laid upon the Altar fire was to be put under, the parts, the head, the fat were to be laid in order upon the wood, the inwards and the legs being washed in water, all were to be burnt on the Altar.

When the good old man had chewed this bitter pill for the space of three days, towards the end of the third day, he lifting up *his eyes saw the place afar off* where his dearest son must be sacrificed.

Being come to his journeys end he builds the Altar, binds his son, and lays him thereon. What pathetic conference passed between them two, the Holy Ghost reveals not. But what it was each affectionate heart will make conjecture. When the father (no doubt with a heavy heart) had taken the knife, and lifted up his hand, and was ready to give the death's blow to his beloved *Isaac*, now imagine you what were *Abraham's* straightens.

Is it not probable he might have such reasonings as these? If I kill not my son God will be incensed because he is disobeyed; if I do, how will the world clamour and censure, being ignorant of my warrant, and therefore apt to judge my act both impious and unnatural.

Now in the Mount is the Lord seen, divine providence sweetly and gloriously appeareth two ways.

1. In that *Abraham's* son is spared.
2. In that a sitting sacrifice is prepared, and both unexpected. *Abraham, Abraham hold thy hand.*

How welcome were these words to the working warm heart of *Abraham*, being ready to let forth the life of his well-beloved son? The execution is checked, *Isaac* is not killed, and yet the intention of his obedience herein is graciously accepted: yea and as an addition of mercy, he is assured by Christ the Angel of the covenant, that God accounted him one that truly feared his name. *Now I know thou fearest me.*

This unexpected providence might work in the good man's heart willingness to tender unto the Lord an offering in way of thankfulness, that his Majesty might have some homage in the same place where he had shown so much favor. And though speedy provision of that kind was as far from *Abraham's* thoughts, as the preservation of his son, yet when he lifted up his eyes and looked, *behold behind him a ramme caught in a thicket by the horns. And Abraham went*

and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son, and Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah Jireh. In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

I will not trouble you in reporting the various readings of these words from the original. In short, the english of my Text is this, *Mans extremity is God's opportunity*. Or if you would have my Doctrine in other words, take it thus:

In the Mount, in the midst of straights it hath been the manner of the Almighty,mercifully to manifest himself for his servants comfort.

There are two things that I shall desire to speak too in the prosecution of this point, purposeley pitched upon because of this days perplexity.

- 1. Confirmation, that it may be strongly believed.
- 2. Application, that it may be seasonably improved.

The Confirmation of the Doctrine I will give in.

- 1. By Scripture.
- 2. By Reason.

The Scripture proof you shall have under two heads.

- 1. The Promises of God.
- 2. The experiences of the godly.

I will mention only two precious Promises, because they are sufficient, being both pregnant and pertinent, speaking both fully and punctually to the point in hand.

The former is in *Psal. 72.12*. where the sweet dispensations of Christ's regal authority being typically foretold by King *Solomon's* government, we have this recorded. *He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also and him that hath no helper*. You may do well to mark the fitness and fullness of the Promise.

- 1. When Christ finds his people in themselves poor and needy, destitute of abilities to shelter themselves from wrong and violence.
- 2. When in regard of others it is thus with them, viz. not only that they have weak helps, or few helpers, but when they have no helpers, none at all.
- 3. When in this distress they cry out as persons in an undone condition, then, though not till then will he deliver.

The other Promise is registered in *Deut. 32.36*. *For the Lord shall judge his people,and repent himself for his servants when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut, up, or left.*

The language is large, and hath much in it, but because the proof in it is apparent to every eye, I will leave it.

The experiences of the godly which I shall produce you may please thus to consider:

- 1. Of single Persons plunged into deep dangers.
- 2. Of companies, whether few or many, compassed about with devouring perils on every side.

For single Persons, I will instance in four Examples.

The first is of *Daniel*, wherein four circumstances are remarkable.

- 1. He was cast to *Lions*, not only one but many, the number we know not.
- 2. He was put into the *Lions den*, and the door was shut, *a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den* that he might not get forth from those beasts of prey.
- 3. *The King sealeth it with his own signet, and with the signet of his Lord's, that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.*
- 4. In this dark den of deadly danger he continued a whole night, and in this great straight *the Lord by his Angel, shut the Lions mouths that they did his servant no hurt at all.*

The second Example is that of *David*, 1 *Sam.* 23. from the 25. to the 28. *Saul pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon, and Saul went on this side the Mountain and David and his men on that side of the Mountain, and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul, for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them. But there came a messenger unto Saul saying, hast thee and come, for the Philistines have invaded the Land, wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David.*

In this Example these things are considerable.

- 1. It was no less then *David's* life that now was endangered.
- 2. The *Ziphites* who were acquainted with *David's* holds, combined themselves also against him.
- 3. All this strength did not only in a war-like way take up arms to meet him, for then by flying back he might have made an escape, but they compassed him round about.
- 4. His strength was not sufficient safely to break through these blood-thirsting forces: Now in this straight, an unexpected providence procures his preservation: In this *Mount* was God seen gloriously.

The third Example is that of *Paul*, which you have in the 21. *Acts* 30.31, 32. *All the City was moved, and the people ran together, they bound Paul, drew him out of the Temple, and forthwith the doors were shut, and as they went about to kill him, tidings came to the chief Captain of the band, that*

all Jerusalem was in an uproar, who immediately took soldiers, and Centurions, and ran down unto them, and when they saw the chief Captain and the soldiers, they left beating Paul.

Herein you may note:

- 1. The general Insurrection, *All the City*.
- 2. Their violent Opposition, *They drew him out*.
- 3. Their bloody Intention, *It was to kill Paul*.
- 4. Their entrance upon execution, *They were beating him to beat out his life: Now in this straight cometh tidings, leave him there is something else to do: Thus was God in the Mount seen, and Paul's life preserved*.

The fourth Example is of *Peter*, Acts 12.4, 6, 7. wherein note:

- 1. That *Herod* intending to kill him (having done execution upon *James*, ver. 3.) had apprehended him, and imprisoned him.
- 2. In prison he was committed to the custody of four quaternions of soldiers, that for every watch both day and night there might be 4. looking to him to prevent escape.
- 3. The night before he was to be brought forth, he was bound with two chains, and two soldiers had him between them. And now, that night, and in that straight, he was delivered by the Angel of God.

The experiences of God's people in combined companies, come in the next place to be considered, and for brevities sake I will only suggest three.

The first is of *Shadrack*, *Meshech* and *Abednego*, wherein their Persons are not so many as the particulars notable in their deliverance, Dan. 3.19, 20, 21, 22, 23. &c. *Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrack, Mesech and Abednego, therefore he spake and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more then it was wont to be heated, &c.*

From these words their extreme peril with which they were besieged, appears in five circumstances.

- 1. Their death is determined by the King, who had authority to command both their tortures and executioners.
- 2. The most mighty soldiers were appointed to bind them, and do execution upon them.
- 3. The furnace being heated seven times more hot then ordinarily, did burn to death them who undertook their burning.
- 4. These 3. men, were cast not only into the mouth, but into the midst of the furnace.

- 5. They fell down bound in the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Now in this condition, conceive how little hope could be expected of life to be continued, and yet it is affirmed by the Holy Ghost, *that they had no hurt, upon their bodies the fire had no power, nor was the hair of their head singed.*

The next is of *Israel* when they came out of *Egypt*, recorded, *Exodus 14*. wherein these things set forth *Israel's* extremity.

- 1. The forces prepared against them, *The heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and he made ready his Chariot and tooked his people with him, and he took six hundred chosen Chariots, and all the Chariots of Egypt, and Captains over everyone of them.*
- 2. The pursuit made after them, *They pursued after the children of Israel, and the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and Chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen and his army.*
- 3. The dreadful apprehensions raised in the hearts of the *Israelites*, (*viz.*) that no less than their death was intended. *Why hast thou taken us away to die? Had it not been better for us to serve the Egyptians then that we should die.*
- 4. The particulars whereby they were further straightened. 1. *The Egyptians overtook them encamping by the Sea.* 2. *The Seas of they went forward threatened to devour them. In this distress God discovers himself, and delivers them. For observe the words, Moses said unto the people, fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you today.*

To day, even just now and not before, help comes from Heaven Herein this farther circumstances hath it's weight, that *Israel* at this instant was provoking God, by murmuring and distrustful fears.

The last is of *Israel* in the reign of *Jeroboam* son of *Joash*. *The Lord saw the affliction of Israel that it was very bitter, for there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel, and the Lord said not that he would blot out the name of Israel under Heaven, but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.*

All these passages propounded from sacred records, may abundantly satisfy us in the truth of the doctrine now under hand: (*viz.*) *That in the Mount of the Lord it shall appear, Mans extremity is God's opportunity.*

In case you inquire the Reasons of this divine dispensation, I return answer.

That God thus worketh in reference to

- Himself.
- His people.

- Their enemies

1. In reference to himself. The praise and glory of his own blessed Name designed in all his works, is the supreme end aimed at in this Providence. This God bringeth in as the cause why his hand carried *Israel* to the very side of the Sea, into the mouth of death before deliverance should appear. *I will be honored upon Pharaoh and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord.*

Upon such occasions the Attributes of the Lord break forth in glory, His Wisdom is most manifested when it worketh beyond means, above means, that human reason cannot find out divine foot-steps. His Power triumphs when all opposition shrinketh before his wondrous workings. The like might be shown concerning his other excellencies. The event of God's dealings with *Daniel*, and the three young governors in the times of their straits, discover that this was God's intent in those providences. For mark how *Nebuchadnezzar* and the King *Darius* did trumpet forth the praises of the God of *Shadrach, Mesech, Abednego* and *Daniel*, when they were eye witnesses of those two glorious deliverances which were wrought on by omnipotency. *Then Nebuchadnezzar spake and said, blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who hath sent his Angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the Kings word, and yielded their bodies that they might not serve, nor worship any god, except their own God. Therefore I make a decree, that every people, nation and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dung-hill, Then King Darius wrote unto all people, nations and languages, that dwell in all the earth. I make a decree, that in every dominion of my Kingdom, men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, and steadfast forever, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and resoueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in Heaven and in earth who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the Lions.* By both these instances it is evident, that the Lord doth appear in the Mount for his own sake, to get and raise himself a name in the world.

2. God doth thus work in respect to his own people. And here I will note only four particulars.

1. Sometimes that he might discover to his servants for their encouragement, both the truth and strength of his own graces in them. This was the reason why God thus tried *Abraham*, that he might manifest that holy fear which was planted in his breast. Hereupon God putteth him to it, and carrieth him into the Mount, leadeth him into distress by degrees, acting him on to build the Altar, to lay the wood in order, to bind his *Isaac*, to lay him upon the Altar, upon the wood, yea to take the knife, and to stretch forth his hand to slay his son, before he did appear for his comfort, in giving order for the lengthening of *Isaac's* life. And now when there seemed to be but one minute of time unto the effusion of *Isaac's* blood, hear the good news from Heaven, *Abraham I know thou fearest me.*

2. Sometimes to manifest the feebleness of some grace in their hearts for their humbling, *Peter* thought himself full enough of courage to come to Christ upon the sinking seas it he might have a call. Well! mark the issue, Christ calleth him, come out *Peter*, but *when he saw*

the winds boisterous, and when his sooting failed, he began to sink, then he was afraid and cried out, hereupon observe Christ's answer, O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt.

3. That he may set the graces of his Spirit in exercise, both for their increase, and for the enfeebling of contrary lusts. We know that habits are strengthened by exercise, and grace is augmented in its measure, by being put forth vigorously in it's operations. And by how much any grace gathereth strength, by so much the opposing corruption becometh feeble in a Christian breast. And that the Lord hath this end in this kind of working, it might be evidenced by manifold instances, but for brevities sake, I will only point at one, in one single experiment.

As holy affiance in God is confirmed, so by such like dispensations creature confidence is abated in holy hearts, 2 Cor. 1.9, 10. *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.* Men in straights see the strength of creature helps shunke up, and withered, whereupon they dare lean to them no longer; but God's irresistible power profound wisdom, abundant goodness, and other glorious attributes in such difficult cases being clearly discovered, the soul is encouraged confidently to cast it self into his arms for future times.

4. That their deliverance might be more sweet to their spirits, and consequently that their joys might the more readily run out before his Majesty in holy thankfulness. When we expect that now our houses shall be fired, the City sack it our estates wasted, our wives abused, our children cruelly murdered, our Sabbath and week day meetings interrupted, our Parliament dissolved, and our Kingdom desolated. Now to see these clouds to blow over, and our Sun to break forth again, oh how sweet will this glorious change be to our now-dropping hearts! *David's* experince speaks to this purpose, *Psal 34.1, 2, 3.* A Psalm of *David* when he changed his behavior before *Abimelech*, who drove him away, and he departed. *I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth: My soul shall make her boust in the Lord, the hamble shall hear thereof and be glad, oh magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.* *Psal. 86.12, 1, 3.* *I will praise thee O Lord my God with all my heart, and I will glorify thy name for evermore. For great is thy mercy toward me, and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.* But more fully and fitly may our Kingdom concernments be expressed by: *Psal. 124.* if our God be pleased now to appear in the Mount for *London*, for *England*, in this day of our deep danger, and exceeding, exceeding great fear, And our desired deliverance from present perplexities, may with joy of soul be expressed by the words of that Psalm. *If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may England say, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us, then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul, then the proud waters had gone over our soul. But blessed be the Lord who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth, &c.*

3. God thus worketh in regard of his people's enemies, both the Devil and devilish men. 1. In regard of the Devil, that he might stop his black and slanderous mouth, which is upon all occasions wide open in ways of calumny, casting slanderous accusations upon God's good

servants. When all *Jobs* estate was removed in a day, all his children knocked dead at one blow, God commending *Job* saith thus to Satan, *Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered and said, skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life, put forth thy hand now and touch his bone, and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.* Hereupon God bringeth *Job* into further straights, for this very purpose to silence Satan. And whereas those malignant spirits continue to be the accusers of the Brethren, and are still apt to provoke his Majesty against them, suggesting, that if his providence put them to pinches, they will then sly out, and manifest their carnal fleshliness in the profession and practice of Religion: Hereupon God puts them (as it were) into the stocks, and sets them upon the rack, and causeth them to be besieged with difficulties to prove Satan a notorious liar.

2. In regard of devilish men. Partly to fill their hearts with the more vexation: Partly to chain down their violent spirits, that they may not break forth with further fury against his cause and people, and through the power of strong conviction, to work some change in their lives and courses.

1. To fill their hearts with the more vexation. The Lord doth indeed rejoice in the misery of the wicked. *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh: yea it is a comfort to his highness to pour forth fury upon them: I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted.* And the Psalmist seems to give in this, as a reason why God causeth it to be midnight with his servants before light peep forth, why they are in deep danger before daylight appear, *Psal. 112.9, 10. Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness, his heart is established, he shall not be afraid: until he see his desire upon his enemies, his horn shall be exalted with honor, the wicked shall see it and be grieved, he shall gnash with his teeth and melt away.* It cutteth a wicked man to the heart, when he thinketh he shall have the day in the downfall of the righteous, and yet the godly they rise and get ground, and gather strength. We have a pregnant proof of this in the example of *Haman*; who expecting that *Mordecai* should be hanged, when *Mordecai* was advanced to great honor, then *Haman* mourned and hanged down the head: And thus it will be with the popish and profane, who this day rejoice in our doleful straights, when God shall appear in the Mount for our deliverance.

2. That chains of restraint might be laid upon their hearts and hands, by God's strange and amazing providences. When they see that God from Heaven doth give testimonialls of approbation to his poor persecuted servants and service, being plunged over head and ears in the floods of deepest calamity.

This is made good upon *Nebuchadnezzar*. *Therefore I make a decree, that every people, nation and language which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dung-hill, because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. Then the King promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon.*

In like manner the defeat of *Haman*, and the deliverance of the poor *Jews* devoted to destruction, produced the same effect upon many of their enemies. And truly notwithstanding this days fears and straights, we will hope to see some such effects upon the hearts and lives of some who deride and oppose our desired reformation. Thus much for Confirmation of the doctrine. Application followeth. There are four uses to be made which are both natural and seasonable.

Hence it followeth, that people have no ground at all to suspect their own gracious standing in reference to God because of their straights. Deep and devouring dangers may be ready to swallow up the righteous, God may bring an *Abraham* into the Mount, unto great difficulties, God's people may travel through the red sea in the way to *Canaan*, seas of trouble, bloody times may overtake them who are most dear to God. This I rather note because God's people are apt to dash upon this rock, and to do themselves much wrong by thus reasoning. If God did love me, or had been graciously respectful to my humiliations and prayers, I should not have seen so black, so dark a day. My self and mine, our peace and Parliament, our persons and possessions had never been in such danger, if the Lord had been favorable to me in seeking better times. Herein *David* failed: *Psal. 73.13, 14. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence, for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.* Now to keep us from adding guilt to our grief, that we may not provoke God to be angry, while our enemies are filled brim full of blood-thirsting fury. I will briefly suggest four considerations, to preserve us from this mistake.

1. By this error acted, we deny the perfection of the word of God, because therein there is no such rule to judge by. Yea the Scriptures openly and evidently speak the contrary, *Eccles. 9.1, 2. No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them. All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.* And certainly if we shall dare to add our devises to God's word, he will be angry. *Add thou not unto his words lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.*

2. Thus people bear false witness against themselves, by passing unjustifiable sentences against their own souls. *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.* To detract from our neighbors credit and comfort, is a breach of God's law. And truly it admits many aggravations, when we deal thus injuriously with ourselves.

3. We express much ingratitude to God, the God of all our mercies, calling his love into question, and overlooking or undervaluing all former favors, because of present pressures and approaching dangers. Let *Israel's* miscarriage in this kind be your looking-glass to show the foul face of this fault, that you may take heed of this deformity. When *Pharaoh* pursued them, and the roaring seas threatened to devour them, their deliverance out of *Egypt* (though wrought on by many miraculous providences) was accounted a misery rather than a mercy, for observe their language, *Exod. 14.11. wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us?*

4. By this mistake we reach a wrong to others, *Psal. 73.15. If I say I will speak thus, behold I should offend against the generation of thy children.* Our carriage in this particular may cast sad discouragements upon the hearts of many dear to God, causing them to question their

spiritual state, because of outward straights. Hereby also we seem to suspect their wisdom who uphold their hopes, and maintain their comforts, notwithstanding their manifold heavy afflictions.

Censure not others to be rejected or abhorred by the Lord, because you meet with them in the Mount, you see them in straights, in extremities. Beloved, the words of the Psalmist are considerable. *Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble, the Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.* As you desire favorable dealing from God in the time of your personal calamity, learn to judge wisely and charitably of them who are in extremity. The *Barbarians* did censure *Paul* to be a man under some black note of infamy, fastened upon him by the Lord, because of his sudden and unexpected danger. *Acts 28.4. And when the Barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, no doubt this man is a murderer.* Mark their confidence as well as their uncharitableness, no doubt he is a murderer: And why no doubt? *because though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth him not to live,* for a venomous viper, a death threatening creature now did hang upon his hand. Beloved when we look upon men arrested by credit-killing accusations, and pursued with death-threatening charges, and constrained to hide themselves from the bloody hands of violence, let us take heed of adding to their sorrow by our censures. That practice which was well beseeming *Barbarians*, will be very uncomely for us Christians. Two things consider to keep you from this fault, which I will propound without much enlargement.

- 1. The sinfulness of this censoriousnesse.
- 2. The dangerousnesse of this censoriousnesse.

The sinfulness of it:

1. Being forbidden by Christ, *judge not, that you be not judged;* judge not, that is, not rashly, groundlessly, uncharitably.
2. Arguing want of love, for truth and strength of love maketh fair and canded constructions of all occurances which concern them whom we love. *Charity doth not behave it self unseemly, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things.*
3. Weakning love, for affection is enfeebled by our looking upon our brethren through the glass which presents them as unlovely, while we think them persons disregarded by God, our respect to them is diminished.
4. Hindering prayer, the Apostle knew this, and therefore I pray you consider by what an argument he presseth the *Hebrews* to pray for him, *pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly.* If you be well persuaded of the afflicted in regard of their pious frame, you will be the more willing to let out your hearts for them in a way of prayer. But when men thus think, the Heavens frown, and God is angry with such an one, and therefore it is a vain thing to bestow time and breath in prayer for him, this office of

Christian love is interrupted. By these particulars you may perceive that this censoriousnesse is very sinful; sinful in the root, and sinful in the fruits, sinful in the heart, and sinful in the life, checking grace, and hindering duty.

2. Consider the dangerousnesse of it.

1. God is much incensed, You remember how *Eliphaz* and the other of *Jobs* friends, loaded him with their heavy censures, concluding his hypocrisy from his extremity. Now when God had done with *Job*, having schooled him out of the whirlwind, and had wrought him to his own bent, observe what followeth, *The Lord said to Eliphaz the Tewanite, my wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends, for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath.* Therefore my beloved if you would not suffer under God's frowns, nor smart under the expressions of his displeasure, if you would not have the sparks of God's wrath to kindle upon you, take heed of censuring any of God's worthies that have been instrumental for good either in Church or commonwealth, because for the present under a black cloud, because exposed unto any disgrace or danger, by reason of some sad providence.

2. Our censoriousnesse may in our suffering times add much weight to our own heavy pressures. If I censure others, and thereby add affliction to their bonds, I may expect that God will add gall to my wormwood, when the bitter cup cometh to my hand, and I must perforce take down a displeasing and distasteful draught. *Judge not, that you be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.* These meditations made use of, may, I hope through God's mercy, prevent our sinning against God, others and ourselves, by uncharitable censures cast upon our distressed brethren.

It concerneth all of us to prepare for a journey into the Mount, to make ready for trials by extremities. Beloved, this day the Heavens are black over our heads, and our fears are not few, for ought we know God will have us into the Mount, my meaning is, it may be the Lord will thrust us into such extremities, as we never yet met with in all our lives.

There are two things that I will plainly speak to in the enlarging of this use.

- 1. What may quicken us to prepare for straights.
- 2. What course must be taken that we may be prepared for such a condition.

To persuade our preparation, consider two motive.

- 1. That we are all exposed unto perplexities.
- 2. That we are all subject to manifold miscarriages in such a state.

1. We are all subject to a distressed condition, let him that denieth it bring forth his supersedias, and say here, I have that from Heaven signed and fealed, which doth secure me I shall never come into adversity. Beloved, believe it, whatsoever afflictions have seized upon any of God's worthies formerly, may overtake you and me before we die, and we cannot tell how speedily. You have heard what befell *Israel*, and why may not the same

betide *England*, you have heard what befell *Abraham, David, Daniel, Paul*, and why may not we look for the like.

Secondly, Subject we are to many miscarriages when God in his providence bringeth us to extremities: I will only hint this in a word or two.

1. Extremities do expose us unto unbelief, A grievous sin it is to suffer our souls at any time to be taken from an holy adherence, and firm dependence upon our God, and yet thus we are in danger to dishonor his highness, and wrong our own souls in times of distress. *David's* example doth evidence this fully. What more fair promise can any man embrace, then that which God made to him particularly, that he should be the King of *Israel*, and yet when *David* was in a straight, you hear of his distrust from his own confession, *I was greatly afflicted, I said in my hast all men are liars, Nathan a liar*, and all others who told him of succeeding *Saul* in the Kingdom of *Israel*, they were all liars. And why? because he saw not a fair and easy passage to the crown. The like also is recorded concerning him, when wearied out with the bloody pursuit of envious *Saul*. And *David* said in his heart, *I shall perish now one day by the hand of Saul*.

2. In distress we are disposed to strange impatency and discontent of spirit, which distemper doth woefully disguise our hearts, and disgrace our profession. It is a wonderful thing that ever a heart furnished with grace, should fly out as *Jonah* did. First, he thought he had lost his reputation, because *Nineveh* by him threatened was by the Lord spared. Well, he goeth out, and then the Sun annoyed him in regard of his body, but God provided a shelter, and the man was calm, afterward the gourd being worm-eaten and withered, *Jonah* he chafes and frets. The Lord checks him by this interrogation, *doest thou well to be angry?* Mark and be warned by his answer, *I do well to be angry even unto death*. The history of patient *Job* also proves this plentifully.

3. I might add, that we are subject to sinful fears, which dismay and torment the heart, check duty, weaken joy, and interrupt our sweet communion with God. Take notice of this distemper in God's own people, for which his majesty chideth them, *And who art thou that fearest a man that shall die, and the son of man that is but as grass, and for gettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and hast feared continually every day, &c.*

4. Apt we are to use sinful shifts betaking ourselves to unworthy practices to safeguard ourselves in times of extremity. Observe this in *Peters* practice, his Master is apprehended, violently carried away, likely to suffer death as a grievous malefactor. Now he seeth himself surrounded with them that oppose Christ, and this distress drove him upon a dangerous rock, a three-fold denial of his dearest Master: Let this move you and me, to prepare that we may not in like manner miss it, if God shall be pleased thus to prove us.

These things I believe do affect your hearts, whereupon in probability you will desire direction. Attend therefore and I will give you some counsel briefly: There are six things which I shall commend to your consideration and practice.

First, You must labor to make sure your propriety in God: When *David* upon service had been abroad, *Ziglack* the place where he left his wife and children was burnt, when he cometh home, there was no house to entertain him, no wife to welcome him, no children to be a comfort unto him, they all were carried captive, hereupon he with the rest, *wept till they could weep no longer*, &c. But *David encouraged himself in the Lord his God*. Heede here the ground of his support and consolation, not the Lord God, but the Lord his God, deity and propriety hold up his heavy heart, for the good man enjoying God, might thus refresh his drooping spirit. What though I have not an house to dwell in? thou art my dwelling place, my habitation, a place of sweetest rest and safest refuge. What though I have not a Wife? I have more in God then a yoke-fellow could have afforded. What though I have not a Child? there is more then the comfort of a numerous posterity in the blessed Deity. The soldiers cannot batter down this castle, the pilfering people pillaging, cannot possibly steal away this treasure, the troops of robbers, the desperate Cavilliers cannot deprive of this possession: This might be much enlarged both seasonably and profitably, but I must not insist upon anything. But this is my request, that you would without delay endeavor to clear up your interest in the almighty, that your dejected hearts may not abide disconsolate in the days of your distress.

Secondly, Acquaint yourselves with God, and labor to be familiar with his Majesty by constant and frequent communion through Jesus Christ. Men desire to know the utmost worth of what they have in possession, and what improvement may be made thereof if need should so require. We read in the Parable, that he *that had bought a piece of ground, must needs go to see it*, and therefore he must be excused if other things be neglected. If we were thus wise for our souls, we would seek to know, and to improve our God who is our inheritance, yea our all, unto our various advantages in the times of our greatest need. Seriously therefore ask thyself this question, What have I in having a God? What have I? I have infinite wisdom to advise me in all difficulties, infinite power to carry me through all straights, abundant goodness to supply all my wants, the tenderest bowels to commiserate me in my most doleful condition, yea I have all sufficiency to fill me brim full, and running over unto satisfaction. I added converse with thy God. He that would have comfort from Physicians in time of sickness, gaineth and maintaineth acquaintance with them in time of health. If you and I shall dare to keep at a distance from God in a way of estrangement from his Majesty in summer days, and in sun-shine seasons, when the Heavens are clear, and the City is peaceable, and the Parliament promising, and our hopes flourishing, we shall want comfort through communion with God, when the sun setteth, winter approacheth, Parliament breaketh, and misery threateneth on every side. Being in hast I shall here lay heads confusedly on heaps, whereas I should distinctly have discovered three things.

- 1. How God is revealed in holy writ for our comfort in the worst of times.
- 2. By what courses Christians should gain, and maintain communion with their God.

- 3. What fruitful improvements may be made of God by such employments. But I shall leave these things to your private care, having suggested this course by way of friendly counsel to make way for your comfort in the day of distress.

Thirdly, Walk exactly. Take heed of making breaches upon your consciences, by willing and willful sinning against the God of your comforts. Beloved, beloved you know that those who have had bruises and broken bones, they will feel aches in hard weather, and certainly if you will in time of prosperity dare to sin against conscience, it will add sorrow to your Sops, and gall to your wormwood, when God cometh upon you in a way of bitter calamity. Sinful sensual surfeits upon sweet morsels, will breed wringing pains, and painful vomits. The sons of *Jacob* were in a great straight when they were taken for spies as the story reports. What did now wring them? The remembrance of sin, though many years since committed, ah our brothers blood, our brothers blood; we would not pity him when he made his moan, and now God will be avenged of us. Alas, alas, we were hard-hearted towards a brother, and therefore no wonder that we meet with harshness amongst strangers. Whereas the maintaining of a clear conscience, ô what a comfort will it be when all shall be blackness, and blood about us. See it in *Paul* and his companions. When they made no other account but to die, what saith *Paul*, *This was our rejoicing*, (that was strange, rejoice when the next day they might expect to go to the stake?) well saith *Paul* *our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world*. Beloved, believe it that you cannot lay in a better cordial, to comfort and to stay your hearts in fearful, fainting, distressing, dying times, then by exact walking with God before the storm fall. The Apostles experience puts *a probatum est* unto this prescription. For ought we know, the day is at hand wherein we shall hear the war-Horses neighing, the murdering Cannons roaring, the little Children skreaking, and the fearful Women skritchng: You know not, beloved, how soon you may see your City flaming, your own houses burning, your goods wasting. It will be a sad sight to behold your Wives barbarously abused, your Husbands bloodily butchered, and your Children cruelly tormented. I beseech you, I beseech you, consider now what will yield you comfort then. When *Hezekiah* did daily expect to die, take notice, unto what he betook himself for solace and support: *Remember now ô Lord I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight*. In like manner may we raise up our sinking hearts in such heavy times, if we can truly thus speak unto the soul-searching Majesty. Lord while times were peaceable and prosperous, when I was surrounded with comforts on every side, thou knowest I had a heart to walk with thee humbly, to observe thy Sabbath holily, to use thy worships purely, and to aim at the honor of thy name sincerely. This, this will cheare you both living and dying. You know that neither the loud winds, nor the black clouds, nor the great showers, nor the flashings of lightning, nor the hideous claps of thunder, do so much affright us, as an earthquake. But when some vapors are got into the hollow places, the bowels of the earth, and the foundation of the world shakes, this is terrible, this is terrible indeed, though the Sun shine, and no cloud appear in the sky. In like manner it is not so much an outward affliction as guilt within, guilt within which causeth the heart of man to rock and quake through fear within him. Therefore take heed, stop all the passages into your souls, keep the heart with all diligence, that no known

guilt be admitted into it, as you desire a stable, firm frame of spirit, prepared for the strongest storms, the greatest straits wherewith divine providence may possibly prove you.

Fourthly, If you have made wounds and bruises in your consciences, seek an healing plaster by sound repentance suddenly. A bone broken being well set (they say) becomes the stronger. *David* had gashed his conscience grievously, both by uncleanness and murder, in the matter of *Bathsheba* and *Uriah*. Notwithstanding by means of *Nathan's* plain dealing being wrought to deep sorrow, the wound was healed, and the same mouth which cured him by a corrosive, gave him this comfort, *God hath forgiven thy sin, thou shalt not die*. Now after this, according to the threatening of *Nathan*, God raised up evil against him out of his own house, and he was in a wonderful straight, *Absalom* was up in arms against him. This distress occasioned the third Psalm, as the title tells, wherein he expresseth his perplexed condition. *Many are they that rise up against me, many there be that say of my soul there is no help for him in God*. Now here is a straight indeed, many imagining, that Heaven could not help him: yet if you will by his phrase of speech, judge the frame of his heart, you shall find as much confidence in him now, as ever in all his life: Take notice of it. *But thou ô Lord art a shield for me, my glory, and the lifter up of my head. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. Yea this is added, I laid me down and slept. Consider in his supposition, 1. The number of enemies, viz. ten thousand. 2. The manner of their opposition, though they should rise up in a warlike manner against me. 3. Their advantage against him, and his danger to be apprehended by them. It is not though they come to meet me, or though they make after me, for then by flight he might hope for safety, But though they should beset me round about, &c. David having made his peace with God, though now in a very great distress, yea although (remembering God's threathing) he might read his scandalous sins, in this heavy affliction, yet his confidence, courage and comfort is very remarkable. If any of your consciences now wring you upon the remembrance of such a sin, or such a sin, (I name none, but leave it between God and your own hearts to consider of it) go home repeat, repent and make your peace with God today, without any further delay, that you may be sit for a straight if it should come tomorrow.*

Fifthly, Mind and trade your experience. God hath done already as much for *England* as is yet to be done, to set all things right and in order again amongst us. Not many Moneths since, our days were as dark, our fears as great, and our enemies as many as now. Let us therefore remember ourselves, the Lord lives, the Almighty is in Heaven, he still is mindful of his covenant, and changeth not. The holy Scriptures yield us plentiful proof of improving former experiences, to arm against future fears. That of *David* is notable, *Thy servant slew both the Lyon and the Bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them. David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lyon, and out of the paw of the Bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher then I, for thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy*. In like manner the Apostle improves his deliverance from *Nero*, that persecutor. *No man stood by me, but all forsook me, notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lyon*. Consider the words, *Paul* was not only in the Lions den, not only

within the reach of the Lions chain, nor only under the Lions paw, but in the Lions mouth. Now his inference is observable, *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly Kingdom.* Again note, *We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead. Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.* Here for your help, I will hint one experience still fresh in our minds, God settled peace between us and Scotland, when after great preparations for war, the armies were set in battle array, the onset given, the skirmish begun, blood drawn, many slain, the two Kingdoms ready to be broken in pieces, the one against the other. Consider what great things God hath done, and trade your experiences for your future profit.

Sixty, Cleere up your evidences for Heaven, and keep them so fair, that in the darkest day they may be legible, easy to be read without hacking and hesitancy. The usefulness hereof in evil times appears in the Apostles experience, *For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction that is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weigh of glory.* Mind the ground, *For we know that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.* The heir apparent of Heaven, may hold up head and heart, and in this manner express himself: come the worst that can come, though my state shall decay, my soul and body part, myself and dearest natural friends be plucked asunder, *yet I have in Heaven, a better and more enduring substance:* more and better friends, sweeter and more satisfying communion. If they take away my trash, the true treasure, that is out of their reach. What if they take down my tottering tabernacle of clay? I shall have a glorified, a beautified body to all eternity, in spite of hell and earth combining against me. What if they drive me out of house, and City, and Kingdom, the best is, they cannot expel me from my God, nor deprive me of a mansion, an abiding place in the City of God, the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is a ground of sweet joy, and strong encouragement unto us, notwithstanding our present state which is dark and dreadful. Here we may seasonably with comfort call to mind that strange apparition unto Moses: *A bush burning with fire, and yet the bush was not consumed.* Beloved, what slames of fury are now kindled in the bosoms of many, threatening to burn down all our hopes? Yet let us pluck up courage, for though our sins have made us combustible matter, yet may we hope that our God will not consume us. Let us cheare ourselves against the jeares and insolencies of the Malignant party with the words of the Church, *Rejoyce not against me ô my enemy, when I fall I shall rise again, when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me.* Some interpreters conceive, Abraham had this deliverance hinted before hand, and therefore first told his servants, *I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you:* and afterward going to the place where Isaac was to be sacrificed; when the child said, *father, father here is the wood, but where is the burnt offering,* he answered, *my son God will prepare one,* and this held up the good man's heart, encouraging him thus to resolve, I will go on, I will see what God will do, I will put him to it. We are in straights at this day, I need not tell you, and who knows but that today in the Mount God will appear for our comfort. Much I cannot speak through want of time to this use, yet dare I not altogether be

silent, considering the season. Under two heads I will briefly assist your sinking spirits by way of advice.

1. Learn aright to make way for desired comforts in times of distress, that you may have this Texts, and this Sermons encouragement at hand, not only now, but hereafter when you may stand in need.

2. Improve the particulars comprised in this title *Jehovah*, held forth for our use in the Text now handling, I may not now speak under these heads, both unto our National and Personal concernments distinctly. For the former, way is made for our refreshing in the worst of times that can possibly overtake us.

1. By studying the qualifications to which favor is promised.

2. By using the means of our good which by the Lord are prescribed.

First, Everyone may not challenge propriety in the privilege of the Text. Every loose-liver may not come out and say, well I in the Mount God will be seen, and therefore I will fear no colors. No, no, for there is a peculiar gracious disposition to be found upon the hearts of them who may expect that God will appear in the Mount for them, for their consolation.

1. Your souls must be so seasoned with God's fear, that having his command, you will not draw back from any service put upon your hands, how hard, how heavy soever. Mark it in *Abraham*, *Abraham* now I know thou fearest me, and how doth his fear discover it self, Upon divine commission he sets upon a service, the doing whereof, was against heart and hair, repugnant to reason, without all president, against the stream of natural affections, crossing the conceit and opinion of the world. Can you imagine if *Isaac* had been slain, and the fact known, what a hubbub would have been in the Country? how many mouths would have been opened, in reporting *Abraham's* strange and unheard of cruelty? *Isaac* is killed, and his own father, father *Abraham*, that religious man, he himself hath killed him, how would this have rung in every corner? Do but think what Mother *Sarah* would have said upon her Husbands return home, Husband where is *Isaac*? and conjecture with what a sad heart he might have made this answer, Wife I have killed him, and I have burnt him before God as a sacrifice. Beloved, neither these things, nor any other which might be cast in as discouragements, did take him off from duty. The fear of God carried him above all discouragements, both from his natural affections, his wives frowns, and the worlds clamours. And to this man, thus fearing God, God appears in the Mount: Mind this I pray you, and labor herein to be like this gracious man, thus devoted to God's fear.

2. You must, not dare to adventure upon any known sin, though it be to safeguard your persons, your estates, your places of favor and honor, your anything, your all things under the Sun. A man of this make, is one who may expect to meet with the Almighty in the Mount. The proof of this is fair in the experience of *Daniel*. The decree was signed, he must not for thirty days pray unto his God, if he did, he must be thrown into the Lions den, well saith *Daniel*, let the Lions make a meal upon my body, I am resolved I will not forbear this worship due to my God, I will not thus interrupt my communion with my heavenly Father. The like

you have in the three young Governors, the King he would have them fall down and worship the image he had set up. If you will not, you must into the furnace. Mark their answer, *Our God whom we serve is able to deliver, but if not, be is known unto thee, we will not serve thy gods.* And the proof of the point reported how God appeared in the days of their distress for their deliverance, unto these experiments I might add Promises. *If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the singer, and speaking vanity, and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul.* The meaning is, if you will betake yourselves to courses of piety and mercy, contrary to your former ways of wickedness and violence, *then shall your light break forth in obscurity, and your darkness be as the noon-day. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. If iniquity be in thy hand put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy Tabernacle, for then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot, yea thou shalt be steadfast, and thou shalt not fear.* What encouragements should these be to persuade us to reform ourselves, and to endeavor the amendment of one another. Therefore go home now, and thus say to God, and to yourselves seriously and sincerely, I am resolved I will leave my cheating, and cozening, my oaths, lying, my hypocrisy and pride, and all my other known sins. Away with these and all other discovered abominations, promise God for future times to betake yourselves unto a better course of living, as you desire the sweet and seasonable discoveries of God, in the time of your greatest need.

Secondly, The means of your good must be used, and they are,

- 1. Civil.
- 2. Sacred.

For Civil means, You must not say we care not whether we have anymore watch in the City, night or day, we will trouble and charge ourselves no further in this kind. But you must hold on in being serviceable to divine providence, otherwise you will tempt God. There is a notable example of *Joab* in this case both commendable and imitable. *When Joab saw the front of the battle was against him, before and behind, he chose all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians, and the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of his brother. And he said, if the Assyrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me, but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee then I will come and help thee. Now be of good courage, and let us play the men and fight for God and our country, and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.* Remember we have by solemn protestation bound ourselves before God to do our utmost in ways lawful for the honor of our King, the liberty of the Protestant Religion, for the peace and welfare of the three Kingdoms, and for the privileges of our Parliament, and keeping within the limits of our callings, to oppose Popery, and popish innovations. Therefore every man according to the laws of God and of the land, must unweariedly be industrious, night and day, for the Kingdoms good, in the use of means, both defensive and offensive, as necessity may require.

2. There are means sacred, Tears and Prayers are the Christians best weapons, this munition let us make use of. *Jeh shaphat* surrounded with danger, when *Moab, Ammon, and the children of Mount Seir* came out against him, what course doth he betake himself to? *he feared, and set*

himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast. And David being in danger to loose both his Kingdom and his life, by the insurrection of *Absalom*, betook himself to prayer, to break the neck of *Ahithophel's* crafty counsel, and also to secure himself from the hand of violence, now stretched forth against him. Beloved, as God's command, and the practice of his people, do guide us unto this employment, so God's precious promises, and our own glorious experiences, touching the prevalency of this ordinance, should persuade our perseverance herein in these times of fear and danger.

Secondly, What is the improvement of the original word here used, *In the Mount Jehovah shall be seen.* This title hath much in it, a great deal more then I may mention. Thus much I have observed from holy Scripture, that it both,

1. Advanceth God.
2. And advantageth a Christian in times of straights.

Let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice before God, yea let thē exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto God, sing praises to his name, extol him that rideth on the Heavens by his Name Jah, and rejoice before him. Four things there be hinted in this title *Jehovha*, and they are all useful for our present purpose.

This title holdeth forth the Lord's,

- 1. Sovereignty.
- 2. Independancy.
- 3. Immutability.
- 4. Fidelity.

1. It suggesteth the Lord's unlimited Sovereignty, his absolute and undoubted authority over all things. *Jehovah* he is the *most high*, not only high, or higher then many, or more high then the most, *but the most high over all the earth.* It is *Jehovah* that ruleth Kings, and ordereth Crowns, joy in him, he can rule both the Kings heart and counsel, he governeth in the Country and in the City, at *Westminster*, and here within the walls: Therefore still rejoice in him, for he is *Jehovah*, the all-governing Majesty.

2. It noteth his independency. All creatures for their continuance, have a kind of dependence upon one another. As the grass and plants upon the earth, the brutes upon the fruits of the earth, and our nutriment is from inferior creatures. But our *Jehovah* dependeth upon none, he is of, and from himself, he needeth no servant, no service. *In him we all live, move and have our being*, but his Majesty is beholding to none, either men or Angels, either for being or well-being. Thus much God intended to teach by his speech to *Moses*, and God said unto *Moses*, *I am that I am.* We think verily that we shall be utterly undone if the Parliament break up, or if our King divide himself from this his body representative. Beloved, my soul maketh out to God for the prevention of this sad fraction. Yet I beseech you remember this,

whatsoever falls out, that whereas all men, and all ordinances, Kings and Parliaments depend on God, yet our God *Jehovah* is an independent Majesty.

3. It intimateth God's Immutability, All other things change, As a snow ball melteth by our handling it, and the flower withereth by our smelling it, so these sublunary contentments wast and ware away by our using them. But in the Lord *Jehovah* there is *everlasting strength*, or as the original language expresseth it, The Lord *Jehovah* is a rock of ages, he abideth the self same, strong, unalterable, immovable God throughout all generations.

Mind this (my beloved) that though *England Ireland*-like should be wasted, although there should be sad changes in Church and Common-wealth, in City and Country, in Towns and Families: Yet still our *Jehovah* continues in himself, and unto his people the self-same All-sufficient, All-satisfying God. Surely we who pitch our hearts and hopes upon this unchangeable foundation, the Lord *Jehovah*, may abide steady in our spirits and comforts in the midst of the worst alterations that can overtakes us.

4. It expresseth God's fidelity. *And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the Name of God almighty, but by my Name Jehovah was I not known unto them.* The true meaning is, that whereas God had manifested abundantly his power by many glorious providences in former times, now he intended to prove himself mindful and careful of his promises made unto his people. Now let us make improvement hereof for our comfort. Search divine records, consider the various precious promises annexed by the Almighty unto the covenant of free grace and mercy. Choose out of those Gospel treasures, such pearls as you put the highest prizes upon, Collect those particular promises, which you conceive most pertinent for your condition, and most full your satisfaction. And from this sweet title *Jehovah*, you may comfortably and confidently infer this conclusions.

Whatsoever Promise is registered in the book of God, either in the old or New Testament, that this *Jehovah* will set all his attributes on work, for the full and seasonable accomplishment thereof unto his own people by special covenant. Therefore having evidenced your propriety in Gospel Promises through Jesus Christ, from this bottom build your comforts, in the darkest and most doleful times. Is is *Jehovah* the all-governing, the independing, the immutable and faithful God that will be seen in the Mount for his servants deliverance.

FINIS.

P-SA-3. A true relation, of the most chief occurrences, at, and since the late battle at Newbery,; until the disjunction of the three armies, of the Lord General, the Earl of Manchester, and Sir William Waller, together with the London brigade, under the command of Sir James Harrington. Published upon necessity, both to undeceive the mistaken multitude, and to vindicate the Earl of Manchester, from many undeserved aspersions commonly cast upon him, either through ignorance or prejudice. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662.

A TRVE RELATION, OF THE MOST Chief Occurrences, at, and since the late Battle at *Newbery*, until the disjunction of the three Armies, of the Lord General, the Earl of *Manchester*, and Sir *William Waller*, together with the *London* Brigade, under the Command of Sir *James Harrington*.

Published upon necessity, both to undeceive the mistaken multitude, and to vindicate the Earl of *MANCHESTER*, From many undeserved aspersions commonly cast upon him, either through ignorance or prejudice.

Penned by *SIMEON ASH*, Who as his Chaplain did wait upon his Lordship, in the Western Expedition.

PROV. 18, 17. He that is first in his own cause, seemeth just, but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him.

PROV. 19.21. There are many devicees in the heart of a man, nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.

LONDON, Printed by *G. M.* for *Edward Brewster* at the Sign of the Bible at Fleet-Bridge, M.DC.XLIV.

A true Relation of the most chief Occurrences, at, and since the late Battle at *Newbery*, until the disjunction of the three Armies of the Lord General, the Earl of *Manchester*, and Sir *William Waller*, &c.

NOT only importunity from friends, but necessity in regard of others of various ways and spirits, doth compel me to give in a true Narrative according to my knowledge and best intelligence, concerning the proceedings of the three Armies conjoined (*vid.* the Lord Generals, my Lord of *Manchesters*, and Sir *William Wallers*) both when the Battle was fought at *Newbery*, and since the Enemies retreat from thence. For not only the reports of many, but also a Letter sent unto me, do suggest; that my silence, now, when my testimony may do good service, doth give occasion both to my Noble Lord's foes and friends, to suspect his faultiness (if not unfaithfullnesse) in a great measure; because heretofore I openly appeared in relating his actions in the North, when there was no need to vindicate his reputation; but now I am mute, when his fidelity to Church and Common-wealth is questioned, and when he is censured, yea clamoured against, as the only blame-worthy cause of the disappointments lately in the West. For my silence hitherto, I can make this just apology. 1. In regard of the

daily intelligence, which went from the Army to *London*, either by Post or otherwise, I conceived it not necessary, or much useful for me to be a weekly Intelligencer to my friends in the City, as when the Army lay before *York*. 2. Neither was I altogether silent, when I espied occasion and a call to speak: For within few days after the relieving of *Dennington* Castle, when I understood what clamours and censures were in *London*, through the misreport and mistake of our actions, I gave a short and true Relation of our Occurrences, for the satisfaction of private friends, which Relation, was the sum of that which I shall now report: and at that time I was very far from imagining, that my Lord, the Earl of *Manchester*, would by any Officer of the Army, be accused, as less faithful, or less careful then others, in promoting the Kingdoms good. 3. Since the Accusation charged upon my Lord, in the Honorable House of Commons, I have held my tongue, lest I should incur displeasure, by seeming pragmatistical, in intermeddling in a business, committed by them to examination, with expectation of a report. But now hearing, that the business there is suspended (some say silenced) and knowing that the loud cries of people, either ignorant, or disaffected to my Lord's credit, do sound far and near, to his dishonor, I have resorved to take the boldness, to represent what I know, both to vindicate my Noble Lord's honor, and to undeceive them (if my testimony may be of any credit) who are too apt and easy to believe calumnies cast upon well-deserving men, wanting patience to wait for truths discovery, by a full and impartial trial; which in this business, cannot be more earnestly desired by any: then it is by my Lord himself, and by his best friends.

I wish that these things may be premised, which I suppose cannot with any color of truth be contradicted. 1. That no motion, no march, no service of the three Armies after their first conjunction, was made or undertaken, but according to the relust of the Council of War. 2. That the Earl of *Manchester*, never assumed to himself, to be accounted or observed, as Commander in Chief, but always voted, as one that had but equal authority with the rest, and acted accordingly in observation of the orders, concluded by common Council. 3. That he often professed unto the chief Commanders; that because himself was no experienced Soldier, therefore he would rather be guided, then guide; rather be acted by their counsels, then act on either himself or them, according to his own private thoughts.

Upon Friday *Octob. 25.* we hoped (from the news brought in by our Scouts) the day following, to fight with the Enemy; but the next morning drawing up our whole body, we found that the Enemies had in such sort blockt up the way to *Newbery* by many works, that our hopes of engaging with them were disappointed. Hereupon it was resolved at a Council of War, that to force the Enemy to fight, our Forces should in this manner be divided, (*vid.*) All my Lord Generals Horse and Foot, the greatest part of my Lord of *Manchesters* Horse, and almost all the Forces under the Command of Sir *William Waller* and Sir *Arthur Heislerig*, together with the *London* Brigade, did march to *Speene* hill: But the Earl of *Manchester*; Foot, with a small body of Horse, was left in the field on this side *Shaw* (a little village) near to M^r *Dolmans* house, which was possessed and fortified by the Enemy. When the Army was thus divided, this order was left with my Lord of *Manchester*; that so soon as he heard of the engagement of our Friends on *Spcene* hill (by the discharging of the Canon) he should fall on the Enemy on this side the River, that he might divert the strength of the battle, from them there.

I will forbear here, to relate the hardship which both parts of our Army met with, that night; because that would be a digression not to my purpose.

On Sabbath day morning early, my Lord of *Manchester*, with the Forces remaining under his command, were in readiness to assault the Enemy, expecting from hour to hour, to hear of the engagement at *Speene* hill: And here to witness the Earl of *Manchesters* willingness to fight with the Enemy, let this be noted, which is a known truth (*vid.*) that in the morning, he commanded a party of about 400 Musketeeres to fall on, over the little River, on the left hand of *Shaw*, that he might soon enough divert the enemies strength from *Speene* hill: This party of ours, took two of the Enemies works, one Captain, and several prisoners; but marching too far, contrary to order, they were beaten back with some loss; by this service, the greatest part of the Kings Foot was drawn towards us, and so the work to which we were designed, was accomplished long before our friends on *Speene* hill did engage. In this place, I might take occasion truly to report, the great pains which my Lord *Manchester* took from morning till evening, often exposing himself to very much danger (the Enemies Drakes playing frequently upon us) in riding from Regiment to Regiment, to encourage the Soldiers, and to keep them in due order, fit for that service which every moment almost was expected: but there are many hundreds, I might say, divers thousands, who can tell the truth hereof, which proves, that my Lord was not so backward to fight, and so regardless of the Kingdoms service that day, as many would have the world to believe. About 4 a clock (as was guessed) we heard the Canon begin to play on *Speene* hill, at which time, my Lord commanded 2 Drakes to be drawn forth (though our Canon hitherto had not been altogether idle) and to be planted in a convenient place to do service against the Enemy at *Dolmans* house, and to make way for the falling on of our Foot there, according to the order given, when our Army divided. Those Drakes did good execution upon the Enemy divers times, forcing their retreat to their works about the house. Now we saw the fighting of the Muskitieres on *Speene* hill, which discovered the service there to be very hot; and not long after, with joy and thankfulness, we beheld the hasty, disorderly retreat of the Enemy towards *Newbery*, wondering that our party did not pursue the victory. It is besides my intention in this Relation, to report the posture of our Army on *Speene* hill, or to give by a full report, the due praise to my Lord Generals Foot and others, who then and there, did excellent and praiseworthy service: Neither indeed, need I, to bestow words hereon, because the world hath been acquainted with these things heretofore. But my Lord of *Manchesters* Horse, commanded by Liev. Col. *Cromwell* (from whom very much was expected) did little service, gained no honor in this work this day. For my part, I know not whom to blame, I will asperse no man, but leave it to their judgment, who were on the ground, to judge who were blame-worthy, in being backward to pursue that happy opportunity, upon the flying, fainting Enemy. Notwithstanding, let me here tell you, what many speak; That it my Lord of *Manchester* had now been in his own person, at the Head of his body of Horse, this neglect would have been charged home upon him, and conclusions would hence, confidently and clamorously have been inferred, that my Lord of *Manchester* was unwilling to bring the Kings Army too low, otherwise, now the woeful wasting wars, might in all probability have been fully well ended.

But to return unto my work. You must not imagine that my Lord of *Manchesters* Foot were all this while idle spectators on this side the River (although as I told you before, the Enemies best Foot were diverted from *Speen* hill, which might have extenuated the seeming fault of some delays) for while our Drakes (before mentiond) were at work, a commanded party of 500 Muskiteers was drawn forth as a Forelorn-hope, to assault the Enemy, who being seconded with the several Brigades of Foot, continued in hot service, until for want of day light to direct, our Soldiers wounded & killed one another. The undaunted valor of our Foot was admirable, they were indeed too forward too adventurous, overrunning their commands, unwilling to be called off. And here this is notable, that when one company of our Foot had taken one of the Works of the Enemy, another Company (through overmuch forwardness and mistake) did beat them out again. So that our greatest loss, both in regard of men wounded and slain, was from ourselves. All this while, my Lord of *Manchester* was with his Soldiers, (as mine eyes, and thousands more can witness) to countenance and encourage the service: and those who know what dangers he then adventured upon, and how long he continued in the field that night, yea, what care he took to prevent the mischiefs of the night from a Neighbor Enemy, and to prepare for the continuance of the battle, which was verily expected by us the next morning; those many (I say) who understood and remember these things, will not easily believe that his Lordship was averse to fighting, and unwilling speedily to end these wars, though multitudes, through ignorance, rashness, and misbeliefe, do in this manner asperse and caluminate him.

That night, the daunted Enemy did in the dark steal away from *Newbery*; what no tice our friends at *Speen*, had of the marching away of the Enemy, I cannot affirm, for reports are various; though all acknowledge, that they had some noise thereof: but this I am sure of, that my Lord of *Manchester* had not the least hint of the Enemies retreat, till near daybreak in the morning; and his intelligence then, was single and uncertain, from a stranger. Yet upon this intimation, his Lordship hastened into the field, to improve opportunity, there the news was confirmed, that the Enemy was gone indeed. Hereupon our whole body was called together; and so soon as we had in the field (near the dead bodies both of friends and foes, which lay on the ground) made our addresses to God, both by praise and prayer, according to the present affecting providences, we marched over the River to *Newbery*: all this while we neither met with, nor heard from our friends at *Speen*, whereupon we hoped that they were in pursuit of the scattered flying Enemy. My Lord of *Manchester* rested not, till he met with some of the Commanders, who had been upon the service at *Speen*, and with them returned to *Newbery*, to consult about the improvement of the present Victory. These particulars, which I knowingly do report, may evidence my Lord's forwardness, to husband advantages and opportunities, for the promoting of the public service. But though my Lord Generals Horse, and Sir *William Wallers* Horse were gone some hours before after the Enemy, yet my Lord *Manchesters* Horse, (commanded by Lieu. Gen. *Cromwell*) we found in the field near *Newbery*, together in a body.

It would be impertinent, for me here to speak of by-businesses of small importance, which common fame hath trumpeted abroad. The taking of the Coaches, with the Men and Horses attending the persons in them, was effected by my Lord of *Manchesters* forwardness, to

furnish Col. *Birch* with a party of Horse for his assistance, whereof I am a witness, being used as a messenger unto my Lord to expedite that work.

And whether his Lordship during our stay at *Newbery*, was not as desirous as any others, in every kind to serve the public, I refer it to the judgment of them who were daily conversant with him. We having after some days, full intelligence, that the King was at *Oxford*, there recruiting his Army, and hearing also, that he intended to fight, so soon as the additional forces sent for, came to him, our Army marched from *Newbery* on Saturday towards *Oxford*, and that night the Head quarter was at *Compton*. Upon Sabbath day the Army marched towards *Blewbery*, and the Head quarter that night was at *Harwell*, and the Army quartered in adjacent Villages, until this time the Lord *Warriston* and Mr. *Erem* (who came to us at *Basing*, being sent from the Committee of both Kingdoms, to assist the service of the Army by their counsel) can testify what was my Lord of *Manchesters* care and carriage in his place, and unto their testimony thus far I might refer them, who are unsatisfied. This day at a Council of War (before these our friends left us) it was found impossible for us to march with our Carriages beyond *Abbingdon*, because the ways, were judged deep and unpassable.

On Monday my Lord with some few who attended him, went to *Abbingdon* to express his respects to Major General *Brown*; and that acquainting himself with the state of that place, he might the better know, how to be serviceable to it, and to the Kingdom in it, as occasion might require. On Tewsday, all our Horse were called to a Rendevouz upon *Chilton*-plain (if I forget not the name of the place) where all the chief Commanders of the Army, at a Council of War, concluded our return unto *Newbery*, the next day. Now because this act (as I hear) is much censured (though it was the result of the Council of War, and we had also the express approbation of the Committee of both Kingdoms, I will therefore make bold to suggest the grounds thereof as they were related unto me. 1. That corner of the Country (being bare before we came thither) could not afford means of subsistence for our Army, and we had small hope of receiving seasonably sufficient supplies elsewhere. 2. By continuing there, we should wholly devour those provisions whereby our friends at *Abbingdon* (being Neighbors) might expect some relief. 3. Because there was no hope of getting over *Wallingford*-bridge, to fight with the Enemy on the other side the River; and the Enemy might, by making overtures of engaging, and yet deceiving our hopes, have wasted our Army through unavoidable wants, without striking one blow. 4. And our forces did daily weaken very sensibly, through the great scarcity of provisions of all kinds, our Soldiers being under much discontent and discouragement.

These reasons (as I believe) moved our return to *Newbery*, upon Wednesday, and the same night some of the Enemies came from *Wallingford*, into the same Quarters, from whence we were removed. Upon Thursday, our Scouts brought news to *Newbery*, that the Kings whole Army was come over the River, with a parpose to relieve *Dennington* Castle. And although many amongst us, gave little or no credit to these reports; yet (of my knowledge) my Lord *Manchesters* cautiousnesse was such, that hereupon he moved the drawing up of all our Horse to a Rendevouz the next day, that we might be ready to prevent the relieving of the Castle.

How this his Lordships motion took with others I cannot say; but that it was disliked and gainsai'd by Lieu. Gen. *Cromwell*, myself, and many others can testify, who heard him earnestly dissuading it, by words to this effect; *My Lord, you Horse are so spent, so harrassed out, by hard duty, that they will fall down under the Riders, if you thus command them, you may have their skin, but you can have no service.*

Although I dare not say, that Lieu. Gen. *Cromwell* did from unfaithfulness to the public, thus dissuade the drawing up of our Horse on Friday. Yet this myself, and many thousands are most confident of, that through this neglect followed the advantage of the Enemy, in relieving the Castle, and our disappointments. For our Horse being (through the scarcity of provisions) quartered at a great distance from one another, and some of our Troops being 10 miles, some 12, and some 14 miles from *Newbery*, they could not possibly (after the Alarm on Friday in afternoon) come in soon enough to prevent the Enemies coming to the Castle, much less to fight with the Enemy in a convenient ground, before he came thither: whereas, if our Horse had been brought together upon Friday (according to my Lord *Manchesters* motion on Thursday, before mentioned) we might have met the Enemy with a timely and successful resistance (through God's mercy) at least for the preventing of the Castles relief.

But I will look backward, and take up my Relation where I left it. The former intelligence received from the Scouts, and the motion from my Lord made on Thursday, not being improved, we waited, to understand, what another day would bring forth: and when certain unquestioned tidings came on Friday in the afternoon, that the whole Body of the Enemies Army was on their march towards the Castle; then Posts were dispatched to the several Quarters of our Horse, to command them to come in early the next morning: but the Enemy having gained the opportunity which we lost, the Castle was relieved, before we were ready to make resistance: yea, the Enemy had placed themselves in Battalia, in the field betwixt *Dennington-Castle* and *Newbery*, before our main Body of Horse were in any posture for service. It would not be to my purpose in this Relation, to specify how bravely a party of the Enemies Horse did assault a party of ours, routed them, and did beat them to our Foot, who received the Enemy with much courage, and repulsed them bravely, who took away with them (as we heard after) the dead and wounded bodies of many, who were much esteemed. Neither do I intend here to tell, how the several Commanders, had now disposed of themselves and their forces. My Lord *Manchester* was with Major *Skippon* in the field, where all the skirmidge was that day betwixt us and the Enemy, and they both often and earnestly called and sent for Lieu. Gen. *Cromwels* Horse, (as I am credibly informed) but they came too late; for before they marched through *Newbery* towards the Army, the Sun was set, the Enemy was making his retreat out of the field, which mine own eyes and others beheld with much grief of heart. Major Gen. *Crafford* (who is known to be sufficiently forward to engage) though his command was over the Foot, yet upon my Lord of *Manchesters* cummand, himself also being moved in the approach of the daring Enemy, did with 9 or 10 Troops (some or most whereof he rallied amongst them formerly routed) charge a body of the Enemies Horse, and caused them to give ground. By this it may be guessed what good service might have been done, if more Horse had been at hand. That night, I hearing many accusations charged upon the Horse which came not in, I made bold for mine own satisfaction, to enquire (of a

valiant Commander my worthy friend) the reasons wherefore those Horse kept at such a distance from service that day, from whom I received these. 1. Because there was not field room for our whole Body to serve in. 2. Because (if they had come in) in that ground, they should have been exposed to the Cannon, playing from the Castle, which would in probability, either have broken, or disordered their several Bodies before they could engage. You see, that I am desirous in my Narration, to give all men their right, and to keep off groundless censures. And here I wish, that it may still be impartially considered, whether yet it appear by this true relation, that the Earl of *Manchester* was more averse to the Kingdoms service, then other men, when either necessity or opportunity did require it.

The Castle being relieved, and the Enemy retreated, our Commanders in chief, upon consultation resolved that night to send forth about 4000 Horse with some Foot, to fall upon the Enemies Rear, so soon as the Moon did arise, hoping by this means to regain what we had lost the day before: but the Enemy continuing all night in a full body, that design was disappointed.

In the morning our whole Army was drawn forth, with intention and expectation to fight with the Enemy, before his removal out of our reach. This being noised, myself, with other Ministers who attended the Campe, did our duty by prayer and exhortation, to prepare them for the expected battle. But when our Commanders had viewed the strength and posture of the Kings Army, and the advantage of ground which they had gained, together with the dangerousnesse of the passages to the Enemy (being both near *Dennington* Castle, and through Lanes) they with one mind at a Council of War, judged it unsafe to engage. What passed in conference at the Council of War, I know not, neither did I judge it meet for me to enquire after those matters: But this I profess, that I heard not any, either Officer, or other, to blame my Lord of *Manchester*, as more backward at that Council of War then others, to engage with the withdrawing Enemy. Afterwards, while the Army continued at *Newbery*, and the parts adjacent, I remember nothing of moment to be reported, but this one thing, (which if not rightly understood, may occasion mistakes, no prejudice) that whereas 3 Regiments of my Lord's Foot, were ordered to march unto *Basing*, to assist the Horse in the service there, they were commanded (when on their march) to return back, according to the counsel of Sir *W. Waller* and Lieutenant General *Cromwell* (as they were going with my Lord in his Coach to *Aldermarston*) upon these grounds, as I was informed. 1. Because there would not in likelihood be any need of that strength there at that time. 2. Because their coming thither would straighten the Quarters of those who were already there, and consequently, make their continuance more uncomfortable. When upon an Alarm, that the Kings whole Army, was on their march to relieve *Basing-house*; it was ordered, that our Forces should remove from *Newbery* to join with our Horse sent to *Basing* before. Now I was necessitated through bodily distempers, to withdraw from the Campe, and therefore cannot from observation speak of the passages afterwards. But I have been told again and again, that the calling off of our Horse and Foot, from *Basing*, was from the order of a Council of War, no man deserting; and also, that no man was more forward in giving his vote, for that Order, then Lieutenant General *Cromwell*.

This is the sum of what I have to say, concerning the chief Occurrences in our Western expedition; wherein, though we had not such happy success, as was desired and expected, yet therein, those acknowledged much of God's goodness, who did most exactly observe his providences in our motions and adventures. Herein I have faithfully, according to my observation and best intelligence, represented things, with special references to my much Honoured Lord, because through misreports, and misbeliefs, his Lordship is rendered to the world, under the black cloud, of sad reproaches. His Honor I confess, is very dear unto me, and the heavy censures with which many do load and wound his estimation amongst men, do much afflict me: yet (I bless God) the cause, wherewith his Lordship hath been trusted, and wherein he hath successfully appeared, is much more deare and precious, yea (if I know mine own heart) I would desert his Lordship, and myself also, deserting that glorious cause of Jesus Christ. I well remember, those words, *Job. 13.7. Will ye speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him?* And therefore I am awed with the fear of God, while I am pleading for man. Yet this I do most seriously profess, as in the presence of the heart-searching Majesty, that I know no cause, wherefore I should once question his Lordships fidelity to the cause of Reformation, and that service of the Kingdom, wherein he hath been prosperously employed. But as the matter of his Accusation is to me most strange and unexpected; so the manner of managing it, by many, who are accounted not only ingenious but eminently pious, is to me and many, a matter of much wonder: For should not those who have received favors from my Lord of *Manchester*, and have solemnly professed truth and strength of respects to his Lordship, rather have signified in private their suspicion of his faithfulness (if they apprehended cause) then proclaim to the world, offenses, whereof he never heard? Might not his known meekness and sweetness of disposition, have encouraged them, to perform this office of faithfulness, who often had the opportunity of secrecy to have performed it? Would not such a course rather have answered that rule of our Savior: If thy brother offend, go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone, &c. then to divulge (I will say no more) in a public way, those things whereof his own heart never suspected himself to be suspected? What Christians, yea what men do not look for such friendship, such ingenuity, from them who converse with them daily, and ordinarily come to eat meat at their tables? And had the prejudice of the public long been feared, through the apprehension of any ill principles possessing the Earl of *Manchesters* breast, why was not this sooner suggested, for the prevention of public prejudice?

I will not dare to guess either at the grounds, or ends of that which now is broken forth, but shall leave secrets unto the Lord, who in his own time will make the counsels of all hearts manifest, and bring to light the deeds, the designs of darkness.

Neither do I thus expostulate, as yielding to the truth of the matters, which are commonly charged upon him: for I have many reasons to believe the contrary, some whereof, I shall briefly mention.

His Lordships former actions and adventures for the public, rendered him in the opinion of the godly party in the Kingdom, as a true, trusty Patriot, both to Church and Common-

wealth; and truly, I am ignorant, what should cause people to alter that opinion, though I have of late, had more opportunities to discover him, then other men.

His Lordship hath often, in the hearing of many witnesses, thus expressed himself solemnly, *I could contentedly part with halft my estate, upon condition the discipline of Christ was established, and a good Ministry settled in every Congregation of the Kingdom, yea with those couditions, how gladly could I betake myself unto a Country life, and leave all other contentments in the world.* Oh how frequent, how constant have his breathings been after peace, with the perfecting of that Reformation which is hopefully begun. And therefore it is a thing incredible to them who know him, that he should take any course, to continue the Civil (or rather uncivil) wars of the Kingdom, which do continue and increase confusions. I know no man, who attends the Campe, less self-seeking, and more desirous to issue the Wars, in a comfortable Peace, then my Lord of *Manchester*.

And this is to myself, an evidence of my Lord's innocence, in regard of what is laid to his charge; that when friends had suggested to him by Letters, Lieutenant General *Cromwels* purpose to accuse him (as was gathered from intimations looking that way) he solemnly protested, that his integrity was such, that he could not believe any such matter: Yea though he did cast about in his own thoughts, what matter of just exception might be laid in against him (for he was far from expecting false accusations) he professed seriously, he could not imagine what it might be; except it were some old complaints, in reference to Major General *Crafford*, and some late estrangements from Liev. Gen. *Cromwell*, since his heats expressed at *Lincoln*, which gave occasion of just offense.

And when upon his coming to *London*, his Lordship understood in generals, that unfaithfulness, and unwillingness to improve opportunities and counsels for the public good, against the common Enemy, was laid to his charge, by Liev. Gen. *Cromwell*; this was his Lordships answer: *I pray God forgive him, for he knows in his conscience, that he hath wronged me, in speaking untruly.* And these words falling from a friend, *How much will your Lordship suffer in your honor, by means of this aspersion?* His Lordship returned this reply, *My defense is from God, who saveth the upright in heart.* These things, which of my credit are truths (unto which many more might truly be added) I leave to the consideration of the ingenious, calm, unbiased Christian, how far they may at least persuade the suspension of censures and clamours, till my Lord hath vindicated himself from his accusations.

But it will be said. There is no smoke, but it argues some fire. And the reports of people, yea of good people, against my Lord of *Manchester* are so common, that doubtless all is not right.

I doubt not but God's hand is in my Lord's sufferings of this kind, who hath learned to justify God when injured by men. He hath expressed his desire to know God's meaning in the Rod, and hath professed his willingness to see, that he might reform, whatsoever others espy blame-worthy in his course. But the opinion and language of the multitude, is no good argument to prove him guilty in that kind and measure, as charged. It is an evil to be lamented, that people are so apt, with credulity to take up evil reports against their Brethren. Besides, the world understands, that divers persons acted by principles opposite

to one another, are yet both violently contrary to the ways of my Lord of *Manchester*: from hence the dust may be raised and continued, which for the present doth darken his reputation, which was wont to shine forth more brightly, and which God (I hope) in his good time will clear again.

I might here take occasion, to mention many strange palpable untruths, standerously raised and spread, yea, conveyed by Letters beyond the Seas, to blast the credit of them, who desire to walk with God: and no reason here can be imagined, but their difference in indgement and practice from them, in some matters of Church-government. But that Scripture doth check me. *Tell it not in Gath, and publish it not in Askalon, lest the uncircumcised triumph.* The Lord heal our breaches, reconcile our differences, and knit our hearts together in more strong brotherly love through Christ.

My self expects severe censure from many people for this service, which (in the judgment of many worthy godly friends) I had a call to discharge: but I hope the sincerity of my heart through God's grace will support me under such burdens, if they shall be cast upon me.

If my faultiness shall be discovered, the Lord I trust will so far preserve me, that I shall not add stubbornness to weakness. And if any shall passionately and unchristianly throw stones at me, and cast dirt in my face, I hope, that my God will make me able to pity them, and to pray for them, and to learn more humility and circumspection in my conversation.

FINIS.

P-SA-4. Christ the riches of the Gospel, and the hope of Christians. A sermon preached at the funeral of Mr William Spurstow the only child of Dr Spurstow at Hackney near London, Mar. 10. By Simeon Ashe preacher of the Gospel, and lecturer there. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662.

CHRIST THE Riches of the GOSPEL, AND THE Hope of CHRISTIANS A SERMON Preached at the Funeral of M^r *William Spurstow* the only Child of D^r *Spurstow* at *Hackney* near *London*, Mar. 10.

By SIMEON ASHE Preacher of the Gospel, and Lecturer there.

PHIL. 3. 23, 21.

I have a desire to depart to be with Christ which is far better.

For me to live is Christ, and to die is Gain.

LONDON, Printed by A. M. for G. Sawbridge at the Sign of the Bible on Ludgate-hill, 1654.

To My much Esteemed Good Friends, Dr *Spurstow*, Pastor of the Church at *Hackney*, and to M^{rs} *Sarah Spurstow* his Virtuous Wife.

WHEN I prepared this Sermon for the Pulpit, and preached it at the Funeral of your much endeared Son and only child, there was not one thought in my mind that it should be brought to the Press; but as it served your desires with reference to the Congregations profit there, so upon the same account (through the importunity of many others also) it now cometh abroad enlarged with respect unto more public service: The reading of it may probably renew your sorrow by occasioning the remembrance of your loss (for the wound not thoroughly healed will smart and bleed again upon every gentle touch) but I hope that influences from Christ (the subject of the Sermon) will drop like healing oil, with sweetness upon your spirits. Summer-fruit doth soonest fall from the tree out of which it grew: The early buddings both of ingenuity and piety, in your hopeful child, caused some of your friends to suspect that God would gather him unto himself before he became a man. Would not you both (if God had lengthened his life on earth) have been content to have wanted his society for a time, upon well-grounded confidence of a comfortable meeting, and that your parting would be for his preferment and your mutual profit? I shall not need to make the application: He was the heir of a full estate, with which God's bounty hath blessed you, but the hand of Providence hath put him into the possession of a far more rich Inheritance; You had hopes that he might have been the staff of your age, but though that support is sunk and shrunk from you, yet you are not left comfortless, for the precious promises of Gospel-grace are continued 〈...〉 to uphold both your hopes and hearts forever. Cheer up 〈◇〉 hearts (my dear Friends) both in hope of his happy change and your spiritual advantage by the sanctification of this your loss. Bless God who bestowed so good a child upon you, suffered you to enjoy him so long, and gave you (with hearts to educate him religiously) to see the success of your endeavors in those timely blossoms which appeared upon upon him; And as for yourselves, do ye not find (through the operation of God's peculiar grace) that upon your

souls which may encourage the application of *David's* support and consolation? *He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make not my house to grow.* In this Covenant there is nothing defective, which any Christian, in any condition, can either desire or want. And amongst other rich promises which are thereto annexed, this is one; (which may be seasonably relieving unto you) to *give a better name then of Sons and Daughters:* Upon all these considerations (unto which your knowledge in the mysteries of the Gospel can add many more) you should rather express the joys of faith then feed upon your sorrows, to your own prejudice and the trouble of your Christian friends: And seeing the Lord hath to your sense written vanity upon the choicest of your creaturecontents, how should your souls be now elevated above all things sublunary and changeable! His hand of providence hath eased you of all further cares for him, whom you intended to leave well furnished with all accommodations for comfort and service in this world; therefore now what have you so much to mind here as to improve time, talents, estate, interests, yea, your All, for your own mutual advantage in Christ, and the glory of God, who hath done so much for yourselves and yours? This improvement of your affliction (wherein my experience hath wrought sympathies) I can and shall heartily request in your behalf through Jesus Christ, in whom I am,

Your assured Friend, if his own, SIMEON ASHE.

June 20. 1654.

To my much Honoured and Worthy Friends, D^r William Spurstow and M^{rs} Sarah Spurstow his Wife, upon the Death of their hopeful Son and only Child, M^r William Spurstow.

***Carmen* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 .**

LEt hopeless Heathens grieve, and let them shed
From drowned eyes vain offerings to the dead;
Let their remorseless hands their bosoms rend,
'Cause Death their comforts and their hopes do end:
Let weeping *Niobe* congeal to stone,
And kill herself with grief and fruitless mone.
But you (Dear Friends) do mourn in hope, and weep,
Believing your blest child in Christ doth sleep.
Harbour we mutinous thoughts against his will,
Whose works are just, whose ways are holy still?
Oh let his mercy and his goodness charm

All discontent; He'll never do you *harm*,
Nor can he do you wrong, because he's just,
Willingly then submit, or else you must.
Banish sad thoughts which do without relief
Torment you with reiterated grief;
Suppose you saw your Son equalling those
Bright morning Stars the Sons of God; Suppose
You saw his soul inthron'd in bliss with them,
Who Cit'zens are of *New Jerusalem*:
Suppose you heard his own delightful voice
Thus speak (Dear Parents) weep not but rejoice
For me, for now I am perfectly free
From sorrow, sin, Death, and mortality;
Surely you do not doubt my happiness
(For you oft say I am gone to heaven) much less
Can loving Parents envy it, then cease
To interrupt my joy and your own peace.
Happy those Parents who their Children teach
God's fear, whilst young, and whilst within the reach
Of Prayers and counsels; so shall not death prevent
Their diligence, and they too late repent.
How early saving light did dawn and break
In him who learnt to pray as soon as speak,
And minding Sermons then knew good from ill,
When those of's age have not learnt to sit still;
Nay more, so young, and yet complained, that he
Could not rule's thoughts when most think thoughts are free.
Then 'twas the devil who did first invent

That cursed profane Proverb, A young Saint
An old Devil; no no, many through God's grace
Set out betimes, and hold out all the race,
And many Timothy's have Mnasons proved,
Who have God's Word in childhood learnt and loved.
Such was his pregnant parts and piety,
His youth it was a full maturity.

A Child that did *per saltum* commence man,
His years spake morning, his parts Meridian:
Harvest i'th Spring, a blossom fairly blown,
Knit, and at once fruit to perfection grown.

Haec moerens posuit Gulielmus Taylor A. M. *apud Londinenses Pastor* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉

**Upon the much lamented Death of the truly Pious Youth M^r William Spurstow, who
deceased Anno Dom. 1633/4 March Aetatis 9.**

Blest Soul, thy Parents only Son! Thou wast
Nipt in the bud, and into deaths Den cast
In Spring time both of age and year. Thy Sun
Is soon gone down, soon is thy short race run;
True, an Apprentiship th'hast served on earth
Of nine years, but the tenth thou paist to Death
As her due Tithe; She will not be denied,
Young, old, rich, poor, are carried down this Tide.
Thou liv'st, though dead in th'memory of those
Who knew thy life and saw its holy close;
The honor thou didst to thy Parents bear,
Thy humble carriage, witty words, indear
Thee unto all; Those sparks of Piety
Kindled wiihin thy Soul by th' Almighty

*Dazled the eyes of men; Thine exc'cellent parts
Admired were by all; Thou wonst all hearts.
But stay, needs he Encomiums? Reader, know,
He joys above while we him wail below.*

E. C. Student in Syd. Coll. Cam.

Upon his Funeral Text, Col. 1. 27. *Christ in you the hope of glory.* With which he was much affected in his life time, and of which he did often speak.

*THis Text did much refresh this Saint, now dead;
Christ was his Hope, his Glory, Crown, and Head:
Whilst here on earth Christ dwelt in him by grace,
But now he dwells with Christ and sees his face.
His Body though in grave, to Christ is knit,
His Soul with Christ, in Christ's own Throne doth sit.
Christ was his hope on earth; but now he is,
His Heaven, his All, his, his, forever his.*

E. C. Student in Syd. Coll. Cam.

Upon the Death of M. *william Spurstow.*

*YE Muses Helicon what can you lie
Thus mantled in a stupid Lethargy?
Breathe out your souls with sighs, melt into tears,
And let your griefs be equal to your fears,
For him poor soul whose Fate it was we see,
To bid adieu in its minority:
Mourn that gloomy day on which it took its rise,
To seek a mansion in heavens Paradise.
What was his worth, what Friends loss, in verse
Were but lost pains in both for to rehearse;
His purer metal'd Soul needeth no Praise*

Or Art to'dulterate, all this canit raise
The price of such a Pearl, that had alone
What bounteous Art or Nature made her own:
And boldly this I will speak unto his praise,
His holy Life doth much exceed his days:
O pray that such blessed hopes may longer live
Examples to such youth as cannot give.

W. H.

The Text.

COL. 1. 27.

Which is Christ in you the hope of Glory.

THE Subject matter of this Text is Jesus Christ, and therefore seasonably suitable to the expectation of this Assembly, which is to hear a Funeral Sermon; For whereas *wine* is to be given unto *those that be of heavy hearts*, what Cordial is comparable with Jesus Christ who is called and deserveth to be accounted, *The Consolation of Israel?*

In the Text Christ is tendered or rather commended to the consideration of these Christian *Colossians* under a threefold notion.

1. As containing the riches of all Evangelical mysteries; The Relative (*which*) must necessarily be referred unto the word *Riches*, in the fore-going part of this verse, as is manifest from the Original in our Greek Copies. Although the vulgar applieth the Relative (*which*) unto *mystery*, and I acknowledge Christ to be a mystery as the holy Ghost doth often suggest in the holy Scriptures; And indeed his conception and his hypostatical Union, &c. give us just occasion to call him *wonderful*, Isa. 9. 6. yet in this place I humbly conceive that he is held forth to our view, as the Riches of the glorious mystery of the Gospel.

2. As being the groundwork and the foundation of every good Christians good hope of happiness; *Christ the hope of glory*. I have heard of Ships laden with rich commodities, from which their owners expect great advantage, called *The Hope*, or *The good Hope*: Under this Name may believers, real Saints, well own the Lord Jesus, *The Hope of glory*.

3. As inhabiting, dwelling in believing Christians, for this end, that by his abiding and operating in them he might be unto them *the hope of glory*; *Christ in you the hope of glory*: Some Translators render the words, *Christ among you*; but I rather cleave unto our English Translators, both old and new, which do answer our Greek Copies, and accord with the most learned, judicious Interpreters, *Christ in you the hope of glory*.

Having thus briefly given in the division of the Text, with the Interpretation of the words both together, I proceed to the handling of the Points of Doctrine hence considerable for our Instruction.

The first Truth observable is this,

That Jesus Christ is the riches of all Gospel-glorious Mysteries. [Doct. 1]

The Apostle *Paul* acknowledging much glory in the Administrations of *Moses* (wherein there was much Gospel, though veiled and shadowed under Types and Ceremonies) yet telleth us, That Evangelical ministrations do *exceed in glory*, and that the *former had no glory* in respect of this latter, which *excelleth*, and *is much more glorious*. Now the riches of all this glory are in Christ; Concerning which the expression of the same Apostle is observable, *The unsearchable riches of Christ*. The riches of this Gospel-glory in Christ may be discovered with reference 1. both to God, 2. and to godly Christians.

First, In regard of God; All the revenues of glory which come unto his Majesty from the Gospel, are most eminently in Jesus Christ; And therefore at his birth the Angels sing, *Glory to God on high*. 1. In him *are all the treasures of wisdom*; Here is wisdom in a mystery. 2. And Christ is (as the *wisdom* so) *the Power of God*; Divine Omnipotency is no way so fully discovered as in Christ. 3. In him is divine love *which passeth knowledge*, which is beyond all dimensions. 4. And as for mercy, how full is the language of the Apostle; *The exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness through Christ Jesus*; And speaking elsewhere of Gospel-incoms he addeth, *To the praise of the glory of his grace*; Here might be added the unspotted holiness and untainted justice of God, more glorified in the inexpressible humiliation of Jesus Christ then in any other way whatsoever. And who knoweth not how the honor of God's Truth is triumphantly glorious in Christ, because all things foretold of him both substantial and circumstantial were exactly fulfilled in him: *The Law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*; These things I only touch upon without enlargement.

Secondly, In relation to his people, Christ is the riches of the Gospels glory. The blessed Apostle is very open in his expression to this purpose, *We speak the hidden wisdom of God which God ordained unto our glory*; Many rich and glorious are the true Christians advantages from Jesus Christ: I shall briefly point at four which *S^t Paul* hath recorded together in *Eph.* 1.

And before I mention the particulars, the general which he premiseth (being very comprehensive) is worthy consideration; *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenlies in Christ*. The Original neither restraineth the word *Heavenly* to *places* or *things*; but the holy Ghost hinteth thus much; That whatsoever spiritual blessings (which are incomparably the best) any Saints receive from the Lord, either here upon earth or hereafter in heaven, all are derived through Christ. The particulars follow.

1. Electing love is in Christ; *He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world*.
2. Adoption into the right and privileges of God's children is by Christ; *Having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will*.

3. Fatherly acceptance with God, pardoning all sins, is upon the account of *Jesus Christ. He hath made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*

4. And the possession of our rich Inheritance is by reason of our co-heirship with Christ Jesus; *In whom also we have obtained an Inheritance, &c. that we should be unto the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ.*

These short touches may be sufficient to clear the truth of the doctrine, I proceed to the Application.

Ministers therefore should in this regard the more abundantly preach Christ: Our Apostle having in the Text told the *Colossians* that Christ is the riches of the glorious Gospel, he addeth immediately in the verse following, *whom we preach*; yea, this is considerable, that when *Paul* was a prisoner for such preaching, he maketh this the greatest boon to be beg'd of God in his behalf, that he might have liberty with ability to declare such things unto them in his Ministry. *Continue in prayer, withal praying for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the Mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds that I may make it manifest.* The like request he maketh unto the *Ephesians*; *Prayalwaies in the Spirit, &c. And for me that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an Ambassador in bonds*; And he greatly glorieth in this as a transcendent honor, That he was made a Minister of the Gospel to preach the *unsearchable riches* of Christ, and to make all men see *what is the fellowship of the mystery, &c.* And this practice may prevalently be persuaded by the consideration of

- 1. The Ministers Office.
- 2. The Peoples need.

First, By Office, We are *Stewards of the Mysteries of God, and it is required in Stewards that a man be found faithful.* In this respect we must produce for the honor of our Master and the use of his Family such Treasures with which he hath been pleased to entrust us. As *Abraham's* servant brought forth *Jewels of silver* and *Jewels of gold* to win the heart of *Rebecca* to *Isaac*, so should we spread before our people the invaluable riches of Christ, that we might work out their hearts unto him.

Secondly, As our Office, so the Peoples necessities do call for our help herein, for there are hidden things herein (as the word *mystery* intimateth, *1 Cor. 2. 7.*) which very few understand, in comparison of the multitudes who are palpably ignorant hereof; This our Savior suggests, who having by the Parable of the Sower, taught, that not above one part of four receive saving profit by the Gospel preached among them, he said unto his Disciples; *Unto you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but unto others in Parables, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.*

And nothing that can possibly be taught is more useful and advantageous. Hereby the proud heart is most kindly humbled, and the humbled heart most sweetly comforted: This

knowledge will enrich the poor in Spirit and keep them lowly who are rich in grace: It will increase the hatred of sin, the contempt of the world, faith in the promises, love to God, Christian courage, zeal, patience, together with humble boldness in addresses unto God, upon all occasions: It is the *one thing necessary*. By means hereof (as the Apostle hints in the verse following the Text) Ministers may hope to *present their people perfect in Jesus Christ*; But these things I do only name without enlargement, yet before I dismiss this Use, I desire leave to entreat my Brethren in the Ministry to mind the counsel and practice of this our Apostle, viz. to study familiar plainness in unfolding these rich mysteries of glorious Gospel grace which are treasured up in Jesus Christ.

My second Use must be directed both unto Ministers and [Use 2] people, To move them to seek more and more the knowledge of Christ. *Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you in all wisdom*; How unweariedly laborious are men in digging into the bowels of the earth to find and to fetch out the riches there; Now of how little worth is all the worlds wealth being compared with Christ! The Gospel is the *treasure in the Field* (of which the Parable speaketh) and Christ is that *one Pearl of great price*, which is of more worth then any man's *All*. Therefore the *Scriptures should be searched* (as men search for treasures) to make further and fuller discoveries of Christ, because in him eternal life and all things conducible thereunto are to be enjoyed. Saint *Paul* who by experience knew the worth of human learning, even amongst the rich-gifted *Corinthians*, *determined not to know any thing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified*; And himself elsewhere giveth a rational, a satisfying account of this his resolution, viz. because of the superlative both excellency and utility of this knowledge. *Doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, &c.* Who can tell how many rarities lie hid in Christ, or how great gain may be got by the knowledge of him? 1. This is the way to procure justification by him, *By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many*. 2. Hereby the growth of all graces both in kinds and degrees, is much promoted; *We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*. 3. And hence issueth glory: The Text tells you, that in him is *the hope of glory; This is life eternal that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*. If all this be not sufficient to quicken diligence in seeking out after the knowledge of Christ, let me add a double consideration from the practice of the holy Angels (though they be not so much concerned in and advantaged by Christ as ourselves) 1. They did desire to *pry and peep* into those Typical and Prophetical discoveries of him which were obscure before his Incarnation. 2. And now they are content to come (as it were to our Schools where we are taught) unto our Congregations for clearer instruction in this mystery according to God's mind; *Unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God*. These things speak cogent arguments to them who are Christianly ingenuous, to move more and more industrious endeavors, to dive further and further into these rich divine mysteries, whereof God's Worthies have given many high commendations, calling it an holy, glorious, fruitful, quickening, happy-making mystery; What commendation can be higher then that of our Apostle, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in*

the world, received up into glory; Herein is contained the marrow of Christianity: And doubtless every Christian who mindeth the power of godliness, either in reference unto God's honor or self-welfare, will by these Meditations be prevailed with to seek acquaintance with this rich mystery. I shall speak no more unto this first Point, viz. *That Christ is the riches of Gospel-glorious Mysteries*; but I proceed unto the second.

That real Saints, believing Christians have (even while [Doct. 2] here on earth) *hope of glory*.

Such were these *Colossians* to whom these words were spoken, *The Saints and faithful brethren in Christ*; Not only Saints titularly but in reality, whose Saintship and faith was witnessed by their brotherly disposition towards one another, and their faithful walking in the world: these, these were they who had hope of future glory. The like expression hath the same Apostle in his Epistle to the *Romans*; *Being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God*. This Doctrine I shall not much dilate upon but only give one touch or two by way of application.

Hence we are informed that the gain of godliness, and [Use 1] the profitableness of a religious life is not to be judged of alone by the outward visible fruit reaped here; for the rich Revenues of holiness are rather in hope then in hand: *The world knoweth us not, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: No man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before them*; And therefore in the estimation of those who judge according to the sight of the eye, *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*. Though in very truth Christians who live by faith, and walk holily with the Lord, have cordials in secret which the world knoweth not of, viz. *peace which passeth all understanding, and joys most unspeakable and full of glory* (which do wonderfully exceed and admirably sweeten all their sufferings) yet the best is behind, these are only the tastes of that full glory reserved for them in heaven. Thus the Prophet *Malachi* confuteth the carnal crew in his days, who said it was a vain thing to serve God; He first telleth them of a *book of Remembrance written before the Lord*, recording all the serviceableness of Saints in evil times, and then referreth them to the last day, when God shall *make up his jewels*, adding these words, *Thenshall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not*. Would you give a right estimate of the precious incoms by godliness, do not so much view their present outward wants and pressures, but rather hearken to the language of their hopes. *When Christ who is our life shall appear, then we also shall appear with him in glory; And we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*.

[Use 2] Therefore let us all try whether we can from good holding grounds, make out our hopes of glory; As Ministers must beware of flattering people with vain hopes, so the Apostle *Paul* persuadeth everyone of us to *show diligence* for the attaining the *full assurance of hope*, yea, the same diligence which we use in reference to any act of obedience: And Saint *Peter* would have all Christians *ready to give a reason of the hope which is in them*. The necessity of this trial may be manifested by these following considerations.

1. The worth of the thing hoped for, viz. *glory*, which is in value transcendently better then all things under the Sun; Herein consists everlasting heavenly happiness. The phrase

whereby the holy Scripture doth express it is very full; *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*; The value of any commodity causeth cautiousnesse to prevent cheating: Wisdom therefore will make wary, that hopes hereof may not be built upon sandy bottoms.

2. The usefulness of hope, being as an *Helmet* to secure from capital dangers in warlike encounters, and as an *Anchor* to prevent shipwreck upon a stormy Sea: in which cases men are careful to make such provision, that the Head-piece and Anchor may not be brittle and easily broken.

3. The hopes of multitudes will be lamentably frustrated; Our Savior brings in many pleading with confidence at the last day for life, who shall be rejected with miserable disappointment, *Many shall say to me at that day Lord, Lord, &c. and I will profess unto them, I never knew you (q. d. I never approved you) depart from me.*

4. We know not how soon our hopes may be assaulted by others, and shaken by the recoylings of our own consciences. As good *Job* had his hopes questioned by his Friends, *Is this thy confidence and thy hope?* So the Church in an afflicted condition doth this dolefully bewail herself; *I said, My hope is perished from the Lord.*

Now if upon these meditations helps for *hopes-discovery* shall be inquired after, I shall briefly hint 1. whose hopes will fail. 2. Whose hopes will hold in the time of trial; As for the former the holy Ghost tells us plainly, that their hopes are perishing, who are 1. either wicked, 2. or hypocrites. *When the wicked man dieth his expectation shall perish, and the hypocrites hope shall perish.* Here though I may not be large in characterizing the wicked man or in uncasing the Hypocrite; yet take these short touches and enlarge them with application in your own thoughts:

First, A wicked man is 1. A sin-lover; *The wicked and him who loveth iniquity doth God's soul hate,* saith the Psalmist▪ And men's love of sin is manifested by their unwillingness to have it spoken against; As *David* would have *Absalom* gently dealt with. 2. And a man who liveth in sin upon choice and deliberation; Like as the fish liveth in water, He is as a Tradesman, a Practitioner in sin, a *Sin-maker*, a *worker of iniquity*, as the Scripture expresseth it; Therefore lay your hands upon your hearts, and observe whether they breathe loving allowance of sin, and deliberate resolutions to drive a trade in ways of known transgressions, though both God and your own consciences condemn them.

Secondly, An hypocrite may be described; *An outside, self-seeking, man-pleasing man.* Thus our Lord doth stigmatize them; *Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; Ye make clean the outside, and all their works they do to be seen of men:* When they either fast, or feast religiously, it is to *themselves*; Hereby a plain-dealing self-reflecting Christian may give a good guess at his own estate, *viz.* whether upright or an hypocrite, and consequently whether his hope will be holding or perishing: And I wish people to consider these hints for trial the rather because the hopes of these persons will fall and fail them at death, if not sooner; *What is the hope of the Hypocrite though he hath gained when God taketh away his soul?*

As for the latter viz whose hopes will hold, attend the expressions of the Apostle *Peter*, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.* Hence two things are notable for our purpose to discover good hope. 1. The Regeneration of the person hoping. 2. The activity of the hope itself. 1. The persons are begotten again, 2. Their hope is lively. That both these particulars may be practically applied for trial, I will for brevity sake suggest that the spiritual birth, and hopes vivacity, may be evidenced by effectual vocation; Hence it is that God in the Scripture speaketh once and again *of the hope of his calling.* Now our effectual calling doth discover itself, 1. Partly by our coming off from sin with detestation, and this is the effect of good hope, *Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself as he is pure.* 2. And partly by our coming up unto God in an obediential submission unto his government, in a studious conformity to his laws. These are conjoined in the experience and practice of God's people, viz. hope and holiness: As of *David*, *Lord I have hoped for thy salvation and done thy Commandments;* And of *Paul*, *After the way which they call Heresy, so worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets, and have hope towards God; And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense towards God and towards men:* Therefore conscientious endeavors against all sinful pollutions both of heart and life, together with care fully to answer the mind of the Lord in a religious conversation, notwithstanding hardships and reproaches in the world, will give good testimony unto the truth of our hopes of eternal glory; whereas looseness of life and heart, in ways of carnal self-seeking and man-pleasing, following the multitude, and swimming down the stream of declining times, may administer just occasion of doubting, that man's expectations of eternal glory will be disappointed.

To persuade all them who have hitherto flattered themselves [Use 3] with false hopes of heaven, to lay in better grounds for the future: It is the earnest desire of Gospel-Ministers that you would *use diligence to attain the full assurance of hope.*

And 1. Because you have heard, that it is attainable, therefore you should take encouragement to seek it.

2. Add to the possibility of getting assured hope, the necessity thereof, that you may be prevailed with to look after it. You heard before that hope is that unto a Christian in his passage unto heaven which an *Helmet* is to a Soldier, and an *Anchor* is to the Mariner. Therefore let this consideration move us to make out for the *Helmet* and *Anchor* of good hope. And I would entreat you the rather to mind this my earnest exhortation, because of the rocks of dissoluteness and destruction upon which you will be in danger to be driven, when Satan and your own consciences shall discover the sandiness of all your former hopes. Noteable for the proof hereof is that passage in the prophecy of *Jeremiah*, where the people being persuaded to repentance, return this answer: *There is no hope, we will walk after our own devices, and we will everyone do the imagination of his evil heart;* Or if the razing of hopes foundations doth not produce such wretched wicked resolutions, with what sinkings and doleful despondency will the awakened Soul be overwhelmed? Our Proverb saith, *Was it not*

for hope the heart would break; Therefore sleight not mine advice, neither delay the use of God's means to gain a well-grounded hope of your eternal salvation: your life is both short and uncertain; And they who go down into the pit cannot hope for God's truth. Now for your help herein, I shall in my next doctrine lead you to Christ who is the true Christians hope of glory.

That Christ is unto faithful Christians the hope of glory. [Doct. 3]

As my Text speaks this truth in open words, so elsewhere our Apostle thus expresseth himself; *The Lord Jesus Christ which is our hope:* And here *Simeon* anchored his hope of heaven, for he taking Christ in his arms, said, *Now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*

For the clearing of this Point there are two things enquirable.

1. What is meant by Hope of glory.
2. How Christ is to be accounted the Christians Hope of glory.

First, The hope of glory.

1. Either signifieth the glory hoped for, as it's taken in many other Scriptures; *The hope laid up for you in heaven; Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.*

2. Or the glorious hope; the grace of hope whereby the Soul desirously expecteth future everlasting glory; according to the words of this our Apostle; *I know that this shall tend to my salvation, according to my earnest expectation and hope.*

Secondly, Christ may truly be called the hope of glory in both these senses.

1. Being *the glory of his people Israel*, viz. the matter, the object of their chiefest glory both here and hereafter. He is the Christians *All* both upon earth and in heaven, Christ is the glory of heaven, the very heaven of heaven.

2. And being the root from whence holy hope and all other graces do spring: *From his fullness we all receive grace for grace; And whom we beholding as in a glass, we all are changed from glory to glory; Grace is glory begun, and glory is grace perfected, and both these we have from Jesus Christ.*

For the further opening and evidencing of this Doctrine, viz. *That Christ is the hope of glory*, Consider, that a Christians hope is attributed: 1. Efficiently, to God the Father working it by the holy Ghost; *The God of hope cause you to abound in hope, through the power of the holy Ghost.* 2. Instrumentally to the word of God, which is the word of his grace. *Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.* 3. Evidentially to the work of saving grace in the soul, manifesting itself by its operations there; *God gives good hope through grace*, whether faith, Rom. 15. 13. or love, 1 Joh. 3. 14. or any other sanctifying frame of heart. 4. And yet in a way of peculiarity Christ is the Christians hope, which our Apostle intends in this Text, wherein there is some Emphasis; *The*

hope, that hope, He is singularly, eminently the hope of glory; Fundamentally our hope of heaven is built upon him: Hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, saith the Apostle.

Now the true Christians *hope of glory* is raised out of Christ.

1. Upon that federal transaction which passed betwixt God the Father and Christ his Son; The Apostle speaking of the Covenant, thus expresseth himself, *To Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made, He saith not, And to his Seeds, as of many, but as of one And to thy Seed, which is Christ: And hither (as I humbly conceive) we may refer that passage in our Savior's Prayer unto his Father, relating to himself, Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.* Upon this account the Apostle seemeth to encourage hope; *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began: For unto whom besides Christ could the Almighty then, viz. before the world began, be engaged by any promise? Solomon doth suggest transactions betwixt God and Christ his essential wisdom, before the Creation, concerning the welfare of man, amongst which transactions, doubtless this was one, that through him believers should have hope of glory.*

2. Because of his satisfactory Passion; For whereas sin committed against God, and God's wrath kindled against man, are the only hindrances of entrance into glory. *Against them who sinned God sware in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest.* The Lord Jesus by his sufferings did break into pieces those bars, and made way for Christians admission into glory; For he *took away sin by the Sacrifice of himself; and Jesus delivered us from the wrath to come; As he removeth guilt by satisfying divine justice, so he quenched the flames of God's anger, by the shedding of his blood; And hereupon followeth hope of glory.*

3. By virtue of his meritorious purchase; The Apostle calleth a glorified estate in heaven, *The purchased possession, received by Redemption: whereas man had made forfeiture of his happiness (which consisted in communion with God) and was altogether unable to ransom it, the Lord Jesus bought it back again by his perfect obedience, which was esteemed of valuable consideration for so great a purchase, because of the infinite excellency of his person, being both God and man; Though man through the worthlessness of his person and weaknesses of his best performances cannot deserve the least accommodation from the Lord, yet man's hope of glory is upheld by the deserts of Emmanuell, of Christ, God with us.*

4. Through the effectual prevalency of his prayer; Christ said with confidence unto his Father, *I know that thou hearest me always; And this was one great Request which he made, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me, for thou hast loved me before the Foundation of the world; This Petition is a good prop to support hope of glory in a gracious heart.*

5. From the end of his Ascension; We all do believe, that Christ is *received up into glory.* And himself before his departure from earth, said, *I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.* Here is good Anchorhold for *hope, which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered.* Christ is gone into Heaven as our Harbinger to provide glorious mansions for us, and to take possession in our behalf. And the Apostle Peter writeth thus

unto the scattered Christian Jews, *God raised Christ from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.* From all these considerations jointly considered this conclusion is confirmed by Scripture-strength and evidence; *That Christ is unto believing Christians the hope of glory.* The application followeth.

[Use 1] Therefore without Christ there cannot be any well-grounded expectation of future glory: As this smart inference followeth undeniably from the Text under hand, so the same Apostle is open and express for this truth elsewhere; Suggesting to the *Ephesians* their sad condition in an unchristian estate, he connecteth these two particulars, *viz. ye were without Christ, having no hope.* Although profane godless and Christlesse men may have their expectations of outward comforts accomplished, and possess *more then heart could wish*, yet in regard of spirituals and eternals we may be confident, that *they spend their days without hope.* In which respect they should rather be looked upon as objects of pity then of envy, when they are in their greatest jollity and prosperity, because being Christlesse they are poor, hopeless creatures. Take man in his best estate imaginable out of Christ, and upon the serious Survey of himself he shall have cause to say, *What is my strength that I should hope?* And as *Paul* said in reference to himself and them who sailed with him in a sad Sea-voyage, that *when neither Sun, nor Stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay onus, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.* So let the chiefest Sons of men with their highest parts be laid under the storms of divine displeasure, without Gospellight discovering Christ, and all hope of salvation will be quite removed.

Hence fair occasion is offered to discover their dangerous [Use 2] delusion, who build their hopes of heaven upon creaturefoundations. As the Papists who in their *Ave-Mary's* call the Virgin the mother of Christ's humanity *Our Hope*, who also trust unto their works as meritorious causes of Salvation: So others also who imagine happiness attainable from the right improvement of Natures abilities, without the meritorious satisfaction of Jesus Christ: whereas the Scripture doth not only assert, that *there is not salvation in any other* besides Christ, but doth also affirm that *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law;* Oh that this short, sharp expression from an Apostolical pen might warn the wanton wits of these unwary times to take heed of crying up Nature and moral abilities, with the neglect of Jesus Christ, who alone is the foundation hope of future glory.

[Use 3] Therefore the communication of glory is from mere mercy, *Eternal life is the gift of God's grace through Jesus Christ;* Although I touched upon this before, yet I take it up again upon a double account; partly because the Apostle in this Text intends a check unto them who mixed their own righteousness with Christ, and partly because many in these days, not only Papists, but other proud Opinionists, do derogate from Gospel-mercy by ascribing too much unto man's natural strength, morally improved, whereby God's design in making man happy by Christ, is directly crossed and disappointed. Let the words of the Apostle *Paul* be seriously considered, *Ye are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that no flesh should glory in his presence, that according as it is written, He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord:* Our All in tendency unto peace, comfort and glory, is therefore from Christ, according to divine project and purpose, that man when at

the highest might be abased in himself, being necessitated to acknowledge that all his advantageous incomes, both in regard of glory begun on earth, and completed in heaven, are from Christ.

Now that I may more clearly advance God's rich grace and free mercy in bringing believers to glory by Christ; I heartily desire that these three things may be observed, viz.

1. That Christ himself was the gift of God; *Unto us a Sonne is given*, saith the Gospel-Prophet; And our Savior himself in his conference with the woman of *Samaria*, calleth himself *That gift of God*, by way of superlative eminency being the richest and freest gift that ever God bestowed upon the children of men.

2. That the grace of faith whereby the Soul receiveth Christ and happiness by him, is the free gift of God likewise. *To you* (saith Saint Paul to the *Philippians*) *it is given to believe*; The Original suggests, that it was given of grace, which our Translation doth elsewhere express: *Apollo* is said *to help them much who had believed through grace*; And this our Apostle in his Epistle to the *Romans*, affirming that our Justification is from mercy, not merit, addeth these words, *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be of grace*.

4. That all our spiritual privileges received from Christ himself, are from him upon terms of mercy and grace. *Forgiveness of sin is according to the riches of his grace*; *We are justified by his grace*; *We are accepted in the beloved, to the praise of the glory of his grace*. And himself in his prayer to the Father saith, *The glory which thou gavest me I have given them*: Answerable hereunto is the advice of Saint Jude, *Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*. It's mere mercy, not merit, that holdeth up the heart in expectation of Heaven. All these particulars being put together will undenably evidence the strength of this my Inference, viz. *That Because the Christians hope of glory is rooted in Christ, therefore Heavens glory with all the requisites belonging thereto are from grace and mercy*. And this will make way for the Use following.

To persuade Christians, *the heirs of glory*, to praise God [Use 4] for Jesus Christ, because all their hopes do spring from him, As *Simeon* expecting salvation by Christ, *blessed God*; All our hearts should breathe forth Saint Peters doxology; *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you*: Hence I might note to quicken gratitude, 1. The admirable worth of the inheritance in glory which hope expecteth, viz. *an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away*. 2. The means whereby this hope is begotten in us, viz. *the death and resurrection of Christ*. 3. And the motive moving the Lord in this way to give us ground of hope, viz. *His abundant mercy*. In all which regards it may well become us to join with our souls in *Zacharies Song*, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David*. This thankfulness may be persuaded by a double consideration, the one more general and the other more particular. In general, because this ground of hope is revealed to us Gentiles, and that upon no other account but God's good pleasure; •his is M. Baines his Observation from

the words before the Text: *God maketh known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; This was an high privilege peculiar to the Jews, that to them were committed the Oracles of God; but how much greater is our preferment in these times, God having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself! And the Apostle elsewhere discoursing of some differences betwixt Old-Testament and New-Testament dispensations, telleth us, that the Gospel bringeth in a better hope by which we draw nigh to God. More particularly in reference to our own persons take notice of these things.*

1. That the revelation of this should reach our understandings, when multitudes of more pregnant capacities continue ignorant hereof; *I thank thee O Father (said Christ) Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes, Evenso Father, for it seemeth good in thy sight.*

2. That we do not only perceive, but also participate personally in this hope through Jesus Christ; whereas there are millions whose heads are full of this light, and yet their hearts are empty of this lively hope of glory by Christ. *And if I by grace be a partaker (saith Saint Paul) I give Godthanks.*

3. That *the riches of the glory of this Inheritance hoped for by the Saints* is inexpressible. And that we may be abundantly thankful for this hope in Christ, as we should pray for a more clear apprehension thereof, so should we endeavor to know assuredly our peculiar interest therein, by finding the Lord Jesus dwelling in our hearts by his Spirit: Because my Text tells us, *That Christ in us is the hope of glory*, which is the next and last Doctrine here considerable.

That Christ by being in believers, is unto them the hope of [Doct. 4] glory. The existency of Christ in believing Christians giveth existency to their hopes of glory. This connection of Christ in them and of their glory through him, is considerable in his most heavenly Prayer, in which having spoken of the glory given unto them, with the same breath (as it were) he suggests his being in them, The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them, &c. Before I proceed in the further handling of this doctrine; These words which speak the in-being of Christ in Christians, do call for some explication: Therefore let us enquire 1. Both what the phrase doth not, 2. And what it doth hold forth to our consideration.

First, It doth not intimate such a being of Christ in any Christian, as of the Godhead in Christ, by reason whereof Godhead and Manhood in Christ made one person; in regard whereof he was from his conception absolutely free from the least tincture of sin, and was made able to complete the work of Mediatorship, both by bearing up under the infinite weight of God's displeasure without sinking, and also to give sufficient virtue and value unto his obedience active and passive, that it might be satisfactory and meritorious. But it doth suggest Christ's peculiar abode in believers *by his Spirit* being received by faith, whereby he dwelleth and operateth spiritually in their hearts, which union betwixt him and them doth in some measure by way of similitude, though not fully in way of parity, represent the union betwixt his father and himself. And whereas the Apostle *Peter* speaketh of our being *made partakers of*

the divine nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. which words are much abused. There are two things notable from that Scripture to manifest the difference betwixt Christ and Christians in that participation. 1. The words are not, we are made partakers of the *God-head*, but of the divine nature, viz. of the qualities of God, according to our capacity, whereby we *escape that corruption which is in the world through lust*, and do in holy dispositions resemble God so far as such creatures can: As *David* speaketh of showing the *kindness of God* unto *Jonathan's* posterity, 2 Sam. 20. 15. whereas *God-head* itself was in such sort in Christ, 1 Tim. 3. 16. that he was *God blessed forever*, Rom. 9. 5. coequal with God the Father, Phil. 2. 6. 2. The Apostle *Peter* is open and express that Christians are partakers of the divine nature (in the sense aforesaid) by means of the *exceeding great and precious promises* of God's grace; whereas Christ was God by an eternal, natural, inexpressible generation.

Having thus briefly explicated the expression in the Text, and the like used by our Savior, I proceed to the handling of the point of doctrine here propounded: And because the doctrine hath two branches, the one necessarily implied, the other openly expressed, I shall distinctly speak unto them both.

The truth implied in the first branch of the doctrine is this, viz. that *Christ is in Believers*; As believers *do receive him*, so he *dwelleth in their hearts by faith*. And therefore it is notable, that the Apostle having moved the *Corinthians* to prove themselves *whether in the faith*, he addeth, *Knowye not that Jesus Christ is in you?* This in-being of Christ in believers is to be understood, not of an abode in them (or anywhere else on earth) corporally, for in that sense *the Heavens must receive him until the time of the restitution of all things*; but of an habitation spiritual, according to the testimony of the Apostle; *Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts*; Thereby intending to teach us, that Christ is in believing Christians spiritually.

And this truth is by various metaphors suggested in the holy Scriptures. 1. By being compared unto showers which descending from heaven, do sink and soak into the bowels of the earth, *He shall come down like rain*. 2. And *his Name is like unto ointment poured forth*, which worketh itself *into the bones*, not staying upon the outside of the person receiving it. 3. He is *meat and drink indeed* unto the soul, from whence he himself concludeth my doctrine, *He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him*: 4. Hereto might be added that he is the soul of our souls, whereby we live spiritually; *Christ is our Life*. And man's life is said to be in him, 2 Sam. 1. 9. The body is called the *sheath of the Soul*, which expression hinteth, that the soul is in the body, as the sword in the scabbard: In like manner Christ who is the Christians life is in all them whom he enliveneth.

Having thus cleared the truth, that Christ is in believing [Use 1] Christians, I proceed to the application of it under three heads of Uses.

First, For Instruction in four particulars, 1. Hence the Godhead of Jesus Christ may be concluded undeniably; for this spiritual ubiquity of Christ in the souls of all real Saints in all the places of the world, cannot belong unto any mere creature whatsoever. This argument Saint *Paul* produced to distinguish the true God from all Idol-gods, *He is not far from everyone*

of us. Omnipresence proveth Deity. And the conclusion followeth with like strength, when believers assert this truth, *He is in everyone of us.*

2. This discovereth the unparellel'd condescensions of Jesus Christ, being willing to abase himself thus low as to be within poor sinful creatures. This was a matter of admiration unto Solomon, *But will God indeed dwell on earth?* The good Centurion said, *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof;* And the Psalmist with much affection calleth upon all the servants of the Lord to praise him and praise him again upon this account; *Who is like unto the Lord God? who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth!* Did God humble himself in looking out of himself, off from his own infinite beauties and perfections, to view either men on earth or Angels and Saints in heaven? How much greater is this condescension in Christ to make his abode in the souls of sinners? Let me here dart only two thoughts into your minds. 1. That Christ *came out of his Fathers bosom where he was daily his delight rejoicing always before him.* 2. That the hearts of the best, upon earth wherein he inhabits, are like dark dungeons, in regard of the clouds of ignorance not dispersed, and like unsavory dunghills in respect of many noisome lusts not fully subdued; Therefore guess with gratitude how low our blessed Lord doth stoop in being content to dwell in us, even in us every way so vile and so unworthy.

3. This giveth us to understand the dignity of all true believers; As they are *precious, excellent, more excellent than others* in many other respects (which I now have not occasion to mention) so upon this account that the Lord Jesus Christ is in them. Moses the man of God judgeth *Israel* in this regard, in a condition far better than any other people; *For what Nation hath God so nigh unto them?* And how much was *Zacchaeus* affected with the apprehension of this favor, this honor, when Christ promised to *abide at his house?* When he had climed into a tree to take a view of Christ, and Christ telleth him that he should not only have a transient sight of him, but also enjoy him as his guest, oh how was *Zacchaeus* (think you) elevated by this entertainment! Now *such* (and greater) *honor have all his Saints:* It was no doubt a very great honor put upon the blessed *Virgin Mary*, both in *her own account*, and in the *judgement of all Christians*, that she did bear the holy body of Christ in her womb for a time, *He that is mighty hath magnified me*, and certainly the inhabitation of Christ by his Spirit in the souls of his servants, is not a privilege inferior.

4. This whispereth the madness and misery of all such who do dare to make opposition against believers, for seeing Christ is in them, therefore in so doing they seek (as it were) to pluck down Christ his house upon his head. I shall not enlarge this Use 1. Either by showing the various ways whereby wrong is done unto the servants of the Most High, *viz.* by secret plots and open persecutions, either by abating their comforts, or increasing their sufferings, either by corrupting their judgments, or drawing them to sin. 2. Or by manifesting Christ's knowledge and sensibleness of these their injuries, together with his severity against their enemies, witnessed both by judgments threatened in his Word, and executed in the world from generation to generation: But I only wish those who are herein guilty, to mind the *Item* given by the Apostle *Paul* in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*, *If any man defile the Temple of God, him will God destroy, for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are.*

The second Use is for the comfort of all true believers, [Use 2] seeing Christ is in them; I remember what is recorded concerning *Paul*, that the sight of some Christian brethren cheered him after a sad shipwreck whom when *Paul* saw he took courage; And *Caesar* cheered the drooping Mariners in a storm by minding them of his presence, How much more should the in-being of Christ solace the believing soul? 1. Because of his authority and power to order all casualties and concernments according to his pleasure, whereas many times the best of creature-friends can do no more then pity and pray: Thus our Lord cheered his Apostles, *All power is given unto me, and lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world.* And it was a cordial to the Disciples in a storm that Christ was with them, whom the winds and waves must obey. 2. Because this a bode of Christ speaketh his complacency; This is M^r Bayns his Note upon the Text. A man cannot properly be said to dwell in a prison in which he taketh no delight: And this answereth a Scripture-expression elsewhere, *Here I will dwell for I have desired it,* (saith God of *Zion*) Though many times drooping Christians, viewing their own beggarlinesse and vileness, judge themselves worthy to be detested and deserted, and would relinquish themselves if they could, yet *Christ looketh to the poor and contrite soul* as a meet habitation for himself. 3. Because he doth graciously communicate himself unto the soul where he resideth, according to the necessities thereof; *I dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the contrite ones.* When you read this promise, remember his ability and fidelity in these and all other kinds, to accommodate those whom he inhabits to their completing in the accomplishment of his Mediatorship; Therefore doubtless there cannot possibly be either any creature-want or danger, wherein the improvement of this in-dwelling of Christ may not refresh the believing Christian. 4. Because this will be constantly and abundantly relieving in times of the greatest solitariness, though in banishment, or the closest imprisonment, and at the greatest distance from the dearest friends: *Joseph in Egypt, David in the wilderness, and Paul prisoner in the Castle,* were admirably cheered by this company; And Christ is now and will be evermore the self-same in his servants for their consolation.

The third Use is for Exhortation, to persuade Believers [Use 3] unto a double duty.

1. To purge all discovered pollution out of themselves, because of Christ's special residence in them. This Use the Apostle *Paul* maketh of this doctrine, for having said to the *Corinthians*, *Ye are the Temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them,* he addeth, *Having therefore these Promises, Dearly Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit;* This was one charge which God gave unto old *Israel*, in a military condition, that all bodily filth should be buried under ground, and this is rendered as the reason, *For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thee, therefore shall thy Camp be holy, that he see no unclean thing in thee;* Oh that Christians would in this respect oppose inward defilements, and not outward pollutions only. How careful are we to sweep and wash away whatsoever might be offensive unto our Friends in the rooms where we lodge them? And what guest can so well deserve welcome as Jesus Christ, unto whom all sin is *abominable*, he being the holy One of God? Be not satisfied therefore with fair faces and white hands, but labor to make and to keep the in-side clean also.

2. To prepare for Christ's contentful entertainment in their bosoms; Who is not willing to be at cost in providing both food and furniture fitting for the welcoming of worthy friends? It's said, *Levi made Christ a great Feast in his own house; yea, Solomon brings in the whorish woman, reporting her provisions made for the young man whom she solicited to lewdness, I have deck'd my bed with coverings of Tapestry, with carved works, and fine linen of Egypt; I have perfumed my bed with Myrrh, Aloes and Cinamon.* And should not a principle of pure love to Christ prevail with Christians to do more then sordid lusts do with the brutish children of men? If you demand what is the provision to be laid in for Christ his welcome; The Apostle telleth you, it is *perfecting holiness in the fear of God*, which practice also, he moveth by the argument under-hand (as was hinted in the former branch of the Exhortation.) By the increasing and acting of all the graces of the holy Ghost, Christ will be abundantly contented. This is intended by these metaphorical expressions of the Spouse unto Christ, *At our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee O my Beloved; I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my Pomegranate.* And take this encouragement all you drooping souls, who are low and little in your own eyes, judging nothing of your graces worthy Christ's acceptance, or meet for his entertainment, that his Loves will take in good part, that which with sincere good-will you shall provide and make tender of with respect unto his content. *I will sup with you* (saith he to the Church.) And upon the invitation of the Spouse, thus expressed, *Let my Beloved come into his garden and eat his pleafantfruit*, This answer speaking good acceptance is returned, *I am come into my garden, my Sister, my Spouse, I have gathered my Myrrh with my Spice, I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey, I have drunk my wine with my milk:* Oh how ready with cheerfulness is the Lord Jesus to own and accept all graces, notwithstanding their defects and mixtures in the bosoms of them whom he doth inhabit! This therefore should both quicken and embolden poor believing souls to lay in and lay out for his satisfaction who is pleased to abide in them.

I proceed to the second branch of the Doctrine, which is the truth openly expressed, *viz.* That the existency of Christ in Believers, giveth existence unto their hopes of glory.

If the reasons hereof be demanded, I answer,

Because Christ his spiritual presence in us, is God's earnest of glory. The Apostle is express for this: Having mentioned the longings of Saints *to be swallowed up of life*, he addeth, *Now he that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.* Therefore if God's own earnest may give good hope, then Christ in believing Christians giveth good hope of glory, especially because the earnest itself is of so great value, the receiving whereof is happiness begun upon earth.

2. Because of that near relation and close union which is betwixt Christ and them, whom he inhabiteth, They are not only related unto him, as servants unto their Master, though that would give ground of good hope. Seeing he himself who is taken up into glory, hath said, *Where I am, there shall my servant be.* Neither are they only one with him, *He in them, and they in him, as the branches in the Vine.* But he is united unto believers *as the head unto the body*, which is called his *fullness*. Therefore if there be hope that Christ will have a complete body without

the defect of any member in heaven, or that every individual member of Christ his mystical body shall be glorified, then Christ in believers is the infallible hope of glory.

3. Because Christ by abiding in Believers doth prepare them for participation in glory. The Apostle Paul is clear in his expressions to this purpose. *Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you, and if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness; But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Wheresoever Christ dwells spiritually, his Spirit operateth effectually for the subduing of sinful principles, and for the advancing of the power of sanctification; And thus he *preparing the vessels of mercy for glory, and making them meet to be made partakers of the inheritance of Saints in light,* he giveth them sure hope of glory.

This by way of application may serve as a good touchstone [Use 1] to try the truth of heavens hopes. Not Christ in the Sermons which we hear, nor Christ in the Chapters which we read, nor Christ in the Sacrament which we receive will administer ground of hope of future glory. Though Christ be in our heads by high notions, and in our mouths by frequent, glorious expressions, yet if he be not in our bosoms by spiritual inhabitation, he is not unto us the hope of glory: It is said of hypocrites, that *God is near in their mouths but far from their reins.* And that *with their lips they honor him, but their heart is far from him.* At the last day many shall plead their profession of Christ, calling him Lord, Lord, and talking of great works done in his Name, who yet shall be rejected with doleful disappointments, *I will profess unto them* (saith Christ) *I never knew you, depart from me;* Here then the question will be, how may Christ his being in us be discovered? I answer briefly. 1. By the grace of faith whereby he is received. 2. By the room into which he is welcomed. 3. And by the effects of his entertainment. First, Whereas true Believers *are the only receivers of Jesus Christ.* This faith will evidence itself, partly by the incomparable value which it puts upon Christ. *To you who believe* (saith the Apostle Peter) *he is precious,* and partly by opposing and purging out sinful pollution, that Christ may not be annoyed by it: *The heart is purified by faith,* Therefore ask your selves, as in God's presence, whether there be anything in the world which you prize more then Christ, or so much as Christ, and whether you do indulge any wickedness within your bosoms, without bitter complaints and vigorous opposition.

Secondly, *Christ dwelleth in the heart by faith.* The Spouse saith, *He shall lie as a bundle of Myrrh betwixt my breasts.* Therefore consider, into what place Christ is welcomed. Do you admit him into some out-house only? As at his birth, he was *laid in a manger, because there was no room for him in the Inn;* Or do you put him into a cock-loft only? I mean, Do you only fill your fancies with notions, and tip your tongues with talk of Christ, or is he indeed received with warm welcome into your hearts, by longings, loves and rejoicings?

Thirdly, Whereas Christ is influentially operative in the soul where he resideth, as the soul in the body where it is. *Christ is our life* (saith Paul) *and I am crucified with Christ, Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* Enquire therefore exactly whether by such spiritual breathings, sense and motions, as were in Jesus Christ, whilst upon earth, you can make out your union and communion with him. *Hethat saith, he abideth in him, ought himself also so to*

walk, even as he walked; what gaspings are in you after conformity to God's will and the glory of his Name! what sighs under sin with the expressions of divine displeasure! what complacency in God's service, and the smiles of his face, in the use of holy Ordinances! what motions, what progress do you endeavor to make, from sin, towards God, in the mortifying of inward lusts, and the advancing of the power of godliness in your conversations? Sincere answers returned unto such like demands, will suggest whether Christ be efficaciously present in you.

This truth administereth matter of much comfort unto all [Use 2] them who find upon due examination the Lord Jesus dwelling in them. When *Zacchaeus* heard that Christ would *abide in his house, he received him joyfully*. Greater cause of joy have they who have already lodged him in their hearts. Now to quicken the believers joy upon that account, viz. that Christ in them is the hope of glory, these comfortable consequences may be considered.

1. Hence they may assuredly expect the supply of all outward wants, whether they look upon themselves, as possessed of Christ, or entitled by him unto glory. The holy Scripture holds forth this inference as deducible from both these grounds. Christ is the owner, the heir of all things, and therefore if God hath given us his Son, *how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* And if the Lord by the right of Christ hath been pleased to give interest in heavens glory, he will certainly vouchsafe all earthly needful accommodations; This conclusion Christ himself gathers from the premises. *Fear not little Flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom*. And the Apostle doth from the same Argument assert the ministration of Angels for their advantage. *Are they not all ministering Spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?* Therefore assurance of provision and protection is hence clearly deducible.

2. Upon the same account they may be confident of their final perseverance. The Apostle *Peter* having asserted the hope which the Regenerate have of this glorious Inheritance reserved in heaven for them, he addeth God's care to preserve them unto the possession thereof; *who are kept* (saith he) *by the power of God through faith unto salvation*: and from hence encourageth this confidence; *Wherefore gird up the loins of your minds, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you, at the revelation of Jesus Christ*. There are but two things (as I conceive) which can possibly endanger their falling short of hoped-for glory, viz. either their own corruptions within, or their oppositions from without. Now Christ being in them, and taking the care of them, doth secure their souls from both, as is manifest from his own words, *I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand*. The gloss which reverend holy M^r *Dod* gave of this Scripture, was this; Whereas Sheep are endangered either from somewhat within them, viz. by the rot, or some disease to which subject, or from somewhat without them, viz. by dogs and beasts of prey: Our Savior promiseth, that the *Sheep* of his fold shall not miscarry finally from either of these dangers. And Christ annexeth an argument which holds invincible against all adverse power whatsoever, whether within or without, whether on earth or in hell; *My Father which gave them me, is greater than All*; Upon this bottom Saint *Paul* builds his triumph; *Who shall separate*

us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

3. Therefore nothing which is consistible with Christ's residence in a Christians bosom should shake his hope of glory. Neither weakness of graces, nor strength of lusts, neither the assaults of Satan, how horrid, violent, frequent soever, nor imperfections in holy performances, how many, or constant soever, which militate against the believers assurance, should sink either hope or heart, except Christ's utter absence from the soul could from thence be undeniably concluded. The Apostle *Paul* having mentioned his constant conflict and his frequent foysls in the 7. of the *Romans*, yet adds in the end of the Chapter, his joy in Christ, *I thank God through Jesus Christ*; and asserts in the beginning of the Chapter following; *There is no condemnation unto them who are in Christ Jesus.* *Augustine* while Christ was in his eye, said, *I dare not despond.* And Christians should both with respect unto Christ's honor and their own comfort, make conscience, not to yield to dejecting doubts, or perplexing fears, in reference to their glory in heaven, while the matter of their complaints is no more then may possibly be found in the soul where Christ dwelleth. Certainly if doubting Christians would carefully hold unto this direction, maintaining and bottoming their hopes in Christ, multitudes of scruples might easily be answered, and their evidences for heaven would be better preserved, and their constant comfort well secured. This *anchor of hope* thus cast out and fastening upon Christ, would be admirably useful, when billows of temptations (as in a tempest) beat upon the believing soul; And the *Helmet of this hope* thus used would keep off many blows, whereby the comforts of distrustful spirits are sadly battered.

4. This may be a precious cordial to the believer upon his death-bed; It was reviving unto old *Simeon*, being ready to leave the word, *Then he took Christ in his Arms, and blessed God, and said, Now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* How many and how sweet soever our contentments are upon earth, of which death will deprive us, yet Christ being in us the hope of glory, *to die will be gain, and to be with Christ will be far better.* And who is not cheerfully willing in a way of self-love, to part with that which is worse for what is much better?

The doctrine may be improved by exhortation. 1. To [Use 3] them in whom Christ is the hope of glory. 2. To others, who as yet have not received him.

First, Those who possess Christ and hope of glory through him, are to be persuaded

1. To contentment with their present condition upon earth, though it be mean and low. The heirs of vaste estates in the world can the better bear hardship, during their nonage, though their diet be scanty, their lodging hard, and their clothing coarse, because they hope that ere long all will be better. Who knoweth not the poverty of Jesus Christ? *The Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have their nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* And yet he is comfortably contented, as in respect of his present enjoyment of God as his portion, so in reference to his expectation of future glory; *The Lord is the Pertion of mine Inheritance: The lines are allen unto me in pleasant places; In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand*

there are pleasures for evermore. The Apostle Paul seeks by this argument to raise the Christian Colossians above sublunaries. *When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.* Oh how admirably would such meditations elevate the discontented Christian with calmness and complacency, if they were set on by faith's activity!

2. To patience in bearing reproaches, with all other crosses for Christ, in a Christian course, keeping in their mind this hoped-for glory. This Doctrine Christ himself both preached and practiced; *Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven;* This was one passage in his Sermon, and truly by this he was supported under his sufferings, *For the joy that was set before him he endured the Cross, despising the shame.* Having propounded Christ's practice, it may be judged needless to mention the example of Moses, who chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, *Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of reward:* But $\langle \diamond \rangle$ you eye in Christ what is equitable and imitable, then consider in Moses what is attainable by the industrious actings of faith and meditation. And yet to prevail further upon your spirits in promoting your magnanimity and patience, by minding your hope of glory in Christ, I wish you to compare your present sufferings on earth with your future glory hoped for in heaven, both in regard of their quality and continuance, for the one are both light and short, whereas the other is both weighty and eternal. The experience of God's servants hath often put a *Probatum est* unto this direction. *For this cause we faint not, for our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

Secondly, Those who have not as yet received Christ to dwell in them, are to be moved as they desire heavens glory hereafter, and the comfortable hopes of it here upon earth, to give entertainment unto Jesus Christ. *Zacchaeus* upon an hint given of Christ's willingness to come into his house, comes down out of the Sycamore-Tree *quickly, and receiveth him joyfully.* Now do you with seriousness consider with what 1. importunity, 2. patience, 3. and promises, the Lord Jesus calleth upon you for entertainment. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

1. There is the use both of a voice and knocking, therefore importunity. He speaketh by his word, and knocketh by his Spirit, with some recoylings of an awakened conscience.

2. This importunity is not only once, it is not a knock, or a word and away, but he *standeth*, he stayeth, and waiteth for admission; This speaketh much patience.

3. This patient importunity is backed with promises of communion upon willingness to take him in, *I will sup with him and he with me*, (as if he had said) I will feast his soul, and I will accept of his provisions for my welcome.

Now if by these motives (to which many more might be added) you be disposed to enquire what you should do that may come into you, and be in you, the hope of glory; I would refer you to the counsel given by the Psalmist (which is doubled, because weighty and necessary) *Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.* Hence two directions may be gathered. 1. That our souls (which in regard of their immortality are called everlasting doors) must willingly receive him. He is a great King, and will not take up with an out-house for his lodging, for the place of his gracious abode; *He dwelleth in the heart;* Either there or not at all. Therefore by meditating upon the fore-mentioned particulars, suggesting Christ his deservings, and the incomparable benefits to be received by him, seek to prevail with yourselves that your warmest loves, strongest longings, and highest joys may be laid forth upon him. 2. That he must be received as Lord and King, with free contentment to submit unto his Scepter and Regal Authority. In houses where Kings were wont to be entertained, *Rex* was usually written upon the door, all the rooms were to be disposed of for his use. In like manner must they commit the Keys of government into the hands of Christ, with willingness to be ruled by him in all things, who would receive him, and through him the *hope of glory*. 3. Hereto may be added heart-humiliation; For whereas high stately Palaces are esteemed the fittest houses for the entertainment of earthly Princes, Jesus Christ the King of glory maketh choice of lowly hearts for his habitation: *For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit:* Therefore level your mountains of selfconceit, lay yourselves in the dust upon the serious review of the evil both of your lives and natures, together with the deserved misery, which you be neither able to resist nor undergo, and make an unfeigned self-resignation unto the Lord, to be always, in all things governed by him, so may you expect the coming of Christ into your souls, and the comfort of good hope of glory through him.

This one thing I earnestly move as a matter necessary to salvation by Jesus Christ, *viz.* self-denial, with submission to Christ, as tendered in the Gospel, upon terms of free grace. The Apostle Paul looketh upon the Jews as not in the state of salvation, *Because they going about to establish their own righteousness submitted not themselves unto the righteousness of God.* Their privileges were high, and their costly Sacrifices many, and therefore they hoping without Christ then preached to work out their own welfare, fell short of blessedness. The same Spirit of pride and self-dependence is in all our natures, which is extremely mischievous, obstructing the way unto Christ's welcome into the soul: therefore I entreat and beseech Christians again and again herein to be exceeding careful. Neither let those who are most rich in parts, duties, enjoyments, rely thereupon, with disrespect of Christ; Nor yet let Poor souls, burdened with guilt, beggarly in abilities, most vile and unworthy in their own account, keep off from Christ through distrustful discouragements; For as all good hope of glory is raised from Christ heartily entertained, so no one who humbly, obedientially stoopeth under his government *shall be rejected.*

In the last place, The Doctrine administereth much comfort [Use 4] unto mourners bewailing the death of such who (as they have just cause to believe) had received Christ into their souls before they left this world, because from this ground ariseth good hope that they are

admitted into heavens glory. Upon this account the Apostle dissuadeth drooping, and persuadeth cheerfulness in Christians upon such occasions. *I would not have you ignorant Brethren concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope; For we believe that those who sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him, and so shall we ever be with the Lord; Wherefore comfort one another with these words.* In this regard regular love to our deceased Christian Friends, would turn our water into wine, our tears into joys. *If ye loved me* (said Christ to his dejected Apostles) *ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father.* And this was the reason (as some Divines do conjecture) wherefore *David* who mourned excessively upon *Absalom's* death, was more comfortable when he heard that his young child was dead, *Now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? I shall go to him:* God gave into his heart assurance of his child's happiness in heaven; whereas the wickedness wherein *Absalom* lived and died did suggest rather doubts concerning his future condition.

This Use puts a fair opportunity into my hand to reach forth a Cordial unto the Father, Mother, Grand-mother, and other Relations of the ingenuous, gracious Child, whose Funeral hath occasioned this Assembly, and whose affectionate minding of this Text (upon which I have discoursed) was the Argument which induced me to undertake it, at this time. He was but nine years old and a half when God translated him, and above five years since this Text, *Christ in you the hope of glory*, took such hold upon his heart, that he frequently spake of it, and often entreated his Father to preach of it. And doubtless it is not a thing usual for a child so young to be thus affected with thoughts of Christ, and glory to be hoped for through him.

Some few things more I will add,

1. To relieve the sad hearts of his nearest friends.
2. To move them, with others, unto thankfulness to the Lord for that which his Spirit had wrought in this hopeful child.
3. As also to quicken young ones unto the imitation of his virtues.

First, His loving honorable respect to his dear Parents, and dutiful observance of them, was very great, which was evidenced by these particulars.

1. Having quick parts and an aptness to learning, he was willing to apply himself unto anything wherein they judged it meet to have him instructed.
2. As he himself was afraid to offend his Parents, so he was careful to prevent amongst Servants that which might trouble them, and to keep from their knowledge whatsoever he thought would be grievous unto their spirits.
3. When under griping pains by reason of the wind-Colick, he would labor to forbear groans and outcries, lest they should be over-much afflicted with his Lamentations.
4. Being asked, whether he desired prayers for the lengthening of his life, his answer was, I would live, that I might glorify God, and be a comfort to my Father and mother.

And all these expressions of his tender love towards his Parents, are the more considerable, because there was reason to hope that they were increased in him by their care of his Religious Education; In all these particulars he was a rare example (especially if his childhood be remembered) of Children's obedience to their Parents.

Secondly, He was like young *Timothy*, knowing the holy Scriptures in his Childehood. Though his bodily distempers did often take him off from Reading in the Bible, yet he had read it twice throughout, and was the third time gotten into the New Testament, before his last Sickness. He was able also to give a good account both of the Chapters which he read, and of the Sermons which he heard.

And I will here mention three Passages which manifest that he minded and was affected with the Word of God.

1. Having been taught a short Prayer by his Parents, his manner was, to add thereto Scripture-sentences from time to time; Two I shall report. The one from *Psal. 119. 68. Thou art good, and dost good, Teach me thy Statutes*: The other from *Psa. 120. 2. Deliver my Soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue*. Were not these his desires of knowledge and of preservation from lying (a sin to which Children are subject) very commendable.

2. Hearing of the misery of wicked ones, and Hypocrites, laid open in a Sermon on the Sabbath-morning, he durst not go to his dinner till he had gone aside to prayer; whereas thousands of riper age have no obediential bents wrought by divine threatenings.

3. And being once reproached (some years since) because the hair of his head was short, he readily returned this Answer, That God's Word speaketh against long hair, remembering those words of the Apostle, *Doth not even Nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair it is a shame unto him? 1 Cor. 11. 14*. May not this give a check unto many, both Ministers and others, whose Ruffian-like locks are very offensive unto multitudes who fear the Lord?

Thirdly, As he was a Child of many Prayers, not only being much prayed for by his Parents and their Godly Friends, but also because he himself did pray daily, seeming also to make conscience of this duty. And here I shall relate some things which I account considerable.

1. Sundry years since he made this as a matter of complaint, that he could not order his thoughts while he was at prayer; How may this shame multitudes of people much elder, to whom roving thoughts in prayer were never troublesome?

2. Not long before his death, staying at home on the Sabbath-morning with a maid-Servant, he desired (as he had done formerly) that they might sing a Psalm and go to prayer; And in his prayer he made this Petition, *Lord, grant that we may leave our sins, not as people do their old clothes with purpose to put them on again, but that we may forsake our sins as rags, with resolution to wear them no more*.

Many times when sick and in pain, he would use these words, *Lord help me*; He was thankful to myself as to others for our prayers; and that night before his death, having been once prayed for by them who watched with him (who discerned the approach of his change) he

himself of his own accord entreated them to pray with him and for him again: Do not these things speak his sensible apprehensions of dependence upon God, with expectations of favor from him by means of prayer?

Fourthly, This must not be forgotten, That for divers years before his death he would express much estimation of those Texts of Scripture which speak of heavens glory, the glory provided for God's Servants forever. He would often commend the grace of contentment, saying, that it was *better then riches*, and that *man's life consisted not in abundance*. If unto all these things we add (that with which I did begin) *viz.* the words of my Text, which did run much in his mind, *Christ in you the hope of glory*; we may thence charitably and probably conjecture, that notwithstanding his religious education, and the many things praise-worthy in his life, yet he grounded his hope of glory alone upon the Lord Jesus.

These particulars I have judged meet to mention (as I before hinted) with respect to God's honor, the comfort of his mourning friends, and the edification both of children and their Parents, who may be herewith acquainted.

Now the practical improvement both of my Sermon and this Narration, I humbly commend unto the blessing of God through Jesus Christ.

FINIS.

P-SA-5. Good courage discovered, and encouraged: in a sermon preached before the commanders of the military forces, of the renowned city of London. In the parish church of Great St. Helens. May the 17. 1642. By Simeon Ash, preacher in London. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662., England and Wales. Parliament.

GOOD COVRAGE DISCOVERED, AND ENCOVRAGED: IN A SERMON preached before the Commanders of the Military Forces, of the Renowned City of *London*.

In the Parish Church of Great S^t. *Helens*. May the 17. 1642.

By SIMEON ASH, Preacher in London.

DEVT. 20. 2, 3, 4.

And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the Battle that the Priest shall approach, and speak unto the people.

And shall say unto them, Hear O Israel, you approach this day unto Battle against your Enemies: Let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them.

For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies to save you.

LONDON, Printed by *John Dawson* for *John Barroughes*, and are to be sold at his shop at the golden Dragon near the Inner Temple-gate in Fleet-street. 1642.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL, the Aldermen, and Commoners, unto whom the *Militia* of the City of *London* is committed, the Serjeant Major General, the Colonels, the Lieutenant Colonels, Serjeant Majors, Captains, and other officers of the trained Bands of the said City.

Right Worshipful,

Cornelius, Centurion of the Italian Band is thus commended by the Holy Ghost, that *he was a devout man, and one that feared God*. And I may report thus much to your honour and to move others to make imitation; that you have begun, and hitherto carried on your *Martial* affairs religiously. For having put the City into a posture of defense; before the execution of the *Militia*; you jointly sought God by Prayer for good success. The Lord heard your Prayers, for you went forth, and returned home, without the least touch of danger to yourselves, or your Companies. This remarkable Providence called you again together, to praise the God of salvations, the God of your mercies.

Hereupon you were pleased to appoint me (very unworthy) to assist you in the service of Thanksgiving: A service not unseemly for the Hoast of Heaven.

This Sermon, which upon that occasion I preached, through the Constructions of your Love found such acceptance, that you commanded it to come abroad to do you further service.

And seeing you gave it good entertainment, as it was first presented, it makes bold to waite upon you without change of habit, expecting your Protection.

Although I somewhat suspect that sundry amplifications in the Sermon which affected the Auditors, may not be so pleasing to the Judicious Reader, yet your desires to have it printed, as it was preached, makes me to run that adventure.

The Lord of Hosts guide, guard, and encourage you in all your good undertakings for peace and truth, and make you careful to put Christian references upon all your services, for the honor and safety of our King, the welfare of his Kingdoms, and the continued Prosperity of this famous City. This your prudent and pious perseverance in the work so well begun, will draw forth many praises to God, many prayers for you, and much rejoicing in the hearts of all them, who sincerely affect you; of which number, I beseech you account him one who is Your Servant, in, and for Christ, SIMEON ASH.

GOOD COURAGE DISCOVERED, AND INCOVERAGED.

PSAL. 31. 24.

Be of good Courage.

Right worshipful, and worthy Gentlemen, (whose desires, and whose service of thanksgiving, I am now attending,) I hope you are come hither with an intention;

First, to honor God for preservation enjoyed, through his providence, to whom you prayed. My Text looks back unto such a business; *The Lord preserveth the faithful*; therefore let the faithful upon such experiences in way of praise, in way of requital learn to be of good courage.

Secondly, I believe you are come together in expectation for the future, to receive further favors from the God of your present praises; and my Text looks forward to that, *Bee of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart, and wait I say on the Lord.*

My Text is short, the words in our translation are not many, in the original, there is but one word, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, The Septuagint renders the Hebrew word, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, Quit yourselves like men; *Viriliter agite, play the men, Rob•ramini, be ye strong.*

The Counsel here given is for all Christians, at all times needful, but for you, and at this time, most seasonable.

Bee ye courageous. First, The Counselor was, a Worthy, a Soldier, a Warriour, a Commander, a King: *David*, as the title tells you, He calls for courage.

Secondly, The Persons counseled, they are Saints, faithful ones: O ye Saints love him, his manner is by his special providence to preserve you; Therefore be ye of good courage. The point lies fair, which I conceive pertinent, and now purpose to prosecute.

God's people must be of good courage.

I shall briefly suggest the Scriptures proof, in a threefold gradation, wherein good courage is called for:

First, Saint Paul an Apostle with Apostolical authority, persuades to it; 2 Cor. 16. 13. *Quit ye like men.*

Secondly, *Jehoshaphat* a King, with regal authority commands it, 2 Chron. 19. ult. *Deale courageously.*

Thirdly, The great God of Heaven and Earth, putting himself under a warlike notion, as the Lord General of all the forces in the World, the Lord of Hosts. He peremptorily presseth it; *Haggie. 2. 4. Now be strong ô Zerubbabel saith the Lord and be strong ô Joshua, the Son of Iozedek the High Priest, and be strong the people of the Land saith the Lord, and work, for I am with you saith the Lord of Hosts.*

Three things there be, that I shall speak to, in the prosecution of this point.

First, The explication of the virtue, the grace called for, wherein I will endeavor to discover what this courage is.

Secondly, The confirmation of this truth by reasons, from which this Doctrine may undeniably be concluded, and by which you may all be fully convinced, that there is abundant cause, why all God's people should be courageous.

Thirdly, The application of all, by way of use, that my Sermon may be the more serviceable.

Christian courage may thus be described, It is the undaunted audacity of a sanctified heart in adventuring upon difficulties, and undergoing hardships for a good cause upon the call of God.

There are six things considerable in the description that I have given, which I will particularly point at, and prove.

First, the *Genus*, the common nature of it: it is an undaunted audacity. This Animosity (as some phrase it,) it is common both unto men, and to some bruits. The Lion, *Prov. 30. 30.* is said, to be *the strongest among beasts, that turneth not away from any.*

And there is an elegant description of the war horse, in regard of boldness, *Job 39. 19. &c. Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder▪ Canst thou make him afraid as a gras-hopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible, he paweth in the valley, and rejoyeth in his strength, he goeth out to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth he back from the sword. The Quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield, he swallows the ground with fierceness and rage, neither believeth he, that it is the sound of the Trumpet.*

And this boldness that is in bruits, it is spoken of, as a piece of this same courage that God is pleased to give to men; *Ezek. 3. 9.* this is the Lord's promise. *As an Adamant, harder then the flint, have I made thy forehead.*

The word *Harder*, is the same in the Hebrew, that is here in my Text, *Fortiorem petra*; The Rock, that is not afraid of any weather, Summer, or Winter, Sun, and Showres, Heat, and Cold, Frost, and Snow, it blusheth not, shrinketh not, it changeth not it's complexion, it is still the same; Such alike thing is courage, in the common nature of it.

Secondly, Consider the subject, it is the Heart, the Castle where Courage commands, and exerciseth Military Discipline; (shall I so say) its within the bosom, it is the Soul of a valiant Soldier.

Some conceive, our *English* word Courage, to be derived from *Cordis actio*, the very acting of the heart.

A valiant man is described, *2 Sam 17. 10.* for to be a man; whose heart, is as the heart of a Lyon. And sometime, the original translated, Couragious, as *Amos 2. 16.* may most properly be rendered, *a Man of heart.*

Beloved, valor doth not consist in a piercing eye, in a terrible look, in big words, but it consists in the metal, the vigor that is within the bosom. Sometimes, a Coward may dwell at the sign of a roaring voice, and of a stern countenance: whereas true fortitude may be found within his breast, whose outward deportment promiseth little, or nothing in that kind.

Thirdly, Note the qualification of this same subject; I said a sanctified heart: for I am not now speaking of fortitude, as a moral virtue, whereof Heathens, that have not God, are capable; and for which many among them, that are not Christians, have been worthily commended.

But I am now discoursing of Courage, as a virtue Theological, as a gracious qualification, put upon the people of God by special covenant. And there are three things that do characterize it, and which do distinguish it from the moral virtue of fortitude.

- The *Roote*, whence it ariseth;
- The *Rule*, whereby it is directed;
- The *End*, to which it is referred,

The *Roote*, whence it riseth, is love to God; All the Saints of God that love the Lord, be of good Courage. The love of Christ constraineth me to make these bold, and brave adventures, saith the Apostle, *2 Cor. 5. 14.*

The *Rule* whereby it is directed, is the word of God: what the Lord hath pleased to leave on record for a Christians guidance in holy pages, *1 Chron. 22. 12. 13.* *The Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, that thou mayest keep the law. If thou take heed to the statutes, and judgments, which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong and of good courage, dread not, nor be*

dismai'd. Bee a man of metal, but let thy metal be according to my mind, according to this rule.

And the End, to which it refers, is God. For every sanctified man, being a self-denying, and a God-advancing man; his God is his Center, wherein his actings, his undertakings rest, and his Soul is not, yea it cannot be satisfied but in God.

The fourth thing considerable in the Description is, the natural, the formal, the immediate operations, that do flow from this gracious, audacious frame of heart, they are two:

- *There is an adventuring upon difficulties,*
- *And there is an undergoing of hardships.*

First, There is an adventuring upon hard services, It is said, 1 Sam. 31. 12. *The valiant men rose and went all night, and took the body of Saul, and the bodies of his Sons from the wale of Bethshan, and came to Gabesh, and burnt them there.* When the Philistines had taken their bodies and were gone away Conquerors, and fastened them there, as Ensigns of victory, brave blades, well mettalled men, went by night, and fetched them back again: an hard, and a brave service.

And by reason hereof there is an enduring of hardships: Those Worthies of whom the world was not worthy, who are said to be *men valiant in fight*, Heb. 11. 34. This, testimony is given of them, that *They endured torturings, the trial of mockings* or cruel mockings, of scourgings, of bonds, and imprisonment, of stoning, of being sawne asunder, of being slain with the sword, of wandering up and down in sheep's skins, and goats skins, being men destitute, afflicted, and tormented.*

Fifthly, in my description, I cast in the cause, which true courage undertakes to do, and suffer for, the object it works upon, the prize it adventures for, it is a good cause, Matters of faith, *stand ye fast in the faith, quit ye like men.* It is a Gospel piece for which I am to jeopard a joint, to hazard alimbe, to adventure life, 1 Cor. 6. 13. or matters of fact: I must be of good courage for my conscience, that I may maintain an evenness of spirit in reference to my rule, in relation to my God, 1 Pet. 3. 14. *If ye suffer for righteousness sake happy are ye, be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.* It is a noble, a Christian resolution in any man, if he thus determine, rather then I will make a wound upon my conscience, a breach between God and my soul; rather then I will violate asacred vow, and transgress the command of my God, I will run the greatest hazards in outward regards that can be imagined.

The goodness of the cause (Divines say) for which a man suffers, makes the Martyr: In like manner, it is the warrantableness of the work, wherein the soldier, the man of metal appears, that gives him the credit, the honor of this title, to be accounted a valiant man.

Sixthly and lastly, I added that good courage makes the foresaid adventures upon the call of God. *Have not I commanded thee, be strong and of a good courage:* If the Lord please to beat up the Drum; If the Lord please to bid them arm, and come abroad, his call is sufficient, Now God calls either by his precept, or by his providence. Either God calls his Champions for to undertake dangers, or he commands dangers to over-take them; and hereupon being led forth by the Lord of hosts, they express their valor: For this they know, that whether it be

estate, or peace, or life, or liberty, or Religion, or whatsoever else they hope to defend, they are all tallants that God hath entrusted them with, and that therefore only upon his Commission signed, and sealed by his own hand they may come forth, and must come forth bravely, and show themselves courageous in reference thereto.

Now for a man in an impetuous, giddy, neady way, to break himself unwisely in his reputation, liberty, estate, and himself knows no other reason: but because his spirit moves him, and his humors stir in him, or some passionate inconsiderate persons provoke him, this (my beloved) is not to be courageous. We read in the Gospel, of a man possessed with an evil spirit, that did often cast himself into the water, and into the fire to destroy himself. And truly it nearly concerns many men of daring spirits, to consider seriously what spirit it is that acts in them: These things we must mark, that the true nature of courage may be understood.

This description of good courage I judged meet to premise and to explain briefly, that we may understand the duty in the text, the duty, the seasonable duty, which God calls for, and I plead for.

Bee of good Courage.

The second thing I propounded in the prosecution of this point, is the reasons wherefore a Christian should be courageous: And my doctrine is built upon a fourfold ground.

First, God's people should be of good courage, in reference unto the condition, unto which God hath called them. God hath appointed all Christians to be soldiers. A Sacrament is a soldiers oath, when we were baptized we took press money, and vowed to serve under the colors of Christ, and as manfull soldiers to fight against the world, the flesh, and the Devil: and as oft as we have been at the Sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord, we have renewed our solemn, and sacred obligation in that kind, in reference to Christ, who is called *The Captain of the Lord's host*, Jos. 5. 16. and *the Captain of our salvation* Heb. 2. 10. *In àure hardness* (saith the Apostle) *as a good culd•er of Christ*, 2 Tim. 2. 4, *Epaphroditus my fellow soldier*, Phil. 2. 25. Beloved, wisdom is not more necessary for a Counselor, nor eloquence for an Orator, then courage for a soldier. Soldiers we are, we must therefore, *Be of good courage*.

Secondly, the weighty services wherein the Lord of Hosts is pleased to employ us. Men employed in peculiar services are commanded to put on fortitude: As *Joshua* who was a Commander to guide, and govern the host, the armies of the Israelites in their passage to *Canaan*, *Bee thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe todoe according to all the Law, which Moses my servant commanded thee, turn not from it, to the right hand or to the left*. And *Ezra*, in regard of his office, is thus spoken unto: *Arise, for the matter belongeth unto thee, be of good courage, and do it*: and common Christians, in respect of services required of them, are to be courageous in their places, *Ios. 23. 6. Be ye therefore very courageous to keep, and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that you turn not aside therefrom, to the right hand or to the left*.

Shall I hint some services that are charged upon all our consciences

The work of mortification, to pick out our eyes, to chop off our hands, to cut off our feet; do you think that a milk sop, a man that is not a man of a stout spirit will do this. Now to massacre fleshly lusts, is (as it were) for a man to mangle, and dismember his own body, it is a work painful and grievous, as for a man to cut off his own feet, to chop off his own hands, and to pick out his own eyes, as Christ and the Apostle *Paul* do express it.

Besides this, there are in Christians bosoms, strong holds to be battered, fortifications to be demolished: there are high hills and mountains, that must be levelled with the ground there are trenches to be made, valleys to be filled. O beloved, I may not mention the hills that lie before us in heaven way, which we must climb up; and craggy rocks that we must get over: and without courage certainly the service put upon our hands will not be discharged.

There are also the walls of *Jerusalem* to be repaired, and the Temple to be reedified: If *Nehemiah* had not been a man of a brave spirit, he would never have gone through with that Church work, those weighty services which he did undertake. How this is applicable to us for the present time, the time of our begun reformation, I speak not; but rather do refer it to your considerations; I beseech you to read *Neh.* 4 17, 18. They which built on the wall, and they that did bear burdens, with those that laded: Everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the Builders everyone had a sword girded by his side, and so built, and he that sounded the Trumpet was by us. While they were at work they were all ready for war.

Thirdly, Christians must be courageous, in reference to the 3. huge Armies, with which they are assaulted.

There are armies

- Of Devils.
- Of Lusts.
- Of men and women in the world, that do wage war with every Christian, that in good earnest makes out after his God in heaven way.

For the Devils, it is the argument of the Apostle, and from thence I took it, *Ephes.* 6. 10. *Brethren, be strong (saith he,) for we wrestle not against flesh, and blood, but against principalities, and powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this World, against Spiritual wickednesses in the heights.* Mark for the number they are many, *Our name is legion, for we are many:* How many thousands, neither you nor I know. There is strength in them, they are Powers, Principalities, and they are Rulers, they have very great authority in the Darkness of the World; in Midnight men, Darke men, Men who love not Sun-shine light, but rather delight to lie in holes and caves.

I mean, in regard of the Darkness of their minds, and their willful ignorance of the things of God. And they are in the height; they fight with much advantage (as some observe,) being over our heads. And they are Spirits, they work invisibly, and they fight against our Souls,

they labor to keep our hearts in thralldom, they seek to beggar and to undo us in regard of our grace, and Spiritual joys.

The Holy Apostle *Peter* saith, The Devil your adversary, goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour. An Adversary, and a Devil, and a strong one, as a Lyon roaring, and then he is active, he walks about, and he is full of malice, ready to devour: These things touched upon, do tell us, that we, who are always surrounded, besieged by such enemies, have need of courage.

There are armies of lusts, I know not how many. The Apostle saith, *Fleshly lusts that fight against the Soul*. These soes lie within us, and they strike at the head, and the heart, endeavoring to let out the precious life of our immortal souls.

As the Captains of the King of *Syria*, had a command to fight against, neither small nor great, but the King of *Israel*. And the Apostle saith, that lusts in his bosom were such enemies, as still carried him captive, and hailed him as a prisoner. (You know the expression, *Rom. 7. 2.*) Beloved, doth not experience oftentimes prove thus much, that pride, passions, unbelief, hypocrisy, earthly mindedness, creature confidence, sensuality, do take up arms against our precious Souls. Alas! alas! lusts, deceitful lusts, many deceitful lusts, are still, still tyrannizing in our bosoms, which of us hath not cause to complain with the Apostle, when I would do good, they are at hand present with me: strong in me, ever stabbing, and striking, and poisoning, and wounding; if I would but pray, or weep, or amend. These Rebels raise their strengths, and combine their forces to hinder me: and no sooner can Satan hold up finger, and temptation show it self; But they are ready furiously to march out against Christ, his government, graces, glory. Beloved, I appeal to your consciences, whether in regard of this black guard, maintained within us, we have not need to be of good courage.

Thirdly, the armies of people: The Apostle *Paul* saith, he fought with men who were as beasts, *Beasts after the manner of men*, *1 Cor. 15. 32*. *David* tells you they were Dogs, and they were Tigers, and Wolves, and Bears, and Bulls, and Lions, so in the Psalms he phraseth them. I promise you, a man that is so beset, thus assaulted, if he be not a man of courage what will become of him? There are *Sanballets* and *Tobiah's*, men of malignant, mischievous Spirits, to do us mischief in Heaven way. had we not need in that regard to be courageous? And truly, women if they cannot use weapons, they will cast, and fling stones, shoot their arrows even bitter words. *David* met with opposition in that kind, from one that was near, and should have been better. *Michal* she jeared him in his righteous, and holy zeal, in reference to God; you know the story, and therefore I report it not. And doubtless, had not he been a man of an Heroic Spirit, he might have been dashed out of countenance and baffled and cooled in his zeal, because of her reproachful language.

There are those that are ready to perform ill offices, *Sheba* like, to blow a Trumpet of sedition, of contention, to cast coals, and kindle strife between the head and the members, the King, and his Subjects; to set all on a •i•me in the Kingdom. In this regard, we had need to be steel to the back, that we be not disheartened. From all these three particuiars, I might apply that passage, *2 Sam. 10. 9. 12*. When *Ioah* saw the front of the battle against him before and

behind; he said he of good courage, and let us play the men: His speeches did sparkle Spirits, he herein proved himself a man meet to be a warlike Commander, for danger and difficulties did add heart and heat.

My Masters, you see our case, let us play the men for our people, and for the Cities of our God. Beloved, you perceive by that which I have pointed at, that our enemies are more and worse, we are beset before, and behind, above, and below, without and within; not only our Cities, but our Souls are opposed, endangered. Hell and Earth, Men and Devils, yea and ourselves are Adversaries to ourselves. Therefore there is good reason, why we should put on Courage.

Fourthly and lastly, We have need of Courage, because of the various afflictions to be expected. For ought we know, heavy things may befall us, and must be borne by head, and shoulders by us, before we get to our Castle, our place of refuge, our rest in Heaven; how stony, how thorny, how deep, and how dangerous our ways may prove, before we get to our journeys end, we cannot tell. It may be, we must travail through blood, through our own blood, and therefore we need Courage.

After our Savior had suggested to his Disciples, *Mat. 10. 21. Brother shall deliver brother to death; the Father the Child, and the Child shall raise against the Parents, and cause them to be pat to death, and you shall be hated of all men for my names sake;* Hereupon he adds, verse 26. *Fear not, 32. Fear not.* Beloved, we know not what may be our portion here on earth, before we come perfectly to enjoy God our portion, and be happy in enjoying of him forever. We may live to see the City fired, our estates wasted, our wives abused, our children torn in pieces lin be-meal, piece-meal before our eyes: believe me without courage, these sights will be hard and heavy to be beheld, such like sights will cause us to fownd away, to sink into the dust, if we provide not courage. Thus have I run over my reasons, and now I request you all, seriously to consider, whether in all the fore-mentioned regards, we have not abundant cause to endeavor, to get the grace the text commends, and to do the duty that in the text God calls for, *Be of good courage.*

I come now to the application of all that hath been delivered by way of use. The uses of this point that I shall speak to, they are but two.

- The first Reproof,
- The second Exhortation.

For Reproof, hence I have occasion for to blame both unworthy cowardliness in some, and wicked audaciousnesse in others: both vices contrary to this virtue, both extremes, opposed by this practice of Christian fortitude, which my text persuades.

First I must check an unworthy dastardliness, which discovers it self three ways in the bosoms of men.

First, when men by reason of pusi•animity, & lowness of spirit, dare not appear in the cause that they are convinced, to be the cause of God. There were some, *John. 12. 43.* who, though

they believed on Christ, yet they durst not profess him for fear of the Pharisees, lest they should be excommunicated. The consciences of many tell them, that such a way is the way of God, doubtless this is heaven road; surely these are the courses to be taken to enjoy God, and communion with him, and yet for fear of I know not what, scorns, mocks, loss of friends, or the like; they dare not be seen. It may be they will go to Christ with *Nichodemus* in the night, for fear too many eyes observe them, and take notice of them in such unwounded paths, exercises which seem to proclaim strictness and preciseness. You see I am in haste, and therefore cannot instance in particulars.

Secondly, others by reason of cowardliness soon grow discouraged in sad and weighty undertakings, because they find the way to heaven craggy, the duties difficult, the services something hard; and because they have not expected success on a sudden; here upon their spirits shrink up; I have reference in this expression to the original word used to this very purpose, in *Num. 21. 4. And the soul of the people was much discouraged, because of the way.* Their spirits were shortened (as it is in the Hebrew) they run up by reason of distress, and all vigor gave in. As a Cravant begins to look pale through fear; his spirits fly to the heart, you shall see no blood in his face: O did he think to be mocked, and to be pursevanted? and did he expect to be imprisoned? and did he conceive to be put on such a dead task, and to work himself down in his strength, respects amongst men, and other outward comforts, and reap nothing but the wind. Much hath been done, and much hath been endured, many weeks, months, years, are run up, since he expected a good crop, of increase and comfort: but hopes being frustrated, and expectations disappointed; he sits down dejected: Because Reformation is driven on heavily, things stick in the birth, therefore many are disheartened.

Thirdly, those that under dark clouds and showers of sufferings lie grovelling on the ground, through disconsolateness: *He that faints in the evil day, his strength is small, Prov. 24. 10.* There is mention of some, *Ios. 2. 11.* when the wind and tide went against them; when the victory was carried on the other side, it is said, *their hearts melted, there was no more courage in them:* The melting of the wax is the severing of part from part: The confirming of the parts together, is the strength of it, the loosening of the parts weakens it: a man's soul runs out through fainting fears, as water; whereas it should be confirmed, as a piece of steel. Christians should be magnanimous, and Fortitude will fortify, and corroborate the soul. As the original word suggests thus much, so the conjunction of strength, and valor in the holy Scriptures doth import it: *Be strong and of good courage.* Think of this, and take heed I pray you of dastardly dejectedness, and dismaying fears, in sad, suffering times, because thereby both soul and body are much feebled, and much prejudiced.

The second thing reprov'd, is wicked audaciousnesse: This branch of the reprehension is needful, for certainly, there is in some men a kind of fire, that riseth out of hell, or rather some metal, which is digged out of the bottomless pit, which is called Courage, and so accounted in the world. My meaning is, that there is a devilish, wretched resoluteness in the bosoms of some to hold on in sin; notwithstanding divine reprehensions, convictions, threatenings, and executions; which is as much opposite to true courage, as the greatest cowardliness in the world. I told you before, that true courage is for good, upon a Command

from God. The Apostle checks the *Corinthians*, because they had so much boldness, as that they did dare to do that which was offensive, viz. to go to law one with another, and that before Infidels, you dare do it saith he, you have so much boldness, 1 Cor. 6. & the Apostle *Peter* checks men, *They are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities*. The Psalmist brings in bad men thus resolving, *Our tongues are our own, and we will speak, and who is Lord over us*.

Some there be, who though the Minister flash the very fire of hell in their faces, discovering the danger of their evil courses; yet like unto the war-horse, they will adventure further, let the consequence prove what it may: yea, although God be on them in ways of heavy affliction, with one rod after another, and one blow bigger then another, though his providence pinch them in their persons, impoverish them in their estates, crush them in their credit; and it may be they suffer much in their yoke-fellows, Children and near allies; yea, though the often recoiling of their consciences, cause earth-quakes in their own bosoms, yet on they will still to do wickedly. These are the men of whom the Prophet complains, *Who make their faces harder then the Rock*, and refuse to return. Men of this make are common in every place, and their way of living is much to be bewailed: and now I am necessitated to speak unto them▪ because their sturdinesse in refusing to stoop unto God in reformation, is reputed courage.

To crush these wretched conceits, I heartily wish that the Scriptures may be perused; where you shall find, that those who are commended for the most valiant Champions, and the stoutest soldiers in the Campe of Christ, that they were the most timorous in matter of sin, and most cautious in references to God, that they might not in any kind offend His Majesty. *David*, that durst take a Lyon by the beard, and durst adventure upon a Duel, a single combat with *Goliath*, yet thus he expresseth himself to God, *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements*. And *Nehemiah*, who had many ways worthily expressed his magnanimity for God and his cause, yet no man was ever more awed with the fear of God. He persuaded himself, and others thereunto. *Ought not we to walk in the fear of God?* And again complaining of the governors, who were his Predecessors, that they were usurious, and very injurious in their places; he addeth but so, *Did not I (I durst not) because of the fear of the Lord my God*. I am confident, that this position is full of truth, you may trust to it, as sound and orthodox: That there is no more Christian courage, then there is Christian fear in our hearts. There is no more true valor in God's account, in conflicting with difficulties, and stout standing under heavy pressures, then there is a cautious, and timorous circumspection, lest sin of any kind should be committed to the dishonor, and provocation of God. Shall I think that a man that will swear, and roar, and curse, and pox, and plague (I should not have defiled my mouth with these words) shall I think that this man of Belial hath Christian courage? He may have moral magnanimity, as an heathen, as a Roman, but he wants the courage of a Saint, that courage which my Text calls for. Beloved, I pray you believe it, (I speak as a Scripture man; and I speak to men that must labor to be men valiant, as becometh Saints) *he that rules his own spirit, doth more then he that overcomes a City*. That man who takes down his untamed lusts; and that man who bridles the unruly member the tongue He who conquers the rebellious mutinies in his own bosom, and who notwithstanding all avocations, is careful still to keep close to God, this is the valiant man indeed, God himself, by *Solomon's*

pen, gives such a one his Letters testimonial to be magnanimous. And for my part I will adventure that which is dearest unto myself in this world, in the hands of this man, if in the hand of any, in regard of valor, and holy, hearty, heroic resolution. But I put off from this reproof, wherein my zeal hath made me bold, to speak my mind: For I had rather counsel then reprehend: and before I go forward, I wish that my checks lighting on ungracious hearts may make kindly and deep impressions on them, for their amendment. And God grant that you that come to praise God, as becometh Saints this day, may learn also hereafter to be valiant as it becometh Saints, according to the directions of sacred Scripture.

The last use, is an use of exhortation; (I fear, I have more to say then my time, and your occasions will suffer me to deliver.) It is onlie this, to persuade you all (my beloved,) I say all, without exception, Colonels, Captains, other Officers, Soldiers, yea all the Servants of the Lord, to yield to the word of exhortation, and in your places to endeavor Christian courage; This use most useful my heart desires to enlarge, wherein I fain would,

- 1. *By Arguments persuade it,*
- 2. *By Directions help you in it.*

I have Arguments of two kinds, God grant they may come with some strength upon your hearts, to move you to endeavor to be truly valorous.

First, From the consideration of the rich commodities, that are the undoubted consequences of Religious fortitude. O the booties, ô the boones, ô the benefits, that Christians may enjoy in the way of Christian valor. I will point at 6. and I shall do little more then point at them.

First, It will wind, and work you into the bosom, and favor of God; *Be of good Courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart.* Put thou thyself forth in a way of bold adventure for him, and his providence shall be sweetly exercised for thy good. A worthy Commander how careful is he of a brave blade, a man that will fight at a Cannons mouth. Doth he hear from him, that a bone is broken? Send for the Bone-setter. Is he like to bleed to death? call for the Surgeon, let him post away to prevent that peril; Doth he grow weaker and weaker? Is there anything in the Campe, that may restore his Spirits, withhold nothing; nothing is too good, too costly, would he eat gold, he should have it.

Thus it is with God, O what letters of commendation doth he give in manifestation of his own love to them in *Pergamos*, upon this very ground: *Thou, saith the Lord, thou hast held forth my name, and not denied it even in those days, when Antipas my faithful Martyr was slain, even where Satan dwelleth.* Thou didst fight for CHRIST in the Cave, where the Devil commanded, thou didst stand and appear for him, when other men did lose life, and blood. Here is a man that God will own, such a one, shall have God's heart and hand to do him honor, to yield him comfort. And therefore I appeal to your consciences, is not this Courage worth the having? worth the seeking?

Secondly, Your Courage will hearten you in the weightiest and difficultest adventures, which the cause and glory of God, the welfare of his Church, the honor of the King, the peace and

prosperity of the Kingdom may put you upon. *Hester* was a woman, yet valiant. Must I to the King for my people; *If I perish, I perish*. I will take my life in my hand and adventure: *Nehemiah* had a hard task to undertake, truly a dead piece of service to set upon, yet notwithstanding being a courageous man, he will hazard his All, to obey the command of his God, and to serve the necessities of his brethren. This is recorded for the everlasting credit of some of the Servants of God, the Priests, 2 •hron. 26. 17. 18. And *Azariah the Priest went in after him and with him 4. score Priests of the Lord that were valiant men; and they withstood Uzziah the King, and said unto him, it pertaineth not unto thee Uzziah to burn incense to the Lord.*

Men of brave Noble Spirits will speak, whatsoever it cost them, upon a call from God, men of valor will appear according to God's command in services sad, and heavy. We say, that a well metled horse, will take forward, and draw at a standing tree, but that I shall speak of in the next.

Thirdly, It will make us unwearied in our works, though desired, and expected success be denied. You see it some time; (My similitude is a plain one, but beloved, it fully evidenceth the thing I speak to,) A Carre-horse of good metal, will pluck, and fall on his knees, and up, and take forty pluckes at a sticking load, whereas a *Jade*, if it come not at the first twitch, goes back, back, and you cannot get him forward. Just thus is it with a Coward, if he have not victory at the first skirmish, he will hardly make a second assault; if he be knocked down, once, twice, or thrice, he gives up all as lost, and is ready to run away; but a man of a stout Spirit in such a case, will plucked up heart, fight again, so long as he can either stand or stir. Thus *Moses* he goes, the first, and second, and third, and tenth time to *Pharaoh*, notwithstanding brow-beatings, repulses, threatenings. *Thus saith the Lord, let my people go*. That was his message, either it must be granted, or he will not cease his importunity. *Israel* he comes for, and *Israel* he will have with him, or else, he will not leave *Egypt*.

My beloved, let us bring this down to ourselves: Many prayers we have made, and many fasts we have kept for *Zion*: and before our deliverance be complete, we know not, how many plucks we must yet have, and how many shall we take to repair the walls, and to reedifie the House of God, in case, God give us this metal, which I am commending.

Fourthly, Courage will be a means to keep us from conscience-wasting, and scandalous miscarriages. What had become (think you) of *Shidrack Meshech*, and *Ab•dnego*? or what had become of *Daniel*, if they had not been men of undaunted hearts? The one had given off doing his duty, presenting his indebted homage to his God, he must not pray for the space of thirty days to his God. The other three must bow down in way of Idolatry to an Idol. But mark the Sparkling of their Spirits; *Bee it known unto thee ô King, we know God can deliver us, but if he will not, we will not fall down, nor worship that Image which thou hast set up*. They were by Courage kept out of the briers, and off the Rock, which might otherwise have torn and broken them woefully. And *Daniel* was preserved from the neglect of his devotion to his God, by the same means.

Fifthly, Believe it, that our Courage will daunt our Adversaries, and drive them away; The Captain of that black guard, (the Devil I mean) will give back, if stoutly withstood: *Resist him*,

and he will flee▪ stand to it and he will runneaway. In like manner, will those, who march under his colors against God's people. It is said expressly 1 Sam. 4. 5. 7. when the *Philistines* heard the *Israelites* shout, O say they their God is among them, woe unto us. Without doubt, the very valor of Protestants will be the daunting of the Papists. Let those who appear for Reformation, maintain their ground, and the enemies thereof, will be discouraged, vanquished.

Lastly, I might add, that our Courage will encourage, I know not how many, One bold leader, will hearten hundreds. O saith *Paul*, my bonds, and sufferings are famous, they are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the Brethren by reason of my bonds Wax bold, and speak the word without fear, *Phil.* 1. 12. 13. 14. If you would know what word? It was the word of CHRIST, who was denied, derided. Now to speak for a Christ when *Paul* is in prison, and in bolts, and fetters for the word of CHRIST, was an act of Manhood. And *Paul's* valor made them thus bold. The Cities Courage will make the Country courageous.

This true valor that I speak for, may have influence I know not how far, through the Kingdom in way of benefit, and advantage. Therefore look you to it, *Quit yourselves like men, Be of good Courage.*

The second motive, is taken from the consideration of the sad consequences of cowardliness.

First, A man's personal discredit, call a Soldier a cravant, and how do you disgrace him? They would fain, (saith *Nehemiah*,) *Put me in fear, that they might have had somewhat to reproach me; Nehem.* 6. 13. A Captain, and a Coward, what a shame is it? If you desire to maintain your honor and reputation, in City and Country, hold up your hearts, *Be men of valor.*

Secondly, This is another a sad consequence of cowardliness, it may tend to make us unprofitable, and unserviceable in our places; *I was afraid, and hid my talant, for Ithought, thou wast a hard master.* You know whose speech it was. When a man hath both opportunities and abilities to do, God and the King, the Parliament and Kingdom, good service. God hath bestowed a good head-piece, much wisdom, an able body and healthful, a strong arm, a vast estate, a great command; and yet notwithstanding, when the welfare of Church and Common-wealth, call him to make appearance, he draws back, dares not be seen, all his talents are tied in a napkin, there is nothing traded for God, because he is a Coward, and dares not look out of doors. There will be a heavy reckoning for that man, *Take him, bind him hand and foot.* Cowardlinesse makes men, though able, yet unprofitable, therefore take heed of it.

Thirdly, The good causes, which men own and favor, may receive a great deal of damage, and prejudice by the pusillanimity, the poorenesse of the Spirits of them, that appear therein. There was a notable piece of policy, in the endeavor of the railing wretch *Rabshecah*, to affright the •ouldiers of *Hezeki•h*, *2 Chr.* 32. 18. *This they did, that they might make us afraid and take our City.* Cowardlinesse ties a man's hands behind him, that he can do nothing in the World, he cannot keep his rank, and place, he neither knows when to charge, or discharge; his hands quake, his eyes cannot see, he cries where am I? and what must I do? Thus all is

lost, because of cowardliness, it is a mighty disadvantage to be a dastard. Certainly, a man under the power of dismay, in fears is worse a man in the use of his intellects.

Fourthly, What sad breaches cowardliness, may make upon us, both in regard of sin, and judgments. I know not. The sad example of Saint *Peter* is here considerable, O what a wound did he receive, by reason of his unworthy fearfulness; It cost him dear before the cut was cured. You know his threefold denial of his Master, with the black aggravations thereof; O I know him not, I am not any of them, you are mistaken in me, &c. But before that breach was, made up, it cost him hot water, *He wept bitterly.*

Beloved, beloved, consider what I say, many a man doth that under the command of cowardliness, which is pain and anguish in his heart to his dying day. God is wonderfully incensed, when men shrink from him, because of difficulties and dangers, *Fear not lest I slay thee.* Be not dismayed at their faces (saith God to *Jeremiah,*) lest I confound thee before them, *Ier. 1. 17.* When God calls often, and calls loud upon men to take part with him, and yet they shrink and draw back, believe it, the danger is not little. You know whose speech it is; *If you will deny mee before men, I will deny you before my Father, which is in heaven.*

A valiant Captain, when the field is fought, and the victory is got, bids, bring in that cravant, that milk-sop, who did run away: Hisse him, turn him out of doors, as the shame of his Country; when Christ shall come and call, and say to some White-livered men, you were ashamed to appear for the strict observation of the Lordsday, and you would not be seen to favor the Reformation, which by *England's* Parliament, at such a time was endeavored, and you would not labor to have the sanctuary swept from all pollutions, and you would be at no cost, to have Christ's-coin, bear his stamp alone, to have his ordinances pure without mixtures, but you would rather *Issachar*-like, lie under burdens, then struggle for deliverance. You were afraid what might be the issue of your boldness in such businesses, if the times should turn, and the tide run another way, and matters change in such and such a manner. And hereupon you sneakingly left me, and my cause and glory in the open fields. Beloved, this will be an heavy hearing to the cowardly Apostate at the last day, when the fearful, and the unbelieving must be sent into the lake which burneth with fire & brimstone. Therefore I entreat you again, and again, to consider well of this matter.

Lastly, how far cowardliness may tend to discourage others: I wish you to consider: I here remember, that when *Israel* of old, was to go forth unto battle, God commanded the officers to speak thus unto the people, *What man is there, that is fearful, and faint hearted, let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's hearts faint (or melt) as well as his heart.*

Gentlemen, God forbid that you who are come hither today, to acknowledge yourselves bound to God for your estates, lives, and liberties, & to have the word of truth, preached and pressed upon you for your souls good. God forbid (I say) that you who give good examples in many other kinds, should do anything which may tend to weaken the spirits, and to damp the courage of any, who shall enquire, what do they in *London?*

Having thus far persuaded you, to pluck up your hearts, as it becometh Saints: I now entreat you, to give me leave to counsel you, what course to take, that you may be courageous, and I

promise to do it, as with sincere reference to God, whose servant I am, so with unfeigned faithfulness to you whom I now serve.

What shall we do, that we may be courageous?

My directions are in number ten, I will not be long in any one of them, because I would not be tedious, I humbly beg your best attention, desiring to speak to your souls, and I beseech the Lord to speak to my heart, and yours.

The first help to Christian courage (which makes way for all the rest) is this: Labor clearly from Scripture grounds to evidence your propriety in God.

When *David* was utterly undone in outward appearance at *Ziklag*, being stripped of all outward comforts, and expected that his brains should be beaten out with stones, (*They talked of stoning him*) *David encouraged himself* (he confirmed and strengthened his heart) as the original expresseth it, *in the Lord his God*: Is there not more in God, My beloved, I pray you put this question upon serious debate in your own bosoms, my God to hearten me, then in mine enemies my greatest, my worst enemies to dismay me? Take the improvement of this point in two particulars.

- 1 God's omnipotency?
- 2 God's Omnipresence.

Is there not more ability in God, then power in all the world, if combined together. *Be strong, and courageous*, (saith *Hezekiah*) *Be not afraid, nor dismayed, for the King of Assyria, nor for all the multitude, that is with him, for there be more with us, then with him: with him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles, And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah, King of Judah.* At this time *Sennacherib* had raised a very great Army, as holy History reports: And railing *Rabshakeh* was confident, that Israel's God could not deliver; yet you see, that this thought. The Lord our God to help us, did steel and strengthen their hearts.

The knowledge of Dietie, and Proprietie, will increase magnanimity in a fearful heart, what are huge armies, strong fortifications weapons of war, the strength, stoutness, skill, or experience of common soldiers, or warlike Commanders against the Lord Almighty? look back to the history last mentioned, where we read, that one angel in one night killed five thousand men in the host of the King of *Assyri*. By this example, guess at the ability of your God, having made sure your interest in him; and from thence gather courage.

2 As the ability, so the presence of God by the efficacy of his all-ordering providence, may hearten all them, whose God he is by special Covenant; *Have not I commanded thee, be strong, and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.* The Lord is with us, by the presence of his special favor, in all our good undertakings whithersoever we go. The Christian carries his commander, his refuge, his Castle, his God along with him, whether he keep in the City, or go forth into the country; whether he serve by land, or by sea, his God is still at hand. Assurance therefore, that the all-

sufficient, all-present God is ours, will lay a good foundation for good courage: Those who adventure upon any service without God going along with them, may expect defeats; notwithstanding all means of defense: and therefore no marvel, if they tremble: But God taking part with his people, they may confidently from his presence expect deliverance. *If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, they had swallowed us up quick &c. but blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us, as a prey to their teeth.* God and his people make one side; and because *their help standeth in the name of the Lord*, who made heaven and earth; therefore they have abundant cause to be of good courage.

Secondly, make sure, that the cause you appear in, is the cause of God. If a man marching to look his enemies in the face, and being about to begin the battle, should feel the earth to shake under him, and the ground to sink, every foot he set forward: O how would this daunt him, and how would his heart recoyle, and give in within him? O beloved, I beseech you, be you well confirmed in your own hearts, that you do serve for God. It is that which was added to give Courage to them in *Jehoshaphat's* time, when they were surrounded, with *Ammon*, and *Moab*, and *Mount Seir*, as if we should say, with *Denmark* and *France*, and *Papists* at home. Well, saith the man of God, *Hearken ye all Judah*, and ye *Inhabitants of Jerusalem*, and thou *King Jehoshaphat*; Thus saith the Lord unto you: *Bee not afraid nor dismayed, by reason of the great multitude for the battle is not yours but God's.*

Beloved, he that hath a bad conscience, and a bad cause, ever fights as a Coward, and is ready at every stroke to lay down his weapons and run away. A true man will stand to it, come who may come, for his cause is justifiable, and he may with boldness own it; but thieves, if they hear any noise, any whispering, they cry one to another, let us hast and be gone, for they know, their adventure's unwarrantable. When a man thus thinks with himself, being beset with dangers and difficulties, what if I should die in this business? could I with confidence own it, at the Barre of JESUS CHRIST? The encouragement of his own conscience, will much embolden him. But if a man's own heart tell him; that adventuring and dying in a such cause, shall sink into Hell, because he opposeth the Commands and Government of JESUS CHRIST; the liberties, the comforts, the prayers of God's people, how is it possible, that he should play the man, and be truly courageous?

Thirdly, Consider seriously, the many weighty consequences of the good cause, which from good grounds, you undertake to maintain. Sit down and sadly think what will the issue be, if you desert your Protestation, whereby you bound yourselves, to stand for the true Protestant Religion, the honor of our King, the Privileges of Parliament, the Laws of the Land, and welfare of the Kingdom. Here it is notable, how the *Philistines* heartened one another, in the day of their deep danger, *1 Sam. 4. 9. Be strong, quit yourselves like men ô Philistines that you be not Servants to the Hebrews; Quit yourselves like men and fight; Either pluck up your hearts, and fight now, or be slaves forever; that is the argument.*

And I pray you, observe how *Joab* pleads, *When he saw the battle before and behind. 2 Sam. 10. 12. Be of good Courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the Cities of our God.* And that passage, *Nehem. 4. 14.* It is considerable, as either of the former; *Bee not afraid remember the*

Lord which is great and terrible, and fight for your Breth••n, for your Sons, for your Daughters, for your Wives, and for your Houses.

Mark it, my beloved, and make application, what if the Papists should get the upper hand? What if the Parliament should be dissolved? What if the malignant party should effect their mischievous desires? Oh how dark and doleful, how black and bloody, would our times prove, we are all, many ways obliged to stand for the government and worship of the Lord Christ: for the safety, and honor of our King, for the welfare of his three Kingdoms, for the Privileges of our Parliament, and for our rights by Law; All these are to be prized at an exceeding high rate: our happiness will be great in the enjoying of them, and our misery not small, in the want of them. Every man according to his Relations and engagements, should reason the case with himself. What adventures should I make, and what hazard should I run, that myself may not be enslaved, that my Wife may not be abused, my Children massacred, and (which is above all,) that Christ's holy Religion may not be corrupted, and that Popery may not be introduced and established in *England*. Thus meditation upon the worth of the things to be maintained, will be a special means to quicken and to augment Courage.

Fourthly, Keep Christ your Captain in your eye. For true valor, there never was, nor ever shall be any like unto him. *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, ô most mighty, with thy glory and Majesty; and in thy Majesty ride prosperously, and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things; Psalm 45. 3 4* How valiant a Champion was the Lord JESUS! *He endured the Cross, and despised the shame; He went on, though dogs did bark, and Lions did roar, though men reproachfully reviled him, and the Devils endeavored to devour him; though the earth (as it were) did shake under his feet, and the Heavens were black and thundering over his head. Although when his professed enemies had conspired his death, Judas did betray him, and his other Disciples did forsake him, yea although his God and Father did hide his face from him, when he answered Divine Justice for our sins, yet he shrunk not, he drew not back, from the glorious work undertaken. When outward dangers encompassed him, and the sorrows of Hell took hold upon his Soul, though he was apprehensive, and sensible of all, unto the utmost, and therefore both complained and prayed to his Father, yet was he not discouraged. He did not sound, when he saw his own blood, yea although his body was wet all over with a bloody sweat, but he worthily did wade through the flood of his appointed passions.*

Consider him, consider him, (beloved,) that you may not faint in your minds; when a soldier sees his Captain content to take up with poor provisions and undaunted, though he meet with hard services, harsh usages, sore affronts, he thereupon grows the more resolute. For thus be reasons within himself. My worthy Commander, for his diet, takes up with a crust of course bread and a little water, he hath not been in bed these many nights, but still, either watcheth, or else, he lies upon the ground, the cold ground no ways, no weather discourages him, Winter, Summer, wet, or dry, scorching heat, the pinching frost, are alike unto him: Bullets, blows wounds, bruises, broken bones, do not cause him to sound a retreat, to give back, and shall I shrink? Beloved, if Christ had shrunk when Heaven frowned, and men deserted, and Devils opposed him, what had become of you, and me? Is this Christ my

Captain? and hath he Captain-like, Champion-like for me both done and suffered thus worthily, thus incomparably, and shall not I put on Courage, and show myself a man, a valiant man for him? I beseech you, consider this frequently and affectionately.

Fifthly, I commend unto you, mutual Christian communion, as a special means of Christian Courage. In the Prophet *Malachi* his times, when wickedness was grown to a great head, and the power of godliness was discountenanced in them, then *those that feared God, spake often one to another.*

When *Paul* after shiprack, saw the brethren, who cameto meet him, he took Courage. And also, upon a strong dispute with some who opposed Christ, when *Silas and Timothy* were come, Paul was pressed in Spirit. God be thanked for that unity and love which is amongst you, amongst you, the Aldermen and Commons of this City, unto whom the Militia is committed; God continue it, God knit your hearts together more fast, and firm from day today: God give you when you meet to consider seriously what may heat, and hearten your Spirits in the way of Christian valor, according to that which this day I have preached, and according to that, which this day we all need.

We read in *Isaiah* 41. 6. of a Company of Idolaters, animating each other, in promoting Idol worship. *They helped everyone his Neighbor, and everyone said to his brother, Bee of good Courage. So the Carpenter encouraged the Gold smith, and he that smootheth with the hammer, him that smiteth with the anvil, &c.*

Doubtless, at this day, those who envy our hopes, and oppose our peace, do meet and hearten one another, both by words and actions. God forbid therefore, that we should be more regardless of one another, having a better cause, and more encouragements.

Sixthly, set faith on work in the promises of the Gospel. The worthies in the primitive times, waxed valiant by means of faith; *Hebr.* 11. 34. You may do well to inform yourselves, what the Lord is pleased to speak in the word of truth for your comfort. By the bond of his own rich unchangeable grace, he is become your debtor to do more then I can possibly express. Three things I thought to have spoken unto, under this direction.

First, The promise of God's assistance, *Bee of good Courage, and he will strengthen thine heart.* The sweet *Psalmist* saw much sweetness in this, and therefore doth mention it, once and again when the Soul saith, I am ready to fall down, yet taking courage, to march forward, it shall renew strength, it shall receive an addition of new strength, *Esa* 40. 31. And that speech of *Solomon*, *Prov.* 10. 29. is very remarkable. *The way of the Lord is strength to the upright.* They go on and gather strength in going, *they walk from strength to strength, Psalm.* 84. 7. Truly this is an heartening consideration.

Secondly, The promise of good success. Beloved, Christians maintaining the cause and minding the glory of God, are as sure of victory as if now they were singing the triumph, and going away as Conquerors. This is most certain, for truth it self hath spoken it; *In the Worldyee shall have affliction, be of good cheer, or be bold, I have overcome the World.* The Devil

hath his deaths wound, Corruption hath (as it were) the knife at the heart of it and the power of wicked men is broken, they are but sprunting and striving for life.

By this argument, the Lord heartened his servant *Joshua*; *Bee strong and of a good Courage, for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance, the land which I sware unto their Fathers to give them*; *Josh. 1. 6* As though the Lord had thus spoken; although thou mayest fight many battles, receive many foils, loose many of thy soldiers, yet be not dismayed, for certainly as a Conqueror, thou shalt bring the people to *Canaan*.

Thirdly, Then the recompense assured upon all them, who stoutly stand to the cause of God, is more rich and large, then I can relate. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne*. And from this assurance, the Apostle *Paul* encourageth the *Corinthians*. Therefore my beloved Brethren, *Bee ye steadfast, and immovable always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much, as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord*. God will requite all pains taken, all sorrows suffered, and you *that have lost houses, or land, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, for Christ, and his cause*, besides that inward peace, and tranquility and joy, which an hundred fold exceed all sublunary contents, to be enjoyed here, you shall inherit hereafter everlasting life. And again, fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. *Behold the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, &c. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of life*. Feed on these promises, for Cordials flow from them to cheer your drooping hearts, and to strengthen courage.

Sevently in large your love. If those hearts which now do but drop love, might flow forth streams of love upon God's cause, our Kings honor, and the Kingdoms welfare how wonderfully would our courage be increased. Both reason and religion, will give in manifold strong arguments to augment our love to our Prince, our Parliament, our peace, our privileges, our posterity: and doubtless our love and valor, will grow together.

Love will adventure far: Women are the more feeble, the more fearful Sexe, and yet love in a tender mother will produce bold adventures to save the babe of her womb. The timorous mother, who is wont to tremble at the report of a Musket, will almost come to a Cannons mouth to save her Child from being broken in pieces: Love doth it.

Have you not in the country sometimes seen an Ewe, in defense of her lamb, to turn head upon a mastive dog, and to stamp, although at other times, the barking of a little whelp, will make a whole flock of them to run away. O, love doth it. And the poor Hen, she will fly at the Kite to save her brood; Love doth it. O that you and I had this Love; Love to *Zion*, to the Gospel of peace, Love to Christ, and the pure ordinances of grace: Love will make brave and bold adventures.

And as it will adventure far, so it will endure much, and long. The Apostle saith, *Charity beareth all things, endureth all things, Jacob* though he had tedious days, and weary nights, a fore service under a sour Uncle, a churlish Master, yet he *served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him, but a few days, for the love he had to her* Love is strong as death, many waters cannot quen•h love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned. What •f one should come to a woman, and make this

motion, be content that your child be torn in pieces, and here is a thousand pounds for you. Her answer would be ready. Not for a thousand worlds: yea, she would almost spit in his face, who should press such a proposition, what rend my child in pieces? There is nothing can conquer love: so it would be with us, in reference to God's commandments, the liberty of Gospel ordinances: No promises, no threats, no means, fair, or fowl would take us off from appearing in the defense of them, if our hearts were more enflamed with love.

Eighthly, Walk exactly, keep your consciences clear.

Notable is that direction of the Lord, *Deut. 13. 8. Ye shall keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that you may be strong*: Suppose a man, who hath a wound, or an impostu mated swelling on his body, should go into the Campe, if any touch him, he skritcheth, and he cries, come not near me, you know the reason, and the application is familiar and easy to the point in hand, wounds in our consciences, will make us timorous and cowardly; but *The Righteous is as bold as a lyon: He that walks uprightly, walks boldly*: Take a man who hath no brokenness, no boils, no •lanes, no bruises, handle him, shake him, crush him, crowde him, thrust him, cast him: notwithstanding he can better bear all this rugged usage, then another can a fillip with the finger. I beseech you mind the application of this, for the Lord's sake take heed, make not inroads, and breaches upon your consciences, go not against your light, for guilt will make you cowardly. *Adam* as soon as he had sinned he runs and puts his head in a bush, what was the matter? he heard a whistling wind, and he runs away: What hast thou sinned, faith God? I, that is the matter. For if *Adam* had kept his heart sound, if he had not sinned, he would with boldness have encountered with any approaches, either of the creatures, or his Creator.

Ninthly, Improve your experiences. It would be of singular use to us, to bestow many hours, both together, and asunder, in recounting the many great things which the Lord hath done for us, both in former times, & of later; we have national deliverances City deliverances, Family mercies & personal mercies to improve providence: Give me leave to cal to mind two most seasonable now to be remembered, considering the end of our assembling at this time: I am credibly informed that yourselves who are here to honor God for your health continued, peace maintained, lives lengthened, had that day when you were abroad, two notable experiences of God's providence for your preservation; 1. There were muskets broken in the field; and yet neither the Muskettiers, nor any near them received the least harm, although the throng of people was very great. Might not some men's eyes, limbs, or lives have been lost, by such accidents; if the all-ordering hand of the Almighty had not prevented such like dangers. The other passage of divine providence is more remarkable.

2 God's hand turned aside graciously, and strangely, a kindled match which was cast towards a basket full of Gunpowder, which stood in the field for that days service. From what malicious heart, and by what mischievous hand this match was cast, the Lord he knoweth, whom we this day magnify, as the God of our salvations.

Beloved, the remembrance of such like providences, should encourage our adventures for the Lord, whose hand hath diverted many unseen, & unexpected dangers. But I had almost

forgot to give in my proof, that the improvement of experiences, increaseth courage. I pray you observe it in *Ios. 10. 25. And I shua said unto them fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage; for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies, against whom ye sight.*

Our God hath many times disappointed the designs of our enemies: many of them who hated us, and endeavored our undoing, and desolation, have been discovered and brought to shame, the Lord hath trampled upon them gloriously. These meditations enlarged by particular pregnant instances, I commend unto you, as means to increase your courage.

Lastly, when ever you have occasion to show your courage, go out self denyingly in the strength of your God, *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Ephes 6. 10. Through God we shall do valiant y. Psal. 60 12. David was a man, as in other kinds, so in this imitable; when he came against Goliath (who threatened to pluck him in pieces, as a Faulkoner doth a bird) his words are very observable. Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of host•, the God of the Armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. Let these be the breathing of your seules. Some trust in Chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen, but near risen an stand upright. Save Lord, let the King hear us when we c•ll.*

Thus be careful to make addition of prayer, unto all the other means of Christian courage. Pray heartily, selfdenyingly, and believingly. Advance God, and plead his promise; and expect assistance according to his promise. *B• of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.*

FINIS.

It is ordered by the Committee, of the House of Commons in Parliament concerning printing, that this Book entitled, *Good Courage discovered, and incourared*, be printed.

John White.

26. May, 1642.

P-SA-6. Gray hayres crowned with grace. A sermon preached at Redriff, Aug. 1. 1654. at the funeral of that reverend, eminently learned and faithful minister of Jesus Christ Mr Thomas Gataker. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662.

Gray Hayres CROWNED WITH GRACE. A SERMON Preached at *Redriff*, Aug. 1. 1654. At the Funeral of that Reverend, eminently Learned and faithful Minister of JESUS CHRIST M^r THOMAS GATAKER

PROV. 20. 29. The beauty of old men, is their gray head.

PROV. 12. 26. The righteous is more excellent then his neighbor.

ISA. 43. 4. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable.

LONDON, Printed by A. M. for *George Sawbridge* at the Sign of the Bible on Ludgate-hill. M. DC. LV.

To the Reverend, and my much HONOURED BRETHREN, the Presbyterian MINISTERS of the Gospel within the Province of LONDON.

Brethren,

THE sad occasion of this Sermon, and not any opinion of its worth, hath moved me to presume upon this Dedication. I know that you are sensible of the smart of that providence, which having, not long since, removed worthy D^r *Gouge* and M. *Whitaker*, hath also taken from us famous M^r *Gataker*; and the rather, because they all were not only members of, but also cordial friends unto our Provincial Assembly. And these our late losses, may well mind us of the death of many more of our brethren, whose hearts, heads and hands, went along with us in the setting up and exercising of the Presbyterian Government in our respective Congregations, with mutual assistance, Classical and Provincial, both for the Ordination of Ministers, and the more pure administration of the Sacraments.

Hereby doubtless the *Lord's voice crieth to the City*, more particularly unto us the Ministers thereof: Oh, that his Majesty would make us *men of wisdom*, exemplarily to see his Name! This is the advice of the Holy Ghost, *Hear the rod and who hath appointed it*.

Brethren, I will not undertake to teach you who are able to instruct others, what use should be made of these doleful dispensations. Have we not cause to complain, that we did neither thankfully prize, nor fruitfully improve their Ministerial gifts, graces and experiences, as we should and might have done?

And seeing they (though dead) do still speak, by their useful Books printed, or their holy Lives remembered, or by both; should not we be conscientious imitators of their constancy

and fidelity, in those ways of holy truth, discipline and worship, which were heartily approved by them, even unto their death?

Moreover, Because so many active members of our Province are translated, ought not we who survive, to strengthen one another's hands the rather, unto double industry, with undaunted courage, in our whole Ministerial employment, and to be the more affectionately frequent in prayer, that our good God would make up our loss, by the more abundant communications of his peculiar grace?

And although this saying may be sighed out with sorrow, *we heretofore had the society and assistance of the forementioned fellow-helpers*, because now we have them not: yet may it also be a matter of encouragement, because our Presbyterian path, hath been trodden without fainting (yea with joy,) by the foot of them, whose remembrance will be as a sweet perfume unto posterity. Having spoken thus much, give me leave (upon the same account,) to mind you of some few good old Nonconformists (unto whom many more might be added) who many years since (when under Prelatical power and oppression) endeavored, by preaching, printing, praying and suffering, to introduce this Presbyterian government which we do now exercise. Though those men disliked the use of superstitious Ceremonies, yet they opposed their tenets and practice, who separated from the Church of *England*, condemning it, and the Ministry of it as Antichristian: But they studiously sought to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, whose labors God blessed to the conversion of thousands of souls and to the maintaining of the power of godliness all their days, and whose profitable Works do still praise them in the gate? But what need I look so far backward, seeing we can easily remember a great company who formerly joined with us here in *London*, in setting up and exercising the Presbyterian government (besides the many others in the several parts of the Land) who now are of chief note for Learning and Piety, in both Universities and other places; whose hearts and prayers (I am confident) still go along with us, for our encouragement.

As this bright cloud of so many witnesses (some in Heaven and some on earth) may be relieving unto our mourning hearts under our great loss; so (blessed be God) we have not yet cause to complain with the Prophet, that *there is no cluster*: for though much contempt is cast upon us (by many, who rather seek great things for themselves in the world, then the things of Jesus Christ) as an inconsiderable number, yet we have (I will speak it to the praise of the Lord) threescore Presbyterian Ministers within the precincts of our Province, who preach profitably, and live godly, who are not tainted with the erroneous tenets either of the Arminians, Antinomians or Anabaptists. And the most high will (I humbly hope) encouragingly appear farther for us in these paths, which (as our consciences be persuaded) are chalked out in the Scriptures of truth, for the welfare of his Churches, and the honor of his own Name by Jesus Christ. *Upon all the glory shall be a defense.*

I will conclude this my address unto you (my much honored brethren) with this hearty prayer, that you may hold on in this good old way, till you be gray-headed; nothing doubting, but that your heary heads will be a Crown of glory, being found in these ways of righteousness.

Your loving brother, and fellow laborer in the work of the Gospel, SIMEON ASHE.

Novemb. 24th 1654.

PROV. 16. 31. The hoary head is a Crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.

WHosoever knew this Reverend man (either by his own acquaintance or the true Report of others) whose Funeral doth occasion this great Assembly, will acknowledge that my Text is suitable unto the occasion of our meeting. The Lord make my Sermon as serviceable as I know my Text to be seasonable.

These *Proverbs* are grave Sentences full of worth and weight, which are the rather to be pondered seriously because of the Authors wisdom and authority; *The Proverbs of Solomon, the Son of David, King of Israel*; They are entire Propositions (especially from the beginning of the 10th Chapter) and therefore (for the most part) to be considered without any context or coherence at all. Every Proverb is like a precious Pearl tending to enrich all them with spiritual wisdom, who shall make faithful improvement thereof through God's special grace.

In the handling of this Proverb (which I have chosen to be the matter of my present discourse) I desire you to attend

1. The division of the Text.
2. The interpretation of the words.
3. And the divine truth from hence tendered unto our consideration.

The parts of the Text (being an entire Proposition) are two.

1. The Subject.
2. The Predicate.

The Subject or the matter spoken unto is, *The hoary head*. And the Predicate or that which is asserted lieth in the words following, *It is a Crown of glory if it be found in a way of righteousness*. Wherein two things are notable.

1. The high commendation given of old age, *The hoary head is a Crown of glory*.
3. The limitation which is warily added, *If it be found in the way of righteousness*.

Thus from the Text divided I put forward to the explication of the words herein used; And because the proposition is conditional, I will first open the words in the assertion, and secondly, those which are in the condition.

First, In the assertion two things are inquirable.

1. What is meant by *the hoary head*?
2. What is to be understood by the *Crown of glory*?

In this phrase *the hoary head* there is a double Metonymy.

1. A Metonymy of the effect for the cause, viz. *hoary head* put for old age the cause thereof.
2. And a Metonymy of the adjunct for the subject, the hoary hairs for the person upon whom they are to be found.

There is also a Synecdoche in the expression, viz. one part put for the whole; The head for the whole person aged.

And the language is likewise Metaphoricall, for man in his declining age seemeth to be compared unto the Winter, the latter part of the year, wherein the superficies of the earth is white, being covered with hoary frost. This Interpretation is according to sundry parallel passages in the holy Scriptures. *I am* (said Samuel) *old and gray-headed*; And *withus* (said Eliphaz) *are the gray-headed and very aged men much elder then thy Father*. Therefore the Rhetoric being taken off the words, it appeareth, that by the hoary head is signified the aged person.

If enquiry be made, what is meant by the *Crown of glory*? I answer, that there is an Hebraism in the words, viz. a *Crown of glory* put for a glorious Crown: The word *glory* noteth credit or excellency, as when the *strength* of the young man is called *his glory*. Some do render the phrase, A *Diadem of glory*, The Diadem properly signifying a *wreathed hatband*, with which the ancient Kings did content themselves, as thinking that a Crown only belonged to their gods. Let it be noted that it is more then a *garland* which may belong to some Conqueror in one exploit, though in all other regards a person mean and considerable. The Crown is appropriated rather unto Kings and Queens amongst the children of men, and here it is set upon the head of the aged person to betoken peculiar honor appertaining to old age; Although the phrase is variously rendered by Interpreters a *Crown of glory*, a *Crown of comeliness*, a *Crown of ornament*, yet the sense is the same in the judgment of all, viz. that *old-age is honorable*. And to this purpose is the Crown applied unto others in the holy Scriptures, viz. by Solomon unto Parents and their children mutually. *Children's children are the Crown of old men, and the glory of children are their Parents*; and upon the same account the Apostle Paul calleth the *Philippians* his Crown, esteeming it his high honor that they were brought to Christ by his Ministry.

Secondly, In the condition annexed, *If found in the way of righteousness*, there are three things enquirable, viz.

1. What is signified by *righteousness*.
2. What the word *way* doth suggest.
3. What is hinted in this expression, viz. of being *found in this way*.

For the first, I will not spend time in reporting either the various acceptions or uses of the word *Righteousness* in the holy Scriptures. In this place it noteth a careful conformity unto the revealed will of God, all whose Commandments are *righteousness*; In which respect Moses saith, *This shall be our righteousness if we observe to do all these Commandments*. For in so doing

we do *suum cuique trihuere*, give everyone their right, viz. God, ourselves, and our neighbors, receive due respect by obedience rendered unto laws divine.

Now before I apply Righteousness in this sense unto the truth in the Text, I must necessarily distinguish betwixt righteousness Legal and Evangelical.

1. Legal righteousness consists in a complete conformity unto Laws divine in their utmost latitude; And thus our first Parents were habitually righteous at their first creation, and our blessed Savior was actually *Christ the Righteous*, But all *Adams* posterity fall short hereof both in their nature and practice. As in the estate of unregeneracy the Apostle concludeth *all under sin*, and saith both of Jews and Gentiles, *There is none righteous, no not one*; So in the estate of Regeneration, so many are the imperfections of them who are most complete on earth, that in the sense aforesaid they cannot be accounted righteous. Though *David* is called a *man after God's own heart*, yet his prayer and testimony do attest this truth, *Enter not into judgment with thy Servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified*.

2. But in a Gospel sense, according to the indulgence and construction of free rich grace, God's gracious servants are said to be righteous. Thus God himself speaketh of *Noah*, *Thee have I seen righteous before me*. And this character the holy Ghost giveth of *Zechary* and *Elizabeth*, *They were both righteous before God*. And this Evangelical righteousness doth consist 1. partly in their sincere endeavor to reach perfection, in which respect they are described to be such who *follow after righteousness*, whereupon God accepting the will for the deed doth call them righteous. 2. And principally, in the imputation of Christ's righteousness unto them upon their humble fiducial closures with him by faith unfeigned, who is the *Lord our righteousness*; Now of this righteousness is the Text to be understood.

The se second Query was, What doth the word *way* suggest?

I answer, That God's Servants being as *strangers and sojourners* in this world, and their life being a travelling toward heaven their long home, where they look for their everlasting abode; their holy conversation on earth is ealled their *way*, which suggesteth both the activity and progress of God's grace in the fruits thereof. This *Solomon* seemeth to speak unto, very clearly and fully, *The path of the righteous is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day*.

And to the third demand, I answer, That a person may be said to be *found in the way of righteousness*, when there is conspicuity and permanency in a godly conversation; when the candle of grace lighted in the heart doth discover itself by its shining, and is kept burning (according to the advice of Christ) *that men may see his good works*, as it is said, that *Paul saw the grace of God*, in the Christians at *Antioch*; so here when the seed of righteousness rooted in the hearts of aged persons doth so bud and fructify in their lives that such who converse with them do or may find apparent effects of God's grace in them, then they are found in the way of righteousness. I shall not bestow anymore words, or time, in the Exposition of the Text, but proceed according to promise, unto the handling of that seasonable Point of Doctrine which is held forth from this Text. *The hoary head is a Crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness*.

That Old age attended with the power of grace and the practice of Religion, is a matter of much honor and commendation.

Let it be considered from the language in the Text how far this Truth doth extend, viz. indefinitely to all aged persons who be truly pious;

1. Of both Sexes, both men and women.
2. Of all ranks and conditions in the world, whether high or low, rich or poor, whether more nobly descended or more mean and contemptible in regard of descent, whether on the Throne or at the footstool.
3. Of all qualities, in regard of natural or acquired accomplishments, whether corporally beautified, or deformed, whether more or less enriched with the ornaments of the mind, viz. learning and other abilities for employment either in Church or in Common-wealth.
4. Of all callings and negotiations amongst men, whether sacred or civil, whether by land or sea, whether in times of war or peace.
5. And this truth, in this latitude, hath been, is, and will be applicable unto all aged persons, found in the way of righteousness, in all the ages of the world. This is notable from the Original, for as the proposition is universal in reference to all hoary heads found in the way of righteousness, so there is no verb to limit it unto any term of time, either past, present, or to come, but the holy Ghost asserts this truth, in relation to all ages and times of the world: That heretofore, and for the present, and for the future, the hoary head in the way of holiness, hath been, and now is, and hereafter to the end of the world will be a Crown of glory.

I shall proceed gradually in the proof of the Point, in reference to the two branches of it.

First, Old age in itself, is a matter of commendation: *The beauty of old men is the gray head:* In which respect (as some Expositors judge) the hoary head is compared by *Solomon*, to the *Almond tree flourishing*, when the white blossoms do render it very beautiful. And hence also it is, that according to the Heraldry observed in the holy Scripture, *the Ancient and the Honorable* are both placed together, and many of God's Worthies there recorded, have this character of honor put upon them, that they *died in a good old age and full of days* (viz.) *Abraham, Gideon, David.*

Secondly, The addition of holiness unto the hoary head, addeth much unto the glory of the aged person: and this the holy Ghost doth chiefly intend in the Text. For the righteous *eatenus*, because righteous, *is more excellent then his neighbor*. And therefore under this Notion, many are registered in holy writ to their everlasting credit in the Church of Christ, (viz.) *Mnason of Cyprus that old Disciple;* and *Anna, a Prophetess of a great age, a widow of about fourscore and four years, who departed not from the Temple, but served God, with fastings and prayers night and day.*

Now that righteousness giveth weight unto the Crown which aged persons do wear, may be abundantly manifested.

1. Because it is one part of *God's image in man*, with which he was adorned at his first creation, which was *his glory*, lost by his fall, and which is *restored* by his Regeneration. *The new man, after God, is created in righteousness.*

2. Because aged persons, thus qualified, are the Emblems of God himself, who is called *the ancient of days*; and of Jesus Christ, in whose metaphorical description, this is one expression; *His head and his hairs were white like wool.*

3. Because the righteous are admitted into near relation and affection with God who *is their Father, and loveth them dearly. The Lord loveth the righteous. The righteous shall shine in the Kingdom of their Father.* Now it was *David's honor* (as he valued it) to be *Son in law to King Saul*: And who doth not judge, that it was much to the repute of *Daniel*, to be called *A man beloved by the Lord. Since thou becamest mine* (saith God himself to his people) *and wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable.*

From these three heads of Arguments jointly considered, the truth under hand, may be undeniably concluded. *That the hoary head is a Crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*

The Application followeth, which I will give, in manifold Uses, under four heads.

The first sort of Uses are for Information in three particulars well worthy our consideration.

1. Hence it followeth, that no qualification whatsoever, wherewith the children of men can possibly be adorned, is of so great worth as godliness; because this is said to set a glorious Crown upon the heads of them who are blessed with it. I grant that there are many natural ornaments and acquired accomplishments, which may gain respect, but it is righteousness which wins the Crown. Therefore *Solomon* saith not, *The hoary head is a Crown of glory, if found in the way of raised parts, of great learning, of martial courage, of large commands in the world, or of successful trading to become wealthy, but if it be found in the way of righteousness.* Though people who are under no higher principles than sense and human reason are of another opinion: *They blesseth the covetous whom God abhorreth, and they do call the proud happy, because set up, when others are abased; because delivered when others are in distress: yea though many boasting themselves in the multitude of their riches, do bless their own souls; yet both God and all those whose judgments are guided by his word, are of another mind.* My text telleth you the thoughts of wise *Solomon*, and if you will hearken unto his father *David*, you shall understand, that his apprehensions were not different. The *Saints* (saith he) *and the excellent in whom is all my delight.* Whence it is notable, that the Psalmist there doth not only express his judgment personally, but he typically reports the sense of Christ, to give to understand, that himself a man according to God's heart, yea and Christ Jesus infinitely above himself, give this estimate of holy persons, that they are incomparably excellent. And if this be not sufficient to clear the truth of my inference, consider his confident assertion to *Saul* his Courtiers, who prided themselves in their Courtship, and

despised him as a man rejected. *Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: whereas all other persons whatsoever are looked upon by the Lord as lumber, these are his peculiar treasure.*

2. The second corollary is this: If righteousness be a Crown, though it be attained in old age only, then how much more honorable are they, who have been found in the way of righteousness all their life long; from their youth, till their heads are gray. This great commendation, did appertain unto *David*. *O God (saith he) thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now when I am gray headed, O God forsake me not.* And this honor *S^t Paul* putteth upon *Andronicus* and *Junia*, *They are of note among the Apostles, who also were in Christ before me.* It maketh very much to the credit of Christians, when grace which blossomed upon them in the spring of their youth, doth abide green and flourishing in the winter of their age; This might be many ways illustrated, 1. They have served the Lord sundry Apprentiships; It is an honor to stand (to have a settled abode as servants) before Kings: Thus the Queen of *Sheba* expresseth herself in reference unto them who always waited upon King *Solomon*, *Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy Servants who stand continually before thee.* Now this, and greater then this, is the renown of them who have been for many years not only retainers but dwelling-servants with the Almighty. 2. They have often been in the field with Christ their Captain, they have fought many battles, and have received many wounds under his Colours and command: The holy Ghost hath seen cause to record in holy Pages some of *David's Worthies* who had made many brave adventures, and done famous exploits in years past and gone. And what more ordinary then for Soldiers to set forth their own commendations, by relating how many years attending on the Army, with hazards run and wounds received; Now the old Soldiers of Jesus Christ are much more worthy high respect, having been found all along in the ways of righteousness; Such a standard-bearer was *Samuel* who received press-money from God while he was a child, and could when grayheaded so plead his righteousness that it will be always remembered to his credit and reputation. *I am old and grayheaded, Behold, here I am, witness against me before the Lord, and before his Anointed; whose Ox have I taken, or whose Ass have I taken, or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed, or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you:* But alas how few amongst them who have had power in their hands can we find, that in their age are thus found in ways of righteousness? 3. They have endured manifold oppositions, losses, and hardships from cruel persecutors; Many hot Summers have scorched them, and many cold winters have pinched them, they have suffered much from open enemies and feigned friends, because of their courageous faithfulness to Jesus Christ, not daring to depart from the way of righteousness. The Apostle *Paul* reckoneth up his sufferings as so many Ensigns of honor, *I will glory also;* (saith he,) And in what doth he glory? why, he tells you, *In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft: Of the Jews five times I received forty stripes save one: Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own Countrymen, in perils by the Heathen, in perils in the City, in perils in the Wilderness, in perils in the Sea, in perils amongst false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness: And*

Paul the aged and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. Thus this ancient Champion of Christ seems to look upon his several many years hardships as so many Pearls with which his Crown was beautified and enriched. And doubtless they are so in the account of all them whose judgments are rectified by the word of truth.

The Third Consequence or Use of Information is this, That it is a very advantageous service to be instrumental in promoting the work of Gospel-righteousness in the hearts and ways of men, because by means hereof they receive no less then a Crown of glory. Hence it was that Saint Paul writeth thus to *Philemon*, *Thou owest unto me thine own self*; How infinitely beyond all sublunary accommodations are the revenues which come in by grace! The Crown is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon the children of men, and no gain is comparable to that which is received by godliness; *Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*; yea, the greatest profit which we are capable to receive from God himself, is to be *made partakers of his holiness*, and the *fruit of righteousness* is from peculiar paternal love, proper to them whom God doth discipline as his Adopted children: This I note, both to discover unto the people of the world who are their best Friends, and to work in their hearts more high estimations of the Ministers of the Gospel whom God hath ordained to bring sinners *to Christ, that they might be the righteousness of God in him*. And howsoever the carnal and unthankful world disregard us, yet the Lord doth so highly value this our work, that he will certainly abundantly recompense it, *They who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the Stars forever and ever*: Whereas men do most esteem and most liberally reward such who are instruments to restore their health, to raise their outward estates, and to prefer them unto places of greatness in the world; The most high God who setteth a higher price upon holiness, will make it manifest at the last day, that those who study to bring men into the ways of righteousness shall be most advanced. It hath been looked upon as an honorable employment to set the Crown on a Kings head, and doubtless it is no less but far greater to be an instrument according to divine institution to crown sinners with righteousness. Consider that this was foretold by an Angel as an exceeding great honor to be put upon *John the Baptist* Christ's harbinger, *Many of the Children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God, and he shall go before them in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the Just*.

The fourth and last inference by way of Information is this, *viz.* That therefore the death of aged godly persons should be much lamented. *David* and all *Israel* wept over dead *Abner* upon this consideration, *A great man is fallen*; Now who are to be esteemed great if not those who are rightfully crowned? And such are the aged being found in the way of righteousness. The Prophet *Isaiah* bringeth in the *ancient* amongst those persons of highest place and power, whose removal doth weaken both Church and State. And this is one strain in *Jeremiah* his Lamentations, *The Crown is fallen*; Now in a safe sense, though not the same, we may apply it unto the death of the meanest, whose hoary heads were found in the way of righteousness; but it is singularly applicable, when an ancient, prudent, pious Minister is translated by death: Such a providence upon the death of *Elijah* caused *Elisha* to cry out, *My Father, My Father, the Charet of Israel and the horsemen thereof*. And truly such occasion of mourning is administered this day upon our loss of the Reverend, Learned, and godly man, whose

Funeral we now celebrate. Neither doth his death alone but the dissolution of sundry other grave and gracious Ministers of the Gospel, not long since, in the Neighbourhood, call for our tears and lamentations before the Lord. The Lord rightly affect us with these strokes, and give us the sanctified improvement of them through his grace.

The second Use followeth, which is for reproof of three sorts of people.

1. Of those aged persons who seem to be ashamed of their old age, by taking courses to hide it, that they might be accounted young, whereas my Text tells us, that the hoary head is a Crown, and the same wise *Solomon* saith elsewhere, The beauty of old men is the gray-head: And the Apostle *Paul* speaketh of his old age as his credit, and that which should render him the more respectfull, *Being such a one as Paul the aged*. Some of the Ancients took occasion in their days to blame very sharply such persons who either picked out their gray hairs, or else did color them artificially, that they might not be reputed old; And this advice was added to the reproof, that they should rather pluck up their lusts then pick out their gray hairs, as rendering them many thousand times more unlovely and dishonorable: Believe it you gray-headed persons, that your covetousness, frowardness, hypocrisy, and unrighteousness do make you reproachful, whereas your age with holiness would be your honor.

2. Of those whose wicked conversation doth cast dis-reputation upon the Crown which God by their many years hath set upon their heads. That Proverb is applicable unto them, *As a Jewell of Gold in a Swines snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion*. Complexion doth not so much beautify as folly doth blemish such a person: In like manner it is very unseemly to see silver hairs soyled with a sinful, debauched conversation; How do oaths, lies, scurrilous cursed speeches and other wickednesses cast mire and fasten rust upon the Crown of old-age. In dealing with these grayheaded sinners I may apply those words of *Moses*, *Do ye thus reward the Lord ye foolish people and unwise?* Is this the requital which you return unto God for his many years patience exercised towards you, and the manifold experiences with long-continued goodness showered down upon you? Do not you yourselves look for better fruit from the trees which you have carefully preserved many winters, and painfully watered many Summers? But if these convincing expostulations will not awaken and reform these people who are weather-beaten in wickedness, and by long soaking in sin are habituated to do evil, I must mind them of that heavy message delivered from the Lord by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *The sinner being an hundred years old is accursed*. The old impenitent sinner, whatsoever his place, his parts, or his respect in the world be, is accursed. God's curse is not only threatened, but already in a great measure executed upon him, *He is cursed*, cursed in his soul, and cursed in all his enjoyments and concernments, during the time of his impenitency and unreformednesse. Here I might be large in discovering the expressions of divine displeasure against people, old in evils as in years, whose decayed, decrepid, withered, weakened bodies might expect pity. The Prophet *Jeremiah* saith, *I am full of the fury of the Lord, I will pour it forth upon the aged and him that is full of days*. And God's threatening runneth thus, that neither he himself nor those whom he will incense against them, shall have any compassion upon the old man, or him that stoopeth for age or the man of gray hairs.

3. Of them who make the aged the objects of their derision. M^r *Cartwright* hath this note upon the Text, that God hath by this Crown of gray hairs vindicated the aged from all the discredit which their stooping or other infirmities might seem to expose them unto: And it is observed by some that though decrepid old age be suggested in the language of the Text, yet *Solomon* doth assign it the Crown. This I suggest the rather to give a check unto the young wanton wits which are apt to break jests upon the aged, because of some seeming uncomelinesses which accompany that condition of life. Guilty in this kind was he who scoffingly asked the old man whose body was crooked by reason of old age, *Whether he would sell him a bow?* These green heads do not consider the greatness of this sin in God's account, who puts this fault into the catalogue of such miscarriages which usher in desolating judgments, viz. *The child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient;* And this sin is the more heinous and provoking, when those aged persons are abused, whose near Relations, Offices of honor, accompanied with the power of godliness, do call for all expressions of respect and esteem. *Solomon* is smart in his reproof of children, who in this kind offend towards their natural parents, *The eye that mocketh at his Father and despiseth to obey his mother, the Ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it.* How many times are those brought unto the Gallows (as the confessions of some in such cases have manifested) through God's just judgment who have been chargeable with guilt of this kind? And how heavy was the hand of God upon many little children for mocking *Elisha* the Prophet, *There came forth little children out of the City, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up thy bald-head, Go up thou baldhead; And he turned back, and looked upon them, and cursed them in the Name of the Lord, and there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.* How far this derision of the man of God did reach, I now enquire not, whether to his Function, with relation to his Master *Elijah* lately taken up into heaven, or only unto his baldness, But this is notable, that childishness and ignorance will not secure such from divine revenge who do dare to deride the aged: What therefore may they expect who have more years on their backs, and should have more grace in their hearts, then to adventure upon this sinful provocation. But yet there is a higher step of aggravation to be added, viz. when righteousness itself which is the chiefest Crown of the aged, is the object of men's derision; when merely the tenderness of men's consciences and their exact walking according to the Word of God doth lay them open unto the jeers of men. The Apostle telleth us that *such despise not man only but God also,* and he rendereth a double reason thereof, viz. because God hath called us to holiness, and hath likewise given us his Spirit to work it: I remember the words of *Solomon*, which are applicable to my purpose, *whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his maker;* And the speech (as M^r *Cartwright* noteth upon the place) extends unto jearing at any bodily defect or deformity whatsoever, whereof God is willing to be accounted the Author. How much more will the Lord interpret those derisions to reach himself, which people shall dare to cast upon his own image in his servants, which is their Crown and beauty? For if God take himself to be concerned in the creatures affliction, how much more then in that which tends to his perfection? This way of wickedness argueth a graceless frame of heart, and to them who walk in it may be applied the sharp words of the Prophet, *Against whom do you sport yourselves? Against whom make you a widemouth, and draw out the tongue? Are ye not children of transgression, a false seed? Ishmael by mocking Isaac made way for his own rejection, and*

doubtless they are not far from ruin who have travelled so long in sin that they are got into *the Chair of Scorners*; When I remember the heavy curse given out against *Cham* for mocking his old Father *Noah* (for it's conceived that he was thus far guilty) when in an uncomely posture by reason of his drunkenness; I tremble to think what will become of them who break brinish jests with profane Satyricall spirits upon God's servants for their sanctity. We read in holy Story that *Michal David's* wife *despised him in her heart*, and spake tauntingly to him upon his zealous dancing before the Lord, and the holy Ghost hath concluded the History with this report, *Therefore Michol the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death*. And ordinarily this cursed course is attended with the heavy curse of everlasting spiritual barrenness. The Lord grant that these hints may through his blessing, give some check unto that profane boldness, which too frequently breaketh forth amongst the children of men.

I proceed to the third Use which shall be for trial; For it much concerneth all sorts to know how this righteousness may be discerned, which is a Crown of glory to the hoary head. The necessity of this enquiry may be manifested by these two considerations.

1. Because there are several mistakes in this matter of righteousness amongst men. For there are many who only appear outwardly to be righteous, when the *inside* discovereth the contrary, being *full of hypocrisy*. And there is something like unto justice, *which is highly esteemed amongst men, though it be abomination in the sight of God*.

2. That we may neither arrogate nor deny this Crown to ourselves groundlessly, and also that we may be the better able to judge unto whom we are bound to give this honor which God hath put upon them. For as it is the duty of all, so it is the care of God's people in this particular (as in other cases) *to guide themselves by discretion and judgment*.

Now those whom God accounteth truly righteous may be known,

1. By their unlimited respect unto God's whole will revealed in his word, as the rule of their obedience for the matter of it. This is the character given of *Zacharias and Elizabeth*, *They were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord*: Therefore here the Query must be, both What is the rule of our conversation? and Whether our endeavors be extended according to the rules of the Scripture universally? For multitudes steer their course rather according to the *compass* of human Ordinances than divine Institutions; And amongst them who seem to have recourse unto Scripture guidance, many are merely partial, picking and choosing according to their pleasure, as *Herod* who heard *John the Baptist, and did many things*, but there was one defect which undid him. And the like might be observed concerning the young man, who fell short in regard of his worldly-mindedness.

2. By minding the manner, together with the matter of their obedience. To this purpose are the words of *Moses*, *This shall be our righteousness if we observe to do all these Commandments before the Lord our God as he hath commanded us*. As this Scripture speaketh to the former note, *viz.* there is an observing to do all, *q. d.* there is a *respect unto all God's commands*, as *David* expresseth it, So it suggesteth reference to the modality with the

materiality of our performances. A principle of righteousness will move a man to do God's Commandments as before him, and as he hath commanded: Whereas his Majesty requireth that good duties should be well done, they esteem it just and equal to endeavor this, not daring to satisfy themselves with outwardnesse and formality, *opus operatum* will not down with the person who is regularly righteous; Therefore people in the proof of their righteousness must consider what care they take to be reverent, humble, affectionate, spiritual and upright in their services before the Lord.

3. By laboring after growth in grace and a more full conformity unto the Laws of the Lord and his deservings; *The path of the righteous (saith Solomon) is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* The Sun doth not more naturally in its progress move towards *high noon*, then a gracious heart worketh towards perfection. The Apostle Paul having reported his own practice in *pressing forward towards the mark*, addeth, that those who are sincere are *thus minded*, and he calleth them *perfect* because thus they are in their own aims and endeavors, as in divine acceptance. Because (as M^r Bayns expresseth it) they take up their arrows always on this side the white, therefore they strive to shoot better that they might hit the white, that they might in all regards exactly answer the mind and expectation of the Lord in their conversation; Therefore those are far from righteousness who stroke their own heads as though they had fully accomplished the mind of God, and speak the language of the *Laodicean, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing*; Setting aside their staves, as though they were got to their journeys end, not looking after increase of grace, as though they had gained enough already to serve their turn. And it will be no violation of the Law of charity to affirm, that he was never truly good who doth not strive to be better.

4. By an humble self denying dependence upon Jesus Christ, looking for divine acceptance through him alone. The holy Apostle notwithstanding his unreprouable course before his conversion (as to men, and according to his light) and his unwearied industry upon his spiritual change, to hit the mark, at which he sincerely levelled, attended with a holy life, free from outward scandal, yet this, this was in his eye and endeavor, *to be found in Christ (saith he) not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.* And thus it is also with all other Christians who are Evangelically righteous, because they do daily experience their own defects both in the matter, manner, measure, and end of their obedience, both to the Commandments of the first and second table, therefore in their addresses unto God either for recompense or acceptance, they take up the words of the holy Martyr, *None but Christ, None but Christ.* This our Apostle himself asserteth, speaking of others as of himself, *We rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, &c.* And he is bold to conclude those to be void of true righteousness who do trust unto their own parts, privileges, or performances whatsoever: *Israel which followed after the Law of righteousness hath not attained to the Law of Righteousnesse; wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith but as it were by the works of the Law.* By these four characters of the person who is Evangelically righteous, being faithfully applied, we may be able to know in regard of ourselves, and to guess in reference unto others (upon conversings

with them) unto whom the Crown of glory (set upon the hoary head found in the way of righteousness) doth appertain.

The last Use followeth which is for Exhortation, and it is to be directed,

1. To them who are old.
2. To them who are young.

I shall begin with the aged, both such who are unrighteous and such who are in the way of righteousness.

First, The aged persons who abide irreligious are to be persuaded to endeavor a change both of heart and life; *Hearken unto me you who are far from righteousness*; Remember the fore-mentioned particulars, wherein true righteousness doth consist, and strive with all your strength to attain them, as you do desire a Crown of glory. The Apostle *Paul* propounds the practice of such who *run a race to obtain a corruptible Crown*, as an argument to press the like duty. And Scripture-Histories together with the Stories of all ages do record the strange adventures, yea, attempts both ungodly and unnatural to advance unto a Crown: Should not we therefore in the way of God seek this Crown of glory? Now that my advice may be the more prevalent, let these considerations be well weighed.

1. That the greatest age attainable on earth without righteousness will not procure this Crown; Antiquity without piety doth yield no more credit then the devil is capable of, who is often called *the Old Serpent*, having had many thousand years continuance in the world: But when holiness is annexed to the hoary hairs, they honor the head with a Crown. How ambitious are proud men (like *Saul*) to be *honored amongst the people*. Therefore as the laborious Bee sucketh honey out of weeds, let us graciously improve such like examples, to provoke ourselves to seek the honor which cometh in by righteousness.
2. This righteousness which is attended with a Crown of glory upon earth will undoubtedly bring that which is very much better in heaven. Hearken what our Savior promiseth, *The righteous shall shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*. And observe the expectation of *David* upon this account, *As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness*. Though I may not spend words in illustrating these passages, yet I wish that the aged would seriously consider how much is comprehended in this glorification and this satisfaction assured upon the righteous at the general resurrection.
3. Who doth not (upon such grounds as have been hinted) desire to *die the death of the righteous*, as that wretch *Balaam* did? therefore wisdom would work endeavors to attain righteousness in the time of life. I remember a passage in the promise made by the Angel concerning the success of *John the Baptist* his Ministry, *He shall turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the Just*; There is singular wisdom amongst the righteous; as in other regards, so herein, because as they intend the best good as their end, so they seek to accomplish it, not only by wishings and wouldings, but by the real use of the means sanctified for the obtaining thereof. Let us therefore herein make, imitation.

4. The unrighteous shall not find any favor with God, because of their gray heads when he cometh to judgment. Somewhat was before suggested to this purpose, therefore now I will only mention two Scriptures, which may be awakening to aged persons sleeping in security. *Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet it shall not be well with the wicked:* Forbearance is no acquittance, but God will be sooner or later upon their bones with blows of vengeance; And their shutting out of heaven is so certain, that the Apostle taketh it for granted that none will question it, *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?* How can you old people give credit to these expressions of divine severity without resolutions to look out after righteousness?

5. You aged ones are the greatest monuments of divine patience, which should *lead you unto repentance;* and the Apostle giveth in two considerations, to add strength unto this argument, *viz.*

1. Because otherwise your hearts will be more and more obdurate, and yourselves become less and less able to reform.

2. Because through your abuse of God's forbearance his wrath will be kindled and increased against you. Weigh I pray you his words, *Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and longsuffering? not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance; But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God:* I have been the more earnest in pressing the reformation of the aged sinners, because it is attained with difficulty through their accustomed continuance in wickedness.

Secondly, I shall bend my advice to the aged who are through God's grace really righteous. These persons are to be persuaded unto real gratitude to the Lord, who hath set a Crown of glory upon their gray-heads. The Psalmist calls upon old men to praise the Name of the Lord; This is one of M^r Cartwright inferences from the Text. And doubtless such aged people have abundant cause to be thankful unto the Almighty. 1. For drawing forth the thread of their lives to so great a length. 2. And especially for converting them unto the way of righteousness.

First, You may be moved to praise God for your old age by these Meditations.

1. Because his Highness is the maintainer of our lives, and the lengthener of our days. Notwithstanding the means used whether ordinary or extraordinary, food, Physic, &c. to continue our days upon earth, yet it must be acknowledged that the Lord *holdeth our soul in life.* And here let it be remembered, that *God's blessing giveth strength* to bread, and efficacy unto all other means of health. Consider also how much of God's wisdom, power, goodness, patience, &c. hath been daily, yea hourly exercised for your preservation. Mind likewise from how many thousands of dangers his hand of providence hath secured you, both in the time of fool-hardy youth and unwieldy old age. Upon such like thoughts the holy Psalmist thus expresseth himself to the Lord, *Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day.*

2. Because by strokes of death ten thousand have fallen on your sides, *on your right hands, and yet it doth not comenigh to you.* What multitudes of men and women, and children more likely to have lived long then yourselves, are dead and gone, but yourselves still abide in the Land of the living? The good young King *Josiah* is deadly wounded by an *Arrow*; And old *Eli* the Priest of the Lord *fell from his seat backward, and his neck brake*; What great numbers have lost their lives, some in war, and others in times of peace; yea, very many, much more fitted for the service of Church and Common-wealth then yourselves. In this regard you should look upon yourselves as reserved to magnify the God of your lives and mercies.

3. It is threatened as a judgment upon a Family when there is not left one aged person belonging to it; *There shall not be an old man in thy House*; These words speak much displeasure against *Eli*; Whereas it is an honor to have old stakes standing to support a Family which issued out of an ancient stock; Like as old Oaks are accounted an ornament to a Park, though they bear neither fruit nor leaves. This is one promise made to the man who feareth God, *Thou shalt live to see thy children's children.* And *Solomon* tells us, *The glory of children are their Fathers.*

4. Because your many years have enriched you with manifold experiences, and this is judged by some Expositors to add much unto the Crown of old age. This I might enlarge, by manifesting the advantages of old men's experiences, both in reference unto their own comfort, and the service of others: The holy Psalmist relieveth his drooping spirit, in an estate of desertion, by improving of God's ancient administrations. *I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High, I will remember thy wonders of old.* Yea the Heathen could knowingly speak of the sweet fruits of old age if men had wisdom to reap them. And all ages do demonstrate, that ancient men, are most meet by their grave counsels to be serviceable unto the public. This Reverend man (whose Funeral we now celebrate, was wont to say, *That a few gray hairs would do more work then many young locks.* Besides other proofs hereof, the History concerning the different advice given to *Rehoboam*, by his young and old Counsellors, will sufficiently witness this truth.

These considerations may quicken the godly aged to gratitude for their hory heads: but I must add, that they have much more cause to magnify God, for making them godly, because old age may be the gift of common bounty, whereas righteousness is the product of peculiar grace. *The wicked may become old,* but the righteous are the adopted children of God and the heirs of heavens glory; Therefore their souls should praise the Lord, because when their lives are *redeemed from destruction, they are also crowned with loving-kindness and tender mercies.* Now that I may prevail with you to honor God whose hoary heads are crowned with righteousness, I will briefly propound to your most serious thoughts these following meditations.

1. That yourselves in the estate of depraved nature were of that number of whom it is most truly said, *There is nonerighteous, no not one,* and that this righteousness which is your Crown was *the fruit of God's Spirit*; Therefore the glory thereof is due unto the Lord and not unto yourselves, because he and not yourselves hath *made the difference* betwixt you and others.

2. That the greatest part of mankind doth abide in the ways of unrighteousness; The *whole world* (saith the Apostle) *lieth in wickedness*; The small number of *ten righteous persons* could not be found in *Sodom and Gomorrhah* with their Suburbs; And before the Flood God himself could not espy any other besides *Noah*, *Thee only have I seen righteous beforeme in this age*; Now by how much the more rare righteousness is amongst men, by so much the more thankful should we be if God hath wrought it in us.

3. Can you remember either your own many, strong, and long-continued resistances made against divine assaults, or the manifold Providences and Ordinances, by means whereof you have been brought into the way of righteousness; May not Christ speak unto you as once to *Jerusalem*, *Howoften would I and ye would not?* yea, for a long time might not this be charged upon you, *You always resisted the holy Ghost?* And by how many hammerings and humblings, by what showers and Sunshine, by what shakings with meltings in the Ministry of the Gospel have you been won to the Lord; Now should not all this patience and goodness of God lead you unto thankfulness?

4. Lastly, Take notice of the various and precious privileges whereof you are made partakers by means of righteousness; These I will only mention without amplification: Hereupon you may be confident.

1. That your lives are lengthened, not only by common providence, but in the pursuance of special promises made unto them who have received *peculiar* grace.

2. That you shall be supplied with all necessary accommodations in your passage to heaven; These are Christ's own words unto them who seek righteousness, *All these things shall be added unto you.*

3. That you shall undoubtedly persevere to glory, *The righteous shall hold on his way.*

4. That all occurrences shall be sanctified to your spiritual advantage, *Say ye to the righteous that it shall be wellwith him.*

5. That God's vigilant eye of providence shall *never be withdrawn from you*, in which respect you may be the rather assured of the seasonable and full accomplishment of all his promises.

6. That upon Natures dissolution your *souls shall be perfect*, and that at the general Resurrection your bodies and souls *shall inherit life eternal*. Now who can believingly look upon himself interested in these glorious obligations of God's grace without a thankful heart?

If by these many Arguments the hearts of any aged ones, being resolved upon gratitude, shall enquire how they may in realities express their thankfulness unto the Lord, both for his long-sufferance and loving-kindness towards them. My answer is this, That you shall be regularly and acceptably thankful unto God both for your gray-hairs and your graces, by studying and endeavoring such a frame of heart and course of life as may answer that counsel which himself hath left on record for your guidance in the holy Scriptures which I shall plainly and faithfully impart unto you. But before I mention particulars to direct your

behavior, I shall premise these two things to move attention with resolutions to practice them.

1. That howsoever, too often, men themselves do not observe when *gray hairs are here and there upon them*, and many times the aged may seem youthful unto others; yet God doth take exact and particular notice of every aged person in the world. The holy Ghost recordeth when *Joshua waxed old, and was stricken in age*, and about what time *Jesse (the Father of David) went for an old man in Israel*. The like I might discover in regard of *Abraham, Sarah, Anna*, But I forbear.

2. That the Lord doth punctually observe all the good, and all the evils of them who are stricken in years, whether they be his own people or others. This I enlarge not by specifying instances, because the naked quotations may be sufficient.

Having thus briefly premised these things, I proceed to the directions which I find registered in the Word of God, that the aged may know how to order their conversation in some measure of answerableness unto that Crown of glory which the Lord by his grace and their gray hairs hath put upon them.

In general, They must be of *such behavior as becometh holinesse*, whether they be aged men or women, therefore they ought to advance and express the power of God's grace by a diligent improvement of all such means as God hath sanctified. The Apostle *John* writeth to the *Fathers who were knowing men*, that they might become more holy. And old *Anna*, though truly good, yet *waited daily at the Temple*, that she might grow better. This I might persuade by many Arguments.

1. There is no one who hath lived the longest and hath made the best proficiency in Christ's School, that is come to that pillar on which he may write, *Ne plus ultra*; But when he hath summed up all his rich endowments, shall find cause to conclude with the words of the Apostle, *Not asthough I were already perfect*.

2. The grievances of old age are such, and so many, as will call for the exercise of the strongest graces attainable in this life. *Solomon* reckoneth up some of them, and telleth the aged person, that they will *take away the pleasures of his life*; Then all the faith, patience, and other graces which have been gained will be found weak enough, to wield, the burdens of that estate: This, this was the only support of the Psalmist, *when strength and heart did fail, that God was the strength of his heart, and his portion (to live upon) forever*. In this respect pains should be taken, that *as the outward man decayeth, the inward man may be renewed daily*.

3. The aged will lie open unto derision and disrespect in regard of the imperfections and weaknesses which attend that condition of life, therefore they should labor by eminency of holiness to secure their credit amongst all sorts of people whatsoever; For nothing doth more awe the hearts of the children of men then the power of godliness appearing in the conversations of God's Servants; As *Paul* advised young *Timothy* hereby to prevent contempt, *Let no man despise thee, but be an example of the believers in word and conversation, &c.* So by

means hereof Job had won great estimation amongst all sorts; *The young men saw me and hid themselves, and the aged arose and stood up.*

4. The miscarriages of old people are in God's account the more heinous, because they have had most frequent and most ancient experiences of his goodness. By this circumstance the evils of *Israel* are once and again aggravated. *God carried them all the days of old, but they rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit: Know that it is an evil thing (more then ordinarily evil) that my fear is not in thee, for of old time I have broken thy yoke, &c.*

5. And I might add that their wickedness will do much more mischief tending more to the dishonor of God and the infection of others. In all these regards it nearly concerneth them whom God hath crowned with age and the profession of his Name, to heed their conversation, that it may be suitable unto that dignity which the Lord hath put upon them. It may well become everyone of them upon this account, frequently and affectionately to make *David's* prayer, *Now I am old and gray-headed, O Lord forsake me not, until I have shown thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to everyone that is to come.* This in general, the particulars follow.

First, The aged should be full of knowledge as they are full of years; This is taken for granted in many Scripture passages, *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days is understanding;* And thence it is that the *ancient and the prudent* are conjoined. Ignorance is much more excusable in the young, who may thus plead, *We are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow;* but an old *Ignoramus* is a thing intolerable: *Better is a poor and wise child, then an old and foolish King.* When God hath set a Crown upon a man's head, and he knoweth not how to wear it; *Honor (saith Solomon) is unseemly for a fool:* And this disgrace is the greater when means of knowledge are enjoyed, yea, enjoyed for many years. You (saith the Apostle to some who were members of the Church at *Corinth*) *have not the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.* And in like manner he greatens this defect in others; *When for the time ye ought to be teachers of others, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the Oracles of God: Remember how sharply Christ reproveth Nicodemus, Art thou a Master in Israel and knowest not these things?* It would be accounted a great disparagement unto a young man having served out an Apprentiship, to be unacquainted with the mysteries of his Trade; Now fifty years is above seven years in Sabbath-days, and yet how many of that age (who have had an addition of many weekly Lecture-days) are yet palpably ignorant in the mysteries of salvation? These things I suggest to shame the aged unto endeavors to become rich in understanding.

Secondly, They should not only be knowing but fruitful, *The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree, they shall bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing.* This may upon good ground be looked for, from them who are truly good, for though the natural radical heat doth abate in old persons, yet the spiritual vigor which they receive from Christ decaieith not. *His branches shall spread and his beauty shall be as the Olive-tree, for from me is thy fruit found.* Although age taketh them off from sundry employments, yet they should be doing something according to their abilities. The holy Ghost telleth us *of an old man who came from his work out of the field at even;* In the evening of our age, towards Sun-setting, we should

be found acting in one kind or other for God; and *happy is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing*. Here I will instance in three particulars.

1. The aged must be *Teachers of good things, Daies should speak, and the multitude of years should teach wisdom*; This was the practice of old *Jacob, Moses, Joshua, &c.* And *Job* reporteth this as a ground of his comfort, *I was eyes to the blind, unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel*. You must bring forth of your treasure *good things, both new and old*, and not trifle out the latter part of your days *in telling old wives Fables*.

2. They must communicate their experiences, *Hear this, ye old men, Hath this been in your days? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation*. This hath been the custom of God's Worthies in all ages, according to his command, whereby themselves have received comfort, others benefit, and God glory. And this I seriously persuade, though I have not leisure to enlarge it. Let future ages understand the most remarkable passages of God's Providence which you have experienced, whereby sin may be rendered odious, and Christ with the ways of faith and holiness may be represented precious to the souls of succeeding ages.

3. They should endeavor to clear both their own credit and consciences, in reference unto all their conversings in the world. This I propound from the example of *Samuel*, when he was *old and gray-headed*, pointing only at the Story, which is well worth consideration and imitation. And in this practice let the honor of Religion be rather vindicated than your own. Give God the glory of your own unreprouable conversation, and for your known miscarriages express your repentance, which will produce both present inward peace and future reputation.

Thirdly, The aged should *possess their souls with patience*, This is one of the particulars which *S^t Paul* adviseth *Titus* to press upon old men, *viz.* that they be *sound in patience*. This grace of patience considered under a threefold notion, is needful, and would be commendable in them.

1. Patience in waiting for the full accomplishment of all God's Promises. *You have need of Patience* (saith the Apostle) *that after ye have done the will of God, you might receive the promise*. And *S^t James* propounds the practice of the Husbandman to persuade this; *Behold, the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it*. I may tell you whose heads are gray, whose lives have been a long seed-time in ways of well-doing, *Behold, the fields are white already to harvest*; Your time of reaping is at hand, therefore hold up your heads and hopes in a patient expectation of your recompense of reward.

2. Patience in forbearing those who load you with provocations. In this case let *David* be your Example, who silently without yielding unto motions made for revenge, submitted unto that affliction with which God did exercise him, through the cursings of *Shimei*. With how much contempt doth the Lion (the King of Beasts) pass on his way, notwithstanding the barkings of angry dogs? Therefore you aged ones who are crowned both with gray-hairs and graces, Look upon yourselves as ready to set foot into your palace, and to take possession of the Kingdom prepared for you; and hereupon with a holy scorn slieght all the clamors and

snarlings of them, who *speakevill of you* because you refuse to *run with them into the same excess of riot*.

3. Especially Patience in a calm and cheerful bearing of all those infirmities and afflictions which are wont to accompany old age. Remember that your age is your Crown, and therefore carry it with contentment, though it cause your heads to ache. M. *Cartwright* upon my Text hath this note, That the holy Ghost doth purposely tell the aged, that the hoary head is a Crown, that by this consideration he might relieve them under all the grievances which attend that condition of life. M. *Muffet* upon my Text speaketh thus, *Old age is born up by these two staves, 1. Life well-spent, 2. Hope of future glory*. And Bishop *Hall* hath this expression in his *Meditations and Vows: I account old age the best age, 1. Because the inconveniences of it are only bodily, with a better estate of mind. 2. Because nearer to dissolution*. Hereunto he addeth this Story, *When a man told a Philosopher, that he was sorry to see him so old: he returned this answer, Be sorry rather that ever I was young to be a fool*: Many such like Meditations might be added to check frowardness, to maintain patience under all the pressures of old age, but I shall refer to the fore-mentioned privileges which appertain unto them *whose hoary heads are found in the way of righteousness*.

Fourthly, They should be *sound in faith*; 1. Both in the doctrine of faith, in the truth of the Scripture, having had long time for trial, to discern betwixt things which differ, and therefore in reference to Fundamentals at least they should be able to say with *David* to God, *Concerning these thy Testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever*. 2. And in the grace of faith, being strong in confidence, whereby they shall with old *Abraham* glorify God, and with old *Simeon* go singing to heaven; It was an easy thing with *Moses* to die when God had shown him the promised Land: And it's a good sight to behold ancient Christians carried out of this world with full sail of assurance, hearing them to speak, as *Job* did, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and though after my skin worms destroy my flesh, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself*, &c. It well becometh them likewise in times of trouble to plead their old experiences with bold confidence, *Why withdrawest thou thine hand, even thy right hand, pluck it out of thy hosome, for God is my King of old*. Whereas their infidelity is the more inexcusable in itself, and the more provoking unto God, because manifold providences both in former and later years, have evidenced unto them God's power and truth; *They forgot God their Savior which had done great things in Egypt, wondrous things in the Land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea, therefore he said that he would destroy them, &c. they believed not his Word*. And hence it was that both *Moses* and old *Zechary* were so severely dealt with for their incredulity.

Fifthly, They should be *sound in charity*, This the Apnstle addeth to the former. And it is very reasonable in many regards; for as they have long lived upon God's love, so they have received most kindnesses from men in manifold exigencies, and the necessities of their old age do call for continued and renewed compassion from time to time. Here I shall only touch upon three Rules to guide this grace in its exercise.

1. For purity, their love should be most enlarged upon the account of piety. As it was the praise of *Titus*, that his inward affection was more abundant whilst he remembered the obedience of the *Corinthians*; When special kindness is shown towards them *who are of the household of faith*.

2. For perpetuity, they must not be *weary of works of charity*: And doubtless if love be true it will be constant, for a friend loveth at all times.

3. For quantity, it should be increased, and it will be to their high commendation if their works of mercy (as of other kinds) *be more at the last then at the first*. And therefore covetousness should be cashiered, as the cut-throat of charity.

Moreover, I might persuade from the authority of Saint *Paul*, *sobriety, temperance, and gravity*. For temperance let old *Barzillai* be an example unto the aged, whose moderation in reference to the dainties of a Court tendered unto him, was very great. And let the sad consequences of *Noah* his intemperance give caution for sobriety unto all ancient persons whatsoever. As for gravity, it's a virtue opposed to lightness and apishnesse; It should be expressed in countenance, speech, and apparel, &c. But these things I must not enlarge. And I will only name what the Apostle addeth in relation to old women. They must not be *false accusers*; His word suggests that false accusers are *devil-like, having tongues set on fire by hell*. This may be a sufficient watchword to warn them to keep at a distance from such exorbitances; The last thing which I will advise all ancient persons unto, is constancy and perseverance in ways of righteousness, according to all the former directions; I would propound the resolution of *David* when old and gray-headed for your imitation, *I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more*, &c. You should be immovable like unto old Oaks, deeply rooted, which are not turned hither and thither, this way and that way, by every contrary wind. Remember the speech of old *Polycarpus* when tempted to Apostasy, God hath been my good Master for 85 years, therefore I will not forsake him: As Arguments to move endeavors after steddinesse both in the profession and practice of the truth, take these short particulars into your serious consideration.

1. In the winter of your age, you may probably be assaulted with violent storms. *When thou shalt be old (saith Christ to Peter) another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not: This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God.*

2. You are in danger of declining. Good old *Eli* towards the end of his life was woefully cooled in his zeal for God, as his indulgence towards his Sons, did manifest. And when *Solomon* was old, *his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father*. These examples may give you an Alarum; for neither high parts, nor saving grace, will secure you from porttall apostasy, therefore you should be watchful.

3. God doth not change or abate in his goodness toward you, but he speaketh unto you as to old *Israel*. *You are borne by me from the belly which are carried from the womb. And even to your old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you*. Now should not God's immutability in his favors notwithstanding your great unworthiness, engage you strongly to hold close unto his Majesty without any backslidings!

4. Your fruitfulness in age, will add to your comfort when you die, and to your honor afterwards. The promise of God speaketh thus much: *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of Corn cometh in in his season.* Unto which might be added S^t Paul's experience; *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day.*

Having finished my Exhortation to the aged, I shall direct my counsel unto them who are young; wherein I will be the shorter, because I have been so large in the former, and I will cast mine advice under three heads.

First, To seek the lengthening of their lives, that they may attain the Crown of glory, which belongeth to the hoary head.

And for this end,

1. Let them warily decline all life-endangering practices. I will instance in some. Quarrellings, fightings, whereby many in the flower of their age lose their lives, whereof there are sad experiences everywhere. Whoredom is another life-shortening sin: Solomon telleth us, that the *Harlots house inclineth to death, & her paths unto the dead.* And he foretelleth the young man, what will be the consequence of that course; *Thou shalt mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.* And unto both the former, I may add drunkenness and gluttony, for as the strength of nature is wasted, and the body is filled with diseases through intemperancy; and by reason hereof the forementioned evils of quarreling and whoring are much fomented. The words of Solomon are here considerable: *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions, who hath wounds, who hath redness of eyes! They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wine, &c. At the last it biteth like a Serpent, and stingeth like an Adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, yea thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.* Finally, Take heed of all such ways of wickedness, which may justly bring you under the Magistrates sword, or expose you to the deadly blows of divine displeasure: *Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.*

2. Let them betake themselves unto such courses, whereunto God hath promised length of days. The Lord in the fifth Commandment, persuadeth every child to honor and obey his parents, upon this consideration, *that thy days may be prolonged.* Yea the whole course of obediential conformity unto all God's Commandments, is pressed by this argument; *What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days that he may see good? keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil and do good.* And some Expositors do suggest from my Text, that walking in the way of righteousness, is a means to obtain the honor of an hoary head. *God ordinarily granteth long life unto good men.* This is most certain, that God will either lengthen the lives of such upon earth, or else crown them with life eternal in Heaven. This lets in the second head of advice to be bestowed upon young persons.

Secondly, To seek righteousness. This was S^t Paul's counsel unto young Timothy, *Follow righteousness.* And the doctrine under hand is a strong argument to back it, which David pressed upon his son Solomon, when young and tender; who speaking of sanctifying grace under the name of wisdom, useth these words; *Exalt her and she shall promote thee, she shall*

bring thee to honor when thou doest embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament, a Crown shall she deliver to thee. Righteousness therefore will be a Crown of glory, unto the green-headed, as well as unto the gray-headed, which should move the young to look out after it.

Now that my persuasion may be the more prevalent with young ones, I shall commend these following particulars unto their serious consideration.

1. God's express command: *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.* If you acknowledge his Sovereignty over you, as your Maker, is it not rational that you should suddenly submit unto his government?

2. The examples of such young ones, who came in unto God graciously in the morning of their age: *Josiah, Daniel, Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego*, as also *Timothy*; but especially set *Christ* before your eyes, who when he wastwelve years old, did famously express the power of grace. Do you judge godliness commendable in them, wherefore then do you not endeavor imitation?

3. The advantages of seeking grace betimes, early in the morning of youth. I shall name some of them without enlargement (*viz.*) The work will be to yourselves the more easy (as the bowing of the twig while tender,) and to God the more acceptable, when the first fruits are consecrated unto his Majesty. Christ is said to love the moral young man; and it is conjectured, that *John* had the more tender respect, because he came unto Christ so soon. The gracious seasonings in youth, will also make the conversation more savoury afterwards: And the sooner you undertake God's service, the more glory you shall bring unto his Name, the larger recompense likewise yourselves shall receive. Finally, this will be an encouragement, unto your hopeful addresses unto the Lord, as need may require. Mark *David's* manner of pleading in prayer; *O God thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto I have declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and gray headed O God forsake me not.*

4. The necessity of endeavoring to be godly in the time of youth. This might be sundry ways manifested: Because then most subject to satisfy many sinful corruptions. As the boiling pots cast up the most scum, so in the heat of youth, there are strongest inclinations to passions, revenge, lasciviousness, intemperance. &c. In which respect the Apostle saw cause to give *Timothy* this counsel; *Fly youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, &c.* And the breaking forth of wickedness in youth, will breed bitter complaints in old age. As the aged are wont to feel pain in those bones which were bruised or broken, when they were young. *Thou writest bitter things against me (saith Job) and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.* *Ephraim* also maketh pitiful moan, *bearing the reproach of youth.* Yea, suppose you should be secured from all gross evils, while young; yet if ever the Lord bring you home unto himself, by the power of an effectual calling, this will be a cut upon your hearts (as it was to *Augustine*,) that you came in to God no sooner. How will you bewail your folly and great ingratitude unto God, that the devil hath been gratified by your first-fruits, and that only the refuse, dregs, and withered stuff of old age, is reserved for God. And if the Lord should punish your obstinacy in youth, with final impenitence, how sad would your reckoning be at the last day? for this is most certain, that when you have sowed your wild oats, and satisfied

the sinful desires of youth, *for all these things God will bring you to judgment*. The Lord give young ones to dwell upon these meditations, and to lay them seriously unto their hearts. Here I might justly take up a great lamentation, considering that averseness unto the power of piety, which is everywhere to be found amongst young people, notwithstanding instructions, convictions, ministerial persuasions, together with some motions of God's Spirit upon their hearts, with which their souls are assaulted for good from time to time. They will acknowledge the reasonableness of our advice; they will shed tears being reproved for their regardlesse of God and of their own souls; yea they will make fair promises of amendment for time to come. But, alas, alas, poor foolish creatures, how careless in seeking to keep these spiritual sparks alive in their own bosoms. How soon do these good motions die within them. They would have the Crown tendered, but will not resolutely hold on in the use of God's means to obtain it. Fain they would save their souls, and yet satisfy their sinful lusts also. And thus they fluctuate as a wave upon the sea, carried hither and thither by contrary winds. Whereas they should upon a serious consideration (whether it be better to serve God or the devil, to save the soul, or to hazard the loss of it unto eternity) work themselves unto an immovable determination, to seek *the Crown of glory in the way of righteousness*.

Thirdly, To yield due, reverent respect unto aged persons, especially to such in whom the power of grace doth most eminently appear. M^r Cartwright upon my Text presseth this duty, arguing from our honoring them whom men Crown, unto such to whom God assigneth the *Crown of glory*. As there should be testifications of high respect unto all such, so especially 1. To our natural parents *Honor thy Father and thy Mother*. 2. And to those whose Office and faithfulness in discharging it, doth call for *double honor*.

Now this honorable respect of the aged (especially if godly) must be expressed,

1. By reverent gestures: *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man*.
2. By giving them the precedency, in speaking in all cases to be debated. *Elihu said, I am young and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid and durst not show mine opinion. I said, Days should speak and multitude of years should teach wisdom*.
3. By testimonies of due estimation to their persons, even at those times when there may be occasion to blame some of their practices. *Rebuke not an Elder, but entreat him as a Father*.
4. By submitting unto their grave and gracious counsels. *Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder*. The Apostle styleth himself *Paul the aged*, to prevail with *Philemon* to yield unto his advice.
5. By preferring them (if in all other regards comparison be equal) in discoveries of love and estimation. As it was agreed upon betwixt *Paul* and the Disciples, that he should *rather lodge at the house of Mnason an old Disciple*, then any where else. By thus doing, we shall witness to the world that our judgments are rectified, and our conversations are ordered by the word of truth, and that therefore we account the *hoary-head to be a Crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness*.

Now having concluded my discourse upon the Text, I know it is expected, that I should speak unto the occasion of our meeting concerning this Reverend Father (whose Funeral we now celebrate) I will premise this, that a full Narrative of his long well-spent Life, cannot be expected from my report at this time, but I hope that it will in due time be drawn up and handed unto you for his honorable remembrance, and for imitation unto posterity, by One who was fully acquainted both with his Life and Death.

In general this I dare assert with confidence (wherein I doubt not your consent) that his *hoary head was a Crown of glory, for it was found in the way of righteousness*. Through God's good providence, he had a long time worn this his Crown, for he was well nigh Fourscore years old. Notwithstanding this his great age, yet (through unusual divine indulgence) his *strength was not labor and sorrow*, for he was neither afflicted with the Stone, or Gout, or Cramp, or any Cough; but he labored only (as I have often heard him say) under the disease of weak old age. That which is recorded of *Abraham*, may be applied to him, *That he died in a good old age, an old man and full of years*. Neither were the abilities of his mind abated, but his understanding and memory continued strong, even unto his end. As all his Works published, do proclaim his incomparable learning in all kinds: so those which were lately printed do witness that Academical studies (when he was young) were fresh and ready for improvement in his old age. And the promise made to the righteous man, was verified in him, *He shall bring forth fruit in old age, he shall be fat and flourishing*. In all which regards, whether we consider the continued healthful frame of his body, or the uninterrupted fruitfulness of the gifts and graces of his spirit, it may be truly said of him, in reference to his death. *That he is come to his grave in a full age, like as a shock of Corn cometh in in his season*. But that I may not anticipate the intended Narrative of his whole Life, I shall only declare two or three passages towards the end of his days. When he looked upon the weakening distempers (which had caused him to keep his bed) as the Arrest of death, he was pleased (through his love to my worthless self) to give order that I should be certified of his weakness, that he might be remembered before the Lord in my prayers; and also that I might be requested, as from himself, to perform the like office of respect for him, which I had lately done for his Reverend neighbor M^r *Whitaker*, by preaching his Funeral Sermon. Upon this intelligence the next morning I hastened unto him, to witness mine unfeigned love and honorable respect of him, as also to put this work (which I have now performed) with his approbation, upon an abler hand: but finding him altogether unwilling to excuse me, I thought it more meet to undertake it, then to distemper his spirit by my refusal. By reason of his very great weakness he could not speak much, but that which he said was weighty and savoury, which I will faithfully relate: His words were these; *I am now conflicting with my last Adversary, though I believe the sting is taken out. Nature will struggle, but I humbly submit unto the good pleasure of God. I heartily beg the pardon of my many sins, especially of my want of sedulity and fidelity in my public and private charge, hoping to be washed with Christ's blood, and desiring to be translated out of this restless condition. I expect daily, yea hourly to be translated into that everlasting rest, which God hath prepared for them who are interested in his Christ: And I pray God to bless you, and his whole Ministry everywhere*.

These were his last words unto me, upon which I might much enlarge myself; but I leave the improvement hereof, and of his laborious exemplary Life, unto your conscientious

endeavors. Although he be now dead, yet he still liveth by his worthy Works already printed, unto which I hope many more (which be left ready for the Press) will be added for future profit in the Church of Christ. I conclude, with hearty desires, that this sad providence, in his death, may be sanctified unto us all, and especially unto his nearest Relations, through God's rich grace in Jesus Christ.

FINIS.

The Narrative of the Life and Death of M^r GATAKER.

M^r THOMAS GATAKER or GATACRE (for so he wrote himself, till of later years to prevent miscalling occasioned frequently by the view of the letters he changed it into GATAKER) was a branch of an ancient Family, so firmly by God's providence planted in *Shropshire*, that the stock hath continued in the same House, carrying the Name of its owner, and known by the title of *Gatacre-Hall*, by an uninterrupted succession from the time of K. *Edward* the Confessor. His Father M^r *Thomas Gatacre* (being not the eldest son of *William Gatacre*) was designed by his Parents to the study of the Law, in order to which he was a student at the *Temple*. During the course of that institution, he occasionally coming to visit some Kinred (then high in place and power,) was often present at the examination of some Christian confessors of the Gospel, in those severe times wherein Satan armed all his forces to suppress that dawning light which threatened ruin to his kingdom of darkness. The harshness of those proceedings, together with the constancy of the good, though simple Christians, that with evidence of truth and resolution of mind maintained Faith and a good conscience, were of great moment with him to facilitate the entertainment of that purer doctrine of the Gospel which began to shine into his soul. This being apprehended by his Parents, they jealous of his change, sent him over to *Lorain* in *Flanders*, and to win him to a compliance in religion, settled upon him an estate in Lease of 100^{lb} *per annum old rent*. but like S^t *Paul*, Phil. 3. he counted all outward advantages as nothing in comparison of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Therefore his Father perceiving his unchangeable steadfastness in that choice (which had nothing to prejudice it but the seeming novelty,) recalled him, and with great displeasure revoked his own Grant, which yet could not take effect without the Sons consent. But the young disciple had already learned the hard lesson of self-denial and forsaking all to follow Christ. Therefore to preserve his conscience, he gave up that which had been the bait of Apostasy. Now the Lord (that hath promised to his faithful followers satisfaction for all their losses) raised him up Friends, by whose means and advice he pursued his studies at *Oxford*, and in process of time, (when not only the clouds of ignorance and superstition were dispelled, but also the showers of blood were blown over) he took upon him the public Ministry of the Gospel. He was household Chaplain to *Robert* Earl of *Leicester*, and Pastor of S^t *Edmunds* in *Lumbertstreet* London. In that Parsonage-house by his Wife *Margaret*, being of an honest Family of the *Pigots* in *Hertfordshire*, (among other Children) he had this Son *Thomas*, born Sept 4. A. D 1574.

In his Childhood he was so addicted to those means which his Parents applied him unto, for the implanting in him the seeds of good literature, that he needed a bridle rather than a spur; for his love of Learning (equal to that admirable capacity wherewith the Father of

Lights had furnished him) was so active in the acquiring of it, that his Father hath often gently chidden him from his book. Neither were his nimble wit, sharp reason, and vast memory perverted to be the instruments of that debauchery wherewith the corruption of our nature doth too often stain and deflower our first days: for he had a lovely gravity in his young conversation; so that, what *Greg. Nazianzen* said of the great *Basil*, might be averred of him, that *he held forth Learning beyond his age, and a fixedness of Manners more considerable than his Learning.*

Having happily dispatched his *tyrocinnia* of first exercises in the Grammar-Schools (wherein he overcame by strange industry the difficulties which that age, destitute of many helps our present days enjoy, conflicted withal; and outstripped many that ran in the same course,) before he had completed sixteen years. A. D. 1590. He was by his Father placed in *S^t Johns* College in *Cambridge*. Not long after his settlement there, his Father (being called by God to receive the reward of his labors) left him not wholly destitute, yet not sufficiently provided for any long continuance of his studies there. But God that hath engaged his truth and mercy to the upright, even for their seed also (*Psal.* 112. 1, 2.) (especially when the Son doth not degenerate or thwart the providence of God, by a forfeiture of his title to the Promises,) provided friends and means for him, who was by an hidden counsel then designed to be an instrument of doing service to the Church of Christ. Thus the fruit was not nipped in a promising bud, by the frost of want.

Now, not from mere favor, but from merit (upon the proof of his Learning) he was chosen Scholar of that worthy Society, wherein he continued his Studies with unwearied diligence and happy success, till he with Abilities answerable to his Degree, commenced Master of Arts. Take for an instance of his Industry this (*viz.* that he was a constant Auditor of that eminent Light of Learning *M^r Jo. Boys*, who read a Greek Lecture in his bed to certain young Students that preferred *antelucana studia* before their rest and ease. The Notes of those praelections he kept as a treasure, and being visited by *M^r Boys* many years after, he produced them, to the no small joy of the good old man, who professed himself made some years younger by that entertainment.

Then was contracted that straight friendship betwixt *M^r Gataker* and that faithful servant of Christ *M^r Rich. Stock*, which continued until the death of this Reverend Minister, as appears by the testimony given unto him at his Funeral.

An evidence of the good esteem which *M^r Gataker* had now acquired for his Learning and Piety was this, that a College being then to be erected by the munificence of the Countess of *Sussex*, the Trustees of that Foundress (Persons eminent for Zeal and Prudence,) did choose him to be one of that Society. They transplanted him into that new Nursery of Arts and Religion, being confident that he would (as he did by Christ's assistance) prove fruitful for the ornament and benefit of that Seminary. Indeed they laid hold of him before the house was fit for inhabitants, fearing lest so fair and promising a flower should be taken up by some other hand. But while the College was in building (that he might not lose any opportunity of doing good,) he retired to *M^r William Aylofes* house in *Essex*, who had gained him that he might instruct both himself in the Hebrew Tongue, and his eldest Son in

Literature proper to his age. In this Family, partly by his own inclination, and partly by the encouragement of the Governors thereof, he performed holy Duties for the instruction of the whole household, expounding a portion of Scripture every morning, that the Sun of Righteousness might as constantly arise, as the day brake in upon them. In this Exercise, whereby he labored & *proficere & prodesse* (both to edify others and himself) he dispatched the Epistles of the Apostles, the Prophecies of *Isaiah*, and a good part of the book of *Job*, rendering the Text out of the Original Languages, and thence delivering clear explications,, and also deducing useful observations. D^r *Stern* then Suffragan of *Colchester* (visiting the Mistress of the Family, to whom he was nearly related,) happened to be present at this Exercise, when M^r *Gataker* explicated the first Chapter of S^t *Paul's* Epistle to the *Ephesians*, which is known to be most pregnant of deep divine mysteries. This portion of holy Writ he treated upon with so happy elucidations, that the judicious Doctor much satisfied with the performance, and admiring the endowments of M^r *Gataker*, exhorted him instantly to take holy Orders, whereby those Gifts might be authorized for public use, and improved for the building up of the Church, and withal offered him his assistance in that business. But he well weighing the burden of that Calling, and modestly judging of his own ability, which he conceived disproportionable to that Office (to the full discharge whereof the Apostle hath set, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 ; who is sufficient?) thanked the Doctor for his kind offer, but deferred the matter to further confideration. Afterward by the advice of the Reverend M^r *Hen. Alvey*, formerly his Tutor, and in this business taken for a Counselor, upon his remonstrance of divers reasons, and the instances of D^r *Stern* afresh reiterated, he assented to be Ordained by the said Suffragan.

The Fabric of *Sidney-Sussex-College* being now consummated, he betook himself to the station designed him, and to the work depending thereon, wherein his pains for seasoning young Students with principles of piety and learning were both great and prosperous; for some of them that watered their gardens at his Spring, or lighted their Lamps at his Light, grew up to eminency, as M. *Jo. Hoyl* and M. *Tho. Pell* afterwards worthy Fellows of the same Society.

About that time certain persons zealous of promoting the glory of God and gaining souls to Christ, that lay in a sad condition through the defect of Pastors able to teach and lead the people in the ways of truth, life, and peace, especially M. *Abdias Ashton* of S^t *Johns*, and M. *William Bedel* of *Emmanuel*, set on foot a design of preaching in places adjacent to the University even to a considerable distance; These invited M. *Gataker* to be a partner in this labor; Being drawn in and encouraged by them, he preached every Lord's day at *Everton* (a village in the meeting-confines of *Cambridge, Bedford, and Huntingtongshire*) where a decrepid man (reported to be 30. years above an 100.) sustained the Name of Vicar, *Vix magni nominis umbra*. Here a Family of *Burgoins* resident in that place deserveth this Honorable remembrance, that M. *Roger Burgoin* during that time used M. *Gataker* with great humanity, which by him was construed to be the effect of his piety.

After half a year thus religiously employed with manifestation of a public spirit, finding some causes to retire from the University, at the motion of M. *Ashton* above-mentioned (that

had been Tutor) he removed to Sir *William Cooks* Family then resident in *London*. This place and employment occasioned the more public discovery of his Ministerial gifts, with the singular approbation of many persons of note, not only for outward estate, but also for affection unto, and judgment in Religion: Hereupon the Lecturers place at *Lincolns Inn* falling void, some principal persons of that Honorable Society (which had been his Auditors occasionally) made addresses unto him, inviting him to that place, offering their assistances, and alleging the facility of his Introduction by the Lord Chief Justice *Pophams* interesting himself in the business, whom they knew both to have loved the Father *Thomas Gataker* (being his intimate once, and contemporary in the studies of Law) and to favor the Son very highly for his own worth and work in the Ministry. But he according to his usual modesty declined the undertaking, and resisted the importunities even of his Friend *M. Stock*, till *D. Montague* Master of *Sydney-College*, repairing to *London*, and being acquainted with the design in hand (though he had it in his thoughts to invite *M. Gatacre* back to the College, that he might read an Hebrew Lecture that had a Salary annexed by the Lord *Harrington*, yet (laying that aside) pressed *M. Gataker* with Arguments and Authority, encouraged him against his own diffidence, and wrought him at last to an assent that without any suit made by him the Lord *Popham* should recommend him to that society. Thus was he chosen Preacher at *Lincolns Inn*, where he spent ten years to the advancement of piety, and with a happy Reformation of some abuses of the Lord's day, as he himself testifies in his Apologetical discourse against *Lily*, pag. 16, 17.

But notwithstanding that Engagement *M. Gataker* did not totally abandon the Family of Sir *William Cook*, to whose Lady he was near by blood, and dear to both, upon the account of his pious labors amongst them. Therefore in the vacations being disengaged from attendance at the Inn of Court, he resided in that Family, exercising his Ministry either in their Chapel or in the Parish-Church, as occasion required; and this with an Apostolical mind, not for filthy lucre, but freely making the Gospel a burden only to the dispenser: Yet such was the devotion of that religious pair, that they also would not serve God without cost, for they afterwards in consideration of those pains freely taken settled upon *M. Gataker* an Annuity of 20^{lb} *per annum*, which he indeed received for some few years, but after (for certain Reasons) remitted unto the Heir of that Family, forbearing to use the Right he had, and forbidding his Executor to claim any Arrears of that Annuity. This is mentioed the rather that the generous temper of his Christian Soul aiming at the highest good of others more then his own temporal advantage, and infinitely removed from sordid acquisition of gain, or the prostitution of his sacred Function unto secular designs, may be opposed to stop the impudent clamour of some whose consciences being both galled and cauterized, prompted them to calumniate him as guilty of covetousness. But his own pen writ the best Apology, as indeed (according to that of *Nazianzen*) they that give him a just character and due commendation, had need to have also his Eloquence.

While he attended on that Flock at *Lincolns-Inn*, Sir *William Sidley* a Learned *Mecenas* and pious Patron of the Church offered him a fair Benefice, and because *M. Gataker* declined the burden of a Pastoral Cure, and pleaded an unwillingness to be taken off from those worthy Gentlemen (of whose favor he had good experience) he endeavored to persuade him that the

taking of an assistant would salve all inconveniences, so that he needed not to desert the Society which in Term-time only, required his labors. But he that poised that burden in the Scale of the Sanctuary, always thought that one Cure of souls was enough for one man, and adventured the unkind resentment of the Noble Gentleman upon the refusal, rather than the accumulation of preferments.

After ten years labors profitably employed at *Lincolns Inn*, not only for the benefit of the then living Servants of God, but also for the behoof of posterity, especially by that Learned Discourse of *Lots* there and then conceived, and formed (wherein what satisfaction is given to conscience in many cases, let the judicious acknowledge) M. *Gataker* thence removed to undertake the Rectory of *Rotherhith* in *Surry*, of the grounds, motive, and manner whereof he himself hath largely given an account to the world in his Apologetick against *Lily*, p. 44. 48. of which this is the Sum.

The Rectory of *Redrith* in *Surry* (as it is commonly called) being void, and one of an infamous life laboring hard to succeed in it (in order to which he before the Incumbents death had set on foot a transaction with the mother of certain Orphans in whose hands the Patronage was supposed to rest,) some of the Religious Inhabitants valuing the means of grace above all other enjoyments, cast their eyes and thoughts upon M. *Gataker*, to gain whom they added to their own entreaties the mediation of his good Friend M. *Richard Stock*. And when he had by many reasons remonstrated unto him, that God did call him to the work, whose honor and Ordinances might suffer prejudice by the intrusion of an unworthy man, he at last suffered himself to be persuaded to engage himself in that charge, which being represented to Sir *Henry Hobart* then Attorney-General by M. *Randolph Crew* (afterward Lord Chief Justice.) Sir *Henry* that before favored other pretensions to gratify some Tenants of his in the Parish, did yet readily embrace the motion concerning settling of M. *Gataker* there, according to his contentment, and wrote a Letter to the Bishop for the removal of all obstructions that lay in the way or might hinder the acceptance of the Presentation of M. *Gataker*, which signed with the hands of all the three Brethren who had Right in that Advocation, was tendered on his behalf.

The report of his remove was no welcome news to many of that society, who fain would retain him, some whereof offered an enlargement of his maintenance for an argument to keep him, and others represented the consistence of both employments by the help of an Assistant. But he that made not his Ministry 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 a mere Trade of living here (as *Gregory Naz.* complained some did in his time, and too many in our times do,) nor would multiply burdens when he deemed himself unfit for the least, would not be wrought to a new resolution. Therefore *Ann. Dom.* 1611. commending his former charge to the grace of God, he betook himself to the sole attendance on that Flock of which God had now made him overseer. His industry in discharge thereof was constant and great, notwithstanding an almost perpetual headach, wherewith God had exercised him from his very youth, and for which he had this only poor comfort from his Physicians, D^r *Goulston* his singular good friend (with whom he communicated his studies on *Galen*, and to whom he contributed his assistance for the edition of some parts of *Galen*,) often telling him, that the

incurable disease of age would be the remedy of his distemper, because together with the abatement of natural heat, his indisposition would grow less vigorous or violent. To the work of his Ministry in public upon the Sabbath, he added a weekly Catecheticall Lecture on Friday in the evening, designed by him to lay the foundation of saving knowledge in the hearts of Children, a certain number whereof every Lecture day did give an account of their knowledge by set Answers to Questions delivered out unto them beforehand for their instruction. (*This course of holding a sound form of words, agreeable to the doctrine of the Gospel consigned in holy writ, of what importance it is, we may conclude from that ignorance and error that have invaded the Church of later times, these mischiefs being imputable scarce to anything so much as to the omission of that useful duty of Catechising.*) But that exercise was performed by him, with such an accurate and methodical explication of the whole body of Divinity, that Christians of riper years and long standing in Christ's School, did resort to be partakers of those discourses, wherein their well exercised senses found not only milk fit for Children, but also solid meat suitable to grown men in Christ. This he continued till he had absolved a perfect summary of Theology, and gave it over when he observed the least part of his Auditory to be those for whom he mainly intended the work, his Parishioners being grown to a neglect at least of his free labors in that kind.

M^r Gatakers constant retirement in his study, made the choice of a help meet for him, that might oversee his Family, a necessary act of prudence. Therefore not long before he left *Lincolns-Inn*, he married the Widow of M. *William Cupper*, to whose two Daughters he was so providently kind in their education and disposing in marriage to two Divines of note, and continued such a fatherly love to them and theirs, that the world mistook them for his own children. That Wife died in childbed of a Son, that bore the Fathers Name, who after that he had seen the most remote parts of the world wherewith we keep commerce, returned home to his Father and died in peace.

The same motive still being in force, he after a decent interval of widdowhood, chose to himself the Daughter of a Reverend Divine M. *Charles Pinner*, who was then brought up in the worthy and religious Family of M. *Ellis Crisp*, Brother to M^{rs} *Pinner*. It pleased God to give him a Son by her (who in process of time was dedicated to God's work in the Ministry) but immediately to take away the Mother, so that the Mothers Funerals and Childs Baptism were celebrated together: Thus our wise and gracious Father tempers the cup for his Children, lest they should surfeit upon earthly enjoyments, as they might easily do if they were mere and unmixed with occasions of sorrow.

He remained then for many years in a disconsolate solitude, till he again adventured and married a Gentlewoman of a very considerable Family, being Sister to S^r *George*, and S^r *John Farwel*, and of a good esteem for understanding and piety. By her he had three Children, whereof a Son and a Daughter were carried to the ground before their Mother, but the third yet lives to walk by the light of her Fathers life and doctrine. This Gentlewoman being of a contemplative mind fell into a Consumption, which wasted the body so that the soul took flight from thence to Heaven.

Last of all he took to Wife a Citizens Widow, whose comfortable conversation he enjoyed twenty four years, but without Issue by her. The love to her was one motive, why he retreated out of his Parsonage-house to another habitation of his own revenue; for supposing that she might be the survivor, he would make a convenient provision for her that she might not be subject to another's courtesy for removal. And that affection extended itself in great liberality to divers of her kindred that were capable of support from him, both in her life time and since her decease. Her he survived two years within a few days, and because he numbered his days with wisdom, presuming that the time was approaching of his soul being married to the Lamb, he could not endure to listen unto the motion of some that advised him to a new entanglement in the world.

Having thus related his several Marriages, in a continued Narrative; I must step back to the report of some passages, in time antecedent unto the last of them.

In the year 1620, having a justifiable curiosity to see our neighbor Church in the united Provinces, and something of the other Provinces in *Belgium*, he took the advantage of the Truce then between the *Spaniard* and the *Hollander*, for a free passage between both countries: Therefore with his entire friend Capt. *Josua Downing*, and an old acquaintance M. *RogerHughs* (his *Mnason*, whose house he used frequently in *London*) he took his voyage, taking withal a Nephew of his being a young Student to be a partaker of that travel. His Mother then alive had some fears, lest he being a known adversary to the Popish cause (which he had mortally wounded with various weapons) should suffer inconvenience from that generation of vipers, whose virulent malice often prompts them to base courses of secret revenge. But God was his guide and his shield, and prospered his journey so, that within a month (for they took boat *July 13.* and returned safe *Aug. 14.*) he had viewed the most considerable places in the Low Countries. In this travel he gave better satisfaction to the English Church at *Middleburgh*, where he gave way to the importunity of friends, desiring to hear him as well as glad to see him, then he did to the English Papists in *Flanders*, with whom he had divers debates, wherein he drove some to a confusion whom he could not gain to conversion.

Anno 1642. a violent fit of the Colick assaulted him, and brought him to the very brink of the grave: but God brought him back again that he might do him further service. For the year ensuing, before he had well recovered his strength, he was called by the Parliament to sit as one of that Assembly, which was summoned to be consulted about Religion; where his endeavors for promoting Truth and suppressing Error were sincere and serious: And his study of Peace with modesty was in this remarkable, that when his Reafons delivered concerning Christ's obedience in order to our Justification (wherein he differed from his brethren) could not obtain assent from the major part which determined the Question contrary to his sense, his own love of unity imposed upon him silence; and wrought him likewise unto resolutions, not to publish his discourses of that subject from *Rom. 3. 28.* that he might not publicly discover his dissent from the Votes of that Reverend Assembly.

During his attendance upon the work of that Convention, the Earl of *Manchester* (being acquainted with his great worth and fitness in regard of his Learning in all kinds, for

Academical transactions) offered him the Mastership of *Trinity College* in *Cambridge*, which is the greatest preferment of that University: for that Noble Lord being entrusted by the Parliament, with the care of that Academy, was not passionately transported with a blind partiality of men's persons, upon any sinister respects, but desired to prefer them, whom he judged most worthy and most hopeful to do Christ service there: and therefore being persuaded that *M. Gataker* might (both in regard of his gravity and vast Scholastical abilities) be a choice ornament of that University, and a fair Copy for others to write by, he was very desirous to place him there. But this good man (though often importuned by many friends, to accept of the motion) according to his accustomed modesty, with many thanks unto the Earl, refused to undertake that place of much honor, service, and outward advantage, pleading together with his unworthiness, the weakness of his body by reason of age, and thereupon his inability to take journeys. And because he looked upon himself as having one foot in the grave, he humbly desired, that a younger man might be thought upon, more likely to be long serviceable than himself, in that place of great eminency and trust. And indeed the sense of his own weakness was not a vain presage of his decays, for not long after he was again surprised with the Colick, which before had shaken him and made his crazy body less able to endure new conflicts: and these were so sharp, that his restauration appeared desperate, not only to his other friends, but also to his Physicians. Yet it pleased God *chastening him sore, not to give him over unto death*. His studies which seemed to have been as his meat and drink in his health, were his physic too, when he was sick; for while he was confined to his chamber, he fitted for the world the *Dissertation de Tetragrammato*, and a Grammatical discourse *de Bivocalibus*. And though this for the subject be not comparable with the other, yet it may be averred that what he did by the bye, and for the refreshment of his languishing body and mind, was more worth than the main work of many students.

But after a long time of being prisoner to his own home, he by God's assistance recovered so much strength as to go to God's house. And now he believed himself bound to employ his Ministerial gifts in God's service: Therefore he again adventured into the Pulpit, where he spent himself so far, that he strained a vein in his lungs, for which being then about Seventy three years old, he suffered an emission of blood, by which and other means God enabled him to overpass that danger. But when he had recruited his veins and sinews with fresh ability, he unwilling to fall under the *woe for not preaching*, acted more according to the willingness of the spirit than proportionably to the weakness of his flesh, till a relapse into that spitting of blood (for which he again permitted a vein to be opened for revulsion,) laid on him the necessity of forbearing the Pulpit. But he never gave over the administration of Sacraments, nor his usual short discourses at Funerals suitable to the occasion (whenever he was solicited unto them,) though those shorter exercises of his Lungs were painful and wasteful of that oil, which like a burning light he spent for enlightening others. The main of his time now was spent in study, and that designed not to a mere entertainment of himself in a quiet privacy, but to the public benefit of the present Church and posterity, as, among other Works, those exquisite Annotations on the Prophecies of *Isaiah*, and of *Jeremy* with his *Lamentations*, do abundantly testify. And we should have gained more by his latest industry, if the malicious slanders of the enemies to the truth had not diverted his studies to some

necessary Apologies. Neither did he, being disenabled to preach, desert his flock, or betray it into the power of Wolves, that would make a prey of precious souls: For troubled at the apprehension of the possibility that the foundation which he had laid (after the example of the wise master-builder S^t Paul) might either not be built upon, or ripped up, he retained the Title of Rector with a charge beyond the Revenue (as it was sometime paid,) till provision was made of a faithful and orthodox Minister to whom he might devolve both burden and benefit.

To his care of feeding his flock in public, very agreeable was his diligence to instruct his family in private: for on Friday night weekly he did expound after supper that short Catechism which he had published for the use of his Parishioners; in which course he so laid forth the Nature and Attributes of God, the conditions of man entire and corrupt, the means of his fall and recovery, the nature of Faith and Repentance, with the doctrine of the Sacraments, that his Parlour was one of the best schools for a young student to learn Divinity. And indeed his house was a private seminary for divers young Gentlemen of this Nation, and more foreigners did resort to him and sojourn with him, to receive from him advice and advancement in their studies: And many that afterwards were eminent in the Churches both here and abroad, were brought up under his eye at least, as *Paul* was at *Gamaliels* feet.

Persons of note that had been his Assistants;

M. Young. *M. Goodal* Minister at *Horton* by *Colebrook*. *M. Symonds*, (of whom yet in these later times of division *M. Gataker* hath been observed to say, It was pity that our Church had lost him, intimating his turning aside to ways of separation.) *Mr. Grayle*, and others yet living laborers in God's vineyard.

Of foreigners that sojourned with him, and were as ambitious of being entertained by him, as of being admitted to an Academy, these were some:

M. Thyloin, after a reverend Pastor of the Dutch Church in *London*, (whose Son was brought by his Mother but a fortnight afore *M. Gatakers* decease, entreating the same good office in the behalf of him, which the Father had with much comfort enjoyed.) *M. Peters*, *M. And. Demetrius*, *M. Hornbeck*, *M. Rich*, *M. Swerd*, *M. Wittefrungel*, *M. Severinus Benzon*, *M. George De Mey*, *D. Treschovius*.

The strength of his Memory was extraordinary, as may appear by this demonstration (*viz.*) That though he used no Common-place book; yet he had in readiness whatsoever he had read, as his manifold quotations do manifest.

His gifts for Edification may be conjectured by his Works extant, in which he hath shown himself most like the ingenuous and industrious Bee, for the rare extraction of all manner of knowledge from almost all Authors, and the solid digestion of it first, and then storing it up for the public good. His polite literature was admired by the great lights of Learning abroad, as the excellent *Salmasius* and others, with whom he held correspondence. And the exercise of it with condescension to children hath been enjoyed with wonder and pleasure at his

visitation at *Tunbridg* School with the Right Worshipful Company of Skinners the worthy Patrons thereof. That, which made all his knowledge both useful and grateful, was, that he was neither vain in ostentation, nor morose, nor illiberal in reservation. But beyond all he sacrificed his Talents to God, while he made *Hagar* serve *Sarah*, and contributed the Egyptian spoils (all his foreign Learning) to the building of the Tabernacle: for with a strange felicity, he made his human literature, (both his moral and critical studies,) become subservient to Religion, and instrumental to the explication of heavenly Truths.

His graces of Sanctification were very eminent in all conditions, to all purposes, and toward all relations. In his life, as to his private course, most remarkable were his Piety, Humility and Charity.

His Piety appeared, not only by his diligence in preaching, but also by his own frequenting God's Ordinances dispensed by others; in order to which he did once at least weekly repair to some Lecture in *London*, so long as he had liberty to look beyond the bounds of his own Parish. A sign of that Piety, was his great devotion in observing the Lord's day, which he consecrated totally (excepting the seasons of repast) unto holy employments. And a fruit of it was his free contribution upon divers occasions to the maintaining of the Lord's house of Prayer. And because there is a connection of sacred persons and things, his love to religious and faithful Ministers may be looked upon as an act of Piety as well as of Charity.

An evident instance of his zeal for God's glory, was a constant consideration of God's Churches abroad, with a diligent inquiry after their estate, and a tender sense of their affliction, which begat that meditation on *Amos* 6. 6. entitled *Sorrow for Zion* His eager desire of a Reformation of things amiss amongst us, was doubtless acceptable to God, though this sinful nation is yet unworthy to have it satisfied. One special and proper effect of his Piety, I take to be that Holiness of life expressed in a constant tenor of good duties, with the abridgment of his liberty in things indifferent, especially of recreations (for he understood no recreation besides study, and made the *amaener* part of studies, the sauce to the more *austere*) that he might give no scandal to the good, nor encouragement to the bad, citing often those two golden Rules of *S^t Paul*, *All things are lawful, but all things are not convenient or expedient*; and, *All things are lawful, but all things edify not*.

His Humility was apparent:

1. In that low esteem he had of his own gifts, which all that knew him admired. He was a true *Moses*, that took not any notice of the shining luster of his own countenance: like a fair ear of Corn loaden with grain, he bended his head downward: for he had nothing of the Pharisical temper, either to advance himself, or to vilify his meaner-gifted brethren.

2. In his freedom from ambition of outward advantages; for he declined not only large means in the Country, but also both Ecclesiastical dignities, and Courtly preferments. For he studiously waved the counsel of some that had given notice of him to that hopeful Prince *Henry* (whom God only shown to this Land, and snatched away to himself,) and had it in design to make way for his being admitted Chaplain to his Highness. For the same reason he

constantly declined public appearances, so that he could not without much reluctance, be drawn by those who had interest in him unto more solemn Assemblies.

3. In his meek conversation with the meanest Christians, for he refused not to treat with the poorest Christian that repaired unto him for counsel or satisfaction.

His Charity was large, though for the most part secret, both in giving and forgiving to poor persons; for he would not permit it to blaze, only allowed it to shine, when his example was requisite to lighten and lead others to glorify God and gratify men. In redemption of Captives, relief of poor Protestants, especially those of the Ministry; to the repairs of public or common losses and general calamities, and to the setting forward of any good work, he was strangely liberal, the fruit whereof the Lord returned into his own bosom, according to his own word, that *the liberal shall be made fat*. For he did not so exhaust himself in his life, but that in his last Will, he did also bequeath unto the poor of the Parish of *Redrith* 50^{lb}, to Ten of his Brethren in the Ministry, whose wants and distresses, especially if occasioned by the iniquity of the times, he did consider with compassion, 50^{lb}; *i. e.* to each of them 5^{lb}; and to eight Widows of Ministers 5^{lb} apeece, in all 40^{lb} to them. Thus his good works both went before him, and followed him also to Heaven, whereby likewise he hath left behind him the luster of a good Name, for the imitation of them who survive.

Justice is presupposed to Charity, for *God hates robbery forsacrifice*. And M^r *Gataker* was exactly just in giving every man his due, though he remitted of his own right very frequently, so that he was according to the Hebrew phrase, imitated by the writers of the N. T. a just man, that is, a kind, equitable person, of a mild disposition; no severe exacter of his own, and a free dispenser of God's gifts, so that *his Righteousness endures forever*, both to his honor upon earth, and to his happiness in Heaven.

In and about his death, to which the course of his declining days leads us, eminent were his Patience and Faith, the latter attended with a deep sense of his own sins, which he acknowledged unto God, and to him only was that confession needful: for as to men his conversation was, as a Bishops ought to be, *irreprovable*.

The first stage to his decease (for *morhus est via ad mortem*) was a fainting fit that surprised him on Friday night *July 7th*, or rather on Saturday morning *July 8th*. This he made no great account of (for he disturbed not the rest of a servant by calling for assistance) because he had at sundry times such *deliquia* or faintings, wherein he gave Nature leave to work out her victory over those vapors or viscus humors that oppressed her. Yet thus far he made use of it, that he compared his infirmity to that of *Seneca*, which according to his relation, the Physicians of that age called *meditationem mortis*, and wished it might prove to him a preparation for his dissolution. The indisposition not ceasing with that fit, discovered itself within a short time to be a Tertian, which how gentle soever, yet falling upon a person of his age and crazy temper (that had long supported a weak frame with a very regular course of diet) made his condition doubtful to his Physician, one of learning and worth, that employed his best care and skill about that Patient, that he looked on as a considerable Person to the whole Church.

July 17. Having published his Will, and taken such order as he thought fit for the settlement of his outward estate, he composed himself to God. His Tertian, growing too strong for Nature and Art both, resolved itself into an almost continued Fever, the extreme heat whereof was very painful: Yet during those conflicts he shown a sweet calmness of mind, a heart weaned from the world, to which he had no affection, though he had a remembrance exactly serving for ordering his Charity even to the last; and in one word, he represented a soul wholly submitting to God's good pleasure. He professed more then once, that no outward thing troubled him so much, as the condition of that Reverend Minister M^r *Sainthill*, who had but lately undertaken M^r *Gatakers* Charge, upon the uncertain title of Life, which now failing so early, besides the expectation of his friends, that Minister he foresaw was likely to be unsettled and to suffer some inconvenience.

Though friends and Physicians give him encouraging words at visits, yet he sensible of his inward decays, could not be flattered into vain hopes of long continuance, earnestly contending that he was not to expect miracles. His expectation of God's dismissal was so fixed, that being consulted whether he would appoint any one Person to perform the last office for him; he not startled at the question, appointed M^r *Ashe* to be entreated to undertake that work, because he had done the same at his last Wives funerals. And one opportunity casually offered itself to set forward that design: for July 18. M^r *Ashe* out of a kind respect to M^r *Gataker*, sent him two Funeral Sermons preached by him, one at M^r *Whitaker's*, the other at D^r *Spurstows* Childes interment. This gave occasion to M^r *Gataker* (in the return for that favor) to request the last that he could be capable of. Upon the receipt of a Letter to that purpose, Mr. *Ashe* on the Saturday following, visited his dear and dying friend; who then told him, That *he found him conflicting with his last adversary. He knew the sting was pulled out, but nature would struggle.* These and other expressions M^r *Ashe* writ down and related at the end of his Sermon.

That day being 22th of July in the afternoon, he called for some Papers of M^r *Baxter's*, sent to him by the Author, with a desire of his judgment concerning them: He wished some short Notes (for the perusal of them had been his last work) to be read over to him, in which something he altered; and having dictated a Letter to that his Learned and much Reverend Friend, appointed that with the Animadversions enclosed to be sent unto him: So vigorous was his mind in a body drooping and dropping into the dust.

He had now given over the use of Physic, as to any prolongation of life, for he said he would struggle no more, because he found, that what was prescribed for the refreshing of nature, oppressed it rather, therefore he would wait the Lord's leisure. An ancient servant that attended on him, desiring leave to rectify the bedcloathes, and saying withal, S^r, Your head doth not lie right; he answered, *It will lie right in my Coffin.*

July 25. at One in the morning, death began to seize on his left foot, from which the spirits retiring, he felt the deadness of that part, and a very sharp pain in the part of the leg adjoining to it. He called for his Son, and told him he feared he should have a difficult death. He then commanded two Surgeons to be sent for to look upon his leg, whom he required to tell him, whether or no his foot were any whit discoloured. It seems he had conceived some

fear of a Gangrene, but being satisfied that there could not be any ground for such an apprehension, he rested with patience. In the evening of that day, being visited by M^r *Sainthil*, and lying in great anguish with violence of heat, he prayed for *pity and patience, support here, and a comfortable issue.*

July 26. Early in the morning, full of pain, gasping and panting, he cried out, *How long Lord, how long? come speedily.* But though death had made an incroachment upon his outward perishing part, yet his inward man felt no decay: for with a full use of reason, he that morning ordered the continuation of a weekly relief to certain poor, and also of some small monthly Pensions to some Widows for a season, caused his Physician to be consulted about taking something that might procure rest, was erected to a more cheerful disposition; inquired after News, and discoursed freely, yet confessed himself to be in pain. About three of the Clock that afternoon, feeling some great change after that putting forth of nature, he called for his Sister, Son and Daughter, to receive his last charge: Thus he spake unto them; *My heart fails, and my strength fails, but God is my fortress and the strong rock of my salvation: Into thy hands therefore I commend my soul; for thou hast redeemed me oh God of Truth.* To his Son he turned his discourse thus; Son you have a great charge, look to it, instruct your Wife and family in the fear of God, and discharge your Ministry conscientiously. To his Sister (a Gentlewoman two years elder then himself) he said; Sister, I thought you might have gone before me, but God calls for me first, I hope we shall meet in Heaven, I pray God bless you. His Daughter he admonished to mind the world less and God more, for that all things without piety and the true fear of God are worth nothing. He advised that his Son *Draper* (being a man of means) would entertain some godly Minister into his house, to teach his children and instruct his family. He exhorted them all to concord: which he hoped the rather, because he had clearly settled his Estate, so as to prevent differences. He enlarged himself in each a little, wishing all to lay to heart the words of a dying man. After this he desired that all should withdraw, and leave him to his rest, which he hoped was at hand: but all his conflicts were not yet accomplished.

July 27. His voice began to be less intelligible, the putrid preternatural heat having furred up his mouth, as is usual in Fevers: yet his understanding and senses also were very quick and active. About six of the Clock in the evening, he called for his Son to recommend his soul unto God by prayer, and endeavored to express what he desired, but not so clearly as to be well understood: yet by his gestures he gave assurance, that he understood perfectly, and concurred fervently with the devotions used on his behalf. Within an hour after, nature being quite spent, he gave up the Ghost, and was translated into that Rest which he so often and earnestly had desired to find in another world, because he could obtain none in this.

Thus after the 43 years inspection of this pious and diligent Pastor of *Redrith*, he left his flock, returning to the great and chief Shepherd of our souls, from his gracious hands to receive an incorruptible Crown of glory: And of his flock I may take up the words of *Greg. Naz.* to *Basil*, concerning the condition of that Church whereof *Gregory's* Father had been Bishop; *You see how full of sadness and trouble this destitute flock appears—making question whether ever it shall enjoy another discreet shepherd, but very confident it shall not receive an equal*

to their deceased Paster, and resolved to acquiesce satisfied in their lot, if they can obtain one that shall be not much worse.

For his Person, the express whereof (though often importuned by deer friends) he would never allow to be taken either by pencil or sculpture: He was of a middle stature, of a thin body, and of a lively countenance, fresh complexion, that looked young when he came to teach at *Lincolns Inn*, and yet was grey betimes, that made him be thought elder then he was, because he had long appeared ancient in the eye of the world; of a choicely temperate diet; of a free and cheerful conversation, addicted to study, but not secluding himself from fit company; of a quick apprehension, sharp reason, solid judgment, vast memory, which by God's mercy continued fresh to the last of his days: He was *helluo librorum*, one that did not vainly increase his Library for show, but chose Books for use, which he made of them so happily, that he had conquered a strange portion of Learning, and made it serve him upon all occasions. He was not so great a Treasurer, as a free dispenser of those riches of the mind, which he did communicate readily, expeditely, clearly. He was an ornament of the University, and of that Society designed for the study of Law; a light of the Church, the Salt of the place where he abode: a loving Husband, a discreet Parent, a faithful Friend, a kind Neighbor, a courteous entertainer of strangers, a candid encourager of Students, a stout Champion for the Truth, yet a lover of Peace, preserving the unity of Charity where there was a difference of judgment; an adversary to novel fancies as well as to antiquated superstitions in Religion: of a Christian magnanimity to despise the world, and therefore resolute through bad report as well as good to maintain a clear conscience. Briefly, he was a faithful Shepherd, and a fit myrror for Pastors, as well as an exact pattern for people; who having almost completed 80 years, departed full of life, but being dead yet speaks in his living monuments of sound Learning.

A Catalogue of the Works of M^r THOMAS GATAKER B. D. now extant.

- *OF the nature and use of Lots* 4°. 1. Edit. 1619. 2^d Edit. reviewed, corrected and enlarged, 1627.
- *A just defense of the same against M^r J. Balmford* 4°, 1623.
- *Thomae Gatakeri Londinatis Antithesis, partim Gulielmi Amesii, partim Gisberti Voetii de Sorte Thesibus reposita*, 4° 1638.
- *A discourse of Transubstantiation, with a Defense thereof*, 4° 1624.
- .
 - *David's Instructor.*
 - *The Christian man's care.*
 - *The Spiritual watch.*
 - *The Gain of Godliness, with Self-Sufficiency.*

- *The Just man's Joy, with Signs of Sincerity.*
- *Jacob's Thankfulness.*
- *David's Remembrancer.*
- *Noah's Obedience.*
- *An Anniversary Memorial of England's delivery in 88.*
- *Sorrow for Zion.*
- *God's Parley with Princes, with an Appeal from them to him.*
- *Eleazers Prayer, a Marriage Sermon.*
- *A good Wife God's gift.*
- *A Wife indeed.*
- *Marriage Duties.*
- *Deaths Advantage.*
- *The benefit of a Good Name, and a Good End.*
- *Abraham's Decease.*
- *Jeroboams Sons Decease.*
- *Christian Constancy Crowned by Christ.*

These published first severally in 4°, were after collected into one Volume in *Folio*.

- *The Decease of Lazarus in 4°.*
- *S^t Stephens last Will and Testament 4°.*
- *A Defense of M^r Bradshaw against J. Canne 4°.*
- *God's Eye on his Israel 4°.*
- *A Mistake removed, and Free-Grace, &c. in Answer to J. Saltmarsh 4°, 1646.*
- *Shadows without Substance, a Rejoinder adversus eundem 4°, 1646.*
- *Mysterious Clouds and Mists, &c. an Answer to J. Simpson 4°, 1648.*
- *M. Anthony Wottous Defense. 8°. 1641.*
- *A true Relation of Passages between M^r Wotton and M^r Walker 4°, 1642.*
- *An Answer to Mr. G. Walkers Vindication 4°, 1642.*

- *A Vindication of the Annotations on Jer. 10. 2.* 4°, 1653.
- *A Discourse Apologetical* 4°, 1654.
- *Marcus Antoninus Imp. cum Commentario* 4°, 1652.
- *De Novi Instrumenti Stylo Dissertatio adversus Pfochenii diatribam.* 4°, 1648.
- *Cinnus, sive Adversaria Miscellanea Lib. 6.* 4°, 1651.
- *De Baptismatis Infantilis vi & efficacîa disceptatio inter D. S. Wardum & Th. Gatakerum* 8°, 1652.
- *T. G. Strictura in D. Davenantii Epistolam* 8°, 1654.
- *De Tetragrammato* 8°.
- *Ejusdem Vindicatio adversus Capellum* 8°.
- *De Bivocalibus dissertatio Philologica* 8°.
- *Animadversions in J. Piscatoris & L. Lucij scripta adversaria de causa meritoria Justificationis, cum responsione ad L. Lucij vindicias* 12° 1641.
- *Francisci Gomari disputationis Elencticae, de Justificationis materiâ & formâ, Elenchus* 8°. 1640.
- *Stricturae in Barth. Wegelini Sangallensis de Obedientiâ Christi disputationem Theologicam* 8° 1653.
- *The Prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, with the Lamentations, which were the portion assigned him in the great work of Notes upon the Bible.*

A PIOUS EPIGRAM OF M^r GATAKER:

Presumed to be His, both because it is a just expression of the intimate frame of his soul, and because it is found written with some alterations of the words by his own hand, and that not long before his end, as appears by the spelling.

I Thirst for thirstiness; I weep for tears;

Well pleasd I am to be displeasd thus:

The only thing I fear is want of fears;

Suspecting I am not suspicious.

I cannot choos but live, because I die;

And, when I am not ded, how glad am I!

Yet, when I am thus glad for sense of pain,

And careful am, lest I should careless be,
Then do I griev for being glad again,
And fear lest carelessness take care from me.
Amids these wrestles thoughts this rest I find,
For those that rest not here, there's rest behind.

In Funere THOME GATAKERI S. T. B. Viri Doctissimi Octogenarii Vegeti & venerandi Senis.

Qualiter ales Arabs longae pertaesa senectae,
Et cupiens vitam morte parare novam,
Undi{que} congesto pretiosa in funera thure,
Ardet in optato victima grata rogo:
Sic inter Sacros famae & virtutes odores
Exuvias ponis tu *Gatakere* tuas.
Spiritus eluso tumulo remeavit ad astra,
Circumfert nomen Fama per ora virûm.
Tu Magnus quoties evolvitur *Antoninus*,
Scilicet a Doctis us{que} legere viris.
Non tua sat tristi deflerem funera versu,
Sufficeret totas si mihi *Camus* aquas.
Ast aliquâ volui cineres tibi spargere guttâ;
Hanc tibi non ficti pignus amoris habe.
G. DILLINGAMUS T. B. Coll. Eman. Praef.

In obitum Reverendi admodum senis, & praestantissimi Theologi, nec minùs pietate quàm omnifaria eruditione eximii, THOMAE GATAKERI, Sacrae Theology Baccalaurei, & Ecclesiae *Rotheriensis* prope Londinum Pastoris vigilantissimi Epicedium.

Quo fugis, (ah!) Phoebi & Musarum magne Sacerdos?
O quid agis? sic tecum unà coelum{que} diem{que}
Eripis Anglorum ex oculis, servas{que} sepulchro
Doctrinae jubar, & miseros in nocte relinquis?

Vidimus (en!) atras vel te vivente tenebras
Ingruere, & densas paulatim crescere nubes;
Te semel extincto quanta haec caligo futura est!
Lumine tam grandi aut quid non metuamus adempto?
Hei mihi, nunc iterum invisum caput exeret Orco
Horrida barbaries, ima{que} excita barathro
Desidia, & Lethe, & languor, so•ius{que} soporis
Torpor iners, rudis error, & ignorantia mater,
Et soror, & conjux vitii, velut agmine facto
In nos juncta ruent, post quàm te fata tulêrunt,
Gentis Apollinae columen: Tu nempe domare
Herculeâ hanc Hydram dextrâ, divine, solebas,
Ingenui{que} acie, & calamo configere monstra,
(Hae tibi erant arts) & Lernam pellere mundo;
Tam been cavisti ne barbara secla redirent,
Discutiens caecas Linguarum Luce tenebras.
Scilicet haec pridem didicit te praeside clerus,
Exemplo{que} tuo, stolido quae aenigmata vulgo,
Philologo licet esse pio; legisse profanos,
Non facit: & veteres fas est versare poëtas,
Fas{que} illis etiam, Christi qui castra sequuntur,
Colligere & sacras Gentili e stercore gemmas,
Aegypti spolia at{que} aurum. Sic Paulus Aratum,
Sic & Aristophanem Chrysostomus, & Gatakerus
Euripidem, & magnum (quid, Zoile, frendis?) Homerum,
Et Sophoclem, & quem non Graecorum heroa revolvit;
Cuncta animo expendens, Critices & pumice limans,
Omnia pervolitans, mistas & floribus herbas

Delibat patiens, herbas apis instar amaras,
Mellificans, nectar{que} bibit sine felle salubres
Et carpit succos, & Cinnum conficit ore.
Quot, quantos{que} duces e Gentibus, at{que} tribunos
Ille catenatos disponit margin longo,
Ingentis animas, captiva{que} nomina ducit
Post Evangelii currum, Christi{que} triumpho
Et Latium, & doctas famulari cogit Athenas!
Sic ill, Hesperiae ditatus munere gazae;
Nec minùs ex Oriente potens, seu forte Jehovahae
Vindicet Augustum nomen vocalibus ornans
Rite suis, sacram{que} superstitione Tetractyn
Liberet, & caeci castiget dogmata verpi:
Seu doceat Graecos Eoo ex fonte rigatos,
Saepe etiam & Pauli phrasin ex Oriente petitam,
Et tessellatos Hebraeo idiomate libros
Foederis ill Novi, frustrà obnitente Phoceno.
Nunc etiam cordi est Aurelius unus & alter,
Quos ill inter se solerti indagine mentis
Comparat, & quantùm aeficerit Antoninus
Advertit, quantùm{que} Stoam superaverit Hippo,
Et Paulus Senecam, & quantùm à cognomine Marco
Distet Philosophus, tamen hic non sordidus autor
Morum, & divini radens confinia veri;
Propterea & noster limâ{que} & luce, ejus{que}
Dignatur curis, (opus aere perennius omni, &
Marmore) & egregiis mire centonibus ornat.
Nec minùs intere à coeli mysteria pandit

*Sedulus e rostris, & Christum personat ore,
Ore, sed & scriptis; quot enim monumenta reliquit
Mysta sacer? quot sermones, quos fuderat ardor
Entheus, aeternae divina volumine famae?
Deni{que}, nec vocis tonitru quàm fulgure vitae
Clarior, exemplo morum, & probitate coruscat
Exornat{que} fidem factis, & verba coronat.
Talis eras, Gatakere Pater, dum vita manebat,
Vitâ chare magis; transcendens computa Mosis,
At{que} vigorem aequans, veget â viridi{que} senectâ,
Ingenio florens etiam vergentibus annis,
Tertius inter nos, dum vixti Varro superstes,
(E reliquis alter Themidos decus, alter Iernes.)
Doctrinam at superans meritis, & pectore puro, &
Moribus integris: O mentis aoumine felix,
Sed pietate magis! debetur laurea doctis,
Sed major sanctis. O ter{que} quater{que} beat!
O felix quicun{que} bonus! sic itur ad astra.
Macte ergo virtute tuâ, Pater; i pede fausto,
Quo tua te pietas simul & doctrina vocavit.
I bonus, i felix, caelestibus utere fatis;
Praemia virtutis sic nominis omen habebis.*

JAC. DUPORT Collegii Sanctae at{que} individuae Trinitatis apud Cantabrigienses senior Socius.

DESIDERIUM; SIVE, In morte GATAKERIANA Fletus.

ERgone stylo Sulcandus Dei Fundus?

Hoc enim prope nomen sonat.

Ergóne votorum plaustris in coelum evohenda Dei Messis?

Hoc enim excidium indicat.

Ergóne lacrymarum nimbis irrigandum Dei semen?

Hoc enim sepulchrum monet.

At veró impares nimis sumus tantae Agriculturae,

Nec arista haec nostro indiget vehiculo:

Fundamur igitur in fletus, viator.

Mecum flebis, ubi flendum noveris.

Flebitur *Gatakerum*:

(Scilicet Te nobis (Bone vir) non Tibi:)

Seculi nostri Desiderium & futuri.

At fortiùs *expetunt* superi,

Suósque continuo in amplexus rapiunt.

Nobis *desiderare* est carere.

Quanta, quanta jactura!

Adsideas, querule Mercator,

Et discas tandem naufragia vera.

Perijt, (si tamen hoc sit perire,)

Pius, Probus, Literatus:

Quae triasunt omnia.

Hunc desideramus, lugemus has virtutes;

Raramque simul in senectute senectutem.

Pium quis dubitat? accersivit Coelun.

Probum quis negat? testantur superstites.

Eruditum quis rogat? loquuntur scripta.

Viator, huc oculos.

En amicam istam litigationem de Magno Tetragrammato

Salmuriensi cum *Capella* initam.

Cessavit vero tandem de Nomine lis, Rem tenet.

Tranquillam ecce in re Baptismali argumentorum vim,
Wardum quâ petijt *Cantabrigiensem*;
Strenuum hunc, & virum Majorum gentium.
Sed & hanc litem diremit utrumque amplexum Coelum.
Validam dein & impetuosam cerne machinam,
Quâ dum Astrorum *Aristocratiam* deturbare satagit,
Infamem istam Tyrannidem,
Et habenas revocare in manus Monarchae Jovis,
Insiliunt undique astrorum (uti audiunt) periti,
Novisque suis impetunt argumentis,
Dicterijs & Spurcitie.
Ille autem discessit Astra propiùs intuiturus:
Desiderantque jam Astrologi in quem venenum exscreent.
Nobilem tandem & ultimum en tibi laborem,
(Certo oculis nostris ultimum)
Antoninum Optimum Maximum,
(Ingens Imperij decus, & Musarum delicias)
Quem alii *in Maedium* tulere, *luce* donatum.
Detineo Te, Viator?
Catervatim cerne quae scripsit quaeque est Meditatus,
Tuisque demum relaturus abi,
Caeteros parâsse sibi Bibliothecas, *Gatakerum* fecisse.
Quod si haec talia nobiscum flere renuas.
At saltem vices tuas defle.
Jacet hic Viatorum Desiderium,
Advenarum Hospes frequens, lubensque:
Necessum jam ut fleas,
Abeasque.

A. M.

ON THE Death of the most Reverend, Learned, Holy M^r THOMAS GATAKER.

NExt to my dear, and dearer Uncle than
I could express though I were more then Man;
Whose Life by all so preciously esteemed
I with mine own would gladly have redeemed:
And were not Death well undergone to save
So great a Treasure from the hungry Grave?
Next unto Him, my Soul doth mourning wear
For his dear Friend the Famous *Gataker*.
Till now the Adage I did scarce believe,
Which says, *To fronts we must no credence give*.
To my great grief too true I find it now,
So much deceived by his smoother brow;
Which with the Rose and Lily that did deck
His, and would have become'd a Ladies cheek,
Did promise fair, and made me hope that He
Might raise eight Decads to a Century.
Doubtless most perfect was the Harmony
Of's Elements, as was his Symmetry:
Thus Body and Soul in him were bravely met
And matched, but that the one though very neat,
No large dimensions had, the other was
More like an Angel clos'd in such a case.
A neat small mansion this doth entertain
Sometimes a stately Lady with her Train.
He was (ah killing word, *He was!* alas,
That now I cannot say, *He is*, but was.)

A Living Star, and that as eminent
As any shined i'th British Firmament.
But that's too modest and angust; 'Tis thought
That even *Europe*, though so fully fraught
With rarely Learned Children, yet hath none
That could in all things parallel This Son.
Believe I do, more truly none then He
Could ere be called a *Living Library*.
His industry long since had treasured
All Learning in his comprehensive Head;
The crucified three Languages spake aloud
His matchless skill, and seemed of Him proud.
The Arts a better Master have not known;
The Fathers, Councils, Schoolmen, were his own.
All Neoterick Worthies he did know
As perfectly as they themselves could do.
Now though he were (none ever more then He)
A perfect *Body of Divinity*,
And such a Phoenix, yet his Lowlinesse
Was such as if he had been nothing less.
Great Parts and Acquisitions commonly
Attended are with a proud Tympany,
So were not his, but such that God he knew,
And knew himself, and his mean Brother too.
Nor did his worth lie buried in his Breast,
As Misers Gold's confined to their Chest:
His light did shine as freely as the Suns,
Or as the water from the fountain runs;

Witness his *Pulpit-pains*, which never did cease
Till Sickness served him with a Writ of Ease,
And *pains in's house*, which a *Gymnasium*
Or *Schola Illustris* was, whither did come
Many from far, whose joy it was to sit,
And reap rare notions at *Gamaliels* feet,
And *Pains at his Pen*; his most transcendent Pen,
Which doth demonstrate Him a Man of Men.
As God did once the Cherubims employ,
Arm'd with a flaming Sword to guard the way
O'th Tree of Life, So did he this man raise
With his choice Pen to vindicate his ways,
And sacred Truth; which none could ever do
More faithfully, for he refused to know
His dearest friends, (as *Levi* once,) though none
Were more exact in that Relation.
He knew that Truth most Lovely is, and that
What ere we weigh, It must preponderate.
And as his Pen was often militant
(Nor less triumphant,) so edificant
It also was; like those blest Builders, who
Stood on their Guard, and stoutly built too.
What Pious, Pretious Peeces have there come
(All trimmd with richest Fringe) out of his Loom!
But above all his Notes on the first pair
Of Major Prophets justly valued are,
As the most golden Key that ere was made
To open God's deep Treasure therein laid.

How doth the Church in Them rejoice! how grieve
That he did not a greater measure give
Of such like Quintessential Annotations!
Too soon he left us in the Lamentations.
But now he leaves us worse leaving us quite,
And bidding us for evermore Good Night.
It must be night when such a Sun doth set,
A Night of Woe and Lamentation Great.
Which is the more, because we greatly fear
We nere shall see another GATAKER.
Whose Grave may proudly say, Lo, here doth lie
Great *Gataker*, that University.

THO. DUGARD, M. A. R. B.

*Neque Funeri Tanti Viri, ne{que} Muneri
Meo Colentis arbitror factum satis,
Vernaculis nisi paucula adjiciam modis
Latialibus vestita saltem vocibus.
At quum perinde, ut displicet silentium,
Non Verba suppetant, paria votis, mihi:
Visum est ab ipso mutuari Mortuo
Quae vivus olim fudit: Et sic optime
Illius expedire se Laudes valent,
Ut proprio Sol explicat se Lumine.
Squalida luctifico tundantur pactor a planctu:
Perfundat teneras lacryma salsa genas.
Omnibus in vicis adsit pullata caterva:
Pellantur subito gaudia cuncta procul.
A terris superas abiit Whitakerus ad auras,*

Aetatis nostrae gloria, fama, decus.
Quo magis ornatum vix fando accepimus unquam
Doctrinâ, ingenio, religione, fide.
Linguarum nemo plus cognition valebat.
Arsoniam spectas? Tullius alter erat.
Cum Graiis quisquis sermones nectere Graios
Audiret, patrio crederet ore loqui.
Hebraeae nemo feliciùs abdita linguae
Exploret sensus elicitâtve probos.
Ingenium quantum, facundia quanta, quot esset
Artibus excultus, scripta relictâ docent.
Praecipue ornabat divina scientia mentem,
At{que} huic juncta soror religionis amor.
Fidus praeco Dei, humani figmenta cerebri
Rejecit, pendens semper ab ore Dei.
Sincere populo divina oracula tradens
Ad Christum docuit quae via recta ferat.
Exemplum pietatis erat, virtutis imago,
Doctrinae culmen, religionis apex.
Men's humilis: purus{que} animus: patiens{que} laborum
Corpus: & immuneris vita referta bonis:
Frons hilaris: faciles aures: pectus{que} fidele:
Sermo pacificus: lingua disertâ fuit:
Os verax: mites oculi: gravitate refulgens
Vultus: cor placidum: dextra benigna bonis.
Cum virtute at{que} art alios superaverit omnes,
Haec, dubium, laus an latior illa si•t.
Sed quid ego conor Whitakeri exponere laudes,

*Quem laudare satis nemo poeta queat?
Quid laudo, cujus cunctas celebratur ad oras
Nomen, quae Christi numina sancta colunt:
Cujus scripta diserta, opus aere perennius omni,
Jam passim volitant docta per ora virûm?
Scripserat haec quondam Gatakerus de Whitakero,
Heros quum superas scanderet ill domos.
Scriberet haec pariter Whitakerus de Gatakeri,
Si nunc in vivis esset ut ante fuit.
Convenisse tibi constat Whitakere, vicissim
Quám been convenient & Gatakere tibi!*

T. D.

ON THE Death of the Excellently Learned and Pious M^r GATAKER.

IF Man created Upright so had stood,
Should This, though less Ill, yet have had more Good?
For what, while militant on earth, he knew,
Angels themselves desire to look into.
And above Natures best his Grace so high,
Hath of her worst obtained the Victory.
Whereto while Death itself Perfection gives,
By's Doctrine and Example still he lives,
With us too: though departed, that is, gone,
(Having learned all here) where more is to be known.

W. W.

**Carmen Elegiacum in obitum M^{ri} THOMAE GATAKERI, R^{di} Theologi, politioris
litteraturae Fautoris simul ac Restauratoris optimi.**

*Occidit heu! summi fulgoris stella corruscans,
Occidit, ut surgat stella decora poli.*

Lumina non pereunt, e terrâ sumpta, fruuntur
Majori coelis luce, micante Deo.

Vixit, & ignaros, potuit quoscun{que}, docebat
Tàm vitae exemplo, quàm prece, voce, manu.
Juppiter in terris, linguâ sua flumina vibrans,
Voce tonans, pravos terruit; inde pii.

Justitiae celebrem retulit pietate Noachum
Praeconem; Moses moribus alter erat.

Quàm docuit, didicit *Gatakerus!* vivere multos
In Christo docuit, sic didicit{que} mori.

Docto scribenti calamo de sortibus olim
Supremum tandem sors tulit atra diem.

Non sic fata solent: quae te *Gatakere* merentem
Siverunt Juvenem, maesta tulêre senem.

Ullo si doluit Pietas, vel maesta querelas
Tempore perfudit, jam been flere decet.

Si literae lacrymas unquam sparsere politae,
Cum fulcrum recedit, jam doluisse licet.

Te dolet Urbs celebris, dolet Anglia maesta Prophetam
Ereptum templis te decus ipsa suis.

Cuncti te flemus, te ploraremus in aevum,
Si non constaret te coluisse Deum.

EPITAPHIUM.

Hic situs est, qui dum docuit, dum scripsit, ab omni
Omnigenae laudis puncta recepit. Abit:

Intravit coelum postquam *Gatakerus* amaenum,
Quod loquar? omnigenae puncta salutis habet.

Expirantis GATAKERI Apostrophe ad Fratres superstites, Pastores Anglicanos.

THOMAS GATAKERUS, Anagr. Urge, mak hast to us.

Farewell; bright-shining-stars! yet ere I part,
Ile leave the sense of my last gasping heart,
With you dear souls: For strayt my spirit must
Be thron'd in bliss, my body turned to dust.
Behold the wildbore-heretics, whose pour
Deeply's engaged God's vineyard to devour.
Urge, and be valiant: *Noah's* now had need
Prove mighty *Nimrods* to run down this breed.
Behold ye Fox-like-Schismatics, who trade
God's vine to ruin; Ah our Church is made
A den of theeving Foxes: These conspire
Like *Samson's* Foxes to set all on fire.
Urge here, pursue them by all means you may,
Dumb-dogs prove useless to devour this prey.
Since Sheep-skin-Wolves do ramble; Sheepheards look
Now to your Lambs, use well your Sheepheards crook.
The Tiger-Ranters rage: This *Hectors* face
Is much disguis'd to th'Churches sad disgrace.
Pluck off his vizard, and unrip his state,
That all God's flock may see this Tigers fate.
Rome's ravenous blood-hounds, from their hellish den
Are rays'd by th'sound of th'Devils horn: oh then
You *Israel's* Watchmen! their hid traces find;
Wound them, and make them leave their prey behind.
The Pope hath got Arithmetic in's Crown,
Who multiplies his Popedom up and down.
Each Church erects a chair: 'tis sad to see

So many plead infallibilitye.
Divide and multiply, this Artist cries,
From such division, do my sums arise.
United force is strong, let your band be
A threefold cord of love and unity.
See and condole our shaken Churches state,
Which walking-earth-quake totter'd have of late:
These sure would counted be an heavenly nation,
'Cause all their motion is mere trepidation.
Who trembles at God's word shall favor find
Whilist word-less Quakers shall go down the wind.
Urge here, fear not, i'th strength of God be strong,
A quaking host can never stand out long.
The Church a Lily is 'mongst thorns: oh strive
To lop these thorns and make the Lily thrive.
Ye Pilots are i'th'Churches Ship; sail on
Though through a sea of blood to mount Zion.
And now methinks grim death 'gins to appear,
Which once was dismal, now my soul doth cheer.
Its sting is gone, and now 'twill me advance,
To just men's souls made perfect, in one glance.
My last sand's run, my life i'le breathe out thus,
Urge Souls in preaching *and mak hast to us.*
Urge God in praying *and mak hast to us.*
Urge Christ in all things *and mak hast to us.*
J. STILLINGFLEETE D. Joh. Coll. Cant. Socius.

On the Death of that Reverend and eminently Learned Divine M^r THOMAS GATAKER.

Who's this that lies thus breathless? doleful sight!

The worthy *Gataker*; That beauteous light
Hath left our Hemisphere. Ah! he is gone,
Who was the glory deemed of Helicon.
The Muses joy is fled; a magazine
Of Learning's here blown up. The Sisters nine,
Could they but rate their loss, (such hath it been)
With tears they'd make another Hippocrene.
Poor house of clay! oh, how it empty lies!
The furniture's removed to Paradise.
Angels have hence convigh'd the jewel-mind;
Nought but the cabinet is left behind.
Adieu young *Nestor*; seldom have we seen
An head so gray, and parts so fresh and green.
His speech to deck such flowers he could bring,
In ages winter one would swear 'twere spring:
But now, for florid language, we may find,
Dumbe Rhetoric; with silence cries her: mind,
Oh! mind your latter ends; death's sometimes late,
But who could ere his life perpetuate?
We thought his preaching done, but here we have
One Sermon more, and for his text, *the grave*.
Be faithful, you, who *Zion's* walls do keep,
Watchmen themselves must once be laid to sleep.
W. TWYNE Fell. of S^t *Joh*. Coll. in *Camb*.

In obitum Viri Clariff. Doctissimi{que} M^{ri} THOMAE GATAKERI 〈 in non-Latin alphabet
〉 .

*Plectro paulisper posito festiva sonante,
Jam melos, attonitae modulantur triste Camaenae,*

*Ingeminat{que} Caput praeclarum linquere terras;
Tum sic effatae, Quae vestram insania mentem
Exagitat, Parcae, vel quae malesana medullas
Intùs agit rabies, ut converratis in unum
Quisquillas, gemmas{que} Rosam Carpatis, & algam?
Delicias mundi, secli miracula quaevis
Haud secus ac faeces vulgi, Sordes{que} profanas
Amoveatis? adhuc tantaene sororibus irae?
Quo tandem effûgit, quaeve occupat iste locorum
Abdita, qui quondam praeclarâ nominis omnes
Famâ praestinxit, nulli pietate secundus?
Men's polita, Deûm proles germana, Minervae
Mercurii{que} domus, Musis & digna teneri
Pieria, ac charitum sedes & hortus amaenus!
Tam docto Calamo referunt accepta Camaenae
Cedro digna, sed & meruere insculpi auro.
Hic, quoniam Culmen virtutis Contigit altum,
Quo nullum patitur sublimius infera moles
Terrestris, sedes quaerit recipit{que} Deorum.
Hunc inter populos illustris fama perennat,
Longeque transfert multùm venerabile nomen.*

J. T.

Ad Tumulum THO. GATAKERI, Londinatis, S. S. Theol. Bacc.

EXuviae cujus? GATAKERI. Plura refer

Haud opus: ad laudes vox ea sola satis.

GUIL. DUGARD, Schola Merc. Sciss. Moderator.

FINIS.

P-SA-7. Living loves betwixt Christ and dying Christians A sermon preached at M. Magdalene Bermondsey in Southwark, near London, June 6. 1654. At the funeral of that faithful servant of Christ Mr. Jeremiah Whitaker, Minister of the Gospel, and pastor of the church there. With a narative of his exemplarily holy life and death. By Simeon Ashe, his much endeared friend and brother. Together with poems and elegies on his death, by divers ministers in the city of London. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662.

LIVING LOVES BETWIXT CHRIST AND DYING CHRISTIANS. A SERMON *Preached At M. Magdalene Bermondsey in Southwark, near London, June 6. 1654.* At the Funeral of that faithful Servant of Christ Mr. *Jeremiah Whitaker*, Minister of the Gospel, and Pastor of the Church there.

With a Narative of his Exemplarily holy Life and Death.

By SIMEON ASHE, *his much endeared Friend and Brother.*

Together with POEMS and ELEGIES on his Death, by divers Ministers in the City of LONDON.

The Righteous perish and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into Peace, they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.

Isai. 57. 1, 2

London, Printed by T. M. for Ralph Smith, at the Bible in Cornhill, near the Royal Exchange. 1654.

The Licencer's Epistle to the READER.

IT is reported in the life of Ambrose, that when he heard of the death of any holy Ministers, he would weep very bitterly. The like I read of Philo, that when he came into any Town or Village, and heard of the death of any good man there dwelling, he would mourn exceedingly, because of the great loss that place and the whole Church of Christ had received thereby. How much more cause have we of this age to lament our condition, who have in few years lost so many precious Saints, and so many Reverend, Learned, and godly Ministers; Surely this sad providence of God speaks with a loud voice, that miseries and calamities are hasting upon this Nation. For the righteous perish (saith the Prophet) and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. Thus Austin died a little before Hippo (wherein he dwelt) was taken. And Pareus, before Heilderbergh was sacked. And Luther immediately before Germany was overrun with war and bloodshed. And now of late years many eminent Lights have been extinguished in this Nation, to fore signify the great darkness that is coming upon us. Amongst which, I cannot but reckon my reverend brother Mr. Jeremiah Whitaker, at whose Funeral this ensuing Sermon was preached. If I should enter upon his commendation, I might truly say what Nazianzen doth of his sister Gorgonia, That I have more cause to fear least I should speak below, then above the Truth; for he was a burning and a shining light in this our Israel; a Messenger and an Interpreter, one among a thousand; a Bezaleel in God's Tabernacle, a true Nathanael, that by his integrity, humility, constancy, charity, publicness, and peaceableness of spirit, and by his diligence

and faithfulness in preaching the Gospel, made his life both amiable and desirable. He was (yet not he, but the grace of God with him) 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 .And though I will not say what Nazianzen saith of Athanasius, that to commend him, were to commend Virtue, because all Virtues were contracted in him; yet this I will say (which is also said of Athanasius, That he was) 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , An Adamant and a Load-stone. To all that conversed with him he was as a Load-stone to draw their hearts to love him: but in the cause of God, & in reference to the truths of Christ he is as an unconquerable Adamant. He was a Jeremiah both in mourning for and witnessing against the sins of the times. He was a second Whitaker, though not so eminent in learning as to be (what is said of him) Mundi miraculum, Academiae oraculum; yet he was (which is also said of him) sound in the faith, one that had no private opinion, that did not in veteri viâ novam semitam quaerere, seek out new paths of his own, but kept the old way and the old path, That had a great wit without any mixture of madness.

It is very disputable to me, whether he preached more by the heavenlynesse of his Doctrine, or by the holiness of his life. Sure I am, he had this peculiar dispensation, That he preached as effectually by his death, as by his life or Doctrine. For the manner of his sickness and death speaketh to all that saw it, or shall now know it by reading this Sermon.

1. *That the best of men are subject to the worst of Diseases: That all things come alike to all, that no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before him.*

2. *That though the Lord cause his children to pass through the waters and through the fire, yet he will be with them, so as the waters shall not overflow them, nor the fire burn them. Though they are troubled on every side, yet they are not distressed; though perplexed, yet not in despair, though persecuted, yet not forsaken; though cast down, yet not destroyed. For so great was the patience that God measured out to this our dear Brother, that though he groaned, yet he never grumbled; though he often mourned, yet he never murmured; nay, though he often roared by reason of the greatness of his pain, yet he always justified and magnified God; and this he did so constantly, and in such a degree and proportion, that as it is said of Job, so it will be said by the Saints that succeed us, for their mutual consolation and encouragement; Ye have heard of the patience of Whitaker: He had an ulcerated flesh, but a sound and whole spirit, and that made him bear his infirmity; he had a stone in the bladder, but a very tender and soft heart; he had a body gangren'd, but a soul unbeleppred with sin. I heard him often say with thankfulness, That under all his bodily sufferings, he had a blessed calmness, and quietness in his spirit; that God spake peace; that though he roared for pain, yet the devil was chained up from roaring upon him.*

It was no small delight to me to behold the tears that were shed at his Funeral. Not that I was glad that there was such cause of sorrow, but to see (in these days, especially wherein the godly Ministry is so much undervalued) a Minister that neither lived undesired, nor died unlamented: of whom it may be said, as is of Stephen, That devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. But I will not detain the Reader from beholding these things more largely related in the following Sermon, by one that was his fidus Achates, and as dear to him as Jonathan to David. The Lord sanctify this example to all that shall hear of it, and fit us his Ministers that supervieve, to preach and live as he did, To fight a good fight, to finish our course, and to keep

the faith, that so we may at last obtain a crown of righteousness which the righteous Judge will give at the last day to all that love his appearing.

So prayeth Your servant in the work of the Ministry EDM. CALAMY.

To the Right Honorable ELIZABETH, Countess Dowager of Exeter.

MADAM,

How irresistible is the power of love and importunity? The holy Scriptures do plentifully manifest, that divine love doth set God's All (whether within or without himself) on work for his children's good, and that his children's importunity hath in all Ages prevailed with his Omnipotency, to appear for their comfort: And multitudes of daily experience do evidence the prevalency of these two Arguments among the sons of men. My self makes one instance for the verifying hereof, by preaching at Reverend, worthy Mr. *Whitaker's* Funeral, and by printing my Sermon with the Narrative of his memorable life; both which come abroad with enlargements; because straits of time, and the discomposednesse of my spirit through grief, would not suffer me thus fully to dilate upon in the Pulpit. Madam, I am confident that your Ladyship can of your own knowledge, not only attest the truth of most passages in my Narrative, but add also much more from your own observation, which will render his memory precious unto posterity.

And will your Honor give me leave to give some further account unto the world, wherefore I have presumed to dedicate unto your Ladyship these expressions of my great respect to my precious much endeared brother Mr. *Jeremiah Whitaker*; Gratitude is at the bottom of this Dedication. Madam, As I shall always really acknowledge your Honors favor towards my worthless self; so I judge it meet to make known upon this occasion that more then many thanks are most due unto your Ladyship from all Mr. *Whitaker's* Relations, for your many and great testimonies of your constant respects unto him all his life long since your first acquaintance with him. I have often heard him mention before the Lord with praises and prayers, your Honors abundant kindnesses, both unto himself and his family, which I believe are on record in heaven to be fully recompensed in due time, because they were the products of your sincere love unto him, as the faithful Minister of Jesus Christ. Madam, there are not many who be so deeply sensible as your selfe of the great loss sustained by the death of this holy man of God: What mine own loss is, I had rather express it before the Lord, then publish it unto the world. He was (Madam) a faithful servant to your immortal soul, the well are whereof God in mercy hath given you to mind much more then all matters sublunary whatsoever. In reference hereunto, he was your wise counselor, in all your doubts and difficulties, your compassionate comforter; in all straits and sorrows, your vigilant Physician to prevent spiritual sickness and infection; your zealous Incourager in all ways of holy service, and a daily Remembrancer of you and yours before the Throne of Grace. Though these things speak your loss, which may warrantably afflict your heart, yet I beseech you (good Madam) consider with comfort, that notwithstanding this bucket be broken (as Dr. *Preston* was wont to express it) nevertheless the fountain of light, life, grace, strength, comfort and satisfaction is still at hand, ever full, and always flowing. He who is now

removed out of the Land of the living (to be serviceable by preaching, praying, conference no more) was only one of those golden pipes through which the God of your mercies conveyed relief sweetly and seasonably unto your soul: the *well-head* is not removed, and many other choice conveyances of grace and consolation from Christ be still continued to you. Let this therefore be the language of your faith. The *Lord liveth, and blessed be the* *◊* *o* *my salvations*, who will never forsake nor fail the soul which in humility and faithfulness doth depend upon his Majesty. And (*Madam*) Mr. *Whitaker* his rich receipts of much sanctifying grace, strong confidence, invincible patience, undaunted courage, un-interrupted peace, with pure elevating joys from the Lord may encourage the hopes of the poorest Christians to expect great things from heaven, according to their necessities and desires, because God is no respecter of persons, but free and liberal in the communications of his peculiar goodness. These are the words of his grace, *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*, Psal. 81. 10. *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me (as the Scripture hath said) out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water*, Joh. 7. 37, 38. The Almighty hath given you some tastes of that incomparable fruit which comes from the Land of promise, that you may be encouraged to hold on in the way thither with cheerfulness and perseverance. *Madam*, It is no small addition unto your honor here, and it will undoubtedly make to your happiness hereafter, that you do own God in unwearied attendance upon his sacred Ordinances, laying forth yourself for his name faithfully with that prudence, self-denial, and plainness of heart wherewith he hath adorned you, through his rich mercy in Jesus Christ. *Madam*, I humbly beg pardon for this my boldness, and crave leave to subscribe myself

(*Madam*)

Your Honors humble Servant, SIMEON ASHE.

JOHN 11. 11.

Our friend *Lazarus* sleepeth.

THESE are the words of Christ concerning *Lazarus*: and they speak 1. His relation. 2. His dissolution.

First, the relation was friendship, wherein we are to observe,

1. How far this friendship was extended, *viz.* both unto Christ, and to his Disciples, *our friend*. It is not my friend, or your friend, but *our friend*, both yours and mine.

2. That this friendship was acknowledged by Christ himself, not only while *Lazarus* was yet alive, but even now when he was dead, *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth*.

In the second part of the Text (*viz.* *Lazarus's* dissolution) we may note

1. The truth asserted (*viz.*) that *Lazarus* though a friend both to Christ and to his Disciples, yet he was dead.

2. The Metaphor whereby it is expressed, which is taken from natural sleep. He sleepeth.

3. The notice which our Savior took of *Lazarus* his decease. This he reporteth unto his Disciples, he saith unto them▪ *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.*

Thus from this plain division of the Text, I proceed unto the observations which do from hence offer themselves naturally unto our consideration. And the doctrines will be six in number, viz. three from each part, into which the Text hath been divided.

[Doctr. 1] The first is this, viz. *That there is a mutual friendship betwixt Christ and true Christians.* Our Lord himself here calleth *Lazarus friend.* And that this friendship was mutual, it is evident from this history.

First, the love of *Lazarus* towards the Lord Jesus was witnessed by the many entertainments and hearty welcomes which he received at his house. And the friendship of Christ unto *Lazarus* is attested by his sisters, formerly, *He whom thou lovest is sick,* ver. 3. and by this our Evangelist; *Jesus loved Martha,* and her sister and *Lazarus,* ver. 5. And the *Jews* said, *Behold how he loved him.* ver. 36. yea our Savior himself in the Text calleth him *friend.*

Now as it was betwixt Christ and *Lazarus,* so is it likewise betwixt Christ and all real Christians; their friendship is mutual. The word *friend* expresseth love, and this love hath its vicissitude amongst friends. As tennis balls with rackets are banded and returned to and fro, so love amongst cordial friends hath its intercourse, it is received with acceptance, and returned with requitals. *Greater love has no man then this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* This expresseth Christ his love to his Christian friends. *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.* This speaketh the love and friendship of Christians to Christ. And you must know that this affection of love was not only betwixt Christ and some peculiar Christians, to Christ, as his Disciples and *Lazarus;* but betwixt him and all other sound-hearted Christians also. When he preached to a very *great multitude of people,* having warned them to take heed of hypocrisy, he useth this compellation, *I say unto you my friends.* And long before his incarnation, this was the language of Christ (the essential Wisdom of the Father,) *I love them that love me.* Whereas it is sometimes said of our friends, that they have only one soul in several bodies▪ it is most true, being applied unto Christ and singlehearted Christians. *The Spirit of God dwelleth in them; and if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

As friends, being, in point of friendship, acted by the same principles, they will and nill the same things: So it is with Jesus Christ and those who are unfeigned friends unto him. As the Apostle *Paul* thus advised the *Philippians,* *Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ;* so he affirmeth of the Saints at *Corinth,* that *they had the mind of Christ.*

The obligations of love are so strong upon friends, that they can heartily say one to another, *I am as thou art.* The Lord accounted *Abraham* his friend, and it is considerable how God and *Abraham* being friends did communicate themselves, with their All unto each other.

As God by way of Covenant promiseth to be an *all-sufficient* portion unto him, to *bless those who bless him,* and to *curse such who curse him,* and to bestow *Canaan* (the land flowing with milk and honey) upon him: so *Abraham* gave up himself wholly to be at God's disposing, in

regard of his habitation, to *dwell where* his Majesty would settle him; and in respect of his relations, to *command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment*. In this manner Christ and believers, they are for each others, with their All, even as for themselves. *I am my beloveds* (saith the loving, beloved Spouse) *and my beloved is mine*. They are the same 1. In their wills. As they in things most difficult and cross to themselves (in appearance) do say, *The will of the Lord be done*; So Christ is ready to speak unto them in reference to the regular motions of their wills, as once to the woman of Canaan, *Be it unto thee even as thou wilt*.

2. In their *desires*. As these are their breathings; *there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee*; So his *desires are towards them*. Not long before his departure from his Apostles, to evidence his desires of spiritual fellowship with them, *He said unto them, with desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer*▪

3 And in their *designs*. As this is in their eyes and aims, that whether by *life or death Christ may be magnified in them*: So he will never turn from them to do them good, but will rejoice over them to do them good.

These are brief hints in reference to the doctrine, more generally considered. In the more distinct handling of it, both the branches are to be taken apart, and particularly to be discoursed upon.

And here give me leave to premise the reasons wherefore I shall discourse of this mutual friendship under the notion of love, in a latitude: viz. because, 1. The word *Friend* (as we already hinted) speaketh *love*. 2. In this History these phrases signify the same thing; viz. *friend Lazarus, and Lazarus loved*. 3. And the holy Ghost elsewhere useth these words indifferently, viz. *friend, beloved*.

The first branch of the doctrine is this, That real rightbred Christians are friends unto Christ His endeared Spouse speaketh this openly; *This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O Daughters of Jerusalem*. Answerable whereunto is the language of the Gospel-Prophet, *a song of my beloved to his vineyard*. Let it be noted that Christ is not looked upon and loved as an ordinary friend, but as a friend extraordinary, either a friend already married, or one affected singularly with expectations of marriage. *The virgins loveth thee*. And indeed, none do love Christ sincerely, who do not love him singularly, superlatively. Let his own words be well weighed; *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me*.

This assertion is bottomed upon good reason, because Christ both in his own personal excellencies, and communicated advantages, is infinitely better than any creature with its fairest amiabilities whatsoever.

Now this their love is not blind, but it *aboundeth in all judgment and knowledge*, as will be manifest by these four reasons following.

[Reason 1] Because of his incomparable, unparalleled beauties. This account his dear Spouse giveth of her strong inflamed affections; *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest amongst a thousand. His head is as the most fine gold.* And having metaphorically commended him from the head to the foot, she thus concludeth, *This is my beloved, and this is my friend.*

His graces which are like to a most fragrant perfume, do in our hearts of all them who are truly spiritual. *Because of the savor of thy good ointments, thy Name is as anointment poured forth, therefore do the Virgins love thee.* And in the song of conjugal loves, this is rendered as the reason of those sparklings, *Thou art fairer than the children of men.* As there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than Saul (*from the shoulders upwards he was higher than any of the people*) So Jesus Christ doth wonderfully over-top and exceed in all rich endowments, the most amiable creatures in the world. And as in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty (*from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him*) and this might be some reason of David's great love towards him:) So in the Lord Jesus, there are perfect beauties without the least blemishes: *He is altogether lovely.* No wonder therefore that wise, knowing Christians do choose and value, and embrace him with vigorous loves.

[Reason 2] Because of his famous, magnanimous undertakings and adventures as Mediator, that he might at once advance his Fathers glory, and the happiness of his Elect.

We read that *Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David, and that he loved him as his own soul,* because upon a Duel he had encountered and conquered the Monster Goliath, who had blasphemed God and vilified his people. Now this service was low and inconsiderable, being compared with Christ's renowned exploits, who hand to hand combated with the devil in the wilderness for the space of *forty days, who spoiled principalities and Powers, made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross;* Who did bear up bravely against the power of darkness to be quell'd under the weight of divine justice to be satisfied, and under the flames of his Fathers displeasure to be quenched. These and the like rare actings of Christ being pondered by Christians do draw forth their hearts in friendship towards him. He himself saith, *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life.* And how can new-born Christians, partakers of the divine Nature, be otherwise affected upon the same account towards their blessed Master?

[Reason 3] Because of their manifold rich receipts from Christ. *David's heart giveth out loves to the Lord, because upon his prayers he had delivered his eyes from tears, and his feet from falling.* Now Christ hath rescued his people from wrath to come, and that without respect to their requests, yea before they sought him.

Our Savior himself giveth this as the reason wherefore the sinful woman loved him, *Many sins are forgiven her, therefore she loved much.* And Jonathan by this Argument laboreth to win Saul's heart towards David, *Because the Lord by him wrought a great salvation to all Israel.*

In this respect the Apostle Paul was rationally under the constraint of commanding Loves to Christ, because of quickening grace received by his death.

Now if I should here discover our large enjoyments from Christ, it would abundantly appear to every ingenuous soul, that there is sufficient cause wherefore he should be accounted and affected as an incomparable friend.

By him we are delivered from sin and hell (as is hinted even now) from the curse of the Law, the hater of God, the deadly snares of the world, and the poison-sting of death. *We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. We are accepted in the Beloved. He is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. And all the Promises of God are in him Yea, and in him Amen.* How rationally therefore doth living love to Christ spring out of this root?

[Reason 4] Because of their full expectations from him for the future, even unto soul-satisfaction, and that to eternity. Many cheering cordials are handed to Christians from Christ here upon earth; in which regard he doth lie as a *bundle of myrrh between their breasts*; but he reserveth the *best wine* for the last. Whatsoever for kind, or for measure the believing Christians comforts are here, yet to be with Christ in heaven will be *far better*; and this, this in glory is looked for through Christ. This consideration causeth their love unto Christ to break forth in a great flame. Let the words of the Apostle be weighed for the evidence hereof, who having spoken both of the *Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven*, as also of the assured Perseverance through *God's Power*, and all this by *Christ*, he adds, *Whom having not seen, yet ye love*. Ingenuous Christians duly weighing the worth of their future happiness, dearly purchased by Christ, and undoubtedly to be possessed by them through Christ, do hereupon practically conclude, that nothing can be imagined more reasonable then this, that they should love him as their special friend.

Thus from confirmation, I proceed to the Application of this Truth by way of Use; which I will propound under three heads; viz. 1. *Information*. 2. *Examination* 3. *Exhortation*.

[Use 1] Sad therefore is their condition who are not loving friends unto Jesus Christ. For doubtless though they be by profession, & in the estimation of others, true Christians; yet they are but only *Slips* in Christianity. As *Judas*, &c.

Our Savior speaketh roundly unto such: *If God were your Father, you would love me*. And if God be not their Father, they are questionless the devils children, children of the curse. How open and express are the words of the Apostle to this purpose? *If any man love not the Lord Jesus, lethem be Anathema Maran-atha*. The heavy and lasting maledictions of God hang over the heads of all them who love not Christ. This is the great severity of God against such who are not friends unto Christ: and that the righteousness of his Majesty herein may be manifested, I wish that this may be minded, viz. that unfriendliness to the Lord Jesus in Gospel-times (wherein his excellencies & deservings are so fully laid open) doth proceed either from 1. *Infidelity*. Or 2. *Contumacy*. Either people hearing from Scripture of Christ's loveliness, do give *God the lie to his face by not believing him*, or else their disregard of Christ ariseth from malignity and stubbornness of will, though they yield to the report of his incomparable worth. And both these are daring, and God-incensing provocations.

Now if any shall be awakened by these flashes of God's anger, to enquire, Who are to be judged persons void of love to Jesus Christ? I shall refer them for satisfaction to Christ's own

words, both the parable, and his exposition of it. The Parable is this, *The Citizens hated him, and sent a message after him saying, We will not have this man to reigneover us.* And the Application made is thus expressed, *Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me.* Therefore all such are proclaimed Christ's enemies, Christ-haters, (even by Christ himself,) who refuse to submit unto him as their Lord and King.

Its no uncharitableness, but judgment according to the Word of truth, to determine those to be no friends unto Christ, whose resolutions are rather to order their lives according to customs, human traditions, their own humors, and the practices of the multitude, then according to the commands and counsels of Christ.

[Use 2] It much concerns us all to examine our friendship unto Christ. To quicken this search, these things are considerable,

1. Because many profess much love outwardly, whose hearts affect him not unfeignedly. As *David* describeth some counterfeit Courtiers, whose words were soft like oil, when there were drawn swords in their bosoms: Never was Christ more in men's mouths with smooth language then now, when their lives speak treachery against him. Thus *Judas* calleth him Master, and giveth him a kiss, yet was no friend. *Have I not chosen twelve* (saith Christ) *and yetone is a devil?* What Sugered words did the devil use, when he designed the ruin of *Adam*, and of all his posterity!

2. Because the comforts of the Gospel do appertain to them alone whose love is without dissimulation. The Apostles benediction was this, *Grace be with all them wholove our Lord Jesus in sincerity*▪ The rich privileges of grace are appropriated unto Christ's cordial friend.

3. Because Christ (whose eyes are like unto flames offire) doth discern clearly, all them that are false friends, though they pretend fair. We read of many who beleevewhen they saw his miracles, but *Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man.*

4▪ Because we cannot tell how soon we shall be called to the scrutiny. The Lord may be awakening our consciences, and setting them as upon a rack; propound that question unto us, which he asked *Peter* once, and again, and the third time, *Lovest thou me?* But though he should not deal thus with us in our life time, yet be sure we shall be examined upon our departure hence, for after *deathcomes judgment* infallibly. Therefore it will be our wisdom in the ways of self-renewing, to say as *Job* did, *When God visiteth,what shall I answer him?*

5. Because by serious self-reflections we may attain such full assurance of our love unto Christ, that we may with confidence speak with *Peter*, *Lord, thou knowest allthings, thou knowest that I love thee.*

Having thus moved the examination of your love to Christ, I proceed to give in some discoveries of Christ's loving friends; and the rather because according to God's institution, we Ministers are set up amongst people to trytheir ways.

And the characters of love being many, I shall be the shorter in them all. True it is, that men's love burning in their bosoms, they many times better express themselves by sense than Arguments; yet God having in his word held forth manifold Signs of sincere love, it is our duty to make our use of them.

1. Love to Christ is always accompanied with hatred of sin. *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.* And the Apostle his connection is observable, *Let love be without dissimulation, abhorring that which is evil:* The ground hereof is manifold. First, because Christ hateth all sin, he suffered death for sin, and is dishonored by it. Therefore it is not possible, that love unto Christ, and love unto sin should peaceably lodge together in the same bosom.

2 Love to Christ is attended with care to prevent whatsoever might be injurious or displeasing unto him. Thus the loving Spouse layeth this command upon all under her Authority. *I charge you that you awake not my Beloved till he please.* In like manner *Jonathan's* love pleadeth with *Saul* for *David's* life. *Let not the King sin against his servant, against David: wherefore wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?* And *Jacob's* affections did project the preservation of his near relation from ruin. Hence it appeareth therefore, that people of *Gallio* his temper, do not love Christ, who care not what wrongs are done to Christ, in the liberty or purity of his Ordinances and comfort of his servants, if themselves can sleep warm in their own well-feathered nests.

3. Love to Christ discovered itself by solicitous enquiries after the mind of Christ, fearing least through mistakes he might be provoked. How inquisitive were his Apostles to know his pleasure in all particulars, relating to the Passover? *The Disciples came unto Jesus, saying, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?* And how timorous was *Abraham* (God's friend) lest he might by overmuch boldness incense him, when he was mediating for *Sodom!* Shall they therefore be accounted friends to Christ who walk at all adventures, without any fears of his frown, or enquiries after his will?

4. Love causeth flowings forth of thoughts upon its object. The beatings of the pulse are according to the heat in the heart. In the *Song of Loves* this is the first clause, *My heart is inditing of a good matter. I speak of the things which I have made concerning the King.* Sparks do not more naturally arise out of a flaming furnace, then musings upon Christ from the soul which is fired with loves towards him. With how much intention, frequency and steddenesse do people think upon the persons and things which are greatly loved! This consideration therefore casts them off as no friends to Christ, of whom it may be truly said, in respect of diligent meditation, *The Lord is not in all their thoughts.*

5. Longings after Christ, together with satisfactions while he is absent, are evidences of love unto him. The loving Spouse shakes off sloth, gets out of bed in the night, and goeth abroad to seek him whom her soul loved Neither ease in a warm bed, nor chamber comforts, nor City-contentments could satisfy her. Her Beloved she must have, and her Beloved she will have, for she is sick of love. Love like the Load-stone is attractive, and the needle touched with it, will incessantly move till it stand directly Northward. In like manner will the heart which is

well warmed with love to Christ: this is its language, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none that I desire on earth besides thee.* Give me Christ, or I die.

6. Contentation in the enjoyment of Christ doth demonstrate love: Some note this from the Greek word, which signifieth Love, viz. that wherein the heart taketh rest. When anything cometh to its center▪ there it is quiet and still: So it is with the heart which loveth God. This was *David's* meaning, as some Expositors judge, when he having expressed his love to God, speaketh thus in an holy Soliloquy, *Return to thy rest O my soul.* This rest the loving Christian attaineth in Christ by complacency and dependency. The Spouse *leaneth* (resteth her self) *upon her Beloved,* and he for delight is *a bundle of myrrh between her breasts:* whereunto the words of the Apostle suit very well, *We have no confidence in the flesh, but rejoice in Christ Jesus.* For the soul which possesseth Christ, and knoweth what it hath, in having him, will say, I have enough, I have all, I need no more; for in him all wants are either supplied or sanctified. In him justifying grace will make up all defects in service. And what is wanting in the streams of creature enjoyments, is given in with more sweetness in the full fountain of his All-sufficiency.

7. Communication of secrets speaketh friendship. *Haman* doth unbosom himself to his friends, by laying open unto them all his concernments, both cross and comfortable. And Christ bids him who was dispossessed of a devil, *Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things God hath done for thee.*

We can put that into a friends bosom which we would not have blazed abroad in the world. Thus Christ's friends do tell him of all their troubles, fears, wants, temptations, lusts, as also of their comforts, receipts, experiences; upon all occasions they step unto him, and he knoweth from them by prayer how things go with them, whether by encouragement or discouragement in their course.

I here remember the speech of *Samson's* wife, when he concealed what she desired to know, *How canst thou say, I love thee, when thy heart is not with me?* And doubtless our estrangement from Christ, in not laying open ourselves upon all occasions before him, doth more then intimate our unfriendliness.

8. Readinesse to comply with Christ's command will undeniably prove that we are his friends. Our Lord is often upon this Argument: *You are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you, He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. If any man love me, he will keep my words.* Thus *Abraham* made it manifest that he was God's friend, by being ready to offer up *Isaac* upon his call. And the Apostle speaketh of the *labor of love,* because love will not withdraw from any work, wherein God seeth cause to employ his friends. The woman who loved Christ much, will *wash his feet, and wipe them with the hair of her head.* This is the language of Love, I account no work too mean, wherein I▪ may serve Christ.

9. Love is content to be at any cost for Christ. Harken unto the expressions of the loving Spouse, *At our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved. And I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine, and of the juice of Pomgranates.* The best

of all kinds, and the best of the best is provided for Christ, if he be Beloved. She who loved much, brought a *Box of ointment very costly*. In like manner, whatever duties Christ's friends discharge, or whatever Ordinances they frequent, they are wont to say with *David, I will not offer to the Lord that which costs me nothing*. They scorn to give him the chaff and bran, when others eat the Kidneys of wheat. To be warm and vigorous in creature communion, and *all a-mort*, chil and cold conversing with Christ, is an abomination to Christ's friends.

10. Love is liberal and free, not grudging any kindness laid forth for a friend. *This is the love of God, (saith the beloved Disciple) that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous.*

When the most is done and endured for Christ, the soul saith, How little have I either acted or suffered for Christ? Oh that it had been more, Oh that it had been more! How little is all my service, how small are all my disbursements for Christ? When *Jacob* had passed two Apprentiships for *Rachel*, under a sour Uncle and churlish Master, wherein he had been pinched with cold, and parched with heat, *They seemed to him but a few days, for the love he bare unto her*. And when *Jonathan* had stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to *David*, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle, we read not of any repinings afterward; and the reason was, because *he loved him, as his own soul*▪ Christ's friends look upon him as deserving over and over again, infinitely more then they shall ever be able to requite, and therefore are troubled that Christ hath had so little service, never repenting that he hath received so much. They know that God giveth *liberally and upbraideth not*. Worthy Doctor *Sibs* was wont to say, Supposing a possibility of sorrow in heaven, this would be the grief of the Saints there, that they have done so little for Christ upon earth, from whom they have received so much.

11. Love maketh courageous for Christ. Everyone knoweth that *St. Paul* was Christ's cordial friend, which he expressed by his magnanimity. *I am ready not to be boundonly, but to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus, for whom I have suffered the loss of all*. Much was lost already, and life itself was now at stake, Let all go (saith Love) for Christ.

Love looketh upon nothing as impossible, or as too difficult to be undertaken. The fearful Hen will fly fiercely at the devouring Creatures which would devour her chickens; and the timorous sheep will turn head upon a mastiff dog, to secure her beloved Lamb. *Love is strong as death, many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it*. *Mary*, whose bosom was full of burning love to Christ, is a rare example of that metal and fortitude which love breedeth in Christ's friends. She seeking Christ's dead body, and meeting with the Gardener (as she imagined) she speaketh thus: *Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away*. Neither the ghastly looks of a dead body could affright, nor the weight of it discourage her resolutions to bear it away. Though she was not able (good soul) by her own strength to carry such a burden, yet her love made her confident that she could do it, and therefore was resolved to undertake it.

12. All these forementioned actings and adventures of love in Christ's friends, do arise, neither only nor principally from self-advantages received from him, but from his

excellencies, and respect to his honor. *Because of the savor of thy good ointments, thy Name is an ointment poured forth, therefore do the Virgins love thee.* And in this, Saint Paul centered as the last end of his love, that *Jesus Christ might be magnified in him, whether by life or death;* Whereas when Christ is looked after rather for loaves than for his divine loveliness, it's rather to be judged a trucking with him, than a loving of him. When men seek only to serve their turn of Christ, as it were by merchandizing, they may be called friends to themselves, but will never be reputed faithful friends unto him. This discovery lies inward and close in our bosoms: in which regard, the more cautiousnesse is needful, that we may not be deceived.

Lastly, and for our help in the former, I add this (as the conclusion of this search▪ upon which I have held you so long) That sincere friendship unto Christ, will raise rejoicings in our hearts upon his advancement, though this may seem to tend to our personal detriment. Here the words of Christ to his drooping Disciples, fearing that themselves should be damnified by his departure from them, are very considerable; *If you loved me, you wouldrejoyce because I said, I go unto the Father.* John the Baptist is a rare instance to evidence this character of true friendship: for he being told that Christ was likely to carry away credit from him, returned this answer. *He that hath the Bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegrooms voice: This my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.* And the Apostle Paul was another example of this ingenuous love. *Some (saith he) preach Christ of envy and strife, supposing to add affliction unto my bonds: Notwithstanding Christ is preached: and I therein do rejoyce, and will rejoyce.* Make application hereof, and ask yourselves this question, whether you can be content that Christ should be set upon your shoulders, and that your credit should be cropped, rather then it should hinder his shine and prospect? can you lay yourselves down in the dust, that the crown may be set upon Christ's head? can you willingly be little or nothing in the account of the world, that Christ may be all in all among the children of men? By sincere answers returned upon serious considerations of all these foregoing particulars, you may be able to give a right judgment of your own estate, whether you be in deed and in truth friends to Jesus Christ.

[Use 3] The Use of Exhortation followeth: wherein I am to bespeak your love unto Jesus Christ. And O that I knew what Arguments to use, that I might prevail with you to become friends unto Christ. Might not the remembrance of the forementioned Reasons wherefore believers love him, being faithfully pressed upon your spirits, be hopefully operative for this end? Take into your consideration 1. His incomparable beauties. 2. His famous exploits. 3. Your former rich receipts. 4. Your future expectations from him: and hereupon command your souls to give in their answer, whether it be not reasonable that you should love Christ. But forbearing the enlargement of those heads, I will deal with you upon principles of self-love, to love the Lord Jesus. So many and so precious are the privileges belonging unto them who are thus affected, that *David* knew not how to desire more at the hand of God. *Look thou upon me and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.*

Shall I mention (and do little more then mention) some particulars?

1. Thus you shall work yourselves into Christ's bosom, (which will be no small advantage) *I love them that love me*, said our Lord long since. It is reported that *Vespasian* commanded a large recompense to be given unto a woman that fell in love with him, and ordered that it should be recorded, that such a sum of money was given upon that account. More beautiful will Christ be unto his friends. *That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their Treasures: Riches, substantial riches, substantial riches making treasures: and all this by the right of inheritance, shall be the reward of them who love Christ.*

2. Hereupon you may confidently expect familiar fellowship with Christ and his Father, which is the Christians Heaven upon Earth, *If any man love me, my Father will love him, and I will love him, and manifest myself to him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

3. Hence issueth assurance, that all events and exercises shall prove, spiritually advantageous. *Also we know that all things work together for good unto them who love God.* Every wind will undoubtedly bring in their profit, and their gain shall come in at every door.

4. And the *Crown of glory is promised to them who love the Lord.*

Now if you shall demand, How may we kindle the fire of love in our breasts towards Christ? I answer,

1. By informing yourselves from the Scripture concerning Christ his worthiness, both in his person, relations, and several Administrations as Mediator betwixt God and man. As this is his own advice, *Search the Scriptures, for they testify of me:* So by the manifestations of him, friendly affections are kindled towards him. Witness the experience of such who during their ignorance of Christ were so far from loving him, that they accounted the love of others groundless, yet understanding his unparalleled beauties, fell in love with him. This is open and apparent by comparing *Cant. 5. 9.* with *ver. 10.* to the end, and with *Chap. 6. 1.* The words being many, I refer you to the reading of them. *The rich hath many friends* (saith Solomon) And are not all the riches of earth and heaven in Christ's possession and at his disposing?

2. By presenting often unto your view by meditation all things amiable in Christ. *While I mused* (saith the Psalmist) *the fire burned.* Looking causeth loving, *The eye affect the heart:* By blowing a spark becomes a flame. As *Abraham's* servant brought forth *Jewels of silver, and Jewels of gold* to win *Rebecca* her heart towards *Isaac*; So should we spread before our souls frequently those things which are enjoyed in Christ, that our hearts may be enamored with him. Ponder upon his own expressions, *I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honor are with me: yea, durable riches and Righteousness. My fruit is better than Gold, yea than fine Gold, and my revenues than choice Silver.* Dwell upon these and the like considerations, and the Lord bless them to the end for which propounded, that your souls may flame forth loves upon the Lord Jesus.

The second Branch of the Doctrine followeth; *viz. That Christ is a loving friend unto all true Christians.*

Howsoever he here calleth *Lazarus* his special friend, and the Apostles were so accounted in some way of peculiarity, *Henceforth I call you not servants, but I have called you friends.* Yet this

compellation, and this amiable relation belongeth unto all faithful Christians likewise. He *loved all his own in the world*; which is plain also, by that gracious invitation, *Eat O friends, and drink O Beloved*, wherein he intendeth to take in all living Christians.

Now if the reason be demanded, Wherefore Christ is so good a friend unto believing Christians? I answer,

[Reason 1] 1. Because they are peculiarly his own upon Covenantcompact *betwixt the Father and himself*. The Covenant was primarily betwixt God and Christ, whereupon they were committed to his trust for the praise of glorious grace. And *He therefore loved them because his own*. This our Lord himself doth more then intimate in his most heavenly prayer, wherein expressing his respect to his Fathers honor, together with abundant love towards the Elect, he doth very often touch upon them *as given unto him* by the Father. And upon this account it was that he thus speaketh of the communion which he had with his Father before the foundations of the world were laid. *I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him Rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.*

[Reason 2] Because of the dear deliberate purchase which he made of them, that they might be brought in to friendly fellowship with him. It is commonly said, that the mother loveth those children most which cost her the most pain when she brought them into the world. The Prophet calleth the *fruit of the womb, Beloved*. And that is very considerable to this purpose which the Evangelical Prophet foretold of Christ, *He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied*. We are Christ's by redemption, and in this regard also we are his beloved friends, and highly esteemed by him above others, as the Prophet witnesseth, *Since thou wast precious in my sight, I loved thee,&c.*

[Reason 3] 3. Because of their spiritual troth-pledge unto Christ. The Apostle speaketh of *espousing the believing Corinthians* unto him as *their husband*. And as this is done in *loving kindness and mercy*, so because of this relation, Christ is propounded as an example of great love. *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved his Church, and gave himself for it.*

[Reason 4] 4. Because they are incorporated into Christ as members of his body mystical. As *the body is one, and hath many members, so also is Christ*. And upon this ground likewise is Christ's love to his people inferred, *No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord his Church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bone.*

[Reason 5] 5. Because all the revenues (as it were) of Christ's honor and reputation on earth, are raised from among believing Christians: for *praise waiteth for him in Zion*: and this is the *seed which shall serve him*. As before his incarnation they are called God's *peculiar treasure*, and his *Jewels*; so since his Ascension the Apostle Paul styleth them the *Glory of Christ*. And in this regard a principle of divine self-love doth incline the Lord Christ to be a friend unto believers.

For the illustration of this truth, know, that this love of Christ is fourfold; viz. 1. Of his *eternal purpose*. 2. Of *Benevolence*. 3. Of *Complacency*, 4. Of *Compassion*.

1. There is a love of divine good pleasure appertaining unto God's people: In this sense God saith, *Jacob have I loved*: and in the pursuit hereof the Lord in due time converteth them unto himself; *I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee*.

2. The Lord loveth them with the love of benevolence, communicating to them, together with himself and his loves, his All, for their comfort: *Who loved me* (saith Saint Paul) *and gave himself for me. All are yours*; and *all things are for your sakes*, saith the same Apostle. Christ himself being the heir of all things, both in heaven and earth, the fountain both of grace and comfort, brings along with himself all needful accommodations, terrestrial, celestial, whether they concern this life, or that which is to come. How liberal was God's love to *Abraham his friend*, giving all *Canaan* to him and his seed after him!

3. The Lord embraceth them with a love of delight and complacency, he himself having made them lovely by putting upon them his own robes and ornaments, both by justifying and sanctifying grace. This is taught by sundry expressions in that Song of Loves. *The Kings Daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought Gold. Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in Gold of Ophir: so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty*. And to the same purpose doth the Prophet *Ezekiel* metaphorically hold for this truth, *I washed thee with water, yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil: I clothed thee also with brodered work, I girded thee about with fine linen, and covered thee with silk, I decked thee also with Ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hand, and a chain on thy neck: And I put a Jewel on thy fore head, and ear-rings in thy ears, and a beautiful crown on thy head. Thus wast thou decked with Gold and Silver, and thy raiment was of fine linen and silk, and brodered work, and thou wast exceeding beautiful; and thy renown went forth among the Heathen for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comeliness put upon thee, saith the Lord God*. Therefore though the Elect themselves are rather loathsome then delightful in their unregenerate estate, yet being covered with Christ his righteousness, and adorned with the graces of his holy Spirit, they are friends in whom he taketh much delight. Hereupon the Church is called *Hephzibah*, for the Lord delighteth in her.

4. Christ expresseth towards them the love of compassion, sympathizing with them in all their sorrows and sufferings: in all *their affliction he was afflicted*. As in reference to his friend *Lazarus*, being brought to the place where he was buried, *Jesus wept*. And hence the Jews inferred this conclusion, *behold how he loved him!*

[Use 1] This makes much for the comfort of all truly gracious Christians, seeing the Lord Jesus is their friend. God intending to give *David* a cordial upon the death of his child, bestoweth upon him *Solomon*, with this assurance that he loved him, whereupon he was called *Jedihiah*; And for the cheering of *Daniel's* heart, he was told once and again, that *he was greatly beloved by the Lord*. Now this refreshing reacheth all Gospel-Christians universally.

In the serving out of this cordial, I will briefly endeavor to lay before you

- 1. The Characters of Christ's beloved friends.

- 2. The comforts hence deducible for their relief.

First, for these signs of Christ's beloved friends, I refer you to the review and application of the particulars in the former branch of the Doctrine, for the discovery of such who are his loving friends. For this is most certain, that Christ *loveth all those who love him*. And I add these two further evidences of them who are beloved of Christ.

1. Those who *are beloved of the Lord are called to be Saints*. Two things are considerable in the quotation, *viz.*

That these Saints are not so titularly only (because so reputed and nominated among men;) but Saints in reality and practice, being persons whose hearts are separated from common pollutions, raised above creature contents, to mind the matters of God in good earnest: in which respect they are called *his Saints* devoted unto him peculiarly.

And this calling is not alone external (for thousands who continue haters of God, are called upon, to lay down their arms of *rebellion*, and to submit unto the government of Christ) but it is a calling internal and efficacious, conquering the soul to come in unto Christ, leaving all in resolution, affection, and endeavor for him. Therefore in the application of this, note, the Quere should be, which way the strongest stream of mind and will do run? whether sin—ward, world-ward, or Godward? and what is the greatest design, driven on by project and practice, whether to satisfy lusts, and to grow great in the world, or to conform unto laws divine, and to advance Christ's glory.

2. The Apostle *Paul* conjoineth *faithful and beloved*. Persons beloved by the Lord, are faithful to the Lord. And this fidelity doth evidence it self by two things especially.

1. By cleaving inseparably unto the guidance of God, when others are swayed by the multitude, swimming down the tide of times. In this regard in times of general Apostasy, *Judah* is said to continue *faithful with the Saints*, holding close to his will in holy worship, when *Ephraim* followed men's traditions and commandments.

2. By intending God's glory more then personal advantage in course of life and conversation.

And in this respect the Apostle speaking of the servants duty, doth place *purloining*, in opposition to *good fidelity*; that servant who purseth his Masters gain, he is not faithful. If these things were brought home by an impartial application, how many would be found in these times not befriended by Christ, though they would be cried up as his chiefest favorites among men?

Secondly, the comforts which belong unto such whom Christ affecteth as his friends, may be considered under two heads, *viz.*

1. The quality	of his love towards them.
----------------	---------------------------

2. The efficiency

First, his love them ward, for quality is,

1. Most cordial. They are *the dearly beloved of his soul*. It is not lip-love, love from the teeth outward, but love from the heart-root.
2. Most large: *it passeth knowledge*, it exceedeth all dimensions. Whereas *never greater love* was expressed, *thenthat a man should die for his friend*. Christ commendeth his love as much more, because he *died for sinners, and for enemies*.
3. Most refreshing. This love is not only *sweeter than wine*, but also *better than life*, yea better than lives, as the Original imports. All the comforts of life natural and civil, all the comforts of the several ages and conditions of life are not comparable to this love.
4. Most constant; whom he *loveth once, he loveth to the end*. This Christ did cast in to cheer his Disciples, being to depart from them. No opposition, loss, or change whatsoever, can *possibly separate beloved Christians from this love*, which the Apostle mentioneth as a matter of high joy and holy triumph. Whereas Solomon telleth us, that *a friend loveth at all times, and that there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother*; this may most truly be applied unto our loving friend Christ Jesus. This the Text suggesteth; for Christ did not only love Lazarus while he lived, but called him friend, even now when he was dead, *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth*.

Secondly, the efficiency of his love is admirably comfortable, to all such who enjoy it. For first, it worketh their deliverance from whatsoever may be grievous and dangerous. *He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood*. And hence follows deliverance *from the curse of the Law, and from the wrath to come*.

Secondly, it procureth whatsoever may be joyous unto a spiritual heart.

1. He hath made us (upon this account) *Kings and Priests unto God and his Father*.
2. He feedeth the soul plentifully by the dainties of sacred Ordinances; *Eat O my friends, and drink, yea drink abundantly, O my beloved*.
3. This his love running through all providences, maketh blessings the more sweet, and supporteth the sinking soul under crosses. As *Hezekiah's* recovery was the more pleasant, because *God in love to his soul* wrought it: so the Apostle puts this as a prop under a fainting afflicted Christian, that the Lord correcteth with paternal love.
4. And his love will prepare his beloved for glory. Christ loved the Church that *he might sanctify it, with the washing of water by the word▪ that he might present it to himselfe a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it might be holy and without blemish*. If unto all these (which I mentioned without enlargement) we add the complacency which he taketh in all communications of his love, it will be a great addition to their joy. *The Lord will rejoice over thee, he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing*. God seemeth to take such content in his loving transactions them-ward, as though he desired nothing more.

Let the friends of Jesus Christ feed and feast themselves with these expressions and provisions of his love.

[Use 2] How should the remembrance of such rare refreshings belonging to them, who are the beloved friends of Christ, quicken endeavors in all sorts to gain a share in his friendship. To enforce this exhortation, I will cast these few thoughts into your minds.

1. Whereas *Solomon* telleth us (What every days experience also speaketh) that *many seek the Rulers favor; Jesus Christ is the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, the only potentate unto whom all authority in heaven and earth is committed, by whom Kings reign, Princes rule, and all the Judges of the earth.*

2. That it will be an high honor to be called God's friend. In holy story *Hushai* and *Zabud* have this title of respect put upon them, that they were the *kings friends*. And it will be for the everlasting credit of father *Abraham*, that he is recorded in sacred pages, *to be the friend of God.*

3. That Christ is and ever will be in favor with God, to make and to maintain our peace with his Majesty, though we frequently, and fearfully do provoke him every day. *The inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon made Blastus the Kings chamberlaine their friend, when Herod was highly displeased with them, because their country was nourished by the Kings country.* And is not our dependence more upon God? And do not we hourly give the Almighty great occasion to reject us, yea to take up arms against us? And is there any one, either on earth or in heaven, that can asswage God's anger, and procure his favor, besides Jesus Christ? Therefore should means be used to make him our friend.

4. The people of God conceiving hope that Christ regardeth us, they will be encouraged with the more affectionate confidence to pray for us in the times of our need. As the sisters of *Lazarus* making address unto him in the behalf of their dear brother, pleaded this, *Lord, he whom thoulovest, is sick.*

5. Hereby we shall be heartened with the more hope to apply ourselves unto God by prayer for ourselves. Our Savior suggesteth this in the parable of the man, who goeth at mid-night to his friend to borrow bread; he applieth it to encourage prayer.

6. Because all our creature-friends may either fall off by unfaithfulness, or forsake us by death or be forced from us other ways. This the doleful complaints of sundry dear unto the Lord recorded in Scripture, do declare: *My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore, and my kinsmen stand aloof off, Lover and friend thou hast put far from me, and my acquaintance into darkness.* Upon this consideration, the human prudence of the unjust Steward is commended, in projecting to provide friends against the time of need. How far our experience at this day speaketh our loss of creature-friends, viz. of some by death, and of others by an unfaithful deserting, I forbear to speak: But I do upon this consideration move your care to gain the friendship of Christ, who will love and live forever: Now if these arguments shall force resolutions in your bosoms to seek Christ's love, and thereupon means to attain it, shall be inquired after; I give these short directions.

1. Accept of God, and of Gospel-righteousness with him, by a self-outing, and a Christ-prizing faith. *The Scripture saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God.*

2. Upon the serious consideration of his worthiness, and hopeful expectations of happiness by him; labor to endear Christ unto your hearts. Although our love to him doth not merit his love, yet it will clearly make manifestation thereof unto our souls. *I love them (saith he) who love me.*

3. And (as an expression of your love) submit obediently unto his government, studiously conforming unto all his commands. This is his own promise which he will perform infallibly. *He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and I will love him.*

[Use 3] The third Use is to be directed unto them whom Christ embraceth as friends with love, and they are to be persuaded unto real gratitude for his love. The Disciple whom Christ loved, having touched upon his incomparable love, addeth this doxology: *To him be glory and dominion forever, and ever, Amen.* From whence might be noted,

1. That the glory to be returned unto Christ for his love should not be verbal only, but real also, expressed by subjection unto his dominion.

2. That this obediential gratitude should not be confined to term of time, but extended unto eternity, *forever and ever.*

3. And all Christians should heartily give in their assent and attestation hereto by annexing their *Amen.*

In the amplification of this persuasion, I might call you back to the review both of the proof of this doctrine, and of the qualities and efficiency of his love, spoken unto, in the first Use: But that I may not tautologize by telling the same things again, I wish you to meditate upon these particulars which will yet further commend Christ's love, and may call you forth in thankfulness for it.

1. His love was primary to us, and ours secondary, succeeding it, as the effect and consequence thereof, *we loved him, because he loved us first.* If he had not fired our hearts with the flames of his love, we should never have bestowed one spark of spiritual affection upon him.

2. His love was free, when there was much loathsomeness, and no loveliness at all in us. *When thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thy blood, when thou wast naked and bare. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love.*

3. His love worketh him unto a familiar conversing with them, which himself expresseth by feasting with them, *He brought me into the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love; I will sup with them, and they shall sup with me:* and by acquainting them with himself, *I will manifest myself unto them:* as also by revealing his secrets, *I have called you friends: for all things*

that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you. As also by conjugal embracings: His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth imbrace me.

Now if Christ's beloved friends, thankfully disposed towards him for his love, shall demand how their gratitude should be really discovered? I answer in the words of *Solomon*; *A man that hath friends, must show himself friendly*: which is done,

1. By a cautious declining of whatsoever may be offensive unto him; as the returning of evil for good is very sinful, and a practice prejudicial to ourselves, so is it taken very unkindly by the Lord. Thus *David* complaineth of *Achitophel*, (and as some conceive, Christ of *Judas*) *My friend that did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me*. As *Caesar* was most afflicted with the wound received from his own sons hands. And thou my son too!

Therefore upon remembrance of Christ's kindness learn to beat back temptations as *Joseph* did. *How then shall I do this wickedness, and sin against the Lord*

2. By an inseparable adherence unto Christ in days of deepest difficulty and danger. The servant engaged to his Master by his favors, is willing to have his ear bored, *that he may dwell with him forever*. *Ruth* upon the receipt of less love a great deal from *Naomi* her mother in law, taketh up this resolution, *Nothing shall part thee and me but death*. God forbid that ever we by our Apostasy should give Christ occasion to speak by way of reproach to us as *Absalom* did to *Hushai* (deserting *David*, as he apprehended) *Is this thy kindness to thy friend? Why wentest not thou with thy friend?* So be you sure that this one circumstance will gripe your hearts with great grief for your backslidings. As *Peter* in this regard wept bitterly, because he had denied, and deserted Christ, so good a Master, so well deserving a friend.

3. By unfeigned love unto all them, who are the beloved friends of Christ▪ This is the inference of *Saint John*, from this consideration under discourse, that therefore *we ought to love one another, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren*. But of this more in the doctrine following.

[Doct. 2] That *all Christ's friends are mutually loving friends unto one another*. As Christ here saith not, my friend, but *our friend Lazarus*, thereby intending to declare the friendship which was betwixt *Lazarus* and his Disciples, as betwixt himself and *Lazarus*.

In the proof of this doctrine, I will point at two particulars (which I conceive this instance under hand may hint.)

1. That there is friendliness and love amongst all good Christians. In this respect the Apostle *Paul* in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, joineth their *faith in Christ*, and their *love to all Saints*. And in his Epistle to *Philemon*, he connexeth his love to Christ, and *his love to all Saints*. Yea, our Savior maketh this the livery whereby his servants may be distinguished from others. *By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another*.

2. That there is a peculiarity of friendly respect in Christians unto Christ's Ministers, as here in *Lazarus* towards Christ his Apostles. This is observable in the Letter sent from *Jerusalem* to *Antioch*, wherein their expression of special love is recorded; viz. *Our beloved Barnabas and Paul*.

But I will not deal with the Doctrine in both these branches distinctly. The handling of it more generally (for brevity sake) shall be alone undertaken.

And the Reasons of the point are four.

[Reason 1] 1. Because of their relation both unto Christ and amongst themselves. They stand related unto Christ as his subjects, servants, children, Spouse, Members, (which, all will acknowledge, and therefore needeth no proof.) And hence issueth love. As *David* was ready to show kindness to the house of *Saul* for *Jonathan's* sake.

And among themselves they are related many ways most nearly. They are brethren, and the *brotherhood is to be loved*. And they are fellowmembers, and therefore to have mutual *respect one to another*.

[Reason 2] 2. Because of Christ his express command, which is repeated, and strengthened with his own example. *This command we have from him, that he who loveth God, loveth his brother also. A new Commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye love one another.* And again, *This is my Commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*

[Reason 3] 3. Because of the image of God engraven upon them, expressed by their holy conversation.

The Apostle *John* asserts this, *That everyone who loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.* Because the child is the picture (as it were) of his father, therefore beloved for his fathers sake.

I here forbear to discover how Believers begotten *again* by Christ (as the *everlasting Father*) do bear his image; but this I propound as the reason of Christians mutual love.

As the *inward affection of Titus* was more abundant towards the *Corinthians* whilst he remembered their obedience; And as it's reported of *Beucer* and *Calvin*, that they loved all them in whom they could espy *aliquid Christi*, anything of Christ: So doubtless it is with all others who are friends unto Christ.

[Reas. 4] Because of the habitation and operation of God's Spirit in their hearts. The Apostle *Paul* calleth this love, *love in the Spirit*. And the Apostle Saint *John* discoursing of this Christian affection, and consequently of God's dwelling in us (being thereby evidenced) giveth in this as the confirmation of both, *Because he hath given us of his Spirit*.

This I place as the last Argument, because it is the true reason which maketh all the former concluding: For neither spiritual relation, nor divine injunction, nor Christ's image upon the Christians soul, could have any commanding influence to draw forth this holy love amongst Believers, if God did not co-operate by the power of the holy Ghost.

Thus from the confirmation I proceed to the Application of the Doctrine; which I shall make in four Uses; viz. 1. *Conviction*. 2. *Examination*. 3. *Comfort*. 4. *Exhortation*.

[Use 3] Hence two sorts of persons are cashier'd, as people who are strangers to friendly fellowship with Jesus Christ.

First, Such who are rather enemies, then friends unto the people of God, as their own consciences witness to themselves, and their practices proclaim to the world, this being their design and endeavor (if they could effect it) to rinate them in their comforts and lives altogether; *They have said* (in their desires, though not with their lips) *Come let us cut them off from being a Nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.* Whatsoever show of love unto Christ these persons make among men, doubtless they are adversaries to him, as sundry passages, surrounding the last quotation do clearly express. *Keep not thou silence O God, hold not thy peace, and be not still O God. Lo thine enemies make a tumult, and they that hate thee, have lift up the head, they are confederate against thee.* As Joab took Abner aside to speak peaceably, but smote him under the fifth rib that he died; So these, though they smile upon Christ's face with a salute, yet they stab his body; or (as one wittily expresseth it) they kiss the mouth and tread upon the toes. Such unfriendliness to godly Christians,

1. Argueth an unregenerate estate. *The upright in his way is an abomination to the wicked.* And he that loveth not those who are like God, *is one of the children of the Devil.*

2. And is not consistent with meetness to be made partakers of the inheritance of Saints in light. For it is not a heaven, but a hell rather to be confined to the company of such as are hated. *He that loveth not his brother abideth in death, &c.*

As this doctrine falls thus heavy upon all those who are enemies, rather than friends unto ordinary Christians: so upon such especially who are professed adversaries to the Ministers of Christ. You know how the holy Ghost doth stigmatize *Ahab*, who hated *Michaiah*, that he was a man who *sold himself to do wickedness*; whereas unto true Gospel. Believers the very *feet of them are beautiful* who bring the glad tidings of peace.

Secondly, those much more are by this doctrine set aside as no friends to Christ, who are *Boutefeuz* and *Incendiaries*, seeking to kindle coals of contentions, and to increase the flames of discontent and animosities among the people of God. This practice proveth them to be *Factors for the Devil*, and exposeth them to the wrath of God. It was an *evil spirit that made division betwixt Abimelech and the men of Shechem.* The Devil is pictured with a cloven foot, to signify that it's his work to cause and continue divisions in the world; And those who sow those *seeds of discord* are reckoned by *Solomon* among them whom the *Lord hateth, and who are an abomination unto him.*

[Use 2] From this open Conviction I proceed unto Examination, because there are many who upon trial will not be found real friends unto God's people, though they be not such notorious opposites as were described in the former Use.

Therefore take those discoveries of them who are right in their loves to real Christians.

First, from the *object of love, viz. Sanctifying grace.* There are many lovely qualifications in God's faithful servants, which an ingenuous moral man may value; as *Herod* revered *John the Baptist*; but it's holiness which is the loadstone to draw the love of the regenerate

Christian. Because *Saints, therefore excellent* in a gracious eye. And hence followeth *universality of Love* to all such, and the abounding of respect according to the increase of Grace.

Secondly, from the *qualities* of his friendship: It is accompanied,

1. With an honorable estimation of them. The heirs of heaven *do honor such who sear the Lord.*
2. And with complacency, *All my delight* (saith David) *is in them.*

Thirdly, from the *Effects* of this love; viz.

1. Readiness to perform real offices for their comfort. Thus S. Paul proved the *sincerity of the Corinthians love*, by their contribution, for the relief of poor Saints.
2. And compassionate sympathies when they are in trouble. *To him that is afflicted pity should be shown from his friend.* By this David did demonstrate his real respects unto some who ill deserved them, *When they were sick, my cloathing was sackcloth, I behaved myself as though he had been my friend.*

These short hints I leave to your amplification and faithful application, that yourselves may understand whether your love unto godly Christians be such as will evidence your regenerate estate.

[Use 3] The third Use is for the comfort of all them, who can in this grace of Christian love and friendship, approve their sincerity unto God, not doubting but that Christ himself will give the like testimony unto them herein, as he did unto *Lazarus* in the Text. *Our friend.*

For 1. It is no small privilege to partake in the love of all heavens favorites, and this love is mutual: Those who are cordial friends to Christians, are cordially beloved by Christians, which is a matter of *much joy* to them who will consider it, as in other regards, so because their *love draweth our prayers* unto God, as need requireth.

2. From hence they may infallibly conclude their regeneration by special grace. *Let us love one another*, (saith Saint John) *for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God.* Whereas persons under the power of depraved nature, *are despisers of them who are good.*

3. And, as they may upon this evidence lay claim to the comforts of grace upon earth, so may they raise confidence of future glory in heaven. *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.*

[Use 4] The last Use is exhortation, wherein two duties might be persuaded.

First, to love Christians, because they are like unto Christ, and belonging unto him in the nearest relations. The holy Ghost is often and earnest in this persuasion, *Love the brotherhood, love as brethren: and above all things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.*

As helps herein, let these meditations be molded believably upon your hearts. 1. That they are in regard of spiritual beauties, the loveliest people under the Sun, *Exceeding beautiful.* The Church is called *the fairest among women.* And this is not the judgment of persons subject

to mistakes, but even of Christ himself, which he gives in, again and again, both as a ground of his own love, and requiring attention unto his testimony. *Behold thou art faire my beloved, behold thou art fair; behold thou art fair, yea pleasant. Thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee.*

Therefore that you may beget love in your bosoms towards Saints, do not so much pore upon their blemishes as their beauties, look rather upon their virtue then their vices; as *Titus* by remembering the obedience, rather than the disobedience of the *Corinthians*, found his affections enlarged towards them.

2. That the obligations of love which the Gospel hath laid upon you, are many, and commanding. Here I will only name (without enlargement) the particulars, whereby *Saint Paul* persuadeth the Christian *Ephesians*, to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. *There is one body, and one spirit, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

3. That no persons whatsoever, have been, or are likely to be, so useful to yourselves and to the public, as these Saints and servants of the most high God. This argument *Paul* presseth upon *Philemon*, to move his affections towards converted *Onesimus*, because now (saith he) *profitable to thee and me.*

These are repairers of breaches, and restorers of paths todwell in. And these are the remnant, which if God had not left, we should have been like unto Sodom and Gomorrah.

I forbear to report how they bestead the public,

1. By their prayers. As *if Moses had not stood up in the breach to turn away God's wrath, Israel had been destroyed.*

2 And by their presence, As God told *Lot*, he could do nothing till he removed from *Sodom*. By this reason *Jonathan* speaketh to move *Saul's* bowels towards *David*, *For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel.*

Secondly, I might from this doctrine deal with all sorts by persuasion to endeavor to become godly, that they may be admitted as friends into the bosoms of God's people. Although I know that there are higher ends to be intended in undertaking the practice of piety, viz. God's glory, and our own salvation; yet this consideration under hand would not be slighted, if these particulars (which I shall only name) were well weighed.

1. That the love of God's people towards us will produce their frequent and fervent addresses unto heaven for us according to our serviceable necessities.

1. That their applications unto the Lord, are very prevalent in regard of their great favor with his Highness.

2. Their love will work them unto readiness in any other kind to serve us with their interests and abilities, counsels and communication of their experiences, as opportunity may be offered.

3. And their expressions of loving respect may administer some relief unto the faint hopes of self-suspecting souls, because they are to be looked upon as best able (in regard of their principles and experiments) to judge of the spiritual conditions of other Christians.

I proceed to the third circumstance, considerable in the first part of the Text, viz. That Christ himself doth testify the forementioned relation of friendship betwixt *Lazarus* and himself with his Disciples: *Our friend*.

[Doct. 3] *That Jesus Christ knoweth and acknowledgeth them particularly, who are friends unto himself and his peculiar people. The Lord knoweth them that are his.* This knowledge comprehends observation, approbation, and commemoration As he owned *Lazarus* here, his friend; So likewise he did his Disciples under the relation of brotherhood after his Resurrection, *Go tell my brethren.* And since his Ascension into glory, such is his respect unto all sanctified ones, *That he is not ashamed to call them brethren.*

If more clear Scripture-proof be demanded, let these two passages be observed.

1. That Christ knoweth who love him, while they are alive. This is manifest by *Peters* attestation, *Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.*

2. That the Lord remembereth after the death of his friends, that they were so during life. As dead *Lazarus* is thus spoken of, *Our friend.* And long after *Abraham's* decease, God speaking of *Israel*, thus expresseth himself, *Theseed of Abraham my friend.*

[Reasons.] I shall only point at the Reasons whence this truth may be concluded.

1. God knoweth his friends, because himself maketh them so. And therefore because he understands his own actions, he cannot be ignorant in whose bosoms there are these friendly dispositions.

2. And God will acknowledge them, because he hath undertaken to recompence them. *He is not unrighteous to forget labors of love.*

The Application followeth.

This consideration may be a cooling card unto two sorts of people.

[Use 1] 1. To all them whose consciences bear witness, that they have no friendly frame of heart unto such godly ones, whose holy conversations discover them to be chosen and called out of the world. *If men's hearts condemn them, God's is greater and knoweth all.* There will be many rejected at the last day, who have pretended much respect to Christ.

2. To all those who are ashamed to own Christ in his cause, and his friends in their holy conversation: for all these our Lord observeth, and of them he will be *ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy Angels.* And I leave it to your consideration, how miserable their case will be at the last day, when Christ who knoweth all his friends and foes, shall *separate the sheep and the goats,* And shall come to *execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly amongst them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly*

committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him; And of the individual unfriendly neglects of his necessitous servants: these must depart with a curse from Christ, and go away into everlasting punishment.

[Use 2] This truth administereth sweet comfort unto all them who are faithful friends unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and his real Relations. The *testimony of their own consciences* will in this case reflect refreshing; and this will be a great addition unto their comfort, that expressions of friendly respect both to God and his servants, are thus observed, and will be acknowledged. The Lord himself to encourage *Israel* in captivity, giveth them to understand that he will own them in that estate. No doubt it was good news to *Cornelius*, when he heard from heaven, *Thy Prayers and thine Alms are come for a memorial before God.* So the Psalmist cheereth himself by this consideration, *I have preached Righteousness in the great Congregation. Lo I have not refrained my lips, O Lord thou knowest it.*

This consolation will be admirably sweet at two seasons.

First, When we may be injuriously suspected and censured for falseness and unfaithfulness, either to God, or to his people. How well was it for *Mordecai* (when himself with his Countrymen, were decried and condemned as enemies to the State) that his fidelity in a particular instance was recorded? And to bring this home to the knowledge that God taketh of his servants sincerity: *J•b* being reproached as an hypocrite, hath recourse to this, *He knoweth the way that I take.* And *Jeremiah* being suspected to be one ill-affected towards the place where he lived, maketh this appeal to the Lord, *I have not desired the woeful day, thou knowest.*

Secondly, At the day of Judgment, when God will measure out unto people according to their ways.

The Prophet *Malachi* having mentioned both God's hearing the good conferences of such who fear his Name in evil times, and the book of Remembrance recording all; he addeth, *And these shall be minesaith the Lord of Hosts, in the day when I make up my jewels, &c.* And this cordial is contained in *Paul's Prayer for Onesiphorus*, *The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; But when he was at Rome, he sought me diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.*

But most comfortable is that full promise of Christ himself unto all such who are friendly unto him in his relations, recorded in *Matthew 25.* from *ver. 34.* to *ver. 40.* from whence these particulars are worthy consideration.

1. That he will at the last day remember all the individual offices of friendship to his members, and will mention much that themselves never minded. *And they shall say, when saw we thee an hungered, &c.*

2. That all acts of love and pity towards his relations (even the least and lowest) shall be interpreted as a special kindness shown unto himself, *Inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.*

3. And the recompense shall be exceeding great. *Then shall the King say, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you. And the Righteous shall go into eternal life.*

[Use 3] I will conclude this Doctrine (and this first part of my Text) with a double short Exhortation.

First, to real friendliness both unto Christ, and to all those who peculiarly belong unto him. Suppose ye saw Christ sitting in a chair of Majesty, and heard him speaking thus in the audience of all the inhabitants on earth, Who is on my side! Let all my faithful friends gather themselves before me: In this case would not multitudes come in with professions and protestations of love? Now it is thus in truth: for our Lord looketh from heaven, and considereth exactly who are his friends, and who are not. Therefore bethink yourselves what you will do. And if you be content to come in to Christ as faithful friends, then befriend (for his sake,) *those especially who are of his household*, for this will be observed and rewarded. *Therefore my beloved, be ye steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*

Secondly, to beware of all kinds of doubling and hypocrisy both in the profession and practice of love, whether towards Christ or faithful Christians.

It is the admonition of the Apostle, *Let love be without dissimulation*. And the Doctrine is a strong Argument to back it, because of the notice which our Savior taketh thereof. Christ himself by this consideration moveth sincerity in all services, whether of *piety towards God*, or *charity towards men*, because an eye from heaven doth espy whatsoever is done on earth with greatest secrecy.

This motive will be the more prevalent, if we mind Christ, who as the Judge of all men, will *manifest and recompense* their services according to their nature and manner of performance.

The second part of my Text followeth; in the handling whereof I shall be the shorter, because I have been so large in the former.

Lazarus sleepeth. In the division of the Text there were three things noted thence; which I shall speak unto very briefly, in three points of Doctrine.

[Doct. 1] 1. *That such who are Christ's, and his people's friends, are subject to death.*

This word [*Sleepeth*] is by our Evangelist himself thus expounded, *Jesus spake of his death*: and it is added, *Jesus saith to them plainly, Lazarus is dead*.

There is no need of Scripture quotations here, because experiences from age to age everywhere give in sufficient proof of this Truth. When the Apostle had particularized many Worthies as examples of faith and holiness, he addeth these words, *All these died*.

[Reasons.] The reasons are not only,

1. Because of *Adams sin* transmitted, *Sin entereth into the world, and death by sin*;

2. And by reason of God's determination, with reference to his own glory, many ways to be manifested in the consequence of death, *It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment,* (For upon these accounts the wicked who are Christ's enemies do die also)

But there are peculiar Reasons wherefore Christ's and the Churches friends do die.

I will not here speak unto that which was extraordinary in this death of *Lazarus*; viz. for the glory of God, that the *Son of God might be glorified thereby*, and for the sakes of them who should believe, upon the observation of Christ's power in a miraculous raising him from the dead)

I will only instance in those ends which God intends in a way more ordinary, with respect unto his people themselves.

1. Sometimes that they may be secured from common calamities coming upon the world. As men do house their cattle before the storm falleth; Thus God takes away the *righteous from the evil to come*, whereof the case of *Josiah* is a famous instance.

2. That they may rest *from their labors*, both of service and suffering, when their task and exercises are over; when their work is done, and the Lord hath sufficiently proved and purged them by variety of providences, both cross and comfortable, in this world, then he calleth them off this stage, and causeth their departure hence.

3. That they might enjoy immediate communion with Christ in heaven, which is *far better* than the best condition attainable in this life; and that their *spirits might be made perfect* in glory, before the day of the general Resurrection, when their souls and bodies shall be reunited.

There are many profitable Uses to be made of this Doctrine, which I shall only point at.

Use 1. Therefore natural death is not the greatest evil, neither are those comforts whereof death doth deprive the best good; because it is absurd to imagine that the most godly should undergo the heaviest evils, and be stripped of the chiefest comforts. This inference is obvious, and might be usefully enlarged. But I must forbear.

Use 2. Therefore death is not always to be looked upon, as a demonstration of God's anger against them who die: neither is any sickness bringing death, to be judged a sign of divine wrath and severity. *Lazarus* Christ's friend died, and it was said before, *He whom thou lovest, is sick.* This is alleged as the reason of the death of *Jeroboams* child, because *there was some goodness in him.* *Hezekiah* was sick unto death; and it's conjectured, that his disease was the Plague, both because of the swelling mentioned, and the medicine advised. *Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil;* And how sad *Jobs* condition was, I need not to relate, who yet (according to God's own testimony) was a man of incomparable piety: *Satan smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of the foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal, and he lay down among the ashes.* This I do rather note, 1. Because people are subject to censure severely those who undergo unusual afflictions. *When the Barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on Paul's hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, vengeance suffereth not him to live.* 2. Because by this uncharitable censoriousnesse,

men do expose themselves unto God's displeasure. Hence it was, that the Lord thus spake unto *Eliphaz the Temanite*, *My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends, for you have not spoken of me the thing that is right.*

Use 3. Therefore God's people should the rather hold up with hope, comfort, and patience under all sorts of their sufferings here, because their death (which is certain) will put a period, an end unto all. Though the Sea be stormy, yet the voyage is short, we shall ere long come safe to shore. For *this cause we faint not, though the outward man perish* (suppose rotting and unsavory, &c.) *for this light affliction is but for a moment.*

Do you not remember how the holy Martyr comforted his fellow-sufferer, (viz.) that death would cure the one of his blindness, and the other of his lameness? And doubtless in this sense, it may be said safely, that death unto the godly is the best Physician, curing them perfectly of all diseases whatsoever. Therefore cheer up, ye Saints of God, under all your grievances, upon the thought of death. Say to yourselves, as the good Martyr did, *But one style or two more, and then I am at my journey's end.*

Use 4. Therefore God's servants should be the more industrious in doing all the good which possibly they can, with speed, because they must die, and death will take them off their work. This is *Solomon's* inference, *Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.* How did our Savior bestir himself, *when he knew that his hour was come?* What a great deal of good work did he then dispatch in a short time? And it seemeth to be the reason, why *Paul* at *Troas* preached till *midnight*, *because he was ready to depart on the morrow.* The nearer unto the center, the swifter is the motion. Famous Doctor *Sibbs* would say, Could we suppose sorrow in heaven, this would be our sorrow there, that we did no more work for God, before we came thither to receive so great wages.

Use 5. Therefore we all should be persuaded, to improve our Christian friends, both Ministers and others▪ in all their gifts, graces and experiences, so much as may be, and that with speed, because they must die: Upon this ground the Prophet *Zacharias* quickeneth obedience, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Turn ye now from your evil ways,—Your fathers where are they? And the Prophets, do they live forever?* Our Savior is often in this exhortation, having foretold his own departure, *Yet a little while is the light with you, walk while you have the light.* As all godly ones are called *light*: So Ministers are *the lights of the world*; *John* was *a burning, and a shining light*: Beloved, death will blow out these your candles, and your Torches; therefore while they live, while they give out their shine and their light, make a profitable use of them, to God's honor and your own souls welfare.

Use 6. Therefore I hence exhort all the friends of Christ, to prepare themselves for death, and to maintain upon their Spirits a prepared posture for nature's dissolution. Although I know, that they being united unto Christ, and reconciled to God through him, they shall undoubtedly (whensoever they die) be translated from earth to heaven: yet there is something more to be minded by Christians, that they may be ready to die. How much might be comprised in *Job's* expression, *All the days of mine appointed time will I wait until my change*

shall come? I shall not undertake to discover; but I desire to leave these four words of advice, in the bosoms of Christians, in tendency unto their preparation for death. 1. Seek well grounded assurance of your interest in Christ, and of undoubted title unto heaven, through him. This foundation being laid, *Paul* could triumph over death,—*Oh death, where is thy sting? thanks be to God, who hath given us victory through Jesus Christ.* And *Simeon* could sing when ready to die, *Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* Whereas there are sad shiverings upon some gracious hearts, when death looketh in at the windows, because they question their admission into heaven, upon nature's dissolution.

2. Take heed of all scandalous sins, sins against conscience, the commission whereof may blemish Religion, and lie as blocks of offense in the ways of others. It is conceived by some Divines, that in this regard *Saint Paul* died with the more confidence, because after his conversion he was no way scandalous: *I have fought the good fight, and I have kept the faith, and henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness.* Whereas *Peter* having dishonored Christ, disgraced his profession, wounded his own conscience, and prejudiced others (how far we know not) by his fearful, threefold denial; was so full of perplexity, that Christ saw cause (before the foretelling of his death) to confirm his heart in helping on the discovery of his sincere love, notwithstanding that sad offensive Apostasy. Broken bones, though knit, will ache towards change of weather. And the remembrance of scandalous miscarriages, may occasion anguish in the bosoms of dying Saints.

3. Settle your outward estate and concernments, according to divine prudence and holy principles, remembering that you must be accountable unto the Lord, (whose stewards you are) how you dispose of the things of this life with which he hath entrusted you. This was God's own advice unto *Hezekiah*. *Thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order, for thou shalt die.*

Many good people dear unto God, upon this neglect are less comfortable to themselves, and less serviceable unto others upon their death-beds, because they suspect the many sad consequences of their not endeavoring to prevent sin and trouble by an orderly settling of all the earthly enjoyments.

4. Leave with gracious gravity and seriousness, charges and convictions upon the consciences of your nearest relations, that Christ, heaven and their immortal souls may be principally cared for. Warn your friends to beware of the sins of the times, and of their own inclinations. Communicate your experiences for future profit, prudently. Here I might expatiate upon the examples of *Jacob* blessing his sons, when on his death-bed; of *Moses* and of *Joshua* their plain dealing with *Israel*, when ready to die; yea, and of Christ himself: But I am necessitated to abbreviate these things with this hearty request, that my friendly, faithful counsel in these things may not be forgotten.

And do not (I pray you,) do not defer these things, for death may steal upon you suddenly, unexpectedly, as a man falls asleep sometimes, when he thought not of it.

This lets in the next point.

Doct. 2. That Christ's friends by death, do fall asleep. The Protomartyr *Stephen* his death is thus expressed: *Hefell asleep*. And the Apostle *Paul* doth often in the fifteenth Chapter of his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, attest this truth.

This sleep is not to be applied unto the soul after its departure from the body (as some fondly dream;) for it goeth to *God* immediately, forth-with *enjoyeth fellowship with Christ*, and *becometh perfect*; But it belongs to the dead body, laid in the grave, which in this regard is called a sleeping place. I shall not dilate upon the resemblance betwixt death and sleep, which is fully done by others: But I will only touch upon two things which are here intended. 1. Death is a sleep unto the godly, because thereby they are laid to rest. There is *ataking of rest by sleep*. *They shall rest in their beds*, saith the Prophet, speaking of the death of righteous ones. *And they rest from their labors*, (so saith the Spirit) *who die in the Lord*. 2. Because their bodies shall be raised, as men are awakened out of sleep: This is expressed in the words which immediately follow the Text: *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep*. And the Apostle *Paul* is much upon this Metaphor, in that place where he undertaketh to prove the Resurrection.

Use 1. Therefore true believers, real Saints should not be afraid to die.

I grant that death unto nature is the King of fears, and it hath its poisonous sting with which it will wound the wicked, whom it doth usher into hell. This (with many other useful truths relating unto death) is admirably laid open of late by a worthy servant of Christ; and it would be a digression, if I should undertake that discovery: But I only move God's people, to arm themselves against the sinking fear of death, because unto them it is no worse then falling asleep. And indeed there is great need of this counsel among God's own servants everywhere, who like foolish children are afraid to put off their clothes, and go to bed in a dark chamber. Herein the forementioned Author, and others, have administered much good help, in which regard I may be silent.

Use 2. Neither let us mourn immoderately because of the death of our Christian friends; seeing they are only fallen asleep. When our Savior had spoken the words of the Text, *Then said his Disciples, If he sleep, he shall do well*. And by the argument the Apostle seeks to prevail with the *Thessalonians*, that they might not mourn excessively upon such occasion. For *those who sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him*. Then he addeth, *We shall be ever with the Lord; wherefore comfort one another with these words*. Love moveth joy, when our weak, weary, pained, diseased friends are fallen into a sound sweet sleep. This consideration therefore should cheer our drooping spirits, in reference unto godly friends, who died in the Lord. Let us mind this the rather, because God who propoundeth this ground of comfort, observeth both when we have need of this cordial, and also what improvement we make thereof, as it followeth in the next and last Doctrine, which remains to be handled.

Doct. 3. The Lord knoweth when his own and his Churches friends do fall asleep by death. As Christ, though now at a bodily distance from *Bethany*, the place of *Lazarus* his abode, yet told his Disciples of his death, *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth*. As God spake this to *Joshua*, *My servant Moses is dead*.

This truth may be concluded strongly by these arguments.

Reas. 1. Because Christ hath the *keys of death* in keeping; the soul cannot be let out of the body, without his leave. And he knoweth all his own grants.

Reas. 2. Because he also hath power in heaven, keeping (as it were) the gate hereof, into which none can enter without his allowance. This is manifest by his promise to the penitent thief: *This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.* Therefore he exactly observeth, when any persons or person hath admission thither.

Use 1. Hence the deity of Christ may be proved undeniably; for though there be thousands dying hourly in the several places of the world, yet Christ knows particularly, 1. Both their qualification, whether his friends and his Churches friends, or no. 2. And the time, when everyone of them giveth up the ghost. As the instance under discourse doth evince. 1. He understood infallibly that *Lazarus* was a faithful friend, both unto himself and his servants: *Our friend Lazarus.* 2. And though he was not corporeally present with *Lazarus* in the place where he died, yet he knew without any creature-intelligence, that now he was fallen asleep by death.

Use 2. This truth speaketh manifold comforts unto God's children: For, 1. This hints his respect to them; *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.* He will not suffer any of them to lose life without his special observation thereof, together with causes and concomitants therein considerable.

2. It suggests his care of every soul; when it removeth out of the body the place of its habitation, it shall not miscary or be lost through Christ's regardlessnesse. Though thousands of devils may watch to intercept the soul, yet Christ who observeth when it leaveth the body, will undoubtedly, according to his charge and promise, secure its Passages to glory. This is a Cordial to the poorest Christian, for there is no respect of persons with the Lord. *It came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom.* And,

3. It may relieve the sad hearts of godly ones, mourning for their loss in the death of their dear Christian friends; for their God and Savior is quickly and fully acquainted with this their affliction: he saw when our beloved relations breathed out their last gasp. Questionlesse it cheered *Hagar*, when she understood that God took notice, when the bottle was empty; and heard the cry of *Ishmael*, because he wanted water. And you may be confident, that Christ who understands when your Parents, your Pastors, your yoakfellows, your friends die; he doth also consider what counsel, what comfort, what supports, what supplies, what encouragements you be deprived of by means of their death. Is not this a choice Cordial to God's children, that *their heavenly Father knoweth they need such things?*

Use 3. Lastly, this Doctrine yields matter of seasonable and needful admonition. Therefore upon the death of God's servants, we should seek after such dispositions, as may be pleasing unto his Majesty, who observeth together with such providences, how we are affected therewith.

Here then I would advise two particulars, wherein I entreat the Lord to make us serious.

1. To be rightly affected with such like dispensations, laying to heart the public loss sustained, when the friends of Christ and his servants are taken away by death. The Lord observeth and complaineth, when people do not herein answer his expectation, *The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart.* And our love unto the public, together with the consideration of the great use of such persons, would help forward our humiliation in such cases. You heard before that they are friends to Christ, and much befriended by Christ, yea, that they are lovers of the cause and people of God. Now is not the death of such to be bewailed? When *Elijah* went up by a whirlwind to heaven, *Elisha* saw it, and he cried, *My father, my father, the Charet of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.* And when *Elisha* was sick, *Joash* (though not a good man) wept over him, and said, *Oh my father, my father, the Charet of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.* Because they believed that the public safety depended much upon the interest of godly men in God, therefore their death was thus lamented. And truly such friends of God are the chief stakes in the hedge, and main pillars in the building, both of Church and Common-wealth. Therefore in such cases, it may well become us to imitate the *devout men, who carried Stephen to his grave, and made great lamentation for him.*

2. To imitate the deceased Saints in their graces and holy conversation; we should lay their lives, as so many fair copies before our eyes, and labor to write after them, by conscientious imitation. The Apostle having given in a catalogue of Old-Testament-believers, who in their several places and ages did worthily, he earnestly persuadeth Christians to be followers of them. And seeing God hath given us to behold the beauty of holiness, and the power of godliness in their courses, it will much aggravate our sin, if we labor not to be like them.

This leadeth me to that which you all look for, (*viz*) to spread before you the exemplary life of Master *Jeremiah Whitaker* the late Pastor of this place, whose Funeral hath occasioned this great Assembly and my Sermon; in reference unto whom, that I may speak unto your edification, I will (with the change of one word only) undertake my Text again, *Our friend Whitaker sleepeth.* And truly I am very confident, that if Jesus Christ was here in his bodily presence among us, he would not be unwilling to speak these words, *Our friend Whitaker sleepeth.* Before I begin my Narrative, I crave leave to premise this, (*viz.*) that though (in some respects) I know a more meet man might have been chosen for this work; who could have done it more exactly and gracefully: yet I acknowledge that myself am not the unmeetest, considering my long and familiar acquaintance with him, especially if this be added, (*viz.*) that in Summer was twelve-month—I riding with him unto *Tunbridge Wells*, he was pleased to give me the History of his life, from his youth till that time; and since that time, it is well known to many, that no one hath had more frequent and familiar converse with him, than myself. Oh how often, and with what meltings hath he poured forth his heart into my bosom, in reference to all concernments, personal, relative, private, public, comfortable and uncomfortable, which have deeply affected him! My forgetfulness will necessitate the omission of many things, and my faithfulness with prudence command me to conceal much of that, which to my heart spake aloud his great goodness and high commendations. I will

suggest the sum of what I judge most convenient to discover, in the report whereof my soul desireth (I hope) to honor God, and to profit his people.

He was borne at *Wakefield* in *Yorkshire* in the year 1599. When he was sixteen years old, he was sent to *Cambridge*, and placed a Sizar in *Sydney* College, where he was much valued for his pregnant parts, and Scholarship. At twenty years of age, having commenced Bachelor of Arts, he was sent unto *Okeham* (the chief Town in *Rutlandshire*) to teach the free-School there. About four years after he married *Chephtzibah* the daughter of Master *William Peachy* Minister of *Okeham*, an eminent linguist, a godly man, and (as I am informed) a painful Preacher of the Gospel, who dearly loved, and highly valued Master *Whitaker*, from his first acquaintance to his end; whose affections to him, wrought on the marriage betwixt him and his daughter. By whom God gave him four sons and three daughters; one son died at *Cambridge*, two are ordained Ministers, and the other is to be educated for the Ministry. Having stayed about seven years at *Okeham*, he was removed unto a Pastoral charge at *Stretton* in the same County, where he continued thirteen years, from whence he was called to *Mary Magdalene Bermondsey*, (with the approbation of many godly Ministers, whom he consulted in the case) where he after twelve years spent in his Ministerial charge finished his course upon the first day of *June*, 1654. and fell asleep in Jesus. He was betwixt fifty five and fifty six years old when the Lord was pleased to take him unto himself. He was buried in *Bermondsey* Church *June* the sixth, with expressions of much love from a very great multitude of godly persons, both Ministers and others of several ranks and conditions, who attended his corps to the grave. By reason of much study, and manifold employments in his calling, he was filled with various bodily distempers from his youth. In the latter part of his time, he was for sundry years exercised frequently with the painful diseases of the gout and of the stone. Notwithstanding the reiteration of these tormenting pains, he attended upon his Ministry both at home and abroad, while he was able to creep into the Pulpit, or to crawl unto the Congregation.

But about the beginning of *November* last past, the violent pain of the stone did in such measure and manner arrest him, that from that time, he continued God's prisoner in his bed, or chamber, till he was set free by a long expected death. Most Physicians in the City were consulted, and were from time to time very ready to serve him with their advice: who did unanimously conclude, his sharp pains to proceed originally from an ulcer in the kidneys, but immediately from an ulcer in the neck of the bladder, caused by a continual flux of ulcerous matter dropping down upon that part. And by reason of the acutenesse and quickness of the sense there, his pains were almost altogether in that place, though the fountain of them was from the kidneys. Towards his end, (about two months) the pain grew more extreme, yet divine indulgence vouchsafed some abatements and intermissions, both in the night & day. As his death drew nigh, his fits of pain were more frequent, either every half hour, or many times every quarter, yea, two or three times in a quarter of an hour, whereby nature being quite spent he died in the Lord. After his death, Master *Holiard* opened his body in the presence of D^r. *Cox*, D^r. *Micklethwaite*, and D^r. *Bevoyr*, (some other more ancient Doctors would have been there, if either their being out of Town, or present urgent occasions had not hindered) who found both his kidneys full of ulcers, and one was swelled

to an extreme bigness, by the abundance of purulent matter in it. Upon the neck of his bladder, they found a stone, (which was about an inch and an half long, and one inch broad, weighing above two ounces, when first taken out, and withal, an ulcer which was gangrened, and this was judged the cause of his death. All other parts of his body were found firm and sound. Now that which I shall relate concerning him in all those places and changes of life wherein God disposed of him, I will cast under the several heads upon which I did discourse in my Sermon. And this method I do the rather resolve upon, both because it best suits with mine own thoughts, and may prove the most profitable unto them who shall be pleased to read the Sermon, when they perceive the main parts thereof, applied and verified in this providential Text, *Our friend Whitaker sleepeth.*

The first Head, *He loved Christ.* He loved Christ, 1. Quickly. 2. Strongly. 3. Constantly. The Lord did win his heart unto himself, while he was a Scholar at *Wakerfield*, where he had his education. For then and there his affections did flow out towards those who were most religiously disposed, with whom he went frequently eight or ten Miles to hear a waking-soul-warming Sermon, and he was wont to join with them in prayers and other holy exercises. And being able to take Sermon-notes, both understandingly and largely, he was very helpful to Christians in the repeating of what they had publicly heard, being from his childhood full of affections in whatsoever business he undertook. Thus this plant did both blossom and put forth fruit quickly, which providence did afterwards make a very fruitful tree. For the more clear discovery of his abundant love to Jesus Christ, I will give these demonstrations.

First, from his early, and constant vigorous workings of heart towards the calling and work of the Ministry; because he always conceived, that therein a Christian might enjoy most fellowship with Christ, and do him the best service. And he considered Christ's speech to *Peter, If thou love me, feed my sheep, feed my lambs.*

Here I judge these particulars very worthy of consideration. 1. That while he was a Grammar-Scholar, this calling he chose; and though his father endeavored often and earnestly to divert his thoughts from the Ministry, yet he was unmovable in his desires to be a Minister. 2. That he never repented of this his choice, but would all his life long, upon all occasions, *magnify this his office.* I have many times heard him speak these words, *I had much rather be a Preacher of the Gospel, than an Emperor.* And when a motion was once made to him for a Mastership in the University, he readily returned this answer, *My heart doth more desire to be a constant Preacher, than to be the Master of any College in the world.* 3. That when he was motioned to marry her whom God afterwards made his wife; he was the rather inclined to accept the motion, because she was daughter to a pious, painful, learned Minister of the Gospel, and would occasionally tell his friends, that he was the better pleased with his choice, because of that relation. 4. That he was never so well pleased with any employment, as that of his Ministry. In the Pulpit he still was like a fish in the water. Though many times he went halting and full of pain thither; yet he would not manifest any sense of distemper, while he was there. How often hath he gone upon crutches unto the Congregation of his own people, to fulfil his Ministry! yea, once (at least of my knowledge) he adventured to Preach

at *Michaels Cornhill*, when he was scarce able to get into the Pulpit, and his friends with much difficulty helped him out of the Church homeward. 5. That when he was by extreme pains taken off from his Ministry, he would sometimes profess unto some special friends, that the pain felt was not so grievous to his Spirit, as his inability (by reason thereof) to manage his wonted work. Many times these were his words, *If I could but Preach, I should be much better*. And he would rejoice with cheerfulness, and thankfulness, when in the times of his weakness, he found not himself more distempered by his preaching, and would mention such experiences as arguments to move his friends to yield unto his preaching, when they did dissuade it as prejudicial 6. He did zealously, upon all occasions, both in public and private defend the office of a Gospel Ministry, and especially amongst those persons, and in such places, where (as he conceived) there was most need. This passage fell from him with affection, in one of his morning Lectures at *Westminster*: Though I have read and heard of some good men, who unadvisedly in their passion have persecuted the persons of some godly Ministers, (as *Asa was angry with the Seer, and cast him into prison*) yet I never knew, I never read, nor heard of any godly person, who did dare to oppose the calling of the Ministry. And whereas at the end of his Sermon, a soldier (expressing himself dissatisfied with the Sermon) came to him in private and asked him, whether he meant this Ministry of *England*, as now constituted? he returned this answer, *Although I will not justify the calling of every individual Minister in the Church of England (as you dare not justify the Saintship of every member in your independent Congregations)* yet I will be ready when and where you please to *maintain the office and calling of England's Ministry at this day*. 7. And that he continued unchanged in this his estimation of the calling Ministerial, may be manifested by one passage in his last Will and Testament, (though it was not long) which I will put down in his own words, writ with his own hand: *For my son Jeremiah, my desire is, that he be bred a Scholar, and that the Lord would spiritually incline his heart, freely to give up himself to the Lord, to serve him in the work of the Ministry, which calling and employment (though now despised) I do esteem above all other in the world, and do commend it to all mine, that if the Lord bless them with sons, they would commend this calling to their posterity*. Before I pass from this my first demonstration of his love to Christ, I heartily desire, that this may be seriously considered, whether there be not herein much to credit and encourage the Ministry of the Gospel; That a learned man, and so eminent for piety, who also had thoroughly studied the Controversies of the times against the Ministry, should upon his death-bed, give such a testimony unto it, when he daily expected to make up his account before God, and also give so great encouragement unto his posterity, to undertake this calling now, even now when such disgrace is cast upon it, and when the Ministers settled maintenance is threatened to be taken from them? And may not those men who know Mr. *Whitaker's* worth be hereby awed, and moved to take heed how they oppose or slight that calling of men, whom he (living and dying) judged to be so highly honored by God himself? To all this add, that it was an ordained Ministry, which he thus valued, as is evident by these two things (as by many living testimonies,) viz. 1. That he joined with the Classis whereof he was a member in ordaining Ministers. 2. That he had an hand in the book lately published by the Province of *London* in the defense of such a Ministry, not only by assent, but also by assistance.

Secondly, his love to Christ was proclaimed, by his unwearied laboriousnesse in his Ministerial services. 1. While he continued Schoolmaster at *Okeham*, he undertook a Lecture there weekly, besides many Sermons preached occasionally in neighbor Congregations. 2. During his abode at *Stretton*, besides his Pastoral employment twice every Sabbath, his constant weekly Preaching at *Okeham*, he was a principal prop to hold up the Lectures in the neighbourhood. His manner was to set apart every holy day (if but one in the week) as a day of seeking God, in reference to the necessities of the times, and no man was more frequent in assisting in days of humiliation in private, both in *Rutland shire*, and the adjacent Counties, when ever invited thereto. 3. And since God's good providence brought him to the neighbourhood of *London*, he was *in labors more abundant* (2 Cor. 11. 23.) For the most part, his set task was four Sermons weekly, (*viz.*) two at home, and two elsewhere, (*viz.*) at *Westminster* and *Christ's Church London*, or *Westminster* and *Stepney*, (since he laid down *Christ's Church* Lecture) together with two Sermons every quarter at *Michael Cornhill*. Add hereto his Preaching monthly at the morning-exercise, or assistance on the fast day at the conclusion thereof, besides occasional Sermons for preparation to the Sacrament at his own place, and at Funerals, both at home and abroad: Yea, I will close up the evidencing of the *labors of his love*, with this true report, (*viz.*) that he would never deny any motion for preaching, and praying, if God gave bodily ability, and other unavoidable occasions did not necessarily hinder. Many week-days he preached twice, yea, then when he attended the work of the Assembly of Divines, (*viz.*) the morning-exercise, either at *Westminster* or elsewhere, & afterwards in the afternoon. I here remember the commendation which *St. Paul* gave of *Epaphroditus*, in his Epistle to the *Philippians*; *For the work of the Lord he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life*. How far this is appliable to painful *Mr. Whitaker*, multitudes do well know, yea, many conceive that his painful distempers (which hastened his removal from us) were caused and increased by his many constant labors in this kind. Neither were his Sermons jejune and dry, because thus frequent; but always full of Scripture strength, savoury & affectionate, as his Auditors will testify.

Thirdly, Such was his love to Christ, that his public Employments did not take him off from family-duties, nor from more private exercises of communion with God. His ordinary course was, together with prayers, to expound some parts of the holy Scriptures in his own family twice every day: and beside other parts of Scripture which he daily read in secret, he usually read over all the Epistles in the Greek Testament twice every fournight: yea when by reason of pain and weakness he himself could not read, he herein employed others for his help. Hence it was that he was a man mighty in the Scriptures (like unto *Apollo*, *Acts* 18. 24.) as was observed by all who conversed with him. And this course he earnestly commended to the practice of his dearly beloved eldest son, as an excellent means to make him both a ready and a profitable Preacher.

Fourthly, His courage in *Christ's Cause* did much commend his love, whereof I will suggest these evidences.

1. While he lived in *Rutland-shire*, he refused to read the book allowing of sports upon the Sabbath, though it was with commands and threatenings pressed upon him. And when he

was called to give in his answer, about the collection amongst Ministers to maintain the War against *Scotland*, he openly told the Bishop or Chancellor that his conscience could not yield thereto. This his answer exposing him to great danger both to lose living and liberty in those times, a neighbor through misguided love (compassionating him and his family) paid the money, and subscribed Mr. *Whitaker's* name without his knowledge. This he was long ignorant of; and when he heard it, he expressed, with many complaints, much grief of heart.

2. Since our times of woeful desertion and Apostasy both from Gospel-truths and practices, he would undauntedly in private conferences and in his public Ministry express his dislike, yea, detestation thereof to the faces of them who too much favored Error, Heresies and ranting courses, though he knew that thereby he did run hazards and procure many frowns. He refused to subscribe the late Engagement, though thereby he was in danger to be taken off from his *Westminster* Lecture. And if his Sermons preached there, upon *Ephes. 2. 2, 3.* (concerning men's walking according to the course of this world, &c. fulfilling the lusts of the flesh &c.) could be collected and published, thereby it would be manifest that M^r. *Whitaker* in love unto his Lord Christ, was a man of good metal and magnanimity.

3. One more private proof of the good man's valiant love to Christ I will make bold to insert; because myself can knowingly attest its truth▪ Since these stormy days, wherein the liberty and livelihood of Ministers have been maligned and struck at, he riding with an intimate friend by *Tiburn*, (which he had not known or not observed before) demanded what that was? and answer being made this is *Tiburn*, where many Malefactors have lost their lives, he stopped his horse, and uttered these words with great affection, *O what a shame is it that so many thousands should die for the satisfaction of their lusts, and so few be found willing to lay down their lives for Christ▪ Why should not we in a good Cause, and upon a good call, be ready to be hanged for Jesus Christ? It would be everlasting honor; and it is a thousand times better to die for Christ, to be hanged, to be burnt for Christ, then to die in our beds.* And how much he condemned life, in respect unto Christ Jesus, there are many who from his own mouth can witness.

Fifthly, So great was his love unto his God and Savior, that he maintained and expressed high estimations, and honorable thoughts of his Majesty, when under tormenting providences, nothing being more feared then this, lest he should do or speak any dishonors unto his Name. These were some breathings of his large love, when through pain he was, as in the fire, and upon the Rack, *Good Lord, keep me from dishonoring thy Name by impatency. O, who would not even in burnings have honorable thoughts of God! Who that knoweth thee would not fear thee, O Lord, love thee, and honor thee! Lord, thou givest me no cause to have any hard thought of thee! Blessed be God, there is nothing of hell in all this. Blessed be his Name for Jesu• Christ, and the revelation of the everlasting Gospel. Who knoweth the power of thy wrath? If it be so heavy upon thy servant here, how heavy shall it be to all those who shall endure it without mixture? Blessed be God for the peace of mine inward man, when my outward man is so full of trouble. This is a bitter cup, but it is of my Fathers mixture, and shall I not drink it? yea, Lord, through thy strength I will: this is my burden; and I will bear it.* Upon any abatement of his pains, he was constantly much in blessing God, using these and such like expressions▪ *O! what a mercy is it that there is any mitigation, any intermission! Lord, make me thankful.* And turning himself towards those who stood by, he

would speak thus. *O help me to be thankful! O lift up a prayer for me that I may be thankful! O what a mercy is this! How much worse might this affliction have been! I might have been distracted or laid roaring under disquietness of spirit.* By these workings of his spirit (which myself and others do well remember, and I could heartily wish that all the rest had been recorded) who perceiveth not the sparklings of his love to God? I will annex one more, which hath much affected my heart, viz. these words he hath often spoken to me; *Brother, through mercy I have not one repining thought against God.*

Now upon all these considerations, I appeal unto the consciences of all ingenuous ones, whether there be not ground▪ to believe, that Christ (if here with us) would give him the honor of this compellation, *My loving friend Whitaker.*

The second head of my Narrative followeth, That *Christ loved Mr. Whitaker.* (For as I discovered in my Sermon, this love is always mutual.) The discovery hereof will be clear upon a double account, viz.

1. Because of the graces with which he was enriched.
2. Because of the Comforts with which he was refreshed.

As for the first. Love-tokens are real messengers of his love who sendeth them: and what surer signs of divine love then the graces of the holy Ghost? Now of these the Lord had given him, in measure, more then ordinary. That which was hinted before in his love to the Lord Jesus, (expressed by laborious, courageous endeavors to advance his praise, and to continue communion with him) doth manifest that he was very rich in Grace; but thereunto I will add five more graces which were very shining in his crown.

1. *Tenderness of heart.* Who ever knew man of a more melting frame before God, whether in confessions, petitions, or thanksgivings? Is there any one living that can say, I have sometimes joined with him in Prayer, and he shed no tears? How did his own sinfulness, (though no more then the ordinary imperfections of the fairest Saints on earth) the evils of the times, and the testimonies of God's displeasure breaking out, break his heart into pieces? Truly I believe that for the space of many years, he did never come off from the serious consideration of these things with dry eyes. And how many thousands would account it a sign of much love from Christ, if they could find such thawings in their frozen breasts?

2. *Meekness of spirit.* With this precious Jewel he was adorned richly. Who ever saw him transported by passion, on a fire through foolish anger, or disguised by discontent? Though he would be warm for God; yet he was a man of a cool spirit, meek, like *Moses*, in all his own concernments. Among many other manifestations hereof, this one was remarkable, that when upon warm disputes with men of dissenting principles and opinions, his spirit was so even, that unhandsome provocations would not discompose him. Hereof I could give instances; but I must forbear.

3. For *Patience* he may well be called a second *Job*. Many who saw him under his racking pains, so frequently reiterated, and so long continued, are confident that God did put him,

and keep him in his furnace to be a pattern of patience unto posterity. It's true, he did roar many times till his throat was dry, but whoever heard him speak one word of murmuring or discontent because of God's afflicting providence? He himself indeed would sometimes through tenderness charge himself of impatience, because he made a noise, whereas that expressed only Nature's sensibleness, not sinful forwardness. And when (accusing himself in that kind causelessly) he was minded of Christ's roarings, though free from all sin, he would be silent. I confess that in desires to be dissolved, he would take up *Jobs* complaint: *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul? Which long for death, but it cometh not, and dig for it more then for hid treasures, &c. for my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like waters,* Job 3. 20, 24. But he always concluded with submission unto the good pleasure of God. When he had been asked how he did? this was frequently his answer, *The bush always burning, but not consumed; and though my pains be above the strength of nature, yet they are not above the supports of grace.*

4. The Lord gave him so much of the *Spirit of grace and supplications*, that his soul was never out of tune for that service. Most of his words when under torment, were holy complaints and prayers to God: some of them I will record, that they may not be forgotten. *O my God help! Father of mercies pity! Do not contend forever, consider my frame, that I am but dust! My God that hath made heaven and earth help me! O give me patience, and inflict what thou wilt! If my patience was more, my pain would be less. Dear Savior, where are thy bowels! Why doest thou make me an astonishment to myself and others? Why doest thou cover thyself with a thick cloud, that our prayers cannot pass? Blessed is the man that endureth temptation. Lord, this is a sad temptation; stand by me and say, It is enough! Am I not thy servant? Consider, Lord, that I am thy servant. O these bitter waters of Marah! Lord, drop sweet comfort into these bitter waters of Marah. O the blood of sprinkling, Lord: Lord, the blood of sprinkling! That blood which extinguisheth the fire of thine anger, O that it might allay my burning pains! I am in a fiery furnace; Lord, be with me, as thou wast with the three children, bring me out refined from sin. When I have sailed through the Ocean of these pains, and look back, I see none of these can be wanting. I fly unto thee, O God, hide me under the shadow of thy wings till these terrible storms be over-past.*

5. God added *Humility* as a crown to all his other Graces, which did shine very bright in the eyes of all who were acquainted with him. Hence it was, that he would converse familiarly with the poorest Christians, and with them who were of low parts for knowledge. This his ordinary expression of himself before God, spake loud: *Poor worm, sinful wretch! O pardon my transgressions, for they are very great.* Hereupon he would weep much when he was told how much he was prayed for, wondering at God's goodness, that so worthless a wretch should have so much interest in the hearts and prayers of the people of the Lord. And his language in his Will reports how little he was in his own eyes: The words are there, *I desire that at my Funeral there may be no pomp, but that so poor a worthless wretch may be privately laid in the ground.*

Thus from the rare Graces received, I proceed to the rich Comforts vouchsafed, as manifestations of Christ's singular love towards this Saint of the most High God. O what kisses of Christ's mouth, and what embraces from the arms of his love were bestowed upon

this man of God! He enjoyed all along his afflicted condition, an uninterrupted assurance of God's fatherly love in Christ. In his addresses to God he constantly claimed propriety, *My God, and my Father*. His inward peace and joy, were the support of his heart under all his g•inding pains. He was confident of mercies mixtures with all his grievous distempers, not at all doubting of the Sanctification of them through grace. Thus he spake many times in his Applications to God: *Consider and save me, for I am thine. How long, Lord, how long shall I not be remembered? yea, I am remembered, blessed be thy Name. This is a fiery chariot, but it will carry me to heaven. Blessed be God that hath supported me hitherto, and he that hath delivered, will deliver. Thou, Lord, never forgettest them that put their trust in thee.* Always when the extremity of pain was over, he would, with smiles speak of God's mercies. Though trembling took hold upon him when his violent pains began, yet he would with confidence say, *Now in the strength of the mighty God I will undergo these pains. O my God put under thine everlasting arms, and strengthen me.* Many times he hath told me, that notwithstanding all his rentings and roarings (from which he expected no deliverance but by death) he would not for a thousand worlds change estates with the greatest man on earth, whom he looked upon as in a way of sin. And let me tell you one providence of fatherly indulgence towards him▪ That *Satan never shook his confidence, nor assaulted his hopes, all the time of his tiresome, irksome exercise.* There is but one passage more which I shall point at under this second head of my Narrative, viz. That he accounted all these inward chearings the fruits of Prayers made for him, though God saw cause to deny that ease and recovery to his body which was much begged; withal valuing those spiritual cordials much beyond deliverance from the Gout and Stone, and death itself.

All these things I have the rather mentioned, to prevent that discouragement or offense, which some may be too apt to take at the continuance of his wasting, tormenting pains, notwithstanding his own godliness, and the uncessant Prayers, both ordinary and extraordinary, which were made unto God in his behalf: for he found the sweet fruits of them in his own bosom, when he felt the continuance and increase of his bodily griefs.

I proceed to the third head of my promised Narrative, which will speak Mr. *Whitaker's* love to his fellow-Christians. He was a man made up (as it were) of love: His delight was in the Saints upon earth, whom he esteemed most excellent, and their society was a constant cordial unto his spirit. His frequent visits of them who were in trouble, and his stirring up others to the like practice, were testimonies of his friendship. His love was not only verbal, but real. Truly I know no man of his estate more liberal. He would often say. *It's a brave thing when a man with a full estate hath a charitable heart.* Sometimes upon special occasions he himself hath given away all the money he had in his house. It was not unusual with him to give twenty shillings unto a poor Saint, and he had many experiences of God's gracious returns in such cases. By his Will he gave 20. l. to the godly poor of his own Parish.

There were two cases wherein his loves were most enlarged to the people of God, whereof I shall give in two instances. The one when their sufferings were public. He hath often told me that *England's* late breach with *Scotland*, and the blood shed, with other sad consequences thereof, had taken such impression upon his heart, that the sorrow would never be removed till his death. And the sufferings both in *Holland* and *England*, upon our late Sea-fights, were

great burdens upon his spirit. The other case was in reference to the inward perplexity of such as were afflicted in mind. Having moved me the week before his death to bestow a visit upon one in that condition, the morning before his death, (when speech was grievous in respect of his weaknesses) he asked me whether I had remembered the party troubled in spirit? which is a remarkable evidence of strong loves. Besides all that hath been mentioned, I could relate his many wrestlings with God to prevent the flood of troubles which he apprehended the Protestant Churches are now in danger to be overflowed withal; as also his compassionate respect to Congregations in the Country, who were like sheep wandering upon the barren mountains without a shepherd.

The fourth head of my Narrative should hold forth the love which he received from the Saints of God. What godly heart that either knew him, or heard of his fame, did not love him? I will not speak of the frequent friendly visits of the Religious ones in the neighborhood round about. I never heard of any man so much prayed for, both in public and private. There was no particular case so frequently, so affectionately spread before God in most of the Congregations about *London* as his. Three days were set apart by Ministers, and many other praying friends to seek God in his behalf; one in private, and two in public, which also were observed much better then such days usually are; yea, in remote Countries, besides the ordinary prayers made for him, there were some Fasts kept, with special reference to his affliction. The multitude of people attending his Funeral, with the many weeping eyes, did witness how much he was beloved. Here I might remember the readiness of *London*-Ministers to supply his place at home, and Lectures elsewhere, as also the willingness of fellow-Lecturers at *Westminster* to preach for him there, when he himself by reason of weakness could not possibly do his own work: But I may be silent, for still everywhere upon the naming of him, love is some way discovered by such who had knowledge of him.

Though I have related much concerning the worth of this good man; yet my conscience tells me, that I have rather been defective then excessive in my relation. I have not told you of his humility, expressed by fears, lest God's people praying for him should speak too well of him before the Lord. Neither have I mentioned his self-denial, never daring to look after great matters in the world, whereby he condemneth many whose self-seeking in earthly advantages, rendereth them very offensive and unsavory in the Church of Christ. Towards his end neither faith nor patience did abate, though his grievous pains were more frequent and violent; in which regards his longings for death were much increased, yet attended with holy submission unto the good pleasure of God: These were some of his expressions, *O my God, break open the prison-door, and set my poor captive soul free; but enable me willingly to wait thy time! I desire to be dissolved; never did any man more desire life then I do death! When will that time come, when I shall neither sin more, nor sorrow more? When shall mortality put on immortality? When shall this earthly be dissolved, that I may be clothed upon with that house which is from heaven? Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors, and follow the Lamb wheresoever he goeth.*

The Sabbath seven-night before God released him, though his pains were very sharp, yet he bestowed most part of the time of public Ordinances in prayer with those that were with him, and his petitions were most for Ministers, that God would clothe his Ordinances with his own power, and enable Ministers to speak unto the souls of people. Then also he did with many tears bewail his detainment from the Sanctuary and Sabbath-opportunities, which had been his delight; professing also, that his being taken off from service was a greater affliction to him then all his pains. And because this apprehension, (*viz.* his unserviceableness) did much afflict him; therefore this was often suggested to him, (which also was relieving to his spirit,) *viz.* that now by the practice of Faith, Patience, Contentment, and Spiritualnesse (which he had formerly preached) he was very profitable unto them who did visit him, and might also prove very advantageous unto others who might be acquainted therewith, through God's grace by Christ. So great was his tender respect unto his friends, that when his pains were coming with violence, he would entreat them to with-draw from him, that they might not be grieved with his roarings. He would often bless God, that his compassionate friends were not necessitated to abide within the reach of his doleful lamentations.

I hearing, the night before God translated him, that he was not likely to live another day, I went early in the morning to take my leave of him (whom my soul loved) and found his bodily strength almost spent. And because he could not speak without difficulty, I spake the more unto him, in relation to the approach of his happy hoped for change: my discourse through God's mercy was refreshing unto his spirit. Minding him that many of his friends intended to set apart that day in seeking the Lord for him, I asked him in what things especially he desired to be remembered before the Throne of Grace? His answer was, *Do not complain, but bless God for me, and entreat him to open the prison-door.* Hereupon laying my hand upon his cold hand, covered with a clammy sweat, I took my last farewell with an aking heart: and upon my departure from him, these were his last words unto me, *Brother, I thank you, I pray God bless you, and I bless God for you.*

That day was spent in addresses to God for him at *Peters Cornhill*, where M^r. *Newcomen* quickened and guided our prayers in his Sermon from *John 11.* wherein he insisted especially upon these words, *Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick, ver. 4.* And M^r. *Jenkyn* endeavored to moderate and regulate our sorrows from *Luke 23. 28. Weep not for me.*

Thus his friends having by prayers, with praises (on his behalf) given him up to God, and having prepared their hearts for their loss of him, the Lord was pleased that evening to take him unto himself.

And now *our friend Whitaker sleepeth. 1. He is dead, that speaketh sorrow. 2. His death is a sleep, this yieldeth relief.*

First, His death is ground of lamentation, because Christ and his Church have now one friend less on earth to be serviceable unto both. I would awaken your hearts unto sensibleness under this great loss, and therefore wish that his great parts, many interests, frequent

opportunities of service, together with the unmovable faithfulness of his heart to improve all for good, may be duly remembered, viz.

1. As for his Abilities, he was an universal Scholar, both in the Arts and Original Languages; by much study he had digested the whole Body of Divinity, he was well acquainted both with the Schoolmen and the Fathers, a good Disputant, judicious in Cases of Conscience, and second unto none in acquaintance with the holy Scripture.

2. He had much interest in the hearts of persons of chiefest places and power in the Nation: for the plainness of his spirit, together with the power of godliness (which did shine in his conversation) gained him much Authority in the consciences of all sorts with whom he conversed, whether in the City or Country.

3. And his opportunities of service were many, not only in *Southwark*, but also in *London*, *Westminster*, *Stepney*, where he had much employment.

We read when *Dorcas* was dead, that the widows stood weeping, and showing the coats which she had made, Acts 9. 39. and that upon *Paul's* departure the people wept, because they should see his face no more, Acts 20. 38. And is there not reason that we should be in like manner affected, remembering how truth hath been defended, error confuted, holiness cherished, wickedness checked, the cause of the poor pleaded, and the violence of some passionate spirits allayed by M^r. *Whitaker*? But now this able, public-spirited man must be serviceable on earth no more; now we shall not be edified by his Ministry anymore, nor warmed by his prayers anymore, nor cheered by his company and conference anymore. But let us moderate our sorrow by this following consideration, That *our friend Whitaker is not dead, but sleepeth*: For this assureth us both of his present ease, and future Resurrection. Now being asleep he is well, he resteth, (as in a bed) and we shall not see his pale face, his weeping eyes, his trembling hands anymore, we shall no more hear his deep groans, and doleful lamentations. He is fallen asleep *in the Lord*, and he and we shall have a better meeting at the general Resurrection then ever heretofore, and then shall we ever *be with the Lord*. Therefore *let us comfort one another with these words*, 1 Thes. 4. 15, 18.

I have but one thing more to hint; viz. That Christ now knoweth that this our precious friend sleepeth From whence I infer, 1. *Comfort*. 2. *Counsel*. This may be cheering unto all his mourning Relations, Domestic, Pastoral, Classical. For Christ understandeth that his wife hath lost a dear husband, his children an indulgent father, his people a faithful Pastor, the Classis a chief Pillar, and all good Christians a real friend.

And seeing Christ (considering that M^r. *Whitaker* is dead) doth also observe how we all are affected with this providence; therefore I beseech you, and beseech you again, to study in good earnest the gracious improvement of this sad dispensation. Let us hear the voice of this rod, repentingly remember the forfeitures made of this blessing, and make conscionable imitation of the good example he hath left us.

Though M^r. *Whitaker* is dead, yet *his holy life speaketh*. My Narrative hath told much of that which it speaketh, and my prayers are, that it may speak (through the concurrence of God's grace) that unto all our hearts, which may be for spiritual and eternal benefit by Christ.

FINIS.

POEMS, And ELEGIES On the Death of Mr. JEREMIAH WHITAKER.

On the Death of my dear Friend Mr. *Jeremiah Whitaker*.

IF death be but a servant sent to call
The souls of Saints to their original:
Dear St thine was a noble soul, to whom
Three Messengers were sent to call thee home;
A stone, an ulcer, and a gangrene too,
Three deaths to hastē that which one should do.
'Twas not because thy soul was deeper set
Then ours within its house of clay; nor yet
Because thou wert unwilling to depart
Thither; where long before had been thine hear••
They were not sent to hale by violence
A soul that lingered when 'twas called hence.
God showed how welcome one death was to thee
Who did, so meekly entertain all three.
Thus many deaths God's *Israel* did inclose,
The sea before, behind a sea of foes,
On either side the jaws of mountains high.
No way from death but unto death to fly.
Not to destroy them, but to let them see
The power of love, which then would se• them free.
Thus *Jobs* four Messengers which did relate
The doleful story of his ruined state
And his three friends, which acted Satan's part

(He on his flesh, and these upon his heart)
Who by disputing him unto a curse
Would make his spirits tormēt̄s the far worse,
Were by God's wise disposal sent to show
The strength he on his Champion would bestow.
Thus Painters put dark grounds, where they intend
To overlay with finest gold, & lend
By deeper shadows luster to that face,
On which they mean their choicest skill to place.
Thus workmen season much with sun & wind
Those greatest beams which must the building bind
Whilst smaler pieces haply are put in
When they come bleeding from the wood & green.
Oft where is greatest grace, God's pleased to send
Great conflicts those great graces to commend
As the six finger'd Giants sword did bring
The more renown to little *David's* sling.
The vanquished Lion, and the conquered Bear
Prepar'd that holy head a Crown to wear.
The Angel wrestled first, and then did bless
And made the greater servant to the less.
Pain was to great for thee, God's grace for pain,
And made the greater serve the less again.
Thy pains served thee to glory, and did sit
The head on which a Crown of life must sit.
This is God's method to fetch joy from grief,
To turn our sorrows unto our relief,
To save by killing and to bring to shore

By the ships planks which was quite broke before.
And thus a barren womb first took the seed
Which did six hundred thousand people breed.
That seed too must from knife and alter rise,
And be before a fire a sacrifice.
Great Preacher of thine heavenly Fathers will
Thy tongue did many years with Manna fill.
Thy life out-preached thy tongue, O blessed strife!
Thy sickness the best Sermon of thy life.
Before each Doctrine must be proved anew,
Thine end was one great proof that all was true.
Before thou preached by weeks, but now by hours,
Each minute taught thy mourning Auditors,
Each patient groan, and each believing eye
Was a new Sermon in Brachygraphy.
When nature roars without repining words,
Grace in the mouth whē in the bowels swords,
In midst of torments to triumph over hell,
To feel God's Arrows, yet his praises tell.
Through thickest clouds to see the brightest light,
In blackest darkness to have clearest sight,
And with our Lord to cry, my God, my God
Upon a Cross under the sharpest rod.
This is indeed to preach; this is to show
Faiths triumph over natures greatest woe.
Then welcome fiery Serpēts scortching sting,
Which did thee thus to th' brazen Serpent bring.
Then welcome Whale, which though it first devour,

Renders at last the Prophet to the shore.
Well mightest thou bear the stone which death did throw,
Who hadst the white stone the new name to show:
Well mightest thou be with such an ulcer calm
Whose soul was healed before with heavens balm.
When spirits wounds are cured though nature groan,
An heart of flesh can heal a back of stone:
Let conscience have her feast, and let flesh roar,
This pain shall make the others joy the more,
As many times those flowers most fragrant smell
Which nearest to sōe noisome weeds do dwell.
Thus have you seen the forge most clearly glow,
On which the Smith doth drops of water throw.
Keen frosts make fire the hotter, & deep night
Causeth coelestial lamps to shine more bright.
And by a dear Antiperistasis,
The child's distress sweetens the father kiss.
A wounded body yields to a sound soul
The joys of this do th' others pains control.
As in the day that the Sun beams appear
All other lesser stars do disappear.
When heaven shines and divine love doth▪ reign,
The soul is not at leisure to complain.
Internal joys his heart so well composes,
That they have judged their flames a bed of Roses.
Mr. Gataker. Mr. Whitaker.
But what shall *England* do from whence are lopt,
Two of her richest acres to heaven dropt.

By loss of these two acres she's more poor,
Then if she'had lost a hundred Lordships more.
'Twere a good purchase to gain these agen,
By giving to the sea all *Lincoln-fen*.
Two little mines of gold do far surpass
Huge Mannors where th' whole vesture is but grass.
Learn we by them what all men will once say,
One Pearch of heaven, 's worth the whole globe of clay.

Ed. Reynolds. *D. D.*

**To the memory of Mr. *Jeremy Whitaker* powerful in Prayer and Preaching, pious in life,
patient in sickness, &c.**

NAY, now forbear; for pity sake give over,
You that would make the Clergy none, or poor:
We are made miserable enough this year,
That we have lost our Reverend *Whitaker*;
Los•e above Deans and Chapters! had but he
Liv'd still & preached—*Ziba* take all (for me.)
Nay I believe, had Sacrilegious hands
Finger'd our poor Remains of Tithes, & Lands
Whilst he surviv'd they had but sinned in vain,
Whitaker would have prayed them back again,
As *Luther* did a young man's soul repeal
Giv'n to the Devil under hand and Seal.
A Chariot and an Horsman we have lost
In whose each single pray'r incamptan Host.
How have I heard him (on some solemn day
When doubtful War could make all *London* pray)
Mount up to heaven with armed cries & tears,

And rout as far as *York* the Cavileers,
Have you not seen an early-rising *Lark*
Spring from her turf, making the Sun her mark;
Shooting herself aloft, yet high•, higher,
Till she had sung herself into heav'ns Choir?
Thus would he rise in pray'r, and in a trice
His soul become a Bird of Paradise,
And if our faint devotions prayers be;
What can we call his less then Extasie?
On his Preaching.
If with th' Almighty he prevailed so,
Wonder not that he wonders wrought below;
The son of consolation, and of thunder
Met both in him, in •thers are asunder.
He was (like *Luke*) Physician of both kinds,
Wrought cures upon men's bodies and their minds.
The falling sickness of Apostasy,
Dropsy of drunkenness, prides trimpany,
The Megrim of opinions new, or old,
Palsy of unbelief, Charities Cold,
Lusts burning Feaver, Angers Calenture,
The Collick in the conscience he could cure:
Set the souls broken bone•; by holy Art
He hath dissolved the stone in many a heart
Harder then that he died of.—O come in,
Ye multitudes whom he hath healed of sin,
And thereby made his debtors—pay him now
Some of those tears which he laid out for you;

Interest-tears I mean, for should you all
Weep over him both use, and principal
'Twould wash away the stone, which covers him
And make his Coffin (like an Ark) to swim.
Now wipe thine eyes (my Muse) and stop thy verse,
(Thy ink can only serve to black his herse)
Yet (stay) I will drop one tear, sigh one sigh more,
'Tis this: Although my Poetry be poor,
O what a mighty Prophet should • be,
Had this *Elija's* mantle fallen to me!
Oh might I live his life! I'de be content
His sore diseases too should me torment,
And if his Patience could mine become,
I would not be afraid of Martyrdom.

Robert Wilde.

Upon the Pious, and painful Preacher Mr. *Jeremy Whitaker*.

An Epitaph.

I *Eremy's* not here into the dungeon thrown,
'Tis heav'ns Whit-acre (only) newly Mown;
Now Angel-reapers gathered have to Barn
The seedsman of God's Word like full ripe Corn.
In tears he sow'd, & now the heavenly Q•ire
To give him joy of Harvest all conspire.
In his sick bed this Paradox we found,
The thorny, and the stony are good ground.
The gout and stone (as millstones) ground the man
To finest flower for Mancher; here no Bran
These sisting times could find: nere did man say,

The Preacher spake as mealy-mouthed today.
Gallants (you mealy heads & capes that have)
Go take perfumed powder from his grave,
The dust off's feet was beautiful, and he
Your powder; and your looking-glass may be.
His life a Sermon was, his dust doth cry
All flesh is grass, go home, and learn to die.
England may ever glory, *Rome* despair
In Whit ac'e i'th Pulpit, and i'th Chair.
Thomas Hodges, *B. D.*

An Elegy upon the Death of Mr Whitaker.

IF passion can make Poets, or grief raise
Expressions great enough to speak thy praise,
Then might •, *Whitaker*, thy worth rehearse;
And with my stowings deck thy sacred Herse.
A Synod's only fit to speak thy fall,
And bear a part in this their Funeral.
Divines must grieve that with thee tomb'd doth lie.
What now we vainly seek, Divinity.
If we would hear such pray'rs as could heaven move
And tune the spheres into a Choir of love
Sweeter than Angels Anthems, then we must
Ransack thy grave, and reinspire thy dust.
There scattered lies that voice, which could inspire
All hearts, and fill them with an holy fire
As flames get flames: Who thunder did defy
Six words of thine could melt, and purify
Such Callous souls, which at their sins never vext.

Did find thy Sermons keener then the Text.
Thy Doctrine still was edge'd against men's crimes
And served to lance the ulcers of the times:
Who now shall teach the wicked their sad doomes?
Or else convince that faith by hearing comes?
For whosoe're heard thee, were caught by th' ear
And went out converts, that came curious there.
But those who n•re were wearied with thy voice
Do now complain of too much length and noise.
For since, blest O•ator, thou parted'st hence,
The Pulpit only suffers violence.
Edw. Bagshaw.

On the much lamented death of that Reverend man of God, Mr. *Jeremiah Whitaker*, his dear friend and old neighbor, both in City and Country.

If Reason, Virtue, Wisdom make a *man*,
If Faith, Hope, Charity the *Christian*;
If faithful, useful, cheerful grace a *friend*,
Arts, Tongues, choice Wit, rare Memory commend
The *Scholar*; if Humanity, Divinity,
Candor, Humility, bowels, integrity;
If parts, pains, zeal, sound Doctrine, utterance, tears,
Faith, courage, prudence, patience, fasting, prayers,
Success crown *Preacher*; Lo, of thousands ten
That *Man, Friend, Christian, Scholar, Preacher* then.
Never in times *unfixt* a man more *fixed*;
Never in heart so *pure*, graces more mixed;
Mildnes with boldness, courage with courtesy;
High parts, low thoughts, yielding with constancy:

Well to *conceive* and speak, to *speak* and *do*,
And do so much, so much to suffer too.
For Love a *Jonathan*, for Truth *Nathanael*;
For Meekness *Moses*▪ and for courage *Daniel*;
Call'd when a child a second *Jeremiah*;
For spirit, prayer, power the third *Elijah*,
For firmness *C•phas*, for sympathy a *Paul*,
For pains, success exceeding most or all.
One thing was lacking yet to make him higher,
As gold, or *Job*, he must into the fire.
As gold, or *Job* he was unto the last,
For *patience* proved, *Integrity* held fast.
Who ere saw such sharp pains? heard such sweet prayers?
Strong cries, but stronger faith, praises with tears?
Ou• Lord by suffering did to *perfection* grow:
In suffering *obedience* he did *learn* and show,
This man of God came to that altitude
By suffering, of sore pains, that multitude.
The racking *Gout* & the tormenting *Stone*,
In *Kidneys* Ulcers two, in *bladder* one,
Made pains sharp, sore, long, thick, but respite small;
Yet faith and patience overcame them all.
Now after well spent life, and restless pains,
And heavē assured, we reckon death for gains:
Death when by self desired, by friends bewayl'd,
And a sweet memory left have still prevailed
To call dead happy. Then our loss to thee
Was greatest gains complete felicity.

Weep *Berm'sey*, *London* wail, mourn *England* all,
He•e did thy *Crown*, *Chariots* & *Horsmen* fall.
John Sheffield, Pastor of *Swithins London-stone*.

Of the same Author.

OLd *Jeremy* a Prophet was and *child*,
Yet was a *brazen wall* and *Pillar* stilled.
He lived in troublous times, sad changes saw,
He suffered much, yet kept he fast God's Law.
By all good honor'd by enemies approved:
By many censured, by none faulty proved.
He dealt with persons highest, and with low;
He warned all, but wished no man's woe.
Son of Contenti•n called when of peace,
The greatest friend and of his Lands increase.
He preached much of Christ & Gospel-days,
The *Covenant new* he taught, and its rich grace.
Yet was his last a doleful *lamentation*,
Sad to himself, sadder to the Nation.
Thou art or wast the same. His *Baruch* he
Companion had to him, let me to thee.

**An Elegy upon the much lamented death of my late dear and reverend Friend
Mr. *Jeremiah Whitaker*.**

ENgland will soon grow poor, if in one year
Kent lose a *Wilson*, we a *Whitaker*.
A *Thames*, and *Medway* from our heads arise,
Their streams our tears, their channels are our eyes.
Our many losses call for *tears*, not fewer;
The breast a *Bason* makes the eye an *Ewer*.

No longer (now) shall *Isis* part the *Burrough*
From *London*, since that *both* sides meet in sorrow.
Not (as of old) by striving whether side
Should for their *own* obtain the Silver tide;
No, not to *gain* the water we'll contend;
But we'll by weeping strive who most can spend.
Conduits give wine (indeed) when th' Crown's put on,
Now run they tears, because our Crown is gone.
Our Friends *Decease* and *Death* our troubles were,
We nor his *Sickness*, nor his *Med'cines* bear.
His Pulpit he esteemed his *rest*, his *bed*;
We thought his bed a *Pulpit*, where he read
Lectures of patience; these he loudly uttered,
By silence oft he groan'd, but never mutter'd.
Of mournful *Magdalene*, *Bermonsey* bears
The *name*, and with her *Title* hath her *tears*,
And our dear *Whitaker* was *Jeremy*
In *name*, in *weeping*, and in *Prophecy*;
But he (no Prophet *now*) no *sackcloth* wears,
His *work* is done, and so are all his *tears*.
May *Bermonsey* of him the late *possessor*
Mourn for her *sins*, but joy in his *successor*.
GUIL. JENKYN, *Pastor of Black-fryers*, London.

Upon the Death of the Reverend, his never to be forgotten friend, Mr *Jeremiah Whitaker*.

O That affection could but make a Poet!
If grief could rhyme with Art, sure I should do it,
(Though so disus'd to versify.) We'l try:

The Subject's sad, and so's the Poetry.
The tender son that never spake before,
To save his fathers life turned Orator.
Shall I forbear in silence? Write I must,
When such a friend lies sleeping in the dust.
The blessed Saint, dear *Jeremy* is gone,
And who shall write his *lamentation*?
Had we his eyes (which always showry were)
Such is our loss, each word should have a tear!
Another *Whitaker* in a Coffin placed,
The first the *Chair*, & this the *Pulpit* grac'd.
Reader, wouldest know his worth, then cast thy eye
Upon the Narrative; there's his excellency.
Rings hold not Histories; who can rehearse
His vast perfection in a narrow Verse!
Take Virtues, Graces, Gifts, and all you can,
All are concentred in this holy man.
A brighter star in all our orb there's none,
None do exceed, few equal him that's gone.
Ah pious soul! What mortal man can speak out
Thy rare humility! Who ere meanly thought
Of thee besides thyself? What moved thy passions,
But Eulogies and Commendations?
'Tis well th' art gone from us, shouldst thou but look
Into and read thy praises in this book,
I am sure by this thou wouldest be somewhat moved,
And *Simeon* himself should be reprov'd.
He speaks thy worth so much, & yet but little

'Tis scarce enough (but true to every tittle.)
Thy personal endowments who would commend,
Should neither know where to begin nor end.
Thy Minister'all accomplishments were rare,
Thy constant pains, thy diligence, thy care
For souls in holy things. who can express?
Thou mightest have longer lived, hadst thou lived less.
O melting Suppliant! who e're did know
Thy prayers to heaven without some tears to go?
The secret ravishings which poor souls have found
When from thy mouth the Word of life did sound!
Our very Pulpits wonder where thou art,
In w^{ch} thou didst such spiritual gifts impart:
But 'tis enough! we'll weep the rest; we can
Launch out no farther in this Ocean.
Could prayers and tears have kept thee here, thy stay
It had been longer in this house of clay.
Pray'r bar'd thee in some time, till death would throw
Open the door by force to let thee go;
At last thy soul did find the way to bliss,
And now is steep'd in heavens happiness.
O blessed change for thee! the painful bed
Is now a Throne, where not a tear is shed.
No dismal groāings now from thee do come,
But everlasting Triumphs in their room.
Farewell (blest Saint) farewell, and since 'tis thus;
We'l hast to thee, thou wilt not come to us.

THO. JACOMB. *of M. Ludg.*

**Upon the death of the reverend, Learned, and Faithful Servant of Jesus Christ,
Mr. *Jeremiah Whitaker*, late Minister of *Magdalene Bermonsey* in *Southwark*.**

What speaks this sudden storm of brinish tears?

What means this doleful volley in mine ears?

Is the Sun darkened? Do the Lamps above,

Resolve their fiery station to remove,

And shine no more on earth? Doth the Creation

Intend to melt itself with Lamentation?

The holy *Whitaker* is stepped away,

Late Angel of the Church of *Bermonsey*.

A Pillar in God's house, a sweet Musician

That gladdened drooping hearts; A soul-Physician,

A Sun whose beams did consolation shine,

A faithful, skilful guide, a rare Divine.

He was a Watchman could not well be blamed;

A workman needed not to be ashamed.

No *Proteus*, that could change to every shape,

No servile spirited Preacher, that could scrape

And cringe to please the lusts of wanton men:

He could not say, and then unsay agen.

Learned, yet very humble, prudent, dear

To God, to men; meek, holy, wise, sincere.

He loved the Truth, he hated Heresy,

A strong opposer of all Blasphemy.

His heart was toward a holy Reformation,

But set against a godless toleration

Of lewd Opinions. Great was his care

To keep the holy Covenant which he sware.

The marrow of God's Oracles was in him,
No Scripture Mystery was hidden from him.
Cases of Conscience he could well untie,
Scruples and Doubts from Scripture satisfy.
His holy Function was his consolation,
His Pulpit work to him was recreation.
His pray'rs were zealous, heavenly steep'd in tear:
His Doctrine Orthodox, convincing clear.
Full of the spirit of life and Power, his words
Did pierce like nails, did cut like sharpened swords:
He durst tell *Ahab* of his great oppression;
What! dost thou kill and after take possession?
He durst tell *Herod* though it cost his life,
'Tis wickedness to take thy brothers wife.
Had strangers heard him Preach, they would have said,
Sure *John the Baptist's* risen from the dead.
His carriage holy, harmless, free from strife,
His Sermons were imprinted in his life.
His body was infirm, diseased, weary,
His soul still vigorous, active, strong and cheary.
The more the Cabinet did waste and wear,
The brighter did the Jewel still appear.
Goodness of nature made the world admire him,
The brightness of his grace made Saints desire him.
The Church on earth hath lost a precious plant,
The Church in heaven hath gained a glorious Saint.
Ra. Robinson, *Minister of Mary Wolnoth, Lombard street London.*

Jeremiah Whitaker.

ANAGRAM, *I have hit everi Mark.*

THou didst not shoot at rovers in the dark,
Thy polisht shaft could hit the smallest mark,
God's glory was thy scope, his Word thy guide,
His stable Spirit did teach thee to divide
The word of truth aright: A signal Teacher,
An useful, pious, fruitful, powerful Preacher
God made thee to his Chu•th. None better knew
Then *Whitaker* to carve to each his due:
The mark of saving grace was first obtained,
And now the mark of glory thou hast gained:
Enjoy it; and let other Archers see
Thy happy pattern, and take aim by thee.

Ra. Robinson *Minister of Mary Wolnoth*; Lombardstreet, London.

***Upon the death of his most dear friend, that eminent servant and Minister of Jesus Christ,
Mr. Jeremiah Whitaker, Pastor of Mary Magdalene Bermonsey in Southwark.***

THus Cedars fall, thus Stars do disappear,
Prophets though Angels, yet but mortals are.
Our *Prophet Jeremy's* dead, and now there's none
That's fit to make his Lamentation.
Plato once wisht that virtue could appear
To mortal eyes, his wish was granted here.
If any Breviator would comprize
All virtues in a word, then let his eyes
Be fixed here, keep *Whitaker* in mind.
And there you have the virtues all defin'd.
Or would you know what all the graces are?
In short hand writing, they make *Whitaker*.

Would any have the Bible in a word,
And what the vastest comments can afford?
Read *Whitaker's* Works, peruse his conversation,
And there's the Bible and th' Interpretation;
That Book was in his breast so well ingrostr,
He could restore it, if it had been lost.
He that by thee (blest Saint) shall calculate.
Will find that Miracles are not out of dare.
Who e're was so far blest to hear him teaching
Was prone to think a Seraphim was preaching.
'Twas *Austin's* wish i'th' *Pulpit Paul* to hear;
He had been satisfied, hadst thou been there.
Me thought when thy sweet soul was poured out
In fervent prayer, I began to doubt
Whether *Elias* was come down again,
And mounting heavenward with his fiery train.
In this thou didst excel; he scal'd the sort
Alone, but thou thy hearers didst transport.
But whither goes my doleful Muse? to span
I'th' hollow of thy f'st the Ocean.
Or to describe his boundless hidden worth?
Nor tongue nor pen can set his praises forth.
This only I will add, he that would draw
His Portraiture, must use *Apelles* Law,
When to paint Lady *Venus* with a grace,
This beauty gave a hand, that gave a face;
The third a color gave, the next a feature,
Al join'd together made that lovely creature.

In the same manner, whosoe're would paint
The beauty of this thrice illustrious Saint,
Must rifle all the world, and look apart
For that which shines most in each noble heart.
One must Humility give, another Zeal,
Another Prudence brethren's rents to heal.
Learning a fourth in its high'st elevation.
A fifth must give a spotless conversation.
His preaching one man cannot imitate;
Here we must have *Beza's triumvirate*.
And when we've travel'd all the world to find
Or make a copy of this matchless mind,
When other men's perfections all do fail,
We must with that old Limner draw a veil
Upon his peerless parts, or for the rest,
Say, here lies that which cannot be expressed.
Sic flevit Mat. Poole Minister of Michaels at the Quern in London.

An Epitaph.

*HEre lies Saint Whitaker, the rest
Cannot, need not be expressed.
Great sorrows noise not, Give some years
For the world to speak in tears.
First this age must vent its grief
In sighs, the next may find relief,
And join their sorrows to compute
Till grief returning strikes them mute,
And makes them silently confess
Their loss; his worth was fathom'esse.*

Another Epitaph.

*UNder this stone intombed lies
An heap of contrarities,
One that's dead, yet doth remain
For person, place, and work the same.
His precious person was combined
Of soul and body firmly join'd.
So still these parts though distant, yet
In Christ are to each other knit.
To earth his body was confined,
Always heaven had and hath his mind,
His work was preaching, so 'tis still,
And preach his name forever will.*

Mat Poole.

To the memory of the learned that eminently Religious Minister of the Gospel (his Reverend brother deceased) Mr. *Jeremiah Whitaker*.

WHitaker sleeps; spices you need not bring
For's body; death itself's embalm'd to him.
Ah blessed Saint! his Sermons were not done
When preached, he lived the Application:
When sick, his pangs were mercy, for when e're
A sigh was breathed out, God breathed in a pray'r.
Lie gently on him dust, this seed is sown
To spring again at th' Resurrection.
Oh for a verse in black! Reader prepare thus
For every drop of ink to melt a tear.
Yet stay, with grief there's cause of joy: then
Joy shall shed tears for him, and grief for us.

Benjamin Needler. Minister of the Gospel at *Margarce Moses Friday-street*, Lond.

**In obitum eximii tam Doctrinâ quam pietate Theologi, *Jeremiae Whitakeri*, funebre
'ΕΤΚΩΜΙΑ 'ΣΤΙΚΟΝ.**

Dr. Gouge. Dr. Walker. Mr. Whitaker.

*DE*fleat occiduos aetas ingrata Prophetas,

Liquit Evangelicum collapsa synastria caelum:

Lugentem & moesto Whitakerus funere mundum

Deseruit; lachrymis squallentem liquerit urbem:

Jam pereat mendax de florido opinio seclo,

Mortuus hic Vates nostrum sepelivit honorem,

Corruit & Verax foecundi gloria rostri:

Patronum amisit Pauper, populus{que} Lutherum,

Amisitque pium mutilata ecclesia gnatum,

Pastorem coetus, Patrem amisere Ministri:

Gens mala praeconem, immotam synodusque columnam.

J. Wells, *Old Jewry* Lond. Pastor.

To the memory of his dear friend and Pastor, Mr. *Jeremiah Whitaker*, deceased.

BEhold the shadow whose admired worth

Nor pen, nor tongue is able to set forth!

He whose vast soul walked through the Isle of Man,

Is here confined in a shorter span.

Whose worth the world though 'twere as big again

Were much too short and narrow to contain.

Sweet were his life and death, his well spent days

Began with goodness, and expired with praise:

His lamp was ever burning, never hid;

And when his tongue preached not, his actions did;

And to his death he still fought faiths good fight,

And then his Lamp exchange'd his borrowed light
For an immortal luster, and here lies,
Enshrin'd, not dead, for Virtue never dies.

R. B. Parishioner.

Upon the Life and Death of that precious Servant of God, Mr. *Jeremiah Whitaker*, whose name (like that of his Lord and Master) is an ointment poured forth.

JEREMIAH WHITAKER, or Etymology.

- *He shall exalt God.*
- His work, *Jer. 20. 13.*
- *God shall exalt him.*
- His wages, *Jer. 5. 10.*

White-aker.

- *A field white for Harvest, John 4. 35.*
- *His fitness for Heaven.*

Blest Saint, how well thy name and worth agree!
In name and office thou art *Jeremiah*.
A God-exalter, and by God exalted;
A *Priest*, a *Prophet*: one that never halted
Twixt God & *Baal*, twixt the truth & error,
Nor couldst be made to start for hope or terror.
Heroic Champion, thou deaths venomous sting
Hast conquered, and with Christ now reign'st as *King*.
A wise and faithful *Labourer* for thy Lord,
To gather in his harvest by the word,
Thou hast approved thyself to Earth and Heaven,
Witness thy life and Doctrine purged from Leaven.
Both *Labourer* and *Harvest* were thy part;
The former living, this thou dying art.

The *Field* being for *Harvest*, *Jer. White-aker*
Is reaped, and of a better soil partaker.

Thy melting tears now cordial-water be.
Let me thy sorrows taste, thy joys to see.

Roger Drake Pastor of *Peters West-cheap*.

A Funeral Elegy upon the reverend his dear deceased friend, Master *Jeremiah Whitaker*.

O Let me weep, and even like a spring
Unto the sea of grief some tribute bring.
These cheeks of mine with tears bedew'd shall swell
For this Seraphique St. who lately fell.
To lose a Friend is sad, but for our Nation
To lose a Jeremy is Lamentation.
Could he from death some way released be
His virtues surely might have set him free;
But 'twas a debt; and what inflam'd desire
Had he to leave his mantle and fly higher!
How shall I praise his worth, and not dispraise?
Say more, and not say less? darkening his rays.
Meekness, humility in this Orbe shined,
In him the chain of Graces was combined:
How was he fir'd with zeal, even frō his youth,
And though he lost all, would hold fast the truth.
With Jeremy he was a man of strife,
Yet not for Tithes but Souls: this was his life;
A downright, upright man he was, a Star
Whose sacred influence diffused far:
And that of these an end I may inclose,
His faith in Christ he solely did repose.

*This made him when he felt the sharpest pain
Upon the flinty rack, not to complain;
Nay when he at the point of death did lie,
Did as the milky Swan most gently die.
What did he die? his soul as in a Cell,
In heav'ns bright Paradise is gone to dwell
Among the Cherubims, where he doth ring
With them that jointly Hallelujahs sing:
Where he for tears in joy doth much increase,
Pleasure doth him of former pain release;
He never shall of Stone, or Ulcer hear,
He never need anymore sickness fear.
Dear Saint! I sooner had adorned thy hearse,
But grief first vents by weeping, then by verse.*

Thomas Watson, *Pastor of Stephens Walbrook, London.*

Upon the Death of that reverend Divine, Mr. Jeremiah Whiraker.

*STay and lament all you that travel by;
'Tis sin to pass, and not to cast an eye
Upon this mournful spectacle, the herse
Of one whose name can dignify a verse.
Loe here th' exuvium of that heavenly soul,
Who living did by's words & works control
The power of sin and Satan & whose breath
Redeem'd poor souls from darkness, and from death.
And by his pious Doctrine did convince
The sly Temptations of that airy Prince.
He whose whole life was a continued Tract
Of practical Divinity, each Act*

A *Sermon*, and each word an *explanation*;
So that his *Audionts* might, by *imitation*
Of him, and of his life, to Heaven come,
Although they had been *deaf*, or he been *dumb*.
But that *Almighty power* who from above
Does all things order, and in whom we move
Wrapt all these *treasures* up in brittle *Clay*;
Death gavit a crack, and so took all away.
And now our *griefs* amount to such a sum
That to express them best is to be *Dumb*.
They that can *count* their wealth, are *counted* poor,
And who can *speak* his griefs can suffer more.
'Tis diminution to his *worth*, to weep
With *single* tears, we his whole flock of sheep
Joyne in one *Lamentation*, and let fall
Our *general* tears at this sad *Funeral*
Of our *Dear Shepherd*, in whose fatal *grave*
Both he and we one joint *interment* have.
From hence there's no *return* for him to us,
But we must by degrees all follow thus.
He's gone before to *usher* us, now dead
What all his life he wrought is perfected,
Living he showed the way to heaven, *whither*
Now dead he's gone to clear our passage *thither*.
Parishioners of Bermonsey.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Reader,

BESIDES the oversights of the Printer in false spelling, ill pointing, and misquoting some Scripture proofs, thou art entreated to correct these Errata's following. *p. 4. l. 8. for me, r. was. p. 6. l. 25. for hater, r. hatred. and l. 26. r. poisonous sting. p. 8. l. 9. r. in the. p. 9. l. 4. r. friends, and l. 13. for be, r. by, and l. 20. r. reviewing. p. 10. l. 3. for First, r. viz. and l. 17. r. relations, and l. 23. r. discovereth, and l. 24. r. lest, p. 11. l. 7. for diligent r. affectionate, and l. 9. r. dissatisfactions. p. 13. l. 4. r. of my. p. 16. l. 27. for beautiful. r. bountiful. p. 13. l. 33. for him, r. himself. & l. 34. r. which did cost. p. 20. l. 9. r. being also the fountain. p. 21. l. 23. for these, r. the, p. 24. l. 12, r. which I have, p. 36. l. 22. for gods r. God. p. 46. l. 26. r. this, p. 47. l. 11. r. in his, p. 53. l. 1. r. Sermons, p. 58. l. 22. r. contemned.*

P-SA-8. Real thankfulness, or, A sermon preached in Paul's church, London, upon the second day of November, 1645 at a public thanksgiving for the taking in of the towns and castles of Caermarthen and Mounmouth in Wales, it being the first Lord's-day after the inauguration of the Right Honorable Thomas Adams, now lord major of that famous city - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662.

Real Thankfulness: OR, A SERMON PREACHED In PAULS Church LONDON, Upon the second day of November, 1645. At a Public Thanksgiving for the taking in of the Towns and Castles of Caermarthen and Mounmouth in Wales, it being the first LORD'S-day after the inauguration of the Right Honorable Thomas Adams now Lord Major of that famous City. By Simeon Ash Preacher at Basingshaw, London, and one of the Assembly of Divines.

PSAL. 50. 14. *Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high.*

PSAL. 50. 23. *Who so offereth praise, glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God.*

LONDON, Printed by G. Miller for Edward Brewster at the Sign of the Bible on Ludgate-hill near Fleet-bridge, M. DC. XLV.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THOMAS ADAMS Lord Major of the famous City of LONDON, together with the right worshipful the Aldermen and Sheriffs thereof.

Right Honorable,

WHen I prepared this Sermon to attend your commands, it was very far from my purpose or thoughts, to make it more public then in the Pulpit. And although I find in myself an utter averseness (in many regards) to appear in print; yet your Lordships earnest desire (which I account a command) set on by the solicitations of some others, hath conquered my unwillingness, to transcribe this Sermon for the Press.

I presume upon this Dedication, not only because the Sermon was preached, and is printed at your command, but also that I might hereby make an open, grateful acknowledgement of your love divers ways expressed towards me.

My Sermon is for substance the self same, which you heard, I know not any one particular head, which I have either added or diminished, only some phrases are changed (for my memory could not reach the same expressions) and the words of Scripture-quotations are given in more largely, then when I preached. My subject is seasonable for these times, wherein the Lord hath been pleased to give us in this City occasion to celebrate many days of Thanksgiving. The practice of our praises, is that which God expects, and I persuade.

Unto how many in our Assemblies (when we meet to sing praises) may our God say, *Quid verba audio, cum facta video? This people draweth nigh to me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Loquere, ut te videam.* Let your lives answer your

language. When shall your works witness your thankfulness? My Lord, I have often heard you use these words, *Quid retribuam Domino?* Give me leave to be your Lordships remembrancer; your obligations to the Lord are now much increased, and with them God hath added opportunities of more puhlike service to himself. Divine providence hath set you in a place of Honor, Authority and Trust, wherein much is expected from you: *Magistratus virum indicat*. A man is that in truth, which he is when tried. The world will judge of you for the future according to this years service. You be likely to meet with many temptations, to draw you aside both to the right hand and to the left: but I beseech you remember, whose you are, and unto whom you must give a strict account of all your ways. Advance God in your hearts, design the welfare of Zion, consult most with them, who counsel from God and for God according to his Word, and I beseech you all, often, and seriously mind yourselves, and remember others of the solemn National Covenant, that the Almighty may not be further provoked by the neglect and violation of it. For the Sword under which we smart and bleed, doth *avenge the quarrel* of God's Covenant, *Lev. 26. 25*. Therefore let everyone thus speak unto the Lord, *Praise waiteth for thee ô God in Zion, and unto thee shall the vow be performed*, *Psal. 65. 1. I will sing praise unto thy Name forever, that I may daily perform my vows*, *Ps. 61. 8. Right honorable and right worshipful*, the Lord hath conjoined you as brethren, in the great work of the Government of this renowned City, I pray God you may be of one mind, soul and way, for the true welfare thereof, and for the encouragement of all such in it, who sincerely seek to set up the holy government of Jesus Christ, in whom I am

Your humble Servant, *SIMEON ASH*,

Thanksgiving realiz'd.

PSAL. 105. 45. That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws.

THis Psalm is Eucharisticall, and this day is a day of Thanksgiving, therefore the subject of the Psalm, and the service of the day, do well suit. In the Psalm the high exercise of praising God is, First, commanded and partly directed, in the four first verses, *O give thanks unto the Lord, &c.*

Secondly, Perswaded, in the remaining part of the Psalm.

The arguments used to press God's people unto this Angelical employment, are considerable under two heads.

1. The quality and variety of divine administrations for their comfort, *Remember his marvelous works, that he hath done, his wonders*, *v. 5. &c.* And that this might be the more prevailing upon their hearts, a large Catalogue of kindnesses conferred, is given in, wherein we have an enumeration of glorious, remarkable providences, in almost forty verses together.

2. The end which the Lord propounded and aimed at, in all these many and memorable dispensations. And this is held forth in my Text, *That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws*. Whereas the life of thanksgiving, lies in *thankesliving*, in a well-ordered obedience to

the *God of our Salvations, the God of our mercies*. This is the subject matter of my Text. Wherein are considerable.

1. The titles, whereby the rule of man's obedience is expressed, *Statutes, Laws*.
2. The terms whereby the regularity of deserved obedience, is suggested, *Observe, Keep*.
3. The way or means whereby this regular obedience, is promoted, *viz*. All the wonderful works of the most High, for his servants, and against their enemies. For the Psalmist having particularized a great number of them, he concludes in the Text. *That, or (as the old Translation renders it) to the intent, they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws*. If any should enquire (upon the perusal of these famous providences) the reason, wherefore the Lord wrought wonders so many, so great for *Israel*: the Text gives an account, *That they might observe his statutes and keep his laws*.

From the division of my Text, I proceed to the explication of the several words used in it: wherein I will be but brief, though something must necessarily be spoken, to make the fairer way, unto that which afterwards must from thence be observed and improved.

You heard before of the two titles given in this Text unto the rule of man's obedience. The first is, *Statutes*. I find the original word translated, 1. *A decree*, Psal 148. 6. *He hath made a decree which shall not pass*. As all the motions of creatures inferior to man are bounded by the decrees of God's dominion (*which are often called the ordinances of Heaven*) So all man's operations should be ordered and limited by his Commandments.

2. *A Portion*, Prov. 31. 15. *She giveth a portion to her Maidens*. And truly God's commands are a good portion to his people, *I have esteemed the words of his mouth (saith Job) more than my necessary food*, Job 23. 12. And, *Thy testimonies (saith David) are my heritage forever*, Psal. 119. 111. Unto a gracious heart, God's work is wages, and employment is preferment.

The second word, is, *Laws*. The original word is most ordinarily used to signify the moral law, the Decalogue, that constant standard, or standing law, by which all Nations, in all ages of the world, have been, and shall be bound to order their conversations before God.

Thus much of the words used, to express God's revealed will to guide man's course: It follows, that I explain those words, which suggest man's regular respect thereunto.

The first is, *Observe*, which imports, 1. either to mind or reserve in memory. As old *Jacob* is said to *observe the sayings (the dreams) of Joseph*, Gen. 37. 11.

2. Or to preserve in safety. In this sense, the same *Jacob* used the word, in his prayer or vow, Gen. 28. 20. *If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, &c.*

And this sense answers the true meaning of the next word, *Keep*, which properly signifies to keep with care and vigilancy, as ammunition is preserved from fire, and false hands, when an enemy is expected, *Nahum 2. 1. He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face, keep the munition, watch the way*.

Now these notions from the original, are not vain, they are both profitable, and such as answer the more open language of the holy Ghost elsewhere. The laws of the Lord should be treasured up in the cabinet of man's heart and memory, *Prov. 3. 1. My son, forget not my Law, but let thine heart keep my Commandments.*

And all the precepts of God, should be secured from violence, that no breach be made upon them, *Keep my Commandments and live, and my Law, as the apple of thine eye, Prov. 7. 2.*

These things I only touch, as I pass forward to that point, on which I purpose to pitch, both because it is the main intended in the Text, and also being most seasonable for the service of the day.

[Doct.] That man's regular observation of all God's Commandments, is the end of all his glorious administrations for man's comfort.

More short. *The end of God's bounty, is man's duty.*

Or thus, in reference to the instances of the Psalm, and the experiences of our times. *Therefore the Lord taketh vengeance upon his adversaries, and therefore the Lord worketh the deliverance of his servants, that they might observe his statutes and keep his laws.*

My beloved! Who can number up in order, the great things, which our God hath done for us, now of late, as heretofore? Our friends have been relieved, our foes have been routed, our prayers have been heard, our hopes revived, our forces prospered, our enemies discomfited. I pray you, fill your thoughts with the particulars, which this day have been mentioned, and upon other occasions specified: And then add unto the remembrance of all, this Doctrine which now I am to deal in. That God's end and aim in all, is this, *That we might observe his statutes, and keep his Laws.*

In the handling of this weighty point, well worth our serious considerations, I shall according to my accustomed plainness endeavor two things.

1. The explanation of the truth, that it may be rightly understood.
- 2, The application of it, that it may be fruitfully improved.

I begin with the former, wherein I will be but short, lest I should want time to speak unto the later, which I chiefly intend, it being of greatest and most seasonable concernment.

And here by way of caution, to prevent mistake in this matter under hand, I wish that these four things may be observed.

1. Mans obedience is the end of God's gracious providences in regard of his precept, though not always in regard of his secret, eternal purpose. I well remember the words of the Psalmist, *Psal. 92. 7. When the wicked do spring as the grass, and the workers of iniquity do prosper, it is that they shall be destroyed forever.* But here I speak not of God's end in regard of his everlasting, righteous decree, which he is pleased to keep close within his own bosom.

As for the end of his command, revealing his pleasure to the children of men: the words of *Moses that man of God* are plain and pregnant to our purpose, *Deut. 10. 12, 13.* where after an enumeration of various, marvelous favors vouchsafed unto *Israel*, he speaks thus, *And now, O Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes.*

2. It is the end of God, in (the fore-mentioned) intention, though too too seldom in execution, God having engaged man to obedience by his bounties, he expecteth an obediential improvement, though his Majesty's expectations are commonly disappointed. The Lord's sad complaint of his vineyard, *Isa. 5.* expresseth this fully, *What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? ver. 4. He looked for judgment, but, behold oppression, for righteousness, but behold a cry, ver. 7.* And our God hath very much occasion of the like lamentation, in this Land, yea in this City at this day, notwithstanding the admirable deliverances, and victories wrought for us. Alas, alas, how few, how very few do anywhere answer the expectations of his highness, in reformation of their ways, and in obedience unto his holy Laws.

3. Although man's observation of God's statutes, be one end, yet is it not the only end of his manifold favors. For amongst many other aims, which are always in his majesties eye, such is his fatherly indulgence unto his people, that he doth give out cordials on purpose to cheer their drooping spirits, and to facilitate their passage thorough the wilderness of this world, *Let the Lord be magnified, who hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants, Psal, 35. 27. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people: for the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity, Psal. 125. 2, 3.*

4. Mans serviceable subjection unto divine injunctions, is not God's last and chiefest end, in all his glorious dispensations. The ultimate, the supreme end of all God's purposes and providences, is his own honor, *He doth all things for himself, Prov. 16 4.* In them who are not obedientially conquered by his kindnesses, he will be glorified. Proud, hard-hearted *Pharaoh* stubbornly withstood all the assaults of God, made upon himself and his people, both by plagues and deliverances, yet God saith, *Exod. 14. 4. I will be honored upon Pharaoh and upon his host.* And those who are made obedientially fruitful, by the showers and Sunshine of divine indulgence: they being filled with the fruits of righteousness, are by *Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God, Phil. 1. 11.* So that all administrations do at last determine and center in the honor of the most high God, who is the author and orderer of them.

Yea beyond the duties of obedience, the welfare and happiness of them who are sincerely obedient, both here and hereafter is ordained and intended by God himself, as an end subordinate unto his own eternal praise, *Oh that there was such an heart in them (saith the Lord) that they would keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, Deut. 5. 29.* And the Apostle, having provoked the believing *Romans* unto the work of sanctification, addeth these words, *Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, Rom. 6. 22.*

Having premised these cautions, these propositions to prevent misapprehensions, and that the meaning of my Text and Doctrine might be truly understood, I proceed unto the Application thereof, which is the second thing promised in the prosecution of the point.

The improvement of this seasonable instruction (thus far unfolded) [Use.] is that which I had principally in mine eye, in the choice of this Text, and I pray God, so to assist me in this last, and the greatest part of my Sermon, that I may reach your hearts, unto your edification and spiritual advantage. All that I shall say by way of Use, I will give in, under these three heads.

- 1. Information.
- 2. Reprehension.
- 3. Exhortation.

The two former sorts of Uses I shall dispatch quickly, but I shall crave leave to enlarge the last, because most profitable, and most pertinent unto this Congregation, and most conducing to promote the realizing of those praises, which this day we present unto our God.

Hence it naturally and necessarily follows, That the disobedience of those persons is most abominable and inexcusable, who have been under the most, and best administrations of the Almighty.

Such offenders do not only violate the Laws of Sovereignty, but of Amity. Their neglects, their miscarriages, are not only undutifulnesses, but unthankfulnesses and unkindnesses.

It is here considerable how the holy Ghost doth ordinarily cast this circumstance, as a loading aggravation upon the sins both of Nations and persons, to break their hearts in the deepest humiliation, and to justify God in his sharpest corrections. Thus *Samuel* sets upon unsubdued *Israel*, 1 *Sam.* 12. 6. *And Samuel said unto the people, It is the Lord that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt. Now therefore stand still that I may reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord, which he did to you and to your fathers. When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place, &c. And the Lord sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies, on every side, and ye dwelled safe.* Here is the commemoration of mercies. Now follows the sin thereby aggravated. *And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay, but a king shall reign over us, when the Lord your God was your king.* Beloved, I may not spend time in paralleling these passages, with God's providences towards this poor Kingdom, and this Kingdom's miscarriages towards the Lord. Do it yourselves, I pray you, and I doubt not, but the serious doing of it, will be advantageous both in the advancing of our God, and in the abasing of ourselves before him. *England's* deliverances and mercies. *London's* deliverances and mercies have been more and greater than of other Kingdoms and Cities; therefore *England's* sins, and *London's* sins are more heinous, horrid, high provocations of the most high God.

And as the evils of a people are thus aggravated by the Lord; so are the offenses of particular persons also. In this manner *Samuel* greatens the disobedience of King *Saul*, 1 Sam. 15. 16. *Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee, what the Lord said unto me this night. When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast not thou made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee King over Israel? And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them, till they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?*

I will not gloss upon this Scripture, which might truly be applied unto many of the richest and chiefest rank in this City: but I humbly beseech you to remember from what low and little beginnings, the Lord hath advanced many of you; and then reflecting upon your lives; consider what account you can give unto his Majesty, for your obedience (or for your disobedience rather) to his holy Commandments. Yea, this course God hath been wont to take with his own dearest servants, to work them unto true repentance. *David's* scandalous falls are well known (I might say they are ill known by too many, who thence take encouragement to offend) and I believe you are not ignorant of that course, which his God took by *Nathan's* ministry, to present his sins as very sinful in his own sight, 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, And I gave thee thy Masters house, and I gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee, such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? &c.* Herein, herein, lies the aggravation. *Wherefore hast thou?* Thou so preserved, thou so preferred. How canst thou answer this?

Give me leave to touch one instance more, which I do the rather add, because it concerneth men of mine own cloth and calling, that you may be convinced: We Ministers desire to aggravate our own faults, by the self-same circumstances, whereby we greaten yours. *Eli* his sinful indulgence to his wicked sons is notorious; now mark how a Messenger from the Lord paints out this his provocation, in black colors, 1 Sam. 2. 27. *Thussaith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaohs house? And did I choose him out of all the Tribes of Israel to be my Priest, to offer upon mine Altar, to burn incense before me? And did I give unto the house of thy father, all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice, &c. And honourest thy sons above me?* We, who are the Ministers of the Lord should look upon our aberrations, as the more loathsome, because God hath honored us with an high and holy employment in special attendance upon himself.

I might much enlarge this meditation, by acquainting you, that guilt under this notion, is most grievous unto a truly gracious repenting heart. It was this that cut good *David* to the quick, when he cried out, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned*, Ps. 51. 4.

But I must leave this Use, because not so fully suitable unto the peculiar service of this day.

The next Use follows, which is for the just reproof of two sorts of persons, whose practices do point blank oppose this purpose of God, in conferring favors, which my Text makes report of.

First, who in handling this doctrine, can hold his hand off them, who are the less obedient and the more dissolute in their lives, because of God's long-sufferance and loving kindness. This sticks, as a black brand upon King Rehoboam, 2 Chro. 12. 1. *It came to pass that when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, he forsook the Law of the Lord.*

It may be truly said of many, that they had not been so bad and base in their lives, if God had not been so bountiful to them in his bestowings. Herein men discover their egregious folly, which can no way be excused, *Do ye thus requite the Lord, ye foolish people & ūwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, & established thee? Remember the days of old, &c. De. 32. 6, 7*

Yea, herein appears the vile malignity of our natures, the inbred poisonous disposition of our unhallowed hearts, which Spider-like suck venom out of those sweet flowers, from whence the little laborious Bee draweth wax and honey.

I have three things to say unto such persons, which I heartily wish may tend unto their humiliation and amendment.

1. That this heinous abuse of God's bounties, is a sad sign of an unregenerate estate. *Let favor be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness, in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, Isa. 26 10.* I have heard the Hypocrite sometimes compared to a Top, which goes no longer then it is lashed. The expressions of the Psalmist concerning such unfound hearts, are here notable, *Psal. 73. 34. When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned, and they inquired early after God, &c. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his Covenant.*

2. That in this particular, idolaters express more respects unto their vain, dumb, idle Idols, then these people do unto the only, true, living, world-governing God, God blessed forever. For observe how the Prophet *Hosea*, bringeth in the idolatrous, reasoning for their Idol-worship, *Hos. 2. 5. I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool, and my flax, mine oil, and my drink.* In which respect, we may take up against these malefactors, the pathetic complaint of the Lord, *Jer. 2. 9. I will yet plead with you (saith the Lord.) For pass over the Isles of Chittim and see, send unto Kedar and considerdiligently, and see if there be any such thing. Hath a Nation changed their gods which are yet no gods? but my people hath changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, ô ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord, &c.*

3. That this carriage is no better then brutish, *Jesurun (saith Moses) waxed fat and kicked, thou art waxed fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness. Then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation, Deut. 32. 15.* The Metaphor is taken from the foolish Ass, which being kept low, will come to the Masters hand, but being put into a full pasture, waxeth wanton, and either runs away from his feeder, or else turns heels, and strikes him.

And the zealous Prophet *Jeremiah* doth with much sharpness speak in like manner unto these beastly kind of men, *When I fed them to the full, then they committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the Harlots houses. They were, as fed horses in the morning, everyone neighing after his neighbors wife. Shall I not visit for these things (saith the Lord) and shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation, as this?*

The Lord awaken the sleeping consciences of such, whom this quick reproof doth reach, that they may be the better for it through his rich grace in Jesus Christ.

The second sort to be blamed I shall touch with a more gentle [Use 2] hand (*viz.*) all those whose ends and aims, in seeking, and in bestowing favors, are directly contrary unto the command and practice of our blessed God. I here point at offenders, in the same kind, under a double head.

1. Such who in the pursuit of outward advantages and accommodations for themselves, do only intend the gratifying of the flesh, the satisfying of their own hellish lusts. The Apostle *James* checketh these men, *Jam. 4. 3. Ye ask amiss, that ye may consume upon your lusts.* And there is a smart rebuke of *Baruch*, wrapped up in that Question, which the Prophet *Jeremiah* propoundeth to him, *Jer. 45. 5. Seekest thou great things for thyself?* Those must take this home to themselves, who mind nothing so much, as *sloth, sensuality, pride, luxury, revenge*, and the like, in coveting and hunting after vast estates, places of honor and command in the world.

2. Those who in conferring places of profit, authority, employment and trust upon others, do principally (if not only) aim at the making of a party, the strengthening of a faction, against the government and ways of Jesus Christ. I will make no instances, but leave it to your wisdom and consciences to make application and improvement of this general Item.

If there be any, whose purses, power, votes, vigor, are to fill offices with men, whose minds, hearts, hands are against the power of godliness, the purity of Gospel-ordinances, the progress of our Church-Reformation, I wish they would consider, that they are not herein acted by the Spirit of God. I will not make any application of *Balaaks* promise to promote *Balaam*, if he would endeavor to discomfit *Israel*, lest I should seem over-tart. Neither would I be thus interpreted in that I have spoken, as though I purposed to strike secretly, any who labor in the sincerity and simplicity of their spirits, to make Jesus Christ glorious in the world. Let my tongue rather cleave to the roof of my mouth forever, then that I dare to utter one word wittingly and willfully against the honor of our Lord Christ Jesus.

Now I come to the last Use, which is to persuade us all [Use 3] unto a double duty, and accordingly is to be divided into two branches.

First, We are hence to be moved to praise God for this his [Branch. 1] indulging providence, in that he is pleased by means of kindnesses to seek the winning and working of our hearts unto his holy obedience.

This inference is made to my hand, in the words immediately following the Text, *Praise ye the Lord.* Now to quicken our hearts unto the admiration and adoration of God, in this regard, let these following short meditations, be seriously considered.

1. That man's obedience makes no whit at all unto God's advantage, *Can a man be profitable to God? Is it any gain to him, that thou makedst thy ways perfect?* Job 22. 2, 3. *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him, or what receiveth he at thine hand?* Job 35. 7. These interrogations carry along with them vehement negations. That it is not possible to profit God in the least measure, by our best obediential endeavors.

Men hire servants, because their work tends to enrich them. But in references to the Almighty, All-sufficient God, all must say, *When we have done all those things, that are commanded, we are unprofitable servants,* Luk. 17. 10. *My well-doing* (saith David, though a man according to God's own heart) *doth not extend unto thee,* Psal. 16. 2. For unto that, which is infinite and perfect, no possible addition can be made.

2. That man's disobedience doth not in any degree prejudice God, *If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him?* Job 35. 6. The Sun is not obscured by man's refusing to behold it, or to commend the light of it.

The self-same beauties, perfections, happiness, which the Lord enjoyed in himself from eternity, he shall possess forever, though no creature should serviceably attend upon him.

Amongst men it is otherwise, for a stock cannot be traded, a trade cannot be managed, many necessary works would be undone, if we had not the assistance of servants. The Crown needs the Plow, the chiefest could not subsist, but by the support of the meanest. The feet uphold the head, and the whole body.

3. That God's rich, mere mercy did move him, to make manifest his mind unto man, that man might understand what carriage would content his blessed Majesty, and in this regard (if God had not added any further motive to obedience) we are obliged to honor his highness, *He showeth his Word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any Nation, and as for his judgments they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord,* Psal. 147. 19, 20.

What if the Lord had left us all in our natural darkness, as Heathens unacquainted with his Commandments, yet should we not have had any occasion to except against his Majesty.

But how great is our engagement to our God, who having given some light of knowledge, doth liberally give in favors, to move the obediential improvement thereof?

4. Suppose that the Lord suspending all ways of love and liberality towards us, should only by threats and blows, have endeavored our obedience, yet in that respect there would have been cause of thankfulness, for it is much better to be beaten to God's work, then to neglect it. *David was of this mind,* Psalm 119. 67, 68. *Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy Word. Thou art good, and dost good.* And verse. 71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.*

Therefore the ways of fairness and fatherly indulgence, whereby God seeks to conform our hearts and lives unto his Commandments, should endear him to our hearts, and draw forth our souls in thanksgiving.

5. The work and worship of the Almighty, which we take in hand, is always more or less defiled; God's excellencies are much obscured, his name sundry ways dishonored, by our imperfections which ever attend our best performances. There is iniquity in our holy offerings, *All our righteousnesses are like unsightly rags.* when good Nehemiah reviewed his famous services for God and his house, upon the discovery of his sinfulnesses, he cries out, Neh. 13. 22. *Lord, pardon me according to thy great mercies.*

Now all this God knows, yea he fore-knew all our future aberrations, when he showered down favors, to move our obedience, *Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance,* Psal. 90. 8. And David testifieth, *Psal. 139. 2. That God knows his thoughts afar off.* Is it not therefore to be very much admired, that the Lord should by renewed and multiplied favors labor to prevail with our hearts, *To observe his statutes, and to keep his laws?*

6. Lastly, (as though all that I have spoken were too little) the Lord hath herein further manifested and magnified his unsearchable grace, that he hath undertaken abundantly to recompense all our obedience, *In keeping of his Commandments there is great reward,* Psal. 19. 11.

Every self-knowing Christian, who is wont with any seriousness, to compare his returns to God, with his receipts from God, will freely acknowledge that he is always infinitely behind hand with his Majesty: therefore considering his former favorable providences, to persuade obedience, together with future precious promises, to crown obedience, we have all reason to call upon ourselves, *Praise we the Lord:* and to say unto one another, *Praise ye the Lord.*

The second branch of my Exhortation follows, which I have [Branch. 2] had principally in my mind and aim, all this while.

To persuade your conscientious care to improve all God's favorable providences unto the promoting and bettering of obedience, according to his purpose and appointment, *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

If my Exhortation upon this ground be not reasonable, lay it aside, *I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say.* Beloved, I am very serious in this my message, being not only seasonable, but of exceeding great concernment, and shall be very unwilling to go off with a denial unto this my reasonable request, which I make in the Name of God for your good.

Manifold examples might be produced to press this Exhortation. That double, that treble resolution of *Israel*, raised from this consideration, is notable, *God forbid, that we should forsake the Lord, for the Lord our God he it is that brought us up, and our Fathers out of Egypt, from the land of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, &c. Therefore we will also serve the Lord.*

And again, when *Joshua* seemed by his words to suspect their sincerity, *The people said unto Joshua. Nay, but we will serve the Lord.*

And yet once more, *Joshua* putting them to it unto purpose, *The people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.*

But I will come lower, then *Israel* professing dependence upon God. The very Heathens, wicked ones, moved only by moral principles, will requite kindnesses in respect to the law of retaliation, *If you do good to them, which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do the same.* And yet in reference unto God, I now request no more. Do but Christianly endeavor to answer God's kindnesses with an obediential carriage, and I call for no more.

I remember, when cruel *Saul*, plotting and practicing *David's* death, was yet by *David's* forbearance to slay him (having power and opportunity) so overcome, that he brake forth into these words, *My son David, I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day,* 1 Sam. 26. 21. God's long-sufferance and loving kindness to us-ward, doth wonderfully exceed all that *David* either did or could express towards *Saul*: He hath not only with-drawn his own revenging hand, though we have infinite times provoked him to his face, but he hath also held the bloody hands of cruel men, who have desired our death: yea, we do not only enjoy safety, but rich supplies of comforts from our God. How much rather therefore should we resolve no more to dishonor God by our disobedience, but *to observe his statutes, and to keep his laws.*

2. This grateful obedience, the Lord will graciously accept, as a full contenting recompense for all his bounties. When *Moses* had numbered up multitudes of blessings bestowed upon *Israel*, he adds, Deut. 10. 12, 13. *And now, ô Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to walk in all his ways, to keep his Commandments?* As if he had said, this is all, he will be satisfied with this, he looks for no more. O beloved, how deeply are we indebted unto the most high God, and yet such is his indulgence, that upon sincere observation of his laws (which by virtue of our being reasonable creatures, we are bound to yield) he will cast a *quietus est*, a full acquittance into our bosoms.

But if this consideration cannot prevail with you, yet I pray you consider on the other hand, how unkindly the Lord taketh their disobedience, towards whom he abounds in benefits. How pathetic is that complaint of God himself against his *Israel*, breathed forth by the Evangelical Prophet, *Hear ô heavens, and give ear ô earth, for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, but they have rebelled against me. The Ox knows his owner, and the Ass his masters crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful Nation.* In reference unto this lamentation, which the Lord maketh over stubborn, unthankful ones, I will only say thus much; Have you not yet offended your God enough, but will you proceed to grieve him still.

3. This practicing of God's praises will be many ways beneficial to ourselves.

1. It will render us wise, in the account of all such, who with any seriousness consider our great obligations unto God. *Keep therefore and do them, for this is your wisdom and understanding, in the sight of the Nations which shall hear of these statutes, and say, Surely this great Nation is a wise and understanding people. For what Nation is so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things, that we call upon him for?* Deut. 4. 6, 7. Is it not wisdom to observe

him, who secures our persons and comforts, whose ever-waking and all working providence is for our good in every kind? And how can man more manifest his wisdom, then by making God's ends, his aim in everything? Now God's end in the administrations of his love is, *That we may observe his statutes, and keep his laws.*

2. This obediential improvement of God's goodness, will evidence the uprightness of our hearts. Mark *David's* argument which he pleads before the all-knowing God, *Psal. 26. O Lord, I have walked in mine integrity, ver. 1. For thy loving kindness is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth, verse. 3.* Threats and blows drive hypocrites to duty, but cords of love draw the gracious heart unto exact walking with his God.

3. When former favors produce better obedience, then may we boldly expect the multiplication of future mercies. *Moses* having, *Deut. 29.* specified some of *Israel's* rich receipts from God's good hand, from *verse. 2.* to the 9th, he thus concludes, *Keep therefore the words of this Commandment, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.* The self-seeking husband-man will cast precious seed with a liberal hand into a fruitful soil, which is wont to return an answerable crop. God hath the end of his bounties, in our obedience. And his promises to follow and to fill them who are obedient, with blessings of all sorts, are manifold in the holy Scriptures.

4. Many and heavy are the judgments threatened against them who continue stubbornly disobedient, notwithstanding the sweet assaults made upon them, by God's gracious administrations. That commination in *Deut. 28. 47, 48.* hath often affected and affrighted my heart, in reference to this trembling Kingdom, *Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things* (mark that, for the abundance of all things) *therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies, which the Lord shall send upon thee, in hunger and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in the want of all things, and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he hath destroyed thee.* When *Samuel* had pressed the bettering of obedience, by God's remarkable works (which is the very exhortation, which I have now under hand) he sets it on by the self-same Argument, *1 Sam. 12. 24, 25. Fear the Lord, and serve him intruth, with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King.* Beloved, we know to our sorrow, that both our King and his Kingdoms are in a wasting condition. God forbid, O God forbid, that our continued disobedience should work our utter consumption and desolation.

This which I have said is sad, and I have made mine own heart say by saying it; yet that is much more lamentable, which the *Apostle Paul* reports concerning God's judgment upon poor, purblind Heathens, for their ingratitude, in not living up to their light, to their receipts, *Rom. 1. 21. Because when they knew God* (it is meant of knowledge attained by God's works) *they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, &c. Wherefore God gave them up unto uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves, verse. 24.* The penalty inflicted upon the immortal soul is the more heavy, because of the souls excellency. And mere torment upon the well-awakened soul is not comparably so grievous, as it's servitude to sinful lusts. Now this, this judgment of judgments is incurred, by not answering obedientially our receipts from God. And let none think to put this off, by

saying, This concerned Heathens, but we are Christians: for consider, I beseech you, whether the danger be not hereby increased? Is our light greater? Have God's works amongst us held forth more grace and glory? Then questionless our disobedience will expose us to as great, or greater judgments.

I have done with the Arguments prepared to enforce my Exhortation: and I hope they have so far prevailed with you, (at least with some of you) as to move resolutions, to make an obediencial improvement of your experiences. I now proceed to acquaint you with some few rules to direct this your obedience, your real thankfulness unto God, with which I shall conclude. And for brevity sake, I will only mention such, as issue naturally and necessarily from my Text and Doctrine.

1. Therefore God should rather be obeyed, then any man whatsoever. I am far from dissuading dutiful observance unto lawful Superiors of any quality or degree: but I propound the Question of the Apostles, *Whether it be better to obey God or men, judge ye*, Act 4. 19. & 5. 29.

Let him, who doth most and greatest favors for us, receive the largest and frequentest respects from us. Give the chiefest attendance unto the best benefactor. Now who, or what is he, that shall dare to stand in competition with God? No doubt but *Joseph, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, had so much ingenuity, as to acknowledge with gratitude their obligations unto their Superiors, yet being acted by their stronger, higher engagements unto God, they refused to gratify them in things displeasing unto his Majesty. And I shall not need to tell you how far the bestowings of God in quantity, quality and variety, do transcend all that kindness, which either hath been received, or can be expected from any human hand.

2. Therefore we should obey God with our All. *Both riches and honors come of thee, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. All things come of thee*, 1 Chro. 29. 12, 14. Is it not reasonable that all which is received from the Lord, should be employed for the Lord? You Merchants expect thus much in justice and equity from your factours beyond seas, that whatsoever commodities you convey unto them, should be disposed of to your advantage. Now I pray you turn the Tables, and deal you with God, as you require men should deal with you. Who doth not acknowledge strength in the Apostles argument? 1 Cor. 6. 20. *Glorify God both in your body and in your spirit, which are God's*. Therefore if we grant the premisses, it will be our weakness to deny the Conclusion.

Consider what I say. If any of you enjoy any wisdom, strength, authority, estates, parts, interests, opportunities, which you received not from the Lord, then refuse to lay them forth for the Lord. But let me appeal unto every individual soul here present, in the Apostles words, *What hast thou which thou didst not receive?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. The inference therefore comes with force upon you, *Thou shalt love* (and consequently thou shalt obey) *the Lord thy God with all thy soul, with all thy thought, with all thy might, Cum omni valde tuo*. O it is an unequal and unreasonable thing, to make any deeds of reservation in our dealings with our God, the God of all grace and of all consolations whatsoever.

3. Therefore our obedience unto God, should be tendered speedily. For is not the Lord so far beforehand with us in his favors, that 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, at this very instant, we are engaged obsequiously to submit unto his government? *Joshua* having particularized to *Israel* ancient providences, whereby God had expressed his care and kindness towards them and their forefathers, he calls for service without delay, Josh. 24. 14. *Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him.* Do not any of you dare to put off God one day longer with procrastinations. A father said, that *cras, cras*, was *corvina vox*. Delays will breed guilt, and bring danger. Let us call to mind how much we were in God's debt, how far in arrears, before we began to pay one penny (as it were) in any humble, holy, hearty performance. Therefore let us now, now obedientially remember our Creator, our Protectour, our Benefactour, our God blessed forever, *To day, while it is called today, do not harden your hearts.*

4. Therefore in all ways of holy obedience, we should *walk humbly with our God*. Well may this alone abase our hearts, that the excellencies of the Lord, and the worth of his service, should not be sufficient to work us unto dutifulness, without a daily addition of fresh favors from his Majesty. But when we compare our unanswerableness to God's purposes, expectations, deservings, it is strange that there should be the least conceitedness in us, in regard of any work at any time discharged. If ever man had occasion to glory in his labors, and adventures for Christ, the Apostle *Paul* (I think) might be the man. But he professeth, Act. 20. 19. *That he served the Lord in all humility of mind.* Now it is most apparent, that besides other means whereby he attained and maintained this sweet, humble frame of spirit, this was one, viz. That he had much in his eye, his rich receipts from Christ, which he was no way able to requite. And I am confident, that by a serious, wise paralleling that which God doth for us, with that which we do for him, in regard of *quantity, quality, variety and constancy*, the swelling of our hearts will be much abated.

5. Therefore all our services for God should be the warm breathings of flaming love. All the undertakings of *S^t Paul* for Christ, seemed to be sparks arising out of this fire. He speaking of labors, losses, hazards, gives in this as the reason of all, 2 Cor. 5. 14. *For the love of Christ constraineth.* And when *David* had endeared his God to his heart, by meditating upon his mercies, Psal. 116. 1. *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my supplication, &c.* From thence did issue obediential resolutions, *I will call upon the Lord. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.* Although God alloweth the use of other arguments to quicken obedience, yet this of love should have the preeminence.

6. Therefore we *should serve the Lord in truth*, because *he hath done great things for us*, 1 Sa. 13. 24. This truth is opposed to seemingness and falsehood. God doth not feed us with fair words. We do not only hear of his bounties, but we see, touch, taste, enjoy the comforts of his good providences. Let us answer our God with realities, *If any man only seem to be religious, his religion is vain*, Jam. 1. As for those who content themselves with shows of godliness, *denying the power thereof*, they are abhorred by the Lord. *Be not deceived, for God will not be mocked, According as every man sows, so shall he reap. If you sow the wind, you shall reap the east-wind.* Be you well assured, that Court complements, frothy flatteries, empty shows will not take with God. Those who pay in good coin, will not be repaid with that which is counterfeit. Let us,

not therefore dream of requiting God's real favors with mere formalities, *Let us not only love in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth.*

7. *Therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity.* This sincerity is opposed unto selfishnesse. Whereas the hypocrite centers proudly in himself, makes himself his last end, his God. *Did ye not eat for yourselves? Did ye not drink for yourselves? Did yeat all fast unto me, even unto me? saith the Lord.* The practice of God, intending and effecting our good, as truly, as his own glory, may well prevail with us, to mind his praise in that which we undertake. His gracious providences are for our comfort, his holy Commandments are for our good, therefore let not us sit down satisfied in serving our own turn by our services, but let us move forward, not resting till we come to this center, God's honor. Whatsoever we do, whether in our general or particular callings, in commanding, obeying, in private or public, *Let all be done unto the glory of God,* 1 Cor. 10. 31.

8. Therefore we should *observe God's statutes, and keep his laws continually.* This the Lord desires, Deut. 5. 29. *O that there were such an heart in them, that they would keep my Commandments always.* And this his Majesty well deserves, *For he daily loadeth us with his benefits,* Psal. 68. 19. His unweariednesse in following us with favors, should move us to follow him unweariedly in the ways of well doing. If in the whole course of your lives, you can find one day, or one hour, wherein God doth not, in one kind or other, do you good, then on that day, in that hour suspend the serving of his highness. We (such is the sinfulness of our sinning hearts) do every moment of our lives, give the most high God most just occasion to resolve to favor us no more: but the Lord (so admirable is his goodness) doth every minute of time, afresh engage us unto his obedience. *Therefore be not weary of well-doing,* but rather, *be always abounding in the work of the Lord.* God forbid, that it should be truly said of any of us, *That we began in the Spirit, and did end in the flesh.*

All these eight rules, necessary truths, and naturally deduced from my doctrine, do concern everyone in this great Congregation without any exception. I cannot imagine, from what seeming pretence any should dare to plead exemption from these directions; and I pray God, that no one of you may depart this Assembly, without some obediential bents and resolutions upon your spirits. But all my Sermon, all my counsel doth most concern them; for whom the Lord hath done most, in ways most remarkable and glorious. No City in the world hath been more magnified by divine providences, then this wherein we are. No people on earth hath been more enriched with temporal and spiritual provisions together, then ourselves. Our God grant that our improvements obediential, may prove in some good measure answerable.

Notwithstanding, by virtue of the equity of my doctrine, the Lord expecteth to be best served, to be most advanced, by them whom he hath most enriched, whom he hath most advanced. And therefore give me leave to tell you, *Right Honorable, the Lord Major, and Right worshipful, the Aldermen of this famous City, that God deserveth and expecteth more from you, then from your brethren. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more,* Luk. 12. 48. As you are bound to be exemplary in exact endeavors, *To observe God's statutes, and to keep his laws:* So is it your duty

(in a special manner) to take care that all others under your command be conformed to the Commandments of your God, *Magistratus est custos utrius{que} tabulae*.

Right Honorable, your Lordship hath for divers years been acquainted with my plain Ministry, and I cannot say that I have lost any place in your affections by my plainness, therefore I will take the boldness to direct myself in faithfulness unto you.

1. Do not you dare through indulgence to spare the punishing of them, who do dare to cast God's Commandments behind their backs. Could you hold your hands, and connive at such, who should go about to sleight the works, which are raised and maintained for the safety of this City? You heard in the opening of my Text, That God would have his laws preserved from violence, as the means of our preservation. I once heard a plain dealing Preacher, compare a remiss Magistrate unto the *sign George on Horse-back*, who standeth all the year with his hand on the Sword, but never strikes. My Lord, *You have not received the Sword in vain*, Rom. 13. 4. Although I would not sharpen the edge of authority unto undue severity; yet would I whet mine own knife to launce and let out the impostumated matter in my friends flesh. I grant your Lordship must be cautious, as courageous, and therefore you have good reason to make *Solomon's prayer*, 1 King. 3. 9. *Give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad*. But I beseech you remember withal, That *foolish pity spoils the City*. Let not common drunkards, profane cursers and swearers, brutish wantons, and such like wicked ones, escape that penalty, which the Law hath appointed for them. *Phineas executed judgment, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*, Psal. 106. 30, 31.

2. I call for your zeal against Popery, that abomination, which brings desolation. Let your zeal move often inquisitions, whether in some corners of this City, there be not Idolatry in the use of the Mass, lest through neglect of search, that abomination be suffered. But I move that in a special manner, search may be made after Jesuits, those unsufferable incendiaries, who blow the coal of contention amongst brethren, who have caused, and do continue the unhappy breach betwixt our King and Parliament, our Sovereign and his Subjects. I have heard a Story of a man, who passing by a tree, which Nature was cleaving, did thrust in his hand to increase the breach; whereupon providence suddenly closing the breach, did there hold the man by the hand, as an act of revenge. Though I dare not assert the truth of this Story, yet I make this moral. Doubtless there are Jesuitical spirits, who haunt these coasts, who walk in this City, and it is suspected by many, that they have a special hand in some of the pamphlets published, to increase the flames of unbrotherly divisions: I heartily wish that they might be apprehended by some good hand to be made exemplary. It's reported that the *Pythagoreans* did set a note of infamy upon the number of two, because it was the first, which dared to depart from Unity. *Solomon* saith, *He that soweth discord among brethren, is an abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 6. 16. 19. And this reacheth more then Jesuits in this Kingdom, yea in this City: For how many make it their business to make breaches, not only among private brethren, but also between the two Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland*, notwithstanding the solemn brotherly Covenant. *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ*, Ro. 16. 17, 18. I humbly move cautiousnesse in

regard of Malignants, that those mischief-workers, who now (as report speaks) are moving homeward, may not inconsiderately, upon too easy terms be entertained and trusted. It is my daily prayer, that God would convert and pardon those who express the most malignity against the work of Reformation so happily begun amongst us: and my soul saith, God forbid, that any who are sincerely changed, should by our sournesse, be sent back again into our enemies quarters. Notwithstanding I must tell you, *Abundance cautela non nocet. When Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the Disciples, but they were all afraid of him, Act. 9. 26.* Fals-hearted ones amongst ourselves, may do us much more wrong, then known adversaries at a distance. And is it not a just ground of complaint made by our friends, when foes who have forsaken City and Parliament, shall make their peace at such easy rates, that they suffer less in their outward estates upon their return, then approved friends have done, if their Assesments and voluntary contributions be considered? I undertake not to direct in this case, but I entreat God, to make the Parliament and City wise and circumspect in this particular.

4 I most earnestly importune your care, for the better and stricter observation of the Sabbath, and I heartily commend worthy *Nehemiah*, as your pattern of imitation in this practice. The ways and courses whereby he witnessed his holy zeal in this kind, lie open in the History, I shall not need to specify them. I beseech your Lordship to see to the suppression of buying, selling and sporting upon the Lord's day. I have often thought upon a speech of that famous servant of Christ, and Minister in this City, *learned, humble, holy, public hearted D^r Staughton*, which I had from him in private conference in those times, when the Sabbath, and the observation thereof, was decried by the Prelates and profane sort of men. His speech was this, *Should any man give up a Castle of such concernment to this Kingdom, as the fourth Commandment is to the safety of Christian Religion, he would deserve to die many deaths.* As you love the Lord, and the life of Religion, regard the Sabbath, and let your heart and hand be against those doctrines and practices, which tend to the profanation of it.

5. I entirely Petition your utmost towards the compounding of our miserable divisions about Church affairs. There are not only Congregations of *Anabaptists, Antinomians* and *Brownists* in this City connived at; but (as it is commonly and credibly reported) also companies of men, who deny the Deity of Christ, and divine authority of the Scriptures. I remember that when *Gallio* was Deputy of *Achaia*, there was insurrection made in *Corinth* against *Paul*, and there were woeful confusions in the City, but it is added, *Act. 18. 17. And Gallio cared for none of those things.* God forbid, that either your Lordship, or any other Magistrate in this City should be thus regardless of our present distractions. When there was a great breach made in the ground by an earth-quake at *Rome*, and notice was given, that the gods would not be pacified, except something of special worth was cast into the breach, *Marcus Curtius* did cast himself in, in love to his Country. And I believe that there are very many amongst ourselves in this City, both Ministers and others, who could be content to sacrifice their lives in this service, to reconcile dissenting brethren. For alas, alas, Do not divisions threaten dissolution? *A Kingdom divided cannot stand.* My soul desires that *London* may, in ways of truth and holiness, be like *Jerusalem, A City compact together*; or (as others render the phrase) *A City that is joined to itself together, Psal. 1 22. 3.*

For the effecting whereof, I make it my last request, that with all your might (as God may be pleased to give opportunity) you would promote the speedy settling and exercise of Church-government. Were the Church blessed with the use of that Discipline, which is according to the mind of Christ, in this posture, it would be *terrible as an Army with banners*, Cant. 6. 10. By this means profaneness would be crushed, superstition suppressed, errors checked, Malignancy discountenanced, the Sabbath better observed, holy Ordinances more purely administered, and our breaches well healed. Here are motives enough to move every right bred son of *Zion*, to set head, heart and hand unto this work. Conscientious, zealous care in this kind, will contribute very much to your honor here, and your comfort hereafter. Good *Nehemiah* thus pleads for himself before the Lord, having been industrious in this service, *Remember me, ô my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds (my kindnesses) that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof*, Nehem. 13. 14. Now in this case, the counsel of God's faithful Ministers, is to be considered. The words of *Artaxerxes* are notable, *Ezr. 7. 21. Whatsoever Ezra the Priest, the Scribe of the Law of the God of heaven shall require of you, let it be done speedily*. Some (it may be) will catch at this sentence, and say, This discovers the drift of Presbyterian spirits; you desire to exercise dominion over your brethren's consciences, and therefore would have all things managed according to your mind? But I must take the boldness to answer, *That this is a notorious slander*. For we petition nothing, but that which in our consciences is according to the mind of Jesus Christ, and profess ourselves willing with the least and lowest of Saints, to submit unto the Scepter of our Lord and Savior, not requesting favor in anything, repugnant unto the holy Scripture.

This is that advice, which in faithfulness, and with humility I present unto your Lordships consideration; and I do it with the more confidence, because in all particulars it speaks the language of our solemn National League and Covenant, which should never be forgotten. And now to conclude all. I beseech you all (*both right Worshipful Aldermen, and right worthy Citizens*) to consider seriously how far my counsel directed to the Lord Major concerneth you everyone. O that God would give you all with one heart to say unto his *Lordship* (as it was once spoken to *Ezra*, to quicken a work of Reformation) *Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee, we also will be with thee. Be of good courage, and do it*, *Ezr. 10. 4* For my part, I shall use no more words, but those of *David* to *Solomon* (relating to Templework) *1 Chron. 22. 16. Arise therefore and be doing, and the Lord be with thee*.

FINIS.

P-SA-9. Religious covenanting directed, and covenant-keeping persuaded: presented, in a sermon preached before the Right Honorable Thomas Adams Lord Major, and the right worshipful the sheriffs, and aldermen his brethren, and the rest of the Common-Council of the famous City of London, January 14. 1645. Upon which day the solemn League and Covenant was renewed by them and their officers, with prayer and fasting, at Michael Basing-shaw, London. - Ashe, Simeon, d. 1662.

RELIGIOVS COVENANTING DIRECTED, AND Covenant-keeping persuaded: *PRESENTED*, In a SERMON preached before the Right Honorable *Thomas Adams* Lord Major, and the Right Worshipful the Sheriffs, and Aldermen his brethren, and the rest of the Common-Council of the famous City of LONDON, *January, 14. 1645.*

Upon which day the solemn League and Covenant was renewed by them and their Officers, with Prayer and Fasting, at *Michael Basing-shaw, London.*

By *Simeon Ash* Minister of the Gospel.

When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it, for the Lord thy God will require it of thee, and it would be sin in thee.

Deut. 23. 21.

I will bring the sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my Covenant.

Lev. 26. 25.

LONDON, Printed by *G. M.* for *Tho. Underhill* at the sign of the Bible in Wood-street. M. DC. XLVI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THOMAS ADAMS Lord Major, AND THE RIGHT WORSHIPFULL The Sheriffs and Aldermen his Brethren, and to the rest of the Honorable Court of Common Council of the City of LONDON.

THis plain Sermon which attended your service of Covenant-renewing from the Pulpit, comes now from the Press, in obedience to your command, to do you and the public some further service. If upon the perusal of that which you heard preached, it may please the Lord to quicken your zeal in Covenantkeeping, I shall have occasion to bless his Name with a joyful heart.

The zeal of the Common-Council of London, in renewing their solemn League and Covenant, rings thorough the several Counties of the Kingdom of England: and I am confident, that the sound thereof hath been heard in many other Kingdoms: And doubtless there are often enquiries, and earnest expectations to hear what London now doth in the pursuance of their Covenant heretofore taken, and now again solemnly renewed with holy fasting and prayer. A City set upon an hill cannot be hid; your practices have had, and will have strong influences into the several parts of this Land, and into other Nations: You have formerly and lately done well and worthily in respect to your Covenant: I pray God, that your continued holy zeal may affect and fire many in other Countries in faithful Covenant-keeping. God forbid, that you should ever deserve thus to be stigmatized, either by God or men; Their heart was not right with God, neither were they steadfast in their Covenant, Psal. 78. 37.

I shall not need to tell you, that our solemn League and Covenant is despised, divided, aspersed and opposed by too many: for that which you may read in Pamphlets, and hear from some Pulpits and other places, doth make you both eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of this evil, which should be greatly bewailed. This contradiction, this opposition should increase your gracious heat for your God. Fire gives out the most scorching heat in the coldest weather. It is time for thee, Lord, to work (saith David) for they have made void thy Law. Therefore I love thy Commandments above gold, yea above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way, Psal. 119. 126, 127, 128.

My soul desires, that according to the guidance of that wisdom which is from above, you all may make the like gracious improvement of the checks and affronts which you meet with, in your Covenant-keeping. By how much the more, any others do plot and practice to hinder the glorious work of Church-reformation, by so much the more do you consult and act, to expedite and perfect it. By how much the more any others strive and study to maintain Popery, Prelacie, Schism, Heresy. by so much the more, do you set yourselves against such matters, as being destructive to the welfare both of Church and state. By how much the more others design and endeavor to break the brotherly union between England and Scotland, by so much the more do you lay forth yourselves to maintain it. And that your zeal in these kinds may appear to yourselves and others to be pure and sincere, let it be your chief and constant care, to reform yourselves and all yours, in everything, according to the will of God: That you all may in these particulars and in all things else, approve yaur selves faithful both to God and man, in holy Covenant-keeping, shall be the prayer of him, who is

Your servant, in, and for Jesus Christ, SIM: ASH.

Feb. 24th

RELIGIOVS COVENANTING DIRECTED.

PSAL. 76. II. Vow and pay unto the Lord your God.

THis Text persuades a double duty. 1. To make vows. 2. To pay vows unto the Lord our God. From whence two truths, seasonable for the service of the day, fall naturally, and easily, without forcing, into our consideration.

[Doct. 1] *That God's people must make religious vows, as his hand of providence doth lead them forth thereunto.*

[Doct. 2] *That such vows being made, must be paid unto the Lord our God.*

In the handling of the former of these propositions, I shall briefly give you, 1. The explication; 2. The application thereof.

The explication of the point I shall dispatch under these three heads. 1. The Act required, vow. 2. The Agents, or persons upon whom this duty is pressed: This the following words express. *All those that be round about him.* 3. The providences, whereby God calleth forth to this practice of *making vows.*

First, Holy vows are the solemn engagements of the soul unto the Lord, according to his will: *If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath, to bind his soul with a bond*, Numb. 30. 2. To vow, to swear, and to covenant, are in Scripture phrase equivalent, importing the same thing, *Jonathan made a Covenant with David, And Jonathan caused David to swear again*, 1 Sam. 29. 16, 17. Here I may not spend time, in discoursing concerning the several sorts of vows, which might be spoken to, under these, or such like heads. 1. They are either made to God, or man. 2. Of things necessary, or arbitrary. 3. Explicite, or implicit, mental, or vocal. 4. Assertory, or promissory. But let it be sufficient, that I now suggest thus much: That the Text is to be understood of such vows, as are promissory obligations unto the Lord. And from hence I shall persuade and direct the managing of such vows unto God, as are necessary and openly unfolded to every ordinary understanding, in the solemn League and Covenant this day to be renewed.

Secondly, the Actors in this duty are described to be such, as are *round about the Lord*. The Psalmist hath reference to Numb. 2. 2. where *Israel* was commanded to *pitch* their Tents *round about the Tabernacle*, which was a sign of God's special presence. And this phrase (as I conceive) describeth God's people by a double character. 1. Their special attendance upon God, their readiness to receive and obey his commands: As the four and twenty Elders, are said, *Rev. 4. 4. to be round about the Throne*, as pres'd to praise the Lord. 2. God's special presence in the midst of them, to hear prayers, and to perform promises, for their preservation and welfare in every kind; *who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God, in all things, that we call upon him for?* Deu. 4. 7.

Thirdly, the call unto this employment I shall note under a five fold providence from the Lord.

1. Sinful defections from God, that by means of religious vowing, his backsliding people might be recovered: *Our fathers have trespassed and done that which is evil in the eyes of the Lord our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their face from the habitation of the Lord, and turned their backs. Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burnt incense, nor offered burnt offerings, in the holy place unto the God of Israel. Now it is in my heart (saith Hezekiah) to make a Covenant with the Lord God of Israel*, 2 Chron. 29. 6, 7, 10. Thus likewise the people of God resolved in the days of Ezra: *We have trespassed against our God, &c. Now therefore, let us make a Covenant with our God*, Ezra 10. 2, 3.

2. Sad discoveries of divine displeasure, that by holy covenanting present judgments might be removed, and future evils prevented: *The wrath of the Lord was upon Judah and Jerusalem; and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes. For lo our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons, and our daughters, and our wives are in captivity for this. Now it is in mine heart (saith Hezekiah) to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us*, 2 Chron. 29. 8, 9, 10.

3. Famous experiences of God's goodness, that by the right use of religious vows his Majesty may be praised, and his providences improved. The exhortation in the Text was grounded upon some such occasion, as many verses in the Psalm declare: *The stout-hearted are spoiled,*

they have slept their sleep, and none of the men of might have found their hands, ver. 5. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a deadsleep, ver. 6. When God arose in judgment to save all the meek of the earth, ver. 8. Hence follows, vow and pay, &c. Interpreters judge, that this Psalm was penned, upon Ashurs overthrow, whereupon many brought gifts unto the Lord unto Jerusalem, 2 Chron. 32. 23. according to the advice given in the words immediately following the Text, Bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.

4. Defective improvements (if any improvements at all) of God's favorable administrations, that by foederall engagements his people might be bettered: *These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses &c. Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes, even in the land of Egypt, &c. The great temptations, and those great miracles: yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day, Deut. 29. 1, 2, 3, 4.* This is propounded as one ground of the Covenant renewed, whereof we read in the following verses.

5. Apparent danger of seduction and departure from God. In this regard God's servants have afresh obliged themselves to his Majesty, for their own establishment and preservation: *Ye stand this day before the Lord, to enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, lest there should be amongst you any, whose heart turneth away from the Lord, Deut. 29. 10, 12, 18.*

[V;se 1] The application of this point followeth; which serves in the first place to inform you of your call to *covenant-renewing*, the intended service of this day. For give me leave to appeal unto your consciences, *Right Honorable, right Worshipful, and much respected Citizens*, whether all the five fore-mentioned particulars, do not fully reach you and take hold upon you, both in respect of God's dealings with you, and your miscarriages towards him, since you at first took the solemn League and Covenant. And here I shall make bold to propound unto you some short interrogatories, under the five fore-mentioned heads, to which I wish your hearts may return answers, as in the presence of the Allknowing God.

First, Are you not guilty of sinful declinings in a great degree from your former engagements unto the Lord? Have you not lost your first love? Have not the matters of God's house been much slighted and neglected? Hath not your care to preserve the truth of Religion from corruption been much abated? Have you not connived at the spreading of pernicious errors in this City? Hath not your zeal against schism and sinful separations from our Church Assemblies been very much cooled? Is not your love towards our Brethren of *Scotland* in a great measure lessened? Have not your vigorous endeavors to promote the settling of Christ's government in our Congregations been woefully diminished? And have you not been lamentably wanting in laboring the thorough reformation of yourselves and families? Which of you, hath striven to exceed, to excel others, in advancing the power of godliness in your conversation? Doubtless these and such like backslidings from former engagements, may well warrant your Covenant-renewing with your God.

Secondly, None of you can be ignorant of the manifold, manifest discoveries of God's heavy displeasure against this poor trembling Kingdom. Hath not the Lord *delivered us up unto trouble and astonishment*, by his severe administrations? How many thousands have fallen by

the sword of cruel war? What woeful desolations are made in many Towns, yea Counties in this Kingdom, by the prevailing pitiless enemies? And should not we read God's wrath against ourselves, in the abundance of blood which hath been shed, and the unhappy spoils which have been made in *Scotland* and *Ireland*? Besides all this, I pray you consider whether these things do not proclaim and speak allowed God's anger? Our long looked for reformation in matters of Religion, is still deferred: our hopes of the much-needed and much-desired Discipline of Jesus Christ, are still disappointed: the miserable rents and divisions in families, Congregations, Cities and Counties, by reason of different, yea contrary opinions and practices, in ways of Religion, are wonderfully increased. And have we not in these regards reason to renew our Covenant, that the wrath of the Lord may be turned from us?

Thirdly, God hath often *remembered us in our low estate, because his mercy endureth forever*. Who can recount God's many marvelous works for our safety and comfort? Have not our deliverances been wonderful, and many of our victories little less than miraculous? How often hath the subtil enemy been infatuated, the strong enemy weakened, and great Armies broken by a little strength? I shall not need here to mind you of the many wonders which God's Almighty hand hath wrought for us, both in the Northern and Western parts. And as for this City, how admirably and unexpectedly hath it been preserved and provided for, in every kind by the Lord? How many oppressions are we freed from, by Parliamentary authority, through the goodness of our God? Therefore besides other presents of praise which God deserves at our hands, we have just occasion to present ourselves unto his Hignesse by Covenant-renewing.

Fourthly, Notwithstanding our various and glorious experiences of God's patience and goodness; Have we not too much cause thus to complain, that to this day we want hearts to husband God's remarkable providences, to his honor and our own advantage? Who loves God more, or who serves him better, because of the great things he hath done for us? Is our faith in God's promises stronger? Is our fear of God's displeasure greater? Are we more zealous for the Lord of Hosts, or more courageous for his truth, against error? Dare we say that we do our utmost for the speeding of Church-reformation, that we may not be over-run and undone by Sects, Schisms and confusions? Therefore certainly, we have a call to renew our Covenant, to quicken our improvement of God's gracious providences, both to his praise, others profit, and our own further comfort in Christ.

Fifthly and lastly, That we may not fall from our steadfastness, we have need to bind ourselves yet further unto our God by solemn Covenant. Men are wont (as I have heard) to hoop their *vessels* with iron bonds, in which they carry their stronger liquors beyond seas, that by the tossings in the ship and the liquors working, the vessels may not be broken into pieces, and the liquor lost. And have not we more need to add the bond of a solemn Covenant to the bond of God's sacred commands, that we may not be broken from one another, nor divided from God in his truths and holy worships, in these broken, erroneons, stormy, tempestuous times?

For 1. *Emulation, variance, strife, seditions, heresies*, are reckoned up, by the Apostle, amongst the works of the flesh, unto which our corrupt natures do strongly dispose us.

2. There are more then a good many of subtle, busy factours in this City, to promote errors, schisms and factions of several sorts, to draw disciples after them, and to spread their infection amongst people of all ranks and qualities.

3. It is apparent, by too many instances, that divers persons both wise and godly, have been deceived and drawn aside from the ways of truth, into the by-paths of error and schism, and into practices of bitterness (I will not say of how many kinds) against their brethren.

Therefore in this respect, as in those before mentioned, you have just cause to say one to another; *Come, let us join ourselves unto the Lord in a Covenant, never to be forgotten.*

[Use 2] Having thus far endeavored to clear up your call unto Covenant-renewing, I now proceed by way of exhortation, to persuade your regular and reverential cautiousnesse in this weighty business. Consider the glorious Majesty of God, unto whom vows are to be made; He *ought to be feared*, as our translation renders the words following the Text: or, He is *fear*, as the Original hath it. In which phrase we have *Nomen affectus, pro objecto*. God is a dreadful and terrible Majesty. And this doubtless is added, to awe men's hearts, in the undertaking of such like services. The advice of *Solomon* upon this ground is more open, *Eccles. 5. 2. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God, for God is in Heaven, and thou upon earth.* In which counsel, the wise man hath special reference unto vowing, as the following words declare.

Now for your guidance in this great service, I will give you briefly some plain and necessary rules.

1. You must Covenant *knowingly*. It is thus openly expressed, of them who covenanted in the days of *Nehemiah*, *Everyone having knowledge, and having understanding, they clave to their brethren, they entered into an oath to walk in God's Law*, *Neh. 10. 29*. Ignorance doth nothing well: the light of knowledge must guide our whole course. And in this business of a sacred vow, it is necessary that men know, both the nature of the duty, and the matter of the federal engagement. No man should be moved by an implicit faith, but everyone should be fully persuaded in his own mind. For as in other cases, so in this, *whatsoever is not of faith, is sin*.

2. *Repentance* for former offenses must precede, and prepare for Covenant-renewing. Thus it was with those, who sealed and subscribed the solemn Covenant in the time of *Nehemiah*, for they assembled themselves to keep a religious Fast (as we do this day) before they entered into the Covenant, *Neh. 9. 1*. In which exercise deep sorrow for sin was expressed, their particular evils were aggravated and largely confessed, themselves were judged, and God was justified in his severe administrations: All these expressions of repentance, are manifest in that 9th Chapter of *Nehemiah*, which then was the introduction to the Covenant. And doubtless if we do not penitently bewail our former violations of God's commands and our own vows, we cannot with acceptation to God, or with comfort in our own hearts renew our Covenant with him this day.

3. Your *hearts* must go along with your vows. It is said, *▪ Chron▪ 15▪ 15▪ That all Judah did swear with all their hearts▪* And God will not take up with less at our hands this day. It is no better then hypocrisy, to lift up hands before God, when *the heart is far from him*. We must in our judgments approve and resolve upon the payment of our vows, and all our affections, both concupiscible and irascible, must be upon the wing, according to the various particularities expressed in the Covenant. The soul should with love, joy and longings, work towards the speedy settling of Church-government according to the word of God, and towards the maintaining of brotherly union between the two Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland*, together with the more full reformation of ourselves and families. And O how should your souls now rise, in holy dislike, in the hatred of, and in indignation against *Popery*, and all *profaneness*, against *Heresies*, *Schism*, *detestable Neutrality*, and whatsoever else it is, which is against God and the welfare of these Kingdoms!

4. Our Covenanting must be accompanied with *humility*. 1. From the sense of our own weaknesses to keep touch with God, in coming up fully to the Covenant; we should lean to his promise, and take hold on his strength: Say, as the Church, *Through God we shall do valiantly*, *Psal.* 60. 11. And as the blessed Apostle did; *Phil.* 4. 13. *I can do all things through Jesus Christ strengthening me.*

2. And being apprehensive of our own unworthiness, to receive any ability from the Lord, seeing by our sins, we have enfeebled our own spirits, therefore we should humbly petition for divine assistance. Herein imitate *David*, who having thus in resolution and promise expressed himself before God, *I will keep thy statutes*, he immediately adds, *O forsake me not utterly*, *Psal.* 119. 8. The more of the spirit of *self-denial* and *prayer* is in your hearts, when you take the Covenant, the more hope there will be of your keeping it afterwards.

5. Come to the Covenant *conscientiously*. Be not acted only by the appointments, expectations or practices of men in this particular: Let not this be the alone motive upon your spirits; Covenant-renewing is ordered by the *Court of Common-Council*: But rather reason thus; The manifold providences of God before specified, do call unto this service, and therefore we will undertake it. If you respect not God in the work, you shall lose both accept <1 line>

6. Covenant *fiducially*: If your spirits act sincerely, according to the fore-named directions, then be you confident that the consequence of this days service will be comfortable. Although your weaknesses are many and great, yet if your hearts be herein found upright with God, you may hopefully persuade yourselves that the Lord will so far regard his own ordinance, and have respect unto the mediation of Christ (*the Messenger, the Mediator of the new-Covenant*) that your work shall be crowned with good success. You heard before, that *Enemy-conquering providences* made way unto the exhortation in the Text, *Vow and pay unto the Lord your God*. And I conceive that the verse following is considerable, being the language of faith; *He shall cut off the spirit of Princes, he is terrible to the Kings of the earth*: The most potent adversaries of the Church shall be brought down, by holy Covenant-making and Covenant-keeping with God.

Now this lets me into the consideration of my next Doctrine;

[Doctr.] *That vows made, must be paid unto the Lord our God.*

Although a vow must not be made a bond of iniquity, and therefore unlawful vows rather call for repentance than performance, (as *David's* rash revengeful resolution against churlish *Nabal*.)

Yet such Covenants as we make according to God's will, we must make good, in conscience to his commandment: *Pay that which thou hast vowed (saith Solomon,) Better it is that thou shouldst not vow, then that thou shouldst vow and not pay it. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin,* Eccles. 5. 4, 5. The Scribes and Pharisees were but sleighty superficial Expositors of God's Law, yet they were wont thus to *publish God's command: Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths,* Mat. 5. 33.

In the prosecution of this plain, profitable, seasonable and necessary point, I shall faithfully endeavor three things. 1. *To persuade this duty by arguments.* 2. *To guide this practice by rules.* 3. *To promote your obedience herein, by some short directions.*

The motives whereby we may be induced to make good our honest and holy vows, shall be cast under several heads, that my progress in them, may be the more easy and edifying.

1. From the nature of a vow in general, and from sundry circumstances considerable in our Covenant particularly.

In general; 1. All vows are sacred obligations upon our consciences: *If any (saith Moses) vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath, to bind his soul with a bond,* Numb. 30. 2. &c. In this respect the holy Psalmist resolved upon this duty, *Psal. 56. 12. Thy vows are upon me, O Lord, I will render praises:* And doubtless every gracious heart will be sensible of this great spiritual engagement. 2. By means of vows we become God's debtors: Hence it is, that the Text calls for *payment, Vow and pay.* I here remember the speech of the Prophet unto the poor widow, *2 King. 4. 7. Go sell thine oil, and pay the debt.* And the Holy Ghost gives in this, as a note of a wicked man, *Psal. 37. 21. He borroweth, and payeth not again.* You Merchants, who have great dealings in the world, would you not be ashamed to appear upon the Exchange, if you were not careful to pay your debts unto men? Therefore, *vow and pay unto the Lord your God.*

More particularly, there are sundry weighty circumstances considerable, in regard of our solemn League and Covenant, which may work our hearts unto serious resolutions to keep it.

1. The materials of our Covenant are *lawful and justifiable;* we vow to *endeavor the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, Superstition, Heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found to be contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness.* And have we not good reason thus to do? For have not these things much endangered the welfare both of this Church and Commonwealth already? and will not the indulging of such matters, prove destructive both to our public hopes and comforts? We vow sincerely, really, constantly, through the grace of God, to *endeavor the reformation of Religion, in Doctrine, worship, Discipline and Government, according to the word of God, and the example of the best Reformed Churches.* I shall not need to specify our engagements, to *defend the Kings person and authority in the preservation of the true Religion, to preserve the privileges of Parliament, as also to continue a firm peace and union between*

the Kingdoms of England and Scotland. These and other things expressed in the Covenant, are by you Covenanters accounted just and equal. I remember *David's* resolution, *Psal. 119. 106. I have sworn and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* And if we judge the materials of our Covenant righteous, we should in that regard lay the greater charge upon our consciences to keep it.

2. Our vows are *deliberate.* The nature of this ordinance hath been unfolded, the several Articles in the Covenant have been considered of, and therefore the rather to be observed. Rash vows bind conscience, if the keeping of them prove only in inexpediencies prejudicial to ourselves, and contradict not any of God's everbinding laws. Therefore *Solomon* calling for the payment of vows, tells people, that they must not think to put off that obligation, by saying, *It was an error, Eccl. 5.* an inconsiderate oversight. And we all know, that when *Israel* was bound to the *Gibeonites* by an oath, through a mistake, being over-reached by a cheat, *All the Princes said to all the Congregation, We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel, now therefore we may not touch them, Josh. 9. 19.* How then shall we be excused, if our premeditated vows be not performed?

3. We have vowed before many *witnesses.* Men who stand much upon their credit and reputation in the world, will be taken with this argument. When King *Herod* was caught in a snare, by his heady vow, and being troubled, because the dancing Damsel demanded the head of *John the Baptist*, it is said, *Nevertheless for the oath sake, and them which sate with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her, Mat. 14. 9.* Consider how many have seen you lift up your hands unto the most High possessor of Heaven and earth, in holy Covenanting: Remember how many thousands know that the vows of God are upon you, and be you hereby prevailed with to keep touch with him.

4. Hereto I might add the consideration, both of the *multitude of all ranks, qualities, callings in this Kingdom, in Scotland, Parliament-men, Soldiers, Citizens, Divines, &c.* who are herein mutually engaged with us. I might also mind you of the often reiterations and renewings of your vows and Covenants: Doubtless these things will not be slighted by them who are ingenuous; but I may not insist upon them, having divers other heads of arguments to speak unto.

The second sort of arguments to persuade Covenant-keeping, shall be taken from our God, the only true and blessed God, unto whom our vows oblige us. And under this head these particulars are considerable: 1. His Majesty takes exact notice of all such engagements, together with all the circumstances of time, place, companies, occasions, &c. which belong thereto: *O God thou hast heard my vows, saith David, Psal 61. 5.*

2. His Highness well remembers these obligations: The Lord rounds *Jacob* in the ear with this *Memento, I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointest the pillar, and where thou vowest a vow unto me, Gen. 31. 13.*

3. He calls for payment, he will not be taken off from demanding his debt in this kind: *When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it, for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee, Deut. 23. 21.*

4. He is the most High possessor and commander of Heaven and earth. The Psalmist lays strength upon this consideration, *Psal. 50. 14. Pay thy vows unto the most High.* And this thought was prevailing upon the hearts of *Jephthah* and his daughter, in a case very difficult in a course very cross to the stream and strength of natural affection: you all know his vow, therefore I shall not need to name it, but mark I pray you the expressions, both of the father and of his child, *Judge. 11. 35, 36. I have opened my mouth (saith Jephthah) unto Jehovah, and I cannot go back. And she said to him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto Jehovah, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth.*

5. He is a most faithful Covenant-keeping God: *He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth Covenant and mercy, Deut. 7. 9.* Although mere mercy move his Majesty to make Covenant, yet will he make it good: How much more should we keep our holy Covenants, which both duty and necessity call us to renew.

6. Although our well-doing, doth not, cannot reach the Lord with advantage, yet his Highness will account himself honored by our faithfulness in Covenant: Hence it is, that these two duties are conjoined in the Scripture; *Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High, Psal. 50. 14. And Psal. 65. 1. Praise waiteth for thee O God in Zion, and unto thee shall the vow be performed.* Consider I pray you, Do we not owe God praise? Do we not pray, *Hallowed be thy Name?* Will it not be our Honors to set the Crown on his head? Therefore let us all resolve to perform our vows unto the Lord our God.

The third head of arguments follows to be considered, and it is drawn from the various precious benefits to be received, by conscientious Covenant-keeping with the Lord our God. 1. Care in this kind will evidence our effectual conversion to God. The Prophet *Isaiah* foretelling the calling of the Gentiles, speaketh thus, *The Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation, yea they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it, Isa. 19. 21.*

2. Good Covenant-keepers lie very near unto the Lord's warm heart, he loves them dearly: *If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, Exod. 19. 5.* Covenant-keepers are God's jewels, and all other persons are accounted as the lumber of the world, in comparison of them. Men will adventure much to ingratiate themselves with great ones; and shall not we pay our vows, that we may enjoy the favor, the estimation of God, whose loving kindness is better then life?

3. Hence issueth hope to prevail with the Lord by our prayers: The Psalmist having said, *Psal. 65. 1. Unto thee O God shall the vow be performed;* he adds immediately, *O thou that hearest prayers.* And so soon as this counsel was given, *Psal 50. 14. Pay thy vows unto the most High,* in the next verse, this follows by way of connection, *And call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* As you desire the audience of your prayers, make you conscience to pay your vows.

4. The sanctification of all our concernments, is a rich privilege appertaining unto honest Covenant-keepers: *All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto them who keep his Covenant, Psal. 25. 10.* God's sweet mercy, in the performance of his promises, runs throug the veins of

all his providences for the good of them, who in reference to Covenant, keep touch with him: And who knows fully the worth of this one prerogative; therefore as you desire a share herein, make conscience to *pay your vows unto the Lord your God.*

5. What need I descend unto anymore particulars, seeing all the precious promises of the Covenant of Gospel-grace, are assured upon them, who are faithful in Covenant with God. The Psalmist having moved this question, *Psal. 24. 3. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place?* part of his answer is this; *He that hath not sworn deceitfully, he shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation:* Therefore be prevailed with through holy selflove and desires of blessedness, to *pay your vows unto the Lord your God.*

6. And yet once more give me leave to press this argument *ab utili*, upon the hearts of you who are affectionate parents: I know your bowels earn towards your children, and you desire their good, as your own comfort; now be you well assured, that you can take no course, which will be more probable to entaile God's blessing upon your posterity, then this of conscientious Covenantkeeping with God. How admirable and desirable is that promise in *Psal. 103. 17, 18. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children, to such as keep his covenant?*

These benefits of Covenant-keeping I leave in your bosoms, desiring that through the blessing of God, they may do you good.

I might here mention a further motive, to persuade the payment of vows, from the sad consequences of falseness and unfaithfulness in this kind. 1. The Psalmist gives in this as a character of a wicked man, *Psal. 55. 20. He hath broken (or profaned) his Covenant.* 2. All the sins of men are greatly aggravated by this circumstance, that they are not only transgressions of God's Law, but violations of their own vows. Thus Solomon brands the adulterous woman, *Prov. 2. 17, She forgetteth the Covenant of her God.* 3. Breach of Covenant brings God's burning displeasure upon people: This thought did awe *Israel*, in reference to their rash League made with the *Gibeonites*, *Josh. 9. 20. We will let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them.*

4. God's anger in this kind kindled, may bring a consumption upon our hopes and comforts. That Item which the *Wise man* gives in this case should be seriously minded, *Eccl. 5. 5, 6. Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, then that thou shouldest vow and not pay; wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?* Never were greater works under hand for Church and Common-wealth, in our days, or the days of our forefathers, then are in agitation amongst us at this day; therefore let us take heed, lest our unfaithfulness in our Covenant provoke the Lord to dash all our endeavors into pieces, with the disappointment of all our golden hopes. God's curse is annexed unto his Covenant, to enforce the keeping of it. It is said, *Neh. 10. 29. They entered into a curse, and into an oath to walk in the Law of God.* And the sword of cruel war is drawn by the hand of Divine justice, to *avenge the quarrel of the Covenant*, *Lev. 26. 25.* This sword of Civil war is eating man's flesh, and drinking man's blood in this Kingdom at this day; and how can we expect that the Almighty should command it to return

into its scabbard, and to be quiet, if we continue careless in keeping Covenant? I profess (beloved) that I have often trembled to think upon that discovery of God's severity, in punishing *Israel with three years famine in David's time, because Saul had broken the rash vow, which the Elders of Israel had made long before with the Gibeonites*. For thus I reason, If the violation of an unadvised oath with subtle sinful men, by the posterity of them who made it, did bring a sore national judgment; what then may we expect from the hand of God, for contradicting both by words and deeds, both by opinions and practices, the solemn sacred League and Covenant which ourselves have upon deliberation, both made and renewed with man and God? These are weighty considerations, and worthy your often and serious thoughts, unto which many more might be added; but I forbear the enlarging of this subject, because you have so fully been acquainted with this matter, by my Reverend brother, who hath largely to satisfaction set forth the exceeding great danger of truce-breaking, from 2 *Tim. 3. 1. Covenant-breaking makes the times perilous: unfaithfullnesse in Covenant is a Landdestroying, a Kingdom-devouring sin.*

Now (my beloved) to sum up all my arguments: If there be in your hearts, 1. Either respect unto the sacred obligation of a solemn vow, 2. Or unto the most High possessor of Heaven and earth. 3. If you either prize the promises of his grace, and desire to be partakers thereof through Christ; 4. Or dread the discoveries of the wrath of the Almighty, and would preserve yourselves and your posterity, yourselves and the Kingdom from breaking blows of vengeance, *pay your vows unto the Lord your God.*

These arguments I hope will not be slighted by you: God forbid, that matters of so great, so public concernment, should be disregarded by them, who profess so much zeal and respect to God and to his cause, unto the prosperity of this famous City, and the welfare both of Church and Common-wealth, as you *worthy Citizens* have done, and persevere to do: Therefore I proceed in this service, to set down some Scripture-rules to guide you in the *Faithful payment of your vows unto the Lord your God.*

Pay your good vows *universally: Pay thy vows, saith the Psalmist, Psal. 50. 14. All thy vows, none excepted; whatsoever you have vowed according to his word, you must make good according to his command: Thus much is open in the text, vow and pay unto the Lord your God.* Take good King *Josiah* for a president for your pattern in this particular, of whom it is thus said, upon his covenanting with God, 2 *Chron. 34. 33. And Josiah took away all the abominations, out of all the countries which pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to swear, even to serve the Lord their God.* You see that he spares nothing, nowhere within the reach of his authority, which might be displeasing unto his God, or destructive to his people. I pray you peruse the particulars to be opposed by virtue of your Covenant, *Popery, Prelacy, Profaneness, Schism, Heresy;* and do not dare to indulge any abomination, which you have vowed to oppose: Take heed that no sinful biasse of near relations, or any self-advantages, take you off from your faithfulness in this kind. The Holy Ghost makes this a character of an heir of Heaven, *Psal. 15. 4. He swears and keeps it, though to his own hindrance:* Therefore let not fear of losing a customer, a friend, an office, a good bargain, or any other outward advantage, hinder you in keeping your Covenant. I will not further enlarge this

head, which I leave to your thoughts, but will conclude the rule, with reading the practice of King Asa in the pursuance of his Covenant, 2 Chron. 15. 16. *And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the King, he removed her from being Queen, because she had made an Idol in a grove; And Asa cut down her Idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron.* There are Idols of men's heads; and of men's hands, there are *Idol-opinions* and *Idol-practices* to be opposed by virtue of our Covenant, and you must beware lest through respect of persons, you prove partial and unfaithful.

When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it, Deut. 23. 21. And, thou shalt not defer to pay it, Eccles. 5. 4. I might here speak much to persuade the speedy payment of our vows; hereby your comfort will be increased, and the public work of reformation quickened and expedited, your acts will be exemplary and of common influence both thorough the City and the whole Kingdom. How many thousands enquire, what is done in London against Popery, Profaneness, Schism and Heresy, in the pursuance of their solemn League and Covenant? The seasonableness of an action betters it, doubles it: *Bis dat qui cito dat:* and I may truly say in the case under hand, *Bis facit qui cito facit:* ply the work of reformation now it is upon the wheels, and you may do much work in a little time: *principium est dimidium totius;* gain-say growing evils, tread upon the Cockatrice in the shell, oppose those opinions and practices in the bud, in the birth, which if suffered to grow, to live longer, will threaten the peace both of Church and state; by delays your own guilt will be multiplied and greated, your hopes of reformation will be enfeebled, and the whole Kingdom endangered: Businesses of necessity call for quick dispatch? and is there any work of greater concernment, then the work of your God, in endeavoring your own reformation, and the reformation of his Church according to his word, which is the matter of your Covenant? I remember the words of Moses to Aaron, *Go quickly to the Congregation, for there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun, Num. 16. 46.* And it is said that *Aaron did run.* Blame me not, but bear with me, I beseech you, if I appear warm, in persuading your speed in acting according to your Covenant, for I speak for the safety of a sinking Kingdom. Are we not all on a flame? which way can you cast your eyes, but you shall see the sparks of unbrotherly contentions, rising as out of a furnace? Alas, alas, we shall burn into ashes, and from confusions fall into a ruinous heap, if through God's blessing upon Covenant-keeping-endeavors, our misery be not prevented.

Pay your vows *boldly*, with so much openness, that the witness of your bonds may be witnesses likewise of your faithfulness in discharging them: The resolution of David is herein imitable, which he expresseth once and again in the same Psalm, *I will pay my vows unto the Lord in the presence of all his people, in the presence of all his people, yea in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem, Psal. 116. 14, 18, 19.* Is it any shame for a man to be honest, and to pay his debts? Wherefore then should men be loath to appear in the pursuance of their Covenants? Act so publicly, so courageously for a full reformation according to the word of God, and against Malignancy, Sedition, Heresy, together with all other things destructive to the welfare of the three Kingdoms, that both City and Country may understand your undaunted resolutions to keep Covenant with your God: And if in this way of zeal and faithfulness, you should meet

with checks and affronts, make ye that answer unto your opposers, which brave-spirited David made unto mocking Michal, *If this be to be vile, I will yet be more vile*, 2 Sam. 6.

Keep Covenant with the Lord *conscientiously*: Have respect unto God in paying as in making vows: My text holds forth this openly, as many other parallel Scriptures, which I have formerly made use of. Whatsoever we do, which is materially comprehended in our Covenant, we should do it, *because of the oath of God*, Eccles. 8. 2. Do not only intend man-pleasing, or self-seeking in the pursuance of your Covenant; be not popular and vain-glorious, but sincere and single-hearted in this service. As in other acts of obedience, so in this of Covenant-keeping, have an eye unto your heavenly father *who sees in secret, and he will reward you openly*. God forbid, God forbid that any one of you should act against your brethren with an envious or malicious spirit, under pretence of making good your Covenant. O take heed unto yourselves, that you disgrace not this holy ordinance, nor open the mouths of them, who malign our Covenant, and would upon such like observations, reproachfully asperse both you and it. I will conclude this rule, with the caution given by worthy Nehemiah: *Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of our enemies?* Neh. 5. 9.

Be vigorous in the payment of your vows: The command of God given unto Moses for the guiding of this business, is here very considerable, *Le. 22. 21. Whosoever offereth a sacrifice to accomplish his vow, it shall be perfect to be accepted, there shall be no blemish in it*. When you pay your debts to God, bring your best coin; put not off your light gold to God; employ and improve your very best for your God; give him the flower of your wisdom, strength, authority and interests; sit down and consider where your chiefest ability lies, and resolve with that to pay your vows. Say thus unto your own souls seriously in secret; I will beat mine own brains by study, I will stir up my best friends by importunity, and I will industriously take all courses within the compass of my general and particular calling, that myself and my family, that this Church and Common-wealth may be reformed, and that unity betwixt England and Scotland, may be preserved according to *the solemn League and Covenant*: to quicken your care in this kind, remember those smart words, *Mal. 1. 14. Cursed be the deceiver, who hath a male in his flock, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my Name is dreadful among the heathen*. Look to it therefore, I beseech you, think not to put God off, with supine, superficial sleightnesse in Covenant-keeping: If you have male-consolations, male-affections, male-endeavors, male-adventures for other things, God will not accept your female, your cold, faint, feeble actings for him, in the payment of your vows: Therefore if you have any talent better then ordinary, trade that for your God, in the pursuance of your Covenant.

Keep Covenant with the Lord *constantly*: *I will sing praiseto thy Name forever* (saith David,) *that I may daily perform my vows*, Psal 61. 8. you must not be like those Tenants, who bring in their rents readily, and miss not a day for the first year, but grow careless afterward, in making payment according to their compacts and agreements. The same heat which is in your hearts today (*this day of your Covenant-renewing*,) for reformation according to God's word, and against the hindrances and hinderers thereof, must be kept burning in your bosoms so long as you shall live. It is to be bewailed with tears of blood, that the tract of time takes off

the fervency of men's spirits for God in the work of vowed-reformation. How have we lost our first love? How is our zeal for good, and against evil of late abated? The time was, when our Covenant was much in our thoughts, much in our mouths, when we moved others, and provoked ourselves to make conscience to keep it: but now (*I am ashamed to speak it,*) our Covenant is forgotten, our Covenant is laid aside; yea (O that I had not occasion to add) many repent their taking of the Covenant, and some are not afraid to plead against it: I heartily wish, that the true causes of this great change were well inquired after. My beloved, Is Church-reformation according to Scripture grown less desireable? Are pure ordinances less lovely in our eyes? Is there now less danger of our undoing by *malignancy, popery, divisions and heresy*, then heretofore? *Remember, I pray you, from whence you are fallen, and do your first works*, in reference to your Covenant, the obligation whereof continues upon your consciences. Our God *keeps Covenant to a thousand generations*, Deut. 7. 9. Let his example in this particular persuade your constancy. *Be not weary of well doing*; be not discouraged by disappointments▪ be not beaten off by difficulties, delays, oppositions; but proceed according to your callings and conditions, to promote that blessed reformation which is under hand: *In due time you shall reap, if you faint not; Finis coronat opus*; Be you faithful in your Covenant unto death, and you shall receive the crown of life.

I have done with my Rules; now give me leave to give in some few helps that you may act accordingly, and I will conclude all.

That you may be able to keep touch with God in point of Covenant, take these very short directions.

1. Work well into your hearts the knowledge of all the forementioned particulars produced to persuade Covenant-keeping: *A wise man (saith Solomon) is strong, yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength* (or strengtheneth might,) *Prov. 24. 5.* Scripture-truths clearly understood, convey according to God's Ordinance, spiritual abilities into the souls of men to act accordingly; As the warm beams of the summer sun administer vivacity to the creatures, both vegetative and sensitive: Therefore I humbly advise you, to put yourselves often under the power of those truths, which may convince you of the necessity and equity of paying your vows unto the Lord your God; and I doubt not, but by means of serious meditation, you shall find more activity herein to do your duty: *While I was musing (saith David) the fire burned, Psal. 39. 3.* The bellows of meditation will produce the flame of zeal, out of the small heat of holy desires to keep Covenant with God.

2. Act conscientiously, according to that measure of strength which you have received. We all know by experience, that exercise increaseth bodily strength, and questionless Christians find the truth hereof in their souls. *Solomon assures us, Prov. 10. 29. The way of the Lord is strength to the upright*: The further we walk on in the ways of faithfulness with God, and for God, the more able we shall be to make good our foederall engagements unto his Majesty. Do you not all remember that famous story of the well-minded widow, lamenting her inability to pay her debts, whose little stock of oil was multiplied by pouring forth, *2 King. 4.* I beseech you make a spiritual improvement of this experiment; give out those gifts, graces, which you have received in the payment of your vows, and be you confident of increase: In this sense

habenti dabitur; trade your two talents, or your five for your Masters use, and they shall be doubled, *arise and be doing, and the Lord will be with you*. Many of you know to your comfort, that a small stock traded, is grown up to a great estate; I pray you make practical application.

3. Mind yourselves, and mind one another often of your solemn Covenant: This was God's own direction in this case, *2 King. 17. 39, The Covenant which I have made with you, ye shall not forget*. Among men, many promises are not performed, because they are not remembered: And so it is likewise in many of our obligations unto God, forgetfulness is sometimes one cause of some unfaithfulness. The Psalmists connection, *Psal. 103. 18. is considerable; Those that keep his Covenant, and those who remember his Commandments to do them*. There is an Order of Parliament, requiring Ministers to read the solemn League and Covenant in the Congregation, upon our Monethly Fast days; And I humbly move, that there may be an Order of the Common-Council of this famous City, that the Covenant which you this day renew, may once at least in every quarter of the year be read amongst you; by means hereof, you would be quickened to appear both jointly and severally, in courses to promote both private and public reformation according to your Covenant.

4. Seek strength from Heaven, by faith and prayer: The holy Apostle, holding up to Jesus Christ by humble confidence, could say, *I can do all through Christ strengthening me*, *Phil. 4. 13*. And the Psalmist makes this report of the success of his prayer; *In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul*, *Psal. 138. 3*. Your selves best know, wherein Covenant-keeping sticks most with yourselves, you are acquainted with your own *remoraes*, your own difficulties in this service. Consider that your help lies in the Lord your God, therefore fetch it thence by fervent believing prayers; plead the promises of God's Covenant with you through Christ, that you through him may be able to deal faithfully, to do worthily; and be you confident that the Lord will never be wanting unto the soul which seeks him in truth, *He hath not said to the house of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain*.

FINIS.

Bartholomew Ashwood, 1622-1680.

P-BA-1. The best treasure, or, The way to be truly rich being a discourse on Ephes. 3.8, wherein is opened and commended to saints and sinners the personal and purchased riches of Christ, as the best treasure, to be pursu'd and ensur'd by all that would be happy here and hereafter - Ashwood, Bartholomew, 1622-1680.

THE BEST TREASURE, Or, THE WAY to be Truly Rich.

BEING A Discourse on EPHES. 3. 8.

Wherein is opened and commended to Saints and Sinners the Personal and Purchased Riches of Christ, as the best Treasure, to be pursu'd, and ensur'd by all that would be happy here and hereafter.

By *Bartholomew Ashwood*, Late Minister of the Gospel; Author of *The Heavenly Trade*.

Riches and Honor are with me, yea, durable Riches and Righteousness.

Prov. 8. 18.

For ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was Rich, yet for your sakes he became Poor; that ye through his Poverty might be Rich.

2 Cor. 8. 9.

In Christo igitur sitae sunt omnes nostrae Divitiae.

In Christo sita spes nostrae gloriae.

Daven.

LONDON, Printed for *William Marshal*, at the Bible in *Newgate-Street*, at the corner of *Ivy Lane*. 1681.

TO THE READER.

THE Wisdom and Grace of God in Christ Jesus, are frequently in the Scripture expressed by the name of Riches and Treasures. These it is the duty of Believers in all Ages, diligently to search after, to enquire into and possess for themselves. And it may be, more Diligence or with more Success, as unto the doctrinal Revelation of them, hath not been used in this Enquiry in any Age, than in that wherein we live. But still they continue *Unsearchable*, though not absolutely as unto their Truth, Reality and Substance, or such a possession of them as may enrich us unto a Meetness for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light; but as unto their unmeasurable Dimensions, their Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and Height in Degrees of Fullness. Wherefore, after the utmost and most diligent search made into these things by the best and wisest of the Sons of men, there is still and ever will be, new work for the Church whilst it is in this world, to enquire farther after and into these Treasures. Nothing but the sight of Christ himself in Glory, can give us a full comprehension of them. Whilst we are here below, no man can exercise his spiritual Wisdom and Faith, about a more

noble, a more useful, and beneficial object. They do best for themselves who are most conversant herein, and will be sound to be the most spiritual and thriving Christians. And therefore those who are not only wise for themselves herein, but do moreover communicate unto others the knowledge that they have obtained of these *unsearchable Treasures*, and their insight into them, that they also may be made Partakers of them, do deserve well in an eminent manner of all that do believe. Among these, the reverend Author of the ensuing Discourse (if I mistake not) doth deserve our Praise and our Thanks to God for him and his Labors. For as he hath given Evidence, that he was himself in a good measure, admitted into the enjoyment of these *unsearchable Riches*; so he hath with great skill and spiritual wisdom, unfolded and laid them open unto the view of others. And this he hath done so briefly, plainly, and practically, that the most learned will find nothing in his Discourse to be despised, and the generality of Believers, whose Edification he designed, will meet with that which will be to their Use and Advantage. The times also wherein we live, do render this and discourses of the like Nature exceeding seasonable. For the Uncertainty of the continuance of all other Riches, should stir us up to look with diligence after an indefeasible Interest in the certain and *unsearchable Riches* of Christ. For as these alone are sufficient for us in every Condition, so we know not but that e're long, they alone will be left unto us; blessed are all they who are possessed of them. Besides, the Opposition that hath been made of late by some unto these and the like Mysteries of the Gospel, doth give a value unto a sober Testimony given unto them. Of this Nature is the ensuing Discourse, which that it may be useful to the Reader, unto all the ends whereunto it was designed by it's worthy Author, shall be the Prayer of his Servant in the work of the Gospel.

John Owen.

THE BEST TREASURE;

From EPHESIANS 3. 8. Unto me who am less than the least of all Saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

CHAP. I.

The Occasion of this Discourse, with an Introduction to the Words, and Explication of them, and the main truth contained in them.

RICHES are desired by most, but true Treasures obtained by few, (through the mistaken Notion thereof.) 'Tis sad to see how solicitous many are after Vanities: and (like the Jews in *Egypt*) are scattered abroad, through all the Land, to gather Stubble, whilst tried Gold lies neglected; and the Pearl of Price little valued. O the Projects and vast expense of Time and strength to reach things that are not; when the infinite Concerns of Eternity, and welfare of an immortal Soul, cannot get a room in one serious thought; or a few minutes of shortening time to attend them. 'Tis lamentable to behold, not only the blind World, but those that profess themselves Wise, (like the Spider) working out their Bowels to weave Cobwebs, and (with the Dog in the Fable) letting go the Substance to catch at Shadows; and running themselves out of breath to sit down in sorrow. The affecting sense of this Folly hath made

me scatter some Balls of true Gold to prevent (if possible) the dangerous haste of such deceived Souls, and to allure them to better and more unsearchable Treasures, that are to be found in, and fetched from the Lord Jesus. This is the Design of the ensuing Discourse on this portion of Scripture, which I shall briefly open, and then draw forth the main Conclusion I intend to prosecute.

The Apostle lays down these words as an Argument by which he endeavors to strengthen the Faith of those believing *Ephesians* in, and to quicken their Affections to the Gospel of Christ, taken from the blessed Advantages it brings to all that do receive it. It makes a Discovery and overture of unsearchable Riches to them: let them be never so poor, destitute of the affluences and good things of this World; yet, by believing through this Gospel, they shall come to attain to inestimable Treasures; even the unsearchable Riches of Christ.

In the Words you have four parts.

First, A Discovery of the admirable Love of God to fallen man, particularly to the blind, perishing Gentiles, in not only giving Christ to save them, but in opening Christ to them, even his secret and boundless Treasures: *The unsearchable Riches of Christ*.

Secondly, Here's the way by which these are opened and brought to light, which is, by the Gospel, in the Administration thereof by his Messengers: That I should preach [〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉] strictly taken, 'tis to preach the Gospel, or good news, but generally it takes in the whole work of the Ministry.

Thirdly, Here's the great expense of Grace the Lord Jesus is at to bring forth his unsearchable Riches, 'tis by the laying out of Grace to those that publish it (*To me who am less than the least of all Saints, is this Grace given;*) Grace, great Grace, to the least of Saints, (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) lesser, least, or more little than the least; an unusual Degradation of a man's self, and the Character of an empty and unworthy Instrument in his own eye, and so a Subject that needed much Grace, to be meetned for such high Service: and yet such a one did Christ use in this great Work, laying out large Grace to prepare him for it.

Fourthly, Another considerable part of the words, are the Persons for whom this Grace is given, and to whom these unsearchable Treasures are discovered, and they were Subjects most unworthy of it, (*to the Gentiles*) the chiefest of Sinners, blind idolatrous Souls, (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) the Heathen, Persons extremely wicked, *1 Cor. 15. 32.* called Beasts, wild Beasts, Strangers to God, beyond the Line of Communication, *Eph. 2. 12.* Aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, yea, Enemies to God in their minds; to those did the Lord lay out these unsearchable Treasures.

To clear up my way to the main truth I intend to prosecute hence, and to leave no difficulty in the words, 'tis necessary I speak to three things, by way of Explication.

First, In what sense *Paul* calls himself less than the least of all Saints, seeing he was a Person so dignified by Grace to be a chosen Vessel to God, an Apostle of Christ, filled with the Graces of the Spirit, and eminent Endowments for the Ministry, beyond many, taken into such high

Communion with Christ, let into the third Heavens to see things unutterable; How then can *Paul* truly call himself less than the least of all Saints? Does not *Paul* speak dissemblingly, as the Pope does, when he calls himself *Servus Servorum*, the Servant of Servants, and yet makes himself Lord over the Faith and Consciences of others?

I answer, Paul doth not hyperbolically debase himself here, but really, and in the deep sense of his former Vileness, before Conversion, when he persecuted the Church, and blasphemed Christ; in the consideration of which, he thought none like him: never such a Wretch as he did God advance to so high Dignity to be an Apostle of Christ: nor doth he think that any particular Saint was so guilty in that kind and degree of wickedness as he was: one that kick'd against the pricks, persecuted Christ in his Members, haling Him to Prison, seeking to draw out his very heart blood, and to root out the profession of him: Now for such a one as he to obtain this Grace, to be put in trust with the Gospel, and to have such Treasures of Grace imparted to him, he thinks that Christ never did the like Favor to any so vile a Creature as he was: so base will a Child of God be in his own eyes, when once the Lord sets his Sins in order before him. *Paul*, in another place, calls himself the chiefest of Sinners, greater than the greatest of Sinners, but never less than the least of Sinners. Indeed compared with the Pharisees, his Sin seemed less than their Persecution and Blasphemy, in the degree and nature of it; his was ignorantly, theirs was maliciously perpetrated, (and so the Sin against the Holy Ghost) and in that respect his Sin was less than theirs, but compared with any that were saved, he thought himself really less than any of them in regard of his sinful Life before Conversion.

Secondly, What is this Grace which *Paul* so admires, and by which his Condition is so changed, and he enabled to preach those Unsearchable Riches of Christ?

Answ. First, By Grace here is understood that infinite Favor and free Grace of God to him through Christ, by which he was called out of the state of Sin and Death into the Knowledge and Kingdom of God; that ever the Lord should pitch on such a vile Wretch as he, and choose him to be a Vessel of Mercy, revealing his Son, with his Unsearchable Riches, to so poor and unworthy a Creature, pardoning his great Transgressions, and pouring out his infinite Treasures on him.

Secondly, By Grace in this place, some understand his Apostleship which he obtained at the hand of Christ, and the Ministry he received to preach to the Gentiles these Unsearchable Riches of Christ: so is it rendered *Rom. 1. 5. By whom we have received Grace and Apostleship.*

Thirdly, Hereby is meant also those excellent Gifts he had received for this end; those choice annointings of the Spirit, and Revelation of the Mystery, to so poor and scandalous a Creature as *Paul* had been, and one that was so ignorant of Christ and Salvation; that God should make him such an able Minister of the New Testament, and give him any door of utterance, and Endowments fit for so glorious a Service. This is that Grace by which these Treasures were opened to the Gentiles.

The third thing to be opened here is, What are those Unsearchable Riches of Christ which *Paul* preached to the Gentiles, and which are held out in the Gospel unto Saints and Sinners?

Answ. First, Those Riches which are in Christ, as Mediator, with which he is enriched in himself; those unspeakable Excellencies of his Person, which, though they reside and inhere in himself, yet they contribute abundantly to the Riches of Believers, Col. 2. 3. *In whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*, (subjective) as his Treasures, found in him. All Treasures, created and uncreated, are not simply placed in him, but hid so, that they can be known by none but those to whom they are revealed.

Secondly, Here are intended those Riches that came by Christ, the Riches of his Purchase, the vast Estate which he hath bought for all Believers, for all that come unto him by Faith, the Estate which he gives, makes over, and prepares for such, and this is called *Unsearchable Riches*: 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , Riches that cannot be found, or traced out. A Metaphor taken from quick scented Hounds, that are yet at a loss, and can go no farther: so the most illuminated Creature cannot follow home these Riches of Christ, they are so mysterious that they cannot be discovered; they leave no Footsteps for any to go after them: the best are at a stand and can go no farther, when they come to wade into this Deep, so deep and hidden are these Riches of Christ.

Object. *If the Riches of Christ be so unsearchable and past finding out, How then could Paul discover and preach them out to the Gentiles? If they are not to be traced out, then Ministers cannot open them, nor Hearers understand them.*

Answ. First, They are undiscoverable by any Humane Eye; the most refined Light of Nature cannot discern them; they are Treasures that no natural Abilities can reach: the most profound Learning, and deepest Studies of the wisest men on Earth, can make nothing of them; they are no way known but by Revelation and unveilings of the Spirit; and in this sense are called Unsearchable.

Secondly, As to the fullness of their Worth and Excellency, they cannot be understood by any in this Life; no mortal man, no unglorified Soul can know them as they are: to cast up the total value of these Treasures, is beyond the Arithmetic of Saints themselves; nay, Men and Angels cannot understand the things that God hath prepared, that Christ hath purchased for them that love him: *Here* (says the Apostle) *we know in part, and we prophesy in part*, 1 Cor. 13. 9. *We*, both you and I, the most elevated Light, by this side Glory, know nothing of these lockit-up Mysteries as we ought: and on this account also they are Unsearchable.

The Words being opened, and the Cabinet unlockit, I come to the main Subject, and Treasure laid up in them; which you may take in this general Doctrine and Proposition.

Doct. *There are exceeding great, glorious, and unsearchable Riches in Christ, opened and tendered to Sinners in the Gospel.*

In this Doctrine lie three grand Assertions to be proved.

Assertion 1. *That there are exceeding great, glorious, and unsearchable Riches in Christ.*

Assert. 2. *These vast and hidden Treasures of Christ are opened in and by the Gospel.*

Assert. 3. *'Tis the Will of God that all these great and glorious Treasures, which are in, and come by Jesus Christ, should be opened and offered to Sinners, yea, the chiefest of Sinners.*

I shall speak to each Assertion, but more largely to the first: *That there are exceeding great, glorious and unsearchable Riches in Christ.*

And here I shall first prove by Scripture, That there are great, glorious and unsearchable Riches in Christ.

Secondly, Shew you (according to the Grace given me) what are those Unsearchable Riches of Christ.

First, That there are such Riches in, and come by Jesus Christ, the whole Gospel attests, which is a Revelation of the Excellency of Christ, and those glorious things which come by him. I shall give you three or four Scriptures to prove it; *Col. 1. 27. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory.* In the former verse the Apostle calls the Gospel a Mystery hid from former Ages; the Excellency of which he opens in this verse, and sets out in these two Epithetes,

- 1. Rich.
- 2. Glorious.

First, 'Tis a rich Mystery, in that it opens the glorious Riches of Christ, which are better than the Gold of *Ophir* and all precious Substance; the Riches of his Wisdom, Grace, Righteousness and Redemption, which he calls tried Gold, and counsels poor Sinners to come to him for it, *Rev. 3. 17.*

Secondly, 'Tis a glorious Mystery; called the Riches of his Glory, *Rom. 9. 23. That he might make known the Riches of his Glory on the Vessels of Mercy.* *Eph. 1. 18. The Riches of his Glory, &c.* The Gospel is a glorious Mystery, because it brings to light great and glorious things, even the Treasures of unknown Glory: and what these Treasures of Glory are, he tells you in the close of the verse, *they are Christ in you the hope of Glory:* Christ Jesus applied by Faith, and received into the Soul by the Spirit, is this glorious Treasure, in that he gives them (in his Union with them) an evident Right to Glory. See *Prov. 8. 18, 19. Riches and Honor are ascribed to him: Riches and Honor are with me, yea, durable Riches and Righteousness: My Fruit is better than Gold, yea, than fine Gold, and my Revenue than choice Silver.* This is spoken of Christ, the true Wisdom of God, (*1 Cor. 1. 24. Christ the Wisdom of God, and Power of God*) who is the Subject of this Chapter. And 'tis said of him, that *Riches, durable Riches, are with him, better Treasures than Gold, than choice Silver; Durable Treasures, which Time cannot waste or alter; Riches that last to all Eternity, which Rust and Moth cannot consume. And Righteousness (i. e.)* Treasure justly gotten, Riches of Wisdom and Grace given him by the Father, and Riches of Righteousness bought by his Blood. All this Treasure is in him, and offered by him unto Sinners. In Christ must needs be Unsearchable Riches, *for in him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily, Col. 2. 9.* that is, the Divine Nature united to the Humane Nature: perfect God, as well as perfect Man; the infinite Treasures of the Divine Nature are his. *He is the Heir of all*

things, and therefore must needs be rich. Heaven and Earth are his, Jews and Gentiles, all Persons and Things put under him; in which Glory and Majesty, set over all the Works of God's hands, he mounts his Throne (having confirmed his Title by his Blood) and gives Gifts to men, and makes a tender of Grace and Glory, of Thrones and Crowns, to all that come unto him, promising to his Servants, that they also shall inherit all things, *Rev. 21. 7.* and therefore he himself must needs be rich. In him are Treasures of Mercy and Goodness, of Wisdom and Knowledge, Riches, exceeding Riches of Grace, *Eph. 2. 7.* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , Riches of Strength, Honor, Glory and Blessing. So that the Scriptures give in full testimony to this Truth, That there are exceeding great, glorious, and unsearchable Riches in Christ. And now I shall endeavor to show,

Secondly, What are those exceeding great and unsearchable Riches of Christ. But alas! this Well is deep, and wherewith shall we draw? these Treasures are out of sight, who can find them out? they are boundless, bottomless, numberless, endless; where shall we begin? where can we make an end? who can search them out to Perfection? The best of men are but Learners, the Angels are Inquirers, the wisest men but Fools in these Searches; we can know but in part, nor prophesy but in part; when the utmost is spoken, you have not heard of one half of his Glory. But according to the Revelation of Christ, I shall open some of these Treasures of Christ to you, under these two Heads, His

- Riches:
 - Personal
 - Purchased

with some Applications and Improvements of them as we go through these Deeps.

CHAP. II.

The Personal Riches of Christ opened, in his Divine Nature; manifested in his Attributes; with the wonderful Advantages thereof to Believers.

PART of these glorious Treasures of Christ lies in his Personal Riches, that vast Worth and unknown Excellency that reside in himself, which become the Believers Treasure also, by their Relation to, their Union with, Contemplation of it, with the communicated Fruits and Effects thereof, *Col. 1. 27. which is Christ in you the hope of glory. (i. e.)* which Treasure is Christ in you, or Christ united to you by Faith, and dwelling in you by his Spirit. Christ his Personal, as well as purchased Treasures are yours, through your Union with, your Relation to, your Enjoyment of him, and his glorious Communications to you.

Now these Personal Treasures of Christ are demonstrable, in his Natures, in his Offices, in his sweet and gracious Dispositions.

In his Natures severally considered, and united in his Hypostatical and Personal Union. The Person of Christ consists of two Natures,

- God, the true *Immanuel* or (God with us) God manifested in the Flesh.
- Man, the true *Immanuel* or (God with us) God manifested in the Flesh.

So *Joh. 1. 14. The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his Glory, the Glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of Grace and Truth: That is, the Word, which was God in the Second Person; The brightness of his Glory, and express Image of his Person, Heb. 1. 3. took our Nature to himself in one Person, and became Mediator, perfect God, and perfect Man*

First, Perfect God, equal with the Father in Essence, *Joh. 10. 30. I and my Father are one; that is, one God, not one Person; 'tis not 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, one Person, but 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, one thing or Being. I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and therefore my Sheep are safe, they are in my hand, and in my Father's hand, (here are two distinct Subsistences) and we are the same: I and my Father are one God; as God, I am equal with him, the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory, Rom. 9. 5. Of whom concerning the Flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever: over all men, and over all things; or in all, (as *Vatab.*) This Scripture is generally used by all Interpreters to prove the Divine Nature of Christ. He is God over all, and blessed forever, in himself, and of himself: and the Author of all those Blessings his Creatures enjoy. *By him are all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, Visible and Invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all things were created by him and for him, Coloss. 1. 16. And therefore he is perfect God, this being his peculiar Operation to create the World: By him all things consist; he upholds all things by the word of his Power, Heb. 1. 3. Supporting and ruling them, which is another property of the Divine Nature, the ruling and bearing up of all things in the World, which none but everlasting Arms can do. So he hath Power to forgive Sins, which only God can do: to raise the Dead, to judge the World, Mark 2. 5, 7. Joh. 11. 43, 44. Acts 17. 31. To know the Secrets of all Hearts, Luke 5. 22. To be the Object of Religious Worship, Heb. 1. 16. All which abundantly prove the Lord Jesus to be perfect God: and so of infinite Perfection and Blessedness, to enrich all that come unto him; which will evidently appear, if we do but a little consider those Perfections of the Divine Nature, as opened in the Scriptures, all which are in Jesus Christ.**

First, His Simplicity, being a most pure Essence without the least Composition or Diversity of Parts or Accidents. There is no mixture of Qualities or Excellencies in God, but every Attribute is his entire Essence, and therefore he is a most pure and simple Being, as the Names he gives himself import, especially these two, *Ehejeh, Exod. 3. 14. I am hath sent me unto you. The Word is in the future Tense, I will be, hath sent me; but in the Hebrew, the future Tense expresseth often both the Present and preterperfect; and so this Word holds forth God's most simple, absolute, and immutable Being and self Existence. So Jehovah, a Name which God seems to take most Delight in, and which doth as it were sum up all his glorious Excellencies in one word, importing his most pure, glorious, and incomprehensible Essence, which he hath in and from himself, before all time, and unto all Eternity, subsisting in, and of himself, and giving Being to all his Creatures, and therefore must needs be the most perfect and simple Being. The Unity of his Essence proves his Simplicity, he is one God*

(though three Persons) *Deut. 6. 4. Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one God; he is the first Being, and one undivided Essence, and therefore most pure and simple. He is altogether a most perfect Being, in and of himself, who wants nothing that is excellent, nor can have anything in himself that is evil, and therefore is a most simple, pure Nature.*

And if Jesus Christ, as God, be such a simple and excellent Being, then he is a most perfect Treasure to his People; there is nothing wanting in him to make them happy, nor can there be anything in him or come from him to make them miserable; then he is true and faithful to Believers; there can be no Contrarieties in him, or Contradictions proceed from him; his Love is sincere, his Purposes are true, there is a reality in his Expressions; for he is one, and of one mind to his redeemed ones. O Believers! think on the Purity of Christ's Nature, the Perfection of his Blessedness, the Integrity of his Affections, and the Infiniteness of all his Perfections, to make his beloved ones happy. There's no Moth, or Rust, no Worm or Death, can ware out his pure Affections to his People. There is no mixture in his Nature: Composition is the Corruption, or Imperfection of created Beings, but in Christ's Divine Nature there is Unity and Simplicity, there is nothing can alter his Thoughts and Resolutions to his sincere ones: he is most true, and most full in all his Perfections and this his Simplicity: assures Believers of eternal and infinite Blessedness in their Union with, and Relation unto him, for he is in himself the most absolute and perfect Being, the first and most simple Being: he is most perfect in and of himself, for he hath all his Perfections in and of himself (as God) and all that is sufficient for his infinite Blessedness, in and from himself, and hath all that in him, which is sufficient for the Good of his Creatures, and highest Happiness of his People. Again, he is most perfect, because he wants nothing from another to make him blessed. He needs no Creatures to contribute anything to him, nor doth he lose anything by Creatures falling from him: or can have any Addition to his Glory or Blessedness, by the access of men, or Angels to him. So also, he doth what pleaseth himself, nothing can resist his Will, or frustrate his Purposes, and therefore is most perfect in himself.

And if the Lord Jesus be so perfect in himself, then he is the Author of Perfection to his People, for he hath made over himself, his whole Person, God-Man, to Believers, to be their Shield and exceeding great Reward. Then Believer, thy case is happy, thy Treasure is full and perfect, thy Choice is a blessed Choice, and thy Lot a perfect Lot, fallen in a good Ground. Then the Person of thy Beloved is altogether lovely, his Accomplishments being altogether perfect, not a Spot or Blemish in him. Then all his Gifts to his Spouse are perfect, his Righteousness is a perfect Righteousness that makes Believers in God's Account as perfect as Christ himself, were not the robe of his Righteousness every way as large as thy Guilt and Nakedness, were it not long enough and broad enough to cover all thy Deformities, and hide all thy Imperfections from the pure and judging Eye of the Father, it were not perfect. But all his Procurements by his Blood are perfect. His Holiness is a perfect Holiness, and he will make his Peoples Graces perfect too, e're he hath done. *He is the Rock, his Work is perfect, i. e.* He doth perfectly fulfill his Promises, his Works are true to his Word, *and he will perfect that which concerns his People. Psal. 138. 8. i. e.* He will accomplish that which he hath begun in me.

Let the doubting Believer know, that the Perfection of Christ is Security for Perfection in his Graces also, in due time; he that hath begun a good work in thy Soul, will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ; he will, ere he hath done, bring thy weak Graces to Perfection, that when he shall appear to Judgment, thy Holiness shall be presented to the Father without Spot or wrinkle.

Secondly, As the Godhead of Christ, is a most pure and simple Being, so is he an infinite Essence, both internally, without all Limitation or Dimension of his Being; and externally, without all Comprehension of Places or Capacities; every Attribute of his is infinite, *His Understanding is infinite. Psal. 147. 5.* His Wisdom, Power, Love, Mercy, Faithfulness, and all his Perfections, are one entire, infinite Being, that cannot be known or comprised, no Bounds or Measures can be set to his divine Excellencies, *The Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him, 1 Kings 8. 27.* or compass his Greatness; how much less can a narrow Heart receive his Fulness, his Love: and all his Attributes are beyond Knowledge. *Isa. 40. 25. To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal, saith the holy one.* This Infiniteness of Christ's divine Nature, is a mystery too deep for human Capacity to fathom, not curiously to be searched out, but humbly to be adored, and no way discoverable, but by his own Light, and according to the model of a created understanding. Some dark Reflections of this visible Glory, are discoverable in the Glass of sacred Scripture, which declare the Greatness of God, both as to his incomprehensibleness and Eternity; he is everywhere, and yet circumscribed nowhere, he fills all places in the World, or without the World, but confined nowhere; nowhere included, nowhere excluded: containing all things, contained by none, his essential Presence is in all places, not by any Extension or Division of parts, which are not in God, but (as the Soul in the Body, so is God in the Universe) the whole in the whole, and the whole in every part; He is essentially present in all Places; not by imparting his Essence to any created Being, but by giving and preserving the Being of those things which fill up those Places: so his Power is everywhere, in that all things are subject to his Power; his Wisdom fills Heaven and Earth, in that all Things and Places are manifest in his sight. And this yields,

- 1. Comfort to Believers.
- 2. Terror to Sinners.
- 3. Caution to all.

First, Wonderful Comfort to Believers, in the Assurance of Christ's Omnipresence with them, to counsel and comfort them. The Believer can say, what none else can, Where I am, there is my Treasure with me: In all Estates and Places is the Lord Jesus with his People (while they keep with him.) In the Water, he wades with them; in the Flames, he stands between them, to keep off Destruction from them; when under Wants, Temptations, Dangers, he is by them at their right hand to relieve them: he knows their Soul in Adversity, for he is near them: He is by, when Corruptions insurrect in them, when Satan with his fiery Darts assaults them, or Enemies oppress them; he sees when their Fears rise and their Tears fall: He stands behind *Ephraim's* back when he is mourning, and puts his Tears into his Bottle, and lays his Complaints upon his Heart. No sooner is *Mary* mourning for her departed Lord, but he is by

her side to comfort her. When his *Daniel's* are thrown into the Lions Den, he goes with them to shut the mouths of devouring Lions, or to give Life in the midst of Death: When the Knife is at the Throats of his *Isaac's*, his Power is by to hold back the murderous hand from destroying; *We will break their bands, and cast their cords from us*, Psal. 2. 3. say the Saints Enemies: Hold there, saith Christ, I am with them to defend them. No cruel Edicts can exile them from his Presence: He was in *Patmos* with *John*, and turned it into a Pavilion; with *Jeremiah* in the Dungeon, and gave him Goal delivery. Earthly men may be abroad, and their Treasures at home; but faithful Believers carry their Treasure with them, or their Portion, their Inheritance follows them.

Secondly, The Immensity and Omnipresence of Christ speaks Terror to the Wicked, in that he is near them to behold and requite their Transgressions; He knows their Works and their Thoughts, all their secret Designs are naked in his sight; There's no covering from his Eye, *The Darkness and Light are both alike to him*, Psal. 139. 12. He sees their Rage and Fury against him; their hidden works of Darkness: All their Plots and Purposes against his Interest are open to his Eye: their inward Thoughts, filthy Lusts, close Practises, are before him; he is behind thy back, Sinner, to hear thy blasphemous Oaths, thy reproachful Slanders of his ways and People: thy malicious resolves, thy bloody Decrees against his poor and faithful ones: He is before thee to obviate thy Designs, to frustrate thy Attempts, and requite thy Spight and Mischiefs. O you who are yet in your blood and gore of Sin, in your confederacy with Death and Hell, in your fixed Wrath against the Lord and his Anointed, be persuaded to believe the greatness of your Danger before you feel it; think how visible all your works of darkness are, when God, who is all Eye, is in every place; and how desperate your sinful Adventures are, on the drawn Sword of Divine Justice at your Breasts; how unsafe your securest state is, who are compass'd within the Circle of Omnipresence, and have Vengeance continually at your heels, yea, are taken in the Arms of devouring Judgment.

Thirdly, The belief of Christ's being everywhere, gives a Caution to all to carry themselves in all Places and Undertakings, as such who are ever in his sight: His Eyes run to and fro, to behold the Evil and the Good: He stands by thy Bed side, to inspect thy waking Thoughts, to observe thy unchaste Motions, thy Earthy, vain Cogitations; no sooner is a forbidden wish in thy Heart, but his Eye is there also: thy tow'ring Pride, thy pale Envy, thy flaming Anger, thy frothy Pleasure, thy lustful Desires, thy revengeful Projects thy Earthy Thoughts, are legible Characters to his discerning look. And should not the sense of this advise thy rational Soul to more watchfulness over thy treacherous Heart: And surely, were Christ's All-seeing Eye more observed, Persons Thoughts would be more weighed, and their Insides more regarded. O, Reader, whoever thou art, Lodge this Truth in thy Heart, and carry this Belief up and down with thee, wherever thou goest; The Eye of God is on thee: He that must shortly be thy Judge, is now thy Recorder; and puts a Remark on all thy Thoughts, Words and Ways, for which he will bring thee into Judgment. Set a watch on all the rising motions of thy Heart; stop thy hasty words at the door, and examine what they are, whence they come, whither they go, before thou let them pass; and measure thy designed Actions by the Standard of the Sanctuary, e're thou let them go under thy hand; seeing he that is thy Judge comes with his

measuring Line to take an Account of them, and to render according to their nature and merit.

Thirdly, Again, As Christ's Infiniteness exceeds all confines of Place, so he passes beyond all terminations of Time; being from Everlasting to Everlasting, without Beginning, without End: *Psal. 90. 2.* His Duration admits of no distinction of Time, and therefore must needs be Eternal. Time is the measure of Finite Beings, which are capable of Priority and Succession, but the Divine Essence hath no Beginning, and so can have no End: He is the Author of all other Beings, and therefore cannot have a Beginning; there being nothing before him to give him a Being: God hath his Essence in and of himself, and so must needs be Eternal. Neither is he only Eternal, (saith *Aquinas*) but he is his own Eternity, because he is his own Essence, subsisting in and of himself; which Essence, or Eternity of his, is the very reason of Eternity, and of all things contained therein: for the Divine Essence, subsisting of himself, must needs be before all things that are made, as the Cause is before the Effect, and Eternity before Time; seeing the things that are made are made by him, *Joh. 1. 3.*

His Unity also proves his Eternity, being one uncompounded and undivided Being, and so before all, as Unity is before Multitude: and whatever Beings are, they are derived from Unity; and without End, for take off Unity and nothing remains. The Scriptures bear full witness to the Eternity of Christ: *Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the Earth, and the World, from Everlasting to Everlasting thou art God, Psal. 90. 2. I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God, Isa. 44. 6. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the Ending, which is, which was, and which is to come, Rev. 1. 8. He is before all, and by him all things consist, Col. 1. 17.* And though Christ be called the only begotten Son of God, *Joh. 1. 14.* and so implies the Father to be before the Son; yet this priority is of Order, not of Time; Christ, as God, is Eternal with the Father, and so before all Time, *Joh. 1. 1.* and to Everlasting.

And this greatens the Believers Happiness beyond all conception, that his Treasure is Eternal: Time limits all the Comforts and Interests of Christless Souls, let them seem never so amiable and great (through the multiplying-glass of mistaken Sense) yet the shortness of their Duration narrows up their Felicity; whereas the portion of Heaven-born Souls exceeds all Dimensions and Terminations: The Moth of Time cannot consume their Treasure: their Lease can never expire: thousands of years, that comprise the extent of Earthly Estates, substracts nothing from that Eternity, which gives duration to the Saints Treasure. Rejoice, O Believer, in the assured perpetuity of thy best Interests; here thy most desired Mercies are but of short continuance: Thy Privileges are but Tabernacle-privileges; thy Enjoyments determinable, thy Frames are transient, thy Pleasures fading, Hope, Peace, Love, Grace, endures but for a Season, but thy Possessions beyond the Grave, are eternal: and as long as Christ lives, shall thy Treasure last, thy Holiness, Happiness, Pleasures, and Perfections in the other World, shall be coexistent with thy Soul; and as far from expiring as the Love that gave them was from beginning.

And as thy Comforts here are short lived, so are thy Troubles too, Sorrow enduring for a Night, light Afflictions, and but for a moment, *2 Cor. 4. 17.* Tears contained within a Bottle,

Fears, Wants, Losses, Dangers, confined within this Span of time, and expired▪ with this short Vapor of Life, but thy Consolations, Gain, Enjoyments, Peace, Safety, shall be eternal, no more liable to the Injury of time; thy wet and weary Sowings, are but for a Season; thy weak and wasting Duties, will be over; but thy reaping, thy resting shall know no end, but endure while the Eternity and Omnipotency of Christ can make them good.

Fourthly, The Divine Nature of Christ is immutable also, above all Alteration and Change, *He is the same Yesterday, to Day, and forever. Heb. 13. 8.* Immutable is his Nature, being a most simple Essence, free from parts or any Mixture, that might render him capable of Corruption; he is also the first Being, and so free from the Influence and Dispose of a higher Power. Change in anything comes, either from a Corruptibleness in its Nature, or from the Will of a Superior Power: but God being the first and supreme Cause, is above all, and so unalterable in his Nature. *Isa. 44. 6. I am the first and the last.* He is infinite too, and so comprehends all Fullness of Perfection in himself, and cannot meet with Alteration; they are imperfect things, that are subject to change, old things that pass away, but God is infinitely perfect, and therefore cannot change or be moved from what he is, by any external or internal Cause; he cannot cease to be what he was, or begin to be what he was not: (as to his Divine being) indeed the *Word*, the second Person, in time assumes the human Nature, into a Union with himself, but then he doth not cease to be what he was, that is perfect God, and so doth not change: and though he alters his Laws and Administrations of Worship, in the times of the Gospel, yet he alters not his mind, this Change was decreed from all Eternity: God determined them to be mutable, and therefore they must change, or God would not be immutable. And whereas it may be urged, that God doth threaten to do what he doth not, and promise to perform, what he hath never fulfilled, and therefore is mutable. I answer, that God never threatens and promises in his word absolutely, but conditionally, and the Condition failing, the Act on which it depends fails: but God doth not change his Mind, neither was this Mutability in man, accidental to God, but foreseen and sure, and so God's Purposes thereabout, are not alterable, but eternal. And whereas God is said, now to be angry, and then to Love, which argues a Mutation: yet that Change is not in God's Will and Affection, which is one Essence with himself, but in his outward Dispensation. So that the Divine Nature in Christ is unchangeable, both in his Nature and Will, he cannot, he will not vary; in him is no Variableness, or Shadow of turning; he is a Rock, and his Work perfect; Time or Change in Creatures, work no Change in God; 'tis the Mistake of Unbelief, to think that the Heart of God changes, as the poor Believer doth; like those that row by the Shore, fancy the Land and Houses on it to move, when 'tis but the Vessel changes his place.

Comfort thy Heart poor Soul (who hast sincerely chosen the Lord to be thy Portion) on this Assurance, that the Thoughts of God are the same towards thee as ev••: all thy changeable Frames, and unfaithful Dealings with him, works no more Alteration in his Heart to thee, than the interposing Clouds, do on the essential Light of the Sun; or the Provocations of the Child, on the Fathers Relation, who is still a Father, how unlike soever he carries himself to the Child: but these Instances are too short to adumbrate and set out the Immutability of God, who cannot but be Truth, though every man be a Lye: he is faithful and cannot deny himself to his, though they believe not: 'Tis his Faithfulness secures thy Faith, and not thy

Faith makes good his Faithfulness. *Rom. 3. 3. 4. Shall their Unbelief make the Faith (or Faithfulness) of God, of none Effect? God forbid. Mat. 3. 6. I the Lord, change not, therefore ye Sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

Is Christ immutable? Then there is Ground enough for Believers to cast Anchor on him, and to bottom their strong Hopes upon his Promises: *for faithful is he that hath promised. Heb. 10. 23. He is not as man that he should lie, or as the Son of man, that he should repent. Numb. 23. 19. Hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good.* He cannot alter the Word that is gone out of his Mouth, Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one Tittle of his Word, till all be fulfilled: *For this end hath God shown to the Heirs of Promise, the Immutability of his Council (confirmed by an Oath) that by two immutable things (his Purpose and Promise) in which 'tis impossible for God to lie, they might have strong Consolation who have fled for Refuge, to lay hold on the Hope set before them. Heb. 6. 18. 19.* O Believer, suffer not thy Soul to be tossed to and fro, with every change of Providence without, or of thy heart within, but roll thy Hopes on this Rock of Ages, on whom the Pillars of the Earth hang for their Stedfastness, the whole Creation for its Sustentation, by whom Winter and Summer, Day and Night are kept within their Seasons, and all the changes of his People, reduced into a Consistency with his Covenant Fidelity.

This also yields encouragement to Believers, for perseverance in the way of Duty, whatever Alterations are in their Conditions and the Times they live in: because he that leads them is the same, in the worst, as well as the best of Times; and as able to secure them, and as firm in his Affections to them, seeing he changes not, and therefore cannot, will not leave them.

Again, To this Immutability of God in Christ, may gracious Souls go to get their unsteddy Hearts fixed, and derive by Faith more constancy to their Spirits towards God: He who is faithful hath engaged it, to establish their Hearts with Grace, and keep them from Evil. *2 Thes. 3. 3. But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you and keep you from evil. 2 Chro. 20. 20. Believe God, so shall you be established.* As Christ's Life is Security for the Believer's Life, *Joh. 14. 19.* His Power for their Preservation, *2 Tim. 1. 12.* so is his Immutability for their Stedfastness, *Psal. 102. 12.* The Author of this Psalm, under the sense of his weakness, and the languishing state of *Zion*, comforts himself in the consideration of God's Immutability: *But thou, O Lord, shalt endure forever:* And upon this mountain of Spices raises his hopes of *Zion* (this he takes for granted, from his unalterableness) *He shall appear in his Glory.* Go, Believer, and lay (by Faith) thy changeable Heart on Christ's Constancy; as the *Shunamite* did her dead Child on *Elisha's* Bed, till she received him to Life again, *2 Kings 4. 21. And she said (when her Child was dead) It shall be well,* verse. 23. So in the same Spirit of Faith with her, Leave thy Soul with a Faithful Jesus to be made faithful also. *1 Thes. 5. 24. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it.*

Fifthly, The Omniscience of Christ is another of his Divine Attributes, by which he doth perfectly, and in one Eternal and immutable Act, know himself, and all things that were, are, or shall be: and things that are not, that never were or never shall be; things natural and voluntary, necessary and contingent; things in their Causes and Effects, acted or intended, good or evil, finite or infinite; all are most clearly and fully naked and open in his sight. He alone fully knows himself and his Divine Perfections, *2 Cor. 2. 10. The Spirit searcheth all things,*

yea, the deep things of God, ver. 11. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the Spirit of a man, which is in man, even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God So Matth. 11. 27. No man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son: That is, No man can know the Divine Nature but God himself, immediately and perfectly; That knowledge which the Saints have of God, is but a secondary and communicated knowledge, of God's back parts, as revealed in his Works, Word, and in a Mediator, according to the measure of the Gift of Christ: But God knows himself immediately and fully as he is: for his Knowledge is his Essence, and so as Infinite as his Being is. He is a pure Act without any potentiality: therefore his Understanding and himself are the same. He knows also all things else that are in Being and not in Being; things past, present, or to come, in one eternal Act, without any search into Principles or Causes; as Humane Understandings do, in a discursive way, and by succession: but hath the Idea's of all things in himself, his Essence being the Exemplar of those things, seeing he gives them their Being: As the Artificer knows the Forms of the Pieces he makes, and the Writer the proportion of his own Letters; so doth God, the first Cause, know all things that receive their Nature from him; they being first in him, and so eternally present to him. Hence the knowledge of God is most certain and infallible, and things are as he knows them, seeing his Knowledge gives them their Being: which must be understood of the things that God approves of, as his Creatures, his Providences, and Evils of Punishment, which are just and righteous: But sinful Evils have no dependence on his Fore-knowledge, or Influence from his Essence. Indeed Actions, as they are natural, have their Being from God; but the pravity and sinfulness of those Acts (Sin being but the privation of that good which was, and should be in them) is derived from the Subject whose Acts they are: As the Motion of the Clock is from the Art of the Artificer; but the obliquity of the Motion is from some defect in the Clock itself: God's fore-knowledge of Sin confers no Physical Virtue and necessity to the Being and succession of Sin, and yet his knowledge of it is certain; all things being naked and manifest in his sight, who is Truth itself, and cannot deceive or be deceived: He determining to permit the Being of Sin, must needs fore-know it; else his Knowledge would not be perfect: and if his Knowledge should be imperfect, his Essence would be so too, they being both the same; but this cannot consist with the Fountain of all Perfection: He is the Holy One, and can do no Iniquity, *Zeph. 3. 5.* His Fore-knowledge of Sin, doth not offer Violence to the Nature of man, or destroy the natural Freedom of his Will, but foreseeing what man would be, determined to leave him to the natural Motion of his own Will. *Judas* betraying Christ, as it was sinful, was the Consequent of God's Foreknowledge, but the effect of his own Covetousness. *Acts 2. 23.*

All Contingencies are perfectly foreseen of God also, both in himself as the first Cause, and so they are necessary to succeed in due time; he sees them also in the second Causes, in respect of which they are said to be contingent, for to God nothing is accidental, although it seems so to men, through an Unacquaintedness with their Dependance on the first Cause: *Rebekah's* meeting *Abraham's* Servant at the Well, and her Discourse with him. *Gen. 24. 15.* seem to Standers by, to be things contingent: but look back to the former Verse, and you will see them to be the answer of Prayer, and so before appointed: The like was the *Midianites* drawing *Joseph* out of the Pit, *Gen. 37.* and the Wind blowing down the House on *Job's*

Children, *Job* 1. though they look like Accidents, yet were the Effects of God's Permission and fore-appointment.

Again, God fore-knows all Contingencies, not only as they are in their first and second Causes, but as they are in themselves; for all things being present to him, he perfectly knows what every Cause will produce in time, and so must necessarily come to pass; according to that Axiom; Every thing that is, when once it is, it appears necessary that it should be: *Acts* 15. 18. *Known unto God are all his Works, from the beginning of the World.* *Heb.* 4. 13. *Neither is there any Creature which is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do.* *Psal.* 56. 8. *Thou tellest my wanderings, put thou my tears into thy Bottle, are not they in thy Book?* *Psal.* 139. 2. *Thou understandest my Thoughts afar off:* that is, before they are in Being. *Prov.* 15. 3. *The Eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.* This Wisdom of Christ, as God, is part of his Unsearchable Treasure, and so great a Deep, that 'tis past finding out, by his most intelligent Creatures in Heaven and Earth. *Rom.* 11. 33. *O the depths of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his ways past finding out.*

Again, as God is infinitely wise in himself, so is he the Author of all Wisdom to his Creatures; *He enlighteneth everyone that cometh into the World.* *Jo.* 1. 9. This is laid down to prove the Divine Nature of Christ, he is the *Word*, which is God; this appears both in his making all things *verse* 3. and in his incomprehensible Essence, *He is the Light shining in Darkness, and the Darkness comprehends it not:* Also, he is the Fountain of all that Light and Life his Creatures enjoy, and therefore must needs be God. The Evangelist doth not speak here of Christ as Mediator, and so of that saving Light, which he gives to his Elect, by his Spirit; but of his divine Essence, which the *Jews* would not own, and as a proof of it; doth instance in his creatorly Power: he is the Fountain of that natural Light, which all men have: all Wisdom comes from him, who is the Father of Lights; he is the Fountain of Light, able to fill the Children of men with all that Knowledge that is necessary, to their highest Happiness, to guide them with his Eye, and lead them into all Truth.

First, This yields wonderful Comfort to Believers, that they have chosen such a Savior, as is able to make them wise to Salvation; who not only knows what is best for them, but can also reveal and make out the Knowledge thereof to them, that they might know and choose, what makes for their best Good here and forever: *He is the Son of Righteousness,* *Mal.* 4. 2. *The bright Morning Star.* *Rev.* 22. 16. *The Light of Israel,* *Isa.* 10. 7. *The Pillar of Fire by Night.* *Neh.* 9. 12. To show them their way, in their greatest Difficulties and Obscurity.

Secondly, This assures gracious Souls, that he who hath undertaken their Conduct, Supply, and Preservation to Glory, knows how to make it good and finish the work he is entrusted with: he can keep that good thing committed to him; he can help them in the worst of Straits, and lead them through the greatest Improbabilities, Weaknesses, Dangers, yea Impossibilities to their desired Rest.

Thirdly, This also relieves them, that they have a Friend in Heaven, who knows their Soul in Adversity, and is acquainted with all their Troubles, Wants, Weaknesses, Wrongs, Fears,

Dangers, yea with all their Labors, Duties, Desires and Designs for him, and knows how to succor, comfort, support and deliver them, when all Refuge fails them, and there is none to help; and how to requite, and crown all their Duties and Sufferings for his Name: He knows their Corruptions, the Strength, and Prevalency of them, and how to subdue and destroy them; he sees their Ways and Infirmities, and how to heal them, he knows the Power and Malice of their Enemies, to restrain them, and discovers the most secret Plots against his innocent ones, to disappoint them, that in vain is the Snare laid in his Sight against them. He observes thy Tears Believer, thy corner Duties, thy Bed-side Breathings after him, though hid from others; he takes notice of thy Innocency, when men revile thee, and knows how to plead thy Cause, and bring thee to the Light.

Fourthly, This will serve to humble the proud Heart of men, that God is acquainted with all their Vileness; he sees their high, their fretful, their vain, their unclean, their unsound, their rebellious Hearts. *Souls*; men see the best of you, your fair and specious Duties, but he sees your inside and all your secret Rottenness, when you sit before him, as his People sit, and seem devout in your Services; he at the same time knows where your Thoughts are wandering, and espies every vain Motion and sinful glance of your deceitful Eye: when thou prayest with greatest Zeal, his Eye is upon thy close Hypocrisy, thy spiritual Pride, thy base ends, and those conceived Lusts, which will break out, when thy Duties are over. O how should this abase thy proud Heart, and prevent thy swelling Thoughts upon conceited Excellencies in thyself, or supposed Worth in thy Duties, seeing he knows what is in thee, and how vain man would be wise.

This also should advise thy Soul to Sincerity, in thy Profession, Purposes, Promises, Duties, because he beholds thee, and weighs thy Paths, searcheth thy Heart, tries thy Reins, and will shortly bring thy secret things to Judgment.

Lastly. This counsels such as want Wisdom, to be looking to Jesus, and waiting at the Fountain, and Spring-head, for their Instruction.

Sixthly, the Omnipotency of Christ, is another of those glorious Properties of the divine nature, which renders him so vast, and unconceivable a Treasure, to all that receive him, *He is the mighty God the everlasting Father. Isa. 9. 6.* who hath infinite Strength to order and establish his Kingdom, and to exert his Government in *Zion*, and over Nations: his Strength must needs be infinite, because his Kingdom is eternal; no created human arm, can sway the Scepter of the World, and maintain an everlasting Rule over the Hearts and Conversations of all his People, in all Ages; and therefore, he must be God, and the mighty God, to transact the whole Work, that concerns him, as Mediator, and to answer the Appellations given him in Scripture. Things are ascribed to Christ, which cannot be performed by less than an infinite Power.

First, His creating all things in Heaven and Earth, *Col. 1. 16.* *By him were all things created, that are in Heaven and that are in Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all things were created by him, and for him:* He is the eternal Word, the Exemplar, and efficient Cause of all created Beings; The Heavens and Earth, Angels and men,

the Inhabitants of the upper and nether World, were all formed by *Jehovah*, Christ, who gave Being to all his Creatures, as pleased him; and therefore his Power must needs be Almighty, *who is the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the Earth, that fainteth not, be that giveth Breath unto the People upon it, and Spirit to them that walk therein.* Isa. 40. 28. chap. 42. 5.

What a potent Lord have Believers chosen, who can supersede all their Difficulties, by his Creation-help? if his whole Store-house of Heaven and Earth be not full enough to supply their Wants, he can soon set forth a new Edition of Mercies by his own immediate arm; if their way to Glory, lie through a waste howling Wilderness where no Foot-steps can be seen to guide them, he can create a Cloud by day, and Pillar of Fire by Night to conduct them: If their Provisions fail to relieve them in their Journey, he can rain a Shower of *Manna* from his secret Granary, and open the Caverns of the Flinty Rock, and put new Springs into the barren Wilderness to refresh them; when they are environed with Troops of Death, he can, in a Moment, interpose his fiery Chariots and Horse-men, and when all their Deliverers fail, send from Heaven, and save them: when the Visibility of Religion ceases, and the Heavens pass away as a Scrole, when the Glory of the Lord's House is dissolved into a *Chaos*, when the Gold of the Sanctuary is become Dross, and the Gospel-Church metamorphoz'd into the old World, he can even then create a new Heaven, and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness. Is thy Heart, Believer, full of filthiness? Thy Redeemer can create a clean Heart: and if thy Tempest-tossed Soul can find no rest, thy Lord can create the Fruit of the Lips, Peace for thee: What is too hard for a creating Arm to do? Or what can undo that People, who have a faithful Creator to commit themselves, and all their Concerns unto?

Secondly, Another Proof of the Omnipotency of Christ, is the upholding all things by the Word of his Power, *Heb. 1. 4. Who being the Brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and upholding all things by the Word of his Power.* Here's another Royalty of the divine Nature of Christ, a new beaming out of his Glory as God, even in the bearing up, maintaining, and Dispose of the whole Creation, in the former *ver.* the forming of the Universe, and whole World, was ascribed to Christ: and here the Preservation of it also, is laid upon him, as a further Evidence of his oneness with the Father: having begun his Work in the Creation, he carries it on in his providential Sustentation thereof, *He is before all things, and by him all things consist. Col. 1. 17.* He is the Foundation that underprops the whole Fabric of Heaven and Earth, which would soon sink down into its first nothing, if everlasting Arms were withdrawn from beneath it, he that first gives Being to his Creatures, must continue it; Conservation is but a Continuation of the first act of Creation, to preserve the World from Destruction, to continue the Creatures in their peculiar Nature and Properties, and to govern those Diversities in an united Subserviency to his Will and Glory; and the Well-being of the whole, is a work of infinite Power, and needs the same Strength, that first produced them. And this is the work (Christians) of your *Messiah*, that person who is God-Man; who by his divine power and efficacious Providence, animates, actuates, cherishes, quickens, and sweetly disposes of all Creatures, Actions and Affairs in the World. He is the great Monarch of Heaven and Earth, that changes Times and Seasons, whose hands are under his Wings, and hath a wheel within the Wheels, that turns about things as pleaseth him; brings Light out of Darkness, Order out of Confusion, Good out of Evil: who hath the Government on his

Shoulders, and absolute Power in his hand, to dispose of all persons and things, as may most further the Pleasure of his own Will, the Advance of his Glory, and the Good of them that fear him.

And is not this Security enough to those, who have entrusted themselves and all their Concerns, with this glorious Potentate, and King of Kings, who hath the Management of all things in Heaven and Earth, that it shall be well at last with the righteous? the momentous Affairs of the world, and of *Zion*, shall issue in the best Good of those that love his Name. How should this calm the tumultuous Fears of the godly into a sweet Serenity of Spirit, and still their tempestuous Thoughts in a quiet Relyance on the Arm, Care, and Faithfulness of their Lord, who knows how to govern the World, and can, and will bring about his Work to gracious ends by all seeming Contrarieties, and interfering Providences in the World. *Why art thou afraid, saith Caesar, to the Master of the Ship, that began to be disturbed in his Spirits, by reason of the Storm and the Darkness of the Night? Thou carryest Caesar.* How much more should Believers be sedate and quiet in their Minds, who have embarked Christ. *Caesar* had only some Command at Land, none over the Sea; he governed the Bodies of a few men, but Christ rules at Land and Sea; he sits upon the Floods, and at the Helm of this great Vessel of the World; how should this lift the Saints Heads above all their Waters?

Thirdly, Christ's working Miracles by his own Power, proves his Omnipotency, that nothing is too hard for him; a Miracle is somewhat done, which is above and besides the Power and Course of Nature; not only as the thing done, but as the manner of doing, when the Cause is secret, and unknown to us, and the thing utterly beyond all natural Causes, that's a Miracle which none but God can do, either mediately by secondary Agents, or immediately of himself. Miracles are only done by a divine hand, because none but God can change the Order of Nature: and this Christ did, not by another's, but by his own power: *The Humane Nature in Christ was but the Instrument of the divine Action, and the human Action received it's Virtue from the divine Nature, saith Aquinas.* It was by his own Power, that Christ did such mighty works as no man ever did. 'Tis said, Virtue went out of him, and healed all their Diseases who touched him. *Luke 6. 19.* It was by his word he cast out Devils, and healed them that were sick. *Mat. 8. 6.* The Wind, and the Seas obeyed him. *ver. 27.* With Authority he commanded the unclean Spirits and they obeyed him. *Mark. 1. 27.* He opened the Eyes of them that were born blind, made the dumb to speak, the dead to walk; by which mighty Works, he proves himself to be one with the Father: *What he seeth the Father do, these also doth the Son likewise; for as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. Jo. 6. 19. 24.*

Neither did he show such Wonders himself only, but by his Power he enables his Servants also, to do such mighty Works, as were above the Power of lapsed Nature to do. *Mark. 16. 17. 18.* *And these Signs shall follow them that believe in my Name (i. e. by my Power and Authority from me) shall they cast out Devils, they shall speak with new Tongues, they shall take up Serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them, they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.* And surely, if the exerted Power of Christ by weak Instruments, could do such

mighty things, above the Capacity of natural Agents, then the essential Power of Christ can do much more than what he hath done.

Fourthly, That must needs be an Almighty Power in Christ, that can bestow on the Saints, all things that they shall ask of the Father in his name: but such is the Power of Christ, *Joh. 14. 13. Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.* He doth not say, my Father shall do it, or that will I procure for you by my Mediation and Interest in the Father; though that be true also: but that will I do by my own Power, as God equal with the Father. (I will do it) this he repeats again in the next *ver. If ye shall ask anything in my Name, I will do it,* being willing to fix this glorious Truth in their Minds, that as he was resolved to fulfill all their just Desires, made in his name, so he was able to do it, the Father and he being one. And this must needs be an Almighty power, to hear and answer all the Requests of all the Saints on Earth, at once: what multitudes are there of Believers in every Age, more than can be numbered, who are always compassing the Throne, and sending up a Cloud of Incense, to the Mercy Seat daily; putting up Variety of Requests to the Father, through Christ, and that not for mean things neither? They beg for the holy Spirit, for the Sheddings abroad of his Love, and Shinings out of his Glory; for treading down of *Satan*, for subduing of Corruption, for Conquest over his Enemies, Enlargement of his Kingdom; for an Almightyness to do, and invincible Patience to suffer the whole Will of God, for the Forgiveness of great Sins, and Multitudes of Sins, for Perseverance in Grace, and for an eternal Crown of Glory; these are many things and great things, things that none but a God can give, and yet no more than what Christ is engaged to bestow on all that sincerely seek him; and therefore must needs be God Almighty, and worthy of Sinners Choice, and of the Saints Trust.

Fifthly, This also sets forth the Omnipotency of Christ, that he is able not only to do all things for, but in his People, working all their Works in them; the Apostle tells us, *2 Cor. 3. 5. We are not sufficient of ourselves, to think a Thought that is good; Neither know we what to pray for as we ought. Rom. 8. 26.* In them dwells no good thing, as they are in themselves; Neither can they do anything without him: their Eyes are unto him for all their Help, their Springs are in him: in the Lord shall one say have I Righteousness and Strength; they are dead as to any self-sufficiency for the least thing that is good; but he is their Life, the Soul that animates all their Faculties, the hand that leads them, the Wisdom that directs them, the Power that actuates them in every good thing. Their Works must be wrought in God or can never be good; 'tis he that works in them, to will, and to do, of his good Pleasure, he teacheth them to profit, he held *Israel* by the hand teaching him to go: he carries his Lambs in his Arms, and gently drives them that are with young; drawing those that are indisposed, quickening them that are dead: he is the Fountain that fills all their Pits, the Head that gives out animal Influences to every Member, for every Duty: and must not he then be an all-sufficient God, and have an infinite Treasury to give to all richly to enjoy, and an Almighty Arm to do all the work of Saints on Earth? O admire Believers, and rely on this Jesus.

Sixthly, raising the dead is an act of Omnipotency, a peculiar Property of the divine Nature, which hath been, is, and shall be the Work of Christ; *I am the Resurrection and the Life. Jo. 11.*

25. *i. e.* He for whose sake and by whose Power the dead shall be raised at the last day. *Martha* suspects Christ's Ability to revive her dead Brother, she believed indeed, he should rise at the last day, and not before; why saith Christ, they that shall then rise from the dead, shall rise by my Power; and if I will raise up the dead then, I can as easily do it now. *The hour is coming in which all that are in their Graves, shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth, they that have done Good, unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation.* Joh. 5. 28. 29. *And I will raise him up at the last day.* Joh. 6. 54. That there shall be a general Resurrection of the dead, at the last day; when every Body (though now consumed) shall be raised up and reunited to the Soul, and be brought to the final Judgment, is not questioned by those that believe, and know the Scriptures. The Author of this Resurrection is God, as God, but the second Person, the Lord Jesus, is delegated to accomplish this Work, which he shall do by his own Voice, (saith Christ himself) by a Shout, by the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God, saith the Apostle, 1 *Thes.* 4. 16. with a great Sound of a Trumpet, saith the Evangelist, *Mat.* 24. 31. That is, the Lord Jesus shall, at that last day, by his mighty Voice, pronounced by the Arch-Angel, cause all the dead, both small and great, to arise in their same Bodies, though changed into an immortal State, and suitable Capacity, to that Condition, to which they are intended, to receive their Soul, and to come to Judgment. And is not this a mighty Work, to quicken the dead, a work peculiarly ascribed to God. 2. *Cor.* 1. 9. *For we had the Sentence of Death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the Dead:* 'Tis the work of God, and of none but God, to raise the dead: 'Tis a work full of Wonder and Amazement, beyond all Principles of created reason, to conceive how those Bodies dissolved to dust, mingled with other Bodies in the Grave, digested into other Natures, by Beasts, Fishes, Fowls, that have devoured them, should yet return and be separated from other Dust and Natures, into the same Individuals, is such a Miracle as is only fit matter for Faith, not Sense, and a firm Foundation for the Believers Hope and Comfort.

It may be thou seest nothing but Deaths on thy Graces, Frames and Capacities; thou findest Decays in thy Soul, the Spirit of Life seems to be departed from thee, thou canst not pray, hear, converse, with that sweetness and delight as heretofore; Comfort thyself Believer; He that is the *Life*, is the *Resurrection* also: He that quickened thy Heart, when Dead, will revive it, when decay'd: 'Tis as easy with him to restore thy Spiritual Frames, as to bestow them: He that can raise the whole World from their Bodily, total Death; can easily, and will, in due time, cure thy Soul-dyings also.

Again, This will cheer drooping Zion, who faints at her Desolations, and fears what will become of the destruction on her Interests: 'Tis lamentable to observing Souls, to see how Religion goes down daily: Holiness is departed from the Earth: The Rod of the wicked lies on the back of the Righteous: the wicked are exalted, and the Righteous oppressed: The House of *David* waxes weaker and weaker, and the House of *Saul* waxes stronger: This is a sad Spectacle; yet in this case Relief is to be fetched from an Omnipotent Jesus: who hath said, His dead men shall live: who can open his Peoples graves, and revive his decay'd Interest, and cause a Nation to bring forth in a day: and Overturn, Overturn, Overturn, till his Kingdom be established in the Earth.

CHAP. III.

The Humane Nature of Christ, distinctly considered; it's Reality proved: His Personality, or the Divine and Humane Nature in one Person; showing what kind of Union it is, and the glorious Consequents and Advantages thereof.

WE have a little inquired into the Divine Nature of Christ: the Beams of whose Glory, but darkly seen, yield a wonderful splendor, and reviving to a believing Eye. In the next place, let us consider his Humanity: The Nature of Man, which the second Person, assumes into a Personal Union with himself: He is perfect Man as well as God: The Woman's Seed; *Made of a Woman, made under the Law*, Gal. 4. 4. *Made of the Seed of David according to the Flesh*, Rom. 1. 3. *For he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but the Seed of Abraham*, Heb. 2. 16. *The Children being partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise took part of the same*, ver. 14. *And was in all things made like to his Brethren*, ver. 17. Called the Son of Man: the Man Christ Jesus: having the Substante of the Humane Nature; though not the Personal Subsistence thereof: He did not take the Person of Man into Union with himself: for then he would have had two Persons: and so have been no true Mediator: The Mediator being one: 1 Tim. 2. 5. *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus*: But if the Lord Jesus had taken the Person of Man, then he would have consisted of two Persons: the Divine Subsistence and the Humane; and so there would have been two Mediators, or Persons mediating, which is contrary to Scripture.

Neither did he take on him the vicious Qualities or Accidents of the Humane Nature: being holy, harmless, separate from Sinners: the Holy Spirit overshadowing the Virgin *Mary*, and purging the Humane Nature of all its sinful dregs: forming it of the Substance of the Virgin: not of his own Essence: whence the Holy thing begotten by the Spirit was not God, but Man; called *the HolyChild Jesus*: purely conceived in the Womb of a Sinner, without the least participation of her Sin, or vicious Defects of her Nature, receiving only the perfect Substance of Man.

- Having the Essential parts of the
 - Body.
 - Soul.
- Humane Nature,

A true and real Body, and not a Phantasm, and Airy Vehicle, as the *Marcionites* and Heretics of old held: He had Flesh and Bones, which a Spirit hath not, *Luke 24. 39. Handle me and see me, for a Spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have*: This was after his Resurrection, when the Disciples doubted that it was an Apparition and not him, and even then Christ had a real Body, palpable and visible, the object of External Senses.

A Natural, and not an Heavenly Body, as the *Manichees* affirmed from 1 Cor. 15. 47. *The first man is of the Earth, Earthy; the second man is the Lord from Heaven*. But to this I answer with *Zanchi*, The Apostle doth not speak here of the Essential Body of Christ; but of his Heavenly

Spiritual Power, which he lets out in raising the Dead; as in the former *verse*. *The first man Adam was made a living Soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit*: He speaks not here of the Nature, but of the person of the second *Adam*, as Mediator; the Difference between whom was great: the first *Adam* but a Creature, this a Creator or Quickenning Spirit: the first *Adam* had his Rise from the Earth, this second *Adam*, as to his person, from Heaven: whence (saith *Pareus*) 'tis evident, the Apostle doth not speak here of the matter of Christ's Body, but of the Original and Dignity of his Person: for he grants in this whole Discourse, that Christ's Body is one and the same with ours; else how can his Resurrection be a proof of ours: and 'tis said, *As by man came death, so by man came also the Resurrection of the Dead*: 1 Cor. 15. 20, 21, 22. And if Christ had not a real, natural Body, then he could not be the Seed of the Woman; neither had his Death been a real Death, or a satisfactory Propitiation; if the same Nature that sinned had not also suffered: And therefore it must needs be that Christ had a Natural Body: He Eat, Drank, Spake, Walked, was weary, smitten, bound, crucified: which are also demonstrations of a Natural Body.

And as he had a perfect Body, so had he a Soul also; contrary to the Doctrine of *Apollinaris*; or else he could not be a perfect Man, and in all things made like unto his Brethren: for 'tis said, when God made Man, *He breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life, and man became a living Soul*, Gen. 2. 7. Hence, saith *Lactantius*, *A Soul-less Body is no Humane Body*: 'Tis said, *His Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death*, Mat. 26. 38. Had not Christ a real Soul, he had not been a living man, nor could be said to have died, when he cried out, *Father, into thy hands I commit my Spirit*, Luke 23. 46. *And having said so, he gave up the Ghost*. This Spirit the Lord Jesus gave up into his Father's hands, was not his Divine Nature, for that was one with, and ever with the Father: and therefore must needs be his Soul; which was his Life; and that departing, he is said to die, and give up the Ghost.

Besides, That Knowledge in which he is said to increase, with those Humane Affections that manifestly appeared in him, and those Acts of his Natural Will, plainly proves his Soul: these being the Essential Faculties of a Rational Spirit. Neither could he have perfectly transacted the Office of a Mediator, and undergone all the Sufferings that were to be borne for the Sin of Man, had he not consisted of a Humane Soul, as well as Body; part of these Penalties, yea the greatest part being Spiritual, and such as none but the Soul could be fully sensible of: And in point of Justice, the Soul of man having sinned, there must be a Soul also in the Redeemer to undergo Sufferings; wherefore he must needs be perfect man in the Essential Parts of the Humane Nature,

- Body.
- Soul.

He had also the Properties of the Humane Nature, both Essential and Accidental: The Essential Properties of man, as well of the Soul, as Body, were in him: The Essential Properties, and Faculties of the Soul, which are the Understanding, Will, Affections, were seated in his Nature; he had a created Understanding, that eminently shined out in his youthful years, being able, at Twelve years old, to dispute with the Learned Doctors, of his

Day, even to the astonishment of his Hearers. *Luke 2. 46, 47. And they found him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the Doctors, both hearing them, and asking them Questions; and all that heard him were astonished at his Understanding and Answers. And ver. 52. Jesus increased in Wisdom and Stature.*

He had likewise Natural Affections, so as without sin: He loved the young man in the Gospel, for those Excellencies that were in him, *Mark 10. 21.* And had a peculiar degree of Affection to *John* above the rest of the Disciples, *Joh. 19. 26.* He had compassion on the multitude, *Mat. 9. 36.* And was grieved for the Heart hardness of his Disciples, *Mark 3. 5.* And had indignation against *Peter's* tempting him to decline his Redemption-work. *Mark. 8. 33.*

He had also the Essential Properties of a Humane Body, such as do flow from the Essence thereof, and are so absolutely necessary to it, as that without these the Body would cease to be a Body: as Quantity, Figure, Members, Dimensions: He had a Material Body, consisting of Flesh and Bone, with its Lineaments and Members; Face, Hands, Feet; he had a Stature, in which he grew, as other men do, *Luke 2. 52.* A Body circumscribed in a place, that must needs have a Circumference, and be in one place at once circumscriptively, not definitively, as Spirits are: Neither does its Union with the Divine Nature, or its glorified state in Heaven, alter this Essential Property of a Body: Nor is the Omnipotency of God a sufficient Argument to warrant the Body of Christ to be in Heaven, and Earth, and in divers places at once; seeing God's Absolute Power never crosseth his Actual Power, or infer a contrariety to his Truth, and to the natural Being of things. Neither did he assume the Parts and Essential Properties of Man only, but the Infirmities also, and accidental Properties of the Humane Nature: though not those which were Personal and Vicious, and procured by Personal Sins, or defection in their particular Natures, as Diseases, Blindness, Lameness, Deformity, which were not the absolute and universal Products of Original Sin, incident to everyone, but arising from some particular Causes, and peculiar to some Persons only; these our Lord Jesus did not take upon him, but such Infirmities as were accidental to the whole Nature, *for that he himself also is compassed with Infirmities, Heb. 5. 2.* not sinful; as culpable Ignorance and Error, but Natural Infirmities, such as were incident to our Natures, (Sin excepted) and such as were the Effects and Punishment of Sin: these Christ took on him, as inculpable Ignorance, Humane Passions of Sorrow, Fear, Anger in the Soul, Hunger, Thirst, Weariness, Pain, bloody Sweat, and Death in the Body. *Mark 13. 32. Mark 11. 13. Math. 26. 38. Math. 9. 36. Mat. 16. 23. Joh. 19. 28. Joh. 4. 6. Heb. 5. 8. Luke 22. 44. Mat. 27. 50.*

And O what enriching Privileges, and full Consolation, do flow to Believers, from the Words assuming the Humane Nature into Personality with himself! And what glorious Excellencies are in Jesus Christ, as he is God-Man, in one Person! infinite Treasures, which can never be traced out, nor fully understood by the Children of men, as will appear, if we consider the kind of this Union, and the Consequents of it.

First, Consider the kind of this Union, between the Divine and Humane Nature of Christ; and O what a glorious Mystery is it!

First, It is a *real* Union: 'tis not Nominal, in Name only, or Metaphorical, in Shew or Similitude; but in Reality and Truth. The Divine and Humane Nature do constitute one Person, which is Jesus Christ. We have already proved that Jesus Christ is perfect God, and perfect Man: he is really so in one person, *Joh. 1. 14. The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his Glory.* The Word, that is, the divine Nature, the God-head of Christ, *was made Flesh*; that is, united to the human Nature, and this in a visible way: *and dwelt amongst us*, it was not a Fiction, but really Christ, God-man, dwelt amongst us, *and we beheld his Glory*, it was obvious to our view, *1 Tim. 3. 16. Great is the Mystery of Godliness, God was manifest in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels.* If this be not real, what can be so? *He was manifest in the Flesh*, How? By way of real Union, *Justified in the Spirit*, by the divine Nature; here's Flesh, and here's the divine Nature, in one person, Jesus Christ, God-Man, seen of Angels, *Rom. 1. 3. 4. Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the Flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the Resurrection from the Dead:* Here's a Person consisting of both these Natures, real man, born of the Seed of David, then real God; thus the Divine Nature was manifested to be in Christ, by the Resurrection of the dead, *Rom. 9. 5. And of whom as concerning the Flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever.* Here both Natures are attributed to one Person; Jesus Christ, as concerning the Flesh, descended from Abraham, he came from David, that is, he received the human Nature from the Virgin Mary, and he is God over all, blessed forever. The God-head is said to dwell in him bodily, *Col. 2. 9.*

Secondly, It is a very *near* Union, the nearest Union that possibly can be. As the Soul and the Body make up one man, so the divine and human Nature of Christ, make up one Person. It is set forth by way of Inhabitation, *Col. 2. 9. In him dwells all the Fullness of the God-head bodily.* God manifest in the Flesh, and justified in the Spirit makes up one entire Person. As the Matter and the Form makes up one Being, so this divine and human Nature makes up one person.

Thirdly, It is a *mystical* and *unconceivable* Union. There's a relative Union between Man and Wife, making one Flesh; a real Union between the Head and Members, constituting one Body; but this cannot reach this Union; it is unconceivable, above all Conception, *1 Tim. 3. 16. Great is the Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the Flesh.* We may admire it, and adore it, but we cannot fathom the depth of this Union between the divine and human Nature of Christ.

Fourthly, It is a *pure* and *unmixed* Union as to each Nature. In regard of Essence the divine Nature cannot be converted into the human, nor the human into the divine, but each Nature remains distinct, and it's Properties are distinct, *Rom. 1. 3. 4.* So that there are in Jesus Christ, two Natures, two Wills, a divine Will, and a human Will: he hath the Will and Affections of a man, though fully sanctified and glorified: he wills whatever the God-head wills, but still, as to his human Nature, it is with a human Will; so that something of the workings of Christ, are by the divine Power, and something by the human Nature. This Union consists in the Communication of the divine Nature with the human, the God-head, and the human Nature agree; so that the divine Nature of Christ communicates all its fullness as far as may further Redemption-ends; for the Sanctification and Salvation of the whole body of Christ, and for

the fulfilling of all Redemption-Work, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. This is a glorious Union, but it is worthy to be known. Ah how little of Christ is known as to these two Natures! how little a portion do we know of him!

Fifthly, It is an *inseparable* Union, it can never be parted more. Therein lies the Happiness of Believers, that Jesus Christ is God-man, to all Eternity, never can there be an end of this Relation; *Jesus Christ God-Man, is the same Yesterday, today, and forever*, Heb. 13. 8. He was the same while in his obediencial Work, on Earth; he is the same in Glory, and will be the same to all Eternity. This Union of Christ's two Natures must be eternal, or else he cannot be said ever to live to make Intercession; *But he ever lives to make Intercession*, Heb. 7. 25. That which made Christ's Redemption infinite, was that he was God as well as Man: Christ the Interceder, God-Man, is now in Heaven, and this must be forever. O what a glorious Truth is this, that there can be no Cessation of this Union! could this Union be separated as *Nestorius* holds, then Redemption-work would cease: *He is over all, God-Man, blessed for evermore*, Rom. 9. 5. If the Saints Union with Christ be inseparable, and their Interest in the Love of Christ inseparable, then Christ is unalterable; but because the Saints must have an eternal Union with him, and he is an eternal Jesus, he must be eternally God-Man, *Romans* 8. 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39. *Joh.* 17. 21. 23. 24.

Secondly, What are the Effects and Consequents, that flow from, and issue out of this Union between the divine and human Nature •• Christ?

First, from this Union of these two Natures in Christ, there follows a Communication of Properties; so that which is said to be done by each Nature, is applied to the whole Person of Christ; O this is a very glorious Mystery. as this, Christ's Sufferings in the human Nature, is applied to the whole Person of Christ; therefore the Blood of Christ, which was but the Blood of the human Nature, is called the Blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. *Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood*; being of infinite Value and Worth. So the Sufferings of the human Nature are ascribed sometimes to the divine Nature, and to the whole person of Christ; so, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. God manifest in the Flesh, and justified in the Spirit; yet both these applied to the person of Christ: whatever the divine nature can do is applied to the Person of Christ, by a Communication of Properties, ••owing from this Union.

Secondly, From this Union, flows this Consequence, That there is Fullness of Grace placed in Jesus Christ to be given out to all his Seed. The God-head fills the human Nature of Christ, *Jo.* 3. 34, *God hath not given the Spirit by measure to him*. When we read of Christ's receiving anything, understand it of his human Nature; for the divine Nature cannot be capable of receiving anything; it is as full of Grace as ever it can hold: And, as the Breast is full of Milk for the Poor Babe, so is Jesus Christ full of Grace in his Humane Nature, to distribute to his Children: His pity moves him to give out this, and the other Grace to his People, and it is in him to bestow it. He wills the best good to all his People, and what he wills, he is able to perform; hence 'tis said, *Joh.* 1. 16. *Of his Fulness we have all received, and Grace for Grace*. Of that Fulness which the Divine Nature is always issuing out to the Humane Nature of Christ, do Believers receive Grace for Grace; Grace suitable to Grace in Christ; so that the Humane Nature of Christ must needs be always full of Grace, by reason of its Union with the Divine:

As the Sun that gives out Light is always full of Light, and the Sea that sends forth Waters to the Rivers, is never vacant. This is a glorious Mystery, of wonderful Encouragement to Believers, to consider what a full Jesus they are related to.

Thirdly, By virtue of this Union, the Lord Jesus Christ hath right to all Glory, and Adoration of Men and Angels, as Mediator. He is the most Illustrious Person; all Honor, Blessing, Praise, Glory, Adoration is due to him. *Heb. 1. 6. When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him.* Surely he must be a glorious Person, when all the Angels must bow at his Feet; Seraphims, Cherubims, and all the Host of Heaven, stoop and give Homage to him, this the Lord Jesus Christ hath a proper Right to, as he is God-Man: *Phil. 2. 9. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every name; Every Tongue shall confess at last, that he is Lord, ver. 11. Rev. 1. 17. And when I saw him, I fell at his Feet as dead.* O the very Vision of Christ is enough to strike a poor Creature to the Earth, *Rev. 4. 9, 10, 11. The four and twenty Elders fell down and worshipped this glorious Person that sate upon the Throne, which is Jesus Christ, Joh. 5. 23. That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father: So that God the Son, the Second Person, the Mediator of his People, deserves all that Divine and Religious Worship which is due to God, as God: Thrones and Principalities are made by him, and put under him. Col. 1. 16. 17.*

Fourthly, By virtue of this Union, the Lord Jesus Christ hath absolute Authority, Kingship, and Headship in his Church, and over all things to the Church, *Matt. 28. 18. All Power is given to me in Heaven and Earth.* O what vast Power is this! All Power on Earth, to do what he will there; All Power in Heaven, to do what he will there, *Eph. 1. 22. And hath put all things under his Feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the Church.* Jesus Christ, as God-Man, is invested with all Power and Authority, to transact the Work of a Mediator, to perform the Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King: The Godhead of Christ, working, as God, and the Manhood of Christ, working, as Man, yet both these Natures concur towards the management of Redemption-work.

As a Prophet, he is able to reveal the Will of God, for he knoweth the mind of the Spirit, being God, he is infinite in Wisdom, *Job. 36. 4. Rom. 11. 33. All Knowledge comes from him, as Mediator: In him are hid the Treasures of Wisdom, Col. 2. 3. He maketh Wise to Salvation; He giveth Wisdom, Prov. 2. 6. He openeth the Eyes of the blind, and giveth Light to them that sit in Darkness, and in the Region and shadow of Death, Matth. 4. 16. Luke 2. 32. Ministers can but preach to the Ear, but Christ can preach to the Heart: Ministers can but open the Scriptures, Christ can open the Heart: He is a full and effectual Head to his Body, the Church, to guide, influence and adorn it, Col. 1. 18.*

As a Priest: And so there's an infinite Sufficiency in his Satisfaction and Intercession, seeing he is God-Man; In his Satisfaction enough to silence all Pleas against his People; He can arrest all the Sentences and Executions of the Law against them. As an High-priest; he is a sufficient Sacrifice for the Sins of the People: *He was made Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. 5. 21.* By the Obedience of Christ all Believers are made Righteous, *Rom. 5. 19.* The Obedience of the Saints is represented complete in Christ, though imperfect in themselves. Hence Believers that are wounded with the shortness of their

Services in themselves, may lift up their Heads, when they look upon the perfect Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. *If any man Sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: And he is the propitiation for our Sins.* Though the Saints do sin, Christ becomes a Sacrifice for them. This one Offering of Christ ever appears before God; when new Provocations appear in his People: *By one Offering he perfected forever them that are sanctified,* Heb. 10. 14. By virtue of this Union, his Blood becomes infinite Blood, equally as large as the Offence: Nay, it is more able to save, than the Sins of Believers to damn: *It is the Blood of Christ that cleanseth from all Sin,* 1 Joh. 1. 7. Therefore his Obedience is a perfect Obedience, and his Sufferings perfect Sufferings: of more satisfaction to Divine Justice, than if all the Sinners in the World had lain in Hell to all Eternity. This Blood is so wonderfully precious, that it is accounted by the Father as the Blood of God, Acts 20. 28. If Infinite can satisfy Infinite, then the Father is satisfied by the Blood of Christ; because whatever the Justice of God can expect, the Obedience of Christ can fully satisfy. This Righteousness to Justification, the perfect Obedience and Sufferings of Christ, receives no Addition or Diminution by the Obedience, or Disobedience of his People, Eph. 1. 6. *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.* Ah! little do Souls know the Bottom they stand upon: It is not (poor Believer) the shortness of thy Obedience, the multitude and greatness of thy Sins, can outmatch this matchless Righteousness of Christ. All the Injuries and Wrongs thou hast done is but the Injury of a Creature, but the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ is the Satisfaction of God; it is the Satisfaction of God the Son, presented to God the Father: O what a blessed state are Believers in, where there is such a price paid for their Sins.

Again, By virtue of this Union, There's Sufficiency in the Intercession of Jesus Christ: *He must needs be able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, seeing he ever lives to make Intercession,* Heb. 7. 24, 25. *How much more shall the Blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your Consciences from dead works,* Heb. 9. 14. The Blood of Christ meritoriously purges the Soul from all filthiness, being offered through the Eternal Spirit. God will not deny himself: whatever God the Son intercedes for, God the Father will grant; so that Christ's Intercession must needs be effectual. O what potency hath Christ in Heaven! what Prevalency in all his Addresses to the Father! Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27. *Christ gave himself for his Church; that he might sanctify and cleanse it; and that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle.* Here's a double Effect of Christ's Mediatorship: One is, By virtue of this Blood, the Spirit comes, and cleanses away the Corruption, and subdues the Iniquities of his People: this is that cleansing by Sanctification: Then there's a presenting the Saints to the Father, complete in him, without spot or wrinkle: thus the virtue of Christ's Intercession, and Righteousness applied by him to the Believer. doth prove such a covering for all Believers, that it hides every spot from God's Judicial Eye, that the Lord is said to behold no Iniquity in them, *i. e.* so as to be angry with them; they are presented lovely, and comely in Christ, though black and deformed in themselves.

As a King: And so he hath Authority to erect a Kingdom of Grace in the World, to make Laws for the well-being of his Church, and to require Obedience of all Persons. Hence the Magistrates of the World are called upon to stoop to Christ. *Psal. 2. 12. Kiss the Son lest he be angry.* All Authority in the World is placed under Jesus Christ, in order to the carrying on his

Mediatorly Kingdom: Hence 'tis said, *Prov. 8. 15. By me Kings Reign, and Princes decree Justice:* they have their Power and Authority, by the Government, and disposing of Jesus Christ, who is said to be *King of Kings, and Lord of Lord's, Rev. 19. 16.* He hath absolute Power over every Creature; Every Knee must bow, and every Tongue confess to him; all must subject to him, *Psal. 22. 28. For the Kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the Governor among the Nations: He shall have Dominion also from Sea to Sea, and from the River unto the ends of the Earth: They that dwell in the Wilderness shall bow before him, and his Enemies shall lick the dust, Psal. 72. 8, 9.*

As a King, he is invested with Right and Power, to give out the Spirit of Grace for the effectual fulfilling of, and completing Obedience to all his Laws, by his Church and People. Obedience to the Laws of Christ cannot be yielded but by the Spirit; the best of his People are no further subject to him, than they are Spiritual; for the Carnal mind is Enmity against God: Hence he saith, *When I go away, I will send the Comforter, John 16. 7.* It is an Expression that notes Authority: When I go away, when I mount my Throne, I will send the Spirit; and he shall promote Obedience: *He shall lead his People into all Truth, ver. 13. 14.* Whenever he intends the flourishing of his Kingdom in the World, he hath residues of the Spirit to give out; the more Holiness there is in Saints and Churches, the more there are of the pourings out of the Spirit: *I will pour out my Spirit upon thy Seed, and they shall spring up as among the grass, as Willows by the Water-courses, Isa. 44. 3, 4.* So *Joel 2. 28, 29. I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, &c.* In those days, that is, in the time of the Gospel, and especially when the Jews are called.

Again, as King, the Lord Jesus Christ hath sufficient Power to protect and rule his People, to govern and subdue his Enemies. He is altogether complete to enact his own Purposes, and to fulfill his own Will; for as God, nothing is too hard for him; *He takes up the Isles as a very little thing, Isa. 40. 15.* It is an easy thing with him to blow off the Nations, and subdue all the Powers that oppose him: *He that sitteth in the Heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in Derision, Psal. 2. 4.* He makes nothing of all the Powers of his Enemies; it is but to look through the Clouds, and trouble their Hosts, *Exod. 14. 24.* One Angel can suddenly destroy thousands of them: he hath absolute Power over all Creatures to bring down all his Enemies, where and when he will; *and he must reign till he hath brought them all down, Heb. 2. 8. Thou shalt break them with a Rod of Iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a Potters Vessel, Psal. 2. 9.* The Saints are ready to tremble when they consider the Potency of their Enemies; but it is far easier for Christ to dash all the Powers of the World in pieces, than for a man to break an earthen Pitcher: *He will order and establish his Kingdom with Judgment and Justice, Isa. 9. 7.* It is not for want of Ability in Christ to order and perfect the Obedience of his Church and People, that there are such Disorders found amongst them; only he is pleased to leave Irregularities for a while, that he may come at last with his Fan, and purge them: So neither men nor Devils can pluck his Sheep out of his hand, *Jo. 10. 28.* Enemies may touch them; Temptations may wound and buffet them, and sometimes Captivate his People; but they cannot remove them out of his hand; he will still support and preserve, all that the Father hath given him.

Fifthly, In this personal Union of the Lord Jesus Christ, lies his Mediatorship: In these two Natures he takes upon him, and undergoes the Office of Mediator. And this is so great a

deep, that time is too short to give a full Display of the Glory of Christ's Mediatorship. *Heb. 8. 6. But now he hath obtained a more excellent Ministry by how much also he is the Mediator of a better Covenant.*

But now &c. That is by virtue of this Union of both Natures in the Person of Christ, he is become a Mediator of a better Covenant; this we may see, if we look back in *verse. 1.* The Apostle speaks of Christ's divine Nature, who is set on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in Heaven; and *verse. 2.* his human Nature is shewn, called the Minister of the Sanctuary, and *verse. 3.* ordained to offer Gifts: and having spoken of Christ in both his Natures, he tells us that he is now become a Mediator, betwixt God and Man; a middle Person, a days-Man, he hath a Mediety or Middleness of Nature, as God-Man, and is a Mediator in regard of his Office, in which Office, the Lord Jesus stands in a double Relation, first, to God, secondly, to Man; having both Natures, he is interested in both parties, the Son of God, and the Son of Man, one with God, *Joh. 10. 30. I and my Father are one:* of one Nature, one Will, one Delight, having one Design and one Glory. As man he is of the same Nature, Flesh and Blood with fallen man, *Heb. 2. 11. 14. 17.* He hath the same Temptations, the same Weaknesses and Infirmities with them (Sin excepted) that he might have a fellow feeling of the Infirmities of his people, and put on Bowels of Compassions, that he might be capable of fulfilling all Righteousness, suffering for them, and holding Communion with them, *Heb. 5. 1. 2.*

This Term Mediator, is taken sometimes in a more large sense, sometimes in a more strict sense.

First, This Term, as it is taken in a large Sense, so the Lord Jesus Christ is a Mediator, as he is the Head, the middle between God and his Creatures, so he is the Mediator of Angels as well as men: It is by him the Angels were made, and in him the Elect Angels are chosen, and by him they are preserved: for Angels cannot be thought to come to such a State of Felicity, and such near Union with God, but upon the account of a second person, *Col. 1. 20.* in the sixteenth verse, Christ is said to be the Creator of Angels, and in this 20. ver. there's his Mediatorship for Angels: *By him to reconcile all things to himself, whether they be things in Earth or things in Heaven.* This is a place of very great Difficulty, and hath puzzled many Interpreters: some conceive it is to reconcile man and Angels together, supposing the Angels were enemies to fallen man, but by Jesus Christ, brought into a State of Amity: but it cannot be so understood here; for the Parties reconciled, are not said to be men and Angels, but God, and these things: how then is this understood? Some therefore conceive, that this Reconciliation is to be understood by way of Proportion and Similitude, not as if the Angels needed Pardon, for they never sinned; but they stand in need of a Mediator, that they may not sin; for as Creatures, they are mutable, and as subject, in their Nature to sin, as the Devils were; and it is by Jesus Christ they are preserved, and kept in the Favor of God. It is said, all things in Heaven: The Heavens themselves are, or shall be brought into a capacity of meetness, for the presence of God, Saints and Angels, by Jesus Christ, as Mediator: The Angels are called Elect Angels, *1 Tim. 5. 21.* And how? but as they are chosen in Christ; for all Election is founded in the Lord Jesus Christ, as a middle Person, as the Head of Election, *Eph.*

1. 4. *According as he hath chosen us in him*; all those Creatures that shall be made, or kept holy, are placed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Likewise the Angels are called the Sons of God, *Job 38. 7. When the Morning Stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for Joy*: Now all Adoption is in the Lord Jesus Christ: If they are reputed as the Sons of God, this Relation must needs be in Christ, who is the only begotten Son of God: therefore all the Angels must needs have dependence upon Christ, as Mediator, *Eph. 1. 10. That in the dispensation of the fullness of time, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth, even in him*. Some conceive it is meant of those Saints that were in Heaven, before Christ came to suffer; but that cannot be, it being put in the Neuter Gender, *All things in Heaven*: so that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Mediator of Angels, in that he procures for them Preservation with God: and were it not for a Mediator, they would never be secured from Falling.

Secondly, More strictly. Christ is called Mediator in respect to God, and fallen Man, coming betwixt them, as a middle Person, to make up the Breach, effect a Peace, and reconcile them together, *Heb. 9. 15*. He is the Mediator of the New Testament, *Heb. 12. 24. And to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant*, *John 14. 6. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life*: It is through his Name alone Salvation is to be had, *Acts 4. 12*. He is appointed of God the Father to this end, *Joh. 3. 16. Rom. 3. 25. Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation for our Sins*: to be one that may reconcile God to Man, and render him propitious and favorable to him, *Acts 2. 23. 1 Pet. 1. 20. Heb. 5. 4. Joh. 6. 24. For him hath God the Father sealed*: He was anointed and furnished with all Abilities for this end, *Isa. 61. 1, 2*. And he is the only Mediator, *1 Tim. 2. 5, 6*. The only Surety, *Heb. 8. 6*. The only Advocate, *1 Joh. 2. 1, 2*. 'Tis God the Son, the Second Person, is the only Mediator; 'twas he that made man, and therefore fittest for him to re-make him; *It would be a great derogation from Christ's Honor (saith Austin) should another mend and reform that spoiled work which he made*. He is fittest to restore man to the lost Image of God, who himself is the express Image of the Father: 'Tis best meet for him to commend the Love of God to man, who himself is the Son of the Father's Love: He is the only begotten Son of the Father, and so fit to Adopt others into a state of Sonship. As Man also, Christ hath Right to Redemption-work, *Lev. 25. 23*. As God, he hath Ability to redeem; As Man he was capable to suffer: As God, he was able to bear up the Humane Nature under Sufferings; As Man, he could bear the Punishment of Sin; As God, he could remove our Sins, and purify our Natures: As Man, he could compassionate his People; As God, he could help them: As Man, he is capable to tender a Satisfaction; As God, to render it infinite: As Man, he was able to become a Sponsor, a Surety, to make a promise in the behalf of his Seed; And, as God, he could make good his Promise: He can reveal the mind, and disclose the deep things of God, and pour out the Spirit of Grace; He hath all Power in Heaven and Earth, and is able to save to the uttermost: He can exalt his Interest, and subjugate his Enemies under his Feet; He sits at the Right hand of God, and is God with the Father, and Man with Man.

CHAP. IV.

Showing, what is the Work of Jesus Christ, as he is Mediator.

WE come in the next place, to show wherein the Office and Work of this Mediator lies: And it will much conduce to the Glory of Christ, to display his Mediatorship.

Now we must consider him in a double Relation. The Lord Jesus Christ hath to deal with two different Parties, where there is a Breach.

- 1. His Work lies with respect to God the Father.
- 2. His Work lies with respect to fallen Man.

First, His Work lies with respect to God the Father: And here his Office lies in several particulars.

First, One great part of the Work of Christ, as Mediator, is, to mediate in the behalf of fallen Man, with the Father, so as to procure terms of Reconciliation: Thus a Mediator is to agitate with the offended Person, to bring to terms of Peace: This was the Work of Jesus Christ, from before all time; He did act with God the Father, that there might be a way found out for agreement between him and poor Sinners. This was drawn up in the Covenant between the Father and the Son, as in *Isa. 42. 6, 7. I the Lord have called thee in Righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a Covenant of the People, for a Light of the Gentiles: To open the blind eyes, to bring out the Prisoners from the Prison.* Here's the result of Christ's Mediation in the behalf of fallen Sinners: He doth treat with the Father, that he would be pleased to show pity to fallen man; and the Father returns this Answer, That he will consent to the terms of Jesus Christ, for the saving of Sinners; that he shall be a Covenant for the People, and give out Salvation to perishing Sinners: So *Isa. 49. 5. to the 10 verse.* The Persons for whom the Lord Jesus Christ mediates, are Jews and Gentiles, and under these are comprised all the Elect of God: And the Father treats, and concludes with Christ, about the saving of these two Parties: *In an acceptable time (saith he) have I heard thee, and I will give thee for a Covenant of the People.* All the Elect of God, both among the Jews and Gentiles, shall be called and saved by this Mediation of Jesus Christ.

But what are the terms upon which the Father consents to the Mediation of Christ, that there shall be Peace for all that come to him?

First, One thing concluded upon between the Father and the Son, is, That the Lord Jesus Christ shall make up the Breach of the first Covenant: There's a Righteous Covenant of God broken, by the Sin of *Adam*, and upon the breach of this Covenant, God is bound, in Justice, to lay Death upon *Adam*, Condemnation upon all fallen Mankind. Now, that this Blessing may be procured, which Christ mediates for, the Sentence of Death is to be reversed; and this cannot be till the Punishment of the broken Covenant be borne. Now the Lord Jesus Christ voluntarily undertakes to do this, *Heb. 10. 7. Then said I, Lo, I come.* All other ways were ineffectual to make satisfaction to the Justice of God for *Adam's* Sin. Now, when no way could make up this Breach, then Christ comes, and consents to pay the price himself, to be a Sacrifice for Sinners; *Lo, I come to do thy Will.* What is the Will of God? Why, that Mercy and Justice be reconciled. Justice was all for Punishment; Justice would not be satisfied till the Penalty was executed: Now Christ must come in the Sinners room, and undergo the Penalty

of this broken Covenant. Says God, *In the day thou breakest this Covenant thou shalt die*; therefore Christ must come and die. This is one of the terms; If the Lord Jesus Christ will be a Substitute in the room of the Offender, and undergo the Punishment, then he will take off the Condemnation, *Rom. 8. 3. For Sin condemned Sin in the Flesh*, that is, in the Flesh of Christ, Justice must be satisfied. The Law could not do this: God sends his Son, and he must undergo the curse, *Gal. 3. 13*. And this the Lord Jesus Christ did consent unto.

Secondly, Another thing required is, That the Lord Jesus Christ should obey the Precepts of this Covenant perfectly, in his own Person, in the behalf of all his Seed: That God might have no Quarrel with the Children of the Covenant, Christ must die to make up the former Breach of this Covenant: He must obey, to fulfill the End of the Covenant; he was not only to undergo Sufferings, but he was to complete all active Righteousness: and this the Lord Jesus Christ consented to▪ Hence he saith, *It behooveth us to fulfil all Righteousness*, *Mat: 3. 15. God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law*, *Gal. 4. 4*. The Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator, becomes obliged to the preceptive Law of God, and must in his own Person fulfil all the parts of this Law, and must work out a perfect Holiness and Obedience, that the first Covenant might be fulfilled, if Salvation be obtained.

Thirdly, Another thing which the Father and Jesus Christ agree upon, about this Work of Reconciliation, is, That the first Covenant, to all its demands, being fulfilled, and there being nothing now to lay in against the Believer from this Covenant; that Salvation may be sure, he concludes to make a new Covenant; which, that it may be faultless, Jesus Christ should now become the Surety of another, and better Covenant. The first Covenant God found fault with, and therefore he thinks upon a second, that may be effectual to all the ends of Salvation-grace, *Heb. 8. 7, 8. For if that first Covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second: for, finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, when I will make a new Covenant with the House of Israel and Judah*. As if the Lord should say to his Son, The first Covenant will never answer thy Proposals, to save fallen Man, and that thy Seed may be blessed, therefore there shall be a new Covenant drawn, that shall be effectual to the ends of Salvation; and thou shalt be the Head and Mediator of this Covenant; this was the agreement between the Father and the Son. Now Jesus Christ becomes the Angel of this Covenant: God agrees with Jesus Christ for fallen man: Jesus Christ covenants with the Father, in the behalf of all his Seed, that he will bring them to Life: He promises to work in them and for them all that is required to Salvation, and that they shall be saved to the uttermost, *Heb. 7. 22, 25. By so much was Jesus made a Surety of a better Testament: wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost*. Thus he becomes an Engager to the Father in the behalf of all Believers. O Friends! this is a glorious Mystery; I fear too few are insighted in the glorious Work of the Mediatorship of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ becomes a Surety, not only to pay the Debt, but to perform the Condition. A Surety, or a Sponsor, is one that promises and undertakes in the behalf of another, to fulfill what he was bound to do. Thus the Lord Jesus Christ hath performed this first Office of a Mediator, by drawing up an Agreement between God and fallen Man, by bringing the Father to terms of Reconciliation.

Secondly, The terms being thus concluded upon, the second part of this mediatory work of Christ is, that he actually set about this Obedience and Suffering, and make good the Agreement between the Father and himself; and this he did in the fullness of time; he comes and actually accomplishes all his Promises to the Father, in point of Merit and Satisfaction. There are two great things Jesus Christ is to do, in order to the fulfilling of this Promise to the Father, in behalf of his Seed: First, meritoriously procuring the things for them; and Secondly, efficaciously applying what he procures, *Heb. 9. 15. And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of Death, for the Redemption of the Transgressions that were under the first Covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal Inheritance.* There could be no Redemption of them that were bound and cast by the Statute of the first Covenant, but by Christ's Sufferings; therefore Christ did actually lay down his Life a Ransom for all his Seed. *1 Pet. 3. 18. For Christ also hath once suffered for Sins the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God. 2 Cor. 5. 21. He hath made him to be Sin for us:* By way of Stipulation and Agreement, he was made a Sin-offering, he did actually undergo all those Sufferings while he was on Earth, which was a full sufficient, equal, just, valuable, and proportionable Satisfaction to divine Justice, all that it could demand, *in foro judicii;* Justice hath nothing more to charge; the Extremity and Rigour of the Law was fulfilled; and whatever the Believer should have suffered in his own person, was all born by Christ. *1 Tim. 2. 6. Who gave himself a Ransom.* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , as *Gomarus* observes, signifies an equal-price of Redemption, an Eye for an Eye, a Tooth for a Tooth, *caput capite redimo*, saith *Arist.* So full is this Satisfaction made by Christ, that God declares himself well pleased. *Math. 3 17.* So great was the delight and Pleasure that God took in his Sons Satisfaction, as that by an audible Voice from Heaven, in the Presence of men and Angels, he discharges him, and gives him an Acquittance.

Again, This Satisfaction must needs be full, because upon the very Promise of this Ransom, when the Conclusion was made between the Father and the Son, did the Lord let his Prisoner free, and give the purchased Possession to the Seed of Christ, before ever Christ did fully pay the Debt: as much as to say, as soon as ever the Lord Jesus Christ gave Bond for the payment of this Debt, the Father gives out the Fruit of it, and so all the Saints that were saved before Christ came, were saved by Virtue of this Promise of Christ to the Father, fully to pay the Debt; and the Spirits of just men, were made perfect with God before Christ came into the World, upon the account of this complete Satisfaction afterwards to be made.

Again, A Proclamation is sent out from Heaven, upon the Death and Resurrection of Christ, that now Peace is made for fallen man, upon the terms of Sinners coming to and receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ: now God would never have sent forth this Proclamation from Heaven, had not the Satisfaction Christ made, been complete and full. *Matt. 11. 28.* Come unto me, whoever you be, let your Burdens be never so great, your Wearyness never so much, your Dangers never so many, come unto me, and I will give you rest: thus he proclaims in the great Feast. *Joh. 7. 27. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink*, be he what he will, here's enough to satiate his Soul, if he comes; here's Redemption procured: And upon this, by the joint Agreement of the Father and Son, a Commission is given to a certain number of men, to preach the Gospel and tender Reconciliation to lost Sinners, *Luke 24. 47. And that*

Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name among all Nations, Mark. 16. 15. And he said unto them, go ye into all the World and preach the Gospel to every Creature. O Friends! These are glorious things, if they be but believed. Tenders of Life must be made to all the perishing World, that all may know, that this was a full and sufficient Ransom which Christ gave, and that the Father was completely satisfied with it.

Again, Upon the Fathers actual Acceptance of Christ's Redemption and Mediation, he doth give out begun Salvation to Believers, they are admitted to the actual Enjoyment of this purchase; so all Believers upon their Reception of Christ, have the Spirit of Christ given them, which to them is begun Salvation, a Seal of Glory, the first fruits of Heaven, *2 Cor. 1. 22. Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts.* Now seeing the Father, upon the receiving of this Payment made by Christ, delivers out Grace, and therein the Beginnings of Glory, to all that savingly close with Christ, therefore this price paid by Jesus Christ, must needs be complete and full

That's the second thing that this Mediator doth, he doth actually pay down the price the Father demands, and this becomes a full Satisfaction to divine Justice, for every Soul that doth savingly close with Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Another thing the Lord Jesus Christ doth as Mediator, is this. By his shed blood, he seals to, and engages with the Father in the Behalf of Believers, that they shall abide with God in his Covenant, and shall no more wickedly depart from him: we have shewn before, that this was one of those Terms agreed upon, between the Father and the Son; that Jesus Christ should be the Surety of another and better Covenant: and here the Lord Jesus Christ stands actually bound for the Preservation of all the Saints to Glory. O if Souls had this Truth let into their Hearts, it would wonderfully prevent many stumbling Blocks by reason of their Unbelief: he stands bound to the Father, as a Sponsor or Surety, in the Behalf of Believers, that he will work all in them, and for them, that tends to the Salvation of their Souls: for in this new Covenant, God doth not deal with man, but by a Surety; man's single Bond will never pass more in the Court of Heaven; no, it was broken in *Adam's* Fall, and God made no more Covenant with man upon these Terms: there must be a Surety; hence he is said to be the Surety of a better Testament, *Heb. 7. 22.* So that that which is to be wrought in and by Believers, the Lord Jesus Christ undertakes to do, *Rom. 8. 4. That the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us:* That is, that Righteousness which the Law requires, even a perfect Conformity to the will of God, might be fully found in Christ our Head, for us and in us, by way of Imputation and Application through Faith; by virtue of the Union between Christ and his Members, all the Righteousness and Obedience, which was wrought in Christ's own person, as their Head, Redeemer, and Mediator of this new Covenant, is imputed to them as their Obedience and Righteousness, and accepted of God the Father, as if it were done by them; and so it is fulfilled in Believers: so that the Lord Jesus Christ stands engaged to the Father, for the Obedience of all his Seed, that it shall be wrought in them, and for them, in Truth, and Sincerity. And he begins to place this inward Conformity to God, in the Soul, when he doth new create it in the Image of God; there is something in every part and Faculty of the believing Soul, that corresponds and answers to the Holiness of God, though but in

Part and Degrees, in their Understandings, something of the true Light of God: in their Wills something of real Conformity to the Will of God: a gracious Soul would be holy as God is holy. O says the poor Believer, I cannot evidence that Holiness I should, but God knows, I would be holy, I would cast off every Sin, I would perform every Duty in a right manner: so in the Affections, there is the Seed of divine Love to God, his Will, and Holiness; there is sincere Love, though but in part, and imperfect: but seeing this Holiness begun in the Saints in Truth, is but in part, and full of Spots; Christ comes, in the next place, and presents his spotless Obedience in the Behalf of Believers, and by Virtue of this mystical Union between Believers and Christ, this Holiness of Christ is the Holiness of Believers, and God accepts of it as their Holiness: O if Souls did but see more into this, they would not take up all their standing upon their own Legs, and see their Happiness or Misery lie in their complete or incomplete Obedience, but they would see all Holiness lie in Christ: hence you see the meaning of that Scripture, *Rom. 5. 19. By the Obedience of one, many are made righteous.* God looks upon sincere Souls as presented in Christ, that so far as Christ is holy, they are holy in him; for all the Obedience and Holiness of Christ as Mediator, is the Obedience and Holiness of his People; for what he did was not for himself, but for his people. And thus much of the first, how this Mediator deals with God the Father for fallen man.

Secondly, The Lord Jesus Christ as Mediator, deals with men the other party too. Now this he doth.

First, As an Interceder to Sinners in the Behalf of God the Father, he comes and treats with men, by virtue of his Mediatorship, to draw and persuade them to Terms of Reconciliation, *2 Cor. 5. 18. All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the Ministry of Reconciliation.* The Lord Jesus Christ comes as the Messenger of the Lord, and delivers over Counsel, and tenders God the Father to Sinners: this he doth in his person: *verse. 19. God in Christ reconciling the World to himself; By his Ministry, in opening the Gospel to Sinners, discovering those great Transactions between the Father and himself, and the great willingness of God to be reconciled, and inviting lost Souls to himself. verse. 20. We pray you in Christ's stead be you reconciled to God.* You see the Errand of the Gospel to you, (Souls) and the Business of Christ in every Sermon, it is to bring you to a willingness to accept of the Terms of Reconciliation, to come over to God by Jesus Christ, that you may be saved.

Secondly, By giving out the holy Ghost, by which Sinners are effectually called, and adopted into the Sonship of God; this is necessary in order to the Application of what the Lord Jesus Christ hath done in his own person, whilst on Earth: he promised when he left the World, to send the Spirit in his Room, seeing it is of necessity, he must go away and take possession of the Kingdom of Glory for his people, and must go within the Veil, as the great High-priest; therefore that this Work might go on in his Absence, the comforter must come. *Jo. 16. 7. If I depart I will send him unto you. And what shall he do? He will reprove the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and Judgment, verse. 8. He will guide you into all Truth, verse. 13.* So that the Lord Jesus Christ sends the Spirit in the Gospel, to make all the Administrations of it effectual, to such as shall be saved. All that Ministers can do, cannot remove the thick Veil, that is, upon the Minds of Sinners, we cannot give eyes to see, nor Ears to hear, it is the work of the Spirit,

it must be an Almighty power, must open this two leafed gate, and let in Jesus Christ into the Heart; it must be by the Almighty Power, and Energy of the Spirit, that the work becomes successful to any Soul, we find it so. How many precious Sermons are cast away upon flinty Hearts, they will not bow nor turn till the Spirit comes; therefore the Lord Jesus Christ in the exercise of his Mediatorship pours out the Spirit, *Gal. 4. 6. That we might receive the Promise of the Spirit through Faith. Gal. 3. 14.* Or the promised Spirit through the Word of Faith; for Faith cannot be had till the Spirit be had: Faith comes by hearing; *How received ye the Spirit, by the Works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith? Gal. 3. 2.* There's no such Commission given at all to the Law, to give out the Spirit; it is by the hearing of Faith, by the opening this Box of precious Ointment, this blessed savor comes to Sinners: till that be done, no Conversion-work can be done; till the Spirit enters the Soul, Jesus Christ cannot enter the Soul: the Spirit of Christ is the harbinger, and goes before, and makes way for this blessed Mediator, to come into the Sinners heart: the Spirit is tendered to all, but the Lord gives it to whom he pleases; for it is as the Wind that blows, *Jo. 3. 8. So is the way of the Spirit:* thus the Lord Jesus Christ gives the Spirit to all that come to him, and by this he carries on his Mediatory work.

Thirdly, Another thing Jesus Christ doth with respect to men, in the exercise of his Mediatorship; He applies his Redemption-work to all those that do believe in him, he makes over himself, and all that is his, by a free Donation, to all that receive him, *Rev. 3. 20. If any man open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him:* The great work is to get open this bolted door of the Heart to Jesus Christ, and when the door stands open, and the Sinner consents to take Christ, and esteeming it a good Bargain to have him, upon the most costly Terms; then he makes over himself to the Soul, *I will sup with him, I will impart my Spiritual refreshings to him, I will give myself to him, he shall feed upon my Flesh and Blood:* we have an Overture made, *Rev. 21. 6. I will give to him that is a thirst of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely, So Rev. 22. 17.* When once God hath brought the Sinner to a thirst for Christ, to a sense of his Misery without Christ, that he cannot live without him; when the Sinner is persuaded to believe in him, and give up himself to him; then the Lord Jesus gives out himself, his Spirit, these Waters of Life, the Waters of Regeneration; then he puts the Believing Soul into the possession of Life and Righteousness, of Grace, and an earnest of Glory. He gives to such, a Right and Title to all that is his, *Joh. 1. 12.* He gives out to them the fruit of his Sweat and Bleeding, the fruit of his Groans and Dying, as they are capable to receive. He died that they might have Life, and have it more abundantly: He was made Sin for them, that they might be made the Righteousness of God in him, *2 Cor. 5. 21.* And now he is performing this, and strips the poor Soul of his filthy Garments, and takes away the filth of Original and Actual Sin, and comes and clothes the Soul with Righteousness, and puts his fair Ornaments upon it, and makes it as a fair Jewel in the sight of God; and when the Soul hath bespotted his own Garments, Christ comes and clothes him with pure Rayment: So that here's always Work for Christ to do for his People, whilst on Earth, to apply the fruits of his Purchase.

Fourthly, The Lord Jesus Christ, in pursuing his Mediatory Work, doth take upon him the Work of an Intercessor in Heaven, and Advocates in the behalf of all his People; He hath done all that was needful for him to do on Earth, and now he is entered into the Heavens, and sate down at the Right hand of God, and ever lives to make Intercession for the Saints,

Heb. 7. 25, 27. That is his Work now in Heaven, to perform that part of his Priestly Office, as is needful for him to do, as a Mediator there.

CHAP. V.

Wherein is opened the glorious Advocateship of Christ, with the unspeakable Comforts and Advantages thereof.

There are two parts of Christ's Priesthood; (1.) His Satisfaction. (2.) His Intercession. The first I have spoken to already, and proved, That the Lord Jesus, by his Active and Passive Obedience, hath satisfied the Law of God, and made a full Atonement for the Sins of all Believers; that he underwent all that they were bound to undergo, and that in their Name, Room, and Stead, for their Sakes, *Heb. 7. 22. Gal. 4. 4, 5. Rom. 5. 19.* This he did by his Active Obedience, and also by his Passive, *Isa. 53. 4. to verse. 7. Gal. 3. 13, 14. Joh. 1. 28, 29.* And by this one Offering of his, hath he perfected them that are sanctified forever, *Heb. 10. 14.* by way of Merit; that God hath no more now to charge on Believers, by way of Punishment for their Sins, seeing Christ hath borne it in his own Body for them on the Tree. By this he hath obtained Salvation for them: that's the first part of his Priestly Work.

But, Secondly, Having dispatched his Expiation, 'tis needful that he carry on his Application of this Obedience and Suffering to them; and this is done by his interceding in Heaven for them. Now, because so much of the Riches of Christ lies in this part of his Mediatorly Work, and it is of such infinite Concernment, as to the Faith, Comfort, and Advantage of Believers, therefore, I shall speak the more fully to this Subject, and shall prove,

1. *That the Lord Jesus Christ, God-Man, doth now sit down at the Right Hand of God, Interceding there in Heaven.*
2. *How the Lord Christ carries on this Work of Intercession in Heaven.*
3. *For whom he doth intercede in Heaven.*
4. *What he doth intercede for.*
5. *Why the Lord Jtsus Christ, as a Mediator, carries on this Work of Intercession.*
6. *What are the unspeakable Comforts and Advanvantages that flow from this Intercession of Christ.*

First, Jesus Christ doth now sit down at the Right Hand of God, and is entered upon the Work of Intercession.

There are two Arguments to prove this.

First, The nature of the Office the Lord Jesus Christ hath undertaken now in Heaven: He hath taken on him the Office of an Advocate, on the behalf of his People. *1 Joh. 2. 1. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous;* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 : This word is ordinarily rendered a Comforter, when applied to the Holy Ghost; but when spoken of Christ (as *Gomarus*, and other Learned men affirm) it is taken for an Advocate, or one that undertakes the Cause of another; an Attorney, or Officer at Law, that appears in Court for

one that is there concerned and accused, to look after, and plead his Cause: He is one that is, by Law, deputed and set apart to that Office, and so is bound to do his utmost for his Client, as for himself: Thus is Jesus Christ set apart, and deputed, by the Father, to this Office of Advocate and Intercessor, *Joh. 6. 27. For him hath God the Father sealed.* That is, appointed, set apart, and confirmed to be Mediator and High Priest, *Psal. 110. 4.* That he might satisfy for the Sins of his People, and sue out the Benefits of it for them.

Secondly, Christ's Fidelity in the Performance of this Work, proves he is now in Heaven, interceding. He cannot be content to have a Name and no more; he is faithful in things pertaining to Men. The Lord Jesus Christ did actually carry on this Work of interceding for his People, before he took their Nature upon him, and came into the World, *Isa. 53. 12. He bore the Sins of many, and made Intercession for the Transgressors.* Upon his Deputation to this Office, and by virtue of the Sacrifice to be offered, he did, ever since the Fall, mediate for his People, and put on Bowels for them. *He carried them all the days of Old, Isa. 63. 9.* whilst he was in Heaven, ever since Adam's Fall, as soon as he had any Seed on Earth. Again, Christ was faithful in this Work of Mediation and Intercession, whilst on Earth, *Heb. 5. 7. Who in the days of his Flesh, when he had offered up Prayers and Supplications; with strong cries and tears.* Those cries and tears he put up were for his People, not for himself, he needed it not: He was willing to be subject to his Fathers Will, to drink of the Cup the Father gave him to drink; But he prayed for the conversion of those the Father had given him, and prays for the Salvation of his People, *Joh. 17. 19, 20. Luke 22. 32.* And this he doth now he is in Heaven; he carries on this Work there in his Humane Nature: *He is entered into Heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us, Heb. 9. 24.* It is a Metaphor taken from an Attorney, that appears in the behalf of his Clients: So Jesus Christ is at the Right hand of God making intercession, by way of Office. When Satan or the Law doth accuse Believers, there's Christ at the Bar, ready to make answer for them, to plead the Cause of his Clients, and procure their Justification: the Apostle makes use of Christ's Intercession to this purpose, *Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died; yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us, Rom. 8. 33, 34.* So *Heb. 6. 19, 20. Which Hope we have, as an Anchor of the Soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the Fore-runner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever.* By an entrance within the veil, was typified out Heaven, Glory. As the High Priest entered within the veil, so Christ, as an High Priest, is now in Heaven, to carry on Redemption-work: He is there to oppose all Designs against his People, and secure them against all the Impleadings of their Enemies; He ever lives to make Intercession, *Heb. 7. 25.* The word signifies, to attain the Mark, as an Archer doth; or he that throws Darts hits the Mark, so the Lord Jesus Christ intercedes so as to prevail.

Secondly, *How doth Christ intercede in Heaven?*

Ans. 1. Negatively, Jesus Christ doth not intercede in Heaven, *Figuratively,* As if his Intercession were no more but the virtue of his Merit, as *Abel's Blood* is said to speak, *Heb. 12. 24.* But formally as one that takes upon him the Cause of his sinning, suffering people.

Secondly, he doth not intercede *Charitatively*, by way of Courtesie and Kindness, which he might do or leave undone, as he pleaseth; but officially by way of Office and Trust committed to him, for so he is our Advocate, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1.

Thirdly, Neither doth he intercede *Precario*, in such an humble manner and Mode of Supplication of bowing the Knee, and submissive Entreaties with Cries and Tears, as the Saints do, and as once he did whilst on Earth; for this is inconsistent with that State of Majesty and Glory, he is in at the right hand of God, *Heb.* 1. 3. But *Authoritatively*, by way of Right and Power, as one that hath deposited a sufficient Price, and now demands his Captives, as one that hath made a Purchase, and now requires the thing purchased, as one that hath deserved what he moves for, and hath Power, as God, to bestow:

Secondly, *Affirmatively*, and so.

First, Christ's Intercession in Heaven is, by his appearing there for us, as our Mediator and Surety, presenting his person, God-man, as our Agent and High-priest, *Heb.* 9. 24. As the High-priest of old did appear in the holiest of all, with the Names of the twelve Tribes on his Breast and Shoulders, for a Memorial before the Lord, *Exod.* 28. 9. to 22. to which, says one, the Church alludes, *Cant.* 8. 6. *Set me as a Seal on thy Heart, as a Seal upon thy Arm*, as a Manifestation of his Love; so Christ's interceding, is his appearing in the behalf of his People, as their Advocate; and Christ's sitting in Heaven, in this Relation to his people may be called his interceding.

Secondly, By presenting his Obedience and Sufferings before the Father on their behalf, that they might have the Benefit of it, and that God would in Justice, communicate the Fruits of it to all his Seed, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1, 2. A type of this we might see in the High-priest's bringing the blood of the Sacrifice within the Veil, and sprinkling it on the Mercy Seat, *Lev.* 16. 11. to 17. First he killed the Sin-offering, and then brought in the Blood before the Lord within the Veil; without which his Act was not complete. Thus Christ first sheds his Blood on Earth, for his People, then enters into Heaven, there to present his Blood for us, *Heb.* 8. 4.

Thirdly, By declaring his Willingness, that his People should have all that Mercy and Salvation which they need, and that he purchases for them. *Joh.* 17. 24. *Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be where I am*; Father, I will that my Children have their due: 'tis true, they have sinned but I have suffered, they have fallen short but I have fulfilled all Righteousness: thou knowest I obeyed for them, and died for them, that all which thou hast promised might be made good to them: and Father, I will that Justice be done for them in Heaven; and I will, that this and the other Mercy be given out to them here, according as their Necessities and Capacities require: whilst Christ was on Earth, he came to do his Fathers Will, and now he is in Heaven, he must in all things have his own, *Joh.* 11. 42.

Thus much may be understood by the manner of Christ's Intercession in Heaven.

Thirdly, *For whom doth Jesus Christ intercede in Heaven?*

Answ. For all that come to God by him, *Heb.* 9. 27. For all that do believe in him. *Joh.* 17. 20. Some desponding Sinners may be ready to say, alas! this is not for me, I am unworthy of so

choice a Mercy: will Christ plead for such a grace-abusing wretch as I? Why Sinner, if thou art one that comest over to Jesus Christ, and believest on the Son, thou mayest lay claim to this Advocate in Heaven, and confidently expect the Benefit of his Intercession.

Again, The Lord Christ intercedes for all his People on Earth, *Joh. 17. 11. And now I am no more in the World, but these are in the World, holy Father keep, through thy own Name, those whom thou hast given me.* The Saints on Earth are the Subjects for whom he intercedes: particularly, for his sinning people: he made Intercession for the Transgressors. *Isa. 53. 12.* Some trembling Soul may say, Christ's Intercession is for them that are holy, but I am vile; but know, O Soul, Christ intercedes in Heaven for his people that sin against him, *1 Joh. 2. 2.* Again, Christ intercedes in Heaven for his weak and impotent people, that are compassed about with Clouds of Infirmities, he hath a special Respect to these, as a tender Father hath to a weak Child; Christ's grace was sufficient for *Paul*, when his own failed under the horrible Buffetings of *Satan*, *2 Cor. 12. 9.* Such as are weak in themselves, that know not how to pray or wait upon God in any holy Duty as they should; these are the Persons Christ pleads for to help them, such as are ready to be overcome by Temptations; *Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not,* *Luke 22. 31. 32.* Poor tempted Souls, hurried up and down, sometimes assaulted with blasphemous Thoughts, then poisoned by ugly Temptations, put upon this Sin, and then the other Sin, every day the Devil following them with new Temptations, laying in new Batteries against them: Now the Lord Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God, interceding for these.

Again, Christ intercedes in Heaven for his suffering People, such as are in danger of being overcome by their Enemies, and have no Might, and none to intercede for them, *Isaiah 59. 16.* Sore Judgments there were upon the People of God, and that justly; for their Transgressions, no Righteousness of their own to plead for them, nothing at all that could justly intervene between Wrath and them: Now in this case Christ steps in, and he intercedes, and brings Salvation. These are the persons Christ intercedes for in Heaven.

Fourthly, *What doth the Lord Jesus intercede for in the behalf of his People?*

First, One thing he pleads for is, for their Preservation in the World, and from the Evil of the World, *Joh. 17. 15. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the World, but that thou shouldest keep them from the Evil.* This implies, Christ's mind is, his People should continue in the World till their Work be done; that neither Sin nor Danger may cut them off till their full time be come; but that they may be kept from Evil; from the Evil of Temptation, and the Evil of Persecution.

Secondly, He intercedes for the Sanctification of his People; and this is a glorious Privilege indeed, *Jo. 17. 17. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth:* By the word of thy Truth, make them partakers of thy Holiness: *For their sakes. I sanctify myself, ver. 19.* I set apart myself, now on Earth, as an High Priest and Mediator: And why so? *That they may be sanctified through the Truth.* It may be a poor tempted Soul hath begged for Grace, but finds no answer; as *Paul* prayed twice, thrice, many times without return; but Jesus Christ intercedes, who will

prevail; and because he prays, they shall obtain, according to the measure of Christ, and in his time.

Thirdly, The Lord Jesus Christ pleads in Heaven, for Believers Union with himself, and with one another, *Jo. 17. 11, 21, 22, 23. Holy Father, keep, through thy own Name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are: That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* This he died for, to gather his People into one, and this he will procure in due time. Their Union with himself shall be inseparable; their Communion may be interrupted, but their Union can never be broken. And it is a matter of Comfort to Believers, that grieve for the sad Breaches amongst Saints, how that Christ intercedes in Heaven for their Union, who cannot be denied.

Fourthly, The Lord Jesus Christ intercedes for his Peoples Succor, and support, under, and deliverance from Temptation, *Luke 22. 32. I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not.* Ah Soul! Art thou followed with new Temptations every day? Doth the Devil vex thee, casting in wicked, vile thoughts, that do make thee tremble, pulling and haling thee? Fear not, says Christ, the Devil shall not prevail. O, says a Soul, What shall I do for Faith? I cannot take hold of this, and the other Promise. Why, Christ in Heaven pleads for Believers, that their Faith shall not fail, shall not sink away, nor faint in the day of Temptation, *He will not suffer you to be tempted above measure, 1 Cor. 10. 13. He will make a way to escape.* As sure as Christ himself hath escaped from Satan, and Dangers unto Glory, so sure shall Believers pass thither also. O Soul! thou canst not tell how to pray; this and the other wicked thought hurries thee; Faith and Hope, all seem to be gone: but, O, what a blessed thing is this, that there is a Mediator in Heaven to pray for thee!

Fifthly, Jesus Christ intercedes in Heaven for the Pardon of all the Sins of his People, and for the enjoyment of his Fathers favor, *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, 1 Joh. 2. 1.* That's part of Christ's Work in Heaven, to Advocate in regard of their Sins: So *Joh. 17. 26. That the Love with which thou lovest me may be in them.* I have purchased thy Favor for them, and Peace with thee, by my own Blood; therefore, Father, O take not away thy loving kindness from them: O, do not be angry with them forever. O, what a wonderful Privilege is this! Christ is not contented that his Father love them with an ordinary and a common Love; but his Will is, that the same Love with which the Father loved Christ, as Mediator, be bestowed upon them.

Sixthly, The Lord Jesus Christ Advocates in Heaven for the supply of all the wants of his People, *Phil. 4. 19. My God shall supply all your need, according to the Riches of his Glory, by Jesus Christ.* Observe the ground, and meritorious cause of all the Supplies of the Saints Needs, is the Riches of Christ in Heaven; the Riches of Christ's Intercession. O! when the poor Believer goes mourning under a sense of this, and the other Want, Christ in Heaven is interceding for them. O, says one, I want a soft Heart; a Heart to love God: I want more power over Corruptions and Temptations: More Humility, says another: O, my proud heart! I want more Patience; I am filled with the Fire of Hell: I want more Purity, unclean Thoughts lodge in my Soul: but Christ in Heaven is interceding for them, thus. Father, There's a Child of mine

wants a soft Heart; I will that thou give it to him: there's another goes complaining for want of more power over Corruptions; I will that thou grant it to him: Another wants Bodily supplies; he is in straits in the World, and knows not what to do; Father, thou hast made me Heir of all things, and I will that thou give him some of mine Inheritance. O that Believers did know this! when they are pining away in their straits, that they would look to Jesus, and by Faith see him interceding for them.

Seventhly, Another thing Christ pleads in Heaven for, is, the subduing of all the Enemies of his People: Whatever is like to endanger their wellbeing, in their work of glorifying God, and in their way to Glory with God, Christ pleads that it may be removed. Are the Snares of the World like to carry away one? the Snare of Prosperity, or vain Company, like to ruin another? Doth the Flesh lust against the Spirit, and ready to reduce it into Bondage? Christ pleads in Heaven for the destruction of these Leviathans; and will, in his own time, bring down all the Enemies of his People: Yea, *Gog and Magog*, and all the implacable Adversaries of *Zion* must be subdued, because Christ intercedes for it, and Reigns till he hath put down all Enemies under his Feet, 1 *Cor.* 15. 25.

Eighthly, He intercedes for his Peoples Consolation; He seems to be much concerned in this, that his People be of good cheer in the World, *Joh.* 16. 33. *Be of good cheer*, Pluck up your Spirits, walk comfortably, *I have overcome the World for you, I will not leave you comfortless*; I will not leave you in danger of overwhelming: Christ takes care that his People be not overladen with trouble, but that they have comfort in due time.

Ninthly, The Lord Jesus Christ pleads for their thorough and complete Salvation, for their preservation in Grace, and their sure and certain enjoyment of Glory. *Wherefore he is able to save to the utmost, because he ever lives to make Intercession*, *Heb.* 7. 25. Whatever their dangers, straits, and hazards be, Christ intercedes in Heaven, for their utmost saving, thorough all, and from all. The gracious Soul miscarries sadly, this, and the other time; in this, and the other matter: he falls dangerously, and bruises his Bones; but Christ pleads in Heaven, that this might not prove a mortal wound: *Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, to behold my Glory*, *Joh.* 17. 24. All his Glory, that he hath purchased with his Blood, is for his People. As a Father, if he gets a large Estate, his Children shall fare the better for it, he will leave it all to them; so Christ in Heaven intercedes, *Father, I will that my Children may share with me in my Glory; may Reign, and sit on Thrones, and be crowned with Immortality with me. Where I am, there shall my Servant be.*

Thus you see what Christ intercedes for in *Heaven*.

Fifthly, *Why doth the Lord Jesus Christ intercede in Heaven?*

First, Because he hath undertaken this Work for his People: He is their Advocate, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1. He is an Officer in Heaven for them, and hath undertaken their Cases; and being bound, he will be faithful: He is there, as their Fore-runner, and his Fidelity lies at stake, to make their way plain to Glory. If they come not after, how can he be their Fore-runner?

Secondly, Because of his Interest in them, they are very near to him, they are his own. *Having loved his own, that were in the World, Joh. 13. 1.* Persons use to love their own. The World loves its own; therefore is Christ so concerned in the welfare of his People, because they are his Propriety; They are his Friends, *Joh. 15. 14, 15. Ye are my Friends, I have called you Friends.* And will not a man concern himself about his Friends? There's never a man on Earth, that hath a Friend so near his heart, as the Saints are to the heart of Christ; They are his Brethren; *He is not ashamed to call them Brethren, Heb. 2. 11.* He is their Elder Brother, and they are younger Brethren, and he cannot but have a tender heart towards them. How full of Bowels was *Joseph* to his Brethren, though they had sold him, and injured him; yet how affectionately did he discover himself to them, he wept, that the *Egyptians* heard him? *Gen. 45.* It is a most affecting Story, to show what the heart of a Brother is, or should be. O, how much is Jesus Christ concerned in the welfare of his People!

Again, He is their Father; He hath the Bowels of a Father: He pleads in Heaven, at the Right hand of God, as a Father doth speak for his Children. O! if a man had a Child, or some Children, condemned to die, how would a tender Father speak for them, and weep for them, that they might not die! with such Bowels doth Jesus Christ plead for his People in Heaven.

Again, They are his Spouse, his Love, his Dove, married to him, *Cant. 5.* And can a tender affectionate Husband shut up his Bowels towards his own Flesh? So Christ, in Heaven, accounts nothing too dear that might be for the welfare of his People, because of their conjugal relation to him.

Thirdly, Because of the great Love he bears to them, therefore will he make Intercession for them, *Isa. 63. 9. In his Love and pity he redeemed them.* Nor men, nor Angels can tell the Height, Depth, Length and Breadth of the Love of Christ; it is Love, passing Knowledge, *Eph. 3. 18.* Christ's Love to his people, is unconceivable, unchangeable: many waters cannot quench it, all their Unkindness cannot diminish it, therefore he remembers their Concernments, and pleads their Cause.

Fourthly, Because of the Sympathy the Lord Jesus Christ hath with them, he hath a fellow-feeling of all their Infirmities and Afflictions: as he is their head, he cannot but sympathize, with all the Maladies and Distempers of every Member; he is the high-priest, and must have Compassion, *Heb. 4. 15. For we have not an High-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities:* He cannot be capable of Insensibility, of the Cases, Concerns and Conditions of his people; Weaknesses, Sins and Wants, whatever becomes the Burden of his People, it is near his Heart: It is not his own Glory in Heaven, can take off his Thoughts and Care of them: He that abuseth the Saints offers Violence to Christ's Eye, *Zach. 2. 8. He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of his Eye.* While he was in Heaven, in the Possession of the Fathers Glory, no sooner did their Cry come up from *Egypt*, but presently it reached his Heart; God tells *Moses* he could not stand still to hear the Complaint of his poor afflicted people: God in Christ, the second person, the Angel of the Covenant resents the Miseries and Afflictions of his people, *Exod. 2. 23, 24. I have surely seen the Afflictions of my People which are in Egypt, and have heard their Cry, and I am come down to deliver them, Exod. 3. 7, 8.* And if he was so pityful, as to be soon afflicted with the Afflictions of his people before he assumed the human Nature

upon him, is he not as much now since he hath taken our Nature upon him, and stands in Heaven clothed with our Body and Soul? *Heb. 5. 2.* Christ carries no Weaknesses to Heaven with him, he hath no kind of Wants, Pains, nor Sorrows, but he is compassed with Infirmities, that is, a Sense of the Weaknesses, and Remembrance of the Afflictions and Infirmities, whilst he was here: He knows the Heart of a Stranger, he knows what it is to be under the Wrath of God, therefore cannot but have a fellow-feeling of the Infirmities of his People. No tender Mother can be more affected with the pain of a little sucking Child, with the Fear of losing it, than Christ is with the case of his people, therefore he pleads for them.

Fifthly, Jesus Christ cannot choose but speak for his People in Heaven, because he hath purchased them, he hath bought them, and paid for them: he thought it fit to lay down a very great price for every believing Soul, *1 Cor. 6. 19.* *You are bought with a price.* He was willing to have his Heart opened, and his Side opened, that he might let out his Blood for them; and surely he cannot but be willing to intercede for them, when he was willing to die, and bear divine Wrath for them: he hath bought Grace and Glory for them, and he must needs speak, that they might have what he hath paid for. It is true, if God should deal upon the account of Creature-deservings, they would soon be totally destitute: but though unworthy in themselves, Christ pleads his Worthyness: Father, I will, that thou give out this and the other Mercy to them, I have purchased it for them: it is true, they have abused the Gospel, and sin'd away the Light of thy Countenance; but I will that thou speak comfortably to them for my sake; for I have always obeyed thee, and done thy Will.

Sixthly, Because of his Promise to them, he hath promised he will not leave them, *Jo. 14. 18.* I go away, says Christ, but I will not leave you; I go to Heaven but it is for you; I carry your Names on my Heart, that I might think upon you, when I am in Glory: when I see how *Satan* buffets and assaults you from day today, then I look upon the Palms of my hands and see your names engraven there, *and will not leave you comfortless, I will come again to you.* He sends his Spirit to keep them Company here on Earth, and he will come and fetch them home at last; he will be faithful to them in all things, that pertain to God, and for the Salvation of their Souls, *Heb. 2. 17.* and Believers may urge him with his Promise and Faithfulness, and this obliges Christ to do all he can for them.

Seventhly, Because of the great Necessity they have of his pleading for them; He sees they would be undone if he did not stand up for them. *Satan* would lay in his Accusations, he is the Accuser, and what ways he hath to accuse the Saints before God, we know not: he accused *Job*, and doubtless he is ever and anon laying in fresh Charges against the people of God; therefore Christ pleads for them: he sees they want Grace and want Strength, therefore he cannot be silent: he saw *Peter* had need of Support, *Luke 22. 31, 32.* therefore he prayed for him: Christ sees they stand in need of Promises, Experiences, Consolations and Privileges, therefore he pleads in Heaven for them.

Sixthly, *What are the Comforts and Advantages that flow from the Intercession of Jesus Christ to believing Souls?*

There's Cause of wonderful Joy and Consolation to Believers, when they cast their believing Looks towards Heaven, to see their Advocate there.

First, In regard of the Excellency of this Intercessor: O! what a glorious, mighty, and potent Friend, have Believers to plead for them; he is no mean person, he is the Son of God, *the express Image of his Fathers Person, Heb. 1. 3.* He is one that made the World, and upholdeth the World, and after he had suffered for Sin, he is gone to Glory, and takes his Seat at the right hand of the Majesty, on high; he doth not stand by as a Begger, but sits down on the Throne, by the Fathers side, and speak as a Friend for them: O what a glorious and transcendent person is he! it is not an Angel, it is not a Saint, but it is the Lord *Jehovah, Jehovah Christ.* O when the Believer, by Meditation, comes to reflect on his Glorious Agent in Heaven, how he is honored by Angels, Saints, and every Creature, it will wonderfully console his Languishing Spirit.

Secondly, Consider the Successfulness of this Intercession, and it cannot but yield much Comfort, *the Father heareth him always, Joh. 11. 42.* The Father and he are one, of one Nature, one Glory, one Will: what the Son wills the Father wills; and Jesus Christ is the Executor of his own Will, and hath all Power in his hands to give out, and perform what he pleads for: What wouldest thou have, Soul? Lord, says the Soul, I would have more Grace, be more holy, have strength against this, and the other Temptation: I am afraid I shall perish under these Blasphemous Thoughts. Oh, the horrible injections of Satan! Lord, support me. Why, (says Christ) Fear not, Soul, In me is Everlasting strength, thou shalt have it in my time, and according to my measure.

Thirdly, Consider the extent of Christ's Intercession, and that will contribute wonderful Joy to Believers: His Favor is not narrowed up to one or two Favorites, but for all his Saints: *All that come to God by him, Heb. 7. 25. All that believe in him, Joh. 17. 20.* Christ excepts none: In this he out-goes the Affections of all Creatures. It is rare for the largest Affections of Men, not to run within some narrow limits; but Jesus Christ hath an equal respect for all his Seed. And then he intercedes for them in all their Matters, *Isa. 63. 9. In all their Afflictions he is afflicted:* There is no part of their Trouble but he is concerned in it: As Christ is an Advocate in Heaven, he is engaged to attend the Concerns of his People, though they should neglect him, *Isa. 57. 18.* He is privy to all their Matters: How should this revive the Believing Soul? It is the usual complaint of Souls, O, I fear Christ will not intercede for me; I am so Carnal, so full of Deceit, Hypocrisy and Backslidings. It is true, He takes pleasure in the Prosperity of his People; but, I fear, I am none of his. They that pray and plead Spiritually may hope, but I cannot pray, nor look up. But let me tell every poor trembling Believer, There's never a Soul that hath the Lord for his God, that Jesus Christ can be unmindful of: He intercedes for all his People, and in all their Concernments.

Fourthly, This may yield wonderful Comfort to Believers, to consider, That Jesus Christ doth not only intercede in Heaven, in their Names, but in their very Natures: He presents the Humane Nature in his own Person, glorified; and in this Nature he pleads to God for them. He is set forth as *the Man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. 2. 5.* He cannot but be full of Pity and Compassion, because he is of the same Nature with them: *They are Members of his Body, of his*

Flesh, and of his Bones, Eph. 5. 30. O, if that Scripture were but put into the Believing Meditation of Believers, what Comfort will flow from it? O trembling Saint! thou mayest object thy Unworthiness and defiled Nature; but Jesus Christ hath thy Nature glorified now in Heaven, at the Father's right hand.

Fifthly, The restlessness and unweariedness of Christ's pursuing the Blessedness and Salvation of all his Seed, is that which may yield wonderful comfort to the Believing Soul. Consider his Temper and Disposition, while he was on Earth: *His Spirit shall not fail, till he hath set Judgment in the Earth*, Isa. 42. 4. And if Christ was so earnest to undergo such work then, and was so restless and active till it was done; surely he must needs be restless to carry on this Work now in Heaven: *He lives ever to make Intercession*, Heb. 7. 25. There are sometimes when men on Earth cannot agitate the Cause of their Friends; but Christ is always taken up about this Work of Mediation: Christ's Authority is capable to manage all the Affairs of his People, were they millions of men, therefore it must needs be matter of wonderful Comfort to Believers, that they have such a Mediator in Heaven.

Sixthly, Consider the Advantages that flow from this Intercession of Christ to Believers, and it will yield matter of wonderful comfort.

Their Sins shall be surely pardoned. O what wonderful comfort is this! *Blessed is the man whose Transgression is forgiven, and whose Sins are pardoned*, Psal. 32. 1. He is an Advocate for them, to take away their Sins, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. 1 Joh. 1. 7, 9. No Bill shall be laid in against them at the Bar of God: Who dares accuse that Soul that is covered over with the Blood of the Redeemer? Rom. 8. 33, 34.

Their Persons and Performances shall surely find acceptance with God, through this Intercession of Christ, Eph. 1. 6. *Who hath made us accepted in the Beloved*. All that glorious Chain of Mercy that is made over to, and fastened upon the Believer, hath its tie to Jesus Christ: Predestination, Adoption, Justification, Sanctification and Salvation, are all laid upon Christ. It is a piece of usual weakness in poor Believers, or rather Doubting-souls, to judge of their Acceptance with God, or Non-acceptance, according to their Deservings, or ill-deservings, and the nature and frame of their Spirits and Duties: when they have been drawn out in Frames, and wonderfully raised in Duties, they think now they shall find Favor; But it is not that which gives your Suits Entertainment in Heaven; it is as God accepts the Soul in Christ, notwithstanding all the Failings and Infirmities of Believers; they are entertained with a *well done good and faithful Servant*, upon the account of Christ.

Again, They are sure to be secured against the prevailing Power of all their Enemies; let *Beelzebub* with all his Train and Forces be united against them, he must be broken to pieces; for Christ is at the right hand of the Father, interceding for them: *Sin shall have no Dominion over them*, Rom. 6. 14. *God will bruise Satan under their Feet shortly*, Rom. 16. 20. Hence it is, they may be sure none of their Enemies shall prevail, Luke 1. 74.

Again, They may be sure to receive more Grace, and Life more abundantly, *God giveth more Grace*, James 5. 6. whilst Christ's Interest holds in Heaven, whilst he hath a Fullness of Grace to bestow, Believers may expect more.

Access to the Throne of Grace at all times in his Name, is another procured Advantage of his Intercession; it is by the Blood of Christ Believers come to God with Boldness, *Heb. 4. 14. 16. Heb. 10. 21. 22.*

Hence the Blood of Christ makes Peace, and an open door for Believers to approach to God, *Eph. 3. 12.* Because he is there at the Throne of Grace, he will open his Door to his Children, and let them in, within the Veil: what tender Mother would shut the door against her weeping Child?

Again, They have not only Access to the Throne of Grace, but Success; they shall speed when they cry with all their Hearts, *Joh. 14. 13. 14. Whatsoever you shall ask in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son: if you shall ask anything in my Name, I will do it.* Christ was leaving his Disciples, and they might tremblingly dispond, how shall we live when thou art gone? the World will persecute us, and Satan will devour us? Why says Christ, I will protect you then, as well as now, and hear your Requests: you think it is only your Concernment, to have your Prayers answered; no, it is the Concernment of my Father too, his Glory lies at stake for it. O! what bold Encouragement is this *Rev. 8. 3, 4, 5.* Prayers ascended up, and presently comes down Thunders, Noises, Lightnings, and Earthquakes: as a Symbol of God's Reception: believe it, Saints have still as great Potency with God, on the Account of Christ, as ever, and their right Prayers shall surely find an answer at the Throne of Grace.

Again, They shall certainly have Perseverance in Grace: for the Certainty of a Believers Graces depend not upon his own Strength, that it should die if he cease to exercise it; but is secured by the Intercession of Christ, *Luke 22. 32. Jer. 32. 40.*

Another Effect of Christ's Intercession is this, The Saints have Oneness with and an Interest in the Love of God, *Jo. 17. 21. 22.* And they shall be sure of Grace and of Glory: they shall have a Mansion in Heaven, *Jo. 14. 3. Jo. 17. 24. Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, to behold my Glory.*

CHAP. VI.

Showing the Willingness of Christ, that Sinners should be saved, the Sin and Misery of such as refuse Christ, with Reproof to several sorts of Persons

WE have a little opened the Transcendent Glory of Christ as Mediator, wherein so much of his vast Treasury lies: we come now to make some Application of this glorious point.

First, By way of Information. First, How wonderfully are poor Sinners indebted to the Lord for giving such a Mediator as Jesus Christ, God-Man; none else in Heaven or Earth could have procured the Salvation of lost Sinners: had he been God only, he had had neither Right or Capacity to suffer: had he been only Man, he could never have born up under the dreadful weight of these Sufferings; Death would have had Dominion over him, his Sufferings unsatisfactory, his Intercession rejected, and all the hopes of Sinners perished; but now he is able to save all that come to God by him: O admire at, and rejoice in this Love of God, in giving Christ, *Jo. 3. 16. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son.* Life and Liberty

Health and Strength, Peace and Plenty, are excellent Mercies; but the giving of Christ is transcendently super-eminent: Can you bless the Lord for lower Springs? O adore these upper ones, this Grace that brings Salvation.

Secondly, See the Willingness of Christ, that Sinners should be saved, he would never else have assumed the work of a Mediator, nor have given himself for this very end that Sinners might be brought to God, *1 Pet.* 3. 18. He would never have undertaken the bloody way of Death, nor drunk off such a bitter tremendous Cup, that Sin had brewed for him; he would not have interceded with God for Terms of Reconciliation, nor undergone such direful, unconceivable Torments, had he not been willing Sinners should live: hath Christ so carefully prepared the Ministration of Reconciliation, and absolutely commanded the Promulgation of the Gospel to every Creature? *Mark.* 16. 15. Hath he laid such a Necessity on his Messengers and Ambassadors, and obliged them, by the Penalty of fearful Woes, to preach the Gospel, and he is not willing that Sinners should be saved? *1 Cor.* 9. 16. See how he charges his Servants to be instant in Season and out of Season, to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all Long-suffering and Kindness, *2 Tim.* 4. 1. To persuade and beseech men to be reconciled, *2 Cor.* 5. 11. 20. And will he reject them when they come? He would not have grieved and mourn'd so much at Sinners Unbelief, and out-standing the day of Grace, had he been unwilling they should have lived, *Joh.* 5. 40. *Luke* 19. 41. 42. Behold how he waits till the last hour of the Day, and treats his Enemies with an affectionate Kindness, why will you die, O House of *Israel*? He heaps up Coals of Fire on their Heads, and draws them with Cords of Love, and with the bands of a man, *Mat.* 5. 45. *Hos.* 11. 4. he offers Violence by his Spirit, to unwilling Souls, and attempts the most charming Persuasions to allure them to him; he thunders and lightens, as on Mount *Sinai*, and threatens them terribly if they will not come, *Joh.* 3. 18. Ah troubled Souls, you that tremble, least he will no more have Mercy on you; but reject your Selves and Duties, shut up his Bowels, and harden his Heart against your Cries. Ah! do but consider and seriously reflect on what Christ hath already done and suffered for you, think on his Carriage whilst on Earth, and his tender Reception of all that came to him; he debarred none, surely, then his Advancement in Heaven, produces no Alteration in him: it may enlarge his Capacity but cannot straiten his Bowels to perishing Sinners. Honor doth not puff him up, or make him unmindful of their Concernments; think upon his Promises, he will cast out none that come to him, *Joh.* 6. 37. Let their Sins be as red as Scarlet, he will make them as white as Wool, *Isa.* 1. 18. He knows the Heart of a Stranger, *Exod.* 23. 29. He remembers what 'tis to lie under the Pangs of a troubled Soul, when he trode the Wine-press of his Fathers Wrath alone; and therefore cannot but compassionate the Miserable, and those that are consumed with the Terrors of the Almighty. Cease Soul, to lay thy Charge on Christ, 'tis thy own Unwillingness and Unbelief that impedes thy way to Life, not his.

Thirdly, How fearful then is the Sin, and how dreadful will be the misery of all those that refuse this Mediator, will not hearken to this Prophet, nor consent to his Proposals for Salvation: The Tongues of Men and Angels are not capable here to commit an Hyperbole, nor can such themselves sufficiently conceive it, till they feel it. Ah, Sinners! Weigh a little these ensuing particulars, and you will find it true.

First, It is a most aggravated Sin, and hath all the circumstances of Evil in it: There's no sin of so deep a Dye, and foul a Guilt.

It is a sin against the highest Mercy, and greatest Deeps of Divine Favor. There were some Discoveries of Mercy that God expended on the Gentile World: In the times of their Ignorance God did wink at them, feed them, and clothe them; But the Treasures of Grace were reserved for the Fulness of Time, the Gospel days. O wretched Caitiff! By refusing Christ, thou kickest against the most sounding Bowels, against rich Mercy, *Eph. 2. 4.* Against tender Mercy, *Luke 1. 18.* Against Free Mercy, *Eph. 2. 8.*

It is a Sin against, and a forsaking of thy own Mercy: Thou stabbest thy own Soul with the same Dagger thou flingest at Christ. O wretched Sinner! thou takest pains to shut thyself out of the door of Mercy, and to argue thyself into the depth of Misery: *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.* Oh Sinner, thou sheddest the blood of thy own Soul, *Hos. 13. 9.*

It is a sin against the choicest and costliest Remedy that ever God prepared: The Garment God made to clothe thy Soul, is dip'd in Blood, and this thou throwest from thee. How justly will thy Soul rot in chains of Darkness to all Eternity, that refuseth such a chargeable Remedy laid out upon thee? The Law was but leading to it, *Gal. 3. 24.* Had you lived to see the Priests killing the Sheep and Lambs, and cutting the throats of these poor Creatures, to make an Atonement for Sin, you would have said, surely the Antitype must needs be bloody: All those charges men were at in their daily Sacrifices, could not take away one Sin; the Blood of Christ must do it. O expensive Mercy! And this thy Soul despiseth: O cursed Sin! All other Dispensations could not make those that use them perfect, *Heb. 9. 9.* Nor all the World, if sold, can pay the Debt of one Soul, or the price of one sin.

It is a sin against the most glorious Majesty that ever was, *Phil. 2. 9.* Thou spittest in that Face that is infinitely above all Spots and Stains; that the Angels admire and adore; one Smile of which maintains all the Life and Consolation of the Saints in Glory; this Jesus thou despisest. O unbelieving Sinner! where wilt thou go to hide thyself from the wrath of the Lamb at the last day?

Lastly, 'Tis a rejection of thy own Duty, a throwing Christ out of his own Vineyard, and how will God deal with such? *He will miserably destroy these miserable men, Matth. 21. 41.* The Lord Jesus Christ hath Right to rule thee, and thou rejectest the Homage thou owest to him, and despisest his lawful Right and Authority which is a most grievous Sin indeed.

Secondly, 'Tis a most unreasonable Sin, there's no Plea at all will bear in the Court of Reason for such a Sin; thy own Reason will judge and condemn thy Soul. O! that ever thou shouldst choose Death rather than Life, and take the Iron Rod of *Satan* over thee, and despise the golden Scepter of Jesus Christ; Ah! Sinner, there's cause why thou shouldst leave thy Lusts and wicked Companions, and depart from the Chambers of Death, in which thy Soul hath dwelt so long, but none at all why thou shouldst not come over to Christ: what doth Christ propose to thee that thou canst cavil at? Is it to leave thy Lusts? If not, these will ruin thy Soul; if thou hadst Fire in thy Bosom, thou wouldest think it reason to cast it out; if Fetters upon thy Feet, and Clogs about thy Body, to shake them off; if a Serpent in thy Bosom, to cast

him out: O Sinner, sit down, and consult with the Principles of Reason, never was a better Bargain offered thee. Think on it, What if the Gate seem straight, it is not so to thy Soul, but to thy Lusts, thou canst not shun Trouble, but must meet with it either here or to all Eternity.

Thirdly, 'Tis a most condemning Sin, *Joh. 3. 19.* This will justify the severest Doom of God, that they might have Life, but would not: Salvation came home to them, but they turned it off. O Sinner, take heed how thou refusest him that speaks from Heaven, despise not Christ.

Secondly, As 'tis the greatest Sin so 'tis attended with the greatest Misery. For first, it opens the Windows of Vengeance, and lets down divine Wrath on thy Soul; it takes off all Possibility of Salvation; he that shuts up this door leaves none open to Life, *Acts 4. 12.* Christ is the only Way, the Truth, and the Life, no possibility of escaping Wrath to come, if thou refuse the Lord Christ, *Heh. 2. 3.* Don't flatter thyself with Hopes of after Mercy; if thou give Christ a final Denial, all hopes of Mercy is gone, when once Christ who is the Blessing, is gone from thy Soul.

Secondly, There's no Acceptance of any of thy duties, 'tis his Righteousness and Intercession makes way for thy Acceptance, *Eph. 1. 6.* All Acceptableness of the best Services of any, is through him, *1 Pet. 2. 5.* None of thy Complaints or doleful Cries, can ever enter into God's Ears, if they be not mixed with the Odours of his Incense: Ah Sinner, thou flatterest thyself with this, that thou wilt pray, cry, and weep upon a Death-Bed; Ah! what are all thy Cries, when God hears not?

Thirdly, there's sure Damnation waits for thy Soul, the Devil stands by, and expects the time when Christ will take his final leave of thee. O Sinner, if once thy time be gone, and precious Overtures of Grace do cease, then certain Ruin follows: as sure as the Work-man's wages is due to him, so will Damnation be to thy Soul, that dost live and die in thy Refusal of Christ; every Soul that will not hear this Prophet shall be destroyed, *Acts 3. 23. Psal. 2. 12.*

Fourthly, all the precious Intercessions of Jesus Christ will be turned against thee; and this is a most doleful Consideration, enough to make the hardest heart to break: now while there's hope, the blood of Christ pleads, Father, wait a little longer for this Sinner; when divine Justice says, cease interceding. that I may take Vengeance on this wretch; no says the blood of Christ, spare this Drunkard, a little longer, O wait one day longer, one year longer, for this Swearer: but upon thy final Refusal of Christ, the blood of Christ pleads another way, Father, I will the Damnation of this Sinner, I will that Mercy be no more tendered to him, *Luke 2. 34.* *This Child is set for the Fall and Rising again of many in Israel.* Christ is for the Fall as well as the rising of many; and believe it, his blood hath as great a Virtue to heighen the Damnation of willful Unbelievers, as ever it hath to further the Salvation of Believers; and O what a dreadful thing is this, when the blood of Christ shall plead against thee. It may be upon thy Death-bed, thou wilt cry, Lord pardon me, Lord let me never go to the place of Torment: but the Blood of Christ will say, Father, damn him, he made me wait many Days and Years, and would not let me into his Heart, Father let him perish; and whom do you think the Father will hear? This is one of the most trembling Considerations that I know, to heighten the

Wrath of Sinners: that Soul must needs go deep into Hell, that the Blood of Christ sends thither; the blood of Christ cries for Vengeance: Ah! Sinners think of it, what a fearful thing it is to refuse this Mediator: the Lord open your Ears, and the Lord work upon your Hearts that you may turn and live while there is Hope.

Fourthly, Hence see whence 'tis that the Prayers of any are so prevailing with God: what is it that makes Faith and Prayer so omnipotent? 'Tis the Intercession of Christ in Heaven that wings our Prayers, and makes them so speedily arrive at the Mercy-seat, and come off with an answer of Peace. 'Tis a Friend in the Court of Heaven that makes the Saints Sutes so prevailing with God, *Rev. 8. 3, 4, 5.* 'Tis his Incense makes way for the Prayers of the Saints, and then Fire comes out of the Censer, and burns up the Enemies of Christ: O there's wonderful Mightiness in the prayers of the Saints whom Christ favors with his Mediation.

Use 2. Of Confutation. If the Lord Jesus Christ be the Great and only Mediator between God and Man; then this will strike down that dangerous, damnable Error of the Papists, Of *Praying to Saints*, and setting up other Interceders besides Christ, making Addresses to the *Virgin Mary*, placing her in the Throne with Christ. If there be but one Mediator, *1 Tim. 2. 5.* and one that liveth to make Intercession, and that the Assurance of Salvation depends on this Intercession of Christ, *Heb. 7. 25.* Then 'tis a damnable Error of the Papists to pray to the *Virgin Mary*, as they do in their Missal: one of which is thus; *O Virgin, the only chaste Mother, loosing our Sins, give us the Kingdom, for thou art Queen of the World, art able to do all things, and, with thy Son, disposest all things.* Another is, *That God, by the Prayers and Merits of the ever blessed Virgin, and of all Saints, would bring us to the Kingdom of Heaven, Amen.* Nay, they say, *That Prayers made to, and delivered by the Saints, are better than those by Christ;* So *Sal.* Now, if Christ be the only way to the Father, and Acceptance is through him alone, then this is a false Way, and never of God's appointing, but blasphemous Sacrilege, and horrible Robbery of the very Flower of Christ's Crown: Nothing plucks the Scepter out of Christ's Hand, his Crown from his Head, as these irreligious Opinions of the *Papists.* If Prayer be an act of Worship, *Matth. 4. 10.* then 'tis only due to God: Indeed there's a civil Worship due to Superiors, but Religious Adoration is God's Prerogative. If we must trust on him to whom we pray, *Rom. 10. 13, 14.* then we must pray to none but God, in Christ; for, cursed is the man that trusteth in man, *Jer. 17. 5.* He to whom we pray must be able to know our wants, and our Hearts; to see our Miseries, and hear our Prayers. Now this the Saints in Heaven cannot do: *Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledgeth us not, Isa. 63. 16.* 'Tis Omniscieny alone can hear our Prayers, and Omnipotency that can Answer them, *Psal. 65. 2. Matth. 6. 6. 8. 32. Eccles. 9. 5.* Thus we may see the Heterodox Assertions of the Papists, in making many Mediators.

Use 3. For Reprehension to the professing People of God.

First, To such as are no more affected with this great and glorious Privilege of having an Advocate with the Father. Ah! Did Souls but know what an Ocean of Privileges, and Fountain of Mercies is comprised in this one Mediator, Jesus Christ, it would fill their Hearts with Joy, tip their Tongues with Praises, and make them more glad in the Salvation of God. But, it may be, you are more affected with your Frames, fine Expressions, and your own Duties, than with the Pleadings of Jesus Christ. This deserves a sharp Reproof.

2dly, Such as make little Use of the Intercession of Jesus Christ. Alas! how few employ Christ about their Matters in Heaven, and engage him in the momentous and weighty Matters of their Souls? May not Christ complain still, as once, on Earth, *Joh. 5. 40. You will not come to me that you may have Life.* 'Tis sad indeed, that the Lord Jesus Christ should enter upon so costly an Office, and pay so dear for a Right to do thy Soul good, and thou neglect to use him after all: This is the condemnation to Unbelieving Sinners, That they turn their Backs upon the Intercession of Jesus Christ. Alas, Soul! Are not thy wants great, and thy Sins many? thy Provocations and abuses of Mercy daily, and yet wilt thou not engage Christ for thy help, to procure thy Pardon, and Passage from Death to Life? O, how justly miserable will thy case be, who mightest be happy, but wouldest not! *He is worthily miserable (saith one) that will not be happy for the asking.* Who knows but that thy hard heart might have been softened; thy filthy heart cleansed; thy covetous heart spiritualized, and thy captivated Soul set free from the damning Power of Sin and Satan, hadst thou but improved a Mediator in Heaven? Know, Soul, if ever Life and Salvation be obtained, it must be by a Mediator.

Thirdly, Here's a Reproof to such as make Mediators of their Duties; that trust their Prayers more than Christ, and lay all their hopes of obtaining on the act of seeking. Indeed the Promise of having is made to asking, *Matth. 7. 7.* but not for asking. Thy Matters (saith *Luther*) do not depend on the worth of thy Self, or Prayer, but solely on the account of Christ, *Joh. 14. 13.* It is Prayer in his Name: And therefore (saith *Luther*) *Nulla Oratio extra Christum. There is no Prayer at all out of Christ.* 'Tis the Altar that sanctifies the Gift, *Matt. 23. 19. Our very Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags,* *Isa. 64. 6. When you have done all, you are unprofitable Servants,* *Luke 17. 10. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy Name give Glory,* *Psal. 115. 1.* All acceptance with God is through Christ. To trust to thy Prayers, is to trample on the Blood of Christ, accounting it an unholy thing, and the most effectual course to provoke the Lord to a real abhorreny of thy Duties, and to throw them back as Dung on thy Face.

CHAP. VII.

Showing, what Consolation flows to Believers from the Intercession of Christ.

IF the Lord Jesus Christ be the only Mediator between God and Man, then here's Comfort for Believers in several Cases.

First, To weak Believers; such as need Mercy, and are unable to beg it as they should. Poor Soul! Art thou sensible of thy urgent Necessities? that thy Wants are more than can be numbered? Knowest thou the Hardness, Pride, Filthiness, and Ungratefulness of thy Heart? understandest thou thy need of the Spirit of Grace, and the Gifts of Grace, but canst not pray for supplies so understandingly, sensibly, affectionately, and believably as thou oughtest, and therefore fearest, shalt never find an Answer, or obtain any reviving comfort to thy Soul, in the believing view of Christ's Intercession in Heaven. Let me tell thee, desponding Christian, thou canst not be really poor, and pray in Faith; thou canst not perish for want, and have a Jesus in Heaven interceding for thee, *Heb. 7. 25. Him the Father heareth always,* *Joh. 11. 42.* If the matter depended upon thy own Oratory and Eloquence, thy Case were sad; but there is one in Heaven that is wise, mighty, merciful, omniscient, who minds thy case,

considers thy needs, hears thy groans, knows thy distresses, and ever liveth to make Intercession for thee.

Object. But, says a Soul, *How shall I know that Christ intercedes for me, who am not worthy to lie under his Table, nor crawl at his Feet; I fear he hath greater concernments upon his Heart than to remember me.*

For Resolution in this, look back to Chap. 4. where is shewn for whom Christ intercedes. He prays for all that believe in him, *Joh. 17. 15.* Art thou one that believest in Christ? Hast thou chosen him as thy Lord and Righteousness? And is he precious to thy Soul? Could'st thou be content to part with all for him? Pleasures, Profits, and Worldly Grandeur, are they nothing, when they come in competition with him. Canst thou not say, O! None but Christ, none but Christ; Christ with Poverty, with Disgrace, with Bondage and misery, is far more preferable than Riches, Repute, Liberty, and Mercies without him? Dost thou consent to all his terms? and art thou willing to take up his yoke, and to learn of him? to bear his Cross, and follow him? to leave all, and come to him, and that considerately, and from thy whole Heart? Dost thou cast and adventure thy Soul, and thy All, upon his Ability to save thee? Believest thou all that the Scripture reporteth concerning him? his Personal Excellencies, and purchased Sufficiencies? That he is able and willing to save all that come to God by him, and will not cast out any that really come? And in this hope art thou resolved to trust thy All upon him, and if thou perish, to perish at his Feet? Then art thou that Soul for whom Christ intercedes in Heaven, *Luke 10. 42. Lam. 3. 24. Isa. 44. 5. Esth. 4. 16. Mark, 9. 24.*

Object. *But I cannot pray as I ought, according to the Will of God. Alas! how cold, dead, spiritless are my Prayers? and will God hear me?*

Sol. 'Tis not for thy name thou art heard, but for the Name of Christ; as you have already heard, *Joh. 14. 13. Rom. 8. 26, 27.* *We know not what to pray for as we ought.* Neither I Paul, nor you believing *Romans*, know how to pray as we ought. If thou wantest words, yet if thou hast sighs and groans, thy Prayers are heard through Christ.

Again, Thou sayest thou canst not pray according to the Will of God.

I Answ. 1. If thy Prayers are for such things as God requires, for things that concern his Glory, and the good and Salvation of thy Soul; and for these outward things, as God sees needful for thee: If thou prayest for these, as God promiseth them, for Spiritual blessings absolutely, and for others, with submission to his Wisdom and Will; if thou seekest these only in the Name of Christ, and ultimately for the Glory of God; with all thy Heart, and with all thy Strength, thou askest aright, and God will grant thee.

Secondly, God in his infinite Grace, through Christ, accounts those things in his People that are not, as if they were, *Rom. 4. 17.* He judges his People to be what they would be, *Rev. 2. 9. I knowthy Works, and Tribulation, and Poverty, but thou art rich.* The Lord judgeth of his People, not so much by their Frames, inherent Qualifications, and external Performances, but by their real Sincerity, and unfeigned desires, *Psal. 38. 9.* Thou complainest thy Prayers be cold, and dead, heartless and lifeless, but doth this please thee, or trouble thee? Is not this the

burden of thy Soul? that which thou mournest over, prayest and strivest against? Doth no Prayer content thee, but what is spiritual and fervent, affectionate and upright? Why, poor Soul, cheer up thyself, God esteems thy Prayers such, through Christ, as if they were so.

Thirdly, The Procurement of thy needed Mercies, doth not depend upon thy Prayer-frames, or the Modes and Measures of thy Holiness, but on the Mediation of Jesus Christ. Pray, weigh that Scripture, *Joh. 14. 14, 16. If you shall ask anything in my Name, I will do it. And I will pray the Father.* (Any thing) that is, anything you absolutely need; Any thing that is fit for you to ask and me to give, I will do it. He doth not say The Modes of your Prayers, the measures of your Frames and Holiness shall do it; but if ye ask, though with broken Language, and troubled Expressions, Sighs and Groans, I will do it. You have but one Advocate with the Father, I will word your Requests, and perfume them with my Incense; not the Excellency of your Duties, but the Worthiness of my Intercession, shall procure your needed Mercies.

Secondly, Here's Comfort to troubled Believers, such as are in the depth of Soul-misery, and cast down with the sight of their Sins, guilt of their Consciences, and Fears of their Condition, that go mourning all the day long, forget to eat their Bread, feed on Worm-wood and Gall, refuse (with *Rachel*) to be comforted, because their first born, their Comforts, first Love and Holiness are not, *Jer. 31. 15.* This is the case of some poor Souls from day today; they meet with no Consolation, eat Ashes instead of Bread, and mingle their Tears with their Drink; they go from Ordinance to Ordinance, and their Fear come and go with them; they feel little Change by all they do, or enjoy, their Hearts are har•, proud, vain, carnal, unbelieving, hence they fear they are Hypocrites, and shall be cast away to all Eternity.

Now here's Comfort to such from Christ's Intercession in Heaven, he is there pleading thy cause, and pressing after thy cure; thou hast provoked God, but he is appeasing his Wrath, 1 *John. 2. 1. 2.* Thou art angering God every day, but he is always pleasing him for thee; thou art making Breaches upon the Law of God, and he is there closing up those Breaches by his Blood and Intercession; thou art busy making wounds upon the Glory of the Father, and Christ is there presenting the deep Gashes, and bloody Stroaks his Justice laid upon him for those very Sins: when God is resolved to be aveng'd for thy Backslidings, Christ is then discovering his constant Obedience, and upright Faithfulness for thee, he pleads with the Father thus, *Father, shall thy Anger burn forever, and thy Vengeance always wax hot against this Soul, My Child? Remember what I have borne for him, I have already suffered for his Sin, and given a plenary Satisfaction to the Demands of Justice, and wilt thou charge it on him? Father, let his Sins be on me, as David, 2 Sam. 24. 17. Let thy hand I pray thee, be against me, these Sheep what have they done? 'Tis I am their Surety, and in thy Account the Offender; I have answered for their Offences, and discharged their Debts, why wilt thou pursue them in thy Anger? Holy Father, in Justice spare these Offenders; behold them in my Blood, and clothed with my Righteousness, Obedience, and Suffering; 'tis true, their Natures are vile, but mine is holy, and they are Members of my Flesh and of my Bones, they are diseased but I have undertaken their Cure, and will present them to thee without Spot and Wrinkle.* And this Intercession of Christ shall certainly prevail with God for thee, that thy Iniquities may be pardoned and thy Sins remembered no more, *Heb. 8. 12.* All that is promise'd in the new Covenant, Christ intercedes for in Heaven; for he is the Angel of the

Covenant *Mal.* 3. 1. The Mediator of the new Covenant, *Heb.* 9. 15. But the Forgiveness of Believers Sins, is part of the new Covenant, *Jer.* 31. 34. *Mich.* 7. 18. where God forgives one Sin he forgives them all, *Jer.* 33. 8. *I will cleanse them from all their Iniquities, &c.* He will pardon not only Sins before, but after Grace; not only small but great Sins, *Psal.* 25. 11. Not only Sins that have been once, but often committed, *Jer.* 3. 22. *Return ye backsliding Children, and I will heal your Back-slidings.* He doth not say once or twiee, but let their Back-slidings be never so great and many upon their Return God will pardon them; nay though they be as Scarlet, and as red as Crimson, *Isa.* 1. 18.

Object. *I did once hope that God had pardoned all my Sins, but now I fear it, because I have back-sliden after Mercy, and wallowed in Sin after washing, and God threatens he will not forgive such,* *Jer.* 14. 10. *chap.* 5. 7.

Sol. 1. The Reason why God would not pardon their Sin, was not because they were too great for Pardon, but because they would not return, *Jer.* 15. 7. *I will destroy my People, because they return not from their Ways,* *Jer.* 23. 14. The Lord promiseth to such as have gone aside from his Ordinances, even from their Youth, that if they will return to him, he will return to them, *Mal.* 3. 7. *Jer.* 4. 1.

Secondly, If God will pardon all their Sins, then he will pardon their Relapses after Mercy, be they never so great, upon their returning to him; God speaks indefinitely, *I will cleanse them from all Iniquity,* *Jer.* 33. 8.

Thirdly, If God will pardon their Sins before Grace, much more those after Grace; if he will forgive them when Enemies, then much more being reconciled; the Apostle useth the same Argument, *Rom.* 5. 8. 9.

Fourthly, If there be no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, then God will surely pardon all their Sins, that ever they commit: for there is never a Sin, but will condemn the Soul if it be not pardoned; but the Soul that is in Christ, is never, no not one Minute of time in a condemned State, *Rom.* 8. 1.

Fifthly, If the Lord Jesus hath satisfi'd for all the Sins of Believers, then they shall furely be forgiven; otherwise, God would be argu'd of Injustice, and Christ would shed his blood in vain: but the Lord Jesus hath satisfied divine Justice to the full, for the Sins of all his People, *Isa.* 53. 5. 6. The 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 or Ransom, *1 Tim.* 2. 6. paid by Christ, was a full and sufficient price, and therefore his Satisfaction is complete for all their Sins: if this were not so, he could not have cleans'd them from all Sin, but he cleanseth them from all Sin, *1 Joh.* 1. 7. Christ could not have saved them to the uttermost that come to God by him, were his Satisfaction imperfect, but this he doth, *Heb.* 7. 25.

Lastly, If the Lord should not pardon all the Sins of his People, he would be unjust and unfaithful, *1 Joh.* 1. 9. but that he cannot be, *Zeph.* 3. 5, He will not do Iniquity, he is the faithful one that cannot deceive or be deceived, *Isa.* 45. 21. Let God be true, and every man a Lyar.

Thirdly, Here's Comfort to Believers, that are dejected in the sense of their strong Corruptions, and unsubdued Lusts; The Body of Death in some doth make them doubt the truth of Grace, and fills their Lives with Bitterness and Terrors: The badness of their Hearts, and vileness of their Natures, makes some conclude their final Ruin; But here's Comfort to such.

Firstly, In that it hath been and is the case of the dearest Children of God, their Corruptions, like the Sons of *Zerviah*, have been too hard for them. *Abraham* accounts himself *Dust and Ashes*, *Gen.* 18. 27. *Job* cries out *I am vile*, *Job.* 40. 4. *David* says, *Mine Iniquities are gone over my head, as a Burden too heavy to bear*, *Psal.* 38. 4. *Isaiah*, from a reflex View of God's Glory, concludes he was undone because a man of unclean Lips, *Isa.* 6. 4, 5. And the Church, *Isaiah* 64. 6. profess they were as an unclean thing. *Paul* an elect Vessel, a man of singular Revelations, yet laments that in him dwelt no good thing, *Rom.* 7. 18. That he was carnal and sold under Sin, *ver.* 14. and when he would do good evil was present with him, *ver.* 21.

Secondly, Here's Comfort, that their Corruptions in them shall not break their Covenant Relation to God, *Psal.* 89. 30. to 35. There can be no Forfeiture of this Promise, *I will be their God, and they shall be my People*. Thy Lye cannot make God untrue, *Rom.* 3. 3. 4. Thy evil Eye cannot make his Eye evil too, *Matth.* 20. 15. Thy wicked Thoughts cannot alter his gracious Thoughts, *Isa.* 55. 8. 9. Thy invincible Corruptions cannot overcome his Mercies, nor the Enmity of thy Nature make God thy Enemy.

Thirdly, Christ is employed in Heaven about this very Work of subduing thine Iniquities, he intercedes ever, and why? That this People might be sanctified by the Truth, *Joh.* 17. 17. That they might have more Grace, and the Spirit given out to mortify their Corruptions; he reigns in Heaven on purpose to bring down his and their Enemies, *1 Cor.* 15. 25. He carries on the work of Redemption in Heaven, and what is that but to set his People free indeed: he hath an assured care now in Glory to fulfil his Promises, one of which is that Iniquity shall be subdued, *Mic.* 7. 18. *Romans* 6. 14.

Fourthly, Christ's promise to the Father, is security for the Destruction of thy Sin, he is engaged to present his people complete to the Father, *Eph.* 5. 27. and to keep them unblameable to his heavenly Kingdom, *1 Thes.* 5. 23.

Fifthly, His Glory and Pleasure is concerned in the Death of thy Corruptions, *Isa.* 53. 10. *The Pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand*. What is this Pleasure of the Lord? It is the Redemption of his People from the Tyranny of Sin, and the Slavery of *Satan*, into the glorious Liberty of the first born of Glory, *2 Thes.* 1. 11, 12.

Lastly, Grace is of a prevailing Nature, and must destroy thy Lusts at last, and the Spirit of Grace is in his people, *Mat.* 12. 20. the Interest of Sin and Sinners cannot always stand before the Interest of God and his people, *Esther* 6. 13.

Fourthly, Here's Comfort to tempted Believers, such as are always dogged with filthy and frigh•ing Temptations, restlessly haunted with vile and blasphemous Thoughts, and miserably buffeted with dreadful and dangerous Suggestions: if Christ be interceding in

Heaven, then surely he will one day or other, put an end to all the Temptations, and in the mean time over-rule them, that they shall not prevail over thee, 1 Cor. 10. 13. Heb. 2. 19. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor those that are tempted. Christ is a merciful High-priest, and wants neither Knowledge, Bowels or Ability, which might render him capable to relieve the tempted; he hath the tempting Serpent, the roaring Lion in Chains, and will mercifully say to that proud one, come so far, and no farther.

Fifthly, Here's Comfort to God's people under their Afflictions and Sufferings in the World, or by the World; if Christ be interceding in Heaven for them, then surely he will not leave them comfortless in their Sufferings for him, Joh. 14. 8. chap. 16. 32. 33. Then Tribulation, nor Persecution, nor anything else can separate them from the Love of God in Christ, Rom. 8. 35. He that is for them is stronger than all that are against them, Jer. 31. He will be with them in the Fire and in the Water, Isa. 43. 2. Christ is never sweeter than when the World is most bitter to a Child of God; Afflictions can but file away the Rust and scour away the Filth, it cannot diminish the, Grace, nor injure the State of those that are interested in Christ's Mediation; Christ's Cordials are never better, than when his people are most faint and languishing: Christ in Heaven, laughs at the vain hopes of his Enemies, and will dash all their Attempts against himself and Interest in pieces, Psal. 2. 4, 9. He will strengthen his tired, distressed Servants under Sufferings, Isa. 42. 10. 2 Cor. 12. 9. His Arm is made bare, his Power displayed and his Strength made perfect in their Weaknesses, Psal. 27. 14. This may be the Trouble and dejecting Fears of some, how they shall hold out-in times of Trial. I am afraid (says one) I shall never bare Reproaches, Hatred, Bonds, Loss of Goods, and death for Christ, with a magnanimous and Gospel Spirit: Why Soul? It shall be given thee in that hour not only to believe, but to suffer for Christ, Phil. 1. 29. The Fury of the Adversary shall not terrify you, nor their rampent Rage deject your Courage. Isa. 35. 4.

Sixthly, Here's Comfort to such as are Mourners for Zion, and grieve at the Afflictions of God's People: That lament to see Christ's Interest on foot, and the Wicked on horse-back, Transgressors to prosper, and the Godly afflicted, that weep to behold Divine Providences thwarting his Promises. The Lord hath promised, that to Christ shall every Knee bow, and every Tongue confess. Men read of glorious things spoken of Zion; but when they look to the Interest of God, they see nothing but matter of trouble and grief. They look to the Earth, and behold Darkness and Confusions; they look to the Church of Christ, and lo, Decays and Dyings: Now this breeds trouble to the Friends of Christ, to see things run counter, and cross to expectation and promise: yet here is Comfort from the Intercession of Christ on this account. For,

First, The Lord Jesus sits at Helm, he is upon the Throne, and reigns as King forever; and this hath been the Faithful's Refuge and Support in the worst of Times, Psal. 10. 2. 4. 16. Psal. 29. 10. The Lord Jesus hath the Government of Nations, as well as of Zion, on his shoulders, Isa. 9. 6. Eph. 1. 22. He rules over all, Psal. 103. 19. His Kingdom ruleth over all. Men and Devils cannot wrest the Scepter out of his hands: In spite of all he is King of Zion, Psal. 2. 6. and his Government is maintained in all the Confusions that are on the Earth; and if so, there is no cause for the People of Christ to be dejected. Fear not, (said Caesar to his Mariners in a Storm)

Caesar is here. Why are ye so fearful, (said Christ to his Disciples, when trembling at their Dangers in a boisterous Storm) O ye of little Faith, Matth. 8. 26. That Vessel cannot miscarry that hath Christ at Helm, and if it could (said Luther) mallem ruere cum Christo quam regnare cum Caesare. I had rather perish with Christ than reign with Caesar.

Secondly, His Paths are in the deep waters, *Psal. 77. 19. Thy way is in the Sea, thy paths are in the deep waters, and thy foot-steps are not known.* The Psalmist alludes to that Providence of God in leading *Israel* through the red Sea; when Deaths were on every hand, God walked on those Waters, and made a way through them for his People. So *Nah. 1. 3. The Lord hath his way in the Whirlwind, and in the Storm and the Clouds are the dust of his Feet.* Those ways that men cannot stand up in, are God's usual walks, in which he leads on his Work and Interest. His ways are above our ways, and, *In the Mount will the Lord be seen, Gen. 22. 14.* His Providences, *Ezek. 1. 16.* are like a Wheel in the middle of a wheel, and a skain of Silk strangely entangled. When *Israel* was come near the Borders of the promised Land, they must be turned back again into the Wilderness, and wander up and down forty years in the Desarts: When Zion's Mercies were come to the Birth, they proved Abortive; Strange indeed is the Womb of Divine Providence, and seemingly contradictory to Humane Reason.

Thirdly, No cross Providences can hinder Christ's Work in the World: He hath purposed, and will perform it. Combinations of men, *Psal. 2. 1, 2. the Gates of Hell, Matth. 16. 18.* and the Powers of this World can no more impede the Success of Christ's Work, than the Barking of Dogs can hinder the Moon's passage to its Journey end, *Isa. 43. 13. I will work, and who shall let it? Who art thou, O great Mountain, before Zerubbabel? thou shalt become a plain, Zach. 4. 7. He taketh up the Isles as a very slender thing; Isa. 40. 15.* The Lord brings in his mightiness here, to comfort *Israel* under Discouragements, by reason of Difficulties in the way of their Mercy. *Comfort ye my People, saith the Lord, ver. 1. Tell her her warfare is accomplished, ver. 2. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, ver. 5. O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength: Be not afraid of Dangers, preach my Word, be undaunted in my Service: Behold your God, ver. 9. He will come, and his Reward with him, ver. 10. He will feed his Flock like a Shepherd, v. 11. He will keep up his Word and Ordinances in spite of all opposition. Obj. But our Enemies are many. Ans. Why, he hath measured all the waters of opposition in the hollow of his hand, verse. 12. Obj. But all our wisdom cannot see how these great things should be brought about. Ans. Why, who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord? ver. 13. He wants not wisdom to accomplish his Work. Obj. But Nations and Islands combine against God's *Israel.* Answ. What if they do? they are no more to God than the drop of a bucket, and the dust of the Balance, ver. 15. Therefore, fear not, he will perform his Promises, and fulfil his Designs. Quest. Why, what hath he promised? Answ. He hath promised, that the stone cut out of the Mountain without hands, shall become a great Mountain, and break in pieces the Image of the Beast, *Dan. 2. 35, 45.* and that he will set up the Kingdom of his Son in the World, ver. 44. *Isa. 2. 2.**

He hath promised Peaceful times to the Church of God, when the Sword shall be turned into Plowshares, *Isa. 2. 4. Isa. 55. 13. Great shall be the peace of thy Children: None shall hurt or destroy in all God's holy Mountain, Isa. 65. 25. Ezek. 28. 24, Isa. 16. 18. Psal. 72. 9.*

He hath promised times of Light and Knowledge, *Isa.* 11. 9. chap. 52. 8. ch. 54. 13. ch. 60. 19, 20.

He hath promised times of Holiness, *Isa.* 60. 21. ch. 4. 3. ch. 35. 8. *Zech.* 14. 20, 21.

He hath promised times of Union, *Zech.* 14. 9. *Zeph.* 3. 9. *Ezek.* 37. 19.

He hath promised times of Joy and Comfort to his Interest, *Isa.* 65. 13, 14. ch. 35. 10. ch. 25. 8.

He hath promised Enlargement to the Church, *Isa.* 2. 2. ch. 60. 8, 9, 13.

He hath promised Stability and Settlement, *Isa.* 54. 14. ch. 60. 20.

He hath promised Activity and Liveliness, *Isa.* 26. 19.

Fourthly, As those great and glorious things are spoken of *Zion*, so they shall certainly be accomplished in due time, *Isa.* 60. 22. *Deut.* 32. 35. *The Vision is but for an appointed time, Hab.* 2. 3. As the Things are appointed, so is the Time, beyond which God will not go one moment, *Exod.* 12. 41, 42. The self-same day; the *Jewish* Doctors say it was mid-day, as soon as one hundred and thirty years was out, to an hour, God fulfilled his Promise.

Lastly, God takes usually the most unlikely time to fulfill his Promises: As in *Abraham*, when his Body was dead, *Gen.* 18. 10, 11. *Abraham* and *Sarah* were sensible of an utter inability and unfitness in themselves for such a Mercy, yet then was the Promise fulfilled, *Gen.* 22. 14. So *Israel* were brought out of *Egypt*, when all things made against it; their Oppressions increased, *Exod.* 2. 23. chap. 5. 7, 8, 19. *Pharaoh* resolved not to let them go, *Exod.* 10. 27. and *Moses* charged to see his face no more, on pain of Death, chap. 10. 28. When God's time was come to bring *Israel* out of *Babylon*, they were as dry Bones, and said, *Our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts, Ezek.* 37. 11, 12. *Psal.* 126. 1. *Deut.* 32. 36. *Mic.* 4. 10. *Thou shalt go into Babylon, and there shalt thou be delivered.* Before that glorious Salvation of the *Jews* in *Shushan*, under *Ahasuerus*, they were brought under a Sentence of Death, the Decree was sealed, and posted away, the time appointed for their destruction, and no possible hopes left of reversing it, *Esth.* 3. 12. to the end, compared with Chap. 8. So much for the Use of Consolation.

CHAP. VIII.

Containing an Use of Exhortation to Sinners and Saints.

IF the Lord Jesus Christ be such a Glorious Mediator, then,

First, Let perishing Sinners be persuaded to get an Interest in him: And for Motive herein, consider these four or five things.

First, The Lord Jesus will Mediate for, and save none but those that are his. Many common Mercies, Favors, and Boons he bestows on his Enemies, but Salvation-blessings are the privileges only of his People, *Matth.* 1. 21. 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *Luke* 1. 68.

Secondly, Many will lay claim to Christ, who have no Interest in him, *Luke* 13. 25. High Pretenders may be shaken off, *Math.* 7. 22. chap. 25. 12. Some that shall think themselves

something, may be found nothing; some that shall be thought Saints by others, may yet be cast away, 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. As *Hymenaeus* and *Alexander*, 1. *Tim.* 1. 20. The *Galatians* and scattered Saints, *Gal.* 1. 6. *chap.* 3. 3. 2 *Pet.* 1. 20. *Rev.* 8. 12. Nay the very Elect shall find it hard to stand, *Matth.* 24. 24.

Thirdly, There is but a time in which Christ may be found, *Isa.* 55. 6. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found*; intimating, there is a time in which he will not, when the door will be shut, and Christ will speak, knock, and call no more; There is but a day of Grace, an hour of Salvation, O Sinner be not wise too late.

Fourthly, It is a most dreadful, tremendous thing, to leave the World without an Interest in Christ; to be summoned to Judgment and have nothing to help them, no Mediator to plead for them, no Righteousness to cover them, no Duties to accompany them, no Eye to pity them, *Isa.* 57. 12. *chap.* 30. 13. *Jer.* 5. 5. This is sad indeed, when all Bowels are gone, and boundless Miseries to be undergone.

Fifthly, Of all perishing Sinners, such as perish under the Gospel, have the most dreadful Miseries, *Matth.* 11. 21. 22. The Heathens and Pagans, Publicans and Harlots, shall have a more tolerable place in Hell, than such as refuse a tendered Jesus: *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation?* *Heb.* 2. 3. O miserable Sinners! sleight not, Salvation tenders, despise not, Gospel calls, but hasten away to this Redeemer.

Secondly, Let the People of God be exhorted, first to bless God for this Mediator, *Eph.* 1. 3. Christ is the Fountain of Blessings, the Author of Salvation, the Gift of God, and have you no *Hosanna's* for the Enjoyment of so rich a person? 1 *Joh.* 4. 9, 10.

Secondly, Ply hard the Throne of Grace, find Work for Christ, *Heb.* 4. 15, 16. *Let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace*, make known your Requests unto God, *Phil.* 4. 6. Consider Soul,

You have always need of Mercy; not a Moment but you want Supplies from God for Soul and Body: your Corruptions are always resisting the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 17. never at peace with Grace, but as a Bow that is bent, are still pressing after their former Liberty, and as Waters pen'd back, are striving to force their way; therefore Christians, you always need the Spirit's help, and fresh Supplies of Grace: your Guilt is always increasing, *James* 3. 2. The Righteous falleth seven times a day, hence daily Sacrifices were appointed, because of daily Sins, *Heb.* 7. 27. Your Temptations are continually renewed, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. New Trials are daily falling on you, new Difficulties are frequently occurring your Life, new Troubles and Afflictions are constantly betiding you.

This is God's appointed way, in which he will give out Mercy, *Ezek.* 36. 37. *Matth.* 7. 7. 'Tis true, sometimes God hears before we ask, but yet preventing Mercy doth not excuse from Duty, and we have no ground to expect Mercy out of the way of Duty.

You are invested with a holy Priest-hood, on purpose that you may be much employed in this Work, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. Your Work and Offices lies in this, to offer up daily Sacrifices to God by Christ.

The Lord Jesus waits in Heaven to receive your Prayers, 'tis his Business and work in Glory, to pursue your Advantages, and therefore he expects to hear from you, 9. *Heb.* 24. As an Agent that expects to hear from his Client, and receive Intimation about his Condition; as a Friend in a foreign Country, that is hearkening for Letters from his Friend, Christ in Heaven desires to hear from his People on Earth; not that he is ignorant of them, or needs to be put in Remembrance, but this way are his Graces in them exercised, their Love and Duty maintained, and himself glorified, *Isa.* 30. 18. *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious.* In the Original it is, he longs and as it were, greedily and enlargedly desires an Occasion to be gracious; he waits in Heaven to be pu* in Remembrance to do his People good.

This way is their blessed Intercourse maintained betwixt Christ in Heaven, and Believers on Earth, by this Christ hears from them on Earth, and they from him in Heaven, *Cant.* 2. 14. *chap.* 8. 13, 14. *Thou that dwellest in the Gardens, the Companions hearken to thy Voice, cause me to hear it:* 'Tis, in the Original, *Cause to hear me*, which occasions a twofold reading. First, *Cause me to be heard*, they are Christ's Words to his Spouse, *Let me be the Subject of thy Discourse to others.* Secondly, *Cause me to hear it*, that is, let me be spoken to, let me hear thy Voice in Prayer, as a man desires to hear from his Wife, when absent; and in the next *verse.* She echo's back the same Request to Christ, that he would hasten his Return to her, that she might have his Company also: by Prayer Christ and Believers have sweet Intercourse with each other, *Cant.* 1. 7, 8. *chap.* 2. 5. 8.

The Lord Jesus is wonderfully delighted to hear from his People, *Cant.* 2. 14. *chap.* 4. 11. *chap.* 6. 13. *Return, Return, O Shulamite, &c.* This word *Shulamite* comes either from *Solomon*, and so her Husbands name is named on her, or from *Salem*, Peace, which is *Jerusalem*, showing her Descent to be from *Jerusalem* above; hence Christ desires her Company because it was pleasure to him to look upon her, her Countenance was as two Armies; it is in the Original, *Mahanaim*, the same word that *Jacob* puts on the place where God met him, *Gen.* 32. 1. 2. As if Christ should say, thy Sight is Angelical to me, though thou art impure in thyself, yet thou art fair in mine Eye.

'Tis a mighty thriving way: there's no such course can be taken to grow rich apace in divine Treasures; Prayer is the Key that opens Christ Treasury, and fetches out the Riches of Heaven, because such may have of God what they will, *Joh.* 15. 7. God is always giving where gracious Souls are rightly asking; God's readiness to give should be an Argument always to crave: as *Sir Walter Raleigh* when *Q. Eliz.* asked him when he would leave off begging, answered, when your Majesty leaves off giving.

Thirdly, Trust to an interceding Jesus, expect all your Mercies from him, *Psal.* 5. 3. *In the Morning I will direct my Prayer to thee, and look up:* the Arabic, and some other Versions have it, *I will prepare or stand before him, and he will see me.* But this agrees not with the Original, where 'tis, *I will order or dispose my Prayer*, as a General doth his Army, and will look out as a man that watches on a Tower, to see what I can espy and what Answer he will give. By a Metonymy, it signifies to expect or look for something, *Matth.* 22. 21. *In his Name shall the Gentiles trust.* The Lord Jesus is the sure and certain Object of a Believers Trust; O Christians! is Christ entered into Heaven, there to appear for his People? O then depend upon his

Intercession, expect all your needed Mercies by him, take up your Acquiescence in his Mediation for you, rest satisfied (Believers) that your case is good, and it shall be well with you in every Condition, because Christ intercedeth for you. Now to strengthen your Dependance on Christ. Consider,

His Engagement to the Father to become your Advocate, *Heb.* 10. 9. *Joh.* 6. 39. His Promise to Believers to pursue their Cause in Heaven, *Joh.* 14. 16. And his full Accomplishments with whatever is needful to complete this Work. He is infinitely wise, and knows how to manage your Concerns and prosper, *Col.* 2. 3. He hath Skill and Counsel to finish his Affairs with Discretion; he knows your Cases better than yourselves, and what Arguments to plead so as to prevail, *Psal.* 103. 14. *Joh.* 2. 24. 25. *Psal.* 31. 7. *Heb.* 4. 13. *Isa.* 40. 27. 28. He is active and laborious; and quick at Work, as well as in Wisdom. *Isa.* 11. 3. He is still unwearied in his Business, and his Spirit never fails, *Isa.* 42. 4. His Eyes are always open, he never slumbers or sleeps, *Psal.* 121. 4. 1 *Kin.* 8. 29. *Isa.* 27, 3. He loseth no time, but takes the fittest Occasion to perfect his Designs, 1 *Pet.* 5. 6. He is faithful in his Undertakings, and one whom you may confide, *Heb.* 2. 17. His name is faithful, *Rev.* 19. 11. He is omnipotent and powerful to fulfil his Pleasure, *Heb.* 7. 25. The Almighty one who can prevail with the Father, and is one with him, *Joh.* 11. 42. *chap.* 10. 30. Consider Christ's Interest in his people, they are his own, *John* 13. 1. They are his Seed, Treasure, Jewels, Members, and Sheep, *Joh.* 10. 3. They are his Spouse, and therefore he cannot forget, or neglect their Concerns, *Ephesians* 5. 29. *Isa.* 58. 7.

Think on his Concernments in all the Affairs of his Interest; by virtue of that Union betwixt Christ and his People, he becomes a sharer with them in all their Conditions, their Mercies are his Delight, *Psal.* 35. 27. and their Afflictions are his Trouble, *Isa.* 63. 9. He sympathizeth with them as the head with the Members, and the Husband with the Spouse; their loss is his Loss, and their Gain he reckons as his Interest. Should Saints and their Concernments miscarry at last, Christ himself would be a certain and eternal Looser: he would loose his Blood, and purchase, his Obedience and Sufferings.

Lastly, Consider, Christ's Glory consists in the Good and Salvation of Believers, 2 *Thes.* 1. 12. His Glory is wrapped up in their Glory, and his Life in their Life, *Joh.* 14. 19. 2 *Cor.* 8. 23. *Joh.* 17. 10.

Fourthly, acknowledge the Intercession of Christ to be the procuring Cause of all your Mercies; in every Reception of Mercy see an Interceding Jesus, and say Lord, 'tis thy Mediation I owe these Enjoyments, Privileges, and Prayer-returns unto, *Luke* 22. 32. *Psal.* 115. 1. *Pro.* 3. 6. *In all thy ways acknowledge him.* This is to pay Tribute to Christ in Heaven, and advance the Glory of the blessed Mediator; this is giving Christ his Due, *Rom.* 13. 7. and a sacrificing to God and not to your Dreg; as it is Christ in Believers is the Hope of Glory, so it is Christ in Heaven is the Hope and Procurer of Mercy.

Fifthly, If Christ be your Advocate in Heaven, then follow his Instructions on Earth, *Matth.* 17. 5. He that commits his Cause to another, commits himself to his Counsel also to be guided by him in everything, that might conduce to his Success in it; Christ's work in Heaven is to order and regulate his People on Earth, and therefore he is the Law-giver, and King as well

as Savior, *Isa.* 33. 22. *Jam.* 4. 12. and the Duty of all Christ's Clients on Earth, is to live by his Prescription and Order given them; and therefore 'tis said, *Numb.* 21. 18. *The Princes digged the Well, even the Nobles of the People, digged it by the Direction of the Law-giver.* This is spoken of that famous Well Beer-Elim: that is, the Well of the mighty ones, that God gave *Israel* in the Wilderness: it was alone the Gift of God, *verse* 16. I will give them Waters, yet they must dig for it, as here; and that according to Prescription, as *Moses* gave them from the Lord: This well was a Figure of Christ, as the *Hebrews* themselves, in their *Midrash Koheleth* do acknowledge, as (say they) *The first Redeemer caused a Well to spring up, so the last Redeemer shall cause Waters to spring up;* as 'tis said, *Joel* 3. 18. *A Fountain shall come forth from the House of the Lord, and shall water the Valley of Shittim;* which signified the Graces of the Spirit, that Well of Water springing up to Life eternal, *Joh.* 4. 14.

Sixthly, Become Advocates for Christ on Earth, confess his name. *Rom.* 14. 11. *chap.* 15. 9. *Phil.* 2. 11. Plead his cause before men, *Hos.* 2. 2. *Plead with your Mother.* This is spoken to the pious in *Israel* (as *Jonathas Caldaeus*, *Jerome*, and others conceive) who are the men, and the whole House of *Israel* their Mother, and their pious Children must plead, that is, expostulate, reason, and contend with her for God to bring her to the Sense of her Sin and Danger; the Lord *Jesus* underwent all dangers in owning your Cause, so should you in his: he always intercedes for you, so should you for him in Word and Deed; your Lives and Lips should plead for him: He pleads effectually for you, so should you labor to be as successful as you may for him, *Joh.* 3. 29. and in order to the Discharge of this important Duty, consider,

That the suitable Qualifications of an Advocate must be acquired, you must get Wisdom to know Christ and the things of his Will, Kingdom, and Glory, you are not likely to do much Service to Christ's Interest, if you are ignorant and unacquainted with his Laws and Concernments, *Mic.* 6. 8. *Col.* 1. 9, 10. *2 Pet.* 3. 18. *Matth.* 10. 16. *Phil.* 1. 9. *Eph.* 1. 17. You must be active and vigorous for God, *Rom.* 12. 11. Slothful Spirits are not like to be much serviceable, *Prov.* 27. 15. *Eccles.* 10. 18. *chap.* 9. 10. *Heb.* 6. 11, 12. You must be faithful, and have Truth in the inner parts, *Rev.* 2. 10. *1 Cor.* 4. 2. *Luke* 12. 42. You must labor after Potency and Mightiness through Christ, that you may prevail for him, *Phil.* 4. 13. *1 Chro.* 22. 13. *1 Cor.* 16. 13. Now the way to get this Strength for Christ, is by Faith to live on him, *Eph.* 6. 10. *2 Tim.* 2. 1.

You must make a thorough and open Profession of him, and of all his Truth, *1 Tim.* 6. 12, 13, 14. *Heb.* 4. 14. *2 Cor.* 9. 13. profess him at all times, *Matth.* 10. 32. profess him openly, plainly, sincerely, and boldly, so did the Apostles.

You must patiently, persevere under all Sufferings for him, *Acts* 21. 13. *2 Tim.* 2. 10. *Heb.* 10. 32.

You must speak well for Christ at all times, *Mat.* 11. 19. *Cant.* 5. 10. *1 Pet.* 2. 9.

You must live out his Glory, *Math.* 5. 16. *Phil.* 2. 15. *2 Cor.* 9. 13.

Thus have we done with the Applicatory part of this Point, and dispatched the wonderful Riches of Christ, as to his personal Union.

CHAP. IX.

Opening somewhat of the sweet Dispositions of Christ, viz. His Goodness, Love, and the Riches thereof, as to the kind, Fruits, and Effects of it.

I Am now come to the third particular, wherein we shall make a Discovery of the Riches of Christ, as they consist in his excellent and sweet Dispositions as Mediator, with those precious Graces and Endowments in him, which will much illustrate the personal Riches of Christ, and be of wonderful Encouragement both to Saints and Sinners, to think better of him, and to hasten after a Dependance on him.

Now the first thing we shall treat of, is the goodness of his Nature: He is Goodness itself, *Psal. 34. 8. O taste and see that the Lord is good:* This Psalm was pen'd by David, when he was driven from *Achish*, and was in sore danger of his Life; in this Condition, he seeks the Lord, and found help, by reason of the Goodness of God, that is, God in Christ; indeed there is Creation-Goodness, and providential-Goodness, but the choicest is his Redemption-goodness, that Goodness which he lets out to poor Sinners in a Mediator. Thus is Jesus Christ the Gift of his best Love, and is qualified, and disposed to commend the infinite Goodness of God to perishing Sinners: his Goodness is great, *Zac. 9. 17. called the Riches of his Goodness, Rom. 2. 4.* Now this goodness of Christ appears.

First, In it's Extensiveness, he is good to all, Mans goodness is contracted and narrow, its greatest Proportion reacheth but a few, none but Friends, Relations, and such as may oblige or requite them, are usually Sharers in it; but the goodness of Christ is immense, it reacheth to all the work of his hands, *Psal. 145. 9. The Lord is good to all, by him all things consist, Col. 1. 17. He upholdeth all things by the word of his Power, Heb. 1. 3.* The very vilest, and most unworthy Grace-abusing Soul have some kind of share in Christ's Goodness; he upholds his very Enemies, and maintains the Being and Enjoyment of such as oppose him.

Secondly, In it's Invincibleness; all the Provocations of his Enemies cannot impede it's designed current, he is resolved they shall have a share in his Mercy, though they oppose their own Mercies; nay all the Unkindness of his people cannot conquer it, nor many Waters quench it: *He maketh his Sun to shine upon the good and bad, Math. 5. 45.* It's strange to think how rare a portion of Mercy the wicked have in their day; he that cried Father forgive them they know not what they do, cries Father spare them to see what they will be.

Thirdly, It's Freeness; 'tis not extracted, but flows out of it's own Accord, *Isa. 65. 24. Before they call, I will answer, &c.* It hath no Creature-merit to provoke it, *Exek. 16. 6. I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy Blood, live,* when there was no Beauty to attract it, no desires to draw it forth: man's Worthyness is no ground for the Communication of Christ's Goodness, what Loveliness had the *Ephesians* to deserve it's liberal Effusions? *Eph. 2. 1.*

Fourthly, 'tis unwearied, enduring Goodness, it hath not the Shallowness of a slender Vessel, which is easily emptied, but the Unfathomableness of the Ocean that can never be exhausted: the vast Expences and Communications of it, from the Creation of the World to

it's final Destruction, will not diminish it one Iota; his Anger indeed hath but a momentary Continuance, *Psal.* 30. 5. But his Goodness endureth forever, *Psal.* 52. 1.

Fifthly, 'Tis Communicative goodness, running over, flowing down, and liberally diffusing itself for the good of others; so 'tis defined to be a Virtue by which a person of his own accord is abundantly prone to acts of Benignity: Christ's Goodness is manifestative, distributive, and it's Dispensations are as natural as the irradiating Beams of the Sun.

Secondly, Another excellent Disposition in Christ, is his Love, not only his Phylanthropy, or good Will he bears to all men, and the Desire he hath of their Salvation, *Ezek.* 33. 11. But his 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 his special Love, from 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 *valde* & 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 *acquiesco*, such an ardent Affection hath the heart of Christ, for a person adhering to him, that it greatly acquiesces in, and is fully contented with him, *Eph.* 2. 4. Such is the Sweetness of Christ's Nature, that it is full of Love, *God is Love*, *1 John* 4. 16. *And as the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you*, *Joh.* 15. 9. Now this Love of Christ to his people, is,

First, A supreme Love, the chiefest Love, he hath a love of Benevolence to all, *Mark* 10. 21. He beheld the young man and loved him; but the Love he bears his own, is transcendent, and exceeds the Love of men and Angels, *Joh.* 15. 13.

Secondly, An infinite Love, Love that passeth all Knowledge, exceedeth all Dimensions, *Eph.* 3. 18. Christ's Love (saith one) hath Length in it, because he loved his Elect from Eternity to Eternity; O unmeasurable Length that hath no end! his Love hath Breadth in it, because not the *Jews* only, but the *Gentiles* also, are sharers in it; 'tis extended to the whole World, *Math.* 28. 19. It hath depth in it, because it brought him down into the Deeps, not only of the Earth, but of unconceivable Sufferings: It brought him as low as the Grave, yea to the very Borders of Hell, *Isa.* 53. 3. It hath height in it, because it ascended far above all Heavens, that he might fill all in all, become our Advocate there, prepare us for it, and it for us, and at last takes us up to himself, that we may behold his Glory.

Thirdly, An eternal Love, *Jer.* 31. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting Love*. All Creature-affections have their Beginning and End, their Risings and Settings, but the Love of Christ is as himself, everlasting, *Rev.* 1. 13. The transiency of his people's Love, cannot injure its permanency, for *where he loves, he loves to the end*, *Joh.* 13. 1.

Fourthly, An unchangeable Love, it hath no Ebbings and Flowings, Waxings and Waneings, Risings and Fallings, but is th• same Yesterday, to Day, and forever, *Heb.* 13. 8. It knows no Alteration, Addition, or Diminution: the Heavens shall wax old as a Garment, and be changed, *Heb.* 1. 11. 12. But Christ and his Love is invariable, *Mal.* 3. 6. 'Tis true, the Manifestations of his Love is mutable, (he may smile today, and frown tomorrow) but not the nature of it; the Cisterns may be dry but not the Fountain.

Fifthly, A free Love, it hath no Consideration of Creature-merit, foreseen Faith, or persevering Holiness, *Hos.* 14. 4. *I will heal their Back-slidings, and love them freely*. What reason can be given, that of the same Lump should be made one Vessel of Honor, and another of

Dishonor; nay that persons of the most exquisite Abilities, natural Endowments, unspotted Moralities, and uncontrollable Sovereignty, should be rejected, and left to the hardness of their Heart, and the righteous Judgment of God, and that others of the meanest parts, inconsiderable Qualifications, prodigiously vicious Lives and miserable Penury, should be elected to the highest Privileges, received into the most intimate Communion, and made partaker of the highest Glory?

Sixthly, The Spring and Fountain of all that Love that is in Believers to God and one another, Creature-affections are but streams derived from this Ocean, Candles lighted at this Sun: *We love him because he first loved us*, 1 John 4. 19. The ascending Love of Saints is a faint Reflection of the descending Love of Christ; the same Waters that empty themselves into the Sea, have their Birth from it.

Seventhly, An active love, Creature-affections are dull and sluggish, and savor rankly of the Vessel they are in, but Christ's are vigorous and laborious; a parental Love, that sets his Wisdom on designing, his Faithfulness on securing, and his Power on accomplishing the chiefest Concernments, and highest good of his Children.

Lastly, a fruitful Love, full of good Works, 'tis commended love, *Rom. 5. 8.* manifested love, 1 John 4. 9. Not love in the Womb, or abortive, but love in the Birth: I shall name some of it's Fruits to his People.

First, the giving of himself for them, *Eph. 5. 25. Who loved me, and gave himself for me*, Gal. 2. 20. This is the highest Testimony of his Love imaginable, he could not have bestowed a better thing; he that gives himself, gives all. He gave himself to procure a purchased Treasure to enrich them, to destroy the partition Wall, and fill up that bottomless Gulf, that lay in their way to glory: he gave himself to discharge their Debts, remove their Guilt, justify their Persons fulfil all Righteousness, and make good the new Covenant.

Secondly, The opening of his heart to them, *John 15. 14, 15. I have called you Friends, for all that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you*: O! the wonderful Love and Kindness of Christ to his People, that he communicates his Secrets, and opens to them the Thoughts of his Heart from all Eternity; he leads them into his retired Chambers and secret Recesses, and feasts them liberally with hidden *Manna*, and excellent Discoveries of the things freely given them of God: Saints cannot ascend up into Heaven, and see the Length Depth, Breadth and Height of those glorious things God hath prepared for them, but they have the Privilege to wade deep into sanctuary Waters, and the Spirit of Grace is freely given them to reveal the Depths of divine Love.

Thirdly, The Communication of all good things to them, *He will give Grace and Glory, and no good thing will he withhold*, *Psa. 84. 11. Psal. 34. 10.* O boundless Love indeed! he may bestow some sublunar Portions on his Enemies, but his Children only shall have the Inheritance, they shall have his Wisdom to direct them, his Goodness to supply them, his Power to protect them, and his Spirit to instruct them, *Joh. 16. 13. 14.* And O what a wonderful Gift is the Spirit; he will show them their Duty, reprove them for their Sin, answer their Doubts, clear up their Way, and enlighten them in their Darkness: he will open their Hearts, enlarge

their Souls, regulate their Wills, illuminate their Minds, and sanctify their Persons; he will communicate Counsel, reveal Christ, discover their Inheritance, and seal them up to the day of Redemption.

Fourthly, His minding and pursuing all their Concerns in Heaven, the Business Believers have in another Country where they cannot come is very weighty; they need Receptions of more Grace every day, Strength against Corruption, Wisdom in their Difficulties, Patience in their Sufferings, and Faith in their Temptations; now Christ doth agitate their Cause, becomes their Factor, and dispatches their Work, *Exod. 28. 29. Heb. 7. 25. Isa. 49. 15. 16.*

Fifthly, His gracious Presence with them, *Joh. 14. 18. I will not leave you comfortless, Heb. 13. 5. Jer. 32. 40. 2 Cor. 6. 16,* He may hide his face for sometime, and suspend the gracious light of his Countenance: he may stand behind the Wall, and step behind the Curtain, yet these are but momentary, not continual, and imaginary, not real.

Sixthly, His bearing with them, and forbearing of them, *1 Cor. 13. 7. Charity beareth all things,* it cannot easily be overloaded: what gross Indignities and abusive Injuries doth Christ patiently receive from the hands of his People? *Amos 2. 13. Psal. 95. 10.*

Seventhly, His thinking often and well of them, and his being a Friend to their Friends, and an Enemy to their Enemies: where a man's Affections are there will his Thoughts be also; the Adulterers Thoughts are on his Uncleaness, the worldly man's on his Treasures, and the Ambitious on his Honors, but Christ's are on his People, *Isa. 43. 4. They are his Hephzibah's,* the delight of his Soul, his Jewels and Treasures, *Isa. 62. 4. Mal. 3. 17.* He esteems their Enemies as his, *Exod. 23. 29.* and favors their Friends with peculiar Blessings, *Exod. 1. 20. Gen. 39. 5.*

Eighthly, His being troubled with their Troubles, and delighted with their Welfare, *Joh. 11. 33. 35, 36.* when the Lord Jesus came to raise *Lazarus* from the dead, and saw *Mary* weeping, and the *Jews* that were with her, 'tis said, *He groaned in Spirit, and was troubled:* nay when he came to the place where *Lazarus* lay, he wept; whereupon the *Jews* said, *Behold how he loved him,* and his Heart is the same now in Heaven, *Isa. 63. 9.* True love will suffer in the Trials of it's Friend, *Acts 9. 4.* hence the Afflictions of Saints are called the Afflictions of Christ, *Col. 1. 24.* what *Hester* said concerning her people, may be more truly spoken by Christ, *Hester. 8. 6. How can I endure to see the Evil that shall come upon my people.* He is grieved at the Evil of their Sins or Sufferings, *Mark. 3. 5. Eph. 4. 13.* and takes wonderful Pleasure in their Welfare, *Poov. 8. 31.* no tender parent can more earnestly desire the Happiness, and rejoice in the Advantages of his Children, than Jesus Christ in his, *Psal. 147. 11.* If the Joy of his Ambassadors doth much depend upon the Prosperity of the Souls of their Auditors, *3 Epist. Joh. ver. 4.* Then surely himself is not altogether unconcerned.

Lastly, His preparing a Heaven for them, *John 14. 2, 3. In my Fathers House are many Mansions, I go to prepare a place for you, &c.* The Lord Jesus knows that his departure from the World with the sad Consequences thereof, would breed great Trouble in the Hearts of his Disciples; therefore labors to prevent it, by telling them of the occasion of his Departure, that it was for their sakes, and in their business; and though the World would abuse them when he was

gone, and cast them out of their House and Country, yet he tells them, he had a Father in Heaven that would receive them, and he was going thither to prepare a place for them, and there was store of room for them in Heaven. The word, translated *Mansion* here, signifies, an abiding, fixed place. Here you dwell in Tabernacles, but in Heaven are places for you, out of which you shall never be turned more. Don't expect much Happiness in the World, but look to Heaven for all your satisfying Comforts: There's a Rest for you, after all your wearying Duties and Troubles; there are pleasant Habitations, after all your Wilderness Journeyings: There's a large dwelling-place; here you are thrust into corners, and may be have little conveniencies in your Houses: Here you dwell in Strangers, and perhaps, Enemies Houses, but there your dwelling shall be in your Father's House. 'Tis really so, I do not flatter you with vain hopes, or feed you with false reports: if it were not so, I would have told you. Some might object here, That there may be Houses in Heaven, and yet they in Hell. No (says Christ) I go to prepare a place for you; when I come to Heaven, I will bespeak a House for you, it shall be your own, your own proper Right, everyone of you, and of all my People, shall have a House of their own, and it shall be free simple, theirs to all Eternity. But some may say, How shall we be sure of this, that when we die we shall have a place in Glory? Why, saith Christ, As sure as I go to Heaven, shall you have a Mansion there; for, 'tis one end of my going thither; 'tis part of my business there, I go to prepare a place for you. (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) This word, saith *Grotius*, notes a Divine Appointment, a place that God allots and appoints for you: that you might not think it is procured by your own Merit and labors. As if he should say, you may be sure, my People, you shall not miss of a place in my Father's House, because he hath given you a house in Heaven, and I go to possess it for you, and to make it sure: My Father hath given it, and I have purchased it, and now I go to take it into my own hand for you: yea, to fit and suit your Lot in Heaven, as may be most meet for you, and as may bear a full proportion to all your Labors, and Sufferings for me. And thus the word likewise imports (saith *Dr. Preston*) to fit and fashion one, as a Vessel is fashion'd and shap'd to its proper Use. But Believers may urge, Lord, how shall we get thither? the Journey is far, the Way we know not; many Dangers lie betwixt this and Heaven; the Prince of the Air, and all the Devils of Hell lie betwixt this and Glory; and how shall we get safely through all these Dangers? Why, saith Christ, I will come again and receive you, when I have done your Work in Heaven, when I have dispatched my gathering, and completing work on Earth, when all my Saints are called and perfected, then will I come again, and receive you to myself; I will come and unite your Souls and Bodies together, and then will show you the way to Heaven, and lead you into your own habitations there, and as surely put you into possession of Glory, as I am going to possess it for myself; and in the mean time, I will take care of you in the way, and send my Spirit to guide you, and bear you thorough it, and my Angels, when you are at your Journeys end, shall receive your Souls, and bring them unto me, that where I am you may be also, *Joh. 17. 24. Joh. 12. 26*. What greater Love can there be than the Engagements of Christ's Heart, to get all his Children brought home to Heaven, that they may be ever with him, and partake of his Glory, *1 Cor. 15. 22, 23*.

CHAP. X.

Several Deductions drawn from the Love of Christ.

IF the Lord Jesus be so full of Love and tender Affection: then,

First, What reason have Sinners never to be quiet, till the Lord Jesus become their Friend, till they have an Interest in his special Love. Alas, poor Souls▪ the common Love of Christ, though now you fare the better for it, will shortly be at an end: His Philanthropy, though precious, yet is but like a Box of Ointment, which may be wasted and consumed, *Mark*, 14. 4. But his special Love is like the two Olive Trees, *Zach*. 4. 12. always emptying out itself through the golden Pipes of his Ordinances to his People: Christ's common Love to Sinners, is like a Land-flood, that will be drained: But his special Love is compared to a Fountain, a Wood of Water that springeth up to Life Eternal. O then labor after an Interest in this Love of Christ, that brings Salvation: Put away the Evil of thy doings, hearken to Christ's counsel, receive him into thy Heart by Faith; obey his Voice, take him to be thy Lord and God, and thou shalt possess his love too, *Psal*. 45. 10.

Secondly, Then what an abominable thing is it to hate Christ? how inexcusable will Sinners Enmity against him be when he comes to Judgment, *Jer*. 2. 5. *Prov*. 8. 36. *All they that hate me love Death*, *Psal*. 21. 8, 9. *Psal*. 132. 18. *Nah*. 1. 2.

3dly, Then why should Believers take up such hard thoughts of Christ? *Isa*. 40. 27. *Why sayest thou, O Jacob, my way is hid from the Lord, and my Judgment is passed over from my God?* that is, my Condition, my trouble, my Soul is out of God's thoughts: He takes no notice of, nor cares what becomes of me: *And my Judgment;* that is, God's judging my Cause, his righting and helping my oppressed Soul, is gone from me, or he hath laid it aside, he will not help me in my Affliction. This was *Zion's* complaint, and hard thoughts of God, and this displeased him; *Why sayest thou, O Jacob, &c?* As if he should say, what cause hast thou, O *Israel*, my People, to entertain such harsh conceptions of my Love? what Iniquity hast thou found in me? what wrong have I done thee? Have I not born thee from the Womb, and carried thee all the days of old? Look back to the Red Sea, and to the Wilderness, who cared for thee there? Call to mind the Manna, and the Rock, the Bread and Water on the Way; I suffered none to do thee harm, I delivered thee out of the hands of all thy Enemies, and plagued them that injured thee: Thus have I been thy help from thy Youth up, and why sayest thou then, my way is hid from the Lord? O *Jacob*, thou dost ill to censure me so severely; Is this the requital of all my love and kindness to thee hitherto? Repent of these injurious apprehensions, and put more favorable constructions on my ways; Gracious Souls have no reason to prejudge the Heart of Christ, and censure him of unkindness and negligence: for 'tis impossible he should forget his People, *Isa*. 49. 15. He hath paid too dear for them to do so: They have cost his Blood, Eternal Counsels, many Troubles, many Wonders, and will he reject them after all? O no. He hath engraven them on the Palms of his hands, where he cannot but see, and must secure their names, *Isa*. 49. 16. I cannot look upon my hands, but I must remember thee: I should forget myself, should I forget thee: thou art set as a Seal upon my Heart, and thy Walls are continually before me: that is, though thy Protection be gone for a time, and I have left thee to the Will of thine Enemies, yet I will redeem and secure thee, I will raise up thy Walls, and re-establish thy State, for thy Walls are before me, though thou seest them not, I can and will preserve them; thou art Weak, but I am strong, I faint not though thou faintest, I am

never weary though thou art tired, and as sure as I have Strength, I will give it thee; they that wait on the Lord shall renew their Strength, *Isa. 40. 28.* Again, you cannot see the way to get out of your Troubles, your Wisdom is non-plust, but mine is not so; *There is no searching of my Understanding:* O then do not give up thy Hopes O *Jacob*, or conclude I have forgotten thee: He hath promised he will not cast off his People, nor leave them comfortless, *1 Sam. 12. 22. Joh. 14. 18. And he is not as a man that he should lie, &c. Numb. 23. 19.* He hath given them his Seal to it, *2 Cor. 1. 22. Eph. 4. 30.* Nothing can separate his love from them, *Rom. 8. 35. 38, 39.*

Object. *But I am afraid I am none of Christ's, nor have the Spirit, because of the Filthiness, Obdurateness, and Irregularity of my Heart.*

Answer, If ever thou hadst the Spirit, thou hast it still, *John 4. 14. Isa. 59. 21.* Gracious Souls may sometimes seem to themselves to be carnal, and sold under Sin, *Rom. 7. 14.* They may not see any good thing dwell in them, *ver. 18.* but be like to the slain that lie in the Grave, *Psal. 88. 5.* So *Heman* thought himself one free among the dead, whom the Lord would remember no more: in the Winter there's little visible difference between the living and the dead Tree; neither is there betwixt a Saint and a Sinner in time of Desertion and Temptation: God's Children may be led captive by Sin, and brought into Bondage by their Lusts, *Rom. 7. 23.* and then 'tis hard to say, how unlike they are to them that never knew God; and therefore Christian judge not thyself by thy changeable Frames, if thou dost not repent of thy Change, thy leaving thy old Courses and choosing God and Grace, a *Corinth. 7. 10.* If thou dost not approve of any Sin, or secretly love thy filthy ways, *Romans 7. 15. 20.* If thy Heart be discontented with thy state of backsliding, and longeth after a return to thy resting place, then thou art gracious, *Jer. 31. 18. Psal. 14. 7.* If thou dost find a War betwixt thy Members and thy Mind, the Law of the Spirit of Life warring against the Law of Sin and Death, thy state is good, *Rom. 7. 21, 22 23. Gal. 5. 17. The Plesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these are contrary one to the other. (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉)* The word notes a vehement and continued Desire, a Desire which is still in Action, and working till we have it accomplisht, not a sudden Motion or momentary Passion. Look how Corruption and Lust works against Grace, so doth Grace against Corruption, *for these two are contrary, (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉)* the one lays Seige against the other, as a Soldier in a Trench against a Fort. Now if it be so with thy Soul, that thou findest in it two parties, as Twins in the Womb opposing each other, and dost experience something in thy Will against Sin, as well as for it, and something in thy Affections, an Enemy to thy Corruptions as well as a Friend; if thou longest as much for Freedom from Sin as from Hell, and thy Heart cannot be at peace whilst the Body of Sin remains in thee, then lift up thy head, O Soul, Judgment shall be brought forth to Victory, and the top stone shall in due time be laid with shouting, Grace, Grace! to it.

Fourthly, Then you that are Christ's, take heed you abuse not his Love, *Rom. 6. 15. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the Law but under Grace? God forbid.* That is, shall we yield our Souls to the Service of Sin, as *verse. 16.* or give a willing Consent to the Commission of it? God forbid; That is, far be it from us, noting it to be a vile and abominable thing, to Sin under Grace, and against Grace; this is a most disingenuous thing to abuse love, and requite Evil for Good: it is most unjust to injure him that loveth you, 'tis a costly Sin, and will have a bitter

reckoning at last, 'tis a Spot notoriously like the Spot of Reprobation, *Jude*, v. 4. But if it may consist with Grace, yet it will break your Bones, and scourge you soundly e're God hath done; what did *David*, *Solomon*, and *Peter*, get by abusing divine Love?

Fifthly, Admire Christ's love, his love is admirable passing Knowledge, you use to admire things that are strange, and beyond your reach, but what more miraculous and unparellel'd than this, That the Lord of Glory who hath Angels at his Service, should set his Affections on poor polluted Dust and Ashes, on Fleas and Worms, as *Abraham* and *David* acknowledged themselves to be, that so illustrious a person as the Lord Jesus should fall in love with so deformed a piece as man, in whom was neither Beauty nor Riches, Virtue nor Honor, and be enamored of him so greatly, as to take him into his Bosom, and a conjugal Relation with himself; 'tis so stupendous a Miracle, that 'tis said, he shall be admired of all that believe when he comes, *2 Thes.* 1. 10. O Christians gather in all your Valuations from Creatures, for your Creator and Redeemer, *Isa.* 63. 1.

Sixthly, Adventure on the Love of Christ, swim on these deep Waters, roll yourselves on these divine Depths, and confide in his new Covenant love, for 'tis unchangeable love to the end; many waters cannot quench it, *Cant.* 8. 7. Trust his Love (I say) in the way of Obedience, *Joh.* 14. 21. 23. If his love be free, then 'tis not for your sake, *Deut.* 7. 17. Not for your Beauty or Holiness, but for his own good Pleasure, *Of his own Will begat he us*, *Jam.* 1. 18. He loves you Believers, because you are his own, *Joh.* 13. 1. And because it hath pleased him to make you his people, *1 Sam.* 12. 22. If he loves those that love him, then surely he will kindly resent the Ardency of thy Affections to him; O adventure on this Love.

Seventhly, love him who hath so loved you, *1 Joh.* 4. 19. *Psal.* 31. 23. *O love the Lord all ye his Saints*. The Reason is laid down from the 19. *verse* to this, *O how great is thy Goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee*, &c. The greatness and Excellency of Christ's Love deserves yours; O love him at all times, and in all things, with a free, supreme, steady, rational, and expressed love.

Lastly, Be full of love to others for Christ's sake, *Eph.* 5. 2. *Walk in Love as Christ also hath loved you*, *1 Joh.* 4. 11. Love all men, such a love is in God, he loved the World, *Joh.* 3. 16. and every Creature in it; such a Philanthropy is in Christ, he would have all men come to the Knowledge of the Truth, that they might be saved, *1 Tim.* 2, 4. Love your Enemies, *Mat.* 5. 44. so did Christ: he prayed, Father forgive them, *Luke* 23. 34. love his Friends, *1 Joh.* 5. 1. *Eph.* 6. 24.

CHAP. XI.

The glorious Excellency of Christ's tender Pity opened and displayed in the several Acts of it, both to Saints and Sinners.

ANother Discovery of the Sweetness of Christ's Disposition is,

Thirdly, His Pity, this is looked upon as an excellent Qualification, and that which renders a person lovely among men, *Rom.* 5. 7. *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die*: for a just man, one that is strict and

rigid in his Life and matters of Justice, none will die; but for a good man, that is, for a bountiful, liberal man, for a Benefactor (saith *Beza*) for a Friend (saith another) some would even dare to die; Kindness and Compassion renders men lovely and amiable in the Sight of Heathens: hence one calls a merciful man a precious thing, and another makes him equal to God, God himself prefers Mercy above Sacrifice, *Mat. 9. 13.* This the Lord opened to *Moses* as part of his Glory, *Exod. 34. 6. The Lord God merciful and gracious, &c.* And this mercifulness is placed in the Nature of Christ, as Mediator, and therefore must needs render him glorious, and be part of his unsearchable Riches: now that the Lord Jesus is so full of Pity and Mercy in his very Nature, the Scripture is clear. This was one Qualification necessary to his Priesthood, *Heb. 2. 17.* This was a special Requisite to the Priest under the Law, that he should be one who might have Compassion on the Ignorant, and them that are out of the way, *Heb. 5. 2.* Therefore the high-priest must be a Man, not an Angel, that so he being subject to Infirmities, to Sins, and Weaknesses himself, he might the better have Compassion upon others in the like ease. The same Argument the Lord useth to *Israel*, *Deut. 10. 19. Love ye therefore the Stranger, for ye were Strangers in the Land of Egypt.* Experience of Affliction fits a person for pity to others, and therefore, our Lord took our Nature upon him, that being compassed with the same Infirmities (Sin only excepted) he might be able to have Compassion on others: this is necessary in that Office, for a person will never be active in such laborious work for Sinners, as offering of Gifts and Sacrifices for Sin, if he have not tender Bowels towards persons in Misery: and therefore Jesus Christ must needs be such a one, who can have Compassion, &c. The word is significant, 'tis in the Original (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) to have Compassion on others according to the Measure and Proportion of their Misery: *Pareus* renders it, to have Compassion as much as is needful; *Beza*, to be affected according to the greatness of another's Misery, and such is the Compassion of Christ, 'tis suited to the Condition of his People: were Christ's Pity but one Grain short of the Misery and Condition of Sinners, he could never save them to the utmost; for if he will save to the uttermost, he must ever live to make Intercession; there's no one moment of time, in which they do not want help, and must have Gifts offered for them: But this Christ will not do, if he wants Compassion, *Jam. 5. 11.* The Lord is said to be pitiful, and of tender mercies (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) of many Bowels; or, as *Piscator*, *multum visceralis*; much bowelful, all pitiful, from inward deep Bowels (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) The word is to pity with the Bowels of a Mother, to be prone to compassion: So *Aestius*; *He is rich in mercy*, *Eph. 2. 4.* Great in Quantity, and Choice in Quality, great Mercy, and choice Mercy, *Psal. 5. 1. According to the multitude of thy tender mercies.* The word *Rab*, multitude, signifies Quality as well as Quantity: many Mercies, or weighty Mercies: Mercies; *Rachamim*: 'Tis such love and pity as Mothers bear to the fruit of their Womb, which is fervent and flaming. The word hath no singular number, because there are many works of Mercy, saith *Piscator*.

Now this Compassion of Christ lies in these two things.

- 1. In his sympathizing with his Creatures.
- 2. In supplying and supporting them.

First, Pity hath sympathy in it: an inward Heart-affecting sense of another's Evils, *Psal.* 103. 13. *Like as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him*, *Judge.* 10. 16. *His Soul was grieved for the Children of Israel.* The word signifieth, His Soul was short'ned, or contracted in him, by reason of grief. 'Tis spoken by an *Anthropopathy*, according to the apprehensions of men: As a man is filled with grief, his Breast is straitened, that he can scarcely breathe; It denotes how much the Lord Jesus is affected with the miseries of his People, *Heb.* 4. 15. He is said to be touched with the Fellow-feeling of our Infirmities, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , suffering with us. Christ, in Heaven, hath such a fellow-feeling of the Evils of his People, as that he resents their troubles as his own. He is tender-hearted, and every misery of theirs reacheth his Soul. But this hath been somewhat treated of before.

Secondly, Readiness to supply, and support others in their Misery; and this is eminently manifested in the Lord Jesus, *Isa.* 38. 20. *The Lord was ready to save me.* Men sometimes have a hand, but no heart; they may help, but will not; they only say, Go and be fed, and be clothed, &c. Others have a heart, but no hand; they have not to supply the needs of others; their Cruse of Oil, and Barrel of Meal will reach but a little way: besides, there may be some Cases in which Men or Angels cannot help, *Psal.* 142. 4. *I looked on my right hand, and behold, there was no man would know me*, &c. But there can be no Condition in which Omnipotency fails to help, *Heb.* 7. 25. *Jer.* 32. 27. And Christ is as really willing as able to save: He is an inexhausted Fountain of all good. *Sufficit omnibus* (saith *Pareus*) *nec sufficit tantum, sed dat liberalissime. Dives est* (saith the same Author) *sufficiencia & affectu*: He is good, and doth good: He feeds, gathers, carries, leads, his poor infirm Flocks, when they most stand in need of him, *Isa.* 40. 11. When they are ready to faint for want, he opens a Well, and fills their Bottles: when they wander from their resting-place, he sends his Dogs, and gathers them to his Fold; when they are weary, and can go no further, he takes them into his Arms and carries them: when they are hungry, he feeds them, when they are naked, he clothes them: when they are sick, he visits them, when they are in Prison, he comes to them: He giveth to his People richly all things to enjoy, *1 Tim.* 6. 17. He exhibits, or yields out, all things, (not some things only) and that richly too: plentifully, not in Title only, but in Fruition also, *Heb.* 4. 16. He giveth Grace to help in time of need: He sends them seasonable help, help in fit time: (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) This word signifies, to run at ones call, to help him as soon as he cries for help; to run in to his Succor; so doth Christ. He is a present help in time of need, *Psal.* 46. 1. When they can hold out no longer, he will relieve their Siege; when they are ready to perish, he will step in betwixt them and destruction, *1 Cor.* 10. 13. And this he doth too from a tender heart, that feels, and shares in their Dangers. Poor Believer! let thy Condition be never so bad, the Lord Jesus hath an open heart and hand for thy help. It may be, men may harden their hearts against thee, good men may take little notice of thee, Priest and Levite pass thee by, and will not know thy Soul in adversity; but yet comfort thy heart, thou hast a Friend in Heaven, that grieves with, and for thee, and will open Treasures to supply thee.

Now this pitiful Nature of Christ appears in divers particulars, both to Saints and Sinners. To Saints.

First, In looking after their Concerns, *Exod.* 2. 22. 'Tis said, that God looked upon the Children of *Israel*; and had respect unto them. This is an act of pity to look after the welfare of another. Merciful *Jesse*, when his Sons were in danger, sent *David* to look after them, *1 Sam.* 17. 18. So is the heart of Christ concerned in the welfare of his People, *1 Pet.* 3. 12. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his Ears are open to their Prayer: He knows their Souls in Adversity, considers their Troubles, and looks after their Matters, *Psal.* 31. 7. *1 Pet.* 5. 7. The want of this looking after a Persons welfare, is an evidence of the want of pity, *Jer.* 15. 5. *Who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem, &c?* O, what comfort is this to poor afflicted Souls, that though men look not after them, Friends matter not what become of them, yet the Lord careth for them.

Secondly, In laboring to prevent their Evils. This is another act of pity, as we may see in *Mordecai* and *Esther*. A dreadful Danger was near to *Israel*; a Decree passed by the King to cut them all off in one day▪ When *Mordecai* heard of this, how industriously doth he labor with *Esther*, to improve all her Interest in the King to prevent it, *Esth.* 4. 8, 13, 14. Christ cannot foresee any Dangers impending on his People, but his Bowels stir him up to employ his Omnipotency to remove them. And this he doth,

First, By warning them of their Danger. He sends them alarms, and gives them notice, as a Watchman, when their Enemies are near, *Ezek.* 3. 18. *Heb.* 11. 7. *Noah being warned of God, &c.* So *Joseph*, *Matth.* 2. 13. was warned of God in a dream to flee into *Egypt*, wh•• Christ was in danger of *Herod's* bloody butcheries. *Ezek.* 33. 11. *Turn you, turn you from your wicked ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?*

Secondly, By keeping their hearts from closing with Temptations, when they are like to prove dangerous: So he dealt with *Joseph*, *Gen.* 39. 9. Perhaps he may permit their falling into some lesser Evils, to try, and humble them; but when the Sin will probably occasion a great dishonor to God, and endanger the final estate of their Souls, then usually he will give forth preventing Grace to direct their hearts from closing with it.

Thirdly, By plucking them back, when on the borders of destruction. Thus *David's* feet had well nigh slipped, and he was almost gone; and then He opens a passage for him into the Sanctuary, and graciously reconciles to him his seemingly contradictory Providences, *1 Sam.* 24. 4, 5, 6. *Psal.* 73. 2, 3, 17. And L••, when by lingering in *Sodom*, he had almost exposed himself a prey to devouring Flames, the Angels suddenly plucked him out, and kept him from that impending ruin, *Gen.* 19. 10, 16.

Fourthly, By sore Afflictions, smarting rods, and cross Providences, he sometimes prevents their sins, and so their destruction, *Psal.* 119. 67. *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept thy word.* Thus the Waters of *Marah* have sometimes led to the Waters of the Sanctuary; and grievous Distempers on the Body have proved the health of the Soul. I have read of one, that by breaking •is Leg saved his Life.

Fifthly, By breaking the Snare when they are in it, and so making a way for their escape, *Psal.* 124. 7. The snare is broken, and we are escaped. When *David* was compass'd round by *Saul*, and no possible way was left him to avoid the Jaws of ruin, then the Lord sent in the

Philistines to call off *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 23. 24, 25, 26, 27. So, when the Protestants in *France* were almost starv'd with *Famine*, and reduced to that extremity that all hopes of *Safety*, in man's judgment failed them, then was *God's* time to come in to their rescue, by sending in *Ambassadors* to call off the *Duke of Anjou* to be King of *Poland*, by which means the *Siege* was removed, and upon the mediation of these *Ambassadors*, the Protestants obtained *Liberty*. Thus he saved *Isaac* also, when *Abraham's* Knife was at his *Throat*, *Gen.* 22. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Lastly, By giving them a *Vomit*, when the *Poison* is taken in, that so it may be timely ejected, before the danger be unremovable. This way *God* prevented *David's* ruin, in the matter of *Bathsheba*, after he had fallen into the sin, by giving him *Repentance* to *Salvation*, *Psal.* 51.

Thirdly, Another act of his pity is, His being soon affected with the *Evils* of his *People*, *Zach.* 2. 8, 9. He that toucheth you, toucheth the *Apple of mine eye*. His *Soul* was grieved for the misery of *Israel*, *Judge.* 10. 6. He pitied the poor *Leper* in distress, *Mark*, 1. 41. and was moved with compassion because the *Jews* were as sheep without a shepherd, *Mark* 6. 34.

Fourthly, His visiting them in their distresses: this is an act of love and pity, *Matth.* 25. 36. I have been sick, and ye visited me, *Joh.* 14. 18. *Joh.* 20. 19. *Exod.* 3. 8. A merciful nature will show itself in visiting such as are afflicted; If others be sick they will go see them, and condole with them: they will go rather to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting, *Eccles.* 7. 2. They are companions of the distressed: and such is the tenderness of *Christ's* heart, that he chooseth the company of the miserable: If his *People* be in the *Water*, and in the *Fire*, he will be with them, *Isa.* 43. 2. If they be cast out of the *Synagogues*, persecuted, and deserted for his sake, he will find them out, and keep them company, *Joh.* 9. 35. If they be cast on sick beds, he will sit by them; if they cannot sleep through trouble, he will sit up with them; when they are solitary and dejected, he will come and see them.

Fifthly, His comforting them in their *Troubles*: He is the *Father of Mercies*, and *God of all Comfort*, who comforteth us in all our *Tribulations*. Consolating is an act of pity to those that are in trouble, 1 *Thes.* 3. 2. So *Job's* Friends, when they had heard of all the *Evil* that was come upon him, they came everyone from his place to mourn with him, and to comfort him. Herein lies much of *Christ's* pity to his *People*, he would not have them swallowed up of overmuch grief, 2 *Cor.* 2. 7. When they are cast down, he charges his *Messengers* to speak comfortably to them, *Isa.* 40. 2. When he brings his *People* into the *Wilderness*, he will speak comfortably to them, *Hos.* 2. 14. *Isa.* 66. 13. chap. 57. 18. This is part of *Christ's* *Intercession* in *Heaven*, that the *Father* would send the *Comforter* to them, *Joh.* 14. 16. And part of his last counsel that he left with them, was, That they would be of good cheer, *Joh.* 16. 33. *Joh.* 14. 1. He began his *Sermon* with a *Use of Comfort*, *Let not your hearts be troubled*, &c. and here he closeth the same with a word of *Comfort*. And indeed, the whole of *Christ's* *Fare-well Sermon*, was *Consolation* to his *People*: He would not have them be in *Heaviness* longer than need did require, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. but commands them to rejoice evermore, 1 *Thes.* 5. 16.

Sixthly, His counseling them in all cases, wherein they stand in need of his *Advice*: Hence they have *Line upon line*, and *Precept upon Precept*, that they might be wise to *Salvation*; and therefore he is called the wonderful *Counselor*, *Isa.* 9. 6. *Psal.* 16. 7. I bless the *Lord*, who

hath given me counsel. Counsel (saith Ainsworth) about my Sufferings, and the Glory that shall follow, Job 36. 8, 9, 10. Adversity sometimes is God's University; and, Schola Crucis (saith Luther) is Schola Lucis: Mysterious Truths many times spring out of Affliction-depths.

Seventhly, His giving to them, and forgiving of them. Pity hath open hands, and stretched out arms. Christ hath left a large witness of his liberality, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. *Who giveth richly all things to enjoy.* Men give sparingly, but Christ bountifully; they with straitened hearts, but he with open bowels; they sometimes in Reversion, but he in possession. And he doth not only give, but forgive, *Mic.* 7. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardons iniquities, &c? Exod.* 34. 6. *Psal.* 86. 5. *Thou Lord art good, and ready to forgive,* *Numb.* 14. 20. 1 *Joh.* 2. 1. They run into debt, and he dischargeth them: They do, as it were, write down their Iniquities, and he blots them out. Now, Are not these admirable demonstrations of his Pity, and affectionate compassions of his tender Bowels towards his People?

Secondly, He hath infinite Pity for his Enemies; Mercy and good will for Sinners, *Luke* 6. 35. This appears,

First, In his bearing with them, and forbearing of them, *Rom.* 9. 22. *Endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction:* How doth the Lord suffer the vilest of men to live, and that very long? *Lo, I have come these three years looking for fruit,* *Luke* 13. 17. *These forty years have I been grieved with this People,* *Psal.* 95. 10. An hundred and twenty years did he bear with that high and incurable wickedness of the first World, and that after it was come to the full, *Gen.* 6. 3. Four hundred years did God bear with the sins of the *Amorites*, even after he had given *Abraham* their Land, *Gen.* 15. 13, 16. How long did the Lord bear with the Ten Tribes after their Apostasy from his pure Service? even the space of two hundred and fifty years; in which time there were Nineteen Kings, and all wicked men, walking in the steps of *Jeroboam*. O! the slowness of God to Anger, even against his Enemies, that dare him to his very Face, yea, that trample his Glory underfoot, and that every day, yea hour; and yet God spares them to old Age many times. Alas! how soon are we angry at our Enemies, and if but slighted a little, ready with the Disciples to call for Fire from Heaven, to consume those that receive us not, *Luke*, 9. 54. But the Lord Jesus is not so, he waiteth that he may be gracious, and his longsuffering leadeth to Salvation.

Secondly, His maintaining of them, and that sometimes at the highest rate, giving them Honor and Riches, Prosperity and Favor. *Pharaoh* must have a Kingdom, and yet an Enemy to his People: *Nebuchadnezzar*, an Empire; *Ahasuerus* an hundred twenty and seven Provinces; *Croesus* vast riches, and *Sardanapalus* delicate Pleasures. All the Creatures are pressed at their Service; the Air, Earth, and Sea are ransackit to satiate their Lusts, *Hos.* 11. 2, 3, 4. He feeds and clothes, helps and prospers his greatest Enemies, and all to heap up Coals of Fire upon their heads.

Thirdly, His affectionate seeking their Salvation. This was his Errand into the World, he came to save Sinners, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. Lost Sinners, *Matth.* 18. 11. Bloody Sinners, *Ezek.* 16. 6. Blind Idolaters, *Acts* 17. 23. Cruel Persecutors, *Acts*, 9. 4. Wicked Sorcerers, *Acts*, 8. 9. These the Lord Jesus seeks to save; he sends his Gospel, to invite them to come unto him, *Matth.* 11.

28. Yea, beseeches them, 2 Cor. 5. 20. Makes large promises to them, if they will return, Isa. 55. 7. Act. 3. 19. Yea, how doth the Spirit strive with Sinners, that they may be saved; Reasons with them, *Why will you die? Come, let us reason together*, Isa. 1. 18. *Why wilt thou not suffer me to save thy Soul, and to make thee happy to all Eternity? Poor Sinner! I have a real mind to do thee good, an affectionate kindness for thee; I came from Heaven to save such as thee. Behold my hands and my feet, see how my heart bleeds for thee: Behold, how ready my purchase is; yonder is thy fair Estate, if thou wilt be mine. Lift up thine eyes to those Mansions, Crowns and Thrones; all these shall then be thine: See those beautiful Garments, consent to me, and thou shalt wear thy filthy Rags, or lie in those pinching straits no longer; thou shalt lodge no more in those stinking Kennels of thy Lusts: O poor Sinner! why wilt thou stand in thy own light, and slight this offer, which thou mayest never have made thee more? Lo, how my Bowels move towards thee, see how my Arms are opened to thee; Be mine, and I will be thine; My Kingdom shall be thine, my Friends will be thine, my Servants shall be thine: My Angels shall protect thee, yea, attend thee; my Creatures shall maintain thee, my Wisdom shall guide thee, my Faithfulness shall keep thee, my Power shall be laid out for thee, my Love shall delight thee, my Honor shall adorn thee, and my Treasure shall enrich thee: I will be a loving Husband to thee, I will provide all good things for thee; I will rejoice over thee, I will forget the wrongs thou hast done me; I will requite thy Unkindness with Kindness, and draw thee with cords of Love: with cords (saith one) woven and spun out of my very Heart and Bowels. O miserable Caitiff! embrace my Counsels, listen thine Ears to Heaven gate, and hear the melodious Music that is there made by refined Spirits; why, wilt thou rather lie with damned howling Devils, than sing Hallelujah's, and the Song of the Lamb with saved Souls? Accept of me, and unchangeable Glory, unspeakable Privileges, and Rivers of Pleasures shall be thine. Thus doth the Lord Jesus woo poor perishing Souls to be happy: and is not this Pity indeed?*

Fourthly, His readiness to receive them when they come to him: No sooner do they open the door but he comes in, Rev. 3. 20. *If any man open the door, I will come in unto him*. No sooner doth the Prodigal return, but his Father meets him; yea, runs to meet him, as if he could never come soon enough at him, Luke 15, 20. Mercy is upon the wing, when it comes to receive returning Sinners. No sooner did Ephraim repent, but God repented too; As soon as he said, *Turn thou me*, God said, *He shall be turned*; when he cries, *Thou art the Lord my God*, presently God Answers, *Is he not a pleasant Child?* So willing is Christ to receive returning Sinners, as that he promiseth he will in no wise cast them out, Joh. 6. 37. Yea, if they cannot come unto him, he will go and fetch them, and if they cannot go, he will draw them, Joh. 6. 44.

Fifthly, His great Joy when he hath obtained them; The Father of the Prodigal keeps a Feast, and makes merry when his lost Child is found, Luke 15. 23, 24. Psal. 104. 31. The Lord shall rejoice in his Works, and this he doth when he hath finished them, Heb. 4. 4. But there is nothing the Lord Jesus Christ takes more pleasure in, than in the Redemption of Souls, Prov. 8. 31. He delighted in the habitable parts of the Earth. This you will find further amplified in the Parables of the lost sheep, and lost piece of Silver, Luke 15. from verse. 4. to 11.

CHAP. XII.

The Improvement of the Pity of Christ, by way of Terror, Encouragement, and Advice.

ARE there such deep, and large Bowels of Pity in Jesus Christ, not only towards his Friends, but his very Enemies? Then here is,

First, Terror to Impenitent Sinners. Ah, Souls! how fearfully great is your Sin, being a plain defiance to the Mercy and pity of Christ: Every Transgression of yours is a kicking the very Bowels of Mercy, and a stab at the Heart of Divine Pity: O! how vile are your Iniquities, whilst without Christ! They are no less than a despising of the Riches of the Mercy and Goodness of God, which would have led you to Repentance, and a treasuring up of Wrath against the day of Wrath, *Rom. 2. 4, 5.* O Sinners! you run on score in abusing of the highest Mercy that ever was, you provoke your best Friend against you: Alas! Who can help you if Mercy itself becomes your Enemy? The Bowels of Christ are your last *Asylum*, if this door be shut against you, *Farewell Souls*; and can you hope that Mercy will plead for you, when rejected by you, or will not God hear the Complaint of despised Mercy think you? Sinners, the Compassion of Christ shall come forth at the last day, and say, I would have saved that Soul, but it would not, how often would I have gathered it, but it resisted? *Mat. 23. 37.* I offered to pay it's Debts, and to get him an Acquittance in the Court of Heaven, but he refused it; I would have ransom'd him from Death to Life, and adopted him to an Inheritance in Glory, but he would not; I would have stamp'd the divine Nature on him, and brought him into the Likeness of the Lord of Glory, but he would not; I would have put down his Name in the book of Life, and secured his Title to Heaven, but he would not; I called, he would not answer; I persuaded, he refused; I beseeched, he despised, I strived, he resisted; and now Justice, into thy hands do I deliver these rebellious Souls, to be dealt with according to the Threatenings of the Gospel and Severity of the Law, that my Wrongs may be avenged. O! what a terrible Complaint will this be? Sinners, tremble then at the Thoughts of your abusing divine M•rcy.

Use 2. Of Encouragement to dejected Souls. If there be such tender pity in the Lord Jesus, O then take Courage hence to hope for Mercy; these Mercies of Christ are infinite, boundless and bottomless; O what a stock of Mercy is in him, for troubled Souls to trade upon, what unfathomed Deeps are there in divine Compassions, enough to serve all thy Turns and Necessities; have thy Sins been many? *The free Gift is of many Offences to Justification, Rom. 5. 6.* Of the Offences of many persons, be they never so many, or the many Offences of one person, there is virtue enough in this free Gift of the Blood of Christ for the pardoning them all, if such return: he (saith one) that had love enough to give us Christ, hath Bowels enough to give us pardon: believing Souls shall never die for Debt, if the Bowels of Christ hath wherewithal to pay it; O! what Shifts will tender Parents make to keep their indebted Children out of Prison? They will beg and borrow of others, pinch themselves, and spare what they can, rather than their Children shall be undone: and surely the Mercy of Christ must needs make the most of his Blood and Obedience, of his Intercession and Satisfaction, for the Pardon of his People. And therefore *Daniel* joins Mercies and Forgiveness together, *Dan. 9. 9.* Is thy Unworthiness great, and deservest thou nothing but Wrath from God, O bear up thy Sinking Spirit on the Arm of Mercy, Mercy is in vain, and signifies nothing, if Justice only must take place: hast thou abused Mercy and sin'd away the Favor of thy God? Thou hast lost his Gift, but he hath not lost his giving, the Child spils his Water and goes to the Well to fill his Pitcher again: there is more Mercy (O troubled Soul) in the deep Wells of

Salvation, for those that seek it. *Obj.* But I have provoked God to withhold Mercy. *Ans.* Let me tell thee, O distressed Believer, there are Forgivings as well as Givings in the Bowels of Christ, and I know not which are greater: Are thy Wants many? Be of good cheer, Mercy hath enough to supply them all, and is as free to give as able, and take this for thy Encouragement: Mercy never gives where there are Deservings. Are thy Grievs, Labors, Fears, Troubles, and Burdens great? Yet comfort thyself, Misery and Mercy are a Kin, Mercy lives in the •lymate of Misery, and never thrives better than in Misery's Ground; to do good to miserable Creatures, is Meat and Drink to Mercy, *John 4. 32. I have Meat to eat that you know not of.*

Use 3. Of Exhortation. First, to perishing Sinners; make use of the Mercy of Christ whilst you have it; now is the acceptable time, the day of Grace, the Season of Visitation; now the Sun shines not only in *Zion* but on *Sodom*; nay it hath stood still on your *Gibeon* for a Season, *Josh. 10. 12. 13.* O let not Mercy go, and leave you in your blood, and let you lie in your Graves; let not the Sun of the Gospel set on you, and leave you in inner Darkness, lest outer Darkness shortly seize upon you: believe it, Mercy seems to be near a Departure, it looks as it were, about to change Houses, to go from *Gentiles* to *Jews*, from *West* to *East*, it seems near setting in *England*, in these *Western* parts of the World. Who knows how soon it may arise in the *East*? O Sinners, do not you lie a bed in your Security, and let Mercy give you the slip. O then you that are yet in your blood, under Wrath, in Danger of Judgment; be advised to strike in with Mercy, while 'tis to be had, *Isa. 55. 6.* while divine Bowels yearn towards you, weep over you, and wait for you, O turn in, and close with Mercy, while its face is unveil'd to you, its Arms opened to you, and before it hath breathed its last Breath to you; believe the Warnings and Treatnings of Mercy, bow and stoop to the Convictions of Mercy, receive the Tenders thereof, obey its Counsel, and persevere in its way; be persuaded Sinners this day, it may be the last time, I may beseech you for Mercies sake, to turn and live: and Oh! how doleful will it be to out-live the day of Mercy, and possibility of obtaining Salvation, when the Angel of the Lord shall proclaim, *Time shall be no more, Time was, but now is past.*

Secondly, to all Souls, both changed and unchanged, if the Lord Jesus be so pityful to you, O then be not cruel to your own Souls, do not rob, cheat, and cozen your own Souls, deprive them not of your own Mercies, *Jonah. 2. 8.* Don't consent to those ways that will rob you of all the Possibilities and Hopes of Salvation; O! the sweet Comforts and Pleasures that now you loose for a few dirty Delights, *Prov. 3. 17.* Think on the Substance, the tried Gold, the rich Attire that you deprive your Souls of by refusing to hearken to the Counsel of Christ, *Rev. 3. 18.* Don't starve your Souls by feeding on Husks, while the bread of Life lies before you, this is Cruelty to them indeed, *Luke 15. 16. 17.* Do not wound, rend, and tare your Souls by cruel Lusts: he that sins hateth his own Soul, *Prov. 15. 32. chap. 29. 24. Math. 16. 26.* O the sad Bruises that Sin gives, and the desperate Gashes it makes in the Sinners own Soul; *Isa. 1. 6. Prov. 8. 36.* Every Sin of thine (O carnal wretch) is a deadly blow on thy own Soul: all thy carnal Pleasures, thy merry jesting Words, thy Swearing, Lying, Cheating, Oppressing, and Covetousness gives new Stabs to thy Heart; it would be a barbarous sight to behold one unmercifully wounding another, much more to see a person torturing his own Soul; do not sell thy immortal Soul for a Lie, for that which is not, which will not profit in the day of

Wrath, *Rom.* 6. 21. *Jer.* 16. 19. Thus *Elijah* told *Ahab*, *1 Kings* 21. 20. That he sold himself to work Wickedness, that is, he gave himself wholly to the Service of Sin, as a Servant that binds himself over to another's Business, *Rom.* 6. 16.

Thirdly, To the Children of Mercy, whom the Lord Jesus hath loved and washed in his own Blood: you that are chosen, called, justified, sanctified and adopted unto Glory, be exhorted.

First, be not hard-hearted to Christ, requite not his Pity with Cruelty, grieve not his Spirit, sadden not his Heart with your sinful and unsuitable Walkings before him: no Sins make greater Wounds on the Heart of Christ, than the Sins of his own Children, *Eph.* 4. 30. O be not cruel to him who is so tender of you, do not feed him with Wormwood and Gall who hath feasted you with Joy and Gladness, yea with his own Heart blood.

Secondly, Put on Bowels of Pity towards others, *Col.* 3. 12. They that are cruel to others, shall find God cruel to them, *Jam.* 2. 13.

Thirdly, Adventure for God in the way of Duty, *Psal.* 5. 7. *Psal.* 23. 6. *Psal.* 25. 10.

Fourthly, Then let the Consideration of Christ's Mercy comfort you under the World's Cruelty, and your greatest Sufferings for Christ, *Psal.* 57. 3. *Psal.* 32. 7. 10. *Psal.* 59. 17.

CHAP. XIII.

Wherein is opened the transcendent Humility of Christ.

ANother part of this total Sum of Christ's personal Treasure, consisting in the Sweetness of his Disposition, is,

Fourthly, His Humility and Lowliness of mind, This is an excellent Virtue, and that which the very Heathens have esteemed at a high Rate: 'tis a rare thing (saith *Aretius*) and rare things are excellent: *Chrysostom* calls it the chiefest Virtue, the Salt that seasons all other Excellencies, and the Beginning of all Good. If any (saith *Austin*) should ask me what is the chiefest Virtue? I should say, *Humility*; what is the next? *Humility*, what is the next? *Humility*. The humble Soul (saith *Manton*) is God's second Heaven, *Isa.* 57. 15▪ Of so great a worth is all true Humility in any, especially in Persons of Height and Grandeur: for these to come down, and humble themselves is exceeding high and noble. O then what is Humility in the high and lofty one, in the Lord of Glory and King of Kings, and Lord of Lord's; yet this is part of Christ's Treasure, *Mat.* 11. 29. *Learn of me, for I am meak and lowly*: He who best knew himself, who is Truth itself and cannot lie, hath declared that he is lowly, and that not in Carriage, and external Shew only, but in Heart also: O what stupendous wonder is this, that so glorious a person as the only begotten Son of God should be lowly in Heart? I speak not here of his divine Nature as God, though in that respect he is lowly too, *Isa.* 57. 15. Though he inhabiteth the highest Heaven, yet he dwelleth also in the lowest Heart; yea 'tis wonderful Condescension in God to behold the things that are in Heaven and Earth, *Psal.* 113. 5, 6. But I treat here of Christ as Mediator, God-man, and so he is humble and lowly in Heart, which will appear, if we consider these particulars,

First, His Humility whilst he was on Earth.

Secondly, His Humility now he is in Heaven.

His Humility on Earth consists, first, in his Willingness (being God over all and Maker of all) to become man his Creature; this is strange, that the Son of God should be willing to be accounted, yea to become the Son of man, *Heb. 2. 16. He did not take the Nature of Angels upon him, but he took on him the Seed of Abraham; so verse. 14. Forasmuch then as the Children were Partakers of Flesh and Blood, he likewise also himself, took part of the same.* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) He did freely receive their Communion-nature, or did freely communicate with them in the same Nature: *He took on him the Seed of Abraham,* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) he consented to take their Nature, and therein to be their Avenger and Redeemer, as the word imports: O Humility! That this glorious *Jehovah* should condescend to so near a Union with man, a Creature so low and of so small Account, *Isa. 2. 22. Psal. 8. 4.* A Creature so poor, destitute of all Good, and deprived of its Beauty, Strength, Riches, and Glory, *Psal. 140. 12. Rev. 3. 17.* A Creature so filthy and vile, that it drinketh up Iniquity as water, *Job. 15. 16.* And a Creature so guilty before God, of Rebellion and high Treason, one that hath forfeited all his Mercies, and stands bound over to the just Sentence of Death and Condemnation.

Secondly, in his Birth, He was born of mean and obscure Parents; *Joseph* his Father was a Carpenter, he descended not from persons of the highest Dignity, but of low Estate, as *Mary* herself acknowledgeth, *Luke 1. 48.* He was born in a Stable, and laid in a Manger, *Luke 2. 7.* A contemptible place where brute Beasts use to lodge and feed; he was worshipped by the wise men of the *East*, acknowledged to be King of the *Jews*, and proclaimed to be Savior of the World by an Heraldry of Angels, and yet hath no better Cradle than a Manger. O unparallel'd Condescension!

Thirdly, In his voluntary making himself of no Reputation, and taking on him the Form of a Servant, *Phil. 2. 7.* He did, as it were, evacuate himself, and spoil himself of all his Glory as the word signifies; not that he ceased to be God, or to be equal with the Father, but he concealed all this Glory, and as it were, deprived himself of all the Manifestations of it, by uniting to himself the form of a Servant, that is, the human nature in a servile State: he took upon him the Form of a Servant, *Non dimittendo quod erat, sed assumendo quod non erat* (says *Zanchi*) As God he was omnipotent, but this Omnipotency was hid under the weakness of his human Nature, his Omniscience veiled under a limited Knowledge, his Glory clouded under Shame, his Riches concealed under Poverty, his Majesty obscured under Contempt, and his Immortality clothed with Mortality. *Quest.* What Servant did Christ take on him the Form of? *Ans.* Why: 1. Of the Servant of God, *Isa. 42. 1. Behold my Servant whom I uphold.* Some take it passively, on whom I will lean, and in whom I will trust, and commit my whole Work unto: others actively, whom I will raise up and strengthen, and carry through my Work. Again, 2. He became the Servant of man also, *Matth. 20. 28. The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.*

Fourthly, In his being made under the Law, *Gal. 4. 4. When the Fulness of time was come God sent forth his Son made under the Law,* and therefore 'tis said, he was a Minister of the Circumcision:

O! What Humility was this? That the Son of God should stoop to the Paedagoge of the Law, and enter on this low and legal Obedience.

Fifthly, In his Obedience to his Parents, and Submission to their low and mean Condition, both for Food and Apparel, *Luke 2. 51. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them.*

Sixthly, In his Employment, and Calling he was pleased to use, till he entered upon his Ministry: He continued with his Father, and (as one of the Fathers hath it) wrought at his Father's Trade, and therefore was called the Carpenter, *Mark, 6. 3. Joseph (says Mr. Lightfoot) taught Christ his own Trade: And Justin Martyr (an ancient Writer) says, That Jesus Christ, before he entered upon his Ministry, made Plows and Yokes.*

Seventhly, In his Company: He did not choose the Society of Great and Noble, but of mean and obscure Persons: He set apart Fishermen and Publicans to be his Disciples, and accompanied Publicans and Sinners, which caused the Senate of *Rome* to vote him down from being a God, because all his Disciples and followers were inconsiderable and beggarly, *Joh. 7. 48.*

Eighthly, In his contentment with mean things: He had not a house where to lay his head, *Matth. 8. 20.* And 'tis said, he was willing to be poor, *For being rich he made himself poor, that we, through his poverty, might become rich, 2 Cor. 8, 9.* He was content with any fare, Barly Bread and Fishes; a broyled Fish, and an honey-comb, *Luke 24. 42.* He was not as proud Persons are, nice, and choice of his Diet, but was pleased with any food, *Joh. 21. 5. Children, have you any meat?*

Ninthly, In his submissive carriages towards God and men; when the Lord bruis'd him, and made his Soul an Offering for Sin, we find not one hasty or undue Expression: But, 'tis said, He was led as a Sheep dumb before her Shearer, *Isa. 53. 4, 6, 7.* All that he said, was this humble complaint, O God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? He was rejected and despised of men, and yet maintained an humble deportment, *ver. 3.* He was lowly to all Persons, not only to the high and noble, but to the poor and despicable; not only to Friends but to Enemies; not only abroad but at home; not only among the meek and humble, but among the proud and peevish; not when it was admired, but when despised.

Tenthly, In his doing the meanest Services: He condescended to the lowest, and most contemptible actions, if he might administer good, *Matth. 20. 28.* He girded himself with a Towel, as a Servant, and washed his Disciples feet, *Joh. 13. 4, 5.*

Lastly, In his patient bearing others Sins, and Sufferings. Proud men cannot endure to bear another's Fault, but Christ was willing to be numbered amongst Transgressors, to be reckoned an Offender, and to bear the Sins of many, even of all that come unto him, *1 Pet. 2. 24.* He humbled himself to the Death, *Phil. 2. 8.* To a shameful Death; the Death of the greatest Malefactors; and to the cursed Death of the Cross.

Secondly, The Lord Jesus was not only humble whilst on Earth, when he passed through his state of Humiliation; but even now, when he is in Heaven, and hath entered into his Glory, he detains this lowliness of heart. This will be perspicuous, if you consider,

First, His Condescention to behold the things on Earth, *Psal.* 113. 5, 6. One would have thought it beneath the Dignity of Christ, now advanced above all Glory, to take any notice of Sublunar Affairs: but if he delighted in the habital Parts of the Earth, before he came down to redeem them, then much more now he hath the possession of the fruit of his Blood among them.

Secondly, His Converses with the meanest, and most despicable Persons on Earth, by his Spirit, *Isa.* 57. 17. *Joh.* 14. 19, 21, 23. Be they never so low and poor, yet, if holy, he takes up his abode with them, and keeps his Court amongst them.

Thirdly, His bowing down of his Ear to hear the cries of his poor, and despised People, *Psal.* 10. 17. *Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble, Psal.* 31. 2. *Bow down thine Ear to hear me.*

Fourthly, His gentle and kind reception of their poor, pitiful Offerings and Services, *Psal.* 51. 17. *The Sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit, a broken and a contrite Heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*

Fifthly, His owning them in the face of the World, before Kings and Rulers, *1 Chro.* 16. 21, 22. *He is not ashamed to call them Brethren, Heb.* 2. 11.

Sixthly, His appearing for them in Heaven, and confessing them before his Father's Face in Glory, *Matth.* 10. 32. *Heb.* 9. 24.

Seventhly, His looking after their meanest Concerns, and numbering the very hairs of their head, *Matth.* 10. 30.

Lastly, His slowness to Anger. But this properly pertains to another excellent Disposition of the Lord Jesus Christ, namely his Meekness, where you may find it fully handled.

Is Jesus Christ of such an humble, submissive Disposition? then,

First, Admire the greatness of Divine Love, in giving such a Savior, of so humble and lowly a Spirit: Had not the Son of God been of a condescending Nature, he would never have become man; and what then would have been the state of Sinners? Had he not been of a lowly mind, he would never have consented to have come into the World in the form of a Servant; and then enthralled Sinners could never have been made free: Had he not been humble, he would never have been willing to be made under the Law; and then the righteousness of the Law had never been fulfilled: Had he not been lowly, he would never have borne our Fault and Punishment; and then our Sins must have been charged upon our own heads.

Secondly, This will serve to shame the proud hearts of men, especially those that profess Christ: O, see the vileness of your Pride in the glass of Christ's Humility!

Thirdly, Labor to be like to Christ, and to be enriched with this excellent adorning Grace of Humility.

Fourthly, Here's Encouragement to humbled Sinners, from the Lowliness of Christ: You that see your Iniquities to be heavier than you can bear, and are afraid because of the Terrors of the Almighty; yet be encouraged to come to Christ, because he is humble, *Isa. 57. 15.* You that see no Worthiness in yourselves to come before him, but are fearful to approach into his Presence, because of your Poverty and low Estate; be encouraged to draw nigh to him, because he is humble, *Isa. 41. 17.* You that see an Infinite distance betwixt God and you, and so dare not approach him; let his Humility encourage you, he will not despise the Prayer of the destitute, *Psal. 102. 17.* You that think your Souls beneath the thoughts and care of such a God, and that he will take no notice of you; O, consider his Humility for your Hope, *Psal. 113. 6.* Cherish expectations from Christ's Humility, for the mortification of your Pride; because 'tis God's Ordinance and appointment unto this end, *Matth. 11. 29.*

CHAP. XIV.

Wherein is shewn, the transcendent Meekness and Gentleness of Christ; To his Enemies, and to his People.

ANother Branch of the sweetness of Christ's Disposition and Nature, is,

Fifthly, His Meekness: *He is meek and lowly, Matth. 11. 29.* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, that is, facil and easy, (as Critics derive it) because they that have this Meekness, are of a gentle, pleasing, and affable Spirit to others: The *Latins* express it by *Mansuetus*, one used to the hand, alluding to those wild Beasts that are thus tamed; They are gentle, and brought to the hand; they are sociable and familiar, not strange and harsh: And such is the Lord Jesus; he is meek, of a sweet and gentle Spirit and carriage towards all, when he opens himself as a Savior to them, but especially he is so towards his People. Meekness especially relates to Anger, as allaying, and moderating of it; So *Arist.* defines it to be the sweetening of ones Spirit, removing its roughness, harshness, and Passion, and rendering it gentle, pleasing, and affable, even to them that provoke it. Now this is an excellent Spirit, *1 Pet. 3. 4.* 'Tis spoken of *Moses*, as one of his chiefest Excellencies, *Numb. 12. 3.* *Now the man Moses was very meek.* And the Lord Jesus sets forth this to be the greatest Excellency that he presents in himself for the Imitation of his People, *Matth. 11. 29.* When the Prophet *Zacharias* would delineate the stately Majesty of Christ, in his Kingly progress to his People, he displays him in the Glory of his meekness, *Zach. 9. 9.* *Thy King cometh to thee meek, &c.* So *Psal. 45. 4.* The Glory of Christ in his triumphant March in the World, is held forth in his Meekness and Truth; this is part of Christ's excellent Glory, as Mediator, *2 Cor. 10. 1.* *I beseech you by the Meekness of Christ,* Now the Lord Jesus is replenished with Meekness.

First, To his Enemies, This he manifested whilst on Earth, to such as hated him, abused him, and sought to take away his Life; 'tis of such the Prophet speaks, *Zach. 9. 9.* compared with *Math. 21. 5.* Now this Meekness of Christ to his Enemies appears.

First, In his Slowness to Anger, *Psal.* 103. 8. *The Lord is slow to Anger.* He was not easily provoked whilst on Earth, under all the Provocations and Abuses cast upon him, *Matth.* 12. 19. *He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear his Voice in the Streets.* Passionate persons will strive to have their Will when crossed, to defend their Names, to oppose their Adversaries, and to revile them that reproach them; but Christ was not so, he strove not in a contentious, quarrelling way, but being reviled, reviled not again, *1 Pet.* 2. 23. Under all his Sufferings, such as were able to make the meekest man on Earth to cry out, and to stir up his Spirit against them, yet Christ was silent, *Isa.* 53. 7. *He was oppressed, he was afflicted, and yet opened not his Mouth, he is brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before his Shearer is dumb, so he opened not his Mouth.* You shall not find one froward Word from Christ in all his Sufferings, by *Jews* or *Gentiles*; look over the Jeers and Reproaches that were cast upon him in his Life, and at his Death; *Is not this the Carpenter's Son,* *Matth.* 13. 55. *Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Mary,* *Mark* 6. 3. They called him a Wine bibber, a Friend of Publican's and Sinners, and yet we find him as a Sheep, dumb before the Shearers: The *Pharisees* charged him to be on that had Correspondence with Devils, *Matth.* 9. 34. but he was silent: another time they call him a blasphemer, *Matth.* 9. 3. but see how mildly Christ answers them, *verse.* 4. *Why think ye Evil in your Hearts?* Another time we find him slighted by the *Samaritans*; he was coming to a Village in *Samaria*, and sent Messengers to provide for him, but they refused to entertain him, and take him in, because his Face was as though he would go to *Jerusalem*, *Luke* 9. 51. &c. because he seemed to be of another way of Religion: they could not endure him, because he was for instituted Worship, and seemed to profess a stricter way than the *Samaritans*: *He looked like a Puritan* (saith Mr. Burroughs) *and therefore they shut him out of their Houses*: now this was no small abuse, an ordinary Spirit would not bear to have a door shut against him; and hereupon, some of the Disciples, *James* and *John*, pleaded for Revenge, and would have had Fire from Heaven to destroy them, *ver.* 54. Yet see the Meekness of Christ's Spirit under this Affront, *ver.* 55. *He turned and rebuked them, and said, ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of, for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's Lives, but to save them.*

Secondly, In his mild Answers to them; how mildly did he answer the *Jews*, who said, he was a *Samaritan*, and had a Devil, *John* 8. 48. 49. All his Answer was, *I have not a Devil, but I honor my Father, and ye dishonor me*; see in that Chapter, how contradictorily and crossly they behav'd themselves to him, yet with what wonderful Gentleness he answers them: when *Judas* came to betray him, *Matt:* 26. 49. with what Calmness doth he treat him, *verse* 50, *Friend wherefore art thou come?* Who could have given so gentle words to so vile a Traitor, but the Mirror of Meekness? *Luke* hath it thus, *Judas betrayestthou the Son of man with a kiss?* *Luke.* 22. 48. what thou *Judas* my Disciple, who hast been so long with me, known my Kindness, and eat and drunk at my table? what thou betray the Son of man, and combine to take away thy Master's life? canst thou find in thy heart to deal so treacherously with thy Lord? How did he reprove *Peter* for smiting the High-priest's Servant that came to take him, *Matth.* 26. 51. to 55. How scornfully did they treat him? *Matth.* 26. 61. *This Fellow saith I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and to build it in three days*; but he held his Peace, *v.* 63. The *Jews* mocked him, blind-folded, and smote him, *Luke* 26. 63. *Herod* with his men of War set him at naught, *chap.* 23. 11. *The Rulers derided him, saying, others he saved, let him save himself if he be the Christ the chosen of*

God, ver. 35. But lo how gently this patient Lamb revenges these high Indignities, ver. 34. Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Thirdly, In the Offices of Love, he shows them; he went about doing Good to his very Enemies, heaping Coals of Fire on their Heads, healing their sick, feeding their hungry, and preaching the Gospel to their poor, *Matth.* 14. 14. chap. 11. 5. His pitying them shows his Meekness, *Luke* 19. 41. He beheld the City, and wept over it: now this Meekness of Christ as it is excellent in itself, so 'tis eminent in degree; 'tis large, and abundant Meekness; weigh but these following Considerations, and you will say the same.

First, The Greatness of those Provocations he hath received from them; Sinners under the Gospel make light of Christ, *Matth.* 22. 5. They despise him, *Acts* 13. 4. They reject him, *Joh.* 12. 48. They rebel against him, *Isa.* 1. 20. They crucify him. *Joh.* 19. 15. They blaspheme his Name, they bely his Truth, abuse his Love, undervalue his Blood, trampling it under Foot, deny his Right, defraud, and injure his Interest, rob him of his Glory, hate his People, and seek to hinder his Kingdom, and yet he mildly puts up these high Indignities; Oppression will •ache a wise man mad, but cannot render Christ ungentle.

Secondly, The Continuance of these Provocations; All the day long have I stretched out my hand to a gain-saying people, *Isa.* 65. 2. every day, *Isa.* 52. 5. Three years, *Luke* 13. 7. Forty years, *Heb.* 3. 9. Continually, *Gen.* 6. 5. And it is no small Provocation to have a Trial lie on a persons back, yet see the Lothness of Christ to destroy his very Enemies; he waits that he may be gracious, and beseeches them to turn and live, *Joh.* 5. 40.

Thirdly, The greatness of his Person, he is the Majesty on high, King of Kings, and Lord of Lord's, *Rev.* 19. 16. He hath Right to Service and Worship from all his Creatures, *To him every Knee must bow, and Tongue confess, Phil.* 2. 9. and yet that he should bear so meekly, the Abuses, Scorns, and Contempts of the vilest men, is wonderful: great men are soon incensed when their Honor and Interest are invaded; but the Lord Jesus is great, and yet meek, a King, and yet lowly, *Psal.* 45. 3, 4. *Zach.* 9. 9.

Fourthly, The Despicableness of the Persons that abuse him; they are his Creatures, made, and mainrain'd by him, inferior Worms whom he can crush every Moment, and strike dead with his Look, *Isaiah* 1. 2. chap. 45. 9.

Fifthly, The great Kindness he hath for them, he comes in their Errand to save their Souls, he sheds his blood, that they might live, underwent the Law, and bore his Fathers Wrath, that they might enjoy his Favor, and be saved to the uttermost if they believe: and is not this a wonderful Discovery of his Meekness?

Secondly, His Meekness to his People is exceeding great, as I shall illustrate in a few particulars.

First, In his bearing with them, he did not only bear their Sins for them when on the Tree, but many Provocations and Abuses from them now in Heaven; so he bore with the *Israelites*, *Isa.* 3. 8. Though their Tongue and their Doings was against the Lord to provoke the Eyes of his Glory; this was not the Carriage of Heathens, but of his own People; their Provocations

was not a single Act from one part of them, but the whole Body combine against him in Word and Deed: these were not supposed Injuries, but real; not intermitted, but continued; not seldom but frequent. How oft did they provoke him in the Wilderness, and grieved him in the Desert, they tempted him, limited him, and murmured against him for Water, for Bread and for Flesh: they rebel'd against him, against his Institutions, in *Moses and Aaron*, against his Command about gathering *Manna*, sanctifying the Sabbath, and going against their Enemies. They continually provoked him to Anger, even to his very Face, *Isaiah* 65. 3. vexed and grieved his holy Spirit, and yet he bears it in the Wilderness for forty years, in the Land of *Canaan*, eight hundred and sixty years before the Captivity; after this, five hundred, ninety, and six years before he cast them off. O the admirable length of the Patience and Meekness of Christ towards that People, in bearing with them, considering the Kind and Length of their Provocations: so under the Gospel, he hath a people redeemed by his Blood, such as avouch him for their Lord, and tread in his Courts; now to these also he exerciseth much Long-suffering and Patience if you weigh,

First, the Multitude of their Sins, they are more than can be numbered, more than the hairs of their head, *Psal.* 40. 12. Sins of Thoughts, Words, and Deeds; Sins against Law and Gospel, the first and second Table; Sins in Duty and out of Duty; Sins every day, every moment, *Gen.* 6. 5. Sins to the last hour of their Lives, till their Tabernacle be pulled down, and the body of Death destroyed; and this is not only the Condition of one, or of a few Souls, but of all the Elect, every man that liveth, *1 Kings* 8. 46. *There is none that sinneth not.*

Secondly, The Aggravation of their Sins taken,

First, From the persons sinning, The redeemed of God, such as have been bought with a great price, *1 Cor.* 6. 20. *1 Pet.* 1. 18. The pardon of whose former Sins cost so dear, the Sons and Daughters of God, *Deut.* 32. 19. Souls loved and chosen out of all the World, to be his; yea they only elected, and all others left, *Amos* 3. 2. Adopted to a glorious state, to be Kings and Priests unto God, to be Heirs and Co-heirs with Christ, to be a name and a Glory to him; and yet for these to be always grieving, always provoking, always reproaching of him, is hard indeed, but not too hard for Christ to bear.

Secondly, From the person against whom they sin, they sin against their Father who loved them with an everlasting Love, drew them with the Cords of Love, and led them in the paths of Love, who hath given his Son for them, and to them, and fixed his unchangeable Love upon them, imparted the royal Privileges of Sons to them, and yet to Sin against him who is the Father of Christ, and their Father, whose Glory was dearer to him than his own Blood, is an aggravated Sin indeed.

They sin against God the Son, who gave himself for them, and bought them with a great price.

They sin against the holy Ghost, who visited them in their low Estate, and brought them the good News of Salvation; who broke open their Prisondoors, and let them forth into a glorious State of Liberty; who quickened, enlightened, comforted, and helped them in all

their Soul-straits; now to sin against this God the Father, Son, and Spirit, cannot but exceedingly provoke the Soul of Christ.

Thirdly, the State in which they sin; O! how inconsistent is this with such an high and glorious Condition, *Rom. 6. 14.. Sin shall have no more Dominion over you, because you are not under the Law, but under Grace.* The Sins of such are the works of Darkness in the day time, Acts of Enmity in a state of Reconciliation, and grievous Bondage in times of Liberty.

Fourthly, The dangerous Effects of their Sinning; 'Tis a corrupt Tree that brings forth sad Fruit, even the Grapes of *Sodom*, and the Wine of *Gomorrhah*; their Sins rob God of his Glory, and bring a greater Dishonor to him than all the Sins of the World besides, *Rom. 2. 23.* They grieve the Spirit of Christ whereby they are sealed up to the day of Redemption, *Eph. 4. 30.* They depress and load, yea break the Heart of God, *Amos 2. 13.* They endeavor to frustrate divine grace, and render the Death of Christ in vain, *Gal. 5. 4.* They do (as it were) reduce the Lord to a great strait, what to do to save their Souls, *H's. 6. 4.* they Shipwreck all their Duties, and put a Vanity upon all their Profession, Labors, and Sufferings; such run in vain, *Gal. 2. 2.* They sadden the Hearts, and weaken the hands of the Godly, and become stumbling blocks in their way, *Psal. 119. 158.* And they do a great deal of mischief to the wicked in prejudicing them against the Lord Jesus, and his holy ways, in hindering their Reception of the Gospel, and depriving them of the Fruits and Labors of Christ towards their Conversion, in justifying them in their ways, encouraging them in their Sins, and in causing them to blaspheme the holy Name of God.

Fifthly, The blessed Advantages they have enjoyed against their Sins; they have many Obligations against it, and many Experiences of the Evil of it, and yet still continue in it: O, this doth make the burden of the Sins of the Godly exceeding heavy to Christ, and yet that he should bear them so patiently, and not consume them: That, though provoked daily by the Brambles, and scratching Abominations of his People, yet his Fury should not be kindled into a terrible Flame to burn them up, doth manifestly demonstrate his meekness to be exceeding great.

Secondly, Christ's forbearing of his People, is another Evidence of his Slowness to Anger: He is not easily provoked, *Neh. 9. 17.* How long doth he forbear before he strikes? he first threatens, and then waits, calls and exhorts, shakes the rod, and then strikes gently, *Isa. 30. 18. Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious.*

Thirdly, His readiness to be reconciled to them, when angry, *Psal. 86. 5. Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive.* O, consider his persuading them to Repentance; how doth he labor to convince them of their Sin, and invite them to return; he entreats, reasons, and beseecheth them to be reconciled, *2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.* Lo, how affectionately doth he receive them when they return! how willingly doth he listen his Ear to their confession of Sin, and bemoaning of their condition? *Jer. 31. 18.*

Fourthly, The moderation of his Anger, when raised, shows his meekness, *Isa. 27. 7, 8. In measure when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it. He stayeth his rough wind in the day of his East-wind,* *Job. 11. 6.*

Lastly, His actual forgiving all their Iniquities, *Psal. 103. 3. Who forgiveth all thine Iniquities, Luke 7. 47. Isa. 44. 22.*

Use. Now, if the Lord Jesus Christ be so full of meekness to his very Enemies, so rich in gentleness, sweetness of Nature, and Patience to his People, then learn this needful Lesson of him; to be of a meek and patient Spirit. Behold, how quietly he took up his Cross, and bore reproaches and Indignities from the worst of men: yea, how still he was under the infinite weight of his Father's wrath. Learn meekness from his Gentleness, as the Elephant doth from the Lamb; when the Elephant is in his greatest Fury, set but a Lamb before him, and his wrath will presently be allay'd: Learn of Christ to bear Injuries, to restrain your Anger, not to be angry, but when Duty, and the Cause of God calls you to it: 'Tis only Sin should be the Object of a Christian's Anger. Moses was calm at his own Reproaches, but could not be still when God was dishonored. Learn from Christ to moderate the measure of your Anger; he corrects in measure: Let not your Anger exceed the desert of the Provocation; Learn from him to time your Anger. As a word fitly spoken, so Anger seasonably exerted is beautiful: and learn from him to remove it when the Cause is gone. Anger should be as Physic, laid aside when there is no need of it: True meekness may easily be discerned by its ends and grounds, it must not proceed from a willingness to be aveng'd on others, but to amend and reform them.

CHAP. XV.

Wherein is demonstrated the infinite Bounty of Christ to all his Creatures, with the manner of his giving.

THE next thing which discovers the sweetness of Christ's Disposition, and greatness of his Personal Treasure, is,

Sixthly, His Liberality: He is of a bountiful Disposition; and this, you know, is of an endearing Nature, *Rom. 5. 7. Scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. Psal. 13. 6. I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.* Now this Liberality of Christ appears,

First, To all his Creatures, *Psal. 145. 9. The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works, Psal. 136. 25. Psal. 145. 15. Whose heart is so large, whose hand so wide as Christ's? ver. 16. He upholdeth all things by the word of his Power, Heb. 1. 3. And by him all things consist, Col. 1. 17. There is never a moment but he is laying out upon his Creatures, and that must needs be a large Treasure that maintains the whole World.*

Secondly, To his Enemies: He doth good to those that hate him: He gives large portions of this World's goods to *Esau's*: And uncharitable *Dives's* do many times fare deliciously, and are clothed gorgeously, by his Bounty, *The wicked prosper, Jer. 5. 28.* Nay, he doth not only give them the fat things of this Life, but the great things of his Kingdom. O, the Privileges and Favors that Hypocrites enjoy as well as Saints! He sends his Gospel to every Creature, and causeth the very Dews of *Zion* to fall upon his Adversaris.

Thirdly, Especially to his Children; for to these he gives,

First, Good things: Whatever they have of him shall be good, *Jer. 32. 40. I will not turn away from them to do them good.* Their very Afflictions are for good: their Wormwood and Gall is good: Rebukes of God upon them, stripping and humbling Providences; nay, their very Corruptions, by this Bounty, prove to their advantage.

Secondly, All good things. *He gives Grace and Glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly, Psal. 84. 11. Psal. 34. 10.* All the good God sees fit for them, and they are capable to receive, shall be distributed to them.

Thirdly, Great things: Not Common, but choice Mercies, passing Knowledge, Mysteries, not only to the World, but to themselves: Things unsearchable, and things unutterable; Things that cannot be known as they are, nor valued as they deserve. *What one Nation (saith David to God) is like thy People, whom God went to redeem for a People to himself, to make him a Name, and to do for them great things and terrible, 2 Sam. 7. 23.* Redemption-work brings forth great and terrible things, for redeemed Souls. O, the great things that God doth, and Christ gives to every ransom'd Soul, *Job, 37. 5.* Things which we cannot comprehend, as you will see, if you give but a general Survey on the Inventory of Christ's Gifts. I shall instance in some of the most remarkable.

First, That invaluable Gift of Light. He is the Light of the World, *Joh. 8. 12.* How deformed is Darkness, how beautiful is Light, *Eccles. 11. 7. He is a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory, &c. Luke 2. 32. He is the bright Morning Star: the Sun of Righteousness from whom the light of Life and all true Wisdom comes; now this is a great and excellent thing, Eccles. 2. 13. Wisdom excelleth Folly, as far as Light excelleth Darkness,* and this you know is very far: Wisdom is preferred before Rubies, and the most excellent things, *Prov. 8. from ver. 10. to 20.* That must needs be great which all the World cannot purchase, but this is Wisdom: now all true Wisdom comes by Jesus Christ, he is the Wisdom of God, *1 Cor. 1. 30.* So, who hath brought to light the 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, the hidden things of God, and that could by no ways be known but by Revelation: *No man hath known the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him, Matth. 11. 27.* He giveth Knowledge and Wisdom to whom he pleaseth, that special Wisdom which none of the Princes of this World can attain unto, *1 Cor. 2. 7. 8.*

Secondly, Life; *He hath brought Life to Light by the Gospel, 2 Tim. 1. 10.* and is not this a great gift? *All that a man hath will he give for his Life, Job. 2. 4.* O! then what is Life from the dead to his people, *Eph. 2. 1. He is our Life, Col. 3. 3. I am come that they may have Life, and have it more abundantly, Joh. 10. 10.*

Thirdly, His Love; all the World and Houses full of Treasures cannot be compared to Love, *Cant. 8. 7.* Should Christ give all the World and withhold his Heart, it were but a mean gift: Favors are valuable by the love whence they come, *Isa. 63. 9. In his Love and in his Pity he redeemed them, Psal. 63. 3. Deut. 33. 3.* All Believers are set as a Seal upon his Heart, *Cant. 8. 6.* He hath loved them with an everlasting Love; they have his Heart, and none else.

Fourthly, Himself; There being nothing greater than himself, to demonstrate the Largeness of his Heart to his people; he gave himself, *Eph. 5. 25. Who loved the Church, and gave himself for*

it; that is, sold himself to purchase them, gave himself to divine Justice to satisfy the Law, and to taste of Death for them, all that he had as Mediator he parted with for them: and hath given himself to them also, *Heb. 8. 10. And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a People.* They have his person, *Hos. 3. 3. Thou shalt not be for another, so will I also be for thee.* All his Beauties and personal Perfections, as described, *Cant. 5. ver. 9.* to the end: all Believers have a Marriage right unto him by way of Gift; again, he hath given them his Purchase, all that he hath bought with his Blood, *Math. 26. 28. This is my Blood of the New Testament, shed for you.*

Fifthly, His Laws and Scepter to guide them through the World, and to steer out their Course of Duty and Safety, and this is a great thing, *Hos. 8. 12. I have written to him the great things of my Law (Rabab)* the excellent or honorable things of my Law: for this word notes Quality as well as Quantity; and if the things of God's Law are so great, what are the Truths of the Gospel, called so great Salvation? *Deut. 4. 8. And what Nation is so great that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous?* *Psal. 147. 19.*

Sixthly, His Spirit; This he gives to all his People, *Rom. 8. 9. If any man hath not the spirit of Christ he is none of his,* *1 Cor. 12. 13, We are all by one Spirit baptized into one body:* This is promised by the Lord Jesus, *Joh. 16. 7.*

Seventhly, His Promises; *For in him are all the Promises of God, yea, and Amen,* *2 Cor. 1. 20.* That is, they are sure and certain in Christ, *2 Pet. 1. 4. Whereby are given unto us, exceeding great and precious Promises,* *Gal. 3. 22.*

Lastly, His Kingdom; *Col. 1. 13. And hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son.* A blessed Change indeed, from Sin to Grace, from Darkness to Light, from the Kingdom of Satan, to the Kingdom of Christ, *2 Pet. 1. 11. So an Entrance shall be administered to you abundantly into the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.* All Believers are invested with the glorious Privileges of this Kingdom, they all become Kings and Priests unto God, *Rev. 1. 6.* Nay a Kingdom of Priests, *Exod. 19. 6.* They are entitled to all the royal Endowments, Investments, and Favors that belong to the Children of a King; they all wear his royal Robes of Glory, they have noble Entertainment, most delicious Food, the highest Honors and Thrones to sit on; Christ gives them the Inheritance, purchased Possessions and Mansions of Glory.

Fourthly, The Liberality of Christ appears in the manner of his giving, now this may come under a six-fold Consideration.

First, He gives readily and propensly: many give, but by Constraint, as the unjust Judge, *Luke 18.* or from fear of Shame or Reproach; men usually give with Reluctancy, but Christ readily, as *Paul* speaks of the Church of *Macedonia,* *2 Cor. 8. 3.* that they were prone to Charity beyond their power; and of *Titus,* *ver. 17.* that being more forward of his own accord he went unto them; so it may be more truly said of Christ, that he wants no external Motives or Perswasions to exert his Bounty. For,

First, Christ's Gifts are his people's due, they have Right to all his Fullness; Christ is the Believers and all that is his, *John 3. 16. Cant. 6. 3. I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine,* *1 Cor. 3. 21. For all things are yours,* they are purchased for them, and given to them.

Secondly, Christ's Office and public Designation to this Work shows it, he is set apart for this end, that he might be the Author of eternal Life, the Giver of all that good that his people need, *Joh. 17. 2. As thou hast given him Power over all Flesh, that he should give eternal Life, &c. Joh. 6. 27. Him hath God the Father sealed;* that is, deputed to this Office and Trust, to be the Lord keeper of his House, and Dispenser of his Fathers Goods. All that Christ hath as Mediator, is to be distributed to his: he hath nothing but must be employed for the Salvation of the Elect, for such is the Agreement betwixt the Father and him, *Joh. 17. 10. All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.*

Thirdly, He hath never the less for giving, and therefore never weary of giving; what's that makes men soon tired with Acts of Bounty, why because the more they give the less they have, and so fail at last in their Ability; but 'tis not so with Christ, he is Fullness still, notwithstanding all the vast Distributions that go out of his Treasury every day, to fill up Heaven and Earth, Men and Angels. (I remember a notable saying of a worthy Divine, *Should all the World (says he) set themselves to drink free Grace, Mercy, and Pardon, dry, drawing Water continually from the Wells of Salvation, nay if they should set themselves to draw from one single Promise, an Angel standing by and crying, drink O my Friends, drink abundantly, take so much Grace and Pardon as shall be abundantly sufficient for the world of Sins which is in everyone of you, they would not be able to sink the Grace of the Promise, one Hairs breath.*) When Beggars come to our doors, they many times promise us, upon the Reception of an Alms, they will trouble us no more, but this would be an improper Expression to Christ, whose Heart is so propense to give, and whose Treasures are inexhaustible, *Col. 2. 9. For in him dwells all the Fullness of the God-head bodily, Col. 1. 19.*

Forthly, He gets by giving; Advantage is a sure Agreement, all men seek their own, every man his gain from his Quarter: now if giving appears to be Christ's Advantage, you may be sure he will be willing to give; men lavish out their Gold for Idolatry, carnal persons pour out their whole Wealth upon their Lusts, the Merchant adventures all he hath for Gain, and can you think that Christ only will be close handed? *Psal. 68. 18.* Here 'tis said, he receives Gifts, *Eph. 4. 8.* 'Tis said, he gave gifts: what Christ received was not for himself, but to give unto Sinners, and that in order to his Dwelling amongst them; Christ's Gifts are to further his Service, *1 Pet. 4. 10.* and his Peoples Profit, *1 Cor. 12. 7.*

Fifthly, He is never more pleased, than when he gives; This appears in his earnest inviting Souls to ask of him, *Joh. 16. 24. Hitherto you have asked nothing in my Name, ask that your Joy may be full.* Had not the Lord Jesus a great Delight to dispense freely to his People, he would not have used such Arguments to persuade them to beg; 'tis said of *Titus Vespasian*, that he never denied anything to those that asked him, but would call upon them, to ask something of him.

Lastly, This doth wonderfully greaten his Glory, *Joh. 14. 13. Whatever ye ask in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.* This verse shows the Reason why the Saints shall do greater works than those that Christ did, because they shall have the Power of Christ to help them; he will do for them what they ask, and give them what they seek; and the reason is, because hereby the divine Glory is more manifested, the Fathers Glory in the Sons Glory; for the Father and he are one, and the Fathers Glory is his Glory, the more he

gives, the more the Father is glorified, and the more the Father is glorified, the more is the Son also.

Secondly, He gives freely without any respect to Merit or Compensation, *Rev.* 21. 6. *To him that is a thirst, will I give to drink of the Water of Life freely.* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) That is, without any antecedent Cause, Worth or Merit, *Rom.* 3. 24. *Being justified freely by his Grace.* As Justification comes freely without any Worth or Righteousness in man, so do all the gifts of God, *Rom.* 8. 32. How can he but with him freely give us all things? *1 Cor.* 2. 12. Christ doth not sell but give his Favors freely, according to the pleasure of his own Will, *Isa.* 55. 1. This is a Truth hard to be received, because 'tis beyond the reason of men, how Grace should move without any Motives and Attractives besides itself, but yet this bounty of Christ hath no respect of Persons, *2 Chron.* 19. 7.

Thirdly, He gives presently Mercies in hand, he doth not say as the unjust and covetous man, go, and come again tomorrow, and I will give it thee, when 'tis by him; he doth not delay to bestow Mercies on his poor Creatures, one Jot beyond the due time, *Psal.* 145. 15. *Gal.* 6. 9. Christ is never at a loss to give, he only stays for a fit time; he had many things to say to his Disciples, but he wanted a convenient opportunity; they were not able to bear them, *Joh.* 16. 12.

Fourthly, He gives heartily; *Jer.* 32. 41. *I will rejoice over them to do them good, with my whole Heart, and with my whole Soul.* He doth not pretend Kindness, and yet begrudge it in his Heart, all his Promises are the Intents of his Heart, *Jer.* 30. 24. *Psal.* 51. 18. *Do Good in thy good Pleasure to Zion.*

Fifthly, He gives liberally, *Jam.* 1. 5. *If any man lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God who giveth liberally.* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) Simply, purely, with a candid Mind and full Intent to do good: 'tis rendered bountifully, as Liberality comes from a simple and pure Heart, he gives many times more than we ask, as the sick man of the Palsy came for Health, and Christ gave him Pardon to boot; *Solomon* asked Wisdom, and God gave him more than he begged, Riches and Honor too, *1 Kin.* 3. 12. 13. He gives richly to his People of all good things to enjoy, *1 Tim.* 6. 17. Suitable to his Treasures, *Phil.* 4. 10. According to his Riches in Glory by Christ, above what we can ask or think, *Eph.* 3. 20. He gives a Kingdom, *Luke* 12. 22. and therefore bids us open our Mouths wide, and he will fill them, *Psal.* 81. 10.

Lastly, He gives constantly every day and every moment, he is never weary of well-doing, *Isa.* 40. 28. *The Lord fainteth not, neither is weary;* men are soon tired with Acts of Bounty, to which the Apostle alludes, *Gal.* 6. 9. But the Lord Jesus is a Fountain that never ceaseth running, he is always doing, there is never a moment but he is opening his Treasures and filling the hungry Soul, *Psal.* 73. 26. *God is my Portion forever.* The Saints are always living on God, and are ever receiving from him, *His Mercies are new every Morning,* *Lam.* 3. 23. Yea though through Carelessness they have lost their Mercies, as the Spouse lost the presence of Christ, *Cant.* 5. and the Tastes of his Love, *verse.* 2. 6. And though by Sin they have forfeited their Mercies, and have given the Lord cause to withhold them, yet he is never weary of doing them good, but always communicating something or other to them.

Use 1. Is Christ so bountiful? Then this may serve to convince all Christless Souls under the Gospel of the greatness of their Sin in slighting and contemning Christ, because it is utterly opposite to the Streams of his Bounty towards them; this, Sinner, will gall thy Conscience another day, when Christ shall say, what Iniquity hast thou found in me, that thy Heart is set against me? have not I born thee all thy days, maintained thee ever since thou wast born, and fed thee with Food convenient? and yet thou wilt have none of me, but liftest up thy heel against me, and crucifyest me with thy Sins every day; so did the Lord plead with *Israel*, *Hos.* 11. 23. 4.

Use 2. This will serve to humble the people of Christ.

First, For their great Unthankfulness to Christ; O how great are the Obligations of Believers to Christ, both for upper and nether Springs, thy daily Bread comes out of his Cupboard, all thy Comforts and Preservations are received from him, but especially thy Souls Mercies are the Products of his Bounty, thy Enlightnings, Awakenings, Drawings and Begettings to God, thy Pardon, Peace, and hope of glory are all from him, and yet who renders to Christ for all the Benefits done to him, who returns to give Glory to God; this is a grievous Sin, *2 Tim.* 3. 2.

Secondly, For their hard Thoughts of Christ; hath the Lord Jesus laid out so much upon thee, and hath yet such Riches in Store for thee, and art thou always distrusting of him, and on every occasion jealous and suspicious of his bounty? *Ps.* 77. 7, 8, 9. *Ps.* 78. 22. 32.

Thirdly, For their little Improvement of Christ's bounty; see this in *Joash*, *2 Kin.* 13. from ver. 17. to 20.

Fourthly, For looking to Creatures for their Supplies more than to Christ, *Jer.* 2. 13. This is a heathenish Sin, *Rom.* 1. 25. *They loved and served the Creature more than the Creator* *Isa.* 55. 2.

CHAP. XVI.

Wherein the Faithfulness of Christ is opened, in accomplishing all his Prophecies, fulfilling his Promises to all the Trust committed to him, and in all the Relations he stands to his People.

THE Sweetness and Excellency of Christ's Disposition consists also.

Lastly, In his Justice and Fidelity; he is righteous, true, and faithful in all he doth and undertakes, and this argues an excellent Spirit; this was part of that Glory, the Spirit of God puts on *Moses*, *Numb.* 12. 7. *But my Servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all my House, with him will I speak Mouth to Mouth:* even apparently, God puts a singular Value on *Moses*, hath a peculiar kindness for him, and affords him more intimacy with himself than others have, because of his Faithfulness: So *Daniel*, It was his great Honor that his very Enemies could not spot him, or find any Error in him, on the account of his Unfaithfulness, *Dan.* 6. 4. 'Twas this brought *Judah* into so high an Estimation with God, as 'tis said, *Hos.* 11. 12. *Judah ruled with God, and was faithful with the Saints.* Nay a faithful person is a Jewel so rare, that he can scarcely be found, *Prov.* 20. 6. *Every man will proclaim his own Goodness, but a faithful man, who can find?* That is, as some render it, 'Tis a common thing for men to talk of their Goodness, Bounty

and Mercy, but 'tis a rare thing for them to be so indeed, to be so good as they seem to be. Others comment on it thus, 'Tis an easy thing for men to promise fair, and to speak of great things they will do, but few are found that perform their word, and are what they promise to be. Take it in either Sense, a faithful man is a rare thing, who can find it, as seldom seen almost, as a black Swan, or a rich Jewel. Now the Lord Jesus is thus excellent, he is true, though every man be a Liar, called *the faithful Witness*, Rev. 1. 5. His Name as well as Nature is faithful, Rev. 19. 11. The Lord Jesus gives a faithful Testimony of the love that God bears to Sinners, he lay in the Fathers bosom, and hath given a true Revelation of him, Rev. 1. 5. Isa. 11. 5. *Faithfulness is the Girdle of his Reins*. The Prophet alludes to those Ornaments, Kings did use to wear; they wore a Girdle as an Ensign of Honor and Power, Job 12. 18. *He looseth the bonds of Kings*, that is, their Girdle, by which he means their Power and Authority, which he removes: now instead of this Ensign of Honor which Kings did wear, Christ shall be clothed with Faithfulness and Righteousness, this shall be his Ornament and Glory, Heb. 2. 17. *He is the faithful high-priest*.

First, He is faithful and just to all men, even to his very Enemies, he will not wrong them in the least; he renders to everyone his due, Rom. 2. 6. The very Hypocrites shall have their Reward, Matth. 6. 2. The Lord Jesus will not give cause to any to say at the last day, that he is their Debtor, or doth them Wrong▪ Matth. 20. 13. The wicked shall have their Portion in this Life, all that is coming to them, as much as they can in Justice demand. If *Ahab* repent he shall have Reprieve from his Punishment; eternal Repentance shall obtain eternal Deliverance. If *Esau* pray for the Blessings of this life with Tears, God will give them to him, he cannot be a Debtor to any; his very Enemies shall have their due, as much as their outward Duties or servile Labors amount to; for the holy one of *Israel* cannot lie, what Promise soever God makes to any outward Action or Virtue, it shall certainly be fulfilled, he cannot defraud any; the *Pharisees* shall have their Honor, *Judas* his bag; *Demas* the World, and *Dives* his Pleasures: he that commands his People to render everyone their due, cannot possibly wrong any.

Secondly, He is faithful to his People, 1 Pet. 4. 19. *Let them that suffer according to the Will of God commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator*: That is, Christ is able to keep you in Sufferings because he made you of nothing, and he that gave you a being when you were nothing, he can keep you now, though all the World be set against you: He can do it because he created you of nothing, and he will do it, because he is faithful, and hath promised; now this Faithfulness of Christ to his people lies.

First, In his exact Accomplishment of all his Prophecies, *All things written concerning him, are fulfilled in him*, Luke 18. 31. A tittle of God's word shall not fall to the ground, all the Types and legal Figures as they shadowed out Christ to come, namely, the High-priest, the Altar, the scape Goat, &c. were perfectly accomplisht in him, they were the Shadows, he the Substance; all Scripture Prophecies concerning divine Providence, the Resurrection of *Zion*, and the Destruction of *Babylon*, shall be fulfilled to one Iota, Luke 21. 22.

Secondly in performing his Promises, never an Engagement made by the Father to the Son, or by him to his people, but he will see it assuredly made good, Rom. 15. 8. 1 Kings 8. 28. 2 Pet.

3. 9. *The Lord is not slack concerning his Promises*, Tit. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 20. *All the Promises are in him, yea, and Amen.*

Object. *Christ's Faithfulness in fulfilling his Promises pertains only to the Heirs of the Promises: but I cannot call the Promises mine, because of my unfaithfulness to God.*

Answ. The Promises of God are not made to the Doers of the Law or Gospel, but to Believers: nor are they made for doing, but upon believing: 'Tis true, by Faithfulness and Obedience comes the thing promised, but a Title to the Promises is procured by believing; pray put a distinction between the Promises, and the thing promised, *Gal. 3. 22. That the promise by Faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe*, Heb. 6. 17, 18. The promise of Grace, Healing, and Salvation, depends not upon the fidelity of the saved Soul, but upon the faithfulness of God, in Christ.

Obj. *But I do not find the Promises made good to me; God hath said, He will never leave nor forsake his People, but, I doubt, he hath forsaken me; for I cannot see his outgoings in the Sanctuary: He hath promised to hear the Prayers made in his Name; to dispence Grace, to give out his Spirit, and to create a new heart; but I find not the performance of these things in me.*

Answ. First, If the Lord Jesus doth not fulfill his Promises, 'tis because thou art not fit for them: God would have brought *Israel* into *Canaan*, near forty years before he did, but they were not fit for that mercy: They were carnal, lusting, murmuring, rebelling, so that God sent them back again into the Wilderness. Christ would have taught his People many glorious Truths, but they were not able to bear them, *Joh. 16. 12. Food, yea, the choicest Dainties, upon a distempered Stomach, are cast away, they feed nothing but the Disease: If God accomplish not his Word to thee, 'tis because thou art incapable for it: Thy Iniquities, it may be, withhold good things from thee, Isa. 59. 1.*

Secondly, Christ may be performing his Promises though thou dost not see it: For,

First, Christ doth fulfill his Promise, though he doth not give the same thing he seems to promise: If he give thee that which is equivalent in the room of it: So, if the Lord doth not give his People the Comforts of this Life, yet if he gives them Contentment without them, he fulfills his Promise; So he dealt with *Paul*, *Phil. 4. 11. I have learned in every state to be contented;* and with *David*, *Psal. 16. 6. The Disciples had nothing, yet in the want of all, they had all things, 2 Cor. 6. 10. If in the want of Bread, God gives Strength and Satisfaction, he fulfills his Word. The wicked in their Fulness are in Straits, Joh, 20. 22. But the Godly in their Straits have a Fulness.*

Secondly, Christ doth fulfill his Promise, though he gives not the same thing, if he gives a better thing: If Christ withholds Earthly things, and gives Spiritual; As *Saul* found not his Asses, but in the room of them met with a Kingdom: The Disciples lost their Nets and Boats, and found a Treasure in Christ: They lost their taking of Fish, and became Fishers of men: *Paul* suffered a Shipwreck of all his own Excellencies, and found the Excellencies of Christ.

Thirdly, Christ fulfills his Promises, though he do not give the same things his People would have, yet, if he gives them suitable things, such as he sees best suits and fits their present

state: So the Disciples expected a Temporal Kingdom, but Christ gave them a Spiritual Kingdom. It may be a little Mercy is more suitable for thee than a great deal; Children must have their meat suited to their Health, not their Stomach: *Paul* could not bear much Vision of God, and therefore must have a Thorn in the Flesh, *2 Cor.* 12. 7.

Fourthly, Christ doth fulfill his Promise, though he doth not give thee what thou thinkest thou dost want, if he give thee what he knows thou wantest, *Rom.* 8. 26. Thou supposest thou wantest Comforts, he withholds them, and gives thee humblings.

Fifthly, Christ fulfills his Promise, though he doth not deliver thee out of thy present Evils, if he thereby preserves thee from a greater Evil: As *Paul* had a thorn in the Flesh, the Messenger of Satan to buffet him; lest, through the abundance of Revelations, he should be puffed up, and his Soul in danger of Ruin.

Lastly, Christ doth fulfill his Promise, if he doth it in his own time, though he doth it not in our time. So in *Abraham*; God promised him a Son, he expected it many years sooner, but God kept it till the most convenient season. Every thing is beautiful in its season, *Eccles.* 3. 11. *1 Pet.* 5. 6. Mercies are Afflictions, when out of due time: Now, 'tis he that gives the Mercy, can best tell when to give it, *Jer.* 49. 19. *Who will appoint me the time, Lev.* 26. 4. The Faithfulness of Christ is firm and unalterable, whatever Objections Unbelief makes against it. He will perform all his Promises, *Gen.* 28. 15. *And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this Land, for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.* O what a blessed word is this! 'Tis a promise made to *Jacob*, when he was to undertake a difficult Journey; and what things are written, are written for our Instruction; Promises made to particular Saints, are applicable to all the Saints in the same condition; as we find that of *Joshua*, 1. 5. *I will not leave thee nor forsake thee.* The Apostle makes Use of it, *Heb.* 13. 5. Now I shall give a few Reasons to prove that Christ cannot fail of fulfilling his Promise. For,

First, He is Truth itself, and cannot lie, *Rev.* 3. 14. He is called, *The Amen, the faithful and true Witness: The Holy one of Israel, who cannot lie: For, God is not as man that he should lie, or as the Son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it, hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* *Numb.* 23. 19.

Secondly, He came to fulfill all Righteousness, *Matth.* 3. 15. *It becometh us to fulfil all Righteousness:* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , It behooveth us, I ought to do it, by the Appointment and Will of my Father, as *Chemnitz* renders it: Christ came into the World to fulfill all Righteousness; Now, to perform and make good the Promises of God, is part of this Righteousness: 'tis a debt God is engaged in, and Christ came not only to pay Sinners debts to the Father, but to make good the Father's Engagements unto them.

Thirdly, Did not Christ fulfill all the Promises of God to Believers, then the New Covenant would be an imperfect and faulty Covenant; were the Promises of the new Covenant unfulfilled, then it would be a Covenant of Works▪ and so imperfect: But the New Covenant is established on better Promises, *Heb.* 8. 6, 7, &c. Now new Covenant-promises are better than

the old, not only as to the Matter of them, but as to the certainty of their performance. The first Covenant-promises were liable to be broken, *Jer.* 31. 31, 32. But these New Covenant-promises are sure to all the Seed. This was the principal thing undertaken in the New Covenant, for Believers, that the Promises should be certainly fulfilled, and therefore 'tis called a better Covenant than the Old.

Fourthly, Christ must needs fulfill the Promises, or he would die in vain, and shed his Blood to no purpose: for the Blood of Christ is the Blood of the Covenant, *Matth.* 26. 28. and it was shed on purpose to confirm the truth of the Promise to all that believe, *Heb.* 9. 15. For this end he came into the World, and became a Mediator, *Rom.* 15. 8, 9.

Fifthly, That he might finish the Work the Father gave him to do, and so give up his Account with joy. This is the Work God sent Christ into the World for, that he might be the Mediator of the New Covenant, and make good the Will of God to all the Federates thereof, *Joh.* 6. 38. to 41. and this Christ cannot fail to perform, *Joh.* 17. 4. His Spirit shall not fail, till he hath set Judgment on the Earth, *Isa.* 42. 4.

Sixthly, That he may stop the mouth of Devils, and prove Satan a Lyar. The great work of Satan is to bely God, and represent him to Sinners Unfaithful and untrue. Now Christ is to fight against the Devil, and destroy his Works, *1 Joh.* 3. 8. and prove the Truth of God against all opposers, *Rom.* 3. 4.

Seventhly, He is fully able to do it; He hath all Power in his hand, both in Heaven and in Earth, *Matth.* 28. 18. He is a merciful God, and so nothing is too hard for him: He will work, and none shall let it; besides, he hath all that Grace and Goodness that poor Souls need, in his own hand; He hath received the Spirit without measure, *Joh.* 3. 34. All Fulness dwells in him; Name anything which thou standest in need of, which is not in Christ to give thee. Dost thou want Pardon, Peace of Conscience, Grace, Holiness, Power over thy Corruptions, Victory over thy Temptations, Comfort under thy Troubles, satisfaction of thy Doubts, quieting of thy Fears, and remove of thy Burdens. Dost thou want quickenings, softnings for the hardness of thy Heart: strengthnings under thy weakness, fitness for thy Mercies and Duties, Patience under thy Sufferings, and Humility under thy Privileges? Dost thou want thankfulness for thy Mercies, clearing up of thy Evidences, Tasts of God's Love, and readiness for Death, Judgment, and Eternity? Why, all this Christ hath in his own hand already; He is not to seek for these things when thou criest after them.

Again, As he hath Power to help thee, and fulfill all the Promises of God to thee, so he hath Right and Authority too: He is the Angel of the Covenant, *Mal.* 3. 1. He is sent, deputed, and sealed of God, to this very Work, *Joh.* 6. 27. All the Promises upon that Redemption-agreement betwixt the Father and the Son, are made over to him, and put into his hand, *2 Cor.* 1. 30. Now all that Christ can do for the making good of his Father's Word, and benefitting his People, he will certainly perform, for he ever liveth to make Intercession, *Heb.* 7. 25. and is entered into Heaven, to appear as their Advocate and Agent, *Heb.* 9. 24.

Lastly, Christ must needs fulfill his Promises, or else he would weaken the Encouragement of Souls to believe in him, and so overthrow all his own Design in, and by the Gospel, which is,

to bring Souls to believe in him, *Joh. 20. 31. These are written that you may believe, Joh, 17. 21. That the World may believe that thou hast sent me, Joh. 10. 38.* Now, if Christ fails of his Promise, how would this discourage Souls from believing in him? who would trust Christ, should he not be faithful? and the Devil would be sure to make the most of this Advantage, to prevent believing. Christ will make good his Word in his own time, way, and measure, *Matth. 5. 18. Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the Law, till all be fulfilled.* All shall be fulfilled for Believers, and in them: and if Christ cannot permit one Jot of the Law to fall to the ground, surely, he will not suffer so choice a part of the Gospel as the Promises are, to be unaccomplished. Again, as Christ will perform all the Promises, so especially those great ones, that concern the Grace and Glory of all that believe, *Psal. 84. 11. He will give grace and glory, &c.* If the Lord Jesus upbraided the Pharisees for tything Mint and Cumin, and omitting the weightier matters of the Law, surely he cannot neglect the greatest of his Gospel-promises to his people.

Thirdly, the Lord Jesus is faithful to the Trust committed to him; thus was *Moses, He was faithful in all God's House, Numb. 12. 7.* that is, as a Steward, he was just and honest in the discharge of that Trust committed to him, concerning the Work and Interest of God; so 'tis taken, *Math. 25. 21. Well done, thou good and faithful Servant; Thou hast been faithful in thy Stewardship in the use of those things committed to thee; in this Sense is Christ faithful also; in a perfect Discharge of that Trust reposed in him, and that both with respect to God his Father, and with respect to his People.*

First, In respect of that Trust committed to him by the Father, God the Father hath entrusted him with the great Concerns of Redemption, Grace, and Glory, with that glorious Contrivance of saving fallen man, and bringing about the Recovery of lost Sinners: and therefore he calls him his Servant, *Isa. 49. 5. And now saith the Lord that formed me from the Womb to be his Servant, to bring Jacob again to him.* It sets forth Christ's Designation by the Father, to his mediatory Office, wherein God the Father calls him to great work, commits vast Concerns to him, about the gathering in of lost Souls, and undertaking their Atonement, Sanctification, and Salvation; for the accomplishment of which, the Father commits all to the Fidelity of Christ, both as to Suffering and interceding work, and in all this the Lord Jesus is faithful: so the Spirit of God calls him a faithful High-priest in things pertaining unto God, in making Reconciliation for the Sins of the People. This the Lord Jesus undertook to the Father, that he would satisfy his Wrath, and remove his Displeasure from his People, by bearing their Sins for and from them, that God might again take them into his Favor, as if they had never sinned; and in this he was and is faithful, nay in all things that God hath charged him with, about the saving of Souls, *Heb. 3. 2. Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.* So that whatever the Father laid on Christ in the behalf of his people to make Reconciliation for them, and present them spotless in his Presence, this he hath fully and faithfully discharged, as I have already shewn on this Subject.

Secondly, The Lord Jesus hath a Trust committed to him from his People: They commit the keeping of their Souls to him as to a faithful Redeemer, *1 Pet. 4. 19.* Every believing Soul

when he comes over to Christ first, doth depute, accept of, choose and entrust the Lord Jesus to be his Redeemer, and he undertakes the preserving of him unto Glory; he that comes to Christ aright, takes him for his Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1. 30. For so is Christ given and tendered by the Father, and so do Believers receive him, and entrust him with their Souls, that they may be made righteous before God, have their Sins removed, and be presented before the Father, without Spot or Wrinkle, *Eph. 5. 25, 26.* They trust Christ for Sanctification, to be made truly, and in his time perfectly holy, as holy as God is holy, and as holy as God requires. They trust Christ for Wisdom, to be made Partakers of divine Light, to be made wise unto Salvation, to know all that God would have them, and that their Natures are capable to understand, and to have the Image of God perfected in them, which consists in Knowledge as well as Righteousness. They commit themselves to Christ to be redeemed from every Evil, Sin, or Danger, or whatever hinders their complete Salvation: thus do Believers, take Christ, and surrender themselves up to him on these great and glorious ends, and thus did he undertake, when he gave himself by his Spirit to them, and therefore is called the Surety of the Covenant, as hath been already shewn, *Heb. 7. 22.* therefore 'tis said, *Eph. 5. 25. to 28.* That Christ gave himself for the Church, that he might wash it and cleanse it, sanctify it and present it to the Father without Spot or Wrinkle or any such thing. This he undertook when he became a Mediator between God and them, 1 *Tim. 2. 5.* Now he is faithful in this also to all his Seed, *Heb. 10. 23.* He is faithful who hath promised, 1 *Joh. 1. 9.* He is faithful and just to forgive them, 2 *Tim. 1. 12. I know whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that good thing I have committed to him against that day, 1 Thes. 5. 24. 1 Cor. 10. 13.* O Souls, you that have committed yourselves to Christ in Truth, know that he is faithful, and will not fail you, but will certainly accomplish and make good all your regular Hopes and Expectations, he can loose nothing of all that the Father hath given him, *Joh. 17. 12.* Be sure, what Bargain soever he hath made with you, what Mercies soever he hath promised you, he will assuredly fulfil and keep touch to a tittle; he is the faithful Steward, and Advocate for his People.

Fourthly, The Lord Jesus is faithful to all the Relations he stands in to his people; Herein Fidelity appears in holding forth, and living up to those Duties of Relation in which a person stands to others; so *Sylvanus* is called a faithful Brother, 1 *Pet. 5. 12.* and *Tychicus* a faithful Minister, *Eph. 6. 21.* In this that they were true and just, in holding forth all the Duties of their Relation, Defectiveness, in which discovers Falseness and Treachery: but the Lord Jesus is faithful in all Relations to Believers; he fills them up, and answers the end of them, now the Scripture sets forth the Union of Christ to Believers, by several Relations.

First, He is their Friend, *Isa. 41. 8. The seed of Abraham my Friend, Joh. 15. 14. 15. Ye are my Friends, I have called you Friends, Joh. 11. 11. Our Friend Lazarus sleepeth.* Now Christ is a faithful Friend to his people in holding forth all the Offices of true Friendship to them. As,

First, Love, *Prov. 17. 17. A friend loveth at all times,* such a Friend is Christ to all his, many Waters cannot quench it, he loves his People when he hides his Face from them, when he speaks sharply to them, and severely rebukes them.

Secondly, To own his Friend in all places, times, and conditions, so *Jonathan* owned *David* in his greatest Dangers, when his Father sought his Life, when it was dangerous to appear for him, 1 *Sam.* 20. 28. 32. so Christ is not ashamed to own his People before God; men, *Matth.* 10. 32. *Whosoever shall confess me before men him will I confess before my Father's Face*, 1 *Cor.* 16. 21. *He reprov'd Kings for their sake, saying, touch not mine anointed, &c.*

Thirdly, Pity; *Job.* 6. 14. *Pity should be shewn from a Friend.* And in this is Christ faithful, he hath compassion on the ignorant, and those that are out of the way, *Heb.* 5. 2. He cannot hide his Eyes from his own Flesh; he is that good Samaritan, *Luke* 10. 33.

Fourthly, Counsel; *Prov.* 27. 9. *Ointment and Perfume rejoice the Heart, so doth the Sweetness of a man's Friend by hearty Counsel:* Christ is called the Counselor, *Isaiah* 9. 6. *He will guide his People with his Eye, and instruct them in the way they should go*, *Psal.* 32. 8. *Thou gavest thy good Spirit to instruct them*, *Neh.* 9. 20.

Fifthly, Adherence; *Prov.* 18. 24. *There is a Friend, that sticketh closer than a Brother*, 2 *Sam.* 16. 17. So the Lord Jesus he stands by his People in time of need, *Ps.* 50. 15. *Ps.* 91. 15. *Ps.* 44. 3.

Sixthly, Comfort; So *Joh's* Friends, *Job.* 2. 11. Came to mourn with him, and to comfort him, the Lord Jesus is faithful in this also, *Joh.* 14, 18. *I will not leave you comfortless*, *Isa.* 61. 2. *To comfort all that mou••.*

Seventhly, Communication of Secrets; *Judge.* 16. 15. *How canst thou say thou lovest me, when thy Heart is not with me?* Now the Lord Jesus Christ is such a Friend, he will open the very Secrets of his heart to his People, *Joh.* 15. 15. *I have called you Friends for all that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you*, *Psal.* 25. 14. O the secret Mysteries of the Gospel, he discloseth to his faithful People, that walk much with him, *Joh.* 14. 2, 3.

Lastly, Supply of wants, *Prov.* 17. 17. *A Friend is born for Adversity*, So *Paul* tells the *Thessalonians* of his friendly respects to them, 1 *Thes.* 2. 8. A true friend is ready to impart anything for his Friend; so *Jonathan* stripped himself to his Girdle, and Bow, and Sword, for *David*, 1 *Sam.* 18. 4. Christ is such a Friend as will supply, all the Necessities of his people, *Phil.* 4. 19. *My God shall supply all your need:* Such a Friend he was to *Jacob*, *Gen.* 48. 15. *The God which fed me all my Life long.*

Secondly, He is faithful as a Brother, for in this Relation also doth he stand to his people, *Joh.* 20. 17. *Go to my Brethren, and say to them, that I ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God and your God.* Christ and Believers have all one Father, though in a different way, Christ the natural, Believers the adopted Children of God. Now as he stands to them in the Capacity and State of a Brother, an elder Brother, so his Fidelity consists in a faithful Discharge of the Duties of such a relation. As,

First, One Duty is Love; All the Saints stand in the relation of Brethren one to another, and so are obliged to mutual Love, 1 *Joh.* 3. 10. Christ fulfills this duty to his people, he loves them as himself, *Eph.* 5. 25. perfectly with the same love with which the Father loves him, *Joh.* 15. 9.

Secondly; Another brotherly duty is Pity; 1 P^t. 3. 8. *Having Compassion one of another, love as Brethren, be pityful:* So Christ can truly say as *Esther* did of her Kindred, *Esther* 8. 6. *Now can I endure to see the Evil that shall come unto my People, or how can I endure to see the Destruction of my Kindred?*

Thirdly, Unity is the duty of Brethren, *Psal.* 133. 1. *Behold how good and pleasant is it for Brethren to dwell together in Unity,* so is the Lord Jesus one with his people; This he died for, *Joh.* 11. 52. This he prays for, *Joh.* 17. 21.

Fourthly, Another brotherly duty is Peace, *Gen.* 13. 18. *Let there be no strife betwixt me and thee, and betwixt my Herdsmen and thy Herdsmen, for we be Brethren.* So Christ labors after peace for his people, and with them, *Jo.* 16. 33.

Fifthly, Acknowledgment is another duty of Brethren, So Christ, *Heb.* 2. 11. *He is not ashamed to call them brethren.*

Lastly, visiting one another, and taking hold of Opportunities to enquire the welfare of each other, and communicate Refreshments. Thus did *Moses*, *Acts* 7. 23. He visited his Brethren, and so doth Christ his People, he gives them special Accesses by his Spirit, he leaves them not comfortless, but will come unto them, *Joh.* 14. 18.

Thirdly, As a husband to his Spouse, is Christ faithful to his People, *Isa.* 54. 5. *Thy Maker is thy Husband,* 2 *Cor.* 11. 2. *I have espoused you to one Husband,* *Hos.* 2. 19. 20. *I will betroth thee unto me in Righteousness, loving Kindness, and Faithfulness.* Now Christ performs all the Offices of a tender Husband to them.

First, In loving them as himself, *Eph.* 5. 25. *Husbands love your Wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it.* Now I shall give you eight Proofs of Christ's great love, as a husband to his People.

First, His high Valuation of them, he esteems them beyond all the World besides, nay above Heaven itself; he could leave the Heaven of Heavens to seek after, and to save them, and Mansions of Glory to come down, and betroath them: he despised all the offered Pleasures and Grandeur of the world, when proposed to divert his Love from them, *Matth.* 4. He sets forth their excellencies by terms of greatest worth, he calls them his Treasure, *Exod.* 19. 15. A Kingdom of Priests, *verse.* 6. His Jewels, *Mal.* 3. 17. *Cant.* 1. 10. *Thy Cheeks are comely with Rows of Jewels, thy Neck with Chains of Gold.* *Cant.* 2. 2. *As the Lily among Thorns, so is my Love among the Daughters:* He terms them, a Fountain of Gardens, an Orchard of Pomegranates, *Cant.* 4. *The only one of her Mother, the choice one of her that bare her.* These high Characters the Lord Jesus gives his Spouse, shows the wonderful account he makes of her.

Secondly, His costly purchase of them, he sold himself to redeem them, *Eph.* 5. 25. 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. He parted with all his Glory, Treasures, Peace, Pleasures, Strength and Life to procure a people to himself; had not his love been infinitely great to all his Seed, he would never have bought them at so dear a rate, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20.

Thirdly, His great Endurings for them; *Jacob* tells us of some Hardships he underwent to gain *Rachel*, *Gen.* 31. 40. 41. But these are nothing to Christ's Endurings for his Spouse: he bore infinite Torments for her, all the Wrath and Vengeance of a consuming Fire, which all the Sins of Believers did merit; he bore temporal Troubles, Wants, Weariness, Pains, Shame, Death itself, with whatever the damned in Hell bear to all Eternity, that did he endure, to get a Spouse among the condemned Sons and Daughters of men.

Fourthly, His amorous Treatments of them, and endearing Converses with them; see the Exuberancy of his Affection, breathing out at his Lips to them, *Cant.* 4. 1. to verse. 6. *Behold thou art fair my Love, behold thou art fair, thou hast Doves Eyes, &c.* ver. 7. *Thou art all fair my Love, there is no spot in thee.* *Cant.* 2. 10. *Rise up my Love my fair one, and come away.* chap. 4. 8. *Come with me from Lebanon, My Spouse, from Lebanon.* verse. 10. *How fair is thy Love, my Sister, my Spouse, how much better is thy love than Wine,* chap. 6. 4. 5. *Thou art beautiful my Love as Tirzah; turn away thine Eyes from me, for they have overcome me.*

Fifthly, His large Gifts and dowry to them; he gives himself, his Spirit, his Purchase, his Laws, his Promises, his Love, Life, Light, and his Kingdom, as I have already shown, and this doth discover his large Affection to them.

Sixthly, His impatient longing after them, shows the Greatness of his conjugal love to them; *Cant.* 2. 14. *O my Dove that art in the Clifts of the Rock, in secret places of the Stairs, let me see thy Countenance and hear thy Voice,* *Jer.* 3. 14, *Turn O backsliding Children, for I am married to you:* He stands at the door, knocking with the dew of the night on his locks, saying, *Open to me my Sister, my Spouse, my Love, my Dove, my undefiled,* *Cant.* 5. 2. He is troubled when he cannot see them, and they will not come unto him, that he might give them life.

Seventhly, His wonderful Complacency in, and rejoicing over them, he is well pleased with; he rests in his love over them, *Zeph.* 3. 17. He takes them for his only Portion, Seed, and Travel of his Soul, wherein he is satisfied: *And as a Bridegroom rejoiceth over his Bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee,* *Isa.* 62. 5. *For the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy Land shall be married,* ver. 4.

Lastly, His utter Inability to part with them, proves his great love to them, *Hos.* 11. 8. *How shall I give thee up O Ephraim?* *Isa.* 49. 16. *Behold I have graven thee upon the Palms of my hands, and verse. 15. A Woman may forget her sucking Child, but I cannot forget thee.* Nay he sets them as a Seal upon his Heart, *Cant.* 8. 6. You must pluck out his Heart before you can make him consent to let his Spouse go, *Joh.* 10. 28. *None shall pluck them out of my Hands.* That's the first Testimony of his conjugal Faithfulness, his Love to all his people; 'tis a constant Love, *Joh.* 13. 1. *Having loved his own that were in the World, he loved them to the end.*

Secondly, His Cohabitation with them; this is another part of the Husbands duty to his Spouse, *1 Pet.* 3. 7. *Ye Husbands dwell with them according to Knowledge,* such is the Fidelity of Christ to his, that he takes up his abode with them▪ *Joh.* 14. 23. and walks with, and dwells among them, *2 Cor.* 6. 16. He doth not give them a transient Visit, and look upon them now and then; however he may sometimes appear a stranger, and draw a Curtain over the light

of his Countenance; yet he doth not change his Habitation, but takes up his rest in *Zion*, and dwells there, *Psal.* 132. 13, 14. *Heb.* 13. 5. *He will never leave them nor forsake them.*

Thirdly, his affectionate and intimate Converses with them, proves his conjugal Fidelity; he keeps up Intercourse with them; Christ in Heaven maintains correspondence with his people on Earth, *Exod.* 25. 22. *There will I meet with thee, and commune with thee, above the Mercy Seat:* that is, In my Ordinances and Appointments, I will open my heart to thee, tell thee my Love, and impart to thee my Secrets, *1 Joh.* 1. 3. Our Fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Christ Jesus, and this Communion is maintained by the Spirit, *Joh.* 16. 13. 14. *When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth, &c. For he will receive of mine, and show it unto you.* 'Tis a notable Scripture, and as much as if Christ had said, I go to Heaven, my personal Presence shall be in Mansions of Glory, but I will send my Spirit and he shall reveal the deep things of God, communicate my mind unto you, and concerning you.

Fourthly, His tender Sympathy with them; *In all their Afflictions he is afflicted*, *Isaiah* 63. 9. He soon feels their Troubles, he that toucheth them, toucheth the Apple of his eye; *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me*, *Act.* 9. 4. and therefore the Sufferings of the Saints are called the (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) the after Sufferings of Christ, *Col.* 1. 24. What is done to them he reckons as done to himself. And he doth not only feel their Afflictions, but bear their Burdens for them, *Psal.* 55. 22. *Cast thy burden on the Lord, he will sustain thee; yea he helps and relieves them under all their Afflictions*, *Psal.* 50. 15.

Fifthly, His patience towards them, shows his Fidelity as a husband; 'tis riches of patience and longsuffering that the Lord doth exercise towards his every day, *Rom.* 2. 4.

Sixthly, His gracious Indulgence towards them, covering their Imperfections, and pardoning their Offences is another thing his conjugal Relation to his People, obliges him to, and this he is faithful in; he puts Honor upon the uncomely parts and carriages of his People, by clothing them with the covering of his Righteousness, *Rev.* 3. 18. He calls upon his people to put on their white Rayment, that the shame of their Nakedness do not appear: He puts up many a wrong for them, and passeth by many a weakness in them, concealing their Imperfections from the view of others, and all because he loves them, and they are his *Hephzibah's*.

Seventhly, His Care of them demonstrates his conjugal Fidelity to them, *1 Pet.* 5. 7. His Eyes are always upon them, from one end of the year to the other, *Deut.* 11. 12. *Commit thy way to the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass*, *Psal.* 37. 5. Upon him is the care of all the Churches, and of every Saint, yea of all their Concerns, even their very hairs. He cares for their Bodies, their Souls, their Families, their names, their Comfort, and their Profit: he will not leave them comfortless, nor suffer them to be tempted above what they are able, he will provide all things they stand in need of, *Isa.* 46. 3. 4. *Psal.* 65. 9. and if he withholds these lower things from them here, he prepares some better thing for them, both here and hereafter.

Eighthly, Protection of them from their Evils and Dangers; this is a Husbands duty to be a covering for his Spouse, and a Screen to her from Injury, *Gen.* 20. 16. So Christ he carries his

as on Eagles Wings out of the reach of their destroying Adversaries, *Deut.* 32. 11. *Exod.* 19. 4. *Deu*• 33. 27. *The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are everlasting Arms. He will keep the Feet of his Saints,* 1 *Sam.* 2. 9. And be a little Sanctuary to them in all places.

Lastly, His cleaving to them forever, and being one Felsh with them, 1 *Sam.* 12. 22. *For the Lord will not forsake his people; he is a present help to them; in time of Trouble always with them, never unmindful of them and their guide unto death,* *Psal.* 48. 14. Yea in Death and to all Eternity, he will be their Life and Salvation; here death determines the Capacity of the most faithful husband, but Christ will accompany his Spouse, and be a Salvation in and beyond the Grave.

Fourthly, As a head is the Lord Jesus Christ faithful to his people; That is, another Relation in which Christ stands to believers, *Col.* 1. 18. *He is the head of the Body, the Church, &c.* He is completely furnished with all Excellencies and Fullness for that end, to be the head of his Body the Church, both as to natural and purchased grace; As God he is eternal, and so hath all sufficiency in him; *Before all things,* and is their Maker and Preserver, and as man, he is *the first-born from the dead,* and by his death hath purchased a Mediatorly Sufficiency to be the head of, and to preside his Body, and perform all the Offices of Headship to it, as to Honor, Government, and Influence: And he hath not only a Fitness to be a head to his Church, but a Right too; for the Father hath given him to be the Head over all things to his Church, *Eph.* 1. 22. Gave, (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) *constituit,* saith *Zanchi,* he appointed him and parted actually with him, and made him over to the Church, to the whole body of Believers, and to every single person, to their use, intent, and purpose, that he should be a Head to them, a true head, a perfect head, an only head, and an eternal head: Now in this Relation is Christ faithful also, answering the ends, filling up the pl•ce, and discharging the Offices of it. Now in this headship of Christ are six things wrapped up.

First, Counsel and Wisdom; In him are all the Treasures of Wisdom, *Col.* 2. 3. All that Light and Knowledge which is needful to make his people wise to Salvation; all that Wisdom which is requisite to repair the lost Image of man, and all that Wisdom which may render him exceeding excellent, and glorious; for in him is the excellency of Knowledge, *Phil.* 3. 8. And all this Counsel he stands engaged to impart to his people, as they are able to bear it, *Eph.* 1. 8, 9. *Wherein he hath abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence. Wherein,* that is, *Qua gratia;* By which Grace, saith *Zanchi,* *He hath abounded towards us;* that is, hath made us to abound in. So the *Scholiast* and *Erasmus,* He hath plentifully imparted to us; hence 'tis ensured to all that truly seek it of God, *Jam.* 1. 5. He will tell them what to do in all cases, as Christ did to *Cornelius* by *Peter,* *Acts* 10. 6. He hath all Wisdom in him, the stone on which is seven Eyes, *Zach.* 3. 9. and will be in every Difficulty and Danger with them. As *Moses said to Hobab,* *we are to encamp in the Wilderness, but thou mayest be unto us instead of Eyes,* *Numb.* 10. 23. So he hath engaged to guide them continually, *Isa.* 58. 11. *Deut.* 1. 33. He is as Eyes to them, where they are in a Land of Pits and Desarts, to guide them in the Wilderness Journeys, while they are searching out the Land of Glory.

Secondly, Care; His Eyes and his Heart are on them continually, 2 *Chro.* 7. 16. He is measuring *Jerusalem*, to see what is the Length thereof, and what is the breadth thereof, that she may be built, *Zach.* 2. 2.

Thirdly, Conduct is the Office of a Head; It ought to lead and dispose of the body and all it's Members to their several Offices. So the Lord Jesus is given to his Church, for their Leader as well as Commander, *Isa.* 55. 4. *chap.* 48. 17. *I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way thou shouldest go.* 'Tis in the Original, making or causing thee to walk; he doth not only show them the way, but leads them by the hand, and helps them to go, as, *Hos.* 11. 3. *Deut.* 32. 12. *So the Lord alone did lead them.* Christ undertakes to conduct his people thorough the World unto Glory.

Fourthly, Government is another act of Headship, *Mic.* 2. 13. *Their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them:* that is, The Lord shall be their Governor and General, *Isa.* 9. 6, 7. *The Government is upon his Shoulders,* *Heb.* 3. 16. He is the Son over his house, to rule and govern it, and this he doth, by making righteous and perfect Laws, and Rules, thereby to govern his Church, *Matth.* 28. 20. *Acts.* 1. 2. *Heb.* 3. 1, 2, 3. And by governing and subduing the Hearts and Wills of his people unto them, *Psal.* 110. 3. *2 Cor.* 10. 5.

Fifthly, Influence; This comes from the Head; all animal Influence for Subsistence, Motion, guiding and action come from thence; in the Head are all the Senses and Intellectuals exerted for the use and Service of the Body, so is the Lord Jesus the head of all vital Influences, to the whole Church and every part of it, *Psal.* 87. 7. *All my Springs are in thee,* *Joh.* 15. 4. *As the Branch cannot bear Fruit, except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me,* *Col.* 3. 3, 4. *chap.* 2. 19. Believers can no longer live, than Christ becomes a quickening Spirit to them; he alone animates their Souls to every good work, anoints their Eyes, and causeth them to see, regulates their Palate, and maketh them to taste the Sweetness of spiritual things, open their Ears to discipline, causeth them to feel the Weightiness of Sin, and to smell a sweet savor in his precious Oyntments.

Lastly, Ornament; The head is the beauty of the Body, if that be removed, the Body is but a deformed lump; Christ is the Believers Excellency and Glory, he hath the preeminence in all things, *Col.* 1. 18. And his glory is the Glory of the body, *1 Cor.* 12. 24. All the Saints Excellencies are in and from him, *Psal.* 68. 34. *Psal.* 89. 17. *For thou art the Glory of their Strength,* 'tis through his Comeliness they are perfect, *Ezek.* 16. *ver.* 10. to 14.

Fifthly, Christ is faithful in the acts of distributive Justice, and renders to everyone their Due, *Psalm* 62. 1. *Thou renderest to every man according to his Work.* There is a legal and evangelical Debt; legally, There is nothing due to the Children of men, but Wrath and Tribulation, *Rom.* 2. 9. But Evangelically all the Believers Rights are due on the account of Christ. So that all what Christ hath purchased, or the Father promised to Christ, is due to his Seed; so that Mercy, Grace, and Glory is as much the Believers due, as Death and Vengeance is the Sinners, on the score of his Sin, *2 Thes.* 1. 6. 7. Therefore the Justice of Christ is laid to pawn for the pardon of Believers Sins, upon their penitential Confession, *1 John* 1. 9. This is the great Error of troubled Souls, that they make their Worthyness or Unworthyness the

Standard and Measure of all their Expectations; this is the Impotency the violated Law of God hath left on fallen man, that they cannot get over *Mount Sinai*, nor see the Righteousness of Christ, and the Equity of Salvation upon his account; for their Sins and Unrighteousnesses do so hang in their Eye, that they cannot see themselves righteous in the Righteousness of another; This Tang of a legal Spirit is a malady-Grace, is long a curing in Saints themselves; the want of which robs Christ of the Glory of his Grace and Righteousness: But know O Believers, the Lord Jesus would be unfaithful if he render not to those that live on him for Sanctification and Salvation all that he hath promised in the Gospel, and hath died to purchase for them; but this cannot be as you have heard abundantly, that the Lord Jesus is faithful in acts of Remuneration; he cannot keep back another's due, who would have all men to render to others their due: But all that God hath made over in the new Covenant to Believers, is their due, and therefore will Christ render it in it's season. And thus have I opened and proved this glorious Excellency of the Lord Jesus, even his Faithfulness; it remains now, that we make some Improvement of it.

Use 1. How great then is the Sin of all those that will not credit the Faithfulness of Christ; there are none that perish under the Ministry of the Gospel, but stumble at this stumbling block; they do not judge God faithful, nor believe the report given of Christ, *Isaiah 53. 1.* Though Christ be manifestly held forth to be a perfect Savior, yet few will believe in him; not one of a hundred (says *Calvin*) that hear Christ daily will yet believe in him: you know it Sinners, you may safely adventure your Souls on Christ, he cannot lie or fail you: you have the whole word of God for your Assurance, all the Scriptures testify of him, *John 5. 39. Acts 18. 28.* You have the Evidences of Christ's Faithfulness in his state of Humiliation, he did and suffered all things written of him, *Luke 18. 31.* He fulfilled all Righteousness, *Matth. 3. 15.* His Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, prove him faithful in all things tending to purchase Salvation. You have the Testimony of others, who have found Christ faithful, *1 John 1. 1, 2.* All the Saints on record are witnesses of Christ's Fidelity. Nay, you yourselves have found him faithful hitherto; how often hath he made good his Promises to you, when you have called upon him, and trusted in him for outward Mercies. You trust other things that are unfaithful, and yet will not believe in Christ: You trust your own Hearts, and they are deceitful, *Jer. 17. 9.* You trust in men, and yet they are a lie, *Rom. 3. 4.* You trust in Creatures, and yet they are vanity, *Eccles. 1. 2.* You know, without Faith you must perish to all Eternity, and yet will not believe in him.

Use 2. Then this reproveth the People of Christ for their injurious Thoughts of him, *Joh. 1. 11.* *He came unto his own, and his own received him not.* This is an aggravation indeed, that Christ's own People, such as have professed him, chosen him, commended him, and born witness of him, and yet will not adventure their All upon him. O, this secret Jealousy of Christ is a fearful Sin. This was that our Lord reproveth in *Thomas, Joh. 20. 5.* So *John. 14. 11.* *Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else believe me for the Works sake.* O the Questions and Doubts that Souls have about the fulfilling of Promises! how loath they are to trust Christ further than they see him.

Use 3. This should humble Christians, for their great unfaithfulness. Alas! how few are found faithful amongst the Saints this day! How may we complain with the Psalmist, *Psal. 12. 1. The godly man ceaseth, and the faithful fail from among the children of men:* and Christ seems to Quere, where he may find a faithful Steward, *Luk. 12. 42.* And Paul says, *I know no man like minded to Timothy, who so faithfully and naturally careth for your state.* O the falseness of Professors, to the Lord Jesus, and one another! How rare is it to find one that makes Conscience of Promises and Profession? one that is faithful to his Trust, to his Word, to his Relation-duties, and in distributive Justice. O, Christians, Mourn over your great unfaithfulness to God, and men; to those Souls you are concerned in: Your unfaithfulness to your Children, Servants, and Neighbors; how little have you done for these to this day? Some of you are Parents; and Masters, but where hath been your Industry in your Families, in teaching, reprovng, and laboring to save the Souls of those committed to you? The Lord lay not the neglect of this to your Charge, nor being in the Blood of your ignorant, profane, perishing Families, Children or Servants, on your head. I must tell you, Friends, it will be dreadfully heavy to bear the blood of Souls, at the Judgment-seat of Christ: and yet, I fear, without Repentance, is like to be the case of some that now hear me, who have been unfaithful to the Souls of their Relations, Husband, Wife, Children, and Servants; who have been too furious in reprovng their Faults towards them, but scarce ever reprovng their Sin against God. Who can hear their Children and Servants swear, take God's Reverend Name in vain, and see them profane Sabbaths, and spend Sacred time in Debauchery and Idleness, and scarce ever check them; that can suffer them to lie in Ignorance, and ready to perish for want of Knowledge, and never labor to catechize and instruct them in the knowledge of Salvation: This is a lamentable case, and will appear so, when these Parents and Masters shall appear before God, with their garments all gor'd and stained with the blood of their Families. O cruel Masters, and Parents, that will be tender of a Horse or a Dog, to feed them, and secure them from want, but can endure to see your children and Servants perish for want of knowledge.

Use 4. Here's Comfort to Believers: Is the Lord Jesus Faithful, then be of good cheer. For, First, All the Promises of God shall be made good to you in due season: He will not suffer a word to fall to the ground of all that good he hath spoken concerning you, *1 Sam. 3. 19. Isa. 55. 11. 2 Cor. 1. 20. Numb. 23. 19.* Then you cannot do too much for God, you canit be undone for him; your Souls are safe, your best Interests are secured, and all that God sees fit for you, is beyond the reach of Men and Devils.

Secondly, All the trust committed to Christ for you, shall be made good: He will perform it to a tittle: The Father hath entrusted your Souls, your Graces, your Comforts, your Names, your Supplies, your Strength, your Interest, your Peace, your Welfare, and your Glory, with him, who is faithful, and cannot wrong you. O Believers, if he will not suffer men or Devils to do you harm, surely he himself will not wrong you, *Psal. 105. 14.*

Thirdly, All your Relation-Rights shall be made good to you: Look what is due to you from the Lord Jesus, as your Friend, as your Brother, as your Husband, and as your Head, shall be made good to you.

Fourthly, All that is due to you upon the strictest terms of the Gospel, shall be communicated to you; All that Christ hath purchased, or God hath promise'd, you shall have in due time; Christ can defraud no man, *Luk. 12. 42.*

Fifthly, Here's Comfort to you under all the wrongs you meet with on Earth, that you have a faithful Friend in Heaven: Here the best of men are a Lye, they are not what you conceive them to be, they do not answer the expectation you have from them: But Christ will never fail you of that Trust you have reposed in him; he will be infinitely better but cannot be worse than your expectations.

Use 5. Let this exhort, first, Sinners: If Christ be so faithful, O then choose him for your Friend: The fidelity of your present Friends cannot be compared with Christ.

Secondly, Believers, Trust in Christ; Commit your Souls, and all your Concerns to him; Learn faithfulness from him; and labor to be like him in your fidelity to God and Men. So much of the first Branch, concerning Christ's Personal Riches.

CHAP. XVII.

Showing that Christ is become a Purchaser in the behalf of Believers; How he hath made this Purchase, and what he hath purchased.

I Now come to the Second Branch of Christ's Unsearchable Treasure, which is his purchased Riches: Those Treasures which he hath as Mediator procured for all that come unto him. And in the prosecution of this, I shall show,

1. *That the Lord Jesus became a Purchaser in the behalf of his People.*
2. *How and by what means he made this Purchase.*
3. *What he hath procured by this Purchase.* And in this I shall use what brevity I may, having spent a greater time already on this Subject than I intended.

First, The Scriptures do hold forth the Lord Jesus to be a Purchaser: One that hath bought and procured great and glorious things by a Price. *Acts. 20. 28. Feed the Flock of God which he hath Purchased with his own blood:* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) that is, which he hath acquired or gotten to himself to be a peculiar People, by the blood or cruel bloody death of his Son. So *Grotius*. So Heaven is called the purchased Possession, *Eph. 1. 14. Until the Redemption of the purchased possession:* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) 'Tis exceeding significant in the Original, both words being near of a signification, until or to the purchasing of the purchased, so 'tis in the words; 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 signifies a Buying or ransoming by a price, yea a full sum, so much as the worth of the thing requires: As prisoners are redeemed by a full price: So *Erasmus* and *Aretius*. It signifies also a full and complete Redemption, as the Preposition 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 implies, being added to the Primitive 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 : & (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) as I have shewn is an obtaining by purchase, or an asserting or vindicating a thing to be ones Propriety by right and purchase, which fully proves Christ to be a Purchaser, so *1. Thes. 5. 9. To obtain Salvation*

by our Lord Jesus Christ (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) to the getting or purchasing of Salvation by Christ. So 1. Cor. 6. 20. *Ye are bought with a Price.* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 .) The word is a buying in the Market or public place, by paying the price demanded. So that these expressions fully Prove Christ to be a Purchaser, one that hath procured great things by buying them at a Price.

Secondly; *How and by what means hath Christ procured and purchased these great things.*

First; By giving himself in the room and stead of fallen Man, to procure their Atonement and Salvation. Eph. 5. 25. *As Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it:* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) He delivered over himself freely, and knowingly. To what? See Ver. 2. *For an Offering and Sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor,* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 .) The first word signifies any Sacrifice, the second a bloody Sacrifice, says *Zanchi*: So Christ made over and delivered up himself to this end to become a bloody Sacrifice for his People, and to fulfil the Fathers Terms for the saving of all that come to him. This he did considerably and willingly: Heb. 10. 7. This was according to the agreement betwixt the Father and the Son. Isa. 49. ver. 2. to 10.

Secondly; By a perfect and perpetual Obedience of all those Laws that were or are required of us in order to our holiness and Salvation, and by a subjection to, and Obedience of the special Law of a Mediator: This hath two parts.

First; His Obedience of what was required of Man by any Law: By the Law of Nature, or by any Instituted Law, either Moral, Ceremonial, or Judicial: All this did Christ submit to and perfectly obey as in the stead of all Believers; Mat. 3. 15. *It became him to fulfill all Righteousness.* Whatever holiness or Obedience was required of Man in the state of Innocency, or since his fall. And therefore 'tis said, Gal. 4. 4. He was made under the Law, as a Man or Minister, bound by his own consent to the full Obedience of it.

Secondly; His obeying all those things that were required of him as Mediator, Phil. 2. 7. That he should make himself poor, and of no reputation, and take upon him the form of a Servant (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) He emptied himself of his Glory: He stripped himself of all his royal robes, and made himself of no account. This was not required by any Law natural or positive, but by the Law of a Mediator. Again he humbled himself to the death, Phil. 2. 8. He had power or liberty, absolutely considered, to lay down his life or not to do it; but with respect to his Mediatorship he had a Commandment to lay it down, Joh. 10. 18. Further, 'Twas by this Law Christ was bound to do all that he did for his People. Joh. 17. 19. *Only for their sakes sanctify I myself.* So ver. 9. *I pray for them, I pray not for the World.* So he was not to strive or open his mouth, but patiently to bear whatever was laid upon him. Isa. 42. 2. Isa. 53. 7. Mat. 12. 19. And by this Obedience of Christ are believers made righteous, Rom. 5. 18, 19. For this is necessary to Salvation, that the Commandments be kept, Math. 19. 17. And the Law fulfilled, Math. 5. 17.

Thirdly; By his suffering all things we were liable to by the first transgression, or any actual Sins flowing from it, Phil. 2. 8. This he did in all the sufferings of his Life; and at his death, he bore the sins of believers for them, 1. Pet 2. 24. *He was wounded for our Transgressions.* Isa. 53. 5.

2 Cor. 5. 21. And became a Sacrifice to God for Sin. Isa 53. 10. Heb. 9. 26. The end of which was atonement, Heb. 2. 17. He also paid the price that God demanded for their deliverance. 1 Cor. 7. 23. *Ye are bought with a price.* 1 Pet. 1. 17, 18. Math. 20. 28. *He gave himself a ransom for us.*

Lastly, By his Intercession Christ completes his Purchase, and carries on the salvation of his people. Rom. 8. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather is risen again, who is also at the right hand of God and maketh Intercession for us.* Though by this he doth not purchase for his people, yet he doth procure and apply mercy to them: As I have largely shewn already, therefore shall wave it now.

Thirdly, *What are those great and glorious things which J^hsus Christ hath procured by his blood?*

First, He hath purchased Believers themselves unto God. Acts 20. 28. *Feed the Flock of God which he hath purchased with his blood.* Rev. 5. 9. *For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood.* Every saved soul is part of Christ's purchase: They are set apart for God. Psa. 4. 3. *A peculiar People to God.* 1 Pet. 2. 9. Though the Father hath ordained them to life, yet they are not actually his till purchased by Christ. Hence it is that Believers Conversion, is not casual or dependent upon Men or means, but is the effect and fruit of Christ's blood purely designed, and unavoidably perfected by Redemption-grace: And hence also their Salvation is sure, being founded on the purchase of Christ. As sure as Christ's blood cannot be spilled in vain, so sure shall every Believer have his Salvation perfected, because it depends upon the Obedience, Merit, and Suffering of Christ. Hence also all the Means of Salvation and the Efficacy of them are certain to believers, Eph. 4. 8.

Secondly; He hath Purchased pardon of Sin, and peace with God. Col. 1. 20. *Having made peace by the blood of his Cross: Chap. 2. 13.* Heb. 8. 12. Rom. 5. 1. There is a full Pardon of Sin, of all the sins of believers, and of every believers, purchased by the blood of Christ. Here are four things I shall speak to.

First; That there is a full Pardon of sin procured; The Scripture sets this forth by clear and pregnant arguments, and by several terms that leave no room for the least Suspicion to the believing Soul. 'Tis called sometimes Remission of Sin, Luke 24. 47. *And that Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his Name:* (< in non-Latin alphabet >) it signifies Dismission or Releasing. All unchanged Souls are in Debt to God, bound over to wrath, and laid up in Prison, but by Jesus Christ there is a discharge of this Debt procured, the bond Cancell'd, the Prison opened, and the Sinners set free, Isa. 61. 1.

Sometimes 'tis called not imputing sin, not laying it to the sinners charge, Psa. 32. 1, 2. *imputeth not iniquity;* that is, doth not charge, and reckon it, and lay it on his account: As a Merchant that sends his Bill to his Debtor, and charges several sums upon him: 'Tis true every Believer is a Debtor in himself, but God chargeth the Debt on another, and not on them.

Sometimes 'tis termed a covering or hiding of sin, not from the sinners, but from God's judicial Eye; Psa. 85. 2. *Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin.* Psa. 78. 38. *He being full of compassion forgave their iniquity. [Caphar] to cover or conceal; from*

this Root is derived *Caphoreth*, the covering of the Ark or Mercy-seat, in which was the Law or knowledge of sin, but by the blood of Christ was covered or purged away.

Sometimes 'tis expressed by not remembering sin anymore; *Jer. 31. 34. I will remember their sin no more*: I will be propitiously merciful, or pacifiedly favorable to their sins, and their sinful errors and unrighteousness will I remember no more; or I will not remember them again: Here are two Negatives which make the denial the more vehement. 'Tis an allusion to men that forgive and forget, and it signifies that God will not upbraid or reproach them with them anymore: hence *Paul* challengeth all the world to lay anything to the charge of God's Elect, *Rom. 8. 33.*

Further, 'tis set forth by a taking away of sin; *Exod. 34. 7. Forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.* The word in the Original is, lifting up or taking away all sorts of sins and iniquities.

Again, 'tis signified by blotting out of sin, so that it shall never be seen more; *Isa. 43. 25. I even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions*: Like the Merchant when the debt is paid crosseth the Book, throws Ink on it, blots it out, that it may not be read anymore; so God the Father casts the blood of Christ on a Believer's sin, and blots it out, so that Justice can lay no more to their charge.

Again, 'tis called a casting of sin behind his back, *Isa. 38. 17.* He doth remove them out of his sight as far as the East is from the West, *Ps. 103. 12.* He will cast all their sins into the depth of the Sea, *Mic. 7. 18, 19.* O the latitude of Believers pardon, and the full discharge of all their sin! Sometimes God seems to be throwing off his people, and giving them a final farewell; but, oh! he returns again, and casteth their sins, (not them,) into the depth of the Sea, where they shall be certainly drowned as the *Egyptian* were, never to be seen more.

Thus you see there's a full pardon procured for God's people, not the least ground for a Question left to them.

Secondly, There is not only a full pardon procured, but a pardon of every sin. All the sins of God's people are forgiven: *Col. 2. 13. 14. Having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting*: that not one debt may be seen; as a Book or Bill that is blotted out can be never more sued against one: *1 Joh. 1. 7. The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. Jer. 50. 20. The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve*: The most cruel Enemy upon the strictest search shall not find one; they shall be all forgiven: And indeed if Grace be free, there is the same reason why all shall be pardoned as well as one: And if the grace of God bring salvation then all must be forgiven or none: And the same blood of Christ can as well pardon all as one. For if the blood of Christ be the blood of God, then 'tis of an infinite value, and can as easily blot out every sin as one sin; and as well discharge Talents as Pence. *Ezek. 18. 22. Larga Dei pietas veniam non dimidiabit. Aut nihil aut totum dabit.*

Thirdly, This pardon of sin is procured for repenting Believers, and for all of them: *Acts 10. 43. To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receiveremission of sins: Acts 13. 38. chap. 26. 18.* Faith is necessary to pardon, because it takes

off all self-righteousness, and all pretences of merit. Faith carries the soul off to a dependence on another for righteousness and salvation. Faith is a self-denying Grace, and expects all upon the account of the Promise. Believers, and every Believer, have their sins pardoned, and shall not perish, *Joh. 3. 16.* Now lest some should pretend to believe, who indeed do not, the Scripture qualifies this Faith by certain Characters. 'Tis also to repenting souls that pardon is assured, and therefore remission of sin is joined with repentance, *Acts 5. 31. Luke 24. 46, 47. Ezek. 18. 30.* But what is this repentance? Doth it consist only in an external sorrow for sin, and an audible begging of mercy? No, no, *Judas and Cain* were thus troubled for sin, and yet never arrived to sound repentance: 'Tis the mourning and returning believer to whom this Promise is made: and to such, and to everyone of these is a full pardon procured.

Fourthly, This pardon is procured by the blood of Christ, and that satisfaction made to the Father by his suffering. It is an Opinion sprung up of men of corrupt minds, that pardon of Sin is the procurement of Inherent grace, and external Righteousness, but not the product of Christ's blood, suffering and satisfaction, which I shall now endeavor to disprove, *Math. 20. 28. To give his Life a Ransom for many. Heb. 9. 26. But now once in the end of the World hath he appeared to put away sin by the Sacrifice of himself, chap. 9. 12. Col. 1. 14.* Thus you see 'tis the blood of Christ offered up to God, that procureth peace, and removeth the guilt of sin: and indeed pardon of sin with respect to God's Justice could be no otherway obtained. For,

First, God had past an irrevocable sentence, that the Soul that sinneth should die, *Gen. 2. 17.* Now if this penalty was not inflicted upon Transgressing *Adam*; how would there be a fulfilling of this threatening. But some may enquire, How comes *Adams* sin to be charged on his Posterity? *Answ. Adams* Transgression, by the strict union there was betwixt him and all mankind, (he being their Head, Root, and Representee) was most justly devolv'd on his Offspring, *Rom. 5. 14, 19.* And therefore God would not have been true to his word, had not this penalty been inflicted on the Debtor, or his Surety: But let God be true, and every Man a liar.

Secondly, Fallen Man could not pay this debt, and make this satisfaction for sin: For the sin being of an infinite Guilt, and the punishment being Death Eternal, *Rom. 6. 23.* Man could never pay his ransom, and set himself at liberty, and therefore some other way must be found out, which was only by the Lord Jesus, God-Man, whose God-head was able to support his human Nature under suffering, and render his endurings of an Infinite value, *Heb. 9. 14. Acts 20. 28.* This is the second Fruit of Christ's Purchase; the forgiveness of all the sins of penitent believers, even past, present, and to come, that nothing shall be laid to their charge, *Rom. 8. 1.*

Thirdly, Acceptation of their Persons is another Fruit of Christ's purchase, *Eph. 1. 6. Wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved:* 'Tis not enough to the completing of Christ's design in saving Souls, that their sins be forgiven, and the guilt and penalty removed, and a discharge of all the Obligations to wrath by reason of sin procured. All this a person may have, and yet no interest in the full favor of God, nor right to any saving blessing from him; for 'tis not sufficient to give a Man a Title to Glory, that he be innocent, or free from offending, but he must come up to the terms of the first Covenant, and do all things required of him; and have

a Positive as well as a Negative Righteousness: *There must be in order to an acceptance with God, not only a not imputing of sin, but a reckoning of Righteousness* (saith Dr. Owen); he must be reputed fully Obedient also. The Law requires a perfect and perpetual Obedience, *Gal. 3. 10.* Should thy Soul be set free from all the charge of past sins, yet thy defect of Righteousness would undo thee forever. They must be righteous that enter into Life Eternal, *Math. 25. 47.* Even as Righteous as God is Righteous: But this is impossible to be attained by lapsed man, *In many things we offend all, Jam. 3. 2. There is none Righteous, no not one, Rom. 3. 10.* And therefore there must be a Righteousness procured for, and imputed to Believers, and that is the Righteousness of Christ: The Commutation of his Obedience for our Disobedience, *Rom. 5. 19. By the Obedience of one shall many be made Righteous.* This Righteousness is called a white Robe, and fine Linnen, *Rev. 7. 9. Chap. 19. 8.* The sweet smelling Garment of our Elder Brother wherein God takes infinite delight and pleasure, *Math. 3. 17. Isa. 42. 1.* The ground of all that pleasure that God taketh in his people, is the Righteousness of his Son: not any of their Services and duties: And look what pleasure the Father takes in his Son as Mediator, the same he takes in every Soul that truly comes unto him, *John 17. 26. That the same love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.*

USE.

If Believers are pardoned and accepted with God, then hence it follows,

First, That God never punishes them in wrath and displeasure. All the strokes of God on Believers are but fatherly chastisements: Not Judicial acts, *Heb. 12. 6.* He takes vengeance on their inventions, but never on their persons▪ Punishment always bears some proportion to the offense, but the sufferings of God's people are infinitely less then their deserts, and therefore are the Fruit of Divine Faithfulness, and Covenant Love, *Psal. 119. 75. Psal. 78. 30, to 34.*

Secondly, God will accept of all their sincere desires and services, though never so mean, through Christ. *Isa. 38. 14. Isa. 63. 8. Exek. 20. 40, 41. Psal. 51. 17.*

Thirdly, They have access to God with boldness at all times, *Eph. 3. 12. chap. 2. 8.*

Fourthly, They are entered into rest, and have peace with God, and with their own Consciences. *Math. 11. 28. Heb. 4. 9. Rom. 5. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 6, 7. Psal. 116. 7. H•b. 4. 3.*

Fifthly, Sin shall never more have dominion over them. *Rom. 6. 14.*

Sixthly, God will withhold no good thing from them, *Rom. 8. 32.* No temporal blessing, *Math. 6. 33.* No spiritual blessing, *1 Tim. 4. 8.* No instruction, *Jer. 31. 33. Isa. 54. 13. Joh. 14. 26.* No sanctified correction, *Heb. 10. 10, 11. Rom. 5. 3, to 5.* No consolation, *Isa. 51. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 4.* No edification and increase in Grace, *Eph. 4. 12, 16.* Nay all things shall work together for good to them that love God, *Rom. 8. 28.*

Lastly, They can never forfeit their state of Grace, and interest in the Favor of God, *Joh. 13. 1. 2 Cor. 7. 10.* They shall be sure to be kept by the mighty power of God unto Salvation, *1 Pet. 1. 5.* There is not the least room left for a falling off from Grace: Because,

First, Salvation is purchased for them; and if the end be purchased, then all the means to the end; and God in Justice is bound to make good Christ's purchase, and to deliver what he bought and paid for, *2 Tim. 4. 8.*

Secondly, Preservation in grace is engaged to them. *Jer. 32. 40. 1 Thes. 5. 23, 24. The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole Spirit, Soul, and Body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it* Here we may see both Sanctification and Salvation is secured to all that are savingly called of God. Salvation is the End, and sanctification is the Means, and both are sounded not on the will of Man, or on his care and fidelity, but as depending on the act and faithfulness of God; not only the first Act of Sanctification, but Preservation; continuance, and growth in Grace is the work of God, and it's perseverance is laid upon divine preservation; to which God hath bound himself by promise to every Soul that is truly sanctified, and his Faithfulness is engaged to make it good.

Thirdly, They are put into the Hands of Christ on purpose to be secured in Grace to Glory, *Joh. 10. 28, 29. They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand:* They are engraven on the palms of his hands; their walls are continually before him, *Isa. 49. 16.* Their Walls, that is their safety: This was spoken in a time when the Walls of *Jerusalem* were broken down: Yet at that time God had Walls about them to secure them, which they saw not. Both Believers themselves, their Graces, and all the Promises are put into the hands of Christ, hence they cannot fall away.

Fourthly, True Grace is of an abiding nature, *1 Joh. 3. 9. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 *not at constantiam & penitissimam inhaesionem,* (saith one) 'Tis an abiding, and constant inhesion of Grace. Some to evade the evidence of this Truth, would pervert the sense of it, taking it for the new Creature which is born of God; whereas the Original is clear against it 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, in the Masculine Gender, which notes a person, not a thing. Again, it would be a *Tautologie* to add a reason why such a one cannot sin, because he is born of God, and his seed remaineth in him, whereas the new Creature, and the seed of God are all one, but here they note two things; First, A Person; Secondly, The Regenerate part of the Person; which is fully explained in the following *ver.* where he that is born of God, or the Child of God, is opposed to the Child of the Devil, which is meant of a distinct Person, not a different Nature in the same Person; and this seed of God is of an abiding nature wherever it comes, it comes never wholly to depart more, *Isa. 59. 21.*

Fifthly, Because their Life is hid in Christ, and therefore cannot be lost and perish at their pleasure, *Col. 3. 3, 4.* The Believers Grace is sure in the Root, however it be in the Branch, and therefore Christ engages to his people, that they shall live because he lives, *Joh. 14. 19.*

Lastly, They have an Inseparable union with the Spirit of Grace that dwells in them, *Rom. 8. 11. He that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken your mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Where the Article 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 as one observes, ever notes the Person of the Holy Ghost, not his Graces; so that the Saints have an abiding union with the

Spirit of God the third Person, and so cannot perish for want of Grace, but are kept by the power of God through Faith unto Salvation. He can never want Water that may have access to the Fountain or Ocean; nor can any Soul be destitute of Grace that is united to the Spirit of Grace. The Graces of Saints are sure; their Faith, their Preservation is sure: O what a glorious privilege is this that flows to Believers, from this purchase of Christ, that their Salvation is sure, and they may know it to be so.

CHAP. XVIII.

Sanctification and Holiness is purchased for Believers, by the Death and Sufferings of Jesus Christ.

ANother part of Christ's purchased Treasure for Believers, is,

Fourthly, The Sanctification of their Natures and Persons. Here I shall show,

- 1. *That the Lord Jesus hath Purchased Grace and Holiness.*
- 2. *For whom this Holiness is purchased.*
- 3. *What this Holiness is he hath purchased.*
- 4. *That this is part of Christ's Treasure.*

First, That the Lord Jesus hath purchased the sanctification of the Natures and Persons of his people. This I shall prove by several Arguments.

First, All the Types under the Law do imply so much, and darkly open this great truth to Believers. We find that Christ in the non-age and Infant state of his Church and People dealt with them in Figures and Shadows: So the Laver, and Sacrifices, the Priests pure and white Robes and Vestments, and the washing of their Garments, when they were to approach the Divine Majesty, were Typical of this Holiness, which he was to procure for his people in the fullness of time, so much the Apostle imports, *Col. 2. 17. Which are a shadow of things to come, but the Body is of Christ.* The shadow goes before, and the body follows: These Types are precedaneous to the coming of Christ, and his full accomplishment of the things intended, and signified by them, thus Christ is the Altar that sanctifies the gift; *In him we have those true and solid good things which were shadowed out in those Ceremonies under the Law,* (says Daven. on the place)

Secondly; The Names and Titles given to Christ import so much: *He is called Jesus, because he shall save his People from their sins: Mat. 1. 21.* He is called a Redeemer to deliver them from their Bondages and hard Service: He is termed the Sanctifier: For he that Sanctifieth, and they that are Sanctified are all of one. *Heb. 2. 11.*

Thirdly; For this end, he was actually designed of God, and made over to his People in the Everlasting Covenant, decrees, purposes, and determinations of God. *1. Cor. 1. 30. He is made of God unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.* He is made of God: *Non in creatione, sed in ordinatione* (saith Pareus). Not created so according to his Divine Essence, as

some Heretics assert, but ordained and given of God to this end to be Sanctification, that is the Author of Sanctification, and therefore he is said to save to the uttermost, *Heb. 7. 25.* which can never be accomplished without Holiness; *For without holiness no man can see the Lord, Heb. 12. 14.*

Fourthly, For this work was the Lord Jesus promised by the Father to come unto *Zion*, and turn away ungodliness from *Jacob. Rom. 11. 26.* This Scripture is quoted out of *Isa. 50. 10.* from which the Apostle varies, following the Septuagint Translation (then in great use) rather than the *Hebr.* seeing it retains the sense, though different in words: In *Isa.* 'tis *The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from Transgression:* The Apostle says, *He shall come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob:* To reconcile which, *Peter Martyr* thinks the Septuagint might mistake (*Lashub*) *To turn*, for (*Leshabe*) *To them that turn:* But this is not likely that those Learned Doctors could be so mistaken in the Original, and therefore 'tis a far better answer that *Beza* and *Grynaeus* do give, That the Prophet speaketh of the Effect of Christ's coming; which is a turning away from Sin: And that the Apostle speaks of the Cause of their turning from Sin; which is Christ's taking away of Sin, for none can turn from sin, till Christ do remove Sin: And this is the end of his coming into the World: To this end he is promised: *Mal. 3. 2, 3. He shall sit as refiners fire, and purify the Sons of Levi.* The Sons of *Levi* are, Firstly meant of the Apostles: Secondly, I suppose, of all the Saints: But so much is clear, that the Lord Jesus is promised to be a refiner to his People in Gospel times and to purge away their filth and dross, and to make them Holy.

Fifthly; For this end it was the Lord Jesus Christ gave himself up to Redemption-work. *Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27. As Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might Sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of Water by the word:* Here we have; 1. One great end of Christ's Obedience and Suffering; 'tis to make his People Holy. 2. Here's the efficient Cause of this Holiness, that is, By the Spirit of Christ; The blood of Christ purges away the guilt of sin Meritoriously, and the Spirit of Christ purifies the filth of sin Efficiently; signified by Water, as 'tis often used in Scripture. *Joh. 4. 10. 14. Chap. 7. 38, 39.* 3. Here's the instrumental cause of this Holiness, the means by which it is wrought and carried on, and that is *by the word*, the immortal seed of the Soul: This he undertook, and was intended to do in the Covenant of Redemption betwixt the Father and him. *Isa. 42. 1, 2, 3, 4. He shall not fail till he hath set Judgment in the Earth*, that is Holiness; for so 'tis taken, *Joh. 16. 8.* And this work is the Lord Jesus here engaged to do. Some take the word (*Ethmoch*) *I uphold*, passively for the Fathers dependence, and Christ's Faithfulness: He leans or stays upon his undertaking this work, and trusts to his performance of what he undertook to do: Others take it actively for the Fathers upholding and carrying Christ through this great work of Redemption, and Sanctification. In both senses 'tis true, The Lord Jesus stands engaged to carry on Redemption-work, and is thoroughly furnished with grace to accomplish it, *Heb. 10. 7.* Christ readily consents to the fulfilling of the Fathers will; and what that was you have *Isa. 42. 7.* To open the blind eyes, and to bring out the Prisoners out of the Prison, which is meant of the work of Redemption, and Regeneration; and it was the will of God the Father that Christ should do this, 1. *Thes. 4. 3. This is the will of God even your Sanctification:* And this he stood bound to do, to promote and perfect the power of Holiness in all his Children. Now what Christ did undertake he finished

Meritoriously, while on Earth. *Joh. 17. 4. I have finished the work thou hast given me to do:* And for the application of it, he is in Heaven to see it performed; and this is the work of his Intercession, *Joh. 17. 17. Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.* This Christ Intercedes for in Heaven, and therefore 'tis the fruit of his Purchase; for he Intercedes for no more in Heaven than what he died for on Earth.

Sixthly; His Authoritative sending the Spirit of Holiness to his people, shows his right to it by his Purchase. *Joh. 16. 7. I will send him to you.* That is after the finishing of his work, and re-instalment in Glory, *Joh. 7. 39.* For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Christ was not yet glorified.

Lastly; Were not holiness purchased for saved Souls, Christ's Redemption-work would be imperfect, neither could Souls ever answer the ends for which he died. Without Holiness were procured and completed by Christ, there could be no Salvation. For,

First; Man cannot Sanctify himself; *We are all as an unclean thing and our Righteousness as filthy rags,* *Isa. 64. 6. And who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? no not one,* *Job 14. 4.* Indeed the Scripture sometimes speaks after this manner, *Make you a clean heart,* *Ezek. 18. 31. Make you a new heart.* So *Isa. 1. 16. Wash ye, make ye clean:* But there is Mans Duty not his power: It shows the subject, not the Author or this holiness; and where you find such Exhortations, they are to lead men to Christ for the getting of this Holiness wrought in them; as, *1 Pet. 2. 4. To whom come, as as to a living stone, &c.*

Secondly, Without this holiness be wrought in Believers they can never be capable of answering the ends of Redemption; which are,

First, To enjoy Union and Fellowship with God, *Joh. 11. 52. 1 Joh. 1. 3. Heb. 8. 10.* Now without Holiness no Fellowship with God, *2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16.* For his Person is Holy; and his offerings and services are Holy.

Secondly, To reconcile together in one all things in Heaven and Earth, *Col. 1. 20.* But no Fellowship with Angels or Saints in Heaven without holiness for they are holy Creatures.

Thirdly, To be brought into the nearest Union, and Conformity to himself, *Rom. 6. 4, 5.* But without Holiness this cannot be.

Fourthly, To be a Name and a praise unto God, *Eph. 1. 12.* But without Holiness no glorifying of God.

Fifthly, To bring Souls to the possession of the purchased Inheritance in Glory, *Eph. 1. 14.* But nothing that defileth shall enter within the Gate of the new *Jerusalem, Rev. 21. 27.* So much for the first Head, That Jesus Christ hath Purchased Holiness. We shall now enquire,

Secondly, *For whom hath the Lord Jesus Purchased Holiness?*

Answ. For all his feed; for every Soul the Father hath given him, *Joh. 17. 9.* Christ's Purchase, death, and Intercession is only for those the Father hath given him, and everyone of them, for all his seed that belong to him as the second *Adam.* And in this sense is that Scripture to

be taken: *Rom. 5. 18. As by the offense of one Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, even so by the Righteousness of one the free gift came upon all Men to Justification of life.* That is; As death came by Adams fall to all his seed, so life comes by Christ to all his seed; neither can it be stretched further, as the Apostle affirms, *1 Joh. 5. 12. He that hath the Son hath life, but he that hath not the Son hath not life.* Neither will any affirm, that all Men are justified unto life, nor any but those that believe in Christ, which are his seed: The Lord Jesus tells us, *Joh. 17. 20; 'Tis for all them that believe on him through his word. Gal. 3. 22. That the Promise by Faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe:* The Apostle speaks here of a double Promise made to *Abraham*, and through him to Believing Gentiles. 1. The Promise of Righteousness in Justification, ver. 18, 19. 2. The Promise of the Spirit in Sanctification, ver. 14. *That we might receive the Promise of the Spirit through Faith*, and both these are made over to Believers. You that come to Christ in truth, and receive him into your hearts by faith, and take his Yoke on your shoulders, obey his Laws, sincerely give up your all to him, and are no more your own, but though you see your want of Holiness, yet are really willing to be Holy as God is Holy, submitting to all the appointments of Christ, in order to it; you are the seed of Christ, the people to whom the Promise of Holiness doth belong.

Thirdly, *What is the Holiness Christ hath Purchas'd for his People?*

Answ, First; The truth of Grace, in opposition to Hypocrisy: The Lord Jesus never shed his blood for counterfeit grace. His purchased Treasure consists not of Counters, but tried Gold, Rev. 3. 17. What he offers to Sinners, that he purchased and died for; but Christ offers tried gold to invited Souls. Any thing short of saving grace is not worth the shedding of the blood of the Son of God. That which Christ Promiseth to his people is the same with that he hath purchased; but he promiseth true grace, Ezek. 36. 26, 27. He Promiseth a new heart, and a new heart is a truly sanctified heart: 'Tis his Spirit he will put within them; and his Spirit is a Spirit of truth, Joh. 14. 17. There is never a Soul whose heart is made willing to be the Lord's; but Jesus Christ hath purchased sincerity for him; Christ never died for Lies and Untruths, but seeming grace is a lie and not of the truth. This is wonderful comfort to poor troubled Souls that are always doubting of the truth of their graces, and would give a thousand Worlds to be sure that their gold is tried gold, and their graces true graces. Now if ever thy Soul were brought to desire Christ in truth, and to receive him with a lively Faith, thou mayest be sure thy graces are true, because the Lord Jesus hath purchased this for all Believers. Now this truth of Grace consists in a through change of the Soul, even of the whole Man; which may be distinguished into these two parts. 1. The taking away of Sin. 2. The giving of Grace, the delivering the Soul from the power of Satan, and the reducing it under the power of God, and into his Kingdom: The purging the Soul from Lust, and possessing it with Grace: the destroying the works of the Devil, and creating it the workmanship of God: In freeing the Soul from the Ruling Power of sin in every part, and implanting the Nature and Image of God on every Power and Faculty of it. Acts 26. 18. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Tit. 2. 14 Rom. 6. 14.

Secondly; Perseverance in Grace; Their continuance in a state of grace: And the abiding of the seed of God in them: *1 Joh. 3. 9.* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 'tis the same word that

signifies the Spirits abiding with Believers, which Christ saith shall be forever, *Joh. 14. 16. 1 Joh. 2. 27.* This he hath Promised in the new Covenant, and therefore this he hath purchased, *Jer. 32. 40.* And therefore the sanctified are called the preserved in Jesus Christ, *Jude ver. 1.* And the Saints are said to be kept by the Power of God through faith unto Salvation, *1 Pet. 1. 5.* This Christ stands engaged to the Father to do, *Joh. 17. 12.* If Jesus Christ hath not purchased perseverance in Grace to the end for all his people, but leaves their continuance in the truth to their free-will, then he leaves them in the same state in which they were under the first Covenant: For the standing of *Adam* in the first Covenant was upon his own choice and will; but this cannot be, because Christ hath taken away the first Covenant from Believers, and Established the second which makes the Comers thereunto perfect, *Heb. 8. 6. to 11. Chap. 10. 9, 10.*

Thirdly; Growth in Grace: What he calls them to that he hath purchased for them; for Christ cannot invite his people to uncertainties or disappointments; what he exhorts them to, he promiseth to work them to, *Phil. 2. 12, 13. Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling; For 'tis God that worketh in you both to will and to do.* Now he bids them to grow in Grace, *2 Pet. 3. 18.* And this he Promiseth also, *Hos. 14. 5. 7. I will be as a dew unto Israel, and he shall grow as the Lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon, they that dwell under his shadow shall revive as the Corn, and grow as the Vine. Psa. 92. 12. The Righteous shall flourish as the Palm-Tree and grow as the Cedars in Lebanon.* What God Promised under the new Covenant Christ hath died for; for this Covenant is wholly Confirmed by blood, by the death of the Testator, *Heb. 9. 14, 17.*

Quest: *Then what is the reason God's People grow no more in Grace this day?*

Answ. First; All are not *Israel* that are of *Israel*; Many pass for Saints in the Judgment of Men which were never sanctified in Christ Jesus, nor will appear to be so in the approbation of God; and therefore some in whom you see no growth, are no contradiction to this truth at all, they being none of the seed of Christ.

Secondly; The Lord's Trees as well as the Trees of the Wood have their growing times: The Winter is no time to grow; no nor the Winter of Temptation or divine desertion. Bodies have their growing times, so have Souls. Believer thy growing time may be yet to come if thou art Christ's.

Thirdly; Souls may grow, though slowly, and invisibly to themselves and others; Believers have sometimes a veil on their Eyes, and cannot discern their flourishing, and sometimes the smallness of Grace renders it indiscernible to others. There may be a growing downward in Faith, and Humility, those radical Graces that strengthen the Souls adherence to Christ, though there be no growing upwards in fruitfulness for Christ. There is a growing in internal longings and secret desires after more of God, and in higher valuations of Jesus Christ, though not in such sensible enjoyments of him. As the truth of Grace lies beyond the view of Men, so doth many times the growth of grace to a Mans self, and to others.

Fourthly; The People of God shall at last have their growth in grace further'd by their present decays in Grace. As the sickness of Children, though it makes them languish for a

time, yet it helps on their growth when 'tis over; so the Winter season promotes the growth of Trees and herbs when the Summer comes.

Fourthly; The Lord Jesus hath Purchased for his people Perfection in Grace also: This is intended by his death, that they may be made perfect in one, *Joh. 17. 23.* This he presseth them to *Mat. 5. 48. Be ye perfect as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.* And what he exhorts them to he prepares and hath redeemed them to. For this end he gives them Ordinances, that they may come to a perfect Man, to the fullness of the measure of the stature of Jesus Christ, *Eph. 4. 12, 13. Heb. 10. 14.* This perfection of grace is nothing else but glory. *1 Cor. 13. 10. When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away:* And this Christ hath purchased for Believers, *Joh. 10. 28.*

Quest: If Christ hath Purchased perfection in Holiness; Then what's the reason the professing people of Christ are so imperfectly Holy, never a day since the Gospel, of more light, and less life; of more profession, and less Power of Holiness; Whence comes this so?

Answ. First; These are the last days, yea the latter part of the last days, and the last days are days of great unholiness, and little grace. O the Catalogue of sins the Scripture gives us that will abound at that time, 2 Tim. 3. 1. In the last days Perillous times shall come, for Men shall be lovers of themselves—Having a form of Godliness but denying the Power thereof. Christ himself shows us the complexion of the last times: Mat. 24. 12. Then Iniquity shall abound, and the love of many wax cold. The days before the Coming of Christ to avenge his Elect are days of little Grace: When the Son of Man comes shall he find Faith on the Earth? Luke 18. 8.

Secondly; Because of the abundance of Hypocrites that get under a profession, and crowd in amongst Saints: In the last times the greatest number of Men are formalists, as you have heard, *2. Tim. 3. 5.* Half at least of Virgin Professors will at the coming of Christ be found foolish, and abundance of tares among the Wheat, and Goats among the Sheep, will be discovered when Christ comes to Judgment; and this hinders the holiness of professors, when a great number among them are rotten, and Carnal; unsound Persons amongst the sincere hinder their thriving in Grace, by their Examples and ensnaring Company; these, as Gangreens, do eat away all holiness; and as dead bodies become contagious; if the living touch the dead, they are unclean, *Hag. 2. 13. Can a man touch Pitch, and not be defiled?*

Thirdly, Because 'tis the hour, and power of darkness, *Luke 22. 53.* 'tis a time of great temptation to God's people: Satan is come down with great wrath, *Rev. 12. 12.* This *Chap.* is contemporary with the Seals and Trumpets, and gives us a repetition of the Churches State under the first and second Persecution; this *ver.* holds forth the second persecution under Antichrist, when Satan is cast out of the true Church, and Believers, and comes down among rotten professors, to stir them up to persecution, and then the Devil hath great wrath, especially in the latter part of his Reign, when he hath but a little time; then by temptation as well as persecution, he labors to destroy the Saints holiness.

Fourthly, God's leaving his people as a punishment of former sins under present Corruptions; for their humbling, and driving them nearer to himself. These may be some

Reasons why there is so little holiness; but however, the time will come when Christ will make up his Jewels, and set holiness in the Earth.

Fourthly, *This sanctification of Believers is part, yea, the choicest part of Christ's purchased Treasure.* I have shewn before that Riches import two things. 1. Some things that were of worth and value, men never seek great heaps of dust or straw, as part of their Riches; but Silver, Gold, and Jewels, are things of account. 2. Abundance and large measures of these excellent things. Now sanctification is a thing of wonderful value, and an unknown excellency in its nature; holiness must needs be excellent because it is a sparkle of Divine Glory; 'tis part of the Nature and Image of God himself, *2 Pet. 1. 4.* 'Tis the Glory of God, *Hab. 3. 3.* When the Prophet would set forth God in his Glory, he gives him the name of the holy one, *God came from Teman, and the holy one from Mount Paran, his Glory covered the Heavens.* The Prophet here speaks and Prophecies of the calling of the Jews by the Gospel, after the Ascension of Christ, in an allusion to his former giving the Law on Mount *Sinai*, and making them his people by that Covenant: So *Teman* is a place in *Idumea*, *Paran* in *Arabia*, between *Sinai* and *Seir*, from whence God gives out his Law, and shows out his Glory, as you may see, *Deut. 33. 3.* Some take *Teman* for *Jerusalem*, and then the meaning is thus; As God did formerly manifest his Glory, by giving out his Law from Mount *Sinai*; and his Holiness in keeping and leading his people through the Wilderness to *Canaan* and *Jerusalem*: So will he in Gospeltimes, manifest his Glory, in giving the Gospel, and calling a People to himself; and this Glory of his will most eminently appear in the manifestation of his Holiness. So that Holiness is the Glory of God, and therefore must needs be most excellent. Nay, Sanctification is the honor of the Creature, *Rev. 21. 10, 11.* The Glory of the latter Church is set forth by its Holiness: So Sanctification and Honor are joined together, *1 Thess. 4. 4.* Holiness is the greatest Treasure; for 'tis laid up in the choicest Treasury; in Heaven, the place of God's Holiness, and the Habitation of the Holy Saints and Angels, *Isa. 63. 15.* Treasures are not the Possession of everyone, they are given usually but to a few: So is Holiness the privilege of the fewest and least number of men; few there be that find it, *Mat. 7. 13.* Riches can procure the greatest things procurable, as one saith; *Money answereth all things*; that is all things that are saleable among men; so Holiness, though it cannot purchase Mercy, yet it fits persons for the greatest Mercies, and highest Services. None more advanced than holy Souls; they dwell in the presence of God, *Psal. 140. 13.* They are through Christ very potent with God; they are fit for the highest work. When Persons come to die, they see the excellency of holiness, and would purchase it with a world: This proves that Sanctification is a rare Treasure.

Again, The purchased Holiness of Christ hath not only excellent worth, but large quantity; he hath purchased fullness of Grace; Grace for Grace. O Believer, though thy heart be empty of grace, yet Christ's Treasure is full, he hath as much as ever thou canst need or crave, to make thee as Holy as thou wouldest be, and that to all Eternity.

USE.

If Holiness be the Purchase of Christ, then 'tis not the Creatures procurement, or by any ways or means obtained short of the merit of Christ. what the Apostle says of Righteousness is true of Sanctification, *Gal. 2. 21.* *If Righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.* So

if holiness be the Fruit of Men's Purposes, Labors and Duties, then Christ died in vain. 'Tis too common an error in many, to charge Christ with too much in some things, and too little in other things. In justification some lay too much on Christ; I mean by charging their sins on him for pardon, which they were never thoroughly convinced or repented of; and in sanctification charge him with too little, expecting their holiness and meetness from their purposes, duties, and improvements: As if holiness were to grow out of the Sepulchers of their Services, and not out of the grave of Christ: 'Tis true indeed the Lord Jesus hath appointed means for the promoting of Holiness, and given promises and Ordinances for the conveying and perfecting of it, but the virtue of all depends upon his blessing, 1 Cor. 3. 6, 7. Rom. 9. 16.

Secondly; Then how inexcusable are perishing Sinners under the Gospel, that will not come to Christ to be made holy. You that lie in your blood, and from the Crown of your head to the sole of your feet are full of filthy Ulcers, and putrifying sores; whose Consciences cannot but condemn you sometimes for uncleanness; and never being cleansed by the blood of Christ; how will you appear before the Holy God, a Consuming fire, in your unpurged sins? How unjustifiable is your filthynesse who might have been cleansed, but would not! What will you answer in the day of Indignation, when all this tendered, but refused Grace shall come against you? when you would willingly part with the whole World if you had it to get a clean heart and a purged Conscience? How dreadful will that word be in the day of Inquisition; *Ezek. 22. 24. Thou art a Land, Thou art a Soul that art not cleansed?* How cutting will the memory be of rejected Grace, when God shall say, *I would have healed you, but you are not healed?* Jer. 51. 9. You might have had your natures changed, your Consciences cleansed, and your hearts sanctified, but you would not: Now away thou profane hard-hearted wretch: Be gone thou secret Drunkard, Swearer, Thief, Liar, take him Devil, go and be filthy still, wallow in thy blood; there lie cursing in torment to all Eternity; as long as I am God, thy blood shall lie upon thee.

Thirdly; Then the Holiness of Believers is and shall be sure, being grounded on the Purchase of Christ. 'Tis bought, and paid for (O Believer) for thee: purchased Sanctification is assuredly thine as thou art not thine own; The truth, continuance, growth, and perfection of Grace is procured for thee by a price: A price agreed on betwixt the Father and the Son.

First, God will not deny it, Justice itself cannot with-hold thy purchased due. As sure as Christ with-holds not one drop of his blood, or penny of the price, so sure will not God with-hold any part of this Purchase. *Rom. 3. 26. That he may be just, and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus:* And if the justifier, then sure the sanctifier. Poor doubting Believer, when thou seest nothing but unworthiness in thyself of the least Grace, and peace from God, then think, 'twas Christ, not I, that made this purchase; he who did not, cannot make a forfeit of his right; and whose blood must perish, whose Honor and Interest must suffer, if one of those for whom Christ died should die and perish for want of Holiness: O no! this cannot be; *The Judge of all the Earth must do right.* Gen. 18. 23.

Secondly, Jesus Christ the believers Advocate cannot suffer to see his poor and needy deprived of their right: He is the Mediator betwixt God and his people; The days-Man and

Umpire to see truth Established in the Earth, and everyone to receive his due: He will give wicked Men their due, much more his Children; And all Power in Heaven and Earth are in his hands, *Math.* 28. 20. He is the Faithful Witness, Holy, and Just one, and therefore will cause that believers shall have the distributions of the due Measures of his Purchas'd Grace.

Thirdly, there is nothing in thee or without thee that can hinder the accomplishment of it, *Isa.* 43. 13. *I will work, and who shall let:* Let Earth and Hell, Sin and self, combine together, they shall not keep back the Communications of grace one day beyond God's time, *Math.* 12. 20. 'Tis not the strength of thy lusts can prevail against the arm of God, and forces of his eternal Spirit, who is commissioned to bring down all thy Enemies, and set thee free indeed. Christ will Reign till he brings down all his Enemies under his feet, *1 Cor.* 15. 25. The greatest part of which is the Corruptions of his people.

CHAP. XIX.

Adoption-Grace proved to be the Fruit of Christ's Purchase: The excellency of this state opened in several particulars.

I Come now to a fifth Fruit of Christ's Purchase, and discovery of that glorious Redemption-Treasure procured by his death; *that is* a state of Adoption, those whom he sanctifies he adopts, and brings into a new Relation to himself; to God the Father, Son, and Spirit: The work of Sanctification doth change their Nature, Adoption changeth their state; they are really altered by Sanctifying Grace, and relatively by Adoption-love. God now becomes their Father, and they are his Sons and Daughters, *2 Cor.* 6. 17, 18. *Come out from amongst them, and touch not the unclean thing:* Here's a change in their Nature and Life: *And I will be your God, and you shall be my Sons and Daughters:* there's a change in their state: Adoption is the taking of persons that are strangers, and undeserving in themselves, into a state and Relation of Sons and Heirs; bringing them into a new Family and Condition: And such is the Adoption of the Sons of God, 'tis a Translation of called and sanctified Souls out of the Family of Satan into the Family of God, *Col.* 1. 13. *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son,* *Joh.* 1. 12. *To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God,* *1 Joh.* 3. 2. *Now are we the Sons of God:* And this Adoption-Privilege is the Fruit of the Death of Christ, *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. *When the fullness of time was come God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law; to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons:* For though this Adoption be an act of Grace in God, to take Souls into Sonship with him; yet 'tis by Jesus Christ, *Eph.* 1. 5. *Having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children, by Jesus Christ: That is,* To be redeemed, and made fit for it by Jesus Christ. Now in the Adoption of Sanctified Souls into the Family of God there are these five things.

A change, 1. of Relation. 2. Of Obligation. 3. Of Disposition. 4. Of Condition. 5. Of Duty.

First, There's a change of Relation; they were the Children of the Devil, *Joh.* 8. 44. Heirs of Hell, and under the Power of the God of this World, *Eph.* 2. 2. *Who rules in the Children of Disobedience.* They were of the kindred of Hell, of that Family whose Head and Ruler is Satan. This was their state, when Redemption-grace found them. Now Adoption alters this relation, and being taken out of this Family by effectual calling, they are by Adoption entered into a

new Relation, and made the Sons and Daughters of God, *Gal. 4. 4.* Now they can call God their Father, Christ their Husband; the Saints their Brethren, *verse. 5. Eph. 2. 19.* *Ye are no more Strangers, and Foreigners, but Fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God.*

Secondly, A change of Obligation; they were bound to the Law of Satan, under the Law of Sin, and Slavery of the World, led Captive by Satan at his Will, *Col. 1. 13.* But when Adoption-grace comes, it delivers them from this Obligation, and they are brought under the power of God, and Scepter of his Kingdom, *Acts 26. 18. Rom. 6. 14, 17, 18. Heb. 1. 8.*

Thirdly, a change of Disposition; they have the Nature and Spirit of Children, *Gal. 4. 6.* *Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, &c.* They were by Nature Enemies, but now are Children; they have a disposition to love God, to honor and obey him, 'tis their Meat and Drink to do his will, *Joh. 4. 34. Mal. 1. 6.* To serve Christ before was burdensome, but now delightful: The Love of Christ constrains them: 'Tis as natural for them now to obey Christ, as ever it was to rebel against him; they are never satisfi'd but when God is well pleased.

Fourthly, A change in their State and Condition; they are brought into a state of Glorious Privileges, in respect of, 1. *Liberty*, 2. *Rights and Interests*. 3. *Boldness*. 4. *Instruction*. 5. *Correction*. 6. *Provision*. 7. *Protection*. 8. *Inheritance*: And by these the state of an Adopted Soul appears to be a glorious state.

First, They are brought into a state of Freedom, *Joh. 8. 36.* If the Son shall make you free then are you free indeed (< in non-Latin alphabet >) The word Imports that Freedom that is opposed to Servitude, as it appears also by the word, *ver. 33.* Christ tells them, *ver. 32.* *The truth shall makethem free;* And they answered him; *We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any Man:* So that by freedom here, Christ intends a delivering of them from that bondage they were in by reason of sin and Satan: and he tells them that this is that freedom that comes by him; all that are the Children of God are free Men and Women. *1 Cor. 7. 22. 2 Cor. 3. 17.* *Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty:* The Apostle tells them, *ver. 8.* That the Ministration of the Spirit is much more glorious than that of the Law, or letter; that is, the Ministry of the Gospel is far more Excellent than that of the Law, which he proves by several arguments: And here he tells us that the Lord is that Spirit, that is, the Lord Jesus is the Author of that Spirit, or Spritual Ministration, under the Gospel, and where that Spirit or Administration is, or where the Soul is brought into this Gospel-state, there is liberty, *Rom. 8. 21.* Now this liberty that all the Children of God are brought into is a twofold liberty. 1. A liberty from Servitude. 2. A liberty to service. Or as a Reverend writer expresseth it: *A liberty from the Family of Satan, and liberty in the Family of God.* There are some things which all Adopted Souls have a liberty from, and some things they have a liberty in or to.

First, All that are Adopted in Christ are set free from that slavery they were in under the Law Sin, Satan, and the World. They are freed from Bondage under the Law, from Bondagework, and Bondage-wrath: All that are under the Law of *Moses*, as all are who are out of Christ, are obliged to Bondage-work, to the work of slaves, not of free Men.

First, they are bound to do work that is above their strength, which they can never perform, *Rom. 8. 3.* The Law was weak through the flesh, that is, there was an impotency in fallen Man ever to fulfil the Law, or attain life by it: The Law required perfect, and perpetual Obedience; but this could never be performed by sinful Man, and therefore legal-work, was hard work, work never to be done by fallen Man, and this is bondage-work.

Secondly; Legal-work is mercenary work; Do this and live. *Gal. 3. 12.* *The Man that doth them shall live in them:* Like a Servant, if he doth his work he shall have his wages, if not he must expect nothing; and this is hard indeed, that the poor weak Creature that is utterly destitute of all strength, worth, and ability, must have no more than can deserve.

Thirdly; 'Tis rigorous work, pressed by arguments of severity, threatenings of death and Hell to all the Transgressours of it. *Gal. 3. 10.* *Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the book of the Law to do them.*

Fourthly; 'Tis fruitless work, works that cannot make the comers thereunto perfect. *Heb. 9. 9.* 'Tis Labor in vain. *Heb. 10. 1.*

Fifthly; 'Tis work without Wages, no reward at all could ever be received from it. *Gal. 3. 21, 22.* *For had there been a Law which could have given Life, verily Righteousness had been by the Law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin. &c.* There is no Life, no Crown, no Kingdom at all is the reward of all such labors.

Sixthly, 'Tis work that will surely end in death: Let men work never so hard yet they must die, and be damned at last for falling short, and this is bondage-work indeed; but the Children of God are freed from this work, *Rom. 7. 6.* *But now we are delivered from the Law, that being dead wherein we are held, that we should serve in newness of Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.*

Again, As they are freed from bondage-work, so are they freed from bondage-wrath: The wrath of God is upon all the Children of disobedience; all Christless Souls are Children of wrath, bound over to an Inheritance of wrath, *Eph. 5. 6.* *Chap. 2. 3.* Because the Law worketh wrath, *Rom. 4. 15.* It brings all its Servants under wrath, under the curse, and under death. *Rom. 6. 23.* But from this also are all the Sons of God freed, *Heb. 2. 14.* *And destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the Devil.* And not only from the Devil, but from the works of the Devil. *1 Joh. 3. 8.* *Rom. 6. 14.* *Chap. 8. 2.* *Gal. 3. 13.*

Again they are free from all yokes of bondage laid on their Consciences by Men. *Gal. 5. 1.* *1 Cor. 7. 23.* *Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the Servants of Men:* Do not give up your Faith and Conscience to their Commands, obey not them contrary to the Command of Christ. *Gal. 1. 10, 11.* if I yet pleased men I should not be the Servant of Christ. This is the first part of liberty the Children of God are brought into, even a liberty from Servitude.

Secondly, They have a liberty to service in the Worship of God: Their service of God is free and ingenuous Service; their offerings are free-will Offerings. *Psa. 119. 108.* *Accept the free-will offerings of my mouth.* That is, those offerings or vows which my mouth hath freely offered. The Children of God are a willing people, *Psa. 110. 3.* They serve the Lord freely from the

heart, *Rom.* 6. 17. They obey from the heart that form of Doctrine delivered to them; They delight in the Law of God after the inner Man, *Rom.* 7. 22. The strictest Service of God is to them the most desired liberty, the Commands of God are no ways grievous to them; that is, to their inner Man, indeed so far as flesh and Corruption get head, they drag heavily to duty, when the spring of their motions, even their childlike love to God is abated, and all the Indispositions of a child of God flow from decays of love to God, and some abatement of the Adoption-Spirit in him: The Children of God are never in their Element, or as they would be, but when their hearts slow out after God, and they can run the paths of his Commandments, this they pray and labor for, *Psa.* 119. 32. *I will run the way of thy Commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart.* So ver. 69. *I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart.* Their hearts move naturally after God when in their right temper: As the Waters run towards the Sea, and the Sun runs his race: Their service of God comes from a new Principle, even from Faith that works by love, and is directed to new and higher ends, than all the services of Hypocrites: The sense of divine love constrains them to duty, that they cannot but choose the things that please God, further than they are bound back by Corruption, and Temptation; their works are wrought in God from a Principle of life, raised and revived by grace; They have no mercenary aims in their Duties to attain any carnal selfish end below God, but their Motives are high and heavenly, pure and spiritual, as the Love of God, and care they have to please him: They see a beauty in Holiness, and a pleasantness in the ways of God, and find a suitability in their hearts, to love these though under never so great discouragements, and disadvantages as to flesh and blood; hence 'tis a Child of God cannot cast off God and his Worship, though he see nothing of good or comfort coming in by them, nor be persuaded to consent to anything that is sinful, though to save his purse, person, yea life itself: All the threatenings of Men, or visible dangers in his way, can't bring his heart to comply with ungodliness, or speak or do anything against God, his people, or ways, *2 Cor.* 13. 8. *We can do nothing against the truth.* None but a *Judas* can come with a Band of men and Officers against Christ to apprehend him, or his people for owning him: *Micaiah* would speak nothing against the truth, though to please a King. *1 Kings* 22. 17. Nor *Jacob's* Soul enter into the secret of the wicked in their sinful enterprise: A fearful *Peter* may forsake the professing of Christ for a time, but he will not be seen on the side of those that do oppose him; no, this is far from the true Spirit of God's Children: We read of the Christians in the primitive times, that left their preferments, rather than they would be seen against Christ people; and the whole Legion chose rather to lay down their lives, than to oppose their fellow Christians: Such shufflings and Compliances are opposed to the Spirit of the true Children of God; they can run after God in a Wilderness, but cannot be drawn against God by all the World.

Secondly, They have new Rights and Interests: Believers being once entered into the Family of God by Christ, are presently invested with new and Glorious Rights which they never had before, nor any besides the Children of God have or can ever have; which will appear in these five things.

First, They have a right to the special and blessed presence of God the Father, Son, and Spirit. *Psa.* 140. 13. *The upright shall dwell in thy presence.* The upright, that is, the faithful, the Children of God, these shall dwell in thy presence, in thy special presence, for all Men and

Devils are in the general presence of God, but the Saints shall be in God's special presence; and not step into it only as strangers may, but continue forever as Sons. *Joh. 8. 35. The servant abideth not in the house forever, but the Son abideth ever, Psa. 26. 6.*

Secondly. They have a right to the purchase of Christ, to all the fruit of his Obedience, and sufferings: His blood is theirs, with all the procurements of it. *Isa. 53. 5. He was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed:* whatever Christ died for according to the agreement betwixt the Father and him, is the Right of his Children, *Joh. 17. 9.*

Thirdly, They have right to the Promises, *2 Pet. 1. 4. Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises.* Whereby, that is, by the knowledge of him, as *ver. 3.* Or through Faith in him, that is, by Jesus Christ we come to have right to the promises, for all the promises are in him Yea and Amen, *2 Cor. 1. 20.* The promises of this Life and of that which is to come, all are theirs, *1 Tim. 4. 8.*

Fourthly, They have Right to Communion with, and to the blessing of the whole Family of Christ: Being entered into God's Family, they have a Right to fellowship with all his people, *1 Cor. 12. 13. For by one Spirit are we baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, Bond or Free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* The great design of the Apostle in this *chap.* is to show that all Believers are brought into nearest Union with Christ, and each other, even into one body; this he proves in this *ver.* by the end of the Ordinances of Baptism, and the Supper, both which do signify and seal up Believers into the nearest Union and Communion, by reason of which they have equal right to one another, and the whole body, they have right to Communion with Angels and Saints: All the Sons and Daughters of God, have right to his House; to his Church, and all the privileges of it, *Isa. 56. 5.* Ordinances and Ministers are theirs, *1 Cor. 3. 22, 23.* Yea, they have right to the blessings of God on all: *Psalm. 3. 8. Thy blessing is upon thy People, Eph. 1. 3.*

Fifthly, They have a right to all the good things of this Life, *Rev. 21. 7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things:* Even the good things of this Life, *Ps. 37. 9. They that wait on the Lord shall inherit the Earth.* They are Heirs with Christ, who is Heir of all things, *Heb. 1. 2.* They have through Christ a Right to all the good things of this world, so far as God sees it best for them; they have their right in the Second Adam, who is Lord of all; this is a New-Covenant-Right; not over other men's rights to invade or break the civil properties of any, but to those Creatures God gives them, and to the good of all things, even wants and enjoyments, and have a sanctified use of them, which none but the Children of God have, *Tit. 1. 15.*

Sixthly, They have Right to the inheritance of Glory, *Tit. 3. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.* Heaven is the Country, Home, and Inheritance of all Saints: Their Title is founded on the Purchase of Christ, and Adoption of Grace: not upon their Merit or Holiness; and therefore 'tis called on the account of Christ, the purchased possession, *Eph. 1. 14. Which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession.* That is until we are actually redeemed from Corruption, and put into the possession of purchased Glory; yea their Reversion in Heaven is so freely procured for them, without any of their money or price,

duties or obedience, further than 'tis the way to walk in to Glory; that Eternal Life is said to be the gift of God, *Rom. 6. 23.* Death comes by Man's merit, but not Life and Salvation: and is not this a glorious state, and blessed condition, to be made Heirs, and Coheirs with Christ? *Rom. 8. 17.* And if Children, then heirs, and Joynt-heirs with Christ: partakers of the same Rights with him, Heirs of the Righteousness of Faith, *Heb. 11. 7.* So was Abraham, and so are all Believers; they have a right to Justification, by believing; and a right to the Kingdom of Glory, *Jam. 2. 5.* Heirs of the Kingdom: They have as good a Title to this by Grace, and through the purchase of Christ, as any man to an Inheritance here on Earth, yea, and far more sure of it; for men may be turned out of their Rights and Properties here; but Believers cannot be deprived of their Title, and Inheritance through Christ.

Seventhly, They have an interest in God's love, they are upon his Heart at all times, *Joh. 16. 27.* For the Father himself loveth you: He loves with an infinite Love, a Love passing knowledge, and transcending the love of all Creatures, *Isa. 49. 15.* A Mother may forget her Child, but God cannot forget his: He loves at all times; Eternally, and unchangeably: He loves his Children ardently, when they have but little love to him: He loves them notwithstanding their unkindnesses and provocations, *Psal. 89. 31, 32, 33.* He loves them when he seems to be angry with them, and is forced to correct them, *Heb. 12. 6.* He always thinketh on them for good, *Jer. 29. 11.* I know the thoughts I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of Peace, and not of Evil. He is very tender of them, and hath the bowels of a Compassionate Father towards them, *Psal. 103. 8, 13. Mal. 3. 17.* And I will spare them as a man spareth his Son that serveth him.

Eighthly, They have a right to the Spirit of Grace, the Spirit is put into their Hearts, *Gal. 4. 6.* Not the spirit of Bondage, but of Adoption, *Rom. 8. 15, 16.* They have union with the Spirit never to be separated more, *v. 11.* they have the Spirit of Grace and Supplication, *Zach. 12. 10.* To quicken, teach, influence, assist in Duty, and make intercession for them, *Rom. 8. 26.* O what a blessed privilege is this to have the Spirit of the Son, whereby they can go to God as a Father, and to have the Spirit working in them the disposition, and working for them the actions of Sons.

Thirdly, They have holy and reverential boldness to come into the presence of God through his Son, *Ps. 26. 6.* I will wash my hands in innocence, and so will I compass thine Alter, *Eph. 2. 18.* For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. They can come to God at all times, and behold his Face in Righteousness, unless their sins do cause him to hide himself for a time, *Eph. 3. 12.* And plead their cause through Christ with boldness, *Heb. 10. 19, 20.* And they are not only free to come, but sure to speed, *Joh. 16. 23, 24. 1 Joh. 5. 14, 15.*

Fourthly, Instruction is another Privilege of Sons, *They shall be taught of God, Isa. 54. 1.* He will teach, instruct, and show them things they know not: He will lead them into all truth, *Joh. 16. 16.* The Spirit searcheth the deep things of God, and revealeth them to the Saints, *1 Cor. 2. 20.* He will teach them all things which they are able to bear: They shall have the openings of Christ's mind, to steer their course whiles in this Wilderness of the World, and shall receive the revelation of all truths necessary to Salvation.

Fifthly, They have choice and delicate provisions, and rich maintenance; this is the duty of Parents to provide for their Obedient and indigent Children, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. *But if any man provide not for his own House he hath denied the Faith:* He cares for his Children, *Mat.* 6. 31, 32. 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. He that gives his Son, how can he but with him freely give us all things, *Rom.* 8. 32. *Phil.* 4. 19. *My God shall supply all your wants:* He that gives a Kingdom at the Journeys end, will not deny Bread and Water in the way: He will provide for their Bodies and Souls, for their Persons and Families.

Sixthly, Correction is theirs, *Psal.* 89. 32. *Heb.* 12. 8. Correction is the Saints Privilege, and great advantage; they have need of it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. *Though for a season, if need be, you are in heaviness, &c.* And they have advantage by it, *Psa.* 119. 71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted,* *Heb.* 12. 10. *But he for our profit.*

Seventhly, Protection is another privilege of Children: He will keep them as the Apple of his Eye, *Psa.* 17. 8. He will hide them in the secret of his Tabernacle, *Ps.* 31. 20. He will keep them Day and Night, *Isa.* 27. 3. He gives his Angels charge concerning them, *Psa.* 91. 11, 12. *Heb.* 1. 14.

Lastly, The Kingdom is theirs: O think what rest, what joy, what holiness, what perfection, what immutability, and Eternity of Glory is in Heaven! and say, all this is my Estate by Adoption; I shall one day be possessed of it; here I am poor, but there I shall be rich, here I am empty and hungry, there I shall be full: here I am despised, there I shall be honored; here I have not a house▪ lay my head in, there I shall have a Mansion to all Eternity; here one and another says, come sit at my Foot, there shall I sit on a Throne, and be a Crowned King forever: Here my Comforts go, and my troubles stay; worms breed in all my enjoyments, but there is no Rust, nor Moth; no Decay, nor Death. O blessed state indeed that Believers are Adopted to in Christ!

Fifthly, The last considerable thing in Adoption is, the Duties that flow from such a state, and this is part of their privilege also, as being the Fruit of an Adoption-state, and that which they are purchased as well as obliged unto by the blood of Christ; all the filial duties of Believers are the fruits of Adoption-Grace, *Gal.* 4. 6. *Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts.* The Spirit of his Son to make you really such, and to form in you the Nature, and work you to the duty of Sons. So that Adopted Souls are not only chosen of God to be heirs with Christ, but are also begotten of God into the Nature and Image of Christ, *Rom.* 8: 29. *Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son;* that as Christ carried himself as a Son, so should the Children of God in their measure, and time and that by the same Spirit. Now these duties which God's Children are spirited and engaged to, are,

First, To love God as their Father, even from a sense of his Fatherly love, 1 *Joh.* 4. 19. *We love him because he first loved us.* *Deut.* 6. 5. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy might:* The Lord thy God, because he hath pleased to make thee his Son, and to place thee in so near and high relation to himself, *Psa.* 31. 23. *O love the Lord all ye his Saints:* You that are set apart for him, and Sanctified by him; O you of all Persons from the

sense of this relation should love him. This is a filial duty, and so essential to Sons, as that 'tis put for the ground of all their Obedience. *Joh. 14. 13. If a man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him; that is, manifest his love to him as a Father.* This is not a forced but a natural love to God arising from that new Nature and Spirit of Adoption in them; so that a Child of God may as well cease to be a Child, as cease to have a disposition to love him: Indeed a gracious Soul may not always actually love God, but he hath a disposition to love him, and can appeal to God that he knows he would love him, and there is nothing in all the World he can value like him.

Secondly, To obey him, *1 Pet. 1. 14. As obedient Children, not fashioning yourselves according to former Lusts.* 'Tis a great duty of Children to obey their Parents in all things lawful, and so they that are God's Children are much more obliged to obey God, whose relation much more binds them, being so far above all other relations, whose love constrains them, *2 Cor. 5. 14.* whose Laws invite them, they being holy, just, and good, *Rom. 7. 12.* Whose rewards also encourageth them, there is a reward in keeping them, *Psa. 19. 11.* and a reward upon those that keep them, *Rev. 2. 10.* Now this Child-like obedience differs from all other obedience; in that, 1. 'Tis the fruit of faith, *Joh. 8. 47. He that is of God heareth God's word, that is obeyeth God's word; but what an Obedience is this, see the former ver.* It is an Obedience from faith, *ver. 46. If I say the truth why do ye not believe me?* 2. 'Tis the labor of love, *1 Thes. 1. 3. Remembering without ceasing your work of Faith and labor of love.* 3. 'Tis delightful Obedience, *Rom. 7. 22. I delight in the Law of God after the inner Man.*

Thirdly, A fear of offending him, *Hos. 3. 5. And shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.* This is a filial fear arising from their relation to God as their Father, *1 Pet. 1. 17. And if you call on the Father, &c. pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* This is a fear springing from and consisting with love; there is a fear that love casteth out, *1 Joh. 4. 18. perfect love casteth out fear,* that is slavish fear: 'Tis such a fear as keeps the Soul close to God, and not drive him from him, *Jer. 34. 40. O how fearful is such a Soul of offending God, Job 34. 31. He will do all he can to prevent sin, Psa. 119. 11. Thy word have I hid in my heart that I may not sin against thee.*

Fourthly, A zeal for God's glory, *Psa. 69. 9. The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up:* That is, the zeal which I have for thy house or for thy pure Worship, against them that would corrupt it, hath like fire consumed me. Zeal is the burning fire of love which will not bear anything that dishonors God: So *Phinehas* could not endure to see God dishonored by the whoredoms of his People, but in his zeal executes the Law upon one of the highest offenders, *Numb. 25. 11.* The want of the zeal made *Laodicea* in danger of being spewed out of God's mouth, *Rev. 3. 16.* and therefore God calls her to Repentance, and to this zealous Spirit in his Worship, *ver. 19. Be zealous and Repent.* This zeal was that Child-like temper that God commended in *Ephesus*, *Rev. 2. 2. Thou canst not bear them that are evil: A zealous Soul cannot suffer any reproach on God's Name, Psa. 69. 20. Reproach hath broken my heart.* This Child-like zeal in *Croesus* dumb Son opened his mouth when his Father was in danger to be slain.

Fifthly, A fiducial dependence on his care and faithfulness, *Psa. 23. 1. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want:* *Rom. 8. 32. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you:* This

was the Child-like confidence of *Job* in his God, *Job* 13. 15. Though he slay me yet will I trust in him: This dependence on the Fathers care quieted *Musculus*, when he was forced to labor in the Town Ditch for his Maintenance.

Est deus in Coelis qui providus omnia curat,

Credentes nunquam deseruisse potest.

Mat. 6. 32. Your Heavenly Father knows you have need of all these things.

Sixthly, Humble Submission to him; *Heb. 12. 9. Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live,* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , The word notes an orderly subjection, according to that order and place in which God hath set a Man, that subjection that is in an Inferior to a Superior: The same word is used of Christ, *Luke 2. 51. And he went down with them to Nazareth, and was subject to them,* that is, submitted himself to that place duty he owed to them as his Parents.

Seventhly, A carefulness to please him, *Isa. 56. 4. That choose the things that please me, to them will I give within my house, a place and a Name better than of Sons and Daughters.* That is, such will I own for my Family, my Sons and Daughters, that choose the things that please me. So did the Lord Jesus evidence his filial duty to his Father, *Joh. 8. 29. I do always the things that please him,* 1 *Joh. 3. 22.*

Eighthly, An endeavor in all things imitable to resemble him, 1 *Pet. 1. 15. As he that called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation.* *Luke 6. 36. Be ye merciful as your Father in Heaven is merciful.* *Mat. 5. 48. Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect; that is,* In the grace of love to Enemies. *Eph. 5. 1. Be ye followers of of God as dear Children.*

Ninthly, A laboring to walk worthy of so high relation, and nearness unto God. 1 *Thes. 2. 12. That you walk would worthy of God who hath called you to his Kingdom and Glory:* Worthy of so high a Calling, like the Children of a King; like *Gideon's* Brethren, who all resembled the Children of a King; *Judges 8. 18. Your duty is to live above the Children of this World, who only are wise in their generation,* *Luke 16. 8. But be ye wise in the things of God, evidence your highest wisdom to be in keeping the Law of the Lord,* *Deut. 4. 6. Live like them that are Adopted Heirs of a Kingdom, even the Heavenly Kingdom, that fadeth not away: O live above the snares and fears of this world.*

Lastly, A maintaining a real Love to your Brethren, and an endeavor to live peaceably with them, 1 *Pet. 3. 8. Love as Brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, &c.* 1 *Joh. 5. 1. Everyone also that loves him that begetteth, loveth him also that is begotten,* 1 *Joh. 3. 11. Gen. 13. 8. Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, between my Herdsmen, and thy Herdsmen, for we be Brethren,* Chap. 45. 24. *See that you fall not out by the way,* 2 *Cor. 13. 11.*

USE.

Thus you see what a glorious Treasure Adoption-grace is; view over this Inventory (Believer) and tell me what thou thinkest of it: Is it not a Treasure indeed, which all the Gold

of *Ophi* cannot equalize? Nor all the glory of the World worthy to be compared with? And see all this procured by the Sweat and Blood, the Obedience and Death of the Son of God; and then say, whether Christ be not precious indeed: Look upon the Children of this World in all their Glory; view their privileges in their utmost latitude and extent; and answer me whether a Believer in rags doth not far surpass them. Christ speaks of *Solomon*, that he in all his Glory, was not to be compared to one Lilly in the Field. So one Saint, and Child of God infinitely excels the Great men of this World, in all their Grandeur, and Advancements. O then admire the Lord Jesus on this account also, for procuring Adoption-grace.

1. Quest. *But how may I know whether I have obtained this Adoption-grace?*

Answ. This is a point worth the enquiring into, and satisfaction in so fundamental a point is very necessary: But 'tis the Office of God's Spirit to seal us up to the day of Redemption, and bear witness with our Spirits that we are the Children of God, *Rom. 8. 16.* Men may lay down marks, but 'tis God must determine the Quest. yet notwithstanding for thy resolution, (Believer) consider,

First, Such are partakers of the Divine Nature, and are really Sons, as well as Relatively, *2 Pet. 1. 4.* They have the Image of God instampt upon their Souls: They have the seed of Holiness, Faith, Love, Hope, Patience, and Humility in them, *1 Joh. 3. 9. Rom. 8. 29.* And they have received of his fullness, Grace for Grace, *Joh. 1. 16.*

Secondly, Such prize nothing in all the world like to Relation to God, *Ps. 73. 25. 1 Joh. 3. 1.* Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the Sons of God.

Thirdly, Christ is exceeding precious to such in whom they are chosen, and by whom this Grace comes, *1 Pet. 2. 7.* To you that believe he is precious. None in Heaven or Earth that they value like to Christ, they account all things but dross and dung, in comparison of Christ's excellency, *Phil. 3. 8.*

Fourthly, Such will employ their greatest care to imitate God, *Eph. 5. 1. 1 Joh. 3. 22.*

Fifthly, such have a Spirit of prayer and supplication, *Rom. 8. 15, 16. Gal. 4. 6.* Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying *Abba Father:* Not Parts, not Light, not the gifts of Prayer only, but such a Soul hath the Spirit of Prayer, very strong strains of Faith and Love run through all his Duties: He hath a Spirit of boldness whereby he comes to God as to a Father. O how earnest and unwearied are his breathings after God; what wrestlings with God in secret hath he, what pourings out of strong cries to him as Christ did in the days of his Flesh, *Heb. 5. 7.* O the strugglings! O the wrestlings! O the ardent breathings of such for the pardon of their sins, for the mortifying of their lusts, and for the reviving of their graces: Now where the Spirit of Adoption is, there is the state.

Sixthly, Such are enabled to bear, and profit by affliction, *Heb. 12. 7.* If you endure chastening God dealeth with you as with Sons.

Lastly, Such have endeared affections to the people of God, *1 Joh. 3. 14.* We know we have passed from Death to Life, because we love the Brethren.

2. Quest. *What must we do to obtain this Adoption-grace.*

Answ. This is an act of Sovereign pleasure, and Free-grace, *Rom.* 9. 15, 16, 18. It cannot be purchased by anything in, or done by the Creature. You cannot with *Simon Magus* buy this Relation, *Act.* 8. 18, 19. yet there are some ways in which Adoption grace may be obtained; as,

- First, Get your Souls separated from sin, *2 Cor.* 6. 17.
- Secondly, Get justifying Faith, *Eph.* 2. 13, 19.
- Thirdly, Beg the Spirit of Adoption, *Gal.* 4. 6.
- Lastly, Open the door of thy heart to the Spirit, *Psa.* 24. 7. *Rev.* 3. 20.

CHAP. XX.

The Confirmation of the new Covenant is the Fruit of Christ's purchase, proved by several Arguments.

ANother glorious Fruit of Christ's blood, and purchased Treasure for saved Souls, is, the establishment of the new Covenant, to Believers, and Believers in the Covenant. This is the certain effect of Christ's death, the making sure the Covenant to all his seed: That there is no more possibility of making it void to the Heirs of promise. This is the great thing undertaken in the new Covenant, that it shall be sure to all the seed, *Rom.* 4. 16.

There are Eight things which secure this to Believers.

First, This new Covenant must needs be firm and unalterable, because the reason why God ••und fault with the old Covenant; was, because it was weak, and could not secure those that were within it, *Heb.* 8. 8, 9. *Which Covenant they brake; though I was an Husband to them, saith the Lord,* *Jer.* 31. 32. Now if this were the reason why God did alter the first Covenant; then the new Covenant he makes in the room of it, must n•eds be free from this Imperfection and mutability, or else it would abundantly reflect on the infinite wisdom of God to make a new Covenant guilty of the same error.

Secondly, This was God's design in making a new Covenant, that it might be ordered in all things, and sure, *2 Sam.* 23. 5. That it might be firm, and established upon better promises, *Heb.* 8. 6. Why are they called better promises? Are there better promises than the promises of Heaven and Glory? They are called better, because more pure and absolute promises, and because it was God's design to make them sure, *Rom.* 4. 16.

Thirdly, It is confirmed by the blood of Christ, and therefore the blood of Christ is called the blood of the Covenant, *Mat.* 26. 28. *This is my blood of the New Testament:* 'Tis the blood of the New Testament, in that it seals to the fulfilling of this Covenant. The death of the Testatour makes the Testament to be in full force, *Heb.* 9. 17. That now all the Promises and Legacies are certain, and cannot be disappointed to the Legatees and Heirs of Salvation. Again, this blood of Christ is the blood of the Covenant, and confirms it, in that it makes good all the conditions of it, that whatever is required to make this Covenant good, is undertaken by

Christ, in the behalf of all his feed, and therefore he is called the surety of the new Covenant, *Heb. 7. 22.* By death he hath fulfilled the Condition of the first, and undertaken for the fulfilling of this new Covenant, in and by Believers: Yea, his obedience is for them, to present them complete to the Father, notwithstanding all their failings.

Fourthly, This new Covenant is sure to Believers, because the Administration of it is in the hands of Christ, *Heb. 8. 6.* *But now he hath obtained a more excellent Ministry, by how much he is the Mediator of a better Covenant.* The whole trust about the Administration of new-Covenant-blessings, is devolved on Jesus Christ; and therefore he is called the Mediator, and Minister of the Covenant: So that the Covenant must needs be sure, seeing the dispose thereof is by compact betwixt the Father and Christ, delivered into his hand upon the account of his death: Now he that is the Believers Friend, Head, and Husband, hath all power in Heaven and Earth, to make good the Covenant to them, *Mat. 28. 18.* So that the promises of the Covenant cannot be forfeited by Believers, being made over to Christ as to a Trustee for them, and their Covenant state also being so surely confirmed, that they cannot fall from it.

Fifthly, Christ's sufficiency to see new-Covenant-promises made good, and new-Covenant-tends accomplished to them, is security enough for their safety. He is an all-sufficient Savior, able to save to the utmost, all that come to God by him, *Heb. 7. 25.* He is able to see God's part fulfilled, having all the promises in his hand, and all the things promised at his dispose; and he is able to see the Believers part fulfilled also, for he hath all that in him which is needful for the making of the Condition good on their part: For,

First, He hath all Wisdom in him, to make them wise to Salvation, *Col. 2. 3.* *He is made of God to his people Wisdom,* *1 Cor. 1. 30.* Appointed of God to receive Wisdom for them, whatever they need to guide them in the way, and fit them for Salvation: Knowledge is necessary to Eternal Life, *Joh. 17. 3.* The Image of God consists partly in it, *Col. 3. 11.* Without it the heart is not good, *Prov. 19. 2.* No Faith without Knowledge, *2 Cor. 4. 4.* No Obedience without Knowledge, *Psa. 18. 44.* This is needful to discern the wiles of Satan, *2 Cor. 2. 11.* The sinfulness of sin, *Rom. 7. 13.* The preciousness of Christ, *1 Pet. 2. 7.* The beauty of holiness, *Ps. 110. 3.* The love of Christ, that passeth knowledge, *Eph. 3. 19.* The *hope* of your calling, and the things freely given of God, *1 Cor. 2. 12.* And for this end all Wisdom is laid up in Christ to be given out to his people by his Spirit through his word; hence 'tis said, that Believers have an Unction from the holy one, to teach them all things, *1 Joh. 2. 20, 27.* And the promise of the Spirit is made to them, to lead them into all truth, *Joh. 16. 13.* So that whatever is needful for Saints to fit them for Covenant-Duties and Mercies, all this is in Christ for them, and so he is able to make the Covenant good to them.

Secondly, He hath all Grace in him that tends to the fulfilling of this Covenant in Believers and for them: He hath received the Spirit without measure; *Joh. 3. 34.* And why is this? But that from his fullness Believers may receive Grace for Grace, *Joh. 1. 16.* He is the fullness that filleth all in all, *Eph. 1. 23.* And therefore hath promised Grace sufficient to his people in all their temptations, *2 Cor. 12. 9.* *1 Cor. 10. 13.* under all their burdens, *Psa. 55. 22.* For all duties and undertakings, *Phil. 2. 12, 13.* *Chap. 4. 13.* *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me.*

Thirdly, He hath all power in Heaven, and Earth put into his hand, *Math.* 28. 18. Power to bruise Satan under his people's feet, *Rom.* 16. 20. To subdue Corruptions in them, *Mic.* 7. 19. To vanquish all their Enemies for them, *Joh.* 16. 33. *Rev.* 12. 11. To heal all their backslidings, *Hos.* 14. 4. To work all their works in them, and for them, *Isa.* 26. 12. To give them Faith, and to finish it, *Heb.* 12. 2. To keep them faithful to the death, *2 Thes.* 2. 3. And to secure the promised Fruit of all for them, *Rev.* 22. 12. and therefore sufficiently able to make good Covenant-Promises to them, and to fulfill Covenant-duties in them.

Sixthly, Christ's engagement to, and for his people, and his interest in them, is another ground for the fulfilling of the Covenant; *Christ* hath promised the Father that he will bring them all to Glory, and hath undertaken all their work for them, *Heb.* 10. 7. And he hath promised to them to make good his Covenant when he persuaded their hearts to him. *Heb.* 8. 9, to 13. *Isa.* 55. 11. Again his own interest in them is security enough: All the fruit of his death and purchase lies in the fulfilling of the Covenant; if that be broken, he loseth all his hopes, and Obedience, he hath died in vain, his blood and Intercession are to no purpose, for herein lies all the travel of his Soul, *Isa.* 53. 10, 11. In this is the enjoyment of all his delights, if this Covenant be not sure then no Soul can be saved, and Christ should lose those delights he had in the habitable parts of the Earth before the World was made. *Pro.* 8. 31. Saved Souls are Christ's Crown and Glory, and how mangled and defective would Christ's Crown be, should any one Perish who are interested in this Covenant? Upon this depends all Christ's Mediatory Glory, *Joh.* 17. 4, 5. And should there be a failure here, he would lose his expected Glory as Mediator. So that you see the fruit of his Purchase, the delight of his Soul, and his Eternal Glory with the Father, are all wrapped up in the accomplishment of this Covenant.

Seventhly, The Immutability of God's Counsel, and the certainty of his engagement, confirmed by an Oath, renders the new Covenant sure, *Heb.* 6. 17, 18. *Wherein God willing more abundantly to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of his Counsel confirmed it by an Oath:* These are two immutable things, God's purpose, and his engagement, and because these could admit of no variation, therefore the things Promised must be fulfilled indue time. Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but the Counsel of God that must stand: 'Tis laid upon Infinite Wisdom, and all things in order to the fullfiling of it, are made so sure, that it cannot possibly be frustrated: He wants not sufficient Power and faithfulness to reach his own designs, and therefore what he hath determined must come to pass, and upon this purpose of God is laid his promise: He having first resolved upon it, is engaged to it.

Lastly, Another reason to prove the certainty of the new Covenant is taken from the nature of the promises; they are absolute; 'tis true there are some conditional promises as the effects of the other, but the fundamental promises, and those which complete the Covenant of grace are altogether absolute; 'tis true also, faith is a necessary qualification to interest a Person in these promises, but when the Soul comes to have a propriety in them, the tenure of them then is absolute, *Jer.* 31. 33, 34. *Heb.* 8. 9. He will put his Spirit within them, and will cause them to walk in his Statutes, *Ezek.* 36. 25, to 28. *I will be a God to them, and they shall be my People,* *Jer.* 32. 40. *And I will make an Everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good: But I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me:*

In which you see the condition is undertaken and secured, as well as the promise and things promised; had it indeed depended upon conditional promises alone, which doubting Souls have most in their eye, then the failure of the condition would have forfeited the promises, and then they had been null'd: But you see the promises of the new Covenant are absolute, and therefore sure to all the seed, even to everyone that believeth in Jesus Christ: These are the grounds of hopes the believers have, that the Covenant, and every tittle of it, shall be made good to them; but that which doth meritoriously confirm it, is the blood of Christ: His death and suffering, on which account it may be looked on as the sealing and confirming of it, and so believers may see to whom they are beholding and obliged for all their new-Covenant stability.

USE.

From this grand and glorious truth: The fulfilling and assurance of the new Covenant, flows,
1. Wonderful Comfort to all true Believers. 2. Great Obligations on them to thankfulness and Obedience.

First, This yields abundant Consolation to Believers, on a double account.

- 1. From the certainty.
- 2. From the Excellency of this Covenant.

First, From the certainty of this Covenant flows these streams of comfort. First, In that all occasions of Jealousy about the love of God are cut off; for if the Covenant be sure, then Gods love is sure, and secured from all mutability, and cessation, this being one great thing contained in it. *Jer. 31. 3. I have loved thee with an Everlasting love.* God's love to his People is Eternal, therefore sure: He doth rest in his love to them, *Zeph. 3. 17.* The word is (*Jacharish*) he will be silent in his love. *Bucer* renders it *Silebit cum dilecta sua: He shall be silent in his Beloved;* that is (saith he) He shall cease from contending with her, being wholly delighted in her. But *Montanus* renders it in the abstract, he shall be silent by reason of his love. *Propter dilectionem suam.* But *Cocceius* and other Interpreters, render the letter (*Beth*) *In: He shall be silent in his love,* or rest in his love, alluding to the wonderful excess of affection in a Person, that through exceeding amorousness cannot speak or express it for a time: *Cocceius* takes it for the pardoning of their sin, and ceasing from those former strokes of his displeasure: And this I suppose may be chiefly intended here; *to wit,* The greatness of his love noed by silence, and exuberant Joy, with a remove of all tokens of his anger, and this to be fixed and perpetual; so the Apostle assures Believers, that the love of God in Christ is irremoveable, *Rom. 8. 35.* All the World cannot withdraw Christ's heart from his People, where he once loves he loves to the end, *Joh. 13. 1.* This a believer may be assured of in the New Covenant, that God's love changeth not, his heart is still towards his people, however his dealings may be with them.

Secondly, Then all the grounds of tormenting fear are now removed. If the Covenant of grace be confirmed to believers, then there's no Just ground for them to entertain slavish fear, *Rom. 8. 15. For ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear.* There's no cause for

such to fear, 1. That God is their Enemy; being once reconciled to them in his Son, he can hate them no more. 2. Their sins shall never Condemn them, *Rom. 8. 1.* 3. God will never totally leave them, *Heb. 13. 5.* 4. They shall not wholly fall from God. *Jer. 32. 40.* 5. They have no cause to fear the wrath to come, *Rom. 5. 9.* *Much more being justified by his blood we shall be saved from wrath through him.* Thus you see all the grounds of tormenting fears are gone: 'Tis true a Cautelous fear and circumspection may be maintained, but the workings of a Bondage-Spirit are removed.

Thirdly, Then dejecting Conclusions from self-impotency to fulfil this Covenant, and all seeming difficulties in the way are wholly Insignificant; if this Covenant be confirmed by Christ to and for Believers, then no insufficiency in them to make good these Covenant-Duties can render it void. Because,

First; the Certainty of this Covenant depends not on the Creatures ability, but on God's Faithfulness; 'tis true, if this new Covenant (as the first) did wholly depend upon the Integrity and Faithfulness of the Soul in Covenant; then indeed the enjoyment of those mercies and promises comprehended in it would be very dubious; but 'tis not so, for God himself hath undertaken the accomplishment of it, *1 Cor. 1. 8, 9.* *Who shall also confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ; God is faithful by whom ye are called to the fellowship of his Son Christ Jesus our Lord.* So *1 Thes. 5. 23, 24.* So that the Saints Confirmation in holiness, and preservation to glory depends on the faithfulness of God in Christ, who having persuaded their hearts to embrace his call, will finish Salvation-work in, and for them.

Secondly, Strength sufficient to finish their work, and to obtain Salvation is ensured to them. *2 Cor. 12. 9.* *My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness.* Grace in thee may fail, but grace in God cannot: Christ hath a stock sufficient for thee, to carry thee through Temptations, and to lift thee above thy Corruptions. So *Ezek. 36. 27.* *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.* The Spirit is a Fountain that will fill up your empty vessels, supply all your wants, and engage your hearts to keep the way of his Commandments.

Fourthly, Then none of the well-grounded hopes of believers shall be lost, *Psal. 119. 49.* *Remember thy word unto thy Servant upon which thou hast caused me to hope.* God will never forget to fulfil those promises which he causeth us to confide in, for he is faithful who hath promised, *Heb. 10. 23.* *Rom. 5. 6.* *And hope maketh not ashamed.* That is, by reason of a disappointment; shame usually ariseth from some frustrations of expectation, but this cannot befall well-grounded hopes, because they have their dependence upon the firm word of God which cannot be disappointed.

Fifthly, Then your labor shall not be in vain in the Lord, if the Covenant be confirmed, then you cannot run in vain, or lose any part of that work you do for God, *1 Cor. 15. 58.* *Gal. 6. 7, 8.* *What a man soweth that shall he reap.* He that soweth to the Spirit shall reap life Everlasting: O Souls, all your sincere duties will appear again, and bring their reward with them. All your pains in serving God, hardships in following him, dangers in owning him, and industrious

labors to please him, shall be fully and certainly recompenc'd with a far more and exceeding Massy Crown of Glory.

Sixthly, Then all your warrantable desires shall be satisfied in due time: For this is part of the Covenant-promise, *Psa. 37. 4. Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart, Psalm. 145. 16, 19.* All the breathings of your Souls after God, and unfeigned longings for more spotless holiness, more perfect victory over sin, for humble submission to divine pleasure, more sincerity of heart, and raised capacities for service, shall certainly be satisfied first or last.

Seventhly, If the Covenant of grace be sure, then nothing can make the believers state miserable, indeed he may seem to be in a bad condition, when under the power of temptation and corruption, and pressed grievously with severe and bitter Providences, and strokes of seeming vengeance, but yet his state is good; who could have past a favorable interpretation on the afflictions of *Job*, when on a dunghill, and on the trials of *David* when pursued by *Absalom*? yet we find there was honey in these Rods, and *David* could notwithstanding lie down and sleep in peace, *Psa. 3. 5.* So *Josiah* in an evil day, when wars and frowning providences did surround him all about, yet died in peace, *2 Kings 22. 20.*

Lastly, Then a gracious Soul is a blessed Soul, both here and to all Eternity, because this Covenant takes care for the good things of this life, and that which is to come: *1 Tim. 4. 8. Godliness hath the promise of this life and that which is to come:* Hence the Scripture doth so often pronounce the Godly Man to be a blessed Man, *Psa. 119. 1. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Psa. 112. 2. Psa. 141. 2.* Thus we have now briefly touched on some grounds of Comfort that Believers may derive from the certainty of this new Covenant; we now come to consider,

Secondly, The excellency of this Covenant which the blood of Christ so confirms to Believers; this new Covenant is a choice and precious Covenant; what *David* said of *Goliath's* Sword may be affirmed of this; *That there is none like it, 1 Sam. 21. 9.* This would abundantly appear, could I with consistency to my design here, run out at large in the demonstration of this great truth; but to touch a little on some evidences of its excellency under these two general considerations.

- 1. *The things that are promised in this Covenant.*
- 2. *The way appointed of God to attain them.*

First, The things stipulated in this Covenant, are,

First, Great and glorious things, the products of infinite Grace, and discoveries of unconceivable greatness, such Promises as were never offered in any other Covenant: In this Covenant God makes over himself to Believers to be their God, their Sun and Shield, their exceeding great reward, all that he is, and all that he hath to be theirs, so far as they are capable to receive: *I will be to them a God;* that's in the Covenant: He whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain; whom the Angels cannot define, far above the searches of the most refined Spirits, far beyond the knowledge of those that always dwell in his sight; this

invisible unknown God in this Covenant makes himself over to Believers: He will be theirs forever, *Heb. 8. 10*. A God in the nearest Relations that Creatures are capable to approach to him in: He will be a Father, Husband, Head to them, and to everyone of them in the Lord Jesus Christ: To love and delight in them; to feed and cherish them; to care and provide for them; to dwell and abide with them; to impart, and Communicate of all his fullness and sweetness to them, so far as it suits with the measure of Christ, and their best good: Is not this a great thing indeed, that God should make over himself to the Believer? O glorious Covenant!

Again, Another great and glorious thing engaged in this Covenant is, That Believers shall be to him a people, a peculiar people; his own people, his Jewel, his Treasure, *Mal. 3. 17*. They shall be the Apple of his Eye; the delight of his Soul, a Seal upon his Heart: *A people near to God, Psa. 148. 14*. Nearer to him than all the world besides; nearer than the Angels, that never sinned: What a wonderful thing is this! They shall be dandled on his knee: Lye in his Bosom; sit at his Table here; and sit down on Thrones in his Kingdom to all Eternity: O what a wonderful Covenant is this! This should fill the Believers heart brim full of Joy and Consolation.

Again, He hath promised in this Covenant, that he will write his Law in their Hearts, and put his truth in their inward parts, *Jer. 31. 33*. They shall be his Epistle known and read of all men, *2 Cor. 3. 2, 3*. He will lead them into all truth, *Joh. 16. 13*. He will show them his Covenant▪ *Psa. 25. 14*. He will be merciful to their unrighteousnesses, and remember their sins no more, *Heb. 8. 12*. He will put his Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in his ways, *Ezek. 36. 27*. He will give them Grace and Glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them, *Psa. 84. 11*. He will admit them into his special presence at all times, through the blood of his Son, *Heb. 10. 19, 20*. He will give them the Spirit of Adoption to cry *Abba* Father, *Rom. 8. 15*. They shall be Kings and Priests to God, clothed with beautiful Garments, a right noble seed all glorious within; and advanced into intimate familiarity with God in Christ by the Spirit, *Rev. 1. 6*. They shall be kept by his mighty power through Faith to Salvation, *1 Pet. 4. 5*. O, are not these great things indeed for poor sinful Dust and Ashes, mercy-abusing Creatures! O we want Hearts to contain them, and Tongues to express them.

Again, As this Covenant is made up of great things, so it contains in it all good things, *Jer. 32. 40*. All God's Thoughts and Resolves, are to do them good; all his dispensations are bringing them in good, *Rom. 8. 28*. O what a Glorious thing is this! Yea they are suitable things that are wrapped up in this Covenant: Such as are suitable to their Natures; suitable to their Spiritual desires; suitable to their wants, and suitable to their advantages: The new Covenant carries nothing Hetrogeneous to the well-being of the Saints: O what a wonderful thing is this! Great things indeed are contained in this new-Covenant, that tends to the infinite contentment, pleasure and profit of saved Souls: Surely this must needs fill Believers Joys, and yield them merry days here, and prepare for them Rivers of pleasure to all Eternity.

Secondly, Consider the way which God hath appointed for the attaining those glorious things, and this will advance the Believers comfort: Persons may come at good things in a bad way, and that would abate much of their consolation: But these great and glorious

things contained in the Covenant of Grace for Believers, are given out in a most excellent way: For,

First, It is in a way of Grace; If God had given them to be bought and sold, to be purchased by man's merit, it would not have been so sweet: But they are held out freely, without money, without price, *Isa. 55. 1. It is by Grace you are saved, not of yourselves, Eph. 2. 8.* There's nothing for man to glory in, about his Salvation, that is of his own: Saved Souls are created to their mercies: They are prepared for their mercies, *Rom. 9. 23.* And their mercies are prepared for them, *1 Cor. 2. 9.* They are also prepared for their Duties, in order to their mercies: They are Vessels of mercy fitted and prepared for mercy and glory, *2 Tim. 2. 21.*

Secondly, It is in a self-humbling, and abasing way: The more the Creature is abased, the more Divine Glory is exalted; and the more God is all in all, the more is the saved Souls Glory, Comfort, and Joy; the more the loftiness of man is brought down, the more God alone is exalted, *Isa. 2. 17.* And the more God is exalted, the more Believers are pleased: Now God gives out these new-Covenant mercies in such a way, as may most abase self; for he gives them out in a way of Believing, and no Grace more cuts off self than Believing: All boasting and Self-glorying is cut off by Believing, *Rom. 3. 27.* Therefore God hath ordered such a way for Souls to come at new-Covenant Mercies, as may cut off all Self glorying, that so their comforts may rise to the greatest measure, to be full Joy and Consolation, to see the Creature abased, and God exalted: There's nothing but Man's cursed self can indeed prove a real Enemy to his comforts: A Child of God is never more filled with the pure Wine of Consolation, than when he is emptied of all the Lees and Dregs of his own vain-glory.

Thirdly, It is in a pure and clean way, that God brings saved Souls to these new-Covenant mercies: It is in a way of Holiness: No uncircumcised shall pass therein: It is in that way of Grace, and Purity, without which none shall see the Lord: It is the upright, pure in Heart, the sincere Soul shall attain to these great and glorious things: The clean Hands, and the clean Heart, *Mat. 5. 8. Psa. 140. 13. Psa. 24. 4. Isa. 35. 8.*

Fourthly, It is in a sweet and pleasant way: A delightful way, for such are all the ways of Holiness to gracious Souls, sweeter than Honey and the Honey-comb: They take wonderful pleasure in Holiness, *Psa. 119. 17. Prov. 3. 17.* Legal ways were hard and troublesome ways. The Yoke of the Law is a heavy Yoke, *Act. 15. 10.* But the Yoke of Christ is an easy Yoke, *Mat. 11. 30.* O that God should confirm such a Covenant as this, that contains such glorious things, and all these ensured to Believers, and they led to them in such a choice way; surely this must needs yield wonderful comfort, and advance the Believers Joy.

Another improvement of this grand truth is by way of Duty.

There's nothing more strengthens the Believers Bond to Obedience, than the consideration of the certainty of the new-Covenant: Not to mention all those arguments that might be urged to engage Redeemed Souls to all manner of Holiness from the certainty of the Covenant: I shall insist only on these two.

First, The consideration of that Infinite Love of Christ, that led him through such a costly way to make good this Covenant: O what manner of Love is this, if duly weighed? That the Son of God should come down, and be made man, take upon him the form of a Servant; engage to the Service of the first Covenant, to make good all the violated conditions thereof by his sufferings, and all the precepts thereof by his Obedience: That he should be made a Curse, and taste of death, and all to make this Covenant sure: That he should shed his blood, to make firm this Covenant in all the parts of it: That he should come and melt himself to death, that the seal might be put upon this new Covenant. O what wonderful Love is this, for nothing could make it sure, but the Testatours blood, and that he would shed his Blood to make it sure. Now then there's no greater constraints to duty, than the sense of the Love of Christ, 2 Cor. 5. 14. *The Love of Christ constrains us.* Arguments of Love are irresistible; it silences the Believing Soul in all his resistances: When Arguments fetched from the Law, do only drive the Soul to Duty; nay sometimes bind back from duty: That at such a time the sense of the Love of Christ doth draw, yea post the Soul away to Obedience, *Draw me, and we will run after thee, Cant. 1. 4.* that is, Let out the potent influences of thy sweet Love upon me, and then I will hasten after thee, or further my Obedience of thee.

Secondly, Another reason for Obedience is taken from the certain blessed Ends, and Fruit of new-Covenant Obedience, which is no less than Eternal Life, Rom. 6. 22. All the blessings of the everlasting Covenant are ensured to such, Ps. 103. 17, 18. *The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him; to such as keep his Covenant, to them that remember his Commandments to do them:* Mercies in the way, mercy in the end, are all ensured to them that fear him, to them that Evangelically keep his Covenant, Psa. 25. 10. *All the paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth, unto such as keep his Covenant and his Testimonies.* There's great reward in the very keeping his Commandments, and reward in the latter end: O what promises are entailed to Gospel-Obedience: Nay, you will not only have the Fruit of your own Graces, but you will have the Fruit of Christ's Grace, the Fruit of his Obedience, and his Righteousness too: Therefore, O what reason have such to obey! seeing the Covenant is made sure, they cannot miscarry, their labor shall not be lost; considering the Love of God, that should engage them to Obedience, and the blessed Issue of it.

Thus much of the sixth Branch, and *Item* of Christ's Inventory, and the Riches of his Purchase.

CHAP. XXI.

The Heavenly Inheritance is the Fruit of Christ's purchase.

WE shall briefly add one particular more of the Purchase of Christ, that is, The Consummation, and completing of all the Believers happiness, and comprehension of his chiefest treasure, which is the purchased possession of Glory, Eph. 1. 14. *Until the Redemption of the purchased Possession, unto the praise of his Glory:* that is, until we come to inherit this glory purchased by Christ: O what a blessing is this! All that have been treated of already, are but little parcels of this total sum of a Believers happiness: O when the whole treasury of Christ shall be opened, and set forth to the view and enjoyment of saved Souls: When all Christ's

personal Glory, as Mediator, shall be discovered to them, and become their Glory; when all his purchased Glory for them also, shall then be entered on by them; all that he hath received for himself, and all he hath procured for them, shall all be made over to them; This will be a blessed Eternity indeed; when their Crowns of Massy Glory shall be set upon their heads, and when they also shall be set down upon Thrones of dignity, honored with the reflections of Christ's Majesty, and unconceivable grandeur. This is a mystery indeed, but a real truth to all Believers: O blessed purchase indeed! who can tell over this sum, when the Saints shall be so enriched with the Riches of Christ, clothed with the beautiful Garments of his praise? O wonderful Glory indeed! Deckt with the Jewels of the Graces of his Spirit; and filled with his holiness brim full: When they shall be satiated with his pleasures, but never tired; sit down at the Well head, and drink full draughts of pleasure; Take in their fill of the highest consolations; and unknown Sweetness, Love, and delight from Christ. O this must needs be wonderful enriching! when they be, ever, ever, ever with the Lord; where no clouds can darken their sights, of their blessed mansion, and their blessed God; where no veil can intervene between them and their Beloved: Where Rust, Moth, Worms, Time, and Death can never come to wear out their enjoyments: O blessed Treasure indeed! Where Eternity shall be the Date, Immensity the Bounds, and Immutability the fixation of their happiness. But so it shall be with saved Souls in Heaven, when they are got through the Sea of Christ's blood to Glory. O Believers, Do not your hearts leap within you? What no kind of affection at all to these things? Is all this as a dream to you? Where are your Hearts? O be affected at this wonderful blessedness Christ hath procured in Heaven for you. O blessed, blessed Eternity! where saved Souls shall wear a Crown, that fadeth not away; where their Garlands shall be ever fresh and green; their joys ever new; and their enjoyments never wearing; where all their sown seed of Spiritual-Duties and Gospel-sufferings, shall spring up to Glory, to a full crop of blessedness, to an harvest of pleasure, proportionable to all the Love of God to them; to the utmost measures of their Graces, and acts of their Faithfulness; the large extent of divine promises, yea suited to the infinite deservings of Christ for his saved ones, Glory, as much as can be claimed: This will set forth the Treasures of Christ to be boundless, bottomless, endless, without all circumference; higher then all Altitude, broader than all Latitude, deeper then all profunditude: O treasures indeed! Saints and Angels may look into them, but can never see the bottom: In comparison of which Riches in Heaven, all the warmest Apprehensions, all the sweetest tastes, all the highest enjoyments of Saints here, are no more than a drop to the Ocean; like one ear of Corn compared with all the fields in the world, clothed with fruitfulness; No more then a single Dust, to all the Beds of Sand in the whole Sea. O what is glory! Christians are these Jewels so valuable, that you can bear about with you here? O what a Cabinet then is Heaven? O what are the Treasures laid up there! O wonderful large indeed! Weigh the utmost pleasures, and delighting, ravishing consolations that all the Believers in the World can get by this side Heaven, all the graces, all the Joys of all the Saints in the World put together, compared with glory, is no more than a single grain to a Massy weight of Glory: O 'tis that which Men and Angels cannot express: All that Believers have here of Heaven, it is but as Bread and Water in the way, the choicest and richest feasting is reserved for the other World, for the Kings Table, where are all Varieties, all Rich Dishes, all the choice Procurements, that may feed and satiate the most curious

desires of saved Souls: Dost thou meet with high Comforts at a Sacrament? wonderful refreshings in Ordinances? yet they are but a Morsel or two thy Father gives thee to cheer thy Spirits, compared with the varieties he hath reserved for thee in Heaven: Or as the short allowance of some Rich Heir whiles in his Nonage, compared with the great Inheritance he is to possess when at full age; or as the first-fruits which are inconsiderable compared with the lump. This is glory, this is Heaven, there's the place where all Christ's Treasures are laid up: O Christians! could you but get a look into glory, you would say; O unsearchable riches indeed: Treasures past finding out.

Thus have I dispatched the first assertion, and shewn somewhat of those vast riches that are in Christ; and though sometime hath been spent in opening them, yet it is but little of all those Treasures, which are prepared for them that are Heirs of the Promise.

CHAP. XXII.

The second and third assertions proved: Showing that those vast treasures of Christ are opened in and by the Gospel, that 'tis the will of God they should be tenderd to the chiefest of Sinners.

I Come now to demonstrate the truth of the second assertion, which is this, *That those vast and hidden Treasures which are found in Jesus Christ, are opened in and by the Gospel.*

For the proof of which I shall demonstrate these three things.

First, That those treasures of Grace and Glory, which are in and come by Christ, can no otherwise be known, than by the Gospel, they are deeps that cannot be fathomed by all the greatest lengths of man's wisdom, 1 Cor. 2. 10. *The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God:* Things that lay deep in his breast, which none could know but himself, and his own Spirit. By these deep things the Apostle understands the hidden grace of God in Christ, with the fruits of it, called ver. 12. *The things freely given us of God.* These are the Riches of Christ, or that come by Christ, called, Rom. 11. 33. *The depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God:* These riches of grace that come by Christ are so deep, that none can know them except they be revealed: Therefore the wisdom that makes wise to Salvation is called hidden wisdom, 1 Cor. 2. 7. And Treasures of wisdom are said to be hid in Christ, called the mystery of Godliness, 1 Tim. 3. 16. 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, from the Heb. word, *Mistar*, or hidden, or secret things: Some derive it, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, from shutting the mouth up, because such things must be concealed, or as others think it 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, Shutting up the senses as well as the mouth, it being a thing hard to be known, such a secret is the great Power of Salvation by Christ: A religious secret (saith one) that cannot be known without some extraordinary flatus, and such are the riches of Christ, hidden things, hid in God, Eph. 3. 9. The fellowship of the Mystery which from the beginning of the World have been hid in God, and therefore cannot be known by all the wisdom of men without the revelation of the Spirit, Eph. 3. 3. 5. And therefore it was an unsound assertion of Mr. *John Goodwin*: That the Sun and Moon do Preach the Gospel, seeing it cannot be known but by the revelation of the Spirit.

Secondly, These Treasures of Christ are Doctrinally contained in the word of the Gospel, there's the only discovery of them Doctrinally, there's no other word can discover them, and thus they are set forth, and brought to light, *2 Tim. 1. 10. But now is made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.* There are actually exhibited to the view of Believers, all the mysteries of godliness, so the Gospel is called the revelation of the mystery which is kept secret since the World began, *Rom. 16. 25.* The Gospel is the wisdom of God that maketh wise to Salvation, *2 Tim. 3. 15.* There are all things opened necessary to Salvation: There are words whereby we may be saved, *Acts 11. 4.* In the word of truth are all the Prophecies of Christ, and of those great and glorious things that God would accomplish upon and by him, *Acts 3. 18.* In the word are all the promises of grace and Glory, all things needful to life and godliness, and these promises are revealed in the word of God: All the promises ever God made to the Sons of Men are in the word, and therefore the promises are joined with the Law, and the service of God, the glory and the Covenant, and all those royalties that in Scripture are made over to Believers, *Rom. 9. 4.* There's all that God hath spoken by the Prophets, *Luke 24. 25.* There's all discovered that ever God Doctrinally revealed of his love to Sinners, and the things that are freely given to them, there's the whole Doctrine of Christ concerning his Person, Nature, Offices, Works, Excellencies, Promises, what he hath done for them, and procured for them; what is laid up in him, and shall be laid out by him to all that come to him; there are the openings of his heart, and the secrets of his love to them, *Eph. 3. 18, 19.* Therein the Righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, *Rom. 1. 17.* The deep things of God *1 Cor. 2. 9, 10, 12, 16.* Things that eye hath, not seen, nor ear heard.

Thirdly, Those great and glorious things contained in the Gospel, are opened by the Spirits Ministration in the Gospel: This is God's appointed way to discover and bring to light those glorious things. *Tit. 1. 3. But hath in due time, manifested his word through Preaching, which is committed to me according to the Commandment of God our Savior:* This is God's way to manifest the deep things of the Word by Preaching: This he hath appointed as a standing Ordinance in his Church through all ages, that some should be set apart for this work, to open and to discover the glorious secrets of the Gospel, *1 Cor. 2. 12, 13. 2 Cor. 4. 2, 6, 7.* To these the Lord Jesus Christ reveals his truth, even the mysteries of it by his Spirit, *Eph. 3. 5.* That they might Preach, and open them to others: This way God is pleased to work▪ thus he taught the Eunuch by Philip, *Acts 8. 26.* and Paul by Ananias, *Acts 9. 11.* and Cornelius by Peter, *Acts 10. 5.*

3. Assertion. *It is the will of God that those great and glorious Treasures of Christ in the Gospel should be opened and tendered to Sinners, yea to the chiefest of Sinners.*

This is as certain, as choice a truth, and precious news to sinners. For the demonstration of which, I shall, 1. Prove 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 by four arguments. 2. The 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 by four reasons.

First, That it is really true, that the Lord Jesus Christ is willing that all those unsearchable Treasures of his should be tendered to Sinners, yea the chiefest of Sinners.

First, Christ's willingness to shed his blood for Sinners, shows he is willing his Treasures should be opened and tendered to them: He that gives the cause, gives the effect, *Causa Causae, est Causa Causati*; Christ's blood is the procuring cause of all those Treasures that are purchased for Believers; and that which gives a right to his personal riches too, *Eph. 1. 7, 11*. Now if Christ be willing to give his blood for believers to procure those Treasures, then surely he is willing to have them opened and tendered to them, he that wills the means to the end, wills the end too: Should not Christ be willing that his riches should be opened and tendered to Sinners, it would lay a great reflection on his intentions in dying for Sinners, and leave the charge of unfaithfulness on truth itself; which how unjust it is let all that are rational judge; but it is for sinners Christ hath shed his blood, yea for the chiefest of sinners, *1 Tim. 1. 15. Rom. 5. 6. In due time Christ died for the ungodly*: 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, 'Tis the same word the Apostle useth to express the people before the flood by, *2 Pet. 2. 5*. Now what these were *Moses* tells us, *Gen. 6. 5*. Ignorance, Profaneness, Contempt of God, and the vilest abominations were committed by those whom Christ came to redeem, yet to these would he have the Gospel sent, and his Treasures opened and tendered.

Secondly, His appointing and sending a Ministry on purpose to Preach the Gospel to sinners proves it: This was the first thing the Lord Jesus Christ did when he ascended on high, he gave gifts to Men, that of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers; and why was this? it was for the work of the Ministry, *Eph. 4. 10, 11, 12*. And what is the work of the Ministry? Why to open and Preach Christ Crucified to the World, to discover reconciliation-mercy, and all the Treasures of Christ concerned therein, *1 Cor. 5. 18, 19. Joh. 20. 21. As my Father hath sent me so send I you*: Now if the Lord Jesus sets apart a Ministry on purpose to attend this work, as *Acts 6. 4*. Then surely he is willing Sinners should have those riches opened and tendered to them.

Thirdly, The choice annointings he gives them to this end, evidenceth his willingness the Gospel should be Preached, and his Treasures opened to the World; as the Father hath anointed him, and given the Spirit without measure to him, so hath he anointed his Messengers with measures of the Spirit for this work, *1 Cor. 12. 7, 11. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone to profit withal*: That is the gifts of the Spirit by a Metonymy of the effect; and given to everyone to whom it is given, for this end to profit withal (so *Piscator*)▪ The Apostle speaks here of gifted Persons in the Church of *Corinth*, whether they were ordinary or extraordinary Teachers, they had all choice gifts imparted to them by the Spirit to that end: All whom Christ sends to Preach the Gospel have the annointings of his Spirit to fit them for that work, *Isa. 50. 4. The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: The Prophet here (saith Calvin) doth personate all the Ministers of Christ in all ages*. And tells us that all those Christ sends to Preach the Gospel, he doth give suitable endowments to them for that end; he doth impart his truth to them by his Spirit that they might teach others: This is the Reason Christ gives the Spirit of his Father, *Mat. 10. 20*. He makes them teachable, that they might teach others: Hence *Cyprian* saith, *Non bonus est Doctor qui non est docilis*: Christ reveals those treasures of his to his Servants that they might open them to others, *Mat. 10. 8. Freely ye have received freely give*.

Fourthly, The charge he lays upon his Messengers, demonstrates this truth, he doth command them to go and preach the Gospel to every Creature, *Mark. 16. 15.* 'Tis an Hyberbolical Synecdoche of the genus, *Every Creature put for all Nations*, saith *Piscator*. The word of reconciliation is committed to them as to Ambassadors, faithfully to impart it to those they are sent to: There's a necessity laid upon them to preach the Gospel, and a woe if they do not, *1 Cor. 9. 16.* *A necessity, not of Coaction, but Obligation, and divine command*, saith *Pareus*.

Secondly, The 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, why Christ is so willing those Treasures should be tendered to Sinners.

First, That so he might give the world a proof of the greatness of his Love to perishing Sinners, and of the largeness of his bowels to poor mankind, *Eph. 3. 9.* *To make all men see what is the Fellowship of the mystery, &c.* Now what was the fellowship of this mystery? The Apostle tells us, *ver. 6.* *That the Gentiles should be Fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel.* This sets forth the wonderful love of God in Christ to fallen man; that God is willing the mystery of Salvation should be opened to such vile Creatures as the Gentiles were; worshippers of Idols and Devils, such unclean and filthy Creatures, the chiefest of sinners, *Tit. 3. 3.* *Eph. 2. 2, 3.* Such were all before Conversion, they had fellowship with Devils, *1 Cor. 10. 20.* And this commends the love of God indeed, that he should reveal Jesus Christ to the vilest sinners, and tells the world it is by Grace any are saved, *Eph. 2. 8.* and of the riches of mercy, *Tit. 3. 5, 6.* It lets sinners know that God is no respecter of persons, he saves none for any worth in them, but for his great love in Christ, *Eph. 3. 19.*

Secondly, That the worst of sinners might be encouraged to come to Christ, and none be exempted from Salvation but those that exclude themselves, *Joh. 7. 37.* This is Christ's design thereby to draw sinners to himself by the savor of his Oyntments, *Joh. 12. 32.* O the precious discoveries of his excellencies are attractive; the riches of Christ, and the Glory of his Kingdom have a wonderful influence to persuade sinners to him, *Gal. 4. 15.* A seen and believed blessedness in the ways of Christ, will make the Soul part with all for him, and come on any terms to the enjoyment of it: Terrors contract the Souls affections to God, but mercy and the excellency of Christ doth constrain them; now Christ is willing that every lost sinner that sees and believes in him should be saved.

Thirdly, That so all his Elect that lie among the perishing world might thereby be gathered in, *Joh. 10. 16.* The Election must obtain, though the rest be blinded, *Rom. 11. 7.* The Lord Jesus Christ cannot lose one Soul the Father hath given him, they must come in first or last; and for their sakes, as the evil-days are shortened, *Math. 24. 22.* so shall the Gospel-days be continued till Christ hath gathered all his Elect into union with himself from the four winds, even as many as are ordained to Life: Now there's no such way to fetch in Souls to Christ, as by opening those Treasures.

Lastly, That they who perish under the Gospel might be left without excuse, *Joh. 15. 22.* They have nothing to plead against damnation, who despise so great Salvation, *Heb. 2. 3.* And turn

their backs on such tendered blessedness: To leave tried Gold for Counters, and Treasures for Trifles, the portion of Saints for the pleasures of sin, is utterly inexcusable; and this is one reason of Christ's opening his Treasures to the world, 'tis to justify his severity against unbelievers, that will not come to him that they may have life; he will have every mouth stopped, and the whole world of unbelieving sinners become guilty before him, *Rom. 3. 19.* Thus have I dispatched the third Assertion.

I now come to make Application of the whole.

CHAP. XXIII.

Containing two Branches of Information: What a great blessing the Gospel is: The greatness of their sin that oppose the Gospel.

IF there are great, Glorious, and unsearchable Riches in Christ; If it be by the Gospel these Riches are brought forth, opened, and tendered to sinners; O then what a mercy is it for Souls to enjoy the Gospel! The Gospel is the field in which this treasure is hid: The Ministry of the Gospel is the digging out, and laying open this treasure: The Gospel is the Cabinet in which these Jewels lie locked up: And the Ministry of the Gospel, by the Spirit, is the opening and unlocking this Treasury and Cabinet: Jesus Christ is this treasure: The Ministers of the Gospel are Messengers and Ambassadors of Christ, sent into the world with news of this Treasure, and empowered to treat with perishing Souls about making them Rich: The Ministers of Christ are Stewards of this great Lord of Glory, entrusted with the tendering and Ministerial disposings of these vast treasures, according to his instructions: This way God brings to light the hidden things of the Gospel, *2 Cor. 4. 7. We have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels:* As if the Apostle should say: O *Corinthians*, there is a treasure, there are Riches in the Gospel, and we have these Riches in Earthen Vessels: The Lord commits them to us, that we may open them, and make a tender of them to perishing sinners, according to his order. Our business is to preach Christ, and open the treasures of Christ, with all his vast Inheritance to every Soul that receives him: O then the singular happiness they have, that have the word of this Grace sent to them: Oh what a mercy is it to live within the day-spring from on high, and under the joyful found: To hear the good news of a Savior's being born, and offered to perishing Souls: To have the tidings of those Soul-enriching overtures; O think upon the blind perishing world, that live without the Line of Communication, with whom Free-Grace holds no correspondence about Salvation, those *Indians* and *Pagans* that live without the Gospel, and then reflect upon the privileges you enjoy, and see what a mercy this is; and then say, who hath made you to differ; O why should the Sun shine on your borders, and the day spring from on high visit your coasts; leaving others to perish without regarding? O is it not Grace that God should visit you with the Gospel, and suffer others to persecute it? O these are the motions of Sovereign pleasure, and the paths of distinguishing mercy: O sinners! how much are you indebted to this free unsearchable Grace, that should pass by so many parts of the World, and pitch on this little spot of ground? O wonderful Mercy indeed! That these swarms of Mellefluous dews and privileges should light on your branches: That the Cloud by day and a Pillar of Fire by night should come, and stand over you. O little do you know what it is to lie in darkness, and in the Region and shadow of Death: O! this should

cause you to value the Gospel: who can tell but they that feel it, what it is to be shut up in the Region of death, and be bound in chains of darkness; to lie in a vast howling Wilderness, where there is none to guide their feet in the way of peace: O what a sad judgment is this! O Souls! If ever you live to see, the light put out, and the Ministry of the Gospel gone from *England*, then you will know what doleful miseries are; and will you not prize the Gospel then, that is such a wonderful mercy, beyond all your Estates, and all the enjoyments of the whole world? How will some men value those Sciences that feed their natural minds with knowledge, and feast their Rational desires with discoveries of some unknown Notions: And will not you love the Gospel, that brings to light the glorious truths of Christ? How will Tradesmen prize the Rules of their Arts, that make them skilful! How will the Worldlings hug those Counsels that help to make them rich! And should not you prize the Gospel, that comes to make you wise to Salvation? Shall men prize instructions about the obtaining of perishing things? And shall the Counsel God gives you about the Food that endureth, be slighted? O Souls! what shall I say? O labor to know the worth of the Gospel, before you feel the want of the Gospel: O prize it, prize it indeed. The Gospel is the best Treasure, the best Comforter, the best Friend that is in the World: 'Tis the best Counselor in all sinners difficulties; it shows you the safest, and best way out of all your Clouds and darkness, *Pro. 8. 14. Counsel is mine, and sound Wisdom.* It is meant of Christ; In his word is the best Counsel to make men wise to Salvation, *1 Tim. 3. 15.* There's the best Counsel to make you happy, *Rev. 3. 18.* 'Tis the best Interpreter in all the World to resolve your dark cases, and there's no such way to get solution in all your doubts, and greatest troubles: The Psalmist found it so, when he went into the Sanctuary, *Ps. 73. 17.* Christians, the Gospel and Word of God tells you, what you should do in all your difficulties, *Acts 9. 6.* The Gospel is the chiefest comforter: O what happy Messenger the ministry of the Gospel is, it brings the best Balm to heal your wounds: Balm of *Gilead* to heal your soul wounds, it affords the sweetest Consolations, *Rom. 15. 4. That we through Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.* Ah! There's no such pure Elixir drops to any, as the Gospel drops: 'Tis the most reviving Spirits imaginable: the water of Life that come through the Gospel: O how reviving how cheering are these to drooping Souls! The Gospel is the power of God to Salvation, *Rom. 1. 16.* 'Tis the arm of God to stay up the poor sinking Soul: 'Tis the Weapons of our Warfare which are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, *2 Cor. 10. 4.* O Souls! what cause have you then to be much affected with the Love of God in giving the Gospel? get your hearts warmed with the sense of this mercy; and more appreciative thoughts of these privileges: O, I know not how to commend it to you: O Souls prize the Gospel, rate it in your esteem above the whole World, *Psa. 119. 167. My Soul hath kept thy Testimonies, and I love them exceedingly.* O rest not till you can say so, I love the Gospel exceedingly; I prize it above gold, above tried gold: 'Tis better than all treasures, *ver. 72. Sweeter, (says David) than Honey, and the Honey Comb, Psa. 19. 10.* If the Gospel be stuff'd with such Riches, who would not prize the Gospel? 'Tis a rich Cabinet, bespangled with beauty in every letter: 'Tis a discovery of the manifold Wisdom of God, and should not you be affected with the Gospel? O testify your valuation of the Gospel by all possible demonstrations.

First, Shew your valuation of the Gospel, by blessing God for it: O send Clouds of Incense to Heaven, full of praises and *Hosannahs* to God for the Gospel: *Paul* blesseth God that the *Phillippians* had the Gospel, *Phil.* 1. 3, 5. *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, for your fellowship in the Gospel, from the first day until now.* As much as to say, that you have enjoyed the Gospel a great while. O from your whole hearts bless God for the Gospel, *1 Thes.* 1. 2, 5. O I am afraid Christians are not enough in this duty of praising God for the Gospel: It deserves solemn days of Thanksgiving.

Secondly, Testifie your valuation of the Gospel; by doing all you can to keep it with you: A person that prizeth a Jewel or piece of Gold in his hand will hold it fast: O Christians! if you prize the Gospel, you will do all you can to keep the Gospel, *Pro.* 23. 23. *Buy the Truth, and sell it not:* Lay out anything to enjoy the Gospel; part with your Lusts, part with your Treasures; let all go, so you may keep the Gospel: But then do not sell it: O the Gospel is Treasure enough, count nothing too dear for it.

Thirdly, Testifie your valuation of the Gospel: By your willingness to part with all, or anything, if God call you to it for the Gospel: Doth God bid you pluck out a right eye, cut off a right hand, let it go if God call for it: Doth he call for your liberty, your lives for the Gospels sake, let them go, *Acts* 21. 13. O Souls! be not like the *Gadarenes* to value your Swine above the Gospel, and rather let the Gospel go, than part with a little of your Estates, *Luke,* 8. 37.

Fourthly, Christians, show your high esteem of the Gospel, by your readiness to attend it at all times: To run at every call of the Gospel, with *Mary* to sit at Christ's feet, though other things be out of order, *Luke* 10. 39, 40. Will not you part with a little of your business, and let your Plow stand still awhile, to attend upon the Ministry of the Gospel? O Christians! show your prizings of the Gospel, by your willingness to sit down under it at all times.

Fifthly, Shew your high esteem of the Gospel, by the greatest improvements of it while you have it; Sirs, you cannot tell how soon it may be taken from you, or you from it; you see what attempts are made against the Gospel, you have reason then to make the most of it while you have it: Christ gives this argument to his hearers to prize it, *Joh.* 12. 35. *Yet a little while is the light with you, walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you:* Be sure at the best, 'tis but a little time you shall have it, if you live out all your time under the Gospel, till your glass be run every dust, 'tis but a little while you shall sit under the dews of this *Hermon hill*; the time of your life is but a little while; the time of your digging in this Mine is but a little while, Death will draw the Curtain, and set you beyond the droppings of these dews and golden Oyls: O then improve the Gospel while you have it; make the most of it, get all the good you can from it, by way of illumination, instruction, Correction, Faith and Consolation: Christians, get your heads and hearts filled with this precious substance what you can; this will be your wisdom, you will find it so when you come to reckoning: O fill these Chambers of your Souls with precious treasures; lay up those choice fruits that may last you in your Winter Days: Get the knowledge of Christ, and the unsearchable Riches of Christ more and more, while you may come under the news of it: O draw hard at these breasts, that you may get much food and nourishment for your Souls, that may serve you many a day.

Sixthly, Shew your high valuation of the Gospel, by your believing in it, by your loving and obeying of it: *Joh. 12. 36. While you have the light believe in the light:* Those friends we value much, we trust much. Souls if you value the Gospel, you will believe it: The Gospel tells you; *He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son hath not life: It tells you, he that lives after the flesh shall die:* O believe it! the Gospel says, *If you forsake your evil ways, you shall have mercy; if you hold fast your sins you shall die:* It tells you, *you cannot come at Salvation, but in Salvations ways:* O believe the Gospel; *they that know thy Name will put their trust in thee, Psa. 9. 10.* If you did but know the worth and truth of it, you would believe it, you may hang all the weight of your Souls upon the Line of the Gospel, you may adventure your immortal Souls upon the promises of the Gospel: It will bear all your weights, then love the Gospel: *Love the truth and peace, Zach. 8. 19.* Is the Gospel such a good Messenger that brings you such good news, and will you not love it? O Souls! love the Ministrations of the Gospel. And then obey the Gospel: If you love Christ indeed you will keep his Commandments, *Joh. 14. 23.* you will obey his voice. This argues your esteem of the Gospel, when you follow the instructions it gives you. Doth God bid you forsake your evil ways? Come and close with Christ? O! obey those Counsels he gives you in his Gospel.

Lastly, Shew your high valuation of the Gospel, by holding forth a Conversation suitable to it, *Only let your Conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ, Phil. 1. 27.* As if he should say, chiefly, this is the main and sum of all O! live worthy of the Gospel.

First, Then is your Conversation as becometh the Gospel, when you live as becomes the grace of God discovered in the Gospel: 'Tis infinite grace is revealed in it; you should walk so as to honor grace; you should press after more grace in your Conversations, there should be grace in every step of your lives, *Tit. 2. 1, 12.*

Secondly, Then you live suitable to the Gospel, when you live up to those great and Glorious things held out in it: When the Gospel is opened there are choice Jewels brought forth to sale: O most excellent things produced by it, and you should live up suitable to these.

There's the manifold Wisdom of God held forth in the Gospel, *Eph. 3. 10.* Treasures of wonderful wisdom are opened in the Gospel: O live up to these mysteries: O Christians, let your lives be exact, for you have curious eyes to look upon you, labor to hold forth much wisdom and much light in your Conversations.

In the Gospel is held forth the mystery of Godliness, *1 Tim. 3. 16. Great is the mystery of godliness.* O what mysteries are here! *God Manifested in the flesh;* God, and yet clothed in flesh: *Condemn'd for sin, and yet justified in the Spirit; seen of Angels:* Preached to the Geutiles, the worst of Sinners in the World: Now live suitable to the mysteries of Godliness.

Again, the Gospel opens the glorious privileges of Saints, of every saved Soul: O wonderful privileges! That Enemies should be reconciled, and strangers made nigh, that Rebels should be adopted Sons and Daughters, made the Children of God by Christ, *Rom. 8. 16, 17.* O what a glorious privilege is this Believing Souls are brought into by the Gospel! to a state of Adoption, *Gal. 4. 6.* A state of glorious liberty, *Eph. 5. 1. Gal. 5. 1.* O live up to these glorious privileges: *You are Children of the light, walk as Children of the light, Eph. 5. 8.* The Gospel shows

you the the things freely given of God, the infinite love of God, the wonderful Salvation-Grace of God: O then you live suitable to the Gospel, when you live up to those great and glorious things held forth in it.

Thirdly, Then are your lives according to the Gospel, when they are suited to the Rules of the Gospel, look what the Gospel commands; and requires that you do, *Gal. 6. 16. Math. 28. 20.* Now the Gospel requires not only Bodily, but Spiritual worship; to worship God in the Spirit: It requires not only external duties, but internal holiness: It calls for Obedience flowing from love, and labors springing from faith; well principled duties, when you endeavor the greatest strickness in your lives; That's suitable to the Gospel.

Fourthly, Then is your Conversation as becomes the Gospel; when it is Subordinate to the ends of it.

One end of the Gospel is to exalt the praise of the glory of grace, *Eph. 1. 12.* To make you vessels of Mercy, for the glory of Mercy: O Christians live so as you may most advance the glory of grace, live self-denyingly and humbly, exclude boasting, then you live as becomes the Gospel.

Another great end of the Gospel is the sanctification of saved Souls, to make Souls holy, *2. Cor. 7. 1.* Then you live as becometh the Gospel, when you carry on Gospel holiness, inward Holiness, outward Holiness, *1 Thes. 4. 3.*

The Salvation of Souls, that's another great end of the Gospel, that the Promise may be sure to all the seed, *2 Thes. 2. 10.* That he that believes in Christ may have Everlasting Life: O then live as you may be saved; you must tread upon the World you have so much doted upon; you must account all things loss and dung for Christ, if ever you be saved: O Christians, labor then to hold forth a Conversation suitable to the Gospel. So much for the first Inference.

Secondly, If such great and unsearchable treasures are opened and tendered to Sinners in the Gospel: O then how great is their sin that oppose and persecute the Preaching of it: O this is a black sin indeed; this activity comes from the Spirit of darkness. O 'tis a dreadful thing to oppose, resist, and persecute the Ministry of the Gospel: For such do all they can to hinder the tenders of unsearchable Riches to the World; they labor to keep the World poor, to hinder the Salvation of Souls: And is not this sad work?

Again, such as oppose and persecute the Gospel, are of the cursed brood and offspring of the *Pharisees*, who do shut up the Kingdom of God, and neither enter in themselves, nor suffer them that are entering to go in: So do those that do oppose and persecute the Gospel, and would put out the light of the Gospel; they are the Children of the Devil; the firstborn of Hell; they do their Fathers work, *Joh. 8. 41, 44.* They that hate the light are the Children of the Devil; their deeds are evil, *Joh. 3. 20.* They carry the Devils mark upon their forehead; wherever they go up and down, to say there goes the Devils Children, there goes an Heir of Hell.

Again, They are Soul murderers; they do hunt Souls, and shed the blood of Souls, *Ezek. 13. 30.* As well as they that hinder the Gospel of Life, as they that bring in false Doctrines, and feed

persons with Lies, and occasion death: They that starve men's Souls as well as they that poison them, both are Soul murderers. They sight against Christ in Heaven: They go up and down with drawn Swords pointed against Christ in Heaven. O bloody wretches! that have murdered Christ on Earth, and now would kill him in Heaven too, *Acts. 9. 4. Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?* O Souls! 'tis a fearful thing to oppose and persecute the Ministry of the Gospel; for all the blood of all the Saints, from the beginning of the world to this day, shall be upon their heads, *Math. 23. 35.* O 'tis a sad thing to lie under the blood of one person; but to have all the blood of all the Saints in the world to lie upon the head of a poor Creature: O what will that Soul do? That Soul will go to Hell with a vengeance, and lie tumbling under the wrath of God to all Eternity. Thus much of the Second Inference.

CHAP. XXIV.

Showing the poor and lamentable State of all Christless Souls.

IF there are such vast and unsearchable treasures in Christ, tendered to sinners in the Gospel: Hence see then the poor and lamentable state of all those Souls that are without Christ. O they are very beggarly Souls that are Christless Souls: As they that are far from the Sun, must needs be far from Light and Heat; so they that are far from Christ, must needs be far from true Riches: He that hath not a Title to the Field, hath none to the Treasure that lies in it: *He that hath the Son hath Life, he that hath not the Son hath not Life.* The Character of *Laodicea* is the complexion of all Christless Souls: *They are Wretched, Miserable, Poor, Blind, and Naked,* *Rev. 3. 17. They are aliens from the Common Wealth of Israel, strangers to the Covenant of promise, without God, and without hope,* *Eph. 2. 12.* They have none of Christ's personal, or purchased treasures to enrich them: They have no right to his Person, and so none to his Excellency: His glorious Attributes signifies no good at all to them. His most precious and sweet dispositions, bespeaks little comfort to them: What Christ hath done and suffered, imports no advantage to them: Christless sinners are like beggars, or like poor persons shut out of the Rich man's door, that have Charity locked up from them; till they come to Christ, neither himself nor his is theirs; they have not any part of his fullness: No Treasures of Justification, Pardon, and Peace, are imparted to them: No Riches of Sanctification are made over to them: No Treasures of Grace, or Glory, are the Unbelievers interest; therefore he must needs be a pitiful poor Soul: Yea, all the Symptoms of Poverty are upon Christless sinners. To name a few of them.

First, A poor Person is a very needy person: He is full of wants; ever and anon in distress, and extremities; always destitute: Poor and needy are Synonymous terms, *Isa. 41. 17. When the poor and needy seek Water.* So it is with Christless Souls, their necessities are many; their wants are more than can be numbered: They want Wisdom, Light, Grace, Glory, every good thing: Nothing truly good is imparted to them: Their unbelief mars all the mercies given to them: *To the unbelieving Soul everything is unclean, defiled,* *Tit. 1. 15.* Their unregeneracy overturns all their mercies. Ah! They want eyes to see what is lacking in them, and hence 'tis they go up and down so secure: They want Eyes to see, Ears to hear, a mouth to speak, Legs to go, and Hands to Labor: they want Life, and every good thing: And being Aliens from the

Common-wealth of *Israel*, strangers to the Covenant of promise, and alienated from the Life of God; must needs be miserably poor.

Secondly, Poor Persons as they are needy, and their wants great, so they have nothing of their own to supply them: A poor man may want Bread; but his Cupboard doth not afford it: He may see his wants, but hath no money in his purse, no treasure to repair them; they are poor that have no Estates; no Barns-floor to go to; no Lands, no Livings, no money to help them in time of straits: Christless Souls are in this sense poor also: They have nothing to supply their wants, to relieve them in their necessities: Their own Treasures are totally exhausted by sin: Where the fountain is sealed, the Cisterns are dry: When the Creator will not help, the Creature cannot, Angels cannot, will not help: Scriptures can impart no comfort to them, whiles out of Christ: Where Christ shuts his door, no good thing gets out to such Souls: They are naked of all those advantages that might enrich them, stripped of those Consolations that might cheer and refresh them: *Where shall we go?* says the Disciples to Christ, *Joh. 6. 68.* So may poor sinners say: *Where shall we go?* they are like the Lepers that sate without the Gate of *Samaria*, ready to Famish, and knew not what to do, *2 Kings 7. 3.* This is the case of Christless Souls: They may have of the fat things of this Life; but not a jot of the Everlasting hills reacheth them.

Thirdly, Poor men usually fare hard; they are much straitened in their refreshments; they feed on mean things, very low diet; Bread and Water is great cheer with them: When the Prophet was reduced to a state of poverty, he was fed with Bread and Water, *1 Kings 18. 4.* Yea sometimes worse fare; as the Prodigal fed on Husks; nay, glad to have it, he looked for some that would give it. *Luk. 15. 16.* Nay, sometimes feed upon Doves dung; yea their own flesh, *2 Kings 6. 25.* O the mean, hard fare poor persons are brought to in a state of Poverty; they go many times with hungry Bellies: Poor people sometimes with *Lazarus* would be glad of the Crumbs that fall from rich men's Tables, *Luke 16. 21.* Such is the state of Christless Souls; their fare is bad, and very course: They live upon the Carrion, the stinking Excrements of sin; They feed upon their Lusts; their sweetest draughts are (with *Darius*) dirty Waters: As the Children of God feed on holiness, 'tis meat and drink to do their Fathers will; so the pleasures of sin are the dainties, and sweet-meats of Christless Souls: The forbidden Fruit is the best cheer such have: No Tree in the garden pleaseth them so well as the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. O such is the meat and drink of sinners, they feed upon their own dung; yea, they are fed with Judgment, whiles Saints eat the dainties, the marrow and fat things of Christ's Table: They eat the Bone, when the Children feed on the Flesh: Sinners come to Ordinances, and eat up Bran, whiles the Children feed upon the finest of the Wheat; they have but the shell and outside of Ordinances, when gracious Souls eat the kernel and inside sweetness: The Friends of Christ feed upon hidden Manna, when sinners fill their stomachs with husks, yea, gravel: The appointments of Christ yield no sweetness to them: Their Ear doth not try words, their Palate hath lost its taste; it cannot difference sweet Waters from bitter; the Language of *Canaan* from the language of *Ashdod*: Institutions from Superstition: 'Tis all one to them what is preached: The pure strains of Gospel truths is no other to them; than the dull methods of dead preaching, juicy meat and dry Bones is all alike to them; O they are poor indeed that fare so hard; If Hypocrites feed on anything 'tis but a

dream; if they have comforts, 'tis but stolen Waters, when they awake they are empty still: Let the fare be never so nourishing, the choicest privileges they prove not by; they are ill favored Souls, and look gastly.

Fourthly, Poor Men have usually mean clothing, so *John* the Baptists low estate in the World was set forth by his habit, *Mark* 1. 6. *And John was clothed with Camels Hair, and with the girdle of a skin about his Loynes:* A plain and sordid habit, as *Calvin* calls it: *Ab omni urbano nitore & lautitiis remotis:* A man far from a Court-like neatness, either in habit or apparel, but in a poor and rustick attire; not but that *John* might have been better clothed; he was the Son of *Zacharias* the Priest, but taking on him the state of Poverty, he clothed himself accordingly: Poor Men are badly clad, *Job* 31. 19. Sometimes they go in rags, as *Soloman* says, *Pro.* 23. 21. *Drowsiness will clothe a man in rags:* It notes the Poverty that slothful Persons are brought into; when *James* would describe a poor man, he sets him forth as clothed in vile raiment, *Jam.* 2. 2. *And there come in a poor man in vile raiment,* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, dirty base clothes: The same word that is rendered filthly garments, *Zach.* 3. 3. Is the dress of poor men: So Christless Souls are very poor, they go in mean raiment, they are naked; the Spirit of God tells the Church of *Laodicea* so, *Rev.* 3. 17, 18. Till Souls be clothed with the white raiment of Christ's Righteousness, they be naked, and their shame appears; they have nothing to cover their nakedness from the sight of God, Angels, and Saints: They go in poor raiment; their garments are webs of their own weaving, and their works are their covering. They are clothed with shame, and covered with Confusion as with a Mantle, *Psa.* 109. 29. O what sad raiment do Sinners go in! Saints are clothed with white Rayment, and beautiful through Christ's comeliness; adorn'd with his Graces, bespangled in his Jewels; they go up and down in rich Attire: But sinners lie in sordid attire, clothed with vile Rayment.

Fifthly, Poor men usually have but bad Lodging; They commonly live in mean Houses; little Cottages: They sometimes dwell in the dust, *Psa.* 113. 7. *He raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;* So the Prophet *Isaiah* describes a poor man, as one that is cast out, *Isa.* 58. 7. *The poor that be cast out:* O their Lodging is hard; they do not spread themselves on Beds of Ivory; nor lie on Cloth of Tapestry: The rich have their ceiled Houses, fair dwellings. The poor many times their Cottages are in a Wilderness, and Houses that drop through. So 'tis with Christless Souls; they have poor Lodgings; when Saints Lodge in the bosom of Christ, they lie in the Arms of Devils: They lie upon Thorns; yea, Spears, that will pierce them thorough: They lie upon Stones; the Earth is their Bed, they are Earthy Souls, and lodge in the very bosom of the world: They dwell in habitations of cruelty; they lie in Graves: So the Prophet, when he speaks of the *Jews* dead in sin before Conversion, he describes them to be in their Graves, *Ezek.* 37. 12. Dead sinners lie like *Lazarus*, bound with a Napkin in their Graves, *Joh.* 11. 44. O there's your Bed Souls, if out of Christ; there you lie kept till the day of Judgment; held Prisoners till a call comes to bring you to the Bar of Christ. O your lodging is mean indeed! Saints dwell in God, *Psa.* 91. 1, 9. their habitation is in the City of God, *Eph.* 2. 19. But all Christless sinners lie without amongst Devils; they dwell on pinacles, and live upon the borders of death every moment, amongst Dogs, amongst the unclean O see their habitation, and the place where their honor dwelleth, *Rev.* 22. 15. *Without are dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers, and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh alye.*

These are the company Christless Souls lodge with: they are turned out of doors: O sad, doleful state indeed!

Sixthly, Another Character of a poor man is this: Poor men are Friendless, *Pro. 19. 4 Wealth maketh many friends, but the poor is separated from his Neighbor*. Every man seeketh the Rulers Favor; every man's Cap, and Hand, and Knee, and all is for them; But the poor man, his very Neighbor comes now to leave him, who was his Friend whiles in prosperity: When Rich men sit down in places of Honor, poor men must stand at the Feet, *Jam. 2. 3*. They are sure to find few Friends to own them, to pity, and help them! So Christless Souls are friendless; they have no true Friends in Heaven or Earth: Those that seem to flatter them, are not Friends but Foes; they rather wound them, and draw them into mischief; whiles they lie in their blood there's no eye to pity them, to do any of these things for them, *Ezek. 16. 5* No hand to help them, to wash, salt, and swaddle them, *ver. 4. 5*. If the Father of Bowels shut up his pity, Creatures can extend but little; whiles they reject the good *Samaritan*, none that passeth by regards them. *If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him, Job 9. 13*. If God be angry, who can befriend us? O sinner, If God frown, what is the love of Creatures? O thy case is doleful, thou thou art a poor Soul indeed, that art out of Christ; if he wound, none can heal, *Job 11. 10*. *If he cut off, or shut up, or gather together, none can hinder him*. Christless Souls are like a Gangreen member, in danger of being cut off if a sudden cure be not found: and who then can befriend them? where the Lord of hosts is a Friend, Creatures are Friends: And where he is an Enemy, Creatures are Enemies too: If God be in Covenant with a Soul, the Creatures are in Covenant too. And if God be against a Soul, all his armies fight against that Soul too: O sinners, who can be friend you? suppose you have Rich kindred, great acquaintance, what can they do at the Bar of God for you? They will not go to the Judgment seat of Christ, and speak for you there.

Seventhly, A poor man is one that is lightly esteemed: This *David* gives as a Testimony of a mean state; when some were sent to treat with him about a match with *Saul's* daughter; he modestly puts it off. *Who I*, says he, *I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed*, *1 Sam. 18. 23*. The word is contemptible, of little, little worth. Rich men are sure of honor; but the poor are little regarded: Great persons are Courted, when the poor are slighted, passed by, little esteemed. So 'tis with Christless Souls: They are lightly esteemed: God hath a very low account of them: The ungodly in God's account are like the Chaff the Wind drives away, *Psa. 1. 4*. So are the wicked, let them be what they will, in greatest dignity here below; they are glittering stars in the worlds Eye, but falling Comets in God's account: The mighty King of *Babylon* being a wicked man, God accounts him but an abominable Branch, *Isa. 14. 19*. So Christ calls proud *Herod*, a Fox, *Luk. 13. 32*. God reckons them as broken Pitchers: Wicked *Coniah* is as a broken Vessel in whom is no pleasure, *Jer. 22. 28*. No more doth God reckon of wicked men, though under all the grandeur of the World: Angels do not regard them: They do not account them worth their company, and attendance: The Saints are guarded by Angels; but wicked men are let alone: Angels are Ministring Spirits to the Heirs of Salvation; not to the Heirs of Hell; they have no charge at all, to watch over them; but to fight against them: They are set in battle array against them; good men cannot regard wicked men; let them be never so high and honorable: Though they give every man his due; yet they cannot

weigh them in the balance of the Sanctuary as anything: They had rather converse with a poor Saint, than with the greatest persons in the world, if wicked, *2. Kings 3. 14. And Elisha said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand; Surely were it not that I regarded the presence of Jehoshaphat King of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.* So lightly esteemed are wicked men in the Eyes of God, Saints and Angels.

Lastly, A poor man is liable to dangers and sufferings; he hath no might against the mighty, but lies open to the injuries and oppressions of those that are above him, *Amos 4. 1. Hear ye this word ye kine of Bashan, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy: Poor men lie under the feet of the potent, and are subject to their Tyranny: On the oppressors side is power, and on the oppresseds side are tears, Eccl. 4. 1.* So Christless Souls are under the ruling power of Satan, and taken Captive by him at his will, *2 Tim. 2. 26.* They have no defense against the strokes of Judgment; 'tis easy with God to crush them every moment; they no have power to secure themselves from ruining vengeance, wicked men are no more match for God than Briars and Thorns, *Isa. 27 4. Yea they can no more resist him than the stubble can the fire, Mal. 4. 1. O sinner, thou art a miserable Caitiff indeed! O see thy poverty, let this stain thy glory; O sinner, look about thee, whiles thou hast a little time: Art thou willing to die so poor? O 'tis not Houses, nor Lands, nor Money, nor Friends, can minister comfort to thee then; O how wilt thou do to live forever, if thou hast none of Christ's tried Gold.*

So much of the Third Inference.

CHAP. XXV.

Wherein Christ is set forth to sinners, as a Match wortby of their choice, in regard of the excellency of his Estate: The amiableness of his Person: His lovely Dispositions and other Considerations to win the hearts of sinners to be looking after this lovely Jesus.

IF there are such vast treasures in the Lord Jesus Christ; then this will follow hence: That the Lord Jesus Christ is worth the looking after by perishing sinners. O what a match is Jesus Christ for undone sinners; could they but obtain him, how happy would they be forever; this is a principal thing in a woers eye, to get a rich match; O Souls you cannot get a better match than Jesus Christ, there's none like him.

First, In point of Riches: O let me commend the Lord Jesus Christ to you upon the account of his wealth: Sinners, if you would have a rich Husband; there's none so rich as Christ: He is wonderfully rich; if you but consider the Nature and number of his riches: If you observe the verity and variety of his treasures: If you weigh the kind or degree of his substance, you will say he is exceeding rich: Take him positively, or comparatively, he is vastly rich: he is really so, and superlatively so: The worlds treasures are but shadows: But he hath substance; true solid subsisting treasures, *Pro. 8. 21. That I may cause them that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures.* Christ's Gold is tried Gold, that which can bear the hardest touch, and abide the fire: And he is superlatively rich, none like him: *Job* was a rich man, but his riches were limited within the Confines of a Country: He was the richest, not in all the world, but of all the men of the East, *Job 1. 3.* But Christ is richest of all: All the Men and Angels in Heaven and Earth put together cannot vye treasures with Christ: What was said of the virtuous

woman is true of Christ, he excels them all, *Pro. 31. 29.* O sinners, would you have a rich match, cast your eyes on Jesus Christ: He hath a very taking Estate, that will be wonderful attractive upon your hearts if rightly set. I shall show in a few particulars what an Estate Christ hath.

First, It is a fair Estate, exceeding large and full; 'tis incomprehensible, and past finding out, both as to his personal, and purchased Treasure: It is in heighth, depth, length, breadth, passing knowledge, as hath been shewn at large, *Eph. 3. 18, 19.* Christ's Estate is as large as himself is, and he is past finding out: *Who can search out the Almighty to perfection? Job 11. 7.* All men's Estates lie here in the lower world, within the measure of a spot of ground: But Christ's treasure fills Heaven and Earth: The Heavens, yea the Heaven of Heavens are his, *Neh. 9. 6.* The Lord Jesus Christ is rich every way considered: He is rich in inheritance: *Heir of all things, Heb. 1. 2.* He is rich in Jewels, he hath abundance of choice Jewels; he hath a day on purpose to make up his Jewels, *Mal. 3. 17.* He is rich in mansions too, *Joh. 14. 2. In my Fathers House are many mansions.* A mansion for every Heir of Glory: O how many Houses hath this Heir of all things? How many dwelling places in Glory? He is rich in Crowns and Thrones: We account that man rich that hath two or three Kingdoms: But Jesus Christ hath a multitude of Crowns: A Crown for every Subject, *Mat. 9. 28.* Every saved Soul is a Crowned King, or shall be so to all Eternity, *Rev. 1. 6.* Every overcoming Soul shall sit on Thrones; and everyone wearing a Crown of Glory, *1 Pet. 5. 4.* O what a vast Potentate is Jesus Christ: All the Angels in Heaven cannot draw an inventory of Christ's Estate, so numberless are his Treasures: He that hath so many millions of Saints, and can give everyone of them a Kingdom: O how rich must this Lord be? O sinners think what a rich Jointure Christ can make you; he can settle an Estate upon you indeed. O will you Espouse Christ, he hath a fair Estate indeed.

Secondly, Christ hath a free Estate: Some men may have large Estates, but many Mortgages and debts upon them; but Christ's Estate is all free; no debts lies on Christ to lessen his Estate; whatever he gives to the whole Creation, doth no way lessen his Riches; like the Sun, whatever light it imparts to the World, or Inferior Luminaries, doth not exhaust or diminish it's Original splendor; all that the Rivers empty from the Sea, do not lessen it, but repay its bounty by a retribution of all those receptions; so whatever contributions come from Christ to men, it doth not lessen his ability to give to his people: The more *Abraham* gave to his Sons by *Keturah*, the less he had for *Isaac*: But Christ's liberality and Obligations do not diminish his treasure; Christ's whole Estate comes to every Believer, every saved Soul hath a whole Christ full of Grace and Glory.

Thirdly, Christ hath a sure Estate, exceeding safe; there's no defrauding of his Spouse, no pre-mortgage to take it away: If Christ's Life could not be taken from him without his consent, when he was Mediator, *Joh. 10. 18.* Then all the Estate he hath purchased with his blood is unremovable; the Father hath given it, who is greater than all, and in whose hands Believers are put, and their Estates secured for them: All new-Covenant promises are sure, as you have heard, part of which is the inheritance of the Saints. This Estate is sure both by donation and purchase: The Father hath given Christ and all that is his to Believers, *Isa. 55. 4. I have given him to be a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people:* This shows the

certainty and truth of this Covenant which is confirmed in Christ, whom the Father hath given and made over to Believers to be the confirmation of his promises. 'Tis confirmed by purchase; he hath bought and paid for it; he went and sold all to get this pearl; he parted with his Life, Blood, Glory, his All, to get this Estate for Believers: The Father hath received every Farthing of the money, and gives him an acquittance under his hand, declares before men and Angels, that Christ owes him nothing for all the whole Estate he hath purchased for Believers, *Mat 3. 17. This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: O 'tis a sure Estate. A conveyance is made of it to Christ in the behalf of Believers, Isa. 49. 8. Math. 28. 18. All power is put into the hands of Christ: The Deeds are drawn, and interchangeably sealed between the Father and the Son, that the Estate is firm and sure to all Believers: Nay the seisure and delivery is given, and Christ hath taken possession of it, and he is entered into the Heavens in the behalf of Believers, and all to make this sure. O sinners will you espouse Hell, and let go Jesus Christ, who is Heir of Life, and Glory, that hath such a sure Estate for you?*

Fourthly, He hath a suitable Estate: Let a man have a fair, free, and sure Estate, yet if it be not suitable to his quality, necessities, and desires, 'tis unsatisfying: But Christ's Estate is every way suitable both to himself, and to his Bride: He hath a large inheritance suitable for his dignity, and to his Spouses quality: Christ having finished his work on Earth, being about to drink the last draught of the Cup; he comes and treats with the Father about his receiving, and 'tis Glory suitable to his quality: *O Father glorify thou me with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the World was, Joh. 17. 1. to ver. 5. O unreasonable Souls, that despise Christ; O sinners! had you ever such a Lover stood at your doors? No, nor never will have the like, if you refuse this Jesus: Yea, 'tis a suitable Estate to his Spouse too: 'Tis a fit joynture for the Kings Daughter, sufficient to maintain her Immortality, and Glory, Luk. 22. 29. I appoint unto you a Kingdom: Now a Kingdom is a suitable state to a Kings Daughter: O Souls! will you fall in Love with Christ? he hath Crowns, Thrones, a Kingdom of Glory for you.*

Then 'tis an Estate suitable to your necessities too: There's enough in Christ to spend upon, and maintain you bravely, richly, here and forever: O sinners, will you match with Christ? whatever you need is in him. *My God shall supply all you wants, Phil. 4. 19. If a Kingdom will do it, you shall not want it: If a Crown of Glory will make you happy and blessed you shall not want it; his Estate is fullness that filleth all in all, Eph. 1. 23. O Believer, it may be thou wantest Bread, Cloaths, Money, and thou goest up and down dejected, sad, full of fears: But hast thou espoused Christ? O consider thou hast a fullness, O what a vast Estate hath Jesus Christ for thee. Sinners, your wants are many, more then you know, God only knows your wants, Sinners, yet there's enough in Christ's Estate and Patrimony to supply them all.*

Then 'tis suitable also to their desires. Sinners desires are large; O what wandering things are the desires; persons may desire things to the utmost ends of the Earth, which they cannot get: But all that the Believer rationally desires, Christ's Estate can satisfy: *He will fulfill the desires of them that fear him, Psa. 145. 19. Yea, 'tis above their desires: Desire as much as thou canst, Christ's Estate is above thy desires, Pro. 3. 15. O what a treasure then is Christ! it fills every chink of the Believers desires, with an overplus: 'Tis more than can be desired.*

Fifthly, 'Tis a pleasant Estate, *Psa. 16. 6. The lines are fallen to me in a pleasant place, yea, I have a goodly heritage.* The *Chaldee* renders it in sweetness, others delightful place: A great Estate if it be not well situated, and lie not in a pleasant place, is not half so contentful; but Christ's Estate is well situated; it hath all considerations and circumstances that may make it desirable. *Canaan*, that was a type of it, is called the pleasant Land, *Jer. 3. 19.* 'Tis in the Original, the land of desires: So the Believers portion that is prepared for him by Christ; 'tis a Land of desires; an Inheritance of beauty and Glory: Christ's Riches are very precious and pleasant Riches, *Pro. 24. 4. And by knowledge shall the Chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant Riches.* Rare, as the word imports; delighting Riches: The whole possessions of Christ are pleasant, the way to it is pleasant, *Pro. 3. 17.* The borders of Christ's interest are made with pleasant stones, *Isa. 54. 12. And all thy borders of pleasant stones.* The first fruits of Christ's harvest is all pleasure and delight, much more the lump; the maintenance he allows his Children here in the way is delighting, much more the Estate reserved at the Journeys end. The Fruits that fall from this Tree of Life is sweet to those that sit under its shadow, *Cant. 2. 3.* how much more to them that climb, and crop the pleasant fruits thereof. *Their drink is pleasant,* *Psal. 36. 8. Thou shalt make them drink of the Rivers of thy pleasures.* And at last he brings them to his Right Hand, where are pleasures for evermore, *Psal. 16. 11.*

Sixthly, It is a peaceful state, not liable to contests and controversies, as men's Estates oftentimes are here: A man may have a great Estate, but it may be a litigious Estate: It may occasion many Law Suits about it: But it is not so in Christ's Estate: 'Tis a peaceful Estate; no wars grow out of this Estate: Christ's Country is called *Salem*: The Land of peace, *Psa. 76. 2.* And he is *The King of Salem*; The King of peace, *Heb. 7. 1. His Kingdom is Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the holy Ghost,* *Rom. 14. 17.* He is their peace, *Eph. 2. 14.* In him they shall have peace, *Joh. 16. 33.* His very Doctrine are words of peace, *Eph. 2. 17.* He came to guide our feet into the way of peace, *Luke 1. 79. He came and Preached Peace:* O what a blessed Estate hath Christ; what a lovely Lord is Christ: He bequeaths peace to his people: Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, *Joh. 14. 27.* They have peace with God who Espouse this Christ, *Rom. 5. 1.* Peace with Saints and Angels, *Col. 1. 20.* Peace with Conscience too, *Phil. 4. 7. Heb. 10. 22* The Fruits of the Spirit is Peace, *Gal. 5. 22.* His Riches have no sorrow annexed with them.

7thly, It is a perpetual Estate: *An inheritance that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven,* *1 Pet. 1. 4.* Christ's Riches are durable Riches, aged Riches, strong, solid, Riches: *Opes densae*, that is *•ultae & firmae*, says *Mercer*, they are great, stable Riches, *Pro. 8. 18. Riches and Honor are with me, yea durable Riches and Righteousness.* His Gold is not liable to rust. 'Tis said of the Cedar, worms will not breed in it; sure there's no worm in Christ's Treasure: O Souls, 'tis a lasting Estate: That neither time nor changes can wast nor weaken: All the Saints spending upon it to all Eternity, never detracts from it: Christ's Treasures are like the deep waters, or like the bottomless Ocean, that cannot be exhausted; his treasure will last as long as God, the Soul, and Eternity lasts, which is forever, forever, forever. Some men have outliv'd their Leases and their Estates and have seen an end of their Houses and Riches; but the Spouse of Christ can never out-live her jointure, it lasts to all Eternity.

Lastly, 'Tis a possessed estate: Some may have great estates, but it is in reversion, they may look long for it, as some Heirs do all their days: But Christ's Estate is all in his own hand, 'tis actually made over to him by the Father, and possession given him when he sate down at the Right hand of God, *Heb. 1. 3.* He hath actually obtained this Inheritance with the Fruits of it, *Heb. 1. 4.* And is actually invested with this glory, *Heb. 2. 7.* This sinners is the Estate of that Beloved that is tendered to you in the Gospel for your choice; he is very wealthy, he hath a fair, free, sure, suitable, pleasant, peaceful, perpetual possession; an Estate you cannot spend or comprehend; an Inheritance you cannot lose or out-•ive: riches that will not cloy, nor clog y•u; a portion that cannot be out-vy'd or matched: Come view the Rentals of his Lands, the Inventory of his Goods, and see what a rich match Christ is, there's none like him; where can you mend your penny-worths? all the world, no nor the Heaven of Heavens can yield you such another bargain. *Job 28. ver. 13. &c. Man knoweth not the price thereof—the gold and the Chrystal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be for Jewels of fine gold, &c.* Then Jesus Christ is worth a looking after if he be so rich as the Scripture reports him to be, and I presume you question not the truth of this testimony. O slight not this bargain which will make you happy to all Eternity; if wealth will please you, here's enough, what say you? Have you any objection against his estate? If not; what stick you at?

Secondly, Dost thou dislike his person? Then it argues thou knowest him not; for he is altogether Lovely, the chiefest of ten thousands: The fairest of the Children of Men: O come, behold the Lamb of God: Look upon this glorious Jehovah Christ: O see his Personal Excellency, and it will allure you, and invite you to come to him: he is the brightness of his Fathers Glory, and the express image of his Fathers Person, *Heb. 1. 3.* Sinners look well upon him, view him from top to toe; there is no blemish in him: O he is the most exquisite one, his perfections are enough to please you, his beauty sufficient to allure you: See his excellent lineaments, the sweet proportion of every part: O how lovely is Christ to the believing eye, in regard of his Person. Consider his Natures, God Man sweetly concentrating in an intimate and Eternal Union, perfect God, perfect Man in one person: O where can you espy such an object! sure he is a *Non-such*; none like him in Heaven, none like him on Earth, in regard of his Personal Glory as Mediator, God Man: look over his Characters that his friends have given him; See in that Book of *Cant. Chap. 5.* How the Spouse displays him, and you will find him a beautiful Person, *ver. 11.* to the end, *His head is as the most fine gold:* His Wisdom and Government is most pure, solid and excellent: *His locks are bushy and black as a Raven:* Which notes not only his love liness, but his strength and vigor he hath his radical moisture, his vital heat: He is strong, his vigor abides with him; he hath strength sufficient for all his undertakings, and he is able to go through what he sets his hand unto; he is strong, vigorous, and spritely. *His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the Rivers of Waters, washed with Milk, and fitly set.* His sight is quick, and perfect, his understanding is infinite: His Counsels are holy, and consistent, all well set, his decrees, his purposes, all methodically ordered and fixed: His looks are gracious, his aspects lovely, enamouring the eyes of them that behold him. O such a lovely Christ is tendered to Sinners; O I know not how to set him forth to your capacities, he is a most taking object indeed. *His face is white and ruddy:* Emblems of Rich Beauty, captivating the eyes, and ravishing the hearts of beholders: The purity of the divine nature,

with the passions of the human, and procurements of his Redemption, sets him forth as infinitely amiable in the eyes of Believers. *His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers:* His graces and choice discoveries of his Excellencies, doth wonderfully feed and delight the Souls of those that have acquaintance and fellowship with him; his sweet and lovely perfections discovered to Believers are like a rich feast that stay with them: *His lips like Lilies dropping sweet smelling Myrrh:* The impartings of his wisdom, the droppings of his Doctrine, his gracious words, his Holy Communications, are savoury and sound, pure and incorruptible, they strengthen the heart, and heal the Soul of those that embrace him: His Doctrine carries wonderful strength to those that are in weakness; how do the words of grace revive the fainting hearts of Believers; his ways are strength to the upright, like Myrrh, they make the heart sound. *His hands are as gold rings set with the Beryl:* His works and administrations in the World, are full of order, beauty, and excellency: All that he doth in *Zion* and out of *Zion*, is all holy; every providence that seems to us sometimes to be unseasonable, is in infinite wisdom displayed by Jesus Christ for the good of his people. *His belly is as bright Ivory overlaid with Sapphires:* His tender Bowels, and boundless affections to his people, are wonderfully lovely and delighting; they are pure, firm, and fixed in their nature, and they are cheering, and enriching in their effects; O Christ's love is not fleeting, 'tis firm as Ivory, set with gold, overlaid with Sapphires. O how rich are his affections, what a Treasure to those that have him. *His legs are as Pillars of Marble, set upon sockets of fine gold.* The gracious motions and efficacious workings of his Spirit, are exceeding mighty and glorious; full of strength: He hath power to bear up all those that follow him: His legs are strong, he can carry his Lambs that are committed to his arms; there's no burden too heavy for Christ, his loins are strong, he can bear what is laid upon him; the weight of all the Saints on Earth is nothing to him: He can carry on all his intendments and interest in the World; his legs are as Marble, able to bear his Body; quick in motion: O what a lovely Christ is this displayed in the Gospel! *His countenance is as Labanon, excellent as the Cedars:* Those discoveries the Lord Jesus Christ makes of himself in his word, and works, are wonderful taking; exceeding enriching: Christ's word is fruit fullizing: O when he speaks to the hearts of his Children, what a deal of virtue goes through his lips; Grace is poured out of his lips, Milk and honey is under his tongue: His appearances carries excellency, riches and glory with them, *His mouth is most sweet, yea he is altogether lovely:* His discourses, the openings of his mind is wonderful pleasing: The word of Christ never cloy the spiritual part. Thus you see what a Person Jesus Christ is: O Sinners consider his beauty; O how lovely an object is he! what can you object against his Person, why you will not espouse him?

Thirdly, Consider his lovely dispositions, O Sinners will you accept of him? He is of an excellent Spirit, of a very sweet nature; full of grace and goodness: His sweet dispositions have been largely opened already, he is full of mercy and compassions, meekness, gentleness, patience, longsuffering, slow to anger, ready to forgive, great in kindness, free and bountiful, of a generous Spirit; true and faithful: Sinners, you may trust him with your secrets; you may venture your Souls upon him: He is harmless, and inoffensive; he doth wrong to no man; his company is lovely and desirable: His converses are pleasant and

profitable: O what a person is Christ! O Sinners, never was such a one offered you as Christ is; why will you not come unto him?

Fourthly, Consider his quality and high dignity, he is no mean Person, but a mighty Potentate, 1 *Tim.* 6. 15. The sole and only superintendent of the whole World, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lord's, *Rev.* 19. 16. *He hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lord's:* He is not only a King, but *the King*, the only true Potentate from whom all others derive their glory, a King not only of Men, but of Saints; not only of Saints, but of Angels, of Thrones, Principalities and Powers: *Math.* 26. 53. And can command them down now he is in Heaven for the service of his elect, *Heb.* 1. 14. *Are they not all Ministering Spirits sent forth to Minister for them who shall be heirs of Salvation.* O Sinners! shall this prevail with you to accept of him?

Fifthly, Take notice of his potency: He hath power as well as honor, *Math.* 28. 18. All things are put under his feet, *Heb.* 2. 8. All the Armies of Heaven and Earth are delivered over to him: He is Lord of Hosts: He hath the Keys of Heaven, Death and Hell: *Rev.* 1. 18. Who then can lock out Christ, or exclude him from doing what he pleaseth, seeing all things are at his beck? *He doth whatsoever pleaseth him in Heaven and in Earth, in the Seas and in all deep places,* *Psa.* 135. 6. He sitteth in the Heavens, and laughs the Counsels of the Potentates to scorn; he makes no reckoning of their combinations, but derides their ambitious attempts against him, *Psa.* 2. 4. He shall pass thorough and over-flow, and break all their considerations in pieces, *Isa.* 8. 8, 9, 10. Let all the subtleties of Hell be woven together, to make a web to catch the interest of Christ in; it shall all be as a spiders web, that can soon be swept away. O admire the Kingdom of Christ; the glorious power of Christ; nothing is too hard for him: He hath an absolute, unlimited and uncontrollable power: He is the supreme over all persons, and all things, in all places, Lands, and Countries: O what power hath he! not only *Authority*, but likewise *Might*, 2 *Chro.* 20. 6. *In his hand there is power and might, and none is able to withstand him:* O Sinners come away to Christ, he can protect you and defend you from dangers.

Sixthly, Observe his wisdom too: this is taking with some to have a head that hath intellectuals in him, and marry one that hath exquisite parts and eminency of knowledge. Now all Treasures of wisdom are in him, *Col.* 3. 3. His judgments are unsearchable and past finding out, *Rom.* 11. 33. *His judgments*, his acts in the World, his Righteous deeds, and the way he takes to accomplish his designs; O how wonderful deep are they! *The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the Spirit of wisdom, and understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and might; the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord,* *Isa.* 11. 2. He is of quick understanding, full of judgment; called *The wonderful Counselor*, *Isa.* 9. 6. The only wise God, from whom all wisdom is fetched, that fills Men and Angels; all the World do light their Candles at his Torch: He is the Sun that fills the whole Creation with beams: There's no searching of his understanding; he can bring to light the hidden things of darkness: 1 *Cor.* 4. 5. He hath eyes can reach where men cannot; he can reveal the deep things of God: 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. O Sinners, what an excellent one is Christ! O how worthy of your choice!

Seventhly, Weigh the glorious and blessed effects of your closing with the Lord Jesus Christ: Sinners, the very day you marry Christ he will pay all your debts, and they are many; he will

pardon all your sins, blot out all your iniquities, remember them no more: He will free you from all your Bondages, deliver you from all your fears, secure you from all your dangers; if you will but espouse him. O the very day you marry Christ he will wipe off all your shame, and remove your reproach: He will heal all your wounds and sicknesses, he will begin to heal them immediately; and never leave till he hath perfectly cured your Souls: He will strip off all your filthy garments, and clothe you with broidered raiment; he will advance you to highest dignity; he will lift up your heads above your fellows: He will make you Kings and Priests to God; he will set you in Heavenly places; he will seal your title to a Rich Joynture, he will make sure your interest to all the Treasures of Heaven: He will possess you with grace, and assure you of glory: O sinners, is not this argument enough to win your Souls, and make you willing to accept of such a Majesty as Jesus Christ?

Eighthly, Sinners think upon the greatness of that love t^e Lord Jesus Christ bears you: He hath good-will towards Men, towards sinners, as sinners, whiles in their blood, he hath a love of pity for you: 'Tis true till you close with Christ he can have no love of acquiescense in you; but he hath a love of good-will to your Souls, he hath so much love for you, as hath made him willing to shed his blood for you; his love brought him down from the Fathers Glory, made him willing to drink the dregs of a cup of wrath for you; the love of Christ to Sinners, hath set up a standing Ministry in the World, sent forth multitudes to publish glad tidings: O Sinners, did you but believe this, how attractive would it be upon your hearts, to draw you to Christ. But if none of these arguments will prevail, let me add one consideration more.

Lastly, The effects of your refusing Jesus Christ will be dreadful: if you will not accept of this proposal; O think what a terrible answer Christ will send you: Such shall not taste of his Supper, *Luke 14. 24.* Not a crumb that fall from this Rich Table of Salvation-cheer shall fall to the share of that wretched sinner. If you will not have his Person you shall not have his purchase: He hath sworn in his wrath these shall never enter into his Rest, *Heb. 3. 11.* O sinner! were there no other Hell but the loss of Heaven, it were enough to break thy heart in pieces: O think upon the sad Issue of thy final unbelief: When thy sins get over thy head, and thy guilt follows thee at thy heels; When Death and Hell shall be at thy back, and then to call and cry, and knock at the door of mercy and not be heard; O what a doleful thing will this be! When armies of devils are round about thee, ready to snatch thy Soul into everlasting burnings, and none to relieve thee; O fearful will the case of thy Soul be! When thou shalt cry; O for mercles sake, Help Lord; I am going to Hell, for mercies sake help; and then for the Ear of God to be deaf, and thou not have one good word, and the door be shut against thee; O what a doleful case will this be! for tender mercy to cease; is miserable: But for mercy to become cruel to you; O fearful case indeed! when tender Bowels shall become Brass and Iron, and there shall be no sounding at all in it towards thy Soul: O sinner if thou wilt not accept of this Christ, he will laugh at thy Calamity, and mock when thy Fear cometh, *Pro. 1. 26.* That's terrible; when God shall not only cease to pity, but deride thy misery: Be assured, Soul, as quiet as now thou art, a day of Calamity will come; there will come a time of Fears for thy poor Soul, and then will mercy itself be turned into wrath, and laugh at thy Calamity; yet further (sinner) if thou wilt not accept of Christ; then will incensed fury send forth its

army of destroyers, and ruin, and cut off thy Soul forever, *Mat.22. 7*. Then shalt thou be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of God, and from the glory of his Power, *2 Thes. 1. 8, 9*. Then shall vengeance glut itself upon thy Soul, and seize upon thee in flaming Fire: O 'tis a dreadful thing to lie at the mercy of vengeance: O what will not enraged fury do to its adversaries, when it hath them at its power? But what will divine vengeance do? O sinner, when God shall arraign thee at the Bar of Judgment for kicking at the Bowels of mercy; for Crowning the head of Christ with thorns, and trampling his blood under feet; what wilt thou do then? (O canst thou read this and not shake) when thou shalt see Devils round about thee, and flaming vengeance take hold of thee: But thus it will be. Then they that would not let Christ reign over them; shall feel Devils rending of them: Then they that fled from the Arms of mercy, shall fall into the Jaws of fury: Then they that shut their ears against the fervent woosings of Christ shall open their hearts to the fiery wrath of Christ: Then they that would not get into the bosom of Christ; shall lodge in the burnings of Hell: Then the Furnace of Hell shall be heated seven times hotter for those whose hearts freezed under the warm beams of Christ's Love: Oh dreadful will thy state be, Sinner, if thou refuse Christ.

Well sinner, take the Counsel given thee: kiss the Son lest he be angry; turn in, turn in hither; reach out thy arms, come away to Christ; say Lord Jesus, I am willingly thine. Sinners are you persuaded? what answer shall we return to this Lord of Glory? Will you be his? Will you accept of this grace tendered to you, before it breathe its last to you.

CHAP. XXVI.

Objections answered. Counsels how to come to Christ.

I shall now endeavor to answer those Objections which are made by doubting Souls, against their coming to Christ.

1. Objection. Says a Soul: *But will this blessed Potentate, this glorious King of Kings, stoop so low as to look upon such an obscure Creature, such a worthless worm as I am? Alas! I am too mean to unloose the latchet of his shoes: I am too unworthy to be the meanest Servant in his House: To be a dog to his Flock: And will he cast his skirt over me? O do not flatter me into such vain hopes, and fond dreams, that such a King of Glory will look upon me: I am too low for one aspect of his Eye.*

Answ. Abundant Testimony hath this Lord given of his condescending heart to sinners: Dost thou think thou art too low for such a Majesty? When he left his Fathers Kingdom, and came down from his Eternal Glory with the Father, he gave abundant proof of the humility of his heart: when he did espouse thy nature, (sinner) to himself; and took upon him the form of a Servant; he shown his humble heart, that he was far from contemning sinners: He was the true *Jacob*, who served a far harder bondage for thy Soul, than ever *Jacob* did for his *Rachel*; this shows his humility: His choosing such mean persons, such notorious sinners for his companions, in nearest Union and Communiwith himself; *Matthew* the Publican, *Paul* the Blasphemer: Poor Fishermen of no regard upon Earth: These did Christ personally choose for his nearest Converses; this shows his condescension: And 'tis not thy low state (sinner) can discourage Christ, if thy heart be really willing: His preaching the Gospel to the poor, and

calling the base things of this world, and things that are not, shows his lowly mind. And his humility hath been abundantly proved already: He will dwell with the Lowly, *Isa.* 57. 15.

2. Object. *But I have no portion for Christ: I am exceeding poor and beggarly; I have no Righteousness, no Grace, no good things dwell in me: I can bring nothing to glorify him; I have no ability at all to serve him; I cannot pray or do anything that is good, and will Christ accept of me?*

Ans. Christ's design in these Gospel tenders of himself to sinners, is not to get, but to give Riches: He wants no treasures for himself, but he rather wants objects to give them to: He wants no goods, but (like the Rich man in the Gospel) he wants room to bestow his goods: He is willing to impart his treasure to sinners, *2 Cor.* 8. 9. Of all persons in the world he is sure to hear the desires of the poor. The rich shall be sent empty away: but the poor that wait on him shall be heard, *Psa.* 69. 33. Art thou a poor Soul in thy own eyes? The Lord hath special regard for such: These are the persons he invites to him that have no money, no price, *Isa.* 55. 1. *The poor have the Gospel preached to them, Math.* 11. 5. Therefore sinners 'tis not thy poverty can break the match, nor hinder thy reception of Jesus Christ, if thy heart be willing.

3. Object. *But I am a deformed loveless Creature, I have no beauty at all in me; I am black with sin, full of all uncleanness, and abominations, polluted in my blood, wallowing in my Mire and Vomit, scarce such a nauseous Object as I in all the world. O what a filthy heart, O what an unclean Soul, O what vile affections have I! and will this holy one cast a glance of Love on such a Creature as I? I dare not think he will endure the sight of me; therefore I am afraid to look to him.*

Answ. Believing sinners, though black in their own eye, yet are comely in Christ's Eye, *Cant.* 1. 5. Faith puts an amiableness on the believing sinner in Christ's account: This is one of those eyes that ravishes his heart, *Cant.* 4. 9. He looks upon them as lovely that come to him, though unlovely in themselves: Affections spy no deformity in the beloved object. Christ's love is so great to fallen man, as that nothing appears unlovely in him, but an unwillingness to be hid: He sees no iniquity in *Jacob*, though there is a great deal. The halt, blind, lame, impotent are no amorous Objects; yet these Christ invites to his feast, *Luk.* 14. 21. Others are not worthy, says Christ, but bring these, they are company for me, if they will but come. Let not thy deformity, and the sense of thy unworthiness keep thee from Christ, because he hath beauty enough for himself, and thee. He hath comeliness enough to cover thy nakedness: 'tis but for some of his beams to reflect on thy Soul, and thou wilt be altogether glorious; thy perfection lies in his, and not thy own comeliness: Christ can soon fill thee with amiableness: see, in *Ezek.* 16. what a change Grace makes upon deformed sinners: The beauty of sinners is Christ's beauty put upon them, and Christ's Holiness imparted to them, and there's enough of it for thee. 3. Know, that Christ's blood is cleansing blood, it doth not only cover spots and deformities, but it takes away filthiness; if thou come to him, the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, *1 Joh.* 1. 7.

4. Object. *But I am a great sinner, none like me, therefore. I cannot think the Lord Jesus will pass them by; or have thoughts of favor for me.*

Ans. So was *David's*, and yet found pardon, *Psa.* 25. 11. for thy name sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquities for they are great. *Manassch's* sins were notorious, and yet upon his Repentance

found favor with God, 2 *Chro.* 33. 3, 4, 5, 6. He reared up Altars for *Baalim*, worshipped all the host of Heaven, and served them; he built Altars in the House of the Lord, and caused his Children to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom*. He also observed times, and used *I*-chantments, and Witchcrafts, and dealt with familiar Spirits, and with *izards*, and when God spake to him he would not hearken, *ver.* 10. O abominable sins! One would think here was a man ripe for Hell; yet upon his supplication, when he was in affliction, God heard him, and pardoned him, *ver.* 12, 13. *Paul* was a flagitious sinner, in his own eyes the greatest that ever was, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. A Blasphemer, a persecutor, injurious, but obtained mercy, *ver.* 13. Therefore 'tis not the greatness of thy sin can stand in the way of thy mercy, if thou come over to Christ with all thy heart.

5. Object. *But I have been an old sinner; I have been rooted in sin, and lived in sin all my days; I have been a continual provocation to the Lord, for many years; through my whole Life sin hath touched sin, and I cannot think Christ hath thoughts of Love for me.*

Answ. So did the Thief upon the Cross, he sin'd to the last hour of his Life, and yet obtained mercy, *Luke* 23. 40, 41, 42, 43. So did some of those that were called in at the Eleventh hour, yet embracing the call, obtained mercy, *Math.* 20. 9, 12. it was not the length of their sinning time excluded the Efficacie of Salvation-mercy, when they did come in at the call of it. I mention not this for a Pillow to secure sinners, but for a Cordial for desponding Souls: Now the Gospel calls thee, sinner; if thou come in this hour, and embrace the calls of mercy; 'tis not the length of thy sinning time, will make void the Grace of God.

6. Object. *But says the Soul: I have slighted many calls already: I have quenched many motions of the Spirit: I have despised the first call: and may I have hopes to go to Christ? Will he receive me?*

Answ. So did *Manasseh*, he did reject many calls; God did speak to him, but he would not hearken; and after his rejection of the first call, yet mercy found him: The *Jews* in the wilderness rejected many calls of God; yet the Lord said, while 'tis called today, harden not your hearts, *H•b.* 3. 7, 8. Though thou hast been guilty of despising many calls, this is matter for thy humbling, but not for thy despair.

7. Object. *But I am never the better for all the means and mercy I have enjoyed: though I had despised the first calls of mercy, yet if I had been the better for after tenders of grace, there were some hope: But I am still the same notwithstanding all the Sermons I hear, and precious overtures of Salvation; my heart is hard, and dead under all.*

Answ. So it was with the Impotent man a great while, he was diseased thirty and eight years. *Joh.* 5. 5. He lay at the Pool's side near the means of cure, but never the better, *ver.* 6. 7. And so continued till Christ's time came to cure him. So *Israel* were barren and unfruitful, till the Lord became a dew to them. *Hos.* 14. 5. Therefore this is no discouragement; if thou believe and come to Christ, God will be a dew to thee, and thou shalt quickly find a change.

8. Object. *But saith one: I am not only never the better for all the means of grace, but I am worse than I was before; when I was under first awakenings, my heart was more tender; but now my heart*

seems to be more brawny and hard; I find more unbelief than ever, more indisposition to go to Christ: I am worse than I was.

Answ. So was *Sarah* too, as to the receiving the promised mercy, more and more indisposed, she complains of the deadness of her womb; she was past age to be the Mother of Children, till the time of life came, then *Sarah's* growing indisposition becomes no impediment at all to the fulfilling of the promise. So was *Israel*, they began to say for their part, their hope was cut off, and God had forsaken them, when mercy was nearest to them: So the woman that had a bloody issue twelve years, and had spent all that she had on Physicians, yet was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, till Christ came and healed her, *Mark* 5. 25, 26. Persons are usually worst in their own eyes when mercy is nearest their doors.

Again, Thy not coming to Christ is the cause of thy decays and hardnings; 'tis thy unbelief that deadens thy heart, and withers thy Soul, Christ doth withdraw his influence from such, and refuseth to do any mighty works in them because of unbelief. O then Soul, come away to Christ, and this is the way to cure thee.

9. Object. But says the Soul: *Christ seems to take no notice of me, I call but he heareth me not, I come to Ordinances, but I cannot see him, nay he seems to be angry with me; everything goes against me, his word speaks bitter things to me; methinks there's never a threatening but belongs to me; I am the Hypocrite and unclean person, that God strikes at in every Sermon, and his rod lies heavy on me too, and in the way of his providence he writes bitter things against me.*

Answ. Soul, is this thy case, doth Christ take no notice of thee? It is because thou takest so little of him, when he unveils his beauty; thou dost not believe in him, when he makes a promise to thy Soul: When he sends words of Counsel, thou dost not obey him. He hath called, and thou hast not answered, and therefore when thou callest he doth not answer, *Zach.* 7. 13. Yet at such a time what follows; doth God make an end of such sinners? No, see *Chap.* 8. 2, 3. O Soul, if the Lord Jesus Christ seems to take no notice of thee, but to frown upon thee, it is to frown thee from thy unbelief; it is but to make thee sensible of thy slighting him: If thou wilt this day accept of the Lord Jesus Christ; his frowns will soon pass away, as a dark Cloud doth when the Sun shines; he will remember thy Iniquities no more.

10. Object. But may some Soul say: *I would fain come to Christ, but I cannot; I like the terms well, but O my unbelieving heart! O my impenitent hard heart! I cannot sense Salvation-kindness.*

Answ. O Soul! The afflicting sense of thy unbelief, is a hopeful sign of thy faith: If thou dost see thy unbelieving heart; so as to be burdened under it, and be weary of it, the Lord reckons it for the beginnings of faith, *Mark* 9. 24. This is the method of Salvation-Grace in begetting faith, to convince thee of its impotency to believe, *Joh.* 16. 9. Soul, is this thy weariness; that thou canst not come to Christ? Wouldst thou have a wider heart for him? Thou art the Soul he waits for that mournest over thy unbelief, *Mark* 9. 24.

But there's one thing more may be as a discouragement to some Souls.

11. Object. *O says the Soul, I fear the time is past, and that God will be gracious no more; I have had a day of grace, but that is gone: The Angel came troubling the Waters, but I would not step in: I have had*

the dawnings of mercy, but I resisted: I fear I have outstood my Market: That I have outstrived the Spirit so long, that he will strive no more: And this bows me down, that I am afraid to look up.

Answ. Sinner, if this be thy case, know that thy fears of losing the day of grace, is a sign it is not lost: The greatest symptom of departing grace is security, and false peace, 1 *Thes.* 5. 3. So it was with the people before the flood: *Noah* threatened judgments, but they dreamt of peace, *Math.* 24. 37. &c. Security usher'd in the departure of grace from them: But while the Spirit of grace strives with thy Soul, the day of grace is not past from thee. Doth God call upon thee now, and plead with thy heart? And dost thou find some movings, and turnings of thy Bowels in thee, crying out, O that there might be mercy for me; that this day of grace may not be past? If so, then sure the Spirit strives yet with thy Soul: Therefore, Soul, if now thou wilt close with Christ, none of these pleas can debar thy closing with him.

Well Sinners, consider the Lord Jesus Christ invites you to come to him, once more he demands your answer: what say you, will you be his or no? Do your hearts accept of him? Do you like his proposals? will you heartily consent to be his, upon all his terms? If so, I shall lay down some Counsels to direct you in your right coming to Christ.

First, Sinner, if thou will come to Christ, thou must come as a poor needy, empty, undone, Sinner, stripped of all beauty, as having nothing at all that may deserve his favor: *'Tis the poor have the Gospel Preached to them. Math.* 11. 5. It signifies such as are brought to great necessities, and extremities; So *Beza* renders it: *Such as are brought very low:* Therefore some derive it from a word that signifies, *falling down at the rich Men's feet:* As some beggars will. *Ferus* interprets it, the poor in Spirit, that acknowledge themselves mean, and are low in their own eyes. So *Calvin* takes it, for them that are oppressed with the sense of their own wants, such as feel their pinching necessities; that lie down overwhelmed with the apprehension of their emptiness: The Treasures of the Gospel are designed to such Persons that are poor and afflicted in their own Spirits. There's no greater obstacle in this Match between Christ and sinners, than a sense of self worthiness: This keeps many from seeing the beauty of Christ; their own Righteousness hangs in their eye; they are too heavy laden with their own thick clay, I mean the sense of their own worthiness, to be looking up to Jesus, and lifted up to him: Sinners may be too rich for Christ in their own opinion, but never too poor; hence the Lord Jesus Christ tells us, he came not to call the Righteous, but sinners to Repentance, *Math.* 9. 13. Not them that Judge themselves Righteous, but them that feel themselves sinners: The Rich he sends empty away, those that are Rich in their own thoughts, when the poor and hungry are filled with good things: Men choose empty vessels to put their liquors in; and low rooms to cellar their wines, so doth Jesus Christ choose empty Souls for his good things: He chooseth the Low plains for his walks, when the high towering Mountains are rejected: The high, and lofty One comes to dwell in the low and contrite Spirit, *Isa.* 57. 15. Sinner, thou must strip thyself of thy own Ornaments, if thou intend to put on Jesus Christ: Thou must throw down thy Crown at his feet; if thou thinkest to wear his Crown on thy head: O Soul! thou must come as a poor wretch to Christ; with thy empty sack, as *Jacob's* Sons did to *Egypt* to buy corn, and then thou shalt have Treasure too: Thou must see thyself an undone sinner; thou must come (with *Lazarus*) and throw thyself

down at this Rich Kings Door; if ever thou wilt be fed with his Crumbs; nay rather feasted with his Dainties.

Secondly, Thou must come to Christ as to a full and sufficient treasure, able to save and satisfy thee; to pay off thy debts, and enrich thy Soul forever, *Heb. 7. 25.* Able to supply all thy wants and fill all thy emptiness, *Phil. 4. 19.* We have shewn already that his treasures are bottomless, boundless, unfathomable, unexhaustible, never to be wasted or spent: O Soul come to Christ as such a one: Measure not Christ's gold by thy bushel; nor his plenty by thy poverty: think not thy debts too great for Christ to pay, because thou knowest not where to get money of thy own: Think not thy straits too many for him to relieve: He hath enough for thy Soul to live upon both here and to all Eternity; O Sinner believe this, and come to him as such a one; suppose not the Fountain is empty, because thy Cisterns are dry: *His Righteousness is like the great Mountains, Psa. 36. 6.* It is in the Hebrew, *The Mountains of God:* And his grace is without measure, *Joh. 3. 34.* Therefore thou must look to him as having a sufficient fullness for thy Soul.

Thirdly, Thou must look to Christ with expectation, as the poor Cripple did to *Peter and John, Acts. 3. 5.* Now shall a poor Creature expect to receive some needful suitable good from a fellow Creature; and will not thou expect some mercy from the Lord Jesus Christ, thy Creator, and Redeemer? O sinner come with expectations to Christ; believe that he is as willing as able to enrich all that come to him: He hath past his word for it. *He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. Joh. 6. 37.* He that believeth on him shall not perish, *Joh. 3. 16.* The weary Soul that comes yea creeps to him, shall have rest, *Math. 11. 28.* The thirsty Soul shall be satisfied, *Joh. 7. 37.* He goes up and down in the Ministry of the Gospel, seeking to save that which is lost, *Luke 19. 10.* And he is angry with them that will not come to him, *Joh. 5. 40.* O sinner, do not take up hard thoughts of Christ: Such suspicious thoughts of Christ is some of the Devils seed that he doth sow in broken ground. When Christ comes to break sinners hearts and make them sensible of their undoneness, then the Devil casts in these tares, and raises up ill thoughts of Christ; It was this did so enervate the diligence of the unprofitable Servant; some undue thoughts he took up of his Lord's bounty: *I knew (says he) thou wert an hard, and austere Man:* Hence he puts up his Talent in a Napkin, and his hand in his bosom, *Math. 25. 24, 25.* Jealousies of Christ's good-will to sinners are very destructive to Salvation-work: The Devil hath hindered many a Soul from coming to Christ, by casting this block in his way. O then come with expectations; at least come to Christ, with as great hopes as the *Lepers* came to the Tents of the *Assyrians* who were Enemies; come to Christ the friend of Sinners. *2 Kings 7. 4.* They adventured with some hopes; we may live, and we can but die; they may kill us, and they may save us alive: But thy case is not so, if thou come and adventure on Christ, thou mayest be sure, he will not kill thee: O look to Jesus then with some hopes; say, who can tell but my Soul may live.

Fourthly, Close first with Jesus Christ himself, and afterwards with his Treasure: I confess usually something from Christ draws the Sinner's first respects to him: The savor of his ointments, some love-tokens, kindnesses, apprehension of necessity; sense of undoneness may conduce to get the first glances of Sinners towards Christ; But though these allure to

Christ, yet the first thing the Espoused Soul must eye in his Match with Christ, is Christ himself; though these things draw the Soul, yet they do not center the Affections: Christ's kindnesses are designed as motives to beget an esteem of himself in sinners hearts: The knowledge of what Jesus Christ hath for sinners, an intimation of pardon, peace and Salvation for all that come to him, may be the Prodromus or fore-runner of Christ's Person to sinners view; but when they come to see him, they must first pitch upon himself; and till they come to this they cannot have a due and orderly close with Christ: In all right and regular Matches, the Person must be first regarded, then the Portion: A Soul is not fit to match with Christ, till he comes to see infinitely more worth in him, then in all his gifts, and favors: It was the excellency of Christ himself that drew *Paul's* highest regards to him, with respect to relation; *Phil. 3. 8. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: Paul sets that fore-most; And then to be made conformable to his Death, and Resurrection. The Spouse was more taken with Christ's Person then with his Gifts: Cant. 1. 2, 3. First himself was lovely, then his fruits. Cant. 2. 3. David counts nothing in Heaven, or Earth like to God in Christ. Psa. 73. 25. 'Tis sordid love, and too unworthy of a conjugal State, that values the Portion more then the Person; that Soul is too unworthy of Christ, who values anything more then him: Math. 10. 37 It must be Christ himself, must sit in the upermost seat in thy Soul. 'Tis a saying of Calvin, Tis an unworthy thing not to prefer one Christ above all: Those Matches never prove comfortable where the Estate is eyed more then the Person, hence conjugal love is broken, when the estate is gone; but where true conjugal love is, it is settled upon the Person: Love that is set upon some Gifts of Christ, more then Christ himself, when these are suspended, the others will decay; but love placed upon his Person will last: Hence 'tis many do so easily leave Christ, when it comes to parting with other things, because their love was set more upon these things then Christ himself: O Soul be sure 'tis Christ himself thou dost choose, and not another; O be not guilty of that mistake as *Jacob* was, to take *Leah* instead of *Rachel*: Be sure it be not a false *Idea* of Christ in thy thoughts, but that it be a real Christ thou takest; and then thou wilt never look for another: Be sure give Christ the preeminence: The Father hath given him the preeminence, and wilt not thou? *Phil. 2. 9. Col. 1. 18. Col. 2. 9. If Christ must take the best place in Heaven, he hath reason to take the first place in thy heart.**

Fifthly, If thou wouldst come to Christ aright, then bring thy all with thee to him; and make a free and full surrender of thyself, and thy all to him: When God would have *Israel* out of *Egypt*, they must not leave a hoof behind, *Exod. 10. 26. 2 Cor. 8. 5. They first gave their own selves to the Lord*: Be sure make over thyself first to Christ, and then all thy interests, and Capacities: Come and subscribe to Christ, *Isa. 44. 5. One shall say I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord. Calvin* hath a saying upon this: *A Person (says he) can never have true faith in Christ, till he comes to make this testification and confession of him*: In the espousing betwixt Christ and the Soul, there is a mutual resignation of each to other with all they have. Christ gives his Person and Purchase to Believers, and the sincere Soul gives back himself and all to Christ: To detain the least part from Christ is abominable fraud, and lying against the Holy Ghost, *Acts 5. 3. If thou accountest any one thing too good for Christ; He accounts all his too good for thee.*

Lastly, Be sure your acceptance of Christ be considerate and sincere, sit down first and count the cost, *Luk. 14. 28.* Thou must be no more thy own; thou must take up thy Yoke and his Yoke: Thy cross and his Cross: Thou must deny thyself and follow him: Weighty things are not to be undertaken rashly, *Diu deliberandum* was an ancient Motto. Hasty matches seldom prove well: O Soul, be not rash in thy taking Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ Espouseth his in Judgment as well as in Faithfulness, *Hos. 2. 19, 20.* in considerate bargains are oftentimes broken or repented of, You will never espouse Christ in Faithfulness, till you espouse him in Judgment: Weigh all things, consider Marriage Articles, what they are, and whether you are willing to perform them, *Math. 16. 24.* O Soul try, can thy heart consent to this? O the falseness of Souls pretended match to Christ hath undone many! You must take whole Christ with the whole heart, or else you will never match aright with Christ, You must choose him never to choose again. You must make him your only choice, and let all your other choosings be by him: *Thou shalt choose our inheritance for us, Psa. 47. 4.* Say then, I will only choose him; I will choose his Person, his Laws, his Honor and Glory; but Christ shall choose all for me; Let Christ choose my place, and condition, high or low: Let Christ dispose of me, where, and how he will in the World, I will dispose of Christ in my heart.

So much of this Fourth Inference. That Jesus Christ is worth a looking after.

CHAP. XXVII.

Showing the folly of such as pursue earthly things, with neglect of Christ, considering the Nature of those things; the Terms on which they are to be enjoyed; The casualty that attends them: The guilt such contract.

IF there be such great and glorious treasures of Christ tendered to sinners in the Gospel: Then see the folly of those that pursue earthly treasures with a neglect of Christ: For Souls to turn their backs on Christ, and court the World, and perishing things: O folly indeed! I shall give four Reasons to convince such persons of folly.

- The 1. *Taken from the things themselves they pursue with neglect of Christ.*
- 2. *The different terms on which Christ and these are to be enjoyed.*
- 3. *The casualty that attends Souls attempts after Earthly things.*
- 4. *The guilt that such contract, who pursue Earthly treasures more than Christ.*

First, 'Tis folly, yea madness to pursue Earthly things and neglect Christ because the things themselves they choose cannot be compared with Christ; which will appear in several particulars.

First, They are uncertain Riches; There's no dependence upon them, *1 Tim. 6. 17.* *Nor trust in uncertain Riches,* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 . Riches that are not declared, and manifested, to be sure and certain, for a dependence; They are not a sure bottom for Souls to build so much hope and delight upon; when it comes to a pinch indeed; then it appears they are vain, and will not profit in the day of wrath. Like a broken Staff, when you lean upon it, then it breaks:

So the Riches of this world, when Souls put some stress upon them, then they fail: They are uncertain; sometimes you enjoy them, and anon they are removed, *Pro. 23. 5. Wilt thou set thine Eyes upon that which is not, for riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven.* They come slowlie, but get off swiftlie; when they come to men, they have leaden feet, and when they leave them, Eagles Wings: To day they flourish like the grass, and tomorrow burn like an Oven: A man hath a beautiful house today, and tomorrow an heap of Ashes▪ O most uncertain Riches! All the world runs in changes; *To day* (says one) *they ar• for the Bosom, and tomorrow for the Beesom:* To day men take them into their bosoms, tomorrow vengeance sweeps them away.

Secondly, They are empty things, they cannot satisfy the Soul that feeds upon them: The world is not filling meat to an immortal Soul; let a person feed never so heartily, yet he is hungry: The whole world •nnot fill one heart; *Alexander* wept, that there were no more worlds to conquer: Nature puts bounds to the Sea; and all Earthly beings have their end, *Psa. 119. 96.* but sin hath made carnal desires boundless: It is with earthly minded men, as *Solomon* says it is with the Grave, and barren womb, and the fire that say it is not enough, *Pro. 30. 15, 16. Wherefore* (says the Prophet) *do you spend your money for that which is not Bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not, Isa. 55. 2.* One calls the whole *Turkish Empire* but a bone that is thrown to dogs: very dry meat; so are all the things of this world: Riches are like meat in a dream: An hungry man thinks he feeds, when he dreams but when he awakes he is empty. Riches feed nothing but the Eye; hence Covetousness is called the lusts of the Eye, *1 Joh. 2. 16.* O'tis a vanity indeed to look after that which you can put in to your Eye! it will not feed your affections, it will not satiate the Soul, it will not quiet the Conscienc: O that *men* should adventure their all for that which will not satisfy!

Thirdly, They are fading things in their Nature: not only uncertain, and liable to remove in the event, but they are dying in their Nature; Corruptible riches: Your Houses, Lands, whatever your greedy Eye covets, are but rotten things: Your Garments are liable to the Moth, and your Gold and Silver Subject to Rust, *J am. 5. 2, 3.* Ah poor treasure indeed! Which rust and Moth consume, rest that strengthens other Creatures eats out these; Houses, Lands, Gold and Jewels, are subject to wearing away, *Tempus teret omnia:* Time will wear them out: Hence Christ advises his Disciples to provide bags which wax not old, a treasure in Heaven, which faileth not, *Luk 12. 33.* Implying that all the treasures of this world are not so: If men lay them up in bags, the bags will wax old, and time will rot them; Thieves can approach to these treasures, and Moth, and Rust can eat them out: ('Tis a pretty simile one hath of it, who compares the Riches of the world to hailstones, that when they fall upon a till'd House, make a rattling noise for the present, but by and by sl•de down, and melt away to nothing.

Fourthly, The treasures of this world are ensiaving treasures; they bring their owners into bondage: as one says; *Ducendo vincimur, vincendo ducimur:* *By their cunning allurements they overcome us, and overcoming us, they lead us Captive:* They first allure the heart, and then enthrall the heart: They bring men into the worst bondage of any, for they bring them into a willing bondage Earthly men are not only led Captive by the world at Satan's will, but are enslaved by their own will; they consent to be bound: Earthly men do with *Esau*, swap a

bargain for the things of the world; they consent to let go their birth right for a mess of pottage; they give up their birth right to their Inferiors, and consent to become a slave to their own Servants: That word of the Wiseman is never more true, *Eccl. 10. 7. then when men are led Captive by the love of this world: I have seen Servants upon Horses, and Princes walking as Servants upon the Earth.* Never did *Israel* do greater drudgery in *Egypt*, then Carnal, Earthly men do to the world: It makes them rise early, sit up late, and eat the bread of sorrows, and all for a few shadows, *Ps. 127. 2. Earthly men, (says one) are like Beasts that are set to draw in the Devils Teams, who draw sin with Cart-ropes, and Iniquity with Cords of Vanity: Isa. 5. 1. Peccata facile veniunt, sed fortiter ligant.*

Fifthly, The riches of this world are ensnaring too. *1 Tim. 6. 9. They that will be rich fall into Temptations and Snares:* The word 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 signifies such snares as persons use to take Birds and Beasts with, and 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 to fasten down to the ground as nets are that take beasts; So Earthlyminded men the Devil stakes them down to the ground: They are held fast in the cords of their own iniquity, *Pro. 5. 22.* What a snare was *Balak's* Gold to *Balaam's* Covetous heart to draw him against his light, convictions and a Divine charge. The Bag proved a fatal charm to covetous *Judas*, it lead him to the Halter: The things of the world proved a sad snare to *Demas*, and led him off from all his profession: Earthly things are like twigs that are in Bird-lime, that hold fast those silly Souls that come at them, that they have no mind nor power •o leave them: O they are sad snares indeed.

Sixthly, Earthly riches are defiling too: The Apostle calls riches filthy lucre, *1 Pet. 5. 2. Not for filthy lucre:* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 Obscure gain as the word implies, filthy, unbecoming, undecent: O 'tis dishonest gain indeed; which ends in the loss of the Soul! Such men are the greatest Couzeners in the world, that cheat themselves, and loose their Souls for sublunary treasures: The Riches of this world defile the Consciences of those that love them; the Apostle calls them the pollutions of the world, *2 Pet. 2. 20.* 'Tis considerable that the Psalmist doth use the word, *Psa. 52. 7.* to fignifie both riches and unrighteousness: *Lo this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his Riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness:* noting that riches prove occasions of much evil, hurt, and filthiness to them that have them.

Seventhly, They are accountable Riches, Talents that must be reckoned for, *Math. 25. 19. After a long time, the Lord of that Servant cometh and reckoneth with him.* All Earthly interests are trusts committed to the fidelity of those that have them, and they must give an account for them, *Luke 16. 2. Give an account of thy Stewardship for thou must be no longer Steward* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) All thy undue pursuits of the World; thy inordinate love to it, thy unjust ingrossings of it to thyself, thy penurious withholding it, from those distributions God hath required must shortly be reckoned for. 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 *ab* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 an house & 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , those things which Families use.

Eighthly, They are afflicting riches: They carry more trouble then comfort with them, *1 Tim. 6. 10. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while Some coveted after—pierce themselves through with many sorrows:* They run themselves through. So *Beza:* They stab themselves all

over from Head to Foot with darts; So the word imports. O how great are those anxieties, and troubles the riches of this world breed for those that have them! they be troublesome things; They cause a great deal of pains to get them: a great deal of care to keep them; a great deal of fear to loose them; And a great deal of trouble when they are gone: Christ compares the love of the world to Thorns, *Mat. 13. 7.* Compar'd with *ver. 22.* Because they prick and scratch the Consciences, as well as choke the word: O the many wounds they will see in them one day that love the world inordinately: Whence *Gregory* hath this upon it: *Let rich men take heed how they handle Thrns, lest they prick them.*

Nint•lie, They are damnifying riches, and bring a great deal of loss with them: A man can hardly come by much of the world, without a sensible detriment: They occasion the loss of a great deal of time that should be used about their precious Souls: The loss of precious peace; O what trouble, what carking, fretting, rending cares have men about these Riches! They loose their natural peace many times, and lose their Soul quietness: The cares of this world breed a great deal of guilt: Then there's a loss of purity too; they sully thy Soul, dirt thy Conscience: bespatter thy Affections: Many a hopeful Soul is corrupted by them to fall from their seeming virtue and moral excellencies; as the young man in the Gospel, *Judas Annanias*, and *Demas*. Earthlimindedness like the F•ie in a Box of Ointment spoil men's natural and moral Virtues: They occasion the loss of many privileges; the love of the world robs Souls of great advantages, such cannot wait on God many times in secret duties, family duties, public duties; they have a Farm, and Oxen, and Merchandise to look after, and therefore cannot come. Nay, they that will be rich deprive themselves of the profit of those privileges they do enjoy: The Love of the world takes off the good of the word, whiles it is preached to them, *Math. 13. 22.* The things of the world damp men's affections to Christ, and heavenly things; they stifle men's Consciences: It duls and blunts the edge of the Sword of the Gospel, and makes it rebound back again, when it falls upon the rocky heart, hardened with the love of the World: O they are damnifiing things: And at last they will set you hard, but they will lose your Souls, and then you have made a cursed bargain indeed, when you have lost your Souls.

Lastly, They are dangerous and too often damning things; they are dangerous for they keep the Soul from Christ: As the young man in the Gospel, he came to the very last step, and yet there he stayed, he could not part withal for Christ that broke the bargain *Mat. 19. 22.* *He went away sorrowful for he had great possessions:* The love of the World stood in the way of his receiving Christ; Thorns are the shelter for Serpents and riches for many lusts, that drown men in perdition and destruction. *1. Tim. 6. 9.* The word in the original signifies a plunging over head and ears in ruin, sunk to the bottom, as one that hath a great weight upon him: One compares rich men to a Pine Tree of which it is said, that if the bark be plucked off it will last long, but while that abides it rots: riches are as a deep pit, into which men easily get, but hardly get out, and therefore Christ says. it is easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle then for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. *Math. 19. 24.*

The things of the World bar up the way to Heaven, and open the way to Hell, and hasten the Soul with a vengeance to destruction: They are like the Devils sleep-drench, that casts Souls into a deep trance, and 'till they come to the end of their lives they never awake, and then

they awake with a vengeance: That's the first. Consider what the things of the world are, and they are fools indeed that pursue them with the neglect of Christ.

Secondly, Consider the different terms on which they are to be had, and it will appear to be folly for men to desert Heavenly things, and choose Earthly: If you would have the World, it will cost you a great deal of sorrow, trouble, and pains, you must tug hard; *Adam* being turned out of Paradise must work in the sweat of his brows for his bread. *Gen. 3. 10.* But Heavenly Treasures is to be received by believing; They come by gift. It is but to come and take it and receive it. *Isa. 55. 1, 2.*

Thirdly Consider the casualty that attends the pursuit of these Earthly things. A great deal of casualty whether you may have them or no; and a great deal of hazard that attends them: The Merchant engages in dangerous voyages, and after all, is not sure to bring home any treasure. *Eccles. 5. 14. These Riches perish by evil travel:* Suppose they are obtained, they sometimes are wasted as soon as won; and he that thinks he hath enough for many years, many times leaves, nothing behind him: Many toil, and tug, eat out their bowels, and spend their days for that which they cannot obtain; how many labor to be rich, and yet die Poor: *Riches make themselves wings and fly away. Pro. 23. 5*

Fourthly, Such as pursue Earthly things with the neglect of Christ, contract much guilt upon their own Souls; they violate the whole Law of God; for the whole Law contains supreme love to God: *Love* (says the Apostle) *is the fulfilling of the Law. Rom. 13. 10. And upon this Commandment* (says Christ) *hangs all the Law, and the Prophets: Math. 22. 40* Upon supreme love to God, and equal love to our neighbor, as to ourselves: Therefore such as pursue Earthly things, and love the World more than God, they break the whole Law of God. *1 Joh. 2. 5.* Yea they violate and break the commands of grace also: It makes men false to all their engagements, and promises; and to all their civil trusts: O what horrid wickedness will not the love of this World put men upon! therefore such contract foul guilt upon their Souls: And this shows their folly.

So much for the use of Information.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Containing an use of reprehension to several sorts of Persons, with consolation to all sound Believers.

IF there be such vast and glorious Treasures in the Lord Jesus Christ, opened and tendered in the Gospel. Then this reprooves such as have or profess to have an interest in these vast and boundless Treasures, and yet are so little affected with them, and have a low estimation of them; O sad indeed! That the choicest substance that ever was; boundless treasure, should be esteemed no more than perishing trash. 'Tis a lamentable thing indeed to see how most Professors value perishing treasures so much, and Jesus Christ so little: Did persons prize those Heavenly Treasures, they would have a less esteem of Earthly; they would be more restless till they saw their Interest in them: Pursue more after them; be at more pains and

cost to secure them: Be more in the commendation of them, and highly esteem those that have them.

Secondly, It reproves those that have or seem to have a title to this glorious Treasure, and yet are not contented with it: O Souls, will a few handfuls of dust please you, and will not a Kingdom, Crown, and Glory? Will a little Cottage in the world take up your delight, and will not a Mansion and dwelling-place in Heaven satisfy you? O Believer, hath God made over himself, Father, Son, and Spirit to be thine eternal Treasure, and is not he rich enough to fill all thy heart, and all thy desires? sit down and consider how groundless are all thy mournings, how unreasonable are all thy frettings and discontent, who canst say of Heaven, *This is mine*; and of God, and Christ, *He is mine*.

Thirdly, It reproves those that have or seem to have a Title to those treasures, and yet look after others treasures, and eagerly pursue a portion in this World. O inexcusable! Like *Dinah* they wander after the things of this World, as she did after the people of the Land, till they deflower their Souls: O Christians, have you chosen God, and will you back to the World again? Hath God delivered you from this present World, and will you yield up yourselves to it again! Hath grace opened your Prison Doors, and will you enter in again? Have you tasted God to be gracious, and yet long after the worldlings bottle, to drink of these Waters of *Marah*? O unreasonable Souls: How unsuitable is this to your state and condition! if you are Saints indeed you are not of this World, *Joh. 15. 19*. Are you the Citizens of Heaven, *Eph. 2. 19*. And would Saints and Angels so dig after the World if they come down from Heaven? 'Tis contrary to your promises and engagements. You go against your convictions, and experiences, and by your inordinate love to, and pursuit of the World you are Enemies to God your own and others Souls.

Fourthly, This reproves those of the People of God, who have an interest in these vast Treasures of Christ, and yet are miserably poor in their own Souls: Many complain Times be hard, Estates wast, Trades decay, but the greatest Poverty lies in Spirituals: Faith, Love, Humility, self denial, Mortifiedness to the World, persons are destitute of these things chiefly; little grace laid out, little grace laid up: Few workings of Spirit in duty, and few works of grace in Men's lives; this argues wonderful Poverty in men's Souls: 'Tis not Poverty in Spirit, but poverty in Spirituals, Professors are so guilty of this day; few acts of Piety towards God, few works of charity towards Men: How lean, and ilfavoured are most under the Gospel: Many are learning, and never come to the knowledge of the truth; a strange veil lies yet upon the minds of many: Little right-kind of knowledge, few know the meaning of the Spirit, few are led into the mysteries of the Gospel: Others profess themselves wise, and to know God, but by works deny him, and their Poverty lies here, They are full of notions, but empty of holiness, Earthly and vain in their Spirit: Most men's Religion this day lies in the head; little-heart-godliness, little life-holiness: Little love to God, and Saints: Little fruits brought forth for God, this shows the Poverty of the times we live in: Again, the difficultness of maintaining spiritual life; hard to get to a life of faith, and love, hard to keep up hope, this comes from Soul Poverty: Hard for Persons to live from one Ordinance to another: Spiritual life decays, wastes, languishes; 'tis with too many Professors as it is with ancient weak

Persons, that are grown so cold, Nature so decay'd, that they can hardly keep themselves warm, longer then by the fire: So tis with many Christians, no longer then under a warming Sermon, but cold presently; nay 'tis not ordinary Sermons will heat them: The richest feedings, the choicest Cordials, scarce keep up faith, love, and delight in God one moment, and are not these poor men? Corruptions grow, a light, vain, Eearthly, frothy Spirit abounds; but meekness, savoriness, humility, gravity, liveliness decays: Little strength for duty, hard to hear, pray, or to manage one duty aright; little Spirit and Truth in most duties, and services: Unable to conflict with temptations, corruptions, oppositions: Hard to live up to light, convictions, resolutions: How do Souls make shipwreck of faith, and conscience! How easily are they overcome by their hearts lust, pride, passion, Earthyness presently carries them aside. Unable to bear the least sufferings: The very shaking of the rod will drive some from duty: Persons cannot yet digest difficulties, and enduring for the Gospels sake: How soon are many worn out by the afflictions, and persecutions of this day: This deserves sharp reproof.

Lastly, It reproves those who partake of those riches of Christ, and yet are reserved to others: O how unlike are these to Christ! He opens his Treasures to you, but you shut yours from others; he hands out his bounty to you, but you shut your eyes from others: His streams make glad the City of God; your narrow heartedness makes sad the Sons of men: His bowels are enlarged, yours sttained; Milk and Honey are under his tongue, emptiness and vanity under yours; his steps drop fatness, your hands cause leanness: O Christians! see your unsuitableness to Christ, and be ashamed of your straitened bowels, and shut hands, towards your poor Brethren, whether as to outward or spiritual supplies! How few are the better for you in soul or body, whose lips bless God for your bounty? *Deut. 14. 13.* A close-handed Professor is a Paradox in nature, and differs from God and the whole Creation: The Lord is good and doth good: Jesus Christ ascended on high, and gives gifts to men, *Eph. 4. 8.* He is always doing good. The Sun diffuseth freely of his light, and heat: The clouds drop fatness: The Earth brings forth her increase; the Trees yield their fruit, and when fit for the use of man, lets them fall into their bosoms; the air communicates its refreshing; the fire its heat, the Sea its store, only man is selfish and with the unprofitable Servant hides his talent in a Napkin: Christians be humbled for your non-conformity to Christ, and the little use you have made of your Talents, and graces for the good of those you live with.

Note That this use of Reprehension was more fully and largely composed by the Author. but the substance of it is contained in that excellent Treatise of the Author, called The Heavenly Trade; to which the Reader is referred.

Third Use of Consolation.

If there be such unsearchable riches in C•rist for his people: Then here's wonderful Comfort to those that are in Christ; such have cause to rejoice and be exceeding glad: For,

First, In your interest in Christ lies your right to all those great and glorious treasures of Christ: He that hath Christ, all that is Christ's is his: *All things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's, 1 Cor. 3. 21.* Such are Joynt-Heirs with Christ put down in the same

everlasting Covenant: adopted to the same inheritance, *Rom. 8. 27.* They have a Title to all that Christ hath as Mediator, and that by donation and purchase: A title that cannot be forfeited nor wasted: A Title to the whole inheritance of God. Ah Believer if Christ be thine then 'tis no presumption to lay claim to anything that is his: All that have been treated of him as God-Man Mediator, his glorious endowments, his personal dispositions, and excellent perfections are all thine. *1 Cor. 1. 30.* Is not this comfort indeed to believers, that have such a Beloved in Heaven, that is altogether lovely? 'Tis wonderful reviving when a Person can see some excellency he is related to beyond what is in himself: What comfort will a Mother take in a beautiful Child, though herself be deformed? What delight will the faithful Wife take in the excellencies of her Husband, and glory in them as her own: Such pleasure doth the Spouse take in the beauty of Christ. *Cant. 5. 10.* And reckons them as her comeliness though she was black. *Cant. 1. 5. I am black but comely:* What consolation is this to a child of God to be intitled to such a glorious Jesus? Though thou art poor yet thy beloved is rich: Though thou art unlovely he is fair, though thou art obscure and vile, yet he is honorable; and his riches, beauty, and honor are thine; and thy reputation with God, Saints, and Angels shall be in him, and as he is. *Cant. 6. 10. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun.* The Lord Jesus hath a high account of the Spouses beauty; she is bright, fair, clear, but it is as the Morning, or Moon, who borrow their beauty from the Sun: Comfort thy Heart, O drooping Believer, though thou canst see no worth in thyself, yet thou hast enough in Christ for thee. Again, what wonderful Comfort may a Child of God gather from a seen Title to all the purchase of Christ, his Righteousness, Graces, Privileges, sure Covenant, and Salvation, when he can upon warrantable grounds lay claim to all this? but so the Believer may, *1 Cor. 1. 30.*

Secondly, The time is drawing near when they shall have a full possession of all those treasures of Christ, *Rev. 21. 7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things:* All those great and glorious things promised shall be his possession, God shall be all in all to him, *1 Cor. 15. 28.* Every tittle of his word shall be fulfilled, though Heaven and Earth pass away, *Math. 5. 18.* Here Believers are rich Heirs under age, which differ nothing from a Servant, *Gal. 4. 1.* but the day hastens when their great Estate will fall into their hands, and they shall live upon it to all Eternity; the expectation of which is cause of comfort; when veils shall be taken away, and thy soul ever with the Lord; when thy filthy Garments shall be taken off, and thy beautiful raiment forever worn; when thou shalt live no more at small allowances of Grace, but receive it without measure; thy Table spread, thy Cup overflow; thy feeding shall be no more on sent portions from thy Fathers Table, but shalt sit down in his presence, and feast upon his fullness to all Eternity: Then shall all promises be turned into performances; all hopes shall end in fruition, and all desires center in delights, then shall parts be turned into perfections, darkness into delight, changes into immutabilities, fears into joys; wants into fullness; absence into presence: O blessed Eternity! When the Lord shall bring forth all his Treasures, open his Ward-robe, and pay off every saved Soul with an infinite fullness as much as he can receive, or desire to have, treasures of love in God the Father, Son, and Spirit; rivers of joy in the presence of God; and fullness of grace in conformity to God. Things

which eye cannot see, nor ear hear, nor the heart of man conceive. 1 Cor. 2. 9. And is not a certainty of these future treasures ground enough for present comfort.

Thirdly, from an interest in this rich Jesus, here's comfort to Saints under all their present wants whether outward or inward: In that.

First, There's enough in Christ to supply them: *In him dwells the fullness of the God-head, Col. 2. 9.* Thy wants Believer are but finite, be they never so great; but Christ's fullness is infinite: Thy necessities are the needs of a Creature, his ability is the power of a Creator: The Lord Jesus Christ can more easily supply thy need, then a whole Ocean can fill one pitcher; for betwixt the Creatures there is some proportion, but betwixt God and the Creature none at all.

Secondly, As there is enough in Christ to fill all thy wants; so all the fullness that is in Christ is thy own, Believer, laid up in Christ for thee, made over to thee, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *Deus mens & omnia mea.* And therefore mayest boldly expect supplies according to the measure of Christ, 1 Cor. 12. 11. *Dividing to every man severally as he will.* Thou mayest as boldly go to the treasury of Christ, as a man doth to his Purse for money, or to his Cupboard for Bread, and as a Child doth to his Father for necessary supplies, *Math. 6. 32.*

Lastly, The Lord Jesus Christ stands engaged to see the wants of his people supplied, *Ps. 34. 20. They that fear the Lord shall want no goodthing, Phil. 4. 19. So that thou mayst boldly say the Lord is my helper, Heb. 13. 6.* Dost thou want Food, Rayment, Health, &c. for thy Body, or dost thou want Grace, Wisdom, Faith, Love, Humility, Patience, Courage, Self-denial, Power over Corruptions, Succor under thy temptations, victory over thy lust; thou mayst go to Christ with expectations of all that God sees best for thee: seeing there are such treasures of all Grace placed and entrusted in Christ for thee.

Fourthly, Comfort under all your losses for Christ; surely if Christ be yours, and such vast treasures are in him, he will not see you losers for his sake; he can and will save you harmless; nay, requite your expensive love for him: all that strength of affection, liberty, time, talents (Christians) you lay out for him, shall be given in again: Jesus Christ is that good Samaritan, who hath past his word to repay again whatever is laid out for him, or upon his, at his bidding, *Luke 10. 35.* If a tender hearted Paul would take the offenses of an Onesimus on his account, *Philemon ver. 18.* Much more will Christ take the expenses for him on his account and repay it a hundred fold in this life, with Glory in that which is to come, *Math. 19. 29.*

Lastly, Comfort under all your reproaches for Christ: 'Tis the lot of gracious Souls many times to be accounted vile, and the offscouring of all things by the men of this world, 1 Cor. 4. 13. so *ver. 10. We are Fools for Christ's sake, and despised:* 'Tis part of the Cross of Christ to be reproach'd for his sake, 1 Pet. 4. 14. But here's Comfort in such a case in the consideration of those treasures of Christ: Christians, your relation to such a Jesus who is the Heir of glory will wipe off all your disgrace: Think on that account you have with God, and the glory you shall shortly have in your own Country, and that will balance all troubles on the account of disgrace for Christ.

CHAP. XXIX.

Containing an use of Examination; Characters of such as have an interest in Christ, and in all those glorious treasures.

Christians; you that have hopes of an Interest in these treasures of Christ: clear up your title: Be sure your claim be good: Rest not till you can have your evidences of Christ past dispute, to make the matter plain and certain to you; that you are Christ's, and Christ is yours: Adventure not at all your hopes of such great and glorious things upon uncertainties: if you miss and fail in your propriety to this Estate, you are undone forever: There's no repairing the loss of Christ when you come to die: All your after-wit cannot mend this bad bargain when time is past: If you build upon the sand, till the building time be over, you will have an Eternity to repent your folly: there's no room for another adventure when the door of Heaven is shut: If you have too carelessly, and groundlessly laid your hopes of Christ, and Glory, and and so are secure till the time be past, you can no more make trial of a better building: O how great will the fall of mistaken hopes be at last; when the Hypocrite shall say too late, woe is me, I am deceived! all my hopes for Heaven have Proved a Lye; I did suppose my title was good, and others thought so too: I could tell of Experiences, and dreamt of closing with Christ; I have had my Convictions, Desires, Tastes, Affections, Parts, Privileges, and high hopes of Glory: But alas, now I see my building is upon the sand; woe to me, all must down again! I have run in vain, and now I must sit down in sorrow to all eternity. O lamentable! when time is gone to come to such a pass: And surely this will be thy case whoever thou art that hast not sure grounds of thy interest in Christ: Therefore, Christians, take not up upon probable hopes, but put it out of doubt that Christ is yours, and this state is yours.

Quest. But, says the Soul, I confess it will be sad and doleful to hear of these excellent treasures, and miss of all at last: But how might I do to be satisfied in this matter, to know that Christ is mine, and his Riches mine?

For the resolution of this Case I shall speak to four things.

- 1. How and in what manner a title to Christ and those glorious treasures are to be obtained.
- 2. Who they are that do obtain them.
- 3. What is requisite towards the obtaining of them.
- 4. What are the certain and specifical fruits and effects of such an obtaining.

1. *How or in what manner may the soul come to have a Right to Christ?*

Answ. There are three usual ways by which persons obtain a Title to a thing: 1. By Birth 2. By Purchase, 3. By Gift.

First, By Birth: On this a natural Relation is founded: A Child comes to have a right to his Fathers Inheritance by Birth. This way the Blessing and Birth-right fell to the First-born: So

Esau had his Title to the Birth-right and Blessing could he have kept it, *Gen. 27. 32.* So *Manasseh* had a right to the Blessing, because he was the First-born, *Gen. 48. 18.*

Secondly, Another way of obtaining a Title to a thing is by Purchase: So *Jeremiah* bought a Field, *Jer. 32. 25,* Thus men get a Title to Estates by Purchase, when they part with a considerable value for them.

Thirdly, Another way of Right to a thing is by Gift and Adoption: So *Jacob* came to an Estate in the Land of *Goshen,* and *Joseph* to the Government of *Egypt,* and *Moses* the Son-in-Law to *Pharaoh,* by gift and Adoption: These are the three usual ways by which an interest is obtained. By the first of these man can lay no claim to an interest in Christ: By Birth we are Children of wrath, *Eph. 2. 3.* By Purchase man can never get a claim to Christ: There's no buying this Pearl of price. Therefore a Title to Christ must come the last way, by Gift. Falsely man having lost his first Estate, with all right to life, and capacity to regain it, by fulfilling the terms in order to it, it must needs follow, that now if ever he obtain life again it must be on a new account, even of Grace. The breach of the first Covenant forfeited all, and bound over the Offender to death and damnation, till which penalty be removed (which lost man could never do) there cannot possibly be any purchase made of new life and Salvation. *Rom. 5. 12.* Sin hath passed over all men, and Death by Sin for that all Men have sinned, and by this fall all power of doing good is lost. *Rom, 7. 18.* So that now of necessity there must be a change of the first term on which life was to be had, there being no possibility in lost man to fulfill them, and if ever Salvation comes it must be by grace *Eph. 2. 7.* and gift: The new Covenant gives out all his mercies freely, *Rev. 21. 7.* There's no place for creature worth and merit in order to Salvation under the Gospel; he that will be saved must accept it as a gift: That's the first, the way of obtaining Christ: He is the Fathers gift, and his own gift. *Gal. 2. 20.* God gives Christ to whom he pleaseth, not for any distinguishing worth in the Creature, but from the good pleasure of his will. *Eph. 1. 11.*

2. Who are they that obtain Christ, and Salvation by him?

Answ. It is they that come to, and receive Christ by Faith. *Joh. 1. 12.* To as many as received him to them gave he power to become the Sons of God: Christ is offerd in the Gospel by grace, and is received by faith, the acceptance as offerd of God is that which interests the Soul in him; This is called a coming to Christ, *Mat. 11. 28.* A letting Christ into the heart, *Eph. 3. 17.* A believing in him, *1 Joh. 5. 10.* He that believes in the Son of God hath the witness in himself: That is the witness of right to Christ and life. *ver. 11.* And this is the record God hath given us, *Life Eternal; and all this in his Son:* For where a gift is freely tendered to all that will receive it, there needs nothing to make that Person fit for that gift, but accepting the offer as tenderd to him: Neither doth this acceptance make a Person worthy of the gift, but fulfills the terms in order to an Interest in it: If a sum of money be offerd to a poor man, and he is called to receive it, this receiving doth not merit it, but appropriate it: So that the Persons to whom Christ is tenderd is to sinners, to all sinners, to the chiefest of Sinners. *1 Tim. 1. 15.* And to everyone of them, *Isa. 55. 1. John. 7. 37.* And the terms on which he is held out is freely without money, and without price, and nothing is required to entitle them to this glorious gift, but their receiving it as tendered.

3. *What is necessary to the obtaining of Christ, and and so of those glorious Treasures in him? Without which Persons cannot, will not, come to him?*

Answ. There are *prerequisites* to the Souls obtaining of Christ: Though they do not merit Christ, yet are necessary to the receiving of him.

First, That the Sinner be brought to see his absolute need of Christ, and his everlasting undoneness without him: This course the Spirit of God took with *Laodicea*. *Rev.* 3. 17. And with those Jews, *Acts* 2. 23, 36. Opens to them their cursed damning Sin, and wretched state by reason of sin, that their hearts might be pricked and wounded. So the Jailor was this way prepared for Christ. *Acts* 16. 30. He was made to see his doleful state. Thus the Law is School-Master to bring to Christ. *Gal* 3. 24. To beat and wound the sinner that he may see his need of a healing Jesus: Thus the Spirit is promised to convince the World of sin, Righteousness, and Judgment. *Joh.* 16. 8. And so did God deal with the unconverted under the Gospel. *1 Cor.* 14. 25.

Secondly, Another requisite to the Souls getting this title to Christ is this, that there be a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; his suitableness and sufficiency to save, his grace, and real willingness to heal, and cure all that come to him, *Heb.* 11. 6. hence, Eternal Life is said to lie in the knowledge of Christ, *Joh.* 17. 3. that is, in the knowledge of his sufficiency, and willingness to save: therefore when *Paul* came to obtain Christ in order to it, says he: *It pleased God to reveal his Son in me*, *Gal.* 1. 15, 16. True faith carries knowledge with it: Faith is not hoodwinked and blind, but hath his discerning: By faith we come to understand: hence the Gospel is to be preached to every Creature; what is the Gospel but the opening of Jesus Christ, his sufficiency, and willingness to save sinners; while persons lie in a state of ignorance, they cannot come to have a true title to Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, 'Tis necessary that the Soul see the worth and excellency of Christ to satisfy: That were there no Heaven at the end; yet Christ himself were Heaven enough: So *Paul* saw an excellency in Christ, *Phil.* 3. 8. And the Apostles also, *Joh.* 1. 14. The Soul that comes to Christ, must see him to be the chiefest of ten thousand; the only desirable one, none in Heaven but Christ, and none in Earth in comparison of him, *Psa.* 73. 25, He that only eyes Salvation in coming to Christ, takes him upon necessity, not upon choice.

Fourthly, Another requisite to this coming to Christ is that the Soul be brought to a real and actual willingness to part with all for him; yea, to a throwing all over board to take him in, *Phil.* 3. 8. *For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them dung to win Christ.* It was no small sum these Converts parted with before they could close with Christ, *Acts.* 19. 19. *They brought their Books, and burned them, and counted the price, and found it fifty thousand pieces of Silver;* which amounts in our money, to one thousand, five hundred, sixty and two pounds, and ten shillings: hence 'tis said, That he that will be saved must pluck out his right Eye, and cut off his right Hand *Math.* 5. 29, 30. And the want of which made the Young man go away from Christ sorrowful.

Fifthly, In order to a closing with Christ 'tis necessary that the Soul see an utter poverty, and inability in himself ever to come to Christ without Christ: *Draw me, and we will run after thee,*

Cant. 1. 4. *No man cometh to me (says Christ) except the Father, which sent me, draw him, Joh. 6. 44.* They must see themselves poor, that come for satisfaction in Christ, *Isa. 41. 17.* Thou must deny thy own Abilities, and Rigteousness, and see thyself utterly unable, so much as to look to Christ, till he give an Eye, *Math. 11. 5.*

Lastly, The Soul must be brought to close with all the terms of the Gospel proposed to him, and made heartily willing to take Christ on his own conditions, *Math. 16. 14.* A person is never fit for Christ till he can give him a blank, and bid him write his own terms, unfeignedly saying, Lord command me anything; I stick at no proposals, so I may be thine, he that would fain beat down the bargain shall never have Christ, *Isa. 44. 5.* now to such a reception of Christ 'tis needful that things be plainly opened, and all the demands of Christ be known, and considered, *Luk. 14. 28.* So that there may be a known and hearty consent to Christ, and a full compliance with all his conditions.

4. *What are the certain fruits, and effects of the Souls obtaining Christ?*

Ans. First, That Soul that hath an interest in Christ is a new Creature, *2 Cor. 5. 17.* *If any man be in Christ he is a new Creature; old things are past away, all things are become new.* As the Lord Christ when he was crucifi'd, was laid in a new Tomb; so when he is received he must be lodged in a new heart: In redemption work all things are new: there's a new Covenant, *Heb. 8. 8.* A new Mediator; the first Covenant had none, *Heb. 9. 15.* Souls are now brought into a new state, of new and glorious Privileges: They were dead, but now are made alive, *Eph. 2. 1.* There's a new Law also, the Law of the Gospel, called the Law of the Spirit of life, *Rom. 8. 2.* Therefore 'tis necessary that the Soul be renewed also; this is promise'd under the Gospel, *Isa. 65. 17.* Behold I create new Heavens, and a new Earth wherein dwelleth Righteousness, so *2 Pet. 3. 13.* there will be a wonderful change wrought in that Person above what flesh and blood can do, an inward change a new heart, and a new Spirit, *Ezek. 36. 26.* new desires, *Ps. 63. 1.* Before the Soul did long after the world, pleasures, vanities; but now, *My Soul breaks for the longing it hath to thy Judgments at all times, Ps. 119. 20. Ps. 42. 1, 2.* New affections to God, *Ps. 116. 1.* new love to Christ, *1 Cor. 16. 22.* new love to the Law of God, *Ps. 119. 97, 127.* new love to the people of God, *1 Joh. 3. 14.* new love to the name and glory of God, *Ps. 26. 12. Psa. 145. 15.* new affections for the Cross of Christ, and reproach for his name, *Gal. 2. 14. Heb. 11. 26.* a new will to loath sin and cleave to God and Holiness, *Rom. 7. 19. Act. 11. 23.* a new Conscience, *Heb. 10. 27. 2 Tim. 1. 3.* and they have a new Convesation, *Rom: 6. 4. Eph. 2. 10. Phil. 1. 27.* They will walk in newness of the Spirit, *Rom. 6. 4.* They are created to good works to walk in them, *Eph. 2. 10.* At least, they design it, though they fall short of it. Thus a Soul that is come to Christ is a new Creature. That Soul that hath no renewings in him, that hath the same Spirit, desires, affections, will, conscience, that ever he had, cannot prove his interest in Christ.

Secondly, Tha• Soul that hath received Christ hath received the Spirit of Christ, *Rom. 8. 9.* *If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, 1 Cor. 12. 13.* *for by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body.* None can receive the Son, but he must have the Spirit too; for Christ is not divided: He that hath Christ, hath the Father and the spirit, for these three are one. Now a Soul that hath the Spirit of Christ may know it by the effects of it: The Spirit of Christ is a

quicken Spirit, it begets a principle of Life: The Soul that was dead to God, and holiness; now hath a new life, a heart to move after God: it works from other motives, even from love to God: Dost thou find thy heart always dead to every act of Grace? No heart to pray, hear, &c. and is this habitual? O then here's no fruit of Christ's Spirit.

The Spirit of Christ is a sin-opposing spirit, always quarrelling with Lust; always convincing, troubling, humbling the Soul for sin, *Gal. 5. 17. Tit. 2. 11, 12.* It gives no peaceable possession to it, but always opposes it as fire doth water: Where the Spirit of Christ is, 'tis a leading guiding Spirit, *Rom. 8. 14.* Christians, what is it leads you? Is it your own Spirits? if you have received the Spirit of God, you may know it by those Scripture ways it takes to put you upon duty: such a one is convinced by the word, and persuaded, and helped by the word to this and the other duty.

Again, The Spirit of Christ is a praying Spirit: A Soul that is in Christ cannot live without prayer; though no eye see it, and no good come by it, yet he cannot omit secret prayer, *Zach. 12. 10. Rom. 8. 15.* 'Tis not enlargement of affections, parts, abilities, and expressions in prayer; but the inditings of the Spirit; inward breathings, sighs and groans of the Spirit: A man may pray like a Saint, or an Angel, and yet not have a jot of the Spirit of prayer: but it is the encouragement of the Spirit to wrestle with God by Christ; the inward suggestions of hope, when a Soul can go to God as to a Father, when the very heart goes out to God in prayer, and when prayer is wing'd with Faith and Love: These are the effects of a Spirit of prayer, and the fruit of a Souls reception of Christ.

Thirdly, They that have obtained an interest in Christ, have crucified the flesh with the lusts there of, *Gal. 5. 24.* They, and only they that are in Christ have crucified the flesh; that is, the body of death, original sin: The general Nature of sin; the universal extents of sin; come under the workings of this Crucifixion: O try Souls; hath the Axe been ever laid to the root of sin? Have you ever found felling strokes upon the body of your Corruptions, are you baptized into the death of Christ, and as he died for sin, so do you die to sin; and by virtue of his death, and wounds, do you fetch power, and strength from him to crucify it? There's a difference between the curbing; and the crucifying of sin: sin may be chain'd up, imprisoned, and not crucified: Hypocrites that are under a seeming change, do restrain, and confine sin; yea they may punish sin, but do not crucify it: The crucifying of sin is the giving it a deadly mortal wound, fetched from the blood, and death of Christ: Faith fetches virtue from the Grave of Christ, to destroy the power of sin, nothing so mortally stabs this *Leviathan* as a believing reflection on our propriety in Christ's Crucifixion, and a laying hold on promises by Faith in order to the application of the benefit of a crucified Christ, *Rom. 6. 4, 6. Our old man is crucified with him:* The putting our lusts into the side, wounds, and grave of Christ; A levelling the Ax to the body of sin, doth strange work to the crucifying of it. Try then are your corruptions, Pride, Passions, Earthliness as strong as ever? deceive not yourselves, this will never assure your interest in Christ till sin be destroyed: 'tis true, when the wound is given, sin doth not immediately die, but the body of sin is dying, and the believing Soul finds his corruptions hath less strength every day; as a man that loseth his blood weakens more and more; so a Soul that crucifies Lust, finds it to weaken day by day.

Fourthly, Another effect of a Souls union with Christ is this: There will be some resemblance of Christ. 1 Joh. 4. 17. *As he is so are we in this World.* As Christ was Crucified in the flesh, so are his Crucified to the flesh: And as Christ was risen and justified in the Spirit, so are they sanctified by the Spirit, and have the nature, and Image of Christ: Hence we are said to be made conformable to the Image of his Son. Rom. 8. 29. They that are Christ's are in some measure of truth like him. 1 Joh. 3. 3. They have something of Christ's Nature, and Spirit: *Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.* Phil. 2. 5. Christ's mind was off from, and above the World; and herein lies as great an evidence of interest in Christ as in anything, that Soul is dead to, and wonderfully loose from the World. Gal. 6. 14. Christ's mind was heavenly, he favored the things above, his meat, and drink was to do his Fathers will, If you are Christ's you will be of the same mind; nothing in the World will so much delight you as to do something for God: Christ's mind was heavenly, to do his work, and hasten home; and if you are Christ's this will be your mind to dispatch your work, and hasten home. Christ was full of mercy, humility, meekness: If you are interested in Christ, so it will be with you.

Lastly, They that are interested in Christ, do interest Christ in themselves, and in all that is theirs, 2 Cor. 8. 5. *They first gave themselves to the Lord:* Such do devote, and make over themselves, and all to Christ, and glad they have any interest, parts, capacities, that Christ will accept of; they cannot keep back a part; no, were it a thousand times dearer, Christ shall have all, Can. 6. 3. *I am my Beloveds, and my Beloved is mine:* The keeping back of part lost *Ananias, and Sapphira;* they were undone, and damned forever, Act. 5. If Christ be yours; you will entitle him to all you are and have. And thus are we come to a Conclusion in this matter: That Soul that can come to seal to those things, is a happy Soul: O blessed Soul indeed! Then mayst thou boldly say, The Lord is my helper; God, Christ, the Spirit, the Promises the Kingdom, and glory is mine. Thus much for the use of Examination.

CHAP. XXX.

Containing a Use of Exhortion, pressing Believers to several duties.

HAVING already dispatched Motives, Counsels, and Directions to Sinners, about their coming to this Christ, I shall only apply this last use of Exhortation to those who are interested in this rich, and glorious Jesus. Christians, you that are made happy in your Relation to Christ, and invested with a Title to these glorious Treasures, of all persons; you are most obliged to duty; Christians, be you advised and exhorted to these several duties.

1 Duty.

First, Be exhorted to Thankfulness to the rich Grace of God, for giving such a Treasure and Treasury as Christ is; be continually offering up Praises and Thansgivings to God, Flames of holy Affection, be admiring the Grace of God, as the Fountain and Spring of these waters of Life, as the deep Mine of those glorious Treasures: now to scrue up your Affections, and wind up your Hearts to make way for holy Melody, admiring, triumphing, and blessing God for giving Christ, consider these following Particulars, as motives to this choice duty.

First, Consider what you were without Christ, O! Christians, look back, and see what once you were, *Eph. 2. 11. Remembering that in times past, you were Gentiles in the Flesh.* The worst of men, an idolatrous sort of men, Worshippers of Devils, you were wild Olives, Enemies to God in your minds, *Col. 1. 21. hateful, and hateing one another, Tit. 3. 3. Lying in your blood to the loathing of your persons, Ezek. 16. 4, 5, 6. dead in Trespasses and Sins, wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked, Rev. 3, 17. Children of Wrath, heirs of Hell, born to Wrath, Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3. under the Curse and Condemnation of the whole Law, Gal. 3. 10. O lamentable state!* Obnoxious to Death, liable to everlasting Destruction, every moment, no guard about you, open to Devils, liable to the pourings out of divine Fury, and the openings of the deep Treasures of infinite Vengeance, to have no security from the greatest Evils, nor capacity ever to be delivered out of them; obnoxious every minute to a fearful looking of a fiery Wrath and Indignation, which shall devour the Adversary, *Heb. 10. 27.* This was once your state Believers, you were stubble, ready for everlasting Burnings, Fuel for that Fire that can never be quenched, and Food for the Worm that never dieth, O! sad case indeed, and was not freedom and deliverance from such a state, a Mercy worth your highest Thanks? Had you but looked into the place of Torment, and dipt your Finger into that lake of Fire and Brimstone, you would have wonder'd at Redemption-mercy, and adored that Grace of God that plucked you out of it: and is not your acknowledgment of preventing Grace, as due now as it would have been to an actual deliverance out of these Miseries?

Secondly, Consider what you are by Grace, if you are related to Christ, you are brands plucked out of the Fire, *Zach. 3. 2. Bond-slaves redeemed from the Pit, Zach. 9. 11. Condemned Wretches saved from Wrath to come, 1 Thes. 1. 10. Translated from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan into the Kindgdom of God, Acts 26. 18. Col. 1. 13. Made Sons and Daughters to God, called to his Kingdom and Glory, 1 Thes. 2. 12. Gal. 4. 6. Crown'd and invested with a Right to his Presence and most glorious Privileges, Eph. 2. 18. 19. Under the Eye of God, under divine Care; infinite Grace is an Undertaker for you, 1 Pet. 5. 7. O glorious State! Consider further, how you lie upon the Heart of God, as a Seal and Signet there, *Cant. 8. 6. Reckoned amongst his Jewels accounted his peculiar Treasure, Exod. 19. 5. Mal. 3. 17. Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, Col. 1. 12. Sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, made Vessels, •itted for Mercy, filled with Mercy, devoted to Mercy, Rom. 9. 23. And Heirs of Glory, Jam. 2. 5. O wonderful, wonderful Grace; this is matter of Praises to God to all Eternity: Time would fail to read over your Inventory, and to look through your Treasury, 'tis Work for an Eternity to do: O believe what you cannot see, and admire what you cannot know, and study out what you yet understand not of your blessed state, both privatively, and positively considered, and when you have found out a little of your Happiness, then look on those beneath you, put your Mercies into the scale with the World's Miseries, rate your Redemption-interest with the lot of Christless Souls, matter of the same Lump with you, think on your Acquaintance, Friends, Relations, Neighbors, that have enjoyed the same Gospel-Privileges with you, and yet these are left to their Blindness, to perish in the Error of their ways, and must down into the deep forever, but you are exalted, and lifted up to Glory. O! What cause is here for Praises blessings, Thansgivings, and Hallejuahs to him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for evermore.**

Thirdly, Consider the greatness of that Grace which hath made you to differ; Ah! Believers, Redemption-grace saw nothing more in you than in *Judas, Demas*, and those that perish; you were of the same Lump, cut out of the same piece, there was not a Jot of Difference between you and the damned, but only the good pleasure of Grace, only divine Mercy laid it's hand upon you: O that astonishing word, *because it pleased him to make you his people*, 1 *Sam.* 12. 22. It was only the free grace of God that chose *Jacob*, and left *Esau*, *Rom.* 9. 13. It was not for your sakes Christians, that the Lot was cast so well for you: No, *Be it known to you O house of Israel, be ashamed and confounded forever in your own Eyes*, *Ezek.* 36. 32. The moving Cause, the Wheel within the Wheel, that made you adopted, and others rejected, was only the good Pleasure of his Will, *Eph.* 1. 5. 7. It was from hence, *God so loved the World*, out of this Womb sprung all your Mercies, it was Height of Grace, Length, Breadth, Depth, Love passing Knowledge, *Eph.* 3. 18. 19. O ye heirs of Glory, be affected, astonished, ravished with the sense of this rich grace of God towards you, in giving Christ not only for you, but to you, and revealing him in you, and uniting him to you by the Spirit, from the same Mass of fallen man, to single out some for pardon, and leave others for Punishment: O wonderful! The Sense of this made the Apostle break out in such a holy Extasie, *Rom.* 11. 33. *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God*, O the depth! A note of Exclamation, and silencing wonder. O consider this Love of God to your Souls, 'tis free Love without any Influences from the Creature, full Love without Circumference or Bounds, eternal Love without Beginning and without end. Fruitful Love, abounding in the rich Gifts and Procurements of it, O the Gifts and Tokens God sends to you now, and O the large store he lays up forever for you: 'tis sympathyzing Love, full of Bowels, delighting Love, full of pleasure in you, 'tis resting Love: He will rest over them in his Love; 'tis immutable Love without Changes, giving Love, forgiving Love, caring Love, securing Love, returning Love, overcoming Love. O! where shall I make an end? How can you come to the bottom of this Deep, wade a little further, till you have lost yourselves in holy wonder: Can you see your brave houses, fine Cloaths, comfortable Relations, and have such high Regards, for these, and no more for this Grace of God: O wonder more at this Love.

Fourthly, Consider how this is the great Design of God in this grace, that you should be to his praise *Eph.* 1. 12. That is the end which God aimed at in Predetermining you to Glory, that you might be to the Praise of his grace, that his Grace might procure the Manifestation of his Praise; 'tis not for an Enlargement of his Revenue, or Advancement of his Profit; for man cannot be profitable to God, *Job* 22. 22. or for any addition to his Honor being above all Praise, but that he might receive the Tribute of his own Glory, and the returns of his outgoing Goodness: Now if this be the very end why God sets his love upon you Christians, then you have reason to glorify his Grace, lest you endeavor to overturn the whole Proj•ct of Salvation-kindness.

Fifthly, Think how delightful Praise is to God, *Psal.* 69. 31. *This also shall please the Lord better than an Ox or a Bullock that hath Horns and Hoofs*. That is, an Adult, and full grown Beast, which is more fit for Sacrifice; as *Rabbi D. Kimohy* notes, a Beast was not fit for Sacrifice under two years old; so that Praise is preferred here above all Sacrifice, as that which God takes most delight in of anything, because this doth most honor him to acknowledge him the Author of

all Mercy, and God of all Grace, *Psal. 50. 23. Whoso offereth Praise, glorifieth me*, That is, He doth in a singular manner show forth mine Honor, and this is pleasing to him.

Sixthly, This brings Profit to your own Souls, *Psal. 50. 23. For 'tis the means and way to obtain the Salvation of God; Ponit viam aut praeparat viam*, (saith one) it opens the way for Salvation to go out to that Soul; this duty of Praise will bring you Gain, because it engageth God to give out more Mercy, and it leaves Influences of spiritual Good on your own Souls; it puts the heart into a good Frame to love God, and delight in him, and leaves more obligedness on the Soul to fear and serve God: so *David* after that Psalm of Praise to God, *2 Sam. 7.* was wonderfully influenced to duty to God, as you may see, *chap. 8. 11.* and had his Spirit abundantly sweetened to men, *chap. 9. 1.*

Lastly, Consider also, how pleasant this duty of Praise is to the Soul itself, it is wonderfully delightful, and abundantly affects, and ravishes the Heart, to have the sense of divine Mercy in it, *Psal. 147. 1. Praise ye the Lord, for it is pleasam, and Praise is comely.* O Believers! let me effectually persuade you then to the highest Acknowledgments of Redemption-grace, and to the utmost Praises for this rich Jesus, who hath blessed you with all spiritual Blessings, *Eph. 1. 3.*

2 Duty.

Secondly, You that have an Interest in this glorious Redeemer, labor to keep up a high valuation of him in your Hearts; if he be so rich as the Gospel reports of him, O then prize him according to his excellent worth: Great men are highly esteemed, the Cap, the Knee, the best Room, the chiefest Seat are theirs, *Jam. 3. 3.* And how much more worthy is Christ of your account, *1 Pet. 2. 7. To you that believe he is precious.* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 it signifies an high Estimation of another's Worth and Excellency, ready to be attested by all possible and due Demonstrations: four things should oblige Believers to a high Esteem of Christ.

First, His own transcendent Excellency which singularly resides in him, and eminently shines out from him, ten thousand times brighter than the Beams of the Sun, which in their own nature challenge the highest Adoration of men and Angels, especially of saved Souls, to whom he is most endeared and most nearly related. As the Apple-tree excels the meanest and most useless Shrub, infinitely more doth the Lord Jesus over top all the Glory of the world as Mediator, *Cant. 2. 3.* He is the chiefest of ten thousands, *Cant. 5. 10.* He is before all things, *Col. 1. 17.* Both in dignity and time, he precedes all Creatures, he is the Fountain of all Excellencies; his divine and personal Perfections make him the glory of Heaven, the adoration of Angels, the admiration of Saints, and the object of all Observance and holy Wonder, *2 Thes. 1. 10.*

Secondly, The high honor the Father puts upon him; He is his Well-beloved, *Matth. 3. 17.* The object of his Delight, the Exaltation of his right-hand, who hath put all things under his Feet, *Heb. 2. 8.* Set over the works of his hands, crowned with Glory and Honor, *verse. 7.* Worshipped by all the Angels, by the Fathers Appointment, and set down at the right hand

of the Majesty on high, *Heb.* 1. 3. 6. entrusted with all the Concerns and Interests of God, in the World, made his pleni-potentiary, to compose all Differences betwixt himself and fallen man: now, hath the Father such a high Valuation of Christ? then surely 'tis an unworthy thing in you, to detract from his Honor.

3dly, The Lord Jesus Christ deserves your high Estimation, because he is the Fountain of all those Streams that do make glad your Souls, the Sun of all those Beams, that warm your Hearts, the Author of all those Mercies that do supply and delight you; all your Excellencies and the things you mostly value, are Derivations from his glory; things are ratable as they come from Christ, he turns your Water into Wine, sweetens your bitter Cups, and makes them to overflow, all your graces come from his Fullness, he is your Friend, your best Friend, your old Friend, your none-such in Heaven and Earth, *Psal.* 73. 25. The Procurer of all your Mercies, the sweetness of all your Comforts, the crown of all your Glory, and doth he not deserve your Estimation? If he hide his Face all Light goes with him, if he suspends the Communications of his Favor, nothing is comfortable to you, if he lock up his Treasures, nothing but Poverty and wasting covers your Souls, everything without him is nothing, and with him, any little thing is enough; Bread and Water is rich cheer with Christ, Disgrace and Reproach is Honor with Christ; Poverty is Riches with Christ; O prize Christ then, for he puts a worth upon all things that you can enjoy.

Fourthly, Consider the wonderful value the Lord Jesus Christ puts upon you, and let this persuade you to a due valuation of him, *Gal.* 2. 20. *Who loved me, and gave himself for me,* *Joh.* 15. 16. O amazing, wonderful, sovereign Grace! That the Son of God should set his highest Regards upon loathsome Dung, swept out of door by divine Justice, cast out into the open Field, pityful, loathsome, undone Creatures, that he should account you (Believers) as the Apple of his Eye, who have been as Thorns in his side, that he should account you as a Seal on his Heart, who have been spears to pierce through his Bowels, that he should value you as the travel of his Soul, the Jewels of his Crown, the Inhabitants of his glorious Presence to all Eternity, that he should account such spotty Worms as you worthy of his Love, his Blood, and his Mediation, deserving his Bosom, his Kingdom and his Throne: O what strange astonishing Grace is this! and will you prefer Creatures, and place Relations in your Bosom, and let Christ lie out of door, O unworthy act indeed! Surely he deserves your highest Estimation, O prize Christ! prize Christ! value him.

First, Above all things in Heaven and Earth, count nothing like him, much less above him; set him in the uppermost Seat, enthrone him in your Heart; Let him ride in that Chariot of yours that is pav'd with Love; Esteem his Person above all Persons, his Purchase above all Purchase: his Love above all Affections; his help above all Assistance: Value him above Father, Mother, Husband, Wife, Friends, Pleasures, Credit, Riches, or whatever is dearest to you: Say as *Moses* did, *Who is like to thee?* *Exod.* 15. 11. *Thy Name alone is excellent, thy Glory above the Heavens.* Esteem his Precepts above all the Commands of men; His Promises, his Privileges, his Comforts, his Ordinances, his People above all: Christ, in conjunction with other things, accounts himself slighted; He must be *Aut Caesar, aut nullus.*

Secondly, Prize Christ in all; in all Persons and things, make him the Standard to measure the worth of all created Beings by; Reckon things as they carry Christ in them: when Satan or Corruption tempt you to a high esteem of any, Ask them, as Christ did, whose Superscription and Image they bear? *Matth. 22. 20.* As the Talent of the Temple was of greatest value, so let thy Account be of those things that have the Temple stamp upon them, in a Sacred Reflection of Jesus Christ. Reckon not much of anything that hath not *Aliquid Christi*, something of Christ in it.

Thirdly, Prize Christ at all times; not only by fits and starts; not when he brings thee Loaves, and loads thee with his Favors only, but also when he hides his Face, and holds his Hand, when he seems to take no notice of thee: Let Christ be thy Sun in the Day-time; let him be thy Diamond in the Night, when all other Lights are gone, and shadows of Darkness are over thee; let him be always uppermost in thy Account; Think meanly of him at no time; let him lie between thy Breasts, to satiate thee at all times, *Cant. 1. 13.*

3. Duty.

Thirdly, Believers, (Have all your expectations from Christ, *Psal. 62. 5. My Soul waiteth only upon God, for my expectation is from him.* If the Lord Jesus be so rich, then he is able to maintain you, and supply all your wants: There's Bread enough in his house to feed you; Light enough in him to guide you; Comfort enough to cheer you: Blood enough to pardon you; Righteousness enough to justify you: Grace enough to sanctify you: Strength enough to bear and support you; Treasures enough to satisfy and requite you. Hence 'tis he calls his People to look to him, and be saved, *Isa. 45. 22.* And on this Belief the Saints resolved to wait and look for him, *Isa. 8. 17.* O Christians! expect all you need from Christ: His sufficiency to help you, and his willingness to supply you, are Arguments enough for your Expectation: why should you look to Creatures more than to the Creator? to the Clay, more than to the Potter? to broken Pits, more than to the Fountain? to the Physician, more than unto God? Is there not a God in *Israel*? why then are your eyes, Christians, after empty Cisterns, and things that cannot profit you? Have you chosen Christ to be your Rock, your Fountain, Life, Sufficiency, and Fulness, to fill all in all; and yet run to other things for your Relief, as if he were not able to supply you? O Souls! fasten your eyes on Christ; expect all you want from him, as the impotent man did on *John and Peter, Acts 3. 5.* Look not so much on Creatures and Relations, Friends, Riches, and Wisdom, &c. lest you be ashamed; but wait for the Vision, for it will speak, *Hab. 2. 3.* Expect all you need from Christ, for the expectation of the poor shall not perish.

4. Duty.

Fourthly, Be contented with Christ alone, whatever is wanting; and truly, 'tis strange indeed, that an infinite Portion cannot satisfy a finite Being, and a whole Ocean fill a little Vessel; Believer, Thou hast the person of Christ, who is the wonder of Angels, the Satisfaction, and the Heaven of glorified Saints, the desire of all Nations, the longed-for Joy of all that truly know and taste him, and will not this content you? *Paul* could leave all the World to go after Christ, and art not thou satisfied with Christ, without the World? *This* (saith *Agnes the Roman*

Martyr) *Even this is he, I now confess that I do love, I will make haste to meet him.* The naked presence of Christ hath been a Heaven to suffering Saints under the want of all things: *I have found a nest of Honey (saith Algerius) in the Entrals of a Lyon, in a deep dark Dungeon, I have found a paradise of Pleasure, &c.* And if some glimpses of the presence, some Illapses of the love of Christ, were enough to these Sufferers in the want of all things, O unreasonable Soul, that thou shouldest complain, and be dissatisfied, who hast an Interest in Christ, and so much of other things too. O Christian! If Christ be thine, let it content thee, for all is thine; his Heart is upon thee, and will not that content thee? He loves thee more than all the World, he will not leave thee, and will not this please thee? *Heb. 13. 5.* He will care for thee, *1 Pet. 5. 7.* Thou shalt want no good thing, he will make up the want of creatures with himself, he will sweeten bitter cups; 'tis but a little while, and he will take thee to himself, where Wants, Sufferings, Shame, Reproaches, Grievs, and Sin shall trouble thee no more: O then be satisfied with a single Christ, in Heaven he must be thy alone Happiness; there's no House, Land, Husband, Wife, Parent, Children, to make up thy Fullness and Blessedness, there God will be all in all, and is not this God in Christ enough now?

5 Duty.

Fifthly, Take up your Delights in this rich and glorious Christ, he is the Treasure, and his should be the heart also, *Math. 6. 21.* There is all that in Christ, which thy Heart can desire, stretch thy Longings to the utmost, and he is infinitely beyond them; and if he deserves to be the object of thy Desires, then of thy Delight, for what is Delight but Desire in Fruition? He is the only adequate object of Delight: other things are unsuitable to a spiritual Heart, and cannot please; empty; and cannot satisfy; fading, and cannot last; cloying, and soon become burdensome; but God in Christ is an eternal Excellency: those things that seem most delectable in Creatures, are but Derivations from his Excellency, Drops of his Fullness, Sips of his Sweetness, the impress of his Fingers: The precious Ordinances of Christ, are but the Galleries in which he walks, the Chariot in which he rides, the Cabinet wherein his Jewels lie, the Cisterns through which Waters of Life pass to saved ones; and if these be so pleasant, O what then is himself, and should not Believers then delight themselves in him.

Quest. But how shall I do to get my Heart to this delight in Christ? I find my Affections cold, and my Spirits dead, that I cannot taste that Sweetness in Christ, nor take that Pleasure in the Almighty as I would.

Answ. First, withdraw your Hearts from all other Delights, this course doth the Lord set *Israel* to get up to a delight in himself, *Isa. 58. 13, 14.* There is no greater Enemy to true delight in God, than a persons own carnal Pleasure, and delight in things below God, *Whoredom and new Wine take away the Heart, Hos. 4. 11.* 'Tis impossible a Soul can take pleasure in Christ and Sin together, *Mat. 6. 24.* For carnal Pleasures withdraw the Affections from God, *Job 21. ver. 12.* to *15. 1 Joh. 2. 15.*

Secondly, Rest not till you have cleared up your Interest in Christ, and can upon good grounds apprehend him as your peculiar and chief Treasure better than all the World besides, and appropriate it to your own Souls, *Cant. 2. 3. 5.* This drew the Spouses Heart to so

much longing after and solace in the Lord Jesus, even the sight of his transcendent Worth beyond all others, and her title to all those Excellencies; 'tis seen Interest in Christ that draws out the Heart after him, *Cant.* 7. 10. Doubts of Relation to Christ, and Fears of laying a claim to these precious Treasures, damps the Soul pleasure in Christ.

Thirdly, Be satisfy'd about Christ's special love to you, and delight in you, 1 *Joh.* 4. 19. Jealousies about an Interest in this love of God, did so cool the *Jews* Hearts towards him, *Isa.* 49. 14. *But Zion saith, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me:* From hence they began to slack their pace after God, and cried out, behold what a weariness is it, and snuffed at it, *Mal.* 1. 13. *chap.* 3. 14. Suspition of Christ's Heart towards you will straiten yours towards him: think well of Christ's Heart to you, cherish daily a good Opinion of his Nature, Affection, and Faithfulness.

Fourthly, Beg hard for heart-affecting fights of Christ; This so enamored the Spouses Heart, she saw the beauties of her beloved, *Cant.* 2. 1. She beheld him to be the rose of *Sharon*, and Lily of the Valleys, the powrings out of his Name drew her affections to him, *Cant.* 1. 3. The Eye affects the Heart, *Lam.* 3. 51. As with Sorrow so with Joy; 'Twas *David's* Sight of God in the outgoings of his Love and Glory, that made his Soul thirst after him, *Psal.* 63. 1. 2.

Fifthly, Be much in the consideration of what Christ hath done for you, and bestowed upon you; this so engaged *Hezekiah's* Heart to God, *Isa.* 38. 17. and filled *David's* heart with such an Extasy of Joy in God, 2 *Sam.* 7. 19, 20. *Psal.* 8.

Sixthly, Get a nature and Spirit suitable to Christ, *Similo Simili gaudet*, *Psal.* 17. 15. *I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy Likeness.* This made the Image of Christ glorious in the Souls eye also, when once it becomes changed into it's Likeness, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. Therefore did *Paul* delight in the Law of God after the inner man, *Rom.* 7. 22. Because he had his inner parts changed into the Image of it; what pleasure will wicked men take in a wicked Cause, from the similitude it hath to their own Nature? So will the Soul in Christ, when once brought into a suitability to him.

Lastly, Be much in Communion with Christ, and this will beget wonderful Joy in him, *Psal.* 119. 167. *David's* being much conversant in God's Laws, begat and strengthened his delight in it. So *verse.* 14. 'Tis Intimacy breeds Delight, whereas Strangeness lessens all that Familiarity and Pleasure we else might take in Persons, *Psal.* 14. 10. *A Stranger intermeddles not with his Joy.* Be not contented to keep to duty, but press after Communion with Christ therein.

6 Duty.

Sixthly, Be not troubled at your Wants, Losses and Sufferings, you undergo in this World; Consider these four things.

First, You can want no good thing, the God of Glory stands bound for your Supplies, *Psal.* 34. 10. *They that seek the Lord shall want no good thing*, *Psal.* 23. 1. *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.* It cannot be, that those who are so much interested in the Heart, Care, Person, and Treasure of the Lord Christ, can be destitute; what can you want who are entitled to all good things? 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. Who are Heirs of the Promises, Promises that concern the Life that

now is, and that which is to come, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. You have a surer Title to your Supplies, than they that have most of the World in their hands; for God hath laid up, in the hands of Jesus Christ, a full Allowance for you, how short soever he may seem to keep you for a while: the Earth is your Lord's, and the Fullness thereof, and the Cattel on a thousand Hills, *Psal.* 50. 10. 12. *Psal.* 24. 1. Heaven, and Earth and all things therein, are made over in the everlasting Covenant for your use.

Secondly, You shall want or suffer no more than infinite Wisdom, and fatherly Love sees best for you; 'tis impossible that divine Purposes should be frustrated towards you; he that will work will work, and nothing shall let, 'tis not Men nor Devils, nor the greatest injury of time, can deprive you of your Fathers Allowance, and that is upon infinite Wisdom and good Pleasure. The Wings and Wheels of God's Providence over his people, and for them, are full of Eyes within and without, to show the wise Care and Providence of God over his, in the worst of times, and hardest condition; and these Wheels are moving for your Good, Christians, and God sees in the darkest Providence, what is best for you; all his Dealings with his people, are the Fruits of everlasting Love, *Jer.* 31. 3. God doth in infinite Wisdom manage all your Concerns; 'tis not by Chance, or through any inadvertency, any Crosses or Losses befall you, but all is done in wise Counsel.

3dly, The less you have of Creatures, the more will God give you of himself, if you be looking to him, and by Faith live upon him. God will admit of no Vacuums towards his people, they can want no good thing; therefore if creature-supplies be removed, Grace comes in the room; as they say, Water will ascend to prevent a Vacuum, and Grace will descend to prevent Emptiness in Believers; God comes in the room of creature-comforts: when *Job* was stripped of all, he had more of the visions of God, *Job* 42. 5. *John* had never more Intimacy with Jesus Christ, than when he was in the barren Island of *Patmos*, stripped of the Confluence of earthly Comforts; *Elijah* never made a better Meal, than when he was driven into the Wilderness, and the Angel was his Cook, 1 *Kin.* 19. 8. Ah Believers! you have never better Allowance of God, than when you are cut short in outward things, if you be faithful; therefore you should be quiet under all Straits and Necessities in the world. The day we live in is full of Trials to many a gracious Soul, the wants of many may be more than many think of, and 'tis now a time to expect more Maintainings from the hand of God, and from the Spirit of Grace, when outward things are removed; when *Israel* was brought into the Wilderness where was no sowing nor reaping, they had their Bread from Heaven, and 'tis God's usual way, to send Meat from his own Table, when the Tables of his Children are empty, I mean, more spiritual Communications from himself, if they murmur not, but patiently and quietly wait for God's Salvation.

Lastly, Consider, Believers, 'Tis not long you shall be in the way of Wants, or Sufferings: the time is hastening that will set you beyond the reach of offending Providences, nothing shall offend you when you get home to your own Country. O! the time is hastening, when Moth and Rust cannot consume, nor Thieves break thorough and steal, *Matth.* 6. 20. And when afflictive Providences cannot injure your Treasure, if the Lord be your Treasure, 'tis not long you will be open to the Injury of time, and to those Casualties that pass upon your Comforts;

every day (Christians) brings you farther through the Briars, and Thickets of this World, and through the barren Wilderness, that leads to your *Canaan*; you are travelling apace towards a period of all your Trials, every new hour brings you a step nearer to the Sight, and Fruition of your blessed Inheritance. Christian, Think every Evening, now I have a day less to wade through the deep Troubles, and Red-sea of this World, and to be kept at such strait Allowances and Supplies in this Life: O a real Faith of this, how should it patient and quiet Believers, under present Straits and short Allowances here? O! Think upon the coming of the Lord, *Jam. 5. 7. Be patient therefore Brethren unto the coming of the Lord behold the Husbandman, waiteth for a precious Fruit of the Earth, and hath long patience for it: He waits a long time before Harvest comes, and bears many a wet-day, and shall not a Believer wait with more Quietness, and hope for a far better Treasure? O! Christians, if you feel some Difficulties and Straits through want of Supplies, Comfort, Credit, Strength, Ease, Peace, Rest, for a little time, know, Eternity is coming, that will make amends for all.*

7 Duty.

Seventhly, Live upon your Treasure, these unsearchable Riches in Christ; for this end hath the Father provided those rich Treasures, to satisfy you here, and to solace you hereafter, 'tis laid up in Christ for you, not locked up from you. Christians, the Lord Jesus is a Fountain sealed to, not from you, there's no Bolt between you and your Treasures, you may go and fetch supply at all times of need, *Heb. 4. 16.* It hath pleased the Father that in Christ should all Fullness dwell, *Col. 1. 19.* For the use of Believers, that he might give eternal Life to all that come to him, and be the head of the Body, the Fullness that filleth all in all, *Eph. 1. 23.* This is the work he hath undertaken to do, and invited all his people to come to him, that they might have Life, and have it more abundantly, he bids them ask and ask again, that their Joy might be full, *Joh. 16. 23, 24, 26.* This is the Will of God, that Believers should eat their own Bread with Quietness, *2 Thes. 3. 12.* And make use of this Inheritance for all their Supply and Comfort: Christians, you cannot make too bold with your own, Christ and all his Fullness is your Interest: you may wear out your Welcome with men, and beg too often at fellow-Creatures doors, but you cannot ask too often of free Grace, or take too much of Redemption-treasures, if you be sure to refer the Measures and time to divine pleasure. In all your need come to Christ for whatever you want, for the Life that now is, and that which is to come; this answers the end of the everlasting Covenant, and the Fathers placing this store in Christ, and Christ's undertaking the Care, Conduct, and Salvation of all that come to him, and this wonderfully pleaseth Christ, and advanceth his mediatory Glory: this also keeps up the credit and Reputation of the ways of God in the World, when Strangers see Believers rich fare, and what a Sufficiency is laid up in Christ for them, that Christ maintains his own poor, that they need not go a begging; this commends that State and Government, where care is taken to prevent wandering Beggars: Besides, otherwise the Promises are useless if you come not to Christ for all your Supplies. These full Breasts will be injured if you milk them not out, Promises are the Bags in which this Treasure is carried out to believers, which will wax old if you use them not. Christ gets nothing (Christians) by your Savingness this way, the more he lays out upon you, the more he lays up for you.

8 Duty.

Eighthly, Improve your Interest in these vast Treasures, to the enriching of your own Souls; are there such Riches in Christ, and is this Jesus yours? O then labor to be rich also. There are two things which I should press you to be rich in, 1. In Grace, 2. In good Works.

First, You that have Interest in these Treasures of Christ, labor to be rich in Grace, be not content with the Truth of Grace, with little Measures of Grace, but strive to abound in Grace, 1 *The*s. 3. 12. For,

First, Grace is the best Treasure, and most rationally desirable for it's self. All other created Beings are conditionally good, so far as God sees them best for us, and so far as they conduce to the great end of God's Glory, and our Salvation; but Grace is absolutely good, because 'tis part of the divine Nature and Image of God, 2 *Pet*. 1. 4. Which divine Nature he tells us, *ver*. 5. 6. Lies in Faith, Virtue, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godliness, and Charity. 'Tis absolutely necessary to the glorifying of God, and being glorified with God, *Heb*. 11. 6. *Without Faith 'tis impossible to please God, and without Holiness no man can see God, Heb*. 12. 14. Grace is the best Treasure, because the most enduring Treasure, the most potent Treasure, it can procure more than all the World can, *Mark* 9. 23. *All things are possible to him that believeth*. Indeed created grace cannot, by way of Merit or Purchase, procure anything but by way of Appropriation and Meekness, it brings that which all the World cannot: Grace is God's high way to Mercy and Peace, being under a Promise of Peace; Grace and Peace are usually twins in gracious Souls, 2 *Pet*. 1. 2. Grace can quiet you under Troubles, strengthen you under Weakness, guide you under Darkness, cheer you under Sufferings, enrich you under Losses, and fill you under Wants; again, Grace is the purest Treasure, earthly Treasures are as those Cities *Solomon* gave to *Hiram*, a mere *Cabal* and dirty things, defiling the Souls of those that have them, and use not them aright; Grace is the most pleasant Treasure, it doth not burden those that have it, as earthly things do with wasting Cares and tormenting Fears. Further, Grace is the best Treasure, in that it will go with the Soul into the other World; all the Riches of this World must be left behind, Death puts the Owner and his Interest into a winding Sheet; no man's Propriety to these out-lives himself, the Grave buries all his Relation to these things, but Grace never dies, true Holiness goes with the Soul to glory.

Secondly, Labor to be rich in Grace, because if you have but little grace, you will hardly prove the truth of grace, though the least grace is grace, as a drop of Water is Water, yet a little grace doth not so capacitate a Soul to see it, 2 *Pet*. 1. 9. He that wants this thriving Grace, forgets that he was purged from his old Sins, he cannot remember or make out his saving Change, or putting off his old state; little Grace is ever skeptical, and subject to Doubtings, *Matth*. 14. 31, *O thou of little Faith, wherefore didst thou doubt*.

Thirdly, Because little grace will hardly carry a Soul through the Temptations, Duties, and Sufferings of the day we live in; these are some of the last times we are fallen upon, and the last times are perilous times, 2 *Tim*. 3. 1. This is the Character of these times, *Abounding Iniquity, and Decay of Love, Matth*. 24. 12. And therefore a little Grace will not carry a Soul through strong Corruptions; where Sin abounds, Grace must abound much more, or else the

Soul will loose ground, *Rom.* 6. 1. What the Apostle speaks there of grace in God, 'tis as true of grace in Saints that must abound more than their Sin, or else Sin will be too hard for them; Judgment must be brought forth to Victory, or else the bruised Reed will break, *Matth.* 12. 20. For this end the Apostle adviseth the *Ephesians*, in his time, which were less liable to such Temptations, they should put on the whole Armor of God, and having done all, to stand, *Eph.* 6. 13.

Fourthly, Else you cannot answer the ends of grace, and all the Cost of God about you; the design of grace in all the means and helps to his people, is to further their growth in grace, and to make them abound to all well-pleasing before God, *Isa.* 5. 2. 4. *Joh.* 15. 2. *Psal.* 92. 13, 14. To whom much is given of them much is required, *Luke* 12. 48.

Fifthly, That so you may be more like to God, who is rich to all that call upon him, *Rom.* 10. 12. He is rich in Mercy, he hath abounded in the Riches of grace towards all his People, *Eph.* 1. 7, 8. Christians should be Epitomes of Christ, and Resemblers of his Excellency, holding forth his Virtues in the World, *1 Pet.* 2, 9. There can be no greater glory to a Child of God in this World, than to be like to Christ, who is the glory of the Father; but by being rich in Grace, you will much manifest the Excellency of Christ in the World.

Sixthly, By being rich in grace, you will become more serviceable to God and others in your Generation, you will be able to do more work for God than others. Grace is a Talent, and the more Talents you have, the more Incomes hath God from you, *Matth.* 25. 16, 17. Rich men have larger Capacities to honor God in the World than others have, they can do more, and lay out more for God, and be more serviceable for God than others; they can feed the Hungry, and clothe the Naked, and take Out-casts into their houses; they can do more to support the interest of God, than the poor, and have more Substance to honor God with; so Souls rich in grace, have larger Abilities to serve and honor God with: the more Grace the more acceptably can they serve God, *Heb.* 12. 28. The more spiritual Services are the more acceptable to God by Christ, *1 Pet.* 2. 5. For such the Father chooseth to serve him, who serve him in Spirit and Truth, *Joh.* 4. 23. *Psal.* 45. 12. *And the Daughter of Tyre shall be there with a Gift, even the rich among the People shall entreat thy Favor.* Tyre was a rich place as well as vicious, and yet, there would God have a People, which should honor him with their gifts and large expenses for him, and the richer the People, the greater will their gifts be; *The rich, or richest, for 'tis the superlative in the Hebrew, Shall bring Gifts, and entreat thy Favor:* noting, that those who are more spiritually rich, are more serviceable for, and potent with God through Christ: these can do more with God, as *Noah, Daniel, and Job* were mentioned above others for their Potency with God, *Ezek.* 14. 14. And *Moses and Samuel, Jer.* 15. 1. As men who had larger faith and grace, and so greater Intimacy with God than others, and such as could do more. O Christians, labor after more grace, because hereby you may become more serviceable for God and others, you may more prevail with God through Christ for Mercies for the Nation, and can be more helpful for others to teach, counsel, and comfort them, and have more Gold, Myrrh and Frankincense in your Treasures to offer to, and for Christ.

Seventhly, The more rich you are in grace, the more rich you will be in glory; the more grace you improve for God, the more glory shall you receive from God, *Luke* 19. 17. 19. This is the

rule of the Lord's Procedure in the day of Judgment, he will render to every man according to his work, 2 Cor. 5. 10. Though glorified Souls receive not for their grace, yet they shall have according to the Measure of their graces, for grace widens the Vessels of Mercy for glory. The more Liquor the Vessel hath, the larger it is; so the more grace, the larger is that Soul, and the more capable to take in glory, when grace shall be turned into glory.

Quest. But some may say, *How may we get more of this spiritual Treasure?*

Answ. First, Get your Hearts more engaged to it, Desires are the Souls Wings, that carry it over all difficulties, to it's beloved Object; this is one Character the Apostle gives of rich men, 1 Tim. 6. 9. *They are such as will be rich:* They have an earnest mind, an ardent Desire to be rich, 'tis a Will and Purpose grounded on Counsel and Consideration; Christians, this will much further your obtaining these riches of grace, if you once get your Hearts resolved for them.

Secondly, Labor for a holy skill in managing Christianity to the greatest Advantage; this makes men thrive when they have the Mystery of their Art, and are their Crafts Masters, and understand the Rules of their Trade; unskillful persons are not like to thrive whatever their Employment be, Prov. 4. 7, 8. Prov. 3. 13. 14. Prov. 24. 3.

Thirdly, Be diligent in the use of all your helps and advantages to Soul-profit, Prov. 10. 4. chap. 13. 4. 2 Pet. 1. 5. Take all Opportunities of waiting at the Pools side, Isa. 55. 1. They that will be rich in the World, take all Opportunities of getting, and ply Markets and Fairs, and Seasons of Advantage for their Interest, and so do Souls that thrive in Spirituall, they are much in waiting on God, they lose no Seasons that will bring them in some Soul-advantage, Prov. 23. 23.

Fourthly, Be still getting in more and more grace from Christ, 'tis Christ's Treasures that enriches the Soul, he that will be rich must buy tried gold of Christ, Rev. 3. 18. The graces of Christ are true gold, they will bear the Fire, and hold out in greatest Trials: counterfeit grace will be as reprobate Silver when it comes to melting, it will be as Hay and Stubble that perish in the Fire, but true grace will hold in time of Trial, 1 Pet. 1. 7. In this, Gold differs from all other Mettals in that it loseth nothing by the Fire, but comes forth the more pure; so is the grace of Christ, 'tis as tried Gold, that doth not loose, but get in the Fire of Affliction and Temptation. Naturalists say, that Gold is more warm in the night than in the day, so true grace cheers the Heart more in the night of Tribulation, than in the day of Prosperity. O Christians! if you will be rich, get in grace from Christ, every day, for that is the true *Cornucopia*, or the Souls plenty, Joh. 1. 16. *Of his Fullness have we received Grace for Grace.* Make some new Additions to your graces every day, 2 Pet. 1. 5. What the Heathen said concerning Learning, *Nulla dies sine Linea*, Let the Christian say concerning Grace, *Nulla dies sine Gratia*. This would be a notable way to Soul-prosperity, to be getting from Christ some more grace in every Approach to him: as are your Receivings from Christ, so will your Thrivings be; put often the hand of Faith into Christ's Treasury, and grasp large Portions of Grace for thy Soul: Faith is the only receiving grace, Joh. 1. 12. *To as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God*, Joh. 7. 39. Therefore 'tis called the Substance of things hoped for, Heb.

11. 1. Faith appropriates to the Believer, the Overtures and Promises of grace, and by a secret magnetick Virtue derives in from the Fullness of grace needed Supplies, Faith dips into the Fountain, and fills the Soul with what it needs.

Fifthly, They that will be rich in grace, must be thrifty saving Souls, choice of their time, and careful that they do not wast their graces, or loose the things that they have wrought, 2 *Joh. ve. 8*. So persons that are thriving in the World, are saving of everything, that nothing be waste; the same Care is needful to spiritual Enrichings; Prodigality will soon consume great Estates, he that is not saving will never be wealthy: Christians, do not consume your days as a Tale that is told, *Psal. 90. 9*. make the most of every hour, do your proper work every day; a wise and faithful Improvement of time, would tend much to Soul-flourishings, *Eph. 5. 16*. Spend no words in vain: put Time and Talents to the greatest Advantage: they got most for God and themselves, who were most in the Improvement of their Talents; hold fast also the Truths you have received, *Rev. 2. 25*. That is, keep and retain the Doctrine, preserve and maintain the practice of those Truths you have received.

Sixthly, Be much in begging grace, be always asking some spiritual Blessing from God, as *Caleb's Daughter Achsah*, *Judge. 1. 15*. her Father had given her one Blessing, and she asks another, and 'tis said, he gave the upper and the nether Springs; so be not content with what you have, but still be craving for more grace: like Princes Favorites who have their Lord's Ear, will be often begging, now this place, then that Preferment; so Believers be suing hard for Grace, ply the Throne of Grace daily, loose no Opportunity wherein you may further your spiritual Interest by Supplication; this is God's appointed way to the obtaining of Mercy, *Ezek. 36. 37*. Follow your Sutes till you obtain, let your chiefest Requests be for Grace, and be restless till you prevail, like *Jacob*, who would not let God go till he had blest him, *Isa. 62. 7*. Give him no rest, till he establish and make *Jerusalem* the Praise of the Earth. Never leave begging till the Lord Jesus hath left off giving, and that will not be whilst he sits upon the Throne, *Eph. 4. 8*.

Lastly, Maintain constant, intimate, and universal walks with God: He is the most thriving Soul that keeps nearest to God; as that is the fruitfulest ground that is nearest the warm Sun, *Isa. 18. 4. Deut. 33. 14*. so is it to keep near to God: This was that which exalted *Israel* above all Nations, they were a People near to God, *Psal. 148. 14*. This made *Enoch* so soon ripe for Heaven, he was one that walked with God, *Gen. 5. 24*. Christians, 'tis not your sitting under God's shadow, will make you thrive, till there be a dew on your Souls, *Hos. 14. 5. 7*. Keep much in his presence, with him is the Fountain of Life, *Psal. 36. 9*. Be also constant in thy walks with God, not by sits and flashes, but drive a steady Trade of godliness: Let thy whole course of Life, both in thy Civil and Religious Duties be as one constant Walk with God, *Gen. 17. 1*. In your Callings, Relation-Duties, in every state, change, and undertaking, keep close to God; this is a notable way to spiritual prosperity, *Deut. 5. 33. 2 Chro. 17. from verse. 3. to 7.*

Secondly, Improve your Interest in Christ, towards your enriching in good Works; Labor to be rich towards God, as well as in your own Souls, *Luke 12. 21. 1 Timothy, 6. 18*. Consider, Christians, the more you lay out for God, the more are you like to God, *who giveth us richly all*

good things, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. And in being rich towards God, you will enrich your own Souls also: for he that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully, 2 *Cor.* 9. 6. Acts of Mercy and Piety are as good Seed, that shall not miscarry, but shall bring forth a sure crop in glory, *Gal.* 6. 8, 9.

9. Duty.

Ninthly, Live up to your Treasure, Walk as becomes so high a Dignity and Relation to so rich a Jesus, 2 *Thes.* 2. 12. This is but reasonable, if God hath changed your State, that you should change your Lives; If your Relation be new, then your Conversation should be new also, *Eph.* 5. 8. 'Tis an unsuitable thing, if God hath invested you with new Privileges, to retain your old Practices: You were Slaves to Sin and Satan, but the Son hath made you free; how unbecoming a state of Liberty are Bonds and Fetters? Grace hath given you Beauty, and, is it fit you should lie in Ashes, and wear your Sack-cloth still? Christians, you are arrived to your adult state, and to your manly years, and will you be like Children, and Heirs under age? This is unsuitable. How unbecoming is a carnal Heart to a Spiritual State? Works of Darkness to the Day-time? *Rom.* 13. 12, 13. You were poor, worth nothing, stripped of all, destitute, afflicted, and naked; Redemption-Mercy hath enrich'd you, and once more entrusted you with a glorious Treasure. O, how unmeet is a low Spirit and sordid Life now! To live on beggaty Elements, to wear filthy Garments, to sit in the dust, and wallow in the mire of your Corruptions, this is most unworthy also of the Grace by which you are advanced. Hath the Lord advanced you to Dignity and Honor, and will you disgrace the Throne of his Glory, and walk unbecoming his Highness and Majesty? O Christians, you bring Dishonor on that King of Glory you are related to, to live like the Subjects of Satan, and Inhabitants of the lower World: you disgrace his Family, into which you are adopted, to be heterogeneous to it in your Spirit and carriages: you disparage the Table you are admitted to, and the Fare you live upon, to look so ill-favored and lean in your Souls, as if the Lord Jesus kept a bad House, and did not allow meat enough to his Children: O Christians! live as becomes your Riches, and glorious state into which Free Grace hath put you. Now, 'tis becoming such a change in your condition;

First, Not to keep your old Company: Persons advanced to high Honor, usually cast off their former and obscure Companions, and converse with Persons suitable to their Dignity: When *David* was advanced from the Sheepfold to a Crown, he leaves his fellow Shepherds, and converses with Nobles: so should you, Christians, have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of Darkness, but rather reprove them, *Eph.* 5. 11. Ye are now fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God, and your Lives should be like those, and your intimate Converses with them, *Psal.* 119. 63. What, a Christian, and yet help on the ungodly in their way, and love them that hate the Lord? sit with vain Persons, and maintain Confederacy with *Rezin* and *Remalian's* son? *Isa.* 8. 6. What a Christian, and look strangely on thy Brethren, and become an Alien to thy Father's House? O how unbecoming is this!

Secondly, Not to wear your old clothes: when *Elijah* was mounting to a new condition of Honor, he left his Mantle behind him, 2 *Kin.* 2. 13. When *Joshua* was advanced to higher dignity, his filthy Garments were taken off, and he was clothed with change of Rayment,

Zach. 3. 4, 5. O Christians! cast off your filthy garments, your old sins, by Repentance, put off Pride, and be clothed with Humility, put off Guilt by Repentance, and put on Christ by Faith.

Thirdly, Live not on your old fare: When the three Children were brought to *Nebuchadnezzar's* Family, they were called to leave their old Pulse and Water, and live on the King's Table, *Dan.* 1. 5. O Christians! Are you taken from your Kindred and Father's House, and brought into the Family of Christ; leave then your old Garlic and Onions, your stolen Waters and forbidden Fruit, and feed on the King's Table, eat and drink abundantly of his Provisions, his finest Wheat, and Honey out of the Rock of Ages; feast on his Marrow and fat things, the Bread of his Table, his Word and Ordinances, his hidden Manna; let it be your meat and drink to do his Will.

Fourthly, Do not your old work, cast off the works of Darkness, *Rom.* 13. 12. Leave off your old Trade of Sin; and serving your former Lusts in your Ignorance, *1 Pet.* 1. 14. *ch.* 4. 2. but carry on a new Trade of Godliness, and Heavenly Conversation, *Phil.* 1. 27.

Fifthly, Leave your old Language; speak no more the Language of *Ashdod*, *Neh.* 13. 24. Let no filthy Communication drop from your Lips, nor vain Discourses be found among you, but let your Communications be holy, *Eph.* 4. 29. *Col.* 4. 6. Persons of Honor usually have their Discourses according to their Greatness; not so light and familiar, but more grave and stately. O Christians! labor you to live so, that more gravity and seriousness appear in your Language and Carriage.

Lastly, Drive on new Thoughts and Designs: when Persons are exalted from Obscurity to Honor, they will not take up such old Thoughts and Projects: So Christians should now have new Imaginations, *2 Cor.* 10. 5. Grace should bring into captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ. Vain thoughts must now lodge no more in you, *Jer.* 4. 14.

10 Duty.

Tenthly, If there be such vast Treasures in Christ, then you that are the Friends of Christ commend him unto others; so did the Spouse, *Cant.* 5. 10, &c. so will the Bridegroom's Friends speak for their Friend, *Joh.* 3. 29. compared with *Pro.* 9. 3. Wisdom should be justified of her Children, *Matth.* 11. 19. O Christians! set forth the Praises of your Beloved, that others may be taken with him: Do all you can to further the Match between the Lord Jesus and Sinners: Be advising your Neighbors to forsake their evil ways, and come to Christ that they may be saved: Be calling upon, and stirring up your Christless Friends, Relations, Children and Servants, to be looking after Christ, that they may be delivered from the wrath to come. You should be publishing his Praises, and commend him to all the World: O, be speaking of his Excellency, and the Glory of his Kingdom, *Psal.* 145. 11.

11 Duty.

Eleventhly, You that are interested in this Rich Christ, be exhorted, above all Portions, to get Christ to be a Portion to your Children; you know what a Treasure Christ is, you have found him enriching your Souls; when you were as a *Syrian*, ready to perish, he came in, and took you up; he comforted you with the Wine of his Consolation: O, that you would labor to

provide this Treasure for your Children! 'Tis strange to see Christians heap up Dust for their Children, and be so careless to get Christ for them: What if you leave them Houses and Lands when you are gone, and leave them not Christ, what doleful Creatures will they be to all Eternity? Time will consume your Earthly Treasures: your Children may out-live their Money and Lands that you may leave them: O, let your chiefest Provisions be for their Souls, do what you can to get Christ for them: Some may be poor in the World, and have no Portions to leave them; O, how careful should such be to leave them a Treasure in the Promises, a Portion that will not be spent. If you can say, as the Martyr, Mr. *Saunders* told his Wife, when he came to the Stake, he had no Portion to leave her, but a Portion in the Promises; and surely, if you can leave your Children an Interest in Christ, you leave them the best Portion.

But, you will say, How might we do this?

First, Labor to Interest them in the Everlasting Covenant: Get sound and saving Faith yourselves, and that will appropriate new Covenant-Mercies to your Seed, *I will be a God to thee and to thy Seed, Gen. 17. 7.* This is God's usual way to the Heirs of Promise. 'Tis true, Gracious Persons may have Carnal Children; but this is God's way; Labor to have sincere Faith yourselves, and then you will leave Covenant-Promises for your children.

Secondly, Get a Treasure for your Children that will not waste, by your strong Cries to God for them: Improve the Spirit of Grace and Supplication for them: Pour out strong cries and Tears. Few are like *Austin's* Mother, who did daily pour out Tears for the Conversion of her Son: *'Tis impossible* (said *Ambrose* to her) *that a Son of so many Prayers can be lost.* May be you pray too coldly for them. O follow God Day and Night, for your Children! O, skrew your Supplications higher! It may be you do not pray so fervently, so believingly as you should for your Children.

Thirdly, Do all you can to convince them of their undone condition without Christ. Don't daub and flatter them with false Promises; they must be born again, or else they cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, *Joh. 3. 3.*

Fourthly, Instruct them in the knowledge of Christ: Be opening, and commending Christ to them: show them the necessity of Faith, and what the Grace of Faith is: Watch over their Lives; be strict and severe in reproving their Sins, that they may be sound in the Faith.

Lastly, Lead a holy Conversation before them, that by your Lives you may win them to Jesus Christ; O your Pride, Passion, Carnality, Vanity, may stumble them. Thus do all you can to get a Portion of upper Springs for your Children.

12 Duty.

Lastly, you that have an Interest in these rich and glorious Treasures of Christ, long to be with Christ, for then you shall partake of all his Riches; Here you have but a little to carry you in the way, you have but in part, but when you come home to him, then you shall have according to the measure he hath purchased for you, you shall see and know, as you are seen and known, *1 Cor. 13. 9, 10, 12.* In heaven, there you will have a Treasure without Measure,

there you will see all his Riches and Glory, and be glorified with his glory, then you will live at the full, you will live upon himself, and God will be all in all to your Souls; O Christians! long then to be with Christ, there's your Treasure where your Lord is, your Inheritance is above with the Saints in Light; Christ is gone to Heaven, and there are all his Riches: O long then to be fit to go home, to be with Christ, that you may partake of all his glory.

And thus have I now come to the further side of this great deep, I mean to the Conclusion of this Subject; and O that what hath been opened of this glorious Christ, may not be in vain; you have heard much of this Tree of Life, God knows what Fruit hath been gathered: a glorious Treasure hath been presented to your View, and offered to you. O see what Advantage you have gained, how dreadful will it be, for any that have heard so much of this rich Christ, to be found poor at last? O it will be sad for any to die poor in a *Loadicean* State, *Poor, Blind, and naked*, and to be cast away. O Sinners consider this, you that have been woo'd and invited to get this choice, tried Gold, Christ hath pleaded with you, to win your Hearts if possible; O take heed you die not without an Interest in Jesus Christ, you will hear all those Truths brought over to you again at the Bar of Christ: and all the Counsels and Helps you have had to draw your Hearts to Christ, will be then as burning Fire in your Bones, and as boiling Lead in your Bowels, if you perish without Christ; Therefore take heed, take heed, that this Christ become not a stumbling Stone, and a Rock of offense to your Souls. And such as are Believers, mind your Duty which hath been opened to you; and O that these Truths might be profitable to all. And the Lord give a Blessing to it. *Amen.*

FINIS.

THE CONTENTS.

- CHAP. I.

THE Occasion of this Discourse with an Introduction to the words, and Explication of them, and the main Truth contained in them. *Page 1.*

- CHAP. II.

The personal Riches of Christ opened, in his divine Nature, manifested in his Attributes, with the wonderful advantages thereof to Believers. *p. 11.*

- CHAP. III.

The human Nature of Christ distinctly considered, it's Reallity proved, his Personallity, or the divine and human Nature in one person, showing what kind of Union it is, and the glorious Consequents and Advantages thereof. *p. 43.*

- CHAP. IV.

Showing what is the work of Jesus Christ, as he is Mediator. *p. 65.*

- Which lies, 1 with respect to God the Father, *p. 66.*

- 2 with respect to fallen man. *p.* 75.

- CHAP. V.

Wherein is opened the glorious Advocateship of Christ, with the unspeakable Comforts and Advantages thereof, *p.* 79.

- CHAP. VI.

Showing the Willingness of Christ, that Sinners should be saved, the Sin and Misery of such as refuse Christ, with Reproof to several sorts of persons. *p.* 102.

- CHAP. VII.

Showing what Consolation flows to Believers from the Intercession of Christ. *p.* 113.

- 1 To weak Believers. *ibid.*
- 2 To troubled Believers in the depth of Soul-misery. *p.* 116.
- 3 To Believers dejected in the sense of strong Corruptions. *p.* 120.
- 4 To tempted Believers. *p.* 122.
- 5 To such as are under Afflictions and Suffering, in or by the world. *ibid.*
- 6. To such as are Mourners for Zion. *p.* 123.

- CHAP. VIII.

Containing a use of Exhortation to Sinners and Saints. *p.* 128.

- CHAP. IX.

Opening somewhat of the sweet Dispositions of Christ, (*viz.*) His Goodness, Love, and the Riches thereof, as to the Kinds, Fruits, and Effects of it. *p.* 137.

- CHAP. X.

Several deductions drawn from the love of Christ. *p.* 147.

- CHAP. XI.

The glorious Excellency of Christ's tender Pity opened and displayed in the several acts of it, both to Saints and Sinners. *p.* 153.

- CHAP. XII.

The Improvement of the pity of Christ by way of Terror, Encouragement, and Advice. *p.* 165.

- CHAP. XIII.

Wherein is opened the transcendent Humility of Christ. *p.* 170.

- CHAP. XIV.

Wherein is shewn the transcendent Meekness and Gentleness of Christ to his Enemies and to his People, *p.* 178.

- CHAP. XV.

Wherein is demonstrated the infinite Bounty of Christ to all his Creatures, with the manner of his giving, *p.* 188.

- CHAP. XVI.

Wherein the Faithfulness of Christ is opened, in accomplishing all his Prophecies, fulfilling his Promises, to all the Trust committed to him, and in all the Relations he stands to his People. *p.* 198.

- CHAP. XVII.

Showing that Christ is become a Purchaser in the behalf of Believers, how he hath made this purchase, and what he hath purchased, *p.* 225.

- CHAP. XVIII.

Sanctification and Holiness is purchased for Believers by the death and Sufferings of Jesus Christ. *p.* 240.

- CHAP. XIX.

Adoption-grace proved to be the Fruit of Christ's Purchase, the excellency of this State opened in several particulars. *p.* 258.

- CHAP. XX.

The Confirmation of the new Covenant is the fruit of Christ's Purchase, proved by several Arguments. *p.* 280.

- CHAP. XXI.

The Heavenly Inheritance is the Fruit of Christ's purchase. *p.* 303.

- CHAP. XXII.

The second and third Assertions proved, showing that those vast Treasures of Christ are opened in and by the Gospel, that 'tis the Will of God they should be tendered to the chiefest of Sinners. *p.* 293.

- CHAP. XXIII.

Containing two branches of Information, what a great blessing the Gospel is, the greatness of their Sin that oppose the Gospel. *p.* 312.

- CHAP. XXIV.

Showing the poor and lamentable state of all Christless Souls. *p.* 323.

- CHAP. XXV.

Wherein Christ is set forth to Sinners, as a match worthy of their choice in regard of the Excellency of his Estate, the amiableness of his person, his lovely Dispositions, and other Considerations, to win the hearts of Sinners to be looking after this lovely Jesus. *p.* 334.

- CHAP. XXVI.

Objections answered, Counsels how to come to Christ. *p.* 353.

- CHAP. XXVII.

Showing the Folly of such as pursue earthly things, with neglect of Christ, considering the nature of those things; the Terms on which they are to be enjoyed, the Casualty that attends them, the Guilt such contract. *p.* 370.

- CHAP. XXVIII.

Containing a use of Reprehension to several sorts of persons, with Consolation to all sound Believers. *p.* 379.

- CHAP. XXIX.

Containing a use of Examination, Characters of such as have an Interest in Christ, and in all those glorious Treasures. *p.* 389

- CHAP. XXX.

Containing a use of Exhortation pressing Believers to several Duties. *p.* 401.

- DUTIES.

- 1 To Thankfulness. *ibid.*
- 2 To keep up a high Valuation of Christ. *p.* 407.
 - 3 Have all your Expectations from Christ, *p.* 411.
 - 4 Be contented with Christ alone. *p.* 412.
 - 5 Take up your delight in him. *p.* 413.
 - 6 Be not troubled at Wants, Losses, and Sufferings in this World. *p.* 416.
 - 7 Live upon your Treasure. *p.* 419.

- 8 Improve your Interest in this Treasure, to the enriching your own Souls. p. 421.
- 9 Live up to your Treasure. p. 430.
- 10. Commend Christ to others. p. 433.
- 11 Get Christ to be a portion to your Children. p. 434.
- 12 Long to be with Christ. p. 436.

Books sold by William Marshal.

Folio's.

- *JOsephus's* History, large folio Cuts.
- *Raleigh's* History of the World.
- *Mead's* Works.
- *Baker's* Chronicle.
- *Willson's* Dictionary.
- *Taylor's* Life of Christ.
- *Caril on Job*, 2 Volumes.
- *Horton's* Sermons.
- *Ambrose's* Works.
- *Usher's* Body of Divinity.
- *Clark's* Martyrology.
- *Clark's* Lives.
- *Cowley's* Works.
- *Dalton's* Country Justice.
- *Peirson* on the Creed.
- *Philip's's* English Dictionary.
- *Bloom's* Maps.
- *Bloom's* Britannia.
- *Roberts's* Key to the Bible.

- *Gurnal's complete Armor.*

Quarto's.

- *Goldman's Dictionary.*
- *Littleton's Dictionary.*
- *Baxter's Saints Rest.*
- *Vane's Meditations.*
- *Morning exercise at Cripple-gate.*
- *Suppliment to Morning Exercise.*
- *Baxter's Life of Faith.*
- *Dr. Bates on the Attributes.*
- *Cambridge Bible.*
- *Brown's vulgar Errors.*
- *Tuckney's Sermons.*
- *Owen of Justification.*
- *Flavill's Fountain of Life.*
- *Flavil's mystical Union.*
- *Flavil's Husbandry.*
- *Gilem's of Temptation.*
- *Dr. Gibson's Sermons.*
- *Dr. Raleigh's Sermons.*
- *Polhill's divine Truth.*
- *Peirce's Sinners impleaded.*

Octavo's.

- *Cole's Dictionary.*
- *Hall's Contemplations.*
- *Coley's Astrology.*

- *Taylor's* living and dying.
- Government of the Tongue.
- Ladies Calling.
- *Baxter's* 32 Diversions.
- *Featley's* hand-maid to Devotion.
- *Cave's* Primitive Christian.
- *Patrick's* Witness, first and second part.
- *Puler's* Moderations of the Church.
- *Polhill* of Faith.
- *Ashwood's* Heavenly Trade.
- *Stockden's* Works.
- *Allen's* Works.
- *Barrow's* Works.
- *Locker's* Works.
- *Steel* of Uprightness.
- *Peto* on the two Covenants.
- *Dr. Owen's* Catechism.
- Spiritual Warfare.
- *Vincent's* terrible ways.
- *Gouge's* Works.

Twelve's.

- Duty of Man.
- *Pilgrim's* Progress.
- *Fox's* end of time.
- *Doolittle* on the Sacrament.
- *Dyer's* Cabinet of Jewels.

- *Dyer's Voice to London.*
- *Rider's Young man's Duty.*
- *Great Assize.*
- *Practice of Piety.*
- *Hugh Peter's last Legacy.*
- *Baxter's poor man's Family book.*
- *Barton's Hymns on the Psalms.*
- *Marshal's Epigramms.*
- *Pool's Dialogue against Popery.*
- *War with the Devil.*
- *Flavil's Saint indeed.*
- *Flavil's Token for Mourners.*
- *Ashwood's Groans for Zion.*

FINIS.

P-BA-2. The heavenly trade, or the best merchandizing the only way to live well in impoverishing times. A discourse occasioned from the decay of earthly trades, and visible wastes of practical piety in the day we live in, offering arguments and counsels to all, towards a speedy revival of dying godliness and timely prevention of the dangerous issues thereof impending on us. By Bartholomew Ashwood Minister of the Gospel. - Ashwood, Bartholomew, 1622-1680.

THE Heavenly Trade, OR THE Best Merchandizing: The only way to live well IN IMPOVERISHING TIMES. A Discourse occasioned from the decay of earthly Trades, and visible wastes of Practical Piety in the day we live in, offering Arguments and Counsels to all, towards a speedy revival of dying Godliness and timely prevention of the dangerous issues thereof impending on us. By BARTHOLOMEW ASHWOOD Minister of the Gospel.

Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life,
Joh. 6. 27.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you,
Matth. 6. 33.

Ne nimium operae consumas in rebus levissimis, fugax aetas, & vitreares valetudo, non quibuslibet est impendenda: quaedam despicienda sunt, & animus ad magna est erigendus,
Eras.

〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 .
Isocrat.

London, Printed for Samuel Lee near Pope's Head Alley, over against the Church in Lombard-street, 1678.

To my honored Friend M^r. Jeremy Holwey, Merchant in BRISTOL.

SIR,

BOth Equity and Interest do give you a peculiar claim to this offspring of my weak Labors, it being born in your House, and drawing its first breath in your famous City. 'Twas with you I had the occasion, and from your Self the practical encouragement to treat on this Subject; while under your roof I enjoyed for divers weeks the advantage of your converse, and beheld in your expressions and conversation a fair display of this Heavenly Trade. This cherished my hopes that a discourse of this nature might find or help to make more such Traders in your August and Merchandizing City: A place (among its many Ornaments) made happy with Gospel enjoyments, and the lovers of Truth and Peace. 'Tis Religion is the honor and prosperity of a People, *It lays their foundation with Agates, and makes their borders of pleasant stones,* Isa. 54. 'Tis like the Crown of Solomon, *with which his Mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart,* Cant. 3. 11. This gives them *Peace within their*

walls, and Prosperity within their Palaces, Psal. 122. 7. It brings down a blessing on their Basket and Stores, fills their Chambers with all precious and pleasant riches, Prov. 24. 4. And decay in this Heavenly Trade, is doubtless one reason of those wastes in men's earthly Trades: There is no such way for men to thrive in their own interests, as to be faithful to God's interest; As 'twas said of Caesar, that by setting up Pompey's Image, he established his own, whereas a decay of Godliness brings a Moth on men's earthly Trades also: Hos, 5. 11, 12, Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the Commandment, therefore will I be unto Ephraim a Moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness. Gregory gives this reason why Dives was tormented in his Tongue, because he talked much of Religion, but practiced little, *Verba legis in ore tenuit quae opere servare Contempsit*. We live in an age of much talking of God, but of little walking with God; Men's tongues are tipped with Heaven, but their hearts and feet sunk into the World, and are full of Pride, Vanity, and Deceit. What was said of Diogenes Synopensis, That in Opinion he was a Stoic, but in Conversation an Epicure, may be sadly reflected on many Professors in this Age, who espouse strict Principles, but lead loose Lives, and only Treat for Heaven, but Trade for Earth. But Sir, You have not so learned Christ, or received this Spirit which is of the world; but that which is of God, 1 Cor. 2. 12. Your devotedness to the Lord making your earthly Interests subservient to things above, with your Zeal, Courage, and Constancy in the way of God, and natural care for the things of his Glory, do bespeak you to be a Trader of another Country, whose work and wages are above; And certainly whatever men think, a walking with God in his appointments, and a conscientious care in everything to please him, will one day appear to be the greatest interest even in their eyes who now despise it; neither is there at present anything in the ways of God which Souls have cause to be ashamed of, however clothed with Calumny and Scorn by men; nor can they who walk in them in Truth, be deprived of any real interest by the utmost severity of those that would run them down, And were there no other Argument to persuade men to the choice and pursuit of Godliness, this were sufficient, even that relief gracious Souls find from a reflection on their Uprightness, to bear them up under their greatest sufferings; yea, that serenity, peace, and sweet acquiescence of Spirit which sincerity affords them under the most dreadful issues which divine pleasure may allot them here. It must needs set Religion above all other Interests (its Enemies themselves being Judges, if they would be rational) that the worst things of Holiness, even then when Believers are under the saddest Circumstances, are chosen and preferred by them above the best things of the world; yea, they are thought a good bargain when purchased with their greatest Sufferings. Surely humor will not engage such who know the usefulness of earthly Comforts, and have least reason to be prodigal of them, to expose themselves, and their dearest concerns in the world unto ruin, but for what they are persuaded, is far better. Hebr. 10. 34. Nor can it be thought obstinacy or hypocrisy in those who know their own hearts, and the terrors of the Lord, to persist in those ways that would cost them their earthly All, and lay them open to divine wrath too, should they be false and disobedient. Certainly, did not prejudice and passion blind men's eyes, the calm exercise of their own light would restrain them from such an uncharitable censure of those that desire to fear God, though they walk in some ways different from their understanding, while they labor to approve their integrity to God and men, and are found faithful to that measure of light they have received. But possibly this

Piece may not fall into such hands, or be permitted long under their eye: My hopes, at least my desires are, that it may prosper with those who profess better things; And if it shall please the Lord (who sometimes uses clay and spittle, and Goats hair, and counts the things that are not as if they were) to make this of any service to your Self and Family, and unto those who profess his Name in your City, for whom I have so high respect in the Lord, it will abundantly compensate the labor, and answer the design of him who is and desires to approve himself

SIR,

Your Servant in Christ Jesus Barthol. Ashwood.

TO THE READERS, ESPECIALLY Those who are the more peculiar Objects of my Care, Love and Labors.

NOTwithstanding the high Pretensions to *Light* and *Wisdom* in the Times we live in beyond some former Ages, there is no small measure of *Soul darkness* fallen upon us in this Evening-part of our *Gospelday*, Isa. 42. 19, 20. *Who is blind but my servant? or deaf as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant? seeing many things but thou observest not: opening the ear, but he heareth not.* Were not a Veil on men's minds, could it possibly be that *CHRIST* should be so little precious in this *Day of revelation* and *Land of visions* in which we live? Was there ever a Nation in the World to whom *Christ* hath been so unveiled and manifestly held forth *Crucified* before their eyes? and yet not to know the *Day of their visitation* and *the things of their peace*, be-speaks shameful Ignorance. Is not this a manifest Evidence of men's *Darkness* and *folly*, to be fondly taken with *Airy Notions* and *vain Speculations*, and all the while neglect that *Wisdom which maketh wise to salvation*, to leave the *Fire of the Sanctuary*, and sit down by *Sparks of their own kindling*: That having a Kingdom before them which *cannot be shaken*, and an *Inheritance that fadeth not away reserved in the heavens*; they should turn again to the *beggarly Elements of this world*, loathing their *Manna* and *Angels food*, and longing again for the *Onyons and Garlic* they had vomited up; to leave *tried Gold* for that which *perisheth*; to let Heaven drop out of their hands, and hug the World in their hearts; to neglect that *Merchandise* which brings in *unsearchable riches*, and drive a Trade for such Goods whose *fashion passeth away*: Do plainly argue Ignorance and folly. Are not the *silver streams* of *Jordan* better than *the muddy waters* of *Assyria*, and our *Rock* above *the worldlings Sandy bottoms* (they themselves being Judges?) and yet to lose those *pleasant streams* for that *filthy puddle*, is folly indeed. Will Eagles stoop to Flies? Can Souls who have ascended into *the light of the Lord*, and seen the *things that differ*, and had *acquaintance* with *things above* upon choice, come down again and prey upon the *Carrion Comforts* and *Interests* of a dying World? O no. Can a Maid forget her *Ornaments*, or a Bride her *Attire*? Oh *foolish people* and *unwise* to be unmindful of *the Rock that begat them*, to leave *the Snow of Lebanon*, to let down such a gainful Trade as *Holiness* is, that they may pursue a *Soul-cheating*, *starving*, *damning* World: demonstrates *folly* and *madness* in such as have the knowledge or hopes of *better things*: are ye so foolish having *begun in the spirit*; are ye now *made perfect by the flesh*? Gal. 3. 3. To obviate or retrieve this *folly* is the design of this ensuing Discourse, which comes not in the gaudy Dress of curious Art, or in the *Excellency of man's*

wisdom, but in the plainness and demonstration of the truth as it is in Jesus. I am not ignorant that Books have their Fashions as well as men, and Discourses that come not forth in the Modish Garb laced with Elegancy and stuffed with Lofty strains, scarce meet with a Look except of Scorn and Contempt from the Wits of this Day: But I love not to follow them who *darken counsel* by words, and by their sublime Speculations and abstruse Notions, lead men into Clouds of their own creating, and while they show Themselves lose their Readers. *There are many tricks and devices* (saith Mr. Dod) *that some men use in Preaching*, (which we may apply also to Writing) *but it seldom does good; the pure Gospel and that Preaching which the World counts foolishness, is that which works most kindly.* Christ's own Weapons are the fittest for his own service, and when there is least of man in God's work, then usually does there most of God appear. The business of this Book is not to feed thy *Curiosity*, but to find out thy *Conscience*, and the likeliest way to That is through the *plains of Intelligible truth*. I cannot expect that Discourse should lead others towards Heaven, that has not its self drained and refined from Earth: Expect not in this anything that may please thy carnal mind, but what may profit thy teachable and obedient Soul; and before thou ascendest the Throne to judge it, take the Balance of the Sanctuary and weigh it: Be advised to go beyond such Readers who only view the Title, read the Epistle, glance a little on the Book, and if they find not something singular and pleasing their curious Fancy, lay it aside; this shows a full Stomach but an empty Soul, and is a Practice that overturns the Writers pains and the Readers profit; be persuaded to read it thoroughly and impartially, and weigh it seriously, and thou mayest find something that concerns either thy Understanding, Affection, Conscience, or Conversation.

I have chosen to prosecute the Metaphor of (*Trading*) throughout this Discourse, having a principal respect to that sort of persons in the design of this Book, and the better to insinuate into the mind of ordinary Christians the knowledge of *heavenly things*, of men's *duties, neglects and backsliding*. If thou art one who never madest a profession of God farther than blindness, formality or superstition might lead thee; and a stranger to this great pleasant and gainful Trade of Godliness, here thou mayest find Arguments to persuade thee to this rational and necessary Undertaking in order to Life and Salvation, Grace and Glory, with Counsel and Instructions how thou mayest attain to this high and heavenly *Calling*.

If thou be one who drivest furiously after the World, pursuing thy earthly Interest with greediness, neglecting the things that concern thy *peace*, and subjecting the Concerns of Heaven and thy immortal Soul to the poor and perishing Trifles of this World; here thou wilt find reasons to convince thee of that *folly*, and helps to loosen thy heart from that ensaring Soul ruining bondage.

If thou meetest with Rebukes upon thy earthly Interests, and crosses on thy Affairs and undertakings in the World, this Book will help thee to find out the Cause of thy Disappointments, and those consuming Moths on thy Estate, and Instruct thee to get *Honey* out of these *Rods*, *good* from these *evils*, and how to Comport with *Divine ends*, and thy own *Advantages* by such *Dispensations*.

Hast thou made a Profeossio of Godliness, and formerly driven this *Heavenly Trade* to *Advantage*, but art now fallen back and decay'd in thy *Spiritual substance*, and become poor in

thy *Inward man* and towards God? here mayest thou find the *Discoveries* and *Evidences* of a *backsliding Soul*, with the *Causes* of it: thou wilt also meet with *Awakening Considerations* to Affect and Afflict thy heart with the sense of thy evil *Case*: Here also mayest thou know whether thy *Decays* are *cureable*, and what *course* thou mayest take to get out of thy *languishing estate*.

Art thou one that doest profess this *Heavenly Trade*? this Piece will tell thee what thy *work* is, and wherein this *Employment* lies; what are the *Important duties* of *Piety* to be driven on every Day, with *Directions* and *Rules* about it.

If thou art one who keepest up this *Trade for Heaven* and thriveest therein, here hast thou *marks* of a *Prosperous Trade* in *Godliness*, and several *Doubts* cleared up about thy *Soul-thrivings*, with those *Important Duties* opened which this *Peculiar Mercy* calls for: Gather out of this *Garden* what *Physic* or *Food* thou needest, and Apply and Improve it, praying for the Assistance of that Spirit that hath been frequently and solemnly begged both for the *Forming* and *Blessing* of this *Discourse* unto all that read it.

You who have been *Hearers* of this Subject, though in somewhat different Expressions suited to your *Capacity* and *Advantage* in the *Delivery* of it, have reason above others to *Receive* and *Improve* this: *Message* Twice sent unto you.

But you Especially my dear Friends, the *Care* of whose Souls is *upon me*, for *whose sake* chiefly these *Truths* were at first *Delivered*, and are now made *Public* have the most obliging reasons to get them *Copied* out upon your *Hearts* and in your *Lives*. To you *Firstly*, more Especially, yea, most *Affectionately* was and is this *Word of salvation* sent and presented again to your *View*, that you might have these things abiding with you, and that they might live in your *Eye* which have founded in your *Ear*, and be *speaking* to you when I shall be *removed* out of your *sight*, and be beyond all *Capacity* to serve your *precious* and *immortal Souls*, that when I can plead no more for God or with you, I may in this be *speaking* to you and others in the behalf of Christ, and *glorious* though *despised Holiness*. This has been the prevailing Argument with me to discover my weakness to the *World*, and expose myself to the *censure* or *scorn* of some.

I have the greatest reason to expect from you the *Entertainment* of these *Truths*, who have *chosen* and *received me in the Lord*, to *declare the Gospel of his Son* to you: You also have known my *Labors*, *Infirmities* and *Afflictions* with you and for your sake; that for *Twenty years* space I have *served you in the Gospel*, in *reproach*, *wants*, *weaknesses*; *dangers* and *sufferings*, neither count I my life *dear* unto myself, so that I may *finish my course with joy*, and the *Ministry* which I have *received of the Lord Jesus*, to *testify the Gospel of the grace of God*: yea. being so *affectionately desirous of you*, I have been willing to have *imparted* to you not the *Gospel of God* only, but also *my own Soul*. Because you were *dear* unto me, you know and have *acknowledged* the suitableness of this *Subject* unto your own *Cases*, and how *evidently* the *condition* of most of you is *opened* here and *suited*, by the *convictions*, *counsels*, *reprehensions*, & *consolations* of this *discourse*; there are some among you that I am *jealous of with a godly jealousy*, lest I should have *labored in vain* for you, and your *minds* be *corrupted* from the *simplicity of the Gospel* through the *temptations* of this

present world: I have often cried aloud in your ears against the sin, and have warned you of the danger of an earthly spirit and conversation, and do tell you now even weeping, that such are enemies to the Cross of Christ, who mind earthly things, until you are crucified to the world, you have no saving benefit of the cross of Christ, or can ever behold the face of God in heaven, until you are redeemed from the earth; all your Profession, Parts, Duties and Enjoyments will be but so many Witnesses against you, if after all you are lovers of this present World: Coveting to be rich will also make your Souls poor, and deprive you of the refreshments of his presence and consolations of his blessed spirit, and will be a manifest evidence that you have little of those pleasures that are from above. 'Twas said of pious Mr. Bain, That he sought not great matters in the World, being taken up with comforts and griefs to which the World was a stranger. The more a Soul converses in heaven and lives upon the first fruits of the other world, the less will he be taken with things below: when Abraham came to live by faith, and in a view of that City whose Maker and Builder is God, the Plains of Sodom and Spoils of Canaan were to him but mean things; I never cared much for the world (saith one) since I came to know better things. You have tasted that the Lord is gracious; you have fed on the fat things of his house, and have found a day in his Courts better than a thousand elsewhere, and must be self-condemned if you prefer not God above Ten thousand Worlds, and count the enjoyment of himself riches enough; yea, if you esteem not the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. 'Twas a brave speech of that noble Galeatius when he had left his Honor, Interest and Relations for Christ and the Gospel sake: I have saith he, riches honor and joy enough while in this Cottage I may live in the Church of God, enjoy his Word and People, and have time to converse with God by holy meditation, and with my Friends about God's great goodness to me in my Conversion, cursed forever be that Religion which weds men to the World, and divorces them from God.

There are others of you (I fear) fallen back in your *spiritual state*; former days were better than now, and the shadow gone back some degrees upon the Dial of your hearts, who it may be have left your *first love*, have lost your *spiritual taste*, more dead to the things of God, Cold and Formal in Duty; possibly you have hid your face from God, and he hath compassed himself with a cloud before you. You have neglected your walks with God, and he hath withheld converse with you: For the recovery of such from whence they have fallen to their first love and labors, is part of this Discourse framed; hear what the Spirit saith therein, Attend and Obey those Counsels, return to your first love, and do your first works, lest the Lord take the Candlestick out of his place, and leave you in that wilderness into which you wander.

Some of you who are *fearers of God* yet walk in darkness, and see no light, have your continual Exercises and frequent Complaints, that he who should have comforted your souls, is removed far from you: My Advice to you is, to walk in the light when you sit in darkness, and wait for the light when the even shadows are upon you. 'Tis but a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry; the Son of righteousness is upon his journey towards you, and 'twill not be long ere it be risen upon you.

Are there any of you who have better days, does your Bow abide in strength, are your Affections warm towards your Beloved, and your hearts sometimes burn within you while he is talking to you in his Word? Do you long for his Appearance, and delight in his Presence, and press hard

after him in his *Appointments*? Do you love the *Word of his mouth* more than your *necessary food*? Can you be content to let your own things sit, that you may *seek the things that are Christ's*? and *sit at his feet*, when others are in the *market-place*, and abroad in the crowd of their *earthly affairs*; Are you alone with *Christ* in a corner? If so, your *Mercy* is *singular*, and your *Obligations* strong to be *entirely the Lord's*; to be no more your own, but *wholly devoted to his fear*, to live a *life of praise and welpleasingness unto God*, to think well of *Christ*, and bear his pleasure; to be *patient in tribulation*, continuing *instant in prayer*, to long for the *Well-head* of your *mercies*, and to be beginning a *life of glory* while you are here in a *life of grace*. I shall close up *this Discourse* with a few words of general Advice to you all.

First, lay the *foundation* sure on which you build all your *Temporary labors* and your *Eternal hopes*: You cannot be too certain, in that on which depends your *all*. Consider how often *Satan* hath *battered down*; yea, your own hearts have disputed away *those Evidences* on which you could sometimes have *adventured your Souls*, and yet the *strongest Assaults* are to come, and the *greatest Forces of Hell* reserved for the *last Battle*. Bottom not your hopes on anything short of a *Crucified Christ*, not on your *Frames*, but on his *Favor*; not upon your *Duties*, but his *Righteousness*; nor upon any kindnesses received from him short of a *saving union* with him; rest not till your *Convictions* be *clear, deep and distressing*, such as *discover sin to be the greatest evil* in its *nature and fruits*, and its *residence and indwelling* in you, a *burden intolerable*; such *Convictions* as will not admit of *after favor or reconciliation* to the least *known or most beloved sin*; that can make your heart to bleed afresh upon every new *touch* of it, and never at rest till the whole kind of it be destroyed out of your *Souls*: Labor to see such a *Beauty in Christ*, as may render all *Created Glory* as *dross and dung* in your *Eye*; stop not till you come to the *Excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ* as your *Lord*; till you can *discern* such a *worth* in the *Person* as well as *Purchase of Christ*, as will make you content to throw all *over board*, to *take in him*, and be *sick of love* till you *enjoy him*: be sure your *close with Christ* be right with his whole *Person, Will and Designs*, to be *one with him* upon all his *own terms*. And that this *union* be not in *Judgment and Consent* only, but in *Heart and Will* from your *whole Souls*, finding an *inward likeness and love* to him in your *renewed nature*.

2ly, Go on towards *perfection*, press after *nearer and more complete Conformity* to the *Nature and Will of Christ* every day: Think how short your *highest measures* do come of *perfect holiness in the sight of God*; set the *Pattern* before you every day, that you may be the more *ashamed* at your *present attainments in Grace*, and more provoked to *higher Aims and Atchievements*; compare yourselves with them that are above you, with the *Rule of Righteousness*, and with all your *Obligations, Time, Means and Mercies*, to keep you *humble in your own eyes*; look upon your *Wants* as well as *Enjoyments*, that you may be as *poor in spirit* as in *condition*; that which is *wanting in you* cannot be *numbered*: *Who am I and what is my people that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?* 1 Chron. 19. 14. Keep low thoughts in yourselves under the *greatest services you do for God*, and the *highest honor you receive from God*. Alas (said the Lord Du-Plessis to one that commended him for the improvemt of his Talent) *What is there of mine in that Work?* say not that it was I, but *God in me*. I know more (saith another) *by myself to abase me, than any man could know to extol me*. So much *humility a man hath, so much grace he hath and worth and no more*: Dr. Har.

3ly, Keep up a *life of faith* upon *Christ* in the *promises*: As the *first quickening* of a Christian is by *faith*, so his *whole life* is maintained by *believing*; no longer than you *believe* can you *live*: Gal. 2. 20. *Your life is hid with Christ in God*. Draw fresh *Influence* thence by *faith* upon your *Hopes*, *Comforts* and *Graces* under every *want*, *fears* and *deaths* within you; make not your *graces* or *duties* the grounds of *believing*, but *encouragements* to *Faith*; study more the *nature*, *freeness*, *fullness* and *unchangeableness* of *redemption grace*, and get acquaintance with the *promise* and *persuasions* of the truth of them in *Christ*: *To live only by faith* (saith Dr. Harris) *and a bare Promise without a pawn*, and *to give all to free grace and to Christ alone*, are *mighty works*; and some of those things he found most difficult.

4ly, Walk in *Love* as *Christ* hath loved you: This is the *life of Heaven*, and *beginning* of that *Excellent glory* which shall never be *removed*; there is nothing does make thee more like to *God*, more *near* and *dear* to him, and more fit for his use than this *Grace of Love*: Let your *Affections* be extended as large as the *objects* of them; unto *God*, his *Word*, *Ways* and *People*; love *God* to obey him; his *Ways* to walk in them, his *People* to *delight* in them, to *sympathize* with them, to *mourn* over them in their *sufferings*, to *help* them in their *necessities*, to *rejoice* with them in their *consolations*, counting their *mercies* your own, which is no easy part of your duty. *It is far harder* (saith one) *to adopt another's Comforts than his Sorrows*, and *to hold ones self exalted in another's exaltation*.

5ly, In the enjoyment of the *World*, get above it, and while you *live in it*, be daily *dying to it*; so much as you get above the *World*, so *near* are you to *God* and *Glory*, and no *nearer*. Covet not another's *Goods*, the *World* is none of your *Portion*, if *God* be your *part*. Oh how much beneath the *Extraction*, *Dignity* and *Duty* of *Saints* is the love to, and life upon this low and dirty *World*: leave not *Children's bread* to feed on such *Carrion dogs-meat*, and *filthy excrements*, with which *Satan* feeds his *Laborers*. But having spoke largely of this matter in the *Book*, I advise your *Eye* and *Heart* thither for *Conviction* and *Counsel* herein.

6ly, Make much of the *Time* and *Means* of *Grace* while you have them; your *Glass* runs, your *Sun* hastens, and the *Wind* blows when and where it listeth. O make use of *Time* while you have it: *God* who made nothing in *vain*, hath *work* for every hour of your *short Day*; work as *hard* as you can, you will find *something* to do when you come to *die*. *Loss of time* (saith Dr. Harris on his *Death-bed*) *sits very near upon me*; *work, work apace*, assure yourselves *nothing will more trouble you when you come to die, than that you have done no more for that God which hath done so much for you*. Wait upon and walk in the *light* while you have it; if *Grace* thinks it not much to spread a *Table* for you, do not you think it much to spare time to sit down at it: You that find so many things to do when *God* calls for your *Company*, will shortly find that *God* hath other things to do than to mind you when you need his *Cordials*; how glad would you be of enjoying *time* to hear the voice of *peace* when you are entering upon *Eternity*, who are not at leisure now to hear *Divine precepts* while in the *possession of time*: neglect not *hearing praying seasons*, which are your *Seed-time* for *Glory* O that every day (saith one) were a *Sabbath* or a *Fast-day*, for then I should be well. Buy not your ease or earthly interest at so dear a rate as the *loss of salvation, time* and *helps*: Evidence your love to *God* by your *valuation* of his *Presence* in his *Ordinances*; How can you long for the *enjoyment of God in Heaven*, who care not for his

company on Earth, or his glorious appearances in his Sanctuary. Stick at nothing that may yield him delight or give him glory, how expensive soever it be on your dearest Comforts and Interests: When one told Du Moulin in his sickness that he wronged himself by speaking so much; 'Tis true, said he, but I will die glorifying of God. A Soul that supremely loves God, will count nothing too much to do, part with or suffer that may bring him glory.

7ly. Rest not in your enjoyments of means, without improvement of them: What's a full Table if thy Soul abide empty, and frequent feeding, if thy inner man languish: 'tis a time of dying and secret waste in most Christians; O covet earnestly the best gifts, that you may flourish in the Courts of God, and grow as the Cedars of Lebanon; that you may be thoroughly furnished to every good work, and your profiting appear to all men: Be deeply sensible of your little Fruit under great dressing, and be humbled; take heed of spiritual pride, and puffings up in your apprehended Excellencies or Privileges; 'tis the humble soul is the most thriving soul; keep your Hearts pure, and Lives unspotted: As sound bodies, so sincere souls are most growing: pare off luxuriant branches as they sprout out, and lay the Ax to the root of them every day; keep up Faith in the Promises of Soul-prosperity to them that serve him in sincerity, Psal. 92. 12, 13. and stay on Christ by Faith for help: when you see nothing but Discouragements in yourselves, and when you are afraid to apply the Promises, even then bless God for them. These Promises, said a doubting Soul, are none of mine, yet I am glad that God hath made them, and for their sakes that shall partake of them; Mr. White.

8thly, Neglect not secret transactions between God and your Souls, to which I fear some of you may be too great strangers: no wonder that Intimacy between God and Souls does fall, when they are seldom together in retirements. Oh take heed of passing by thy Closet or secret corners one day, Matth, 6. 6. or posting out of them before God and your Souls have some Converse together; and be not only constant in it, but careful to please God in the spiritual performance of it: Let not Custom or Formality deprive thee of the sweetness of that bread eaten in secret. You are in this Book more fully called upon to these Duties of secret Prayer, meditation, heart-searching, and watching-work, to which I refer you.

9ly; Make conscience of every Duty you owe towards others, in your Relations, Places and Callings; keep up Family duty, or write *Heathen* upon thy doors, that the World may know thee: If you neglect God's service, he will not be your Sanctuary; Prayerless houses have broken walls and doors, and no defense against the least evil: If you will not give God your breathings, how can you think he will give you his blessings: 'Tis sad that any, especially such whom God hath taken into his house, should shut him out of their doors; or give him such pitiful service as some do, scarce ever reading the Scriptures in their Families from one Lord's-day to another; only send him a little hasty fruit, some short and shuffled prayers once a day: no wonder that salvation come not to their houses, or converting grace into their families, but a flying Roll is over their habitations, and the black marks of Ruin on their Children and Servants: think it not strange that God makes thy pleasant Roses pricking Briars and Thorns to thee, who hast made them Spears and Swords to him. Oh keep with God in every duty of his service, your Relation, Calling and Employments.

Lastly, in every condition *walk with God, and wait for God*; if he lead you *in ways of mercy*, follow him *in ways of duty*. If you have *Comforts* take heed of *doting on* or *abusing of them*: when he sends you *Afflictions* receive them; be not *fainting* nor *froward* under them, but *sanctify God in them*, and by their *hand* return to him; do not over-love your *mercies*, or over-fear your *troubles*: prepare for *Changes*, but live upon *Immutability*, and be settled under all your *unsettlements*; count nothing *strange* but *sin*, and nothing *hard to bear*, but the *absence or anger of a gracious God*: lose not your *fears in times of peace*, neither cast away your *confidence* in the *day of trouble*: let your *Lamps* be always *burning*, that you may see *the way of your duty* in the *Night of your danger*; and how to get in *Comfort* in your *Adversity*; and let your *loins be girt*, that you may be ready both to do your *work* and to *meet your wages*; and be always *looking and waiting for the coming of your Lord*, who will welcome you in the *Acceptance of your Duties*, uncloath you of your *sins and sufferings*, and crown your *sincerity and faithfulness* with a *Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you*; which is the *longed for Fruit* of all his *Labors* with you, and the *subject matter* of his *daily prayers* for you, who is in him *that was and is, and is to come*,

Your Affectionate Labourer, Fellow Servant, and Brother, Barthol. Ashwood.

THE Heavenly Trade, Opened and improved from

Proverbs 3. 14. For the Merchandise of it is better than the Merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

THAT Religion is under a very great declension in the day and place wherein we live, is too evident to serious observers; but too little laid to heart; or the prodigious effects, which usually follow such expiring godliness, duly trembled at. The character of the last and perilous times hath over taken us; men having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it, 2 Tim. 3, 5. A lamp, a name to live, notions parts, external privileges and duties, make up the Religion of the greatest part of professing Christians this day, while the vitals of Christianity visibly languish; where is that ancient Faith, Love, Zeal, Faithfulness, Courage, Patience, Self-denial, Mortifiedness to the world, Justice, Charity, Heavenly-mindedness, holy Converses, with that universal Piety and Unity, which made the Saints so famous in former generations, and had so great an influence on the enlargement of Christ's Kingdom, notwithstanding Pagan and Antichristian force against it? In the room of which, now pride, contention, formality, selfishness, hypocrisy, with the general gangrene of an earthly spirit, eats out the life and power of true holiness: The affecting sense of this dangerous evil gives occasion to this ensuing discourse, whose errand into the world, is not to plead for notion or faction, but to advocate for despised godliness; to help to awaken this sleepy age, and contribute a weak hand with abler shoulders, to give a lift (if possible) to fallen piety.

Amongst the many Advocates for piety, Solomon the Penman of this book hath done worthily, and laid out much strength of reason to attach the minds of men, and regain them to the knowledge and fear of God. This chapter is a system of those motives which he more largely

prosecutes throughout this book, to persuade men unto a thorough pursuit of holiness. Divers are the considerations he proposes to this end: taken

First, From the happiness of those that obtain and improve this pearl of grace, *verse. 13. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding:* (though with greatest labor and cost) and having gotten it, doth put it to its due use and improvement for the good of others; they, whoever they be, are blessed men and women, in regard of that profit, pleasure, peace, honor, safety and life (with the durable and eternal possession thereof) ensured to those that thus make Religion their business, from *verse. 13, to 27.*

Secondly, From the evil estate and end of those that pursue the ways of sin, which is in its nature vile and abominable to God, and as to its products, its shameful, cursed and destructive in the end; *verse. 23, 32, 33, 34, 35.*

The Penman knew that few would deal in those commodities and trade about divine things (all men seeking their own, and few the things of Christ) and therefore sets forth those wares with greatest commendation to buyers, that they might off the better. He begins with the gain that comes by godliness; a popular argument, and that which in other things puts men on great adventures, and restless labors towards their enjoyment. *The hope of advantage (saith Chrysostom) makes all difficult things easy.* What will not the Merchant do or suffer to get a little profit? a fit metaphor to set forth the diligence of a Christian in his race, and to insinuate the worth of those eternal things he is in chase of. *The merchandise of which is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain therethereof than fine gold.*

In the words, for methods sake, you may observe,

First, The subject, *wisdoms merchandise*, and the gain thereof.

Secondly, The Predicate, *Better than silver, than fine gold.*

Wisdom] Divine Wisdom, which in this book, (not to mention all its acceptations:)

First Is put sometimes for the Lord Jesus Christ, the 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, the word, and increated Wisdom of God, or the wisdom who is God; who is made to us of God, Wisdom, as well as Righteousness; the light of the world; the bright morning Star; the Sun of Righteousness, from whom are derived all those beams which irradiate the dark minds of men; and that Wisdom which makes wise to salvation; in whom are hid all the treasures of Wisdom: This is that shining Diamond, that Pearl of price, which outvies all the beauties of the world; the costly gems, and whole treasures of nature, in whom are unsearchable riches, the enjoyment and use of whom is soul enriching.

Secondly, For the Word of God, which is, *sure, making wise the simple; pure, enlightening the eye; and more to be desired than gold, yea than much fine gold;* called the Light of the Lord, *Isa. 2. 5. Come ye, and let us walk in the Light of the Lord;* the discerners of the thoughts and intents of the heart, *Heb. 4. 12.* which are able through the Spirit's illumination, to make one wise to salvation; and in this sense the Jews usually take Wisdom for the Word and Law of God: *In keeping of which there is great reward, Psal. 19. 11.*

Thirdly, By it is held forth a true and saving knowledge of God, part of that Original beauty which man lost by his first fall, and is regained by a second edition, and impress of the Spirit, when renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created it: this knowledge is called 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , not an idle speculative, but a lively operative knowledge, which consists of an illumination of the mind, and an infusion of faith and spiritual knowledge. *Parisiensis* calls it, *The gate of life through which God first enters into the mind of man*. In this Wisdom and Knowledge of God as the souls last end, with the way that leads thereto, and felicity that results from it, enlightened minds see greater luster than in fine gold, and all the bravery of this lower world.

Now this Wisdom is not only speculative, taking in the notion of truth, and pleasing the mind with refreshing views of things excellent; but practical, which disposes the soul to a fruition of God, so revealed to the eye of Wisdom, and to the obedience of all those counsels opened in order to it. Hence *Davenant* counts it an error in the Schoolmen to restrain Wisdom and Understanding to a contemplative life, when both have their equal reference to an active practical life and conversation: In regard of it's essence, it's an intellectual virtue; but in respect to the matter and use, it's practical and moral; and therefore he defines Wisdom to be *an infused knowledge of those things which lead to faith and a holy life, with a pious affection, inclining the soul to the application & practice of the things it knows*. This the Scriptures hold out to be that true Wisdom, which God requires of men: *And to man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding, Job 28. 28*. Job having spoken of the wonderful Wisdom of God in the works of Creation, beyond all the searches of human understanding, he tells them what is that Wisdom which God requires of man, not to screw into those unfathom'd deeps and mysteries of divine works in the Creation; not to feed on abstruse notions of things that concern them not; but this is true Wisdom, to fear God, to serve and obey him, and to depart from iniquity; So *Deut. 4. 5, 6. Behold I have taught you Statutes and Judgments, keep therefore, and do them, for this is your Wisdom and understanding in the sight of the Nations, which shall hear of all these Statutes, and say, Surely this great Nation is a wise and an understanding people. Wisdom from above* (says the Apostle) *is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, James 3. 17*. that is it makes men holy and fruitful in good works. So the Psalmist describes Wisdom, by holy walking; *I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way; Psal. 101. 2.* and *Ephes. 5. 15. Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise*. Holy walking is both the fruit of Wisdom, and the way to Wisdom. *Col. 1. 9, 10. You may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all knowledge and understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God*. And so the Wise man understands it in this book. *Prov. 1. 7. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom. That saith Aquinas) from whence Wisdom begins to be operative. Chap. 4. 11. I have taught thee in the way of Wisdom, and led thee in right paths*. Wisdom hath its way, and feet to walk in it; and this way of Wisdom is a right path; or, *right-holy-actions* (saith *Piscator*) so the Ancients take Wisdom. *Cicero* calls it, *The Art of living*. That Wisdom which doth nothing, is worth nothing. *All Wisdom lies in this one thing* (saith *Lactantius*) *That we know and worship God. Religion is wrapped up in Wisdom, and Wisdom in Religion. The work of Wisdom lies in this, that contemning earthly things, by which we were formerly held, serving and desiring these frail perishing*

things, we may now be directed to seek after the eternal reward of a heavenly Treasure: (So saith Aquinas) Wisdom is not to be considered only as it leads to a knowledge of God; but as it directs and orders the life according to divine Rules: And in this sense I take Wisdom here for true Holiness; that Wisdom which is manifested in a heavenly, gospel conversation, the merchandise of which is so advantageous.

*The Merchandise thereof: Objectively considered: The trading for this Wisdom, or Merchandizing about; so the Septuagint renders it: 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , To merchandize, is to buy and sell to get in, and put off goods, to take in, and lay out: this Wisdom is better than to get in gold, or anything that gold can buy, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 from 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , The word is, to go up and down here and there as Merchants do, to buy & vend their goods, to travel abroad now in one place, then in another; to be full of distraction, tumbling up and down to get and put off their wares: So busy a work is merchandizing, which takes up men's thoughts, time and labors to follow it, that they might get some advantage in the world. And such is the work of Religion; it is an active work, that calls for the heart, time and strength, if ever souls think to turn it to any account: And they that do thus, that make Religion their work, that lay out themselves and their all in pursuit of Heaven and spiritual things, whatever cost and pains they are at, if they can but gain these treasures of godliness, and obtain Wisdome's wares, they make a good bargain; for the profit that comes by these is far better than silver yea than fine gold: The Septuagint hath it: *Than to get the treasures of silver and gold; yea the best gold, beaten gold.**

There is another sense that one gives the words, taking Wisdom for the price by which those great and eternal things are got: (I rather like the instrument than the price) spiritual things are freely given, not bought, *Isa. 55. 1.* but those that lay out, and improve their Wisdom to gain grace, to promote godliness, and further salvation, make a better bargain: than they that lay out their treasures of gold and silver to buy the best goods on earth: In either sense it's a truth, Wisdom's merchandise is the best merchandise; to trade about spiritual things, grace and glory is incomparably the best trade: Whence observe this Doctrine or Position,

Doct. The Heavenly Trade is the best Trade; no Merchandise like Wisdom's Merchandise, and trafficking about spiritual and eternal things.

This Truth will evidently appear, if you consider,

- 1. *The nature of those things about which Wisdome's Merchants trade.*
- 2. *The Person they deal with.*
- 3. *The Terms they trade upon.*
- 4. *The gain that comes by it.*

Reas. 1. First, The things about which this Heavenly Trade is taken up, are in their nature things of greatest worth; wares which all the worlds treasures cannot purchase or compare with; they are all great, glorious and excellent things; nothing mean, contemptible and

useless, among all the goods that Wisdom proposes to souls choice and reception: *The favor of God: Redemption from Hell: Pardon of sin: Peace with God: The graces of the Spirit: Communion with Father, Son and Spirit, with Saints and Angels: Walking with God: Spiritual blessings: Joy in the Holy Ghost: Heavenly Treasures: Assurance of Glory:* These are all things of incomparable value, and the things that heavenly Traders deal about: And are not these far better in their nature, than the low, dirty, fading things of this world? No Onyx, Sapphire, Chrystal, Coral, Pearl, Topaz, Rubies, or the most costly pieces of nature, can compare with this pearl of price; this stone cut out of the mountains, or those spiritual treasures which are the subject of this Heavenly Trade: Let those be Judges who know the worth of things; call in Wisdom's Lapidaries, let God, Saints and Angels speak in this matter, their verdict will be, Wisdom's wares weigh down all, as to their innate excellency: I shall only propose three evidences to determine this case, and they are of unquestionable verity, and a sufficient proof of this truth. They are,

- 1 *Scripture.*
- 2 *Experience.*
- 3 *Reason.*

First, The Scriptures will tell you, there are no wares like heavenly wares, *Deut. 32. 32. Their Rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being Judges. His loving-kindness is better than life, Psal. 63. 3. And the light of his countenance, than the increases of corn, and wine, and oil, Psal. 4. 6, 6. The Law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver, Psal. 119. 72. Tried faith much better than gold that perisheth, 1 Pet. 1. 7. One day in God's Courts better than a thousand elsewhere, Psa. 84. 10. None in Heaven like to God, nor any on earth in comparison of him, Psal. 73. 25.* To make provision for the soul is the one thing needful; to enjoy Christ and spiritual things is the better part that shall never be taken away, *Luk. 10. 42.* The Kingdom of God is the chiefest thing to be sought for in the first place, *Matth. 6. 33.* first in affection, and first in time: Multitude of testimonies might be produced from Scripture to attest this truth, the Heavenly Trade is the best Trade; no goods like heavenly goods: what do you trade for here? is it for more than life you plot, you work for? you gain no more here than meat, drink, raiment, money, land, credit, and the like, which only tend to life; but the favor of God is better than life: one gracious look, one whisper of peace from God, weighs down all those: riches, pleasures, honors, do not make a happy man or woman; the Scripture never reports such blessed as have the abundance of these things, but rather miserable and unhappy, obnoxious to more snares and dangers; but godliness makes a blessed man, and pardon of sin a happy man, in God's account, *Psal. 1, 1, 2. and 32. 1.* whose testimony is truth itself, and to be relied on beyond all the grounds of blinded opinion, and false hopes.

Secondly, Experience assures men of this truth; that heavenly things are the best things: come to a Soul that hath tried both; one who hath had all that the World could afford on the one hand, and hath also experienced the favor of God, and spiritual things, and he will tell you of spiritual things, as *David* did of *Goliath's* Sword: *There is none like them 1 Sam. 21. 9.* And as *Solomon* of the virtuous Wife: These things above excel them all, *Prov. 31. 29.* And wisdom is

much better than Gold, and to get understanding rather to be chosen than Silver, Prov. 16. 16. This was Solomon's experience, who had the largest trial of any man, he had Houses, Vineyards, Gardens, Servants, Silver, Gold, the peculiar treasures of Kings; Greatness, Pleasure, Music, and whatsoever his eyes desired: and upon all gives this verdict; That wisdom excelleth folly as far as light excels darkness, Eccles. 24, 13.

Piety transcendeth Pravity; Heaven the World: Purity out-passeth Pleasures, as Light doth Darkness: When he speaks of things below, he tells you; *These are all vanity and vexation of spirit; he that labors for these, labors for the wind, Eccles. 5. 16.* and what he seeks, finds not; but when he speaks of wisdom, and spiritual things, he is as one that wants words to express their worth: *Wisdom is better than Rubies, and all the things that may be desired, are not to be compared to it, Prov. 8. 11.* David was a man who had tried various conditions in the World, he knew what trouble and comfort was, what youth and age was, what poverty and riches were; he had pleasures, honors, treasures, with the hearts of his people, and command of a Kingdom, and yet he tells you, *he had seen an end of all perfection: and that the light of God's countenance was better than all, and to be a door-keeper (a mean place) in the house of God, was more eligible, than to abide in the tents of wickedness: Psal. 119. 96. Ps. 4. 6. and 84. 10.* He chooses it as his one thing; *To dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple, Psal. 27. 4.*

Moses knew what honor was, and the pleasures of sin, and yet upon choice, prefer'd poverty with godliness, on the side of truth, before all the treasures of Egypt; *He refused to be called Pharaoh's Son, rather choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26.* He knew the Nobles of Egypt, and grandeur of Pharaoh's Court, and yet could value a poor persecuted people, that owned God, and cleav'd to him, beyond them all: *Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like to thee? Deut. 33. 20.* He counts God the none-such; *Who is like to thee, O God? Ex. 15. 11.* and Religion the best interest; *Set your hearts unto all the words, I testify; for it is not a vain thing for you, for it is your life, Deut. 32. 46, 47.*

Ask of Paul, and he will tell you what the fruit of sin, and driving furiously against Christ and his interest was, when the Lord Jesus came to reckon with, and to pay him off in the way to Damascus, Act. 9. 3, 4. whose blow he felt many years after, in Conscience twitches now and then, 1 Tim, 1. 13, 15. And upon the sense of that change Grace made on his heart and condition, he tells you, that *whatever he counted gain before, he saw now to be loss for Christ, Phil. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.* There was a time when he thought his letter-knowledge, blind zeal, birthpriviledges, legal duties, popular applause, Rulers favor, and protection by Power, to be great things; but now he alters his reckoning, and values the knowledge of Christ and interest in him, and grace derived from the power of his death and resurrection, to be an excellency that stained all his former glory.

The Jailor once thought it his greatest interest to swim with the stream, and sail by the compass of the times he lived in, to run down the ways and servants of the Lord Jesus, to obey his warrant, and secure the Saints feet in his stocks, Act. 16. ver. 24, to 34. but when once Grace takes him in hand, and plucks him through the strait-gate of conscience, terrors, and

repentance, into a state of regeneration, then he corrects his errors, and sees it his chiefest concern to espouse Christ, and to come over into the way of persecuted godliness; then to believe in the Lord Jesus, to be kind to his servants, and to drive the Trade of despised Christianity; he thought upon most mature consideration to be worthy of his choice and pursuit. *What treasures more rich or precious (said Agerius, when a prisoner for Christ at Venice) than everlasting life? where be greater riches or dignities more honorable than in Heaven? here droppeth the delectable dew, here floweth the pleasant Nector, here runneth the sweet milk, here is plenty of all good things; I have found a nest of honey in the entrails of a Lion, in the deep, dark Dungeon; I have found a Paradise of pleasure; where others do weep, I do rejoice; when others do shake and tremble, I do find plenty of strength, and boldness; in strait Bonds, and cold Irons, I have rest:* Fox, Vol. 2. pag. 181. Come to sinners also when they lie under Conscience, terrors, and the armed troops of death and hell invade their guilty hearts, and enquire their opinion concerning the goodness of their choice, the advantage of that bargain they have made, in parting with God for the World, in rejecting Christ for the Flesh, in turning their backs on holiness, for the service of sin; and their dejected countenances, their gastly looks, their unquiet jestures, their cries and groans, will soon tell you the sad resentment of their folly, and bad Trade they have driven in the ways of sin and death.

Thirdly, Nay, Reason itself rightly exercised, must needs grant, that heavenly wares are the best wares upon a fourfold consideration.

- 1 *Of their Rarity.*
- 2 *Their Price.*
- 3 *Their worth.*
- 4 *Their Duration.*

First, Heavenly things are rare, and therefore excellent; scarcity enhaunceth the price of things; Diamonds and precious stones are dear, because scarce, and more rarely had; plenty usually beats down the price of things, when rarity makes them costly; and such are Heavenly wares; they are the greatest rarity in the world; they are less known, more hardly come by, and seldomer enjoyed than anything this earth affords; there are few parts of the world where Wisdom's goods ever come: How many Countries are there where the Gospel is not known? or any sights of God, or things eternal ever had, but such as are discernible by the dini light of nature; and of those coasts which this days spring hath visited, to how few have the brightness of this light appeared? few places have the mysteries of the Gospel opened, or the deep things of God purely, fully and powerfully preached. It hath been the privilege of this Nation above many, to have a peculiar share of Gospel discoveries and truths, more spiritually and practically disclosed; and yet how few here, or in other parts, have any acquaintance with these glorious secrets? or arrive to this excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and Divine Mysteries? what a veil is there on the minds of most, under the purest administrations of the Gospel, that seeing, they see not; understanding, and yet not affected with the things they know; the spiritual beauty, and inward worth of them

being hid from their eyes. Most hearers (like *Balaam*) see heavenly goods with eyes half opened; and hence it is they no more value and pursue them: Could these poor, beggarly, dirty things of the world, be so preferred in men's affections and embraces, and so much time consumed upon them, with neglect of God, and things above, if the worth of Wisdom's Treasures were truly known and believed? no certainly, we may without breach of charity complain, *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Isa. 53. 1.* They are rare, in that they seldom appear in their own worth and excellency to the view of men: few know and believe the worth of heavenly things.

They are also goods that few trade on. It's a rare thing to see men much vers'd about heavenly things, and to drive a trade of godliness: There are divers possibly that barter for some of Wisdom's goods, for knowledge, peace, comfort, parts, external duties, &c. but few that carry on a full trade of godliness: An *Enoch*, a *Noah*, a *Caleb*, a *Joshua*, a *Job*, a *David*, a *Paul*, a *Barnabas*; here and there one in their several ages, that are thorough with God, and universal in the duties of godliness, heart purity, godly simplicity, universal holiness, converse with God, meditation on things above, tenderness of conscience, self-denial, mortifiedness to the world, heavenly-mindedness, spiritual converses, are commodities that few deal about this day. A thorough-paced Christian is the Phoenix of the place he lives in, and more seldom seen than a sparkling Diamond in the dark night we live in; few seek these goods in earnest, as they do the world and their own things, and fewer obtain them, *Phil. 2. 21.* Few I fear do live in the daily exercise of their graces, the warm breathings of their souls after God and spiritual things: few that find the white stone, that live in the view of their pardons, and sensible enjoyment of divine grace; and therefore these heavenly goods are rare things, seldom discovered, seldom known, seldom pursued, seldom enjoyed; and being rare, are excellent and desirable.

Secondly, Heavenly things are the best, because the most costly; this argument will not hold in all things: men may buy their desired comforts too dear, and give more for the world, pleasures, and their particular goods, than they are worth; but none can be deceived in Wisdome's wares; the glory of God, the salvation of souls, the enjoyment of grace and spiritual blessings, cannot be too dearly obtained; their price bespeaks the greatness of their worth, they being realities and things excellent in their nature and use; and if they are valuable according to their price, they must needs be transcendent; for the purchase of them cost God dear; he hath been at the expense of eternal counsels of manifold wisdom, of unknown love, of the gift and blood of his own Son, to procure these great things for Believers; and it hath cost him mighty power and patience to fit Believers for them, and maintain their enjoyment of them: *Ye are bought with a price, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot. He gave himself a ransom, an equal price, sufficient to purchase Believers to himself, with grace and glory for them: He so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, to give him to death, to the death of the Cross, to unspeakable torments, and all to procure these glorious and blessed treasures for Believers, Joh. 3. 16.* O costly wares! O dear bought goods! for which the pearl of price was sold, and the treasures of Heaven emptied out.

And as these stand the purchaser dear, so they are costly to the receiver also: The preparation for an interest in these treasures, is many times dear to Believers: O the wounds and launcings, the bleeding and heart-prickings, the pangs & throws that lead the van to this banner of love, which redemption-grace spreads over saved souls; these are the stormy tempests, the bloody skirmishes, that go before the Believers reception of purchased peace: Besides, the terms on which this good bargain is offered, though infinitely beneath its worth, yet as to the souls capacity are high, it's no less than a throwing of all its former treasures over-board, a parting with its nearest interests, and dearest comforts that lie in the way of its enjoyments; a plucking out a right eye, and cutting off a right hand; a denying (O hard saying!) of a man's own beloved self; a not only bearing when laid on, but a taking up not the Cross of Christ alone, but his own Cross too, whatever his own sins, or the hand of men and Devils may make for him; and in this plight not to sit down, or stand still, but to go on and follow Christ up the hill, through thick and thin, through scorns and thorns, day and night, through every change, in every state, home to the grave: No easier terms are given to the enjoyment of these riches, than a hearty consent to these proposals, which may expose the soul to an actual loss of his earthly all, and undergoing unknown trials, troubles and duties in the way: This bargain, though blessed in itself, yet is thought so dear by some, as that they break upon these very terms, and think God, grace and glory, too chargeable for their acceptance: This then sets off the worth of heavenly things, that they cost so much upon choice, and upon the highest reason and deliberation.

Thirdly, As their price is high, so is their worth great; they are good in themselves, and good to those that have them. *Hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your souls delight itself in fatness;* earthly things are not so, if good in themselves, yet they may not be good to those that have them: Riches are snares and swords to the owners thereof, and oftentimes do pierce them thorough with many sorrows: They are not only good, but absolutely good; other things are not so; earthly things are but conditionally good, when God sees them good, and makes them good, so long as he doth bless them, and let out something of himself through them, manna, food, raiment, nether springs, are so far good as God is pleased to convey out some spiritual good thorough them, or make them some way subservient thereto; these things cannot make men happy, or prove them so.

Nebuchadnezzar's greatness could not secure him from grazing amongst the beasts, and bedding with them in open fields, and under wetting dews, *Dan. 4. 33.* *Belshazzar's* pleasures could not guard him from the hand-writing against the wall, *Dan. 5. 5.* *Dives* was in the midst of plenty and honor one day and the next in hell. These lower things are but as cisterns and pipes, that signify nothing, except some waters be conveyed through them; no more do these, unless God let out his love, and promise through them. These heavenly things are not only absolutely good, but every way good; good for every man, in every state; good for poor and rich, for young and old, for all persons, all things; *Godliness is profitable for everything, 1 Tim. 4. 8.* There is no person or condition, but grace and spiritual blessings are good for, and can convey good thorough: There may be such a case in which nothing of this lower world can help: *Riches make them wings and profit not in the day of wrath.* In times of trouble and divine wrath, instruments of music carry no sweetness in them but spiritual mercies, they

help to comfort in the day of trouble: *In the multitude of sad thoughts within me thy comforts refresh my soul, Psal. 94. 19.*

Fourthly, Their duration proves them excellent, they are lasting wares; time works no change upon these, the Heavens will wax old, and as a vesture they shall be changed; but heavenly things never perish with the using: indeed our measures and sense of these may change, we may not always have the same degrees of grace or comfort; but this alteration is not in these things, but in us; as God; so grace and spiritual things, are in themselves the same, yesterday, today, and forever; good in prosperity, and good in adversity; good in life, and good in death: mutability mars all earthly comforts, they are things of no continuance; we may have them, but cannot hold them; like the fleeting Islands about the *Tenariff*, which persons see at a distance, but when they come near them, they vanish away: *The things that are seen are temporal, 2 Cor. 4. 18. We may have them, (faith Seneca) but cannot possess them; and they no sooner please us, but pass from us:* but unseen things are eternal: His love is everlasting; the graces of his Spirit abiding: *1 Joh. 3. 9. Whosoever is born of God sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him:* The joys of the Holy-Ghost are lasting: *That my joy might remain in you: Jer. 31. 3. Joh. 15. 11. Isa. 59. 21. Heb. 10. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 4.* Indeed acts of grace may fail for a time, but the habit of grace is never lost; frames, and streams of comfort may ebb, but the Fountain of Joy is never drain'd dry; Justification is immutable, Pardon of Sin is irreversible, the Saints treasures in Heaven are enduring, and can never fade away: Men may outlive their Treasures here, and see all their Portions go before them; but heavenly Interests, and immortal Souls, are of like continuance, and this greatens their value: Men estimate a little Land beyond a great Estate of uncertain continuance; and such are Wisdom's wares, there's no rotten goods among them.

Reas. 2. Secondly, The heavenly Trade is the best Trade, in regard of the Trader these Merchants deal with: Much of the comfort, safety and advantage of men's Trades, lieth in in the persons they trade with; if these be able, honest, affectionate, it conduces much to the thriving of those they deal with: What mischief comes to Traders, when Sellers are cheating, cruel, and extortioning? and when Buyers are false, and deceitful, and fail of their word? But none of these hazards can heavenly Traders be exposed to, from those they deal with: Indeed Wisdom's Merchants have to do with many, in the pursuit of their heavenly Trade, both by way of taking in, and letting out; but yet there is one great Merchant, with whom they principally deal, as to the management and issue of their whole Trade, in this Merchandise; they converse with God, Saints and Angels, but all is done through a Mediator; the Goods they receive is upon his interest; they deal with God through him; all their wisdom to trade, and rules to act by, come from him; the good and advantage of all their Trading, is secured by him; and though they may be concerned with many persons and things, (with all that duty and providence calls them too,) and, with the Chymist, are to extract some good from everything they deal with; and, like the Bee, gather Honey from weeds; yet this good they get from persons and things, is not in them, but conveyed through them from the great Purchaser with whom they deal; good from everything, to these heavenly Traders, and Heirs of Salvation is made over in the propromise; *(All things shall work together for good to them that love God, and are called according to his purpose,) Rom. 8. 28.* and

shall in due time, through these Conduits, be emptied out to Believers, by the hand of Jesus: So that it is properly, and strictly, but with one great Merchant those Traders have to do with for the goods they lay out, or take in; all other things and persons are but ways and instruments of his appointment, through which it shall be delivered; and this makes Wisdom's Trade so good, that the advantage of it is not depending on those secondary Agents, they have to do with but upon one, that is more excellent, both great and good, able and faithful to answer both his promises, and the expectations of those that deal with him. As to his Quality, and personal Grandeur, he is above all, and over all, King of Kings, and Lord of Lord's: *He hath a vesture on his thigh, whereon is written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lord's, Rev. 19. 16.* He is the Majesty on high, the Glory of Heaven and Earth; he hath Angels to worship him, Thrones and Principalities under him, all creatures in Heaven and in Earth to serve him. O! how honorable is it to deal with him, to whom Kings and Potentates pay their tribute, and to whom Men and Angels yield their homage? It's taking with Men, to converse with those that are above them, and to manage concerns with Persons of Honor, and Greatness: but here's one (Souls) that offers to trade with you, from whom all creatures receive their glory.

Yea, his Goodness answers his Greatness, and sweetly tempers his personal converse for the encouragement of the meanest Soul, that hath occasions with him: Greatness without Goodness, rather checks than relieves the hopes of those that are beneath it; but such is the sweetness of Christ's nature, as that his Glory doth but render his Goodness the more amiable; and his Goodness represents his Glory the more desirable; he values no man by his own worth, nor despises any for their low estate; the meanest Soul hath as easy access to him, and as gracious a reception, as persons of highest reputation with men: *I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones, Isa. 57. 15.* He is of a sweet and gracious temper, of a free and generous spirit, good to all, especially to those that seek him: this renders persons desirable, who would choose to deal with men of ugly natures, and churlish dispositions: affability and sweetness do strongly invite men to converse with such; and none like to Jesus for excellent goodness and loving kindness, for pity and bounty; goodness is his nature, mercy his delight; he takes pleasure in doing good; none that trade with him, but he will see them to be the better for it.

He is also able as well as good; Some men have excellent natures, but straitened capacities, they are willing to do good beyond their power; but it is not so with the Saints friend; *He hath all power in Heaven and Earth, Mat. 28. 18.* and can do whatever pleaseth him; he hath all creatures at his command; all the treasures of Heaven at his dispose; he is infinitely rich, and hath all that good that Souls can need or desire; he hath goods of all kinds of supply his Customers with; it is not so with men, no Merchant can furnish his Traders with everything they need; but one sells this ware, another that; here men sail to one Country for one Commodity, and to another Country for other Wares; they ransack Nature's treasures by Sea and Land, borrow something from every Nation, that hath a peculiar excellency, to make up their supplies, and furnish all their occasions, and pleasures: but the Lord Jesus hath all that in him, and at his dispose, which you need; he can supply all your wants, having all fullness

dwelling in him, *Phil. 4. 19.* He hath that in him which your Souls want, and the command of that you need for your Bodies also: He can give you the desires of your heart, *Psal. 37. 4.* He is able to make all grace abound towards you, that you always, having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work, *2 Cor. 9. 8.* Here's no less than five Alls, that flow from the ability of Christ to Believers; All grace abounding in them, All sufficiency enjoyed by them, All ways, in All things, for All good works: Did Souls but believe the all-sufficiency of Christ, they would not so perplex their spirits when in wants, with, what shall I eat? and with what shall I be clothed? and how shall I get this? and the other mercy I want, when all is offered to Wisdom's Merchants freely? for godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come; and these promises are in the hand of Jesus, for all that come to God by him: *All things are delivered to me of the Father, Matt. 11. 27.* The Lord Jesus is not only able to give you all that you ask according to his will, having all things delivered to him for that end; but he can keep it for you, and secure it to your use: *I am persuaded that he is able to keep that good thing I have committed to him, against that day, 2 Tim. 1. 12.* This all-sufficiency of Christ, is argument enough to new-Covenant-federates, for a calm and quiet dependence on him, and holy walking before him, *Gen. 17. 1.*

And that which is exceeding pleasing to Traders also, he is faithful as well as able; he is one of his word, that makes good all his promises to a tittle, to those that by Faith deal with him: *The holy one of Israel cannot lie, or alter the word that is gone out of his mouth; hath he said, and shall he not do it? hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Numb. 23. 19.* and *Rev. 1. 5.* He is the faithful witness; faithful is his name. *And he that sate upon the Throne was called faithful and true, Rev. 19. 11.* And faithfulness is his nature, in comparison of whom every man is a liar: *Let God be true, and every man a liar, Rom. 3. 4.* If the Lord Jesus were not faithful to his word and undertaking, the Father would not have trusted him with all the concerns of his glory and people in the world; neither had he been a fit person for the Elect to have committed unto him their souls, and all that is dear to them: Men promise one thing and do another; affirm a thing that is not, and this undoes many, the unfaithfulness of those they deal with; but it is not so with Christ, you may trust on his fidelity; Heaven and Earth shall sooner fail, than one tittle of all that he hath spoken: And therefore excellent is that Trade which is carried on with so excellent a Jesus.

Reas. 3. Thirdly, Weigh the terms on which this Trade is offered unto souls, and it will appear to be incomparably the best Trade. For to such as will set upon this Trade,

- 1 Goods to trade upon shall be freely given.
- 2 Wisdom to manage them shall be fully imparted.
- 3 A blessing on the due improvement of them shall be ensured.
- 4 To him shall the glory of all be rendered.

First, Wisdom's wares are freely tendered to all that will receive them, without money, and without price: *Come buy wine and milk without money and without price, Isa. 55. 1.* To him that is a thirst will I give to drink of the waters of life freely, *Rev. 21. 6.* Here Merchants cannot get or put

off goods at that rate; there's no going to the world's markets without money or credit; they that will have men's goods must pay for them, and many times have dealt bargains; but the Lord Jesus imparts his treasures freely, he paid dear for them, they cost his heart blood, but he spares them freely; no silver or gold will pass in those bargains. *Simon Magus* had his offered gold, for the Holy Ghost, thrown back with detestation and destruction to boot, *Acts* 8. 18, 19, 20. The terms on which this trade is driven are free; it cannot stand with the design of redemption grace, which is to advance the praise of the glory of grace, and to cut off all boasting, that every mouth may be stopped; to admit of anything from fallen man that might look like a compensation of salvation mercies; neither is there anything beneath Christ's merits, that can equalize the worth of heavenly things; and alas what have they to part with who have lost themselves? and to give to God, who have nothing but what they receive from him? It must needs therefore be altogether freely given, whatever is received in order to salvation: O blessed news to poor traders, that their poverty is no bar to this employment; the poorest may receive of Wisdom's wares, as well as the rich, seeing it is a free trade; and whatever makes a difference on the creatures part, is laid aside in the dispensation of spiritual mercies: Here are no Monopolies, or hard impositions upon this trade; no restraint from setting up, or selling out of Wisdom's goods, in any parts of the world. Cities have their enclosures, Corporations their bars to keep out strangers from their privileges; but in this trade all persons, be they who they will that will come over to Wisdom's Merchandise, have right to carry on this work of godliness in all places where ever they are. The heavenly trade is a free trade, goods freely given, and liberty to set up in all places, and to all persons.

Secondly, As goods to trade upon are freely given; so wisdom to manage them shall be fully imparted: This is a privilege which sellers on earth will not afford; you may have their goods at their price, but not instructions how to dispose them to your advantage; but this great Merchant in Heaven, with his wares, gives skill to use them: *I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way thou shouldst go, Isa. 48. 17. If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God: For the Lord giveth wisdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding: He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea every good path, Prov. 2. 4, 5, 6, 9.* The soul that seeketh for Wisdom's wares, shall with it find instruction how to use them: *I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shouldst go; I will guide thee with my eyes, Psal. 32. 8. He will be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, Job 29. 15.* The Lord Jesus will find all in this heavenly trade, goods, and tools, and skill, and strength, and all: *Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.*

Thirdly, A blessing on the due improvement of these shall be ensured to all his traders: *The wayfaring man shall not err, Isa. 35. 8. His workmen shall not labor in vain, 1 Cor. 15. 58. For his blessing is upon his people, Psal. 3. 8. Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee, and the light shall shine upon thy ways, Job 22. 28. The book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein, (this is the heavenly trade, to fulfill after God, and such shall prosper,) for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success, Josh. 1. 8. No*

Merchant will undertake to make their dealers prosperous; they must trade at great uncertainties, and run the adventure as to the issue of all: Blessings come not out of earthly shops, but from a divine hand, let come what will in the way: Blessings will surely come at the end to those that cast out at Christ's bidding, and trade by his instruction in Wisdom's Merchandise, let men curse, let devils vex, let North-winds blow, and blow down too their earthly comforts, yet God will bless them that fear him, everyone, *Psal. 115. 13.* He will bless them in life, and bless them in death; and is not this good trading, to be sure of blessings in the way, and blessedness at the end? *1 Pet. 1. 9.*

Fourthly, Another Condition in this Trade is, That God shall have all the glory, but they that trade with and for him shall have all the good that comes by it: This is the head Rent which the great Lord reserves to himself, and will not part with to another: *My glory will I not give to another, Isa. 48. 11.* This is his great design in all works of his hands, and gifts of grace, that he may be glorified: *The people shall be all righteous, the branch of my planting, the work of my hand, that I may be glorified.* This is God's great end in bestowing redemption mercies, to have all the glory to himself, *who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that we should be to the praise of his glory, Ephes. 1. 12.* Christians, the Rent must be the Lord's, the fruit shall be yours: *Whose keepeth the fig-tree shall eat the fruit thereof, Prov. 27. 18.* All the sweetness of the Vine is for those that possess it, and the herbs of the earth for them by whom it is dressed, *Judge. 9. 13. Heb. 6. 7. The righteous shall eat the fruit of his doings, Isa. 3. 10.* The present comforts of holiness are not mean; *Great peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them, Psal. 119. 165. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* Religion is the most pleasant trade; no delights like those that are in God, and fetched from him: God gives the world the bones, and keeps the marrow for his laborers; the godly feed on the wheat, the wicked have but the bran; look whatever good, comfort, credit and happiness Religion can afford here, and to all eternity, is their part that trade upon it: *Who planteth a Vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof, 1 Cor. 7. 9.*

Reas. 4. Lastly, The Heavenly Trade must needs be the best trade, because it is the most profitable trade: The advantage that comes by godliness, makes it the best employment in the world. We use to say, three things make traders rich, all which are found in the way of godliness.

- 1 Great Returns.
- 2 Sure Returns.
- 3 Quick Returns.

Now nothing turns to more account than a thorough pursuit of piety; whatever men think, Religion is the most thriving way, in regard of the

- Excellent Fruit of it.
- Abundant Fruit of it.

- *Durable Fruit of it.*

First, Great returns will soon make traders rich, when the time and labor they expend is abundantly compensated, and the things they part with, bring in far better: so is it with this heavenly trade; there is no proportion in their adventures to their returns: their duties are poor imperfect things; when they have done all, they are unprofitable servants, but their reward is great and glorious; their afflictions light and momentary, but the issue, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 1 Cor. 4. 18. It's great profit indeed, when some weak works of faith, and labors of love, a little patience, obedience and duty for a time, shall be rewarded with eternal rest, pleasure and glory: there is no equality between the race and price, this striving and crowning: What's a cup of cold water, to a river of pleasures? a Crown of thorns, to a Crown of Glory? the worlds srowns, to divine smiles? conscience-troubles, to the consolations of God? a few tears, fears, watchings, faintings, duties, afflictions, to the joys of the Lord into which they shall forever enter?

It's a great bargain to part with base things, for excellent; beastly lusts, for the beauties of holiness; an unclean, for a clean heart; vile affections, for virtuous dispositions; filthy rags, for fair garments; a body of death, for a spirit of life. To let go the world for God, fellowship with devils, for communion with Christ, to lose guilt, and to gain righteousness; to escape Hell, to obtain Heaven; this is great gain. To swap away old things, for new; rotten things, for sound; hypocrisy, for sincerity; lies, for truth, is a good bargain. To exchange empty things, for satisfying; things that are not, for things that are; goods that perish with the using, for things that wax not old; fading trifles, for eternal treasures, is a thriving trade indeed; and such are the incomes of this Heavenly Trade, they are incomparably great and excellent; there's nothing mean, no low price goods, that Wisdom's Merchants deal about; all their riches are pleasant and precious: *By knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches*; precious faith, precious promises, the precious blood of Christ, precious thoughts of God, are some of this precious substance heavenly Traders meet with in the way of holiness. Besides, this pursuit of godliness enters souls into an acquaintance and converse with God, and helps them to keep an intercourse with Heaven, and to maintain a life above and beyond the reach of all others; and is not this advantage?

Religion also helps men to blessed experiences of the love, power, greatness and faithfulness of God; and this constant employment about heavenly things, makes the way pleasant and delightful, and fills the soul with much contentment with its lot in the world, whatever the trials, losses and sufferings may be that they are exposed to. Also the driving this Heavenly Trade secures the good and comfort of all their other interests, and sweetens their portion, whether more or less that Sovereign pleasure allots them in the world, bringing all their concerns under divine care and promise for their good, comfort and sufficient supply in their passage home: And are not all these great returns? enough to make the Heavenly Trade the greatest interest and advantage beyond all others in the world.

Secondly, Sure returns make Traders rich: Merchants that drive gainful trades, count if one Adventure to two or three come safely home, they get well: but all regular Adventures in this Heavenly Trade are secured; *Their labor shall not be in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. 58. not one

of their sincere attempts in the way of God shall miscarry; never a pious duty lost; all their sowings to the spirit shall surely spring up into a blessed harvest, *Gal. 6. 6. Though they sow in tears, yet they shall reap in joy Psal. 126. 5, 6.* Though they go forth weeping, yet if they bear precious seed, they shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them: *God is not unrighteous to forget their work and labor of love shewn towards his Name, Heb. 6. 10.* God is engaged in justice to see the Adventures of Believers safely returned into their harbor; he hath promised it, and cannot be unfaithful; neither doth it consist with his honor, to put Believers on an unprofitable service: *He never said to the house of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain, Isa. 45. 19.* Ingenuous men love to see their servants thrive: Will Christ, think you, let his laborers be losers? their works shall surely follow them into their rest, *Rev. 14. 13.* how ever they may be out of sight in their passage towards it, seeing God's Word lies at stake for it.

The blood of Christ stands engaged also for the safe returns of the Saints Adventures, that are according to the will of God; their religious labors are part of the travel of his soul, which he must see secured, and they are the pleasure of the Lord, which must prosper in his hand, *Isa. 53. 10, 11.* He is become a Surety for them unto God, and a Surety for the Father unto them: *By so much was Jesus made a Surety of a better testament, Heb. 7. 22.* The Covenant is called here a Testament, as relating to the Saints privileges and interests, which by that Covenant becomes due to them, and shall be surely made good to them upon the account of Christ's Suretyship for it; He is the Surety of this Testament or Covenant, and every promise of it; one of which is, That what they sow to the Spirit, they shall reap in glory; their labor shall not be in vain: and to make all the promises good both the condition and blessing to the foederates of this new-Covenant, hath the Lord Jesus laid down his precious Blood, which cannot be lost, *Heb. 9. 15.* but it would be cast away, could Believers religious duties be in vain.

Another thing that secures the Saints advantages by this heavenly Trade, is this; that their trading is the work and product of his own Spirit; their duties are his work: *Thou hast wrought all our works in us, Isa. 26. 22. It is God that worketh in you to will and to do, according to his good pleasure, Phil. 2. 13. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, 2 Col. 3. 5. They are his workmanship, created to good works, Eph. 2. 10.* by whose influence they are acted, and let by the Spirit of God, *Rom. 8. 14.* So that further than the spirit of the living creatures move, their wheels cannot move, nor do anything graciously, further than their works are wrought of God, and by God, *Joh. 3. 21.* So that Believers labors in this heavenly Trade, are the work of the eternal Spirit; and should their work be lost, the Spirit of God would labor in vain, and his work cast away; which cannot be, *Isa. 45. 18.*

Lastly The Lord Jesus is an adventurer with them, his Glory and Kingdom is concerned in this heavenly Trade; when his Will is done, his Kingdom is come, *Mat. 6. 10.* and *1 Thes. 4. 3.* Holiness is his will, and a conformity to his Law, and he is engaged to the Father, for the Saints holiness and happiness; for their grace and glory; *As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him, Jo. 17. 2, 12.* The Father

hath put all Believers into the hands of Christ, and entrusted him with their graces and glory, both which are included in eternal life: *ver. 3. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, &c.* that is, this is the way to life eternal, and the beginning of life eternal, even the grace of Faith, and saving knowledge of God: and this grace, as well as glory, is put into the hand of Christ for Believers, to be kept for them; and they are also put into his hand, to be kept by him through it unto glory: and in pursuance of this trust, the Lord Jesus is engaged, to keep his people, their graces, and the reward of them, for them, that they be not lost; the advantages of this heavenly Trade, are secured to Believers by the Lord Jesus, his adventure with them, his truth, faithfulness, and glory, is concerned in their safety: so that their returns are not only great, but sure.

Thirdly, Quick returns, if great, are greatly enriching: Hence comes that Proverb, that light gain makes a heavy purse, it brings great custom, and that occasions quick returns: Now, no Trade brings quicker returns than the heavenly Trade: *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, Rev. 22. 12.* The Lord Jesus not only makes good, but quick payment; as soon as the work is done, he promiseth to make good his word: *Call upon me in the day of trouble; and I will deliver thee, Psal. 50. 15.* Nay, the Lord Jesus sometimes pays beforehand: *And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and whiles they are speaking, I will hear, Is. 65. 24.* Men many times are forced to stay for their Mony and sometimes lose it at last; but the Believers gain is not only sure, but speedy.

Obj. What's the reason then, the people of God do complain of God's not hearing, and deferring an answer to their requests? And why are Believers advised to patience, and long-suffering, after they have done the will of God, if the return of their Faith and Duties were so quick? This is the experience, and complaint of the people of God in all ages, that God seems not to regard their Prayers, and to delay his coming to help them.

Sol. 1. First, yet are the Saints returns quick; because they are in due time; God never delays to perform his word, when the Believer hath need of it; in the needful time of trouble, he will surely hear; *My God shall supply all your wants, Phil. 4. 19.* When once the Soul comes to stand in real want, then God will surely pay him; *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, Isa. 40. 17.* When once they come to be needy, then God will with-hold no longer, but will help; this he hath promised, *they shall not want any good thing, Psal. 34. 10.*

Secondly, If the Lord do not pay presently, he will give use for it, they shall lose nothing by forbearance; *But when he comes, he will bring his reward with him, Isa. 40. 10.* Not only a reward of his work done by them, but a reward of their patient waiting for his promises also, their mercy shall be so much the sweeter, for their want of it, and waiting for it. O! how welcome are long looked for mercies, when they come, then is every mercy double; God tried *Job* long by with-holding mercy, but see the end of *Job*; God paid double for what he took, and withheld from him, *Job 42. 10.* Returns are sure always in the needful and seasonable time; and if God delays, he will pay well for it.

To which I might add this also; Many times Wisdom's Merchants are the cause of these delays, by their unfaithfulness in their trade, or their unfitness for their returns: *The diligent hand makes rich, Prov. 10. 4.* Souls that are active and faithful in the whole of Religion, shall have no cause to complain of God's slack payment.

So much by way of demonstration of the point, That the Heavenly Trade is the best Trade; no Merchandise like Wisdom's Merchandise.

Now, to come to some improvement of the Point.

USE I.

First, If the heavenly Trade be the best Trade, then it's strange that so few do set upon this Trade; persons that are to enter upon some course of life, and would fain live in the World, are willing to take the best Trade that is attainable by them, if they can but reach it, and have wherewithal to carry it on: who would spend his time and strength in low, sordid and mechanick services, which cannot maintain, or enrich him; if a brave, generous and wealthy Calling did offer itself, and might be compassed? and yet such is the folly of most under the Gospel, who are ready to choose anything but Godliness, and to fall in with every proposal for their employment, rather than to engage about the work of Salvation: Men are wise in their generation, and know in other things how to choose the best bargains, only in the things of their Souls are foolish, and can be content to pursue shadows, and let go the substance; to lay out all their desires, hopes and labors about a life that perisheth, neglecting the vast concerns of another World, and the welfare of their immortals Souls: Is not this folly? Poor Sinners, let me reason a little with you, if possible to recover your lost understanding: come, be your own judges; Is it your interest (think you) to adventure your All, for things that cannot abide with you when obtained, nor satisfy you if they stay? things that can but bring you to your Grave, and accompany your bodies to the House of Mourning, and there leave you; unless they show you the way to Hell also. Is it not madness to adventure your Souls for a trade, pleasures and treasures of so short continuance, and little advantage? things that you will shortly be as weary of, as now desirous; and throw them to the Bats and Moles of the Earth, that you may go into the Rocks to hide you from the fury of a Sin-avenging God? Will you spend all upon time, and lay up nothing for eternity? Or, is it rational to think that you should reap where you never sowed, and possess the benefit of that Trade you never drove? *Gal. 6. 7, 8.* Can you think to reach Heaven hereafter, and never walk one foot in the way to it here? Certainly, what men sow, that they shall reap: Can you imagine the things of Heaven to be so cheap, as to be had without looking after? Alas, things far inferior cannot be so easily obtained; it may cost some of you many tuggings, much sweat, labor and expense to get but a little of this World; and do you think to find this tried Gold without buying, and digging for it? and is it a wise bargain (think you) to purchase your desirable Comforts with the loss of your Souls? and that you may gain but a little of the World, to part with a possibility of having Heaven? *What will it profit you to get the World, (were you sure of every part of it) and to lose your Souls? Mat. 16. 26.* And what if you miss of your hopes in this, and fall short of Heaven too? never have what you looked for on Earth, nor a place in Heaven neither; will not your case be then dreadful? O! foolish Souls! that may

be happy, but will not; that may get into such a course of life as would enrich you here, and forever; but refuse it, preferring a poor beggarly life before a rich and noble state; choosing rather to trade with Devils than God; to swap away your delightful time, for doleful eternity; your salvationprizes, swinish pleasures. O sad exchange for! to be bewailed, but not remedied: What? to barter away strength for weakness; desires for emptiness; labors for vanity; hope for despair; precious souls for perishing shadows; an open door of grace for a shut door of glory; mercy for misery; earth for hell? O fools in grain! to let go such a bargain, as being had, would forever make you; and being lost, may never be regained; but in the room of it, an eternity to repent your time of folly; when tears and cries will be too late, when mercy shall have no repentings for you, bowels themselves no roulings over you, nor everlasting arms any help for you, *Mat. 25. 10.* This is your danger, (Sinners,) this may be your case, who refuse wisdom's counsels, choosing death rather than life: you that would have none of Wisdom's wares, nor work; but have rather valued the Devil's Counters, before Christ's Gold; and the pleasures of sin, that are but for a season, before the treasures of grace and glory, that are eternal; walking after the flesh, and serving divers lusts, till your trading time for Heaven be almost over. Alas, Sinners, there may be, for anything you know, but few Merchandising hours left for you in this World; it may be scarce a Sabbath more between some of you, and hell: in what a case then are you like to be, who never set upon this heavenly Trade to this very day? and should you now go out of this World strangers to this employment, in what a doleful state will your Souls be forever? when you come to possess the eternal fruit of your bad bargain, then could any lay their ears to Hell gates, and listen at your cries, they would hear such language as this from your trembling lips, *Folly, Folly, Woe, Woe, Eternity, Eternity.*

USE II.

Secondly, This calls to mourning over the great decays of this Heavenly Trade, in the times and places wherein we live: Loss of Trade is easily resented as an evil case, a matter of trouble. Men use to be affected with hard times, when a death lies on their interests, and their earthly concerns are at a loss; and this is the case of most men this day; all places are full of complaints about their affairs in the world; there's a moth in men's labors and dealings, and it is easily seen and felt; the heavy looks, and heartless carriages of many, do plainly demonstrate a sense of their temporal wastes, and their mouths vent such-language: *The times are hard, and the trade of the Nation gone:* But alas! where are the mourners of Zion? and who is afflicted at the decays of godliness, and death on this Heavenly Trade? Though there is nothing more visible and lamentable than the falling back in Religion; yet who lays it to heart? and who is rightly affected with this important evil?

Now towards the cure of this insensibleness, and to awaken our hearts to a due apprehensiveness of our evil case, by reason of the decays of godliness; I shall

- 1 Lay down some symptoms evidencing it to be our case, that there are real and great decays of this Heavenly Trade in the time and places wherein we live.
- 2 Shew why this should be for a lamentation.

First, That this Heavenly Trade goes back and decays, is so evident, that he is a stranger in our *Israel*, and hath too much of a spirit unconcerned in these matters, who doth not plainly see Religion, and the power of Godliness dying and languishing in most places and persons. Now the better to evince this sad truth, I shall proceed in a plain and familiar method, keeping to the metaphor in the text, and the usual symptoms of decay'd Trading.

Six things usually show the decays of earthly Trading, all which are conclusive of the point in hand, and discover bad times for piety, and great wastes of Religion.

First, When the price of things is much fallen, and the rates very low, and goods are worth little or nothing; then men say, it's bad trading: So is it now in this Heavenly Trade; the rate and value of divine things is much abated; Wisdom's goods seem little worth to many: There was a time when Heavenly Wares were highly prized; the Word of God was precious to souls, far better to Saints than thousands of gold and silver; they could have parted with all the world, to enjoy God in Ordinances: estate, ease, credit, were nothing to a place in God's house; and one view of his countenance was better than life: Oh how sweet were the words of his mouth? much sweeter than the honey and honey-comb: Men could let their own ploughs stand still, to set their hands to God's plough; with *Mary*, they could neglect any business to sit at Christ's feet, *Luke 10. 39.* leave their appointed food, and most pleasant delicacies, for one draught of Sanctuary-waters; yea but for one sip of divine sweetness, they could break their rest, leave all for Christ's company; bear frowns, threatenings, losses, sufferings, with wonderful ease, for some fellowship with God and his people; they would not lose a praying or hearing hour, whatever it cost them; they would stick at no hardships; price should never break between Christ and them; subscribe any terms, and count it a cheap bargain too, if at any rate they might obtain grace, and some spiritual good to their souls. But alas! now the case is altered; few will bid much for the precious things of *Zion*; even they that could have plucked out their eyes, and have given them to the Messengers of Christ, now think it too dear to pluck their hands out of their bosoms to open the door to Christ himself: Now soulpriviledges are worth little or nothing; Sermons, society of Saints are scarce counted worth the parting with a little time, ease, business, or friend, to enjoy them. *A shop, a market*, is better than the solemn Meeting with most: few can step over a straw, and forbear to gather a little stubble, though it be to get the unsearchable treasure of Christ: This is the sad temper of most Professors this day, they have lost their estimation of Christ and spiritual things; they do not value (let men talk what they will) God, above the world; Christ, above rest; one day in his Courts, above a thousand elsewhere; his precious Word, above their appointed food: most think it more adviseable to take seasons for the world, than for Heaven; rather to baulk many Sermons, than lose a little profit and opportunity, though but of very small advantage in the world: Men are full, and rich, and have goods enough; they think they know enough already; have heard enough, prayed enough; they feel no want of, nor see worth in spiritual things; and therefore offer so little for soul-advantages; and this bespeaks manifestly the decay of this Heavenly Trade.

Secondly, Fewness of buyers argues bad trading: Among men, when Chapmen are scarce, few take off any goods; wares lie on men's hands, and will not off; then men say, Trade is fallen:

Thus it is in this Heavenly Trade; there are few buyers of Wisdom's Wares; choice goods lie on sellers hands, and will not off; may not the Lord Jesus complain as formerly Wisdom did, *Prov. 1. 24. I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hands, and no man regarded; you have set at naught all my counsels, and would have none of my reproof.* And as the Servants of God in the parable, *Mat. 11. 17. We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned, and ye have not lamented.* Markets are full in many places; the Lord Jesus hath much goods exposed to sale, and there are many Chapmen, but few buyers; persons come to Religious Assemblies and Sermons, as many do to Fairs, to see, and be seen; to gaze on goods, but not to buy; few will take Christ's wares on his own terms, and come up to the selling-price; God, grace and glory, are too dear for many men's money; they like some goods, but the price is too high; some could be content to have Christ; but to deny themselves, take up their Cross, leave all, and follow Christ; that they think is too dear, and break for price, *Mat. 16. 24.* Heaven is desirable at last, but the world at present; they could be content to take Heaven in reversion, when the lease of their worldly interests is expired; and to receive their portion there, when all is gone here; but to trade above now, and transport their earthly treasures to Heaven, while they enjoy them on earth, that's too hard for them; such goods, such overtures will not off; persons will not receive the Word of God as the Word of God; they will not take threatenings to fear them, warnings to regard them, promises to believe them, precepts to obey them. May not most Ministers complain, *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Isa. 53. 1.* Most like and commend sermons, but few receive and obey them; it's lamentable to consider how little of a Sermon is carried away, remembered and practiced: This is the sin of Professors, and some that pass for more than ordinary, and yet are guilty of this careless, forgetful and unprofitable hearing; persons entertain truths, as they do their acquaintance; when they meet them on the way, shake hands and embrace them; be exceeding glad to see them, and then bid them farewell; that's the reason the Lord Jesus carries back so much goods from Markets; his wares will not off; men buy not: And hence it is also that Christ turns back their duties; he will not receive the goods of such neither, and this makes bad trading for Heaven.

Thirdly, Want of employment is a sign of bad trading: When Trade is good, every man's hand is full of work; but when men are out of employment, and have nothing to set their hand to, but stand idle in the Market-place, this shows a decay of Trade: And is it not so with Wisdom's Laborers now? Persons professing God were once active in Religion, but are now grown slothful in spiritual business. Where are the works of faith, the labors of love, the fruits of the spirit among Christians this day? who is fervent in spirit? *Ephes. 6. 18.* who strives in prayer, watching thereunto with all perseverance? *Joh. 6. 27.* where are they that labor even unto weariness for the bread that endures? *Heb. 12. 1.* running even unto fainting in the race that is set before them? *Rev. 7. 15.* Serving God day and night in his Temple, and being diligent that they may be found of him in peace, *2 Pet. 3. 14.* What *Pharaoh* charged on the *Hebrews*, when attempting liberty to serve God, may be with much more justice reflected on those that profess to serve God; and though they may, yet do not: *Ye are Idle, ye are Idle:* and hence it is men's hearts go a whoring after the world, and the flesh, with the lusts thereof; it is because they are slothful in spirit; a death is upon their hearts, and this causeth

the work of God to cease, *Neh.* 4. 11. It is but little work most do for God this day; how cold, dead, formal, slighty, are many in duty, doing the work of God deceitfully, their own consciences being Judges? *Jer.* 48. 10. few labor with their hearts before they come to hear, in hearing, and after hearing, to get some soul-good by it: Men are usually pleased with a Lamp, though there be no oil in it; cannot be contented without some duty, but well pleased with bare duty: To be nothing in Religion troubles them; but to be something, though never so little, satisfieth them: and if this be Popery to rest in the work done, how many Papists have we amongst us this day? Certainly Professors are generally asleep, or slumbering; they do their work so badly and heartlessly, their work falls out of their hand, as things do from men asleep; active for the world, as if they could never do enough; but soon tyr'd in the work of God; dispatch but little of heavenly work from day today, from one Sabbath to another; little heart-searching, soul-watching work is done; little in-door employment is carried on; the exercise of faith, hope, humility, patience, zeal, self-denial, seems a stranger to a great many this day; not for want of occasions or encouragements to work, (the Lord is still calling upon his Laborers to make haste) but for want of hearts to work: And this spiritual sloth proves that the Heavenly Trade is much lost.

Fourthly, The poverty of Traders plainly shows Trading is not good; when a Trade doth not maintain the Trader, but he still goes back, and becomes poorer, then surely trading is not good: *The diligent hand makes rich, Prov.* 10. 4. When trading is good Traders usually thrive, and live well upon it, but when they waste and become poor, then trading decays: So is it with Heavenly Traders, when they drive a good Trade for Heaven they grow rich apace towards God, and in their own souls: Wisdom's wares are soul-enriching wares: *My fruit is better than gold, yea than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver, Prov.* 8. 19. Men account those to be rich who have much of gold and silver; but Wisdom's fruit is better than gold, and therefore must needs be enriching: they that have this gold cannot be poor: Hence it is Christ counsels *Laodicea* to buy of him gold tried in the fire, that she might be rich, *Rev.* 3. 1. But alas how poor in spirituals are persons generally this day! *Therefore I said, Sur lie these are poor, they are foolish, for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God, Jer.* 5. 4. Unacquaintedness with the way of God, when men walk wide from Religion, and lose their strict and close walking with God, they soon become poor and foolish: And this is the case of many everywhere; they give a carnal liberty to themselves, and indulge a freedom to walk after the fight of their own eyes, and not by rule; and where this is, there is soulpoverty, which is too visible in most this day. Christians, do but observe your own hearts and others, and you will find this spiritual poverty abounding everywhere. Little thrivings appear under the best of means, choicest Privileges do little more than keep up a name to live; they convey but little quickenings to the soul: A show of Religion, and a mere skeleton of profession, is the common fruit of Ordinances in most places, whereas all the while decays are on the vitals of Christianity; abatements in grace appear every day, and a visible alteration in the whole frame, and internal vigor of the soul, faith, love, humility, patience, self-denial, and every grace becomes weaker every day; *Former days were better than now, Eccles.* 7. 10. Speak Christian, are not matters worse with thy soul, than they were? and abatements appear in every part.

There was a time when thy mind was beam'd over with Divine Light; the Candle of the Lord did shine in thy tabernacle: Thy eye was quick to discern good and evil; thou couldest once see an excellency in the knowledge of Christ; O how choice were sermons! privileges were to thee the uncasking of Jewels, and the opening of hidden glory; thou didst dwell in the Land of Visions, and still some new discoveries of light and grace did meet thee in thy affectionate attendance upon God. But now it is not so; thy Candle burns dimly, and thy right eye is darkened; now thou seest but little beauty in grace, or desireableness in truth: things under thy feet the other day, that seemed nothing compared with Christ; now through the multiplying-glass of thy deceived mind, seem great and lovely.

Formerly thy affections were warm and lively after God, his word and ways: O! how precious were his appointed Feasts, and his Tabernacles amiable? thou couldst delight in approaching to God, and talk of a blessedness in his presence. O the pleasure, sweetness and joy thy heart did find in thy Closet, in spiritual Converses, and Duties, and public Ordinances! thou couldst weep over sin, and bedew thy prayers with tears, and find thy heart burn within thee while Christ was speaking, and melted under the warm beams of divine love. But, alas, now it is not so; now thy affections are dead, thy heart as cold as a stone; all the while thou art speaking to God in Prayer, or God speaking to thee in his Word, thou findest no more savor in Ordinances, Duties, and Christian Converses, than in the white of an Egg, *Job. 6. 16.* Thou findest not that delight in God as formerly, and the night of thy pleasure is turned to fear unto thee, *Isa. 21. 4.* This is Soul-poverty.

Again, there was a time also, when thy Will, like the great Wheel in the Clock, could move regularly after God; thou couldst choose God for thy chiefest interest, and Christ for thy only treasure; preferring an interest in him above ten thousand Worlds: thou couldst have voted for communion with God, before thy meat and drink; and one hours fellowship with Christ, beyond all the delights on Earth: thou couldst choose the things that please God, and deny thy own pleasure to give content to him: thou couldst once stick to thy first choice, and find the purpose of thy heart cleaving to God, *Act. 11. 23.* Thou couldst once resolve, and keep thy resolutions; 'twas easier to take thy heart out of thy body, than to gain thy consent to part with Christ, his presence and ways. But now thy will is hardly drawn after pure and constant enjoyments of God in his ways: O! how difficult a thing is it to persuade thy will to let go all for Christ, to leave everything to attend on God, to part with the world and self to wait on God, to throw all over-board to take in Christ! How hard is it now, to consent that Christ shall have all the command of thy Soul, and dispose of thy dearest interests! now thou findest it a work above thee, to keep thy heart in order one hour, or to perform the purposes of thy Soul to God and Godliness; thou resolvest, and changest every day; thou vowest, and breakest thy vows continually; there is no stedfastness in thy spirit: this also bespeaks thy Soul-poverty.

There was a time also when thy Conscience was tender, thy heart could smite thee for the least sin; thy Conscience could hold thee to the greatest duty, and bind thee to thy good behavior: thou couldest not go against the light and checks of thy regulated Conscience, were it to gain the whole World. But now 'tis dead and quiet, it can bear the sharpest strokes

of the two edged Sword, and not feel it, or bleed; it makes little or no bones of sin against knowledge, and mercy; sins that were before troublesome, now go down easily; it can digest threatenings and terrors with little trouble, and sleep while the arrows of the Lord's wrath fly about its ears; it can let go mercies without regarding, and truths to pass away without entertainment: this is Soulpoverty.

This thou canst say too, there was formerly an activity in thy Soul for God, and the spring of thy heart was strong, and it set every wheel a going: thou couldst run, and not be weary; walk, and not be faint: no religious duty was tiresome to thee; no commands of God were grievous, *1 Joh. 5. 3.* no journeys seemed long that led to God, nor Sermons tedious that spake of God: thy spirit was all life, when in holy company, and work: did any say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord, *Zech. 8. 21.* thou wouldst say, I will go also: If God did but say, Seek thou my face, *Psal. 27. 8.* thy heart would presently answer, thy face, Lord, will I seek. But now a deadness seizeth upon thee, and slothfulness gathers in over thy whole Soul: thou art soon weary of well-doing, and canst not hold out with God in conflicts and difficulties, as heretofore: thou art not so diligent to prepare thy meat in Summer, *Prov. 30. 25.* nor to lay in provision for a Winter spending-season: thou turnest on thy bed as a door on its hinges, and takest little pains with thy heart and conversation: thou lovest many an opportunity and advantage for thy Soul through thy deadness and indisposition to good works: And doth not this bespeak Soul-languishing, and poverty?

There are decays and poverty in thy life also, as well as spirit: how unprofitable is now thy conversation, to what it was? there was a time when thy bow did abide in strength, thy lips did disperse knowledge, *Prov. 15. 7.* thy steps did drop fatness: it was good to be in thy company, few came from thee but were bettered. But, alas! now, how dwindling is thy light? how jejune and sapless is thy converse? thy company little lovely, thy communications little profitable; thy words eat as doth a Canker, it sears as a hot Iron, and deadens those that hear it; thy breath freezes all that come hear it, so unprofitable a burden is thy company. *We turn all Religion (saith one) into a discourse, censure or dispute: We can eat, and drink, and talk, and sin as freely.* This is a sad case indeed, and bespeaks great decays of godliness, when persons become more poor, and impotent in their Souls.

Fifthly, Small adventures in Traders, do usually bespeak bad Trading; when times are hard, and Goods go not off, Sellers buy but little, and drive a less Trade when improvements fail; men are loath to adventure the principal, but presently contract their Trade, and lessen their dealings. So 'tis in this spiritual Trade, when Souls begin to decay in it, and Trading is bad, they narrow up their Trade, and lay out less of their heart and strength about it; little of their Soul goes out after God, and things above; they cannot adventure for God, as formerly; nor spare time for prayer, hearing, reading, holy conference, as once they could; the stream of their affections begins to run another way; now they are all for the world, self, and vanity; business and interest eats up all their time; or at least, they say to Christ, as *David* did to *Mephibosheth*, (*Thou and Zibah divide the Land*;) So, thou and the world, thou and pleasures, thou and reputation divide my heart, time and strength: this is too evident; God hath not so much of men's hearts, desires, love, delight, faith, hope, zeal, as heretofore: 'tis low waters

all the year long with many; no heart to duty, as the Prophet complains; *Whoredom and Wine take away the heart, Hos. 4. 11.* So lust, sloth, the world, and self, take away the heart; few breathings after God, when absent; or delight, when present; indisposed to duty, cold, formal in duty; put off God with anything; keep the best of the flock, the prime of their strength for themselves and the world; and turn off the Lord with a corrupt thing, the residue of their wasted affections and strength, *Mal. 1. 14.*

Sixthly, Breaking shows bad Trading, when men can hold it no longer, but are forced to give over; they go back, and waste so fast, that at last they shut up shop, and are gone. The times we live in are a manifest instance of this truth; men breaking ever and anon, now one, then another; declares plainly Trading is bad. And thus 'tis with Wisdom's Merchants this day; how many that have driven a brave trade of Profession, made a great show of Religion, were famous in their generation for Parts, and seeming Piety; but are now come to nothing, quite fallen and gone; great apostasies from the truth, sad shipwracks of Faith and Conscience can these late times speak of! Men that seemed like Stars, to give a blaze for a while, and then turned to falling Meteors at last: or, with the Sun, that riseth in a splendor, and sets in a cloud: The visible apostasy, and gross debauchery of men professing God in these latter times, is great; but the secret degeneracy, and backslidings of heart, are much more: many break, but more do warp. 'Tis far easier to observe, than to be affected with men's great declensions in Religion; some in principle, but most in practice; some with the fallen Angels have left their habitation, and fallen from their first state; others fault in their profession, and are fallen in their station: some with stormy winds are shaken down; others fully ripe, and gotten to the height of their profession, loosen by degrees, and drop away: some fall from the tree, others rot where they hang; some trees have lost their fruit, others their very leaves, and are become twice dead: where can you cast your eye, and not see fallings away either from Faith, or faithfulness? Men take up notions, and as easily leave them; most build upon the sand, little rootings in the truth: how easy is it to draw men from their opinions? little stedfastness in love: how soon doth the labors thereof cease? a little trouble makes men let go their profession, others lose their strictness in Religion, and grow more remiss and lame in duty, leaving their first love, and close walks with God's: And are not these such manifest symptoms of decaying godliness, that he who runs may read, and see that the Heavenly Trade is almost come to nothing this day?

2 And this is cause of mourning, and to be greatly laid to heart; who can see these things and not be affected: If there be any quick flesh, how can it but bleed? if any waters are left, surely our eyes should run down tears, and we pour out waters in *Mispah* before the Lord abundantly, for wasting, gasping piety, that is even giving up the ghost: For where this Heavenly Trade decays,

First, There is a growing strangeness between God and such souls: While Trade is kept up among men, there is much acquaintance, converse and intimacy between them; there are ever and anon occasions of writings, meetings and discourses while trading holds; but when once that is let down, then communion ceaseth; they have little business one to another; no more letters pass, or visits given; seldom see one another, and so at last grow out of

acquaintance with each other: And thus 'tis between God and souls; when once this Heavenly Trade is let down, a strangeness begins between God and them, they are seldomer in his company, neither are there such enquiries after God as before: *There is none that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us because of our iniquities, Isa. 64. 7.* They were strange to God, they did not call upon him as they use to do; and if they did, it was in such a general, cold way, that it signified little; they did not take hold of him: The word signifieth, *To hold with all their strength*, as men do that are drowning that will not let go what they hold: it signifies also (*says a Learned Critick*) not only to hold a thing, but faster and faster to wax strong in the holding it: But alas! they did not so take hold of God, as such who were like to perish without him: They did not stir up themselves: They did not waken and rouse up themselves: (as the word imports) They were grown more remiss in duty; they did not strive with God for help as they did: And God was strange to them; he hid his face from them; he concealed himself, that he might not be seen, (as the word signifies) he seems not to care for their company: This made the Prophet cry out, *Why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the Land, and as a wayfaring man, who turneth aside to tarry but for a night? Jer. 14. 18.* Seldom visits, and short stays, shows strangeness in them that have been intimate; and so 'tis between God and such who neglect this Heavenly Trade; the Lord seldom visits them, nor hath such warm converses with them as before: And is not this cause of mourning, when such a friend as God hath been to his people, and one on whom all their hope lies, and in whom all their help is, shall look strange upon them, and take no notice of them? This is enough to break an ingenuous heart, and one that knows what it is to enjoy God: Neither is it only the present want of God is their suffering; but by this means they are in danger of losing him quite: *The Lord is with you while you are with him; and if you seek him, he will be found of you; but if you forsake him, he will forsake you, 2 Chron. 15. 2.* Hence the Prophet, when he apprehended a change in God's carriage towards *Israel*, the next thing he fears, is his departure from them; he no sooner complains of God's strangeness, but presently prays, *Leave us not, Jer. 14. 9.* When once it came to a straitening, and loathing between God and his people, then terrible judgments follow; *My soul loathed them, and their soul abhorred, me, Zach. 11. 8, 9,* 'Tis in the Original, *My soul was straitened in them: God's heart was not towards them as formerly; he could not bear with them as formerly: And then, I will not feed them, that that dies, let it die, and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off;* he matters not what becomes of them: Do but think in what a case are such a people: This should be for a lamentation.

Secondly, Soul-poverty, and wastings of their spiritual interests, do usually attend neglect of this Heavenly Trading. When men come to spend upon the stock, and have no comings in, they must needs waste apace: So it is where trading for Heaven is neglected; such have no recruits of their wasted graces, nor supplies of their impoverished souls, when the fountain is shut up, and all communication of grace withheld; no intercourse between God and them; he will not receive their goods, nor impart his treasure but all ways of relief are blocked up; then they must needs waste apace in spirituals, and become poorer every day. The way to be rich, is to have store of Christ's tried gold: *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, Rev. 3. 18.* *Laodicea* was poor, because she wanted Christ's tried gold, the

real graces of his Spirit; and this she lost by letting down her Spiritual Trade; she did not buy of Christ; she did not come to, and deal with Christ in his own ways, and upon his own terms, and that made her poor: And so 'tis with every soul that neglects this Heavenly Trade; he soon comes to know what soul-wants are: Once let down a life in godliness, and presently poor in graces, poor in experiences, poor in comforts, poor in hopes, want strength, and want peace, fare hard, lodge badly, cast out from among men; as *Job* describes poor and mean persons: *Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and Juniper roots for their meat, Job 30. 4 5. 6.* Very mean fare; little pleasing or nourishing food; bitter and salt herbs: some take them for nettles, poor food; and yet the usual feeding in those parts, of those that were low in the world; neither was their lodging better: *They dwelt in the clefts of the Valley, in caves of the Earth, and in the Rocks:* Suitable also was their reputation; *They were driven from among men, they cried after them, as after a thief.* Such is the condition of poor persons full of straits, and meanly esteemed; and so 'tis with such as decay in their Heavenly Trade; they have lost their sweet morsels, and marrowy bits; their pleasant fare, and soul-refreshments they once had, and feed on dry bones, and sapless Ordinances: They are not maintained at that rate of comfort and experience they once had: They have hard lodging also; lose that sweet rest and peace they sometimes found in Christ, and in their sincere walkings after him: Fal'n in reputation too; neither God nor good men think so well of them as once they did. This is the case of such as fall back in Religion; they soon fall into such poverty, and spiritual wants come upon them, as armed men: *In the fullness of their sufficiency they are in straits, Prov. 24. 34. Job 20. 22.* And this is cause of mourning; wants and poverty do fill men with trouble, perplexity and grief: Oh the distractions and distressing thoughts that straits commonly beget! and no straits like to soul-straits; Christians, you yourselves be my Judges.

Thirdly, Neglect of Trading for Heaven will blast all other Trading, and breed a moth to consume even your temporal substance: When *Israel* began to let down their Heavenly Trade, and to mind their own concerns and houses above God's, presently God blasts their temporal interests; he makes holes in their moneybags, and blows upon their increase: All their tuggings in the world (with neglect of God and his Worship) came to nothing; they sowed much, and it brought in little; looked for much, and it came to little; wrought hard, earned great wages, laid up money, but it fell out again, through some secret hole in their bags, which divine jealousy opened, consuming their substance, to let them know, that men may make more haste than good speed; and they that reckon without God, must reckon twice. And may not this be one thing that cuts this Nation short in their outward interest this day, because they have forsaken God, neglected his service, lost the power of godliness? certainly though outward prosperity be no token of God's favor, nor any Gospel-promise to his people; yet when the Lord does fight against a people by successive rebukes, and send in a secret mildew, wasting and consumption on their interests, and this becomes general and national, it shows displeasure in God, and should be laid to heart; the want of which is set forth as an additional aggravation to such a people's sin: *Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his Laws: Therefore he poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle, and hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to*

heart, *Isa. 42. 24, 25.* It was the not walking in the way of God, neglect of obedience and practical holiness, a letting down the Heavenly Trade that brought those ruining judgments on *Israel*; losses on their interests, *verse. 21.* They were robbed and spoiled, firing their houses, *verse. 25. It hath set him on fire round, it burned him.* Now in this miserable case there was yet a greater judgment on them, a strange stupefaction and insensibleness of spirit; they did not see God's anger in it, yet, *Yet he knew it not; (viz.)* Whence it came, and who did all this; they looked to *Chaldeans*, and enemies, but 'twas God did it; and yet they laid it not to heart; they were not rightly affected with all these desolations, and their near approach to ruin: And is not this our case? God hath warned us by his Word this many years, threatened us by prodigious signs in Heaven and Earth, begun to execute them already, by Plague, Sword and Fire, dreadful wastes in the great City, and many other places, to the undoing of many families, made a breach upon the Trade of the Nation, to the impoverishing of the whole Land; and yet we are as insensible as *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* were, as if the Lord had sent the spirit of slumber upon us; impoverished, yet fell it not: This should be for a lamentation.

Fourthly, The decay of this Heavenly Trade, if not cured, is the ready and certain way to ruin: *The destruction of the poor is poverty, Prov. 10. 15.* Men's poverty fills them with consternation and dejecting fears, and does also expose them to many evils, and take down their external defense from injuries, being made a prey to their oppressors. *The rich man's wealth is his strong City, Prov. 18. 11.* Rich men protect themselves from injuries; their riches are Advocates for them to men; but poor men lie open to all invasions; when men grow poor every man treads upon them: So is it when the Heavenly Trade decays, and soul-poverty springs out of its ruin; then destruction makes haste to such places and persons: For this the Lord Jesus threatens to take the Kingdom from a people, because they bring not forth the fruit of it, *Matth. 21. 43.* they did not render to God the fruit of all his dressings and waitings on them: Barrenness and decays in Religion uncured, are a certain forerunner of Desolation, *Luke 13. 7, 9.*

Before the Lord brought in that cruel Nation, the *Vandals* on *Africa*; the Christians in *Spain* were much degenerated from their former purity (as *Salvian* complains) and the power of godliness was much decayed; he tells us, they had nothing left but the name of Christianity, to which their conversation was most unlike. *What is it (saith he) to please ourselves with the name of Christian, when the very name does greaten our guilt, in that we are so unlike to it? Before the Massacre at Paris (saith Mr. Clark in his Martyrol.) such a general stupidity seized upon the Protestants, that their minds were very wavering, and few there were that shown themselves zealously bent to Religion; but all, both great and small, were intent upon worldly matters, building to themselves goodly Castles in the air.* It was observed by some, that before the change of Religion and Martyrdom in Queen *Mary's* days, there was great unprofitableness under the Means of Grace. What the issues of these great decays in Religion may be amongst us, we know not; but such symptoms have usually foregone great changes, and severe strokes, on such persons and places: And is not this matter of lamentation? Physicians use to cure a Lethargy by a Fever; the one hath been our disease, O that the other, if no means else will do, may be our cure.

Fifthly, At the best decays in this Heavenly Trade will render the Traders account heavy in the day of Christ. Into what straits did the sense of an abused trust put the Prodigal Steward, *Luke 16. 13?* He had been unfaithful in his place, wasted his Masters goods, and now was in danger of being turned out; a reckoning was called for, and he unable to render it; and in perplexing thoughts how to give in his accounts, and to secure his future welfare: And this will be the case of such as are negligent and unfaithful in their Heavenly Trade; it will expose them to soul-trouble one day, how to answer it before God: First or last God will call for an account how his goods have been improved: He hath given you a stock to trade upon for him: Light, Grace, Parts, Capacities, Gospel-privileges and Opportunities, Liberty, Peace, Experiences, with many mercies and afflictions, which are all your Lord's goods, and must be accounted for; upon the passing of which depends your eternal state, or much of your soul's peace: The Lord Jesus hath a double audit, or accounting with his servants: In this life in the Court of Conscience; and in the Judgment-Day at the bar of God: In the first your present peace and soul comfort is much concerned, and your eternal welfare in the last: Alas! how will you answer conscience now when that book is opened, and the Lord Jesus brings in his bill of so many mercies expended, with skill and capacity to improve them; and such a charge of debt issuing thence: So much due for such goods, and for other wares; for Sermons, Sacraments, Graces, Comforts, Frames, Prayer Returns, Gracious Providences and Protections; so many personal mercies, so many family mercies, so many bodily mercies, so many soul mercies, so many Church mercies, so many National mercies, sick-bed mercies, health mercies, journey mercies, habitation mercies, caring mercies, sparing mercies, giving mercies, forgiving mercies, seen mercies, unseen mercies; and little or no return yet made for all these: How can the conscience stand up under such a charge, or lift up his face without spot, when it sees its guilt in all, and cannot answer one of a thousand? *How shall man be just with God, if he contend with him? How shall he answer him one of a thousand?* And if you cannot carry it in the Court of Conscience here, where God reckons by a Proxy; and it may be doth give but a general charge, what will you do at the bar of God, where the Lord will judge righteous judgment, and determine your eternal state, as you are approved or disapproved in that day? What think you souls, will not so much neglect of duty? such decays of grace? so frequent breach of Covenants? so great unfaithfulness in your places and relations? so many days and weeks, and not a stroke of work for God? so much bad work, so much waste of goods; will not all this look wistly upon you, and without repentance and a sealed acquittance, render your case dangerous at the judgment seat? And if so, is it not matter of lamentation? O lay this to heart!

USE III.

Thirdly, If the Heavenly Trade be the best Trade; then this reproves men's too greedy and inordinate pursuit of their earthly Trades and Interests, to the great prejudice and hindrance of this Heavenly Trade: And oh that I could here dip my Pen in tears, as well as gall; and not only write against, but weep over this earthly spiritedness, the great, the common, the uncur'd disease of men; almost of all men, of good men, this day! With what earnestness, strength of affection, and indefatigable labors, do men pursue after the things of this world, as if all their pleasure, happiness, yea life and eternal welfare lay wrapped up

in these things. *Jehu* did not more furiously drive after a Crown, then men do this day after crumbs. There was a time to some when godliness was counted gain; but now gain is valued beyond godliness. *Trade* is the great *Diana* to which most men sacrifice: *Profit* the wheel within the wheel, which sets all a going: The salt that seasons all things; nothing savors well that hath not this in it. *Advantage in the world*, is like the blood in men's veins; the soul in the body; that quickens their desires, puts life into their dead hopes; makes the blind to see, the lame to leap and run, the deaf to hear, the lips of them that are asleep to speak. *Gain* is the whetstone to men's wits, the loadstone to their affections, the spur to their actions: this is the object of men's quickest senses, the center of their liveliest motions. O! the projects, cares, tuggings, sweats, rowings, ridings, restless labors, that are engaged about this enquiry: *Who will show us any good?*

Quest. But how may we know when men do inordinately pursue their earthly business and concerns?

Answ. 1. First, When they engross too much of their time: this was *Israel's* sin, saying, *When will the New-Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth Wheat?* *Amos* 8. 5. They were not contented with their own time but they must entrench on God's time als. they thought the time long till they were at their worldly work, and hoped to get advantage from God's institutions, for their earthly interests; and that the Jubilee-Sabbath, when men must cease from tillage, would help to heighten the price of things, and so further their advantage: therefore the Lord reproves them for their undue diligence about the World: *It is in vain for you to rise up early, and to sit up late to eat the bread of sorrows; for so he giveth his beloved sleep, Psal. 127.* Here (saith *Piscator*) he doth, by this sudden *Apostrophe*, inveigh against those covetous *Tradesmen and Merchants*, telling them; 'Tis in vain for them to rise up so early to their work, and sit up so late in their shops, for such poor and contemptible gain: So *Rabbi Solomon* renders it for *Artificers*, who rise early to their labors. Excessive pursuits of the World in point of time are here reprov'd as vain and sinful, while hereby they deprive themselves of time for God and their Souls.

Secondly, when they lay out their Hearts on the World; *If riches increase, set not your hearts on them, Psal. 62.* 10. The danger of a disease lies in its seisure on the heart: Earthly things, under the hand are a duty; but in the heart, a disease. The heart is Christ's Royal Fort, to which the Devil, the World and Flesh lay siege; and if that be taken, all is gone: Earthly things are briars and thorns, and therefore dangerous to come near the heart: the least prick at the heart is mortal; the heart is Christ's nuptialbed, into which Christ retires; the World is the Saint's servant; now to admit a servant into the Lord's bed, is adulterous: the heart is God's Seat, Pavilion and Throne, into which none must come but himself; like the gates of the Sanctuary, into which none must enter but God himself: *This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter into it; because the Lord, the God of Israel hath entered into it; therefore it shall be shut, Ezek. 44.* 2. Such is the heart of Believers, to be kept for God only; to take in creatures into God's room, is intolerable boldness; to let out thy heart to the World, Trade, Interest, Creatures, is to invert the order of nature, as well as grace. In creation, God sets man uppermost, and puts all things under his feet: *Thou madest him to have dominion over*

the works of thine hands; thou hast put all things under his feet, Psal. 8. 6. Now, to place those things over thy heart, which God hath set under thy feet, is to turn the World upside down, and to overturn the whole course of nature. This is the great sin of this day, men's letting out their hearts on the things of this World: were persons but serious, and willing to be search'd, and to know their own state, many that think well of themselves, might find, that notwithstanding all their shows, and seeming hopes, they are in a woeful and dangerous case, in that their hearts are not right with God, but are set on other things, on earthly things more than on God.

Six things discover this, that the heart is set too much upon this World.

First, When the desires are inordinately let out after it: this is one symptom the Prophet gives of an unsound, covetous heart; such a one hath greedy, unsatisfied desires after the World; *Who enlargeth his desire as Hell, and is as Death, and cannot be satisfied, Hab. 2. 5.* In the former verse he tells us, a carnal unbelieving heart, is a rotten unsound heart: *His soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him: but the just shall live by Faith.* A carnal heart is all for himself, and his own carnal interest, and not for God; he lives by sight, and not by Faith; and this was an evidence of it, all his desires were for carnal things. Desires are the breathings and outgoings of the heart, and as the heart is, such are they; where the desires are earthly, the heart is earthly; such a one is never satisfied with any portion of earthly things: as a person in a Fever, always thirsty; so is an earthly heart, always coveting more and more: *They join house to house, and lay field to field, till there be no place, Isa. 5. 8.* As long as there is any place left, they covet it: A Field, a House, a Living, is but a morsel that stays a hungry stomach for the present, as soon as that is digested they long for more: this is a certain sign that heart is on the World, whose desires have never enough of it: and alas! where's the person that will say with *Jacob, I have enough?* Where the heart is set on God and things above, a little of the World will content that Soul; food and raiment, with godliness, is enough; but it is never satisfied with its measure of Grace, and enjoyment of God; the more it enjoys of God, the more it longs for further fellowship with him; one duty doth but edge the stomach for another: the more he hath, the more he desires of God and spiritual things: and so 'tis with a heart that is altogether earthly, the desires are earthly also, never satisfied with what he hath, but still longing for more.

Secondly, A worldly heart hath worldly thoughts; there the mind is wholly taken up about earthly things; thoughts are to the heart as the beams are to the Sun, the streams to the Fountain, which are homogeneous, of the same nature with them; our Lord Jesus tells us, that 'tis out of the heart that evil thoughts proceed, *Mark. 7. 21. They come immediately from the heart,* (says Mr. Fenner,) *nothing comes between the heart and them; other sins* (says he) *come from the heart, but it is at the second, third and fourth hand; but thoughts come immediately from it:* And nothing doth more discover the heart, than the usual, habitual, delightful thoughts of a man do: *They are the univocal acts of the heart, which show what the heart is, as shining does the light;* Mr. Fenner of the misery of earthly thoughts. Where are thy thoughts mostly? thy pleasing and delightful thoughts? there is thy Heart: *They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh, Rom. 8. 5.* As soon as they awake, thoughts of their business (as friends) come to visit

them; they drive out other thoughts of God and heavenly things, they vanish and disappear at the presence of earthly thoughts, as Clouds do at the rising-Sun; as when a Master comes in to take his seat, Servants rise up, and go their way: no sooner doth thoughts of God come in, but earthly thoughts drive them away, as the Shepherds did *Jethro's* Daughters, and there is no *Moses* to stand up and help them, *Exod.* 2. 16, 17. An earthly man from morning to night his thoughts are upon the World, as the Dog follows his Master all the day long: In company, alone, at home, abroad, in journeys, in duties; his thoughts are usually about his Trade, Interest, House, Field, Work, and the like; it may be sometimes good thoughts may be cast into the mind, and these make amends for all other thoughts, feeding the deceived heart with conceits that all is well, because good thoughts come in now and then; whereas the main bent of their thoughts have been about earthly things: these thoughts grow out of the heart, they are in-dwellers; but good thoughts are only guests and strangers that do not stay long; they give a visit, and then are gone, and must give way to earthly thoughts again, which are home-born, household-servants and inhabitants: thy thoughts of God are but occasional, now and then extraordinary, when some special mercy or affliction is upon thee, but thy earthly thoughts are fixed, stated and continued: thy good thoughts are like rain-water, that fall upon thee, or as pump-water that must be drawn out; but thy carnal thoughts are as wellwater, that runs freely, and springs up from within thee: thy good thoughts are but thy recreation, when thy mind is tired with other things; but thy earthly thoughts are thy work and employment; when men have done their work, they sometimes walk abroad; such are thy seldom thoughts of God and divine things, when thou hast drudg'd away the strength of thy mind on the World, and thy own things, then, to quiet conscience, and recreate thy mind, thou givest thy thoughts leave to walk abroad, and give a visit to better things: thy heavenly thoughts are gentle, easy, weak and sickly, and carry out little of the strength and vigor of thy heart with them; but thy thoughts of the World are strong and lively, the first-born and strength of thy heart; they are spending thoughts, working, plotting, carking, studying thoughts: Ah souls! deceive not yourselves with fancies of your good estate, from some fits and good moods in you (which hypocrites may have) and all the while the strength and bent of your hearts, the constant, lively, prevailing thoughts of your souls are carnal, selfish and earthly.

Thirdly, Persons restless labors after the world, plainly show their hearts are upon it: Where the heart is set upon a thing a person is restless till he hath it; he leaves no stone unturned; sets wit, hands, friends, and all on work to get it. When *Shechem's* heart was set on *Dinah*, *Jacob's* daughter, he sticks at no proposals so he might but obtain her: *Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me, I will give; the Land shall be before you, dwell and trade therein, and get you possession therein, Gen.* 34. 10, 11. No terms were counted too hard; take up profession, undergo painful duties, punishing circumcision; part with anything so he might but have the desire of his heart, What hardships did *Jacob* undergo for his beloved *Rachel*? twice seven years service, consumed with drought in the day, and frost in the night, and his sleep departed from his eyes: *Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle, and thou hast changed my wages ten times, Gen.* 31. 40, 41. And yet all this he could bear to enjoy the object of his love.

So 'tis with earthly minded men; all their capacities are engaged about earthly things; their chiefest strength is laid out about their Trades, callings and businesses in the world, seldom minding soul-concerns, little employed in religious duties; now and then hear, read, pray, as may stand with interest; cold, sleighty, formal, sleepy in duty; but all life when about the world; ready to complain prayer is too long, preaching tedious; too much time spent in duty; what need this waste? *Matth. 26. 8.* All seems lost to flesh and blood which is spent on Christ and his service, [*Mr. Trap:*] But all too little for the world; weary themselves for very vanity; stick at nothing that will help them to their desired interests; undergo any hardships; turn the back on any duties; adventure health, reputation, the displeasure of God, with all their spiritual mercies; yea and the eternal welfare of their souls also, rather than lose an advantage in the world: This is the spirit of too many this day: Men that seem to be somewhat, bid fair for salvation, with the young man in the Gospel; like the terms well; come up to everything but this; cannot part with the world for Christ; come up to everything, only with *Naaman*, must be pardoned in this, that they have a *Rimmon* to bow to, *2 Kings 5. 18.* In everything else they will consent to follow Christ, but in this they must be spared: when their farms, their merchandise and profit calls for them, then the concerns of Christ and their souls must stand by; and affections like a flood run over all that lies in their way; take no notice what Scripture or Conscience say; deaf to all arguments that thwart interest: This is the case of a worldly heart; his chiefest strength is laid out about earthly things; these must be followed and sought after, whatever becomes of the soul and spiritual things. What is that so great hope (saith *Seneca*) what so great necessity, that stoops man who was made upright, to contemplate Heaven, and buries and drowns him in the deeps of the Earth, to get out that gold which is not got with less danger than 'tis kept, *Sen?* A little strength for duty will serve the turn; but a great deal of time, care and labor must the world have: Surely the world rules that heart that comes and goes at its bidding, and can leave all to follow it at the command of interest. You will judge him another man's servant, who, whatever he is doing, will leave it all when his Master calls him, and follow him. Let men think what they will, God hath no part for the present in that soul that can do more to enjoy the world, than God; and counts anything more necessary than to converse with, obey and serve him.

Fourthly, The delight and pleasure men take in earthly things, declare that their hearts are let out upon them: Where the heart is, there will the delights be. Love is is the very life of the soul, *Alsted. Theol. natur. p. 613.* When *Jonathan's* heart was knit with the heart of *David*, *1 Sam. 18. 1.* as an evidence of it: *Chap. 19. 2, Jonathan Saul's Son delighted much in David:* Delight is the rest of desire, in the fruition of that good the heart is set upon, which satisfies the desire; [*Reynolds of the Passions, Cap. 19. Pag. 197.*] One calls it, the Sabbath of our thoughts, and that sweet tranquility of mind which we receive from the presence and fruition of that good whereunto our desires have carried us: If then men's delights in the world exceed their pleasure in God, 'tis a sign the world is their chiefest good. Wicked men delight in their abominations, and that proves their ways to be of choice. *Isa. 63. 3, They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations:* Try thy heart by thy pleasure; what is sweetest to thy taste, God or the World? What is most delightful to thee, to wait on God, though with the loss of the world, or to pursue the world, with the want of God? Men cheat

their own Souls, when they say the enjoyment of God is better than the world; and yet for every trifle, and smallest advantage, can upon choice, baulk the enjoyment of God in his appointments, and cannot adventure the least loss and prejudice to their interest, though it were for the nearest fellowship with God: certainly that which is the Souls greatest pleasure, that will it make after when left to its liberty: Canst thou leave the snow of *Lebanon* for the waters of *Assyria*? Pass by a walk in Christ's gallery, to sit down and solace thyself on the dunghill-comforts of this life? then are not thy chiefest delights in God: *Psal. 27. 4, One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple:* If the beholding of God in Ordinances be thy delight, it will be the one thing in thy desires and endeavors; also all other things are nothing to that: If thy chiefest pleasure be in God, then nothing but a conviction of duty can make thee upon choice decline an opportunity of waiting on God; and even then also, when obedience to God sets thy hand to the world; delight in God will engage thy longings after him, and make thy greatest comforts thou art then pursuing, a weight and a burden to thy soul, because they stand between thy heart and communion with God. Thy affections will be like the Kine that drew the Ark to *Bethshemesh*, that lowed after their Calves as they went, *1 Sam. 16. 12.* When thou art constrained to draw in the Cart of thy duty-employments, even then will thy desires belowing after the comfort of thy relation-interest in God. How is it soul? speak; Is not a good Fair and Bargain sweeter to thee, and doth more affect thy heart, than a sermon and a duty? Dost thou not use to follow the world with thy back on fellowship with God and Saints, and not the least regret in thy spirit, or cloud on thy comforts? if so, thy heart is not yet supremely set on God.

Fifthly, Lothness to part with thy earthly comforts and interests tells thee, thy heart is too much upon them. *Jacob's* unwillingness to part with *Benjamin*, was a sign his heart was too much set upon him. *Judah* tells the Governor of *Egypt*, *That his Father's life was bound up in the Lad's life, Gen. 44. 30.* The Spouses affection to her Beloved was seen in this, that when she found him, she held him, and would not let him go, *Cant. 3. 4. I found him whom my soul loveth, I held him, and would not let him go.* Such is the testimony, that if men's hearts are on the things of this life, they hold them fast, and will not let them go: Most men are too tenacious of their interests, to be dead to them: close hands argue cleaving hearts to the world. Alas! with what reluctancy do men that have the abundance of this worlds goods, lay them out again for God! how hard is it to draw any proportions of charity from them that have this worlds goods? what arguments and reasons will men be pleading for their sparingness in parting with the Mammon of this world? and how much beneath their measure do most men expend their earthly things upon the calls that God gives them? This shows plainly, their heart is bound up in the fruition of these things. *Covetous men will sooner part with their flesh, than their gold (saith Augustine) shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men whom I know not whence they be? 1 Sam. 25. 11. (saith covetous Nabal.)* Covetous persons cannot endure to part with what they have. The covetous man, while he holds fast his riches, is held fast by them; and in preying on others, he himself becomes a prey, *August.* They are like a net, which takes in all the fish that comes at it, but lets out none again, except some small ones that are little worth: Earthly minds are seen in nothing more

than in their tenacity, and close keeping of what they have; like dying men, whatever they take hold of, they let not go: This is the temper of many, they cannot scatter for God, nor honor him with their substance: *There is that withholdeth more than is meet, Prov. 11. 24.* That's the character of one whose heart is on the world. *He is not only covetous that takes away other men's goods (saith Augustine) but he that covetously withholds his own,* and will not let them go when God hath use for them: Certainly, if Believers themselves are not their own, then they will one day know their estates and interests are not their own, but the Lord's, and to be at his dispose. How will the owner of that Colt Christ sent for, rise up in judgment against many! no sooner did the Disciples say, *The Lord hath need of him, but straightway they let him go, Luk. 19. 33, 34, 35.* Shall one that pretended not so much to Christ (for ought we know) readily part with so much at the first request; and they that profess much love to Christ, refuse to lay out lesser things for him? This doth manifest the world is dearer to such than Jesus Christ.

Lastly, Then are men's hearts upon the world, when their trust and dependence is upon earthly things. We are apt to put confidence in friends, and therefore the Lord cautions *Israel* against such dependencies, as false deceiving things: *Trust not in a friend; put ye not confidence in a guide, &c. Micah 7. 5.* The Spouse came leaning upon her Beloved in the wilderness, *Cant. 8. 5.* No sooner had the rich man store of goods, but he places his confidence in them, *Luke 12. 19. I will say to my soul; soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years, take thine ease; eat, drink and be merry.* 'Tis natural to men that choose the world for their treasure; to choose it also for their trust: They that dare adventure their supreme affection on things, dare also take up their dependency on them. Men *choose not a tree they think will rot, Isa. 40. 20.* If riches be thy choice, thou thinkest them worthy of thy reliance; or thou actest irrationally. Men that have wealth, *have inward thoughts that their houses shall continue forever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their Lands after their own names, Psal. 49. 11.* 'Tis hard to have the good things of this life, and not to expect too much from them; so inviting is their appearance to a dependency on them: Earthly things are fair in promise, but false in performance; like quagmires covered with grass; men think them firm ground, but when they tread upon them, they soon become their graves. The Evangelist calls all that glorious pomp with which *Agrippa* so amus'd spectators, but *a mere show, Acts 25. 23.* When *Agrippa* was come, and *Bernice*, with great pomp, 'tis with much fantasie and external show: All the glory of this world is but a pompous show, that cheats beholders, and allures them to a deceived expectation: They that have much visible comfort in creatures, live little by faith. How rare is it for men that have estates and riches for their posterity, to commit them to divine care, by an act of pure recumbency on the promise, and to believe upon a naked word for all their supplies and needed comforts: *Such is our expectation whither we flee for help, Isa. 20. 6.* An earthly heart is known by carnal trust and dependency on earthly things. Ah souls! put your hearts into this scale, and see whether they do not press down to this present world: Speak soul, who shalt shortly be weighed for eternity in the balance of the Sanctuary; are not thy desires, thy thoughts, thy restless labors, thy delights, thy close adherence to, and dependency, all engaged about the things of this life, with the neglect of God, and heavenly things, thine own heart being Judge? And if so, then

Thy State is dangerous.

And thy Folly great.

First, Thy State is dangerous; thou hast not a dram of true grace in thee: *Love not the world, nor the things of the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 Joh. 2. 15.* Do not flatter thy soul into perdition; if thou lovest the world, thou dost not love God: *For the friendship of this world is enmity against God: Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God, James 4. 4.* He whose heart and mind is set after the world; he that will be rich, the bent and design of the heart is for it; that's the Butt he levels at, whatever he professes; That's his great business and project: *Thine eyes and thy heart are not but for thy covetousness, Jer. 22. 17. He maketh haste to be rich, Prov. 28. 20.* drives furiously after the world; his heart is reconciled to all the means and ways that lead to it (be they never so clashing with soul-advantages) that man, be he who he will, is a friend to the world, and an enemy to God, let him make the highest profession possible: So did *Judas* get into the Church of God; so did *Demas* pray, preach, and so may hypocrites for a time; yea make many prayers, *Isa. 1. 15.* Doth he profess love to God? so did the Jews; and yet their hearts went after their covetousness, *Ezek. 33. 31.* Is he of a lovely spirit, and unblameable conversation? so was the young man in the Gospel; his great desire was to inherit eternal life, *Mark 10. 17.* that was his business to Christ; he desired to know how he might be saved; he seemed to be all for Heaven; his life also was unblameable: *All these have I observed from my youth up, verse 20.* He was of a sweet, lovely spirit: 'Tis said, *Jesus beholding him, loved him, verse 21.* and yet could not part with the world for Christ; had his heart knit to earthly things all the while, and went away sorrowful; he could not consent to sell all and give to the poor, *ver. 22.* no marks will serve that Soul's turn, whose heart is glued to the World, and cannot give up all to Christ's dispose: God and the World cannot dwell in that Soul, godliness and gain cannot keep house together: where the grace of God comes in truth, it teacheth men to deny worldly lusts, *Tit. 2. 11, 12.* He that hath no power to deny the cravings of a worldly heart, never yet received the grace of God in truth. *Grace (saith one) may stand with some transient acts of naughtiness, but never with covetousness: Adams on the 2 Epist. of Pet. p. 9. 16. Noah was once drunk with Wine, but never with the World: Lot twice Incestuous, never Covetous: Peter denied his Master thrice; it was not the love of the World, but the fear of the World brought him to it; for he had denied the World before he denied his Master: Once David was overcome with the Flesh, never with the World. Why did not these purge themselves from Adultery, Anger, Contention, and the like? because into these sins the infirmity of a Saint may fall; but if once into Covetousness, there is nothing of a Saint left, not the very name. Luther acknowledges there was scarce a sin to which he had not been tempted, save to the sin of Covetousness. The Lord Jesus tells us that his Disciples are not of this World: some derive the word, Holy, from Earth, and a privative particle, in that redemption from the earth, is the great work of holiness: All they that partake of the Cross of Christ, are crucified to the World, and the World to them, Gal. 6. 14.* Not a jot of the benefits of Christ are treasur'd up in that Soul where the God of this World dwells; and if without Christ, without hope; thy case is desperate if thy heart be earthly, under the ruling power of this World; thou art yet in a graceless state, and no grace, no glory; if thou mindest earthly things, destruction is thy end, *Phil. 3. 19.* If thou art one of this World, whose heart is after thy covetousness, thy portion is

in this World, *Psal. 17. 14. All thy Heaven is on this side the Grave: For this ye know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an Idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God, Eph. 5. 5. 'Tis joined with the most abominable sins, Thievery, Drunkenness, Adultery, Idolatry, Extortion, for which things sake, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience, Col. 3. 5. 6. The Scripture calls covetous men, cursed children, 2 Pet. 2. 14. An heart they have exercised with covetous practices, cursed children; really cursed with a detestation, such whom God abhorreth, Psal. 10. 3. And the wicked blesseth the covetous, whom God abhorreth. A woe is pronounced against them, Hab. 2. 9. Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil: One would think this a duty, or at least very commendable, to provide for our Family, and get what we can for our children, and to endeavor to secure our houses from any suffering and calamity; but if this be men's end, to set their nest on high, to get great things for themselves, and so to manage their affairs, as to avoid all sufferings for God, there's a dreadful woe hangs over their heads, and disappointment of all their design in the issue; for instead of honor, they are brought to shame in the end: *Thou hast consulted shame to thy own house, and sinned against thy own soul, verse. 10. They are unworthy of any society with men: I have written unto you not to keep company; if any man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one, no, not to eat, 1 Cor. 5. 11. and shall be cut off from communion with God to all eternity: Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God: be not deceived, neither Fornicator, nor Idolater, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9. 10.**

Secondly, as thy state is dangerous, if thou art one who lovest this present World; so thy folly is great, to set thy heart upon the World.

After thou hast been convinced of the evil of such a spirit and practice, and hast felt the smart of it in thy own soul.

After thou hast been arraigned at the bar of thy Conscience, and condemned in thy own heart for this Sin, (as every truly convinced Soul is,) if ever the spirit of bondage hath been at work in thy heart, (as thou hast confessed) then hast thou found this sin more bitter than death to thee; and now to return again to such courses as will break thy bones again, and put thy soul to greater torture than ever, (as all relapses do,) this is folly indeed.

After thou hast chosen God for thy portion, Christ for thy treasure, Godliness for thy gain, the inheritance with the Saints for thy Land, a mansion in Heaven for thy house, Christ's tried Gold for thy Money, a conversation in Heaven for thy Trade, the Father, Son and Spirit, for thy All here, and forever, (as thou hast done, or fearfully belied thy profession,) that after all this thou shouldest turn again to these beggarly elements, and exchange God for the world, a Crown for crumbs, a Throne for thorns, a Dowry in Heaven for a dunghill on earth; an eternal weight of Glory for a burden of thick clay; fellowship with God for defiling converse with dirt and bespotting trash; a Burgeship in Heaven for a name written in the earth; is not this folly, folly? Not that one who had real interest in God & things above, can ever fully and finally forfeit them, and lose them again; (for, once in Christ, and ever in

Christ) but those things thou didst once seem to choose for thy chiefest interest, and hast professed hopes of a certain title to these supreme treasures; and now, to sell thy hopes of God and Glory for that vomit thou hadst spewed up, and mire thou hadst been washed from, this is madness indeed.

After you have seen so often the vanity and uncertainty of these things below, that they are empty, and will not satisfy; they cannot quench thy thirst, or fill thy hungry soul; cannot afford the least rest to thy weary heart; but are still short of thy expectations; thou lookest for peace, and behold they give thee trouble; thou thinkest to gather Roses, and they prick thy fingers; and when thou hopest to find rest in them, and sayest, Soul, take thy ease in thy full bags, and fair estate; thy pleasant house, near relations; then they prove swords to pierce thee, or briars to rend thee; or at the best, but wind that does but swell, not nourish thee. Thou hast also found them fading things, that will not stay, rare ripe, fruit that soon rots; a moth, an Eastwind take off all; they are a pleasing gourd one day, and withered the next, *Jonah 4. 7. God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.* A sickness comes and takes away thy child, and all the hopes of thy house perish with him: Thy Customers break, and thou art impoverished: The fire burns down thy house, and thou art undone: Thy Heir it may be proves a Prodigal, and all thy gatherings are scattered; so uncertain, empty, perishing, are these things, and thou knowest them to be so, and hast found them such, and yet thy heart runs after them; and with the Dog in the Fable, thou leavest substance to catch at shadows; neglecting unseen, sure, sweet, satisfying and eternal things, for things that are not; and is not this madness? [The world perisheth, and yet thou seekest after the things thereof, *Petrarch.*]

After you have found better things, and tasted the sweetness of them, you have experienced the light of God's countenance to be beyond all corn, and wine, and oil; his loving-kindness to be better than life; a day in his Courts to be more eligible than a thousand elsewhere, *Psal. 4. 6, 7.* O how sweet hath his Word been to thy taste, sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb! how often hath God cheered, quickened and strengthened thy heart in thy approaches to him, that thou hast said (as *David of Goliath's sword*) there is none like this: And as the Disciples when with Christ in the Mount, 'tis good being here; Lord evermore give me this bread: and yet after all this, that thou shouldest upon choice, leave these for the world, and prefer thy shop, thy trade, thy field, house, money, before these divine and approved treasures: This is madness.

After so many confessions of this sin before the Lord and his people, and so many prayers and cries to God against it, and for grace to subdue thy earthly heart with many promises, and declared purposes to turn no more to this folly; that thou shouldest so easily, so speedily be reconciled to the world again, and reassume thy affections to these old lovers after all; this is madness, and will exceedingly greaten thy guilt and torment, when the Lord shall make inquisition for these things; when thy convictions, prayers and vows shall return as so many Serjeants upon thy back, to arrest thy guilty conscience, and as so many witnesses to prove God's charge against thee; that at such a time and such a time, in thy closet, in the Congregation of the Lord's people, in days of humiliation and preparation-seasons, on thy

sick-bed, under such a word and rod, thy heart did melt over thy sin, and thou didst solemnly renew thy Covenant against it; and now to have thy prayers, and tears, and promises; yea, and God too against thee, for thy Apostasy after such Lovers as thou thyself wilt loath another day, and be ashamed to own in the presence of God, Saints and Angels; this is folly, folly.

Now when God is punishing thee for this very sin, by stripping thee of thy Idols, and pouring out the vials of his wrath upon this *Euphrates*, thy riches, interest, trade, and earthly comforts, over which thou hast carried away thy heart from him, that now while the Rod is upon thy back, thou shouldest hold fast thine iniquity, and refuse to return; this is desperate and incorrigible folly. And this is the practice of most this day; God blows upon their trades and interests for following them, and letting his house lie waste; and yet they pursue them still: The Lord takes out the bottom of their bags, and yet they put in more money into them. God smites men for the iniquity of their covetousness, and yet they go on frowardly in the way of their heart, *Isa. 57. 17.* God is hedging up the way of men's Lovers, and yet they break thorough to overtake them: So it was with *Israel*, God had hedge'd up her way, made a wall that she should not find her paths; and yet she followed after them. *Hos. 2. 6. And she shall follow after her Lovers* (O incorrigible wickedness!) *but* (saith God) *she shall not overtake them: The Lord is plucking down men's bricks, but they build with hewn stone; the Sycamores are cut down, but they change them into Cedars, Isa. 9. 10.* Providence pulls away unduly pursued interests, but men catch at them again: This is daring wickedness, and a telling God to his face, they fear him not, neither will they return. *Jer. 5. 3. Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved, thou hast consumed, but they have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a Rock; they have refused to return:* This is our case, and should it not be for a lamentation?

Lastly, when nothing but ruin and destruction is before our eyes; manifest danger of losing all, even Interest, Gospel, Life, and all that is dear to us seems to be a going; and yet to pursue these things, with neglect of our souls, is madness beyond parallel, and a dangerous symptom of approaching ruin. If men are not given up to a spirit of blindness, they must needs see that wasting destructions are upon us; gray hairs are here and there, and we see it not, *Hos. 7. 9, 10. Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not; yea, gray hairs are here and there, yet he layeth it not to heart; and the pride of Israel doth testify to his face, and they do not return to the Lord their God, nor seek him for all this. They felt the pain, but did not acknowledge the cause and fountain of all those evils, (saith Zanchi;) and this showed they were desperate and incurable, in that they were convicted of their evil case, and yet would not return to the Lord.* No spot more dangerous than continuance in sin under utmost means of reformation and confessed danger of ruin. *If our transgressions and sins be upon us, and we pine away in them; how shall we then live? Ezek. 33. 10.*

USE IV.

If the Heavenly Trade be the best Trade, &c. Then this offers counsel and exhortation to five sorts of persons.

1. To such as are strangers to this Heavenly Trade.

Counsel 1. Such as are strangers to this Heavenly Trade; you that never were acquainted with this high Calling, but have spent all your time about things that perish, trafficking about Hell and Damnation. Be you exhorted to set about this choice, rich, and blessed Trade.

There are four Arguments that usually sway with rational persons in their choice of earthly Callings, which are also weighty inducements unto all not yet concerned to speed upon this Heavenly Trade.

Arg. 1. First, Necessity puts men on employments, and none are greater than theirs who are without this Divine Calling. Sinners, you that are yet without God in the World, you are miserably poor, and ready to perish; you are worth nothing but sin and misery; He is a poor man that hath nothing to live upon; and such are you, while without this line of communication, and strangers to these supreme concerns: You are spiritually poor, and have nothing (as yet) for your Souls to live on here, or to all eternity, *Rev. 3. 17. And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* Poverty is one of the miseries of all unchanged souls; and that which aggravates it, is this; that they think themselves rich, and yet have nothing; no Food to fill them, but empty husks, and swine's meat; no Rayment to cover them, but filthy rags, and confusion, no House to shelter them from the storms of Divine wrath; or any Habitation to receive them, but an infernal Lake of Fire and Brimstone, and a receptacle with damned Devils; not a friend to help them; not an eye to pity them; There are none so poor in the World but they have something or other to help them, something in hand, or something in hope; something of their own, or something of others: if they canit dig, yet they can beg; if they have not interests to maintain them, yet they find pity to relieve them: But a Christless Sinner hath nothing to supply his immortal part; nothing in hand; nothing in hope; nothing of his own; nothing of others, that can contribute the least good to his undone Soul, whatever he lives on, is nothing but wind and emptiness; *He feeds on ashes, a deceived heart turns him aside, Isa. 44. 20.* He crams his starved Soul with filthy dung and excrements, (so loathsome are all the pleasures of sin he lives on,) *Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the Covenants of Promise; having no hope, and without God in the World, Eph. 2. 12.* This is your condition, Souls, while without this Heavenly Trade; you are miserably poor, whatever you have in the World, you have nothing in God; whatever your Bodies and Families have, your Souls have nothing: *'Tis little profit to enjoy all things, and miss that one thing by which only we come to use them; Aug.* You labor for vanity, and lie down in sorrow; and have you not reason to look out after some course to help you, and to embrace this overture of a Calling that will maintain and enrich you here, and forever? The Lepers case is thine; if thou sit still in thy condition, thou diest: In the World's fullness is famine; in thy security and false hopes, is death also: If thou adventure an offered grace, it may save thee; however, thou canst but die, *2 Kin. 7. 3, 4.*

Again, you are not only poor, but Bankrupts; your poverty is of your own procurement, and the issue of your prodigality; you had once a fair Estate, but lost it; God, Grace and Glory was yours by the first Covenant, *Luke 15. 30.* but you have trifled it away for forbidden-fruit, and spent all you had on Harlots; you have consumed your Lord's goods also in riotous living,

and wasted a large stock committed to your trust, and now must give an account of your Stewardship; were it only your personal wants that your folly hath brought upon you, (though that be heavy,) yet 'tis comparatively tolerable; but restitution must be made, and that is inconceivably distressing. A dreadful word, sinners, lies against you! (how can you bear it? how can you eat, drink, talk, or sleep in peace? much less rejoice when the handwriting is against the wall?) 'tis this, *Give an account of thy Stewardship, Luke 16. 2.* A review of thy past time must be expected, by what means thou didst reduce thy miserable Soul to this low estate, and an account of thy Stewardship will be required; and then when too late, thou wilt say with the Steward, *What shall I do? ver. 3.* and is it not more advisable now to take this counsel of *Eliphaz, to acquaint thyself with God, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee, Job. 22. 21.* to return to that Trade which thou hast left, and recover the Treasure which thou hast lost, that so thy account may be comfortable in the day of Christ?

Nay further, you are not only poor, and bankrupts; but deeply in debt; debtors to God, to whom you owe yourselves and all that you have, by the Law of Creation and Covenant-obligation, but never yet discharged that due to this very day. You are in debt to God for all your mercies in Creation and Providence, patience-mercy, preservation-mercy, preventing-mercy, bounty-mercy; there's never a moment but God is laying out some new mercy upon thee, of which thou hast never made retribution to this day.

Debtors to the Law of God, which hath its full and just claim on you, a Law that is just, righteous and good, and to which you owe obedience by just and unquestionable ties, and yet have never yielded any right subjection to it all your days, but have violated all its righteous commands every day and moment of your life, both in thought, word and deed; *For he that keepeth the whole Law, and yet offendeth in one point or iota, is guilty of all, Jam. 2. 10.*

Debtors to Conscience, whose Law is in force against you, and by which you shall be judged. *Rom. 2. 14, 15. These having not the Law, are a Law to themselves, which show the works of the Law written in their hearts; their Consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another;* and yet you have broken these Conscience-bonds, casting its cords from you: how many ties hath Conscience laid upon you which you have broken, going against the light and dictates thereof!

Debtors to all the World, to whom, in some respect or other, you are obliged. There are duties you owe to all men, to love them, and pray for them: to all your neighbors and acquaintance, to do them good as you have opportunity, and to seek and endeavor their Salvation to your power, which you have not done to this day. There are duties you owe to your relations, friends and family, which you have neglected, and have been increasing your Original debt, by running on new scores every day, which can never be cancel'd, or a power obtained to discharge your duties acceptably, till you come to Christ, and enter your souls into his new and everlasting Covenant, setting upon those great and Evangelical duties of it.

Your slavery is also great till you come over to this blessed work: You are in bondage unto Satan: *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey, Rom. 6. 16.* You serve incomparably the worst Lord; a cruel Lord who hath no mercy,

but delights in the misery of fallen man; *A roaring Lion that goes about seeking to devour*, 1 Pet. 5. 8. A cursed one cast out from God, cursed above all creatures; *reserved in everlasting chains under darkness to the judgment of the great day*, Gen. 3. 14. Jude, verse 6. Thine implacable enemy that hates thee with a perfect hatred: An Accuser, that never speaks well of any: A Murderer he was from the beginning, Rev. 12. v. 10. and the original cause of all the destruction in Earth and Hell: A false and deceitful creature, that never kept his word with any: A Lyar, and the Father of Lies, Joh. 8. 44. one that will be too hard for you, and cheat your souls into destruction: A miserable poor creature; one that hath lost all his glory and excellency, and hath nothing to give you for all your service, but some of the same flames in which he must fry forever: This, sinners, is your Lord, whom you have chosen and served all your days: And as you serve the worst Lord, so you do the worst work; base, filthy, shameful, cursed work: Such are all thy actions whiles in an unchanged state; you do hard work; no service like it; you work, and have no food to refresh you, which is the cruellest bondage: *Israel in Egypt* wrought hard, and yet had fleshpots, Onions and Garlic to relieve them; but you have nothing to feed your hopes and affections, but lies and vanity; you work, and have no raiment to cover you, all your employment makes you naked; you labor, and have no rest; weary and heavy laden, and yet feel it not, Gen. 3. 7. Other Laborers have their successive quietudes, but you have none; the hireling hath his shadow; the laborer hath his evening to give over his work; his bed to sleep on; but your work admits of no rest; 'tis never done; you do the Devil's work day and night, waking and sleeping; nay, while you eat and drink your work still goes on; O sad servitude! You work and have no wages: All earthly Laborers have their penny, something or other to compensate their pains, money or maintenance; but you have nothing in hand or hope, here or hereafter, but death and damnation; the fruit of your labors here, is more bitter than death; and the wages at the end of your day, wrath and vengeance, worm and fire, Mark 9. 44. And is not this bad employment? and is it not time sinners, to change your calling, and to accept this offer made you of this excellent Trade?

Arg. 2. Secondly, The danger that attends your present state should put you on a timely relinquishment of it: You are poor, and that exposes you to scorn and contempt, to oppression, treading down, and crushing, to devouring and destruction; you are not safe from ruin one moment; the next knock at thy door may be a call to Judgment *Prov. 17. 5. Amos 4. 1. Hab. 3. 14. Prov. 10. 15.* When thou liest down, thou mayest make thy bed in Hell; when thou awakest, thou mayest see God on the Throne, thy Soul at the Bar, thy Accusers at thy right hand, the Evidence in thy own breast, the Sentence written in capital letters, *Go ye cursed:* Under thy feet a bottomless lake of fire and brimstone; round about thee cruel Devils ready to seize upon thee, and lodge thy guilty condemned soul in thine eternal home, *Matth. 24. 51.* You have been Prodigals wasting what is not your own, and are in danger every day of a charge against you.

You are deeply in debt, and in danger of an arrest every hour; when you go forth, death may be at your heels; when you return, destruction may enter with you: O the uncertainty of thy time sinner! the danger of thy eternity, the absolute ruin of thy immortal soul, if thy reckoning begin before thy work: and hast thou not reason then to hasten about thy great concern, and to burn no more daylight in works of darkness?

Arg. 3. Thirdly, Thy duty should quicken thy undertaking in this great employment: Religion is not your Liberty, but your manifold debt: The Law of Creation binds you unto God; you will confess you were made by him, and God will profess you were made for him, *Isa. 43. 21. This people have I formed for myself, that they should show forth my praise.* Your fall from the Covenant of Works, is not your liberty from the essential duties of it; neither is your incapacity to perform it, a dispensation of your obedience: 'tis still your duty to return from whence you fell; to take the Lord to be your God, to love him with all your heart, and with all your might; to trust in him; to fear and obey him. A draught of these Covenant-duties did God place in your conscience by which you shall be judged, *Rom. 2. 12. 15.* though the counterpane you have defaced; yet the Original Deed is with God, and will be brought forth in the day of Christ against such as have not taken the Lord for their God.

You are also maintained by God, and that obliges you to him: 'Twas the argument the Apostle urged to the Masters of Reason in that age, why they should seek the Lord, because 'twas from him they had their subsistence, *Acts 17. 28. For in him we live, and move, and have our being.* If God maintains you, 'tis rational he should have the use of you: 'Twas the reason Moses used to prove God's right to Israel's all, *Deut. 32. 9, to 15. The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance; why? He found him in the desert Land, in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about; he instructed him; he kept him as the apple of his eye: As an Eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him: (And therefore no reason they should leave him for strangers.) He made him ride upon the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the field; and he made him to suck honey out of the Rock, and oil out of the flinty Rock: Butter of Kine, and milk of Sheep, with fat of Lambs and Rams, of the breed of Bashan, and Goats, with the fat of kidnies, of wheat, and thou didst drink the pure blood of the Grape.* Mercies are cords and bands by which the Lord obligeth men to himself: *I drew them with cords of a man, and with bands of love, Hos. 11. 4.* All thy life (sinner) hath been full of these constraints of mercy and love, to take the Lord to be thy God.

The Gospel of Grace which you profess to own and receive, binds you to seek first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, *Matth. 6. 33.* to do the work of God, to labor for that bread which endures to eternal life; to work the works of God, *Joh. 6. 27, 28.* to be no more your own, but the Lord's, *1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.* Cease to call or think yourselves Christians; tell the world you do not believe or hope to be saved by a crucified Christ, or else come over to him, and be disposed by his sacred Will. This is your duty.

Arg. 4. Fourthly, Weigh the unspeakable gain that will surely accrue to you, if you set up this Trade of Godliness. I have already shewn in the demonstration of this point, the great profit that this Heavenly Trade will turn unto, to all that deal thoroughly in it, to which I advise you to cast back your eye, and take three or four considerations more, to convince your understandings that Religion is eligible on grounds of greatest interest: For,

First, Religion will maintain you in the hardest times: So will not other Trades; there may be seasons when earthly employments will turn to no accounts: You have heard that riches profit not in the day of wrath; and some of you have seen the time, when they that work

could yet scarcely eat; but God's work is meat and drink, when daily bread fails, *Joh. 4. 30. I have meat to eat that you know not of. Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 1 Tim. 4. 8. God careth for the righteous; and when the Lions lack, and are hunger-bit, they that fear the Lord shall want no good thing, Psal. 34. 10.* They shall be sure to be provided for, whoever wants: God hath past his word for it: All things are theirs by purchase, who are Christ's by choice; that is (saith Piscator) *All earthly things are designed of God for your use, and the furtherance of your salvation:* Not as if the Saints had a right to other men's interests. The *Apostle doth not speak here (saith Pareus) of civil possessions, but of that divine order by which all things ought to serve the good and advantage of the Church of God.* The Earth is the Lord's, & the fullness thereof; all which is given into the hands of Christ for the good of his people: *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church, Ephes. 1. 22.* The whole Earth is but God's Kitchen, for the maintenance of his house; and if he will feed his servants and slaves, much more his children: *He gives to all their meat in due season, and satisfies the desires of every living thing:* Much more will he care for, and give food convenient to his living in *Jerusalem.* Indeed Believers are not of the world, and therefore have not their portions in the world; they are the Heirs of Heaven, and have no promise of more on Earth than will comfortably carry them home, and suffice for the discharge of those offices assigned to them here: They are Servants, not Heirs, who carry the cloak-bags in their journey. Persons of grandeur bear no more about them than for present use: Surely, were earthly treasures good for heaven-born souls, he that gives better things would not deny these: But God knows enough is as good as a feast; and so much the Saints shall have in their passage home. No man sends his servants a journey, but he allows them enough to carry them thorough; and so will God to his: If he maintains idlers and enemies; much more will he feed his faithful servants and laborers: He hath promised to supply all their wants, *Phil. 4. 19.* and is able to make it good: If he thinks it not much to give them a Crown, he will not deny them Crumbs: If God should let his work-men, want, his work would cease; his own interest, as well as his promise, obliges him to look after such; his Love, Truth, Glory, with all his Attributes, are concerned to maintain his people in his work; and therefore nothing more sure than daily bread, and sufficiency in all things to such as serve and obey him.

Secondly, Godliness will secure you in dangerous times, *Prov. 3. 23. Thou shalt then walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble; when thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet, v. 24. For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.* The way of duty is the way of safety: whatever men think, the greatest security is in the boldest Adventures for God (if regular;) where his Sun does guide you, there his shadow will cover you; *who shall harm you if you are followers of that which is good? 1 Pet. 3. 13.* Men may threaten you, but cannot injure you; they may spoil your estates, imprison your bodies, but cannot do you any real harm; while men keep with God, God will abide with them; his presence shall fence them, his favor shall shield them, his Angels shall encamp about them; all his Attributes shall guard and secure them: God's people that cleave to him in duty, are as the *Hebrews in Goshen*, as *Israel in the wilderness*, as *Noah in the Ark*; they only are safe from ruining evils, when others are exposed to destroying judgments.

Thirdly, Nay, Holiness will not only maintain and secure you; but it will also enrich you, and fill you with the best Treasures, the true Riches, *Luke 16. 11.* the tried gold that cannot be corrupted or defrauded, *Matth. 6. 20.* It will furnish you with the unsearchable riches of Christ: the world hath its treasures; and so hath Christ his precious substance, to bestow on all that trade with and for him; as hath been already shewn.

Fourthly, Piety will cheer and delight you; no comforts like theirs who walk with God in truth: This was *Hezekia's* cordial when under a sentence of death, *Isa. 38. 3.* *Remember O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart:* And *Paul's* rejoicing, *that in all simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation in this world,* *2 Cor. 1. 12.* The purest pleasures flow down from the Throne, and steam in thorough Sanctuary-waters into the soul: Alas! what are those drossy comforts that run thorough the worlds channels, which only leave a slime behind, and then empty themselves into the dead Sea of perdition, *perishing in their using,* *Col. 2. 22.* Carnal mirth hath a pleasant entrance, but an ill farewell, *Prov. 14. 13.* *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness:* But Religion breeds the best contentments, and most satisfying pleasures, *Psal. 36. 8.* *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of thy pleasures.*

Fifthly, Wisdom's Trade will make you truly great and honorable, and give you a place to walk among those that stand by, *Zach. 3. 7.* That is (saith *Junius*) *I will place thee in the same dignity the Angels of God enjoy in Heaven, and thou shalt dwell in the same Church among those Myriads,* *Prov. 4. 8.* *Exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to honor when thou dost embrace her.* *V. 9.* *She shall give to thine head an Ornament of grace, a Crown of glory shall she deliver thee.* How contemptibly soever the world looks on the ways of Godliness, and those that espouse them; yet all true greatness lies on the side of piety. All the world's glory is but a Pageant, a mere show of honor, compared to that which is on the head of every true Believer: Saints have the noblest extraction, born of God; the highest dignity, *made Kings and Priests unto God,* *Rev. 1. 6.* *Ye shall be unto me a Kingdom of Priests,* *Exod. 10. 6.* Cloathed with the richest Ornaments, *perfect through divine comeliness,* *Ezek. 16. 10, to 15.* appointed to a Kingdom that is everlasting, assured of Thrones and Crowns with Christ for evermore. *Rev. 3. 21.* *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sit down with my Father in his Throne.* A sure Throne shall Believers have above, as certain as Christ is now upon his Fathers Throne; and the same Throne that the Father gives to Christ, *specifically,* though not *gradually:* A Crown fitted to their heads; indeed Saints cannot wear the Crown Christ doth; his is the Redeemer's Crown; theirs the Redeemeds, made of the same glory: *Joh. 17. 24.* *Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me,* *2 Tim. 2. 12.* *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.* O blessed glory, and greatly to be longed for! whose measure is incomprehensible, whose duration is undeterminable.

Now, Sinners; If these Arguments convince you that 'tis your necessity, interest and duty to set upon this great employment, and you find your hearts really willing to come up to the proposed terms of this high Calling, and embrace any counsels that lead thereto. Then;

Direct. 1. First; You must get a capacity for so excellent an undertaking: Heavenly work is too high for earthly natures; and special service for common endowments: They that are in the flesh cannot please God, Rom. 8. 8. No creature can act beyond its being, 'tis above the sphere of unchanged nature to carry up the Soul to things above, there must be a spiritual principle before there can be a heavenly operation; you must first be God's workmanship before you can do his work; and be created to good works before you can walk therein, Eph. 2. 10. 'Tis a sad thing (saith Mr. Caryl) to see a badman do that which is bad; yet it is a sadder sight to see a bad man continuing in his state, to go on doing good; this is the acting of the new creature's part in the old creature's state, and what will that avail? To set upon Religion in an unregenerate state, is labor in vain; the dumb may as well speak, the blind see, the dead walk, while they remain such, as they that are evil do good: Can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit? Mat. 7. 18. Or a Fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Jam. 3. 11. No more can an unsanctified Soul do holy work. The person must be gracious before the work can be good; God had first respect to Abel, and then to his Offering, Gen. 4. 4. The ungrafted Cherry-tree brings forth but harsh fruit, let the soil and dressing be never so good; so is the Soul under the highest privileges and performances without implantation into Christ: The root must bear the branch before the branch can bear fruit; a breaking off from the wild Olive with a participation of the fatness of the good Olive-tree, is absolutely necessary to true faithfulness, Rom. 11. 17, 18. Four things are needful to make an action Evangelically good; a good Principle, Matter, Form and End: neither of which is consistent with a man in his natural state: 'Tis dangerous also as well as vain, for persons to set upon doing good, and never care to become good; for this deceives their own Souls, making them think their condition safe when they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, Rev. 3. 16. and not only feeds an error in their state, but strongly hinders the cure, while these unprofitable duties consume Salvation-time, and destroy Salvation-hopes; despair is usually the issue of presumption; and they that conceit too soon that all is well, shall conclude when too late, that it shall never be better: This then is your first work, (Souls) To be sanctified and made meet for your Masters use, and prepared to every good work, 2 Tim. 2. 21. Labor to get your natures changed, and hearts quickened; you must be born again, or cannot see the Kingdom of God: Be looking to Jesus to create in you a new heart, a renewed mind, will and affections, to have a saving principle put into your hearts, and a disposition of Soul towards the whole will of God: Cry mightily for the Spirit, and wait for his movings upon the face of Sanctuary-waters, and for a mighty power of God in the Gospel upon your Souls: Get under the healing-wings of Christ, and rest not looking unto Jesus till virtue go out from him to heal your Souls: If this be thy restless desire, thou canst not let Christ alone, running after him, crying, Jesu, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me; he will turn again, and have compassion, and give the holy Spirit to them that unfeignedly and incessantly ask him, Mark 10. 47, 48, 49. Luke 11. 13.

Direct. 2. Secondly, cease from your own works. Isa. 55. 7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy: The first step in returning to God, is departing from sin and self; Neither can we (saith Calvin) hold converse with a holy God, till we be estranged from our unholy self. When the Apostle advises the Ephesians to put on the new man, Eph. 4. 24. He first exhorts them to put off the old, with his

whole conversation: *verse. 22. That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt:* Grace builds not on an old foundation, neither does it adorn, but reform the former conversation of called Saints; there is no clothing upon in regeneration-work, the old garments must off before the new will come on: Religion is not a covering for, but a stripping off a sinful life, neither can you be free to set on God's work till you leave your old works. *Rom. 6. 20. For when you were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness:* You had nothing to do with holiness, you had no freedom to do God's work while you were Sins servants: *He speaks of their actual liberty from grace, not their legal freedom, saith Pareus;*) you are not at liberty to do the work of holiness, while under the command of sin. No man can serve two Masters: *Mat. 6. 24. that is, two contrary Lord's, How can the same man (saith Grotius) follow godliness as his work, and at the same time be distracted with cares about getting and keeping earthly things?* 'Tis a vanity for persons to dream of a compliance between sin and holiness, whose work is too inconsistent for one Soul at one time; ruling iniquity and grace, are two contrary states, which cannot meet in one person and time: Never think of setting up on the Heavenly Trade, till you are freed from hellish servitude, and invested with the liberty of the Sons of God, a freedom from the love and service of every sin. Godliness calls for the whole of a man's heart, strength and time, and requires a person void of any inconsistent obligations; resolve to break from every way of death, if ever you think to enter into the way of life.

Direct. 3. Thirdly, Make over yourselves to the Lord in an Everlasting Covenant; they that will be Masters of a Trade, must first be bound to the service of it, and resign up their persons, wills, capacities and time to the instruction and government of another in order to their fitness for such a calling: And so must souls that will learn Wisdom's Merchandise, they must bind themselves to the Trade, and make over themselves and their all to God in Christ, to be taught and enabled to set up this excellent work. *Jer. 50. 5. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant that cannot be forgotten.* Sin had made a separation between their God and them, and brought a death upon their mercies and Templeenjoyments: but now the Spirit of Prophecy breathing on these dry bones, moves them to a vital union with the fountain of life, (the only regular way to their new work and mercies) they must first be joined to the Lord, before they can be rejoined to one another, and reenjoy their lost privileges; and this union lies in a hearty acceptance of offered grace, a taking hold of God in Christ, and a Covenant-surrender of the whole soul and its All to him again: [O for arms to embrace him, saith Mr. Rutherford!] This is called a giving up of ones self to the Lord, *2 Corinth. 8. 5. But this they did not as we hoped, but first gave themselves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God: They exceeded our hope:* We only expected some part of what was theirs, but they gave themselves first to God, and to us (to be directed and governed by the will of God, to be placed in the fellowship of his Gospel) as well as their interests to the service of his people: 'Tis also a giving away of ones self to the Lord wholly, unreservedly and perpetually, to be no more his own, *1 Cor. 6. 19. And ye are not your own.* This surrender of yourselves to God (souls) must be in judgment, understandingly, and ariseth freely on choice; universally, without the least reservation; absolutely, without any limitation or conditions of our own; eternally, without any

expiration and term of this grant, and to be attested by all overt acts within your power, *Isa. 44. 5. One shall say I am the Lord's; another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Jacob.* Whatever may most fully ensure and express an absolute devotedness unto God, must be done by those that ever expect to thrive in grace and godliness. *Verse 3, 4. I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring, and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the watercourses.* When once this implantation into Christ is dispatched, then will the Lord give prosperity to that soul; then are you in a sure way to success in all your holy undertakings, and like to speed well in this Heavenly Trade when you become entirely the Lord's in order to it: O be not satisfied till God be yours: [*The King's Son or no Husband, Rutherford.*] *The rational soul (saith Augustine) being capable of God, can be satisfied with nothing but God.*

Direct. 4. Fourthly, Come over into the family of Christ, if you would drive on this Heavenly Trade to purpose: Apprentices are household servants, up-rising, and down-lying; and so must Wisdom's Traders be; they must be members of Christ's family, and dwellers in the house of God. Psal. 65. 4. Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts; we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy Temple. Those whom God chooses for himself, he brings to himself, and makes them dwellers in his Courts: *Sucha one is entered into his family, that he being a sound Believer, may spend his life among the holy Citizens of Heaven.* Those whom the Lord takes into Covenant, he takes into communion; not only with himself, but with his people. *Jer. 3. 14, 15. I am married unto you, and I will take you one of a City, and two of a Family, and I will bring you unto Zion, and I will give you Pastors according to my own heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding:* This was intended of Gospeltimes and Churches: *When all the Nations shall be gathered to the Name of the Lord to Jerusalem, verse 17. And the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, verse 18.* which began to be fulfilled upon the breaking down of the partition wall, and the bringing in of the Gentiles unto Christ, *Ephes. 2. 14, 15, 19. When Believers should be no more strangers, and foreiners, but fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God.* The Apostle hath reference to the 12th verse, where souls out of Christ are said to be aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the Covenant of Promise; but now having access to God by one Spirit, *verse 18. Ye are no more strangers and foreiners. (a) In respect of the Church of God you are no longer strangers (saith Zanchi) but fellow-citizens with the Saints; and in regard of the Covenant of God, you are no more foreiners, but of the household of God. In whom all the building fitly framed together (that is, every stone in the building) groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord, verse 21.* The Church of God is his Temple where he is rightly served, *Rev. 7. 15. Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and serve him day and night in his Temple: which is his Church (saith Mr. Durham) here begun by fellowship in his Ordinances and in Heaven completely. Ezek. 20. 40. For in my holy Mountain; in the Mountain of the Height of Israel (a type of Gospel-Churches) saith the Lord God; there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the Land, serve me; there will I accept them, there will I require your offerings:* Plainly intimating that God hath no acceptable service, but in the Churches of his Saints; I mean as to public worship: Persons cannot give God his full instituted worship, till they come into fellowship with his people, seeing Church-fellowship

is itself an institution of Christ. *Matth. 28. 19, 20. Acts 2. 41, 42. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Mat. 18. 17, 18, 19.* The Church of Christ is his body, where he hath set his members, *1 Cor. 12. 18. That being fitly joined together, they might increase with the increase of God, Ephes. 4. 16. Col. 2. 19.* His Vineyard where his work lies, and into which he sends his Laborers, *Isa. 5. 7. Matth. 20. 1, 2.* His Garden where his Lilies and Beds of Spices are. *Cant. 6. 2.* His Family where he feeds and instructs them; where he guides and governs them. *1 Tim. 3. 15. Ephes. 3. 15.* His Sanctuary where he hides and secures them. *Psal. 78. 69.* His Galleries where he walks, and is held by his Saints. *Cant. 7. 5.* His Goldencandlesticks where his Lamps are burning: *The Firmament and Heaven* where his Stars are shining, and the Sun of Righteousness ariseth with healing in his wings. *Rev. 2. 1.* There's his *Granary* where he lays up his provisions, his manna, marrow, fat things, and spiced wine: *Isa. 25. 6.* There's his *School* where he instructs his Disciples, and makes them wise to salvation. *Isa. 54. 13. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children:* There are his *Oracles and Secrets.* *Rom. 3. 2. The Adoption, the Glory, the Covenants, the giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promises, Rom. 9. 4.* There's his *Nursery* where his tender plants are set to grow, where he brings in those that shall be saved. *Acts 2. 47. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.* His converting the Gentiles is called a persuading them into the tents of *Shem*, that is the Church of God, *Gen. 9. 27.* Yea the House of God is the gate of Heaven. *Gen. 28. 17. This is none other but the House of God; this is the gate of Heaven.* By the gate of the Church (saith Augustine) we enter into the gate of Paradise: How goodly then are these Tents of Jacob? How amiable are those Tabernacles of Israel? As the valleys they spread forth, as gardens by the Rivers side, as the trees of Lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as Cedar-trees beside the waters, *Numb. 24. 5, 6. To your Tents then O Israel, 2 Sam. 20. 1. Fly to your windows O ye Doves, Isa. 60. 8. Love the habitation of God's house, and the place where his honor dwells, Psal. 26. 8.* Where are such pleasures, treasures, light, life? where are your chiefest interests, your privileges, your work, your Lord, the first-fruits of your eternal glory? if you have taken Christ for your Teacher, you must take his Church for your School; you must dwell where he dwells, where you may sit at his feet, and receive his Doctrine.

Direct. 5. Fifthly, Be mortified to this present world; get your hearts loose from things below. *No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him that hath chosen him to be a soldier, 2 Tim. 2. 4.* He does not lay ties and snares about his feet, which throw him down, and hinder the course he engages to follow. Christianity is a Warfare, and Race; earthly things in the heart are as entanglements about the feet, which hinder this undertaking; you will have no liberty to heavenly things, till redeemed from the Earth; nor can run the race towards glory, till you lay aside the weights that press you down, and the sin that doth so easily beset you, *Heb. 12. 1.* If you will set your affections on things above, you must first take them off from things beneath, *Col. 3. 2.* He that sets his face towards Heaven, must turn his back upon the world, *Phil. 3. 13. Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before:* The world is one of those things Christians must leave behind them, if ever they think to reach Heaven *We should* (saith Luther) *with a certain greatness of mind contemn this life, and world, and with a large heart breathe after the future glory of an Eternal Life.* Till you are brought to a contempt of this world, and can count it as dross and dung, you can never value Heaven, or pursue things above with an even and uninterrupted heart. That

soul which designs to make Religion its work, must be ready to attend it at all times, and to have the heart composed and fitted to all the instructions that lead to it, which an earthly heart cannot do: A light and mutable spirit, now for God, and then for the world, is unfit for this great employment. *He that puts his hand to the plough, and looks back, is unmeet for the Kingdom of God, Luke 9. 62.* And such is a heart under the command of earthly things; 'tis never steadfast with God: the things of this world fill the soul with wind, and make it light and trifling about the things of God: *The heart of man is like that Jewel (I have read of) that one gave to Alexander, that while it was kept bright, weighed down the choicest gold, and most precious stones; but if once it fell into the dust, and took rust, it was lighter than a feather:* And so is the heart, if it falls into the dusty things of this world. The Church clothed with the Sun, hath the Moon under her feet, *Rev. 12. 1.* The more a soul is filled with the pure knowledge of God, and shining in its conversation, the more it is lifted up above the world: The nearer Heaven, the farther from Earth. *The more separate from the world (says Mr. Greenhill on Ezek. 3. 23.) the more fit for communion with God: Ezekiel must leave his house, and go into the plain, and there the Lord will talk with him.* The King's daughter must forget her own people, and her Father's house, ere the King would greatly desire her beauty, *Psal. 45. 10, 11.* And Abraham must leave his Country, and pleasant habitation, before he could get into a way of frequent communion with God; and so must a soul in heart and affections sit loose from the ensnaring things of this world, if ever he thinks to drive this Heavenly Trade. *By so much the more (saith Augustine) doth any one cleave to God, as he ceases from loving his own interests.*

Direct. 6. You must resolve on this also, To submit to all the instructions the Lord Jesus gives you; to go thorough all the labors, and bear all the burdens that this Heavenly Trade calls you to; every Art and Calling have their principles and rules, by the knowledge and obedience of which they are attained to; and so hath Religion: And as Piety is the highest and noblest profession; so are its principles more pure and mysterious, and with greatest difficulty attainable. Acquired knowledge furnishes men with light sufficient for all earthly undertakings; but to this Heavenly Trade both infused and acquired understanding is needful; both rules, and an eye to discern them must be given, if ever this Art be obtained: For this end the Lord Jesus is given, *for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, that they may see, Isa. 42. 6, 7.* and for a Prophet, to teach and instruct them the way they should go: and to hear and obey him as such, is the absolute duty of all that have given themselves up to his conduct and government; *Acts 3. 22. A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me, him shall you hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.* He hath undertaken to inwite them that obey him, and to show them what they must do, *Acts 9. 6.* And if they go on to know, they shall know the Lord: if they sit at his feet, and hear his Word, *Deut. 33. 3.* he will shine out to them, and send out a fiery Law for them: In order to which instruction your duty is to hear him, to watch daily at his gates, and to wait at the posts of his house, *Prov. 8. 34.* when he calls, say with Samuel, *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth, 1 Sam. 3. 10.* And whatsoever he saith (said the Mother of our Lord) unto you, do it, *John 2. 5.* Slight no directions, stick at no difficulties in comporting with his pleasure, 'tis for the life of your souls; obedience is so necessary in the Disciples of Christ, as that without it no true knowledge can be attained here, *John 7. 17. (if any man doth his will he shall know the Doctrine)*

nor salvation hereafter, *Heb. 5. 9. (he became the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him:)* His yoke is easy, and his burden is light, *Prov. 8. 5, 6. Prov. 3. 17.* He enjoins you nothing but what is needful, profitable, excellent, and pleasant: *Hear and your souls shall live, Isa. 53. 3.* Shall the servants of men come, go, do this or that, when they are bidden? *Matt. 8. 8.* Yea, shall the Devil's slaves do the greatest drudgeries, run most desperate adventures; throw themselves from pinacles; yea damn their souls at his bidding? and the servants of Christ so disobedient (when 'tis for their own concerns, their mercies and advantages are wrapped up in it) and that to so rational and easy injunctions? The consideration of this prevailed with a Heathen to obedience, when against his inclination. *2 King. 5. 13. His servants came near and said; My Father, if the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it?* (seeing it is for thy life and health) *how much rather then when he saith to thee, wash and be clean?* If his commands seem grievous, let love sweeten them: If his yoke seem heavy, let his rest at the end of it render it easy: when duties seem burdensome to flesh and blood, his burdens heavy, losses for the Gospel's sake great, think thus; better smart once than ever; to undergo troubles in the way, than at the end; to have my bad things here, rather than be tormented hereafter, *Luke 16. 25.* and what pains and hardships will men undergo for gold that perisheth, *1 Pet. 1. 7.* yea for counters that cheat them; and shall not I for an inheritance that fadeth not, reserved in Heaven, *1 Pet. 1. 5?* What strivings have some to obtain a Crown that is corruptible; and shall I be weary that am in pursuit of one that is incorruptible? *1 Cor. 9. 25.* without labor, no rest; without bearing the heat and burden of the day (when called thereto) no penny at the end, *Matt. 20. 12, 13.* without striving lawfully, no crowning, *2 Tim. 2. 5.* without doing the commandment, no eating of the tree of life, *Rev. 22. 14.* without enduring to the end, no salvation, *Mark 13. 13.* comfort yourselves with this, that *Heaven will make amends for all;* when your wet and weary sowings shall end in a pleasant and eternal harvest. *Gal. 16. 9. Let us not be weary in well doing, for you shall reap in due time, if ye faint not: Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. 15. 58.*

Direct. 7. Lastly, What you do, do quickly: Time waits not your leisure. There are but twelve hours in the day, and how many of them have been slept and sinned away, and how few of them may be before you, who knows? What if your Sun should set at noon day? or a summons meet you in the midst of your work: *Give account of thy Stewardship, for thou shalt be no longer Steward Luke 16. 2.* What will you then do? Some of you are in your afternoon, & what time is that to set forth such a long journey as the way to Heaven is? and yet will you gain (by your delays) some of this time also, for the Devil, World and Flesh? others of you are in your morning, (the best time to put forth in your travel towards glory:) O! lose not your season for eternity: *Make much of time, (saith Aquinas) especially in the weighty matter of Salvation: O! how much would they that now lie frying in Hell, rejoice, if they might have the least minute of time wherein they might get God's favor: the young man hath death at his back, the old man before his eyes, and that's the more dangerous enemy that pursues thee, than that which marches up to thy face: Christ's work admits of no delays, his injunction allows not of too morrow, but while 'tis called today: Heb. 3. 7. To day if you will hear his voice, verse. 13. To day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin: Seek the Lord while he may be found, Isa. 55. 6. [Haste,*

haste, the tide will not bide, *Rutherford*.] 'Tis now or never, while the Light shines, the Lord knocks, the Angel moves on the waters, while the Lord delays his coming: Salvation-work is quick work, God's racers must run, his Doves must fly, his Servants be diligent, that they may be found of him in peace, *1 Cor. 9. 26. Isa. 60. 8. 2 Pet. 3. 14.* You that have stood idle in the market-place all your day hitherto, hasten into the Lord's Vineyard, *Matt. 20. 6.* [Love is sick to hear tell of tomorrow: Mr. *Rutherford*.] What *Jonathan* said to his Lad when *David's* life was in danger, let me advise you: *And Jonathan cried after the Lad, make speed, haste, stay not, 1 Sam. 20. 38. I rue nothing* (said precious Mr. *Welch* when on his sick-bed) *but that I was so long in beginning: O, saith David, that I had wings like a Dove, for then would I fly away, and be at rest: I would hasten my escape from the stormy wind and Tempest, Psal. 55. 6, 8.* Sinners, you are in danger of stormy tempests while in your unchanged state; *O hasten to your strong holds ye prisoners of hope.* When *Brenz* was like to be given up to the enemy, one writes him this note; *Fuge Brenti cito citius citissime: Fly Brenz quickly, more quickly, most speedily.* Souls, 'tis for your lives, make all possible haste about the work of your Salvation: And you that are entered on this heavenly work, double your diligence that you may finish your course before God finishes your time: methinks the word of God, and his providences this day; yea, everything seems to thrust you forward, and do to you as *Pharaoh's* Task-masters did to *Israel: Exod. 5. 13.* *And the Task-masters hasted them, saying, fulfil your work.*

To Professors.

Counsel 2. Secondly, if the Heavenly Trade be the best Trade; then you that profess this Calling, be you exhorted to follow it; keep up and improve your Trade for Heaven: what's an employment without improvement? the most profitable Calling not followed, turns to little advantage: The day we live in gives men sensible experience of this truth, that they who intend to live in the World, must attend their employments: The idle person suffers hunger; they must be careful and diligent in their business, that think to make anything of their earthly interests: and so 'tis in this Trade of godliness; they that will be saved, must *work out their Salvation.* A Trade is a man's business, and course of life, which he pursues and carries on from day today; 'tis the subject of his thoughts, counsels, and considerations; of his time and strength, and daily work; where he ends one day, he begins the next, and contributes his utmost wisdom, parts and labors to the most vigorous prosecution of it: And so must it be in this Heavenly Trade, (Christians,) it must be the impending business, and principal concern of your whole life; that which commands your thoughts, purposes and capacities; which engrosses your time, care and strength, and to which every other business must give way, and every occasion and occurrence must be subservient: it must be followed, and driven on every day, in everything, place and company; whatever is neglected, that must go on, and give no place to intermissions, no, not for a moment: You must not say to godliness, as *Felix* did to *Paul: Go thy way for this time, when I have a more convenient season I will send for thee, Acts 24. 25.* Stops in the way of God are not easily recovered; one days neglect brings all out of order: Prosperity in Religion admits of no *Parenthesis* in its work, or consists with allowed interruptions; Piety must be as the blood that runs through every vein of your life, and affair in the World: In eating, drinking, talking, thinking, buying, selling, you must be still driving

on Wisdom's Merchandise. Christians, follow your work, or lay down your Trade; 'tis vanity, yea, the way to beggary, to profess a Calling, and not pursue it.

Quest. But wherein lies this Heavenly Trade, which I must so make my business? what do you drive at by all these Arguments for Heavenly Trading?

What I intend by this metaphor, I shall open to you under these seven general Heads, as the main duty of a Christian, and to be carried on in the whole course of his life.

- 1 To have and keep up a heavenly spirit.
- 2 To secure your interest in heavenly things.
- 3 To get in more and more of heavenly Goods.
- 4 Every day to drive on heavenly work.
- 5 To be heavenly in your thoughts and meditations daily.
- 6 To keep up heavenly converses every day.
- 7 To improve everything you have, meet with, and do, to heavenly ends and advantages.

First, If you will drive on this heavenly Trade, you must have and maintain a heavenly spirit; this is the spring of all heavenly actions; as is a man's spirit, so will his thoughts, words and conversation be; look what way the spirit of a man goes, that way the man goes: *They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit;* That is, they that are altogether led by their carnal affections, (saith Willet) following the ducture of the flesh, (saith Pareus,) who are governed by a carnal spirit, they mind and pursue carnal things; and they that are after the spirit, who are under the rule and government of the spirit, who are spiritually minded, these do savor and make after spiritual things. What the Prophet *Ezekiel* speaks of the motion of second causes according to the direction and influence of the first cause. *Ezek. 1. 20. Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went;* (that is the wheels,) *for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels:* The same may be said of the actions of men, that they are according to the motion of that ruling spirit that is in them: *they that live in the spirit, walk in the spirit, Gal. 5. 25. Caleb's* fulfilling after God, was the fruit of that other spirit he received, *Numb. 14. 24. 'Tis* said of those that built the house of God, *Ezra 1. 5. that God had raised up their spirits to the work, as birds stir up their young to fly. Then rose up the chief of the Fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the Priests and Levites, with all those whose spirit God had raised up, to go up to build the House of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.* They that set about the work of Religion, must be persons of raised spirits, capable of ascending to things above. The reason why no more do set upon this Heavenly Trade, is, because they want this heavenly spirit, their spirit is earthly, and that (as leaven) seasons their whole souls, and makes their conversations earthly: 'Tis contrary to nature, for a carnal mind to savor spiritual things; *Such are not subject to the Spirit of God, neither indeed can be, Rom. 8. 7.* 'Tis as natural for the stone to ascend, and waters to run back, as for an earthly heart to love and pursue heavenly things. A heavenly spirit suits heavenly things, and does as naturally

incline the soul to things above, as the fire moves upward, and the water carries all that is in it to the Ocean. A heavenly spirit savors heavenly things, and stirs up heavenly desires and motions to divine things. A heavenly spirit conveys out heavenly influences and strength to the soul, and is as good blood and spirits that strengthen the body. A heavenly spirit is influenced by heavenly arguments, and prevailed with by heavenly motives taken from the love of God, the excellency of Christ, the suitableness and advantage of spiritual things to the nature of the soul, the pleasing and glorifying of God; all which signifies nothing to an earthly and carnal heart, which only understands, savors, and is acted by carnal reasons and considerations. 'Tis therefore a principal part of a Christian's business in this Heavenly Trade, (and that which is leading to all other duties) to take heed to his spirit, *Mai. 2. 15.* to get and keep that pure and heavenly. If the fountain be corrupt, the streams cannot be good: Get your minds beam'd over with heavenly light, to discern heavenly things, their nature and worth; this *Paul* begs for the Saints at *Ephesus*; *Eph. 1. 17, 18.* *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlighten'd, that you may know what is the hope of his Calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints.* There are great hopes and glorious riches made over to Believers in the Gospel, the knowledge of which is necessary to cheer the heart, and engage the soul with all its strength to make out after them. *One thought of Christ* (saith *Mr. Ball*) *reaching the heart, is more to be valued than all Creature-contentments whatsoever, though they should be enjoyed in their fullness for a thousand years without interruption:* 'Twas this kept alive the Apostles hearts, under the dyings of the Lord Jesus in their bodies, and filled them with such courage & joy, that they had an eye to see glorious and eternal things. *2 Cor. 4. 10. 13. 16. 18.* *While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.* And this was their great work by the Gospel, *to make men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the World was hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, Eph. 3. 9.* And having got this spiritual eye, a Christian's duty is to keep it open, and fixed on things above, to preserve it from the injury of Sin and Satan, to take heed of the vapors of a carnal heart, and the dusty motes of this lower World, that they fall not in and weaken this sight: to get eye-salve from Christ, and pure annointings of the spirit on it every day, that they may see things invisible, and those great things of the other World they are engaged about: The most discerning eye on this side the everlasting Hills sees but darkly through a glass, and knows but in part, *1 Cor. 13. 9. 12.* How carnal are the minds of most Christians in this World? the very Disciples (though their eyes were blessed with peculiar sights,) *Mat. 13. 16.* yet had carnal apprehensions of spiritual things, even after the Lord Jesus had spent all his pains about them. *Acts 1. 6.* *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom unto Israel?* knowing souls have sometimes *their eyes held that they cannot see Jesus, Luke 24. 16.* nor bear discoveries of his glorious truth, *Joh. 16. 12.* that the Lord Jesus may say to all in this life; *O fools, and slow of heart to believe, Luke 24. 28.* *David,* after he had been long a learner, yea, after he was wiser than his teachers, yet cries out for more light. *Psal. 143. 8.* *Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk. Psal. 119. 18.* *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law. We may sail here* (saith *Mr. Hooker*) *in daily search, and when we know, there is something still beyond our knowledg, as men that travel in the*

main Ocean, they see nothing but water, and yet see neither side nor shore, brim nor bottom, and there is more water to be seen. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ, and he keeps the keys in his own hand and bosom. Be often looking unto Jesus for clearer sights of him, and the things freely given of God, with the way to them. Knock often at the treasury-door, till he answer and open, and send you away enriched with the knowledge of him: this is part of your Trade, to know Goods, and the worth of them, and how to buy and sell to best advantage. Alas, to what purpose is it to deal in Commodities that men know not? and heavenly things are hidden things, beyond the search of Men and Angels. *1 Pet. 1. 12. Which things the Angels desire to look into;* They bowed and stooped down to pry into those hidden secrets, and as it were to peep into the mysteries of the Gospel; as the word signifies; to look a-squint with cross eyes, every way, and with quickest observance, as through a Casement at one that passeth by; and this they did with an earnest and restless desire. The Apostle alludes to the Cherubims placed over the Mercy-seat, with their faces looking towards the Mercy-seat, and through it to the Ark (a type of Christ and Gospel-mysteries) *Exod. 25. 20.* as things worthy, and yet hard to be known, which call for an inward and spiritual eye under fresh annointings every day. Christians, this is your daily work, to follow on to know the Lord; to be much with the Sun of Righteousness for healings and beamings on the eve of your mind, that you may be more capable to understand the whole counsel of God concerning you. This is a Heavenly Spirit or Mind enlightened with Heavenly Wisdom to eye and understand heavenly spiritual things.

Another property of a Heavenly Spirit is this; 'Tis a Spirit that savors as well as sees heavenly things; it tastes a sweetness in divine things; there is nothing in all the world that so pleases a spiritual mind, as spiritual things: so much is included in that word, *Rom. 8. 5. Domind the things of the flesh:* that is, do savor and relish them; so 'tis rendered, *Matth. 16. 23. For thou savorest not the things that be of God;* it includes the affections as well as understanding. A heavenly spirit takes delight in heavenly things, and is an active principle that carries out the soul after God and things eternal: And that's your work too, to get and maintain a delight in God, and divine things; to cherish breathings after heavenly things, and preserve your spiritual senses in exercise, that your souls may be ever quick in seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and feeling, the joys and pleasures that are in things above: By this means Religion will be desirable, Christ's yoke easy, and his ways pleasant, and his commands not grievous, This is one of the most difficult pieces of Christianity, to maintain the inward principle and spring of holy actions pure and lively: 'Tis far easier to set on any external duty, than to keep the heart in a fit active frame for God, which is apt to languish and grow out of order every moment, if not kept and maintained by continued supplies from above. *Prov. 4. 23. Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of Life.* Now if you would keep up a heavenly spirit:

First, Beware of those things that weaken it: A Heavenly Spirit is a very tender thing, and must be charily kept, or will soon suffer loss; 'tis like the apple of the eye, that is liable to injury from every dust or stroke that comes nigh it; or like a Venice-glass, that is down and broken with every little touch. You cannot be too choice and tender in watching and guarding this Spirit from everything that is contrary to it.

Take heed of carnal lusts, these stand between God and the soul, and these resist the Spirit, *Gal. 5. 17.* and fight against the soul. *1 Pet. 2. 11.* *Dearly Beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, that war against the soul.* Water is as consistent with fire, sickness with health, death with life, as unmortified lusts with a heavenly spirit; and you may as safely dwell with thieves and bloody murderers, as suffer fleshly lusts to harbor near your hearts: These suffered to hover in the soul, will devour your sacrifice; and like water, quench this sacred fire; and with the Ivy, eat out the nourishment of this heaven-born spirit. When *Alexander* asked *Diogenes* what he would desire of him; that you (saith he) would stand aside a little from between me and the warm Sun: so a soul that knows what the views of God are, will desire nothing more than the remove of what stands between him and the warming sight of this heavenly Sun. Carnal lusts are as venomous breath, that soon seize on, and weaken the vitals of godliness: Never expect peace or welfare to the spiritual seed, till the bondwoman and her Son be cast out. How soon have excellent frames been all lost, and the candle of the Lord well-nigh put out by these filthy damps that ascend from the deeps of unclean and unmortified affections. This wrought such changes in *Israel*; now they sang his praises, and then presently forgot his works, *Psal. 106. 12.* Those divine raptures could not abide, and what was the cause? why 'twas unmortified lusts that had dominion over them. *V. 14.* *They lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the Desert, and he gave them their requests, but sent leanness into their souls.* This soon brought the Jews from being conquerors, to captives, that they did not pursue their victories, and drive out the *Canaanites* out of the valleys, as well as the mountains, *Judge. 1. 19. ch. 2, 3.* This want of mortification in Believers is the cause that their corruptions do so often give check to their graces, and make their choice heavenly frames so short-lived and mutable. [O cursed pleasures! O damnable ease bought with the loss of God! *Rutherford.*] O Christians! guard your spirit from those filthy and fleshly lusts, as Physicians do fortify the spirits against malignant vapors, if ever you will maintain a gracious and heavenly spirit.

Earthly things also admitted too near the heart, prove the bane of a heavenly spirit: these, like a stone at the bird's leg, pluck it down when it attempts to be upon the wing: Worldly affections, when they exceed their bounds, are like waters that overflow the banks; they carry down all heavenly motions before them. Earthly things are the Devils lure to professing Christians, which draw down their lofty meditations, when they are in chase of things above; as the Fowler allures down the towering Lark when hovering aloft in the gentle air. The Devil deals with earthly men, as Naturalists say men do with Bees; *when they swarm and are flying away, they throw up dust, and they scatter again:* So doth Satan when their thoughts are up upon heavenly things; he casts in the dusty thoughts of this world, and they scatter them again. *Demas hath forsaken us, having loved this present world, 2 Tim. 4. 10.* Earthly things draw away the heart from God, his work and interest: How often do those interrupt, if not countermand the most serious thoughts of gracious souls? and where they cannot as a Master command, they will as neighbors be often coming in, and hinder the soul in its most weighty business, if the door be not locked against their unseasonable visits. Worldly lusts must be denied, as well as ungodliness, by those that intend to live righteously, soberly and godly in this present world, *Tit. cap. 2. v. 11, 12.* Earthly things are good servants, but bad

Masters; useful in their place; as fire in the hearth is profitable, but in the thatch dangerous; and as unruly Servants, and untamed Colts are serviceable when reduced to their place, and kept under government. Worldly thoughts are as some roots that must be often trod down, or they will spill up and seed in our hearts. Christians, have a special strong guard against the encroachments of your earthly affairs, if ever you will secure the thrivings of a heavenly spirit,

Take heed also of grieving the Spirit of Grace, which maintains and relieves this heavenly spirit: As the spring is to the streams; so is the holy Spirit to this heavenly spirit in Believers, that feeds and supplies it from his own nature: Now to grieve this Spirit, is to provoke him to withhold his gracious communications to the soul. *Ephes. 4. 30. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby you are sealed to the day of redemption:* Which implies, that this Spirit of Grace being grieved, suspends its comforting sealing influences towards the souls of Believers. This Scripture is taken from *Isa. 63. 10. But they rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them:* They grieved his Spirit, as the word signifies; and this broke that amicable accord between the Spirit and them, that he became their enemy, and cut off all succors from them; yea, comes forth against them: And that which grieved the Spirit of God was, the the abuse of its kindness. *V. 9. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.* Nothing does more grieve the Spirit of God, than the abuse of his kindness and tender mercy to his people; when the Lord hath been opening the bowels of his pity to souls in saving and redeeming-mercy, and hath been shedding abroad his love upon them, bearing with, and carrying of them for a long time; and all this is slighted and contemned, and the soul takes no notice of all this grace, but still perseveres in its evil course; this grieves the Spirit, and causeth him to withhold his tender mercy, and quickening influence from the soul, and it becomes *weak as water, and withers in all the leaves of her spring, Ezek. 17. 9. Psa. 104. 29.* As the member languishes when it can no longer receive influences from the head; and the branch withers when the root communicates no sap to it: so is it with the soul when the spirit ceases from all its gracious communications, as it does when grieved by those he loves and labors with; not as if the Divine Spirit could be capable of passions and perturbations, as creatures are: But then may the holy Spirit be said to be grieved, when gracious souls do that which is enough to grieve one that tenderly affects us, and by all means seeks our eternal good. Now two things usually grieve such a one: First, Injuries from a friend. Secondly, The sufferings of a friend. Unkindness from those we love, does usually sit nearer our hearts, than any injuries from strangers or enemies: we usually expect more regard from such, and therefore are more troubled at disappointments: And such is the tenderness of the Spirit to Believers, that want of love, or injury from such is more abusive, and carries in it all that which in its nature is grieving. Again, we usually grieve at the evils of those we love; and such are the sins of Believers, they are injurious to themselves, and enemies to their own souls: This the Spirit of God sees that gracious souls, by their carnal affections, and sensual passions, by their corrupt communications, and fleshly lusts, do not only resist him, and frustrate his work in them; but these also injure and endanger their own souls; by these they lose many a mercy,

and draw upon them many afflictions and fatherly displeasure from God against them; and this grieves the Spirit to see; and this removes his presence, and hinders his comforting, quickening operations, by reason of which their spirits fail, and become cold and weak to every heavenly action, Your work Christians, is to be tender of the Spirit; to take heed you be not unkind to his person, that you do not undervalue his gracious communications, or resist his internal operations: Take heed of unthankfulness for his kindnesses, of slighting his counsels, of unsuitable walking to his rules and mercies, if you would not grieve him, and so deprive yourselves of his quickening influences on your spirits. That's the first: Beware of those things that weaken this heavenly Spirit.

Secondly, If you would maintain a Heavenly Spirit; get all the nourishment you can for it: As the body is nourished by food, and the animal spirits by contributions of joy and contentment; so is this Heavenly Spirit by all the means and helps God hath appointed to this end, *1 Tim. 4. 6. nourished up in the word offaith, and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.* The Word and Ordinances are to the inner-man, as nourishing food to the outward, which strengthens the spiritual part, and maintains its vigor and activity. *Timothy had imbibed the Doctrine of the Gospel together with his milk (saith Calvin) and had made continual progresses in the same to that day, which did so greatly strengthen and nourish him in his faith and graces.* The Word of God is suited, sent and commissioned to the service and advantage of your graces; 'tis the way by which the Lord Jesus maintains and increases spiritual life and growth in the new-born soul. *1 Pet. 2. 2. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.* Attend upon all the Ordinances of God, where they are purely and powerfully administered: Be much in reading the Scriptures, and such help <◇> the Lord gives you for your instruction and quickening. *1 Tim. 4. 13. Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. V. 15. Be thou in them: as the words are; that is, exercise thyself with these continually, constantly, and with all thy might; let not a day pass without reading, meditation, and secret prayer, that the inner-man may have all the recruits that are needful and appointed for its strengthening.* Your bodies can better want their appointed food, than your souls their daily bread: The want of constant feeding, and sound digestion of spiritual provisions, is one cause of that soul-leanness, and spiritual languishing that abounds everywhere this day.

Thirdly, If you will keep up a Heavenly Spirit; be much in communion with the Father of Spirits. Fellowship with God puts a stamp of Heaven upon the soul, and leaves an impress of the Divine Nature on it. *2 Cor. 3. 18. But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.* Views of God, though but through the glass of Ordinances, have an assimilating virtue, and do transform the mind into his own likeness. When *Moses* was taken up into a nearness to God, he gets some abiding beams of his glory upon him, and comes off with divine shines on his countenance, *Exod. 34. 35.* When the Lord Jesus was got on to a high Mountain apart, and had more near fellowship with Heaven, 'tis said: He was *transfigured, and his face did shine.* Nearness to God does wonderfully warm and quicken the heart, as approaches of the Sun do the body. *With thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light, Psal. 36. 9.* As the being of

spiritual Life lies in union with God in Christ by faith; so is its well being maintained by communion with him in the Spirit, who supplies the soul with quickenings, as the fountain doth the vessel that's put under it, with waters: God is in himself the Essential Life, and to his people the fountain of Life. *Thou Lord (saith one) art life by thy Essence, and the fountain of Life by communion; from thee all Life flows out, and runs down incessantly.* In fellowship the Lord Jesus lets out Himself, Love and Spirit; and this attracts the heart after God, and strengthens the soul's motions after him. *Every act of fellowship with Christ here (saith Mr. Reyner) is a step Heaven-ward:* By it the heart is raised after God, sweetly refreshed and strengthened with spiritual strength. *To live in fellowship with God (says the same Author) is to live at the highest rate under Heaven, next to Heaven; yea as in a corner of Heaven, to live in the highest Region of Christianity,—'tis the Life of Paradise, an Evangelical, yea Angelical and Coelestial Life, in comparison whereof the most men and women are dead.* Communion with God does wonderfully nourish the Heavenly Spirit, and fatten the spiritual part of Believers: *Such (saith Reyner) suck a honey-comb, eat fat things full of marrow, and drink wine on the lees well refined, spiced wine.* O Christians; press after nearness to God in Ordinances and Duties; rest not in highest privileges without spiritual converse with God in them, and communications of his Love and Life through them.

Fourthly, Cherish heavenly motions in your hearts, and be tender of all the breathings of the Spirit upon you. It may be the Lord comes in upon the heart with some Spiritual Light or Life, in a Sermon, or in a Duty, or when alone, stirring up thy desires, and warming thy affections, making some offers of grace, and help to thy dull and languishing soul; take heed now how thou slightest or stiflest these: this is one step to the quenching of the Spirit, and impeding its gracious assistance, and vital operations on thy soul: *1 Thes. 5. verse. 19. Quench not the Spirit.* He that will kindle a fire, gathers up every little coal, and makes the most of the least spark. The shavings of gold are gold, and the smallest breathings of the Spirit are to be highly prized: He that checks the first motions of the Spirit, may never meet with the second; and he that slightes the least gifts of grace, may forever miss of its larger doles. O to what a height might grace come in thy soul, if every stirring of it were improved! God despises not the day of thy small things; how unreasonable is it thou shouldst overlook his! The Lord Jesus (Christians) doth nourish and cherish the least good that is in you, *Ephes. 5. 29.* O be tender of whatever communications come from him to you! This will abundantly help on the enlivenings and enlargements of this Heavenly Spirit.

Fifthly, Dwell much in the meditation of Heaven; this will heavenlize your spirit: 'Twas this made the Apostles persons of such heavenly spirits; they did often look to things above. *1 Cor. 4 18. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.* No affliction could discourage them from owning and professing Christ; nor earthly comforts allure their desires and delights from Christ; and that which so strongly guarded their hearts from either of these dangers, was a firm persuasion of an interest in future glory, and a diligent observing eye upon this glory: a levelling look at this mark does wonderfully raise the heart towards it, and put in a new spirit and life into the soul, strongly engaging all its attempts towards the enjoyment of it: Frequent contemplations of Heaven do much wean the heart from this Earth. If thou rememberest thou art not of this world, earthly things shall only be admitted into the Court of the Temple, not into the heart, which is the Holy of

Holies, *Burg.* on 17. *Joh.* How contemptibly did those Worthies of old look on this world, when once they got sights of Heaven! *Heb.* 11. They counted themselves strangers and pilgrims on the Earth; were not mindful of their own Country; went out from it; would no more return to it; sought an heavenly Country; were persuaded of those great and glorious things above, and embraced them; laid hold of them by faith; and made after them: and that which did so powerfully work over their spirits to these things above, was their believing sights of them. *V.* 13. *These all died in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off; that is, the things promised, (viz.) heavenly things, of which Canaan was a type.* So *Pareus* refers the participles here to the things signified of the promise, that heavenly Country which they only desired. *Things nearest Heaven (saith one) take least care of the Earth: The Fowls of the Air neither plow nor sow.* The glory of the world seems little to one that dwells much on the believing views of Heaven. 'Tis said of *Fulgentius*, *That when he beheld the splendor and joy of Rome, the glory of the Roman Nobility, the triumphant pomp of King Theodorick, he was so far from being taken with it, that it raised up his desires after heavenly joys the more, saying, How beautiful may the Coelestial Jerusalem be, when terrestrial Rome so glittereth! If such honor be given to lovers of vanity, what glory shall be imparted to the Saints, who are lovers and followers of truth!* Serious thoughts of Heaven will inflame the desires after it: *Our Conversation is in Heaven (saith Paul) whence also we look for the Savior, who shall change our vile bodies into the likeness of his glorious body, Phil.* 3. 20. We wait, hope for, and expect Heaven, to be where this blessed Country is; the breadth and length of which we now look into by faith. If your thoughts be much on Heaven, your longings will be much for Heaven. I have read of one being in his journey towards *Jerusalem*, thought he saw famous Cities in his way, and met with many friendly entertainments; yet would often say, *I must not stay here; this is not Jerusalem:* So will thy heart say (if thou conversest much in Heaven now) when thou meetest with the most desirable comforts of this life; yet this is not Heaven; my affections must not stay here. Allow time every day to take some turns in the upper world, and to get thy heart held in the galleries above; where are the sweetest delicacies, and most delighting views to take thy heart, and sublimate thy affections to these pure and eternal things?

Sixthly, If you would keep up a Heavenly Spirit; be much exercised in heavenly actions: As is men's employments they are mostly versed about, so usually is their spirit: Actions strengthen habits: Men that are much taken up about earthly things, are earthly-minded; their spirits being tintured with the things they have much to do with: Such are heavenly actions to gracious souls; they draw forth and exercise their graces: use makes men ready, and adapts their spirits to their work. The Apostle makes this an evidence of strength in grace, that such are much in the exercise of it. *Heb.* 5. 14. *Strong meat belongeth to them who are of full age; even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.* The more you are conversant about holy things, the stronger will be the bent of your spirit to them; the more facile and pleasant will Religion be, and the indisposition of your spirit to it more abated. *Prov.* 10. 29. *The way of the Lord is strength to the upright.* The more you walk in it, the less weary will you be; the more pleasure will you find in it, and the more propense will your spirit be to it. This is the first work in Wisdom's Merchandise; to get and keep up a Heavenly Spirit.

Secondly, Another piece of your Heavenly Trade is, to secure your interest in heavenly things. This is part of men's business in the world, to secure their interest in the things they have: they mark their goods, and brand their cattle, and set their names on the things they have, that their interest in them might be known: And this is the great concern of Wisdom's Merchants also, to make good their claim to, and prove their propriety in the things of Heaven and Glory: These are worth the securing, being things of infinite moment, and eternal duration; other things are not. O what folly is it to strive for shadows, and lose the substance; to get and secure Houses, Lands, and Reputation for your Children, and to lose your souls! As he that complained when he was to die; *That he must burn in Hell forever, for getting an estate for his Son, and neglecting his own soul. What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Matth. 16. 24.* To make all things else sure, and leave God, Grace and Glory to an uncertainty. As *Caesar Borgiabewail'd* when too late, saying when he was near death; *I have endeavored to secure me against every danger but death; and having never thought of death, must now die.* Things eternal will then appear the greatest when men come to die; then an interest in God, pardon and salvation will be valued beyond ten thousand worlds: And is it not worth the looking after now?

And what can compensate the loss of that soul, who miscarries in his All, and hath nothing left but the tormenting sense of what he hath lost, and the intolerable burden of what he hath found, as the fruit of his often cautioned folly? 'Tis a dreadful thing to be disappointed of salvation-hopes: What if thou shouldest miss of glory at last, and thy end should be to be cut off, and to have thy portion with Hypocrites in that Lake which burns with fire and brimstone, where the worm never dieth, and the fire is never quenched? *Mark 9. 44.* How couldest thou bear, if when thou thinkest to enter into the joy of the Lord, then in a moment to be thrust into the place of torment? and when thou dreamest of carrying up into *Abraham's bosom*, where is eternal pleasures; to fall into the hands of God, who is a consuming fire? this is fearful.

And yet this may be thy case. Think how possible, nay how easy 'tis for men to be deceived in lesser matters, and that they who have had the highest confidences of a future blessedness, have been mistaken at last, and all their hopes have expired as a falling Meteor, and come to nothing, *Job 27. 8. For what is the hope of the hypocrite though he hath gained much, when God taketh away his soul?* Men may think themselves to be something, and yet be nothing, *Gal. 6. 2.* Come with confidence to the Bridegroom's doors, and demand an entrance as the foolish Virgins did, and yet rejected. *Mat. 25. 11, 12. Afterward came also the other Virgins, (that is when the door was shut) saying, Lord, Lord, open to us; but he answered and said; verily I say unto you, I know you not.* They may seem to have some reason for their claim, and produce evidences of their hope, and yet be turned away as workers of iniquity. *Mat. 7. 22, 23. Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? have cast out Devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity:* The heart is deep and deceitful, who can know it? none but he who searcheth the deep things of God can reach this bottom, and bring to light the hidden things thereof: The work of grace is a secret full of mysteries, that none can open and fully know, but the eternal Spirit that formed it in the womb of a Believer's heart: Seeming grace hath so near a

resemblance to saving grace, that it puzzles the most curious and searching eye (if not enlighten'd with a beam from Heaven) to discern the difference: besides, the slender measures of the Spirit that most have attained to in this life, with the subtle insinuations, the false representations, and treacherous prevarications of that bloody and irreconcilable enemy of mankind, all which conspire to put a cheat upon the professing Christian, and render his Salvation exceeding doubtful. And suppose thy state should be safe, yet how perplexing and full of anxiety is it, to have the least suspicion of thy unsoundness? To have the life of thy precious soul hang in suspense, and to be unresolv'd in that great case, whether thou must live or die to all eternity! O! how tormenting and heart-sinking is this! An awakened Soul that cannot rest in sin, nor yet hope in grace, or upon any Scripture-warrant come to a determination about his real interest in God, and things eternal, is like a troubled Sea that cannot rest; Instruments of Music cannot allay its disquietude, no Creature comforts can charm its heart to a peaceful composure: who does in reality but suspect his eternal welfare, and but think he reads this hand-writing on the wall: *Mene, mene, tekel upharsin: Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting, Dan. 5. 25. 27.* Nothing in all the World can be a Plaister broad enough for such a wound, no Cordial can cheer that heart, till Grace decides the controversy, and assures the Soul of an unquestionable title to the Heir of all things, and to the inheritance with the Saints in light: And have you not reason then to be restless till your propriety in these glorious treasures be attested; which, though difficult, yet is possible and feasible to all that follow Wisdom's counsel in order to it? The eternal truth hath opened a way to the decision of this question, whether I have eternal life or no, and laid down certain marks of a Soul entitled to things above. *1 Joh. 5. 13. These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life; Vers. 12. 19. Chap. 3. 14.* The Lord hath charged this to be the duty of all that profess their hopes of glory, to make their Calling and Election sure, *2 Pet. 1. 10.* To examine themselves whether they be in the Faith, *2 Cor. 13. 5.* To prove their own work, that they may have rejoicing in themselves, *Gal. 6. 4.* which he would never have done were it impossible: He hath also promised the Spirit to help them in this work, and to lead them into all truth, bearing witness with their spirits that they are the Lord's, *Joh. 16. 13. Rom. 8. 16.* And upon this very account exhorts them to holiness, that they might not impede this sealing work of the Spirit, *Eph. 4. 30.* And upon the arrival to this certainty, hath ensured great consolation and advantage, *2 Pet. 1. 8. 10, 11.* All which words signify nothing, and reflect unrighteousness on the spirit of truth, were not an evidence of right to these heavenly things obtainable.

Quest. But how may I come to the knowledge of this desirable truth; that Heavenly Treasures are surely mine, and that I may make a warrantable claim to God, to Christ, and these things of the other World?

Sol. 1. First, By your conjugal union with the Heir of Heaven: All things in Heaven and Earth are Christ's, he is the Heir of all things. *Heb. 1. 2.—Hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed Heir of all things: All things in Heaven and Earth are his by donation, purchase and inheritance juridically conferred over to him in the new covenant, and actually put into his hand, upon the finishing of his meritorious work and victory over*

death. *Matt. 28. 18. All power is given to me in Heaven and Earth: Lawful power, right, privilege and authority, (as the word imports,) and with this is the Lord Jesus invested, and hath all things put into his hands, and all creatures under his feet, Heb. 2. 7, 8. And all right to true riches is derived from him, through union with him. 1 Cor. 3. 21, 23. All things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's: If you are Christ's, then all things are yours, not else; your title is founded on your marriage-relation to him. Gal. 3. 29. And if you are Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and Heirs according to the promise: A title to these glorious treasures is made over in the new covenant, which covenant is confirmed in Christ, and made in him, and through him to all that are his: He is the way, there's no coming to these treasures but by him; he is the door, no entering into them but through him: He is the treasury itself, in whom all the riches of grace, all the fullness of pleasures and satisfaction lies; you must have the treasury before you can have the treasures; the well itself before the waters are yours: He that hath the Son hath life; hath him by way of possession, as an owner and proprietor: If you have Christ, you have all that is his, his person and purchase go together: Rebekah must consent to go and marry Isaac before she could be invested with that substance and wealth which was his. This new covenant which interests a soul in the Lord Jesus, and his unsearchable riches, is a marriage-covenant. Hos. 2. 19, 20. And I will betroth thee unto me forever, yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies; I will even betroth thee to me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord. Ezek. 16. 8. I entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord, and thou becamest mine; this was a marriage-covenant. Jer. 3. 14. Turn O back sliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married to you. If you would see your title to heavenly treasures, try your conjugal union to the Lord Jesus the Heir of Heaven. Every relation to Christ is not a conjugal relation. There is a general relation, as dead branches to the tree: Joh. 15. 2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away. A person may be in Christ as the luxuriant branch or sucker is in the tree, that sucks the sap of privileges, and gets some nourishment of frames, and comforts, but brings not forth fruit, it sprouts out of the stock, as proud flesh grows on the wound, but hath no right union with the root, or nourishment from the head: Such are obtruders and hang-bies, which take the place of children, but are strangers, who climb up as the thief to steal, but comes not in by the door to dwell with God: they are retainers to Christ's House, that now and then do some service for him, and have some scraps and favors, but are no abiding members of his house; like the Apricot, that leans on the wall, but is rooted in the earth.*

There is a temporary Relation also; as of a Servant to a Master, where there is a propriety for a time: The servant comes into the house, enjoys privileges and protection, and doth some service, is very useful for the family, and it may be beloved too: (as a servant.) And such is the relation of some to Christ; but this differs vastly from that union which entitles to the person and purchase of the Lord Jesus; he is mercenary in all he doth, and hath by-ends in his entrance and continuance; he does not anything from pure love to Christ, but for self-respects and advantage: his welfare is not wrapped up in the welfare of the family, to stand or fall with it; to embark his All in the prosperity of that house: he lives in the family, and upon his Lord, but to himself, and is as the Planets which are carried about with the *primum mobile*; but yet have a distinct motion and course of their own: he is in the family, but not of

the family; and as his relation is but titular, so his station is but temporary; he abides not in the house forever, *Joh. 8. 35*. And when he goes away he carries off nothing but his own; not a jot of the inheritance is his; he hath fared well, and had a great deal of credit and comfort for a time; but goes as he came, and is the same person as he was.

There is also a Concubine-Relation to Christ, which gives the soul some use of his kindness, but no right to his person. A *Concubine* is one that is contented with ones bed, but hath no conjugal love to his person; neither doth she pass into the husband's family, or are her children counted legitimate: She is one that either by constraint or consent, comes over into an external communion with another for his use and bed; but is never married to his person, or hath chosen him for her husband, to become one flesh with him, to take up her delight in him, and to do all from a principle of love to him: And as she hath not the properties; so she hath not the privileges of a wife, for intimacy and entertainment, in respect of power and maintenance. Such is the relation that many have to Christ; they consent to have some enjoyment of Christ, but have no marriage-union with him; he is not theirs by choice, but either for necessity or advantage, to enjoy their own pleasures by him, and receive some profit from him: they never saw an excellency in him, or were ever unhearted by him, as he is by his Spouse. *Cant. 4. 9. Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister, my Spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes; with one chain of thy neck:* Thou hast unhearted me, or snatched away my heart: These never consented to all his proposals in order to union with him; they never heartily gave up themselves to him, nor entered into covenant with him, and became his. And as they are strangers to an espousal-state; so are they to a Spouse-like disposition; they have not the temper and carriage of a wife, nor the privileges that such use to have; they are not acquainted with his secrets, nor the openings of his heart, and those amorous embracements peculiar to such a relation; they are not invested with any Authority or Rule; they have no power over their corruptions, nor command of their spirits and affections, that should be in subjection to them: Grace bears no sway in them; sin and self does all in their souls; neither were they ever enrolled in his family, or owned by the Lord Jesus as his *Hephzibah's*, nor have the allowance and special provisions of the King's Bride, and Lamb's Wife; and as to their conceptions, and those births they seem to have by Jesus Christ, they are spurious and illegitimate, and never owned by the Lord Jesus as the genuine products of his own Spirit. This is the case of those that have not marriage-union with Christ; they have no right to him or his Treasures. Try then your Espousal-relation to Christ.

Quest. How may I know whether I am married to Christ or no?

Answ. 1. First, If you are married to Christ, you are such as have special acquaintance with Christ; you know him as none else do. The wife hath the most peculiar and distinct knowledge of her husband of any: Others may know something, yea much of him; but none knows him so much as the wife; she hath acquaintance with all his excellencies, and all his infirmities; she has the largest tastes of his love, and experience of his sweetness, and intimate converses with him of any in the world. So 'tis with the Spouse of Christ; she dwells in his presence, and lodges in his arms; she sees him within the veil uncloth'd of those coverings that stand between him and the eyes of strangers, and conceals his amiableness

from common beholders: He puts aside his glorious Robe, and shows her his naked breast, and lays her hand upon his tender heart: she is much alone with him in his chambers, where he expresses intimacy with her, as *Isaac* did with *Rebekah*, and discloses the secrets of his heart, and the greatest unveilings of his love: He tells her what thoughts he had upon her from all eternity; when he was in his Father's Kingdom, his heart was working after her, and he thought the time long till he came down to see her; and no sooner did he cast his eye upon her (though then she lay polluted in her blood, and cast out into the field, to the loathing of her person) but his heart did burn within him towards her; and it was the time of love: He tells her all the time of his hard labor in the world for her, seemed but a few days; and the unsupportable burden of her sins, and the Father's wrath upon him for her sake, seemed but as nothing for the love he bore unto her. In these converses he assures her of his Love, Person and Kingdom; and however he may seem in his carriages, yet his heart is fixed upon, and faithful to her, and swears he will never, never leave her, but after a little absence come and receive her to himself, and she shall be forever with him. Thus he manifests himself to her, as he doth not to the world; by reason of which she becomes so well acquainted with him, and knows his voice, and by faith sees his sheep; she can tell by experience who, and what her Beloved is, and how far better than other Beloveds. There's never a soul that's married to Christ, but hath his time, when he makes out some special discoveries of his love and self to it; and it can tell some stories of what Christ did once say and do unto her: what slights she hath had of him, and gifts from him: such a soul can tell, how when he was dead, Christ quickened him; when he was lost, Christ found him; when he was in prison, Christ set him free; he washed him when in his blood, and poured in Oil into his wounds; healed his backslidings, and loved him freely: He can say with *Rebekah* to her Brother *Laban*; *Thus the man spake to me, and shown the ear-rings and the bracelets, Gen. 24. 30.* And with *Judah* brings forth the signet, bracelets and staff, *Gen. 38. 25.* and tells with the blind man how Christ opened his eyes, and what he said to him, *Joh. cap. 9. ver. 15, 35, 37.* And though by his sin and unbelief he may lose the sight of him for a time, and be under a suspense of his discovered kindness; yet if the Believer would be true to his experience, he can discover such an acquaintance with Christ as no Hypocrite ever had.

Answ. 2. Secondly, Another thing that will prove your marriage to Christ, is your conjugal-love to him. *Jer. 2. 2. I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thy espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness in a Land not sown.* The Lord convinceth *Israel* of the great decay and change of their Love to what it once was; there was a time when their affections were high towards God, when he called them out of *Egypt*, took them from the Ironfurnace, and married them to himself; then nothing was too hard for them; they could follow God in a wilderness, where there was nothing but God alone to satisfy them; creatures were wanting to allure them, and yet they could stick at nothing; no difficulties should part God and them: Whence came this warmth of their affection? why it was their nearness to God that created them: The Lord had taken them into a marriage covenant, and carried them in his bosom; and this inflamed their hearts after him. When the Lord brings a soul into an espousal-state, he gives them espousal-love; and that is the greatest love: O sweet! saith *Rutherford*, were that sickness to be soul-sick for him; and a living death it were to die in the fire of the love of

that Soul-lover Jesus. The Apostle makes this an essential duty of a married state, to have conjugal affections: The Husband to love his Wife as his own flesh, and the Wife to love her own Husband as herself, *Eph. 5. 28. Tit. 2. 4.* And the Prophet reckons this love to God as the certain fruit of their Covenant-relation to him. *Isa. 56. 6. That join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the Name of the Lord.* As soon as Paul had espoused the Lord Jesus, it appeared in his supreme love to him; he valued none like Christ: *He counted all things dross and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ his Lord, Phil. 3. 8. To be found in him, not having his own righteousness, v. 9. To know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death, v. 10.* Conjugal love is a personal love; pure love to Christ is set on Christ himself for himself, not for his gifts that come from him; but for those excellencies that reside in him; 'tis love to his person, not to his patrimony only; 'tis love springing from his love. *1 Joh. 4. 19. We love him because he first loved us.* True affections to the Lord Jesus are the births of his own love to us, a coal kindled from his fire.

Conjugal love is also peculiar as well as personal love; so far as 'tis conjugal, 'tis to him, and none but him; or if to others, 'tis for his sake: Espousal love to Christ affects none like him: If there be any person or thing thou lovest more than Christ, or equal with him, thy affections to him are whorish, not conjugal: *He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me: He that loveth Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me, Mat. 10. 37.* Yea, he that doth not hate Father or Mother, or anything, so far as it is inconsistent with love to Christ, cannot be his Disciple, *Luke 14. 26.* True love to Christ will let none in all the world share in that love which Christ hath; 'twill take none into his bed but himself; 'tis chaste love.

Again, Conjugal-love is not only to Christ, but 'tis such a love as longs to be *found in Christ, not in himself*; it would have all his glory and excellency in Christ; it reckons Christ for all that's truly honorable as to him; it would get as near to Christ as possible; yea it never rests till in him: *To be found in him.* 'Tis also such a love as conforms to Christ: Love is of an assimilating spirit; it would be like to its peculiar object. The affectionate wife conforms as much as may be to her Husband: so 'tis with the Spouse of Christ, she would in everything that is imitable resemble him, and 'tis her great trouble she is not more like him: what would such a soul give if his heart was like Christ's heart; if he had such a spirit and life as the Lord Jesus had on Earth? it would be holy as Christ is holy, and cannot set up a stand short of that: 'Tis true, the soul hath not such a spirit as Christ had; 'tis too proud, vain, carnal passionate, earthly, selfish, and that troubles him; but it can never be quiet, till he comes nearer to the pattern in Heaven, and to a full resemblance of his well-beloved Jesus.

Answ. 3. Thirdly, A soul espoused to Christ will leave all for Christ; that's the condition of marriage between Christ and his Bride. *Psal. 45. v. 10, 11. Hearken O Daughter and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy Father's house, so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him:* As if he should say, weigh and consider the terms on which this match is to be concluded between Christ and you. If you will be his, you must leave all for him; you must forsake all your other lovers, friends, interests, comforts for Christ, so far as these hinder your love to Christ, your communion with, and serviceableness unto him. When the woman comes to be married, she leaves her friends, Father's house,

Country, and all to come and live with him that shall be her Husband. *Rebekah* left her Father, Brother, Friends and Country to go to *Isaac*, *Gen. 24. 58. And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, wilt thou go with this man? and she said I will go.* That soul that cannot consent really and considerately to part with all for Christ, never yet came up to marriage-terms: The treaty between Christ and that soul never went far enough for a conclusion; and if it go no farther; if thy soul cannot seal to this, to part with all thy interests, thy dearest comforts; yea thyself for Christ, the match must after all be broken, and Christ and thee part at last, yea part forever. O soul! try thy heart in this; here lies the knot, the vertical point; this is the most difficult of all Christ's proposals, and that the soul is longest consenting to, even the letting go all for Christ: His person may please well enough; his estate is desirable for a reversion; but now to take leave of, and to go with Christ, this is the *hard saying*: Persons would have Christ and the world too, Christ and friends too, Christ and reputation, peace, liberty, pleasure, and self too; and if this will not be granted, break the bargain: but if ever Christ and you have closed, and you are his, and he yours, you cannot count anything too dear to part with for him, or to let go at his bidding: If Christ calls for Estate, Husband; Wife, Children, an *Isaac*, a *Benjamin*, a right Eye, a right Hand, all must go; and you must part with them freely and cheerfully, as *Abraham* did with *Isaac*. *Gen. 22. 3. Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his Asses, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his Son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and went unto the place of which God had told him:* Not as *Jacob* did part with *Benjamin*; by constraint, and grudgingly, *Gen. 43. 11. If it must be so now, do this, &c.* He was almost starv'd before he would consent to part with *Benjamin*; and when he did, he lets him go last of all: he parts with *the best fruits of the Land, Balm, Honey, Spices, Myrrh, Nuts, Almonds, double money*, anything first; at last *Benjamin* was screwed out too: Many must have their comforts wrench'd out of their hands before they will let them go; but this is not love to Christ. A soul married to Christ will say with *Mephibosheth* concerning his Land; *Let Zibah take all; for as much as my Lord the King is come again in peace to his own house, 2 Sam. 19. 30.* So, let God take all my estate, strength, liberty, comforts, seeing the Lord Jesus is come home to my soul in peace: Houses, Lands, Friends, Credit, Peace, Life, may be dear, but Christ will be dearer if he and you are one flesh. *All Bavaria* (said *George Carpenter*) *is not so dear to me as my Wife and Children; yet for Christ's sake I will forsake them cheerfully. Do you think me such a fool* (said *Ogvier* to one that tempted him with life and preferment) *that I should change eternal things for temporal. Loss of goods is great; (saith Hooper) but loss of God's grace and favor is greater?* Love is never thoroughly seen till it comes to parting: O the tuggings, holdings, shifts and reasonings that men will have before they will part with that they dearly love: *Now it will appear* (saith *Philpot*) *what we love best, for to that we love we will stick:* If Christ have most of your hearts, you will let fall everything out of your hands to hold fast Christ: *I have* (said *Mr. Bale*) *exil'd myself forever from mine own native Country, Kindred, Friends, Acquaintance, which are the great delights of this life, and am well contented for the sake of Christ..*

Answ. 4. Fourthly, A Soul married to Christ, stays, and lives on Christ. The Wife casts herself upon her Husband's love and care for her supplies, and lives on his allowance for all her provisions: 'tis suspicious for a married Woman to be maintained by strangers, and to live on other men for what she needs; 'tis the Husband's duty to provide for his own, and to nourish

and cherish his Wife as the Lord the Church, *Eph. 5. 29.* and 'tis the Wives duty to go to and rely on his faithfulness for it: So 'tis with the Soul that hath espoused Christ; it is to live on Christ for all it needs: they that take Christ aright, take him for their All, not for better or worse for richer or poorer, as Women take their earthly Husbands, (for Christ is always best of all, always exceeding rich, and full of unsearchable treasures,) but to take him for their only and sufficient portion at all times, and in all estates. *Lam. 3. 24. The Lord is my portion, saith my Soul, therefore will I trust in him. Lord,* (said Paulinus, when his City, Gold and Silver was taken away) *let not the loss of these things trouble me; for thou art all, and more than all these to me;* [Shaw's Tombstone, p. 33.] Christ is the Believer's All in the way, and God his All in All at the end. *It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, and under him all things should be put,* *2 Col. 1. 19. Heb. 2. 8.* And this is for the supply, comfort and blessedness of those that are his. *Eph. 1. 23. Which is the body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all.* Whatever Christ hath (as Mediator) is the Churches for her use and profit: If men have plenty of liquors, they fill their vessels with them; if they have much riches, they place them in their treasury, so doth Christ dispose of his fullness for his Churches good; hence 'tis the Spouse of Christ comes leaning on her Beloved from the Wilderness, *Cant. 8. 5.* and dares adventure her All on the love and sufficiency of her loving and lovely Lord; she is full of failings, but she lives on him for righteousness; many are her weaknesses, but she goes to Christ for strength. *Isa. 45. 24. Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength:* She is sensible of many wants, but casts herself on the promise; *My God shall supply all your wants,* *Phil. 4. 19.* Her backslidings, temptations, dangers, troubles and fears are many, but she stays on the Lord Jesus, whom she hath chosen for her only friend in Heaven and Earth, and there she lays herself down in his bosom, when wearied with difficulties and doubts, and embarks herself in his faithfulness for all she stands in need of, for life and godliness, for grace and glory.

Answ. 5. Fifthly, Fruitfulness to Christ proves Marriage to Christ: Hence the Spouse is set forth by metaphors that express fruitfulness; a *Garden*, not a wilderness; a *well watered Garden*, which is usually most fruitful, where the Spices flow out, where the Graces of the Spirit are more operative and abundant, and Souls become more fruitful in manifested holiness; *An Orchard planted with choice and pleasant fruits, Camphire, Spikenard, Saffron, Calamus, Cinamon, with all trees of Frankincense, Myrh and Aloes,* with all the chiefest Spices, which signify the preciousness, variety and abundance of grace and holiness in those who are savingly united to the Lord Jesus: *A flock of Sheep, whereof everyone beareth twins, and not one is barren,* *Cant. 4. 12, 13, 14, 16. Ch. 4. 2.* 'Tis compared to the *Palm-tree*, the *Cedar*, the *Vine*, the *Fig-tree*, a green *Olive*, plants famous for flourishing, growth, clusters of fruit, constant fruitfulness; 'tis said of the Fig-tree, it bears fruit all the year long, and in many places they shall always find green figs on it: Such is the Spouse of Christ, compared with the world and hypocrites fruitful and flourishing: *A good tree bringeth forth good fruit,* *Mat. 7. 17. The root of the righteous yieldeth fruit,* *Prov. 12. 12.* Wherever the grace of God is received in truth, there it brings forth fruit, *Col. 1. 6.* As sin brings forth fruit unto death, so doth grace unto life, *Rom. 6. 22.* No sooner doth the Lord Jesus espouse a Soul, but he heals it of its barrenness: *He maketh the barren Woman to keep house,* *Psal. 113. 9. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he*

taketh away, Joh. 15. 2. A barren Christian is a monster in Religion, no living member of Christ's body; indeed there are Winterseasons when fruit may not appear, but even then 'tis in the seed and sap; and there is a preparative for fruit, which appears in the season, but to be always without the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, *Gal. 5. 22, 23.* is a sign of one that never had marriage-union, and intimate communion with Jesus Christ, but is the certain mark of a fruitless Fig-tree, in danger of cutting down, and the character of that ground which is cursed, and nigh to burning, *Luke 13. 7. 9. Heb. 6. 8.* Souls, try your state, 'tis for your lives, your All depends upon your marriage-union with Christ: Had you never any special acquaintance with Christ? Have you no conjugal love to Christ? Cannot you consent to leave all for Christ? Do you usually live and stay on other things for life and salvation, and not on Christ? Have you been ever barren souls, that never brought forth the fruits of the Spirit unto God? then were you never married to Christ, nor have any true title to heavenly treasures.

Mark 2. Secondly, your interest in heavenly things is known by the naturalness and supremacy of your love to them; *Where the treasure is, there will the heart be, Mat. 6. 21.* If heavenly things be yours, your heart is there; worldly men have the *World set in their hearts, Eccl. 3. 11.* Their heart is but the *World copied out:* so heavenly souls have Heaven set in their hearts, which are but the counterpane of Heaven; everything hath a natural love to his own, the World will love his own. *Joh. 15. 19. No man ever hated his own flesh: Eph. 5. 29.* What affections have brute beasts for their young, and will venture their lives to defend and maintain them. 'Tis storied of the Storks, when the Town of *Delph* in the low Countries was on fire, and the Storks perceived the fire to come near their nests, they endeavored to carry away their young, but when they could not remove them, they flutter'd over them with their wings, covering them from the flames till they all perished together, [*Belg. Com. wealth.*] So strong is natural affection to its interest, and the natural issues of itself; much stronger should gracious affections be to their interests: *O how I love thy Law! (saith David) 'tis my meditation all the day long, Psal. 119. 97.* Whence came this affection? it was from his interest in those great and lovely truths. *Psal. 119. 111. Thy testimonies have I chosen as an heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart.* Souls risen with Christ, and born to the inheritance above, will set their affections on things above, *Col. 3. 1, 2.* Where is thy heart, Christian, in Heaven or Earth? what things are dearest to thee, and sweetest to thy taste? canst thou prize the light of God's countenance better than life? hadst thou rather be a door-keeper in God's House than dwell in the Pavilions of this World? Is a little of Heaven better than a great deal of Earth? and can thy heart consent to be at any loss in the World to enjoy God in his Ordinances, and to be enriched with spiritual blessings in heavenly places? Then heavenly things are thine.

Mark 3. Thirdly, if heavenly things be yours, it will appear by your heart-cares for them, and vigorous pursuits of them; how careful are men of their interests, to secure and enlarge them? *Phil. 2. 21. All men seek their own:* If the things of Heaven be yours, your greatest care will be to get and keep them; when *Kish* thought his Son *Saul* was lost, he left caring for the Asses, sorrowing for him, saying, *What shall I do for my Son, 1 Sam. 10. 2?* Christians, if heavenly

things be yours, they will lie nearer your hearts than all the World besides; the sense or fear of losing them will more trouble you than all losses besides; the world, relations, creature-comforts will be forgotten; when you apprehend a death on your heavenly interests, you will do more, and part with more to get Heaven, than the World and dearest comforts of it. Many will pretend desires for Heaven, as the young man in the Gospel; but Christ will say to them as to his Hearers, *Mat. 5. 47. What do you more than others?* Souls, you would have Christ here, and Heaven hereafter; but what do you for it? what do you more than hypocrites and common professors, whose portion is in this life? can you leave the world for God? can you deny yourself for the pleasing of Christ? and part with your right eye, and right hand; throw away your Idols of gold and silver, the world, and fleshly lusts, and honor God with your time, strength and substance? Can you let your Plough stand still to follow God's; and stick at no pains and hardships to enjoy the least spiritual good? Then are heavenly things yours.

Mark 4. Fourthly, Then are you interested in Heavenly Treasures, when your hearts and spirits are suited to them; when the Lord hath let in a heavenly tincture on your hearts; and inlaid your spirits with heavenliness, and a mind that answers to heavenly things, as face answers face in the water: When God intends men for Heaven, he doth in time fit them for it; and where he gives a title to mercy, he gives a capacity also; where he makes over the riches of glory; he makes that soul a vessel fit for glory. Men do not purchase Pearls for Swine, and build Schools for brute beasts. God did not make the Heavens for fishes, and the Sea for beasts, but suited every creature to its element: They that are his Adoption, are his new Creation also, *Ephes. 2. 10.* and when they are designed to a blessed end, they are principled for it, and have a disposition put into them to move towards it: They that are set apart for Heaven hereafter, do bear the image of their heavenly Father here, *1 Cor. 15. 49.* There is a stamp of glory upon the Heirs of glory, though it may be so covered with dirt, and worn out with the rust of corruption, as not to be easily seen at all times. *Whose is this image and superscription? Matt. 22. 20. Caesar's coin hath Caesar's stamp;* and the Children of Heaven have their Father's mark upon their foreheads, *Rev. 14. 1.* If Christ's Treasures be yours, you are his Treasury; though earthen vessels, yet treasures, vessels and bags that wax not old. Do you hope for spiritual blessings? what manner of spirits are you of? Do you savor heavenly things? What things do best suit and please your spirits, the things of Heaven, or the things of the world; grace, or goods; righteousness, or riches; spiritual things, or carnal? What goes down easiest, or when down, sits easiest on your stomachs? The Heirs of Heaven are Non-conformists to this world, but transformed into the Spirit of Heaven, and the renewing of their minds to their new estate, blessedness and glory, *Rom. 12. 1.* That's a second thing wherein this Heavenly Trade lies, in securing and clearing up your interest in heavenly things.

Thirdly, Another thing wherein this Heavenly Trade lies is this; in getting in of heavenly goods: This is a great part of Traders business, to be furnishing themselves with wares fit for their employment and advantage; the Artificer in making; the Merchant in buying in goods that are vendible and will turn to profit. So must Wisdom's Merchants get themselves stored with Wisdom's wares, that they may be able to drive on her Trade: Only in this lies the difference; earthly goods are either the products of men's labors, and effects of their

industry; or else the purchase of their money and treasures: But heavenly goods come not in this way, as the proportionable reward of their labors, or return of their money: Indeed heavenly bread must be labored for; but when all is done, the Son of man gives it to them, *Joh. 6. 27.* Salvation must be wrought out, as if it lay at their fingers end; and yet this very will and power to work wrought in them. *Phil. 2. 12, 13.* *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* No sufficiency is found in the creature, before saving grace helps, to embrace its overtures, no more than a dead body to receive life. *Ephes. 2. 1.* *You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit,* *Joh. 15. 16.* The soul's choice of Christ is the effect of Christ's first choosing him; and its love to God the product of God's first loving him, *1 Jo. 4. 19.* and the soul's fruitfulness is the effect of Christ's purposing and appointing it thereunto. *No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him,* *Joh. 6. 44.* Not only morally by persuading the will with potent arguments; but physically, by working to will, by a powerful inclining and disposing the will to come to, and choose Christ, through the irresistible operation of the Spirit: *So then, 'tis not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,* *Rom. 9. 16.* Salvation-grace both of righteousness and holiness, is freely given to the thirsty soul through and with Christ, *Rev. 20. 6.* and the inclination and power to receive as freely bestowed also. *Phil. 1. 29.* *To you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.* Faith itself is the gift of God, both the power and will to believe, not given to every man alike: *For all men have not faith,* *2 Thes. 3. 2.* because the Father was not pleased effectually to bestow it. *Deut. 29. 4.* *The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear to this day: Who hath made thee to differ? or what hast thou which thou didst not receive?* *1 Cor. 3. 7.* If the differencing of one man from another, as to his improvement of grace, lay in his own inclinations and natural freedom of his own will, then there was something in the creature that made this difference, contrary to this Scripture; and a foundation laid in a man to glory, which wholly overthrows the design of Redemption-grace, which is to take off all boasting, *1 Cor. 1. 29.* *Rom. 3. 27.* and to lay all the praise and glory of man's salvation on special grace, *Eph. 1. 5, 6.* neither is the first grace only freely given; but more grace also, all sufficiency after (conferred for every good word and work; yea, for every thought that is good) comes from the same grace that first called you, which must also perfect every good work to the day of Salvation, *2 Cor. 3. 5.* our sufficiency (who have grace) to think or do the least spiritual good, is derived from the same fountain-fullness that is in Christ, *Jam. 1. 16.* Eternal life, with whatever leads thereto, is the gift of God, *Rom. 6. v. 23.* As Christ, so all things with him are freely given, *Rom. 8. 32.* not only the seed of grace, but the growth of grace; not only the habit, but the act of grace; all comes from Christ in the way of Redemption-grace. Get your hearts well established with this grace, that nothing in you, or done by you, can merit or procure anything of the Father, but upon the account of Christ, and his grace, and promise in him to all that by the Son do come unto him. Goods you need for a daily Trade, but no money and price will pass for them, *Isa. 55. 1.* they are freely given, and yet you may boldly come for them: Go you must with empty sacks, your friend in Heaven will fill them, and return your money in your sacks mouth. Christians, a considerable part of your work (and that which lays the foundation to all your Trade) lies in getting your souls furnished with heavenly wares: You will drive but a poor

Trade for Heaven, if you do not often receive goods from Heaven. Alas! what can you do in Christianity without continual supplies from Christ? *Laodicea* could not do any good in Religion, for want of goods from Christ: She had none of his tried gold, and therefore grew soon poor and miserable: If goods fail, trade falls, and livelihood with it: What advantages doth the Tradesman miss, and what losses doth he sustain, by wanting goods to furnish his Customers? So do Christians when they want grace to serve their occasions, necessities, temptations and duties; what advantage might souls get, had they but grace, when they come under Ordinances and Duties? and what losses do they meet with for want of grace, under afflictions, trials and employments? how pitifully do they carry it under troubles, and providential exercises, and are oftentimes sadly foiled for want of grace and wisdom to manage such trials? You have daily need of more grace, as you have of bread for your bodies: Your occasions, temptations and work are spending, and without fresh supplies from the Treasury, you will soon be empty and impoverished: Neglect but your spiritual recruits one day, and you will feel it: 'Tis your interest, if you are Traders, to keep your shops full, and to be often sending for more goods: Grace will never lie long on your hands; other goods may: You will have still occasions to exercise grace in your dealings with God and men; you can never be over-stored with Wisdom's wares.

'Tis your duty also to make use of Christ continually: In everything to make known your requests to him: To draw waters out of this Well of Salvation every day: He is a Fountain sealed for your use; he is made of God to be wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption too; for this end, that they might live upon him to these ends: This is to live by the Faith of the Son of God, which is the Christians daily duty: He complains as being injured when his people will not come unto him that they might have life, *Joh. 5. 40*. He is troubled when his Children will not make use of him: *Hitherto you have asked nothing: Ask and you shall receive that your joy may be full, Joh. 16. 24*. Never was a full breast more pain'd for want of drawing, than the Lord Jesus is, when his people receive not from him that fullness that is laid up in him for their use.

'Tis your advantage also to be often at Christ's door, and to be continually fetching in supplies for your souls: This is the way to grow rich apace; to get in more and more of the unsearchable riches of Christ, *Rev. 3. 18*. This is the way to be filled with the fruits of righteousness, to be more thoroughly furnished unto all good works, to the glory and praise of God, *2 Tim. 3. 17. Phil. 1. 12*. This is the way to do everything better, and to abound in the work of the Lord, and to be more complete in all the will of God, *1 Cor. 15. 58. Col. 4. 12*. By this means you will become more serviceable unto others, and useful in the place where you live, and in the Societies where God hath placed you; the more full of grace, the more able to profit others. *Rom. 15. 14. That ye always are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. 2 Cor. 1. 4. That we may be able to comfort them with the same comforts wherewith we are comforted of God*. They that freely receive, will be able freely to give; and that's a blessed thing, *Acts 20. 35*. And till you receive you cannot give. Christians, get in more grace every day for your own use, for the glory of God, and the good of others: Labor to be furnished with every grace, especially those graces which the Lord hath more use of, and the time, condition and place you are in, do more especially call for, *Heb. 12. 28. 2 Pet. 1. 5*.

Be sure to be well furnished with Faith; that's an useful grace at all times (for we live by Faith, *Heb.* 10. 38.) but especially in evil times, in times of temptation and affliction. Faith is an eye, a hand, a foot at all times; 'tis a grace always useful at every turn; you cannot be without it and be well; 'tis a working grace, and that's good for Traders; you cannot work without it, *2 Thes.* 1. 4. A building grace, *Jude*, v. 3. 20. A nourishing grace, *1 Tim.* 4. 6. A soul-enriching grace, *Rom.* 4. 12. A soulstrengthening grace, *Ephes.* 3. 16, 17. But 'tis especially needful in evil times, it being a cheering grace, *Rom.* 15. 13. 'Tis a soul-keeping grace, and that's good in dangerous times, *1 Pet.* 1. 5. 'Tis a soul-saving grace, that saves in troubles, and out of troubles, *Psal.* 27. 5. *Jam.* 5. 15. 'Tis a heart-establishing grace, *2 Chron.* 20. 20. A world-contemning grace, *Heb.* 11. 26. A world-conquering grace, *1 Joh.* 5. 4. A soulsecuring grace, *Heb.* 11. 23. *By faith Moses was hid three months.* It secures a person in troubles: 'tis a breast-plate to preserve the heart, *1 Thes.* 5. 8. And a shield to cover the head, *Ephes.* 6. 16. It leads a person through trouble, *Heb.* 11. 29. *By Faith they passed through the Red. Sea, as by dry Land, which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned.* O get in plenty of this precious unfeigned Faith, for that's the great trading-grace of a Christian; for it gets in, and lays out every grace. Faith is the receiving grace; it receives in Christ, *Eph.* 3. 17. and it receives from Christ, *John* 1. 16. Faith is the key that opens Christ's Treasures; the hand that takes out his tried gold: Faith is the carrying, and recarrying grace: Faith comes up to the market-price, and never breaks with God on terms, but subscribes to all the demands of Christ, and so never returns empty. Christians, you will never want goods for your Heavenly Trade, if you can but keep Faith in exercise; your shops will never be empty, as long as Faith can stir up and down, and keep up its Journeys to Heaven: If there be any goods in the promises, any wares in Heaven, Faith will have them down, as long as the soul needs them, and it be for God's interest to part with them: O then get faith! Alas, what pitiful Trade do some drive for want of Faith! Choice goods will not off; precious promises, pertinent instructions, persuasions and encouragements lie on Christ's hands for want of faith in them that hear.

Christians, you will make nothing of Religion without Faith, in the days we live in; you will soon shut up shop, decay and break when troubles come to purpose, without store of Faith. Faith will fill your store-houses, do your work, put off your goods, get in your rights, pay your debts, and maintain you richly on the incomes of your Trade.

Patience is another grace that will much serve you in your Spiritual Trade; you have need of Patience to do the will of God; no working without Patience. *2 Cor.* 12. 12. *Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all Patience.* *Rom.* 5. 4. *Patience worketh experience.* Souls are apt to be weary of well doing without Patience, and to tire in running, without this long-breathed grace of Patience. *Heb.* 12. 1. *Let us run with Patience the race that is set before us.* No receiving the fruit of Ordinances and Duties without Patience. *Luke* 8. 15. *They on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it; and bring forth fruit with Patience.* The Lord usually tries his people's Patience before they come to the fruit of Promises, and bring forth the obedience of Precepts; there's a winter between seed-time and harvest; many wet, weeping days between sowing and reaping, *ut enim segetem in agro pluvias, nives, glacies, pruinas, grandines, & tempestates ferre necessarium est antequam maturescat, & fructum ferat, ita hominem fidelem intus & extrinsecus multa pati mala oportet.* *Stell.* The seed

must lie long, it may may be, under ground, and when 'tis come up, be nipt up with frosts, and covered with snow and hail, and bear many a storm before it ripens, and brings forth fruit, and this calls for Patience; yea many times longsuffering. *The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth, and hath long Patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain,* James 5. 7. Patience is needful to suffer, as well as do the Will of God. Rev. 13. 10. *Here is the Patience and Faith of the Saints: To endure captivity and cruel Death for the sake of Christ,* Patience to wait for the promise, Rom. 8. 25. and Patience to receive it. Heb. 10. 36. *Patience (saith Seneca) is a salve for every sore, that only which alleviates our burdens; without it we cannot be men or Christians: (saith another) 'tis the grace that makes a complete and well accomplished Christian,* Manton. James 1. 4. When reason is at a stand, and hope almost at an end, and all refuge fails; Patience steps in, bears the burden, and calms the soul.

Hope is a necessary grace to this great undertaking, reckoned among the three Cardinal virtues that wonderfully adorn a Christian's spirit and conversation. 1 Cor. 13. 13. *Now abideth Faith, and Hope, and Charity: Hope is the offspring and refreshment of Faith; 'tis begotten by Faith, and (says one) As a good child relieves its father Faith in time of need.* Hope is an expectation, Faith a persuasion. Faith eyes the promise, hope the thing promised, as sure though future, which comforts the soul under the present want of desired mercy; and this is needful to cheer the soul under its exigencies and disappointments in the way of its Christian conversation. Hope keeps in the fire, and keeps up the house. Heb. 3. 6. *Whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of our hope firm to the end.* Were it not for Hope the house would fall asunder; Hope keeps it together, till the Lord new build it in Heaven: Hope anchors the soul in a storm, and makes it steady under shaking tempests, Heb. 6. 19. Hope maintains a Christian in a hard winter, while the seed is under clods, and till the corn come to the barn. 1 Cor. 9. 10. *He that ploweth, ploweth in Hope (that is of a good harvest) that will compensate all his labors.* Hope secures the soul from shame and disappointment under temporary forbearance, Psal. 34. 22. It helps it to rejoice in tribulation, Rom. 5. 2. and compasseth him about with mercy, Psal. 32. 10.

Humility, Self-denial, Goodness, Temperance, Gentleness, Love, Zeal, Holy Fear, are all good goods that will off well, and turn to the Trader's profit, if well improved: Get your souls well stored with these graces of the Spirit, also if you ever think to drive a good Trade of godliness,

Get your minds filled with knowledge, as well as your hearts with grace; that's part of the Christian's Treasure. 2 Cor. 4. 6. *We have this Treasure (that is of the knowledge of God in the face of Christ) in earthen vessels: In whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom,* Col. 2. 3. Saving knowledge is a Treasure laid up in Christ for Believers, and to be fetched out for their use and comfort. *The riches of the full assurance of understanding, and acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ,* Col. 2. 2. The Gospel is a mystery, a secret, hid from the natural eye, and cannot be known but by the revelation of the Spirit. To have an inward, clear, sensible, experimental and certain apprehension of the glorious truths of the Gospel, opened and confirmed to the eye of Faith, is a high attainment beyond what any reach to, but those that have the annointings of the Spirit, and to whom 'tis given by the Spirit as the

fruit of prayer, and faithful attendance on his teachings in the Gospel and Ordinances of Christ: This is called a rooting and establishment in the Faith, *Col. 2. 7.* and growing in knowledge, *2 Pet. 3. 18.* alluding to trees that being well planted do take deeper root in the earth, and in time come to greater settlement and strength against shakings: And as children that gradually grow and increase to higher statures; so this spiritual knowledge is gradually increased; 'tis not the privilege of new-born babes, of persons at their first conversion, to have this deep fathoming of Gospel-mysteries: But of stronger Christians, who by constant attendances on the Means of Grace, and in progress of time, by Faith, Humility, Prayer and Attention to the Spirit, do at length come to higher measures of this illumination, and full assurance of truth. As *Gerson* reports of a godly man he knew, who at first was exercised with many doubts and fears, and shakings of Faith; but at last through humiliation of soul, and a captivating of his understanding to Divine Truth, together with the illumination of the Spirit, came to a wonderful clearness in the matters of Faith, and of his soul-estate, with such a settlement of spirit, and certainty about his salvation, as to have no more doubts remaining in him. Christians, content not yourselves with some notions of truth, and shallow cold apprehensions of the great mysteries of salvation; but labor to get in greater measures of spiritual understanding, both objective, as to the Truths to be known; and subjective, as to the discerning of them: Alas, we know as yet nothing as we ought; there are deeps in the knowledge of Christ for Elephants, as well as shallows for Lambs; and there are greater beamings on the souls eye to be obtained, and more certain understanding, and familiar acquaintance to be had with the same Truths we know. Your business, Christians, in the Heavenly Trade is to get more Divine Wisdom, to be led farther into all Truth, and to enter into the Mysteries of the Gospel; wading farther and farther into Sanctuary-deeps; to know more of God, of the way to him, and the things freely given of him, and to know better what you know: *Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes.* There's a secret in Gospel-truths which the wisest men in the world can never by their greatest Wisdom come to see, without the special revelation of the Spirit: As none can come to see the spirits, salts, and occult virtues, in herbs and minerals, till by Chymistry they are extracted: Others may discern and receive the things themselves in the gross and bulk of them, and yet never see or taste those choice spirits hid in them: So 'tis with such as are strangers to a spiritual knowledge, they apprehend Truths in the bulk and letter of them. A *carnal man* (saith *Hooker*) *may hear the sound of the Word, understand the signification; his judgment may see the evidence of the argument, and force of reason in them; and yet thereality and spiritualness of that Divine good never apprehended. The world by wisdom knew not God, 1 Cor. 1. 21.* There's no proportion between a spiritual object and a carnal eye: *The carnal mind cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God, neither can they know them, for they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. 2. 14.* Labor to see the beauty and amiableness of Truth; to see your propriety in Truth, to taste an inward sweetness, and ravishing pleasure in Truth, to feel the sense of special love to your souls in discovery of light, and to find a mightiness going out in every Truth on your souls, changing you into the very Spirit and Image of Truth: To grow in knowledge extensively, into all Truth; and intensively, in deeper and more sensible, spiritual, powerful apprehensions of truth; the want of which right knowledge makes so many cold, dead hypocrites, and barren professors in this day of light and parts.

Get also your Consciences stored with the Peace of God, which passeth understanding. This is the salt that seasons everything, condition and duty, *Mark* 9. 50. This will shoe your feet to travel through the rough and tiresome ways of affliction, temptation and persecution you must meet with in the pursuit of your Heavenly Trade, *Ephes.* 6. 15. This will calm your hearts in storms, and maintain a Summer within, when 'tis Winter without, and nothing but tempests and troubles in the world, *John* 16. 33. This will preserve you when all is going, and keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus, *Phil.* 4. 7. This will guard your hearts from those slavish fears, darksome doubts, and dreadful troubles that many are filled with this day, and make you triumph over sin, trample upon the world, and smile in the midst of all the frowns of men and Devils. O get and keep this rare Jewel of inward Peace, which will help you to draw near to God with boldness, and cheerful serenity in every duty, *Heb.* 10. 22. Get your consciences bath'd in the blood of Christ, and the evidences of your sincerity cleared up every day; this will help to maintain a feast of inward peace under the temptations of Satan, and the view of your daily failings and stumblings.

Get your hearts warmed, and affections quickened with the sense of divine love to your Souls: this is a choice part of heavenly treasures, and will abundantly conduce to the lively carrying on of this divine Trade; affections raised by the application of redemption-grace, will be to your Souls as spread sails to the Ship, to carry you strongly along against wind and storm, and fill you with pleasant gales within, and give you a speedy and comfortable passage through the waves of this World, *2 Cor.* 5. 12. 'Tis the Soul's wing that mounts it up towards God, and carries it aloft above the entanglements of sin, the world, and flesh, in the warm pursuit of God's commandments, *2 Cor.* 5. 14. His commands will not be thought grievous, or his yoke heavy, where this love of God hath left a savor on the heart, *Psal.* 119. 32. *Rom.* 13. 10. It will exceedingly sweeten the bitter waters of *Marah* to you, and make the paths of God's Providences, as well as his Precepts, pleasantness and peace.

Take in also the consolations of the Spirit, and the joys of the Holy Ghost, these will be useful to cheer your hearts under tribulation, and strengthen and cordial you under heartfaintings and qualms you may meet with from those ill vapors of this lower World, and want of creature-comforts, *2 Cor.* 7. 4. *Rom.* 15. 4. This spirituall comfort will also help to drown your carnal joys, and to prevent a surfeit with the pleasures of this World, (another danger that Wisdom's Merchants are sometimes liable to.) *Acts* 2. 28. *Make me full of joy with the light of thy countenance.* Spiritual joy, where it is, fills the heart, and leaves no room for carnal delights; as the heat of the Sun puts out the fire, so will spiritual consolation extinguish carnal joy: 'Twas the comfort which *Moses*, by Faith, fetched in from the views of an invisible God, that made him choose reproaches with the people of God, before the pleasures of sin that were but for a season, *Heb.* 11. 21. 25. This spiritual comfort is a notable way to stability in every good work, *2 Thes.* 2. 16, 17. to help on your Souls edification and growth in grace and holiness, *Acts* 9. 31.

O! what work have Christians to do, besides the World, and minding their own things? were Religion followed to the purpose, persons would have no leisure for sin and vanity: O! what

need have gracious Souls of a diligent hand to make them rich, and to be taking in spiritual goods every day.

Quest. But how should I do to get my Soul furnished with these heavenly goods? If my heart deceive me not, I would fain be enriched with every grace, capacity and accomplishment, for the discharge of my duty, the pleasing, honoring, and enjoying of God, and for the welfare of my immortal Soul: But how to attain this longed for mercy, I know not.

Sol. 1. If you would be enriched with heavenly treasures, and get in those goods; Then,

1. First, maintain a constant sense of your own wants and emptiness: *That which is wanting cannot be numbered, Eccles. 1. 15.* Look over your souls every day, and see your poverty; look into your understandings, and see how little light is there; into your minds, and consider how little spirituality lies there; how little warmth and heavenly heat in your affections; little truth and sincerity in your spirits; little tenderness in your consciences; little flexibleness in your wills to divine things: little faith, love, humility, meekness, fear, zeal, life, strength, faithfulness, stedfastness in your souls: were this really seen, and felt, and the excellency of these spiritual perfections discerned, and the soul's great concern and interest that lies wrapped up in them, with the absolute necessity of having every grace, in order to duty, peace, comfort, prosperity and salvation; persons that had any life at all, could not lie still, or be content, till utmost means were used to obtain supplies: 'twas a false conceit of a self-fullness that kept back *Laodicea* from seeking after Christ's treasures, *Rev. 3. 17, 18.* And that blind opinion the Pharisees had of their good estate that so prejudic'd them against the convictions and counsels of Christ towards their cure, *Joh. 8. 33. 39. 41. 48.* Had not the *Corinthian* Saints been so full and rich in their apprehensions, they would not have had such sleighty thoughts of instituted means towards their Souls good. *1 Cor. 1. 12.* And have been contentious with one another, when they should have been contending for higher measures of grace and godliness, *verse. 11.* 'Tis the poor are the laborers in God's Vineyard, *Zech. 11. 11.* And they that feel their daily need of soul-relief, that will be at any pains to enjoy it, *Isa. 41. 17.*

Secondly, Get a believing sight of Christ's grace and fullness, that he is able to enrich you, and willing to help you. *Heb. 11. 6.* This brought *Naaman* to the Prophet *Elisha* for cure of his leprosy; he believed his servants report, that he was able, and cherished hopes that he was willing to heal him. *2 Kin. 5. 3.* And she said to her Mistress, would God my Master were with the Prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy: One told this to her Lord, and hereupon he goes and adventures: *ver. 5.* And he departed. A persuasion of Christ's ability, brought the Leper to him for cleansing. *Mat. 8. 2.* Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean: He was persuaded that Christ was able, and had hopes that he was willing, or would never have come to him. A thorough belief of Christ's ability to help, will make a soul to cherish hopes of his willingness also. So the blind men, *Mat. 9.* they believed Christ's ability to help them; *ver. 28.* And they had hopes of his mercy too, that he would do it: *ver. 27.* Thou Son of David have mercy upon us: and this hope made them not only to come to Christ, but to follow after him: whatever persons pretend to a believing in Christ's ability to save and sanctify them, they have not this faith, who question his willingness to satisfy the longing soul, and save all

that come to God by him: you confess he is able to furnish you with all you can want or desire; believe his willingness also to supply all your wants, who sincerely wait upon him.

Quest. But how may I know that Christ will furnish me if I come for these heavenly treasures? there are many come, and go without their errand: Some ask, and have not, *Jam. 4. 3.* run, and receive not; strive to enter in, and are not able, *1 Cor. 9. 24. Luke 13. 24.* There are some the Lord threatens he will not hear, *Prov. 1. 28. Isa. 1. 15. Zech. 7. 13.* And I have sought these spiritual blessings many a time, and God hath not answered: How may I be sure Christ is willing to give these treasures unto me?

Sol. The Lord Jesus hath made an offer of grace to all sensible Sinners, who feel their need, and thirst for supply, *Isa. 55. 1. Joh. 7. 37.* and called upon them to come and receive it without exception, *Matth. 11. 28.* Now it cannot stand with his divine goodness and truth to offer mercy, and not intend to give it; he cannot deceive, or be deceived, who is the faithful one; nor invite his creatures to an expectation, and then fail them. Now he hath called all to come, and required no other condition but their coming, and receiving him and the things he hath offered. He hath also promised, as well as offered, to give to him that thirsteth. *Rev. 20. 6. I will give to him that is a-thirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.* I will give, (not sell) or let out on any terms of self-worthiness; for if there be anything to make the creature worthy, 'tis not a gift, but debt, *Rom. 4. 4.* [To him that is a-thirst,] nothing else is required but a pinching sense of souls need, and an unsatisfied desire of supply. [I will give freely,] out of no respect to anything in the creature, but his necessity and misery; the moving cause is his own grace and free mercy to Sinners, as Sinners. [I will give liberally too;] let him drink freely, take as much as he needs, or is capable to receive. [I will give suitably,] such things as you desire and need, and such things as are capable of satisfying you, (*of the fountain of the waters of life.*) *Matth. 7. 7. Psal. 36. 7, 8. Joh. 6. 37. Isa. 41. 17.* You will find nothing in these Scriptures required in the person, but sense of his need, seeking satisfaction, coming, believing, and a real subjection to all God's terms, and a pure designing of his ends. I disclaim all; the Port I would be in at, is redemption and forgiveness through his blood; *Ruth.* Now, if he hath promised to give to them that seek, he must be willing to give; *For the holy one of Israel cannot lie, Numb. 23. 19.* He hath received all his Mediatory fullness of purpose for the giving out to those that come unto him. *Joh. 1. 12. Psal. 68. 18. Thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them:* He is the Angel, Messenger and Mediator of the new Covenant, the Trustee and Feoffee entrusted with that great estate for the use of his people that need it, and come unto him for it, *Mal. 3. 1. Heb. 9. 15.* And therefore is said to appear in Heaven in the presence of God for them, as an Advocate to follow their cause. The Lord Jesus is wonderfully pleased too, in giving to his needy seeking ones. *Mic. 7. 18.* He delighteth in mercy. *Psal. 35. 27.* He hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants: the more he gives, the more he sees of the travel of his soul, and is satisfied. *Isa. 53. 11.* The more he gives, the more he receives: The gifts and graces of God are as the rivers that flow from the Sea, and return to the Sea again. *1 Chron. 29. 14. Of thine own have we given thee:* The more Christ gives to his people, the more he receives; his talents come in again with improvements, *Mat. 25. 27.* The more he gives, the more he is glorified, *Joh. 14. 13.* Answer these questions before you doubt Christ's willingness to part with

spiritual goods freely to all that truly seek them. Do you think really that Christ can dissemble, offer mercy, and have no mind to give it? Do you think that the Lord Jesus can break his word, or become false to his promise? Can you imagine he will be unfaithful to his trust? Can he delight in giving, and yet not willing? Doth he gain by giving, and yet not willing to give? Is he glorified by giving, and yet be loath to give? then would he not care for his own name. Suspect your willingness to receive, not Christ's to give you all that grace you need and seek of him.

Fourthly, Another thing wherein this heavenly Trade lies, is, to carry on heavenly work, and to be daily driving on the great business of godliness. Religion hath its work as well as the world; every Trade hath its employment, and so has godliness. Christianity is not a notion or opinion, a name to live, and no more: 'Tis a miserable vanity and cheat for a person to think a bare Lamp will light him to Heaven, and a few lazy wishes bring him to glory, though he travel not the way to it. Alas, to espouse the principles of Piety, without the practice of it, to get over to privileges, and be strangers to Purity, to profess Faith without works, and love without labors, will signify nothing towards salvation. Will Opinion make a man an Artist, or imagination enrich him, or hunger fill him, or reading the way to a place bring him thither? No more will affection, knowledge and profession help men to Heaven, unless they work out their salvation, and carry on the duties of Religion that lead to it, *Phil. 2. 12.*

First, Consider, a Christian hath much work, and a little time; great work, and small strength; necessary work, and many diversions; excellent work, none like it: persons that set about salvation in earnest, will find much to do; and the farther they go in Religion, the more busy their employment will be: every day brings its work with it; new instructions, new mercies, new afflictions and temptations every day, which calls for much exercised grace and duty. A child of God hath no time for idleness, or impertinent business. O the many things that must be dispatched within the compass of this little inch of time for eternity! Soul, if thou diest, and thy work undone when thou diest, thy soul's undone; there's no rising from thy grave to do neglected work; or dispensation at the Bar of God for the omission of Salvation-duties.

This work is necessary also as well as great; some duties are necessary to secure thy salvation; all duties are necessary to maintain thy comforts, and greaten thy glory. Men plead necessity for this and th' other thing, to do this work, and take that journey; to omit this duty, and absent from such a privilege; but who is sensible of the necessity of working the work of God, and attending soul-concerns? It may not be necessary you should have peace, credit, plenty, riches, comforts; that you should have so much estate, preferment and contentment in the world; but 'tis absolutely necessary thy soul should be saved, and that God should be obeyed; that spiritual concerns should be attended, (whatever is neglected) that thy debts should be paid, thy peace with God obtained, thy hungry soul be fed and refreshed, thy title to Heaven cleared, the presence of God enjoyed, and thy seed-time for glory improved.

'Tis promised-work too, and that makes it necessary; you have engaged to be the Lord's if you are Christians; and have given up yourselves to be his, and not your own; your time is

his, your capacities his, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. what you are and have, is from him and for him; this you have devoted to the use and service of God when you took him to be your God, 2 Cor. 8. 5. and many a time since you have engaged to obedience of his commands: There are sick-bedvows, affliction-promises, engagements under conscience-troubles; yea every day, and in every duty, you tell God you will mend your ways, redeem your time, do him more and better work; and how can you stand before him with such flattery and dissimulation, and under the guilt of so much falsehood and treachery, while your work lies still undone?

Yea your work Christians is excellent work also, above all the employments of the world; 'tis supernatural work, yea Angelical work, yea such work as Angels cannot do, to believe in, love, converse with, and obey Christ, as your Redeemer and Savior, Phil. 3. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 7, 8, 9, 12. to suffer for Christ, and be baptized into a conformity with his death and resurrection.

'Tis suitable work also you are called to in this Heavenly Trade, work suited to your natures: If you are Saints, you have received a heavenly spirit, and are partakers of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. 'Tis as natural for you to do heavenly work, if you are Christians, as for the world to do earthly work, there being a disposition and propensity put into your renewed natures to new and heavenly work, as there is a disposition in the seed to its proper fruit, 1 Joh. 3. 9. *For his seed remaineth in him:* 'Tis work suited to your hopes which are laid up in Heaven, Col. 1. 5. *For the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven, whereof you have heard before in the word of Truth.* That is the blessedness, those great and glorious things you hope for, which are laid up for you in Heaven, as a Treasure safely kept for you: *Called hope by an Antonomasia (saith Davenant) This reward is not said to be only offered and proposed to us; for that would weaken our hope, if the certainty of those things hoped for did depend on us, and our disposition; so that it should be given or denied us according to the worth of our works, graces and duties; but 'tis said to be laid aside for us, as that which is deposited, and safely laid up in God our Father for us.* A Christian's choicest Treasures lie in hope, not in hand; beyond their present view and enjoyment, and yet secured to their use and propriety, 1 Pet. 1. 4. *Reserved in Heaven for you:* (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) kept as it were in custody, and with watch and ward for you sure and certain, on which the hopes of Believers are firmly laid, and to which their present work is suited: heavenly work bears a proportion and agreement in its nature (though not in worth) to heavenly and eternal things; 'tis work suited to your inheritance and wages in its kind, though not in degree: and that's excellent work which is of the same nature with your eternal blessedness.

Suited also to your present privileges, who sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus Eph. 2. 6. Gracious souls, though in habitation they are on the Earth, yet in point of privilege they sit in Heaven: *Through their union with Christ they may be said (saith Zanchi) to sit where he sits, as a husband or Brother absent from his Wife, and Brethren doth possess a Kingdom for them; they, though absent, may be truly said relatively to possess it in him as members in the head, they sit in Heaven in the person of Christ; and as the lump is sanctified in the first fruits:* Neither do they sit only relatively through their union with Christ; but spiritually, through their communion with him. In that sense (saith Bucer) as the Apostle speaks, Phil. 3. 20. They have their conversation in Heaven. This is a glorious privilege the Saints only enjoy; in this life to

converse in Heaven, and to have their life above, above the world, and things below, and such should their work be also: How pleasant should heavenly work be to heavenly souls! which Believers are and should be.

Secondly, Christians set upon heavenly work; for as is your work, so will your maintenance be: They who do that work which the world cannot, have that meat and drink which the world knoweth not, *Joh. 4. 32, 34.* The Lord hath dainties, and peculiar refreshments for those who are single and faithful in his work, *they have joys which strangers intermeddle not with, Prov. 14. 10.* Whoever go without, his laborers shall not lack: He keeps a good table for his work-men: *In keeping of his Commands there's great reward, Psal. 19. 11. They eat the fat, and drink the sweet, Neh. 8. 10.* The marrow, the spiced wine, the hidden Manna is their meat and drink (so far as they have need of it) O the sweet bits, and pleasant sips they miss of, who are idle in God's Vineyard! *They that will not work, shall not eat, 2 Thes. 3. 10.* Would you live high in your spiritual comforts, then work hard in your spiritual work.

Thirdly, As is your work, so will your company be: They that do earthly work, have earthly companions to labor with them: As is men's Trade, such is their company. *The children of the night have their fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness, Ephes. 5. 11.* and gracious souls are companions with them that fear God, *Psal. 119. 63.* Wicked workers have wicked men and devils casting in their lot with them, *Prov. 1. 14.* And so have heavenly Traders heavenly company; they have the presence of God with them, *2 Chron. 15. 2. The Lord is with you while you are with him:* They have the Comforter with them, *Joh. 14. 16. He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever: Rom. 8. 11. By his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* No company like the Comforter; friends may leave you, but if you keep with God, and do his will, the Spirit of God will abide with you forever; though he may not always be seen of you, yet he will always reside with you: At the best, friends can but stay with you, but the Spirit of Christ will dwell in you, and give you the nearest and most intimate acquaintance with himself, (if you obey his voice, and follow him) God's laborers have the company of Angels also: *they are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, Heb. 1. 14. They pitch their tents about them that fear God, Psal. 34. 7.* and have it given in charge to take care of the Children of God, *and to carry them in their arms, that they dash not their feet against a stone, Psal. 91. 11.* Those are lovely company indeed, such as will never hurt you, but do you good; you shall be the better for them, *Prov. 13. 20.*

Fourthly, As is your work, so will your wages be to all eternity: though not for your work, yet according to it, *Rom. 2. 6. Who shall render to every man according to his deeds:* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , not 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , *according to, not for their works:* The Preposition 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , noting here (saith Pareus) not the merit, but the measure, analogy or rule, by which undeserved rewards shall be distributed, and just punishments shall be inflicted, as the word is used, *Mat. 9. 29. ch. 23. 3.* And so as it refers to glory (saith he) it rather describes the person to whom this glory shall be given, then shows the cause why it is given, as *Mat. 25. 34, 35.* Also the word rendered (〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉) is used for a free reward that hath no respect to desert, *Mat. 20. 8.* The same reward being given to him that wrought one hour, as to those that bore the heat and burden of the day: So that the

word (*according*) notes the kind of work, not the cause of reward, reward as it refers to salvation: Suitable to that of Christ, *Rev. 22. 12. Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be:* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 . Indeed evil works have their causality, and desert of punishment, but not good works of reward: *Gryner* gives three reasons of the difference: First, Because good works proceed from God, and are the fruits of his Spirit in us; but evil works proceed from man, and are the effects of his own spirit and will. Secondly, good works are imperfectly good as to degrees, and therefore cannot merit; but evil works are perfectly evil, and therefore deserve death. Thirdly, Good works are commanded, and so are but our duty, and cannot merit, (payment of debts are not purchase) but sins are forbidden, and so are a breach of the Law of God, and deserve death. *Luke 17. 10. The gift of God is eternal life, but the wages of sin is death, Rom. 6. 23. Death is wages due, but life is a gift altogether free. By grace ye are saved, Ephes. 2. 5.* There can be no desert of glory in the most spiritual duties of man: Because

First, They are not man's work, but God's in him, *John 15. 5. Without me ye can do nothing, Gal. 2. 20. I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* Holiness is called the fruit of the Spirit, *Ephes. 5. 9.* Now the reward is due by way of debt to him that worketh; but to him that worketh not, 'tis of grace, *Rom. 4. 4, 5.* and therefore reward is not due to Saints who work not, but by strict way of justice rather to the Spirit that worketh in them.

Secondly, They are no way proportionable to the reward, and so not meritorious: Their work is imperfect, they know but in part, and do but in part, *1 Cor. 3. 9. Phil. 3. 12.* The best duties as they come from the Saints here, are spotty, and as sweet waters that come from an evil vessel, they savor of the cask through which they come; but glory is perfect, *omnibus modis,* and hath no defect in it; Our works also are finite, being created, and creature-actions; but the reward is infinite, the love and glory of an infinite God.

Thirdly, Though our Holiness were perfect, yet it could not merit; because it is due to God from that relation we bear to him as his creatures, and redeemed ones, and from our promise and covenant with him to love, obey and serve him, *Ephes. 2. 10. 2 Cor. 8. 5.* Duties are but debts, not acts of favor to God: We owe God ourselves, and our all, and are indebted to Christ for his Redemption-grace, more than we can ever pay; we cannot (though we do all we possible can) requite the blood of Christ, and love of Christ; and till we are out of debt we cannot merit.

Fourthly, We have nothing to merit withal, for we are not our own, *1 Cor. 6. 19.* Man hath nothing to give to God, who is not his own, but God's (as all redeemed ones especially are) Believers are his servants: *Rom. 14. 4. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?* And a servant is not his own; his time, strength, capacity, work, are his Masters; so are the Saints duties the Lord's, not by way of legal compact, and requital of wages, but by way of redemption, right and purchase, being bought out of the service of sin and Satan to his own use; and the service of such is a due already upon a former score; a debt of thankfulness, and cannot merit a reward: Beside, what can they give to God, who have nothing but what they receive from God? *1 Cor. 4. 7. Who hath first given to him? and it shall be recompensed to him again: for of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever.*

Fifthly, Were rewards due to any upon the account of his work, then man had something to glory of in himself, and might say of Heaven as *Nebuchadnezzar* did of *Babylon*, *Dan. 4. 30. Is not this great Babylon which I have built for the house of the Kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my Majesty?* So might such say when they come to Heaven; Is not this the mansion I prepared and deserved by my duties and graces, for my glory and blessedness? For self-justiciaries, though they are forced to say that their grace is given of God; yet they boast of the improvements of this grace as theirs, and glory is due to the improvement of grace (they say) and not to the bare grace or talent; and though they are driven to confess Christ's merit, yet they shuffle and say, Christ merited for them, that they might merit: But that is contrary to the Gospel, which tells us, *That 'tis not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, Rom. 9. v. 16. And 'tis God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, Phil. 2. 13. And that no flesh should glory in his presence, 1 Cor. 1. 29. And therefore God hath chosen the foolish, weak; and base things of this world, and things that are not, of purpose to prevent this self-glorying before him, verse 17, 18.* And the Apostle makes this reason why *Abraham* was not justified by Works, but by Faith, cause then he would have something to glory in; but this could not be. *Rom. 4. 2. If Abraham were justified by works, he had something to glory in, but not before God.* So that the Saints, though they have a reward of their work, yet it is not for their work; 'tis a reward, not of debt, but of grace; yea of glorious grace, *according to your work.* (Christians) God will not give you a jot less than the utmost of what your love and faithfulness comes to; *Your labor shall not be in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. 15. 58.* He will not fail of any of his Promises, or disappoint you of your expected end, but will be better than your hopes: You will say in that day of compensation, *Who hath begotten me all these? Isa. 49. 21. Whence is this to me? Luk. 1. v. 43. When saw we thee an hungered? Mat. 26. v. 37.* Glory is a mighty thing, infinitely above all your labors: Christians, Heaven will make amends for all your duties and losses, and abundantly compensate, and exceed all your expenses for God in the world: And have: you not reason to set about the work of grace, and drive on the employments of this Heavenly Trade?

Quest. But what is this heavenly work which *Wisdom's Merchants* must be driving on every day?

Sol. I answer; First, in the general; Heavenly work is that work which hath a heavenly Author and Principle; a heavenly rule, and a heavenly end: work wrought of God by his Spirit, *Joh. 3. 21.* Work done according to the will of God, and by Scripture-rule, *Col. 4. 12.* Work wrought for God, and designed purely and ultimately to his glory, *1 Cor. 10. 31.*

But more particularly, heavenly works may be considered under these two heads.

First, Such as are heavenly in the matter of them, as well as manner and end.

Secondly, Such works, as though earthly in the matter of them, yet are done in a heavenly manner, and to an heavenly end.

First, That's heavenly work which is of a heavenly nature, matter, and manner, and end; as all those religious duties are which respect God, ourselves, and others.

First, Drive on that work every day which hath God himself for its first and more immediate object, as all acts of religious worship, both natural and instituted, moral and positive. *Mat. 4. 10. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve:* This is due to God from all his rational and intelligent creatures, both Men and Angels to worship him only, with that reverential fear, faith, love, hope and delight which is due to him, as the Supreme Majesty of Heaven and Earth, the great Creator and Conservator of all his creatures; and to serve him with that subjection and obedience as their relation to God their Sovereign calls for. This is the duty of all persons, especially those that profess their owning of God, and choice of him to be their God in Christ, and peculiar treasure. *Deut. 13. 6. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and serve him, and swear by his name.* Christians, to let out your hearts upon the world, relations, self, and creatures, is to rob God of his service, and to commit Idolatry with the creature. Think this, when my heart runs out to things below God, and my affections, hope, trust and delight get over their banks, and break their due bounds, and subordinacy to God: when I fondly dote upon, and take pleasure (abstractively from God) in any creatures, then do I deal treacherously with my God, I rob him, and give his glory to another, *Isa. 48. 11. O set habitually your hearts on God, and let out your faith, love, hope, fear, desires, and delighting pleasures on God every day, yea all the day long, as your chiefest good, supreme Sovereign, and last end. Prov. 27. 17. Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.*

Again, external acts of divine worship are part of thy every days work, which thou owest to God, and to be duly and daily performed to him, as to pray, hear, and read his sacred word: These are that honor, homage and service that is due to God every day, especially morning and evening; *Prov. 8. 34. Deut. 6. 7. Exod. 30. 7. 1 Chron. 23. 30. Ezek. 46. 13, 14, 15. Amos 4. 4. 1 Chron. 16. 40. Psal. 55. 17.* This is the daily burnt-offering to be prepared for the Lord; *Exod. 29. 38, 39.* Morning and evening; the vows that are to be daily performed. *Psal. 61. 8.* God's mercies are new every morning, and so must your praises be also. *Lam. 3. 23.* He keeps you day and night. *Isa. 27. 3.* And 'tis but reasonable you should give him his morning and evening sacrifice: you depend upon him for the mercies of every day, and he expects from you the duties of every day, which is reasonable service. *Rom. 12. 1.* You have daily necessities, difficulties, trials, dangers and duties, in which you need his help; and is it not your concern to be daily at his feet, and seeking his favor, counsel, strength and blessing?

Herein lies your professed subjection to God also; slight religious duties, and you reject God from being your God: This very reason doth *Moses* give why *Israel* should serve the Lord, and cleave to him, and swear by his name, and give him all religious worship, *Deut. 19. 20, 21. He is thy praise, and he is thy God, who hath done for thee these great and terrible things which thine eyes have seen. Dan. 6. 16. Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee:* 'Tis a contradiction to say that God is your God, and yet withhold his service from him: As soon as ever God had a people in the World, he had service from them. *Gen. 4. 26. Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord:* No sooner had *Seth* (who was the other seed which the Lord appropriated to himself in the room of *Abel*) a Son and Family, but they had peculiar worship for God, and were distinguished from the Family of *Cain* by this, that they did serve God: This is the work of God, that every Soul is bound to dispatch every day, in Closet and Family, in Spirit and Truth, with a pure heart fervently.

This also is the best part of your work in the world, to attend on God; all other service is but drudgery, compared with your serving God, and transacting the great matters of your Souls, and your everlasting concern. This is your interest also, to maintain nearness to God, who is the life of your souls, the length of your days, and fountain of all your supplies; there's no such pleasure as in the ways of God, nor profit as in keeping his commands. O the blessedness of converse with God, and maintaining a daily intercourse with the Father of Spirits! 'tis the privilege of Angels, and of glorified Saints, to be always beholding his face, 1 *Thes.* 4. 17. *Mat.* 18. 10. And the peculiar honor of the upright to dwell in his presence, *Psal.* 140. 12.

There is no such advantage also as to be much with God every day. *Psal.* 73. 28. *'Tis good for me to draw near to God:* Often journeys to Heaven bring in much profit; 'twas this way David did thrive so much in wisdom, grace and experience, out-shining all the men of that age, and serving his generation by the will of God; *his being much with God.* *Psal.* 139. 18. *When I awake I am still with thee:* By this nearness to the Son of righteousness did Enoch so soon ripen for Heaven; and by his constant walks with God, did he so timely get to his journeys end. Of all that generation, we find none so soon sent for home, and translated to his rest, as holy Enoch; for whereas the rest lived nine hundred, eight hundred, seven hundred years; only he lived three hundred sixty and five years, and that which so quickened his fitness for rest, was his activity in heavenly work: *Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him,* *Gen.* 5. 23. He kept his constant turns with God in his Garden and Gallerywalks, and then went in with him into his Presence-Chamber, there to sit down with him forever.

This also will make you thrive in your own work, if you are faithful and diligent in God's work; mind his concerns, and he will care for yours, *Deut.* 30. 9. *Obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments, and the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every good work of thy hand;* He shall make thee to abound in the work of thy hand; (as 'tis in the Hebrew) to have more than enough, (as Montanus renders it,) He will bless thee in every work of thine hand, (according to the Septuagint,) other Copies have it; He will have a great deal of care of thee, &c. *He will make thee excellent with good things,* (saith Junius;) *He will make thee to enjoy good in every work of,* &c. (saith Symmachus;) He shall prosper the work of thy hand; It shall go well with such. *Deut.* 4. 40. *Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes and his commandments which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee,* *Gen.* 42. 18. 'Twas piety made Joseph so prosperous in all he did, he feared God. *Do this, and live; for I fear God:* and God was with him, and made all he did to prosper in his hand, *Gen.* 39. 3. *Whatsoever he doth shall prosper,* *Psal.* 1. 3. The blessing of the Lord shall be on the head and hands of such; let their condition be what it will in the world, yet it shall be well with such as fear the Lord; if he be afflicted, yet his afflictions shall turn to his good, and be part of his prosperity. *2 Chron.* 31. 21. *And in every work he began in the service of the House of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandment, to seek his God; he did it with all his heart, and prospered.* The way to true prosperity leads by Heaven-gates. Christians, if ever you will thrive in your own work, be sure to carry on God's work: begin with God every day, the first fruits are his. Dispatch religious worship in your Closets and Families before you enter on your earthly business: Close up every day with him, he is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end, and must

have the issue as well as entrances of every day. The morning and evening sacrifice are his, 1 *Chron.* 16. 40. 2 *Chron.* 13. 11. *Psal.* 55. 17. Give God his due, before you render to Nature its dues. *Psal.* 61. 8. Pay your vows to God every evening, before you run on score for new mercies: See all things secured in everlasting Arms before you lie down to rest; put thy Soul and thy All into the hands of Christ by solemn devotion and resignation every night; get the watch set, and all things safe, before thou exposest thyself to the hazards of the night, and enterest upon an incapacity to secure thyself from the least danger. O precious souls! lie not down as dogs and swine, who, when they have filled their bellies, get to their styes and kennels.

Secondly, carry on all that work daily which hath a more special respect to your own selves, and leads to the sanctifying, comforting, strengthening, edifying, saving of your precious souls. Next to the glory of God, yea in pursuance of it, thy own Salvation is thy chief concern; *What will it profit a man to gain the whole World, and to lose his own Soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?* What is left, if the Soul be lost? and what is done, if, after all, the Soul be undone? To look after others Souls, and neglect thy own; and to secure all things else, and leave destruction on thyself, is folly like to hers that saved her goods from the fire, but left her child to perish in the flames. Salvation is your chiefest work, committed to your care, and to be accounted for in the day of Christ. *Phil.* 2. 12. *Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling.* And 'tis great work also, many things must be attended too, and several things dispatched, if ever Souls be saved.

First; You must carry on heart-work every day, and that's great work: they that are acquainted with their own hearts, know there is much to do in and about them: There is nothing more out of order than man's heart, and nothing in man of greater concernment than the heart: Hence 'tis the strict charge the Lord gives his people to keep their hearts, *Prov.* 4. v. 23. *Above all keeping (as 'tis in the Hebrew) keep thy heart, Proz.* 23. 2. *Ephes.* 3. 17. *Prov.* 4. v. 4. The heart is the one thing Christ looks for; the chief room he dwells in; his warehouse, where he lays up his goods; his workhouse, where he cuts out, and prepares his work, *Prov.* 16. 1. A great part of salvationwork is done in the secret chambers of the heart: The heart is the root and spring in man whence all acceptable duties flow, *Ephes.* 6. 6. *doing the will of God from the heart;* and to be especially looked after. A Christian finds a great deal of work to do about his heart every day: There is

Heart-searching work, Psal. 64. 6. The heart of man is deep, and not easily fathom'd; 'tis a long journey to the farthest end of the heart, which no man ever yet reached in this life: The Sea is deep, and yet it hath a bottom: The World is large, and yet it hath been compassed; but who hath ever travelled through his own heart, to set up his *non ultra*, and say, Hitherto its wickedness goes, and no farther. *'Tis deceitful also above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? Jer.* 17. 9. A man hath no such cheater to deal with as his own heart; it hath such *Cameleon* colors, *Maeander* windings; such labyrinth turnings, subtle shifts, false pretences, close designs, fair promises, smooth excuses, rhetorical pleas, seeming integrity, deep-rooted hypocrisy, that a man cannot tell what to make of his heart, or how to find it out; and this calls for constant searchings and observings of the heart: Besides, the Lord gives his people the balance of the Sanctuary on purpose to weigh it in, and casts out a line of

providence every day to try it by. Men meet with occasional providences, temptations, employments, companies, changes, mercies, afflictions; all which help to discover the heart; the issue of which is to be observed in order to the finding out of thy heart.

Heart-judging work: When Christians have found out the evil of their hearts, their pride, hypocrisy, &c. seen the proof and evidence clear, and how contrary to Law and Gospel, to Equity and Mercy, to Light, Experience, Warnings, Patience, Profession and Promises, they are then to charge these things upon the heart, to set home the evil with all the aggravations of it, from its nature and effects, from the quality of the person, the time, place, continuance in it, attempts and means of cure, compared with others beneath them for light, profession, means and mercies; and having by these arguments convinced the heart of its exceeding evil, then to pass sentence against, and condemn it as unworthy of any mercy, and deserving of all the threatenings in the Word against it, until the heart come to bear its iniquity, and feel its exceeding sinfulness, and cry out with the Apostle, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom. 7. 24.* This would be of wonderful use to clear up your sincerity, to preserve the tenderness of your spirits, to cut off all excuses, false hopes, and security in sin, and make it more abominable when it appears with its most taking allurements, *2 Cor. 7. 11. 1 Cor. 11. 31.* and this would evidence your interest in pardon, and freedom from Divine condemnation.

Heart-humbling work. O the pride that lodges, yea lives in, and incorporates with this little piece the heart of man! how unsearchable is it, and past finding out! like leaven in the lump, and poison in the cup, which cannot be separated by a human hand; as rottenness in the bones, that cannot be fetched out. Pride is as that lofty mountain before *Zerubbabel*, which must become a plain, *Zach. 4. 7.* as deeply rooted trees, whose Mores are not easily plucked up. One compares spiritual pride, to the shirt, or inmost garment, which the Saints last of all put off; and which like the Ivy, will not be plucked out, till the wall in which it is comes down also. O the tuggings a child of God hath with his proud heart, to get and keep it low! As the Spider, whatever it feeds on it turns to poison: So is it with the proud heart of man; it turns all it does, hath, meets with, and sees to the nourishment of pride; proud of its sins; proud of his graces; proud under afflictions, and proud of mercies; proud of honor, and proud of humility; proud of God's favor, and proud under his frowns. O what a strange disease is pride, that feeds upon the means which the Lord gives to cure it, and gets strength from the remedy to nourish the disease! like *Ephraim's* wound; when God would have healed one, another appeared: And this helps to make a Christian's work great work indeed, which is never done till his day be done, and his Tabernacle pulled down.

Heart-purging work: The heart of man naturally is a very sink and kennel of uncleanness; a fountain of pollution; a running Issue full of filthiness of flesh and spirit, *Mat. 18. 19.* *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things that defile the man.* 'Tis not accidental and adventitious filthiness, for that may more easily be washed away, *Jer. 6. 7.* but 'tis innate and connatural, and never ceases bubbling forth, till the fountain be cleansed, and the root be changed. Sin in the heart is the root and spring of all the wickedness that defiles the thoughts, words and actions. Christians

complain of their thoughts; they are pestered with vain, unclean, distracting thoughts in duty, and out of duty; whereas the distemper lies in the heart: Thoughts are but the ebullitions and swarmings of the heart: He that will cure his thoughts, must first cleanse his heart, *Jer. 4. 14.* The heart is the nest where these Wasps fly out and trouble the soul; the root that feeds these luxuriant branches, briars and thorns that wound the conscience; and the strong fort of *Zion*, where these *Jebusites* hide themselves, and issue out to prey upon the gracious soul: Till these nests be spoiled, the Ax laid to the root of the tree, and this strong Tower attach'd, and these blind and lame removed, souls will never be freed from irruptions of sin in their thoughts and conversations: This (Christian) is busy and hard work, and part of thy daily employment in this Heavenly Trade; to sweep, wash, drain and cleanse thy filthy heart, by sound repentance and faith in the promises, death and blood of Christ.

Heart-quickenning work. The heart is the *primum mobile*, the great wheel in the watch that sets all a going; if that stop, all faculties are still: A lively heart makes a diligent hand to rid away soul-work, and a nimble foot to run in the ways of God's commands; when the heart is quickened, then every duty, inward, outward, public, private goes on; such a soul needs no spur to quicken it, nor pulley to draw it to its duties. O what a burden are some to their Christian friends, to keep them up, and draw them on in the way of God, and all because their hearts are dead, and that liveliness which once seemed to be in them is departed! The spring that at first made them so active, is weakened or broken; the waters that set their Mills a going fail, and that temporary love, and common grace, like standing pools having no fountain to maintain them, are dried up by consuming lusts, and scorching temptations; so that now they wither in all their branches, and become weak, cold, and indisposed to every work of God and their souls. Some of these dangerous symptoms of decayed grace, are found also in sincere souls, for not looking after their hearts betimes, and keeping them close to a quickening Jesus, by a lively faith in the promises. Christian, mind this also every day, to maintain thy spiritual life, by fresh quickenings, and reviving influences, from the fountain of life, on thy weak and dying heart, making use of all instituted helps for soul-strengthening; as hearing, reading, meditation, holy conference, and the like.

Heart-teaching and enlightening work. A light head, and a dark heart may dwell together; and it seems to be the condition of too many under the Gospel this day. A spiritual eye to look into the mystery of truth, and believing affectionate discerning of excellent things, is not easily found; even while Christ is read, a veil is on men's minds, and their foolish heart is darkened: And this is one reason souls walk not as children of light; 'tis because they are not light in the Lord, *Psal. 40. 8.* The Law of God is not within their hearts; they have no inclination or power upon their hearts to do the will of God they know, for want of this heart-knowledge: Be earnest with God to beam over your hearts, to make that the Hemisphere where the Sun of Righteousness may daily arise with healing in his wings: Cry with *David, Psal. 119. 36. Incline my heart to thy Law:* Let my heart lean and stay upon thy Law, as a man doth upon a staff to bear him up: Get a greater nearness in your hearts to truth, that the Word may be wrought in, and incorporated into your hearts; that it may be a *Goshen*, a Land of Vision, and full of the understanding of the Lord.

Heart-keeping and Heart-watching work. The heart is bent to backsliding, if it be not kept and held fast to the Lord and his ways; 'tis still turning aside, and winding off from its proper duty. The Lord complains of *Israel*, *Psal. 78. 8. They did not set their heart aright, and their spirit was not steadfast with God:* They did not prepare, adapt, dispose their heart to God; neither was it constant and steadfast with him, but on every occasion did start aside: So false a thing is man's heart, if not under a watchful eye, and strong hand, holding it fast to God. *Prov. 4. 23. Keep thy heart with all diligence:* Keep it as under lock and key, bolted against sin, and bound by cords of love to every duty: And what a hard province is this! O the work that a child of God hath to keep his heart in order one moment; to keep down sin; to keep it from the power of corruption, and prevalency of temptation; to keep up grace in the heart; to maintain its desires after God, and things that are excellent; to preserve its affections to things above; to hold the thoughts on God, and things eternal, that they start not away; to continue its integrity; to perform its purposes; to secure its frames, experiences and enjoyments! And he that will thus keep his heart, must watch it constantly, never have his eye off from it, or suffer his jealousy concerning it to cease: He must be always making it over to the Lord Jesus for security, and be still imploring help from Heaven, faithfully following all the instructions he gives towards its securing: This is heart-work, and the first part of this heavenly work that concerns yourselves.

Secondly, You must carry on mortificationwork every day. *Col. 3. 5. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is Idolatry.* The Apostle having assured the believing *Colossians* of their future happiness, doth thence infer their duty and necessity to press after utmost holiness here, as the way to this blessedness: The first part of which holiness lies in this great work of mortification: there is no greater motive for Believers putting off sin, than wellgrounded hopes of interest in Christ and glory: if Heaven be yours hereafter, holiness must be yours now: There is no place for sin in Heaven, nor unclean thing can enter there. Then hasten away sin now; that's his Argument: [Mortify your members;] Get yourselves rid of sin; put to death, weaken and destroy the whole body of sin, with all the parts and issues of it; the head and ruling power of sin had its mortal wound before: *verse. 3. Ye are dead;* habitually dead to sin, the world, and self; they have got their deaths-wound, the stab is at the heart, and can never be healed more: but they are not actually dead, more blood must run, and spirits be spent, and this monster be weakened every day: Practical mortification is wanting, and must be promoted daily. *This spiritual death to sin (saith Davenant) is not as the natural death; for that's a pure privation, and admits of nothing in the subject that's contrary to it: But spiritual mortification is not purely privative, but while we live there's something left that is of a contrary nature to holiness, which must be daily opposed and destroyed.* Sin in Believers is driven from the royal fort of the heart upon Christ's entrance into it, but possesses the suburbs and out-works of the soul, from whence it must be gradually expel'd also by the mortifying influence of the spirit; like the *Canaanites* which were removed from the Mountains, but could not be wholly driven out of the Valleys, that *Israel* might by them be proved, and taught to war, *Judge. 1. 19. ch. 3. 1, 2.* So the Lord Jesus Christ doth not presently destroy corruptions from the people, that by them their sincerity may be proved, their graces exercised, and the mighty power of his

spirit manifested: This makes a Christian's work busy, and constant, having to do with potent enemies within and without, *Eph. 6. 4.* which must be fought every day, and a continual war maintained with them during life: without fighting, no conquering; without striving, no crowning, *2 Tim. 2. 5.* 'Tis with a child of God, as with *Israel* when fighting with *Amalek*, if the hands of Faith and Prayer be not held up, no conquest; when these are down, spiritual *Amalek* prevails. O the losses that Christians sustain for want of mortification, by reason of which their foiled corruptions rally up, and take their graces captive! *Let men neglect the constant practice of mortification, (saith Davenant) and their vices that were trod down and subdued, will soon resume their strength; their corruption that was lopt off will bud out again, and the graces of the Spirit in them being almost strangled, man returns to his former temper.* Hence come those dreadful fears of good souls, that the grace of God was never in truth in them, but that they are still in a carnal state, and shall perish at last, and all this for want of carrying on the work of mortification in them: As a lively Faith overcomes sin, so prevailing lust weakens Faith, *1 Joh. 5. 4. Eph. 4. 2. 30.* withstands the sealing-work of the Spirit, and overthrows the work of the Soul's hopes, filling it with fears about the unsoundness of his estate, and the miserable issue of all his profession, experience and labor. By this ladder of unmortified sin, the Devil scales the royal fort of Faith, throws down its Towers, and man's it against the Soul's peace, comfort and holiness. O the mischief that Christians do to themselves by indulging sin, and for want of a vigorous pursuit of this great duty of mortification! which makes them like to *Israel*, who being once upon the borders of *Canaan*, were by their unbelief, and unsubdued lusts, brought back near the confines of *Egypt* again, and after a wearying inconstant life, were consumed in the wilderness at last. So 'tis with gracious Souls, by their unmortified lusts, after some accesses to grace, tastes of divine love, hopes of glory, and fairness for Heaven, they are brought back to the borders of Hell again, and made to spend their life in an uncomfortable and souldistressing wilderness. Christians, 'tis not security enough for your peace and spiritual welfare, that sin hath lost its dominion, unless its strength and life be impaired also: dethroned sin may bid you many a battle, and give you sore foils, and though it may not recover the Scepter, yet it may keep the Sword; and when it cannot mount the Throne, may get into some strong hold, and put the soul to much trouble e're it be beaten out again. Neither is it safe to acquiesce in some temporary truce with thy corruptions; bloody overthrows have been oftentimes the events of a cessation of war for a season: *Joab blew the Trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they anymore, (i. e. for that time.) 2 Sam. 2. 28.* And yet 'tis said, *ch. 3. 1.* *Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; but the house of David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker:* Sin may seem to yield, and trouble thy soul no more for a time, but carry it quietly with thee, as *Joab* did to *Abner*, and on a sudden smite thee to the ground, though not to death, *2 Sam. 3. 27.* Nor is it enough that sin be in chains, and under restraint through the present strength of overcoming grace, unless it be hanged up in chains as a dead malefactor. Secured lust may break prison, and escape from under thy hand (as *Benhadab* did from *Ahab*) to thy greater hurt, *1 King. 20. 42.* What mischief have chained Bears and Lions done when broken loose? Believer, thy condition is not safe till thy sin be dead: what *Saul* said to *Jonathan*, *1 Sam. 20. 31.* may be applied to thy case; *As long as the Son of Jesse liveth upon the ground thou shalt not be*

established, nor thy Kingdom; wherefore now send and fetch him to me, for he shall surely die: So can thy Soul obtain no stability in grace, but be always full of ups and downs, and have wars and changes against thee till thy corruptions be subdued.

Quest. But how shall I do to get sin mortified? I am convinced 'tis my duty, but find it not my capacity: After all my strivings, prayers and hopes, I am still foiled, and fear I shall one day perish by the hand of these *Saul's*. O when shall the Kingdom be restored to *Israel*? When shall the deliverer come to my soul? What shall I do to get these mountains a plain before *Zerubbabel*? and these Thieves crucified with my Lord Christ?

Sol. If ever thou meanest to get the death of thy sins, take these directions.

Direct. 1. First, Do nothing that might tend to strengthen sin. *Rom. 13. 14. Make* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , *no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 . *lusts thereof:* the word signifies a provident care of the flesh, as men do to maintain themselves and families: Don't take up your thoughts about it, how to feed and please your lusts: Never think to kill your corruptions while you secretly feed and maintain them: Many complain of their corruptions, and yet all the while feed and strengthen them. There are several things that do contribute maintenance to men's lusts.

First, Delightful Remembrance of former sins, do wonderfully please a carnal heart, and stir up desires to future sins: As the remembrance of former mercies is food to present faith. *Psal. 74. 14. Thou brakest the head of the Leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness. Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, and the breaking of Pharaoh's power,* seriously thought on, was food to *Israel's* faith in the wilderness: And such are delightful remembrances of former sins: When a person takes pleasure to think and talk of his former evils; this doth feed present desires and hopes of sin. When *Paul* would help on the *Romans* freedom from the service of sin, he labors to get their present thoughts of former sins embitter'd. *Rom. 6. 21. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of these things is death.*

Secondly, Pleasing Imaginations, and fancying of present or future sins, do wonderfully strengthen the habit of sin. The Lord charges *Israel's* sinful actions, as the product of their wicked thoughts. *Isa. 65. 2. Which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts.* Sin first begins in the head, and ends in the feet; first working thoughts of sin, and then actual works of sin: The Devil doth usually strike the first fire on the tinder of men's thoughts, which afterwards burns in their hearts and lives. *Jam. 1. 15. When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.* They that would avoid the birth of sin in their lives must take heed of the conception of sin in their pleasing thoughts. They that would help on *Babylon's* ruin, must prevent its propagation, and put a timely check to their growth; dashing their little ones against the stone, *Psal. 137. 9. Leave not anything that belongs to Babylon in thy soul, saith Hugo.*

Thirdly, Unbelief strengthens lust. *Jer. 2. 25. But thou saidst there is no hope; no, for I have loved strangers, and after them I will go,* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 . *Desperatum est (scil.) cor.* My

heart despairs of help; I fear it will never be better, therefore I will go on in my way. Unbelief strengthens lust, and makes the soul a prey to it. 'Twas by unbelief *Israel* fell in the wilderness, both into sin and ruin. And the Apostle cautions Christians that they fall not by the same example of unbelief, *Heb. 4. 11.* 'Twas unbelieving desponding fears had almost turned up *David's* heels, had not grace succoured him by the Word, *Psal. 73. 2. But as for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well-nigh slipped.* And whence came this weakness of grace, and strength of corruption? why it was from the apprehended prosperity of sin and sinners; and the succesless issues of his profession and obedience: *Verse 15. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence:* If this be the fruit of my holiness, then all my labor is in vain; 'tis to no purpose I have followed God all this while, if wickedness shall carry it at last. O take heed of unbelief if ever you would get down your lusts.

Fourthly, Presumption secretly conveys in relief to sin, and succors it against all the sieges of Word and Spirit. *2 Pet. 2. 10. Presumptuous are they, self-willed.* A presumptuous soul is a self-pleasing soul, one that pertinaciously and willfully seeks his own carnal contentments, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, (as the word imports) he will boldly adventure on the most dangerous issues of sin, so he may but gratify his lusts, and obtain his sinful desires; he fears no dangers, sticks at no hardships, though God and his Word be against him; it makes the sinner go against all warnings, threatenings, counsels, with hopes of success. *Numb. 14. 44. But they presumed to go up to the hill top, verse 42.* The Lord forbid them to go, threatening his remove from them, and their ruin, if they durst go up against his will. Nay, it was said, *The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord; and Moses went not out of the Camp;* would not stir one foot with them in that wicked enterprize, yet they would go. O take heed of Presumption, that does exceedingly keep up sin, and pull down the sinner.

Fifthly, Carnal security is a great friend to sin, and contributes much to its advantage, when Christians let down their watch, and lie down to slumber, then corruptions rise up and prevails over them. When the *Amalekites* were spread abroad upon all the Earth, eating, and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the Land of the *Philistines*, *1 Sam. 30. 16, 17. David* fell upon them, and smote them from the twilight, even to the evening of the next day, and there escaped not a man of them save four hundred young men which rode upon Camels and fled. So 'tis with gracious souls after some great mercy, either some special privilege enjoyed, some spoils upon their lusts obtained, or token of God's favor received, they become secure, proud and careless, letting down their watch, exposing themselves to temptations, and soon become a prey to sin and Satan. *Jer. 48, 11. Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into Captivity, therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed.* If you would have a change on your carnal hearts, take heed of carnal security in your hearts.

Sixthly, Self-indulgence helps to nourish sin, when persons are lovers of their own selves; seek to please, indulge and gratify the desires of carnal natural-self; then lusts thrive in that soul. He that feasts his body (saith *Ephrem Syrus*) and starves his soul, is like him that feasts his slave, and starves his wife. *2 Tim. 3. 2.* Self-love leads the Van to all the iniquities and

hypocrisies of the last times. O the troops of sin that march under the banner of self-love, and are secured by its conduct; hence self-denial is the first step to Christianity, *Mat. 16. 24.* You can never prosper in your salvation-attempts, or decay in your soul-ruining lusts, till you learn to deny yourselves in every part of it. Take heed of a selfish spirit, if you would be sincere souls, and see the death of your lusts.

Seventhly, Opportunity favors sin exceedingly, and helps to keep its hopes alive, and gives it occasion for its enlargement. Opportunity is the Midwife of lust, and helps to deliver it of its inward conceptions and pregnant desires: 'Twas opportunity that blew the coal of *David's* lust into a flame, *2 Sam. 11. 2.* and midwiv'd out *Hezekiah's* pride, *Isa. 39. 2.* Had it not been for opportunity, *Lot* might have escaped the sin of incest, as well as the sufferings of *Sodom*, *Gen. 19. 30 to 37.* and *Judah's* uncleanness with his Daughter-in-law *Tamar*: 'Twas opportunity that exposed *Dinah* to a rape, and *Peter* to the temptation of denying his Lord and Master. Take heed of adventuring into the way of temptation, and going to the borders of soul-danger; shun the occasions of evil; turn aside out of the way of snares, *Prov. 1. 15. chap. 4. 14, 15.* Temptation feeds corruption, ensnares and entangles the feet, and (as fuel) keeps in the fire of lust. You may as safely suffer the sparks to come near to gun-powder, as opportunity to corruption.

Eighthly, Impenitency in sin strengthens the habit of sin. *Jer. 8. 6. No man repented him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done? everyone turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.* They run on furiously in sin, as the horse doth into the battle, who runs till he sweats (saith *Theodoret.*) So they have no end or satiety of sin; and this impenitency in sin was the cause of all their pertinency in sin. Impenitency hardens the heart, and heaps up sin on sin unto the day of wrath, *Rom. 2. 5.* Take heed then of all those things that may in the least maintain and keep up sin in your souls, as ever you think to bring it down: That's the first Advice.

Direct. 2. Secondly, Not only shun whatever might strengthen sin, but take heed you go not out in your own strength against sin, if ever you think to mortify it: He that would mortify sin, must be able to master Devils, *Ephes. 6. v. 12.* But human strength is no match for Devils: If man in his pure estate were too weak for such an adversary, then much more impotent is impure and imperfect man: 'Tis not the woman, but the woman's seed must bruise the Serpents head, *Gen. 3. 15.* The Saints victory is through him that hath loved them, and given himself a sacrifice to God for them, *Rom. 16. 20. Rom. 8. 37. Ephes. 5. 2.* It must be his armor and arm too must bring salvation from spiritual enemies: *Without me you can do nothing, John 15. 5.* 'Tis this makes souls to fail in their attempts against sin, that they set about it in a strength inferior to sin. When *Augustine* after all his strivings, vows and duties to bring down his corruptions, found them still too hard for him? he heard a voice saying to him, *Thou standest in thyself, and therefore thou dost not stand:* Whereupon he betook himself to prayer, and faith in the blood of Christ, and so got some victory over them. When the Exorcists, *Act. 19. v. 15, 16.* went to cast out Devils by the bare Name of Christ without the Power of Christ; both they and their attempts soon miscarried: *Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye? and the man in whom the evil spirit was, leapt on them, and overcame them, and prevailed over them, so that they fled out of the*

house naked and wounded. Creature-strength is too weak to master that enemy which hath the power of Hell to guard it. O go not out against sin

In the strength of your purposes and promises! *Peter* to his own cost, found that too weak to secure him in an hour of temptation.

Go not out in the strength of your frames and affections: How easily can Satan beat the Saints from these posts, and cast in a flood to drown their warmest affections! The *Galatians* that were high in frames and affections, and could talk of a blessedness, while spiritual, soon felt an alteration when they became carnal, *Gal. 4. 15. chap. 3. 3.*

Go not out in the strength of your duties and performances; these are too weak without faith and the arm of Christ to charm these Serpents, and disarm spiritual adversaries.

Go not out in the strength of your graces; these are not Christ, nor have an Almightyness in them to bring down sin and Satan: 'Tis not grace in Believers, but grace in Christ, that is sufficient to guard the soul from Satan's buffetings, and to rescue it from his temptations, *2 Cor. 12. 9.*

Direct. 3. Thirdly, Get the union between thy heart and sin broken: The life of sin lies in that union it hath with the heart; if that be broken, sin dies; as a man then ceaseth to live, when the union between the soul and body is dissolved: Sin hath too great a part even in a Believer's heart, which moves for some respect and indulgence towards it: When the enlightened mind says, Crucify it, the carnal affections cry, *Spare it, is it not a little one?* And the heart (like the City of *Iconium* about *Paul* and *Barnabas*) is divided. *Act. 14. 4. And the multitude of the City was divided, and part held with the Jews, and part with the Apostles.* So 'tis with the gracious soul; sin hath too great a potency in the carnal mind, which must be broken, or sin will never die: Get the Spirit's interest in thy heart strengthened, and sins party weakened every day.

There are seven things that have a great tendency to weaken the heart's union with sin, and withdraw its affections from it.

First, An abiding sense of the great Love of Christ towards it; that he should pity him, when pitied of none, left of all; love him, when wallowing in his blood, and altogether unlovely in himself; love him, while an enemy to God, yea to his own soul; love him so as to give himself for him; to leave his Father's glory, and take up shame, yea taste of death for him, love him, and pass by others; call him, and leave others: the serious consideration of this hath a great constraint on the gracious heart to hate sin, which Christ so hates, and in love to the soul came to destroy.

Secondly; A due apprehension of the unconceivable sufferings of the Lord Jesus, and all procured by sin: *He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; he bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows: he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; he was oppressed and afflicted, and (that which gave an extremity to all these sorrows) it pleased the Lord to bruise him, to put him to grief, and to make his soul an offering for sin:* This made the blows the heavier, that they came from a Father's hand: *Had an enemy done it,*

it might have been easier born, (though his torments were unimaginable) but mine equal, mine acquaintance, my familiar friend, Psal. 55. 12, 13. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me, Matt. 27. 46? and all this the fruit of sin: This makes a gracious soul to hate sin, that hath been so cruel to his best and only friend.

Thirdly; A believing sight of the excellency and holiness of Christ, hath a mighty power to draw off the heart from sin: when the Prophet had got a view of the Lord in his holiness, he hath presently unlovely and troublesome thoughts of sin. *Isa. 6. ver. 1. to 7. Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King the Lord of Hosts: A sight of Christ's holiness will make sin seem exceeding vile and loathsome, and the soul restless till delivered from it: 'Tis unacquaintedness with the holiness and beautiful perfections of Christ, that makes men fall in love with that deformed monster, sin: the transcendent glory of Christ is his grace; and the glory of the Saints is to be like him, Joh. 1. 14. which is obtained through the immediate views of him. 1 Joh. 3. 2. When he appears, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is: The hope of which sight, and glory, is soul-purifying now: ver. 3. And every man that hath this hope, purifieth himself, as he is pure: No sooner had the Apostles a sight of Christ's glorious grace, but the next thing was a receiving from his fullness grace for grace, Joh. 1. 14. 16.*

Fourthly; A sensible sight of the exceeding sinfulness and evil of sin will help to loosen this conjunction between the heart and sin: when once *Paul* came to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and felt the killing fruits of it in his soul, his heart presently came to be loosened from the ruling power of it. *Rom. 7. 11. 13. That which I do, I allow not; what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.* The sense of the shameful fruits of sin was influential on the believing *Romans* towards their freedom from sin, *Rom. 6. 21. 22.* Christians, get your eye more intently fixed on the cursed nature of sin; how contrary to God; how like to Devils; how filthy loathsome and abominable: look upon the certain dreadful effects of sin here, and to all eternity, if not removed; it hath brought death on the Son of God, and destruction on the Sons of Men, bondage on the creatures, a curse on everything men do and enjoy; enmity against God, alienation from God, robbing him of his glory, crossing his will, spoiling his works, grieving his spirit, hindering the soul in duty, depriving it of mercy, exposing it to judgment, necessitating it to evil, weakening his hopes, breaking his peace, opposing his grace, and endangering either the loss, or lessening of his glory; with other innumerable mischiefs, injuries, cruelty and miseries that follow the heels of it; with the great difficulty in its removal. *I say; be more in the heart-affecting consideration of these things, and you cannot choose, but with Paul, be weary of sin, loath it, and long for a separation from it, Rom. 7. 24.* How can ye love that knife that hath stabbed your dearest Friend, Father, Husband; yea, your own soul? How can you like that cloud and veil which stands between you and the Son of righteousness, and keeps these quickening warming beams from you, which would have cleared and strengthened your heart? How can you hug the fetters, kiss the walls and doors that imprison your souls in bondage, and keep you from your beloved, and from the glorious liberty of the Sons of God? what pleasure can you take in that Thief which stole your richest Jewels, and hath brought you to a morsel of bread?

5ly, Apprehension of that high dignity and honorable state to which grace hath advanced you, & those peculiar glorious privileges which you are now invested with, hath a mighty influence on a gracious heart towards the abhorring of sin, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1, 2, 3. Oh how unsuitable are works of darkness to the children of light! how unbecoming is vile raiment to them that dwell in Kings Houses: A Swine's snout to a Saint's eye; thick clay, and defiling dirt on the hands, face, and heart of the heirs of glory, and children of the Kingdom: what an unlovely sight is it to see Kings wallow in the mire as Swine; and such who enjoy the privileges of Angels, to do the work of Devils? Remember that thou art Son to a King, said one to *Antigonus*, and that will keep thee from base courses. O Christians! work in these thoughts upon the heart, and see whether there can be any room left for the works of the flesh, or affections thereof.

Sixthly; Expectations of future glory will help you to despise that abominable thing, sin: Can you rationally look for a Throne with your Beloved hereafter, and lodge in the bosom of your Idols and adulterous Lovers now? How can you think that head shall wear a Crown of glory with Christ, who is always plotting to put Crowns of Thorns on Christ's head now? To reap life everlasting then, who sow to the flesh now? Do you hope for that time when you shall be uncloth'd of sin? and can you make it your present work to put on sin, hold fast sin? how inconsistent are desires of sin, with hopes of freedom? Christians, do not deceive your souls, you cannot have sure grounds of fellowship with God hereafter, and allow the least communion between your hearts and sin now.

Seventhly, Maintained union and communion with Christ will break heart-union and fellowship with sin: As heart-union with sin will not admit of union and communion with God. *Hos.* 4. 17. *Ephraim is joined to Idols, let him alone: I will have no more to do with him; I will leave, and remove from him: So union and communion with God in Christ, will not bear union with sin.* *Hos.* 2. 2. The Lord would not say *Israel* was his Wife, until her Whoredoms were put out of her sight, and her Adulteries from between her breasts: and no sooner did she return to a believing sight of, and affectionate union with him, but she presently cries out, *What have I to do with Idols anymore,* *Hos.* 14. 8? Contraries oppose and weaken each other. *Psal.* 97. 10. *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.* *Matth.* 6. 24. *No man can serve two Masters, either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and Mammon.* Union with God is of an incorporating nature. *1 Cor.* 6. 17. *He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit, and cannot subsist without heart-separation from sin.* *2 Cor.* 6. 16, 17. *I will dwell in them, and walk in them;—wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord.* Cleaving to Christ by Faith is the best way to the relinquishment of sin. The soul that hath constant fellowship with Christ, will not care for other Lovers, *Phil.* 3. 8. That's the third Direction: Get the union between thy heart and sin broken.

Direct. 4. Fourthly, If you would mortify sin, strike at the root of it, and get the body of this death destroyed, The life of the tree lies in the root; lop off all the branches, yet if the root be sound, the tree lives, and the branches will sprout out again, *Job* 14. 7, 8, 9. But if once the root be cut off, the whole tree dies and ceases from bringing forth fruit. So 'tis with sin, if you set against this or that particular corruption, and let the body of death alone, not using

means to weaken that, you will make but little of all your endeavors; when you have quieted one lust, another rises: 'Tis but to little purpose to lade away waters out of a ship, unless you stop the leak that feeds them; while there is water in the Sea, it will be still running in. They that will cure a disease, must get the cause removed: Original sin is the source and fountain of all actual sins; as that is weakened, so will the irruption of actual sins be abated: The way to prevent the inroads and stranglings of a garrison, is to begirt the Fort, and not only keep them in, but scale and attach the strong hold that secures them. *This is the wisdom of a Christian (saith Mr. Burroughs) that when he comes to labor against any corruption, he doth not spend his time so much against this or that particular corruption, but strike at the body of corruption:—And hence is the reason that Christians in a little time grow so much, and get so much power against their corruptions, whereas others are a long time before they get any power at all.* 'Tis with a Believers heart, as with a garden overgrown with weeds; though the tops be often plucked off, while the mores and strings abide under-ground, all they do to cleanse it is labor in vain, they still spring up afresh: So is it with men's corruptions, till the root be more withered and weakened. Now to further this work:

First, Be deeply sensible of your sinful natures, as well as sinful actions: This the faithful complain mostly of, even their sinful natures. *Isa. 64. 6. We are all as an unclean thing, and our righteousnesses as filthy rags. Psal. 51. 5. Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my Mother conceive me. Rom. 7. 24. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!*

Secondly, Apply the Death of Christ by faith to the whole body of sin in you. Faith fetches virtue from a crucified Christ to dry up the bloody issue of sin, *Luke 8. 44. chap. 6. 19.* This being the appointed way of God to bring down sin. The foundation of a soul's redemption from sin is laid in the Death of Christ. *1 Pet. 2. 24. Who bare our sins for us in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, might live to righteousness.* This death to sin is the effect of Christ's dying for sin; this being the end of his Death, to redeem his people from all iniquity, *Titus 2. v. 14. Christ's Death for sin was not only a pattern to Believers, but a medicine and appointed means to destroy their sin. Rom. 6. 6. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him; that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.* 'Twas by the Cross of Christ that *Paul* was crucified to the world, and the world to him, *Gal. 6. 14.* Carry over thy old man to the Cross of Christ, and bury thy strong lusts by faith in the grave of Christ, deriving virtue thence to kill thy sin. Faith brings the soul into a fellowship with the Death of Christ, to receive the benefits and energy thereof; one of which benefits is a killing power on sin.

Thirdly, Improve Faith in the Promises. The death of sin in Believers, is part of the New Covenant, and as sure as pardon. *Micah 7. 19. He will turn again, he will have compassion, he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the Sea, Mat. 1. 21.* He shall save his people from their sins, *Rom. 6. v. 14. Deut. 30. 6.* which promises are sure to all the seed: The Lord Jesus came on purpose to perform the promises to, and in his people. *Rom. 15. 8. To redeem them from all iniquity, Titus 2. 14.* And to destroy the works of the Devil, *1 Joh. 3. 8.* And saith in these Promises is soul-cleansing, and sin-subduing: Carry over thy unruly corruptions to Christ in the Promises, and sue for justice upon them.

Fourthly, Implore the constant help of the Spirit of Grace, both to discover, oppose and destroy thy corruptions: This work is too hard for flesh and blood; nothing short of the Eternal Spirit can get a full conquest over sin, and the power and wiles of Satan in thy soul: *'Tis through the Spirit Believers come to mortify the deeds of the body, Rom. 8. 13. And by the spirit of judgment and burning, the Lord purges away the blood of Jerusalem, Isa. 4. 4. And by the Law of the Spirit of Life, we are made free from the Law of sin and death, Rom. 8. 2.* Take heed of grieving and impeding the Spirit of Holiness, by which his gracious, sanctifying influences are suspended, and thou be left to the weaknesses of thy own spirit. Be much in prayer and fervent cries for the Spirit's daily assistance in this great work.

Fifthly, Give no place to the least motions of sin, but maintain a constant war against the whole powers and body of sin: The want of preventing care, timely opposition, and constant warfare against all the corruptions of flesh and spirit, is one thing that lays gracious souls under the entanglements and prevalency of their lusts, *James. 4. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 2. Rom. 12. 9. We embrace (saith one) the desires of our temptations upon implicit faith, not examining and withstanding the first entrance of temptation, nor crushing the first motions of sin.* 'Tis easy to crush the Serpent's Egg, but dangerous conflicting with it when it becomes a Cockatrice. A rebellion may be with less strength dissipated at its first appearance, than suppressed when it hath gathered head, *Isa. 14. 29.* The Devil's first assault (saith *Chrysostom*) is violent; resist that, and his second will be weaker, and that being resisted also, he proves a coward. A Christian's wisdom and interest lies much in these two things:

First, To take the start of sin, to strike the first blow, to be in the field before it; yea to baracado up its way, and to fall in upon its quarters; to lay in provision against its very rising; to fortify the heart against the least consent to sin, by applying threatenings and promises betimes, and furnishing the heart with sovereign and scriptural antidotes against it: The neglect of this preventing care, deprives the soul of needful helps against its surprisal, and so renders it weak against its first assaults. *Arius* at first (saith *Jerome*) was but a spark, but being not suppressed betimes, he proved the incendiary of the whole Church.

Secondly, To prosecute the soul's victory over sin: Sometimes the Lord gives his people power over a lust, by a sanctified affliction, or blessed ordinance, which victory, if pursued, might tend to the total subduing of it; but usually we grow secure after such successes, and do not follow the victory, but give over too soon, as *Joash* in his-smiting on the ground, *2 Kings 13. 18, 19.* The Prophet bid him shoot the arrows of the Lord's deliverance, and smite upon the ground; and 'tis said, *He smote thrice, and stayed; and the man of God was wroth with him; and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times, then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it.* O what advantage might a Christian get if he did but follow his victory over his corruptions, and not suffer them to recruit and gather strength again! Give no rest to thy lusts, nor space for reviving; no not for a moment, but keep up thy warfare every day.

Sixthly, If you would further the death of sin, keep up the life of grace: As the life of sin weakens grace; so the life of grace keeps down and weakens sin. *Gal. 5. 16. Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.* Keep up grace, and sin will down. *As when the house of David waxed stronger, the house of Saul waxed weaker, 2 Sam. 3. 1.* 'Tis written of *Ephrem Syrus*,

that though he was a man much given to passion in his youth; yet after he entered into a strict course of life, he was never seen to be angry with any man. As you cannot get power over sin, but by the Spirit of Grace; so you cannot keep the head over sin, but by the Life of Grace: Get your graces strengthened, and you will find your corruptions weakened.

Thirdly, You must carry on Renovation in grace, and the inward work of Sanctification every day. *Ephes. 3. 23, 24. And be renewed in the spirit of your minds: And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness* After the work of Mortification, the Apostle presses Christians to this work of Renovation, or Internal Holiness; be renewed in the spirit of your minds (*i. e.*) in your minds by the Holy Spirit; the mind being put for the whole man, and internal faculties of the soul; both understanding, will, affections and conscience; all must be renewed by the Spirit, called the New Creature, *2 Cor. 5. 17.* or Workmanship of Christ transformed after his own Image in righteousness and true holiness; and renewed in knowledge, *Eph. 4. 24. Col. 3. 10.* When the soul is truly regenerated, there is the stamp or exemplar of Christ's holiness, placed in the whole soul in truth; but in weak measures at first, which must be renewed or enlarged in the soul, till it comes to the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ. Christians at the first change, are compared to new born babes, *2 Pet. 2. 2.* weak in grace, but under a natural disposition and obligations to growth and increases in this grace of God, both intensively and extensively: This is a Christian's duty by divine command, and comports with the appointment of God in order to it, *2 Pet. 3. v. 18. 1 Pet. 2. 2. Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 13.* 'Tis the way by which grace becomes glory, and is greatly necessary to perfect a soul's holiness; that so he might come to his full stature and conformity to Christ, *Ephes. 4. 16. Rom. 8. 29.* And by the increases of grace may be enabled to dispatch all his duties, bear his burdens, and bear up under his temptations, that he might be capable to enjoy all his mercies, to glorify the God of grace, and to be made meet for the enjoyment of God in glory: On all which accounts it becomes the Christian's great concern to press after larger measures of grace every day; to grow up into him in faith and love, who is the head in all things, *Ephes. 4. 15.* To grow downward in humility and self-denial; to grow extensively in every part of holiness, and greater enlargements in every grace; to wax stronger and stronger in the grace that is in Christ Jesus: *Perfecting holiness in the sight of God; and pressing more and more after the price of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus:* The want of which increases of the Spirit, doth much obscure the glory of Christ in Believers, cloud their evidences, and render them too weak for their corruptions, their growing trials and duties. Christians, content not yourselves with the truth of grace, without daily growth in grace. Improve your interest in the Resurrection of Christ, by believing for the dailing quickening of your hearts, and raising of your affections to things above, and attracting your desires and whole souls after God, grace and glory. Be much in internal soul-work, of heart searching, soul watching, divine contemplation, secret ejaculations, and soul breathings after God, and higher manifestations of his light, life and love.

Be constant in every appointment of God, public and private; of prayer, reading, hearing, holy conference, that you may get nourishment thereby administered to your souls: Get under all the dews and showers of grace for your fruitfulness.

Be spiritual as well as frequent in exercising grace under the means of Grace; without this you cannot serve God acceptably, *Heb. 12. 28.* or receive from him who is the head nourishment to your souls, but by these bands and joints of faith and love, *Col. 2. 19.* Formality eats out that sap which should make you green and flourishing: A dead, cold heart under the Word, can no more digest it to nutriment, than a dead body can concoct natural food.

Maintain hungering desires after the word of grace, and appointed means to your spiritual growth, *1 Pet. 2. 3.* Hungering after food argues a good digestion, and a sound concoction furthers nourishment: Keep up warm affection to every way of God, living on Christ for all the good and blessing of them. *Psal. 84. 5. Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are the ways of them; who passing through the Valley of Baca, make it a Well; the rain also filleth the Pools; they go from strength to strength, everyone in Zion appearing before God.* When *Jehoshaphat's* heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord, 'tis said he waxed great exceedingly, *2 Chron. 17. 6. 12.* Heart-enlargement in the ways of God is a notable help to soul-thrivings: Take this one thing more; be poor in spirit, if you would be rich in grace: Such are under the promise of being satisfied, of being guided in judgment, of increasing their joy; to such he will give grace, and revivings. *Humble souls (saith one) are empty vessels, which God will fill; are low plants, which God will make to grow: To be nothing in our own eyes, is the way to receive all good things, even grace in abundance from God; Psal. 22. 26. and 25. 9. Isa. 29. 19. Prov. 3. 34. Isa. 57. 15.*

Fourthly; To keep your evidences for Heaven fair and legible, is another part of your Salvation-work: this will abundantly comfort you under all your tribulations, quicken you to a lively dispatch of your duties, give you a humble boldness in your approaches to God; arm you against the fears of death, and administer to you an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Beware of quenching and grieving the Spirit of grace, by which its sealing-work is hindered: Take heed of laying blots upon your evidences, by any allowed iniquity in your hearts, or unpurged defilement in your hands, which will weaken your confidence in the Lord, fill you with dejection and despondency of spirit, and give your spiritual adversary great advantage over your souls, *2 Pet. 1. 10. 1 Joh. 5. 13. 2 Cor. 1. 12. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Heb. 10. 22. Job 19. 25, 26, 27. 2 Pet. 1. 11.*

Keep up your sincerity and truth in the innerman, be often looking to the principle of your actions, that it be gracious; and to your ends in everything you do, that they be pure, singly, and ultimately aiming at God, his will and glory in every duty, action and undertaking.

If you would evidence the truth of grace, you must be every day in the exercise of grace, and conscionable endeavors to live up to known duties, exercising a conscience void of offense towards God and man, not resting in any measures of grace, but going on towards perfection, and aiming at greater enlargements in your souls and graces continually.

Thirdly; Carry on all these natural, moral, and religious duties that concern others. This is the will of God, and part of your sanctification. *Matth. 5. 16. Let your light shine before men, and by your good works glorify your Father which is in Heaven. 1 Cor. 10. 32. Walk unblamable towards all*

men, giving no offense to any, lest the Gospel be blamed. Phil. 1. 10. That you may be sincere, and without offense to the day of Christ. 1 Pet. 2. 12. Having your conversation honest among those you have to do with; dealing justly with all men, rendering to every man his due; doing good to all, as opportunity serveth, Gal. 6. 10. Psal. 35. 13. and be kind to the just and unjust, seeking the salvation of sinners, mourning over them, praying for them, instructing of them; seeking by a humble, holy, and affectionate carriage to win them over to the Lord Jesus, who are not won by the word, Luke 19. 41. Psal. 51. 13. 2 Pet. 3. 1. Loving, praying for, doing good unto your greatest enemies. Virtues separated (saith *Chrysostom*) are annihilated; equity without goodness, is severity; and justice without piety, cruelty: 'Tis better to do good than to receive good. 'Twas said of Mr. *Hooker*, That he was born for the good of many, but few born for the good of him: That you love, delight in, and do good to all Saints, as Saints, that carry the image of God on them. That you make conscience of your relative duties both in your own houses, and in the house of God. Psal. 101. 2. Walking within your own houses with a perfect heart; to be Christians at home as well as abroad; showing the same spirit, zeal and affection to your Families as to others; doing your utmost to keep up the service of God in your houses, both together and asunder, morning and evening in prayer, and reading the word of God, Acts 10. 2. 9. Josh. 24. 18. Psal. 25. 10. Matth. 6. 6. That you faithfully discharge those mutual duties you owe to each other, as Husband, Wife, Parents, Children, Masters, Servants, Eph. 5. 22. to the end of chap. 6. To be meek, loving, peaceable in your words and carriages towards one another, giving that due respect as the place and relation calls for from each other: To be holy and profitable in your discourses, seeking the spiritual welfare, edification and salvation of each others souls, as of your own, Deut. 11. 19. Prov. 22. 6. ch. 23. 13. Col. 3. 12, to 16. Heb. 12. 14. Gen. 18, 19. The want of which due and Christian carriages in your houses brings up an evil report on the ways of God, rendereth the truth of your grace questionable, hinders the gracious presence of God with you, and removes his blessing from you, Eph. 4. 29. Rom. 11. 14. You whom grace hath privileged with a place and name within the walls of God's house, do stand obliged to fellowship-duties of love, care and faithfulness to each other; considering one another to provoke to love and good works, Joh. 15. 12. Heb. 10. 24. and esteem each other better than yourselves: To seek one another's good as your own, serving each other in love, Phil. 2. 3. 1 Cor. 10. 24. 33. Gal. 5. 13. To sympathize with each other in affliction, Col. 3. 12. and to be helpful to them in bearing their burdens, supplying their wants, comforting, counseling, and supporting them in all their tribulations, Heb. 13. 3. visiting the sick and imprisoned, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, warning the unruly, admonishing the offenders, bearing one another's infirmities, covering their weaknesses, avoiding whatever might offend and injure each others souls, or lessen their affections, or break the unity of spirit and bond of peace between them; but by a sweet, humble-self denying, and faithful carriage, to engage the heart to each other, praying for the whole body, and every member: To be gracious and spiritual in all your communion and converses, seeking the prosperity of Zion, rejoicing in each others graces and good, as in your own; doing all you may towards their comfort and salvation, Mat. 25. 42. Acts 20. 35. 1 Joh. 3. 17. Rom. 15. 1. and 16. 17. Lev. 19. 10. 2 Cor. 12. 20. Col. 4. 6. Phil. 2. 17, 18. Tit. 2. 12. 2 Cor. 13. 7. Psal. 15. 2. Col. 3. 9.

In your Callings, commerce and dealings with men, to be just, honest, and faithful, doing as you would be done unto, not defrauding one another, but speaking the truth in all your bargainings, and performing your promises, though to your hurt. This is a considerable part of your heavenly Trade, and that wherein the credit of Religion doth eminently lie; the pleasing and glorifying of God, the good of others, the propagation of the Gospel, the peace and salvation of your own souls, even in the faithful discharge of these natural, moral, and religious duties you owe unto others.

This is the first part of heavenly work; work of a heavenly nature as well as manner, both with respect to God, our own souls, and others.

Secondly, Another part of heavenly work is to do earthly things in an heavenly manner: Though the things of the World are of a different nature from things above, yet when rightly managed, they are subservient to them, and come within the compass of this Heavenly Trade: To which three things are needful.

- 1 To do earthly things by heavenly rules.
- 2 With heavenly hearts.
- 3 To heavenly ends.

First, Then is earthly work part of your Heavenly Trade, when you transact it by heavenly rules; every Science hath its Maxims; distinct Governments have their distinct Laws: So hath every Trade its rules, principles and instructions by which it is carried on. Earthly Traders have their rules and methods by which they manage their businesses, as may most comport with the end they propose, and the advance of their own earthly interests; and so 'tis with heavenly Traders, though they have to do with earthly things, yet they must act about them by heavenly rules.

Now there are ten rules which heavenly Merchants must observe in the management of their earthly affairs.

Rule 1. First, Be sure the matter of your employments be good, that your Callings be lawful, and the things you do be just and honest in the sight of God: Evil things can never be well done: meddle not with prohibited goods; do nothing that either in its nature, use, or by divine Law becomes evil, *2 Cor. 13. 7. Phil. 4. 8. Eph. 4. 28.* Let your Callings be lawful, of good report, and useful in your generation, not only for your own interest and advantage, but for the service and good of others: *For no man liveth to himself, Rom. 14. 7.* Such a calling as hath God for its Author being according to Scripture; and *hath God for its Teacher (saith Fenner) Isa. 28. 26. And as a man can manage with peace of conscience, and be assured his work doth please God, and he can pray for a blessing upon it; which they cannot do who set on employments that tend to nourish vice and wickedness, Rom. 13. 14.*

That your Recreations also be lawful; such as are free from scandal and temptation, used by, and with persons fearing God, and such as have a tendency to refresh the mind and body, the better disposing it to its necessary duties, being sparingly and wisely used, so as to be no

occasion of evil to others, and religiously entered on by seeking to God for a right management of it, and blessing on it. Such actions as come not under these characters, are not becoming Christians, who must give an account to God for every vain word, much more for idle actions, *Mat. 12. 36.* 'Tis part of that which will trouble souls when their sins are bearing on them; *that they have inherited lies, vanities, and things wherein is no profit, Jer. 16. 19.* Saints should be working nothing but what hath a good in it: *Working with his hands the things that are good, Ephes. 4. 28.* and which can bring some glory to God: *Whatsoever you do (of which Recreations is a part) do all to the glory of God, 1 Cor. 10, 31.* But what good to the body, foul or estate; what glory to God; what peace to conscience in the day of Christ, can be found in carnal sports, scandalous plays, cards, dice, lascivious dancings, and the like? which are the offspring of chambering and wantonness, things wherein is little praise, virtue, or good report; but rather the spots of Christianity, and bane of piety, which tend to debauch the affections, to deaden the conscience, to nourish wantonness, and seed a fleshly carnal mind, the end of which is death, *Rom. 13. 13. Phil. 4. 8. Jude v. 12. 2 Pet. 2. 18. Rom. 8. 6. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.* It is a double content to a generous and well disposed nature, when he doth good for his pleasure. *Games of hazard (saith a worthy Divine) do very much discompose the mind; they also provoke passion, and cause much disturbance in the soul for things of nothing. Games that consist in dexterity of body or mind, are much to be preferred before these: Chess will sharpen the wit, but busy it over much, and toil the spirits, instead of recreating them, which is the proper use of play: Of all gaming, the less the better; and when it disorders the passions, the least is too much. He that ventures much money at play, ventures with it not only the tranquility of his mind; but makes a certain loss of it whatever becomes of the money—Squandring away of money in play, is not the way to make friends of that unrighteous Mammon, that receive a man into everlasting habitations, but an enemy rather that will turn him out of his temporal habitation; it is the way to lose both Earth and Heaven: So then, whether we win or lose, we commit robbery; for if we rob not our adversaries, we rob ourselves, our families, and God: We may add this also; such unprofitable Recreations devour that precious treasure of irrecoverable, invaluable, yea salvation-time; and useth those hours in posting to Hell, which are too much neglected for hastening to Heaven. O how careful then should souls that profess heavenly hopes be of their earthly work, that it be such as may conduce to their accomplishment of them!*

Rule 2. Secondly, Set upon earthly things in their proper place and order: Seek first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added to you, Mat. 6. 33. Let God have the uppermost Throne in your hearts, the fore-foot in your walk, the first stroke in your work; give heavenly things the precedency, both in estimation, affection and time, as things of greatest worth, and to which you are chiefly obliged: That's the due order and method of heavenly Traders, to begin every day and work with God; serve God first, and then yourselves: Set apart some time for religious duties, before you set upon earthly employments. Men will not go abroad into unwholsom air fasting: The things of this world have a contagious breath in them: Break your fast with God every morning, before you adventure on heart-ensnaring businesses: Labor with God first for his presence with you, his wisdom to direct you, his grace and strength to help, secure and bless you in your earthly

labors. Antidote your hearts with divine cordials every morning, before you get into the Pest-house of this world, and let something of Scripture lie nearest thy soul for counsel, comfort, quickening every day: He (saith *Augustine*) that hath tasted the sweetness of Divine love, will not care for temporal sweetness. Meddle not with the thorns of this world, till you have fenced your hearts and hands by prayer, and the sword of the Spirit: 'Tis more haste than good speed to run into the world before you have spoken with God: The lawful way to earthly employments lies by Heavens gates. Christians, God will sue you for trespasses if you take any other way to your trades and employments in the world, than his prescribed way of religious duties. Besides, you have need of God's eye and hand in everything you do: You know not the snares and deaths that lie in your employments, and the dangers you are subject to in every step you go, and in everything you do: You may go forth in the morning, and never return more; some have died as *Israel* did, with meat in their mouths; others have fallen down dead in their work, broke their necks in a journey, been found dead in the way: O set on earthly work in God's way; go not about the world till you have been with God, and secured your All in his hands.

Rule 3. Thirdly, Keep your earthly business within the bounds of due time. He that hath allotted you your work, hath allotted you your time for it: it consists not with man's state, relation and interest, to be arbitrary in anything, but to walk by rule. *There is a time for everything under the Sun, Eccles. 3. 1. A time for every purpose, and for every work, verse 17. Job 7. 1.* As there is an appointed time to man on earth; so there is an appointed time to man for earthly things: He that hath set bounds to the world, hath not left worldly employments without bounds, but hath fixed men's earthly affairs within their proper season. *Psal. 104. 23. Man goeth forth to his work and to his labor until the evening.* The Psalmist acknowledges here the power and providence of God in setting bounds to his creatures; bounds to the Sun and Moon. *Verse 19. He appointed the Moon for seasons, and the Sun knoweth his going down:* Bounds to the day and night. *Verse 20. Thou makest darkness, and it is night:* he limits the labors of wild beasts and men; the beasts have their preyingtime confined to the night. *Verse 20. 22. And it is night wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth; the Sun riseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.* Men have their working-time allotted in the day: *Man goeth forth to his work and labor until the evening;* that is, to the end of their working-day, which consisted among the *Jews* of twelve hours. *John 11. 9. Are there not twelve hours in the day?* the usual time for men to dispatch their earthly work in. *The Lord would not (saith Musculus) have men's labors drawn out so far as to wear out their strength, but hath set bounds to it.* As the Lord would not have the world to take up men's hearts; so he would not have it to eat out their time, or encroach on these seasons that are due to greater concerns. God, Nature, Grace, thy own soul, and the spiritual good of others, have their claims, as well as thy earthly calings, to this little inch of this time. O consume not thy precious day on things that are temporal, and neglect thy opportunities for things eternal: do not enslave thy body beyond thy beasts, which have their times of rest; nor exhaust that strength which better things call for, upon an empty perishing world. Excessive labors beyond their due time, do argue either too much desire of these things, or too little faith in God, and are reprov'd by the Lord as the vanity and practice of them, who are not his beloved ones, *Psal. 127. 2. 'Tis lamentable to see such*

as would be thought the heirs of Heaven, so excessively taken up in enlarging their possessions on earth; engrossing all their time early and late, about their earthly affairs, leaving nothing but a few unserviceable minutes for God and their souls. O Christians! Keep the stream of your earthly affections and labors within the banks of allowed time; rob not God of his time of special service; nor nature of her time of needful rest and refreshment: nor thy own or others souls of time for their spiritual concerns, for such poor perishing things: Shew charity to thy redeemed body; make it not a drudge to thy earthly lusts: Man is too noble a creature to be a vassal to this world: 'Tis a sad spectacle to see the *Nazarites* of Heaven, like *Sampson*, with their heads shaven, and their eyes plucked out to grind in the world's mill, till they pluck down the house about their ears, *Judge*. 16. 21. How do men macerate their bodies, and starve their souls, only to help them with supplies in their passage to the grave, and all the while neglect the work of God, and their souls, leaving the relics of their wasted strength, and the world's refuse, for the service of an immortal God. This is not to follow earthly things by heavenly Rule.

Rule 4. Fourthly, Be diligent in the use of your working time: take heed you waste it not upon impertinencies, or by needless diversions, or by idleness, and unfaithfulness in your work: this is a sin against both Law and Gospel, which requires diligence and faithfulness in men's earthly callings: Labor and calling-work was man's duty before his fall. *Gen. 2. 15, The Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it:* And after the fall, painful labor was enjoin'd and inflicted as a punishment of his sin. *Gen. 3. 19, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, until thou return to the ground.* This duty of bodily labor in men's Callings, is of equal sanction and regard with the duties of God's Worship, being inserted in a positive Law, and as that which is necessary to the sanctifying of God in Sabbaths. *Exod. 29. 9, 10, Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work, but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work: The injunction of working in six days (saith Mayer) is given in the same commanding terms in the Original, that the injunction of not working in the seventh is: and the same reason is given for both: the one is taken from God's resting on the seventh day: and the other from his working the six days:* So that not to labor faithfully in thy Calling the six days, is a breach of the fourth command, as well as the working on the Sabbath-day: Not as if the six days labor were to exclude all religious Worship of God on either of these days when the Lord calls to it by extraordinary Providences, as to mourning or rejoicing, or by ordinary tenders of Gospel-mercy, in Week-day Lectures, or the like; for this would cross his other commands, *Preaching in season and out of season, and laboring for the bread that endures to eternal life:* This diligent labor doth not exclude private worship every day, and public worship on week-days; so far as it consists with faithfulness in men's Callings, for which time must be redeemed, *Eph. 5. 16.* but it requires diligent attendance on men's Callings, on the week-days (as opposed to sloth and sinful waste of time) without which God is not duly served on the Sabbath: This diligence in men's Callings is also required in the Gospel, *1 Thess. 3. 10.* Idleness is a Gospel-scandal, and renders Christians worthy to be abstained from, as not obeying the Word of God; and such must not eat, *1 Thess. 4. 11.* such are unprofitable servants, who improve not their talents for God, and the good of others, *Matth. 25. 30.* and

are worse than Infidels, who do not by diligence in their Calling provide for their own, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Rule 5. Fifthly, while your hands are about the world, set a guard about your hearts: The Believers heart is Christ's royal Fort, secure that, and all is safe: *If riches increase, set not your hearts upon them*, Psal. 62. 10. 'tis the Nature of earthly things, like a Malignant Disease, to get to the heart, O how hard is it to meddle with these, and the heart not become earthy too! when a gracious Soul hath been with God, and got his heart warmed, quickened, and drawn out to things above; no sooner doth he return to the world, but all is gone again: such dangerous damps doth this earth send unto heavenly hearts: secure thy heart with God every day, make a new surrender of it to him, before thou get into the snares of thy earthly business: Set a vigilant watch upon thy heart every moment, lest the things of the world steal in and take it captive.

Rule 6. Sixthly, Attend your earthly affairs with a calm and quiet spirit, whatever occurrence you meet with in the world; let your spirits be composed and fixed on God: wonder not at changes in an unsteddy world, which is only constant in inconstancy. *Here have we no continuing City*, Heb. 13. 14. All things here are moving, ascending or descending: Things below are compared to the Moon, Rev. 12. 1. which is never at a stay, but hath its constant changes; and like the Sea that ebbs and flows every day; and as the fountain of the Sun, which *Pliny* writes of, that the waters are extreme cold and sweet at noon, but boiling hot and bitter at midnight: So mutable are the comforts of this world, then going when they seem most likely to stay. Man's condition in this world at the best, is like the mountain *Potosi*, over which there always hangs a cloud even in the clearest day. And as 'tis written of a Meer or Salt Marsh in Scotland, called *Pochlowland*, where there are tempestuous waves raging without wind, yea in the greatest calm. Christians, be not troubled at the tides you see in these waters of *Marah*. *Riches make themselves wings and fly away*, Prov. 23. 5. Let none of these lower things trouble you when gone, which cannot content you when present: but one moment of time can make them cease to be yours. *There is but one days difference* (saith *Seneca*, upon the burning of a City) *between a great City, and no City*: So there may be but one day, nay but one hour, between a Father, and no Father; a Husband, and no Husband; a man of pleasure, and a man of sorrows; a rich man, and a poor man. Set not that at your hearts which should be at your heels: Men do not use to sigh, look pale, and cry, when servants leave them: Earthly things are no more; they are given you as handmaids to wait on you, not as a Spouse to lie in your bosoms; as servants that come and go, not as children that abide in the house forever. When thou hast lost an earthly comfort, say, A servant is gone from me today. Keep up a contentation of mind with the portion God gives you here. Heb. 13. 5. *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with those things that you have*: Let them suffice you, as 'tis in the Greek; count them enough. If an *Esau* can be satisfied with his crumbs, how much more should a *Jacob* with the children's bread *What this and Heaven too!* (saith one.) A little of the world, and much of Heaven, will well agree. I have enough, and enough, and enough, said precious Mr. *Ball*, who yet was very low in the world. When the Earl of *Leicester* offered Mr. *Cartwright* the Provostship of *Eaton College*, saying, 'twas an hundred pound more than enough, he answered, the hundred pound more than enough was enough for him. Psal. 37. 16.

A little that the righteous hath, is better than the revenues of the wicked. There are two diminutives in the Original (a little little of the righteous man's) let it be never so 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 little, with righteousness, it weight down all the abundance of the worldly man's interest; be it more or less, it is enough. O thrice fools are we, like new born Princes weeping in the cradle, knowing not that there is a Kingdom before them, *Rutherford*. I have often thought on that providence concerning *Israel* in the wilderness. *Exod. 16. 8. He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little, had no lack.* Christian, why so troubled about thy proportion of these things of the footstool? as if your Father knew not what you wanted, or cared not for you, or could not maintain you: You shall have enough to carry you to your graves, and you can absolutely need no more. *And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not, for behold I will bring evil upon all flesh, but thy life will I give thee as a prey in all places whither thou goest, Jer. 45. 4, 5.* You know not what God is doing in the world: Have you but little now? you may shortly have less: Be content with what you have: A little in *Bethel*, if it be but a pillow of stones, with bread and water, is better than the rich Plains of *Sodom*: A piece of blest bread in *Immanuel's* Land, is sweeter, and will go farther than all the Garlic and Flesh-pots of *Egypt*. than a great deal of unsanctified comforts: A small portion of the world, with soul-advantage, is better than a great estate with spiritual losses and temptations. God can multiply a few loaves; make the barrel of meal, and cruse of oil, to hold out, and your clothes not to wax old, rather than you shall want enough to carry you through your wilderness, if you will be believing and obedient. Be contented with the talent God gives you to trade upon: Have others more than you? envy them not; they have the more to reckon for; and it may be they need more, or they can bear more than you. *That* (saith one) *would sink a small vessel which is but an ordinary burden to a great ship.* Some can better manage a large estate with less trouble and temptation than others: Possibly that would puff up thy heart with pride, and catch thy feet in snares that never stirs another's affections, to whom God hath given a braver spirit, or greater mortifiedness to this world. Subscribe to God's wisdom and pleasure, believe his promises, wonder at his mercy, be thankful for what you have above many; see your All in God, and hope to be shortly with him; and you cannot but be content with your allowance in the world.

Rule 7. Seventhly, Follow your duty, but cast your care on God, abide in your callings, but live above them. *1 Pet. 5. 17. Casting all your care on God, for he careth for you.* Depend not on your wisdom, labor or success in your employments, but upon the promise, love and care of God for you: If the Lord blesseth your substance, do not you bless yourselves in it: See an emptiness in all your abundance, and shortness in these to answer your many wants. God can soon make a hole in your money-bags, blow on your increase, turn your prosperity into contempt, and make your expected comforts as the dream of a night vision. Live not on large barns, but on the full breasts of promises, for the good of what you do enjoy, or for the supply of what you want. The poor Christian hath the keeping of his purse in his Father's hand, the rich in his own hand. If sight fail, live by faith: Faith assures you of the good issue of all difficulties in your way, and gets advantage from the worst condition, and sweetness to mingle with every bitter providence you meet with. It may be thou hast a great family, and little to live on; liest in debt, and hast nothing to pay it; hadst a little the other day, but the

Caterpillar and the Cankerworm hath devoured it; this loss, and the other stroke hath wasted it. In this case thy duty is to live on God by faith, for a sanctified fruit of his hand upon thee, and for making up this lack by his abundance: When thou canst see no way out of thy perplexing trouble, let thine eye be unto God for help, *2 Chron. 20. 12. 2 Chron. 25. 8.* Go not out of God's way for relief: He that wounds must heal; he only that casteth down can raise up, *Deut. 32. 30.* Neither faint thou in the day of adversity, or way of thy duty, *Prov. 24. 10. Prov. 16. 3.* but commit thy way to the Lord, and he will bring it to pass, *Psal. 37. 5. Mat. 6. v. 25. 1 Cor. 7. 32. Phil. 4. 6.* Take heed of carking cares, and fretful vexings; these cannot lessen thy trouble, but will greaten thy sins; a provident care is thy duty, but a distrustful vexing care, both thy sin and affliction.

Rule 8. Eighthly, In all your labors pray for a blessing: If you would live well, you must beg as well as work; add duty to thy diligence, prayer to thy provident care, calling on God, to thy calling in the world: As every creature, so every condition and work is sanctified by the word and prayer, *1 Tim. 4. 15.* In every undertaking seek to God for counsel. *Prov. 3. 6. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.* Christians should not set upon the smallest matters without enquiring the will of God; not to go to this or that place, to buy or sell to do this or that work without seeking to God for direction, *Jam. 4. 13, 14, 15. Our journeys* (saith one) *must not be undertaken without asking God's leave,* *Dr. Mant. on Jam.* This would evidence a life of dependence on God, and bring all thy affairs under divine care and blessing; *Abraham's* servant begins his journey with prayer, *Gen. 24. 12. 27.* and concluded it with praise, *Gen. 28. 20.* And so *Jacob; Israel's* folly in concluding with the *Gibeonites* contrary to the command of God, was laid on their not asking counsel of God. *Josh. 9. 14. The men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord.* O the snares and disadvantages men are exposed to in their earthly concerns, for not taking counsel from God, and engaging his hand and blessing with them: Prayer will further your work, sweeten your pains and difficulties in it, and secure the comfort and good of it: When you want mercy, seek God for it; when you receive mercy, see God in it, and return praise to God for it.

Rule 9. Ninthly, Though you live in the World, yet be dead to the World: Heavenborn souls, though in the World, yet are not of the World, but chosen out of it, *Joh. 15. 19.* and crucified to it. *Gal. 6. 14. God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the World is crucified to me, and I unto the World.* This crucifiedness to the World (saith *Pareus*) signifies the contempt and despising of this World; he intimates hereby, that the World with all its scorn, pride, pomp and glory are despised by him, as a nothing, empty, dead thing. A soul crucified to the World sees nothing lovely and desirable in this World but God, his Word and Works: there's nothing in earthly things that can be taking with spiritual hearts, if God be not enjoyed in them: all the glory of the World is no more to them than a dead carcass, if the love of God breath not through it on their hearts; nay the very Garden of the Lord is a Wilderness to them, if the Rose of *Sharon* be not in it. A mortified Saint wonders that a rational immortal Soul can see such worth in riches, pleasures, honors, and poor perishing things of this life, which to him are nothing; he can easily part with all at the Lord's bidding. And he feels no such evil neither in the bad things of this World, as to make men startle at them; wants, losses, reproaches, torments for Christ, lose their frightfulness to them whose

hearts love to the Lord Jesus hath reconciled unto the bitterest affliction that can befall them for his sake. *If Christ stand, and do not perish, (saith Luther) what matter is it if Wife and Children perish?* If liberty, estate, life and all go, so he stay: Such should thy heart be in pursuit of these things, as one that is dead to the World, and sits loose from all its glory, and above all its threatenings; content to have, or not to have; to use, or want; to enjoy, or be denied, or deprived of it, as God pleaseth.

Rule 10. Lastly, Do all your work within the view of death, judgment, and eternity: transact the employments of every day, as dying persons, who are leaving this World, and liable to a remove every moment: How would frequent and serious thoughts of a near approaching end wonderfully check men's greedy pursuits of this World, and help to keep their actions in a consistency with their accounts. King *Philip* would have it proclaim'd before him every morning, *Remember that thou art mortal:* And when falling upon the Sand he afterward saw the print of his body, said, *O how little a parcel of earth will hold us when we are dead, who ambitiously seek after the World while we are living.* When *Severus* was old, he called for an Urn or Pitcher in which the ashes of a dead person were put, and looking a while on it, said, *Wilt thou contain that man whom the whole World cannot contain?* Alas, what will the whole World be to thee when thou comest to die? let it seem no more to thee now, who art dying every day: do everything as strangers and pilgrims here, *Heb. 11. 9. 13.* and as if you heard a voice every day saying, *Awake, and come to judgment:* *Jerome* thought whatever he did, he still heard that voice; *Surgite mortui, & venite ad judicium;* Arise ye dead, and come to judgment. When you are travelling to this Market, and the other Fair; think, *Sure I am journeying to the grave, and I know not what dust I shall shortly be shovell'd into:* when you are about your work, think, *I am hastening to eternity, and shortly these hands must rot in the grave:* When you promise yourselves great things, as the fruit of your labors, and hope for this gain and the other comfort, say, *Death may come between me and my enjoyments, and crop off the hopes of all my labors.* What can be great to him that accounts the World nothing? or long to him that counts his life but a span? *Mr. Dod,* When thou findest thy heart running out too greedily after this World, ready to lie, cheat, oppress, undermine others to greaten thy interest: think on this; *For all these things God will bring thee to judgment, and render to thee according to all thy works.*

Secondly, Then do you your earthly work in an heavenly manner, when you do it with an heavenly heart: As is the heart, so is the action in God's account: the Lord was much pleased that it was in *David's* heart to build him an House, though he never did it, *1 Kin. 8. 18.* and displeased with all that *Israel* did in his service, *because their heart was not right with him, Psal. 78. 37.* *Israel* did many good works, *they sought him, they returned and inquired early after God, they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer, ver. 34, 35.* but all this was nothing in God's esteem, because their heart was not upright in it; they had an earthly, carnal, selfish, backsliding heart in all they did. If thy heart be heavenly, though thy work be earthly, yet it puts an excellency on it; but if thy work be heavenly, and thy heart earthly, God doth reject and despise it: the heart is the root of every action, and if the root be good, the fruit will be good also, *Mat. 12. 33. Rom. 11. 16.* If the fountain be sweet, the streams will be sweet also; and if thy heart be heavenly, thy work is heavenly: A heavenly heart, like the Bee, turns all it doth to heavenly uses: when the Lord Jesus had put his hand upon the

Spouses heart, and left some myrrh upon her bowels, presently her hands dropped myrrh, and her fingers sweet smelling myrrh, *Cant.* 5. 4, 5. A heavenly heart perfumes thy earthly work, and makes it wonderfully taking with the heart of Christ.

Quest. How might I know when my heart is heavenly in my earthly work?

Sol. First, A heavenly heart is a heart enlightened to see heavenly things; a heart beam'd over with heavenly light, to discern things invisible: An earthly heart is a dark heart, it sees nothing in God, his Word and Works, so as to draw up his heart to Heaven: an earthly heart sees nothing but earth in heavenly things; and an heavenly heart sees Heaven in earthly things. The Patriarchs saw the heavenly City in their earthly Country, *Heb.* 11. 13, 14, 16. They saw the promises (that is, the things promised) afar off, and confessed that they were strangers on earth, they sought a Country, desired a better Country, that is an heavenly; and all that as the product of their heavenly sight, they saw heavenly things in earthly: *Abraham* had an heavenly eye to see Christ's day, *Joh.* 8. 5, 6. and *Moses* a heavenly eye to see him who is invisible, *Heb.* 11. 27. A heavenly heart doth not only see heavenly things, but sees an infinite worth and excellency in them: it sees them to be the best things; it sees a greater glory and desirableness in things above, in one glance of his eye, in one day within his Courts, in one hours communion with him, than in all the World besides: *Mary* saw more advantage in sitting at Christ's feet, than in the many things *Martha's* heart was taken up about, *Luke* 10. 41, 42. *Cursed be that man* (saith the noble Marquess *Galeacius*) *that accounts not one hours communion with Christ above all the World.*

Secondly, A heavenly heart is a heart that savors heavenly things, *Rom.* 8. 5. Nothing goes down so sweet with a heavenly heart as heavenly things, *everything rejoices in its like:* An earthly heart delights in earthly things; the Merchant in his Trade, the Husbandman in his Field, Houses, Husbandry, and fruits of the earth; the voluptuous man in his pleasures; as he that sold his City for a draught of water; crying out when he had done, O that for so short a pleasure, of a King I should be made a Slave! The proud man in his greatness, *Is not this great Babylon that I have built, for the house of the Kingdom?* *Dan.* 4. 30. So doth the heavenly heart relish greatest sweetness in heavenly things: *How sweet are thy words to my taste? yea sweeter than honey to my mouth,* *Psal.* 119. 103. *His fruit was sweet to my taste; his mouth is most sweet,* *Cant.* 2. 3. and 5. 16. *My meditation of him shall be sweet,* *Psal.* 104. 34. *We took sweet counsel together,* *Psal.* 55. 14. *We talked of the mysteries of godliness* (saith *Ainsworth*) *of the exercises of Religion;* (saith another) which I suppose the Prophet meaneth by going into the House of God, as companions consulting (as it were) how they might prepare themselves to his service.

Thirdly, A heavenly heart is a heart that longs and desires after heavenly things: *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none that I can desire on Earth in comparison of thee,* *Psal.* 73. 25. *When shall I come and appear before God? My soul thirsteth for thee; my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land where no water is, to see thy power and glory, as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary,* *Psal.* 43. 2. *Psal.* 63. 1, 2. *My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God,* *Psal.* 84. 2. Desires are the natural motions of the heart, and the best character, and truest lineaments (saith one (y))that can be drawn of the minds

of men. Practices may be overrul'd by ends; but desires are always genuine and natural: Hence good men have had most confidence in approving themselves to God, by their affections, and the inward longings of their souls after him, as being the purest and most unfeigned issues of love, and such as have least proximity and danger from foreign and secular ends. It is an unquestionable evidence of souls risen with Christ, and receiving the stamp of Heaven on the heart, to set their affections on things above: Heavenly desires are the natural breathings of a gracious heart, which can as well live without them, as a man without breathing; a cessation of spiritual desires, argues soul-swooning, or spiritual death.

Fourthly, A heavenly heart is known by its heavenly thoughts; it will be much thinking of heavenly things: As is the heart, so are the thoughts usually. *For as he thinketh, so is he, Prov. 23. 7.* The thoughts are the first-born of the heart, and strength of the soul, and as natural issues of the mind, as beams are of the Sun; if the heart be evil, the thoughts will be evil; if the heart be good, the thoughts will ordinarily be good, *Matth. 15. 19.* further than corruptions or temptations hinder, *Jer. 4. v. 14.* If your hearts be heavenly, so will your designed, habitual and well-pleasing thoughts be. *They that are spiritual, will mind the things of the Spirit, Rom. 8. 5.* Try your hearts by your ordinary, quiet and delightful thoughts: Are vain, earthly thoughts your trouble, and holy thoughts your delight?

Fifthly, A heavenly heart will be full of heavenly projects; such a heart will be driving designs for Heaven; his consultations, enquiries and studies, will be how to carry on and promote heavenly interests. *Titus 3. 8. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works:* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , *cum ration & concilio exerceri;* the word is, might study, devise, and beat their brains how they might do good: That's the temper of earthly hearts also; they will be plotting and contriving ways and means how to advance earthly interests. *Phil. 3. 19. Who mind earthly things,* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , *Zanchi,* whose thoughts are in the earth (as the Syriac renders it,) that is, they are wholly taken up about earthly things: So 'tis with a heavenly heart, it is taken up about the things of Heaven; it lays holy plots, how to keep down the world and corruption in the soul, and how to make the most of all it hath and doth for Heaven, to secure his interest, and enlarge his possession above: So far as the heart is heavenly, so far is it designing for Heaven.

Sixthly, A heavenly heart is acted and influenced by heavenly motives and arguments; there is nothing sways more with a heavenly spirit than reasons drawn from heavenly things, heavenly pleasures, heavenly honors, heavenly treasures will do more with a heavenly heart than any arguments drawn from things of this life. The nature of the heart is much known by the motives that are most potent with it: A carnal heart is biased by carnal things: *Who will show us any good? Psal. 4. 6.* But a spiritual heart with spiritual things: *Lord lift up thou the light of thy countenance upon us: Lot will choose the plains of Sodom; but Abraham will prefer walks with God, though in a Wilderness. David values his lot, by what it hath of God in it, and counts that most pleasant and rich which helps him to most of God, Psal. 16. 5, 6.* Tell an heavenly heart how he may be rich, great and comfortable in the World, and it signifies nothing: but tell him how he may pitch his Tent nearest to the Ark and enjoy most of God,

how he may keep peace and holiness within, and order his conversation aright to please God, and you will sooner win such a heart, than by all the choicest proposals of this life. *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?* Psal. 119. 9. *Who shall abide in thy tabernacle?* Psal. 15. 1. *Who will rise up for me against evil doers?* Psal. 94. 16. *How might I do to get a better heart? to be more rich towards God? Oh that one would give me drink of the waters of the Well of Bethlehem!* 2 Sam. 23. 15. *How might I do for some fore-tastes of the rivers of pleasure at the right-hand of God? and to eat of the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God,* Rev. 2. 7. These are the most taking things with an heavenly soul; his choice, his delights and transcendent interests lie on the other side of this World, even within the borders of *Immanuel's Land*.

Seventhly, A heavenly heart is a heart that lives upon heavenly things, and is maintained by provisions fetched from Heaven, nourished up in the words of Faith, 1 Tim. 4. 6. desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby, 1 Pet. 2. 3. My meat and drink is to do the will of him that sent me, Joh. 4. 34. Earthly hearts are maintained by earthly comforts; like the Crows, they live on carrion; but heavenly hearts live upon heavenly things, they feed on the finest Wheat; and, like the *Indian Bird, Ule malim, that lives upon the dew, and of the juice of Flowers and Roses;* heavenly souls prosper best on heavenly pulse and water: *Give me understanding and I shall live,* Psal. 119. 144.

Eighthly, A heavenly heart walks by heavenly Rules; 'tis led by the Spirit of God, Rom. 8. 14. All the threatenings of men cannot upon choice bow him from his path-way of duty, Dan. 6. 10. nor the reason or allurements of men draw him with full consent into the way of sin, ch. 3. 18. Whatever comes of it he is at a point to keep the commands of God, Psal. 119. 106. It chooses to be governed by heavenly Laws. *And we will walk in his paths,* Isa. 2. 3. *As for me and my house we will serve the Lrrd,* Josh. 24. 15. Such a soul is easily persuaded by the evidence of truth; and will hear what the Spirit says: *A little child shall lead him,* Isa. 61. 6.

Thirdly, Then are earthly things done in an heavenly manner, when done to heavenly ends and purposes; to obey, please and honor God; when a person can approve his heart to an allseeing eye, that the great and chief end for which he takes up this or that calling, sets on any employment, is in subordinacy to these great ends, not to please men, to gratify his own lusts, to grow great in the world, to enjoy pleasure, ease, reputation, and interest here, but out of obedience to the Maker, Redeemer and Governor of this world, that God in all things might have his will and glory, 1 Pet. 4. 11. This is the ultimate end of all God's works, and should be of man's also. All employments run out of their proper channel, if they tend not to this Ocean of divine glory: As God is the *Alpha*, so he must be the *Omega* of every action; the first cause must be the last end. God hath made all things for himself, *Prov. 16. 4. To him belongs the issues*(as from death, so) *of life,* Psal. 68. 20. Nothing is further good, than it answers God's end; earthly ends spoil heavenly work, and heavenly ends puts an excellency on earthly work. Christians, be careful of your ends in all you do: 'Tis not enough to do things that are right, if you are not upright in them: That's unsanctified work which hath not holy aims, and God for its last end. To follow your callings, that you might live honestly in the sight of men; that you might provide for your own, and have a competency in the world to carry you comfortably through it, is lawful, as subordinate secondary ends, but not

as your chief and last end, to which all your actions must be directed; that must be singly and supremely the pleasing and honoring of God as your highest end.

Fifthly, Another part of this Heavenly Trade is driven on & maintained in heavenly thoughts: Thoughts are the embryo and conception of actions, which also come under the cognizance and government of Religion. 'Tis a common, but carnal principle, and false assertion, that *thoughts are free*: They are free indeed from the inspection of men, but not from the eye and judgment of God, who searcheth the hearts, and weigheth the spirits, *Jer. 17. 10.* and will bring every secret thing into judgment, *Eccles. 12. 14.* Solomon tells us, *The thoughts of foolishness is sin, Prov. 16. 2. Prov. 24. 9.* And Peter tells us, that the thoughts of the heart need forgiveness, *Acts 8. 22.* not only sinful actions, but sinful thoughts are forbidden, *Deut. 15. 9.* and the very thoughts as well as words and lives of Christians, are to be brought under the obedience of Christ, *2 Cor. 10. 5.* The Idea and platform of every considerate action, is first drawn in the mind and inward thoughts: No work is rightly done that wants praevious thoughts and consideration. *Prov. 16. 9. A man's heart deviseth his way;* he weighs, considers and deliberates about the way he is to go in, and the course of life he is to drive; he counts the time, cost, and everything that must go to his work. *Prov. 31. 16. She considereth a field and buyeth it.* So 'tis in this Heavenly Trade; there must be devising of the way, serious thoughts and considerations, how to manage it to best advantage; how to get in, and put off wisdom's goods; how to strengthen grace, to dispatch duty, to obtain the favor of God, and dwell in his presence; how to improve mercy, and how to ensure glory. The Heavenly Trade can never be carried on without heavenly thoughts. Inward working thoughts about God and godliness, are of wonderful use to further a holy life: They warm and cheer the heart under troubles, *Psal. 94. 19.* engage and fix it on God, and render his presence desirable: Heavenly thoughts fire the heart, and inflame it to holy actions, *Psal. 139. 17. Psal. 39. 3.* and are a choice preservative against sin, *Psal. 4. 4.* 'Tis greatly useful to increase knowledge, and attain to deep wisdom and understanding. *Dan. 14. 4. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase:* That is, their thoughts shall be working on truth, busily employed to find out the meaning of the word, *looking on one side, and on the other side* (saith Mr. Fenner) and by this means shall come to a great thriving in knowledge. Men will never be religious to purpose, or be their crafts-masters in this Heavenly Trade, till they be more spiritual and heavenly in their thoughts. Christians, make conscience of your thoughts; *they must come to judgment;* wash your hearts from whence they come, *Jer. 4. 14.* and watch your thoughts whither they go; check your thoughts when they begin to wander; quicken your thoughts when flat; fix your thoughts when floating; spiritualize them when carnal; exercise them when slothful; set them on their proper and profitable objects, and hold them to their work in divine and heavenly meditation every day, which is part of your Heavenly Trade, and hath a mighty tendency to soul-enriching, *Psal. 4. 4. Psal. 63. 4. Psal. 104. 34. Gen. 24. 63. Psal. 1. 2. Psal. 77. 12. Psal. 139. 8.*

Meditation is a calling in the thoughts from its stragglings and undue employments, fixing them on, and holding them to their peculiar work: 'Tis the travel of the mind in the search of some spiritual good, from such things as duty and providence lay before it; it weighs things and actions in the balance of truth; it turns things up-side down, and looks on both

sides, and through them, that it may take a right estimate of them: 'Tis the running to and fro of the cogitations to increase knowledge, *Dan. 12. 4.* Meditation sifts things and truths, to divide the flower from the bran, and truth from errors; it helps to a clearer and more sensible view of truth and excellency; with the Chymist, it extracts the spirits and quintessence of things; it warms the heart, and fires the affections, raises desires, engages the will, enlightens and enlivens the conscience, and helps to feed the soul on divine truths, to feast it with divine love; it draws nourishment from ordinances, sweetness from promises, instructions from the creature, and good from providences. Without Meditation a person cannot receive the good that's offered to him, or do the good that is required of him. The Word preached doth not profit hearers, for want of Meditation to digest it; threatenings, promises, counsels, encouragements, do not affect the soul, or effect their errand and message, for want of a serious and settled consideration of them. O what profit might Christians get to their souls, were more time spent every day in right Meditation! Believer, charge thy heart with this duty of daily Meditation, which is as needful as Prayer, Reading, and any acts of holiness, and allow some time constantly each day for this holy exercise of thy serious thoughts and contemplations. To meditate on God, his Word and Works; on the Soul, its being, immortality, duties, evils, and interests; on the the World, its vanity and emptiness; on Sin, its nature and issues; on Holiness, its excellency and blessed advantages; on Death, Judgment and Eternity, with whatever might yield instruction and profit: Urge thy conscience with the command of God, the practice of the Saints, the great necessity, and many advantages of this duty; consider the great and usual averseness of thy heart to it, which doth manifestly bespeak its spirituality and excellency; for the more nature is indisposed to a duty, the more of God is usually in such a duty: think also of thy manifold losses and disadvantages thou hast sustained by thy neglect of it, and pray hard for the spirit to help thy soul in the due performance of it; which hints I can only leave with thee without further enlargement, lest it should swell this Volume beyond its designed bounds.

Sixthly, If you would drive on this heavenly Trade, you must be keeping up heavenly converses every day, and upon every occasion: much of earthly Trades is carried on by earthly discourses, this way they drive bargains, and barter away goods: a great many words oftentimes go to chaffering, buying and selling: and so is it in this heavenly Trade; Religion is much advanced by a spiritual improvement of men's talk and converses; this way did the searers of God keep alive Religion in evil times, when other helps were wanting, *Mal. 3. 16.* *Prov. 10. 21.* By this souls come to be fed and nourished in their holy Faith, *1 Tim. 4. 6.* A great deal of good or hurt comes by men's discourses. O the mischief Christians do to each other by their vain, carnal and earthly communications when they come together! *Evil communications corrupt good manners, 1 Cor. 15. 33.* *Whose word doth eat as doth a canker, 2 Tim. 2. 17.* This way does Satan put off much of his wares, even by Wisdom's Merchants, making them to weaken, cool, deaden, and corrupt one another's spirits, stir up, feed and strengthen each others corruptions, become temptations and provocations to one another to sin, by their sinful corruptions: 'Tis sad to think how the work of God ceases, and the work of Satan prospers this way: Persons come warm sometimes from a Sermon, and are soon cool'd by impertinent and vain discourses; come from secret duty, when their hearts are quickened,

and raised, and presently deadened again by spirit-quenching discourses. O how many labors of the Saints and Servants of Christ, and how many strivings of the Spirit are overturned, and come to nothing by vain and rotten discourses! no wonder the Apostle tells us, *The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell, Jam. 3. 6.* Through the organ of an unsanctified tongue doth Satan shoot his fire-balls of temptation into the hearts of hearers: are you afraid of that fire which burns down your houses? beware of that fire that burns down souls to hell. 'Tis no small part of a Christian's wisdom to speak a word in season, and to order (as his conversation so) his converses to edification: When the Apostle presses the *Ephesians* to wisdom, *Eph. 5. 17.* the next thing he advises to is holy conference, *ver. 19.* by men's language are they known of what Country they are; so are persons discovered, whether Citizens of Heaven, or the World, by their ordinary and desired language. 'Tis said of *Augustine*, he went not so willingly to a feast, as to a conference to reduce any that erred. *He that is of the Earth, is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from Heaven is above all; and what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth, Joh. 3. 31.* He will be speaking of heavenly things, which he learnt of God: *A good man out of the abundance of his heart bringeth out good things; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh:* The tongue is but the index and bucket of the heart, that tells men what things are within, and draws out of those deeps to others; men use to find out what metals are hid in the earth by the color of the sand which the waters wash away from the mountains: if the streams be low, the spring is weak; an empty heart yields empty discourses; *By your words you shall be justified, or condemned: The tongue of the just is as choice silver, Prov. 10. 20.* in that it is enriching to those that are near it. *The tongue of the wise is health, Prov. 12. 18.* It sendeth out sound and wholesome words to the strengthening of hearers: 'tis said of the Spouse, *that her lips did drop as the honey-comb, honey and milk are under her tongue, Cant. 4. 11. And the roof of her mouth like the best Wine that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak, Cant. 7. 9.* This doubtless is one reason of the little thrivings of Christians in communion this day, 'tis from their barren and carnal communications; this starves Religion both in thy own soul, and in those thou conversest with; 'tis not maintained by gracious converses, and soul-edifying discourses. Christians, lay this to heart; how can you bear the charge of all that decay in godliness this day upon your non-improvement of this part of your heavenly Trade?

Lastly, Then do you carry on the heavenly Trade, when you improve everything to heavenly advantages, getting good from everything you meet with, do, or enjoy. 'Tis so in earthly Trades, all men seek their gain from their quarters, *Isa. 56. 11.* endeavor to turn everything to some profit: And so should heavenly Traders be getting some spiritual good from everything that comes under their hand, and in their way, if ever they intend to thrive: this comports with the great design of God in all his administrations to his people, which is to do them good. *Who fed thee in the Wilderness with Manna, which thy Fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at the latter end, Deut. 8. 16.* To this end are his providences directed: *The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him, Ezra 8. 22.* And this leads to the accomplishment of the promises towards Believers: *I will set mine eyes upon them for good, Jer. 24. 6. I will not turn away from them to do them good, Jer. 32. 40.*

All their occurrences are brought under a promise of working for good. *All things*, the best and worst things of providence, *shall work for good to them that love God, Rom. 8. 28.* And why is this? but that gracious souls should be expecting good from everything, every affliction, as well as mercy, that doth befall them; and be comporting in all their capacities with this design of God, by an improvement of all, to this great end of souladvantage: *What more good, O Lord?* was the usual saying of a godly man, when the Lord brought any new affliction upon him, with which he was much exercised, and from which he ever got some spiritual advantage.

For this end are gracious souls made capable to use their mercies, to bear and improve their afflictions to some spiritual good; they have a principle of grace planted in their hearts, and of divine light into their minds; and have received rules and instructions of purpose, that they might be able to reach this end: They are made men of wisdom for this end, that they might hear God in affliction, *Mic. 6. 9.* and see God in mercies; and are skilled in divine Chymistry, that they might extract the spirit of providences, and good of every condition, duty and mercy. 'Twas said of pious Mr. *Dod*, that he used to turn Earth into Heaven by a wise and spiritual improvement of all earthly affairs. A blessed metamorphosis! and an argument of excellent skill and high attainment in this heavenly Trade, to turn Copper and Brass into Gold, and to convert everything, the worst things to some good. This (Christians) is your privilege, duty and interest, so to manage every affair, condition, occurrence and experience, as to help on your soul-enrichings.

There are nine things especially which Christians should be careful to manage to some soul-advantage, to be getting good from them, to the furtherance of their instruction, meditation, mortification to sin, the world, and self; to the strengthening of their graces, raising their affections, quickening to duty, preparation for death, and every trial in the way to it; and for furthering their meetness for glory.

First, Privileges are one thing which Believers should be getting good from, to these great and noble ends of spiritual good. Every heavenly Trader hath some privileges which may afford soul-profit.

- There are *Natural* Privileges.
- There are *Providential* Privileges.
- There are *Spiritual* Privileges.

All which may contribute some profit to the improvers of them; Parts, Youth, Health, Strength, are part of Nature's treasure, and to be husbanded to the use and service of the soul: These are some of those talents the great Housholder gives to his Family, (though in different measures) for improvement, and singular mercies they are, if well used to the Donor's ends and directions. A humble use of Parts to the good of others, and setting of wit, memory, reason, with the choicest intellectuals, and richest endowments of the rational mind, on the service of the soul, *3 Epist. Joh. 2.* making them hewers of wood, and drawers of water for the sanctuary of the Lord: A shaving and paring off of the excrements and froth of

wit, that they may become *Israelites*, and devoted to the God of *Israel*, and spiritual uses, *Deut.* 21. 12. keeping them under the government of the spirit, is a good improvement of them in this heavenly Trade.

You that have Parts and habilliments of Mind, do not prostitute them to the pleasure of the flesh, and the service of sin, but resign them to the use of the spirit; towards your enrichings with true wisdom, and increases in the knowledge of God, which brings salvation. When sprightly Parts and sparkling Wit are inlaid with grace, then are they as *Apples of Gold in pictures of Silver*, *Prov.* 25. 11. O how amiable are these endowments of nature, when seasoned with grade, when *perfum'd with Myrrh and Frankincense*, and *besprinkled with the Powders of the Merchant*, *Cant.* 3. 6.

Youthful time is another privilege for souladvantage; 'tis the morning of the soul's day, the best and most useful part of time, when appropriated to God and divine uses: what advantage have such for warmth of affection, and dispatches of duty? whereas decrepit age, like an emerited Soldier, hath worn out its serviceable capacities; and as the setting-Sun, is attended with evening cold, and shadows, and the close of working useful time. O how unserviceable is old age for transacting the work of the new-birth, when Conscience is sunk down into the deeps of guilt! when the affections are clogged with the dirty things of this world, and preengaged to other Lovers; and when the marrow of natures strength has been eaten out by the wasting service of sin. So great and amazing a work is the salvation of a sinner, that it deserves a subject of the choicest capacities to be completed in, and transacted by: And then is youth profitably spent, when devoted to God, and taken up in the great matters of salvation. You that are yet in your youth and morning-time, let God have the spring of your time, the first-born of your strength, and first ripe fruits of your capacities; let not youthful pleasures have the flower of your time and abilities, leaving the bran for God and your souls.

You that have strength of body, and a healthful temper, put it to the best use for your heavenly interest. Are you strong to labor? work out your salvation; labor for the bread that endureth; you that have legs, use them while you have them, to carry you up and down after God. If you must eat bread in the sweat of your brows, let it be the bread of your Father's house. If you must rise up early, sit up late, break your rest, exhaust your strength, let it not be all for the world, let Christ have some of your strength, before all be gone; yea, if you have any, let Christ have all.

As there are natural privileges, so are there providential privileges also, which are the capacities that providence dispenseth to some, of doing and receiving good beyond others, as liberty, peace, plenty, with other outward mercies, all which are to be husbanded to the best advantage of your souls.

Have you Peace with men? improve it towards the obtaining and securing your Peace with God: Your firmest leagues with men will hold but a little while, if your covenant with God be broken; what can favor with men profit you, if you have frowns from God? If men sheath up their swords, and God's be drawn, thy case is dangerous, and full of trouble. Make this use

also of thy present Peace, to prepare for future trouble, and to be the better armed when trials come; spend not all thy store upon thy present Peace and Comfort, but save some fragments for times of need. God gives thee a breathing-time, that thou mayest hold out the better in thy race; and spares thee a little rest, that thou mayest be the fitter for approaching trouble.

Have you Liberty? take heed of yokes of bondage, *Gal. 5. 1.* and soul-straitnings. If God set you at large, do not imprison yourselves to the world and carnal lusts: Is thy body out of prison? labor to get out thy soul also, *Psal. 142. 7.* Are thy feet enlarged? get thy heart enlarged also, and run the ways of his commandments, *Psal. 119. 132.* Make the most of your Liberty in doing service to God, in attending on his appointments, and in taking all opportunities of doing salvation-work, and enjoying salvation-helps: Be like your Lord, going up and down doing good, while you have opportunity, *Joh. 12. v. 35.* If you have spare time, or can redeem it by double diligence from your earthly business, lay it out for God and his people in religious duties, Christian visits, holy conferences: The time may come you may wish for such a privilege, and long to see one of these days of the Son of man.

Have you yet a liberal portion of the good things of this life? is your garner full, your table spread, your cup overflowing? lay in the sense of these mercies now, as winter-provision to warm your hearts then, when you may not have them to warm and refresh your bodies, and lay them out to refresh those that want them, that they may bless God for you, glorify God in you, and procure mercy for you in the day of need: Make not thyself a slave to thy abundance, but make thy plenteous comforts serviceable unto thee.

There are Spiritual Privileges too, the lot of some, and calls for great improvements. There are Personal Privileges, the State and Spirit of Adoption, justification of persons, purchased right to pardon and peace with God, freedom from condemnation, assurance of preservation in grace unto glory, with many gifts of grace and spiritual favors which thousands enjoy not. And there are Public Privileges of access to God, communion of Saints, a place within the walls of God's House, with variety of soul-provisions, an interest in the promises of God, the prayers and graces of his people, things of infinite worth, and purchased at no lower rate than the blood of Christ: You that are interested in those, come under great obligations to behold them with wonder, to hold them with trembling, and to use them with diligence and faithfulness. You that are planted in the Courts of the Lord, *Psal. 92. 13, 14.* be fat and flourishing; content not yourselves with bare privileges, with dogs to feed on dry bones, but get the marrow, juice, and fattening virtue of all your advantages. Do not with *Lazarus*, lie at the door of your rich Lord, the Dogs licking your sores, when you may go in and be healed.

Secondly, Ordinances are another thing which Believers should be getting spiritual good from: These are the golden pipes through which the Lord pours in the Oil of grace into his golden Candlesticks, and Gospel-Churches, *Zach. 4. 12.* Showres of Manna to feed his people in the wilderness, and on this side their own Country, *Deut. 8. 16.* These are the Churches breasts to fill and nourish her children unto life eternal, *Isa. 66. 11. Gen. 2. 6. 10.* Ordinances are the Mist, the River of *Eden*, by which God waters his Garden; Scriptures are the Mines, Ordinances are the opening of them, to such as dig for Wisdom. A considerable part of this

Heavenly Trade is driven about these commodities; ply them well, that you may get large incomes of spiritual blessings through them: Take heed of sleeping at these breasts, or playing with them, lest the Lord put them up, or put you off; lie at the pool side, wait at the wells of salvation, and not only come, but draw out waters of life thence for your needy souls: For which four things are needful.

- *Preparation.*
- *Attention.*
- *Retention.*
- *Obedience.*

First, Prepare before you hear, get the room emptied, swept and garnished: For those provisions of Christ you are called to, bring your pitchers empty and clean, that God may fill them: Come not to clean food with a soul stomach, but get your hearts purged by sound repentance, and washed from an evil conscience, and renewed by the Spirit; for the new wine of the Gospel, 1 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2, 3. They must be new born babes, that receive the sincere milk of the Word, so as to grow thereby, *Mat.* 9. 17. If a dead Christ must be laid in a new tomb; *Mat.* 27. 60. surely a living Jesus will not come into an old heart, and rotten sepulcher. Spend some time before you go to hear, in searching your hearts, and reviewing your ways, in getting a deep sense of their vileness, and the exceeding sinfulness of your sins, that the fallow field of your hearts may be plowed up, and you sow not among thorns: Take heed you bring not a hard heart to hearing. When *Thrasamund* the *Arian* read *Fulgentius's* defense of the truth, he praised his wisdom, wondered at his eloquence, commended his humility; yet had his heart so hardened, that he could not submit to the truth. To help you herein, set prayer on work to beg down the Spirit's of assistance; bring your hearts to Christ by prayer, that he would make them clean: If he say, *I will, be thou clean*, thy Leprosy shall be cleansed. Prayer also helps you to suitable provision, and a blessing on it: Hearers prayers help Ministers to preach, and themselves to hear, 2 *Thes.* 3. 1. Souls never thrive better than when Ministers and Hearers be much in prayer for the Word of the Spirit, and Spirit with the Word. *To pray well, is to study well* Prayer (says one) is a messenger to fetch that holy seed out of the garner above: Prayer is the former and latter rain to make it grow beneath; pray continually if thou wouldst grow continually. After Christ had fed the multitude, he went up into a Mountain apart to pray. *Matth.* 14. v. 23. Secret prayer (saith Mr. *Trap*) fats the soul, as secret morsels feed the body; therefore it is said to be the banquet of grace, where the soul may solace herself with God, as Esther did with Ahasuerus at the banquet of wine, and have whatsoever heart can wish, or need require.

Secondly, Take heed how you hear, hear as for your lives, with holy attention, with fear and trembling. Ministers (saith Mr. *Latimer*) should preach as if Hell were at their backs, and hearers should hear as if life or death were in every word. Hear with holy affection; many were given up to believe a lie, because they loved not the truth, nor received the word in the love thereof, 2 *Thes.* 2. 10. Hear believingly; the Word preached did not profit, being not mixed with faith in

them that heard it, *Heb.* 4. 2. 'Tis by faith the Gospel becomes the power of God to salvation, *Rom.* 1. 17. The Arm of God was not revealed on *Israel*, because his report was not believed by them, *Isa.* 53. 1. The Spirit is given out through the hearing of faith: Never expect to profit by hearing, till you join faith with hearing.

Thirdly, Keep the Word you do hear; take heed of letting slip the things you have received, *Heb.* 2. 1. Hold fast the truth that no man take your Crown, *Rev.* 3. 11. Be not forgetful hearers, but doers of the Word, *Jam.* 1. 25. Forgetful hearers will never be doers: *Israel's* disobedience was the fruit of their forgetfulness, *Psal.* 78. 10, 11. The reason of the Disciples trouble at the sepulcher of Christ, was said to be their forgetfulness; they had forgotten what he had said to them when he was in *Galilee*, *Luke* 24. 6. Bad memories have many times barren lives: Be much in after-prayer for the Comforter's help to keep the Word for you, and bring it to your remembrance: Prayer opens the heart to take in the Word; and prayer shuts the heart to keep in the Word: keep up meditation of the Word, *Psal.* 111. 91. This chews the cud, and gets out the sweetness and nutritive virtue of it unto the heart and life: This way the godly come to be as trees planted by the waters side, that bring forth much fruit in their season, *Psal.* 1. 3.

Fourthly, Obedience of the Word helps to profiting. The worth of Divine Truths is never fully known until they are lived upon; nor its virtue felt till we cleave to it in our conversation. *Prov.* 4. 6. *Forsake her not, and she shall preserve (problem) love her, and she shall keep thee. Vers. 12. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened, and when thou runnest thou shalt not stumble.* O the sweetness, the pleasure, the strength, the blessedness that they lose who only look on truth, but do not live it! Strangers to a holy life meddle not with the joy that is wrapped up in the Word and Waies of God, *Prov.* 3. 17. *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* The Word of God yields out but half its sweetness, until it becomes the way and walks of men, *Psal.* 10. 11. In keeping them there is great reward. *My witness is in Heaven*, saith Mr. *William Cooper*, upon his death-bed, *That the love of Jesus, and his people's souls, made preaching my pleasure; and I had no such joy as in doing God's work. They are blessed that do his Commandment; not only in that they have right to the tree of life, but in that they eat the pleasant fruits of it, and feed upon that hidden Manna unto which bare hearers are strangers.*

Thirdly, Get all the good you can from Providences; from favorable Providences, and from frowning Providences: These are the North and the South winds, which the Beloved causes to blow upon his garden, *Cant.* 4. 16. that the spices might flow forth. Providences, whether prosperous or afflictive, are to saved souls but the fulfilling of Divine Purposes, and the accomplishment of precious promise, which are designed for the good of Believers. Observe the Providences of God if you would get good from thence. *Observable things* (saith worthy Mr. *Blair*) *do follow them that are given to observation.* Doth God bring thee under smiling Providences? get some good from them: In these the Lord writes legible characters of his Covenant-love to his people. O read the tenderness, love, bounty and faithfulness of God in them, and be affected! Get thy heart to write back letters of love and thankfulness to God again; entertain giving Providences with thanksgiving hearts, and the sacrifice of praise, 2

Chron. 29. 31. Let the Lord communicate with you concerning receiving as well as giving, *Phil.* 4. 15. If left-hand mercies flow in upon you, take heed lest those floods break their bounds, and carry away the banks of your affections and circumspection. Christians, 'tis a safe rule to fear your mercies as well as afflictions: There is usually less fear, and therefore more danger of professing friends, than professed enemies. 'Twas the prayer of Queen *Elizabeth*, *To be delivered from her friends, as for her enemies she would take care of them.* Further, if you have now a spring-tide of outward mercies, prepare for low-waters: The comforts of this world are not standing pools, but running streams, and rolling Seas, that ebb and flow; expect not too much from them; entertain your coming mercies as strangers, who have their time to go as well as come: *The Lord gives, and the Lord takes, Job* 1. 21.

Get good also from taking as well as giving Providences; be blessing God for them: There is more self-denial and pure love to God expressed in such acknowledgments, than in praises for bestowing mercy, *Job* 1. 2. Besides, divine grace runs as well through the empty channels, as broad streams of outward comforts: 'Tis the same hand of the Father that uncloaths, which dresses his children; the Fork as well as the Rake belongs to the Covenant of Grace and Peace; neither is love or hatred known by these things, *Eccles.* 9. 1. Some have never found more than when they have lost all: The Lord oftentimes makes men's losses their gains, and their gain of earthly things their losses: *Saul* lost his Asses, and found a Kingdom: *Shimei* found his servants, and lost his life: Place not then your happiness, no nor your comforts in these things: How many prick their fingers to get a few fading Roses, which as soon wither as they are plucked: Think well of God under scattering Providences, and believe he loves you as much when he removes your mercies, as when he gives them: Look to God in Providences; see whence those winds come that blow down your houses, and scatter your comforts; enquire wherefore God contends with you, *Job* 10. 2. Doth not that worm which devours your gourd, breed in your security, pride, unthankfulness, and abuse of them, while you had them? search out the cause of God's displeasure; justify God in it, and bear his indignation humbly; come down at his feet, kiss his rod, and hear the voice of it: This is to get good from the worst of Providences.

Fourthly, Get good from the world, and things thereof; by seeing its wiles and deceitfulness, its vanity and emptiness, *Mark* 4. 19. The world is a fading thing, the fashion of it passeth away and it is gone. Trades-men care not for over-much of those goods that are soon out of fashion, *Eccles.* 1. 2. O care not for the world, the fashion whereof soon passeth away! *1 Cor.* 7. 31. The world is a dirty thing, 'tis hard to touch it, and not be defiled. Christians, be not like Swine, who love to run into the dirt; and if you would keep yourselves unspotted, take heed of the world. The world is a heavy ponderous thing; by faith make it portable, and more easy to be born, *2 Cor.* 4. 17. that it may not clog your feet, and stop your race towards glory: Faith will soon lessen your burden, and mend your pace; it will turn brass, yea clay into gold, and make it light in carriage. The world is a strange Country to the Citizens of Heaven, get good from it, by living as strangers in the world, by making you long the more for your own home, by converting it to the service of your souls, and interest in glory. *The Scorpions in Caria, when they sting, kill home-bred people, not strangers.* Apollon. Be a stranger to the world, and it will not hurt thee. The world is a subtle Strumpet, shun her embraces, lie not in her bosom,

stop your ears against her charms, and shut your eyes from her allurements. The world is an enemy, beware of it; when it promises, believe it not; when it kisses you, take heed of the sword in its hand, *2 Sam.* 20. 9, 10. when it cries peace, peace, then fear swift destruction; set thy feet on its fair neck to keep it down; get it nailed to the Cross of Christ, and pierced to death with the sword and spear of the Spirit. Get good from every state and condition God puts you into, whether high or low, rich or poor: If you are above others in place, be above them in grace; if you enjoy more than others, labor to do more than others, *Matth.* 5. 47. The higher you are in the world, be so much the lower in your own eyes: The tallest Cedars bow most: Ships of the greatest burden draw most water, and go deepest: Exalted Angels rejoice to be ministering spirits: Yea the Son of God delighted in being the servant of men: *Israel* was a Prince, and prevailed with God, and yet counted himself beneath the least of all God's mercies, *Gen.* 32. 10. *By how much the greater I am (saith Maximinus) so much the more I labor; and the more I labor, the greater I am.* Paul the chiefest Apostle, and yet in his own eyes less than the least of all Saints, *Ephes.* 3. 8. Humble yourselves when God exalts you; and when you humble yourselves, God will exalt you.

Have you much of the world? take heed of puffings up; the more you have, the more you owe; the more you have of Earth, the less you may have of Heaven: The poor in the world may be rich in faith; and the rich in the world may be oftentimes poor in faith: If God give you much here, be fearful lest he give you your All here. When one offered *Luther* much gold, he protested God should not put him off with these things. 'Tis said of *Gregory* the Great, he could never read these words, *Son, remember thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things,* without horror and astonishment, lest having such dignities he should be excluded his portion in Heaven. Have you little in the world? you have the less to reckon for; you have the lesser temptations, the fewer briars and thorns to go through. Are you mean in reputation? you are so much the safer, and the more beneath envy. 'Tis more to you (said Mr. *Rutherford* to the Lord-Keeper) *to win Heaven, being ships of great burden, and in the main Sea, than for little vessels that are not so much in the mercy and reverence of the storm.* Are you low in the world? the more reason you have to lie low in your own spirits; a Prince's heart, and a beggar's purse do not well agree. Are you in want? make more use of Christ's fullness: 'Tis blessed misery that brings souls to Christ for mercy: Had it not been for affliction, Christ would have had but little company whiles in the world: The whole need not the Physician; the sick, the blind, the deaf, dumb, and possessed of Devils might bless God for their maladies, which were the occasions of bringing them to the Physician of their souls as well as bodies: 'Twas well for the poor *Canaanite* that her daughter was ill, for by that means she was put upon seeking crumbs, and while she asked for them, got the children's bread to boot, *Matth.* 15. 27, 28.

Fifthly, Get good from your Callings and Employments in the world, by preserving a sense of the snares and dangers that lie in the management of them. If men would take a strict survey of their Calling-carriages, and be true to their observations, they must needs confess there are many evils they are guilty of in the management of them every day; either idleness, or excess of labors, deceitfulness, earthliness, lying, cheating, selfishness, covetousness, carnal-mindedness, vain discourses, multitude of words, murmuring, unthankfulness, with many other sins of omission and commission, which they are exposed

to in the pursuit of their Employments: Now when the experience and sense of this do keep them more humble and watchful against the occasions and appearances of such evils; when this helps to break and melt the heart before the Lord in prayer, fly to Christ in the sense of their weaknesses and inability to hold up under their temptations for all their help and grace to stand, *Ephes. 5. 15, 16.* And when they labor to keep a tender spirit in all their dealings, and a holy jealousy of their hearts in everything they do; exercising self-denial, and mortifiedness to the world, and things below, then they get profit from their Callings, *Prov. 41. 3. Psal. 141. 3.*

When they make their particular Callings to comport with, and subserve their general; when men's businesses in the world do not unfit them for, but are helpful in their religious duties, to keep their hearts in a meetness for spiritual service, even while they are in their earthly Employments, maintaining a walk with God in them, then they get good from their earthly Callings, *Ephes. 6. 18. Titus 3. 1.* Sometimes God blesseth your Callings, and makes your basket and store to increase; then to be enlarged in thankfulness, and preserve the memory of God's goodness, is not only your duty, but will sweeten the enjoyment of your mercies: *With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands, Gen. 32. 10.* To love him more, and serve him better, with more cheerfulness and gladness of heart; this is profiting by your Callings.

Sometimes God blasts your labors, and crosseth your hopes, makes a breach upon your Trade, follows you with losses one after another: In this case to look to the hand of God, to search out God's end in all, to get good by it, to be the more weaned from the world, and to cease from earthly stays, is a profitable use of your Callings.

Sixthly, Be getting some good from your company you reside amongst, meet or converse with: The Lord offers, and souls may get much good this way: O the mercies that God deals out through men's company! 'Twas well for *Rahab* that ever the spies came to her house, for by that means she obtained the salvation of herself and family. What a mercy 'twas to the woman of *Samaria*, when she came to the Well, that she found Christ there, who instead of filing her pitcher with perishing water, by this means got her heart filled with the waters of life, *John 4. 15?* What good did the Disciples get by company in the way to *Emmaus*, who by that means had their cold hearts warmed, their weak faith strengthened, *Luke 25. 15.* to the 32. Others have had company fatal to them: Had it not been for *Potiphar's* house *Joseph* might have escaped temptation to uncleanness, *Gen. 39. 7.* And had it not been for *Pharaoh's* house, he had not learned to swear by the life of *Pharaoh*, *Gen. 42. 15.* As long as *Peter* kept with the Disciples, he was faithful and courageous; but when once he fell into evil company, and got into the High Priest's Hall, he presently fell into that fearful sin of denying his Lord and Master, *Luke 22. 55. When they sate down together, Peter sate down amongst them.* Christians, beware what company you come into, for the peace and welfare (if not the life) of your souls, is much concerned in it: *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, Ephes. 5. 11. Prov. 1. 15. chap. 4. 14, 15.* Choose not wicked company for advantage sake, as *Lot* did with the loss of his goods, and hazard of his life, and a dreadful fall to boot, *Gen. 19. 15. 36.* Advantage was his end why he chose the Plains of *Sodom*, but loss was the

issue of his choice: So *Balaam* for *Balacks* goods, run himself into those temptations that cost him his life, *Gen.* 31. 8. Go not into wicked company except duty call you; if you have God's warrant, you have his protection; and if by providence, or in the way of obedience, you meet with evil men, be good with them; [*The Sun* (saith *Diogenes*) *visits kennels, and is not defiled.*] either by taking an occasion to do them good, as the *Israelitish* Maid did to her Master *Naaman*, directing him to the Prophet *Elisha* for cure, *2 King.* 5. 2, 3. Or by putting a stop to their sin, as *David* did. *Psal.* 75. 4, 5. *I said unto the fools, deal not foolishly, and to the wicked, lift not up your horn.* And as *Judah* sought to divert his Brethren from their wicked enterprise against *Joseph*, *Gen.* 37. 26, 27. Or by reproving their sin, as *Nehemiah* did the sin of the Nobles, *Neh.* 5. 7. Or by instructing them if ignorant, as *Paul* did the *Athenians*, *Acts* 17. 22, 23. But if they be such like Sons of *Belial*, that the thorns cannot be taken by hand, let them be thrust away, and get yourselves fenced that they hurt you not: Take heed of the least compliance with them in their sin. *1 Tim.* 5. 22. *Be not partakers of other men's sins; your own are heavy enough; silence in not reproving, with any signs of approving others sins, make them your own.*

If you enjoy good company, take heed you miss not of good, or meet with evil from them: good men have their evils; great men are not always wise, *Job.* 32. 9. And 'tis easier to follow them down, than up the hill, and to imitate their vices, than their virtues; diseases are more communicable than health; men may impart their sickness, but cannot their soundness. O what advantage hath sin for its propagation, when it falls from the hands of men reputed gracious! The errors of good men are not only examples, but arguments unto others to sin also: If *Peter* play the hypocrite, other *Jews* dissemble likewise with him, *Gal.* 2. 13. and no less a man than *Barnabas* is carried away with their dissimulation. If they that are strong do but eat in the Idols Temple, the weak will eat the things offered to Idols, *2 Cor.* 8. 10. O take care of the evils of good men, which like books published *cum privilegio*, vend the more. An *Esau's* garment will make a *Jacob's* voice to pass; and where good in any man is admired, evil is there seldom feared: take heed you follow no man further than he follows Christ, *1 Cor.* 11. 11. Implicit imitation is as dangerous in practice, as implicit faith is in judgment: weigh their actions you intend to walk after; let no man's reputation be your warrant for imitation: Eminent persons are File-leaders, which way they turn, the File turns with them: *The leaders of my people cause them to err*, *Isa.* 9. 16. Men usually follow those they commend, and how much the greater they are with whom we converse, (saith *Seneca*) the more is the danger. Get good from good men, else their goodness is nothing to you: what truth you hear from them, receive; and as *Mary* did the Angel's words, so do you ponder their gracious sayings in your hearts, *Luke* 2. 19.

When you are in the company of those that are above you in wisdom and grace, be more swift to hear than to speak: The emptiest vessels make the greatest sound; and I have often observed in company, such as have most need to hear and learn, being self-conceitedly wise, will take up most of the discourse; and instead of drawing waters from deeper wells to fill their empty vessels, they will be pumping out that little they have: This surely doth not bespeak the modesty of such, and less becomes their profit. *Origen*, when a child, used to question with his Father about the sense of the Scriptures, and afterwards became a great Scholar. 'Tis the observing attentive Christian is usually the most knowing, thriving

Christian; who, with the Bee, gathers in the Summer, and gets honey from every flower it meets with; and in the Winter spends it. When you meet with empty vessels, 'tis your charity to be putting in, but when you come to deep wells, 'tis your duty and interest to be drawing out, by asking questions, and proposing doubts, as the young man in the Gospel did, *Mat. 19. 16.* and *Nicodemus* and the woman of *Samaria, Joh. 3. 2. 4. ch. 4. 11, 15, 20.* to Jesus Christ. The enquiring soul, if it be done in truth, and followed with obedience, will be the most flourishing soul.

Seventhly, Get good from your retirements as well as company; be never less alone, than when alone: Sometimes in pursuance of duty you must be alone; when thou prayest enter into thy Closet, *Mat. 6. 6. Retire we must sometimes* (saith Mr. *Trap,*) *and into fit place to meet with God; solacing, and entertaining Soliloquies with him, as Isaac did in the field, Jacob upon the way, Ezekiel by the river Ulai, Peter upon the leads, Christ upon the mountains, Abraham in the grove in Beersheba, Gen. 21. 33. 'Tis no matter* (saith the same Author) *how mean the place be, so it be secret: where there is a Jeremy, a Daniel, a Jonah; a Dungeon, a Lions-Den, a Whale's-belly, are goodly Oratories. If you will not hear me,* (saith Peter Moice) *send me to my prison again among my toads and frogs, which wilt not interrupt me while I talk with my Lord God; Acts & Mon. 122.* O how desirable is retirement with God to a soul that hath acquaintance with him! *Antisthenes* being asked what good he had got by Philosophy? answered, that I can converse with myself; much more is it thy interest to converse with God. 'Tis said of that pious man Mr. *William Sedgwick,* *that when he was young, while the rest of the Family were at their Games and Dancings, he would be in a corner mourning. Mr. Greenham, when at any time he was sick, would suffer nobody to sit up with him, that so he might more freely converse with God. Psal. 119. 62. David would rise at midnight to enjoy communion with God. O the blessed seasons that gracious souls have had with Christ in their corners! how sweet have their stolen waters of life, and bread eaten in secret, been to their hungry souls! Prov. 9. 17. If the walls of this house could speak* (said Mr. *Hew Kennedy*) *they could tell how many sweet days I have had in secret fellowship with God, and how familiar he hath been with my soul; The fulfilling of Script. p. 442.* The Lord doth usually unbosom himself most to his friends when he hath them alone. *Hos. 2. 14. I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her, or speak to her heart,* (as 'tis in the Hebrew:) Upon which words *Stella* hath this note, *God needs no witnesses that he might speak to our souls; when God finds our heart alone, he presently comes in, and sups with it;* and when he observes our soul withdrawn from the cares and carking thoughts of this World, then is his time to open his great wonders and secrets to it. *Jacob* was never more prevailing with God than when alone; then was the time he got the blessing, *Gen. 32. 24, 29. Peter* was alone in prayer with God when he fell into a trance, *Acts 10. 10. His soul was as it were removed from the body for a time,* (saith *Beza*) *that he might converse with God. Elijah* was alone in secret prayer, when the Angel brought him that refreshing feast, in the strength of which he travel'd in the wilderness forty days, *1 King. 19. 4. to v. 9.* O what am I, (said Mr. *Patrick Simpson,* after he had been many hours in his Garden alone, wrestling with God for his deserted Wife) being dust and ashes, that the holy ministering Spirits should be sent by the Lord to deliver a message to me! telling one that overheard him, that he had had a vision of Angels, who did with audible voice give him an answer from the Lord of his Wive's condition; this Woman also to whom,

upon importunity, he delivered these words, as she was approaching to the place where he lay on the ground, heard an affrighting noise of a great rushing of multitudes together, and with it a melodious sound: Such a welcome doth the Lord Jesus give his children sometimes, when he gets them alone into his Chambers and Wine-cellar. O the sweetness persons may find in their solitudes with Christ! *Sampson* turned aside when he saw a swarm of Bees and Honey in the carcass of the Lion, *Judge*. 14. 8. 'Tis said of *Jerome*, that living in the wilderness, he seemed to converse with Angels. *Contemplation* (saith *Gregory*) is the clearest day of internal light; then are their discoveries most, when in a holy silence with God alone: Retirement (Christian) is an opportunity put into thy hand of in-door work; 'tis God's call into the Mount: *Exod.* 34. 2, 3. *Be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the Mount, and no man shall come up with thee.* 'Tis his command to a holy silence and cessation from other work, that thou mayest attend the most secret concerns of thy soul: Improve this time wholly in converse with God and attending the affairs of thy soul: This is a season to take an estimate of thy soul-state, to try the grounds of thy hope for eternity, to be searching into the secrets of thy heart, and taking a full review of thy past life, and former carriages, *Psal.* 4. 4. Then is the time to weigh thy mercies and duties, to call to mind God's dealings with thee, and thy carriages towards him; to be studying the wiles of Satan, and the ways of thy duty; the worth of godliness, the danger of miscarrying, and the blessedness of overcoming, and such like meditations. When you are riding, or walking, or sitting alone, invite the Lord Jesus to keep you company, to walk and converse with you; fill up your vacant hours with secret prayer and meditation; take heed of being at leisure from duty-employment, either in your general or particular Calling, or lawful Employments, lest being too much alone, the Devil strike in for company; no greater temptation can Satan find, than times of solitude not improved.

Eighthly, Get good from occasional objects and occurrences, which are not chance and fortune, as the blind world calls it; but the products of divine wisdom and pleasure towards Believers for their good. *Albane* receiving a persecuted Christian into his house, and seeing his holy devotion, and sweet carriage; he was so much affected with his good example, that he became both a Professor and Martyr; *Bede*. It was not by accident, but divine intention, that *Melchizedek* should meet *Abraham* to bless him, and *Shimei* meet *David* to curse him; that *Moses* should meet *Jethro's* Daughter at the well in *Midian*, and that *David* should meet the *Egyptian* in pursuing the *Amalekites*: It was God put it into the thoughts of *Saul's* servant to advise his Master to speak with the Prophet, by which means he obtained a Kingdom: 'Twas by divine disposal, that when *Joseph* was cast into the pit, the *Midianites* should pass by, and lift him up, and sell him to the *Ishmaelites*, and they to *Potiphar*. The Lord is carrying on some part of his work, some piece of mercy or justice, comfort or affliction by all these occurrences, in which his people should be coworkers with him, and be learning something from every passage of providence they meet with, and object they occasionally behold in their journeyings and pursuits of their occasions in the World: What fruitful meditations had *Sampson* from beholding the carcass of the Lion, and swarm of Bees in it in his journey to *Timnah*? *Judge*. 14. 8. 14. And our Savior from seeing the wither'd Fig-tree in his passage from *Bethany* to *Jerusalem*? *Mat.* 21. 19, to 23. What a lecture did Christ read to his Disciples upon

viewing the goodly Buildings of the Temple? *Luke* 21. 5, to the end: He beheld the City, and wept over it, and improved it to some instruction to his Disciples, *Luke* 19. 41. He beheld people casting in gifts into the treasury, and makes improvement of it, *Mark* 12. 4. Some told him of the blood of the *Galileans* which *Pilate* had mingled with their sacrifice, and he makes a profitable use of it for his Disciples instruction, *Luke* 13. 1, 2. What Sermons hath Christ preached, when he took his Text from the waters of *Samaria*? *Joh.* 4. 9, 10. from the *Manna* given to *Israel* in the wilderness? *Joh.* 6. 26, 27, 31, 32. from the multitudes flocking after him for loaves? Christians, if you would grow rich in Spirituall, make some spiritual improvement of all you see, hear, meet with in your journeys, dealings, converses in the World: Thou walkest into thy Garden, get some instruction from the objects that thou castest thy eyes upon: Every herb in thy Garden preaches God to thee : Thou walkest into the Field, go with *Isaac's* heart, to meditate upon the creatures and providences of God thou beholdest there: Thou lookest to the Heavens, let it not be only as the *Pharisees*, to discern the face of the Sky, *Matth.* 16. 3. but to see the glory of God, and his handy-work, *Psal.* 19. 1. with the Chymist, extract some good from everything thou meetest with. 'Twas said of *Jerome*, he knew how to gather gold out of the dunghill, and honey out of weeds, leaving the poison for spiders. How will men dig into the bowels of the earth, rack the creatures, spend themselves to get a few shadows, and all the while do nothing to get the substance that endures! and this doubtless is one reason of soul-poverty this day; we trade not with creatures and occurrences that fall in our way to spiritual advantages: Beg spiritual skill and faithfulness to be improving all you see, hear, do or enjoy to soul-profit.

Ninthly, Get good from your falls and miscarriages: Physicians do sometimes make poisons medicinal, and so doth the Physician of of value make the diseases of his people turn to their health. Sin is the greatest evil, and yet redemption-grace works good out of it. *David* got good by his fall, it made him the more humble and broken in heart; drew out his heart in stronger cries after grace; made him more watchful for the future against the occasions of sin, *Psal.* 51. 7, 8. to the 12. *Psal.* 39. 1. *Psal.* 141. 3. *Peter* got good from his fall, by keeping an after-sense of the evil of it on his heart. *Israel* by their departure from God came to loath themselves the more in their own eyes, *Ezek.* 36. 31. And *Ephesus*, by a sense of their evil got this advantage, they could not bear evils in others, *Rev.* 2. 2. As sin abounds, so grace abounds much more, *Rom.* 5. 20.

Object. If souls may get good from sin, and where sin abounds, grace abounds much more: Then why should we be troubled for sin, and watching against it? Why may we not rather sin, that grace may abound, and do evil that good may come thereof?

Sol. The Apostle answers this objection, *Rom.* 6. What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid; and proves by several Arguments.

First, That it cannot be that souls interested in Christ can live or allow themselves in sin; Because

First, They are dead to sin, and therefore cannot live any longer in sin, v. 2. dead men while so cannot live, but Believers are dead to sin no longer to live therein, 〈 in non-Latin

alphabet › , *amplius*, never more to live in it; they may fall into it, be overcome by it; but to allow it, to design it, to make provision for it, and to take up encouragements upon choice in judgment, to continue in it; this cannot consist with men dead to sin, as all souls in Christ are; for they are baptized into the likeness of Christ's death, yea into his death, v. 3. That as Christ died for sin once to die no more, but was raised by the glory of the Father, v. 4. so they being really dead with Christ, should live no more in sin, but be perpetually dead to it; for this is the very end of Christ's death, to destroy the old man, the body of sin, the whole power and Being of sin in Believers, to be accomplished in its time and ways, v. 6. And Christ died in vain, and hath lost the great end of his death, if they that are in him can live any longer in sin; *for he that is dead is freed from sin*. 7. ‹ in non-Latin alphabet › , being put for ‹ in non-Latin alphabet › , by a Synecdoche, *Piscat*. that is, absolved from the obligation, servitude, dominion and guilt of sin; as an Apprentice is by Law declared free, or set free from his Master's rule and power.

Secondly, They that are in Christ are not only partakers of his death, and therein brought into a state of death to sin; but they are partakers of his resurrection, and by it instated in a life of holiness, v. 4, 5. that now they should live to God, which cannot consist with a life of sin, v. 11, 12.

Thirdly, They that are Christ's are brought under grace, under a Covenant of Grace, opposed to the Law as a Covenant of Works, and therefore cannot be any longer under the dominion and service of sin, v. 14. These two Covenants being in that respect contrary, they that are under the Law as a Covenant of Works, are in the flesh, and bring forth fruit unto death, *Rom.* 7. 5. and for that end are Believers set free from the Law, and brought under Grace, that they might serve God in newness of spirit, v. 6. and no longer serve sin.

Fourthly, They are become the servants of righteousness, set free from the service of sin, *Rom.* 6. 18. Your time under sin is out, and you have now no more to do with sin; you are another's servant, and therefore cannot return to the service of sin anymore; for you are now servants to God, not for a time, but forever; you have delivered over yourselves, sworn over yourselves to be the servants of God forever, and therefore cannot now serve sin: That's his first answer: You cannot, if in Christ, serve sin any longer, nor continue in sin that grace may abound: for if you can consent to live in sin, you are not under grace.

Secondly, You ought not to do it, if you are rational; 'tis not your concernment to sin, because sin is an evil thing.

First, Sin is the greatest slavery in the world, v. 16. You are servants to sin, and to Devils; sins are the works of the Devil, *1 John* 3. 8. which Christ came to destroy; sin is evil in its state; 'tis drudgery, and in its nature 'tis filthy, abominable and shameful.

Secondly, It is attended with sad issues here; it brings forth bitter fruit, v. 21. It makes the soul ashamed when awakened, to see what he hath done, and it fills the soul with grief, horror and torment; it breaks your loins, makes you go halting to your grave; it makes you weary of your life, and fearful to die; it sets your teeth on edge, and fills your bowels with

wormwood and gravel. O the dreadful effects of sin here! which makes it no way a souls interest to sin, *2 Cor. 7. 11. Psal. 51. 8. Psal. 38. 4. Psal. 119. 120. Psal. 55. 4. Lam. 3. 19.*

Thirdly, As the work is bad, and fruits are evil here, so the wages of sin is death, v. 23. As soon as the work is done, they shall have their wages, which is always paying, and never paid; they shall be always dying, and never dead; *whose worm never dieth, and whose fire is never quenched, Mark 9. 44.* This will be the certain end of them that can choose sin, and live in sin, if God be holy, and his Word true. And can you then continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid.

O Christians! get good from your sins; to be ashamed of them, to grieve and mourn over them, to hate and loathe them, to pray and cry against them, to watch and strive against them, to fly to Christ for pardon over them, and freedom from them, to shun and avoid the occasions of them, to have no more to do with them, to seek and further the death and total ruin of them, to prize graces, and love Christ the more, to be more attentive to his instructions, and obedient to his commands, to bless God, and rejoice in Christ; when God doth in any measure keep you, or set you free from sin, to long for Heaven and Glory, that you may never sin more, to keep close to Christ, and abide in his ways, that you might be the more secured from sin, and fitted for glory, *Ezra 9. 6. Zach. 12. 10. Ezek. 36. 31. Rom. 7. 24. Prov. 4. 14, 15. 1 Thes. 5. 22. Ephes. 5. 11. Ephes. 2. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 7. 2 Cor. 5. 8. Acts 11. 23.* This is to get good from sin, and to drive on the Heavenly Trade: That's the second branch of Exhortation to Professors.

3. Counsel to Earthly Traders.

The third branch of Exhortation is to Earthly Traders, who meet with breaches and discouragements in the pursuits of their Earthly Trades. This is manifestly the case of *England* this day: The Lord blows on men's interests, makes breaches on their Trades, sends in wants as an armed man; Trade fails, a blast is on men's labors, and the Nation becomes poorer every day: This should be for a lamentation, but few lay it to heart; men murmur and complain; some are dejected and sink in their spirits, others seeing God plucking their Idols away, hold them the faster, become more close and covetous; others sink the deeper into the world, turn more earthly and excessive in their carkings and labors; others more griping and oppressive; but few in appearance look to God, and make a right use of this sore stroke. Now towards a better improvement of this providence, give me leave to propose to all such these few Counsels.

Counsel 1.

First, By your disappointments and losses in your Earthly Employments, be convinced of the transcendent excellency of this Heavenly Trade (which you have, it may be, in pursuit of those too much slighted:) There are no such issues of Wisdom's Merchandise, if duly followed: Religion breeds no such worms to devour its treasures; *Riches and honor are with me, yea durable Riches and Righteousness: My fruit is better than gold, yea than fine gold, Prov. 8. 18, 19.* There are no such hazards in the ways of God, as here in my earthly business I am exposed to: I labor hard, and can hardly live out; I sow much, and bring in little; I eat, but have not

enough; and drink, but am not filled; I clothe me, but am not warmed; I earn wages, but put it into a bag with holes; I look for much, and it comes to little, and when I have brought it home, the Lord blows upon it, *Hag.* 1. 6, 9. But 'tis not so in that Heavenly Trade I have neglected; there are no such disappointments; they that sow to the Spirit, in due time do surely reap; they that labor for that bread, shall have it given to them. O how do Wisdom's Merchants prosper when I decay! their faces shine, their basket is blest; whatever they have in the world, 'tis enough for them; they eat their bread with gladness, and singleness of heart, and are freed from those anxious cares and fears I am almost consumed with: That's the best Trade, I now see it; when all fails, that holds; when others famish, that feeds; when others undo men, that enriches them: O blessed Calling! thou excellest them all. This is one good use of your earthly wastes, to see the excellency of Heavenly Treasures.

Counsel 2.

Secondly, See God in these afflictions that lie upon your Earthly Trades and Interests: Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, *Job* 5. 6. nor promotion from the East, or from the West, but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another, *Psal.* 75. 6, 7, 'Twas not the wind, the fire, the *Chaldeans*, or *Sabaeans* that undid *Job*, but it was God that took away, it was by his permission all those losses came, *Job* 1. 21. This helped *Job* to a due deportment under his troubles, that he saw God in it: *He doth not fall out with man, or complain of the Devil; he is not angry with chance or fortune, with stars or constellations, but looks to God in all. Is there any evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it? Amos* 3. 6. *I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil, Isa.* 41. 7. *Israel* decayed in their estates, and God says, 'twas he that blowed upon them: Men usually lay it on the times; cry out of one, and other, but few look to God, and that's one reason men make no better use of this Rod, because they do not see it in the hand of a holy God: You will never lay your hand on your mouths, till you cast your eyes on God in these troubles, nor take a right way for cure before you see the hand that smites you, *Psal.* 39. 9.

Counsel 3.

Thirdly, Search out the cause of them: You will not find the remedy, till you see the reason. *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me, Job* 10. 2. *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin? let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord, Lam.* 3. 39, 40. The Lord may well say to the Complainer, *Friend, I do thee no wrong, Mat.* 20. 13. And as *David* did to *Eliab*, *What have I now done? is there not cause? 1 Sam.* 17. 29. Hath God consumed your estate, broken your Trade, brought you to a morsel of bread? and is there not cause? There are several sins which do usually prove wasting to men's earthly interests.

First, A letting down of Religion, and decaying in this heavenly Trade, is usually followed with wastes on men's outward comforts and interests, as hath been already shewn: *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come, 1 Tim.* 4. 8. When that flourisheth, all things go well: when Religion goes down, nothing prospers. *2 Chron.* 24. 20. *Why transgress ye the Commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you.* For this letting down of Obedience did God threaten to

make *Israel* waste, and a reproach; to send evil arrows of *Famine*, and to break the staff of *Bread*. *Ezek. 5. 14, 16, 17. Because ye multiplied more than the Nations round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the Nations round about you; you have increased in abomination more than the Heathens and Nations round about you, and have not kept those Laws, and done that Righteousness which they have done: [Greenhill,] Therefore behold I, even I, am against thee:—Moreover, I will make thee waste, &c.* Falling back in holiness will make men fall back in the world too, bring a curse on their abundance. Now this decay of Religion is the sin of this day, as hath been fully demonstrated.

Secondly, Declension in the worship of God hath been followed with declensions in men's interests: *Mal. 1. 9. Israel* brought to God a corrupt thing, the blind, and lame, and sick, the worst of the flock, and departed from God's Ordinances, and the Lord brought on them a curse; *I will even send a curse upon your blessings, yea I have curs'd them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. To give glory to God,* (saith *Cocceius* that honor and worship that is due to him: They had corrupted God's worship, and God corrupted their seed, *Mal. 2. 3. I will destroy your fruits before they are ripe; which Cocceius* thinks was fulfilled in that great famine in *Claudius* his days mentioned *Acts 11. 28.* They had made the service of God contemptible, *Mal. 1. 7,* and God made them contemptible: *Chap. 2. 9. Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people,* 〈in non-Latin alphabet〉 according as you have not kept my ways, but have been partial in my law: you have cast dung on my Ordinances, (for such are corruptions, 〈in non-Latin alphabet〉 in God's worship;) and I will spread dung on your faces; *Mal. 2. 2. Even the dung of your solemn Feasts,* excrements. I will instead of seed throw so much dung upon you, even the excrements of your corrupt service; as the defilement thereof shall even overcome and ruin you: For these corruptions in the worship of God, did God stretch out his hand over *Israel*, and diminish their ordinary food, delivering them to the will of them that hated them: *Ezek. 16. 26, 27. I have cut thee short of thy allowance, I have diminish'd thy portion,* [Greenhill] *thy lawful things,* Sept. God's worship is his name, by which he is known and distinguished from all Idols, *Exod. 20. 4. his glory,* *Rom. 1. 23.* To corrupt his worship, is to defile the place of his Throne, *Ezek. 43. 7.* and to defalcate, and cut off his tribute and revenues from the earth: And no wonder if God blast their Trade, who adulterate his Treasure.

Thirdly, A covetous with-holding from God turns away the blessing of God on men's labors, and tends to poverty. *Prov. 11. 24. There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that with-holdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.* Many think that lost which is laid out for God, and be-think nothing but what goes to pious uses. O how sparingly do most sow, as if they thought their seed cast away! and thence 'tis they reap so sparingly, *2 Cor. 9. 6.* Men's former charity, rather like showers than streams, are dried up; and therefore are God's showers withheld also: expenses for God having been many, seems now burdensome, through men's self-love and unbelief. While *Alexander* had hope for more, he never wanted a heart or hand to part with the Frankincense and Gold he had: certainly men's Faith fails when their Charity fades: Few in their scarcity dare, with the *Widow of Zarephthah,* give the first cake to the use and service of God, *1 King. 17. 13, 14.* No wonder the barrel of Meal and

cruise of Oil fails; 'tis Christians weariness in well-doing, and defectiveness in scattering for God, hinders their reaping and gathering, *Gal. 6. 9*. This was one of those sins that brought a curse and devourer on *Israel's* increase, *Mal. 3. 9, 10, 11*. and is still as pregnant of blastings and mildews as ever it was.

Fourthly, Greedy desires after the World are oftentimes followed with disappointments: *Ye looked for much*, *Hag. 1. 9. and it came to little*, *(in non-Latin alphabet)* . *Sept.* To look with desire and affection. 'Tis mercy in God, when men's hearts run too fast after the World, to lay some blocks in their way, to hedge it up with thorns, that they might not overtake their Lovers . *Hos. 2. 6*. Thorns in men's way is safer than spears in their bowels, and that would have been the issue of such Lovers when they meet. Covetousness is the Hydropick distemper of old aged profession: to cure which, the great Physician hath providentially prescribed abstinence, and in his holy jealousy hath made men to read their sin in their punishment. The Lord sees it dangerous for his people to have much of this World, because it becomes a snare to their souls; *They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare*, *1 Tim. 6. 9*. Earthly things are the very bane of Religion, they entangle men's feet, and keep them from attendance on God in his appointments. The invited guests had no leisure to enjoy refreshments for their souls, because of their interrupting interests of this World, *Matth. 22. 5*. The things of Heaven seem light to such, compared with their other things: *They made light of Christ's invitation*, and put men on pleading excuses for neglect of God, and on justifying their omissions of holy duties: *They began with one consent to make excuse*: Christ and his people would have more of men's company, if the World had less of their hearts.

These earthly things do not only hinder men's duties, but their thrivings also under privileges: 'Tis the cares of this World, and deceitfulness of Riches, that choke the Word, and make men unfruitful, *Matth. 13. 22*. They make careless, sleighty, forgetful hearers; they hinder convictions, quench the motions of the spirit, take away the tastes of divine sweetness, and make all the attempts of Grace fruitless: They take away the heart from God and spiritual things, and so nourish formality and hypocrisy in profession and duties, causing men to draw near with their mouths to God, when their hearts are far from him, *Ezek. 33. 31. Isa. 29. 13*. This made *Judas, Ananias, Demas, Simon Magus* such hypocrites in Religion, because they loved this present World, *2 Tim. 3. 2, 5. 2 Tim. 4. 10*.

This weakens faith, blinds the mind, starves the affections, rules the will, and so man's all the royal forts of the soul against Christ; by which the salvation of that soul becomes exceeding difficult.

And they make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof, feeding the carnal mind, and yielding such nourishment to sin, as that it always resists the Holy Ghost, wins the day, renders damnation sure to all that are not by a mighty hand redeemed from these spiritual enemies; so that it becomes in such a case needful to starve earthly desires, by a remove of those things that feed and maintain them; and men may look upon those afflictive providences on their interests, as the procurements of their earthly affections: Hastening to be rich, hath poverty at the heels, *Prov. 28. 22*.

Fifthly, Unfaithfulness in men's Callings puts them out of the way of blessing, and ushers in wastes on their interests, *Mic.* 6. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. The Lord had a controversy with his people, v. 2. and till this was taken up, all their religious services were to no purpose; sacrifices and duties could not prevail, or stop his displeasure, till their sins were removed, v. 6, 7. 'Twas not to wait on God in public duties was all that he called for, *but to do justice, show mercy, and to walk humbly with him*, wherein they had been defective; and therefore had he brought a rod upon them, v. 9. he had made them sick in smiting them, and would make them desolate, v. 13. They should eat, but not be satisfied; and there should be a casting down in the midst of them; they should be blasted in their labors and interests; they should sow, but not reap; tread the Olive, but not anoint themselves with it; have sweet Wine, but not drink it; and then comes to reckon with them, wherefore this was brought upon them; *ver. 10, 11, 12. Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked? and the scant measures that is abominable? Should I count them pure with the wicked balance? and with the bags of deceitful weights? for the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the Inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouths.* They were full of wickedness, and among the rest, were false and deceitful; they did not walk humbly with God, nor justly with men, but were deceitful in their Callings, had false weights, scant measures, were injurious to others, and not just and faithful in their dealings; some oppressed, others defrauded; such as were over others were cruel task-masters, exacting their labors, *Isa.* 5. 8. 3. grinding the faces of the poor, eating them up as bread, *Psal.* 14. 4. by defrauding them of their due, keeping back the hire of the Laborers by fraud and injustice, *Jam.* 5. 4. which they do (saith one) who give them not a proportionable hire, working upon their necessities, sucking out the strength and sweetness of the Laborers, *Dr. Manton*. A sin that cries in the ears of the Lord of Sabbaths, cries out aloud, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, and their groans are entered into his ears, as a God of vengeance to requite it, and to give his poor a Sabbath, and rest from their oppressions: A sin that God will surely and severely punish; *He will be a swift witness against them that oppress the Hireling in his wages, and turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of Hosts, Mal.* 3. 5. Sins join'd with Adultery, Sorcery, and Swearing; provocations in God's ears, and actions that plainly show no true fear of God in such persons that dare oppress their poor Laborers, changing their wages as *Laban* did *Jacob's*, *Gen.* 31. 41. These God will surely take in hand; he will be both Judge and Witness against them; he will not delay neither, but proceed speedily to sentence and execution against such as oppress their poor laborers: Of all oppression, the oppression of the poor is greatest, and carries most cruelty in it, to tread on them that are down already, and abuse them that have no helper; to take the bread out of their mouths which are ready to starve, and to defraud them of their wages, which is their life, and God calls it down-right robbery, *Levite.* 19. 13. To build up their houses, and raise up estates upon the ruins of the poor laborers, is to lay the foundation in blood, and hath a woe pronounced against it from the Lord of Hosts, *Hab.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12. This is one of those sins which bring a people down to the ground, and make them desolate: *Ye have eaten up the Vineyard, the spoil of the poor is in your houses; what mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord of Hosts. Her gates shall lament & mourn, and she being desolate, shall sit upon the ground, Isa.* 3. 14,

15, 26. This is a God-provoking, and an estate-wasting sin, and one of the great, visible, crying sins of this day.

Sixthly, Another reason why God consumes the interests of men, and makes a breach on their Trade, seems to be this; That by this means he might bring them down to his foot, and bring them back to himself: Prosperity in men's interests feeds their pride, and makes them too high for God's use and pleasure; riches do puff men up: *Thine heart is lifted up* <...> ; *thy riches, behold therefore I will bring* <...> *upon thee, the terrible of the Nations, and* <◇> *shall draw their sword against the beauty of* <◇> *wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness; th•shall bring thee down to the pit, they shall destroy thy riches wherein thou gloriest, and countest thy beauty,* Ezek. 28. 5, 7, 8. Men are apt to glory in their riches, and to give that respect to them which is due to God, and this he will not bear, but comes out in indignation against men's Idols, Jer. 9. 23. Abundance of earthly interests doth also unfit men for God's use and delight, rich in goods, and poor in grace; prosperity in the world cools men's hearts towards God, and lames their feet in his way: 'Tis the poor of the flock that waits on God, Zech. 11. 11. that press his Vineyard, and bear the heat and burden of the day, Jer. 52. 15. When men grow full, they are lazy; & when great, they become fearful to adventure for God: *Give me thy shield* (said Epaminondas to his servant, when he had got a great sum of money) *for now thou art grown rich, I am sure thou wilt not adventure thyself into dangers.* Smyrna was the poorest of the seven Churches in Asia, but yet was richest in grace and serviceableness for God. *I know thy poverty, but thou art rich,* Rev. 2. 9. This may be one reason why the Lord makes this Nation poor, that he might by this make them pure, he melts away our dross, that we may be the more refined, and takes away our Lovers, that he might come in the room of them: *I will hedge up thy way with thorns; she shall follow after her Lovers,* <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> <...> *not overtake them; and she shall seek* <...> *shall not find them; then shall she say,* <...> *go and return to my first husband, for then it* <...> *better with me than now,* Hos. 2. 6, 7. Men •om return to God fully, till stripped of other •mforts; nor see God to be best, till their con•ion in the world be bad; and therefore doth God remove these mountains of earthly interests, that his people may the better see and go after himself.

Counsel 4.

Fourthly, If God hath made breaches on your Trade, get the breach between God and your souls composed: Hos. 4. 1, 2. *Hear the Word of the Lord ye children of Israel, for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the Land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land; by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing Adultery; they break out, and blood toucheth blood:* There's a controversy between God and a sinning people (and such are we:) Sinners contend with God, & God by afflictions contends with them, and till this controversy be taken up, there's no peace. *And if ye will not for all this be reformed by me, by these things, but will walk contrary to me, then will I also walk contrary to you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins,* Levite. 26. 23, 24. *Hear the Word of the Lord:* Lay this to heart, they that strive with him shall perish; there is no contending with God; bow we must, or break, return, or be ruined: *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings,* Isa. 1. 16. Get

washed away your blood by sound Repentance; get into Christ's blood by saving Faith; set upon a thorough reformation, personal, family, public, each one in his place, help to carry out the uncleanness of thy heart, hand, house and land to the Brook Kidron, *2 Chron.* 29. 16. Get tradingsins removed, if you would have trading mercies enjoyed: Take every man his Censer, and stand in the gap; pour out strong cries for returning-mercy, that the Lord would cease from his fierce wrath, and turn again, and heal our Land, and bless our substance, accept the work of our hand, and dwell in our Land.

Counsel 5.

Fifthly, Get advantage from decays in your Earthly Trade, to further your Heavenly Trade; gather materials from your earthly ruins, for your heavenly building. Christians, there's a great deal of good you may get from these evil things in the world, to quicken your pursuit after the things of Heaven.

First, By your earthly losses you may be convinced of the vanity and uncertainty of all things below God: Men are apt to take up too much pleasure in their booths, till God sends a devouring worm and consumes them; and to sit down under their shadows with great delight; and therefore doth God make them like shadows to fly away; what expectations do men raise from their swelling-comforts, thinking their mountains are made so strong, they shall not be moved, till the Lord by some levelling providence soon corrects their fond opinion! and what dependencies do we usually take up on those uncertainties, leaning so hard on our reeds, till they break under us, and send splinters into the arm which stays upon them? O the contentment, pleasure, profit, men fancy to be in creatures, friends, relations, honors, estates, before by some killing stroke they see themselves to be deceived! What mercy is it then to meet with disappointments in these groundless hopes, that we may come to see before it be too late, what poor, empty, perishing things all the wares of this lower world are! This way *David* came to have his error seasonably corrected. And *Solomon*, by a serious review of past enjoyments, comes to see that all was vanity and vexation of spirit, *Eccles.* 2. 1. *Surely every man walketh in a vain show; they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them, Psal.* 39. 6.

Secondly, Divine rebukes on men's earthly interests, help them to a discovery of those sins that procure them, *Deut.* 31. 17. Afflictions are Christ's clay and spittle to open his people's eyes, and to bring them to see those evils that have brought those deaths upon their comforts, and breed those worms that have destroyed their substance. Times of correction, are times of instruction, *Job* 36. 8, 9. When *Jacob's* Sons were cut short of their provisions, reduced to great distress, and plunged in sore dangers, then they thought upon their sin, and wrong done to their brother *Joseph*, *Gen.* 42. 21. *Then they said one to another, verily we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and would not hear, therefore is this distress come upon us: Whence one hath this note, Affliction is a dark condition, yet it brings much light into the soul.* Men come to read their miscarriages best by the fire-light of affliction; then *Manasseh* knew that the Lord was God, *2 Chron.* 33. 13. Now the soul comes to see his abuse of these mercies he hath lost, his inordinate love to them, and

wanderings from God, and this helps to after-wisdom, and greater freedom from these entanglements for the time to come, which is no small advantage to future godliness.

Thirdly, By this loss of earthly things, the soul comes to see a necessity of looking after, and ensuring better treasures: *Heb. 13. 14. Here have we no continuing City, but we seek one that is to come.* Uncertainties on Earth should put souls the more to look after Heaven. The Prodigal never thought of returning till all was gone, *Luke 15. 14. to verse 18.* The Steward never considered how to secure his future state, till goods were wasted, and Stewardship in danger of removal, *Luke 16. 1, 2, 3, 4. Think of swimming ashore (said Mr. Rutherford) after a shipwreck. 'Tis a mercy in this stormy Sea to get a second wind, for none of the Saints get a first.* This is advantage indeed, when having nothing, you seek to enjoy all things; and when the world flies from you, to pursue Heaven the faster. Could a Heathen say, *I never gained more than when I lost all;* because his shipwreck became the occasion of obtaining knowledge; and will not you Christians by your earthly losses be provoked to make after heavenly interests?

Fourthly, Losses in the world have an advantage through grace to loosen the heart from the world. Afflictions on men's estates are like wormwood on the breast, that tends to wean the hearts of God's children from them: Love of the world hath been the sin of this Age; and the shipwreck of worldly things is the likeliest way to cure it; this disease is best conquered by fasting. Absence of Lovers is sometimes the way to starve affections; and poverty with distress is God's usual method to chastise men's wanton affections to this world. Afflictions when sanctified, are Sanctuary-fire to purge away the dross of our affections, *Mal. 3. 3.*

5ly. Soul-enlargement is another fruit of sanctified straits, and so a help to the heavenly trade. Christians are never fit to make any speed in the way to Heaven, until their hearts be enlarged, *Psal. 119. 32.* Enlargements in the world are oftentimes bonds to the soul: He that hath most of the Earth, hath usually least liberty for Heaven. When the Lord cuts short the interest of his people, he doth but knock off golden fetters from their feet, that he may bring their soul out of prison. Afflicting Providences are God's dieting his racers, that they may be more longbreath'd, and swift in their run towards glory. O how imprisoned are redeemed souls in the many things of this world! they cannot have time to pray, read, hear, confer for the entangling-affairs of this life, till God by some deaths upon their employments sets them at liberty. Removes of worldly treasures are but the taking off of a heavy cloak-bag from the shoulders of *Zion's* Travelers, that they may the more comfortably travel to their journeys end. Good souls, whiles crowded with earthly businesses, are like persons in the midst of a thicket, and thorny grove, when they would be going forward, one briar hangs in their skirts, and another thorn stops their way; so that when God takes off their interests, he doth but cut out a way for his children to pass the more comfortably and swiftly through the brakes of this world, and lighten the vessel that it might sail faster and safer to its designed port; and is not this advantage?

Sixthly, Sweeter relishes of heavenly things are to Believers the blessed issues of the world's bitterness: Harsh Providences on earthly comforts make heavenly things the more pleasant. Men sometimes engraff sweet fruit on crab-treestocks, and God gives honey to his children at the top of the rod, *Psal. 94. 19. [The thorn is one of the most cursed, and angry, and crabbed*

weeds, and yet out of it springs the Rose, Rutherford.] The sweet-meats of this world do too often put Christians pallats out of taste; to cure which, doth the Lord dish out his daintiest meat with sour sauce: Heavenly things never relish better, than when there is less sweetness in the creature. What a value did *David* put upon spiritual things when stripped of all! *Psal.* 63. 1. Gospel-comforts will not down with such as are choke'd with the world's delicacies; but when once the Saints are emptied of the world by cross providences, then is Christ precious: & is not this a help to Heavenly Traders? O then! the more crosses you meet with in the world, the more haste do you make to your Crown. Doth the world fly from you? pursue Heaven the faster. Doth gain fall? then advance godliness: And if your gettings from Earth be small, let your layings out for Heaven be great. And thus much for the third Branch of Exhortation.

4th. Advice to such as are fallen back in Religion.

Fourthly, A word to such as have begun this Heavenly Trade, and are fallen back: This is the case of some, and may be of more in this hour of Temptation and Apostasy: There are some have begun in the Spirit, and are now ending in the flesh; who have made a fair show, seemed to be somewhat, and like blazing comets, drew the eyes of admirers on them for a time, and then fell down to the Earth. Some that have left the very form; others that have lost the power and life of godliness: Many have laid down their Lamp; but more have spent their Oil, and are almost come to a snuff: Some have shut up shop, are quite gone, and have taken their leave of Religion, resolving to return no more, unless safety, credit and interest return with them: Others yet stay, keep open shop, but have little goods; decay daily, and are upon the breaking hand; a waste is on their interests, they have lost their first love, decay'd in spirituals; faith, hope, love, zeal, delight in God, and liveliness for him are quite lost; as hath been demonstrated in the use of Lamentation. The design of this head is only to offer some advice towards the recovery of decayed broken Traders: In which, as hitherto, for better illustration I shall keep to the metaphor in the Text.

Advice 1.

My first Advice to such in order to their recovery, is to be deeply affected with their evil case.

First, Consider, 'tis no small change for a person that hath lived well, been in reputation with God and men, fared deliciously, been used to the dainties of God's house, and delicacies of his love; have tasted the heavenly gift, and the powers of the world to come; now to be brought to penury, and scarce meet with a sweet morsel from day today; to be put off with husks and dry bones, and the crumbs that fall from their Lord's Table; to stand at his door, or to wait without for some scraps, when the friends of Christ, and Wisdom's thriving Merchants, have their marrow and fat things; this is a great change.

For such as were wont to have a place amongst them that stand by, to converse with the Father of Spirits, to be let into the Presence chamber, and have the visits of the Comforter, and spiritual fellowship of Saints: Now to be laid aside, and scarcely looked upon with a divine glance from day today, no intercourse with God, or fellowship with the Spirit, from

one Lord's day to another, but to be only company for formalists and hypocrites, and such as are without; this is a great change. O get thy heart deeply affected with it!

Secondly, Think also how unlovely, offensive and displeasing an object in the eyes of God, a withered, decayed Professor is; *his soul takes no pleasure in him, Heb. 10. 38.* He doth not care for the company of such, they are a burden to him, he loves no more to see them, than men do dead corps in their houses, and rotten trees in their garden; he bethinks the place they stand in as cumbring the ground, *Luke 13. 7.* he counts them unworthy of the Kingdom of God, having put their hand to the Plough, and then look back, *Luke 6. 62.* Nothing more troubles his soul, than a lukewarm temper, that was once burning in love, but now is neither hot nor cold; such ride on the stomach of Christ, and make him down-right sick, till he hath vomited them out into the dunghill from whence they came; and is not this matter of trouble to a sensible heart? *Rev. 3. 16.*

Thirdly, Such have little desirableness in the eyes of men also. Who cares to deal with broken Merchants; or keep company with spendthrifts, that have wasted their estates, and are come to nothing? no more do gracious souls care for converse with backsliders. Decayed Professors are like broken vessels in whom there is no pleasure; and as a withered hand, or broken bone in the body, which hath lost both its usefulness and beauty. A broken Trader in Religion is valued by none; the men of the world cannot endure him, because he hath been seemingly godly; and Saints cannot love him, because he is not really gracious: Such, like *Absalom*(when hung by the hair) lie between Heaven and Earth, as unworthy of either; and as a person held in a strait passage, cannot go forward nor backward; he cannot go far enough to keep pace with the profane, nor go back to fill up his place with the pious; the Saints reject him, the wicked will not receive him: In such a pitiful case is a withered decayed soul, he hath no comeliness in him for which he should be desired.

Fourthly, They are the greatest losers of any who break in Religion; for they not only lose their own goods, but others also; their talents; graces, privileges and experiences, are their Lord's goods, which they have wasted in riotous living; they lose what they once had, what they seemed to have, or were fair for; and they lose what they hope to have, *Luke 16. 1. Mat. 25. 29. 2 Epist. Joh. v. 8. Gal. 3. 4.* All their enjoyments, tastes, comforts, frames, experiences, are lost: All their profession, faith, love, conscience, are shipwrecked: All their duties, labors, sufferings, come to nothing, if they are not recovered again to repentance. Here men estimate their losses to be great, from the quality, variety or abundance of the things they lose; all which are yet but temporal; but the Treasures that Professors are in chase of, and which they shall surely have, if they be sincere and faithful to the death, are eternal; of all which, by their backslidings (if uncur'd) they are deprived: O who can count the sum, and value the worth of those glorious things they fall short of, who fall back, and go down in Christianity, till they come to nothing!

Fifthly, Their case is dangerous also, and their wound hardly healed; not one of many that fall back in Religion, if they go far, recover again. *Joh. 6. 66. From that time many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him.* When *Judas, Simon Magus, Hymenaeus, Alexander, Demas,* went off from Christ, they returned no more: *John* tells us of some that went out from them,

and thereby declared that they were not of them. *1 Joh. 2. 19. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.* The Apostle speaks not of such as fall out of infirmity, falling in the way, which gracious souls may do, both falling into some sin for a time, as *Peter*, and fall back by some abatements of grace, as the Church of *Ephesus*, yet be recovered; such he intends not here; but those that fall out of the way, both totally and finally, these recover no more.

Quest. If persons that fall back in Religion after a high profession, may never be recovered again; how may one know if he find decays, and falling back in Religion, whether he be one of those that shall never be healed or recovered more? This is my case, I find great declensions in my soul and conversation, and I fear I shall never be restored, but wax worse and worse, and perish at last.

Sol. 1. First, Are not thy declensions thy choice, upon judgment and consent, but against the standing bent of thy heart? the renewed purposes of thy soul through Christ: Thy error is not thy aim, thou dost not deliberately contrive thy departure from God, but hast a secret would-not against every backsliding; then thy backslidings shall be healed again, *Psal. 119. v. 10. Rom. 7. 19, 25.*

Secondly, Are thy backslidings and spiritual decays thy soul-trouble, and restless burden, because of thy distance from God as the God of grace, and Father of thy mercies; and because of the injury thereby done to thy graces and inner man, and from an enmity in thy nature against sin? Then there is hope in *Israel* concerning this, that thy backslidings shall be healed, *Rom. 7. 24. Psal. 5. 1, 7. Luke 15. 21. Gal. 5. 17.*

Thirdly, Are thy backslidings after thy Effectual Calling, and thy sincere choice of God to be thy peculiar and alone portion? Thou canst appeal to the searcher of hearts, that thou hast taken the Lord to be thy God and only Treasure here, and to all eternity to be thy last end and chiefest good; and hast taken Christ to be the only way, truth and life, thy Lord and righteousness; and hast made a full and actual surrender of thyself and thy All to God in exchange, to be presently, unreservedly, and eternally his, and not thy own, to be led and governed by him only: If so, thy after-errors cannot make void this Covenant, but are under a promise of healing; *such cannot sin unto death, because the seed of God remaineth in them, 1 Joh. 3. 9.* They are undertaken to be kept, that they should not totally and finally depart from him, *Jer. 31. 18. Isa. 57. 18. Jer. 3. 14, 22. Hos. 14. 4. Jer. 32. 40.*

Fourthly, Art thou restless in thy backslidings, until the Lord doth heal thee? thou canst give him no rest till he establish thy soul, and be as the dew to thy dry and barren heart: When God sets a soul a crying, it's a sign he will hear: *Jer. 30. 15, 17. Isa. 19. 22. A man (saith Mr. Dod) can never be in a bad condition, except he hath a hard heart, and cannot pray? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God? Job 27. 10.* Backsliders in heart are heartless in prayer; as they decay, so do they restrain prayer, *Job 15. 4.* Ye have said, it is in vain to serve God, *Mal. 3. 14.* As sin becomes more delightful, so duty becomes more burdensome, cold and formal; but a gracious soul that shall be healed is importunate with God, and will not let him alone, *Exod. 32. 10, 11.* or let him go until he bless him, *Gen. 32. 6.* The worse his condition is,

the more fervent his cries are; the more his piety goes down, the more his prayers go up, *Psal. 6. 2.* Such a soul shall be healed, who would be healed; where he works to will, he will work to do.

Fifthly, Are thy vitals sound under all thy decays? then thy consumption is not mortal: Is thy heart sincere? thou canst not hide or reserve iniquity, but walkest before God in truth; thy desires after grace are not feigned, *Psal. 17. v. 1.* Thy love to God is not pretended, liplove, but real; thy faith and love are not wholly gone, but maintained in the truth thereof, though abated; thou canst not let God go, but hast a secret rest on him, and resolved recumbence on his grace and faithfulness. There is hope of that tree, though it seems to be cut down, that it will sprout again, and the tender branches thereof will not cease, *Job 14. 7.*

Sixthly, If under all thy decays thou findest a humble heart and contrite spirit; thy backslidings make thee lie low before God, and to become more vile in thy own eyes every day; thy soul-poverty makes thee poor in spirit also, rating thyself beneath the least mercy, and judging thyself unworthy of all that patience, privilege and mercy shewn to thee; thou dost not fret at afflicting providences, nor charge God foolishly, but bearest his indignation, justifiest his displeasure, and wonderest at his forbearance; then will revivings come again, and recovery after thy falling back, *Dan. 9. 7, 23, 25. Mat. 5. 3. Isa. 57. 15.*

But on the other side, There are five dangerous symptoms of falling back that shall hardly be restored.

First, If thy falling back be before thy falling in with Christ in truth; thy decays before thy quickenings, then 'tis dangerous: If thy building were on the sand, and the towering heights of thy frames and profession from which thou art fallen, were only structures of thy own raising, in which the Sanctifying Spirit had no hand, then thy decays are not likely to be repaired. Art thou a stranger to the new birth, and to any inward change upon thy soul? the principle of thy new profession and actions is still an old heart: Thou never didst take the Lord for thy God and only Treasure, nor hadst to this day any heart-union with the Lord Jesus; then thy fall is dangerous, *Mat. 7. 26, 27. 1 John 5. 14. 2 Tim. 3. 5.*

Secondly, A falling off from the foundation is dangerous: When men depart from the Faith, turn to another Gospel, and deny the Lord that bought them, fall from the Doctrine of Grace after enlightenings, to a Covenant of Works, laying the foundation of Salvation-hopes upon creature-performances and improvements, when they go from the Rule of Faith and Word of Truth, to natural light, and seducing spirits, which have not their evidence and approbation from the Scriptures. When persons at once disclaim dependency on the true foundation and disposal by the Rule of Righteousness 'tis much to be feared whether such shall be restored, *Gal. 1. 6. ch. 5. 4. Heb. 10. 26, 39. 2 Pet. 2. 15. Heb. 6. 4. 6.*

Thirdly, When men make Merchandise of the Truth, and sell their profession for worldly interest, having loved the reward of iniquity, and made a swap of their Religion for advantagesake: This is a mighty provocation to the Spirit, when men can sell themselves to work wickedness, and value the great things of God's Law, of his Truth and Salvation at so low a rate; to part with them for a mess of pottage, and the dirty *Cabals* of this world: 'Tis seldom that such find repentance, though they seek it with tears: See *Judas, Simon Magus,*

Balaam, Demas, Spira: What remarks of furious indignation God makes such Apostates to be, who can part with their Religion for worldly interests! 2 Tim. 4. 10. 1 King. 21. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 3, 15. Acts 1. 18.

Fourthly, Backsliders in heart shall surely perish, and be filled with their own ways, Prov. 14. 14. when falling back is upon choice, and with delight, like a deceitful Bow that is then at rest when its string is broken, Psal. 78. 57. When a man casts off Religion as one doth his burden, and a beast his yoke, Jer. 5. 5. and is glad he is rid of his troublesome work, as one that is got out of prison, Rom. 1. 32. This argues a spirit of *Belial*, and a dangerous state: Many have taken up a Lamp upon constraint, for fashion, or interest, or for companies-sake, as the foolish Virgins did, Prov. 14. 14. Psal. 78. 57. Jer. 5. 5. Mat. 25. 1. But when opportunity hath offered itself for a fair riddance, they have soon appeared what they were by their cheerful returns to *Egypt*, and the broad way of error and looseness, falling in with other interests, and finding pleasure in it: Now the world, reputation and pleasure take away the heart, and they are well-pleased with other Lovers: this is a bad sign of a desperate state, of marish-ground that shall never be healed, Ezek. 47. 11.

Lastly, When persons are prejudic'd against the means of recovery, hate them that rebuke them in the gate, Amos 5. 10. shun the light, and cannot endure those that would reclaim them from the error of their way, Joh. 3. 19. their hearts rise against any attempts to reduce them, Amos 7. 10. cannot bear them that are good, slight and hate the people of God they formerly loved, avoiding their company; jeer and reproach those Ministers, people and ways they once took pleasure in: this shows a dangerous state, such a persons condition seems desperate, and not far from the Chambers of death. O you that are fallen back in Religion! get your hearts affected with it: do you begin to decay? you know not where it will end: are you gone back? 'tis questionable whether ever you may return, and then what will your latter end be? your last state will be worse than your first; and if twice dead, you will be plucked up by the roots; if after showers and dressings you decay, your end will be to be burned.

Advice 2.

Secondly, If you would recover out of your wasting decays in this heavenly Trade, search out the causes, and get them removed. There must needs be something more than ordinary, when men who have a good Trade, which may be driven in the worst of times, and will ensure advantage, if followed, do notwithstanding fall back and decay: Such is Religion, it will maintain and enrich its followers, if they be not wanting to themselves; there must needs be some great causes and miscarriages then that doth cast back the professors of Christianity, and bring a consumption on their soul-prosperity: some of which may be these:

First, When they enter upon this heavenly Trade, and have not a stock to set it up: Religion is a great thing, and cannot be carried on without a stock of saving-grace to maintain it: Common grace is not a suitable stock for this spiritual Trade; it may help men to transact the external part, and common works of Religion; but cannot do the inward, secret, and choicest services of godliness: *A stranger intermeddles not with its joy*, Prov. 14. 10. no, nor its work; *They*

that are in the flesh cannot please God, Rom. 8. 8. The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, Rom. 14. 17. it lies not in outward duties, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; which no hypocrite can reach to. This spoils many, they take up a form of godliness without the power of it; and being strangers to the work within, they cannot carry on the works of grace without, which this state calls for; and so fall back, and come to nothing. When persons get some knowledge, parts, frames, and temporary graces; they presently take up a Lamp of profession, and get into the company of the wise, climb up to the enjoyment of privileges, and then sit down contented, and fall asleep; and when they come to temptations, and spiritual duties, to the work of faith, love, patience, self-denial, mortification, and the like; having not grace to support them, and a principle that suits such work, they fall short of duty, and into sin, and so Trade, and fall away: Common grace is as a standing-pool, which having not a spring to feed it, dries up when supplies cease, and scorplings come; whereas true grace is as a well of water, that springs up to life eternal.

Secondly, Another thing that casts back Traders, is this; when they set upon an employment, and have not skill to manage it: Every Art hath its principles, rules and mysteries by which it is carried on: to deviate from these, is to mar the excellency, and miss the advantage of it: Irregular actions seldom thrive; so 'tis with the heavenly Trade, when persons set upon it, and have not skill to order it to best advantage, no wonder if they prosper not, but fall back in godliness. *Solomon* directing to this heavenly Trade, advises to get wisdom as the principal thing in order to it, *Prov. 4. 7.* And when the Apostle would further the Saints in holy walking, as the necessary way to it, he begs wisdom for them, *Col. 1. 9, 10. That ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding: that ye may walk worthy of the Lord to all, well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work.* Two things made *David* thrive so much in his proper public work; Integrity of heart, and Understanding, *Psal. 78. 72.* He fed them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands: Some books read it in the plural number in the *Greek; In skilfulnesses,* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , noting the great measure of wisdom which men need who would prosper in their proper work, and order their administrations prudently, as might most further their spiritual welfare: The want of which wisdom and prudence in Christians to order everything they do in their general and particular Callings, converses, conditions and occurrences in the World to the best advantage of their souls, is one reason they thrive so little in their heavenly Trade: Wisdom would teach men to prevent many snares and occasions of evil, and instruct them how to get good from everything they do, which would much advance their soul-profiting, for want of which they go back in spirituals, and decay apace.

Thirdly, This also casts back Traders; when they are not diligent in the management of their Trade: *A slothful soul suffers hunger, Prov. 19. 15. and by much sloth the building decays; and through idleness of hand the house droppeth thorough, Eccles. 8. 10.* They that will thrive in the World must be diligent, take all opportunities to carry on their work: *The diligent hand maketh rich, but by slothfulness men are brought to a morsel of bread.* So 'tis in Religion, when men let down their work, and do not follow it to purpose, they soon decay, and become spiritually poor; this is the bane of many this day: Religion is not their business; men do but little on the Lord's day, and scarce a stroke of work is done all the week after; hear they will, and when

that is done, their work is done too: never think of what they hear, or put it to practice from one Lord's day to another: All the week their heads, hearts, hands, feet, time, strength, discourses, contrivances are wholly taken up about the World; and how can they choose but go down the hill, and waste away in their soul-interests?

Religion is one continued work, which allows of no intermission, but hath its work every day, and in everything; break but one link of this golden chain of godliness, and it weakens the whole. O the slothfulness of Christians at this day in their soul-businesses! every day is filled up with neglects; neglect of prayer, neglect of reading, meditation, conference, heartwatching, grace-cherishing-work, forget this duty; pass by another, cold, sleighty, formal in all; this spoils the prosperity of souls. The *Galatians* began well, but did not hold out, they were soon weary, *Gal. 5. 7*. Most men's journey to Heaven is full of stops, and that which makes it most miserable, their lets are of themselves: *Who hath hindered you?* Men's stays are within in their own hearts, they have no heart to do good, *Hos. 7. 11*. Love to Religion is almost gone, and this makes men weary in these pleasant ways: while affections hold, souls are never weary; but when the heart is gone, then everything is a burden; such will do no more than needs they must to quiet conscience, and preserve peace and credit; and this starves godliness.

Fourthly, Great and frequent losses in men's Trades tend to breaking; and so it is in Religion: Christians through their sloth, formality and unwatchfulness sustain many and great losses of spiritual mercies, and this brings them low. A Christian the other day, it may be, had his graces flourishing, his heart warm, his affections quick and lively, his conscience pure and tender, his will flexible, and fixed on God and things spiritual, *2 Ep. Joh. 8*. and a good frame throughout his whole soul: but now through his carelessness all is lost again, *Gal. 3. 4*. One time he loses the favor and comfortable presence of God, *Psal. 51. 12*. another time he loses a sweet serenity of spirit, and peace with God; then light and convictions are gone; another time enjoyments and experiences are gone; now his desires after God are lost, then his strength is devoured; now temptations prey upon the soul, and then corruptions make a waste upon it: come to Ordinances, Sermons, Sacraments, and after a great deal of prayer, care, and striving, a little grace and comfort is obtained; but through want of watchfulness all lost again: it may be before it stirs out of the place, or recovers home to his habitation; the next company, discourse, occasion, takes away all.

Another time God brings the soul into the fire of some great affliction, sickness, suffering, losses; and there melts it into some holy frames, humility, faith, love, obedience takes off some dross, puts on some beauty, imparts some souladvantage; but immediately upon a change of the person's condition, when new mercy, health and comfort returns, all the good is lost again. Now through these many and great losses in spirituals, which gracious souls sustain, they are brought very low, and come to be soon poor and beggarly.

Fifthly, Great wastes, and large expenses, help to make Traders poor apace; when they turn spendthrifts, and prodigals, living above their estates; when their layings out are more than their comings in, this must needs bring them low: It undid the Steward; *He wasted his Masters goods, Luke 16. 1*. So 'tis with Wisdom's Merchants also, when they turn prodigals of their

graces, mercies, parts, strength, time, and other goods committed to them, spending them on their lusts and carnal contentments, then they soon find an alteration.

O, at what a rate do men live in point of time! and at what vast expenses of their short day upon things of no value, talking, eating, drinking, sleeping, trifling, sinning away their precious time, as if they had no employment for it, or no better work to do: Little do souls think what a small pittance of day-light they have allowed for their vast concerns, and multitude of great employments; and what madness 'tis to be so prodigal of this little inch of precious time. O the hours, and days, and years that professing Christians spend to no purpose! in vain thoughts, foolish talking, impertinent converses, unprofitable duties and labors, which when they shall be all reckoned up by the great Creditor, and a bill of wastes put into the hands of conscience, and the total sum of these expenses read; what amazing sense! what dreadful impress! and fretful sting will this beget when persons come to die! As the Queen said, *If her heart were ripped open, Cales would be found written in it:* So if their hearts could then be as legible as their expressions, men might read this there in black, and capital letters, *Lost time, Lost time.*

How great also are men's wastes of graces and peace, wisdom and capacities, and all for the obtaining of some poor, empty, insignificant comforts, which perish with the using: There are no locusts (Christians) like your cursed lusts, which have devoured your precious things; your affections, time, strength and graces; what convictions, resolutions, hopeful frames, conscience-tenderness, talents, capacities, privileges, ordinances, providences, have the service of thy base lusts, and contentment of thy carnal mind consumed! and this hath brought thy soul to such straits and distressing exigencies.

When souls live above their capacities and proportion; that's casting back, when persons have little, and yet live high; have but a little light, and yet spend that too in works of darkness; have but a short day, and yet so many hours of that one day consumed in vanity; this is to live above thy estate, and will be soon impoverishing: When men have but a little grace and strength, and yet adventure upon great temptations, and run into soul-ruining dangers, rush into vain company, set upon entangling affairs, and take much business on their hands, and yet have but a little portion of Wisdom and Grace to manage them; this is to live above thy estate in Christianity. To be low of stature, and yet high in conceit, of little spiritual worth, and yet think highly, and speak highly of thyself, and to expect estimation from others also, is to live above thy estate.

To have nothing to maintain thee but what comes in by thy soul labors; no longer work, no longer eat; thy daily bread depends upon thy daily work; so poor, and yet in this condition to expect an easy life, to lie down to slumber, to dwell carelessly, and set thy hand but by fits and starts to thy work: This is to live above thy spiritual estate, and will soon bring thee to breaking in this Heavenly Trade.

Sixthly, Great debts are breaking, and will cast men back in Wisdom's Merchandise; when men owe more than they are worth, and know not how to pay it; run further on book every day, till their credit will pass no longer; they have often promised payment, but still failed,

and now their word will not pass, they can get no more goods, Creditours will not trust them, but begin to suspect them, and threaten to take them up, then men shut up shop and break: This also is pernicious to Heavenly Traders, when they become unfaithful to God and men, run on score for mercy, but never pay or render to God again; are deep in debt to God for divine goodness; receive one mercy after another, one talent after another, and make no returns of any; God sees not principal or interest, but they remain fruitless and unthankful under all; make promises of better improvements, but still break them: Come to Sacraments, and renew their Covenant with God, and go away and break it again; make promises to God under affliction, that if he will deliver them *this once*, they will never grieve and provoke him more as they have done; make large engagements, if God will hear this prayer, and give that mercy; but when their turn is served, forget God, and break all their vows again; be ready to pass their word on every occasion, and then look after it no more; this begets a jealousy in the Lord of Hosts, that he will trust them no more, *Deut. 32. 21. but hold his hand. and part with no more goods, but threatens to take them up, and to cast their souls into prison; begins to sue them in the Court of Conscience, and to out-law them at the bar of Justice, to seize on what they have; then away goes peace, joy, hope, and then comes breaking. These are some of those reasons why Christians go back in Religion, and decay in their Heavenly Trade. O Christians! bring the plummet to the line, and thy heart and life to the balance, and try from which of these comes thy soul-decays, and then get it to bear upon thy heart, till thou art fully convinced of thy evil, and willing on any terms to obtain remedy.*

Advice 3.

Thirdly, Compound with your Creditor; get your peace made with God through Christ; make haste to prevent a seizure on your person and goods by a timely composition. *Agree with your adversary while you are in the way with him, lest at any time he deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into prison, Mat. 5. 25. 'Tis a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an ever-living God, who is a consuming fire, Heb. 10. 31. ch. 12. 29.* O tremble in the sense of his righteous Judgment, and force not the Lord by thy delays to commence a suit against thee, and to make an entry upon all that thou hast; *but go humble thyself, and make sure thy friend, Prov. 6. 3.* Fall down before thy Creditor, and sue for terms of reconciliation; cast thyself at the feet of mercy, confessing thy sin: Pay the debt thou canst not; go beg remission, and offer a Surety to discharge the score, even such a one as the Father himself is well pleased with: Thy Creditor must be satisfied or thou art undone; but this you can never do: Away to a Mediator to obtain terms, and to procure your peace; make Christ your friend, who is able to satisfy all the Father's demand, to cross the book and send your discharge by the Spirit of Grace, who can witness the pardon of all your sins to your consciences: Come to him in the sense of your folly, bearing your shame. Forsake your wasting ways, and with the prodigal return from your harlots to your Father's house, rating yourselves beneath the least of his mercies, and consenting to the meanest condition, so he would but take you in again, *Luke 15. 17, 18, 20, 21.* Subscribe all his terms, and make a new surrender of yourself and your All to Christ, to be no more your own, but more entirely his than ever, *Jer. 50. 5.* Enter into a new Covenant with God in Christ, taking him for your Surety, and fetching all

your abilities to fulfil it from him, and get thy soul more firmly bound to the Lord in it by the bond of the Spirit.

Advice 4.

Fourthly, Set up no more for yourselves, but enter yourselves Factors for Christ. It may be you traded formerly for yourselves, and that broke you; if you would prevent that danger for the future, you must be no more for yourselves, but for him; trading as his Factours, not your own.

Now three things are required in a Factor, which must be observed also by wisdom's Merchants, if ever they will drive a thriving Trade in Godliness.

- 1. *To trade upon another's Stock.*
- 2. *To be regulated by another's Advice.*
- 3. *To drive on another's Interest.*

First, If you will be Christ's Factours, you must trade upon his stock; you must not only take all your goods from him, but as his; not only fetch in your graces, abilities, skill, success from him, but use and improve them as his, not as your own. *Joh. 1. 16. Of his fullness have all we received grace for grace.* 'Twas not only part of his fullness before it was received, but 'tis his grace after reception. *Col. 1. 19. It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell:* not only the fullness of the Divine Nature, but the fullness of habitual grace, both which are in Christ; the latter is chiefly intended here, which dwells in Christ as in a head, not for himself only, but for his body, as beams in the Sun, and water in the Fountain for the use of man. The Father hath laid up all that grace that Believers need here and forever in the Lord Jesus, as in a Treasury, or Trustee's hand, for their use; or made it over to him not only as a deed of gift, but as a purchase which he hath bought by his blood for the good and use of his children: 'Tis his fullness, right and interest, but for their use and advantage, but so as the property and disposal be still his. Fal'n man hath forever forfeited his credit with God since his first defection, to become anymore the disposer of his interests and inheritance, or be entrusted again with his own portion. God deals with saved souls as parents do with prodigal children, secures their estates in the hand of a Feoffee. Believers Treasures are laid up in Christ, that so grace as well as glory, sanctification and salvation may be sure to them, and not liable to forfeiture or loss; to be disposed of, and parted with by them as they please, but be certainly and eternally theirs, that so they may come to Christ for all they need, as heirs under age, who have no more in hand than what they want, but must come to their Overseers for all they have use of; and not only as such, but as Stewards also that must be accountable for what they have, and how they bestow it.

Poor decay'd souls, Would you recover your losses, and renew your Trade? then you must come to Christ's fullness, and be beholding to his free grace for all you need. Do you want grace for your duties, places, trials, sufferings? come to Christ's fullness for your supplies; send to him by the hand of prayer an intimation of all your wants: Make known your

requests to him. *Phil. 4. 6. Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.* Cease not from following God in the Name of Christ with requests, till the Spirit meet you with returns. The Lord Jesus hath ordained his people to receive their supplies, salaries, and stipends from Heaven in the Court of Requests. *Matth. 7. 7. Ask, and you shall receive. All things whatever you shall ask in prayer believing you shall receive, Matt. 21. 22.* Seek it by prayer, receive it by faith: Go to Christ in the promises for all you want, judging him faithful who hath promised, *Heb. 11. 11. God's Word is as good as present pay, and shall be fulfilled by him (who cannot lie) to all that by faith receive it, and wait for its performance. All his promises are in Christ Yea and Amen, 2 Cor. 1. 20.* Who came down from Heaven to confirm them with his blood, and is returned to Heaven to fulfil them by his intercession, *Heb. 7. 25.* You may boldly adventure on divine assurance, and shall not be ashamed, if you sincerely roll on Christ in his Word. Be well acquainted with the promises, clear up your interest in them by believing, and expect their fulfilling through Christ. It may be thy graces are low, thy corruptions high, guilt heavy, fears many, refuge fails, thy prayers not answered, no good news from Heaven or Earth; thou prayest, hopest, waitest, but no answer; in this case nothing but firm reliance on divine faithfulness, can keep thy head above water.

Are you in wants? go to that promise, *My God shall supply all your wants, Phil. 4. 19. God will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly, Psal. 84. v. 11.* Do you find changes in your spirits, and frames, and condition? See that word, *Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe his Prophets, and you shall prosper, 2 Chron. 20. 20.* Are corruptions high? apply that word, *He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us, he will subdue our iniquities, Mic. 7. 19. Sin shall have no dominion over you; for you are not under the Law, but under grace, Rom. 6. 14. Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, Titus 2. 14. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil, Joh. 3. 8. I will save her that halteth, Zeph. 3. 19.* When thou seest nothing but witherings and dyings in thy soul, apply these promises; *So wilt thou recover me, and make me to live, Isa. 38. 16. The righteous shall flourish like the Palm-tree, he shall grow like the Cedars of Lebanon: Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God, thy shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing, Psal. 92. 11, 12, 13, 14. I will be as the dew to Israel, he shall grow as the Lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon: they that dwell under his shadow shall return, and shall revive as the corn, Hos. 14. 5, 6, 7. They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, Isa. 40. 31.* In these and such like promises, as in wagons sent of purpose to fetch you, go over to your *Joseph*, and get them laden with the riches of his Kingdom, that you may be relieved and carried on in your Trading for Heaven, improving these not as yours, but as your Lord's goods: That's the first, Trade upon Christ's Stock.

Secondly, Follow his instructions, be guided by his order in the management of your Heavenly Trade: Take Letters of Advice from your Creditor, how to lay out his moneys, and how to dispose of his goods. *Prov. 3. 5. Lean not to your own understanding, which is the most close and subtle kind of Idolatry (saith Cartwright) Seek not after your own heart, and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring, Numb. 15. 39.* Man is mightily propense since his first defection from God, to take the Scepter into his own hand, and to become the governor of his own

ways: But this God cannot bear, as being inconsistent with his Supremacy, and that State also into which man is by grace redeemed; which is an absolute devotedness unto God, 2 Cor. 8. 5. Ye have likewise chosen the Lord to be your Law-giver and King, if you are his, and are now upon your own consent determinable by his pleasure in everything you do: The rectitude of every action lies in a conformity to his will, who is your Lord and Sovereign. And as the eyes of a Handmaid wait on her Mistress; so should Believers on Christ for direction in all they do, *Psal.* 122. 3. Christians, your former irregularities in the prosecution of your Heavenly Trade, have almost lost you, and cast you back: O be more observant of Divine Instructions for the future! follow your advice, walk by Rule: *As you have received how you ought to walk, and to please God; so abound more and more,* 1 *Thes.* 4. 1. Beg Wisdom of God to know his Will in everything, to do that which is well-pleasing in his sight, having a warrant for every action you perform both civil and religious; this will be your comfort now, and your peace in the day of your accounts.

Thirdly, Drive on his interest, not your own. *Rom.* 14. 7. *For none of us liveth to himself.* God can more justly say what *Laban* did to *Jacob* concerning his children and goods; *These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle; and all that thou seest is mine,* *Gen.* 31. 43. *The cattle on a thousand hills are his,* *Psal.* 50. 10. *with the corn, wine, wool and flax,* *Hos.* 2. 9. Both the improvement as well as principal are his, *Mat.* 25. 27. He hath right to the exercise and fruit of your graces and duties, with all that you enjoy and do: Put Christ's mark on all your goods; whatever you gain by his talents, put on his account, and let your disbursements be expended to his use. Seek not your own things, your credit, peace, comfort, interest, but in subordination to him: If the Lord by his Word calls for any of your enjoyments, you must let them go: If by his Providence he takes off any comfort, murmur not, say, 'tis the Lord, Let him do what he will with his own, *Mat.* 20. *verse* 15.

Advice 5.

Fifthly, Follow your Trade better than you have done; remember how former carelessness, formality, sloth, hypocrisy, have undone you, and amend. The slothful soul is as the door on his hinges, *Prov.* 26. 14. that never makes any progress in Religion, or comes to any excellency in grace. *No Christian (saith Mr. Sedgwick) is so able in the habits of grace, as he who is conscientiously frequent in the practice or exercise of grace.* [*Christ's Counsel to his languishing Church*] Would you recover your state, and come to any eminency in godliness, then make Religion your business: That sleightiness of spirit in the way of God, which lost you at first, will never restore you. *The recovery of a faint soul (saith the same Author) will never be effected by faint workings: You did fall into your decayed state by remissive actings, and think you, that which was not able to keep up your graces from sinking, can now quicken and raise them being sunk.* [*Christ's Counsel to his languishing Church*, p. 148.] If negligence did cast you back, diligence must help to recover you: Take more pains with your hearts; follow your work of godliness every day, and in every place; Be early and late in your shops of duty, and in the warehouse of your hearts: Beware of spiritual sloth, and soul-losses; take heed of unfaithfulness with God, conscience, or others; keep touch with your Creditor; be tender of your vows to God and men; keep from prodigality; live not above your condition; waste not precious time,

parts and grace in vain; walk strictly in the whole course of your life, keeping yourselves from iniquity, and in the Love of God. *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ, Jude v. 21. Tit. 2. 13.*

5th. Branch of Exhortation to good Traders in Religion.

Lastly, You, whoever you are that drive on this Heavenly Merchandise, and have any good Trading in Religion, be you exhorted

Advice 1.

First, To bless God for good trading: Is it well with your souls? *Doth the South-wind blow upon your Garden, and the Spices flow out? Cant. 4. 16. Doth the Fig-tree put forth her green Figs? and the Vine, with the tender Grape, give a good smell? Cant. 2. 13.* What reason have you then to be always giving thanks? you whose trading turns to any spiritual advantage: thou canst say, *'Tis good to draw nigh to God; in keeping his commands is great reward: The Lord is not a barren wilderness to thy soul; but peace is within thy Walls, and prosperity within thy Palaces, Psal. 122. 7. Thy glory is fresh in thee, and thy bow renewed in thy hand: thy root spreadeth out by the waters, and the dew lying all night between thy branches, Job 29. 19, His ways are pleasantness, and his steps drop fatness to thy soul; and he commands his blessing upon thee; and thy faith and love do grow.* Is it thus in any measure with thee? O then bless the Lord with thy soul; let all that is within thee bless his holy Name. Make the Lord thy glory, and triumphing praise: Thou hast abundant reason to be admiring grace, and exalting divine glory. Because,

First, Soul-thriving is a great mercy at all times; a little spiritual goods is beyond all the World's treasure; one piece of Christ's tried Gold weighs down all the Pearls and Diamonds on earth; and whatever can be found below grace, cannot be compared with it, *Job. 28. 11, 12, 16.* or named the same day with it: The light of God's countenance, pardon of sin, participation of the spirit, fulfilling of Promises, fellowship with the Father, Son, and Spirit; heartbreathings after, love to, and delight in God, are things of inestimable worth; if you weigh them in themselves, or with other things; or if you consider the grace from whence they come, or price which they cost: Spiritual thrivings are an evidence of sincere love to God. *Judge. 5. 31. Let them that love thy Name be as the Sun that goeth forth in his might,* and of special love in God to that soul, *Tit. 3. 4, 6. Eph. 1. 3, 5, 7.* God may prosper in the World those he hates; *Esau* had his fat things here, but grace and peace are new-covenant-blessings, which spring from eternal love in the heart of God to that soul, *Heb. 8. 10. Zech. 8. 11, 12, 15.*

Secondly, 'Tis a singular mercy at this time, a mercy that few enjoy in the day we live in: What a rare thing is it, in this long winter, to see a green Olive, a tender Grape appear, or Pomgranate bud? *Cant. 7. 6.* or one Berry in the uppermost branch, *Isa. 24. 13.* It was a peculiar glory put upon the head of *Thyatira*, that she was thriving when other Churches were decaying: *She had works, and works, and the last were more than the first, Rev. 2. 19.* *Ephesus* had lost her first love; *Sardis* had decayed and wasted her first strength, and was ready to die: *Laodicea* was luke-warm, ready to be spewed out by the Lord Jesus, *Rev. 3. 1, 8, 16.* only *Thyatira* flourished exceedingly, and grew in the winter; and this honor she had, to have it recorded by the Spirit for a monument in after-ages. 'Tis not the lot of everyone to thrive in

evil times; few *Thessalonians* whose faith and love did grow, *2 Thes.* 1. 3. A single *Timothy*, who had flourishing affections to the things of Christ; *I have no man like minded, Phil.* 2. 20. One *Gaius*, whose soul out-prospered his body, *3 Ep. Joh.* v. 2. A flourishing Christian this day is like a flower in winter, an Apple-tree amongst the trees of the wood: Surely, if there be a Soul who this day flourishes to any height of Christianity, who lives in intimacy with God, fares deliciously in his soul, feeding on marrow, and hidden *manna*; that he or she is greatly beloved of God. Thy lot, O soul, is fallen in a peculiar plot of mercies ground; and should not the Lord Jesus be admired of such a one, seeing he is come to him in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel? O bless God for this unspeakable gift!

Thirdly, 'Tis an earnest of eternal mercy: They that sow to the spirit shall reap life everlasting, *Gal.* 6. 8. And such as abound in holiness, shall have an abundant entrance administered to them into the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, *2 Tet.* 1. 11. God will never throw away savoury salt to the dunghill, nor burn up fruitful branches: Trees full of sap are the Lord's trees, which he will transplant into his Paradise above, *Psal.* 104. 16. The Lord's ripe fruit shall be gathered, not shaken on the ground; and safely housed in Heaven. Grace is too precious seed to be lost; *Such as sow it now, though in tears, shall surely come again, and bring their sheaves with them, Psal.* 126. 5.

Poor troubled Soul, God will not despise the day of thy small things, much less thy soul-enlargements after him; he will be tender of thy smallest blossoms, and secure them into fruit; much more shall thy increases arrive to the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ, *Eph.* 4. 15. *God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which you have shewn towards his name, Heb.* 6. 10. It may be thou hast forgotten many a duty and hearty testimony of thy love to Christ, his name, people and ways; and canst see nothing in all thou hast done, but art ready to say on every turn; *When saw I thee an hunger'd, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw I thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or sick, and in prison, and came to thee? Matth.* 25. 35. But God cannot be so unrighteous to forget it, or let it pass so; but keeps a record of all thy meanest duties, and will make the most of them in the day of righteous judgment. *I know thy works, and thy labors, and thy patience, &c. Rev.* 2. 2. *When thou wast under the Fig-tree I saw thee, Joh.* 1. 48. He takes notice of a *Daniel* by the river *Hiddekel*; of a *Peter* on the house-top; of *Elijah* under the Juniper-tree, *1 King.* 19. 4, 5. yea, of what was but in *David's* heart to do, and requites it, *8 King.* 8. 18. Will not an *Ahasuerus* let the good deeds of *Mordecai* go unrewarded? and shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right, and crown the works of his own hands? *Your labors shall not be in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor.* 15. 58. O then be blessing God for the least good he hath wrought in you, and for you, for any prosperity in your souls. There are no offerings come up with that acceptance on God's Altar, as thanksgiving-offerings, *Psal.* 69. 30, 31. What a delightful remark did the Lord Jesus put upon the Lepers return to praise him for cleansing, *Luke,* 17. 18. the more spiritual, the more rejoicing, *Isa.* 52. 8. No such thriving souls, as God-praising souls: *Jer.* 31. 12. *Therefore they shall come, and sing in the height of Zion; and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord for Wheat, and for Wine, and for Oil; and their soul shall be as a watered Garden, and they shall not sorrow anymore at all.*

Quest. How might I know whether I have good trading in Spirituals or no, that I might have ground for rejoicing in God? Could I find this soul-welfare you speak of, I should bless God with my whole soul; but I fear 'tis otherwise; that I am one of those who fall back, and decay in my heavenly Trade.

Sol. There are seven signs of good Trading, especially in evil times; which men usually reckon to be discoveries of a thriving Trade.

First, When men go not back in the World, but hold their own, they lose nothing: 'Tis much in bad times to keep ones ground; to be savers in such a season is a piece of gain: Try in this how 'tis with you; do not you go back in your spiritual estate? is it not worse with you than heretofore? Is not your faith, love, humility, patience less than heretofore? If you go not back in grace, you go forward; there's no standing at a stay in Religion, men go forward or backward in the way of Virtue; they that do not decay, do thrive in Spirituals: *Job* proves his good estate by his standing fast in shaking times: *Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lip; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food: My foot hath held his steps; his way have I kept, and not declined*, *Job* 23. 10, 11, 12. and thence concludes a gainful issue: *When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as Gold*. And the Apostle reckons it good profit, in soul-conflicts, to stand ones ground; if he cannot gain, yet not to lose: *But having done all, to stand, is victory*, *Eph.* 6. 13. Christians have their winterseasons, when growing is not visible; then to keep alive, is commendable. Do you hold fast your integrity? and keep your garments on? Do you preserve your conscience pure from the defilements and temptations of the day and place you live in? and your hearts unspotted from the World? your desires as warm, your purposes of cleaving to God as firm, and your feet as quick to run the way of God's commandments as heretofore? then have you good trading, considering the times you live in, which is an hour of temptation, and an evening of darkness.

Secondly, If wares go off well, 'tis good trading; when goods vend at a good rate, men count it thriving. Is it so with your souls? do your prayers come up to God with acceptance? do duties turn to any profit to you? what returns have you of your religious services? do hearing, prayer, conference, bring you any soul-advantage? do not goods lie by you undisposed of? but your graces are exercised, your talents, gifts, opportunities, improved; then 'tis good Trading. If the Lord give you light, you lay it out for the good of others; if he restore to you the joy of his salvation, and uphold you with his free Spirit, you teach transgressors his ways, and endeavor to convert sinners to him, *Psal.* 51. 12, 13. When God drops in comfort to you, you pour it forth to others, that they may be comforted also with the same comforts wherewith you are comforted of God, *2 Cor.* 1. 4. When you are come to duties public or private, do graces go out in them? you show parts it may be, but do you lay out grace as well as gifts, spiritual as well as natural affections? Do you pray with the Spirit, and hear with Faith? do hope, fear, humility, holy fervency, heavenly breathings, sincerity, go off in your religious duties? when you meet with company, what goods do you put off to them? Do you labor in every society to vend something of heavenly wares, to put off some holy counsel and instruction, some gracious experience and observation, to leave something

behind you in every place and company you come, that may fasten a savor of God on them? then is it good Trading, and you are in a soul-thriving way.

Thirdly, Men count it good Trading, when they are richer in stock, when they have more goods, more variety, greater quantity of wares, than first they had, and that clear too, and paid for; their shops and warehouses are fuller than they were, and the goods their own also; this men reckon good Trading: And can you say 'tis thus with your souls also? Are you increased with spiritual goods? your graces are more as well as gifts, your faith, love, hope, fear, are more grown, and stronger than they were, *2 Thes.* 1. 3. Can you trust God more than you could, and hang upon a naked promise more strongly than you could, when sight fails? *2 Cor.* 5. 7. Can you think well of God when he frowns upon you? Can you love him when he corrects you? *Isa.* 39. 8, Can you stay on him when he strips you of your visible comforts, and cleave to him when he seems to reject you? *Job* 13. v. 15. Then are you richer in stock.

Is your Faith more cleansing and quickening, your Love more warming, your Zeal more fervent, your Hope more adventurous, your Patience more bearing, your Joy more delighting, your Humility more self-abasing? then are you increased with goods. Have you more of every grace; it may be at first you had much affection, but little sincerity; great desires, but little faith; much comfort, but little patience and self-denial; you could pray, talk, rejoice, do some duties, but could not bear trials, want comforts, live by faith when sight failed; you were much it may be in some duties, but negligent in others; but now you have more variety of graces, enlargement in duties, and more universal respect to all God's commands, *Psal.* 119. 6. And if you are less in the bulk of duty, you are more in the spirit of it; when 'tis thus, there's a thriving Trade in Christianity.

Fourthly, Are you less in debt than you were? that's another sign of good Trading: Do you make conscience of rendering to God again for all his benefits? *Psal.* 116. 12, 13. Is it your trouble when you are behind-hand with grace, and fall in arreer to the mercy of God by your unthankfulness? *Dan.* 9. 10. Indeed, in compensation of the grace of God you are defective; to make requitals of mercies you cannot; you see possibly an infinite shortness in your performances of the meanest favor that the Lord bestows upon you; but such as you have, you give to the Lord; you render all possible praises, though not all praises due, *Exod.* 15. 2. This you are careful of, and charge upon your hearts every day, to walk as becometh the grace that brings salvation, and the mercies bestowed on you: 'tis the desire of your heart and labor, to walk worthy of God to all well pleasing, and to answer the end of mercy in which you are willing beyond your ability, and grieve at your falling short herein: Now this doth the Lord count for the deed, and accept at his people's hands, as full pay, through the satisfaction of Jesus Christ, *2 Cor.* 8. 12. And where 'tis thus that persons live in the daily sense of Divine Grace, and grateful acknowledgment of every mercy, there is a thriving Trade in spirituals.

Fifthly, Have you much owed you, and is it secure? This also bespeaks a thriving Trade: Men count sure debts as good as ready money; though they have little in bags, yet if they have the more in book, and good debt too, they rate themselves accordingly, and reckon themselves worth so much as is due, as well as to what is in hand: And is it so with you Christians? are

you rich in promises? is much coming to you upon a new-covenant score? It may be you have little in hand, little comfort, peace and sweetness you meet with from day today: You sow much, but reap little; you ask, but have not, and yet seek with your whole heart: Goods are received, but no money returned; if so, you have good grounds of hope for a plentiful harvest, because you sow store of good seed; are much in holy duties, and sincere in them; many a prayer upon the file, many a tear droped into God's bottle, much grace laid out in duty, and time spent in it, a daily care to please God, and upon Scripture grounds can lay claim to many a promise on the account of Christ: What you sow, you shall reap, *Gal. 6. 8. Your labor shall not be in vain in the Lord, 2 Cor. 15. v. 58. Say unto the righteous, it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings, Isa. 3. 10.* And the less is received, the more is behind. Improvements of grace do book down many a mercy for Believers, which possibly they may not receive all their life, and yet be sure, and turns to account in the Inheritance prepared for them; and this is good Trading which brings in bonds and bills that are sure, and shall be paid to Heavenly Traders in their own Country.

Sixthly, That's good Trading where the present incomes maintain the Trader, and so much is got by it as they may live by; when a person can live comfortably upon his gettings, without impairing the stock: If it be so with the Believer in thy Heavenly Trade, then hast thou good Trading. Try Christians, your thriving by your livelihood! can you live comfortably upon the fruits of Religion, *Cant. 2. 3. Isa. 40. 31.* doth your Religion maintain your Souls and Graces well? *Joh. 4. 30.* at what rate do you live? Men that thrive in the world usually live well, have good fare, and good clothing: Diet, Apparel, Expences, do soon show men's gettings; Indeed Prodigals may spend high, live well for a time, but then they cannot hold it; they soon break, but when men can bear liberal expenses, and their Estates not impaired, it argues such do thrive apace, and get well in their Trades; so 'tis with thriving Christians, they ordinarily live at a higher rate of peace and comfort than others, *Ps. 119. 165. Ps. 80. 19.* their fare is better, unless the health of their Souls do sometimes call to fasting and affliction; strong Christians, overcoming Souls, have better Provisions promise'd them than others: such feed on hidden Manna, *Rev. 2. 17.* and marrowy bits; milk is for babes, but strong meat for strong men, *Prov. 21. 15.* 'Tis joy to the just to do judgment: Joy and Pleasure (saith Mercer) is the fruit of well-doing to such: Such can expend more than others, who have larger proportion of Blessings on their Souls. A person may be truly gracious, and yet live uncomfortably in his Soul, and in the ways of God; but he that thrives in Godliness, hath larger incomes of sweetness and peace, and makes many a merry meal on the review of his integrity, and the grace of God in and towards him, *Psal. 112. 2.*

Seventhly, Layings up, as well as layings out bespeaks good Trading, when men fill their bags and enlarge their possessions, turn Purchasers, and begin to join house to house, and field to field, then they manifestly show their thrivings: So when Souls thrive in their Heavenly Trade, they begin to lay up for Heaven, and to be preparing for another world; they lay up Treasure in Heaven, *Mat. 6. 21.* get bags that wax not old: weak Christians are all for their comforts here, how they may maintain their peace and pleasure in the way; but strong Christians, thriving Souls, they have their thoughts upon their journeys end, and to make provisions for their future state: Bread and Water contents them here, *Gen. 28. 20.* a little

spending Money in the way to help them home is all they indent for: But their chiefest care is to lay up for Heaven; *When shall I provide for mine own house, saith Jacob, Gen. 30. 30?* So the thriving Christian is thoughtful about his house in Heaven, to make all the provisions he can for that; he will lay up in store a good foundation to lay hold on eternal life, *1 Tim. 6. 19.* he is for securing all he can for Heaven, and for such works as will follow him; he will turn all he may into moveables, that he may transmit them into his Country. The interests of this world are stak'd down to the earth, and cannot be removed; but thriving Christians are for such goods as they can knock up, and carry with them to their own home: They strive to pray, hear, think, speak, do, suffer, and all for eternity: their affections are gone before to Heaven, while their bodies are imprisoned in the World. As 'tis said of the *Athenians*, when besieged by *Sylla*, their hearts were with him without the walls, while their bodies were forced to serve within. So 'tis with enriched Christians; the World is a Prison to them, a strange Country where they have been sent to trade; and when they have filled their sacks, and got all they can, they long to depart into their own Country. By these things (Christians) may you know what kind of Trade you drive for Heaven; and what share you have in this great engagement to thanksgiving.

Object. All this makes against me, and confirms my just fears that I am a stranger to spiritual thrivings; I now see 'tis a pitiful Trade I drive in godliness: I profess, hear, pray, perform duties, enjoy privileges, but am never the better. O how may I write lost labor on all my performances! I need no greater proof than these evidences; nor other judge than my own conscience, to convince my languishing soul of daily wastes and poverty in my heavenly Trade: What shall I do to get my case mended, and once attain to true thrivings in this holy Calling.

Sol. There are four things which usually make men thriving in their earthly Trades; which do also contribute to prosperity in this heavenly Merchandise.

- 1 *A provident care.*
- 2 *A diligent hand.*
- 3 *A secret trade.*
- 4 *A divine blessing.*

First, Men that are thriving in the World are provident and careful to prevent their dangers, to secure their interests, and proportion means to their advantage. And so must Christians that think ever to flourish in godliness: what losses and miscarriages in Religion might a provident care prevent? were temptations way-laid, and corruptions timely guarded against, souls might escape many surprisals of sin, and abatements in grace: Never think to prosper in holiness, till you are provident to prevent its weaknings, and contribute all you may towards its strength and enlargement. One enjoys a good frame of soul, much peace and joy in believing; and for want of watchfulness loseth all again. Another hath got a little power over his corruptions for a time, and for want of a provident care to avoid ensnaring occasions, is overcome again. Another hath a choice advantage put into his hand for

spiritual good, but not exercising a timely care and preparation to improve it, miscarries in all his hopes and labors; and by these changes and interruptions their spiritual welfare is impeded: *Go learn of the Ant, she provideth her meat in Summer, Prov. 6. 6, 8.* Be wise as Serpents, they decline danger as soon as seen, and guard their noblest part, though with the hazard of their All, *Matth. 19. 16.* Walk circumspectly as wise, *Eph. 5. 15.* O how happy might Christians be, were they as provident for their souls as they are for their bodies! and did exercise their reason, care and fore-sight to further their spiritual interests; and without this provident care, never think to prosper in this heavenly Merchandise. Take heed of grace-wasting sins, of any secret lust allowed, or sweet morsel rolled under your tongue, that will prove a moth in your spiritual estate, and keep you low in your heavenly interests. Souls under some perplexing lust, are like *Israel* under the prevailing hand of *Midian* against them, *Judge. 6. 3, 4, 6.* *When Israel had sown, the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the East, and they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither Sheep, nor Ox, nor Ass;—and Israel was greatly impoverished:* So 'tis with such; no sooner have they got any mercy, frame, experience, hope, or soul-advantage, but presently a prevailing lust riseth up, and destroys all: Cry unto the Lord as *Israel* did, until he deliver you from every iniquity: make no peace with any corruption, never let it rest till wholly destroyed if you think to prosper in your souls and conversations. Be provident also to take all advantages for godliness, watching your opportunities for every duty, keeping every soul-market and fair, and taking the best season to lay out grace, and get in profit, *Prov. 8. 34.* Be careful to get some good from everything, and to keep and save what you have; and this will tend to soul-thriving, *Acts 2. 46.*

Secondly, A diligent hand tends to thriving; men that prosper in the World take pains, and follow their employments; rising early, sitting up late, neglecting no business that may help on to profiting. So must you that intend to thrive in Religion; you must make it your business, you must be laborers in God's Vineyard, *Joh. 6. 27.* and workmen indeed that need not be ashamed, *2 Tim. 2. 15.* Christians for the most part are too slothful in their spiritual business, to have their profiting appear: it will cost you more striving to enter into the strait-gate, and get ground in the narrow way that leads to life; more blows must pass before your enemies will down, and more strokes at your work before your interests will come in: Running, striving, wrestling; in labors more abundant, in weariness, and painfulness, in watchings: What pains will men take for the World? *She riseth also while it is night,—Her candle goeth not out by night: That neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes. Ye compass Sea and Land;* and should they not much more for Heaven? The most diligent soul is the most thriving soul; *Always abounding in the work of the Lord; instant in season, and out of season; taking every opportunity for Heaven: And what their hand finds to do, to do it with all their might;* this is the way to soul-thriving, *1 Cor. 9. 24, 25. Heb. 12. 4. Eph. 6. 12. 1 Cor. 11. 23, 27. Prov. 31. 15, 18. Eccles. 8. 16. Matth. 23. 15. Eccles. 9. 10.*

Thirdly, Driving a secret Trade of holiness, is soul-thriving: Men that have some peculiar art, and unknown mystery in their Trade which is not ordinary and common, usually get greatest custom and advantage: So is it in this heavenly Trade; the more men are taken up in the mysteries of Godliness, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* the more they thrive in Religion. There's a secret in

holiness, which no stranger intermeddles with, *Prov. 14. 10.* There's a way within the veil; the hidden part in which souls are made to know wisdom; *Psal. 51. 6.* Hidden riches of secret places, which thriving Christians meet with, *Isa. 45. 3.* If you would prosper in Godliness, be sure to maintain the secret duties of piety: The religion of most men lies in the Market place, and in the view of others; their hearts, their closets are not privy to any secret transactions between God and their souls; and in the praise of men they have their reward: but the thriving trade of Christianity, is the secret trade. Christians be most in those duties which men least observe, and chiefly excellent in the invisible part of your visible work: Public duties are most honorable, but secret duties the most gainful. *Matth. 6. 4.* *And thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.*

Fourthly, The blessing of God maketh rich: *Prov. 10. 22.* *Promotion cometh not from the East, nor from the West; nor prosperity from men's fingers ends, but from God's hand. Deut. 28. 8, 10, 11, 12.* *The Lord shall command his blessing upon thee; in thy store-houses, and in all which thou settest thy hand unto:—The Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods:—The Lord shall open to thee his good treasures; the Heavens to give thee rain to thy Land in his season, and to bless all the work of thy hand: (and then comes riches) And thou shalt lend unto many Nations, and thou shalt not borrow: Prosperity, both spiritual and temporal, comes at God's sending: Psal. 118. 25. O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity: Psal. 18. 32, 33. He restoreth my Soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness: Psal. 23. 3, 5. Thou anointest my head with Oil: Thou blessest the springing thereof; thy paths drop fatness: Psal. 65. 10, 11. The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered Garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not, Isa, 58. 11. I will be as the dew to Israel, he shall grow as the Lily, and cast forth his root as Lebanon, Hos. 14. 5.* Secure an interest in the promises, and get your souls brought under the showers of blessing, if ever you think to thrive in godliness. Improve thriving graces, and take prosperous courses; these are under a promise of blessing: though every grace and duty do in their measure help on soulprosperity, yet there are some graces and duties have a more special influence on spiritual thrivings.

First, Faith is a soul-prospering grace: *2 Chr. 20. 20.* *Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established: believe his Prophets, so shall ye prosper. Eph. 6. 16.* *Above all take the shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall quench all the fiery darts of Satan, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, insuper, Bez.* Every grace is useful in the spiritual warfare, but Faith especially: other graces may (with *Saul*) slay their thousands; but Faith (with *David*) slays its ten thousands: Some darts may be quenched by other graces, but Faith quenches fiery darts, yea all the fiery darts of Satan, which does wonderfully further thriving: *The just shall live by Faith, Heb. 10. 38.* Faith will maintain the soul's life in the greatest straits and exigencies: Faith is a receiving grace, it takes in whatever is laid up in the promise; and that's thriving. *Gal. 3. 22.* *That the promise by Faith might be given to them that believe.* A soul-enriching grace, *rich in Faith, Jam. 2. 5.* A working grace, *And the work of Faith with power, 2 Thes. 2. 4.* A powerful grace; it gives the soul experience of the mighty power of God. *Eph. 1. 19. 20.* *What is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, 1 Thes. 2. 13.* 'Tis a strengthening grace: *Out of weakness were made strong, Heb. 11. 34.* through it doth the Lord let out his abundant grace: *And the*

grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. 1. 14. It doth exceedingly nourish the soul in grace, and edify it to salvation: 1 Tim. 4. 6. Nourished up in the words of Faith, 1. Tim. 1, 4. Which minister questions rather than edifying which is in Faith: One reason why souls prosper no more in piety is their unbelief; they are full of doubtings, fears, and questionings upon every turn, still wavering as a wave of the Sea; such cannot receive much at the hand of God, but are still weak, and going back in Religion. Be much in believing the promises against hope, and above fears, if ever you think to prosper in Religion.

Secondly, Love to God, his Name, ways and interest is a Soul-prospering Grace. *Let them that love him, be as the Sun that goeth forth in his might:* Judge. 5. 31. *They shall prosper that love thee,* Psal. 122. 6. *Let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee, for thou Lord wilt bless the righteous, with favor wilt thou compass him as with a Shield,* Psal. 5. 11, 12. Love to God must needs be a prospering Grace, because it brings the Soul under the blessing of God, and within the compass of his securing Shield, Love is a Soul-strengthening and establishing Grace. *Eph. 3. 17, Being rooted and grounded in Love,* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, set in a firm ground, not easily shaken from God or their integrity. Love makes a growing Soul. *Eph. 4. 15, Speaking the truth in love may grow up in him, who is the head in all things.* It helps on edification in Grace, *ver. 16. maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love:* Love constrains the Soul after God, makes his commands pleasant, and quickens the heart to make hast in the way to Glory; the more you love God, the more will you prosper in Godliness.

Thirdly, Humility is a Soul-prospering Grace, and under a promised Blessing. *Prov. 29. 23, Honor shall uphold the humble in spirit; shall bear him up from falling, and bring him unto honor* (saith Montanus) *Prov. 15. 33, By humility are riches and honor:* The humble Soul must needs be a thriving Soul, for God giveth Grace to it, *Jam. 4. 6. yea, dwelleth with the humble to revive the Spirit of the humble, Isa. 57. 15.* There's a great deal of Pride in most Christians, and that hinders Soul-thriving, proud of Parts and Grace, proud under seeming humility, proud of humility; Low Valleys are fruitful, when lofty Mountains are barren: *The rich sit in a low place:* *Eccl. 10. 6, Such as are rich in wisdom* (saith Mercer) *they sit in a low place;* they come down, and lie low in themselves, *folly is set in great dignity:* Poor, foolish, empty Creatures, they are high in conceit as well as place, many times; but the most rich and thriving Souls, these are poorest in Spirit, and lowest in their own eyes; the richer the Metal, the heavier; Gold weighs down Silver and Tin; the fuller of fruits branches are, the more they bow: *He sendeth the springs into the valleys,* Psal. 104. 10. *Psal. 65. 13. They are covered over with Corn:* Vineyards thrive best in low places: One branch of Grapes from the Valley of Eshcol, was said to be a burden for two men, *Numb. 13. 23. would you flourish in Grace? take heed of Pride: Pride in the Soul,* (saith one) *is like the spleen in the body, when that swelleth, all the other parts languish: 'tis poison at the root of the tree, which corrupts the sap—'Tis so dangerous a poison, that of another poison there was confected a counterpoison to preserve Paul from it:* would you prosper in Godliness? be persons of low, humble spirits, (Mr. Adams on 2 Pet.) *2 Cor. 12. 7. Exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high,* Ezek. 21. 26.

Fourthly, Another choice fruit of the Spirit which will further Soul-thriving, is sincerity: *Prov. 14. 11, The tabernacle of the upright shall flourish: They shall have good things in possession,*

Prov. 28. 10. they shall not only be preserved from evil, and escape the pit into which the wicked fall; but shall be sure to meet with good; Blessings, good things shall be given to them as their inheritance, as *Aquila* and *Theodosius* interpret it, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, *Thou showest mercy to thy Servants, that walk before thee with all their heart*, 2 Chron. 6. 14. *He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lift up his Soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully, he shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his Salvation*, Psal. 24. 4, 5. Upright Souls must needs prosper, they dwell in the presence of God, Psal. 140. 13. He will withhold no good thing from them, Psal. 84. 11. His countenance beholds them, Psal. 11. 7. God engages his all sufficiency for their good, Gen. 17. 1. They shall hold on their way, and wax stronger and stronger, Job 17. 9. and shall surely prosper. 2 Chron. 31. 21, *In every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered: 'tis not thy many Duties before God, but the Oneness of thy heart with God: nor the bulk of thy Services, but the sincerity of thy Soul, which will make thee prosperous in thy heavenly interests.*

Again, Take thriving courses, prosperous ways, as well as prospering Graces, these are under a promised Blessing also. Not to multiply particulars: There are four thriving ways in which Christians may attain to a prosperous Trade in Christianity.

The way of

- 1. *Self-Examination.*
- 2. *Prayer.*
- 3. *Enjoyment of God.*
- 4. *Obedience.*

First, Be often examining; and calling yourselves to an account how matters stand with your Souls: Traders that would be thriving will be often viewing their Books, and trying their Accompts, and have some set days, when they survey their Goods, cast up their Books, and try whether they gain, or lose; and so must Christians that would profit in Religion, they must be often judging themselves, that they be not judged, 1 Cor. 11. 31. they must cast up their accounts, and try their state whether they go forward or backward: Hag. 1. 5. *Consider your ways: try how the case stands with you, whether you get or lose, and what's the cause of all those blastings that are upon you, Psal. 4. 4, Commune with your hearts upon your beds, and be still: 2 Cor. 13. 5, Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith, prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you except you be reprobates.* The neglect of this examination is one cause of that great mistake of persons about their Soul-state, some thinking themselves better, Rev. 3. 17. others judging themselves worse than they are: which begets security in some, discouragement in others, error and floth in all. A right estimate of thy spiritual capacity, either poverty or riches, gain or loss is absolutely needful to regulate thy duty unto a right affecting of thy heart, and advance of thy spiritual interests: Look over the Day-book of thy heart and life every night, posting all thy accounts on the large book of

thy Conscience, and take some special time for a more full survey of thy Soul and state for Eternity; this will be of good use to further Soul-thriving.

Secondly, If you would prosper in your Souls, be much and mighty with God in Prayer: 'Tis said of *Uzziah*, that *he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God, and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper*, 2 Chron. 26. 5. Right Prayer is a wonderful way to Soulenrichings: *He (saith one) can never be poor that can pray well*: One reason why this King prospered as long as he sought the Lord, was, by this means he came to the *visions of God*, and that helped him to take a right way to prosper. By Prayer you advise with God, what course to take towards mercy: 'tis your Ephod by which you ask counsel of God where to go to shun danger, and what to do to carry on Duty, and obtain Mercy, 2 Sam. 23. 6. 9. Chap. 30. 7. and by Prayer you procure and get out the Graces and Supplies you need, 1 Chron, 4. 10, *And Jabesh called on the God of Israel, saying, O that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coasts, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me*: and God granted him that he requested. Prayer brings down the Spirit sometimes insensible and almost intolerable measures thereof. When that precious Servant of the Lord Mr. *Bruce* in Scotland (of whom King *James* said he was worthy of the half of his Kingdom) had sadly represented the Churches case, then under eminent danger, there was such a sensible down-pouring of the Spirit, that they could hardly contain themselves; yea, an unusual motion on those who were in other parts of the house, not knowing the cause of it at that time. O what great things did *Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Jehoshaphat, Samuel, Elijah*, and other Servants of God, get out of the hand of God! *Luther* was a mighty man in Prayer, 'tis said of him, he could get of God what he would, nothing is too hard for Faith and Prayer, because it seeks nothing but what God is willing to spare, and hath promised to give: Labor to get a mighty Spirit of Prayer; the gift of Prayer will not do, it must be the Spirit of Prayer, which is a pure, and heartcleansing Spirit, and cannot dwell with the least regarded Sin: Gifts of Prayer with natural affections may be mighty on the Spirits of men, but are no way prevailing with God for the Blessing: 'Tis said of *Naaman*, *He was a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper*, 2 Kings 5. 1. So there are some that seem mighty men in Prayer, and can wonderfully raise the affections of others; pray like Angels, but all the while are *Lepers*, under the ruling power of some secret lust; pride, passion, covetousness, uncleanness, and the like, which they hide under their tongue; but such are far from this mighty power of prayer, which brings down the Spirit on their own hearts or others. Ah Christians! if you would prosper in grace, get and improve the Spirit of Grace and Supplication.

Thirdly, Another thriving way is to engage God with you in all your undertakings. 'Twas this made *Joseph* so prosperous in all he did; God was with him. *Gen. 39. 23. Because the Lord was with him; and that which he did, he made it to prosper*: 2 Sam. 5. 10. *And David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of Hosts was with him*: 'Twas not his wisdom, valor, nor any means he used, but the gracious presence of God with him that made him to grow so great: This made *Solomon* to prosper; 2 Chron. 22. 11. *Now my Son, the Lord be with thee, and prosper thee*. When persons lose the gracious presence of God, they soon find an alteration, and begin to wither and decay in their soul-comforts and prosperity: *Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled*, *Psal. 30. 6. Troubled like a withered flower, that loseth sap and vigor*, [Mr. *Leigh*.] *Jonah* soon

found a change in his soul; it ceased to be with him as before, when once he fled from the presence of God: He never had a good day after he lost the presence of God, but storms, tempests, shipwreck of peace, safety and prosperity, and a casting into the deeps of distress, and ruining dangers, *Jonah*. 1. 3, 10. Ah Christians! as you love your souls, and your spiritual welfare, take heed of losing God's gracious presence; whose company soever you lose, keep the Lord's presence with you; abide with him, and he will abide with you: *2 Chron.* 15. 2. *The Lord is with you while you be with him; and if you seek him, he will be found of you: Put away the unclean thing, and he will dwell in you, and walk in you,* *2 Cor.* 6. 16. Love him, and keep his commandments, and he will take up his abode with you, *Joh.* 14. 23. Content not yourselves with any privilege except you have God with you: *If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence,* *Exod.* 33. 15. *I protest (saith Mr. Bruce, when wrestling for the presence of God with him in his going to preach) I will not go except thou go with me.*

Fourthly, Follow the counsel of God, if you would thrive in the work and way of God: *Josh.* 1. 8. *This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success:* *Jer.* 38. 20. *Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord which I speak unto thee; so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live.* One cause why men prosper no more in Religion, is, that little conscience they make of doing the will of God: men hear, but forget the word; others know their Lord's will, but prepare not themselves to do it. We live in an age of notions, not of motion after God; like men that see Countries in a Map, but care not to travel into them; bare knowledge pleaseth most: Men's zeal after truth, is like *Absalom's* love to his Father *David*, only to see him, not to serve him: *2 Sam.* 14. 32. *Let me see the King's face;* which he no sooner did, but conspired against him: So most care for no more than to behold truth, not to dwell with it; and hence 'tis that prosperity is such a stranger to them: 'Twas not directions could heal *Naaman* of his leprosy, but obedience; he was never the better till he followed the Prophet's counsel, and washed in *Jordan*: that which made the ground rain'd upon, to be nigh to cursing, was not bringing forth fruit meet for them, by whom 'twas dressed, *Heb.* 6. 8. Do not only seek after, but walk after the truth, if you think to prosper in Religion, *Jam.* 1. 25. The doers of the word shall be blessed in their deed.

Object. 'Tis the desire of my soul to live in the exercise of every grace, and discharge of every duty; and some weak endeavors I have had, though too too short; with many cries for this soul-prosperity, but cannot yet attain unto it: Methinks I am like a wither'd arm, a dry tree, and barren womb, nothing doth me good; no food, seed or showers make me thriving and fruitful: *I fear I shall be at last cut down, and bundled for the fire.*

Sol. First, Thou mayest thrive in Religion, and not know it for a season; thy profiting may be, though not appear: The Tradesman may bring home gain in his purse, though untold: men know not their gettings till they cast up their accounts: thy prosperity may be as a casked Jewel, and friend under disguise. If you would estimate your advantage, survey yourselves, compare your present with your former state; what were you? what are you? speak out soul: was there not a time when thou wert blind, thou couldst see no evil in sin, nor excellency in

grace? but now thy eye is opened, and things appear otherwise to thy soul than they did: Now there is nothing so vile as thy wicked heart, and ways; and nothing so desirable as Christ and holiness.

Thou wert once dead in sin, thou didst not feel or fear any hurt in it, or danger by it; but now 'tis otherwise: thou canst not sin, but thy conscience smites thee: nor God threaten, but it affrights thee: thy quick-ey'd conscience soon espies the least failing in thy duty, falseness in thy heart, or error in thy life; and, as a Serjeant, arrests thee, and hales thee to the Judge. Thou couldst formerly live without God, and be as still as the dead body in the grave, and the burning brand in the fire: but now as a bone out of joint, thou art restless till in communion with him: I remembered God, and was troubled, *Psal.* 77. 3.

Thou wert gone out of the way; yea an enemy to the way of life, turned aside to the flock of his companions, and didst turn again, and rend those that were of them. But now thou art folded with the flocks of Christ, and feedest besides the Shepherds Tents, *Cant.* 1. 8. Thy foot hath held his steps, and thou esteemest the word of his mouth more than thy necessary food, *Job* 23. 11, 12.

Object. But may not an hypocrite go so far, and all this be no more than a change from darkness to conscience-light, and from sin to common grace.

Sol. Common light cannot see a desirableness in Christ for himself, nor bring the soul to count all things dross and dung to win him, and obtain the excellency of the knowledge of Christ as thy Lord; but saving light sees one Christ worth ten thousand Worlds, and quits all to take him. *Phil.* 3. 8.

Common light sees no evil in sin; but guilt, and torment, loss of comfort, and sense of punishment, *Gen.* 4. 13. but true grace, when in exercise, loathes sin when it pretends love; and flies from sin when it makes largest proffers; and fears sin when it sees no danger, when there is no breach on present comfort feeled, or danger of future misery feared, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. The gracious soul, like *Joseph*, when tempted with flattery, secured with secrecy, pursued with restless importunity to wickedness, yet cannot close with it, and sin against God, *Gen.* 39. 9.

Common light can dwell with works of darkness, and consist with an unsanctified heart and life, *2 Pet.* 2. 1, 2. Common light and lust never fall out but when it awakens conscience, or weakens interests: but saving grace cannot bear that which is evil, *Rev.* 2. 2. or ever be brought to a treaty with sin, in order to an agreement, *Gal.* 5. 17. but, with *Sarah*, can never be at rest till the bondwoman and her son be turned out of door, *Gen.* 21. 10. Common grace may be offended at sin, but never hates sin; there is no contrariety founded in their nature or difference, but what may upon terms be made up, *Luke* 23. 12. And if it seems to have an indignation against sin, yet 'tis not against every sin, and at all times, nor irreconcilable at any time: but saving grace hates the very being of sin, *2 Cor.* 7. 11. And as the Tiger flies at the very picture of a man, so doth Grace abhor the appearance of evil: 'Tis universal against the whole species, and every kind of sin; an enmity founded in the nature of grace, and therefore irreconcilable, *Psal.* 139. 22. and derived from the riches of grace, *Ps.* 97. 10. and

greatness of redemption-love: It cannot be reconciled to sin, because sin cannot be reconciled to grace, or admit of any love to, or enjoyment of God; but still interrupts the soul's tranquility, holiness and pleasure in God, his chiefest and only good.

Again, Common light can live without special acquaintance with God, *Eph. 2. 13.* [afar of,] if it can have peace, because its Country is nourished by the King's Country, *Act. 12. 20.* and its welfare depends upon divine pleasure, 'tis all it looks for: but saving grace gets within the veil, *Heb. 6. 19.* approaches the mercyseat, where it converses with God. To be called by his name will not content grace; no, nor to eat his bread, and wear his raiment, except it enjoys his bed also: it longs for intimate communion with God, *Psal. 101. 2.* *O, when wilt thou come unto me?* It loves the Bridechamber, closet, and secret corners with him; never thinking itself near enough to, or long enough with him.

Obj. But change from nature to grace, is not growth in grace: though I may have received the former rain, and reaped the first fruits of the Spirit; yet I fear I have not the latter rain, and after-fruits of grace: waterings and dressings do not make me fruitful, or feedings make me grow: and that's the case you insist on.

Sol. 1. There may be fruit, though not appearing; and growth, though unseen: Christ hath under-ground-fruit, which may not spring up to thy own view, or others, *Ps. 88. 5.* [*Free among the dead,*] as berries hid among the leaves, which cannot be seen till winter-storms or shaking times come: thou mayest thrive more inwardly than outwardly, and be like the windows of the Temple, wide within, and narrow without; you may grow more in the truth and parts of grace, though less in the fruits of grace for a season; thy sincerity may be more, though thy shows be less; you may grow more downward in humility, self-abasement, sorrow for sin, though not upward in joys and blossoms of comfort; thou mayest grow more out of thyself, and into Christ, as the root of all thy grace, and foundation of thy foul-rest, though not into sensible frames and workings of grace. Art thou more sensible of thy own nothingness? thy heart-deceitfulness? self-insufficiency? inward disorders? soul-wants? sinfulness? hypocrisy? barrenness? then thou profitest, *Rom. 7. 18.* Art thou more jealous of thy heart every day, *2 Cor. 9. 27?* more weary of thyself? and longing after Christ? having a higher valuation of his excellency, and greater breathings after his quickening spirit, and delighting presence, *Phil. 3. 8?* this is profiting.

Secondly, It may be thy conclusion springs from thy impatency; thou mayest be for hasty fruit, not allowing time for its growth and maturity. The Husbandman waits for the precious fruits of the earth, *Jam. 5. 7.* before he can enjoy them, or estimate their worth: Thy hopes, labors and profit may be buried under the clods for a while: *We cannot sow and reap* (saith one) *in a day:* The more excellent and durable the fruit is, the longer is it before it comes to maturity: rare ripe fruits are soon rotten: hypocrites blossom apace, and cast their leaves as fast, *Mat. 13. 21.* Though 'tis matter of shame, that those trees which have less earth, and least nourishment, should grow fastest; yet the reason is, they take up no time in getting root, and growing downward; and hence all their growth is outward. Thirdly, It may be 'tis a winter-time with thy soul; the Sun of Righteousness is withdrawn from thee, and thy lightsom days are gone, *Cant. 2. 11, 12.* The Comforter that should have relieved thy soul, is

far from thee, *Lam.* 1. 16. It may be thou hast sin'd away his warming presence, and lost thy first spring; hence 'tis the flowers do not appear: Yet here's thy comfort, though thy winter be not a time of fruit, yet God will make it to thee a time toward fruitfulness.

Advice 2.

2. You that have any good Trading for Heaven, be exhorted to enlarge your Trade; drive a greater Trade of godliness every day, as men that prosper in the world do; they build larger barns, fairer houses, greater shops, get more goods, buy more land, and widen the bounds of their interests: So should you Christians, if God bless your heavenly substance, and prosper your souls; if the gain of godliness come in, lay it out to greaten godliness, as biting Usurers do, take use upon use; convert your gettings into your Trade; put your incomes into bank, and your blessings into stock, trading on them. Think

First, On the smallness of thy first stock, and thy low estate at thy setting up, A *Syrian* ready to perish, *Deut.* 26. 5. thy grace was small, a grain of mustard seed, *Mat.* 13. 31. thy capacity is weak, a new-born babe, 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. You began with one talent, and have you not reason to improve it? you were the fewest of all people, *Deut.* 7. 7. *I taught Ephraim also to go, taking him by the arm, Hos.* 11. 3. as a little weak child; *a dry tree, Psal.* 56. 3. *a tender plant, Isa.* 53. 2. which need addition.

Secondly, Consider what a poor Trade most men drive for Heaven this day; few that seek the things that are Christ's, and make Religion their business. All men seek their own things; the multitude of Professors, as well as others, wonder after this beast the world: We may say of Religion, as the Prophet did of *Zion: This is godliness which no man seeketh after, Jer.* 30. 17. Few *Israelites, in whom there is no guile; few Noah's, perfect in their generation, walking with God; few Calebs, who fulfill after God.* Most men's Religion lies in notion, profession, talkings, frames, privileges, going to Meetings, getting into Churches; but few make conscience of their words and ways, their promises and duties; few second-table men and women, that cause their light to shine before men; and as *Zacharias and Elizabeth, walking in all the commands and ordinances of God blameless, Luke* 1. 6. *doing justly, showing mercy, and walking humbly with their God, Mich.* 6. 8. *visiting the fatherless and widow in their affliction, and keeping themselves unspotted from the world, Jam.* 1. 27. And should not this provoke thy zeal for the Lord of Hosts, to see the Altars of Religion down, and so few friends of godliness left, and stir up thy holy ambition to excel and do more for God than others? It would argue a brave spirit, and be a worthy attempt to offer a lift at fallen godliness, with thy *life* as well as *lip*, and by the raised splendor of thy holy conversation, as a City on a hill, to provoke others to an imitation, saying, *Come up hither.*

Think also what an excellent Trade the Saints and Angels in Heaven drive, who have their portion in hand, and dwell in the City of the great King, who are always receiving and rendering, driving a whole Trade for God, above all hazards and interruptions: They always behold their Father's face, and serve him day and night in his Temple, with palms in their hands, with songs in their mouths, and their Crowns at his feet, and how far you are beneath these glorious Merchants. Think what a breadth you have yet to fill up in godliness, and

what advances you must make in holiness, before you can get up to their pitch, and have a place amongst them that stand by, *Zach. 3. 7.* and is it not time yet to build the house of God? *Hag. 1. 2.* and that you hasten to your work, and raise higher stories for God every day, pressing after greater measures of grace, till you come to the fullness of the stature of Christ, and those perfections of glorified Saints and Angels?

Fourthly, When will you be fit for a return into your own Country, and a comfortable account of your Stewardship, if you be so slothful and contracted in your Heavenly Trade? When will your ships be loaden, and your sacks full for a departure hence, if you trade at such a rare, and attend your soul-thrivings no better? your Treasure is deep, and calls for more digging; your Crown is afar off, and requires faster running; your Reward is large, greater enlargements of labors are needful to meeten you for it. O think how far glory is above all your proportions of grace and duty; and what need you have to press after more enlargedness in your souls, and suitableness for your estate above.

Fifthly, The greater Trade you drive for Heaven, the less trouble; 'tis not so in earthly Trades; there the more work, the more weariness; but Religion carries refreshment in its work. *John 4. 34. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Prov. 3. 17. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* O the sweetness and delicate pleasure which vigorous pursuits of holiness afford! *Cant. 2. 3. I sate under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.* If persons intermeddle not with the joy of godliness, 'tis because they neglect the work of it; they eat not the kernel, because they break not the shell; Christ's myrrh is to be gathered, and his honey eaten with the honey-comb, which must be squeezed out ere eaten, *Cant. 5. 1. Rabbi Solomon takes the comb* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , for a Cane, out of which the honey is sucked, or the sugar boiled out. They that will eat Christ's pleasant bread, must work hard for it; his idlers have none of his dainties; the greater the labor, the sweeter is the rest. The Lord's way is not tiresom, unless to flesh and blood: the more you run in it, the less weary. *Isa. 40. 31. They shall run, but not be weary, walk, but not faint:* And though they should be weary in well doing, through their carnal sloth, yet they are not weary of it.

Sixthly, The greater Trade, the richer; 'tis not always so in worldly employments; men may labor in vain, and sit down in sorrow, but godliness is profitable for all things, *Isa. 55. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 8.* And the Heavenly Trade brings in the true Treasure, as I have already shewn; and the more employment, the more profit.

Seventhly, The larger Trade you drive for Heaven, the more you have of that honor that comes down from Heaven, *Rom. 2. 10. Glory, and honor, and peace to everyone that worketh good.* The greater Trade, the greater riches, and the greater riches, the greater reputation: *The rich hath many friends, Prov. 14. 20.* The greater Trade you drive for Heaven, the greater regard you have from God; the more of his presence is with you, his delight in you, and blessing upon you; the Spouses growth and fruitfulness, was much taking upon the heart of Christ. *How fair and how pleasant art thou O Love for delights! Cant. 7. 6, 7. This thy stature is like to a Palm-tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.* The Palm-tree is an emblem of growth and fruitfulness; the more it is oppressed, the more it grows, and no tree more fruitful; 'tis called

〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , always having leaves: Naturalists say, 'tis never without leaves and fruit; when some fruit is ripe (as *Pliny* tells us) other fruit is growing It hath leaves in the highest branches, wherever the sweet sap comes (saith *Alsted*) 'Tis a tree that's exceeding profitable; some reckon three hundred and sixty advantages that this Palm-tree yields, and hence the *Egyptians* make it a symbol of the solar year, which consists of three hundred sixty five days: and its fruit is wonderfully restorative and nourishing, repairing the decayed strength, and radical moisture of man's body, *Alsted. Theol. Nat.* and therefore a fit metaphor to express the Church's fruitfulness, in which the Lord Jesus takes such great delight; he gets up early to the Vineyard, to see if the Vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the Pomegranate bud forth, *Cant. 7. 12.* So delightful is the view of a flourishing people unto Christ: The more you thrive in grace, the more will you have of Christ's company; and that's honorable.

Eighthly, The greater Trade you drive for Heaven, the more useful you are while on Earth; the larger capacities you have to do good to others, and to serve your generation, which is a blessed thing. *'Tis more blessed to give than to receive, Acts 20. 35. 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18. Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate.* The richer you are in grace, the more able you are to do good, and not only able, but the more willing also. The reason Christians have no more heart to do good, and to communicate, is their soulpoverty; they are not rich in grace, they have but little spiritual Treasure, little grace to communicate; their hands are shut, because their hearts are empty; but the more divine treasure you have, the more ready will you be to do good, and to lay out both your outward and inward riches. O how useful may rich men be in the places where they live, if God give them hearts to do it! and how helpful may such be in this day of soul-wants, who are increased with spiritual goods? there are many impoverished souls this day who are ready to perish for want of light, peace and comfort; perplexed with doubts, darkness, and distressing fears, and have none to help them. O how refreshing, in such a day of soul-exigencies, would it be to have some rich neighbors among them, some prosperous *Jobs!* *Who with-hold not the poor from their desire, nor cause the eyes of the Widow to fail, Job 31. 16, 17, 19. Who would draw forth their soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, Isa. 58. 10. Who could not eat their morsel alone, or see the poor to perish for want of clothing: To be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, Job 29. 15. To speak a word in season to him that is weary, and to comfort others with the same comforts they have received of God.* Christians, make haste to be rich in grace, that ye may be rich in good works; that ye may cast in much into the Lord's treasury, *Mark 12. 41.* and out of your abundance cast into the offerings of God, *Luke 21. 4.* Then should the blessing of the poor, that was ready to perish, come upon you, *Job. 29. 13.* and the fruit of well-doing be your savoury meat, on which the Lord would daily feed you.

Ninthly, The greater Trade you drive for Heaven now, the greater will your estate in Heaven be hereafter: *2 Tim. 4. 8. Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness; which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all that love his appearing.* To me, who have run my race, finished my course, and kept the faith: To me, who have wrought hard in the Vineyard, and traded diligently for Heaven in the World: For me, yea for all such as enlarge their heavenly Trade, *is laid up,* 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , (as Parents do

Portions for their children, saith Zanchi) a *Crown of righteousness*: glory suitable to their improvements of grace; called a *Crown*, to note its excellency; and of *righteousness*, to note its equity: It shall bear a proportion to all that grace, labors and faithfulness that is in Saints; and infinitely beyond it. *A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. God will not leave out the least item of the Saints right in the great day of righteousness; *A cup of cold water; a little meal to the Prophet Elisha; a mite in the treasury; a desire to build God's house*: all shall be remembered in that day: Mercy gives the Crown, but Justice fits it for the overcomer's head. *God crowns (saith Beda) his own gifts, not thy merits: He first gives grace in the time of mercy, and then crowns it in the day of Judgment*: And is not this argument enough? yea constraint on an ingenious heart, to labor after the greatest latitude of holiness? Is not Heaven enough to requite all thy duties and hardships on earth? *What's enough*, (saith one) *if Rome be counted little*? So what can be counted great, if Heaven be small, and not price enough for all thy holy strivings, and utmost progress in the way of life?

O attend your proficiency in this heavenly Trade! your hearts and hands can never be too deep in the concerns of this upper World; in this you can never be too covetous: 1 Cor. 12. 31. *Covet earnestly the best gifts*, Take heed of putting stands and limits to your holiness; (the course of all unsanctified souls:) In this only is it lawful to remove the ancient bounds, and enlarge your spiritual inheritance, as far as possible; *Reaching forth to the things that are before, and pressing forward to the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*, Phil. 3. 13, 14. Nothing undoes Professors like to stinting their measures of holiness, and contenting themselves with present attainments; if they can get to such a pitch of light, grace, and comfort, as will secure their salvation and present welfare, they sit down, and go no further: this makes formalists and starvelings in Religion. *Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward*, Exod. 14. 15. is God's charge on his people in their passage to the heavenly *Canaan*: *Be adding to your faith virtue, &c*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. The greatest skill in this holy Arithmetic lies in Addition and Multiplication. Be still enlarging your store, get in more choice of heavenly wares, greater quantities, and more costly goods; and be putting off more and more goods, as you have opportunity; seeing great is not only your present advantage, but your reward in Heaven also, Mat. 5. 12.

Advice 3.

Thirdly, You that have good times for trading now, make provision for bad times; Lay in for changes: be not like the Grasshopper, that spends her All in Summer; and when the Winter comes, starves. Every Summer hath its Winter; North-winds have their season to blow on Christ's Garden, as well as the South, *Cant.* 4. 16. Good and evil have their turns with Christians in this life; 'Tis only the *Diveses* that have their good things in this life; here have the Saints no continuing City, *Heb.* 13. 4. Created comforts, whether spiritual or carnal, have their shakings and removes: *Heb.* 12. 27. *And this word yet once more signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made; that those things which cannot be shaken, may remain*. The life of Believers is made up of vicissitudes; with *Naomi*, now full, then empty, *Ruth* 1. 21. like Ships in their passage to their Port; now they have calms, then storms; none but wicked, and they not always neither are exempted from their changes in this life, *Psal.*

55. 19. 'Twas an error in *David's* apprehensions, which he soon saw to his cost, that his mountain was made so strong, it should not be moved. *Psal. 30. 6. I said, in my prosperity, I shall never be moved: Lord, by thy favor, thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.* Prosperity and affliction have their different says and thoughts: think of thy most promising state here; *though this be a beautiful structure, yet 'tis but a tabernacle:* Sin puts wheels on every condition below, and makes them moveable: What that Ambassador said to the *Romans*, who boasted of the height and strength of their Walls; *they were not so high, but sin could bring them down,* may be said of the most flourishing condition of Saints in this World: Is thy store full now? a spending time may come: *Dionysius the second had four hundred Ships, an Army of one hundred thousand foot, nine thousand horse, and the richest Magazine of any Prince, and yet lived to lose all.* Christians have their spending as well as getting times, and should lay in for times of need.

There are four special seasons when gracious souls will have need of all their store to relieve them.

- Times of *Temptation.*
- Times of *Desertion.*
- Times of *Affliction.*
- And The time of *Death.*

First, Times of Temptation are spending times, and call for great succors to be laid in against such seasons. First, Because such times are certain to Believers, they will come. *Psal. 11. 5. The Lord trieth the righteous:* There's never a gracious soul, but some time or other the Lord trieth it, either immediately by his Spirit, or mediately by afflictions or temptations from men or devils. The Apostle tells us, every man is tempted. *James 1. 14. But every man is tempted when he is drawn aside of his own lust and enticed. The best of men (saith one) are tempted, and that when they are at the best. [Capell of Temptation.] Adam in Paradise, Gen. 3. 6. Solomon after God had twice appeared to him, 1 King. 11. 9. Job after the evidences of his uprightness before God, and religious duties, Job 1. 1, 5. Peter after he had made a confession of Christ, and entered into covenant never to be offended at him, Mat. 26. 33. Yea Christ himself after his Baptism, and the Spirit's resting on him as a Dove, and the Father's owning of him by an audible voice from Heaven, Matth. 3. 17. chap. 4. 1. He (saith the former Author) that thinks he is so good that he ought not to be tempted, and so strong, that he need not fear to be tempted, hath need of a temptation, that by experience in himself, he might prove what he ought to have found in the Word; that of ourselves we have no strength. Capell.*

Four things make temptations unavoidable to gracious souls:

- 1 *God's good Pleasure.*
- 2 *Satan's Rage.*
- 3 *The Saints Corruptions.*

- 4 And their Profit.

First, 'Tis God's good Pleasure to have them tried: *The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is*, 1 Cor. 3. 13. whether it will bear the fire or no; hereby the excellency of his work, the greatness of his power appears, in the enduring graces of the Saints, and their standing after all. By this the Lord will confute the slanders of men and devils, who are still charging his people with hypocrisy, and falling away when trial comes; *Doth Job fear God for naught? Job 1. 9. Put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face, Job 2. 5.* This is the usual calumny of the Saints enemies; to confute which, and prove them liars, doth the Lord suffer his people to be tempted. 'Tis his will and purpose that all his people should be tried; and therefore 'tis unavoidable.

Secondly, Such is Satan's Rage, he cannot always keep his fingers from them; if he lets them alone, 'tis but for a season. *Luke 4. 13. When the Devil had ended all the temptations, he departed from him for a season.* Is Satan busy? then his work is not done; hast thou any rest? 'tis because his tempting-time is not come; he is a roaring Lion, and cannot rest from seeking to devour, though he forbears attempting to devour for a season, when it makes to his greater advantage: Never expect freedom from temptation, till Satan's chain be shortened, or thy remove without his reach obtained, *Rev. 20. 2, 3.*

Thirdly, The Saints corruptions expose them to temptations; *Where the carcass is, there the Eagles resort, Mat. 24. 28.* While the Saints have galled backs they can expect no freedom from flies. If *Sampson* be bound, the *Philistines* will be upon him. *The cause of those sins is in us whereof the occasion is from Satan*, Capell. Till the fire of Hell be out in the Saints, the Devil will not lay down his bellows; where there is no sin, there is no matter for temptation to work on; as where there is no morbid matter, there contagion cannot so easily fasten, corruption keeps open the door for Satan; never look for silence from Satan, till you find cessation from sin.

Fourthly, The profit and good of gracious souls do necessitate it: By this means they come to see their own vileness; were it not for temptation, they could not see the greatness of their corruption: *David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Peter*, did not think their hearts were so abominable, till left to temptation, which stirs the mud, and brings up the bottom to the top; and this helps to abase them, and make them more vile in their own eyes. By this also they see their own weakness, and their need of Christ; and are more effectually brought out of themselves to the Lord Jesus for succor and victory. And by temptations from Satan they come to be acquainted with his devices, *2 Cor. 2. 11.* and more skilled in his wiles and stratagems (no small advantage to one that is in a state of warfare with him.) This way also doth the Lord winnow his Saints, and by these high winds fan and cleanse them. *Luke 22. 31. Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat;* and brings them to more conformity to their head, and to greater establishment in grace, which are glorious advantages to Believers, promised in the New Covenant, and this way accomplished, which makes temptations necessary to Wisdom's Merchants, and renders it their great concern to lay in provision against them.

Secondly, As temptations are certain, and will come; so they are shaking when they come; they are part of that rain, flood and wind which did beat vehemently on the sandy building, that it fell, *Mat. 7. 27. Luke 6. 49.* Temptations are part of the Devil's Artillery, his fiery darts and cruel buffetings which none can bear without the whole Armor of God upon him, and then too; all they can do is but to stand, *Ephes. 6. v. 13, 16.* They are so potent and prevailing, as that none but such as are in Christ can stand their ground under them. *And in time of temptation fall away, Luke 8. 13.* Receive the Word with joy, seem to love God, and delight in his ways for a season, till temptations come to the purpose, and then fall away. There are some temptations are more easy to be born, but when Satan sets on a soul with all his might, there's no standing without divine succor, and the Lord's opening a way to escape. Temptation is reckoned amongst the sorest afflictions that the Saints do undergo, *1 Cor. 10. 13. Heb. 2. 18. Heb, 11. 37. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword.* No suffering like temptations, for they draw the soul to sin, which is more cruel than death to a soul that loves Christ. O Christians, what need have you then to be laying in for an hour of temptation, seeing it will surely come, and seeing it will be so terrible when it comes!

Get yourselves well furnished with wisdom, that you may know Satan's devices, that you may be able to distinguish between temptation and corruption, and able to answer the Objections, and subtle reasonings of Satan; you must have experience also to encourage your hope, and strengthen your patience, that instances of former relief in the like cases may lift up your head, and strengthen your expectations in new Trials also. You must lay in store of faith to guard your hearts, and shield your heads from the fiery darts of Satan; you must get your integrity cleared, and the uprightness of your heart and way evidenced; that's of great use also to bear up your Spirit under all his charges against you. Make much of every breathing of his Spirit in you, and take care you quench not any of his motions: *God (saith one) doth often leave us to own Satan's suggestions for our own, because we do not own God in his holy motions and breathings.* And have good evidences of your interest in Christ, and assurance of his love to you, and assured help in the time of need; taking special care to have corruptions weakened, and a growing mortification in your souls; that so when Satan comes he may find nothing in you to fasten his temptations on: This calls for your provident care, to store your souls against times of Trial.

Secondly, Times of desertion are spendingtimes, which will need a full stock, when the Lord doth hide his face, and withdraw the sense of his love, and influence of his quickening presence: This the Lord may do, and hath done; he hath left the dearly beloved of his soul; gone from his habitation; compass himself about with a cloud; left his children in darkness as those that have been long dead. *'Tis just with God (saith Mr. Cooper) to deny us the comfort of our graces, when we deny him the glory of them. Isa. 45. 15. Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel the Savior. Job 23. 8, 9. Behold I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but cannot perceive him, on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand that I cannot see him. Isa. 49. 14. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, my God hath forgotten me.* This was one of the greatest sufferings on Christ, his apprehensions of his Father's forsaking him. *O God my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Mat. 27. 46.* Here was a total

and final desertion that our Lord Jesus came under as to his sense, and the effects of it; he saw nothing of the comforts of the Divine presence, to the last breath of life, but died in this darkness. *Verse 50. Jesus when he had cried again with a loud voice (that is, as he had done, verse 46.) he gave up the Ghost;* and had no comfort to the last minute of life: And if God hath done so to the green tree, how much more may he to the dry? if he forsake his natural and only beloved Son, he may surely hide himself from his Adopted Sons, even to their dying hour: And this is a condition full of consternation and terror: The *poena damni*, the loss of God, and all good, is thought to be a far greater punishment to the damned, than all the punishment of sense and torment. O the dreadful apprehensions that good souls have had about God's forsaking them! 'Tis a Hell on Earth, and the beginning of the second death, to be under a real sense of God's removal from the soul. O the amazing dread, and consuming error, that *Job, Asaph, Heman*, and others were filled with, by such apprehensions of God's withdrawment from them, and his wrath lying hard upon them! Soul, though now it be a time of light with thee, the Candle of the Lord shines upon thee; thou walkest in the light of his countenance, liest in his bosom, and art dandled on his knee; yet may the days of darkness be many, and thy soul lie in the shadow of death, and under real apprehensions of the Lord's departure from thee, and displeasure against thee, and then thou wilt find need of all the cordials, light and hope imaginable. O lay in sure and unquestionable satisfaction about this great case; that God is really and inseparably yours; and under all your clouds, fears and guilt, think well of God. *'Tis hard (saith one) to think ill of ourselves, and well of God at the same time.* Store yourselves with promises and experiences, with faith, hope, patience, and every grace that may bear you up in such a Trial, and cordial your fainting heart under such dangerous deliquiums. *If God should damn me (saith one) I have two arms, the one of faith, and the other of love, with which I would embrace him, and carry him with me, and his presence would make Hell itself a Heaven to me.*

Thirdly, Times of sore affliction, and distressing calamities, are spending-times, and will try your store of grace, and strength to bear it, and to get through it; and such you may live to see: The Cross is the usual way to the Crown, and affliction the lot of them that will live godly in Christ Jesus. *And we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God, Act. 14. 22. The fining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold, Prov. 17. 3. And the fan for the wheat;* the condition of Believers in this world cannot long bear prosperity without loss to their spiritual part. Christians under settled comforts in this world, are like standing pools, which soon gather mud; and as 'tis said of Moab, so 'tis with the people of God. *Jer. 48. 11. Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity, therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed. The sweetest nights that ever Jacob spent were in the field; so with Peter in prison; and David had those large affections to rise at midnight, and God's Word was sweet to him when his trouble was bitter, saith Dr. Harris.* But by afflictions the Lord refines his people from their dross. *Though the wisdom of the world (saith Mr. Bradford) think of the cross according to sense, and therefore flieth from it as from a most great ignominy and shame; yet God's scholars have learned to think otherwise of the Cross, as the framehouse wherein God frameth his children, like to his Son Christ: the furnace that fineth God's gold, the high way to Heaven, the suit and livery of God's*

servants, the earnest and beginning of all consolation and glory. Acts & Mon. 3. Vol. page 322. If you will be Christ's Disciple, you must expect tribulation; If need be you are in heaviness for a season. God's fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem: Prepare for afflictions, by which God prepares his people for himself. He is not fit for the reward in glory (saith Bernard) who is not ready to ascend the Gibbet as the way to it. We are fallen on the last times, which are times of abounding iniquity, Mat. 24. 12. sinning, and therefore like to be suffering-times, called perilous times; cruel times, 2 Tim. 3. 1. Beza renders it, troublesome times; Tremellius, hard times, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, it comes from 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, to bring damage, or to overturn; they will be overturning times; times of desolation, as Christ prophesies of them, Mat. 24. 15. days of vengeance. Luke 21. 22. These be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled: Great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be, Mat. 24. 21. called the great and terrible day of the Lord, when the Sun shall be turned into darkness, and the Moon into blood. Joel 2. 31. The Sun shall be turned into darkness, and the Moon into blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. Cocceius thinks this time to fall under the sixth seal, Rev. 6. 12. under which 'tis said, These are they which come out of great tribulation. I rather think that the sixth seal reckons with the enemies of God's people, and brings redemption to the Saints under great tribulation. That which we may clearly gather hence is, that those last times will be times of sore calamities, both personal and public, to Nations, and to the Church of God; and what a portion of those amazing troubles may fall upon the people of this age, we know not: this is certain, God seems to give his call from Heaven, as well as out of his Sanctuary, to prepare to meet with him, Amos 4. 12. to gird up the loins of our mind, Rev. 16. 15. to keep our garments on; to watch, lest he come as a thief, Luke 12. 35, 36. to have our vessels stored with Oil, and our lamps burning; and to reckon on midnight sitting up, and be as men that look for the coming of their Lord: Matth. 25. 6. To watch and pray always, that we may be counted worthy to escape the things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man, Luke 21. 36.

Fourthly, The time of Death is a spending time, and calls for great provisions for that long journey; and great change the Soul is then passing into. Death is the King of Terrors: O how amazing is the sight of it to a natural eye, and an awakened conscience! the work that death comes to do is frightful work to flesh and blood; to pluck a soul out of its ancient dwellings, to take it from all its acquaintance, friends, relations, and earthly All, from the comforts of the whole World, never to see or enjoy them more, as they have done; nay, to pull down this earthly tabernacle, not to leave a stone upon a stone, but quite to demolish it to the ground, is a great change: to lay a writ on the soul's back, and in a moment to bring it to judgment, from all its acquaintance, friends, and dearest relations, to the vision of an infinite holy God, there to receive its eternal doom, and to enter into a new estate, out of which he shall never depart, either of blessedness or misery. To take the soul off from all the means of salvation, and possibility of change out of that estate into which, by death he enters; that if the soul should die in his sins, there's no future repentance, or anything can be done to mend his ill condition: this will be terrible to a guilty conscience, sensible of many sins unrepented of, many duties neglected, much time lost, great hypocrisies uncur'd, many fears unremoved, and doubts unanswered. Now for such a soul, in a moment, to come to judgment, and to have

no time allowed him to set things in order for so great a compearance, and to state his account for that final Audit, is an amazing providence. The time of death is also a time of the greatest light, when the soul's eye shall be opened to see things as they are, no more in a glass, but face to face; then the soul that hath been dark all its days, shall see clearly things it never knew. As 'tis said of the Mole, that it is blind all its time, till it comes to die, and then it sees: So they that would not see, shall then see, and be ashamed; then shall souls see things as they are, and find that to be evil which they thought good, and that to be good which they thought to be evil. Death is the greatest informer, and makes the largest discovery of things that ever was; it brings to light the hidden things of darkness, sins the world never knew, and sins it may be the soul itself never saw, or thought itself guilty of: then will the least flaw, error, unsoundness, neglect, failing, be fully seen; then the things that now seem to be small, will then appear to be great; and those things that were taken for mountains, will be less than one single grain of dust.

Death is a time also when conscience hath its quickest senses, and liveliest acts, when it sees, hears, feels, fears, all things as they are, and without any other witness, becomes both Accuser and Judge: then Judas needed no Accuser to charge him, or Judge to condemn him, but his own conscience; nor Executioner to dispatch him, but his own hand. *What's the matter, man,* (said Mr. Perkins to a Malefactor, going up the ladder, and his countenance showing the inward terrors of his soul,) *art thou afraid to die? O, no Sir, said he, but of a worse matter.* So another upon her death-bed, and under a terrible sight of her wicked life, when one that was by offered something to comfort her against the fear of death, replied, *Were it but to die, it were nothing: A world* (said another, upon the border of eternity, and under conscienceaffrightings) *for one inch of time! O give me one inch of time!* Luther speaks of an Eremite who, a little before his death, stood very sad, never stirring out of his place for three days, having his eyes fixed towards Heaven; and being asked the reason of this posture, answered, he was afraid to die: His Scholars began to comfort him, telling him he need not to fear death, who had been so holy in his life; but he replies, *'tis true, I have lived well, and been obedient, but God's judgments are otherwise than Man's judgment,* Tom. 4. fol. 50.

The time of death is a time of great temptation also; then Satan usually brings forth his chiefest strength to weaken the soul's faith; 'tis his last onset, and that is the hottest; as men that storm a Garrison, in their last assault they usually put forth their utmost strength: *Then he opposeth us with most armed force. In this last assault,* (saith Luther) *'tis not as in other temptations, where faith and hope doth fight; for here he sets upon the very resistance, and the strife is about striving, and the war is maintained by another war: Here the fight is, that it may be lawful to fight, and to resist him whose greatest policy is then to dissuade from resisting; laughing at our hope, as if it were already vanquished, and it were to no purpose to resist.* This is a critical time, and hard to stand; the last enemy is death; when the soul must have the whole armor of God, and be found not in his own righteousness, but take sanctuary in the grace of God, the righteousness and faithfulness of Christ. *Death is somewhat driery,* (saith Mr. Cooper) *and the streams of that Jordan between us and our Canaan run furiously; but they stand still when the Ark comes: let your anchor be cast within the veil, and fastened on the rock Jesus; let the end of the threefold cord be buckled to the heart; so shall ye go through. When thou art tempted,* (saith Luther)

and seest no way to escape; shut thine eye, answer nothing, and commit the cause to God: This (saith he) is the chiefest wisdom we should attend to in the hour of death. This was Bernard's course and comfort, when on the point of death; *I have lived wickedly, (saith he) but thou, Lord Jesus Christ, enjoyest Heaven by a double right; first, because thou art the Son of God; then, because by thy death and passion thou hast obtained it: thou keepest the first thyself by thy birthright; the last thou bestowest on me, not for my works but of thy grace.* Christians, you had need be well furnished for the hour of death, (your greatest and most difficult hour) laying in all the provisions you can for a sure and comfortable passage to glory. Thus you see Wisdom's Merchants have more to do than keep up present life and comfort, they must lay in for times to come; for times of temptation, desertion, affliction, and the hour of death.

Advice 4.

Fourthly, If you have good trading with God, then lay out for God. This is reasonable work, pleasing work, honorable work, profitable work.

First, 'Tis reasonable work to lay out for God; he deserves it, 'tis his due; all your mercies are his interest; *I will return and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof; I will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness,* Hos. 2. 9. Though God gives his people the use of mercy, yet he keeps the propriety in his own hand: God is the *Alpha*, and should be the *Omega*, the Author, and 'tis reasonable he should be the end of all our mercies. *James 1. 17. Every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights:* And (as beams from the Sun) is derived from his bounty, as his peculiar offspring. *My goods are thy gifts (saith Augustine) All our good is either himself, or what comes from him:* Both trading and thriving are from him, and should also be for him, both principle and interest are God's own, *Mat. 25. 27.* If you lay not out your mercies for God, you rob him of his due. Your mercies are the Lord's, not only by that interest he reserves in them, but by your resignation of them unto him. Christians, when you gave up yourselves to the Lord, you gave up all your interests and capacities also, *2 Cor. 5. 8.* To keep back any part of your All from God, is to lie to the Holy Ghost. *Acts 5. 3. Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the Land:* No lower terms will pass in reconcillation with God, than what *Ahab* yielded to *Benhadad*, *1 Kings 20. 4. My Lord O King according to thy saying I am thine, and all that I have.* If you are not your own, much less anything you have, is absolutely yours. God gives his people But a conditional interest in all things beneath himself, so far as it suits his pleasure, use and glory. To keep back any part of your capacities and interests from God, when by his Word and Providence he calls for it, for his service, name and people is hypocrisy, lying, fraud and rebellion, and contrary to the Lord's undoubted interest, both by creation, redemption, and your own grant, *Hos. 2. 8. 2 Cor. 7. 20.*

Besides, you receive not your mercies as Owners, but as Stewards, to keep and use them for him, and according to his instruction, *1 Pet. 4. 10. As everyone hath received the gift (whether of grace, or gifts of grace, inward or outward gifts, spiritual or temporal, 'tis all one if he have received it) so let him administer the same, as good Stewards of the manifold grace of life.* Your interests are God's gifts; your abundance, his Bounty and trust to be bestowed to his use and pleasure, for which you must give an account.

Secondly, 'Tis pleasing work to lay out for God: *Paul counted not his life dear to lay out for Christ, Acts 20. 24. Peter and John rejoiced that they were counted worthy to part with their name, and to undergo reproach for Christ, Acts. 5. 41. Nazianzen was glad that he had something of value, to wit, his Athenian learning to part with for Christ. The Mother of William Hunter the Martyr rejoiced, that ever she was so happy as to bear such a child as could find in his heart to lose his life for Christ's Name sake, Acts and Mon. p. 13. 96.* Nothing seems burdensome to do or part with for Christ, to a soul that loves him: How willingly did *Jonathan* strip himself of the Robe that was upon him, and gave it to *David*, and his garments even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle, because he loved him; much more pleasing will it be to a soul loving Christ, to part with his All for Christ, *1 Sam. 18. 4.*

Thirdly, 'Tis honorable work also to lay out for God; *He that gives to the poor lendeth to the Lord, Prov. 19. 17.* And is not this honorable to make God a debtor, and to get him who is over all blessed forever, to become bound to his creature: O what honor is this, that the Giver of All should seem to be beholding to his creatures, who have their All from him! Have you anything you can part with for Christ? think what honor 'tis that God entrusts you with the bestowing of such gifts for him; the Lord might have made you beggars, not givers; who hath made you to differ? why is grace, gifts, strength, estate, time, put into thy hand, and not into others? it shows a good opinion God hath of thy faithfulness, and so bespeaks honor: O let not God have cause to revoke this estimation!

Fourthly, 'Tis profitable work: The more you lay out for God, the more you get for yourselves; there's no such way to gather, as to scatter for God; your improvements of mercy to God's end, are but as sowing of seed, which will come in again with greater increase, *2 Cor. 9. 6. He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully.* Laying out for God is Trading secured, not liable to hazards, as earthly undertakings are, but under a promise of sure and great returns, as hath been proved, and that is profit. Laying out for God, is lending to God upon interest, *Mat. 19. 29.* where both principal and interest are sure. *Prov. 19. 17. He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.* The Lord takes it as done to himself, and will repay with large use; he lends to the Lord upon bond for use, as the Hebrew imports, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, and he will surely repay it. God is bound for it, and therefore the debt is sure. 'Tis a great mistake in men, and that which starves their expensiveness for God, to think the more they give, the less they have; whereas laying out for God brings in principal and use; it sanctifies what is left, and brings it under a promise of increase. As the pouring out of the Widows Oil filled her vessels; the more she poured out, the more she had, *2 Kings 4. 5, 6.* And as the Widow of *Zarephath*, by giving first to the Prophet, secured her own provision in a time of famine. *1 Kings 17. 13, 14. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of Oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. Mal. 3. 10. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.* 'Tis men's niggardliness to God, and close-handedness to the poor, and pious uses, is one reason doubtless of the wastes and blastings on their outward interests this day. *Prov. 11. 28. The liberal soul shall be made fat,*

and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. Cartwright and Baine think this is meant of spiritual gifts, as the former verse is of external good things. But as Mercer well observes, the sentence is general, and takes in any supplies that are given to such as are needy Such shall be made fat; he shall be so far from being impoverished thereby, as it shall increase his substance; *He shall be watered as with showers in Autumn:* The latter rain, which is fruitfulizing: The streams of charity are not like running water that passeth away, but as fruitful showers that come again with increase. *Prov. 3. 9, 10. Honor the Lord with thy substance, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty.* Multitude of promises might be heaped up, which give in a joint-testimony to this truth; as *Mat. 25. 29. Eccles. 11. 1. Prov. 28. 27. Prov. 22. 9. Isa. 58. 7, 8, 10, 11.* with many others, and are abundant security for the blessing to such as lay out for God.

Besides, this is a proof of your love to God, *2 Cor. 8. 24. Wherefore show ye to them, and before the Churches the proof of your love,* *1 Joh. 3. v. 17. Whoso hath this worlds goods, and seeth his Brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* *1 John 4. 20. For he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?* By true charity to your poor Brethren you evidence your love to God; that secures all your true and needed mercies.

Fifthly, This also is pleasing to God, *Phil. 4. v. 18. Having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God,* *Heb. 13. 16. Isa. 56. 4.* and that is surely prosperous.

Then Christians, if God hath first given unto you; if you love him; if you would please him; if you would prosper in soul, body and estate, lay out for God: If you have freely received, freely give; whatever God hath entrusted you with, expend it for him.

First, Lay out your time for God: Among the many wastes of mercies souls are guilty of, this is not the least; *waste of precious time:* Though there is no creature-blessing of greater worth than time, in which a foundation is laid, of all those mercies that are eternal. Time is a talent, a treasure; not only a mercy, but that without which there can be no mercy: Consider for your improvement of Time,

First, Your Time is not yours, but God's, made by him, and for him. *Psal. 76. 17. The day is thin, and the night is thine; thou hast prepared the Light and the Sun.* Time is that space between two Eternities, limited by divine pleasure, to divine use. *Job 14. 5. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.* And if Time be the Lord's, then 'tis fit it should be used for God. *Give unto God the things that are God's.* When thou sinnest or trifiest away this Time, think on this; *now I rob God, and spend another's goods.* You that hate robbery of men, be not thieves to God and your own souls: Time is God's, not thine own.

Secondly, Think how much you have lost of past Time, and this should make you choice of present Time. *Psal. 90. 9. We spend our years as a tale that is told; which vanisheth into the Air and is soon gone. Much of our time (saith one) is plucked away from us, more is stolen away, but most of all doth slide away. O how little a piece of life is that we live!* How much of thy time hath been consumed in the grave? How much in the market-place? much slept away in the

Vineyard: When nature, self, the world and sin have had their shares of every day, how little a portion hath been left for God? Hence 'tis the Apostle advises Saints to redeem their Time; to get Time for God and their souls, though with some loss to other interests, because it hath been taken captive by self, sin and the world, and held prisoner so long. This waste of former Time makes it absolutely needful for them that will reach their journey's end before their day be gone, to redeem Time from their callings, recreations, refreshments, idleness and rest, for the recovery of neglected work, or they will find it wanting when they come to die. *Give me my time again*, said a woman on her deathbed, being under fears about her eternal state; nothing could relieve her troubled soul, who had lost salvation-time.

Thirdly, Consider how short and uncertain your remaining Time is, or may be: The whole Time of thy life is but a span, a hand-breadth, a post, a weaver's shuttle, a vapor, a tale that is told, as a flower of the field, things of no duration, *Job 9. 21. Psal. 39. 5. James 4. 14. Time* (saith one) *is a short parenthesis in a long period; so short, that before we can name it, our present Time is become past Time. Our whole life* (saith another) *consists but of two days, the day of our birth, and the day of our death;* for no sooner born, but we begin to die. Time is on the wing, hastening to Eternity every moment: Time travels when you sleep, and runs when you creep: Time goes on when you stop; and gets ground when you go back: As the stream hastens to the Ocean day and night; so doth Time to Eternity: O use your Time for God while you have it! it will shortly be none of yours; if you do not use it, you will lose it; you were as good let God have your Time, as to let it run away to no purpose; if duty do not improve it, rust will consume it; the Devil, World and Flesh will engross it; and 'tis better give it to God, than let the Moth and Caterpillar devour it. Besides,

Fourthly, Can you put it to better profit than to lay it out for God? he is the best chapman for your Time; nothing will give you so much interest for Time as God will; put all the gain of other Time into the scale, with the incomes of God's Time, and you will soon see the difference. Time laid out for God will be the best security for your own Time: Give God his Time, and he will give you your Time; all that Time that is needful for a blessed Eternity; There's no such way to enjoy Time, as to use it for God. *Prov. 3. 16. Length of days is in her right hand.* Time expended for God will not only secure, but sanctify your Time also, as the first-fruits did the lump, *Rom. 11. 16.* Besides, Time devoted to God brings in eternal interest; Though Time be but a thing temporal, yet improved, it will bring to things eternal, *2 Cor. 4. 18.* nay it will bring you mercy in the time of need: Give God your working-time, and he will feed you when in your unserviceable time. *When I was a young man* (said Mr. Bruce) *I was diligent, and lived by faith in the Son of God, but now I am old, and am not able to do so much, yet he condescends to feed me with lumps of sense.* [Fulfill. of Scripture.]

Fifthly, you must give an account for your time to God; he takes notice of men's time, how 'tis spent; and accordingly will judge them: *Luke 13. 7. These three years I come seeking fruit on this Fig tree, and can find none; cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* *Psal. 95. 10. Forty years long was I grieved with this people.* *Luke 19. 44. Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.* God looks for fruit from his people, according to their months, *Ezek. 47. 12.* O how much is it your concernment to order your disbursements of time to a consistency with your

comfortable account in the day of Christ! then you will wish God had more of your time, when you come to reckoning for it: what a blank will there be in our account of time, if it be not better bestowed than hitherto? That time will yield you most comfort when you come to eternity, which was spent for God here.

Sixthly, How can you bethink a little time for God, who hath not thought an eternity of mercy too much for you? Christians, 'tis salvavation, with eternal glory, he hath prepared for you, *2 Tim. 2. 10.* A Crown incorruptible, an Inheritance that fadeth not away, a Kingdom that cannot be shaken: Upon this very argument the Apostle presses the Saints to unweariedness in present work, *Gal. 6. 8.* Think how disingenuous 'tis thus to requite the Lord that hath dealt so bountifully with you; to with-hold your time from him, who first gave it to you, and hath denied it to others; and will shortly close up your troublous time with eternal rest, in blessed mansions of purest pleasures with himself: Let this love of Christ shame you for misimproved time, and constrain you, for the future, to lay out all possible time for God.

Secondly, Lay out your strength for God; he is the God of your strength, he hath right to it, and use for it, *Psal. 43. 2.* He hath work for you which calls for all your strength: *His works are great, greatly to be sought out of all that have pleasure therein, Psal. 111. 2. His mercies are great, and greatly to be praised: Psal. 86. 13. His anger is great, and greatly to be feared: 2 King. 23. 26.* His trials and rebukes on his own children are many times great, which need great faith and patience to bear up under them, and the strength of grace to make a right use of them: *Psal. 71. 10. Which hath shewn me great and sore troubles:* You do not know what need you may have of all the strength your hearts and graces are capable to receive, to carry you through your remaining trials and troubles: you have not yet resisted unto blood, or been brought to fiery trials, nor seen such days as never yet were or shall be And therefore you had need be girded with strength, and to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and one way to it, is to use what you have for God, *Heb. 5. 14.* God's service also calls for expended strength: *Luke 10. 27. Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy strength, 1 Chron. 26. 8.* The strength of thy heart laid out, inward strength for God in his service, the strength of your whole souls; and outward strength, the strength of your bodies also in the work of God. So did our Lord Jesus, he wasted his strength in the service of his Father, that at thirty four years old, he was taken to be near fifty: he was weary in his work. And *Paul* did spend, and was spent for Christ, *2 Cor. 12. 15.* And *David* cried out, *My knees are weak through fasting, Psal. 119. 24. Glorify God in your bodies, and in your spirits, which are the Lord's: 1 Cor. 6. 20. In labors more abundant: 2 Cor. 11. 23. Striving for the faith of the Gospel.* Religion is no easy work; *Ministers* (saith Mr. Burroughs) must venture their strength for Christ, and so must all that are Christ's: *2. Cor. 11. 27. In weariness, in painfulness, in watchings.* Religion is worth all your labors and exhausted strength; men tire themselves for the world; how much more should they for God and Glory?

Thirdly, Lay out your gifts and graces for God, and the good of souls: *1 Cor. 12. 7. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal:* that's God's end why he gives gifts to any, that everyone who hath them should improve them to his glory, and the good of others. A capacity of serving God, and furthering his Kingdom in the World, is such a

privilege as the Saints in Heaven enjoy not: and the Angels, when employed in any subserviency towards it, readily and cheerfully prosecute it. *Angels are vigilant creatures, and wait for opportunities; and when they come, will not lose them*, [Greenh.] Yea, 'tis such a prize, as being once lost, can never be enjoyed again; nor gracious souls ever more return to their stewardship, when once 'tis given up; and therefore should be heedfully regarded, and faithfully used while continued. God gives not talents to be napkin'd up, nor lights to be hid under a bushel: none of us liveth to himself, *Rom. 14. 7*. All the characters of Saints, and those relations they stand in, engage to usefulness: They are the lights of the world set in a candlestick, that they may cause their light to shine forth before men, *Mat. 5. 14, 15*. They are the salt of the earth, of purpose to savor others. *Mat: 5. 13*. *If salt hath lost its savor, 'tis good for nothing but the dunghill*. They are stars in God's firmament, to communicate their light and influence unto others, *1 Cor. 15. 41*. Vessels in God's house to be meet for use, *2 Tim. 2. 20, 21*. Stones in his building, which have a mutual usefulness to bear up each other, and toward preserving the whole, *Eph. 2. 2*. Branches in the Vine, that yield their fruit for the cheering the hearts of men, *Judge. 9. 13*. Trees in God's garden full of sap, *Psal. 104. 16*. Members in the body, to impart their nourishment to each other, *Eph. 4. 16*. and discharge their respective duties, of sympathy, care, and helpfulness to their fellow members: *1 Thes. 5. 14*. *We exhort you, brethren, to warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient towards all men*: Use all your capacities for God while you have them, lest he take them from you, or opportunity to improve them.

Fourthly, Lay out your earthly interests for God, *Prov. 3. 19*. *Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of thy increase*: Give God his due in maintaining his Messengers, and keeping up his worship; alluding to those first fruits of *Israel's* increase, which were the Lord's by special appropriation to his service, *Exod. 22. 29*. and supply of his ministry among them, *Lev. 23. 20*. the equity of which obliges in Gospel-times, though their ceremonial and judicial respect cease: and this duty is reinforc'd under the Gospel by more ample arguments taken from the light of Nature, the law of *Moses*, and will of Christ, *1 Cor. 9. from ver. 9. to 15*. To this head is refer'd that command; *Gal. 6. 6*. *Let him that is taught in the word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things; for God will not be mocked*: (as they do who pretend Religion, and yet are defective in this manifest duty,) pressing them to unweariedness in this expensiveness for God, whatever discouragements they meet with upon the assurance of the blessed fruit of obedience to the will of Christ herein, *ver. 7, 8, 9*. 'Tis not the maintaining or welfare of a few men in the World, that is the design of this great command of Christ; but the tendency this hath to the promulgation of the Gospel, and keeping up the instituted worship of God, the conversion of Sinners, and edification of Saints successively in every generation, to which these supplies are necessary, that the servants of Christ might attend on their ministrations without distraction; and whoever (a subject of Christ, and sharer of this privilege) draws back from this duty, he is chargeable not only for violating the royal righteous law of Christ, but for being guilty of subverting his Government, Crown and Dignity; and endeavoring in his measure, the ruining his interest, of hindering the conversion and edification of souls; and whatever damage hereby comes to the spiritual or

eternal welfare of souls; it will be laid on their heads in the day of the righteous judgment of Christ.

Another greatly concerning duty contained in this Scripture, is charitable communications, feed the poor, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, relieve the oppressed. [*Bede Alapid.*] This is to honor God with your substance; not to spend it on your lusts, to live high, to fare deliciously, to build your nests on high; but to make your abundance a supply for the good of those that are in wants, 2 Cor. 8. 14. Isa. 58. 7. 10. Mat. 5. 42. Jam. 1. 27. Heb. 13. 16. Luke 14. 12, 13. Otherwise,

First, All your Religion is in vain, *James 1. v. 26, 27.* Your knowledge, desires, affections, frames, tastes, enjoyments, marks, experiences, seeming graces, duties, are all nothing, and can never prove the truth of your grace, the safety of your estates, and goodness of your religion, if you are found defective in this great duty of Charity. *Psal. 112. 4, 5. Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness; he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. A good man showeth favor, and lendeth.* Let men say what they will, if they be covetous, hard-hearted, have no compassion to them that are in wants, have no heart to give or lend to needy ones; they have no true grace in them. *Verse 9. He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness endureth forever.* Men may talk, and pray, and seem to be eminent Christians; profess love to God and their neighbors, and yet all the while be deceived, and have not a jot of grace in them, while their hearts are cruel, their hands shut to their poor Brethren. Remember the young man in the Gospel, and fear thine own estate if thy heart be glued to thy possessions:—*How dwelleth the Love of God in him! 1 Joh. 3. 17.* He loves not God, and God loves not him; that shuts up the bowels of his compassion from his poor and afflicted Brother. *That's pure Religion, and undefiled before God to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world, Jam. 1. 27. Shew me thy faith by thy works. Jam. 2. 18. Religion (saith one) is not only contemplative, but the greatest part of it like the Mathematick's 〈2 pages missing〉 bargains, how will they stand for a penny! in chacharity, how cold are they! how hard is it to screw an alms out of their hands! if this be Religion, the Lord keep me from such Religion.* This begets an odium in the men of the world against Religion, and the ways of God: But woe to that man by whom offenses come; it had been better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the midst of the Sea, *Mat. 18. 6, 7.*

Fourthly, Acts of Charity purely done will evidence your right to glory. *Mat. 25. 34, 35, 36. Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came to me.* The enquiry in that great day will not be after men's profession, light, frames and duties of Worship, but after the fruits of their faith and love as evidential, not causal, of their right to glory, *Here is held out (saith one) not the cause of their salvation, but the sign and testimony of them that believe, &c.* The Kingdom is obtained by way of Inheritance: (*Come inherit the Kingdom:*) and prepared for them, as a portion for children, not purchased by them as the procurements of their works: The reward is freely bestowed on all interested in Adoption-grace, of which title the bearing proof in that day will be the fruits of love to those that are

Christ's; words will not be sufficient to demonstrate this love then; it will not serve men's turn to say they loved Saints, except it were extended to all, yea the least of Saints, and proved by acts of love, and communications to all their necessities; and that not some small pittance of their abundance, which they valued not, but it must be such portions and kinds of relief, which their necessities call for; in visiting, feeding, clothing, owning, comforting, receiving into their houses, and whatever help they were capable to express, and this as readily and heartily expended to them as they would lay them out to themselves and theirs, that being the rule of Charity: *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, Matt. 22. 39.* The want of this evidence, whatever else may be pretended, will finally and eternally cast souls in that last and terrible day, *Mat. 25. 41. to the end.* Do not deceive thy soul with false hopes of glory; not one mark will pass for Heaven, where there is a hard heart, and close hands towards poor and distressed Saints: *For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shown no mercy, Jam. 2. 13.* There is no room for you in Divine bowels, if you shut up your own bowels against them that are in misery. See in that Parable, *Mat. 18. 33, 34, 35.* the dreadful end of those who are any way cruel to their fellowservants, having themselves tasted the mercy of their Lord. The liberal distributions of your estates to the poor, is the only way to make them truly serviceable to your souls, whiles this becomes the occasion of your reception into everlasting habitations. *Luke 16. 9. Make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations* The mammon or riches of this world, is called the riches of unrighteousness, because they are unrighteously gotten, or unrighteously kept, to the detriment of those that need them; or unrighteously spent to the hurt of those that have them; but the way to change their nature, and to make them profitable, is to lay them out to the poor, who will receive you, or witness for you in that day, to prove the truth of your love, by which you shall be received into glory.

Fifthly, They are the sure way to blessing here. *Luke 6. 38. Give, and it shall be given to you, good measure pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom; for with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again:* Intimating, that giving to the poor, is but lending to the Lord, as hath been shown, and it shall be surely repaid in this life, either in kind, or in value, in such things as they need; yea oftentimes in the same coin, and that to sufficient requital, good measure amplified by three metaphors, *pressed down, shaken together, and running over;* that is (saith Scultetus) God will so bless them, that they shall be sensible they are sufficiently repaid, *2 Cor. 9. 6. Deut. 15. 10, 11. Mat. 10. 41, 42. Psal. 41. 12. Prov. 11. 24. Job* was a man of great Charity, *Job 29. 12, 13.* a man of great prosperity in the world, v. 6, 7. and though for the trial of his faith he was stripped of all for a season, yet did the Lord after all turn his water into wine, *chap. 42. 10. Rahab* entertained the spies, and saved herself and family from ruin by it: The *Shunamite*, the Widow of *Zarephath* got by laying out acts of Charity to the Prophet. *Tiberius* the second was a person of great liberality to the poor; 'tis said of him, that whatever *Justinus* his predecessor had contracted by covetousness, *Tiberius* freely distributed to the poor: And when *Sophia, Justine's* Widow, reproved him for his excess of Charity, he replies, *I trust in the Lord that our Exchequer shall never want money, while the poor are maintained out of it.* Neither did his expectations fail; for as the same Author reports, he found a vast treasure in his Palace, hidden under the pavement,

which could scarce be emptied for divers days: Thus God blessed his bountiful hand. Mr. *Gouge*, in his *Surest and Safest Way of Thriving* (a book worth your getting, and to which I refer you) gives many modern instances of this great truth; I shall for their sakes who have not the Book mention this one, concerning the pious and imitable resolution of Mr. *John Walter*, Citizen of *London*, who having a sufficient estate to maintain his Charge, resolved what further estate God should entrust him with, to bestow the same on charitable uses; after which vow he found his estate wonderfully increasing: A worthy president to such as have enough to live comfortably upon, to put bounds to their further purchases, and entitle their surplusage to the service of Christ, and refreshments of his Saints; a course men will one day find more gainful, than to join house to house, and field to field. *'Tis the best way* (saith *Chrysologus*) *for a rich man to make the bellies of the poor his barn, to succor the fatherless and needy, and thereby to lay up treasures in Heaven.* *Gregory the Great* was so devoted to Charity, that all what he had seemed to be the common granary of the Church. *'Tis said of Cyprian*, he was *the blind man's eyes, the lame man's legs, the naked man's garment*; he was a man of so great Charity. Mr. *Fox*, the Author of the *Acts and Monuments*, never denied to give to any that asked for Jesus sake. *Augustine* sold the Ornaments of the Church to relieve the poor. And *Basil* in a time of great famine sold his Land, and other goods to maintain the poor. A Duke being asked by some Ambassadors whether he could show them some hunting-dogs, gathered a great many poor people together, and showing them to the Ambassador, said, These be the Dogs I daily keep, and with which I use to hunt after Heaven. O that Christians would have other games in chase, than that which perishes in the using, and lay out their estates to better advantage than what appropriating them to self-interest can afford! Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give to him that lacketh, seeing such blessed encouragements do attend this Christian duty.

Fifthly, If you have good trading in grace, then lay up for glory: If you are Wisdom's Merchants, Heaven is your Country and home, the place of your rest and eternal residence: The world is a strange Country to you, a spot of ground where you are set for a while to trade in to get commodities for your Country; and sent into it as *Jacob* was to *Syria*, to provide for his own house, and then to return into his Country; *Gen. 30. 30. This is not your rest, Mich. 2. 10.* Christians, you are not sent hither to take root in the Earth, or with the Raven, let out of the Ark to build your nests in the world; or with the fool in the Gospel, to take your rest in your full barns, and increased goods; but as *Joseph* was sent before into *Egypt* to make provision for his own Country; and as *Solomon's* ships were sent to *Tarshish* to transport what materials were useful for the House of God, and his own house. All that you are allowed here, is but as factorage for present maintenance: Some viands and refreshments in the way, but your great business is to get such goods as will vend in your own Country. Remember, you are all this while left here, to fill your sacks for your own home, where your kindred and habitation lies: Your Father's house, and your own mansions, your treasures, pleasures, crowns, thrones, and all that you are like to have forever, lies in your City above, whose maker and builder is God. *We know but little of Christ's love* (saith Mr. *Cooper*) *till all be perfected and spread before us in Heaven.* O lay up for Heaven! treasure up all you can for the other world whither you are going: Especially lay up these four things for Heaven:

- 1 Hopes for Glory,
- 2 Desires for Glory,
- 3 Treasures for Glory,
- 4 Preparations for Glory,

First, Lay up sound Hopes for Heaven. 1 Pet. 1. 13. *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind; be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* Sure hopes of Heaven are of wonderful use to quicken a soul's dispatches for Heaven. Acts 26. 7. *Unto which promise our twelve Tribes instantly serving God day and night hopeto come.* 'Twas their hopes to enjoy those great and glorious things in the promise, that did put them on such diligence in those ways that lead to it; to strive in every duty that seemed to have an eye to this glory, they did stretch out their hand to take hold of eternal life, as one that was near the prize. Hope puts strength and activity into the soul in its motion after God, and makes it restless and unwearied till it enjoy him. This argument the Apostle useth to provoke the *Hebrews* in their race towards glory: Heb. 12. 1. *Seeing then we are compassed about with so great a cloud of winesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* The weight of the argument lies in the sure and blessed issue of well-grounded hope attested by so many witnesses in the former Chap. who ran so great adventures, sustained so great losses, underwent such cruel deaths in chase of this eternal Crown; and not one of them miscarried, all got safe to glory, through their many fears and deaths. And seeing all that had this true hope hither to have sped well, and the same promise is made to us; Chap. 11. 40. having provided some better thing for us, (better privileges, better promises,) Let's pluck up our spirits, and at it again; and if no visible comfort or evidence meet us in our way, yet let us hold on with patience till we come to the end of our race.

Hopes of glory do also guard the soul against discouragements and difficulties. 1 Thes. 5. 8. *Putting on the breast-plate of Faith; and for an helmet, the hope of Salvation.* Hope arms head and heart, and keeps off the venom'd darts of Satan from ruining the soul; while wellgrounded hope of a blessed end is kept up, *Israel* prevails, and the Believer is kept from being overcome: 1 Joh. 5. 4. *This is the victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.*

Hope of glory maintains a patient expectation and quiet waiting for the fruition of it. Rom. 8. 25. *If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it;* and this is no small mercy: Impatience hath a dangerous influence on a Christian's heart, discouraging it, and exposing to temptation of giving over; saying, *Wherefore should I wait any longer?* 2 King. 6. 33. which danger Hope secures from.

Hope settles, and stays the heart; stilling its fears, scattering its doubts, and strengthening its confident expectation of glory, turning persuasions into the highest certainty, even a kind of knowledge. 1 Joh. 3. 2. *But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* Well-grounded and improved hope in a Christian's life, doth usually end in a triumphing confidence at his death: *I shall shine* (said a precious servant of God on his

deathbed,) *I shall see him as he is, and all the fair company with him, and shall have my large share: it is no easy thing to be a Christian; but as for me, I have got the victory, and Christ is holding forth his arms to embrace me; I have had my fears and faintings as another sinful man, to be carried through creditably, but as sure as ever he spake to me in his word; his spirit witnessed to my heart, saying, fear not; he had accepted my sufferings, and the out-gate should not be matter of prayer, but of praise; [Mr. Rutherford's last words.] And a little before his death, after some fainting, he said, Now I feel, I believe, I enjoy, I rejoyce, I feed on Manna, I have Angels food; my eyes shall see my Redeemer. O what rich cheer will hope of glory find on a death-bed! What brightness is that I see? (said Mr. John Holland the day before his death,) have you light up a candle? a stander by answered, no, 'tis the Sun shines: Sun shine, (saith he) nay, it is my Savior shines; now farewell World, welcome Heaven; the day-star from on high hath visited my heart. O speak it when I am gone, and preach it at my Funeral; God dealeth familiarly with men; I feel his Mercy, I see his Majesty; I see things that are unutterable: Hopes of glory will make the World seem a very poor thing in a Believer's eye; he that by faith can stand on Mount Nebo, and get one glance on the promised Land, as his, feeds on the first ripe Grapes of his own Country; in comparison of which, all the World's dainties are bitter things. Hopes of glory cheers the heart in the way to glory. Rom. 5. 3. *And rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Rom. 12. 12. Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation:* It makes the soul go merrily on, like a Ship under sail, that hath both wind and tide; whereas the doubting Saint drives heavily on, when winds and waves beat against him, being unwheel'd of Faith and Hope: Sure hope of Heaven gets honey out of the rock, and meat out of the eater, which makes his rough ways plain, and his passage to Heaven pleasant: 'Tis Christians losing their hopes of Heaven, makes them so uncomfortable in their passage through the World.*

Lastly, Well-grounded hopes of Heaven have a great influence towards preparation for it, while it hath an advantage to further his holiness. 1 Joh. 3. 3. *And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself as he is pure.* When the Apostle speaks of the faith of God's elect, which is after godliness, Tit. 1. 1. as a furtherance of this holiness, lays this hope upon eternal life; *In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the World began:* Expectations of Heaven well laid, cannot but constrain a soul to utmost measures of holiness. 2 Pet. 3. 14. *Seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that you may be found of him in peace without spot, and blameless.* Heaven is a place of perfect holiness, no unclean thing can enter there; which the eye of faith seeing, and the soul's right to it, puts a person upon perfecting his holiness, that he may be ready to enter in. O then lay up hopes of glory, which have such precious fruits hanging on them.

Quest. But what are those sure hopes of glory, which will never fail of glory; and from which we may expect such excellent fruit?

Sol. First, Sure hopes of glory, which will never fail of glory, are issued out of a saving union with the Lord Jesus, the Lord of glory. Col. 1. 27. *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory.* Christ united to you, and dwelling in you by his spirit, is this glorious treasure spoken of in the former part of the verse. Here are two arguments to endear the Lord Jesus to Believers.

First, That in their union with him they are invested with great and unsearchable treasures; he himself being that glorious and hidden riches opened in the Gospel, and made over to them in their reception of him into their hearts by faith; part of which treasure they have in hand in their present union and communion with him, and the blessed fruits and consequents of it here.

Secondly, Another thing that renders Christ precious to Believers, is, that in their union with him is laid the foundation of their right to, and evidence of their hope of glory; [*Quatenus est in illis eatenus habent spem gloriae. Dav.*] and assurance of their future and eternal enjoyment of himself, and all his treasure laid up in glory: There's no other way to have a right to glory, but by union with Christ, who hath purchased glory only for those that are his, and have this spiritual union with him. Hence 'tis that the Lord Jesus Christ is called a better hope, *John 17. 21, to 27. Heb. 7. 19. For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw near to God:* That is the Lord Jesus in his Priestly Office, of which the Ceremonial Law was a forerunner, did bring in a ground of better hope in opening the way to God in grace and glory: All right to glory is through him who is the Lord of glory, *1 Cor. 2. 8.* and hath the disposal of it to whom he pleases, *John 17. 2.* even to all the Father hath given him to be his; and to these he gives eternal life, *John 10. 28.* They that have union with Christ cannot perish, being members of his body, flesh and bones; should a soul that hath received Christ here, miss of glory hereafter, then would a member of Christ perish, and his body in Heaven be maimed and imperfect, which cannot be, his Church being the fullness of him who filleth all in all, *Eph. 1. v. 21.* And Christ hath past his word for it they shall not perish, *John 10. 28.* Not one of them is lost who are truly in Christ, *John 17. 10.* They are his servants, and shall be where he is, *John 12. 26.* His Spouse, which shall be ever with him. Try then your union with Christ; Have you received him into your hearts by faith? Are you one Spirit with him, having the same mind in you that was in Christ Jesus? you would be holy as he is holy; nothing short of complete oneness with Christ can content you: Indeed, you have carnal desires within the borders of your souls, that crave for satisfaction, and sometimes will have it whether you will or no; but there is another Law in your mind warring against this Law in your members, that cannot rest till you arrive more to his likeness, who is your life, righteousness and glory. Are you implanted into Christ's death and resurrection, brought into some conformity to him? And do you live upon him as the branch upon the root for all your grace and supply, and stay upon him as the stone upon the foundation, for your support in grace unto glory, as your only Lord and Righteousness? Then are your hopes for glory sure speeding hopes.

Secondly, Truth of grace secures your hopes of glory, it being the earnest, seal, and first fruits of glory. *2 Cor. 1. 22. Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* Grace is God's seal for glory, and what greater security can there be? 'Tis his earnestpenny, which is never taken away, as a pledge may be, but secures the whole sum; yea 'tis part of pay: Grace is that seed of God which remaineth in him, *1 John 3. 9.* and secures the soul's state against final Apostasy, through its union with the Spirit dwelling in him, *Rom. 8. 11.* Prove your truth of grace (though never so weak) and you will prove your title to glory: Doth your grace owe its being to the fullness of Christ, *John 1 16.* owning its derivation thence; and

dependence there? Doth your grace spread itself into every part and faculty of your soul, wholly sanctified throughout? 1 *Thes.* 5. 23. Cannot your grace mingle with sin, or own the least appearance of evil, *Rev.* 2. 2. but hath according to its measure an irreconcilable enmity against every known sin? *Gal.* 5. 17. Cannot your grace rest in any measures short of perfection, but hath desires and endeavors after more and more grace? 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. Hath your grace pure and ultimate designs for Divine Glory, aiming in everything, *Phil.* 1. 20, 21. that Christ may be magnified, *John* 3. 30. and self annihilated? then is your grace true grace, and will in time turn to glory.

Thirdly, Your mortifiedness to the world will be a good proof of your title to Heaven. The heirs of Glory are chosen out of the world; are not of the world, *John* 15. 19. Redeemed from the earth, *Rev.* 14. 3. They have not received the spirit of this world, but the Spirit that is of God, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. and are crucified to it, *Gal.* 6. 14. dead to the desires, pleasures and interests of this world, *Col.* 3. 1, 2. Dead men have no favor or delight in things; no more have they who are dead to this world, any acquiescing pleasure in earthly things, which can no more satisfy a heavenly soul, than dung can feed a living man. Christians, try how your hearts stand affected to earthly things; are these great in your eye, amiable to your affections, attractive on your desires, prevalent on your wills, beyond the things of Heaven? then are your hopes of Heaven unwarrantable by any Divine evidence, and will at last leave your names written on the earth.

Fourthly, Your hopes for Heaven, if right, will be active lively hopes. 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *Who hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead.* Hopes that put life in your affections and spirits, and makes you vigorous after holiness, and the way to glory, *Ephes.* 2. 10. Right hopes for Heaven will make you run in the way to Heaven, and put you on all manner of holy conversation. *Paul's* hopes for Heaven put him on labors and strivings after perfect holiness, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8, 9. *Phil.* 3. 12, 13, 14. Try your hopes; do they quicken you to duty, or leave you dead? You have no heart to the ways of God, or delight in approaching to him; his commands are grievous to you; this bespeaks unsound and frail hopes for Heaven, which will at last deceive you: But sure hopes for Heaven are backed with suitable labors for Heaven.

Fifthly, If your hopes be right for Heaven, then will your conversation be in Heaven. *Phil.* 3. 20. *But our conversation is in Heaven, whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile bodies, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious body.* You will be taken up about heavenly things, and driving on heavenly concerns: You will be maintaining intercourse in Heaven, and keeping up your converses with God; you will be often taking journeys to Heaven in your contemplations and desires; your business will be much in Heaven, and your occasions thither frequent; though you live on Earth, yet you will converse in Heaven. As Dr. *Preston* said when he was near death, *I shall but change my place, not my company.* O try your hopes for Heaven by your conversation, if that be engaged about the things of Heaven now; if your work be in Heaven, your rest shall be in Heaven also.

Sixthly, If your hopes for Heaven be right, you will willingly undergo whatsoever sufferings and dangers lie in your way to Heaven. He that is sure of reaching home at last, will venture

through any dangers in his way. O what hazards will men run through to get an earthly Crown! no difficulties will discourage them; how much more will hopes for Heaven carry souls through the Red Sea of afflictions and bloody sufferings they may meet with before they come to it! *Acts 20. 24. chap. 21. 13.* He that cannot consent to drink of the cup Christ drinks of, and which the Father shall give him to drink, and to submit to the cruellest death, losses, shame, trials and torments, which his faithfulness to God may bring him to, must reckon again, and take up other conclusions about his future state; easier terms cannot be granted: *Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Luke 14. 33. He that will come after me, must deny himself, take up his Cross, and follow me. Matth. 16. 24. We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God. Acts 14. 22. If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him, 2 Tim. 2. 12.*

Secondly, Lay up desires for glory, not only some desires of glory, but such desires as nothing else can satisfy but glory; which nothing short of a whole God can content. Most souls in this life limit their desires, and take up their wishes too short of true blessedness: *My soul thirsteth for God (saith God) but it was only for some sights of his power and glory, as he had seen him in his Sanctuary, Psal. 63. 1, 3.* Some looks through the lattice; some embraces of Christ in the arms of faith, pleased the Spouse, and doth satisfy most souls here: Alas, how few are the desires of gracious souls, which a little of God will not content! One desires grace, another peace; some are for quickenings and comforts; others for enlightenings, for higher measures of knowledge, for some sights of God through a glass; but how few breathings are there, to see as we are seen, to know as we are known? *1 Cor. 13. 12.* And indeed 'tis strange that Heaven-born souls, that heirs of glory, and fellow-citizens of Heaven, should have no more longings after their own home, and not only for some first-fruits, but the full ripe fruits of their own Country. *David* had sometimes workings after this, not only for God to come to him, but for himself to go to God; when his heart takes a leap from the path of life, into the presence of God, where is fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. *Psal. 16. 11. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.* From the beholding of his face in righteousness here, he longs for the satisfying visions of God in glory. *Psal. 17. 15. As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.* *Paul* also under the highest enjoyments of God here, had his unsatisfied longings to be with him as best of all, *Phil. 1. 23.* and in respect of which he counts his greatest intimacy with Christ in the body, to be a kind of absence. *2 Cor. 5. 6. Knowing that whiles we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.* Do not terminate your desires upon anything that can satisfy you on this side glory: Get such desires raised, which cannot be answered till you come to Heaven, with such kind of breathings as these: *O when shall I come to that blessed state, to know as I am known; to have every corner of my heart filled with the immediate emanations of his glorious fullness! O when will that time, or rather eternity come, when I shall be satisfied with looking on that blessed face which is every day the Angels wonder, and the Saints joy. Here alas! I lie among the pots, all sooty and defiled, whiles the vessels of my Father's house, and the bowls before the Altar, out of which my Lord always drinketh, are bright and glorious. Now I have my habitation where Dragons lie, while a glorious Pavilion stands empty for me: Here I feed on my own dung, and oftentimes eat the excrements of Devils, and all the while there's bread*

enough in my Father's house, and my Brethren fare deliciously at the King's Table. O when shall my work be done, that I may be gone! When shall the things for cleansing be given me, and the days of my purification be accomplished, that my turn may come to go in to the Lord my King! When shall the Nuptial garments, the Bridal ornaments, the Robe, the Ring, the Royal Vestments bespangled with costly Jewels, be given me, with this most welcome message, Arise my Love, my Dove, my Fair One, and come away! Lay up such kind of breathings after the Mountains of Spices, the Everlasting Hills, the Rivers of Pleasures, the Bride-chamber of Glory, where you shall be ever with the Lord. This will hasten your pace to Heaven, and mount you on the wings of a Dove: This will help you to pass by the world's glory with a holy scorn, and to bear its cruelty with incredible patience.

Thirdly, Lay up all the Treasures you can to greaten glory: Though the lest portion of glory is satisfying, yet the highest measures of glory are desirable, because in it there is the greatest conformity to God, 1 *John* 3. 2. *Luke* 10. 17, 19, 20. *Dan.* 12. 3. and the fullest enjoyment of God. The Lord Jesus doth propose degrees of glory for the encouragement of his people to greater improvements of grace; and therefore the highest degrees of glory are desirable: O get as much as you can here to greaten your felicity in Heaven. Do all you may to make your Crown more massy, and your mansion more fair, and your pleasures more full to all Eternity.

Several things have a tendency to greaten your glory. The more grace you improve now, the greater will be your glory; he that gained ten pounds, had ten Cities: Grace is seed sown, according to its measure will be the harvest: *What a man sows, that shall he reap*, *Gal.* 6. 7. The less seed is sown, the less crop will there be; and the more seed, the larger increase, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9. Glory is a Crown of Righteousness proportioned to the utmost improvements of Grace. The more work you do for God, the greater will be your wages of grace in glory, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2, 4. 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *That everyone should receive according to what is done in the body.*

The more you lay out for God, the more shall you receive from him, 2 *Cor.* 9. 6. who will certainly repay it.

The greater your sufferings are for God, the greater will your rejoicings be with him: *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy*, *Ps.* 126. 5. Look what disproportion there is between the Seed-time and Harvest, far greater is there between the Saints sufferings, sorrows, and triumphing joy: Their sorrow lies within the compass of a short night, their joy begins with that morning which hath no evening to follow it, *Psal.* 30. 5. Their tears will scarcely fill a bottel, but their pleasures are so vast an Ocean, as that they cannot be received, but must be entered into, *Mat.* 25. 21. *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. Yea the present consolations of the Saints oftentimes abound in their sufferings; *The ringing of my chains hath been sweet music in my ears*, (said *Guy de Bres*;) *all my former discourses were but as a blind man's of colors, in respect of my present feeling: O what a precious comforter is a good conscience!* How unspeakable then are those rejoicings, when all tears shall be wiped off, when sorrow and mourning shall fly away, *Mat.* 5. 10, 11, 12.

The more your losses are for Christ on earth, the greater will be your gain in Heaven. *Heb. 10. 34. And took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that you have in Heaven a better and an enduring substance.* Men can never bring their goods to a better Market, than to have them spoiled for the sake of Christ: your goods you lose for Christ are capable of being spoiled; your goods you shall receive in Heaven are above all injury; the very *bags wax not old*, much less the treasure: time will mar your best interests here. Alas, what is a little old goods, moth-eaten garments, rusty silver subject to change; compared with that substance, whose duration is as long as eternity, and whose extension is as large as immensity? and such is God in Christ, the Saints eternal treasure: *Mat. 19. 29. And in the World to come life eternal.* Carnal reason judges them the greatest fools that dare to be undone for their profession; whereas divine truth reckons such the mad men, who to escape them that can but kill the body, durst encounter him who can damn both soul and body in Hell, *Mat. 10. 28.* And to lay a foundation of a few days safety upon the ruins of themselves and others. *How dangerous* (said Mr. Cooper) *is their estate, who cannot rise but with the fall of many? Et quantum sit illud propter quod nos reliquisti? How poor are those things* (saith he) *for which you have left us?* whereas the Saints losses for Christ are their greatest gain, while the things they part with are but temporal; but those they gain are eternal, *2 Cor. 4. 18.*

Lastly, The more souls you help to Heaven, the more treasure you prepare for Heaven: *Dan. 12. 3. They that be wise* (the margin hath it, they that be teachers) *shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever.* As nothing doth sink a person deeper into Hell, than to have the blood of souls upon its head, and to become the occasion of others perishing, *Jer. 2. 34.* So it wonderfully greatens a persons own blessedness in Heaven, to be the means of getting others to be blessed also: *1 Thes. 2. 19. For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? for ye are our glory and joy.*

Lastly, Lay up preparations for glory: Glory is a great thing: O what a change doth Heaven make upon a Believer's state! *We shall all be changed, 1 Cor. 15. 51.* from corruption to incorruption; from sin to spotless purity; from imperfection to perfection; from darkness to knowledge; from faith to fight; from espousals to a marriage-day: and what preparations do such a change call for? What if death should surprise you, and take you in your old clothes? 'tis not your daily garments, no not your best rayments are good enough for your marrieday: your attire must be all new when you solemnize your eternal nuptials to the King of Glory. O what manner of persons should you be who look for new Heavens, and a new Earth! If a Paul be not sufficient to carry a love-token to Christ's Spouse here on earth, *2 Cor. 2. 16. Who is sufficient for these things? Who then are fit to lie in the Bridegroom's arms to all eternity? Few think what a change must be before the Saints can get to Heaven: 1 Cor. 15. 50. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.* If so much preparation-work must be dispatched before an Esther could be fit for the embraces of an earthly King, *Esth. 2. 12.* six months for purifying with oil of Myrrh, and six months with sweet Odors, and with other things? How much sanctification-work is needful to meeten a soul for the immediate enjoyment of God in glory? and how unready are the most of souls for such a change? O Believers! hasten about your preparations for Heaven,

seeing you have no fixation on earth, and know not what hour your Lord will come. In order to which, take these six directions.

First, Get your hearts more loose from this present world; men that change places, knock up, and take abroad things they must carry with them: Your hearts (Christians) are the principal things you must take with you to Heaven; it may be you have gone to God in duties many a time, and left your hearts behind you; but you cannot go to God in glory, except your hearts be with you. And O what a difficult work is it to go the heart (upon choice) loose from everything below God! and till this be done, there's no getting to Heaven: Things fastened to the free-hold (they say) cannot be removed; how then can that heart get to glory, that is nailed down to the world, and things below. Be daily loosening your hearts from the world, estates, houses, lands, trades, friends, relations, and everything below; for you may not have time to get them off without loss, when death comes: you must leave them all shortly, and you know not how soon, to go to better friends and interests: these have been snares and spears to your souls, and have given you many a wound, and still hinder your speeding to glory; and why should you be loath to part with them? O Christians! if you are willing to be with Christ, you will give your hearts warning to be gone from these tabernacles, and to take their leave of this world daily.

Secondly, Press after more maturity in your graces; the more ripe, the more fit for gathering, *Joel. 3. 13. Tamar must tarry a Widow till Selah be grown, Gen. 38. 11.* and your marrieday must be delayed till you come to a full age: The Saints must be as a shock of corn that cometh in in its season, *Job 5. 25.* Ripen a pace in your graces, if you would get to glory: Get your faith, hope, patience, and every grace increased daily; especially your love to God; that's the grace shall abide in glory, *1 Cor. 13. 8.* Faith and Hope are the soul's helps, and companions in the way; but Love will be an eternal inhabitant with you. Get purer, deeper rooted, stronger, more enlarged love to Jesus Christ every day, till you be downright sick for him; this will make your life a death without his presence here, and your death to be life in being with him forever. 'Twas love to Christ made *Ignatius* so dead to all things below, and so longing to be with Christ: 'Tis storied of him, that when he was dead, and his heart taken out, they saw the name of Jesus written in it in letters of Gold: The more love to God, the more fit for God; *for God is love,*.

Thirdly, Get and keep the testimony of a good conscience, that may witness for you in the day of Christ: when you die, you are to have a trial for your life, your inheritance, your All; and you had need have your witness firm, and ready: Now there are two great witnesses you will need in that day to clear your title; the witness of Conscience, and the Spirit: have the one on your side, and you will not want the other. Get your consciences sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and purged from dead works by the Spirit of Christ, that it may be able to appear for you in that day. The blood of Christ will put words into the mouth of conscience for you, to plead the general issue, and the benefit of pardoning grace, wherein you have been transgressors; enlightened conscience will accuse you that you have sinned; and besprinkled conscience will plead for you that you are pardoned; and purged conscience will testify for you that you are changed, and that you hate the evil you have done, and love the

holiness you have neglected. O of what wonderful use will the testimony of a good conscience be when you stand at the Bar of God! Get it true to you now, and sure for you then.

Fourthly, Maintain more constant walks with God daily; this will fit you for your eternal fellowship with him. Converse with God is begun acquaintance here; and in Heaven is perfect friendship, and perpetual fellowship. It will much fit you for Heaven hereafter, to begin the work of Heaven here, which lies in maintained intercourse with him. Through these gallery-walks with God, do the Saints pass into the Presence-Chamber, and sit down with him forever: Communion with God now, is Heaven begun; such are fittest for his presence in glory, who are train'd up in his company here.

Fifthly, If you would prepare for Heaven, dispatch your work on Earth: Heaven is a state of rest, and rest follows the finishing of labor, *Heb. 4. 9. Rev. 4. 13.* Paul must end his fight, finish his course, and keep the faith, before he can reach the Crown: *2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.* In the grave there's no wisdom, device, or work; this is your only time for labor while you are in the Vineyard. O how much work is behind with most! which will make a departure terrible to an awakened conscience. Haste about your neglected work; you have (it may be) much work to do with others, in your families, with your relations; possibly there are some souls in their graves, and you have not done what you might to bring them forth; dead Husband, Wife, Children, Servants, for whom you must do more, or cannot comfortably appear before God. O hasten about this work, that you may give up your account with joy! There's soulwork to be done, to get corruptions subdued, graces strengthened, your accounts stated, evidences cleared, and lamps trimmed, which must be attended with utmost vigor. If you would get home, finish your work.

Lastly, Be always ready, waiting for the coming of the Lord: *Luke 12. 35, 36. Let your loins be girt about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men, that wait for their Lord when he will return from the Wedding; that when he cometh, and knocketh, they may open to him immediately: 2 Pet. 3. 12. Looking for, and hastening to the coming of the day of God:* Not only be waiting for your change, but longing after it, as persons that are ready for a desired journey think the time long ere they go. *Why are the wheels of his Chariot so long a coming? Judge. 5. 28. The Spirit and the Bride say come, Rev. 22. 17. With the Virgins go out to meet him, Mat. 25. 1. If you knew the welcome that abideth for you when you come home, ye would hasten your pace; Rutherford.* The more ready you are for the coming of Christ, the more will you long for his appearance; and the more grateful will his approach be. The uncertainty of that time when the Lord Jesus shall appear, and the unseasonableness of that surprisal for preparationwork, should put Christians on continual readiness, lest coming in an hour they know not of, they be found unfit to enter in, and the door be shut, *Mat. 25. 10.*

O how dreadful will a miscarriage be at last! All the hopes, labors and comfort of your life depend upon your final safety, and happy conclusion of your day: 'Tis a great thing to live a sanctified, and die a saved soul. O how few imagine the difficulty of being a Christian indeed, and the infinite concern of securing an immortal soul, and a sure title to the unsearchable riches of the other world! O the folly and madness of rational creatures, to make everything

sure but salvation, and to spend their time and strength about the many things of a perishing life, and lose the better part! Whoever thou art that castest thine eye upon this discourse, thou wilt one day find Religion to be thy chiefest interest; when thou comest to take thy farewell of a vain deceitful world, and seest all thy Lovers, for whom thou hast slighted thy precious soul, thy Soverign Lord, and dying Redeemer, to prove miserable comforters, not able to afford one drop of balm, to heal, or cordial to cheer thy fainting heart, and affrighted conscience: When thou seest pale death deliver thee a summons to appear before the holy God, and to give an account of thy Stewardship, when thou seest the Books opened, and such a fearful charge against thy guilty conscience, which thou canst not deny or answer; then wilt thou find godliness in the power of it, to be the greatest gain; and wouldest give ten thousand worlds for such an evidence as *Hezekiah* and *Paul* had, when within view of death and eternity. And is not Religion as much thy concern, and should be as grateful now, and all those great and important duties of piety which this Book lays before thee; thought to be as advisable now, when time and capacity may render them feasible, as in a dying hour, when desires and purposes may be too late? O do not content thy treacherous heart, to cast a transient glance upon these lines, to approve or commend them, and after all to shake hands with these vast and concerning Truths in them, and live and die a stranger to this great and heavenly work; but resolve to set about it presently, to pursue it thoroughly, that when your Trading-day is done, your enriching Eternity may begin, and you receive that vast Inheritance that fadeth not away, eternal in the Heavens.

FINIS.

THE TABLE.

- *The occasion of the Discourse, and Introduction to the Word* Page 1, 2
- *The terms opened, and scope of the Scripture cleared* 4
- *The Doctrine raised, That the Heavenly Trade is the best Trade; no Merchandise like Wisdoms Merchandise, and trafficking about spiritual and eternal things* 9
- Reasons to prove the Point, take
 - 1 *From the nature of those things about which Wisdoms Merchants deal*
 - 2 *The Person they deal with*
 - 3 *The terms they trade upon*
 - 4 *The gains that come by it* 9
 - *Three things prove Heavenly Ware to be the best in their own nature*
 - 1 *Scripture* 11
 - 2 *Experience* 12

- 3 Reason 15
- 4 Things prove even to enlightened Reason, that Heavenly Wares are the best Wares, cause of
- 1 Their rarity 16
- 2 Their price 18
- 1 They cost Christ dear *ibid.*
- 2 They are oftentimes costly to Receivers 19
- 3 As their price is high, so their worth is great; good in themselves, good to those that have them 20
- 4 Their duration proves them excellent 21
- Reas. 2. The Heavenly Trade is the best Trade, in regard of the Person traded with, the Lord Jesus, who is most excellent, as to his
- 1 Greatness 24
- 2 Goodness 25
- 3 Ability *ibid.*
- 4 Faithfulness 24
- Reas. 3. The terms on which this Trade is driven, proves it the best Trade
- 1 Goods to trade upon shall be freely given 28
- 2 Wisdom to manage them, shall be freely imparted 30
- 3 A blessing on the improvement of them shall be insured *ibid.*
- 4 The glory of all shall be returned to God 31
- Reas. 4. 'Tis the most profitable Trade, cause it brings
- 1 Great returns: Three things prove it.
- 1 Religion has excellent fruit
- 2 Abundant fruit 33
- 3 Durable fruit
- 2 Sure returns; four things prove it 35

- 1 *The Justice of God insures it. 2 The Blood of Christ engages for it. 3 These returns are the work of his own Spirit. 4 The Lord Jesus is an Adventurer with Believers in this Heavenly Trade* 36, 37
- 3 *Quick returns* 38
- *Ob. Why then do the people of God complain of his delays to hear and help them?* 39
- *Answ. 1. God will answer and help in due time*
- 2 *If he stay long, he will pay well for it* *ibid.*
- 3 *The Saints themselves are oftentimes the cause of their not receiving quicker returns* 40
- *Use 1. Of information, if the Heavenly Trade be the best Trade, 'tis strange that so few do set upon this Trade, the evil of which is aggravated* *ibid.*
- *Use 2. Of lamentation over the great decays of this Heavenly Trade; where are*
- 1 *Six Symptoms of this decay*
- 2 *Abatement of price, when heavenly goods are not valued* 45
- 2 *Fewness of Buyers* 47
- 3 *Little employment and slothfulness of spirit in heavenly things* 49
- 4 *The poverty of heavenly traders, largely opened and proved* 50
- 5 *Small adventures for God, proves bad trading in Religion* 56
- 6 *Breaking shows bad trading* 57
- 2 *Sad effects and dangerous issues of decays in this heavenly trade*
- 1 *It begets a growing strangeness between God and that soul* 59
- 2 *Soul poverty and wastings in men's spiritual interests* 61
- 3 *It brings a blast on men's earthly trades and interests* 63
- 4 *'Tis a ready way to ruin* 65
- 5 *It renders the Traders account heavy* 67
- *Use 3. Of reprehension of men's too inordinate pursuit of their earthly trades and interests* 69
- *Quest. How may we know when persons do inordinately pursue their earthly trades and interests?*
- *Answ. 1. When those ingross too much of their time* 70

- 2 *When they take up too much of their hearts* 71
- *Six signs when the World takes up men's hearts.*
- 1 *When the desires do greedily go out after them* 72
- 2 *When their thoughts are earthly* 73
- 3 *Their restless labors after the world* 76
- 4 *The delight and pleasure they take in it* 78
- 5 *Loathness to part with their earthly comforts and interests, shows an earthly heart* 81
- 6 *When their trust and dependence is on earthly things* 83
- 2 *Aggravation of the evil of an earthly mind*
- 1 *The state of such is dangerous* 84
- 2 *Their fall is great* 88
- Use 4. *Of Exhortation.*
- 1 *To such as are strangers to this heavenly trade, where are four Arguments to persuade them to this blessed Calling.*
- 1 *Their wants and necessities while without this trade* 95
- 2 *The danger that attends their present state* 101
- 3 *Their duty to set upon this trade, and the obligations upon them to do it* 102
- 4 *The advantage that comes by it in five things* 104
- 1 *Religion will maintain you in the hardest time* *ibid.*
- 2 *Godliness will secure you in the most dangerous times and places* 106
- 3 *Holiness will enrich you in impoverishing times* *ibid.*
- 4 *Piety will cheer you under greatest disconsolations* 107
- 5 *Wisdoms trade will make you truly honorable* *ibid.*
- *Seven Directions how to get this trade*
- 1 *Get a capacity and heavenly nature for this heavenly trade* 109
- 2 *Cease from your own works* 111
- 3 *Make over yourselves to the Lord in an everlasting Covenant* 113

- 4 *Come over into the Family of Christ* 115
- 5 *Be mortified to this present world* 119
- 6 *Submit to all the instructions the Lord gives you, in order to it* 121
- 7 *What you do, do quickly; make hast about it* 124
- 2 *Bran. of Exhort. To such as profess this Calling, exhorting them to follow it* 126
- *Quer. Wherein lies this heavenly trade, and what is it you would have us follow:*
- *Answ. There are seven things in which this heavenly trade lies* 127
- 1 *To have and keep up a heavenly spirit* 128
- 2 *Properties of a heavenly spirit*
- 1 *It sees heavenly things* 130
- 2 *It savors heavenly things* 133
- *Directions to keep up a heavenly spirit.*
- 1 *Beware of those things that weaken it* 134
- 3 *Things do greatly weaken a heavenly spirit, and what they are* *ibid.* to 140
- 2 *Dir. Get all the nourishment you can to strengthen it*
- 3 *Be much in communion with the Father of Spirits* 141
- 4 *Cherish heavenly motions in your heart* 143
- 5 *Dwell much in the meditation of heaven* 144
- *Be much exercised in heavenly graces* 146
- 2 *Another part of this heavenly trade is, to secure your interest in heavenly treasures* 147
- *Quest. How may I know that heavenly treasures are mine?*
- *Answ. 1. By your communion with the heir of heaven, are you married to Christ or no?* 151
- *Que. What are those Evidences that will assure this Conjugal Union with Christ?*
- *Answ. Five things prove Marriage to the Lord Jesus.*
- 1 *Peculiar acquaintance with Christ, such as no stranger hath, they know his secrets, and have intimate converse with him* 156
- 2 *Conjugal love to Christ* 158

- 3 A soul espoused to Christ, will leave all for Christ *ibid.*
- 4 A soul married to Christ, stays and lives on Christ 164
- 5 Fruitfulness to Christ, proves Marriage to him 166
- 2 Your interest in heavenly treasures is known by the naturalness and supremacy of your love to them 167
- 3 By your care for, and pursuit of them 169
- 4 If heavenly treasures be yours, you will find your spirits suited to them 170
- 3 Another thing wherein this heavenly trade lies, is, in getting in of heavenly goods, and what they are, and how to be obtained 171
- Que. How may I do to get my soul furnished with heavenly goods?
- Answ. 1. Maintain a sense of your own wants 187
- 2 Get a believing sight of Christ's fullness 188
- Que. What ground may I have for hope that Christ will supply me?
- Answ. This is fully spoken to pag. 190, 191.
- Another part of this heavenly trade, is to carry on heavenly work *ibid.*
- Four Motives persuading to it, and what they are 192 to 203
- Que. What is this heavenly work that Christians must do in this trade of godliness?
- Answ. 1. All that work which is of a heavenly nature, matter, manner and end 203
- 1 All that work which has God for its Author, as acts of Religious Worship *ibid.*
- 2 All that work which hath more especial respect to yourselves, as 209
- 1 Heart-work *ibid.* to 216
- 2 Mortification work 217
- Que. How shall I do to get sin mortified; I am convinced 'tis my duty, but find it not my capacity?
- Dir. 1. Do nothing that may strengthen it 221
- Eight things help to strengthen sin 222 to 227
- Dir. 2. Go not out in your own strength against sin *ibid.*

- *Not in the strength of your purposes, nor of your frames, nor in the strength of your duties, nor in the strength of your graces* 228
- *Dir. 3. Get the Union between your heart and sin broken* 229
- *There are seven things that help to break the hearts union with sin* *ibid.*
- *Dir. 4. Strike at the root of sin* 234
- *Four helps towards it* 236
- *Dir. 5. Give no place to the least motions of sin* 238
- *2 Helps towards it* *ibid.*
- *Dir. 6. Keep up the life of grace* 239
- *3 Carry on Renovation work; some helps towards it* 240
- *4 Keep your Evidences for heaven fair* 243
- *3 Carry on all those natural, moral, and religious duties that concern others; in your house, in the house of God, in your callings and dealings with men* 244
- *2 Another part of your heavenly work, is to do earthly things in an heavenly manner* 247
- *This lies in three things.*
- *1 To do earthly things by heavenly rule*
- *2 With heavenly hearts* 248
- *3 To heavenly ends*
- *Ten Rules about doing of earthly things.*
- *Rule 1. Be sure the matter of your employment be good, that your callings and recreations be according to the Will of God* 249
- *Rule 2. Set on earthly things in their proper place and order* 251
- *Rule 3. Keep your earthly business within the bounds of due time* 252
- *Rule 4. Be diligent in the use of your working time* 255
- *Rule 5. While your hands are about the world, set a guard about your hearts* 257
- *Rule 6. Attend your earthly affairs with a calm and quiet spirit* *ibid.*
- *Rule 7. Follow your duty, but cast your care on God* 261

- Rule 8. *In all your labors pray for a blessing* 262
- Rule 9. *Though you live in the world, yet be dead to the world.* 10. *Do all your work in the view of Death, Judgment, and Eternity,* 263, 264
- 2 *Then do you earthly work in a heavenly manner, when you do it with a heavenly heart* 266
- Que. *How may I know when my heart is heavenly in my earthly work?*
- Answ. 1. *A heavenly heart is enlightened to see heavenly things* 267
- 2 *A heavenly heart savors heavenly things* 268
- 3 *A heavenly heart desires and longs after heavenly things* 269
- 4 *A heavenly heart has heavenly thoughts* 270
- 5 *A heavenly heart will be full of heavenly projects* *ibid.*
- 6 *A heavenly heart is acted and influenced by heavenly motives* 271
- 7 *A heavenly heart lives upon heavenly things* 272
- 5 *Another part of this heavenly trade lies in keeping up heavenly thoughts* 274
- 6 *If you would drive on the heavenly trade, keep up heavenly converses* 278
- 7 *Then do you carry on this heavenly trade, when you improve everything to heavenly advantages*
- *There are nine things especially that Christians should improve to heavenly advantage*
- 1 *Privileges: 2 Ordinances. 3 Providence. 4 The World, and things thereof. 5 Your Callings. 6 Your Company. 7 Your Retirements. 8 Occasional Objects. 9 Your falls and miscarriages.*
- 1 *Get good from your privileges.*
- 1 *Natural Privileges* 283
- 2 *Providential* 285
- 3 *Spiritual* 287
- 2 *Get good from Ordinances, 4 helps towards it* 288
- 1 *Preparation before you come to them* 489
- 2 *Attention* 290
- 3 *Retention* 291

- 4 Obedience *ibid.*
- 3 *Get all the good you can from Providences, from smiling Providences, and from frowning, from giving and taking Providences* 292, 293
- 4 *Get good from the World, and the things thereof* 294
- 5 *Get good from your Callings and Employments* 297
- 6 *Get good from your Company* 299
- 7 *Get good from your Retirements* 303
- 8 *Get good from occasional objects and occurrences of Providence* 307
- 9 *Get good from your falls and miscarriages* 309
- *Ob. If souls may get good from their sins, then why should persons be troubled for sin, or watch against it?*
- *Answ. In two particulars: 1 They that are dead to sin cannot live any longer therein; proved by four Reasons* 310
- 3 *They ought not to commit sin. 1 'Tis slavish work. 2 It has bitter fruit. 3 It has doleful wages* 312
- 3 *Branch of Exhort. To earthly traders who meet with breaches and discouragements in their earthly trades, counseling them*
- *Coun. 1. To be hereby convinced of the excellency of the heavenly trade, which is not liable to such disappointments* 313, 314
- *Coun. 2. See God in your afflictions* 311
- *Coun. 3. Search out the cause of them* 316
- *Probable Reasons of breaches on men's earthly trades and interests.*
- 1 *Letting down of Religion, and decay in the heavenly trade* 317
- 2 *Declensions in the Worship of God* *ibid.*
- 4 *Withholding their interests from God* 319
- 5 *Greedy desires after the world* 320
- 6 *God doth it to bring men down to his feet, and to bring them back to himself* 324
- *Coun. 4. Get the breach between God and your souls composed* 326
- *Coun. 5. Get advantage from earthly decays, to further your heavenly trade*

- *Four advantages hence to your heavenly trade*
- *1 It helps to convince you of the vanity and uncertainty of all things below God 327*
- *2 It helps to discover those sins that procure these wastes 328*
- *3 By this you come to see a necessity of pursuing and securing better treasure 329*
- *4 It helps, through grace, to loosen the heart from things below 330*
- *5 It tends to the furtherance of Soul-enlargements ibid.*
- *6 It makes heavenly things relish the sweeter 331*
- *4 Branch of Exhort. To such as have begun this heavenly trade, but are fallen back, this advises them*
- *Advice 1. To be deeply affected with their evil case 333*
- *Considerations to further it.*
- *1 Think on the change thy decays have brought upon thee 333*
- *2 What an unlovely and displeasing object thou art hereby become in the eyes of God 334*
- *3 It makes thee little desirable in the eyes of men ib.*
- *4 Thou art the greatest loser of any: thy case is dangerous, and thy recovery difficult, such are hardly recovered 335, 336*
- *Que. I fear this is my cause, I am fallen back in grace, and fear I shall never recover; How may I know whether my backslidings shall be healed?*
- *Answ. There are six signs of backslidings that shall be healed.*
- *1 When thy back slidings are not upon choice, but against thy judgment and consent 336*
- *2 When they become thy Soul-trouble, and hearts burden 337*
- *3 When they are after thy effectual calling, and sincere choice of God 337*
- *4 When thou art restless, until the Lord doth heal thee 338*
- *5 When thy vitals are still sound ibid.*
- *6 When under all thy backslidings thou findest a humble and contrite heart 339*
- *5 Dangerous symptoms of falling back that shall hardly be restored.*
- *1 If thy falling back be before thy falling in with Christ 339*

- 2 *A falling off from the foundations* 340
- 3 *A making Merchandise of the truth, selling themselves to work wickedness* *ibid.*
- 4 *Back-slidings in heart shall not be cured* 341
- 5 *When persons are prejudiced against the means of recovery* *ibid.*
- Adv. 2. *Search out the causes of thy Souls decay, and get them removed* 342
- Caus. 1. *Entrance upon this heavenly trade without a stock to set up* *ibid.*
- 2 *Setting upon this trade, and having no skill to manage it* 344
- 3 *Want of diligence in following it* 345
- 4 *Great and frequent losses in thy spiritual interests* 346
- 5 *Great wastes, and needless expenses* 347
- 6 *Great debts are breaking* 350
- Adv. 3. *Compound with your Creditor*
- Adv. 4. *Set up no more for yourselves, but enter yourselves Factors for Christ* 352
- *Three things required in a Factor, which must be followed by those that will thrive in this heavenly trade*
- 1 *To trade upon another's stock* 353
- 2 *To be regulated by another's advice* 356
- 3 *To drive on another's interest* 358
- Adv. 5. *Follow your trade better than you have done* *ibid.*
- 5 *Branch of Exhort. To such as have good trading in Religion, be you exhorted*
- 1 *To bless God for good trading* 360
- 1 *This is a great mercy at all times* *ibid.*
- 2 *A singular mercy at this time* 361
- 3 *An earnest of eternal mercy* *ibid.*
- Qu. *How may I know whether I have good trading in spirituals?*
- Sol. *There are seven signs of good trading in evil times* 364
- 1 *When men go not back* *ibid.*

- 2 *If Wares go off well* 365
- 3 *When men are richer in stock* 366
- 4 *Are you less in debt* 368
- 5 *Have you more owed you, and is it sure* 367
- 6 *That is good trading, when the present incomes maintain the trader* 369
- 7 *Laying up, as well as laying out, bespeaks good trading* 371
- *Complaint. This is my case, I see I am this languishing soul, what shall I do to get my condition mended, and my languishing soul revived, and attain unto true thrivings in this holy Calling?*
- *Sol. There are six things that help to thrive in their trading.*
- 1 *A provident care* 373
- 2 *A diligent hand* 375
- 3 *Driving a secret trade* 376
- 4 *The blessing of God on men's labors* *ibid.*
- 5 *There are also prospering graces to be kept up*
- 1 *Faith is a Soul-prospering grace* 377
- 2 *Love to God, his name and ways* 379
- 3 *Humiltty is a Soul-thriving grace* *ibid.*
- 4 *Sincerity is a Soul-thriving fruit of the Spirit* 381
- 6 *Take prospering courses* 382
- *There are four Soul-thriving courses.*
- 1 *Keep up Self-examination* *ibid.*
- 2 *Be much with God in prayer* 383
- 3 *Ingage God with you in all your undertakings* 385
- 4 *Follow Divine Counsel in all you do* 386
- *Ob. My fear still remains that I am a barren soul, and shall perish at last* 388
- *Sol. 1. Thou mayst thrive in Religion, and not know it* *ibid.*

- Try thy change *ibid.*
- Ob. *But may not a hypocrite go so far, and all this but change from darkness to conscience light, and from sin to common grace* 389
- Sol. *This is answered in four particulars ib. to p. 391*
- Ob. *But change from nature to grace is not growth in grace; I may have the first fruits, though not the after-fruits of the Spirit* 391
- Sol. *This is answered in three particulars* 391 to 393
- Advice 2. *Inlarge your trade*
- *Nine Motives to engage Christians to Soul enlargements* 393 to 399
- Advice 3. *Lay in for bad times* 402
- *There are four seasons when Christians will need all their store*
- 1 *Times of temptation* 403 *Mat. 2. 1. Cause they are certain they will come* 403
- 2 *They are shaking when they are come* 407
- 2 *Times of desertion* 408
- 3 *Times of great affliction* 410
- 4 *The time of death* 413
- Advice 4. *Lay out for God; this is*
- 1 *Reasonable work* 417
- 2 *Pleasing work* 419
- 3 *Honorable work* 420
- 4 *Profitable work* *ibid.*
- 5 *'Tis a proof of your love to God* 422
- Dir. 1. *Lay out your time for God.*
- Mot. 1. *Your time is not yours, but God's*
- Mot. 2. *Much of your time is lost already* 424
- Mot. 3. *Your time is short and uncertain* *ibid.*
- Mot. 4. *You canit put it to better profit* 425

- 5 You must give an account of your time 426
- 6 How can you bethink a little time for God, who hath not thought an eternity of mercy too much for you 427
- 2 Lay out your strength for God *ibid.*
- 3 Lay out your gifts and graces for God 428
- 4 Lay out your earthly interests for God 430
- 1 Else all your Religion is vain 432
- 2 Acts of charity are parts of Religious worship 433
- 3 God is much glorified by duties of charity 434
- 4 Sincere charity will evidence your right to glory 435
- 5 'Tis the sure way to blessings here 437
- Coun. 5. Lay up for glory 440
- 1 Lay up sound hopes for glory 441
- With Motives thereto *ibid.*
- Que. What are these sure hopes of glory?
- Sol. 1. They issue from saving Union with Christ 445
- 2 They are the fruits of true grace 447
- 3 There will be a mortifiedness to this world 448
- 4 Right hopes are active hopes 449
- 5 Then will your conversation be in heaven 454
- 2 Lay up desires for glory 455
- 3 Lay up all the treasures you can to greater glory 457
- Several things tend to greater glory 458
- Lay up preparations for glory; for which 461
- 1 Get your hearts more loose from the world 462
- 2 Press after more maturity in your graces 463
- 3 Get and keep the testimony of a good Conscience *ibid.*

- 4 *Maintain walks with God daily* 464
- 5 *Dispatch your work on earth* 465
- Lastly, *Be always ready for the coming of the Lord* *ibid.*

FINIS.

William Attersoll, d. 1640

P-WA2-1. A commentary upon the epistle of Saint Paul to Philemon Wherein, the Apostle handling a mean and low subject, entreating for a fraudulent and fugitive servant, mounteth aloft unto God, and delivereth sundry high mysteries of true religion, and the practice of duties oeconomicall. Political. Ecclesiastical. As of persecution for righteousness sake. ... And of the force and fruit of the ministry. Mouing all the ministers of the Gospel, to a diligent laboring in the spiritual harvest ... Written by William Attersoll, minister of the word of God, at Isfield in Suffex. - Attersoll, William, d. 1640.

A COMMENTARIE UPON THE EPISTLE OF SAINT PAVLE TO PHILEMON. Wherein, the Apostle handling a mean and low subject, entreating for a Fraudulent and Fugitiue Servant, mounteth aloft unto God, and delivereth sundry high Mysteries of true Religion, and the practice of Duties

- *oeconomicall.*
- *Political.*
- *Ecclesiastical.*

As

- Of Persecution for Righteousness sake.
- Of Christian Equity, and Moderation.
- Of God's free Grace forgiving offenses.
- Of Household Government, and private possessions.
- Of the Conversion of Sinners, and Communion of Saints.
- Of Faith, and good works.
- Of Friendship, and Suretyship.
- Of Prayer, and Hospitality.
- Of the Gospel, and Alms-deeds.
- Of God's Providence.
- And of the force and fruit of the Ministry.

Mouing all the Ministers of the Gospel, to a diligent laboring in the spiritual Harvest, and the people, to a conscionable attending to the word of Salvation, as to God's high and holy

ordinance for our conversion, with assured hope of his wonderful blessing; upon the sound Preaching of the one, and the saving hearing of the other.

Written by WILLIAM ATTERSOLL, Minister of the word of God, at Isfield in Sussex.

Luke 17. 3.

Take heed to yourselves: if thy Brother trespass against thee, rebuke him: and if he repent, forgive him.

Printed at London by William Iaggard. 1612.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPfull Sir THOMAS PELHAM, Baronet, increase of GRACE in this life, and eternal GLORIE in the life to come.

AGesilus King of Lacedemon, when one praised a certain Orator that he could stretch out small matters at large and length; and amplify them with many words, both fitly and fully answered him, *But I cannotthinke him a good Shoo-maker, that would put a great and wide Shoo upon a slender foot.* There be many I fear, who considering the shortness of this present Epistle; and comparing it with the largeness of my Exposition, will be ready to suppose and surmise, through the fore-stalling of their prejudicate Opinion, that to a little City I have set up wide Gates; and to a slender body, have fashioned a wide Garment; both which, are faulty and unfit. But, if these partial Judges would weigh the cause aright, in just and equal Ballances, without the corrupt affections of Malice, or Envy, I doubt not, but they will rather think, that to a great Foot I have fitted and applied a little Shoo.

For this Epistle Written to *Philemon*, though it be short in words, and comprehended in a little compass; yet, if we regard and respect (as we ought to do) either the pithy and profound substance of the matter, or the cunning, or rather curious Art of *Paul* the writer, or the great and glorious Majesty of God the Endighter, which shineth and showeth it self even in the least things; we shall be constrained to confess, that this is a right great Epistle, and as one saith in another case, *Verborum parua, sed rerum foecunda*, and the Interpretation of it very brief, both in regard of the Worthinesse of the Argument, and the Wisdom of the Spirit that appeareth therein. A Diamond may be little, yet it is of great price. The eye is small, yet it seeth far. The heart is little, yet is it the life of the body. It pleaseth God to show forth the greatness of his power in the least works of his hands. And as Merchants that cast Accounts, comprize greater sums in shorter room; so doth the Apostle handle most weighty Matters & Mysteries within the slender compass of a few Verses, that we should rather weigh the work, then number the words. He seemeth nowhere to reason more exquisitely, and to deal more pregnantly then in this place. Every word almost hath the force of a Motiue; and seasoning his cause with Wisdom, and his doings with Art, he so creepeth into *Philemons* bosom, and closeth with him at a sudden, that by no means he can start from him. Sometimes, by loving Titles; Sometimes by Artificial insinuations; Sometimes, by favorable preventing of Objections; Sometimes, by Rhetorical persuasions; Sometimes, by earnest Preparations; Sometimes, by Charitable Mittigations; Sometimes, by strong Obligations;

Sometimes, by deep Protestations; Sometimes, by fit Reuocations; and sometimes by forcible Arguments, as it were by so many courteous *Congees*, and vehement *Adiurations*, he dealeth and prevaileth in such sort with him: as *Popilius* the *Romaine* Ambassador, against *Antiochus* King of *Syria*, who having delivered his message from the Senate, made a circle about him with his rod, and charged him to put off all delays, and give him present answer before he departed out of it. Thus doth the Apostle lay his Net, and cast his Chaine about *Philemon*, that he hampereth him fast, and holdeth him close, before he is aware of any such matter.

This *Philemon* (to whom the Epistle is directed) was a Wealthy man, a Cittizen of *Colossae*, the Host of the Church, who had a Servant, named *Onesimus*; he, having pilfered and purloyned some of his Masters goods, fled away from him and the Church that was in his house. For, whatsoever the care and diligence of the Governors be, lewd persons do oftentimes shroud themselves under their Roofe. But coming to *Rome*, no better then a fugitive, he heard *Paul* preach the Word, which is as *an Hammer* to break in pieces the stony hearts of unregenerate men, and *the power of God to salvation, to all that believe*; so that he acknowledged the falt he had committed, and desired to be reconciled to his Master, whom he had offended. He being thus gained to the Faith, and kindly and courteously entreated by *Paul* (*Who becometh all things to all men, that by all means he might save some*) is by him sent back with these Letters of Commendation, and intercession for him, pleading his cause, as it were at the bar, effectually, craving pardon for him earnestly: and teaching thereby, that no man (albeit of the lowest sort and condition) truly repenting, ought to be despised and contemned. He went away Vnprofitable, he returned Profitable; he went away Peruerted, he returned Conuerted; he went away a Servant, he returned a Brother. Before he heard *Paul* preach, he was a Thief; but when he had heard him, he became as his Natural Son, as he is not ashamed to call him, and account him in this Epistle.

Upon this occasion of this Servants flying away, and be-taking himself to his heels, a question may be demanded, which also of some is handled, whether it be lawful for bond-slaves that are bought with money (such as the state of Servants in those days for the most part was) to run away from their Masters, forasmuch as the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 7, 21. If thou mayest be free, use it rather*. Where he willeth them to prefer freedom before bondage, and to be their own men rather then another's; and to be at liberty, rather then to be Servants to the Honor and Humour of other men. I answer, such practice is not to be any ways allowed, unless they be oppressed with beastly and intolerable Tyranny, and be denied meat and maintenance, whereby life is to be sustained. For then their Masters that have paid a price for them should be defrauded, the Covenant or promise (that themselves have passed) should be disannulled, and themselves being taken, should thorough their own misdemeanor, be more cruelly handled, and kept in harder & straighter durance. We see when *Joseph* was sold by the Treachery of his envious Brethren, and thereupon carried far from his Fathers house, he behaved himself with all Modesty and Meekness, he endured the cross with all patience, being laid in fetters where the Iron entered into his soul; he never attempted to make a willful escape, or to break open prison (albeit it had been no hard matter to do it) least while he thought to avoid the smoke, he should fall into the fire: like unto *Espops* Fish, who being in the pan, leaped upon the coals. The *Israelites* when they were holden in *Egypt*

in bondage and great slavery, never offered to make resistance, but waited with all long suffering, until God sent *Moses* and *Aaron* to work their deliverance. The Doctrine of the Popish School-men alloweth in their deciding of cases of conscience, such as are unjustly and wrongfully imprisoned, to escape for their lives if they can: and according to this determination, is the practice of the Papists. But this is no better then to resist the Magistrate, *which is the Ordinance of GOD*, Rom. 13. The Apostles being clapt up in prison, never sought occasion and opportunity to deliver themselves, until God and Man delivered them, and brought them forth: and sometimes the Lord sent his Angel from Heaven, to open the prison doors, and to smite off their chains, and to free them from the rage of their enemies. The Apostle *Peter* warneth Servants to be subject to their Masters with all fear; not only to the good and courteous, but also to such as are froward: and he giveth this Reason, *For this is thank-worthy, if a man for Conscience toward God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully*. We must commit our selves and our causes to God, and take heed we use not unlawful means to set our selves at liberty.

Now, concerning the counsel and direction of the Apostle, he persuadeth no liberty but such as is lawful, even to free themselves from thralldom by all good and honest means, only that God shall put into their heads and hands. For, when Servants were bought and sold as Villaines, nay as brute Beasts in the Market, and while their Master had power over them of life and death, he would have all such as are under the yoke, *Count their Masters worthy of all Honor*, that the name of God and his Doctrine be not evil spoken of. When *Paul* and *Silas* were committed to close prison, as they sung Psalms to God, *suddenly there was a great Earth-quake, and the Foundation of the Prison was shaken, by and by all the doors opened, and every Mans bands were loosed*, so that they might without knowledge or disturbance of any, have escaped and gone their ways; but being committed by authority, they remained as lawful prisoners without evasion.

These things here briefly touched, are largely entreated of in this *Commentary*; touching the penning whereof, to leave mine own Labors to the Judgment of the indifferent Reader, I cannot deny (but do ingenuously confess) that I have benefited myself, and do desire to benefit others, by other Authors, both Olde and New, whom I have searched and perused, through whose travails I have been guided and directed in the way, and by whose eyes I have seen into many particulars here discussed. Concerning the ancient Writers, that have the grayest hairs, I cannot pass over *Chrysostom* and *Theophylact*, both Greek Writers: Concerning the Moderne and later, *Calvin*, *Beza*, *Illyricus*, *Rolloc*, *Piscator*, *Hunnius*, which (for Honors sake) I name & remember. Among whom, some have written shorter Annotations, others have written fuller expositions, and all of them have yielded some matter and stuff toward the erecting of this building. Neither is this any shame or reproach to acknowledge, but rather a fruit of Justice and Equity, to give to everyone his own. Let no man therefore object, that I have thrust my Sickle into another man's Corn, or put mine hand into another man's Coffe, or ploughed my ground with another man's Heifer, or set to sale other men's goods, as mine own; much less upbraid with contumely and contempt, the saying of the Poet:

Si forte suas repetitum venerit olim,

Grege animum plumas, moueat cornicula risum,

Furtiuus nudata coloribus.

that is;

If every Fowl shall fetch her plumes again,

The Naked Crow, shall stripped of all remain.

The Wiseman teacheth, *There is no new thing under the Sun, is there anything whereof one may say: Behold this, it is new? It hath been already in the old time that was before us.* The Heathē man saw this, & could say:

Nihil est iam dictum quod non sit dictum prius:

that is;

There nothing is, or said, or seen;

Before our times, that hath not been.

The Apostle writing to the *Corinthians*, saith, *All things are yours, whether it be Paul's, or Apollos, or Cephas, &c. all are helps allowed and appointed unto us to bring us unto Christ.* It is no small comfort to Travelers to tread and trace the footsteps of such as have walked the right way before them. In like manner, it is no small profit and pleasure to me, grounded upon the evidence of the truth, to have followed the examples of learned and approved Authors, that have labored faithfully in the Vineyard of the Lord, and lighted a Candle unto others.

This Exposition (such as it is) I presume to offer unto your Worship, not fearing your Judgment in the allowance, nor doubting of your favor in the acceptance thereof, and therefore grounding myself upon it, I regard not the censure of Carpers and Cauillers, who have nothing to grace themselves, but by seeking the disgrace of others; nor yet anything to raise themselves a great name, but by taking away others good name: so that as one saith well, *Ex alieni nominis ruina gradum sibi faciunt ad gloriam suam.* They will dislike either the person, or the matter, or the style, or the allegations, or they know not what, and care not what, so it be somewhat. The proofs used are too many, the Reasons too large, the Uses too vehement; yea, nothing can please them, that please them-selves in their own conceits. If I should crave pardon for my slips in this Exposition, or for my boldness in this Dedication, I should therein also open the mouths of many, to tax me of vanity, and reprove me of folly. For, when *Albinus*, who wrote an History of the Roman Offices in the Greek tongue, requested the Readers in the Praeface, to bear with him if they found any imperfections and wants in his work, *M. Cato* the Censor answered when he read it, *Doubtless he had deserved pardon indeed, if he had been forced to write his Story: but he is a Trifler that had rather ask pardon for his fault, then to be without fault.* For men are wont to desire forgiveness either when they err at unawares, or when they commit a fault by constraint & compulsion from such as have authority over them, whom they cannot or dare not deny. Such severe and sharp Judges I am like to light upon, who will demand the question of me, what I mean to plead for pardon?

For, who compelled me to make the fault for which I crave favor? And why I did not rather keep myself from offending, then desire the forgiveness of the offense?

Wherefore, leaving these rash and rigorous Censors of other men's doings, I come to declare the causes that have induced me to offer the exposition of this Epistle unto you, and to pass it under your Worships name. For to whom doth a Treatise of Godliness more fitly agree, then to him that professeth Godliness, and hath the power of it dwelling in his heart? Or to whom should I commend the Patronage of the truth, better then to him that is a fauorer and lover of the truth, and of such as favor and love the truth? Besides, as I have heretofore tasted of your kindness and bountifulness toward me, which I ever esteemed as a debt lying upon me, so I have been desirous to leave a perpetual Testimony to others, of a thankful heart. I am not able to recompense like for like, but may rather say with the Apostle, *Silver and Gold have I none, but such as I have I give unto you:* and so much the more I will always be ready to follow the example of *Paul*, who when he had received mercy at the hands of *Onesiphorus*, he prayed unto God to render back into his bosom the fruits of his love bestowed upon him, *The Lord show mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but when he was at Rome, he sought me out very diligently, & found me. The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy with the Lord at that day, &c.* So my earnest prayer to God, even the Father of all mercy, and God of all consolation, is, & ever shall be, to show mercy for your mercy, & love for your love, & to preserve you unto his heavenly kingdom. And I beseech you oftentimes to Meditate upon the 71. Psalm, which as it was composed by the Prophet in his latter time, so he oftentimes craveth of God to be with him, & to keep him safe, now that his head was hoare, and his hairs gray, *Thou art my hope, O Lord God, even my trust from my youth: cast me not off in the time of age, forsake me not whē my strength faileth.* And afterward, *O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, even until now, therefore will I tell of thy wondrous works, yea even unto mine old age and gray head, O God, forsake me not, until I have declared thine arm unto this generation, and thy power to all them that shall come.* For, a man may fall away from God, as well through the doting of age, as through the lusts of youth. Be faithful unto the death, & you shall receive the crown of life: continue unto the end, so shall you be safe. The Wiseman teacheth, that the days will come, when we shall say, we have no pleasure in them, when *the keepers of the house shall tremble*, that is; the hands which safeguard the body from injuries, shall shake as in a palsy: *The strong men shall bow themselves*, that is, the legs, which are as a strong Staff, or as a firm Pillar, to sustain and bear up the weight of the body, shall begin to fail and wax feeble: *The Grinders shall cease;* that is, the teeth appointed to chew the meat, either wax loose, or else are lost: *They wax dark that look out of the windows;* that is, the eyes of the body (which are as the Windowes of the house to give light) shall decay and grow weaker and weaker, that they cannot behold the brightness of the Sun: *The doors shall be shut without by the base sound of the Grinders;* that is, the Lips which are as two Doors or Gates, shall scarce be able to open themselves, being become stiff: *He shall rise up at the voice of the Bird*, that is, the least noise shall be able to awake him, he that while he was young slept soundly, so that the sound of a Trumpet could hardly move him, is now by the crowing of the Cock, or the chirping of a Bird, raised and disquieted: *All the daughters of singing shall be abased;* that is, the ears and other Instruments of Music shall be so

weakened and dulled, that they shall take no pleasure nor delight therein, as *Barzillai* confesseth unto *David*: also *They shall be afraid of the high thing*, that is; when once they grow crooked with age, every plain way will seem rough; and every stone, a Mountain unto them. And *the Almond tree shall flourish*: that is, their head shall be renowned with the comely ornament of white hairs, as the beautiful Blossomes of an Almond Tree, &c. Thus doth the Wiseman describe the discommodities and difficulties of old age, which approacheth unto us all, and will in the end overtake us, to the end we should learn to remember our Creator in the days of our youth. The Lord God Almighty, who is *the ancient of days*, deliver you from every evil work, and bless you and yours more and more with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things, that as you bear the Image of his Eternity, so you may be partaker of eternal Glory, Amen.

Yours to command, WILLIAM ATTERSOLL.

To the Reader.

IT was well said, that the first duty of a Writer is, that he read over his own Title, and cast back his eyes to consider what he began to write: who, if he dwell upon the matter, is not to be accounted long: but if he wander and straggle from it, every sentence is too too long and tedious. The Epistle with which I deal, I confess, is short: the Commentary which I have written upon it, long: howbeit, I have been careful to remember the former rule, and to keep me close to the present subject, and therefore hope to obtain pardon with patience. One of the Ancients said of *Carthage*, that contended so much and so long with Rome, in emulation for greatness and Empire; It is better to say nothing, then to speak a little. Much more may this be said of this Noble and Divine Epistle, wherein the Apostle doth so discover his affections, and stir up the affections of others, that too much cannot be spoken of it.

Touching the Epistles of Paul, some were written unto whole Churches; as that to the *Romans*, *Corinthians*, *Galatians*, &c. Other were written to particular persons; as two unto *Timothy*; one to *Titus*; and this to *Philemon*. Notwithstanding, we must understand, that howsoever they were privately directed to certain men, yet they were inspired of God, and penned by the Apostle, for the benefit of the whole Church. For if respect had only been had to those, unto whom they were purposely and principally intended, many things might have been spared, which are everywhere dispersed and handled in them. This appeareth expressly in the Epistle to *Titus*; the which, albeit it carry his Name alone, whom *Paul* left in *Candy* To redress the things that remain: yet the scope of *Paul* was, to profit the whole Church, as we see in the finishing of the matter, when he shutteth up the whole in this manner; *Grace be with you all*. The Inscription is to one, but the conclusion is made to many, even all the elect. So ought we to apply unto our selves, such heavenly instructions as are handled in this Epistle, no less, then if it were particularly sent unto everyone of us from God.

The Books of the *New-Testament*, may be ranged and ordered into three sorts; whereof part are *Historical*, part *Doctrinal*, and part *Prophetical*, to omit the distributions of others. The *Hystorical* are so called, because they describe the History of Christ our Savior, as the four Evangelists; or of the Apostles and the Church gathered by them; as the *Acts of the Apostles*.

The *Dogmatical* are such, as are called the Epistles of the Apostles, not that such as comprehend the History of Christ, do not also contain the Doctrine of Christ, and of salvation by Christ, but because these do most especially handle the same. True it is, the Apostles labored in preaching the Gospel, and publishing it by lively voice, in what places, and to what persons, and at what times soever they could; but because they could not always dwell among the Churches, and guide them with their presence which once they had planted, neither yet were able to see them all in the face and to speak unto them mouth to mouth: it pleased God to move them, and direct them to set down in writing (compiled in form of Epistles) the sum of Christian Doctrine touching piety toward God, Faith in Christ, and love toward men: but most especially concerning the miserable estate of man through his fall, and of the remedies of this misery: concerning the Person and Offices of Christ the mediator; concerning the benefit of free Justification by Christ and of the lively fruits thereof, which ought to shine forth in all them that are Justified. The Prophetical Book, is only the *Revelation of John*, which under certain Types, foretelleth the state of the Church to come, both the combats which it shall endure, and the victory which it shall receive.

The Heretics that lived in former times, raised up from the pit of hell, by Satan himself to disturb and destroy the faith of many, have called sundry of these Canonically Books of Holy Scripture into Question, and rejected them altogether, as Bastards or counterfeits. *Faustus the Maniche* (as *S. Augustine* witnesseth) was not ashamed to open his blasphemous mouth, and affirm, that many things in the New Testament were false. The *Ebionites* would receive only the Gospel according to *Matthew*, the other three they despised and refused. The *Marcionites*, another detestable and damned sect, used only *Luke's* Gospel, and that also they miserably mangled according to their own devilish fancy. The Acts of the Apostles, and Paul's Epistles, were set at naught, and flatly refused by the *Tatians*, and other Heretics called *Seueriani*, as *Eusebius* maketh mention in his History. Both the Epistles written unto *Timothy*, that to *Titus*, and the *Hebrews*, were cast away by *Marcian* and *Basilides*: for whatsoever they saw to cross and contradict their Heresies, they rased out of the Canon, and would not receive it as authentical. Among all which, this is to be observed, that such as did admit (as Divine) any of the Epistles, did never deny the authority of this Epistle to *Philemon*. Some indeed have renounced the Epistle to the Hebrews: some, the latter Epistle of *Peter*: some, the Epistle of *James*: some, the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*; and other, the two latter familiar Epistles of *John*: but no Heretic was so forsaken of God, or ever grew to be so desperate, to contemn and set light by this Epistle, if ever he admitted and accepted the credit of any. Which plainly declareth the Majesty that shineth in this little and short Letter, wherein *Paul* by his Divine eloquence and pithinesse of argument, doeth even ravish and astonish all the Readers thereof.

To the end this may the better appear, let us as in a Table set before our eyes the chief heads and contents of this Epistle, and view with how cunning a pen or Pensill, the principal parts thereof are drawn, together with the profit arising from thence; following the example of them, which when they bid any guess to Dinner or Supper, are wont first to declare what shall be their cheare, & how many Dishes they shall have, praying them to take it in good worth, and to look for neither better nor worse, then hath been mentioned. In like manner,

being determined to make a feast, and having provided a Banquet, which I have set forth, and invited the courteous & Christian Reader, that will come and taste of it: I dare be bold to promise, that the Meat is good and wholesome. What food soever is found that cannot please the taste of a well-affected stomach, I confess the fault is in the Cook that hath prepared and dressed it. I would therefore entreat thee to accept of these three Dishes, and to consider, the person that was the writer; the person to whom he writeth; and the person for whom he writeth. The person that penned it, was *Paul* the Apostle: the person to whom it was written, was *Philemon* the Master: the person for whom he wrote, was *Onesimus* the Servant. Upon these three, as on certain pillars, stand the main drift and purpose of this whole Epistle here expounded.

Touching the first, which is *Paul* the Writer, he doth not style himself in this place, as commonly he useth; *An Apostle of Jesus Christ*, but *The Prisoner of Christ*, and declareth that he begat *Onesimus* to the Faith, in Prison. It is honorable to the Saints to suffer for the truths sake. The Apostles rejoiced that they were *Counted worthy* to endure afflictions and troubles in a good cause. They endured imprisonment as Martyrs, not as Malefactors; as Preachers of the Gospel, not *As Busie-bodies in other men's matters*; as doers of good, not as evil doers; never ceasing to further the salvation of others, even when their bodies were restrained of liberty: and yet in this want of enlargement, they were mighty in deed and word, to work the conversion of such as resorted unto them, verifying the saying of the Apostle. 2. Tim. 2. 9. *I suffer trouble unto bonds, but the word of God is not bound*. Whiles he pleaded his cause in *Chaines*, he had *Almost* caught *Agrippa* in the *Chaine* of the Gospel, and won him to the Faith. When he was come to *Rome*, he would not be idle, but *called the chief of the Jews together*, and then expounded unto them the way of Salvation, testifying the Kingdom of God, and persuading them those things that concern Jesus, both out of the Law of *Moses*, and out of the Prophets, from morning to night. Thus doth one say most truly of him; *When he was bound, he was stronger then they that bound him*: when he was a Captive, he was freer then they that kept him: and when his Judges examined him, he examined them, and set them at liberty that were under the thralldom of sin and Satan. It is truly said of the Wiseman; *He that winneth Souls is wise, and shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and such as turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the Stars forever and ever*. This wisdom is nowhere to be found, nowhere to be sought, nowhere to be learned, but in the Word of GOD, which is the wisdom of God, and the power of God. So then we see, it is not the punishment that maketh a Martyr, but the cause. Some are punished as Malefactors: some die as Martyrs. *Joseph* was cast into the same *Prison*, with the *Butler and Baker of King Pharaoh*: They suffered imprisonment in the same place, but the cause was not one for which they suffered. *Joseph's Master took him and put him in Prison, in the place where the kings Prisoners lay bound; and there he was in Prison*; but because it was in a good cause, and for a good conscience, *the Lord was with him, and shown him mercy, and got him favor in the sight of the Master of the Prison*. The like we might say of *Paul* and *Silas*, who were not only beaten with Rods, but clapped up in close Prison with Malefactors; but they were not without comfort in their sufferings, *For At midnight they prayed and sung Psalms unto God, so that the rest of the Prisoners heard them*. They suffered *As evil doers*, but not for evil doing. And albeit they were Prisoners, yet they were Christian

Prisoners: and when the body was ready to be offered, and the time of their departure drew near, forgot not their Apostolical care of the Churches, and watchfulness over the Lord's Flock; yea, we see Paul in this place, forgetteth not a base Servant, as shall be shown afterward.

Touching the second point, we are to consider the person to whom Paul writeth; which is, to *Philemon*, craving at his hands the fruit of Christian Equity and Moderation, to forgive him that had offended him, according to the doctrine of the common Master of them both, Jesus Christ. Luke 17. *Take heed to yourselves, if thy Brother trespass against thee, rebuke him: and if he repent, forgive him: and though he sin against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying; It repenteth me, Thou shalt forgive him.* It is a great virtue in thee, if thou wrong not him, of whom thou art wronged: It is great Fortitude, if when thou art wronged, thou remit it: It is great Glory, if thou be willing to spare him, whom thou hadst power and ability to hurt. As Christ taught forgiveness to others, so he practiced his own Doctrine, and *prayed for those that were his persecutors.* *Philemon* had been greatly wronged by his false and thievish servant, yet *Paul* craveth pardon for him upon his repentance toward God, and his submission toward his Master. It is the Doctrine of the *Nouatian* Heretics, to deny hope of favor and forgiveness to such as are fallen; against whom *Cyprian* hath written a learned Epistle; whereby they go about to kill, whereas they should cure them that are wounded, and to swallow up them in despair, whom they ought to raise up with comfort. For they allege, that Christ threateneth, *Whosoever shall deny him before men, them will he deny before his Father which is in heaven.* But he understandeth such as persevere in it without repentance, denying him unto the end, and forsaking him unto the death, such indeed he will disclaim and deny in the kingdom of his Father; which plainly appeareth by the contrary, in the opposite Member going before, where he promiseth, that *Whosoever shall confess him before men, them will he also confess before his Father which is in Heaven;* whereby he meaneth such as continue in that confession, and are faithful without starting backward.

Peter being in the High-priests house, did deny his Master that chose him, not only to be an Apostle, but to be an elect vessel, to preach the Gospel both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*; he denied him that bought him, and redeemed him; in word, with an Oath, with Cursing and Execration; yet he returned and repented: he went out from that wicked Company, and wept for his grievous fall most bitterly. Many good Soldiers are sometimes daunted at the sight of their Enemies, and run out of the Field like Cowards, not without some reproach and impeachment of their Man-hoode, who afterward gather strength, and are ashamed of their own folly, both resisting those that fight against them most courageously, and pleasing the Captain that hath made choice of them.

Hence it is, that the Lord proclaimeth Mercy, and reneweth his Covenant of forgiveness to such as turn unto him. The Prophet *Joel* saith, Chapter 2. *Turn you unto me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning; Rent your hearts, and not your Garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, & of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.* Here is mercy offered, and a general pardon published, which God will perform to all penitent persons. Likewise, the Lord for better assurance, if we doubt of his word once

uttered, saith by his Prophet Ezekiel, Chap. 33. *O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, Thus ye speak and say; If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we are consumed because of them, How should we then live?* Thus do wicked persons, when they hear of God's Judgments, cast off all confidence in his mercies, and murmur at his threatenings. But what followeth? *Say unto them, as I live saith the Lord, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live: Turn you, turn you from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O ye house of Israel?* When the sinful woman came to Christ in the house of Simon the Pharisee, humbly confessing her sins, & shedding abundance of tears for them, and by them both, testifying her love to Christ, he turned unto her, and said, *Thy sins are forgiven thee.* On her part, we see repentance, weeping, and Prayer; On Christ's part, we see Forgiveness offered, and pardon bestowed. It is well said of Cyprian, *Legimus & adoramus nec praetermittimus coelestem domini sententiam, qua ait negaturum se negantem; nunquid & poenitentem?* that is, we read, and reverence, and do not go about to reverse the heavenly sentence of the Lord, when he saith; *I will deny him that denieth me:* But doth he anywhere, or at any time say, *he will deny him that repenteth of his sins from the bottom of his heart?* Or doth he allow any to judge another man's servant, which standeth or falleth to his own Master? This is it which maketh the Church Triumph in the experience and feeling of God's Favor and Mercy, Micah. 7, 8, 9. *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy, though I fall, I shall arise. When I shall sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me.* For as the righteousness of the righteous man, shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression, so the wickedness of the wicked man shall not hurt him, whensoever he turneth from his iniquity. Such is the care of God over the sheep of his pasture, & his love toward them, that he denounceth a fearful war against the shepherds of Israel, that feed themselves, & not the flock: he chargeth them that they did eat the fat, and clothed themselves with the wool, but the weak they have not strengthened, the sick they have not healed, neither have they bound up the broken, nor brought again that which was driven away, neither have they sought that which was lost, but with rigor and cruelty have they ruled them. Ezek. 34. To conclude this point, our Savior showeth, that when a man, having an hundred Sheep, hath lost one of them, he leaveth ninety and nine in the Wilderness, and goeth after that which is gone astray, until he find it, and then *He layeth it on his shoulders with joy, and carrieth it home to the sheepfold, I say unto you, that joy shall be in heaven, even in the presence of the Angels of God, for one sinner that converteth.* Seeing then, the Lord Jesus (who is the LORD of life) teacheth in the Gospel, that there is so great joy in Heaven for a penitent sinner, how great joy ought there to be on earth, when we see the kingdom of God enlarged, and a fellow member pulled out of the jaws of Satan, whom he had holden captive, and taken as a prey to devour and destroy forever? It is the end of Christ's coming, *To seek and to save that which was lost,* Luke 19, 10. And seeing our gracious God is so ready to remit offenses done against him; who are we, and of what matter or metal are we made, that are so hard-hearted, and stiff-necked, and implacable against our Brethren? We are taught to ask forgiveness, *as we Forgive:* and in the Parable of the miserable and merciless servant propounded, Math. 18. Who being forgiven ten thousand Talents, refused to forgive his fellow an hundred pence, was delivered to the Tormentors, till he should pay all that was due to his Lord: We are taught, that in like manner *shall our heavenly Father do unto us, except we forgive from our hearts each one to his Brother, their Trespases.*

This Doctrine doth the Apostle publish at large in this Epistle, craving pardon at the hands of *Philemon*, for his penitent and prostrate servant, not doubting but as God had forgiven him, and given him repentance, so he also for his part would remit the trespass and injury done unto himself. Thus we see what to judge of these *Nouatians*, who are indeed the true *Puritans*, and contrary to the whole course of the Scriptures, deny repentance and reconciliation, to such men as after baptism (through infirmity, and force of persecution, and fear of danger) do yield so far, as to deny the faith. We have a noble example of God's notable compassion toward such as offend of frailty and weakness in *Peter*, who was received to mercy: and Christ would never have said, *Whatsoever ye loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*, if such persons as repent were altogether to be barred out of the bosom of the Church. Can these proud spirits then be the Disciples of Christ, that are harder and straiter laced then their master? Thus they frustrate true repentance, & take away all admonitions both public & private, which are of great force to reclaim and recover a sinner.

The third and last point remaineth. For, as we have considered the person that writeth this Epistle, and the person to whom it is written, so we are to mark the person for whom it is written, to wit; for *Onesimus* a servant, a fugitive servant, a false servant, a fraudulent servant. A base and mean subject for the Apostle to handle, howbeit penned in so high and heavenly a manner, and contrived with such exquisite Art, and excellent Judgment, that it over-reacheth the meanness of the matter, and leaveth no excuse that *Philemon* could allege to wind himself from him, and manifesteth the special care that *Paul* had, of this poor penitent person. It is recorded of *M. Fox* of blessed Memory, when one told him that a certain man (of none of the greatest or highest callings) who had received much comfort from him in the days of his trouble, was desirous to acknowledge his thankfulness toward him, and asked him whether he remembered such a one? He answered; *I remember him well: I tell you, I forget Lord's and Ladies to remember such.*

Many there are, that are ashamed of such as are of low degree, whom notwithstanding God loveth, for whom the Savior of the world died, and to whom the word of salvation is preached. When the Church was in *Abraham's* house, it consisted not only of such as were borne in his house, but of such also as were bought with his money, of any stranger that was not of his seed: and when the Lord gave unto him the seal of his Covenant, he commanded him to circumcise not only himself and his son; his Steward, and the chiefest partes of his family, but every male, even the least and lowest that lodged under his roof. As then the Wiseman saith in the Proverbs, *He that mocketh the poor, reproacheth him that made him*; so he that despiseth a servant, because he is a servant, dishonoreth God that made him a servant. Hence it is, that the Apostle chargeth such to be subject to their Masters, *and please them in all things, not answering again: neither pickers, but that they show all faithfulness, that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Savior in all things.* They are therefore, through pride and disdain not a little deceived, but wander wide out of the way, that think religion cometh not down so low as unto servants, that God's providence vouchsafeth not to respect them, & that it booteth not to give them any instruction. True it is, God hath established by his own ordinance, a difference between the Mayster and the Servant, as our Savior showeth, Luke 17. *Who is it also of you, that having a servant ploughing or feeding Cattle, would say unto him by and*

by when he were come from the field, Go, and sit down at table? And would not rather say unto him, Dresse wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself and serve me, til I have eaten and drunken, and afterward eat thou, & drink thou? &c. The Gospel doth not abolish the distinction between man and man; between high and low; between Master and Servant; yea, when they are all believers, as is plentifully handled in this *Commentary*: howbeit the writ of partition is not so great, nor the wall of separation so far distant between them, we should think the Lord careth for the one, and contemneth the other, who made them both, preserveth them both, redeemed them both, sanctifieth them both, and will glorify them both. This did *Job* wisely consider, Chap. 31. *If I did contemn the judgment of my servant, & of my Maid, when he did contend with me, what then shall I do when God standeth up? And when he shall visit me, what shall I answer? He that hath made me in the womb, hath he not made him? Hath not he alone fashioned us in the womb?*

The Heathen, that saw nothing but by looking through the windows of nature (themselves being merely natural men) took upon them their just and lawful defense, and pleaded for them at the bar of reason (when they were used oftentimes no otherwise then the Beasts and Cattle) that Master and servant had one & the same beginning, were norished with the same Elements, did draw in the same air, did tread upon the same ground, and returned in the end into the same earth. Yea, their plea for them went a great deal farther, *Though they are bondmen, yet they are men: & albeit they are servants, yet they are our fellow-servants. He is indeed become a servant, but it is through necessity; A Servant in body, but a Free-man in mind.* And peradventuee the Master himself that ruleth over him, may be more slavish then he. He that is a Drudge or servant to his own lusts, to Wrath, to Envy, to Covetousness, to Ambition, is a right servant, obeying most foul and filthy Masters, and none a baser Bondman then such a one. He is a true Master, and a right Free-man, that hath learned to rule over his own affections, such a man is stronger then he that ruleth a Citty. The other are servants against their willes, but these serve and obey as most vile vassals, willingly; neither do they desire freedom.

We are not to esteem of men by their estate, or (as we say commonly) by their fortunes, but by their manners. We may alter our manners, our condition we cannot always. He is no great wise man, that purposing to buy an horse, looketh not upon him, but contenteth himself to view only the Bridle and Saddle: so is he as simple and shallow, which judgeth of a man by putting on a gay coat, or by the wearing of a precious garment, or by the condition of his outward person, and not by the inward Guiftes and Ornaments of the mind. *Abigail* is renowned for a Woman of singular wisdom, and that worthily, yet she disdained not the counsel of her servants. *Naaman* was Captain of the King of *Aram*, yet he refused not the advise of his attendants, that waited upon him. These persons judged it to be no disgrace or disparagement to their high calling, nor any sawcinesse in their servants, to presume to teach them, and tell them their duty; nay, without guiding themselves by them, and following their direction, the one had been exposed to miserable slaughter, the other had returned in the uncleanness of his leprosy; whereas by this means the one was preserved, the other was cleansed. It is therefore an untrue and unsavory Proverb, that *A man keepeth in his house so many enemies, as servants*: for we have them not enemies, but we make them so,

when we behave our selves toward them tyrannously, cruelly, contumeliously, spitefully, & outrageously, doing against them so much as we dare do, not so much only as we ought to do: not considering how lawful it is, but how powerful we are, & how weak they are. All the profane Histories, are full of worthy examples of many Servants, who are commended for their trust and faithfulness; Wittnesse, and Courage; Might and Magnanimity to all posterity, and have not doubted to give their lives to death, in their Masters quarrel. It is not therefore much to be maruelled at, that the Apostle, perceiving how *Mighty* the word had been in *Operation* upon *Philemons* Servant, doth account him as his Son, and seeketh to reconcile him to his Master; in which respect, he was willing and desirous to have *kept him with him, to Minister unto him*. He claimeth some authority over him, being his spiritual Father: howbeit, because he was not only his Son, but also another man's Servant, he would not retain him without his Masters knowledge. Let them not therefore for their low degree be contemned, nor have the means of instruction denied unto them.

Thus I have set down to thy view (Christian Reader) the scope of this Epistle: wherein the Apostle (in a narrow compass) doth couch together many Mysteries of our Religion, which I have labored to lay open in this *Commentary*. And howsoever the work is grown in bigness, & extended in length under mine hands more then at the first I purposed and intended, yet I hope the manner of handling herein observed, shall easily recompense thy labor bestowed in reading. I cannot in few words comprehend the matters that are here and there dispersed throughout the Book. Among many other, these points are principally handled. Touching affliction for the truth, and persecution for righteousness sake. Touching Christian Equity and Moderation: Touching God's free grace, & forgiving offenses: Touching household Government and Private possessions: Touching the conversion of Sinners, and the Communion of Saints: Touching Faith, and Good Works: Touching Friendship and Suretyship: Touching Prayer and Hospitality: Touching the Gospel and Alms-deeds: Touching God's providence, and of the force & fruit of the Ministry: as is more at large to be seen in the Table of the doctrines. Accept (I pray thee) the pains I have taken in the discussing of these points, pardon the escapes (if any be) into which I have fallen, as in traveling so long a journey, it is easy to fall into a slumber: and wheresoever thou vnderstandest the hand of God to have been with me in publishing the truth, give him the glory, & ascribe the praise unto his great name, to whose grace & goodness, I commend thee.

Thine in our common Savior, *William Attersoll*.

A BRIEF RECAPITVLATION OF ALL THE DOCTRINES HANDLED AT LARGE IN THIS EPISTLE.

Out of the Praeface.

- The course of the Gospel cannot be stopped, but will have his passage in the world. page 1.
- The Argument and occasion of the Epistle, together with the uses thereof. page 7.

Verse 1, and 2.

- Doct. 1.

Good things must be followed and sought after earnestly and fervently, not coldly and carelessly. pag. 9

- Doct. 2.

It is no disgrace or reproach to the Servants of God, to be cast into prison for the Gospels sake. pag: 12.

- Doct. 3.

The persecutions of all true Christians, are the persecutions of Christ Jesus, when they are imprisoned for Christ's sake. page 15.

- Doct. 4.

All good duties to God or man, are better done by the help of others, then alone by our selves. pa: 21

- Doct. 5.

A Christian friend will perform any Christian duty to his friend. page 25.

- Doct. 6.

Christian women should be helpers unto their husbands, as heirs together of the grace of life, page 29

- Doct. 7.

The calling of a Minister, is a painful and laborious, a needful and troublesome calling. page 33.

- Doct. 8.

It is the duty of all house-holders, to teach and instruct their families that belong unto them. page 38

Verse 3.

- Doct. 1.

The free favor and mercy of God in Christ Jesus is first and above all other things to be desired and prayed for. page 48

- Doct. 2.

Such as are in God's favor, have his blessings flowing unto them, and following them. page 55

- Doct. 3.

All blessings temporal and eternal, are to be craved from God alone in Christ Jesus. page 61

Verse 4, and 5.

- Doct: 1.

Men ought to take cause of great joy, to see others grow and proceed in good things. page 68

- Doct. 2.

It is the nature of faith to apply the mercies and promises of God to our own selves. page 76

- Doct. 3.

It is the duty of the faithful, to pray not only for themselves, but also for others. page 82

- Doct. 4.

True Religion must not only be inwardly believed, but also outwardly confessed, and openly professed. page 86

- Doct. 5.

Faith and Love, are the chiefest things that commend a man to God and his Church. page 95

- Doct. 6.

Faith in Christ, and Love to the Saints, do always go together in all the servants of God. pag. 99.

- Doct. 7.

Christ must be the Object of our faith, we must look unto him, and depend upon him. page 106

- Doct. 8.

The works of mercy, are especially, and above, & before others to be shown to the poor Saints that are godly. 111

- Doct. 9.

Such as truly believe in Christ, and belong to him, are Saints. page 117

Verse 6, and 7.

- Doct. 1.

It is our duty to stir up our selves and others to increase in good things. page 126

- Doct. 2.

The gifts which we have received, must not lie hid in us, but be employed to the good of others. 140

- Doct. 3.

The goodness of God bestowed upon our selves or others, must be published abroad, and made known to others. page 142

- Doct. 4.

The spiritual graces of God bestowed upon others, do give occasion of joy to the Saints. pa. 147

- Doct. 5.

The works of mercy are to be shown to the poor distressed Saints. page 154

Verse 8, and 9.

- Doct. 1.

The Office of the Pastor and Minister of God, is an Office of power and authority under christ. 163

- Doct. 2.

Gentle means are to be used rather then severe, to persuade men to holy duties. page 172

- Doct. 3.

Superiors in gifts, or age, or both, are to be revered and regarded above others. pa. 177.

Verse 10.

- Doct. 1.

The least and lowest member converted to Christ, must not be contemned or condemned. page 184

- Doct. 2.

The same affection that is between the Father and the Son, ought to be between the Minister & the people committed unto him. 189

- Doct. 3.

The preaching of the word is the ordinary means and instrument of our conversion and regeneration, page 205

Verse 11. and 12.

- Doct. 1.

Christian religion maketh a man profitable and helpful unto others, that before hath been injurious and hurtful. page 227.

- Doct. 2.

In godly, religious, and reformed families, are many times ungodly, obstinate, and unreformed persons, both Children and Seruaunts. page 237

- Doct. 3.

Former Offences (albeit great and heinous) upon true repentance, are to be forgiven and forgotten. page 243

- Doct. 4.

Our love to all the Saints, especially such as have been converted byvs, ought to be dear and fervent, page 254

- Doct. 5.

The Gospel doeth not abolish or diminish civil ordinances, & distinct degrees among men. pag: 262

Verse 13. and 14.

- Doct: 1.

Every Christian is bound to serve the common good of the church, by what means soever GOD hath enabled him thereunto. pag: 272

- Doct: 2.

All Christian duties done to God or man, must be done willingly, and cheerfully performed, pa: 282

Verse 15, and 16.

- Doct: 1.

All things (even sin it self) are ordred and turned by the providence of God, to the good of the elect. page 295

- Doct: 2.

God oftentimes taketh from his servants outward commodities, to bestow upon them greater, page 305

- Doct: 3.

The falls and sins of our brethren, whereof they have repented, are not to be increased and amplified with odious and extreme words, but rather to be buried and forgotten, page 311

- Doct: 4.

The more grace apeareth in any, the more should they be tendered and regarded of us. page 322

- Doct: 5.

Although Christian religion do not take away the degrees of persons, yet it maketh us all equal, and brethren in Christ, page 330

- Doct: 6.

The more bands and reasons are given us to care for any, the more we are bound to care for him, page 337.

Verse 17.

- Doct: 1.

The consideration of our communion one with another, ought to move us to regard one another, and to do all good one to another. pa: 348

- Doct: 2.

Among Christian friends all things are common. page 350

Verse 18, and 19.

- Doct. 1.

The communion of Saints doth not take away any man's right & interest in his private possessions, and things of this life. page 365

- Doct. 2.

It is lawful for one man to become surety for another, and to engage himself and his credit. pa: 373

- Doct: 3.

Couenants in Writing, for debts, bargains, and sales, are honest and lawful. page 385

- Doct: 4.

Such as have gained us unto God, ought above all others to be most dear unto us. page 394

Verse 20, and 21.

- Doct: 1.

No man ought to be eager and extreme in exacting and requiring their debts, dues, and demandes, from the poor and needy, page 407

- Doct: 2.

Whatsoever we desire, provoke, and persuade others to do, must be in the Lord. page 415

- Doct. 3,

Men ought greatly to rejoice at the good and benefit of their brethren, in temporal & eternal blessings, which they see to befall them, page 421

- Doct: 4.

Men ought always to hope well, and to think the best of their brethren, not to suspect the worst of them. page 426

- Doct: 5.

The faithful being moved to Christian duties, have yielded more then hath been required at their hands. page 431

Verse 22.

- Doct: 1.

Hospitality, that is, the joyful and courteous entertainment of distressed strangers for the truths sake, is to be used and practiced of all the servants of God. page 440

- Doct: 2.

The prayers of the faithful are auayleable for themselves and others, both to obtain blessings to them, and to remove judgments from them. page 447

- Doct: 3.

The gifts of God bestowed upon his Servants, come from his free grace, not from our free will or deserts. page 457

Verse 23, & 24.

- Doct: 1.

Courteous speeches, and loving Salutations, are beseeming the Servants of God. page 471

- Doct: 2.

We must not utterly cast off the weak, but show our compassion toward them. page 478

- Doct: 3.

Many that seem forward in the profession, do afterwards fall back. page 484

Verse 25.

- Doct: 1.

Spiritual things are to be prayed for, and preferred before earthly things. page 500

An Exposition of the Epistle, of the Apostle Paul to Philemon.

THIS Epistle is short in Words, low in Argument, and private, in regard of the Matter: yet the manner of handling is high and heavenly, and the Doctrine general and common to the whole Church. It was written (as appeareth) to *Philemon*, at what time the Apostle was grown old in years, was drawing near his end, and was clapt up and kept in Prison at *Rome*; from whence also he directed sundry Epistles to diverse Churches and particular persons. From thence he wrote to the *Galatians*, to the *Ephesians*, to the *Philippians*, to the *Colossians*; and the latter Epistle to *Timothy*, which was penned not long before his death and dissolution. For albeit, he were held in durance and restrained of his liberty, that he could not visit the Churches where the Gospel was planted, nor lay a new Foundation where as yet it had not been preached: yet he was not idle or unfruitful, but labored to do good to the Church by writing, when he could not come to bestow some spiritual Graces among them by teaching. We see here, that *Paul* writeth out of Prison, and slacketh not to instruct, both general Churches, and particular persons. From hence we learn, that the course of the Gospel cannot be stopped, but keepeth on his way and passage in the World. The truth of the Gospel will have his free liberty, it can be hindered by no Chaines, it can be restrained by no Bandes and Boults, it can be shut up by no bars of Iron, and Gates of Brasse, but breaketh forth as the light of the Sun out of a dark Cloud. We see this evidently in the example of *Paul*, albeit he were in bonds and Chaines, yet he pleadeth his cause, with such gravity of speech, with such power of the Spirit, with such piercing of the matter, with such efficacy of words, and with such respect of the persons before whom we spake, that he had almost gained & persuaded *Agrippa* to Christianity. The like we see in another place, when he was brought Prisoner to *Jerusalem*, confined to an House, and delivered to a Soldier to be kept, he received all that came unto him; *Preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all boldness of speech, without let.* This appeareth more evidently in none, then in Christ himself, who as at all times he sought all occasions and opportunity to do good to the souls and bodies of men, so when he was upon the Cross, he converted the Thief, and was ready to seek and to save him that was lost. These consents of Scripture, come directly to the former point; and serve to teach us, that whatsoever the purposes and pretences of men be, yet they shall never be able to stop the stream of the word of God, which floweth plentifully to the comforting and refreshing of the dry and barren hearts of sinful men.

Let us briefly consider the Reasons. First, the doctrine delivered is of God, not of Men; from Heaven, not from the Earth. If man were the Author of it, it might easily be resisted by the power of man; nay, it would in time fall down of it self. But seeing the whose Scripture is inspired of God, and the doctrine thereof hath him for the Author, the light of it cannot be quenched. Thus doth *Gamaliell* reason in the Council, *If this be of God ye cannot destroy it, least ye be found even fighters against God.* Who can prosper, that provoketh God? Or who can look for good success, that fighteth against God, and against his ordinances?

Again, God will bring their devises to naught, and confound all their endeavours that go about to hinder the course of his word. Although they band themselves together, and assemble against the Lord and against his anointed; yet he that dwelleth in the Heavens shall laugh, and have them in derision, he will break their bands and crush them in pieces like a Potters Vessel. This the Prophet teacheth. Psal. 33. *The Lord breaketh the Counsel of the Heathen, and bringeth to naught the devises of the people: The Counsel of the Lord shall stand forever, and the thoughts of his heart throughout all Ages.* Seeing therefore, that the Doctrine of the Gospel is of God, and that he will dash them in pieces with a Scepter of Iron that stop the course of it, we may truly conclude, that the course thereof cannot be hindered.

The Uses of this point are many, which I purpose briefly to point out, that we may proceed. First, weigh with me from hence the excellency of the word of God. Who is ignorant what opposition hath been and is made against it? What resisting and contradiction? Yet it keeps on his course, and hath his passage in the world, and runneth through the whole Earth. The Apostle declareth, *That the things which came unto him, turned rather to the furthering, then to the hindering of the Gospel, so that his bands in Christ were famous throughout all the Judgment Hall, and in all other places.* So he saith afterward in this Epistle which we have in hand; *I beseech thee for my Son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds.* Was it not enough for the Apostle to labor when he was free, and his Feet at liberty, but he must also spread the Net to catch men in Prison? The light of God's truth can never be put out, the heat of it cannot be smothered, the power of it cannot be broken. Though the Teachers and Preachers of the word, may be stocked and stoned, hewn asunder, burned with the Fire, slain with the Sword, clapt up in Prison, and fettered in chains; yet the word it self is lively and mighty in operation, it entereth deeply, it discerneth sharply, the thoughts and intentes of the heart. True it is therefore, the Ministers of the Gospel may be bound, but the Gospel it self cannot be bound. Their hands are bound, and their feet are chained, when the tongue is at liberty to utter the gracious and glorious promises of the Gospel. Nothing can bind the tongue, but fear and infidelity. If a man bind an Husbandman, he hinders his sowing, for he soweth with his hands: but the teachers being bound, the word is not bound, for they sow with the tongue. Let vt therefore acknowledge, that the preaching of the Gospel hath in it a Divine power, nothing can be matched with it, nothing can be compared unto it. The Devil is called in the Scriptures by sundry Names, to declare his power: the God of the World, the Prince of the Air, the strong man that ruleth the House: and he cannot be displaced and dispossessed but by a stronger. But the Gospel is stronger then all the power of Satan, and is able to throw him out, for it gathereth a Church where he hath his Throne, and ruleth in the hearts of the Children of disobedience; it delivereth men from the power of the Devil, and bringeth them into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God. If a man were in the shadow of death, and had one foot in Hell, the word of God is able to bring him back again, This is it which our Savior said to the seventy Disciples when they returned from preaching the Gospel, and confirming it by Miracles that followed it; *I saw Satan like Lightning fall down from Heaven.* Where he teacheth, that albeit Satan be strong, yet the Gospel is stronger, so that he cannot stand before it. He hath his overthrow by it, and falleth down before it, as *Dagon* did before the Ark. So the Apostle showeth, that he was called and sent to *Open the eyes of the blind, that they*

might be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. We see it also in the example of Christ himself upon the Cross, who converted the Thief, gave him faith and repentance, and assured him of eternal blessedness in the heavens. The Apostles were forbidden to preach the Gospel: through the malice and madness of the High-priests, they were apprehended and imprisoned, they were scourged and evilly entreated, yet they regarded not the words, they despised the threatenings of all their enemies, and continued to sound out the Gospel in all places. *Paul and Silas* prayed and sung Psalms unto God in prison, and I gained the Jailor to the Faith, verifying that which the Apostle speaks in another place; *I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds, but the word of God is not bound.* Indeed sometimes it falleth out, that the holy Servants of God have their hands tied, their feet fettered, their bodies imprisoned, & their tongues cut out that they cannot speak to the people; but even then the word is not bound, for then their constant suffering and patient bearing of the cross, doth as by a lively voice, publish and proclaim the truth of the Gospel for which they suffer, and serveth to win many to the Faith of Christ, So then, the patient suffering of the faithful (though they speak not with their tongues) is as a solemn preaching, and hath the nature of an effectual Sermon, to gain many to the Faith.

Secondly, we see it is in vain to set our selves against the Gospel of Christ, and the Ministers of God that bring it unto us. True it is, the World endeuoreth nothing more then to hinder the truth, and to drown all memory of the glad tidings of salvation; but all their labor is lost, and all their purposes shall be frustrate. The Tyrants of the Earth may bind the professors of the Gospel, but the Gospel it self they cannot bind, and the course of it they cannot withstand, *Paul* was cast into prison, yet he freely preached the Gospel of the Kingdom to all that came unto him. Let all those that say it is in vain to serve God and to pray unto him, know for a surety, that it is in vain for them to resist God, and the power of his might. Let them refrain from iniuring his Servants, and from going about to stop their mouths: let them remember what *Gamaliell* said; *Now I say unto you, refrain yourselves from these Men, and let them alone, for if this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will come to naught.* A notable lesson to be learned of all malicious men, and bloody persecutors of the Gospel, that would if it lay in them, bury all remembrance of Christ and his Gospel, they shall find and feel the strength of him against whom they wrestle, they shall see the folly of their own ways, and the madness of their own works, and they shall in the end, perceive it to be as impossible, and themselves as unable to hinder the free passage of the Gospel, as to bind the wind in their Fistes, or to stop the Rain of Heaven from watering the earth. Hence it is, that the Prophet speaketh to like purpose to the Enemies of the Church; *Gather together on heaps ô ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces, and hearken all ye of far Countries, gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: gird yourselves and ye shall shall be broken in pieces: Take counsel together, yet it shall be brought to naught, pronounce a decree, yet it shall not stand, for God is with us.*

Thirdly, seeing the Gospel cannot be stopped, it it is the duty of all of us, to pray for the free passage of it. We have a promise, that God will spread abroad his saving health, and magnify his great Name over all the Earth; now it belongeth as a special duty to us, to pray unto him, to glorify himself, and to make his Name known among the Sons of Men. This charge doth the Apostle give unto the *Thessalonians*; *Furthermore Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the*

Lord may have free passage and be glorified, even as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil Men, for all men have not Faith. It is the duty of all the godly, to pray for the enlarging of the Gospel, whereby the Kingdom of God is also enlarged. Let us be mindful daily of this duty, desiring of the Lord this grace, that the Gospel may be freely preached, and cheerfully received, that he would send forth laborers into his Vineyard, and maintain them against ravening Wolves that seek to devour them, that he would bless their labors, and remove all stumbling blocks out of their way, that he would give them courage and constancy in discharging their duty, & utterly remove all hirelings and false teachers out of his Vineyard. It is God that must thrust forth Laborers into his Harvest. It is he that fitteth them to the work: It is he that blesseth them in the work. Let us not therefore be wanting to our selves, but pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send out able work-men to gather the Corn into his Garner. The cause why we are not furnished with such Teachers, and if we be furnished, yet the work doth not prosper under their hands, is, because we do not ask for a blessing from God, from whom every good gift proceedeth.

Lastly, this serveth as a great comfort, both to the Pastors and people. For seeing the Gospel shall have his course, let the Ministers boldly go forward in the discharge of their duty, and teach the people committed to their charge. Let us not fear the faces of Men. The word which we preach, is the word of God, who is able to maintain it, and make it mighty in our mouths, to cast down hills and holds that lift up themselves against it. He is able to danut and dash in pieces all those that set themselves against it. The work is the Lord's, the Workmen are the Lord's, the blessing and success is the Lord's, and they that strive against it, fight against the Lord. Let us comfort our selves in these things against all the disgraces and reproaches of the World. And concerning the Professors of this Gospel, let this Minister comfort also unto them, that they build not upon the Sand, or upon a weak Foundation, but their building standeth upon a Rock which shall never be removed. The Apostles comfort themselves, and encourage one another in the work of the Ministry, because they were assured that the word which they delivered, was no vain word, nor deceiveable Fable, but the Gospel of Christ who chose them to the calling, and sent them to the work, and strengthened them to stand, and gave them wisdom to convince and confound all their Adversaries. Likewise *Paul teacheth; That many of the Brethren in the Lord were boldned through his bands, to confess and profess the truth of God.* We cannot fall except the word fall with us; nay, except God fall with us, so long as we stand fast in the Faith. Wherefore howsoever others shrink back, and make ship-wrack of a good conscience, let us hold out unto the end, and then we shall be sure of eternal happiness in the Heavens.

Hitherto we have handled the time when this Epistle was written, and the place from whence it was written; to wit, when he was in prison. Now let us consider the Argument thereof, and the occasion whereof it was written. The occasion of penning and writing this Epistle was double: First, general for the instruction and direction of the whole Church in some necessary points of faith and obedience, entreating most waightily and wisely of Justice, mercy, mildness, meekness, moderation, reconciliation, & Christian equity, insomuch that he seems rather to respect the edification of the whole Church, then to have in hand the business of one poor and private man. The special occasion was to

entreat at *Philemons* hands, to pardon his servant that had offended him, and to accept his subjection and submission unto him. This *Phile.* (as it seemeth) was a cittizen of *Colossae*, a city scituate in *Phrygia*, not far frō *Laodicea*, whose servant *Onesimus* committing either Theft in purloining away his Masters goods, or some other great and grievous crime (as the manner of lewd and evil Servants is) ran away from his M. as far as *Rome*, being many hundred miles distant from *Colossae*, where he supposed he should hear no more of him; or if he did, would not follow and pursue after him so far. This Fugitiue and Runnagate Servant, false fingered, and false hearted, coming to *Rome*, was by the gracious providence of God, brought where *Paul* the Apostle lay bound in prison, and hearing him (among others) preaching the Gospel of Christ to Remission of sins, to all that repent, had his heart opened, and was by God's blessing converted to the Faith, became a sound and sincere Christian, and performed sundry duties of love to *Paul*, ministering continually unto him in the time of his Captivity, as a dutiful Son to his spiritual Father. But after the Apostle understood that he was another Mans Seruaunt, and belonged unto him, as it were a part of his possession, though he found him in his distressed and afflicted estate, very profitable, comfortable, and necessary unto him, yet he would not detain him from his Mayster, to whom, by the Word of God, by the light of Nature, and by the Law of all Nations he appertained. Hence it is, that he sent him back again to his Master, with this Epistle; in which the Apostle doth by force of reasons and vehemency of words, urge *Philemon* to entertain, and retain with him his fugitive and offensive Servant, but now greatly altered, and thoroughly changed by the power of God's word: *Which converteth the Soul, and giveth wisdom unto the simple:* as the Prophet teacheth us.

Thus we see how *Paul* entreateth and obtaineth pardon for *Onesimus*, a Servant, that was converted by the preaching of the Apostle: which offereth unto us diverse good and profitable uses.

First, we see that Christ Jesus rejecteth none that come unto him, how base and simple soever they be. All such as repent and believe the Gospel, whether Masters, or Servants, high or low, rich or poor, are accepted of him who is Lord of all, and with whom is no respect of persons. A notable comfort to all of low place and mean condition, to consider with themselves, that howsoever the men of this World have many times no respect unto them, yet they are dear to God, and regarded of him, who openeth to them the door of salvation, and reserveth for them a Crown of righteousness. He appointeth his Word and Sacraments for them, as well as for others, and hence it is, that for the most part the poor receive the Gospel. *There is neither Jew nor Graecian: there is neither bond nor free: there is neither Male nor Female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

Secondly, this instructeth us, not to contemn or despise any, how vile soever they may seem in our eyes, but to be careful for their good, and to further their conversion, according to the counsel of Christ our Savior. Math. 18. *See that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels always behold the Face of my Father which is in Heaven: For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost.* Many are basely and badly thought off in this World, who are in great price and estimation with GOD. Many are wronged and oppressed of

Men, of whom the high God of Heaven taketh care and charge. We are ready to respect the outward face and person of Men, but he regardeth the heart. God the Father loveth them, woe therefore to them that hate them. Christ Jesus came to save and redeem them; woe therefore to all them that seek to hurt and destroy them. It pleaseth God oftentimes to call the Servant, and to let the Master alone, suffering him to perish in his sins. This is the cause that the blessed Virgin magnifieth the Lord, and that her Spirit rejoiceth in God her Savior, *Because he looked on the poor degree of his Seruaunt, and had done great things for her: He pulleth down the mighty from their Seats, and exalteth them of low degree; He filleth the hungry with good things, and sendeth away the Rich empty.*

Thirdly, we learn, that no man ought under any color of Religion and pretence of godliness, to keep away other men's Servants from their own Masters. *Paul* found the Servant of *Onesimus* faithful to help him, and forward to Minister unto him; yea, he might be bold with *Philemon* his Mayster; yet he would not detain him with him, without his allowance and approbation. The Gospel then doth not destroy and disannul the diverse degrees and orders established in the World, but rather confirmeth and strengtheneth them. It alloweth not the Servant to resist and rise up against the Master, although he should be a believer, and his Master an unbeliever; or he be a believer as well as his Master, and in knowledge of godliness be equal unto him: but teacheth him to obey for conscience sake, and to *Count his Master worthy of all honor, that the Name of God and his Doctrine be not evil spoken of: And they which have believing Masters, let them not despise them, because they are Brethren, but rather do service, because they are faithful, and beloved, and partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.*

Fourthly, we are to mark, that the Lord requireth of us, to be ready to forgive and forget the wrongs and injuries that are done unto us. Let us put from us all rancor and malice, and not suffer the Sun to go down upon our wrath. O how great is the mercy of God toward us? How great is our debt toward him? Let us put on the bowels of pity and compassion, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; *If any Man have a quarrel unto another, even as Christ forgave, even so do ye.* If we come to any of the exercises of our Religion; to hear the Word, to receive the Sacraments, or to call upon the Name of God, if the Leaven of maliciousness have infected our hearts, the word of life, is made the savor of death; the Sacraments, are made Instruments of Wrath; and our Prayers are turned into Sin. We are taught in our Prayers, to ask forgiveness at the hands of God, as we our selves perform this duty toward our Brethren. The promise of forgiveness, is made to them that do forgive, *When ye shall stand and pray, forgive, if ye have anything against any man, that your Father also which is in Heaven, may forgive you your trespasses: For if ye will not forgive, your Father which is in Heaven will not pardon you your trespasses.* This accordeth with the precept of Christ. *Math. 5. If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy Brother hath ought against thee, Leave there thine offering before the Altar and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* If we desire *As new borne Babes the sincere Milk of the word, that we may grow thereby; We must lay aside all maliciousness, and all guile, and dissimulation, and envy, and all evil speaking.* If we would be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving our own souls, we must *Lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of maliciousness, and receive with meekness the word that is grafted in us,*

which is able to save our Souls. Now we have in this Epistle, a most worthy example of receiving them that are fallen, of forgiving the penitent, of the pardoning of injuries, of joy for the conversion of a Sinner. Yea, we learn not only to be lovers of peace, but to be makers of peace; as *Paul* doth between the Master and the Servant. Our Savior pronounceth them blessed *That are Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God.* We are charged, not only to seek peace our selves, but to make peace with others, whereby we bear the lively Image of God, who is called the God of peace: we are made like unto Christ, who is our peace, and hath reconciled us unto his Father.

Fifthly, we are taught to take heed we do not rashly sit in judgment upon any. This evil Servant had picked and purloyned from his Master, and when he had done ran his ways, yet GOD found him out and gave him repentance, when he sought not after God. It is a common Prouerb; *He runneth far that never returneth.* Christ Jesus calleth some at the leaveth hour, as he did the Thief that hung with him upon the Cross. The Apostle chargeth, that *We judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who will lighten things that are hidden in darkness, and make the counsels of the heart manifest, and then shall every man have praise of God.* And in another place, *Who art thou that condemnest another man's servant? He standeth or falleth to his own Master.* All men are in the hand of God, and all times and seasons are disposed by him. The Husbandman Tilleth the ground, and soweth his Corn, but it doth not by and by grow up. The Disciples of Christ heard many things of his mouth, which seemed buried and forgotten, but the precious fruit thereof, appeared plentifully afterward. Let us not limit unto God his times and seasons, nor go about to teach him knowledge. *Paul* was a Persecuter of the truth, a Blasphemer of God, an oppressor of the Church, yet in the end he was called by the voice of Christ. Let us therefore condemn no man, nor judge any rashly, least we be judged.

Lastly, we see evidently (as in a Glass) in this Epistle, that all that are elected of God to eternal life, shall in God's good time be called effectually to the knowledge of the truth. God hath made all things in number, weight, and measure. As no more shall be saved then he hath appointed, so not one of them shall be lost that he hath prepared to be heirs of glory. God hath many ways to pull them out of the fire whom he will have saved. So many as belong to him, he will at one time or other, send them and offer them the means of their salvation: yea, when we least of all seek our own good, and intend our own conversion, it pleaseth God to call us, and to gather us into the bosom of the Church. The Parable of the *Housholder hiring laborers into his Vineyard*; teacheth, that he calleth at all times and hours of the day. We see it in the example of *Paul*, when Christ Jesus called unto him from the Heavens, he thought nothing of his own conversion, but of the Churches subversion. We see it in the Penitent Thief, in *Manasseh*, in *Mary Magdalene*, and many others. We see it in *Onesimus* in this place: Who would have imagined, that this man playing the vile Runna-gate, and the false Thief, and departing out of the religious House of godly *Philemon*, which is honored with the Name of a Church, would ever have turned a new leaf, and come to the acknowledgement of the truth? who would have thought that the prodigal Son, going from his Father, forsaking his Brother, wasting his patrimony, and spending his strength and wealth upon Harlots, would ever have seen his own folly, and that it should be said of him;

My Son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, but he is found? This is that which is set down in the Acts of the Apostles; *When the Gentiles heard it they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.* God is able to make a way for the execution of his purposes, and knoweth how to accomplish his decrees. Thus much of the circumstances of time and place, as also of the Argument of this Epistle: Now let us come to the words.

1Paul, a Prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Brother Timothy unto Philemon, our dear friend and fellow helper:

2And to our beloved Apphia, and to Archippus our Fellow-Soldier, and to the Church that is in thine House.

In this Epistle we are to consider two things: First, the Praeface, in the three first verses. Secondly, the substance and matter of the Epistle, in the rest. The Praeface or entrance, containeth the inscription or Title, in these two verses, & sundry prayers in the four verses following. The inscription, remembereth both the parties writing; to wit, *Paul* and *Timothy*: and likewise, the persons to whom the Epistle is written; *Philemon*, *Apphia*, *Archippus*, and the Church that was in *Philemons* house. These persons, as well writing, as written unto, are not barely and nakedly set down, but are described by their several notes and titles given unto them, wherein are contained several Arguments of persuasion, to move *Philemon* to that whereunto he exhorteth and entreateth him. And first for himself, a Captive and Prisoner, he moveth him to respect his suit, in regard it was the suit of one under persecution, bound in chains, and kept in thralldom, whom he ought to pity, especially seeing he was a Prisoner of Jesus Christ; that is, not for any bad cause, but for the professing and Preaching of the glorious Gospel of Christ. Secondly, he joineth in this suit with him, *Timothy* a Brother, nay more then a Brother, a famous Evangelist, whose commendation was throughout all the Churches, who with him entreated for his Servant. Moreover, concerning those to whom this Epistle is written; first *Philemon* himself is mentioned, with whom he presumeth to prevail, both because there is mutual love between them, loving one another in the truth and Christian Faith, and because he is a fellow-helper, seeking to promote and further, by all good means, the course of the Gospel, in both which respects, there should be a near familiarity and special interest one with another.

Secondly, to him he joineth *Apphia*, which seemeth to be his Wife, both because she hath the second place after *Philemon*, and because she is set before *Archippus*, who was the Pastor and Minister of that Church, as we shall see afterward. He calleth her a beloved Sister, most dear unto him for the common faith, moving her also to plead this cause, and to further this request with her husband, whom he would not nor could not deny, in so reasonable a suit.

Thirdly, he nameth *Archippus*, and calleth him a Fellow-Soldier, because they of the Ministry (if they be faithful) are in continual warfare, not only against the continual engines and assaults of Satan, who withstandeth their Ministry, but against false teachers, and against

many unreasonable men, as also against the sins and corruptions that reign or arise in their several charges. We see how men destitute of faith, make continual war against them, one way or other.

This man thus described by his Office, was Pastor and Preacher of the word in the Church of *Colossae*, as appeareth by the words of the Apostle, writing to the *Colossians*. Chap. 4. *Say to Archippus, take heed to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.* He nameth him with the rest, because the Pastors and Ministers of the Church, ought to prevail much with all the professors and people that are under their charge, being to them in place of Fathers, that may or should command in the Lord.

Lastly, he remembereth the Family of *Philemon*, which he doth entitle with an honorable Name, calling it a Church: which serveth to the singular commendation of this Servant of God, as one that did so guide, instruct, and govern his private Houshold (as all faithful Governors of Families ought to do) as that it might truly be reputed a company and Congregation of Men, Women, and Children, that are dedicated unto God, to his worship and obedience, according to the saying of Christ; *Where two or three be gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* Every Christian Family, is a particular and little Church, where God is sincerely honored and worshipped, which is another special reason to win *Philemon* to his purpose, thinking so reverently and religiously of him and his private charge.

It remaineth after the order and interpretation of the words, to see what Observations arise out of the same. If we should stand upon every particular point that might be raised out of the Text, it would be both endless and fruitless. Again, the Scripture is as a lively Fountain, that can never be dried up: it is as a rich Treasury, that never can be emptied. Wherefore, before that we come to handle the principal and especial Doctrines, it shall not be amiss to point out diverse instructions that the Apostle intimateth.

And first, mark, that among all that are here named, none is mentioned without his Title of honor, to teach, that everyone ought to have some-what to commend him, and whosoever lead an upright and holy life, their name ought to be renowned and honored in the Church of Christ, which should also cause them to be well reported of unto posterity.

Secondly, observe that *Paul* joineth with him *Timothy*: he excelled him in the greatness of gifts, and in the function of Apostle-ship, yet he calleth him his Brother, thereby giving us an example of Christian modesty, whereby it cometh to pass, that the godly, as they are placed in an higher degree, do behave themselves so much more lowly. So the Apostle willeth us, *Not to be high minded, but to make our selves equal to them of the lower sort, and to think better of others then of our selves.*

Thirdly, albeit he were the principal that wrote, and *Philemon* the chief to whom this Epistle is written, yet to himself he joineth *Timothy*, and to *Philemon* he annexeth as Helpers in his suit, *Apphia* his Wife, *Archippus* the Minister, and the rest of the Church in his house, all which he mustereth together as mean, to make an atonement with his Master, which example teacheth all Christians, especially the Ministers of the word to seek peace, and labor to make peace among Brethren, that one may be reconciled unto another, and all men live in

charity and unity together. Hereunto cometh the counsel and commandment of Christ our Savior; *Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God.* Hereby we shall give comfort to men's consciences, and remove the stumbling blocks and offenses that daily arise among Neighbors. On the other side, we may truly say; *Cursed are all debate makers, for they shall be called the Children of the Devil.* For such as make debate and raise contention, and kindle strife between Brother and Brother is as it were casting Oil into the fire, are not of God, who is the Author of love, but are guided by the spirit of the Devil, whose works they follow and practice.

Fourthly, in joining all these as Mediators for *Onesimus*, we see the singular wisdom of the Apostle, he leaveth nothing vnattempted to effect his purpose. He doth not deal slightly and rawly, but useth convenient means and fit persons to work this reconcilment. For he employeth and joineth the help of *Apphia* and *Archippus* to appease the Master, and to draw him to receive his Servant into his former favor. This is the dealing that Christ prescribeth; *That we should take with us two or three, that by their authority, reconciliation may be effected, and every word may be confirmed.*

Lastly, observe, that notwithstanding the difference in gifts and sex between the persons here named and expressed, they have all some mark of love set upon them, they are Brethren and Sisters, they are friends and fellow-helpers, and all dear one to another: to teach us that there ought to be a near conjunction, not to be dissolved; and a fast not of love, not to be loosed between all those that are true members of the Church, and professors of the faith.

Paul a Brother of Jesus Christ, and Brother, &c.]

Here are many persons heaped together. In all this, we see the Apostle is exceeding earnest, using all the reasons and most effectual persuasions that he can, to obtain this his purpose, whereunto he moveth *Philemon*. He marcheth together in battle array, as it were an army of Arguments, to contstrain him to yield: yea, every sentence, or rather word of the sentence, seemeth to be as a Furnace to dissolve the heart, and to melt the affections of *Philemon* into love and compassion toward his Servant that had so deceived and abused him: the Lord also, herein showing what care he hath, and what care all other Christians should have for the comforting, relieving, and curteously entertaining of the simplest and basest servants of God. From this practice of the Apostle, we learn that good things must be carefully and earnestly followed; yea, by all the means we can be pursued after. It is not enough to do good things, but we must do them in a right manner, we must be forward and fervent in the doing of them. So doth *Paul* in this place set upon *Philemon*, and omitteth nothing that may serve his present purpose. Great was the zeal of *Moses* for God's glory against the Idolatry of the people, and afterward for their pardon and forgiveness. The first Table requireth our love to God, *Withall our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength:* and the second Table requireth us, *To love our Neighbor as our self:* so that whether wye perform the duties of the first or of the second Table, we must perform them heartily, sincerely, and earnestly. The Prophet *David* had a zeal as hot as fire; *So that the zeal of God's house did eat him up.* When we call upon the Name of God; *We are commanded to be fervent in Prayer.* In the high work of the

Ministry, we are charged to Preach the word in season, and out of season, to improve, rebuke, and exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine. In hearing the word, we are willed to be swift to hear. In all the works of Sanctification, we are warned while we have time, to do good to all men, and to redeem the time, because the days are evil. The Apostle noteth of himself touching his own practice; *That to the Jew he became as a Jew, that he might win the Jews: To the Gentiles he became as a Gentile, that he might win the Gentiles: to the weak he became as weak, that he might win the weak: and he became all things to all men, that by all means he might save some.* All which testimonies and consents, prove directly, that we must follow after good things diligently.

The Reason remain to be considered. First, God is delighted with diligence and earnestness in our callings, and is wont to yield a blessing unto it. He promiseth, that such *As cry after knowledge, and search for wisdom as for Silver, and desire it as a Treasure, shall understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.* Earnest Prayer always prevaieth and availeth much with God. Luke 18, 2. I am. 5, 16. Feruent zeal addeth wings, and maketh it mount up on high, and pierce the Heavens, where Lip-labor is lost labor, and bringeth nothing, but returneth empty to him that made it, like the Dew, that being raised up in the day by the beams of the Sun, falleth down again in the evening.

Secondly, earnestness and zeal are of great weight and force to provoke others to imitation. We must be examples to them, and seek to draw them to follow us. This should comfort and encourage us unto well doing, insomuch as we shall stir up other to be like us, and to walk in our steppes. This is the reason which the Apostle teacheth, writing to the *Corinthians: I know your readiness of mind, whereof I boast myself of you unto them of Macedonia, and say, that Achaia was prepared a year ago, and your zeal hath provoked many.*

Thirdly, men's hearts are hardened, and their affections frozen, they shut their eyes, they stop their ears, and they turn away their hearts from the truth; and therefore in regard of this Iron or Brazen age into which we are fallen, all means that can be taken, and all occasions that can be used, are too little, (though most earnest) to work upon such tough and rough Mettall. This doth the Apostle prophesy of long age, when persuading *Timothy* to wait with all diligence upon his office, he addeth this as a reason; *For the time will come, when they will not suffer wholesome Doctrine, but having their ears itching, shall after their own lusts get them an heap of Teachers, and shall turn their ears from the truth, and shall be given unto fables.* Seeing therefore the earnest doing of good things bringeth down a blessing from God, provoketh men to an imitation, and seeing many are hard-hearted, that they will not easily bend and yield; it followeth, that we are bound to do all good duties that belong unto us diligently, not carelessly: forwardly, not faintly: fervently, not coldly.

Let us now see what good Uses may necessarily be concluded from hence. First, we learn, that zeal and forwardness is a grace and gift of the Spirit to be commended, honored, and magnified in the Servants of God. The Lord himself commended and blessed the zeal of *Phinehas*. The Apostle saith; *It is a good thing to love earnestly always in a good thing.* This reproveth those that reproach it, and cannot abide it in others. They scorn and scoff at the Servants of God for doing their duty, and so make themselves culpable of an horrible sin. But

let not us be ashamed of the taunts and reproaches of them that hate us and deride us, because we desire to serve the Lord in the uprightness of our hearts. The time will come, when we shall receive the joy, and they the shame.

We have a notable example hereof in *Michall, Saul's Daughter*, and *David's Wife*. When she not able to comprehend the inward motions of *David's* joyful heart, leaping and dancing before the Lord, bringing home the Ark with shouting of voice, with sound of Trumpet, and with gladness of heart, despised him in her heart, and came out to meet him, and said; *O how glorious was the King of Israel this day, &c.* Then *David* said unto *Michall*: *It was before the Lord, which chose me rather than thy Father and all his House: and I will be yet more vile than thus, and will be low in mine own sight.* Where we see, it is, and ever hath been, the lot of God's Servants, to be branded and upbraided for their zeal, it was never liked of cold and careless men, that are never earnest in anything but in wickedness, nor forward, but in following the profaneness of their own hearts. While they delight themselves in the pleasures of sin, and walk in their own corrupt desires, they are earnest enough: but when they should practice the duties of godliness, and show by their godly conversation whose Servants they are, there appeareth no life of God's spirit in them, they remain as dead and senseless men.

Secondly, negligence and coldness in Religion, and in performing the duties of Christianity, are great sins which wound the Soul, and procure the wrath of God. The Prophet pronounceth those accursed, that do the work of the Lord negligently. The Church of the *Laodicea* is severely threatened, to be *Spewed out of the mouth of Christ, because it was neither hot nor cold, but luke warm.* The Idolaters, both among counterfeit Christians, and ignorant Gentiles, exceed oftentimes the true professors in fervency and zeal, they spare not their substance and possessions. The Pharisees compass Sea and Land to win one Proselite. It is a shame and reproach for us, to come behind them that are so blindly led. God will not be dallied withal in the matter of Religion, either we must serve and acknowledge him as we should, or not at all. The Prophet cried out to the Israelites; *Why halt ye between two opinions? If God be God, follow him; but if Baal be God, follow him.* It is a vain worship to serve the Lord with the Blind, Leane, and Lame, as it were with the offall of our affections, or with the Dregs of our works, and to turn unto him half our face, and the other half to the Devil, or to our own lusts. Is not this an igdinity which a man of any place and reckoning will not take at our hands? It were better for us never to know or acknowledge true Religion, then to know and acknowledge it negligentlie, without profit, without conscience, without zeal, without yielding unfeigned obedience unto it, having it only swimming in our Brains, and resting in our Lips, but never entering into our hearts.

Lastly, seeing we must be fervent in good things, it serveth to season our zeal, and to temper it with knowledge that it be not blind. If our zeal be blind and ignorant, the more earnest and forward, the worse it is: the faster we run, the further we hasten out of the way. True zeal, is a fervency of the Spirit, arising of a mixture of love and anger, compelling men earnestly to maintain the glory of God, and drawing from them sorrow and grief of heart, when he is any way dishonored. This is grounded upon the word, and is caused by beholding a breach of God's Commandments. This appeared in *Lot*, when he beheld the unclean

conversation of the beastly *Sodomites*. Blind zeal, is, when we are hot and hasty, beside the warrant of the word of God. The Apostle *Paul* witnesseth, touching the Israelites; *That they had the zeal of God, but not according to knowledge*: yea, he testifieth of himself before his conversion; *That he profited in the Jewish Religion above many of his Companions, and was much more zealous of the Traditions of his Fathers*. So Christ foretelleth, *That the time should come, that whosoever killed them, should think that he did God service*. Let us therefore take heed, that we give not liberty to our best affections to run out, but rule them as they ought, and order them within the compass of the word. All things are not to be done of all men. Every Man must consider what belongeth unto him in his place and calling. We must weigh our gifts, and how we are fitted to every work, so shall we have praise of God, and comfort in our work. And thus much touching the general Doctrine, arising from the earnest manner of the Apostles writing, using all means to persuade *Philemon* to receive his Servant. Now let us come to the words particularly, and in order.

Paul a Prisoner, &c.]

In other Epistles, he calleth himself an Apostle of Christ, and a Servant of God: but here he calleth himself a Prisoner, which is as glorious a Name, and as honorable a Title, as the other, among all the faithful, and he doth more glory in this, then in the other. He was a chief Apostle, & pillar of the Church of God, the Teacher of the Gentiles; yet we see he is imprisoned, and is not ashamed to mention it, but remembereth his imprisonment and suffering, as an advantage to gain credit with *Philemon* in his suit. We learn from hence, that it is no indignity or dishonor to the true Servants of God, to be clapt in the Stockes, to be cast into Prison, or to be put to death for the Gospels sake. I say, imprisonment, afflictions, and troubles, fall upon the best Servants of God, without any reproach or shame unto them. We see this in *Joseph*, who through the false suggestion of his Mistress, and rash credulity of his Master, was committed to prison. When *Michaiah* had delivered the truth of God, and resisted the false Prophets that deceived the King; *He commanded him to be put in Prison, and to be fed with Bread of Affliction, and with Water of Affliction, until he returned in peace*. *Jeremiah* is put in prison because he prophesied, *That the Citty should be taken, and the people delivered into the hands of the King of Babylon*. *John*, by the commandment of Christ, writing to the Church of the *Smyrnians*, telleth them; *That it shall come to pass, that the Devil shall cast some of them into Prison, and bring them unto tribulation, but willeth them to fear none of those things which they should suffer*. So the Apostle *Paul*, is not ashamed of his afflictions, but rejoiceth in them, and after a sort boasteth of them, enduring the bitterness of the Cross, the hardness of imprisonment, the danger of death, the bearing with Roddes, the perrill of Shipwracke, the stoning with stones, the buffeting of Satan, the blueness of the wounds that were given unto him. *Paul* and *Silas* were cast into prison, *And had their Feet made fast in the Stockes, but they prayed and sung Psalms unto God, so that the Prisoners heard them*. All these consents of Scripture serve to teach us, that it is no disgrace or reproach unto the Children of God, to suffer in a good cause at the hands of evil men.

Let us weigh the reasons which help to wipe away the shame of the Cross. First of all, God in the sufferings of his Servants, aimeth at their good and benefit, he would have their Faith

purified, their patience tried, and their obedience manifested. The Gold is cast into the Furnace, not to consume it, but to refine it: not to wast it, but to purge it. Thus doth *Peter* the Apostle teach in his first Epistle; *That the trial of your Faith being much more precious then Golde that perisheth (though it be tried with fire) might be found unto your praise and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.* So *John* teacheth the Church, that the Instruments of the Devil, which are the cruel persecutors, should cast some of them into prison that they might be tried. He might have said, that they might be destroyed, that they might murmur against God, and despair of his mercy, for this was the purpose of the Devil: but he pointeth us unto the purpose of God, and the end that he respecteth in all our sufferings; which is, to prove his own gifts, and to make manifest the secrets of our hearts.

Secondly, if we respect the good and profit that redowneth to others by our sufferings, we should not be ashamed of the Cross, no, nor to lay down our lives for the Brethren. For they serve for the confirmation of the Faith of others, that they seeing their patience and constancy may be strengthened in the truth, and emboldened to make confession thereof with cheerfulness. Thus doth God deal contrary to the purpose of the Devil, and all devilish men; who labor by all means to weaken the faith of the Church, by raising persecutions against the particular members thereof, which God altereth and turneth to another end. The Apostle speaking of his own afflictions, saith; *I would ye understood Brethren, that the things which have come unto me, are turned rather to the furthering of the Gospel, so that my bands in Christ are famous throughout all the Judgment Hall, and in all other places, insomuch, that many of the Brethren in the Lord are boldned through my bands, and dare more franckely speak the word.* Shall we be ashamed of those things which God hath sanctified, to be means of strengthening our Brethren? True it is, if we should measure things by the corrupt judgment of a natural man, it seemeth unlikely and impossible that the sufferings of the godly, should turn to the gain and furtherance of the Gospel: but God often worketh out his own glory contrary to all human wisdom. Who would imagine, that out of death should spring life, or that the blood of the Martyr... should be the seed of the Church? But thus it pleaseth him to manifest his own honor, and to show that he is infinite in wisdom.

Thirdly, if we respect the persecutors of the faithful, they must be discerned thereby, to be wicked men and deadly enemies, working out their own destruction, and sealing up their own reprobation. For as the cause of the godly is made more famous, and spread abroad far and near for which they suffer: so such as persecute them shall come to confusion, and do bring upon themselves swift damnation. The Apostle speaking of the unbelieving Jews, saith; *They killed the Lord and their own Prophets, they persecuted the Apostles, and forbad them to Preach unto the Gentiles, to fufill their sins always, for the wrath of God is come on them to the utmost.* Seeing therefore God will have the faith of such as suffer tried, the godly that believe confirmed, and the persecutors discerned to be most wicked men, no man should be ashamed of the crosses and troubles that befall unto him.

Now let us see the Uses. First, this serveth to condemn sundry sorts of men, that esteem not aright of the sufferings of the faithful, nor judge of them with righteous judgment. It reproveth such as wonder at them lying in affliction, as at *an Owl in the desert, or a Pellicane in*

the Wilderness, so that they are as a Sparrow upon the house top sitting alone. It reproveth such as think them the greatest Sinners, and measure the condition by the chastisement that they suffer, like the friends of *Job*, who judged him to be a deep dissembler, and an hollow hearted Hypocrite, because he suffered such things. How many are there that insult over the godly, when they are humbled under the cross, and feel the hand of God upon them? How many are there that esteem of them when they are in peace and prosperity, but leave them in time of trouble, and forsake them in the day of their calamity, as the Apostle 2 Tim. 4. complaineth of many men?

Lastly, it reproveth such as are discomfited in their profession, and offended at the calamities that befall others for the faiths sake, and faint for the Servants of God. On the other side, let us learn better things, and not judge rash judgment against the righteous. Let us not think it strange, to see the best men troubled and evilly dealt withal, by evil and carnal Wretches of this World. It was the lot of Christ our Savior; *He was despised and rejected of Men, he was a man full of sorrows, and not esteemed.* It was the lot of all the Prophets and Apostles, and is the portion of all the Servants of God in these days, and shall be to the end of the World. It is in vain for us to think, to be exempted out of the common condition of these men. Let us not be offended at their sufferings, not shrink back for the troubles that do befall them. Let us not think them the greatest Sinners for their greatest sufferings, nor reproach them as wicked men, for sustaining the reproaches of wicked men. All they that judge thus, are deceived in their judgment. When the Disciples shown Christ of the *Galileans*, whose blood *Pilate* had mingled with their sacrifices, he answered & said unto them; *Suppose ye that these Galileans were greater sinners then all the other Galileans, because they have suffered such things? I tell you nay: but except ye amend your lives, ye shall all likewise perish. Or think you that those eighteen upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell and slew them, were sinners above all men that dwell in Jerusalem, I tell you nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* Lastly, let us be so far from triumphing over them, and trampling upon them that endure affliction, that rather in their sufferings we should suffer with them; in their weeping, we should weep with them; in their mournings, we should mourn with them; in their miseries, we should pray for them; that so we may show our selves members of one and the same body with them, according to the precept of the Apostle; *Be of like affection one toward another, rejoyce with them that rejoyce, and weep with them that weep: remember them that are in bonds, as though ye were bound with them, and them that are in affliction, as if ye were also afflicted with them.* And this is a notable Argument and testimony to our own hearts, that we are lively members of the body of Christ, and serveth as a sweet comfort unto us, that we are of the fellowship and Communion of Saints.

Secondly, seeing the afflictions of the faithful are not shameful and ignominious unto them, we may conclude from hence, that they are blessed that suffer adversity for the Gospels sake. For seeing *Paul* glorieth in this place of his persecutions, & accounteth it a praise to him to be a prisoner of Christ, we must needs hold them happy and blessed that are in affliction for righteousness sake, whereby we are joined to the faithful, we are made like them, and one with them; nay, we are joined with Christ, and made one with him, so that the deeper we sink down under the cross, the more we are likened to the son of God. This is it

which he teacheth his Disciples, *Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven: blessed shall ye be when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you for my sake falsely.* See here a difference between the spirit of God & all carnal men. All men indeed desire to be happy and blessed in this life, & in the life to come, and they are much deceived in their judgment and estimation of true happiness. How many are there that account happiness to consist in honors, pleasures, preferments, riches, friends, peace, prosperity, plenty, abundance, and worldly dignities? and esteem of troubles, afflictions, crosses, shame, persecutions, losses, as the greatest miseries that can befall the Sons of men? But God accounteth otherwise of them, and would have his Saints that suffer for a good conscience, to account otherwise of them then the world accounteth, seeing the fruits of men's wickedness are turned to be the means of our blessedness. The Apostle Peter teacheth the Church this Lesson, *Who is it that will harm you, if ye follow that which is good? Notwithstanding, blessed are ye if ye suffer for righteousness sake: yea, fear not their fear, neither be troubled.* Christ our Savior teacheth, that to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven, though they be accounted unworthy of the company of men, yet they shall enjoy the blessed society of Christ and his holy Angels: though they be driven out of house & home, yet they shall have their habitation in the Heavens: though they be taunted and termed by the most odious names among men, yet they shall have praise and honor of God, and their names are written in the Book of life.

Lastly, we are put in mind by this doctrine of a necessary duty, that we faint not under the cross, but go boldly, forward with our profession unto the end, and rejoice in our afflictions. If we did suffer as evil doers, as murderers and malefactors, we could have no comfort in our sufferings. Hence it is, that the Apostle chargeth, *That none of us suffer as a Murderer, or as a Thief, or an evil Doer, or as a Busie-body in other Men's matters: But if a Man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify GOD in this behalf.* Many men suffer shame and reproach, but it is for their offenses: in such sufferings, we want peace of conscience, and comfort under the cross. If we suffer as drunkards, as robbers, as riotous persons, we suffer for our merits and deserts, we cannot rejoice and be glad when we suffer in this manner. But it is better (if the will of God be so) that we suffer for well doing, then for evil doing, for Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Wherefore, if God at any time call us out for the Gospels sake to suffer adversity, let us herein rejoice with an exceeding great joy, and never be ashamed of the Gospel, which is the power of God to salvation unto all that believe. *Manythere are that glory in their own shame, but some are ashamed of their glory.* We see how many make a mock of sin, and foam out the froth and scum of their own shame; they strive who shall exceed and excel one another in drinking, in revelling, in whoring, in all vanity, and are not ashamed; nay, they are past all shame. It were as great a shame for us to be ashamed of our glory, as it is for these to glory in their own confusion and shame.

Now, to endure affliction for the Faiths sake, is our glory and honor, and therefore let no man be ashamed of it. As for those that are ashamed of the Cross, let them also be ashamed of the Gospel; yea of Christ, which is the subject and substance of the Gospel. Our Savior, declaring that this must be the condition of all the Servants of God, to be reviled and

persecuted, saith: *Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in Heaven, for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you.* And the Apostle Peter, willeth the Jews to rejoice, inasmuch as they are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall appear, they may be glad and rejoice. For if it be no shame or infamy to be persecuted and imprisoned for the truth of Religion and the testimony of a good conscience, what greater matter of rejoicing can there be offered unto us, in the midst of our sufferings? What greater occasion of gladness and cheerfulness of heart can we have, seeing the goodness of the cause swalloweth up the disgrace of the cross, and the glory of the Gospel, over-shaddoweth all the shame of persecution. This made the Apostles depart from the council of the Pharisees, *Reioycing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the Name of Christ, and the preaching of the truth.* So the Hebrews are commended, *Who being made a gazing-stock by reproaches and afflictions, and becoming Companions of them which were so tossed too and fro, did suffer with joy the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had in Heaven a better and an enduring substance.*

[Of Jesus Christ, &c.]

Before we heard that *Paul* entitled himself a Prisoner: Now let us see whose Prisoner he was. He was imprisoned by the authority of *Caesar*, and the malice of the *Jews*, yet for the cause of Christ, & the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles. The cause of his bands and imprisonment, was not the committing of any heinous crime, but the publishing of the glad tidings of salvation to the world. In this sense, that *Paul* is a prisoner for Christ, that is, for the confessing and preaching of Christ, he calls himself oftentimes by this title, as *Eph. 3, 1. For this cause I Paul am the Prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.* These words are taken in this place passively, not actively: passively, in that he suffered imprisonment for Christ's cause, and was cast into prison for the maintaining of the glory of Christ: not actively, as if Christ had put him in prison; for in this sense, he might be called the Prisoner of *Caesar*, to whom he had appealed, that the envy of the *Pharisees*, and malice of the *Jews* might be repealed and defeated. The doctrine from hence is this, that faithful $\langle \diamond \rangle$ afflicted for the truth, may account their tribulations & afflictions, to be the tribulations and persecutions of Jesus Christ. The persecutions of all true Christians which are imprisoned for Christ's sake, are the persecutions, and must be esteemed as the persecutions of Christ himself. This Apostle writing to the *Philippians*, and mentioning his Chaines, calleth them his *Bands in Christ*. And in the Epistle to the *Colossians*, he saith; *Now rejoice I in my sufferings for you, and fulfill the rest of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his bodies sake, which is the Church.* Here he calleth the afflictions which he in his body suffered, the afflictions of Christ. So he exhorteth *Timothy*, not to be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of him being his Prisoner, but to be partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the power of God. All these testimonies do teach us, that all such afflictions as are occasioned through the Gospel, and brought upon the godly for righteousness sake, are not only to be called their afflictions, but the afflictions of Christ Jesus, for whose cause they come upon them.

The reasons hereof are plain and evident. For first they are sustained for his names sake, and therefore may fitly be called his. If then we endure them for his cause, and for the witness of the Gospel, whereof he is the matter and Author, he is the occasion of their trouble, and

therefore they are to be accounted his. He must needs be a party with us, for whose cause and occasion we are troubled. A man of any humanity and natural affection, will make himself a Companion in tribulation with him, who is punished or troubled for his debt and offense. When *Abiathar* came to *David*, and told him how that his Father and his Fathers house were slain, for succouring of *David*, he presently took to himself, saying; *I am the cause of the death of all the persons of thy Fathers House, abide thou with me and fear not, for he that seeketh my life, shall seek thy life also: for with me thou shalt be in safeguard.* The truth of this reason is set down by the Prophet, when he saith: *Surely for thy sake are we slain continually, and are counted as Sheep for the slaughter.* Hereunto the Apostle alludeth and concludeth the reason, in the Epistle to the *Romans*. Cha. 8. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or perrill, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake are we killed, and are counted as Sheep for the slaughter.* Seeing then, afflictions are sustained for Christ's cause, whose shall they be better accounted than his?

Secondly, there is a nearer conjunction between Christ and his members, so that we are made flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones. If then we be made one with Christ, even members *Of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones:* the afflictions that are ours must needs be made his, the persecutions that are ours, must needs be made his; the persecutions that are ours, are his persecutions; our imprisonment, is his imprisonment. For they that are faithful, are the body of Christ, and he their head, so that they with him make but one Christ. Hence it is, that the Church which is the company of true believers, is called by the name of Christ. If any member suffer, the head suffereth with it as well as the members, there is such a sympathy & feeling between thē: so is it between Christ and his Church; their grief, is his grief; their sorrow, is his sorrow; their trouble is his trouble. This reason is included in the words of the Apostle writing to the *Colossians*, when he saith; *I fulfill the rest of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body sake, which is his Church.*

Let us come to consider the uses. First, see here what Christ accounteth of the sufferings of his Servants. He accounteth whatsoever is done to them that are faithful, a... done unto himself, whether it be good or evil, whether it be comfort and consolation, or trouble and persecution. True it is, Christ Jesus is ascended into the heavens, and sitteth at the right hand of his Father, so that he can suffer no more, he can die no more: yet now he suffereth in his members that confess his name, and rejoiceth in his members that praise his name: when they are troubled, he is troubled, and when they are comforted, he is comforted. And first touching afflictions, all such as offer wrong and injury to the Saints, do offer wrong and injury to Christ himself. This appeareth in the words of Christ to *Saul*, who had obtained letters from the High-Priests to put in prison those that called on his name, saying to him: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* He might have said, why persecutest thou my Saints? Why bringest thou them bound to *Jerusalem?* But to enforce his reproof, he telleth him with whom he hath to deal, and to whom the injury and indignity is offered, to wit; to Christ. A notable lesson for all persecutors, to ponder upon, and carefully to remember. Whensoever they take crafty and wicked counsel against the Children of God, and they are plotting and contriving any mischief against them: when they whet their tongues, or draw their Swordes, or busy their heads, or set a work their hearts, to overthrow and destroy them, let them by

and by consider, that Christ calleth unto them from Heaven with a revenging voice: *Why persecutest thou me?* If this voice of Christ were always sounding in their ears, and entering into their hearts, and piercing their consciences, it would repress their rage, and assuage their malice intended against the people of God. If any man among us that liveth in the Church, were asked the question, whether he would persecute Christ in his person, imprison him, revile him, wrong him, afflict him, and put him to death if he lived upon the face of the earth: he would be ready to answer, God forbid; and to defy him that should offer to charge him with it: he would answer, he looketh for salvation from him, and meaneth not to contrive the destruction of him: yea, he would be ready to say with *Hazaell*, what? Is thy Servant a Dog that I should do this great thing? 2. Kings 8. 13. But let us not deceive in our selves, in vain words that cannot profit, whatsoever is wrought against the Servant, redowneth to the reproach and contempt of the Master, and Christ will be revenged of the afflictions laid upon the least and poorest member that belongeth to his body, as if they were inflicted upon his own person. Hence it is, that the Evangelist describing the form and manner of his last judgment, when Christ shall break the heavens, and come to judge the quick and the dead: *Set the Goats on the left hand and say unto them: Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepaered for the Devil and his Angels, for I was hungered, and ye gave me no meat, I thirsted, and ye gave me no drink: I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in unto you: I was naked, and ye clothed me not: sick and in Prison, and ye visited me not:* Then shall they answer him; *Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or a thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in Prison, and did not minister unto thee?* He shall say unto them: *Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.*

And as the wrongs wrought against the righteous, do reach up to Heaven, and touch the person of Christ: so on the other side, whatsoever benefit, whatsoever comfort, whatsoever good, is shown to the faithful, because they are faithful, shall be rewarded even to a Cup of cold Water, and Christ will esteem it as do one and offered unto himself. This likewise appeareth in the last judgment of Christ, when he shall say to his Sheep standing on the right hand: *I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I thirsted, and ye gave me Drink: I was a Stranger, and ye took me in unto you: I was naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in Prison, and ye came unto me: for verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* He doth not say, ye have refreshed, ye have visited, ye have clothed, ye have comforted my Servants, but ye have done all these things to me; I have been filled, I have been refreshed, it is I, it is I, that have been clothed by you, and comforted of you.

If any were asked what he would do if Christ Jesus were in necessity among us, if he saw him naked, whether he would clothe him? If he saw him an hungered, whether he would feed him? Or thirsty, whether he would give him Drink? Or in Prison, whether he would visit him? He would be ashamed to deny him anything, that hath given him all things: he would think himself unworthy to live in the World, if he should see him want and not supply it. But every Christian man to another, is as Christ himself, when we feed, clothe, and visit him, we feed, clothe, and visit Christ; which made the believers set their Lands and possessions, and lay the price down at the feet of the Apostles, to be distributed as everyone had need. Among

all encouragements to well doing, there cannot be a greater then this, that Christ accepteth it as done unto himself.

Secondly, seeing the afflictions of the Children of God, are the afflictions of Christ, we learn what to esteem of all their afflictions, they are not shameful and ignominious, but glorious and honorable, as the Crown of a Prince, or as the Banners and Ensigns of victory. This is it which the Apostle teacheth. *Phil. 1, 29. To you it is given for Christ, that not only ye should believe in him, but also suffer for his sake.* Where we see, he maketh it a special prerogative and preeminence, to endure affliction for Christ's sake, and maketh it as great an honor to suffer, as to believe; and therefore he joineth them both together. The prison into which the godly are cast, is better then the Palace of a Prince. The Chaines that are borne and worn, for keeping faith and a good conscience, are greater ornaments, then all the Chaines of Gold about the Neckes of the Men of this World. The Fetters wherewith the faithful are laden, are of greater price and estimation, then all the Bracelets and Abilements, then all the Silver and Gold, that the Sons and Daughters of Men delight to carry about them. Hence it is, that the blessed Martyrs that gave their lives for the truth, when they came to suffer death, kissed the stake to which they were tied, the Chaine with which they were compassed, and the Wood by which they were burned and consumed. We see it is the manner of the men of this World, to set out themselves with pomp and bravery, to win credit, and to get themselves honor and estimation, whereof we have an example in *Herod*, recorded in the *Acts*: Who arrayed himself in roall apparel, cunningly wrought, that it glistred as the Sun (as *Josephus* noteth) and made an Oration, and the people gave a shout, saying; *The voice of God and not of Man.* This outward pomp and ostentation, are not the notes and marks whereby true Christians should be known and discerned. Servants are known whom they serve, and to what Master they belong, by the Badge on their sleeve. The persecutions and afflictions of the faithful, are the Badges and Cognizances of Christ, whereby they are known to be his. This is it which the Apostle putteth us in mind of. *Gal. 6. From henceforth let no man put me to business, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.* Where we see, how the Apostle calleth his sufferings for the Gospel, the marks of Christ. What these marks are, he showeth in other places, when he reporteth the stripes, whippings, scars, and blemishes which he bare about in his body; *I think that God hath set forth us the last Apostles, as men appointed to death, for we are made a gazing-stock unto the World, and to the Angels, and to men: we hunger, we thirst, we are naked, we are buffeted, we are reviled, we are persecuted, we are evil spoken of, we are imprisoned, we are whipped, we are stoned, we are made as the filth of the World, and the off-scouring of all things.* These are the marks which the Apostle glorieth in, and whereof he is no more ashamed, then the Soldier is of his wounds and scars. We see how Soldiers that fight in a good cause, in their Princes quarrel, and for the defense of their Country, if they loose an Eye, or an Arm, or a Legge, are ready to show the place, they account it no blemish, they are not ashamed of it. If these can vaunt of the marks and maimes which they have sustained: how much more honor and glory should we account it, to bear the marks of Christ, and to suffer reproach with the people of God? Howsoever therefore the World judgeth of the scourgings, whippings, and imprisonments of the faithful, they are truly and rightly honorable with God and good men. And if we will judge rightly, we must esteem no otherwise of these their sufferings.

Thirdly, we see that it is not the bare punishment, but the cause that maketh a Martyr and Witness of the truth. It is the cause that maketh the crosses of Christians to be the Cross of Christ. The Apostle testifieth he was a Prisoner for Christ and the Gospel, not for his own sins and offenses. It is not our suffering barely and nakedly considered, can honor us with the reward of glory, and the Crown of Martyrdom, but the cause in which we die, and the quarrel in which we suffer. True it is, afflictions are common to the godly and ungodly, they suffer alike, they are imprisoned alike, arraigned, condemned, and executed oftentimes alike, but albeit the afflictions be one and the same, yet the cause is not one and the same for which they are afflicted. The ungodly are punished for their sins; the godly are afflicted for a good conscience. *Abel* is murdered of his Brother; *Cain* is cursed and condemned to be a fugitive upon the earth: both of them are afflicted, but the cause is diverse; *Abel* is killed for his godliness; *Cain* is punished for his wickedness. *Joseph* is sold to Strangers and cast into prison, so likewise are *Pharaohs* two Eunuchs, his Butler and his Baker: they lie all in one prison, but they had not one cause: for he is committed through the slanders and false accusations of his Mistress, they for their demerites and offenses against their Master. Christ had his feet and his hands nailed on the Cross, so had the two Thieves, they suffered all one punishment, but how contrary were the causes of him and them, seeing he suffered without cause, but they justly and worthily had the sentence of death executed upon them? Let us not therefore only fasten our eyes, and look upon the bare punishment, but consider what the cause is, and according to the cause, esteem both of the person and of the punishment. Some are prisoners of men, others are Prisoners of the Devil, of whom they are holden captive, and both of them for their wickedness: but if we will be Martirs of Christ, we must be the prisoners of Christ. This serveth to reprove the Church of *Rome*, who glory in their Martyrs (as sometimes the *Donatists* did) and fill up their Calendar with such as they have canonized for Saints in Heaven, which were no better then Traitors when they lived upon the earth. The Church of *Rome*, which vaunteth her self to be the only true Church of God, and condemneth other, honoreth diverse Saints which never were in the World; some that were *Pagans*; others, that were *Jews* in Religion, and refused Christ; and others, that were Heretics and Traitors, that neither had Faith on Earth, nor have salvation in Heaven, being Rebels to their Princes, and enemies to their Country, and disturbers of the State. And therefore also it condemneth those, who albeit they live under the Gospel, and shroud themselves under the branches of it, as under a comfortable shadow, whereby they have refreshed and enriched themselves, yet they magnify the Church of *Rome*, and set up the Faith professed therein, they balance it equal with the true Church of God among our selves, and thereby seek to shake in sunder the Faith of many. These men cry out, not only that there are and have been learned men on both sides, but Saints and holy men on both sides, and true Martyrs on both sides; and therefore would have the people carried about with uncertainty of Doctrine, as with a wave of the Sea. But we deny that any have suffered among us for the *Roman* Faith, or have been led to execution for their Religion. The truth is, they have but too much favor shown them, and too great liberty given them. Indeed, such as have been found factious and forward to advance foreign power, to adhere to foreign enemies, to stir the people to rebel and take arms against the Prince, to compass the death and destruction of the Prince, such as have been Authors of treacheries and conspiracies,

and been convinced to be trumpets of sedition by the deposition of witnesses, by the form of their trial, and by their own confessions, have been justly executed among us, as by all men must needs be acknowledged. In the City of *Rome*, all that will not take the Popes part, or shall take him to be no Pope, or refuse to join with him if an Army should be sent against him, are adjudged to be no lawful Subjects, but disloyal Traitors. No foreign Prince will repute them for his people and Subjects, that shall deny to take his part against any foreign Usurper or Inuador whatsoever. So the Laws of our Land have seized upon some, who have busied themselves in matters of State, bringing over Bulls, declaring that the Prince was to be deposed, and the Subjects discharged of their alleagiance. As for pointes of Faith, they were never mentioned in the proceedings against them, they were not called into question for their opinion concerning the Mass, for transubstantiation, for worshipping of Images, or for any other point of the Romish Religion, or rather superstition. Therefore it is false, that any have died among us as Martyrs, or any otherwise then as Traitors. The true Church of God ever held them for Martyrs, that died for the profession of the Faith, and the testimony of Christ: but such of the Popish faith and faction as have been executed among us, died for maintenance of the Popes pleasure and tyranny, taking upon him to depose Princes, and seeking by open arms and secret Treasons to murder them. True Martyrs suffered for the truth wrongfully, and therefore deserved commendation, according to the rule of the Apostle: *It is thank-worthy if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully:* but these suffer not in matter of wrong, nor for a good conscience, unless the will of the Pope be the rule of their conscience. True Martyrs must be endued with Charity for as the Apostle teacheth; *If I give my body to be burned and have not love, it profiteth nothing:* but these have not any shadow of charity who plot the death of their Prince, and seek the destruction of their Country. To conclude this point, unless Treason be Religion, and falsehood truth, and unless Antichrist be to be received for Christ, these men cannot be esteemed and honored as Martyrs among us, who died not for Christ, but for practicing against the Doctrine of Christ, which teacheth to be gentle, patient, humble, and not any way to seek revenge.

Lastly, from this Doctrine ariseth great comfort to the Servants of God, and as great terror to all their Enemies. It is a great consolation for them that are afflicted for Christ's sake, to assuage their sorrow, and a great means to work in them patience, to consider that Christ putteth all their tears in his Bottle, and accounteth their afflictions to be his afflictions. If we suffer with Christ, we shall reign with him: if we die with Christ, we shall live with him: if we be made like unto him in ignominy, we shall be made like unto him in glory. The Apostle *Peter* exhorteth the people of God, *Not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial which was among them, to prove them, as though some strange thing were come unto them, but to rejoice, inasmuch as they were partakers of Christ's sufferings.* If anything be able to lift up your hands, and to raise up your harts under the Cross, this consideration is able to refresh our weakness, and comfort our feeble Spirits that our afflictions shall no otherwise be respected and regarded, then if the load were laid upon Christ himself. On the other side, this serveth to terrify the hearts of all persecutors of the godly, and Enemies of all righteousness, they can never escape the hand of God and of Christ, whom they do persecute in his members.

They have not to do only with men like unto themselves, but with him that is the eternal God, against whom they can never prevail. This is it that deceiveth the proud persecutors of the poor people of God, they dream they have to do no further then with weak men, who are not able to resist them, and that they have no farther account to make. But they must know, that their persecutions reach to Christ, and that they slander, revile, reproach, and hurt the person of Christ himself, so often as they slander, revile, reproach, and hurt the least and lowest member of Christ; and therefore shall not escape fearful punishment. Hence it is, that Christ speaking unto *Saul* when he was converted to the Faith: *It is hard for thee to kick against pricks*. It is therefore a fearful thing to be a persecutor. *It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you which are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall show himself from Heaven with his mighty Angels, &c.* So the Apostle *John* describing the tribulation of the Church, saith: *Behold, it shall come to pass, that the Devil shall cast some of you into Prison*. He doth not say, the persecutors shall do it, but the Devil: because he ruleth in them, he carrieth them to do his will; albeit they be blind and see it not; albeit they be hardened and understand it not; albeit they be senseless and regard it not.

[*And our Brother Timothy, &c.*]

Here is the second person writing this Epistle. *Paul* joineth unto him *Timothy*, a man of reverent account, and famous in the Church, as he doth in many other places of his Epistles. The former Epistle to the *Corinthians*, was written by *Paul* and *Sosthenes*: the latter by *Paul* and *Timothy*. *Paul* and all the Brethren which he had with him at *Rome*, joined together in the writing the Epistle to the *Galatians*. *Paul*, *Silvanus*, and *Timothy*, wrote the Epistles to the *Thessalonians*. So in this place, *Paul* joineth *Timothy* with him in his suit, because howsoever he were in great credit with *Philemon*, and able to obtain a great matter at his hands, yet he knew he should prevail better by the help and assistance of another, then he could do himself alone, seeing two may prevail more then one. He honoreth him also with the name of a dear Brother (whom oftentimes he calleth his natural Son) that his gifts and graces may be considered with his person, and carry the greater weight in his suite, and so *Philemon* sooner yield his consent, and grant this request, being requested, and as it were set upon by so many. From this practice of the Apostle we learn, that what good thing soever we enterprise and take in hand, we shall better effect it with others then alone by our selves. The joining unto us the hand and help of others is profitable and necessary to all things belonging unto us for the better performing and accomplishing of them. This the Wise man teacheth. *Eccl. 4.* when he saith: *Two are better then one. Abimelech*, being directed by God to stir up *Abraham*, obtaineth by his means (who prayed for him) that which he could not compass and accomplish alone by himself. The like we might say of the three friends of *Job*, they obtained the favor of God, and the accepting of their Sacrifice through the intercession of *Job*, which without him they could not obtain. *Absalom* not being able to purchase & procure of himself the good will of his Father, moveth *Joab* to deal for him, *Joab* useth the help of the subtle Woman of *Tekoah*, whereby he is reconciled to his Father. Heereby it cometh to pass, that *Paul* so often requesteth and requireth the prayers of the Church, that utterance may be given unto him, that he may open his mouth boldly to publish the secrets of the Gospel. All these places of Scripture prove plainly and directly

unto us, that what matter of weight and importance soever we enterprise and go about, it is good for us to take to our selves the help of others, to further us therein.

The truth of this Doctrine will better appear unto us, if we weight the causes and consider the reasons. For first, the labor and wages of two, is better and greater then of one alone. In all doing of duties there is profit & reward, but where greater strength is joined and force united, there is greater fruit of the labor seen. This is the reason urged by the Wise man. *Eccle. 4.* where the Doctrine hath his confirmation, when he had taught that two are better then one, he addeth immediately; *For they have better Wages for their labor.* It maketh us (having company) to be more cheerful in laboring, it devoureth the tediousness and wearisomeness of the work, and it provoketh us to an holy emulation, who shall go before each other. Hence it is, that Christ Jesus calling and sending out his Apostles, did send them forth two and two, and the Evangelist doth couple, and as it were yoke them together, *Peter and Andrew, James and John, Philip and Bartlemew, Thomas and Matthew, &c.* Thus they were sent, and thus they labored together. When God had called *Moses* to go to *Pharaoh*, and to will him to let his people go, he sent him not alone, but joined unto him his brother *Aaron*. When the Lord Jesus appointed the seauenty disciples to second the labors of his twelu Apostles: *He sent them out, two and two before him into every City and place whither he himself should come.* So then, there is more profit in a life that hath a fellow, then when all things are done alone, in the earnestness of the labor the works shall have more force, their strength is increased, their courage is kindled, by mutual exhorting and cheering up one of another, and by the mutual example that one giveth to another.

Secondly, in peril and danger if one fall or be overcome, he hath by his fellow, a fitter remedy against all the changes and adventures of this life. When a man doth take a journey into a far place, it falleth out oftentimes that he cometh into some great danger, out of which he is never able to rid himself, and therefore woe to him that is alone. This is more dangerous in the matters of the soul, if a man fall into sin, and have no man to pull him out of the pit into which he is fallen. In bodily falls it is accounted childish and sottish to fall and not to rise again, to stumble and to lie still in the mire, and therefore he hasteth to rise before any man know of his fall. But in spiritual falls which are more common and more dangerous, the case is far otherwise. For he that falleth into sin, is scarce ever lifted up and set on his feet, unless by the exhortations, admonitions, and reproofs of others he be restored and recovered. This we see in the examples of *David, Hezekiah,* and sundry others, who continued in their sins until the Prophets of God came and spake unto them in the name of the Lord. This is the reason that *Solomon* useth to commend the sociable life above the solitary; *For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: and if one overcome him, two shall stand against him, and a three-fold cord is not easily broken.* Seeing therefore, the recompense of labor, is better of two then of one, and the danger of falling, is lesser in one that hath his fellow with him; in both respects we see, that the help of others, especially of the faithful, is very necessary and profitable to all things belonging unto us.

The Uses are now in the next place to be observed and marked. First, this teacheth us, that in all occasions and adventures of our life, both in prosperity and adversity, we should use

and seek the help one of another. We say commonly, that two eyes see more then one, and three more then two. Two hands are better to work withal, then one. Two heads are better then one, and three better then two, to contrive anything. Man is by Nature sociable, and loveth the company and fellowship of others, more then other Creatures that fly together and flock together. The Philosophers could say, that such as leave the society of men, and betake themselves to a solitary life, are either a God, or a Beast. Experience doth teach us, that all of us do stand in need of the help of another; the high, of such as are low; the rich, of such as are poor; so as we are bound together by common fellowship, as by a strong band, and one of us cannot be without another. Let no man therefore despise his Brother, neither let the head say to the foot, I have no need of thee. The Lyon which is accounted as the King of all the Beasts of the Forest, may want the help of the seely Mouse. Let us set no man at naught, be he never so seely and simple. All human things are uncertain and unstable, and are turned as with a swift wheel. Let us therefore maintain peace and concord one with another, that when we want, the comfort and counsel, the aide and assistance one of another, we may not be to seek of them, but have them at hand. Smal things are increased by concord: great reuennues are diminished, and large possessions decayed by discord. A bundle of sticks taken together, are not easily broken: but being severed one from the other, they are quickly pulled in pieces without any great pains or policy. An army of men so long as they incamp together, and march together, are not easily subdued, but one serveth to strengthen another: but if they go straggling and forraging out of order, if they fall to the prey and pillage, everyone providing for himself, it falleth out oftentimes, that the Conquerors have been conquered and overcome. And as there is great use and benefit in the company and society one of another, in regard of earthly and temporal things, so is there greater profit of it in regard of spiritual things. We have need to be instructed and comforted, to be admonished and advised one of another. We want daily, the daily prayers one of another, to commend our selves and our Brethren to God. The Apostle *James* saith; *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing. Is any sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray for him, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.* So the Apostle *Heb.* 13. stirreth up the *Hebrews* to this duty, *Pray for us, for we are assured that we have a good conscience in all things, desiring to live honestly, and I desire you somewhat the more earnestly that ye so do, that I may be restored to you more quickly.* We want oftentimes, nay at all times the prayers one of another, and we must continually be ready to help one another, and mindful of the welfare of the whole Church. This condemneth and reproveth the solitary and Monkish life of those, that abhor and abjure the fellowship and familiarity of men, and like the wild Ass, delight in no place but in the Wilderness, as if it were a work of merit to live alone out of the company of others. These men glory, that they are the light and salt of the world, yet they hate the light, and hide themselves in their dens, as it were in darkness, under a color, forsooth least they gather contagion and corruption from the base vulgar. But as the *Gentiles* teach by the light of nature, that we are not born for our selves alone, so is it their duty rather to come abroad, to enlighten others with the light which they make boast of, and to season the unsavory, and unseasoned, and unsanctified manners of the people which they complain of. Doth any man light a Candle to cover it under a Bushel, to hide it under a Bed, or to put it in a privy place?

But he setteth it in a Candlestick, & placeth it on a table, that it may give light to all that are in the house. And what use is there of the Salt, unless application be made of it to the meat, that it may be kept from putrifaction? Away therefore with this Monkish life out of the Church, which standeth neither with the ordinance of God, nor the society of man: and let us maintain concord and company one with another, not forsaking the fellowship, as the manner of some is, but remembering that God hath said; *It is not good for man to be alone, and that two are better then one.*

Secondly, this teacheth us to maintain the public meetings and assemblies of the Saints, and to magnify the Lord's Sabbaoths, when all the Church join in prayers, praises, and other exercises of our Christian Religion, making even Heaven and Earth to ring with the sound of their thanksgivings, and consents in the Doctrines of Faith, and fruits of their obedience. For seeing the doctrine we have in hand, teacheth, that the company of others, chiefly of the faithful, is very available to help us forward, and to further us in all good duties, we learn the excellent use of all Church-meetings, where with one mind, and with one mouth, we glorify God the father in Jesus Christ. Surely, as many sticks make a greater fire, and many strings a fuller Music: so is the meeting of many in the Church, to pray to God together, to hear the word together, to receive the Sacraments together, to sing the praises of God together; it is a fire that casteth abroad a great heat, and an harmony passing pleasing in the ears of the Lord.

Now the more gracious these meetings are, the greater is their sin that break off this fellowship of the Saints, and dissolve the people of God, which came willingly together at the time of mustering together his Army in perfect beauty. Now the Standard seemeth pulled down, and the Campe to be broken up, and the people disperced and scattered as Sheep without their Shepherds, wandering here and there (as it were) upon the Mountains, to seek pasture to save their lives. It is noted in the holy History, that a great Famine was sent upon *Samaria*, when the Prophets were destroyed; *So that they sought for the Fountaines of Waters, and the streams of the Rivers, if so be they might find to save the Horses and the Mules alive, least the Land were utterly deprived of them.* The word of God groweth precious in our days, and the people that hunger after the Bread of life, are constrained to go from place to place to sustain themselves. This made the Prophet to cry out: *O Lord of Hosts how amiable are thy Tabernacles, my soul longeth, yea & fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, for my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.* This serveth to reprove those that show no love or liking to Church-meetings, that despise the grace of God offered unto them, and prefer any assemblies in the World, and of worldly and wicked men before the assemblies of the Church. These men (if they be asked) say they hope to be saved, but they will not use the means of their salvation: they look to come into the Kingdom of Heaven, but they regard not the way and path that leadeth unto it: they will needs be of God, but they will not hear the word of God, and therefore we may truly conclude, that because they hear it not, they cannot be of God.

Lastly, we must not content our selves, or think it sufficient to pray unto God, or to praise him alone in the Closet of our house, or of our heart, or in the company of our Family, when we should do our duties to God publicly, and join with the rest of the Congregation. Christ

Jesus himself repaired to the Temple, at the set times of God's worship: so did the faithful in all ages of the Church, they were terrified, neither by the coldness of the weather, nor by the greatness of the heat, nor by the length of the journey, nor by the costliness of the worship: but had the greatest solace and chiefest delight in those holy meetings; where is the presence of God, the joy of the godly, the gate of heaven. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith; *Blessed are they that dwell in thine house, they will ever praise thee: a day in thy Courts, is better then a thousand other where: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the Tabernacles of wickedness.* *Psal. 84, 5, 10.* True it is, we are commanded to make private prayers, and to pour out the secret Meditations of our hearts before the Lord, but when we ought to assemble with our Brethren in one place, and frequent the meetings of the Church, God will not hear us, nor accept us if we refuse such solemn meetings, although we privately call upon him in our houses. They that come sildome to public Prayers, do also most sildome use private prayers. And such as enter into their Chamber, & when they have shut the door, do pray unto their Father which is in secret, will make conscience to enter into the Lord's Courts, and to pray unto him with the rest of the faithful. For if God promise his presence, where two or three are gathered together in the Name of God: much more will his ears be ready to hear us, and his mouth open to answer us, and his hands stretched out to help us, when we shall join together with the rest of our Brethren, as one man to call upon him. See then the difference between the godly and ungodly. The Children of God have desired nothing more then to abide and continue in the house the Lord all the days of their life, as the Prophet maketh known his request. *Psa. 27. One thing have I desired of the Lord that I will require, even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to visit his Temple.* And nothing hath more troubled and disquieted them, then when they have been constrained to go from the house of God, and been banished from the exercises of their Religion. This we see in the example of the Jews carried into captivity. By the Waters of *Babel* we sate, and there we wept when we remembered *Zion*. But the ungodly are never more merry nor better contented, then when they are out of the Church: nor never more heavy and discontented, then when they are in the house of God. They think every hour seven. They count every Sabbath the loss of a day, and no time worse spent, then that which is spent in the service of God. All time is esteemed to little and to short, that is spent in pleasures, in Carding, in Dyeing, in Drunkenness, in vanity, and in all wickedness: never considering that we ought to number our days, and redeem the time, because the days are evil.

[*To Philemon, our dear Friend and Fellow-laborer, &c.*]

Hitherto we have spoken of the persons writing: Now we are to proceed to the persons, to whom this Epistle is written; which are four in number, whereof one is chief and principal; the other, such as are joined to him as less principal. The chief person here named, is *Philemon*. Touching this *Philemon*, who he was, and of what calling and condition, it is not agreed among all. Some think he was in the Ministry, and of some Ecclesiastical function, because the Apostle calleth him a Fellow-laborer. But the opinion and judgment of these men is not certain, and the reason whereupon it standeth, is weak and wavering. Rather he appeareth to be a Citizen of *Colossae*, of good wealth and worship, because both the

Pastor of that Church was *Archippus*, as appeareth *Coloss. 4*, *Say unto Archippus, look to thy Ministry that thou fulfill it*; And many other are called by this honorable Title of Fellow-laborers, who never had calling to preach the word, as appeareth in diverse places, where *Paul* saluteth not only private persons, but Women, who were not to teach publicly in the Church by this Name, as *Rom. 16. Phil. 4. 3. John*. Now the Apostle useth two reasons, to persuade him to yield to his suit and earnest request; the one, of friendship and familiarity that was between them; the other, of his zeal and forwardness in furthering the Gospel, as indeed it is the duty, not only of the Ministers, but of all the godly, to promote the doctrine of the gospel, and to labor much in the Lord by their prayers, works, counsels, endeavours, and employments. So then in regard of the near conjunction of Christian love and common labor in the truth, and for the truth; the Apostle hopeth to prevail with him. From hence we learn this Doctrine, that where true Christian love is, there is a willing and ready performance of all Christian duties one to another. Christian friendship and familiarity, ought to prevail much, to entreat and obtain duties of love one from another, and to stay unchristian and uncharitable courses. When a contention grew between *Abraham* and *Lot*, and between the Heard-men of their Cattle, *Abraham* said unto him; *Let there be, I pray thee, no strife between thee and me, neither between my Heard-men and thy Heard-men, for we are Brethren*. *Jonathan* and *David* (a pair of sure and fast friends) entered into a covenant of peace and amity, either with other, this love would not suffer any evil to be pretended and plotted against each other, which they did not willingly disclose and discover. *David* loved him as himself, and *Jonathan* revealed and betrayed the counsel and conspiracy of his Father, even to the danger of his own life, and the loss of a kingdom. He preferred the maintaining of friendship before the gaining of a kingdom. The love that was in Christ to his disciples, caused him to reveal to them all things that he had from his Father; *Henceforth call I you not servants for the servant knoweth not what his M. doth, but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, have I made known to you*. When Christ sitting at the table, told the disciples, that one of them should betray him into the hands of Sinners; *Peter* moved *John*, whom Jesus loved, and who leaned on his breast, to ask who it was of whom he spake, being assured he would not deny to tell him, because he loved him This the Apostle teacheth; *Doubtless one will scarce die for a righteous Man: but for a good man it may be that one dare die*. So in this Epistle that now we have in hand, verse 9. he saith; *For loves sake I beseech thee for my Son Onesimus*. All these several places serve to point out, and to prove this truth unto us, that a friend, a true Friend, a true Christian friend, will not deny, but readily perform any Christian duty to his friend.

The Reasons are; first, because true Friends are as one Soul in two Bodies. They agree in one, they consent in one, they take such sweet counsel together, and are partakers one with another, in weal and woe. The Heathen could say, that all things are common among friends: and that a sure friend is as another the same. It is said to this purpose, that *David* loved *Jonathan* as his own Soul. *1 Sam. 18*. So *Luke* speaking of the faithful members of the Church, saith; *The multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one Soul: neither any of them said, that anything of that which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common*. Seeing then, that such as are joined in Christian friendship, have one Soul, one heart, one

will, one purpose, how can they but perform all good things one to another? Who can deny anything to himself? Who hateth his own flesh, or doth not nourish and cherish it by all the means he can? How then shall not Friends, that have a Title and interest one of another, demand and obtain anything that is just and equal?

Again, this is a note of true love, that it seeketh not his own good, but seeketh and desireth the good of his Brother. The love that aimeth and endeth at it self, is nothing else but self-love (whereof there is great store in the World) when Men respect nothing but their own profit. But true love is so occupied about the thing loved, that in regard thereof, it is oftentimes negligent about it self, not enjoying all the liberty or commodity that lawfully it may have. The Apostle describing the properties of love, saith: *Love suffereth long: it is bountiful: love enuyeth not: love doth not boast it it self: it is not puffed up: it disdaineth not: is seeketh not her own things: it not provoked to anger: it thinketh not evil.* Seeing then this is one of the fruits and properties of love, that it is ready to neglect it own private profit and pleasure, in regard of the thing loved, we cannot doubt of a careful performance of all duties and demands that are required of it, where it is.

Let us see the Uses of this Doctrine. First, seeing Christian friendship will perform Christian duties, we learn, that a Christian Friende is a sure Friend, and Christian friendship, is the best friendship. These love in the Faith, and therefore cannot start back. Such friendship as beginneth in the Flesh, and ariseth upon carnal causes, and worldly respects, is easily broken and dissolved, the least displeasure doth over-turn it: but the friendship which is in God, and for God, endureth forever, no envy shall undo it, no occasion shall break it, no time shall dissolve it. This appeareth by the words of the Wiseman. Prouerb. 18. 24. *A man that hath friends ought to show himself friendly, but a friend is nearer then a Brother.* Seek such friends as fear God, and be Christianly minded. Choose none to be thy friend but him that is the friend of God. Let none be thy Brother, that is not the Brother of Christ. One such friend, is worth ten thousand others. If thou have in all thy life found by trial and experience such an one, make more account and reckoning of him, then of a natural Brother (which band is but in the flesh) assuring thyself, that grace will work above nature, and therefore prefer him before all earthly treasure. If then thou be careful to keep thy temporal Riches and Possessions, much more oughtest thou to be careful to keep a faithful friend, and join thyself in amity with him. True it is, there is a kind of friendship and familiarity among Drunkards, among Adulterers, among Robbers, and among all Malefactors; as *Solomon* teacheth. Prouerb. 1. 14. *These sometimes seem most nearly joined, but by the least occasion that can be, they are easily separated.* There is in all places and parishes, almost a band and knot of these friends, and good fellows. But such as the word of God maketh Friends, and the band of the Spirit gleweth together, are not easily sundered and disjoined, but have a sure and steadfast conjunction, and are built upon a strong and stable foundation. These love more in adversity, then in prosperity, & in time of need do show what their friendship is: whereas the friendship arising upon worldly causes, will fail and abate when wealth decayeth, when the world lowreth, when trouble cometh, & so show themselves not to have been the friends of us, but of our wealth: not of our persons, but of our prosperity.

Secondly, we learn from hence, to be bold with all Christian friends, and to suffer them to be bold with us. It is a true note of a true Friend, of a faithful friend, to deal plainly, to reprove, comfort, exhort, commend without flattery, without partiality. There is none of us all, how great soever our knowledge be, how great soever our graces be, how much soever we have profited in the faith of Christ, but sometimes we have need to be instructed, sometimes to be comforted, sometimes to be reprov'd, and sometimes to be threatened. It is a great blessing of God, when he giveth a friend, by whom (as by a true Glass) we may perceive and know our wants and blemishes. We shall find everywhere such as will be ready to sooth and flatter us in our offenses, & to tell us all is well done: but few there are that will deal faithfully with us.

This a great plague, and a great judgment, commonly waiting upon great men, and rich men, that they find few or none that dare admonish them of their faults, or tell them of their offenses; and so many times are suffered to run on to their destruction. Let us account it as a special blessing sent unto us of God, when we have a friend by whom we may hear what is amiss in us. We could give him thanks, that would tell us of some spot in our faces, or blemish on our Garments; and shall we envy or malign him, that will discover unto us the sins of our Souls, which do more soil and defile us, then all the blemishes of the Body? The Prophet *David* having found the benefit and comfort of a godly reproof, when he was reprov'd by *Nathan* the Prophet, saith; *Let the righteous smite me, for that is a benefit, and let him reprove me, and it shall be a precious Oil that shall not break mine head.* To this end speaketh *Solomon* in the Proverbs: *Rebuke not a Scornor, least he hate thee: but rebuke a wise Man, and he will love thee.* The correction of a Friend, is as the Rodde of a Father: the end is not to destroy, but to save: not to overthrow, but to deliver from death. We are all of us bound, as it were in a bond or Obligation, to perform this duty one to another: and we must in humility submit our selves, under the reproof of our Christian friends.

We cannot better make manifest our love unto our Brethren, then by admonishing of them, and reprov'ing of them. This is it which *Moses* teacheth in the Book of *Leviticus*; *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart, but thou shalt plainly rebuke thy Neighbor, and suffer him not to sin.* Can a Physician show his love better, then by telling his patient his disease, and declaring unto him the means whereby to cure it? Can a Man meeting his Brother, wandering out of his way in Hilles and Dales, in Woodes and Wilderness, show his love better unto him, then by bringing him into the way, and laying his error before his face? So that no man can give a sounder Testimony of his sincere heart, and unfeigned love toward his Brother, then by dealing plainly with him when he walketh not uprightly. For a Friende is unto the Soul, as Physic is to the Body: and the admonishing of our Brother, is as the directing of a Trauailer. Let us therefore suffer the word of exhortation, Knowing that such as are out of order must be admonished; the feeble-minded, must be comforted; the weak, must be strengthened; the evil, must be reprov'd; the obstinate, must be terrified and threatened. And let us not fret and rage against our Brethren, when we are checked and controlled for our sins. It is a sign we are persuaded and resolved, to continue in our sins, when we cannot abide to be reprov'd, but are ready to say with *Ahab*: *Hast thou found me ô mine Enemy?* The word of God is good to him that walketh uprightly: and we shall find in the ende; *That open rebuke is better*

then secret love; yea, that the Woundes of a Lover are faithful, and the Kisses of an Enemy are pleasant.

Lastly, seeing one Friende (especially a Christian Friend) may challenge and claim much from his Friende, we must know that it is a fearful sin, under color and show of friendship, to betray or undermine one another. Of such false and feigned Friends, *David* complaineth in sundry places of the Psalms; *My familiar Friende whom I trusted, which did eat my Bread, hath lift up the heel against me: Surely mine Enemy did not defame me, for I could have borne it: neither did mine Adversary exalt himself against me, for I would have hid me from him, but it was thou, ô Man, even my Companion, my Guide, and my Familiar, which delighted in consulting together, and went into the house of God as Companions.*

This falsehood have the faithful felt in all Ages: This had Christ himself experience of, being betrayed of one of his own Disciples and Household. So have his members continually proved the same, being exercised by the deceit of false Brethren. This was the sin of *Cain*; Who spake friendly to his Brother, but when he had him alone in the Fielde, he rose up against him and slew him. This was the sin of *Joab*, his false and fraudulent dealing with *Abner* and *Amasa*, he spake peaceably, but meant treacherously; *Art thou in health my Brother?* And so smote them with the sword that they died. This was the sin of *Judas*, who had Hail Master in his mouth, and covered the hollowness and Hypocrisy of his heart, with the kindness of a Kiss: but this was a token of his Treason, and the sign that he had given to apprehend him. It was not a Kiss of love, but a Testimony of his villainy; and therefore Christ said unto him: *Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a Kiss?* Hence it is that the Apostle *John* exhorteth. 1. John 3. *My little Children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue only, but in deed, and in truth: for thereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall before him assure our hearts.*

This is the true love which standeth not in word, but in deed: which lieth not in the tongue, but in the heart: which consisteth not in an outward show, but in the inward truth. Such was the love of the godly gathered together after the ascension of Christ, they loved together in truth, and had all things common in the use: *For all that believed were in one place, and had all things common: they were of one heart and of one Soul, neither any of them faide, that anything of that which he possessed was his own, neither was there any among them that lacked.* Where the Evangelist declareth, that their harts and affections were so joined in God, that being all members of one body, they could not suffer their fellow-members to be destitute, accounting the defeating and defrauding of them, as it were a spoiling and robbing of themselves.

We must not deny our help to them that are in Christ, but show our selves ready to clothe him, to feed him, and to visit him in all his members, as we shown before, otherwise we are no true members, but dead members.

[*And to our dear Sister Apphia, &c.*]

Hitherto we have spoken of the first and chief person, to whom the Epistle is directed: Now let us come to such as are less principal, being joined with him, which are these: first, *Apphia*: Secondly, *Archippus*: Thirdly, the Family of *Philemon*, to whom this Epistle was to

be read. The first that cometh to be considered, is *Apphia*, whom he calleth a beloved Sister. This Woman seemeth to be the Wife of *Philemon*, my reason is, because she is placed immediately after *Philemon*, and before the Minister and Pastor of the Church. For no cause can be assigned why she should follow *Philemon*, and go before *Archippus*, but that she was the Wife of *Philemon*; and therefore the Apostle joineth her next unto him in place, as she was joined to him by the ordinance of God. And this is the judgment of many.

Now, as *Paul* before did join with himself *Timothy*, so in this place he joineth *Apphia*, as a Companion with *Philemon*, that thereby he might make the way more open to ob...ine his purpose. Good Women ought to do much with their Husbandes: and the Apostle provoketh her by naming and saluting her, to be a mover and persuader of her Husband, to this charitable and Christian duty. We learn from hence, that it is required of all Christian Women to be helpers and furtherers of good things in their Husbands. It is the duty of Wives to stir up, and spurr up their Husbands to all Christian duties and holy fruits of Religion.

The ende of her Creation was, that she should be an Helper unto Man, especially in the best things, for the Woman was made for Man, and not Man for the Woman; and therefore GOD said from the beginning: *It is not good for Man to be alone, let us make him an Helper meet for him.* Solomon describing in the Book of *Proverbs* a virtuous Woman, whose price is far abouethe Pearls, (he saith) *The heart of her Husband trusteth in her; and he shall have no need of spoil: She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life, &c. She openeth her Mouth in Wisdom, and the Law of Grace is in her tongue, she overseeth the ways of her Household, and eateth not the Bread of idleness.* An example of this duty, we have in the Wife of *Manoah*, the Mother of *Sampson*, when her Husband was greatly affrighted and astonied, at the sight of the glorious departure of the Angel of God, who ascended up in the flame of the Altar, and cried out in the perplexity of his Spirit, and terror of his heart: *We shall surely die, because we have seen the Lord:* She encouraged him and comforted him, being greatly cast down, *If the Lord would kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering, and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have shown us all these things, nor would now have told us any such.* Another example we have in the *Shunamite*, a Woman of great estimation, when she perceived the Prophet *Elisha* to come often that way, she said unto her Husband: *Behold, I know now, that this is an holy Man of God, that passeth by us continually, let us make him a little Chamber, I pray thee, with Walls, and let us set him there a Bed, and a Table, and a Stoole, and a Candlestick, that he may turn in thither when he cometh to us.*

Where we see she stirreth up her Husband to do good to the Prophet, and to prepare him a study by himself, fit for his Meditations. And the Apostles do often urge this duty, and teach, that all Women should be helpess, not hinderers: furtherers, not discouragers: stirrers forward, not houlders backward from good things.

The Reasons are plain. For first, they may by the gracious goodness of GOD be blessed Instruments to win their Husbands to the Faith, by beating themselves toward them with meekness of Spirit, and by patient waiting for a blessing from God. The Water by often dropping, pierceth the hard Stone: the earth by continual touching, weareth the Tough Iron: and what is it that length of time doth not alter? The Apostle *Peter* exhorteth; *Wives to be subject to their husbands, that even they which obey not the word, may without the word be woon by*

the conversation of their Wives, while they behold their pure conversation which is with fear.

Likewise Paul persuading the believing Wife to dwell with the unbelieving Husband, and not to depart from him, giveth this reason; *What knowest thou, ô Wife, whether thou shalt save thine Husband?* Seeing therefore they may be effectual means to save the Souls of their Husbands, and to win them without the word, and so gain them a good report and a sweet Name in the Church, they must consider that it belongeth unto them to be helpers unto their Husbands.

Secondly, she is his yoke-fellow, and ought to draw with him in an eeven and equal course, to make her obedience to him easy and cheerful in the Lord. The Oxen that draw in a yoke together, are an ease of the work and burden one to another. Such a pair of yoke-fellows were *Abraham and Sara, Isaac and Rebecca, Zacharias and Elizabeth*, and sundry others. The man and Wife are as the two eyes in the head, or as the two feet in the Body. The two eyes if they go together, and look both one way, be it upward or downward, be it to the right hand or to the left hand, all is well and comely in the face: but if they be severed and the one look one way, the other another way, what a blot and blemish is it to the face? The two feet, if they walk together, and one step do follow another, they become the body well, and one furthereth another: but if one step one way, and another step another way, there is no agreement in the body. So the man and the woman being made to draw in one yoke, being as the two eyes, the two hands, the two feet in the body, working together, and helping one another, should never be severed and divided to cross one another, to reproach one another, to shame or depart one from another. This piety and honesty, God and Nature doth teach us to practice.

Let us see what are the uses of this doctrine. First, seeing the Woman is made by the Law of her Creation to be an helper; we learn, that a good and Christian Wife that is wise and godly, encouraging her Husband, and stirring him up to godliness, is a great blessing of God. If she find her Husband backward and untoward, cold and careless in good things, she will labor wisely to bring him on, and to conceive a liking of them, that before distasted with him. If she perceive him forward, she will endeavor to make him yet more forward. If she find a spark, she will strive to kindle the Coals, and make it flame out to the comfort of many other. If she see him waver and wax faint, she will never cease until she have strengthened and sustained him. If she find a good beginning, she will further it by a timely proceeding, and a conscionable persevering unto the end. It is a worthy saying set down by *Solomon: He that findeth a Wife, findeth a good thing: and receiveth favor of the Lord.* And in another place; *House and Riches are the inheritance of the Fathers, but a prudent Wife cometh of the Lord.* He is blessed of God that hath such a portion. She bringeth a blessing to his person, to his Children, to his Family, to the means of his maintenance, and to his whole estate. She will seek to better his estate (howsoever she find it) both with God and the world, in heavenly things, and in earthly. This reproveth such as destroy or hinder his estate, impoverish him, decay him, or undo him, whether by dainty and delicate fare, or by gay and gorgeous apparel, by costly and sumptuous furniture, by feasting or idleness, by carelessness and negligence, or by any vanity whatsoever. *A wise Woman* (saith the Wise man) *buildeth up her house, but the foolish destroyeth it with her own hand.* Secondly, it reproveth such Wives as are uncomfortable and vncheerefull, much more such as are bitter and reproachful to their

Husbands, such as *Micholl* was to *David*. Of such *Solomon* saith; *A foolish Son is the calamity of his Father, and the contentions of a Wife, are like a continual dropping:* Where he compareth the braulings and chidings of a Woman, to the cover of an house, which is so broken, that when it raineth, the Water droppeth in upon the Planckes and Walls, and rotteth the Timber of the house, so that in short time, it is very ruinous and ready to fall. So when Women are given to contention and brauling, they are the cause of great mischief and destruction to the whole family. Civil wars were always held among the Heathen most dangerous: but the iars that are at home, and made within the Walls of the house, are as noisome and grievous, and do threaten the ruin thereof. Every bitter word is as a shower of rain that falleth into the House. This maketh many Husbands ill husbands, and causeth them to delight anywhere, rather then where they should delight to be, and to desire any company, rather then to be with the Companion of his life, which he ought to desire. An house thus divided cannot stand long, albeit for a time it may continue.

Secondly, it serveth as a notable direction for godly Women, in regard of the honorable Name and Title of an helper given unto them, to teach them to watch all occasions, and wait all opportunities offered them to do good, and not to slack them. It is a great point of wisdom to take the occasion: and there is a fit time for every purpose under the Heavens. Hence it is, that the Apostle chargeth *everyone to abide in his calling*, when he speaketh of the Woman's winning of her Husband. And we have a notable example hereof in the behavior of *Abigail* toward *Nabal*, a wise woman, toward a churlish and drunken Husband, when she saw evil ready to come upon her and her Husband, and the whole Family, yet she told him nothing, neither more nor less until the morning arose, because he was drunken, and so had no reason to consider, or to conceive what she had done for their deliverance: but in the morning when he had slept out his drunkenness, and the wine was gone out of *Nabal*, then she told him, and set before him the wickedness of his heart, the purpose of *David*, the danger of death, and the working of the safety of the whole Family. It is a great profit and advantage to do a thing in season. On the other side, it is the note of unwise and wicked Women, to draw their Husbands to all wickedness and outrageousnesse, to further them in impiety and ungodliness, and consequently to hasten their own and their Husbands ruin and destruction. If there be any spark of godliness, they are as water to quench it in their Husbands. An example hereof we have in *Jezebel*, when *Ahab* longed after the Vine-yard of *Naboth*, and could not obtain it, so that he came to his house heavy and in displeasure: did she persuade the Kings heart to be content? Did she tell him he had enough, or move him to suffer *Naboth* to enjoy his possession in peace? No, as if he had not been of himself mad enough, she pricketh him forward; she saith unto him, *Dost thou manage the Kingdom of Israel? Art thou fit to be a King? I will give thee the Vineyard, up, eat Bread, and be of good cheer.* The like we see in the Wives of *Solomon*, that were Heathen, they turned away his heart from God, and provoked him to set up Idolatry. When *Mordecai* refused to bow down to *Haman*, and to give him the honor that was due to God, he was full of wrath, so that the glory of his Riches, the multitude of his children, the favor of the King, the greatness of his honor, the advancement of his Name, did nothing avail him, so long as he saw *Mordecai* the Jew sitting at the Kings Gate: Did his Wife persuade him to be patient? Did she show him, that favor is deceitful, that

wealth is uncertain, and that honor is as a blast of wind; yea, lighter then vanity it self? No, she moveth him to set up a tree of fifty cubits high, and to speak to the King that *Mordecai* might be hanged thereon. It is great means to goodness, to delight in good company. It is a great allurements to wickedness, to follow evil company. A day-companion is strong to draw men to all impiety: but the Night-companion is stronger, and prevaieth farther, and oftentimes bringeth to the hight of all iniquity.

Lastly, as the consideration of the Name being made to be Helpers, putteth Wives in mind of their duty: so it teacheth all men two things. First, they must remember, that it standeth everyone upon, to have a care in his choice and match, to get such as may brook their Names, and be indeed Helpers, and not hinderers unto them. It is the greatest calling that we can enter into, and a band never to be broken. Therein standeth the comfort or discomfort of our whole life. It is our duty to be careful to marry in the Lord, that Christ may be bidden as one of our Gueste, and not shut out of our meetings. It is a profane marriage where he is not entertained, and we can look for no blessing to come upon such assemblies. The Apostle teaching, *That the Wife is bound by the Law, as long as her Husband liveth, and that her Husband being dead, she is at liberty to marry with whom she will, he addeth, only in the Lord.* The same Apostle chargeth us, *Not to be unequally yoked with the unbelievers, because there can be no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness, no communion between light and darkness, no concord between Christ and Belial.* Such unequal marriages between the Sons of God, and the Daughters of men, brought an universal flood upon the Earth. How greatly God detesteth this, the Prophet *Malachi* declareth. *Cha. 2. 11. Judah hath transgressed, and an abomination is committed in Israel, and in Jerusalem, for Judah hath defiled the holiness of the Lord which he loved, and hath married the Daughter of a strange God.* This condemneth such matches as are sought out for beauty, for riches, for honors, but no mention made of godliness, or of Religion. The chiefest things to be respected, are not wealth, and such outward things, of the world, for a man may be advanced in his estate this way, and yet in the end be cast down to hell.

Secondly, such as have received by the blessing of God, such helpers and comforts of their life, must learn to love, and delight in such wives, as in those companions that God hath sent them. This doth *Solomon* teach, *Rejoice with the Wife of thy youth, let her be as the loving Hind, and the pleasant Roe, let her breasts satisfy thee at all times, for why shouldst thou delight, my Son, in a strange Woman, or embrace the bosom of a Stranger? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondreth all his paths.* Where he teacheth, that the delight that the married folk ought to take one in another, is a notable preservative to keep them from uncleanness. They must confess, that it is God that hath knit them together in such wise, that the one should not desire to be separated from the other. The Apostle writing to the *Ephesians*, willeth *Husbands to love their Wives, as Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it:* and showeth, that men ought so to love their Wives as their own bodies; *So that he which loveth his Wife, loveth himself, for no Man ever yet hated his own Flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord doth the Church.*

[And to *Archippus* our Fellow-Soldier, &c.]

Hitherto of the two first persons, to whom the Epistle is sent; to wit, *Philemon* and *Apphia*, the Husband and the Wife. Now followeth the third person, who was the Pastor of the Church, described by his proper Name, *Archippus*: and by his Office, a Fellow-Soldier. True it is, all Christians in this life are Warriours, and fight the battles of God, against sin, the world, and the Devil: and so may be called Fellow-Soldiers, in as much as they are members of the Militant Church: yet the Ministers of God are in a peculiar and special manner, so called, because they are as it were the Captains & Standart-bearers to go before others, and to order the battle. This Title to be called a Soldier, is a borrowed speech, (for their Weapons are not carnal) and importeth great labor and much trouble, it signifieth the necessity of the calling, and pointeth out the danger and opposition that is made against it. The Doctrine from hence is this, that the calling of a Minister is painful, most needful, and a troublesome calling, resisted and opposed against by Satan and wicked men. When Christ saw the people scattered abroad and dispersed, as Sheep without a Shepherd, he had compassion upon them, and said to his Disciples; *The Harvest indeed is great, but the Laborers are few, pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest, to thrust forth Laborers into his Harvest.* Where we see, he calleth the Ministers of the Gospel Laborers in the Harvest-field, and gatherers of the Lord's Corn. We see what great pains men take in Harvest, and how necessary Laborers are, when the Corn is ripe and ready to be reaped. The Apostle *Paul* speaking of himself, and the rest of the Apostles saith; *We together are God's Laborers.* And in another place; *The Elders that rule well, is worthy of double honor, specially they which labor in the word and doctrine.* Heerevnto agreeth that which he writeth in another Epistle: *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a work-man that needeth not to be ashamed, dividing the word of truth aright.* All these testimonies teach us this truth, that the office of the Ministry is not so much a dignity, as it implieth a duty; it is not only an honor, but a burden; it is not only a Title of renown, but a work of labor.

This will better appear, if we mark the Reasons following. First, the ordinance of God appointeth, that every calling should eat their Bread in the sweat of their brows; that is, should be industrious and painful in their several vocations, whether it be in bodily or in spiritual labor. The bodily calling, requireth bodily labor: the spiritual calling, requireth spiritual labor. Idleness and negligence in any work of the Lord is accursed. An idle hearer, that joineth not practice, is abominable: a loose and careless professor, that addeth not obedience, is a bad professor.

Secondly, the Ministers of God fight the Lord's spiritual battles for us, by their prayers, care, watchfulness, faith, and the whole Armor of God: by opposing and setting themselves against Heritiques, Atheists, Worldlings, Schismatics, Wicked men, and all things that exalt themselves against God. Is not this a great work, of great labor, to resist the budding and growing of so many sins as daily rise up, as men that strive with the whole Earth? To labor, in study, in word, in doctrine, in zeal, in watching? According to that which the Apostle saith; *I was often in weariness, and painfulness, in watching often: besides the things which are outward, I am combred daily, and have the care of all the Churches: who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* How did *Moses* fight in prayer, and labor in zeal for the people of Israel, when he stood in the gap and stopped the wrath of God that was kindled against them? If then we would reason from the general to the special, waying the purpose and

appointment of God, who hath annexed labor to every calling, or consider that the Ministers of the word are the Soldiers of God, to fight his battles against sin and sinful men; in both respects we may conclude, that the calling of the ministry, is an office of great necessity, and of much labor.

This doctrine teacheth us, and offereth unto us diverse Uses. First, let us learn to acknowledge the work of the Ministry, to be a work of great diligence, painfulness, and labor, if it be performed as it ought to be. We must keep back nothing from the people, but show unto them the whole counsel of God. We must lay the Foundation of Religion among them, and build constantly upon it, which cannot be done without faithfulness. If we take heed to our selves, and to all the flock, whereof the holy Ghost hath made us Ouer-seers to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood, we shall find our function to be full of labor and sweating, to receive much evil entreating, and hard entertainment here in this World. The Apostle teaching the duty of the hearers toward their Ministers, saith; *Let a man so think of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and disposers of the secrets of God: and as for the the rest, it is required of the Disposers, that every Man be found faithful.* So he teacheth in another place: *This is a true saying, If any Man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a worthy work.* Where he showeth indeed, that the calling is a worthy calling, but it requireth also worthy laboring. This will farther appear unto us, if we consider the Titles that are given unto them. They are called Builders, that are continually busy in building, hewing tough Timber, and squaring rough stones. No Timber, no Stones of themselves so unfit for building, as we are by Nature to be coupled together, and to grow unto an holy Temple in the Lord. They are called Soldiers, they are always fighting or looking for their enemies, and drawing out the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Is any calling under Heaven more necessary, then the profession of a Soldier in time of danger? And when an assault is made, or the battles join, is any profession more painful? Sometimes they are called Husband-men. Is not the life of the Husbandman a painful life, and is not the ending of one work the beginning of another? Doth not every season of the year bring his several travel? So that no calling is accompanied with more labor and less ease. Sometimes they are called Watch-men, who stand continually on their watch Tower, to discry the coming and approaching of the Enemy. Sometimes they are called Shepherds, abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock; they are in the day consumed with heat, and with Frost in the night, and their sleep departeth from their eyes. Seeing therefore the Ministers aie builders of the Lord's house, Soldiers in the Lord's Campe, Husbandmen in the Lord's field, Watch-men in the Lord's Citty, and Shepheardes over the Lord's flock, which he hath redeemed with his precious blood; we must all confess, that the Ministry of the word is a work of great labor, if it be discharged aright. For this, if we know not by practice, we may see by experience, that to study with constantnesse, to meditate with earnesse, to instruct with diligence, to exhort with carefulnesse, to reprove with zeal, to comfort with cheerfulness, to convince with boldness, to watch over the people with a godly over-sight, as they that must give accounts for their Souls, to conceive godly anger and great sorrow for sin, to pray in public and private, to go in and out before the people of God in the doctrine of Faith, and in example of life, to prepare themselves to handle the word, and to deliver it

with power and evidence of the spirit, with earnest affections, being thus prepared; I say to perform all these duties, doth more consume the inward parts, wast the body, impair nature, decay strength, spend the vital Spirits, and cause them to be subject to sundry infirmities, sicknesses, and diseases, then any the strongest labor that is used among men. For this we may observe, that the labors of the body (though they be great) maintain strength, preserve the stomach, increase the appetite, and add vigor to every part: but it is far otherwise in the labors of the mind, they weaken the natural powers, they wast the vital Spirits, and they decay the health of the body. Hence it is, that the Apostle giveth this precept to *Timothy*, a Minister of the Gospel; *Drink no longer Water, but use a little Wine for thy stomachs sake, and thine often infirmities*: declaring thereby, that it often falleth out, that the Ministers of the Gospel wick take pains in their callings, are feeble in body, weak in strength, sparing in diet, and subject to diseases.

Secondly, seeing the calling of a Minister requireth pains and labor, it reproveth those that be Idol Shepherds, dumb Dogs, evil Beasts, slow bellies; not laborers, but loiterers; not workmen, but sleepers: which make not the calling painful, but gainful. How many are there that enter into this weighty and worthy calling for their own ease, and to follow idleness and pleasure? How many, to enrich themselves, and to gather wealth? The Prophet *Isaiah* complaineth greatly of such in his time. Chap. 56. 10. *Their Watchmen are all blind, they have no knowledge, they are all dumb Dogs, they cannot bark: they lie and sleep, and delight in sleeping*. Let all such consider the greatness and height of their excellent calling, and remember the honorable Titles whereby they are called, that so they may be put in mind of their duties. Let them be diligent (according to the counsel of *Solomon*) *To know the State of their flock, and take heed to the herds: for Riches remain not always, nor the Crown from generation to generation*. And howsoever many that possess the places, occupy the rooms, and usurp the Titles of Pastors, do glory in their calling, and account themselves sent of God: yet so long as they loiter in the Lord's Harvest, and will take no pains to win Souls to God, they are but Idols, *They have eyes and see not, they have a mouth and speak not, neither make they a sound with their throat, they that make them are like unto them, so are all that trust in them*. True it is, they can say somewhat for themselves, and can allege sundry reasons to maintain their ease and idleness; *And the sluggard is wiser in his own conceit, then seven men that can render a reason*: as appeareth in the example of the slothful Servant, who did hide his Masters Talent: notwithstanding, if the diligence in their calling, be not answerable to the dignity of their office, they shall have the reward of sluggards, they shall have the Talent and gifts which they have received, taken from them, and the blood of those that perish through their negligence, shall be required at their hands.

Again, it condemneth and convinceth the senseless opinion of vain and unthankful men, that cry out against the Ministers in every place, accounting their calling easy, and themselves idle, as living by the sweat of other men's brows, and receiving their means and maintenance without any manner of pains. Albeit, this objection be indeed idle, and deserve no answer, and that it is in vain to reason with the belly, that hath no ears to hear, nor heart to conceive; and albeit I stand in a slippery place, because I should be censured to speak rather for our selves, then for others, and to respect more our own gain, then the good of

others: yet somewhat must be said to this foolish and peevish conceit. Indeed, I acknowledge freely, some are unprofitable drones, that do not gather, but eat the Honny: and some idle Shepherds that fleefe the sheep, but feed not the Flock: these I confess have their living come in easily, who indeed deserve no living, and because they will not labor, they should not eat; and woe be to them if in time they repent not. But these men that object as before, do exclaim and cry out, not against the abuses of the office, or the slothfulness and negligence of men, but against the calling it sefe, contrary to the saying of Christ, who teacheth, that the *Labourer is worthy of his hire, and the workman of his meat*: and opposing themselves against the ordinance of God, who hath appointed the Ministry to be maintained: for as they that *Ministred at the Altar, did live of the Altar: so God hath ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel*. As these men are ignorant of this high ordinance of God, so they seem not to know themselves. They are so blind, so brutish and blockish, that they know not by any experience from themselves, that men have souls, and that there is an immediate soul-labor, far greater then bodily labor, and likewise a soul-suffering (which they shall one day feel, if they repent not) many ways exceeding and surpassing bodily suffering, or any torment that befalls the body. Remember with me, and consider a little, (though it be in an higher degree) the sorrow of the Soul that was upon Christ in the Garden, without any the least touch and visitation of the body, whether it were painful and laboursome or not, *When it so heated and crushed him, that it caused him to sweat drops of blood, that trickled down to the ground*. Many diseases of the body are very painful and hard to be borne; but the grief, and anguish, and horror of the soul, is a thousand times more painful, according to that which *Solomon* speaketh in the Proverbs, Chap. 18. *The spirit of a Man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear it?* Furthermore, there is persecution of the Soul, as well as a persecution of the body; and these two are distinguished, and differing one from the other. For when Tyrants persecute the Church, and rage with fury against the Saints, their faith is not shaken, but Religion then flourisheth most of all, as we see when *Israel* was in *Egypt*. The greatest slavery and slaughter, is, when men's souls are corrupted with false doctrine. Lastly, is the calling of a Prince, of a Counselor, of a Noble-man, an idle calling, because they use not bodily labor? This is, as if a man should say, that the Governor of the Ship doth nothing in sailing, because while some climb the Masts, other walk upon the Hatches, he sitteth quiet and holdeth the Sterne: he doth not indeed as they do, but he doth far greater and better things. The Church and Common-wealth are not unfitly compared to a man's body, which consist of many partes, all needful and necessary, yet all have not the same uses and functions. If the members of a man's body should rise and rebel against the belly, if the feet should plead, that they only bear up the weight of the whole body, if the hands should affirm, that they labor painfully, earn their living, and bring many other commodities: if the shoulders should say, that they bear all burdens: or the head, that it seeth and heareth: the mouth, that it speaketh: and then if all jointly should turn themselves to the belly, and accuse it to be without profit, to remain in the midst of the body, without doing anything, and sustain no labor to the maintenance of the rest of the partes: were not this a foolish conceit of reasoning, and would not this tend to the ruin of the whole body? In the body political, if the people that dig and delue, should complain and conspire against the Prince and Nobles, (who labor by care, rule by authority, foresee by wisdom, and manage by

government) because they work not with their hands, would not this draw with it the destruction of the Common-wealth? So is it in the Church, and in the offices of the Church. As the people labor by working, so do the Ministers in studying and preaching. All have not one office, all have not one use. Therefore the Apostle saith; *The body is not one member, but many: if the foot should say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? And if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God disposed the members, everyone of them in the body at his own pleasure: for if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are there many members, yet but one body: and the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor the head again to the feet, I have no need of you.* Whereby we see, that the body consisteth of many members, all have their necessary use for the preservation of the whole, and yet all have not one and the same function. So then, they despise the Ministers of the Gospel, and so account the Ministry of the word needless and unprofitable, because they work not with their hands, and not labor with bodily labor; are as mad and monstrous, as they that would have all the body to be an hand; no mouth, no head, no foot. For albeit, the Teachers of the Church be not the hands of the body, to handle the Carpenters Axe, or the Shepherds Crooke, or the Husbandmans Plough, or the saw of the Sawyer: yet he is as the eye of the body, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death: as the mouth of the body to speak to God, and to pour out supplications before him for the people: yea, he is also as the belly, for as the belly which receiveth all meats that nourish man's body, doth send them back again with advantage, to the nourishment of the whole body: so the Minister receiving maintenance from the Church, doth feed them again, and nourisheth them with the bread of life to the salvation of their souls. He receiveth temporal things, but he soweth unto them spiritual things. The Apostle saith; *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own cost? Who planteth a Vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a Flock, and eateth not of the Milk of the flock?* The Soldier liveth by the receiving of his wages; the Husbandman, by the fruits of his labors; the Shepherd, by the increase of his flock: and therefore it must not seem strange unto us, that the Lord's Soldiers should enjoy their pay, and that his Workemen should have their hire.

Lastly, seeing the calling of the Pastor set over the people, is painful, it offereth good considerations and profitable Meditations, both to the Pastors, and to the people. Touching the Ministers, it serveth as a good admonition to such as purpose and intend to enter into this great calling of the Ministry, that they do it wisely and warily, that they run not before they be sent, that they enter at the Door, and climb not in at the Windowe, that they consider what provision, and store of new and old they have, to go through the work. Such as mean to build, do first make great provision and preparation. The Kings of the Nations, and Princes of the Earth, with great advise and consultation, do proclaim wars. The Ministry is a going to Warfare, it is a building of God's House; and therefore it is to be enterprized not rashly, but advisedly: not meanly stored, but plentifully furnished with all manner of provision fit for the Lord's work. Again, being the Soldiers of Christ, and the leaders of his people, they must seek to please, not men, but their Captain that hath chosen and called

them, they must take heed they do not entangle and snare themselves in worldly matters, and so hinder their work in hand, whereby they are made unfit to serve God and his Church. The order and discipline of the Wars is such, that so soon as the Soldier hath enrolled and given his name to his Captain, he leaveth his house and other affairs, which might with-draw his mind, and mindeth nothing but the battle. So ought we to be wholly loosed, and throughlie freed from the impediments and incumbrances of this Worlde, that Christ may have our service in this warfare. This is that use which the Apostle maketh of this Doctrine. 2. Tim. 2. Thou therefore suffer affliction, as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ; *No Man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, because he would please him that hath chosen him to be a Soldier.* Touching the people, they must know, that when God sendeth such Laborers among them, they must be esteemed and accounted as the greatest defense and preservation of a Citty and Kingdom. This is confessed by *Joash the King of Israel* (when *Elisha* fell sick of his sickness, whereof he died) *O my Father, my Father, the Charet of Israel, and the Horsemen of the same.* The prayer of *Moses*, prevailed more then the Sword of *Joshua*, and all the furniture of war against the *Amalekites*. The Apostle writing to the *Hebrews*, exhorteth thē *To obey them that have the over-sight of them, and to submit themselves, because they watch for their souls as they that must give accounts, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for them.* Secondly, it teacheth them to account them worthy of their hire and wages, & to esteem them worthy of double honor. It is a grievous and a crying sin, to keep back the laborers wages, to diminish it, to grudge at it, and to take it to themselves, and it calleth for vengeance, & entereth into the ears of the Lord of hosts. The Ministers are the Lord's laborers and workmen, hired to labor in this Vineyard, to sow, to plant, to water, to prune, to dig, & he hath appointed to them their portion for their maintenance: if this therefore be detained from them by In-justice, it crieth unto God, and bringeth oftentimes his curse upon us, both in spiritual and temporal things. In spiritual things, because he dealeth with us in heavenly things, as we deal with his Ministers in earthly things. If we detain from them their maintenance, he will detain from us his blessing. If we be sparing in giving them their hire, he also will be sparing in bestowing upon them his graces. As we sow, so we shall reap. In temporal things, because God promiseth a blessing to such as pay the Lord his due, and threateneth to curse them that spoil him in his Tithes and offerings. This we see in the Prophet *Malachi*, where God complaineth of their spoiling and defrauding of him, he saith; *Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have spoiled me, even this whole Nation: bring ye all the tithes into the Store-house, that there may be meat in mine House, and prove me now here with,* saith the Lord of Hosts, *if I will not open the Windowes of Heaven unto you, and pour you out a blessing without measure.* If then we desire the blessings of God to come upon us in spiritual graces, or in earthly things, we ought not to with-hold the Laborers wages, that plough up our fallow grounds, and Till our barren hearts. It is a worthy exhortation, which the Apostle giveth to the Church of the *Thessalonians*, touching their Ministers, *We beseech you Brethren, that ye acknowledge them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, that ye have them in singular love for their works sake.* For seeing the true Pastors of Christ bestow their labor among us, and consume themselves as the Candle, to give light to others, we ought to show the bowels of love and compassion toward them, we ought not to be wanting unto them in the fruits of our love.

[*And to the Church that is in thine House, &c.*]

Hitherto we have handled the third person written to; namely, *Archippus*, together with the description of him to be a Soldier of Christ, and a Fellowe-Soldier with the Apostle: Now, we are to proceed to the fourth and last which yet remaineth, which is a joining of many persons together, for he addeth to the former, *The Church which is in thine House*. He adorneth the Household and Family of *Philemon*, with the Honorable and renowned Title of a Church. This serveth to commend as well *Philemon* the Master, who had instructed his Family in the Doctrine of godliness, as also the Household it self, which had been taught and trained up by him.

We see here a private House is called a Church. For seeing where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, he is there in the midst of them: every assembly or meeting of the Saints, is called not unfitly by that Name. *Philemon* to his perpetual commendation, had by his care and industry, made of his house a little Church, instructing, guiding, governing, framing, and ordering them in the knowledge and fear of God. We learn from hence, that all Householders ought to prepare, instruct, and order their Families in the knowledge of God, and obedience of godliness, that the house of the Master may be the Church of God. And that it is the duty of all such as have the government and oversight of others to see thē taught and instructed in the ways of God, it appeareth by many precepts and examples set forth unto us in the Scriptures. This is it which *Moses* gave in charge to the *Israelites*, *Ye shall lay up these my words in your harts, and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as a frontlet between your eyes, And ye shall teach them your Children, speaking of them, when thou fittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.* So the Prophet speaking of the great works of God, wrought for the safety of his people, & the overthrow of their enemies, declareth, *How he established a testimony in Jacob, and ordained a Law in Israel, which he commanded our Fathers, that they should teach their Children, that the posterity might know it, and the Children which should be borne, should stand up and declare it to their Children, that they might set their hope on God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his Commandments.* This it is which *Solomon* speaketh. Prover. 22. 6. *Teach a child in the Trade of his way, and when he is old he shall not depart from it.* Hereunto also agreeth the saying of the Apostle; *Ye Fathers, provoke not your Children to wrath, but bring them up in instruction and information of the Lord.* Now, as we have seen sundry precepts, pressing us to the performance of this duty, so we have many examples of the godly, that have put it in practice, and gone before us in their obedience. *Abraham* the Father of the faithful, is commended of God, for his care and conscience this way. Gene. 18. 19. where he saith: *I know him that he will command his Sons, and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and judgment.* *Job* is reported to have sanctified his Children, when the days of their banqueting were gone about, *He rose up early in the Morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all.* *Cornelius*, a Captain of the *Italian band*, feared God with all his Household. The Parents of *Timothy*, his Grand-mother and Mother, brought him up in the knowledge of the Scriptures of a Child, *Which are able to make us wife unto salvation through the Faith which is in Christ Jesus.* To these precepts and example before remembered, we might add diverse other out of the Book of God, to teach us, that to whom

soever GOD hath vouchsafed this grace, and given this honor to make him a Father of Children, a Mayster over Seruaunts, a Governor over an Houshold; he requireth with all this duty, and therefore layeth it as a burden upon his Shoulders, to teach, to exhort, to admonish, to reprove, and to instruct all those that are under his charge and jurisdiction.

The Reasons enforcing this Doctrine, are many in number, strong in value, and manifest in the view of all that will rightly consider of them. For first, all Christians are generally charged to exhort and admonish one another, as we see. 1. Thess. 5. 11. Heb. 3. 13. 14. Levite. 19. 17. So then, unless the rulers of Families will exempt themselves out of the number of Christians, they cannot shake off this yoke, but they are bound to edify and exhort daily their Families, least their harts be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. If then we be bound generally to admonish one another, even those to whom we are less bound, much more are we to do it to such, as we are tied unto by a double band, and a nearer conjunction.

Secondly, every Mans house is his private charge, which he must over-see, it is as his Flock which he must attend, it is as his City, over which he must watch: and thereby fit them for the hearing of the public Ministry of the word; and therefore must answer for their negligence. This we see in the example of *Eli*. 1. Sam. 2. 29. He is charged with the sins of his Children which they had committed, and to have honored them above the Lord. This is a grievous fault, and an horrible offense, to set yp our Sons instead of God, and to make more account of them then we do of the most high. Hence it is that *Solomon* saith; *Be diligent to know the State of thy Flock, and take heed to the Heard*s. Such as are Shepherds, over the Sheep of the Pasture which are unreasonable, ought to care & provide for them: much more ought such to be diligent and watchful, as have the people of God committed unto them, and have a charge to look to his sheep which are endued with reason, whose Souls are immortal, who bear the Image of God upon them, and for whom Christ Jesus shed his most pure and precious blood. Every man hath some charge or other, greater or lesser, in the Church, in the Common-wealth, or in the family: and everyone must be diligent to know the estate of this charge, laboring earnestly to discharge it. And if we will make conscience of our duty, we shall find the least flock enough for our feeding, the least field sufficient for our tilling, the least house great enough for our teaching and ordering.

Thirdly, we may be drawn to the discharging of this duty, if we consider the profit and benefits that arise from hence. First, it will be a means to make them more carefully to learn to know the will of God, when they consider it shall be required of them, and an account taken how they hear. Secondly, it will cause them to retain in mind and memory the better, the Lessons which they have learned, when they have whetted them upon their Families. Thirdly, God will increase his gifts and graces that are in them already, he will bless them with a new supply, for to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance. Fourthly, it will breed and begin great obedience and dutifulness in all the degrees of their Families; first to God, then to themselves; and afterward to others, to the preventing of a thousand household griefs and troubles, that arise for want thereof. This obedience is a thing which all Fathers and Masters greatly desire. Everyone desireth to have dutiful Children and faithful Servants: this is the way and course to be taken, that we may attain

unto it. So when such as have been instructed and nurtered by us, shall go abroad into other families of their own, and grow to have houses themselves, as they have been instructed, so will they instruct their Servants, and deal toward them as they have been dealt withal themselves. Lastly, the public ministry is made more fruitful unto them, in that the seed sown in their harts is watered, and thereby made to spring up. And this is found true by daily experience in our assemblies, that let the Minister teach never so diligently in his charge, unless there be a seconding and furthering of his labors, in several families at home, all the doctrine delivered and heard, is trodden under foot, choked, and forgotten.

Fourthly, innumerable are the evils, and manifold are the mischiefs that come of the neglecting of this duty. First, it is the Mother of all the ignorance and gross blindness, that ouerfloweth and overthroweth the Church. For from what cause cometh ignorance, but from the want of teaching, as darkness proceedeth from the want of light? Secondly, it causeth the Lessons and instructions taught on the day of the public assembly, to be forgotten of Master and Man, of Mother and Daughter, of Father and Child, before the next day. Often teaching and much repeating, make a diligent Master, and a profitable Scholar. Thirdly, from hence come all domestical braules, contentions, stubbornness, and disobedience, that the House is divided against it self, which would be remedied and prevented by this means. Lastly, the neglect of this duty, bringeth God's judgments upon the whole Family. So then, whether we consider the common duty of exhorting that lieth upon all, or that the private house is a private Church, or that the benefits are many where this duty is practiced, & the evils many that grow where it is neglected: in all these respects we see, that it is a special duty required of all governors, to labor, to plant, and to sow the Seedes of true Religion in the heart, as it were in the ground of those that are committed unto them.

Before we come to the uses of this Doctrine, certain Objections are to be removed, whereby many stumble and fall down. The Sluggard pretendeth there is a Lyon in the way, and feareth danger when there is none. So soon as *Adam* had sinned, by and by he sought Fig leaves to cover his shame. Many are the devises of men, daubing with untempered Morter, to excuse their neglect or contempt of this duty. Some say, they are ashamed to pray, to read, to teach in their families and households, and to call them together for such ends. They are ashamed of it, because it is good, because it is commanded: but they are not ashamed of committing open sins in open places. They shrink back when any good duty is to be performed: but they blush not with brazen faces and Iron fore-heads, to break out into all profaneness. Let these take heed least Christ be ashamed of them when he cometh into his kingdom. If we be ready to confess him, and to profess his truth, he will acknowledge us before his Father which is in Heaven. Some say, it is a note of hypocrisy to perform these duties, and condemn them as Hypocrites that teach their Families. These are evil Servants, that out of their own mouths may be judged. Let them pray to have their stony hearts taken away, and new hearts given unto them; *For if their hollow and hypocritical hearts do condemn them, God is greater then their harts, and knoweth all things.* And let them take heed, they sit not in judgment upon others, least with the same measure that they mete, it be measured to them again. Let them judge nothing before the time, but reserve judgment to the Judge of the whole world.

Others say, it will let and hinder their Servants work, we must have so much praying, that we shall have little working. These men can alot and allow no time for the Lord, but think every hour lost that is not spent in business of the World, and affairs of this life. These are like to profane *Saul*, who when the *Philistines* pressed toward him, and he was to ask counsel of the Lord; *He commanded the Priest to with-draw his hand*; that is, he said unto him, the season serveth not to seek unto GOD, we cannot spend the time in calling upon him, let us go unto the battle and fight against our Enemies. These men are like to wretched *Pharaoh*, when *Moses* called upon him to let the people go into the Wilderness to serve and sacrifice to the Lord, he is charged to make them idle, and to cause them to surcease from their works. These men are like to covetous *Judas*, who when *Mary* anointed Christ's feet, complained of the wast, and said; *Why was not this Ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor*. Wherefore our Savior answereth such, in his reply to *Martha*, who was much troubled and cumbered about much serving, *One thing is needful, Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her*. Nay, to be instructed in true Religion, and to set out a time for calling upon the Name of God, is so far from hindering our Servants work, that it shall further it, and give a blessing unto it.

We are commanded to meditate in the Law of the Lord day and night, that so we may make our way prosperous, and have good success in the works of our hands. And the Prophet teacheth, *That except the Lord build the House, and watch the City, the labor of the Builder, and of the Watch-man, is in vain*. Others say, they shall be mocked, taunted, and scorned by the World, they shall be termed *Precisians*, they shall be called Puritans. But we must not seek to please men by running into the displeasure of God. For oftentimes it falleth out, through the just judgment of God, that whilst we hunt after the pleasure and favor of men, against God, we have the favor neither of God nor Men. The Apostle saith of himself, writing to the *Galatians* *If I should yet please Men, I were not the Servant of Christ*. It was the lot of Christ, it hath been the portion of all true Christians, to be scourged by the viperous and venomous tongues of ungodly men, that care not for God, nor regard any Religion. We are faint Soldiers, not worthy to bear the Name of Christ, if we fly out of the field for every idle word, and taunt of the tongue cast out against us. We must prepare our selves against greater encounters, and arm our selves against words and Swords, we must buckle both with the Devil and with Deuilish men, hand to hand, except we will yield him both our bodies and Souls to our destruction. Some say, they cannot bring the unlearned to knowledge, and that youth are stubborn, they will be youth still, and we were once youths, & they should hardly keep any Servants, if they should strictly tie them to this order; nay they should fly the Parish rather than bear this yoke. I answer, first, let us remember, that GOD giveth the knowledge of his Mysteries, even to the simple and lowly minded that fear him. Secondly, consider, that young men are commanded to *remember their Creator in the days of their youth, and shall give an account of all things unto God*. As for their stubbornness, the word of God is the best remedy to bend them, and make them pliable unto all goodness: so that the Prophet saith; *Wherewith shall a young Man redress his way? In taking heed thereto according to thy word*. But if they be so stiffly and stubbornly minded, that they will not be reclaimed and reformed, their room is better than their company. If admonitions will not win them, they

are to be avoided: thy house is better without them, then with them. Neither are we to fear their flying away, and departing to another place: for if this course of instruction were taken in hand everywhere, the Objection were answered, and their mouths stopped. For whether would they go to escape this training up in the principles of Religion? It is certain they could turn themselves no whither, but it would meet with them in all places. Others object, our Fathers did well enough without observing any such order; I trow you will not condemn them. Why should we make ourselves wiser then they? They troubled not themselves or their Children with learning of Catechisms: and we see men do well enough prosper in the World, yet busy not their heads about this. I answer, if they mean those forefathers and Ancestors, whose steps we should follow, as *Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joshua, David*, and diverse others, which were indeed our Fathers, then we may be assured out of the word of truth, that these busied and bestirred themselves this way: they taught their Children, they instructed their families, they reformed disorders, they removed the disordered. If they mean our forefathers that lived in latter times, when darkness covered the earth, no marvel if they were not urged, thereunto themselves, or that they urged not others, for then they lived at the diet of the Prelates, and nothing pleased the Prelates better then the ignorance of the people, they were the blind Leaders of the blind, they could neither enter into the Kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffer those that would enter. Notwithstanding, we will not meddle with condemning our forefathers, neither will we justify them, both these belong unto God; and therefore are not to be usurped by any man. We must judge the best of them, according to the rule of Charity, *Which hopeth all things, and believeth all things*. We know God reserved to himself 7000. in Israel, in the days of *Ahab*, that never bowed the knee to *Baal*: and he hath a few names yet in *Sardis*, which have not defiled their garments, which shall walk with him in white, for they are worthy. We may say with the Apostle of them; *The time of this ignorance God regardeth not, but now he admonisheth all men everywhere to repent*. We are not therefore to look what they have done, but consider what by the word they should have done, and what by the same we ought to do. And touching the thriving and prospering of them that neglect this duty: this is an Objection fitter for Atheists, then Christians to use. Christ hath taught us, that this is no rule to measure good or evil: he showeth, *That the Father maketh his Sun to shine, and his rain to fall upon the just and unjust, upon the godly and the ungodly*. The Wiseman hath taught, that by outward things we cannot understand, whether we be loved or hated of God. We see the wicked for the most part prosper more in the World in worldly things, then the godly, as we read *Psal. 73. 3, 4, 5. and Job 21. 8. 9.*

Lastly, it is objected, that some which have been diligently and duly taught, do yet live as leudly and profanely, as they that never knew anything of God. I answer, it may be this is thy wrong and rash judgment. The world speaketh evil of those that will not follow them into all excess of riot. But let us grant it to be so: yet herein they play the wrangling Sophisters and Cauillers, alleging a false cause for a true. For I am sure, this course of learning is not the cause of the looseness of their living. If grace had been in their hearts, it would be a means to make them believe and live better. He that knoweth his Masters will, is more likely to perform it, then he that knoweth it not, nor careth for the knowing of it. He that hath his eye-sight, is more likely to walk without stumbling and falling, then he that is blind: so he

that is instructed in the ways of godliness, hath better means to walk in the fear of God, then he that is ignorant and knoweth nothing. True it is, some that know their Masters will do it not: some that have their eyes open, fall down now and then: yet none can be so void of reason to conclude from hence, that it is not necessary to know his will, or to open our eyes. Thus much for the removing of the objections, and the scattering of those Mists and Clouds that stood before us.

Now let us come to the Uses of this Doctrine. First, seeing it belongeth to the Masters and Governors of Families, to instruct them in godliness, we gather, that it is not enough for them to provide for the bodies of such as are under them, and belong unto them in this life, but they must care most especially for their souls and bodies in the life to come. They then are greatly deceived, who when they have given them meat and Money, think themselves sufficiently discharged. If we only feed them and fill them to the full, what do we more to them then to our brute Beasts? If we only clothe them and pay them their wages, what do we more to them then the Turks and Infidels that fear not God, that know not God, do perform to their Children and Servants? If we think our selves discharged by providing for them, and leaving unto them a temporal patrimony and possession, and never regard to make them heirs and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven, what do we more then the Jews or Gentiles, that are ignorant of Christ and his Gospel? What should it avail us or them, to leave them rich in the World, and poor in God? To lay up for them treasures on earth, and to neglect the treasures of Heaven, which are the true and enduring substance? True it is, Fathers and Mothers are bound concerning this bodily life, to make honest provision for the sustenance of their Children; and therefore all unthrifty Dicers and Drunkards which wast and wash away their goods (whose Children may well be accounted fatherless, and their Wives as Widdowes) have no spark or portion of natural Fathers in them: nevertheless, they are charged, not only to bring them up in the World, but to prepare them for the World to come. It is a vain and foolish imagination to dream that we have done our part, or discharged a Fathers and a Mothers duty, when we have nourished, appartelled, and brought up our Children, whereas we have a far greater account to make before God for their souls. They are also greatly deceived, who if they send them to the Church on the Sabbath day, and bring them to the place of God's worship, they think they have answered the charge required of them. These men post over all their duty to the Minister, and lay the burden (to ease themselves) upon his shoulders. They care not, they spare not to lay load upon another's back, that they may not bear it, or touch it with their little finger. But God cannot thus be mocked or deluded, or defrauded, who commanded that themselves should rehearse his Laws and Commandments to their Children and Housholds.

Indeed, it is a commendable duty to see that they serve God, and to accompany them unto the house of God; but this is only half (if half) our duty, or rather to do our duty to halves; we must both provide that they may be taught, and also teach them our selves: when the Minister hath planted, we must water: when he hath preached, we must see how they profit, and by all means assist him in the work of the Lord. They are also greatly deceived, who take themselves to be discharged of their duty, when they have taught them to say the ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed, or the Articles of Faith, because they say

they have done what they can, and are able to perform no more. If they can do no more, it is a shame for them that they will be Fathers, before they can do that which is the duty of fathers. It is one thing to teach them to say them; another to understand them. It is not enough for us to help them to speak the words, unless we labor to make them conceive the meaning of the words. The Commandments of the Law, and the petitions of the Lord's Prayer stand not in the bare words, but in the true meaning. Let them know therefore, that they must render a greater account then of teaching them to utter and pronounce the words, they must cause them to understand them, they must sow the Seedes of Christian Religion in their hearts, they must instruct them with all diligence, they must exhort them with all earnestness; they must charge them to fear God, and to walk in his ways: that so their children may be made God's Children, and so give them to him again, of whom, and by whose blessing, at the first they received them.

Secondly, seeing all Householders must teach their families, it is their duty first of all to reform themselves, that so their people may be reformed. They that are the chief in the Family, must look unto themselves, and go in and out before them by good example, that so they may the better look unto those that are under them. It is a Testimony of our great love toward them, and an earnest desire to win them to the truth, and to embrace true godliness, when we seek to save their souls. He that loveth the soul, loveth truly: for the foul is the principal part of man. They therefore that are careless in training up their children in religion, cannot assure themselves that they bear any true love unto them. Let them show never so much comfort & compassion to their bodies, yet all their mercies are cruel, so long as they neglect the chiefest care that ought to be in them toward their souls. We may judge thē to be more inhumaine and unnatural, even more then savage beasts, who not only by neglect of teaching their Children the fear of the Lord, but by corrupt example of living do lead them into evil, and so murder their souls. For how many children instead of good education and godly instruction, do hear their Fathers delight in swearing, do see them deal deceitfully and unjustly, and walk in every evil way? If we should behold a man killing his own children, and laying violent hands upon his own flesh, if we should see him destroy his posterity, and shed the innocent blood of those that came out of his own loins: who would not accuse and condemn him of unnatural murder and barbarous cruelty? But there are many, many thousand Fathers in the world that are the Murderers and Butchers; yea, the death and destruction of their own Issue. They gave them life, but they are the causes of their death. They gave them a temporal being, but they bring them to eternal condemnation. They should direct them in the right way to Heaven, but they lead them into the paths of sin, and so thrust them down to Hell with their own hands. For so long as we teach them not to honor God, but to dishonor him, and regard not whether they know Christ Jesus or not, but are patterns and presidents unto them of all profaneness, we are guilty of their blood, and are worse then those that take away their natural life, and shall one day hold up our hand at the bar of God's Judgment, to be arraigned for it. For they only kill the body, and when they have done, can do no more: but we cast away and spill the Souls of our Children, which is the greatest rigor, the vilest murder, and the extremist cruelty in the world. If therefore we would be clear and pure from the blood of our children, let us train

them up in godliness, and take heed to our selves, reforming our own ways, and endeavoring to be examples unto them in all holiness and true righteousness. This is it which *Joshua* professeth in his exhortation that he maketh to the people, that they would with full purpose of heart cleave unto the Lord. *Joshua* 24. 15. *If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve, whether the God's which your Fathers served beyond the flood, or the God's of the Amorites, in whose Land ye dwell: but I and my house will serve the Lord.* The like we see in the answer of *Queen Ester* to *Mordecai*, when she had exhorted to gather the Church together to Fasting and Prayer, that God might be entreated to open a way for their deliverance she addeth; *I and my Maids will do likewise.* A like practice we find in *David*. *Psal.* 101. as he declareth that his eyes should be upon the faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with him, and that such as are upright should serve him: so he professeth, *He would walk in the uprightness of his heart in the midst of his house, he would set no wicked thing before his eyes, but hate the works of them that fall away.* For well did *David* know, that if the Master of the house were evil, the Family ordinarily could not be good, and that the example of the highest, it alleged as a warrant to the lowest to follow. It is great pity, that a Child should hear an evil word, or see an evil deed, they are so ready to imitate that which they hear and see. Let us therefore look diligently to our selves, what examples we lay before them.

Thirdly, this doctrine directeth us to have in our private Families, the private exercises of Religion. It is no small praise of the house of *Philemon*, that he had so taught and instructed his Family, that he had the lively Image and true representation of a Church in it, discharging after a sort, the duty of a Pastor within his own walls. So the Apostle *Paul* saluteth *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, and the Church that is in their house. Every Governor of an house, and Master of a Family must endeavor, that his house-hold may deserve the Name of a Church. He should be the speaker, they the hearers: he the Pastor, they the flock: he the Minister, they the people: he ready to instruct, they ready to be instructed. A private Family, should be as a private school, the Governor is the Master of the School: everyone within his government, is a Scholar to learn of him.

This shall be a singular commendation unto us, if we so order our several charges and places of government, as that they may be called rather Churches, then private Families: rather Schools, then Houses: rather Temples of GOD, then dwellings of men: rather Tabernacles set up to serve the Lord, then buildings erected to serve our selves. Now we shall attain to this praise and estimation among the faithful, if our houses do resemble Churches, by the practice of such exercises as are performed in it. For the Master is both a King and a Pastor within his own house: a King, to rule and correct: a Pastor, to instruct and reprove; yea, to remove such as are obstinate and obdurate. Let us therefore all of us set up little Churches in our houses: let us use in them prayer to God, Catechizing of our youth, teaching of the ignorant, reading of the Scriptures, singing of Psalms, conferring one with another, examining of our people, taking an account how they profit, comforting them that are weak, encouraging them that are willing, discountenancing them that are froward and untoward, showing gentleness unto all, suffering the evil, and instructing them with meekness that are contrary minded.

Thus doing, we shall begin a Church in our houses, we shall erect a temple and Tabernacle unto God, and give to those that live with us, and depend upon us, an entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. But alas, May we speak and write to many Masters in our times, as *Paul* doth in this place to *Philemon*? May we truly call their private houses little Churches, by reason of the exercises of Religion used in them? Nay, I would to God, there were not great multitudes swarming among us, which have such dissolute and disordered houses, so far from being Images and likenesses of a Church, that they are lively pictures of the profane World, and very representations of the Kingdom of darkness, and of the bottomless pit of Hell. These men, howsoever they shroude themselves under the names of Christians, and would be accounted faithful men, yet it is manifest, that they are far from true Christianity, and from a godly and religious mind. For shall they be esteemed sound and sincere Christians, that suffer their Families to be full of swearing, lying, railing, roysting, quarrelling, contention, and all other wickedness, and never go about to examine them, or exhort them to any goodness? So that it is a very hell to dwell in them, a very death to live in thē, a loathsome and stinking person to remain in them; yea, a foul and filthy lakes to abide in them, wherein all unsavory and unseasoned practices, are contained and continued. I dare boldly avouch, and constantly defend, that a man were far better to thrust his Son into a Pest-house, or place of infection, then to commit him to such Masters of misrule, and teachers of all abominations, most noisome and dangerous to Soul and Body, where those corruptions are quickly learned, which are afterward hardly forgotten, and bred in the bone, which are not easily removed out of the flesh. We usually and commonly say of him that liveth in a contagious place, Lord have mercy upon him: but much rather, and far better may we say and pray for such as are in lewd and ungodly houses, Lord be merciful unto them, and deliver them from evil. For if the plague and pestilence walk among us, and we among them, they can but kill the body, and make an end of this Mortall life: but the contagion of sin will bring fearful destruction, both upon Soul and Body, and will root out whole Houses and Families, wast Towns and Cities, and consume utterly Countries and Kingdoms. We see how by the instinct of Nature, Parents have a care to place their Children, where they may be well used, and where they may be well provided for, that they want nothing: but what folly is this to look to the body, and to have no respect to the Soul? To be curious in the least, and careless in the principal thing? To see that the back be clothed and the belly filled, and never require or inquire how the soul (which is the chiefest part) be provided for and sustained? To be angry if they want food for this life, and yet to seem pleased and contented, though they never taste of that bread and of that meat, which endureth to everlasting life.

It hath always been otherwise with faithful Governors and Christian Parents, they have made conscience of their duties to God and their Families. It is noted touching *Jacob*, when he was to go to *Bethel* the house of God, he sanctified and prepared his people, he reformed and redressed the abuses that were crept in among them, before they came to the worship of God. *Abraham* had in his house three hundred and eighteen persons which he had well instructed, who were ready to adventure their lives with him in the battle. The Apostle giveth this commendation to *Timothy*, *That he had known the Scriptures of a Child, who are able to make him wise unto salvation, through the faith which is in Christ Jesus*. His first years as it were

the first fruits of his age, were seasoned with the doctrine of Christ, which was done by a familiar and easy order of instructing him. Our government therefore over others, must not be a meet civil government (as the government of most men is) but a religious government, to feed the soul as well as the body, to provide for the life to come, as well as for this present life.

Fourthly, it is required of us, to bring our several Families to the public exercises of Religion, of the word and prayers, that we may know how to use and practice these aright within the Walls of our private houses. It is not enough for us to serve God alone by our selves, and to plant true Religion in our own hearts, but we must endeavor to bring others to God, especially those that are nearest unto us. It is not enough for us, nor a sufficient discharge of our duties to go to the Church our selves, and to frequent the places of God's public worship to come to the house of Prayer, and to attend to the preaching of the word on the Lord's day: but we must look to our Children and Servants, we must have an eye over them, we must see that they be not absent, but present: and when they are present, that they attend and hearken to the Ministry of the word: and when as they are departed, we must know what they have profited. When we send our Servants to the Market, we will see what they bring home, and how they have provided for our bodies: much more when we send them to the Market of their Souls, should we require an accounts of them, where they have been, and what they have done, and how they have heard. How many are there among us that have a care to come to this place themselves, that have no conscience to look to their Children, whose salvation should be as dear, and as much desired as their own? Yea, even among you that are at this present in this place, if diverse were asked; Indeed here you are, here you sit, but where are your Sons, where your Daughters? Where are your Man-Servants, where your Maides, for whose Souls ye must give an account, what reasonable answer could ye make? Nay, how many are there to be found, who, if they have their work well done on the week-days, care not what they do, how they behave themselves, or where they become upon the Sabbath day? And so they make themselves guilty and partakers of their sins through their negligence, as *Eli* did of the offenses of his Children.

Hence it is, that in the fourth Commandment, prescribing the time of God's public worship, the Housholder is charged to have care of his Son, of his Daughter, of his Servant, of his Stranger. *Jacob* called for his people, and assembled them together, when he went to *Bethel*. *David* went with a great train and company into the house, as those that go to a Feast; when he saith; *When I remembered these things, I poured out my very heart, because I had gone with the multitude, and led them into the house of God with the voice of singing and praise, as a multitude that keepeth a Feast*. Behold here, the godly devotion of a religious heart, as the Hart brayeth for the Rivers of Waters, so his soul panted after God and his public worship: neither could he content himself to go alone, but it was his comfort and delight, to lead others as it were by the hand with him, that they might find that sweetness in the word that he found, and be partakers of the benefit that he reaped thereby.

Lastly, seeing it is so necessary a duty to teach our Housholds, we must acknowledge that it is as necessary for Children and Servants to be taught and instructed. It should be therefore

our care and desire, to dwell and inhabit in such places and houses, as that we may be trained up in godliness, and learn our duties to God and man. It should be our care and desire to place and bestow our Children with such persons, as that they may be brought up in the fear of God. There is not one of those in our Families, even the lowest and meanest, but of meat, drink, clothing, or wages, be at any times denied or detained from them, they will think themselves wronged and misused, and are ready to complain of the injury. How much more (if there were in them any care of their Souls, or love of the life to come) would they mourn and lament when they are debarred and defrauded of this most necessary portion (the knowledge of true Religion) appointed by the Lord to be bestowed upon them. If a man be to take any Farm, he will not do it hand over head, but he will know what Acres he shall have, what arable ground, what Meddow, and what means of his maintenance: but how many are there that seek to others for their service, who never consider what instruction they shall have, or whether they be likely ever to hear of the Name of God? There is no Man so simple in wit, but if he put his Son to be an Apprentize, and his Master within his years do not teach him his occupation, he will and may justly think his Child much misvsed: what a wonderful blindness and blockishness then doth it argue in them, that care not where they put, and with whom they place their Children, so they learn their occupation, they regard not whether they learn any Religion, and never enquire whether their Masters take any pains or not, to teach them the precepts and instructions that belong to a Christian, which of all callings under heavens, is both the most honorable, and in the end, shall be acknowledged to be most profitable. Let us therefore put out our Children to be the Servants of those, that may learn them to be the Servants of God. Let us so bind them to their Trade, that we may be sure they may learn the Trade of Trades, the Art of Arts, the Mystery of Mysteries; that is, Religion and Godliness. If we have little to leave our Children, and small wealth to bequeath unto them, yet if we bring them up to this Trade, and bind them fast unto it, we shall leave them a worthy and wealthy portion: for all men must be of this Trade. We see how costly other Trades are, and what a round sum must be given with our children to serve for them: but we may without cost, and without Mony, make our Children of this Trade, which is the best and most gainful of all others. *For godliness (saith the Apostle) is not only gain, but great gain, if a man be contented with that he hath.* If thou have not learned this gainful and profitable Trade, thou wilt be never but a Begger and a Bankrupt: for being destitute of this, thou art without Grace, without God, without Heaven. Thus much of this doctrine.

3Grace be with you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hitherto we have spoken of the first part of the Praeface of this Epistle, touching the persons writing and written unto: Now we come to the second part; to wit, the prayers which he maketh, which are of two sortes: a salutation, and a thanksgiving: the salutation is a greeting, which the Apostle wisheth to all the persons before named, wherein we are to consider two pointes; first, what blessings the Apostle desireth to be given unto them. Secondly, from whom he craveth them. The blessings which he prayeth for, are two; namely, *Grace and Peace.* By Grace, we must understand the free favor, mere mercy, and good will of

God towards us, whereby he hath eternally & undeservedly loved us in Christ, who are a people by nature not beloved, but deserving to be disgraced by him, and hated of him. The second blessing that he beggeth for them, is peace, whereby is meant all kind of benefits, spiritual and temporal, which flow unto us from this Fountain, and grow out of the root of grace; and therefore ordinarily in other Epistles, it is annexed unto it. Grace here mentioned, is not any gift in us, but it is God's, and in God; it is his gracious favor, free love, and good will, whereby he is well pleased with his elect, in, and for Christ. Peace, is not any gift in God, but in us, and is that holy unity and blessed concord, which is in the Kingdom of God among God's Children: this concord and agreement of God's Children, is a fruit and effect of grace. So then, the meaning of the words is this; We wish unto you all the favor of God in Christ, and that concord which is proper to God's Church and Children, having peace with God, with his holy Angels, with his Church, with your own hearts, with your enemies, and with all his Creatures.

Secondly, in this verse is set down the cause, the worker, and author from whom these blessings come; to wit, the Father, and Jesus Christ. God the Father, the Fountain of them; and Christ our Lord, as the Conduit pipe, by whom they are carried and conveyed unto us. But it may be objected, why is the holy Ghost left out? why is not he named? do not these gifts come from him as well as from the Father and the Son? I answer, It is a general rule in all Arts, and true in Divinity; That which is understood is not wanting. So then, the holy Ghost, the third person in Trinity is not omitted, though not expressed: for he must of necessity be understood, who proceedeth from them both; namely, from the Father and the Son. Christ saith in his Prayer. *This is eternal life, to know thee to be the only true God, and whom thou hast sent Jesus Christ:* yet the holy Ghost in this place, is not excluded from both the persons, but included and comprehended together with them, for these three are one, as the Apostle teacheth. Thus much touching the order and meaning of the words: Now let us proceed to the observations out of the same, and then come to the Doctrines.

The observations out of this verse, containing the salutation, are not many, which we will point out. First of all, we see the matter of his Prayer what it is; he asketh not the favor of Men, but of God: he craveth not earthly and worldly peace, but spiritual and heavenly. True it is, the favor and good will of Men, the outward peace and tranquility one with another, are worthy and excellent gifts, but the free and fatherly favor of God, together with peace with GOD the Father, being reconciled unto us in his dear Son, are much to be preferred in our desires. Heereby we have that peace of conscience which passeth all understanding, which teacheth us to rest in God as in a most loving Father, with all confidence and assurance.

Secondly, as we learn chiefly to ask spiritual blessings, so we see what blessings among such as are spiritual, are the principal and predominant; to wit, the favor of God and peace of conscience. He that is possessed of these two, hath an hid Mine of Treasures, with which, all the Wealth and Riches of the World are not to be compared unto. For these blessings are heavenly, are spiritual, are eternal: whereas the substance of this World is Temporal, is Transitorie, is corruptible. The Worlde it self must pass and vanish away, and all these earthly things must decay and perish with it.

Thirdly, the Apostle in some of his Epistles, useth three words; *Grace, Mercy, and Peace*: here he contenteth himself with naming two, Grace and Peace, omitting and leaving out Mercy: wherein there is no contrariety or diversity, for as much as Mercy is included under Peace. For by Mercy is understood our Justification, which consisteth partly in the forgiveness of our sins, and partly in the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which do bring true peace with them.

Fourthly, we see from whom he asketh all these; to wit, first from God the Father, to teach that he is the Author of every good giving and perfect gift. If then we stand in need of them, we must go to him, we must ask them of him, we can receive them of none but of him, as the Apostle *James* teacheth.

Fifthly, we see that to God the Father he joineth Jesus Christ: for all blessings are bestowed upon us through Christ, the Mediator of the New Testament. God the Father is the Fountain, Christ is the Pipe or Conduit, by whom they are conveyed unto us. He that hath not him, hath not the Father. He that is not in him, remaineth in death. Hence it is that the Evangelist saith; *He that believeth in the Son, hath everlasting life, and he that obeyeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Sixthly, observe the Title given unto him, he is called the Lord of his Church: it is a Kingdom, whereof he is the Prince: it is a City, whereof he is the Governor: it is an house, whereof he is the Master: it is a body, whereof he is the head. So then, all obedience is due to him, and all men (how great soever) must acknowledge his Lordship over them. Lastly, in that he craveth grace and peace from Christ our Lord, as well as from God the Father, it confirmeth our Faith in a Fundamental point of Christian Religion, touching the Deity of Christ; *Who is GOD equal with, the Father*; against the *Arians*, and other Heretics that deny his Eternity. For seeing he giveth grace and peace as well as the Father, we conclude him to be true God Co-eternal, and Co-equal with the Father.

[*Grace, &c.*]

This word in the Scripture hath two significations, the ignorance whereof hath bred great error, and be one the occasion of stumbling in the Church of *Rome*. First, it signifieth God's good will and favor: Secondly, some gift of God freely bestowed, which is grace of his grace: and so the Apostle doth distinguish the grace of God from the gift that is by grace. In this place, we must understand, not any particular gift of God infused into us, as faith, hope, love, and such like; but the free favor and love of God, whereby he accepteth of some in Christ for his own Children: for we see here, it is discerned and distinguished from peace, which is a gift of Grace, and therefore cannot signify the same thing. This grace and good will of God, is the Fountain of all God's blessings, and the foundation of all man's happiness. All that we have is of Grace, it is the beginning of all good things in us. Our Election, Redemption, Vocation, Justification, Sanctification, & Glorification is of grace only, we can ascribe nothing to our selves. Now in this Divine Salutation, and Apostolical Benediction, mark that the Apostle beginneth with this grace. From hence we learn, that the favor of God is to be sought for above all other things. The free grace and undeserved love of God, is the first, and

highest, and only cause of all blessings, is above all things to be desired and entreated at the hands of God. Consider the example of *David*. *Psal. 4. Many say, who will show us any good? But Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.* As if he should say, let worldly men seek what they will, and let them place their happiness in riches, pleasures, and vanities, but my desire is after thy love and favor above all. Hence it is, that he calleth and accounteth God his portion, his lot, his inheritance, his rock, his refuge, his shield, and Castle of defense; to show, that all his joy was in God's favor, all his comfort in God's love, and that he preferred his grace before all things in the world besides. This affection is also expressed in the 73. *Psalm. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And I have desired none in the earth with thee: my flesh faileth, and mine heart also, but God is the strength of mine heart, and my portion forever.* So the Apostle *Paul* accounteth all things as loss and dung in comparison of the grace of God. Whereby we see, that all men should principally, and in the first place, seek, wish, and entreat for the feeling of God's favor in Christ, as the blessed Fountain of all good things to come upon us.

Let us consider the causes and Reasons of this point. First, one drop of his free love, is better worth than all the World, and it shall yield us more sweet and sound comfort in the latter end. If we should put the grace of God and the glory of the world, and peize them together in the balances, the least dram and drop of the favor of God toward us, would over-weigh, and over-sway all the whole World, and all the things that are in the World, which worldly men make their chiefest Treasure. This the Prophet *David* found by experience, so soon as he had prayed for the loving countenance of GOD, he addeth; *Thou hast given me more joy of heart, then they have had, when their Wheat and their Wine did abound.* This giveth a man more sound comfort, then he can find else-where. We have a common saying that runneth in every Mans mouth, Give a man good luck, and throw him into the Sea. But this is a Divine truth, Let a man have the free Grace and favor of GOD, and then neither Sea nor Land; neither Fire nor Water; neither Sword nor Pestilence; neither force nor Famine; neither any other thing shall be able to hurt him. We see this in *Moses* and the *Israelites*, when they were come to the Red Sea, and *Pharaoh* with his Army followed at their backs, they were brought through the Sea as on dry Land, and were carried safely in the Wilderness as on Eagles Wings by the providence and protection of God. The three Children were cast into the Furnance, *Daniel* was thrown into the Lions den: yet they were not consumed with the Fire, neither he devoured by the Lions. This made the Prophet say; *Though I should walk through the Valley of the shadow of death, I will fear none ill: for thou art with me, thy Rodde, and thy Staff, they comfort me.* All other comfort is no better then discomfort; all other joy is no better then sorrow and vexation of Spirit without this; according to the saying of the Wiseman: *I said of laughter, Thou art mad; and of joy, what is this that thou dost?*

Secondly, the grace and love of God, blesseth, sanctifieth, and furthereth all other things unto us, honor, wealth: wisdom, riches, strength, favor, friendship, and whatsoever befall the Sons of Men. The Prophet testifieth. *Psalm 45.* Because God had blessed him forever, therefore it is said unto him, prosper thou with thy glory, ride upon the word of truth, and of meekness. On the other side, the want of the love and grace of God, curseth all other things unto us; yea, defileth and poisoneth them, and maketh them deadly, our honor it

turneth into shame, our strength into weakness, our wisdom into foolishness, our riches into snares, our beauty into vanity, our savor into hatred. We have many examples in the word of God, and by daily experience offered unto us of this truth, the wisdom of *Achitophell*, the honor of *Haman*, the valor of *Joab*, the beauty of *Absalom*, the knowledge of *Judas*, all these were good and great blessings of God, but all are turned to be curses unto them, because wanting the free grace of GOD, they wanted the sanctified use of them. Seeing therefore, the love of God is of greater price, and more excellent value then all the world, and seeing his grace sanctifieth and seasoneth all other blessings, and the want thereof bringeth a curse upon them, we conclude and gather from these reasons, that the free favor and mercy of God in Christ Jesus, is first and above all other things, to be entreated and desired for our selves and others.

Now let us make use of this point. First, let everyone of us seek to have our hearts established and settled in this free grace, to find and feel in us his love shed in our hearts by his holy Spirit. Let this be our first, our chief, our principal and special care, to obtain the love and favor of God, that we may be beloved of him. This was the prayer of the Prophet, *Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and stablish me with thy free Spirit*. So the Apostle teacheth; *It is a good thing that the heart be stablished with grace*. We see how men are filled and carried away with natural presumption, even from their Cradle, persuading themselves to stand in a sure estate, and thinking to escape the wrath of God: but of this free grace they have no taste, no desire, no feeling of any want. They imagine themselves to stand in no need thereof, they presume they are in the favor of God; they dream that he cannot choose but love them. If we want any earthly blessing, the help of Friends, the health of body, the Treasure of this World, we can very quickly feel it, our senses are sharp enough to discern it: but though we want the grace of God and his favor toward us, we have no more feeling then dead Men hath, we neither feel it, nor desire it, nor once regard it.

We spend our strength, wast our life, and consume our days in seeking riches, honors, pleasures, and preferments, but we never look so high as to the grace of God. We lie groveling like the Beasts upon the Earth, we use every day; nay, every hour, nay, every minute, the blessings of God, *In whom we live, and move, and have our being*: yet we will not lift up our eyes to the chief cause of all, the Grace of God. Let us therefore above all things, seek earnestly for the grace of God, wherein the Foundation of all our happiness is laid. He that liveth in his favor, hath comfort in all sorrows and miseries. He that dieth out of his favor, dieth as a Beast; nay, worse then a beast, and shall have fellowship with the Devil and his Angels, it had been good if such a one had never been borne. For even as the rich man in the Gospel, desired one drop of Water to quench the fire, and to cool his tongue, and if he might have gotten it, he would have preferred it before the gaining and obtaining of a thousand Worlds: so when God shall set our sins in order before us, and the Gulf of his wrath ready to swallow us, we shall cry out for one drop of Grace, for one drop of Faith, for one drop of comfort, to refresh our pining Souls, and to deliver us from the shadow of death.

Now is the time to desire and seek after grace, if we let slip the present occasion offered unto us, we shall afterward cry out for it, and complain of the want of it, and yet shall never

attain unto it. Thus was it with the rich Man, when he entreated *Abraham to have mercy on him, and to send Lazarus, that he might dip the tip of his Finger in Water to cool his tongue, being tormented in that Flame: Abraham answered; Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy pleasures, and likewise Lazarus pains: now therefore he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* Thus was it with the foolish Virgins who slumbered and slept, and regarded not to procure and provide Oil for their Lamps: for when the Bridegroom was come and had shut the Gate, they cried in vain, *Lord, Lord, open unto us,* who received their answer, *Verily, I say unto you, I know you not.* Thus it shall be with those in the last day, which shall say; *Lord, Lord, have we not in thy Name prophesied? And by thy Name cast out Devils? And by thy Name done many great works? For then he will profess unto them, he never knew them, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* So shall it be with those that have neglected the time, and passed over the opportunity, who begin to say, *Lord, open unto us, we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our Streets:* to whom he shall say, *I know you not whence ye are.* Let us all be wise, and beware by their examples, that we do not delay the time from day today. Let us crave this gift of God, that we may have it in time of need, and in the hour of temptation. If now while we have time, we shall desire and labor to obtain grace, we shall not need hereafter to stand in fear of Death, or to cry out through horror and despair! O that I had one drop of Faith! O that I had one drop of Grace.

Secondly, seeing grace is in the first place, above and before all other blessings to be desired and required at the hands of God, let us learn the highway, and enter into the beaten path that leadeth to this Grace, and when we have learned it, let us walk in it, in a constant and settled course. Now the steppes that we must make to trace it, and find it out, are these. The first degree or step, is to dislike our selves, and to be in disgrace with our selves. Every man naturally, is in love with himself, and his own shadow. But we must cast off this self-love, that cleaveth so fast and hangeth on, and learn to know our selves, and to hate our selves.

No man can magnify God's mercy sufficiently, until he attain to the knowledge of his own misery. *Daniel*, a man gracious and dearly beloved of GOD acknowledged this in his prayer, and as it were ascendeth into the presence of God by this step, *O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, and unto us open shame, as appeareth this day, to our Kings, to our Princes, to our Fathers, and unto every Man of Judah, because we have sinned against thee.* This was the course that the Prodigal Son took, and the way that he entered, *Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.* Thus did the poor Publican insinuate himself into the grace of God, and departed justified in his sight, he smote his breast, saying; *Lord, be merciful to me a Sinner.* To be proud, and puffed up with our own righteousness, and to trust in our own wisdom, is the fore-runner of a fall.

The second step to obtain grace, is, after we have felt this want and misery in our selves, we must not rest there, but earnestly desire, and inwardly hunger and thirst after the love and favor of God in Christ, above all earthly things. First, we must feel our selves empty, before our Souls can have this hunger. Our Savior describing true blessedness to his Disciples, and showing wherein it consisteth contrary to the judgment of the World, he saith; *Blessed are the poor in Spirit;* that is, that know themselves poor, that feel themselves poor and void of

righteousness: and then he addeth, *Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.* We must hunger after the meat that never perisheth: we must thirst after that Well of Water which springeth up unto everlasting life. If we never hunger after grace, we shall never have grace. *The whole desire not the Physician, but they that are sick: They which think they see, are made blind, and their sin remaineth.*

Lastly, it is required of us, to lay hold by the hand of a true Faith, upon the grace and mercy of God in Christ Jesus, offered unto all of us in the promises of the Gospel generally, and learn to apply them to our selves particularly. Christ calleth those that are weary and heavy laden, promising to ease end refresh them. In the last and great day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying; *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* He teacheth; *That he that shall believe and be Baptized, shall be saved.* These are general promises, these require particular application. We cannot receive them into our hearts, and make them our own, except we lay hold of them by a special Faith. This lively Faith, bringeth Christ home to us, and openeth the doors of our Souls to entertain him. If then we feel our own misery, if we hunger after mercy, and if we apply the promises of the Gospel to us particularly, we shall be assured to find the grace of God, and taste plentifully and abundantly of his love. So many as truly desire grace, must look to attain it by these means, and climb up to the top of it by these steps and degrees, as by certain stairs.

Thirdly, seeing grace is first of all to be craved, it directeth us to observe and keep a good order, in seeking and craving things at the hands of God. We are taught first to seek his grace and favor, as the root and Fountain, and then peace, welfare, and other blessings. He that will receive fruit from the tree, must come to the root and body, before he can come to the branches: so if we would have peace, health, wealth, a good name, favor, friendship, or other gifts of the Spirit, we must begin at the root; that is, entreat first for the grace of God, take hold of his free love, and above all things, beg his fatherlie favor to compass us, as with a garment, and to defend us as with a shielde. It is in vain to ask anything, it is in vain to hope for, and to expect any blessing as a blessing, before this be asked and obtained. This order is to be observed, if we would enjoy and possess God's blessings. When the grace of God cometh, and maketh us accepted, it cometh not alone, but cometh accompanied, and bringeth a train of all other blessings with it.

He that will seek a benefit from a Prince, must first seek to be gracious with the Prince and get his favor: he must never look to be respected and regarded in his suit, that is out of the Princes favor: so if we would have wealth, welfare, ease, honor, peace, prosperity, or any other gifts, we must before all things, labor to be gracious with the great God of Heaven, and seek to be accepted in his beloved. This serveth to reprove the preposterous course of carnal Men, who set the Cart before the Horse, and place the Bobby before the Soul, and advance the Earth above the Heaven, and so overthrow the whole order of Nature, laboring first for wealth, and afterward for virtue; first, for Riches; afterward, for Religion: first, to be great in the World; afterward to be gracious with God. These men seek from day today, and from year to year for earthly profits, and vanishing pleasures: but never think on the root of all blessings, the grace of God. This corruption is reproved by Christ, who prescribeth unto us a

better way, when he saith; *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be ministered unto you.* If the things of this world be the first in our thoughts, the chiefest in our desires, the greatest in our estimation, and the best in our imagination, we have our reward, we must look for no other reward at the hands of God.

Lastly, when we have found our hearts persuaded, and our Souls possessed of this grace of God, let us delight in it, let us rest upon it, let it be made our stay and comfort in all times, and upon all occasions. Let us remember to be more thankful to God for it, and more joyful in it, then those that rejoice in Harvest, or such as find great spoils and rich booties. If thou shouldst find Mines of Silver and Gold, and Mountains of Pearls and precious Stones, they could not give such comfort and contentment unto thy Soul, as this grace of God is able to do, which is a Jewel of Jewels. Blessed is the man that findeth this Treasure, and getteth it into his heart, for the Marchandize thereof, is better then the Marchandize of Silver, and the gain thereof is better then Gold: it is more precious then Pearls, and all things that thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto it. For these treasures of the earth, which worldly men have in so great price and estimation, are bought at a deer rate of the owners, but the Lord offereth and giveth his grace frankly and freely unto us, which need the same, as we read in the prophesy of *Isaiah*, and in the Epistle of *James*.

Secondly, the Marchandize of these Pearls may be stolen from us, we cannot so safely and closely lay them up, but time will consume them, rust will rot them, and Thieves will steal them, as our Savior teacheth in the Gospel: *But the grace of God shall never die or decay, but is ever flourishing, and everlasting.* Lastly, the gain of Silver & Gold, if we could possess it in the greatest measure, is but to maintain the body, and to provide for this present life for a season: but the gaining of grace and the favor of God, is an entituling of us to the Kingdom of heaven, and to eternal life, which he that hath this grace of God in his heart, shall possess forever. Indeed, few men do believe this, because they make more reckoning of things earthly, then heavenly: but all men shall find it to be true in the end. This treasure the poor may have as well as the rich. In all temptations this will stand by us, and raise us up when we are cast down, and strengthen us when we are weak. This grace (whereby we are freely beloved) will go with us abroad, will stay with us at home, will lie down with us in bed, will sit with us at Table, will direct us in prosperity, will stick to us in trouble, will comfort us in sickness, will solace us in death, and will accompany us to heaven. To desire this, is the best covetousness, and that which only hath allowance and approbation from God, and therefore the Apostle chargeth us to covet spiritual things. All these things teach us to rest and rely upon the grace of God, as upon the only comfort of our Souls, and the very life of our lives, according to the practice of the Prophet. *Psal. 4.* after he had desired of God to lift up his loving countenance upon him, he addeth; *I will lay me down and also sleep in peace, for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.*

[*And peace, &c.*]

Hitherto we have spoken of the first blessing, which the Apostle craveth for them; to wit, the grace of God, which is the grace of graces: Now followeth the second, which is peace, which is a notable fruit, growing upon the blessed tree of grace. This signifieth the quiet concord

and unity, which the faithful are made partakers of, being once engrafted into Christ, and brought into the bosom of the Church. They find peace and are at an agreement, which hath many branches, and standeth of many parts, everyone whereof is a most worthy blessing. First, we are at peace with God, when we are reconciled unto God in Christ, so that he hath no quarrel or controversy against us. *Rom. 5. 1.* Secondly, we are at peace with the elect Angels, which pitch their Tents round about us, and are set to guard us, least we dash our foot against a Stone. Thirdly, we are at peace with our selves, when our consciences enjoy quietness and tranquility, not accusing or condemning, but excusing and clearing us, being washed in the blood of Christ, This is that peace of God which passeth all understanding. Fourthly, we are at peace with God's Children, foretold by the Prophet, that the wild Beasts and tame should dwell together, the cruel and the gentle should couch together, and practiced by the Church and believers, who are said to be of one Soul, and of one heart.

Fifthly, we have peace with our enemies, who are charged not to touch the Lord's anointed, and to do his Prophets no harm. This is so far verified, as is expedient to set forth the glory of God, to procure the safety of the godly, and to repress the rage of the Reprobate. Thus *Joseph* was at peace with *Pharaoh*, *Obadiah* with *Ahab*, and *Daniel* with *Nabucadnezzar*, *Mordecai* and the *Jews* with *Ahasuerus*: and thus is the saying of the Wiseman verified; *When the ways of a Man please the Lord, he will make also his enemies at peace with him.* Lastly, we have peace with the Beasts of the field, the Foules of the Heaven, and all the Creatures of God, so that we shall find help and comfort from them, as we see in the Prophet, God maketh a Covenant with them for his people. *Hos. 2. In that day I will make a Covenant for them, with the wild Beasts, and with the Foules of the Heaven, and with that which creepeth upon the earth: I will break the Bow and the Sword, and the battle out of the Earth, and will make them to sleep safely.* Loe here how large and ample is this peace, and how many and worthy preeminences there are thereof. This peace followeth grace, as a fruit of it, and therefore (we see) it is joined unto it both in this place, and in sundry other Epistles. We learn hereby, that such as are under the grace and covenant of God, living under his protection and obedience, have assurance of all God's mercies, spiritual and temporal, of this life, and of the life to come, all which do belong unto them, and shall follow them, and overtake them. I say, such as are under the grace and favor of God have all his blessings following them, so far as they may further their eternal happiness. *Moses* showeth *Deut. 28.* that when once they belong to God, and are under his grace, as under the shaddow of his Wings, all his blessings should follow them, and come upon them from Heaven and Earth, from house and field, from soul and body, that they should be blessed in the fruit of their body, in the increase of their Cattle, and in the abundance of all things. *Aaron* and his Sons did thus bless the people, *Num. 6. 6. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* Where we see, he setteth peace after the shining of God's gracious countenance upon them. This the Apostle teacheth in the Epistle to the *Romans*, having proved at large that we are justified without the works of the Law, he addeth; *Being then justified by Faith, we have peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* The Prophet *David*, expressing that God is his Shepherd, to refresh him with his grace, to feed him with his word, to rule him by his staff, and to deliver him from danger, concluded hereupon; *I shall want nothing, doubtless kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,*

and I shall remain a long season in the house of the Lord. The like we see in another place; *The Lord God is the Sun and Shield unto us: the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.* The Apostle Paul setteth down at large the blessings flowing from this love of God, *Who hath predestinated us to be adopted through Jesus Christ, in himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, where-with he hath made us freely accepted in his beloved, by whom we have Redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to his rich grace, whereby he hath been abundant toward us in all wisdom and understanding.* Where he teacheth, that the free grace of God, whereby we are accepted in his beloved, in whom he is well pleased, and exceedingly contented, is the cause of all other mercies, and therefore such as are in his favor, shall find the fruits thereof to their comfort, and have all his blessings to overtake them.

If any doubt yet remain in us to trouble us, and hinder our faith from receiving and believing this Doctrine, as a pregnant and certain truth, consider with me a little farther the reasons, to ground and establish us herein. For first, when the wrath of God is once appeased, and the love of God opened unto us, we have free and bold access unto him, and to the Throne of grace, as▪ to a most merciful Father. The Apostle having declared, that we are at peace with God through Christ, he addeth immediately; *By whom also thorough Faith we have this access into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice under the hope of the glory of God.* We may freely come into the presence of God, we have boldness to ask anything that we want, we have assurance to be heard when we call upon him.

Secondly, it is the free love and favor of God, that spared not his own Son, but bestowed him upon us, who is our life, our peace, our atonement. Now seeing it is his grace only that hath given us the blessing of all blessings, we shall with him, and by him, have all other gifts to compass us about, and to come upon us, according as the Apostle teacheth. Rom. 8. *If God be on our side, who shall be against us? Who spared not his own Son, but gave him for us all to death, how shall he not with him give us all things also?*

Thirdly, his love reconcileth all his Creatures, and openeth the way to his mercies toward them whom he loveth. This is it which Moses speaketh to the *Israelites: Because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto our Fathers, the Lord hath brought you out by a mighty hand, and delivered you out of the house of bondage.* And afterward he putteth them in mind, *That the Lord would not hearken unto Balaam, but the Lord their God turned his curse to a blessing unto them, because he loved them.* Thus doth the Prophet tell the people of God; *That they inherited not the Land by their own Sword, neither did their own Arm save them, but his right hand, and his Arm, and the light of his countenance, because he did favor them.*

Lastly, they love God again whom he loveth. His love worketh love, and constraineth them to express back again that which they have received. They that love him shall never be destitute, but feel the fruit thereof to their endless comfort. The Prophet saith to this purpose. Psal. 91. *Because he hath loved me, therefore will I deliver him: I will exalt him, because he hath known my Name.* Lay now all these things together, and consider, that seeing we have free access to the Throne of grace, seeing we have Christ, the greatest blessing of all given unto us, seeing all Creatures are reconciled unto us: and lastly, we being loved, do love God

again, and pour out streams issuing from his Fountain, and all this proceedeth from his grace: we conclude, that such as are in God's favor have his blessings following them.

Now let us handle the uses. First, seeing the favor of God is the Fountain of all goodness and graces in us, we learn, that no favor is like to the favor of God. The grace and love of Princes, bringeth many privileges and preferments with it: but can they assure us of every good thing? Or do they remain and continue with us forever? Nay, they are most unstable, and uncertain, their honor is turned into dishonor, and all their glory is changed into shame and confusion. *Haman* was the happiest man in the kingdom in his own eyes, and in the eyes of many others; one day he was next unto the King, & the next day he was most wretched; one day in favor, the next day out of favor; one day honored, the next day hanged. Nay, thus it fareth & falleth out oftentimes with the godly, as we see in *David*; who was greater in *Saul's* Court than he? Who was more praised and preferred? Was made the Son in Law of the King, and the Captain of the Hoast: yet by and by he was disgraced, degraded, and depraved by flatterers and false informers, cast out of the favor of the King, and put in danger of his life. It is not so with God, it is not so with his favor shown toward the godly: whom he loveth once, he loveth ever: he doth not change, he cannot lie, he will not repent. He is unchangeable, there is no shadow of change with him, his gifts are without repentance. There is great comfort in such favor, seek therefore for his favor, above the favor of Princes: and make much of it when we have found it. Great is the love of Parents toward their Children: but the love of God surmounteth them all, and that love which can be in them.

Secondly, seeing such as are gracious with God, are laden with many blessings, we may see hereby the blessed estate of all that live under the grace of God, all things do serve them that serve the Lord, and have tasted how gracious the Lord our God is. He is counted happy in the World that hath the favor of Princes. The Queen of *Sheba* pronounced the people and servants of *Solomon* happy, which did stand ever before him to hear his wisdom. When *Elisha* demanded of the *Shunamite* what he should do for her, or whether there were anything to be spoken for her to the King, or to the Captain of the host: she answered, *I dwell among mine own people*. She lived in peace and quietness, she had no cause to make any complaint against any her Neighbors, she was not driven to make any suit to King or Captain, she troubled not others, and others troubled not her, and this she accounted an happy life. But the happy estate and blessed condition of the faithful, is a thousand times greater: they are at peace with heaven and earth, with Men & Angels, with themselves, and with all others, with life and death, nothing shall be able to hurt them.

True it is, they have no promise to be free from temptations and troubles, Famine may come, Persecution, Pestilence, nakedness, poverty, peril, and tribulation may come, and death shall come: but we have a gracious and sure promise, that they shall not hurt us, or destroy us, or hinder our salvation, they are all Enemies without Armor, as Soldiers without a Sword, as Serpents without a sting, and as Asps without venom. This is it which the Prophet handleth at large. *Psal. 91. Who so dwelleth in the secret of the most High, shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty: surely, he will deliver thee from the Snare of the Hunter, and from the noisome Pestilence: thou shalt not be afraid of the fear of the night, nor of the Arrow that flieth by day: nor of the*

Pestilence that walketh in the darkness, nor of the Plague that destroyeth at noon-day, A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come near thee: there shall none come unto thee, neither shall any Plague come near thy Tabernacle. He meaneth not in these words, that the godly shall be free from troubles, sicknesses, & all calamities, but that God doth so care for them, and watch over them, that nothing shall be able to hurt and harm them, but he will give them a sanctified use of the Cross, and make all things turn to their good, and further their salvation. This is it which the Apostle Paul offereth to our considerations; *Let no man rejoice in men, for all things are yours: whether it be Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death: whether they be things present, or things to come, even all are yours, and ye Christ's, and Christ, God's.* Great is the dignity and excellency of the godly, that all things are made to serve to their use, and are appointed in the ordinance of God to serve for their profit: according to that which he hath in another place, *We know that all things work together for the best unto them that love God, even to them that are called of his purpose.* Where we see he teacheth, that not only things present are ours, but things to come: not only life is ours, but also death, which is a gain and advantage to the godly, and an entrance or door that leadeth to everlasting life. What greater glory can befall us, or what greater happiness can we desire, then to have all things ours. Life is ours, death is ours, the world is ours, the Cross is ours, the Crown is ours, heavens is ours, the Angels are ours, Christ is ours, God is ours, all is ours, and what is there that is not ours? What a great honor is this? Or who is it that can doubt of these things? Or whom should not these privileges move? The World is a place of our resting: Life the time of our bettering: Death, is a change of our misery, and an entrance into glory: things present, are the beginning of our comfort: things to come, are the consummation of our comfort: the Cross is our instruction: the Angels are our Watchmen: the heaven is our happiness: Christ is our Savior: God is our Father: all things are favorers and furtherers of our salvation. It is a comfort of all comforts, that we are at peace with God, that he is our friend, and that he hath no controversy against us. If God were against us, who should be able to stand for us, or dare take upon him the protection and defense of us? But being justified by Faith, we are at peace with God. It is a great blessing to be at peace with men: but it is a greater blessing to be at peace with God. We are at peace with the blessed Angels, *Who are all ministering Spirits, sent forth to Minister for their sakes which shall be heirs of salvation.* They guard us from dangers, they carry us, as a Nurse doth her Child in her Arms, that we be not hurt by the Devil, or his Angels, or his Instruments.

We are at peace with the Church; that is, with all such as fear God, and believe in Christ. The Prophet *Isaiah* speaking of the Kingdom of Christ, and of the fruits of the Gospel, foretelleth; *That the Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard with the Kidde, and the Calf, and the Lyon, and a fat Beast together, and a little Child shall lead them, &c.* Meaning thereby, that when a man is called into the State of grace, howsoever by Nature he have the greediness of a Wolf, the wildness of a Leopard, the fierceness of a Lyon, the cruelty of a Bear, he shall lay away his savage and brutish Nature, and become gentle, and live peaceably with all men. We are at peace with our own selves, which is the peace of a good conscience, when it being washed in the blood of Christ, ceaseth to accuse and terrify, and beginneth to excuse and comfort us; when neither Hell, nor Death, nor damnation, nor any danger doth dismay us, or bring us to

despair: but in the midst of all, we have the peace of God ruling in our hearts, as the Apostle speaketh. *Coloss. 3. 15.* If a man wear at peace with the Angels, with men, and with all the Creatures, if he had no Enemy to encounter him, but lived at peace with others: yet if he were at war and Mortall enmity with himself, if he felt the terrors of conscience, and his own heart condemning him, he should quickly find what a great blessing it is to have a clear conscience, which is a continual Feast. This peace was in *David*, when he said, in the midst of manifold dangers, *I laid me down and slept, and rose again; for the Lord sustained me: I will not be afraid of ten thousand of the people that should beset me round about.* This is of such excellency, that it is called *The peace of God that passeth all understanding:* it is instead of a guard, to keep our hearts and minds in Christ. We are at peace with our enemies, both because so soon as we believe in Christ, we seek to have peace with all men, so far as is possible, and as much as lieth in us, and because God restraineth the malice of the Enemies, and inclineth their hearts to embrace peace; Thus God brought *Abraham* and *Isaac* into favor with *Abimelec* King of *Gerar*, that he was ready and willing, no only to receive peace when it was offered, but to crave peace when it was not desired. Thus God brought *Daniel* into favor with the chief of the Eunuchs and sundry others, to find the fruits of love at the hands of their enemies, because he hath the harts of all men in his own hand, to wind them and turn them at his own pleasure.

Lastly, we are at peace with all Creatures in Heaven and Earth; above and beneath, which are made to serve for our benefit and salvation. The Prophet saith; *Thou shalt walk upon the Lyon and the Asp, the young Lyon and the Dragon shalt thou tread under foot.* And God promiseth, *To make a Covenant for them with the Beasts and Fowls, that they shall walk safely.* All these privileges teach us (having such a large peace with God and his Angels, with the Church and our own selves, with our Enemies and all Creatures) that it is the most comfortable thing in the world, to be under the grace and Covenant of God, and that nothing is more to be desired, then to feel the favor of God towards us: for having this, we possess all things. If we want him and his favor, though we have all the world, it will not nor cannot content us, but all things are cursed to us, and we to them.

Lastly, seeing all that are accepted of God, are blessed with all good things, this teacheth us the wretched and fearful condition of all such, as by reason of sin are out of favor with God, they shall find no rest, they shall have no peace, heaven and earth shall conspire against them, and deny them succor and comfort in the day of God's punishment and visitation. It is said of *Ishmael*, that his hand should be against every man, and every man's hand against him: so is it with all the ungodly, not reconciled to God, they shall find no sound comfort in any Creature, but shall have all the World against them. This is a great misery and torment, lying heavy upon the wicked, and piercing their Souls as the flashings of Hell, according to the saying of the Prophet; *I create the fruit of the lips to be peace; peace unto them that are far off, and to them that are nere, saith the Lord, for I will heal them: but the wicked are like the raging Sea that cannot rest, whose Waters cast up Mire and Dirt, There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.* God setteth himself against them, and all Creatures shall confound them and fight against them, until they are confounded and overthrown. And as the Apostle speaking of the blessed and happy estate of the godly, declareth, that all things are theirs: so on the other side we

may truly say of the ungodly, that nothing is theirs; they have Title and interest in no creature to receive any comfort in them, or stay from them, or protection by them. God is become their Enemy, the Angels are armed to destroy them, their own consciences convince and condemn them, the Heaven is shut against them, death is the gate of Hell unto them, affliction is a means of murmuring in them, the World is a Snare unto them, Christ is a Rock of offense unto them, the Gospel is the favor of death unto them, the mercy of God is made a Packe-horse for their sins, all the ordinances of God are abused by them, and all the works of God's hands shall be Instruments of their confusion. If anything may be accounted theirs, it is destruction of their Souls, confusion of their faces, contempt of their persons, horror of their consciences, the company of the Devils, the tormenting of their bodies, the feeling of God's wrath, and the separation from his presence and glory; all these shall indeed be theirs, and wholly theirs, and only theirs, and always theirs, when their secret sins and wickedness shall be revealed. Then they shall call to the Hills to cover them, and try to the Mountains to keep them from the sight of God, from the seat of his judgment, and from the fierceness of his wrath and indignation. And as the Apostle teacheth, concerning the godly (as we shown before) that all things work for the best to them: so we may truly teach on the contrary, that to those which love not the Lord, nor the Lord them, all things turn to their destruction, and further their condemnation; the Word, the Sacraments, and all other exercises of Religion, as we see in the *Israelites*, and in *Judas*, whom no instructions could convert, no miracles could move, no means could profit or bring to repentance. If a man had any suit in some Princes Court to make, or a supplication to put up, and there should find the Prince, the Peers, the Nobles, the Commons, and all men set against him to cross him and contradict him, to resist and gain-say him, his case would be judged of all men to be most miserable: but thus the case standeth with all evil and ungodly men that stand in need of God, and of good men, and of all God's Creatures; yet shall have no relief or refreshing from them: God will deny them, Christ will not know them, the Spirit will not comfort them, the Angels will not guard them, the Prayers of the Church will not help them, the Gospel shall not pardon them, the Sacraments shall not strengthen them, the Beasts shall not spare them, the Creatures shall not sustain them. And if they shall peradventure find any comfort or consolation in them, yet what would that avail them, when their own conscience within their own breasts, should arraign them as a Malefactor, convince them as a witness, condemn them as a Judge, and torment them as an Executioner? This we see in the example of *Cain*, when he had made a breach and wound in his conscience, he could rest nowhere, he could abide in no place, he stood in fear of every Creature, he cried out; *My punishment is greater then I can bear: Behold, thou hast cast me out of this day from the Earth, and from thy face shall I be hid, and shall be a Vagabond and a Runnagate in the Earth, and whosoever findeth me shall slay me.* In this State and condition do all the Reprobate and unregenerate stand, they shall find no peace in any Creature in Heaven and Earth, and their own conscience as a thousand witnesses shall torture and torment them. And if any time they seem to have peace and to find rest, their peace is a false and deceitful peace. They laugh sometimes, but it is from the teeth outward, and in mirth the heart is heavy. They have riches, but they are as Usurpers and as Thieves have them, who shall come to be arraigned and condemned for them. Their outward estate seemeth happy, but it is most slippery and uncertain: when they say, peace,

peace, then cometh sudden destruction, as the pain upon a Woman in travail. But the righteous, howsoever they seem many times miserable in trouble, and destitute of all good things, do indeed want nothing which God seeth to be for his glory and their good, they have that true peace which our Savior promiseth to leave with them, and to bestow upon them: *Peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you: let not your heart be troubled, nor fear.* Mark then the difference between the godly and the ungodly: the condition of the godly is in show miserable, but indeed most blessed; *They are as unknown, and yet known: as dying, & behold they live: as chastened, and yet not killed: as sorrowing, and yet always rejoicing: as poor, and yet making many rich: as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.* On the other side, the condition of the wicked is in show blessed and happy, but indeed and in truth, most wretched, lamentable, and miserable. Their laughter is madness, their peace is unquietness, their joy is sorrow of heart, and the end thereof is heaviness. To this purpose the Wiseman saith; *There is away that seemeth right to a man, but the issues thereof are the ways of death.* So then, howsoever the ungodly eat and drink, sing and dance, jest and talk of vain things, howsoever they labor to avoid grief, and put away the evil day far from them; howsoever they pass away the time merily, and live as if they had made a Covenant with death, yet they cannot be in quiet and rest, for they have an Hang-man and Tormentor within them, from whose hands they cannot be delivered; to wit, their conscience which doth check them and terrify them, before the judgment seat of God, although they strive to make themselves believe that there is neither God nor Devil; neither heaven nor hell; neither salvation nor damnation. Thus much of the blessings craved in this salvation.

[From God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.]

Now we come to consider from whence these gifts come, and who is the Author of them, to wit; from God the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghost. So then, these graces here entreated, are craved and wished from the blessed Trinity, distinguished into three persons. We learn from hence, that all good things of what sort soever, either for obtaining blessings, or avoiding judgments, are to be entreated and requested from God. All things temporal and eternal, are to be asked and begged from that one God, which is revealed unto us by the Scripture, in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. When *Isaac* purposed and prepared to bless his Son *Jacob*, and to pronounce what blessings should come upon him and his posterity, he said; *God give thee of the Dew of Heaven, and of the fatness of the Earth, and of the plenty of Wheat and Wine.* God gave this form to *Aaron* and his Sons, of blessing the Children of *Israel*: *The Lord bless thee and keep thee, the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be merciful unto thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* The Book of the *Psalms* doth plentifully offer this truth unto us in the practice of *David*, and other the dear Children of God, *Have mercy upon us, ô Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have suffered to much contempt.* This is the direction that the Apostle *James* giveth; *If any of you want wisdom, let him ask of God, which giveth to all men liberally, and reproacheth no man, and it shall be given him.* This is that which the Apostle both teacheth and craveth: *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.* The like we see used by the Apostle *John. Revel. 1. 4.* All which testimonies serve directly to teach us, that what blessings soever we want, we must beg them of God, and of him only.

Let us see the Reasons to confirm us in this truth. First, God is the fountain of all good things, and the Well-spring of all graces whatsoever. He is a most bountiful and liberal Giver, none can help us but he alone. If he shut his hands, who can open them? If he stop his ears, who can hear? If he turn away his eye from us, who can see our wants? If he close up his heart, who can show mercy? Hence it is that the Apostle saith: *For of him, and through him, and for him; are all things: to him be glory forever, Amen.* And James, in the first Chapter of his Epistle. *I am. 1. 17. Every good giving, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

Secondly, the three persons in Trinity, do work jointly together, even from the first beginning of our creation, to the last finishing of our salvation. It is said, all things were made by the Son, and that without him, nothing was made that was made; the Spirit also did sustain and uphold that confused Lump, which was the matter of the universal: so that they are said and set down to be Creators as well as the Father. In the work of our salvation, the Father willeth it, and electeth us; the Son meriteth and deserveth it, the Holy Ghost applieth and appropriateth it. This is it which Christ himself saith. John. 5. *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* And Chap. 16. *When he cometh, which is the Spirit of truth, he will lead you into all truth.* So we might say the like, touching the gifts of Sanctification and Justification, the Father forgiveth and washeth away sin by the blood of Christ, through the sprinkling of the Spirit: he mortifieth sin by the power of the death of Christ, through the working of the Holy Ghost: he raiseth unto newness of life, by the power of Christ's Resurrection applied by the Spirit: he justifieth us by the righteousness of Christ, imputed and appropriated unto us by the Spirit. Seeing therefore that God is a most munificent and liberal giver, rich unto all, and niggardly to none, and seeing these three persons being one God, do work jointly together in all things touching the creation of the World, and the salvation of man, and the redemption of our Souls; it followeth, whensoever we want any gifts needful for Soul or body, for this life, or the life to come, we must ask the supply of them at the hands of God only, the Father, the Son, and holy Ghost.

Now let us handle the Uses briefly that arise from hence. First, we see, that it is necessary for all that would pray aright, and would obtain that which they desire, to be well instructed in the Unity of the Godhead, and the Trinity of the persons, and to know the distinct properties of the persons, without the understanding whereof, we worship not the true God, but an Idol. Our Savior in his conference with the Woman of *Samaria*, chargeth the *Samaritans* to worship they know not what: so do many in our days, both Heretics and ignorant persons, they call upon God confusedly, but they have no particular knowledge of God at all. We must conceive no otherwise of God in our mind, then he hath expressed in his word. The scripture teacheth to knowledge, to believe, to worship one God, and him only. If we conceive or imagine, or receive a multiplicity of God's, we turn the truth of God into a lie, and we erect unto our selves so many Idols. Again, the same Scripture setteth before us three persons in that Godhead; the Father, which is the first person in the Trinity of himself; the Son, which is the second person, begotten of the Father; the holy Ghost, which is the third person, proceeding from the Father and the Son. The Father is God, the Son is God, the holy Ghost is God, and yet these three persons are not three God's, but one only God. And here we have in

this place a notable Testimony of the God-head of the Son, where the Apostle desireth, and prayeth for grace and peace to be given to *Philemon* and his Wife, to *Archippus* and the Church, not only from God the Father, but from the Lord Jesus Christ. This had been monstrous & horrible Idolatry and blasphemy. Lastly, if Christ had not been in Nature, Majesty, and glory equal with the Father, he of whom, and from whom, we crave spiritual and eternal gifts, *And of whose fullness we receive, and grace for grace*, must be confessed and believed to be God: but such is Christ Jesus, and therefore let this be an article of our Faith written in our hearts, acknowledged with our mouth, and confessed in the Church forever, that Christ is true God.

Secondly, all good things are to be craved of God, whether it be the supplying of his graces, or the removing of our troubles, we are taught to go immediately to God by Christ whensoever he blesseth us, and to return unto himself the praise of his own work. This duty being required, it serveth to meet with many corruptions that are too common in the world. It convinceth such Heathnish minded men as are of dead harts, and have no spark of the life of God's Spirit in them, that receive and swallow up daily diverse blessings, yet never look to GOD that blesseth them, but we are like unto the Swine that go groveling to the ground, like the Horse and Mule that have no understanding at all, and so use all the profits and pleasures of this life, without any acknowledgement and consideration from whence they come, and of whom they have received them: or like unto the *Israelites* when they had forsaken God. *They sate down to eat and drink, and rose up to play:* or as *Esau*, *He did eat and drink, he rose up and went his way*, he filled his paunch, and such was his profaneness, that he was touched with nothing. These men do daily devour infinite mercies of God, and yet never call upon him. In him they live and move, and have their being, yet never acknowledge him, from whom they receive life, and breath, and being. This is an evident argument of a profane Spirit, and made the mark of an Atheist, not to pray to God. Moreover, it reproveth such as having great benefits bestowed upon them, do not magnify the Author and giver of them, but some praise themselves, and ascribe them to their own power, and so sacrifice to their own yarne, as *Nebucadnezzao* did. *Dan. 4. 27. Is not this great Babel that I have built, for the House of the Kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my Majesty?* This way do the greatest sort of men offend, if they have anything, they impute it to themselves, and thank their own hands, and ascribe it to their own labors, to their early rising, to their late going to bed, but never remember the Name of God, nor consider that whatsoever we have for Soul and Body, and all things belonging unto them are from God, whether of necessity, plenty, or pleasure. Let us learn to confess, and say with the Prophet. *Psalm 23. Thou dost prepare a Table before me in the sight of my adversaries, thou dost anoint mine head with Oil, and my Cup runneth over.* Some likewise bless their Idols and the works of men's hands, which is detestable Idolatry, as *Belshazzar* did, who when he brought forth the golden Vessels that were taken out of the Temple of the Lord's house at Jerusalem, he praised his God's of Silver and Gold, to whom he ascribed the praise of the victory, and contemned the true God who liveth forever. Others, call upon Saints and Angels, instead of flying unto God; as they do that embrace the Religion of the Church of *Rome*, who for every purpose and use have a several Saint; as likewise the Heathen had that knew not God. For touching the Idolatry of the Gentiles and of

the Papists, touching superstition of the one and the other, blood cannot be more like to blood, Milk to Milk, or an Egg to an Egg, then one of them is to another, as may appear by the conference and comparison of them both. For first, there was no Nation, no Province, no Citty, no House, which had not some peculiar protecting God to stand for them against Enemies, and to defend them from evil; as *Babylon* had *Belus*; *Egypt* had *Isis* and *Osyris*; *Athens* had *Minerua*; *Ephesus*, *Diana*, &c. Thus is it among the false Catholics, and false Christians; *Spain* hath *James*; *France* hath *Saint Denis*; *Germany* hath *Saint George*; *Venice* hath *Saint Mark*; *Coloine* hath the three Kings; *Rome* hath *Peter* and *Paul*; the *Hungarians* have *Ludowick*; *Milen* hath *Ambrose*; and so other people, other Patrones: Secondly, among the Gentiles, the Elements had their several God's to rule over them, and to bear all the sway in them, as the Heaven and Fire, had *Jupiter*; the Air, *Juno*; the Sea, *Neptune*; and Hell had *Pluto*: not much unlike is it among the Papists, where *Agatha* ruleth over the Fire: *Nicholas* over the Sea: *Valesianus Theodulus* over the tempests, &c. Thirdly, the Gentiles had a certain God assigned to their Cattle; as *Apollo* and *Pan* the Shepherds God, and likewise to the fruits of the Earth: as *Apollo* ripened their fruit: *Bacchus* increased their Wine: *Ceres* sent them store of Corn: so is it among the *Romanists*: *Wendelinus* taketh care of their Sheep, *Eulogius* of their Horse, *Pelagius* of their Oxen: *Anthony* of their Piggies and Swine: *Iodocus* over their Fruits of trees: *Vrbanus* over their Vines: and (to show themselves no wiser then a Goose) they gave the charge of their Geese to *Gallus*. Fourthly, the Religion of the Gentiles assigned several God's for several diseases, and those they called upon to heal them and help them, they called upon *Apollo* for the plague; upon *Hercules* for the falling sickness: upon *Juno* for Women in travail: so the superstition of the Papists, hath assigned and deputed diverse He-Saints and She-Saints to the same purpose: they pray to *Sebastian* against the Plague: to *Petronella* against the Ague: to *Saint John* against Poison: to *Apollonia* against the Tooth-ach: to *Anastasius* against the Head-ach: to *Mark* against sudden death: to *Liberius* against the Stone: to *Margaret* for Women in travail: to *Uincent*, for the recovering and restoring of things lost: *Saint Felicitas* gave Male Children: *Anna*, Riches: and *Barbara* provided that none should die and depart before that they had received the Sacrament.

Fifthly, the Heathen had peculiar God's that were the Patrons of learning and learned men, and gave knowledge in Handy-crafts, as such as were studious *Apollo*, *Minerua*, and the nine Muses: Smiths, had *Vulcane*: Physicians, *Aeculapius*: Soldiers, *Mars*: Hunters, *Diana*: Mariners, *Castor* and *Pollux*: Harlots, had *Venus*, *Flora*, *Lupa*, and the like: If we come and compare these with the Church of *Rome*, we shall see the like practice, for among them the God of the learned, is *Gregory*: of the Painters, *Luke*: of the Physicians, *Cosmas* and *Damianus*: the God of Soldiers, is *Saint George*: of Smiths, *Eulogius*: of Shooe-makers, *Crispin*: of Tailors, *Gutman*: of Hunters, *Eustachius*: of Harlots, *Magdalena* and *Asra*. Lastly, the superstition of the Papists in worshipping Idols, is the same with the Idolatry of the Gentiles: for the Heathen did build Churches and Chapels, erected Altars, ordained Priests, set up Images, appointed Feasts and forms of prayers, offered gifts, burned Incense, and fell down before their false God's, which are the true works of men's hands. They sware by their names, when they entered into their Temples, they sprinkled themselves with holy Water, and they carried about with them their Images to worship. Let any man compare the *Roman* Religion, and the manners of worship

retained and practiced in that Church, and then let him openly declare, whether (the names only of the Idols being changed) the same Idolatry be not still maintained and continued; and whether the old Idolaters, which were the Gentiles; and the new Idolaters, which are the Papists, do any whit differ? But to leave them either to the mercy of God, to open their eyes, or to judgment, to make them that see not, more blind, let us acknowledge God only to be our Patron and Protector, who ruleth over Sea and Land, who taketh care of us and ours; whom we *Are commanded to call upon in the day of trouble, with promise to hear us.* Christ Jesus teacheth us a form of prayer, and willeth us to say: *Our Father:* and therefore let us go to the root, not to the branches; to the Fountain, not to the streams: to the Creator, not to the Creatures.

Lastly, seeing all gifts come from God by Christ, we are put in mind to use them all to his glory, of whom we have received them. If GOD have given us wit, wisdom, knowledge, authority, credit, riches, strength, honor, and such like, we must remember wherefore they have been bestowed upon us, and must be referred to their right end; not thereby to magnify our selves, and to set up our own Names, but to glorify the Giver of them, and to praise his great Name. If this be not the mark we aim at, and if every blessing do not make us gain some glory to God, who hath thus magnified us, and lifted up our heads above our Brethren, it had been better for us we had never received these blessings, but had been as wandering Clouds without Rain, as corrupt Trees without Fruit, and as empty Vessels without Water. Hence it is, that the Apostle remembering, that through God's blessing we are made partakers of food, he addeth; *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do; do all to the glory of GOD.* It is a notable comfort unto us, to use his blessings aright, that they that used their Talents well, were honored of the Master, and had more given unto them.

It is a fearful sin to abuse them, and to turn them to the dishonor of God, to the hurt of his Church, and to his own destruction. This is a common sore and sickness in our days. Whatsoever we have received, we have received in not for our selves alone, but for the good of others, and the glory of God: so that wear not to be lifted up in the pride of our own hearts, nor disdain or contemn our Brethren, but consider that there is nothing which we have not received, and therefore we must not boast as if we had not received it.

4I give thanks to my God, making mention always of thee in my Prayers.

5(When I hear of thy Love and Faith, which thou hast in the Lord Jesus Christ, and toward all Saints.)

We shown before, that the Prayers used by the Apostle, are partly a salutation; and partly a thanksgiving. Of the salutation we have spoken hitherto: Now followeth the Thanks-giving, wherein he giveth thanks to God for such good things as were found in him, and thereby conceiveth hope to obtain of him that which he requested. The Thanksgiving is set forth: First, by the subject or person, to whom thanks are rendered, to God. Secondly, by the time, when he praiseth God for him, not sparingly, or sildome, but oftentimes, and continually when he prayed unto God, and poured out his supplications unto him. Thirdly, by the

efficient cause, the hearing of his virtues and graces that abounded in him; to wit, his Faith in Christ, and his love to the Saints, the poor afflicted members of Christ. So then, we see to whom he gave thanks, to God: when he gave thanks for him, always when he prayed: and wherefore he gave thanks because he heard of his faith and love. As if he should have said; As I wish unto you all the full favor of God, and all prosperity, both of Soul and body: so I cease not to rejoice in thee, and to offer praise and thanks for thee to God whom only I serve and hang upon; even so often as I pray unto him, I remember thee, and that upon good ground and trial, for I do daily hear from the Churches of the worthy fruits of the Spirit of God that dwell in thee; namely, of thine unfeigned Faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus Christ, and of thy fervent love which thou showest to all the Saints, that stand in need of thy relief & comfort. Thus much touching the order and meaning of the words.

But before we proceed to handle the several Doctrines offered to our considerations in this division, it shall not be amiss for us to answer three doubts that may arise out of these words. First, the question may be asked, why the Apostle calleth God, his God, as if he were no man's GOD but his. Secondly, the *Rhemists* in this place gather two notable errors, Justification by works, and Prayer to the Saints, and make Faith to be no less in the Saints than in Christ. The like collection is made by *Bellarmino*, that we must believe in them, and hope in them, as in our Patrones, because the Apostle maketh mention of *Philemons* Love and Faith toward Christ, and toward the Saints; so that they gather, that there is Faith toward the Saints as well as toward Christ. Thirdly, it may be demanded why *Philemons* love is limited to the Saints, and to no other. Touching the first doubt arising out of the fourth verse, it may seem strange unto some, that the Apostle should say, *I thank my God*. Is he not the God of the rest of the Apostles and of all believers, as well as his God? Is he the God of the Mountains, and not of the Valleys? Is he the God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles? Yes, even the Gentiles also.

Paul therefore may be thought of many, to inclose a Commons, and to encroach upon the right of others, he may seem very courteous, and to claim and challenge as proper to himself, that which belongeth generally to all the faithful. But the Apostle setting down his right and interest in God, doth not deny or debar others of their privilege. He doth herein express the nature of a true Faith, which is to believe, not only that he is the God of other Men, but that he is his God, and that he was to believe in him, to rest in him, to depend upon him, to look for all good things from him. Hence it is, that the Prophet *Daniel* praying unto God, saith sometimes; *O our God*, and sometimes again, *O my God*. To say (our God) is a word of Charity: to say (my God) is a word of Faith: the one, respecteth others; the other, reflecteth upon our selves. When we pray *Our Father*, we show our love to the Brethren; when we say, *My Father*, we show our Faith, that we have our part and portion in God as well as others, and are to apply the promises of Grace, (made to all believers) particularly to our selves, otherwise they cannot help us and avail us. But of this we shall speak more afterward, when we come to the Doctrines.

The second question ariseth from hence, that *Paul* seemeth to make Faith respect the Saints, & so to teach us to believe in them, and to pray unto them. For in the fifth verse he saith, he

heard of *Philemons* love and Faith which he had toward the Lord Jesus Christ, and toward the Saints. But if the Apostle had meant to teach Faith to men, and to direct us to believe in Saints, he should be contrary to the Doctrine delivered by himself, contrary to the rest of the holy Scriptures, and contrary to the Articles of our Faith. Contrarie to himself, because he teacheth, that we cannot call upon any, whom we do not know out of God's word, and believe to be both able and willing to help us, saying: *Whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord, shall be saved: how then shall they call on him, on whom they have not believed?* Where he reasoneth thus, that we must believe only in God, and therefore pray only to God. He should be contrary to other Scriptures, because we are taught by them, *To come with boldness to the Throne of Grace;* & therefore the invocation of Saints is vain and needless, seeing we have a free access and bold approaching unto God through Christ: again, they are *Cursed that trust in man, and make flesh their Arm, and so with-draw their heart from the Lord.* Christ calleth us unto himself, and commanded us *to ask the Father in his Name, for the Father himself loveth us.* He should be contrary to the Articles of Faith, wherein we are taught to believe only in God, the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghost. Again, such as are not obstinately blinded, and peruersely disposed, may easily distinguish the Apostles words, and see that he referreth not Faith both to Christ and the Saints, but Faith to Jesus Christ, and love to the Saints. For after that he had commended *Philemon*, for two chief gifts of God, Faith and Love, in both which, consist the perfection of a Christian man, he assigneth to either of them their proper subject; namely, that Faith is in our Lord Jesus Christ, and Charity is toward all the Saints, which distinction and diverse Relation, may appear by the Latin Interpretour, and by their own *Rhemish* Translation, altering the preposition, and reading it thus; *Love and Faith in Jesus Christ, and toward all the Saints.* Thirdly, the Apostle else-where having occasion to mention these two graces of God, he doth describe them distinctly by their several obiectes, and expressly referreth Faith to Christ, and love to the Saints, as writing to the *Ephesians* he saith; *Therefore also, after that I hear of the Faith which ye have in the Lord Jesus, and love toward all the Saints, I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.* So in the Epistle to the *Colossians*, *We give thanks to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, always praying for you: since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of your love toward all Saints.* Compare these two places with the words of *Paul* in this place, and we shall see they serve as a Key to open this, and do utter that plainly which here is spoken more darkly. Thus we see by the way, that the Scripture is the best Expositor and Interpretour of the Scripture, and that which is spoken obscurely in one Book, is made evident and manifest in another. Fourthly, it were not hard to produce and allege sundry authorities and testimonies of elder times, thus distinguish the words as we do, and avouching that no Faith and confidence is to be put in any of the Saints, as if the Apostle had said; *I know how great Faith thou hast reposed in our Lord which hath saved us, and with how great Charity thou hast relieved them that are the Servants of God, and esteem godliness.* Lastly, Faith in the Saints cannot be proved, and invocation of them established and grounded from hence, because the Apostle speaketh of the Saints living, not departed; in the Church Militant, not Triumphant: the Saints on Earth, not in Heaven. For the Saints on Earth want our help, and crave our relief to be extended toward them: but they that are in glory and have received their Crown, do not stand in need of our comfort and refreshing: and therefore this is a weak foundation to build the Popish

Faith and belief, in Saints that are dead and departed out of this life, seeing the Apostle understandeth it of one sort, and they take it and stretch it to another.

The third question is this, why the Apostle restraineth *Philemons* love to the Saints, whereas love is a common debt that we owe to all men, as the Apostle saith; *Owe nothing to any Man, but to love one another, for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law.* Seeing therefore, love should not be restrained to the Saints, as though we ought to shut up our bowels of pity and compassion from others, and seeing we are not to despise our own flesh, but honor the Image of God engraven in our Nature: how is it, that his love which ought to comprehend all mankind, and enlarge it self to all others, is only mentioned to have been toward the distressed Saints and Members of the Church? The reason is, they which are of the Household of Faith, are tied to us by a stronger and straighter band of friendship and familiarity, and God commendeth them unto us more particularly, and so they ought to challenge the first place, in declaring the fruits of our love. The Apostle doth direct us to this point, when he saith; *While we have time, let us do good unto all men, but especially to them which are of the Household of Faith.* We are charged to love all, but we must love the Saints with a peculiar and special love, even as heirs with Christ, and Members of the same body with us. God requireth of us to love all men as his Creatures, but the godly as his Children. Though therefore our love should be common, and extend it self far and near into all the world: yet there should be certain degrees, and an order in our love should be observed. We are commanded to love all, but we are not commanded to love all alike. We are bound to love the godly and ungodly, but we are not bound to love the ungodly as the godly; the Reprobates as the elect; the Vessels of wrath, as the Vessels of honor; the Children of *Belial*, as the Children of God. We are therefore here directed, whom we are most nearly and deerly to love, even those that have Christ dwelling in their harts, and grace shining in their faces. Contrary to the practice of worldly Men, who only love such as are of this World; their love is like themselves, profane men, a profane love: carnal men, a carnal love: they love evil men for their evil, because they partake with them in evil: they hate the godly for their godliness, because they are unlike them, and will not run with them into all excess of riot, according to that which the Prophet hath, *They that reward evil for good are mine enemies, because I follow goodness.* This agreeth with that which Christ told and taught his Disciples, *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the World, but I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hateth you.* Thus much touching the deciding of the doubts and answering of the questions, that arise out of these two verses: Now let us come to the observations that arise therein.

The words being interpreted, and diverse questions answered, let us see what points offer themselves fitly to be deserved. First, he beginneth with a thanksgiving, to teach that it is meet and necessary to give thanks to God for benefits received at his hands, according to the Doctrine of the Apostles *In all things give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.* We are ready to forget such mercies as we have received, and thereby make our selves unworthy of further favor. Secondly, consider to whom he giveth thanks, to God: not to any Saint or Angel, or any Creatu•..., to guide us in the performance of this duty. Thirdly, mark the person, for whom, for *Philemon*: so that we are not only bound to give thanks for our selves,

but for other, especially when we see God's word to bring forth fruit in the hearts of Men. Thus doth *Paul* in this place, rejoice for the godliness of *Philemon*, and everywhere in his Epistles showeth himself exceeding glad for the conversion of Nations and people to the Faith. Thus the Church of the Jews are said to glorify God, when they heard of *Paul's* conversion. This is the duty of all Christians, specially of the Ministers, to pray continually for the Flock committed unto them, and to praise the name of God for their increase in godliness.

Fourthly, observe that first he mentioneth his thanks-giving; then his prayers for him, so that he joineth the one with the other. Whereby we see, that prayers conceived for our selves or others, are not to be severed from giving of thanks. For no man is so perfect in this life, but he hath need of daily increase in grace: and therefore we must so give thanks for our Brethren to God, in regard of the graces of his spirit which they have received, that we also pray incessantly for their growth in those graces. Besides, no man standeth so firmly rooted and grounded in grace, but he may fall, and by his fall have his gifts lessened and diminished, unless he be strengthened and stayed up by the means and helps that God hath appointed: among the which are Prayers, both our own and others.

Fifthly, he saith his Faith and love were heard off, and spread abroad far and near: so that we see God's graces bestowed upon us, will not be hidden and concealed. We are set as upon a Theater to be seen, all men's eyes are fixed upon us, all Men's mouths will be opened to speak of us, and all men's ears will listen what they can hear of us, even then when they are absent from us. On the other side, what evil soever we commit, we cannot conceal and cover, we have many eyes upon us we shall have a thousand ears to hearken, and ten thousand mouths to prattle against us, so that we must so walk as we saw many with us, and many saw us how we walk. Sixthly, we see here a notable difference between unfeigned praise, and feigned flattery. The Apostle without any feigning and fawning, rehearseth in this place the commendation of *Philemon*, as he doth in other places of the whole Churches, thereby to encourage them in well doing, and to stir them up, to continue fast and faithful to the death, and to hasten to the end of the race set before them. But such as flatter and use colorable words are wholly at the beck of others, extolling and admiring whatsoever they do or speak, whether it deserve praise or dispraise. It standeth us upon to consider whom we praise, and wherefore we praise them, that it be for such good things as appear to be in them.

[*I give thanks to my God, &c.*]

The Apostle finding and hearing of the excellent and worthy graces of God that were in *Philemon*, was moved with great joy, and thereby stirred up to bless and praise the Lord God. We learn from hence, that all Christians (especially Teachers) are greatly to rejoice and praise God when they see, or know, or hear, that professors prosper and grow forward in heavenly graces. It is a matter of great joy and comfort to seemen grow in graces as they do in years, and to increase in heavenly things as they multiply their days. When the Prophet *David* saw the forwardness of the people in offering willingly unto the Lord, with a perfect heart for the building of the Temple; *He rejoiced exceedingly, and blessed the Lord before all the Congregation.* And Psal. 122. *I rejoiced when they said unto me, Come, let us go into the house*

of the Lord. The Apostle writing to the *Romans*, giveth thanks through Jesus Christ for them all, *Because their Faith was published throughout the whole world*. When the Churches of *Judea* heard that *Paul* a Persecuter was converted to the Faith, and made a Preacher of the Faith, which before he destroyed, *They glorified God for him*. The Apostle *John*, writing to an elect Lady whom he loved in the truth, saith; *I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy Children walking in truth, as we have received a Commandment of the Father*. And writing to *Gaius*, he saith, *I rejoiced greatly when the Brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, how thou walkest in the truth: I have no greater joy then these, to hear that my Sons walk in verity*. By these several places alleged, as by so many witnesses produced, we see that it is our duty greatly to rejoice when we behold the Gospel flourish, and the professors of the Gospel grow forward in good things.

And there are many reasons to warrant and confirm this Doctrine. First, it serveth exceedingly to advance the glory of God that men grow in godliness, which ought to be an effectual reason to move us to rejoice: for what is there, that should more cheer and rejoice us, then when God's Name is magnified, and his truth extolled among the Sons of Men. In all things that we do, if we do them aright, we should aim at God's glory. Now, as the Name of GOD is blasphemed by careless and wicked professors, (the Apostle charging the Jews, that through their evil life, the Doctrine of God was slandered:) so on the other side, God is greatly honored, when our deeds accompany our words, and a godly life adorneth and garnisheth a good profession, according to ihe commandment of Christ; *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your goodworkes, and glory your Father which is in heaven*.

Secondly, the forwardness of one, is a notable means to draw forward another. For as one wicked man maketh another, and he that is seduced, is an Instrument to seduce another: so he that is truly converted, will not rest in the quiet fruit and inward comfort of his own conversion, but labor to convert others, and so make them partakers of that comfort which they have found. The Apostle writing to the *Thessalonians*, saith of them; *Ye became followers of us and of the Lord, and received the word in much affliction, with joy of the holy Ghost, so that ye were as ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia*. They that are gained to the faith, will be means to gain others, so that the winning of one is the gaining of another. This we see in the conversion of the Apostles. When *Andrew* was brought to Christ, *He found his Brother Simon first, and said unto him, We have found that Messias; which is by interpretation, that Christ*. So when Christ called *Phillip*, and said unto him, *Follow me: Phillip found Nathaniell, and said unto him, We have found him of whom Moses did write in the Law, and the Prophets, Jesus that Son of Joseph, that was of Nazareth*. The like we see in the Woman of *Samaria*, when Christ had preached salvation unto her, and offered unto her the Water of life, that she should thirst no more; she left her Water-pot, and went into the Citty, and said to the men; *Come see a man which hath told me all things that ever I did, is not he that Christ?* Being moved her self, she moved others: being drawn, she drew others to Christ.

Thirdly, it is a great comfort to the Pastors and Teachers of the Church, when such as are taught, do grow in grace, and prosper by those means that are brought and offered unto them. The Apostle calleth the *Phillippians* his Brethren beloved and longed for, his joy and his

Crown: wherein he accounteth their growth, his honor: their increasing, his rejoicing: their faith, his hope: their flourishing, his felicity: so when he had praised God for the zeal of the *Thessalonians*, in receiving the word, in following other Churches, and in suffering affliction for the Gospels sake, he addeth this reason; *For what is our hope, or joy, or Crown of rejoicing? Are not even you it, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? Yes, ye are our glory and joy.* He doth not make the matter of his glorying, and the occasion of his rejoicing to be his calling, so much as the fruit of his calling: he doth not comfort himself so much in his Apostleship, as in the effect of his Apostleship; that is, the conversion and salvation of the *Thessalonians*. If a man have never so high and eminent a calling in the Church or Commonwealth, he cannot comfort himself so much therein, as when he seeth the blessing of God upon his labors, when he remembereth he hath kept a good conscience therein, and considereth he is to God the sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. It is a great comfort to the Husbandman after his toiling and tilling, after his planting and ploughing, to see the fruits of his labors, and to behold the increase of the earth, that yieldeth usury, advantage, and increase when it is sowed. So it fareth with the spiritual Husbandman, whose labor is greater & oftener, enduring all the year long, whose patience is greater in waiting for the early and latter rain, whose gain and profit is less in tilling a dry and barren soil, that yieldeth little or no increase, but a crop of cares, a bundle of Briars and Bushes, and an Harvest of Thorns and Thistles, that are reserved for the fire.

Lastly, the graces of God, and the growing in these graces, are fruits of their election, and seals of their salvation, so that the Angels in Heaven rejoice at the conversion of a Sinner. Every grace of GOD addeth assurance: the greater graces, the greater assurance: the more graces, the more assurance: the growth of graces, is the growing of our assurance. For if these things be found and abound in us, they will make us neither to be idle nor unfruitful in the acknowledging of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, but give us a comfortable assurance of our eternal election and effectual calling. So the Apostle giveth thanks for all the *Thessalonians*, making mention of them in his prayers, and remembering the efficacy of their Faith, the diligence of their love, and the patience of their hope: by all which he gathereth assuredly, as building upon certain knowledge, that they are elect of God. Now then, to lay these reasons together, and to gather them as upon an heap: seeing nothing bringeth greater glory to God among men, nothing serveth better to draw on others, nothing ministereth greater joy to the Teachers, nothing sealeth up more surely their salvation, then the increase of his Kingdom, the growth of the Saints, and the enlarging of the bounds of the Church; it followeth, that all God's Children must show their joy and gladness, when they see any to increase in the obedience of the Gospel, to grow in grace, and to proceed constantly in the truth of God,

The Uses remain to be considered and learned of us. First, we see that the principal and chiefest thing which the Minister should seek and search after, is the profiting of his people, and the building up of the Kingdom of God among them. For his joy in their growth, and his comfort in their conversion, will cause him above all things to labor after it. There is no comfort in the Minister like to this comfort, when he seeth the fruits of godliness, as it were the marks of God's Spirit to shine forth brightly in his people. What comfort hath the

Husbandman, more in his husbandry, then to see the fruits of the earth; not to be blasted, but to be blessed; not to wither, but to grow; what joy hath the Shepherd like to this, when he seeth the flock not to be infected, but to flourish: not to be rotten and scabbed, but to be sound and whole: not to decrease and decay, but to increase and to bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets. What greater delight hath the Nurse, then to see her child live in health, grow up in strength and stature and prosper in the world? So there is no comfort like to this comfort, no joy like to this joy, no delight like to this delight, to behold the harvest of the Lord, the sheep of Christ, the Children of God, to flourish and to increase more and more to grow from faith to faith, & from grace to grace, *until they all meet together unto a perfect man; and unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ.* Hence it is, that after the Apostle had testified his joy and thanks to God for the faith and love of the Colossians he addeth: *for this cause we also, since the day we heard of it, cease not to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be fulfilled with knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord, and please him in all things, being fruitful in all good works, and increasing in the knowledge of God,* and let us by this example comfort our selves in such as increase in good things, and pray for such as are coming forward. We live in a decaying and declining time, wherein many have forgotten their first love: we see the cold season and Winter of all Godlines, wherein men are frozen in the dregs of Sin. We may behold with our eyes (if we be not stark blind) a general wasting, languishing, and consumption of the heat and heart of Religion. If then in this common pining of the vital parts, we may discern any reviving and refreshing to appear, or any flourishing of Godlines (which seemed dead at the root) to spring up, let it be a comfort unto us, and teach us to give God the glory, who maketh light to come out of darkness, and life to arise out of death. This serveth to reprove those that never desire the profiring of their people, nor regard what their estate, and how their standing is in heavenly things: they never consider whether they go forward or backward: whether they grow upward or down-ward, to Heaven or to Hell, to God or to the Devil, to Salvation or to damnation. These are they that feed themselves to the full, but regard not to feed the flock over which the holy Ghost hath made them overseers. These are they that live of the Alter, but care not to minister at the Alter: they will be sure to reap carnal things but they have no conscience to sow spiritual things. They live of the Gospel, but they will not preach the Gospel. The Apostle testifying his longing and thirsting after the salvation of the Church, said, *I seek not yours but you.* But these men, if they would speak the truth from their hearts, might say: we seek not you, but yours, we care not what become of you, so that we may find the sweetness of that which is yours. How far are these from the zealous affection of the same Apostle, who became all things to all men if by any means he might save some: he teacheth that a necessity lay upon him to preach the Gospel, and denounceth a woe upon himself if he preach not the Gospel. Let us all in our places follow his example, and pray unto God to give the grace of conversion to turn the hearts of men to the saving knowledge of the Gospel: and where he hath granted this mercy let us pray him to increase it more and more, and to continue it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, as the growing in good things is matter of joy, so on the other side, it is caused of great sorrow and grief of heart, when the professors of the saith, and hearers of the word,

and such as seemed lovers of the truth, do not profit, but revolt: do not go forward, but go backward, do not grow better and better, but become worse and worse. It must not seem strange, that great sorrow ariseth unto the servants of God, when men do not profit in good things. We see what worldly sorrow is found in worldly men that causeth death: the least occasion of loss, the least feeling of trouble, the least crossing of their humors can draw from them abundance of tears. But such as are led by the spirit of God, are spiritually minded, *they have godly sorrow that causeth repentance unto salvation not to be repented of.* This was in the Prophet David, when he saw a decay in Godlines, and a growing in wickedness, *mine eyes gush out with Rivers of water, because they keep not thy law.* This was in the Prophet Jeremiah, *O that mine head were full of water, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the Daughter of my people.* This was in Christ our Savior when he came near to Jerusalem, he beheld the Citty and wept for it, *O if thou hadst even known at the least in this day those things which belong unto thy peace, but now are hid from thine eyes.* This was in the Apostle Paul when he saw the revolting and backsliding of the Galatians, *O my little Children, of whom I travail in Birth again, until Christ be formed in you: I am in fear of you, least I have bestowed on you labor in vain: ye did run well, who did let you that ye did not obey the truth?* This is a special note to discern and distinguish true Pastors from hirelings, and faithful shepherds from Wolves: for the true Ministers of Christ are inwardly touched and grievously pained to behold the present sins of the people, and the future judgments of God hanging over their heads. This is a great grief of heart and goeth near them, to see so little growth of Godlines, so little fruit of their labors, so great increase of all ungodliness. This reproveth those that make a mock of sin, and can laugh as heartilie at the committing of iniquity, as at the best ieast and the greatest sport. If we begin once to laugh at sin, we will not make any conscience to commit it. When once we do not stick to ieast at it, we will quickly come to it in good earnest. When we can make a play of it, there is but a short step to put it in practice. The very Heathen saw thus much that had but half an eye, that if they suffered evil to be committed merrily and in sport, they should find it practiced in their earnest contracts & common affairs. And many of the heathen by other Heathen are commended, among whom vices were never laughed at. But how many are there among us that would be counted and are indeed called Christians, who come far behind the blind Infidels, who are open ieasters at evil, and deriders of good. This laughing is the beginning of evil, when ieastes turn to good earnest, and words into deeds. These men are far from the practice of those whom we heard before commended out of the word of God, and from the Godly affection of David and Jeremiah, of Paul and Christ himself, who mourned in soul to behold the sins that reigned and were commonly practiced in their days. This is a notable sign and assurance to our own hearts that we hate them indeed when they do draw out of us buckets of water and rivers of tears. This grief of heart was in the Apostle writing to the Phillippians, when he saw the loose behavior of of many that professed Christ in word, but denied him in deed, of whom he saith, *Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose end is damnation, whose God is their belly, whose glory is to their shame, which mind earthly things.* Now it cannot be but the hearts of the faithful Ministers and godly brethren, will be greatly grieved and vexed, when they see God dishonored by our careless walking, and standing still idle all the day long withou a laboring in his Vineyard: We must

daily increase and grow strong in faith, or else we decrease and grow weak in saith. If we wax not every day better, we fall to be worse and worse. We never stand at one stay. If we walk not forward, we run backward, like the water of the Sea, that if it do not flow, it ebbeth: or like unto the life of man, if strength increaseth not, it decayeth. So then, if any would come to man's full and perfect stature, he must grow up by little and little, from one measure to another: So if any would become a perfect man in Christ, he must follow the truth in Love, and in all things grow up into him, which is the head; that is, Christ, by whom all the body being coupled and knit together by every joint, receiveth increase of the body, unto the edifying of it self in love. Let us therefore take heed to our selves, that we grieve not the hearts of the faithful, and by our sins, quench their affections toward us, as it were by pouring Water upon them. Let us seek to grow up in knowledge and in obedience, that we be not as Dwarfes or Vrchins, never coming to any growth, nor profiting any whit in the School of Christ; nor be as idle Drones, that never labor, but live unprofitably to themselves and others.

Thirdly, it is the duty of all God's people, by striving to go forward in good things, to delight the hearts of their Teachers, and the rest of the Brethren. So long as we increase and proceed unto a perfect man, and unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ, that we be hence-forth no more Children, wavering and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the deceit of men, and with craftiness, whereby they lay in wait to deceive, we make Christ glad, we rejoyce the Spirit of God, we make glad the Angels, we comfort and cheer up the hearts of the godly, and we bring that peace to our own hearts, which passeth all understanding. On the other side, if we grow backward, and decline by little and little from the holy profession of the truth, which we have received, we crucify Christ, we quench the Spirit, we grieve the Angels, we offend the faithful, and we wound our own Souls. This duty urged from this Doctrine, reproveth sundry sorts of people, that do not desire to delight the hearts of those that have instructed them, and to comfort them that have labored in the word and Doctrine among them.

First, such as have continued long in the Church, and grow in years, but not in knowledge. What comfort can these men bring to their Teachers and Instructors, when no increase is seen, or can be marked in them? It is a common, but a most fearful sin, not to profit and proceed in the ways of godliness: and yet it is to be feared, that not one of an hundred cometh with any desire of instruction, with any care of sanctification, with any purpose of reformation, with any hunger after salvation. If men go to the the Market to buy their provision, and to supply the necessities of the body, we see what they bring home, we see they return not empty, we see they come back laden. But when they go to the House of God, and frequent the exercises of his word, how often do they return with empty hands; nay, with empty hearts, nay, with hard hearts, and so worse then they came unto them? This is it which the Apostle teacheth. *Hebr. 6. The earth which drinketh in the Rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth Hearbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing of God: but that which beareth Thorns and Briars, is reprovved, and is near unto curssing, whose ende is to be burned.* Secondly, hereby is condemned the want of the fruits of kindness toward the Pastors, whereby they may be encouraged, and made cheerful and comfortable in their calling. Some

there are, whom we may well account of the better, or (at least) none of the worser sort, who abstain from hurting, wronging, and molesting their Ministers, but they withal, abstain from showing succor, help, or countenance toward them: they will indeed do them no evil, but likewise they will do them no good, contemning them in their heart: they will not be open enemies, professing hatred toward them, but withal, they are not their friends to give them any comfort, they use them strangely and vnciuilly, as base abjects in their sight, when as their calling is as much honored and magnified in the word, by the mouth of God, as any calling under Heaven.

This was the sin of the *Corinthians* for a time, who wanted love & kindness in supporting the Apostle under the weight of his calling, so that he was constrained to stand upon the commending of himself, and the extolling of his Ministry, *I was a fool to boast myself, ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you, for in nothing was I inferior unto the very chief Apostles, though I be nothing.* This also the same Apostle complaineth of in another place, *At my first answering, no man assisted me, but all forsook me, I pray God that it may not be laid unto their charge.*

These men did not dispraise him, but they would not commend him: They would not renounce him, yet they would not defend him: as they would not disclaim him, so likewise they would not assist him. Of this sort are many that live among us, who think they have discharged a worthy duty toward the Minister, if they do him no harm, if they offer him no wrong, if they abstain from injury toward him. It was far otherwise with the *Galatians*, who loved *Paul* so dearly and entirely, that they accounted nothing to be too precious for him, *The trial of me which was in my flesh, ye despised not, neither abhorred; but ye received me as an Angel of God, yea as Christ Jesus: what was then your felicity? For I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them unto me.* But in these days wherein we live, it were well, or not much amiss for the faithful Ministers of the Gospel, if such as should support them, would not subvert them; if such as should help them, would not hinder them; if such as should raise them up, were not ready to cast them down; and if such as should refresh them, were not rather given to revile them, and disgrace them. Here then is condemned all hard and bitter dealing toward them (whereby their calling which is an honorable office, is made an irksome burden unto them to bear) against such as taunt and scorn them, that jest and mock at the work of their ministry, which is the wisdom of God, and the power of God, against those that delight to vex the servants of God, to mingle their bread with gravel, their drink with gall, and their life with reproach. This made the Prophets and Apostles cry out continually, to see themselves abused, their Ministry contemned, the word of God himself refused, & all Religion profaned. When *Elijah* saw that the children of Israel had forsaken the Covenant of God, cast down his Altars, and slain his Prophets, he desired God to kill him, *It is now enough, O Lord, take my soul, for I am no better then my fathers.* The prophet *Isaiah* saith, *I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, which walked in away that was not good, even after their own imaginations. Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength in vain, and for nothing, but my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.* The Lord saith to *Ezekiel*, *The Children of thy people talk of thee by the walls, and in the doors of houses, they*

sit before thee and hear thy words, but they will not do them, for with their mouths they make jests, and thou art unto them, as a jesting song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can sing well, for they hear thy words, but they do them not: and when this cometh to pass (for loe it will come) then shall they know, that a prophet hath been among them. So when Paul came to Athens, and saw the City full of Idols, he preached unto them the knowledge of God, and the resurrection of the dead, but they said, *What will this babbler say?* And others, worse then those that scorn and scoff at the word of life (which they should hear with fear and reverence) are fallen into this horrible depth of sin, that thorough malice to the word it self, do come unto them to hear them, not to learn, but to trap and entangle them; not to edify themselves, but to misreport and accuse them; not to receive profit, but to find occasion to persecute them, as the Jews did with Christ and his Apostles, who came not to hear them, but to tempt them; not to believe them, but to bely them. Many such Jews and Iudasses we meet withal in our days, who are so far from rejoicing the hearts of their Ministers, that they may do the work of their calling will ingly, not grudgingly; cheerfully, not heavily; with joy, not with greefel; that they think it a great duty done unto them, if they do not disgrace them, or molest them: It is a great sin not to help them, not to countenance them, not to stand with them in good causes, but to suffer every base companion, and beastly liver, to insult upon them as their footstool: but it is more grievous to scorn them, and deride them, to make them their Table-talk, and their Tavern-talk, to declaime against them from the Tribunal of their Ale-bench: but it is most fearful of all, to come to them, to catch them, and entrap them; to hunt after words and Syllables, and to wrest them against the mind and meaning of the speaker. Let us beware of these sins, let us not be in the number of such as are set down in the seat of scorners, and false accusers. If they shall not escape that do no good, if they shall not be excused that do not rejoice them; surely, they shall be guilty of a sorer and severer punishment that malice them, that mock them, that misinforme others of them, and every way misvse them, and contemn them.

Lastly, seeing we are all bound to rejoice in the proceeding of the faithful, it followeth from hence necessarily, that we are not to envy and repine at the growth of the Church, or of any member of the Church. This is a great fault and folly in many, when they see any parts of the Church flourish, and behold greater increase in others then in themselves, by and by they grudge and repine at it, and have their own eye evil, because the Lord's eye is good. These are like to those Laborers, that were hired into the Vine-yard, who when they saw such as were hired about the eleauenth hour to receive their penny, and to be made equal with them, who had borne the brunt and burden of the day, and had endured the heat and sweat of the work, they envied at the Servants, and murmured against the Mayster of the house. We must envy no man's good, we must repine at no man's Salvation. The calling and conversion of the Gentiles, was such a stumbling-block in the way, and n Mote; nay, a Beam in the eyes of the Jews, that they had rather renounce the Gospel, and depart from Christ, then to receive them into a fellowship of the same Faith, and make them partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven. So did the Scribes and Pharisees take it grievously, that the grace of God, and Remission of sins, and the Mysteries of Salvation, should be preached and published to Publicans and Sinners. There is no gift or benefit bestowed upon any, but it is

given for the good and comfort of the whole Church, so that we should rejoice therein, not repine thereat, forasmuch as we have our portion and profit in it. Nevertheless, what is more common and usual, then to make the blessings of God upon others, a great eye-sore unto our selves? Such as are dull and back-ward themselves, cannot abide those that are forward: They that are ignorant, think all others to have too much knowledge: They that are cold and slothful in the matters of God, do carpe and cavil at the zeal which they see in others, and think them to be too hasty, too earnest, too praecise. Hence it is, that oftentimes the Husband checketh the Wife; the Father controuleteth the Son; and one Friend tebuketh another, as running too fast, and shooting beyond the mark. Howsoever this is not greatly to be feared in our days, wherein few run at all, & many stand still, wherein few shoot at the mark; yet if it were so, it is better to be a little too forward, then to be too backward; to have a little too much zeal, then to be stark cold, as many; or luke-warm as the most are. We see this in the state of a man's body, it is easier to work an evacuation of that which is too much, then to procure a restitution of that which is too little. It is an easier cure to purge our gross & superfluous humors when they abound, then to repair and restore Nature when it is decaying and consuming. It is much easier to take away the sharpness of an edge tool, then to set a sharp edge on that which is blunt & dulled. It is easier to pull down a part of the building which is over-much, then to lay a new foundation. If there be one among us that seeketh to be too just, and aimeth at a righteousness above the Law, there are a thousand that come too short, and fail in that which is required of them. It is a most blessed thing to keep the Golden mean between too much and too little. It is easier to bring him that is in the excess to the mean, then to reduce him to the mean, that is in the defect. When a man lieth dead in sins and trespasses, and hath no spark of the life of God in him, to bring such an one to true godliness, is, as it were, to raise him from the dead. When a man lieth languishing and consuming by little and little, and all good things begin to decay in him, so that he is grown stark cold; nothing is harder then to restore such a one; it is as much as to work a wonder and miracle. But when our zeal is grown to be a little too hot, and our edge made somewhat too sharp, it requireth no great labor, it asketh no great pains to reduce us back again, and to make us return home the way by which we went. There is no cause therefore, that we should so rashly and out-ragiously bear our selves toward those that climb up a step too high, and bear them-selves a little too forward: let us rather examine our selves, and consider whether we do not our selves many ways fail of our duties; so that we may say, and say truly, we are unprofitable servants. Let us never envy or grudge at the good of others, remembering always, that what grace soever is granted to one member, is given to the whole body, and to every particular member of the body; As he that doth good to the eye, doth good to the whole body, & the benefit redowndeth to the hand and foot. Thus it is in the mystical body of Christ, *We being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone, one another's Members*. We see in the Acts of the Apostles, when the Disciples had heard, that Peter was called and warned by an Heavenly Vision, to preach to *Cornelius*, and other Gentiles, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying; *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted Repentance unto life*. Thus much of the Joy and Thanks-giving of the Apostle; Now let us see to whom he gave thanks, set down in the next words.

[*I give thanks to my God.*]

Here is the first illustration of the Apostles Thanksgiving, declaring to whom it is made, to wit; to God. The Apostle giving Thanks, and praising God, he calleth him, his God. He saith not simply, *I give thanks to God*, but particularly; *I give thanks to my God*. He calleth him his God, and applieth the promises of the gospel made to all that believe peculiarly and especially to himself. Whereby we see for our instruction, that the nature and property of a true and lively faith, is, to apprehend and apply God and his promises particularly to our selves. It is a duty required of us, to labor for that faith which may be as an hand to lay hold on the mercies of God, and to appropriate them unto our selves. This we see in the vow of *Jacob*, *If God will be with me, and will keep me in this journey which I go, and will give me Bread to eat, & clothes to put on, so that I come again unto my Fathers house in safety, then shall the Lord be my God*. This special application we see oftentimes in *David*, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And again, *O Lord my God thou art exceeding great*. The same appeareth in *Thomas*, one of the twelve; when Christ (who will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flaxe) had respect to the weakness of his Faith, and bad him see the print of the Nayles in his hands, and put his Finger into his side, he cried out, *Thou art my Lord and my God*. This Christ practiseth himself, and teacheth others, when he said to *Mary*, *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my Brethren, and say unto them; I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father; and unto my God, and to your God*. The Apostle Paul, speaking of Christ, and the benefites which he reapeth by him, saith, *I am crucified with Christ, but I live, yet not I anymore, but Christ liveth in me: and in that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith in the son of God, who hath loved me, and given himself for me*. And in another place, *I thank him which hath made me strong, that is, Christ our Lord, for he counted me faithful, and put me in his service*. All these consents of the holy Scriptures, serveth to confirm us in this truth, that true Faith standeth in a particular applying of the general promises of the Gospel.

The Reasons will make this yet more manifest unto us. For first, everyone that shall be saved, must have a particular Faith of his own, and not satisfy himself with the Faith of another. No man can be saved by another man's believing, no more then be nourished by another man's feeding. The Prophet *Habbakuk* teacheth this point evidently, saying; *The just shall live by his own Faith*. Faith is the work of the Spirit in the heart of man, so that if it must be in the hearts of everyone of us, it followeth that it must be special.

Secondly, true Faith giveth sound comfort, and worketh peace with God; this is the property of that Faith which we must have in us. But comfort cometh unto us, by hearing of a promise made to others, not belonging to our selves. What consolation of heart can this work in us, to know that others shall be saved? This the Apostle speaketh of, *Heb. 6*. God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise, the stableness of his counsel, bound himself by an Oath, that by two immutable things, wherein it is impossible that God should lie, we might have strong consolation, which have our refuge to lay hold upon that hope that is set before us. No man receiveth comfort by the riches of another, himself being poor: or by the honor of another, himself living in disgrace: can so no man can feel any comfort by the Faith of another, so long as he wanteth Faith himself, to apply Christ unto himself. Seeing then,

that every man must attain to salvation by his own faith, which is able to minister comfort unto him in the time of need, we see that Faith consisteth in applying the mercies of God unto our own selves.

The Uses of this Doctrine are now to be considered and stood upon, that so we may understand how to apply this applying of Faith unto our selves. First, this confirmeth the form and manner of speech, used in the Articles of Faith, wherein everyone is taught to say; *I believe in God*; Not, *We believe in God*. For howsoever we are to pray for others as well as for our selves, and are taught to say; *Our Father which art in Heaven*; yet, when the question is of our Faith, we must say, not [*We believe*] but [*I believe*.] We pray for others, but we believe for our selves. The like is to be said of every principle of Faith, every man must hold them all, and believe them all. This overthroweth the Doctrine of the Church of Rome, which teacheth a general and implicit Faith to be sufficient for us, to Justification and Salvation. For they teach, if a man can say, *I believe as the Church believeth*, though he know not how or what the Church believeth, though he understand nothing, though he be able to apply nothing unto himself, he hath a good faith, and by that faith may be saved.

Answerable to this Divinity, are the Jesuits and School-men's damnable and devilish positions, which maintain; that the people are not bound to know what the matters of Faith be; that ignorance is better then the knowledge of them; that they need not enquire after them; and that Faith is better defined by ignorance, then by knowledge. Hence it is, that they commend the Colliars Faith, who (as the tale is told) being at the point of death, and tempted of the Devil what his Faith was? Aunswared, *I believe and die in the faith of Christ's Church*; but being again demanded, what the faith of Christ's Church was, that faith (said he) that *I believe in*: and thus the devil getting no other answer, was overcome and put to flight. This fable hath been so long told and related among them, that now themselves begin to believe it to be a truth; as a liar by often telling an untruth, beginneth to think it may be a true tale. This Colliars faith is the popish Creed, which being founded in ignorance, is too weak a shield to quench the fiery Darts of the Devil, and to resist his temptations. Thus true faith is suppressed, & ignorance is set on foot by these ignorant Teachers, who as they are blind themselves, so they would put out the eyes of others. They require no knowledge of the things we pray for, but prefer ignorance: they require no ability to profess the particular points of our faith, but in gross and general. This ignorance is plentifully condemned in the Scriptures. We are taught, that the word must dwell plentifully in us, and that we must be able to give an account of the hope that is in us, to them that shall require an answer of us. We are taught that ignorance is the Mother of all evil, the root of all error, the cause of all unbelief, and that whatsoever things are written afore hand, were written for our learning, that we might have comfort and believe.

Thus do these enemies of God and his people, take from them their sword when they should go to fight, and strip them of their Armor when they should enter the battle; like Thieves, that put out the Candle which serveth to discover them. To conclude, let us know that an ignorant faith is no faith, for where there is no knowledge, there can be no faith. But such as live in the Church of *Rome*, being blindly led of blind Teachers, do know nothing to their

comfort, they have the key of Knowledge taken from them, they are nuzled and encouraged in ignorance, they hear it magnified and extolled unto the skies. Some of them pretend the reading of the Scriptures in the mother tongue, and in the translation that all may understand, to be a principal cause of heresy. Another shameth not to avouch, that it was the invention of the Devil, to permit the people to read the Bible. Another blusheth not to write, that he knew certain men possessed of a Devil, because being but Husbandmen, they were able to discourse of the Scriptures. They teach, that it is Heresy for a Lay-man to dispute in a point of faith. These men speak not by the spirit of God, but utter the Devils language, and instruct the people in the Colliars Creed. It is written of *Timothy*, that he was trained up of a child in the knowledge of the Mysteries of Religion. It is written, that the things revealed, belong to us and to our children. In former times, the Doctrines of godliness, and several points of religion, were known of all, and the lowest of the people reasoned of them, and their Bishops exhorted thē thereunto; asking why they are uttered, if they may not be known? Why they have sounded, if they may not be heard? And wherefore are they heard, but that we should understand them?

Secondly, seeing it is the very form of faith to receive and apply: this teacheth, that it is not enough for men to have an historical faith to believe those things to be true which the word teacheth, touching God, Christ, Faith, Eternal life, and such like; but we must apply them to our own hearts, & have a particular faith of them: otherwise, we may be sent to School to learn faith of the Devils, who go so far. And howsoever some may think it to be a very gross and homely comparison, to compare men to the Devils, yet if we examine the faith and practice of wicked and carnal men, we shall easily perceive, not only that the Devils are equal unto them, but do go many degrees before them. For first, the Devils understand the Law and the Gospel: They know the end of the one, and the use of the other: They give assent to the Covenant of Grace that it is true, they know that it is certain & sure, and that God will give remission of sins, and the glory of immortality to the members of his Church. They know the Person, the Natures, the Offices of Christ. They know that all things spoken in the Scripture shall be performed. This appeareth in the confession which they make in many places of the Gospel concerning Christ, *I know thee what thou art, even that holy one of God; thou art the son of God, thou art that Christ*. And the Apostle *James*, speaking of such as gloried in a false faith, but wanteth the true Faith, saith; *Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well; the Devils also believe it, and tremble*. He setteth down a chief point of Religion which the Devils believe, concerning the unity of the God-head; and this faith of the Devil, is not to be restrained to this one principal point, but it stretcheth to the whole Doctrine of faith: so that he setteth down expressly this one ground & foundation, instead of the whole body of Christianity. For the Devils do not only believe that there is one God, who hath created all things, and governeth all things, and shall judge all the world; but that there is one Christ, one Savior, one Redeemer. And this is a sure reason that they know this great Mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, because they seek to overthrow, destroy, and deface it by contrary errors. But how many are there among the sons of men, that take themselves to be great Christians, and think they are better then the Devils that know not these things? Are there not many that are among us, and live in the bosom of the Church, who would defy

them that should charge them to come behind the Devils, & yet know not the Doctrine of the Trinity, the person of Christ, the union of his Natures, the end of the Law, the Sacraments of the Church, the Covenant of the Gospel, the Nature of Faith, the Justification of a Sinner, and the way of salvation?

Again, the Apostle teacheth, not only that the Devils believe the things that are written in the scripture, but likewise that they tremble at the Judgments of God contained in the scripture. They know the promise of the Gospel, they hear of remission of sins, they believe there is in eternal life which the blessed of the Father shall inherit, but they feel no joy in it, they receive no comfort by it, they are never a whit delighted with it, because they know themselves separated from it, and to be reserved for the wrath to come; as we find it uttered of the Devils through the mouth of the possessed, *Why art thou come to torment us before our time?* Whereby they acknowledge, that they looked for the accomplishment of threatenings, and the feeling of torments, but they would have the time prolonged and put off so long as they could: And we see that they believe all matters of Faith to be true, but they are not persuaded, nor cannot believe, that they pertain anything at all unto them: They have no hope of mercy, they have no assurance of pardon, they have no expectation of salvation. Now, as they believe that the promises of God do not concern them, so they know that the threatenings of God shall certainly come upon them, and that eternal torments are prepared for them, which is the cause of their fear and trembling. But how many wicked men are there that live in sensuality, and are drowned in security. They are resolved to lie still in sin, and yet consider not what hangeth over their heads. Tell the Devils of their estate wherein they stand, and they tremble; Tell the ungodly of their condition, they are careless. The Devils in remembrance of Judgments, despair; the ungodly presume. The Devils are constrained to confess that God is just, the ungodly wash it away and say; tush God is merciful. Thus doth Satan besot and bewitch the Reprobate, & teacheth them a lesson which he could never learn himself; namely, that God's word is not all true, and that the threatenings there pronounced, shall not fall upon them, and therefore we see, such as are taught and reproved by the Ministry of the word, either to be as senseless blocks not moved at all with them, or as open blasphemers, reviling and railing at the word. These are notable and forward Scholars, and have profited deeply in the Devils School, they are grown to be more cunning then their Master, and have out-gone him in their profession, and therefore they must be as near condemnation as he. This faith then to believe that part of God's word, which consisteth in believing God's vengeance and threatenings is hardly to be found among the ungodly, and therefore the faith of the Devils is more perfect; which should teach us to labor that our faith may exceed and go beyond the Devils, and that we may seek to apply the merciful promises of God to our selves, and so to find comfort in them, which the Devils want. We must not only say, Christ gave himself, but he gave himself for me; It is not enough to say he loveth man, but he loveth me; he is a Savior, but he is my Savior; he is a Redeemer, but he is my Redeemer; he forgiveth sins, but he forgiveth me my sins. It is not enough to say, he saved others; but we must say, he saveth me: he is not only the God of others, but he is my God, and my Lord. This was the comfort that David felt, when he saith; *The Lord is my Rock and my Fortress, my God, and my strength, my shield, the horn of my salvation, and my refuge.*

It is the tenor of the Covenant that God made with *Abraham*, and all believers, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*. If then God have promised this mercy, and spoken peace unto our Consciences, saying to every faithful person, *I will be thy God*; why should not every believer take hold of this, and say; The Lord shall be my God, as I am one of his people? This is not to offer injury to other men, or to make him peculiar to our selves, but to leave him the same to others, that he is to us, as every man enjoyeth the light of the Sun, without excluding others from the use thereof.

Lastly, we learn that it is no Doctrine of pride and presumption, to teach assurance, confidence, and certainty of Faith, that everyone should believe that God is his God, that Christ is his Savior, that the Holy-Ghost is his sanctifier, that forgiveness of sins, and eternal life, shall be given unto him. If we believe not this, we believe nothing; if we deny this, or doubt of this, all our Faith is in vain. For, as we pray for the forgiveness of our own sins, so we must believe the forgiveness of our own sins. The promises of the Gospel are general, these we are to know do belong to us, and therefore must take them as spoken to us. It is promised to *Joshua* immediately after the death of *Moses*, that God would not leave him, nor forsake him. This the Apostle applieth and maketh it common to all the faithful, whom he chargeth to have their conversation without covetousness, seeing it is written, *That God will not leave them nor forsake them*. God commandeth us to call upon him with promise to hear us, *Call upon me, and I will hear thee*. This was the comfort of David, and the assurance that he had; *When I call upon the Lord, he will hear him*. Christ our Savior giveth us encouragement to prayer, because *Whatsoever we ask in his name, that will he do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son*. Hence it is that *John* saith; *This is the assurance that we have of him, that whatsoever we ask according to his will, he heareth us; And if we know that he heareth us, we know we have the petitions which we ask of him*. When Christ said to the poor distressed man in the Gospel: *If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*. He answered, *Lord I believe, help mine unbelief*. So saith the Prophet, *Behold Lord, I am thy servant; I am thy servant, ô give me understanding that I may keep thy Commandments, &c.* The Lord saith generally, *Whosoever believeth shall be saved*. Hence the Apostle inferreth this particular to the Jailor, *Believe thou, and thou shalt be saved*. When God saith, *Seek ye my face*; the voice of the faithful doth return and rebound this back again; *Thy face Lord I will seek*. God by his new Covenant bindeth himself to the heirs of promise, saying; *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*; whereupon they are emboldened to say; *Loe this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us, we will rejoice and be joyful in his salvation*. God saith unto us, *I am thy salvation*; our heart again with unspeakable comfort inwardly ministered, answereth; *Thou art my God*. So then, when we say aright we believe in God the Father, it is as much as to say; I believe that God is my God, and I have assurance and trust in him for my salvation. And to believe that God is my God, is to believe that he is my life, my peace, my deliverance, my salvation; not only that he is these things in himself, and in his own nature; not only that he is these things to other men, that trust in him, and depend upon him, but that he is indeed the same to me, that his mercy doth compass me, his power defend me, his providence watch over me, and his favor keep and preserve me to himself in life and death. For there are many degrees of faith, one step is to believe that God is; the second step, is to believe God, that is, to give

credit to him, that all his words which he hath spoken, and the promises which he hath made, are true; the third step, is to believe in God, which requireth trust in God, according to his word and promise, being firmly resolved, that he will do whatsoever he hath said. Thus it is required of us to do in every Article of Faith, in every promise of Mercy, in every word of grace offered unto us: we must by a special faith receive it, and apply it. If such a faith be required, the question may be asked, how Infants can be saved, that cannot have this faith of their own, and therefore it seemeth they must be saved by their Parents faith? I answer, that the faith of Parents doth bring the Infants to have a Title and interest in the Covenant of grace, and in all the benefits of Christ; but it cannot apply the merits of Christ's death, his obedience, his righteousness unto the Infant. For this the Believer and faithful Parent doth only to himself, and to no other; but the merrites and satisfaction of Christ, and ingrafting into his body, are wrought by some special and secret working of the Holy-Ghost unto us unknown, but effectual to the Infant, and comfortable to the Parent, albeit it be not done by his faith: and therefore this, that men are justified by a special faith, holdeth to be true in men of years and discretion, not in Infants and children, who are justified and saved by an extraordinary working of God's spirit, *Like the wind which bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whether it goeth: so is every man that is borne of the Spirit.*

Again, sometimes the dear children of God fail in this special faith, & want this particular application; they are not able to say, God is my God; Christ is my Savior. I answer, this falleth out indeed sometimes in the temptations of Satan, and in the infirmities of the flesh, so that they have not a feeling of God's mercy toward them, but even then they cease not to believe. We must live by faith, not by feeling. A man may have life in him, though the sick man in extremity do not know it, or feel it: so may faith be in us, in some great temptation, albeit we feel it not present. *David* lost and wanted this feeling, when he prayed God to create in him a clean heart, and to renew a right spirit within him. But was it utterly lost? No, for he saith; *Take not away thy Spirit from me.* In this case, it shall be good for us, to remember the former mercies of God toward us, and consider how he hath dealt with us; and thereby assure our harts, that howsoever God for a season with-holdeth the light of his countenance from us, yet he will restore us to the joy of his salvation, as we see in the example of the Prophet; he could not in his trouble receive any true comfort, for howsoever he did think upon the Lord, he was still troubled, and though he prayed unto him, yet his spirit was full of anguish; the help then which he found in his present distress, was this; *Then I considered the days of old, and the years of ancient time: I called to remembrance my song in the night, I remembered the works of the Lord, certainly I remembered thy wonders of old.* So when we feel not that comfort and delight in praying that we felt, we must not wax faint & give over, we must continue in the Prayer of faith, though not of feeling.

[*Making mention always of thee in my Prayers.*]

This is the second circumstance whereby the Thanksgiving of the Apostle is amplified, wherein he witnesseth, that he usually prayed for *Philemon*, and others. In this practice of the Apostle we learn, that the faithful are to pray one for another. It is a duty required for all

of us, not only to pray for our selves, but to pray for others, especially for those whose piety is known unto them. This we see plentifully proved and confirmed in the example of *Abraham*: he prayed for the Sodomites that they might be spared; he prayed for *Abimelech*, that he might be healed. When the people desired *Samuel* to pray for them, he said, *God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, and cease praying for you.* This Paul performed for the *Romaines*, *God is my witness (whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of his Son) that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my Prayers, beseeching that by some means one time or other, I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come to you.* Heerunto we are directed by that form of Prayer which Christ taught his Disciples, and left unto his Church, directing us to say, *Our Father, give us, forgive us; lead us not, deliver us: Not My Father, give me, forgive me, lead me not, deliver me.* So the Apostle shutting up what Armor a Christian must use against his spiritual enemies, he saith; *Pray always with all manner Prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watch thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all Saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to publish the secret of the Gospel.* So he prayed for the *Colossians*, always since he heard of their faith in Christ, and of their love toward all Saints: and he required the Prayers of the *Colossians* again for himself, that God might open to him the door of utterance, to speak the Mystery of Christ, for which he was in bonds. Thus the Apostle *James* doth teach us to deal one toward another; *Is any sick among you? Let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray for him, and anoint him with Oile in the name of the Lord, & the Prayer of Faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.* All which examples and Commandments, serve to guide us to the performaunce of this special duty that we are charged and commanded to pray one for another, and to be mindful one of another, in our best thoughts and most serious Meditations.

The Reasons hereof being rightly weighed, will easily gain our affections to yield to this truth. For first, the Communion and fellowship that is among the Saints, requireth our Prayers one for another. We believe, that there is one body, one head, one company, one inheritance, one Brotherhood, as we see *Ephes. 4. Endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; there is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your vocation; there is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, which is above all, and through all, and in you all.* Now what Communion were this among the members of Christ, unless we were straightly tied to pray one for another, and to perform this mutual duty one for another? So that the want of it, is a plain argument, that we are not members of the same body, seeing we desire not the good of them.

Secondly, it is a most forcible weapon put into our hands, whereby we are made able to help our selves, and the rest of our Brethren which are fellow-soldiers with us, all of us fighting under the same Captain, Jesus Christ. Their fighting is our fighting; their retiring is our retiring; their victory is our victory; their loosing of the field, is our loosing of the field. For everyone is not a Soldier by himself, but we are all joint-soldiers together, we overcome together, and we are put to the foil together. For even as soldiers do not only stand upon their several guards, but unite their forces together, whereby it cometh to pass, that they who being severed asunder, and scattered abroad, might easily be overcome, having joined their forces, are unconquerable and irresistible: so if we do not only look to our selves, and

our own footing, but join in Prayer with other, they for us, and we for them, our spiritual enemies shall not be able to confront us, or confound us, but we shall make them turn their backs to us, and their faces from us. The Apostle naming the Armor which we must all put on to defend our selves and our Brethren, and to offend our enemy, doth set down Prayer as a chief means to obtain God's assistance for our selves and others.

Thirdly, Prayer is a Medicine to heal all maladies, and a Plaister to cure all sores. What Physician is it that hath such a receipt? What Surgeon that hath such a salve? The Masters of that Art have several remedies for sicknesses and diseases that come of contrary causes; but this Medicine will take away all our spiritual griefs and infirmities; yea, albeit they proceed of contrary causes. So then, it must needs be a sovereign Salve that serveth to such several purposes. This is it which the Apostle *James* pointeth out unto us, *Acknowledge your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed: for the Prayer of a righteous man availeth much, if it be fervent.* Seeing therefore we are as a body standing of many members, and seeing prayer is a weapon to defend us, and a medicine to heal us: it followeth, that we must use it, one to help and succor another.

Now let us see what are the Uses. First, we learn, that the use of prayer, both public and private, for our selves and others, is most necessary. It is a special gift of the spirit, which is common to all, for all have not the grace of Prayer. The Apostle saith, *I exhort that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.* The neglect of this is a note of a rank Atheist, who is described not to call upon God. Christ Jesus did oftentimes pray, he was fervent and continual in it; he spent whole nights in Prayer. When he was in his Agony, he prayed once, and again, and the third time. This condemneth those that are careless and negligent in the practice of this duty, that are so covetous for themselves, that they can crave nothing for their Brethren. If one member of the body should scrape all to it self, what would become of the rest? Such are unnatural members, as take care only for themselves. These can say the Lord's Prayer, and rehearse the words, but their hearts are far from the meaning and right understanding. They say, Lord give us our daily Bread, that is, to me, and to my brethren; not to me alone; nor to them alone, but to me, and to them; to these my Brethren, as well as to myself. These men are liberal in words, but covetous in mind; their mouths are opened and enlarged, but their hearts are restrained and instraightened; they think they never have enough, and that their Brethren have too much. They are far from giving thanks unto God for them, who repine at every morsel that they eat, and at every blessing that they enjoy.

Secondly, we learn that the weakest and meanest in the Church are not to be despised and contemned, inasmuch as they may by their prayers and other means help the strongest and the greatest. The Apostle teacheth, that God hath so framed the members of the body, *That the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor the head again to the feet, I have no need of you; yea, much rather those members of the body, which seem to be feeble, are necessary.* The strongest stand in need of the help of the weakest; the greatest, of the meanest; the highest, of the lowest; the richest, of the poorest; the Prince, of the people. All mankind are so created, as that they are not perfect of themselves, but everyone wanteth the aid of another.

One Nation standeth in need of another, no Country yieldeth all commodities. No man hath all the gifts of Nature, but someone, some have others. We see it even among the brute beasts, such as are excellent in craft, and mighty in strength, yet have their wants together with their wiles, and their maimes joined with their great might. The Fox is subtle to keep himself from snares, yet he is weak to guard himself from Wolves: on the other side, the Lion is strong enough to guard himself from Wolves, but he is not subtle enough to keep himself from nets. We have not all things requisite and necessary for us, we have not all properties to be commended: we run into many dangers, from whence the meanest may help to deliver the mightiest. So then, seeing we are enjoined to pray one for another, and thereby may help one another, let us know, that we must despise no man, reproach no man, hate no man, but consider that at one time or other, we may want the help & hand of him. This doth the Wiseman point unto, when he mentioneth a little City, and few men in it, and a great King came against it, compassed it about, and built forts against it: and there was found therein a poor and Wiseman, and he delivered the City by his wisdom. And we have a notable example hereof, in the siege of *Abel* by *Joab*, a wise woman cried out of the City, and moved him to return from the assault. We see how forcible the prayers of *Abraham* were to move the Lord to spare the Sodomites, if ten righteous persons had been found in the City. Thus God testifieth, that he was restrained by the Prayers of *Moses*, and (as it were) tied with bands, that he was not able to destroy the people. Let us therefore make much one of another, and let no man hate his Brother in his heart, but know, that his prayers avail with God for him. We see the Prayers of the Church profited *Peter* much, though he were an Apostle, for thereby he was delivered out of prison, and from the danger of death, by the Ministry of an Angel. So they profit us, if they be faithful and servant.

Lastly, it is our duty to entreat the mutual Prayers one of another. We heard before, how all the people prayed *Samuel* to pray for them: So did the people come to *Moses*, and entreat this duty of him, that they might be delivered from the fiery Serpents. The Apostle is oftentimes earnest in requiring this at the Churches hands, *Brethren, I beseech you for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the spirit, that ye would strive with me by prayers to God for me.* When we are poor, and can do our Brethren no other good, yet may we benefit them by our Prayers. When we see our Brethren in necessity, in danger, in affliction, in persecution, in sickness, and in great misery; when we have no hand to help them, no power to deliver them, no means to succor them, no favor to speak for them; yet, we have hearts to lift up for them to God, the Father of all mercies, and the God of all consolation, and by praying unto him for them, we shall do them much good, give them much comfort, minister unto them much help, and procure unto them speedy deliverance. This shall be more available and profitable unto them, then all other means of help and succor, used for their safety without this. Let such as are of the greatest gifts earnestly crave and call for the prayers of those that have lesser and smaller gifts. This reproveth such as never regard them, nor require them, that think they have no need of them, nor know the necessity of them. It is all one to these men, whether they be prayed for, or not; whom God no doubt doth oftentimes cross in the works of their hands, that they do not prosper, because they make no account of the Churches Prayers. It reproveth such also, as regard not the public assemblies of the faithful,

and the meeting of the Congregation of Christ in one place, where Prayers are made for the Church, where praises are sung, and thanks are rendered for the blessings of God; yea, heaven and earth are made to ring and rebound with sounding out his glory, as it were with the voice of one man. All our Churches for the most part on the Lord's day, assemble at one hour, we come together at one time, a blessed hour, a blessed time; the best hour, the best time in the whole Weeke. O, how should we love it; how should we desire it, how should we delight in it? Then do we pray for the Church, then the Church prayeth for us: then are we mindful of our Brethren, then are our Brethren likewise mindful of us, then is God mindful of us all. Then we call upon God for his Saints, then do the Saints upon the earth call upon God for us, then doth GOD hear us all, both them and us; them for us, and us for them. This is a sweet Harmony and pleasant agreement, when we do thus with one mind, and with one mouth glorify God, and with a feeling of God's mercy, can cry out, *O Lord of Hosts, how amiable are thy Tabernacles? My soul longeth, yea, & fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, for mine heart, and my flesh rejoice in the living God.* On the other side, great is their wickedness and profaneness, that do not affect such times of public Prayers: they show themselves to be beastly minded, and led... with the wicked Spirit of the Devil into all abominations: neither may such look to find any benefit, or feel any comfort by the Prayers and supplications in those places, and at such holy times poured out. It is a great privilege belonging only to the faithful, to have right and interest in the Churches Prayers. It is not so with the wicked, so long as they abhor such meetings, which are the most fruitful seasons, when God with a gracious dew doth rain upon his inheritance, they are as barren trees, and as withered branches that are reserved for the fire of God's vengeance, and heavy indignation. This is it which the Prophet saith, *They which go by shall not say, the blessing of the Lord be upon you, or, We bless you in the name of the Lord.* So long therefore, as they remain in this contempt of God, and of his Religion, the prayers of the Church shall not avail them. Lastly, it reproveth such as neglect this duty, and whereas they should pray for others, do curse and ban them, and wish all evil to come upon them. The Prophet *Jeremiah* complaineth, that he had neither bought nor sold among that contentious people, and yet everyone did curse him. These men love cursing, and therefore it shall come upon themselves, and enter into their souls: and as they love not blessing, so it shall be far from them. We are commanded to love instead of hating, to do good instead of hurting, to pray instead of persecuting, and to bless instead of cursing. But of this Doctrine, we have spoken more at large else-where, and therefore will I here pass it over, and proceed unto that which followeth.

Verse 5. [When I hear of thy love and Faith which thou hast towards the Lord Jesus, and toward all Saints.]

In these words, the former Thanks-giving is amplified by another circumstance, containing the cause wherefore the Apostle gave thanks to his God for him, and did make mention of him in his Prayers, because he had heard by the report of the Brethren, howe great Faith and Love were in him. Herein we have these particulars to be considered; First, he reduceth the principal pointes of salvation to two heads, Faith, and Love. In these standeth the happiness of the godly: by these, a Christian man is perfected, for they are the chief graces of the Holy-

ghost. Secondly, he beginneth with [*Love*,] and placeth it before [*Faith*.] Faith, indeed is more precious, but it is inward and hidden in the heart, and in Nature and order goeth before Love: but he first nameth [*Love*] because it is better known to us, better seen of us, and is as the Touch-stone to try our Faith. For though the cause be more worthy then the effect, yet the effect is more perspicuous and manifest: so Faith being the cause of works, is more excellent, but Love as an effect is more evident. Thirdly, we see, that albeit Faith be set in the last place, for the reason rendered before, yet Faith is first defined, and so the order somewhat inverted. Now, it is described and declared by his Object, that it respecteth Christ Jesus. Last of all, he defineth love, which he applyeth to the Saints, albeit it extend to Infidels, to reprobates, to profane enemies, whom also we are to love, yet a special manner of love is due to the Saints, which are members of the same body with us. For even as God loveth all mankind, and all the works of his hand, who as he created them, so he preserveth them, feedeth them, giveth them fruitful seasons, filleth their hearts with joy and gladness, and maketh his Sun to shine upon them, and the rain to fall upon them, to make them without excuse: but he loveth his Church with a special love, not only giving them temporal blessings, but such as do accompany salvation; the one, he loveth as his creatures; the other, both as his creatures, and his Children: so are we to love all mankind as our own flesh, but not in an equal degree with the faithful, who are tied together in a straighter band, because there is not mutual love between the godly and ungodly, neither do they grow up into one body. But the godly are charged to love one another...▪ and they are made the members of Christ, and heirs with us of eternal life; and therefore, love is especially and principally to be shown to the Saints, that is, unto the Elect, which ought to be above all the creatures in the world dear unto us, who are called Saints for two causes; First, because they are purged & cleansed from their sins by the blood of Christ; Secondly, because they are framed and fashioned by the spirit of God to an holy life, and godly profession and conversation. Thus much touching the order & interpretation of the words. Now let us see what doctrines arise from hence for our instruction and edification.

[*When I heard of thy Love and Faith.*]

The Apostle doth not say here that he saw and beheld, or was an eye-witness of the Faith and fruits of the faith of *Philemon*, but that he heard of them by the report of the Brethren. *Paul* at this time (as we have shown) lived at Rome, and *Philemon* dwelled at *Colossae* (many Miles distant the one from the other) yet his faith was published, and his love manifested throughout the whole world, which necessarily inferreth, that he openly professed them, and made it known what religion he was of. For if *Philemon* had not shown boldly his faith, and witnessed a good confession before many witnesses, it had been impossible, that *Paul* being so far from him, should have heard of it. Heereby we learn, that faith and the fruits thereof must be openly professed. True Religion, must not only be inwardly believed, and in the heart acknowledged, but must outwardly be confessed and professed in the world before men. We see this in *Daniel*, and the three Children, he was cast into the Lions den, they into the hot fiery furnace, because they thought it not sufficient to worship God closely and secretly in their hearts, but publicly declared what God they served, and what religion they embraced. The Apostle writing to the *Hebrews*, calleth Christ

Jesus the High Priest of our profession, that is, of the truth which we profess and believe. And afterward he saith, *Let us keep the profession of our faith without wuering.* And again, *Let us by him offer the sacrifice of praise always to God, that is, the fruit of the lips which confess his name.* This duty of acknowledging and confessing the truth, have all the servants of God practiced & made conscience of from the beginning, giving witness to God & his truth. When the Apostles were conuented before the counsel, they did not hide their faith, but said, *Ye Rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, forasmuch as we this day are examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, to wit, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye have crucified, whom God raised again from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.* And when they were charged to ho de their peace, and to speak or teach no more in the Name of Jesus, they aunswared; *Whether it be right in the sight of GOD, to obey you rather then GOD, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.* The Apostle Paul useth this boldness of speech before *Felix, I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call Heresy, so worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law, and in the Prophets, &c.* And as the Apostle himself practiced this duty, so *Timothy* is commended and praised by him for the same, *Fight the good fight of Faith, lay hold of eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses, wherein also he followed the steppes and example of Jesus Christ, which under Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession.* All these, as a cloud of witnesses, serve to confirm us in the assured truth of this doctrine, that God requireth this duty of us to confess his word boldly, to manifest our faith openly, to show our Religion publicly, that so we may confess before the Lord his loving kindness, and his wonderful works before the sons of men.

And howsoever these Testimonies may serve and suffice for the strengthening thereof, yet it shall appear more plain and evident unto us, if we weigh the Reasons. First, the profession of our faith hath a great promise of a rich reward joined with it, and added unto it; and the starting back from it as a deceitful bow, hath a sore threatening of a grievous curse following after it. It is that which our Savior teacheth his Disciples, whom he sent out as Sheep among Wolves, and foretelleth them of afflictions and persecutions that should be raised against them, *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven; and whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* It is an hard matter to stand when the storm falleth, and to confess Christ in time of danger, when persecutors arise, and enemies show themselves; but the earnest consideration of this, that Christ will confess us in the glory of his Father, and before the Angels of God, will be a forcible means and motive, to put life and courage into us, to enable us and persuade us to this practice. For what can be more right and reasonable, and stand better with the Law of equity, then that the servant should not fear to profess what Master he serveth, who will know him and confess him, when he is entered into his glory? If a Prince should come to a man among a great company, and single him out by name; if he should acknowledge him among a thousand others, and speak kindly unto him, it would encourage him to live and die in his quarrel; even so, seeing Christ Jesus the son of God, and the heir of all things, will at the last day do us this honor, to confess us to be his own

children, and give unto us the Crown of glory; how should we be stirred up in love to him again, and strengthened in the inward man to wax bold in the faith, and fervent in spirit, to give out a clear Testimony before all the world, whose Servants we are, and in all troubles to cleave unto him with full purpose of heart? On the other side, we must be terrified from denying him, lest he be ashamed of us, and deny us before his Father which is in Heaven.

Secondly, confession is a necessary fruit, and consequent of faith; where true Faith is in the heart, there will follow confession with the mouth. This is it which the Prophet speaketh in his own experience, *I believed, therefore did I speak, for I was sore troubled*. This is made a note of Faith, what it believeth it speaketh, albeit the confession of the truth be accompanied with danger. And lest any should imagine this to be peculiar to the Prophet, & not common to others, the Apostle draweth it likewise unto himself, *Because we have the same spirit of faith, according as it is written; I believed, and therefore have I spoken: We also believe, and therefore speak*. He that is afraid to confess Christ, hath no true faith; but he that believeth in him will not be ashamed of him and his Gospel.

Thirdly, the Faith of Christ's true Religion, is a most glorious thing, containing in it the great praise and glory of God's wisdom, power, mercy, and righteousness, and it delivereth the matter of man's salvation, and eternal happiness. This was it that moved the Apostle to preach the Gospel freely and boldly, *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Grecian*. Seeing therefore, Christ hath promised to confess us before his Father; seeing faith is manifested and shown by confession; and lastly, seeing the Gospel of Christ is the instrument of God's power, to work in us salvation; it followeth, that the Religion of God, and the gospel of Christ, must not only be believed in heart, and embraced in Judgments, but also be confessed by the mouth, and professed in the practice of an holy life.

Against this truth, somewhat may be objected. First, if true Religion must openly be confessed, then such as are dumb and cannot speak, can have no Religion: if Confession be a fruit of faith, then they must of necessity want Faith, that want the use of the tongue. I answer, the Doctrine must be understood of such, as have the use of the tongue given them to glorify God. If God have given unto us the freedom of speech, he requireth this duty at our hands. If he have given us no more then a sanctified and faithful heart, let us honor him with the holy Meditations thereof, he will exact no more of us, then he hath given unto us. Hence it is, that the Prophet *David* saith, or rather the Lord himself by the Prophet. *Psalm 81. Open thy Mouth wide, and I will fill it*. In like manner it is said, *That Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the word of God*, yet can God extraordinarily give faith to those that are deaf, and have not their hearing, who is not bound to the outward senses, nor tieth his graces to the outward ears, but supplieth those wants by the working of his holy spirit, to the endless comfort of such as have those infirmities.

Again, the Apostle saith, *Rom. 14, 22. Hast thou Faith? Have it with thyself before God*. Where we see, he seemeth to say, that it is sufficient if we have Faith inwardly in the heart, albeit no confession follow outwardly with the mouth. I answer, the Apostle in this place speaketh of another thing; to wit, of a persuasion touching Christian liberty in things indifferent: as if he

should say, Art thou strongly persuaded and assured, that all Meats are lawful to Christians? Be it so; yet use it between God and thine own Conscience, and hurt not thy Neighbor with it, nor offend thy weak Brother by it. This serveth nothing at all, to maintain a dumb Religion without open Confession, which some would willingly bring in, considering (as one saith) that he which doth dissemble faith, doth deny it.

Lastly, it is Obiected, that Religion is better to be concealed, that we may give no offense unto others, and avoid the troubles that ariseth by Confession. I answer, that is no offense given to men, but a grievous sin committed against God, who requireth the profession of his truth. And the Apostle Paul was ready to suffer bands, and imprisonment; yea, even death it self, for the profession of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus much briefly shall suffice, in answer of the Objections that are made.

Now, let us see and mark the Uses that arise from hence. First, we learn, who are to be accounted true Christians, and true Believers, to wit; such as show soorth their Faith by their Confession. It is not left to our own choice, whether we will make a solemn and sound profession of the Faith, or not, no more then it is at our liberty, whether we will believe or not, or whether we will be saved or not. It is required of all, that belong to God, to confess his name, and maintain his Religion. All men must confess, that would be confessed before the Father. Christ Jesus will never bear and endure that servant, which is ashamed of his service. The Prophet prophesying of the Kingdom of Christ, and showing how they should grow and multiply as the grass of the field, maketh this as a fruit of their conversion to the Faith, *One shall say, I am the Lord's: another shall be called by the name of Jacob: and another, shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and name himself by the name of Israel.* This the Apostle also teacheth, *Rom. 10. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth man confesseth to salvation.* So our Savior doth not make it proper to his disciples, but common to all, to confess him and his words before men. And he doth not say, whosoever shall confess me in heart, but with his tongue; not inwardly, but outwardly; not secretly, but openly. For albeit, the Faith of the heart be the principal thing, and cheefely required of us; yet the confession of the mouth must not be separated from it. This reproveth such as account this open confession of the truth to be of no absolute necessity, but a mere thing indifferent, left to our liberty to be practiced, or not to be practiced. These are those Libertines, that would live as they list, and make it no matter of what Religion they be. For, if it be indifferent whether we profess Religion, or not, it is indifferent whether we believe or have faith; and let them hold it indifferent also unto them, whether the Lord Jesus do profess to know them or not.

Again, we see, that it is not enough for us not to deny Christ, but there is required of us a farther duty, even to confess him before men. It is required of a dutiful son, to confess his Father with a sound and upright heart, but yet he must not deny his father before men, if he would have his Father confess him. So is it the part of a true Christian, to believe to righteousness, and to confess to salvation. Everyone would seem willing and desirous to be saved, but if we look to be partakers thereof, Christ must know us for his servants: and he

will not acknowledge us in his kingdom, unless here we make confession of him. If we will not here know him, he will say to us hereafter, I know you not, depart from me, *If we deny him, he will deny us*; If we be ashamed of him, take heed lest he also be ashamed of us. The Thief that was upon the Cross, made open confession of his faith, reproved the blasphemy of his Companion, and called upon Christ for salvation, *Luke 23. he rebuked his fellow, saying; Fearest thou not God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? We are indeed righteously here, for we receive things worthy of that we have done, but this man hath done nothing amiss: And he said unto Jesus, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.* And albeit he were a Thief and a Malefactor, for which he suffered death, yet is not Christ ashamed of him, he doth not stop his ears and refuse to hear him, but to show himself true in his word, and faithful in his promise, he doth acknowledge him as his own, because he confessed him before that sinful and wicked generation, saying unto him; *Verily, I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in Paradise.*

The Apostle *John* living, when the Deity of our Savior began to be doubted of, and called into question, saith, *Every Spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is not of God.* If therefore we look to be confessed of Christ, and to have our souls saved in the day of the Lord, let us boldly bear and behave our selves under the Cross, and not shrink in the wetting like deceitful cloth; let us know that confession and salvation must go together, if we wait for the one, we must express the other; if confession go before, we may build surely, and ground our selves strongly upon the promise of Christ, that the salvation of our souls shall follow after, and no man shall take it from us. This made the Apostle say, *For this cause I suffer these things, but I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.*

Secondly, seeing our Faith and Religion must be confessed, it is a duty that lieth upon us to seek to know the truth, and labor to express the power of godliness; otherwise it is impossible that ever we should make profession of it. For profession of the faith presupposeth a knowledge of the faith; for how can we confess that which we know not, or manifest that to other whereof we are ignorant our selves? This controlleth and condemneth those that live in the Church, hear the word, and have the Gospel sounding a long time in their ears, yet know not what faith is, nor how to believe; so that whereas in regard of their continuance in the Church, in regard of the means offered to them, and in regard of their age wherewith God hath blessed them, they might have been teachers of others, they have need to be taught the beginnings of faith, the grounds of religion, & the principles of the word of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. Alas, who can consider without great grief of heart, and anguish of spirit, in what state the greatest number of our people stand, and remember that after all our planting, watering, sowing, and laboring, they are apt and fit to receive any religion, because they are blind and ignorant, and know not God aright, or any part of his truth, to their souls health. They are like the potters Clay, which is ready to take any form, and receive any impression; or like the earth, which altereth and changeth as the wind or weather, as the Spring or Winter shall work upon it. If they were taught to believe and receive the *Cabala* of the Jews,

the Alcoran of the Turks, the Revelations of the Anabaptists, the Traditions of the Papists, or such like rotten trash of man's devises: and if they were countenanced by authority of Princes, and Laws of men, they were as easy to be wrought upon, as wax that is ready to receive any stamp and impression. A lamentable case, that we should be still as Babes and children, not knowing the right hand from the left, carried about with every wave of Doctrine, and receiving the darkness of error for the light of the truth. But we have not so learned Christ, and the Christian Religion. When we have once given entertainment unto the truth, and embraced it soundly in our hearts, we must not deny the faith whatsoever befall us, whatsoever trouble come unto us; whether prosperity fawn and flatter upon us, or whether adversity pinch us, and pain us; whether the Sun of peace shine upon us, or whether the clouds of affliction over-shadow us, we must always be the same, and our standing in the faith should not be wavering or wandering, to give over at every assault, and to shrink back for every brunt, and to deny our Lord and Master by every temptation. This serveth to reprove those that know nothing, and therefore can profess nothing; and as they know nothing, so they will know nothing, of whom we may say as the Apostle doth, *This they wittingly know not, and so are willfully ignorant, and shut their eyes, because they would not see, and because the light should not shine into their hearts.* For seeing God hath commanded the light to shine out of darkness, we may truly say, *If our Gospel be then hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds; that is, of the Infidels, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ (which is the Image of God) should not shine unto them.* Thus doth God send them strong delusion, that they should believe lies, *That all they might be damned which believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* Let us therefore seek after knowledge, as for great Treasures. Let us search the Scriptures, that in them we may find eternal life: let us have the word of God dwell plentifully in us, which is able to make us wise unto Salvation. Let us use all good means to increase knowledge in us, to begin in Faith, to hold out a good confession, & to maintain the truth against all the adversaries that rise against us.

Thirdly, seeing it is a duty to open our mouths, and lose our tongues, to confess to his name that hath called us to his truth, it standeth us upon continually, and constantly to pray for the Spirit of strength, or corroboration, that we may be made able to stand in the time of danger. It is not in all that know and acknowledge the truth, to avouch it, and to maintain it, to confess it, and to stand to it: but only of such as have received the strengthening power of Christ. Hence it is that the Apostle saith of himself, *I am able to do all things, through the help of Christ which strengtheneth me.* So he prayeth for the *Colossians*, *That they might be strengthened with the glorious power of Christ.* When a man hath once received to believe, he wanteth a new grace to be given unto him, that the grain of Faith which lieth hidden in the heart, and covered in the Ashes of man's frailty, may grow up openly, and bring forth in us the confession of the mouth. This appeareth by the words of the Apostle *John*, who testifieth; *That even among the chief Rulers, many believed in him: nevertheless, because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be cast out of the Sinagogue: for they loved the praise of men, more then the praise of God.* He speaketh in this place of such as were true believers, as appeareth both by the phrase of speaking, and the opposition, made between these, and

those that believed not mentioned before. Verse 37. where it is said, *That though he did many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him.* The Evangelist noteth two lets and impediments that hindered them from the open manifestation of their Faith; to wit, the shame of the Cross, and the glory of the world.

Thus we see, that sometimes the dear Servants of God are for a time afraid to confess him, and to bewray themselves what they hold, and how they believe. When *Peter* was come into the High-Priests Hall, and saw himself in danger of death, he was so far from confessing, that he fell to open denying of his Mayster; he believed in him (no doubt) in his heart, but he gave not glory unto him (as he ought) with his mouth. This we have heard to be in some of the blessed Martyrs, who gave their lives to the death, they have sometimes staggered, and felt the weakness of the flesh, before they have been thoroughly strengthened in the Inner man. *Nicodemus* a Ruler of the *Jews*, and a Master in *Israel*, & bearing a love unto Christ, came unto him by night, and closely as it were by stealth. So *Joseph of Aramathia*, was first a Disciple of Christ secretly, for fear of the *Jews*: yet afterward being stirred up with those things that they saw at the death and passion of Christ, both of them shown themselves more boldly & confidently in his cause, and in the end forsook all, to follow him, and resolved to cleave unto him with the loss of all things that might be precious and dear unto them. Such then as our Faith is, such is our confession. A weak Faith, a weak confession: a strong Faith, a strong confession: no Faith, no confession: a staggering Faith, a wavering confession. Wherefore it belongeth unto us, to call upon God to give us his Spirit, which is called *The spirit of strength*, whereby we shall be enabled to bear the Cross patiently, and to confess the Faith constantly. For when once we are sustained and supported by the Spirit of Christ, no Cross shall daunt us, no temptation shall overwhelm us, but we shall endure all things with a contented mind, and persevere unto the end.

Lastly, we must show our selves ready and resolute to give a reckoning of our faith and hope, of our profession and Religion, when we shall be required. This is greatly to the honor of God, when his Servants prepare themselves to set forth his truth, and are not afraid of the threatenings of their enemies. This is it which the Apostle *Peter* teacheth us, *Sanctify the Lord in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and reverence.* This constant and Christian resolution was in *Paul*, when he was brought before rulers for Christ's sake, though when he came to his answer no man assisted him, but some fled from him, and others were ashamed of him, yet he quit himself like a man, and shown himself a faithful witness of that truth which he believed. This use meeteth with many corruptions, and reproveth sundry practices that reign among us. First, it convinceth such as think they are not to be blamed, but excused; not to be controlled, but defended; albeit, they deny the truth of God, for fear of men, in time of persecution; so that they cleave to it in heart, and embrace it in their souls, so that they inwardly believe it, like of it, and hold it to themselves. Yet we heard before, that it is not enough for us, not to deny the faith, but it is required of us to confess it. It is not enough for us to abstain from that which is evil, unless we be careful to do that which is good. The Apostle *John* teacheth. *That all the fearful and unbelieving, the abominable and murderers, the Whore-mongers, and Sorcerers, the Idolaters and liars, shall have their part in the Lake which burneth*

with fire and Brimstone, which is the second death. Here we see, that among these wicked persons which he nameth, he nameth in the first place fearful persons, which fear men more than God; these are overcome by Satan, and led to hell and destruction. Hence it is, that the Apostle chargeth us (as we heard before) not only to keep our faith, but to keep the profession of our faith. And *Paul*, when he came to his first answering, doth not reprove the Brethren, because they openly denied the Faith, but because they secretly forsook him, and did not assist him, and he prayeth God that this sin may not be laid to their charge. So the Angel of the Church of *Pergamos* is commended, who dwelt where Satan's throne was set up, because he kept the name of Christ, and denied not his Faith, even in those days when *Antipas* his faithful Martyr was slain, among them where Satan dwelleth. It is not enough therefore not to deny the faith, or not to abjure the Doctrine of Christ, we must give an account of a farther duty, and know; that God requireth of us the confession of his truth, if we would have him confess us in the resurrection of the just.

Secondly, it reproveth such as keep their Faith and Conscience to themselves, and will not bewray it to others. A man shall live many years among them, and yet not know what Religion they are of. These are they that hide their Religion, and bury their Talent in the earth, and thereby make themselves ready for every change and alteration; like the Weather-cock which turneth with every blast of wind. These are they, that think themselves wise and wary men, by keeping them-selves close and private to themselves: and yet every simple man, nay every child may plainly perceive, that they are indeed of no Religion. For that faith which always is kept secret, is no faith at all. It is required, not only that every knee should bow, but that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, unto the glory of God the Father, *Phil. 2, 10, 11*. Such as never profess anything, do plainly make it manifest, and as it were light a Candle to others, to discover the secrets of their hearts. Sometimes they will be Gospellers, sometimes they will be Papists, sometimes they will be Newters, such (it is to be feared) at all times are Atheists, or at least in the right way and broad path, that leadeth unto Atheism. Let not such therefore flatter themselves, and deceive their own souls; let them show their religion, if they have any: or else they show themselves to be men of no religion.

Thirdly, it reproveth such as censure and condemn others, as too pure and precise, by reason of their profession. These men that are cold themselves, and care not whether Religion go sorward or backward, cannot abide that any should be more zealous and earnest than themselves; & because they will not run with them into all excess of riot, therefore they rail at them, and speak all manner of evil against them. They have borrowed many opprobrious terms, and drawn many reviling tauntes from the enemies of the Gospel, and grace of God, and apply them whete they ought not to be bestowed. When the Lord had restored the Gospel unto us, being brought out of Superstition and Idolatry, that the Romanists gnashed their teeth for anger, disgorged their malice with rage, and were like to break in pieces, through envy of the work of the Lord set up among us, they devised against us and our religion, most bitter reproaches: then was our profession called Puritanism, and our professors branded with the names of Puritans, Praecisians, and unspotted Brethren: which contumelies are now taken out of the mouths of enemies, and one Brother doth spit

them in the face of another. What a shame and indignity is this, that we professing one faith, living under one Gospel, embracing one Religion, and enduring the same enemies, should borrow such venomous speeches from the scornful and despightfull Papists, and cast them as Dung in the faces of our Brethren? Let us therefore leave these railing and reviling speeches, and send them back to Rome (the Mother of cruelty, and of all biting and bitterness) from whence they come. Let us upbraid no man with his zeal, nor hit no man in the teeth with his profession. Let us rather be moved in love to follow their example, & be provoked in a godly aemulation to walk in their steps. And let us all know, that we must not be like the *Laodiceans, which were neither hot nor cold*: for if we scorn all zeal and forwardness in the ways of godliness; if we be lukewarm professors, and neither hot nor cold, it shall come to pass, that the Lord will spew us out of his mouth.

Fourthly, it reproveth such as think they may be present at the Sacrifice of the Mass, and hear and see their Idolatry, so they keep their conscience to God and themselves; yea, some go farther, and think they may not only be present at Idolatry, in the Idols Temple, but bow down to the Idolles, offer unto them, creep unto them, and serve them with their bodies, so that they abhor such worship in their minds, and serve God in their hearts. But these excuses cannot serve to justify such manner of serving of God. When God would assure *Elijah*, that he had his people in those ruins of the Church, & that he was not left alone, he said, *He had left seven thousand in Israel, even all knees that have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him*. He doth not say, he had reserved such as did not believe in *Baal*, but keep their heart to God; but they are noted by this mark to be the Lord's, that they gave not to *Baal* the bending of the knee, nor any outward subjection unto him. In the temptations offered to Christ our Savior, when the Devil only required of him to fall down and worship him, he answered; *Avoid Satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord, and him only shalt thou serve*. *Nebucadnezzar* required nothing of *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, the three Servants of God, but to bow the knee, and to fall down to the golden Image that he should set up; and yet they did choose rather to be cast alive into the hot fiery furnace, and to endure the extremity of the flame. It is not therefore enough to worship God in heart and soul. True it is, he commandeth us to worship him in spirit and truth, but not only in spirit and truth. God requireth of us the body, as well as the spirit; the outward man, as well as the inward; the knee, as well as the heart. He challengeth every part & member of our body to be employed to his worship. He that hath an ear to hear, *Must hear what the spirit saith unto the Churches*: He that hath a Tongue to speak, *must speak as the words of Gad*. He that hath hands to lift up, *Must lift up pure hands, without wrath, and without contention*. He that hath a knee to bow, *Must bow it to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. He that hath a mouth to open, *Must make confession with it to salvation*. He that hath feet must say, *Our feet shall stand in thy gate, O Jerusalem*. The cause why God claimeth and challengeth the whole body, is because the body is his, as well as the soul. It is his by creation, because he made it, *and not we our selves; we are his people, and the Sheep of his pasture*. The Clay was his whereof we were formed, so that we are his by the Law of Creation. He feedeth and findeth us of his own costs and charges; he clotheth us with his own wool, *For all the Beasts of the field are his, and the Beasts on a thousand mountains*. If then we live at his expenses, we are his by another right, even the Book of his

providence. We are made his, by the freeing of us from the thralldom of sin, from the tyranny of Satan, from the bondage of corruption, by paying a price, a great price; by giving for us a ransom, a great ransom, not of Silver and Gold, but by shedding his blood, his precious blood for us; the Spear pierced his heart, the Nayles pierced his hands and his feet, the Thorns pierced his head. Seeing therefore, he suffered so much in his body, for our bodies; we are wholly his, by the work of our redemption, who before were not his. The Holy-Ghost likewise sanctifieth our bodies as well as our souls, and maketh them a Temple to dwell in: and lastly, we look for salvation and glorification, not only in soul, but in body, and therefore we must glorify God both in our bodies, and in our souls: we must offer up our bodies an holy Sacrifice unto him, and not commit Sacrilege against him, by plucking and withdrawing away any part of our bodies from him.

Lastly, it reproveth such as keep company with open enemies to God and his Religion, where they cannot but hear God dishonored, his truth blasphemed, his servants slandered and reviled, and yet make as though they heard nothing, or saw nothing, or could speak nothing; for they stop their ears, and close their eyes, and shut their mouths to the discountenancing of Religion, and the encouraging of evil persons. How many are there that make the true professors of the word, and the faithful Servants of God a common by-word, and their Table-talk at their bankets and meetings? We are at such times ashamed of Christ, of our faith, of our religion, of any matter that may tend to the edification of our souls, but we are not ashamed of the works of the Devil, and of the fruits of darkness. We are not ashamed to fill our tables, what shall I say? with spewing; nay, worse then spewing, with open blasphemy, and swearing, with slandering and reviling of our brethren. Such were the enemies that David had experience of; they reioysed and assembled themselves against him, the very abjects tare him, and ceased not with the false scoffers at bankets, gnashing their teeth against him, *When he prayed daily unto God, and the zeal of his house did even eat him up, he became a Proverb unto them; they that sate in the gate spake of him, and the drunkards sang songs of him.* When we see godly men thus handled, and their profession in our meetings taunted, let us open our mouths in the cause of the dumb, let us give glory to God in the midst of our assemblies, and not suffer the faithful to be so foully traduced, and Religion it self through their sides to be nipped and despighted. Let us follow the counsel of the Wise man, *Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all the children of destruction: Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and judge the afflicted and the poor.* We are willed according to our places and power by all lawful means to help the afflicted, and to succor the distressed. We must not be faint-hearted and afraid to speak for them. This is it which the Prophet teacheth, *I will declare thy name unto my Brethren, in the midst of the Congregation will I praise thee.* This is a duty to be practiced of us, so often as we see our Brethren reviled, their profession taunted, and Religion it self slandered.

[*I hear of thy love and faith.*]

We have heard before the commendation of *Philemons* profession, so that *Paul* being far removed from him, yet had notice of it. Now, we are to consider wherein his profession stood, and wherefore he is commended. The things for which he is praised are these two,

Faith, and Love. He might have named many other graces and gifts of God, his knowledge, his temperance, his patience, his meekness, his gentleness, his goodness, his longsuffering; but these are the chief and principal, these perfect a Christians man's salvation. For our happiness standeth and consisteth in two things, partly in our Communion with Christ our head, and partly in our conjunction and fellowship with the members of Christ. Faith is that which uniteth us with Christ our head: love joineth us together one with another, which are the members of his body. From hence we learn, that the chief things that commend a man to God and his Church, are faith in Christ, and love to the Saints of God. Among all the gifts of God which bring unto us a good report, the principal are to be a believer in Christ, and to show forth the fruits of mercy. This appeareth in all the examples of the Fathers, and Patriarchs of elder times, that lived both before the flood, and since the flood, even unto the coming of Christ: for by it our Elders were well reported of. By Faith, *Abel* offered unto God a greater Sacrifice then *Cain*, by the which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: by the which faith also he being dead, yet speaketh. By faith was *Enoch* translated, that he should not see death: neither was he found, for God hath translated him, for before he was translated, he was reported of, that he had pleased God. It is said of *Abraham*, that above hope, he believed under hope, & it was imputed to him for righteousness. The Apostle speaking of the *Romaines* saith, *I thank my God through Jesus Christ, for you all, because your Faith is published throughout the whole world.* And afterward he greeteth *Aquila* and *Priscilla* his fellow-helpers in Christ Jesus, who for his life were ready to lay down their own necks, to whom not only he gave thanks, but also all the Churches of the Gentiles. So he giveth thanks to God, when he heard of the faith of the *Colossians*, which they had in Christ Jesus, and of their love toward all Saints: he praiseth God without ceasing, remembering the effectual Faith and diligent love which were found in the Church of the *Thessalonians*. All these examples teach us this truth, that it is faith and love, and such like graces of God's spirit, whereby we receive a good report, as that wherewithal we are accepted of God, and become renowned in the Church.

The Reasons follow to confirm this Doctrine. First, they give us good acceptance and approbation with God and man, because they are evident marks, and notable Testimonies of our election and perseverance. They are as two ear-marks, to know and discern whose Sheep we are. Hence it is, that the Apostle making mention of the *Thessalonians* in his Prayers, who had shown the effectual faith and diligent love, & the patience of their hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God even our Father, he addeth, *Knowing (beloved Brethren) that ye are elect of God.* So the same Apostle writing to the *Phillippians*, saith, *That because of the fellowship which they had in the Gospel, he was persuaded of this same thing, that God which had begun this good work in them, would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.* For howsoever the faithful have a new name given unto them, and written in them, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it: yet do the godly after a sort know and understand the election of others, the calling of others, the justification of others. True it is, they are assured of their own election to eternal life, more certainly by the inward Testimony of the spirit: nevertheless we have some knowledge of the election of our Brethren, by outward signs and tokens. Now, there are two things to be considered, the knowledge and judgment whereof, is

hard and hidden; the one of that which is past; the other of that which is to come. That which is past, is our election from everlasting, before the foundation of the world was laid; that which is to come, is our perseverance and persistence unto the end of our days; yet we see the Apostle professeth some knowledge, nay persuasion of them both, which is grounded upon the graces of God, bestowed upon those that are his. The more excellent these graces are in quality, the more they are in number, the greater they are in quantity, the better Testimony they give unto men, and the surer judgment ariseth from them, unto such as have them.

Secondly, God hath given praise and glory as an inseparable companion of godliness and goodness; and on the other side, he hath appointed and allotted shame to follow sin. He hath joined these together, to wit, glory with piety, and shame with iniquity. These draw together, as it were, in one yoke, so that one cannot be without the other. The Apostle speaking of the ungodly saith, *Their glory shall be to their shame*. Seeing therefore, the graces of God's spirit are Testimonies of election, and Companions of praise and glory, we must from hence conclude, that the good gifts of God that are found in us, make us accepted of God and man.

The Uses follow to be considered and learned of us. First, seeing faith in Christ, and love toward the Saints give us a good report in the Church, and lay up a good foundation for us in heaven, we see that only godly men have a good name, and evil men shall leave an evil name behind them. This is one difference between the godly and ungodly: the godly, as he leadeth a godly and sanctified life, so he leaveth behind him a good report, whereby he smelleth sweetly in the Nostrils of God and man. But the ungodly, as they dishonor God in their lives, so he will dishonor them in their persons and names, and reward them with confusion of faces. This is it which the Prophet threateneth in the name of God, *Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, and ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of mind: & ye shall leave your name as a curse unto my chosen, for the Lord God shall slay you, and call his servants by another name*. There is a praise and commendation, which turneth to shame and infamy, to woe and misery: and again, there is a shame and reproach, that bringeth glory and praise with it. This our Savior teacheth, *Woe be to you, when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false Prophets: but blessed are you when men hate you, and when they separate you, and revile you, and put out your name as evil for the son of man's sake*. It seemeth to many that look with an eye of flesh, and judge with corrupt judgment, that the righteous are forgotten, and their names buried as in the grave of silence, they seem above all other wretched and miserable, because no man revengeth the wrongs and injuries that are offered unto thē: yet God in the end will maintain their cause, and give them good estimation with all good men. On the other side, howsoever the ungodly flourish for a season, and are famous in the world, howsoever they are praised of others, and praise themselves with their own mouths, yet their names shall be filthy and abominable, according to that which Solomon saith, *The memorial of the just shall be blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot*. This overthroweth three sorts of men that offend, and esteem not of men according to their faith and profession.

First, such as slander the godly, and bring up an evil report of the faithful people of God, such as revile them, and seek to take away their good name from them, which is a Jewel more precious then Silver and Gold. But we shall less esteem what they speak, if we consider who they are that spake. For the witness of an enemy is by no Law to be taken, but always to be suspected. Secondly, such as magnify and advance the ungodly, give them the praise and applause of the world, speak well of them, as of the only honest men that deserve to be commended. But so long as they live in sin, their own wickedness doth testify to their faces, and their ungodly hearts proclaim their own shame, and shall bring upon them utter confusion. Let this be written and engraven in our minds, that ungodliness will bring a blot and leave a reproach behind it. Lastly, it convinceth such as are Civil men, that can say they are not Drunkardes, they are not adulterers, they are not Thieves, they lead an honest life, they pay all men their own, they are ready to pleasure their friends, they deal justly with their Neighboures: these men have a good liking of themselves, and are accounted the only men among others. For this civil honest man is reputed the only honest man. But a man may do all this, and be a Pharisee, yea no better in the sight of God, then a Turk and infidel. He may carry the countenance and have the report of such a liver, and yet smell strongly and savor rankly in the Nostrils of God, of ignorance, of unbelief, of pride, and of self-love. If we would deserve true praise indeed, we must not rest in these outward practices and in this moral civility, we must plant Religion in our hearts, we must have a sound Faith in Christ, we must know the Doctrine of the Gospel, we must worship God aright. This the Apostle setteth down as a rule to direct us in our praising of men, *He is not a Jew which is one outward, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the Flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one within, and the Circumcision is of the heart; in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.* It is the commendation of *David*, that he was a man after God's own heart. It is the commendation of *Job*, that he was an upright and just man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil. It is the commendation of *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, that they were both just before God, and walked in all the commandments and Ordinances of the Lord without reproof. If a man be void and destitute of this piety, he can receive no comfort by his civility, and albeit he have the estimation of an honest man, it shall avail him nothing, unless withal he be a Religious man: and if our praise be never so great for our external dealing toward men, it shall minister no profit unto us, except we show inward devotion toward God.

Secondly, seeing Faith and Love give us a good commendation and report, let us by these and such like graces of God's spirit seek after a good name, let us not hunt after the praise of men, but that which is of God: the other is a blast of wind, this is certain and never fadeth. This made the Apostle say, *We did not use flattering words, as ye know, nor coloured coueteousnesse, God is record: neither sought we praise of men, neither of you, nor of others, when we might have been chargeable as the Apostles of Christ, we speak not as they that please men, but God, which approoueth our hearts.* This use and conclusion being well pondred and considered in our hearts, it will discover the great vanity and folly of earthly minded men, who seek rather a great name then a good and godly name. Thus did they that built the Tower of Babel, they sought a great name by their great exploits, for they would build them a Tower that should reach to heaven, (that is, exceeding high) to get them a name. Thus did *Absalom* seek a name

by adulation and flattery, by stealing away the hearts of the people, by creeping and crouching to everyone. Thus do hypocrites seek a name, by a vizard of holiness, & putting on a show of Religion, who indeed have a name, that they are alive but they are dead. Thus do rich men hope to become famous and to leave a name behind them, by getting goods, & raising up their Children, who think that their houses & their posterities shall continue from generation to generation, and call their Lands and Livings by their names. Thus did *Nebucadnezzar* seek a name, when in the pride of his heart he said, *Is not this great Babel, that I have built for the house of the Kingdom by the might of my power, and for the Honor of my Majesty?* Thus did *Herod* by his smooth words and eloquent speech, procure the applause of the people, that cried out, *It is the voice of God, and not of man.* All these were ignorant what a good Name is, and therefore they and their Names could not continue in honor, but perished like Beasts that die of the rot and murraine. Wherefore, we must labor to get a good name by faith in Christ, by favor to the Saints, by love to the Gospel, which we shall obtain, if we be careful to avoid all kind of sins, both gross sins, and light sins, and all occasions and enticements that may draw us unto them. It is impossible that we should have Faith to please God, and to have praise of God, if we never repented of Dead-works, if we live in open sins against knowledge, and against Conscience. And howsoever we account some sins small and slender (as the Church of Rome hold some Venial) yet *As dead Flies cause to stink and putrefy the Ointment of the Apothecary, so doth a little folly him, that is in estimation for Wisdom and for glory.* On the other side, we must strive to be rich in Faith, and in Good-Works, for such as endeavor themselves to honor God in these, shall receive Honor from God. And if by any weakness or infirmity we be fallen to the loss of a good Name, we must have a care, with all speed to repair it: we must be humbled by unfeigned Repentaunce; We must seek to be reconciled unto God, to be washed in the blood of Christ, to be purged in our Consciences, and to build up the ruins of our decayed life. For, the care to repair this good Name being lost, must be no less then to obtain it at the first. This we see in *David*, in *Manasseh*, in *Peter*, who turned unto God with all their hearts, who by their rising again from sin to Righteousness, built that which before they destroyed, repaired that which before they impaired, and increased that which before they had diminished.

Lastly, it is a great comfort and consolation to the faithful and godly, to keep Faith and a good Conscience, they are assured, that howsoever the Wicked shall undermine and nibble at our good Names, and cast some blemish upon them to defile them, yet God undertaketh the protection and preservation of our good Names, and it resteth not in the power of any creature to spoil us of them. True it is, our good Name is in danger of three great enemies, which are as three Catterpillers, that wast the fruits of the earth, or as so many Locusts, that eat up the grass of the field, or as three Canker-Wormes, that eat the barks of the Trees. Some are Authors and Inuenters of Slanders, and false Tales; Others, are Walkers and Talkers of them, spreading them abroad to the hurt of others: A third sort, are Hosts and receivers of the two former, believing such Ware to be good, as these Merchants and Brokers bring unto them. But howsoever, the Children of God are subject to the venomous tongues of ungodly men, whereby they are maligned and slandered; yet they must rejoice and comfort

themselves in this, that their approbation is in Heaven, and their reward with their God, thorough whose abundant Mercy, they shall be had in perpetual remembrance.

This the Apostle putteth us in mind of, when he saith, *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are Honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are worthy love, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any Uertue, or if there be any praise, think of these things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me.* For what should it avail a man, to be praised and commended in the World; for Strength, for Nobility, for Gentry, for Riches, for Beauty, for Greatness, which cannot make us blessed? Nothing can give us true and everlasting Honor, and cause us to be approved of God and Men, but Faith and the fruits thereof, that accompany salvation. Hence it is, that the Apostle speaking of the Fathers that lived in faith, and died in faith, which followed them even to their Graues, saith, *that all of them through Faith obtained a good report.* Let us therefore above all things seeke to please God by faith, that so we may find that favor which never shall have end.

[Faith and Love]

We have shown before wherein the praise of Philemon standeth; to wit, in faith and Love: which offereth unto us another profitable consideration, in that he joineth and annexeth these two virtues together. He nameth not faith alone, nor Love alone, but he knitteth faith and Love as it were in one band together. So then we see, that these two graces given by one and the same spirit, are remembered, to take up their seat and lodging in one man's heart. We learn hereby, that faith and Love are always coupled together, faith is not without Love, nor Love without faith, but faith and Love go together in all the servants of God, and can never be separated and put asunder. When *Paul* prayed for the Thessalonians, he remembered these two to be in them, their effectual faith, and their diligent love. It is said of the Church gathered together after the assention of Christ that all they which believed were in one place, and had all things common. Such as were true believers, were also commoners together, such as had Faith in Christ, had Love toward the Saints.

This *Luke* showeth more plainly afterward, *The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul, neither any of them said that anything of that which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.* Here we see Faith, and the manifestation of Faith, by the fruits of Charity joined together. To this purpose the Apostle saith, *In Jesus Christ neither Circumcision availeth anything, neither uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by Love.* Here also he coupleth Faith with Love in one Yoake, declaring that Faith is effectual in the duties of Love. So the Apostle *John* teacheth, that faith in Christ, and Love one toward another, are things ever joined together. *This is then his Commandment, that we believe in the Name of his son Jesus Christ, and love one another as he gave Commandment.* And the Apostle *James* speaking of the effectual faith of *Abraham* whereby he believed and was justified, declareth that *the Faith wrought with his works, and through the works was the Faith made perfect.* All these Texts and Testimonies of Scripture serve to teach us, that our faith must be accompanied with Love, and the one not divided from the other.

The truth hereof will better appear to everyone of us, If we consider the Reasons. For first, they are as the Tree and the Fruit, as the Roote and the Branch, as the Fountain and the Streame, as the cause and the effect. Faith is the Tree, the Roote, the Fountain, the cause: Love is the Fruit, the Branch, the Streame, the effect. The cause and the effect are Relatiues, and have relation and reference either to other: so that the cause cannot be without his effect; nor the effect without his cause: and therefore both these must go together. The Prophet describeth the blessed man *to be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Waters, that will bring forth her friute in due season, whose Leafe shall not fade: so whatsoever he shall do, shall prosper.*

Secondly, faith separated from Love, or Love separated from faith, is a false faith and a false Love. Faith without Love, or separated from the fruits of Love, is dead and without life; a naked name without the thing, an empty shadow without substance, a dead carcass without breath. It is nothing worth without Love. The Apostle saith, *If a man had all faith, so that he could remove Mountains and had not Love, it were nothing, he should be as sounding Brasse, or a tinkeling Cymball.* So we read in the Epistle of James, *That the Faith which is without works is dead, it is a Bastard Faith, a counterfeit Faith, an idle Faith, which is no true Faith indeed, but only in Name.* For, as a painted hand is no hand, so a seeming Faith is no Faith. Again, Love without Faith, is without his right order, yea without his life & soul, his true cause and form, and so not good, but evil; not approved, but rejected of God, *For without Faith, it is impossible to please God, and whatsoever is not of Faith, is sin.* All works of Justice, Mercy, Righteousness, to relieve the poor, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, without Faith are nothing worth; nay all these beautiful shows are beautiful sins, except they be seasoned with Faith. Again, to afflict thy soul, to humble thyself, to hear the word, to receive the Sacraments without Love, that is, to do the duties of the first Table, and to neglect them of the second Table, is but Hypocrisy, and maketh us abominable in the sight of God. Seeing then, Faith and Love are as the cause and the effect that live together, & seeing they loose their Names and Natures, being disjoined and divided one from another; we see it evidently and strongly to appear, that Faith in Christ, and Love to the Brethren, as Mother and Daughter, are joined together in every true Christian.

The Uses are now to be considered. First, seeing these two gifts are coupled together one with another, it followeth, that they must never be separated in a Christian man. He that is joined with the head, must also be joined with the members; and he that hath his part in the Communion of Saints, hath his fellowship also with Christ. If it be a general rule delivered by Christ, that the things which God hath coupled together, no man must separate; it holdeth in this particular, that Faith and Love are not to be disjoined and dismembered, forasmuch as God hath lodged them as two guests in one house, & locked them up as two Pearls and Jewels in one Closet. It is a rule published by the Heathen, that all Virtues are knit together in one Chaine, so that he which hath one, hath all of them; he that wanteth one of them, wanteth all: so is it with this worthy pair of Heavenly graces, we must not have a Faith without Works, nor Works without Faith, but our Faith must be fruitful to bring forth Works, and our Works must be thankful to confess them, to be received from Faith: Our Faith worketh by Love, our Love liveth by Faith: our Faith respecteth Christ, our Love respecteth the Saints.

Thus must these two be found in everyone of us, for they meet together in all such as shall be saved. This made the Apostle say in his Epistle to Titus, Chap. 3. *This is a true saying, and these things I will thou shouldest affirm; that they which have believed God, might be careful to show forth Good-Works; These things are good and profitable unto men.* Let us examine our own hearts, whether we find these two graces in us, which must be as two twins that rejoice and take delight to be together, or two Sisters that accompany one with another, like *Martha and Marie* in one house, so must these be two Virtues in one heart. Hence it is, that the Apostle *John* saith in his first Epistle, *If any man say, I Love God, and hate his Brother, he is a Lyar: for howe can he that loveth not his Brother, whom he hath seen; Love God whom he hath not seen?* And this Commandment have we of him, that he that loveth God, should Love his Brother also. Where he teacheth, that the love of God, and the love of our Brethren, are knit together with such a fast knot, as can never be loosed and dissolved, the Works of the first Table cannot be pulled asunder from the Works of the second Table. The Apostle *Peter* moving the dispersed Jews, to give diligence to make their Election sure, and their calling certain, that so they might never fall away, exhorteth them, *To join Uertue with their Faith; and with Faith, Knowledge; and with Knowledge, Temperance; and with Temperance, Patience; and with Patience, Godliness; and with Godliness, Brotherly Kindnesse; and with Brotherly kindness, Love.* These Christian graces of God's Spirit, he would have in them, and not only to be found in them, but to abound in them; and not only some of them, but they must endeavor to get them all, and to join one of them to another, that so we may be fruitful in all good Works. It is not therefore enough for us to have one gift alone, and then think we are well. Let us not flatter our selves, and boast of our Religion, to say we have Faith, or Knowledge, or Temperance, or Love. He that hath but one of them, hath indeed none of them. We must have many, or else we cannot assure our selves, that we have any at all. For, as he that is reformed in one sin, is reformed in all known sins, and he that truly repenteth of one, truly repenteth of all: so he that hath obtained one gift, hath gotten many. One sin commonly goeth not alone, so one Virtue goeth not alone. When Faith cometh, there cometh a Traine with it, it is as a Royal Queen, that never trauaileth abroad without her train. Faith layeth hold upon Christ, in whom all Treasures of Knowledge & Wisdom are hidden: Whosoever possesseth him, and hath him dwelling in his heart, he possesseth all things. If then we, by attending on the ordinance of God, have gotten Faith, which cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word; so soon as Faith is entered, a great multitude and mighty Army of God's Graces stand about us, and throng at the door of our hearts, as it were striving and thrusting, which of them should enter first, and they never give over, until they be all come in, and have taken up their lodging there, never after to be dislodged and dispossessed of that place.

Let us not therefore be so sparing and niggardly, to think one grace of God sufficient for us; we serve a liberal Lord and bountiful Master, that offereth to make us partakers of all his Treasures, and to bestow upon us all the riches of his house. We may put our hands into his Coffers, and store our selves with plenty and abundance. We see howe they that cover their houses, do lay Tile upon Tile, or Stone upon Stone, or Strawe upon Straw, so thick, that it may not rain thorough, and that they may be defended from wind and weather; so should it be with us that are setting up a Christian building, when we have laid a good foundation, we

must cover our houses with a strong covering, we must lay Grace upon Grace, and join Virtue to Virtue, that though the storms of temptations beat upon us, yet they may not prevail against us; though the Rain of afflictions fall upon us, yet it may not enter into us; and although the Winds of wickedness do oftentimes blow upon us, yet they may not overturn and overthrow us.

Secondly, seeing Faith and Love go together, and dwell together, we are put in mind of a notable duty, and are thereby directed to prove our Faith by our Love, and our Love by our Faith, and to make one of them serve to assure the other. The cause will prove the effect, and the effect will manifest the cause. We may prove fire by the heat, and the heat by the fire; a good tree by his fruit, & the fruit by his tree. Many will seem faithful & religious, they will glorify that they believe, & boast of their piety and godliness; yet come to their lives, & you shall find therein no fruits of mercy, no works of charity, no tokens & testimonies of their love appearing in them. This man's religion is in vain, his faith is in vain, his show of godliness is in vain: for pure *Religion and undefiled before God the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless & widows in their adversity, & to keep himself unspotted of the world.* And the same Apostle in the next chapter teacheth; *That it shall not profit any man to say he hath Faith, when his Faith bringeth forth no Good-works.* Again, many will show some fruits of Love to their Brethren, in Alms, in liberality, in giving unto the poor, in dealing justly and uprightly; and yet have no faith, they do them as natural men, moved by a natural affection, or stirred up by vain glory, or hunting after the praise of men, or constrained by the laws of Princes, or fearing the reproach of the world, or seeking the merit of their own salvation. All such have their reward according to their work, but not according to their hope. They have their reward already, they must look for no other; they have it among men, they shall loose it with God; they have the applause of the world, but they must pass another doom in the life to come. Such faith (before spoken of) without love, is but a shadow of faith; and such love without faith is but a shadow of love, both are naught and nothing worth if they be asunder. The root joined to the Tree are both good, and make the branches fruitful, but separate the one from the other, pull the root from the Tree, and you destroy them both, you kill them both. This is that use which *S. James* urgeth, chap. 2. *Some man might say, Thou hast the Faith, and I have works: show me thy faith out of thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.* Whereby we are taught to try the truth of our faith, & the sincerity of our love, that we be not deceived in the one, or in the other. But how shall this trial be made? Surely, by making one the Touchstone to the other, laying one to the other, and waighing one in the balance with the other. For the Apostle willeth the vain Christian, who hath nothing but the name of faith, to glory in (like a poor Begger that boasteth of great riches) to show the goodness of his Faith by the fruits of Good-works, or else his faith will appear to be no faith, and his claim to be a false usurpation. So then, if thou wilt prove thyself a true Christian, and to be just before God through faith in Christ, it is not enough to take unto thee the Title of faith, and to boast of such a belief as the Devils have, and every reprobate may have; but thou must be content to have thy inward faith examined and tried by thy outward works, whether it be the true faith or not. For a true Faith is always joined with love, and bringeth forth Good-works, as necessarily as a good Tree bringeth forth good fruits. An evil Tree

bringeth forth evil fruits, but a good Tree hath good fruit coming from it. From this conjunction of these two superior virtues, to wit, Faith and Love; the Rhemists in their translation, and other Romanists in their disputations, do debate and conclude against a fundamental point of Christian Religion, on this manner:

- *If Faith be not alone, but joined with Love,*
- *Then Faith alone doth not justify:*
- *But Faith is not alone, but joined with Love,*
- *Therefore Faith alone doth not justify.*

To this Objection I answer, they make an equivocation in these words, [*Faith alone.*] If they mean by Faith alone, a dead faith (as James doth) which is void of works, then they speak nothing to the purpose: for we never allowed of such a faith, we never taught justification by such a faith. But if they mean, as they should if they reason against us, that in the act of Justification, there is required hope and charity, or anymore then the hand of faith, which is the only instrument to take hold of Christ: if they join unto this, any of their works, we deny their assertion, and cannot admit of such justification. For, we believe and hold it as a sound foundation of our religion, that faith without any works doth iustifye, forasmuch as it doth alone apprehend the mercies of God, and apply the merits of Christ, whereby we are justified: so, that if the question be, what we must oppose between the Justice of God and our sins, why he doth not execute the curse of the Law against us, wherefore he is reconciled toward sinners, and receiveth them into favor, and how they stand as just before his Throne. Here works have no place, which are imperfect, which are stained and defiled, so that both we and our works must be accepted for another; namely, for Christ's sake, whom faith receiveth, and so putteth him and his benefits into our souls. True it is, Faith and Love are always joined in one Christian, they are required to perfect him, and to bring him to salvation. Thus Faith is necessary, Hope is necessary, Charity is necessary; they must all concur in one subject, & meet together in the same person, so that no believer must be without any of them. Thus we confess they are never alone, he that is without Hope and Charity is also without Faith; and whosoever hath a lively Faith, hath likewise an effectual Hope, and a fruitful Love. Nevertheless, howsoever they be joined, and must be joined in the practice of a Christian life, yet they are not joined, nor cannot be joined in the act and Article of Justification. The eye in the head alone seeth, not the ear, not the mouth, not the tongue, and yet it is never alone in the head, but joined with others. The hand in the body alone serveth to handle and to take the meat whereby we are fed and norished, yet it is not without the arm, without the foot, without the eye, without the head. Every part and member of the body in his place is necessary, and all serve to perfect the body, without which it were maimed and imperfect, but every member hath his several office and function: so is it with the gifts and graces of God, all are and ought to be joined together, to make up a perfect Christian, and he must be furnished with them to make him complete and absolute to every good work; but every gift hath his several object and Office. The property of the eye is to see, of the hand to handle, of the foot to walk; so the Office of Faith is to make us just,

the office of Hope is to make us wait, the office of Love is to make us merciful. We do not separate Faith and Good-works from the exercise of a Christian man's life, but in the office of Justification, and acquitting of us in the presence of God. Faith in her Office is alone, as Love likewise is in hers; but in our practice & in our persons they must be joined. A Prince, albeit in her estate & Throne she be alone, yet she goeth not without her train, and Maids of Honor, waiting about her, and attending upon her. Faith, when she layeth hold on Christ, and receiveth the promise, is as it were upon her Throne of estate, and in her proper calling joining us to God. Neither do we ascribe our Justification to faith for it self, or as it is a work and quality in us, as if it were any part of our Justice or righteousness, as if we were justified partly by the merits of Christ, and partly by the worthiness of our own faith, for that were to seek Justification in our selves, which is the Doctrine of the church of *Rome*: but we are justified no otherwise by our faith, then we are fed by our hand. Now how doth the hand nourish the body? Not because it is meat to feed the dy, but because it receiveth and applieth unto it the meat whereby it is sustained. Even so, Faith iustifyeth and giveth life, not because it is our Justification either in whole or in part, but because it receiveth Christ to be our righteousness and life, in whom *We have remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified and reserved to eternal life*. So then, we ascribe Justification to our faith, no otherwise then as it is the means or Instrument to apprehend and receive the mercies of God, the merits of Christ, and the promises of the gospel.

Thus we teach, that faith is the hand which we stretch to heaven, to take hold of Christ, and to embrace him sitting at the right hand of his father. It is the mouth, whereby we eat and drink Christ, because to believe in him is to eat him. It is the stomach whereby we digest him, because he is to be digested by Faith. It is the foot whereby we enter the possession of all the benefits of Christ, and so far we possess them as we walk towards them. By Faith it is, that we touch Christ, and so receive Christ, for look how much Faith we bring to receive, so much we draw of the abundant graces of God. To conclude therefore, we see how Faith is alone, and how it is not alone: how it goeth with Love, and when it goeth not with Love. It is alone in our Justification, it is not alone in our godly conversation: It is alone in receiving Christ, it is not alone in furnishing a Christian man's life, nor sufficient to adorn him with such graces as God requireth to be in his person, for all other virtues must be in him.

Lastly, seeing Faith and Love are always linked together in one man, this overthroweth another Doctrine of the Church of Rome, which teacheth that Faith may be without Charity, and separate from good works. For the true and justifying Faith of God's elect can be no more without works then the fire without heat, the water without moisture, the sand without heaviness, the Sun without brightness, the soul without life, or the good tree without good fruit. Neither let them pretend the Apostle James to color this their fancy, as though it proved that a man may have Faith without Charity. For he speaketh in that place of a dead Faith, not a lively Faith: of a false Faith, not of a true Faith: of the Faith of the Devils, not of the Faith of God's elect: of Faith in outward profession, not in the inward affection. He showeth that Faith if it have no works is dead, and again, Faith without works is dead: he likeneth such a Faith to the Faith of the Devils, and therefore it cannot be a justifying Faith: unless they will make the Devils good Catholics, and partakers of salvation.

He resembleth this Faith to the good words of him that wisheth well to a poor man, but doth nothing at all for him; he speaks him fair, but he doth not succor him. And as the body that breatheth not is dead, so Faith that bringeth not forth good works is dead. Now a dead Faith, is no Faith: it is Faith in name, but not in Nature. The Philosophers teach that when the body is dead, there shall be neither foot nor hand, but only a likeness of name, as a man termeth a hand of wood or stone, a hand: so in like sort is a dead hand called an hand, or a dead man, a man: because howsoever they are not the same, yet they retain the show and shadow of the name: but all true parts of the body are defined by their Office and faculty. Thus doth the Apostle call a dead faith by the name of faith, whereas indeed it is no more true faith then a dead man is a living man. Hence it is, that some of the Popish writers teach, that James by the name of spirit, understandeth not the soul, but the breath, and that he fitly compareth works to breath, and faith to the body: because as the body of a living creature if it breath not is dead, so faith if it bring forth no works is dead: for breathing is an effect of a living body, and working is the proper effect of a living faith: we say therefore, that there is a faith which may be without Charity, and there is a faith that cannot be without Charity. There is a general faith which believeth that there is one God, and giveth assent that the Scriptures be true, which goeth no farther; this we confess may be, and oftentimes is without good works. But there is a faith that worketh by Love, which can never be separated from Charity and good works, but wheresoever it is, there is infallibly and inseparably joined unto it the Love of God and man, *bringing forth the fruits of Righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God*. If we have this true faith which purifieth the heart, it will be rich and plentiful in all good works, and teach us to show the fruits of Love to our Brethren. There hath been a long contention and much ado in the Church, how to reconcile *Paul* and *James* together, the one advancing faith, and the other good works, *Paul* saith we are justified by faith and not by the works of the Law. *James* saith, we are justified by works and not by faith only. These sayings by faith, and not by faith: by works, and not by works; seem one directly opposite and contrary to the other. This difference is only in the letter, not in the matter; in show, not in substance: in words, not in meaning; and the Doctrine which now we have in hand, will help easily to accord them, nay there cannot be a better reconciliation, then when we join them together in the practice of our lives and conversations. Let us join the lively Faith of *Paul* with the Good-works of *James*, let us bring them both into action, and so we shall be justified by *S. Paul's* faith before God, and by *S. James* Works before men. Thus the places will easily be made one, which seem different the one from the other. For, although *Paul* do commend Faith, yet he doth not condemn Works: and albeit *James* do commend Works, yet he doth not condemn Faith; and therefore as they teach both, so we must practice both, we must be void of neither of them. Seeing they preach both, we must know that both are required of us. This overthroweth two sorts of men; first, Papists; and then Libertines. First the Church of Rome do us great wrong and injury, both in falsely slandering us, and in filling the ears of the simple and ignorant people with lies, that our Doctrine is a Doctrine of liberty and licentiousness, that we teach men, (or at least open a gap to men) to live loosely and lewdly, and that we are enemies to Good-works, whereas in very deed, we do the clean contrary, as this Doctrine among a thousand others may bear witness, which now we deal withal, teaching us that Faith must always go with Works, that Faith purifieth the heart, and

giveth victory over the world. We teach, that Christ is not only our Justification, but also our Sanctification. We charge men to beware, that they use not the liberty of the Gospel, as a cloak of maliciousness. We teach them to serve the Lord with fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. We will men to let their light so shine before men, that they seeing their Good-Works may glorify their father which is in heaven. This is no Doctrine of liberty, nor openeth a window to all wickedness, and yet this is our Doctrine, which is so plain and evident a truth, that some of our hottest adversaries are driven to acknowledge it. But who are they, that have this leisure, to pry and search into the lives of others abroad, and are ignorant of themselves, and their own Doctrine at home. For it is their Religion that is a broaching of lies, and of all liberty to do evil, as all men by the light of Nature, not blinded with the love of error might soon espy. Behold therefore some kinds of their Catholic Faith taught by their holy Mother the Church. They teach the lawfulness of deposing Princes, and discharging their Subjects of their allegiance and obedience toward them: This Doctrine filleth Kingdoms and Countries with Treasons and Rebellions, and alloweth Traitors, and Assassins, and Murderers of them at the Popes pleasure. They do teach and allow the worship of Images, and bowing down to Stockes and Stones, whereby the people are drawn away from the living God, to palpable Idolatry, as common experience hath declared, and some of themselves have confessed. They publish at large the benefit of Pardons, which may easily be procured for money, which open wide the Flood-gates of all vngodlynesse. For who will spare to commit sin, that is able to redeem it with his purse? Yea, this emboldened certain men, to rob the Popes pardoner, who before hand had given them a pardon to commit the next sin, though it should be a great sin. They teach, touching the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, that a Dog or Mouse, or Swine, or any Beast, eating a consecrated host, eateth the very flesh and body of our Savior, as I have shown else-where. They maintain the filthy Dunghill of Stews and Brothel-houses, which giveth allowance unto open whoredom and uncleanness; yea, they say it is good for a Commonwealth, and the Pope tollerateth the Curtezans in Rome, and in other places, upon a yearly rent, to practice and profess Bawdry. Unto this rablement of their Catholic conclusions, we might add many others, which suffice to discover what the holiness of the Romish Religion is, and to direct us to come out of it betimes, least partaking with the same sins, we also partake in the punishments. Secondly, this conjunction of these two Virtues, overthroweth the carnal looseness of all Libertines, such as are Hypocrites and vain boasters of Faith, which think it sufficient to speak of Faith, and to boast that they believe. These men doth the Apostle *James* plainly reprove in his Epistle, teaching, that where there is want of works, there is also want of Faith; of a true Faith, which is the right Faith. We must therefore examine our Faith by the fruits, and prove our believing by our working. We have many such in our days, that glory of their Faith, and boast that they are of a right belief, and yet lay them to the trial, and examine their lives what they are, and we shall find them to be liars against the truth, and deceiving their own souls. Knowe therefore, that our faith is, as our lives are: A good life, a good Faith; a dead life, a dead Faith; an unfruitful life, an idle Faith. And thus much of Faith and Love joined together: Now let us speak of them severally, as they are described; first, touching Faith; and afterward, touching Love.

[*Faith in Christ.*]

The first Virtue which is here commended to be in *Philemon*, is Faith, which is said to respect Christ. This Faith is a gift of God, whereby we apprehend Christ and his benefits, believing the remission of our sins, and our reconciliation with God. Mark therefore, that the faith here set forth, is said to be toward Christ, and Christ who is the proper object of Faith, doth also point us unto the Father, who willeth and ordaineth our Salvation, Redemption, Reconciliation, and Salvation; and to the Holy-Ghost, who applieth and appropriateth to the elect, these benefits which are willed by the Father, and merited by Christ. So then, when the Apostle saith of *Philemon*, that his faith was in Christ, he teacheth that true faith looketh unto Christ, dependeth upon him, trusteth and resteth in him for salvation, and not upon any creature in heaven or earth. Our faith must direct us to Christ to believe in him, to have recourse to him, and to look for salvation from him, as the Israelites did health from the Brazen serpent. This is proved unto us by many consents of the word of God. The Apostle *John* in his Gospel offereth plentiful Testimonies of the truth, as Chap. 1, 12. *As many as received him, to them he gave prerogative to be the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name.* And Chap. 3. *God so loved the world, that he hath given his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* And again, Chap. 17. *I pray not for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in me through their word.* So before in the third Chapter, *As Moses lift up the Serpent in the Wilderness, so must the son of man be lift up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.* Thus he speaketh in another place, *This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent.* When Phillip said to the Eunuch, *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayst be baptized:* He answered, *I believe that Jesus Christ is that son of God.* So Paul and Silas willed the Keeper of the prison to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he should he saved. And the Apostle, Gal. 2. teacheth, *That a man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we, I say, have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ.* All these places of Scripture plainly instruct us in this principle of our holy religion, that Faith must be in Christ, in whom it findeth a sure ground to rest upon.

The Reasons are to be marked and considered, which confirm this Doctrine. First, because the work of salvation is wholly and only wrought by him, and no part thereof is reserved to any creature, in whole or in part. To be called Jesus, is as it were the proper name of Christ, who is a perfect and absolute Saviour, beginning, continuing, and finishing our salvation. This is it which *Peter* preacheth: *Among men, there is no other name given under heaven, whereby we may be saved, but by the Name of Jesus.* And the author to the Hebrews saith, that *he is able perfectly to save them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* Thus we see, Christ is made the Author and finisher of our salvation.

Secondly, to put a difference between the Creator and the Creatute, between the things pertaining to God, and the things pertaining to men. No creature is to be believed in, nor any blessing that we receive from Christ. We believe the Church, not in the Church; the Communion of Saints, not in the Communion of Saints; the forgiveness of sins, not in the forgiveness of sins, as we shall see afterward. Seeing therefore, we have Justification and

salvation from no other then from Christ, and seeing we must make a difference and distinction between him and all other creatures, it followeth; that we must believe in him, and fasten our Faith as a sure Anchor of our soul upon him.

Let us see what are the Uses of this Doctrine, and how we may profitably apply it to our instruction and edification. First, seeing it is our duty to believe in Christ, we learn that Christ Jesus is true and eternal God, equal with his Father, to be worshipped and glorified together with the Father, & the blessed spirit. This serveth to convince the Heresy of the Arians, Jews, Turks, Persians, and sundry other Infidels, who deny the Deity of the son of God, and cast him down into the row and rank of mere creatures, who notwithstanding being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, at whose Name every knee must bow, both of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. Therefore, we saw before, that the Apostle in his salutation, wisheth Grace and Peace to come upon them, to whom he writeth this Epistle, as well from Jesus Christ, as from God the Father. If Grace and Peace come not only from the Father, but from the Son, it followeth that he is God equal with the other. Hence it is, that he saith in the Gospel, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me, let not your heart be troubled.* And again, *He that believeth in me, believeth not in me* (to wit, an ordinary man, as they falsely imagined) *but in him that sent me.* And in another place, *Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me: I and my Father are one.* So when Christ had restored sight on the Sabaoth day to him that was borne blind, he said; *Lord I believe, and worshipped him.* Whereby we see, that whosoever is without the Son, is also without the Father: he that believeth not in the Son, believeth not in the Father: He that worshippeth not the Son, Worshippeth not the Father. So then, this is a certain and invincible Argument of the Deity of Christ, that we are to believe in him, forasmuch as Faith is a Worshippe due only unto God.

Secondly, seeing it is a principle necessary to be holden of all men, that we must believe in the Son, we must put a difference between these sayings; to believe God, & to believe in God. For, albeit he that believeth in God, believeth God, yet it is not so on the contrary, everyone that believeth God, doth not by & by believe in God. The Devils themselves (as we shown before) do believe God, they believe Christ, they confess him to be the son of the Father, they know him to be the Judge of the Worlde, the Savior of mankind, the holy one of God; and yet they do not believe in him, they put no confidence in him, they look not for life and salvation from him, but are assured they are reserved to destruction. This maketh them cry out in the Gospel, *Why art thou come to torment us before the time.* And the apostle James saith, *The Devils believe and tremble.* They believe God touching his Nature and attributes; they believe Christ touching his Person, & Natures, and Offices: They believe the Holy-Ghost touching his Person and Gifts: They believe there is a Church and singular perogatives imparted to it, and bestowed upon it. And albeit our Faith must go beyond the faith of the Devils, yet they go farther then many professors of the Gospel among us, that have no knowledge of these things. So then, it is required of us, not only to believe that there is a Savior of the world, but we must believe that he is our Savior; beginning our salvation in this life, and perfecting it in the life to come.

This confuteth the Popish opinion, that holdeth, that we may believe in the creatures, as well as in the Creator: in the Saints, as well as in Christ: in mortal men, as well as in the eternal God. They teach that we may believe, not only the Church, but in the Church; not only *Moses*, but in *Moses*; not only the Prophets, but in the Prophets. We are charged to believe in the blessed Trinity, in God the Father, in God the son, and in God the Holy Ghost: but when the speech is not of the God-head, but of the Creatures and Mysteries, we are not taught to believe in them; and therefore we are no more to believe in the Church, then to believe in baptism, in the resurrection of the body, the Communion of Saints, and in the participation of glory. We are indeed to believe *Moses* and the Prophets, that they spake not of themselves, that their word is not the word of man, that they ran not before they were sent; but we are not to believe in them. We are indeed to believe *Peter* and *Paul*, but not in *Peter* and *Paul*. We are to believe the Scriptuers, but not in the Scriptures; for that were to bestow upon the servant the honor of the Lord, and to give to man that which is proper to the divine Majesty. We must believe in Christ Jesus our only savior; as for those that believe in any other, or seek salvation in any other then in Christ, whether in Saints, or in Angels, or in themselves, they believe not in Christ as in their only Savior. For he believeth not in God, who doth not place in him alone the trust of his whole felicity, who doth not put his affiance in him, who doth not depend upon him, who is not assured of his good will and favor, looking for salvation from him, and for deliverance from all evils.

Lastly, seeing it is necessary for us to have faith in Christ, it is our duty to use all means to attain to this Faith. Many there are, which are deceived in thinking they have it, who indeed have it not. These suppose they are full of Faith, who are as empty vessels, and never tasted the sweetness of it, as may appear, by examining the common practice of our common professors, by these six notes. First, true Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word preached, as the Apostle showeth, Rom. 10. *How shall they cal upon him in whom they do not believe, How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, how shall they hear without a Preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?* This place is not unfitly called a Ladder that reacheth to Heaven, whereby as by certain stepes we climb up to heaven. God sendeth, the Minister preacheth, the people believeth. The same Apostle asketh the Galatians, *Whether they received the spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?* But the Faith which many talk and boast of, is conceived and conceited without the preaching of the word, for they cannot abide it, they will not attend unto it, they regard not to hear it. True it is, if they be asked whether they have Faith or not, they will think it a strange question, and marvel that we should make doubt thereof, they suppose themselves to have a sound Faith in Christ; but how come they by this faith? They say they believe in Jesus Christ for their salvation, and yet they live in a perpetual neglect, and continual contempt of the public Ministry of the word. Such is their believing, as is their hearing; and their Faith is aunswerable to their attending. It is a great foolishness, & worse then madness, for any man to imagine to attain to Faith by any other means then God hath ordained. When God hath said, that the ordinary way to obtain Faith, is by the preaching of the word: wilt thou in the high pride of thy ignorant heart say, I can have Faith without preaching? This is to cross the ordinance of God, and to think thyself wiser then God. For, although all have not Faith that

ordinarily hear; yet ordinarily none have faith that do not hear. If then we would have Faith, we must seek it as God hath appointed, where it is to be found; and when it is to be found, let us be diligent hearers, attentive hearers, constant hearers, and then we shall see the blessing of God upon us, that we shall be saving hearers.

Secondly, true Faith is also joined with Prayer to God, and with repentance from dead works: for how shall they call upon him in whom they do not believe? And the Apostle *Peter* teacheth, that Faith purifieth the heart. *Paul* exhorting the Elders of *Ephesus* saith, *That he witnessed both to the Jews and to the Grecians, the Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.* It was the substance of Christ's Sermons, which he preached when he came into *Galilee*, *The Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the Gospel.* But there are many amongst us that profess Faith, which have a Faith of another kind and Nature, it is not joined with invocation of God's name, they make no Conscience to call upon him, they have not the Spirit of Prayer, that crieth in their hearts, *Abba Father*: it worketh not in them conversion of heart, a turning of the mind, a change of life: they boast of Faith, but they remain the same men they were before, a dead life, a dead Faith; a profane life, a false Faith, that will in the end deceive them.

Thirdly, true Faith worketh in us an holy contentation in our estate, and teacheth us to depend upon God's providence, touching Food, Raiment, and all things necessary for this present life. This Christ our Savior teacheth us from the example of the Fowls of the Heaven, of the stature of our body, of the Lilies of the field, from the grass of the earth: what do pensive thoughts, distracting and distrustful cares avail to sustain us, or preserve our life? Wherefore, seeing the Birds are nourished, our stature is increased, the Lilies are beautified, the Grass is clothed by the power and providence of God, *Shall he not do the same much more to you, O ye of little Faith?* Faith therefore maketh us rest upon God, want of Faith taketh away all trust in him. But many among us, that will needs boast of Faith in Christ, want this Faith in his providence: for they dare not trust GOD with their life, they do not depend upon him for their living, they are afraid he will leave them, and forsake them, they do not believe he will be a merciful and gracious God unto them, they have not that affiance & confidence reposed him, that natural children have in their Parents. A Child doth not weary him-self with matters of the World, he doth not fore-cast for many years, he is not entangled and choked with earthly Cogitations, all his care is cast upon his Father, he trusteth upon him, he knoweth he will provide for him, and so passeth his days without distrust or despair. And shall we not be ashamed, to be sent to School to learn of little Children, that depend upon their Father, whereas we have not learned to lift up our eyes unto our Father that dwelleth in the Heavens, but use unlawful means and ungodly shifts to help our selves. A plain argument, that we have not that Faith, which we falsely imagine, and vainly imagine our selves to have.

Fourthly, true Faith is the Mother of love, and maketh us live in peace one with another; the Apostle *Paul* teacheth, *That Faith worketh by love.* And John in his first Epistle saith, *This is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his son Jesus Christ, & love one another.* But many that will seem to have faith in Christ, show no fruits of love toward their Brethren, they are not

careful (if it be possible) and so far as lieth in them, to have peace with all men, they do not seek after peace, and ensue it, but live in hatred and contention, in malice and envy, and least of all do affect the children of God. An envious Faith, is no Faith; and therefore, let such men look unto it. Fifthly true faith is mingled with doubting and unbelief, with wavering and fear, and oftentimes strongly shaken and assailed as with a mighty Tempest. This we see in the Father of him that was possessed with an unclean spirit, he was ready to rest upon Christ, but he felt the fruit of his own corruption, the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak, he found a fight within himself, between Faith and Infidelity. When he considered the infinite power of Christ, that was able to cast out Satan, and to bind the strong man he was moved to believe. On the other side, when he saw the strangeness, the continuance, the incurable disease of his sons, when he marked that the Devil took him, tare him, cast him into the fire to burn him, threw him into the water to drown him, and at all times sought to destroy him, when he beheld with the eyes of a Father that his child fumed at the mouth; gnashed with his teeth, pined away in his body, and was bruised in his bones, he was tempted with unbelief, and this made him cry out with tears, *Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief.* This is it wherein the Lord forewarned and fore-armed *Peter, Behold, Satan hath desired you to winnow you as Wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* He prayed not that their Faith should not be tried, but that it should not be destroyed, forasmuch as they must on every side be assailed. But the Faith of many is such, that they say they perfectly believe, and they thank God they never doubted in all their life. This Faith is no Faith, it is an idle conceit, a vain persuasion, a foolish presumption. Lastly, the true Faith increaseth by degrees, it is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which at the first is the least of all seeds, which afterward groweth unto a Tree, that the Birds of the Air come and build their Nests in it: and therefore, we must proceed from Faith to Faith. But many amongst us, that will needs be in the number of the faithful, never feel these Degrees of Faith, they see not any increasing or decreasing, any shining or eclipsing of their Faith; Nay, they never examine themselves whether they be in the Faith or not. They never consider whether they go forward or backward in the ways of Godliness: they can cast up their accounts every Weeke with the world, but they can suffer whole months and years to pass over their heads, and never once offer to make level with the Lord. If we will assure our own hearts, that we have this true and perfect Faith in Christ, let us observe the manner and measure of it, the steppes and degrees of it, how we walk by it, and labor by all holy means to increase it in us. Thus much touching the Object of Faith: Now, let us consider the Object of Love.

[*Love toward the Saints.*]

The meaning of these words, is first to be observed, and then the Doctrines are to be gathered, which the Spirit of God offereth in this place to our considerations. By love, we are to understand the fruits of love: mercy, consolation, compassion, brotherly kindness, relief, pity, and whatsoever fruits of charity we see them want & stand in need of. It standeth in the affection of the mind, in the words of the mouth, and in the works of the hand. By Saints, we do not understand such as are dead and deceased, but those that are living; not such as are of the Church Triumphant, but in the Church Militant; not such as are crowned with glory in heaven, but those that dwell upon the earth; not such as are enrolled in the Popes Register,

and stand in red Letters in the Popish Calendar; but the faithful, whose Names are Written in the Book of life, which are the true members of Jesus Christ. Thus much touching the true Interpretation of the Words. We see here that Love is described by the Object thereof, to wit; the Saints. For, as Christ is not the Object of our Charity, for our well-doing extendeth notvnto him: so the Saints are not the Object of our Faith, but as Faith hath respect and relation to Christ, so hath love reference to the Saints. Now, we have shown already, that *Philemons* love is commended toward the Saints, because he had a principal and special care of them. True it is, he neglected not others, but he was most of all mindful of the godly, poor, and distressed Brethren. We learn hereby, that the works of mercy are especially to be shown to the poor among us that are faithful, which may be accounted of the fellowship and Communion of the Saints. Howsoever all such as are poor, are in their poverty to be regarded, inasmuch as Christ hath taught us that the poor we shall have always with us, yet the Godly poor, that have piety joined with their poverty, are before others, and above others, to be respected and relieved.

In the performance of this duty, we see the practice of the Prophet *David* going before us, and leading us the way. *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord, my well-doing extendeth not to thee, but to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent: all my delight is in them.* In like manner also, our Savior Christ describing the manner of the last Judgment, when he shall give to everyone according to his Works, declareth, that the fruits of mercy bestowed upon the members of Christ, being sick, imprisoned, hungry, thirsty, naked, and in necessity, are allowed as notable fruits of a justifying Faith, and of a true love, and accepted as done to Christ himself. So the Evangelist Luke testifieth in the Acts, that *the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one mind, they had all things common, no man accounted anything he possessed his own, but to serve the necessary use of the Saints.* The Apostle having proved in the Epistle to the Romans, that we are justified freely by the grace of God, without the works of the Law, whereby we are at peace with God, cometh to set down the fruits of Faith, Chap. 12. *Reioycing in hope, continuing in Prayer, distributing unto the necessities of the Saints, giving yourselves to Hospitality.* Hereunto come diverse Laws which God ordained among his people, *If one of thy Brethren with thee be poor within any of thy gates in thy Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand unto him, and shalt lend him sufficient for his need.* All these testimonies of Scripture do prove, that the poor which are godly are most of all to be succoured and sustained, as they, that for the most part stand in greatest need to be helped.

The Reasons hereof are to be considered. First, it is a fruit of our election, which we ought to assure to our selves more and more. The Apostle *John* testifieth this, *We know that we are translated from death to life, because we love the Brethren: he that loveth not his Brother, abideth in death.* We ought daily to gather arguments to persuade our hearts of God's love towards us, which we shall see by our love toward our brethren. The election of God is hidden in himself, the cause of it is not in our selves; but we shall not need to climb up to Heaven to know it, God hath left us a better, a more easy & certain way then to search into the secrets of God, that he hath kept to himself, if we enter into our selves, and see the effects and signs of it, we shall not doubt thereof, but rest assured with unspeakable comfort that we belong to

him. For as the Lord knoweth who are his, so we shall know that we are the Lord's, if we find the fruits of election graven in our hearts, among the which this is one of the principal, our unfeigned love to the Brethren, the forgiving of our enemies, our delight in the Saints, our doing good to them that are of the household of Faith.

Secondly, such poor as be faithful belong unto Christ, and what comfort soever is ministered, what relief soever is shown to them, is ministered and showed to Christ, as Christ himself witnesseth with his own mouth, who is truth it self, that they should the more readily embrace it as the truth. For he telleth us, that it shall be said to us in the last day, that have helped the Saints, and refreshed their bowels, *Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it to me.* This is a notable motive and encouragement to move us to this duty, to consider that our love is shown not to men upon the earth, but to Christ sitting in heaven, at the right hand of his Father. Hereunto cometh the wise saying of Solomon, *He that hath mercy upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and the Lord will recompense him that which he hath given.* Yea, he is so rich a rewarder, and a bountiful recompencer of that which is done to those of his household, *that if a cup of cold water be given to a Disciple in the name of a Disciple, to a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, he shall not loose his reward.* When one lendeth to an honest man that standeth upon his credit, he seareth no loss, he knoweth he will perform what he hath promised, and accounteth his word as good as a band and Obligation: how much more ought we to be assured of right good payment, when we have done any good thing unto the poor, forasmuch as we have not done it to man, but unto God. He hath given his word to see us paid, will we not take his word? he offereth to enter into bands, & to be bound in a statute, is not statute-law good with us? Albeit he be indebted to none, but all in debt to him, yet he offereth himself as a pledge, and becometh surety for the money, who is so good a paymaster, that he will not only restore the principal, but pay the hire and profit to him that hath lent it, both in this life, and abundantly in the life to come.

Thirdly, we are bound to follow the example of our heavenly father, to love as he loveth; to love most where he loveth most of all; and least, where he loveth least of all. Now, he loveth all his creatures, which are the works of his hands, *He saw them all when they were made, and loe they were all exceeding good:* but he especially loveth mankind, *Whom he created in his own Image, according to his likeness:* and yet most especially he loveth the faithful, upon whom he bestoweth the riches of his love, and hideth not the secrets of his kingdom from them; yea, he hath given them his own son to be their Wisdom, Justification, Sanctification, and Redemption unto them, howe should he not with him give them all things else? This the Apostle teacheth, warning us to *Trust in the living God, which is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe.* Here is a pattern and president for us to follow, that we may be like our Heavenly Father; we must love all mankind, but we must most entirely and dearly respect the godly: we must love all the poor, but the poor that are faithful we must love most of all. If we must bestow labor upon barren ground, we must not leave the fruitful untilled: and if we must cast our Bread upon the Waters where it may seem to be lost, we must not deny it to the living members of Christ's body, which are our Brethren.

Fourthly, we cannot by our well-doing benefit God at all; our goodness can do him no good, our love cannot profit or pleasure him. For, as our wickedness can do him no harm, so our kindness can procure him no good. This he saith, and thus he speaketh in the Prophet, *I will take no Bullock out of thine house, nor Goats out of thy Foldes, for all the Beasts of the Forest are mine, and the Beasts on a thousand Mountains: I know all the Beasts on the Mountains, and the Wilde Beasts of the field are mine: If I be hungry, I will not tell thee, for the World is mine, and all that therein is.* We receive all good from him, we can return nothing back to him again, to do him good. This is the reason which the Prophet *David* teacheth, which moved him to join himself unto the people of God, and to profit them, because he saw he could not pleasure God, his well-doing could not extend to him. Seeing therefore the duty of love shown to the Brethren, are seals of our election, and are accepted as done to Christ himself, seeing we must follow the example of our heavenly Father, and that we cannot by all our goods help him; it followeth, that we must begin our works of mercy at the faithful, & cast a pitiful eye, & open a liberal hand especially toward thē.

Let us now come to the Uses of this doctrine. First, this teacheth, that there ought to be among all the faithful a communion of Saints, they are as a family or household among themselves. They have a near fellowship, they are near brethren, they are fellow members of one body, they are knit together by one spirit, they are called under one hope, they are made Christ's by one faith, they are made one by one baptism, they have one bread to feed upon, they have one cup to drink of, they have one table to meet at, they have one God that they worship, they have one salvation that they aim at. This the Apostle expresseth at large. *Ephe. 4. Support one another through love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your vocation: There is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, which is above all, and through all, and in you all.* We are charged to have a care of all mankind, but as it is fit and convenient, that they which are of the same family, should be helpful and beneficial one to another, rather than to such as are of another family, which are not so nearly joined unto them; so we must have a care to do good to all the sons of men, but it is requisite, that those which are members of the same body, nay which are Sons and Daughters; Brethren, and Sisters, having the same God for their Father, the same Church for their Mother, the same Christ for their elder Brother, which are begotten of the same immortal seed, nourished with the same Milk, and gathered together in one hope, should be beneficial and bountiful one to another, rather than to those that are forraigners and Strangers, not linked to them by the bond of Faith, nor joined with them in the body of Christ. Wherefore, the Apostle saith to the Phillippians, *If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of Love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any Compassion and Mercy, fulfill my joy, that ye be like minded having the same Love, being of one accord, and of one judgment.* He teacheth us to have one mind and heart, he admonisheth us to cleave together, and to hold together. We see how those of the Kingdom of darkness and destruction, do couple and combine themselves together against the Church and chosen Children of God; for doubtless we may say as the Apostle did, *Against thy Son Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentles and the people of Israel, gathered themselves together.* And▪ as the Prophet speaketh, *They have consulted together in heart, and*

have made a league against thee, the Tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites, Moab, and the Agarims; Gebal, and Amalech, the Philistines, and the inhabitants of Tyrus, &c. So is it in these days, the ungodly rabble of profane persons have joined together, and make as it were a Conspiracie against the godly: the profane and Atheists, the Papists and Libertines set themselves against the faithful of the Lande, and open their mouths against heaven, they devise all horrible and detastable slanders to work their confusion. We find hard entertainment in the World, because we are chosen out of the World. We are hated of them, because we are not Companions with them in evil. We are reviled and slandered of them, because we will not follow all excess of riot, to the slander of our profession, and to the dishonour of God. Wherefore, the Children of light should company and consort together, being the Sons of God, heirs of his Kingdom, members of Christ, Temples of the Holy-Ghost. The unreasonable Creatures may condemn us. We see Cattle heard together, Sheep flock together, Fishes shole together, and Birds of a Feather will fly together: O what a shame is it then for us, to make a rent and division in the body of Christ, by separating our selves one from another in affection of heart, and practice of life! A true Christian man or woman is like a Candle, that consumeth it self to give light to others. So must God's people spend those gifts which God hath given them for the benefit of their Brethren. This Communion which we are to yield to the Saints, standeth in two things; not to speak of the Communion that we have with Christ our head, but one toward another. First, in affection; Secondly, in gifts. In mind and affections we must be of one heart, to mourn with them that do lament, and to rejoice with those that God doth comfort. We see this to be in the natural members of our body, if one member do suffer, the rest are pained; if one rejoice, the other are comforted. This duty the Apostle remembereth unto us, *Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep: be of like affection one toward another.* So the writer to the Hebrews moveth us to *Remember them that are in bonds, as though we were bound with them: and them that are in affliction, as if we were also afflicted in the body.* If our selves were in prison, we would have a sensible feeling of our imprisonment, and we would be ready to complain of the want of the fruits of love in others toward us, if we were not visited and comforted. Let us therefore practice that toward others, which we would have practiced toward our selves. This must all true Christians have in mind, that they must have tender hearts and compassionate affections, putting on the bowels of mercy and commiseration in regard of the miseries that befall the Church in general, or our Brethren in particular. Christ Jesus is touched with a feeling of their miseries, and accounteth them as done to himself, as appeareth when he said, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* This reproveth those that weep when the Church rejoiceth, or rejoice when the Church weepeth. The Prophet Amos complaineth of this deadness of heart in his days, *The people drank wine in bowls, they anointed themselves with the chief ointments, they stretched themselves upon Beds of Ivory, but no man was sorry for the affliction of Joseph.* If we be not touched with a sight & sense of the Churches miseries, it is a plain argument that we are dead members, not living; rotten members, not sound; senseless members, not feeling. The second part of the Communion of the Saints, standeth in the communication of gifts. The gifts of God to be imparted to our Brethren, are of two sorts. For, as we consist of two parts, the soul and the body, so the gifts are of two kinds, Spiritual graces, and temporal Blessings. We must bestow upon them spiritual gifts, procuring their

good, by example, exhortation, comfort, prayer, reproof. We are willed to exhort one another, while it is called today: we are admonished, when any man is fallen by occasion into any fault, as spiritual men to restore such a one with meekness, considering out selves, least we also be tempted. Touching temporal blessings, we must be ready & content to bestow such goods as God hath bestowed upon us, for the good of our fellow-members. If we have this worlds good, we must not hide our compassion from them, for then we cannot assure our selves that the love of God dwelleth in us.

Secondly, seeing we are charged to provide for the goodly poor, and not to see them want, it teacheth that we are all the Lord's Stewards, to dispense and dispose his blessings to others. We hold all that we have of him, and we hold all at his will, and during his pleasure: he may thrust us out of our houses when he listeth. For properly we are not Lord's, but Tenants▪ not Owners, but Stewards; not Possessors, but Borrowers; and whatsoever we enjoy, it is not ours only, but ours, and the poor's; they have their share and portion with us. A Christian man, though he be the freest man upon the earth, yet he is a Servant to all, especially to the Church of God. A Christian man, is only a Free-man; for he hath Christian liberty belonging •o him, *And he whom Christ maketh free, he is free indeed.* He is freed from •he curse of the Law, from the bond of perfect righteousness, from the burden of Ceremonies, from the bondage of sin. He hath a freedom in the voluntary worship and service of God, in the free use of all the Creatures of God, to come to the throne of grace, with assurance to be heard for Christ's sake, and to enter into the Kingdom of glory after this life. On the other side, a wicked man is the greatest slave and bondman that can be. He is in bondage under sin. He is subject to all punishments temporal and eternal. He is in bondage under the Devil, who keepeth all impenitent sinners in his snares to do his his will. He is in bondage under the wrath of God. But to let this pass, howsoever the faithful are free men, yet they are not only the servants of God, but the servants of men, especially of the poor, but most especially of the godly. We are not to seek our own things, but to refer the labors of our calling, and the blessing of God upon our labors to the common good of the Church whereof we are members.

This condemneth two sorts of men. First such as seek for nothing but to settle themselves and maintain their own estates, to enrich themselves that they may live in ease and wealth, like the rich man mentioned in the Gospel: these make no conscience of swearing, forswearing, lying, dissembling, oppressing, and such like unfruitful works of the flesh. These men may allege and plead for themselves what they will, but in truth they never yet knew what the Communion of Saints meaneth. The Apostle giveth this precept to all the Church, *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of other men.* And in another place, *Bear ye one an others burden, and so fulfill the Law of Christ.* So the Apostle James teacheth that we often ask, and receive not, because we ask amiss, that we might consume the same upon our pleasures. Secondly, it reproveth such as wast and consume the good creatures of God in riotousnes, in drunkenness, and in all excess, and when they are in brotherly love and Christian compassion admonished, do by and by answer, what have you to do with my spending? I spend nothing but mine own, I spend none of yours. Yes, thou spendest that which is thy wives, thy Children's, thy families, even that which is God's, for which thou shalt give an account at the great and dreadful day of judgment. For when Christ

shall come with thousands of his Angels to make an end of all things, and say unto thee, *Come, give an account of thy Stewardship for thou mayest be no longer Steward:* wilt thou answer to the Judge of all the world, and to Christ that shall sit upon the Throne, thou hast wasted none of his goods, and abused none of his Creatures? Thine own heart, and thine own conscience, as a thousand witnesses, will give in evidence against thee, that thou hast taught thy tongue to lie. They have forgotten they are the Lord's Stewards, and shall give an account to him as certainly of the bestowing of their substance, as themselves take an account of their servants, of that portion of their goods which they have committed unto them.

Lastly, seeing we are debtors to all men, but specially to the faithful, it reproveth such as show the chiefest fruit of their love and charity upon the ungodly and profane, whom it were many times more charity to see punished then relieved, and corrected then maintained. Many there are among us that have no care or compassion of the poor Saints, though they see their wants and necessities, yet they can shut their eyes and pass by them as the Priest and Levite did, by him that was robbed by Thieves and lay half dead of his wounds. But they will oftentimes be bountiful, and show their benevolence upon such, as a great deal worse deserve it. We see that our collections and distributions are made many times amiss, and such as are most profane, are best provided for. Such as are idle Drones, beastly Drunkards, filthy Harlots, and their graceless bastards, are more regarded and respected, and have better experience of our Alms then such poor as are godly minded, heirs by grace, Saints by calling, and sons by faith. This is an invertng and ouerturning of the order that God hath set and settled to remain among us, for this is his ordinance which he hath left with us, *While we have time, let us do good unto all men, but specially to them that are of the household of Faith.* So the Apostle prayeth for the Thessalonians, that the Lord would increase them and make them abound in Love one toward another and toward all men. First it must extend to such as are members of the Church, and afterward to all others. 1. Thes. 3. 12. Loe here is an Ordinance of God perpetually and inviolably to be kept, as a Law of the Medes and Persians which could not be altered: we must do good to the distressed Saints and poor servants of God before others and more then to others. God indeed is good to all, *and his mercy is over all his works,* but in a special sort *he is good to Israel, and gracious to them that are pure of heart.* He saveth man and beast in body, but he saveth the souls of his elect forever: He doth not only preserve them temporally, but he will glorify them eternally. From hence such as are poor and have godliness laid up in their hearts must learn, to bear the heavy burden of poverty with patience, seeing that howsoever they are neglected of men in the daily ministrations, yet they are highly respected of God, and he vouchsafeth to leave special direction for them above others, to be sustained. The greater our poverty is, the greater should be our piety: that the more miserable we seem to the world, the more honorable we may be in the sight of God and of all good men. True godliness will sweeten the bitterness of the Cross, which hath the promises of this life and of that which is to come. But a poor estate joined with a profane life, and extreme necessity accompanied with extreme iniquity and impiety, is a double misery, a double wretchedness, a double unhappiness. Let this therefore comfort us, and temper the greatness of our affliction, seeing God doth care for us above all

his Creatures; yea, before the rest of mankind, charging those that are rich in this world to make a difference between man and man, between person and person, between poor and poor, even such a difference as he himself hath made, who preferreth the sheep of his own Pasture before Goats; the Sons and Daughters of his own family, before bastards; the heirs of his Kingdom before Aliens and strangers; the vessels of honor, before the vessels of dishonor. As for the poor that are wicked, ungodly, lewd, and profane, so long as they live in their wickedness, ungodliness, leudnesse, and profaneness, they are no parts of God's family, they are bastards, not sons; they are members of the Devil, not members of Christ; they are cages of unclean Birds, not Temples of the holy Ghost; they are as dung and dross of the earth, not silver and Gold for the Lord's house. Seeing therefore God doth cast them down into the second rank, let not us advance them above their place. God is the God of order, not of confusion: and if we be of God, let us establish among us the order that he hath planted. Let us judge with righteous judgment, and lay all partiality aside. Let us not respect the poor because they are our friends, but because they are the friends of God. Let us not see to those that are nearly alied to us, but to those that are of the kindred of Christ, which hear his word and keep it, who are his Mother, Sister, and brother. Heereby they shall be encouraged in well doing, and we shall by our godly care of them, provoke them to greater zeal, and to a constant continuance in their profession. Wherefore let this be the rule to guide and govern us: Such are to be used best which are indeed best, let them have most relief of the body, that have most grace and godliness in the heart. Godliness giveth the preeminence, and ungodliness bringeth reproach and setteth a note of infamy upon his face that is defiled with it. True it is, others must have their portion and proportion: but it must be so rated, that they be in the first place provided for, that are most religious in heart, and painful in their callings, and thankful to their weldoers. For where true Religion hath taken place, it will make them diligent in their business, and serviceable to those of whom they have received good things. As for those that are idle, and unthankfull, they never tasted of sound Religion, and do nothing else but abuse their profession. Thus much of the persons to whom we must do good; that is, especially to the faithful.

[*Toward the Saints.*]

The faithful are here called by the name and title of Saints. By this word are all such called as are the true members of Christ-Jesus, whether they be living, or dead; in this life, or out of this life. But in this place only such are meant, as live under the covenant of grace, and fight the Lord's battles against Sin, the World, and the Devil. Now they are called Saints, or holy, for these causes: First, because they are separated by the mercies of God, from the filthiness and damnable condition of this world: they are gathered into a Church, and set apart for the pure service of God. Secondly, because they are purged and cleansed from their sins, by the precious blood of Christ. Thirdly, because they express the fruit hereof in holiness and righteousness, they are altered and changed from that which they were by nature, they are regenerate and created anew, they are renewed in their willes, affections, purposes, and practices. This is contray to profaneness. We learn from this title given to the faithful, that they which truly belong to Christ are Saints; that is, are sanctified, cleansed, and purged from their sins and iniquities by the blood of Christ, are delivered from the slavery and

bondage of sin, and are enabled by the grace of God in some measure to serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. In this respect the *Israelites*, when God had chosen them out of the world to be his people and servants, are called a royal Priesthood, and an holy Nation. This name of Saints is usual and common with the Apostle Paul in all his Epistles. In the Epistle to the Romans he writeth to all Rome beloved of God, called to be Saints. So he writeth to the Church of God which is at Corinth, *to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, Saints by calling, with all that call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place: and afterward he saith, God is not the author of confusion; but of peace, as we see in all the Churches of the Saints.* So he showeth in the Epistle to the Ephesians, *that to him the least of all Saints, this grace was given, that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.* The Prophet David also saith, *I will hearken what the Lord God will say, he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints, that they turn not again to folly.* All these places do plainly prove, that they which believe in Christ and belong to him, truly may be called Saints and holy men.

The reasons are these. First, because they are there-unto called and chosen in Christ, they are thereunto justified and redeemed by Christ. For we are chosen before the foundations of the world to be holy, *He hath chosen us in him, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.* It is the end of our calling, as the Apostle teacheth 1. Thes. 4. *This is the will of God, even your sanctification, and that ye should abstain from fornication, &c. for God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.* It is the end of our redemption, as Zacharias showeth, that the Lord God of Israel hath visited and redeemed his people, *that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies should serve him without fear all the days of our life, in holiness & righteousness before him.* Seeing therefore God hath called us with an holy calling, and appointed us to be Saints, by his decree of our election, by the efficacy of our calling, by the virtue of our Justification, and by the power of our redemption, it followeth, that all the faithful may worthily challenge the name of Saints.

Secondly, the servants of God must be Saints, to the end there may be a conformity and likeness unto him that hath had mercy upon us. It is requisite that there should be a resemblance between God and his people. God is holy, it is one of his names, he is called the holy one. Christ is holy, and he is called the holy one of God. Seeing therefore God is holy that hath called us, it followeth that holiness belongeth unto us. The son beareth the Image of his father, and thereby is easily known whose son he is. If we be the sons of God, we must express his Image in holiness and true righteousness. This is it which Moses declareth and repeateth Levite. 11. *I am the Lord your God, be sanctified therefore, and be holy, for I am holy, and defile not yourselves with any creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.* Hereunto accordeth the saying of the Apostle Peter, *As obedient Children fashion not yourselves unto the former lusts of your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, be ye holy, for I am holy.* If then he that is the God of all the Saints be holy, if it be one of his essential attributes, so that he can no more cease to be holy then he can cease to be God, the Saints themselves must be Saints, not only in name, but in deed, they must be transformed into a likeness of him, they must show the fruits of holiness, and be partakers of the divine nature, in that they flee the corruption which is in the world through lust.

Thirdly, the faithful are called by the name of Saints, that there might be a difference between that which we have of our selves, and that which we receive from God; between the old man, and the new man; between our first birth, and our second birth: between nature, and grace. No man is a Saint by nature, we have not holiness from our selves, but we are strangers to it, and that is a stranger to us; nay, we are enemies to holiness who love nothing else but profaneness, and desire to be anything else then to be Saints and holy. The Apostle putting us in mind of our first birth, that we might so much the more magnify the grace of God, which is marvelous and glorious in his Saints, saith, *Remember that ye being in times past Gentiles in the flesh, and called uncircumcision of them which were called Circumcision in the flesh, made with hands, that ye were at that time without Christ, and were Alians from the common wealth of Israel, and were strangers from the Couenants of peomise, and had no hope, and were without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus, ye which once were far off, are made near by the blood of Christ.* And to the same purpose he speaketh in the Epistle to the Colossians, *You which were in times past strangers and enemies, hath he now reconciled in that body of his flesh through death, to make you holy and unblameable, and without fault in his sight.* Seeing then, that we are called to holiness, seeing we must as Children resemble our father, and seeing God will have a difference between our natural condition and the estate wherein we stand by grace; we may conclude, that all such as are in the number of true believers, are also Registered in the number of true Saints, sanctified inwardly by the spirit of God.

Let us now make use and application of this Doctrine unto our selves. First, we see plainly hereby, that there are Saints upon the earth; that is, men and women regenerate and sanctified. The prophet *David* saith, *All my delight is in the Saints that are upon the earth,* whereby it appeareth, that there are two sorts of Saints, one in heaven, the other on the earth: one sort is the spirits of just and perfect men, the other such as are clothed with flesh, who have a righteousness begun in them but are yet far from perfection: some that have already received their Crowns, that are already glorified, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; others that are yet in warfare against sin, the world, and the devil, and carry about with them the remnants of natural corruption. Therefore we profess to believe in the Articles of our Faith, the Cōmunion of Saints. So the Apostle saith, *Dare any of you having business against another, be judged under the unjust, and not under the Saints. Do ye not know that the Saints shall judge the world?* And afterward, *Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* This serveth to reprove all those, which in scorn and derision, mock the servants of God, and upbraid them with their profession, saying; O you are a Saint, you are of the little flock, you are an holy man; A young Saint, an old devil. Thus is Religion made a Proverb and common by-word, and thus are men come to sit down in the seat of Scorners: but hear this, O ye contemners of God! and know, that whosoever is not holy, is profane; he that is not pure, is impure; he that is not a Saint of God, is a bond-slave of the Devil: there is no mean between the one and the other. He that is not of the little flock of Sheep, is of the great Heard of Goats, and of the multitude of unbelievers that shall be condemned. He that entereth not in at the strait gate that leadeth to life, walketh in the broad way, and entereth at the wide gate that leadeth to destruction. He that is not a Saint before he dieth, is a Devil incarnate before

his death. This is that which our Savior speaketh concerning Judas, *Have I not chosen twelve, and one of you is a Devil? Now he spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for he it was that should betray him.* This Judas was not a Saint, and he is pronounced to be a Devil. Now choose whether thou wilt be a Saint, or be accounted a Judas, a Devil, a member of the devil. For, he that is not in some sort changed, renewed, regenerated, and sanctified in the inner man, shall never see life. If we begin not the way to salvation in this world, we shall never be received into glory in the world to come. This is the Doctrine which Christ preacheth to *Nichodemus, Verily, verily. I say unto thee, except that a man be borne of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* So the Apostle saith, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye mortify the deeds of the body by the spirit, ye shall live: for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* And in another place, *Thus we judge, that if one be dead, and he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.* Sanctification goeth always before glorification. Everyone would be glorified, but everyone will not be sanctified: everyone would live with God, but everyone will not die to sin: everyone would receive the victory, but everyone will not fight the battle. But let us not be deceived, God is not mocked. If we would attain to salvation, we must first have sanctification, we must be Saints in this life; if we look to be Saints in glory hereafter; we must be Saints upon the earth, if we would be Saints in heaven; we must first make a beginning, before we can come to the ending. We must take pains, we must labor hard, and sweat much, before we can come to our journey's end.

Let us therefore take heed we do not make a mock of the Saints, least we mock at our own sanctification, and consequently neglect, nay despise our own salvation. If we make any account of holiness of life, let us not cast it out as a reproach, to be holy. Let us consider, that this is the will of God, even our sanctification; it is not therefore his will that we should delight in profaneness, and ungodliness. And as for those that are scorned and abused, or rather not they, indeed, or their persons flouted and contemned, but their Faith, their Religion, their Sanctification: let them not hang down their heads, and be discouraged, but walk boldly through good report and evil report, and be so far from shrinking back for these taunts & revilings, that rather we should prepare our selves for an harder battle, & an hotter encounter. We have not yet resisted unto blood. Remember what our Lord and Master hath endured, the reproach of the world, the slanders of the ungodly, the mockings of the malicious, the shame of the cross, and what not. We must not look to fare better than he, we must not think to be entertained otherwise than he was. If this be the worst that they can say by us, if this be the greatest fault they can report of us, that we are Saints and holy persons, let us not be discomfited, but rather comforted herein, that God is glorified in us, his name is honored, and the mouth of Iniquity is stopped, having nothing to detect us off, nothing to object against us. The enemies of *Daniel*, howsoever they watched all occasions and sought all opportunities to betray him and destroy him, yet the greatest crime they had to charge him withal, was, that he prayed to his God three times a day, and made supplication unto him. The *Chaldeans* had no other fault to charge the *Jews* to have committed, then that they would not bow down unto an Idol. If they could have found any other matter to accuse them of, as Malefactors, their malice was so great to their profession

and to their persons, for their professions sake, that they would not have spared and held their peace. But this was the glory of these servants of God, that they suffered not for their sins and deservings, but for their faith, and a good conscience. This was it wherein the Church and faithful comforted themselves, Psal. 44. *If we have forgotten the name of our God, and holden up our hands to a strange God, shall not God search this out? For he knoweth the secrets of the heart: Surely for thy sake are we slain continually, and are counted as sheep for the slaughter.* This is that place which the Apostle alludeth unto Rom. 8. Whereby he comforteth the people of God in their afflictions: whereby we see, what is the portion and condition of the Saints in this life: they are sheep, not wolves; they are afflicted, they do not afflict; they are killed, they do not kill: they are killed not because they have forsaken and renounced God, but because they would not forsake him and renounce him: They are slain not for their own sin, but because they would not commit sin against God. If this be our case and condition, that we are reproached for our righteousness and religion, *and if we be railed upon for the name of Christ, we have cause to rejoice, in as much as we are partakers of his sufferings and shall be partakers of his glory; yea, blessed are we, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon us, which on their part is evil spoken off, but on our part is glorified.* Let us comfort our selves and our brethren with these things.

Secondly, seeing all the faithful living in the world are Saints, this serveth to convince the Church of Rome, who appropriate the word Saints to those that are dead, and honor none with this title that live upon the earth, but such as are departed out of this life, and being famous for miracles, are Canonized by the Pope, whom they account as a God upon the earth. Hence it is, that they add farther, that our Church cannot be an holy Church, because there was never yet any Saint or holy man of it, approved to be such by miracle or any other evident token. They renounce our Church, because it is no holy Church, and they conclude it is not holy, because we have no Saints that are in it or ever were of it. First, let us speak of our Saints, and then somewhat touching their Saints, whereof they boast so much, and in whom they glory so greatly. Touching the former, the Prophets, Apostles, and holy men of the first Churches, were professors of the same faith that we believe, as appeareth by the Scriptures, by which we offer to be tried in all controversies; but our Adversaries will not deny these to be Saints, and such Saints as have been approved by miracles. Again, we have in our Churches true believers, justified by the blood of Christ, and sanctified by the spirit of God, and therefore are Saints by calling, as we have shown before. We have the fruits of sanctification, as necessary effects of a living faith, we profit daily in repentance from dead works, we labor more and more for the full assurance of understanding and steadfast faith in Christ, for our redemption. But such as live in sin, and walk in the flesh, have not the spirit of Christ, they are not of our church, they are no true Saints; they may be among us, but they are not of us. As for the popish Saints which are found in their Golden Legend (so called) and stand in red letters in their Kalenders, it is no marvel if we do not account of them, when many among themselves do seem not much to respect them; and affirm, that the Saints canonized may be no Saints, and the miracles whereupon it is grounded, no miracles. And because the Church of Rome speaking of Saints do always mean such as are in the Popes Calendar, and of his canonization (who is now held to be the only Saint-maker

upon the earth) and propound such to the people, to the honored and worshipped, let us consider a little what those Saints are, & whom they adore and call upon. Our Savior Christ accuseth and reproveth be Samaritans, *Because they worshipped the thing which they knew not: a worship they performed, but they knew not what.* But this falleth flatly and fully upon the papists heads, for they worship many fictions for Saints, & shadows for men; whereas there were never any such that lived upon the earth. It were easy to allege sundry of this stamp, but a few shall serve and suffice instead of many. Saint *George* is worshipped among the Papists, as a renowned Saint, but such a Saint as they report and receive this *George* to be, was never extant in the world, who is said to have killed a Dragon, that was so big, that four yoke of Oxen could hardly draw him out of the City, which sundry of their own writers esteem little better then a fable. Secondly, S. *Christopher* is solemnly adored by the Church of Rome, who is reported of some to be a man of twelve foot long, and of other to be twelve cubits high: this is he that went up and down to seek the Devil to serve him; for he said, *I go to seek my Lord the Devil to serve him.* If this were a Saint, he was one of the *Deuilles* Saints, whom he served, and called him Lord, and not one of God's Saints. The like we might say of S. *Catherine*, and infinite other, whom falsehood hath forged and devised, and superstition norished and retained. Moreover, their Legends of Saints are so full of fables and fooleries, that they do not only set them down for Martyrs, which never had being in the world, but they adore devoutly for Saints and Martirs, those which (by the confession of their wisest writers) were pagans & Jews, traitors & heretics, men of a wicked life, & of a doubtful faith: what was the soldier I pray you, that pierced the side of christ, but an Infidel? for otherwise he would never have thrust his spear so spitefully, and offered that villainy and violence to the body of our blessed savior; yea, it may probably appear & be gathered out of the scripture, that he was not only a cursed unbeliever, but a damned wretch & reprobate: and no approved history maketh mention of his calling and conversion, yet the blind ignorant papists do worship this soldier as a Saint, under the name of *Longinus*, what is this but to make Pagans and Infidels Saints; yea, when so many dead men's bones and blood, their relics and ashes, are worshipped in every coast and corner where popery reigneth; what assurance can any man have, that he doth not worship the bones & bodies of pagans & heathens? *Gamaliell* mentioned in the Acts, was an incredulous Jew, & a right Pharisee, as apeareth by the counsel which he gave to the Jews in the Counsel, fit for a Politician, unfit for a Christian; showing rather a wily & witty head, then a religious heart, & if he had believed in Christ, he would not have feared to confess his name; yet hath he a place among the *Romish* Saints, and reverently are his relics esteemed of them. How many of their English Martirs were devilish traitors, odious, perfidious, disloyal, seditious, rebellious, unfaithful to their Prince, & enemies to their country? Some endeavored to stir up foreign Princes against their Sovereign Lord, which no man can deny to be an act of treason. Some went about to stir up the Kings Subjects to rebellion, and stood at open defiance, and at the swords point with the Prince. Others, have been slain in the field in the midst of the rebellion which themselves raised, & among the rebels which themselves armed. Others were executed as notorious Traitors, for maintaining the Popes Bulls of deposing princes, and would by no means condemn them; none of them would promise to join with the Princesse side, and take her part, if the Pope should send an army against hir, to depose her person, to spoil her subjects,

& to invade hir country. Of this sort here set down, thus qualified and sanctified, are *Becket, More, Fisher Forest, Sanders, Campian, Sherwin, Parry, Ballard, Babington, Someruil*, and such like; who are canonized by the Pope, and agnized for Saints by the Papists: they pray unto them, and keep their bones and rags for holy relics, and worship them, whereby it appeareth, that they put those in the Popes kalender, as rubricated Martirs, and imagine them to be Saints in heaven, who by all likelihood are tormented & damned with the devils in hell. The time will not suffer us to make a Catalogue of these their Saints, but this may suffice to show, that the Papists honor diverse Saints, which never lived in the world, but are merely fansied and fondly imagined: others, that are doubtful, & not certainly known to be such as they are reported: others likewise, that were pagans in superstition, Jews in religion, Heretics in profession, traitors in practice, and wicked men in their conversation; of whose damnation in hell there is more certainty, then either of their faith in earth, or salvation in heaven. And thus we will leave them, their Saints, and their Saint-maker.

Thirdly seeing all they that belong to Christ are Saints, it belongeth to every man to try the assurance of his salvation, by the fruits of his sanctification. For hereby we may assure our selves that we are in the communion of saints if we lead a sanctified life. If we have our conversation in holiness, we shall have in the end everlasting life. The Apostle teaching that the foundation of God abideth sure, so that the Lord knoweth who are his, showeth how we shall know that we are the Lord's, even everyone for his own assurance must depart from iniquity. Hereunto cometh the saying of *John* in his first Epistle, *If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie & do not truly: but if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin.* And *Paul* writing to the Romaines saith, *If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life for righteousness sake.* We glory in the names of Christians, we would be accounted Christ's, we take upon us the Title of Saints, and yet we are not careful to bring forth the fruits of Christians, and to lead a sanctified life. All Trees in the beginning, when the world was created, were made fruitful, nothing was barren, nothing fruitless. If we be the Garden of God, we must be rees of righteousness, *and bear much fruit even in our old age.* Many that are barren in bearing good fruit, are too fruitful in bringing forth the unsavory fruits of the flesh, which the Apostle nameth, *Gal. 5.* who may justly fear the curse that God laid upon the Fig tree, and every day look to be hewn down and cast into the fire. It is not enough for us to be fruitful, but we must labor to be more fruitful. It is not enough to be holy, but we must be more holy. It is not enough to be Saints, but we must increase in sanctification. This the Prophet showeth in the Psalm, *The righteous shall flourish like a Palme tree, and shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon: Such as be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God: they shall still bring forth fruit in their age, they shall be fat and flourishing.*

Where we see, that God's Children are never void of the fruits of faith, but have them in them to their endless comfort. Other Trees oftentimes fall to degenerate and grow out of kind; and if they do hold out, yet age maketh them decay and die, albeit you dignity, and dung, and water them never so much, it cannot keep them from wasting and withering; it is not so with the faithful, which are planted in his Church, as it were in his Garden, even in their old age they bring forth abundance and store of fruit, albeit they be never sold, yet

they shall never be barren but yield a plentiful increase, being continually watered by the working of the spirit. To this purpose Christ speaketh in the Gospel, *I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman, every branch that beareth no fruit in me, he taketh away; and everyone that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.* And in the Revelation of John he saith, *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.* On the other side, there is no comfort to profane persons, that are irreligious, that are mere natural men, that find no change in them, that are not bettered by the means afforded unto them from God, that keep the spots of the Leopard, and the skin of the Blackamoore continually upon them. These walk in the flesh, and savor nothing but of the flesh, and therefore of the flesh shall reap corruption. This is that which the Author to the *Hebrews* speaketh, *The earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them, by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing of God: but that which beareth Thorns and Briars is reprov'd, and is near unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.* Where he compareth those that continue in faith, and bring forth the fruits of faith to good ground, that answereth the labor of the husbandman; but such as forsake the faith, and a good conscience, he resembleth to evil ground; these bring forth nothing but the unfruitful works of darkness, as it were so many thorns & Thistles, and therefore are near to cursing & consuming. So the Prophet *Isaiah* notably expresseth this, *There shall be no more there a child of years, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for he that shall be an hundred year old, shall die as a young man, but the sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed.* The faithful in Christ's kingdom shall flourish through his gifts, & be blessed of God: but such as are unfruitful are accursed, & albeit they seem for a time fresh and flourishing, yet they are no better in the sight of God then dead carcasses, and stinking carrions. So that we see, there can be no comfort without sanctification.

Lastly, as all they that are in Christ, are Saints, so it is our duty to use the fellowship and to delight in the Communion of Saints, abhorring & renouncing, separating and with-drawing our selves from all ungodly and unlawful societies of men in the world. The delight of the Prophet was in the Saints. He professeth himself to be a companion of all them that fear the Lord, and keep his precepts. The conjunction & communion of the faithful is threefold, in piety, in amity, in glory. In piety, because the hearts of the faithful are joined together in faith, & in the fear of God. In amity, because they love together as children of the same father, knowing that hereby we shall be known to be the disciples of Christ, if we love one another. In glory, because they are heirs of the same kingdom where are many mansion places prepared for thē. If we desire to be partakers with the children of God in eternal happiness in the heavens (as all men will seem desirous of blessedness) we must be united to them in a godly life, & in Christian love: we are willing to hear of felicity, but we care not for the practice of piety, or for walking in charity. *Balaam*, that was hired with the wages of iniquity to curse the people of God, whē he saw the goodly order among them, cried out, *Let my soul die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.* He desired to communicate with the godly in eternal life, but he would not join with them in a reformed life. But it is necessarily required of us to be linked to them in love, to be of one heart, and to be joined with them in godliness, to be of one faith, if ever we look to enjoy with them the same

inheritance of immortality. Such therefore, as will neither be friends and familiars with them, but hate and abhor them worse then a Dog or a Serpent, nor be Worshippers of God with them, reforming their lives, & repenting from Dead-works, but follow the lusts of the flesh with greediness, and draw iniquity as with cartropes must know, that they shut out themselves from the kingdom of heaven, & shall not ascend with them into the mountain of God. Now, as the faithful delight in those that are faithful, and the godly in such as are godly, so they account it a great grief to be among the ungodly, where they shall see much iniquity, and hear God dishonored, & feel themselves many ways endangered. This made the Prophet lament his own condition, *Woe is to me, that I remain in Meshech, & dwell in the tents of Kedar; my soul hath too long dwelt with him that hateth peace: I seek peace, & when I speak thereof, they are bent to war.* These corrupt and contagious societies, are manifold in the world, which we are to avoid more then a place of infection that may endanger the body, among the which there is a knot and band of such lewd companions, and loose mates, as accompany together in drinking, gaming, swearing, whoring, rioting, revelling, and railing at all religion, and at the servants of God that are the professors of religion. This society in evil is to be found in every place, but this society is not of God, but of the devil: it is not the communion of Saints, but the company of sinners that make a practice of all wickedness. Again, there is another sort, who albeit they be not so fully & foully disordered, yet are as far from the kingdom of God. For, when they should accompany the faithful in the assembly of the Saints, they keep company with their catle, beasts, & swine. When the faithful on the lords day, are going into the house of God, they are going into their fields; when they should be with their brethren, they are looking on their bullocks, & show no more conscience to religion, then if they had no other souls, then their Swine or dogs have. A lamentable case, that such profaneness should be found in places where the precious word of God is preached, and yet it were easy to point out such prophan persons among us. These have the harts of *Esau, who preferred a mess of pottage before his birthright.* If these be busy in their bargaining and buying, or be with their friends & gossips at home, it is held no good manners to part company. Many of our poor brethren in other places would greatly rejoice to hear the word, that are barred from it, and would give god thanks if they might be suffered publicly to profess it with freedom of heart, and liberty of conscience, which we proudly and scornfully cast from us, as a contemptible thing. And yet if a survey of most of our parishes were made, & a view taken of them, it is to be feared, that both these sorts would take up the greatest company, and the fewest sort be found of those that with good & honest harts, attend to the word with diligence and reverence. These men that thus absent themselves from the church of God, deserve to be separated from the Saints and Sacraments, from the word and prayers, that they may learn not to be so profane, and be ashamed of their evil.

6That the fellowship of thy faith may be made effectual, & that whatsoever good thing is in you through Christ Jesus may be known.

7For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because by thee Brother, the Saints bowels are comforted.

IN this place we have the shutting up of the entrance of this Epistle. We heard before how *Paul* gave thanks to God for *Philemon*, he prayed for him, & that daily: he praised greatly his Faith toward Christ, and his Love toward the Saints, that is, the poor and distressed Christians. These words do depend upon the fourth verse. For we must know that the Apostle goeth not on in the praise and commendation of *Philemon* begun in the former verse, magnifying his Faith and Love whereof he had heard by the report of the Church; but they agree with that which he had spoken before; namely, that he is mindful of him in his Prayers. For, if it be asked, for what cause did he pray for *Philemon*? The answer is, to the end that his Faith showing forth good fruits might not be found counterfitted, but approved to be true. We have therefore in these two verses, these two things to consider; first, what was the matter of his prayers, what was the substance and contents of them; to wit, that he might manifest his Faith, not to lie idle, but to be extended to others. Secondly, the reason why he made that, the matter of his prayers, & wherefore he prayeth that his faith might be effectual. Touching the first point, which is the matter of his prayers, he craved two things; first, that his faith might be made common to many, & the benefit of it might comfortably flow to the refreshing of many souls. For although faith have her secret and hidden dwelling in the heart, yet the fruits of it are imparted to others: Secondly, that it might be effectual; now faith is effectual when it worketh by Love, & bringeth forth good works to the relieving of others; as if the Apostle should have said, that thy Faith by communicating it self to others, & not remaining with thyself alone, may more & more show the virtue, force, and power thereof, in all goodness. Thus he prayeth not only for grace, but for the increase of grace to be given unto him. Then he declareth wherein this effectual faith standeth & consisteth; to wit, in the acknowledging of those good things which were in him, that so they may be brought into the light to be seen of all men, & to be felt of those that were in need. For the apostle *James* (as we have shown) calleth that not an effectual or living faith, but a dead & idle faith, which is not declared and professed by works. In the last place he addeth (*through Jesus Christ*) whereby he meaneth, that whatsoever good thing we have in us, we have it by christ without whom we have nothing that is good. Touching the second point, which is the reason why he prayeth for an effectual Faith in him, because the love that appeared to be in him, had wrought great joy and gladness of heart in him, which love of his he commendeth by the effect, *The bowels of the Saints were comforted through him*. This fact of his, the Apostle commendeth, first, by the consideration of the persons to whō his love was manifested, not to those out of the church, but to the saints. For charity to the Saints is to be commended, inasmuch, as it cannot be bestowed on a better subject; they do stand in the place of Christ, who accepteth of our love & liberality as extended toward himself. Secondly, his love is commended by the name of bowels, whereby the extreme necessity of the Saints is signified, who were (as it were) pained in their bowels and inward parts. Now, the great poverty & penury of those upon whom we bestow our charity, increaseth and maketh it the greater. Thirdly, the word of comforting, refreshing, and cherrishing the heart, is a matter of great commendation. For it is no small thing to comfort and strengthen the weak and feeble, and to give rest to the soul & body, that hath been tost & trobled with much affliction. Thus doth the Apostle set forth the fruits of *Philemons* love most effectually. This is to be observed of us concerning the method and meaning of these words, which are thus

much in effect; If thou wouldest more fully know the cause of my giving thanks, and the remembrance of thee in my prayers, surely it is this, that as God in mercy hath bestowed upon thee a true saving faith, so my earnest desire and humble request is unto him, that the offices, fruits, and duties of thy faith may be more and more communicated and fitted to the benefit of the poor Saints; that so whatsoever good thing is to be found in thee through the grace and working of Jesus Christ, may be acknowledged, manifested, and published abroad, to the glory of God, the comfort of the faithful, and the provocation of others. For indeed thy love giveth me great occasion of much joy, because thou (my brother) dost not only cheer the Saints, and rejoicest them, but cause their very harts and bowels, even their secret and inward parts to be refreshed & rejoiced. But before we handle the doctrines arising in this division, it shall not be amiss a little to examine the force of the words, and the manner that *Paul* hath observed in the penning of them. First observe, that he saith not simply, *thy faith may be made effectual*, but [*The fellowship of thy Faith*] that the fruit thereof might redound and return to many. Secondly, he saith not barely [*That his Faith might be known,*] but [*Every good thing,*] that is; every grace that was in his heart, because when Faith is made known to others, and brought into sight & open light: many other gifts of the Holy-Ghost are made known, as Love, Patience, Liberality, and such like. For the grace of Faith is never alone in the heart, but is garded with a troop and company of all other virtues, and when it cometh as it were out of the doors, it cometh abroad with a band and train of all other graces. Thirdly, he declareth the author and cause of all these blessings, from whence they proceed, to wit; from Christ, that we should learn not to think or speak of any benefit, without making mention of Christ. Fourthly, he draweth an argument or reason why he prayed for the efficacy of his Faith, from the former experience of his Love, which was as effectual as his Faith, teaching that the experience of grace already given, should move us to beg and crave the increase of that Grace, and a perseverance and continuance in that grace: and therefore, we must not be so simple or senseless to imagine, when we see grace bestowed upon any man, that we have no more need to pray for the increasing and growing of that grace. For, we must know, that there are degrees of grace, there is a first Grace, there is a second Grace. Now, that Grace may be multiplied, and a continual increase and access to it may be added: we must make daily prayers, we must pray that we may have Faith, and when we have it, we must not be secure, but pray that it may be effectual and working by love. Last of all, in the commending of *Philemons* liberality, he doth not nakedly say, that [*he gave to the poor,*] but [*To the poor Saints,*] for all that are poor, are not poor Saints; many are poor that are wretched and ungodly, and have no part of sanctification: neither doth he say only, that he gave to the Saints, but he refreshed them; and not only that he refreshed the Saints, but the very bowels of the Saints. Now let us come to the Doctrines.

That the fellowship of thy Faith may be made effectual. Here the Apostle remembereth the matter and substance of his prayer, what it was that he besought and requested of God; where we see he affirmeth that it consisted in this, that the fruits of his Faith might be increased, & continually augmented. We learn from this place, that it is the duty of all men, earnestly to desire, wish, and procure the good of others, and to stir up our selves & others to increase in the graces of God's spirit. The growing and proceeding of our brethren in the best things

should be sought for of us. When Moses had word brought unto him, that some in the host did prophesy; that is, had received notable gifts of the spirit, for the guiding and directing of his people, he said, *I would to God, that not only these, but that all the Lord's people were Prophets, and that he would pour out his spirit upon them.* The Apostle writing to the *Thessalonians*, saith, *Furthermore, I beseech you Brethren, and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that ye increase more and more, as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God.* They had increased already exceedingly, they had gained in the Faith, and were grown to a perfect age, they receive this Testimony and commendation, that they became followers of the Apostles & of the Lord; They received the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy-Ghost; They were as ensamples to all that believe in *Macedonia*, from them sounded out the word into all quarters; they received it, not as the word of men, but as it is indeed the word of God, which worketh in them that believe. Touching the times and seasons, he had no need to write unto them, because they knew perfectly that the day of the Lord should come as a thief in the night Touching brotherly love, they had no need he should write unto them, for they were taught of God to love one another: & yet he prayeth to God still to increase them, and make them abound in love one towards another, and toward all men; yea, he desired exceedingly night and day, that he might see their face, and might accomplish that was lacking in their faith. Hereunto tendeth the exhortation that *Paul* giveth to *Timothy*, *Despise not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesy, with the laying on of the hands of the company of the Eldership: these things exercise, and give thyself unto them, that it may be seen how thou profitest among all men.* When the writer to the *Hebrews* had reproved the sluggishness of that people, he addeth, *Therefore leaving the Doctrine of the beginning of Christ, let us be led forward unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead-works, and of Faith toward God.* All these places of Scripture serve to teach us the truth of this Doctrine, that we must all labor to perfection, that we may be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect, and endeavor to draw on others to perfection.

Let us see the Reasons. First, Christian profession is a way, in which men must not stand still, but must walk and go forward in the way, they must not stay in one estate, but be always stirring forward. So when the Apostle had exhorted the *Thessalonians* to increase more and more, he addeth, *As ye have received of us, how ye ought to walk, and to please God.* We are now in this life in our journey, we must not think that we are come to our journeys end, which cannot be before our lives end. As then they that have a great journey to go, do not rest till they come to their journeys end, so must it be with us, we must make hast on our way, and be swift in our race. The way which we are to go is our profession: the Traveler that entereth into the way, is every true Christian, the end of our journey is the entrance into life; the judge of our going, and giver of the victory, is God. He that standeth still can never come at his journeys end, it is he that goeth in his way, & runneth in his race, that shall receive the crown of everlasting happiness.

Secondly, Christians are compared to Children. Children are always growing in age, increasing in stature, going forward in knowledge and in Wisdom; if they do not prosper and proceed, we commonly call them and account them *Vrchins* and *Changelings*. So must we grow in grace, until we come to a perfect aged man in Christ. The Prophet speaking of the

faithful that were zealous in the worship of God, saith, *They go from strength to strength*. So the Apostle exhorteth, that we *should not be Children in understanding, but as concerning maliciousness we should be Children, but in understanding we should be of ripe age*. He would have us as Children, and he would not have us as Children: he would have us Children in malice, but he would not have us Children in knowledge. We see they fall out for light offenses, because the mind is weak that ruleth and guideth them: one word will raise anger, and another word will make them friends, and therefore though they fall out quickly, yet their falling out is far from malice, and they are easily reconciled. Thus he would have us to be children, but in wisdom, in knowledge, and in understanding, he would have us to be of ripe age, & proceed in these gifts, as we do in our years. No man's life standeth at a stay, let us increase in the other as we do in this, that so the graces of God may be perfected in us.

Thirdly, we must so walk in our way, and hasten to our journeys end, that we may obtain the prize. He that over-commerh and holdeth out to the latter end, only shall be saved. He that giveth over, is a faint soldier, a weak Work-man, a slow runner, a feeble wrastler. We must so fight, that we may overcome, we must so work that we may rest, we must so run that we may obtain, we must so wrestle that we may receive the Crown, we must so prove Maisteries, that we may win the victory. Staying in one state is a token of reprobation and rejection from God, they are cast into a spirit of slumber and drowsiness, they sleep in security, and cannot see their way. This did the Prophet prophesy, and this doth the Apostle testify to be true concerning Israel, God hath given them the spirit of slumber: eyes, that they should not see, and ears, that they should not hear unto this day. Seeing then that our profession is the way wherein we are to walk toward the heavenly Jerusalem, seeing we must be like Children that grow in age and years, and lastly seeing we must labor to obtain the Crown, to win the victory, to receive the price, and to get the wages; it followeth, that we all must endeavor to go forward, and to bring others forward toward the Kingdom of Heaven.

The uses remain to be handled, that we may have the profit of this Doctrine. First we learn, that God hath a just action and suit to commence against all idle bellies, and unprofitable Drones, that be Truants and no proficiencie in the School of Christ. The church of God is the School of Christ, he is the Master, all of us are or should be his Scholars. We are brought forth into the world, that when we come to years of understanding, we may be Scholars in his School. If any of us put our Children to a free School to be taught, if they should still stay and stand in the lowest form, and never a whit proceed in learning, we would judge them either void of ordinary diligence, or destitute of ordinary capacity. We look when we set them to School, that they should increase in learning. We have a common proverb, that Scholars of all other have the best conscience, that whereas others never think they have enough, they think they have to much for their money. But let us see how it fareth with us, who are likewise Scholars in the best School that ever was, the Church of God: and have the best Master that ever was; to wit, Christ himself. God hath put us to School to learn at the mouth of Christ, who hath committed us to Pastors and teachers, as to his Deputies to be instructed. It is required of us, that we grow in knowledge, in faith, in zeal, in obedience, and in all the works of sanctification. If we be good Scholars, we must grow forward and ascend higher, we must proceed from grace to grace, and from one step to another. But alas, how

many are there in our congregations, who having lived under the Gospel, that offereth salvation to men all the days of their life, and continued ten, twenty, thirty, forty years, hearing the word of God sounding in their ears, yet are no wiser in Religion then a young Child, and are no forwarder then when they first stepped and entered into the School-house of God. I doubt not but they are wise in matters of the world, but in the book of God and in matters of their salvation they have no knowledge. They receive the grace of God in vain, and are Dunces and Dwarfes in this School of Christ; without growing and increasing in Godliness. They are not in truth able to say unto their own Souls, I have received some greater measure of knowledge, I have attained better strength of Faith, I have found some increase in Godliness, I have felt some care and conscience to please God. Nay we may truly say, that many are more ignorant in knowledge, more lewd in life, more backward in good things, more profane in heart, more contemning the word of God, and loathing the means of salvation, then they were in the beginning of their days. This is our estate and condition, most lamentable and fearful, and yet we can complain of Idle boys and sluggish Scholars, that think they take to much learning for their money, and never consider that we are the men, and that the proverb concerneth our selves. God will enter into judgment with us, and if we be not learners in his School, he will remove us and discharge us out of his School. It had been better for us that we had never known God, that we had never received his truth; nay, it had been better for us that we had never been borne, or been borne Turks and Cannibals, Pagans and Infidels, then to have the Gospel among us, and not to hear it; or to hear it, and not to learn by it: or to learn by it, and not to obey it and grow daily in the practice of it. This appeareth by the grievous threatenings denounced by Christ our Savior against those Cities where his word had been preached and professed, and his great miracles had been wrought and shown, *Woe be to thee Corazin, woe be to thee Bethsaida, for if the great works which were done in you: had been done in Tyrus and Sidon, they had repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes, but I say unto you, it shall be easier for them at the day of judgment then for you. And thou Capernaum which art lifted up unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell, for if the great works which have been done in thee, had been done among them of Sodom, they had remained to this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be easier for them of the Land of Sodom in the day of judgment; then for thee.* He compareth here *Corazin* and *Bethsaida*, with *Tyre* and *Sidon*: likewise *Capernaum*, with *Sodom*; that is, the places where Christ had dwelled, where the Gospel had been offered, where many of his miracles had been manifested, with such Cities as never had the Law, never heard the Gospel, never saw the Prophets, never knew the Doctrine of salvation, but lived in ignorance and in idolatry. And in this comparison he teacheth that such Towns and Villages as have had the preaching of the word, and the ministry of the Gospel among them, shall receive greater punishment in the day of judgment then other poor blind wretches that never had these means offered unto them. We would all of us think it a very harsh and homely comparison, and far from all likely-hood of truth, if I should compare us, even us of *Isfield*, with *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, we know how foul and filthy these places were, we confess they are loathsome in our eyes, and odious in our ears, we know that for their wickedness they were destroyed with fire and brimstone from heaven: and yet I say unto you in the name of God, from the warrant of his sacred word by which we shall all be judged, that if we live in this contempt of the truth that is preached unto us, and do not

bring forth the fruits of the Gospel, it had been better we had been borne *Sodomites* and *Gomorrheans*, for our judgment shall be greater, and our punishment heavier, because our sin is heinouser. No sin greater then the contempt of the Gospel, as no mercy is greater then the peaceable enjoying of the liberty of the Gospel, and therefore no reward of sin shall be more horrible; So that we may truly say from the mouth of Christ, it shall be easier for Sodom in the day of judgment, then for our Village. Let us apply this to our selves, and lay it to our hearts to work in us true repentance. *Corazin*, *Bethsaida*, and *Capernaum* had many privileges, and might glory as much as we in the favors vouchsafed unto them, and yet they are upbraided by Christ with their vnthankefullness toward the Gospel, so that the case of *Sodom* is made better. Take heed therefore least we contemn the Gospel, and so committing one of the greatest sins we make our selves guilty of the greatest judgments that can fall upon mankind. The contempt of the Gospel, hath brought the heavy hand of God upon the Jews that were God's own people. Let us not be high minded, we are no whit better: but rather fear least God spare not us, and tremble under his grievous, but yet righteous judgments, who spareth not those that are deer unto him when they sin against him.

Secondly, we are bound to use the means that may further these gifts in us, that is, the ministry of the word, which being reverently used, hath a promise of blessing. It is a light unto our feet and a lantern unto our paths, it setteth us in our way, and directeth us unto our iourneies end. The Apostle teacheth, that Paul planteth, Apollos watereth, but it is God that giveth the increase; to wit, by the planting and watering of the Ministers. The Husbandman tilleth and toyleth about his ground, he soweth his Corn, but he cannot make it spring up, nor send the early and latter rain. So is it with the Ministers of the Gospel, the Lord's Husbandmen, they must labor in his field which is the Church, that the people may grow in faith and grace. This reproveth those that attend not to the ordinance of God, with care and diligence, but neglect the work of the Lord in them. They will not suffer themselves to be ploughed and tilled, that grace may grow in their hearts, as Corn doth in the Fieldes. They say they increase and proceed in the ways of Godliness, but they will not use the means which God hath ordained, and therefore they do deceive themselves. He that heareth not at all, doth not grow at all: he that heareth negligently, groweth slowly in any good thing. For as we sow, so we shall reap. Again, this checketh the dullness and drowsiness of such, as when they have begun in the spirit, would end in the flesh, which say the word is profitable and necessary to gather a Church, but not to continue it; to begin faith, but when it is begun and begotten in us, we need not hear still; we have faith already by the preaching of the word; we shall not therefore need to frequent the preaching of it still: we have that wrought in us which the word is appointed to work. These men under a color of having faith, do scorn and deride the preaching of faith. But the word is not only the immortal seed to beget us, but wholesome food to sustain us: it is milk for such as are weak, and strong meat for such as are of riper years. He never had faith by the word, that seeketh not the strengthening of it by the word. It is not enough to have saith, but we must seek the increase and continuance of it; which is continued & preserved by the same means that it is bred and ingenderd. This it is which the Apostle *Peter* teacheth in his first Epistle, that being borne anew, not of mortal seed but of immortal, by the word of God, which liveth and endureth forever, we should as

new borne babes desire that sincere milk, that we may grow thereby. Whereby we see, that he calleth the word immortal seed to regenerate us, and sincere milk to nourish us, so that we have as well our growing up as our first birth by it, and there is a continual use of the preaching of the word as well to men that are called aready, as to them that are to be called hereafter. For the end of preaching is, not only to convert us, but to continue us: not only to raise us up, but to uphold us: not only to beget us to the faith, but to strengthen us in the faith: not only to give the first life to us, but to renew us after our manifold slips and often infirmities. We are even in the state of our regeneration as a ship, which if it lie still without use will rot in the Haven, and if it be kept never so carefully, it will want rigging and repairing. So is it with everyone of us in this life, we have not attained to perfection, we always lack somewhat, we stand in need of renewing and repairing, we must be mending that which is impayred, increasing that which is lessened, restoring that which is decayed, and keeping in his course that which is rightly ordered.

So then we must acknowledge a perpetual necessity of the word, to increase in us the graces of Faith and Sanctification, which without use of the means are subject, if not to dying, yet to decreasing; if not to perishing, yet to diminishing; if not to withering away, yet to a languishing and loosing of those degrees that have been begun in us. Hence it is that the Lord saith, *I the Lord do keep it*, (that is, the Church which is the Vineyard of the Lord) *I will water it every moment, least any assayle it, I will keep it night and day*. It is not with the Ministers of the word as it is with men of other Trades, who when they have begun a work and are departed from it, though they return not to it in a long time, yet they find it in the same case as they left it. The Gold-smith that hath melted his silver in the fire, and cast a vessel in the mould, & begun to hammer it with his Toolles, if he lay it aside at night, the next day when he cometh to his work, he findeth it as he left it. The Carpenter that hath hewed his Timber, or the Mason that hath squared his stones in what sort soever they left their work when they departed from it, in the same they are sure to see it, it is not better, it is not worse, but as it lay, so it continueth. And thus it is in all other Sciences. It is not so in the Art of hearing and teaching, we do not always find the people as we left them, we labor to have them reformed and made zealous; yet they are no sooner departed, but the multitude of business, the strength of temptations, the corruptions of their nature, do so beset them and besiege them round about, whereby they are beguiled and ensnared, that they make the work of reformation more hard and difficult then it was before. This made the Apostle Paul say of the Galatians, that he travailed in birth again with them until Christ were formed in them, and was afraid least he had labored among them in vain, Gal. 4. 11. 19. This also made the Apostles consent and agree together to visit the Churches where they had preached the Gospel, to confirm them in the truth which they had received. For as we eat often for the restoring of the force of nature, and repairing of the decays of the body: so it is our duty to hear often, for the making up of the breaches and ruins that Sin and Satan have made in our souls. We see by daily experience, that after our repentance & the renewing of our minds, we are subject to stumble and fall into sin, and ready to lie long in it, as men cast into a deep and dead sleep, if we be not awaked with the Trumpet of the Lord in our ears. *David* was by the subtlety of the enemy surprised, and drawn to commit two horrible sins, Adultery and

murder, he lay a long space securely in them, until he was by the Prophet *Nathan* roused up and recovered. Wherefore as there is a continual use and exercise of repentance, so is there a continual use of the preaching of the word, that we should not stand at a stay, but increase more and more, until we come to the fullness of the perfect age of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Thirdly, seeing we should desire our own profit and others, it condemneth three sortes of men: first, such as stand at a stay: secondly, such as go backward: thirdly, such as envy the good and growth of others in the best things. Touching the first, we have many that stand still and move not, they are cast as it were into a dead sleep, call and cry unto them, lift up thy voice as a Trumpet, they have no ears to hear. If one come to a sick man, and feel his pulses, yet cannot perceive them to beat or stir, we will say he is near unto death, or in some ecstasy: so is it with such as have the word of God preached unto them, if they be not moved by it to go forward, but we find them at the years end, where they were at the beginning, it is an evident sign of a spiritual lethargy and slumber, and that they are in danger of death. He is accounted an evil scholar that learneth not somewhat every day, but many thousands remain in the school-house of Christ, that are so far from profiting every day, that they suffer whole weeks and months, and years to pass over their heads, without calling themselves to an account what they have learned that they knew not before, and wherein they yield obedience which they practiced not before. If a man should ask them, whether they have bettered their knowledge, increased their faith, furthered their sanctification more this year then before, they cannot yield a reckoning of any access is come to any of their gifts. In this number are the greatest sort that live among us, they are standers, and not walkers: they are sitters, and not mouers; where you left them this year, you shall be sure to find them the next year, and many years after. They see the time of their life, and the years of their age proceed and hasten unto an end, yet they never endeavor to proceed in Godliness, and to hasten to God's Kingdom: whereas we should all provide, that as the outward man decayeth, so the inner man may be renewed; and as the body is weakened, so the spirit may be strengthened. Wherefore let all such know, that not to go forward, is to go backward: not to increase, is to decrease: not to labor, is to loiter: not to go before, is to come behind; and not to proceed is not to profit, but to loose all. Our Savior speaking of the servant, to whom he had given one Talent that digged it in the earth, and hid his Masters money, saith: *Thou evil servant and slothful, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I strewed not, thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the Exchangers, and then at my coming should I have received mine own with advantage: take therefore the Talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten Talents: for unto every man that hath, it shall be given, and he shall have abundance, and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away. Cast therefore that unprofitable servant into utter darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* Where we see, he went not backward, he lost not that which he had, but he kept his own, and yet he is called an unprofitable servant and is cast into utter darkness. So the Apostle reproveth the Hebrews, because when as concerning the time they might be Teachers, yet they had need again to be taught what are the first principles of the word of God, and were become such as had need of milk and not of strong meat. Secondly, it reproveth such as run a while and then give over, so that all their righteousness is as a morning dew. These are they which were

zealous, but they return to their old sins, and start away as if they had never been the men. This the Apostle condemneth in the Galatians, Chap. 5. *Ye did run well, who did let you that ye did not obey the truth? Hymenaeus and Philetus* were held to be great Christians, and obtained a good report in the Church, yet afterward they fell away, putting away a good conscience, making shipwreck of faith, and saying that the resurrection is past already, thereby shaking the foundation of religion as it were a main pillar of the building, and so destroying the faith of certain. In like manner he complaineth of *Demas* a great professor of the Gospel, that he had forsaken him, and embraced this present world. Good beginnings help not without good proceedings. If a man have a long journey to make, what availeth it to go many miles, if he stand still in the mid-way, he were as good never begin as not continue. We see this in *Lots* wife, she went out of *Sodom* with her husband and seemed as forward as he, but in the end she looked back, and was turned into a Pillar of Salt. We must forget that which is behind, we must not pause in our race, nor stay to take breath, until we come to the end of our course, when we shall freely breath and rest from all our labors. We must therefore strive and contend, that we may out-go not only others, but even our selves. We must never stay our journey, but always hasten, and so every day amend our pace, that we run more swiftly today then we did yesterday, and tomorrow then we did today. This the Apostle teacheth, setting down the laws to be observed in running, *Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, yet one receiveth the prize. So run that ye may obtain.* And again, *If any man strive for a Maistry, he is not crowned, except he strive as he ought to do.* We have in the holy Scriptures many laws to incite and provoke us to walk, to go forward, to run, to strive, to wrestle, but we have none to sit still, to be idle, to loiter, to be careless and secure, like to those that stood idle in the Market place, to whom Christ said, *Why stand ye here all the day idle.* It is the will of God, that we should always make strait steps with our feet in this life, that when we have kept the faith and finished our course, we may rest from all our labors. It is a woeful case, to run, and never to come to the journeys end: to labor, and yet to reap no fruit of his labor. This made the Apostle say, *I therefore so run, not as vncertainly: so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.* It is not enough to run, except we run well.

Thirdly, it reproveth such as envy the good blessings of God upon their brethren. For if we should desire their profit as well as our own, and their increase as well as our own, we ought not to repine at their good success in or heavenly. It is noted to the great praise and commendation of *Moses*, that when *Joshua* envied the gift of prophesy in the Elders, and would have *Moses* to forbid them, he answered, *Enuiest thou for my sake? Yea, would God that all the Lord's people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them.* He cared not what became of his own credit and estimation among the people, so that God might be honored & glorified among them. The like mind was in *John the Baptist*, when his Disciples told him that all men began to flock after Christ, and to resort to him, whereby they feared the fame of their Master would decay, he said unto them, *Ye yourselves are my witnesses that I said, I am not that Christ, but that I am sent before him: he must increase, but I must decrease.* The like we see, when the Disciples of Christ forbid him that cast out devils in Christ's name, because he was not one of the Disciples: for Christ said unto them, *Forbid him not, for there is no man that can do a Miracle by my name, that can lightly speak evil of me: whosoever is not against*

us, is on our part. Let us take heed of this envy, which is a grief arising of another man's prosperity, always joined with a secret kind of malice towards him that is envied. This is a wild plant springing up in the soul, which destroyeth true Charity, rejoicing at the evil, and sorrowing for the good that befalleth our Brethren. And howsoever envy be noisome and pernicious to others, it is more hurtful to him that possesseth it, it tormenteth his mind, it wasteth his body, it fretteth his mind, it shortneth his days, and it destroyeth his soul. It setteth him on work to backbite and slander his Neighbor, and to deny him all duties of humanity. So then, envy, hatred, and back-biting, always go together, as three Cankers, and evil sores, that consume the body, hurt the good Name, lessen the gifts, and repine at the goods of our Brethren. And if it be evil to envy the gifts of God, & our eye should not be evil, because the Lord's eye is good: Much more evil is it, to scorn, mock, and disgrace the gifts of God in his Servants, as profane Beasts, and Heathnish Atheists do in these days, saying; you are an holy Brother, you are a Saint, you are a man of God. This sitting down in the seat of Scorners, is worse then dwelling in the foul and irksome Cave of envy; and therefore, let us beware thereof. Let us praise the gifts of GOD, in whomsoever we find them, whether in Friend or enemy.

Lastly, seeing we should all seek to profit our selves and others in godliness, we must know that it is our duty to stir up the gifts of God in us, that we do not bury them as in a Grave: we must exercise the gifts that we have by continual practice. Use maketh men prompt and ready, want of use maketh men untoward. Let us take heed we do not quench the spirit, and grieve him. The spirit of God is in many respects resembled to fire, which purgeth some things, consumeth other things, and heateth other things. So doth the Spirit of God purge, consume, and warm. It refineth and purifieth us as metal is from dross, it wasteth and consumeth sin in us as straw and stubble, it kindleth in us the heat of zeal, and warmeth us when we are frozen in our sins. Now, as the Spirit is compared to fire, so our sins are likened to Water; Water we know will quench the Fire, Sin will quench the Spirit. Let us therefore blow this Fire, let us kindle the Coals of it, let us stir up the Brandes, and put more matter to it, that it die not. The Priests in the time of the Law, were appointed to maintain the Fire upon the Altar day and night, that it should never go out, because it was from Heaven, and they were forbidden to offer strange Fire. So the Apostle warneth *Timothy*, and putteth him in remembrance that he stir up the gift of GOD which is in him, by the putting on of his hands. But here some man may Object; If the Spirit it self may be lost, then much sooner and easier the lesser gifts? I answer, the Spirit of Faith and regeneration can never be quite lost, for the faithful and regenerate are begotten not of mortal, but of immortal seed; their knowledge is like the light of the Sun, the others are like the brightness of the lightning, and flashing in the air, which shineth for a season, and by and by vanisheth and fadeth away. True it is, the best gifts may decay, but not die; they may be weakened, but not quite wasted; they may be lessened, but not utterly lost. They may seem to perish, and be wholly gone in time of temptation, as we see in *David*, *Peter*, and many others, yet even then they remain in them, though not felt, as fire covered in the ashes, or as the light over-shaddowed with a cloud. This the Apostle *John* testifieth, saying; *Whosoever is borne of God sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him, neither can he sin, because he is borne of God.* Where he teacheth, that Faith

and Love of Holynesse are never lost, which serveth to the comfort of the Godly, not to nourish security of the Flesh in themselves.

[*The fellowship or communication of thy Faith.*]

Here we see how the Apostle in the matter of his Prayer which he used for *Philemon*, entreated for the communicating and fellowship of his gifts, that is, that they should flow and issue out, to the good and benefit, to the profit and bettering of others. This teacheth us, that the gifts and blessings of God, whether temporal or eternal, bestowed upon any, must not lie hid or dead, but be used and employed to the good of others, and so yield a fellowship and communion to others. Whatsoever good things we have received, we must have them, not for our selves alone, but for the good of others. This we are taught in the Parable of the Scribe taught of God, unto the Kingdom of Heaven, he is likened to an Householder, which bringeth forth out of his Treasure, things both new and old. His old and new store must not be kept to himself, but be brought forth, and serve for his fellow Servants.

So in the parable propounded, Luke 19. this appeareth; *A certain Noble-man went into a far Country, to receive for himself a Kingdom, and so to come again: and he called his ten Servants, and delivered unto them ten pieces of Money, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. And afterward, the first came, saying; Lord, thy piece hath increased ten pieces: and the second said, thy piece hath increased five pieces.* The Apostle likewise showeth, that all the gifts of Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Prophesying, the gifts of healing, the operation of great works, the discerning of spirits, the diversity of toongs, the interpretation of tongues are distributed to every man severally to profit withal, and for the good of the whole body. And speaking of such as have temporal things, he chargeth *Timothy* to charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us abundantly all things to enjoy, that they do good, and be rich in Good-works, and be ready to distribute and communicate. All blessings therefore are to be communicated and distributed to others, they ought not to be laid up in a Napkin, or be buried in the earth, or be covered under a bushel, as the manner of many men is.

The Reasons of this truth, are to be sought out and considered of us. First, we are servants unto all, to do them good, and to further their salvation. True it is, the faithful are most free, being set at liberty by Christ from the curse of the Law, and from the Dominion of sin, according unto the saying of Christ. *John 8. If the Son make you free, you shall be free indeed.* Notwithstanding this freedom, it is a part of their dignity to be the servants of God, and a part of their duty to be servants to men, to seek their good, to procure their benefit, to further their edification, and to finish their salvation. This is it which the Apostle *Paul* setteth down, 1 Cor. 9, 19. *Though I be free from all Men, yet have I made myself Servant unto all Men, that I may win the more.* We are brought into the World, to do good to others, and to be as Candles to give light to others, rather than to our selves. This made the same Apostle in another place say, *We preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and our selves your servants for Jesus sake.* If then, the Ministers be the servants of the Church, and all men Seruauntes one toward another; we must in all things show our selves Servants, by serving the necessities, and seeking the good of all our Brethren amongst whom we live.

Secondly, we are members of the same body, and therefore in this respect should profit one another. We see it is so in every part of our body; the eye seeth not for it self, the head inuenteth not for it self, the hand worketh not for it self, the foot walketh not for it self, but they do these duties for the whole body. Thus it ought to be among all the faithful; if Christ Jesus be our head, we must be affected as mutual members one to another. So the Apostle teacheth, that as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, which is one, though they be many, yet are but one body; even so, is Christ. And afterward, *If one member suffer, all suffer with it: if one member be had in honor, all the members reioice with it.* If then we had Faith to believe, that we are nearly joined together, one to another, as members of one body, we would faithfully employ our selves to the good and comfort one of another.

Thirdly, we are all of us Stewards and disposers of the manifold graces of God. For God being as a great Noble-man that hath a great house, ruleth all things in it by his Steward. So hath God committed his goods to us, and made us Stewards of his family, to Minister in season to all in the Housholde; and he will take an account how we use them, when it shall be said to us, *Give an account of thy Stewardship, for thou mayst be no longer Steward.* This is the reason urged by the Apostle *Peter*, *Let every man as he hath received the gift, minister the same one to another, as good disposers of the manifold grace of GOD.* Seeing then, we are made Servants, Members, and Stewards, to serve one to another, to help one another, and to Minister one to another, we are bound to respect the faithful as our fellow-servants, to do them good as our fellow members, and procure their benefit as partes of the same Family with us.

The Doctrine being thus cleared by store of witnesses, and by strength of Reasons, let us not pass from it, until we see the Uses of it. First of all, this teacheth us to remember and mind the benefit and good of others, and not only to desire, but to effect the same, as much as we can, especially their eternal good. It is a good thing to do good unto the bodies of our Brethren; but the chiefest good is to do good to their souls. There is none of us but have received some gift, and by the use thereof may do some good. God indeed with a liberal hand distributed his blessings, he hath not dealt couetously, niggardly, and sparingly toward us; but liberally, richly, bountifully. He hath given all his goods among us all, he hath not given all to everyone, but he hath bestowed some to one, and some to another, in one measure to this man, in another measure to that man. But howsoever the number of our gifts be small, and the measure of them little, yet no man hath so small a number, or so little a measure, but he may gain some glory to God the giver of them, and do some good to his Brethren by the use of them.

We see in the Parable, he that had received five Talents, increased five other Talents; and he that had received two Talents, gained other two also; and these are called good and faithful Servants. The Apostle *Paul* writing to the Phillippians, *Look not every man on his own things, but every Man also on the things of other men.* Heereby such are reproved, as are Lovers of themselves, invent for them-selves, care for them-selves, labor for themselves, and do the duties of their calling for themselves: these do not mind or mean any good to the Church, or to their poor Brethren, they care for nothing but their own advantage.

Secondly, seeing such are reprov'd as have gifts, and yet use them not but hide them, and so diminish them by ydlenesse & want of conscience. Such as use their gifts, do increase them; such as use them not, decrease and diminish them. It is the just judgment of God upon all unconscionable persons, that have received gifts in a great measure, & never employ them or bestow them to the profit of others; they have their gifts taken from them, their knowledge is diminished, their judgment corrupted, their memory decayed, their zeal quenched, their diligence abated. We see this in the Ministers of the Gospel, who are made able and apt to teach, who are filled and furnished with gifts answerable to their calling, to do good in their places, when they grow slothful, and spend their days without care and conscience of their duties, they are infatuated of God, and abhorred of men, they run into gross errors, and are made ridiculous even to children. This is it which the Prophet long ago prophesied, and threatened from God to fall upon these proud & profane men, *O Idol Shepherd, that leaveth the flock, the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall he clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.* The like we may say also of the people, who have profited by the preaching of the Gospel, and gathered much instruction, to their great comfort, when they begin to stand at a stay, and to cease the course into which they are entered; all things go backward with them, they become luke-warm, they have less knowledge (I speak of many of our professors) then they had; ten, yea twenty years ago: their zeal is turned into coldness, their forwardness into backwardness, their Prayers into pleasures, their earnestness into negligence, their love into loathing, their hearing into dullness and deafness, their ears are stopped, and are made hard and heavy; they were wont to draw others to the exercises of Religion, but now themselves stand in need to be hailed and pulled unto them: they were wont to light a Candle, and lead the way to others, now their light is put out, and they remain in darkness themselves.

These men through their benumbing and backsliding, cause the name of God to be evil spoken of, raise a scandal upon their profession, bring an evil name upon the word, and open the mouths of wretched men to speak against true Religion, and all those that do embrace it. True Religion is a worthy work, and a great building, it requireth hard labor, great patience, much striving, and long continuance, whereof our Savior Christ putteth us in mind, when he saith, *Which of you, minding to build a Tower, sitteth not down before, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to perform it, lest that after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to perform it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying; This man began to build, & was not able to make an end.* Wherefore, it standeth all Pastors & people upon, to remember from whence they are fallen, and to do their first works, lest God come against them in his anger, and vex them in his fore displeasure. The calling of the Ministry is an high calling; it is one of the highest callings; but if we make it a calling of ease and ydlenesse, feeding our selves, and not teaching the people, we disgrace our office, and make it most vile with God and men. This is it which our Savior expresseth under the comparison of Salt, when he saith, *Salt is good, but if Salt have lost his savor wherewith shall it be salted?* It is neither meet for the Land, not yet for the Dunghill, but men cast it out. All other things, though corrupted and spoiled, yet retain some other use; as we see in Wine when it is sower, in a Tree when it is dead and withered, and in straw when it is rotten, they are turned into other uses; but if the Salt be

unsavory, it is good for nothing, it is hurtful for the Land, it is unprofitable for the Dunghil, no reckoning or account is to be made of it, but to be trodden under foot as unsavory. So then, such as are made Ouer-seers of others to teach the Church, and watch over the people of God, are reprov'd, being idle & slothful, and such as will take no pains in instructing those that are committed unto them. Let Ministets be diligent and watchful to do the duties of their calling: let them preach the word in season, and out of season; let them beware of sluggishness and slothfulness. Al such as are idle and negligent, are not worthy to be maintained, they usurp that hire which they receive, they have no right or interest to live of the Gospel, that do not preach the Gospel; they have no just title to eat the milk of the flock, that do not feed the Sheep, albeit they may claim their wages by the Laws of men, yet they are no better in the account of the high God, then Thieves and robbers that live by ruin and spoil of the people, who are partakers of all their goods, and yet like wrongful usurpers, they will not teach them in the word; yea the good ordinances of men require, that such as receive wages should do the work, and such as take the hire, should take the pains.

If any man have an house to build, if he see the Carpenter and Mason idle, and do nothing, so that the frame to be set up, is in no greater forwardness in the end of the year, then it was in the beginning, will he pay them their wages? Or if we have any business to do, will we pay the workmen before the work be finished, or if they let it alone and leave it undone? And shall it go worse with the people of God, then all other that hire laborers to labor for them? Or shall they alone be constrained, to maintain and sustain idle Lubbers and loiterers that can do nothing, or will do nothing, more then a Child of seven years old may do as well as themselves? We are the Lord's Builders, and spiritual Masons to build his Church; we are his husbandmen to Till his ground; we are Shepherds to feed his flock. It is out duty to frame his building, and every day to add somewhat to the building. It is our duty to Plough up the fallow ground, and sow the precious seed of the word among them, that they may grow thereby. It is our duty to feed his Sheep with wholesome food, and to lead them into green pastures. If we be not careful to do our work, there is no reason we should receive his wages; and if we care not to discharge the duty, we cannot with a good Conscience take a penny: if we will be at no pains, what warrant have we to make any gains by our ydlennesse. God hath provided for us a liberal allowance; he requireth of the people a cheereful performance thereof, and he chargeth the ministers to have a careful remembrance to labor in the Lord's harvest, that so they may eat their own bread, and not live by the sweat of other men's brows. It is a general rule delivered by the Apostle, binding all persons and degrees of men, *Even when we were with you, this we warn'd you of, that if there were any which would not work, that he should not eat: for we hear, that there are some which walk among you inordinately, and work not at all, &c.* Let all such therefore, as are negligent in the work of the Lord, and stand idle without employment, consider, that as God hath given no gifts to be idle, but to be used, so he would have no idle persons to be maintained, he doth grudge them their meat, he doth not allow them a Morsell of bread, he regardeth not though they starve, that will not set their hands to labor. For, he inhibiteth and forbiddeth his Church and people, to bestow anything upon sluggards, or to give them any succor, to the end, that the forcible weapon of necessity may contstrain them to set their hand to work, and also to busy themselves in the

Calling which they profess. And this standeth with exceeding great equity, and good reason. For, what is meat, but the reward of Labor? And what is the Wages which they have, but the recompense of the Work? Or, what is hire, but only the reward of pains-taking?

Now, he that doth no good, but is unprofitable to mankind, and is not dilligent in his business, what right or reason is it, that he should be rewarded as a Labourer? Moreover, they are here reprov'd, that use their gifts to the hurt and hindrance of others. For, if such be justly blamed and condemned, as hide their gifts to their hindrance, and use them not to the benefit of others, they are much worse, that abuse them unto evil, that use their wit to undermine the ignorant, their wisdom to beguile the simple, their learning to subvert the truth, their knowledge to overthrow the faith, their riches to vndoo the poor, their credit to cross justice, their authority to disdain, their strength to oppress the weak, their power to contemn others, and every gift to the dishonor of the giver, as the Serpent did his wilnesse to deceive. These are all like mad men armed. It were better that a mad man had no armor and weapon, then that he should use, or rather abuse them, to the death and destruction of others: so it were better these men wanted these gifts, then that they should profane them to the dishonor of God, to the hurt of others, and to the bringing of a fearful judgment upon their own souls. It were better to do nothing, then to do evil; as we say, it is better to be idle, then to be ill occupied. It were better to let the sword rest in the scabbard, then to draw it out to wound the innocent; to let our riches corrupt, and our garments be moth-eaten, and our treasure be cankered, then we wear them with pride, & wast them in drunkenness, whoredom, and all wickedness. We must one day give an account unto God, both what we have received, and howe we have bestowed that which we have received. If the Merchant that hath had his Factor in a strange Country, wasting his goods committed to him on harlots, and in riotous living, will call him to an account how he hath spent his time, and misspent his goods; shall we not think that the eternal God will summon us before the bar of his judgment seat, to give in a reckoning & an exact account what we have done with such gifts as he hath lent us, and how we have bestowed them?

Thirdly, they are here also reprov'd, which bar and lock up such gifts of such, as might be profitable to the Church and Common-wealth, which suffer them not to employ their gifts, that desire to employ them, which do little good themselves, and yet hinder those that would do good. The Dog that lieth in the manger, will not eat the Hay himself, nor suffer the Ox that laboreth to eat of it. So we have lamentable experience of such men, or rather Beasts, as open not their own mouths, but have learned to shut the mouths of others that would preach the gospel. These are like to *Amazia*, that proud Priest of *Bethel*, that falsely informed the King against the true Prophet of God *Amos*, and charged him to hold his peace, he sent to *Jeroboam* king of Israel, saying; *Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel, the Land is not able to bear his words.* And he said to *Amos*, *O thou the Seer, flee thou away into the Land of Judah, and there eat thy Bread, and prophesy there, but prophesy no more at Bethel, for it is the Kings Chapel, and it is the Kings Court.* These are like to the cruel Priests and Prophets, that suffered not *Jeremiah* to publish the word of the Lord, but stopped his mouth, and clapt him up in prison, and if their rage had not been repressed, and their malice restrained, they would not have rested, till they had put him to death, and brought him to

destruction. He was as a silly Lamb in the jaws and claws of blood-sucking Wolves, and led unto the slaughter, he sought not any revenge against them, but only said, *As for me, behold I am in your hands, do with me as ye think good and right: but know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this Citty, and upon the Inhabitants thereof, for of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you, to speak all these words in your ears.* These are like to the chief Priest and Pharisees, who threatened and charged the Apostles that they should thenceforth speak or teach no man in Christ's name; but they answered, *We ought rather to obey God than men.* And again, *Whether it be right in the sight of God to obey you rather than God, judge ye.* These are like to that ambitious *Diotrephes*, mentioned by the Apostle *John* in his third Epistle. who as he loved to have the preeminence among them, so he prattled against the true servants of God with malicious words, and not therewith content, neither he himself receiveth the Brethren, but forbiddeth them that would receive them, and thrusteth them out of the Church. It is an horrible sin to take away the preaching of God's word from men. For whatsoever men pretend to excuse their sin, and what Fig leaves soever they patch together to cover their shame, they are guilty of the destruction and damnation of so many souls, as by them might have been instructed. *Judas* was guilty of an heinous sin for betraying and delivering the body of one innocent to a temporal death: but these shall be arraigned of high treason against Jesus Christ, who betray many thousand souls into the hands of Satan, and throw them into the jaws of death, even of eternal death. Such are the bloody Papists, which deny the use of the scriptures to the people, and debar them of the means of getting knowledge. And such are all carnal Gospellers, which think the preaching of the Gospel, to be a needless and superfluous thing, and account the people to have sufficient, so that they have a praying Ministry alone, and the service read distinctly among them. Let us therefore take heed, that we do not stop the course of the Gospel, or put out the light that would shine into our hearts, but rather further (with all our power) the truth that God hath set up among us, and spread abroad his saving health, that so glory may be gained to his name.

Lastly, it reproveth the neglect of employing the gifts of God bestowed upon them; that is, in the people. Whether God have given us spiritual graces or temporal blessings, we must take heed how we use them. We are ready to hear, and willing to learn the faults of the Ministers; yea, we can speak of them our selves, and talk of them all day long; we can tell that some use not their gifts to the good of the Church, others abuse them to the hurt of the Church: but never consider how themselves employ their own gifts, or what account they shall give to God that hath bestowed them. The benefit of them, is not in having of them, but in the using of them; not in the enjoying, but in the employing; not in the possessing, but in the practicing. Not to use them, is all one as if we had them not. For, as the covetous man wanteth as well the things that he hath, as those which he hath not, so do these sluggards receive the grace of God in vain, which have the use of those things they enjoy, no more then of those things which they have not obtained. This made the Apostle say, *We desire that everyone of you show the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that ye be not slothful, but followers of them which through Faith and Patience inherit the promises.* God is constrained oftentimes to take away the means that he sendeth for our good, whē we make

no good use of them; he taketh away good Pastors, he sendeth & setteth up evil Pastors in their rooms, when we do not profit, nor are careful to make others profit by us. This the Prophet *Zechariah* denounceth from the mouth of the Lord, *I will raise up a Shepherd in the Land, which shall not look for the thing that is lost, nor seek the tender Lambes, nor healt that that is hurt, nor feed that which standeth up, but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear the claws in pieces.* This also Christ our Savior teacheth in the Gospel, *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath.*

Furthermore, in the parable of the man, that going into a far Country, called unto him his servants, and delivered unto them his goods; we see that the evil servant, that having received a Talent hid it in the ground, & brought only a Talent to his Master again, hath that taken from him, and it is given to him that had gotten and gained five Talents. It is accounted an evil Tree, not that only which bringeth forth evil fruit, but that also which bringeth forth no fruit. It is accounted evil ground, not only that which beareth Thorns and Briars, but that also which bringeth forth no Corn for the use of man. He is accounted an unjust steward, not only that wasteth his Masters goods & converteth thē to his own use, but he that keepeth them safe and sound without employment, which he had received to lay out, to dispense and to distribute. He is accounted an evil servant, not only that selleth to others or reserveth to himself his Masters Corn which he should have sowed in the earth, that it might have brought forth great increase and a plentiful Harvest, but he that keepeth it by him, and in the end delivereth it back in the same manner and measure that he took it. So are we unfaithful servants, unjust Stewards, and evil bestowers of our Masters money, if we let it lie by us, and do not employ it to some gain. If then they be blamed and unrewarded that gain nothing, what shall they be esteemed, that loose the Stock, and dash away the principal. Again, if God have given unto us this worlds good, he requireth of us to do good with it, to help those that are in want, and to distribute to the necessities of the Saints. Hath God been liberal to us, that we should be hand-bound and heart-bound unto others? He hath left the poor with us, that we should be instead of God to them, as *Moses* is said to be given to *Aaron* in God's stead as a wise Counselor, so we are appointed to be unto them as a wise distributor, supplying that which is wanting unto them. How should God give much unto us, when for his sake we will not give a little. If we were in their case and condition, and had experience how great the misery of want is, and how heavy the burden of poverty is, we would be willing to be refreshed, comforted, and eased: *Therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do ye to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.* Whatsoever we do unto them, shall not be unregarded, or unrewarded: we sow it in a fruitful ground, and we shall reap it again with great increase.

Lastly, seeing we must employ that which we have received to the benefit of others, it serveth greatly to comfort such as have been careful to communicate to others those things that they have received, and to make them partakers of the same comfort that they have reaped by them. It is a blessed thing when men have endeavored to their power to benefit others, to exhort them, to admonish them, to comfort them, to refresh them, and have used our gifts to the profit of our brethren. O what a wonderful comfort and consolation shall it be unto us when we must leave this world and go the way of all flesh, to remember that we

have not spared to do good to others, we have not failed to benefit others, we have not ceased to scatter abroad a part of that which we have gathered. Let us lay this to our hearts and apply it to our consciences, both we that are the Ministers and you that are the people. If we that are made watchmen over the City of God, and overseers of the Church, shall to the utmost of our power employ our gifts and spend our selves to give light to others, God will not forget the labor of our hands, but great shall be our reward in heaven, according to the promise mentioned in Daniel the Prophet, *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the Stars forever and ever.* Hereunto accordeth the answer of Christ to the question of Peter, *Who is a faithful Steward and wise, whom the Master shall make Ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in season? Blessed is that servant whom his Master when he cometh shall find so doing.* We shall find more comfort of conscience and joy of heart, and gladness of spirit, when we depart this life, that we have been faithful in that little committed to our trust, and made others partakers of it as well as our selves, then if we had great abundance of earthly blessings, and were owners of the whole world.

The like comfort shall all faithful people of God find, that have distributed their Masters goods, they shall receive their reward, according unto their work. We see the harvest is answerable to the seed time, and they shall reap as they have sowed. Then they shall taste the sweetness, and reap the comfort of their labor, bestowed in applying themselves to the profit of others. Their last day shall be a blessed day unto them, when they shall find God as ready to communicate unto them his glory, as they have been to do to others their duty, and to bestow upon them the fruits of mercy, and the works of charity. The greatest good is to seek to gain their souls; the next, is to give to their bodies. On the other side, how uncomfortable shall that day of our departure be, how woeful and full of trouble, bringing horror of conscience, vexation of spirit, and confusion of face: Woe then, woe (I say) to all idle Ministers, and sluggish people, that when they are to be gathered unto their Fathers, and lie upon their death beds, cannot remember what good they have done, but shall be troubled and tormented with the consideration of this, what good they might have done, that they might have been fruitful trees, but have been barren; Good ground, but have been evil. These men have nothing else to muse and meditate upon, but how they have spent whole days and nights, whole months and years, in eating and drinking, in feasting and company, in pleasures and pastimes, in surfeiting and drunkenness, and what comfort shall their poor distressed soul, and languishing body, feel in that day, but cry out with a lamentable cry, and a pitiful howling, able to move the stones, and to pierce the rocks, that all is vanity, and then condemn their folly, that have placed their happiness in this unhappiness, and the joy of their spirit, in this sorrow of their heart. For, if that be true which the Prophet saith, *Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, and walketh in his ways: when thou eatest the labors of thine hands, thou shalt be blessed, and it shall be well with thee:* It is no doubt as true, that such as eat not the fruit of their labors, but eat the fruit of their laziness and loitering, are accursed. This is it which our Savior addeth, *If that servant say in his heart, My Master doth defer his coming, and shall begin to smite the Servants and Maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The Master of that servant will come on a day, when he thinketh not, and at*

an hour when he is not ware of, and will cut him off, and give him his portion with the unbelievers, & that Servant that knew his Masters will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. Where he teacheth, that as eternal life is the reward of diligence, and discharge of our duty, so is eternal destruction the wages of all idle bellies.

Such as do no good to others shall know at the last that they have indeed done no good unto themselves. The more serviceable we have been to others, the more profitable shall we be in the end to our selves, and the comfort of all shall be felt in our hearts, when we shall say with the Apostle, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith, henceforth is laid up for me the Crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* A notable example hereof, we have in *Obadiah*, who was Governor of *Ahab's* house, when he saw himself in distress of famine, & in fear lest *Elijah* should depart, he called to remembrance the fruits of his Faith, the worship of God, and the favor shown to his children, and herein he was comforted. When *Jezebel* slew the Prophets of the Lord, he hid an hundred men of the Lord's Prophets by fifties in a Cave, and fed them with bread and water. Let us therefore never be without such arguments to comfort us, we shall find the benefit of them when we are in trouble, and especially when we are going out of the world.

[*And that whatsoever good thing is in you through Christ Jesus may be known.*]

The Apostle in these words, mentioneth this to be the cause, why he would have the gifts of God bestowed upon *Philemon*, to be communicated to others, because by that means, they might be made known to others, and acknowledged by others, and so spread abroad far and near. We learn from hence, that it is the duty of everyone to manifest and show forth, yea, to spread abroad and to speak of the gifts of God bestowed upon themselves and others. When God is good toward us, and distributeth his graces among us, we must be ready to confess and acknowledge them, when we feel them in our selves, or see them in others. This our Savior teacheth *Math. 5. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* Thus the spirit of God in the Scriptures remembereth the righteousness of *Noah*, the faith and obedience of *Abraham*, the patience of *Job*, the chastity of *Joseph*, the meekness of *Moses*, the single heart of *David*, the sincerity of *Nathaniell*, the labors of *Paul*, the repentance of *Peter*, the restitution of *Zacchaeus*. Christ Jesus publisheth the graces of God that shined in *John the Baptist*, he saith he was a burning and shining Candle, and that they would for a season have rejoiced in his light. The Apostle declareth that the faith of the Romans is published throughout the whole world. The praise of *Timothy* was noised and notified in the Church, whereof *Paul* putteth him in mind to make his proceedings answerable to his beginnings and to the hope that was conceived of him, *Despise not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prohecie, with the laying on of the hands of the company of the Eldership.* So likewise the fact of *Mary*, anointing the body of Christ, and working a good work upon him to bury him, is commanded to be made known, and not kept secret, *Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout all the world, there shall also this that she hath done be spoken off, for a memorial of her.* Thus the Apostle remembereth the effectual faith, and diligent love, and the patience of that hope in

our Lord Jesus Christ which was in the Thessalonians. So he recordeth and commendeth the liberality that was in them of *Macedonia* toward the poor Saints at *Jerusalem* that were in distress. All which Testimonies serve to teach us, that it is our duty to publish the gifes of God upon us or our brethren, not to hide them: to spread them abroad, not to smother them: to make them known, not to cover and conceal them to our selves.

And albeit these examples may be sufficient to move us to embrace this as a certain truth, yet we have sundry reasons yielded in the Scriputre farther to confirm it unto us. First, to the end that God's graces being seen & known he may be glorified and blessed for them, who is the author and giver of them. It ought to be our chiefest desire and study, that God may have his praise and glory among us. This is that reason which Christ our Savior pointeth out unto us, when he commandeth us to show forth our good works in our life, that God our Father may be glorified which is in heaven. One end of good works is the glory of God. They can never please him, unless they aim at that mark, and tend to that end. This the Apostle *Peter* teacheth, *Have your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that they which speak evil of you as of evil doers, may by your good works which they shall see, glorify God in the day of visitation.* The glory of men and the magnifying of their name is not to be sought after; but of God, to whom all glory is due.

Secondly, we are to make known the gifts of God in our selves or in others, because the more they be known, and the farther they are spread, the larger praise and more abundant thanksgiving may be given unto God and yielded to his name by many. The rendering of thanks unto him is a sacrifice that smelleth sweetly in his Nostrils. The Apostle speaking of the liberality of the *Corinthians*, and exhorting them to the works of mercy, he useth this reason, that by beholding of them, not only the godly are refreshed, but God is glorified, *That on all parts ye may be made rich unto all liberality, which causeth thorough us thanksgiving unto God, for the ministration of this service, not only supplieth the necessities of the Saints, but also abundantly causeth many to give thanks to God.* The reason is direct, and of great force.

Thirdly, in respect of others, because the more the goodness and graces of God are spoken of, and the more largely they are dispersed, the mo by that means may be provoked & stirred up to an imitation and following of their example, and to a treading in their steps. This is another end that we ought to respect in publishing the mercies of God to draw others to do the like, and to provoke them as by an holy emulation of their godliness. Hence it is, that the Apostle stirring up the *Corinthians* to a bountiful helping of the Saints at *Jerusalem*, he setteth before them the example of the Churches of *Macedonia*, that they should follow them, *We do you also, to wit Brethren, of the grace of God bestowed upon the Churches of Macedonia, because in great trial of affliction their joy abounded, and their most extreme poverty abounded unto their rich liberality.* Having set before them this glass to look upon, and in it to behold themselves, that albeit the *Macedonians* themselves had heavy burdens laid upon them, and many charges of their own that pressed them down, whereby they were made poor, yea extreme poor, yet they hung not back, but were forward according to their power, yea, beyond their power to succor others. He exhorteth the *Corinthians* hereupon, *That as they abounded in everything, in faith, and word, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in their love*

toward the Apostles, even so they should show themselves to abound in this grace also. Likewise he commendeth the Thessalonians, that they became followers of them, *And received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy-Ghost, so that they were as ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia, and in Achaia.* So when he hath proved that Abraham's Faith was imputed to him for righteousness, he addeth; *Now it is not written for him only, but also for us, to whom it shall be imputed, which believe in him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.* So then, if we lay these things together, & consider the person of God, of the Church, and of others, that God is to be glorified, that the faithful must have their mouths opened to praise him, and that all others must be provoked by our good example; in all these respects we learn, that whensoever God bestoweth his gifts, and we taste of his graces, or others are made partakers of his goodness, we must be careful to make the same known to others.

The Uses are now to be stood upon. First, we see there may be sometimes a foolish modesty in concealing those good things which should be uttered and published, if they may further the cause of Religion, or provoke others to godliness, or bring glory to God. God is not ashamed of us, to be called our God, and to do us good; let us not therefore be ashamed to acknowledge him to be good unto us, and confess his goodness to the sons of men. We see how men are not ashamed to make known their ungodliness, and proclaim it openly with brazen faces; they glory in it as at a triumph, & never blush at anything. Let us therefore be bold to speak of good things, & account it our duty to sound out allowed the graces that we have received. It is to great niceness to hide God's glory and our gifts. This was the cause, why *Paul* mentioned his labors, his calling, his knowledge, his pains, his visions, his revelations, when the false Apostles extolled them-selves above him, to the reproach of his person, to the slander of his calling, to the disgrace of the Gospel, and to the dishonor of God. This compelled and constrained him not to be silent in his own cause, or rather in the cause of God and his Gospel. For, albeit his enemies seemed only to contemn him, and set his person at naught, yet the contempt reached farther, and thorough his sides they gave a blow and a wound to the truth it self, we must not be so dissolute and careless to neglect what everyone speaketh of us, but be jealous of our credit and maintain our good name, especially when our sincerity and God's verity are joined together. We see how *Samuel* before all the people protested his innocence in his life, and uprightness in his calling, because the *Israelites* had rejected him and brought his ministry into question. There was a time when Christ would not have himself and his works known; to wit, when the knowledge might hinder him and his preaching, but he commanded his Apostles to speak that in the light which he had told them in darkness, and to preach that in the house tops, which he told them in the ear. This serveth to condemn those that derogate from the godly, and diminish the graces that God hath given unto them, and bestowed upon them. For howsoever the notes of Godliness are stamped upon them, and the gifts of God do shine as brightly as the light of the Sun in them, whereby they are marked to be his, and known to belong unto him, yet they will lessen and extenuate them and as it were clip the Princes Coyne, that so they may be disgraced. This is a manifest note of a Child of the Devil, and of representing his Image. For as the names given to Satan describe his nature, so the word (Devil) in the originall tongue which the holy Ghost useth, signifieth a false accuser, a carper, a cauller, a

disgracer, a slanderer, one that by all means seeketh to deface the truth and those that uphold and support it. Thus the nature of our spiritual adversity is notably painted and purtraied out unto us. His whole practice standeth in false accusations, wrongful imputations, and willful calumniation of God to man, and of man to God. He falsely accused God to our first parents, in the beginning, to envy their good estate, and therefore of malice forbad them the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He falsely accused *Job* to serve God; in hypocrisy, not in sincerity; with show of the body, not with singleness of heart; to be seen of men, not to approve himself with an upright conscience in the presence of God. These qualities of the Devil are to be found in all the wicked. If you talk and reason with them, of such as truly fear God, either they will censure them as Hipocrits, and falsely accuse them not to be the persons which they make profession to be, or else they will detract from them and diminish those gifts that God hath abundantly bestowed upon them. Christ Jesus himself could not escape this viperous brood, who was accused by the Devils offspring, and the Children of darkness, the Scribes and Pharisees, to be a Samaritan, to have a Devil, to be a Drunkard, to be a Seducer, a Blasphemer, and what not? So was it with his Apostles, they were filled with the holy Ghost, and endued with the gifts of tongues, yet they felt the smart of this rod, and were wounded with this sharp sword, they were accounted Deceiuers, accused as Drunkards, slaunderd as Disturbers of the common peace, and reviled as Traitors, and Rebels against *Caesar*, for the Disciple must not look to be above his Master, nor the servant greater then his Lord. These revilings and reproaches are not peculiar to Christ and his Apostles, but common to all the faithful and true believers in his name, they taste of the same cup, and have the like measure measured unto them. They are slandered and backbited, they are reviled and taunted for the truths sake. But let all such carpers and cauilers look to themselves and take heed to their estate, they resemble their father whose works they do, and they show themselves to be petty-Satan's, and very Devils incarnate. Now such as are the Children of the Devil, must look to have their portion with the Devil, and his Angels. Let us therefore be ready to magnify the mercies of God toward our brethren; let us speak of the praises of him that hath given them; let us remember what God hath done for us and others; and especially let us beware that we do not disgrace them and their gifts, which tendeth to the dishonor of him that gave them. For as *Solomon* saith, *He that mocketh the poor, reproacheth him that made him:* so is it true, that whosoever contemneth and despiseth, reuileth and treadeth under his foot the Godly, adorned from the Throne of God with the precious graces of his spirit, he reproveth and reproacheth God himself who hath given that annointing which they have received of him. Thus we see how we are to behave our selves in respect of God's gifts; we must not be ashamed to confess them, but we must be both ashamed and afraid to deface them, and so to defraud God of his honor due unto him.

Secondly, seeing it is our duty, when God hath been good unto us or others, to make known his goodness: we learn hereby, how the Saints of God may be rightly and religiously honored of us, and remembered to their everlasting praise. It is our duty to give thanks to God, who hath blessed them with his graces, and governed them by his holy spirit, and to pray unto him so to direct us, & dispose of our ways, that we may follow their godliness, & walk in their steps wherein they have gone before us. True it is, the church of Rome go a great deal

farther, and teach us to go further in the honoring of them than God alloweth, & the word approveth. For they lade them with the spoils of Christ, & take from him the royalties of his Priest-hood, & therefore indeed they do not honor them, but dishonor and disgrace them, when they decke them with feathers that are not theirs. Is there any good & godly man living on the face of the earth, that could be content to have thieves and robbers spoil other men of their goods, and bring them unto him, and if they offered them, would he accept and receive them? If he would not receive them as his own, but refuse & reject them as belonging to others, how should the blessed Virgin, the holy Apostles, and other Saints of God, account those sacrilegious wretches to be their friends, which rob & spoil God of his honor, and thrust Christ Jesus our mediator from his office to bestow upon thē? It is their honor to honor the same God with us, and to worship him. And it is our honoring of them, to give all honor to God, by walking in those ways wherein they have led us the way, and by following the light which they have carried before us. And if we would know how to honor the Saints aright, and to give them their due, it consisteth in these pointes: First, that God be magnified and praised in them: our praising of them must tend to the praising of him, who hath advanced them, and crowned them with his gifts. God must be all in all to us, and his glory must be preferred and sought for of us. The Apostle remembering the History of his own calling and conversion, telleth that the Churches of the Jews said, *He which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the Faith which before he destroyed; and they glorified God for me.* When they heard he was gained to the Gospel, they considered therein, the power, goodness, and mercy of God, and with joy of heart, they gave him thanks for it. Secondly, the Saints should be honored by an approbation of God's gifts in them, and by an honorable mention of them. For, seeing they have used the gifts of God faithfully, he will have their gifts praised and extolled, and the Saints themselves to be magnified & commended. So the Apostle mentioning his persecuting of the church in the time of his ignorance, addeth, *But by the grace of God I am that I am, and his grace which is in me, was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which is with me.* So in the Parable of the talents, they that used their talents well, & increased much by the use of them, do hear this to their great praise, *It is well done good servant & faithful, thou hast been faithful in little, I will make thee Ruler over much, enter into thy Masters joy.* Moses is reported to be faithful in all the house of God, as a seruanr, for a Witness of the things which should be spoken after. So the Holy Fathers are commended by the Apostle in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, who through their faith obtained a good report. 3. They are honored of us by following of their lives, and by an imitation of their virtues, being as examples and patterns for us, to walk after. For this is the glory of the Saints, if we follow their Faith, Hope, Charity, Patience, Doctrine, and other like graces that have appeared in them. The Apostle willeth the *Phillippians* to be blameless and pure, as the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a naughty and crooked Nation, shining among them as lights in the world: and he addeth, *Holding fast the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither have labored in vain.* And to this end doth the Scripture make plentiful record of the graces of God, given to the Saints, that our Faith might be strengthened and confirmed, and we encouraged in all well-doing. This is the right manner of honoring the Saints and faithful Seruants of God, when God is honored in them, and for them, when they are praised and commended, and when we are stirred up

to good things by their example. As for Religious Worship of adoration and invocation of them; it is not due unto them, it is proper to God, and the Saints do not desire it, or accept it. Wherefore, it is a notorious slander of the Church of Rome cast out against us, that we contemn and despise the Saints, that we deface them, and set them at naught, whereas we honor them as God hath commanded them to be honored, and give them that reverence that he hath appointed. It were horrible impiety to speak reproachfully, or to think unreverently of them whom GOD the Father honoreth, whom the Son acknowledgeth for his Brethren and Heyres with him, whom the holy spirit calleth his Temple to dwell in. *The Righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. The memorial of the just shall be blessed.* The Virgin Marie saith, *He hath looked upon the poor degree of his servant; for behold, from henceforth shall all ages call me blessed.* On the other side, *The name of the wicked shall rot, and in the generation following, it shall be put out.* But the Romain Church, under a false Title of honoring the Saints, do hide and cover all their superstitions, and bring in their merits and mediation, under color of doing reverence unto them.

Now, the Scripture hath fore-warned us, that nothing falleth out more often or easily, then to err and offend in honoring of the Saints. Christ reproveth the Scribes and Pharisees, who built the tombs of the Prophets, and garnished the Sepulchers of the righteous, yet they bare mortal hatred to the Gospel, and to the professors of it. And he reproveth the Jews, who magnified the memory of *Abraham*, and boasted themselves to be his Children, yet they shown themselves to be the children of the devil, and would not do the works of *Abraham*. But we give them sufficient honor, when we publish their praises and gifts, and follow them in our lives, as they followed Christ the author and finisher of our faith.

Thirdly, we must beware that vain-glory be not the end which we seek for. We are to give the glory to the Author, not to the Instrument; to God, not to man; to the Creator, not to the Creature. When *Herod* was magnified by the vain applause of the people, and honored for his great gifts as a God, *Immediately the Angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not glory unto God, so that he was eaten of Wormes, & gave up the ghost.* This is it which Christ objecteth to the Jews, *How can ye believe which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh of God alone?* Yea, this is it which he speaketh of himself, *I seek not mine own praise, but there is one that seeketh it, & judgeth; if I honor myself, mine honor is nothing worth.* This vain-glory here contemned and condemned, is as rank poison to infect, as a bitter root to corrupt, and as filthy mire to defile our best works, be they never so excellent. What more heavenly work, or profitable duty can we perform, then to pray unto God, and to call upon his Name, for the prayer of a faithful man availeth very much, if it be fervent; yet, if it be a Sacrifice offered with a vain heart, it becometh unfruitful. We ask, and we obtain not, because we ask amiss. The like might be said of alms & fasting, the one a fruit of Faith, the other a furtherance of Faith (for Charity testifieth, fasting helpeth our Faith) if we perform them in hypocrisy, hunting after the praise of men, not desiring the honor of God, we may have our reward from men, but we cannot receive any reward from God. They shall have the praise of men, they shall not have the praise of God. For, as the children of the Prophets among many herbs, gathered one that was bitter and dangerous, and shred it into the pot of pottage amongst the rest, who when they began to eat, cried out and said, *O thou man of God, death is*

in the pot: So if among the duties we perform to God, we mingle the vanity of our own hearts, and sprinkle them with the darnel of our own glory, we may truly say, *Death is in the work.* In all things that we do, we must seek to set forth the glory of God. If any man minister (saith Peter) *let him do it as of the ability which God ministereth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.* Likewise, the Apostle Paul giveth this precept, *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* If we aim at any other end, we miss the mark, and mar the work, how good and glorious soever, it may seem to be in the eyes of men. For, as God seeth not as man seeth, so he judgeth not as man judgeth: man looketh upon the outward appearance, but GOD pondereth the hearts. This is it which Christ spake to the Pharisees, *Ye are they which iustifye yourselves before Men, but GOD knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abominable in the sight of God.* Let us therefore publish the gifts of God upon our selves and our Brethren, not to the magnifying of our own persons, but to the extolling of his praises; and let us so spread abroad our graces, as that we remember his glory, that wrought them in us by his Spirit.

Verse 7. [*For we have great joy and consolation in thy Love.*]

Hitherto we have spoken of the matter of his Prayer: now let us see the reason why he made this the matter thereof. For the Apostle might have craved and asked of God many other things for him of God; yet he desired that his faith might be communicated to many; and so be manifested to be effectual, working by love. The reason here rendered, is from the effect or fruit of his prayers, they were not uttered in the air, they fell not without profit & good success to the ground, but he felt great comfort and consolation wrought in him by the works of *Philemon*, performed to the glory of God, to the praise of his Faith, and with the approbation of the church. Here then he showeth, that he had occasion offered him of great joy and gladness, in regard of the graces of God, effects of faith, & fruits of true piety, which he heard and knew to be in *Philemon*. From hence we learn, that spiritual blessings and graces of God bestowed upon others, do give just occasion to the Saints of God, of great gladness and comfort. It is our duty greatly to rejoice, when we see spiritual blessings in heavenly things, given to the Children of God. This truth our Savior Christ teacheth in the Parables of the stray Sheep, of the lost Groat, and of the prodigal Son. The Shepherd having found his sheep, layeth it on his shoulder with joy, he cometh home, he calleth his friends, saying, *Rejoice with me, for I have found my Sheep which was lost.* I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven, for one sinner that converteth, more then for ninety and nine just men, which need none amendment of life. The poor woman having lost a Groat, lighteth a Candle, sweepeth the house, searcheth every corner, and when she hath found it, she gathereth together her neighbors, saying, *Rejoice with me, for I have found the Groat which I had lost: wherevpon he addeth; Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the Angels of God, for one sinner that converteth.* The Father of that riotousonne, which wasted his goods, hath compassion upon him, runneth to meet him, fell on his neck and kissed him, put apparel on his back, a ring on his finger, and shoes on his feet, reproved his son that envied and repined at it, saying; let us eat and rejoice, it is meet we should make merry and be glad, for this thy Brother was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, but he is found. Hereunto

cometh the Thanksgiving of Christ to his Father, when he saw the increase of his Church, and the overthrow of Satan's kingdom, *That same hour rejoiced Jesus in the Spirit, and said; I confess unto thee Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and understanding, and hast revealed them to Babes; even so, Father, because it so pleased thee.* The Prophet David rejoiced with great joy, when he saw that the people offered willingly unto the Lord with a perfect heart, & he blessed the Lord God of *Israel*. When the Jews heard of the conversion of the Gentiles, & that the Holy ghost fell upon them, as upon themselves at the beginning, *They held their peace and glorified God, saying; Then hath God also to the Gentiles, granted repentance unto life.* When the apostle perceived the notable zeal of the *Thessalonians*, in receiving & entertaining the gospel not as the word of man, but as it is indeed the word of God, he witnesseth *that they wer his hope & his joy, his crown & his glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.* Likewise the Apostle John rejoiced greatly, when the Brethren testified of the truth that was in *Gaius*, & how he walked therein, *He had no greater joy then this, to hear that his sons walked in the verity.* Whereby we see, there ought to be great joy amongst the faithful, when they see the Church prosper and flourish, and the graces of God to increase among them.

The Reasons are many that confirm this unto us. First, the glory & praise of God is much increased, which should comfort the hearts, & rejoice the spirits of the Saints. The more we abound with spiritual blessings in heavenly things, the more God is honored, and his name glorified. This the Apostle teacheth, speaking of the relieving of the Church at *Jerusalem*, *The ministration of this service, not only supplieth the necessities of the Saints, but also abundantly causeth many to give thanks to God.* Where he showeth his joy, that he received and conceived for their voluntary submission to the Gospel, and compassion to the brethren; this was a special cause, that God was praised; this ministered greater gladness to him, then that the Saints were comforted and relieved.

Secondly, the general good of the church must lead us to this duty, & cause us to rejoice, which next unto God should be dearest to us. For whē we see the Church increase, and many souls of many men & women saved, when we see their hearts converted, & regeneration wrought in them, so that they begin to live to God, who before in the time of their ignorance lived to themselves, to sin, to condemnation: who can have such hearts of Flint, or of Iron as not to be moved with joy, & even tickled with a sweet meditation of God's mercy, beholding the enlarging of the kingdom of Christ. The prophet reioysed to see the people willingly affected, & religiously minded to go to the house of the Lord, *Because Jerusalem did thereby prosper, peace was within her walls and prosperity within her palaces.* Where he showeth, that his rejoicing was for the wealth and welfare of the house of God.

Thirdly, the Ordinances and Laws of God are walked in and observed, & so his blessings procured and obtained. For, if we hearken & obey his voice, we have a promise to be respected and rewarded. Such as walk in the Statutes & commandments of the Lord to do them, shall be blessed in the house, in the field, in the City, in body, in soul, in temporal things, in spiritual things. Now, when God is obeyed, men should rejoice and be glad; and when his Laws are broken, they should be much grieved and troubled. The Apostle *John*

writing to an elect Lady rejoiced greatly, that he found of her children, walking in truth, as they had received a commandment of the lord. On the other side, we see *David's* eyes did gush out with Rivers of tears, because Wicked men kept not his Laws. These Reasons, being duly weighed, and rightly considered, do teach us, that God's blessings bestowed upon our Brethren, must minister matter of joy, and great comfort unto us.

Let us now proceed to the handling of the Uses, that we may have the benefit of this Doctrine, and not suffer it to pass from us without profit. First of all, seeing God's graces upon others must work joy in our selves, we learn the truth of that article of our faith, which all profess to believe, but many do not understand, to wit, the communion of Saints. There is a double communion, one which we have with Christ; the other, which the church hath among themselves, & the former is the cause of the latter. For Christ our head, hath given himself unto us, whereby we have the right of adoption, the imputation of his righteousness, and a title to the kingdom of heaven. From hence, as from a fountain, issueth that communion which all the members, both in heaven & earth, have among themselves, howsoever severed in place one from another, howsoever the one sort be dead, the other living; & howsoever the one sort is triumphant, the other Militant. Our Brethren in heaven wish well to the Church, pray for it general, desire the perfect consummation of it, and crave the full and final deliverance of it from all troubles. The Apostle bringeth them in, speaking on this manner, *How long Lord, holy & true! Doest not thou judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth.* True it is, they know not, they see not, they hear not what things are done upon the face of the earth, and therefore they cannot pray in particular, for the particular conditions and persons of men. On the other side, we who live upon the earth have our conversation in heaven, our minds, our harts, & souls, are there; we do in our desires and affections converse with them, we pray to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. Our Communion among our selves consisteth in three things; first, in the affection of the heart; secondly, in the gifts of the spirit; thirdly, in the use of temporal riches. The first in heart, when we are so linked and coupled together, that we are like affectioned one to another, so that when one is grieved, the rest are grieved; and when one rejoiceth, the rest are refreshed. The Evangelist describing the estate of Christ's Church, saith, *The multitude of them that believed, were of one heart, and of one soul.* The Heathen wish well to their own blood and kindred, but we must wish well to all Christians, as to our selves; we must not only know & hear of, but feel their miseries, and mourn with them that mourn; we must not tell them as news, but lay them to our hearts. The second branch is in the blessings of God bestowed upon us, we must impart to our Brethren our spiritual gifts, we must teach them by our example, we must advise them by our Counsel, we must guide them by our admonition, we must stir them up by our exhortation, we must raise them up by our comforts, we must help them by our Prayers. The third part of our communion standeth in temporal things, when we are content not only to leave our superfluities, but even to spend our selves for the good of our fellow-members; we must be ready to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to harbor the harbourlesse, which are not only of our own flesh, but of our own faith; not only clothed with the same Nature, but adorned with the same Name. This is the communion which we profess and believe, and is confirmed and concluded in this place.

Secondly, we learn to desire the best gifts, that we may rejoice and comfort the godly. For, when we profit in good things, we cheer the hearts and minds of all the faithful. Every living thing hath his prospering & proceeding, and is known to have life in it by increasing from one degree of perfection to another. The grass springeth, the plant shouteth, the corn flourisheth, the tree groweth. If we have any life in us of God's Spirit, & be not as grass that is withered, as plants that are dead, as Corn that is blasted, and as trees that are plucked up by the roots, we must go forward from one measure of grace to another, from a lesser to a greater. This serveth to reprove sundry abuses, and to meet with many corruptions that abide and abound among us. First, it condemneth such as delight to offend, to grieve, and vex the Saints of God. For, if we should seek to rejoice and comfort them, and to Minister all occasion of joy unto them, then we are not to discomfort and trouble them, we are not to work sorrow and anguish in them. The estate of these offensive livers, is fearful, as Christ our Savior declareth. *Woe unto the world because of offenses, for it must needs be that offenses shall come, but woe be to that man by whom the offense cometh: whosoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him, that a Millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea.* We ought to give no offense either to Jew or Gentile, or to the Church of God, for woe shall be to them that offend their Brethren, that grieve the Spirit of God, and cause the enemies of our Faith to blaspheme. Secondly, it reproveth such as converse only with the ungodly, and can be merry only in their company. The Children of God have always accounted it a great cross and vexation to dwell with such as are lewd in their course of life, and are bare and barren in good things. The Prophet saith, *Woe is me that I remain in Meshech, and dwell in the Tents of Kedar.* It is an heap of miseries, and a very representation of Hell, to be continually vexed, and exceedingly grieved with their wicked conversation. Just Lot was vexed with the unclean conversation of the wicked; for he being righteous and dwelling among them, in hearing and seeing, vexed his righteous soul from day today with their unlawful deeds. And in what place almost now can a man live, where all kind of vile and vicious dealing is not practiced, where all uncleanness of life is not used? There is great comfort in the society of the faithful, and not only great comfort, but great profit. The Wiseman teacheth, *That he which walketh with the wise, shall be wise, but a Companion of fools shall be worse.* On the other side, the company of the wicked is accompanied with danger. It is a presumption of our own strength, to thrust our selves among wicked companions. Such as are continually in the Sun, must needs be Sun-burnt. Such as walk in the mist, must needs be berayed: such as touch pitch, cannot but be defiled: so, such as abide in bad company, live in places of danger, by reason of the infection of sin, of the weakness of the flesh, of the forsaking of God, and of the power and liberty that Satan hath in such places where he setteth up his Throne. For wheresoever sin is practiced, defended, and maintained, where it covereth the earth as water doth the Sea, there the Devil reigneth; there he keepeth his court, there he hath his residence & remaineth, there he possesseth all things. So long therefore, as we keep company with those that commit sin with greediness, and run on in their evil courses without controulement, we shall be sure to learn their ways, and are in danger to receive destruction to our souls.

Thirdly, it reproveth those that go backward in their profession, that are corrupt trees and without fruit, twice dead and plucked up by the roots. Where shall we in these days find matter of joy to comfort our selves, when godliness so much decayeth, and wickedness is set aloft? The Apostle saith notably to the Corinthians, *I fear least when I come again, my God abase me among you, and I shall bewail many of them which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, & fornication, & wantonness which they have committed.* Suffer me a little to paint out unto you in his colors, the unclean leprosy, and filthy morphew, that hath by sprading so disfigured the face of this world, as it is made odious in the eyes and judgments of all that have any light of God's spirit to discern it. If we consider the times wherein we live, we may truly say, they are the perilous seasons foreshowed by Christ and his Apostles, when faith is scarce found upon the earth. What can we hear or see in any company to which we resort, and not be either grieved, or guilty? For when we behold iniquity practiced without fear, & maintained without shame, if we be not grieved at the committing of it, we are made guilty of it. If all Recordes were searched from the beginning, and a narrow vew of other times taken, it would be found by experience (our helps and means greater then theirs considered) that we ouermatch them all, in all kind of profaneness and abominations. As forswearing, lying, whoring, pride, Atheism, wantonness, looseness, unmercifulness, oppression, coueteousnesse, sacrilege, luxury, drunkenness, envy, Hipocrisie, malice, contempt of the word, and such like, they have overspread the whole world as a running soar, as a fretting Canker, and as a loathsome ulcer, whereby our age is become as the dregs and lees of all that have gone before us; yea, as a common sink that receiveth all filthiness and corruption into it. If any object, there was never more light of knowledge then is in our days, and that the word was never so plainly and plentifully preached. I answer, if it be granted that the light of knowledge is wonderful great, yet it is also as true that there was never more darkness of impiety, never moe mists of ungodliness, then now remain among us; so that it seemeth our greatness of knowledge, serveth to no other purpose, then to add to the greatness of our condemnation. We are grown worse then our predecissors and forefathers, because if there had not been such light, there could not be such darkness. If we had been blind and not seen the light, we should not have so greatly sinned. Thus our Savior speaketh to some of the Pharisees, *If ye were blind, ye should not have sin, but now ye say, we see, therefore your sin remaineth.* The Sun of the Gospel, having shined upon our marish grounds, hath raised these stenches, and given li•e and growth to these monsters. For where the Gospel doth not soften, it hardeneth; where it worketh not conversion, it worketh confusion; where it effecteth no good, it maketh men worse, yea, worse then *Tyre* and *Sidon*, worse then *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*. Thus truth compelleth me, and woeful experience constraineth me, to be a witness of that I would not if I could otherwise choose touching the common corruption and iniquity of our age. But some man may say, the goodness of our professors will make amends; and heal this soar; yea, make a full recompense of the former disorders and abuses. Indeed I acknowledge with all thankfulness and rejoicing, that God hath his Church, and chosen flock among us, contrary to the opinion and practice of such as have made a rent and separation from us. But although we have a true Church of Christ with us, it is a little flock, a small remnant, a gathering after the Harvest, a gleaning after the vintage. It is an hard matter to find a true *Isralite* in whose heart is no guile. They are rare hands that are free

from the contagions of the times, and pure from the spots of filthiness now reigning. We may take up the complaint of the Prophet, *The best of them is a briar, and the most righteous of them ts sharper then a Thorny heage*. A man would have thought, he might have engaged his life, and pawned his soul for the sincerity of some, whom now we may behold to be gone as far as *Demas* was, in the love of this world. Their love to the Saints, their zeal to the word, their affection to the Ministers, seemed to be such, that no man doubted but their names were written in the book of life; who now seem to be rased out of that book which God hath written. They endured the bitterness of the Cross, they despised the shame of the world, they suffered the taunts of the wicked, who now are set down in the seat of the scornful, and are become luke-warm in their profession. Self-love hath quenched brotherly love, mercy is swallowed up through hardness of heart, compassion is turned into sencelesnesse, yea all civil and just dealing seem to have taken their Wings and to be fled up into heaven, or else to be sunk down into the Center of the earth, and to have left the society of our new Christians. It is now accounted a rashness, an heat of youth; yea, a sin worthy of sharp punishment, to stand to the rule and line of the word. If a man give but a look toward the Gospel, and do not profess himself an open enemy unto it: if he show the least entertainment to the truth, and do not set himself against the professors of it, though he be a common Gamester, a rioteous liver, an usurer, an incrocher, and oppressor; he hath the name and title of a good Christian, he hath the praise and commendation of a good professor. What joy therefore can the Children of God have in such works of darkness, and in such workers of iniquity. We may wish with the Prophet, that our head were full of water, and our eyes a Fountain of tears, to weep day and night for the desolation and destruction that hangeth over their heads. The Husbandman taketh no pleasure to see Tares and Darnel grow in his field, instead of good Corn. The Gardener cannot without grief behold weeds spring up in his Garden instead of wholesome Hearbes. So when we see the Church of God, to bring forth Chaff instead of Wheat; Beanes, instead of Fruit; vice instead of virtue, and sin instead of righteousness; what greater grief can arise in our hearts, or what greater sorrow can be wrought in us? If we grieve through the wickedness of our ways, and profaneness of our lives the Children of God; we likewise grieve the spirit of God, and quench such good motions as are inspired into us.

Lastly, it is our duty to seek the good and prosperity of the Church, by all good means, and to draw them and move them, to embrace the ways of salvation. This duty hath many branches growing from it. For seeing God's graces bestowed, give occasion of great joy, it ought to teach us to exhort one another, to comfort them that are comfortless, to reprove them that go astray, to pray for our brethren, to seek to gain and win them to the faith; and when they are gained and won, to rejoyce unfeignedly at their conversion, and if we see any hope of their repentance and turning to God, to converse with them and not to be ashamed of their company. Certainly, he is not truly converted himself, that doth not rejoyce at the conversion of others. He never knew what true repentance meaneth, that conceiveth no joy at the repentance of others. He is ignorant of the way of salvation, that is not greatly delighted and comforted, when others begin to be saved: that we say of them, as Christ doth of *Zacchaeus*, *This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he is also become the son of Abraham*. This doth directly reprove four sortes of men. First, such as rejoyce in those that

will sin with them and run into all excess of riot with them. Great is the delight that sinners take in the society and company one of another. They join hand in hand together, it is their solace and pastime to agree together as brethren in evil, it is as meat and drink unto them to follow after ungodliness. Christ teacheth, that the Angels in Heaven rejoice for one sinner that repenteth. Our joy ariseth upon their repentance. Their turning to God worketh our rejoicing.

So long as men flatter themselves in their sins, and proceed in their evil doing, no matter of joy is offered unto us. Secondly, such as seek to draw them to evil, to vanity, and to all ungodliness, (a common sickness that reigneth in our days,) when men entice one another to evil. These men bear the Image of the Devil, and are transformed into his likeness. For how can they gain their brethren to Godliness, that are means to seduce them and so to bring them to all ungodliness. Hence it is that *Solomon* counselleth us, when sinners entice us, not to consent unto them. It is a grievous sin to be an entiser, but it shall not excuse him that is enticed. Let us therefore know, that we must exhort one another to piety, not to impiety, and further one another to salvation, not to condemnation; & bring one another to heaven, not to hell. Thirdly, it teproueth those that envy and murmur at the calling of our Brethren to Repentaunce, and at their bringing into the Kingdom of Christ. This corrupt affection was in *Joshua*, who repined that the Elders had the gift of prophesy bestowed upon them, as well as *Moses*. This was in *Jonah*, when he had preached to the *Ninevites*, and saw the great mercy of God in sparing of them, and not destroying them according to hls preaching, and their deseruings, was angry, and it displeased him exceedingly. He regarded his own credit and estimation among men, more then their conversion and preservation. This was in the elder Brother of the riotous and prodigal Son, when he saw the joy of his Father, at the receiving of his Child, and his readiness to forgive, he was angry and would not go in. But his Father persuadeth him, that there is no cause why he should be grieved, inasmuch as he is not himself hindered or indamaged by this receiving of his Brother into favor; and reproveth him, in that having no regard of his brother, he is sorry for the common joy conceived of his return. That joy did offend him, whereof he should have been a Companion. These two Reasons are to be noted and observed, to root up all envy and malice out of our hearts, considering that we loose nothing, whensoever God doth graciously receive into favor, those which through sin were fallen from him, & that it is haughtiness without godliness; grief without mercy; and cruelty without compassion; not to rejoice and be glad, when we see any of our fellow servants restored from death to life, raised from sin to righteousness; and found, who before were lost. He then is unrighteous and ungodly, who enuyeth his brother received into favor, and he doth peruersely and maliciously, which doth murmur at the mercy of God upon our brethren. Fourthly, it condemneth such as fail in the former duty, that never exhort their brethren to godliness, never dissuade them from sin, never comfort those that are in misery, never praying for them that are in distress, never desire God to be good unto them, never rejoice with them, when God hath shown mercy.

We live in these times, when the hand of God is stretched out against many of our brethren, they are restrained and shut up by the contagion of plague & pestilence. This their woeful condition, doth cal upon us, and cry unto us, to be mindful of them, and to pray to God our

common Father, to have pity upon them, to call in his arrows that he hath shot against them, to remember his old mercies, that he was wont to show to his inheritance. The Prophet exhorteth and stirreth up the people to pray for the peace of Jerusalem: and that duty which he requireth of others, he daily practiseth himself, praying unto GOD to be favorable to Zion, and to build the Walls of Jerusalem, according to his good pleasure. Let us examine our selves, whether this affection be found in us, and learn to testify our Love towards them, by procuring their good and safety. When we are in misery, our desire is to taste of the kindness and compassion of our Brethren. Let us be as careful to promote their happiness. God is ready to hear us, his ears are open unto our Prayers, so that we plainly bewray, that we shall remain without feeling and sense of their misery, unless we pray unto him for them, who is the God of all Mercy, and the Father of all Consolation.

[*Because by thee (Brother) the Bowelles of the Saints are refreshed.*]

These Words, are a reason rendered of the words going before, declaring wherefore he had great joy and consolation in his love, because the needy Members of Christ were succoured by him. This tendeth to the praise of *Philemon*, who by his Charity and merciful dealing toward the poor Saints, did continually refresh and comfort the bowels of them that wanted. We learn from hence, that the works of mercy and compassion, are to be shown toward the poor Saints. It is our duty to be bountiful and liberal, to those that are in necessity. This Doctrine is proved and confirmed unto us by sundry commandments, and examples in the word of God. Hereunto cometh the charge given by *Moses*, *If one of thy brethren with thee be poor, within any of thy Gates, in thy Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother, but thou shalt open thine hand unto him, and shalt lend him sufficient for his need which he hath.* Likewise *Solomon* saith, *Cast thy bread upon the waters for after many days thou shalt find it, give a portion to seven, and also to eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.* Also the Apostle speaketh, to the same purpose, *To do good and to distribute forget not, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.* The examples of the Children of God that have gone before us in the performance of this duty are many, both in the old and New Testament. It is recorded to the perpetual praise and commendation of *Obadiah*, that he hid the Prophets of God in a Cave, from the cruelty of *Iesabell*, and sustained them with food, and ministered all things necessary unto them. The like we see in *Job*, who restrained not the poor of their desire, nor caused the eyes of the Widow to fail, he saw not any perish for want of clothing, nor any poor without covering; his loins blessed him, because he was warmed with the fleece of his sheep. The widow of *Zarephath* relieved *Elijah* in the Famine. The Apostle commendeth *Onesiphorus*, because he oft refreshed him, and was not ashamed of his Chaine, but when he was at Rome he sought him out very diligently and found him. The Evangelist Luke in the Acts of the Apostles declareth, that *Tabitha* was full of good works and alms which she did, for she made many Coates and Garments to cover the Saints. *Cornelius* is reported to be a devout man, and one that feared God with all his household, which gave much alms to the people, and praised God continually. All these Testimonies of holy Scripture teach us, that to do good, to yield relief, and to minister comfort unto men, especially to the Saints of God, is a necessary duty belonging to all the servants of God.

Now as we have heard sundry commandments and examples to move us hereunto, so diverse reasons may be produced to confirm the same unto us. The wise man in the book of Ecclesiastes is plentiful in this argument. First, he presseth upon us this duty, in respect of the rich reward that shall be rendered to those that are merciful to the poor. For exhorting all men to cast their bread upon the Waters, that is, even where it seemeth to be lost, & where no hope of recompense remaineth: he giveth this reason: *for after many days thou shalt find it.* And in the book of the Proverbs he saith, *He that hath mercy upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and the Lord will recompense him that which he hath given.* When one lendeth to an honest man he feareth no loss, but hopeth to receive again; much more may we be assured that God himself will restore and repay, who is not as the sons of men, that he should delude or deceive us.

Secondly, he moveth us to the fruits of Charity and compassion, from the consideration of the uncertainty and vanity of all things, insomuch as albeit we know what is present, we are ignorant of that which is to come. All things in this life are mutable and uncertain. 1 The life of man is uncertain, we know not how short a time we have to live and to exercise our liberality. We know not what one day may bring forth, and that one minute and moment may cut off all opportunity to show mercy. 2 It is uncertain, whether the riches, which now we have in plenty and abundance, shall continue and abide with us. The Apostle calleth Riches by this title; uncertain riches, and Solomon saith, *Wilt thou cast thine eyes upon them which are nothing? For Riches taketh her to her Wings as an Eagle, and flieth into the heaven.* Who was to be compared with Job, among all the men of the East, yet suddenly he was stripped of them, and made one of the poorest. It is uncertain, what our estate and condition may be, and to what necessity our selves may come, we may be brought to that extremity, that we may stand in need of the help of others, and be constrained to ask alms, and beg our relief of them, when as we by the righteous judgment of God shall find rich men so affected toward us, as others have found us, when we had the goods of this world. Lastly, it is uncertain what thy son and heir will prove, thou knowest not whether he will riotously wast, and prodigally consume all that thou hast left, which thou hast gotten with care and travel, or whether a stranger shall enter upon thy labors, and usurp that which is not his own. This is that reason which Solomon setteth down in his Ecclesiastes, *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.* In all these considerations, being compassed about, and hemmed in on every side with a world of uncertainties, it standeth us upon to follow the counsel and advise of Christ our Savior, who willeth us to make us friends with the riches of iniquity, that when we shall want, they may receive us into everlasting habitations, which is not spoken of goods evilly and wrongfully gotten, but of goods that may be wickedly and wrongfully taken from us by open force, or secret fraud; by violence of Robbers, by pretence of right, by color of Law, or by the power of the oppressor.

Thirdly, the poor cannot recompense and repay again that which is bestowed upon them, but God himself will restore it seven fold into thy bosom. We must herein imitate our Heavenly Father, who is ready to show mercy to all. This is the precept of Christ, *Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not away, &c. that ye may be the Children of your heavenly Father, for he maketh his Son to arise on the evil, and the good, & sendeth rain on the*

just and unjust. So likewise it behooveth us, to follow the example of Christ, *Who being rich, for our sakes became poor, that we thorough his poverty might be made rich.* This was the greatest grace and mercy that could be shown.

Fourthly, the poor have been in all ages, and shall always remain with us to the end of the world, to the end that their bowels may feel our refreshing, and their loins bless us, and pray for us. For, if it had pleased God, he could have made all men rich, and none to stand in need of the aid and assistance of others; but this difference in degrees among men, placing some above, and others beneath, making some rich, and others poor, setting some on high, and others low, serveth most for the advancement of his glory, and the maintaining of fellowship and friendship, of concord and unity one with another. If all were rich, and abounded in outward wealth, we should neither know God, nor our selves, nor our Brethren: we would be ready to say, *Who is the Lord?* We would be ready to disdain and despise our Brethren. If all were poor, and in necessity, there would be nothing but robbing, stealing, perjury, and all confusion. Wherefore, it is the ordinance of God, that some should be rich, and some poor, some wealthy, and others in want. He maketh some poor, to exercise their patience, and to try howe they will bear that burden, and behave themselves under the cross. He maketh others rich to exercise our mercy, to be objectes of our pity and compassion, and that we should never want some occasions to show forth the fruits of a lively faith. Seeing therefore, we shall receive a great advantage in this life, and be recompensed at the resurrection of the just; seeing we are uncertain what shall happen hereafter, and know not what evil may fall upon the earth: seeing we are commanded to follow the example of God the Father, who is good to all, and of Christ his son, who being rich, made himself poor, and of no reputation, and lastly, seeing we must always have the poor to exercise the works of mercy, and to relieve their misery; it followeth, that we are to distribute the outward blessings of this life to those that be in want and stand in need of comfort.

The Doctrine being thus cleared and confirmed, let us see the uses that arise from hence. First, this being so necessary a duty required of all men, it teacheth a difference between the Heathen and Christian religion. The Heathenish Religion never took order for the poor, nor required any compassion toward them; but the profession of Christ, chargeth this duty upon all true believers, and teacheth that judgment shall be without mercy, to those that show not mercy. When *Paul* departed from the rest of the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, they warned him only that he should remember the poor, which thing also he was diligent to do. But this was never remembered, nor regarded, nor intended among the Nations that were unbelievers. True it is, the Painims and Philosophers, have held and delivered many moral instructions, and spoken well of Justice, Temperance, Clemency, Prudence, and Friendship, of obedience toward parents, of Gentleness toward men, of liberality toward the poor, of love toward our Country, of Loialty toward Princes, and such other virtues. He that should deny their precepts in part to be well spoken, and in part to be well practiced, should do them great wrong. But the Christian Religion, as it hath all these in common with them, approving and allowing of them; yea, not disdainng to read their books and to learn such Doctrine of them as they have left in writing, so it hath lanced out a great deal deeper, and entered farther, and considered better of the precepts of good life, and the practice of good manners, then

the Heathen and Infidels have done. It was a rule of one of the wisest among the Gentiles, that we are not borne only for our selves, but that our birth is partly for our Country, partly for our Parents, and partly for our friends. A goodly and Golden sentence much admired, and greatly commended, and oftentimes alleged. But if it be compared with the Doctrine of Christ, and the duty of all Christians, it will be found maimed in his limbs, and defective in his parts, neither having a good beginning, nor making a perfect ending. For first of all, he prescribeth that our Charity should be employed toward our selves, which they have well marked, allowed, and followed, which say, that a well ordered Charity beginneth at himself. But this is far from the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles. Christ himself cōmandeth us to love our Neigh-as our selves, and *Paul* teacheth that Charity seeketh not her own things. Again, he maketh mention of our Country, of our parents, and of our friends, and rangeth them into good order, but what becometh of the poor? where or in what place of this notable sentence doth he place them? he speaketh not of them at all, let them shift as they can, they are quite forgotten, the Philosophers Charity stretcheth not to them; let them sink or swim, live or die, feed or starve, it was all one to him and to that Religion that he believed. And indeed a poor person in the time of the Painims had no other means to live and sustain himself and his family, then to sell himself as a slave to him that would buy him, if no man were found that would buy him, he perished for hunger, and died through want and famine. True it is, when they saw some men with their eyes languishing in misery, and heard them with their ears pitifully complaining in their extremity, they were sometimes touched with commiseration and compassion toward poor persons, but they never called or accounted this duty of humanity a virtue, but only an human passion or natural affection. Furthermore, they never built or erected any Hospitalls or houses of refreshing to lodge and nourish the poor, neither had the Princes their Almoners, to distribute their Alms as Christians have. When a Child was borne misshapen and evil-formed among them, it was killed; yea, it was not only allowed, but commanded, to stifle and strangle it, that it should not be brought up: a cruelty and inhumanity against Nature, and a despite and injury done to the Creator, who created them, and formed them in their Mothers womb. They made account of poor men as they did of Beasts; for alas, as those poor wretches came into the Market place, & set themselves to sale, as men do their Cattle, so such as bought them, standing there at offer & proffer, had full possession to do with them what they would, they had power to kill their bondmen at their pleasure, when, and how, and for what cause they thought good, and were not subject to give any account of their death, and for their so doing. They did ordinarily slay their slaves and Servants, when they became unprofitable unto them, and reserved such as were strong to labor, and able to do them service. Moreover, they set up sundry Theaters for Combates, to offer pleasure, and make pastime to the Beholders, and caused their poor Slaues to band themselves in two partes, one against another: then, they brought them forth, causing them furiously to set one upon another with naked swords, and with naked bodies, none of them being furnished with any defensive Armor; and the people assembled to see this most ungodly sport, laughed at it, and took no less pleasure to look upon it, then we take pleasure to see Cockes fight one with another.

Thus we see what the Religion of these Panims and Miscreants was, barbarous, beastly, bloody, defiled with all cruelty, contrary to all pity and piety, regarding the poor no more then brute beasts, and making no more account of them, but for their service they drew from them, and for the want they had of them. For among all the morral precepts which they taught and delivered, we never read that they spake anything, that they prescribed or persuaded anything touching the poor, nor that they ever established any good policy to help them. Notwithstanding, it agreeth well with natural reason, that everyone do good to his like. And it is a sound principle confessed among all, What thou wouldest not should be done to thee, do it not unto another: but we must do to another, as we would he should do unto us. But the Religion which is called the Christian religion goeth farther, and beginneth where nature leaveth us: It teacheth us to respect the poor as our own flesh, to regard them as the members of Christ, to account of them as of those that bear the Image of God, to relieve them as heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to remember that the Lord Jesus accepteth and rewardeth that which is done unto them, as done unto himself. So then, no man can deny, but all men must confess, that the Christian Religion is in all points more excellent and perfect, then all other Religions, which are of Men, and savor of the Flesh.

Secondly, seeing the works of mercy must be shown to the poor Saints, it reproveth those that are weary and backward in doing good, and have no care to relieve them that live in great poverty and penury. We see many that are bountiful, and (as I may say) prodigal and wasteful in pampering of themselves, and feasting the Rich, which have no need, and stand not in want, but are sparing and fast-handed towards the poor. These are like unto the Rich man, that was cladde in Purple, and fared deliciously every day, but would not yield unto poor *Lazarus*, the Crummes and Offals that came from his Table. This is a great vanity, to gain praise and commendation from the Worlde, to be great Cheere-makers to the rich, and to be miserable to the poor and needy. Indeed, it is no sin to entertain thy rich Friends, and to Feast thy Kins-folks, as *Abraham* did *Abimelech*; but the other to feed the poor, rather then to Feast the rich, ought to be more common, and is approved to be more commendable. But such as follow all riot, and live in all excess, are most hard-hearted toward the poor. For devilish prodigality and Christian liberality, cannot stand together. Such as wast their goods in riotous living, think it ill spent that is given to the poor, especially that which is bestowed upon the poor Saints. We saw this in the rich *Glutton*, who abounding in outward blessings, would communicate nothing to *Lazarus*, as full of wants as he was of sores. We have hereof a lively picture, set up to be seen in the *Sodomites*, who exceeding in excess of pride, and fullness of Bread, offended there-withal in contempt of the poor, and weakening the hand of the ndeeie. Behold the practice of all that spend and wast their wealth in drunkenness, surfeiting, and such like wickedness, it greeueth them more to give a penny to good uses, then to lavish and dash away a pound, in following and feeding their beastly humors; whereby God is dishonored, the poor are robbed, their bodies are disfigured, their good Name is impaired, and their souls are endangered forever.

There is no man, that delighteth in any sin, hut he hath pretence and excuse for his sin. The slothful servant that hid his Masters Talent and treasure committed unto him, alleged this for himself, *I knew that thou wast an hard man, which reapest where thou sowedst not, and*

gatherest where thou strowedst not. So the sluggard saith, *There is a Lyon without, I shall be slain in the street.* In like manner, such as are miserable and merciless toward the poor members of Christ, are ready to cover their shame, though it be with Fig-leaves; to daub up their hardness of heart, though it be with untempered mortar, and to paint their hypocrisy, though it be with deceitful and fading colors. Let us see what their Objections are, hindering their liberality, and shutting their hands, or rather their hearts from this compassion, so often commanded of God, and so much practiced of the godly. First, they say, they cannot do that which they desire, they fear that they themselves may want, if they should be liberal in giving. I answer, this proceedeth from the bitter root of infidelity. God hath promised to reward the liberal giver, but these men have not hearts to believe him, & to consider that he is true of his word. They think that by giving alms they shall be wasted, but the spirit of God pronounceth, that their wealth shall be increased. *He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord, & shall never lack.* The liberal person shall have plenty, and he that watereth shall have rain. There is that scattereth, and more is increased, but he that spareth more then is meet, surely cometh to poverty. Whatsoever is bestowed upon the poor, is accounted as given to Christ, who is a rich Rewarder of all that seek him. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *He hath dispersed abroad, and hath given to the poor, his benevolence remaineth forever; also, he that findeth seed to the sower, will minister likewise Bread for food, and multiply your seed, and increase the fruits of your benevolence.* The Wise man teacheth, that if our bread and our bountifulness were cast upon the waters, yet after many days we shall find them again. The Husbandman casteth his seed in the earth, and burieth it almost an whole year before he receiveth & reapeth the fruit of that he hath sown. Therefore, let not those that use to give relief to others, fear that they shall want the relief of others. Again, others plead and pretend that they are poor and needy themselves, they are rather constrained to receive, then to give; to take, then to distribute; to accept, then to bestow; for he that hath but little, cannot minister to others. But this cannot excuse the neglect of this duty. Let such know, that if there be a willing mind, *A Man is accepted according to that which he hath, and not according to that which he hath not.* The poor Widow mentioned in the Gospel, cast but one Mite into the Treasury, and yet that which she gave of her penury, was more respected of Christ, then all the abundance of the Rich. The Churches of *Macedonia*, were themselves in extreme necessity, and in great poverty, yet sent relief to others, above their ability. They that were converted to the Faith, after Christ's ascension, diminished their own substance, when they sold their possessions, and distributed the money among the poor, according to the necessities of everyone. Every man is bound to minister to his neighbor, and to supply his wants as God hath enabled him. Thirdly, others alleage for themselves, that they have a great charge and heavy burden lying upon their shoulders, they must provide for Wife and Children, they have Father and Mother, and Kindered to relieve, and if they should not sustain them, they are made worse then Infidels, and have denied the Faith. These shifts cannot serve our turn, nor justify us in our evil doing. True it is, these things must be done, but the other must not be left undone. The Church gathered by *Peters* preaching after Christ's ascending into Heaven, not only spent of their superfluity, but sold their patrimony to relieve the poor, yet no doubt they had Wife and Children of their own to provide for. So no doubt had the *Macedonians*, who not only according to their power, but also beyond their power, were willing to do others good.

We must commit our Children unto him that hath promised to be a Father unto them. He hath promised, that he will not leave us, nor forsake us, but be our deliverer, *So that we shall not fear what Man can do unto us.* We have a full assurance of his word, *That the righteous shall not be forsaken, nor his seed beg their Bread.*

Such therefore, as set their hearts to prepare and provide much for their posterity, do withdraw themselves commonly from helping the poor, and by this means do oftentimes bring a curse upon their own goods, so that some of their Children, or of their Children's Children riotously wast them, & make havoc of all most vnthriftilly. Fourthly, some there are, that hang back, and will give no Alms, because the poor are lewd and wicked, they are Idle and abuse their alms, they have bad tongues, and are unthankful persons towards such as relieve them. I answer, we must in our giving respect more the Commandment of God, then the persons of men: and though it fall out, that their tongues curse us, yet if we succor them in their necessity, the loins of the poor shall bless us, and we shall thereby heap Coals of fire upon their head, and make them ashamed of their evil. We are likewise commanded to love our Neighbor, it is not mentioned in the gospel, that we should not love him except he be godly. We are commanded to set before us the example of God, *Who maketh the Sun to shine, & rain to fall upon the just and unjust, upon the godly and the ungodly, that so we may be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect.*

Again, the Apostle *Paul* having taught, that idle persons which will not labor should not eat, addeth one thing further to be practiced, *That we should not be weary of well-doing.* Let us not therefore so much look upon the person of the men, as consider the greatness of their want: Let us not look for a recompense from them, but from him that hath promised unto us, that a Cup of cold Water shall be respected, and rewarded by him. This is it which *Solomon* meaneth, Eccles. 11, 3. when he saith, *If the Clowdes be full, they will pour forth Rain upon the Earth, and if the Tree do fall towards the South, or towardet the North, in the place that the Tree falleth, there it shall be.* In this place, the Wiseman persuadeth the Church to liberality toward the poor; the Clowds, when they are full of water, do not keep it to themselves, but pour it on the earth that gapeth for the rain, as if it were a thirst, and openeth his mouth to be refreshed; so when men are laden with wealth, they are bound to cherish their brethren, as it were pined away with hunger & third. Then he preventeth that objection which Covetous men make, to stay their hands from showing mercy, and to shut up their compassion from the needy, because they are wicked and unworthy of any favor, that they will abuse it to Whoredom, to Drunkenness, and to excess. For, he telleth them of the profit and reward, that they shall receive, because as the Tree, howsoever it falleth, on the right hand, or on the left, on the North, or on the South, it skilleth not, seeing it becometh the owners, and it falleth to him; so the bountifulness of good men, whether it be given to the worthy or unworthy, to the faithful or unfaithful, shall turn to his benefit that bestowed it. To conclude, every Christian man, must have the Spirit of Christ, if he be his; he that hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. But Christ is merciful, and therefore we must be merciful.

Lastly, seeing it belongeth to those that have the goods of this world, out of their plenty to supply the wants of the poor, it belongeth unto us to have an earnest care and diligence to provide for the poor, especially, the poor Saints. This duty and diligence was in the Apostle *Paul*, as it is expressed, *Rom. 15.* where it is said, *That he Ministred to the Saints at Jerusalem, and withal, that he gave himself no rest in this, until he had sealed this fruit unto them;* that is, till he saw it done and effected, according to his desire. It is not enough for us, to give good words, or to utter from our mouths good wishes, but we must in our several places, and particular callings, do our utmost endeavor, that relief may even be sealed to our poor. It is not enough to give to those that ask and crave the fruit of our liberality, but we must learn to enquire of the wants of the Saints, and to search what is their condition. It belongeth unto us, not only to have ears prepared to hear, but to have mouths opened, to ask of the welfare of those that are in necessity. We would desire to be so dealt with all our selves; and therefore let us be so minded toward our Brethren. This we see in *Abraham*, he stayed not till those strangers came into his house, till they desired to be received & have lodging, but he went out of his tent of his own accord, to see whom he could espy, that he might bring them to his house. So did *Lot*, so dealt all the Fathers. Thus did *Nehemiah*, when he saw some of his brethren that were come from *Ierusalem*, he asked them concerning the state of the Church, and of the residue of the Captivity. We must not always wait, till we be entreated and urged to show mercy, but offer it our selves, to testify the willingness of our hearts. We must not only readily give our relief when the poor require it, but go unto them, search them out, and call for them, whether they ask our Alms or not, whether they require our relief or not. As Christ hath loved us, so let us love one another. Now, he loved us being his enemies, when we never asked remission of our sins, for he was found of them that sought him not, and shown mercy to them that desired it not, so ought we also to deal with our Brethren, not tarrying till they crave, but offering our Compassion. There have ever been poor, that make not their wants openly known, and are so dejected and rejected of many, that they are ashamed to show their necessity. This duty requiring our earnest care, to seek after, and see to the wants of our poor Brethren, reproveth three sorts of men. First, such as help them only in words, but not in deeds; with their mouth, not with their hands; in outward show, not by any true fruit of Charity. Such men doth the Apostle *James* note in his Epistle, who when they see a poor man, or a poor Woman, which wanteth bread to eat, and clothes to put on, they say unto him; *God help thee (poor man) and succor thee, and send thee relief, it is great pity thou art no better provided for.* These are destitute of a true Faith, which standeth not in word only: and the poor, notwithstanding all these fair Words, and goodly promises, may starve for cold, and die for thirst, and perish for Famine, if they should find no better comfort, and if every man should serve them after this sort. It is a very true saying of the Wise *Solomon*, *A Man that boasteth of great liberality, is like Clouds and Wind without Rain.* So the Apostle *John* saith, *My little Children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue only, but in deed, and in truth.* It is not enough for a man to say, he will help and succor his Neighbor, unless he help him indeed.

Secondly, it reproveth those that do not rightly consider what poor the Apostle meaneth, and setteth before us as objects of our compassion. He doth not understand the idle Begger,

or sturdy Rogue, or vagrant Companion, who not applying himself in any lawful calling, maketh a profession of beggary, and liveth altogether upon the spoil of other men's goods, the profit of other men's labor, and the sweat of other men's brows. Neither doth he mean such manner of persons, as are common and continually haunters of Ale-houses, Vnthrifths, Spend-als, Carders, Dicers, Drunkards, which spend all the Weeke in going from one tippling place to another, having Wives and Children at home, that want those things which they wast, and when they come unto them, they rail and rage as mad men, against those they should relieve. These are excluded and wiped out of the roll and Register of the poor Saints spoken of in this place, being worse then Infidels, and denying the Faith. The Turks and Sarazens shall rise up in judgment against this wretched generation, and condemn them. But the Apostle pointeth out such unto us, to be holpen and comforted, as albeit it hath pleased God not to bestow so great a portion of worldly blessings upon them, as upon others, as the Artificer, the Handy-crafts man, and Day-Labourer, yet labor diligently in their Callings, and follow their Trades with all carefulness to relieve them-selves, and to maintain their Families, as those that profess the fear of God, and the Faith of Christ. Under this rank, we may range poor Widdowes and Fatherless Children, all aged and impotent persons, such as are lame and diseased, that would work, but cannot; that desire to labor, but are not able. It is the rule of the Apostle, that ought to take place in all Churches, *That such as will not take pains, must not eat.* All those, that through frailty of Child-hood, or weakness of Olde age, or impotency of limbs, or greeuousnesse of sickness, or thorough greatness of their charge, laboring according to the utmost of their strength, yet are not able to maintain themselves, must have their wants supplied willingly and cheerfully; not grudgingly and sparingly, showing our selves to have a feeling of their necessities.

Thirdly, it reproveth such as never open their mouths to know the estate of the poor Sain•s, or to enquire how they fare: Alas, how should they offer their help of their own accord, and open the bowels of pity before they be entreated, that will depart from nothing, but urged and constrained by force of Law, or taxation of others? Or how should they extend their compassion to the poor that are absent, who are like unto the rich man that despised *Lazarus* lying at his gate, and would not give him the crumbs that fell from his table? It is noted to the great commendation of *David*, that after the death of *Saul*, he sought not revenge upon his issue and posterity, but did good to his children's children, & said; *Is there any left of the house of Saul, that I may show mercy for Jonathan's sake?* So ought we to seek out the servants of God, and to find out the poor, and to enquire after the distressed Saints, and say; *Is there any of the poor yet left, to whom we may show mercy for the Lord's sake?* For they represent the person of Christ: when they come unto us; Christ himself cometh unto us; and when they ask of us, it is Christ that asketh of us, and saith; *I am hungry, I am thirsty, I am naked, I am harbourlesse;* so that whatsoever we would do to Christ if he were with us, the same must we do to them that are among us.

8Wherefore, although I have great liberty in Christ to command thee that which is thy duty.

9Yet for loves sake, I rather beseech thee, being such a one, even Paul an Old man; yea now a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

IN the words going before, we have heard the preface or entrance of this Epistle, consisting partly in the Title of it, and partly in certain Prayers used by the Apostle: Now we are to proceed to the rest of the Epistle, wherein we must observe two points; First, the chief matter is handled; Secondly, the whole matter is concluded. The chief matter, is touching *Onesimus*, or himself. The first, concerning *Onesimus*, is handled from the eight verse, to the 22. verse. The latter touching himself, is expressed in the 22. Verse, wherein he willeth to prepare lodging for him, hoping by their Prayers to be delivered out of prison. The former point is set down in this short speech or sentence, *I Paul pray thet to receive Onesimus*: The parts of which sentence are not barely propounded, but amplified; and then, the whole is proved & confirmed. We are therein to consider three partes; First, the entreating and praying of *Philemon*; Secondly, the person praying and entreating; Thirdly, the person for whom he prayeth and entreateth. His praying of *Philemon*, is declared by a diverse reason, *Although I have great liberty to command thee, yet I pray thee and beseech thee*. The person praying and beseeching, is *Paul*, who is described generally, being such a one, and then particularly by his old age, and by his bonds. Touching the person, for whom he beggeth and beseecheth, we shall see afterward, Verse 10.

This is to be observed touching the order of the words. Now, let us consider the interpretation of them. First, he speaketh of his liberty in Christ, that is; as an Apostle and Minister of Christ, whose Messenger or Ambassador he is; whereby he insinuateth and signifieth, that this power is not his own, or of himself, but is Christ's; it is not the servants, but the Lord's; it is not man's, or the Ministers, but God's. For even at Magistrates ordained and sent forth by the Prince, can do nothing in their own name, but in the Kings name; so Ministers called of God, and fitted to the office whereunto they are called, must teach, command, reprove, and exhort, not in their own name, but in the name of Christ their Lord and Master. He addeth, *That for loves sake he entreateth him*. Love, in this place, may be referred either to *Philemon*, or to *Paul*, seeing the Apostle leaveth it at large, and restraineth it not either to his love, or to his own. If it be referred to *Philemon*, it carrieth this sense, I do entreat thee, and not command thee, for thy compassion and loves sake, which I have before commended in thee, and thou so diligently and devoutly showest unto the Saints. But I do not take this to be the natural meaning of the words, so that we are to understand them rather of *Paul's* love toward *Philemon*, that he so tendered and loved him, as that he had rather deal with him in kindness, and by intreatance, then roughly and severely. Lastly, he saith, *Paul, an Old man, and now a prisoner of Christ*. In these words, is included great force to move *Philemon*: We must understand the first Words of his Age, not of his Office; of his years, not of his Ministry; and he calleth himself a prisoner of Christ, that is; for Christ's sake, and the preaching of his Gospel.

So then, according to this Interpretation, these words are thus much in effect, as if he had said; Seeing I hear everywhere of thy fervent Love, and exceeding tender Compassion thou

bearest to the poor Saints, though I may many ways command thee in things that are right and equal, as in that I am an Apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ, in that I am stricken in Age, ready to leave this life, and in that I am now a Captive and Prisoner, for the cause of Christ and his Gospel, yet the love and tender affection I bear unto thee, do move me rather to beseech and to entreat thee.

Now let us see what may be observed out of these words. First of all, the Apostle would not do that which he might do, and was lawful for him to do, which may teach the Minister and all men sometimes to be content to depart from their right, as *Abraham* did toward *Lot*, when a strife arose between them, and as *Paul* did oftentimes, according as himself testifieth in his Epistles. Which condemneth those that stand strictly upon their right, and consider what is lawful but forget what is fit and expedient. For in things that are indifferent we are not by and by allowed to do that which is lawful, nor to use our power, but must suffer all things, that the Gospel of Christ be not hindered. Likewise, the Apostle would not sometimes take any wages of the Church, but preached freely and was not chargeable to any, because he would not give occasion of speaking evil against the Gospel. Secondly, the Apostle publisheth his liberty to command, but it is only in Christ whose Ministers he and we are, and not our own. Thus he calleth himself an Apostle, not by man, nor by the will of man, but of Christ. This is the difference between a civil Magistrate, and an Ecclesiastical Minister. The civil Magistrate may give charge and send out commandments in his own name, but the Minister must command in his Masters name, in as much as Christ hath not imparted the power, nor communicated the right which he hath over men's consciences unto any mortal man, no not to the Angels in Heaven. Wherefore, whatsoever we speak or do, we must do all in his name that hath sent us. Thirdly, mark how far his authority stretcheth and extendeth, he can require and exact no more then that which is right and equal and their duty to do. It is no absolute or immoderate power, but limited within these bounds, that he go not beyond them. This is required of all the Ministers of the word, they are to teach that which is right, and he people are bound no farther to hear them. Fourthly, he declareth why he yielded up a part of his right and did not prosecute it to the full, for love sake, it was for Charity sake that he turned his power into prayer. All indifferent things must be measured by this rule. Charity will cause a man willingly to give place where it is in the heart, but where it is not, he will not regard to use his liberty with offense, nay to the destruction of his brother. 5 Lastly, *Paul* to move *Philemon* propoundeth his bands and afflictions, to teach that no man ought to grieve at the afflictions of the Church. We ought to be so far from being ashamed of the Cross in our selves, and from being offended at the Cross in others, that rather we are to know, it commendeth the Ministry, and serveth greatly to edification. For by this title he commendeth himself, and purchaseth authority unto his Ministry, whereby he signifieth not only that he is an Apostle, but somewhat more; an Apostle, a prisoner; that is, adorned with the marks and tokens of Apostolical honor, seeing the badges of the Apostleship are such bands as he suffered for Christ's sake. So then, a Minister afflicted, is more then a Minister: a Christian persecuted, is more then a Christian: and every faithful man and woman, the more they are tried by suffering for the Gospel, the more they are to be honored and the better to be esteemed in the Church.

[*I have great liberty in Christ, to command thee.*]

The Apostle having to deal with *Philemon*, whom he had won by his Ministry to the Gospel, and whom he had authority to command in the Lord; saith, that he might be bold to urge and press him to this duty in regard of the Office of Apostleship, of the greatness of his age, and of the sufferings of bonds and imprisonment. Heereby we learn, that the Pastor by his Office hath power and authority to require and to command men as the Minister of Christ to do their duties. The Teachers of the Church have power by their calling and placethat they are employed in, to be bold with their people, they have an interest in them, to urge them to good things. We see then, that the Ministry is an office of power, and the Ministers must have boldness in the discharge of their duty, and in the execution of their calling. This we see in the practice of the Prophets of God, and of the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

When *Elijah* was charged by *Ahab* to be a troubler of Israel, he answered with freedom of speech, and boldness of spirit, and vehemency of zeal, *I have not troubled Israel, but thou, and thy Fathers house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.* The like we see in *Jonah*, he was not afraid when he came to *Nineveh*, to cry out against the Citty and the Inhabitants thereof, *That except they repented; within forty days they should be destroyed.*

This Doctrine among other places hath most plentiful confirmation out of the prophesy of *Jeremiah*, whether we consider the commandment of God, or the practice of the Prophet. Heerunto cometh that which the lord speaketh to him, *Behold, this day I set thee over the Nations, and over the kingdoms, to pluck up, and to root out, to destroy and throw down, to build and to plant.* When *Pashur* had smitten him, and put him in the stocks, the Prophet said unto him, *Thus saith the Lord, behold, I will make thee to be a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends, and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it, &c.* This authority the Apostle *Paul* doth often claim & challenge unto himself over the people, and he showeth what power he had by reason of his Ministry. When he giveth sundry instructions to diverse degrees among the *Corinthians*, he saith, *Unto the unmarried I command, not I, but the Lord.* And in another place, *Seeing then that we have such trust, we use great boldness of speech.* It is noted by the Evangelist, that Christ taught as one having authority, and not as the Scribes, that is; boldly, not fearfully; zealously, not coldly; with great power, not as one that telleth a dream. The Apostle writing to *Timothy*, doth not only gently entreat him, but straightly charge him before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels, that he observe those things, without preferring one to another, and do nothing partially. And in the Chapter. following, *I charge thee in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Jesus Christ, which under Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that thou keep this commandment without spot, and unrebukable until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Likewise, in the latter Epistle, *I charge thee before God, and before the Lord Jesus Christ, which shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing, and in his kingdom, preach the word, be instant in season, and out of season, improve, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and Doctrine.* All these places of Scripture laid together, comparing the Commandments, together with the examples of the Prophets of Christ, and of the Apostles, do teach us by the Ordinance of God, power, and Authority are always joined to the Pastors Office, and never to be severed and divided from it.

Let us see what are the Reasons. First, if we consider the names that are given unto them, and the honorable Titles whereby they are called, we shall be moved to confess their calling to be accompanied with power under Christ. They are Fathers in Christ, but Parents may be bold with their children. They are Pastors and Shepherds, but the Shepherd is to direct & order the Sheep of his pasture. They are Ambassadors, but the Ambassador is not sent without authority from him that sendeth him. They are Captains of the Lord's host, but the Captain hath rule and government over those that are under his charge and regiment. If then the true Ministers of Christ be Fathers, Shepherds, Ambassadors, and Captains under Christ the great shepherd of the Sheep, their Office cannot be without jurisdiction and authority over the people of God committed to their charge.

Secondly, if we consider the fruits and effects that are ascribed in the word to the Ministers of the word, we shall see that their Ministry is joined with authority. They are the means and instruments to bring us to the knowledge of Christ, to the bosom of the Church, and to the Kingdom of Heaven. Their Office is to convert sinners, and to save souls. When Christ ascended up into Heaven, he appointed Pastors and Teachers in his Church for the repairing of the Saints; for the work of the Ministry, and for the edification of the body of Christ, till we all meet together (in the unity of faith and that acknowledging of the son of God) unto a perfect man, and unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ. So the Apostle exhorteth *Timothy* to take heed to himself, to exercise his gifts, to give attendance to Reading, to be diligent in exhortation, and to continue in delivering sound Doctrine, because in doing these things he should save both himself and them that hear him. God hath put into them and their mouths the word of reconciliation, so that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the preaching of the word of God, and therefore the Ministers are said to save their own souls, and the souls of others.

Thirdly, there is a co•peration of God and the Ministers Office together, and an admirable sympathy between them. If then God and the Minister do work together, he may lawfully enjoin men to do their duties. This is it which the Apostle teacheth, *We are together God's laborers*, and in another place, *We therefore as workers together, beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain*, where to comfort the Ministers against the contempt of the world, he declareth, that it pleaseth God to use their Ministry to work faith in whom he will. True it is, the Ministers are not able to give or work faith in the hearers, either in whole or in part, it is God only that giveth increase and a blessing upon his own means, but they are the instruments which he employeth. He commandeth the Ministers to preach, and he giveth a blessing to their preaching. The Minister laboreth on the heart and conscience God reformeth it, and giveth the grace of repentance. The Minister delivereth the Doctrine of faith, God giveth the gift of faith. The Minister teacheth righteousness and holiness of life, God saith; be it so, he shall be righteous and holy. The Minister pronounceth mercy to the penitent, God bestoweth mercy and forgiveness of sins upon him. Thus God ratifieth their word, and after a sort tieth his blessing unto it. Seeing rherefore, that the Ministers of the word have many titles of power and jurisdiction given unto them, seeing they are the means and instruments appointed to bring us to salvation, and Lastly, seeing they work with God

and as it were help him in bringing men to faith and eternal life; we may conclude, that their Office is joined with power and authority.

Let us see what are the uses of this Doctrine. First, touching the Office it self, we gather, that it is a worthy calling, an honorable Office, an excellent Function, how base and mean soever it be esteemed among men of this world. This the Apostle setteth down writing to *Timothy*, *If a man desire the Office of a Bishop, that is, a Minister of the Gospel, he desireth a worthy work, not only a work, but a worthy work.* Therefore this Office, is not only a lawful calling; but a worthy calling. It is hard to discharge it aright, for who is sufficient for these things? but those things that are hard, are excellent. The Minister beareth the person of Christ in preaching the word and administering the Sacraments. We heard before that in furthering and finishing the salvation of men, God worketh with them. It is a great and glorious account which God maketh of his word in the mouth of his Ministers, when it is truly preached and rightly applied, he giveth grace by it, and ordinarily worketh not salvation without it. This is no small honor and estimation to the Ministers of God, and to the Ministry of his word, that he admitteth them as joint-workers, and as it were fellow-laborers with him, he worketh when they work, he exhorteth when they exhort, he reproveth when they reprove, he teacheth when they teach. This the Prophet teacheth to be the Ministers commission given him of God, when he hath preached righteousness to man, God will have mercy on him, and will say to the Minister, Deliver him that he go not down into the pit, for I have received reconciliation. This the Apostle saith, *Now then are we Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you through us, we pray you in Christ's stead that ye be reconciled to God.* This our Savior Christ also himself speaketh, and avoucheth, in the person of *Peter*, *I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* Whereby he teacheth, that the Ministers are the Porters of Heaven, they have the Keys committed unto them, they are appointed to bring the Children of God into the sheepfold of Christ. They shut the Kingdom of Heaven against all unbelievers, by preaching, that they shall not enter, but be cast into utter darkness and be tormented in Hell. They open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers and penitent persons, by preaching that they shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven and enjoy eternal life. To this end and purpose Christ speaketh to his Apostles after his ascension, *Whose sins soever ye remit, they are remitted, and whose sins ye retain they are retained.* True it is, God only forgiveth sins properly, but he hath appointed his Ministers to preach, publish, and to witness to their consciences that repent and believe the Gospel, that all their sins are forgiven. And on the other side to preach and declare that such as will not believe and repent, shall never have their sins forgiven them. For, how the Ministers bind and loose, shut and open, forgive and retain, the Prophet *Isaiah* showeth, when he saith, Chapter 44. *I will destroy the Tokens of the Sooth-sayers, and will make them that conjecture, Fools: and turn the Wisemen backward, and make their knowledge foolishness; but he confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the Counsel of his Messengers.* Whereby we see, that God doth bind and loose, forgive and retain with him, when he confirmeth their word, and performeth their Counsel. This is the Dignity of the Ministry, which serveth to reprove the unthankfull world, and

ignorant people, that make no reckoning or account of this ordinance, which is the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

First, it condemneth those that think the Ministers proud and presumptuous, and accuse them as saucie and malapart, when they command us from the Lord, and check us for our sins. It is their duty, not only to teach and admonish, to exhort, and to comfort, but to convince and reprove, to threaten, and to denounce Judgments from God, against the obstinate and unrepentant. When they are stirred up with boldness and courage to tell the people of their sins, we must know they do that which they may do, & speak no more then they ought to speak: they must not hold their peace, unless they would dishonor their Lord that sent them, and bring judgment upon their own heads. An Ambassador, if he should not use the name and authority of his Prince, should abuse his Prince, & make himself liable to grievous punishment. So the Ambassadors & Lieutenants of Jesus Christ, if they should not command and charge us (his subjects) in the name of our Lord & Master, they should abuse and abase him that put them in the office, and sent them to their charge. Therefore the Apostle saith, *Let a man so think of us, as of the ministers of Christ, & disposers of the secrets of God, & as for the rest, it is required of the disposers, that every man be found faithful.* Zachariah reproveth Joash & his princes for their Idolatry, *they thought him to be a mad and malapart fellow, & put him to death.* So when Jeremiah was sent to prophesy against the Temple, and the Citty, and to exhort them to amend their wages and their works, they could not bear his words, but threatened to kill him. Secondly, it reproveth those that account the Ministers, their Vassals and Slaues, whereas the case of a Pastor is not to be made an underling or a block for everyone to insult & tread upon, as the wicked Worldlings use them. This is the measure indeed that is met unto us, this is the recompense that is received by us, and this is the complaint that the Apostle maketh, *I think that God hath set forth us, the last Apostles, as men appointed to death, for we are made a gazing stock unto the world, and to the Angels, and to men; unto this hour we both hunger and thirst, & are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place.* Whereas they should be regarded as the Ambassadors of God, and respected as his Stewards set over the house of God to dispense the mysteries of life and salvation. True it is, great contempt lieth upon our calling to the Ministry, even as much reproach is laid upon the profession of Christ in sincerity. The Prophet declareth that his adversaries rejoiced at his calamity, and hated him wrongfully, because he followed goodness, so do the Ministers of the Gospel suffer much hatred and contempt by wicked and profane men, because they discover their Hypocrisy and open their iniquity; yea, the word of God in their mouths is many times as a fretting Corasiue applied to their consciences, that they cannot welter and wallow so secretly and securely in their sins, as they would and as they wanted to do. When they are resolute and resolved to continue in sin, and think to rest and sleep quietly therein, as in a bed of ease, the word of God doth often raise them up, and rouse them out of their senseless security, and summoneth them to the bar of God's judgment. This is it that troubleth their peace and their patience, this maketh them to spurn against their persons and their calling, this causeth them to watch them narrowly, and to hunt after advantages through their infirmities, that thereby they may disgrace them: this draweth them to cast all contempt and dishonor upon their Office, that so their disorders and profaneness may not

be espied. For how should they abide the Ministers of the word, that hate the word of God? Or how should they suffer the Ambassadors, that cannot endure the Ambassage and message that they bring? But we must arm our selves against the scorn and contempt of the world, which by wicked men is cast as mire and dirt in our faces, considering that we are the sweet savor of God as well in them that perish, as in them that are saved. Thirdly, the high excellency of this calling, reproveth those that account the Office to base and low for them and for their Children. Many there are that live by the Gospel, that are ashamed to preach the Gospel. They live by the Altar, and yet are ashamed to serve at the Alter. They can be content to have the Milk and to cloth themselves with the wool of the sheep, and yet disdain to feed the sheep. These are they that love the chief places at feasts, and to have the chief seats in the assemblies, and greetings in the Markets, and to be called of men *Rabbi, Rabbi*. Ambition and vain glory have tied up their tongues, and made them cleave to the roof of their mouths. Covetousness and idleness have choked them and stopped the passage of their voice. Pride in themselves and contempt of others, have sowed up their lips and made them cast the care of the flock upon their substitutes, who many times are as careless as their Masters, and in the mean season between them both, the sheep of Christ bought with his precious blood, go to wrack and run to ruin. What a shame is it, that any man should be raised up and advanced merely by the Gospel, and yet account the preaching of the Gospel a reproach to their high dignity? The son of God himself refused not to serve in this calling, he went about all Cities and Towns teaching in their Synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. If then Christ Jesus the son of God took pains in this calling, what son of the earth shall disdain to discharge this office that he hath undertaken, and by which he is maintained. Again, seeing the calling is so excellent, why should any be ashamed to consecrate their sons to God, in the service of the Ministry, thereby to gain souls to him and to his kingdom?

Fourthly, if it be a calling of such dignity, it reproveth those that run before they be sent, and wait not a lawful calling from God, that they discharge it afterward with peace of heart, and comfort of Conscience? We see many young men make more hast then good speed in entering into the Ministry, who for the most part want that judgment, staydnesse, experience, gravity, & moderation that is meet to be in men of that profession. Hence it is, that they are called by the name of Elders in the Scripture. The Apostle thought it necessary to give this charge to *Timothy*, a young man (though he were of rare hope, and of excellent gifts) *To fly the lusts of youth, and to follow after righteousness, Faith, Love, and peace, with all them that call on the Lord with a pure heart*. And in another place he saith, *Let no man despise thy youth, but be unto them that believe an ensample, in word, in conversation, in Love, in Spirit, in Faith, in Pureness*. If he had this need of instruction, howe much more others?

Fifthly, it reproveth those, that are so hand-fasted, that they repine at their maintenance that labor among them. How many places and Parishes are there, that regard not how they be taught; or whether they be taught or not, so they may be well dealt withal in their Tithes; that is, if they might pay little or nothing to maintain their Minister? There is grown in many congregations this agreement and bargain, between the Pastor and the people, if he will spare them in temporal things, they regard not how he deal with them in spiritual

things. If they may pay little, they are content he shall preach little; If they may enjoy their Tithes at a low rate, they are well pleased, that he take his ease, and teach them seldom. But albeit, he preach in season, and out of season, and do his duty with all diligence, yet they murmur and repine at his allowaunce, and think everything too much, that is bestowed that way.

Lastly, it reproveth such as regard not the censures of the Church, inflicted upon evil doers. The censures of the Church are made as a scar-Crow, and esteemed of many as a mock. But if that power and authority were regarded in the Ministers hand, that the word of God alloweth and appointeth, whereby he is authorized to exercise spiritual jurisdiction in Church-matters, not only to preach, but to punish; not only to teach, but to correct; not only to instruct, but to excommunicate; then would the Office be magnified, then would the Ministry be esteemed according to the institution of them. Our Savior giving order and direction to inform the Governors of the Church, when scandals and offenses arose among them, addeth; *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* We see God promiseth to ratify the sentence pronounced and denounced in his name. The abridgement of this power is the contempt of the men, and of their Ministry, and the curbing & cutting short of their authority, doth open a gappe to all contumely and reproach of their persons and office. If a Magistrate should prescribe and ordain that Law which is wholesome and profitable to the Common-wealth, and have no power at all to punish the Malefactors and misdoers that transgress, who is it that would regard the Commandment? If a School-master had authority only to rule and to teach, but were restrained to take up the rod to correct and chastise the obstinate & sluggard, what Scholar would hearken or give ear to his teaching? In like manner, so long as the Minister is allowed only to speak the word, or to threaten, but stinted that he shall go no farther, his Ministry will be little regarded; as if a Master should tell some of his Scholars of their shrewde tricks, but were not licensed to punnish their evil doing. God hath joined authority to the Pastors office, & put into his hand the discipline of the Church, and the Ministers of God, have exercised & executed the same according to his ordinance. Hence it is, that the Apostle reprovng an heinous offense amongst the *Corinthians*, and showing the use of Ecclesiastical correction, saith, *What will ye? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and in the spirit of meekness?*

Secondly, seeing boldness to command under Christ, belongeth to the office of the Minister; it teacheth us, and putteth us in mind of many good duties; as first, to ask this gift of God, and crave of him to indue us with the zeal of his glory, and other graces of his spirit, that we may speak the word boldly, as we ought to speak. We see an example hereof in the Apostles, when they heard the threatenings of the enemies of the Gospel, *They lift up their voices to God, with one accord, and said, O Lord, thou art the God, which hast made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants with all boldness to speak thy word.* So, when the chief Priests said, *Did not we straightly command you, that ye should not teach in his name? And behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with yoar Doctrine, and ye would bring this man's blood upon us.* Then Peter and the Apostles answered, *We ought rather to obey God then mē.* Many men are endued with great gifts of learning and knowledge, but they

want the tongue of the Learned to minister a word in season, they want zeal and utterance to deliver the word of God to the people. Let everyone therefore, seek to fit and furnish himself to this calling, and in Christ Jesus be bold to do this duty. This the Prophet saith, *Crie allowed, spare not, lift up thy voice like a Trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.*

This reproveth those that have the word in respect of persons, who dare not do their duties, and are afraid of men's faces. They would be counted the Ambassadors of God, but they are afraid to do their Masters message. Let such learn of *John the Baptist*, who shrunk not back, but was bold to tell *Herod*, that it was not lawful for him to take his Brothers Wife. We must not be Dastards and faint-hearted soldiers, to fight the Lord's battles, but first be sure, we have a good warrant out of the word, and then go boldly into the field, and fear not to look the enemy in the face. True it is, if we have not our Commission signed and sealed unto us, we have just cause to fear; we speak in our own names, and not in the name of God: we send our selves, we are not sent of him; We are our own Messengers, to do our own Message, not the Ambassadors of the eternal God. But when he hath put his word in our mouths, we must go to those that he hath sent us, and whatsoever he commandeth us, that we must speak. So, when God had stretched out his hand, and touched the mouth of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, he said; *Bee not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee, to deliver thee, saith the Lord.* Thus he speaketh to *Ezekiel*, *I have made thy Face strong against their Faces, and thy Fore-head hard against their Fore-heads, I have made thy Fore-head as the Adamant, and harder then the Flint: Fear them not therefore, neither be affrayde at their looks; for they are a Rebellious house.*

Secondly, it teacheth them not to loose their Authority, and so to shame their Calling, and their Mayster that hath put them in that Calling, bringing them-selves and their Ministry, under the subjection and slavery of others. The Apostle by all means seeketh to magnifye his Ministry, and to beautify his Calling. Hence he saith, *Am not I an Apostle, am not I free?* This reproveth those that serve the lusts and pleasure of others, and dare do nothing to displease such as are in high place. Thus *Aaron* in the absence of *Moses* offended, who was at the commandment of the people, when they said unto him, *Make us God's to go before us, he received their golden earrings, and fashioned it with the grauing tool, and made of it a Molten Calf.* The like we see in *Uriah* the Priest, when *Ahaz* (who did not uprightly in the sight of the Lord, but walked in the way of the Kings of *Israel*) saw the Altar that was at *Damascus*, he sent unto him the pattern of the Altar, and the fashion of it, and all the Workemanship thereof, and he made an Altar in all points, like to that which the King had sent from *Damascus*. This departing from the Commandment of God, to please the humor or honor of mighty men, must be far from us. We have a plain way set before us, we ought to walk in it, we must not decline either to the right hand, or to the left hand. We must not make merchandise of the word of God, but deal faithfully with God and his people. The Prophet *Micah* complaineth of such Prophets in his time, as flattered the people in their sins, *And Prophesied unto them of Wine and of strong drink, and in such Prophets the people delighted.* The Lord chargeth *Jeremiah*, *to truss up his loins, to arise, and to speak to the Children of Israel all that he commanded him, not to be afraid of their faces, lest he destroy him before them.* Let us beware of such smooth tongues, that flatter with their lips, and bring us in danger of destruction. *Solomon* teacheth us, *That a man*

which flattereth his Neighbour, spreadeth a Net for his steppes; declaring thereby, that as a Birde which is taken in the Net, is in danger of death; so they which believe flatterers, fall into great perilles of Soul, of Body, of Goods, of good name, of life.

Thirdly, it teacheth the Ministers, to take heed they abuse not their Authority, and turn it into tyranny, but employ it unto edification, not to the destruction of the Church, or any member thereof. This the Apostle plainly teacheth concerning himself, *Though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should have no shame.* And in another place, *We have not Dominion over your faith, but we are helpers of your joy, for by Faith ye stand.* We must remember and consider that we are under Christ: we are his Substitutes and Lieutenants. He is the chief Shepherd of the Sheep. We must not bear our selves as Lord's over his heritage, but as ensamples to the flock. Christ himself testifieth, that he was among them as one that served: *For the son of man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life for the ransom of many.* Let us have the same mind in us, that was in christ Jesus; let us behave our selves as Stewards, not as Lord's; as Officers, not as Princes; as Ministers, not as Usurpers; as Stewards, not as Masters of the house.

Lastly, it serveth for instruction of the people, that they despise not the Ministry of the word, but always ready to hear it with reverence. For wheresoever there is authority in the speaker, there should be fear and reverence in the hearer. They are Ambassadors sent, not from Man, but from God; they speak not in their own names, but in the name of God; they publish not their own Dreams or devises, but the Doctrine of God, and therefore ought reverently and obediently to be regarded. Thus the Prophet teacheth us to reason, *The people must hear the Law at his Mouth, for he is the Messenger of the Lerd of Hosts.* True it is, they are men that bring it, but they are Messengers sent of GOD, they are subject to the same passions that we are, but God hath put his word in their hearts, and in their mouths: and therefore, both they and it must be received with all reverence, and entertained with the inward obedience of the soul. Hence it is that our Savior Christ saith, *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that heareth you, heareth him that sent me.* The Prophet teacheth, that their feet are beautiful that bring glad tidings of peace, and bring glad tydings of good things. They are said to be worthy of double honor, and to teach the way of salvation. If a man had lost a precious Jewel, and Rich Pearl, which was all the riches and substance of his house, and being in this case, should meet with a man that can tell him who robbed him of it, where it is, and how he may come to have it again, how would he respect him, and reward him? A godly Minister is such a one unto thee, who when *Adam* had lost himself, and all his posterity, and that peerless Jewel of righteousness the whole wealth of our souls, can truly tell us who did steal it away from us, and how it is to be recovered again. The Devil is the Thief; Christ doth restore it: Faith applieth Christ, the Word of God worketh Faith; the Minister preacheth the word whereby we believe. How well dost thou account of that Physician, and how highly doest thou esteem of him, who when thy health is lost, and sickness fallen upon thee, can tell thy disease, open the cause of it, show thee the cure and remedy of it, and restore thee to thy former state and strength; so when thy soul is sick unto the death, and even to damnation, the man of God can heal the deadly wound that Satan hath given, and apply a sovereign plaster for thee, made of the precious blood of Christ.

From hence all men may learn, how to esteem God's Ministers, and with what affection we are to hear them. The Sheep of Christ will hear his voice and follow him. This is a notable token to know the children of God by: to disobey the Ministers of God, is to disobey God himself; & to despise their word, is to despise the word of God himself. Is not the Ambassador of an earthly Prince received with great honor & reverence? Is not his message received as undoubtedly as if the Prince himself were present? Are not they which despise his authority as heinously punished, and as vilely accounted of, as if they resisted and rebelled against the King's own person? Shall then the Messengers of the living God, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, be received less worthily than the other, whose authority is greater, whose message is weightier, whose place is higher? It is requisite therefore, that the people fear and reverence their Minister, or else they will in no case honor and obey him. For where fear is not present, all honor is absent; & whosoever scorneth to perform this duty of fear, let him be well assured, he contemneth not him, but the Lord that sent him. This fear is to be yielded, not to his person, but to his Office. For as the Apostle exhorteth the *Thessalonians* to acknowledge them that labored among them, and have them in singular love for their works sake; so we ought to fear those that are set over us in the Lord, for their worker sake. So he witnesseth that the *Galatians* received him as an Angel of God; yea more than so, they received him as Jesus Christ himself. This was not as he was a man, but as the Minister of God: this was not for the excellency of his person, which he acknowledgeth to be simple, and testifieth to be contemptible; but he was received for that excellent message which he brought among them. Therefore *Paul* writing to the *Phillippians*, saith, *As ye have always obeyed me, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, so make an end of your salvation with fear and trembling.* This reproveth all those that are stubborn and disobedient, and will not obey the word of exhortation delivered unto them: such also, as hear not often and constantly, but seldom and carelessly, as if they were persuaded, that they had nothing to do with God, or God with his word: such as when they hear are not stricken with any fear of the presence of God, or of the power of the word, or of the truth that is delivered, so that they never can hear aright, seeing GOD accounteth those only the right Hearers, that tremble at his Word, and are of humble and contrite hearts.

Lastly, such as are content to hear and listen with their outward ears, but it is no longer than they list, and no farther than their own fantasies are fed, and their desires followed, and their humors pleased. They are willing to hear, until their special sins be reprov'd: but when they find themselves touched, or their iniquities (which they dwell in) discovered, they grow out of patience, and begin to revile and rail at the Ministers that seek with a good Conscience to discharge their duties. This is an evident note of a corrupt hearer, and a plain testimony of an evil heart. We must be ready to hear the curses of the Law, as well as the promises of the Gospel: we must account it a benefit to be reprov'd our selves, as well as to hear others reprov'd. A sick man would not content himself to have the Physician show unto others their diseases, but would have his own disease discovered unto him; so is it profitable unto us, to see our own sins, and to hear our own corruptions revealed and manifested unto us. If we once desire to come out of our sins and iniquities wherein we have lived; if once they become bitter and unpleasant unto us, it will be no grief or burden, to see

our selves stripped, and laid open to the view and sight of the world. Let us therefore with meekness of spirit submit our selves to the stroke of God's word, and not rage when we are reproved, as the manner of those is, that purpose to persevere, and to continue in their sins unto the end.

Verse 9. [*Yet for your loves sake I rather beseech thee.*]

Here we have the second part of the diverse reason before remembered. The former Verse, was a preparation or entrance into the prayer or petition of Paul, and containeth the authority that he had (if he would use it) to command *Philemon* that which was convenient for him to do. These words are a mild mitigation of the former; namely, that albeit he might command him by his office, yet he would rather entreat and beseech him thorough love. The Apostle having to do in this place with a matter of Christian moderation and equity, wherein he might from the Lord command with authority, doth notwithstanding pray and beseech; and when he might lawfully urge and require the practice thereof, he rather resolveth to use gentle, humble, and loving means. The Doctrine arising from hence, is this; That the Servants of God, ought to use mildness and meekness in delivering the will and message of God to his people, rather entreating them with lenity, then commanding them with authority, albeit they have liberty so to do. Courteous and gentle means are first to be used, if they may prevail, rather then checking and chiding sharply and rigorously with Offenders. We see this in Christ Jesus himself, who did not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking Flaxe, he saith, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will ease you, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* This appeareth in sundry places of Paul's Epistles, Rom. 12, 1. *I beseech you Brethren by the mercies of Christ; that ye give up your bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable serving of God.* So, 2 Cor. 5, 20. *Now then are we Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you through us, we pray you in Christ's stead, that ye be reconciled to God.* And in the tenth Chapter of the same Epistle, *I Paul myself, beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, which when I am present among you, am base, but am bold toward you being absent.* Thus the Apostle Peter speaketh, *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as Pilgrims and Straungers, abstain from fleshly lusts which fight against the soul, and have your conversation honest among the Gentiles.* Likewise the Apostle John writing to a Noble woman by birth but more noble by Faith and Religion, saith, *I now beseech thee (Lady) not as writing a new Commandment unto thee, but the same that we had from the beginning, that we love one another.* Whereby we see, that it is a duty required of us, that in delivering the word of God, & in declaring his will, we should use mildness rather then sharpness; gentleness, rather then roughness; beseeching rather then commanding; and meekness of spirit, rather then threatening of judgment.

Now to confirm this doctrine, sundry reasons may be rendered and produced. First, we are bound to use those means, and to take that course, which is most forcible & effectual. But to deal with love and lenity, and to handle our brethren kindly and meekly, is most likely to prevail with most men. Therefore the Apostle requireth, that the servant of God must not strive, but must be gentle toward all men, apt to teach, suffering the evil, instructing them

with meekness that are contrary minded, proving if God at any time will give thē repentance, that they may acknowledge the truth, and come to amendment, out of the snare of the devil, &c. There is no way so available to bring evil men out of the dangers wherein they stand, who are as it were taken prisoners, and made bondslaves to do the Devils will, then to allure them by gentleness, to draw them by long suffering, and to overcome them by patience.

Secondly, this course well and duly observed, serveth to persuade them with whom we deal of our love and tender affection towards them. For loving and friendly dealing, argueth loving and affectionate minds, and with whomsoever we have to do, it is a great means of prevailing, and the ready way to bend and incline him unto that which is good, and to turn him from that which is evil, when his persuasions are perceived to tend to the profit and benefit of him whom we would persuade. We shall never do any good, or prevail with our Brother, to bring him into the right way, unless he can assure his own heart that we love him, and seek his good, and desire his Salvation. It is Love in the Speaker, that moveth the Hearer to embrace that which he speaketh, to like that which he teacheth, to hate that which he reproveth, to avoid that which he condemneth, and to practice that which he commendeth. We must work this Opinion, and ground this persuasion in their hearts, that we love them, and that all our Doctrines, Instructions, and Reproofes, proceed only from this Fountain, before we can move them to Attention, Reverence, and Obedience, unto that which they hear delivered. Hence it is, that the Apostle in sundry places, writing to diverse Churches, and moving them to follow the examples and exhortations given unto them, laboreth to persuade them of his unfeigned Love towards them, as it appeareth, *Phillippians 4, 1. Therefore, my Brethren, beloved and longed for, my joy, and my Crown, so continue in the Lord, ye beloved.*

Thirdly, we are to imitate our Head and Master Christ Jesus, he used not his Authority and Power that was in him, he dealt not roughly and severely with his enemies, but meekly and mercifully, and most compassionately, he was meek, and as a Lamb before his shearer. When he might according to his mighty power in Justice have destroyed his Persecutors and enemies, he prayed for them, he entreated pardon for them, that their sin might be forgiven. Therefore the Apostle *Peter* teacheth us, that we are provoked to a patient bearing of wrongs, and suffering of troubles, by the example of Christ, saying, *For heerunto ye are called, for Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an ensample, that ye should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was there guile found in his mouth.* Seeing then, that mild and merciful dealing pulleth out of the snare of the devil, openeth the love of the speaker; and lastly, maketh us like to Christ, whose example is a perfect pattern of all meekness and moderation, it followeth, that it is carefully to be used of us when we speak to the people of God, in the name of God.

Let us see what Uses may be raised and remembered unto us out of this Doctrine. First, we learn that mercy and compassion, yea all tokens and testimonies of love are to be shown toward Malefactors, even when Justice is to be executed, and punishment inflicted, and the course of Law is to proceed against them, that they may know it is not malice, but Justice,

hath brought this fall upon thē; it is not their blood, but their good that is sought, and the good of others. The truth hereof we see practiced in *Joshua*, when *Achan* was apprehended, and his sin discovered, whereby he had offended God, sinned against his express commandment, and troubled *Israel*, he said unto him, *My son, I beseech thee, give glory to the Lord God of Israel, & make confession unto him, and show me now what thou hast done, hide it not from me.* Cruelty in deed, or bitterness in word, even toward evil doers that are already adjudged, or stand at the bar to be judged, is barbarous and inhuman. To insult over a poor prisoner, or a condemned man that is guilty of death, and carried to the place of execution, standeth neither with an human disposition, nor with a Christian affection, nor with Brotherly compassion. Behold the proud and insolent behavior of the savage and beastly minded Pharisees and Priests against our Savior Christ, mocking, spitting, buffeting, railing, reviling, whipping, and crucifieng him between two thieves. They were not content to seek his life, and to shed his blood, but laded him with contempt and all shameful calumniation. This also is the practice of their successors the Romish Clergy, who are the followers of them in malice and cruelty, when the faithful have been, not only conuented before them, but condemned of them, they have embrued their hands, and defiled their garments with their blood, which crieth to the God of Heaven for judgment; neither were they contented to feed their eyes with their torments, and to satisfy their lusts with their sufferings, but proceeded to all extreamities of rage and madness, railing at them, and speaking all manner of evil against them. This abuse is sometimes too usual and common in the places of Justice & judgment, from whence all gall and bitterness should be banished: we may hear unseemly jests, bitter taunts, & uncharitable reproaches cast out of their mouths (as a loathsome vomit out of the stomach) who should *Remember that they sit in the seat of God, and are to execute the Judgments of God, with whom is no iniquity, nor respect of persons, neither receiving of reward.* *Jehu* the King of *Israel*, executing the judgments of the Lord against the house of *Ahab*, according to all the word of the Lord, is threatened himself to be punished, because he did it with a cruel and bloody affection; The work was good, but his heart was evil; the deed done was righteous, but the manner of doing was corrupt; he respected not the glory of God, but his own revenge; he did it not to serve God, but to serve himself. This was the cause why the Lotde visited him, his house, and all *Israel* for it, and revenged their blood thus shed, because he failed in the manner, though otherwise he did that which is just and right. We must regard not only what we do, but in what sort and manner, to what end and purpose we do it. It is our duty to show Mercy and Love to Offenders, even in punnishing of Offenders. We must have respect to their bodies and souls: We must admonish, reprove, threaten, and correct, in great compassion and mercy, not in rage and revenge to fly upon them.

But here the question may be asked, whither a Christian man may not be angry with them with whom he dealeth, being stubborn and perverse, and deal sharply with them? I answer, the Apostle giveth direction what to do in this case, *Be angry, but sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the Devil.* If we break out suddenly into any passion, let us speedily recall that affection, and not suffer it long to lodge with us. But there is a godly anger, and an holy kind of indignation; there is a lawful zeal to be commended in the servants of God, which they are to conceive inwardly, and to utter outwardly against sin, not

against their perverseness. So it is said of Christ, that he looked round about him angrily, mourning also for the hardness of their hearts. His anger was joined with pity and compassion, & it was not so much against the men, as against their blindness. The Church of *Ephesus* is commended, that it hated the works of the *Nicolaitans*, which Christ also hateth. It hated not the *Nicolaitans* themselves, as they were men, but the works of the *Nicolaitans*. Again, it may be said, that the Prophet *David*, *Psal.* 109. and in many other places, prayed for the destruction of his enemies, both their persons and posterity. So did *Elijah* for fire from Heaven, to destroy the Captains that came to take him. I answer, we have not the same spirit that they had, and consequently have not the same warrant. They were Prophets, and God revealed unto them that they were obstinate enemies, so that they were enabled to judge, that their malice and wickedness was incurable, and that they would never repent, They had an extraordinary measure of God's spirit, not only to see their present condition, but to discern their future confusion; and hence it is, that they were endued with a pure zeal of God's Glory, and not carried with an evil desire of Reuenge, of Envy, of Hated, and of Emulation.

Again, the imprecations of the Prophets, are prophesied of plagues to come, but we have no such extraordinary instinct revealed unto us, to know what is to come: wherefore, we cannot allege their examples for our imitation, we must walk in the Kings High way, and follow the general rules of the Scripture, to deal mildly, to put away pride and cruelty toward those that are under us, to banish tyranny; and treading of them under our feet. This is to be observed of all Fathers, Masters, and Governors, remembering that in Christ we are all Brethren, that by Nature we are all of one mold and making, that (as men) we have all one Creator. This consideration we find to have been in *Job* toward those of his Family. *If I did contemn the judgment of my Servant, and of my Maid, when they did contend with me; what then shall I do when God standeth up? And when he shall visit me, what shall I answer? He that hath made me in the womb, hath he not made him? Hath not he alone fashioned us in the womb?* This the Apostle also teacheth, *Eph. 6. Ye Masters do the same things unto them, putting away threatening: and know that even your Mayster also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.* So then, we are to deal with gentleness, not with roughness; we are rather to seek to win others by love, then to compel them by rigor. We must endeavor that all bitterness, and anger, and wrath, crying, and evil speaking be put away from us: we ought to be courteous one to another, and tender-hearted: we are not to think that any are privileged, and freed from reproof, but we must reprove meekly and modestly, least whilst we go about to amend them, we make them worse. It is an heavenly Counsel given by the Apostle, *Brethren, if a man be suddenly taken in any offense, ye which are spiritual restore such an one with the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted: Bear ye one another's burden, and so fulfill the Law of Christ.* Where we see, he would have the faithful endeavor to reform a man with all gentleness, when he hath done amiss. We must not flatter him in his sins, for then we encourage him, and uphold him in his wickedness, nay, we betray him into the hands of the Devil, and by that means drown him deeper in destruction. Whensoever therefore our Brother falleth into evil, it is no love nor charity to cloak his evil doings, or to dissemble his lewdness which he hath committed, but we must have a care that he may rise again. If a man

be in the mire, or in a ditch, we will reach him our hand to help him out; much more ought we to have pity on his soul, when we see it sinking into perdition?

Secondly, seeing we are to win men rather by gentleness and love, we must acknowledge that great wisdom and discretion is required in the Ministry, to divide the word of God aright, and to be able to apply himself to every degree and calling of men. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, writing to *Timothy*, *Rebuke not an Elder, but exhort him as a father, and the younger men as brethren, the Elder-women as Mothers, the younger as Sisters with all pureness.* There is indeed a profitable and necessary use both of rough and tender dealing. When the people of God went out to war. the Lord commanded them to offer conditions of peace to that Citty, if it refuse to make peace they should besiege it, smite it, and destroy it. So should we, when we execute our Office, first offer peace before we proclaim war; first, allure by Gentleness, before we thunder out judgments; first, exhort, before we threaten. In the material building, all the stones that are to be fitted to the building, are not of one nature, some are soft and easy to be hewed and hammered, others more hard and of a flintier marble disposition, they require sharp tools, strong blows, & sturdy arms, before they can be brought into form, or be squared for their place which they are to hold. So it is with the lively stones of the spiritual Temple of God, some have soft hearts of flesh, & are of humble & contrite spirits, like the bruised reed or the smoking flax, others have hearts hard as the Adament, and cannot easily be brought to feel the strokes of the word of God. These are not to be dealt withal and handled alike, but after a diverse manner. This is the counsel of the Apostle *Jude*, *Have compassion of some, in putting difference, and other save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, and hate even that Garment which is spotted by the flesh.* This serveth to reprove, first, such as use unseasonable lenity, when Godly severity is required. Some diseases, require sharp medicines. This is a great sin, whether it be in the family, in the common Wealth, or in the Church. *Eli* heard many complaints against his sons, that they sinned against God, and caused his people to abhor his offerings, yet he did bear with them, and was not sharp toward them as he ought to have been, he said unto them, *Why do ye such things? for of all this people I hear evil reports of you: do no more, my sons, for it is no good report that I hear, which is, that ye make the Lord's people to trespass.* He shown mercy, where he should show severity, and he winked at those that were worthy to be punished. This proceedeth not from a love to our Children, but rather from a looseness in our selves, and a carelessness of their good and salvation. This causeth vice to increase and maketh sin grow in all places. The like we see in *Ahab* King of *Israel*, when God had delivered a cruel enemy into his hand, he spared him, and suffered him to escape out of his hands, a man whom God appointed to die, and thereby is threatened, that his own life should redeem and ransom the life of his enemy, and so the one pay the price of the other. The like we might handle in *Saul*, who receiving a commandment to destroy *Agag*, and his substance, together with the *Amalekites*, he gave life to those that God would have him put to death, and shown mercy to such as should be smitten with the sword. This negligence in punishing offenders is too common in the common Wealth, and is a means to increase sin, to see sin punished. It is a true saying of the wise man, *The blueness of the wound serveth to purge the evil, and the stripes within the bowels of the Belly.* Thus it falleth out also oftentimes in the Church. When the incestuous person

among the *Corinthians* was (according to the Ordinance of God,) to be cast out, he was suffered in the Church, and had not the censures of the Church executed against him, so that the Apostle telleth them, that their rejoicing was not good, *Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump.* Such was the carelessness and coldness in many of the Churches of *Asia*, they were too mild toward Heretics and evil livers, and suffered the sword of excommunication to rust in the sheath, which should be drawn out to the terror and fear of all stubborn and unrepentant sinners. Secondly, it reproveth such as are too sharp and rigorous, against offenders, and forget all rules of Charity toward them. All laws must not be written with blood. The law of God, albeit it did not stint what stripes every offender should have that deserved stripes, yet it limiteth and restraineth what number they should not exceed, that the offender might think himself loved, not hated: all the Corrections that God layeth upon his Church come from love. True it is, the Pastors and Ministers are to rebuke such as are fallen, but when they see sorrow for sin, and repentance from dead works wrought in them, they should begin to raise them up again and comfort them with the precious promises of the Gospel, least they should be overwhelmed with despair, & be swallowed up with over-much heaviness. Our Savior hath set down an order perpetually to be observed touching offenders, *If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him, if he hear thee, thou hast won thy brother, but if he hear thee not, take yet with thee one or two, that by the mouth of two or three Witnesses every word may be confirmed, &c.* We must proceed slowly, and as it were with a leaden foot against our brethren, and beware of rash and hasty judgment. The ancient Church in former times offended this way being so austere and severe against offenders, who for small offenses enjoined punishment for the space of many years. This is the sin of such as are of the separation, and have departed from our Churches, condemning our Church to be no Church, our Ministers to be no Ministers, our sacraments to be no sacraments, refusing to hear the word at our mouths, to pray and communicate with our people, and to perform other religious duties with us. Thus they have noted and marked us out with the black cole of condemnation, who deserve rather to be excommunicated by us, had they not voluntarily excommunicated themselves from us. On the other side, it behooveth us to show compassion to them that sin of ignorance or infirmity, and to season our admonitions and exhortations with a loving affection, let us bear with them so long as we see any hope of amendment, following the example of *Moses*, who mourned and prayed for the *Israelites* fallen in Idolatry, and of *Christ*, who wept over *Jerusalem* to make them weep for their sins, who seemed to have no sight or feeling of them. Lastly, it reproveth the Church of *Rome*, who are very Tirants and Tormenters of the people of God, for as they have burdened them from time to time with men's Traditions, so for every slight matter they have thundered against them with their excommunications, and thereby made themselves terrible to the whole world. Hence it is, that the Pope and his Bishops threaten Princes, challenge authority to excommunicate them, to depose them, and to discharge their subjects of subjection and allegiance. This is cruelty joined with impiety, this is severity accompanied with Hipocrisie, this is cursing and banning, contrary to the Christian faith, and therefore being causeless they cannot come.

Thirdly, and last of all, we learn for our obedience, that whensoever entreating, beseeching, gentle, or loving dealing is used to call men home to God and to themselves, it is their duty to yield themselves and to embrace earnestly the mercies of God offered unto them. The sin of contempt and contumacy is fearful, when the bountifulness of God is despised, his mercies loathed, his patience and long suffering abused. If we will not hear when he crieth to us, we shall cry also in the days of our misery, and he will not hear us in our trouble, but mock at our affliction. Our Savior remembereth the *Jews*, that he would often have gathered them together, as an Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, but they would not, and therefore their Habitation should be left unto them desolate. First, he preached mercy, then judgment, first he gathereth, then he scattereth, first he counselleth, then he confoundeth. This is the order which the Apostle teacheth to be observed by the Lord himself, in the first place, by patience and long suffering he calleth men to repentance, nevertheless if they will not turn unto him, but harden their hearts against the means and Ministry that he useth to call them, he hoardeth and heapeth up wrath for them against the day of wrath. This hath been the dealing of God with us in this Land more then fifty years, he hath preached unto us by his mercies, he hath entreated us and provoked us by peace, by plenty, by patience, by temporal blessings, by spiritual blessings, by prosperity which the glorious Gospel of Christ hath brought with it, he hath planted his Vine among us, he hath looked for good fruit answerable to such great means and long mercies. But what have we performed according to that which God hath expected? and how have we behaved our selves in respect of this bountifulness which we have tasted and received? Surely, we become every year worse then other, more barren, and less fruitful; we are not only void of good fruits, but full of evil fruits, bearing nothing but leaves of vanity, and shows of Hipocrisie. We cannot deny, but God (as a careful dresser of his Vineyard) hath often times been constrained to take his pruning knife into his hands, he hath scourged us by famine, and chastened us by plague and pestilence; yea, still doth visit us in sundry places, and yet though he have put us into the furnace, and tried us with the fire of his judgments, he cannot purge out our dross, or take away our tin, or cleanse away our corruptions from us, but still we swerve from him, & swerve with blasphemies, with oaths, with profaneness, with drunkenness, with whoredom, with contempt of the Gospel; we abound with the fruits of the flesh, and works of darkness, which agree not with that light into which we are brought. The word of God was more reverently esteemed, better regarded, and more carefully practiced thirty; yea, forty years ago, then it is in these declining times in which we live. We have a long time gone backward, and not forward; we grow downward, and not upward; we are farther from the Kingdom of Heaven, and not nearer. What then remaineth for us, but a fearful looking for of judgment and violent fire, which shall destroy his adversaries? If he open the Treasures of his wrath, and the store-houses of his judgments, if he bring forth the arrows of his quiver, and draw his sword out of his sheath, let us prepare to meet our God by unfeigned repentance, let us forsake our sins which bring all curses and callamities upon us. If his mercies will not move us, his judgments shall remove us out of our places. The Fig-Tree is first Husbanded and digged about, if the digging and dunging of it will not make it bring forth fruit, it is appointed to be cut down. The patience of the Lord goeth before denuntiation of judgment, or execution of punishment. A Physician never aduentureth upon

a desperate Physic, but in a desperate disease. A Surgeon applieth salves and all possible remedies before he proceed to the cutting off of Arm or Leg: So hath the Lord dealt with us, & so he doth deal with us, if his word could convert us, his judgments should not overtake us; if his mercy could turn us, his justice should not destroy us; if his love could save us, his wrath should not condemn us.

[*Being such a one, even Paul aged, and now also a Prisoner of Jesus Christ.*]

We heard in the words before, *Paul's* beseeching of *Philemon*, amplified by a diverse reason of commanding. Now we have to consider the second part of the sentence, which is a description of his person, generally and particularly, which hath great force to move him and instruct him. He mentioneth his age and the term of his life now almost ended, together with his afflictions and bands for Christ's sake and the Gospels, thereby to teach him, not to be ashamed of him, or to be offended at him, but to reverence his person, and to and to obey his word. Here then we see, that the Apostle doth challenge much to be due unto him (which he might justly do) in regard of sundry privileges of his calling, of his age, of his sufferings and imprisonment that he sustained for the cause of Christ. Heereby we learn, that such as God hathmarked out from others by age, gifts, or other privileges are much to be regarded and revered. We must acknowledge it to be a duty belonging unto us to yield much to such as God hath distinguished and separated from the common order of men, by length of life, by greatness of gifts, or other worthy respects which they have received. The Apostle teacheth that the King and Magistrate are to be honored, *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God, and the powers that be, are ordained of God.* And 1 Pet. 2. 17. *Honorall men, love brotherly fellowship, fear God, honor the King.* Thus also he speaketh a little before, *Submit yourselves unto all manner Ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be unto the King as unto the superior, or unto Governors as unto them that are sent of him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.* Touching such as are superiors in age; it is a precept given by *Moses*, *Thou shalt rise up before the hore head, and honor the person of the old man, and dread thy God, I am the Lord.* Where we see the Lord prescribeth that duty to be performed to old age, which *Paul* challengeth to himself: being aged in this place. An example hereof we have recorded in the book of *Job* in *Elihu*, when *Job's* three friends ceased to answer him, he began saying, *I am young in years, and ye are ancient, therefore I doubted, and was afraid to show you mine opinion, for I said, the days shall speak, and the multitude of years shall teach wisdom.* Likewise touching the teachers and Ministers of the Gospel, the Apostle saith, *The Elders that rule well, let them be had in double honor, specially they which labor in the word and Doctrine.* And in another place, *Obey them that have the oversight of you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give accounts, acknowledge them that labor among you and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, that ye have them in singular love for their works sake.* Lastly, to endure adversity, to suffer imprisonment, and to be put in fetters for Christ's sake, is so far from putting them to shame that are in *Chaines*, and ought to be so far from offending any, that rather it commendeth their person, beutifieth their Ministry, adorneth their gifts, magnifieth their calling, and maketh their Office more effectual, and much more to be respected, and more available to edification. It is an honor to be set as an ouerseer in the Church, but it is a greater honor to suffer in Christ's cause.

Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *Be not ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord, neither of me his prisoner, but be partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the power of God.* And Ephe, 3. 13. *I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for your sakes, which is your glory.* All these Testimonies serve to confirm this truth sufficiently and abundantly, that such as God hath made any way superiors unto us, and preferred before us in calling, in age, in gifts, in sufferings, or any other perogatives, are much to be accounted off, and greatly to be respected of us.

This truth will better appear unto us, and be more deeply grounded in us, if we mark and observe the reasons whereon it standeth as upon a firm foundation that cannot be shaken. For first, it standeth with the Ordinance and commandment of God as we see in the xx. Chapter of the book of Exodus where the law is established, and a promise of blessing annexed. Thus the Apostle expresseth the one and the other, Ephe 6. *Honor thy Father and Mother (which is the first commandment with promise) that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on earth.* If this be a precept of God, that we ought to honor those whom God hath any way honored, and if the obedience unto it be joined with our good, and that good which all men so much desire; to wit, length of days and continuance of long life upon the earth; if we respect either his precept, or regard our own profit, we are bound to acknowledge those privileges of age or gifts which he hath given them, and to honor them for them.

Secondly, all superiors, in what respect soever they be placed above us and set before us, do bear the Image of God. He hath sealed them in the forehead with his own stamp, and marked them out with the print of his own finger, that they should resemble him. He hath advanced them to be instead of fathers, and honored them to bear a simillitude of his person. In the Magistrate is the Image of the power and glory of God, Dan. 2, 37. In the father, of his providence and authority; in the Elder, of his continuance and eternity: in the learned man of his knowledge and wisdom. Now, wheresoever the least and lowest title of the image of God appeareth, albeit it be blemished with many infirmities, it is to be confessed and acknowledged; yea, to be honored and revered.

Thirdly, God will be severely revenged on all such as break his order, and seek to confound those things which he hath distinguished. The light of nature hath imprinted this Ordinance of God in all men, and the Heathen, living in darkness and destitute of the light of the word of God and of the knowledge of true Godliness, have established wholesome laws and sharp statutes to that purpose, to avoid confusion, and to maintain a peaceable communion one with another. Old age was honorable among the Gentiles, so that the moe white hairs they had on their heads, the moe wrinkles they had in their faces, and the less strength in their bodies: the more were they esteemed of their equals, feared of young men, and honored of all men. As every year did add to the time of their age, so it added reverence to their persons. When the keepers of the house trembled, the strong men bowed, the grinders ceased, the doors were shut up, the lights were darkened, the Almond Tree flourished, and the Daughters of singing were abased (all which are evident signs, not only of old age coming toward us, and approaching near unto us, but present with us and attending upon us) then

were they most regarded, all other arose from their seats to honor them, no man durst utter an unseemly word, show an irreverent gesture, or commit an ungodly action before them. If then we go about to quench the light of nature, and refuse to reverence those that God hath exalted, it is no marvel if he draw them out to shame and bring them to misery which rise up against lawful authority, or despise such as he hath honored, ouertaking them in their devises, turning their wisdom into foolishness, and bringing upon them final confusion. We see this in the fearful examples of *Absalom*, *Ahitophell*, *Shimei*, *Joab*, and such like Childen of rebellion. The son of *Noah* that mocked his father, is cursed with an heavy and horrible curse. The Children of *Ierico* that derided and reproached the Prophet, were torn in pieces with two Bears that came out of the Wilderness. Seeing therefore that all superiors have the Image of God shining upon them, and seeing God on the one side commandeth them to be honored, and on the other side threateneth to punish such as despise them; it followeth, that such as God preferreth, we must highly regard and yield them much honor.

The uses remain to be considered. First, we learn from hence that it is no disgrace or disparagement to a man's modesty, when such as are bound by the law of God and nature and by all good order, do forget to yield their superiors their due, or (which is worse) do in pride and contempt insult over them, to claim and challenge that which is his right. The Apostle doth oftentimes remember his place and calling to the *Corinthians*, which had forgotten him and rejected him. He putteth them in mind of his Office, *Am I not an Apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are ye not my work in the Lord? If I be not an Apostle unto other, yet doubtless I am unto you, for ye are the seal of my Apostleship in the Lord.* This we see likewise in *Samuel*, *I am old and Gray-headed, I have walked before you from my Childhood unto this day, bear record of me before the Lord and before his anointed, whose Ox have I taken? or whose Ass have I taken? or whom have I done wrong too? or whom have I hurt? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.* We are bound to yield to every man his due as a debt which we owe unto him, according as God hath distributed his Talents among the several degrees of men. This Christ himself teacheth, *Give unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and to God the things which are God's.* So the Apostle saith, *Rom 13, 7. Give to all men their duty, tribute, to whom ye owe tribute; Custom, to whom Custom; fear, to whom fear; honor, to whom ye owe honor.* Whensoever therefore this Honor, or Fear, or Reverence is denied us which God hath given unto us, it is no Pride or haughtiness of heart, to challenge it, and require it at their hands that are bound to yield it. If they will not know us, it is lawful for us to know our selves. If they contemn us and cast us at their feet, we must learn to magnify and make much of our Callings and Guiftes. This reproveth and condemneth those that dispraise and disable them-selves too much, wherein there may be as close and secret Pride, as in them that rise up early to praise themselves. We must not deny the graces of GOD that are in us, but acknowledge them to the praise of God, and submit our selves to the judgment of others, that will not flatter for us for that we have not, nor craftily conceal that which we have.

Secondly, seeing such as excel us in Age, or any Guiftes, ought to be much esteemed of us, and prevail very much with us: it putteth all Inferiors in mind of many good duties. First, it is required of them to praise and commend the Guiftes of God in them, and give the glory of

them to God the giver. We must magnify them, and prefer them before all others that have not the same Guiftes, though they be our enemies and such as hate us. We must not so much consider their persons, how they are affected toward us, as their Guiftes, they are the Guiftes of God, and therefore should be acknowledged and approved. They have worthy Guiftes that we want, and yet are given for our good and benefit. We do not see their Guiftes so defiled with infirmities and mingled with Corruptions as our own are; all which things should help to add Grace and Glory to the Guiftes that are in others. When *Pharaoh* perceived the great Wisdom that was in *Joseph*, he spared not to speak of it, he shamed not to place him over all the Land of *Egypt*, to make him Lord of his house, and Ruler of all his substance, that he should bind his Princes unto his will, and teach his Auncients wisdom. So when *Nebucadnezzar* saw that *Daniel* was endued with knowledge and understanding from above, more then all the Astrologians and Enchaunters that were in *Babylon*, he doth confess them to be in him, and reverence him for them. So ought we all to do when we hear or behold the gifts of God in our brethren, let us acknowledge them and praise God for them.

This reproveth the common practice of those that will diminish and disgrace their gifts, and like of nothing but that which is in themselves. Let us beware of Pride and Envy, disdainng others, deprouing, and lessening such inward graces of God's spirit as are in them. If another man should not readily acknowledge their outward gifts wherein they glory, and reverence them for their Parentage, Titles, and dignities, they would think themselves wronged, and disgraced, they would be ready to cast them in the teeth with forgetfulness of their duty. Why then should not they confess the inward gifts and heavenly graces that appear in their brethren, which are far more excellent then the former? Secondly, it is our duty to make profit of the gifts of our Superiors, and take benefit by them. This is the end for which they were given by God himself, and this is the use that we must make of them. It is a great blessing of God, when he is gracious and bountiful unto his people, and largely and liberally bestoweth his blessings upon them: we have many examples of godliness, of mortification, of patience, of meekness, of mercy, and many other gifts in the godly, so that we may take counsel and comfort from them. Yea, as we are greatly to reverence these gifts in others, so we must labor to feel them in our selves, and to keep them in the Closet of our own hearts. It is ashame to see others religious, and to be without Religion in our selves? To see others godly, and our selves to be without godliness? To see so many graces in our Brethren, and we remain without grace? This is a plain argument, that we esteem nothing at all, and make no reckoning or account of any good gifts in our Brethren, for as much as we are not desirous to be partakers of them our selves. For whatsoever we regard in others, we will labor to have and enjoy our selves.

Lastly, it behooveth all young persons, to conceive a reverent opinion, and to carry a dutiful and discreet behavior toward their elders, that are more ancient then they in years. Old men are instead of Fathers, and the Apostle would have them to be exhorted as Fathers. Again, old age is a blessing of God, which few obtain and attain unto, in comparison of the rest. The contempt of it, is the contempt of God, and a deriding of his Image, as appeareth by the commandment expressed. Levite. 19. When the Lord had prescribed a reverent behavior toward aged men, he addeth; *Thou shalt dread thy God, I am the Lord:* declaring thereby, that

where there is want of reverence to their persons, there is the want of the fear of God, for he joineth rising up before the Elders, and the reuerencing of God together. Where the fear of God is not, there can be no duty performed to men. This reproveth the rudeness, the common and customable sausinesse that is in young persons, that refuse to give them liberty and freedom to speak before them. In all Companies, the younger is the readier to speak, although he utter nothing but words of folly and of vanity. Likewise, it reproveth those that will not give them room and place when they come in presence. It is indecent and uncomely in the Church or else-where, to see weak and feeble old Men stand, and young Boys to sit down on their seats, without wagging, stirring, or giving place unto them. This is directly contrary to the Law of God; *Thou shalt rise up before the hore-head, and honor the person of the old man.* We may now renew the complaint of the Prophet, in regard of this conclusion; *The Children presume against the ancient, and the vile against the honorable.*

Lastly, seeing we must have a great respect to such as are in gifts above us, or in age before us, or go beyond us in both, it teacheth us so to live and behave our selves, that we may be worthy of all honor & reverence. Let such as have good gifts, employ them to the greatest good of others. He that hath received much, must bring forth much fruit, as the Servant that had five talents committed unto him, gained five other talents. So old men must be grave and sober, and carry a Majesty in their countenance, that they may after a sort resemble the Majesty of God. As gravity and sobriety agreeth to every age, so most especially to the elder age; contrary to which, is lightness, lasciuiousnesse, and waywardness, which make them not honorable, but odious; not to be revered, but to be despised in the eyes of the younger sort. Let them adorn their years with those virtues which the Apostle nameth. *Let the elder-men be watchful, grave, temperate, sound in the faith, in love, and in patience.* If they be careful to express these things which become wholesome doctrine, they shall manifestly show, that their living so long in the World hath not been in vain. The Wise man saith, *The beauty of the young men is their strength, and the glory of the aged is the gray-headed;* that is, Wisdom, Counsel, Experience, whereby they are more adorned, then the young man is beautified by his bodily strength. For, the Ornaments of the mind are to be preferred before the properties of the body. Again, they must be examples of a godly life, and holy conversation, that youth may stand in fear to commit any indecent and unseemly thing in their presence. Thus *Job* saith of himself, Chap. 29. *When I went out of the gate, the young Men saw me, and hid themselves.* But when the Elder sort are Ring-leaders and examples of an evil and corrupt life, there is more gravity on their heads, then piety in their hearts; in their white hairs, then in their behavior; and so the Crown of honor is taken from them, and they are justly contemned, despised, and reproached of those, of whom they should be honored. For, we may see old men so hardened in Wickedness, that if a man would find whole heaps of wickedness, he need seek no farther, but to them. Some, by their age and long experience, have learned nothing but craft and spitefulness, so as if a man should frame himself after their example, he should have neither faithfulness in him, nor upright dealing. Others are loose and disordered in their whole life. Some have been given to swearing and blaspheming in their youth, and they are not reformed; nay they are more deformed in their age. Others, are so drenched and sapped in Covetousness and Whoredom, as that they infect all places,

and defile all persons where they come, they delight in such rotten and filthy communication, that even young men are ashamed to hear them spew out such ungodly and unsavory talk. Such as lead their lives as Fathers in the Church, and adorn their age with godliness, shall not need to be offended at these things, nor to say with the Lawyers in the Gospel, *In saying this, thou putttest we to rebuke also*. We are all to honor the gray-head, and to magnify old age: For (as Solomon saith) *Age is a Crown of Glory, when it is found in the way of Righteousness*; Whereby he meaneth, that old age seasoned with a Godly life and upright, bringeth with it as great glory, as a Crown on the head, and a Scepter in the hand doth unto a King; and therefore such old men are greatly to be revered, and highly to be esteemed. But many, except they should be honored for their Ignorance, Superstition, Frowardness, Maliciousnesse, Waywardnesse, Covetousness, Drunkenness, Licentiousness, and Self-will, there is nothing else to be found in them, to be learned of them, to be gathered from them. By these foul enormities, they bring themselves into contempt, and bring shame and reproach upon their own heads; so that no man defameth and dishonoreth them so much as themselves. For, do they behave themselves with such Stayednesse, Wisdom, and Grauity, that young men fear to behave themselves lewdly and licentiously in their sight? Or do they show themselves examples of good things? Nay, they serve for nothing but to corrupt and infect youth, they be patterns, nay Patrons and Maintainers of all filthiness and loose living. Surely, if young men mis-behave and misgouverne themselves, they are not to be excused, but to be reprov'd, because they ought to order their lives aright, and *Remember their Creator in the days of their youth*; and not deserve to be evil spoken or reported of: but Olde folk, are double worthy of the shame that men do them, if they be not honored for their Virtues. They should learn by their long life, and old age, to grow in the knowledge of GOD, and his Son Jesus Christ; to hate sin, to delight in righteousness, and daily to die unto the Worlde, that as they bear about them a body declining and decaying in strength, so they should be renewed in the inner man, long after eternal life, and not nestle them-selves here upon the earth, as if they should continue forever therein, nor pursue so greedily after the Worlde, when they can scarce go or creep up and down in the world. It is a testimony of God's great mercy toward us, when he lengthneth our life, and prolongeth our days to the last period and power of Nature; Oh, how might we have profited in the knowledge of Religion, in the fear of God, in the ways of godliness, in the means of salvation, and in good example of life? If we had learned, since we entered into Christianity, but now a little, and then a little; here a Precept, and there a Precept; we might (in short space) have attained to a great measure of understanding, and be daily fitted to God's Kingdom. But alas, such as should be old in Faith, are very Babes and Children, a thing greatly disgraceful and reproachful to their years & condition.

The Apostle chargeth the *Corinthians*, that they should not be Children in understanding, as concerning maliciousness, he would have them Children, but in understanding to be of ripe age. Whereby we see, that aged persons do quite degenerat from that which they ought to be, when they remain void of knowledge, and destitute of spiritual Wisdom, and suffer many that are young in years, to overtake them, yea to over strip them, and go many degrees before them. If a man should bind his son an Apprentice to some Science or Occupation, and

when he had served his time, should be to seek in his trade, and be never a whit the more his Crafts-master, in the ending of his years, then he was at the beginning, we would think he had lost his time, and complain of the injury of the Master, or of the carelessness of the Servant. If a Father should put his son to School, and he always continue in the lowest Fourme, and never ascend higher, we would judge great negligence to be either in the Master, or in the Scholar. Behold the Church of God is the School of Christ, and the best place to learn the Science of all Sciences, if we have lived long therein, some of us twenty, some thirty, some forty years, and some longer, and yet be no wiser in Religion, then a child of seven years old, is it not ashame for us, and may we not be condemned of great negligence in the matters of our salvation? Let us examine our selves how we have profited, and compare our proceeding in knowledge with the length of time that God hath granted unto us. He may justly require great things of us, and challenge at our hands much fruit, who hath afforded unto us, great means for our growth and increasing in all good things.

Verse 10. *I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds.*

Hitherto we have spoken of the description of *Paul*, craving to be heard and respected in regard of his age and office, which is the second part of the sentence before remembered. Now, we are to observe the third point, which is concerning *Onesimus*, whom he setteth forth; first, by a note of relation, [*My Son;*] then by the cause, [*Whom I have begotten in my bonds.*] The Apostle in this Verse beginneth to enter into his suite, showing for whom he doth entreat, and afterward for what he doth entreat. To his request, he annexeth diverse reasons: first, because he begat him; that is, brought him by the preaching of the Gospel, to the true Christian faith, and therefore he is earnest to entreat for him. Secondly, because his Master should now find him profitable unto him; that is, faithful, trusty, and serviceable, for so will true Christian servants be; whereas such as are ungodly, will be unfaithful, and such as have not the fear of God before them, cannot answer the trust that is reposed in them for Conscience sake. Thirdly, because *Paul* loved *Onesimus* tenderly and dearly, as his own bowels, not as a servant, but as his son; not only as a Brother, but as his own bowels. This is the order of the words.

Let us briefly see the Interpretation of this Verse, and reserve the rest to his proper place. First of all, when he calleth *Onesimus* his son, he meaneth it not in respect of the natural birth and generation, but of the spiritual and super-natural. So that by a borrowed speech he meaneth, one brought to his Faith by his Ministry. Likewise when he saith, [*Whom I have begotten,*] the meaning is, whom God by me did effectually call to embrace and believe the Gospel. It is not the work of a mortal man to frame and reform the soul unto the Image of God. He only nameth himself as the author of his regeneration, which he doth not to oppose himself to God, but only to show what God doth by the ministry of man. Lastly, when he addeth, [*In my bonds,*] he meaneth, when he was a prisoner, and lay in prison. This Verse according to this exposition of the words, is thus much in effect, as if he had said, Having thus prepared thee for that which I am to entreat from thy hands, if now thou wouldst know the party or person for whom it is, surely it is thy runagate servant *Onesimus*, and upon these

grounds, he is my spiritual son, for I have begotten him in the time of my captivity, to the true profession and obedience of the Gospel.

Before we come to handle the Doctrines and instructions arising out of this verse, it shall not be amiss to set down diverse profitable observations that may be considered. First, we see here a Rhetorical repetition of the same word, I beseech thee being aged and a prisoner, I beseech thee for my Son *Onesimus*. This redoubling of his prayer, and entreating (used also elsewhere) showeth the desire, and manifesteth the earnestness of his mind: he was not cold in his suite, as if he regarded not whether he obtained it, but prosecuted it with his whole desire and full purpose, so that he contenteth not himself once to beseech him, but beseecheth him again.

Secondly, we see, that the person of him, whom we will commend to any man, hath great force to move him, and to prevail with him, to grant unto us that which we crave and desire at his hands. Wherefore, whosoever would be commended unto any, must look to himself that he have in him somewhat worthy commendation. For, as another man's mouth should praise us, & not our own; so the matter of praise must be in our selves. A false praise, is a true dispraise; and a wrongful commending, is a real discommending. The praise that cometh from others, must proceed from a due desert in our selves. If the Apostle had not found a great alteration, he would never have given this commendation to *Onesimus*. Thirdly, we see an example in *Paul*, of wonderful humility, and lowliness of mind. See here the difference between *Paul* the Apostle, and the proud Bishop of *Rome*. *Paul* beseecheth where he might command; but he commandeth where he hath no warrant to beseech. For the Pope usurpeth authority over Princes and Kings; he cursseth and banneth, he threateneth and thundereth out his excommunications. It is not so with our Apostle, for such is his exceeding modesty and mildness of Spirit, that he abaseth himself to be a false and fugitive servant, whom he embraceth as his own Son. What could be more reproachful, then to rob his Master, and then to play the runagate, that so he might run on in his evil course, and deliver himself from punishment? Yet we see, the Apostle is not ashamed of him, is not ashamed to cal him his Son, that *Philemon* might not be ashamed to receive and to accept him as his Servant. For if he be the son of *Paul*, he may be esteemed the servant of *Philemon*.

Fourthly, we see how effectual the sound conversion of a sinner to God ought to be, and how forcible it should be to prevail with us, to win our Love towards him, and cause us to perform all the duties belonging unto him. For we may not be ashamed to account him either as a Son, or as a Brother, whom GOD accounteth for his own son and servant. We are most unworthy to be called the sons of God, if we refuse his children to be our brethren. But if we mark this aright, we shall find the number of those to be few, which regard the Faith, conversion, salvation, & other spiritual blessings bestowed upon their brethren, as they ought, and therefore testify no love, show no joy, perform no duties, when they behold sinners converted unto God. Fifthly, we see that the name and praise of a spiritual Father (which is proper to God alone) is communicated to the Apostles and Ministers of God: whereas God only doth renew and regenerate us by the power of his spirit, the Ministry only is man's, whether he be Pastor or Apostle. Our Savior teacheth us, to cal no man Father upon

earth. It is no work of man (be he never so excellent) to frame and reform the soul into the Image of God. But because we are borne anew by Faith, and Faith cometh by hearing, the Minister as the disposer of the Mysteries of God, doth under God perform the duty of a Father. So then, seeing the word of God preached by the mouth and Ministry of man, is the immortal seed of eternal life, it is no marvel if he be called by the Title of a Father, from whose lips we conceive that seed, and receive that word. Thus much is to be observed of us in general out of this verse. Now let us come to the particular Doctrines.

[*I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, &c.*]

We are here to mark the scope and purpose of the Apostle in these words. We see he useth exceeding earnestness and importunity to have him received to his Masters favor. The condition of *Onesimus* was this, he was a servant of the basest calling. For men Servants and Maid-servants in those days were not as they be now: Men had them not for Wages and hire, as they that wer bound to do no more then Covenant, but they were Bondslaues, to be bought and sold in the Market, and their Masters possessed them as Oxen and Cattle, and had power over them of life and death. Now, albeit he were a servant of this kind and condition, and had been besides a runagate and a Thief, deserving grievous punishment, even death; yet he pleadeth his cause being converted, with as great force and fervency as can be expressed. We learn, from this love appearing in the Apostle, that the basest person in the Church, truly converted & brought unto Christ, should not be contemned, but most lovingly, tenderly, and Brotherly regarded. The least & lowest member that belongeth to God, ought not to be rejected and debased, but highly for Christ's sake to be honored and respected. We see how Christ calleth unto him all that are weary and heavy laden, promising to ease and refresh them. Likewise he embraceth the poor and simple, as lovingly and cheerfully as the rich and wise of the world. The Publicans and sinners are accepted of him, that were hated of the Jews. The Woman taken in adultery, accused by the Pharisees, is exhorted by him to repentance. The Blind man restored to his sight, and cast out of the Synagogue, is sought out by Christ, and taught to believe, and brought to be a true member of the Church. The penitent Thief hanging upon the Cross, and hearing Christ preach, is converted to the Faith, and received into paradise. It is not the will of our heavenly Father, that one of these little ones should perish. When the prodigal son had wasted his wealth, and his strength in riotous living, so that necessity fell upon him, and Famine constrained him to eat of the husks wherewith he fed his Swine, his Father received him into his favor, and had compassion upon him: he willed him not to return back to his Harlots, and to betake himself to his former companions, but while he was yet a far off, he rejoiced to see him, and embraced him when he saw him, saying; *This my son was dead, but is alive again, he was lost, but he is found; and they began to be merry.* The incestuous *Corinthian* swept out of the Church, by the censures thereof, and delivered up to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, and wandering as a stray Sheep from the sheep-fold, is brought again into the house of God, and into the assembly of the faithful. The Apostle hearing of his sorrow for his sin, and of his unfeigned repentance, saith; *It is sufficient unto the same man, that he was rebuked of many, so that now contrary wise, ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, least the same*

should be swallowed up with overmuch heaviness. The like we see, & might say of *Mary Magdalene*, who was infamous in life, out of whom Christ cast seven devils. Of the Cananitish woman, whom he heard and helped: of the Cripple that lay at the Poole, whom when Jesus found in the Temple, he exhorted to sin no more, being now made whole, least a worse thing come unto him. Likewise the Evangelists declare, that by the power and love of Christ, the blind had their sight restored, the Leapers were cleansed, the dead were raised, the halt walked, the sick were healed, and the poor received the Gospel. So the Apostle willeth servants that are under the yoke, to account their Masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God & his Doctrine be not evil spoken of. All these places of Scripture, serve to teach us, that such as are of meanest account, and least estimation, being converted to the Faith, and belonging to Christ, are greatly to be regarded, and entirely to be beloved.

This shall not seem anything strange unto us, if we mark the Reasons whereupon it is grounded. For first, those that are least esteemed, and are of lowest condition, were bought with as great and high a price as others, and were redeemed not with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, but with the dear and precious blood of Christ. Rich and poor, high and low, great and small, had all one price paid for their ransom. This is the reason urged by Christ, *See that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven: for the son of man is come to save that which was lost.* If then, the least be redeemed by his death, and saved by faith in him, as well as the greatest; it followeth, that all should be regarded, none contemned; all loved, none despised. Hence it is also, that the Apostle chargeth those that are strong, to receive unto them the weaker sort, and not to despise them whom God hath received and for whom Christ hath died.

Secondly, there is no respect of persons with God. He doth not esteem men for accidental things; as for poverty, or riches; for honor, or dishonor. The poor, the fatherless, the widow, the stranger, the servant, are as dear to him, and as greatly respected of him, as those that are set in high places, & are honored with great callings. When we speak of a person in our talk and communication, we mean some man, or some woman; but the Scripture meaneth a more special thing, to wit; the outward quality or condition of man, which may purchase him grace or disgrace, favor or disfavour. When God will call us to his truth, and bestow his graces upon us, it is done according to his holy will and good pleasure; he is not moved to it by the outward appearance and condition of the person, he respecteth not Country, or sex, or birth, or riches, or poverty, or Nobility, or wisdom, or learning, or friends. This is it which the Apostle teacheth, *Al ye that are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, there is neither Jew, nor Grecian; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* And to the same purpose *Peter* speaketh, *Of a truth I perceive that God is no acceptor of persons, but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.* Seeing then, God accepteth the person of no man, he would have no man rejected for the meanness of his person.

Thirdly, they shall receive with others the same recompense of reward, the same kingdom of heaven, the same measure of glory. The differences that now are in this life, shall cease. As

there is now the same precious faith, so then there shall be the same precious felicity. The poorest members of Christ have the same spiritual graces that are necessary to salvation, and therefore shall be partakers of the same inheritance. This the Apostle *James* setteth down, chap. 2. *Hearken my beloved Brethren, hath not GOD chosen the poor of this world, that they should be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to them that love him?* He hath not prepared and provided one place of glory for those that are Rich, and another place for those that are poor; he hath not left one inheritance for the Noble, and another for the vnnoble; but as they have one Faith to apprehend Christ, so they shall have one glory to be like unto Christ. The Lord Jesus himself testifieth this, *In my Fathers house are many mansion places, if it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you.* If then, we consider these points, that the lowest in the Church, and the most unworthy to be of the Church, are bought with one & the same price, that God accepteth and respecteth no man's person, and that they shall receive with others an eternal weight of glory and immortality, we may conclude this as a necessary truth, that we ought not to be ashamed of any, though of the lowest sort, and poorest estate, and meanest condition, to whom God hath imparted and vouchsafed this mercy to believe in Christ, and to be a member of his body, and to be in the number of true believers.

The Doctrine being made evident, the Uses will be as apparent. First, seeing we are bound to love the lowest in the Church that belong to Christ, we learn that our affections must be carried most earnestly, and in the greatest measure to those that have the greatest measure of heavenly graces, not regarding Riches, or Kindred, or outward respects, before the other. It is a sound and sanctified love that is wrought in us toward those that are faithful. The Apostle in this place, was so far from being ashamed of *Onesimus* converted to Christ, and gained to the Gospel, though he were a Servant, and had been a Thief and a Runnagate, that he glorieth in his Faith, rejoiceth in his Conversion, accounteth him as his Son, and respecteth him as his own bowels. This affection no less then fatherly toward him, he expresseth afterward, *Receive him, not now as a Servant, but above a servant, even as a Brother beloved, specially to me, how much more then unto thee, both in the Flesh, and in the Lord? If therefore thou count our things common, receive him as myself.* He saw in this man being a Proselite, newly converted to the Faith, such fruits of sanctification, as seals of his conversion, that he loved him most dearly, and sought by all means to procure favor for him with his Master. Whatsoever the former life of men hath been, when once they make Conscience of their ways, beginning to lead an holy life, and to blot out the infamy & reproach of their conversation led in the time of their ignorance, it is our duty to begin to love them as entirely as our Brethren in Christ, and as children with us of the same Father.

The practice hereof we see in Christ our Savior, and have this instruction given us from his own mouth, *Matthew* 12. when it was told him, as he was preaching his word to the multitude that came to hear him, that his Mother and Brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him, he answered, *Who is my Mother, and who are my Brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his Disciples, and said, Behold my Mother and my Brethren: for whosoever shall do my Fathers will which is in heaven, the same is my Brother, and Sister, and Mother.* To this purpose the Prophet *David* speaketh, *All my delight is in the Saints that are upon the earth.* The Godly must be

most dear unto us, and we are bound to be kind to them, as to our Kin. For if they ought to be unto everyone of us, as the Mother & brethren, yea as the flesh & members of Christ, they ought not to be neglected or contemned, but to be cherished. Heereby we shall know that we are translated from death to life, if we love the brethren. On the other side, we ought to mourn and lament for such as remain in ignorance of God, lie under the dominion of sin, and continue in the profaneness and abominations of their youth. It is noted by the Prophet, that his eyes gushed out with rivers of waters because they kept not the law of God. Christ Jesus mourned for the hardness of heart that appeared in his hearers, he wept for *Jerusalem* when he came near unto it. Righteous *Lot* was vexed day by day, when he beheld the unclean conversation of the sinful *Sodomites*. The Apostle told the *Phillippians* of vain walkers, and that with tears, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ. We see by common and daily experience, when any of our friends and familiars are dead or lie at the point of death, a natural affection toward them causeth us to weep and lament for them, and draweth oftentimes from us abundance of tears; how much more ought it to go near us, and make us sob and sigh from the very depth and bottom of our hearts to see our brethren lie dead in sin, and as it were rotting in the Grave of their corruptions, or else to walk in the paths of death that bring with it certain destruction and eternal damnation. If a man should come into a field where he should behold thousands slain with the sword, wallowing in their blood, and others having received their deaths wound to languish in pain and to strive and struggle for life, who would not account it a lamentable show and most pitiful sight? But thus is it with us, and this is the condition of many thousands that glory that they abide in health, and yet are most dangerously sick and diseased; that think they are alive, and yet behold they are a company of dead carcasses, that boast they are far from the Gates of death, and yet (alas) they lie gaping and gasping for breath which is ready to be gone? If there be in us any life of God's spirit, or any love of Godliness, it cannot but grieve our souls to behold the desolations that are in the earth, and the languishing of many ready to die; nay, which are already dead in sin, and stink in the nostrils of God and man. For as a man having escaped shipwreck and gotten into an Haven and Harbour, reioyseth in his own safety, and comforteth himself in his deliverance, but when he behouldeth the misery of his brother suffering shipwreck and cast away by the violence of the storms and Tempestes that beat upon his bark, which drown both it and him in the Seas, he cannot but greatly be grieved, and exceedingly perplexed. So ought it to be with us, howsoever the escaping from the filthiness of the world, and the uniting of us with Christ our head, doth breed in us matter of great joy, and may worthily cause us to reioice, yet when we see the bondage of our brethren under sin, and the ruins into which they are come, it cannot but work in us great anguish of spirit. If we perceive them to wander out of the way and to go astray from the simplicity of the Gospel and from the fold of Christ and fellowship of the faithful, it is our part to turn them back and to gather them home. *For howthink ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave ninety and nine, and go into the Mountains, and seek that which is gone astray? and if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he reioyseth more of that sheep, then of the ninety and nine which went not astray, so is it not the will of your father which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.* This love toward the lowest that are converted to the faith and coupled to Christ, reproveth two sorts of men. First, such as are ashamed of

the poor Saints, who being without the comfort of friends, but not without contempt of the world, are not regarded or esteemed. He that despiseth his poor brother redeemed with the blood of Christ, would also despise and despite Christ himself if he walked upon the earth. He that honoreth not a faithful man of low degree, doth dishonor the faith it self and reproacheth the Gospel that he professeth; yea, he despiseth the Church, and shameth such as are members of it. This the Apostle James teacheth, *If there come into your company a man with a Gold Ring and in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poore man in vile raiment, and ye have a respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a goodly place: and say unto the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my Footstool. Are ye not partial in yourselves, and become Judges of evil thoughts?* The needy servants of God and poor afflicted Saints are ashamed and blamed of the world, they are scorned and scoffed at by the ungodly: shall we then, that are of the same Religion, profession, and communion, join hand in hand with them, and contemn the faithful that deserve to be honored; thereby adding more sorrow to their affliction, and doubling the misery that is upon them. For it must needs lie heavy upon them and even oppress them with anguish, to find this measure at our hands, of whom they looked for comfort and counsel. This appeareth in the saying of the Prophet, *Surely mine enemy did not defame me, for I could have borne it, neither did mine adversary exalt himself against me, for I would have hid me from him, but it was thou (O man) even my companion, my guide, and my familiar.* It is made a note and mark whereby we may try our selves whether we belong to the Church of God, and shall be received into the Kingdom of glory, that a vile person is contemned in their eyes, but they honor them that fear the Lord. But the practice of many men is directly contrary, who as they are of this world, they magnify and make much of the ungodly, but tread and trample under their feet the Children of God, as if they were a thing of no value. The Apostle blameth the Corinthians, and noteth it as a blot and blemish in them, that they put the poor to shame, separating themselves from them, and refusing to partake the supper of the Lord with them.

Secondly, it reproveth such as contemn those that have once sinned and fallen into gross and grievous sins, and albeit they be come out of the mire in which they wallowed, and renounce the wickedness in which they walked, yet they always remember them to their reproach, and speak of them to their infamy. But when once their sins become bitter unto them, and they have given good Testimony of their unfeigned repentance, we must not be unmerciful and without compassion toward them, but rather restore them with the spirit of meekness, considering our selves, least we also be tempted. The former failings in faith or obedience are not to be objected, or they rejected with reproach after repentance. God remembereth their sins no more, and therefore we ought to forgive and forget them. They that truly turn unto God, and repent of their sins from the bottom of their hearts, have blotted out the stain of it before men, and must be esteemed of us, as if they had not fallen or offended. For even as the Prophet teacheth, that if the Righteous turn away from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, all the righteousness that he hath done, shall not be mentioned, but in the transgression that he hath committed, and in the sin that he hath sinned, in them he shall die: so if the wicked shall return from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all the statutes of God, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall

surely live and shall not die, all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him, but in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Sin indeed bringeth a wound with it, but when once repentance cometh, the wound is cured, and the scar is healed, and the remembrance of it is abolished, for God will blot it out of his book of remembrance.

Secondly, seeing every member of Christ must be much esteemed, be he never so mean, it teacheth us not to have the religion of God & the faith of Christ in acceptatiō of persons. We must esteem of the faith that is grounded on our Lord Jesus Christ simply, according to the excellency and sincerity thereof, and not regard it, in one more, and in another less, according to the condition of one above another in outward things. This corrupt opinion and deceitful judgment is reprov'd by the Apostle *James* in his Epistle Chap. 2. *My brethren have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ in respect of persons.* Where he teacheth, that the profession of the faith ought to be esteemed with a single eye and a simple affection, and that partial affection of one before another is to be avoided. But may we not prefer one before another, and is it unlawful to have respect of degrees among men? may I not honor a wicked man with honor due to him, and set up the ungodly in higher place above the Godly? yes, in outward respects everyone is to be advanced and revered according to his calling without respect of his Godliness or ungodliness; of his Religion or superstition; of his faith or infidelity. For to whomsoever God hath given preeminence, it is our duty to yield them obedience. A wicked father is to be honored no less then a Godly, an hard Master is to be feared no less then a gentle, a wicked Prince is to be served no less then a faithful. It is God's Ordinance that hath lifted them up above others. The purpose of the Apostle is not to take away, no not from evil men their external dignity, or to draw others to deny them duty, but his meaning is, that we ought not to measure the soundness of faith, or the truth of Religion, by outward perogatives, or to conclude that such have a right profession and true belief, because they have Riches, and are men of authority; and the faith of others contemned, because they are poor in goods, few in number, weak in strength, low in degree, base in birth, and mean in all outward things, which are greatly accounted off in the world. This reproveth such as stand upon men's outward persons, and make the quallity and condition of the outward appearance a rule to try and examine their faith and Religion. These are such as build upon the Sand, and set their house upon a slight and slender foundation, which is soon shaken and suddenly falleth to the ground. These are such as measure the matters of faith by the deceitful line of men's persons. Hence it is, that if a man persuade his brother that he holdeth an error, and move him to embrace the truth, though he be convinced by the Testimony of the Prophets and Apostles, yet he will readily reply and answer; you are not learned, you are no Scholar, you have not been at the Vniuersity, other great men are of another mind, who are before you in age, above you in knowledge, and beyond you in judgment. Exhort a man in these days to hear the word with all diligence, and to attend unto it with all carefulness, as to the Ordinance of God, and the ordinary means to work in us salvation, tell him that he that is of God must hear God's word, show him that every man should be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath, convince his conscience that he must desire the sincere milk of the word that he might grow thereby, he is wise in his own

conceit to shift off all these instructions, and to deceive himself: saying, If this were so needful and necessary a duty, we should not have so many great men, and rich men, neglect the word: They like not this so much preaching and preciseness, we see such are great Clerks and profound Divines do preach seldom, some once or twice a year, others once a month, why cannot we be content to follow them? They know their duty they read the Scriptures, they are deep learned men, they would preach oftener, if it were required of us to hear oftener? These are they that build upon men, and think to excuse themselves by other men's corrupt examples. These are they that look only to others, and rejoice to follow a multitude to do evil. These are they that are like to the Pharisees mentioned in the Gospel, who said to their Officers sent out to apprehend Christ, returning empty again, *Are ye also deceived? do any of the Rulers believe in him, or of the Pharisees? but this people which know not the Law are cursed.* We must not, hang upon the pleasure of men, though they be great in the world, noble in birth, rich in wealth, high in calling, many in number, mighty in strength, glorious in account and reputation of others. We must consider, not so much whether great and learned men like and approve of it, as whether it be agreeable to the truth of the word of God or not. One man defending a truth is to be preferred before an hundredth others, holding and upholding an error or heresy, and we are rather to believe a poor and silly man grounding himself upon the scriptures, before a thousand Doctors building upon human Traditions and unwritten verities. If these men that are blind themselves, and look upon all things through other men's spectacles, had lived in the days of *Elijah, Micaiah, and Jeremiah*, when the truth of God was so often contradicted and ouerswaied by multitudes of men, when for one true Prophet of God there were five hundredth false Prophets, whom would they have believed? whom would they have received? whom would they have condemned? It would have gone hard with the truth and been evil spoken off by the evil mouths and malicious tongues of these partial Judges. They would have said, *Elijah* is but one, the Prophets against him are many, are not they liker to see the truth then he? Thus the faith of Christ and pure Religion is not weighed in the balance of the Sanctuary, nor measured with a just *Ephah* and a true *Hin*, but with false weights and deceitful balances, which are an abomination unto the Lord. In all causes and questions that rise, the word of God must judge.

Thirdly, this giveth comfort and contentment to the meanest & smallest of God's Saints, and putteth them in remembrance not to be discomfited and out of heart for their mean calling or for their low estate, for they are nothing the less regarded of God or to be esteemed of his Church. They have as great an interest in all God's blessings, as the richest sort, and many times a greater; they have as great a portion in Christ, as the mightiest men, and many times a greater. *For God hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree, he hath filled the hungry with good things, and sent away the rich empty.* What grace of God, what means of salvation, is hidden from these poor little ones, so accounted off by the men of this world? They have interest in the word and Sacraments, they have free access to come into the glorious presence of God, to pray unto him, and to pour out their supplications before him, as well as they that swell with riches and abound in earthly things. When God had made a covenant with *Abraham*, and planted his Church in his family, he gave Circumcision as a sign and seal thereof, not only to *Abraham*, but to all his house, and commanded him to

Circumcise not only himself and his seed, but all the men of his household, both borne in his house, and bought with money of the stranger. Whereby we see, that the lowest of his servants and bondmen that belonged unto him, have as great right to the Covenant, and as good a Title to the promises of God as he had; in as much as they were assured by the commandment of God, that the visible sign that was in their flesh was not in vain. The like we see in the Apostle writing to the *Corinthians*, *Moreover brethren, I would not have you ignorant, that all our fathers were under that Cloud, and all passed through that Sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in that Cloud and in that Sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.* This people was a great body standing of many members, some of them were the Elders of the people, and the heads of the families, others were of the lower sort and of inferior degree, yet they had alike privilege in the Sacraments, and the Apostle five times remembereth that all of them were partakers of them. This is it that made him say in another place, *Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it; for he that is called in the Lord being a servant, is the Lord's free-man; likewise also, he that is called being free, is Christ's servant.* We see this in the members of our natural bodies, some members are more high and honorable than others, yet none are contemned. We have a care, not only of the head and heart, of the hands and lively parts, but of the least and smallest that belong to the body; *Yea, much rather those Members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary: and upon those Members of the Body which we think most dishonest, put we more honesty on, and our uncomely partes have more comliness on: for our comely parts need it not, but GOD hath tempered the body together, and hath given the more Honor to that part which lacked, least there should be any division in the body, but that the Members should have the same care one for another.* So ought none that belong to Christ Jesus to be neglected. He contemneth Christ himself, whosoever contemneth the least member that belongeth unto him. This Christ our Savior showeth, *Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him ehat a Mill-stone were hanged about his Necke, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea.* As this causeth contentment in the poor, so it worketh Humility in the rich, considering that their Honor, Wealth, Authority, and such like privileges of the flesh, cannot commend the more to God, or to the Saints, but their soundness in Faith, and sincerity in life, according to the saying of the Apostle *James*, *Let the Brother of low degree, rejoyce in that he is exalted.* Again, *He that is rich in that he is made low, for as the flower of the grass shall be vanish away.* The poorest man that is of base account and reckoning in the World, hath as great and as good a Title to Christ, as the greatest men that be. They have not so great a portion in outward blessings, but they have as great a part in Heavenly Graces. He that hath Christ is a Rich man, he bringeth with him all things else; for in him are hid, all treasures which we are bound to seek after. He that wanteth Christ, is a poor beggar, if he had his house full of Silver and Gold, and possessed Mountains of Pearls and precious Stones. The Apostle teacheth, that *If we be Christ's, then we are Abraham's seed, and heirs by promise;* so, that the poorest person that is in the Church, if he believe in Christ, is in the place of *Abraham*, and succeedeth him in the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven, which is a greater Honor and preferment unto them, then the want of outward benefits can bring abasement. This is a most worthy and excellent comfort, whereof we shall be assured,

if we walk in the steppes of faithful *Abraham*, if we repent and believe in Christ, and walk worthy of our calling.

[*I beseech thee for my Son Onesimus.*]

The party for whom the Apostle entreateth, is in these words both named and described. He is described, first by relation, when he calleth him *His Son*; secondly, by the means and manner how he is his son, by a spiritual generation, through the immortal seed of the Gospel, and through the ministry of the word in the time of his restraint and imprisonment at *Rome*. Touching the former point, which is the Title given unto *Onesimus*, he esteemeth him as his Son, and therefore accounteth himself as his Father. If then *Onesimus* be his son, the Apostle must needs be his Father; and if *Paul* be his Father, he must needs be his son. For the Father & the Son have mutual reference one to another, & cannot consist one without the other. We learn from this name given unto *Onesimus* converted to the Faith, that there ought to be the same affection between the Pastor and the people, which is between the Father and the Son. The same love that is between Parents and their Childeren, ought to be between the Shepherd and his flock, between the Steward & the household, between the Master & the Scholar, between the Minister & the people, between him that winneth, and them that are won to the Faith of the Gospel. The Apostle *Paul* writing to *Timothy* and *Titus*, calleth them his natural and beloved sons, according to the common Faith, because he had begotten them by the seed of the Gospel to be the Children of God, without which new birth, they could not belong to his kingdom. So, when the King of *Israel* came to the Prophet *Elisha*, who lay sick in his bed, he wept upon his face, and said, *O my Father, my Father, the Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen of the same*. Likewise, *John* writing unto his beloved *Gaius*, declareth that he rejoiced greatly when the brethren came & testified how he walked in the truth, and addeth; *I have no greater joy then these, to hear that my sons walk in verity*. And *Paul* writing to the *Corinthians*, toucheth this at large, *I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I admonish you; for though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel*. To this purpose he also speaketh to the *Thessalonians*, *We were gentle among you, even as a Nurse cherisheth her children: Thus being affectioned toward you, our good will was to have dealt unto you, not the Gospel of GOD only, but also our own souls, because ye were deer unto us*. And afterwards in the same Chapter, *Ye know how that we exhorted you, and comforted, & besought everyone of you (as a Father his children) that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory*. These allegations are so many witnesses of this doctrine, teaching that it is a most tender affection of Love and compassion that ought to be between him that teacheth, and them that are taught in the word.

This will farther appear by the Reasons whereby it is confirmed unto our Consciences. First, the Ministers of God give as a being in Christ, and consequently to be the children of God, which is the best being and birth that can be bestowed upon us, the word of God being the precious and immortal seed, and they by teaching and applying it, are the Instruments, whereby through God's blessing we are begotten to be new borne babes in Christ, and of the children of men, or rather the children of the Devil, are made the sons and daughters of

almighty God. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.* And Peter in his first Epistle showeth, *That we are borne again, not of mortal seed, but of immortal, by the word of God, who liveth and endureth forever.* So then, by their Ministry we are made alive, that before were dead; we are made sons that before were enemies; we are made Cittizens that before were strangers; we are made heirs, that before were Aliants.

Secondly, the Ministers of the Gospel are as our Mothers, and do conceive us in their womb, travel with us in pain, and bring us forth as with labor of Childbed, to fashion us in grace, and to perfect us in Christ. We know the Sorrowes, the Paines, the Passions, and the perilles of a Woman's travail to be exceeding great: so the measure of the Ministerial pains and labor is marvelous great, which the Apostle expresseth, *2 Cor. 11, 23. He endured labors abundantly, stripes unmeasurably, imprisonment plenteously, the danger of death continually. Elijah, being raised up of God to restore Religion, to pull down Idolatry, to destroy Baals Priests, and to set himself against the enemies of God, was at length so worn with care, so wasted with sorrows, and so wearied in this business, that he desired the Lord to take him out of the world, saying; It is now enough, O Lord, take my soul, for I am no better then my Fathers.*

The pains and perplexity of the Prophet *Isaiah*, made him cry out alowde with great anguish of spirit, *My leunnesse, my leaunnesse.* So *Jeremiah* crieth out, *My belly, my belly, I am pained at the very heart, mine heart is troubled within me;* declaring thereby, that his gripings and griefs in his Ministry were so great, that they were like the pains of a vehement Colicke. Likewise the Apostle, being careful to bring back the *Galatians* to the truth of the Gospel which they had forsaken, saith; *My little children, of whom I travel in birth again, till Christ be formed in you;* meaning, that he endured much trouble, and sustained great pains, to fit them & frame them to God's kingdom. Seeing then, the Ministers of Christ be as spiritual Fathers and Mothers; Fathers to beget us, and Mothers to bear us, and bring us forth, we may concludde, that the Pastors and people have as near a conjunction between them, as Parents and their children.

But because somewhat may be objected against this truth, we will remove those doubts, and take away those Objections, before we proceed any further, or handle the Uses that are to be learned of us. First, our Savior saith, *Math. 23, 9. Call no man your Father upon the earth, for there is but one your Father, which is in heaven: Bee not called Doctors, for one is your Doctor, even Christ.* If then, God only be our Father, and no man is to be called by this name, either we must account the Ministers God's, which were blasphemy; or debar and deny them this Title, which were contrary unto other Scriptures. I answer, Christ doth not in these words forbid the denomination, but restrain the ambition of men, as appeareth by the conclusion of the words, *Verse 12. Whosoever will exalt himself shall be brought low, and whosoever will humble himself shall be exalted.* Hence it is, that the Apostle calleth himself as well the Doctor of the Gentiles, as the Father of the *Corinthians*. It is one thing to have the name, and another thing greedily to hunt after it, and proudly to challenge it to our selves. Besides, touching the fountain of our first birth, and the foundation of our faith and regeneration; he is our only Father, we ascribe it to no man upon the earth. But even as touching our natural being, he hath ordained subordinate causes as his Instruments and fellow-workers, to beget us, and bring us into this world, and to give us life, whom he doth honor with the titles of Fathers

and Mother. So touching our new birth, although it be the sole work of the spirit, and therefore proper to God, yet because he worketh it by the word & Sacraments, the preaching and dispensation whereof, he hath committed to the Ministers, and appointed to be conveyed to men by their means, he doth communicate to them the appellation of Fathers, as those whom he useth, to bring us & beget us unto God. So then, *Paul* so giveth himself the name of Father, as that he neither robbeth God, nor taketh from him the least jot of the honor that is due to his name. For it is a common rule, that they are not contrary, which are subordinate. When one is under another, and inferiorly ordered & ordained to another, there is a good agreement between them. God is the choice cause, *Paul* is the Instrumental.

Again, the Apostle depresseth and derogateth from the Ministry, and saith, *I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase*. So then, neither is he thar planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. How then doth it come to pass, that he doeth there so much debase them, and here so greatly honor them, as to make them fellow workers, yea, fellow-fathers with God? He may seem to be unconstant as a Reede shaken with the wind, and to lift up and cast down at his own pleasure. I answer, the contrariety is not in the words of the Apostle, the difference is in the persons with whom he dealeth, and to whom he writeth. So there seemeth a contradiction between *Paul* and *James*, in the matters of Faith and Good-works, *Paul* saith, *We are not justified by works*; *James*, saith, *We are justified by Works*; *Paul* saith, *We are not justified but by Faith*; *James* saith, *We are not justified by Faith only*. Here is a show of dissention, but it is only in show, not in truth: for then, in one of them should be no truth. The Reason why they use a different order of teaching, is the diversity of the Scholars, which they instructed, and the contrary affection of such as they taught and informed. *Paul* had to do with Iusticiaries that sought to be justified partly by faith, and partly by works; partly by Christ, & partly by themselves; partly by somewhat in another, and partly by somewhat in themselves; partly by the merits of another, and partly by their own strength and merits. *James* had not to do with such persons, but with Libertines and loose livers, which confessed in words free Justification thorough Faith in Christ, yet they were deceived and had not learned, that all those that are justified, are also sanctified, that all that are in Christ, are become new Creatures, that they are borne anew, and walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, and therefore thought works needless and fruitless. Thus *Paul* dealt in this place. If at any time he saw so much honor given to the Ministers, as that God's honor was diminished, or any way obscured, and so he robbed of his glory; then he pulled down their estimation, that God might have his right, and be unto us all in all. But if on the other side, they were debased and disgraced (as in these days they are) whereby the word also was abhorred, and God, the Author of it, and the ordainer of them dishonored; they ought to have their due, they are to magnify their office, and to be esteemed as the Ministers of Christ. As for example, when we have to deal either with the Anabaptists, that wait for revelations, and utterly reject the Ministry & Ministers of the word, or with those profane Atheists of our time, who contemn them, and count them idle and of no use, and so have no regard of them, or respect unto them: we are to show in what an high calling God hath seated them. He saith of them, *It is not you that speak, but the spirit in you*. He saith of them, *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me*. He

saith of them, *Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted; & whose sins ye retain, they are retained.* This serveth to stop the mouths of carnal men, and alloweth us to know our selves, when the world will not know us, or acknowledge us. But when we have to deal with those of the Church of Rome, who make their Pope a God on earth, and set their Cardinals and Clergy above the word, we are to be taught what the Ministry is of itself, being separated from the spirit of God; an empty sound without force, and a bare Instrument without effect in the hand of the workman, that can do nothing of it self, but as it is used and applied by the work-man. Thus much of the removing of such Objections, as might hinder the use and profit of this Doctrine.

Now let us come to consider the Uses, which are either general, belonging jointly both to the Pastors & people; or special, belonging to either of them. First, seeing the Minister and people ought to love as Father and Son, it teacheth them to cut off all occasions of discord and division, and to nourish love and mutual concord one with another. It may be many occasions may arise, which if by wisdom they be not smothered and suppressed in the beginning, they are as little sparks that quickly break out into a flame, and the flame suffered to continue consumeth all things that are near unto it. We must show our selves ready to bring water to quench this fire. We must stop the Flood-gates, that the streams of contention do not over-flow, and in the end drown us as in the deep waters. It is a deceitful snare, and wonderful subtlety of Satan, to cast matters of dissention between the Minister and people (as it were a bone to gnaw upon) that so though the word be among them, yet that it may by that means be with less fruit and profit with them. Well doth this enemy of mankind know, that where there is hatred to the person, there can be no love to his preaching; and where there is desire of contention, there can be no hope of edification. For whom the people hate, they regard not to hear; and where there is no liking to the man, there will follow a loathing of his Ministry. We see this in the example of *Ahab toward Elijah* and *Micaiah*, whom he hated to the death, and professeth his enmity toward them, and therefore despised the word that came from their mouths. When *Elijah* reproveth him for killing of *Naboth*, and taking possession of the Vineyard, he said, *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?* So when *Jehoshaphat* asked, if there were not a Prophet of the Lord that they might enquire of him, *Ahab* who had sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, answered; *There is yet one man, Michaiah the Son of Imlah, by whom we may ask counsel of the Lord, but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good unto me, but evil.* Where we see, he hated the Prophet, and therefore abhorred his prophesy, and regarded not to have him in his presence. We may behold this in the example of the Scribes and Pharisees toward *Paul*, they could not abide him nor his doctrine, so that he was employed principally among the Gentiles. On the other side, as the people love the Ministers from the heart, so for the most part they profit by them. The Apostle giveth this Testimony of the *Galatians*, that they loved him exceedingly, and therefore regarded his Doctrine accordingly, *The trial of me which was in my flesh ye despised not, neither abhorred; but ye received me as an Angel of GOD, yea, as Christ Jesus: what was then your felicity? For I bear ye record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them unto me.* Hence it is, that Christ and his Apostles labor to plant this truth, and to settle this persuasion in the hearts of those whom they taught, that

they were dearly beloved to them. When the Disciples were afraid at Christ's words, he answered again & said unto them, *Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches, to enter into the kingdom of God.* So the Prophet *Isaiah* speaketh, *Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are as signs and as wonders in Israel.*

Thus do the Apostles write in this manner to the Churches, calling them beloved brethren, and dear children. As we have loving words in our mouths, so we should have loving affections in our hearts. It is a pitiful sight, & lamentable condition, when the Pastor in any place setteth himself against the people, and the people against the Pastor; when they that should love together as Father and Son, do wrangle together as Cats and Dogs, and are ever snarling and biting one of another. If a private house be divided against it self, it cannot stand; so, if a particular Church, be in a bitter mutiny, it runneth to ruin, and is miserably torn in pieces. It is a great praise of that congregation, where they are at peace and unity, join together in the word & Sacraments, and sing the Psalms and songs of God, to his endless praise. It is a comfortable thing, when the people rejoice in their Minister, & the Minister in his people: when the people desire and delight in the company of their Minister, and the Minister in the company of his people, and so take comfort in the sweet society one of another. This reproveth those, that upon every slight occasion, for every slender profit, yea for every toy & trifle, follow suits of Law, and bring actions of trespass one against another, whereby they trouble not only their neighbors at home, but the Country abroad. These have forgotten the words of *Abraham* to *Lot*, when a debate arose among their Heard-men, *Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee & me, neither between mine Heard-men, and thine Heard-men, for we are Brethren.* It is therefore a great shame and reproach to hear of such jars and civil wars as are in many parishes. It is a plain argument that there is little love between them, and less good wrought among them. The Minister accounteth them not as his Sons and Daughters, he seeketh not to win them to the faith, he esteemeth them not as his Crown in the day of the Lord. On the other side, the people do not reverence their Minister as their father, but hate him as their enemy. God is not among such Ministers and people, but is gone far from them, and they are departed far from him. *God is love, & they that dwell in love, dwell in God, and God in them.* If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfect in us. The Devil is the Father & fountain of all debate and hatred, *For where envying and strife is, there is sedition, and all manner of evil works.* How then can we otherwise think, but that Satan beareth rule among them, and possesseth the chief hold of their hearts, seeing so small tokens of love, and so great fruits of the Old man, nay of the old Serpent, appear among them? Wherefore, to return thither from whence we began, we must remember the amiable names given to the Pastor and people, they must consider they are as Father and Son, nearly coupled and joined together, and thereby stir up themselves, and admonish one another of their duties, to open their hearts in love, and again to shut them up, that hatred have no entrance into them, and that malice do not abide in them.

Secondly, these most loving Titles applied to the Minister and people, show the duties required of Pastors toward their charge, and teach them to love them as their children, to tender their good, to exhort them to lay up for themselves spiritual riches. Great is the love of Parents towards their Children. If the Child be sick or wayward, they do not cast him out

of doors, or withdraw their affections from him. Hence it is, that Christ when he saw the people scattered abroad, and dispersed here and there as Sheep without a Shepherd, *He had compassion upon them, and shown great love toward them.* We see how Christ applieth this to the Conscience of *Peter*, & willeth him to try his love toward him, by feeding his Sheep and Lambes, thereby assuring him, that if he persuaded himself to love Christ Jesus, and yet was not careful to teach his people, he deceived himself, and lied to the Holy-Ghost, who would find him out in his sin. This serveth to reprove sundry corruptions, and to meet with many abuses in the Ministers, that make them unworthy of the name of Fathers, and testify that their hearts are empty of this unfeigned love, that ought to be in them towards God's people, whom they should affect as dear Children. First, it condemneth the willful and ordinary absence of the Pastor from his flock that is committed to his care and charge, whereby the duties of teaching, and example of life, in his own person are neglected. True it is, there may just and lawful causes of the Pastors absence sometimes fall out, so that the Church be not endamaged, but as far as is possible be sufficiently provided for: as sickness of body, whereby he is restrained; Church affairs, whereby he is hindered; Persecution, whereby he is enforced to fly; Private affairs, whereby he is necessarily constrained for a time to be absent: but a willful, long, and continued Non-residency from that particular Congregation enjoined him to feed, is evidently convinced by many Reasons grounded upon the word of God, and the practice of the Church of Christ. The Scriptures of the old and New Testament, do directly forbid it. The Lord saith by his Prophet *Isaiah*, *I have set Watchmen upon the walls, O Jerusalem, which all the day, and all the night continually shall not cease; ye that are mindful of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he repair, and till he set up Jerusalem the praise of the world.* The Prophet *Ezekiel* is plentiful in this argument, who speaking of unfaithful Levites, saith; *Ye have not kept the ordinances of mine holy things, but you yourselves have set others to take the charge of my Sanctuary.* So the Prophet *Zacharias* setteth down this as a great judgment of the Lord, *I will raise up a Shepherd in the Land, which shall not look for the thnig that is lost, nor seek the tender Lambes, nor heal that which is hurt, nor feed that which standeth up; but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their Clawes in pieces.* It is noted of *Solomon*, when he built the Temple to be the place of preaching and Prayer, (which he did according to the word of God) he also built Houses and Chambers round about the Temple, & joined unto it, to teach the Priests and Levites that they should be near unto their charges.

For this cause also it is expressed; *That Eli the Priest of God, sate at the door of the Tabernacle, to espy the manners, and to answer the doubts of those that came and resorted unto him.* And the Apostle *Paul* expressing the Priests function, saith; *They did minister about the holy things, and did wait at the altar:* He useth a word of great force and strength, that bindeth them to a continual residency and sitting at their charge. If we come to the New Testament, we shall see sundry directions, importing and implying the Pastors presence with his people. The Apostle speaking to the Elders of *Ephesus*, saith; *Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the Flock, whereof the holy Ghost hath made you Ouer-seers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood: for I know this, that after my departing, shall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not sparing the Flock.* The Apostle *Peter* likewise exhorteth the Elders, *Feede the Flock of God which dependeth upon you, caring for it, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a*

ready mind. The Apostle to the *Hebrews* warneth the Church, *To obey them that have the oversight of them, and submit themselves, for they watch for their Souls, as they that must give accounts.* It is a great wonder, that negligent Pastors reading these places, and considering these charges laid upon their shoulders, can so easily shake them off, or so slightly pass them over, or so soon forget them. They may seem more then sufficient to convince them of want of love, of abundance of covetousness, of excess of idleness, of hardness of heart, of contempt of the word, which they should teach to others. A great and heavy judgment of God is upon them, that can pass over this duty without fear and trembling, that can see neither the danger of their own souls, nor the danger of the people's Souls through want of instruction.

Again, the Titles given to the Ministers under the Gospel, as also to the Prophets and Priests under the Law, do urge diligence, faithfulness, and careful attendance; and consequently, the personal presence of the Pastor. They are called, Shepherds, Watch-men, Stewards, Captains, Builders, Ambassadors, and such like; so that, though they teach oftentimes by themselves, and continually and constantly by others, they are not excused. The office of the Minister is set forth in the Picture of a Shepherd, who, by reason of the multitude of ravenous Wolves & other hurtful Beasts, keepeth watch day and night over his flock. He is a Watch-man set in his Watch-Tower to discry the enemy, and to give warning of the danger. He is a Steward to provide for the Family, and to give them their portion of meat in due season. He is a Captain of the Lord's Hoast, to lead them into the obedience of godliness, and to go before them in example of life. He is a Builder, to frame them and fit them to be stones in the Lord's building. He is an Ambassador, to deliver the will of him that sent him, and to speak being called, as the words of God. These comparisons, as they serve to teach diligence and continuance in preaching, so they are forcible to press him to attend upon his charge, that attendeth upon him.

Thirdly, the Apostle speaking of the office of the Minister, saith; *Who is sufficient for these things?* When he hath done all he can, and employed himself to the utmost of his power, yet he shall come far short of his duty: how much more, when he is ordinarily absent from his charge, which requireth his ordinary presence?

Fourthly, it is against the order of Nature, the rule of reason, and the law of Justice, to take wages for that work which he doth not perform; and to eat where he doth not labor. It is a great wrong and injury done to those that labor in feeding the Flock, to be denied to eat of the Milk of the Flock: to do the service, and another to receive the reward: to take the Corn, and to give others the Straw: to sow spiritual things, and to be deprived of temporal things: to bear the burden, and to endure the heat of the day, and other to come and take away the penny and price for which they covenanted. It is a kind of theft to eat without labor, and to feed themselves without taking pains.

Fifthly, the danger is very great, that groweth both to the Pastors and people, by this sin of absence and want of attendance. For if any of the Souls which belong unto their charge do perish through their negligence, and starve through want of food, they shall be arraigned as guilty of their death and destruction. The Prophet *Ezekell* setteth down the threatening of God, *When I shall say unto the wicked! O wicked man, thou shalt die the death, if thou dost not speak*

and admonish the wicked of his way, that wicked man shall die for his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand. Hereunto accordeth the saying of Christ; *If the Blind lead the Blind, both shall fall into the Ditch.* The loss of the flock, is the reproach of the Shepherd: and the people's destruction, shall be the Pastors confusion. And when the Pastor is absent, the people will soon decline, from zeal to coldness, fall from virtue to vice, turn from the worship of God to Idolatry, revolt from the works of piety, to damnable security. Let a man withhold his hand, and cease from sowing good seed, or under-sow his ground by sparing his Corn, Thistles and Weedes will spring up instead thereof. Let a man have food withdrawn from him, and abstain from nourishment that feedeth the body, he shall be filled with wind, and fall into weakness. When Moses was absent from the Children of Istaell but forty days, while he was talking with God in the Mountain, they committed horrible Idolatry, and turned the glory of God into the similitude of a Calf that eateth hay. *Iehoash the King of Judahdid that which was good in the sight of the Lord, all his time that Jehoiada the Priest was with him, and taught him: but after his death, both, King, and Princes, & people, left the house of the Lord God of their Fathers, and erected Groues, and served Idols, so that wrath came upon them, because of this their trespass.* This also experience taught the Apostle in the Church of the Galatians: while he was present, they kept the Faith, they turned neither to the right hand nor to the left, they did cleave to the Doctrine of Christ's Gospel: but when he was gone, the false Apostles entered, and took occasion by his absence, to sow Tares among the Wheat, and to corrupt the truth with Leaven of false Doctrine. When the Shepherd is gone, the Wolves may safely enter into the Sheepfold, not sparing the Flock. When the Watch-man is gone or fallen asleep, the Enemy may enter and sack the City. When the Husbandman that sowed good seed in his field is departed, the envious man came and sowed Cockle and Darnell among the Corn. While the people have the presence and residence of their faithful Pastor to feed them, and to go in and out before them, both in Doctrine and example, yet such is the weakness of Flesh, the corruption of Nature, the strength of sin, the subtlety of the Enemy, the vanity of the world, the inconstancy of human things, that they are ready to fall and to give over; albeit I say that he be with thē, and conversant among them, and remain in the midst of them? If then much evil be done while the Ouer-seers are present, much more will be committed while they are absent, while there is none to stay them, while the Bridle is cast in their own necks. Thus Moses proveth that the people would corrupt themselves, and turn from the right way after his death, because they had been rebellious and stiff-necked he being alive. *Deut. 31, 27, 29. I know thy rebellion and thy stiff-neck: behold, I being yet alive with you this day, ye are rebellious against the Lord: how much more then after my death?*

Sixthly, the necessity of having the presence of the Pastor continually to call upon the people, appeareth herein, because the danger of the Wolf is continual, and therefore the use of the Shepherd is continual. The Apostle telleth the Elders of *Ephesus, That he knoweth this, that after his departing, grievous Wolves would enter in among them, not sparing the Flock.* Besides, Satan is busy in tempting, subtle in undermining, crafty in deceiving, malicious in spoiling, and cruel in destroying: he compasseth the earth too and and fro, and walketh up and down in it. Now, the more diligent the spiritual enemy is, the more violent and watchful ought the Pastor to be. If the good man of the House knew at what hour the Thief would come to rob

and to steal, doubtless he would watch, and not suffer his house to be broken down. Hence it is that *Peter* saith; *Be sober and watch, for your adversary the Devil as a roaring Lyon, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.* And surely this is the cause, that in some places the people are defiled with all abominations; in other places they are perverted and seduced by Jesuits and Seminary Priests, and in all places grow cold and careless in Religion, because they want means to guide them and stay them in the right way, they have not zealous Pastors to stir them up to godliness, and to drive away the Wolf far from them.

Seventhly, it is of evil report, a note of covetousness, or evil suspicion of it, and giveth great offense to the Church of God. For where there is an unnecessary absence of the Minister from his cure and charge, he giveth occasion to suspect, that he rather desireth to feed upon them, then to feed them: to seek theirs, then them: to prey upon them, then to pray with them: to possess their goods, then to win their Souls. We are commanded to abstain from all appearance of evil. And the Apostle approoueth his Ministry to the consciences of the *Corinthians* by this, *That he sought not theirs, but them.*

Eighthly, the inconvenience is great that cometh by this absence, it is the cause of a Vagrant, in-sufficient, idle, and reproachful Ministry, and an evident occasion of keeping out of sufficient men and able Work-men, both able and apt to teach, and of impouerishing such as are already entered. This is the cause of many wandering Levites, and of sundry that sit idle for want of employment.

Lastly, this ordinary absence is against the Statutes of Princes, and the decrees of Counsels, holden not only in the most pure times, but in the most palpable times, even as it were at midnight, when the whole earth was over-shaddowed with darkness. These appointed many Cannons and Constitutions, charging the Minister to be resident in God's Tabernacle, not to be absent from his Parish, lest he loose that excellent Talent which God hath bestowed upon him: appointing that no man should be ordained Minister of two Churches, but limiting him to remain in that, unto which he was first called. If any be called to another charge, let him simply give over the former, and claim no interest in it. If any be otherwise, he shall be prohibited from the Lord's Table, and be excommunicated.

Hitherto we have shown the necessity of the Pastors presence, and opened the reasons whereby it is confirmed and strengthened. Now it remaineth to answer such objections as are brought, to justify the ordinary absence from the charge which he hath taken upon him. There are many things brought and alleged to warrant this absence. *Solomon* teacheth, that the Sluggard is wiser in his own conceit, then seven men that can render a reason. The causes that are pretended to excuse and defend the Pastors absence, are taken partly from the holy Scripture, and partly from natural reason. First, they say it was lawful and lawfully practiced in *Epaphras*, who was the Minister of the *Colossians*; yea, a faithful Minister, yet absent from that Church. *Col.* 1, 7. and 4, 12. The like might be said of *Epaphroditus* absent from the *Phillippians*. I answer, first it doth not appear plainly and directly, that they were the Pastors of those Churches; rather it seemeth they were Evangelists, that went from place to place, and always seconded the labors of the Apostles. For it is to be thought that *Archippus* was the Pastor of the *Colossians*, who is charged to look to his Ministry that he had

received in the Lord, that he fulfill it. Secondly, their absence was not willful and ordinary, but they were employed by the necessary occasions of the Church, chosen and enjoined to dispatch the business thereof.

Again, they object that he which preacheth the Gospel, must live of the Gospel. 1 Cor. 9. but without joining Living to Living, as it were house to house, all cannot live by reason of the smallness and slenderesse of the living, therefore it is tolerable in some. I answer, the want of sufficient provision, cannot bring with it a sufficient toleration. It doth no more warrant the Act, then to do evil, that good may come thereof, whose damnation is just. If there be a roving Ministry among us, and a wandering up and down of such as offer their service for ten shekles of Silver, and a suit of apparel, and an ordinary allowance of meat and drink: it belongeth to the Magistrate to reform this disorder, and to redress this mischief. Thus it was among the *Jews* in the Old Testament: but this misery and calamity fell upon them, when there was no King in Israel. Secondly, it is better to take some other lawful means in such poverty of the Church, as to labor with the hands as *Paul* did, or to practice some other laudable science, which will be without offense to God or Man.

It is in his power to root up, that did plant: it belongeth to him to pull down, that did build: he can destroy, that doth preserve. But the positive Law of man appointed them their circuit and bounds, and consequently may order them as it thinketh, and may give leave of absence.

I answer, that Magistrates may not abrogate and abolish Laws constituted and conformed according to God's Laws. Again, the division of Parishes is not from men, but of God. For when the Scripture willeth Elders to be chosen for every Church, and that these assemblies should be with the greatest convenience of order and comeliness; it is plain, that thereby is prescribed, a division of national Churches into particular Congregations. For this cause *Paul* left *Titus* in *Creta*, that he should continue to redress the things that remain, and should ordain Elders in every City. So the Apostles ordained Elders by election in every Church.

Again, it may be said, a man may have two Livings, being by Law united, Therefore before they be united. I answer, if the union be such, that there may be but one body, and one competent and commodious resort thereof together in one place, so as one Pastor may fitly instruct them, and lead them out and in, in the duties of Religion, in the sanctification of the Sabbath, in the practice of holiness, and in example of life: then it followeth, that albeit it be lawful to make this conjunction, yet it is not proved lawful before the union. It is lawful, being made one Congregation, one assembly, one Church, which is unlawful so long as it remaineth divided, & maketh two Congregations, two assemblies, two Churches. For the Minister may conveniently teach them together, whom he cannot possibly teach asunder; as the School-master may teach the Scholars that belong to one School, but not those that belong to diverse.

Moreover, if it be unlawful, then especially in this point, and for this cause, because he receiveth maintenance where he doth not labor. But it is lawful to take wages, where there is no work done, as appeareth 2. Cor. 11, 8. Where *Paul* saith; *I robbed other Churches, and took Wages of you to do you service.* I answer, the place is to be understood of extraordinary

Ministers, and of extraordinary occasions, when, and where, no settled and sufficient maintenance is established, and therefore doth not prove the matter in question. And where as according to our division of Parishes, lands, are occupied by Forrainers and Strangers; and consequently, Tithes and duties taken of them, without any feeding of them, it was ordained to establish a certain, known, and definite maintenance, and besides the Minister not failing in his calling, they may be partakers of his labor.

Furthermore, it is objected, that Pastors are not tied to particular places, but are discharged by a general teaching. It skilleth not where they teach, so they be not idle. They are Ministers of the Church of England, and therefore may preach in any part of the Land, and are blameless. Therefore there is no unlawful non-residency. For God hath ordained (saith the Apostle) *That they which Preach the Gospel, may live of the Gospel*. I answer, they are not only Ministers of England, but of such a particular Congregation, and have their maintenance of such a particular Church, and therefore are bound to employ their labor in that particular place. He that hath not a particular charge and Church to care for, will care indeed for no Church as he ought to care. For if that which is cared for of all, is cared for of none: then he that hath but a general care, of one place no more then of another, commonly neglecteth all. When God sent *Jonah* the Prophet to *Nineveh*, he sinned in going to *Tarshish*. If he had preached never so duly and diligently in that Citty, when God called him to another, he had not discharged the duty of a good Prophet. Besides, whereas they say they are Ministers of England, & therefore sufficeth to preach in any corner or quarter of the Land: they may as well say they are Ministers of *Europe*, and consequently may preach in any part of *Europe*, and be discharged in conscience of any farther duty to be required of them. Nay, some are so shameless, as they dare openly avouch, that they are as much bound to the Church of Jerusalem, if they might have access thereunto, as to that people that called them, and do maintain them. Verily, this argueth little learning, and less conscience. For this were to change a Pastor into an Apostle, a limited office into an unlimited, and as great a wonder as to bring all the world into the circuit and compass of a little Town. And we see it is directly against the order of the Scripture, which calleth them Ministers of such and such a particular Church; as of *Ephesus*, of *Pergamos*, of *Sardi*, and the rest. So when general teaching is Apostolical, particular is Pastoral, which is limited to a certain place. Again, it is a thing in it self unreasonable, and to the people injurious, that they should receive their Wages in one place, and perform their service in another place: that one should give them their hire, and another have the profit of their pains. Would not a man think he had wrong done him, if he hyring a servant, another should take the labor of his hands? Or should that servant be excused, who having wages paid him by his Master, should apply himself in another man's work? Or, when a man hireth a shepherd to look to his sheep, will he not complain if they be neglected, and another man's sheep fed and attended? Or, can such a shepherd think his duty discharged, albeit he be never so diligent and watching in looking to the sheep of another? A Shepherd hath a particular Flock to attend, which he must watch: a Servant must dispatch his work that hath hired him. Thus it ought to be with every faithful Minister, he hath his special ground to Till, his proper house to build, his Flock to feed, his Citty to watch, his Army to lead, and may not wander out of the bounds and borders limited unto him.

Others allege in excuse of this absence, that many of them give necessary attendance upon their Lord's and their Families, and being their Household Chaplains, and so doing service to great persons, are forced to be absent from their Cures. I answer, this savoreth of covetousness, or of ambition, or rather of both. They have covetous hearts, and aspiring minds. If they have peculiar charges of their own, Who compelled them to be other men's Chaplains? Or if they be to attend upon their Lord's, who compelled them to take the charge of Souls? It was an usual thing among the godly Kings of *Judah*, to have their Prophets at their elbows to teach them, to stir them up to good things, and to keep them from falling into sin. The Prophet *David* had *Gad* the *Seer* belonging unto him, who was with him in his banishment, and was as his Counselor, he was retained both in prosperity and adversity with him. And it is a commendable thing, not only in Princes, but in men of State and high place, when they entertain such for a love of the truth, to instruct them and their families in the knowledge of godliness: when they esteem them as the Ministers of God, and give them (not single, but) that double honor which God's word alloweth them: and when they can be content to hear the Law at their mouths, and submit themselves to the obedience of that which is spoken unto them in the Name of the Lord. Yea, such as are so entertained, may highly advance God's glory, and do great good with such great men, and in such great Families, if they regard to do good service to God, rather then to themselves; if they do not flatter to please men, but deal carefully and conscionably in their places. But such as are of high calling, may have attendance and sufficient service done unto them by others, that are without Cures, and have no charge of souls committed unto them: and as they are willing to entertain them, so they are able to maintain them, that they shall not live of the Churches which they do not instruct.

Lastly, they pretend that they teach commonly by themselves, but continually by their substitutes. They come often among their people, and teach them by Curates which they have set in their places: and therefore they sin not by *Non-residency*. I answer, this often teaching is not sufficient, where continual watchfulness is required. The Lord never said unto him [*Teach often:*] but preach the word in season, and out of season. *He is accursed that doth the work of the Lord negligently. Jer. 48, 10.* Diligence is required, where danger is feared. The flocks that are in danger of the Wolf, are watched day and night. The Enemy is always at hand, and watcheth his advantage by the absence of the Pastor. If they could covenant and agree with the adversary, never to assault their charges, but at certaine times and seasons of the year, and bargain with him not to meddle in their absence, they had some good pretence for their negligence, and might be ready to meet him when he cometh to tempt and seduce their people.

Again, they cannot be discharged by a Deputy, where they are to perform personal duty: neither are they freed from blame by other men's gifts, where they are to practice their own gifts. These are like to the Priests, who being commanded to bear the Ark upon their own Shoulders, did set it upon a Cart, and draw it with Oxen. So ought the Ministers to feed their Flocks themselves, and not put them to be fed of others. Some compare such foolish and idle Pastors that put over their charges to others, unto Harlots, which so soon as they have brought forth their Children, by and by commit them to be kept and nourished of others,

that they may sooner give themselves to their lusts again. Others resemble them to a man that doth marry a Wife, and being himself unapt for generation, or unwilling to give due benevolence, is content she become fruitful, and made the Mother of many Children by another Father: so is he accounted and presumed to be as vain a man, who being espoused and married to a Church (as a man to his Wife) doth use the help of others in getting spiritual Children unto God. Christ Jesus is the Shepherd, the chief and great Shepherd of the Sheep, all other Pastors are but his Servants and Substitutes: and therefore themselves being his Deputies, they cannot make a Deputy, no more then one Servant discharge himself by another. So then, we must know, that they can no more be said to preach the Word, that preach by others; then to be resident, that are resident by others: or to be godly that lead a godly life by others; and thus they may be saved by others, and themselves go to Hell. But as every man is bound to live godly himself, so is every Pastor bound to preach in his own person. This appeareth under the comparisons and similitudes of Builders, Captains, Ambassadors, Stewards, and Shepherds, which we spake of before. When a man hath made choice of a skillful and cunning Builder to build his house, the Work-man hath not done his duty, if he put it out to be finished by another. When a Prince hath made choice of a General to lead his Army against the Enemy, he may not send another in his room, and himself sit idle at home, but his allegiance bindeth him to go in his own person. The like we might say of the rest. Thus we have seen at large, that the love between the Pastor and people overthroweth the ordinary absence, without just and conscionable causes the one from the other, so that if the Minister would assure his own heart that he loveth the sheep which he hath taken upon him to teach, he must show it by feeding them with the wholesome and heavenly pastures of the word of God.

Secondly, it reproveth such as outwardly are in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening Wolves unto the Flock; not careful Pastors, not loving Parents, but such as have no provision, no store, no food, no Bread of Life to break unto them, but seek to starve and famish them through want of Milk and meat to put in their mouths. If they be resident and remain with them, and yet do not instruct them, and preach unto them, it is all one as if they were absent from them. If there be meat and drink in the house, and none set upon the Table or given to the Children, they may die and perish for hunger.

These idle Drones are no better then Murderers and Man-slayers; nay, Soul-slayers, which is the greatest and most bloody Murder. For as the Steward that should feed the bodies of such as are in the Family, and pineth them to death, is a Murderer: and the Nurse, that undertaketh the nourishing of the Child, and yet either through daintiness or idleness, or willfulness, will not draw out the breast, but suffereth the Child to languish and perish, is a Murderer of the Child: so such as are Stewards of God's house, and Nurses of God's people, yet feed not their Souls, but starve them to death, are Blood-suckers and Murderers in the highest degree. They are worse then the Cannibals that live upon blood: for these live upon the souls of men, and carry them head-long to Hell. The Lord complaineth in the Prophet, *That the people perish through want of knowledge*. Such as are blindly led, do fall into the Ditch with their blind Leaders. The blood of such as perish in their ignorance through want of teaching, shall be required at the Watch-man's hand. The Prophet *David* having the Water of

the well of *Bethlehem* (that he longed and lusted to taste) brought unto him, yet would not drink thereof when he had it, but poured it for an offering unto the Lord, because it was the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives. O that these men would consider of their sin, and had a feeling of their iniquity, that they eat and drink the blood of Men, and maintain themselves by the destruction of their souls. Suppose he lead an unblameable life, give good example to others, keep hospitality, fill their bellies, make peace among his Neighbors, be able privately to exhort and comfort them, and to perform other common works of Charity: yet he hath not discharged the duty of a Minister, unless he preach unto them diligently and faithfully, and divide the word of truth aright.

Lastly, seeing the Minister and people ought to be as Father and Son, this showeth the duty of the people that are under their Ministry, that they regard their Ministers as their Parents, honoring them, yielding them due recompense, esteeming them as Fellow-workers with God, to beget them to Christ, to turn them to Salvation, to nourish them up, and continue them in the estate of Christ. Nay, we should account of them (if it be possible) more then of natural Parents. Of our Parents we have received only to be; Of our Ministers we have received to be well. Of our Parents we have taken our first birth: of our Ministers we have obtained our second birth. Of our Parents we have been brought into the World by Generation: of our Ministers we have been brought into the Church by Regeneration. Our first begetting was to death: our second or new birth, is to Life and Salvation. By the first birth we are Heirs of Wrath: by the second we are made the Sons of God. So then, if it be better for us to be borne again of Water and the Holy Ghost, which cannot proceed from the will of the flesh, nor from the will of Man, but of God: we ought to esteem of those that are Instruments of our Regeneration, as dearelie and tenderly as if they were our Parents, and to say with the Apostle; *How beautiful are the Feet of them which bring glad tidings of pceace, and bring glad tidings of good things?* Hence it is that he speaketh to the *Thessalonians*, *We beseech you Brethren, that ye acknowledge them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, that ye have them in singular love for their works sake.*

The fifth Commandment calleth and comprehendeth, all Pastors under the Name of Parents, to teach us to know those that have begotten us unto the Lord, and to note the time, the means, and the person that hath brought that blessing upon us. It hath been an old and ancient custom, for men to celebrate their birth-day, as we see in *Herod*, who usually made a great Feast at it: much more oughtest thou to make thy New-birth day, wherein thou was borne again and made the Child of God, a day of solemnity never to be forgotten, and to rejoice therein above all things and times in the World. This reproveth those, that regard not to hear them, nor care to attend to their Doctrine. For as God condemneth the absence of the Pastor from his own people; so he reproveth the absence of the people from their own Pastor. Some hold of *Paul*, some of *Cephas*, some of *Apollos*, and delight more in the gifts of a Straunger, then in the Ministry of him whom the Lord hath placed over them. But may we hear none but our own Pastors? What if they be unapt to teach, and unable to instruct? I answer, we may hear others, and prove many Spirits, but we ought not willingly to be absent from our own assemblies, where our presence and company is especially required. I am no Patron of unpreaching Prelates, I wish them either reformed, or removed: either amended

or deprived. If a man want food at home, he may lawfully ask Bread and take relief abroad: but when a man is plentifully stored, or at least, competently and conveniently provided for at home, it is a shame to take the Bread that is appointed for others. Be it that other Pastors have greater gifts of learning, of zeal, of utterance, then our own: yet we are bound to hear them, to pray for them, to attend upon them, as they attend upon us. He hath commanded every Man to eat his own Bread, and to drink the Water of his own Cistern, contenting himself with his own estate, not envying the better estate of another.

We see how mercifully the Lord dealeth with those of the lower and poorer sort, who have little and the same homely provision of fare, in comparison of others that are full fed, and fare deliciously every day, and are charged with many Children to bring up; yet both they and their children are as healthful in body, and as strong in their Limbes, as comely in countenance, and as well graced in their outward persons, as they that abound in Wealth, and their Cuppes over-flow in all the dainties and delicacies of the World. So we may be well assured, that the Lord will much more provide for our Souls, and bless that provision that he hath appointed for us, albeit it be but mean and simple. When a man is sick in body, he will prefer that Physician which knoweth best the state of his body, who is most likely to do him most good, although perhaps some other be better learned and deeper skilled. Thus ought it to be with us, our own Pastor, which is the Physician of our Souls, knoweth best our estate, seeth whereof we have need, understandeth the Nature of our disease; and consequently, is best able to restore us to health again. He that hath more learning, may profit by him that hath less, may profit (I say) even in knowledge. For the Lord speaking by the mouth of his Minister, whom he hath in some measure furnished with gifts, many times teacheth the wise by the simple, and the great learned man, by him that is inferior to himself. The Lord Jesus was oftentimes present at the Sermons of *John*. The Prophets that were extraordinarily called, disdained not the Ministry of the Priests, but were content to learn the law of them. This is the Lord's doing, to advance his own glory, and to humble the highest Teachers of the Church. The Apostle hoped to profit by the *Romaines*, as they should by him. Every Congregation or Parish, should consist of so many Christians as can meet at one assembly.

The Apostles directed by the Spirit of God, were the Authors of this division and distinction; who having converted many to the Gospel, separated them, and ordained them Elders, not only according to the number of their Cities, but also according to their several multitudes, which are called Churches. For even as God hath distributed the Civil State of the World into Kingdoms, Provinces, Shires, Cities, and other Dominions, and hath ranged them into several meetings: so he hath divided his Church into certain and several assemblies, for the better ordering and edifying of them: and therefore the distinction of particular Churches, is not of human invention, but of divine institution.

Hence it may be concluded and inferred, that one Pastor cannot be over all assemblies, nor all assemblies under one Pastor. Every Shepherd must have his own Flock, and every Flock must know his own Shepherd. There is a near band and mutual conjunction between these two. The Minister is charged with his own people by the ordinance of God, he must attend the Flock committed to his care and Cure, over which the Lord hath made him Watch-man

and Ouer-seer. This is the knot that tieth the people fast to their own Pastor. Everyone in the Civil State knoweth his own Citty, and to what company he and his whole house doth belong. Every Company in the Citty, knoweth to what jurisdiction he belongeth. So it ought to be in the Church of Christ, every particular Christian should be annexed unto one certain assembly, and be there enrolled as a member of that society, to live under the Ministry and government thereof. For where shall we rather hope to receive good, then under that Ministry which the Lord hath set over us? Or from whom rather shall we expect the blessing of God, then from him whose labors he hath promised to bless? Hence it is that the Apostle saith; *Obey them that have the over-sight of you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your Souls as they that must give accounts, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you.* Here he addeth many reasons, as it were upon an heap, to urge us to this duty. If they watch for our Souls, we also ought to wait upon them: If that they must render an account for our Souls, we must also render an account of their labors bestowed upon us. If they must do it with joy, and not with grief, we are charged by our obedience to the Gospel, and by submitting our selves to the Ministry of our own Pastors, to Minister all comfort, and give them cause of rejoicing in their labors. But if we sever our selves from them, and refuse their Ministry; we grieve them, not comfort them: we discourage them, not encourage them: we afflict them, not rejoice them. It is therefore a most vain pretence, and great folly of such as being reprov'd for their negligence, in resorting to their own Pastors; answer, that they can profit more by another, they can be edified better by hearing in another place, whereas peradventure, they regard not to hear any man, and contemn the Gospel, out of whose mouth soever it proceed and be uttered. Besides, we have greatest hope of receiving blessing from our own Pastor, and every member of the same assembly, must seek the Lord, and serve him in the place appointed unto us for that purpose, and therefore we ought not to with-draw our selves from thence, where our presence is required. If God have put the word of Reconciliation into his mouth, to say unto us in the Name of the Lord, be ye reconciled unto God, and have made an Ambassador to speak in his Name, who is he that shall over-rule the ordinance and counsel of God, or refuse to submit himself unto his most holy and merciful assignement? Secondly, this convinceth and reproveth those, that contemn, deride, scorn, abase, abuse, and revile their Ministers.

These are ungodly and ungracious Children, that thus behave themselves toward their spiritual Fathers, and bereave themselves of the blessings that belong to such as obey their Parents. These are like to cursed *Cham*, that mocked his Father, and heard an horrible curse denounced against him, which took effect afterward in his season: or to those malicious Children, which mocked the Prophet, scorned him and his calling, and brought upon themselves the judgments of God. If we follow their sin, let us look for their end; if we walk in their ways, we must be assured of their wages: and if we imitate their deeds, we shall be partakers of their destruction. How many are there among us, that are grown to that height of sin, that they regard not the doctrine that is delivered, but set themselves against the Minister that doth deliver it? These men are grown to be shameless and impudent, that regard not the means of salvation, nor esteem of the ordinance of God, nor desire to hear of their sins. These have stiff necks and hard hearts, they are come to sit down in the seat of

the Scorers, and they shall have the reward of Scorers. And let all such as will know nothing else, learn this as a certain rule gathered out of a continual Tenor of the Scriptures, and the constant course of God's judgments, that when once they begin to make a mock of sin, and of the means that should recover them out of their sin, then wrath is not far from them, but is near unto them. The more presumptuous and secure they are, the nearer to destruction. We see this in the people of Israel. 2. Chron. 36. 16. When once they began to dally with God; nay, with their own souls, and mocked the Messengers that the Lord God of their Fathers sent to them, rising early and late (for he had compassion on his people, and on his habitation) he brought upon them the King of the *Chaldeans*, who spared neither young man nor Virgin, neither ancient nor aged, God gave all into his hands. This is a fearful example of his judgments, that fell upon this people for their contempt of the word, and misusing the Messengers that were sent unto them; to teach all men to beware, and be warned of falling into the same sin, and return betimes, that (if it be possible) his plagues may be prevented by timely repentance. Few that run thus far look back again, to say, what have we done? When the measure of sin is perfected, the time of judgment is hastened. Howbeit God is able to touch and to turn their hearts; and his word before contemned, if now it be believed, is able to save their Souls.

[*Whom I have begotten in my bonds.*]

Before we heard how the Apostle calleth *Onesimus* his Son. In these words he expresseth how he became his Son; namely, that by his Ministry he begat him to God, and turned him to believe the Gospel. He setteth down the force and efficacy of the Ministry of the word, and showeth, that it is not an empty sound, and an idle noise of wast words vanished in the air without fruit or profit, as foolish and frantic Spirits do blasphemously report, but is an effectual instrument, whereby God worketh the Regeneration, Conversion, and Salvation of Men. Heereby we learn, that men are regenerated and borne a-new by the Ministry of the Word to be the Children of God, and Coheires with Christ of eternal life, God working by the means of his word, and by the Ministry of his Servants, whereby he conveyeth it unto us, his Spirit being the powerful Applyer, Blessor, and Effectour of this new-birth. So the Apostle saith, *In Christ Jesus through the Gospel I have begotten you.* The Prophet *Jeremiah* teacheth, *That his Word is like a fire, and like an Hammer that breaketh the Stones.* It is able to burn up and consume our corruption, and to mollify our stony hearts, that we may have hearts of Flesh. This the Apostle *Peter* speaketh; *We are borne again, not of Mortall, but of immortal Seed, by the word of God which endureth forever, and this is the word which is preached among you.* In like manner *James* saith; *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be as the first Fruits of his Creatures.*

To conclude, *Elihu* setting down diverse means that God hath, and useth to instruct Man, and to draw him out of sin unto himself, maketh this one, and one of the principal; *If there be a Messenger with him, or an Interpretour, one of a thousand, to declare unto man his righteousness, then will he have mercy upon him, and will say; Deliver him that he go not down into the pit, for I have received a reconciliation.* These testimonies, both of the Prophets and Apostles, are plain to prove, that the word preached is the ordinary Instrumental cause of our conversion and

regeneration, and the means that God hath sanctified to bring us to be members of the Church, and Heirs of Salvation.

The Reasons are very plain to confirm this point of Doctrine. First, the word is of a most powerful and piercing Nature, it is hotter then the fire, it is stronger then the Hammer, it is sharper then the Sword, it is sweeter then the Honey, it is purer then the Gold: it is better then the Pearls: more nourishable then meat, more forceable then the Leaven, more profitable then the Rain, more comfortable then the Dew that falleth upon the Herbs. It is able to make a Blind man see; a Crooked man, straight; a Bond man, free; a poor man, rich; a sick man, whole; nay, a dead man, it is able to make alive again. This is a great work, it is a wonderful Miracle that God worketh in the time of the Gospel. We are borne dead in sins and trespasses, without Faith, without Repentance, without Grace, without God, without Hope, without Sanctification, without Salvation: but the Word of God is able to bring restoring of sight to the blind, deliverance to the Captive, liberty to the bruised, healing to the broken hearted, and life to the dead. This is noted, as the end of *Paul's* calling and sending to Preach the Gospel; *To open their Eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by Faith in Christ Jesus.*

Thus also the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* writeth; *The word of God is lively and mighty in operation, and sharper then any two-edged sword, and entereth through, even unto the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, of the joints and the marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* If any ask the question how it hath this power? I answer, not by any inherent quality in it self, nor by any force it receiveth from man that preacheth it, but from the Supernatural power of God, who is mighty in the hearts of men, rejoicing the heart, converting the Soul, giving wisdom to the simple, granting light unto the eyes, and keeping from presumptuous sins by it.

Secondly, that way whereby God worketh Faith in us, by the same means he beginneth our new-birth, and maketh us his own Children. But the ordinary means to work Faith in us, is the preaching of the word; *For how shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a Preacher? And how shall they Preach, except they be sent? So then Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* We see hereby, that Faith is the cause and beginning of repentance: we see also that Faith is wrought by the word, and therefore by necessary consequence, repentance must come by the word. Here are three things offered to our considerations; the Word, Faith, and Regeneration. Regeneration is a fruit of Faith: Faith is an effect of the Word; the Word is preached by the Minister. Now, it is a true rule, that the cause of the cause, is also the cause of the effect, and therefore the preaching of the Word being the cause of Faith, which causeth Repentance and Regeneration, must also needs be the cause of Repentance, and of Regeneration.

Thirdly, it is the ordinance of God to work this good work of Regeneration in us, because we cannot by our wisdom, or any natural gifts in our selves (though most esteemed in our own eyes, and greatly magnified by others) attain sanctification of life, or believe unto salvation.

This the Apostle testifieth. 1 Cor. 1. and maketh this the reason why God will save us by the hearing of Faith preached; *Seeing the World by it own wisdom, knew not God in the wisdom of God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.* There is a double knowledge of God, and a double way to know him: one, Natural, the other Spiritual. Natural, by the sight of the Creatures, by the view of the world, by beholding the heavens, which declare the glory of God, whereby the eternity, the Majesty, the power, the wisdom, the greatness, the goodness of God do appear. Spiritual, by hearing and hearkening unto the word of God, which not only beareth witness to those essential properties of God, more sufficiently and fully then the former, but setteth down distinctly the Trinity of the persons, and the mercy of God toward the elect, promised and performed unto them for Christ's sake. Natural reason is blind in the matters of God, and though it may serve to make us without excuse, it cannot suffice to bring us to salvation without a farther and better guide. So then, the Lord, to make the wisdom of the World foolishness, and to gain glory to his own Name, and to show that he hath vouchsafed that grace & mercy to us which he denied to the wisest among the Gentiles, that were learned and skillful in all human knowledge, but were utterly ignorant of his Word, hath raised up to us a light which they never saw, and made us to hear the sound of a voice which they never heard. Seeing therefore the word preached is of so great force, that it causeth Faith in us, which all the wisdom of the World could never work: it followeth, that this word of God, is the ordinary cause or Instrument of our conversion and salvation.

This is so plain, & so pregnant a truth, that it is greatly to be wondered, that any should stumble or stagger at it, and that all do not submit themselves unto it. But because doubts arise, and Objections are made against this point and principle, plainly proved, and firmly established by reasons out of the Scripture; let us see what they are, and how they may be answered. First of all, it is objected, that there are other means effectual, to work Faith, and to bring to Repentance: as afflictiō, or private admonition. Touching affliction, such as lived in Idolatry, in ignorance, in uncleanness, that favored wholly of the flesh, and nothing at all of the spirit, have been brought to confess and forsake their sins, and to humble them-selves under the mighty hand of God; some being afflicted in body as *Manasseh*: others, troubled in Conscience, feeling the wound of the spirit, & groaning under the stroke of God's judgments, as *Paul* in his conversion, have by this means had Faith and Repentance given unto them. And touching private exhortation, it is made auayleable to turn us to God. Hence it is, that the Apostle teaching that a believing Husband may with a safe Conscience use the company of an unbelieving Wife, and a believing Wife use the company of an unbelieving husband, so that the one ought not depart from the other: he useth this Reason, *For what knowest thou, O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy Husband? Or what knowest thou (O Man) whether thou shalt save thy Wife?* So the Apostle *Peter* setting down the wives duty toward her husband, saith *Let their wives be subject to their Husbandes, that even they which obey not the word, may without the word be won by the conversation of their wives.* Where we see, that some are won to the Faith, without the preaching of the word. I answer, it is true that God blesseth and sanctifieth many means beside the preaching of the word, to the good of his Children, as Meditation, Conference, private instruction, Prayer, fear of Hell, and such like. Notwithstanding, many that are

converted to God, are deceived in the means and instrument of their conversion. For, albeit such as are afflicted are brought to know themselves, and to acknowledge the damnable estate wherein they stood, yet it is not the affliction it self that wrought their conversion. The trouble that they sustained and endured, whether it were in body, or in mind, or in both, was sent by the goodness of God upon them, to bring them to a love of the word, who before loathed it, and made no account or reckoning of it. This is it which the Apostle teacheth, *That by the Law cometh the knowledge of sin*. So affliction may lay before us the knowledge of our sins, but it cannot take them away: it may show us our wound, but it cannot help us, and heal us: it may cast us down, but it cannot raise us up: it may be a School-master to bring us to Christ, but it cannot make us partakers of Christ. It is like a sharp Needle, which doth not, nor cannot sow the cloth, but it is necessary to prepare the way for the thread; or it is like an eating or a fretting corrasive which cannot cure, but yet it is profitable to make the way for the healing medicine. So the afflictions that God layeth upon us, may bring us to the sight and knowledge of our sins, and to the consideration of the miseries which we deserve, and to the feeling of the flashes of hell fire: but they cannot work Faith in us, nor assure us of pardon, nor apply to us the promise of God touching the remission of sins. It maketh a good beginning, but it cannot bring the work to perfection. The like may be said of private admonition, and a godly conversation, which the Apostles teach may be means of salvation to others: it is not spoken to lessen or weaken the authority or efficacy of public preaching, as if it were not the ordinary means to conceive, nourish, and increase faith in us; neither is it simply to be understood that they are able to convert the soul, but only that they are good occasions, fit inducements, and profitable helps to draw us and allure us to a liking, and loving, and longing after faith. For when a man that is not a Christian, but an Infidel, beholdeth the holy, pure, & chaste conversation of his Wife after her calling to the knowledge of the truth, and hir subjection and obedience toward himself, he may be moved to embrace the Christian Religion, whereof he seeth such worthy fruits. We have a notable example heerof, in the woman of *Samaria*, who persuading the men of the City to go out and hear Christ, they said unto her after they had heard his preaching, *Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have herd him our selves, and know that this is indeed that Christ the Savior of the world*. The exhortation of this woman prevailed with them to hear Christ, and by their hearing they were converted: she was the cause of their hearing, their hearing was the cause of their believing; she was the Instrument that brought them to Christ, and he wrought Faith in them, when they were brought unto him.

Secondly, it is said that reading is preaching, and therefore it is a sufficient means of salvation. To this purpose they quote, *Acts 21. Moses of old time hath in every City them that preach him, seeing he is read in the Synagogue every Saboth day*. Loe (say they) he is preached when he is read, therefore the bare reading must needs be preaching; yea, some add it is better then preaching, because when they hear the Scriptures read, they know it is the word of God; but when they hear preaching, it is men's exposition and interpretation, and they know not whether it be true or false, sound or unsound, right or wrong. I answer, this objection falleth of it self, and it is overthrown by that, whereby it is sought to be strengthened. For if reading be preaching, then reading cannot be better then preaching,

inasmuch as nothing can be better or worse than it self. It is not denied but the word (*Preaching*) may in a general sense include not only the reading of the word but any other way of declaring and publishing the power, truth, glory, and works of God, *Rom. 2, 20, 21. Psal. 19, 1, 2.* but then it is not used as we take the word in the state of the question. For we mean by preaching the expounding of the Scripture, according to the proportion of faith, & applying thereof according to the capacity of the hearers. And thus they are set down in the place alleged before, as two distinct things, one accompanying and following the other, according to the ordinance of God, and practice of the servants of God. Hence it is, that the Apostle giveth this as a duty and direction belonging to *Timothy, Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to Doctrine.* So it is said in the book of *Nehemiah, The Levites caused the people to understand the Law, and the people stood in their place, and they read in the Book of the Law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.* Likewise when Christ came to *Nazareth*, where he had been brought up, and went into the Synagogue on the Saboth day, he stood up, *He opened the Book, and read the Scripture: then he closed the Book, he sate down, the eyes of all of them were fastened on him, and he began to preach unto them.* Thus also we see, that when the Apostle *Paul* wrote his Epistle to the Romaines, he excused himself that he could not come to preach unto them, *For he longed to see them that he might bestow some spiritual gift among them, and acknowledged himself a debtor to the Grecians, and to the Barbarians, to the Wisemen, and unto the unwise, so that as much as lay in him, he was ready to preach the Gospel to them also that were at Rome.* Whereby we see, that preaching and hearing are not witing and reading: and therefore, as the Apostle when he wrote, did not preach, so the people when they read, did not hear.

Moreover, if we should reason a little farther with such as prefer simple reading before sound preaching, how do they know that the word which they hear read, is the word of God? For the Scripture inspired of God is the Originals, the Hebrew of the old Testament, the Greek of the new Testament, in other tongues it speaketh not but by an interpreter; for from these two tongues and languages the Scriptures were turned and translated by men, into the French by Frenchmen, into the Dutch by Dutchmen, into the English by Englishmen, and so of all other Nations. So that when we read, or hear read the Scriptures in our own tongues, we read and hear read the translations of men: as when this word is preached we hear the expositions and interpretations of men. And hence it is, that the translations; even the best translations which are among us, may be amended and corrected, according as it pleaseth God to give greater sight, and better insight into those learned Languages, and as time discovereth the wants and imperfections of them. But the Scriptures themselves are free from all error, no weakness can be discovered in them, they cannot be made better by the judgment of men, or by length of time. For all God's works are pure and perfect, and no man can control anything in them. If this be true (may some say) that the translations of the Scriptures are in some sort the work of man, how shall the people know when they have and hear the word of God, and when they have and hear the word of man? This may seem to leave them in a maze and mammering, and to hang their Faith upon the will of men, that they shall not know what to believe. I answer, they must have in all doubts that arise, and in all Controuersies that do trouble them, they must have (I say) recourse to their faithful and

learned Pastors, whose care over them, and love unto them, may give them hope that their senses are exercised in the wise discerning between good and evil. Whereby, by the way we may see, the necessity of having Pastors and Teachers, able to teach, to convince, to correct, to instruct, to comfort, to resolve such doubts and demands as are moved unto them. Besides, the people of God have for their direction, both the help of comparing one place of Scripture with another, and the assistance of the spirit, to lead them unto all truth that shall be necessary for them to salvation.

Moreover, if we should demand of these men that are wise in their own eyes, how they know the word read to be the holy Scripture, what will they answer? Will they say, by the authority of the Church, or by the testimony of the spirit? But whatsoever they speak, they must speak against themselves. If they say by the Church, the Church also setteth forth the preaching of the Gospel, and chargeth us to hear the same at the mouth of the Minister. Will they say by the Spirit? the same Spirit will lead them into all truth, and open their hearts to attend the preaching Ministry, if they be led by the spirit of God. Wherefore to conclude, and to return to the former objection, such as hold reading to be preaching, or better then preaching, are either such as are Idol-Shepherdes that cannot preach, or idle Shepherds that will not preach, or ignorant people that cannot judge, or carnal Gospellers, that regard not to hear, or such conceited sluggards, as live under a reading Ministry. These are they that condemn the Priests and Prophets, nay Christ and his Apostles of want of wisdom and discretion, to choose the best means; or of ignorance to know and understand what is most profitable; or of malice and envy, to hide from them that which is most profitable, or of malice and envy to hide from them that which is most available for their souls health. For, if reading be better, they are to be blamed that use the worse, and refuse the better. Surely, they would never have preached at all, if the naked reading had been as effectual. Moreover, the reading Minister by this reason, should be the best Minister, & reading, a better gift then preaching; yea, every child might be a better Minister then he that preacheth the word. And then, what should we do with Universities and Schools of Learning, which are the Nurseries and Seminaries of the Church, to train up able men, and to furnish them with gifts of knowledge. But the gifts which Christ bestowed for the edification of his Church, when he ascended on high, and led Captivity Captive, are all preaching gifts. The want of gifts which the Prophets complain to have been in the guides of the people, was not of reading and reciting the words out of the book, but the gifts of preaching and expounding the Scriptures. Hence it is, that God rejecteth those that be ignorant, as unfit and unable Instruments of salvation, *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, because thou hast refused knowledge; I will also refuse thee, that thou shalt be no Priest to me.* And in another place, *The Priests lips should preserve knowledge, and they shall seek the Law at his Mouth, for he is the Messenger of the Lord of hosts.* Lastly, the preaching of the word is acknowledged & confessed to be the only essential mark of the Church, so that it alone is of force to work faith and salvation.

Thirdly, if reading of the Scriptures be not an ordinary means to work Faith in Christ, and Repentance from dead works, as well as the lively preaching of them, it will follow that the Ministers themselves want the ordinary means, because they by reading do furnish themselves to preach to others, but seldom do hear others preach. I answer, they want not

the ordinary means from their own preaching, though they have no other, though they hear no other. They have faith before they enter into that calling, but it is confirmed by their own Ministry. Hence it is, that the Apostle moving *Timothy* to give himself to reading, to be diligent in exhortation, to plant sound Doctrine, and to increase in such gifts as were bestowed upon him, addeth, *Take heed to thyself, and unto learning: continue therein, for in doing thus, thou shalt save both thyself, and them that hear thee.* Where we see, he showeth that his Ministry should be a means not only to save others, but to save himself. And there is no faithful Minister, but in reproving, he reproveth himself; in teaching, he teacheth himself; in threatening, he threateneth himself; in comforting, he comforteth himself; in strengthening others, he strengtheneth himself; yea, he findeth and feeleth his own Ministry as forcible and powerful to his own soul, as ever he perceived the Ministry of another. The threatenings of God denounced by his own mouth in the name of GOD, have made him shake: the consolations that he hath pronounced, have entered into his soul, and refreshed his bowels. And of this we have from time to time to our own comfort, a blessed experience. Besides, if the Lord would bless other ways and means to the Minister, who is necessarily restrained by the commandment of God, & the discharge of his calling from the hearing of others, what is that to the people, who are charged to hear the Law from their mouths, and no way hindered from the performance of this duty? so that they must follow the way that God hath left unto them, that is; to attend to the ordinance which he hath chalked out unto them.

Fourthly, it may be said, that Christ appointed reading to be an ordinary means to beget Faith, when he sendeth out his Apostles into the world, to teach all Nations, which includeth a commandment to teach them by writing, as well as by word, and consequently implieth, that the people should be taught as well by reading their writings, as by hearing their preachings to come unto faith. Hereupon it is, that Christ willeth the people to search *the Scripture, because in them they thought to have eternal life, & they did testify of him.* And the Apostle John saith, *These things are written that ye might believe, that Jesus is that Christ, that son of God, and that in believing ye might have life through his name.* So Abraham said to the rich man, *They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them.* I answer, the commandment given to the Apostles, concerneth principally the preaching of the Gospel by word of mouth, and lively voice uttered in the hearing of the nations, and therefore some of them wrote more, some of them less, some of them nothing at all. But if the commandment had been as general for writing as for preaching, none of the Apostles would have omitted it, nor could have stayed their pens without a manifest breach of their own duty, and God's commandment. Now, so far as their writing was one kind of teaching, and included in that word, the meaning is for confirmation & preservation of that truth which they delivered & preached among them. Thus the Apostle speaketh to the *Corinthians*, *I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which ye have also received, and wherein ye continue, & whereby ye are saved, if ye keep in memory after what manner I preached unto you, except ye have believed in vain.* Likewise writing to the *Romaines*, *I myself am persuaded of you (my Brethren) that ye also are full of goodness, & filled with all knowledge, and are able to admonish one another: nevertheless, I have somewhat boldly after a sort, written unto you as one that putteth you in remembrance, thorough the grace that is given me of God.* So the Apostle John saith, *I have not written unto you, because ye know not the*

truth, but because ye know it, & that no lie is of the truth. Whereby we see, that they wrote to those to whom before they had preached, to confirm them in the truth, which they had embraced and received. They did not write to them that were wholly ignorant of the truth, and had never heard the Gospel: but to such as they had taught, to the end that either standing in it, they might be established, or being fallen from it, they might be recovered and reclaimed. Thus he commendeth the *Thessalonians*, because they had kept all the ordinances and traditions received from him; and thus he telleth the *Galatians*, *That he marvailed much, that they were so soon removed away unto another Gospel, from him that had called them in the grace of Christ.* It remaineth therefore, to answer such testimonies as are alleged to justify the sufficiency of reading, and to make it an ordinary means of salvation.

Touching the place, *John 5.* commanding the searching of the scriptures, Christ Jesus in the same referreth them to the Scriptures or word written to correct their judgments touching himself, his person, and offices. For, whereas they believed not the Sermons of Christ, and the Lord Jesus could not safely refer them to the chair of the Scribes and Pharisees, who were grossly deceived, and maliciously blinded in that Mystery, there remained only the reading and searching of the Scriptures, that thereby they might learn the truth of his Sermons.

Again, where the Apostle saith, *These things were written that ye might believe, John 20.* it is to be understood of the Miracles of Christ, wrought for confirmation of his Doctrine, and for strengthening of faith, as appeareth in the words immediately going before, *Many other signs also did Jesus in the presence of his Disciples, which are not written in this Book.* And that this is the true and right end of Miracles, appeareth by the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, where he showeth, that the Gospel began first to be preached by the Lord, and afterward was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, *God bearing witness thereto, both with signs and wonders, and with diverse Miracles & gifts of the Holy-ghost, according to his own will.*

Lastly, where it is said, *They have the Books of Moses, and the writings of the Prophets, let them hear them, Luke 16.* This is the sum of all our Sermons and preachings, we preach nothing out of the Law and the Prophets, but both *Moses* and the Prophets, must be expounded and applied. The Eunuch sitting in his Chariot, had *Moses* and the Prophets, and read them as he sat; yet when *Phillip* came to him, and asked, *Understandest thou what thou readest?* He answered, *How can I without a guide?* Furthermore, the reading of the Scriptures, is not here opposed against the preaching of them, but against Visions and Apparitions of the dead, as the Prophet speaketh, *When they shall say unto you, Enquire of them that have a spirit of divination, and at the Soothsayers which whisper and murmur, should not a people enquire at their God? From the living to the dead?* To the Law, and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Fifthly, if the word preached be the ordinary means of bringing us unto sanctification, and so to salvation; then where it is not, there is not ordinarily salvation, and consequently no Church visible, where no Minister is. Heerby we shall condemn many particular Congregations to be no visible churches, because they want the public preaching of the word. I answer, let this be supposed which is not granted, yet in such assemblies many may

appertain and belong to the Church Catholic. Secondly, the reputation of the Church, holdeth them to be visible assemblies, which we are not lightly to esteem or pass over, notwithstanding the want of a preaching ministry, both because they have the use of the word, the administration of the Sacraments, and the exercise of Prayer, which no doubt are auayleable, where more cannot be attained: and because the wants of the Minister, having an outward calling, bringeth not a nullity to a Church. Thus no doubt it was in *Israel*, when they were without a Priest to teach them, even then God reserved unto himself seven thousand that bowed not the knee to *Baal*. Thus Christ himself teacheth, that when the Laborers were few, *Mat. 9, 37.* yet the Harvest was great. Thus it was in many of the Jewish Synagogues, that were dispersed here and there among the Nations, where they had the Lecture of the Law and the Prophets: and when *Paul* and *Barnabas* entted into the Synagogue on the Saboth day, the Rulers of the same sent unto them, and said; *Ye men and Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.* Whereby it may be gathered, that unless the Apostles had come at that present, the assembly had been dismissed without preaching. When *Zechariah* the Priest, was stricken dumb by the hand of God, so that he could not speak to the people, yet he continued the time of his course, & the people were present at his ministration. The Priests under the law were oftentimes unlearned and insufficient, yet were they not therefore no priests at all, neither did the people refuse the service of the tabernacle, being done with their unwashen hands. So ought we to do in the want of a preaching ministry, when we cannot have all that we would, or that we should have, we must be contented to take what they can give, & what we cannot have at home, we must seek abroad, or rather with *David*, *We must seek with all care & endeavor with all our power to bring home the Ark of the Lord unto our own dwellings.* And in the mean season, we may pray with them, we may hear them read the word of God, and we may receive the Sacraments at their hands. This is not spoken to defend ignorant Ministers, who are unworthy of the places which they hold, but to show that we are not to separate for every want and blemish in the Church, but rather to tolerate that which we are by no means able to redress.

Lastly, it may be said, that Sermons written by the Minister, and read to the people, may breed Faith and Repentance in us, and therefore much more the Sermons of the Prophets and Apostles. I answer briefly, first of our Sermons written, and then of the Sermons of the Prophets & Apostles written, and then read to the hearers, or by the hearers. First, touching our Sermons written, if they be the right dividing of the word, and proceed from the gifts of the Minister, enforced thereunto by weakness and infirmity, they are to be held a preaching, and may work a faith. This is not spoken to be a Patron of ydlennesse, of ignorance, of negligence, of carelessness, but it is spoken to support the weak, to move them to cal upon God to strengthen them, and to persuade the people not to despise their ministry. Secondly, touching the Sermons recorded and read in the Scriptures preached by the Prophets and Apostles, they are not rehearsed at large as they were delivered, but summarily set down, with intent to be divided and opened by the Ministers of the Church. So then the comparison holdeth not, from the Sermons of the Ministers that are read to the Sermons in Scripture, because there we have not whole Sermons, but only the chief points and principal heads, and as it were the contents of them set down unto us. Thus we have run over the objections

that are alleged against this doctrine, and answered them particularly, that no starting hole might be left unto them that impugn it. For the enemies of this truth, are such as take themselves to be wise, and will not easily receive satisfaction, like unto him that was so skillful in wrestling, or rather in wrangling, that though he received a fall, yet he would persuade the wrastler that cast him, and the people that beheld him, that he was the Conqueror.

Having now cleared the doubts that were brought against this principle which now we have taught, and over-maistered the enemies thereof, stripping them out of their armor wherein they trusted, and turning them out of their shifts whereof they boasted, let us come to make use of this point. First, seeing the preaching of the word is the Instrumental cause of our regeneration, we learn for the increasing of our Faith, that the preaching Ministry is necessary to salvation. No Sons without it are begotten unto God. Regeneration is a most needful grace of God's spirit, whereof if we be destitute, it had been better for us that we had never been borne. Thou must be conceived of another seed, thou must have another Father, thou must feel in thee another byrrh then that which is Natural, thou must find another change, and a new disposition in thy heart, mind, affections, and conversation, before thou canst turn from sin to righteousness, and come from hell to heaven. This the Apostle *John* teacheth, *Whosoever is borne of God sinneth not, but his seed remaineth in him, neither can he sin, because he is borne of GOD.* This is the point wherein Christ instructeth *Nicodemus*, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except that a Man be borne of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of GOD.*

This regeneration making a beginning, and giving us an entrance into the kingdom of God, cannot be attained without the hearing of God's word preached; and the word it self cannot be published without a preacher, so that Preachers are the sovereign means appointed of God to work Faith, Repentance, and salvation in all his children. To this purpose *Solomon* speaketh in the Proverbs, *Where there is no vision, the people decay; but he that keepeth the Law is blessed.* This necessity of the preaching of God's holy word, and our necessary attending upon it, as upon the ordinance of God, offereth to our considerations, these three points: First, the misery of those that want it: Secondly, the fearful condition of all such as have it, & yet contemn it; that enjoy it, and yet make no account of it; that live under it, and yet will not submit themselves unto it: Lastly, the blessed estate of such as have this means and profit by it.

Touching the first, we may behold the wretched case of those that are without the preaching of the word; they live in blindness & darkness, they walk in places of continual danger, and yet cannot see their way, they live without the ordinary means of life and salvation, and so without hope to come to repentance, without which there can be no salvation. This is the estate of Jews, of Turks, and Infidels, that are deprived of the comfortable use of the word, and they that live in corners where the sound thereof is not heard. These want the bread of life, and therefore must needs starve & perish. They have not the words of eternal life, which are the power of God to salvation, & therefore are near to destruction. For it is the manner of gods dealing to deny unto men the means whereby they should believe, when he

hath no purpose that they should believe, & he withdraws from them the instrument whereby they should be converted, when he doth not purpose and intend their conversion. It was a fearful curse when God said to his Apostles, *Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the City of the Samaritans enter ye not.* Likewise, when they had gone through *Phrygia*, and the Region of *Galatia*, they were forbidden by the Holy-Ghost to preach the word in *Asia*; then came they to *Mysia*, and sought to go into *Bithynia*, but the spirit suffered them not. So when God vouchsafeth not this mercy unto us, to wit; the Ministry of his word; it is a fearful sign of his heavy indignation, and as much in effect, as if the Lord should say, I will not have them converted, I have no purpose to bring them to salvation.

This is it which is spoken concerning *Israel* by the Prophet, *Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a Priest to teach, and without Law.* And to the same purpose Amos speaketh, *Behold, the days come saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the Land, not a famine for Bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord: and they shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even unto the East, shall they runne too and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it, in that day shall the young Uirgins, and the young men perish for thirst.* O that we could consider of these things, and lay before our eyes what danger it is to want the preaching of the word, that thereby we might be moved to pity the desolations of so many of our poor Brethren, and to fear the taking of it away for our unthankfulness from our selves, and to magnify the unspeakable mercy of God toward us, while we do enjoy it. Great are the plagues, and horrible are the ruins of the Church in many places. Oh, that we had hearts to mourn for it, and to pray to the Lord of the harvest, to thrust forth Laborers into his harvest.

Secondly, it teacheth the fearful condition of such as contemn this ordinance of God, and think it too base for them to seek salvation by it. It is very strange, that so plain a point as this, should be so proudly gainsayed and resisted. These carnal men will not give the Lord of heaven leave to appoint how and by what means he will save us. Shall flesh and blood presume thus far, and advance it self against his Creator? If we will be saved, we must seek salvation, as it is left us to seek, and not after our own fancy. When God hath said, Give attendance to my word; wilt thou answer, I will not attend, and yet have salvation as well as if thou diddest attend? Take heed thou do not deceive thyself and thine own soul, and in the end find thyself frustrate of thy salvation. How men will shift off these duties, I know not, because I know not their hearts; but this I know, and this I would have them know and understand, that as there is a God that will be worshipped after his own will, and not according to our natural wit; so this must be our wisdom, to submit our conceits and immaginations to his heavenly pleasure. It is the first point in Christian Religion, to be learned, to account thyself a Fool, that thou mayest be wise in Christ, and to throw down all thy Natural parts at his feet, that thou mayest seek true and Heauenlie Wisdom of him. Thou must account thyself stark blind, and able to perceive nothing aright in the matters of God, and in the means of thy salvation, to the end thou mayest recover sight, and see thy way wherein in thou oughtest to walk. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith, *Open mine eyes, that I may see the wonders of thy Law: Make me to understand the way of thy Precepts, and I will meditate in thy wondrous works; Give me understanding, and I will keep thy Law, yea I will keep it with my*

whole heart. Where he acknowledgeth his eyes to be closed, his ears to be stopped, his mind to be darkened, his heart to be hardened by nature, before Grace and Mercy come and make the way plain before him, whereby our eyes shall be opened, our ears bored, our minds enlightened, our hearts softened, and our selves prepared to hearken to the voice of God speaking unto us. But is not God able to save us without the Ministers preaching, and the people's hearing? Are not all things possible to him? Is he bound and tied to his own means? Is not he free to work as it pleaseth him? I answer, he is not tied, he is free, he is able to save without preaching, yea without reading, without the Sacraments, without Prayer. Wilt thou from hence conclude against reading of the Scriptures, against receiving of the Sacraments, against joining in Prayer? The question is not of the power of God, but of his will; not what he is able to do, but what he hath promised us to do; not what he is tied to, but what he hath bound us to seek. He is able to preserve our life without Bread, without food; but he that presumeth upon this power, and abuseth his providence, and neglecteth to seek his nourishment at his hands, must look to perish: So we deny not but God is able to save us without preaching, but he hath not made us any promise to obtain life any otherwise then as we seek the Law at the mouths of his Ministers, that bring glad tidings of good things. He was able to preserve his three servants in the hot fiery furnace, and did preserve them; yet he that will voluntarily and violently cast himself into the fire, shall feel the smart of his own folly, and the danger of tempting God. Let us not therefore think our selves wiser then God, lest our wisdom in the end be turned into folly, our presumption into despair, our dallying with the word, into destruction. Thirdly, we are put in mind by this means of our regeneration, to acknowledge the happy estate and condition of that Nation, of that people, of that parish, to whom God hath vouchsafed the preaching of his word, because it is a sure pledge & proof of his love toward them, and a manifest argument and testimony that he hath a Church there to be gathered, a people to be converted, and many souls to be saved. For even as God withholdeth the means of salvation from those that he doth not determine to save, *As he stayeth the heavens from raining upon the earth when he will bring a famine, so when he will show mercy, he will send the means plentifully.* It was a great mercy to the Jews, when Christ called his Disciples, and bad them *Go and preach to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand.* It was a great blessing intended to the Macedonians, when a vision appeared to Paul in the night, *There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come into Macedonia, and help us: whereby Paul was assured, that the Lord had called him to preach the Gospel unto them.*

It was a great favor bestowed upon the *Corinthians*, when the Lord said to Paul, *Fear not, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall lay hands on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this City, so he continued there a year and six months, and taught the word of God among them.* Where the Lord telleth his servant, that he had people there, whom he meant to save, and therefore he sent them his word to save them; yea, he had much people there to save; and therefore the Apostle must bestow much time and diligence among them, to bring them to salvation. When God would preserve Moses out of the waters that might have drowned him, he sent *Pharaohs* daughter to the River, to take up the Child, and to provide for it, who brought him up at her own cost. So when God will save a people from

their sins, and make them partakers of his Kingdom, he offereth unto them the means, he sendeth his word, he giveth gifts unto his Ministers, he toucheth their hearts with a Conscience of their duties, and causeth them to preach unto them, that so they might be converted and saved. If God have thus blessed us, and bestowed this mercy upon us, which he hath denied to many places and persons, causing it *to rain upon one City, and not upon another City, so that one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not, withered.* Let us therefore acknowledge this goodness, and walk worthy of this benefit, least the Gospel be removed from us, and given unto another Nation, that will bring forth the fruits of it. When the Gospel was offered unto the Jews, and they resisted & blasphemed, the Apostle shook his raiment, and said unto them; *Your blood be upon your own head, I am clean, from henceforth will I go unto the Gentiles.* It had been better for us we had never had the word preached among us, then to have it offered, and we not regard it. It shall be easier for the Turks and Sarazens in the day of judgment, then for us; for if they shall be condemned, that never had the truth of God among them, and knew not what the preaching of it meaneth; much more justly shall we perish, that have had the Gospel taught in our streets, and brought unto our doors, and Christ Jesus described in our sight and among us crucified. Let us therefore take heed that the Gospel be not the savor of death to death unto us, and that Christ be not a rock of offense to stumble at, least if we fall on him, he grind us to pieces, and to powder.

Secondly, seeing the word preached is the means whereby we are regenerated, it teacheth the Minister to be careful to exercise his duty with faithfulness and serviceableness to Christ and his Church. Heereby he shall deliver his own soul, gain glory to God, and turn many unto righteousness. This made the Apostle say, *We preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and our selves your servants for Jesus sake.* The Lord Jesus himself went about all Cities and Towns preaching the Gospel, and healing the sick. The Apostle Paul saith of himself, *A necessity is laid upon me, and woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel.* And thus he exhorteth the Elders of Ephesus, *Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, whereof the Holy-Ghost hath made you Ouer-seers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood,* Acts 20, 28. It is his duty to be well studied in the word of God, & to exercise himself carefully in the reading thereof, that he may be able to declare the same unto the people. He must be as a plentiful Store-house of all necessary provision, that they may resort to him, and seek the Law at his mouth: For how shall he be able to teach another, that which he himself hath not learned? Or how shall he deliver that which himself never received? Neither is it enough for him to seek knowledge himself, and to keep continually in his study, till he become (as one saith) as a Tun that will not sound being full when one knocketh upon it: but he must come forth, and preach the word of God, and deliver wholesome doctrine, and declare by feeding the flock of Christ that he loveth his Master, and the Master of the Sheep, whose servant he professeth himself to be. This is it which the Apostle Peter teacheth, *Feede the flock of God which dependeth upon you, caring for it not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; not as though ye were Lord's over God's heritage, but that ye may be ensamples to the flock: and when that chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive an incorruptible crown of glory.* If we do not thus labor, but loiter in the Lord's Vineyard, we cannot assure our selves to be the Ministers of the Lord, but robbers and spoilers, nay murderers and man-slayers, who do not

only eat the sins of the people, and fill our bellies with the sweat of other men's brows, but make a prey of their souls, and expose them to be destroyed and devoured of their enemies. When the great day of the Lord shall come, and the great Shepherd of the Sheep shall appear, and a great account of our Stewardship shall be taken of us, we shall bear the burden, not only of our own sins, but of all the sins of the people, and every soul belonging unto our charge (that hath perished thorough our own negligence) shall be laid to our charge, and his blood be required at our hands, and so shall become horrible Reprobates in Hel, to be tormented with everlasting pains. For even as the holy mā speaking of this calling, teacheth that a faithful messenger of God, and interpreter of his will is but as one of a thousand, that though they be many that undertake the office, yet the number is few & rare that make Conscience of their duty to God and his people: so on the other side, few of this many shall be saved, but be cast as notable devils into hell, & draw with them thousands into destruction. Neither is it sufficient for the Ministers discharge, if he teach sildom, or now and then, as at every quarter day when he cometh to reckon with them, or once a month to avoid the Law, but he must watch, and teach, and feed his flock continually, *And preach the word in season, and out of season.* The greatest labor shall have the greatest reward. *They that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the Stars forever and ever. Everyman shall have his wages according to his work.* They that employed their Masters money & gained by it, are accounted good & faithful servants, but the idle and loitering servant that would do nothing, but hid his talent that was given unto him, was cast into utter darkness, and rewarded according to his deserts. Let us therefore labor to have a clear conscience toward God and man. The more pains we take, the greater shall be our comfort; the more diligently we sow, the more plentiful shall be our harvest. If we be painful in our callings, and diligent in teaching the people, *We shall not need, as some other, Epistles of re commendation unto them, or Letters of re commendation from them: for they shall be our Epistle written in our harts which is understood and read of all men.* And concerning those committed to us to feed, we see by experience that they cannot live without food, they cannot grow and prosper without a daily supply, so their souls cannot live unto God a spiritual life, unless they be often fed, and plentifully nourished by the milk of God's word. When *Paul* took his leave to depart from *Ephesus*, he propoundeth before the Elders his own example, *Remember that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn everyone both night and day with tears.* This faithfulness is to be found in us, as our comfort in this life, & our crown in the life to come, always proving when God will give faith and repentance never to be repented of. We know not the times and seasons that God hath kept in his own hand. If he touch not the heart at one time, and leave a blessing behind him, he may touch it, and frame it unto obedience at another time. It behooveth us therefore, to use the means to sow unto them spiritual things, and to commit the success of our labors unto God, seeing *Paul planteth, and Apollos watereth, but it is GOD that giveth the increase.*

Thirdly, seeing the word preached, is the ordinary means of our regeneration, it teacheth the people to look to their feet when they enter into the house of God, and to take heed how they hear. It is not left to their own choice whether they will hear or not, no more then it is to y^e Minister whether he will preach or not. It is required of them, that they reverence them, obey their Doctrine, love them, provide for them, pray for them, and in all things

esteem of them as the messengers of Christ, as the Ministers of the word, & as the overseers of the Church, yea it standeth them upon, to hear the word at their mouths, to account of it as the means of their salvation. It is great ignorance & impiety to desire any other means to have faith, then that which he hath appointed for us. It is the great mercy and goodness of God to appoint mortal men subject to sin and all infirmities as we are, at whose hands we may be fed, at whose mouths we may be taught, and with whom we may talk familiarly, and yet by their simple Ministry may have as good assurance of salvation in this life, and of glory in the life to come, as if the Lord himself should speak from heaven. For, the word of God is as the gate of heaven, and he hath committed the Keys thereof to his faithful Stewardest, *That whatsoever they bind on earth, should be bound in heaven; and whatsoever they loose on earth, should be loosed in heaven.* True it is, many foolish & faithless men persuade themselves, that they should repent and believe the Gospel, if they might hear God himself speak, or if one came from the dead to tell them what they should do to be saved. When *Cain* had conceived malice and murder in his heart, and intended to kill his Brother, the Lord spake unto him, set his sins in order before him, and threatened judgment against him unless he repented; but did he repent at the voice of God, and turn unto him with all his heart? *No, he fell from evil to worse, and added one sin unto another, till he had filled up the measure of them.* All the Israelites heard the Law of God in the wilderness, and saw his wonderful works that he shown among them, yet they believed not, neither ceased to murmur and rebel against him. *Judas* one of the twelve was reprov'd of Christ for his treason; so were the Scribes and Pharisees for their hypocrisy, yet none of them repented, or at the least many of them repented not at his preaching unto them; wherefore, it is not the hearing of the voice of God can give us repentance, it is his changing of our hearts, and renewing of us in the inner man, that casteth us into a new mould, and worketh in us a new birth. When Christ Jesus was nailed upon the Cross, they said, *He saved others, but he cannot save himself: if he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe in him.* But if he had come down at this taunt cast out upon him, would they, or could they have believed? Or could Christ have been the true Messiah, if he had descended, seeing it was the end of his coming into the world that he might suffer, and fulfill the things that were foretold by the Prophets? Or would they not rather have said he was some couzener or Coniurer, some Impostor or deceiver, as often before they had falsely and blasphemously charged him? Or had they faith in their own power to believe when they would, and to receive him to be the Savior of the world? These carnal men do resemble and reason like unto the Scribes and Pharisees, If God would descend from heaven (as they would have Christ come down from the Cross) then they would immediately believe, then they would no longer lie in their sins. But if God should with his dreadful and terrible voice speak unto us, we were not able to appear before him, nor to abide the hearing of it, but should be swallowed up with fear, and stand amazed as dead men.

When God spake unto the Children of *Israel* in the Mount, they fled from him, and could not endure his presence, they stood a far off, and cried unto *Moses*, *Talke thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God talk with us, least we die.* Shall we then in the foolishness and pride of our own harts challenge the Lord to come forth unto us, and presume to settle our selves to

enter talk and communication with him, when the earth quaketh at his voice, and trembleth under him? When the Mountains are removed before him, and the Angels cover their faces from him? If we will not believe the preachers of the word, nor content our selves with this ordinance of God, but would have either revelation from Heaven, or the presence of God, or the person of Christ, or the glory of an Angel, or the appearaunce of the dead, or we know not what, we shall never be partakers of the benefits of Christ, we shall never receive to believe, we shall never have the grace of regeneration bestowed upon us. God hath not left us to the preaching of Angels, but to the Ministry of men. If we will not yield obedience to the voice of God speaking to us in his Ministers, we would not regard his own immediate voice thundering down upon us, nor believe if a damned soul or ghost shall come out of hell to preach unto us. If we will not believe *Moses and the Prophets, we would not believe, though one came unto us from the dead.* Wherefore let us leave this vanity, and in a conscience to God, and obedience to his ordinance, in a love to our own souls, and desire of our own saluatiō, let us everyone be swift to hear, slow to speak, & slow to wrath.

Now, to the end we may hear aright, three things are required of us; Preparation, Attention, and Meditation, joined with practice. Preparation before we hear; Attention in the time of hearing; Meditation and practice, after our hearing. When Christ had propounded the parable of the Sower and the seed, in the end he gathered from thence this note, and draweth this conclusion and admonition; *Take heed how ye hear.* For some present themselves to the Ministry of the Word, for form and fashion, for company and custom, without conscience; others think it enough to be present, howsoever they be affected in the hearing, or moved after the hearing. It is therefore necessary that we should be prepared before we come: Now to this preparation, three things are necessary; Faith, Fear, and Desire: first, we must have Faith, without which, the Word is as a dead Letter without life, and as an empty sound without power: and if we do not give credit unto it, it cannot profit the hearers. Secondly, we must come with fear, that we may fear God in his word, and avoid the breach of it. For the Lord hath respect unto them that are of humble and contrite hearts, and tremble at his word. We must set our selves in the presence of God, and hear as if we saw him present before us, and so receive the word as from Christ himself, the Teacher of his Church.

Thirdly, we must come with good stomachs, as unto a feast prepared for us, we must hunger and thirst after the word to feed our empty Souls, desiring it, and longing after it, as doth the dry ground after the Dew of heaven, and the shewers of Rain. This the Apostle *Peter* teacheth; *Desire the sincere Milk of the word of God, that ye may grow thereby.* He that thinketh himself full before he come to the Lord's house, is no fit Guest to be partakers of his dainty fare. In hearing the word, we must be attentive, and intentiue to that which we hear. As we are present in body, so we must be present in mind. God opened the heart of *Lydia*, to attend to those things that were delivered by *Paul*. This is very profitable many ways, and helpeth as a Sovereign remedy against the roving cogitations of the mind, against the entertaining of other actions of another Nature, and against the loathsomeness and weariness, that for the most part accompanyeth the most holy things of God. First, we are subject to inconstancy and lenity of mind, our hearts are ready to wander and go astray from the present work in

hand, and oftentimes are carried away from the best matters, so that we neither remember where we are, nor consider what we do, nor endeavor to profit as we ought.

Secondly, it availeth against those deceits and destructions, whereby we entertain other actions of piety, which with-draw us from the present occasion and duty of hearing required of us. For some think they do God good service, when they offer unto him no better than a will worship, which is abominable before him. Hence it is, that many think it enough to be present with the assembly, and regard not how they be occupied, so that while the Congregation is employed one way, they are employed another, & while it performeth a public action, they are exercised in some private devotion: as for example, when the Church is hearing, they are praying: or when the Church is praying, they are reading. This is to offer the Sacrifice of Fools. For the public actions of the Church, must be publicly attended of all the assembly, and there is neither time nor place unto anything that is private or proper to one, or to few. For the Minister being a public person, is always either the mouth of God, or the mouth of the the people: the mouth of God to speak unto us from him, and to deliver the word in his name; the mouth of the people and Congregation, to speak unto the Lord for us, so that the action is common to the whole Church. So then, it cannot stand with the rules of the word, and the comely order that God hath left to his Church, that in the time of public prayer, of hearing the preaching, of receiving the Sacraments, of singing of Psalms, any should exercise and busy themselves otherwise, then as the whole assembly doth, in their private reading, or in private prayer, or in private meditation, thereby severing themselves in devotion and action from their brethren, with whom they have joined themselves in bodily presence. Our Savior Christ speaking of private Prayer, giveth this direction; *When thou prayest, enter into thy Chamber, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray unto thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.* For it is a manifest contempt of the ordinance of God, a disdain of our Brethren, and a dividing of our selves from the Communion of Saints, to worship God in public place alone by our selves, and it were better for us to hearken, then to wander; and to use our ears then our eyes. Thirdly, this earnest attention helpeth against the common disease of weariness and irkesomenesse of hearing, whereby it falleth out, that we sit in our Seats as men placed upon Thorns; impatient, discontent, moving hither and thither, and angry that we are detained so long from that which we more desire. If we would examine our own hearts, how earnest oftentimes we are, and not in following our own vanities and idle pastimes (to note them with no worse Title) that we can spend whole days and nights in them without tediousness: it might worthily make us ashamed, not to be able to stay and abide an hour or two in the house of God, for the increase of our Faith, and the furthering of our salvation.

Hence it is, that we make such hast to be gone, and think every minute and moment of time an hour, till we depart: we abide not the Prayer after the Sermon, to crave of God his blessing upon our hearing, which as it is a necessary part of the Ministers duty, so the people with all reverence and humility ought to join therein. For he that will not wait and stay to crave the blessing of God, doth carry home with him to his house, the curse of God, and never profiteth by that which he hath heard. After our hearing, is required Meditation and practice of that which we have heard, that we may be bettered in judgment, in knowledge, in

affection. We should be careful to remember it, to ponder upon it, to lay it up in our hearts, and to frame all our doings by it. There is a double use and benefit of Meditation. It serveth us against the negligence and security of those, that hold the Word no longer in the mind, then the sound is in the ears, and remember the instructions no longer, then they abide in the Church, like riuen and rotten Vessels, that leak and let out the liquor as fast as they received it. For they are no sooner dismissed, and risen from their seats, but their hearts are strayed, and their tongues applied after earthly; nay, after profane things, according to their several affections and vain delights.

Again, it helpeth more deeply to imprint in our minds, and engrave in our memories, that Doctrine which we have heard, and it furthereth us in a wise and profitable application of every point taught unto our selves. He proveth the best Scholar that thinketh often upon his Lesson, after he hath had it. And touching practice, which is the end of our hearing, preparation, attention, and meditation, Christ himself hath said; *Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.* Likewise the Apostle James, pronounceth those only to be blessed, *Which are not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word.* So then it is plain, that the end of hearing is not vain speculation, or a bare knowledge of the will of God, but a care to obey it and perform it. For which cause the word is called a light for our paths, and a Lantern for our steppes, to the end we should walk in it, and live by it, and seek direction from it.

Lastly, this Doctrine giveth good direction to such as have authority, either to ordain and appoint fit persons, or to present them to certain places. For seeing the regeneration of man is wrought by the preaching of the Word, it teacheth the over-seers of the Church to look to their office, and to take heed that they do not rashly lay their hands upon ignorant and vn-sufficient persons, or such as are scandalous and loose Liuers, and then thrust them upon the people to look to their Souls, which are not worthy to feed their Cattle, or to wipe their shoes. The Apostle giveth this rule to Timothy, *Lay hands suddenly on no Man, neither be partaker of other men's sins, keep thyself pure.* Moreover, he would not have the Deacons to have the office of attending on the poor, unless they were first tried & examined, and after trial approved, let them (saith he) first be proved, then let them Minister, if they be found blameless: therefore much rather ought the Ministers themselves to be proved, before they be approved, as the calling is higher, and the danger greater, if they be found unfaithful and unworthy. They must not be carried away by friendship or favor, or Letters of commendation, but approved only of such as are apt to teach, and unblameable in life. The Apostle giveth this as an unchangeable rule never to be broken, *A Bishop must be vnreproueable, apt to teach, not given to Wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre, &c.* For when an unfit man contrary to this order, is put into the Ministry, he is as much to be reprov'd that doth admit him, as he that doth present him, and as he that is represented and admitted, seeing he maketh himself partaker of his sins. But to pass this over, let us come to such as are Patrones, and have the bestowing of Church-livings, it standeth them upon to make choice of all Teachers, that may bring the people to Faith and repentance, least it come to pass through their means that the people be untaught, and least the Prophet complain of them, as he did of the chief Rulers and Leaders after their return from Captivity, when everyone sought their own private profits and pleasures, but had no time, or at least would

spare no leisure to provide for the setting up of the Temple of God; *Is it time for yourselves to dwell in your Fielde-houses, and this House lie wast?* This offense and abuse, cometh from three chief heads, and issueth from three Fountaines, for it proceedeth partly from ignorance; partly from carelessness; and partly from covetousness. By ignorance, when they know not what care is committed unto them, and what trust is reposed in them. By negligence, when they feel not the greatness of the sin, nor consider the injury offered to others, but suffer themselves to be drawn and overcome by affection, or kindred, or other men's suites, to bestow sufficient places upon vn-sufficient persons. By covetousness, when they reserve a portion or pension to themselves, and when they so pare it and share it from the incumbent, that they sequester the greatest benefit of the Benefice for themselves, and bestow ten Shekles and a suit of apparel by the year to another, to bear the name and to serve the Cure. These bestow as much upon their Horse-keeper to keep their Horses; as upon the Minister that hath the charge of Souls. If ignorance be the cause. I would in the Name of God, and in reverence to their high places and callings, crave liberty to use a word of Exhortation unto them, to beseech them to give me leave to put them in mind, and to be content to learn how they came by this right and authority to be put into their hands. After that the bounds and limits were assigned to every Parish, and several Churches were appointed for several Ministers, and Lands and livings bestowed for their maintenance, to the end that everyone should keep his own, and no man to intrude upon the right of another, nor rob the Church of that which was given, there were certain temporal men chosen, either by godly Kings, or by such as had endowed those Churches and given them Lands, to be Patrones of those Churches, who might be able and ready to defend the Church rightes and privileges, to the end the Pastors themselves should with more convenience and less incumbrance, apply their vocations. It was thought unfit for them to follow suites of Law, whereby their studies might be distracted, and so the people should not be instructed: and besides, those holy men, resembling Christ, and employed in the service of the Church, would not be contentious in the law to strive with any: whereby we see they are called Patrones, because they were appointed by the first Doners, to defend the right of the Donation against all Intruders and Incroachers upon their gifts, and to protect the Church-livings from the injuries and insolencies of covetous and contentious men. They were not appointed by the first institution to bestow Church-livings (as now they do) but to patronize the right of the Lands consecrated to the Church. Afterward, they were allowed to nominate the Minister, that the burden that lay upon them might be the better borne, and that the trouble might be eased with some honor. Seeing therefore they have as men of trust, the right of Patronage and presentation put into their hands, and may not only defend the place, but name the person, let them be careful to discharge the trust that is reposed in them, and show themselves worthy of that power and privilege committed unto them. Again, let them consider that it is a great calling & of great importance, and therefore great gifts are required for the execution of it. It hath annexed unto it the charge of Souls, and therefore is not slightly to be passed over.

Ignorance shall excuse no man, *He that knoweth not his Masters will, shall be beaten with fewer stripes:* but willful ignorance of such as do not know, nor will not know, is a double sin. This

is not spoken with any malice or hatred to their persons, but in a desire of their good, and a love to the people, so that we say no otherwise of such Patronages, then Christ did of his persecutors; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*. If negligence and carelessness be the cause of this offering of unworthy persons to be the Overseers of the Church, then I crave humbly and heartily the wise consideration of these profitable Meditations. The Lord threateneth to the Watchman death, that warneth not his hearers, and saith, he will require their blood at his hand. If then God have made me, or the people hath chosen me, or the Church hath suffered me to be a Patron, I ought thus to reason: If I negligently place such a one, as for want of ability cannot, or for want of conscience, will not give warning, and admonish the wicked of their sins, can I want my portion in the wrath of the Lord that is threatened against all such defaults? Christ Jesus teacheth, that it is a sign of love to him in the Minister to feed his Sheep, to feed his Lambes: if then I be a Patron of any place, I must think that it is a token and witness of my love to Christ, if I cause his Sheep and Lambes to be fed. And if it be want of love in the Minister, when he doth not feed, but fleese the Sheep; when he doth not teach, but starve them; is it not so in me, if through my sluggishnes and sin it so come to pass? It is a great sin to lay hands rashly to admit any into the ministry, and thereby to give that worthy calling to an unworthy man: and is it no offense in me being Patron, to bestow the Living upon such a one? If he be to be blamed that giveth institution and induction, he cannot be excused that giveth the presentation. It is noted by the Evangelist; that when Christ saw a great multitude of people gathered together from all quarters, he had compassion upon them, because they were as Sheep without a Shepherd.

The word used in that place, is of great force, derived of a word that signifyeth the Entrails, the Bowels, and inward parts; expressing thereby, as it were an aking of his head, or a yerning of his Bowels, to see so pitiful a sight, so doleful a spectacle. If then there belong unto me the right of a Patronage, and presentation to any Living, I must thus consider, if I be led by the Spirit of Christ, or have any zeal of his glory, or care of the salvation of his people in me. I must show mercy and compassion to those Souls that are so dearly bought and purchased, even by the precious blood of Christ. If we have an house to build, we will not admit of every Work-man that offereth his help, or is commended to us by others, or will labor best cheap: but we will make choice of the most expert and sufficient. And shall we then choose or commend to the building of the Spiritual house of God, every Cobbler and Bungler, insufficient persons; either *Jereboam's* Priests, that were of the lowest of the people, or such as *Eli's* Sons, who were the leudest of all the people? When the Tabernacle of God was to be built, they took not tag and rag from among the refuse of the Congregation, but such as were filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all workmanship. If covetousness be the cause of placing such blind guides, which is as great an over-sight, as to set a blind man to be a Watch-man, or a dumb man to be a Messenger, or a Lame man to be a Post, or a deaf man to be a Judge: we must observe, that the Lord complaineth in the Prophet; that he was spoiled and robbed when the Tithes and offerings were taken away from the true use, and from the right Owners, and therefore would visit it with a grievous plague and heavy judgment. The Jews in the Gospel allege it unto Christ, as an Argument of love to them and their Nation, that the *Centurian*, whose Servant was sick,

had built them a Synagogue: so that on the other side, they would have branded him with the note of hating them and their Nation, if he had spoiled the Synagogue, or taken away the privileges belonging unto it. The Prophet *David* (as we heard before) would not drink of the Water of *Bethlehem*, because it was gotten with the danger of some few men's Temporal lives: Ought not this to teach a great conscience to everyone, to take heed that he do not eat and drink that which hazzardeth the Souls and bodies of many of their Brethren, and to make them afraid to clothe themselves and their families, by leaving the people naked to their enemies, to be a pray unto them, and to be destroyed by them? It is noted as a thing worthy of note and memory in the life of *S. Augustine*, that he sharply rebuked and reprov'd a Gentleman in his time, for re-calling and taking away his own gift, which before he had given to the maintenance of his Church: how much more would he have been offended if he had lived in our days (wherein many are as friendlie and favorable to the Ministry, as the East wind is to the fruits of the earth) & how much more severely would he have censured those Caterpillars and Cormorants, that take away by injurious customs and corruptions the maintenance of the Church, which neither they nor their Fathers have given? The ancient *Romaines* by the light of Nature (as *Liuy* testifieth) disliked and checked *Qu. Fulvius Flaccus*, because he had uncovered a part of *Iuno's* Temple, to cover another Temple of *Fortune* with the same Tiles; they told him that *Pirrhus* or *Hanniball* would not have done the like, and that it had been too much for him to have done it to a private Cittizens house, being a place far inferior to a Temple, and in conclusion, forced & compelled him to send home those Tiles again, by a public decree of the Senate. Let those things be duly waied, and make these men ashamed to come behind the Heathen, who did more to their Idols, then they will do for the honor of the true God. If they be not hewn out of Oaks, and have hearts of Flint, let them open their eyes and behold the oppressions of the Church, and the pulling away in whole or in part, the provision appointed for the Pastor, whereby it cometh to pass, that many places want the preaching of the Word, and many Souls perish for the want thereof.

When the *Philistines* sent home God's Ark from them, they sent it not back empty, they returned it not without a gift. When *Zacchaeus* repented of his injurious dealing, he offered to restore four-fold. If these Church-pollers, who have robbed the Church, and enriched themselves with the spoils thereof, will not restore that which they have wrongfully taken, and make up the breaches which they have wastfully made, being without the fear of God, and any fruit of true Religion, they shall in the end receive judgment according to their works, and in the mean season, their own consciences shall sting and torment them. It goeth indeed hard with the poor Church that is oppressed, and it groaneth and sigheth under the burden of her oppression: yet in the end, when the Lord chief-Justice of Heaven and Earth shall pronounce sentence against them, it shall be known that they, who oppress others, do more hurt themselves, then those whom they oppress; in as much as the sorrow and smart of the oppressed have an ende, but the woe and torment of the oppressor shall be everlasting, because he heapeth unto himself wrath, against the day of wrath, and of the declaration of the just judgment of God.

11Which in times past was to thee unprofitable, but now very profitable, both to thee and to me.

12 *Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him; that is, mine own Bowels.*

Hitherto we have heard the chief matter of this Epistle propounded and amplified: Now let us see how it is proved and confirmed. The matter handled, is; that *Onesimus* should be received and entertained again by his Master. This is first strengthened, and then concluded. To effect his purpose, *Paul* draweth diverse reasons; some taken from *Onesimus*; others, from the Apostle himself. From *Onesimus* in the eleventh verse, because he should find him very profitable and serviceable, which is amplified by the contrary, albeit he have been unprofitable and unthrifty unto thee. The reason may be thus framed;

- *If he will prove profitable unto thee, then thou oughtest to receive him, lest thou be found an enemy to thine own profit:*
- *But he will prove profitable unto thee,*
- *Receive him therefore.*

This hath included in it, the force of a close and secret Objection. For *Philemon* might object, I have found him hurtful: why then should I receive into my House as a member of my Family, that Servant which will cause more harm, then bring profit: I have had experience of the damage that he hath done me, what homage he will do me, I know not. To this the Apostle maketh a double answer; first, by granting, then by correcting that which he had granted, and both ways, by comparing the time past with the time present; the time before he embraced Religion, with the time of his conversion: as if he should say; true it is, and I grant he was once unprofitable to thee, for while he was unfaithful to God, he could do no faithful service unto thee: but why dost thou urge the time of his ignorance? And why dost thou consider so much what he hath been? For now he is become a new man, he hath tasted of the true Religion, he hath learned to know God, to know himself, to know thee, and to know me. To know God, his merciful Creator; to know himself, a wretched Sinner; to know thee, his loving Master; to know me, his spiritual Father; whereas in former times he was ignorant of all these. As he regarded not to know God, so he could not regard thy good: but now thou shalt receive a new *Onesimus*, a new Servant, a new man, the same in substance, but renewed in quality, and altered from the Crown of the head to the sole of the foot. He was not before so unprofitable, but now thou shalt find him as profitable unto thee, as I have found him both diligent and dutiful unto me, in my bonds and imprisonment.

The reasons taken from the Apostle himself, are of two sorts: first, from his action of sending him: secondly, from the Communion and fellowship which *Paul* had with *Philemon*. The first, touching his present sending of his Servant back, is propounded, and then the objections that might be alleged, are prevented. The reason may thus be concluded;

- *If I have sent him back again, then thou oughtest to receive him at my hands.*
- *But I have sent him back again unto thee,*
Verse 12.

- *Receive him therefore.*

This is the reason: the preventing of the Objections is in the three Verses following, which come afterward to be considered.

This is the order of the words, it remaineth briefly to vnfolde the meaning & Interpretation of thē. When he saith of *Onesimus*; *That he was in times past unprofitable*: he meaneth in the time of his ignorance, before his conversion, before his calling by the preaching of the Gospel, and before he came to the knowledge and understanding of true Religion. By [*Vnprofitable*] we must understand, lewd, untrusty, unfaithful, stubborn, dissolute, and every way carnal. Again, when he saith [*But now*] he meaneth since his conversion, and since a new-birth was wrought in him, he is made [*Profitable*] that is; honest, helpful, dutiful, faithful, serviceable, so that he opposeth and compareth the State and condition of Regenerate *Onesimus*, with the State and condition of unregenerate *Onesimus*, and maketh the one contrary to the other. When he willett *Philemon* to receive him, he meaneth to grace and favor, forgiving and forgetting his former faults and bad dealing. Lastly, when he calleth *Onesimus* his own Bowels; he meaneth as dear to him, as his own Bowels; who, although he were a poor Slaue and abject Servant by calling, and a Fugitiue and Runna-grate by his former condition, yet now greatly beloved of the Apostle, even as himself. As if he should say; If thou lovest me, account of him no other-wise then thou dost of me, entertain him as mine own heart, receive him as my Son, and as if he were begotten of mine own bowels.

In these two Verses, containing two reasons, to persuade *Philemon* to receive his Servant, being made much better by his departure from him, we are to observe diverse pointes, worthy of our diligent observation, and of our careful consideration. First, we are to mark, how the Apostle, speaking of the offense of *Onesimus*, and of his former State before his conversion, doth mittigate the greatness of his sin, by the mildness of the word. For whereas he might have called him, a Thief, a Rogue, and a Runna-gate, he doth allay it, and express it under a gentler Name, (as we shall see better afterward) to teach us, that when we have to do with Sinners that are converted unto Christ truly, and have repented of their sins unfeignedly, we should deal favorably with them, we should not rack and stretch their offenses, but after a sort, cover them with the cloak of charity, and bury them in the Grave of forgetfulness. Secondly, we may observe how the Apostle speaking of his Conversion and Regeneration, doth set it out to the full, not only that *Philemon* should be persuaded, but that *Onesimus* might be comforted. Wherefore he doth not only say that he was become profitable, but very profitable, or exceeding profitable. And he addeth; not only very profitable to *Philemon*, but to himself, even to them both; whereof *Paul* had experience already, *Philemon* should have hereafter: which teacheth us to use all good and loving means, to strengthen such as are newly converted, and to remember for their comfort and encouragement, such good things as appear to have been in them, not to diminish or lessen them, but fully to express and declare them to others, that God may be glorified in their calling, and they themselves may be strengthened in all well doing.

Thirdly, we see in the strength of the first reason, that men are greatly moved to do anything by hope of receiving profit and commodity. It is an Argument not only to induce

profane and ungodly men to commit wickedness, but to persuade the godly and faithful to follow holiness of life. Whatsoever is offered unto us under the Title of profit, doth carry with it a certain force and power to lead us to the practice of it: whereby we ought to learn, that in moving men to well doing, we may lawfully lay before them the hope of Heaven, and assurance of profit; yea, all men for their better encouragement in the works of godliness, may have respect to the profit of their labor, and the recompense of reward. True it is, the glory of God, and the discharge of our duty, ought to be the principal means to move us, but the consideration of our own profit should not be neglected. Hence it is that the Apostle moving all that have believed, to be careful to show forth good works, addeth; *These things are good and profitable unto men*: on the other side, removing them from foolish questions, and Genealogies, and contentions, and brawlings about the Law: he concludeth, for they are unprofitable and vain. So the Apostle declaring the wonderful Faith of *Moses*, who refused to be called the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, chose rather to suffer adversity with the people of God, and esteemed the rebuke of Christ greater riches then the treasures of *Egypt*, showeth, that he had respect to the recompense of the reward.

Fourthly, *Paul's* sending is made a reason for *Philemons* receiving, and he concludeth, that he is to be received of his Master, because he is sent back by *Paul* himself. For seeing *Onesimus* returned not of his own accord, or through compulsion of others, or through danger of law, or through fear of punishment, but by the purpose and appointment of *Paul*, and came not again empty, but laden with letters of commendation; it serveth highly to set forth the matter. To present himself in this sort before his Master, by the direction and advise of *Paul*, was more then if he had returned of his own head, and it was more effectual to move *Philemon* to receive him: which teacheth us, that the author and persuader of any journey or embassy, doth serve greatly to commend the journey, and to set forth the embassy it self; and therefore a message sent from a faithful and good man, is not lightly to be passed over, or rashly to be contemned, or unreverantly to be received of him to whom it is sent.

Lastly, we are to observe the tender and inward affection of *Paul* toward *Onesimus*, who was as dear unto him as his own bowels, and therefore would have him so received and respected, as he would receive and respect his own bowels. Where we see, that together with his petition, he bewrayeth and discloseth his affection toward him for whom he maketh request. This teacheth us, partly, that to the end our request and commendation may take place, and work in him whom we beseech and entreat, we ought to show our love, and make manifest our dear affection for him, in the manner of making of our suit and supplication; and partly, that whosoever is truly turned unto God, and repenteth of his sins from the bottom of his heart, ought to be dearly beloved of us; yea, albeit he were a Servant, a Fugitive, and one stained with much wickedness. For a sound conversion of the heart, doth blot out all reproach from the penitent, and raseth out of our minds all remembrance of former offenses, as if they had never been committed. These are the general observations: now let us descend to the particular doctrines.

[Which in times past was to thee unprofitable, but now very profitable, both to thee and to me.]

We heard before, that in these words one Argument is included, to persuade *Philemon* to receive his Servant, which is, because howsoever he had been unprofitable, now he was turned to be most profitable. In which Words the Apostle maketh an allusion, to name *Onesimus*, which in the original signifieth profitable. It is an usual and common thing in the Prophets, to allude to the Names of Men and Women, of Cities and Countries, and from thence to draw some profitable consideration and conclusion, that thereby they may move to some virtue, or condeme some vice, or give warning of some judgment, or set forth some mercy of God. The like it were easy to show in the New-Testament. So in this place, the Apostle putting *Philemon* in hope of receiving profit by him, alludeth to the Name of *Onesimus*, that is profitable. In like manner, one of the Heathen Poets using this Name, hath a wise and worthy sentence; *The gifts of Enemies, are not gifts, nor profitable.*

The last word is the same with the Name of this Servant, wherefore it is as much as if the Apostle should have said; I do not fear, and do not thou doubt, but he will behave himself answerable to my expectation and commendation given of him, beseeming the profession of the Faith worthy his own Name, and will approve himself unto thee to be a right *Onesimus*, that is; thrifty and profitable. Before he was *Onesimus* in name, now he is so in deed: before he held the Title, now he hath the truth; before thou sawest the shadow, now thou shalt see the substance; thou hast had experience of his unprofitableness, now shalt thou have the benefit of the profit that he bringeth with him, being made a new Creature in Christ Jesus. We learn from hence, that Christian Faith or Religion, of a man unprofitable, maketh him profitable; and of one unfit, maketh him fit to every good work. The conversion of men to the true Faith, worketh the greatest change and alteration that can be, and maketh them good, profitable, and helpful unto others, that have been before, unjust, injurious, cruel, and hurtful. This appeareth by the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, where he showeth; *That the Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie with the Kidde, and the Calf, and the Lyon, and the fat Beast together, and a little Child shall lead them: the Cow and the Bear shall feed, and their young ones shall lie together, and the Lyon shall eat Straw like the Bullock: the Suckling Child shall play upon the hole of the Asp, and the weined Child shall put his hand in the Cockatrice hole.*

These things are not literally to be understood, but he meaneth by these Beasts, men of a ravenous and brutish Nature, who when they shall be brought into the Kingdom of God, and Church of Christ, they shall lay aside their wicked and Woluish properties, and become loving, gentle, kind, and courteous one to another. This the Apostle teacheth. *Ephe. 2, 11. Remember that ye being in times past Gentiles in the Flesh, and called uncircumcision of them, which are called Circumcision in the Flesh, made with hands, that ye were at that time without Christ, and were Aliants from the Commonwealth of Israel, and were Strangers from the Couenants of promise, and had no hope, and were without GOD in the World: but now in Christ Jesus ye which once were far off, are made near by the blood of Christ.* It is noted in the Words of the Prophet, and of the Angel; *That John the Baptist, by the power and force of his Ministry, shall turn the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just Men, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*

This truth is farther confirmed unto us by sundry examples, as by the example of *Paul* toward others, and others toward *Paul*. Let us look upon the example of *Paul*, no man is ignorant, that before his conversion to the true Faith of Christ, he was a bloody Persecuter, an horrible Blasphemer, and a cruel Oppressor, one that made havoc of the Church of God, and sought to overthrow Religion: but after he was called to the knowledge of Christ, he was turned into a new man, he became gentle unto all, he thirsted after their Salvation, which is the sincerest Testimony of the soundest love. The like affection we see in the Jailor after his conversion. He had executed his office with all rigor and extremity; *He cast the Apostles into the inner Prison, und made their Feet fast in the Stockes, because he would be more sure of them:* but immediately after the feeling of the Earthquake, the hearing of *Paul*, the opening of the Prison, the preaching of the Faith, and turning of his heart; *He took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes, and was baptized with all that belonged unto him.* Whereby we see the fruit of his unfeigned love, after the truth of his unfeigned conversion. Before he shown his cruelty, now he testifieth his Charity; before he manifested his rage, now he declareth his Religion; before we heard of his fury, now we see his Faith. The *Jews*, that crucified the Lord of glory, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of the Son of God, when they were exhorted to amend their lives, and to save themselves from that froward Generation: they received his word, they were added to the Church, they continued in the Doctrine of the Apostles, in the fellowship of the faithful, in the singleness of heart, in the breaking of Bread, in the communication of goods, in the praising of God, in the selling of their possessions, and in the distribution of them to all men, as everyone had need. The like we see in *Zacchaeus*, he was at the first a Publican, a chief receiver of the tribute, and a chief deceiver of the people, he had robbed many by false accusations, so that he was grown rich, and by his Riches, into reproach and hatred: but when Christ had revealed himself unto him, he stood forth and said unto the Lord: *Behold, Lord, half my goods I give unto the poor, and if I have taken from any man by forged cauillation, I restore him fourfold.*

This is a great work of God that he worketh at our conversion, which the Apostle speaketh off. 1. *Corin.* 6, 10, 11. *Be not deceived, neither Fornicatours, nor Idolatours, nor Adulterers, nor Wantons, nor Buggers, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards; shall inherit the Kingdom of GOD: and such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our GOD.* All these Testimonies and examples teach us, that where is a right conversion of the heart, there is also a true alteration of the life; and where there is an embracing of the true Christian Religion, there is a change of our conversation.

The Reasons of this Doctrine are evident, and shine as clearly as the Sun at Noone-day. For first, if we consider our natural estate and condition what we are before our conversion, we shall easily be brought to acknowledge, both where, and what, and whence the change is. For naturallie we hate the truth, and the professors of the truth, *Being full of all unrighteousness, Fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of Envy, of Murder, of Debate, of deceit, taking all things in the evil part, Whisperers, Back-biters, Haters of GOD, Doers of wrong, proud, Boasters, Inuenters of evil things, disobedient to Parents, without understanding, Covenant-breakers, without natural affection, such as can never be appeased, merciless, Lovers of themselves, cursed speakers, unthankfull, unholy, false accusers, intemperate, fierce, no lovers at all of*

them which are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures, more then lovers of God, having a show of godliness, but have denied the power thereof.

Behold here a Glass to behold our selves in, a perfect Glass to look upon, that we may see our selves, and know our selves what we are. And albeit all these sins do not actually break out of us, yet they are all originallie bred in us: and albeit the fruit of them do not appear outwardly, yet the very Spawne and Seed of them remaineth inwardly: and albeit we do not feel the Branches, yet we have cause to fear the bitter Rootes and Remnants and Relics, of them that are deeply settled in the Garden and Ground of our hearts. Seeing therefore our Nature is thus corrupt, and we so far alienated and estranged one from another, we cannot be healthful or profitable to any of God's people and Children. Our Savior teacheth, *That the Men of this World should always hate his Servants, and be unto to them as Wolves to the Lambs; yea, that the time should come, that they which kill them, should think they did God good service.* This is it which the Apostle speaketh and confesseth as well of himself, as of others; *We our selves also, were in times past unwise, disobedient, deceived, serving the lusts and diverse pleasures, living in maliciousness and envy, hateful and hating one another, until the bountifulness and love of GOD our Savior appeared; who according to his mercy saved us, by the washing of the Newe-birth, and renewing of the Holy-Ghost.* This is our natural condition, before we have freedom from this thralldom, and deliverance out of this misery which we bring with us, and upon us.

Secondly, when men are truly converted, they will make conscience of hurting, they will abstain from wrongs and injuries, they will be ready to do good to others, to profit others, to walk in all the duties of their callings, and to keep a good conscience toware God and man. This appeareth in the Prophet Isaiah, Chapter 65. where this Doctrine hath his confirmation, when he hath said; *That the Wolf and the Lamb shall feed together, and the Lyon shall eat Straw like the Bullock, and to the Serpent Dust shall be his Meat:* He addeth; *They shall no more hurt nor destroy in all mine holy Mountain, saith the Lord.* The Apostle saith, Acts 24, 16. *I endeavor myself to have always a clear conscience toward God and toward men.* Christ Jesus himself saith, *My meat is, that I may do the will of him that sent me, and finish his work.* So it is, and will be meat and drink to everyone of us, if we belong unto him, to do good unto all Men; yea, even our Enemies and Persecutours, as appeareth in the example of *Stephen*, who prayed for his utter Enemies, that hated him with deadly hatred, and stoned him to death: and in the example of *Joseph*, when his Brethren feared revenge, and to be rewarded evil for evil, according to their deserts, he said: *Fear not, for am not I under God?* Thus he comforted them, and spake kindelie unto them.

Thirdly, true conversion worketh in us the love of God and men, and so maketh us fruitful in all good works; it suffereth us not to be barren and unfruitful, and it subdueth the rage and corruption of our sinful Nature. For such as perform not their duties to God in the several partes of his worship, nor abstain from violence toward men, whom they ought to love as their Brethren, do make it plain and manifest, that they were never rightly converted. Such as are rightly converted, are truly sanctified; and therefore that is a false conversion, where there is want of sanctification. When the Prophet hath sore-shown the wonderful change and alteration that the Gospel of Christ should make, he maketh this the cause; *For the Earth*

shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters that cover the Sea. We saw and shown this before in the example of *Paul*, we cannot doubt, but he was before his conversion, as a roaring Lyon, and as a raging Wolf against the poor Lambes of Christ: but being made a Christian, and called to the knowledge of the truth from Heaven, he couched down quietly with them, so that we may truly say with the Prophet; *That the wolf did dwell the Lamb, the Leopard did lie with the Kid, the Lyon did eat Straw like the Bullock.* Seeing then, that the conversion of a man worketh in him the love of God and man, seeing before true conversion we hate others, and other hate us; and lastly, seeing after true conversion we begin to make conscience of hurting and harming others; it followeth, that such as by nature were as Bears and Bulls, as Asps and Vipers, as Wolves and Cockatrices, as Lions and Leopards; that is, fierce, cruel, covetous, injurious, and unjust, being converted to the Faith, and gathered into the Church, are made gentle, mild, and merciful.

Now let us come to the consideration of the Uses, and to the application of the Doctrine to our selves. First of all, we see hereby, that they are greatly deceived, that think true godliness to be unprofitable, and no gain at all to return and redowne to the practiser of it. Great is the benefit of true Religion, and much is the profit of our conversion. Without this, a man is no better then a Beast; nay, worse then any Beast. He liveth like a Swine, he dieth like a Dog, he becometh afterward a Devil. The holy man *Job* describing the life and death of ungodly men, saith of them; *They spend their days in wealth, and suddenly they go down to the Grave;* They say also unto God: *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit should we have, if we should pray unto him?* This is the voice of *Atheists* that regard not God; yea, that think there is no God. But true Religion bringeth with it the greatest profit, and no gain is comparable unto it. It maketh us profitable to our selves and others: the benefit that it bringeth to others, is both to their Bodies and Souls.

Hence it is that the Wise man saith; *The Marchandize thereof, is better then the Marchandize of Silver, and the gain thereof is better then Gold, it is, more precious then Pearls, and all things that thou canst desire, are not to be compared to her; Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and glory: her ways are ways of pleasure, and all her paths prosperity, she is a Tree of Life to all that lay hold upon her, and blessed is he that retaineth her.* Howsoever therefore the World, and the Children of this World, do repute and esteem of godliness, it is most certain it is the greatest Jewel, and offereth all other blessings with it. Hereunto accordeth the saying of the Apostle, *Godliness is great gain, if a man be content with that he hath.* And in another place; *Bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things, which hath the promise of the life present, and of that which is to come.* What can be more profitable, then that which maketh a man happy and blessed, who is, by the fall of man (and the corruption of his nature) cursed and miserable? And who is it that doth not desire blessedness? But godliness joined with true conversion of a Sinner to God, maketh his State and standing blessed. The Psalmist witnesseth, *That he isblessed that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his Commandments: blessed are they that are upright in their way, and walk in the way of the Lord: blessed are they that keep his Testimonies, and seek him with their whole hearts: blessed is the man that walketh not in the*

counsels of the wicked, but delighteth in the law of the Lord, and exerciseth himself therein day and night.

What can be more profitable then to have interest in Christ the treasure of all treasures, and the Jewel of all Jewels; to have him our Mediator, our Redeemer, our Savior? But when once we are truly converted, we have gotten Christ, he is become ours, we have him dwelling in us, him I say in whom dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily, who is the head of the church, whom to know is eternal life. By him our bondage is turned into freedom, our beggary into riches, our thralldom into liberty, our death into life. Who is it then can be so simple or ignorant, to affirm that profession to be without gain and profit, that bringeth Christ Jesus with it, in whom all treasures are hid and had? Or who can be so sottish or senseless to deny, that when we have done all that we can, our means are too slender, our cost too small, our time too short, and our labor too little, in seeking to find him, and in digging and deluing after him. For if we find him, we are sure to find all things, and to want nothing that is good. What thing can be more profitable then that which giveth a man just Title to God's blessings, and a sanctified use of his creatures? The ungodly man that is not converted to God, but perverted in all his ways, hath no part or interest in the promises and mercies of God, to warm himself with his wool, to feed himself with his meat: *For all the Beasts of the Forrests are his, and the beasts on a thousand Mountains.* Such as are wicked persons, are wrongful Usurpers, and unjust intruders upon the Lord's goods, and the portion that he hath prepared for his own people, nay they are shameful Thieves, and shameless Robbers that steal from the godly, that which was created for them, bestowed upon them, and sanctified unto them. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *Unto the pure are all things pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure, but even their minds and consciences are defiled.* In Adam we have lost the pure and free use of the creatures of God; in Christ Jesus the second Adam, and heir of all things, we recover our Title unto them again. Now, that which putteth us in possession, and bringeth the full fruition with freedom of conscience, and comfort of heart of all these things, must needs be holden most helpful and profitable unto us in this life.

Last of all, if we consider the enduring and continuing of the gain of godliness, we shall find the price of it to be above all other commodities: the sweetness whereof may delight us, and the contentment thereof may satisfy us, and the certainty thereof, may allure us to the seeking and preferring of it before all other, and to travel and traffic for it far and near. What commodity canst thou name or remember, that the richest Merchants bring from strange Countries, which is not subject to be lost by land, and to perish by the Sea, by storms, by robbers, by rousers, by tempests and shipwreck, so that when thou hast fetched it with the greatest danger of thy life, it may be taken from thee, and thou from it, which maketh it to be but a shadow of true gain? But the profit of godliness is of a contrary Nature, if once we have gotten this Pearl, the Thief cannot steal it, the moth cannot corrupt it, the Sea cannot drown it, the rust cannot fret it, the Land cannot loose it, the length of time cannot consume it, the greatness of danger cannot take it from us; the unfaithfulness of servants, the subtlety of enemies, the fraud of false Brethren, the force of the mighty, the violence of the Oppressor, the partiality of the Judge, the wresting of the Law, can never

deprive us or debar us of this benefit; yea, that which an Heathen man said once of human learning, may more truly and justly be spoken of godliness, which indeed is true learning; the which whosoever wanteth (what Ornaments of Nature and Art soever otherwise he hath) is utterly unlearned; nay a stark fool: It will follow us as a sweet guide abroad, to solace us, it will stay with us a pleasant companion to delight us at home; it will lie with us as a bed-fellow in the night, to teach us whereon to meditate; it will sit down with us as a guest at the Table to direct us; it will be with us as a skillful Physician in sickness to comfort us; it will stick and stand to us in prosperity, to humble us; it will cleave fast to us in adversity, and in the evil day to refresh us; it will wait upon us in death, it will descend with us into the grave, it will ascend with us into heaven, and always follow us from place to place, as the shadow doth the body. This made the Apostle *John* say, *Blessed are they that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors, and their works follow them.* Revel. 14, 13. To conclude therefore, so often as we think of true Religion, or remember the day of our conversion, we must think with our selves, that we made the most blessed change that ever was made, and hold this for a firm and sure principle, that no gain is like to this gain, no profit like to this profit.

Secondly, seeing Christian Religion, planted in the heart of a man, maketh him good and helpful to others, who before was unjust and unprofitable, let everyone prove his effectual calling, and true conversion, by earnest seeking after the good of others, and by a careful abstaining from hurting, troubling, and wronging of others. It is to be chosen as a better thing to suffer, then to offer wrong; to receive, then to requite; to take, then to give. *Obadiah* living in *Ahab's* Court, is commended for the manifestation of his Faith by his Works (as the Tree that showeth what it is by the fruits) he hid the Prophets of God from the sword of the persecutor, and fed them in the Cave in the time of famine. The Prophet affirmeth and assureth, that such shall dwell in the Tabernacle of the Lord, and rest in his holy mountain, as make much of those that fear the Lord, and honor them whom God hath honored. To this purpose, the Apostle setteth this down as a certain sign of our adoption, that God accepteth us as his sons and daughters, to wit; our love to the Saints, *We know that we are translated from death to life, because we love the Brethren.* Everyone must be able to show the soundness of his faith, and the truth of his conversion, by the fruits of his calling, and by the works of regeneration and amendment of life. An injurious man, that loveth himself, but not another, that hath no care to do good to his Brother, but to himself only, is not yet truly converted to God, nor delivered from the bondage of sin, nor made a member of Christ, nor engrafted into the true Church, nor endued with the grace of sanctification; he is yet in the flesh, and not in the spirit; he is yet in death, not restored to life; he is the bondslave of Satan, not brought into the liberty of the sons of God. For where there is no change in conversation, there can be no assurance of true conversion.

The meditation of this point, must enter deeply into our harts, & teach us to try our selves, whether as yet we born again by water and the spirit, or not. Whosoever can say thus, I have been in bondage to sin, now I am set free; I have been the prisoner of Satan, now I am at liberty; I have lived unprofitably to God, unprofitably to myself, unprofitably to others, now I have learned to lead my life to the honor of God, to the benefit of my brethren, and to the comfort of mine own soul; whosoever (I say) can say thus, may be assured of his conversion

and turning unto God, and that God hath begun his good work in him, which he will finish at the appearance of Jesus Christ. Let us all therefore know and consider, that it is required of us to repent of sins, to turn to God, to change our hearts, and to amend our lives, that so we may bring forth the fruits of righteousness, and express our obedience to the Gospel. To be without the fruits of the Gospel, is to deny the Gospel; and to be without godliness of conversation, is to be without Christ; and to be without an heart inwardly sanctified, and without a life outwardly regenerated, is to be without faith. It had been better for us that we had never had the Gospel offered unto us, then to have it, & to contemn it: It had been better we had always remained in darkness, then to have light come among us, and not to walk in the light. It is a worthy exhortation that the Apostle maketh to the *Thessalonians*, *Ye are all the Children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, neither of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as others do, but let us watch and be sober: for they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night: but let us which are of the day, be sober, putting on the Brest-plate of faith and love, and of the hope of salvation for an Helmet. It is not everyone that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that hath an earnest and careful endeavor to do his will.* It is not enough for us to be called a Christian, to bear the name of a Protestant, to renounce the name of a Papist, to make show of the true Religion, and to be an hearer of the word: we have learned better things, and must give an account of a farther duty. We will say peradventure, we hate and detest all the blind and erroneous opinions of Heretics, of Arians, of Papists, of Atheists, of Anabaptists, of Libertines, and such like; that we renounce all those opinions, that derogate anything from the true worship and honor of God, as denying of Christ's Godhead, his Manhood, his Mediation; that we abhor all kind of Idolatry, and superstitious serving of our God. But is this the whole conversion of a man? Or is this the perfect work of Repentance, that ought to be wrought in us? We must go farther then thus, and yet (my Brethren) I would we all went so far.

Many stand in the midway, and have not proceeded to learn and practice those duties. We must hate all ignorance of God and of his word, which is the Mother and Mistress of all sin and error: we must love and embrace the knowledge of God revealed and offered unto us from time to time: we must seek after it as a Treasure, we must receive it, otherwise we deceive our selves. We must hunger and thirst after the sincere milk of God's word, and account their feet beautiful, that bring it unto us, we must say; *Come, let us go up to the house of God, that he may teach us his ways, and that we may walk in his paths.* But do we thus? Nay, when it is offered, do we not spurn and kick against it, as the Horse and Mule, that is without understanding? Do we not mock and deride the Prophets of God, and preachers of the word, laboring to instruct us in the right way, and are we not for the most part made worse, and our hearts hardened, that we can receive no instruction? If we loved the light, we would delight in it, we would be reformed by it, we would be transformed into the obedience of it: but our profane works do testify against us, that we hate both the light, and those that are the Authors and the bringers of it. I might allege many other works of darkness, that swarm in our lives, and make us swerve from the rule of righteousness left unto us in the word. If we live in beastly drunkenness, in unclean lusts, in hatred, in malice, and such like fruits of the flesh, we are not yet partakers of a new birth, we are not become new creatures, we have

not yet put on the new man, we cannot do good to any of our brethren. When *Abraham* was to travel among the Heathen that knew not God among the Idolaters that worshipped not God, among the profane Infidels that were never converted to God, he said, *The fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my wives sake*. He could look for no duties of love, no practice of righteousness, no fruits of humanity toward him, to proceed from them that were vnmortified, vnsanctified, and unregenerated. It is the great mercy of God to mankind, to give to them his word, which restraineth their actions, subdueth their affections, and ordereth men which otherwise would be outrageous Monsters, as Wolves, Tigers, Lions, Bears, Bulls, Bandogs, nay Devils incarnate one to another; who being left to themselves, they would be as Cormorants or Cannibals, ready to devour and eat up one another, being not only without piety, but without civility, without courtesy, without humanity. If therefore his word do not alter us, nothing will, nothing can. Thus then we see, that seeing it is the conversion of a man, that maketh him any way profitable or serviceable to others, we must all labor to be born again, otherwise it had been better we had never been borne; and we must seek true Repentance, and the conversion of the heart, otherwise we shall be unprofitable members in the Church of God.

Lastly, seeing it is the turning of us to God, that turneth us to the good of men, it serveth as a notable direction unto us, to teach us, that whosoever desireth that such as belong unto him should be profitable and faithful unto him, let him labor to plant godliness in their hearts, and to sow the seeds of eternal life in their minds. It will be able to minister no comfort unto thee, to see godliness flourish in others, and to hear of their conversion to God; endeavor to bring it home to thine own house, and to settle it in the doors of thine own family. A better duty thou canst not perform unto their souls, and so unto them, then by this, which will bring the blessing of God with it, and remove the curse of God from thee and thy family. Who is it (if he were asked the question) that would be troubled with an unfaithful Wife, with stubborn Children, with untrusty Servants, or who is it that would not account them the greatest plague and punishment that can befall a man in this life, to have such a dissolute and disordered house? If then, any desire to be with comfort and contentment matched with a provident and profitable wife, blessed with gracious and obedient children, furnished with diligent and dutiful servants, let them seek out such as truly serve the Lord, make choice of such as show lively fruits of their unfeigned conversion, be careful to train them in the knowledge of God, and to procure their salvation.

This was *Abraham's* care and Conscience, to instruct such as did belong unto him, and this was the cause that he had a blessed wife, partaker of the same inheritance with him, that followed him up and down in every place, as God called him; he had a faithful *Isaac*, ready in all duty to obey him; he had careful and trusty servants, that contented not themselves with eye-service, but performed their duties in the singleness of their hearts, as serving the Lord, and not man. Would we then have our Wives that lie in our bosoms, and are given as the dearest and nearest companions of our life, to be found faithful unto us, of pure and chaste conversation, loving their children, governing their house, and giving no occasion to the adversary, to speak evil? Let us make them faithful to God, and endeavor to work true Religion in them, as they which are heirs together of the grace of life. Such a blessed couple

were *Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Zacharias and Elizabeth, Aquila and Priscilla*, with sundry others. This made the Prophet say, *Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, and walketh in his ways, &c, thy wife shall be as the fruitful Vine on the sides of thine house, & thy children like the Olive plants round about thy Table.*

Moreover, if we desire to have our Children the fruit of our own body, and the fry of the Church to be good and dutiful unto us (as everyone would have them do their duty to him, and will cry out against them when they behave themselves rudely and unreverantly) let us be careful of their conversion, let us give them the sweet taste of Religion, and let us teach them this trade of the fear of God. We see that many complain of the hardness of the world, of the straitness of the times, and of the miserableness of many men; Alas (say they) it never went worse with poor men, we know not what to do with our Children, how to employ them, or where to bestow them, except a man be able to give a round and rich sum with his son, he cannot get him a Master, or provide him a service, or bind him to a trade, or place him to get his living another day. But understand, O ye unwise among the people, and ye Fools when will ye be wise? How long will we live in the Church, and yet not learn this one lesson which is the foundation and fountain of all the rest, that godliness is the greatest gain? Bind them to this trade, this is the best trade, with which no other can be matched or compared; this requireth no great stock or substance to put them forth. They that have nothing to give, and little to live upon, may as soon advance and prefer their children this way, as they that have great riches, & large possessions. Hence it is that the Prophet saith, *Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and ye that have no Silver, come buy and eat; Come I say, buy Wine and Milk without Silver, and without Money: wherefore do ye lay out Silver, and not for Bread? And your labor without being satisfied? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight in fatness.*

Whereby we see, that whosoever are called to be of this Science, it will be able to maintain the Tradesmen, it will bring in the greatest profit. There are so many of some Trades, that they fear one will not be able to live by another, one enuyeth another, and hindereth another. It is not so in this Trade, the moe the better, the moe the merrier, everyone helpeth another, and all do make up a blessed fellowship and communion of Saints. If then, thou have a care to put thy son to an Occupation, that he may learn to live another day, and neglectest this which is the chief and ground of all, thou art greatly deceived in thy choice, and Christ Jesus shall laugh thee to scorn for thy folly. Let me therefore commend this weighty business of bestowing thy son, to thy wise consideration; a greater gain I cannot name, a richer trade thou canst not find, a better Master he cannot serve, a farther freedom he cannot obtain, a surer inheritance he cannot purchase. This is it which *Solomon* pointeth out unto us, *Prov. 22, 6. Teach a child in the trade of his way, and when he is old, he shall not depart from it.*

Furthermore, if we desire to have our Servants that attend upon us, and labor for us, to be obedient and faithful unto us, painful in their calling, and trusty in their business, let us know that we our selves must be the means to procure it, and further it by seeking their salvation, and laboring earnestly their conversion. If they be truly Religious, they will be

truly righteous; if they once know how to serve God faithfully, they will soon learn to serve us faithfully for Conscience sake. Many have evil servants, and ungracious Children, they see it, they complain of it, they seem to lament it; but they never consider that the chiefest fault is their own. Have we Servants or Children given to lying, to deceiving, to fraud, to falsehood, to robbing and stealing, and breaking out into sundry disorders in their life? Let us mark what the cause is, let us see where is the occasion, and let us provide how these abuses may be remedied and redressed. There is no better way to recover them, then to teach them their duties, to show them their sins out of the word of God, and to lay before them his Judgments that are due unto them. It is a great blessing of God to have a Religious servant, he bringeth the blessing of God with him, the heart of his Master may trust in him, and he shall have no need of spoil, he will do him good (and not evil) all the days of his life. This we see in the servant of *Abraham*, who as he had a care to teach and train up his household in the ways of godliness, so the Lord blessed him with a faithful family, and a religious servant, whom he employed in a weighty business, of fetching home a Wife for his Son *Isaac*.

The like we see in *Joseph*, he was sold for a slave, and brought down into Egypt, and bought at the hand of the *Ishmaelites*, *And the Lord was with him, and he was a man that prospered, and was in the house of his Master the Egyptian, and his Master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand.* So afterward, when as thorough •he slanderous accusation, and false information of his Mistress, he was cast into prison, where he was laid in Irons, and his feet were held in the stocks, the Lord made his innocence known, and shown mercy unto him, and got him favor in the sight of the Master of the prison, and the Keeper of the prison committed to *Joseph's* hand all the prisoners that were in the prison, & whatsoever they did there, that did he; and the Keeper of the prison, looked unto nothing that was under his hand, seeing that the Lord was with him, for whatsoever he did, the Lord made it to prosper. Behold here in *Joseph* (as in a clear glass) the right picture and pattern of a right religious servant, who being a poor prisoner, and lying in a dark Dungeon, being unjustly fallen into the displeasure of his Master, and wrongfully cast into a close prison, did in that woeful and pitiful condition, both gain glory to God, beautify his own profession, and seek the good of his Master, that put his trust in him. For no man is in so low and mean an estate, if he be a poor Servant, a base Kitchen boy, or a vile prisoner, but by diligence in his Calling, (such as it is) and by showing fidelity to his Master (such as he is) may greatly glorify the name of God whom he doth serve, and adorn the Gospel of Christ which he doth profess.

Hence it is, that the Apostle exhorting all religious servants, saith, *Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their Masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his Gospel be not evil spoken of, and that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Savior in all things.* The example of *Jacob* also is worth and worthy the observation in this case, who albeit he served an hard & froward Master, yet he rather considered what he ought to do, then what the other deserved to suffer, so that he witnesseth, *He was in the day consumed with heat, and with frost in the night, and his sleep departed from his eyes, whatsoever was torn of Beasts, he brought it not unto him, but made it good himself.* This is it which the Centurion in the Gospel confesseth, and commendeth in his servants, *For I am a man also under the authority of another, and I have Soldiers under me:*

and I say to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh, and to my servant do this, and he doth it. These examples also of that servant and Soldier, that waited upon *Cornelius*, is notable to this purpose, who being trained up in the fear of God, shown all fidelity and forwardness to perform the will and commandment of his Master, and went to bring *Peter*, by whose Ministry they might be further instructed. Thus we see, that religious servants are the best Servants, the most dilligent Servants, the most true and trusty Servants, the most provident and profitable Servants, and therefore it belongeth to all Masters of families, to be careful to teach them the fear of the Lord, and to train them in the ways of godliness. Heereby they shall honor God, hereby they shall do great good to their souls, hereby they shall discharge a good Conscience, hereby they shall procure their own profit, and further their own gain.

[Which in times past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable both to thee and to me.]

The Apostle in this place, speaking of the estate of *Onesimus*, and showing what he was before his Conversion, and what he was after, doth fitly distinguish the times, and saith, that before his Calling to the Faith, he was unprofitable, serving to no other purpose, but to feed himself, and fill up a place; but no good, no grace, no godliness appeared to be in him. But where did he converse and lead this life? Was it where the name of God was not known, or where the sound of the Gospel was not heard? No, it was in faithful *Philemons* house. This may at the first seem a very strange and wonderful thing, that he living in so religious an house, in so reformed a family, with so godly a company, which had the reputation of a little Church, should favor nothing of piety, nothing of Christianity, but remain in unfaithfulness toward God, and in unrighteousness toward his Master. From this description of *Onesimus*, in the time of his ignorance, before his eyes were opened, and his heart reformed, we learn that it falleth out (notwithstanding the desire and diligence of the Governors of the house) that in reformed families, are oftentimes found unreformed persons. In godly places, do many times lurk ungodly Children, and vncorrigible servants, into whose hearts no instruction will enter, and whose disposition no means of reformation can alter. We see this in the first family that ever was upon the earth; and there have been no more wicked men in the world then they, that have had the best means to direct them. *Adam* had malicious and murthering *Cain*, *Abraham* had persecuting and savage *Ishmaell*; *Noah* had scoffing and cursed *Cham*; *Isaac* had ungracious and prophan *Esau*; *David* had ambitious and aspyring *Absalom*. So it was with *Eli*, with *Samuel*, with *Hezekiah*, with *Josiah*, & sundry others, who after good means used by themselves, have found much evil practiced by their Children. The Fathers are often careful to lay a good foundation, & to nurture their children with good instruction, yet few children prove like their Fathers, but are a degenerate and unregenerate offspring.

And albeit this do sufficiently appear unto us by Testimonies of Scripture, and by daily experience, yet we shall farther be confirmed in this truth, if we weigh the Reasons whereupon it standeth. First, Religion cometh not by inheritance, and grace cannot be conveyed by propagation, but every man begetteth his like, as he himself is by nature, as one Serpent engendereth another. This *Moses* teacheth, that when *Adam* was fallen from God,

and had lost the grace of sanctification, *He begat a child in his own likeness, after his own Image.* Godly Parents may leave their children temporal possessions, but they cannot bequeath unto them Faith and a good conscience, which are not to be found in the natural man.

Secondly, there must be a new birth begun by God's spirit; for the grace of regeneration, whereby we are brought to have one foot in God's Kingdom, is not of flesh and blood, but of water and the spirit; it is not of the will of man, but of the work of God. This is it which our Savior setteth down, *As many as received him, to them he gave prerogative to be the sons of God, even to them that believe in his Name, which are borne not of blood, nor of the will of the Flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* Likewise, when he disputed with *Nicodemus*, who was ignorant of this Doctrine, he saith; *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except that a man be borne of Water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* It is he only that gave the heart, that is able to change the heart; it is he that gave the eyes, that is able to open the eyes.

Thirdly, albeit the unregenerate persons, and loose livers, do not want education and good bringing up, yet they are not amended and reformed, because God doth not purpose their conversion, but appoint their confusion. The Lord stirred up *Pharaoh* to this same purpose, that he might show his power in him, and that his name might be declared throughout all the earth, yet he sent unto him *Moses* and *Aaron* to clear his own Justice, & to make him without excuse. The like the Scripture speaketh of the sons of *Eli*, who were reprov'd of him, for making the *Israelites* to trespass, and to abhor the offerings of the Lord, yet they regarded not his reproof, being the Father of their bodies, the Priest of the most high God, and the judge of the people: and this reason is rendered, why they obeyed not his voice, & hearkened not to his Counsel, *Because the Lord would slay thē.* So then, whether we do consider that grace cannot be conveyed by propagation, or that it is the proper work of the spirit, to effect our regeneration, or that God will glorify his great name in the confusion of such as break the bands, and cast away the Cords of Discipline from them, we cannot greatly marvel, that in reformed places, are oftentimes to be found unreformed persons.

Let us make use of this Doctrine, and see both what may be learned by it, and how it may be applied unto us. First of all, it teareth, that though education be a notable means of reformation and working good in the hearts of those that hear instruction, and albeit Parents and Maysters be thereby discharged, as they that have done their duty, yet bare teaching is not sufficient to convert the soul, and to settle the Conscience in good things. *Noah* was as careful for the instruction of *Cham* and *Canaan*, as of the rest that were of his house, & belonged to his charge: yet they followed not his Doctrine, but scoffed at him that was both Pastor and Parent. *David* a man after God's own heart, walked in the midst of his house, in the uprightness of his Conscience; yet he had an incestuous *Ammon*, a Rebellious *Absalom*, a licentious *Adoniah*, all of them ungodly and ungracious Children. So then, although education be a good means, yet it is not a sufficient means to work reformation. He that laboreth in planting and watering, is nothing, except God give the blessing of increase. We see this evidently in the public assembly, as well as in the private family; in the house of God, as well as in the house of man. There is a difference of hearers, according to their diverse dispositions, some are deaf hearers, that have not their ears bored through to the

heart, they have only outward ears, and regard no more but outward hearing, and are no way moved with that which is spoken, dead-hearted, dull-eared, dim-sighted, heavy-headed. Others, beside their bodily ears, have the ears of their hearts opened by the word and work of the Spirit, made pliable and tractable to receive, embrace, and believe, that which they hear. So is it in the private instruction, used in private Families, all that hear with the outward ear, are not reformed; all that are instructed, are not converted. What then? Shall not Fathers teach their Children, and Masters their Servants, and Householders their Families, because some have not believed, and many remain as blind and blockish as they were at the first? Yes, it is their duty to be dilligent in teaching them, and in laying the foundation of Christian Religion among them, howsoever it be received or rejected of such as be in their houses, and belong unto them. Were not he a simple Husbandman, that would neglect to sow his Ground, because he knoweth that some of the Corn will never grow up, to bring forth fruit, but die in the earth? Or were not he an unwise Law-giver, that will not have wholesome Laws enacted and established, because some transgress them, and disobey them, and make no account of them? Or were not he a very foolish Father, who because he hath one rude and riotous Son, that will not reverence his person, nor fulfill his Commandments, nor regard his Authority, nor fear his threatninges, would therefore hold his peace, and refrain himself from instructing and informing his other Children in the ways of Godliness? Or were he not a bad Gardener, who because some of his Ground bringeth forth Weeds and Nettles, would therefore refuse to water the Hearbes that are meet for the use of man? When the Lord sent his holy Prophets to reprove the stubborn and stiff-necked Jews, he knew what entertainment them-selves should find, and what effect their Doctrine would have taken, yet to make them without excuse, they were commanded to go, that they might be convinced of sin, seeing there had been a Prophet among them. The Prophet *Jeremiah* being called of God to preach the word, is told afore-hand, that they should not obey his word, but fight against him. Likewise *Ezekiel* being sent to the children of *Israel*, is shown that they would not hear him, nor cease from their ways. Whereby we see, that howsoever the people were stiff-necked, and stif-hearted, howsoever their faces were stronger then the Flint, and their fore-heads were harder then the Adamant, yet God would have his word offered unto them, and laid before them. He hath mo ends then one of the preaching of his word; sometimes he useth it to soften, and sometimes to harden; sometimes to save, and sometimes to condemn; sometimes to be the savor of life unto life, and sometimes to be the savor of death unto death. So should it be with all godly householders, howsoever they have many that harbor in their houses, & are entertained within their walls, that regard not the fear of God, but pull away their shoulders from the sweet yoke of God, yet they are not to surcease or wax faint and weary, but to continue the instruction of them & the pouring of water upon the hard stone, proving if God at anytime will soften their harts, and give them repentance, that they may come out of the snares of the Devil, of whom they are hold captives. We know not at what time God may work in them, and call them to a sight of their sins, and to a turning from their sins. They may hear that in the time of their ignorance, which they may practice in the time of their knowledge. They may hear that Doctrine, which though it lie hid and covered, as Corn in the earth, or as fire in the ashes a long time, and seem buried in perpetual forgetfulness, yet it may afterwards break forth as the light, and

kindle in their hearts as a mighty flame. Thus peradventure it might be with this *Onesimus*, when he was converted by the Ministry of the Apostle to the Faith of Christ, he might call to his remembrance many good things that he had heard before, but never a whit regarded nor respected, and now profit by that Doctrine that before he had despised and derided. The Disciples of Christ did not by and by receive, nor conceive of his preaching; but when he was risen again, they remembered what he had delivered unto them. So ought we to deal toward such as are committed unto us, let us plant and water, committing and commending the success and increase of all our labors unto God.

Secondly, seeing where there are good means, are many times godless and graceless men, we learn that to hear to salvation, and to receive willingly instruction, is no general or common grace, no man can believe, saving he to whom it is given. It is the gift of God that must open the understanding, and boar through the ear, and sanctify the heart, before any can hear, with a desire to understand, or lay it up with a purpose to practice and obey. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith, *The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned I back.* The Evangelist *Luke* teacheth, that when the Apostles preached the Gospel, so many as were appointed to salvation, believed, which was a fruit of their election; others mocked, which was a sign of their Reprobation. *Lydia* is commended, in that she attended unto the things which *Paul* spake, but it was the Lord that opened her heart before she could be a faithful and fruitful hearer. To this purpose *Moses* speaketh to all *Israel*, *Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the Land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his Land, the great temptations which thine eyes have seen, those great Miracles and wonders: yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day.* Now, as this over-throweth such as teach and maintain an universal Vocation, so it must serve to settle us in the truth of the Doctrine of particular election, and predestination, *That it is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that rundeth, but in God that showeth mercy. He showeth mercy upon whom he will show mercy, and will have compassion upon whom he will have compassion: therefore, he hath mercy upon whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth.* God loved *Jacob*, and hated *Esau*, so that it was said, *The elder shall serve the younger.* The Lord electeth some unto life and salvation, before the foundations of the world; he elected some, and therefore not all; before the beginning of the world, and therefore not for their deserts, who then had not their being upon the earth. *Who art thou that wilt dispute with GOD? Or what shall it avail us to question it, and quarrel it with the Almighty? May the Clay reason with the Potter, or the Axe with the Carpenter, or the Sawe with him that draweth it, or the Rodde with him that taketh it? Or shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Dare any Servant pry and search into all the secrets of his Master? Canst thou follow & track the way of the Fish in the Waters, of the Fowls in the Air, of a Serpent upon a stone, of a Ship in the Sea? Let us not ask a reason of his will, but rather say with the Apostle, O the deepness of the Riches both of the wisdom and Knowledge of GOD! Howe unsearchable are his Iudgements, and his ways past finding out? For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who was his Counselor, or who hath given unto him first, and he shall be recompensed? If God should do equally well unto all his Creatures, then were he after a sort so much less to be praised and magnified of some for his benefits, seeing he should do nothing specially and singularly to them, more then to others. Neither is there*

are iniquity in our God in so doing, for may he not do with his own what he will? May he not lighten what eyes he will, or shoot away what arrows he is disposed, without our certain knowledge of his secret counsels?

But some man may say, when an whole assembly have the same means, the same Ministry, an whole Family the same teaching and instruction; How is it that some believe, others will not believe? Some are converted, others are hardened? Some are elect, others are rejected? I answer, it is not for the Creature curiously to search into the works of the Creator, but to be wise, according to sobriety: and as well a man might demand, why all in the field is not pure Corn, but some Tares? Why all in the Barn is not Wheat, but some Chaff? Why Trees bear some leaves, and not all Fruit? Why in a great house there are Vesselles of Golde and Silver; some to an honorable, and others to a dishonorable use? Why there are as well Goats that will not hear, as Sheep that hear the voice of the Shepherd? The Lord Jesus adareth the Counsel of his Father herein, and confeseth the reason to be his will and heavenly pleasure, and farther then this whosoever goeth, higher then this whosoever ascendeth, and deeper then this whosoever searcheth, shall wander as in a maze, and never return, shall fall down headlong into a Gulf, and never rise up again. Our Savior saith, *I give thee thanks, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the Wise and men of understanding, and hast opened them unto Babes, It is so, O Father, because thy good pleasure was such.* As for the condemnation of the wicked, and the execution of the heavy wrath and just judgments of God, there is more then sufficient due desert in the Reprobate; and though the righteous Lord work therein, yet beware thou imagine any evil in him. The rain moystneth an evil Tree, and therefore it beareth bitter, and no better fruit. In that it beareth fruit, it cometh of the moisture: but in that it bringeth forth evil fruit, it cometh of his own Nature. The Sun by the strength of his heat, and virtue of the Beams thereof, raiseth out of the Dirt and Dunghill, many foul and filthy savors, that infect men, and corrupt the Air; the raising of them up, is from the Sun, the unwholesome and noisome smelles are from the places themselves. The Rain is not properly the cause of the evil fruit, but the Nature of the Tree, and therefore it worthily calleth for the Axe to cut it down, and then justly deserveth to be thrown into the fire. The Sun is not directly the cause of those filthy savors that are extracted out of stinking Ponds and puddles, but the Miery and marish Ditches themselves. So is it with God, he is as the Rain that falleth, and as the Sun that shyneth from Heaven, *He moveth the evil man who worketh evil: the action is of God, the evil is from the free will of man, and from the soul spirit of the Devil. God is not the Author of the evil, and therefore let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own concupiscence, and is enticed.*

Seeing then, the grace of Election, of Redemption, of Justification, of Vocation, of Sanctification, is not general, nor generally given unto all, but according to the free purpose and pleasure of him that chooseth, redeemeth, calleth, justifieth, and sanctifieth: Let us acknowledge his great mercy to the praise and glory of his name, when he maketh his own ordinances auayleable, which we see in many to be unprofitable: let us confess his loving kindness toward us, when he doth beget us by the immortal seed of regeneration, and

worketh effectually our salvation. For what have we in us, to move the Lord to savor us, and follow us, with a multitude of his compassions? Doth he see us any better by Nature then others, whom he hath rejected and refused? No, in no wise. We are of the same mould with them, and by nature no better then they. Let us not stand upon the righteousness of our own nature, or the deserts of our own works, or the goodness of our Ancestors, but seek to have grace in our hearts, and not to call that our own, which we our selves have not done. The Father shall not be saved by the Child, nor the Child by the Father, but every man shall confess the ways of God to be equal, and give an account for himself. Manie godly and faithful parents have had children appointed to wrath, and reserved to destruction: and therefore, whether our forefathers were believers or unbelievers, let not us look so much upon them, to glory in them, or to rest upon them, or think to be saved by them, as enter into our selves, and labor to approve our obedience in the sight of God.

Thirdly, seeing that in good houses are found evil persons, it putteth all Parents and Masters in mind of a necessary duty, and offereth them comfort in the discharge of their duty. Their duty is not to forget or neglect to pray unto God earnestly, constantly, and continually, for God's blessing upon his labors in their family. For when we have done our best endeavours, and used the greatest diligence, there remaineth somewhat behind to be performed for our Children and people, even to wait for the increase of our labors, and the work of God's Spirit, to season and sanctify their hearts that belong unto us. It is not the outward work of teaching, that can convert the soul, and reform the life. We can but speak unto the ear, it is God that speaketh unto the heart. Hence it is, that some believe, and others blaspheme; some are bettered by the word, others are made worse by instruction, and become desperate, and extremely wicked, as the Sun that softeneth the wax, and hardeneth the Clay. The Jews that were fed by the word, *were filled with envy, and contemned the ordinance of God offered unto them, and spake evil of the way of God, and the means of salvation.* So it was with Pharaoh, the more Moses and Aaron spake unto him, so much the more his heart was hardened. For the word, thorough the corruption of our nature, is as an Hammer that hardeneth the Anvil, as a fire that consumeth the Stubble, and as a Rain, that bringeth up briars and bushes, that are reserved to be burned. There is no godly Housholder, but if he be diligent to mark the manners, and to know the behavior of the people about him, he shall espy not only many unreformed in themselves, but secret enemies to reformation in others. So that it is their parts, to entreat God, both before and after the means used, to make them effectual and profitable, and to desire him to incline their hearts to practice and obedience. We must follow the example of the Husbandman, who after the sowing of his seed, and Tilling of his ground, *looketh for the early and the latter rain to come from heaven,* so must we call upon God our Heavenly Father, to send a gracious rain to moysten their hard hearts, and so to soften them, as that they may be fit to receive instruction. This the Prophet *Jeremiah* teacheth, *I have heard Ephraim lamenting thus; Thou hast corrected me, and I was chastised as an untamed Calf, convert thou me, and I shall be converted, for thou art the Lord my God.* And in another place the Church saith, *Turn thou unto us, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.* Whereby we see, that we must depend upon God to pour out his grace upon them, and to begin in them the work of regeneration.

Moreover, this serveth to comfort all faithful Parents, and godly Maisters, who have with a good conscience been careful to discharge their duties, and to reform their families, albeit many remain obstinate, and continue settled in the Dregges of their sins. It is impossible for the black Moore to change his skin, and the Leopard his spots; it is hard for them to do good, that are accustomed to do evil. Our labor shall not be in vain to our selves, albeit it be in vain to others; our work shall return into our own bosom, albeit it will not enter into the bosom and breast of others. This is it which Christ our Savior said to his Disciples, whom he sent unto the lost Sheep of the house of *Israel*, *Whenye come into an house, salute the same, and if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.* Our careful endeavours shall be rewarded of God, albeit they be smally regarded of men; they are approved in Heaven, albeit reprov'd & rejected in earth. When the Prophet *Isaiah* bringeth in the Lord Jesus, complaining that his preaching took none effect among the unthankful people of his own hard-hearted Nation, he comforteth himself in this assurance, that he knew his labors should not be in vain in the Lord, *I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength in vain, and for nothing, but my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.* So shall it be with everyone of us that are devout and diligent in doing our duties, and in instructing our families, God will not measure our pains by their profit, nor reward our diligence according to their negligence, *For every man shall receive his wages according to his labor.* This ought to be an encouragement to all men to take pains with their people, and to comfort them against all discomforts that arise in their way, to slake their diligence, to cool their zeal, to hinder their pains, and to stop the course, that happily they have begun to win their families to a love of the truth.

Lastly, seeing evil persons are found, where good means are used, it teacheth all those that are under the government of godly Masters, not to bless themselves as though they were happy, because they dwell not in profane places, because they serve not profane Masters, because they are partakers of instruction, which many thousands want; but it belongeth unto them to labor by all means to make the use of the means offered unto them, to be fruitful and effectual for their salvation. For, as when we come into the congregation of the faithful, we ought to be prepared and fitted to receive the spiritual food of our souls; so in coming to the private exercises of Catechizing & instruction, we are not to present our selves rashly and vnreuently, as if we went to hear a Play, or to see some pastime, or to dispatch some worldly business: but we must perform these holy actions with a conscience of our duties to God, & with a care of our own salvation. We have not of our selves ears to hear, nor eyes to see, nor hearts to understand: we are not able to conceive the things that are of God, without the assisting and strengthening Spirit of God.

Before we come to hear the word read unto us, or the principles of Religion laid before us, or to join in prayer with our Brethren; we must purge our affections, of wrath, filthiness, maliciousness, dissimulation, hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking. For so long as these corruptions are found in us, to offer unto us the Word, is all one, as if most pure Waters were poured into a stinking and polluted Vessel, whereby they are made unprofitable. We must use earnest and hearty prayer unto the Lord, to open our blind eyes and deaf ears, *That we may understand the wonderful things of his Law: That he would take away our stony hearts, and give*

us hearts of Flesh, in which his Word may be deeply imprinted. And whensoever we are performing these heavenly duties, we must account our selves to be in God's presence; we must remember, that he is either speaking to us, or we are speaking to him; and we must stir up our selves to all attention. Thus it shall come to pass, that the word of God, which worketh in many to condemnation, shall be to us the Seed of regeneration, the food of the soul, the curing of our corruptions, the light of our ways, and the means of working in us all necessary graces of God in this life, and of assuring unto us everlasting happiness in the life to come.

[Verse 12. *Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is; mine own Bowels.* Hitherto the Apostle hath named and described the party or person for whom he prayeth: Now he showeth briefly the matter of his request, and the account that he maketh of him. The request is, that he would receive him into his House, and retain him into his service again: the account made of him, that he was to him as his Bowels, even most dear and tender, being made a member of Christ, though a poor Slaue and abject Servant by his calling, and a Fugitiue Runna-gate by his former condition: whereby we see the loving affection and tender compassion of *Paul* toward him for our imitation. As if he should have said; If I thought or imagined that he would be as unprofitable unto thee hereafter, as he hath been heretofore, I would never have given him my Letters of commendation, nor have sent him back unto thee in this manner. For I should be of this mind, rather to have him punished then received. But now I am not afraid of it, or discouraged from sending him unto thee, I have had a comfortable experience of his faithful service, who ministered unto me in my necessities. I have therefore good cause to conceive a good opinion of him, and to give this testimony of him, that he was never so unprofitable to thee, as I have found him profitable to me.

We learn from hence, that former offenses upon true repentance and amendment of life, are to be remitted and pardoned by all true Christians. Whensoever our Brethren have trespassed against us, and offended us, it is our duty, upon their unfeigned repentance to forgive them, to forget their injuries, and to receive them into favor again. Whereas *Onesimus* fled from his Master, it was a sin, from so good a Master it was a greater sin: but whereas he conveyed away with him his Masters goods, and did steal from him at his departure, this was more heinous, and made his offense worst of all: yet upon his repentance, he laboreth to have him forgiven, and to have his trespass put out of remembrance. This is offered to our considerations in the Parable of the prodigal Son, when once he resolved to leave his loose life, and to return back to his Fathers house, from which he shamefully departed, he was entertained with a kiss, and received into favor, and had his former misdoings and misdemeanors forgiven. When *Peter* came to Christ and said; *Master, how oft shall my Brother sin against me, and I shall forgive him: Unto seven times?* Jesus said unto him; *I say not unto thee, Unto seven times: but unto seauenty times seven times.* To this purpose Christ propounded a parable of a certain King, which would take an account of his Servants, and finding one that was unmerciful and hard-hearted to one of his Fellow-Servants, he called him unto him, and said unto him: *O evil Servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou prayedst me: oughtest not thou also to have had pity on thy Fellow-Servant, even as I had pity on*

thee? So his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the Tormentours, till he should pay all that was due to him: so likewise shall mine heavenly Father do unto you, except ye forgive from your hearts, each one to his Brother their Trespasses. We have in the Scriptures sundry examples of the practice of this Doctrine, and of the performance of this duty. We see this in *Joseph* toward his brethren, when they desired forgiveness, and craved pardon at his hands after the death of their Father, he said unto them; *When ye thought evil against me, God disposed it to good, that he might bring to pass as it is at this day, and save much people: Fear not now therefore, I will nourish you and your Children, and he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.* This *Paul* himself practiced, and moved others to practice toward the incestious *Corinthians*, *It is sufficient unto the same man, that he was rebuked of many, so that now contrary-wise, ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, least the same should be swallowed up with over much heaviness. Wherefore I pray you, that you would confirm your love toward him: to whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for verily, if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it, in the sight of Christ.* To this purpose the same Apostle saith; *Be angry, but sin not: let not the Sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the Devil.* And afterward; *Let all bitterness, and anger, and wrath, and crying, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all maliciousness: be ye courteous one to another, and tender-hearted, freely forgiving one another.* All these Testimonies and examples, as a Cloud of Witnesses serve to teach us, that repentant offenders must be forgiven, and their offenses blotted out of our remembrance.

The reasons to confirm this truth farther to our consciences, are not far to seek, but near at hand. For first, hereby we imitate our heavenly Father, and are made like to him. As we are commanded to be holy, as he is holy: so we are charged, to *Be merciful, because our Father also is merciful, who hath not desire that the wicked should die, but that he should live, if he return from his ways.* God is provoked of us every moment, and we are indebted unto him ten thousand Talents, yet he is entreated of us, and he is reconciled unto us, so that he maketh his Sun to arise upon the good and evil, and the rain to fall upon the just and unjust: ought not we therefore to love one another, and to forgive one another after his example? This is the reason used by the Apostle; *Now therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on the bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another: if any man have a quarrel to another, even as Christ forgave, even so do ye.* It were woeful to us, if God were not ready to forgive: for we find our selves ready to offend, and one sin unpardoned, is sufficient to make us be condemned.

Secondly, our forgiving of our Brethren, giveth comfort and confidence that we our selves shall be forgiven. We are taught to gather assurance of pardon to our own hearts, from our readiness to forgive others, that God will, & in Christ hath forgiven us our trespasses. This we see in the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer, when we are taught to say, and to pray: *Forgive us our sins, for even we forgive every man that is indebted to us.* Everyone would be glad to have a sure testimony and infallible witness of the forgiveness of his sins, for from hence cometh our greatest comfort. Now there cannot be stronger Argument to work in us this persuasion, seeing that we by examining our affections toward our Brethren, may conclude the certainty of God's mercy toward us. For our forgiveness is not made the cause, but the

sign and Seal of God's forgiveness, for as much as his pardoning of us, doth work in us the pardon of others.

Thirdly, it is a certain thing, that such as will not forgive, shall themselves never be forgiven. Our forgiveness is upon condition, if we remit the offenses of others: if we retain them, our own sins are also retained. If then the example of God and our own assurance cannot draw us to this duty, let the greatness of the danger move us to forgive, which hangeth over their heads, that harden their hearts in hatred and malice against their Brethren. This our Savior setteth down immediately after the Lord's Prayer; *For if ye do forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye do not forgive Men their trespasses, no more will your Father forgive you your trespasses.* And in another place he saith; *When ye shall stand and pray, forgive, if ye have anything against any Man, that your Father also which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses: for if you will not forgive, your Father which is in Heaven will not pardon you your trespasses.* This the Apostle James assureth, *That there shall be condemnation merciless, to him that showeth not mercy, and mercy rejoiceth against condemnation.* This we see in the example of that evil Servant that fell from his Masters favor, and was denied forgiveness. For when as being unable to pay, *He cried for mercy, desired forbearance and promised payment, his Master had compassion upon him, loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But when that Servant dealt hardly with his Fellow-Servant that ought him an hundred pence, so that he laid hands upon him, took him by the throat, and cast him into Prison, his Lord called back his grant, and required the debt of him, and delivered him to the Tormentours.* This may seem very strange at the first, that his Lord should forgive the Debtor, yet and afterward exact the debt of him: to pardon the offense, and to punish the offender. This may seem all one, as if a Magistrate should remit the theft, and execute the Thief. But we shall not greatly marvel at this dealing, if we consider that God giveth pardon upon condition, and that we receive pardon upon condition. True it is, this condition is not always or here in this place expressed, but it is here and always to be understood. Notwithstanding, sometimes the condition is added, as when Christ saith; *Condemne not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.* Luke 6. So that he forgiveth us our offenses, conditionally that we forgive the offenses of our Brethren. Thus he forgave the Servant that was not able to pay, to teach him compassion and mercy toward those that were indebted unto him. If we will not forgive, but require of our debtors the utmost farthing, we shall find the Lord as hard, and our selves to make a Law against our selves. Wherefore, to the end that God's example may be followed in well doing, that our own consciences may be assured of forgiveness, and that great danger is incurred through want of forgiveness: we learn, that God requireth it as a special duty of us, to show our selves ready and forward to forgive our Brethren, that have wronged and offended us.

And howsoever this Doctrine be proved by Scriptures, cleared by examples, and confirmed by reasons, yet as it standeth not with the liking of flesh and blood, which is ready to revenge and breath out threatenings; so carnal reason ministereth many objections which are not to be passed over, but to be diligently discussed and dissolved. It shall not therefore be amiss, before we proceed to the uses, to answer such questions as stand in the way, whereat the vnleatned stumble, as at a stone that lieth in the way: which being determined, we will handle the Uses.

First, seeing we are bound to forgive everyone that is indebted unto us, the question may be asked whether, this extend to all debts, and that we are charged to forgive all our Debtors? I answer, debts are of two sorts, either Civil, which cometh by Couenants of buying and bargaining one with another, without which, the life of man cannot consist. Of these mutual Couenants and Contracts between man and man, we must not understand our Savior Christ when he speaketh of Debts and Debtors: but of private hurts and damages that are done unto us, in our bodies, in our goods, or in our good Names. These injuries done to our bodies, which oftentimes are misvsed; to our goods which are diminished, to our good Names which are impaired, are to be remitted. As for other debts due to us, we may require them, so we do it with showing mercy to such as are in necessity, toward whom we ought to have patience in forbearing.

The second is, whether a man may lawfully sue him at the Law that hath offended him? Or how doth suing and forgiving stand together in a Christian? I answer, the Law is free for all men, and the end of it is to redress all disorders. And as a Soldier in a lawful war may kill his Enemy, and yet love him: so may a man forgive an injury, and yet use the remedy of the Law, and thereby seek in a Christian manner, to redress the wrongs that are done unto him. Now, in suing at the Law, we must observe these six rules. First, it must not be for toys and trifles, but in matters of wait and importance, which do nearly concern us, and whereby we are some way damnified. But trifles cannot damnifie us. This reproveth those that are so far carried upon the spleen, as that they are ready to prosecute every action and slight occasion that is offered unto them, if it be but the wagging of a Straw, which bewrayeth an evil heart in them. Secondly, we must take heed of private revenge and inward hatred, which if we conceive, we do not forgive. We must not suffer our suites to cool our love to our Brethren, nor to weaken our Faith in performing our service & worship unto God. For albeit the cause be never so just and lawful, yet if we handle it unlawfully, uncharitably, and vnchristianly, we offend God, and transgress against our Brother. Thirdly, we must beware of giving offense to the Church of God. Some offenses are taken, but not given, as when men are offended for doing our duty to God. We must not omit that which God requireth, because man will be offended. Our care must be, to be ready to give satisfaction to the godly, that our doing be not justly scandalous, observing the rule of the Apostle; *Give no offense, neither to the Jew, nor to the Gentile, nor to the church of God, and abstain from all appearance of evil.* Fourthly, the end of all Controuersies and Suites in Law, must be to live in concord, and to maintain godly peace. If we have not this end, we aim at a wrong end. The end of all lawful War, is not murder and tumults, but peace and quietness. So the end of all strife, must be to live without strife. For if all injuries were put up and were not repressed, many would grow worse and worse, and overturn the Civil State and government.

Fifthly, another end we may at, must be, that the truth may come to light that is hidden, that the party offending may be chastised, and by chastisement be brought to repentance for his wrongs. For such is the malice of many, that the passing by of one wrong, would but open a wide gap or gate to bring other injuries upon our own heads: and the more we suffer, the more hard measure they would offer. Lastly, the Law must be used, not upon pleasure, but upon necessity, and we must take it up as the last refuge and remedy. We must use it as a

Father useth correction, or as a Physician useth desperate Medicines, or as the Surgeon useth searing and cutting, when other will not serve the turn. If a friendly agreement and private arbitration may be had, let it be preferred, and the Magistrate not troubled with our contentions. Thou oughtest not to produce into public Courts of Justice and judgment, that which may well be decided and determined by grave, sober, godly, and discreet men at home, as the small causes which the Rulers might judge, were not to be brought before Moses. *Exod. 18, 22.* If it cannot be had, so that though we seek peace and ensue it, yet it flieth from us, it is lawful for us to go farther, even to sue our neighbor at the law, and use the benefit of the Magistrate.

The third objection is, how can the Magistrate practice this Doctrine to forgive offenses and offenders, seeing (as the Apostle teacheth.) *Rom. 13. He beareth not the Sword in vain?* If his duty be to punish, how can he pardon? If he be to execute judgment, how can he forgive them that trespass? I answer, a Magistrate is to be considered two ways, according to two several persons which he doth sustain; to wit, either as he is a Man, or as he is a Magistrate, as he hath a common condition, or a special. As he is a man, or a Christian man (which estate he hath common with his Brethren) he is to bear and forbear, and behave himself as others: but as he is a Magistrate, which estate he hath as properly belonging unto him; he is the Deputy and Vice-gerent of God, he sustaineth his person, he executeth his judgment; and therefore he ought not to have any respect of persons, or wink at the committing of any wickedness.

The fourth Objection, is, how we can be said to forgive our Brethren their trespasses, seeing no man can forgive sins but only God. Hence it is that *David* saith in the Psalm; *Against thee, against thee only have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight.* *Psal. 51.* Likewise the Scribes and Pharisees, when they heard Christ speak to the man sick of the Palsy; *Thy sins are forgiven thee,* began to reason among themselves, *Who is this that speaketh Blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?* *Luke 5, 20, 21.* I answer, in every sin there are two things to be marked and considered; the evil of the action, and the damage that ariseth to man by the evil action: the one God forgiveth; the other man forgiveth. God pardoneth the evil; Man pardoneth the damage or detriment that befalleth his person, goods, or name. So then God forgiveth, and Man forgiveth: God forgiveth the sin, man forgiveth the hurt. For we must observe, that in every trespass are two offenses; one to God; the other to man. To God, when he forgiveth the breach of his law, and imputeth it not to the offender which belongeth properly to him, and no man is able to do. To man, when he remitteth the injury or harm that hath risen to him, in the things that appertain to him. It is not in man's power to forgive the sin, whereby God is offended: and he oftentimes pardoneth the wrong done to him, when God forgiveth not the sin: for God never forgiveth any, but such as are penitent.

Lastly, the question may be asked, whether all offenders against us are to be forgiven, or only such as repent. The Apostle moveth *Philemon* to pardon his Fugitive and false-fingered Servant upon his repentance. So Christ our Savior speaketh to his Disciples: *Take heed to yourselves, if thy Brother trespass against thee, rebuke him: and if he repent, forgive him: And though he sin against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying; It repenteth*

me, thou shalt forgive him. Whereby it may seem at the first, that either we are only to forgive the penitent, and retain malice against the impenitent, which were want of Charity: or say, that the condition annexed by Christ, is void and idle, which were a voice of blasphemy. I answer, offenses are forgiven two ways, as there are two kind of persons that offend against us. Some acknowledge and yield their offense, others are obstinate and stiff-necked. So, one kind of forgiveness is, when we bear no malice, when we do no wrong, when we seek no revenge. Another kind, is; when we think well of them that have offended us, when we are persuaded that God hath forgiven them, when we are ready to receive them into our favor again. Wherefore we have no liberty granted unto us to deny mercy and forgiveness to the wicked. If a man have done us wrong, and then either denieth it, or diminisheth it, and will not repent of it: True it is, we are commanded to love him, we are forbidden to hate or to hurt him, we are restrained from revenge, we are bridleed from wishing or desiring vengeance to fall from Heaven upon him, we are charged to do him good and not evil, we are willed to procure his salvation, to seek his amendment, and to further his repentance that he may see his sin; but we are not bound nor bidden to have a good opinion and estimation of him; for though we must love him, yet we must think of him as he deserveth. But when a man hath offended us, and trespassed against us, and being reprovved and admonished confesseth his sin, desireth pardon, craveth reconciliation, offereth satisfaction, bewaileth his former transgression, and promiseth amendment of life, it is our duty not only to love him, but to like of him: not only to hate him as an Enemy, but to account him as a Brother: not only to desire vengeance to come upon him, but to accept of his repentance, and to assure his heart that God hath forgiven him, and will not lay his sin unto his charge. So then, if any man do me an open injury, and I laying aside a thirsting after revenge, do not cease to love him, but instead of evil do good, and instead of wrong, do bestow a benefit upon him, though in regard of the wickedness of his heart, the mischief of his hands, the want of repentance, and the nature of his offense, I think hardly and heinously of him (as he is worthy) yet am I truly said and rightly accounted, to forgive him. For when God requireth that we do good to our Enemies, love them that hate us, bless them that hurt us, pray for them that persecute us, and to do good to all them that speak all evil against us: he doth not thereby presently command that we allow in them those things that he condemneth, or praise in them the things that he reproveth: but he only would have our hearts free from hatred, our minds from malice, our tongues from slander, & our hands from revenge. The second manner of forgiveness (which is a free and full forgiveness) is, when beholding lively fruits of their repentance, we esteem them as brethren, we account them as the children of God, we favor thē as fellow-members with us of Christ, & are persuaded that the remembrance of their sins committed against God, and of their injuries offered unto us, are blotted out of God's sight. For true repentance is an high and holy work, greatly accepted of God and his Angels. Of God, because when we repent, he will put all our sins out of his remembrance. Of the Angels, because there is joy in their presence for one Sinner that converteth, more then for ninety and nine just men that need no repentance. The substance of that which hath been said, is this: If an offender have wronged thee, and continue obstinate and settled to wrong thee still, thou shalt forgive him, that is; thou shalt not hurt him, nor malice him, but love him, and seek to do him good: but as yet thou art to think him

a willful and wicked man, *Because thou art not to speak evil of good, or good of evil; to put darkness for light, and light for darkness; to call bitter sweet, and sweet sower.* If he turn from his evil ways, and repent him of his sins, thou shalt forgive, him, that is; think as well of him, as ever thou didst think ill of him, comfort him, raise him up with the sweet promises of the Gospel, and assure him that God hath forgiven him, & therefore he need not doubt of the forgiveness of his Fellow-Servant. And if we will a little search the Scriptures, we shall find examples of both these sorts and kinds of forgiveness recorded unto us. Of the first sort of forgiving evil doers, even while they remain evil doers, we have in *David toward Shimei*, that cursed him with an horrible Curse, he sware that he should not die, and pardoneth him (albeit *Abishai* the Son of *Zeruiah* said; *Shall not Shimei die for this, because he cursed the Lord's anointed?*) Notwithstanding, he thought of him as of a wicked man, and gave *Solomon* his Son charge, not to account him innocent. And this is that forgiveness which *Moses* speaketh off. *Levite. 19. Thou shalt not hate thy Brother on thine heart, but thou shalt plainly rebuke thy Neighbor, & suffer him not to sin.* Of the second sort of forgiveness, which is toward the penitent, we have an example in *Paul* and the Church of *Corinth*, toward the incestuous person which had committed Fornication, *And such Fornication as is not named without detestation among the Gentiles, taking unto him his Fathers Wife.* For when he being rebuked of many, and put out from among them, sorrowed for his sin with a godly sorrow, which caused repentance not to be repented off, he willeth them to receive him, and entertain him among them as a faithful Brother, and to think well of him as they did before, *And to minister comfort unto him, lest he should be swallowed up with over-much heaviness, and lest Satan should circumvent us, for we are not ignorant of his enterprises.* Hence it is that he saith; ye ought to forgive him, and to comfort him, and to confirm your love toward him, which is as much as if he should desire them to take him again for a Brother.

The Objections being answered, which stood before us as a Cloud that dimmed and darkened our sight: let us come now to the Uses of the Doctrine, and see what we may conclude from hence. First, seeing former offenses are upon our repentance to be forgiven, we learn that we ought all to be of a plakeable Nature, easy to be appeased, and ready to be entreated; we must be inclinable to mercy, and pass by offenses that might provoke us to anger. It is a fruit of true love, described by the Apostle; *It suffereth long, it is bountiful: Love enuyeth not: Love doth not boast it self: it is not puffed up: it doth no uncomely thing: it seeketh not her own things: it is not provoked to anger: it thinketh not evil: it rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth: it suffereth all things: it believeth all things: it hopeth all things: it endureth all things.* There is no man but gladly desireth to have God (that is able) to be ready and willing to forgive him his sins: and therefore we ought to be like affectioned toward our Brethren. It is a great comfort to the weakness of our Faith, which needeth all props and pillars to sustain and uphold it. For though the forgiveness of our Brethren be no cause of our forgiveness, it is a sign and testimony, whereby we are infallible confirmed, that as surely as we remit others, we shall be remitted. Nothing maketh us more resemble the Lord, then to be merciful, he is the God of patience, *He is slow to anger, he is full of compassion, and of great kindness, he will not always chide, neither keep his anger forever, he knoweth whereof we are made, and he remembereth we are but Dust.* On the other side, nothing in the World maketh us so like unto Satan, and to be

transformed into his Image, as malice and envy. Hence it is that he is called a Tempter, a Slanderer, a false accuser, the author of all hatred and dissention. This appeareth in the example of our first Parents, so soon as they were placed of God in the Garden, immediately Satan set upon them, and sought to dispossess them of that happy estate. If then we give our selves to hatred and malice, and never think our selves well, but when we are disgorging the rank or and envy of our boiling stomachs, we show our selves not to be the Sons of God, who is Love it self; but to be the Children of the Devil, who is maliciousness it self. For, *Hethat committeth sin is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning: for this purpose was made manifest that Son of God, that he might loose the Works of the Devil: Whosoever is borne of GOD sinneth not, for his Seed remaineth in him, neither can he sin, because he is borne of GOD.*

This reproveth those that keep old revenge and settled malice as a festered sore, rusting and rankling in their hearts, to the satisfying of their own lusts, to the poisoning of their own Souls, and to the dishonoring of Almighty God. This we see to have been in *Cain*, who hating his Brother, and suffering the Sun to go down upon his wrath, in the end his wrath conceived, brought forth Murder, and Murder when it was finished, wrought out his destruction. The like appeareth in *Absalom* toward his Brother *Ammon*. For when *Ammon* had defiled his Sister *Tamar*, respecting neither the wickedness of the Fact, nor the shame of his Sister, nor the reproach of his person, nor the offense of his Brother, nor the blaspheming of the enemies, nor the scandal of the Church, nor the offense of his Father, nor the defiling of his Fathers house: *Absalom conceived hatred in his heart, and executed vengeance upon him to the full, two years after: he dissembled his purpose till occasion served, and afterward his malice brought forth a lamentable effect, when he goared his Sword in blood.* It is esteemed among carnal men, a token of valor to revenge, but indeed it is no better then slavish weakness, and want of true fortitude. So then, they are possessed with the Spirit of the Devil, that are content to shake hands and promise forgiveness, that speak deceitfully everyone with his neighbor, flattering with their lips, and gloze with a double heart; yet keep in mind the remembrance of old injuries waiting and watching for opportunity of time, place, and means, to execute the bloody designs of their beastly hearts. Would we be thus dealt with all at the hands of God? Would we be thus forgiven? Would we have half a forgiveness, and no more of him? Woe, and woe again were it to us, if we were thus forgiven. Let us deal as faithfully and fully, as sincerelie and unfeignedly with them, as we desire to have the eternal God to deal with us: *For with what judgment we judge, we shall be judged: and with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again.* Let us bannish from us, all lame, and half, & halting remission, which keepeth a part and piece vnforgiuen: if we would have the Lord forgive all, and cast them into the bottom of the Sea forever, let us be like minded toward our Brethren. Otherwise, our own consciences shall convince and condemn us, so often as we say the Lord's Prayer, seeing we pray most fearfully against our selves: and as we reserve behind in a corner of our hearts a piece of our malice, so we desire the Lord also to reserve a part of his wrath for us, and of his punishment against us.

If any think himself wise enough to shift off this danger, and say; so long as I cannot resolve with myself to be in Love and Charity with my Neighbor, and to forgive him that hath offended me, so long I will not use the Lord's Prayer, but some other good and godly Prayers.

For we are not tied to this or that form, we have many excellent Prayers beside, we may use any of them. See, Fool, Fool, how subtle and crafty thou art to deceive thyself. Blind people play with the Lord's Prayer, as the Fly doth with the Candle, or as the child doth with the Knife: whereby it falleth out, that the one is burned, the other is wounded. Take heed, God is not mocked, we cannot dallie with him. It is not this or that form that God regardeth, it is our being in that estate, not reconciled to our Brother, that bringeth upon us sudden destruction. For God is Love, *And he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him: he that loveth not his Brother, abideth in death: Whosoever hateth his Brother is a Man-slayer, and ye know, that no May-slayer hath eternal life abiding in him.* Whereby we see, that to such as are malicious, there is no forgiveness, as we have noted before.

Secondly, seeing such as offend us, must upon their sound repentance be forgiven; we are taught hereby, not to reproach and upbraid men what they have been, when they are renewed by amendment of life, but consider their present condition what they are. For when God hath put out of his remembrance their sins, we must not set them upon records: when GOD hath discharged them of them, we must not lay them to their charge: when God hath cured and covered them, we must not uncover them, and make them bleed afresh. Let us remember what we our selves have been, before we were in the State of grace, even as evil as others, and had our delight in all sin. The Apostle saith. Rom. 7, 18. *I know that in me, that is, in my Flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but I find no means to perform that which is good.* Likewise, he forbiddeth and restraineth the Gentiles from insulting and triumphing over the Jews, that were through infidelity for a season cut off: Thou wilt say; *The Braunches are broken off, that I might be grafted in: Well, through unbelief they are broken off, and thou standest by Faith: boast not thyself against the Braunches, be not high minded, but fear.* It is a great reproach to us, to reproach such as have fallen, and are risen again by true repentance: to upbraid such as have sinned, & have forsaken their sins. It is a greater blemish to those that check them after they have turned from them, then to those that committed them. For they have washed away by their tears the filthiness of them, and blotted out the deformity that did cleave unto them.

True it is, so long as we continue in sin, and follow the lusts of our own hearts, we must be content to be reprov'd and shamed for them, that so we may be brought to see them, and be sorry for them. Thus it is noted, that Christ began to upbraid the Cities, *Wherein most of his great works were done, because they repented not.* So the Apostle feared, *Least when he came again to the Corinthians, his God should abase him among them, so that he should bewail many of them which had sinned already, and yet repented not of the uncleanness, and Fornication, and wantonness which they have committed.* They then that repent nor, are to be disgraced: but such as have repented, are to be loved and cherished. It skilleth not what they have been, for they are accepted according to the grace which they have received, which serveth as a singular comfort unto them. They that labor to disgrace those whom they should embrace, do imitate the example and practice of the Devil, who tempteth those that he seeth to have renounced his service, and departed from his Kingdom, and telleth them what they have done, how loose they have been in their lives, and into what horrible sins they have fallen, that thereby he might bring them to despair, and to let go their strong confidence that they have in the

promises of the Gospel. So it is with sundry of the Servants and Children of the Devil, they taunt and revile the faithful, for former faults which now they hate and abhor. But as they answer Satan, so they may all his Instruments, that they should consider rather what they are, then what they have been; and behold their present condition, not that which is past. Let us be like the good Angels, who do rejoice at the conversion of Sinners, but never cast them in the teeth with their offenses that have stumbled, and are recovered.

Lastly, let us cut off all occasions of dissention, & quench the fire that is begun to be kindled. A small spark, if it be not quenched, will break out into a great fire: a little smoke nourished, will turn into a flame. So when causes of contention and division do arise, we must endeavor to stay them and appease them. It is easily stopped in the beginning, which afterward is hardly, or not at all resisted. This wisdom we see in *Abraham*, (when strife arose between his Heard-men, and the Heard-men of *Lot*) he said unto him; *Let there be no strife (I pray thee) between me and thee, neither between thy Heard-men and my Heard-men: for we are Brethren.* They were not natural Brethren according to the flesh, as descending of one Father, but of a near kindred according to the flesh, and a nearer according to the Spirit: he was *Lots* Vnckle and elder, and in that respect his better, he was richer & wealthier, he had more Servants also to take his part, to join together, and to over-master him, if he had listed: yet he standeth not upon one, or upon all these: he looked not when *Lot* should stoop and bow unto him, but as in years, wealth, and authority, so in godliness, meekness, and moderation he went before him. Let us all consider this, & be provoked by the example of Christ, to be meek and lowly, *That we may find rest unto our souls.* The Lord Jesus hath taught us to call upon one Father, shall we then disdain our Brethren? The Apostle teacheth, that we are one body: if the members of the body should disagree and fall out; would not the ruin and destruction of the whole body follow? Again, we are all called to the same hope of eternal life; there is one mark, at the which we all shoot; there is one end, whereunto we bend; being Children of the same Father, and Heirs of the same Grace, and partakers of the same inheritance. O that this Meditation were settled and grounded in our hearts to love with brotherly kindness, and to hate all malice as a Serpent.

Let us learn, that we ought no more to be divided asunder, then the kingdom of Heaven can be divided: and that whosoever renteth himself from his Brethren, banisheth himself from the place of glory, which we all look for. Christ Jesus cannot be divided: for as his Coat was without seam, so his body must be without separtion. There are not diverse Faiths, diverse Baptismes, diverse Suppers, diverse God's: but one Lord Jesus, one Baptism, one Faith, one Lord's Supper, one God and Father of all. All these things, *Abraham* (no doubt) did consider and believe, and therefore said; *We are Brethren.* He doth not stand upon his reputation, and say; Shall I stoop to him? Shall I creep and crouch to him? Am not I better then he? Am not I wealthier then he? Am not I elder then he? He layeth all these aside, and resolveth thus; *Are not we Brethren?* And shall we strive? What a shame would this be to us? What a dishonor to God? What an evil example to these Nations that live among us? What a stumbling block of offense shall we lay before them to cause them to blaspheme God, and to speak evil of us, of our Religion, and of our holy profession? Let not us therefore tarry till others come and offer conditions of peace, but let us seek peace and ensue it.

Shall we stand aloof and hang back from agreement with them, because we take our selves to be abused, wronged, slandered, and injured? Shall God command us to forgive, and will we answer presumptuously, we will not forgive? Shall the Lord say unto us; *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thine heart*: and will we reply audaciously, we will hate him? Or if we do not scorn God to his face, what will we, what can we allege, or what shall we bring for our defense, that *Abraham* might not have brought as well as we? Will we say we are more excellent, and therefore reason it is, that they should bow the knee unto us? Will we say we are the better men? So was *Abraham*. Are we richer and wealthier? So was *Abraham*. Are we elder in years, and so look that the younger should yield? So was *Abraham*. Have we many Friends to join with us, to see we shall have no wrong, and to take our partes? So had *Abraham*. Are we mightier in force and power? So was *Abraham*, he went every way beyond *Lot*. Now then, if we be the Children of *Abraham*, we must do the works of *Abraham*. Whatsoever privileges we have to advance us above our Brethren, under color whereof we shroud the corruption of our Nature, and the malice of our hearts, let us lay all aside and cast them into the Dust, let us renounce age and honor; let us cast from us birth and years; let us deny wealth and worship, to the end we may be little and lowly in our eyes. *Abraham* got more true honor by yielding, then we can do by our proud looks, lofty stomachs, and corrupt minds. He that hath most godliness will relent soonest.

Let us strive who shall go before another in mercy and forgiveness, and put far away all bitterness of Spirit, and put on all humbleness of mind. But (alas) where is this meekness and longsuffering, while we rail and rage one against another? If the least occasion of contention and iarre be offered, how ready are we to embrace it, to nourish it, to prosecute it with all extremity? When we are a little moved, are these the words of Brethren, I will not take this abuse at his hands, I will never put up this injury, I will not be made such a Noddy, I will sue him at the Law, I will not leave him worth a Groat, I will make Dice of his Bones, I will tread upon his Grave: and shall I yield unto him, I will never do it.

O my Brethren, is this to follow the stepes of faithful *Abraham*, or to be like him, who was so wise, so meek, so great a lover of peace and concord? If we be ashamed to tread in his paths, take heed least the God of *Abraham* be ashamed of us, both in this life, and in his Kingdom forever. We boast our selves to be the Children of *Abraham*, we account our selves to be true Christians, and yet we will neither follow the example of *Abraham*, nor obey the commandment of Christ. The Lord remitteth the debtes that we are not able to pay, and will we require the utmost farthing? He forgiveth ten thousand Talents, and will not we forbear an hundred pence? It is the Master and Lord of all that is so merciful, and shall the Servant be so cruel and hard-hearted to his Fellow-Servant? Let us take heed least our malice and unmercifulness unto others, do cry out for vengeance against us, and shut up the mercy and compassion of God toward us, rendering seven fold into our bosoms, and barring us from any access to the Throne of his Grace. For if we forgive not men their trespasses, our prayers shall be abominable, our religious exercises shall be turned into sin, and our offenses shall not be forgiven.

To conclude, let us consider these three pointes. First, that no Man can offend us, as we daily offend God, in thought, word, and deed. Secondly, that we may fall, and perhaps have fallen already into the like offense that we blame and reprove in others. Thirdly, we would be greatly grieved, not to be respected and relieved in the bitterness of our hearts, therefore we should regard the sorrow and supplication of others, craving mercy and commiseration at our hands. If we suffer our Brethren to call to us, and we be deaf, stopping our cares against them, we greatly deceive our selves, if we think to find the Lord other-wise minded toward us.

[*Thou therefore receive him, that is mine own Bowels.*]

He calleth *Onesimus* his Bowels or Entrals, being nothing of Kin to him in the Flesh, in respect of his earnest and fervent love that he beareth to him in Christ, being a true professor of the Faith. He knew well the lewd disposition of Seruaunts, for the most part in those days, as the Masters were cruel to them, so they were unfaithful to their Masters. It was found commonly true by common experience, which churlish and covetous *Nabal* spake falsely of *David*. 1. Sam. 25, 10. *Who is David? And who is the Son of Ishai? There be many Servant now-a-days, that break away every Man from his Master.* The like we see in the Servants of *Shimei*. 1. King. 2, 39. *Who fled away from him to Gath.* It was therefore a rare thing; and consequently more wonderful to find a man of this quality so well qualified: and a man of so bad note, to be so notable, which made the Apostle so earnest in speaking for him, and in commendinh of him. For nothing could have been said more effectual to pacify the wrath, and to mollify the heart of *Philemon*, in as much as he inferreth, that if he would not be appeased at his request, he had raged by this means on the very bowels of *Paul*. Behold therefore in this place, the conjunction of two heavenly virtues in the Apostle; to wit, Humility, and Love; that it is hard to say which was the greater, so that he was not ashamed to receive as into his Bosom and Bowels, a base Bond-slave, and besides, a Thief and a Runna-gate, to the end he might protect and defend him from the displeasure of his Master. And doubtless, if the conversion and turning of man unto God, were as highly prized and worthily esteemed of us as it ought to be, we would lovingly tender, and charitably embrace and such as we see truly, without hypocrisy converted unto God.

We learn from hence, that the love which Christians ought to bear to all the Saints, especially to those whom they have been means to convert, ought to be entire, dear, hearty, earnest, most faithful, and most fervent. It is our duty to love all men, more especially the Saints, but most especially such as have been gained to the Faith by us. The Lord himself testifieth his tender compassion toward his Children, to provoke them to follow his example. The Prophets declare; *That he which toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye.* So *Zachariah* blessed the God of Israel, *Who through his tender mercy gave life to them that sate in darkness and in the shadow of death, and guided their feet into the way of peace.* This appeareth notably in Christ Jesus, *Who was made like unto his Brethren, that he might be merciful, he will not break the bruised Reede, nor quench the smoking Flaxe: These things (saith he) have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, this is my Commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you: greater love then this hath no man, when any man bestoweth his life for his friends.* This affection

we find in many places in the Apostle; *God is my record, how I long after you all, from the very heart-root in Jesus Christ: we had consolation in you, in all our affliction & necessity, through your Faith, for now are we alive, if ye stand fast in the Lord.* The Evangelist Luke describing the Church of God gathered together after the ascension of Christ, saith; *All that believed were in one place, and had all things common, and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as everyone had need.* This is a precept given in the Law, and no duty more often urged and touched in the Gospel. Moses saith, *Thou shalt not avenge, nor be mindful of wrong against the Children of thy people, but shall love thy Neighbor as thyself, I am the Lord.* The Apostle Paul among many precepts that he giveth, this is one of the chief and principal, *Let love be without dissimulation, abhor that which is evil, and clean unto that which is good: be affectioned to love one another with brotherly love.* All these testimonies of God the Father, of Christ Jesus our Lord, of the Apostle, of other Christians, and of the whole Church, do sufficiently teach us, that howsoever all the Saints of God are to be loved, yet those especially that have been converted to us.

The reasons that may be rendered to uphold (as firm pillars to strengthen) this Doctrine, are many and infallible. For first, there is great labor employed, long time spent, many means used, and continual care bestowed to convert a Soul to God. It is no idle work, it is not brought to pass without much ado. A Woman having had an hard labor with her child, doth love it the more, and will use speech accordingly, saying; *This was a very dear Child unto me, I must needs love it; yea, her love is so hearty and entire, that she forgetteth the pains and sorrow that she hath sustained.* Benjamin among all the Sons of Jacob, was most tenderly beloved, in whose birth the Mother died, the fruit was saved, but the Tree withered and fell down, he cost Jacob therefore dear, even his best beloved wife, and indeed his only lawful wife, whom Laban promised, & for whom he served, so that he called him Benjamin, *the son of his right hand.* If then, that which is dearly bought, be deeply beloved, it is no marvel if it work effectually in spiritual things, where the greatest pains and labor is shown. We see this in the Galatians, who had put the Apostle to much trouble and exceeding torment in their recovery to Christ, are by him called his *Little Children of whom he travailed in birth again, until Christ were formed in them, and he was in much fear and perplexity, lest he had bestowed on them labor in vain.* This appeareth in his behavior toward the Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, the glory, and the Couenants, *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my Conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in mine heart, for I would wish myself to be separated from Christ, for my Brethren that are my Kinsmen according to the flesh.* The like affection is bewrayed in Moses toward God's people, who had carried them in his bosom as a Nurse doth the sucking Child, when God was offended with them, and threatened to consume them, he cried unto the Lord, *Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them God's of Golde, therefore now if thou pardon their sin, thy mercy shall appear: but if thou wilt not, I pray thee rase me out of thy Book which thou hast written.* Thus he shown the bowels of his love toward that people, with whom he had taken so great pains, for whom he had so often prayed, and by whom he had been so oftentimes provoked.

Secondly, by testifying of our love, and showing forth the fruits thereof, we gather great assurance that we are of the company of the faithful, of the Communion of Saints, and of the

society of them that belong to the truth, when we love vnfaignedly those that are of the truth. The Apostle *John* teacheth that our love to the brethren, is a fruit of true faith, *Heereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall before him assure our hearts.* And again he saith, *We know we are translated from death unto life, because we love the Brethren; he that loveth not his Brother, abideth in death.* Whereby he showeth, that we are assured that we belong to God, are his children by the fruits of love, which are certain tokens of our election to eternal life.

Thirdly, love is the livery of Christ, and as it were the badge and cognizance whereby we are known to be his Disciples, and to be taught and directed by his spirit. This agreeth with the Doctrine of Christ, *A new Commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you; that ye also love another; by this shall all men know, that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another.* Christ Jesus did instruct his Disciples, especially in love, and did as it were graft it and engrave it in their hearts, and thereby made Charity a note of Christianity, seeing that where love doth not rest, there Christ doth not dwell. If then, we would make it manifest, that we have been brought up in the School of Christ, we must love one another.

Lastly, seeing it is the sum of the Law, and a token and testimony that we make Conscience to walk in the ways and commandments of God. Heerunto cometh the laying of the Apostle, *Owe nothing to any man, but to love one another: for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law. For this; Thou shalt not commit Adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* This is a special praise, and singular commendation of love, that it is a short sum and brief abridgement of the whole Law, and of every Commandment contained in the Law. This truth is taught in sundry other places, and repeated again and again, *All the Law is fulfilled in one word, which is this, Thou shalt love thy Neighbor as thyself.* And Col. 3. *Above all things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.* Likewise 1 Tim. 1, 5. *The end of a commandment, is Love out of a pure heart, and of a good Conscience, and of Faith unfeigned.* Love therefore comprehendeth all duties: for Charity is the Law abridged, as the Law is Charity enlarged. Love is as it were a general Virtue, like unto the soul which is said to be whole, in the whole & in every part, or as the blood which is dispersed through the whole body, so is love enlarged and lengthened through all and every virtue. Seeing then, such as are converted by us, are the fruit of our labor, and that Love to the brethren is the seal of our salvation, the badge of our profession, and an Epitome or a breuiary of the whole Law, it followeth that it ought to be hearty, earnest, and fervent, toward all the faithful, especially such as have gone astray, and been brought by us into the right way.

This then being a virtue so necessary, that everyone which belongeth to the Lord Jesus Christ, must yield their obedience, even to love the Brethren, and show himself a true Christian, by showing Charity to his neighbor: let us consider the nature and properties of this Love, that we may have the right and true use of this Doctrine. For here is occasion offered unto us, to search into the knowledge of this Virtue, which is almost banished from among men, or weeded and worn out of the world, or carried from hence into the wilderness from the sons of men, or departed up from heaven from whence it came, and to have quite

and clean abandoned the gross earth, which is unworthy to entertain so precious a Jewel any longer. First therefore let us know what Brotherly love is. It is a work of God's spirit, whereby a man is moved to affect his Brother for God's sake, and to show forth the fruit of this affection. I call it a work of God's spirit, because it is not Naturally in us, it is not borne with us. Naturally, everyone is a lover of himself, and unnaturally is an hater of his neighbor, so that true love is the print of God's finger, and a mark set upon us by his spirit. Hence it is, that the Apostle setting down the fruits of the spirit, reckoneth up Love in the first place, as one of the principal, *The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, &c.* So then, we want this grace, until God work it in us. We need not seek far for self-love, for Love of the world, and the things that are in the world, for the Love of pleasures & carnal vanities, we have these near unto us, even within us; but we can never love the godly for God's sake, until it be given us from above, of whom only we must ask it, and from whence only we can receive it. Again, to be well affected toward our Brother, is to wish and seek his good, to rejoice at his prosperity, and to be grieved at his misery. True love is not idle, and it maketh us that we shall not be unfruitful and unprofitable unto others. We must be ready to help them bear their burden, and show the bowels of compassion toward them. That love which doeth not manifest it self to the relief and help of his neighbor, is no true Love, but beareth only the shadow of it.

Moreover, it is added, that we must do it for God's cause, because God is principally and first to be loved with all our power, and for himself. Our neighbor is to be loved in God, and for God, because he is God's creature, and beareth his Image. For Love extended to man is a fruit of the Love of God. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *This Commandment have we of him, that he that loveth God, should Love his Brother also.* God cannot be loved, and our Brother hated, because there is one and the same Law-maker, that commandeth both to love him and our neighbor also. Lastly, we must consider, who is our Brother, and what is our neighbor that we must Love, which are the parties to whom it is to be shown. By [*Brother*] we are not only to understand the son of our Father, that is our own blood & kindred; and by [*Neighbor*] we must take heed we do not deceive our selves, restraining it to such as are joined to us in friendship, or near unto us in dwelling, or such as bear unto us good will, but such as are of the same Nature with us, even any of mankind. He is to be accounted as our neighbor that is a man as we are, and doth bear the Image of God as we do, of what condition so ever he be, whether he dwell near unto us, or far from us; whether he be our own Country-man, or a Stranger; whether he be worthy or unworthy; whether he be a friend or an enemy; whether he be known or unknown; because we are to consider him in God, not in himself, as we noted before. This our Savior teacheth in the parable of the Samaritan, answering the Scribes question, *Luke 10.* that we must show the duties of love to him that wanteth our help and relief, though he were our enemy & one that did hate us (as the Samaritans were unto the Jews) whether he be godly or ungodly, we must extend the duties of love toward them. Thus did *David* deal toward *Saul* his enemy, that sought his life to take it away: he spared him when he might have slain him, and he cut off only a piece of his coat, when he might as easily have cut off his head; which kindness of his heaped up coals of fire upon his head, and so wrought with him, that he called him Son, and prayed God to recompense unto him that

goodness that he had shown, and ceased from persecuting of him at that time. The like example we have in *Elisha*, who would not suffer the Horsemen that were sent to take him, to be smitten with the sword, but commanded Bread and water to be set before them; so they did eat and drink, they refreshed themselves, and returned to their Master. Let us follow these worthy presidents, and account all men our neighbors; let us account our selves bound in duty to help them, and do unto them, as we would have them deal toward us. Thus we see what love is, we have heard from whence it cometh, wherein it consisteth, and to whom it is to be shown. It cometh from God, and is the work of his spirit; it consisteth in a fellow-feeling of their good and grief, of their prosperity and adversity, so that we should rejoice with them, and mourn with them, according to the condition wherein they are; it is to be shown to all such as are of the same nature, and are covered with the same flesh; that is, to all mankind.

Secondly, we are to consider the property of this Love, how it is to be performed. For, as we have seen the parties who are to be loved, even all; so we must mark the manner how they are to be loved; that is, fervently, and earnestly. This is taught by the Apostle *John*, *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue only, but in deed and in truth*. This also he pointed out a little before, *This is the Message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should Love one another, not as Cain who was that wicked one, and slew his Brother*. And the Apostle Paul saith, *Let Love be without dissimulation*. Likewise in the Epistle to the Galatians, *It is a good thing to Love earnestly always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you*. Our Love therefore must not only be true, but fervent, and that for these causes. We have the perfect example of Christ, *Who gave his life for his Sheep, and suffered the shameful death of the cross to redeem them*. Again, if occasion require it, and our calling will bear it, we ought so to Love them, as we should give our lives for the brethren; which duty we can never fulfill, except our Love be fervent. Lastly, there are many means to quench Love, as wrongs, injuries, unkindness, unthankfulness, hatred, and emulation; all these corrupt affections, are as water to the fire. Seeing then, it is so quickly, and by so many means cooled and quenched, let us kindle it, and labor to continue it, that it may always burn, and not decay. This fervent Love is a rare Jewel, which seemeth almost gone out of the world.

Thirdly, we must know the form and manner how we are to Love our brethren, to wit, even as our selves. By this rule our practice must be squared, and by this rule shall our love be judged. As we wish our own good heartily, sincerely, and vnfaignedly, so ought we to desire the good of our neighbor. It is the Law of Nature that teacheth us to do to others, as we would have others do to us. It is the Law of God that commandeth us to Love our neighbor as our selves. Our Love must be without hypocrisy and dissimulation from the very heart. This hearty Love is as it were the life and soul of the duty due to our brethren. Let us therefore love them with a sincere affection, and in unfeigned simplicity. This appeareth plainly in such as prayed for their persecutors and utter enemies, as *Stephen* when they stoned him, kneeled down and cried out with a loud voice, *Lord lay not this sin to their charge*. And our Savior Christ when they crucified him, said, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*. If we can practice and perform the like, wish their good as our own, pray for them as for our

selves, and desire their forgiveness, as we would be forgiven of God, then is this true love to our true comfort found in us.

Secondly, seeing this is the Love that must be found in us towards the Saints, it serveth to meet with many enormities, and to reprove many sins that reign in the world, and are as the fore-runners of the full and final ruin thereof. Our love to others, is a cold love; frozen, without heat; dead, without life; barren, without fruit; such as our Savior speaketh of in the gospel, *Because iniquity shall be increased, the Love of many shall be cold.* But our Love is hot toward our selves, we have abundance of self-love, which ouerfloweth in us, and overcometh true love. This is the only love that remaineth in the world in these days, which is the corruption, nay the bane and poison of true love. This is it which the Apostle prophesied of long ago, *This know also, that in the last days shall come perrillous times, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, without natural affection, no lovers at all of them which are good.* Where we see, that Paul prophesying of the last days, days of great peril, and much impiety, doth put self-love in the first place, as it were in the forefront, and make it the fountain from whence the train floweth, that followeth afterward. For he which loveth himself, will not regard what he doth to others, and arrogateth all things to himself; he setteth up himself as the only man of account, he magnifyeth himself, he contemneth all others. Hence it is, that he is covetous, proud, treacherous, stubborn, heady, high minded, and heapeth or hoordeth up sin upon sin, till he fill up the measure. The world is pestered with these Monopolies, which are all for themselves, nothing for the common good of Church or Country. We have a common Proverb rife in their mouths, but more rife and ripe in the practice of the people, *Everyone for himself, and God for us all.* The first branch showeth what is in use, but the second part must be changed; for where everyone is for himself, there the Devil is for all. Wherefore the former is the Devils Proverb, and is no more to be used among God's people. The Christian Proverb must be, *Everyone for his Brother, and God for us all:* because Love seeketh not her own, but the good of others.

Secondly, as we see self-love checked and controuled, so they are condemned that place brotherly love in fair words, and gentle speeches (and yet many fail in these, and cannot afford them, as if every word of their mouth were worth Gold) whereas in such is no sound Religion, but a vizard only of holiness. True love must be shown in the fruits, in sustaining, helping, pitying, & relieving those that crave our relief, and are in necessity. The Apostle teacheth them that are destitute of true faith, that shroud themselves under the profession of the Gospel, and yet are not able to make demonstration thereof by their works. A good Tree bringeth forth good fruit. If the Tree bring forth either no fruit, or evil fruit, it is an evil tree. If we have only good words, and either no works at all, or evil works, it is a plain argument, we are not yet in the number of true believers, neither are endued with that faith which worketh by love. Hence it is, that the Apostle James saith, *If a Brother or a Sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say to them, Depart in peace, warm yourselves, and fill your bellies, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what helpeth it? Even so the Faith, if it have no works, is dead in it self.* If then, we content our selves to give the Alms of fair words, which are but empty shows, it showeth that we are barren trees full of leaves, but void of fruit, and it shall minister as little comfort to our hearts, as it doth

relief to their bodies. We are taught to visit Christ in his members, and apply our selves to do them good, that in the last judgment we may find that mercy and compassion at the hands of Christ, which we have shown to the members of his body. To give kind words, is not that fervent love which here is commended unto us.

Lastly, it reproveth such as give themselves to fraud and deceit, to cruelty and oppression, to subtlety and circumventing their brethren, to lying & using false Waights and Measures. For if this should be the rule of our love, that it ought to be fervent, we should examine our own hearts whether we would have another man to deceive and oppress us, by forgery & falsehood. The Apostle reproveth all such wrongful and injurious dealing, and as a Prophet of God denounceth severely certain judgment upon such wickedness, *Let no man oppress or defraud his Brother in any matter: for the Lord is an avenger of all such things, as we also have told you before time, and testified.* It is common and wicked Objection. May I not do with mine own as I list, who shall hinder me to use mine own as I think good? This is the common argument of Harlots, Drunkards, and other beasts, which ought not to be in the mouths of Christians. Let them use it that are out of Christ, let us be ashamed of such profaneness and ignorance. For indeed, thou hast nothing that is thine own; thou art but a Steward, and the time shall come, when thou must give an account of thy Stewardship, because thou mayst be no longer Steward.

Lastly, seeing all are to be loved, but especially such as have been converted by us; it teacheth us to further their salvation, that have been brought into the way by us, and never to forsake them, until we have brought them to their journeys end. For what a vain thing were it, to find a man wandering out of his way, and going astray from the right path, and when he hath brought him back, to leave him without farther direction? Or what an unnatural part were it for a Mother to bring forth her Child into the world, and then to take no more care of it, neither to wash it in water, nor to wrap it in swathing Clowts, nor to have any compassion upon it, but to cast it out into the open field. The love of Moses his Mother was greater toward him, who being borne, was hidden three months from the cruelty of the Egyptians, and being put among the Bul-rushes in the water, was watched by his Sister, to see how God would provide for his deliverance; even so, it standeth us upon, having been made blessed means and Instruments of the good of others, to be assistants unto them, and to further their salvation, as God shall enable us.

It is the part of a good Work-man, not to leave his work imperfect. A good Physician will not leave his patient, when he hath done but half his cure. An Husbandman will not give over when he hath half sown, but will labor unto the end. He that doth but half build an house, is but half a Carpenter. He that entereth into Christianity, and beginneth well, is but half a Christian, the greatest part of the work remaineth behind. Let us all follow the example of God, when he began the great work of the Creation of the world, he left not his workmanship vnfashioned and vnfinished, but in six days fully accomplished it to the glory of his name. And as he did in the generation of his creatures, so he doth in their regeneration, *Those whom he loveth, he loveth unto the end.* This is it which the Apostle teacheth, *I am persuaded of this same thing, that he that hath begun this good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus*

Christ. As then God never leaveth him whom once he loveth, so should we have a care of those that we have moved to embrace the truth, and watch over them for their good. The Minister must preach sound Doctrine in love, to the souls of men that he hath undertaken the charge of, for whom he is to give an account in the great day. We see the Apostles having taught the Gentiles, & planted a Church among them, did not cast off all care of them, nor think themselves to have discharged a sufficient duty toward them, but knowing the malice of Satan, the deceit of false Teachers, and the frailty of man's nature, *They returned back to confirm them in the faith, and to settle them in that truth which they had received of them.* When *Peter* professed great love to Christ, he willed him to manifest it by feeding of his Sheep and Lambes: the greater his diligence was in feeding the flock of Christ, over which he was made a principal Watchman, the greater duty he performed to Christ himself. When *Agrippa* the King had heard the defense that *Paul* made for himself, and the confirmation of his calling, by the heavenly vision that appeared unto him, he said, *Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian.* But did *Paul* him so? Or doth he think it enough to make him almost a Christian? No, half a Christian is no Christian; and almost godly, is not godly. Therefore his desire was to take him by the hand, or rather by the heart, if he could have sounded into the depth and bottom of it, and to have led him from *Almost*, to *Altogether*. Hence it is, that when he seeth him coming toward Christ, he casteth out his Net to catch him, if it were possible; saying unto him, *I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me today, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.* Thus he ceaseth not continually to call upon the Churches, to increase more and more, and to proceed from grace to grace. Again, it belongeth to every Master of the Family, to water that which himself or the Minister hath planted, and to be always weeding out the bitter roots that spring up in his Garden. If we have brought any of his family to godliness, and to embrace the Gospel, let him make much of them, let his countenance be toward them, let him favor them above others, and admonish them to frequent the exercises of Religion, remembering that it is as great a Virtue to keep, as to get; to preserve, as to find; to hold fast, as to take.

Moreover, as it is a general duty belonging to all of us, to exhort one another, while it is called today, and stir up one another to good things; so if by our example of life, or lighting of them a Candle to see their ways, they shall come to the acknowledgement of the truth, we should love them dearly, and provoke them to go farther forward in good works, assuring them that such as continue to the end, shall be saved. This serveth severely to reprove those, who having been zealous in the faith, and witnessed a good confession before many witnesses, and been a means to open the eyes of others, to behold the glorious light of the Gospel, that before wandered in darkness, are now gone back themselves, or seem to stand at a stay, and have left their first love. To whom I can say no more, but wish them to turn back to consider what they have been, and to remember what they are, knowing that it had been better for them, never to have known the way of righteousness, then after they have acknowledged it, to turn away from the holy Commandment. Let all such therefore call to mind the exhortation of Christ, to the Angel of the Church of *Ephesus*, *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come against thee shortly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of his place; except thou amend.* It is a great shame to show the way to

another, and to go out of it himseife; to teach another, and not to teach himself; to stir up another to go forward, and himself to go backward; to kindle zeal in others, and himself to grow cold & lukewarm, and therefore to give occasion to others to think, that their former profession, was but an heat of youth, seeing they decline in their old age. On the other side, such as have been won to the Gospel by others, ought entirely and fervently to love such as have converted them, to show themselves every way thankful unto them. The Apostle beseecheth the *Thessalonians*, *To acknowledge them that labor among them, and are over them in the Lord, and admonish them, that they have them in singular love for their works sake.* Who is it, if he were blind and had his sight restored unto him, would not speak well of him by whom it was restored, and acknowledge himself bound unto him all the days of his life? We are all naturally borne blind, & have not one eye to see the saving truth of godliness: If then, we attain the sight of our selves, and to know our natural blindness, how ought we to praise God's mercy toward us, and to love those by whom we have the eyes of our minds enlightened? He is a very unkind and unthankful person, who, having lost his way in a great and terrible wilderness, where he knoweth not which way to turn or return, not whether to go to get out, meeteth with a certain guide that is able and ready to conduct him, and to enstruct him in his way, will never so much as open his mouth to give him thanks. Or having been cured and recovered from a dangerous and desperate disease, that brought him to the doors of death, will never acknowledge the benefit and good turn that he hath received. So is it with those that have wandered a long time in the vanities of this world, and in the pleasures of the flesh, as in a wilderness; it is the greatest ingratitude not to acknowledge those his best and surest friends, that have shown them the strait gate, and the narrow way that leadeth unto life. And if our souls have been saved from death, to which we made hast, and ran with greediness; if there be any comfort of love, or fellowship of the spirit, or any compassion and mercy in us, we ought to show it to those that have been as spiritual and special Physicians unto us, to deliver us from death, and to restore us to life.

[*Whom I have sent again.*]

Hitherto we have spoken of the first reason that concerneth the person of *Onesimus*, who was unprofitable, but now is become very profitable. The second sort of reasons are touching *Paul* himself, and touch either the present action of his sending of him back, or the common friendship that a long time had been between *Paul* and *Philemon*. The first of these reasons is in this 12. verse, which may be thus concluded:

- *If I have sent Onesimus back unto thee, then it is thy duty to receive him:*
- *But I have sent him back again,*
- *Therefore it is thy duty to receive him.*

If there had not been great cause that *Philemon* should receive him, the Apostle would never have sent him, especially seeing he found his abode with him and his service done unto him very profitable. Now we are to mark in this place, that *Paul* requireth not *Philemon* to make his servant free, and to discharge him of his bondage; and albeit *Paul* had great need to have

used the ministration of *Onesimus* in the extremity of his imprisonment, yet being another man's servant, and not his own; belonging to his own Master, and not to him; and knowing that he ought not to covet another man's servant, he would not detain him, but sent him back to *Philemon* to whom he did appertain, and from whom he departed. This is consonant to the truth and purity of the Gospel, this the Master might well require, and this duty the servant was bound to perform, even to return and repair again from whence he came. Heereby we learn, that the Gospel of Christ doth not dissolve or abolish, but confirm & establish civil ordinances, distinct degrees, and politick constitutions among men, as between Princes and Subjects, Parents and Children, Husband and Wife, Master and Servants, Superiors and Inferiors.

This appeareth in many places of the word, where the several and distinct duties of several and distinct callings, are mentioned and required by the Apostle. Hereunto cometh that which he setteth down, *Rom. 13. Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God, and the powers that be, are ordained of God.* Likewise writing to the Ephesians, he chargeth *Wives to submit themselves unto their husbands, as unto the Lord: he willeth Husbands to love their wives, even as Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it: he requireth of Children to obey their Parents in the Lord, for this is right: he commandeth Fathers not to provoke their Children to wrath, lest they be discouraged, but to bring them up in instruction and information of the Lord: he prescribeth unto Servants, to be obedient unto them that are their Masters, according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of their hearts, as unto Christ; and he setteth down the duties of Masters, that they should deal justly with their servants, putting away threatening, knowing that even their Master also is in Heaven, with whom there is no respect of persons.* In like manner, when he writeth to *Timothy*, he saith, *Let as many Servants as are under the yoke, count their Masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his Doctrine be not evil spoken of.* And *Titus 2. Let Servants be subiect to their Masters, and please them in all things, not answering again; neither pickers, but that they show all good faithfulness, that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Savior in all things: for that grace of God that bringeth salvation unto all men hath appeared.*

The like exhortations, and establishing of civil ordinances, we see in *Peter*, *Submit yourselves unto all manner ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be unto the King, as unto the Superior; or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent of him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.* So likewise he chargeth the *Wives to be Subject to their Husbands, that even they which obey not the word, may without the word he won by the conversation of the wives, while they behold their pure conversation which is with fear.* And the *Husbands he teacheth, That they should dwell with them, as men of knowledge, giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, even as they which are heirs together of the grace of life, that their prayers be not interrupted.* Christ our Savior willeth us to *Give unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God, the things that are God's.* The Apostle hath heaped together many such precepts unto the same purpose, *1 Cor. 7. Let the Husband give unto the wife due benevolence; and likewise the wife unto the Husband: defraud not one another, except it be with consent for a time: unto the married I command; not I, but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her Husband, and let not the Husbände put away his wife: If any Brother, have a wife that believeth not, if she be content to dwell with him,*

let him not forsake her; and the woman that hath an Husbande which believeth not, if he be content to dwell with her, let her not forsake him. Let every man abide in the same Uocation, wherein he was called: Brethren, let every man, wherein he was called, therein abide with GOD. All these rules and commandments, serve to teach us this truth, that howsoever the gospel doth make us all as brethren, and join us together in one body, yet it doth not abrogat and abolish the difference between man and man, and bring in an Anarchy and confusion, but settleth a distinction between Prince and subject, between Master and servant, between high and low.

This Doctrine of the gospel will better appear, if we mark the reasons. For first, God is not the author of confusion and disorder, but of peace and order. Look upon all the creatures of God in heaven & earth, on high and beneath, and we shall be constrained to cry out with the prophet, *O Lord, how manifold are thy works? In wisdom hast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches.* Al tumult and sedition, all disorder and insurrection cometh from the devil, he is the author thereof. For he first brought in sin, and sin brought in disorder. Hence it is, that the apostle saith, *God is not the author of confusion, but of peace as we see in all the churches of the Saints.* He commandeth that all things be done honestly, and in order; he commendeth the goodly order that is observed among the faithful, and therefore he teacheth not any disorders, nor alloweth them where they are.

Secondly, Christ came not into the world to abolish the Law, but to establish it, as he testifieth, *Mat. 5. Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy them, but to fulfill them: for truly, I say unto you, till heaven and earth perish, one jot, or one tittle of the Law shall not escape, till all things be fulfilled.* Now we know that the moral Law commandeth the honor of Father and Mother; that is, of all superiors, who bear a part of his image. If then, the end of his coming were to ratify the Law; then it followeth, that the Law making a difference between superiors and inferiors, remaineth, and shall remain in his full strength, power, and virtue.

Thirdly, the Gospel commandeth hearty obedience, as unto God, and therefore doth not dissolve or disannul true obedience; nay, it is a praise and ornament to the Gospel, when all sortes walk in the duties of their several Callings, and specially such as are the obedience of others. Servants are the lowest condition in the Church, and yet the Apostle teacheth, that by vprighnesse of their life, and obedience to their Master for Conscience sake, they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Savior in all things; and on the other side, by the evil life, stubbornness, and disobedience of servants, that profess the knowledge of the Gospel, the name of God and his Doctrine is blasphemed and evil spoken of. Likewise, speaking of believing Wives, that have unbelieving Husbands, he putteth them in mind of subjection, to the end that by their holy conversion, they may win their husbands to embrace true Religion. To this purpose the Apostle *Paul* teacheth servants to be obedient to them that are their Masters, according to the flesh, and chargeth them *that whatsoever they do, they do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men.* Seeing therefore, that God is the author of order, not of confusion; seeing Christ came not to abolish, but to establish the Law; and lastly, seeing the Gospel teacheth subjection, and doth not release or acquit any of their duty; it followeth, that the gospel doth not bring in parity and equality among all (the Mother of all mischief)

but discerneth and distinguisheth of the Callings of men; it doth not give liberty to pervert all order, it maketh not Servants to be Masters, and Masters to be servants, but directeth everyone to keep his place, and to abide in his vocation.

Seeing this is the honor & commendation of the gospel, let us see what Uses arise from the knowledge of this point. First of all, we conclude from hence necessarily, that it hath always been a lying devise, and devilish slander to Christian religion, to be the author and fauorer of carnal liberty, and to Christian professors, to be enemies to states and commonwealths, to magistrats, laws, & civil ordinances. This hath always been the accusation of slāderous tongues, to brand the Gospel, as the breeder and bringer in of all uproars and conspiracies: & yet there is no Doctrine under the Heaven, that less deserveth to be defamed. For the Gospel was a friend to Princes, when Princes were enemies to the Gospel; it teacheth to be subject unto them, to pray to God for them, & to obey all their godly constitutions, and therefore it is the Father of lies, and enemy of all truth, that hath sought to disgrace & discredit the holy truth of God, and such as in truth do embrace it. He seeth and perceiveth, that if the Gospel stand, his kingdom must fall; if the Gospel flourish, his kingdom must decay. Hence it is, that the church & people of God, have in all ages and times of the world, been accused of rebellions, treasons, seditions, insurrections & many other grievous impieties Heerof the scripture & experience afford plentiful examples. In the book of *Ezra*, the enemies accuse the guiltles *Jews* to be a rebellious people, & that they have of old been always given to sedition. *Ahab* burdeneth *Elias*, that it was he & his fathers house that trobled *Israel*. *Haman* suggesteth unto the king against the *Jews*, that their laws were diverse from all people, & that they did not observe the kings laws, and therefore it was not for the kings profit to suffer them. The Apostles are accused to be authors of sedition, troublers of cities, raisers of tumults, causers of rebellion, breakers of laws, and teachers of ordinances not lawful to receive, they said of them, *These men that are Jews trouble our City, & they preach ordinances which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe seeing we are Romans*. Where we see, they cover their covetousness with a shadow & pretence of standing against innovation, but they discover the hollowness & hypocrisy of their harts, when they join troubling of the state and preaching of the gospel together. Whereby it appeareth, that their troubling of the city was nothing else, but because they preached the word, which the devil & his instruments could not bear and abide. *Paul* is accused by *Tertullus*, to be a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the *Jews* throughout the world, and that he taught all men everywhere against the law of *Moses*. And no marvel, for thus they dealt with the son of God, when he taught the truth without mixture of error, and without respect of person, he was accounted & accused not only to be a Sorcerer, a Samaritan, a Drunkard, a glutton, a deceiver, a devil, *but an enemy to Caesar, and a troubler of the public peace*. Now all these things being considered, let us remember what the Lord *Jesus* saith to us, *The servant is not greater then his master, if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you*. The heathē after Christ's time, cried out against the Christians, that they were the authors and causes of all public plagues & calamities that fell upon kingdoms & countries. If *Nile* flowed not over the fields, if the heaven stayed, if the earth quaked, if famine increased, if the pestilence continued by and by the poor Christians, as the sheep of Christ, were cast unto the lions. They charged them to make privy

conspiracies, to devise secret counsels against the commonwealth, to murder children, to feed themselves with man's flesh, and to practice all Iniquity; they were so blinded, that they could not perceive that their Idolatries brought God's judgments. Thus we see how the church hath lien open to all false surmises and suggestions of sedition. But what can be immagined more unjust or vettrue? If there be any peace in this world in any lande, it is for the Gospels sake, and it cometh through the bountifulness of God for his people's sake that call upon him. Nevertheless as the Gentiles dealt with the Jews and Christians from time to time; so do the wicked in these days with the godly, they lay to their charge that they keep no laws, that they disobey Princes, that they are seditious and tumultuous, and enemies to the State. If we see or hear the Saints of God thus handled, and evilly entreated, we must know that this is an old devise of the devil practiced against the Prophets, against Christ against the Apostles, and against all true Christians, even from the beginning. And let this serve to comfort us, when we find such slanderous imputations and accusations laid to our charge, considering that thus they have reviled and railed upon the Servants of GOD, that have been before us in all times, and that we have Christ Jesus, the witness of our innocence, who if not in this life, yet in the life to come, will reveal the things that are hidden in darkness, and bring to light the things that are covered. In the mean season we must remember that they are pronounced blessed, that are reviled and persecuted for righteousness sake: and we must labor to convince them, not so much by words, as by deeds, answering the falsehood of their slanders, by the uprightness of our lives, which shall be able to speak for us, even when we ohld our peace.

Secondly, we see that Christian poillicy is not against Common-wealth policy, so that there is no State under heaven, whether entertaining the regiment of one, or of many, but may give entertainment to the Gospel. For seeing it meddleth not with matters of civil government, whether it be a free state, or depending of others, it shall receive no impeachment or detriment in temporal affairs. Our Savior teacheth, *That his kingdom is not of this world, but spiritual for the soul & Conscience*. When one came unto Christ, and entreated him to bid his Brother divide the with him, he said unto him, *Man, who made me a Judge, or a diuider over you*. When tribute was required by the Officers and Receiuers, he sent *Peter* to pay it, declaring by his willing obedience, that civil policy is not taken away by the preaching of the Gospel.

This serveth to overthrow two sorts of Heretics, both of them (enemies to the Crown and Dignity of Princes) the Anabaptists, who take away Magistracy, and despise government, and the Papists, who follow apace after them; and if they make hast (as they begin) they will soon overtake them. The Anabaptists, take away all dominion and power, deny Magistracy to be lawful, take away the propriety of things, and will have all things common. These are such as the Apostle *Jude* prophesied of in his Epistle, which despise government, and speak evil of them that are in authority. Their error, or rather heresy, they ground upon diverse places of Scripture, which we will briefly answer.

First, they object, that Christ saith, *Resist not evil*, which is required of all Christians: What use then is there of the Magistrate, who beareth the sword and resisteth evil? I answer, Christ in these words exhorteth us to Christian patience, and reproveth private revenge, he

doth not abrogate the Office of the Magistrate, as appeareth by the words of Christ, if they be aright considered. For he doth not say, if any man shall strike thy neighbor on the right cheek, command him to turn the left also; neither doth he say if any will sue his neighbor at the law, & take away his coat, charge and require him to deliver his cloak also; but whosoever shall give thee a blow on the right cheek, turn thou to him the left also; & if a man shall take away thy coat, let go thy cloke also. Wherefore it appeareth, that this concerneth private persons, not public Magistrates. Again, *To resist evil*, is not simply and in it self evil; but to do evil, is evil indeed. For if it were simply evil in it self; no householder among Christians should withstand and resist the evils of his house, but suffer them to do what they list, and lay the bridle in their own neck: No Schoolemaister shall bridle the folly and licentiousness of youth, which the rod of correction doth drive away; no Father shall be allowed to chastise and punnish his children, but must let them alone to run into all evil. If these things be absurd & unworthy the person and doctrine of Christ; it followeth, that it is not simply & absolutely forbidden, to resist evil. For what is the Magistrate else in the commonwealth, then as an householder among his family; as a schoolmaister among his scholars; as a father among his children; nay if there be need anywhere, of a Christian Magistrate, it is among faithful Christians; that is, amongst those that do not revenge themselves, but are patient before their oppressors, as the Sheep that is dumb before his shearers. The Children of this world are like brute beasts, who as they make no conscience of wrong, so they make no conscience of revenge.

Secondly, they object that we are charged to stand fast in the liberty which Christ hath purchased for us, and whereby he hath set us free, Gal. 5, I answer, this is to be understood of spiritual liberty, not civil; the liberty of Conscience, not of obedience; of Christian liberty, not Anabaptistical. For the liberty of Christ, is a freedom from the power of Satan, of sin, of death, of hell, and of condemnation; it is not a freedom from the power of Princes, and an exempting of men from civil subjection.

The third objection is, that Kings sons are free from tribute, and therefore from subjection. Math. 17, 26. I answer, though all Christians be made the sons of God, yet Christ Jesus speaketh that of himself, who according to his deity was the natural son of God, and according to his humanity & birth into the world, was of the lineage of *David*, and heir to the crown and kingdom, and consequently was freed from payment of tribute. But this serveth nothing to free men from Magistrates, and the duties we owe unto them.

Fourthly, the Apostle saith, *Ye are bought with a price, be ye not the Servants of men*, 1 Cor. 7, 23. But Magistracy maketh us the servants of men. I answer, this toucheth nothing the calling of Magistrates, but teacheth that in matters of Religion we should not depend upon the aurtherity of men, or hang upon their sleeve, as the Corinthians did, who are reprov'd for addicting themselves, some to one teacher, some to another. This is to make men Lord's of our faith. To conclude, we must know that the Magistrate is the Minister of God, and hath received from God, not an absolute power to do what he list, but a limited power, to take vengeance of the wicked, to countenance the godly, that so we may live a peaceable and quier life in all godliness and honesty. He is the keeper of both the Tables of the Law, he

executeth Justice and judgment without respect of persons, he abolisheth Idolatry, and maintaineth public tranquility; without whom, one of us could not live by another, but men would be as Wolves and wild beasts one to another; so that the Anabaptists that would abolish this ordinance of God. are enemies to religion, to godliness, to equity, to honesty, to peace and quietness.

Secondly, the Popes, Jesuits, and Papists, that hang upon the Pope, as upon their God, doth cut short the authority of Princes, thar they may establish an absolute sovereignty and supremacy of Antichrist, the man of sin, who tyrannizeth over men's Consciences, and advanceth himself above all Kings, and Emperors, and Magistrates of the earth. Hence it is, that the Priests and Jesuits; bring in an immunity and exemption of the Clergy, from the authority of the civil Magistrate, and secular powers, which is a kind of rebellion, & this is claimed as a privilege belonging unto them by the whole Roman Clergy. Again, the Jesuits are medlers in State-matters, in establishing and deposing of Princes, in troubling of Common-wealths, in plotting and practicing of Treasons, in murthuring of Princes, and in setting all things in an uproar.

Thirdly, the Bope usurpeth a power to free subjects from their allegiance and their oath of obedience, as appeareth by the Popes two Breeues that he sent over, forbidding his popish Catholics to swear homage and fidelity to the King.

Fourthly, their teachers of popish Divinity, publish and maintain many Treasonable positions, tending to the dishonor of Princes, and to the overthrow of Kingdoms. It is well known to all the World what *Bellarmino* hath delivered in the Controuersies of Religion, that he hath published to be read and viewed of all men; how basely he hath spoken of Princes, and how boldly he hath diminished their authority, that he might establish the Popes Temporal Soueraignty. He teacheth out of his Doctors Chair, or rather from his Orators Deske, that Princes are rather Servants, then Lord's, subject not only to Popes and Cardinals, but to Bishops and Priests: that Princes have their authority, not immediately from God, nor from the Law of God, but by the Law of Nations: that Princes may be deposed and dethroned by their Subjects, and other placed in their stead; that the Pope hath Temporal power indirectly: that obedience is due to the Pope for conscience sake, but to Princes for policy sake. That the cause why Christians in former time deposed not *Nero* the Tyrant, and *Julian* the *Apostate*, and *Valens* the *Arian*, and such like, was, because they wanted Temporal power, and if they had not wanted strength, they would not have wanted will to do it: that if Princes go about to turn away the people from their base-Roman, and Bastard-Catholic Faith, they may and ought to be deprived of their dominions. Hereunto we might add many like principles of their devilish Divinity taught in their Schools, and brought into the State, and practiced by their Disciples, out of *Sanders*, who was himself an Arch-rebel, and perrished in his rebellion that he had raised, being not only a beholder of it, but an Actor in it.

Whereby we see, if he had no other matter, what we are to esteem of the *Roman* Religion; namely, that it is a counterfeit Religion, to be abhorred of all true Christians, being the Nursery of Treasons, and the Mother of all abominations; which setteth up the Pope, as the great Idol and Arch-rebel of the World, so that he usurpeth a Supremacy over all Civil

Gouernments in the Earth: whereas the true Christian Religion is as contrary to this, as light to darkness, which teacheth to be subject to the higher powers for Conscience sake; which teacheth to fear God, and to honor the King: which teacheth all degrees, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, to stoop down to this ordinance of God. Our Weapons are Prayers, and tears; our means that we use, are supplications to God and to Man. But these Seducers put down the honor of Kings and Princes, and teach them that depend upon them, to take up Fire and Sword, and all other seditious practices which the God of this World teacheth the Children of rebellion, so often as occasion of advantage, and hope to prevail serveth them.

Lastly, seeing the Gospel doth establish, not abolish; strengthen, not weaken; confirm, not disannul the ordinances that God hath settled among Men; we learn, that whosoever is a good Christian, and hath rightly embraced the Gospel, is also a good observer of Household Government, and of Common-wealth Government, which stand with the word of God, and the maintenance of peace and human society. I say then, that a faithful and sound Christian, is a good Subject, a good Father, a good Master, a good Wife, a good Child, a good Servant, a good Common-wealths-man. The Church and Common-wealth are as loving Sisters, living, dwelling, growing, flourishing, prospering, decaying, and falling together. We must all consider our common and special calling; and know, that Christian duties and Personal duties, must not be divided the one from the other, but be coupled and joined in one man. It is not sufficient for a man in common conversation to be a Christian, but he must show himself to be so in his special calling. A Magistrate must not only be a Christian, but he must be a Christian Magistrate. A Father and Master must not only be Christians, but they must be Christian Fathers, and Christian Masters. It is not enough for us to be Christians abroad, we must not content our selves to be Christians in the sight of others, but we must manifest our selves to be so, in the administration and government of our particular Families, and in the discharge of our several duties, toward Wife, Children, and Servants. This reproveth many that live among us, who bear themselves abroad as men, forward in Religion, eatnest in their profession, and such as would be accounted to go before many others: yet take a view of them what they are privately in their own houses, and what duties they perform toward their Families, they have lost the reputation at home that they had abroad, and show themselves to be more careful to seem religious, and to be thought great Christians, then to be good Christians indeed. The like we may say of all Inferiors. It is not enough for the Wife, the Child, the Servant, the Subject, to show themselves faithful and religious openly in the Congregation, and other places of resort, but they must show themselves right Christians in their reverence, subjection, and obedience toward those Superiors that are set over them.

Thus we see, that as everyone hath two callings; one general, which is the calling of Christianity, common to every member of the the Church; the other, personal or particular, which is the discharge of special duties, in regard of that distinction made between man and man: so both these callings must be joined together in our life, as the body and soul are in one man. If one of them be wanting, the other is missing. If they do not meet together in one person, there is only a show of true Christianity, but the substance is absent. A good Christian therefore cannot be an evil Subject, an evil Servant. If they have Christ Jesus formed in them, it will make them obey for Conscience sake. Nay, hereby we see, that only

such as fear God are good Subjects, others cannot be. For the wicked and ungodly do provoke God to anger; against the King, against the Kingdom, and to procure the destruction of them both by their sins. This is it which *Solomon* teacheth in the *Proverbs*; *For the transgression of the Land there are many Princes thereof: but by a man of understanding and knowledge, a Realm likewise endureth long.* Thus the Lord took away good King *Josiah* from the Children of Israel, because the people were not worthy of him, and God was angry against *Judah* because of their iniquities. This is the chief cause of the alterations of Kingdoms, and of the often mutation and changing of Kings and Princes. For how can it be, that such as are Rebels against God, should be Frinds to Princes?

True it is, it hath been the ready way which the Devil hath used (as we shown before) to bring such as are godly and fear God, into hatred and detestation, by his Instruments; to bear the World in hand that they are Enemies to Princes. Christ Jesus, though he obeyed *Caesar*, and taught obedience to *Caesar*, and paid poll-money, yet he was accused of Treason, and charged to be an enemy to *Caesar*, and condemned for it. So was *Paul* slandered, as a disturber of the State and Common-wealth. But if we will rightly consider this point, we shall find, that these men that have nothing in their mouths but obedience, and harp upon no string so much as disobedience, (as if they themselves were made of obedience) may justly be censured and convinced to break three Laws for their one, whom they falsely and fraudulently accuse. So that we may invert the accusation, & turn it as a wheel upon their own heads, and charge them justly with that, wherewith they unjustly ouercharge others. When the zealous Prophet *Elijah* was blamed and reprov'd to be a troubler of Israel, he answered the crime objected unto him, and rejected it back, that it rebounded upon him that gave the charge; *I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy Fathers house, in that ye have forsaken the Commandments of the Lord, and followed Baalim.* Such then as break the Commandments of God, and despise his laws, cannot for conscience sake to be obedient to Princes: and they that have been found unfaithful to God, can never be judged faithful to men. It is well known and seen how they transgress the Kings laws, in their apparel, in their meat, in their words, in slandering, in fighting, in quarrelling, in carding, in bowling, in dicing, in drunkenness, in sitting at Ale-houses, where the Magistrate and Minister are the common Table-talk, and an hundred such like inormities. As for the godly, though they be branded with breach of obedience, and duty to Princes, they will be found the best, the greatest, the chiefest; nay, the only true Friends that Princes have. For first, they pray unto God earnestly and heartily for their Prince, and the whole Land fareth the better for their prayers: for God heareth the Prayers of such only as hear his voice, and love his Laws, and fear his Name, when they call and cry unto him for their Prince. But he heareth not, he granteth not, he regardeth not the prayers of wicked men: for he that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayers shall be abhominable.

Hence it is that *Solomon* saith; *The Sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the righteous is acceptable unto him: he is far off from the wicked, but he heareth the Prayer of the righteous: the Sacrifice of the wicked is an ahhominaion, how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind.* So then, there can be no more utter enemies to Princes, then such as are wicked against God, according to the saying of the Wiseman in another place; *Take the dross from the*

Silver, and there shall proceed a Vessel for the finer: take away the wicked from the King, and his Throne shall be established in righteousness. All men therefore may see how absurd and preposterous a thing it is, that such as are no better then rebellious against God, should be the Friends of the Prince, and that such as are godly should be accounted enemies.

Again, the godly are ready to subject themselves according to God's ordinance to Magistrates, their obedience is in the Lord. When lawful things are commanded and required at their hands, they address themselves to do the things commanded: if unlawful, they submit themselves in all things, they resist not in anything, but suffer according to the pleasure of the Magistrate. If then they be subject with all fear, not only to such as are good and courteous, but also to the froward, knowing that this is thank-worthy, when a man for conscience sake toward God endureth grief, suffering wrongfully: How is it, that wicked men are not ashamed to account them as Traitors and Rebels? If it should fall out, that godly Princes command something which is contrary unto God's word, we must obey God rather than men, but we must submit our selves in well-doing unto Princes. It is a gross and unreasonable thing to imagine, that a man in obeying God doth disobey his Prince. This appeareth in the example of the three children, mentioned in the Prophecy of *Daniel*, when the King commanded them to fall down before the golden Image that he had set up, they answered; *We are not careful to answer thee in this matter: Behold, our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the hot fiery Furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, ô King: but if not, be it known to thee, ô King, that we will not serve thy God's, nor worship the golden Image that thou hast set up.* The like we see in *Daniel* himself, when he had been thrown into the den of the Lions, he saith to the King; *My GOD hath sent his Angel, and hath shut the Lions mouths that they have not hurt me: for my Justice was found out before him, and unto thee, ô King, I have done no hurt.* He had indeed broken the Kings edict, but he accounted it no disobedience, seeing therein he obeyed God. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith; *Fear GOD, honor the King:* where he showeth the order that is to be observed, the fear of God challengeth the first place, and goeth before the honor of the King. Let us therefore suffer the reproaches that are cast out against us, and learn always to obey in things lawful, but to submit our selves even in things unlawful, by enduring the punishment that shall be inflicted upon us. Thus the Servants of God, and faithful Martyrs from time to time have done: they never rebelled, they never took arms, they never made resistance, but always prayed for Princes, when Princes were enemies unto them. And concerning the ungodly, whatsoever they pretend, they cannot be the Princes Friends, because (as we have shown) they care not to keep their Laws, and if they had a care of Princes Laws, they would also have a regard of God's Laws.

13Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered vnto me in the bonds of the Gospel.

14But without thy mind would I do nothing, that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

Hitherto we have spoken of the reason that *Paul* urgeth to *Philemon* to receive his Servant, drawn from the action of his sending of him back: Now followeth the preventing of Objections, taken either from *Paul* his retaining of him, Verse 13. and 14. or from *Onesimus* his departing from his Master, Verse 15. and 16. The first objection is concerning the keeping and retaining of *Onesimus*, the objection is wanting, and may be thus supplied. For *Philemon* might have said; I hear many words, how profitable he is to me, how dear to thee. I know no such profit in him, I can see no benefit that I am like to receive by him: of this I am well assured, I have sustained great loss by him. If then he be so necessary and profitable, and if he be as dear unto thee, as the Son that cometh out of the Bowels of the father, why didst thou not retain him still with thee? To this the Apostle maketh a double answer; first he granteth, and then he reuoketh that which he had granted. For he confesseth, that his desire was to have detained him: which he maketh plain by a reason drawn from the end, that he might have continued [*To minister unto him in the bonds of the Gospel.*] In the next verse he joineth a correcting of that which he had granted; to wit, that he would do nothing in this matter without the assent and consent of *Philemon* his Master: which revocation he amplyfieth by an Argument from the end, *That thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity,* which also is declared by the contrary, [*but willingly.*] In these words, howsoever they be naturally the preventing of an objection, is included also a certain reason. For the Apostle in this Epistle useth more show of Art, and force of persuading, and power of reasoning, and skill of creeping into the heart of *Philemon*, then he useth ordinarily in other places: and therefore in removing objections he argueth, and in arguing he remooueth Objections. This appeareth evidently in this place. For he reasoneth and strengtheneth his request by this Argument:

- *Whom I desire for the good parts that I see in him to retain, that in thy place he might serve me in the bonds, or, cause of the Gospel: him thou oughtest to receive lovingly, and willingly.*
- *But Onesimus for whom I entreat is such a one;*
- *Therefore thou oughtest to receive him lovingly and willingly.*

This is to be considered of us, touching the order of the words: Now let us see what is to be known concerning the meaning of them. When he saith [*Whom I would have retained*] he showeth again what great account he maketh of *Onesimus*, being as it were the only man whom he would have made choice off (if it had been in his liberty) to have comforted him, and ministered unto him in the time of his affliction and imprisonment. Again, when he saith; [*For thee*] or in thy stead, he inferreth, that *Philemon* himself did owe unto him that duty, if he should require it of him, and urge it from him. He mentioneth, *The bonds of the Gospel*, meaning thereby, the afflictions which the Gospel had brought him, wherein the Genetive case doth note the cause as we saw before, verse 1. and 9. As if he should say, the cause why I am prisoner and put in bands, is the preaching of the Gospel. In the 14. verse he saith; *Without thy mind I would do nothing*, where, by the general put for the special, he meaneth without thy counsel and consent I would not do this thing; that is, retain *Onesimus*

with me, I would do nothing touching the keeping of him from thee, to whom as thy Servant he doth properly belong.

Lastly, he addeth, *Least it should be of necessity*; that is, least I should extort and wring it from thee against thy will, and so seem to compel thee hereunto, whereas thou shouldst do it cheerfully and willingly. This is the Method and meaning of this division, according to which order and Interpretation, the words are thus much in effect. If thou ask a reason why I kept not *Onesimus* with me, seeing I make him so profitable, and worthy to be loved and liked, so comfortable, trusty, and serviceable: I answer, I could have been content with all my heart to have done so, he is my Son, and I his Father: but withal, he is thy Servant, and not mine; and thou art his Master, and not I; and therefore I ought not, without thy leave, knowledge, and consent to keep him, for the Gospel maintaineth, and not dissolveth political order and household government, which both are the ordinance of God. Besides, a benefit and good turn should come, with a cheerful heart and a willing mind, and ought not to be gotten by constraint and compulsion, and therefore I would know thy will, before I kept him to myself.

Before we come to the particular handling of the Doctrines that arise from hence, some things briefly are to be noted, which I will briefly observe, without any long and large application. First of all, the Apostle intimateth his desire, to have retained *Onesimus* with him, and that he was loath to suffer him to depart from him: which declareth that the presence of those that are dear unto us in Christ, is welcome, pleasant, comfortable, & much set by, and we greatly desire to keep them continually with us. For as love is the knot of conjunction that bindeth us together, though we be absent and far severed one from another: so it craveth and requireth the bodily presence of those whom we entirely love, which howsoever we cannot obtain in this life, for as much as our earthly affairs will not suffer it, yet we shall be sure to enjoy it perpetually, and without end in the life to come, when we shall have the greatest joy and comfort one in another that can be wished or desired; such as the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Secondly, note with me the end why he desired to retain *Onesimus* with him, that the Servant might do service to him in the Masters stead. The end then, is, the Ministry and attendance which *Paul* might of duty require of *Philemon* himself. If then the Master be bound to do his service, and wait upon the Apostle, much more the Servant! Whereby we may note and mark, how great right and jurisdiction he that hath gotten and gained a man to Christ, hath, over him whom he hath gained, so that he may challenge not only one of his Servants, but himself to Minister unto him, and to help him in temporal and transitory things. For he that hath received spiritual blessings, cannot without great unthankfulness deny corporal benefits, so that it cannot be expressed how well he hath deserved of that person, whom he hath won by the word to God, *And delivered him by his Ministry from the power of darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of his dear Son.*

Thirdly, we may observe, in the Apostles correcting of his former grant, that as he is commended that doth his duty that is required of him, freely and willingly, so he is worthy to be praised and commended, that doth not go about to wring and wrest a benefit against a

man's will, though it be due debt and a bounden duty, but laboreth by all means, that it may be voluntary, and not upon necessity: for hereby it cometh to pass oftentimes, that he not only getteth a benefit, but winneth his heart and good will that giveth it: and many times it falleth out, that the mind of the giver is more to be respected then the gift it self, as we see in the poor Widow mentioned in the Gospel; who casting into the treasury two mites, is said to have given of her penury, more then all the rich men that bestomed of their superfluity. Thus much of the general observations. Now let us come to the particular Doctrines.

[*I would have retained him with me, that for thee he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the Gospel.*]

The Apostle in these words, doth claim both *Philemon* and *Onesimus* to owe unto him, being in bonds, their service and comfortable administration. Indeed he senderh his Servant back to him: yet he seemeth closely and secretly to insinuate, that he would take it thankfully at his hands, and receive it as a gift most welcome unto him, if *Philemon* would return him to him again: and that he should deserve more praise, if of his own accord and liberality he would have sent back his Servant now restored unto him, of whose help and Ministry he had so great need. The Servants of Christ that suffer for his Name, are to be succoured by what duties soever we can. For seeing the banishing of our persons, the whippings of our bodies, the spoiling of our goods, the impairing of our good Name, and many other reproaches and afflictions do accompany the preaching and profession of the Gospel, whosoever shrinketh back from suffering them, and refuseth to be partaker of them when God calleth him to bear witness unto the truth, he renounceth the Gospel, forsaketh his Brethren, and separateth himself from Christ. The defense of the Gospel is common to all, and every man must be an helper to the truth. Therefore the man that suffereth persecution for God's cause and the Gospels, is not to be accounted as a private person, but as one that dischargeth a public duty of the whole Church, and therefore the care of him, generally lieth upon the shoulders of all those that profess the faith. From hence we learn, that help, succor, and service, is a due debt from all that truly are religious, to them that suffer for the Gospel and for righteousness sake. We see how *Paul* requireth it of *Philemon* and *Onesimus*, that they should in his bonds Minister unto him, and help him in his distress. The virtue here required, is that fruit of love, by which a man becometh a Servant to everyone for their good, within the compass of his calling. So then, every Christian is bound to serve the common good of the Church, and of them that have need therein, by his gifts, by his goods, by his wisdom, by his authority, and by what other means soever God hath enabled him. This is commanded by the Apostle. Gal. 6. *While we have time, let us do good unto all men, but specially to thē that are of the household of faith.* So the same Apostle setteth out love by his effect, *Love seeketh not her own things but the good of others, it suffereth all things, it endureth all things.* The Church of the *Hebrews* is commended for the notable fruits of their love shown unto the Saints, that thereby they might be encouraged to go forward, and to hold out unto the end, *For God is not unrighteous, that he should forget your work and labor of love, which yeshewed toward his Name, in that ye have ministered unto the Saints, and yet Minister.* This we read to have been the practice of the Primitive Church in time of extreme misery, and the hard weapon of necessity pressing sore upon them; *Great grace was upon them all, neither was there any among them that*

lacked, for as many as were Possessors of Lands or Houses, sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid it down at the Apostles feet, and it was distributed unto every Man according as he had need. The examples of the godly are worthy to be considered, who have shined in the world by this virtue, as by a light in dark places. *Obadiah* ministered to the Prophets in the time of Famine, and in the days of persecution; *He did not only hide them from the rage of the enemy, but supplied their necessity.* *Nehemiah* employed himself for the good of *Jerusalem*, by his authority, power, wealth, and credit that he had with the King. This was in *Paul*, as he testifieth of himself, *Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself Servant unto all Men, that I may win the moe:* So that he was ready to offer up himself upon the Alter of their Faith. Likewise he requireth of the Widdowes employed in the Church-service, to attend upon the sick, that they should be of this good report, *Asto have lodged Strangers, to have washed the Saints feet, to have Ministred to them that are in necessity.* So the Church of *Thyatira* is commended by Christ for the performance of this duty; *I know thy works, and thy love, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works, and that they are moe at the last then at the first.* This is so general a duty; that the Apostle *Paul* expresseth it among the common fruits of Faith. *Rom. 12. Be affectioned to love one another with brotherly love, in giving honor go one before another; Not slothful to do service, fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord.* No man is exempted from this duty be he never so high, is is no disparagement, but a great advancement, even of the honor and glory of Princes, as the Prophet teacheth; *Kings shall be thy nursing Fathers, and Queens shall be thy Nurses, they shall worship thee with their faces toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet;* That is, they shall reverence and serve Christ and his Church, and they shall account it no dishonor unto them to do any good to the Saints. All these Testimonies serve as so many proofs to witness this truth, that we must account this our condition, that we are all as Servants, to do service to our Brethren, and to employ our selves and best endeavours, to do them good according to their wants.

The reasons follow, which will cause this Doctrine to sink deeper into us, and make the truth appear without all gain-saying. First, whatsoever gifts are bestowed upon us, to this end they are bestowed, to profit with all, to help one another, and to edify that body whereof we are members. We are all Fellow-members of one body, and therefore are bound to relieve and refresh our Brethren. Every member serveth one another, & are for the whole. Nature it self in other things, teacheth us this duty. The Sun as the eye of the World, shineth not for it self, it yieldeth not heat for it self, but for others. The clouds which are as the bottles of heaven, do not drop down rain for themselves, but for others. The earth, which is as the Mother of these inferior things, bringeth forth Hearbs, and Grass, and Fruit, and Corn, for the use of man, and not for it own benefit. This comparison drawn from the members of the body, serving one another, and everyone caring for the whole, is often urged by the Apostle: He teacheth, that *As we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not one office: so we being many, are one Body in Christ, and everyone, one another's Members.* And in another place; *There are many Members, yet but one Body: the Members should have a care one of another, least there should be any division in the Body: Therefore if one Member suffer, all suffer with it: if one Member be had in honor, all the Members rejoice with it.* If then one of the Members of our natural body be ready to do service to the other, & to the whole, it should be our care to do

the like that are of the Mystical body of Christ Jesus, from whom as from the head we receive all influence of spiritual grace necessary to salvation.

Secondly, it is our duty to follow the example of our Lord and Master Christ Jesus, he came to serve, not to be served; to Minister, not to be ministered unto; to redeem, not to rule. This our Savior preached to his Disciples, when they began to think of Lordship, and to disdain one another, *Whosoever will be great among you, shall be your Servant: and whosoever will be chief of you, shall be the Servant of all, for even the Son of man came, not to be served, but to serve; and to give his life for the ransom of many.* Where he showeth, that the way to true honor is to serve, so that the greater service we do to the Brethren, the greater honor we shall receive at the hands of God. The greater our service is, the greater shall be our reward, when everyone shall receive according unto his work. This we see farther strengthened unto us in the example of Christ, who humbled himself to wash his disciples feet, and to wipe them with a Towell being washed, and said unto them; *Know ye what I have done unto you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so am I: if I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet: for I have given you an example, that ye should do, even as I have done to you, the Servant is not greater then his Master, nor the Ambassador greater then he that sent him.* We are taught to set Christ the most absolute example before our eyes, to learn humbleness of mind, and the duty of service one to another: we must consider him in his glory, and in his humility. First, in his glory as our King, as our head, as our Lord, and as our Master: then in his humility, as abased and humbled in our Flesh unto death, even to the death of the Cross. When we have done this, then we are thus to reason with our selves; hath Christ in his great glory cast down himself for my sake: and ought not I, if I were the highest upon earth, stoop down to my equals? Ought not I, that am his Subject, his body, his Disciple, his Servant, to serve the necessities of my Fellow-servants? Thus the Apostle commending Love to the Saints, and meekness of mind, leadeth us to Christ; *Look not every man on his own things, but every Man also on the things of other Men: let the same mind be in you that was even in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of GOD, thought it no robbery to be equal with GOD, he made himself of no reputation, he took on him the form of a Servant, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto the death.* If then we look unto Christ Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Salvation, we have him as a perfect example without blemish, and as a pure Glass without stain to look upon, who in the greatest glory hath shown the greatest abasement, in the greatest honor, he hath set before us the greatest humility.

Thirdly, true Religion consisteth in ministering to the Saints, in helping and succouring of the poor, in employing himself to the good of others, as a Candle that spendeth & wasteth it self to give light to them that are in the house. It consisteth not in bare knowledge, but in practice; not in an idle Faith, but in the fruits of love. This the Prophet *Isaiah* showeth and sets down, *If thou pour out thy Soul to the hungry, and refresh the troubled soul, then shall thy light spring out in the darkness, and thy darkness shall be as the noon day; And the Lord shall guide thee continually, he shall satisfy thy Soul in drought, he shall make fat thy bones, so that thou shalt be like a watered Garden, and like a Spring of Water, whose Waters fail not:* Meaning, that they which relieve the poor, and comfort such as are comfortless, their light shall never be put out, but shine forever, God will be their comfort in the day of trouble, and he will recompense

abundantly their good works. Seeing then, the gifts that we have, are given to every man to profit his Fellow-members withal, seeing we are to tread in the steps of our blessed Savior Jesus Christ, and seeing the truth of Religion standeth in the fruits of love; we may conclude necessarily the former Doctrine, that we ought to account it no disgrace unto us, to abase our selves to do service, and to Minister to the wants and necessities of the Saints.

Let us now proceed to handle the Uses, and edify our selves thereby in our most holy Faith, and in all Christian obedience. First, this serveth to reprove those that have forgotten all true service to the faithful. Many there are that have no feeling of the troubles and turmoyles that fall upon the dear Servants of God. Their eyes are closed, and their hearts are hardened, they have no bowels of compassion to Minister unto them, they have no hands open to relieve them. The rich of our Churches, who have this Worlds good given unto them, are either in their insatiable desires (as Hell or the Grave) poor, wrongfully getting, miserably keeping, unconscionably scraping, and unjustly pulling from others, without mean or measure; or else they spend their wealth and consume their substance; some in Haukes and Hounds; others, in sumptuous apparel; others, in excessive Feastings; others, in worse uses, which I will not name, all being unnecessary and fruitless things, unprofitable for the Church or Common-wealth, so that little can be spared for the poor Saints, and that which is spared, is as hardly drawn from them, as a piece of flesh out of their sides. These men never think of doing service to others, but of serving their own turns and commodities: which ought not so to be among them that profess Christ Jesus, who served not himself, nor sought his own benefit, nor minded his own gain and glory, nor lifted up himself above others, nor desired to get earthly riches, nor went about to empouerish others: but being rich, he became poor; being Heir of all things, he had not whereon to lay his head; being Lord of all, he became Servant unto all. Hence it is that the Apostle saith, *We have not an High-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all things tempted in like sort, yet without sin.* And a little before in the same Epistle; *In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be merciful and a faithful High-priest in things concerning God, that he might make reconciliation for the sins of the people: for in that he suffered he was tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.* Whereby it appeareth, that Christ Jesus hath a lively feeling of our infirmities, and an inward touch of our wants, he is not slightly affected with our infirmities, but as the head is when the members are pained. And if we be the true members of his body, we will remember, and cannot forget them that are in bonds; *But be grieved as if we were bound with them: and them that are in affliction, as though we were also afflicted in the body.* This compassion toward those that are in misery, is an assured pledge, and a comfortable Testimony unto us, that we are engrafted into Christ, and united to all true Christians, that we have a Communion with him as with our head, and that we have a communion with the faithful, as with his members. But if we be without feeling of the afflictions of *Joseph*; that is, of the troubles of the Church, we are without Christ, without Faith, without Love, without compassion; and consequently, without peace and consolation in our hearts. For what peace can he have that is out of Christ, who is the Author of peace? Without whom, all things are but trouble and vexation of Spirit. Or what consolation can we

have that we are his members, when we have no sense or sight of the troubles and infirmities that are incident to our Fellow-members?

Secondly, it reproveth such, as in the pride and haughtiness of their hearts do scorn to do service to the poor Saints, and think it a great disgrace to them, to cast their eyes upon such contemptible creatures. But wouldest thou have Christ look upon thee, and have a respect unto thee? Then disdain not thou to look upon his members, which are unto thee in place of Christ, so often as they suffer in his cause. In what a miserable case shall they be in at the last day, to whom Christ Jesus the Lord of life, shall say; *Depart from me, I know ye not?* Now, if we in this life, turn away our faces from the faithful, and are ashamed of them in the day of their calamity, & say to them, *Depart from me, I know you not.* Let us take heed that he be not ashamed of us before his Father, and before the elect Angels. The highest that are upon the earth, must not refuse to show all fruits of love even toward the meanest for Christ's sake, but be ready to acknowledge that they have received their Callings and Dignities, not to lift up their hearts above their brethren, but be as Fathers, as Shepherds, as Nurses, to nourish and cherish such as want their help. This is it which good *Mordecai* did teach *Ester*, when the church was as it were in travel, and in great danger, *Think not with thyself, that thou shalt escape more then all the Jews, for if thou holdest thy peace at this time, comfort and deliverance shall appear to the Jews out of another place, but thou and thy Fathers house shall perish, and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time?* Where he putteth her in mind, that the cause of her advancement was to be a Nursing Mother unto the Church, and that it was the end which God aimed at, in calling of her to that place of dignity. And as the greatest are not to scorn the smallest, nor the highest be ashamed of the lowest, nor the richest trample under their feet, the poorest; so on the other side, the meanest and lowest, must not envy others that are above them, but know that they likewise are bound to do service to them, according to the utmost of their power and endeavor. Who was meaner in place and condition then *Onesimus*? yet the Apostle testifieth of him in this place, that *He had ministered unto him in the bonds of the Gospel.* So there is no man so poor, so low, so small in his own eyes, and in the eyes of others, but he may do some good to others, and thereby gain glory unto God, and to his Gospel.

If then, we think that the poverty of our condition, or the meanness of our place, or the baseness of our person, shall excuse us, or exempt us from serving Christ and his Church, and that it skilleth not, though we live as idle Drones, and unprofitable burdens to the earth that beareth us; we deceive our selves, and bereave our selves of much comfort, that we might receive, by bearing our selves painfully and profitably in our Callings. The Apostle instructing all persons in the Church, to behave themselves without contempt and envy, proveth it notably by a comparison drawn from the members of the body, *There are many Members, yet but one body: and the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor the head again to the feet, I have no need of you; yea, much rather those Members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.* The Rich, cannot want the poor, and therefore may not contemn them; and the poor cannot want the rich, and therefore may not backbite them, and envy at them. For as God hath tempered the body together, that one member should stand in need of

the help of another; so is it in the things of this life, one liveth by another, and therefore, one must have a care of another, and seek the good one of another.

Thirdly, here are reprov'd all merciless men, that shut up their pity and compassion from the poor, and therefore have not the Love of GOD dwelling in them, nor the Love of Children remaining in them. For whosoever loveth GOD, will for his sake Love his Brother also. The Apostle John, handleth this Argument at large, in his first Epistle, and the fourth Chapter, where he saith, *Beloved, let us love one another, for love cometh of God, and everyone that loveth is borne of God, and knoweth God: he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love. If any man say, I love God, and hate his Brother, he is a liar; for how can he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we of him, that he which loveth God, should love his Brother also.* To this purpose the Apostle James saith, *There shall be condemnation merciless, to him that showeth not mercy, and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.* If then, we look for mercy, let us show mercy. There is no poor Begger that craveth an Alms at thy door, there is no man standeth in so great need of thy help, that liveth with thee, as thou wantest the mercy and favor of God to comfort thee, to clothe thee, to feed thee, to succor thee, to hear thee, to help thee, when thou criest unto him. We are all as naked and needy Beggars that knock at his gate, and we are wholly nourished by his hand. We are all as poor suiters, suing for his grace and favor, and we cannot live if we be denied, and take the repulse of him. We receive mercy, under condition to show mercy again. If we be vnmerciful, we make our selves unworthy to receive any mercy from God.

Secondly, seeing we are servants to all, to help them by all the means we can, by comfort or counsel; by word or deed; by our wealth or authority; or whatsoever God shall enable us: from hence ariseth a great comfort unto a man's conscience, and an assurance of his peace and acceptation with God, to pray unto him with comfort for his graces, not doubting to obtain them, if we have been serviceable and comfortable unto others, especially to the servants of God, that are as dear to him as the Apple of his eye. It is a means of excellent joy and peace to a man, to consider that he hath employed all the good things he hath to the use of God's house, and his household servants: for when any common danger shall fall, or he find anguish and affliction of Conscience for sin, he may be assured of comfort, seeing GOD hath wrought this sincerity, and set it as a seal of his mercy in his heart. *Obadiah* having been in the practice of this duty a diligent servant, and performed most notable service when *Jezebel* sought the destruction of the Prophets, he hid an hundred of them, by fifty and fifty in a Cave, and gave them Bread to eat, showing himself liberal handed, and tender-hearted, with the hazard of his own credit, favor, and life. When he met *Elijah*, that willed him to go to his Lord, and told him, he would show himself unto him, although *Obadiah* at the first feared and distrusted, and thought the spirit of God would carry him away to some other place, and then *Ahab* would kill him, he began at the length to comfort himself with the meditation of his service that he had done to the Saints: *Doest thou not know that I fear God? and hast thou not heard of the fruits of it that I took in the heat of this persecution, and in the bitterness of this long judgment, and in the extremity of this famine, an hundred of the Lord's Prophets, & how I hid them, and fed them secretly in two Caues of the earth? If thou account of this my service, and hast judged me faithful to the Lord, let this move thee, not to give me over into the hands of thine and mine enemy.*

The like we see in *Nehemiah*, an excellent Prince, he did so employ himself and his service to the good of the Church, that he regarded not his own profit, but spent of his own Goodes and substance, because the necessity of the people was exceeding great, so that he entertained them at his own cost and charges: From whence, he gathereth unto himself this comfort (as *Obadiah* had done before, who proveth, that he feared the Lord, and assured his Conscience thereof, because he had preserved and nourished the true Prophets of God. *Nehemiah* (I say) gathereth this comfort, by succouring the poor servants of God in distress, that God, not for the desert of the work, but the grace of his own mercy (who crowneth not our merits, but his own gifts) would not forget them, so that he saith; *Remember me, ô my God, according to all that I have done for this people.* Now, as the remembrance of our service ministered to the Saints, shall Minister comfort to us, so the contrary practice must of necessity gall a man's conscience, and the horror thereof accuse him for not doing any good service to the Church of God, when he shall remember how long he hath lived in the world, and yet been barren of all good works, and never done any good to the people of God. Nay, it were well with many, if they had only done no good, if they had only been barren and brought forth no good fruit, and if they had only done no hurt to the Church. For their daily practices cry out against them, and the tears of the faithful which they have shed; what said I, their tears? Nay their blood which they have poured out as Water, doth witness evidently against them, that they have brought forth plentiful fruits, of hatted, of enmity, of malice, of outrageousnesse against the Church. Their own consciences accuse them, and God's people have felt them, and in the end fearful judgments shall overtake them. No enemy of the Church that set himself against *Zion*, hath ever prospered. O that that they had hearts to consider these things, but now are they hidden from them. God hath given them breath and life to do good to his Church, and he hath lifted up their heads above others in wealth and authority to serve him: but they are going out of the World, before they know wherefore they came into the World. And when they must leave the World and depart out of it, wherein they have been but Tennants at will, they remember with anguish and terror of conscience, that they have done nothing less then that for which they were sent into it, but have employed their goods, their strength, their wit, their wisdom, their life, their dignity, and all to oppress and vex the Church; yea, to root it (if it were possible) out of the earth. It were good they could in time remember their fore-Fathers, *Pharaoh, Senacharib, Ahab, Jezebel, Judas, Herod*, and such like Persecutours and Enemies, that breathed out threatenings against the Church: and as they resemble them in their life, let them take heed they follow them not in their death, and after their death. But let us that practice better things know, that God doubtless will remember them in kindness, that remember the afflicted Saints, and cast such off with shame and dishonor, that do despise and despite them. We have a worthy example hereof in *Ebed-melech*, recorded by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, who because he entreated for the Prophet, and suffered him not to lie in the Dungeon, and to die for hunger, through the false suggestions of his malicious enemies, God shown mercy unto him, and delivered him from the plague that fell upon the City.

This serveth as an instruction, both to the Minister and people. If the Minister have labored in the duties of his calling, and in the service of the Church, and in the execution of his

Ministry, and in the feeding of the flock committed unto him, he hath wherein to comfort himself, he may be assured of his love unto Christ, and consequently of Christ's love toward him. We must remember what Christ said to *Peter*; *Louestthou me? Feed my Sheep, feed my Lambs*. So the Apostle mentioning his great pains and troubles, and dangers, to preach the Gospel, that he seemed as a man either distract of his wits, or puffed up with ambition and vain-glory, he assigneth this as the true cause; *The love of Christ constraineth us*. If then we consider what love the Lord hath shown toward us, or behold how dear his Church is unto him, and with how great a price he hath redeemed it, we cannot but in the Meditation thereof be thrust forward (if we love him, or regard him) to perform the duties of our Ministration, although they be mighty painful, in seeding, in weeding, in plauting, in strengthening, and in comforting, according as daily occasion shall be offered unto us. But if we be entered into this calling, and do nothing therein but please men, and serve our selves, and our own lusts being entered, what comfort can we find, or what reward do we look for at his hands, that hath chosen us to be Shepherds and Watchmen? We must not be like unto the Prophets mentioned in the Prophet *Micah*, *The Priests of Zion teach for hire, & the prophets thereof prophesy for Money*. If then we have greater respect to the fleece, then to the Sheep; or to the wages, then to the work; we serve our selves, and not the Lord Christ, and he will accept no such service at our hands. For we serve our own bellies, but not the Church; we fill our purses, we feed not the people. *Woebeth unto such Shepherds, should not the Shepherd feed the flock?* What will our gain and glory profit us at the last day, when they must leave us, and we must leave them? We shall receive more sound comfort and peace, when we shall depart this world, and remember what account we are to give of our pains taken in our calling, in our labors undertaken in the Ministry, then in the heaping up of many liuinges, and the getting of much riches. If we have gained but one soul to God, he shall stand up for us, when all the mucke of this earth shall fall down. He shall be our joy and our crown, when all other delights shall give us the farewell. Neither doth this Doctrine and duty serve only for the comfort of the Minister, but for the comfort of the people that have endeavored in their callings to serve the Church, and labored vnfaignedly to seek the well-fare thereof. They that have had a sweet feeling of the love of God, are careful to love him again: and they that love him in singleness of heart, will be enforced and constrained to love his children, and to do all the service they can unto them. They will think no duty too much, they will think all they have done, all they can do to the Church, to be too little. Hence it is, that Christ Jesus commending the Church of *Tyatira*, for such good works as were found therein, beginneth with *Love and Service*; First, he mentioneth their Love, then he addeth their Service, to show that as our Love must appear by our fruits of Service, so all our Service must proceed from Love to those whom we serve. If a man employ himself never so dilligently, and take never so great pains, and travail with all his power, for the peace and good of the church, yet if it proceed not from a sincere love toward them, but either from a love of gain, or a desire of glory, or a fame of praise, he shall receive no reward at the hands of God. This service, as at all times we must be ready to make it appear, so especially we must show it in the necessities of the Church. When it lieth under the heat of persecution, or feeleth the Arrow of famine, or beareth the affliction of poverty, and groaneth under the weight of these burdens, we

must remember that we owe our service to them as a duty, and that we are the servants of the Church. This shall be our crown and comfort in the last day.

Thirdly, seeing God requireth of all true Christians, of what condition soever they be, according to the means afforded unto them, to use their gifts, their power, their possessions, and whatsoever benefits they have received, to use them (I say) to the comfort and service of God's Saints, it kindleth the affections of God's people to bless and praise God for them, to speak well of them, to pray unto God for them, and to obtain greater blessings for them, then they have bestowed. Thus they that do good to the Church, do good to themselves: they that give much unto them, do receive more; and such as have been helpful and serviceable to God's people, shall find them as their remembrancers to God, who will not forget the labor of their love, and the duty of their service. This ought to be a notable encouragement unto us, not to deal niggardly toward the Saints, nor to withhold from them the fruits of our love, seeing nothing shall be lost, that is bestowed upon them, but we shall receive an hundred fold into our bosom, grace for grace, love for love, blessing for blessing, mercy for mercy. For this comfort and consolation will arise to them that do good to God's people, they shall have favor with God, they shall gain a good report with the world, and they shall purchase the sweet savor of a good name, as of a precious ointment among the Saints, and shall stir them up to entreat God's manifold mercies for them. *Jehoiada* that good High Priest, was so honored of the people, for suppressing the tyranny of *Athalia*, for setting up the kingdom of *Joash*, and for restoring the true religion of God, that he was accounted a common Father of the Country, and they gave him the burial of a King, for they buried him in the City of *David* with the Kings, because he had done good in *Israel*, and toward God and his house. So the apostle *Paul* declaring that *Onesiphorus* had done him great service, prayeth unto God for him, *The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but when he was at Rome, he sought me out diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy with the Lord at that day.* Whereby we may gather, that the benefits bestowed upon the Saints, shall not perish, although they themselves cannot requite thē; for though they want ability to pay them, yet they want not hearts to pray for them; yea, the Lord will not only have pity of them that take pity of his people, but he will show mercy to their households, because when *Paul* praiseth the bountifulness and zeal of *Onesiphorus*, he wisheth well for his sake to his whole family. The blessing of God shall not rest only upon the head of the just, but it shall descend into his whole house, such is the love of God toward those that be his. If the consideration of this great promise, and rich recompense of reward, do not prick us forward to exercise the works of love, and fruits of compassion, we are more then blockish and brutish. On the other side, such as have been, not helpful, but hurtful; not industrious, but injurious; not serviceable, but unprofitable to God's people; when God shall visit them either with public calamities, or private judgments, their own Consciences shall gall them, and gnaw upon them, when they remember their own works, which shall provoke men to speak evil of them, cause them to pray against them, and constrain them to call upon God to work their confusion. This we see in *Paul* the Apostle, in the latter end of the same Epistle, *Alexander the Copper-smith hath done me much evil, the Lord reward him according to his works.* Thus doeth the Prophet *David* deal

oftentimes in the Psalms, *Think upon thy congregation which thou hast possessed of old, & on the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed, and on this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt: lift up thy strokes, that thou mayst forever destroy every enemy that doth evil to the Sanctuary.* Thus we see the people of God have from time to time prayed against the malicious enemies of the Church, that sought the ruin and destruction thereof. Their prayers are of great force, & enter into the ears of the Lord of hosts, whether it be to obtain mercies upon the friends of the Church, or to draw down vengeance upon the adversaries thereof, that oppress it with cruelty, and blaspheme the name of God, which is holy throughout all ages and generations. There is no greater honor that we should desire or delight in, then to be called the friends of God, and the servants of the Church. If we be the servants of God, we must also account ourselves the servants of the Church. The Prophet David did esteem the faithful that were in Jerusalem, as his Brethren. So on the contrary side, there cannot a greater dishonor and reproach befall us, then to be reputed the enemies of God and his people. For if we set ourselves against his people, that are his portion and inheritance, he will no otherwise deal with us, then with his enemies. If God come against us as his enemy, we shall not be able to prevail, we cannot stand before him, but shall be as stubble in the fire, and as chaff before the wind.

Lastly, seeing God requireth service to his Church at our hands to do all good to them by all good means, it is our duty to enquire and learn the estate of the distressed Church, that we may know and be informed where, and when, and how it is afflicted. How many are there that never think upon the people of God to do them good, but forget their affliction and oppression. The Butler of *Pharaoh* did not remember *Joseph*, but forgot him and the kindness he shown toward him when they were prisoners together, who had said unto him, *Have me in remembrance with thee when thou art in good case, and show mercy I pray thee unto me, and make mention of me to Pharaoh, that thou mayst bring me out of this house.* So when *Zachariah* the son of *Jehoiada* (whom we mentioned before) was, for preaching the truth, and denouncing the judgments of God from his mouth, oppressed with envy, and overborne by the might of the Rulers, the King would not deliver him out of their hands, but commanded him to be stoned with stones, and remembered not the kindness that his father had done to him, but slew his son. This is the common course and current of the world, we will not see the afflictions of the poor Saints, but turn away our eyes from them; or if we cannot choose but see them, we quickly forget them, as if we had never either beheld them, or known of them. This is one misery of the faithful, that men do not regard them when they are in misery. The Lord hath determined, that there shall be always some objects offered unto us, and set before us to exercise the fruits of our Faith and Love. He hath said, that the poor we shall always have with us, and such as stand in need of our help and comfort. It is in easy thing to boast of Faith and Love: but if we will be assured, that we have true Faith indeed, we must show it by our works, which are the fruits whereby it is known. We must not turn away our faces from the faithful, as the Priest and Levite did in the Gospel, but be ready to help, as God giveth ability, and offereth opportunity. Nay, it is not enough for us to succor such religious Saints, as we see want succor, but we must learn and labor to know the state of the Church, and ask of others howe it fareth with the godly poor among us. The children of God have gone before

us in the doing of this duty. It is noted of *Abraham* the Father of the faithful, that he waited not till the strangers craved entertainment at his hands, but he ran to meet them from the Tent door, and prayed them to take some refreshing at his hands, whereby he received Angels into his house at unawares. If we believe him to be the Father of the faithful (as the Scripture calleth him) & that we would be accounted as his children, we must be careful to do the works of *Abraham*. They are not children that tread not in his steps, and follow not his example.

The like we might say of *Lot*, who sat at the gate of *Sodom*, and rose up to meet the men, and prayed them to turn into their servants house, and to lodge with him all night. The holy man *Job* justifieth his innocence, & cleareth himself from Hypocrisy, *That he suffered not the stranger to lodge in the street, but opened his doors unto him that went by the way.* *Nehemiah* was careful to know the state of the Church, and asked his brethren that came from Jerusalem, concerning the Jews that were delivered, which were of the residue of the captivity, by whom he heard, that they lived in great affliction, & in reproach, that the Citty was broken down, and the gates thereof burnt with fire. So the Shunamite having prepared a Chamber for *Elisha* to lodge him, and set therein a bed, and a Table, a Stool, and a Candlestick, constrained him to come into her house to eat bread. We see how *Lazarus* and his two Sisters, *Martha* and *Mary*, received the Lord Jesus to house, & ministered unto him. They fed him, and he fed them; they gave him the meat that perisheth, but he gave them the bread of life, and the meat that endureth forever.

Likewise the Evangelist *Luke* noteth in the Acts of the Apostles, that when the heart of *Lydia* was opened to attend to the things that *Paul* delivered, she besought them saying. *If ye judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there, and she constrained them.* These are worthy examples of faithful men and women, that teach us by their own practice, what manner of service is due to the Saints, not only to help those whose misery we know, but to enquire of them whose state we do not know. This indeed is pure and perfect love, when we do to our brethren, as we desire they should deal toward us. The Wiseman would have everyone to be diligent to know the state of his flock, much more it is required of us, to enquire the state of God's flock, which is his Church, that he hath redeemed with his precious blood. It is not therefore enough for us to say, we knew not their wants, seeing all those are willfully ignorant, that have the means to come knowledge, and yet will not use the means. We may oftentimes know the necessities of the Saints, but we will not enquire of them, because we will not know them. This shall not excuse us in the sight of God; but accuse the more, because our ignorance is affected ignorance, inasmuch as we might know, and yet we do not desire to know.

Verse 14. [*But without thy mind would I do nothing, that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.*]

We have seen already the reason why *Paul* was desirous to have retained *Onesimus* with him, to wit, that he might have ministered unto him, and served him in his afflictions that did befall him for the Gospels sake. Now he declareth the reason, why without the knowledge

and consent of *Philemon*, he would not detain him, to the end, that the duty or good turn which he might that way receive at his hands, might be done freely, willingly, and cheerfully, not by constraint and compulsion. Heereby we learn, that all Christian duties done to God or man, must be done with a free, willing, cheerful, and hearty affection. This is it which the Lord requireth. *Deut. 6. Hear, ô Israel, the Lord our God is Lord only. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* So the Prophet *David* prayeth, *O Lord I beseech thee, accept the free offerings of my mouth, and teach me thy judgments.* No other Sacrifices please God, but such as are free and voluntary: all things must be done in love with a ready mind. The Apostle teacheth, that *He that distributeth, must do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.* This also was figured out unto us in the shadows and Ceremonies of the Law, when the people were commanded to offer a male without blemish, presenting him of his own voluntarily will, at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord, declaring thereby, that our serving of him must not be grudgingly, but we must perform it frankly and freely, and with a willing mind. The Apostle moving the Corinthians to bountifulness toward the poor Saints at Jerusalem, teacheth them that they must offer a free will offering, *I sent the brother whose praise is in the Gospel, (which seemeth to be Barnabas) who is also chosen of the Churches, to be a fellow in our journey, concerning this grace which is ministered by us unto the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your prompt mind.* All these words of Scripture, are witnesses of this truth, beyond all exception, that God never liketh of constrained service, but will have men to do their duties to him voluntarily, as is fit to be performed of the creature toward his Creator, and of the Child toward his Father.

Let us see how the reasons will make this better to appear unto us, that we may have strong proof to put the matter out of all doubt. First, God loveth a cheerful giver, a cheerful servant, a cheerful service. It is the heart and the inward affections that he accepteth & regardeth, which is the principal part of a man, and the fountain from whence all outward actions proceed. He will have the heart, or else he will have nothing of us. This is the reason urged by the Apostle to the *Corinthians*, *As every man wisheth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver.* Now, that which the Apostle speaketh of charity and of alms, may as truly be spoken of every duty that God requireth of us. When we pray we must call upon God cheerfully, for he loveth a cheerful prayer. When we give thanks to his name for blessings received, we must thank him cheerfully, for he loveth a cheerful giver of thanks; and albeit these be notable parts of God's worship and excellent duties commanded of him, and required of us; yet without this cheerfulness, they are as a dead thing, & not regarded.

Secondly, our obedience unto God, must be answerable to the obedience of Christ, that he performed to his Father; for he hath therein given us an example, and taught us how to obey. The manner of his obedience was willing, and done of his own accord, not extorted and wrested from him, for then it could not have been accepted of God, nor meritorious for us, nor praised in him. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *Then said he, Loe I come to do thy will, ô God, he taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified, even by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once made.* Thus Christ himself speaketh in the

Gospel, *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again: No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself, I have power to lay it down, & have power to take it again.* Where he showeth, that the cause wherefore he suffered, was not because Caiaphas conuented him, or the witnesses accused him, or Pilate condemned him, or the Jews executed him, but because it pleased his Father and himself to make himself an offering for sin. For except he had died willingly, all his adversaries had been too weak to work anything against him, as appeareth in evidently the Garden, when he cast them all down to the ground with a word of his mouth. Here is set down a pattern for us to follow: we must perform the like obedience that he did, as his was voluntarily and willing, so ought ours likewise to be, that it may be acceptable in the sight of God.

Thirdly, the things that are not done in Faith and Love, are sin. For, without faith it is impossible to please God. And though I had the gifts of prophesy, and knew all secrets, and all knowledge, yea if I had all faith, so that if I could remove mountains, and had not love, I were nothing; & though I feed the poor with all my goods, and though I give my body that I be burned, and have not love, it profiteth nothing. So then we see, that no duty is acceptable without Faith and Love. But nothing done unwillingly, uncomfortably, or hypocritically can be done in Faith and Love. And therefore such duties as are thus performed, have no life nor virtue in them, to give them any grace or acceptation with God.

Lastly, God knoweth our hearts, and seeth how we bring our gifts, & offer our offerings. He looketh not upon the outward work, but regardeth the intent of the heart. When *Cain* brought unto God an oblation of the fruits of the ground, he had no regard to him nor to his offering, because he saw the hollowness and hypocrisy of his heart. This is the reason that *David* useth to persuade *Solomon* his son, to have a care to learn and to practice the will of God, *1 Chro. 28, 8. And thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all harts, and understandeth all the imaginations of thoughts, if thou seek him he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever.*

Where we see, the Father careful for the future good of his son, moveth him to endeavor and strive to know God by learning what he willeth, & to serve him uprightly and willingly, by practicing as he enableth, because our thoughts are not hidden from the all-seeing eye of God, and because he offereth himself to them that seek him, but forsaketh them that refuse him, when he is offered. We may easily deceive the eye of man, that looketh only to the person, and beholdeth only the outward work; but it is impossible to deceive the searcher of hearts. If then we gather all these reasons into a short sum, and set them as in a Table before our eyes, if we consider that God loveth a cheerful service, that Christ performed a willing obedience, that faith and love giveth acceptance to the work; and lastly, that God giveth recompense according to the heart, which he knoweth; we see that the strength of them will bear the full weight of this conclusion, that the duties of our Religion must not be performed constrainedly, but freely; not grudgingly, but cheerfully; not unwillingly, but readily; not of necessity, but voluntarily.

Now we are to make Use of this Doctrine. First, seeing no man must perform any holy duty to God or man upon compulsion, or against his will, but with all his mind and might, we learn that every action or duty is accounted of by God, not according to the greatness of the worker, or outward show of the work, but according to the will and affection of the doer: it is the manner of doing that God more accepteth, then the action or deed it self. A Child in his obedience to his Father, is esteemed for his reverent, loving, obedient, and dutiful heart, and not for the greatness or worthiness of his work. For what can he do, when he hath endeavored to the utmost, to pleasure his Father? So is it with us, when we have done all that we can, we must confess we have been vnprofitable servants, and therefore God more respecteth the intention, then the action; the Work-man, then the work; the affection, then the effect. *Mary* is commended of Christ, *because she loved much*. The poor widow that cast into the treasury one mite, is praised by Christ above the rest, that offered of their substance and superfluity. *He that giveth a cup of cold water, in the name of a Disciple to a Disciple, shall not lose his reward*. What is the bestowing of a Mite? Or what is a cup of cold water? Are they of themselves, & in themselves considered anything worth? Or can they deserve to be accepted? No, in no wise: but God accepteth the manner, more then the matter; how they are done, more then what is done. This is it which the Apostle expresseth, 2 Cor. 8, 12. *If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not*. This layeth before us the abundant kindness of God, who albeit he be a spirit every way perfect, yet he accepteth our lame and defective service. Our duties shall be all acceptable in his sight, though they be performed in great weakness, and mingled with many imperfections (which were sufficient to cause them to be rejected and refused) if we be careful to do them in the truth and uprightness of our hearts, and with cheerful and ready minds. All things must be done in love, and this must be considered in all the works of our hands. This ministereth a double comfort; First, unto such as are of poor and low degree, to consider that GOD regardeth the heart more then the hand, and our willingness more then our work. Hence it is, that even servants whose condition is lowest in the family, and which meddle not in great matters, or in weighty affairs, or in excellent works, yet are charged with this affection, and in sincerity to behave themselves in those inferior duties, *Servants be obedient unto them that are your Masters, according to the flesh in all things, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men*.

Where he showeth, that servants must do their duties, not as serving for the penny, or aiming at the filling of their belly, or contenting themselves to please their masters eye, but even as serving God, looking for a recompense from him, knowing that he hath placed them in that estate, & requireth those things in truth and sincerity to be performed as unto him. For the Lord doth not see as man seeth, he doth not look to the outward action, but he beholdeth with what heart all things are done, and therefore measureth according to every man's deed, whether he be high or low, rich or poor, Lord or Servant. The best heart hath the best recompense; the worst heart hath the worst wages. There is a great difference between work and work; some are great, some little; some beautiful, some base; some high, some mean, some low; but whatsoever I do, if I do it cheerfully, as serving my master Christ,

that looketh upon me, albeit my calling be never so simple; as to wash dishes, to wipe shoes, to scour the spit, to sweep the house, I please God therein as well as he that manageth a kingdom, that ministereth Justice, that preacheth the gospel. True it is the work is greater to rule the affairs of State, then to remain in the kitchen, yet he shall be better accepted of God, that performeth these small things heartily, then he y^t doth the greatest works grudgingly, either drawn by importunity, or cōpeld by necessity. Thus it doth fall out, that a poor servant, carrying this mark and testimony with him, is more acceptable to the Lord, then he y^t hath done greater things to the judgment of the eye, to the show of the world and to the sight of men. Secondly, this serveth as a singular comfort to everyone of us, that groan under the burden of sin, that feel the weakness of our faith, and are dismayed at the smallness of our sanctification. We know how busy Satan is to watch his advantage of our infirmities and imperfections, & to persuade us that we have no faith at all, that we are without repentance, without grace, and without regeneration, because we feel great defects, and many wants in our best works, and our best gifts. But this must comfort us, that God accepteth of that measure that he hath given us, even according to that which we have, not according to that which we have not. A weak faith, shall be as auayleable to apprehend Christ, as a strong faith. If we have a desire and an hungering after grace, *He will fulfill the desires of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry and save them.* God hath assured us, that as he hath begun his good work in us, so he will finish his work, and in his good time bring it to perfection. When we find any dullness and untowardness in our selves, if we hate and dislike them, and labor to profit and grow forward in sanctification, God accepteth our willingness and readiness, though our strength be not answerable to our desire, or the outward work answerable to our heart. For God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above the strength that he shall give us; and the Lord Jesus is a merciful High priest, who will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Let us all therefore look that a willing and ready mind be found in us. Again, this must be considered in all things: If we come to hear the word, and to exercise the duties of God's worship, if we do it for fashion sake, for fear of the law, for the praise of men, or for custom, they are nothing worth; they ought to be performed in obedience to God, in love of his ordinance, in delight of his worship, in singleness of heart, and in an earnest affection, to the means of our salvation. The like we might say of giving of alms and liberality toward the poor, if they be not bestowed with promptnesse of mind, with compassion of heart, and with feeling of the wants of those that crave our help, they are nothing at all respected of God, nor they that distribute thē rewarded of him.

Secondly, seeing only that duty which is done freely and not by compulsion, deserveth due commendation; this reproveth all those things that are don upon wrong grounds, and evil foundations. It is not enough to do a good thing, but we must do it well; It is not sufficient to do those things that are godly, but we must do them in a godly manner. Let everyone herein carefully examine his soul, and try his own heart, whether he do the duties of his calling unwillingly, uncomfortably, and upon necessity, for fear of danger, for avoiding of shame, for keeping of his credit, for praise of the world, or such like causes, which are all false motives; or whether he do them heartily and cheerfully as in the sight of God, before whom

all things are naked & open. This is to be considered as well of the Minister himself, as of the people that hear him, and are partakers of his labors. The calling of the Minister is an high and mighty calling, he is the Steward of God, and a watchman over the people, for whose souls he must give an account in that great day of the Lord. It is not enough for us to labor among them (though we should work, and weary, and toil our selves never so much) but we must do it diligently and cheerfully, as serving Christ the Shepherd of the sheep. If the chief end that we respect be to maintain our selves, to live easily, and to increase in riches, we have our reward. Or if we preach unto them, because the law doth enforce us, and enjoin us unto it, and because otherwise the people would cry shame upon us: if reaping their Temporal things, we do not give them Spiritual, or if we so entangle our selves in the affairs of this life, that we cannot intend the duties of our calling, we cannot possibly please him that hath chosen us, to be as Soldiers to fight his battles, and hath appointed us to be as Shepherds to watch his flock. It standeth us upon, to be so touched with a care of our duties, as that if there were no Law to compel us, and urge us to be painful therein, yet the zeal of God's glory, and love of his people should constrain us. Hence it is, that the Apostle *Paul* speaking of his own practice saith, *Though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to rejoice of: for a necessity is laid upon me, and woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel: for if I do it willingly, I have a reward; but if I do it against my will, notwithstanding the dispensation is committed unto me.* Whereby we see, he showeth, that such a necessity of the divine calling, did press sore upon him, that he must preach or perish. For, if he held his peace, and did not do his duty, the curse of God would lie hard and heavy upon his shoulders, and bring such intolerable torments upon him, as should make him cry out, woe, woe, alas, alas, what a wretch am I? yet notwithstanding this necessity, he must have a willing mind, and do his duty gladly. A good work done willingly, is made much better by the willing doing.

Again, there is nothing so easy, but it becometh difficult and unpleasant, hard and tedious, which a man doth by compulsion. No man therefore hath done his duty, or discharged his calling, that worketh against his will. *Jonah* the Prophet went to *Nineveh* against his will, he could have wished that his preaching had taken no effect, so that he was chastened of God. When *Moses* was called to go to *Pharaoh*, to charge him to let the people go, that they might serve the Lord in the wilderness, he provoked God to anger, because he delayed the matter, and excused himself, & framed objections, and shown himself backward to enter on the work. Hence it is that *Peter* speaketh to all the Ministers of the gospel, *Feed the flock of God that dependeth upon you, caring for it, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, &c. that when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye may receive an incorruptible crown of glory.* That which is not done willingly, is not performed conscionably, and where there is not found readiness of mind, there cannot be looked for any recompense. The Prophets of God being inwardly touched with a feeling of God's effectual calling, have obeyed immediately, and ran whether he sent them to preach. The Prophet *Isaiah* speaking of himself saith, *I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send? Or who shall go for us? Then I said, Here am I send me.* When Christ Jesus called *Simon* and *Andrew* his brother, and said unto them, *Follow me, and I will make you Fishers of men, they forsook their Nettles straight way, and followed him.* The like we see in *Paul*, when he was converted and called by a voice from

heaven, *he was not disobedient to the heavenly voice and vision, he communicated not with flesh and blood, but prepared himself to the work; whereunto he was separated from his mothers womb.* This practice ought to be in all of us that are entered into this calling, we must labor cheerfully, willingly, and gladly, that the work may prosper and go forward under our hands: The end of our labor should be the salvation of men's souls; the drift of our sowing, to see a plentiful harvest; and the purpose of our preaching, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Secondly, such as are hearers among the people are from hence also to learn their duty, to do those things that are required of them; not daily, but dilligently; not heavily, but heartily as to the Lord. Many seem desirous to have the Gospel, but they would have it of free cost, and therefore repine at the costs and charges it bringeth with it. If we give maintenance to the Ministry, not for conscience, but of necessity; not for love to the Gospel, but by compulsion of Law; not as a free-will offering to God for the recompense of his kingdom among us, but as a taxation which we cannot resist to retain with us, or detain from them, accounting the Gospel not a benefit wherein we delight, but a burden which we should shake and shift off if we might; it is our sin, and eo acceptable service unto God. For God in this respect loveth a cheerful giver. These men are wholly carnal, and regard not the salvation of their souls. If they have an Horse-keeper that dresseth their horses, or a Shepherd that watcheth their Sheep, or an Heardman that looketh to their Swine, or a Cobbler that mendeth their shoes, they are more willing to consider him for his pains, and to recompense his labors, then to minister to the necessities of the Minister. They think that well gotten that is gotten from him, and that ill spent & employed, that is bestowed upon him. Again, as we are to give them a liberal maintenance cheerfully, so when we come to the exercises of our religion, we must come unto them willingly, not unwillingly; joyfully, not tediously. For as he is accursed *that doth the work of the Lord negligently*, so is he also accursed, that cometh into the house of the lord grudgingly and grievously, not as one delighting in the work, but as one discouraged with the weariness, whether it be of the way, or of the word. He is an evil servant that doth his masters business committed unto him vnpleasantly & untowardly; he is an unfaithful subject that obeyeth the laws of his Prince by compulsion; he is a disobedient child that performeth his Fathers will against his will, & honoreth him without his heart. So he is an evil and unfaithful hearer, that treadeth in the Lord's courts unwillingly, & reioyseth not when the time cometh to perform his duty unto him. It is noted of the people of God, that they travailing to the place of God's worship, passed through many dangers, & endured much heat, and suffered many wants in the wilderness, for the pleasure that they took in his service. The profit they reaped, did swallow up the tediousnes of the pains; & the love to his court, did mittigate the greatness of the labor. This made thē say, *A day in thy Courts is better then a thousand other where: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the tabernacles of wickedness.* Where is this zeal to be found among us? Who showeth this forwardness to God's service? Or whom can a man single out to say of him, that no want or weather doeth hinder him from the exercises of godliness? We are grown unto that loathing of the heavenly *Manna*, that albeit it fall in the midst of our Campe, and round about our habitations, yet we will not step out of the doors to see it, nor open our mouths to taste it, nor stretch out our hands to gather it: either the blasts of wind do trouble us, or the fear of rain doth hinder us, or the heat of Summer doth burn us, or the cold of Winter doth

pinch us, or a Lyon in the way doth stay us, and every trifle stoppeth our journey. If our heart were in the house of God, it would quickly move our feet to carry us thither. But where the heart is not, every member is heavy, and hardly drawn to do their duty. The Devils do the will of God by constraint, and against their wills, it must be otherwise with us. Where the heart is, there is our delight. The Prophet describing the flourishing estate of the Church, saith, *The Lord shall send the rod of thy power out of Zion, be thou Ruler in the midst of thine enemies: thy people shall come willingly at the time of assembling thine Army in holy beauty, the youth of thy womb shall be as the Morning Dew.* Where he showeth, that the people of God were wont to come to the hearing of the word, to the partaking of the Sacrifices, to the receiving of the Sacraments, and to the exercises of Religion, they assembled and gathered themselves together freely and of their own accord, to present themselves before the Lord. This duty is required of us, we must come willingly to Christ, to hear him speak unto us. It is one virtue to come into the house of God, but to come cheerfully and comfortably as to a feast, is a double virtue, and that which giveth life unto her coming. If we come unwillingly, and be drawn to our duty on the Lord's day, either by shame of the world, or by fear of law: we come as dead men that are without working of the spirit, or desire of profit, or feeling of comfort, or increase of Faith, or bettering of obedience. If the danger of law did not more compel thē, then the conscience of their duty or the love of religion allure them, many among us would sildome or never keep the Lord's Sabbaths, nor attend upon his ordinances: they come to them as willingly as the Bear goeth to the stake, & as cheerfully as the malefactor passeth to the place of execution. Hence it is, that some come to this place once a month, others once a quarter, others only upon high days & solemn feasts, more I think to show themselves, then to labor to save their souls. Such was the zeal of our brethren to the gospel in the days of persecution, that they went more willingly to the fire & flame, then these men in the days of peace come to the hearing of the word, and to the house of prayer. They were more cheerful in suffering of death, then these are in seeking the means of life. Hence it is, that some linger so long before they come, & are afraid they shall be there too soon. Others, when they are present, give little attention, & not at all regard to profit themselves. Others, are ready to depart and be gone before the assembly is dismissed, and think they have learned enough. These are they that think they are at liberty to do what they list, & to go and come when they list. They make no conscience to begin & end the exercises of religion together, and so profit accordingly, having little more knowledge then brute beasts.

Thirdly, this confuteth the common adversary, which ascribe all to the work done, & regard nothing at all either the mind of the doer, or the manner of doing, as their blind distinction, *de congruo & condigno* teacheth. They hold that the bare presence at the sacrifice of the Mass, without any good intention of the mind, is meritorious in the sight of God. This is their *opus operatum*, the which is indeed the cutthroat of all true religion. For admit once into the worship of God an outward resting in the work done, who will regard the reformation of the heart? But this fitteth well enough the new *Roman* religion, which consisteth wholly in external observations, in delighting the eye, in pleasing the ear & the other senses: but requireth nothing aright which may not be performed of a Reprobate. *God is a spirit, & they that*

worship him, must worship him in spirit & truth: so that whatsoever religion resteth & teacheth men to rest in ceremonial and carnal observations, is a false religion invented by the devil. This also is the error of the ignorant people, that will not be accounted Papists, & yet are as ignorant as they in their practice, and as superstitious in their devotions, and as corrupt in their opinions. They never look to their hearts to purge them, nor to their affections, to order them aright, when they come to the service of God. If they can say, oh we have heard the word, we have been at the church, we have prayed to God, they think all is well, and that God can require no more at their hands. They dream the whole service of God to stand in outward things only, as though they were the things wherein the Lord delighteth, and not rather the truth and uprightness of the heart. This is it for which the Prophet Isaiah reproveth the people in his time, and compareth them to the Princes of Sodom^a and to the people of Gomorra, notwithstanding a zealous observation of the outward ordinances that they practiced, & God commanded, *What have I to do with the multitude of your Sacrifices? I am full of your burnt offerings, and the fat of Rams, I desire not the blood of Bullockes, Goats, and Lambes: when you come to appear before me, who required this at your hands? Bring no oblations in vain: Incense is an abomination unto me; I cannot suffer your New-Moons, nor Sabbaths, nor solemn assemblies, I am weary to bear them, because your works are evil. But wash you, make you clean, take away the evil of your works from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well.* All these were but as outward Ceremonies without substance, which the Prophet Jeremiah, calleth *Lying words that cannot profit.* Outward observations of religion will deeeiue us, if we rest upon them, & put our trust in them. If we perform a worship to God without the heart, we dishonor God, we deceive our own souls, and we increase our condemnation. *We draw near to God with our mouths, and honor him with our lips, but our heart is far from him, and therefore we worship him in vain, who is not delighted with outward shows, and with idle shadows, but requireth the singleness of the soul, and the willingness of the mind.* He looketh upon the heart when we come before him. We see how careful men and women commonly are, when they come to the place of God's worship, to have all things in the outward man decent and cleanly; they look upon themselves, that their faces be washed, their Garments brushed, their linen white, that no spot, no blemish, no want, no wrinkle may appear in them; but if we go no farther, we are but Hypocrites and dissemblers in the sight of God, all our glorious shows are no better then abomination before him. So then, as the wiseman teacheth, it standeth us upon to give to God our hearts, which is the best present we can offer unto him. We are taught in the Lord's Prayer, to pray unto God, that we may do his will upon the earth, as the Angels do which are in heaven. They perform the will of God readily, and without any grudging; they obey his commandments (whensoever he sendeth & employeth them) faithfully and cheerfully. No one of them slacketh in his function, but is diligent in the execution of that which is given him in charge. Thus it ought to be with all of us, we must delight in God's worship, and encourage others to delight therein. We must make the house of God a place of pleasure, we must make his word our meat and drink, and our continual hearing, must be a daily refreshing unto our souls.

Lastly, seeing all Christian duties must be performed of us willingly, we are hereby guided and directed in our obedience, that we are not to hinder the necessary duties of Christianity

belonging unto us, by objecting fleshly reasons, as it were laying stumbling blocks in our own ways, to keep us back from a willing, free, and cheerful going forward in the works of our calling, and in the parts of God's worship. We see, when many are called to a new course of life, and told of the necessity of laboring to get knowledge, and hearing the word of God, they can object for themselves, I shall loose my time, neglect my business, hinder my estate, make myself a laughing stock unto others. I shall miss such a bargain, I shall omit such a journey, I shall want such a meeting of Good-fellows, of Friends, and of Neighbors. These are like to those Guesse mentioned in the Gospel, who being bid to the banquet, made their excuses, and would not come; they made light of it, and went their ways, one unto his Farm, and another about his Merchandize. Our Savior teacheth, that when the word of God is preached unto us, the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, choke the word, and it is made unfruitful. The world is a deceitful bait, and the glory thereof dazleth our eyes, that we cannot discern the vanity thereof.

Again, when the duties of Love and Charity, ought to be extended toward those that want relief, and the fruits of mercy, they are ready to object, I shall weaken by giving to others the means of my maintenance, I shall disable myself, I shall hinder my family and Children (whom I must provide for, or else I should be worse then an Infidel) and thereby give cause to my adversaries, to rejoice and triumph over me. Thus everyone is wise in his own eyes, and carnal reason is apt enough to Minister fleshly objections, to slake our zeal, and to hinder our course of obedience. But let us stop our ears against the songs of these enchanters, which seem to bewitch, not our bodies, but our souls. These are nothing else but words, full of distrust and doubting, proceeding from Infidelity. Let us learn to rest upon God's providence, by well-doing, and look for his blessing. This is it which the Apostle remembereth, where he laboreth to move the Corinthians to relieve the distresses of the Saints, *Give not grudgingly, or of necessity, and God is able to make all graces to abound toward you, yet ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work, As it is written, he hath spered abroad and hath given to the poor: his benevolence remaineth forever.* Such as lived in the Church, in the days of the Apostles, when there were many poor, many extremely poor, were moved to be liberal, yea very liberal and bountiful unto them, so that they that had possessions sold them and distributed them, as everyone had need. Many of them no doubt had wives & Children, and were burdened with charge and family of their own, yet they accounted nothing peculiarly their own, but they had all things common, they had them not only for themselves, but for their brethren. To conclude therefore, we must beware we be not led aside by the subtlety of Satan, and the corrupt immagination of our own Nature, to be hindered thereby, from practicing such duties as are required at our hands. He that will not follow the calling of God, until the flesh minister no objection against it, shall never have the commendation of obedience. He shall never go about any good duty, but we shall find somewhat stand in the way to cross it, either our pleasure or profit, or somewhat else will round us in the ear, to make us forsake it, or delay it, or condemn it. When the word of God reproveth any sin in us, that seemeth sweet unto the flesh, we shall meet with a thousand temptations, to persuade with us to continue in it with greediness, and to follow after it with all eagerness. Wherefore, so soon as we know the will of our heavenly Father, let us prepare

our selves to do it, and to delight in it, and step over the rocks of offense, that stand before us to make us fall; that so God may be delighted with us, & take pleasure in our obedience proceeding from the heart.

15 *It may be, that he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever.*

16 *Not now as a Servant, but above a Servant, even as a Brother beloved, especially to me: how much more then unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?*

IN the words going before, we have already handled the removing of the first Objection which ariseth from *Paul's* sending of *Onesimus* back again to his Master. The next Objection is touching his departure from his Master, mentioned in these two Verses, wherein he both aunswareth the Objection, maketh a new reason, and seeketh to extenuate the displeasure that *Philemon* had conceived against him. The Apostle answereth here in this place, that Objection which might be made and moved from the former matter of this suit. He hath entreated *Philemon* (as we have heard) to receive *Onesimus*, he might hereunto have said; But why should I receive him? Shall I entertain a Runna-gate Servant, a base Varlet, that hath wasted and purloyned my goods, and sought to undo me? If he were well with mē, why did he depart from me? If not well, why will he return to me again? He that is once evil, is always presumed to be evil. This is the Objection: whereunto the Apostle maketh a double answer, as he did before: first, by way of granting and yielding to *Philemon*: secondly, by a kind of correcting his former grant. The granting is, I confess and acknowledge willingly, that he departed from thee, and would not tarry with thee. The correcting is, though he did depart, it was not forever, it was but a very short time, as thou seest. So then, the answer is from the adioynt of time, he went from thee for a little season, which is not barely set down, but with an illustrastion added unto it from the ende, [*That thou shouldst receive him forever:*] which also is enlarged by a comparison from the greater; *Not so much as a Servant, but as more then a Servant.* The latter part of this enlargement, being the second part of the comparison, is declared by the special [*A beloved Brother*] more then a Servant, for a Brother carrieth with it a better respect, and a farther regard then the name of a Servant. This also is enlarged by a comparison from the greater to the less, especially to me, which comparison also is amplified by another from the greater, how much more to thee, which is farther strengthened by a division or distribution of the Subject, showing wherein he was more bound to *Philemon* then to *Paul* himself; *Both in the flesh and in the Spirit.*

Thus we have seen the resolution of these Verses, and the order which is propounded in them. Now let us see what are the points that require interpretation. First, he saith; [*He departed*] he useth a kind of diminution, called 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, or a qualification of his fact and fault committed against his Master. For he useth a more gentle and friendly word to lessen the offense, that it might not appear to *Philemon* so great as it was, calling his running away, a departure from his Master. Now the Apostle saith; *It may be that he departed*, or peradventure he departed. The word, used in this place, is also found. Rom 5, 8. where he saith; *Doubtless one will scarce die for a righteous man, but yet for a good man it may be that one*

dare die. Properly it signifieth quickly or speedily, or hastily: but that signification cannot fitly agree to these places, and therefore it must be turned and translated [*It may be he departed.*] Where the Apostle doth not speak of this secret work of God precisely and peremptorily, but with an exception or limitation, warily and reuerentlie, least offense should be taken, and encouragement given thereby to the committing of evil. For if he had said simply and absolutely, he departed for this end, and he fled away that he might be converted: other Servants might have been emboldened in wickedness, and have pretended the same cause, and have run away from their Masters: who, being asked the cause why they took them to their heels, would readily answer; It was that I might be converted to the Faith, as *Onesimus* was: he ran away from his Master, and was saved; I ran away also that I might be saved. So then, the Apostle by this word, noteth out the special providence and mere goodness of God, ordering and governing this Fact, which is not to be drawn into a general practice. In the next place he addeth [*For a season.*] the word signifieth for an hour, that is; for a small time, even so much as *Onesimus* was travailing from *Colossae* to *Rome*, from his Master to *Paul*, by whom being converted, he was immediately sent back, which was no long time, but a very little while, even as it were an hour, in comparison both of the time that he before had been with him, and of the time he was like to stay with him hereafter. Wherein also he seeketh farther to lessen his fault & offense by the circumstance of the time, as if he should say; If he had been from thee any long time, or that thou hadst missed him many years, thy wrath might be harder to be appeased; but he hath been from thee a small time, it is but as it were one hour, and therefore have patience toward him, especially considering by his absence, thou shalt gain this, that he shall never depart from thee hereafter, but remain faithful & profitable unto thee many years. Thou mayest well bear the lack of him one hour, seeing thou shalt thereby get the advantage of many months and years. Therefore he addeth, *That thou shouldst receive him forever*; that is, all the days of his life, unto his death. Thus the phrase is taken in sundry places of the Olde Testament; when circumcision is called an everlasting Covenant: the Passe-over is commanded to be kept holy by an ordinance forever: whereby he meaneth a long time, even unto the coming of Christ in the flesh. So if a Servant would not go away from his Master, because he loved him, and was well with him, the Master should take an Aule and pierce his ear through against the door, and he shall be his servant *forever*, that is; to the year of Jubilee. So in this place the Apostle saith; *Philemons* Servant should remain with him *forever*; that is, a long time, even so long as he should live upon the face of the earth. Lastly, when *Paul* saith, he must be beloved [*In the Flesh, and in the Lord*] he meaneth, both in things appertaining to this life, and the life to come. In the Flesh, in regard of his service which he shall perform to his Master, in matters belonging to this Mortall life. In the Lord, in respect of the common faith in Christ. This is the meaning of the words in this division: wherein (as we noted before) howsoever the Apostle doth purposely answer an objection, yet in this answer also he propoundeth two new reasons, to move *Philemon* to receive his servant. One is in the 15. verse, taken from the secret work of God's providence, which may be thus concluded:

- *If the providence of God have governed his departure, that by occasion thereof he is changed, for his good, and for thine, that he might be saved, and thou better served: then receive him again unto thee:*
- *But the providence of God hath guided his departure, &c.*
- *Therefore receive him again unto thee.*

The second reason is contained in the 16. verse, because *Onesimus* of a Servant, is made a Brother to *Paul*, much more to *Philemon*; and therefore to be loved exceedingly, being bound by a double band; to wit, in the Flesh, & in the Faith. In the Flesh, as a Servant. In the Faith, as a Christian: whereas *Paul* had only one cause to love him; namely, the common Faith. This reason may be thus framed;

- *If Onesimus of a bad Servant be made a good Servant; yea, more then a Servant, even a Brother much to be loved, then receive him.*
- *But Onesimus is become more then a Servant,*
- *Therefore receive him.*

Thus we see how the Apostle interminglenth Reasons with Objections, and Objections with Reasons. So then according to the former order and Interpretation of the words: the sum of them is thus much in effect: But thou will say unto me; He ran away from me. I grant indeed, and cannot deny, but that his purpose was wicked, and I acknowledge the cause that moved him to leave thee, and to forsake thy house to be very lewd; to wit, the fear of punishment for his offenses, but look, look I say unto the end, purpose, and counsel of God, in his departure from thee, which appeareth to be far from the drift and intent of *Onesimus*; to wit, by his flight to bring him to *Rome*, by bringing of him to *Rome*, to direct him to me in prison, by directing of him to me, to convert him to Christ, and by converting of him to Christ, to change him from a bad and lewd, to a faithful and profitable servant. What said I, a Servant; nay, a degree higher, even a Brother. Consider therefore (I pray thee) how many ways thou art to respect this my son *Onesimus*, and to accept of him. For in that he is now joined to thee in the common fellowship of the Faith, through the great mercies of God in Christ, thou art bound to regard him hence-forth, not as an ordinary Servant, but as a dear Brother in Christ, equal with thyself in the Covenant of grace, and the inheritance of eternal life: withal, remember how many ways he is joined to thee, rather then to me. He is for the common faiths sake dear, I confess, to me, and tenderly beloved: but he is bound to thee by two bands; first, in respect of the flesh, in that he is of thy charge and family, he is thy Servant, and an helper of thee in the means of thy outward maintenance, and withal, in the Lord Jesus (our common Master) he is thy Brother and fellow-heir of the same promises, being together with thee a member of his body. Now the more ways we are bound to any, the more we should regard them: he is dear indeed to me, but he is nearer to thee then me; and therefore he ought to be much dearer to thee, in regard of this conjunction between you.

From these verses, diverse worthy considerations do arise, which are not unprofitable to be observed of us. First, mark that the Apostle entitleth the shameful running away of *Onesimus*, the Servant of *Philemon*, by the Name of a departure. If we will speak properly, a departing is one thing, a running away is another thing. For albeit, everyone that runneth away departeth: yet everyone that departeth, runneth not away from his Master, because he may depart by consent, either having leave and license, or that the time of his service is expired. So a little before, verse 11. he called him [*Vnprofitable*] whereas he might lawfully have given him an harder Title. This was not done in regard of the offense, because it was small; but in regard of his repentance, because it was great. So he speaketh afterward ver. 18. *If he have hurt thee, or if he oweth thee anything*; whereas he might have said, he had robbed him, and stolen his goods from him: declaring that we should deal friendly and favorably with those that are truly converted to God, we are not to augment and agrauate a Penitents offenses, but to be gentle and merciful toward him, as often as we make mention of him. Such as have repented, are by all means to be fauored, we cannot be of too mild a spirit toward them.

Secondly, in the Apostles answer to *Philemons* objection, we may mark; that we are bound to forgive and forget the injuries and offenses done unto us, when once God hath forguien and covered the sins committed against him, and received the Sinner that repenteth to mercy: when God maketh all things turn to our good that love him, and thereby recompenceth by a double benefit, the loss and damage that we have sustained.

Thirdly, we may observe, that Christian Religion doth more strongly bind all persons to their particular callings, and maketh the knot greater then it was. For that which he speaketh here of a Christian Servant, even a Brother, is true of all callings in the Family and Common-wealth. For as a faithful Servant is more then a bare Servant: so a Christian King is more then a King; a Christian Master, is more then a Master; a Christian Father, is more then a Father; a Christian Husband, is more then an Husband: so on the other side, a Christian Wife, is more then a Wife; a Christian Subject, is more then a Subject; and so of all the rest. Great is the Dignity and preeminence of our Christian calling, which (as the Apostle speaketh) is a translating of us from darkness, into the Kingdom of Christ Jesus, so that it is a royal prerogative which they want that are unbelievers.

Fourthly, the Apostle, notwithstanding the great account he maketh of this Servant, doth not deny subjection to his Master, nor exempt him from the condition of a Servant, but he addeth, [*More then a Servant.*] He saith not, he is no more a Servant, but he is more then a Servant: so that our Christian calling doth not abolish policy, and politique Constitutions, and Domestical government: but rather doth strengthen and sanctify them. He that is called to the truth being a Servant, must not be discouraged and discontented, but rejoice in this, that he is the Lord's Free-man.

Fifthly, when he styleth him [*A Brother*] he doth after a sort signify he is equal unto him. For albeit, in the Common-wealth and private Family, it be necessary that some should be Superiors, and others Inferiors; and that this disparity and in-equality among men, be the ordinance of God: yet in the Kingdom of God and in Christ Jesus, there is no distinction; *There is neither Jew nor Graecian: there is neither Bond-man, nor Free-man: there is neither Male, nor*

Female: for we are all one in Christ Jesus. When God will punish sin and the breach of his Law, he doth it without respect of persons. Such as are in greatest Dignity and highest place of authority upon the earth, are subject to sicknesses, to diseases, to death; so that (as the Prophet saith) *Ye Princes shall fall like others.* That which God laid in the beginning upon mankind; *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy Bread, until thou return to the Earth:* And to the Woman he said: *I will greatly increase thy sorrows and thy conceptions, so that in anguish thou shalt bring forth Children:* What Man, or what Woman, can free themselves from this burden, or deliver themselves from this punishment? We see the high, subject unto them as well as the low, the rich as well as the poor, the Prince as well as the people. So on the other side, when God will bestow the graces of his Spirit that accompany salvation, he distributeth them according to his pleasure, and respecteth not the outward person, he maketh no difference between Bond and Free, between Master and Servant, but giveth where it pleaseth him: which serveth to teach patience and contentation to those that live in lower places. God looketh upon them, when he passeth many times by those that are greater in the world; yea, he filleth them when he sendeth the other empty away.

Sixthly, we may observe, that he joineth love with Christian Brotherhood, and calleth *Onesimus* [A beloved Brother] not only a Servant, not only a brother, but a Brother dear and beloved; signifying thereby, that where a Christian calling is found, there Charity and Love is as a due debt required: so that if any man be converted, to become a true Christian indeed, & thereby is made our Brother (who before was a Christian only in Name & naked profession) even for this cause we are bound to embrace him with the greater love. Every man in his order to be loved, even he that is no Christian, if it be Turk or Infidel: but whosoever is a right Christian, not only in title, but in truth, must more specially be loved of us, and be dear unto us, who is nearly joined unto us as a member of the same body with us, and is to be esteemed of us, not so much another man from us, as one and the same man with us. He that is out of Christ, is another from us, he is diverse to us, and yet is to be loved as a man, as one that beareth the Image of God.

Lastly, observe, that the more causes there are of love and conjunction one with another, the dearer and deeper ought our love to be. There are many degrees of uniting us together, now the more there are, the more degrees should there be of love between us. The conjunction between the Master and the Servant in the private society, ought to be a cause of mutual love: but when to this natural respect there is added a spiritual fellowship and communion in Christ, whereby the Servant becometh more than a Servant, even a Brother with his Master; this requireth a farther degree of love in them one toward the other. Thus we see sundry observations, and all very profitable offered to our considerations out of these words: we cannot stand upon them all, and therefore we will only select some of the prin pall and chiefest of them.

Verse 15. [It may be that he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him forever.]

In these words we see, how he goeth about to mitigate the wrath and displeasure of *Philemon*, by teaching him to consider; that those things which were done peruersely and

corruptly, are by the direction and determination of God turned to another end. For a joyful end and good issue in evils, is as it were a remedy offered unto us by the hand of God, to blot out offenses. *Paul* therefore admonisheth *Philemon*, that he ought not now to be so greatly offended at the flight and running away of his Servant, because it fell out to be the cause of good, not to be repented off. So then he warneth, that this departure of *Onesimus* from his Master, is not to be waied and pondered by his purpose and meaning, but by the end & event which was most wholesome and profitable. For by this means he was brought to the Apostle, and by hearing of him, was instructed in the way of salvation, to the end that afterward he might be made more diligent and faithful to his Master. Whereby we see, that when he saith [*Therefore he departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him forever:*] It is not to be referred to the purpose and intent of *Onesimus* flying away, who had no such thought or determination ever to come back to his Master again, much less to come back better or a believer: but it hath relation to the providence of God, disposing of his fault and flight to a good and gracious end. Heereby we learn for our instruction, that all things (even sin it self) are by the high providence of God turned to the good of the elect. Such is the infinite wisdom and power of God, that he bringeth evil to a good end.

We see in this place how the Apostle maketh the providence of God to turn the sin of *Onesimus* to good, and to the benefit of himself and many others. For by running from his Master, he came to *Rome*: by coming to *Rome*, he lighted upon *Paul*: by falling into his company, he heard the Gospel preached: and by hearing the word, he was converted, which had not fallen out if he had not departed: so that his stealing and running away, turned by the goodness of God to his great benefit. So the sin of *Adam* turned to the greater gain and glory of the elect. To this purpose we may profitably consider the vile and villainous act of *Iocobs* Sons against their Brother *Joseph*, who considereth that it was done by the marvelous providence of God, that being sold for a Bond-slave, he might be advanced to that honor and Dignity, whereby he might nourish both his Father and Brethren in the years of Famine: therefore he said unto them when he made himself known: *Be not sad, neither grieved with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you for your preservation.* The like we might say of the crucifying of the Lord of Life, he was delivered into the hands of Sinners through the Treason of *Judas*, and other wicked and cursed Instruments; for *Judas* betrayed him, the *Jews* accused him, and *Pilate* judged him, whereof the Apostles say. Acts. 4. *Doubtless against thine holy Son Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, gathered themselves together, to do whatsoever thine hand and thy counsel had determined before to be done.* So then, albeit they wickedly intended nothing but to show their hatred, and testify their envy in the death of Christ, yet God brought another matter out of their malice, and made his endless mercy to man appear in his work of Redemption. God would have him die, *Caiaphas* would have him die, *Pilate* would have him die, *Judas* and the *Jews* would have him die; but God for our Redemption, they for other ends, as *Judas* for covetousness; and the Priests for envy. The History of *Job* is a plain and direct proof of this point that now we have in hand: he was robbed of his goods, deprived of his Servants and Children, through the rage and covetousness of his Enemies, and by the cruelty of Satan: the enemies intended herein to satisfy their own covetousness; the Devil purposed

to bring the Servant of God to despair: neither of thē aimed at any good to *Job*: but God that overruleth and over swaieth all, had another end, to try his patience, to make known his Faith, to try his obedience, and to give the devil the foil & overthrow. Thus then we see, that all things (whatsoever they be) are ordered and disposed by the providence of God, to the good of those that belong unto him, even then when they do not intend it.

The reasons of this Doctrine are apparent, to settle our hearts and consciences therein. The first is, the infinite wisdom and unsearchable power of God, who, as the Apostle teacheth, bringeth light out of darkness, & worketh by contrary means, such as men count foolishness, as to save men by the foolish preaching of the Gospel, that is; which is esteemed among the wise men of the World no better then foolishness. When Christ would make a blind man see, and restore his sight unto him; *He spat on the ground, and made Clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the Blind with the Clay.* A natural man would think this had been a way and means (judging by human reason) rather to make a man that seeth to be blind, then a man that is blind to see. Christ was able to have healed him with a word, or to have given unto him new eyes: but he chose rather to use these weak means, that in themselves had no power or strength in them.

Thus was *Naaman* the Syrian cleansed of his foul Leprosy, whereas he imagined the Prophet would come forth unto him, lay his hands upon him, and call upon God for him, it pleased God to work by other means, and to cleanse him by washing seven times in *Jordan*. We see this in nothing plainer, then in the glorious work of our Redemption. The Lord Jesus, *By death, overcame death; by humbling of himself beneath all, he was exalted above all. By making himself poor, he made many rich. By suffering himself to be condemned, he hath brought us to be justified and saved.* Thus he also dealeth with his own Children; he bringeth men to Heaven by Hell; he leadeth to immortality by corruption; he guideth them through fire and water to set them in a wealthy place. He worketh not by ordinary ways, by extraordinary, so often as it pleaseth him. When he would comfort, he terrifieth; when he would raise up, he casteth down; when he would revive, he mortifieth; when he would exalt, he bringeth low; when he would make a man rich, he maketh him poor.

This it is which *Hannah* setteth down in her Song of Thanks-giving; *The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; bringeth low, and exalteth; the Lord killeth, and maketh alive, bringeth down to the Grave, and raiseth up.* This also the Prophet *Isaiah* signifieth; *The Lord shall stand as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wrath as in the Valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work: and bring to pass his Act, his strange Act.* This is one of the works, of the strange works: one of the acts, of the strange acts of God, when he turneth evil into good, and ordereth the wicked actions of men to the glory of his Name, and the good of his Children.

Secondly, it is the pleasure of God to confound the wisdom of Man, that cannot attain to great matters, but by great means. For *God hath chosen the foolish things of the World to confound the wise, and GOD hath chosen the weak things of the World, to confound the mighty things, And vile things of the World, and things which are despised hath God chosen, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should rejoice in his presence.* God disposeth of all things as pleaseth him, and oftentimes crosseth the devises of men. They intend one thing,

but God bringeth to pass another: they purpose one end, but he will have another come forth, to teach man's wisdom to be but foolishness.

Thirdly, he expresseth his wonderful love, making all things that fall out in the world to serve his Church. True it is, the Church of God is beset with many enemies, that as wild Boars seek to root it out of the Earth, as the Devil which is the Captain of this Army, under whose Banners are gathered together the wicked world, the flesh, hell, death, sin; all which multitude as a great host muster together, to work the utter overthrow thereof: yet God that sitteth in heaven, maketh all their endeavours and enterprises further the salvation of his Church. This the Apostle teacheth; *We know that all things work together for the best unto them that love God, even to them that are called of his purpose.* He blesseth their troubles and afflictions, and worketh in them patience under the cross, humility in suffering, and experience of his mercies, and maketh them confess, that it was good for them that they have been afflicted. We see this evidently in the example of *Job's* troubles and torments that he endured, there were many work-men set on work to wast his goods, to destroy his Children, to kill his Servants, to afflict his Body, to torment his Soul, all aiming at this to bring him to despair, and all these Wheelles were set to move by the Devil: but the Lord out of their sins wrought his great good; *Making trial of his Faith to bring forth patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed.* So then, seeing God is able to work, and doth work, both above, and contrary to means that men imagine, seeing he confoundeth the wisdom that is in man, and maketh manifest the abundance of his love to his people, in turning all things that fall out to their good, and making them serve them: we conclude, that God's providence disposeth and ordereth all actions, whether they be good or evil, for the benefit of such as fear him, he will make all things that come to pass, to serve them that serve him.

This doctrine of God's providence is a firm pillar of our faith, and a fundamental point of our Religion, and therefore it is thoroughly to be cleared, and the questions to be answered that they may be raised against it. First, it may be objected, that if God govern all things by his providence, it skilleth not what we do, whether we do good or evil, seeing his will must come to pass, and we cannot change it. It seemeth no matter whether we hear the word, or pray, or labor to do well, inasmuch as his will must be accomplished. I answer, that this is a false and wicked conclusion, which is founded upon our own devise, but doth not follow upon his providence. For albeit, he order all things, yet he hath appointed us to use the means. It is a great error and ignorance to separate the decree of God, and the endeavor of man which he would have coupled together. *Rebecca* the wife of *Isaac*, had heard it from the mouth of God that could not lie, that her two sons should make two Nations, and the elder should serve the younger; whereby she knew that *Esau* could not kill *Jacob*, howsoever he threatened, and whatsoever he intended, yet did she not tempt God, nor presume carelessly upon his providence, but she used the ordinary means to save and preserve the life of *Jacob*, and sent him to her Kindred out of his Brothers reach: which she did not in distrust, but in faith. The like we see in *Paul* when he was in the Ship, and the Angel of God had told him there should be no loss of any man's life, but all should come safe (though with much danger) to the land: yet he saith unto them; *Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be safe.* Christ our Savior

prayeth to his Father to glorify him, and yet he was sure and certain of it before, to teach us, that as we believe God's providence, so we must use, and not refuse the means that he hath ordained. But of this we have spoken else where more at large, and therefore will pass it over.

If all things come to pass by the unchangeable decree of God, then nothing is done freely: and so the liberty of the Creatures will is taken away. I answer, a thing may be done by the unchangeable counsel and necessary decree of GOD, and yet changeably, and contingentlie, and freely, in respect of diverse causes by which it is produced: so that God's unchangeable purpose and man's free will may stand together. We see this in the History of Christ's Passion; the Soldiers brake the bones of the Thieves that were crucified with him, but his bones were not broken. How came this to pass? In their own nature they might have been broken, as well as not broken, as well as the Thieves were: and if we consider the Soldiers, in respect of the Nature of their will, they might have chosen the one or the other. But in regard of God's will and purpose, it was necessary they should not be broken, that the Type might be fulfilled, and that the Scripture might be accomplished.

If God rule all by his providence, how is it that there is so great confusion and disorder under the Sun? How is it, that evil men prosper and flourish, and the godly are driven to the wall, and to the worst? How is it, that there are so many Murthers, Blood-sheds, Cruelties, and Riots. I answer, the faithful are afflicted in this World for their good; *That they should not be condemned with the World*, as the Prophet confesseth it in his own experience. On the other side, the ungodly receive God's blessings for their farther condemnation, and to make them in-excusable before the judgment of God.

Moreover, there is no disorder in the Worlde in respect of God, albeit there be confusion in respect of Men. For there is order in the greatest disorder that happeneth among us. Hence it is that the Wise man saith, *God hath made all things beautiful in his time*. Even those things that seem most foul and deformed in our eyes, are yet fair and beautiful, being sent as just and due punishments from God, as the execution of his wrath and vengeance, for the wickedness and unthankfulness of the World, and for the trial of the Faith, patience, and obedience of his Servants. When peace maketh us secure, and security bringeth a forgetfulness of GOD, an abuse of his blessings, and a breaking out into all excess: are not the Sword, the Pestilence, and Famine, justly sent upon us of GOD? When we see men thrive by oppression, and get their goods with Covetousness, unjust dealing, deceit, and unmercifulness to the poor; is it not a just revenge from God's own hand, that an unthrift should arise, and ryotously was the goods that have been naughtily and wrongfully gotten? Mark a little (I beseech you) the example of *David*, the dear Child of God, so often commended in Scripture. He committed Adultery with the Wife, and caused her Husband to be slain by the Sword of the *Ammonites*, wherein he sinned grievously, and provoked the Lord exceedinglie. For he is threatened by the Prophet, and the threatening is performed. *Nathan* is sent unto him to show him his sin, to denounce the chastisement of God, and so to bring him unto repentance; he said: *The Sword shall not depart from thy House; Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own House, and will take thy Wives before thine eyes, and give them*

to thy Neighbor, and he shall lie with thy Wives in the sight of the Sun, &c. This was the punishment that was threatened, which was most just in respect of God that did decree it, in respect of *Nathan* that did denounce it, and in respect of *David* that did deserve it. See now, how it was brought to pass in the house of *David*. First, *Amnon* his Son defileth his Sister *Tamar*: then *Absalom* another of his Sons, in revenge of that Incest, slayeth his own Brother, and afterward rebelleth against his Father, gathereth a power of Men, and driveth his Father out of *Jerusalem*, and when he cometh thither, by the counsel of *Ahithophell*, he causeth a Tent to be spread, and in the sight of all the people, went in and lay with his Fathers Wives. Here are sundry devilish and wicked practices, Incest, Murder, Rebellion, treason, all abominable enormities: and yet God saith; *He did all these things*. These sins were most foul and filthy to look upon, as they were the inventions of the Devil, the persuasions and practices of evil men: but as they are punishments sent of God upon *David* for his offenses, they were beautiful in their time, they were the righteous sentence of a just Judge, who cannot deal unjustly in judgment. Thus much of answering these few Objections: Now let us proceed to conclude some Uses out of this truth.

The Uses that will arise from hence, are many, but we will only touch the principal. This Doctrine serveth for reproof, for comfort, and for obedience. For, it serveth to reprove and convince sundry persons, that either know not, or knowing, do abuse this providence of God, whereby he taketh care of all things that are in the World, and directeth them to a right end. And first of all, we set against it, and oppose unto it, the dreams and dotages of Atheists, Epicures, Libertines, and such like Wretches, who either deny wholly there is a God, or make him sit as idle in heaven, as themselves are upon the earth: so that, albeit he know and see all things, yet he worketh or ordereth not the special actions of men that fall out. These are they that pull God out of his Kingdom, and set up Chance and Fortune as an Idol, and make it their God. We must all learn and confess, that the Lord, that is the Creator of Heaven and Earth, is also the Ruler and Governor of all (even the least) Creatures. The whole world, from the highest heaven to the center of the Earth, is subject to his providence. He worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will: he giveth life and breath, he preserveth them: so that nothing cometh to pass without his appointment. Whether they be things with life or without life; with reason, or without reason; general, or particular; evil, or good; Angels, or Men; necessary, or not necessary; all are ruled by his decree. So then, Chance & Fortune are words of the *Gentiles*, and are blindly used by such as are called *Christians*, whereas nothing can be done without his will and working, who is omnipotent. What seemeth more casual then the Lot? Yet, *The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposition is of the Lord. Prov. 16. 33.* This is it which our Savior teacheth: *Are not two Sparrowes sold for a farthing, and one of thē shall not fall on the ground without your Father? Yea, and all the hairs of your head are numbered.* So that we see, Chance and Providence cannot stand together, but the one overturneth the other. Secondly, it reproveth such as frō hence take encouragement to commit sin, to break out into sundry outrages, or to live securely, because God can turn it to our good, and maketh it serve to set forth his mercy. This is that presumption and sin of rebellion touched by the Apostle. *Why do we not evil that good maycome thereof, whose damnation is just.* So in another place; *What shall we say then? Shall we continue still in sin, that*

Grace may abound? How shall we that are dead in sin, live yet therein. We confess indeed, that God is the Sovereign cause of all events that are brought to pass, and whatsoever the enemies of the Church intend and enterprise, whether the Sons of Men, or the Devil and his Angels, he stayeth and hindereth, or represseth and disappointeth, and always disposeth it to the good and salvation of his children. Nevertheless, this doth not excuse or free the Instruments that he useth from fault. They do the will of God blindly and ignorantly, but they do cross his will openly and purposely: so that his providence doth not exempt the wicked from their evil doing. *David* knew well enough, and confesseth as much, that *Shimei* was sent of God most justly to curse him, and to rail upon him, when he fled from the face of his son *Absalom*: yet in his last speech to the King his Son, he doth not defend him or excuse him, *But giveth charge and commandment to be revenged of him, and not to account him innocent.* If then evil instruments cease not to be guilty before men, much more faulty shall they be before the judgment Seat of the Almighty, and much less shall they escape punishment for transgressing the Law of God. For howsoever wicked men be well moved by God to execute his work by them, who may use any of his creatures according to his own power & pleasure; yet in as much as they (being moved of God) do peruersely and crookedly, and wickedly move themselves, to will and work evil, so that themselves are the workers and causers of their own evil works; whereby it cometh to pass, both that they grievously offend God, and afterward severely punished of him. Wherefore such as resist God, & rebel against his law, and strive against his will, cannot say they have done his will, inasmuch as they had no purpose to keep his ordinances, & therefore make themselves subject to all his judgments. Lastly, this reproveth the Church of *Rome*, that among many slanders cast out against us, are not ashamed to lay to our charge that we maintaine, that God is the author of sin. We hold, we teach, privately, publicly, by word, by writing, in Schools, in Churches, that God is not the author of sin, but the devil & man's own corrupt will: & whosoever teacheth and preacheth otherwise, if it were an Angel from heaven, we hold him accursed. Hence it is that the Prophet saith, *Thou art not a God that loveth wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee.* So the Prophet *Habakuke*, *Thou art of pure eyes, and canst not see evil: thou canst not behold wickedness.* Likewise *Zephany* saith; *The just Lord is in the midst thereof, he will do none iniquity.* In like manner the Prophet *Zacharias* saith; *Let none of you imagine evil in your harts against his neighbor, and love no false Oth: for all these are the things that I hate, saith the Lord.* Thus we hear that he loveth righteousness, and hateth wickedness, so that he is the author of all good, of no evil. If we would hear this farther opened, the Apostle *James* is a witness of it; *Let no Man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he drawn away by his own concupiscence, and is enticed.* This is the conscionable Doctrine of piety, and the contrary we renounce and abhor as open blasphemy. This also is the opinion of all our Teachers that ever were among us, as were easy to show by infinite Testimonies out of their writings, if it were necessary: Nay, which is more, we teach no more then the School-men of their own side, the Men of their own Religion, the Doctors of their own profession. First, I will declare what we hold touching God's providence ordering all things, even sin it self, which is out of order: and then confirm the same out of Popish Writers, thereby to stop their mouths, and to answer the false imputations that are laid upon us, that if they will not see what we hold, yet they may understand themselves; or

if they will needs condemn us, let them condemn their own Prophets. That which we teach of God's actions concerning sin, may be reduced and referred to these three heads. First, he is the Universal cause of all things, he sustaineth mankind, that in him he liveth, and moveth, and hath his being; yea, he upholdeth the being and moving of all his Actions, good and bad: insomuch that no Man could move hand or foot to an Action, no nor have being himself, if God sustained and supported not: so that the act is of God, as also the actions of all Creatures.

Now, if they will not be ignorant, but take knowledge of their doctrine, many among them affirm full as much, that God is immediately the first cause of all things, produced by the second causes: but of things evil, he is the mediate cause, in that he produceth and preserveth the Creature that is the mediat cause of evil. So likewise another saith; A Sinner when he sinneth, doth against the law and will of God in one sense, and in another not against them. He doth indeed against his signified will, and against his precepts and prohibitions, &c. but against the will of his good pleasure he doth not, nor against the effectual ordination of God. In this manner and meaning write many others, that no sin falleth out beside the will and intention of God.

Secondly, we teach that God being free to bestow where he will, to restrain where he will, and being bound to none, doth with-hold his Grace, & withdraw his spirit, and leave the wicked to themselves: whereupon it followeth, that their minds are blinded, their harts are hardened, and they cannot choose but sin. But how, may some man say, doth God harden? I answer, not by inspiring evil into men, not by creating any sin or corruption in their will, which was not there before (as he doth grace in their heart) but by denying them the power of his grace which might mollify them, and by offering them sundry objects, which they convert into occasions of sin, and by delivering them over as a just Judge to the temptations of Satan; whereby they are overcome, and have neither power nor will to stay themselves. For when God departeth, how can it be but Satan should come in place? This is not strange Doctrine among the Papists themselves. One saith; that GOD is a debtor to no man, and therefore he is bound neither to cause that Act, nor the contrary, nor yet not to cause it: but the will of the Creature by God's Law is bound not to cause the act; and so consequently sinneth by doing it.

Lastly, we teach that God doth both order or ordinate the sin that is committed, which is nothing else but a directing of it as pleaseth him, that it go not beyond his will, neither otherwise then seemeth good in his wisdom. Sometimes he restraineth it that it shall not pass nor proceed farther then he appointeth, who giveth bounds unto the Sea. Sometimes he turneth it to another end then the person intended that practiced it. Both these we see evidently in *Job's* temptations. The Devil desired nothing more then to destroy body and soul, but God restrained his rage, & appointed how far he should go, and what he should not do, and wrought *Job's* greater good by his greatest malice. Sometimes also he maketh way for sin to pass, that thereby he may punnish one sin with another. And doth not the Church of *Rome* teach as much? Yes, fully as much. *Bellarmino* in the third Tome of his *Controuersies*, saith as much, that God not only permitteth the wicked to do many evils, neither doth he

only forsake the godly, that they may be constrained to suffer the things done against them by the wicked; but he also overseeth their evil wills, and ruleth and governeth them, he boweth and bendeth them by working inuisibly in them. Thus we see, that if our Adversaries look well into their words, and know their own voice, t...y shall not need to exclaim and cry out against us, that we make God the Author of sin, seeing the same speeches in the same cause are used by themselves. We freely confess, that God willeth nothing that is formally sin, as he willeth that which is good; but he hateth it, and forbiddeth it absolutely; within us by the light of his holy spirit, and without us by the light of his holy word.

The first entrance of sin into the World, was by the voluntary action of man's will corrupting it self, God inspiring or infusing no evil into it. To conclude, let us know, that as we all agree that every Act is of God, so we must take a difference between the action, & the evil that is in the action. The action itself is of God, but the defect or disorder of the action, is from the Instrument, which being corrupt, can it self bring forth nothing but that which is corrupt. If a man spurn forward a lame Horse that halteth down right, in that he moveth and goeth it cometh from the Rider, but in that he halteth, it is from the Horse himself. If a man cut with an evil Knife, he is the cause of the cutting, but not of evil cutting, but the badness of the Knife is the cause. Or as a cunning Musition, that playeth upon an Instrument that iarreth and is out of tune, the sound is from him that playeth, who observeth due proportion of time, and a right order of striking, but in that it iarreth, it is in the Instrument it self. The like we must hold of God's providence over wicked men and Angels, and all their actions, he putteth no wickedness into them, but he ordereth and governeth that which he findeth in them, and bendeth it by his infinite wisdom and power to a far other end then the evil Instrument intended. The whole cause of sin is truly and properly in Satan, and in our selves.

Secondly, this Doctrine serveth greatly to comfort us, both in prosperity and adversity, and that for the time to come we should repose our whole hope in God. For seeing all things come to pass by the providence of God, so that not so much as sin it self is committed without his will, it is a great comfort many ways to God's Church and chosen Children. We know that he can moderate, and will moderate the rage of the Devil, and the malice of wicked men, that they shall not hurt or hinder their Salvation. For the Devil is the Lord's Servant or slave, to work his will, albeit he do it unwillingly and by compulsion. The Prophet *David* saith, *The Lord is at my right hand, therefore I shall not slide.* And when his Soldiers were purposed to stone him to death, he was in great sorrow and heaviness, *But he comforted himself in the Lord his GOD.* If then we cast up our eyes, and behold the providence of God evermore watching over us, we shall not doubt of the love and goodness of God, nor of deliverance to come from his hand, albeit we see no ordinary means, but all things go a contrary way. This made the holy Man *Job* say; *Though the Lord would kill me, yet will I trust in him.* And the Prophet, *Though thou cast me into the place of Dragons, and into the shadow of death, yet will I fear none evil.* The church being in great perplexity and danger in the days of *Mordecai*, he was not without comfort, he lived not without hope, he ceased not to use lawful means for the delivery of it, he was not at his wits end, nor dispaired of an happy issue, because his heart was grounded and established in the Doctrine of God's providence, as

appeareth by his words to *Ester*: *Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the Kings House, more then all the Jews, for if thou holdst thy peace at this time, comfort and deliverance shall appear to the Jews out of another place, but thou and thy Fathers House shall perish: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the Kingdom for such a time.*

Again, this providence of God in everything, teacheth contentation of mind in every estate; yea, in adversity when we lie under the Cross, so that all things go against us; forasmuch as God's providence hath appointed us our lot and portion. When we live in peace, and have abundance of outward means to maintain us; as plenty, riches, health, pleasure, friends, liberty, and such like, we must remember from whom they come, and so be put in mind to be thankful for them, because they come not to us by chance, but by God's providence: so that we must not barely look upon them, nor wholly rest upon them, but behold his goodness and blessing in them. For if we consider that all prosperity cometh from him; as Meat, Drink, ease, peace, and all plenty, who is not pricked forward, and stirred up unto Thanksgiving towards so loving and bountiful a Father? Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *In all things give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.* The Prophet Isaiah, complaineth of the unthankfulness of the Jews towards GOD, *I have nourished and brought up Children, but they have rebelled against me: the Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Cribbe, but Israel hath not known me, my people hath not obeyed me.* The Prophet David dealt otherwise, and behaved himself with greater duty, teaching us all what to do, when he saith, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take up the cup of salvation, and praise the name of the Lord.* But when these outward things, whereby life is maintained do fail us, we must not fail to remember whence famine, war, pestilence, sickness, trouble, and affliction come, that there is no evil in the City which the Lord hath not done.

Moreover, let us depend upon him for the time to come, assuring our selves that he will not leave us, nor forsake us. He giveth us every day experience of his mercies, so that by remembrance of benefits received from him, we cannot doubt of his favor toward us. Lastly, this should be a very strong reason unto us, not to be unmeasurably dismayed, nor excessively offended, when offenses and great evils break out among us, as oftentimes it falleth out; whereby many are ready to shrink back, and others are much disquieted to see the Church of God so troubled. We are not to think it strange, or to forsake the faith through these scandals: for God would not suffer any evil to come to pass, unless out of that evil he were able to bring good; and out of that sin to bring forth righteousness, to the glory of his great name, and for the salvation of his deer Church. He would never have left *Adam* unto himself, if he had not determined out of his fall, to gain praise to himself, and to provide better for his people. It is necessary that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom they come: Let us not therefore fret our selves because of the wicked men, neither be envious for the evil doers, for they shall soon be cut down like grass, and shall wither as the green herb. And we must rest, and be resolved assuredly, that God doth not allow or favor their sin, nor purposeth to free them from the guilt and punishment of sin, howsoever he turneth their wicked purpose to a good end. For sin is the transgression of his Law. But God never swarueth nor stayeth from the strait rule of his own will, neither putteth wickedness into man; but as the earth affording sap and moisture as well to the evil trees, as the good,

cannot be reprov'd, because the cause why the evil trees bring forth evil fruit is of themselves and their own nature, or as the Sun that raiseth evil smells, and noisome fauors from unsavory puddles, cannot justly be found fault withal, because the reason thereof is not in the Sun beams, but in those corrupt places; even so, when God disposeth to good ends the sins of men that proceed from the instigation of the Devil, and abide in the ungodly themselves, he cannot be called the cause or author of sin, although by his providence he moveth all things, yea, even the ungodly, that are not able to move or remove themselves.

Lastly, seeing God's providence extendeth to everything that is, and disposeth it according to his own pleasure, it directeth us in our obedience, & putteth us in mind of a Christian duty; namely, to be patient in all adversity. If we consider that nothing can befall us, but that which is sent by the fatherly will and counsel of God, who hath always just causes to exercise his children with chastisements, either to try them, or to humble them: we shall learn to submit our selves to him, to hold our peace because he hath done it, and to keep silence that we offend not against him. This will keep us that we do not rage against second causes, that we do not mutter and murmur against God, that we seek not revenge against our enemies. We are ready in sickness to complain, in poverty to repine, in injuries and oppressions to retaille and return like for like, and in all troubles to be impatient, and to use unlawful means to deliver our selves, not attending the Lord's leisure; and the reason is, because the providence of God is not learned of us, we cannot depend upon him, we know not that he hath all things in his power to employ them to his glory, and to use them to our good. We heard before, that *Joseph* was sold by his own brethren, & made a servant and slave to the *Egyptians*. If he had only called to mind the unkind & unjust dealing of his unnatural brethren, could he have retained a brotherly affection toward them? Could he forgive the wrong offer'd unto him? Could he have repress'd his rage, and staid him self from revenge and recompense, to give them according to their deeds and deserts toward him? But when he lifted up his mind to the Lord, and saw how God had disposed their treachery to another purpose then they meant or imagined, he forgave them their offense, he inclined to mercy, and of his own accord did comfort his Brethren, saying; *But now be not sad, neither grieved with yourselves that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you, to save you alive in this land, and to preserve you by a great deliverance: Now then, you sent me not hither, but God himself, who made me a Father unto Pharaoh, & Lord of all his house, and Ruler throughout all the Land of Egypt.* So the holy man *Job*, if he had rested in the roberies of the *Chaldeans* & *Sabaeans*, by whom he was hurt and annoyed, had by and by been kindled with wrath, and set on fire to work revenge; but because he ascended higher, and acknowledged the work of a superior hand, he possessed his soul with patience, & comforted himself with this notable saying, left unto us for our imitation, *The lord hath given, & the Lord hath taken away, as it pleaseth the Lord, so is it come to pass.* The like we might say of *David*, when *Shimei* cursed him, as he fled to save his life, *And Abishai the son of Zeruiah said unto the King, Why should this dead Dog curse my Lord the King? Let me go now I pray thee, & take away his head.* He answered again, *What have I do with you ye sons of Zeruiah? For he curseth, even because the Lord hath bidden him curse David; Who dare then say, wherefor hast thou done so? Behold, my son which came out of mine own bowels, seeketh my life, then how much more now may this son of Iemini? Suffer him to curse, for the Lord hath bidden him.*

He knew that God's providence would turn this to the best, & therefore he was ready to forgive the wrong which this wicked man measured unto him. Thus doth the Apostle *Peter* speak comfortably to the people that gave their consent to the killing and crucifying of Christ whom God raised from the dead, *Now brethren, I know that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your Governors; but those things which God before had shown by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath thus fulfilled.* Such therefore as are malicious, to desire revenge and cannot be entreated to moderate their anger, never understood the Doctrine of God's providence. We have indeed many excellent reasons, and notable Meditations to move us to put up wrongs that are done us, and to root out of our hearts the weed of revenge; and instead thereof, to set the sovereign plant of patience and longsuffering, brought out of the Garden of God, which is the Scripture, that it may grow and flourish among us. And never was there more need of them, never was there less practice of them; for now the manner is, (as one truly speaketh) a word and a blow, a word and a stab, a word and a Writ. He that hateth his Brother, is a Man-slayer, for rash anger, is the Fore-runner of murder, and a degree and step to murder. God is of a patient Nature, and slow to anger; Christ Jesus is meek and lowly, whose example we ought to remember, that we may repress all choller, and so find rest unto our souls: for he forgiveth more to us, then we can forgive to others. The wrath of God hangeth over all their heads that retain wrath; for such as will not forgive, are in danger never to be forgiven, seeing we ask forgiveness, as we our selves do forgive. It is a property of love to suffer and bear, and it is a note of injustice to revenge our own quarrels; for we take away the honor of God, and make our selves the parties that receive wrong, the witnesses that accuse, the Judges that condemn, and the Executioners that punish, which is against all Law of God and Man.

Lastly, all wrongs done to us by wicked men, come by God's providence, to which we are to submit and subject our selves, knowing what he is able to do, and what he hath promised to do toward us, even make all things fall out for our comfort and salvation. When *Saul* persecuted *David* in the wilderness, and had enclosed and compassed him round, ready to fall upon him, there came a Messenger to *Saul* saying, *Hast thee and come, for the Philistines have invaded the Land: Wherefore, Saul returned from pursuing David, and went against the Philistines.* They were the means of *David's* deliverance, but they had no purpose to do him good, or to deliver him out of the hands of *Saul*, or to free him out of trouble; for their intent was wicked, ambition moved them, malice carried them, revenge furthered them, and covetousness resolved them to go to work, and invade the Israelites. Nevertheless, the Lord used their unlawful act to his own glory, and over-ruled them to do that which they never dreamed, even to be the Instruments of preserving *David*, that was near to death.

To conclude, by all these things it appeareth, that the Doctrine of God's providence, is the ground of all godliness; but where it is denied, the foundation of Religion is pulled asunder. For, until we know and consider, that nothing happeneth by hap-hazard, but all things are swayed by the determination of the most highest, so that a drop of rain doth not fall, a puff of wind doth not blow, a clap of thunder doth not sound, a flash of lightning doeth not shine, an Arrow of famine cannot fly, a plague of pestilence cannot destroy, a judgment of War cannot arise without his appointment; we shall never be thankful for his benefits, we shall

never be patient in troubles, we shall never conceive hope of delivery out of our adversities. And thus much of God's providence in the departure of *Onesimus* out of the house of *Philemon*, which being evil, God turned it to good as well of him that departed, as of him from whom he departed.

[*That thou shouldest receive him forever.*]

Here we see, that the Apostle to a loss of small continuance, opposeth a perpetual use, that the Master should gain of his servant. For to persuade him to patience in regard of his loss and hindrance, and to prevail with him to be reconciled toward him that had so offended him, and caused his loss; he doth assure him of gain & advantage; namely, that his short departure should recompense him sufficiently, with a continual possessing of him, being assured to retain him forever. We learn from hence, that God doeth oftentimes take away from his servants, many outward and earthly commodities, to the end he might bestow upon them, both mo and greater blessings. When the Mother is determined to wean her child, and take away the breast from him, it is not to famish him, but to give him a diet and food that is fitter for him. So when it pleaseth God to deny to his servants such blessings as they desire, he recompenseth the wants of them with benefits of a more high and heavenly nature. This we see in the example of *Abraham*, when he was sent by the calling of God out of his Country, from his Kindred and Fathers house, there was given to him and his posterity, the whole Land of *Canaan*; yea, God entered into a Covenant with him to be his God, and to acknowledge his posterity to be his people; so that albeit he wanted the pleasure of his Country, and the delight of his Kindred, yet he gained the friendship and favor of GOD by obeying his calling and commandment. We see this in *Jacob*, he was robbed of his son *Joseph*, by the treachery of his sons, and lived a long time without him whom he so much desired; yet in the end he beheld him in glory and dignity, and blessed him & his posterity. We see the same in *Joseph* himself, he was cast out of his Fathers house by his brethren, he was sold into the hands of strangers, he was cast into close prison, he endured many slanders, troubles, and crosses that fell upon him, but he bare them patiently by Faith, and in the end he was delivered, and became Ruler over the Land of Egypt. He wanted his Father, and his Father wanted him for a season, but in the end they were restored either to other, with full advantage. Let us set before our eyes the example of *Job*, he lost his Goods, his Children, his Servants, his Cattle, he became poor, and yet was patient, and in the end God made an happy issue of all his afflictions, so that he had them doubled and restored unto him twofold. Our Savior Christ beateth upon this point, teaching his Disciples, *Whosoever shall forsake houses, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my Names sake, he shall receive an hundred fold more, and shall inherit everlasting life.* For when *Peter* said to the Lord, *Loe, we have forsaken all, and followed thee,* Christ answered him; *Verily, I say unto you, there is no man that hath forsaken Lands or house, &c. for my sake and the Gospels, but he shall receive an hundred fold now at this present, houses and brethren, and Sisters, and Mother, and Children, and Lands, with persecution, & in the world to come, eternal life.* This appeareth farther unto us, in the Parable of the rich Glutton, and poor *Lazarus*, one of them was clad in Purple, and fared deliciously every day; the other, lay at the rich man's gate, who was not admitted to his Table, and continued without the doors, who was not admitted into

his house: God denied unto him the blessings of this life, but he gave him the riches of faith, and received him into eternal glory. All these places of Scripture, and examples of the godly, teach us, that God denying unto his Children the things of this life, doeth it not, because he hateth their persons, or enuyeth their good, or purposeth their destruction, but rewardeth the lack and loss of bodily things with spiritual; of earthly things with heavenly; of transitory things with eternal; of lesser things with greater.

Thus the Doctrine is made plain by these testimonies, but will be made much plainer, if we consider the Reasons following. First, the loosing of these outward things for a good cause, is as the seed season when we sow our Corn, looking for a plentiful Harvest, as an after blessing. There is that scattereth, and more is increased, as the wiseman speaketh. So the scattering away, and loosing of the commodities of this life, and the pleasures thereof, when God requireth it at our hands, and calleth for it, shall be no loss, but a gain; no hindrance, but a benefit; no pulling of us down, but a setting of us up; no undoing of us, but an enriching of us forever. This is it which the Psalmist setteth down, speaking of the return of the people out of captivity, *They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy, they went weeping, and carried precious seed, but they shall return with joy, and bring their sheaves.* Where he compareth the people going into captivity, to needy Husbandmen, who cast into the ground for seed, that which was left them for succor and sustentation of their life, and returning out of captivity, to reapers which rejoice at the abundance of increase which they find: as if he should say, the Jews, who were sad and heavy, when they were carried Captives into *Babylon*, shall be joyful when they obtain the fruit of their hope, which is a glorious deliverance.

Secondly, God is our exceeding great reward, with whom it is an easy thing to bless and increase, to restore and multiply the good things given unto us. When God would comfort *Abraham* whom he had brought out of *Vr* of the *Caldees*, to dwell in the Land of *Canaan*, he said unto him, *I will make of thee a great Nation, and will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing; I will also bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.* If then he will restore that which he hath taken away, and make up the breach that his hand hath made, we cannot doubt of his liberality toward us. The poor widow had but an handful of Meale in a barrel, and a little Oil in a Cruze, but they were increased, not wasted; multiplied, not diminished, unto the time that the Lord sent rain upon the earth, 1 Kings 17, 14. Whether therefore we consider, that the loss sustained for Christ's sake, and the Gospel, is rather a sowing then a loosing, and a laying up, rather then a scattering abroad; or whether we consider, that God is rich in mercy, and the most bountiful rewarder of his servants; in both respects we conclude, that lesser blessings are sometimes taken from us, that we may have greater supplied unto us, whereby our gain is made better then our loss.

This Doctrine being duly weighed, will be very profitable both to comfort such as are in trouble, and to instruct such as are ignorant, and to direct such in their obedience, as wander out of the right way. First, let this be our comfort, when we sustain any losses, or feel any wants, though they be never so great, though we must depart from lande and life, yet in this case, it shall be a gain and advantage unto us. For to gain and save where we

ought not, is a certain loss. This gain is little, but the loss is great; it is to enjoy temporal things, and to loose eternal; it is a getting of the earth, and a loosing of heaven; a getting of substance, and a loosing of the soul. Miserable is this gain, and wretched is the lucre that is thus dearly bought & purchased. On the other side, to be content to forsake and renounce all for Christ's sake, shall in the end bring with it assured and perpetual riches. For, what is it that we have not received? It is God that hath made us, & not we our selves; it is he that hath enriched us, and not we our selves; and whatsoever we have, whether it be much or little, we have it not of our selves; and therefore we hold all of him, as Tenants at will, he may re-enter and dispossess us of them when it pleaseth him, so that we must render them up into his hands, when he calleth for them, and be resolute to leave them, when he demandeth them of us.

Let us not therefore shrink back for fear of trouble and persecution, but set before us the example of Christ, who hath gone before us, he for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, and despised the shame, and is set at the right hand of the throne of God. The servant must not be above his Master, nor the disciple above his Lord. We must account it an honor to bear about us the marks of Christ Jesus in our body. If we be partakers of his afflictions and patience, we shall also be partakers with him of his glory. This is it which he exhorteth us unto unto. *Math. 16. If any man will follow me, let him forsake himself, and take up his cross, and follow me: for whosoever will save his life, shall loose it; and whosoever shall loose his life for my sake, shall find it: for what shall it profit a man, though he should win the whole world, if he loose his own soul? Or what shall a man give for recompense of his soul?* Whosoever is not thus persuaded and resolved for the profession of the Gospel, and the faith of Christ, and the witnessing of the truth, to endure tribulation, and to suffer persecution, is not yet a Christian in deed, but in name; not in heart, but in show. So then, howsoever we be afflicted and made sorrowful for a season, yet the time will come, when our souls shall be comforted, and we have our heads lifted up, which blessed day, we ought to attend with all patience, and desire with earnest Prayer.

Secondly, seeing God sometimes depriveth his dear Children of outward and earthly blessings, but rewardeth them with heavenly; it serveth notably to instruct us in the right meaning and understanding of the reason annexed to the fifth Commandment, where such as Honor Father and Mother, have a promise of a special blessing made unto them, that they shall live long upon the earth. Where we see, that godly Children have the promises of this life made unto them. For *Godliness is profitable unto all things, and hath the promises both of this life, and of the life to come.* And on the other side, the fearful Judgments of GOD are oftentimes upon rebellious and disobedient Children. The Wiseman saith, *The eye that mocketh his Father, and despiseth the instructions of his Mother, let the Ravens of the valley pick it out, and the young Eagles eat him.*

But we see it come to pass many times, otherwise then hath been spoken of; and some will object, that wicked persons, & disobedient Children live long, and contrariwise, good men & obedient Children, do oftentimes die quickly, they prolong not their days to old age, but depart hence in the prime of their youth. I answer, first touching the ungodly, then

concerning the godly. The ungodly indeed do continue long upon the earth, and die full of days, but it is to their farther vengeance, and to heap up wrath against the great day of the fierce wrath of God, and to fill up the greater measure of their sins, that God also may fill unto them the greater measure of his Judgments. This we see in *Cain*, who was tormented with fear of punishment, and gripings of Conscience, and horror of hell, and feeling of sin, which was worse unto him then many deaths. It had been a great benefit to him, if he had died so soon as he had been borne, for then he had not sinned so horribly, then he had not murdered his natural brother so shamefully, then he had not offended God so outrageously; but now, the longer he lived, the more sins he committed, and the greater judgments he deserved, and the heavier torments he endured. This we may say of all the ungodly, who commit sin with all greediness, and consequently live to their heavier punishment. But concerning the godly, he calleth them many times out of this present life betimes unto himself, and provideth far better for them, then if he had given them a long life. For he taketh and translateth them from the miseries of this world, to the joys of eternal life. And it is often good for us, that the Lord take us soon from hence; for as thereby he bringeth us to a better place, so we reap a double benefit.

First, we are kept from the corruptions of the world, for living in a corrupt air, we are ready to gather infection, and to take the scent as quickly as flax is apt to take the fire. But by taking us from hence into a sweeter dwelling, we are prevented & kept from many sins which otherwise we would fall into. This is it which the Prophet *David* showeth, *The rod of the wicked shall not rest on the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness: do well, O Lord, unto those that be good and true in their harts.* He knoweth whereof we are made, he seeth our infirmities, & how prone we are to decline after evil examples that are set before us; so that it is a benefit unto us, to go hence before we have corrupted our hearts, and defiled all our ways. *Enoch* lived in a most dangerous time, when wickedness began to cover the face of the earth, but because he walked with God, he was taken away, that malice should not change his heart. This is it which the Apostle *Paul* testifieth. *For this cause many are weak and sick among you, & many sleep: for if we would judge our selves, we should not be judged: But when we are iduged, we are chastened of the Lord, because we should not be condemned with the world.*

Secondly, God dealeth mercifully with his people, in removing them out of this life, that they should not feel the present miseries, nor see the imminent calamities which he knoweth hang over them, and is determined to bring upon the sons of men, and be overborn and swept away by them with others. This we see in the example of *Abijah* the son of *Jeroboam* that made *Israel* to sin, who is branded with this note of reproach in sundry places of the holy history, *That he did sin, & made Israel to sin:* the Prophet said of this one only good son of this wicked father, that he should die being a child, and all *Israel* should mourn for him, & he only of *Jeroboam* should come to the grave, because in him there is found some goodness toward the Lord God of *Israel* in the house of *Jeroboam*. God in great mercy toward him, took him away being a child, that he should not be infected and afflicted. For if he had lived to see the white hairs of his old age, he had been in great danger of the fearful sins of his fathers house, & been in great affliction to behold the horrible judgments that were to fall upon that

godless and graceless family. The like might be said of good *Josiah*, he was gathered betimes to his fathers, and was put in his grave in peace, that his eyes should not see all the evil which the lord would bring on the land. He took him out of this world, before his wrath fell upon the ungodly. This is it which the Prophet *Isaiah* telleth us, *The righteous perisheth, & no man considereth it in heart: & merciful men are taken away, and no man understandeth that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come: Peace shall come, they shall rest in their beds, everyone that walketh before him.* Lastly, God calleth away his children out of this transitory life, to make them partakers of a blessed life, *Seeing they are blessed that die in the lord, they cease frō their labors & their works follow them.* Neither do the godly lose by this bargain, neither doth God falsify his word, but is better then his promise. For if he take away a short & frail life, and reward with a long and eternal life, the promise faileth not, but changeth for the better. Change (as we commonly say) is no robbery; but this change is a commodity. If a man promised yard of cloth, and perform an ell; if he promise silver, and pay gold; if he promise to give a cottage, and put him in possession of a Palace; if he promise little, and perform much, he breaketh not his promise, but performeth it with advantage; & thus doth the Lord deal with us, who is not as man that he should lie, nor as the son of man that he should deceive, who oftentimes granteth more then we ask, and bestoweth more then we beg, but never denieth that which he promiseth. If any farther reply, how then is God true in his promises, y^t promiseth long life in this life. I answer, that all God's promises concerning earthly blessings, must be understood with a condition, namely, so far forth as he shall see them to be expedient for his glory, and our salvation. But so far as long life shall be a benefit unto us, so far he will give it; but if in his all-seeing, and all-serching wisdom he know it to be better for us to dy then to live, to be gathred to our fathers, then to continue with our children, he taketh us away, and recompenseth the want of temporal life, with a kingdom of eternal glory. This is it which the Apostle expresseth, who repeating this blessing to come upon them that honor father & mother, doth not only say, *That thou mayest live long on earth,* but addeth, *That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long upon earth.* So then, long life is not always a blessing, for sometimes it is better to leave the world then to live in it; to depart out of it, then to enjoy it. The ungodly man, the longer he liveth, the greater is his sin, and his condemnation for sin. This the wiseman setteth down, *Thogh a sinner do evil an hundred times, & God prolongeth his days yet I know that it shall be well with them that fear the Lord, & do reverence before him: but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, he shall be like a shadow, because he feareth not before God.* Heerunto agreeth the Prophet *Isaiah*, *There shall be no more there a child of years, nor an old man that hath not filled his days, but he that shall be an hundred years old, shall dy as a young man, but the sinner being an hundred year old shall be accursed.* Thus then we see how to expound the promise of long life, which God performeth really, or if he take away such as are godly and obedient, he recompenceth it more fully with a better life, and so he bestoweth a great deal more then he taketh away, and granteth a better measure then he withheld from them.

Lastly, we learn for our obedience when we suffer losses, not to be vexed through impatency, nor to break out in storming, fretting, and fuming manner against God, but to rest our selves upon him, being ready to bless his name, & not to cast away all hope &

confidence of being restored. It is a worthy saying of the Prophet to *Amaziah K. of Judah*, being like to loose a great sum of money which he had disbursed for the leuying of foreign forces, *The Lord is able to give thee more then this*. If he see it good & profitable for us, he can and will repay it in the same kind; for who looseth for God's cause, & doth not get? but if he do not recompense earthly things with earthly, he will assuredly bestow upon us such riches as are immortal & immutable, & such a treasure as is eternal, not fading, but enduring forever in the heavens. A notable practice heerof we have in *Job*, ch. 19. in all his troubles (which were exceeding great) he comforted himself in this, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, & that I shall see him in the last day*. Somtimes he doth restore in the same kind, that which we have left, & seemeth to be lost: we see in the former example of *Job* what a blessed end the Lord made; so if we will wait with patience, and tarry his leisure, & be content with his works, we shall behold the end better then the beginning. Moreover, we see the merciful dealing of god toward his children, from whō he withholdeth personal blessings. To some he giveth strength of body, swiftness of foot, quickness of sight, readiness of hearing, & aptness of the hand, together with a due proportion & comliness of every part. But to others, he denieth these things, so y^t we see some blind, others lame, crooked, deaf, deformed. Notwithstanding, God oftentimes supplieth these wants, and recompenseth these infirmities with a most plentiful measure of better, that is, of heavenly graces. We see this in the example of the blind man mentioned by the Evangelist *John*, he wanted the sight of his bodily eyes, but he had a greater light shining in his heart, & a deeper insight into the doctrine of salvation, then the chief of the Pharisees that were accounted the only *Rabbies* and masters in *Israel*, so that we may truly say, that the blindman did see, and they that thought themselves to have their eye-sight were stark blind. For when the Pharisees said of the Messia, *We know not from whence this man is, the blind man answered & said unto thē, Doubtless this is a marvelous thing, that ye know not whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes: now we know that God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God, & doth his will, him heareth he, &c. if this man were not of God, he could have done nothing*. This was a worthy and open confession of the great work of God that had been wrought upon him, wherein he saw more true and heavenly light then all his enemies, who then boasted of the name of the church, and cast this simple man out of the Synagogue. But if we consider the poor man of the one side, & the proud pharises on the other side, which of them was most blind, and whither of thē was a member of the true Church? Surely, God gave a marvelous light of knowledge to his weak servant, that he was not ashamed to confess Christ Jesus, according to the measure of grace given him: whereas the blind Pharisees were blind, leaders of the blind, & saw nothing. Heerupon Christ saith, *I am come unto judgment into this world, that they which see not, might see: & that they which see, might be made blind*. And when the Pharisees which were with him heard, these things, & said unto him, *Are we blind also?* He answered, *If ye were blind, ye should not have sin, but now ye say, we see: therefore your sin remaineth*. Let us not therefore despise such as have infirmities or deformities of the body, nor upbraid them with them, which are not in their powers to put away; rather let us take heed of the blots and blemishes of the soul; to wit, of sin, which maketh the greatest scab and scar, and bringeth reproach unto the person. Let us beware of the blindness of the mind, of the hardness of the heart, of the wounds of the soul, and of halting with God. The blindness of the mind is a sin,

and the punishment of sin, so that God is offended with it: whereby it differeth from the blindness of the body, which indeed is a certain affliction, but it is no transgression; it is a kind of misery, but no iniquity; it is a cross, but it is no sin. But the inward blindness of the mind is in it self a sin and breach of God's Law, and maketh a man culpable of judgment, and guilty of eternal death: because none is so blinded, but he hath first pulled out his own eyes, and refuseth the light of the Gospel offered unto him through the hardness of his heart. Again, this ought to be a special comfort unto us, and to suffice to assuage all grief conceived for the want of earthly blessings, if God have denied unto us the use of one or many of our members, as of our eyes, our ears, our tongue, our hands, our feet, and have made us blind, or dumb, or deaf, or lame, or maimed, let us not be discomforted or sink down under the burden; but rather considering the recompense that he giveth us another way, and the supply that he maketh by spiritual graces, let us humbly give him thanks, remembering that it is better for us, that one of our members perish, then the whole body should be cast into hell. We see the holy man *Job*, having had great losses and damages brought upon him to his great hindrance and decay in earthly things, acknowledged the hand of God in it, & gave him the glory, saying, *Naked cam I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken it, blessed be the name of the Lord.* Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *Hearken my beloved Brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, that they should be rich in faith, & heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him,* James 2. If God have made me blind, yet if he have given me the eyes of my mind, to see the mystery of faith in this life, and the excellency of glory reserved for me and all his Saints in the life to come, I have wherewith to comfort me abundantly in the want of bodily sight. If God have made me lame, & to halt with my foot, and thereby want many outward pleasures, that many seek and find; yet if he have vouchsafed this mercy unto me, to make me walk with a right foot to the truth of the Gospel, I cannot want sound comfort and inward peace to my own soul. God looketh not upon the person of man, he accepteth no man for his outward form and feature of the body, but looketh upon the grace and garnishing of the heart; so that albeit we be every way deformed, yet if we be thoroughly reformed in the inner man, we shall be accepted before him a thousand times more, then such as have the greatest Ornaments of the body, but have nothing to decke and adorn the soul.

[*It may be he departed for a season.*]

Note here how the Apostle describeth the sin of *Onesimus* committed against his Master: he doth not aggravate and exaggerate his offense with big & swelling words, to show the greatness of his sin, but doth lessen it by gentle & mild terms whereby he calleth it. His running away he nameth a departing; his absence from his Masters house & service, the missing of him as it were an hour. This the apostle speaketh, not so much to assuage the anger of *Philemon* provoked thorough the offense of his servant, as to testify his unfeigned repentance, whereby he had buried and blotted out the wickedness which he committed by running from his Master, & by robbing of him. We learn hereby, that the falls & sins of our brethren that repent, are not to be increased with odious and extreme words. Whensoever (I say) we see the fruits of unfeigned repentance in any of our brethren that have fallen into

sin, and been overtaken through the weakness of the flesh, we are to bind up their wounds, as careful Surgeons, and to comfort them with the sweet promises of the Gospel; not to revile them, or rail at them, or reproach them for their former falls: we must not speak the most, or the worst, or the hardest of them, but in mildness of spirit mollify the greatness of the sin what we can. This Doctrine is made evident unto us, by many testimonies and examples in the word of God. When *Joseph* saw his Brethren sad and grieved with themselves, because they had sold him into Egypt, he comforteth them with the providence of God, whose work it was to have him sent and sold into the hand of strangers, *Now then you sent me not hither, but the Lord, who hath made me a father unto Pharaoh, & Lord of all his house, and Ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.* This we see in the Lord himself toward *Job*, who reproveth him for much weakness that he had shown in the combat and temptation: yet when he had repented in dust and ashes, and laid his hand upon his mouth, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against his three friends, because they had not spoken of him the thing that is right, like his servant *Job*. The like practice appeareth in *Nathan*, toward *David*, whom he reproveth: first covertly and closely under a parable, then openly and evidently he chargeth him with adultery and murder, together with great unthankfulness toward God that had been so gracious to him; but when he repented and humbled himself under the stroke of the two-edged sword of God's word, saying, *I have sinned against the Lord;* the Prophet doth no more upbraid him with those foul and filthy sins of committing Whoredom, and shedding of blood, but said unto him, *The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die.* Thus did Christ our Savior deal with the woman taken in adultery, even in the very act, brought before him by the Scribes and Pharisees, he preached unto her the Gospel upon her repentance, *I do not condemn thee, Go and sin no more.* The like we see in the Apostles dealing with the incestuous Corinthian; before his conversion, the Apostle chargeth him with fornication, and *Such fornication as is not named among the Gentiles, that one should have his Fathers wife,* and reproveth the whole Church that they had not put him away from among them: yet when he had confessed his sin, and testified his repentance by his unfeigned sorrow for his sin, the Apostle would have his sin forgiven, and his person comforted, *Least he should be swallowed up with overmuch heaviness.* Likewise remembering the Corinthians what they were in the time of their ignorance, Thieves, Oppressors, Fornicators, Idolaters, Drunkards, Railers, & riotous persons, by their conversion to the Gospel, and Faith in Christ, they were changed to a better life, and so could no longer be charged by such sins, *Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, & by the spirit of our God.* Whereby we see this truth plainly proved unto us, that it is our duty not to aggravate and amplify the sins of such as have repented them of their sins.

To this duty we shall be better directed and strengthened in the truth of it, if we mark the reasons. For first, we are not to increase in words the sin of a penitent person, because love worketh softness and gentleness in us, a care of the good name of our Brother, and banisheth all evil surmises & suspicions from us. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *Love is patient.* When *Peter* exhorteth us, that above all things we should have fervent love among us, to the end he may confirm his exhortation, and show that there is nothing more profitable unto the faithful, then to maintain mutual Charity; he bringeth this reason, *For Love covereth*

the multitude of sins. If this love rule in our hearts, & remain among us one towards another, it bringeth excellent benefits, and we avoid innumerable evils. But if hatred bear sway, men in biting and tearing one another, are ready to consume one another, to reproach and detract one from another, to slander and defame, to strike and quarrel one with another, without measure or mercy.

Secondly, we are not always to upbraid our Brethren, and cast them in the teeth with their former falls, because we must account it sufficient, that they have been checked and teproued by us, or by the mouths of many witnesses. The nature of God himself, is gentle toward us, that *he will not always chide, nor keep his anger forever.* So ought we to deal one toward another. For, if he doth not deal with us after our sins nor reward us according to our iniquities, we should have compassion one toward another. If he know whereof we are made, and remember that we are but dust, we must also learn, that we have all need to be forgiven, as there is no man but desireth to be forgiven. If then it be available to our Bretherens good to have them reprov'd, we ought not to proceed to reviling of them, and railing upon them for those offenses which they have forsaken. This is the reason touched by the Apostle, mentioning the transgression and conversion of the incestuous person, who washed away with his tears, the guiltiness of his sin, he saith; *It is sufficient unto the same man, that he was rebuked of many, so that now contrary-wise, ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, &c.* If then, it be sufficient to reprove; then to revile and reproach, is more then sufficient, even superfluous, and unprofitable, and uncharitable, as we noted before.

Thirdly, whensoever our Brethren repent, we are bound to testify our forgiveness of them, and to bring a cloak to cover the foulness and deformity of their offense. But so long as we publish them abroad, and proclaim them in the ears and audience of others, it is very plain we do not forgive them: so long as we remember them to their discredit and reproach, we do not cover them. It is that reason which we heard before out of the Apostle, where he instructeth the Corinthians in Christian meekness and moderation toward him that offended and repented that had fallen, and was risen again; and chargeth them to esteem it enough that he was reprov'd, so that now they should confirm their love toward him, and freely forgive him. Seeing therefore, that love covereth the multitude of sins, seeing it sufficeth to reprove the sinner, and that it is a duty belonging unto us, to testify our forgiveness of him that sinneth; we may from all these considerations, as from evident consequences conclude, that the sins of our brethren, committed and repented of, ought not above measure to be stretched and augmented, but rather mittigated and lessened by us.

Before we come to the Uses of this Doctrine, it shall not be amiss, to answer some Objections. First, the Evangelist *Matthew*, called to be an Apostle, calleth himself a Publican, for in numbering up the twelve, he mentioneth himself, *Matthew that Publican.* I answer, the office of a Publican was no unlawful calling, and therefore not of that Nature that falleth within the compass of this Doctrine that we have in hand. True it is, in regard of the abuse of the Office, the name of the Officer was become odious, and therefore the Publicans and Sinners are oftentimes joined together. Now their Office was, to be Collectors of the Toll and tribute imposed upon them by the Romains which was as lawful for thē to gather, as for the people

to pay. Hence it is, that *John the Baptist* doth not exact of the Publicans that came unto him to leave their office, but exhorted them to beware of bribery & oppressions, *Require no more then that which it appointed unto you*. So then, the condition of a Publican, & the profession of a Christian, may both stand together; so that a man converted to the faith, may hold the office, and be called by the Name, without any disgrace of his outward or inward calling.

The Prophet denounceth a fearful woe against all those that call evil good, or good evil; which put darkness for light, & light for darkness. If then, we are to speak of a penitents sins favorably, & not to deal rigorously with a Convert, it seemeth to give liberty to utter a lie, & to smother the truth. I answer, it is one thing to speak of the nature of the sin, and another thing to speak of the converted sinner. The sin is one thing, but the Conversion maketh it another. When we speak of the Nature of the sin, and the offense against God, we are not to lessen or diminish it; but when we consider it in the person that hath repented, the shame and reproach is done away, so that we may speak of it with all gentleness and mercy toward them.

The Scripture often mentioneth the unclean life of *Rahab*, and albeit she turned to God, forsook her filthiness, and joined her self to the people of God, yet she is branded evermore with the name of an Harlot. So the Apostle saith to the Hebrews, *By Faith the Harlot Rahab perished not with them which obeyed not, when she had received the spies peaceably*. In like manner *James* speaketh, *Was not Rahab the Harlot justified through works, when she had received the Messengers, & sent them out another way?* I answer, this is not mentioned to her reproach, but spoken to their praise: she is not upbraided with it, but commended, because she had forsaken it. We see hereby, what she was before her calling, she is not reproached with it after her calling. Thus our Savior speaketh in another place, to the chief Priests and Elders of the people, *Verily I say unto you, that the Publicans and the Harlots go before you into the kingdom of God*. Where he meaneth, that they were such (as the Apostle speaketh of the Corinthians) but now they had given over that life. Thus he saith of his Miracles that he had wrought, *The blind receive sight, the halt do walk, the Lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up*. These men, while these infirmities were upon them, could not be delivered from them; but he showeth what they had been, and what they were: they had been diseased, but now were restored. So in *Rahab*, the Apostles testify, what she had been, to wit; an Harlot: and what she is, not any longer an Harlot, but a true believer with the people of God. It is added therefore, not any way sounding to her defaming, but to show the greatness of God's compassion, and the soundness of her conversion.

The Uses remain to be stood upon, that the Doctrine may serve to our comfort and instruction. First, we learn from hence a notable point of Christian wisdom, to esteem of all men as they are, and not as they were, according to their present estate wherein they remain, and not according to the condition wherein they lived in times past. It skilleth not what they have been, we must consider what they are. The Apostle reckoning up many horrible sins committed by the Corinthians in the dark night of their ignorance, he saith, *Such were some of you, but now ye are washed, now ye are sanctified*. Where we see, he maketh a flat opposition between their former estate before their calling, and their estate after their

conversion; and setteth a difference between that which they were once, and that which they are now. He saith, such they were, he doth not say such they are; they were, but now are not, because they had repented. The like we see in his affection towards one particular member of that Church (of whom we spake before) while he continued in his Incest, he chargeth them to cast him out from among them; but when he heard of his sorrow for sin, and of his repentance from dead works, he exhorteth them to confirm their love toward him more and more. We see this offered unto us in the example of God and his elect Angels. When we have sinned against the Lord, and fallen into horrible offenses, whereby he is dishonored, and our Consciences wounded, he sendeth means to turn us from our sins, and is ready to forgive us when we repent; he never upbraideth us with our iniquities that we have forsaken, but accepteth of us as we stand in the state of regeneration. This serveth to reprove two sortes of men: First, such as are so uncharitable and malicious, that they never forget the falls of their Brethren, but ever remember them, and reproach them for them. If any of the faithful have suddenly fallen into any sin, it shall always be laid to their charge, and hit in their teeth, and spread abroad from one to another, and be made far greater then it is. Wherein, see the peeuishnesse and partiality of wicked men, who love their own, and bear with a boulder up one another in wickedness. If the ungodly that make a continual practice of sin, and have their whole delight therein, do run out of one evil into another, without touch of conscience, without shame of men, without fear of God, without turning of the heart by repentance: they shall find those that will defend them, justify them, speak well of them, as if they had committed no sin. But if any that are true Believers, have been overtaken by the suggestion of the Devil, and the corruption of the flesh; one fall of theirs shall never be forgotten, it shall always be kept on foot, it shall run in the minds and mouths of profane men, as if it had not been forgiven them: whereas a thousand enormities of lewd and ungodly men are passed over, and never spoken off. The World loveth her own, and speaketh well of her own, even of such as God abhorreth. As for the Godly that desire to please God, it cannot abide them, all their actions are narrowly pryed and searched into, and never were they so much hated as in these our days. Seeing then we have to do with such sharp sighted Eagles, that behold all, and more then all that we do, who like deceitful Workmen, are ready to stretch them upon the tender-hooks, and like slubbering Surgeons, spare not to make the wound wider then it is, whereas they ought to seek to cure and heal it: let us look more earnestly into our own ways, and know that we have a thousand eyes fixed upon us, and a thousand mouths that will be opened against us, and ten thousand ears that are prepared to listen to any slanders and surmises that shall be reported of us. Thus shall we take profit and reap a benefit even by our enemies. Thus we see how they are reprov'd that upbraid men with their sins which they have repented off, and do not acknowledge the change that is wrought in them; not by Men, but by God. He that is truly converted, is made a new man, and hath a new work begun in him, so that his old works are renounced, and no man abhorreth them more then himself, no man is grieved for them so much as himself. If then we truly love our Brethren, especially whom we see to be sorry for their sins past, we will think of them with all Charity, we will speak to them with all gentleness, we will have no evil suspicion of them, we will not hinder their good Name: so that when they are evil

spoken off by others, we will endeavor to excuse them, to bury their faults, and to save their credit.

True it is, we must not allow of wickedness, nor call evil good; but such as have offended us, we must bear with them, and deal with them by admonitions, exhortations, reproofs, & threatenings, laboring thereby to heal them, & to give a remedy unto them. Now, if such be worthy reproof and reprehension, that remember the offenses of their Neighbors, which before they have practiced, and now have renounced: how much more are they to be condemned, that mock and deride such as have unblameable infirmities, and are blind, or deaf, or lame, or any way blemished in their bodies. The Wiseman teacheth in the Book of the *Proverbs*, *That he which mocketh the poor, reproacheth him that made him*. So it may be truly said, that whosoever reproacheth his Brother for his blindness, or lameness, or deafness, or deformity, reproacheth God that hath made him so. And who knoweth what hangeth over his own head? Or what judgment may fall upon himself or his? The little Children that came out of *Beth-ell*, mocked the Prophet, and said unto him; *Come up thou Bald-head, come up thou Bald-head*. Where we see they scoffed at him for his infirmity: but what followed? He turned about and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord; and two Bears came out of the Forest, and tare in pieces two and forty Children of them. A grievous judgment fell upon them, notwithstanding the tenderness of their age: and they are made an example unto us, to teach us to beware, that we make not a mock at the miseries of others. It is our duty rather to pity them, and show compassion toward them; to defend them, not to offend them; to comfort them in their affliction, not to lay an heavier burden upon them. This is a notable comfort unto all Parents, when they have Children borne unto them any way blemished and deformed, that they do not therefore cease to love them, that they ought not to be ashamed of them, that they should not neglect the education of them, but rather be the more careful to train them up in the fear of God, which shall more beautify them, then their blindness or lameness shall be able to blemish them. For it may be, that God will give unto us more comfort by them, then by all the rest that have the ornaments of Nature. And if we think them to be greater sinners then other men, because they suffer such things, and have those infirmities, we are deceived. When the Disciples asked Christ concerning the blind man, *Who did sin, this Man or his Parents, that he was borne blind?* Jesus answered; *Neither hath this man sinned nor his Parents, but that the works of God should be shown on him*. So then, these wants that appear in many; as the blindness of the eyes, the lameness of the foot, the deafness of the ear, the baldness of the head, the maymednesse of the hand, the stuttering of the tongue, the crookedness of the body, the deformity of the face, or other defects of nature, are not in themselves sins, but infirmities without blame or blot, which are not to be charged upon those that have them. If we be careful to eschew the blemishes of the Soul, that make us ugly Monsters, and misshapen Creatures in the sight of God, we are blessed & happy: as for outward deformities, they shall all be done away, when this Mortall shall put on immortality; and this corruption put on incorruption, so that we shall be made like unto Christ our Savior in glory.

Secondly, seeing the faults of Brethren repenting, are not to be exaggerated and increased with odious Names, but rather covered with the cloak of Charity; as *Sem* and *Japheth* did the

nakedness of their Father. It teacheth us to rejoice at their conversion, to foster and cherish good things in them, that are Prosolites and Conuerts to the Faith. The Scribes and Pharisees *Would compass Sea and Land to make one of their Sect and profession: they spared no labor to win them unto them.* How much more then ought we to endeavor to encourage all that be coming on, and to kindle good things appearing in them? Our Savior teacheth; *That there is joy in the presence of the Angels of God, for one Sinner that converteth.* Thus it ought to be with the members of the Church, when they see the increase thereof, nothing should so rejoice them, as when an access is made and added thereunto. If the body had long lacked the use of one part, and should see the same restored unto it, would not the rest of the members much rejoice? Yes, no doubt. So when we see one of the Sheep of Christ, that hath wandered far from the Sheep-fold, brought home, and following the true Shepherd, we cannot but receive great consolation by it. It is a true saying, that there are many Wolves within, and many Sheep without. Some there are that lurk in the bosom of the Church, which depart out of it, and are found to be indeed no better then Wolves. Others, are for a time out of the Church, and are as savage and cruel Wolves, who in the end are gathered home, and are in the number of the Sheep of Christ. Such a one was Saint *Paul*, who was a Persecuter: such were many that were the Crucifiers of Christ, yet were the Sheep and Lambes that belong unto Christ. When these join themselves to the Church, and are converted unto the Faith, their former life led in ignorance and blidnesse, must be forgotten, and we are to rejoice at their conversion.

Did any of the Church ever reproach *Paul* with his blasphemy against God, with his oppression of the Saints, and breathing out threatenings against the Disciples of Christ, when once he became a believer? Did any tell *Peter* in scorn and contempt, that he was a denyer of his Master, a Swearer and cursser that he knew him not, after that he had testified the truth of his repentance by the bitterness of his tears, for his weakness that he had shown? Did any object to *Noah* his drunkenness, or to *Lot* his Incest, or to *Solomon* his Idolatry? No man laid any of these things unto their charge, neither were they hated for them.

Hence it is, that the Prophet *Daniel* having denounced a great judgment to be accomplished against *Nebuchadnezzar*, for his cruelty and oppression, saith unto him; *O King, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by mercy toward the poor: Loe, let there be an healing of thine error.* Where he showeth, that howsoever he grievously sinned and provoked God to wrath, yet if he could repent of his former ways, all his wounds should be healed, and the judgments of God should be reuersed and revoked. This serveth to reprove those that regard not the repentance of those that have sinned, nor esteem of them any whit the better. These were the *Nouatians*, that gloried of a kind of purity and perfection in themselves, and denied Salvation to those that denied Christ in persecution, and to such as fell into sin after Baptism; yea, albeit they did repent. But God delighteth not in the death of a Sinner, but that he should live. It is our duty to raise up them that are fallen, and to heal the broken-hearted, after the example of Christ, who will not break the bruised Reede, nor quench the smoking Flaxe. And if we be commanded to leave ninety and nine in the Wilderness, seeking that which is lost, and bearing it home

upon our shoulders: how much are they to be reprov'd that keep them from the Sheep-fold that are come unto it, and bar the door against them that desire to enter? The Apostle saith; *That to the weak he became as weak, that he might win the weak; and he was made all things to all Men, that he might by all means save some.* The Lord Jesus calleth the Church of *Ephesus* to repentance, *To remember from whence they were fallen, and to do their first works:* Now he would never have exhorted them to repentance, except there had been pardon and forgiveness for the Penitent. If any should say to the Husbandman, follow thy business, till thy ground, plough thy fields, sow thy Corn, but thou shalt see no increase, thou shalt gather in no harvest, thou shalt have no fruit of thy labor: do we think that by this means he could be encouraged or stirred up to labor? Or if the Master of a Ship should bid the Mariners in a tempest and storm to look to their Tacklings, and everyone to work with his hands in his place wherein he was set, and withal should tell them (when they had done all) that they should neither save the Ship, nor the lives of such as were in the Ship, it were a cold comfort, or rather a certain discomfort.

In like manner, what should it avail to exhort and excite any to repentance, and to call upon them to turn unto God, when in the mean season, we bar them from salvation, and hedge up the way that leadeth unto eternal life, that they cannot enter into it, albeit they do repent and return unto him? So then, there is greater mildness and moderation required of us, & we must labor to suppress hatred and malice toward our Brethren, If any be sudainly overtaken by the snares of Satan, and the subtlety of sin, let us restore them with the spirit of lenity, considering our selves, least we also be tempted. Let us not be glad at their falls, nor triumph at the victory which Satan seemeth to have gotten, but rather mourn for them, and help them out of their danger. We are commanded in the Law, when we see the Ass of our enemy to couch down under his burden, not to cease or fall to lift him up: how much more ought we to support the weakness, to asswage the sorrow, to bear the infirmity, and to relieve the misery of our Brother? It is the manner of ungodly persons, to make it their daily sport in their devilish meetings, to insult over him, and to leap upon his back with all the reproach and infamy that they can devise to lay upon him. But it skilleth not what such foul mouths do utter, they shall one day reap the reward of their malice, and the penitent person that holdeth his peace, shall find in the end the fruit of his patience.

Thirdly, it teacheth us for our obedience, to repent betimes, and not to delay the time thereof, but while the acceptable season is to bring forth the fruits of amendment of life. For seeing we are not to make the most, or speak the worst of the falls of our penitent Brethren, it serveth as a good encouragement, and a profitable inducement to lead us and guide us unto true repentance, that so our sins may be put away. Sin is as a most filthy Leprosy, but when we repent, we are cleansed of that Leprosy. It is as unsavory Dung that stencheth the earth, and the evil savor thereof ascendeth up to Heaven; but when we repent, we smell pleasantly, as a sweet perfume in the Nostrils of God. It is as filthy Mire, that soyleth the Soul, corrupteth the Body, and spotteth the Garment; but when we repent, the stain and blemishes of sin are put out of his sight, and blotted out of his remembrance. For when God forgiveth iniquity, transgression, and sin; he throweth it into the Sea, into the bottom of the Sea, that it may never arise again to our confusion and condemnation, and he remembereth

it no more. As far as the *East is from the West, so far hath he removed our sins from us*, as the Prophet speaketh, so that they are so far taken out of his sight, that they and we shall never meet together. He covereth them, and will not impute them unto us; *So that we which were in times past strangers and enemies, are now reconciled, being made holy and unblameable, and without fault in his sight.* If then God do cover them when we repent, who are we that go about to uncover them? If he do not impute them, why should we lay them to their charge, who have a discharge from God, who hath cancelled the band and hand-writing that was against them? If God have washed and wiped away the filthiness of them, why should any man cast the mire of them in their faces again? The most expert and excellent Pysician, cannot cure a deep wound & a festered sore, but some scar will remain, and some print in the flesh is left behind: but God so healeth our infirmities, that he taketh away the stain, the guilt, and the punishment, that no token, no mark, no sign of his wrath and indignation ever appeareth to appall us, or dismay us. This is the great love and unspeakable mercy of God toward the broken heart and contrite Spirit. He that hath been an Adulterer, and hath repented of his uncleanness, is no Adulterer. He that hath been a Drunkard, and repenteth of the beastliness and abuse of the good Creatures of GOD, is no longer a Drunkard. He that hath been an Enemy and hinderer of God's word, and now loveth it above Silver and Gold, is no more an enemy, but a friend of the Gospel. He that hath been a Swearer and Blasphemer, and repenteth of his blasphemies, is not a blasphemer. He that hath been a profaner of the Lord's Sabbaoths, and now is careful to sanctify them, and spend them in holy exercises, is no longer a profane person. True it is, these men have been such, but when they see their sins, hate them, forsake them, are grieved for them, and are departed from them, true repentance is as the Fullers Sope to wash them, and to make them whiter then the Snow. We must therefore make a great difference, between that which they have been, and that which they are. Shall we say, that he, who is come to man's estate, and hath put away childishness, is still a Babe and Suckling, as Infant and Child, because once he was so? Or shall we say, that he, who is made a Free-man, and had served out his Prentishippe, is a Bond-man still, and under the jurisdiction of another, because that once he was so? In like manner, shall we change our Brethren to be Children in knowledge, to be the Servants of sin, and Bond-slaves of Satan, because they were so in the time of their ignorance, before God gave unto them repentance, that they might come out of these snares wherein they were holden Captives? Nay, I will say more, whosoever reuileth and reproacheth him with his Adultery, Idolatry, Blasphemy, Drunkenness, or Prophanesse, that hath fallen into these offenses, but dwelleth not nor delighteth in them, is a malicious enemy, a false accuser, a slanderer and liar against his Brother. The Apostle *Peter* denied his Master (as we shown before) he forswore him, and cursed himself if he knew the Man, which he did through fear to save his life. But because he went immediately out of the High-Priests Hall, and wept bitterlie, did any of the rest ever upbraid him, and reproach him with Apostasy, with swearing, with curssing, with his infirmity and presumption? All they therefore are led by another Spirit then the Disciples were, who despightfullie cast them in the teeth with their sins, which are more odious and grievous to them, then to those that set them afoot, and blaze them abroad to their disgrace.

This is a great comfort, and bringeth wonderful peace of conscience to all those that truly repent of all their sins past, which they have followed with greediness: seeing, that as God forgiveth them, so he will not have others to charge them with them. For if the Lord and Master of us all remit them, we are not to charge our Fellow-Servants with them. If the Prince forgive, upon the sorrow and submission of his Vassall, the Treason intended against his person, shall the subject dare to call him Traitor, seeing the Princes pardon is the Subjects protection and discharge? If the Father forgive the Child his disobedience, shall the rest of his Brethren speak evil of him, and always keep it in fresh remembrance? If these things were duellie regarded and rightly considered of us, we would not lie one hour in our sins, but make hast to be reconciled unto God, that so we may abolish the guiltiness and greuousnesse, together with the infamy of them. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith; *As ye have given your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity, to commit iniquity, so now give your members servants unto righteousness, in holiness: for when ye were the Servants of sin, ye were freed from righteousness. What fruit had ye then, in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death, but now being freed from sin, and made Servants unto God, ye have your fruit in holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

Where he teacheth, that such as continue in their sins, are as dead trees, or as rotten branches that bringeth forth no fruit: but they that are made free from sin, are made the Servants of righteousness. The Tree that hath a long time brought forth no fruit, when once it beginneth to bring forth good fruit, cannot be called an evil tree. The ground that beginneth to yield plentiful increase, cannot be called barren, whatsoever it hath been in times past. So is it with everyone of us, we are accounted Trees of righteousness, and fruitful ground, so soon as we lay aside the unsavory fruits of wickedness. Wherefore, whensoever we hear the taunts and reproaches of uncharitable men, cast out against us for such sins as we have long ago left, let us not be grieved at them, nor sorrowful for them, nor seek revenge against them, but rather comfort our selves in this, both that God hath given us repentance to see and forsake our sins, which before we made our chiefest pleasure, and that he hath pardoned them in his Son, and will never lay them to our charge, so that he accounteth them as if they had never been committed, and accepteth of us, as if we never had offended him. As for the ungodly, that have sin reigning in them, and never truly repented of heir sin, they may and ought to be charged with their sins, and as we find them in the present time to be, so we may justly account of them, so we may truly call them, and so we may censure them and pronounce of them. For as it is lawful to call a Spade, a Spade: so he that is known to live still in Adultery, may be named and noted to be an Adulterer, and a filthy liver. He that maketh a continual practice of drunkenness, and is resolved to remain in it, may be called a drunken beast, a drunken sot, a drunken companion, and we need crave no pardon if we give him that style. He that regardeth not the hearing of God's word, but liveth in open contempt of God, and of his ordinances, may be justly branded with the reproach of his sin, and may be called the enemy of all righteousness, and the Child of the Devil. We know, that *Judas* through covetousness betrayed his Master, and when he had done, he dispared of pardon and hanged himself: the reproach of this fact and offense, remaineth to this day, and shall never be blotted out, but he is called *Judas* the Traitor, and

Son of perdition. *Math.* 10. 4. *Acts* 1. 16. 17. And thus the case standeth with all other unrepentant Sinners, that use not the remedy appointed of God to bring them out of the state of damnation, into the way of salvation. Hereupon we see the Prophet *Isaiah*, Chap. 1. calleth them the Princes of *Sodom*, and the people of *Gomorrah*, a sinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of the wicked, corrupt children, Witches Children, the seed of the Adulterer, and of the Whore. Christ calleth the Pharisees a brood of Vipers, blind Guides, Hypocrites, such as were of their Father the Devil. This appeareth in the Psalm, where the Prophet speaking of such as hated to be reformed, and cast the words of God behind them, saith; *When thou seest a Thief thou runnest with him, and thou art partaker with the Adulterer: thou givest thy mouth to evil, and with thy tongue thou forgest deceit: thou sittest and speakest against thy Brother, and slanderest thy Mothers Son: these things hast thou done, and I held my tongue: therefore thou thoughtest that I was like thee, but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thee: O consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none that can deliver you.* Where we see, he layeth to their consciences their sins, and applieth unto them the judgments of God that did hang over them: so that thereupon he calleth them to serious and earnest consideration of their former works, thereby to draw them to repentance. Heereby are reprov'd diverse sortes of evil and corrupt minded men. First, such as aggravate and augment the sins of the godly, and make those that are no sins, to be taken for sins: and such as are lesser, to seem the greatest of all.

These are they that broach and belch out of their envious hearts and filthy mouths, and stinking breathes, all the venom that lieth hidden within them against the godly, when they can espy any of them (who have their weakness as other men, and being left unto themselves, cannot but fall) to be overtaken with the frailty of the flesh; Oh (say they) these are the holy men, these are the holy Brethren, these are the godly folk: see, see what they are, none are worse people then they. These men have quick eyes to see their sins, but they are blind and cannot see their repentance. They know what they have committed, but they are ignorant and will not know that their sins are remitted, and that whatsoever the Son of God remitteth, ought not to be retained and remembered of the Sons of men. It is no disgrace to a man to have been wicked and infamous for his offenses, if he be throughly changed and altered: for their reformation giveth them more grace and honor with God and all good men, then their former life doth shame and discredit. The Apostle saith; *The time of this ignorance God regarded not, but now he admonisheth all men everywhere to repent, because he hath appointed a day in which he would judge the World.* Secondly, they are reprov'd that lessen the sins of the impenitent, and mollify them with gentle Plaisters, thereby hartning and hardening them in their sins, thereby fawning upon them, and flattering them in their wickedness. They are men of the profane World like themselves; and therefore their sins shall be no sins, and their great sins are little motes that cannot be seen. It hath always been a practice and ancient custom among evil Men, to lessen odious vices, & to abate them with softer and milder terms: and that fraud and fashion was never never more frequent, then where the vice was most common. Thus it is, when Thieves are called Taking-men: Covetous persons, Thrifty-Liwers: Thus Adultery is accounted but a trick of youth; fighting and quarrelling is named man-hood; drunkenness is reputed good fellowship, and Drunkards the

only good fellows. Thus is sin extenuated and diminished by those that know not the Nature of sin; and therefore seek to blanch the foulness and filthiness of it, to which they are so continually accustomed. But howsoever these men account of sin, and whatsoever they call it, they shall find that the lessening of it, is the way to increase it, and the diminishing of it, is the means to make it greater. If we would have our sins and offenses not to come into account, we must forsake them, and repent of them.

Thirdly, it reproveth such as disclose and reveal a Penitents confession. When our Brethren in the anguish of their Souls, and in a feeling of the horror of sin, have sought peace and comfort at our hands, and have discovered their offenses that trouble them to us, as the sick man doth his disease to the Physician that he may be healed: it is our duty to comfort them, not to disgrace them; to conceal them, not to reveal them; to hide them, not to publish them and blaze them abroad, to their disgrace and discredit. True it is, when evil is opened unto us, not past, or present, but to be done afterward, as if a man confess his determination and resolution to commit Murthers, we are not tied to cover and conceal it, but are bound to manifest and make it known. This showeth the wonderful abuse of the Church of *Rome* committed in holy things, and things supposed by them to be holy. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is most horribly profaned of them, which being instituted in remembrance of the death of Christ, to assure us of our spiritual communion in him, and of our spiritual nourishment from him, is often received of them to combine them together in wickedness, and to take security thereby one of another, not to reveal the Treasons and Conspiracies that are plotted among them. Thus it is in the supposed Sacrament of Penance, when they would reveal the hidden mischief and poisons of their hearts, to the Priests and Jesuits their Confessors, they will seem to do it by way of confession, that so it might be (as it were) locked up and sealed with this Seal, as a secret never to be disclosed and discovered. Thus is confession become nothing else but a cover of Treason and Rebellion. But when our Brethren being afflicted in Conscience, and wounded with the Darts of Satan, and the poison of sin, shall accuse themselves, and confess some heinous sin committed that lieth heavy upon them, and can find no comfort in concealing of it, but greater horror, & thereby are brought to the gates of Hell; and like to be swallowed up in despair, when they shall (I say) confess to the glory of God, and the shaming of themselves, the wickedness of their hearts and hands, we are not to utter it to others to their disgrace, but by all means we can to cover it in secret and silence. For as we are to acknowledge our faults one to another, and to pray one for another: so we are in love to conceal the falls one of another, and not to open them in choller and malice to their reproach.

Lastly, this reproveth our remissness and wretchlesse in dealing with recusant Papists, the members of the Pope and Popish Church, who because we would not offend them, we speak of them honourably, and give them the Name of Catholics, and honor them with the Title of the Church: whereas we should give them their right, and call them by their proper Names, of Idolaters, and enemies of the Grace of God, and disturbers of the State. We have many among us that are ready to join with them, and to give them the right hand of fellowship, who can be content to mingle together God and *Baal*, Christ and *Belial*, light and darkness, the Temple of God, and an Idol. But as we believe the High-priest of *Rome*, to be the

very Anti-christ described in the Scripture, so we also hold that the Church of *Rome* is a false and Bastard-Church, and no true Church of Christ Jesus, who not only have shaken, but razed down the very foundations of Religion, maintaining the worshipping of Images, and the merrits of works, by making a mock of Christ's merits and satisfaction, by devising other Mediators, and by presuming to offer him up an unbloody Sacrifice to God the Father. Let us not therefore halt between two opinions, nor go about to reconcile those things which can never hold or hang together. The false Apostles would join the Law and the Gospel together, the works of the Law, and the grace of Faith in the matter of Justification, which can never be, the one destroying and pulling down the other: because if it be of grace, it is no more of works, or else were grace no more grace: but if it be of works, it is no more grace, or else were work no more work. So we have those that dream of an union between Christ and Antichrist, but if the Lord be God, follow him; if *Baal* be he, then go after him. No man can serve both these Masters so contrary one from the other, so that whosoever cleaveth to the one, forsaketh the other.

Verse 16. [*Not now as a Servant, but above a Servant, even as a Brother, &c.*]

Here is a singular commendation of *Onesimus*, expressed by many steps and degrees; the one ascending and climbing above the other. He was not only as a Servant, but above a Servant; not only as a Brother, but a beloved Brother; not only dear to *Paul*, but much more to *Philemon* himself. This is so much the more worthy praise and commendation; nay, of wonder and admiration, as the disposition of Servants in those times was lewd and licentious, who albeit they had good and godly Masters, yet they were light-fingered and light-footed, and upon every occasion they were apt to run away from them, as appeareth in *Hagar* that lived in the house of *Abraham*, when *Sarah* began to deal roughly with her, immediately she fled from her. Seeing therefore it was so rare a thing among those kind of men, to find any well minded and disposed, the Apostle maketh the more account of him, and would have his Master to make account of him. As if he should reason thus:

- *Him, who in Christ Jesus is become thy Brother, thou oughtest carefully to tender, and dearly to love:*
- *But Onesimus is now by his unfeigned conversion become thy Brother;*
- *Therefore receive him.*

Here we see the Apostle reasoneth for *Onesimus*, to have him received and respected above an ordinary Servant, because he was truly converted, and had in him a good measure of Grace, and was become a true and sound Christian. We learn from hence, that the more Grace appeareth in any, the more should they be tendered and regarded of us, whether they be Servants, Children, Neighbors, Pastors, People, Wife, Kinsfolke, or Acquaintance. In whomsoever the greatest store of heavenly things is to be found, such as most of all to be loved and regarded; tendered, and respected. The Prophet *David* teacheth, when the Lord, who had anointed him to be King over his people, should bring him unto the Kingdom, and

make him Ruler and Governor over a great and mighty People, what they were that he would most of all regard, and upon whom he would cast his eyes; *Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me, he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me, &c.* Solomon hath many heavenly sentences, and Divine Proverbs to this purpose: as Chap. 14. 35. *The pleasure of a King is in a wise servant: but his wrath shall be toward him that is lewd.* So in the 16. Chapt. *The righteous lips are the delight of Kings, and the King loveth him that speaketh right things.* Likewise, in the Chapter following, *A discreet Servant shall have rule over a lewd Son, and he shall divide the heritage among the Brethren.* The practice of this duty we see in Abraham, he had a faithful Servant, whom he made the Steward and Governor of his house, and made more reckoning of him, then he did of *Ishmael* his Son, or of the rest that did attend about him; and therefore purposed to have made him his heir. When he purposed to provide a Wife for his Son *Isaac*, he called him, and employed him to go to his Country and to his Kindred to bring a wife for him. The like we see in *Jacob*, Who loved *Joseph* above all his Brethren, because he saw most grace in him. This was in *Elkanah* toward his wife *Hannah*, he comforted her in her affliction, and said; *Why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not? And why is thy heart troubled? Am not I better to thee then ten Sons?* This appeareth in *Jonathan* toward *David*, *He loved him as his own soul*, and made a covenant of peace, and a league of friendship with him, not in any worldly respect, not for any earthly commodity, not to enjoy any temporal benefit (for he seemed thereby to loose a Kingdom) but because he saw the Lord to be with him. So the Apostle writing to the elect Lady and her Children, testifierh; *That he loved them in the truth, and rejoiced greatly that he found them walking in the truth.* Heereby we see, laying all these testimonies together, the truth of this doctrine, that it is our duty to regard them most, that have greatest grace shining in them.

The reasons hereof are plain to inform us. For first, where Grace is, it bringeth blessedness to that society, kingdom, congregation, family, and person; as appeareth by the confession of *Joseph's* Master. *Gen. 39. 2. 3.* whom he served. Now who are more to be regarded, or better to be thought off, then such as are blessed, and cause blessedness to others? The wicked man is accursed of God, *and draweth the curse of God upon the places where he dwelleth, and upon the persons with whom he dwelleth.* But such as have found grace with God, and have grace laid up as a precious Treasure in their hearts, do bring the blessings of God to others, and serve to conuay them to them, as we see by infinite examples in the Scripture.

Secondly, we see that God is most gracious to such as have most Grace in their hearts, he tendreth them as the apple of his eye, and loveth them as own Sons. Indeed he loveth all the works of his hands as they are his Creatures: he maketh his Sun to shine, his rain to fall, his fruitful seasons to refresh them: he hath not left himself without witness among the Infidels, that he might make them without excuse. He giveth to Beasts, and to beastly men their food, their Corners and Garners are full, and abounding with diverse sortes, and their Sheep bring forth thousands, and ten thousands in their Streetes: but GOD is specially known in *Judah*, his Name is great in *Israel*: he showeth his Word and his Statutes among them, he hath not dealt so with every Nation, neither have they known his judgments. As this is the dealing of God toward those that are his, whom he maketh partakers of the secrets of his Kingdom: so it is

our duty to follow his example, and to show our selves like unto him in our brotherly kindness toward his chosen Children, and our beloved Brethren.

Thirdly, the more grace appeareth in any, the nearer he doth resemble God, the more evidently doth the Image of God show it self in him. The Image of God, standeth and consisteth, especially in holiness and true righteousness. The ungodly are stamped and marked with profaneness and wickedness, which is the Devils badge and impression. The more they grow in evil, and bring forth the fruits of impiety and unrighteousness, the nearer they come to Satan, and are like unto him. On the other side, such as bear the Image of their heavenly father, must be exceedingly respected and regarded, as the Apostle teacheth; *Everyone that loveth him which begat, loveth him also which is begotten of him.* He that loveth the Father, will for the Fathers sake, love the Child. And he that loveth God, will (for his sake) love the Child of God. Seeing therefore it is blessedness to every society and Congregation, to have men therein endued with grace, seeing God delighteth to rest among them that seek after grace; and lastly, the more grace is found in any, the nearer he draweth to God: in all these respects we conclude this as a certain truth, that it is our duty to respect them above all others, that have the greatest measure of grace abiding in them.

Let us gather the uses that arise from this Doctrine. First of all, this ought to stir us all up to labor to grow in grace and in the gifts of the Spirit, that thereby we may procure & deserve the love of men. They that grow in grace, are truly to be reputed and accounted gracious. It is noted in Christ, *That he increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.* When a man groweth in strength of body, it is a sign his meat nourisheth him, and doth him good. So when we profit in knowledge and understanding, in holiness and sanctification of life, it showeth that we are good hearers of the word. *Solomon saith in the Proverbs, A wise man shall hear and increase in learning: and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.* We must therefore proceed in good things, that we may be well pleased, that we may be enriched in his graces, and established more firmly in the ways of godliness. For there cannot be a better means to keep us from a fearful Apostasy, and to preserve us from a dangerous backsliding, then to go forward in that journey into which we are entered, and to make strait steps to the place of our rest. So long as we walk to the end of the race set before us, there is no fear of fainting or falling backward. But when once we begin to stand still, and do not go forward, our case is to be pitied, we have given room to Satan, and taken the foil, who will not rest there, but take farther hold of us. Whosoever standeth still, and remaineth at one stay in matters of Religion, will shortly turn backward. The heavenly bodies are ever in motion, it is the earth that standeth still at one stay: so such as are heavenly minded, are always going and growing toward heaven; whereas such as think upon nothing but the earth, are so cloyed and clogged with that gross matter, that they cannot move a foot forward to lay hold of happiness. Hence it is that the Apostle exhorteth the *Corinthians, Seeing we have these promises (dearly beloved) let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of Flesh, and spirit, and finish our sanctification in the fear of God.* Likewise, writing to the *Thessalonians, He stirreth them up, and exhorteth them in the Lord Jesus, that they increase more and more, as they had received of them, how they ought to walk and to please God.* Thus also speaketh the Apostle *Peter,; Ye therefore (beloved) seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye be also plucked away with the error of the wicked,*

and fall from your own steadfastness: but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This serveth to reprove those that either stand still or go backward, and are not proficience in the School of Christ, who hear much and learn little; who know somewhat, and practice nothing at all; who think they have gotten enough, and that now they may be idle and slothful. It was not so with the Apostle, who was a better Scholar then these Drones; he labored evermore to be better & better, as himself testifieth; *I forget that which is behind, and endeavor myself to that which is before, and follow hard toward the mark, to the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* He was not like unto a foolish Runner, who running in a Race for a great price, will every foot be looking back how much ground he hath run and rid, but his eyes were fully fixed upon the mark, considering how far he had yet to pass, and waighing how much he was distant from perfection. It had been better, that we had never made profession of Christ, or been called by his Name, then to stand at a stay, or to start aside, whereby it may be probablie suspected, if not rightly gathered, that we never had any soundness in us. Let us therefore labor to abound more and more in wisdom, and in all godliness. Whosoever glorieth that he hath so much Grace as he desired, did never truly desire any grace. Whosoever sitteth still, and never intendeth to go forward, shall never come at his journeys end. And whosoever thinketh himself to be good enough, and purposeth never to be better, will presently grow to be worse, and never cease until that he be stark naught.

On the other side, such as have a care to proceed, and are at the mending hand, though they do it slowly and slackely, though they have many defects and defaults, though they feel in themselves many infirmities and imperfections, yet it is a notable comfort and testimony unto their hearts, that GOD will give them grace to continue unto the end, and to persevere in the Faith unto the death. For such do get ground of their enemies, do weaken the force of sin, do strengthen the gifts of the Spirit, and do profit daily in the exercises of Religion which they frequent. Secondly, this reproveth such as regard most of all, and bestow the greatest fruits of their love and compassion, upon the most ungodly and ungracious, which are most unworthy to be respected. For the more men grow in wickedness and profaneness, the less they ought to be loved and liked of us. It is true godliness that should join us in mutual friendship one with another, and unite our affections one toward another. The more godliness appeareth to be in them, the nearer ought our conjunction to be with them. And as they grow in good things, so ought our love to increase toward them. This the Prophet David teacheth. Psalm 15. 4. *Lord, who shall dwell in thy Tabernacle, who shall rest in thy holy mountain? He in whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoreth them that fear the Lord.* And in the Psalm following, *Thou art my Lord, my well doing extendeth not to thee, But to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent: All my delight is in them.* But how many are there among us, that have no society or familiarity with the faithful, and such as fear the name of the Lord? That think themselves in a Prison or in Hell, so long as they are among them? That can be merry and pleasant among profane Companions, but hang down their heads when they are with the godly, and never rest till they be gone from them. If a Man or a Woman should always delight to be in the company of Bears and Wolves, and to converse among Dogs and

Swine, that when you seek for them, you should never find them but among the Beasts, as if they had abandoned the company of reasonable Creatures, we would think them strange bodies, we would wonder at their humors, and be ready to say they were of a wild and woluish Nature, and (as it were) transformed into the qualities of Beasts, like unto *Nebuchadnezzar*, who had his understanding taken from him, and his dwelling appointed among the Beasts of the field. *Dan.* 4. 30. So is it with those that frequent no company but of wicked persons, and use no society with any, but of such as are as blind as Beetels, and as senseless as stones, & as brutish as beasts in matters of Religion: may we not truly conclude of them, that they are beastly minded, and like to them with whom they sort, and to whom they resort? The Prophet saith, I am a Companion of all that fear thee: but these may say; I am a Companion of them that forsake thee. He saith; Do not I hate them that hate thee? But these men say, Do not I love them that hate thee, and hate them that love thee? They hate the godly in their hearts, and the more grace appeareth in them, the more they despise them; as *Michall* did *David*, when she saw his zeal in bringing home the Ark of the Lord into his own City. They esteem more of their dogs and Swine, then they do of the dear Servants of God, bought with the precious blood of Christ, & therefore they say! Oh, these are the little flock, these are Saints, these are holy folks, we are not for their company. But if we belong to God and to his Kingdom, we must of necessity be of the Communion of Saints. And if indeed thou think them holy, thou oughtest to conclude; therefore we are, and must be, and will be for their company. For either we are holy, or unholy; either godly, or profane; either righteous, or unrighteous. If we be not true Christians, we are no better then Devils incarnate: and therefore shall have our portion and reward among the Devils. So then, either they utter those words with a scoffing spirit, and then we leave them to his judgment that will take vengeance of all such taunts that he accounteth cast out against himself: or else they make a fearful conclusion against their own Souls, disclaiming themselves to be Members of the Church, renouncing the sweet society & communion of the Saints, refusing the forgiveness of their sins, and accounting themselves unworthy of eternal life: or else they speak ignorantly, as poor silly blind Souls, who are to be pitied and prayed for, and this all the hurt we wish unto them for all the malice they bear against us, being bold to crave more good for them, then they do for themselves, saying; *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do: Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* Thus we desire God to give them them eyes that are blind, and to open their hearts that have shut them against the truth, and the professors thereof.

Secondly, seeing it is our duty to respect everyone of the faithful, according to the grace of God measured out unto him, it is required of all men to look always to the best things in the choice of the companions of their life. We learn not to enter rashly into any near society with such as have not the graces of God's holy spirit to commend them. When any of us are to seek friends, to match our selves with a Wife, to entertain Servants, to make choice of teachers, our care must be to enquire after such as have true piety in their hearts, and may yield unto us sound comfort. And whensoever we have made that happy and heavenly choice, we must labor to cherish, to increase, and to strengthen them in all their ways, and for our parts, must delight and rejoice in them above all other. One good Friend, one godly

Wife, one religious Servant, is worth ten thousand others, what privileges of the flesh soever they bring with them. Hence it is that the Apostle saith; *The Wife is bound by the law, as long as her husband liveth: but if her Husband be dead, she is at liberty to marry with whom she will, only in the Lord.* We see how *David* among all the Sons of *Saul*, made choice only of *Jonathan*, to join with him in a strong league of sure friendship, because he knew him to have an upright and faithful heart toward God: These two did take sweet counsel together, and had their souls knit in a fast and firm knot of mutual love. Likewise, concerning the servants of his house that he would receive and retain, he saith; *Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me, he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me: there shall no deceitful person dwell within mine house, he that telleth lies shall not remain in my sight, &c.*

The Apostle *Paul*, called to be an Apostle, & teacher of the Gentiles, having converted many to the faith, did take the greatest delight, and reaped soundest consolation in them, he accounted them his Crown, he esteemed them his Sons, he called them his glory, he rejoiced in them as his hope. This appeareth in the example of *Onesimus*, whom he had begotten in his bonds, the greater fruits of Faith he found in him, the greater account and reckoning did he make of him. The like we might say of others, even of whole Churches gained to the Gospel; the more they increased in godliness, the more his bowels were enlarged in care and compassion toward them. This affection ought to be in all true Pastors toward their people, they must love such above the rest, as exceed and excel the rest in the knowledge and practice of true godliness. This affection should be in the Father towards his Children, he should love them most, he should give them most, he should provide and prepare for them most, that have most Religion in their hearts, most grace in their souls, most soundness in their lives. Let them be used best that are best, and find most favor, that show the greatest faith. The Scripture teacheth us, that *Isaac* had two sons; *Esau* was the first borne, yet *Jacob* had the blessing. Godliness maketh the younger to be the elder, the second to be the first, the lowest to be the highest, the least to be the greatest; but ungodliness causeth the first borne to be last, maketh the elder to be younger, and easteth down the highest into the lowest room. So we see, that among the sons of *Jacob*, *Joseph* had the double portion, albeit he were the youngest of them all saving one, because the rest of his Children had stained themselves with some gross sin, which did put them out of their proper place, and disinherit them of the blessing.

This point here to be learned and practiced, reproveth two sorts of men, as well such as make choice of such as be wicked, as those that hate them which are good and godly. We must not delight our selves in those that be carnal and corrupt, albeit they be never so near unto us. *Ahab* did repose and rejoice himself in *Jezebel* against *Naboth*; *Saul* in *Doeg*, against *David*, when he saw that God was with him, and his spirit departed from himself. *Rehoboam* made choice of youthful, vain, and vicious Companions, and refused the Counsel of the prudent, and the advise of the Elders, & the friends of his Father. *Jeroboam* made choice of the ignorant multitude, of the scum of the people, and of the Rascall sort, to be the teachers of *Israel*, and their guides and Governors in the matters of God's worship. It is a common evil to delight in evil company, in profane persons, in Idol-shepherds, in carnal friends. The delight that men take in these is vain, and of no value; nay it bringeth in the end Gall and

Wormwood, and biteth as a Serpent. If thou delight in thy Wife, Children, Servants, Friends, and Familiars in the flesh, in a worldly and wicked manner, and never considerest from whence thou hast them, nor receivest them as the gifts and blessings of God, that thereby thou mayest have sound joy, and true happiness heaped upon thee, it is extreme folly and madness. What was the end of *Ahab's* joy in his wife, in his sons, in his posterity? They were at the last, though multiplied exceedingly, cut off from man to beast, and none of them left to water a wall. How many are there, that being free and at liberty to make choice of Friends, of Wife, of Servants, of Companions, do never set the Lord before their eyes, who having little grace in their own hearts, make an election of such as are most ungracious and graceless. They desire not to be Companions of such as love the Lord and his Law, but respect riches or beauty, or honor, or such outward Ornaments, as perish with the use, and cannot cleanse the soul. Wherefore, let all superiors know and understand, that it is a duty and instruction belonging unto them, to delight themselves, and set their hearts upon such as are religious and virtuous, and to show their anger and displeasure against those that are faithless, and fear not to offend the Lord with their wicked lives and ungodly behavior. For this shall be our praise and commendation in the choice of our friends, and in the government of our houses, to follow the example of God our Creator, who is the most prudent and perfect Governor. His favor doeth embrace, and his goodness compass on every side, such as faithfully serve him, and sincerely worship him: but his wrath and angry countenance is fierce against those that walk rebelliously in the contempt of his Laws, and live licentiously in the profession of his service. Thus ought it to be in his people that govern in his fear, such as they see fear God they must honor, they must commend, they must encourage, they must countenance; but such as are stubborn against themselves, and stiff-necked against God, they must reprove and reject, they must discommend and discountenance by all means they can. For, all such as suffer disorders and misbehavior in their charges, without check and controulement, shall find the faults of their Inferiors turn to their own reproach and reproof. The Wiseman teacheth, that *sin is a shame to a whole people, and to a great company*; much more then shall it turn to be infamous and ignominious to a house, and to the Master of the house, as we see in *Eli* and his sons.

Secondly, it reproveth such as hate and abhor those that show the seeds of Faith, and the sparks of grace, and the fruits of the spirit to be in them. It is an evil (as we heard before) not to prefer and make choice of such as are good; but it is a great deal worse to loath and dislike such as are godly, when they have made choice of them, and brought them home into their own doors. They that have obtained this mercy to find grace with God, do bring the blessings of God with them into the house, they come not empty and alone, but full fraught and furnished with great Treasures, if that we had spiritual eyes or hearts to discern it. *A Religious and a virtuous Wife isa great Jewel, her price is far above the Pearls, for she will do her Husband good, and not evil, all the days of her life*: and yet many repine and murmur that their wives have so much knowledge, and that they are too zealous in the truth. They never think they bring them to much riches and substance, but if they labor to be rich in God (which is the true Treasure) they think a little to be too too much. They never complain that they are in favor with great men, from whom they may reap a commodity; but if they seek to be in

favor with God, from whom every good giving, & every perfect gift proceedeth, they make a scoff and a mock at it. They ought to encourage them, and stir them up to good things, and not hinder them in their course. They ought themselves to teach and instruct them, & not discourage them from learning of others. Thus it is also many times with many Fathers, that pretend a love to their children, but it is in the flesh, not in the spirit; in the world, not in the Lord; in earthly things, not in heavenly. If their Children have embraced the Gospel in sincerity, and seek after the means of their salvation with diligence, they think they are too forward, and fear they will prove too praecise, and so make more account of others, that are more loose in life, and profane in conversation.

This fault was in good *Isaac*, who preferred his son *Esau* hated of God, before *Jacob* that was loved of him. So do the Fathers of our times, delight themselves most in their Children that are most lewd, and show least favor to such as most deserve it. And thus it fareth with many Pastors & Teachers of the people, who ought to go before them in soundness of Doctrine, and uprightness of life, and by all means to bring forward such as are coming on, to spurr and stir up such as are sluggish, to comfort such as are careful and zealous, and to discountenance such as are open or secret enemies. But how many are there that would be called and accounted faithful shepherds and true Teachers sent of God, who are afraid their hearers should be too forward: like envious Masters, that are loath to have good Scholars, & repine at it to have any profit too much under them. Thus they nuzzle them in ignorance that are blind, they strengthen the hand of iniquity, they encourage evil doers, and discourage those that would fain walk in the ways of godliness. It was the earnest desire of *Moses*, *That all the Lord's people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them.* If we have this spirit, let us never reproach those with learning too fast, that are under our charge, who ought to be our comfort in this life, and shall be our crown in the life to come.

Lastly, seeing it belongeth as a special duty unto us, to show our greatest affection to such as have in their harts most religion, it serveth as a comfort and encouragement to all callings, even the lowest that are among men, to labor after good things, and to seek to serve and fear the Lord, seeing such as are the meanest, and of basest reckoning with many, are respected and recompensed of him. This is a notable encouragement, to consider that God taketh care of us, and requireth of men to do us good. The least member of the body is honored, and not despised; cherrished, and not contemned; tendered, and not abhorred of us. So it ought to be in the members of Christ's body, which are all dear to him (which he bought with an equal price) and therefore ought to be dear unto us, if we believe our selves to have our part and portion in his body. Notwithstanding, if thorough the pride, contempt, disdain, and unthankfulness of men, we find our selves little regarded, made as a foot-stool for men to tread and trample upon, & as a ball to spurn at with all reproach, and so scorned for our well doing: let us not be dismayed with this dealing, but consider that the poor servants of God have tasted of the like measure that have gone before us, so that we are not the first that have been thus used, and we are not like to be the last that are in this sort to be abused.

Mark a little how it fell out with *Joseph*, one that performed the best service, and yet one that received the worst recompense. When he was brought down to Egypt, and bought and sold

as a slave, or as Ox in the Market from one to another; at length he came unto the hands & house of *Potiphar*, whom he served faithfully, so that the Lord was with him, and made all that he did to prosper in his hand; his Master put all that he had in his hand, and made him Ruler of his house; nevertheless, not long after, thorough the false suggestion of his Mistress, and the hasty and over-rash credulity of his Master, his good service was forgotten, he is cast in prison, and lieth bound in setters. The like we might say of *Jacob*, who served for his wives in the house of *Laban*. Who could do better service, or who could show himself a more painful and profitable servant, then he had done? He speaketh it before *Laban's* face, and doth not whisper it behind his back, he avoucheth it before him, that he might take exception to it, if he had ought to object against it, *Whatsoever was torn of Beasts, I brought it not unto thee, but made it good myself: of mine hand didst thou require it, were it stolen by day, or stolen by night, I was in the day consumed with heat, and with frost in the Night, and my sleep departed from mine eyes.* This duty and diligence did he perform, and yet what was the wages of the work, and the recompense of his labors? It followeth in the next words, *I have been twenty years in thine house, and served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, & six years for thy Sheep, and thou hast changed my wages ten times.* Thus we see, how good and gracious servants have been served in former times before us, and what hard measure hath been rendered and repaid unto them.

The examples of the Israelites is fit to be thought upon, and worthy to be considered in this case, when they sojourned and served in the land of *Egypt*, according as the Lord fore-shown unto *Abraham*, *Know for a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a Land that is not theirs four hundred years, and shall serve them, and they shall entreat them evil.* They never plotted any rebellion, or attempted act of hostility against them, but served their task-masters that oppressed them, and labored in making brick, and gathering straw, and finishing their task, yet they were blamed and beaten, and laden with many sorrows. Let us therefore by all these examples be encouraged, and know that nothing can happen unto us, which hath not fallen out to others that have lived before us, who have done as good and faithful service to their superiors, as we have done or can do, and yet have been evilly entreated, and wrongfully pursued, and cruelly handled, and unjustly rewarded. Let us not suffer for evil doing, and as evil doers; but let us suffer as Christians, that so God may be glorified, and we not ashamed of our afflictions. For this is thank-worthy, if a man for Conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully, it is acceptable before him, & is respected of him, albeit among men it go away unrewarded. We herd before of the good service of *Jacob*, of *Joseph*, of the *Jews*; of *Jacob* toward *Laban*, of *Joseph* toward *Potiphar*, of the *Jews* toward the *Egyptians*, and how evilly they were rewarded and recompensed of their cruel and covetous Masters. But they knew they served a better Master in Heaven, who would not suffer them to want the fruit of their labors, nor to loose the work of their hands. Hence it is, that he increased *Jacob* in substance, he brought *Joseph* out of prison, he gave the *Israelites* favor in the eyes of the *Egyptians*, that gave them Jewels of Silver and of Gold, and sent them not empty away. Thus will God deal with us, if we suffer with patience, and will honor them that are careful to honor him.

[Above a Servant, even as a Brother beloved.]

We heard before howe the Apostle commendeth *Onesimus* to his Master, that he was to be received of him not so much as a servant, as one that was more then a servant; that is, not an Infidel, but a Christian. This point, is in these words declared by the special, or by a word of Relation, a beloved Brother, which was more then a simple servant. For if he had any unbelievers (that were not of the household of Faith) either borne in his house, or bought with his money, they were his servants, but they were not beloved Brethren. But this man converted to the Faith was above the rank and degree of such persons, he was both a Servant and a Brother. True it is, there was great difference between *Philemon* and *Onesimus*, between the Master and Servant in things of this life; one, was Superior; the other, Inferior: one was to command, the other to obey; one was to rule, the other to be subject in the Lord; yet we see, how the Apostle in this place is not afraid to call *Onesimus* his Masters Brother, and would not have the Master ashamed to acknowledge it in words, & to show it in his practice. This is not spoken, as if they were natural Brethren in the flesh, and descended of one Father, according to the common generation of the rest of the sons of men; but they were Brethren in Christ, partakers of the common Faith, equal in the participation of heavenly graces, alike in the favor of God, one not dearer to him then another. Hence it is, that the Apostle before Verse 7. and afterward, verse 20. calleth *Philemon* his Brother in Christ, though he were his son in the Gospel, because he had begotten him unto God by the immortal seed of the word, as we shall see in the words following, where he challengeth as his own, and as a due debt unto him, whatsoever *Philemon* had.

From hence we learn, that we are all of us equal before God and our Brethren in Christ Jesus our Lord. Although Christian Religion doeth not take away the difference of persons, and conditions before men, but alloweth some to be high, and some low; some above, and others beneath; some to be Masters, and others to be Servants: yet, it maketh us alike and equal before God, inasmuch as it causeth us to be brethren in Christ. This truth hath plentiful confirmation out of the books of Moses, where all the *Jews*, of what quality and condition soever they were, are oftentimes called brethren. The poor are named the Brethren of the rich: the Debtor is called the Brother of his Creditor: the Servant is Brother to the Master: the King set over them, must not lift up his heart above his Brethren. This is it which *David* confesseth in many places of the Psalms, *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren: in the midst of the Congregation I will praise thee.* And in the 122. Psalm, he wished prosperity, and would procure the good of God's house, for his Brethren's and Companions sake. Where we see, that albeit he were the King of *Israel*, and sate in the throne of glory and seat of dignity above them, yet he refuseth not to cast himself into a common condition with others, and to give them the honor of his brethren. This is it which the Prophets teach everywhere, *They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his Brother, saying, Know the Lord for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.* This is it which Christ speaketh to his Disciples, *Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Doctor, even Christ; and all ye are Brethren.* The like precept the Apostle enioineth and the same rule he delivereth to the Romans, chap. 12, 16. *Be of like affection one toward another, be not high-minded, but make yourselves equal to them of the lower sort: be not wise in yourselves.* And to the *Phillippians*, Chap. 2, 3. *Let nothing be done through contention or vain-glory, but that in meekness of mind every man*

esteem other better than himself. Again, to this purpose he writeth to the Galatians, *All ye that are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ; there is neither Jew nor Grecian, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* All these Testimonies of the Old and New Testament, do fully and evidently teach us, that howsoever the Gospel permitteth and prescribeth the differences and degrees of persons, that some be Lord's, and others bear themselves as servants, yet it alloweth and maketh them to be equal in Christ, to be brethren and Sisters in the common faith, all members of Christ, all partakers of the same hope, all heirs of the same kingdom.

And what can be more plain then this principle? First, it is the nature & property of God to accept no man's person. An high place, a noble birth, a comely personage, are much respected amongst men, and such persons are highly advanced and preferred. But it is not so with God: for, in his election of us to life, in his calling of us, in his justifying of us, in his sanctifying and saving of us, he respecteth not whether we be high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlearned; he chooseth, he calleth, he justifieth, he sanctifieth, he glorifieth the bond as well as the free; the low as well as the high; the Servant as well as the Master. This is it which the holy man *Job* setteth down, *Wilt thou say unto a King, thou art wicked? Or to Prince, ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the rich more then the poor, for they be all the works of his hands.* To this purpose the Apostle *Paul* speaketh, *To every man that doth good, shall be glory, honor, and peace, to the Jew first, and also to the Grecian, for there is no respect of persons with God.* Likewise, the Apostle *Peter* teacheth this in the Sermon that he preached unto the Gentiles, *Of a truth I perceive, that God is no acceptor of persons, but in every Nation he that feareth him, & worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.* Seeing then, this is the Nature of God, that he regardeth not the outward appearance and countenance of men, we must know that he respecteth all as equal and alike.

Secondly, Christ Jesus accepteth all that believe in him as his Brethren and members of his body, even flesh of his flesh, & bone of his bones. This is it which he speaketh to *Mary Magdalene*, after his resurrection, when he had appeared unto her, and manifested himself unto her; *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father; and to my God, and to your God.* Where he showeth, that God is a common Father, & that all the godly are as brethren one to another. Likewise, the Apostle writeth to the Hebrews, *He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, wherefore he is not ashamed to call them Brethren, saying; I will declare thy name unto my Brethren, in the midst of the Church I will sing praises to thee.* The Lord Jesus is infinitely above us, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, and we are poor, wretched, and miserable men; yet he is ashamed of no man, except we first be ashamed of him. He will deny no man, he will reject no man, except we first do deny and reject him. If then, Christ do vouchsafe to account and accept us as his brethren, we must needs acknowledge an equality and brotherly fellowship among all the faithful that are in Christ.

Thirdly, all the godly that are truly regenerate, are adopted to the hope of the kingdom of glory, and are redeemed by the blood of Christ. It is not Gold, or Silver, or Pearls, or the treasures that are in the world, could pay a price sufficient to redeem and ransom our souls;

it is the precious blood of Christ alone, that must purchase our peace, as of a Lamb undefiled and without spot. Now, he came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost; he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. How mean soever our places, how simple soever our persons, how base soever our conditions are, we have as good a title, and as great an interest in the death and passion of Christ, as they that shine in the world, that are clad in Purple, and fare deliciously every day. And as these have redemption by him, so God affordeth to them the means of salvation, as well as the mightiest Monarkes upon the earth. The poor man hath the word of God offered to him, read unto him, and preached unto him as well as the rich: he hath the Sacraments of God provided for him, as well as for them that are of high place: he may pray unto God as freely, as comfortably, as cheerfully, as the great men of the earth, and he hath a gracious promise to be heard and respected, as well as they. Though thou farest hardly and meanly at home, yet God hath prepared thee a feast, and biddeth thee to his Table richly furnished, and plentifully stored with all provision. Though thou do not iet up and down in Silks and Veluets, and hast no gorgeous attire to put on, yet God hath provided thee a better garment, he giveth thee his own son to put on, and clotheth thee with his righteousness, which shall cover all thy shame, that thy nakedness shall never appear in his sight. So then, seeing God accepteth no man's person, seeing Christ vouchsafeth to call us Brethren; and lastly, seeing the faithful have redemption by his blood, it followeth necessarily, that our Christian Religion, and Faith in Christ, do make all persons after a sort equal, as Brethren and Sisters of one and the same Father and Family, and Ioynt-heirs of one and the same Kingdom, that is immortal and never fadeth.

The Uses of this Doctrine are many, putting us in mind of sundry good duties. First, seeing that in Christ, who is the elder brother of the house, we are all made Brethren and Sisters together, having one Father, which is God; one Mother, which is the Church; one inheritance, which is heaven: it is our duty, being nearly joined by so strong bands, and in so fast and firm a society, to love one another, to seek the good one of another; and to cut off all occasions of discord and division that may arise among us. For, shall such as are members of one body be divided one against another? Or shall such as are the dear Children of the same Father, nourish hatred and heart-burning among themselves? Or shall such as are parts of the same family, foster malice in their hearts, and follow contentions and emulations, to the ruin one of another. My Brethren, we see these things are, but these things ought not so to be. How shall God be our common Father, if we live not together as loving Brethren? Or how shall he call us his children, if we behave our selves as strangers or enemies one to another? This Brotherly love, is the root of all good duties to be performed; where it is wanting, there is nothing but strife and sedition, and all manner of evil works. This is the old commandment, *That we love our Neighbors as our selves*. This is the new commandment given unto us, *That we love one another*. Seeing therefore, there is one body, and one spirit; one Faith, and one Father; one Church, and one Baptism, let us support one another by love, and endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace. This is it which the Apostle proveth, when he hath shown, *That there is neither Grecian nor Jew, neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, free, but Christ is all, and in all things; he addeth, As the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on the bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness*

of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel unto another, even as Christ forgave, even so do ye: and above all these things, put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. When a Controversie & contention arose in the houses of Abraham and Lot among their servants, though there were a great difference and disparity between them, yet Abraham said, *Let there be no strife I pray thee, between thee & me, neither between thy Heardmen & my Herdmen, for we are Brethren.* This is that whereof the Prophet putteth us in mind, and offereth to our consideration, *Behold, how good and comely a thing it is, Brethren to dwell even together, there the Lord hath appointed the blessing of life forever.* To this purpose the Apostle saith, *Be affectioned to love one another with Brotherly love, in giving honor go one before anothee; not slothful to do service, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.* It cannot be denied, but many occasions of jars and janglings arise among men, and the more they are given to the world, the more they are wrapped and entangled in them, & the less desire and delight they have to be loosed from them. He that is given to contention, shall always feed himself upon it, and never want matter to keep him in it. But would we know what is the cause of so much hatred & malice that remaineth among us? Hereupon it ariseth, even from hence, that we forget that we are Brethren, and do all look for one and the same inheritance.

Secondly, seeing the Gospel of Christ teacheth us to account our selves as brethren, albeit it take not away the degrees of persons, & the differences of Callings, it serveth as a good instruction to all Superiors, to use all mildness and moderation, patience and meekness towards those that are their Inferiors, and placed under them, and to teach them not to contemn and abhor them, not to despise and disdain them. For howsoever there be one way a great inequality between them in matters of this world, and in the things of this life, inasmuch as God set superiors above us, in an higher place and requireth subjection, reverence, and obedience of those that are beneath, yet in another respect they are matches and equals, having a like portion in Christ, and a like interest in the means of salvation. We see in many things of this life, the Lord maketh no difference between high & low, between Prince and people. True it is, their food is daintier, but are their bodies stronger? Their attire is costlier, and their apparel finer, but are they kept the warmer? They may have greater help of the Physicians, but can they deliver them from death? They may have a more costly Coffin, a more sumptuous Tomb, and a greater train following them to the grave, but can these things help the soul? No, no, the Prophet is plain, and experience should make us able to see it, and wise to confess it; they have great names, and high Titles of honor given unto them, *I have said, ye are God's, and ye are all Children of the most high, But ye shall die as a man, and ye Princes shall fall like others.* If then, there be so little difference in the life, and less difference of the death of rich and poor, of Master and Servant, of Magistrate & Subject, we shall find a greater equality and parity between them in holy and heavenly things. We allow them to be as the elder brethren, but they must know and consider that other are as the younger brethren of the house, and have the same privileges given unto them. For if the Lord Jesus be not ashamed to call us all brethren, shall they be ashamed to confess one another to be equal in the matters of our redemption and salvation? Shall the rich man disdain the poor, or the Prince his people, or the Master the servant, or the Free-man him that is bond, seeing the Lord of life, that is equal with his Father in might and Majesty,

vouchsafeth to repute us all in the place of Brethren? Hence it is, that he saith in the Gospel (speaking of lodging the stranger in our houses, of clothing the naked with our Garments, of feeding the hungry with our meats, of visiting the prisoners with relief, of refreshing the sick with our comfort.) *Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Who are more disgraced and contemned in the world, then such as are Strangers, or Prisoners, or naked & in necessity? Yet these poor contemptible ones are dear in his sight, tender as the Apple of his eye, and acknowledged of him to be his Brethren. We are not worthy therefore to be esteemed of Christ, if we regard not such as are in greatest price, and chiefest account with him.

So then, we must take heed, that we never despise, and deride, and disdain those that are called the Brethren of Christ, nor refuse to embrace them as our own Brethren. This is that use which the Apostle urgeth, in setting down the duties of Masters, *Ye Masters, do the same things unto them, putting away threatening, and know, that even your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.* Where we see, how he moveth all Masters to cast off all pride and high conceit of themselves, and to Love their faithful servants, as their faithful Brethren. It is not far from this purpose, which *Job* speaketh touching his practice and behavior toward his Servants, *If I did contemn the judgment of my servant and of my Mayde, when they did contend with me, What then shall I do when God standeth up? And when he shall visit me, What shall I answer? He that hath made me in the womb, hath he not made him? Hath not he alone fashioned us in the womb?* Where the holy man commendeth mildness in all Governors, and reproveth the exercise of cruelty toward their servants. He gave them free liberty to declare and debate the matter with him, to allege what reasonable excuse soever they had, considering with himself, that we have one common Creator and maker, and are partakers of the same Nature, and concluding thereupon, that albeit such as are bound to serve us, be of low degree, and despised in the world, yet they nevertheless are our brethren. So then, such as are advanced unto high places, and set in authority over others, are not to trample them under their feet, to despise and set them at naught, to account them as vile persons in their eyes, but to use them with mildness, and to behave themselves in all lowliness, & to rule their houses with all gentleness. We must remember that we have a Master in heaven, so that albeit he hath exalted us on high, yet God standeth above all, and is the Master both of the Master, & of the servant. O that this were well weighed, and wisely considered, and thoroughly learned of all Superiors, that sit at the stern and guide the ship. The higher and greater our places are, the lower and lesser ought our hearts to be. If we be made Magistrates and Masters, and Rulers, to govern others, let us confess they be Brethren with us. This yieldeth a profitable meditation to all Christian Governors, when we behold any of our Inferiors (though they were our bondmen) in any trouble or distress, to think earnestly upon these things. If God have made me never so high, when I see the people pinched with dearth and famine, that they are ready to perish and famish in the streets for want of Bread, I must know they are not Dogs, (though many make no better nor farther reckoning of them) alas, alas, they are my Brethren.

When the Pestilence walketh in the darkness, and the plague destroyeth at noon day, that God striketh down with his fearful hand; that thousands fall at our side, and ten thousands

at our right hand (for he oftentimes maketh havoc, and bringeth desolation into many houses and families) I must think it is no Murraine of Cattle, they are my brethren. When I behold the oppression of the poor, and the grinding of the faces of the needy, that they are eaten up as bread, and sold as old shoes, for nothing; I must have this feeling of their affliction, they are not as Horsses or Asses over-laden with their burden (whom yet, if it were so, we were bound to pity & raise up, though belonging to our enemy) they are my poor and dear brethren, whom God hath created, whom Christ hath redeemed, whom the holy spirit hath sanctified, whom the word hath regenerated, whom the church hath nourished, whom the Angels have guarded, and who, together with me, in the last day, shall be glorified. At that day shall God be all in all, when Christ Jesus shall abolish all power and authority among men, when Princes must resign their kingdoms, and cast down their crowns at his feet, then there shall be no more Prince and Subjects, Pastor and people, Mayster and Servant, Father and Son, Husband and Wife. These degrees endure but for a season, which must have end, when Christ shall come to judge the quick and the dead. If God have made me a Master, and committed Servants to my charge, they must not be respected as my Swine or Oxen; they are my Brethren, and therefore I must look unto them in time of their sickness, & use all good means for their deliverance. The Centurion in the gospel is commended, that when his servant fell sick, & was in danger of death, he came to Christ for help and succor. If a man have a Bullock and beast that is diseased, he will ask counsel, & seek remedy, much more ought we to deal mercifully with our servants which God hath made our brethren, & not to show more mercy to our Cattle for our commodity sake, then to man made after the Image of God for his sake. To conclude, let us from this Christian equality, learn Christian mercy, and know the estate of them that suffer any kind of misery. For what is the cause that we tyrannize over those that are our Inferiors, but because we forget that we are their brethren, and that in this respect they are equal unto us?

Thirdly, this Title of Brethren communicated to all the faithful, serveth as a comfort and consolation to all Inferiors, and to teach them this duty, that they ought not to grudge, or to be grieved that they are placed in a low estate, as though they were therefore less esteemed and regarded of God. For seeing God hath thus far provided for them to call them their Brethren, and to make them equal with those of greater Callings, they are to be contented with their places. It is a great Honor, to be so greatly in his favor, and to be so highly regarded of him, who rejecteth no man for his poor degree, for his low estate; for his mean condition. This is it which the Apostle Paul setteth down, 1. Cor. 7, 21, 22. *Art thou called being a Servant? Care not for it: but if yet thou mayest be free, use it rather: for he that is called in the Lord, being a Servant, is the Lord's freeman: Likewise also, be that is called being free, is Christ's Servant.* Where he showeth, that no man's poor calling should be his discouragement: but this must be his comfort, and bring peace unto his soul, that if he be a true believer, although he be man's servant, yet he is God's free man. And whomsoever the son maketh free, he is free indeed. For, we must know, that whosoever committeth sin with greediness, and draweth iniquity as with Cart-ropes, he is the servant of sin, though he were the Master of a family, or the Ruler of a kingdom. And on the other side, whosoever is freed from the bondage of sin, and the slavery of the Devil, he is a right free-man, although he be a Captiue, a Prisoner,

or a Servant. If we have our part in Christ, we have our part in this comfort, seeing the Servant is saved as well as •...e Master, if he believe.

Furthermo•..., we must consider these two things, both that whatsoever our calling be, wherein we abide, whether it be high or low, we have it from God, we are allotted unto it by his appointment, and that he seeth it, and knoweth it to be the fittest place and best calling for us under the Heavens. For, he respecteth in all his purposes, his own glory, and our profit. If he saw any condition of life to be better for us, or a means to further us in our holy faith and salvation, he would not keep us from it, he would not deny it unto us, he would not restrain us of it. It is a spice of the Devils poison, which he inspired & instilled into the minds of our first parents, to conceive hardly of God's dealing toward us, as if of malice or envy he had held us from the greater good, and bestowed upon us the lesser. He came to them in the Garden, and told them, *That God doth know, that when they should eat of the tree of knowledge of good & evil, in the midst of the Paradise of God, their eyes should be opened, and they should be as God's knowing good and evil.* So when we grow discontented, and dislike our callings which God hath appointed unto us, we begin to be inueigled by the subtlety of Satan, and shall be always aspiring higher, then God hath judged to be meet for us. Let this serve us, & suffice unto us, that how low soever in our own eyes, and little in the eyes of others, our condition is, yet God hath made them equal with us, and us Brethren with them, to our great and endless comfort. This is that use which the Apostle maketh to encourage and strengthen servants in their duties, *Servants, be obedient unto them that are your Masters, according to the flesh with fear and trembling, in singleness of your hearts, as unto Christ. Not with service to the eye as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will serving the Lord & not men, And know ye that whatsoever good thing any man doth, that same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.* Whereby he declareth, that the obedience of such as are bond, is no less acceptable to god, then the obedience of such as are free: he looketh not so much to our persons, as to our actions, nor so much to our actions, as to the manner of our doing of them. He liketh and alloweth that which is done of the servant, as well as that which proceedeth from the Master: and he that is of low degree, pleaseth God in the duties of his calling, as well as the man that is of greatest reputation in the world, and highly magnified for his Riches and Honors.

Lastly, seeing God respecteth all alike, and hath made all as one, and as Brethren that are in Christ, it serveth as a reproof, and threatening, and terror, to all drowsy and secure persons, that think they shall escape the judgments of God for their high places. There is no difference with God, there is no inequality with Christ, to them that are in Christ, high and low are all alike with him. None are saved for their highness, none are condemned for their lowness. Christ Jesus accepteth no man for his glory, he rejecteth no man for his ignominy. Let us therefore not bear our selves bold and confident upon our outward excellency, but stand in fear of his judgments, and prepare our selves with all reverence and diligence, that we may be found worthy to stand before the great God in that great day of account. For we must *all appear before him, when he will judge every man according to his works.* When we shall come personally before his Throne of glory and seat of judgment, he will have no respect to the Nobleness of our birth, to the greatness of our learning, to the beauty of our faces, to

the strength of our bodies, to the largeness of our livings, to the abundance of our Riches, or to any outward privileges and dignities of our persons. Then shall all flesh be gathered together from the four winds, and stand before the Judge of all the world. God will respect us as we are, not as we appear to be; not as others have accounted of us, but as he shall manifest us to have been, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, and hidden things shall be revealed. Then must every man answer for himself, and plead guilty or not guilty, when no pretenses, or excuses, or delays shall avail us. Then shall the poor beggar appear without his rags; the rich Glutton without his Robes; Covetous *Indas* without his bags; Crafty *Gehazi* without his money; Proud *Haman* without his Honor; Aspyring *Absalom* without his Ambition; Murthering *Cain* without his Weapon; Cunning *Achitophell* without his Pollicy. The Kings of the earth must lay down the glory of their Crowns, and the dignity of their Scepters, the Nobles must renounce the Ensigns of honor, and all persons must set aside outward respects of honor and dishonor, of glory and shame, of favor and contempt. Nevertheless, it is to be observed, that albeit these men must stand before the throne of God, without these respects that they made their chiefest felicity; yet they shall not appear without their cruelty, bribery, treachery, blasphemy, covetousness, & such like impiety, for their evil works shall follow them, & cleave fast unto them. Let us therefore never think to escape, when we shall come naked before the eternal Judge, as ever we came into the world, & more naked then we departed out of the world; for whereas some have their Coffins to cover them, others their Tombs to beautify them, and all men their winding sheets to wrap their Carkasses in, whē the Lord shall descend with thousands of his Angels, they shall not have a rag, or a poor fig-leaf to hide their shame. Let us seek while we have time to put on Christ's righteousness as a Garment, that we may be able to stand before the son of man, and receive the glory prepared for us, before the foundations of the earth were laid.

[*Specially to me, how much more then unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord.*]

We have heard how the Apostle accounteth, and how he would have *Philemon* account of *Onesimus*; to wit, above a Servant, even as a beloved Brother. In these words, he urgeth him farther, and showeth that he had more cause to respect him, and greater reason to love him then himself had, because he was joined to him by more bands, whereof two he nameth; one of the flesh, as being his servant; the other in the Lord, as being his brother. *Paul* was moved to respect him, only in regard of the common faith, and therefore he saith; if he were, not so much a Servant as a Brother to him, much more he ought to be so to his Master; not because he was his servant as other servants are, but because he was the Lord's servant, so that he was bound to love him, both for the Lord's sake, and for his own sake. Heereby there is offered to our considerations, this Lesson to be learned, that the more bands and reasons are given unto us of God to care for any, the more we are bound to care for him, and to respect him. A professor of the Gospel, is more to be regarded then he that is wirhout: One of the same Nation, more then a stranger; one of our own Kindred, more then another farther from us; a Neighbor, more then one that dwelleth many Miles from us; one of a man's house, more then him that is out of his house; a Kinsman converted to the faith, & become a true and perfect Christian, morethen a Kinsman not converted. A Child that hath the sparks of grace in him, more then a Child void of them; a Servant fearing God, more then

a Servant in the same family, that doth not fear God, nor regard his word, nor make Conscience of the means of his salvation. *Abraham* loved *Isaac*, the son of Promise, having more graces in him, more then *Ishmael*, the son of the bondwoman, and a scoffing wretch, and more then all the Sons of *Keturah*, to whom he gave gifts, and sent them away. We see this in the dealing of *Abraham* toward *Lot* his Nephew, he would suffer no contention to rest among them, and when he heard he was taken prisoner, he would not have stirred for the wicked sinners that dwelt in *Sodom*, but he armed his servants to recover him out of the hands of his enemies. This is it which *Solomon* teacheth, *Better is a Neighbor that is near, then a Brother far off*. The Apostle teacheth this truth, when he giveth this precept, *While we have time, let vt do good to all men, but especially to them which are of the household of faith*. And in another place, *If any Widow have Children or Nephews, let thē learn first to show godliness towards their own house, and to recompense their Kindred*. To this also we are directed in the fifth Commandment, when we are commanded to Honor Father and Mother. Whereby appeareth the truth of this doctrine, that it standeth with God's ordinance, to have the most care of those, and to show the greatest fruits of love unto them, to whom we are bound in the greatest and nearest bands.

The Reasons being wisely considered, will make this plainly to appear unto us. It is a general sentence delivered by *Solomon*, in the book of *Ecclesiastes*, *Two are better then one, and a threefold Cord is not easily broken*. Wheresoever there are stronger Cords to tie us, and moe bands to join us together, our Love ought to be the more greater one towards another. Manie sticks make the greater Fire, and many stringes, the better Music.

Secondly, it is a thing very well pleasing in the sight of God, to consider what means he hath afforded to increase mutual love and society, one with another. This is the reason urged by the Apostle, to persuade the Children and Nephews of poor Widdowes to take care for their Parents, according to their ability, *Because that is an honest thing, and acceptable before God*. Now, we are bound unto them by many effectual Reasons, as it were with bars of Iron, and bands of Brasse, to nourish those that have nourished us, that have fed us, that have clothed us, that have begotten us, and brought us into the world, so that we must acknowledge it both right and reasonable.

Thirdly, such as break these bands, & cast away these Cords from them, do set themselves against the Doctrine of Christ, and may be sent to school to the Infidels, nay to the brute beasts, which are not void of a certain natural affection. This the Apostle teacheth, *If there be any that provideth not for his own, and namely for them of his household, he denieth the faith, & is worse then an Infidel*. For howsoever they profess the Faith in words, yet in deed and in truth they deny it. But God is delighted with our works, not with our words, and looketh upon the substance, not the show of our Religion, according as the Apostle speaketh, *They profess that they know God, but by works they deny him, and are abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work Reprobate*. This profession is vain and hyppocritall, and no more regarded of God, then the leaves of a Tree of him that looketh to find fruit upon it. So then, seeing two are better then one, seeing it is a thing well pleasing with God; and last of all, seeing the Faith is denied of those that regard such as are nearest to them nothing at all, we learn howsoever,

we owe somewhat to all mankind, and there is a common band that knitteth us fast together, yet where the debt is greatest, there we are bound to pay most, & where the Obligation is straightest, there we are to perform the greatest duties.

The Uses remain to be considered. First of all, if it be a duty of man toward man, to require most where most is committed, and to yield the greatest love again, where are the greatest occasions to couple and combine us together: then much more are we bound unto the Lord, of whom we have received all, to whom we do own all, and by whom we do enjoy all. We must do homage to him as to our King; we must give honor to him, as to our Father; we must yield him fear, as to our Master; we must perform subjection to him, as to our Creator; we must show obedience to him, as to our Law-giver. He would be holden as a man utterly void of all wit and wisdom, who being indebted unto many men, and owing to some more, and to others less; bound to some in one band, to others in two; to others in many bands; to some owing all that he hath, and to others more then he hath, or is able to pay: would begin to pay his debts without difference and discretion, delivering much to whom he oweth little, and little to whom he oweth much; satisfying two bands where he is bound in one only, and regarding only to have one cancelled, where many other are required at his hands. Thus it fareth with everyone of us; to one, we owe one Talent; to another, three Tallents; to another, five Tallents; but to God we are above all others most deeply indebted; we owe unto him, our goods, our good Names, our substance, our liberty, our lives, our selves, our souls, our bodies, and when we have given him all, all will not serve to pay him, seeing we owe unto him more then we have.

Hence it is that our Savior saith; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy mind: this is the first and the great Commandment: and the second like unto this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* We see then the order of the Commandments set down by the God of order, that God hath the first place, and man the second; the duties we owe unto him, are preferred before the duties we owe to our Brethren. And if we mark the Lord's prayer, and the order which we are taught to observe in our Prayers and Petitions, we shall find those ranged in the first place that touch the honor of his Name, before such as belong to our necessities: so that the duties are greater, the Chaines are stronger, the bands are faster, and the reasons are firmer to bind us, and knit us unto God. In him we live and move, and have our being. He sendeth Rain and fruitful seasons, he filleth our hearts with joy and gladness. He made us, and not we our selves, he made us of nothing, and when we became deformed, he reformed us. He hath written his Laws in our hearts, and our sins and iniquities he will remember no more. What wrong and injury hath the Lord done us, that having received so many pledges of his favor, and sealed so many bands, acknowledging the infinite debts that ws owe unto him, we should prefer Dust and Ashes before him, and set up proud flesh in disgrace and despite of him? We see what mighty and weighty reasons we have to magnify him above all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, and to advance him above all excellency that is in man, whose breath is in his Nostrils: and yet who is it that giveth him his due, and doth not extol the Creature above the Creator, who is blessed forever?

True it is, every man will pretend love to God, as to him that hath elected him, created him, redeemed him, called him, adopted him, justified him, sanctified him, and preserved him. But do we love his word above our own pastimes and pleasures? Our Savior saith; *If any Man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come and dwell with him: he that loveth not me, keepeth not my word.* If then we prefer the following of our own vanities before the hearing of his truth, we plainly bewray the hypocrisy of our hearts, and show that our love is fastened upon the Earth. We will all seem to love the Lord, and his word, least all men should condemn us, and cry shame of us: but this our love continueth no longer, then till some profit or pleasure round us in the ear, and come in comparison (as it were) to be weighed in the balance together; then farewell God, and his Word, and his Sabbaoths, we will none of them, so long as we have the other to follow after. What is more common in continual practice then this? Will not a drunken Feast, a riotous company of profane Fellowes, sooner draw us to their Lure, then a conscience of our duty to God to keep us at home, to attend to his ordinances for the salvation of our Souls? Every man almost can say the Commandments, and pronounce the words, but they consider not the meaning of them, and how large they are. They know the Law; *Thou shalt have no other God's but me:* and they would complain of the injury done them, if they should be charged to break the same. Nevertheless, if we love the World more then we love God, or delight in our Riches more then in his Worship, if we trust in the Creature more then in the Creator, or if we fear men more then God, we offend him, and transgress his Commandment. Let us now consider with our selves, how deeply we are indebted unto God, and remember that we owe many duties unto him: he hath given us much, so that he may require much of us again; he hath bestowed many blessings upon us, and therefore he looketh for the greater service at our hands.

Secondly, seeing the Band and Obligation, is much more powerful and astringent to some, then unto others (albeit we are required and charged to love all men as they are men, and to wish well unto them) according to the diverse degrees whereby they are coupled together, both by the sense of Nature, and by the Commaundement of God, it serveth to reprove sundry abuses, and to meet with many disorders that are most rife and common among us.

First of all, it reproveth the blind superstition, not only of elder times, but of the present days wherein we live, and the wicked sniftes of Popish Monks, which being wise in their Generation, would persuade it as meritorious to foolish and sinful men, to give away all their Lands and possessions, and means of maintenance from their Children and Kindred, and bestow them upon the feeding of idle Drones, and unprofitable Beasts, that live by the sweat of other men's: labors to this end, to say Masses for the quick and the dead, and to pray for the puling Souls that languish in Purgatory. For such as was their cruelty over men's bodies, and their Dominion over their consciences, and command over their goods, that the poor people have been, and at this day are besotted and bewitched by them, that they are ready to give a thousand Sacrifices of Rammes, and ten thousand Rivers of Oil, and to forgo their first borne for their transgression, even the fruit of their body for the sin of their Souls. The spiritual consenage and deceit of the fraudulent Jesuits as greedy Cormorants, is notorious and famous, or rather infamous in this kind and case whereof we speak, who make hast to

the sick person that is rich (as the Eagle flieth to the Carkasse) to make a prey of him, and the Priests themselves, greeuing that such a fat Morcell should go by their mouths, and so great a bootie should escape their hands, have lamentably complained of their bribery, hypocrisy, cruelty, and iniquity. These are they that eat Men's sins as Bread, and regard not to dam their Souls, to fat their own Bodies, and fill their own pusres.

Again, this reproveth the impiety and vnnaturalnesse in men that regard not their own flesh, nor have a respect to their own Kindred, but are strangers from them, unkind unto them, and void of love toward them. The Apostle prophesieth and complaineth, that in the last days shall come perrilous times, when men shall be cold in Charity, and destitute of natural affection. He would be accounted a stark fool that would seem to show compassion to feed another, and yet starve his own body; to be liberal abroad, and miserable at home; to see other men's miseries, and to take no notice or knowledge of his own; to quench the fire kindled in another man's house, and to suffer his own to be turned down stick and stake, and nothing left to cover his head, and to give him shielde and shelter from the wind and weather.

So standeth the case with all such as open their hands to those that are far off from them, and turn away their eyes from such as are their flesh, and bone, and blood, to whom God and Nature hath made them more indebted, then to other men. It was not so with *Joseph*, when he lived in wealth, and *Jacob* was in want: he was stored with plenty, and his Father tasted of scarcity, he gave him Corn freely, and sustained his Kindred willingly. The like care we see in *Ruth* toward *Naomi*, the Daughter in Law toward the Mother in Law, she labored and travailed for them both, she gleaned and gathered after the Reapers among the sheaves, and what she left when she was sufficed, she reserved it, and brought all home to relieve and refresh her old Mother. These examples are agreeable to the rule, and these practices are aunswerable to the prccept of the Apostle, requiring of Children and Nephews to recompense the kindness of their Parents. When Christ our Savior was upon the Cross, he shown his godliness toward his Mother, and committed her to the Disciple whom he loved, himself being ready to leave the World. For when he saw his Mother and *John* standing by her, he said unto his Mother; *Woman, behold thy Son*: then said he to the Disciple, *Behold thy Mother, and from that hour the Disciple took her home unto him*. It is the duty of Children to honor their Parents, not only by obedience, but by maintenance; not only by reverence, but by recompense; not only by subjection, but by thankfulness for the benefits that they have received. If they be hungry, they must feed them; if poor, they must relieve them; if in necessity, they must help them; if weak, they must Minister unto them. For if this must be performed to Strangers, much more to Parents? There is nothing more just then this kind of duty, because the light of Nature teacheth, to requite one good turn for another, and to do unto another, as thou wouldst have him do to thee. Wherefore, to deny the performance of these duties, is unnatural and inhumaine: but to break out into the contrary practices, is monstrous and beastly. *Absalom* conspired against *David*, *Sheba* the Son of *Bichri*, a man of *Iemini* conspired against *David*, both of them raised Israel against him, and blew the Trumpet of rebellion. Both the persons were wicked, both their practices were devilish, both their punishments were just and righteous. But if we consider the manner of the offense, by the

condition of the offender, and weigh the persons in a balance by the several bands, whereby one was tied above the other, we shall easily find that the sin of *Absalom* did exceed, and his fact was more odious and hateful in the sight of God and man. For *Sheba* indeed rose up against his Liedge-Lord, and lawful Prince. But *Absalom* ought to have shown himself as a Son, as a Servant, as a Subject, and to have acknowledged *David* his Father, his Master, his Magistrate. He was the Lord's anointed to them both, and therefore they should have been afraid to lay their hands upon him, or to set themselves against him, or to take away the Crown and Kingdom from him: Nevertheless, *Absalom's* attempt was accompanied with a multitude of offenses, he wronged him that had begotten him, that had nourished him, that had nurtered him, that had honored and advanced him, that had given him life, and all things appertaining unto life. All these bands, that ought to have been as a strong Cord or Cable, never to be untwisted, and as a Chaine of Iron, never to be broken, he rent in sunder as a thread of Tow is broken when it feeleth the fire, and therefore as the fault was most foul, so his fall was most fearful, according to the saying of the Wiseman; *Whosoever recompenceth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house*. Thus then we see, that such as contemn their Parents, and refuse to help and succor those that GOD hath made nearest unto them, and so bound them in a greater band, do commit the greater sin, and plainly declare that their hearts are void of natural affection.

Thirdly, this Doctrine reproveth those, that where most causes and reasons concur and meet together to urge them to their duty, do not make use of them, nor bind themselves more closely and straightly with them, nor show more kindness being moved by them, so that the greater and moe the means are to tie them in affection one to another, the less many times their love is. This may be made plainly to appear unto us, if we consider the particular practice of the people toward their Minister, and the general behavior of one of the faithful toward another. God hath bound the people to their own Pastor, by a straighter and nearer conjunction, then to the Shepherds of other Foldes, because they have a greater charge of their Souls, and must give an account for them to the chief Shepherd of the Sheep: and yet we see they are most bitter and violent against them, because they reprove their sins, and discover their corruptions, that they themselves may see them and forsake them, and God may forgive them. Shall the sick person hate the Physician because he showeth him his disease, and offereth his help & best endeavor to cure it? In like manner, shall we be spitefully entreated and cruellie handled, and mortally maligned, that wish them the greatest good, show our selves their best friends, deal faithful with their Souls, and labor to bring them to eternal happiness? This is it which the Apostle speaketh to the *Galatians*; *Am I therefore become your Enemy, because I tellyou the truth?* Thus also the Prophet *Jeremiah* complaineth, *Shall evil be recompensed for good? For they have digged a pit for my Soul: remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them*. We pray for them, we stand in the gap, we exhort and admonish them, we desire to cure them of those sins, that fight against their Souls to destroy them.

Secondly, we are to draw from hence a general consideration, that as God hath called us with an holy calling, into the bosom of the Church, so he hath linked the faithful in love one to another, and yoked them together with the sweet yoke of his Gospel: and yet how many are

there that profess the name of Christ, and will needs be accounted true Christians, that cannot abide the Children of God, but hate them with an unfeigned hatred, and account them as their Mortall enemies? If we should see a man rage against the members of his own body, and strike himself with stones to the wounding of the flesh like the man possessed, would we not seek to bind him with Chaines, and say he were mad and out of his wits? So likewise, if we be in Christ, we have him as our head, and are members one of another; and therefore such as nourish the passions of hatred as Coals of fire kindled in their breasts, are out of their right mind, as men distracted and beside themselves. No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord doth the Church. We have many effectual means and strong reasons to join our affections one to another, *There is one Body, and one Spirit; there is one hope, and one inheritance; there is one Faith, and one Baptism; there is one God and Father of all, which is above all, and thorough all, and in us all:* These are so many bands to hold us together; if we pluck these Chaines asunder, and break the Fetters in pieces, that no man can tame us nor bind us, we are not living but dead members, and offer violence to our own flesh. The single knot of nature ought to be sufficient to knit us one to another, and the least thread of natural conjunction of our human Nature, ought to sew us together as a Garment fitted for our body: how much more when many occasions meet together, which should establish brotherly love to continue among us?

Thirdly, seeing coupling of many reasons together, and the meeting of many good respects in one, giveth the more cause of joy and gladness, of loving and caring one for another, it giveth a profitable instruction to all Children and Servants, and other inferiors to perform the duties of honor and reverence to their Fathers and Masters. If there were no other means, this were a sufficient means to make them tractable and attentive to the words and directions of their Fathers and Masters, even because they are their Fathers and Masters. For this includeth many reasons, and joineth them in nearer bands, then they were tied together before, and detecteth them of a greater sin, and maketh them guilty of a greater judgment. When it pleased God to open the mouth of *Baalams* Ass, to reprove the foolishness and wickedness of that false Prophet, it was his fault not to hearken, nor give heed to that which is spoken unto him. When God instructeth us by the Creatures which are the common Masters of all mankind, we must learn the invisible things of God by them. When the *Wiseman passed by the field of the slothful, and by the Vine-yard of the Man destitute of understanding, which was grown all over with Thorns and Nettles: he beheld and considered it well, he looked upon it and received instruction.* But when the Lord chooseth one to speak unto us, and to inform us in his ways which hath been the Instrument of our life and being, of our peace and welfare, of our good and salvation; we ought to have more respect to his person, and to his persuasion, as he is a more honorable Messenger, and as his words do proceed from greater love and kindness toward us. This serveth greatly to reprove all rebellious Children and contemptuous Servants, which dislike and distaste the holy instructions and informations of their Fathers and Masters. If they receive any temporal commodity from them, this doth relish well in their mouths, but they regard not their counsels, they will none of their instructions. These are wicked Children; these are ungodly Servants. An evil Child, is but half a Child; an evil Wife, is but half a Wife; an evil Servant, is but half a Servant;

an evil Subject, is but half a Subject. The godly and gracious Child, is a Child indeed; a godly and gracious Wife, is a true Wife indeed; a godly and gracious Servant, is a right Servant indeed; a godly and gracious Subject, is to be accounted and acknowledged a true Subject indeed. For as there are degrees of conjunction of mankind one to another, which are as certain steppes, whereby we climb up to the society and mutual love of others; so the more steps and degrees there are, the greater ought our love to be. To be a man created after the Image of God is one degree, and challengeth love from us to be performed toward him.

To be joined in a Political or Domestical knot; to wit, in the Common wealth, or in the private Family (as the Prince and Subject, the Father and Son, the Master and Servant) is another, and a nearer degree, and ought to be the cause of farther love. But if to these natural and civil respects, there be added a spiritual Communion in Christ, which is the best band, that bindeth faster than all the rest, whereby the Subject is made his Princes brother; the Child, his Fathers Brother; and the Servant, his Masters Brother: this requireth a more faithful and fervent love, and a farther degree of our affection toward them. On the other side, if the conjunction between them be only in the two former considerations, there can be no true and sincere love between them, albeit they be so closely tied together: no, although they be Fathers and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants, Princes and Subjects. For where Christ Jesus is not, there can be no singleness and soundness of the Soul; whosoever loveth not in the Lord, he cannot love from the heart: and where there is no true piety, there can be nothing else but hypocrisy, which is the bane and poison of true love. Hence it is, that he which hath an evil Servant, doth not in truth possess him, he hath an interest and propriety in the least part of him: he may have his hands, but he cannot have his heart. So the Apostle showeth, that while *Onesimus* was a wicked man, and an unbeliever, his Master *Philemon* could not commodiously use him: he wandered therefore a while from his House, that by changing of the place he might be turned into another, and return a new man; before an unworthy Servant, but now a profitable Servant; nay, a beloved Brother, made near, and after a sort equal with his Master thorough Faith in Christ.

Whensoever therefore Kings and Princes, Fathers and Masters, being believers, have under them, and belonging unto them, such as are unfaithful and unbelievers, they cannot promise to themselves that they have the whole rule and command over them. This appeareth evidently in the Popish sort, that believe the Doctrine of the Council, or rather Conuenticle of *Trent*, if one that professeth the Gospel have a Wife, or Child, or Servant, embracing that falsely named Catholic-Religion, that rest upon the deceiveable errors of the Priests and Jesuits, and all of them upon the decree and determination of the Pope; he cannot make his accounts (except he account amiss) that he hath full power over them, or the rule of their lives, or the love of their hearts. We see it oftentimes come to pass in Subjects adhering to the Dregges of Popish superstition, that notwithstanding the bands of fidelity and allegiance, whereby they are obliged to their Princes, they break out into actions of open Rebellion, and seek the subversion of King, and Country, and Religion. If then a man would have an absolute and Sovereign command over his Inferiors, and be assured to have a whole and entire Wife, that his heart may trust in her, and her heart rest in him: if a man would have a dutiful Child, and a faithful Servant to do his will, and perform service unto him for

conscience sake, he must make choice of such as have in them the fear of God, the Faith of Christ, the gifts of the Spirit, the love of Religion, the desire of instruction, and the care of salvation. If these be wanting, never think their affection can be firmly settled toward thee: but upon every occasion it will be easily removed from thee. It is the surest and fastest knot that Christ knitteth, all other bands will quickly be broken and loosed.

Lastly, seeing the increase of many bands meeting together, doubleth and trebleth the care and love one toward another, so that where the smallest number of means is found, there also is found the smallest love: and where the greatest number of occasions concurrerth (as it were) on an heap, there ought to be the surest knot of friendship and amity: it should put all superiors in mind of a necessary duty, to be careful to instruct those that belong to their several charges and iurisdictions, that so they may tie them with a surer knot to themselves, and have the better service at their hands. For seeing they are nearer coupled unto them that are under the reach of their authority, or the roof of their houses, then unto the rest of mankind: they ought to have a greater respect unto them, and bear a dearer love unto them, even unto their bodies, how much more unto their Souls? But we cannot better testify our love unto them, and show our care over them, then by making known unto them the works of the Lord, and the ways of salvation. If we be commanded to *Exhort one another while it is called today*, and to stir up one another to good things, if we must admonish them that are out of order, and comfort the feeble minded; how much more are we bound in conscience to perfect it to those that depend upon us, and are nearer unto us? It was the first and principal care of all the godly Kings that had true Religion in their own harts, to provide for the instruction of their subjects. The Apostle writing to the *Ephesians*, and prescribing the distinct duties of sundry persons, forgetteth not the Father and the Son, and as he chargeth Children *To obey their Parents in the Lord*: so he commandeth Parents, *to bring them up in the instruction and information of the Lord*. Thus godly Masters have used all diligence to bring their Servants to have a desire of Religion, and a love to the exercises of piety; whereby oftentimes such a good work hath been wrought in them, that they have accounted their Masters as second Fathers, and as spiritual Fathers, & confessed themselves more bound in all duty to them, then to their natural Parents, having learned that to the glory of God, and the salvation of their Souls by their Masters instruction, which they could never understand by their Fathers education. They have confessed themselves to have gained more by such a service, then if a large portion, a rich inheritance, and great reuennues had been left unto them. And indeed, this is the only way to teach Children dutifulness, and to frame our Servants to obedience, to plant godliness in them, and to water that which is planted. The neglect of this care in us, will make them careless: and the making of no conscience to teach them, will bring them to be unconscionable in their places. If we be dumb and open not our mouths to instruct them, we shall have deaf Children, and deaf Servants; that will stop their ears against all good admonition that is offered unto them. If we be bound in a double Band, common and special, and do perform a single duty unto them: it will follow, that as they owe unto us a twofold duty, general, and particular; the general of all mankind; the particular of Servants, they will perform a single, and maimed, and imperfect service. Thus much shall suffice for this Doctrine and division.

17 *If therefore thou account our things common, Receive him as myself.*

Hitherto we have spoken of the former reason drawn from the Apostles action of sending him back to his Master, together with the convincing and confuting of the two objections that might be made against the receiving of him; one touching the retaining of him with himself; the other, touching the Servants departure from his Master. Now followeth the second reason of the second sort, taken from the person of *Paul*, and it is of his communion with *Philemon*, and the participation of the same heavenly gifts and graces with him. This reason is first handled, and then another Objection is prevented. The reason is in this 17. Verse: the prevention is the two next following; to wit, the 18. and 19. Verses. This reason here used, is briefly propounded, and yet nothing is omitted which may carry any force of Argument to persuade and assuage *Philemon*. For he inferreth out of the former words wherein he hath commended *Onesimus*, not so much to be accounted as a Servant, as to be received as a Brother, that he is worthy to be forgiven: and withal, he insinuateth and signifieth that he was necessarily joined with him in these bands of mutual love, that he could not be separated and divided from him, whereby it must come to pass, that one of these will follow; either thou must love us both, or else forever refuse us both. If thou hate him, thou canst not love me: or if thou love me, thou must not hate hate him. This reason is thus framed:

- *If we have fellowship together in all common blessings, then receive him.*
- *But we have fellowship together in all common blessings:*
- *Therefore receive him.*

The first proposition of this reason is in the beginning of this verse, [*If therefore thou account our things common, receive him.*] The conclusion is amplified and made manifest by a comparison of the like, [*Receive him as myself.*]

Thus much of the Method: now let us see somewhat concerning the meaning of the words, which are few, and not hard. When the Apostle saith [*If thou account our things common*] the words in the original are; *If thou have me a Fellow or partaker*; that is, *One in common with thee*: whereby he expresseth his singular affection to this poor fugitive Servant, and maketh his cause and this request all one, so that to reject him, was as much as if he rejected *Paul*; and on the other side, to embrace and receive him, is accounted by him, as done to himself. Again, when he craveth to have him received; by receiving, we must understand, not only the entertaining of him into his service, and the taking of him home into his house, but therein also he requesteth of him, to forgive him his offenses committed against him, and to think well of him, as of a Brother in Christ. Lastly, when he addeth [*As myself*] he meaneth, lovingly, friendly, heartily, as thou wouldst do me if I came unto thee. As if he should have said; seeing no man denieth to his companion and familiar friend, anything that is honest and just, it cannot stand with that love and familiarity that hath ever been between thee and me, to deny me this reasonable request: but we have been and are most dear and inward

friends, communicating one with another all good things, so that I have accounted thee another myself, and thou hast accounted me another thyself, and therefore I do not doubt, but thou wilt receive him again into thy favor, as if he were another *Paul*, or as a member of his body.

This is to be marked and considered concerning the meaning. The words in this verse are not many, but the observations are not few that might be concluded and collected out of the same. First of all, many may marvel that the Apostle is so earnest, vehement, and importunate for a Servant, and especially for such a Servant. Surely, fear of hard and severe dealing might have moved *Onesimus* to distrust and despair, and therefore he useth all means to hold him up, to cherish his faith, and to further the good work begun in him, being as yet a young plant, a new convert, as a joint newly restored, and having yet a tender conscience: whereby he provoketh us and all others, to seek tenderly the upholding, maintaining, confirming, and comforting such as have given witness of their true repentance, not to quench the smoking Flaxe, nor to break the bruised Reed. For seeing we are with all mildness to receive unto us such as are weak in the faith; woe unto them that stay them that are coming forward, and lay stumbling blocks in their way to bring them back, and to cause them to return to their vomit with the Dog, and to the wallowing in the mire like the Sow that was washed. And seeing the sinner is thus to be helped, which hath approved his conversion unto us, that we are to make intercession unto others, to obtain pardon for the penitent; we are admonished, that they are much more favorably handled, and carefully to be received, and gently to be remitted by our selves.

Secondly, we see, that to the old request he addeth a new reason: for we shall never find in this Epistle, his petition barely and nakedly propounded. He hath used diverse Arguments before to persuade *Philemon*, yet here we have another annexed, to move him to grant it without denial or resistance. This giveth instruction to the Ministers of the Gospel, to teach the truth soundly and substantially, as that the consciences of the people may be well grounded, and thoroughly settled therein. When matters of weight and importance are in question, they must not deal rawly, they must not use weak proofs and insufficient reasons, whereby men may be rather hardened in their errors, then helped out of their errors.

Thirdly, the Apostle doth not simply say; *If our things be common* (as he might have done) *but if thou account them common*, and us to have a communion between our selves: declaring thereby, that it is not enough to know a truth, unless we also yield unto it as unto a truth. It is one thing to know what is good, and another thing to embrace it in our practices. It is one thing to know what is evil, and another to refuse it in our actions. We must labor not only to have our minds cleared, our understandings and our judgments rectified to see the truth, but to have our harts and affections sanctified to follow it. It behooveth therefore not to rest our selves satisfied with general notions, but so to ensue after them, as that we make special application of thē: *David* in general knew that Adultery was evil; *Noah* knew that drunkenness was beastly, *Peter* knew the denying of his Master was fearful; yet in the brunt of temptation, though the mind had knowledge of it, the affections would not refuse it, but yielded as a City besieged by an enemy.

Fourthly, the Apostle putteth *Philemon* in mind, that seeing there was so near a conjunction between them twain, that they were become as it were one man, and had one mind in two bodies; it followeth, that whatsoever was joined to one of them, ought of necessity to be joined to the other. Whereby we see, that such as are our friends, ought to be also the friends of our friends, that is; of those that are joined unto us. *Philemon* was the friend of *Paul*, and therefore if *Onesimus* were the friend of one, he must needs be the friend of the other. *Paul* and *Philemon* were as two Brethren, if then *Onesimus* were the Brother of *Paul*, he ought also to be accounted the Brother of *Philemon*, and therefore he would have him received as himself. It is no true friendship when one taketh profession to love another man, and yet hateth him which is his chiefest and dearest friend: for if indeed we loved him, we would for his sake love the other that loveth him. This we see in the covenant made with *Abraham*, who is called *The friend of God*, whereby it appeareth, that the Lord promised to be a friend to his friends, and an enemy to his enemies.

Fifthly, in the amplification of the conclusion, he addeth [*As myself*] thereby showing, that he would have him regarded no otherwise then himself. Whereby we learn, that our love to the Brethren ought not to be in word, or in tongue, or in show, but in deed, in truth, and in heart. This is Christian love, this was in Christ toward us, and this should be in all of us one toward another. 1. *John* 3, 18. *Rom.* 12, 9. 1 *Pet.* 4, 8. These particular observations and sundry others might be stood upon, and farther enlarged, but I have only pointed them out, and will leave them to your farther consideration. I will only stand upon the Doctrines that are more principally intended, and more particularly purposed, which consist in the strength of the reason, and in the truth of the words in themselves considered.

[*If thou account our things common, receive him as myself.*]

This reason is drawn from the working cause. Where, to move *Philemon* to grant his petition, he allegeth the communion that was between them. If I be partaker with thee, and thou with me of the common benefits, so that the same thing which is mine is thine, and the same things which are thine, I may account mine; thou being my Friend, canst not deny to loue and receive him that is my Friend. Indeed, if we had only a private respect unto our selves, so that my things were mine own, and not thine; and thy things were thine own, and not mine, thou mightest deny me my request: but seeing thou art another, myself, and dear unto me as mine own soul, it is a forcible reason to stir thee up, both to hear and grant that which I desire and request of thee. From hence we learn, that the consideration of the mutual conjunction that we have one with another, giveth us an interest one in another, and ought greatly to move us to hear and regard each other. So then, the acknowledgement of our communion ought to stir us up to have such a care one of another, that nothing requested upon good ground should be denied. This is it which the Father of the faithful calleth unto *Lots* remembrance; *Let not us strive, for we are Brethren*. So dealeth *Moses* toward the *Israelites*, he shown himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying; *Sirs, ye are Brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?* The Apostle telleth the *Ephesians*, that they were as one Body, and one Spirit, they had all one Faith and Baptism, and hope of salvation, and thereupon persuadeth with them to endeavor to keep the unity

of the Spirit in the Bond of peace. Thus he teacheth the *Corinthians*; *By one spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Grecians, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one spirit, so that the gifts given unto us, are given to profit withal.* The Apostle *John* speaketh to this purpose; *Hereby have we perceived love, that he laid down his life for us, therefore we ought also to lay down our lives for the Brethren.* This appeareth in the practice of Christ, he said unto his Disciples; *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go to wake him up.* Where we see he maketh the friendship that was between them a motive to go to *Bathania*, to raise him up from the dead. This is offered also unto us in the parable propounded by Christ, *Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him; Friend, lend me three loaves, &c.* declaring thereby, that he which hath a friend indeed, resteth upon him, and is bold with him in the time of his necessity. All these places and examples teach us to be ready to perform all duties of love and kindness one to another, seeing there is, or ought to be a common fellowship among us.

The reasons of this truth are very plain and apparent. For first of all, we have all of us one common Father, we are all his children; we have one common Maker, we are the work of his hands. If then we be so nearly tied, so closely linked & yoked one to another, we ought to have a great care and respect one of another. This is it which *Job* considered to move him to mildness toward his Inferiors, *He that hath made me in the womb, hath he not made him? Hath not he alone fashioned us in the womb?* Where he showeth, that the Master and the Servant have one and the same Creator, so that they are so straightly joined together, as that they are bound to be beneficial one to another. To this purpose *Solomon* saith, *The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all;* that is, they live together in a common fellowship, and one standeth in need of another.

Secondly, as we have one common Father, so we have one head, and are the members one of another. This is it which our Savior teacheth in the Gospel; *There shall be one sheep-fold and one Shepherd.* There cannot be a nearer conjunction & communion, then the members of the same body have one with another: everyone seeketh the good of another, and all labor after the benefit and preservation of the whole. This comparison is fitly alleged by the Apostle, *As the body is one and hath many Members, and all the members of the body, which is one, though they be many, yet are but one body: even so is Christ.* So then, seeing God is the common Creator of us all, and seeing we are made the members one of another, through our conjunction and union with Christ, we gather from both these considerations, that our fellowship and communion one with another, must cause and compel us to do all good one to another, and to have a special care one of another.

Let us briefly see what profitable Uses may be concluded from hence. And first, if the communion that we have one with another, and the intercourse of friendship ought to move us to Christian duties; then it followeth much more, that the communion that we have with Christ, and the honor which God vouchsafeth unto us to account us his Friends, should be available to join us to him, to teach us to obey him, to honor him, to serve him, to worship him, and to walk in the practice of his Commandments. Hence it is, that *Abraham* performing the condicions of the Covenant that God hath required of him, when he promised to be his

God, and the God of his Seed, is oftentimes renowned with this honorable Title, to be termed [*The Friend of God.*] This Christ our Savior teacheth, *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you: henceforth call I you not Servants, for the servant knoweth not what the Master doth: but I have called you Friends, for all things that I heard of my Father, have I made known to you.* No friendship is more glorious and gainful, then the friendship of God, none is more constant or continual, seeing whom he loveth, he loveth to the end. Hereby we have access unto God, as to our Friend, then which▪ what can be a greater Dignity.

Now the honor is great, so we must know wherein it consisteth: for friendship is not an idle name, without the truth of the thing. The love of God to us is seen in his favor toward us, in blessing of us, in taking the care of us, in pardoning our sins, in adopting of us to be his Sons, and in giving of us eternal life. Our love toward God is to be measured by keeping his Commandments, in depending upon him, in believing in him, and in looking for all good things from him. But if we rebel against him, and forsake his laws, we cannot make any account of God's friendship, nor make our reckoning to have him to be our friend. For sin is a Make-bate. Commonly we hate and detest those as the worst sort of men, that raise contention among Friends. But such is the nature of sin, it causeth the greatest enmity, where there should be the greatest amity. The Prophet *Isaiah* teacheth this very evidently; *The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear: for your hands are defiled with blood, and your Fingers with iniquities, your lips have spoken lies, and your tongue hath murmured iniquity.* They wanted many good blessings, but they considered not the cause, that their sins had made God their Enemy, and caused him to depart from them. If then we desire the friendship of God, we must have a desire to walk in his ways. So then they are in a miserable case that have no care to please him, for they have not God to be their friend, but their adversary. We say commonly, a friend in the court, is as good as a penny in the purse: but to have a friend in the highest Court of heaven, and the friendship of the most high, who is the King of Kings, is more worth and better to be esteemed then all the World beside. From this ground our Savior teacheth us to regard his friendship above all, to fear his wrath, which if it be kindled, rageth as the fire, and not to stand in fear of the displeasure of men, thereby to be hindered in our obedience; *I say unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that are not able to do anymore: but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear, fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, him fear.* Thus it behooveth us, from the consideration of our communion one with another, to ascend and rise up to the contemplation of our fellowship with God: and from the meditation of our duties to be performed to men, to proceed to the practice of our duties to God.

Secondly, seeing our communion is accompanied with duties of godliness, we must be careful to associate our selves with godly men, to whom we are most bound, and from whom we may receive the greatest benefit. For seeing our fellowship one with another, teacheth us to love and make much one of another, we must delight in the company of the faithful, that so we may hear, counsel, comfort, regard, and exhort one another. All mankind are combined together in one society, but if we be brought by God's ordinance into one Family,

we have another, and a nearer band to couple us in the same yoke. We must beware lest we give room and entertainment to those that are ungodly, whereby the rest of the House may be insected. Thus the Apostle *Peter* exhorteth the believing *Jews*; *Save yourselves from this froward Generation*. It is certain, that such as are good, by using evil company, are made evil; and such as are evil, are made worse. Such as make no conscience of their company, will make no conscience in time of any iniquity.

Thirdly, we must learn by this communion, to show the duties of compassion one to another, to help and relieve them that want, and every way to sustain and succor such as are in necessity. When *Job* considered that we have one Creator, and sprung all out of the Earth, which as a common Mother bare us in her Womb, *He could not see any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering*. And in another place he complaineth of them that offered great kindness unto him in his prosperity, when he had no need of them or their courtesy, but forsook him in his greatest necessity. These he compareth to Winter brooks, which flow and over-flow when there is an over plus of water, but are dry and dammed up in time of Summer, when the earth gapeth, and the Grass withereth, and the Flower fadeth for want thereof. Such men forget themselves, and the condition wherein God hath set them. They know how to require and look for duties from others, but they are unmindful of their own, and so become unmerciful to their Brethren. They do not remember, that the time shall come, when they will preferred one drop of Mercy before a thousand Kingdoms; yea, before ten thousand worlds.

[*If thou account our things common, &c.*]

Hitherto we have considered the strength of the reason, and gathered the Doctrine that ariseth from hence. Now we are to weigh the words alone by themselves. The Apostle taketh his Argument from the communion and fellowship that is between him and *Philemon*, so that he could not deny him his suit. From hence we raise this Doctrine, that among Christian Friends all things are common. Such as are true friends, not in tongue, but in truth; not in hypocrisy, but from the heart; should have great interest one in another, to use themselves, their gifts, their blessings without grudging, to the natural comfort one of another. When *Jonathan* entered into a covenant of love and league of friendship with *David*, *By and by he put off his Robe that was upon him, and gave it David, and his Garments, even to his Sword, and to his Bow, and to his Girdle*: Yea, he discovered the secret counsels and consultations of his Father, that he might deliver his friend from danger of death. This is it which the Apostle speaketh to the *Romans*; *As we have many Members in one body, and all Members have not one office, so we being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone, one another's Members*. The Evangelist *Luke* describing the state and condition of the Church, after the Resurrection and ascension of Christ, saith; *All that believed were in one place, and had all things common, and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as everyone had need*. And afterward, in the fifth Chapter he addeth at large the same point, *Great Grace was upon them all, neither was there any among them lacked, for as many as were possessors of Lands or Houses, sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid it down at the Apostles feet, and it was distributed unto every man, according as he had need*.

Hence it is, that we are taught in the Articles of Faith, to believe the communion of Saints; yea, this is so plain and manifest a truth, that the Heathen had this sentence as a common Proverb commonly in their mouths, that among friends all things should be common. Whatsoever is bestowed upon us, we should have it not only for our selves, but for others. If we have riches, it is our friends; if we have any gifts bestowed upon us, they must be at the commandment of our friends. Whatsoever we have to profit them withal, it must be theirs, as well as ours. All these Testimonies of the holy Scripture, and common experience teach us, that wheresoever Christian friendship is, there must be also a Christian community; that there be no lack, but the want of everyone must be supplied by a common hand of those that do abound.

Let us see how this is confirmed unto us by reasons. First, it is the ordinance of God, that one man should be an hand and helper unto another in all necessities, and hath united us as Brethren. so that they should seek to comfort one another. This is it which *Solomon* propoundeth, *As Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart, so doeth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.* If then, we be bound to help our brethren by our hands, by our mouths, by our feet, by our hearts, and by all that we have in our power, it followeth, that there ought to be a communion in the use of all blessings that we enjoy.

Secondly, the Lord Jesus, which is the great peace-maker of the world, and sole Mediator between God and man, who hath joined Heaven and Earth together by his Cross, so that through him we have an entrance unto the Father by one spirit: he, I say, hath brought peace unto us; he hath made perpetual friendship between his Father and us, and consequently settled sure friendship among our selves. This is it which the Apostle speaketh *Ephe. 2. He is our peace, which hath made of both one, and hath broken the stop of the partition wall, to make of twain one new man in himself: that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, by his Cross, and stay hatred thereby.* It is the Office of Christ's Priesthood to make peace, not only between God and man (which notwithstanding is the chiefest work) but between man and man, whereby we become one body in him.

Thirdly, the faithful have the same privileges, and live as it were in common together. They have the same Father, they expect the same inheritance, they hear the same word, they receive the same Sacraments, they are born of one Mother, they are begotten of one immortal seed, they are fed by the same sincere Milk, they live as by one soul the spirit of Christ, they are as near as Father and Children, and as members of one body, we are all one in respect of the promises of salvation. Albeit there be a distinction amongst them in Country, Nation, Age, Sex, and such like; and live in diverse ages and places, yet there is such a spiritual Kindred, and near society between them, that these common privileges bind them mutually and manifestly one so another. Wherefore, seeing it is the ordinance of God, that we should put our helping hand to do all good to our brethren; seeing Christ Jesus hath reconciled us to God his Father, and made peace amongst our selves; and lastly, seeing the faithful have a common interest and privilege in the same holy things, whereby they are fitted to the Kingdom of Heaven, in all these respects we learn, that among true Christian

friends, there should be a Communion and fellowship of all the blessings of God bestowed upon them.

Now, order requireth, that we handle the Uses of this Doctrine. And first of all, we learn that there is no friend like to the Christian friend, who is another of the same. Such as are coupled together in this society and fellowship, are made one soul. Hence it is, that *Moses* teaching that no natural affection toward those that are nearest unto us, ought to withdraw our hearts from God, describeth such as are most dear, and so have greatest interest in us, where he calleth Brethren the sons of the same Mother; he calleth the wife, her that lieth in the bosom; he saith of a Friend, that he is as a man's own soul, whom he loveth as himself. The Heathen glory in certain Golden paires of steadfast friends, that have been ready to lay down their lives one for another. Howbeit, in all ages and times of the world, they are able to reckon up very few, and those for the most part forged and counterfeit, rather to teach what should be done, then what ever was truly done. And yet if such friendship had ever been practiced, and such friends ever really extant, it had been begun and ended in the flesh, and therefore had been but a corrupt and carnal friendship. For, where God doth not couple together, and make the knot, and where the glory of his name is not the mark we shoot at, there the very life of true friendship is wanting. All the former examples of supposed friends, that were fastened without the glew of Religion, and the fear of God to hold them together, might make a goodly show of rare love, to the eyes of natural men, howbeit they did all things to be praised of men, to be magnified of the world, to be spoken of after their death, and to be highly esteemed of others. But they are not to be matched & compared with true Religious friends, which have the bond of the spirit, and of a good conscience to couple them together. Such were *Ruth* and *Naomi*; for when *Ruth* was willed to return after her Sister, she answered, *Intreat me not to leave thee, nor to depart from thee, for whether thou goest, I will go: and where thou dwellest, I will dwell: thy people shall be my people, & thy God my God: where thou diest, I will die, and there I will be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death depart thee and me.* Such were *Jonathan* & *David*, of whom we spake before, who did cleave and adhere one to another, as if they had been no longer two, but one man; and as if one had been of the bone and flesh of another. Such were *Jacob* and *Rachel*, he thought no time too long, he judged no service too bitter, he esteemed no wages too little, because he loved her. Such were *Reuben* and *Joseph*, he would not content to shed *Joseph's* blood, nor to lay violent hands upon him, but counseled his Brethren to cast him into a pit, to the end he might deliver him out of their hand, and restore him to his Father again. Such were *Moses* & *Aaron*. Such were *Solomon* and *Hiram*, between whom was peace, & they made a Covenant one with another, so that they did communicate either to other such commodities as they were stored withal. Among these was mutual love and friendship did bind them together. There is a difference between love and friendship. For, he may love, that is not beloved; but he cannot be a Friend, unless he love, and be loved; which the Apostle noteth when he saith, *Owe nothing to any man, but to love one another.* This is the sum of the whole Law, for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law. Hence it followeth, that the nearest band, and surest conjunction, is between the faithful, they only can be true and trusty friends, because they

love, and are loved; that which one doth, the other is ready to require and return the like, to perform mutual kindness one to the other.

This is the right and religious friendship, and this is only to be found among the Saints that are members of the same body, and joined in one brotherhood and Communion. But it is not so between the godly and ungodly, between the holy and profane, between the elect and the reprobate; *There is no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness, there is no communion between light and darkness, there is no concord between Christ and Belial.* These being mixed and joined together, are like the feet of *Nebucadnezars* Image which he saw in a dream, which were part of Iron, and part of Clay, which was easily dissolved, and quickly broken in pieces; so is it in the agreement and love that is between the faithful and unfaithful, it is partly strong, and partly weak, but it cannot be joined fast one with the other, as Iron cannot be mixed with Clay. For albeit the godly do love the ungodly, even the Infidels, according to the commandment of God, yet there can be no sound and sincere friendship between them, because that is not mutual love, it is not in both parties, inasmuch as the wicked do hate extremely the Children of God, and contemn them in their hearts, as *Cain* did *Abel*. Let us therefore sort and associate our selves with those that are godly men, who will in time of trial prove our safest friends. All other society, how strongly soever it seemeth to be planted and built, will fall to the ground. We see Neighbors oftentimes forsake us, we see our alliance and Kindred renounce us, we see Brethren oftentimes show themselves as strangers one to another; but where grace and Religion is, there the friendship will never fail, but is as a running stream, that never waxeth dry.

Mark this in those sweet paires of friends which before we coupled together in an equal yoke, whom grace and godliness joined, and therefore no unkindness could separate. *Ruth* loved *Naomi* as greatly when she returned empty, as when she came out full and well stored. *Jonathan* was found as faithful to *David* when *Saul* sought to slay him, as when he began to honor him; when he lowred at him, as when he shown the best countenance toward him. And howsoever the ungodly may hide the intents of their hearts, and promise to perform all duties of love towards us, yet their love hath no certain foundation, but will deceive them that trust unto it. When *Job* was in prosperity and authority, everyone respected him, and was ready to pleasure him, he was honored in the gate, he was revered in the street, he was feared in the house. But when his goods were gone, and all his dignity failed, no man regarded him, his friends, his servants, his Wife despised him. Let us hear in his own words the complaint that he maketh, and attend to that he speaketh, where he declareth what befell him, *My Neighbors have forsaken me, & my familiars have forgotten me: They that dwell in mine house, and my Maids took me for a stranger in their sight: I called my Servant, but he would not answer me, though I prayed him with my mouth: My breath was strange unto my wife, though I prayed her for the Children's sake of my body: The wicked despised me, and when I arose, they spake against me: All my secret friends also abhorred me, and they whom I loved, are turned against me.* Whereby we see, we can make no account of the friendship of an ungodly man, where profit is the band, and not piety; he loveth for carnal respects, and temporal commodities, and not for the truths sake. Our delight must be to be amongst the faithful servants of God, who love always, not by hrunts and pangs, who love wholly and entirely, not to halves; who live in

trouble and adversity, as well as in the days of prosperity, so that one may say to another, as *Jehu* did to *Iehonadab* the son of *Rechab*, coming to meet him, *Is thine heart upright, as mine heart is toward thine?* He would be accounted an unwise man, that would take more delight in the shadow, than in the body; in the show, than in the substance: the friendship that is among the ungodly, is only the shadow of true friendship, so that they are destitute of true wisdom, that advance it above the friendship that is among the faithful, or make any account and reckoning of it, in comparison of the other. Let us therefore join in a firm League of amity and friendship with the faithful, which no time shall dissolve, nor no occasion shall break.

Secondly, seeing Christian Friends have a community among themselves of all good things, it serveth to condemn the Niggardlinesse and Covetousness of those that overthrow this Communion, and even pinch and pine away themselves, depriving themselves of the lawful use of that which they have in their own keeping. Of these there are two sortes; first, such as say in word and practice, That which is mine, is mine, and that which is thine, is thine; I will keep mine own, and keep thou that which is thine own: I will crave nothing of thee, and thou shalt receive nothing of me. Secondly, such as say, whatsoever is mine, is mine: and whatsoever is thine, is mine: mine own is no way sufficient for me, but I hope & gape for a part of thine. The first sort do not convey other men's goods to themselves, but refrain from wrong and oppression: yet they cannot abide to do good to any, nor to give away anything that is their own. The second sort are yet farther removed from true Charity, who regard not what means they use to get other men's goods. Let such men consider, that they offend against God, they offend against their Neighbor, they offend against themselves. Against God, because they detain from him his due; against their Neighbor, because they deny to him things necessary; against themselves, because they with-hold things fit and reasonable. They are unthankful to God, they are unjust to their Neighbor, they are cruel to themselves. The Apostle chargeth them to commit Idolatry, and to make a God, or rather an Idol of their money, because as the Idolater serveth his Idol, so doth the covetous man his riches, and as the one maketh his Image his hope and trust, so doth the other his treasure; and as the one is afraid to break his Image, so is the other afraid to lessen his substance. These are they that are content to cut large thonges of other men's goods, but are sparing in spending of their own; who empty their bellies, that they may fill their Coffers, who pinch their body, that they may enlarge their gain, and draw back their hand when they should give, but stretch it forth when they would receive. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *Mortify your members which are on the earth, fornication, uncleanness, the inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is Idolatry, for the which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the Children of disobedience.* And in another place he teacheth, *that the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some lusted after, they erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* In which words, howsoever the Apostle useth an excessive kind of speaking (for properly original sin is the root of all evils, because as a fruitful offspring they arise from thence) yet it is a Mother that bringeth forth many Children; Cruelty, Injustice, Oppression, Fraud, Deceit, Ignorance of God, contempt of his word, and security in all heavenly things. These things being duly considered, serve to the condemnation of those that shut up the bowels of

compassion from God's Children in their afflictions and necessities. For the Apostle John in his first Epistle saith, *Whosoever hath this worlds good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* Woe therefore unto them that make all things private, and with-hold their love from such as are to be loved, and their relief from such as are to be relieved. How can these men think to find mercy at the hands of God that show no mercy to their brethren, seeing there shall be judgment merciless, to such as show no mercy? Let us have our conversation without covetousness. *Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.* The wise man teacheth, that *the liberal person shall have plenty, and he that watereth shall also have rain: There is that scattereth, and is more increased, but he that spareth more then is right, surely cometh to poverty. The treasures of wickedness shall not prosper or profit us anything at all, but righteousness delivereth from death.*

Secondly, this reproveth such as have no familiarity with the faithful, but show themselves strangers unto them. For, whereas all our love should be toward the Saints, all our delight should be in the Saints, all our care should be of the Saints; there are many that boast themselves to be of the communion of Saints, yet make no difference of any company; the most wicked are most welcome unto them, and the most profane, are most pleasant. No company is so sweet and so much desired, as the Communion and communication of Ruffians and scoffers; and on the other side, nothing is more sower and sharp unto them, then the presence and conference of such as fear God. But we must all know, that much help or hurt cometh to men, by the company which they haunt and frequent. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith, *Away from me ye wicked, for I will keep the Commandments of my God.* So the Apostle Peter admonisheth all those that would be delivered from destruction, *To save themselves from a froward generation.* Likewise Moses & Aaron exhorting the people to beware of *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram,* and the Rebellious rowt of their adherents, saith, *Seperate yourselves from among this Congregation, depart from the Tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye perish in all their sins.* The ungodly have their profane meetings, their drunken feasts, their unlawful pastimes; let us not partake with them in their evil, which is the right way, and the ready means to quench all holy desires, and good purposes in us, as fast as the friendship of the faithful is able to kindle them in our hearts. When shall we see wicked men strive and contend to come into the Company of the godly? They account nothing so unsavory unto them, nothing so irksome, nothing so troublesome, albeit they might be helped and benefited by their blessed meetings. How is it then, that we should desire or affect the conversation of the ungodly, by whom we can no way be furthered in any good thing, but be corrupted and defiled in our ways, to the dishonor of God, to the danger of our souls, and to the perverting and poisoning of others.

Lastly, seeing there is a Communion and fellowship of all the blessings of God bestowed upon us, it is our duty to love one another, & to perform all duties of love, to the benefit of others, as if we were one man. This the Prophet teacheth, *They shall be my people, and I will be their God, and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the wealth of them, and of their Children after thē.* So the Apostle Peter chargeth us, to love brotherly fellowship, saying; *Be of one mind, one suffer with another; love as Brethren. be pitiful, be courteous, submit yourselves one to another, render not evil for evil, neither rebuke for rebuke, but contrariwise,*

bles; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should be heirs of blessing. Whereby it appeareth, that there are many duties, as it were branches of this love, as we see, *Rom. 12, 9, 10, 13.* where many particulars of this unfeigned and fervent love are expressed, and we are admonished as members of one body, to provide one for another. We are bound to employ our gifts, not only to our own benefit, but to the benefit of the whole body: as the eye seeth not for itself alone. the hand worketh for all the parts, the foot walketh for every member. So if we be true and faithful Christians, we ought to carry this mind, to be ready to do service one to another. If we have knowledge, it is our duty to teach others; if we have wisdom, it is our duty to counsel and direct others; if we have the gift of exhortation, we are to dissuade from Vice, to persuade to Virtue, and to stir up others to good things. If we have riches and outward blessings, we must give cheerfully, not only of our superfluity, but of our penury and necessity, if need so require. We have all received some gifts, none is an empty vessel without liquor, or a dead tree without fruit; God, to make men without excuse, hath bestowed somewhat upon all, *Some have received five Talents, some two Talents, and someone Talent.* Let every man as he hath received the gift, minister the same one to another, as good disposers of the manifold grace of God. We are joined together in a spiritual society, and have great need one of another; as the hand cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee; so no man can say to any of his Brethren, I have no need of you. The rich cannot live without the poor, and contrariwise, the poor cannot continue without the rich. As it is the duty of such as are poor to labor in their callings, it is the duty of the rich to relieve them, not to despise them; to comfort them, not to contemn them; to help them, not to disgrace them. These practices of love are a Christian man's badge, declaring evidently what Master he serveth, & to whom he belongeth. We must show our selves ready to ride and run, to use our Friends and purse for the good of others. Hence it is, that the Apostle commendeth in the Church of the *Thessalonians*, not only their love, but their labor of love performed with all carefulness and cheerfulness. Our love therefore must not be idle, but diligent; not standing in word, but in work; not in profession, but in action.

Moreover, we must by all good means procure the good one of another, and bear the reproof of a friend that seeketh to set our sins before us, and to bring us into the right way. This is it which the Apostle signifieth to the *Galatians*, *Be you as I, for I am even as you, I beseech you Brethren, ye have not hurt me at all.* Whereby he meaneth, that albeit he was compelled to use sharp reproofs (as it were) eating Corasiues and strong Purgations, that thereby he might stir them up to repentance, and show them from whence they were fallen, yet his mind was not changed toward them, nor his love turned into hatred, as if he should say; Think not that my convincing of your errors, and reproofing of your backsliding from the sincerity of the Gospel, proceedeth from any malice toward you, for I am the same man I was, and therefore look that your minds be not estrange from me, for I do tender you, even as mine own self. Seeing therefore a man's friend is all one with himself, one is bound to seek the good of another, and to bear the reproofs of things amiss with all patience.

Lastly, let our communion work in us a lively feeling, as well of the prosperous estate, as of the hard condition of our Brethren; either to rejoice with them, or to lament with them, as occasion is offered. This is the exhortation of the Apostle to the *Romans*, Chapt. 12. when he

hath stirred them up to love without dissimulation; to service, without slothfulness; to humility, without disdain; to patience, without revenge; to bless, without cursing; to distribute, without grudging; to pray, without fainting; he saith, *Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep: be of like affection one toward another.* This teacheth us, that all the godly ought to have (as it were) the same will and wish: they ought to think the same things, to speak the same things, to further the same things one in another. The profits and disprofits of our Brethren, we must have in common with them, and it is our duty to account them our own. We are to mourn for the one, and rejoice for the other, as if it were our own estate. When any good is befallen unto them, we are to be glad, and to be merry at the heart, as it had befallen us; and so much the rather, seeing we have our portion in it. If we see them weakened in their estate, and go backward and not forward in matters of the World, it ought to be our grief and sorrow: especially if we see them decline in the best things, and turn aside out of the way from him that called them in the grace of Christ, wavering and wandering wide from the truth of the Gospel which once they embraced, we ought so to take it to heart, & to be swallowed up with heaviness, as if we our selves had gone backward. This affection is worthy great praise, where it is to be found. It assureth us that we are living and feeling members in the body of Christ, and have a near conjunction with the other parts. It greatly pleaseth God, and hath an assured promise of a rich reward, according to the saying of our Savior, *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.* This serveth to reprehend the common practice of common Christians, that live as those that know not, or regard not this Communion and enterchange of the same blessings that they have received at the hands of God. These are they that say, God for us all and every man for himself. These are they that make what benefit they can of others, but will depart from nothing themselves: who prize men as sheep and Oxen, and bethink with themselves how much they may make of them, as if they brought them openly into the Market and set them to sale for what will you give me? These are they that never esteem, nor make any account of their brethren, but when they have occasion to use thē, and stand in great need and necessity of them. These are they, that seek themselves only and their own good; as for others, they regard them, so long, and so far, as they may get and gain anything by them, according to the common practice of the world deciphered and described by the Apostle, *All seek their own, and not that which is Jesus Christ's.* Is it thus in the partes and members of the natural body? Doth the eye see only for it self? Doth it not give direction to hand and foot, and serve to the good of the whole body? Doth the hand labor only for it self and to sustain it self, or doth it not rather work both for it self, & for every member of the body besides? The foot, doth it not likewise walk up and down, and take pains for the general good and common benefit even of the least part that belongeth to the body? If it be thus in the several members of our body, ought it not much rather to be so in the mystical body of Christ Jesus? Shall we then make a Mart or Monopoly of our brethren, and fell them for our own filthy gain and private advantage? But whereas we ought to rejoice at their good, how many are there that repine at it, and pine away at the sight of it? And whereas we ought to be greatly grieved to see them go back in goods, or in goodness; in the world, or in the word; they are glad to behold their wants, and are ready to push them down that begin to fall. These men are not only without piety, but without humanity: not only void of conscience, but of common Ciuillity, and are no better then

rotten members. Everyone would be taken and holden for a true member of Christ Jesus, but few regard to do the duties of members. The partes of our bodies delight and rejoice one in another, but many of us that dwell near together, regard not to see one another in the face, or to converse and communicate either with other, and yet they would be accounted Christians. The partes of our body are ready to help and defend one another, the hand is at hand to be lifted up to save the head; to endanger one member to shield another, otherwise it were no hand: we will not hazard the least trifle, for the greatest good of others, and yet we would be accounted Christians. The partes of our body, when one is in pain, will not leave it destitute and distressed, but seek by all means to free it out of trouble; but we are hand-fast in helping the poor and needy members of the same body with us; nay, such paymentes as are imposed by Law upon us, are hardly wrung from us; otherwise we could be content to suffer the poor Servants of God to perish, and yet we would be accounted Christians.

If God love the cheerful giver, how should he then accept of such Guiftes? *If we have this worlds good, and see our brother have need, and shut our compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in us? If we say we love God, and hate our brother, are we not liars against the truth? For how can he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, love God whom he hath not seen?* Assuredly we may conclude, that there is no love of God at all in them that have no eyes of compassion to see their miseries, no ears of pity to hear their necessities, no harts of mercy to melt and relent at their sorrows, no hands of liberality to supply their wants. For judgment without mercy shall fall upon them that will show no mercy: and we shall never have fellowship with the Father, if we have not fellowship and communion with his Children. Wherefore (as the Apostle saith) *Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaking the fellowship that we have among our selves, as the manner of some is: but let us exhort one another, and that so much the more, because ye see that the day draweth near.* Let us be ready to practice these fruits of love toward others, that we may taste of the Fruits of God's love toward our selves. Would we then briefly know what community ought to be among us? Would we understand how, and in what manner we ought to have all things common? Would we live as true Friends, and practice true friendship one toward another? The holy Man *Job* giveth us a good and full direction in these duties, and such a direction as was sealed up by his own example: *He restrained not the Poor of their desire, nor caused ehe eyes of the Widdowes to fail: he did not eat his Morsels alone, but the fatherless did partake thereof: he saw not any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering: he made not Gold his hope, nor said to the Wedge of Gold; Thou art my confidence: he was the eyes to the Blind, and the Feet to the Lame: he was a Father unto the Poor, and when he knew not the cause, he sought it out diligentlie.* Here is a worthy president set before us, and a pure Glass to look upon, wherein we may see cleerelie into the Communion of Saints, what it is, and how it is to be practiced. Let us evermore have this as a Table painted before our eyes, and join with our knowledge obedience, remembering that God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

18If he hath hurt thee, or oweth thee ought, that impute thou unto me.

19I Paul have written this with mine own hand: I will recompense it, albeit I do not say to thee, that thou owest moreover unto me, even thine own self.

Hitherto we have spoken of the reason in the former Verse. Now we come to the removing of another Objection, which the Apostle preventeth in these two Verses, which seemed to stand in his way, & hinder the obtaining of his request. For *Philemon* might have said; Thou intrestest me for a Servant that hath been injurious and hurtful unto me, wasting and misspending my goods, and hindering much mine outward estate, therefore I must entreat thee to give me leave to punish him according to his deservings, and to recover as I can my damage inferred by him. How then can I receive him that hath hurt me, and robbed me, and is in my debt? To this Objection of *Philemon*, let us consider the answer of *Paul*, which he doth make two ways; first, by a concession; then by a correction: as we saw before in removing the former Objections. By concessions, or by way of granting, impute it to me, require it at my hands, and lay it upon my accounts. This first answer, is confirmed & strengthened by an humain testimony, [*I Paul have written it with mine own hand*] I have not set to my mark, and used the hand of another. This Argument also hath the force of another secret Objection, for *Philemon* might have said; Thou promisest fair, and vndertakest much, thou offerest thyself to undergo the debt in word only, but I require some better assurance, and some stronger evidence. To this *Paul* answereth; If thou refuse to take my bare word and naked promise, thou shalt have more. For behold, I do not request it without script or scrole, I have written it with mine own hand: take this as a Bill or Obligation of my hand-writing, that I will well and truly satisfy, content, and pay, or cause thee to be well and truly satisfied, contented, and paid whatsoever he oweth thee. Loe, I bind myself firmelie unto thee by these presents, which shall be thy warrant, that the debt shall be fully and wholly discharged, without any fraud or delay. The reason may be thus concluded:

- *If thou have a Bill or Band of my hand to show for his debt, then doubt not of the payment of it:*
- *But thou hast a Bill or Band of my hand,*
- *Therefore doubt not of the payment of it.*

The correction of his former offer to satisfy the debt, followeth, which is the second part of the answer; [*Albeit, thou owest to me thyself.*] As if he should say; that which I have promised to discharge, I am ready to perform, I will pay thee every penny. And yet why do I say, I will pay thee? Forasmuch as thou art in my debt, and owest more to me, then he doth to thee: he oweth thee a little Silver, but thou owest me thine own Soul. Seeing thou art so much indebted unto me, and that I may justly claim from thee and challenge at thy hands thine own Flesh, which art in a special regard bound unto me in all that thou hast, it is no great matter for thee to remit a little Money, or Money-worth, that thou mayst otherwise require from him. This is amplified by an Ironicall passing over of the matter, and yet by a certain Rhetorical Elegancy he uttereth it, and calleth *Philemon* to acknowledge it. He seemeth to be willing to forget it, and yet he would have him to remember it. A like speech unto this the Apostle useth. 2 Corinth. 9. 4. *I have sent the Brethren that ye may be ready: least if they of*

Macedonia come unto me and find you unprepared, we (that we may not say, you) should be ashamed in this my constant boasting. Where he showeth, that having boasted among the Brethren of the forwardness of the *Corinthians*, if they should be found unprepared, he will not say that themselves should be ashamed, but he meaneth that they should consider of it, and confess it. This revocation or denying, to express in word, that which he was willing another should understand, may be thus concluded in form of an Argument;

- *If the case stand thus between thee and me, that thou owest unto me thy very self: Then much more thou mayest forgive thy Servant this debt for my sake.*
- *But the case standeth thus between thee and me,*
- *Therefore thou mayest forgive him for my sake.*

Thus much concerning the order of these two Verses in this division: wherein we see, how in answering he argueth, and in convincing he replieth and proceedeth to defend his cause. Now let us see the meaning of the words, so far as they require opening and Interpretation. First, when he saith, [*If he hath hurt thee, or owe thee ought.*] These general words may be applied to any wrong, or damage, or In-justice; signifying thereby, the Theft that *Onesimus* had committed, but mitigating it by a more gentle term. For hereby we may gather, that he had robbed his Master, as the common fashion and usual manner of those is that run away. Such as are determined to go from their Masters, & to betake themselves to their heels, will not go away empty, but purloyn what they can: and yet the Apostle diminisheth the envy of the crime, choosing to use such words as either betoken a small fault, or contain no fault at all.

Hence it is that he saith, [*If he owe thee anything.*] For there was not any civil contract or bargain between them, in as much as there could be no such buying, or selling, or changing between the Master and his Servant, as the condition of Servants was in those times, whereof we have spoken before. Wherefore we see that they are deceived that think it cannot be gathered out of this place, or from this Epistle, that the Servant had robbed his Master, both because he is not directly charged with theft, and because the Apostle only speaketh by supposition, [*If he have hurt thee.*] I answer, that he doth not indeed name and express any robbing or rifling of his Masters House; yet we must consider, how he maketh the least of everything, in regard of his repentance which had wiped away the stain thereof. For whereas he had been hurtful to his Master, *Paul* calleth it [*Vnprofitable:*] whereas he had played the Runna-gate, *Paul* calleth it a departing away: so in this place, whereas he had pilferred and purloyned his Masters goods, *Paul* calleth it an hurting, which is a less fault, or a debt, which is no fault. Seeing then, throughout this Epistle the Apostles drift is, by expressing a little to understand more; and by naming a small offense, to understand a greater; we are not to doubt, but his meaning in these words, is to tax him of that theft which he had committed. Neither is it anything to the present purpose, that it is objected, that the Apostle doth not plainly and directly avouch, that he had any way hurt his Master, because he uttereth nothing simply, but by way of supposition; [*If he have hurt thee*] as if he spake by hear-say, and knew not the certainty of that which he had heard: For no doubt he

knew the whole truth of the matter by *Onesimus*, who having truly repented, had particularly acknowledged and confessed the wickedness of his heart, and the unrighteousness of his hands in defrauding of his Master. *Hethat hideth his sins cannot prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall find mercy.* Whosoever will obtain pardon, must make confession. So long as sin is vnacknowledged, so long it is unpardoned. Seeing therefore he had received remission, we cannot imagine, but that before there went confession, and an unfolding of the whole matter from the beginning to the ending; so that the Apostle would not, nor could not speak waueringly and doubtfully of that, whereof he was fully instructed, and perfectly informed from point to point. Besides, the conjunction [*If*] is not condicionall in this place, but Illatiue, and is not spoken by supposition, but rather by way of confession or concession. True it is, sometimes it is condicionallie; directly affirming, and plainly denying nothing. As *Job 31. If my heart hath been deceived by a Woman, or if I have laid wait at the door of my Neighbor: if I did contemn the judgment of my Servant: if I have seen any perish for want of clothing.* Thus it is taken *Gen. 18. 24. If there be fifty righteous within the City, I will spare all the place for their sakes.* And thus it is taken most commonly throughout the Scriptures, in more then an hundred places, which are all to be understood condicionallie, not affirmatively.

Again, sometimes the word is to be taken as a particle, not only conuecting and concluding, but affirming, and knitting together that which is affirmed, as in many places of the 8. chapt. to the *Romans, If we be Children, then are we also heirs: if God be on our side, who can be against us:* as if he should say; seeing we are Children, seeing God is on our side. So the Apostle exhortheth the *Colossians, If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above.* Where he doth not speak vncertainly, but conclude peremptorilie, that they ought seriously to enter into the Meditation of the heavenly life, considering they had been instructed in the resurrection of Christ. Thus *Peter* speaketh in his second Epistle, *If God spared not the Angels that had sinned,* that is; seeing he spared them not. And thus is the word taken (to go no farther) in the words immediately going before, in this Epistle to *Philemon, [If thou account our things common, receive him as myself.]* Where the meaning is, seeing all things between us are common as among friends, do not thou stand or stick at the entertaining of him. So likewise when he saith, *[If he hath hurt thee]* it is a granting of the crime, and as it were a confessing of the action whereof he might be charged, as if he had said; seeing the case is so indeed, discharge him, and account me as thy debtor. Thus much for the clearing of the Interpretation of the first words, and the answering of the objections against it. It followeth *[That impute to me]* where he taketh the debt or wrong offered by *Onesimus* upon himself, and offereth himself to be bound in a band for him, and to become his pledge or surety. When he saith *[I have written it with mine own hand]* it is the confirmation of his promise by a civil Instrument, and by subscribing his name unto it. Lastly, when he addeth, *[Albeit, I do not say to thee that thou owest to me even thine own self,]* we must understand, that the debt which the apostle urgeth as due unto him from *Philemon*, is in respect of his conversion and winning unto Christ. Wherein he alludeth to such as being conquered in battle, are reserved alive to them that have overcome them, & made them their Servants, in saving them from death, in keeping them from the sword, and in preserving them from destruction. Thus then the Apostle argueth; I being a Captain under Jesus Christ, to win him a people from the bondage

of sin and Satan, have among many other, won thee and thine whole Family, and have taken you away as it were Captive, delivering you in Christ Jesus from eternal misery; and therefore thou owest me much more than thy Servant can owe thee, even thine own self, and whatsoever is dearest unto thee: for thou hast been by my means rescued and recovered from the bondage of Satan, & the dominion of death, and hast been brought to the freedom and liberty of the Sons of God. Thus we see, how the Spirit leaveth no starting hole for *Philemon* to shake & shift off this duty, to the end it might be a perpetual rule to the Church in the like case, without all exception. As if the Apostle should have said; If thou object, that thy loss and detriment received by *Onesimus*, is more than thou mayest bear and canst forgive: I answer thee, that thou shalt not thereby be hindered, for I thy friend *Paul* will answer thee whatsoever he is indebted and endangered unto thee, even to the uttermost mite thou shalt demand. And that thou shouldst not doubt of mine offer; behold, this my hand-writing shall be thy warrant and assurance, which I have subscribed with mine own hand: albeit, I may by my right that I have in thee (pulling thee and thy Family out of the Captivity of Satan, the slavery of sin, and the bondage of hell) claim from thee more than thou canst from *Onesimus*: for thou owest to me indeed and in truth, not a part of thy goods and possessions, but thine own self, even thy Soul and Body, which are by my Ministry preserved to everlasting life: and thou canst not sufficiently esteem of thy Redemption and Salvation effected and merited by Christ, but manifested, applied, and warranted unto thee by my preaching, and the graces of God bestowed upon me for the effectual conversion of the elect.

Thus we have seen the order of the words, and have learned the meaning of them. It remaineth according to the manner and Method before propounded, to gather from hence such observations as are intimated unto us, and might be largely handled of us. First of all, observe with me, that the Apostle returneth here to a consideration of that which might be objected: so that we see it is the duty of the Ministers, not only barely to teach the truth, but to remove doubts, to answer Objections, to put away Impediments, and to clear all difficulties that may stick in the minds of the hearers, and hinder the believing and embracing of the truth delivered unto them. For howsoever our care be to teach plainly and evidently, yet the carnal reason of a natural man ministereth many cavils and questions, whereby diverse scruples remain in the hearts of the people, as dangerous stumbling blocks to turn them out of the right way, & to stay their course from running with a right foot in the paths of righteousness. Wherefore it standeth us upon, to consider diligently, what may be alleged against the truth that is taught by us, and to make a plain answer unto the same. This we see in every Epistle practiced by the Apostle. When he had taught free justification by faith apprehending Christ without the works of the Law, the Jews might have objected; If the law do not justify, then it was given in vain, it is abolished, it serveth to no purpose. He knew this would be concluded, and therefore he preventeth it; saying, *Do we then make the Law of none effect through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.* And afterward, having taught that *where sin abounded, there grace abounded much more*, if he had rawly and barely left the matter thus propounded, a man might have objected; If this be true, that there grace aboundeth where sin hath abounded, then sin seemeth to be the cause of God's glory, and

then why do we not sin fully and freely, that thereby the glory of God may be magnified? Wherefore he vnloseth this knot in the words and chapter immediately following, *What shall we say then? Shall we continue still in sin that grace may abound? God forbid: How shall we that are dead to sin, live yet therein?* Likewise to the same purpose he speaketh again, for having proved that sin shall not have dominion over us, *because we are not under the law, but under grace*, considering with himself, that profane men might abuse the grace and liberty of the Gospel to commit sin with greediness, he replieth, *What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid, &c.* The like we see practiced in other places: When he hath taught the Ephesians to *love their Wives as their own bodies, yea even as Christ loved the Church*, and addeth, *that this is a great secret or mystery: a man might ask, do you speak this of the love that ought to be between the Husband and the Wife, or of the love that is between Christ and his Church?* he answereth, *I speak concerning Christ, and concerning the Church.* In like manner delivering a rule to the Church, that Widdowes should be chosen to attend upon the sick and those that were diseased, he would have none under threescore years of age set a part to this Office, he addeth, *But refuse the younger Widdowes, for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry, having damnation:* The Apostle knowing that these words might have been wrested wrongfully and applied contrary to his meaning, (for one might have said, what, have they damnation for marrying? Is marriage the cause of damnation?) He resteth not so, but answereth the point, *they have damnation for denying and breaking their first faith.* This wisdom is to be put in practice of all the Ministers of God's word, we must be able not only to teach, but to convince, and to fore-see what may be objected against that which we have delivered. So then the Ministers must be men of knowledge, thoroughly furnished to convince the adversaries, and replenished with store, both new and old, to overthrow all spirits of contradiction that seek to subvert and destroy the faith of many. And it belongeth to the people to resort and repair to their Ministers thus quallified, for resolution of doubts wherewith they are troubled, considering with themselves that the Priests lips must preserve knowledge, and that the people are to seek the law at their mouths, because they are the Messengers of the Lord of Hosts.

Secondly, we see again in the first words of hurting and owing, that there is used a certain mitigation. For whereas he might have called him a Thief and Runnagate, he expresseth them under much milder names, calling his robbing and flying away, an hurting, and debt; declaring thereby, how gentle and easy an hand, how loving and charitable an heart, we ought to bear, toward the penitent. We are not to aggravate the slips and falls, nor augment the sins and offenses of our brethren, nor to urge them and set them out in their colors to the uttermost, nor to follow them with extremity, but it is our duty to deal mercifully with such sinners as are unfeignedly and truly turned unto God, remembering always these three things. First, that we are subject to the like sins, and may be overtaken with the same offenses, through the temptations of Satan, and the corruptions of our own nature. Hence it is, that the Apostle admonisheth us, to restore such as have fallen, even with the spirit of meekness, considering also our selves least we also be tempted. Secondly, that as we are subject to fall, so we have offended as greatly against God as they, if not in the same kind and after the same manner; so that if he should enter into judgment with us, who could

stand in his presence, or answer him one of a thousand? This is it which Christ Jesus laid to the charge of the proud Pharisees, when they brought before him the woman taken in adultery, he said unto them, *Let him that is among you without sin, cast the first stone at her: who, when they heard it, being accused of their own consciences, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest even to the last.* Thirdly, that we do desire and obtain forgiveness of our sins upon this condition, that we forgive others, when we are taught to say; *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.* Wherefore, let us be of a gentle mind and placable nature, easy to be entreated, ready to be persuaded, willing to be reconciled, and forward to forgive all injuries and wrongs offered unto us: without which affection all our prayers to God, and all the parts of his worship, are made void and nothing worth unto us. Hence it is, that we are moved, when we have brought our gift to the Altar, then and there remembering that our brother hath ought against us, to depart and leave our offering until we be reconciled unto him. Of this point we have spoken before: yet the great necessity of it, and the present use of the Lord's supper, which is a Sacrament of love and unity, requireth the renewing of it; and therefore, unless it be to those that are dead-hearted and heavy eared, that will neither hear, nor mark, nor understand, nor obey, it cannot but work some grace and conscience in them that have their ears opened, bored and prepared.

Thirdly, note the singular love and exceeding compassion in the Apostle, offering himself to become surety; yea, to enter into bands for so base a servant as had stolen away his Masters goods, and ran away for fear of punishment. Herein is great love; and herein Christ Jesus testifieth his love to his Church, in that he became sin for us, and undertook to bear the burden of man's wickedness and God's wrath: even wickedness most heinous, and wrath most horrible. Herein is unspeakable love, he offered himself as a pawn & pledge for us miserable sinners and bankrupt persons, not able to pay one penny of that great debt that we owe unto him.

Fourthly, we may learn that the imputation of another man's debt, may stand with the law of God and man, so that by all law divine and human he is reputed and holden a debtor, that offereth and maketh himself surety for another, so that he is justly charged to be the debtor and the other man for whom he becometh surety is discharged and freed from the debt: yea, the satisfaction of another is imputed to the debtor, even as his debt is imputed to the surety. This being cleere and evident in all Law, and by all reason, why should it seem a marvelous, or rather a monstrous thing in the eyes and ears of our adversaries, either that our sins should be imputed to Christ our mediator, or that his sanctification and justice should be imputed to us, and that we are not justified by inherent righteousness, but by the imputed righteousness of Christ, *Who is made unto us of God to be our righteousness, to the end that we might be found in him, not having our own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.* This ought not to seem strange or impossible to us, seeing he is no less just and righteous, to whom the justice and righteousness of another is imputed, then that person is who hath an inherent righteousness of his own within him: as it skilleth not who payeth the debt, so it be discharged, in as much as the debtor is as well freed when another hath satisfied the creditor, as if himself had done it. Nay he is more just and righteous that hath Christ's righteousness made his, then if he had an inherent

righteousness of his own, albeit it were perfect and complete, full and absolute, without all stain and imperfection. For Christ's imputed righteousness is more worth and worthy than all the inherent righteousness that is in men and Angels: yea that imputed righteousness of Christ is more accepted and respected of God, than all the righteousness that is found in the Angels themselves: and when we shall live with Christ our head in the Heavens, albeit we shall have perfect righteousness inherent in us, and be like the Angels which always enjoy the presence of God, and behold the beauty of his face, yet even then we shall appear more glorious, gracious, and accepted of God, through that righteousness of Christ imputed unto us (which we shall never lose nor put off, no not when we shall be in immortality) then for this inherent sanctification when it is at the highest top and in the greatest perfection, without any want or weakness.

Fifthly, note also the Ironical preterition or passing by that which he would have carefully considered, and wisely imprinted in the mind of *Philemon*, [*I say not that thou owest to me thyself.*] This he doth to avoid all suspicion of arrogancy and ambition, or least he should seem proud and haughty, and challenge overmuch to himself; he lesseneth and diminisheth the matter greatly, whereas he might have uttered and signified more than he speaketh, so that he leaveth the rest to *Philemons* secret and serious consideration. This teacheth us to avoid all arrogant boasting, and to beware of vain vaunting of our selves above that which is meet and ought to be in us. Hereunto the Apostle oftentimes exhorteth us, *Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another.* And in another place, *Be of one accord and of one judgment, that nothing be done through contention or vain-glory, but that in meekness of mind every man esteem other better than himself.* We are naturally given to think well of our selves, and to desire to be magnified of others above that which is in us; whereas we ought to humble and abase our selves, that God may with his gracious hand lift us up.

Lastly, observe with me in the last words the Metaphor used by the Apostle, witnessing and warning him that he owed to him his own self; as if he had been taken by him in wars, by the law whereof he was as his own. This serveth to teach us, that all men are by nature captives to sin and prisoners to Satan, being delivered and freed from the subjection and slavery of them. This our Savior teacheth, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, that whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin: if the son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* To this purpose the Apostle *Paul* speaketh, *Know ye not that to whomsoever ye give yourselves as servants to obey, his servants, ye are to whom ye obey: whether it be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness: but God be thanked, that ye have been the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart unto the form of the Doctrine whereunto ye were delivered: being then made free from sin ye are made the servants of Righteousness.* Where the Apostle showeth, that there are two sorts of Servants; some are Servants to sin; other, are Servants to righteousness: and whosoever is Servant to one, cannot be Servant to the other; they are so opposite and contrary the one to the other, that no man can serve these two Masters. This is it which the Apostle *John* handleth; *He that committeth sin is of the Devil, for the Devil sinneth from the beginning: for this purpose was made manifest that Son of God, that he might loose the works of the Devil.* Let us all suffer the Ministers of the Gospel to take us out of the hands of Satan, and to subdue us to the Kingdom of Christ, by the two-edged Sword that goeth out of his mouth. Thus much may suffice for the general

observations which arise out of the words, and might be stood upon at large; but I have only briefely pointed them out. Now let us particularly lay open such doctrines as are more especially aimed at in these words.

[*If he hath hurt thee, or oweth thee ought, &c.*]

In the former verse, we have heard how the Apostle hath reasoned on this manner with *Philemon*, [*If our things be common, thou oughtest to receive him to favor, whom I have so great cause to favor*] urging a community and fellowship in all God's blessings. But in this verse he acknowledgeth a debt to *Philemon* from *Onesimus*, and doth take it upon himself to answer it. We learn from hence, that the communion which is among the faithful Saints, doth not take away the private possession, dominion, distinction, and interest in the things of this life. Albeit the things belonging to this temporal life, be in some respect common, yet in another respect they are private. They are common touching use, they are private touching possession. This appeareth in the practice of the Fathers that lived after the flood; as *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job, David*, and diverse others; who albeit they willingly imparted to their Brethren the blessings of God bestowed upon them, yet they had their special houses of abode, inheritances of lands, possessions of goods, Flocks of Sheep, herds of Cattle, and distinction of Servants. Mark this in the order, that God took with his own people, when he had subdued their Enemies, and brought them into the Land, every Tribe had his several inheritance, and every Family in the Tribe, had his peculiar possession divided unto him by lot, to avoid all Controversie and contention among them. When *Naboth* was urged by *Ahab* to pass his Vineyard to him, either by sale or by exchange, he answered; *The Lord keep me from giving the Inheritance of my Fathers unto thee*. This is it which *Solomon* speaketh in the *Proverbs*, *Drink the Water of thy Cistern, and of the Rivers of Waters in the streets, but let them be thine, even thine only, and not the Strangers with thee*. He teacheth the faithful to live of their own labors, and to be helpful to the godly that want. Great were the wants and miseries of the poor Saints of God, (as we see in the *Acts of the Apostles*) so that many sold their possessions to relieve the distressed Members of the Church: yet the Apostle *Peter* saith to *Ananias*, who had kept back a part of the price of that he had sold; *Whilst it remained, appertained it not unto thee? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God*. By which words it is manifest, that albeit the Saints accounted nothing their own, but had all things common among themselves, yet they always retained a several right and propriety in those things that they possessed.

This truth will yet further and better appear unto us, if we enter into the consideration of the Reasons that serve to strengthen it. First, it is confirmed by the Commandments of God, and by the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer. The eighth Commandment forbiddeth us to steal away our Neighbors goods, and to do him the least hurt therein. The tenth commandment restraineth the inward lusts & motions that arise in our minds, and condemneth the coveting of his house, of his wife, of his servant, of his ox, of his asse, or of anything that belongeth unto him. If then, God commandeth the preservation of every man's goods, and forbiddeth all injuries to be offered unto them; it standeth us upon to

acknowledge a right and interest that everyone hath in earthly things given unto him. Likewise, our Savior Christ teacheth us daily to ask our daily bread, so that no man ought to desire that which is another's bread, but everyone to know his own, what God hath given him, and what he hath given to others. If then there be bread that is ours, then also there is bread that is not ours. And if somewhat be ours, and somewhat not ours; it followeth that everyone hath an interest in his own goods, and cannot lay hold on another man's.

Secondly, the invading of other men's inheritances, and the encroaching upon their private possessions, is the fruit either of a confused Anarchy, or of a loose government, and both of them are contrary to that ordinance which God establisheth, and the order that he requireth. This we see in the latter end of the book of Judges, where it is recorded, and oftentimes repeated, that *In those days, there was no King in Israel, but every man did that which was good in his own eyes.* And what I pray you was that? Even that which was stark naught: they brake out into open outrages; riots, usurpations, oppressions, and community of women. All things were out of course, no man ordered his life aright, every man followed his own lusts. But God is a God of order, and not of confusion, as the Apostle teacheth, 1. Cor. 14 *God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as we see in all the Churches of the Saints: let all things be done honestly and in order.* But if every man may enter upon the labors of other men, and take to himself what he pleaseth, it would bring as great a confusion of families and common wealths, as once there was of tongues when one did not understand another, so that they were constrained to break off the work they had begun.

Thirdly, everyone hath a proper and peculiar possession, his own servants to order, his own ground to till, his own fields to husband, his own family to govern, and his own domestical affairs to manage, that he may provide things honest in the sight of God, that he may rejoice in the labor of his own hands, and be thankful to the father and giver of all good things. It is a rule taught by nature, approved by experience, strengthened by custom, and established by the founders of Cities and Kingdoms, that whatsoever is cared for of all, is cared for of none as it ought to be, but is neglected of all. This appeareth in every Town and incorporation, in every house and congregation. If a matter be committed to many servants to be dispatched, it is commonly either altogether left undone, or done negligently, and worse then if it had been assigned to one. I have heard it delivered as a proverb, that he which hath one man, is sure of a man, he that hath two men, hath but half a man; and he that keepeth three, hath none at all. One looketh upon another, and leaveth the work for his fellows, thinking with himself that albeit he neglect the doing of it, yet there are two others to finish it: and so among them all, the business of the Master lieth undone. We see this in mending of high ways, which because it is to be done by a common hand, and by a general agreement of many together, is generally posted over from one to another, and commonly left off from year to year. Mark this moreover in the provision for the poor, who ought to be charitably relieved by the laws of God and man: yet because the burden lieth upon the shoulders of all, all men are ready to shake it off from them, and pinch courtesy who shall begin. But when everyone knoweth his own, it increaseth care, and doubleth diligence in him, he rejoiceth with his family in the blessings of God, and learneth to be a good Steward in the use of them, disposing of them to the glory of the giver, and to the comfort of the

receiver. This it which *Solomon* teacheth, Chap. 5. of the Proverbs, *Let thy fountain be blessed, and rejoyce with the wife of thy youth, let her be as the loving Hind and pleasant Roe: let her breasts satisfy thee at all times, and delight in her continually.* So then, the distinction of dominion and possession, when everyone knoweth his own and what is not his own, maketh men careful to look unto them. Wherefore seeing God is the author of propriety, the hater of confusion, and the commander and appointer of every man his several task and labor; it followeth, that the community of the Saints doth not destroy the propriety of substance, but every man keepeth the title and tenor of his own goods, which no other can challenge to himself.

As we have seen the reasons that confirm this Doctrine, so let us see the uses that instruct us in many profitable points tending to edification. First of all, this confuteth and convinceth the detestable and damnable sect of the Anabaptists, who deny to men any property in anything, but would have all things common. True it is, among faithful friends all things are common (as we have already proved and confessed) so that as we have one father, so we have one fraternity, and are of one family. Hence it is, that *Tertullian* in his Apology teacheth, that among Christians all things were common, except men's wives. What then? Were these first Christians, Anabaptists? Or are these Anabaptists like these first Christians? No, in no wise. They allege indeed the example and practice of the primitive church, but it doth not no way favor their opinion, nor countenance any such Communion, as these Heretics would bring in amongst us. But they object that all that believed were in one place, and had all things common; yea, they accounted nothing to be their own. I answer, that these words are not to be understood, as though they had forsaken their own houses, and lived together, in public, and in common, in the same house, as it were in the celled and Cloisters of Monks; but as it followeth in the next words, *They continued daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house; did eat their meat together with gladness and singleness of heart.* If this be true, let the Anabaptists (a new sect of Monks) answer, at whose houses this was done? Was this meeting and eating of their meat in the houses of the Infidels, or of the believers? I think no man is so sottish, to say it was in the houses of the unbelievers, who would not receive them to house, nor give them any entertainment amongst them, seeing they hated them and their profession to the death. Wherefore it must of necessity follow, that these assemblies were in the houses of such as were faithful. If then the faithful Christians had their houses, in which they met together, then they did not at all sell nor forsake their houses and dwellings, nor coop up themselves as is it were in Monasteries or Hermitages from the society of men. Secondly, whereas they object, Chap. 4. *As many as were possessors of Lands sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid it down at the Apostles feet:* It is not so to be understood, as if they had cast away all care of their household affairs, and possessed nothing in private afterward. For this was done by some of the richer and wealthier sort, who were not compelled to sell, neither can it be gathered that they sold all. Nay it appeareth throughout this book of the Acts, that many after this fact possessed houses of their own. The Evangelist *Luke* noteth, that when *Peter* the Apostle was brought out of prison by the Ministry of the Angel that was sent to deliver him, *As he considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, where many were gathered together and prayed.* Frō whence I pray you, had this woman this house? If all

Christians sold their inheritances and proper houses? So then, the communion of goods that was among the first Christians, was nothing but a sale of part of their possessions to succor the poor Saints, least being constrained through Famine, and left destitute of the help of the Brethren, they should turn back again to the Jewish Religion; and therefore it is said, that distribution was made of those things that were sold; not equally, or confusedly, *But according as everyone had need:* so that he that had the greater charge, had the greater allowance, and he that had the less Family, had the less maintenance. True it is, it is said; *The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one Soul, neither any of them accounted anything of that which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.* But from hence we may rightly gather, that every man had special interest in his own goods. For if they had possessed nothing as their own, and that the community among them had destroyed the property that rested and remained with thē, what is this that he saith; *anything of that which he possessed was his own?* Whereby we see, that as yet they continued owners and possessours of their goods, as they did before: but they so possessed them, that they were content to employ them no less to the use of others, then to the benefit of themselves; according to the precept of the Apostle, *That they which buy, be as though they possessed not: and they that use this World, be as though they used it not, because the fashion of this world goeth away.* But be it, that the Apostles had instituted such a communion as these imagine, in this Church at Jerusalem: and let us grant, that among them there was no distinction or property retained: yet it cannot be proved, that the same was required of all Christians, or that it was unlawful for them to keep that portion of earthly blessing befallen unto them. We heard before what *Peter* said to *Annanias*; *Why hath Satan filled thy heart that thou shouldst lie unto the Holy-Ghost, and keep away part of the price of the possession? Whilst it remained, appertained it not unto thee? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.* How could *Peter* speak this, or with what warrant could he deliver it, if all Christians had been enjoined to sell their possessions, and to renounce their Title and interest in them, to live in common one with another? Doth he not say, that the possession might have been kept and unsold? And when State was delivered, doth he not affirm, that the Money that he had received was in his own power? If any ask, wherefore then is he so sharply reprov'd, and severely punished? I answer, because he supposed he could deceive the Holy Ghost, and so kept back a part of the price, and yet pretended to bring the whole sum unto the Apostles. His sin therefore was lying, fraud, and deceit. So then the *Anabaptists* are plainly convinced, and a lawful propriety of goods is established. This we read farther in other places of this Book, that the Christians held the possession of their houses and goods as their own. There was a certain Woman, a Disciple, named *Tabitha*; she was full of good works and Alms which she did, and made many Coates and Garments which she gave to the poor.

In the next Chapter, among many Christian virtues, *Cornelius* the Captain is commended, to *Be a devout man, and one that feared God withal his Household, which gave much Alms to the people, and praised God continually.* In the eleauenth Chapter we see, that after *Agabus* had signified by the Spirit, that there should be a great Famine throughout all the World; *The Disciples, every Man according to his ability, purposed to send succor unto the Brethren which dwelt in Judea.* Mark

here that he saith; *Every man according to his ability*; for what ability could any have, if no man did hold anything as his own? Or what difference could there be between one another? In like manner, we heard before, of the house of *Mary the Mother of John*, where many were assembled: and we read of the house of *Simon the Tanner* where *Peter* lodged, and continued for the space of many days: he was a true Christian, and yet he kept his house after his conversion to the Faith of the Gospel. In the 16. Chapter, *Lydia* a seller of Purple, having her heart opened, and being baptized, said; *If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into mine House, and abide there: and she constrained them.* She doth not say; *Sell my House, but enter into my House*, which she so possessed, as that she communicated it also to the Apostles. In the twentieth Chapter the Apostle *Paul* doth glory before the Elders of *Ephesus*, saying; *I have coveted no Mans Silver, nor Gold, nor Apparrell.* What reason can be rendered of this saying; if no Christian might lawfully retain the possession and propriety of Gold or Silver? In the 21. Chapter it is said; that *Paul and they that were with him, entered into the House of Phillip the Evangelist, whtch was one of the seven Deacons, and abode with him.* If nothing ought in private to be possessed, why had he not sold his house? How dareth he retain and reserve anything to himself? Wherefore is he not reprov'd of the Apostle, and the rest of the Brethren, for breaking the supposed ordinance that they had planted and appointed in all Churches. But of this, I have spoken else-where; and others discuss and dispute this point at large, showing that God hath settled this order to be observed in the Church, that everyone govern aright his own house, and distribute to the necessities of the Saints. The Apostle speaketh to this purpose; *If any Widow have Children or Nephews, let them learn first to show godliness toward their own house, and to recompense their Kindred, for that is an honest thing, and acceptable before GOD.* And afterward, *If there be any that provideth not for his own; and namely for them of his Household, he denieth the Faith, and is worse then an Infidel.* Likewise writing to the *Thessalonians*, he saith in the first Epistle, chapt. 4. *We beseech you brethren, that ye encrease more and more, and that ye study to be quiet, and to meddle with your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.* And in his second Epistle, Chapter 3. *When we were with you, this we warned you off, that if there were any which would not work, that he should not eat: for we heard that there are some which walk among you inordinatelie, and work not at all, but are Busie-bodies: therefore them that are such, we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that they work with quietness, and eat their own Bread, &c.* Thus then it evidently appeareth, that the *Annabaptists* are deceived, which go about to bring in such a communion, or rather confusion among men, as neither Christ hath commanded, nor the Apostles have instituted, nor experience hath approved, nor any Christians have practiced, nor the example of the Church at *Jerusalem* hath warranted. To this Pestilent and poisoned Sect of detestable Heretics, we may join as *Cozin-Germans*, those mischievous and miserable Male-contents, that hold in word the lawfulness of private possession, but follow in practice the unlawfulness of more then an *Anabaptistical* communion.

These are they that bring discontent to see others enjoy more then themselves, endeavor by unlawful and ungodly actions to bring in an equality of all things; pulling down Hedges, filling up of Ditches, burning of Houses, removing of Markes, breaking down Fences, digging down Enclosures, dispaling and disparking the bounds of Lands, and laying all things

common, (as they did in the Insurrection of *Wat Tyler*, *Iacke Straw*, and many others) which we have seen or heard done in our days; yea, many idle and disordered people, hoped and looked for a commotion in the latter days of our late Sovereign. For as *Esau* hating his Brother, and thirsting after the murder of him, thought in his mind; *The days of mourning for my Father will come shortly, then will I slay my Brother Jacob*: so these ryotus routs of Rebels, intending to fish in troubled waters, and minding to make a prey of the richer sort, said among themselves; *The days of mourning for Queen Elizabeth will come shortly*; then we shall have enough, then we shall make the Chur•...es pay for all, then we will want nothing that is to be had. Let us take heed of such ungracious person as begin a conspiracy, and lay the foundation of an Insurrection. Though they call us to come with them, and would have us to join in league with them; let us beware we cast not in our lot among them, nor walk in the way with them, for their feet run to evil, and their broad paths, are the beaten paths of death.

Secondly, seeing every man hath a state in his own goods, it teacheth us this duty, that we ought to be content with that portion which we have; be it more or less, be it small or great, be it a simple or a worthy portion, and to be by all means thankful for it: considering with our selves, that the difference of places, Lands, Possessions, with the properties thereof, be of God, and are to be acknowledged as his gift. True it is, men do sometimes increase their wealth by unlawful means, by robbing and wronging of others, to their own condemnation: but then they want comfort and peace in the possessing of them; they cannot say they eat their own Bread; they cannot esteem God to be their helper. Let us hate such wicked shifts, and renounce from our hearts all deceitful dealing. Let us seek for a blessing upon our labor at his hands, that is the disposer of all things in Heaven and Earth. Let us learn, *That godliness is great gain, if a Man be content with that he hath: for we brought nothing into the World, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out, therefore when we have food and raiment, let us therewith be content*. This is it which the Apostle teacheth, Heb. 13. *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with those things that ye have, for he hath said; I will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: so that we may boldly say, The Lord is mine helper, neither will I fear what man can do unto me*. We shall never deal faithfully with the goods of other men, nor for Conscience sake abstain from wrong and Injustice, until we rest contented in our hearts with things present, and depend by Faith upon God's providence, knowing that he hath by his gracious promise bound and charged himself with us, and for us, in all things necessary, as well for our bodies, as for our souls. He is a mighty God, and a merciful Father, that never faileth nor forsaketh his Children that trust in him, that call unto him, that depend upon him. If this Faith be in us, it will swallow up many cares, and consume many fears, which distract and distemper unbelievers in this life.

Let not our heart therefore be addicted to Covetousness, nor let us suffer our selves to be carried away from God, by the greedy and gaping desire of Riches, nor seek to augment them, & abound in them by unlawful means, nor possess them with vexation of mind, or with affiance in them. But let us rest in our several Callings and conditions of life with contentation, and a quiet Conscience, not swelling in heart, or disquieting our selves in vain, with longing after an higher state and standing, then the Lord hath allotted and allowed

unto us. If once our affections over-flow the banks of our present conditions, so that we cannot use with thankfulness that which we have received, we can never be persuaded to be contented, but we will not stick now and then to borrow of the Law of equity, shifting & providing for our selves what ways we can without difference, and breaking out into dishonest and vnorderly courses, without conscience. Let us therefore for our better instruction in this point, lay up in our hearts, these few Rules follows, to work in us contentation.

First, that all of us enjoy more then we deserve, and can justly challenge at the hands of God. If we would have a crumb of bread, we must crave it of him, and say, *Give us this day our daily bread.*

Secondly, that we oftentimes do want outward things, because we esteem no more of inward graces and spiritual blessings. We have no promise of God to bestow upon us earthly gifts, any farther then we ask by prayer, and seek by faith heavenly things, according to the saying of Christ; *First seek the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be ministered unto you.* It is therefore God's great judgment upon such graceless and thanklesse men, as contemn these things that belong to a better life, that oftentimes they are brought to feel the want of the transitory things of this life.

Thirdly, that it is a great subtlety and policy of Satan, to inueigle and entangle our minds with the desire of such benefits as we want, thereby to cause us to murmur, and to move us to distrust for them, and to disgrace the present benefits which we enjoy, and so to provoke us to be unthankfull. The people of Israel abounded plentifully in many great blessings in the Wilderness, and tasted liberally of God's goodness; yet when they suffered the least want of Water, or Bread, and had not their lusts satisfied at their own desire, they did break out into impatency of spirit, and forgot the mighty works that he had done for them. Their present want made them to distaste and dislike all the rest of God's mercies; *Even as the evil-favored and lean-fleshed Kine, did eat up the well-favored and fat Kine, or as the thin and blasted ears of Corn, devoured the rank and full ears, in the dreams of Pharaoh.* Let us not therefore burn with a desire of an higher estate, but labor to find our hearts and minds thoroughly settled in that large and liberal portion which we have in present possession by the good hand of God toward us.

Fourthly, that the Lord doth not always actually bestow upon his Children the riches and wealth of this World, but nurtereth them up to depend wholly upon his faithful promise, who hath given them his word, that he will not leave them nor forsake them. And in the mean season, he worketh in their hearts a patient bearing of the wants and necessities of this life, but in the end, he will bestow upon them eternal blessings that never shall have end, and heavenly graces that never shall decay.

Fifthly, that one drop of God's favor toward us, is better worth, and more of value, then this whole World, that is but vain and transitory. If we cannot rest in this favor of God, in the want of outward things, it is most certain we have not yet learned truly to prize, and rightly esteem the favor of God. Such as cannot be content to forgo and forsake earthly things,

never truly felt the forgiveness of sins. Let us learn to rest in the least taste and touch of the grace and favor of God, whatsoever it bringeth with it; whether wealth or want; whether plenty or poverty; whether prosperity or adversity.

Lastly, we must remember that Nature is content with a little; so that if we have food and raiment, we ought to be content, as we noted before. This was the vow of *Jacob* when he went from his Fathers house, while he was in the way to *Haran*; *If GOD will be with me, and will keep me in this journey which I go, and will give me Bread to eat, and Clothes to put on, so that I come again unto my Fathers house in safety, then shall the Lord be my GOD.* There are two pointes of man's life; his entering into the World, and his going out of the world: the space coming between both these, receiveth many changes and alterations, many differences and diversities. Some are poor, and some are rich; some noble, & some vn-noble; some high, and some low. The beginning of all is equal; the end of all also is equal touching this life: for as we brought nothing into this world, so we can carry nothing away with us, *We came naked out of our mothers womb, and naked we shall return thither.* The time between our rising and falling, our birth and death, is of short continuance, and therefore we ought not to be careful to heap up Riches, *For as much as we shall take nothing away when we die, neither shall our pomp descend after us.* If a Man have need of one only Pot or Pitcher of Water, it is small wisdom and great vanity to try to draw up a whole stream. If a little provision will serve for the journey and voyage that we undertake, it is a needless and bootless thing to hoard and heap up great store of furniture for a small occasion. Let us therefore take heed of all excess, and content our selves with the moderate use of outward blessings, enjoying such things as we have with cheerfulness and thankfulness, bearing the want of such things as we have not, with patience and meekness, depending upon GOD for his blessing, in all things that any way concern and belong unto us. To love Riches, is a token of a base and abject mind; to covet and desire them when we want them, is a sign of a wretched and miserable mind; to use them well to our private commodity, and the public utility when we have them, is a Testimony of a commendable and contented mind.

Lastly, we learn from this Doctrine, to take good heed that we do not abuse our property and dominion of those gifts that God hath given us, bestowing them only to our private use, and with-holding the comfort of them from others, to whom they ought of right to be imparted and employed. For albeit the possession of them be ours, yet there is an use of them belonging to the Saints; the property of goods, and the communion of Saints standing together. Whensoever we have these outward things, we must not with-hold them, when they may profit the Church, and refresh the Saints. We must not be covetously and corruptly minded, like *Nabal*; who, when *David* and his Men were in necessity in the Wilderness, said; *Shall I take my Bread, and my Water, and my Flesh that I have killed for my Shearers, and give it unto Men that I know not whence they are?* He challengeth all as proper to himself; his Bread is his, his Water is his, his Flesh is his, all is his; he hath nothing for *David*, nothing for his Servants, nothing for others. This we see in the dealing of *Laban* toward *Jacob*, he saith unto him; *These Daughters, are my Daughters; these Sons, are my Sons; these Sheep, are my Sheep; and all that thou hast is mine.* He challengeth all to himself, he leaveth nothing to *Jacob*. *Gene. 31. 43.* The Apostle *James* teaching us to prove our Faith by our works, saith; *If a Brother or a Sister be*

*naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them; Depart in peace, warm yourselves, and fill your Bellies, notwithstanding ye give them not those things that are needful, what helpeth it? Whereby we see, that mercifulness to our poor and needy Brethren is commanded: so that as we believe a communion to be among all true professors, so we are charged to be as the Clouds that drop down the sweet shewers upon the Hearbes, as lively Fountaines of Water that flow out plentifully to the use of others, as fruitful Trees bringing forth store to feed others. We must consider, that we are but Stewards of our goods that are lent us for a time, for which we are to give an account, and of which we are to give a yearly rent to the chief Lord, which his poor Children are appointed to receive at our own hands, whom we are bound to relieve with our goods. He hath said; *The poor ye shall always have with you, but me ye shall not always have.* This duty is oftentimes required and beaten upon in the word of God. This appeareth in the practice of *Job*, who being accused falsely of his three friends, to be an Hypocrite, is compelled to boast after a sort of his works as the fruits of his Faith, and the assured Seals of his unfeigned profession; *I delivered the Poor that cried, the fatherless, and him that had none to help him: the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the Widdowes heart to rejoice.**

Where we see, how he rendereth an account of his life past, being of his Adversaries charged with great wickedness and much dissimulation. So the Prophet describing the blessedness of that Man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his Commandments, saith; *He hath distributed and given to the Poor, his righteousness remaineth forever, his Horne shall be exalted with glory.* He showeth hereby, that the godly do not spare niggardlie, but distribute liberallie; according as the necessity of the poor Saints requireth, and as his own power and ability suffereth him. Hereunto cometh the precept of Christ: *Sell that ye have, and give Alms: make you Bags which wax not old, a Treasure that can never fail in Heaven, where no Thief cometh, neither Moath corrupteth.*

Let us consider, that God hath made the poor as well as the Rich; and that the poor man is our own Flesh. Especiallie, let us always remember that the godly poor are our Brethren in Christ, and that in the last judgment the Lord Jesus will account it, and reward it as done unto himself, whatsoever hath been bestowed upon his needy and distressed Brethren. If we be careful to practice these duties of Christian Charity and Community, it shall avail to seal up God's favor toward us in the remission of our sins, and much advantage us to obtain many blessings, seeing many supplications shall be made and offered up for us, and so we shall taste the fruit that we have planted, and harvest the Corn that we have sowed. For *Whatsoever a Man soweth, that he shall reap,* (as the Apostle testifieth to the *Galatians*) and therefore if we be diligent to help the poor and needy, we shall receive a full recompense, with much increase into our own bosoms.

[*That impute to me, I will recompense thee, &c.*]

See here the most earnest affection of *Paul*, for this poor Servant. He offereth himself to become Surety and Pay-master for *Onesimus*, to answer for his debt, and to stand as a debtor himself in his place, in respect of his Creditor, and to pay whatsoever would be, or could be required at his hands. But before we come to the point of instruction here offered to our

consideration, it shall not be amiss to answer a question that may here be demanded, how he promiseth the payment of money to another, who unless he were himself helped and sustained of the Churches, had not whereupon to live. We know how it went oftentimes with the Apostles, by the confession of *Peter*, and of *John*, who said to the Cripple that lay at the gate of the temple, *Silver & gold have we none*. And the Apostle *Paul* was also constrained to labor with his own hands. How then is he on a sudden become so wealthy, as to offer his service to another, and to undertake to discharge the debt of another? I answer, the meaning of the Apostle is, that he would have him forgive his Servant, and to require the debt neither of him, nor of his Servant; as appeareth evidently by the whole course of the preventing of this Objection. He would not therefore have him to contend with his poor penitent Servant, nor seek any trouble against him, unless he would account him a debtor in his stead. And furthermore, he addeth forth-with, that *Philemon* was indeed wholly his, to whom he owed all that he had: so that if he would require the debt, he should consider that the payment was already made. From this offer that *Paul* maketh, which is, to satisfy another man's debt. We learn, that it is a lawful thing for one man to become Surety for another, and to engage himself for his sure and faithful Friend, of whom he is well persuaded. Howsoever suretyship be to some very hurtful, and to all dangerous, yet it is to none in it self, and of it own nature, unlawful or sinful.

This truth is confirmed unto us by diverse examples, of such as have gone before us in the practice of this duty. When *Jacob* refused to send his youngest and beloved Son *Benjamin* (whom he begat in his old age) into *Egypt* with his other Sons to fetch Corn, saying; *Ye have robbed me of my Children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin: all these things are against me*. Then *Reuben* answered his Father, saying; *Slay my two Sons if I bring him not to thee again: deliver him to mine hand, and I will bring him to thee again*. Where we see, he offereth his Sons in hostage, and was ready to deliver them as pledges, and to bind to his Father, Man for Man, Son for Son, body for body, and life for life: which is a greater matter then to be bound money for money, and goods for goods. The like we see more evidently in the Chapter following, when *Jacob* did hang back, and seemed resolved not to let *Benjamin* depart with them; *Judah* is earnest with his Father, saying; *Send the Boy with me, that we may rise and go, and that we may live and not die; both we, and thou, and our Children: I will be surety for him, of mine hand shalt thou require him: If I bring him not to thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame forever*.

In which words we see, that when *Judah* considered the cause of their long delay, and the extremitie of the great dearth, and the danger of their present estate, that except they had made this tarrying, doubtless they might have departed from their Father, and returned to their Father again the second time, he undertaketh the matter, and becometh surety for the Child. This is it which he freely and francklie confesseth before *Joseph*, when they had been brought back to him, the Cup being found in *Benjamin's* sack, *Doubtless thy Servant became surety for the Child to my Father*, and said; *If I bring him not unto thee again, then will I bear the blame unto my Father forever: now therefore (I pray thee) let me thy Servant abide for the Child, as a Servant to my Lord, and let the Child go up with his Brethren*. Whereby also it appeareth, that he considering with himself, that he could not without impeachment of his credit, without

breach of his promise, and without heaviness to his Father, return to him, except the Child were with him: he offereth himself as a pawn, and pledge, and prisoner to *Joseph*, as before he had done to his Father.

This also we see euidentlie in the Acts of the Apostles, when *Paul* was troubled fought preaching Christ crucified, and risen again from the dead, *Insomuch, that the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain vicious and Vagabond Fellowes, and having assembled the multitude, they made a tumult in the City:* It is said, that *Iason* received him and other of the Brethren into his house, and offered to baile them, and to be bound for them, putting in good assurance that they should appear and be forth-coming. And if we require an example in the same kind and condition, with this that is mentioned in this Epistle: Our Savior expresseth the like, in the Parable of him that went down from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*, and fell among thieves, who wounded him with their weapon, and robbed him of his Raiment, and left him in his trouble, even half dead: *A certain Samaritan (as he iournied) came near unto him, and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, and poured in Oil and Wine, and put him on his own Beast, and brought him to an Inn, and made provision for him: and on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the Host, and said unto him; Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will recompense thee.* This Samaritan did show himself a right Neighbor, both in showing his present charity toward him, and in offering himself to become a surety for him. All these approved and allowed examples of the faithful, do sufficiently and evidently teach us, that it is in it self lawful to undertake payment for another, and to become Surety for him.

And if we require better grounds to satisfy us in this truth, let us enter into the strength of reason to assure us, without any wavering herein. First, weigh with me the example of Christ, an excellent pattern and president of the practice of this, an example far beyond all exception, an example that ouersadoweth, and dazeleth and darkeneth, all that cloud of witnesses produced by the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews; he became surety for his Church unto his father, to pay the debt of our sins, and to satisfy his justice. If then any doubt, or make a question of the former examples, wherein we saw how *Reuben* offered himself to become as a pledge to his father, *Judah* to *Joseph*, *Iason* to the Governor, and the *Samaritan* to his Hoast: behold a most absolute and perfect example of Christ Jesus, who bound himself for us; his body for our bodies, and his soul for our souls, that our sinful bodies might be made clean by his body, and our souls, washed through his most precious blood. For the Prophet prophesieth, that he should make his soul an offering for sin. And Christ himself saith, *My soul is very heavy even unto the death, &c.* Thus did his love exceed and abound toward us, that our love might exceed and abound one toward another. To this purpose, the Apostle showeth, that Jesus is made a surety of a better Testament. He stood in our places, he took upon him our sins, he bare in his body the punishments due to us, he felt the wrath of God kindled against us.

Secondly, it is a fruit of love even this way to relieve and help such as are like to suffer damage and detriment by want of outward things. Now, human society and Christian piety

requireth, that one should sustain and succor another in their necessity, as we see in the former examples of *Reuben, Judah, Iason*, and the *Samaritan* before mentioned and remembered. The life of man can hardly stand without lending and borrowing, without letting and hiring, without buying and selling, without bargaining and trusting one of another. It is a work of mercy to become surety, and therefore as lawful (no doubt) as to give or lend. The law of God commandeth us to help our Neighboures, as we are able, and as they have need: and they are to be relieved by such means as are in our power; by giving, by forgiving, by communicating to them such things as we have, and they have not. For if we love them, and have true Charity in us, we must not be wanting to them, but be ready to profit them and do them good, so far as we do not hurt our selves. It is no unwise sentence of a wise man, *The wicked will not become surety, and he that is of an unthankful mind, forsaketh him that delivered him*: declaring thereby, that as he is a fool that is surety for every man, so is he ungodly that in no wise will be surety for any man. We are commanded to help up our enemies Ox that is fallen, or his Ass that is sunk down under his burden; how much more ought we to show pity and compassion to our brother himself, vexed with the creditor, terrified with the prison, oppressed with his debt, and dismayed and discouraged with the payment at hand, that is to be made? So then, whether we do consider that Christ Jesus is made our surety, or that suretyship is a fruit of Christian love one toward another, in both respects we see, that in it self it is not to be disallowed or condemned.

The uses of this Doctrine are diligently to be considered of us. And first of all, if it be lawful and warranted to become surety one for another (as we have before plainly proved) it convinceth and confuteth those that hold it to be evil and unlawful, to give their word, or offer their band, or tender their promise or engage themselves any way for their brethren. Love is a debt that we owe to all men, as the Apostle testifieth, Rom. 13. 8. and therefore we ought not to fail in the performance thereof. It is imagined and supposed by some, that all or the greatest part of the controversies between man and man, and suites of Law, between party and party arise from hence, that things are taken up upon trust, that there is borrowing and lending among us, and that there is crediting one of another; and so would have these quite taken away, and the Names of them utterly abolished out of all Incorporations and Common-wealths.

It is reported, that among the *Turks* are few suites and actions commenced one against another, because there is with them no bargain or sale, no buying or selling, but for ready Money, and for present pay. But this is a plain fallation, to put that for a cause which indeed is not the cause. For the corrupt conscience of men, the covetous desire of Money, the greedy gaping after gain, the malicious humor of revenge, the bitter root of strife, and the extreme want of love are the true causes of all wranglings & suites one against another, not the lending and borrowing of Money or money-worth. Hence it is, that God never forbiddeth in his Law the use of hiring, or of borrowing, but rather rectifieth the judgment, directeth the practice, and prescribeth the rules of the right and lawful use thereof. Hence it is that the Lord saith in the Law; *If thou lend Money to my people; that is, to the poor with thee, thou shalt not be as an Usurer unto him, ye shall not oppress him with Usury: If thou take thy Neighbors Rayment to pledge, thou shalt restore it unto him before the Sun go down: for that is his covering only,*

and this is his Garment, for his skin, wherein shall he sleep? Therefore when he crieth unto me, I will hear him, for I am merciful. In these words, he forbiddeth lending upon interest to the poor, and forbiddeth cruelty in retaining pawns and pledges taken from them that are in necessity, whereas they ought to be restored.

To this end and purpose Moses speaketh in another place, *If one of thy Brethren with thee be poor, within any of thy Gates in thy Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor Brother, but thou shalt open thine hand unto him and shalt lend him sufficient for his need which he hath.* So the Prophet saith; *The wicked borroweth and payeth not again: but the righteous is ever merciful, he giveth and lendeth, and his seed enjoyeth the blessing.* To these sayings of Moses and the Prophets, accordeth the Commandment of Christ; *Give to him that asketh: and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away.* All these rules of direction serve to instruct us in the practice of the duties of love, and teach us how to behave our selves in buying and borrowing, in letting and lending unto our Brethren that call upon us for our help in the time of need. Secondly, hereby they are reprehended, that bind themselves by vow or oath, from binding themselves in any respect, or in any cause, or upon any occasion for any person. This is an ungodly and unlawful shift that some men use, to disable and to bar themselves from doing this work of charity, and showing this fruit of love to their Brethren. For many, to the end they might not be enwrapped and entangled in the deceitful snares of suretyship, do enter into covenant one with another, and do firmly bind themselves upon a great penalty and forfeiture, never to enterpose their credit for any man whatsoever. But it is sometimes a necessary duty of piety, and a testimony of the soundness of our Religion, and a great comfort to our consciences, to stand between our Brethren, and the harms that are coming toward them,

It is a general rule taught in the word of GOD, delivered by the law of nature, and observed by the Gentiles; that we should so deal with others, as we would be dealt with all our own selves. It is taught by the mouth of Christ; *Give to every man that asketh of thee, and of him that taketh away the things that be thine, ask them not again: and as ye would that men should do to you, so do ye to them likewise.* There is no man if he were in want, and stood in need of the bare word, or honest promise, or firm band and Obligation of another, but he would be ready to request it, and willing to use it, and content to accept of it. Wherefore, we are to remember that we ought not to hang back when as we ought to perform the like service, and to show like compassion to our brethren. It is therefore a great sin, and a great sign of the want of love, when we are called unto this duty, not to be forward faithfully to discharge it. We ought at all times to be lovingly affected and charitably disposed one toward another; so that when God calleth us, and withal enableth us with no damage, or trouble, or loss to our selves, to deliver our neighbor out of his misery, then to shut up our compassion, and to refuse to pass our promise for him, is an evident token, that little love and small kindness abideth in us. If then, the not doing of this duty, be an offense against God and our Brethren, how much more to covenant and condition with our selves or others, or to enter into great bands, that we will never enter into any bands (great or little) for them that call upon us, and mean honestly to discharge whatsoever we mercifully undertake for them? No Vow can be good, no Oath can be lawful, no Band can be allowed, no Covenant can be equal, no

promise can be warranted, that is not well grounded, and advisedly uttered. For, seeing suretyship is not of it self, and in it self unlawful, to bind our selves wholly from it, cannot be esteemed to be lawful.

Let us therefore in the acknowledgement of this truth, show brotherly Love as occasion serveth, as the need of our Neighbor requireth, and as our own ability permitteth. Some are willing to help their brethren by word and deed, and are not able: In these *a willing heart, and a ready mind, are to be accepted*. Others, are able to do much good by their wealth, and by their word; yet they cannot be brought to show any relief either by the one, or by the other. Wherefore, it standeth you upon, that have this worlds good, to be ready to employ it as faithful Stewards this way, *And to make you friends with the Riches of iniquity, that when ye shall want, they may receive you into everlasting habitations*. And in the mean season, *Make you Bags which wax not old, a treasure that can never fail in Heaven, where no thief cometh, neither Moth corrupteth*. But howe many are there, that are even dead in good works? They are dumb and tongue-tied when they should speak for the poor, or give their word for them; their hands have a shaking palsy, that they cannot write their names to do them good; so that if one poor man were not more ready to plight his promise for another, then the rich, they might many times starve and be undone. These are they that care not what become of those that are in necessity, which shall one day give an account of their Stewardshippe, and leave behind them, the Goods wherein they delighted, and made them the God's wherein they trusted.

Secondly, seeing we have shown it to be lawful to enter into suretyship, (for if it had been simply and altogether forbidden, *Paul* would never have proffered himself to be surety unto *Philemon* for *Onesimus*.) This serveth diverse ways for our instruction. For hereby we are directed to be careful to use it lawfully. A thing that is of it self, and in it own nature laudable and lawful, may be used wickedly, unwarrantably, and unlawfully. The Apostle *Paul* speaking of the Law saith, *We know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully*. The thing that is good, may be used in a manner that is not good. But it is a true and common Proverb, *That the faults of the Artificers are not to be ascribed to the Arts themselves*. The Law is not to be blamed, but the Teachers of the Law, who did falsely apply it, and wrongfully wrest it, and ignorantly corrupt it. Now, that which the Apostle speaketh of the Law, may rightly be spoken of suretyship: It is good and lawful, if a man use it well and lawfully. But if we use it, and enter into it rashly, not rightly; ordinarily, not warily; foolishly, not wisely; desperately, not discreetly; if we entangle our selves with it, without much deliberation, without good circumspection, and without due consideration, it becometh unlawful unto us.

True it is, it is not evil in it self, but to him it turneth to be evil, that useth it evilly, according to that which the Lord saith by the Prophet, *I gave them Statutes which were not good, and Judgments wherein they should not live: because they brake them and abused them, and were made more inexcuseable without them, in that they framed not their lives according to the obedience of them*. It falleth out oftentimes, that such as have incombred themselves with rash promises, and unadvised suretyshippe, seldom live in peace and quietness, without distraction of mind, or fear of trouble, or danger of loss, or feeling of misery. Hence it is, that *Solomon*

teacheth us to behave our selves wisely and warily in this point, and beateth upon no Doctrine more often, more earnestly, more effectually, then he doth upon this matter that we have in hand. In the sixth Chapter of the Proverbs, he saith, *My Son, if thou be surety for thy Neighbor, and hast stricken hand with the Stranger, thou art snared with the words of thy Mouth, and art taken with the words of thine own mouth.* Where he compareth him that is free from bills and bands, and books of the Creditors, free from suretyship and such like bondage, to a Bird that hath the liberty of the whole air, to fly therein at her own pleasure: but he that is bound by Promise, or Covenant, or Statute, is like a bird in the net of the Fowler, the which (albeit she flutter with hir wing and cry with her voice, and hop with her foot, yet) is fast caught, and may be killed, or put in the Cage. So is it with him that is entered into bands, or hath given his word for another; he hath after a sort lost his freedom, he standeth in danger of falling into mischief. Wherefore, that this giving of assurance to others, and for others, either by our word or hand, may be performed lawfully to the good of others, and not to the hurt of our selves, we must mark, remember, and practice, two points: First, consider the persons of others for whom it is done; Secondly, our own persons that do it.

Touching those persons for whom we become sureties, we must know, that we are not to engage our selves and our credit, for everyone that will crave it at our hands, or will desire us to pawn our Word, and enter into bands for them, and promise us fair to see us discharged: but in such men who oftentimes have a greater feeling of their own wants and necessities, then of freeing them out of woe, that have pledged themselves for them, we are to observe three things. First, that they be well known. Secondly, that they be honest and godly. Thirdly, that they be sufficient to pay that which they would have us bound unto another, to assure him that they will pay. These are the persons that we are bound to help, either for Piety, or Charity, or Honesty, or Amitie, or Consanguinity, or Affinity, all which bands do bind us one to another, and require some duty to be performed towards them. This is set down as a singular point of true Wisdom by the Wiseman, *Prov. 11, 15. He shall be sore vexed that is surety for a Stranger, and he that hateth suretyship, is sure.* And afterward in the same Book, to the same effect, *Take his Garment that is surety for a Stranger, and a pledge of him for the stranger.* As if he should say, pity him not, let him feel the smart of his folly and rashness, and let him bear the punishment of his headinesse and heedlessness: according to that which is set down in another place, *A Man destitute of understanding, toucheth the hand, and becometh surety for his Neighbor.* Whereby we see, that we must not be so over-seen to undertake for all men hand over head without difference, but for such as are well and thoroughly known unto us within and without, with whom we have lived and been long conversant, and eaten (as it is in the Proverb) a Bushel of Salt, of whose care and Conscience in his dealings with others, either in the same, or in the like cases we have had some good trial and experience. He that doth engage himself far for a stranger whom he doth not know, shall repent afterward when it is too late. And if we have seen or heard of his unfaithfulness in former times to others, we are deceived if we expect any better dealing.

Again, we are to observe that *Solomon* by the word [*Stranger*] doth not only understand such an one as is unknown unto us, but would have us beware of those that are lewd and ungodly. For so throughout the whole book of the Proverbs for the most part, he taketh and useth

that word, *By the Strange Woman*; he meaneth, a wicked Woman. So in the former places his purpose is to teach us to look to our selves, that they be not of profane life and loose behavior, for whom we promise to become sureties; they ought to be known unto us for their honesty and piety, that so our hearts may trust and rest in them. But such as are ungodly, and given over to all licentiousness, and spend their days and wealth in beastly drunkenness, will never make conscience of their word or band to save us harmless. They may well flatter us till we be bound, but they regard not to discharge us after we are bound. They are unfaithful to God, and therefore we cannot look to find them faithful to our selves. Whereby we see, how grossly they are deceived, and how greatly they are deluded, and how sencelessly they are besotted, that will sooner be bound for Shifters, Gamsters, Bankerouts, Tosse-pots, and other base Companions, most unwilling, and most unable to keep touch with their Creditors, then such as are sober-minded, and honest livers, painful in their callings, and careful to bring up their families as they ought to do. These are they, that as they are loose in life, so they are lavish of their word, and prodigal of their tongue for their consorts. If there be any Malefactors guilty of any heinous & horrible crime, they are ready to offer their word or band to baile them, and deliver them from prison, and account it a trick and token of good fellowship to stand for them, and to keep them from their deserved punishment. And therefore they are oftentimes rewarded according to their works, and left in the danger which they have brought upon themselves. These are they that will complain against the unfaithfulness of others, whereas rather they might & should accuse their own rashness and foolishness, that joined with them in their impiety, and brought upon themselves great misery.

Moreover, as we must know them in the face, and in the faith, so we must hearken after their sufficiency. We must not undertake much for them, that are not able to discharge a little. It is notably said of *Solomon*, *There is that maketh himself rich, having nothing; and that maketh himself poor, having great riches*; that is, a man cannot rightly judge of the estate of everyone by their course of life, and outward carriage: many being poor, and in debt, being Bankrouts and broken fellows, make show of great wealth, by putting on brave apparel, by delighting in costly fare, by setting up sumptuous buildinges, by frequenting chargeable company, and by keeping a great port: this is exceeding vanity, and endeth in beggary. Others, on the other side, fain themselves needy, and complain of poverty; they go barely, and fare hardly, as if they were nothing worth, who notwithstanding are of great wealth and substance: This is extreme parsimony, and endeth in misery.

Seeing therefore, it is so ordinary and common for men to dissemble their estates, by making it seem better then it is, we must be wise-hearted, not to think all Gold that glistereth. The world is full of those that lift up themselves in pride above that they are indeed, and make show of that which is not in them in truth, and thereby endanger those that look no nearer, and try no further then the outward pomp and appearance. These are like those running streams, that promise continuance, and yet incontinently are dried up, and deceive such as trusted in them; or like those living creatures that stouer with their wings and feathers, or raise up their backs and bristles, whereby they seem much greater then Nature hath made them: Or like to Quagmyres, that apeare fair without, but if you

come near them, you stand in danger to be plunged in them, and to perish by them. Thus we see what is to be considered of us, in making our selves sureties for others; Namely, that in regard of their persons, we must know them thoroughly, we must have experience of their honesty, and we must learn what is their sufficiency: But if they be strangers utterly unknown unto us, if they be Varlets void of Conscience and fidelity, if they be boasting and bragging mates without substance and ability, let us take heed we do not strike hand for them, nor be deceived by them, nor offer our selves as pledges or sureties for them, which is seldom done without hurt, never without danger.

Secondly, touching our own persons, before we are to enter into band or suretyship for others, we must mark and meditate upon two things. First, what is the sum for which we shall be obliged. Secondly, the means how we may be discharged. It standeth us greatly upon, to bethink our selves both what is the quantity, and what is our ability to answer it. It is a moral precept, and wise saying worthy to be written in our harts, *Be not surety above thy power: for if thou be surety, think to pay it.* So then, there is more required of us, then to look to the persons of others, who they are, and what they are. It is a vain thing to be wise abroad, and foolish at home; to be sharp-sighted in prying into the estates of others, and never to enter into the consideration of our own. For whatsoever the persons be, and whatsoever their earnestness be, draw not a Bow above thy strength. Albeit they be not enemies unto us, but friends; not strangers, but well known; not hateful persons, but most dear unto thee; not loose Companions, but honest and godly minded: yet be well advised what thou do, and look before thou leap. If it be for thy assured friend, that is as thy soul; if it were for thy Brother, the Son of thy Mother; if it were for thy Kinsman that is of thine own blood; if it were for thine own son, that is thine own flesh, yet engage not thyself so far, promise not so much, bind not thyself in so great a sum, as may impair thy estate, hurt thy family, hinder thy trade, diminish thy stock, and vndo thy posterity, if the debt should be required of thee, and the stone be rolled upon thee. For whosoever giveth his word and promise for another, bindeth himself to pay and to discharge that debt wherein the principal party faileth: and the Creditor oftentimes relieth more upon the sufficiency of the assurer, then upon the honesty of the borrower. We are in kindness and courtesy so to pleasure another, as that no man is bound to vndo, or to hinder himself.

Let every man therefore well weigh his own strength. It were foolish pity for the saving of another man's life to loose our own. It were amercillesse kind of mercy to leap into the water, and drown our selves, while we seek to deliver another. We are bound to have compassion of some, pulling them out of the fire, when we see them in danger to be burned; but it were more then childish to run into the fire, and so burn our selves. We are commanded to bear the burden one of another, but it were more then soolish pity to break our own shoulders, by sustaining the weight and bearing the burden of another man. Again, as we are to mark our own strength, so we are to consider our own discharge, how we may be secured and set at liberty. For, before we pass our word, or give our band & hand for the payment of other men's debtes and duties, we must know how we shall be assured to be delivered from that burden and bondage that we have undertaken. We ought indeed to bear good will to all men, but our good will should not be a looser. It is no Charity to receive a blow upon our own

heads, to keep the stock from another. So then, let us remember these few points fit to be learned and practiced of us. Knowe what kind of man he is for whom thou becomest a surety. If he be a stranger to thee, meddle not with him: if he have broken his credit with any before, suspect him: if he be a shifting Companion, discard him; if he be insufficient to pay his own debt, deny him; if the sum be great, and thy ability little, so that it may hinder thee and thy Calling, if thou be driven to pay it, enter not into it; and if thou canst not see which way thou mayest be freed from the perrill and danger that hangeth over thy head, fly away from it, as from a Serpent that will sting thee, as from a Canker that will consume thee, as from a Gulf that is ready to swallow thee.

There are two eating sores, that are in Nature as a Gangrene, which are as two Vultures, that are continually gnawing upon the heart, & devour the flesh, even unto the bones; to wit, Usury, and Suretyship. These are near of Kin one to another, and are joined together as the Father and Son, as the cause, and the effect. The unmercifulness of the Usurer constraineth the poor debtor to crave mercy of the surety. I speak of that Usury that byteth, and of such suretyship as vndoeth: Of that Usury that oppresseth, and of such suretyship, as when it hath taken away the coat, will take away the Cloake also, which strippeth a man of the Jewels where-with he was decked, of the furniture wherewith he was stored, of the Garments wherewith he was clothed. Notwithstanding, there is great difference to be made between them: This Usurer is as the Hunter; the Surety as the prey: The Usurer as the Horse-leech doeth cry always bring, bring; the poo•... Surety is made as the Porter on the Packe-horse, that beareth till his shoulders break. It is necessary for every man to have these notes before his eyes, that he be not suddenly taken, or rather over-taken by the instigation and importunity of others. This reproveth such as make an ordinary and common matter of it, and a notable point of good fellowship, the part of a good nature & loving disposition, to be of a flexible nature (as the soft wax) to yield to every man's request in this business. We see generally, that they which have the least purpose to pay, and the smallest care to perform that which they have promised, are for the most part most forward to undertake and offer themselves, their words, their wealth, their bands, their bodies for other men. But such as are most careful and Conscionable in payeng their Debtes, answering the Arrerages that accrue by the false-hoode of feigned friends, are most backward to yield their necks to this yoke, assuring themselves, that it is far better to walk at liberty, then to have his feet put in the Stockes for Correction. Wherefore, let no man blame those men that hang back, and are not ready to serve every man's turn, nor to grant every man's request with their Band and Obligation. How many are there in this present, and have been in former times, that have been quite vndoone, and fallen into decay, and with that fall, have thrown down their Wives and Children forever, by yielding to gratify others, and damnifie themselves thorough this means of rash Suretyship? Such as are cruel Creditors, and live upon the prey, as the Eagle doth upon the Carkasse, will show no more mercy to the debtor, that is come in his danger, then the miserable rich man did to the Begger that lay at his Gate.

This we see in the Creditor mentioned, 2 Kings 4, 1. where one of the Wives of the Children of the Prophets, cometh, crieth, and complaineth unto *Elisha*, *That her Husband that feared the Lord being dead, the Creditor came to take her two Sons to be his Bond-men*. This also appeareth in

the practice of the unmerciful Rich-men, mentioned in *Nehemiah* 5, 1. 4, 5. so that there was a great out-cry of the people, and of their Wives against them, who said; *We have borrowed Money for the Kings Tribute upon our Lands and our Vineyardes, and now our flesh is as the flesh of our Brethren, and our Sons as their Sons: And loe, we bring into subjection our Sons and our Daughters, as Servants; and there be of our Daughters now in subjection, and there is no power in our hands, for other Men have our Lands, and our Vineyards.*

If then, we would not willingly draw upon our selves the burdens of other men, nor see with our eyes the taking away of our goods, for which we have labored, nor hear with our ears the cry of our wives and Children spoiled of their hope and expectation, nor feel our selves bitten with hunger, pinched with cold, thrown into prison, and vexed with all kind of miseries, let us look to it betimes, least we repent when it is too late. It is profitable and Heavenly Counsel given by *Solomon, Prov. 22, 26, 27. Be not thou of them that touch the hand, nor among them that are surety for debts; If thou hast nothing to pay, why causest thou that he should take thy bed from under thee?* It is a true saying, [*He is happy; that can by other Men's harms can learn to beware.*] Let us not be cruel and unmerciful to our own Families, nor rush our selves into these Quicke-sandes of troubles and turmoyles that after follow at the heels of this rashness. Let us use all carefulness and diligence to know the party for whom we promise to become Pay-Masters. Let us weigh his Truth and Honesty, his Estate and Ability, his Profession and Piety: And withal, let us examine our selves thoroughly, and ponder our own sufficiency, that we be not at unawares surprised and hastily overtaken. Let us prove our selves, and enter seriously into this Cogitation and consideration, whether we be able, without shaking of our Wealth or Substance, or diminishing of our credit and estimation, or weakening of our estate, to discharge that which we have undertaken, if our friend for whom we are bound, should fail and fall down. Neither let any Foolish and Vndiscrete persons Object, that this pretending of danger, and entering with wariness, is to be accounted no better then a wanting of Love that ought to be in us: For, it is rather a point of good Wisdom and Discretion, to look unto our own estate, and to beware, and to be warned in time, by the falls and ruins of other Men. How many are fallen from great Riches, to extreme poverty; from much, to little; from an high condition, to great Beggerie and misery; and been as it were consumed with the scorching heat that this fire of Suretyshippe hath cast out? Wherefore, let us learn to be Wise betimes, and take heed by the chaunges and chances of other men, least by engaging our selves too deeply for other men's debtes, our minds be distracted with pensive thoughts, our hearts be pierced with bitter Sorrowes, and our bodies be cast into loathsome prisons, as it hath fallen out to very many before our eyes. If Riotous livers, and prodigal persons, that wast their wealth in vanity, and spend their goods vnthriftilly, do request and require us to give our words, or to be bound in bands for them, we are not bound to do it by the Law of God; nay, we are bound not to do it by the Law of God: we are bound to provide for our own families, or else we have denied the Faith, and are worse then Infidelles that are in the world, and out of the Church. The Apostle, in giving of Alms, and extending of our liberality towards the poor Saints, *Would not have one overburdened, and another eased: One oppressed, and another released: One pressed down, another to high lifted up.* The same proportion is to be holden and observed in this case. Indeed, *Love seeketh*

not her own, but is bountiful; Nevertheless, it is no fruit of Love required to be in us, that one should be grieved, and another eased; that one should be hindered, and another helped.

Lastly, seeing it is not unlawful or forbidden, to bind a man's self by band or otherwise to another, it ought to teach all Creditors and Lenders, not to be rough and rigorous over a surety. No cruelty toward any is lawful. If it be a Malefactor that hath committed an heinous crime, and deserveth the punishment of death, he is not to be proceeded against with a desire of private revenge, and a satisfying of our cruel mind, and a thirsting after blood. If it be a Debtor that is fallen into decay, he is to be dealt withal in Mercy and Commiseration, not with Rigour and Seueritie. If then, we are to deal so with a Debtor, much more with a surety. When we see a man that hath been well advised in it, and circumspect to prevent dangers, and foresee damages so far as the eye of man's understanding and judgment can reach, we ought not to take advantage of his error, but to show him what favor possibly we can. If thou seest him fallen into thy hands, deal with all mercifulness toward him, and consider not so much what thou mayst do by Law, as what thou oughtest to do in love: neither think what rigor of Justice will permit, but what the right of equity will allow thee to do. It is a true saying, that the Heathen saw into, Extreimity of Law, is oftentimes the greatest injury and want of Charity that can be. Hence it is, that *Solomon* exhorteth sureties to deal wisely, to rid themselves out of danger, and to use all lawful means to free themselves from trouble, and not delay to promote and procure their own good, *Prov. 6, 3. My Son, if thou be surety for thy Neighbor, do this now, and deliver thyself, seeing thou art come into the hand of thy neighbor, go and humble thyself, and solicit thy friends.* He would never give this devise and direction what he should do that as ensnared and entrapped by suretyship, unless the Creditor were to be drawn to show pity.

Now, in these words, he giveth a three-fold counsel what to do, and how to behave our selves when we are entangled with rash suretyship. First, we must not sit still, or neglect the opportunity to deliver our selves from danger, we must submit our selves to him, to whom we are bound, and into whose power thou art fallen, and at whose mercy thou standest; crave pardon and patience at his hands, request him earnestly to be friendly and favorable toward thee in relieving or releasing thee, and letting of thee alone. Say unto him, and say it in truth of thy heart, and with full purpose of performing, Doubt not of your debt, be content for a while, and (God willing) I will discharge all at the last. Secondly, we are willed and warned to go to our friend, or to him whom we took for our friend, when we became surety for him, and to urge him instantly to pay his own Debt, and discharge thee of the danger without delay; tell him, it is for his cause, that thou endurest this trouble, and bearest this burden, and that for doing good to him, thou sufferest and sustainest this loss: will him to consid•... of thy kindness that haddest not the power to deny the engaging of thy •else to help him in his necessity.

Thirdly, we are admonished and advised to go to our friends that lou• us and desire our good, and are greatly grieved for our affliction, entreat•...g them to pity our case, pardon our negligence, and help us out of these b•iars in which we are entangled, hoping never to come into the like inco•...berances again. These are the ways that we are to take, and the pathe•

that we are to walk in. In the practice of them being sanctified to our use▪ we may look for a blessing from God, and hope to find comfort in our own hearts. But if thou think to escape the hands of thy Creditors, by hyding or absenting of thyself from him, or standing out against him, or holding suit with him, and answering him at the Law, thou art deceived. Thou shalt better provide for thine own peace and security, by submitting thyself to the party to whom thou art bound, by entreating the person for whom thou art bound, and by soliciting thy friends, to consider thy case and their own in thee. All this doth *Solomon* not only counsel us to do, but to do it speedily, and to take little rest, until we be delivered from this danger, saying, *Give no sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eye lids: deliver thyself as a Roe from the hand of the Hunter, as a Bird from the hand of the Fowler.*

Hereunto accordeth and agreeth the saying of Christ our Savior, *While thou goest with thine adversary to the Ruler, as thou art in the way, give diligence in the way, that thou mayest be delivered from him, lest he draw thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Jailor, and the Jailor cast thee into prison: I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the utmost Mite.* There is nothing to be gotten, by opposing of our selves against such as may hurt us, and by keeping out of their sight, with a purpose to defraud them, and to defend our selves. It is most true, which *Solomon* speaketh in another place, *The Rich ruleth the poor, and the borrower is Seruaunt to the Man that lendeth.* Whereby he meaneth, that commonly it falleth out among men, that the rich over-rule the poor, and that the Debtors are Servants unto their Creditors. To conclude, if we show our selves ready and willing to put in practice the Rules given unto us, to bring us out of the Briars and bondage of suretyshippe, we shall find rest to our souls, and God will incline the heart of our Creditors, to show favor unto us, who hath the hearts of all men in his own hands.

Verse 19. [*I Paul, have written this with mine own hand, I will recompense it.*]

Philemon might well have contented himself with the bare word and naked Promise of *Paul*, forasmuch as his word and deed did not differ one from the other. This is the defense that he maketh for himself to the *Corinthians*, when he was accused of lightness and inconstancy, promising to come unto them, and yet he came not, *When I was thus minded to come unto you, did I use lightness? Or mind I those things which I mind, according to the Flesh, that with me should be yea and nay? Yea, GOD is faithful, that our word toward you, was not yea and nay.* Notwithstanding, albeit his word was as good as his bande, and his saying accorded with his doing, and his promise were as strong as an Obligation, so that he dealt not as men usually do, which will rashly avouch anything that cometh into their head, and by and by change their purpose in the turning of an hand. We see in this place, how he, promising to satisfy *Philemons* damage, and willing to leave no scruple or doubt in him, doeth farther confirm it, and assureth him by his hand-writing and Couenants, albeit they two were great and near friends, and had good interest one in another.

We learn from hence, that civil Instruments and Couenants in writing, together with other assurances that may be asked and granted, are good and lawful, even amongst the best and greatest Friends. I say, when Debtes are owing, when bargains are made, when money is lent,

when Lands are sold, and when there are mutual Contracts between man and man; between Friend and Friend; between Kinsman and Kinsman; assurance in writing with hand and seal may be interchangeably given and received. This we see in the practice of all people in former times. When *Abraham* had made a Covenant of peace and unity with *Abimelech* K. of *Gerar*, he did deliver unto him seven Lambes, *That the taking of them might be a witness of the truth, and an assurance unto him that he had digged that Well of waters.* To this purpose, did the King require *Abraham* to take an Oath and solemnly to swear by the name of God, that he would not deal falsely and fraudulently with him, nor hurt him, nor his Children, nor his Children's Children. The like (or rather greater) assurance is required and yielded in the 23. Chapter of the same Book, where *Abraham*, buying a field of *Ephron* the Hittite, requireth an Instrument with witnesses, and a delivery of the possession, *The Field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, and over against Mamre, even the Fielde and the Cave that was therein, and all the Trees that were in the Fielde, which were in all the Borders round about, was made sure unto Abraham for a possession, in the sight of the Hittites, even of all that went in at the gates of his City.* Where we see, all the circumstances and manner of the contract which *Abraham* maketh are set down and expressed.

First, we see a large description of the place that was bought, together with the bounding and confronting of the place, as also the appurtenances; Namely, the Trees that grew therein. Secondly, we see the name of the seller set down, who did openly avouch the sale thereof, as being his own. Thirdly, the name of the buyer, that no doubt might be left. Lastly, the witnesses are recorded of this bargain and sale, that none might hereafter lay claim unto it, or deny unto *Abraham* the lawful possession of it, and the holding of it to him and his. And if we would yet see this more clearly, we have more evident confirmation of it in the propheties of *Jeremiah*, where to show the certainty of the return of the Israelites into their Lande and Country again, he maketh a solemn purchase, *I bought the Fielde of Hanameel mine Vncles son, and weighed him Silver, even seven Shekels, & ten pieces of Silver; and I writ in the Book, and signed it, and took witnesses, and I gave the Book of the possession unto Baruch, in the sight of Hanameel mine Vnckles Son, and in the presence of the Witnesses, which were written in the Book of the possession, before all the Jews that sate in the Court of the Prison.*

In these words (which are more at large related in the Prophet) we see what assurance and security was taken and given, with Writing, Sealing, Witnesses, delivery and keeping the Rolles and Records thereof. This is set down likewise, in the latter end of the same Chapter, *Jeremiah* 32. 43, 44. where he saith, *The Fields shall be possessed in this Lande, whereof ye say, It is desolate, without Man or Beast, and shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans: Men shall buy Fieldes for Silver, and make Writings, and seal them, and take witnesses in the Lande of Benjamin, and round about Jerusalem, &c. for I will cause their Captivity to return, saith the Lord.* This discovereth the practice of those times, and delivereth the forms and fashions observed among that people. When *Jacob* and *Laban* made a Covenant either with other, which might be a witness between them both, they confirmed it by Oath, and set up an heap of stones, to testify the amity and friendship renewed between both parties. In the Parable of the unjust Steward it is remembered, that all Debtors and Debts were recorded in writing, with the sum that everyone owed: *For he called unto everyone of his Masters Debtors, and said unto the first: How*

much owest thou unto my Master? And he said, An hundred measures of Oil. And he said to him, Take thy writing, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, How much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of Wheat: Then he said to him, take thy writing, and write fourscore. In this Parable, we see the manner that was used in the days of old; namely, that Books of reckonings and accounts were commonly kept, and usually brought forth, when men did level their debts, and make even one with another. All which Testimonies, ratifying the practice of former times & persons, serve to teach us, that it is lawful for the faithful, to use all circumspection to assure their debts, bargains, and contracts one with another.

And if we would enter into a further consideration of this truth, we shall see a plain confirmation of it by sundry reasons. For first, it is a common Proverb among us, *Fast bind, fast find.* That which is loosely bound, is lightly lost; but a three-fold Cord well tied and twisted by word, by writing, by seal, is not easily broken. A word affirmeth, a writing confirmeth, a seal assureth, and everyone of them bindeth to perform our promise. We see by daily experience, that men are both mortal and mutable, and words prove oftentimes but wind, albeit ratified with the greatest solemnity. True it is, our word ought to be as good as a thousand Obligations, but deceit is bred naturally in our hearts, so that we cannot ground upon the bare word of men to find good dealing. Otherwise, the Lord would never have given so many Laws to restrain wrong and Injustice, fraud and oppression. All these, or at least a great part of them are prevented, by setting down our Couenants and Agreements in Writing, under our hands and seals.

Secondly, it is needful to have this manner of dealing among us, to the end that equity and upright dealing might be observed among us, and that all occasions of wrangling and wresting of words and bargains, may be cut off, as with the sword of Justice. This is it which the Prophet *Jeremiah* expresseth in the 32. Chapter of his prophesies, mentioned before, where the Doctrine hath his confirmation, *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Take the writings, even this Book of the possession; both that is sealed, and this Book that is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue a long time.* Where he maketh mention of a double writing or instrument, which is here called after the manner of the Hebrews [A Book,] One of them was unsealed; the other, was sealed, and so concealed; & both of them were evidences to assure unto him the Land that he bought and purchased. That which was sealed, seemeth to be the Original, and as it were the Court Rolles authentically recorded and laid up for the perpetual remembrance of the matter. That which was open and unsealed, seemeth to be a Coppie, delivered and taken word for word out of the former, to be carried about with them into Captivity. The end of both was for continuance, that the bargain and sale that passed between them, might never be forgotten.

Thirdly, that all occasion of Controuersie and couzenage might be taken away. For if there were no writings to show (the memories of men being frail, and their practices being unfaithful) the world would be full of all loose dealings, and concord would be banished from among men. The end why *Abraham* set seven Lambes by themselves, was; because *Abimelech* should receive them at his hands, to be a witness of their agreement, and that all controversies were finished and ended between them. It appeareth many times, when proofs

in writing fail, that false witnesses are suborned, and so the seats of Justice are subverted: all which are easily remedied, when good assurances are at the first taken.

Fourthly, good assurance is to be allowed and received, to the end we may safely dispose of such things as are in our power and possession, either to our posterity or otherwise. Hence hath been in all ages, the laudable and commendable use of making Wills and Testaments, which the word of God approveth, by delivering diverse rules belonging to that profession. The Law of God and of Nature, hath taught; that the Will and Testament of the dead, ought not to be abrogated or altered: and that no Will is of force until the Testator be dead. Now, we know not whether the gifts that we give, & the Legacies that we bequeath, be of our own proper goods, or the goods of other men, except we have before hand a sufficient assurance of them made unto us. Seeing therefore, where there is a fast knot, there is a sure keeping; seeing upright dealing is to be observed; seeing occasions of quarrels and contentions are to be stopped; and seeing the goods that God hath given unto us, are rightly to be bestowed: it followeth, that everyone is to provide for the security and quietness of his estate by all lawful means, not only by word of mouth, but by assurance in writing, that thereby he may foresee the danger that may come upon him, and be wary and circumspect in all his doings; according to the saying of Christ, the Teacher and Author of true wisdom, *Be ye wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doves*. For if wisdom do season all our affairs, then also our contracts, that are common in this life.

We have heard this Doctrine confirmed: Now let us see how it may be applied, and what uses may be concluded out of it. First of all, it setteth for reproof of the Anabaptists, who are hereby directly overthrown, that condemn the property of goods and possessions, together with all contracts and conditions that pass from one to another. For we have shown, that bargains and sales are lawful, not only among the Gentiles, but even among the Christians; not only under the rudiments of the Law, but in the times of the Gospel. The end of such writings Obligatory is nothing else, but to assure everyone of his own, and to make it appear what belongeth to another man. If then it be lawful to possess House and Lands; Money and movables, as our own substance; it is as lawful to crave and take assurance of the possession of them, that they may not by fraudulent means be alienated from us. But of this we have spoken before. Secondly, they are reprehended, who are offended that men in these cases will not trust them, and rely upon their words without farther assurance in writing, and refuse to give men good security. For all is little enough, and many times too little.

I have heard it credibly affirmed and avouched by some Master of that profession, that albeit a conveyance of Land, a deed of estate, an Indenture of Couenants be drawn, as sure and certain as learned counsel can devise and contrive; yet it is an easy matter to pick holes in them, and to take advantage of them. We see daily, what quirkes and tricks of Law are broached and invented, whereby such as are simply and honestly minded, are defrauded and defeated, of Houses, Lands, and other Chattels. Never was there so little truth, and so great craft and cozenage in the World, as in these days. Satan himself seemeth now to have opened all his pack of devises, and his Instruments as good Scholars of so bad a Master, have

learned sundry devilish practices, whereby true meaning men are oftentimes notoriously gulled.

Some there are that are thought to study little else, then to find wants and imperfections; in Statutes, in Leafes, in Lands, and in assurances given between man and man. This is the cause, that the Makers of our Laws are compelled to use so many words, and to heap up so many Tearmes, that thereby they might heal this sore, and remedy this mischief. Let us not therefore grieve or grudge to make sure that whereof we have made sale. No man ought to be so simple as not to ask it; and no man ought to be so peevish as to deny it. We may easily behold such as are friends today, to be enemies tomorrow: one while they affirm, another while they deny; at one time they promise to pay or repay; at another they hang back at it, and make it strange that they should be challenged of their promise. Everyone *Seeketh his own, and not the things of other men:* and how many have been foully deceived, and guilefully beguiled by trusting too far? But there is no reason or equity, that when we have received Money, we should deny or delay to give good security, and that other men should stand to our courtesy. Wherefore, it is a great injury and In-justice, to require men to depend upon us and our word, without further assurance in black and white. For albeit, we mean not falsely, but faithfully; not fraudulently, but honestly; and our Word be as firm as our Oath; and our Oath as sure as our Band; and our Band as good as ready payment, and present possession, in regard of our honest meaning and true intent: yet we cannot live forever, and we know not what may fall out after our decease. But some man may say; what need so much a do among Friends? And what stir do you make, as if we were Infidels, and not Christians? Or what need so many Couenants and conveyances, where there is a shorter course? And where the profession of Christ is a stronger band, then all the writings that the wit of man can imagine and set down? I answer, that all they that profess Christ in word, do not believe in him in heart. And albeit, the saving knowledge of Christ be a band of all bands, to link us together; yet this doth not hinder or abolish civil contracts, to be assured to us and our posterities. Be it, that we are the greatest friends, there is so much more need, of so much the more ado among them that are Friends, thereby to keep them Friends, and to hold the knot of friendship between thē. For oftentimes it falleth out, that through want of words, and writings, and witnesses; such as have been most faithful friends, have become most bitter enemies one to another. Were not *Paul* and *Philemon* Friends, near Friends; yea, the nearest and dearest Friends that could be? Were they not as the Father and the Son? Did they not so live together and love together, *That they had all things common?* Yet we see *Paul* offereth assurance of his word and promise in writing, subscribed with his own hand; *I Paul have written it with mine own hand.* Yea, notwithstanding all assurances that can be desired and demanded, we may well perceive by daily and lamentable experience, what suits and strifes arise about Titles and conveyances of Lands and Liuing: how much more would we contend one with another, if there were no Instruments drawn, no Evidences made, no writings engrossed, to testify the truth among us? All Kingdoms and Cities, all Towns and Villages, would be full of stirs and strifes, of troubles and tumults, that would never end: and the Judges and Justices might stand from Morning to Euening to hear cases, and decide controversies between man and man, to the wearying of themselves and others. He that

hath an heavy pursse and a strong heart, would never rest satisfied, if no writing or records could be produced against him. Wherefore, it standeth all men upon; on the one side, willingly to yield good assurance; and on the other side, to ask good security, where they buy and sel, or borrow, or bargain, and do give or take upon trust; through want whereof sometimes, not only the Rents and Reuennues, but the Lands themselves are spent in suits and actions of Law.

Lastly, it reproveth such, as notwithstanding assurance given, do make no conscience to pay debts and demands due, upon agreement to their brethren. These are forward to give assurance, but backward to make performance. Many there are, that are content to yield to what promises, and enter into what bands you will crave: but when they have done, they use no care, and make no account to pay their debts, and to perform the Couenants whereunto they have consented and condescended, contrary to the counsel of the Prophet, who asking the question; *Who shall dwell in the Tabernacle of the Lord, and who shall rest in his holy Mountain?* He answereth, *He that sweareth to his own hindrance, and changeth not.* It is requisite for everyone, to be as wary and well advised in his promises as he can, and to deliberate with himself and his Friends, that he do nothing rashly: but when he hath stricken hands, and made a promise to his Neighbor, he ought to perform it, albeit it be to his hindrance, unless peradventure he be released.

Be it therefore known unto all men, that as it is lawful to converse and commerse one with another; so it is meet and convenient that they should deal, not upon vncertaineties, but upon assurances, as they that build not upon a sandy ground, but upon a sound foundation. As it is right and lawful, that there should be buying and bargaining, purchasing and possessing among us, so is it right and lawful, that there should be Deedes and Indentures to testify the same, and as it were to live when we are dead. And as it is needful and expedient so long as the world endureth and continueth, there should be borrowing and lending; so it is as necessary, there should be Bills and Bands, to show the truth, and to bind men to the payment of all dues, debts, and demands whatsoever: and after payment well and truly made, to give discharge & acquittance accordingly, that controversies (so much as may be) may be avoided, and concord (as far as is possible) may be maintained and established. They therefore are unworthy to live in any well-ordered and governed Common-wealth, that refuse (being able) to perform their promises, and satisfy their Creditors, and cancel the Obligations, that themselves have sealed and delivered before many Witnesses, who albeit they stand not by the high-way side with Swordes, or Staues, or Rapiers, or other Weapons, yet are indeed no better then Thieves and Robbers; nay, many times are worse, inasmuch they bring greater damage, and are the means of undoing many men. Such are they that are angry, and much offended with Notaries and Scriveners, which by their writings bind them (as they imagine) too strongly: and when they see themselves troubled and arrested upon the Obligation, they hate them, and curse them, and cannot behold them with a friendly look and a loving countenance: as if the fault were in the Clearkes, Bailiffs, and other public Officers, not in themselves and their own unfaithfulness, which is all one, as if a Male-factor should charge the Executioner (who is the Minister of Justice) to be the cause of his death,

forgetting that his own misdeeds and misdemeanors, brought him up unto that place and punishment.

Secondly, seeing it is needful, that to confirm our lawful contractes, there be Evidences to show, it is a good point of wisdom required of us, to use the advise of such as are learned in the law, and are both men of knowledge and of conscience. For here (if in anything else) we shall find the common Proverb true; That the best, is best cheap. Many there are that regard the Fee more then the Cause; and speak for themselves, rather then for the party that hath chosen them. Again, many suites arise through ignorance and unskillfulness of the Law; wherefore, it is meet we should resort to a learned Counsel: so that partly through the want of honesty and piety in some; partly, the want of skill and practice in others, many poor Clients go to wrack. We must all deal in the matter of our goods, as wise Patients do for the curing of their bodies, and the recovery of their health. They will not go to every Slubberer or Sorcerer; to every Leach or Mountebank, to take charge of their bodies; to whom a man would be loath to commit his Beasts. If any doubts arise, avoid all forgery, and perjury, suborning of false Witnesses, counterfeiting of Evidences, and such like deceitful practices; as the God of this world hath taught the Children of darkness and confusion. Take that course which God alloweth, and Justice warranteth; repair to men of that profession, give him good instruction, and follow thou his direction. For this purpose, I will crave leave to set down three rules, that are required and are to be performed of men of Law; the observation whereof, shall give peace and comfort of conscience with God, and gain them Crowns and credit among men.

First of all, if they disdain not to be advised and taught by us, let the end of all their pleas and proceedings, be the finding out of the truth. Let this be the mark that they shoot at, and the star whereby they direct all their course, which seasoneth all their pleadings (as it were) with Salt. If they regard not the trial of the truth, nor which way the cause go, so they may receive their Fee; they abuse the balances of Justice, and turn equity into Iniquity. God is truth, and everyone that belongeth unto him, should labor to bring the truth to light. It is a general rule taught by the Apostle, *We cannot do anything against the truth, but for the truth.* Woe therefore unto them that dig deep to hide the truth, and invent shifts to bury it out of sight, that it may not take place; and do all things against the truth, and nothing for it.

The second rule is, that they do not delay the causes of their Clients, and protract the time in hope of farther gain; from Tearme to Tearme, and from year to year. As there may be too great hast, so there may be too great delay, and there are Rocks on either hand; the safest course, is to sails in the midst between them both, for fear of shipwreck. It is a duty of the Surgeon, not to linger the curing of his Patient, and to torment him a whole year, where he might restore him in a quarter. Suites of Law are tedious and chargeable; they are as the fits of a Feauer, that vex the body and trouble the mind. It is an evil course, to keep sores always raw, and wounds green, in hope to get Mony: So it is an uncharitable proceeding, to retain causes, and to keep them always on foot, except they may have for expedition.

Lastly, as the end of their pleading must be truth and verity, and the course of it without delay; so it is required of them, when they know the cause to be evil, and see the manifest

signs of an overthrow, that they do not conceal it, but discover and open it unto their Clients. They are to forewarn them of the end, that they do not entangle themselves in unnecessary and unlawful suites. It is delivered as a duty of the Physician, and of the Minister, when they come to a sick man that lieth on his death-bed, and see manifest signs of death, that they do not hide it from him, nor flatter him in his sickness, saying; I hope you shall do well and recover, and be as merry among your Neighbors as ever you were; but rather with wisdom warn him, and with discretion certify him of it, to the end he may renounce all confidence in earthly things, and put his whole affiance in God; according to that sentence of the Apostle, *We received the sentence of death in our selves, because we should not trust in our selves, but in God which raiseth the dead.* Thus ought it to be with the careful and conscionable Lawyer, when he seeth the cause of his Client desperate and languishing, without hope of life, he ought not to draw him on, and move him to proceed, but persuade him to give over, and tell him the danger that will come upon him. It is too late to bid the Soldier beware, when the victory is lost. The wisest way is to prevent a mischief betimes, before it be too late. So then, to truss up these things closely together, and to couch them in a narrow room, if he shall use his diligence that the truth may be discovered, and right take place, and make this the end of his pleading; if he bend his wits to give quick dispatch to the causes he undertaketh, and not to prolong the time for his own advantage: And last of all, if he lay open the weakness of his Clients cause unto him, and forewarn him of the issue thereof; he shall do the part of an honest man; of a faithful Christian; of a learned Lawyer; and of a discreet Counselor.

Thirdly, from these assurances in writing, to confirm our promises one to another; we learn the cause why it pleased the Lord to use so many ways and means with us, to give us his Word, his Oath, his promises, his Miracles, his Couenants, and his Seals. We learn wherefore all these do serve, even to strengthen our Faith in the good meaning of God toward us. And as he thereby assureth his own graces, so he provideth for our weakness. If there were in us that measure of Faith that ought to be, the bare word of God might be all-sufficient to teach us to acknowledge him to be the God of our salvation, and to depend upon him for our Redemption. But seeing we have much infidelity in us, and are cumbered with doubting in the promises of God, it pleased him in great mercy to provide a remedy for our infirmity: so that we may truly say; where Sin abounded, Grace hath abounded much more. Thus we see the Lord Jesus dealt with *Thomas*, one of the twelve, when he believed not the Resurrection, nor those that were chosen Witnesses thereof, but said; *Except I see in his hands the print of the Nailes, and put my Finger into the print of the Nailes, and put mine hand into his side, I will not believe it.* Here we may behold (as in a Glass) the example of exceeding great infidelity and unbelief; he neither believeth, nor will believe; he will live by sight, and not by Faith. This was no small obstinacy and incredulity in one of the Apostles, who deserved to perish in his sin. But Christ Jesus raiseth him out of this sleep, and offereth mercy with much compassion, as it were pulling him out of this danger; *Put thy Finger here, and see mine hands, and put forth thine hand, and put it into my side, and be not faithless, but faithful.* This is it which the Evangelist *Matthew* setteth down, Chapt. 12. *A bruised Reed shall he not break, and smoking Flaxe shall he not quench, till he bring forth judgment unto victory.* Now, such as *Thomas* was, such we are all by

Nature: we cannot be persuaded to believe, except we see and feel. We will not believe the bare word of God, but are always ready to waver through unbelief.

Hence it is, that God in great mercy did from the beginning of the world, add to his word his Sacraments; to assure his people, that as he is the GOD of truth, so he meaneth truly, and performeth effectually whatsoever he hath promised. The Sacraments therefore, are as signs and seals of his promises, and dependencies upon the word that is gone out of his own mouth. The Apostle speaking of circumcision given to *Abraham*, saith; *He received the sign of Circumcision, as the Seal of the righteousness of the Faith which he had, when he was uncircumcised, that he should be the Father of all them that believe, not being circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.* Whereby we may see, what the Nature of the Sacraments is, to wit; that they are visible signs instituted of God, to seal up his promises in the hearts of the faithful. The Author or efficient cause is God, who only hath power and authority to appoint and ordain them, because he it is that can give force and efficacy unto them. The matter is the visible sign: the form is the manner of institution, according to the Rites taught and prescribed in the word.

The end is, that the faithful may be confirmed and strengthened in the truth of GOD. The word was given to instruct the Church by hearing: the Sacraments were given to instruct the Church both by it, and by the rest of the senses. Indeed, if we were Angels, and not men; and were Spirits without bodies, and heavenly Creatures, not earthly: we should not stand in need of visible and bodily Sacraments; but because our faith is feeble, and wrestleth with Satan, the World, the Flesh, and such Enemies; it wanteth props and pillars to uphold it, that it do not fall. For albeit our Faith be mingled with doubting, & assaulted strongly with the waves of infidelity, yet it ceaseth not to be a true Faith. An imperfect Faith is a sound Faith, though it be weak; so that it standeth us upon with the Apostles, *To pray for the increase thereof.* Faith goeth before the Sacraments: the which without Faith, are idle and empty signs, without profit, without comfort, without use.

True it is, the Infidels, as the *Egyptians, Ethiopians*, and other profane people, who neither worshipped the true God, nor embraced the true Religion, had the outward use of circumcision (as Histories testify) as also the Turks and Jews have at this day: but their cutting off the flesh is not the Sacrament of God, but a mere civil thing; yea, an evil thing. Thus then we see, that the Sacraments were ordained of God to help our infirmity. The promise of God is certain, and his Covenant doth not waver: neither can these outward Seals make it stronger. But it is we that stumble and stagger, and have need to be supported. And woe unto us if we use not this help and remedy left unto us, nor profit thereby in confidence and assurance of our salvation. For God hath after a sort bound himself unto us, as by an Obligation. Indeed man, notwithstanding his words, his oaths, his promises, his bands, his seals, and his assurances; is oftentimes changeable and unconstant: but it is not so with God, whose word is yea, and Amen. Were it not that we are weak of Faith, and slow to believe, he needed not to swear by himself, and by his holiness: he needed not to have set Authentick Seals to his Word, saving that he minded to leave no place for doubting in us.

Hence it is, that the Apostle writing to the *Hebrews*, Chapt. 6. saith; *God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the stableness of his counsel, bound himself by an Oath, that by two immutable things, wherein it was impossible that God should lie, we might have strong consolation, which have our refuge, to lay hold upon that hope that is set before us, &c.* The greater means God hath left unto us, the greater faith he requireth of us, and the more conscionable use of those means, that we may not always be Children. Woe then unto us, if in the store of so great mercies, and variety of so many means, we remain distrustful, and do not labor to gather strength of faith, and assurance of comfort. Let us therefore grow from Faith to Faith, as it were from strength to strength, and not stand at one stay: let us proceed from one degree and measure to another, until Christ Jesus be thoroughly formed in us.

Lastly, seeing Couenants in writing be requisite by the Laws of God and Man; we must know, that it is our duty to deal justly and uprightly one with another, and in our bargainings, to keep a good conscience toward God and Man. For this is the end wherefore Instruments in writing were brought in, that all cozenage might be cut off, & all occasion of strife might be prevented. Whereby we may gather, that in all ages of men, and times of the World, there have been many deceits, and much unrighteous dealing, to the disturbance of public peace, and the dissolving of concord among men: otherwise it had been in vain to require, or to receive such security in our buying and selling, in our borrowing and lending one with another. If every man's word and deed did ever go together, and the outward words of his mouth, did agree with the inward secrets of his heart, if he did hate fraud and falsehood, as Death and Hell: what need were there of so many men's oaths to be taken, of so many Witnesses to be called, of so many Writings to be engrossed, of so many Evidences to be drawn, and of so many assurances to be made. A man cannot in these days borrow or lend a little Money, but there must be Bills and Bands, Writings and Obligations, Seals and Witnesses, to testify the same. If there were those sincere hearts that ought to be among us, and that upright dealing that God requireth, there should not need so many Oaths, not so many *Nouerint vniuersi* be everywhere found. Let us therefore deal justly and truly, and not seek to wind away in the dark, so soon as any starting hole is offered unto us.

Hence it is that *Moses* saith; *When thou sellest ought to thy Neighbor, or buyest at thy Neighbors hand, ye shall not oppress one another: but according to the number of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years, thou shalt abate the price thereof, for the number of Fruits doth he sell unto thee: oppress ye not therefore any Man his Neighbor, but thou shalt fear thy God, for I am the Lord your GOD.* Where we see, the Lord chargeth his people to keep a good conscience in their Traffique one with another, and condemneth all deceitful Sellers and cozening Bargainers, that aim only at their own gain, but seek not the good of their Brethren. Hereunto cometh the Exhortation of the Apostle. 1. *Thess.* 4. 6. *Let no Man oppress or defraud his Brother in any matter: for the Lord is an Auenger of all such things.* This is a notable warning to all men that profess holiness, without which no man shall see God; to beware of all injuries and In-justice, and to seek no commodity to our selves by the discommodity; nor advantage, by the disadvantage of another. We are all Brethren. Shall one Brother oppress another? Or deceive and defraud another? Thus doth the same Apostle increase the sin of

the *Corinthians*, when he saith unto them, *Why rather suffer ye not wrong? Why rather sustain ye not harm? Nay, ye yourselves do wrong, and do harm, and that to your Brethren.*

There are many Bands, as it were joints, whereby we are knit and coupled one to another, to be of one Blood, of one Kindred, of one Country, of one City, of one assembly, and of one Family: all which kinds of conjunction, as so many strong Arguments do cry out in our ears, and publish to our hearts, that no injurious and unjust dealings ought to be practiced among us. And albeit the former reasons ought to be sufficient unto us, yet none can be more effectual to join us in mutual friendship, and to procure the good one of another, then the consideration of the conjunction that we have with Christ our head, and the communion that we have in Christ one with another; whereby it cometh to pass, *That we are made one new Man in himself, And everyone, one another's Members.* If all these things will not suffice and serve the turn, to turn us away from doing wrongs to those that are so near unto us; yet let the vengeance of God that hangeth over the heads of all Oppressors terrify us, who in all Ages past hath shown, in the seasons present doth show, and in the times to come will show himself the great Reuenger of Fraud, Pillage, Theft, Injury, and all wrongful dealings. If then the knowledge of God's will cannot work in us an hatred of In-justice, let us be assured, that after the breach of his Law, and the transgression of his will, followeth the execution of his wrath, and the inflicting of punishment due thereunto.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. If that his wrath be kindled; yea, but a little, blessed are all they that trust in him. These men that scratch and scrape together the Treasures of this life, which are but trash in comparison of the life to come, never consider the day of reckoning that shall follow, when the Lord will call them to an account of their stewardship, *And judge every man according to his works. Rom. 2. 6.*

[*Albeit I do not say to thee, that thou owest moreover unto me, even thin own self.*]

Hitherto we have seen the former part of the answer to the objection: Now remaineth in these words, to be considered the revocation of the former grant; wherein, albeit the Apostle will not speak what he thinketh, yet he leaveth it to *Philemons* secret cogitation, to consider what he was indebted unto him, as if he should say; I have offered to discharge thy Servants debt; nevertheless, if thou remember me, and if thou hast not forgotten thyself, the amends is already made, the debt is already paid. Whereby it appeareth, that *Philemon* was himself won to the embracing of the Faith by the Ministry of *Paul*, as his Servant also was. First of all, the Apostle claimeth at his hands, that duty he challenged at the Servants hand; as appeareth verse 13. where he showeth, that he would have retained him, that in his stead he might have ministered unto him in the bonds of the Gospel. Seeing therefore both of them owed the like service; it followeth, that both of them had the same occasion: for the Apostle joineth them together, as the fruits of his Apostleship.

Secondly, it is the greatest debt (that can be) that is here expressed, when he saith to him [*Thou owest unto me even thine own self.*] It was a great debt which the Servant owed to his Fellow-Servant, that required of him an hundred pence, but so much Money would have levelled the debt, and discharged him from prison, and have paid that he owed. They were

great Debtors that owed; the one five hundred pence; the other fifty: but he that owed ten thousand Talents, was the greatest of all: and yet if they had been able to have paid so much, the debts had been fully discharged. For where Money is owing, Money will make even: a little sum, will be paid with a little; a great sum, with the like quantity. The unjust Steward called together his Masters Debtors; and one owed an hundred measures of Oil; another so many of Wheat, but the Apostle saith; he did owe unto him, not fifty pence, not an hundred pence, not ten thousand Talents, not an hundred measures of Oil, not an hundred measures of Wheat, but his own self; that is, even his Soul and body. This debt he urgeth because of his Ministry, by which he was at the first converted, and hitherto continued in the state of grace, which remained as a Seal engraven and imprinted in his heart. From hence we learn, that such as have gained us to God, or preserved us in the state of Salvation by the preaching of the Gospel, ought to be most dear unto us, we owing unto them even our selves, and whatsoever we have besides to do them good. The benefits bestowed upon us by the Ministry of the word, can never be sufficiently esteemed, nor worthily enough prized, nor abundantly enough be recompensed and rewarded.

Hence it is, that when *Elisha* sell sick of his sickness, whereof he died; *Joash* the King of Israel came down unto him, and wept upon his face, and said; *O my Father, my Father, the Charrt of Israel, and the Horsemen of the same.* Where we may learn what to account of the Teachers of the Church, by the testimony of a King that sitteth on his Throne: if he do so account of thē, such as are inferior to him must not make less reckoning of them. Hereunto cometh the saying of the Prophet; *How beautiful upon the Mountains are the feet of him that declareth & publisheth peace; that declareth good tidings, and publisheth salvation; saying unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.* Where he showeth by way of admiration, that it is one of the greatest benefits to have Pastors sent unto us, that may direct our steps into the way of peace, and guide our feet to eternal life. This is the estimation that the *Galatians* had of *Paul*, and the commendation which *Paul* giveth of the *Galatians*, that they accounted nothing too dear or too good for him; *The trial of me which was in my flesh, ye despied not, neither abhorred: but ye received me as an Angel of God; yea, as Christ Jesus. What was then your felicity? For I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have pulled out your own eyes, and have given them unto me.* Where he showeth, that he was entertained among them as an Angel; nay, above an Angel, even as Christ himself. To this purpose he writeth to the *Corinthians*, *Let a man so think of us as of the Ministers of Christ, and disposers of the secrets of God.* By all which testimonies it is manifest, that such as converted us to the faith, and brought us to be Cittizens of the kingdom of heaven, ought to be dearly and entirely beloved of us.

Neither should this seem strange unto us. First of all, they are most of all to be loved and highly esteemed of us that do us most good: we are most deeply indebted unto them, that labor most for our benefit. This it is which our Savior insinuateth in the parable of the lender that had two debtors; the one ought him more, the other less; and he forgave them both: declaring, that he judged uprightly, *Who supposed that he would love him most, to whom he had forgiven most.* The greatest benefit requireth of us the greatest love. But the Ministers do us, or may do us the greatest good, if we lay not a bar in our own way. For the blessings that God bestoweth upon men by the Ministry of his Pastors and Teachers, are spiritual and

eternal blessings: but the blessings that the hearers do return and recompense to their Ministers, are Temporal, and (as the Apostle speaketh, and calleth them) Carnal, saying; *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, it is a great thing if we reap your carnal things?* They fight our Spiritual battles for us, and what do we not owe to such?

Again, they are unto us instead of Christ: they are his officers that he hath appointed in his Church, who when he ascended into heaven, gave gifts unto men, and ordained those that should teach his people unto the end of the World. Hence it is that the Apostle saith; *Now then are we Ambassadors for Christ: as though God did beseech you through us, we pray you in Christ's stead, that ye be reconciled unto God.* If we did believe that the Ministers were left us in Christ's stead, and did supply his room, we would otherwise respect them and esteem of them, then we do.

Thirdly, they are the Ministers by whom we believe; and consequently, by whom we are saved: They are our Fathers in Christ, by whom we are begotten to eternal life. To this end the Apostle saith; *Who is Paul then? And who is Apollos, but the Ministers by whom ye believed, and as the Lord gave to every Man?* Can we have a greater blessing bestowed upon us then Faith; without which, it is impossible to please to God? *But Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of GOD:* And the word is brought unto us by the Ministers of God. Seeing then, that they deserve the greatest love, that do us the greatest good: Seeing the Ministers are unto us in the place of Christ Jesus; and lastly, seeing they are the Instruments by whom we believe. It followeth necessarily, that such as turn many unto righteousness, are highly to be regarded, and to be greatly magnified of us above many others.

The Uses arising from hence, are of diverse sorts. First of all, it directeth us to other necessary truths to be learned of us. It is noted by the Apostle, to be one general use of the Scripture; that it serveth and sufficeth to teach all truth needful to salvation: so the former point being received, will help us to find out and conclude other truths. First we learn, that wheresoever there is a true profession; a sound feeling; and true taste of Religion, or joy of salvation, there will be a reverent account, and joyful entertainment of the teachers and publishers of the Gospel. On the other side, a light & slender account of the Ministers, argueth a light account of the word of Christ, of the doctrine of salvation, and of the truenesse of Religion. Let everyone of us examine our own affections, and try our own hearts by this Touchstone. It is impossible to make any diuorse between the true Ministers of God, and the true Doctrine which is according to godliness. He that honoreth one, magnifieth the other; and he that contemneth the one, despiseth the other. Whosoever it is, that being distempered and diseased, esteemeth of his health, or desireth it, he will honor the Physician that cureth and recovereth him. He that being wounded, is thoroughly healed, will greatly regard him that gave unto him the salve to make a plaster. He that hath been ignorant, and is taught the knowledge that he had not before; will make much of him that hath been his Master. This will be the behavior of all such as have felt the burden of their sins, and been humbled under the heavy stroke of God's hand, and felt the unsearchable depth of the sore festering and fretting within them: They are the only men that know what necessary use there is of the Ministers, to search their wounds, to raise up with comfort, to

bind up the broken-hearted, and strengthen them that are weak and ready to fall. As for those that never knew what the Nature of sin is, nor felt the intolerable burden of it, but think themselves sound, and not sick; heart-whole, and not diseased; Living men by Nature, and not dead in sins and trespasses; they take themselves to be in good case, according to the saying of Christ our Savior; *The whole need not the Physician, but they that are sick*. Thus then we see, how we may prove our selves whether we be in the Faith or not, even by the good estimation that we have of such as are the bringers of it.

Secondly, we may gather from hence, that the greatest part of the world lieth deeply and dangerously in condemnation, because such hath been the unthankfulness thereof toward the Ministers and Messengers of Salvation, that bring glad tidings of peace unto us, that it never respected them, or gave them any reverence. We see this by the examples of the Prophets, of the Apostles, and of Christ himself. So long as men resolve to entertain their sins, so long they will never be willing to entertain the Preachers of the Gospel; whose Office is, to beat down the Kingdom of sin and Satan, and to set up the Kingdom of Christ Jesus in the hearts of Men. When *Herod* was determined to keep his Brothers Wife, he could not abide to hear *John* preach unto him, but committed him to prison. It is an evident sign of a corrupt conscience and of a profane heart, to account vilely of those whom God hath highly advanced. The Ministers of the Gospel were never so much hated, scorned, and abhorred; they are made a common reproach and by-word for every base Fellow; they are set forth as upon a Stage or Scaffold, to be derided of every Man; *They are made as the filth of the world, and the off-scowring of all things unto this time*. If this be the estate of the Ministers, we may give a true judgment in what estate the cause of Religion standeth among us, and what harbor it findeth with the men of this age.

Such as esteem of the Ministers as the filth and off-scowring of the earth, do also account the knowledge of the word as the Dregges and draury of all other things. Such as respect not those that are the means of faith, will also reject faith it self. The Ministers of the word and true Religion, grow up as two Plants together; so long as the one is countenanced and upholden, so long the other will flourish and spread abroad, and prosper. But if the Ministers, that are as the Lord's Gardiners, or the dressers of his Vine, be evilly entreated, maliciously slandered, despitefully handled, and scornfullie reproached; Religion it self beginneth to faint and to languish, and cannot long go free. Let us know therefore by this sign, the sickness of this age, and the dangerous declining of all good things. There cannot be a more certain token of the ruin of the Church, then when we see the main posts and chief pillars thereof set at naught. It is an easy matter to give judgment what will be the issue of this disease; it is no hard thing to feel the pulses of this Generation, and to tell them that the very pangs of death are upon them, so long as the spiritual Physicians of their Souls are base in their eyes, that desire nothing more then to recover them out of that desperate consumption into which they are fallen. There is no man hath his vital Spirits so far spent, and the natural heat so much wasted, but is willing to hear of a Physician that is able and willing to set him on foot again, and to restore his strength unto him that he had before. But we are become so senseless or shameless, and so dead in our sins, that we have no desire of health, nor seek after any spiritual Surgeons or Physicians to look unto us in time of

sickness. There is no disease without cure, if men of knowledge be inquired after, who have the tongue of the learned to minister a word in due season.

Secondly, as this Doctrine serveth to teach, so it is profitable to reprove diverse sorts of men; but I will only touch these three. First, it maketh against such as make a bad and base account of the Ministers of God, and think they owe no duty to their Pastors, but reckon them as their Vassals and Servants; suppose that they are bound to please them, and follow their humors, and account their Teachers beholden unto them for vouchsafing to hear them, as crediting their Ministry by their presence. It must not therefore seem a strange thing unto us, when we see the Ambassadors of God contemned, when we hear them reviled, and all manner of evil done to their persons. We know our calling to be of GOD, acceptable in his sight, and precious with all faithful men. We are the sweet savor of God, as well in them that perish, as in them that are saved: we know, that howsoever the preaching of the Word be a stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Grecians, and both a stumbling block and foolishness to the filthy Libertines, and carnal Gospellers: yet to them that are effectually called, it is the power of God, and the wisdom of God. We know what Christ hath pronounced of our Ministry, so long as we deliver the truth of God. Luke 10, 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.*

If a Man abuse an Ambassador of a Prince, and set him at naught, it is reputed and revenged as a disgrace and dishonor done to the Prince himself: so, if we shall abase and disgrace the Ministers of the Gospel, which are the Messengers of God, we shall never escape without punishment, but bring upon our selves swift damnation. Is not he a godless and ungracious Child, that mocketh and despiseth his Father, after the example of cursed *Cham*, who tasted of God's wrath for this contempt? The Lord pronounceth a fearful threatening against this fearful sin; *The eyethat mocketh his Father, and despiseth the instruction of his Mother, let the Ravens of the valley pick it out, and the young Eagles eat it.* In like manner, he is an ungodly and unregenerate hearer, that controlleth and contemneth the Preacher of the word, who is a spiritual Father of the soul, and giveth us not this life, but a new life; not the first birth, but the second birth; not the sight of the body, but the light of the mind; which things are far more excellent and precious then the other. There can be therefore no greater unthankfulness, then to contemn the Ministers of Christ.

Secondly, it meeteth with the starting holes and silly defences that many make for themselves, who to excuse their contempt of the Gospel, and treading under foot the word of God, do lay all the blame and fault upon the Ministers. Ask the question of the most proud Spirits and profane persons, whether they be enemies to the preaching of the Gospel, and open contemners of the Gospel, or not: they will deny it, and show themselves ready to abjure it; and yet none do more evidently contradict the truth then they. These are sly and secret enemies, who lightly esteem God's sacred and eternal word, under pretence of men's persons. They profess in word, to magnify the word; but they regard not the Ministers that bring it. They know well enough, that if they should openly oppose themselves against the Scriptures, and bid battle to God; all men would cry out against them; all men would hiss at

them; all men would point them out with the finger; and nod their heads at them as they go in the streets. But they go more subtly and circumspectly to work, they pretend the greatest love to the truth that can be, all their quarrel is to the Ministers that deliver it. And thus they think to slide away in the dark, that they may not be espied: whereas their own consciences within them do accuse them, and their own hearts every way, and every day condemn them, to be deep dissemblers, hollow hearted Hypocrites, and the most dangerous enemies that the Church of God hath. The same Apostle, that writing to the *Thessalonians*, chargeth them *Not to despise prophesying*; exhorteth them also, and beseecheth them in the same Chapter, *That they acknowledge them which labor among them, and are over them in the Lord, and admonish them, that they have them in singular love for their works sake*. The same Apostle that honoreth the Scripture with the greatest Titles of Dignity, and maketh it sufficient to make *The man of God absolute, being made perfect to every good work*, writing unto *Timothy*: doth also command him, to *Preach in season and out of season; to do the work of an Evangelist, and to cause his Ministry to be thoroughly liked off*. It is a vain excuse, and worse then the Fig-leaves that *Adam* sewed together to hide his shame, to seem to approve and allow of the word, and yet to reject such as are appointed to speak in the Church, and are set over us in the Lord.

He would be accounted a stark fool, that being hungry, would dislike and distaste his meat, and so starve his body through a willful famine, because he cannot abide the Cook that dressed it: or that would refuse his drink to quench his thirst, because he neither loveth nor liketh him that drew it for him, and brought it unto him. Would not he be condemned of extreme foolishness and simplicity, that would not vouchsafe to receive or look upon, or hear to be read, a Letter sent unto him from his Prince, and that for his good, because he careth not for the Messenger that offereth it unto his hands? Or, would not all men account him worthy to die an hundred times, who having a pardon sealed and sent him from the King, for his offenses, whereby he justly deserved to have the sentence of death pronounced against him, to be immediately executed upon him, should scorn the pardon, and the Princes mercy; because he favoereth not the man that is employed to bring it? Or, would not all men say he were worthy to be drowned, who being fallen into a swift stream, ready to bear him away with the violence of the waves, would not lay hand and hold on that which is preferred unto him, because he accounteth him his Enemy that desireth to save him? The like folly and madness is in those that refuse the word, because they hate the person of the Minister that breaketh the bread of eternal Life, that doth the message that God hath put in his mouth, that publisheth in Christ's Name a pardon of sin to all people that will repent and believe the Gospel; that would bring them to salvation of their Souls, that they might not perish, but have everlasting life.

The Prophet commendeth good King *Hezekiah*, who albeit he were sharply reproved, and threatened with a grievous judgment, he did not break out into raging speeches, nor cast into prison, nor put to death the Prophet that denounced a great plague against him: but submitted himself to God, and revered the word of the Prophet, saying; *The word of the Lord is good which thou hast spoken*. All men will be ready to confess in general, that the word of God is good, even as God is good; but they cannot be brought to acknowledge the word in the mouth of the Minister to be good. This is the shift of those that are wise to deceive

themselves. If they bring unto us the Doctrine of salvation revealed in the Scriptures, it is that word whereby we shall be judged in the last day, and be found guilty of horrible Treason against God.

Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *As many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law, at the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel.* The Jews and Gentiles oftentimes cried out against him, and accounted him unworthy to live, yet he showeth that at the last day they should be judged, not only according to the word, but according to his word; not only according to the Gospel, but according to his Gospel. When the Lord was determined to give his own people into the hand of their enemies, and to root them out of that good Land which he had given unto their Fathers, he hideth not from them the cause of his judgments, but setteth their sins in order before them, that *they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and till there was no remedy.* Where we see, he joineth together the mocking of his Messengers, and the despising of his words. These two, do necessarily follow one another; & where the one goeth before, and leadeth the way, the other will not come far behind. If this were well and thoroughly weighed of us, it would avail us to great good, and further us in the word of salvation, and rid us from many stumbling blocks that lie in our way.

Lastly, it reproveth such as refuse to give them sufficient maintenance, and do bar them of that competent and convenient portion that God hath allotted unto them in his word. For, if such as have spent their strength to bring us unto God, ought above all others to be regarded of us, and have a worthy recompense of their labors; surely, they deserve to be checked and controlled, that deal niggardly toward them, who have kept back nothing from them, but revealed unto them the whole Counsel of God. We see in this place, what the Apostle *Paul* challengeth at the hands of *Philemon*, whom he had won to the Faith; he accounteth him to owe unto him all that he had, so that if he should give unto him all the substance of his house; nay, his own life, it were but due, it were but a debt that he owed unto him. He that hath ransomed a prisoner out of the hands of the enemies, hath jurisdiction and authority over him, and may worthily claim whatsoever he hath. He that hath saved the life of his enemy in battle, and made him captive, is wholly at his disposing that hath taken him. In like manner, such as have pulled us out of the fire of hell, out of the Iawes of death, and out of the slavery of Satan the Prince of this world, that ruleth in the hearts of the Children of disobedience; may by a Divine and human right reap, our temporal things, and require to be sustained and maintained by us. Might not he be registered for a most unthankfull person to all posterities that shall come hereafter, that would suffer him to want that hath fed him, that hath nourished him, that hath preserved his life? Who doth not cry out against *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians, who forgot *Joseph* a great Benefactor to their whole Land, that provided much Corn in the plentiful years, and saved the lives of many thousands by his labor and industry? So likewise, what a shame is it, to suffer such worthy Instruments of our good, to lack and suffer hunger? Vndoubtedly, they deserve to be forsaken of God and all good men, that forsake those that are their Fathers in Christ, and instructors in Christianity. Notwithstanding, this blemish and reproach sticketh nearer unto many men now living,

then the skin upon their backs, which brandeth and blotteth them, as with a coal of perpetual infamy; who being brought to know themselves, to see their own sins, to understand their secret offenses, to make Conscience of their ways, to come to true repentance, and to begin to set their footing in the kingdom of heaven, by the blessing of God, upon the labors of his Ministers, yet have no consideration of them, are not greiued nor ashamed to see them want, and to live in necessity, but have forgotten all the comfort that they have received, and shut up the eyes of their compassion from them. So often as I consider the former times of men's zeal and forwardness, that being drawn to a love of the truth became Instruments to draw on others, and compare the same with the present estate of things, we may seem to live in a continual Winter, and under a frozen Climate, wherein appeareth nothing all the year long, but Frosts and Ice, and cold, and Hail, and Snowes, covering the Mountains and Valleyes, without any Spring or Summer, without any heat, or growing, or flourishing of anything. For I remember, how many being touched with a terror in Conscience, and feeling the burden of their sins more heavy then Lead, pressing them down to the nethermost Hell, could find no comfort in their pleasant Companions, in their delightful pastimes, and in sweet Instruments of Music, all these were tedious and bitter, and wearisome unto the flesh: one word of comfort from the mouth of the Minister, was as Balsam unto them, to refresh their faint and feeble spirits, by whom they were raised up. But now, living in peace and prosperity, they are fallen asleep, they remember not the kindness they have received, and the consolation that they have tasted, and can both hear and see their misery, and almost beggary, that were the greatest means of their bringing them from the greatest misery and slavery that can be imagined. For, what greater bondage, then the bondage of sin, of Satan, and of Hell? It is a great reproach to see a Christian Brother to beg his Bread, or to crave relief of others: a faithful Minister is a Christian brother, and more then a Brother; yea, a Christian Father, whose Children in the faith ought to give him maintenance in the flesh. It is truly said by the Apostle, *Let him that is taught in the word, make him that hath taught him, partaker of all his goods: Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* To this purpose he speaketh in another place, *The elders that rule well, let them be had in double honor, especially they which labor in the word and Doctrine: for the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn: And, The Labourer is worthy of his wages.* It is a great shame to the people of God, that such as are conscionable in their Callings, and are as faithful Stewards distributing to them in the family such store as they have provided, should complain for want of maintenance, and a liberal pension in temporal things. The Apostle James teacheth, *That the hire of the Laborers which have reaped their fields (which was of them kept back by fraud) crieth, and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Hosts.* The Ministers of God are his Laborers, and labor for us, to gather us as good Corn into the Lord's Barn: if then, we detain from them the Bread that they should eat, and the fleece of the wool wherewith they should be clothed, and the fruits of the earth whereby they should be maintained; This is a crying sin, and will never cease, until it have brought down God's judgments upon our selves, and our substance.

Thirdly, seeing the benefits brought upon us, both upon our bodies and souls, by the means of the Ministry, can never be worthily esteemed, and sufficiently expressed; it serveth to instruct us in the necessary duties of our obedience, even to testify our love to the truth, by reuerencing and respecting them that are as the Lord's Messengers, to bring the truth unto our doors. This the Apostle commendeth unto us in the *Thessalonians*, *For this cause also thank we God, without ceasing, that when ye perceived the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is indeed the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe.* Where we see, that after the *Thessalonians* had heard the Gospel of Christ published unto them, so many of them as were ordained unto eternal life believed; and submitted themselves to be duided and reformed by it.

This duty, hath many branches. First, it is required of us to hear the word of God with patience. This is the first step and degree that leadeth unto life, and it proceedeth from the mere grace and favor of God, whensoever it is wrought in our hearts. For, how many are there, that when they hear, stop their ears? That when they see, shut their eyes? That when they understand, do harden their hearts? When *Stephen* made a defense for himself, before the chief Priests that sat in the Counsel, *They gave a shout with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran violently upon him all at once, and cast him out of the City, and stoned him with stones.* When one *Alexander* a Jew beckned with the hand, prepared himself to speak, and would have excused the Apostles, *There arose a great shout almost for the space of two hours, of all men crying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.* Likewise when *Paul* made a particular rehearsal of the manner of his conversion to the faith, before the Jews, they heard him quietly and with silence, until he said; He was sent to the Gentiles; but then thorough impatience, they cried out, they cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, and lift up their voices, saying; *Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not meet that he should live.* We see by these examples, that it is a token of God's goodness, when he giveth us circumcised ears to listen and attend to the word preached unto us, with patience and perseverance unto the end, albeit we hear our sins reprov'd, & our secret thoughts opened unto us. It is our duty to show our selves swift to hear, but slow to speak, and slow to wrath. We must be slow to speak against that which hath been delivered, and we must be slow to anger and indignation against those that have delivered the truth unto us.

Secondly, it is required, that we receive the word that we have heard, & assent unto it as to the word of truth, and acknowledge it to be good and true, even that part of the word that containeth his judgments, his threatenings, his curses, his punnishments. This is to be craved of God, as being a special work of grace in those that belong to his kingdom. For many there are that hear, and have their ears open to attend; these are not dull hearers that mark nothing, but ate ready to listen and give care; and yet they will not give their assent to that which they have heard. The Apostle teacheth, *That the natural man perceiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* When *Paul* preached at *Athens*, in the hearing of the *Stoics* and *Epicures*, touching the resurrection from the dead, they said, *What will this Babbler say?* A great part of our ordinary hearers, may be placed in this rank, who are content to hear, and

then sit in judgment upon that which they have heard, and never give credit unto it, but measure the truth of God by their carnal conceits, and natural reasons.

Thirdly, it is farther required of us, to embrace the truth in our hearts, & carefully to apply it to our own souls. It belongeth unto us, not only to hear it with the ear, and to assent to it with the mind but to lay it up deeply rooted in us, and to make it our own by a special application. This is the right use of the word, this is peculiar to the elect, and this is a work of grace in our hearts. The Hystoricall faith giveth a general consent to the truth of God, but never goeth farther to apprehend it, as we see in *Simon the Sorcerer*, who is said to have believed, that is; in a general manner to have consented to the Gospel; and yet *Peter* telleth him, *That his heart was upright, and that he remained in the gall of bitterness*. Let us not therefore appropriate the word of grace, that is able to build farther unto our own selves; otherwise we shall have no more comfort then the Reprobates have, who come so far, as to confess the word to be true, and that God by his Son will save the Vessels of mercy.

Lastly, it is required in this special manner, to entertain the word, to wit; as the word of God. Many receive the word and embrace it willingly, readily, cheerfully, and joyfully; but not as the word of God. I will not stand to speak of the Church of Rome, which holdeth that the word written, hath not authority in it self, unless the Church approve it, and therefore albeit it embraceth the word of God, yet it embraceth it not as the word of God. For how many are there among our selves, that receive not the word of God with that reverence and obedience that they ought, as appeareth by the evil practices of their lives? These men do not receive the word of God, as the word of God, who if they did in truth & sincerity acknowledge this truth to be of God, & to have him for the author thereof, they would lead their lives in another manner then they do; they would be afraid to rush forward, & to run headlong as it were with violence into the breach & transgression thereof. They would consider, that God will not bear and endure the contempt of his word, but revenge the dishonor done to his name, with great plagues and most grievous judgments. These are the duties that are to be performed of us, and the four degrees that testify our submitting of our selves to the truth of the Gospel, preached & delivered unto us by the Ministers of Christ.

Lastly, seeing they, by whose ministry we are gained to God, and preserved in the state of salvation being gained, ought to be most dear to us, we owing unto them our own selves. This must teach the Ministers of God a necessary duty and lesson, to be marked of them; to wit, to endeavor by their daily diligence, and continual preaching of the Gospel, to make the people indebted unto them. For how do the people come so much in their debt, but that they receive heavenly Doctrine by their Ministry, as from the mouth of God? Such as have need of admonition, must be exhorted; such as are weak in the faith, must be strengthened; such as need comfort, ought to be comforted; such as are ignorant, must be instructed; such as are willing to be taught must be beseeched and entreated; and everyone must be handled according to his nature and condition, according to the rule of the Apostle, *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, dividing the word of truth aright*. All men are not to be handled after one manner, but one after one manner, and another after another. He were a bad and mad Physician, that would use all his patients to

one receipt. Some have gross humors in them, and stand in need to be purged; some, more strongly; others more gently; according to their condition and Constitution. Others have more need to have nature restored, then purged, such must have Cordials and Restoratives ministered unto them. So is it with such as need Physic for the soul. The Minister must not be dumb and silent among his people, but speak unto them, and instruct them as a good Father doeth his Child, one after one manner, another after another manner, and everyone by some means or other. This the Apostle setteth down as a duty by his own practice, *We were gentle amongst you, even as a Nurse cherisheth her Children: Thus being affectioned towards you, our good will was to have dealt unto you, not the Gospel of GOD only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.* Where the Apostle testifieth his great love and liberality toward them, that he accounted not his own life precious & dear unto himself, but was content to offer it up upon the Sacrifice and service of their faith, that he might rejoice in the day of Christ. So then, it belongeth to us the Ministers of the word, to preach the Gospel with all patience, diligence, and longsuffering. Let us be instant, in season, and out of season: Let us be gentle toward all men, apt to teach, suffering the evil, and instructing them that are contrary minded. Paul writing to the Romaines, and declaring unto them that he oftentimes purposed to come unto them, that he might have some fruit also among them, yieldeth this as the reason, *I am Debtor both to the Grecians, and to the Barbarians: both to the Wisemen, and unto the unwise; therefore so much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you also that are at Rome.* So in another place he testifieth, that *Albeit he was free, yet he had made himself a servant unto all men, that he might win the moe.* To the Jews, he became as a Jew, that he might win the Jews; to them that are under the Law, as though he were under the Law, that he might win them that are under the Law: to the weak, he became as weak, that he might win the weak: he was made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some. Thus we see how the Ministers ought to apply, and to employ themselves in laboring in the Lord's harvest, to gain a people unto him, and to bring them into the sheepfold of Christ. For how or which way should the people be indebted unto us, if we never commit the Gospel unto them? A Debtor and a Creditor are Relatiues, and have reference one to another. If we do not seek to make our hearers partakers of the treasures of the Gospel, nor labor to enrich them with the saving knowledge of the Doctrine of salvation, we cannot be dear unto them, they cannot be indebted unto us. If we reap and receive their temporal things, and eat and drink, feed and clothe our selves by their labor, without labor in our places, we run continually into their debt, and they owe us nothing but shame and contempt to be poured upon us, according to our deserts. It is a great comfort to the people, that make much of them that have the oversight over them, submitting themselves to them that must give an account for their souls, considering that thereby they may gather confidence, and get assurance to themselves, that they are true believers, and have embraced the Gospel in sincerity. So on the other side, it is a singular point of sound comfort to all the Ministers of the word, that have been painful in the work of the Lord, they may claim as their own right and proper possession of their people, to be maintained and honored with double honor of them, and nothing indeed can be sufficient or answerable in proportion to their pains. But what reason can be alleged, that the people should be burdened, & not instructed? Charged with Tiths, and not helped with teaching? Pay their duties, and receive no Doctrine. Hence it is that the

Apostle saith, *Let a man so think of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and disposers of the secrets of God; and as for the rest, it is required of the disposers, that every man be found faithful.* Whereby we see, the good account and estimation that the Minister receiveth of his people, ought to move him to faithfulness and painfulness in his Office; so that we must conclude, that such as will be reputed for the Ministers of Christ, should show themselves to be so indeed, by their care of the flock committed unto them.

20 *Yea, Brother, let me obtain this pleasure of thee in the Lord, comfort my bowels in the Lord.*

21 *Trusting in thine obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do even more then I say.*

Hitherto we have seen the Reasons that *Paul* hath propounded to urge *Philemon* to receive and entertain his servant: In these words, we see the matter concluded and repeated again, howbeit not ydely or unprofitably, but with gain and an holy advantage: for in the closing up of the whole, he reasoneth farther, & inferreth a new argument to persuade *Philemon*, drawn from the benefit and comfort he should receive by it. This reason is taken from the effects, and may be thus concluded:

- *If hereby I shall obtain fruit of thee in the Lord, and if thou doest refresh my bowels in the Lord,*
- *Then thou shouldest receive him to thee again.*
- *But I shall hereby obtain fruit, and have my bowels refreshed,*
- *Therefore receive him to thee again.*

Or we may frame the Reason on this manner:

- *That which may greatly rejoice me, and both please and pleasure me, I am assured thou wilt willingly do:*
- *But the forgiving of Onesimus will do so,*
- *Therefore I am assured thou wilt willingly do it.*

This is contained in the 20. verse. In the next verse, we have the preventing of another Objection which might be made, not against some part, but against the whole Epistle, and the Apostles manner of handling thereof. The Objection is wanting, but may easily be gathered, and may be thus supplied out of the Answer which is expressed: Why are you so earnest and vehement in this matter? Have you so great distrust, and so little confidence in me, that you use so many words, and deal so earnestly with me? Do you think I have so little Charity in myself, and so small respect to you, and so hard an heart toward him, that no persuasion can mollify me, no reason overcome me, no friends turn me? The answer to this followeth: I have written unto thee, not because I doubt of thy favor, but because I trust in thy obedience: not because I fear thou wilt deny me, but because I know thou wilt pleasure

me. This persuasion he amplifieth by a comparison drawn from the greater to the less, as if he should say: Nay I am well assured, that for my sake thou wilt grant a greater matter then I crave at thy hands. The Reason may be thus contrived:

- *If thou be ready to yield more then this, then I know assuredly thou wilt do this:*
- *But thou art ready to yield more then this,*
- *Therefore I know assuredly thou wilt do this.*

Thus much is to be marked of us touching the method, wherein we have the conclusion of the chief matter, howbeit adorned with much efficacy of words, and strengthened with great force of reasons. Now let us consider the meaning of such things as require interpretation. [*Yea, Brother*] This first word, is a note of exclamation, or an Adverb of asking, or wishing, or beseeching, or hoping well; as if he should say: Oh my Brother, I hope that this my intercession for him shall not be in vain, but carry sufficient weight and authority to work in thee moderation in relenting, and compassion in pardoning of him. This word of affirmation is put to garnish the sentence, & to make the exhortation more powerful and pathetical. When he saith, *Let me obtain this favor*, or fruit; benefit or pleasure; he useth the Optative mood, & alludeth to the name of *Onesimus* in the word [*Onaimen*] which fitly serveth his purpose. Touching these words [*Comfort my Bowels.*] The meaning is, receive him, and remit his offenses, and in so doing, thou shalt cheer and revive my heart: for the receiving of him, is the relieving and refreshing of my outward parts, and of my inward affections; so that nothing shall be more pleasing unto me. He addeth [*in the Lord,*] thereby signifying, that the duty required of him is such, that it pleaseth God, and setteth forth his glory, and may Religiously be performed; nay such, as could not with a safe Conscience be omitted or denied. So then, he understandeth hereby, that he should do him a great pleasure, and withal please God and obey him. That then which he doth request, is commended by two fruits; it shall benefit man, and it shall be acceptable to God. In the 21. Verse he saith, [*Trusting in thine Obedience,*] which is word for word (in thy hearkening unto me) expressing wherein Obedience consisteth; Namely, in hearkening to that which is commanded, even to hearken with a purpose to do it.

To this purpose *Samuel* joineth Harkning & Obeying together, *Hath the Lord as great pleasure in Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices, as when the voice of the Lord is obeyed? Behold, to Obey is better then Sacrifice, and to Hearken is better then the fat of Rammes.* So then, the use of this word [*of Obedience,*] is not without great force, for thereby he insinuateth, that *Philemon* could never escape the note of disobedience, if he did not yield to the Apostle of Christ, making so honest, so equal, so just a request. Lastly, when he saith, [*Thou wilt do no more then I say,*] the words are in the Original, [*Above that I speak,*] that is; thou wilt grant more then I ask or demand at thy hands; testifying hereby, the free hearts of true Christians, that being provoked to necessary & holy duties, they will oftentimes exceed that whereunto they are desired. This being the right order, and true interpretation of these words, in these two verses, they are thus much in effect; Oh my Brother, if thou regardest any good to me, or desirest to pleasure me in that which I desire or delight in, let me obtain this benefit & good

turn at thy hands, which will also be accepted of God, being a work of mercy allowed & commended in his word; refresh I beseech thee my bowels, and comfort me in my son *Onesimus*, for what thou dost to him herein, shall be as done to me. If thou ask me, why I use so many words, and whither I do distrust of thy dealing? I answer, that I write nothing at all doubting, but altogether trusting thou wilt grant my request; yea, assuring myself, thou wilt show thyself willing to grant more then I have requested, even to set him free if I should require it.

These words are short, but the Observations that arise from hence, might be many: some I will only point out, and afterward handle others perticularly. First of all, mark the forcible farewell that the Apostle taketh. The *Conclusions* and *Perorations* that Orators use, are wont to have the sharpest edge, but they are wont for the most part to be long and tedious, and full of words; but the Apostle in this place useth the greatest brevity, with the greatest vehemency: Wherein he repeateth again the same manner of speech, [*Of refreshing his bowels,*] which we had before in the twelfth Verse. [*Thou therefore receive him that is mine own Bowelles.*] Likewise, as he saith, [*Let me obtain this pleasure in the Lord,*] so he doubleth it, [*Comfort my bowels in the Lord.*] This teacheth, that repetitions of the same Doctrine, are good and profitable to the Church, according to the practice of *Paul*, *It grieueth me not to write the same things to you, and for you it is a sure thing.* Let it not therefore grieve us, or offend us, to hear the same Exhortations, Reprehensions, and Threatenings, but rather learn to lay better hold of them at the last, then we have done at the first.

Secondly, by these phrases of obtaining a pleasure, and refreshing his bowels, we may learn, what joy and comfort the godly do feel & receive in themselves by the raising and restoring of a sinner. It is as if we wanted an hand, an eye, a foot, or an arm, and had it given unto us: would not this rejoice us, and revive us greatly? So is it with the faithful, when they behold a fellow member with them in Christ's body restored and coupled with the head, from whence it receiveth a gracious influence of all spiritual blessings; it ministereth occasion of the greatest joy that can be unto thē. Thus it ought to be with us, when we see any converted to the faith, we ought to have a fellow-feeling of the goodness of God bestowed upon them, inasmuch as the Angels themselves rejoice when one sinner is converted.

Thirdly, mark what words of beseeching & entreating he useth, of praying and desiring him to grant his request, albeit by his Apostolical authority he might command him. Whereby we learn, that the godly and faithful are more moved with mildness & gentleness, and with loving and friendly exhortations, then by severe threatenings denounced against them. They are endued with God's spirit, which is a Master to teach them, & worketh in them the will and the deed. Of unwilling, they are made willing; of tough & rough hewn, they are made pliable and apt for the building; of stubborn, they are become obedient & ready to learn. They are as good scholars in the school of Christ, who fear more the displeasure of their Master whom they love, and who loveth them, then the suffering of many stripes and strokes given unto them. This is a true note to know the disciples of Christ from all others. Evil men abstain from sin for fear of the punishment, & for feeling of judgment, so that if

there were no threatenings denounced, no curses annexed, no plagues and torments feared, they would grow worse and worse, & quickly fill up the measure of their iniquity.

Fourthly, we may gather hereby, that pollitick order is not ouerthrown by the Doctrine of the Gospel, neither is the right and authority of Maysters over their servants abrogated by the faith of Christ. For *Philemon* was not an Infidel or unbeliever, but a fellow-helper with *Paul*; yet rule over his servants is not denied him, nor taken from him, but he is only bidden to receive him curteously, and to pardon him mercifully; yea *Paul* (as we see) doth humbly beseech him, that he may obtain and retain his former place, and doth not straitly command him to discharge him of his service. This jurisdiction standeth by good warrant of the Laws of God and Men: but of this we have spoken more at large before, in the 12. Verse of this Epistle.

Fifthly, we see the Title again repeated, that he giveth to *Philemon*, when he calleth him by the name of his Brother. Thus he called him before verse 7. and so he esteemed of *Onesimus*, verse 16. Whereby we see, that all men made members of Christ, and engrafted into his body, are become as faith. Brethren one to another. Thus doth the Apostle call this *Onesimus* *A faithful & a beloved Brother*, who is as one of them that were chief in the church. The consideration hereof, ought on the one side, to pull down our proud Feathers, and make us equal with them of the lower sort: and on the other side, to make us love one another not with dissimulation, but with brotherly love; not in word only, but in truth; as members of one body, and as brethren of one father.

Sixthly, he continueth his humble supplication for *Onesimus*, which showeth, that they are far from true repentance, that do excuse, or defend, or deny their faults and offenses; *For he that hideth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall find Mercy.* When *Onesimus* did see so famous an Apostle of Christ, so carefully to entreat for his cause, he ought much more to be humbled with a feeling and remembrance of his former offenses, thereby to move the mind of his Master to gentleness and moderation.

Lastly, observe out of this place, that albeit we doubt not to obtain that which we desire, but are assured to enjoy that which we ask, yet we must deal earnestly and effectually, both in regard of the matter it self (for in a weighty and necessary cause, we ought not to proceed slenderly) and in respect of the nature of men, who many times are dull to conceive, and slow to grant that which we crave. There is no man so quick of pace, but needeth to have the spurs clapped to his sides now and then. No man runneth so swift a pace, but sometimes wanteth exhortations, consolations, reprehensions, admonitions, threatenings, and such like encouragements. We have not yet attained unto perfection, so long as we live we must be Scholars in Christ's school, and as it were, proceed from step to step. Thus much briefly touching the general Observations: Now, let us come to the handling of the particular Doctrines.

[*Yea, Brother, let me obtain this fruit.*]

By this conclusion it may appear, that albeit *Onesimus* had robbed his Master, and run away with a great part of his substance, yet he had spent all (as it often falleth out with ill-gotten

goods) and then being beaten with his own rod (as the prodigal son) and brought to necessity, tasted of the sweet fruit of the Ministry of the blessed Apostle. Hence it is, that he urgeth so earnestly, and presseth *Philemon* so exceedingly to remit the debt, & to forgive the hurt he had received by his naughty servant, as being no way able to satisfy him, nor by any means hereafter being likely to satisfy him. For if any ability had been in him, to make satisfaction, there had been no place for pardon and remission, nor for *Paul's* undertaking of the debt. If we by fraud and stealth, by injury and injustice, possess the goods of other men, we are commanded to make actual and real restitution. The word of God teacheth us directly, that such as detain the goods of other men, are unmeet for his worship, & unfit for his service. Again, such as with-hold them from the right owners, shall die in their sins, and not have pardon before restitution, when God hath enabled them thereunto. But if we do keep back from them their own, our repentance is not conscionable, but counterfeit. Heerby it appeareth, that *Onesimus* was not able to pay unto his Master such things as he had taken away, for otherwise it had been an unreasonable request to have a debt pardoned which might be restored. For that which any man doth unjustly detain, is none of his, but that persons from whom it is detained. So then, this being the poor servants condition, that he had left nothing of all that which he had taken away (as commonly goods evilly gotten, are evilly spent) the Apostle craveth pardon. From hence we learn, that we ought not to be eager and extreme in urging and exacting debtes from the poor and needy, but rather be ready to remit & relieve, or at least to forbear what we may, and are enabled to do. Heerunto cometh the precept delivered in the law of *Moses*, *Every creditor shall quit the love of his hand which he hath lent to his neighbor; he shall not ask it again of his neighbor, nor of his brother, for the year of the Lord's freedom is proclaimed.* Where he teacheth, y^t mercy should be shown to their brethren in necessity, that they ought not to be hasty in calling for the things that are due to thē, but rather to give farther day & respite. So afterward, *If one of thy Brethren with thee be poor, within any of thy gates in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee: thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor Brother.* To these Commandments remembered unto us in the Law, let us join the practice of *Nehemiah*, in the time of a Public want and outcry of the people, when they complained that they were constrained to take up Corn upon trust, to morgage their Lands, their Houses, and their Vineyards, thorough extremity of the famine, to borrow Money for the Kings Tribute, which must be paid, and to sell their sons and daughters for Slaues, he said; *Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, for the reproach of the Heathen our enemies? For even I, my Brethren, and my Servants do lend them Money and Corn: I pray you, let us leave off this burden, Restore (I pray you) wnto them this day their Lands, their Vineyards, their Olives, and their Houses, and remit the hundereth part of the Silver, of the Corn, of the Wine, and of the Oil that ye exact of them. Then they said; We will restore it, and will not require it of them, we will do as thou hast said.* Where we see, the wonderful care that this Governor of the people had, to have the poor relieved, and to cause their case to be respected, and to move the Rich to be beneficial and bountiful unto them. So then, it is a clear point, that no man ought to be over-hasty in requiring such Debts as are due unto him from poor men, and such as are in great need.

If any will yet make a doubt and question of this Truth, let him dilligently mark the Reasons whereupon it is grounded. First, it is a common Proverb, *That where nothing can be had, the King looseth his right.* We must therefore consider the extreme necessity wherein some men are, and the poor estate into which they are brought. Compassion and Love, are to be extended towards such as crave favor, and are willing, albeit not able to satisfy us, according to their desire, and our demand. This is the Reason which is pointed out unto us, in the parable propounded by our Savior, ann expressed by the Evangelist Saint Luke, in the 7. Chapter, and the 41. Verse. *A certain Lender had two Debtors; the one ought five hundred pence, and the other fifty; and when they had nothing to pay, he forgave them both.* The like appeareth in another Parable mentioned in Matthew, Chapter 18, 24. *When the Servant was brought that ought to his Master ten thousand Talents, because he had nothing to pay, he had compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him that debt.* Whereby we see, that the cause why his Lord had compassion upon him, was his inability and necessity, he was not able to pay.

Secondly, it is a means to bring a blessing from God, that is the giver, and from them to whom we give, and it is accepted for righteousness. If then, our doing good to others, bringeth profit to our selves, it is our duty to show to them our Compassion, in easing and mittigating such burdens as otherwise we might lay upon them. This is the reason that Moses maketh, *Deut. 24, 12, 13. If it be a poor body, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge, but shalt restore him the pledge when the Sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his Raiment, and bless thee, and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the Lord thy God.* This Reason is not superfluous, but very effectual, considering what Hand-fasts and Hold-fasts we are, and how everyone seeketh to provide for himself. We think, the whole earth will fail us; we Dream that whatsoever is lent, is lost; we fear that GOD will forget us, and forsake us. Hence it is, that Moses doth encourage us to Liberalitie, by these two Arguments; Namely, that the poor shall pray for us, and GOD will hear them, and accept of us.

Thirdly, the example of God is to be set before us: he forgiveth his poor Debtors that are not able to pay him. We are all deeply indebted to God, we are desperate debtors, we owe unto him more then ten thousand Talents, and have nothing to satisfy the least mite of that he may require and challenge of us. We are in an hard case, if God should deal roughly and rigorously with us. But when we cannot restore, he doth remit; & when we are not ably to pay, he offereth pardon. This reason is urged by Moses, *Deut. 24, 17, 18. Thou shalt not pervert the right of the stranger, nor of the Fatherless, nor take a Widdowes Rayment to pledge: but remember that thou wast a servant in Egypt, and how the Lord thy God delivered thee thence.* In which words, he moveth them to show mercy, because they had received mercy; they had received it of God, they must return it back again unto their Brethren. Thus Christ himself instructeth us by his own mouth, *Be ye merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful.* We must therefore be followers of the bountifulness of God. So then, if we lay these things together, and consider with our selves either the persons of our brethren that are in necessity, or our own persons, that receive by it a Commodity, or the person of God that pardoneth our iniquity, we may easily gather the truth of this Doctrine, that it is our duty to show mercy toward our poor debtors that •...e not able to make satisfaction to us, as they desire, and we require.

Let us come to the Uses. First, this serveth to teach us, that men are not always to look to their own benefit and profit, but likewise to the profit of others. We see by experience, that many are such great Deuourers and Sea-gulphes, that they are never contented, but seek to swallow up all they can lay hold upon: These will remit nothing, release nothing, mitigate nothing. It is a worthy precept given by the Apostle, *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of other men.* This is a fruit of true faith, and a sign of true love, when we seek to do good one to another. It is a blessed and comfortable thing unto our own hearts, to be content to leave our own, to depart from our right, and to suffer loss and damage. We heard before, how *Nehemiah* remedied the oppression of the people, whereby he found as great comfort to himself, as he brought comfort to them, so that he prayed, *Remember me, (O my God) in goodness, according to all that I have done to this people.* If we feel the same affection in our selves, we shall find the benefit thereof in our hearts. On the other side, it shall fall out to be a matter of great grief and griping to our Consciences, to remember how hard-hearted and hand-fast, we have been, even when the Calamity of the times and the necessity of our Brethren have cried out unto us for mercy.

We may see a great number that lie in wait and ambushment, as skouts and espials, nay as Thieves and Robbers for their prey, who suck the blood of their poor Brethren out of their veins, and draw the Marrowe out of their bones. What persons are to be relieved sooner then the poor? And what times and seasons are there to show mercy, better then of Dearth and Famine? Yet then do merciless men (as Horses-Leaches) pull what they can from the poor, to enrich them-selves, albeit it be with the ruin of others. They are glad of such times, they are most welcome unto them, whereas (in very deed) they should then especially open their bowels and breasts to show Compassion to such as are in necessity. Their minds are only bent to enrich themselves, they praise it as a fair and fat year for them-selves, albeit it be a lean and lamentable year for all others. This is a most wretched desire: this argueth a small regard towards the poor, which have much ado to maintain them-selves, even when they are helped and succoured. We see how the prizes of all things increase of Meat, of Drink, of Bread, of Houses, of Lands, of Cattle, and other Commodities: but the earnings and wages of poor folks do not increase, but rather decrease, so that such as have been able to live and to maintain their families in reasonable sort, are now driven to beg, and go behind hand, and live by Alms. If in the general rising of all other things, if in the raising, or rather racking of Rents, if in the inhancing of the prizes of such wares as the rich men have to utter, the hire also of the Day-laborer were augmented and increased, it would be more easy for them to maintain an hard and poor life, and by the sweat of their labor to keep their Wife and Children. But this seemeth to be corrupt and unconscionable dealing against the Law of God, against civil Equity, and common Humanity, and to threaten the decay of many men's estates, that all commodities should alter to extraordinary prizes, and yet the poor have only his ordinary allowance for the day, and be made even a common Drudge or Packhorse, to bear the burdens of others upon his back. The Law of love requireth, that the more we see any man distressed, so much the more we ought to spare him, until he may recover his estate. If we see him willing to pay us, and grieved in himself that he cannot pay us, and use all good means to his utmost power to pay us, let us bear with him, and not show rigor

toward him. If we should see a poor Cripple halting, and scars• able to draw his legs after him, and another, instead of reaching him a staff to stay him, or his hand to help him, would cut his sinnewes in sunder, or smite his Hamstrings, that he should be able to go no further, would not all men condemn him of cruelty and inhumanity? In like manner, when we behold our poor Brother in great necessity, having much ado to maintain himself, and sustain his life, if we thrust him down altogether, how dwelleth the love of God in us? Shall not his poverty cry unto him for vengeance? Let us therefore beware of adding affliction to such as are already in misery, and know, that the sparing of the poor, is an acceptable service & sacrifice unto God, wherewith he is exceedingly well pleased.

Secondly, this Doctrine serveth for reproof. First, against wretched Usurers, and extreme Creditors, that will neither spare nor forbear their poor Debtors any time, albeit their necessity be never so great, albeit their loss be never so inevitable, albeit their desire be never so earnest to make them satisfaction, yet they will extort and exact the utmost farthing, to the utter ruin of them, and of all that belong unto them. To these men the Apostle James saith, *There shall be condemnation merciless, to him that showeth not mercy, and mercy rejoiceth against condemnation.* For in the last day, when they shall stand at the judgment seat of Christ, they shall find him as rigorous to them, as they show themselves hard-hearted toward others. The rich man in the Gospel, that suffered *Lazarus* to lie at his gate, without relief and compassion, would have given an whole world (if he had had it) for one drop of water to cool his tongue that was tormented in that flame: but when he most of all wanted comfort, it was denied unto him. The servant in the Parable, that would not refrain his anger, nor forbear his fellow that fell down at his feet, and craved respite, but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt, hath the same measure measured unto him again, for his Lord did call him unto him, and said unto him; *O evil Servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou prayedst me, oughtest not thou also to have had pity on thy fellow-servant, as I had pity on thee? So his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the Tormenters, till he should pay all that was due to him.* It is laid to the charge of the Jews, that notwithstanding their outward profession and show of Religion, they were indeed irreligious and void of true piety, in that they refused to show mercy toward the poor. For the Prophet *Isaiah*, Chapt. 58, 3. or rather the Lord by the Prophet, saith; *They will draw near unto God, saying; Wherefore have we Fasted, and thou seest it not? We have punished our selves, and thou regardest it not? Behold, in the day of your fast you will seek your will, and require all your debts.*

Where the Prophet reproveth the hypocrisy of this people that gloried in the observation of the Ceremonies, and yet they shown no pity to their Neighbors, but delighted rather to fleese and flawe them to the uttermost. Is is wisely said of *Solomon*. *Prov. 22. He that oppresseth the poor to increase himself, and giveth unto the Rich, shall surely come to poverty.* Seeing therefore we ought not to pull out the throats, or grind the faces, or grieve the hearts of the poor that are not able to pay us, but to show all mildness and moderation toward them; it condemneth their practice that are hot and hasty in pursuing their right, and in persecuting such as bear honest minds to pay every man his own.

Hence it is, that the Prophet pronounceth him happy and blessed, that considereth wisely, and thinketh charitably of such as are in poverty and distress; abilitate, they want power to help them, albeit to relieve them, means to direct them, and counsel to comfort them; *Blessed is he that judgeth wisely of the poor, the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble: the Lord will keep him and preserve him alive, he shall be blessed upon the Earth, &c. the Lord will strengthen him upon the Bed of sorrow, thou hast turned all his Bed in his sickness.* Secondly, this Doctrine is against those, that count themselves clear and beyond all all reproof, if they keep the Letter of the Positiue Law, being notwithstanding therein cruel, unjust, and unmerciful. Extreame Law, is extreme wrong, and great cruelty: for even the laws themselves require to be mitigated with equity, and tempered with reason; and seasoned with conscience. It is not enough for us to say; I do but Justice; I do him no wrong; I seek but mine own. This cannot excuse our extreme courses, nor make our wicked words and works warrantable. The times and occasions may be such, as may make the seeking of our own to be theft; yea, Murder; when it taketh away the Bread of the poor which is their living.

We see, how the Prophet maketh it unlawful for all persons at all times, to require all their debts of all sorts of men. We see, that the Servant in the Gospel is punished for requiring all his own: he cast his Fellow-servant into Prison by a warrant of Law, and a strict course of Justice; he exacted no more then was due unto him; he required not two hundred pence, when an hundred only would have discharged the debt; yet himself was therefore thrown into utter darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For the times may be so hard, our Brethren may be so poor, and we may be so wealthy, that we ought to be content to depart from our right, and to yield to the necessity of such as are in want, and to say with the Prophet; *Is this a time to take Money, and to receive Garments, and Olives, and Vineyards, and Sheep, and Oxen, and Men-Servants, and Maid-Servants?* The creditor could say thus much for himself, & lay this for his defense, that came to take away the Children of the poor Widow to make them his Bond-men; He required but his own. The Apostle condemning the contentions that were among the *Corinthians* in Law-matters, saith; *Why rather suffer ye not wrong? Why rather sustain ye not harm? Nay, ye yourselves do wrong and do harm, and that to your Brethren.* Wherefore, when we see men's poverty so extreme, that they have need to have all forgiven unto them, we must be content, not by constraint, but willingly to loose sometimes the principal. It is a silly shift to say, I do nothing but that which Law warranteth me: for we must also be able to say; I have done nothing but that which a good conscience hath warranted me; which equity hath warranted me; which love hath warranted me; and (that which is more then all the rest) I have done nothing, but that which the profession of the Gospel of Christ hath warranted me. If we can say this truly, we have comfort in God, and peace in our own hearts. This is it which the Apostle speaketh touching himself, and his own practice; *We have not used this power, but suffer all things, that we should not hinder the Gospel of Christ.* We must diligentlie consider our calling, and labor to bring forth the fruits of the Gospel, that the name of God be not evil spoken off.

Thirdly, albeit we ought not to be rough or rash in exacting our own, but to deal mercifully, and to bear patiently with the poor: yet this must not give men liberty, to gather other men's goods into their hands, and then to defraud them as much as they can. There be some,

that under a color of Religion, will cozen and deceive, creeping into men's bosoms, borrowing and getting from them what they can, with a corrupt mind and a guileful conscience, and spending it in idleness, in riotousnesse, in drunkenness, & such like leudnesse. These are they, that when they are demanded to pay their due, will be ready to curse their Creditours, and to keep from them their goods with a strong hand, and then upbraid them with covetousness, with miserableness, with extortion, with oppression. Yea, some are so unthankful, so proud, and so wicked, that they receive the favors of men, and their friendship toward them, as matters of duty; insomuch that some will say; what have these Rich men done unto me, but they were bound to do that and more also? And what is this in comparison of that, which by the Commandment of God they owe unto me? Thus, while these men ask relief, they think they require nothing but their own, and that others are much indebted and greatly beholden unto them, that they will take an alms at their hands. Others (who yet are more proud and profane) do shamefully abuse, not only the liberality of the rich, but the very word of God it self, framing it to serve their own turn, and wresting it to please their own humors, pretending that they *Ought to lend, looking for nothing again*. Thus they bend their Scriptures which way they list, not knowing what they say, nor understanding the purpose of Christ. For first, to speak properly when we look for nothing again; we do not lend, but give. When a Man lendeth, he may look for his own; whereas he that giveth, doth it freely.

Again, the purpose of our Savior is to be considered, who in that place moveth us to do good one to another, with a single eye, and with a simple heart; not to love, because we would be loved; nor to do pleasure, because we would receive the like; but to love even our enemies, of whom we have no kindness again. For in the words going before, he saith; *If ye love them which love you, what thank shall ye have? For even the Sinners love those that love them, &c. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank shall ye have? For even the Sinners lend to Sinners, to receive the like*. Then afterward followeth the former sentence which these men allege; *Love ye your Enemies and do good, and lend, looking for nothing again*; that is, for no such pleasure at their hands, do not lend to them at one time, to the end that they may lend to you another time: for this were to respect more our own commodity, then their necessity; and the love of our selves, more then the love we bear to our Brethren. It standeth not with the rule of Charity, to give away part of our goods with this condition, that he pleasure us in the like with that which he hath. For these give or lend nothing, but to those of whom they hope to receive the like; and therefore obey not the counsel of Christ, that would have those called and invited to our Tables, which cannot bid us again, nor give us any recompense. So then, we must show our selves willing to make the poor partakers of that we have, although they be not able to do the like for us. This is it which our Savior meaneth *By lending, and looking for nothing again*: And thus much touching the natural Interpretation of that place, which these men abuse and pervert, as they do also other Scriptures. But to leave them, and to return to the former matter; It is a pernicious kind of Theft, in former days scarce heard off, or at the least not so commonly practiced, that men regard not how great sums, or what value of other men's good they get into their hands. If a man be holpen in his need, and he forget it; if he do not ackno•...ledge it; if he do not pray to God to requite and recompense it,

when himself hath no means to do it, he abuseth the liberality shown toward him, and is no better then a Thief. But to gather the wealth of others to our selves, and to borrow Money, or take up Wares of credit, as far as they can be trusted; of one, an hundred pound; of another, fifty; of one more, and of another less; never purposing to repay, but as soon as they have laid held on it, to break up, is a more monstrous kind of robbery then the former. For then a report is noysed abroad that they are Banckrupt, and by and by an agreement must be sought with their Creditors, to satisfy them forsooth with the third, with the sixth, with the tenth part: they purposing afterward to live upon their stolen goods and the labors of other men; whereby oftentimes it falleth out, that many godly and honest dealing men are utterly undone, and their poor Wives and Children brought to great poverty. It is made a property of the wicked by the Prophet, to make care to borrow, but to take no care to restore. *Psal. 73. The wicked borroweth and payeth not again, but the righteous is merciful and giveth.* It testifies the wonderful care that was among the Servants of God to make restitution, in that when the Iron where-with one was felling of a Tree fell into the Water, he cried out and said; *Alas Master it was but borrowed.*

Whereby it appeareth, he was more troubled for the lack and loss of it, then if it had been his own. It is likewise to be considered of us, which the Apostle *Paul* teacheth. *Rom. 13. Owe nothing to any Man, but to love one another: for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law.* Wherefore it standeth us upon, to restore the things we have borrowed, and to pay those to whom we are indebted; albeit, it be with the sale of the necessary things we have. The Widow of the Sons of the Prophets, at the commandment of *Elisha*, selleth the Oil that God sent her to pay her Creditor: as we see *2. King. 4.* for the Prophet said unto her; *Go and sell the Oil, and pay them that thou art in debt unto, and live thou and thy Children upon the rest.* Where we see, God would not have the Creditor defrauded, but rather then the debt should be vnpaide, the Lord himself would pay it: and the Prophet did not give her counsel to rail and rage against the Creditor; to call him a Miser and covetous Cormorant, or to live in excess and abundance, without care to satisfy that debt which might be demanded: but charged her first of all to pay the whole, and if any were left, she and her Children should feed upon the rest. But some man may say, what if we be not able? What if we have nothing wherewith to pay? What are we then to do, or what course are we to take? I answer, God accepteth of a ready and willing mind, where there is no farther strength or better ability. Offer thy labor and service; show thy repentance and remorse of conscience; testify the truth of them by thy sorrow and tears, and if ever God make thee able, thou must do it actually.

It may be further objected, though a man be able to restore, how if in doing it, he shall utterly shame himself and his profession? If this of necessity must follow, make choice of some faithful Friende that may perform this duty for thee, and conceal thy Name. Secondly, it is better to seek the praise of God, then the praise of men. Thirdly, honor, and praise, and peace, are promised to all that be truly converted: and the reward of sin not repented off, is shame, and reproach, and contempt, both Temporal & Eternal; according to the Testimony of the Apostle, *What fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death: but now being freed from sin, and made Servants unto God, ye have your fruit in holiness, and the end everlasting life.* But if it be farther asked, How if the parties be dead, or

what if I know not the special persons whose goods I possess? I answer, restore them to their Heirs; if they have none, or thou know none, yet keep them not with thee, they will kindle a fire in thy Family, that shalt wast all thy wealth and store, till nothing be left. In this case make the poor their Heirs, deal as *Zacchaeus*, *Luke 19*. *Be merciful toward them*.

Lastly, the question may be demanded, whether the Son be bound to restore the goods, which the Father hath gotten by oppression? I answer briefly, whatsoever the Son knoweth to be evilly gotten, cannot be justly kept from the lawful and just owners thereof. *Ezek. 18*, *14*, *15*. &c. *Prov. 28*, *8*. If the Son follow the abominations of his Father, and walk in them, or approve of them, he maketh himself guilty of the same offenses also.

Lastly, seeing it is our bounden duty to forbear, and sometimes to forgive such as are poor and not able to pay: we may gather from hence, for the strengthening and confirmation of our Faith, that much more will God with patience forbear, and in mercy forgive us our debts and trespasses. He teacheth us to ask forgiveness at his hands, *Being assured of it if we forgive*. He chargeth us to forgive, *Not only seven times, but seauenty times seven times*. He instructeth us, *That if our Brother sin against us seauenty times in a day, and seventy times in a day turn again to us, saying; It repenteth me, we must forgive him*. We have not one drop of that infinite mercy that is in God, whose compassion is higher then the Heavens, and greater then the love of Parents toward their Children. He that commandeth mercy to others, will not be unmerciful himself: and he that forbids cruelty to others, will remember to be merciful himself. It is the greatest dishonor done unto God that can be, to doubt of his favor, and to call his loving kindness into question. We must build upon his promises as upon a stable and steadfast foundation that shall never be removed. Heaven and earth shall pass away, *But his word shall not pass away*. We have the word and Oath of God, as two unchangeable Witnesses, so that it is impossible that he should lie, or we be deceived. We have the Sacraments of God as two Authenticke Seals, to ratify his promises, and to make them most sure unto us. We have the earnest penny as a certain pawn left unto us, *And the spirit of adoption testifying with our Spirits, that we are the Sons of God*. We have the grace of Sanctification written in our hearts, whereby we are dead to sin, and crucified unto the world.

Wherefore, seeing we have so many ways to warrant his gracious goodness unto us; why do we yet stand in doubt? and wherefore are our minds wavering in his mercies, *As a Waue of the Sea tossed by the violence of the Winds*? Let us enter into our own hearts, and consider our own dealinges toward our Brethren. If we find our selves ready to forgive, and inclined to remit the injuries done unto us, and willing to release, or at least to forbear the debts, that we may worthily challenge of many our poor and needy brethren: we may from this compassion toward them, gather an undoubted persuasion (as a necessary conclusion) to our selves, that his mercy should be extended in great measure toward us, & that he will never forget his wonderful compassion, knowing that whomsoever he loveth, undoubtedly he loveth unto the end. He is never weary of well-doing, his gifts are without repentance. He is not as man, that he should lie; nor as the Son of Man that he should change, *With whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning*. We are variable and unconstant, but he is always the same, and will make good the words that are gone out of his own mouth.

[*Let me obtain this pleasure in the Lord, &c.*]

The Apostle in these words doth testify, that these things which he requested of *Philemon* were in the Lord; that is, agreeable to the will of God. He doth not crave them to please himself, or to pleasure *Onesimus* only, but he asketh them, because he knoweth that the obtaining of the same will be acceptable to God. Here then he showeth what ought to be the end that we propound to our selves, in making suites and requests to others; we must consider, not so much what may content us, as what God commandeth and alloweth. From hence we learn, that whatsoever we do move, desire, provoke, and persuade others to do, must be in the Lord; that is, warrantable, and conscionable, standing with the will of God and a good conscience. This is it which the Apostle handleth. *Phil. 4. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are worthy love, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, or if there be any praise, think on these things.* And afterward in the same Chapter, commending them for a work of mercy; he showeth, *That it was an odour that smelleth sweet, a Sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.* Likewise *Ester 4. 14.* When *Mordecai* would persuade *Ester* to adventure her credit and life in the behalf of the Church, which was sold to the mercy of the Sword, and to the tyranny of the Enemies; he showeth the equity and lawfulness of it, though it were dangerous for her, and threatened death unto her; *Who knoweth whether thou art come to the Kingdom for such a time?* As if he should say; Thou owest this duty to God and service to his Church, being advanced to the Kingdom for this end and purpose, and therefore it is well-pleasing in his sight. Thus doth *Nehemiah* exhort the Rich and the Rulers among the peoole, to restore the Lands, the Vine-yards, the Olives, the Houses, together, with the hundred part of the Silver, and of the Corn, and of the Wine, and of the Oil that they exacted of them; showing, that in so doing, *They should walk in the fear of God, and redeem themselves from the reproach of the Heathen.* Thus the Apostle persuadeth the *Thessalonians* to sanctification, *Because it is the will and pleasure of God, who hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness.* By all these consents, as by most strong Evidences and firm Witnesses it appeareth, that we ought to have the warrant of God's word and approved will, to allow whatsoever we require or provoke others to do.

This will be made very plain and manifest by sundry reasons. First of all, true love will require only such things as are honest. Such as proceed further, and make their own will the rule and line to square out other men's actions with all, do want true love, and are not indeed true Frrendes. The Apostle describing the Fruits and effects of love, saith; *It rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.* It is a good & sound note of a right friend, to request such things only as are just and seemly. The very Heathen by the light of nature could see thus far, and teach how far we are bound to pleasure and profit our friends.

Secondly, such requests as are lawful and laudable, do give warrant in craving, boldness in asking, and comfort in obtaining. Such requests shall never make us ashamed to move them, nor cause us to take the repulse or denial when we have moved them. We see this in the example of *Mordecai*, when he craved of *Ester* to make intercession for her people, she looked more into her own danger, then into the Churches deliverance; and respected more her own

person, then their safety: notwithstanding, he knowing his request to be honest and lawful, would not give over, but continued his suit; though he were delayed, yet he was not daunted; though he were denied, yet he was not discouraged; but went forward boldlie, until he received a gracious answer. The like we see in the Woman of *Canaan*, who came to Christ for her Daughter, that *Was miserably vexed with a Devil*; albeit, she received a three-fold repulse, or a three-fold delay; yet such was her Faith, that she would take no denial, but did stride over all things that might seem to hinder her, and never would cease until she had obtained her request. Whereby we see, that her honest request was granted, and she went not away empty.

Thirdly, such motions receive a blessing from God. If we crave and desire nothing at the hands of others but that which is right, our persuasions shall be accepted of God, who hath the hearts of all men in his own power, to change and alter as it pleaseth him. When *Ester* asked of the King to have her life given her, at her petition, and her people at her request; she had it granted, and more also then she asked. On the other side, unlawful and ungodly suits, do oftentimes turn to the confusion of such as obtain them; albeit they may flourish for a time, yet in the end they are snared with the words of their own mouth. We see this in the example of *Haman*, who after he was exalted in honor next unto the King, he craved of the King very earnestly, *That all the Jews should be slain and put to death in one day*: this he obtained, and prevailed in his suit, but he never lived to put it in execution, but was hanged on the tree which he had provided and prepared for *Mordecai*. Wherefore, seeing it is a chief and principal rule in friendship, to request and require only honest things; seeing such requests (though they be great) give comfort and assurance of obtaining, and seeing they receive a blessing at the hands of God: it followeth, that whatsoever we provoke or procure men to do, must have a fair warrant, and be agreeable to the will of God.

The uses of this doctrine are not to be omitted. First, we learn from hence other truths for the strengthening of our Faith. So long as any of our Brethren ask that which is good, & crave of us to give our consent to that which is lawful, we ought to have our ears and our hearts opened to hearken unto them. No request among ten thousand is more reasonable, then when the word of exhortation is offered unto us, and we are moved to repent, and bring forth the fruits of amendment of life. So long as we follow our own lusts, and delight in the profaneness of our corrupt hearts, we walk in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and run the way that leadeth to destruction. If then any come unto us, and persuade us to turn unto God, and to forsake our former ways: who are better, or greater, or surer Friends unto us then these? For who can wish us greater good, or procure us greater benefit, then to seek to save our souls, and to make us inheritors of God's Kingdom? We ought therefore to make much of them, and not send them away from us weeping. These seek not themselves, but us; they aim not at their own profit, but ours; it is our duty one to another, to exhort one another, while it is called *To day*. Are they charged and commanded to have mouths to speak unto us, and ought not we to have ears to hear them, and hearts to obey them? On the other side, it is necessary to deny whatsoever is unjust, and dishonest, and unreasonable, whatsoever we are required, and by whomsoever we are importuned. For as it is a commendable virtue not to deny, or delay a Christian request put up unto us: so is it as

praise-worthy, to refuse to hearken and yield to any unlawful and wicked desire. What though we be dear friends, or great acquaintance, or near Brethren? What though we have a mutual communion of good things among us? Should we therefore abuse this conjunction that we have one with another? It is accounted by the Heathen Philosophers, as the first Law to be observed in friendship, that we neither request things shameful and dishonest, neither do them when we are requested. It is an absurd thing to imagine, that they which refuse to gratify us in ungodly things, and to follow our corrupt minds, and to be ready at our pleasure, to call light, darkness, and darkness, light; good evil, and evil good; should be said to part friendship, and to transgress the limits of peace and concord. For it is a base and blind excuse, and a weak pretence, not to be allowed; for a man, when he hath done evil, to confess he did it for his friends cause, or at his friends request. There is no man so closely tied unto any, that for their sakes he should submit himself to that which is evil, and so make himself partaker of their sins. There is little difference between him that committeth evil, and another that yieldeth to the committing of it. Let us therefore know, that God requireth of us this duty, to take diligent heed that we give no consent to evil, nor incline our hearts to obey those that would provoke us unto it. They are Instruments of the Devil, that would draw us to iniquity, and pull upon our own heads, the heavy wrath and displeasure of God: so that we ought as much to abhor them, and to fly from them, as if we heard the Devil himself speak unto us, and therefore to say unto them; Come behind me Satan, or avoid Satan, thou art an offense unto me.

We have a worthy example of this in *Joseph*, when his Masters Wife cast her eyes upon him and said; *Lye with me*, he hearkened not unto her, but denied her request, and refused to be in her company; *Behold* (saith he) *my Master knoweth not what he hath in the House with me, and hath committed all he hath to mine hand: there is no Man greater in this House then I: neither hath he kept anything from me, but only thee, because thou art his Wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and so sin against GOD.* A Carnal Man, that is nothing else but a Lump of Nature, and a Mass of Flesh, and an heap of corruption, would marvel much at the great simplicity of *Joseph* in this place, and think he dealt like an unwise man, who by obeying his Mistress, might have gotten great honor, purchased much favor, and rid himself from much trouble, which afterward he fell into; as well through the false accusation and information of his Mistress, as also through the rashness and hastiness of his Master. Yea, *Joseph* himself, if he had looked no farther then to the beholding of glory and prosperity, might have reasoned thus with himself; What shall I do in this case? I am in great trouble on every side. If I do not consent unto her, I shall be falsely accused, evilly entreated, hardly imprisoned, and cruelly handled; I shall live in all woe and misery all the days of my life: were I not therefore better to hearken unto her voice, and thereby avoid all these troubles that hang over mine head: whereas on the other side, I am likely by her means, to come to honor and preferment, and to be in greater credit in my Masters House? He doth not thus consent with Flesh and blood, neither consent to her filthy lust; to the dishour of God; to the injury of his Master; to the blot of his own name; and the wounding of his own conscience: but standeth at denyance and defiance with her, notwithstanding her great flattery and daily importunity. Thus ought it to be with everyone of us, though it be our Master, our Governor, our Parents, our Friends,

we must not yield to them in evil; we must not grant any wicked requests that may bring us out of favor with God, and procure his just judgments to come upon us. It were better for us to be out of favor with Men, then out of favor with God: and to fall into their hands, then to sin in the sight of the Lord. It were better to endure a little reproach for a small season for well-doing, then to undergo the wrath of God forever, for evil-doing.

The Mother of *Zebedeus* Children came with her Sons to Christ, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him; to wit, that her two Sons might sit; the one at his right hand, and the other at his left hand in his Kingdom: he denied them, and said; *Ye know not what ye ask: are ye able to drink of the Cup that I shall drink off, and be baptized with the Baptism that I shall be baptized with all?* The like we see in *Peter* and *John*, when they were commanded in no wise to speak or teach in the Name of Jesus, they answered unto them; *Whether it be right in the sight of GOD to obey you rather then God, judge you?* This is duly to be considered, and carefully to be practiced of us. Let us not be carried away with the enticements and suggestions of others, knowing that if we follow their direction and counsel in evil, we shall incur the same punishment with them.

Secondly, this serveth to reprove and condemn their folly, that in making suites and requests, never consider what they ought to ask, and what another may grant unto them; but respect their own lusts; anger, malice, revenge, honor, and advantage. What did the Wife of *Potipher* respect in her raging and burning lust? Did she respect the Covenant of GOD, or the credit of her Husband, or her own honor or honesty? No, uncleanness had possessed her heart; Lust carried her eye; Impudencie ruled her tongue; and all partes of Soul and Body were out of order. The Mother of *Solomon* requested (as she thought) a small request of him, that *Abishag* the *Shunamite*, might be given to *Adonijah* his Brother to Wife: and the King promised not to say her nay: but when he heard it, he revoked his promise, denied his Mother, and executed *Adonijah*, as one that aspired to the Kingdom. Wherefore, she was not well advised what she asked.

The like we might say of *Herodias* & her daughter. For when *Herod's* Birthday was come and kept, the dancing Minion pleased the eyes of a light & lascivious King, so that he promised with an Oath, *That he would give her whatsoever she should ask: and she being before instructed of her Mother, said; Give me here John Baptistes head in a Platter.* The mark that these lascivious Women sought after in this request, was the murdering and making away of *John*, which also followed the giving of this counsel, and the asking of this request. It is an evil thing, to make any evil motion; yea, albeit no evil follow after it, and albeit no consent be given unto it. It was evil in Satan the Tempter, to tempt our Savior in the Wildernsse; albeit he found nothing in him, and could fasten no infidelity, no presumption, no sin upon him. So is it in his Instruments, although they cannot prevail to seduce any unto sin, and draw them to offend God; yet they have wicked hearts and intents, in laying snares and baits to entrap others. We see this in *Joseph's* unchaste Mistress, albeit she could not draw away his heart from the fear of God, nor weaken the Faith he had in him, yet her sin was not the less, nor her purpose any whit the better. We see this likewise in the suit that *Haman* propounded and obtained; *If it please the King, let it be written that the Jews may be destroyed.* Now albeit the

Church was delivered, yet his malice was insatiable, and in the end turned to his own destruction. This ought to terrify all graceless Suppliants, that make no choice or conscience what they demand: for when they are not careful to desire such things as are warrantable and consonant to the will and heavenly pleasure of God, their own requests do many times in the just judgment of God, turn to their own confusion. Wherefore it standeth all men upon, to look with a single eye into the cause which they mind, before they seek it, and sue for it; that it be just, reasonable, conscionable and honest: against such, as never have in themselves such consideration, but so they may speed in their purpose, they regard not what they desire. This is a point worthy to be marked of all, especially of those that depend upon others to be advanced and preferred. It is a grievous sin to abuse the favor and authority of others, to bring their bad and lewd purposes to pass. It is the manner of many men that are in credit with great persons, to be bold to solicit any of them without difference or due regard of equity; not considering the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the thing; the making or marring of others; the doing of good unto them, or the utter undoing of them. Hence it is, that *John the Baptist* exhorteth the Soldiers that came unto him to be instructed; *Do violence to no Man, neither accuse any falselie, and be content with your wages.* We must therefore take heed what we ask, & into what inconveniences we draw and drive others into. Our requests must be seasoned with the fear of God.

Lastly, we learn, that no man hath an absolute power and authority over others, but limited and restrained within certain bounds. *Paul* had the highest office of Apostleship committed unto him, yet he could not require and command what we list, he could go no further then the will of the Lord, which is declared and doubled in this place. Albeit God have lifted up our heads above others, and made us Rulers to command, yet we cannot command what we list. The Master must remember, *That he also hath a Master in heaven.* The Father must consider that he also hath a Father which is in Heaven. Such as are inferiors, are not bound to yield an absolute obedience in all things, but they are tied to obey their Superiors, so far as they do not disobey the Superior power, which is above all power in Heaven and earth. Whatsoever they are commanded to do, can bind the conscience no farther then standeth with the pleasure of God. It is not enough for them to say; I was moved to it by others; I was commanded to do it; it lay not in my power to prevent it or resist it; I am under the jurisdiction of others, and am tied to obey. This will not go for currant payment, but beareth a counterfeit stamp; it is like the Fig-leaves of *Adam* where-with he covered himself, which served his turn well enough, until God came to examine him, and to enter into judgment with him. So these weak excuses, seem wise reasons to justify our wicked obedience, until they come to be searched and sifted by the light of God's word. For this cause the Apostle teaching subjection to Parents, saith; *Children, obey your Parents in the Lord, for this is right.* Whereby we learn, how to understand that precept which seemeth to exact a general or universal obedience, *Coloss. 3. Children, obey your Parents in all things;* namely, that it must be in good and lawful things.

In like manner, as the obedience of Inferiors is instinted and restrained, not left at random and at liberty; so the jurisdiction of such as are in Superior places, is not so great, as to tyrannize over men's consciences, to require what they please, and to command what

seemeth good in their own eyes; but it must know the bounds that God hath appointed, and not exceed the same. This made the Apostle say to the Church of the *Corinthians*, *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ*. He chargeth them to go no farther with him, then they saw him to walk with Christ; and therefore in another place he showeth, *That if any Man or any Angel from Heaven should Preach otherwise then they had received, he must be holden accursed*.

This serveth to reprove all such as bind their Inferiors to do whatsoever they command. This is to set up our selves instead of GOD. Absolute obedience in all things without restraint is due to none, but unto him that hath an absolute power and command over all Creatures. His authority is infinite, and receiveth no limitation. As for the Sons of men, how great soever their power be; yet it is finite, and it urgeth us no farther, then they have warrant to command us.

Wherefore, they are greatly deceived, and take too much upon them, that think themselves abused, their places contemned, and their authority diminished, when they are not in all things obeyed. Nay, they themselves do not sufficiently know themselves, nor their high callings, that look for more then is due unto them, and require of their Inferiors, so much as they with a good conscience cannot perform. These are they that say; Do they not owe us a duty? Are they not under us? Have not we power over them? May not we command subjection and obedience unto us? True it is, all reverence and obedience is due unto them in the Lord; but if they will have subjection against the Lord, and against his will, they forget their places, they take too much upon them, and they usurp a Dominion that was never committed and communicated unto them. Let all that are in authority, beware of this pride of heart, and advancing themselves above that which ought to be in them.

This we see to have been in *Saul*, as he persecuted *David* from place to place, so he commanded the Sergeants that stood about him, *To turn and slay the Priests of the Lord*; as if they were bound to do it at his desire. The like appeareth in *Absalom*, when he would satisfy his own malice, and revenge the dishonor done to his Sister *Tamar*, he commanded his servants, saying; *Mark now when Amnons heart is merry with Wine, and when I say unto you; Smite Amnon; kill him, fear not, for have not I commanded you? Be bold therefore, and play the Men*. He doth not go about to persuade their consciences of the lawfulness of the fact, but he is blind himself, and seeketh to blind the eyes of other; he is carried away with malice, and filleth the hands of others with blood. Thus are the wicked possessed with pride, and presume in the height of their iniquity, that all their ungodly commandments whatsoever, are to be obeyed. But as they are reprov'd that execute whatsoever they are required to do; so are they reprehended, that will require everything that they list, to glut their own anger and malice. They that do command, and such as are commanded, are both culpable of judgment. *Saul*, in commanding to slay the Priests of the Lord, was an horrible Murderer; so was also *Doeg*, the Executioner of it.

Absalom charging his Servants to kill his Brother, was a detestible Parricide; so also the Servants had their hands defiled with blood that obeyed his commandment. Let us therefore all of us remember the rule of the Apostle. 2 Cor. 13. 8. *We cannot do anything against the truth, but for the truth*: So let all Superiors say; We can command nothing against the Lord, but for

the Lord. And let all Inferiors say; we cannot obey against the Lord, but in the Lord; and whether it be better to obey God or Man, judge you. We must all consider, before we require obedience, what it is that we would have done, that we may have warrant to exact it; and others comfort to execute it.

[*Refresh my Bowels in the Lord.*]

This is another variable phrase, whereby the Apostle requireth, that *Onesimus* be received again into his Masters service. This earnestness for him argueth, both that the Man before his calling was most wicked; but now after his conversion, was turned to be most godly and religious: besides, that his Masters heart was wonderfullie estranged from him. So then, we are herein to consider two things: first, that unless he had greatly wronged his Master, and done him injury in some heinous manner, the Apostle would not have been so vehement, nor have doubled his request for him.

Secondly, unless he had been throughlie assured and persuaded of his unfeigned repentance, doubtless he would never have pleaded his cause with such effectual Reasons, earnest asseuerations, and often repetitions. Now, in these words of comforting and refreshing his Bowels, he witnesseth; that he should receive exceeding great joy, if *Philemon* would release *Onesimus*, and receive him into his love and favor again, as he desired of him.

We learn from hence, that it is a special duty required of us, to rejoyce at the good and benefit of our Brethren, both in Temporal and Eternal blessings. When we see any good befall them in matters concerning this life, or the life to come, it belongeth unto us greatly to rejoyce, and inwardlie be comforted. The practice hereof we may behold in *Jethro*, when *Moses* told him all that the Lord had done unto *Pharaoh* and to the *Egyptians* for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come unto them by the way, and how the Lord delivered them; *Jethro rejoiced at all the goodness which the Lord had shown to Israel, and because he had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians.* The like appeareth in the *Virgin Marie*, Luke 1. 39. *She arose in those days and went into the Hill Country with hast, to a City of Judah, she entered into the House of Zechariah, and saluted Elizabeth.* They had both tasted of God's great mercy, and had experience of his mighty power: *Elizabeth* conceived in her old age: *Marie* conceived being a Virgin, and *One of them rejoiced with the other*, in a mutual feeling; not only of the goodness of GOD toward themselves, but of his loving kindness toward each other. The same we see afterward, *When Elizabeth's time was fulfilled that she should be delivered, she brought forth a Son: and her Neighbors and Cozins heard tell how the Lord had shown his great mercy upon her, and they rejoiced with her.* The same affection did the Angel fore-show to *Zacharias* to be at his birth; as appeareth in the former part of the same Chapter, Luke 1. 14. *Thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoyce at his Birth.* The Apostle *John* testifieth, that *He rejoiced greatly, when he found the Children of the elect Lady walking in the truth.* So the Apostle *Paul* writing unto the *Thessalonians*, one of the most excellent Churches that ever was planted, calleth them *His Joy, his Crown, his Glory.* By all these examples we may see, that men ought greatly to rejoyce and be glad when they behold any good to befall their Brethren.

The Reasons are very plain. For first, we ought to be of like affection one toward another, as members of the same body. If we do draw nourishment from Christ our head, we must yield mutual help one to another. Thus the case standeth in the Members of our natural bodies: and this we are put in mind of, Rom. 12. 16. *Be of like affection one toward another, be not high minded, &c.* We have many members in one Body, and all Members have not one office: so we being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone, one another's Members. Seeing then, we are so neerelie coupled together, our joy ought not to be private to our own selves, but mutual.

Secondly, true love worketh hearty joy for the good of him whom we love. Where there is no true love, there can be no joy, but envy at the good estate of another. Every good and godly thing that we see upon them, will be judged to be too much; and every cross that we see upon them, will be judged to be too little. But if we do indeed love them, and have our hearts joined unto them, we will rejoyce and be glad in their good, as in our own. This is it which the Apostle *Paul* speaketh, as we have shown you before, 1. Corinth. 13. 6. *Love rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.* So then, forasmuch as we are members one of another, and that wheresoever and in whomsoever true love is to be found, there will also follow a rejoicing in the good things that befall unto him whom we love: we may well conclude, that when we see God any way good and gracious to our Brethren, whether it be in matters of this life, or in things belonging to the life to come, we ought to rejoyce and to be glad thereat.

Let us now proceed and pass to the Uses, and so apply this to our selves. First of all, seeing we are to rejoyce at the good of our Brethren, as at our own good; it is our duty to be sad and sorrowful at the hurt and loss that cometh unto them. This is that use which the Apostle deducteth from the contrary, Rom. 12. *Rejoice with them that rejoyce, and weep with them that weep.* This serveth to reprove such as are dull and senseless, that they cannot rejoyce at any grace or blessing bestowed upon their Brethren, they are not affected at it, they care not for it, they delight not in it, they are not comforted by it. This deadness of Spirit turneth us into the Nature of Beasts; nay, maketh us worse then brute Beasts, who are not wholly without natural affections. It is made a note of a ve... wicked and ungodly Man, *To be without natural affection, and to be merciless.* The Apostle chargeth us, *To be affectioned to love one another with brotherly love.* If a Man should be smitten and wounded, have Pinnes or Bodkins thrust into him, and yet never stir, or move, or wag at it, all men would conclude he were past feeling, and without life, and approaching to death. So is it with us, if we can behold the miseries of our Brethren, and never be touched at it, nor troubled with it, we are as dead men, and as rotten members. Secondly, if it make against them that are as stocks and stones, and are never a whit moved or cheered at the prosperous estate of their Christian Brethren; then they are much more to be reprehended, that rejoyce at the ruin and downfall of others, reproaching them, insulting upon them, laughing them to scorn. These men have no spark of true humanity, but are destitute of all Charity, which ought to abound in us toward those that are in misery.

These are far from being grieved at other men's troubles, that after a sort feed upon them, and make a sport at them. If we were in trouble, and any should thus deal with us, that is;

not pity us, but make a pastime of us; not comfort us, but deride us; not mourn with us, but scoff at us; we would think our selves greatly abused and injured at their hands. That which we could not have men offer unto us, that we ought not to do unto them; according to the rule of Christ our Savior, Math. 7. 12. *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do you to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.* This is the substance of the second Table: And thus far did diverse of the Heathen see. They saw this to be a very great cruelty, and a savage and brutish usage of men, to throw them down that are ready to fall, and to cast them flat on their faces that begin to stumble. If these Men did but consider that all troubles are of GOD, and that no troubles befall to others, but are incident to the Nature of Man, and may come upon our own heads, it would be an effectual means to hold us back from jesting and scorning at others, in as much as it bringeth the wrath of God upon us and our posterity.

Secondly, seeing it is our duty to be glad thereat, when any good things befall our Brethren; it standeth us upon to search and enquire in love after the condition of the Saints in particular, and of the Church in general. For how shall we rejoice and be glad at their good, if we be not careful to know in what state they are, and how they fare? This duty we may see practiced in the holy Scriptures; by *Abraham, Lot, Nehemiah, David*, and diverse others, who were both careful to succor and relieve such as were in distress, and watchful to inform themselves of the wants and necessities of their Brethren. And thus we may see how one Church provideth for another, as the Church of *Antioch, of Macedonia, and of Corinth, for the poor afflicted Members of Christ that were at Jerusalem.* This reproveth such, as albeit they see the troubles of the Church with their eyes, and hear the complaint of the poor with their ears, yet shut their eyes, and stop their ears, and pass by them, as the Priest and Levite did, when they saw him that fell upon Thieves lie wounded and half dead. These shall find as little mercy at the hands of God, as they show to their afflicted and distressed brethren. If then we would find mercy in time of need, let us show mercy and comfort in the time of calamity, when our Friends, our Neighbors, our Kindred are in trouble. And albeit we never see our Brethren lie in their affliction, nor over-whelmed with sorrow, that we should succor them, yet are we not thereby justified and discharged, unless we also have been careful to enquire of others how they do, what they want, and wherein they stand in need of our help. It is recorded of *Abraham and Lot*, that while they offered their service to entertain strangers, they received Angels into their houses at unawares. When *Nehemiah* met with some of his Brethren that came from *Jerusalem*, he tarried not until they made relation of the estate of the Church, to testify his zeal to God's worship, his love to the poor Saints, his desire of the prosperity of the faithful, but he prevented them, and asked earnestly of their welfare. Thus did *David* remember the kindness between him and *Jonathan*, and forgot not to show it to his posterity, and to the house of *Saul*: and albeit he had dealt graciously and mercifully with many, yet he called for more, and left none of them unregarded.

Let this affection rule in us, and draw out of us this testimony of a loving heart. Many there are, that will seem to be friends of the Church, and to regard the good thereof, and when help is craved of them, will not be behind hand to deal liberally toward the relieving thereof. This is a good beginning, and a commendable virtue which is to be cherrished in them, for there are hundreds and thousands that never come so far, nor proceed to this step, but

declare themselves either open enemies, or senseless *Newters*, that look only to them-selves, but have no feeling of the estate of others. Nevertheless, if God have given unto us a bountiful hand, we must not rest there, and stand at a stay, we must learn a farther lesson, and ascend up higher, and show more love to the Church, then to give to them that ask, and to succor such as we see in necessity; for we must give an account of a farther duty, even use our tongues that God hath given us to inform our selves in the knowledge of their condition that we see not, that are absent from us, that are unknown unto us. We see how desirous and greedy men are of news, and to enquire of Travelers the estate of places and persons, that they may seem to be ignorant of nothing: and in this they are very *Athenians*, who gave themselves to nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some news. But this desire of novelty, argueth the vanity of our minds, or serveth to the delight of the outward man, or at the farthest bringeth with it only a momentary pleasure, and slender profit. If we would know such news as may delight our selves and others, and bring great pleasure, and greater profit both to our selves and others, let us inquire how the poor people of God do, let us ask of their welfare, let us use all means to know their estate; this shall be well pleasing to God, comfortable to our selves, profitable to the Church, and auayleable to stir up others to follow our example.

Thirdly, if it be required of us to be touched with a feeling of the good things that come to our Brethren; then it followeth, that we ought much more to be moved to rejoice at our own good. He will never be glad at the benefit that befalleth another, that is no way affected at the good that befalleth him-self. When we have the means of instruction offered unto us, and we begin to be converted unto the faith, there is matter of exceeding great joy and gladness set before us. It hath been an old custom for men to celebtate and solemnize their birth day, the day wherein they were borne and brought forth into the world: and we have one example of it in the Gospel, of *Herod*, who *when his birth day was kept, made a Banquet to his Princes and Captains, and chief estates of Galilee*. If this were used among the Heathen, to retain in memory the remembrance of that time, wherein it was said, *A Man-child is borne into the world*, how much more ought we that are Christians, to make the day of our new birth, a day of joy and gladness, a day of mirth and delight, a day of feasting and rejoicing in the Lord, wherein we have been borne again, and made the Children of God. For the first birth is unto death; the second, is unto life. The first birth giveth us a being; the second, giveth us a good being in God; the first birth is to condemnation, the second birth is to salvation. By the first birth we are made the vessels of wrath; by the second, we are made the heirs of the heavenly kingdom. The first birth is in uncleanness; the second birth is in righteousness, and in true holiness. By the first birth, we bear the Image of the first *Adam*; by the second, we bear the Image of Christ the second *Adam*. By the first birth, we can do nothing but evil, inasmuch as the immaginations of the thoughts of our hearts, are only evil continually; by the second birth, we are enabled and strengthened by the spirit to do good, and to walk in the ways of God that are well pleasing in his sight; so that this ought to be much more esteemed of us, then the former, and to comfort us above all things and times in the world. We see this in the example of *Zacchaeus*, who at his new birth was comforted exceedingly, he received Christ Jesus joyfully, he acknowledged him as the Father that begat him willingly: he made a

great feast for gladness, and gave great gifts to the poor, with all alacrity. The like appeareth in the Jailor, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, *Who being converted, at the same time he took his two Fathers, Paul & Silas, and washed their wounds; he set meat before them, & reioysed greatly with all his household.* We ought therefore to know them that have begotten us in the Lord, and have been Instruments of our conversion.

These examples serve as a reproof against those, that never had knowledge either of the time when, or of the place where, or of the manner how, or of the person by whom they were converted and begotten again as new borne babes in Christ; that never had the feeling of this grace of regeneration. This is a wretched condition, and a fearful sign, that they savor still of the flesh, and lie in the corruptions of the old *Adam*, and know not what a second birth meaneth. Thus it was with *Nicodemus*, a man of the Pharisees, a Ruler of the Jews, and a Teacher of Israel, when Christ had taught him, *That except a Man be borne again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*, he answered, *How can a man be borne which is old? Can he enter into his Mothers womb again, and be borne?* We see in all Churches there is an order appointed (and to good purpose) that a note should be taken, and a Register kept of our birth, and the birth of our Children. If there be a good use of this, much more benefit and comfort shall we find by the recording of our second birth, of our life in God, and our dying to sin, by remembering the time, the place, the party, & other such like circumstances, to the everlasting peace of our own Consciences, by whom we have been brought to this life. And indeed it is impossible that ever we should rejoyce at the conversion of a sinner, except we have learned to conceive great joy and gladness, when our hearts are opened and softened to receive the Graces of God into them.

Lastly, seeing we are to rejoyce at the good of our brethren, we must from hence be drawn to an higher and farther duty; Namely, to give thanks to God for them, as for the blessings bestowed upon our selves. It is our duty to crave of God such things as they want, and to give him the praise for such things as he hath bestowed upon them. Our joy must not be carnal, but our rejoicing must be in the Lord. If then we order our joy and gladness aright, it will lift us up to behold and consider from whence all good things proceed. We oftentimes receive at the hands of God many good gifts, but never remember to return unto him the praise. So it falleth out, that diverse will seem joyful and glad at the prosperity and happiness of their brethren, who nevertheless are tongue-tied, & never open their mouths to give glory to the giver and granter of them. We must therefore know, that it is our duty to render thanks to God for his benefits vouchsafed to his people. And this is a notable sign and token whereby we may try and examine what our mirth and gladness is, and whether it be rightly ordered and disposed, or not. If it be Spiritual, and not Carnal; Holy, and not Profane; Heavenly, and not Worldly; it will stir us up to cast up our eyes and hearts to the Father of Lights, acknowledging all to come from the seat of his holiness. The Apostle directing the Church what their joy ought to be, saith, *Phillip. 4, 4. Rejoyce in the Lord always, again I say rejoyce.* This use which now we urge of this Doctrine, is expressly confirmed and concluded in the practice of *Jethro*, as we see, *Exod. 18, 10, 11.* before remembered unto us: so soon as he had testified his rejoicing; at all the goodness which the Lord had shown to *Israel*, immediately he said, *Blessed be the Lord, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand*

of Pharaoh: who hath also delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians: now I know, that the Lord is greater then all the God's, for as they have dealt proudly with them, so are they recompensed.

Thus Moses declareth, that the great works and wonders that God had shown to *Israel*, wrought great joy of heart in *Jethro* his Father in Law; but he rested not there, nor stayed in an outward rejoicing; his joy did end in thanksgiving, which sanctifieth all our mirth and gladness. For if our mouths be filled with laughter, and our tongue with joy, and yet God be shut out of our minds, there is nothing in us, but pride and profaneness of heart. Then is our mirth true mirth; and our joyfulness true gladness; when God is all in all, when we acknowledge him to be the author of it. This appeareth in the people, when God brought again the captivity of *Zion*, *They were like them that dream, and became very joyful: Then said they among the Heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them; the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoyce.* Where we see, that their joy of heart was accompanied with giving of thanks. The like we might say of *Melchizedek* King of *Shalem*, and Priest of the most high God, who met *Abraham* returning from the slaughter of the Kings, and blessed him, saying; *Blessed art thou Abram, of God, most high possessor of Heaven and Earth, and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand.* This reproveth those that know no joy, but that which is fleshly, like unto themselves, who as they are carnal, so they rejoyce in nothing but that which is carnal. The end of this joy is heaviness. It is the faithful only that are of God in Christ Jesus, that can truly rejoyce and be merry from the heart: as for the joy of others, it is but from the teeth and tongue outwardly, it cometh not from the inward parts. This the Prophet teacheth, *Psal. 32, 21. and 33, 1. Be glad ye righteous, and rejoyce in the Lord: and be joyful all ye that are upright in heart:* Thereby declaring, that the ungodly and profane men of the Worlde, have nothing to do with this gladness whereof we speak: their joy is not in the Lord, but in the Flesh, it is not accompanied with thankfulness, but with all looseness, excess, and riotousnesse.

Verse 21. [*Trusting in thine obedience, I have written unto thee.*]

In these words the Apostle excuseth, that he hath hitherto been so earnest with *Philemon*, declaring, that notwithstanding his exact and effectual manner of handling the matter, he doubted not of his receiving of him into his favor again. So then, his drift is to show his good opinion of him, that he would not stick to forgive him, but yield readily to every honest & reasonable request. He knew not certainly what *Philemon* would do, he knew what wrongs he had received, and what losses he had sustained at his Servants hands; yet we see how grounding himself upon the former trial of his Faith and Obedience; he hopeth the best, he doubteth nor the worst; he trusteth in his obedience, he feareth not his denial. From hence we learn, that it is our duty always to hope well, and to think the best, not to suspect the worst of our brethren. This appeareth to have been in *Jacob* towards his Children, when they had sold their Brother, and dipped his Coat in a Kids blood, and brought it to their Father. Albeit he knew they hated *Joseph* whom he loved exceedingly, yet he would not suspect them for the murthuring and making away of his Son, but said; *Gen. 37, 33. It is*

my sons Coat, a wicked Beast hath devoured him, Joseph is surely torn in pieces. The like appeareth in *Joseph*, who was betrothed to *Marie* the Mother of Christ, when he saw that she was with Child, he concluded rather, that it was by committing Fornication before the contract, then by committing adultery after her betrothing. When the matter was uncertain and unknown unto him, he judged the best. Thus dealt *Jonathan*, who was faithful toward *David*, he persuaded himself and his friend the best of his Father. For when *David* said, *What have I done? What is mine iniquity? And what sin have I committed before thy Father, that he seeketh my life?* He said unto him, *God forbid, thou shalt not die: Behold, my Father will do nothing, great nor small, but he will show it me: and why should my Father hide this thing from me? He will not do it.* There was more Charity in the son, then there was piety in the Father; for he judged better then *Saul* deserved. Likewise when the Apostle *Peter* had reproved the Jews for crucifying Christ the Lord of glory, and delivering of him into the hands of sinners, he exhorteth them to repentance, saying; *Now Brethren, I know that through ignorance ye did it, as also your Governors, amend your lives therefore and turn, that your sins may be put away, when the time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.* He hopeth the best of them, and doth not keep or hide in his heart any hard conceit against any of them. In like manner, the Apostle writing to the Hebrews, and denouncing a sharp and severe threatening against those that fall from God, deny his truth, and renounce his Religion, he addeth, *But beloved, we have persuaded our selves better things of you, and such as accompany salvation, though we thus speak.* Whereby he mittigateth and asswageth all that he had said, hoping better of them to whom he writeth. All these Testimonies, taken both out of the old & New Testament, do serve to teach us, that we are bound to judge the best, and charged not to nourish any hard conceits against our brethren.

The Reasons following will make it more plain, if anything can yet be plainer. First, it is a property of love to be charitably affected, as the Apostle testifieth in his description of it, *1 Cor. 13, 5, 7. Love thinketh not evil.* Again he saith, *It suffereth all things, it believeth all things, it hopeth all things, it endureth all things.* The Wise man also teacheth, *That love covereth a multitude of sins.* So then, where Christian Love and Brotherly kindness is, there is the best opinion and judgment one of another.

Secondly, it is a fruit of a righteous man to hope the best, and to judge charitably of his Brother. The best man doth hardly suspect others to be bad. It is said of *Joseph*, *Math. 1, 19.* that being a just and righteous man, he was not willing to make the *Virgin Mary* that was betrothed unto him a public example, but was minded to put her away secretly. Whereby we gather, that the reason why he would not pursue his right with extremity, but conceived the best according to the rule of Charity, was, because he was a just man, ready to give to every man his own. On the other side, it is a note of a wicked man, to think or imagine the worst of men. It is a common Proverb, *A man doth muse, as he doth use; as himself, useth to do, so he imagineth of another.* He that judgeth lewdly of another, by mere suspicion or supposition, is commonly lewd himself. For such as are wicked, do think others as wicked as them-selves: and such as are Hypocrites themselves, are most forward to tax others of hypocrisy. Seeing therefore, to be charitably minded, is both a property of love, and a fruit of righteousness; it followeth, that we ought to hope the best of all our brethren.

The Uses remain to be considered. First, this serveth to reprove sundry abuses that are crept in among us, and are too common in our practice, directly condemned in the ninth Commandment; which tend to the hurt of our Brothers good name, as all hard conceits and evil surmizes, all uncharitable opinions, and suspicions, against them. The good name of a man is very precious, yet it hath many enemies. If then we be charged to conceive the best in doubtful cases one of another, the capital sin of Calumniation or slander, is hereby condemned, as the chief opposite to a man's estimation and credit. This hath many branches, that are breaches of the Law: all of one kind and Kindred, and all enemies unto the good Names of our Brethren. In this number are ranged these three, as Companions one of another: the Tale-breeder, the Tale-bearer, and the Tale believer.

The first beginner of all the mischief, is the Inuenter and Deuiser of Tales, who forgeth them in the fire of hell, who hammereth them upon the A nuile of malice and envy, who venteth them abroad, and letteth them fly upon the wings of fame and report, thereby maliciously intending the disgrace and damage of his Brother. There is no sin maketh a man so resemble the Devil, as this doth; inasmuch as he hath his name from slandering and backbiting. These men the Lord doth greatly detest, and will shut them out of his kingdom.

Secondly, hereby is reprov'd the Tale-carrier; the former Merchant bringeth in the wares, this man is as a Pedler to utter the wares, and to set them to sale. And thus the Scripture it self speaketh of these broachers and bringers of them, as *Levite. 19. 16. Thou shalt not Merchandize tales, or walk about with Tales among thy people.* This sort of men is not idle, but is always stirring up and down; they sit not at home, but frequent many places; they are not strangers, and unknown abroad, but are acquainted with many persons, and will insinuate themselves into their company. It is a notable Metaphor that the spirit of God useth, to compare them to Pedlers, or petty-chapmen. We see what the Trade and fashion of Pedlers is, so soon as they have bought their wares of someone or moe Merchants, they sel the same commodities to others. Thus it is with Backbyters and Tale-bearers; when they have gathered together a fardle of tales, of rumors, and reports; as it were with a pack of Wares, they wander from one place to another, from one house to another, from one person to another, that they may set out to sale such stuff as they have heard, and utter them in the absence of their Neighbor, to his disgrace and infamy. These are they, which increase hatred among enemies, and make discord among the best Friends. Hence it is, that *Solomon* saith, *Without wood the fire is quenched, and without a Tale-bearer strife ceaseth.* Such persons are the very plagues and poison of human society, they wound a man in his good name, they rob him of his goods, they wrong him in his friends, they bereave him of his life. This we see in the example of *Doeg the Edomite*, who caused the Priests of the Lord to be slain: of *Ziba* the false and unfaithful servant of *Mephibosheth*, who by slandering his Master, obtained his goods. It is a great injury to rob a man of his goods, it is an heinous Theft in the sight of God: it is a greater injury to spoil a man of his good name, which is sweeter then Oyntments, and better then Riches; for that which is stolen may be restored, but the blot of infamy is hardly or never wiped away. There is some remedy against the biting of Serpents, mad Dogs, and venomous beasts; but against the toong of the slanderer & Sycophant, there can none be found. We see that thieves (who come to spoil and to steal) may be prevented or shunned,

but who can stand before the tongues and tales of the Tale-bearer? But it is the greatest injury to bereave a man of his life; which the slanderer doth oftentimes, by sowing discord between party and party, as we shown before in *Doeg*, of whom the Prophet *David* complaineth, *Psal. 52, 2, 4. That his Tongue did cut like a sharp Razor, and that he loved all words that may destroy.* They are pronounced happy by the mouth of Christ that are peace-makers; are not they therefore to be holden accursed, that sow hatred among friends, as it were Darnell in the fields; that are Make-bates and pick-thanks, seeking to please the fancies of others? If then, the makers of peace be the sons of God; surely Tale-bearers, that are makers of debate, are the Children of the Devil, whose Image they bear. These are the Devils Merchants, and carry about with them his wares; they are his Apprentises or Iourny-men, and serve him for wages. And albeit they set up one Trade, yet they sell not after one fashion. Some come whispering and leasting secretly to the disgrace of others; some come glozing and perverting the words that they utter, contrary to their meaning; some have no sooner sold their commodities that they carry into one place, but they store themselves by and by with new. For, as they speak to us of other men freely, and fully, and falsely; so they will speak as largely and lewdly of us, to other men.

Thirdly, here is condemned another enemy of our name and credit, to wit; he that loveth, believeth, and entertaineth lies and slanders. These are such, as deal not toward others, as they would have others deal with them. This sin is reprov'd in the Law, *Exod. 23, 1. Thou shalt not receive a false Tale, neither shalt thou put thine hand with the wicked, to be a false witness.* This the Prophet *David* teacheth. *Psal. 15, 3. He that slandereth not with his tongue, nor doth evil to his Neighbor, nor receiveth a false report against his neighbor, shall dwell in the Lord's Tabernacle, and rest in his holy hill.* But on the contrary, such as slander, and defame, and receive, and believe false tales, are delivered up to Satan, and are heirs of hell. In theft we see, that such as receive stolen goods, are accessory to the theft; so he that willingly heareth and receiveth the reports of whisperers, is guilty of the crime of back-biting. For it is a true saying; If there were no Tale-inuenter, there would be no Tale-receiver; and if there were no Tale-receiver, there would be no Tale-bearer. Against all these Maladies and Mischiefes, an approved and often tried Medicine, is true Charity; for if there be in us a Charitable Mind, a Charitable Tongue, a Charitable Eare, a Charitable Heart, we shall be safe from these euilles. Where there is a Charitable Mind, there will be no devising and inuentering of slanders. Where there is a Charitable Tongue, there will be no carting and carrying of false reports. Where there is a Charitable Eare, there will be no hearing of evil surmises one against another; And where there is a Charitable Heart, there will be no believing of them. Many attain to the first step, they have a Charitable Mind, they will invent and forge no tales; but they miss in the second, they want a Charitable tongue; for when they have heard false tales, they carry them about from one to another, and by that means the mischief spreadeth farther: But many do come to these two first steppes, and yet fail in the third; they have Charitable Minds and Tongues, they will devise nothing, they will disperse nothing, yet they want a Charitable Eare, because they take delight to hear false tales, and to have them brought unto them. It behooveth us to watch over our Ears, as well as our Tongues; and consider, that if we did not desire to hear them, others would not long take delight to report them.

Secondly, it is our duty to expound and interpret all doubtful things in the best part, before the truth do plainly and clearly appear unto us, and what we may to cover their infirmities. We must not be suspicious without great cause or good ground, but to give all uncertain and wandering reports of our brethren, the best Interpretation, according to the rule before remembered, *Love believeth all things, it hopeth all things*. True it is, we ought not to be over-credulous and light of belief, to credit all things that are brought unto us, as *David* was when he entertained & believed false *Ziba* against his faithful subject. Neither ought we to be hard of belief, to believe nothing that is told us, though never so constantly and certainly, as appeareth in *Gedaliah*, who would not believe *Iohanan* and the Captains of the host, that certified him that *Ishmael* was sent to slay him. But this his want of belief, he bought with the loss of his own life. Again, as we are to construe things in the best sense, and beware that we wrest nothing contrary to the meaning of the speaker, considering that they are heinous sinners, that take all things in the worse part: so we are also bound to show a loving heart, a tender affection, and a Charitable compassion toward our brethren, in seeking to defend and maintain his good name, when we hear him slandered, and his good name impaired. If we hear a malicious enemy broach his malice, by speaking lies, and uttering slanders against our brethren, ought not we as their friends, in love to open our mouths in the cause of the dumb, showing our dislike of their evil reports, and testifying our good affection toward their persons, and relating the truth in their defense? For we must know, that we may be slanderers as well by silence, and holding our peace, as by discrediting them by our tongues. He is a false witness, that hearing his neighbor falsely accused, doth not labor to clear him, when he is able by giving Testimony unto the truth.

When *Jonathan* by his own knowledge, perceived that the reports were false which flatterers had devised, and *Saul* had immagined against *David*, (being then misled and misinformed) he could not hold his tongue, but spake in his defense, in the cause of the innocent, saying; *Wherefore shall he die? What hath he done?* The like we see in *Nicodemus*, when he saw the malice of the Scribes and Pharisees to have been so great, that they would have condemned Christ absent and unheard, he stood up in the Counsel, & said; *Doth our Law judge a man before it hear him, and know what he hath done?* This ought to be an example unto us, how to behave our selves, when we hear good and godly men reviled and railed upon, wrongfully accused, and unjustly slandered, we should not be tongue-tied, but open our mouths in their defense. It is a firm testimony of our love both to their person & profession. Lastly, we are to show the grief & sorrow which we conceive, whensoever we hear a true report of any faults and sins committed by them that have been a blot and blemish unto him. We see this in *Nehemiah*, in *Ezra*, in *Paul*, and many others. So then, such as are ready to judge the best of their brethren, will be careful to make the best of everything, to defend their good name from slanders and reproaches, and to testify their grief for such evils as break out of them.

Thirdly, albeit we are to hope the best of others, and to judge charitably of them; yet we must know, that it is our duty to admonish one another, and seek to convert one another from going astray. Heereby we shall save a soul, clear their good name, and cover a multitude of sins. For it is most certain, we can never conceive a good Opinion of them, nor have them in any estimation, nor entertain a Charitable Judgment of their doings, unless we

show our selves forward to exhort and admonish them, when we see they walk not with a right foot, nor tread in the steppes that lead unto eternal life. When *Paul* saw *Peter* dissemble with the *Jews*, he reproveth him to his face: so did *Nathan* the Prophet *David* after he had sinned.

It is a witness infallible of our love, in that we admonish our Brethren, and suffer not sin upon them. It shall be a precious balm, that shall not break their heads. On the other side, as we are to judge the best of others; and to admonish those that fall and offend: so we ought not to think that they hate us that show us our faults, or that they are our enemies that reprove us. A sharp reproof, is more hardly digested, then a bitter pill is swallowed. We desire for the most part to be soothed and flattered in our sins, and to have soft pillows sowed unto our Elbowes, that we may sleep in sin, without controulment, and so run into destruction without trouble, and with much ease. Never were there more miserable times then these ate, in the which we live. He that reproveth, maketh himself a prey: and he that is reproveth, stormeth and rageth at the matter, as if he had received a great injury, and as if men had gone beyond the bounds of their Calling. But if there be true Wisdom in us, we must regard those that do admonish us in the Lord.

Lastly, seeing it is our duty to hope and esteem the best one of another, let this be acknowledged and confessed of us, that we must judge of no man before the time; we must take heed of rash judgment, according to the rule of Christ, *Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what Judgment ye Judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measuee you mete, it shall be measured to you again.* Likewise our Savior in the parable of the Housholder, which went out at the dawning of the day to hire Laborers into his Vineyard, signifieth, *That God calleth at all hours and times of the day; some at one time, and some at another, according to the good pleasure of his own will.* We must despair of no man's salvation, but hope the best of them, that God will give them repentance, to come out of the snares and subtleties of the Devil, whereby they are holden captives to do his will.

This offereth unto us these three Meditations. First, it is a comfort to those that at the last are brought to repentance. No man is excluded from grace in this life, and from glory in the life to come, that turneth unto God with all his heart. The Thief upon the cross was received to mercy: they that were called at the eleventh hour, and labored but one hour, had their penny. It falleth out oftentimes, *That the last are first, & the first are last.* Let none despair through the greatness, heinousness, and multitude of his sins, but rather make hast, & delay not the time, to put off from day today, considering how ready the Lord is to embrace him, to receive him, to forgive him.

Secondly, albeit the gate of mercy be set wide open for all penitent persons, yet this ought not to harden men's hearts in carelessness and security. For the ungodly that continue in their sins, have no defense for themselves and their presumption in God's Mercy, by the example of those that were called at the last hour of the day. Mark, that so soon as the thief and Laborers were called, by & by they repented: the reason why they turned from their sins no sooner, was, because grace was no sooner offered unto them: but when God spake, they heard his voice; when God called, they answered without delay: whereas these impenitent

persons have had the means oftentimes offered unto them, and yet refuse the calling of the Lord.

Thirdly, we are to hope the best of our brethren, to commend them unto God, to pray for their conversion. There cannot be a greater injury done unto them, then to pass the sentence of condemnation upon them, and as much as lieth in us, to blot them out of the book of Life. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, 1. Cor. 4. *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will lighten things that are hid in darkness, and make the counsels of the heart manifest, and then shall every man have praise of God.* The secrets of God belong unto him, we are not to search into them, but to adore them.

[*Knowing that thou wilt do even more then I say.*]

This is a confirmation of the former conclusion, drawn from a comparison of the greater to the less, in this manner: *I doubt not but thou wilt receive him, because thou art ready to perform more then I require at thy hands*, which is amplified and enlarged by an human testimony, *I know it well enough.* Here then we may see, the good opinion that *Paul* had conceived of *Philemon*, that he was willing not only to grant whatsoever he craved of him, but to yield more then he required. The Doctrine arising from hence is this, that righteous men being moved to Honest, Charitable, Just, and necessary duties, will yield more then men can well request and require them to do. The people of God have from time to time shown themselves ready, not only to do what they have been commanded, but to practice more then hath been charged upon them.

This we see in the Children of *Israel*, when they were required to bring their Offerings to the Lord with a willing heart, they brought too much & more then enough, for the use of the work and the building of the Tabernacle. They were not slack and backward in furthering the service of the Sanctuary, but zealous and forward in promoting the glory of God and the place of his worship, so that they prepared and presented more then was looked for at their hands. When *David* saw that the plague was stayed, and the hand of God removed from him and his people, he was willed to go up and rear an Altar unto the Lord in the threshing floor of *Araunah* the *Jebusite* (where the Angel stood being commanded to stay his hand) which he desired to buy with his money: but *Araunah* said unto *David*. *Let my Lord the King take and offer what seemeth him good in his eyes: Behold the Oxen for the burnt Offering, and Chariots, and the Oxen for Wood: all these things as a King, he gave unto the King.*

True it is, *David* would not accept of this kindness, nor offer a burnt offering unto the Lord his God, *of that which cost him nothing*, so that he bought the threshing floor & the Oxen of him at a price; notwithstanding, it showeth the readiness, willingness, and forwardness of this good man to do more then was required at his hands. And as we saw the free-heartednesse of the people at the building of the Tabernacle: so we may see the same in preparing for the building of the Temple, for when *David* provoked thē by word and example to offer freely, and said *Who is willing to fill his hand today unto the Lord? The Princes of the families, and the Princes of the Tribes of Israel, and the Captains of thousands, and of hundreths, with the Rulers of the Kings work, offered willingly, and they gave for the service of the house of God, five thousand Talents*

of Gold, &c. and they with whom precious stones were found, gave them to the Treasure of the house of the Lord, &c. So that among them they brought more to the helping forward of the building of the Temple, then David looked for.

The like we see in the practice of the Churches of *Macedonia*, who provided for the Saints of *Jerusalem*, not only as they were able, but beyond that which they were able: for though themselves were brought to great misery, and extreme poverty, yet they fainted not, but became so forward, that he saith of them, *I bear them record, that to their power; yea, and beyond their power, they were willing, and they prayed us with great instance, that we would receive the grace and fellowship of the Ministry which is towards the Saints.* The Apostle craveth of them a little, and they perform much: he beseecheth them to do according to their power, and they bring unto him beyond their power. By all these examples, as by a Jury of many witnesses, it appeareth, that the faithful will not hang back, but be ready to perform and practice more then is required of them; they will not do less, but more then is looked for at their hands.

Though this truth be plain in it self, yet it will be made much plainer by reasons. First of all, the obedience of the faithful, will super-abound, because they set before them the example of God, and delight to come near unto him. They have experience of his bountiful dealing toward them, he is ready to grant not only what they ask, but more then they ask. They find him not only willing to hear them when they pray, *But forward to prevent them with his blessings before they pray.* When *Solomon* desired a wise heart to go in and out before his people, he gave him Wisdom, Riches, & Honor. Seeing therefore, the godly do feel this unspeakable liberality of God toward them, that he heareth before we call, and granteth before we ask, and answereth before we request, we ought to resemble our heavenly Father, and to put on his Image, that we may show our selves like unto him in yielding more at the suite of our brethren, then can be required of us.

Secondly, the Children of God have a free and willing mind, and seek to walk before him with a perfect heart. And what will not a willing heart do? Will it not strive to attain to perfection? When *Moses* setteth down the forwardness of the people, in offering to the Lord for the work of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, he maketh this to be the cause: *They had a willing heart.* And again, *Everyone brought somewhat, whose heart encouraged him, and whose spirit made him willing: both men and women; as many as were free-hearted, came and brought Taches & Earrings, and Rings, &c.* The like is mentioned of *Araunah* the *Jebusite*, that he had in the service of God *The heart of a King.* Now where there is a free spirit, a willing mind, and a perfect heart, there is no dallying or delaying in the duties of piety and obedience, but so fervent and zealous a proceeding, that we see men voluntarily inclined to do more then we could desire of them.

Thirdly, their joyfulness in the works of righteousness and godliness do exceed the trial of necessity. Though the Lord try his people with manifold afflictions, yet they are so far from quailing and cooling their willing readiness, and ready willingness to do according to that they are required, nay above that they are required, y^t they make the same much more excellent and famous. This is the reason expressed by the Apostle, that the Churches of *Macedonia* were liberal according to their ability, & beyond their ability, *Because in great trial*

of affliction their joy abounded, and their most extreme poverty abounded unto their rich liberality. Such joy and comfort do the faithful take in doing the duties required of them, that they think they can never do too much, or proceed too far.

Fourthly, they acknowledge all things to be from God, and to be his; and therefore they will yield freely, where he requireth, and what he requireth, and as far as he enableth them to their uttermost strength. This maketh strive with themselves, even to out-go themselves. The Prophet *David* acknowledgeth this upon the practice of a good duty performed with an earnest and zealous affection, he blessed the Lord before all the Congregation, and said; *Blessed be thou, O Lord God of Israel our Father, forever & ever: Thine, O Lord, is greatness, and power, and glory, and victory, and praise: thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou excellest as head over all, &c.* The same doth the Apostle remember of them of *Macedonia*, *This they did, not as we looked for, but they gave their own selves, first to the Lord, and after unto us by the will of God.* All these Reasons being laid together, and duly considered, do persuade to our Consciences this truth, that we should show our selves ready to yield more, rather than less, touching those duties that are required of us.

The Uses remain to be handled. First, from hence we learn this point, that forwardness and zeal in good things is greatly to be commended. We cannot yield more than is looked for at our hands, unless we be earnest and fervent in the spirit, as men that are led by the spirit. True it is, there is no warrant to walk without our warrant, or to run too fast without any guide. Hence it is, that *Solomon* saith, *Eccl. 7, 18, 19. Be not thou just over-much, neither make thyself over wise, wherefore shouldst thou be desolate? Be not thou wicked over much, neither be thou foolish; wherefore shouldst thou perish, not in thy time?* Meaning thereby, that as we should not suffer sin to reign in our mortal bodies (though we cannot wholly drive it away) so we should not seek a righteousness beyond the Law. This over-much righteousness was in him, who being commanded in the name of God to smite the Prophet, & in smiting to wound him, refused to obey, because it seemed strange unto him to wound a man that was godly, and not guilty of any crime. The like is that which *Saul* did, who being expressly charged and forbidden to save alive any persons or Cattle that belonged to the *Amalekites*, preserved the chiefest of the things, and the choicest of the Oxen and Sheep to offer up in sacrifice unto the Lord. But the one of them was slain of a Lyon; the other lost his kingdom; to teach us, that to obey is better than sacrifice; & to hearken, is better than the fat of Rams. So then, we must understand, that albeit we are to be ready to yield more than well can be required of us, yet we must not think to do more than God requireth of us. If we speak of the duties that God commandeth, we come far short when we have done what we can, & we must confess we are unprofitable servants; but when we speak of good and Christian duties which our Ministers or brethren crave of us; & desire us to practice, we should willingly perform more than they ask at our hands. Let us therefore be fervent and zealous in all lawful and honest things. It is good always to be earnest in a good thing. The Lord abhorreth and detesteth the Luke-warm *Laodiceans*, that are neither hot nor cold, but will spew them out of his mouth. If any should deal in our cause for us, we would not have him deal negligently and carelessly: shall we then be remiss and careless, when we deal in matters that belong to God, and our own salvation? Shall we deal as men benumbed with cold, that seem to have no life in them,

but are frozen-hearted, and have no motion of the spirit of God in us? Let us not stand at a stay, but always proceed forward, as Travelers that hasten to the end of their journey: or as Sea-faring men, that think it long until they lie at rode in the Haven, as in a safe harbor from wind and weather. This serveth to reprove all those, that accuse and reproach others, for being too forward and zealous. If we be not zealous in Religion, we are of no religion, whatsoever we account of our selves.

Secondly, this Doctrine is a comfort to our selves, and to other the servants of God, and an occasion of great joy, when as we our selves or others are forward and cheerful beyond expectation in good things. A notable example of both, is offered to our consideration, in the provision that was made, and the furniture that was provided for the building of the Temple, 1 Chron. 29. 9. Where we see, that when *David* himself having a great zeal and delight in the house of his God, gave of his own Gold and Silver, and the people and Princes following his example, spared no cost and expenses, it is said, *The people rejoiced when they offered willingly, for they offered willingly to the Lord, with a perfect heart: and David the King also rejoiced with great joy.* Again, there is great occasion offered unto us to glorify God, & to praise his name, whensoever he worketh this willingness in the hearts of his childsen, and when we see their zeal to abound, and their readiness to go beyond any request that we can make unto them. It is a property of the good and diligent servant, who being bidden to go, will run about his business; or being required to do little, will gird up his loins and do more: as, on the other side, the Wiseman teacheth, *Prov. 10, 26. that as Vinegar is to the Teeth, and smoke to the eyes, so is the slothful to them that send him.* When we behold such an increase in godliness, and a running in the race of Christian duties, let us be mindful to give God the glory and the praise, who hath touched their hearts to bring forth so great fruits. Contrarywise, it is the cause of much grief and sorrow, when men deceive the hope and expectation that is conceived of them in the best things, when we look for a plentiful Harvest, and find only a few blasted ears; when we expect an increase, and see nothing but a fearful fainting and languishing in honest and holy duties. This is it which the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews reproveth in them, *When, as concerning the time, ye ought to be Teachers, yet have ye need again that we teach you, what are the first principles of the word of GOD: and are become such as have need of Milk, and not of strong Meat.*

The like reproof is cast upon the Galatians, Chap. 3, 1. *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth to whom Jesus Christ was before described in your sight, and among you crucified?* Oh! see, see, the misery of our days, all come short of the duties that are required of them, be they never so just, honest, necessary, so greatly to God's glory, and the advancement of true Religion. If men would come thus far, to yield half so much as is requested of them; or as far as they should, we should judge it much, and it would appear greater then it is. Behold, the barrenness and backwardness of our days, that yield no better fruit. If a man would take a Light, and search up and down from house to house, where shall he find a true-hearted *Philemon*, of whom we may boldly say, as *Paul* doth in this place; *I know that thou wilt do even more then I say?* I would we were come thus far, to say of our professors, *I know thou wilt do as much as I say.* We have not learned to perform so much; we have started back from our former zeal; we are fallen from much, to little; and from little, to nothing at

all; and from nothing, to less then nothing; that is, from no good, to much evil. For, how many might a man single out by name, and point out with the finger, who notwithstanding their happy beginnings, & raising a wonderful expectation of a glorious end, are now become dry and withered; of whom we may say, I know thou wilt do nothing, I know there is nothing in them, I know they have embraced this present World. These are like those Streames or Channelles, which immediately after a shower of Rain run swiftly, and promise to the poor Traveler, that wandereth in the Wilderness, a most comfortable refreshing, but in time of need deceive him: So is it with such as have embraced the Faith, and seem to have received into their dry hearts the sweet Dewes, and pleasant showers of the Word, who appear zealous for a time and afterward fall away, they deceive the hope that hath been conconceiued of them, and the end with them is worse then the beginning.

The Doctrine, that hath dropped upon them as the rain upon the herbs, and the great rain upon the grass, is quite dried up, and no remnants thereof are to be discerned; according to the saying of Christ, *Unto every man that hath, it shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away.* This is notably expressed in the parable of the Man that going into a strange Country, called his servants, delivered and divided to them his goods, and when one of them went his way and hid his Talent in the earth, it was taken from him that had been slothful, and given to him that had gained five Talents. Again, if the time would serve, it were easy to show, how sumptuous, costely, and full of expenses men are, to maintain their vanities, pleasures, and delights, above that we can desire or imagine: but in other things most nigh and niggardly and hand-fasted. We see how wasting and prodigal they are in the pursuit of their carnal lusts, they think no cost to be too much, no charges too great.

Lastly, it is the duty of every man to labor to be answerable at the least to the expectation that the Church hath had of him, and to endeavor to be as good as he hath made show off, performing therein the practice of his profession, not deceiving any of the Servants of God therein. This requireth of us a careful observation and marking of the manners of men, both of their beginnings, and proceedings, and not to stand (as idle behoulders) gazing in the air; that we may understand the time, the means, the forwardness, the knowledge, the show that hath been in many; all which have promised much, and caused us to expect good things at their hands, and yet oftentimes in vain. This appeareth in the song of the Prophet *Isaiah*, Chap. 5. Wherein he setteth before the people's eyes their great unthankfulness, that albeit the Lord had done for his Vineyard what he could, yet it brought forth wild Grapes instead of good Fruit: and therefore he threateneth that the Thorns shall ouergrow it, the Beasts should spoil it, the Rain shall not nourish it. Thus also the Apostle speaketh to the Hebrews, who as he exhorteth them, that leaving the Doctrine of the beginning of Christ they should be led forward unto perfection, so he threateneth such as turn backward with an horrible judgment that shall come upon them, a fearful curse that shall overtake them, *For the earth (saith he) that drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth Hearbes meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing of God: but that which beareth Thorns and Briars, is reprovved, and is near unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.* Whereby we see that an heavy curse belongeth unto all such as answer not the hope that is conceived of them: they deceive men

much, they deceive as far (as lieth in them) God himself, but especially they deceive their own souls. We pity those greatly, whom we have seen fresh and lusty, strong and sturdy of body, when they grow weak, faint, sickly, and decaying in age and strength: but much more ought we to lament to see those that have been forward and gone before many others, to have need to be taught again the first principles of Religion, and to feed on Milk as they that are inexpert in the word of Righteousness. It is a sign of health, when men grow in strength and stature: and it is a token of the true Child of God, when men grow in grace. This is it which the Apostle speaketh to the Corinthyans, *As ye abound in everything, in faith, and word, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love toward us, even so see that ye abound in this grace also.* And afterward he saith, *Shew toward them and before the Churches, the proof of your love, and of the rejoicing that we have of you.* Likewise, Timothy had great praise in the Church, who, according to the propheties that went before of him, did answer the expectation of the faithful, approving himself in the sight of God and men. Heerevnto cometh the counsel and commandment of the Apostle; *These things exercise, and give thy seife unto them, that it may be seen how thou profitest in all things.* It is a great comfort and encouragement to the people of God, to see any the members of Christ to prosper and profit in good things: On the other side, it ministereth occasion of much grief and heaviness of heart, to behold the zeal of the Spirit quenched, and the light of the Gospel that hath shined in their minds, eclipsed. If a man should look upon the members of his own body, and see any one of them shriveled and withered; as Arm, or hand, or Leg, not prospering, not growing, not moving, not receiving life from the head: it would work sorrow in us, and we would pity others, in whomsoever we should see such infirmities. In like manner, we must be well assured, it cannot but greatly grieve the Church of God, to behold the parts thereof to begin to faint and wax feeble, to grow groveling downward, when they should cast up their eyes to Heaven, and live as Cittizens of that Kingdom.

22Moreover also prepare me lodging: for I hope through your Prayers I shall be freely given unto you.

The chief matter of this Epistle concerning *Onesimus*, hath hitherto been handled, and is now finished; wherein we have heard diverse and sundry reasons drawn; partly from the person of *Paul*; and partly from the person of *Onesimus*. Now followeth the remainder, intended chiefly by the Apostle, concerning himself. For we have already shown, that the principal scope of this Epistle is double: one touching *Onesimus*, which hath thus far been expounded; the other, touching *Paul* himself, which now cometh to be considered. This point is knit unto the former, and hath an evident dependence upon it, and is amplified by a transition in the first words [*Moreover also.*] Heereby he doth effectually move *Philemon*, and seeketh to obtain his former purpose. For when he heareth that he shall shortly entertain the Apostle himself in his house, it must needs kindle a greater forwardness and willingness in him to grant his request, least he make him heavy, and deceive his expectation. Whereas therefore, *Philemon* might have thought with himself, and thus reasoned touching *Paul's* suit; It skilleth not whether I grant it or not, he hath been a most lewd Servant unto me, and *Paul* liveth far off from me, he is held in Prison at *Rome*: either he will not hear what becometh of *Onesimus*, or if he do hear, peradventure he shall never be delivered out of prison, but remain a Prisoner

all the days of his life; and therefore I will deal with *Onesimus* as seemeth good to myself. These and such like imaginations, the Apostle putteth out of his head, and telleth him he should shortly look for his coming unto him, whereby he should know what account he made of his words, and what obedience he would yield to his request.

Hence it is, that for this cause *Paul* craveth to have lodging prepared for him, rather by *Philemon*, then any other Citizen at *Colossae*: not that he required much provision and preparation to be made for his entertainment, *Who had taught others, and learned himself to be content with a little*, but because by this commandment, as by a sharp Sword, he would pierce the Bowels of *Philemon*, and as by a strong Engine, batter the Fort and Bulwark of his heart, and thoroughly persuade him, and prevail with him, to receive *Onesimus*, both into his house, and into his favor. In this verse, we have to consider two pointes: first, a Commaundment; secondly, a reason whereby the commandment is strengthened. The commandment is, to prepare him hostage and lodging: wherein he answereth a double doubt and question that might arise in him, and trouble the motion and matter that *Paul* intended. For first he might have said; I may use *Onesimus* as I list, *Paul* is far enough from hearing of it. Again, he might have thought, It is well he had such a cause to plead, and such a request to make, otherwise I should never have heard from him. These suspicions the Apostle remooueth, when he saith in this place; I have not written for his cause alone, but for myself, that thou make account to be mine Host, and to receive me into thine House. The reason is drawn from the working cause, I hope to be given unto you through your Prayers, and may be thus frame;

- *If I hope to be given unto you by your Prayers, then prepare me Hostage,*
- *But I hope to be given unto you by your Prayers:*
- *Therefore prepare me Hostage.*

Or rather, the latter part of this Verse is the the taking away of an Objection which *Philemon* might have made, upon the hearing of the charge given unto him of preparing him lodging, which may be thus supplied. Shall we look for thy coming? Why, Thou art a Prisoner? Thou art safe enough from coming to us, and lodging at mine house: thou must be content with a cold lodging in another place; thou mayest well tell us of thy forth coming, but I doubt thou wilt not yet be coming forth. To this the Apostle answereth; *I hope in short time to be delivered*: whereunto he annexeth two causes of his hope, that he might know it was, not built in the Air without foundation, but grounded and established sufficiently, relying upon the prayers of the faithful, and upon the grace and mercy of God.

This is the order of the words: Now let us consider the Interpretation of them as they lie. When he saith [*Prepare me lodging*] he meaneth the entertainment of Hospitality, whereof lodging is but a part. The word signifieth all things requisite for the well using of a Stranger; as receiving to House, food, lodging, and all other necessaries belonging thereunto, whereof many parts are expressed by the Apostle, in the description of the Widdowes that were to be taken to serve the Church, in attending unto the sick. In the next place when he saith, [*I hope through your Prayers, &c.*] it argueth, that the Churches of the Gentiles did pray incessantly

unto God, for the deliverance of *Paul* out of Prison; as we see in the Acts of the Apostles, when *Herod* had killed *James*, and put *Peter* in Prison, earnest Prayer was made of the Church to God for him. So that we see he had the Prayers of the faithful, and that he did acknowledge the benefit & necessity of them, that they should prevail with God.

Lastly, when he addeth [*I shall be given unto you.*] We must understand, that the word which the Holy Ghost useth in this place, signifieth to be freely and frankly given: noting thereby, that when he should be delivered, and find the effect of their Prayers, it should be through the free grace and mercy of God, and not merited by the Saints. So then, according to this order of the words, and interpretation of the Text, the reading of this Verse is to this effect. Having now ended my suit moved unto thee touching *Onesimus*, I am in the next place to solicit thee for myself; namely, that as thou art inclined in love to all the Saints of God, so that thou prepare thyself to entertain me at thy house, with all the fruits of hospitality. For although I be in bonds, and kept fast in hold, yet my hope is; that by reason of the continual and effectual Prayers of the Saints, I shall ere long, through the free mercies of God be given unto you, and to the other Churches, for their further edification in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Thus much touching the meaning. Now follow certain general observations, which I will only point out, and not stand upon at large. First of all, observe the different manner of the Apostles dealing here, and in the former words. When he entreateth for another, he is large and earnest, but when he commendeth to him his own cause and private business, he dealeth in a word; he dispatcheth it briefly; he toucheth it by the way; as if it were a thing impertinent, or from the matter. This showeth, that he had more respect, and a greater regard to obtain his suit for *Onesimus*, and to further his salvation, then to speed in his own suit, which pertained to the supporting and supplying the necessities of this present life. This teacheth us to be more earnest in another man's cause then in our own, but especially all Pastors, that have the charge of Souls committed unto them, to be more earnest for the saving of Souls, then to procure their own ease; and that they seek the benefit of others, rather then the profit of themselves; according to the rule of the Apostle. 1. *Pet.* 2. *Feede the Flock of God that dependeth upon you, caring for it; not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.* This affection if it be found in us, shall minister exceeding comfort to our hearts, when we remember that we have employed our gifts and labors to gain a people to God, and have not sought theirs, but them. On the other side, woe unto idle Shepherds, that feed not the Flock, but feed themselves. Such as are to work in the Lord's Vineyard must be Laborers, not Loyerers; they must be able to feed, not to fleese; they must blow the Trumpet, and not hold their peace.

Secondly, the Apostle doth not assure himself or the Churches of God that he shall be delivered, but [*he hopeth*] to be set free, as if he should say; I have conceived an hope not vain and foolish, without ground of reason, but I trust in God's mercy to be set in safety, that I may serve the Church, and profit you in the Gospel a long time. Now, whether the Apostle being delivered out of Prison, ever came among the *Colossians*, and took up his lodging in the House of *Philemon*, it is uncertain, and not to be found in the holy Scriptures. The like hope he conceiveth in other places of his Epistles, as when he writeth to the *Phillippians*, Chapt. 1.

To abide in the flesh is more needful for you, and this am I sure off, that I shall abide, and with you all continue, for your furtherance and joy of your Faith. And in the Chapter following, *I hope to send Timothy as soon as I know how it will go with me: and I trust in the Lord, that I also myself shall come shortly.* The like we see in the Epistle to the Hebrews (if that were Paul's) Chapt. 13. *Know that our Brother Timothy is delivered, with whom (if he come shortly) I will see you.* Observe in this place, that his hope is not absolute, but condicionall; not simply purposed, but limited; *I hope in the Lord.* This is expressed by him in the first Chapter of the Epistle to the Romaines, *I make mention of you always in my Prayers, beseeching that by some means, one time or other, I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God, to come unto you.* We must therefore know, that all our steppes are directed of God, they are not in our own power to be ordered at our own pleasure. We must also beware of all vain confidence and presumption in our selves, and in under-taking our business and affairs of this life, seeing the success is unknown, and our life is uncertain. Whatsoever we take in hand, we must depend upon the providence of God, and rely upon his will.

Hence it is, that the Apostle James reproveth them that say, *Go to now ye that say, today or tomorrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: (and yet ye cannot tell what shall be tomorrow.) For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth but a little time, and afterward vanisheth away: For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, both we shall live, and we shall do this and that.* God is the chief Ruler and Moderatour of all persons and actions, nothing is guided and governed by Fortune, nor falleth out by Chance: he sitteth as it were at the Sterne, and ordereth all things to his own glory, and the good of his Church.

Thirdly, he putteth them in hope and comfort, that he should be delivered and come unto them, as a matter that would be welcome and profitable unto them. Which teacheth, that the company, fellowship, and presence of the faithful Servants of God, is much to be desired and looked after, and much to be rejoiced in. Thereby they receive mutual comfort one in another, and bestow mutual graces one upon another, and likewise by having the fellowship one of another, they whet and sharpen one another. We are ready to grow dull, as an edge-tool that is quickly blunted and turned. Now the communion and communication which we have together among our selves, will quicken our Faith, and kindle our zeal, that it will break out into a great flame. Hence it followeth, that they are happy that delight to frequent the company of the godly, and of such as may profit us in the best things. He that walketh with the wise, shall be the wiser; but he that is a companion of Fools, shall learn foolishness. Wherefore, they are hereby reproveth, that never think themselves better at ease, then when they are farthest from them that delight in the Lord, and take pleasure in lewd and riotous company, by whom they are misled and carried out of the right way.

Lastly, we see that the Apostle always ascribeth much to to the Prayers of the Saints. We know, that Paul was one of the chief of the Apostles, whose gifts were great; whose labors were painful; whose visions and revelations were wonderful; yet he rejecteth not the prayers of the Church; as appeareth in this place, and Phil. 1, 19. *I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and by the help of the spirit of Jesus Christ.* So then, the excellency of any member and worthiness of the chiefest in the Church, doth not exempt him from

standing in need of the Prayers of the poorest Christian and lowest part of the Church. Nay, the greater and higher, and more eminent any man is, the more he hath need to be prayed for, and commended to the grace of God; inasmuch as he is set in a more slippery place, he lieth open to greater danger, and is exposed to stronger temptations and assaults of Satan, then those that are in a lower place, and a meaner condition. Such then as excel others in gifts or calling, ought to desire the prayers of the faithful (which avail much if they be fervent) no less, if not more then others. Note also the great necessity and force of prayer, that all persons, as well high as low, stand in need of it.

Lastly, let everyone labor to have a feeling of his own want of the supplication of others; yea, the higher we are set, the greater will be our fall, if we be not strongly assisted by all such means as God hath left, to further our salvation and deliverance out of troubles that hem us in on every side. Hitherto of the observations: Now let us come to particular doctrines.

[Moreover also, prepare me lodging.]

He requireth in these words, of *Philemon*, an entertaining of such as are destitute, and driven out of house and home for the Gospels sake; as if he should say, when any of the poor Saints are banished, persecuted, and put to great extremitities, as the World doth always carry an hard and unmerciful hand toward them, be careful to receive them cheerfully, and to minister all comfort ye can unto them willingly. The word therefore used in this place, hath a general signification, and containeth all duties belonging to the entertainment of Strangers. And by Strangers we mean, not such as ordinarily come to visit us, nor such astrauaile about the business of this life, and take up their lodgings in Inns or Taverns: but such as fly from place to place, and are compelled against their wills, to leave Country, or Kindred, or House, for the Gospels sake. The word used in this place, is not to be restrained to giving of them lodging, as if they had discharged so much as could be required of them, but under that, all duties of the same kind and nature are comprehended; as Meat, Drink, Apparrell, and all other things necessary for them. These the Apostle knew would be joyfully yielded by *Philemon* to him, and all other the faithful, especially such as labor in the word and Doctrine. Hereby we learn for our instruction, that Hospitality; that is, the courteous and joyful entertainment of distressed Strangers, is to be used and practiced diligently by all the Children of God. The succouring of Straungers that are destitute, especially the poor Ministers that are employed, or would be employed in the affairs of the Church, is required of us.

This we see in the examples of sundry of the faithful, one very famous among the rest, is the *Shunamites Wife*, Who called the Prophet of God to her house to eat Bread; and she said to her Husband; *Behold, I know now, that this is an holy Man of God that passeth by us continually, let us make him a little Chamber with Walls, and let us set him there a Bed, and a Table, and a Stoole, and a Candlestick, that he may turn in thither when he cometh to us.* This is it which the Prophet *Isaiah* commendeth, Chapt. 58. 7. *Is not this the fasting that I have chosen, to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that wander unto thine house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, & hide not thyself from thine own Flesh?* This is noted as a part of the innocence and integrity of *Job*, Chapt. 31. *The stranger did not lodge in the street, but I opened my doors unto him*

that went by the way. The like we might say of of the Woman of *Sarepta*, that entertained *Elijah* in the time of famine: of *Lazarus* and his Sisters, that received Christ into their house: of *Zacchaeus*, who lodged him joyfully: of *Lydia*, who entreated *Paul* and his Compaons, to come into her house, and to abide with her: of *Onesiphorus*, who sought out the Apostle diligently, refreshed him oftentimes, and was not ashamed of his Chaines. All these examples, Registered and recorded in the Olde and New Testament, teach us, that God requireth it as a special duty at our hands; to entertain, lodge, and refresh such poor Straungers as are constrained to wander up and down, either for preaching or professing of the Gospel.

This duty is urged upon us by diverse reasons in the holy Scriptures. First, it is to be practiced of us, because it is the commandment of God, that we should love and lodge strangers, and show all pity and compassion toward them, to succor them in their necessity. This is it which *Moses* saith, Deut. 10. *Love ye the Stranger, for ye were Strangers in the Land of Egypt.* Herevnto cometh the rule of the Apostle, Rom. 12. *Distribute to the necessities of the Saints, give yourselves to Hospitality.* This is the precept of the Apostle *Peter*, Chapt. 4. *Be ye harborous one to another, without gruding.* Seeing therefore God commandeth, it is our part to obey, and submit our selves to his will and pleasure.

Secondly, as God requireth this duty of us, so we have his own example to teach it unto us. It is a property of God to love Strangers, and therefore to be imitated and followed of all that belong unto him. This reason is expressed in the Book of *Deuteronomy*, Chapt, 10, 18. *The Lord our God, is God of God's, and Lord of Lord's, a great God, mighty and terrible, who dothright unto the Fatherless and Widow, and loveth the Stranger, giving him food and raiment, love ye therefore the Stranger.* Where we see, he urgeth this duty to love the stranger, moved by the example of God himself, who is always ready to help him, and to defend him: so that it ought to be our desire and delight to study to be like unto our heavenly Father.

Thirdly, God doth greatly honor such as honor Strangers: they have been so far honored by God, as that Angels have entered into their houses, been entertained by them, and have blessed them. This the Apostle teacheth, *Heb. 13. Be not forgetful to entertain Strangers: for thereby some have received Angels into their Houses unawares:* Declaring hereby, that they which in the simplicity of their hearts serve God, and comfort his Saints in the duties of Hospitalitie, and other fruits of love, shall obtain great honor, and many blessings from GOD, even more then ever they thought of, or could expect at his hands; as we see in *Abraham* and *Lot*, who became the Hosts of his special Servants, most dear unto him, even the most glorious Angels, nay of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was among them. Thus doth the Lord honor them that honor him. Seeing therefore God commandeth this duty in his word, approveth of it by his example, and honoreth the performance of it in his Servants, it teacheth, that the kind entertainment of such as are desolate and destitute Strangers, poor Widows, or fatherless, friendless, and comfortless Orphans, is an acceptable service approved in the eyes of God.

The doctrine being thus cleared, the Uses remain to be shown. First, this declareth, that Hospitality is a commendable virtue, and a worthy fruit of love; yea, an excellent ornament in the Children of God, whereby they receive good report of the Church. We see this in

Rahab, Who by Faith received the Spies peaceably, and sent them out another way. We see this in the old Man of Mount Ephraim▪ that dwelt in Gibeah, who wished peace unto the Levite and his wife, and brought him into his house, and gave Fodder unto the Asses; there they washed their feet; there they did eat and drink; and there their hearts were merry. So the Apostle Rom. 16. commendeth *Phebe*, a dear Sister to the Romans, *That they receive her in the Lord as it becometh Saints, and that they assist her in whatsoever business she needeth of their aid: for she hath given Hospitalitie unto many, and unto himself also.* Likewise *Gaius* is commended to the Host of *Paul*, and of the whole Church: yea, to be faithful to all the Brethren, and to Straungers, which did bear witness of his love. The Church was then in persecution; the people of God were often driven into banishment. There were in those days no Inns to receive Straungers, and to entertain Trauailers, as there were afterward, and now are in all places. Every godly man's house ought to be their Inn to receive them. We love the truth, as we love the entertainment of those that profess it, and suffer for it. Especially it is required of us, to make much of the true Ministers of Christ Jesus, when we see them made as Straungers, to want house, living, maintenance. Seeing therefore many troubles were raised through the tyranny of the Enemies against the Saints; so that they were constrained to forsake their Country and Kindred, to enjoy the profession of the Faith, and the peace of a good conscience: the Apostles of Christ do oftentimes beat upon this point, and require this duty, to receive such to our houses as the World rejected, and accounted unworthy of the company of men. If we do good to these poor members of Christ, that *are glad to wander up and down in sheep's skins, and in Goats skins, being destitute, afflicted, and tormented;* who, to save their lives from the rage of the oppressor, and the sword of the persecutor, were driven to hide their heads in Wildernesses, and Mountains, and Dennes, and Caues of the Earth; we testify our unfeigned love to the truth, and to the Brethren; nay, to Christ Jesus himself, as we shall see and show afterward. But if we do good to such as are able to requite it, and to such as are linked unto us by Kindred, or any other band, it is no true trial, no due proof, no perfect testimony of our charity.

True it is, kindness and humanity are good, if they be ordered aright, and ruled according to piety and godliness: but when they extend farther, even to such as are not able to recompense it, and to such as are unknown unto us, therein we make demonstration, that we serve God in sincerity, and hold fast the right rule of Charity. Such as are at home in their own Country, shall find relief enough, they shall have Kinsfolke to minister help and succor unto them, according to the saying of the *Shunamite*, when the Prophet said unto her; *Behold thou hast had all this great care for us, what shall we do for thee? Is there anything to be spoken for thee to the King, or to the Captain of the Host:* she answered; *I dwell among mine own people.* But such as are poor godly strangers are destitute of help; they have neither Friends nor Kinsfolkes; they have neither aide nor favor shown unto them; they lie open to all injuries and indignities. The poor Children of God are often exiled and banished from their houses, and are as silly Birds whose nests are taken, so that they know not whether to go, or what to do, or whom to fly unto, or under whose roof to shroude themselves, from the storm and tempest that hath overtaken them. Now the greater their misery is the more accepted is our charity: and the more heavy their persecution is, the better accounted is our compassion,

which shall never be forgotten, but receive a reward. This is that promise which Christ our Savior maketh; *Whosoever shall give unto one of these little ones, to drink, a Cup of cold Water only, in the name of a Disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.* Let us therefore delight in showing the works of mercy, that GOD may delight in us: and succor the poor Saints that are distressed, that we also our selves may find help in time of need.

Secondly, this Doctrine serveth for reproof. First of all, of such as think that Hospitality consisteth in feasting and keeping great cheer, and bidding the Rich to their Tables: whereas the Scripture understandeth by it, a courteous entertainment of such poor Christians as are bannished out of their Countries. They therefore are much deceived, that commend those to be the only House-keepers that feed men of all sorts, without difference and discretion, and relieve idle persons that flock unto their Gates, and gather together such as are sturdy and vagrant to receive their Alms, contrary to the rules of the word, and the Statutes of well-governed Common-Wealths. These may be said rather to keep great houses, then good houses; and to be great House-keepers, rather then good House-keepers. It were more charity to punish, then to relieve such unruly persons, as will submit themselves to no Laws, nor live in any Family or society, to the ende there may be sufficient for them that are Strangers indeed. And such as wander up and down, and are incorrigible, are no better then Thieves, in as much as they live by the sweat of other men's labors, and as idle Drones suck away the Honey from the Bees, and devour that which should maintain the faithful of the Land, and such as labor the thing that is good. Let such therefore, as have their affections ready to receive others into their houses, and to make them partakers of the blessings that God hath bestowed upon them, use it most commonly toward the poor Saints, and destitute members of Christ; according to the precept of our Savior. Luke 14. *When thou makest a Dinner, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, nor thy Kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a Feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the Blind, and thou shalt be blessed, because they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.* True it is, our Kinsmen, our Friends, and rich Neighbors, may be invited and bidden, but not they only, as the custom is of our days; we entertain such, as may entertain us again.

Secondly, this meeteth with the corruption of our times, we cannot abide those that are Strangers, but are enemies to the very name when we hear it. But all neglect of them, and injurious dealing toward them is a great sin, and such as are haters of Strangers, are grievous Sinners. Such were the *Sodomites*, such were the men of *Gibeah*, that offered all violence they could, to the Strangers that came to lodge among them; it was an evident sign of horrible impiety and iniquity that reigned among them. They that cry out so much against Strangers, and use it as a word of reproach, do show plainly that they do not deserve to be numbered among the Children of God, nor to be accounted as members of Christ, anymore then Dogs and Swine, inasmuch as out of their own mouths they shall be judged. It is a shameful barbarousness for men to have pity and compassion on them that are helpless. Among the Heathen and Infidels they were evil thought of, that had not this reason and understanding to receive them gently and peaceably that were cast out of their houses and dwellings: how much more is it requisite for us, when we see the Church of GOD tossed and

tumbled, and tormented by Tyrants and enemies of the truth, to give courteous entertainment to the poor Christians which are banished out of their Countries, bereaved of their friends, and separated from their Kinsfolkes, of whom they might be succoured? If we do not these things, it is an evident token, that we renounce God, and have no spark of true piety in us. For the Lord doth more rigorously condemn the outrages and wrongs that are done to strangers, then those that are done to a man's own Neighbors. The Heathen shame us; nay, shall rise up in judgment to condemn us in this behalf: for when they intended to show that some man was of a wicked and slavish Nature, they were wont to say; *Get thee hence, thou art an Enemy toward Strangers*: and this check and taunt was more with them, then if they had branded a man with the Name of an Whore-master, a Drunkard, a perjured person, a Murderer, or if they had said; *Thou art worse then a brute Beast*. They accounted the poor man and the stranger to be both sent unto us of God, and therefore ought not to be despised. They called them to lodge and sojourne with them, and acknowledge that there ought to be a compassion of the miseries one of another. They shown not a niggardly mind, but a cheerful look, and a friendly countenance toward such as they had received to their house.

The *Painims* have spoken and practiced after this manner: what shall then become of us that profess our selves to be God's Children, when we fight so directly against the order of nature? For God hath set one common and general band among all mankind, and it is required of us, to extend our charity toward all such as resemble us, and carry the Image of God upon them: but especially it behooveth us to respect such as are more nearly knit unto us by the band of Faith, and therefore ought to be more dear unto us, then all others. True it is, all Strangers are to be warned and admonished for their part, that they abuse not that name and privilege. If a man have a privilege and protection from a Prince, and then abuse both himself and it, so that under the color of that benefit and honor done unto him, he commit some outrage and wicked Act, shall he not be worthy of double punishment? It falleth out sometimes, that a great number will say, they are driven out of their Country for their conscience, yet they show a corrupt conscience, defile the Church with their dissolute life, & give occasion to unbelievers, to blaspheme the purity of doctrine, and to have their mouths wide open against the professors of it. Notwithstanding, we must take heed, that for the offense of some, we do not reject those that are God's strangers, that we do not leave them helpless, but succor them as God hath enabled us. They are among us, to try our benevolence and charity. If we show mercy to them, though they be not able to requite it, yet God is both able and willing to recompense our works of mercy.

Thirdly, it is our duty to take the opportunity offered unto us of God; nay, it is required of us to seek the opportunity to express our obedience to God, and our love to his people, in doing all good to such as stand in need. The practice hereof we see in *Abraham*, who sate at his Tent door, to invite such as he saw passing by, and had need of the fruits of mercy to be shown unto them. So *Lot* his Nephew, who had been brought up in his house, and had learned of him to express the duties of Charity; sate at the Gate of *Sodom* (into the which strangers did enter) to call them to his House, to refresh them with meat, and to defend them from injuries, to which otherwise they lay open above all other. This reproveth those that grudge

and are grieved when any occasion falleth out, that they are tried what affection and compassion they bear unto them. We see this eidentlie in *Nabal*, toward *David* and his men: for when he was entreated by the Messengers that were sent unto him, to give whatsoever came to his hand; he railed at them, and sent them away empty; he was lavish of his tongue, but sparing of his pursse; they had words, but they had nothing but words. It was otherwise with *Abraham*: when he saw men come toward him, he ran to meet them, he bowed himself unto them, he entreated them to receive the means of refreshing themselves at his hands, he pressed upon them very earnestly, that they should not deny him. To this purpose we heard out of the Apostle *Peter*, *That we should be harborous without grudging*. We must therefore, not only do good to Strangers, but do good cheerfully, and with a ready mind, without murmuring and repining at the occasion offered unto us. We now dwell in our own Country, and among our Kindred; we rest quietly in our Houses, and in our Beds; we live in peace and quietness; but we know not what days may shine upon us, and what times may come over our heads. We that now hate and abhor strangers in our own Land, it may happen, that our selves may be Strangers in a Land that is not our own. *Moses*, exhorting the people of Israel to be merciful toward such, as above all others stand in need of mercy; to wit, Strangers, Widdowes, and fatherlosse Children; maketh this as a reason unto them; *Love the Stranger, for ye were Strangers in the Land of Egypt*. And albeit this reason do not hold in many of us, neither can be persuaded to deal kindly with Strangers, because we have been already Strangers: yet this Argument may be alleged unto us, to be careful to love Strangers, because we our selves may be strangers in another Land. For we know not where we shall end our days, or in what manner, anymore then when we shall die, which all of us know to be uncertain. If then we be hard-hearted unto others, we must not look to find others pitiful to our selves. It is God's will, that we should be Strangers in this World; as appeareth by the example and confession of the faithful. Heb. 11. 9. 10, 13. *By Faith Abraham abode in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Country, as one that dwelt in Tents with Isaac and Jacob, Heirs with him of the same Promise: for he looked for a City having a Foundation, whose bulder and maker is GOD*. Thus did all the godly cast up their accounts, and confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth; yea, we are his Children upon other condition. The Lord is in Heaven, and we live upon the earth, yet he cometh down unto us, and governeth us; he showeth that he hath not forgotten us, but giveth us an example what pity we ought to have of them that fly unto us, as poor sheep that are scattered by ravenous Wolves; we should deal with them, as we would have the Lord deal with us, and show that mercy that we expect of him.

True it is, the Apostle noteth it among the properties required of the Pastor and Minister, *That he should be given to Hospitality*: but he meant it also in general, to all the faithful; howbeit the Ministers must show them the way, and hold out the Candle to give them light. For his purpose is not to bind the Ministers only to beware of intemperancy, to fly Covetousness, to avoid Pride: and on the other side, to move them only to be just, sober, courteous, chaste, and harborous; in the mean season, leaving all others to do what they would, and live as they list. But the Apostle singleth them out by themselves, and chargeth these duties upon them: first, because the word of God should not be evil spoken off by the enemies, beholding such scandals and faults to be in them. Secondly, to the end they should

approve their Doctrine by their good life, and ratify it to the consciences of all that hear it, and so make it better welcome to them, and them more willing to embrace it. Thirdly, that the people should follow them, and frame their lives according to those virtues and graces which they see in their Shepherds. And by the way let us note, that if chiefly among others, the Minister must be harbourous, and it be a virtue that commendeth him to the Church to be given to Hospitality, then the means should be cheerfully and plentifully afforded unto him, that he may be fitted and enabled to perform it. This duty indeed is looked for from him, and he lieth open to obloquy and reproach when he doth not discharge it; and yet in the mean season, his present ability, or rather disability and insufficiency, is not considered; yea, the means either are denied unto him, or with great grudging & much lessening, yielded unto him, contrary to the precept of the Apostle; *Let him that is taught in the word, make him that hath taught him partaker of all his goods.* To conclude this point, let us learn to rejoice when we can do good to the distressed Saints, that offer themselves as objects of our compassion; and be glad that God hath enabled us to help them; *Remembering, that it is a more blessed thing to give, then to receive.* We saw before how God plagued the Sodomites and the men of Gibeah, for their sauagenesse and cruelty toward the strangers that came to lodge among them. God oftentimes blesseth those places and persons, where, and by whom they are entertained: as on the other side, many judgments and punishments fall from Heaven upon their heads, that are currish and unkind unto them.

Lastly, it is a great comfort and peace to a man's conscience, that God will in his Son Christ regard him▪ when with a single heart he hath been careful to testify his love toward distressed Strangers for the truths sake. Let us rejoice in this consolation, that we shall be assured that God will pity us, when we have thus pitied others. This persuasion we see in *Nehemiah*, who resteth himself upon it, and raiseth comfort of obtaining from it, *Nehe. 5. 19. Remember me, ô Lord, in goodness, according to all that I have done for this people.* The like appeareth in *Obadiah*, *1. King. 18. 13.* who being in distress and fear of his life, said to *Elijah*, *Was it not told my Lord what I did, when Jezebel slew the Prophets of the Lord? how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's Prophets, by fifties in a Cave, and fed them with Bread and Water?* These men we see, found great comfort to their own Souls in the practice of this duty. If the same fruit of Faith, and testimony of love be found in us, we shall not be left comfortless, when we desire comfort of God. Nay, if this entertainment of the Saints, whom the profession of the faith in time of trouble, hath made Strangers, be among us, and do abound, it will make us that we shall be neither idle, nor unfruitful, in the acknowledging of our Lord Jesus Christ. And that we may yet have farther comfort and encouragement herein, we must understand, that whatsoever comfort and compassion we show to the Servants of God, that are harbourlesse and succorless, the Lord Jesus doth account it as done unto himself. For Christ is oftentimes left without help and harbor in his poor members: and in them he wandreth up and down from place to place, to seek relief.

Thus he shall say in the end of the World; *I was a Stranger, and ye took me in unto you: I was naked, and ye clothed me: I was in Prison, and ye came unto me: for verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it to me.* Let this comfort and refresh us; let this encourage us to love Strangers, and to perform all duties of love

toward them, considering that Christ Jesus will abundantly reward our well-doing, and accept it far above the worthiness of the work, albeit it be shown to the poorest and simplest soul that belongs to his Body. On the other side, this serveth as a great terror to those that are without natural affection, and spiritual compassion, to consider wisely of the poor Strangers, to whom Christ shall say; *I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in unto you; sick and in Prison, and ye visited me not; for verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.* This serveth to increase their sin, and to make the judgments of God to enter into their bones, considering that they have not to do only with men, but with Christ: and the contempt is offered not only to a base stranger, but to our blessed Savior.

He that striketh and woundeth the hand, or the foot, maketh pain and grief to arise in the head; inasmuch as one part is touched with a sympathy of the others misery. The faithful are all the members of Christ's body, whereof he is the head: if then any of them be afflicted, he suffereth with them; he is grieved for them; he is hurt through them. Let all the enemies of the godly therefore take heed unto themselves, lest they kick against the truth of God, and hurt the least of the professors thereof, considering that he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye; yea, toucheth and pierceth Christ himself, of whom we may truly say; *Whosoever shall fall on this stone, he shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will crush him in pieces.* Who is it that dareth break out into this blasphemy, to profess that he wisheth to wound Christ, to reproach him, to defy him, to turn him out of doors, to suffer him to perish, and to shut up their compassion frō him? But whiles we are ashamed of our poor Brethren, we are ashamed of Christ; whiles we deny to stretch forth our hands to help them, we pass by Christ, and look awry or a squint upon him. Would we have the Lord of life and glory deal with us, as we deal with them, and behave our selves toward them? We live, if not in the persecution, yet in the necessity of the Church and Children of God: we cannot but see many want. If the enemies of the Gospel hate them for the truths sake, shall not we love them for the truths sake? If we desire to find comfort in the great day of the Lord, let us now show comfort as God hath blessed and enabled us, according to our ability. He will never be wanting to them, that consider wiselie of the wants of them that fear him. If we do not deny our comfort to them, he will never deny to minister comfort to us in time of need. But if our harts be hardened, and our hands full of cruelty, we deceive our selves if we look for any comfort at the hands of God. The Rich man and Miser, that had *Lazarus* at his Gates. Clad himself in Purple, and fared deliciously every day, yet shutting his eyes from beholding the misery, and stopping his ears from hearing the cry of the poor; himself was cast into torments, and cried with a great cry and a bitter, and was not heard nor regarded. Then his sumptuous fare could not refresh him; then his gorgeous apparrall could not comfort him; then his resort and retinue could not revive him, but he continued in endless, and remidelesse tortures and torments. If we follow his example, let us fear his ende; and if we practice his sin, we must look to feel his punishment. If we behold the troubles of the Ministers and Professors of the Gospel, driven out of house and home, and cast out of Land and Living, and we cannot afford them a good word, nor give them anything to supply their wants when God hath given unto us this worlds good, we our selves shall cry and not be heard. We shall all stand in need of the mercy of God. If we were rich & noble, if were Kings

and Princes, if we have had thousands that have required and received mercy from us, yet a time shall come, when we shall stand at the Judgment seat of the Almighty, and call for mercy at his hands. The Lord in that day shall recompense us according to our works. Have we delighted in the deeds of mercy, and shown pity to the poor wandering Saints? Let us be of good comfort, we shall not find God a severe Judge, but a merciful Father and Savior unto us; we shall receive the fruit of our Labors in due time, gather as we have scattered, and reap as we have sowed. On the other side, have we seen the Saints of God sick, and not visited them? Strangers, and not harboured them? Hungry, and not fed them? We shall hang down our heads in that day, when we would give all the world for one drop or dram of mercy to come near us, *For there shall be condemnation merciless to him that showeth not Mercy, and Mercy reioyseth against Judgment.*

Let us consider these things whiles we have time. It was too late for the Rich man, when once he was in Hell, to cry unto *Abraham* to have mercy on him, and to *Send Lazarus, that he might dip the tip of his Finger in Water, and cool his Tongue tormented in that flame:* but in his life time, he had shown no mercy, he had denied the Crummies that fell from his Table; and therefore now no mercy is shown to him, all comfort is denied unto him. Thus shall it be with all that are enemies to the distressed Saints, that are constrained to wander without any certain dwelling, as poor strangers, from place to place to save their lives, with loss of their Liivings: God shall measure out to them, as they have measured to others, then shall they condemn their folly that is past, and repent of their Crueltie, when it is too late.

[*For I hope through your Prayers, I shall be bestowed upon you.*]

Here the Reason is rendered, wherefore the Apostle requireth *Philemon* to prepare to entertain him coming as a Stranger unto him; because he was in hope that their prayers should prevail with God for his deliverance out of prison. It was the duty of the Church, to make prayer and supplication to God incessantly for him, to see if he would be entreated to release him out of prison, and to deliver him from the mouth of the Lyon. Touching the effect of them, the Apostle declareth that they were not poured out in vain, but it should undoubtedly come to pass, that God being stirred up by the prayers and desires of the faithful, would graciously hear them, & speedily procure his safety and freedom. From hence we learn, that the prayers of the faithful made to God, are very auayleable and effectual. The supplications of the Godly, that come from a faithful heart, and proceed from lips unfeigned, are not idle and unfruitful, but of great power and force with God, as well to obtain the blessings which they want, as to remove such plagues and judgments as are heavy upon them.

The Testimonies that might be brought to prove this point, are infinite. The prayers of *Abraham* prevailed to heal *Abimelech* and his servants. The prayers of *Abraham* should have prevailed, if ten righteous persons had been found in *Sodom*. The course of the Sun and Moon were stayed by the prayer of *Joshua*, till he was revenged of his enemies. *Isaac* prayed for his wife, because she was barren, unto the Lord, and the Lord was entreated of him, and *Rebekah* his wife conceived: so that she became fruitful▪ and had two sons given unto her, of whom came two Nations. *Elijah* by prayer obtained Rain, which had been withheld from the earth three years, and six

months. So did *Hezekiah* the continuance of his life for fifteen years. The Church by prayer obtained the deliverance of *Peter* out of prison, when as he should have been brought forth to the place of execution, and slain as *James* was. This is that which the Apostle *John* setteth down, *John* 5, 14, 15. *This is that assurance that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have desired of him.* These consents of holy Scripture teach us, that the prayers of the faithful are the means and Instruments appointed of God to obtain his blessings for us, and to remove his judgments far from us and others.

And as the examples are many that might be alleged, so the reasons are many that might be produced to settle this truth in our hearts. First of all, our Prayers do delight the Lord exceedingly, he loveth to hear our voice, as the Father doth to hear his Child. True it is, the grace of Prayer is his own gift; yet he smelleth the savor of it as sweet Incense, he heareth the Harmony of it as pleasant Music, he accepteth the odour of it, as a burnt Offering. Hereunto cometh the commendation that Christ giveth to the Church, *Cant.* 2, 14. *Shew me thy sight, let me hear thy voice: for thy voice is sweet, and thy sight is comely.* To this purpose the Prophet saith, *Ps.* 141, 2. *Let my Prayer be directed in thy sight as Incense, and the lifting up of mine hands as the evening Sacrifice.* All the faithful are to him as the sweet singers of *Israel*, he taketh pleasure to hear them, as we do to hear the best Consort that is among men.

Secondly, true Prayers are of such strength, that they do after a sort force the Lord, and constrain him to yield himself as overcome and vanquished, inasmuch as it pleaseth him by this means to be conquered. They are as mighty weapons, whereby all Christians show themselves valiant Champions, not only to defeat their enemies, but to prevail with God. It is noted, that *Jacob* wrestled with God in the form of man, and he could not prevail against *Jacob*: for as God assailed and assaulted him with the one hand, so he upheld and strengthened him with the other. He had power with God, as it were to overcome and to carry away the praise of the victory. Thus shall it be with all the godly (who are true *Israelites*) that are fervent in faithful prayer, none shall be able to stand against them, God will yield himself unto them, as it is said, he could not prevail against *Jacob*. The like we see in *Moses*, *Exod.* 32, 9, 10. to whom the Lord said, *I have seen this people, it is a stiff-necked people: Now therefore, let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, for I will consume them, but I will make of thee a mighty people.* As if he should have said, thy prayers bind me hand and foot, and after a sort take me prisoner, so that I am not at mine own liberty: thou over-rulest me, and overmaimest me by thy prayers. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith, *He minded to destroy them, had not Moses his servant stood in the breach before him, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.* And the Apostle rehearsing the Christian man's armor of proof, & weapons of defense, nameth the Prayers and supplications of the Saints, which are not the least part of that Harness.

Thirdly, his promise goeth with our prayers, he cannot deny the words of his own mouth, nor frustrate that which once he hath spoken. It is that which the Prophet mentioneth, *Psal.* 50, 15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble, so will I deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* Here we have a Commandment to call on God; we have a promise & assurance to be heard: we must

perform the condition, to glorify him that hath heard us. To disobey the Commandment, is horrible Rebellion; to distrust the promise, is monstrous Infidelity; to refuse the condition, is vile ingratitude and unthankfulness. This promise is also laid before us by Christ himself. *Math. 7, 7, 8. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for whosoever asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; & to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.* This promise of God is the shield of the faithful, it giveth them comfort and boldness in asking, and confidence and assurance in obtaining. If we had no promise, there could arise in our hearts nothing but fearing and doubting; nothing but terror and discouragement. So then, whether we consider, that the prayers of the people of God are as pleasant Music to delight him, or as a strong weapon to enforce him, or as a sure building settled upon the Rock of his promise, we may safely conclude, that they are very available to help us and others, when as they proceed from an humble and faithful heart, which giveth life and quickening unto them.

Let us see the Uses that naturally arise from hence. First, it teacheth us, that if prayer be so available, we ought to learn what prayer is. Manie there are, that know the Commandment of God, that he requireth this duty at their hands; they see what they should do, who yet are altogether ignorant in the right manner of the doing of it. They come to this work as to an ordinary matter, they perform it of custom, they make it a Lippe-labor, they come without feeling of the Majesty of God, or their own wants. We must therefore understand, that to pray, is to put up our requests to God, according to his will, from a contrite heart in the name of Christ Jesus, with assurance to be heard.

In which description of Prayer, there is offered to our considerations, these five things: First, that it is a putting up, and pouring out of our requests to God: *For how shall we call upon him in whom we do not believe?* And as he only is to be believed in, so he only knoweth our conditions, & heareth our cries, and seeth our necessities. It is therefore our duty to seek unto him in our misery, and to make him a Tower of refuge to resort unto. This the Prophet *Isaiah* teacheth, Chap. 17, 7. *At that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall look to the holy one of Israel.* We must acknowledge, that it is not left in our own choice to pray, or not to pray; we have an express Commandment, *After this manner pray ye.* And again, *Pray continually.* Let them therefore be ashamed, that make no care or Conscience to pray, and such as cannot pray at all. These two may well be joined together, and are brethren in evil, and Companions in wickedness. For Prayer is a gift bestowed upon all the faithful, in some measure. Some have this blessed grace in a greater degree, and some in a less; but all are endued with it in some sort, none do wholly want it, that want not the spirit. Hence it is, that we read of the Spirit of supplications. *David* and *Daniel* were often in the practice of this duty, and failed not three times a day to humble themselves in the presence of God. There is no man so simple and sottish, but knoweth how to ask a benefit when he wanteth it: he can ask for bread, when he lacketh it: he can crave drink, when he is thirsty: he can crave apparel when we would be clothed. We see the practice of this in little Children, they are quickly brought to do this: and yet I fear me, the greatest part of men, neither desire, nor know how to desire anything at the hands of God, who is a liberal rewarder of all that come unto him,

and call upon him. They can beg of men, but they have no knowledge to put up any supplication to God.

If a Prince should set out an Edict, and make a Proclamation, that whosoever would come and make humble suit unto him, should have such a fair Lordship or rich Manour, there are few that would miss it for want of asking: no man would want words, all men would be eloquent enough, there would be suters and suppliants great store, that would make their tongues serve them ripely and readily for such a purpose. Thus it is between God & us, he hath published, that *Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved*: Let us not now be wanting to our selves, nor lose a kingdom for want of asking. If we ask for grace and glory, we shall obtain. That which we would do for a temporal possession, let us not leave undone to obtain an heavenly inheritance; and if we would go unto men, let us not neglect or omit to pray unto God.

The second thing to be observed in the right invocation of the name of God, is that it must be offered up according to his word and will. We are not left at our own liberty, and our voluntary choice how we will pray, the manner prescribed, allowed, and accepted of God, is when it is done according to his own will. He will be worshipped according to his own appointment, and not as we please. This was taught us before, out of the Apostle *John*, Chap. 5, 14. *This is the assurance that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us*. He doth not promise, that whatsoever we crave, we shall receive; and whatsoever we ask, we shall obtain; but he restraineth the promise, *Whatsoever we shall ask according to his will*.

This therefore, is the right manner of praying, to pray according to his will, that commandeth this duty of us. We must crave of him such things as he alloweth, and not lust after the things that he hateth and forbiddeth. This being the rule of Prayer (that is shortly set down) doth direct us in all our supplications to seek to know his will, & then to submit our selves unto it, if we would pray with fruit and profit. We see among men this order observed, that such as desire to obtain the favor and help of other, do frame themselves wholly unto their will. So ought it to be with us, if we would have God to respect us, and hear us, we must fashion our selves according to his pleasure, otherwise we deceive our selves, if we hope for any blessing at his hands. Now the will of God directing our prayers, consisteth in three things. First, that our bodies and souls be no otherwise settled, then becometh those that are to enter talk and communication with God. This the faithful declared, by lifting up their hands, by casting up the eyes, by bowing down the knees, and such other gestures, as testified the sequestering of all their thoughts from the earth and earthly cogitations, and the bringing of all their mind to the meditation of heaven and heavenly things. Secondly, we have need in prayer, of perseverance & continuance. We must not give over, and wax weary. It pleaseth the Lord oftentimes to defer to hear & to help us, not that he neglecteth us, or forgetteth us, or wisheth our hurt, but to exercise our Faith by delaying. Wherefore all rash presumption ought to be far from us, which dareth to prescribe unto God, either the time, or the manner of our deliverance, and of granting our requests. It is our duty to wait patiently upon the Lord, and to refer unto him the means and manner of helping of us. The woman of

Canaan is a notable example to teach us to continue in prayer, even then when we seem to have the repulse and denial. The Widow in the Gospel is a worthy president to this purpose, to move us to this perseverance, and not to give over. Lastly, we must beware, that we ask no more then God giveth us leave to ask in his word. We must require those things that are fitting us to crave, and beseeming God to grant. Many men never consider these things, but are rash and heady in their petitions, regarding neither what he in goodness and Justice can give, neither what is profitable for themselves to receive. Some crave riches to spend in lust and riot: other wish for strength to be revenged of their enemies, whom they ought to receive with goodness. Others are not ashamed to ask foul and filthy things, which one would blush to ask of a mortal man, which the Heathen themselves have condemned. These are the causes why our prayers are not heard, because we ask amiss, and do not submit our willes to his will. Our wills are carnal and corrupt: his will is pure and holy, and the rule of all righteousness.

The third point to be observed in prayer, is, that it proceed from an humble and contrite heart. If pride do compass us as a Chain, and an high conceit of our selves possess us, we are deceived if we suppose to obtain anything at the hands of God. A proud Begger is hated of God, and scorned of men. There can nothing be seen more deformed and despised, then a poor man that is proud. There is nothing can worse sort together, then a proud heart, and a beggars purse. God ever-more resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble and lowly. The Prophet *David* declareth this *Psal. 51, 16, 17. Thou desirest no Sacrifice, though I would give it: thou delightest not in Burnt Offerings. The Sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit, a contrite and a broken heart, O Lord, thou wilt not despise.* We must learn therefore truly to feel our own poverty and misery: let us consider that we need all things that we ask, and so join an earnest and fervent affection and desire of obtaining. Indeed, we cannot always have a like feeling, but we must always strive against deadness of heart, and dullness of spirit▪ Let us shake off all vain-glory and pride, and give all the glory to God, as the poor Publican did in the Gospel. Thus have the faithful done, as appeareth in *David, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah.* We must not be like the proud Pharisee, that stood upon his own righteousness, and condemned other of wickedness and profaneness. Let us also come with Repentaunce, not only craving pardon for sins past, and making an humble Confession of faults present, but desiring grace to be strengthened in time to come.

Lastly, let not our prayer be a lip-labor for form and fashion sake, but earnest and fervent. When *Saneherib* invaded *Judah*, and besieged the strong Cities, and thought to win them for him-self, *Hezekiah* and the Prophet *Isaiah* with him cried to heaven. Thus doth the Prophet *Jeremiah* speak, *Arise, cry in the night; in the beginning of the Watches, pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord lift up thine hands toward him, &c.* Heerunto accordeth the Apostle, *Rom. 8, 26, 27. The spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not how to pray as we ought: but the spirit it self maketh request for us with sighs, which cannot be expressed: but he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the meaning of the spirit; for he maketh request for the Saints according to the will of God.* Thus it appeareth out of the practice of the Prophets & Apostles, what kind of prayers God accepteth. True it is, they avail much, howbeit they must be fervent. Cold prayers turn into sin, and never bring with them any blessing. We will seem to

draw near to God, and to honor him, howbeit it is only with our mouths and lips, which is a vain worshipping of him. We will needs call upon his name, but our prayers freeze between our teeth, and are uttered without zeal. These are they that pray, but it is in such sort, as if they never meant to speed. If a Child should crave anything of his parents in that manner, they would take them-selves to be abused.

The 4. thing expressed in the former description of prayer, is, that it must be put up in the name of Christ Jesus. He is the Mediator of the New Testament, he standeth between the wrath of his Father & us; he maketh continual intercession for us. If then, we would have our prayers accepted, we must come in his name, he is the High-priest of our profession, he offereth them up unto his Father, who accepteth them not for their woorthinesse, but for his worthiness; not for their merits, but for his merits; as we shall show farther in the Doctrine following. In his Name, did the Fathers come to the Throne of Grace, and presented their prayers before God, assuring themselves to be heard for his sake. This is manifest in the prayer that *Daniel* maketh, Chap. 9. 17. *Now therefore (O our God) hear the Prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy Sanctuary that lieth wast, for the Lord's sake.* He acknowledgeth Christ Jesus to be the heir and Lord of all things, in whom, and through whom God would accept his prayers. This we might farther show by other examples; yea, it is taught us by the mouth of Christ himself, *Verily, verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* As no man can come to the Father, but by him, so no man can obtain anything but by him. We cannot ask in our own name, that is; for our own merits anything; we ask and obtain in the name of Christ. By his name we must understand his incarnation, his passion, his death, his deserts, his intercession. For, as he that hath Christ, hath eternal life, because *Christ is the way, the truth, and the life;* so he that hath Christ, obtaineth all things, because he it is alone in whom the Father is well pleased. It is therefore a lawful and laudable custom of the true Church, to conclude and shut up their prayers in the name of Christ, declaring thereby, that their trust and confidence to be heard, standeth not in themselves, nor in any other then the Mediator between God and them. True it is, the Church of Rome useth this form, and endeth in his name, but this is no better then a mere mocking of Christ. For, albeit they add in the closing up of their prayers, *Through our Lord Jesus Christ;* yet the substance of them is full of Idolatry, and the Saints are made Idols, and Christ a Mediator to bring us to them, which is as foul a dishonor, as if the eldest son, who is heir of all, should be used and employed to bring us into the favor of the servant of the house. So then, we must hold it as a principle of our Faith to direct us in our prayers, that they be not made in the name of any creature, but in the name and mediation of Christ alone. And hereby is discovered a manifest fault and palpable error of ignorant people. They pour out many Prayers, and cry out oftentimes, *Lord help me, Lord have mercy upon me,* Thus do these poor and simple blind souls, rush upon the Lord, as it were into the Chamber of presence, without a guide: they know not the nature of God, that he is as well a most fearful judge, as a most merciful father: and they are ignorant of the Office of the Mediator, in whose name they should present their prayers to him. He that cometh in his own name, cometh in a wrong name; and he that cometh without Christ, departeth

without fruit. He sprinkleth our prayers with the sweet Odours of his merits and mediation, without which, our prayers and our persons are abominable.

The fifth and last thing required in Prayer is, that it must be made with assurance to be heard. Prayer is to be made in faith, whereby a man must have confidence that he shall obtain that which he hath asked. This affiance being wanting, maketh Prayer to be no prayer. Whosoever doubteth whether God will grant his requests or not, can never pray for anything earnestly and effectually. This our Savior teacheth, *Mark 11, 24. Whatsoever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye shall have it, and it shall be done unto you.* None can have this persuasion to be heard, none can have this affiance, that God is both willing and able to help them, but the faithful, who have assurance that their sins are pardoned, and their persons reconciled unto God in Christ. Such as stand in doubt of this, can never believe any other promises revealed in the word, nor be sure that any of his prayers shall be heard. If any come and make any suite or supplication unto us, whom we know to doubt of our good will and meaning toward us, can we regard them, or accept of them? So they can by no means please God, that while they are praying, doubt of his good meaning, or Almighty power, and know not how he is affected and disposed toward them. For this cause the Apostle *James* directing us in the right course of prayer, commandeth that it be made in faith without doubting, *James 1, 6, 7. Let him ask in Faith, and waver not: for he that wavereth, is like a wave of the Sea tossed of the wind, and carried away: neither let that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.* It is a great corruption of the flesh, and such as springeth from the bitter root of Infidelity, to imagine that God doeth not, or will not regard our prayers, according to that saying of the Prophet, *Psal. 10, 13. Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? He saith in his heart, Thou wilt not regard.* But here some may Object & say; How can we have this assurance, seeing many pray, and yet receive not; they ask, and obtain not. The Prophet *David* complaineth, *O my God, I cry by day, but thou hearest not; and by night, but have no audience.* And in another place, *He prayed for the life of his child with great earnestness of spirit, with great humbleness of mind, with great anguish of heart,* and yet he obtained not the life of his son that he desired, *for the Child died.* I answer to this many ways. First, God doth sometimes defer to answer his servants, to make them cry more earnestly. We are made of a dull Mettall, we quickly wax weary in prayer; we must have some means to kindle our zeal. Now, it is a great error in the faithful, to think that GOD deceyueth us, because he delayeth us; it is the purpose of God to try us for the exercise of our faith, and the increase of our zeal.

Secondly, men do sometimes pray that are profane, and lie in some grievous sin, that is unrepented of, which is as a thick cloud standing between the Lord and us, and as it were stopping his ears, that he cannot hear us: or as a bar that lieth in our way, that we cannot possibly come into the presence of God. True Repentance will scatter the Cloud, and remove the bar that is before us; but till sin be forsaken, our Prayers cannot be granted. Many complain that they are not heard, and murmur that they spend their words as in the Wind; but they never consider what the cause is, and where the fault lieth, and how it is to be reformed.

Thirdly, they pray to satisfy their lusts, and do not ask such things as they ought to desire, according as the Apostle *James* upbraideth the Jews to whom he wrote, *Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye might lay the same out on your pleasures*. It is not enough to crave good things, but we must ask them to a good end. If our purpose be evil, our Prayers cannot be good, our requests cannot be granted.

Fourthly, we must pray for earthly things, with condition, so far as they may serve to the glory of God, and our own good: and therefore, we must refer our selves wholly to his will and pleasure, as we are taught in the Lord's Prayer to say; *Thy will be done*. Spiritual Graces we may ask without exception, but earthly benefits with limitation.

Lastly, God heareth our prayers two ways. First, when he granteth that thing which we ask. Thus he heard *Isaac, Moses, Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, & others*. Secondly, albeit God do not bestow upon us always those lawful things which we desire and demand, yet he heareth our prayers, and answereth our cries, when he giveth something proportionable to that we ask: As if we crave earthly blessings, he giveth us heavenly; and if we crave temporal things, he yieldeth eternal life; and if, instead of deliverance of us out of trouble, he giveth us strength and ability to bear trouble, and patience to endure under the cross without murmuring. Thus is Christ said to be heard in that which he feared, albeit he suffered death. He prayed that the *Cup might pass from him*, yet he was to drink of it; his Father had decreed it, he had undertaken it, and we were to be redeemed by it. Notwithstanding, he was heard when God gave him strength to bear it, and sent an Angel to comfort him in his Agony, according to that he speaketh, *John 11, 41, 42. Father I thank thee, because thou hast heard me, I know that thou hearest me always*.

So when *Paul* felt a prick in the Flesh, the Messenger of Satan to buffet him; for this thing he besought the Lord thrice, that it might *Depart from him*, and he said unto him, *My Grace is sufficient for thee, for my power is made perfect through weakness*. God did not hear him, and yet he did hear him. He requesteth one thing, and God granteth him another. He craveth freedom from temptation, but he is promised a supply of grace to be made able to overcome temptations. Thus it fareth with everyone of us; we must consider what we ask, and how God heareth us. We must not think he forgetteth us, when he doth not feed our fancies, and answer our expectations: he knoweth what is best for us, and he will give us that which he seeth to be best for us.

Secondly, as this Doctrine sendeth us to school to learn what true prayer is, so it serveth to reprove three sorts of men. First, such as are grown to this height of profaneness, that they think it to be in vain to pray unto God. The faithful find by a blessed experience of God's favor, that nothing is more profitable unto them. They would rather leave any earthly Commodity, and loose their lives, then cease to call upon the Name of God. We see this in the example of *Daniel*, Chapter 6. 7, 8. when a Decree was confirmed, sealed, and published, according to the Law of the *Medes and Persians*, which altereth not, *That whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or Man for thirty days, save of the King, he should be cast into the Den of Lions*. It might seem no great matter to forbear and abstain from prayer for so short a time, yet when *Daniel* understood, that the writing was passed and published, he went into his house, and

his window being open in his Chamber toward *Jerusalem*, he kneeled upon his Knees three times in a day, and prayed and praised his God, as he did afore-time.

It is therefore a Testimony of a very profane and proud heart, not only not to pray, but to contemn and abhor it as an unclean thing, or as a superfluous and needless thing. Thus doeth *Job* bring in the ungodly speaking, who differ but one step from Atheists, the dearest and best beloved sons of the Devil, Chapt. 21. *They say also unto GOD; Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit should we have, if we should pray unto him? Ah, vile Wretches, whether will your blasphemous mouths reach? Will you thus be at defiance with the most high and Omnipotent GOD, and set yourselves against Heaven? Whereas we are so oftentimes allured and provoked to prayer, and have most gracious and precious promises added, that God will hear us? Shall we bid him battle (as if we were stronger then he) and say; If we cry unto him Day and Night, what do we gain, or what advantage shall grow unto us? Do not they prosper alike, that never have God in their minds, and they that frequent diligently and daily the house of Prayer? Who are more subject to troubles, then such as trouble themselves with the word of God, and study to keep his commandments? Wherefore, whether we pray, or not pray, all is one, all is alike, there is no difference, we loose our labor, we receive no profit. Thus do many speak, thus do mo think; the world is full of such vermin and venom. Against which most wicked imaginations, we must oppose the commandment of God willing us to pray, the promise of mercy, the examples of the faithful, which have been heard when they prayed. Secondly, this Doctrine reproveth such as go to Saints and Angels; from the Creator to the Creature, which is a great dishonor done to God, and a reproach to Christ. Were not he a foolish and sottish suppliant, that when the Kings son offereth to speak for him to his father, would refuse to use his mediation, and go to one of his servants to entreat for him? Is it not meet that such a one should be said nay, and depart without his purpose? Even so, inasmuch as the father sendeth us unto his son, and the son calleth us to himself, what madness is it to run as well from the one, as from the other, to go from the son to the Saints; from him that can hear, to them that cannot help? Nay, as the Father is deprived of his Honor, and the son robbed of his Office, so the Saints themselves are disgraced. If a man should set any of the Subiectes down in the Chair of estate, and then bow down before him, and give him any of the Royalties of the King, were not this high Treason against the Prince, and extreme wrong to the Subject? Thus the case standeth between us, God, and the Saints. If we shall advance the Saints to so high a degree, as to pray unto them, which is proper unto God, and (as it were) the Princes Regality; if they did see our impiety, they would blush at it, and be ashamed of it. The Apostle *Peter* would not suffer *Cornelius* when he met him, to fall down at his feet and worship him. *Paul* and *Barnabas* rent their cloths, when they saw *Jupiter's* Priest bring Bulls with Garlands unto the gates of the Citty, to the end they might offer sacrifice unto them. Did they reject this service done unto them when they lived upon the earth, and shall we think they do now affect it, or would now accept of it? Away therefore, with the mediation of the Angels, who know not our hearts, nor hear our prayers. Away with the mediation of the Saints, who being now in heaven, are accepted of God, not for themselves, but for the precious merits of their Savior Christ. I except not the blessed Virgin *Mary* his*

Mother, but as once *she rejoiced in God her Savior*, so now she triumpheth in Christ her Redeemer, and is accepted through the deserts of her son. To conclude this point, let us remember the saying of the Apostle *John*, *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the reconciliation for our sins*. Where we see, he joineth these two together, to be an Advocate, and to make reconciliation, and appropriateth them both to the person of Christ. If then, the Saints be our Advocates, that we should present our prayers unto them; they to Christ, and Christ to God; they must also make reconciliation for our sins, and appease the wrath of God the father, which is impossible for them to do, and blasphemous for us to affirm. It is our duty therefore to repair & resort unto God the father through the merits of his son Jesus Christ. The Prophet complaineth, *That some trust in Chariots, & some in horses*. So in time of trouble, some seek to Saints & Angels, others fly to Witches & Idols, *but we must remember the name of the Lord our God*. But of this point we have spoken before more at large. Thirdly, it reproveth such as see the want of many blessings in themselves and others, & feel great judgments and public calamities upon themselves & others, and yet pray not at all to have the one bestowed, and the other removed. These are like to brute beasts, that roar & cry out for their prey when they want meat, but they never consider from whence they receive it; and as the swine that eat the Mast in the woods, but never look up to the tree from whence it falleth: or as the dog that biteth the stone that is cast at him, but looks not to the hand that threw it. So do these men; they can mourn and murmur when they sustain any loss, feel any plague, or find any want; but they have no knowledge to search out the cause or the means how God's blessings should be obtained, or his judgments be prevented. Hence it is, that the Prophets complain of this sencelesnesse and want of feeling of God's mercy, and our own misery, as we see in *Ezekiel*, and in other places, *I sought for a Man among them, that should not make up the hedge, and stand in the gappe before the Land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none*. It is a vain thing for a Physician to know the Disease, and not to apply the Remedy; so likewise is it a great folly for us to know our own wants, and yet to want Wisdom to take a right course to redress the same. What deadness of heart hath entered into us, that we have forgotten the commandments of God, and cannot remember the examples of his servants that have obtained great things at his hands, and cannot be encouraged by his manifold and merciful promises that he hath made unto us? Let us then be provoked to this duty, and not be wanting unto our selves, but respect our own good and benefit in seeking unto the Lord daily, in calling upon him early and late. The servants of *Naaman* reprove him, in that being commanded an easy and ready way to be cured and cleansed of his Leprosy, yet he hung back, and would not use the remedy, *If the Prophet* (say they to their Master) *had commanded thee a greater thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, wash, and be clean?* So may it be said to us, to shake off our drowsiness, and to work forwardness in us to practice this duty, If the Lord in our present wants should require at our hands any hard and difficult thing, ought we not to obey him, and to perform his Commandment? How much more then, when he respecteth our weakness, and saith only; *Ask, and you shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you*. We shall not need now to say in our own hearts, *Who shall ascend into Heaven, or descend into the deep, to bring his blessings unto us from thence*. The remedy is at hand, the means are near even in our mouth, and in our heart; this is *the prayer*

of faith, which availeth much if it be fervent. It teacheth us the way to the Lord's treasures, & to put our hand into his Coffers, to take such benefits as we want, and to put up the arrows of his wrath into his quiver, which he hath drawn against us, to shoot at us.

Thirdly, from hence ariseth great comfort to all the faithful that call upon the name of God. For, are the prayers of good men auayleable for our good? Do they procure blessings, and stay judgments? Then have we great cause to rejoyce, and matter of great joy offered unto us in the diligent practice of this duty. We are assured, that the Lord will not defraud & deceive us, but give us those things that we desire, and he knoweth what we want. Is our Faith weak? He will strengthen us. Are we ignorant? He will enstruct us. Do we want the Graces of his spirit? He will supply them. Is our Love cold? He will quicken it. Is our Repentance imperfect? He will perfect it. On the other side, are his Judgments among us? He will remove them. Are we in distress? He will have mercy upon us. Do our sins trouble us? He will discharge us. Are we in sickness? He will restore us. Are we in any misery? He will deliver us. If the consideration of this gracious dealing of God, and the performance of his precious promises, do not put life into our dead hearts, and assure comfort to our feeble spirits, and raise us up when we are cast down: what weapon can be of sufficient force to pierce our hearts, and to drive us to the Conscionable practice of this duty? If we had not a blessed experience of God's goodness towards us, we should have the less sin to doubt thereof. But seeing there is no faithful Man or Woman, who hath not found the Lord ready to hear him in time of his need, and that we are compassed about with so great a Cloude of witnesses, let us comfort our selves, and one another in these things, and be stirred up to call upon his name.

Lastly, are the Prayers of the faithful profitable to all things, and available to make us partakers of God's blessings, and to stop the course of his Judgments? Then we must remember that it is our duty to praise his name when he hath heard our prayers, and granted our requests, either for our selves, or our brethren. It is a note of an unthankfull heart, to obtain a benefit, and not to acknowledge it; to receive a gift, and not to praise and commend the giver. This is it which the Apostle teacheth, *2. Cor. 1, 9, 10, 11.* speaking of the afflictions which came upon him in *Asia*, whereby he was pressed out of measure, passing strength, so that he doubted altogether, even of life, *We received the sentence of death in our selves, because we should not trust in our selves, but in God which raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver us; in whom we trust, that yet hereafter he will deliver us, so that ye labor together in Prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us for many, thanks may be given by many persons for us.* In which words he declareth, that as he had experience in the time past, of the mercy of God, in the deliverance which was given unto him: so he hopeth of the like assistance of his spirit, if that the *Corinthians* would be mindful of him in their prayers. Where we see, he ascribeth much to their Prayers, and yet, so much, as that he would have the glory of his deliverance to be given only to God, and thanks to be rendered unto him. A point worthy to be considered of us, and a duty needful to be performed by us. As he hath promised, and we have prayed: so when he hath paid, he is to be praised. Praise is comely, and well becometh the Saints of God, the want whereof, taketh away the comfort and sweet fruit of his blessings from us. It is a great offense to be unthankfull unto men, but far greater to God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being. Wherefore, whensoever

we have opened our mouths unto God, let us return the Calves of our lips unto him, and never show our selves more ready to ask, then we are willing to praise and magnify the Lord, who hath granted that which we have asked. And hereby we may try our selves, whether we be truly thankful unto him, or not.

[*I shall be freely given (or bestowed) upon you.*]

The Apostle in this place, useth a word derived from grace, so that it signifieth to be given by Grace. Thus the word is taken in sundry places of the Scripture, as Rom. 8. *If he have given us his own son, how should he not with him give us all things else.* And 1 Cor. 2. *We have received the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are given to us of God.* So likewise, Galath. 3. *God gave the inheritance to Abraham by promise.* The meaning of the Apostle is thus much in effect; the Prayers of the Saints shall prevail with God, and being offered up for my deliverance, shall not return to them without comfort, nor ascend to him without effect, nor concern me without effect. Notwithstanding, albeit they shall not go empty away, but have their full force and power, yet it is to be acknowledged and Learned, that they so obtain, as that my deliverance is to be wrought out by the free gift of his Grace, not by the merit and desert of your prayers.

From hence we learn, that the gifts of God bestowed upon his Servants, come from his free grace, not from our deserts; from his mercy, not from our merits: from his Goodness, not from our Worthinesse. This is set down in the second Commandment of the Law, Exodus 20, 6. where the Lord promiseth eternal life unto the Keepers of the Commandments, yet they must not look to obtain it as a due desert, *For he will show Mercy unto thousands to them that love him, and keep his Commandments.* Faith is an excellent gift, and a notable means to bring us to eternal life, *For he that believeth in the Son hath eternal life, and he that obeyeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of GOD abideth on him.*

We see then, the necessity of having a lively Faith, because to believe in Christ, bringeth with it eternal life: yet it is not for the merit of our Faith, but for the Mercy of God, and the Merit of Christ apprehended by Faith, inasmuch as *Eternal life is the free gift of God.* The like we may say of Prayer, we have a comfortable promise, that if we ask, we shall receive; if we seek, we shall find; not because our Prayers do deserve acceptation: and therefore, when Daniel prayed unto God, he confesseth that *righteousness belongeth unto the Lord, but unto us open shame, because we have sinned against him.* Whereby we gather, that although our prayers are not without effect, yet they prevail not by any excellency is sound in them, and therefore he saith; *Compassion and forgiveness is in the Lord our God, albeit we have rebelled against him.* Thus also we might perticularly speak of all the good ordinances of God, and the good duties that proceed from us, as the saving hearing of the word, the fruitful receiving of the Sacraments, & such like holy exercises of our Religion: inasmuch as he doth accept them, and is well pleased in the performance of them, howbeit not through our worthiness that do perform them, but thorough his goodness that doth command them, thorough his mercy that doth approve them, thorough his promise that doth receive them, and thorough his liberality that doeth reward them.

If we would know the Causes and Reasons why the Graces of God are freely bestowed upon us, and nothing given in our deserts; First, let us consider that all matter of boasting is taken from us, and God will have the glory of his own works, and the praise of his mercy. If he should take anything of us, he should loose so much of his own glory, and we would be ready to ascribe our sanctification and salvation to our own selves. This doth the Apostle set down at large in sundry Epistles; for speaking of *Abraham* he saith, *If Abraham were justified by works, he hath wherein to rejoyce, but not with God.* And having shown before, that God accepteth of the faithful, making him just, and without blame, by imputing of Christ's righteousness unto him, he confirmeth it by the end of Justification, which he maketh to be the glory of God, saying; *Where is then the rejoicing? It is excluded. By what Law? Of Works; Nay, but by the Law of Faith.* As if he should say; If we were justified, either by our own Works wholly & only, or partly by Faith, and partly by works, then the glory of our justification should be wholly given to our selves, or at least not wholly given unto God. To this purpose he speaketh in the Epistle to the Ephesians, *By grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast himself.* God will have the glory of our justification, he will be accounted and acknowledged to be the Justifier and Savior of us; he hath not left us to justify our selves, nor to be our own Saviors, as shall better appear afterward.

Secondly, there are no such properties in any man's works, as that they cannot merit or proceed from any other fountain then Grace. Let us therefore see what properties are necessarily required in works, to make them meritorious. First, they must be done of a man of himself, & by himself: but we have nothing of our own to give him, but are most poor men and mere beggars, and can but pay God with his own. The works that are our own, are sufficient to deserve his wrath: but have no power at all to procure his favor. For in our selves we are wretched and miserable, poor, naked, and destitute of all goodness, so that it is truly said by the Apostle *Paul, Who separateth thee? And what hast thou, that thou hast not received? If thou hast received it, why reioycest thou, as though thou hadst not received it.* Without him therefore we can do nothing: it is he that must work in us the will and the deed.

Secondly, they must be such works as are not due unto him, they must not be due debt, they must come from our own free will, they must be such as God cannot justly challenge at our hands. But whatsoever we do, we do as poor debtors; nay, we are worse then poor debtors, we are miserable Bankrupts, we have nothing, we have less then nothing to pay. Our Savior hath a worthy sentence to this purpose, *Luke 17, 10. When ye have done all those things that are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.* And what could *Adam* do, and offer unto God in his innocence, but that which was his duty; and whereunto he was bound unto his Maker, for his Creation and other blessings bestowed upon him?

Thirdly, the work must be done to the benefit and profit of him, from whom we look to be repaid. *But our goodness and well-doing reacheth not to the Lord, Psal. 16.* We may benefit men, but we cannot benefit our maker, from whom we have received life and limb, soul and body, & all that we have, but we can give him nothing. Now they that cannot give anything to God,

can deserve nothing from him: but we cannot give anything to God, according to the saying of Paul, *Who hath given unto him first, and he shall be recompensed? For of him, and through him, and for him are all things, to him be glory forever, Amen:* therefore, it is evident that we cannot deserve.

Fourthly, whatsoever is imperfect, cannot stand in the presence of the most just and perfect God: we must bring nothing before him, but that which is absolute, and able to bear and sustain his wrath. But all that we do offer, or can offer unto God, is maimed and imperfect: such are our best Works, our Prayers, our Meditations, our Hearing, so that our righteousness is like a menstruous clothe. Whatsoever proceedeth from us, is foul and faulty, no man is able to satisfy the Justice and rigor of the Law, according to that of the Apostle, *There is none righteous, no not one; they have all gone out of the way, they have been made altogether unprofitable, there is none that doth good. no, not one; and therefore by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified in his sight.* We must all entreat for pardon and forgiveness of our evil Works, and not stand upon the perfection and sufficiency of our good works.

Lastly, the work and the reward must be in proportion equal, for if the reward be more then the work, it is not a reward of desert, but a gift of good will. The Apostle saith, *Rom. 8, I account that the afflictions of this present time, are not worthy of the glory, which shall be shown unto us.* Thus then we reason; Nothing can deserve, but that which is equivalent to the thing deserved: but nothing that we can do, can equal or deserve the gifts, the least gift of God. So then, albeit we had some-what to give, and that we were not as most naked and needy beggars; yet it cannot be compared or correspondent to that which we receive. For grace and glory are vnvalewable and unmatchable, no price can purchase them, no money can buy them, no merits can match them. So then, whether we consider that GOD will have the glory of all his works, or that there is a great disproportion between Mercy and Merits; in both respects we conclude, that the gifts of GOD given unto his faithful servants, proceed from his free grace, not from our free will, so that they are not deserved of us, but bestowed upon us.

This Doctrine being thoroughly strengthened, let us see what Uses may be grounded from thence. First, we learn from hence, that seeing God giveth not by desert, but of his mercy; that whatsoever we have obtained and received by any prayer, or other means from the hand of God, we must ascribe all to the glory and praise of his name, and acknowledge him to be the Author and giver. True it is, we are commanded to call upon the Lord, and to put up our suits and supplications unto him: and when we have prayed, and God hath heard our prayer, we must not think that we have well deserved to speed in our desires, and say; *For my righteousness, & the strength of my Prayers, I have gotten this or that:* but as we use the means, so we must acknowledge that God findeth such faults in our best prayers, that he might curse us, rather than bless us; and condemn us rather than hear us; and withal consider, that in hearing us, he respecteth more that which is in himself, then anything that is in us, he is moved rather of his own mercy, then any absoluteness that he can see in our well-doing. Let us therefore meditate upon our own wants, and albeit we use those helps and Instruments that he hath appointed, yet let us give him all the glory to whom it is wholly due. When a great multitude of enemies came against *Jehoshaphat*, he set himself to seek the Lord, and

proclaimed a fast through out all Judah, *They asked counsel of the Lord, and prayed unto him:* yet when God had given them the upper hand; they blessed not themselves, but the Lord; they praised not their own zeal, but his mercy; and they ascribed not the victory to their fasting and prayer, but to his favor and power: *For they assembled themselves in the Valley of Berachah, and there they blessed the Lord: then every Man of Judah and Jerusalem returned with Jehoshaphat their head, to go again to Jerusalem with joy, for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their Enemies.*

The like we might say of *Hezekiah*. The example of the Prophet *David* is plentiful in this Argument, he oftentimes praiseth the Lord, because he had heard the voice of his petition, as *Psal. 65. O God, praise waiteth for thee in Zion, and unto thee shall the vow be performed, because thou hearest the Prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.* And *Psal. 98. Sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory.* And *Psal. 115. Not us, ô Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the glory, for thy loving mercy, and for thy truths sake.* And hereby we may discover a deep devise, a dangerous plot, and a deceitful policy of the Devil. He laboreth by all means to keep us from Prayer, he cannot abide that we should call upon the name of our God. He will tell us of the fearful Majesty of God to dismay us; he will suggest our own baseness and unworthiness to discourage us; he will object that others pray not at all, yet do well enough, & that they live in all abundance, and want nothing, yet are not so devout; he will tell us (to make us secure) that God knoweth whereof we have need before we ask, that he needeth not to be put in mind of his mercy, and that he cannot forget the covenant that he hath made with us. These are subtle baits to entrap us, and mighty stumbling blocks to trip us, and strong temptations to slay us, and by these he oftentimes prevaieth in the Children of disobedience. If he cannot obtain his purpose of us at the first, yet he will not give over, but follow us hard at the heels, till he hath subdued us; and mark our foot-steppes, till he hath ensnared us. He will say unto thee, when thou preparest thyself to pray, what needest thou pray at this time? Thou art now unfit; thou art without feeling; thou hast other business to go about, another time will serve as well, or better then this, when thou mayest be better fitted to this work. For if thou pray without feeling and zeal, thou sinnest, and thy prayer is abominable; wherefore take heed thou pray not, least thou sin against God.

Thus he prevailed with *Saul*, when the Priest brought the Ark of God to ask counsel of him what he should do, *Saul* said unto him, *Withdraw thine hand:* as if he should say; Let us pursue our enemies, I have no leisure to stand asking counsel of God. If he prevail with us, to neglect this duty at one time, he will take advantage of it, so that if he see us ready to pray afterward, he will allege, what needest thou pray yet? Thou omittedst it at such and such a time, and thou speddest well enough, thou hadst no evil or hurt by it, why then wilt thou now begin? It will but trouble thy Conscience to be always praying, it will hinder thy business, and cause thee to neglect thy calling: yea, when thou hast done all thou canst, thou shalt get nothing by it, but shalt make thyself a laughing-stock, and a gazing-stock to the whole World; wherefore it were much better for thee to do as many other of thy good and honest Neighbors, that are not so curious and precise in these matters, who are beloved in the World, and look to come to heaven as well as thyself.

Moreover, he will not forget to tell thee, that if thou betake thyself to this strict course of life, it will bring thee into many melancholy dumps, and so cast thee down, that thou shalt never be merry at the heart. This is the Devils Logic and Language, or rather his sophistry and subtlety, and thus he doth discourse and dispute with us, to draw us away from this duty. For well doth he know, that prayer is a principal part of our spiritual Armor, whereby we are safe garded from him, and all other enemies, and the most effectual means to kindle in us the saving and sanctified Graces of God's Spirit: and therefore when we cease praying, God will stay his hand from blessing us; he will with-hold his graces from us; he will give us over into the power of our spiritual enemies, and renounce us from being in the number of his Children. But if he cannot thus far prevail with us, but that the conscience of God's commandment and our own duty, will stir us up to this practice: then he worketh in us another way, and creepeth upon us after another manner. He will after a sort close with us, and join in the acknowledgment of the necessity of daily exercising our selves in making Prayer unto God: but withal, he will foyst in a false finger, and tell us, that by devout Prayer we shall merit salvation, and that the moe our Prayers are, the greater shall be our merits.

Thus he mingleth and tempereth rank Poison with Prayer, so that albeit we use it, we do abuse it; so that it is all one as if we used it not. Thus he showeth himself to be ready at our Elbow, to puff us up with pride, and to tell us that we pray oftener then others, better then others, with greater feeling then others, with greater faith then others, with greater zeal and assurance then others. Thus he prevailed with the Pharisee, mentioned in the Gospel, he stood and prayed thus with himself; *O God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men, Extortioners, unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican: I fast twice in the week, I give Tithe of all that ever I possess: I love to pray in the Synagogues, and in the Corners of the streets: but under a color of long Prayers they sought the praise of men, and the enriching of themselves, and therefore were to receive the greater damnation.* And as in the former times of the Church, when he could not keep them any longer in Fornication and uncleanness (as if it were a thing indifferent) he taught chastity, thereby to destroy chastity; and under a false praise of single life brought in the detestation of marriage, and the practice of incontinency: so doth he persuade Prayer, thereby to overthrow Prayer. For to move to pray, thereby to meritt and deserve, is to corrupt Prayer, and to make it of none effect. It is the duty of the Minister of God to preach the word, it hath the promise of blessing, and of great reward: but if he go about to persuade us, that we shall merit eternal life by our faithfulness in our Ministry, and by diligent instructing of the people committing to our charge, we must resist the subtle Serpent, and defy him, and deny his merrits. It is the duty of all the godly that have this Worlds goods, to give alms to the poor, especially to the godly poor: but if he move us to give Alms, that we may get Heaven or gain the praise of men, we must strive against his temptation, and not suffer our selves to be deluded by him. For this is as much as if he should say unto us, I would have thee pray, but thou shalt obtain nothing: I would have thee give alms, but thou shalt have no reward. Seeing then, we are subject to a double temptation of Satan (who goeth about like a roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour) so that he will (if it be possible) hinder us from Prayers, or (if he cannot) will corrupt them with his Leaven of meritt: we must prepare to resist him both ways. Whensoever he goeth about to stay us from

praying unto our heavenly Father, we must resist him strong in faith, and oppose against him these Meditations. Let us remember God's most holy commandment, to call upon him in the day of trouble, and that we are continually to watch and pray, least we fall into temptation. We have together with the precept, a promise annexed for our comfort and greater encouragement to this duty, that he is near to all that call upon him; even to all that call upon him in truth; yea, the eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and his ears are open unto their prayers.

Let us consider, that there is an absolute necessity of the invocation of his Name, and of craving his assistance, that we may be freed and delivered from the snares and assaults of the Devil, and that he would give us strength to overcome them, and not suffer us to be tempted above our power, but give a blessed issue of the temptation, that we may be made able to bear it. And as the necessity is great to call upon him daily, *In whom we live and move, and have our being*; so the profit thereof is no less; it bringeth a blessed experience and trial of God's goodness and mercy toward us: It increaseth his spiritual graces in us, and maketh us zealous in all good works: It obtaineth those things that we want, and remooueth the judgments that hang over us, or are upon us. We have the examples of all the faithful, as a Cloud of Witnesses to incite us to this duty. And if we put forth our hands to take and use any of the Creatures or blessings of God without asking him leave, we are no better then Thieves and Robbers. These and such like Motiues, serve to kindle our zeal in Prayer, & to quench the fiery darts of the Devil which he casteth at us. If he go about to puff us up with pride, through an opinion meriting by any, even our best works of Prayer, or Preaching, or Alms-deeds, we must know that all our works are imperfect, and that the good things in us are his own gifts.

Hence it is, that the Apostle saith of himself and all his labors; *I am the least of the Apostles: by the Grace of God I am that I am, and his Grace which is in me, was not in vain. I labored more abundantly then they all, yet not I, but the Grace of God which is with me.* And in another place, *Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.* Again, *What hast thou that thou hast not received? If thou hast received it, why boastest thou as though thou hadst not received it?* It is a worthy saying set down by our Savior, *When ye have done all those things which are commanded you, say; We are unprofitable Servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.* Wherefore, we must labor in all our works to see our imperfections, to cast down ourselves in humility before the Judgment seat of God, and to refer all things to his glory. The Apostle giveth this general rule; *Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* And if in these ordinary and natural works, we must aim at that end as at a mark: how much more, in the Mysteries of our salvation, and the great keys of our Religion, ought we to give thanks unto God for blessing us with spiritual blessings in heavenly things? We are not able to inspire Grace into our barren hearts, it is the gift of God, and therefore he must be confessed the giver of every good giving and perfect gift, to the glory of his own Name. And for our selves, let us in all duties of our obedience; Prayer, Alms, or whatsoever works approved of God, prepare our selves to bring humble and broken hearts, freed from the Thorns of pride and vain-glory.

This is taught by David in the Psalm, *The Sacrifices of God are a contrite Spirit: a contrite and a broken heart, ô God, thou wilt not despise.* The like we see, Isaiah 66. *To him will I look, saith the Lord, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my words.* And thus was the practice of Daniel in his Prayer, *O Lord, incline thine ear, open thine eyes, and behold our desolations: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our own righteousness, but for thy great tender mercies.* This humility shall appear to be in us, if we refer the end of all our actions to the honor of God, and make that to be the scope. Let the principal end be the glory of God: the next, the salvation of our Souls: the third, the edification of our Brethren in Christ Jesus. Let us cause our light so to shine before men, that they may glorify our Father which is in Heaven: and then let us follow those things which concern peace, and where-with one may edify another.

Secondly, as by the free bestowing of the graces of God, we are taught to give him all possible praise, so it taketh away all opinion of the merits of works, wherein proud flesh is ready to trust. For to place Merit and Justification in our own works, is to rase down a chief Foundation and principal Pillar of Christian Religion; both because thereby we abolish Grace, and renounce salvation by Christ, and make every man a Savior to himself, and so exclude salvation by Christ: all which are shameful Heresies and horrible blasphemies, and detestable abominations. As many as seek to be justified by the Law, are fallen from Grace. Therefore the Apostle Paul saith, Rom. 11. *There is a remnant according to the election of Grace, and if it be of Grace, it is no more of works, or else were Grace no more Grace: but if it be of works, it is no more Grace, or else were work no more work.* This serveth to confute the Romish Doctrine, & giveth us just cause to come out from among them, and to make a separation from them, as being no true Church of God. For in as much as they take away the foundation and chief pillars whereupon the house of God standeth, they pull it down and bring it to ruin. We see how they exclude Grace, and bring in Merrit. They establish a twofold kind of Merit, and both of them (as they understand them) plants of their own setting, but mere Strangers in the Garden of the Scriptures, and therefore shall fall; according to the Doctrine of Christ, who saith; *Every Plant which mine heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.* One sort is the merrit of the person; the other, is the merrit of the work. The merrit of the person, they make to be a dignity in the person, wheredy he is esteemed worthy of eternal life; and this they say is found in Infants dying after Baptism, who, though they want the merit of good works, yet they want not the merrit of their persons, by which they receive the Kingdom of heaven. The merrit of the work, is a Dignity or excellency in the work in it self, whereby it is fitted and enabled to deserve life everlasting. Hence it is that they teach, that the work and the deed are meritorious two ways; first, by Covenant, because God hath made a promise of reward unto them. Secondly, by their own Dignity, because Christ hath merited, that our works should merrit. A strange opinion, and a strange language and manner of speaking, never heard of in the Book of God. As for us, we renounce all personal merrits; that is, all merrits within the person of any mere man: also all merrits of works done by any mere man whatsoever. The true merrit whereby we look for the favor of God and life everlasting, is to be found in the person and works of Christ alone, who is the treasury and storehouse of all our merrits.

But here some man might object and say; The promise of reward is made to them that believe and work, therefore our works do merit: for merit and reward be Relatiues. I answer, there is a double reward; one of Merit, the other of Mercy. Every good work, be it never so little, done in Faith, done to the glory of God, done in that manner that he commandeth, shall be rewarded, but the reward is not given for the worthiness of the work, but through the liberality of him that hath promised. Hence it is, that eternal life is called an Inheritance. The obedient Child hath promise from his Father to be his Heir, and to inherit his Lands, Goods, and Possessions, after his decease; yet not for his obedience sake, but because his Father loveth him, and in kindness and compassion preferreth him before others. Let it suffice us, to have the Kingdom of Heaven as a free inheritance, and not dream as Hirelings, that we shall have it as an hire and Wages of our work, for then we shall be deceived of our hope and expectation. It is a vain confidence to set up such an high price of our works, as thereby to make them able to buy Heaven. These men do know, neither the weakness of their own strength, nor the unworthiness of their own works, nor the wretchedness of their own persons, nor the excellency of God's Graces, nor the praise of his glory, whereof he is jealous, which he will not give to any other. They are like to *Simon Magus*, who offered to buy the gifts of God for his Money, as a purchase: or like to the Heathen, that look to be heard for their much babbling sake: or like to Servants that do all for their hire. So these Merit-mongers will have no Heaven, except they may have it as their hire, and as a penny-worth for their penny; they will not be indebted unto God, nor beholding unto him for it. As for us, we value not our good works at so high a rate, we know their imperfections, we crave eternal life as a Sons portion, and an inheritance freely promised unto us, and freely bestowed upon us.

Indeed, it is the will and pleasure of God, that we should labor and bring forth good works, to express our thankfulness to him that hath adopted us for his Children; and after our labor, receive the inheritance: yet we cannot deserve it by our obedience, and we have a better claim unto it, by being Sons, then working as Servants. We confess, that the reward shall be given of bounty, not of necessity; by gift, not by debt; by promise, not by desert; by God's acceptance, not through our perfection. As for the Papists, that glory in their own works, let them take heed they do not deceive themselves, and whilst they rob God of his honor, let them beware they do not rob themselves, and deprive themselves of the honor promised to the Saints: and whilst they challenge and lay claim to everlasting life, as to the Wages of Servants, let them in time look to themselves, least they be denied the Inheritance that belongeth unto Sons.

Lastly, seeing all God's gifts come from him to us, of Grace and Mercy; It is our duty above all things to desire Mercy, and to crave the free gifts of God. The Children of God, whensoever they presented themselves into his presence; they have stripped themselves of all things; they have renounced all privileges of the flesh; they have acknowledged their own unworthiness, and have craved nothing but his favor, and to be satisfied with his Image. This we see in the Prophet *David*, *Psal. 6. My Soul is sore troubled, but Lord, how long wilt thou delay? Return (ô Lord) deliver my Soul, save me for thy mercies sake.* He desireth nothing but of Mercy, he pleadeth nothing but favor; he standeth not upon his own righteousness; he willeth not

God to respect him according to his own worthynesse. Again, Psal. 63. *Thy loving kindness is better then life, therefore my lips shall praise thee: thus will I magnify thee all my life, and lift up mine hands in thine Name: my Soul shall be satisfied as with Marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:* Where he preferreth the goodness of God before all things in Heaven and Earth, whiles he advanceth it above life; signifying thereby, that his life could not be pleasant unto him, and that he would not wish to live without it. What is more desired then life? Yet he preferreth the loving kindness of God before it. So in another place, *If thou (ô Lord) straitly markest iniquities, ô Lord, who shall stand? But mercy is with thee, that thou mayest be feared.* Likewise the Church in the Lamentations of *Jeremiah*, confesseth as much, chapt. 3. *It is the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* In all which places we see, that the godly sue for pardon, and cry out for mercy. If they desire any blessing, they ask it of favor: If they crave to have any judgment removed, they crave it of mercy: and they esteem his grace above their own lives, or any earthly thing that they can desire. We must acknowledge that it is of his mere mercy that we live, and move, and have our being. It is our duty to praise his name daily for his great mercies toward us, which are infinite for measure and continuance. If he accept us, it skilleth not greatly though men reject us, and condemn us. If his wrath be kindled against us, and his loving countenance be turned from us, what is it that can delight us, who is it that can comfort us? We see by many & sundry examples in our Brethren, that have been cast down through the multitude and greuousnesse of their sins, and an apprehension of the heavy wrath of God, and a withdrawing of his favor for a season from them, albeit they have had Riches, Friends, Lands, Prosperity, and outward peace, yet none of these could Minister comfort unto them, so long as God's countenance was hidden from them, as the Sun covered in a Cloud. But when once he appeared in mercy and goodness to them again, their bones and bowels have been refreshed, according to the words of the Prophet in the Psalm, *If thou, Lord, lift up thy countenance upon me, thou shalt give me more joy of heart then they have had, when their Wheat & their Wine did abound.* Labor therefore, by all means to feel his favor; use all means to obtain it, employ thyself diligently to keep it, and to continue it toward thee, that in thy life it may be with thee, and in death it may not depart from thee.

23 *There salute thee Epaphras my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus.*

24 *Marchus, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke my fellow-helpers.*

Hitherto, we have handled the chief matter touching this Epistle, containing his suit for *Onesimus*, and his commandment to prepare him lodging. Now followeth the Conclusion and shutting up of the Epistle, consisting in certain salutations, which are of two sorts; either from others, or from himself. The salutation from others is in these two Verses: the salutation from himself is in the Verse following. In these Verses he saluteth *Philemon* in the name of five persons which were famous and well known in the Church, and of great authority and credit above many others. This salutation as it was very honorable unto him, so also it carried with it great weight and moment to effect his principal purpose with more

easiness. For seeing he joineth with him *His Fellow-prisoner*, and *Fellow-helpers* in this suit, that he might the better obtain his request, so that they all put up as it were with one voice and consent the same petition, *Philemon* could not but consider, that it was a very unseemly and unworthy thing to reject so many suppliants in so reasonable a cause. So then, the sum of these words is this, *Epaphras, Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke* do salute thee. The first man is described by an adjoined property, my *Fellow-Prisoner*; which is declared by the cause, *For Jesus Christ*. The rest that are here named, have one common adioynt as a title of honor ascribed unto them when he calleth them *his Fellow-helpers*.

Thus much touching the Order and Method. Now, let us see the meaning and Interpretation of the words. By [*Saluting*] in this place, we are to understand, to use all kind and courteous speaking, and to wish all peace and prosperity of soul and body, which are fruits of that Brotherly Love that ought to be among all the Saints. Thus did the faithful pray one for another. In this salutation he nameth five persons. In the first place, he rangeth *Epaphras*, a Cittizen of the same Cittiy with *Philemon* and his Countreyman, as appeareth in the Epistle to the Colossians, chap. 4. *Epaphrasthe Servant of Christ, which is one of you, Saluteth you, and always striveth for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and full in all she will of God*. This man had been the Teacher of the Church at *Colossae*, and had converted them to the faith of Christ, as we read in the same Epistle, Cha. 1. *As ye also learned of Epaphras our deer fellow servant, which is for you a faithful Minister of Christ*. It seemeth he was an Evangelist, who succeeded in the labors of the Apostles, but now being at Rome, he was put in prison, and here saluteth *Philemon* as a Fellow-prisoner of *Paul*, not for any wickedness and crime that he had committed, but for the Testimony of Christ, and for preaching the Gospel, and therefore is called not *Caesar's* prisoner, but *Christ's Prisoner*. Whereby it appeareth, that this *Epaphras* was falsely accused by the enemies of the Gospel, and therefore brought unto *Rome*, and put in hold.

Secondly, he nameth *Marcus*, who is mentioned also in other places of the Scripture, who was Cozen to *Barnabas*, and the son of that *Marie*, who was wont to give entertainment to the Disciples at Jerusalem; yea, such was her godliness, that she made her house as an Inn to lodge the poor Saints, and as a public Temple for the people of God to meet together to pray unto him, and to praise his name. This appeareth, Col. 4, 10. *Marcus saluteth thee Barnabas Cousin, touching whom ye received Commandments, if he come unto you, receive him*. So▪ when *Peter* was delivered out of prison, it is said, *He came to the house of Marie the Mother of John, whose sur-name was Mark, where many were gathered together in Prayer*.

Thirdly, he saluteth *Philemon* in the name of *Aristarchus*, of whom also mention is made in the Epistle to the Colossians, and there likewise he is called *Paul's prisoner, Aristarchus my Prison-fellow saluteth you*. As they embraced one Faith, and believed in one Christ, so they suffered for one cause, and were Companions in affliction?

Fourthly, he nameth *Demas*, who at this time was a constant Confesser of the truth, and a zealous follower of the Gospel, but afterward he started back from the Doctrine of Christ, forsook the fellowship of *Paul*, & embraced this present world, as the Apostle complaineth of

him afterward, as we see, 2 *Tim.* 4, 10. *Demas hath forsaken me, and hath embraced this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica.*

Lastly, he reckoneth up *Luke*, to wit, the Evangelist, who came to Rome as a Companion with *Paul*, as we read, *Acts* 28, 14. and is named in the Epistle to the Colossians, *Luke the beloved Physician greeteth you.* He was a Physician by profession, and after his conversion he accompanied *Paul* in his greatest dangers. Of these men here described, we might speak much, and handle their lives at large, but this is done by others, and this may suffice for the Interpretation of these verses.

We heard in the beginning of this Epistle, that *Paul* joined *Timothy* to him, as a joint Writer thereof, and directeth it to others, besides to *Philemon*, that they might be means and Mediators unto him; so in the winding up of the Epistle, he hath mustered together many others: by all which, he setteth upon *Philemon*, as it were, with an Army of Intercessors and Advocates, to soften and overcome his grieved and offended mind, and to incline him to mercy and compassion.

Moreover, this salutation giveth us some direction of the time when this Epistle was written. Touching the which time, there is some difference among the learned. Some are of opinion, that this Epistle was written after the second that he wrote to *Timothy*, and this reason is rendered, because in that Epistle it appeareth, that *Timothy* and *Mark* were not with him, and he willeth them to make speed to come unto him, *Only Luke is with me: Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable unto me to Minister.* But in this Epistle it is evident, that these men were come unto him. Seeing therefore, there he sendeth for them, and here they are found to be with him, it should seem that this Epistle is Written after the other.

This is the Reason urged by many, which seemeth to be of great force to persuade. But if we diligently mark it, and thoroughly consider of it, we shall find it to be too weak to bear the weight of this conclusion. For this present Epistle, as also that to the Colossians was written when he was first taken; the second to *Timothy*, when he was taken the second time. For *Paul* having appealed to *Caesar* from the partial dealing of the High-Priests, and the cruel persecution of his own nation, was brought to Rome in the beginning of *Nero's* reign, about the third or fourth year thereof. Now it is evident and known to all, that *Nero* in the five first years, was one of the most mild and merciful Princes; and as in his last years, he exceeded all men in Tyranny and Crueltie, so in his first, he passed all his predecessors in Mercy and Gentleness. In the beginning of his Empire, *Paul* pleaded his cause before him, and was delivered out of prison, and let go whether he would. But the rage of the enemies of the Gospel being endless, he was taken again about the end of *Nero's* reign, who waxed mad against Christian Religion, at which time he wrote the latter Epistle to *Timothy*, wherein he fore-telleth the approaching of his death, and the time of his dissolution, *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departing is at hand.* Thus much touching the time when this Epistle was written.

Now, let us point out some general Observations out of these Verses that might be enlarged, and farther stood upon, if time would serve. First, we see the Apostle setteth down a

salutation proceeding from others: which teacheth that salutations are an ordinary means ordained of God to nourish and cherish mutual love, and that union and conjunction which the members of Christ's body have one with another, who are only in body, & in regard of bodily presence severed one from another in this present life; whereas in heart they are joined together, and shall be hereafter both in soul and body.

Secondly, albeit the Apostle were a prisoner for the faithes sake, yet God doth not leave him alone, he hath *A Fellow-prisoner* joined with him, and many Fellow-helpers added unto him. And albeit he delighteth not himself in the imprisonment of another, but could rather wish him delivered, as appeareth by his words to *Agrippa* (who said he was almost persuaded to become a Christian,) *I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me today, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds: yet notwithstanding the Company of the Godly is gracious and comfortable both in prosperity, and in adversity, both in prison, and out of prison.* Thus it is set down by Luke, Acts 16, 25. when *Paul* was whipped and imprisoned, and his feet made fast in the stocks, he had *Silas* joined with him, and they two spent the night in praying and praising God together, teaching & admonishing themselves in Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with a grace in their hearts to the Lord, so that the prisoners heard them. Thus we see the endless Mercy of God, towards his afflicted and distressed Servants, he raiseth them up some comfort, and some Comforters, verifying the promise made to his Church, *If I depart, I will send the Comforter unto you.* He knoweth our infirmities, he seeth how ready we are to yield and slide back: & therefore as he strengtheneth us by others, so he maketh us means to strengthen others.

Thirdly, he calleth *Epaphras* a prisoner of Christ, as he also had called himself before in the beginning of this Epistle. The reason is, because he had preached Christ. Heereby we learn, that persecutions oftentimes follow the sincere preaching of the Gospel; not that it is the property of the Gospel, but the cause is the malice of such as will not embrace and receive the Gospel; and therefore, they hate and persecute those that believe in Christ, and give entertainment to the Gospel. This is it our Savior teacheth, *Mat. 10, 34, 35. Think not that I am come to send peace into the earth, I came not to send peace, but the sword: for I am come to set a Man at variance against his Father, and the Daughter against the Mother, &c. and a man's enemies shall be they of his own household.*

To this purpose he speaketh in another place, *I am come to put fire on the earth, and what is my desire, if it be already kindled?* The Gospel is the proper cause of peace among the godly, so it is the occasion of great trouble among the wicked. They are therefore much deceived, that make the Gospel the cause of all division and hurly-burlies that are in the Worlde. When any troubles arise, the preaching of the Gospel is accused to breed them, but this is a false imputation. The true cause, is the malice of Satan, and the fury of his Instruments, that cannot abide the Light of the Truth to shine among them. So then, let us not think it a strange thing, when we see such stirs and tumults arise, but Arm our selves with Patience; Learn to be Wise as Serpents, and Innocent as Doves, and condemn those that are the authors and beginners of those broils and contentions.

Fourthly, observe the Titles that he giveth unto our Lord and Savior, he describeth him by two Names; First, he calleth him Christ; then, he calleth him Jesus. Christ, signifieth as much as Anointed; Jesus, importeth as much as a Savior, who was so called, because he saveth his people from their sins. From whence, observe that Christ is the King, the Prophet, and the Priest of his Church, to govern us, to teach us, to Redeem us, to save us. This is his Office, for these Ends and Uses he was anointed of the Father with the Oil of Gladness above his fellows. This serveth to our great good, and the benefit of it is communicated unto us; he maketh us Kings and Priests to God his Father; he armeth us with power and strength against sin, the Flesh, the World, the Devil; and maketh us able to overcome them: thorough him we have access to the father, and may boldly appear in his sight, and offer up our Prayers with assurance, *Yea he enableth us to offer up our selves, our souls, and bodies, an holy, lively, and acceptable Sacrifice unto him*, which is our reasonable serving of him: he doth enstruct us in the will of his Father, enlighten us in the knowledge of the truth, and maketh us (as it were) his Household Disciples and Scholars, to reveal unto us all things needful for our salvation. Let us therefore confess him to be the only son of God, perfect God, and perfect Man, the sole Mediator between God and Man, and let us acknowledge no other Savior able to Redeem and ransom us, to pay so great a price, and to deliver us from so great wrath and destruction. If we make other Mediators, and set up other Saviors, we renounce the Mediation of Christ, and Salvation purchased by Christ. This pierceth the very Marrow, and entereth into the bowels of the Romish Religion, which setteth up other Mediators, and consequently establisheth a false Christ of their own, which indeed is no Christ, no Jesus, no Savior, no Redeemer?

Fifthly, observe with me, that speaking of *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, & Luke*, he calleth them his fellow-helpers; whereby he putteth the Ministers of the Gospel, and all the Children of God in mind, to be helpers to the truth, and to further the preaching and propagation of the Gospel by all possible means that God hath enabled them. For this cause, the Apostle commendeth many of the faithful, *Rom. 16, 3, 9. Greet Aquila and Priscilla my fellow-helpers in Christ Jesus*. We must do all for the truth, and nothing against the truth.

This reproveth those that employ their wits, and bestow their strength, to hinder the truth, and the professors thereof. These have no part nor fellowship in the Ministration, nor in the sound profession of the Gospel, but are professed enemies to the faith of Christ. Moreover, this shall Minister unspeakable comfort unto us, to consider that we have been helpers to the truth, and furtherers of the Faith which is in Christ Jesus, we shall leave a good Name behind us, and receive and incorruptible Crown of eternal Glory.

Lastly, note with me, that when *Paul* wrote this Epistle, he was at *Rome*, and he joineth with him sundry others, which were the chief and principal, whose very names might carry some credit and authority to persuade *Philemon* in this matter which he undertook; yet in all this Epistle we have no mention of *Peter*, who is supposed to have lived there, to have died there, to have been Bishop there five and twenty years. He joineth to himself so many Assistants as he could, to obtain his suite. He writeth (as we heard before, from *Rome*) to have *Onesimus* pardoned, and he useth the name of *Timothy* to that purpose; why is *Peter* here forgotten?

Why doth he not join him with himself in the same Epistle, if he had been resident at Rome, as a good Bishop ought to have been? Again, we see he specifieth many by name, *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke*: but we have no mention of *Peter*. And it is said, that *Mark* was the Disciple of *Peter*, and by his Commandment wrote his Gospel: was it fit to name the Disciple, and to forget the Master? to remember the members, and to forget the Head? To express meaner persons, and to omit the principal? Besides, he calleth these men his fellow-helpers; *Paul* was as the Master-workman and chief builder, they were his helpers and partners in the business. Was not *Peter* also one of his brethren, and either a fellow-prisoner, or a fellow-helper in the Gospel? Wherefore then is he concealed? Observe with me from hence, and by Conference of many other Scriptures, that *Peters* being at *Rome*, is an uncertain opinion, and an ungrounded assertion.

It was by composition agreed upon between *Paul* and *Peter*, that *Peter* should preach to the *Jews*, and *Paul* to the *Gentiles*; how then could *Peter* sit as bishop at *Rome*? Or if he preached to the *Jews* at *Rome*, how cometh it to pass that the christiā religion was strange, & in a manner unknown unto them when *Paul* came to *Rome*, as appeareth in the end of the Acts of the Apostles, where they say unto him, *We will hear of thee what thou thinkest, for as concerning this Sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against*. Again, when *Paul* wrote to the *Romaines*, he willeth them to salute many particularly, and by name, both men and women: but he maketh no mention at all of *Peter*, which no doubt he would have done, if he had at that time also been at *Rome*. Furthermore, the Apostle Wrote many of his Epistles from the City of *Rome* (as we shown in the beginning of this Epistle) as for example; to the *Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Phillippians*, to *Timothy*, this to *Philemon*, and that other Epistle unto the Hebrews, (if it were his) and from thence, he sendeth many salutations, in the Name of many, that remained at *Rome*: Among whom, *Peter* is never mentioned, but his name and being there, is over-passed. Lastly, the Apostle testifieth, that while he was called forth to give an account of his Faith, *All did forsake him, and none assisted him*: wherefore, either *Peter* was not then at *Rome*, or if he were, he did shamefully forsake him. Thus then we conclude from these and such like Circumstances, that it cannot be gathered out of the holy Scriptures, that *Peter* was ever at *Rome*. Whereby we learn, that the Popish Religion is a doubtful and uncertain religion; their Faith is uncertain; their Hope is uncertain, their Heaven is uncertain. For, the supremacy of the Pope, and subjection to him, is made a fundamental point of Religion, and the believing of it necessary to salvation. *Bellarmino* a Cardinal of *Rome*, defining the Church, maketh it to be a Company of men, professing the faith, and partaking of the Sacraments, under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of *Rome*, so that such as hold no Pope, are judged and censured to build upon a false foundation, and therefore to be no true Churches, no sound Catholics, no right Christians.

The chief Controuersie between us and the Papists, is, for the Popes Monarchy and Authority over the Vniuersal Church, which is maintained by many of them, as a material point, and necessary for everyone to hold that looketh to be saved. Which is an Opinion both absurd, and ridiculous, and unreasonable. The Church Triumphant in Heaven, is not subject to the Pope of *Rome*. The Church of the Old-Testament, was never subject to the Pope of *Rome*. The Church of the New-Testament, which was when Christ lived upon the earth, was not subject

to the Pope of Rome. The Primitive Church, that was in the days of the Apostles, was not subject to the Pope of Rome. For during all this time, there was no Pope of Rome at all, and yet there was (during all this time) a Church; or else they must say, that the Triumphant Church, the Jewish Church, and the Christian Church, are no Churches at all.

Moreover, the necessity of subjecting every soul to this supposed supremacy, and pretended primacy, doeth blot out of the number of Churches; the East-Churches, and the South-Churches, and leaveth only the Roman Church, to whom the Title least of all belongeth, or at least, as little, as to any of the rest. Besides, at the death of every Pope, and in every vacancy of that Sea (which sometimes hath been no small time) the Church should fail and fall: for how should the faithful then be subject to the Bishop of Rome, when there is no Byshoppe of Rome at all in the World. Furthermore, when there falleth out a Schism, so that there are two or three Popes that are together by the ears for the Popedom and Prelacie, the people are uncertain to which of them to cleave, and whether of them to obey.

Lastly, it is false, that the members of the Church must be subject to the Pope, seeing he is no better, nor no other, then that Antichrist which the Scripture hath fore-shown; time hath discovered; and the faithful have felt and suffered. Thus then we have seen, that howsoever the Romanists make it a principal matter of faith, to put our heads under the Popes Girdle, to bow our knees, to kiss his holy feet, and to fear the Thunderbolts of his wrath, yet all his jurisdiction is besides the Scriptures; nay contrary to the Scriptures: seeing *Peters* Byshopprick and being at Rome is very uncertain. To say no more: If then it be uncertain whether *Peter* were ever at Rome, then it must also be uncertain, whether he were Bishop of Rome; and if it be uncertain whether he were ever Bishop of Rome, then it must also be uncertain whether the Pope be Bishop of Rome, and his successor in that Sea; and if the Popes succession and Dominion over the Church be uncertain, his Triple Crown shaketh, and beginneth to totter: all which weighty burdens, do hang by a twines-thread of *Peters* being at Rome, which hath no footstep or foundation in the Scriptures. True it is, we dare not directly and peremptorily say, that he was never at Rome; we know how hard a thing it is to prove a negative, yet it is more likely and probable, that he was never there, then that he was ever there; the Scriptures being Judges. Who would willingly travail in a blind and uncertain way, where he cannot be assured whether he go right or wrong? But such is the journey that the popish passengers enter into, they walk in unknown paths, and tread the Mazes of many doubtful steps.

The Popish Writers cannot agree in what year *Peter* came to Rome: One hath assigned one time; Another, pointeth unto another time: They agree not how many years he stayed there, when he departed from thence, how long he sate Bishop there, who succeeded in his place immediately after him; whether *Clement*, or *Linus*, or *Cletus*, or *Anacletus*. It is made of absolute necessity by them to receive the Saeraments; yet by their Doctrine, no man can certainly know, whether he be partakers of them, or not, inasmuch as they teach, that all standeth upon the Priests intention, which can be known to none but to God and himself. Thus we see, how weak and woeful a Religion the Romish Religion is, and upon what silly and sandie foundations it resteth. Let us leave these uncertain by paths, and tread in the

beaten way of the Scripture, which cannot deceive: let us build our faith upon the rock which cannot be shaken, and forsake that Church that goeth a way she knoweth not, and leadeth her Children she knoweth not whether, and teacheth them to receive she knoweth not what, and believeth those things which she cannot prove. Thus much for the general Observations.

[*There salute thee Epaphras my Fellow-prisoner, &c.*]

These Verses do contain mutual salutations, with kind and Christian wishes one toward another. This is the winding up of the whole matter, wherein he reporteth the friendly greetings of the faithful which they sent to *Philemon*. This we see to be very common in the beginning of every Epistle. From hence we learn, that courteous speeches, and friendly salutations, are to be used of one Christian toward another, whether present or absent. All kind and courteous dealing ought to be shown mutually toward each other.

When *Melchizedek* met *Abraham*, he blessed him, Gen. 14. When the Angel came unto *Gideon*, he saluted him thus, *The Lord be with thee, thou valiaunt Man*. When *Boaz* in harvest time came among his Reapers, he said unto them, *The Lord be with you*; and they answered him, *The Lord bless thee*; that is, so soon as he saw the Laborers that reaped his fields, he began kindly to salute them, and to wish them well: they likewise returned the like answer back again (as an Echo) unto him.

The Angel *Gabriell* being sent of God unto the Virgin *Marie*, he said unto her, *Luke 1, 28. Hayle, thou that art freely beloved: the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst Weomen*. When Christ sent out his Apostles, and gave them Commission to preach to the lost Sheep of the house of Israel, and afterward, appointed seventy Disciples to second their Labors, he willed them to salute the places whether they came, *Into whatsoever Citty or Town ye shall come, enquire who is worthy in it, and there abide till ye go thence: and when ye come into an house, salute the same, and first say, Peace be to this house*. That which Christ commandeth his Disciples, himself practiseth toward his Disciples; for when he appeared to his Disciples after his resurrection, he said, *Peace be unto you*. The Apostle writing to the Romaines, spendeth the greatest part of the sixteenth Chapter in Salutations & Commendations sent too and fro among the Saints. Thus he concludeth another of his Epistles, *Finally (Brethren) fare ye well: be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of Love and Peace shall be with you: greet one another with an holy kiss; all the Saints salute you*. All these examples teach us this as an undoubted truth, that the use of kind and courteous speeches are beseeming the servants of God, and becometh their profession.

We shall not need to seek far to find out the true causes and reasons of this Doctrine. First, our well wishing one to another is a fruit of our love, and a means to maintain and continue love among us. To this purpose the Apostle *Peter*, doth command, not only that they should salute one another, but such as they loved, and such as loved them, Chap. 5. *Greet ye one another with the kiss of love*. If we would maintain love, we must wisely and carefully entertain such helps as may further us in the perfourmance of that duty, whereof this that now we speak off is one: so that we are to express our inward love by outward tokens, to the end it may be seen and appear unto others.

Secondly, our salutations are remembrances of our care and good affections toward these whom we greet well. It is a sign that we are not forgetful of them, but do greatly regard and respect them. This doth the Apostle Paul signify, Colos. 4, 12. *Epaphras the servant of Christ, which is one of you, saluteth you, and always striveth for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and full in all the will of God.* Where we see, he joineth these two things together, as depending one upon the other, his saluting of them, and his praying for them.

Lastly, to desire the good of others from the heart, is both a fruit of the spirit, and a good sign and testimony to our own selves that we are chosen of God to eternal life. To this purpose the Apostle numbering up many notable fruits of the spirit, maketh mention of *Love, Peace, Gentleness, Goodness, meekness, Long Suffering.* And in another place, he exhorteth them *as the elect of God, holy, and beloved, to put on the bowels of mercies, Kindnesse, Humbleness of mind, Meekness, Long-Suffering, Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another.* So then, if we shall consider that courteous speeches are tokens of love, remembrances of our affection, fruits of the spirit, and testimonies of our election, we may conclude, that it is the duty of one Church to wish well to another, and of one Christian to speak kindly to another.

We have heard the Doctrine confirmed, but before we come to the uses that arise from hence, it shall not be amiss briefly to answer an Objection or two that may stand in our way, which may seem to restrain and forbid that which here is commanded and allowed. We read in the book of the Kings, that when *Elisha* sent his servant *Gehazi* to the *Shunamites* house, he bad him if he met any, not to salute him: and if any man saluted him, he should answer him nothing. And when Christ sent out his disciples to preach, he gave them the same charge, and willed them to *Salute no man by the way.* Where the duty which is here approved, may seem there to be reprov'd. I answer, the drift and scope of those places is to be considered, and not the bare words to be urged. The intent of the Prophet speaking to his servant, and of Christ to his Disciples, is to enjoin those persons to omit for that time the practice of duties of common courtesy and civility, so far forth as they might stay or any way delay the performance of weightier affairs enjoined unto them. We must therefore understand the meaning of them comparatively, as if it had been said: Rather then you should any way hinder the quick dispatch and speedy practice of that business which is laid upon you, speak to no man in the way. So then, the meaning of the places is not simply and absolutely to forbid men to salute others, but so far to require the omitting of it, as it should be a let and an impediment unto them in doing their duties.

Secondly, we read in the Apostle *John*, in his second Epistle, *If there come any, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not to house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil.* Here again seemeth to be another prohibition, contrary to the precept and Injunction in this place. I answer, this place doth not forbid salutations & courtesy of man to man, but familiarity and acquaintance with Heretics, even such joining and closing with them, as may seem to give the least applause and approbation to their bad proceedings, and wicked opinions. Thus much of the loosing of these knottes, and answering the Objections that seem to contradict the Doctrine taught out of this place. Now let us handle the Uses.

First, we learn, that courtesy, with civil, gentle, friendly, & soft speeches, are to be entertained of the servants of God. This is it which Solomon teacheth in sundry places of the Proverbs, *A soft answer putteth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger.* And Cha. 25. *A Prince is pacified by staying of anger, and a soft tongue breaketh the bones.* This is the commandment that the Apostle giveth, *Be ye courteous one to another, and tender-hearted.* This is the commendation of Gideon, against the rage of the Ephraemites, that were grievously incensed, and sharply set against him; he answered them mildly and gently, and thereby their spirits abated towards him. The like we see in Abigail, when David's wrath was kindled against her husband and household, she pacified him by her loving and lowly answer, so that *he blessed God that sent her, and her that counseled him, and her counsel that restrained him from shedding blood.* A fire is soonest quenched by water, and anger is soonest appeased by gentleness. Let us plant this in the Garden of our hearts, and learn to give good speeches one to another, and show a friendly Countenance (even to them that wrong us, and abuse us) without any purpose or desire to revenge.

This is a Virtue hard to be found in these days among the sons of men, they cannot speak well one of another. This gentleness that teacheth us to deal courteously toward each other, is thinly sown in the furrows of our hearts. Wherefore, we must know that humanity and courteous dealing are not (as some imagine) excluded from Christians, as if nothing should be in them, but rigor and austerity. Indeed they are to deal roughly and rigorously with willful and wicked men, that are offensive and unruly, but we must be gentle, meek, and lowly toward such as are willing to be instructed. Hence then it appeareth, that our common forms of salutation are commendable, both practiced by word of mouth, and used in writing, standing upon the warrant of God's word, and example of the faithful. Let us therefore accustom our tongues to civility, to blessing, & wishing all good one to another. This becometh our profession, and witnesseth to all the world, that we are of pure conversation.

Secondly, this Doctrine serveth for reproof of diverse and sundry abuses that are too rife and common among us. It seemeth a light and ridiculous thing to many, to salute, and to be saluted, but it is of great force, and availeth much to the obtaining and getting of good will. It is a point of courtesy and humanity to salute others, and to pray for them. Let no man say these are very small and slender matters to be spoken of, and stood upon. We must acknowledge that our obedience is to be shown even in the least, and not in the greatest matters only. And a true Christian is to be seen and known, when he will yield in the practice of lesser points, and such as are not of greatest importance. Wherefore, seeing every Christian must thus behave himself, it reproveth diverse sorts of men.

First, such as are so strongly possessed, and rankly over-grown with malice and revenge, that they neither will salute such as they meet, nor answer such as salute them. These men are dainty of their speech, and as sparing of their words, as if every word of their mouth were worth a wedge of Gold. Hence it is, that many stand upon terms of their reputation, and look to have others bend unto them; they say, *Why should I salute him first? Or wherefore should I begin to speak unto him? Shall I yield myself or bring myself under him to be made his Foot-stool? I will not stoop or bow down: he hath first wronged me, let him*

therefore first seek to be reconciled: and if I should speak to him, I know he will not answer me, nor look toward me. These are goodly pretences and colourable shiftings to maintain Hatred, Displeasure, and privy Grudgings one against another, and cause us to pinch courtesy who shall begin to deal curteously one with another. But art thou resolved, that thou wilt not begin first, and as it were break the ye, but wait until another begin to salute thee? Thou must consider that the very *Publicans and Sinners do the same*, as our Savior teacheth Math. 5, 46, 47. *If ye love them which love you, what reward shall ye have? Do not the Publicans even the same? And if ye be friendly to your Brethren only, what singular thing do ye? Do not even the Publicans likewise? Wilt thou not yield and give place first? Be constant, and settled, and vnmoouable in a good thing: but in keeping an old grudge or a new displeasure, a goodman ought not to be stubborn and obstinate to continue therein forever. Doest thou think it a shame and reproach to thee, to change thy mind. Who doth so esteem and judge? Doth God? No, he accounteth it thy greatest honor to yield to that which he commandeth. Do the godly among whom thou livest? No, thou shalt rejoice them, and give good example to other, and and heap coals of fire upon their heads whom thou hast offended, and give a sound testimony of thy unfeigned love to thy brother that hath offended thee. Hath he hurt thee first, and done thee wrong? Be it so: he hath done evil, every man will confess it, no man will deny it, no man can defend it. Do thou good to him again for his evil, and provoke him by thy example, and do that which becometh thee, without looking wherein he faileth.*

Let us seek to be like our Heavenly Father, who maketh his Sun to arise upon the evil and good: and sendeth Rain on the just and unjust. It is a common thing in such as are rich and mighty, to pass by the poor, and never or seeldome vouchsafe them a word of their mouth which costeth them nothing. It is a praise and commendation to be honorable, yet humble. A proud heart testified by a scornful eye and a silent tongue, is to be reprov'd, wheresoever and in whomsoever it be found. On the other side, it is a great encouragement to men of the lower sort, when such as are great and mighty in the world, do kindly salute them, and friendly speak unto them: they are greatly affected at it, they are moved to love them, and stirred up to be cheerful in well doing, when they see they are regarded, and not despised, or accounted base in their eyes, nor respected as their Foot-stool.

Secondly, such as are reprov'd make an outward show of the performance of this duty, but inwardly are as far, and some-times farther from the right practice of it then the former. These are such as are true Christians in name, but not in deed: in show, but not in substance; in word, but not in heart. These have Charity in their lips, but enmity in their souls. They speak of peace, but they nourish hatred. A man would judge them to be the flower of courtesy, and to have all couplements of humanity in them, and yet notwithstanding, all this is but a mask and vizard to color their hypocrisy. These are a most vile and wicked kind of men, that have sweet and sugared tongues, but malicious and envious hearts, and full of venom. This we see in *Joab*, who took *Abner* aside in the Gate to *speak with him peaceably, and smote him under the fifth rib, that he died*: and likewise he dealt with *Amasa*, he said to him, *Art thou in health my Brother, and took him by the Beard with the right hand, to kiss him: but with the other hand he smote him with the sword, and shed out his bowels to the ground*. The like salutation we see in *Judas*, who had given the multitude that came with swords and staves from the

High-Priests and Elders of the people, a Token, saying, *Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he, lay hold on him: and forthwith he came to Jesus and said, God save thee Master, and kissed him.* Thus he betrayed the son of man with a kiss.

We must have our words and hearts go together, and not one wander and stray from the other. We must not have our words softer then Oil, & hide swords and spears within us. This is cruel and deceitful dealing; this is far from true Christianity; this is far from that plain and simple dealing that ought to be in us. Such men are the most dangerous and pernicious enemies that are, they are hardly known, and therefore hardly avoided. One of these false hearted Brethren, is worse then an hundred open & professed adversaries. A pit which is covered, so that thou canst not see it, is more likely to work thy hurt, and cause thee to fall into it, then that which is manifest to be seen. Let us therefore remember, that our words be always seasoned and accompanied with truth. Let our mouth speak as the heart thinketh; and let us take heed of lying, cogging, cozening, glozing, smoothing, and dissembling, which are the works of the devil, & the fruits of the flesh, and the badges of Hypocrites.

Thirdly, as we have heard that they are to be reprov'd, that disdain to speak to others; and such as are content to use friendly greetings in word, but their hearts go not with them: so likewise, such are condemned as use unkind and vncourteous speeches; nay foul and unclean, ungodly and profane communication. This the Apostle teacheth, *Ephes, 4. Let all bitterness and anger, and wrath, crying, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all maliciousness.* Such was the snappish answer of Cain, *Am I my Brothers keeper?* So for this cause Nabell being a churlish & currish man, is concluded to be a fool and a wicked man.

This uncivil & bitter dealing, is a great sign, and a certain note of an unregenerate and carnal man. Let us beware of all railing & rotten speeches. The mouth is the Messenger of the heart, and from the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. A filthy tongue, argueth a filthy heart: an vnbrideled tongue, a licentious heart. A poisoned tongue, that casteth out banning and cursing, doth manifest a cursed and corrupt heart. The tongue that raueth and rageth beyond all measure, and belcheth out blasphemies, and vomiteth out pocky and plaguy speech (as it were) the over-charging of a loathsome stomach, doth show (be it spoken with reverence) a pocky and plaguy heart.

It is a shame almost to speak those things, I will not say which these men do in secret, but which they speak openly, publicly, evidently. And yet (alas) how common a thing is it (when men and women are a little heated and provoked) to wish all evil to fall upon the persons of their Brethren and their Cattle; nay sometimes upon their own wives, their own children, their own Servants, their own Cattle, crying out a vengeance on them, a plague of God to come upon them, a Murraine take them, the Devil of hell go with thee, and such like; which come from an uncircumcised mouth, nay from an uncircumcised and unregenerate. Neither, let any allege for the excuse of their cursed and wretched speeches, *It is a custom they have gotten, but that they mind and mean no such thing, whatsoever they speak;* for first, this is a cursed custom: and a custom in sinning, the greater it is, the worse it is. The more thou doest accustom thy tongue unto it, the harder it is to be left. Our Savior teacheth, that *A good man out of the good Treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of an evil*

Treasure bringeth forth evil thing: But I say unto you, that of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof at the day of Judgment. If then we must reckon and account at the end of the World and of our life for idle words; what madness is it for us to cast out and disgorge blasphemous, wicked, and cursed speeches, which will bring upon us horrible plagues and heavy punishments to be suffered in hell fire? Hence it is, that Christ saith in the words following, *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* Here-unto the Apostle James agreeth, Chap. 1. *If any man among you seemeth Religious, and refraineth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's Religion is vain.* Neither let them say, they think not evil, they mean not as they speak: for this doth not take away the evil, but rather increase it, in as much as they add sin unto sin, hypocrisy to impiety; as it were drunkenness unto thirst. Let such acquaint their hearts with blessing, not with cursing: and strive against their corruptions which are grown to an head and have gotten a custom in them, remembering the saying of the Prophet, Psal. 109. *As he loved Cursing, so shall it come unto him: and as he loved not blessing, so shall it be far from him: as he clothed himself with Cursing like a raiment, so shall it come into his Bowels like water, and like Oil into his Bones.* Let us therefore all of us put in practice the precept of the Apostle, *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouths, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.* Where he declareth, that corrupt speech should be to the ear, as unsavory meat to the stomach. A rotten Sheep is known by his bleating, so is an unregenerate heart by his words. Wherefore as the taste abhorreth rotten meat, so should our minds loath and detest rotten and irreverent talk.

Lastly, seeing we are taught to use all gentle and courteous communication, and all loving salutations and well-wishings one toward another; this teacheth us, that we must all diligently study and practice the government of the tongue, to order it aright and in due manner. This is a worthy study, it is an hard study, it is a profitable study. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith, Psal. 34. *What man is he that desireth life, and loveth long days for to see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile.* To this purpose he speaketh in another Psalm, *I thought, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue, I will keep my mouth bridled, while the wicked is in my fight.* The difficulty and hardness of this study, the Apostle James signifieth and setteth down, when he calleth the tongue a world of wickedness, and an unruly evil, Chap. 3. *The whole nature of Beasts and of Birds, and of creeping things, and things of the Sea, is tamed and hath been tamed by the nature of man: but the tongue can no man tame.* The profit of this study, together with the hardness, is noted by the same Apostle in the same Chap. *If any man sin not in word, he is a perfect man, and able to bridle all the body.*

Now because it is so excellent and difficult a study to guide and govern the tongue aright, we must know, that there is an Art and Science thereof to be learned, and diverse rules and precepts to be observed; that we may know when to speak, and when to hold our peace. There is no Art whatsoever attained unto, without knowledge, practice, and experience. The first lesson that we must learn in this study, is, to crave of God his assisting grace, that may make this labor easy, and the work pleasant unto us: without which, we shall find it impossible to hold in the Reins of our unruly and untamed tongues.

Hence it is that the Prophet saith; *Set a watch (ô Lord) before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips*: Declaring thereby, that of our selves we are not able to govern our tongues. And again he saith else-where; *O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise*. If God do not open our mouths, we can never order our tongues as we ought. Before we speak, we must diligently consider what we speak, and to what end. The Wiseman telleth us, *That he which answereth a matter before he hear it, it is folly and shame to him*.

To this purpose the Apostle teacheth us, *To be slow to speak, and swift to hear*. This virtue appeared notably in *Elihu, Job 32. Who waited till Job had spoken, for they were more ancient in years then he*. In our speaking, we must be careful that our words be gracious, and seasoned with wisdom, truth, reverence, modesty, meekness, and sobriety, as it were with Salt, which are contrary to the foolish, rotten, and graceless talk that aboundeth in our days; wherein men are grown to be very Beasts, *Their Throat is an open Sepulcher, they use their tongues to deceit, the Poison of Asps is under their Lips, their Mouth is full of cursing and bitterness*. Nay, the venom and Poison of their tongues, is worse then the poison of Serpents: and yet they would think themselves greatly wronged if they should be charged to be as a Brood of Adders, and a Generation of Vipers. For who knoweth not that the Serpent cannot hurt a man, except he be present to see him and bite him: but such as have not learned to rule the tongue that is unruly, and to govern it from breaking out into ungodly and cursed speaking (which is the Devils Language) do hurt men as well absent as present; as well far off, as near at hand; as much when they are from them, as when they are with them. The holy use of the tongue is the language of *Canaan*, which we must all covet to speak, that it may be ordered according to the Word and will of GOD. But when the tongue, which is an excellent Member, given unto us of God to praise and glorify his Name, is abused, it is kindled by the fire of Hell; according to the saying of the Apostle *James, Chapter 3. The Tongue is Fire; yea, a World of wickedness: so is the Tongue set among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of Nature, and it is set on Fire of Hell*. This he setteth forth more at large in the words following, and exhorteth us, that the harder it is to rule the tongue, the more care we should use in the government of it, and apply it to the honor of God, and the good of our Neighbor.

Hence it is, that he reproveth those that one while are blessing, another while are cursing with it, blowing sometimes hot, and sometimes cold, sometimes praying to God, and anon railing at, and reviling their Brethren; *There-with (saith he) bless we GOD, even the Father; and therewith curse we Men, which are made after the similitude of GOD: out of one mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing: my Brethren, these things ought not to so to be. Doth a Fountain send forth out of one place sweet Water and Bitter? &c*. Let us then use such meekness and moderation in our speech, as that we do not break out into Choller: let our answers be soft and mild, that anger be not kindled, nor increased, nor continued. If any shall revile us, and rage against us, our duty is to bless, and not to rail. This is the Commandment of Christ, *I say unto you, love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that hurt you and persecute you, &c*. Thus doth the Apostle *Peter* speak, *Love as Brethren: be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, neither rebuke for rebuke: but contrariwise bless, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should be heirs of blessing*. If the least occasion of strife and contention arise among men, it cannot be decided; nay, nor heard without such bitter tants

& reproaches, as ought not to be, nor to break out among Brethren. We ought to be of a patient Nature, and follow the example of God, who beareth with us all. The Apostle Jude affirmeth, *That Michaell the Archangel, when he strove against the Devil, and disputed about the body of Moses, durst not blame him with cursed speaking, but said; The Lord rebuke thee.* Where we see, that the Arch-angel abstained from all railing, having to do with the Devil, the greatest enemy of God and his people. Be it, that we have to deal with bad men, and such as are notoriously evil, yet we must not take liberty to our selves to use reviling speeches, to brawle, and contend, seeing the Angel would not do it, and he would not do it against a worse adversary then we have, or can have any. We must commit revenge unto God, who hath said; *Uengeance is mine, I will repay.*

[*Marcus, Aristarchus, &c.*]

Touching *Mark* mentioned in this place, we have spoken already, and declared out of the Acts of the Apostles, that he was a Jew of the circumcision, and called to be an Evangelist, who also wrote one of the Gospels as he had learned of *Peter*. It appeareth, that his Parents were well acquainted with the Apostles, and received them into their house; whereby it came to pass, that *Mark* himself was converted to the Faith, and endued with the gifts of the Holy-Ghost, so that he was chosen to be a Fellow-helper unto them, and travailed with them into diverse partes of the Worlde. True it is, he did at one time forsake *Paul* in *Pamphilia*, and shrunk in his shoulders from the trouble: yet notwithstanding this weakness, he ceased not afterward to labor in the preaching and propagation of the Gospel; and albeit *Paul* would not take him with him into their company, *Who went not with them to the work*, yet *Barnabas* took him, and sailed unto *Cyprus*. He was present with the Apostles at the first and famous Council holden at *Jerusalem*, and heard the matters debated and disputed among them. We see here in this place, and other places of the Scripture, that he had reconciled himself to *Paul*, and blotted out the infamy of his backwardness and backsliding; and therefore he is accepted again among them, so that they gave unto him the right hand of fellowship.

From hence we learn (this Scripture being compared with other) that it is required of us to have a care and compassion toward the weak, not utterly to cast off such as have fallen and failed in any duty. When we see any not so constant in the truth as they ought, and we desire, we must not by and by shake them off, or stand aloof from them, but rather strengthen and encourage them, and make much of them. This practice is commanded unto us in sundry places. The Apostle exhorteth hereunto; *Him that is weak in the Faith receive unto you, but not for Controuersies of disputations: Why dost thou condemn thy Brother, or why dost thou despise thy Brother?* And in another place of the same Epistle, *We which are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves.* To this purpose he writeth to the *Thessalonians*, *We desire you, Brethren, admonish them that are out of order: comfort the feeble-minded: bear with the weak: be patient toward all men.* To these Commandments, we may add sundry examples of the faithful, that have given us an example to follow. But first let us see the most perfect example of all, the example of Christ Jesus our Lord, of whom it was prophesied thus; *A bruised Reede shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he*

bring forth judgment unto victory. This appeareth, in his loving calling of all unto him that are weary and heavy laden, promising to ease them, and refresh them: so that he refused not the company of Publicans and Sinners. When *Aquila* and *Priscilla* had heard *Apollos*, who was weak in knowledge, *They took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.* The like we see in *Paul* toward the incestuous *Corinthian*, whom he would have received again into the bosom of the Church, and admitted into the company and society of the faithful. All which commandments and examples do evidently prove unto us this truth, that such as are weak in the faith are not to be cast off, but rather cherished and encouraged.

See the farther confirmation here of by force of reason drawn from the nature of God, from the members of the Church, from the person of such as are weak. First, if we consider the gracious and merciful dealing of God toward such as err of frailty and infirmity, that he is both willing and able to strengthen and confirm them, we shall be put in mind thereby of our own duty. The Apostle writing to the *Romans* Chap. 14. and exhorting them not to shun, but to take into their company him that is weak in the faith, giveth this as a reason, *He shall be established, for God is able too make him stand.* If then, God will establish them, we must make much of them: and if he will make them stand, we must not thrust them down.

Secondly, it is required of all the members of the Church to have a special care not only of the strong, but also of the feeble partes. We see how it standeth in the members of our body, *The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor the head again to the feet, I have no need of you: yea, much rather those members of the body which seem to be more feeble, are necessary, &c.* Now as it is in the natural body, that the chief members have a care of the least, so it ought to be in the mystical body, wherein the faithful should have the same care one for another. Add heerevnto that we are commanded to exhort and admonish one another, according as we see them to have need.

Thirdly, we must take heed least by our rigorous and austere dealing, the weak brother be discouraged and driven from the faith. It is no wisdom to lay a great and heavy load upon the back of a weak Beast, least his back be broken, and the burden miscarry, and the Master be disappointed. To this purpose it is, that the Apostle, persuading the *Corinthians* to take unto them the incestuous person whom they had put out from among them, saith: *Ye ought now to forgive him, and comfort him, least the same should be swallowed up with overmuch heaviness: wherefore I pray you that you would confirm your love toward him.* No man almost is so unmerciful to his poor Beast, but he considereth what he is able to bear. Vnseasonable severity can do no good, but much harm. Seeing therefore God is able to establish the weak, seeing the partes of the Church must have a care one of another, and lastly, seeing the feeble minded are not to be discouraged, in all these respects we may conclude, that the weak in knowledge, in faith, or in obedience, are not to be despised, but rather to be instructed, strengthened, and confirmed.

Let us come to the uses, and handle them as briefly as we can. First, this serveth to reprove those that do not only passover, but contemn and despise such as any way come behind them. If they see a man weak or feeble, they are so far from helping of him up, that they are

ready to disgrace him and cast him down. These are like to them that are described in the Prophet, who, together with Hypocrisy nourish pride in themselves and join unto it contempt to others, *Which say, Stand apart, come not near to me, for I am holier then thou.* Or like unto the *Pharisee* mentioned in the Gospel who prayed thus with himself, *O God, I thank thee that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican.* If a man have one of his eyes, or legs weaker then the other, will he reject or neglect it, and not rather look to it, and seek to strengthen it, and cure it? Whē the fire is going out, we are wont not to cast water upon it, but to thro on more Coals, or to bring more Wood to kindle it. When the body is feeble and sickly, we do not use to starve it, or stifle it; but to cherrish it, to diet it, and keep it warm. So ought it to be in the members of Christ's body, when we see any stand at a stay, and as it were begin to pine and languish, we should bring them home into the Sheepfold of Christ: when we see any wounded, we should bind up their wounds, and pour in Oil and Balm to refresh them: we must seek them that are lost, and gather them that are dispersed. As for those that discourage and discountenance such as are of humble and broken harts, and by their unseasonable severity bring them to despair, let them know, that they are no better then the very Instruments of the Devil, who are hired as Journey-men to do his work, and do usurp the very office of the Devil. He is the accuser, hater, and persecutor of the faithful, but especially he seeketh to undermine the weak, and to swallow them up in the quick sandes of desperation, without help or hope. In this consideration the Apostle moveth the *Corinthians* to forgive the incestuous person, saying; *To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for verily, if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the sight of Christ, least Satan should circumvent us, for we are not ignorant of his enterprises.* Wherefore, as God hath appointed comfort to his afflicted and contrite servants, so they are justly to be taxed, that show rigor, when they should show mercy, and draw out the sword when they should put it up. Of these merciless men, doth the holy man *Job* oftentimes complain, who when he lacked and looked for comfort, but could find none; he was as one mocked of his Neighbor, and crieth out (in the extremity of his sorrow) of his friends, *Miserable comforters are ye all.* Thus it fareth with many of God's dear Children, and our poor Brethren, when as thorough great anguish of soul, and vexation, they call (as *Job* once did) for comfort, *Have pity upon me: have pity upon me (O ye my Friends) for the hand of God hath touched me:* yet their acquaintance are strangers unto them, their neighbors have forsaken them, their brethren are removed far from them, and their familiars have forgotten them.

True it is, there is a time of severity and sharpness, and such as are obstinate and intractable, as an untamed Heifer, are to be terrified with sharp handling, that they may be made fear. But, there is a difference to be made between sinner and sinner, and the servants of God must discern aright between Offender and Offender, not judging of all alike, nor dealing with all alike, according to the Doctrine and direction of the Apostle *Jude*, *Have compassion of some, in putting difference: and other save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, &c.* This Wisdom we ought all to crave, that we may do things in due season, that we may not purge humors when we should restore Nature; neither yet go about to heal, when we should cut and lance.

The Wiseman to this purpose, hath a worthy saying, *Proverbs 25, 11. A word spoken in his place, is like Apples of Gold, with pictures of Silver.* Let us not be in the number of such, *As with our lies make sad the heart of the righteous, whom the Lord hath not made sad: nor strengthen the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life.* Let us take heed, that it be not justly and truly spoken of us, which the Prophet chargeth upon the Shepherdes of Israel, *The weak have ye not strengthened, the sick have ye not healed: neither have ye bound up the broken, nor brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost, but with cruelty and with rigor have ye ruled them, &c.* God will require an account of us touching his Sheep, and such as we despise, he accounteth and respecteth as most dear and precious in his sight.

Secondly, must we have a respect to the weak? Then we must acknowledge it to be our duty, to cherrish such good things as we see in any of our Brethren, remembering the saying of our Savior, *Math. 18, 33. Oughtest not thou also to have had pity on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?* God doth show mercy and pity upon us; and therefore, if we will be his Children, we must not be unlike our heavenly Father. Such is the state and condition of men, that whethersoever we turn us, we cannot but see some of our Brethren feeble and fainting, and ready to sink under the burden; so that they are ready to perish, unless we put under our hand to uphold them. In this respect, so many as are members of the Church, ought to be so many Physicians one to another, that we may be means of curing and comforting one another. We are charged to be keepers of them, to look unto them, and by all good means to tender their good. It is an excellent precept given by the Apostle, *Gal. 6, 1, 2. Brethren, if a man be suddenly taken in any offense, ye which are spiritual, restore such one with the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, least thou also be tempted: bear ye one another's burden, and so fulfill the Law of Christ.* Where we see the Apostle urgeth us to this duty by putting us in mind of our own infirmity. We so stand today, as that we are ready to fall tomorrow; nay, we continue this hour, that we are ready to give over the next. Yea, such is the mercy of God oftentimes toward such as are weak ones, that when he hath made them once to see their own frailties, he maketh them at the last stronger, and more steadfast in the Faith, then such as seemed to be more forward, and many degrees before them. How weak was *Nicodemus*? He came to Jesus by night at the first, he had a good desire to be instructed, but he was ignorant in the principles of Religion, he durst not show himself openly to be his Disciple for fear of the Jews.

The like we might say of *Joseph of Arimathea*, another Disciple of Christ, (but secretly to avoid danger;) notwithstanding God did so bless them both with increase of strength, and the spirit of courage and boldness, that the little light of Grace and spark of Faith that was in them, did so shine and break out into such a flame, that they were not ashamed to profess themselves to be his Disciples: when the rest forsook him, they begged his body of *Pilate*, they wrapped it in linen clothes, with Myrrh, and Alloes, and sweet Odours, and bestowed the honor of burial upon him. Thus it falleth out oftentimes, that they which are first are last, and the last are first. We know not what storms and Tempestes hang over our own heads, and what perilous times may come upon us: we know not what weakness we shall show in them, howe great the Rebellion of the Flesh will be, and what comfort we shall want

our selves. The Prophet pronounceth him *Blessed, that judgeth Wisely of the poor, and promiseth that the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble.* If we have any feeling of this happiness, or have any Faith in our hearts touching this promise, let us make it manifest, by seeking the good of our weak Brethren. It is an hiddeous and horrible cruelty and out-rage by our want of mercy, and of feeling their infirmities, to hinder the salvation of any one for whom Christ died.

Hence it is that the Apostle saith, Rom. 15, 2, 3. *Let every man please his Neighbor, in that which is good, to edification: for Christ also would not please himself, but as it is Written, The rebukes of them that rebuked thee, fell on me.* It cost a great price to Redeem a soul, and to bring it from Death to Life; from Hell to Heaven; and therefore, we must use all means (wherewith the Lord shall enable us) to comfort such as are Comfortlesse, by the Comfort where-with we our selves are comforted of God. There is no Man but desireth to find Peace and Comfort in himself. What is this life of ours without it? If a man should live many thousand years upon the face of the earth, and have experience of nothing but sorrow, anguish, misery, and vexation of Spirit, so that he could feel no quietness, no rest, no consolation, no tranquility in these days of his Pilgrimage: would he not desire to be out of such a life, and prefer death before it? Do we then wish for peace? And would we find comfort? The greatest comfort in the World that can come unto us, and refresh and cheer up our Souls, is to win and save Souls. Blessed are we, if we have been Instruments to gain but one Soul unto God. It is the greatest gain; it is the best Traffique; it is the sweetest Marchandize. It shall be said unto us in the last day; *Thou good and faithful Servant, well done: thou hast been faithful over little, I will make thee Ruler over much, enter into thy Masters joy.* Let us set this before our eyes, and consider before hand the price of the reward, when the time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Lastly, seeing God hath such a care of them that are weak, that he would not have them cut off, but cared for of all men: this ought to serve as a notable encouragement unto them, to labor to grow in Grace, and to increase more and more, that they may proceed from strength to strength, and so come to a perfect man in Christ Jesus. True it is, there are degrees of Faith, all have not one measure of Grace; and yet the least measure, if it be but as a grain of Mustard-seed, is of power to save our Souls. If there be wrought in us by the sanctifying Spirit of God, the beginnings and seeds of Faith; to wit, an humbling of our selves under the burden of our sins, an acknowledgement and feeling that we stand in need of Christ, an hungering and longing desire to be made partaker of Christ and all his merrits, and a flying to the Throne of Grace from the sentence of the Law, troubling the conscience, trembling under the same: if these preparations (as it it were ploughings up of the furrows of our hearts) be found in us, God will not cast us away, but make this weak measure of Grace to be effectual to salvation. This is a sweet comfort to all saint hearts, that are every foot like to sink down, and as it were to give up the Ghost. This ought to be a forcible means to work thankfulness in them, when in the examination of their hearts, they shall find the least measure of Grace settled in them, and know their merciful Father willing to acknowledge it, to accept it, and to reward it. Not that we should flatter our selves in our wants, or content

our selves in our weakness, to stand always at one stay: but hereby to be brought forward in well-doing, and to run the race with all cheerfulness that is set before us.

This a notable sign of a true and sincere heart, when we feel our strength to come every day unto us, and an access to be added to our former course. For if we desire to be better and better, and deal as men that run in a race, who stand not still in the mid-way, but press with might and main to the mark: this is an infallible note of a sincere heart. This is it which the Apostle testifieth. *Phil. 3, 14, 15. Brethren, I count not myself, that I have attained to it, but one thing I do: I forget that which is behind, and endeavor myself unto that which is before, And follow hard toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* It is the goodness of God to accept the small measure of Faith that we bring unto him. This granteth not liberty unto us to do nothing, to stir neither hand nor foot, or to content our selves that we go not backward. For we must all know and understand, that the beginnings of grace are deceitful and counterfeit, unless there be a growth and increase.

The kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of Mustard seed, which at the first is so small and little, that it is scarce discerned, but after that it is cast into the ground of a prepared and purified heart, it rooteth deeply, it groweth speedily, it spreadeth exceedingly. It is like unto Leaven, which a woman taketh and hideth in three pecks of Meale, till all be Leauened. The Master delivering his Talents unto his servants that he had called, saith unto them, *Occupy until I come*; he doth not bid them hide them in the earth, *Luke 19, 13.* Hereunto cometh the exhortation that *Paul* giveth unto *Timothy*, who had greatly profited in godliness, and was brought up in the understanding of the holy Scriptures from a child, *Chapter. 1. I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is thee, by the putting on of mine hands.* The word is a borrowed speech from the fire, which must be evermore kindled and kept with a new supply from going out. If a man see his Corn that is in the field stand at a stay, and not shoot forward, he conceiveth little hope of any plentiful Harvest. If we set a Scholar to School, and he always continue in the same form, and never come forth in his learning, we will by and by conjecture, he will prove a Dunce. Or if we see a Child that doth not grow in strength and stature, we use to say; he will never be a tall man; he will never be but a Dwarf. So is it with all those that have had the plough of God's word brought in among them, and the ground of their hearts sowed with the precious and immortal seed of the word, and their hearts moystned with a gracious rain, as it were the shower upon the herbs, and yet continue dry and barren without any fruit; it is to be feared, that they will shortly fall back and wither away. If we have been brought up in the School of Christ, and have heard the Lecture of the Law and Prophets; nay, of Christ and his Apostles read unto us, and often sounding in our ears, and yet find no access of knowledge or increase of obedience, we may look every day to be thrust out of this School; yea, to see the School dissolved and turned to another use. If we have had both Milk and Meat brought unto us, and placed at the Table of the Lord full fraught with all delicates, *And yet neither as New-borne Babes desire that sincere Milk of the word that we may grow thereby: nor yet know that strong meat belongeth to them that are of age, that in the end we mayall meet together unto a perfect Man, and unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ, certainly we shall always remain as Children, wavering, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine by the deceit of men, and with craftiness, whereby they lay in wait*

to deceive. But if we feel the weakness of our Faith, and the rest of the Graces of God's Spirit, and unfeignedly desire the increase and supply of them, he will fulfill our desire, and we shall know to our endless comfort, that our desire is not in vain: yea, to feel the weakness of Grace, is of Grace; to see the weakness of Faith, is of Faith; and that which is yet more, he accepteth the desire to believe in Christ, as Faith it self; the desire to repent from dead works, as repentance it self: the desire to be reconciled to God, as reconciliation it self. They are pronounced *Blessed, that hunger and thirst after righteousness, because they shall be satisfied.* Whosoever is a thirst, hath promise made unto him, *That he shall have the Well of the Water of life freely given.* We know by a natural feeling what hunger and thirst is, and when we are hungry, when thirsty; and when not. Properly we are hungry, when we are empty, and thereby wax faint and feeble, and finding both our emptiness and weakness, desire meat to satisfy and content us. Properly we are thirsty, when we feel a drouth or dryness in us, and desire some drink to refresh us. In like manner, and by good proportion, they are said to hunger and thirst after righteousness, that feel they want it, and would fain have it. If we feel our selves to be out of Christ, and do long after the blood of Christ to be redeemed with it, and to be justified by it, then we truly do hunger after Christ. Thus much touching this Doctrine, which ariseth only by comparing this Salutation with other Scriptures.

[*Demas, and Luke my fellow-helpers.*]

In these words also by conference of other places, ariseth a good instruction to us that profess the Gospel of Christ Jesus. For this is he of whom he was forsaken, as he showeth, *2. Tim. 4, 10. Demas hath forsaken me, &c.* He is called in this place a fellow-helper of *Paul*, yet the vanity of this world drew him back, being overcome with the toil and trouble that accompanied the professors of the truth, and the preachers thereof. He doth not mean that he had clean renounced the Gospel, and was become a back-slider and cut off from the Church as a rotten member, but he shrunk back for his advantage, or because he was loath to suffer adversity with the people of God: as it he should have said, he preferred the love of the world before the love of God. But whether ever he recovered himself or not, and renounced the world which he overmuch loved, we have not so full and fair a warrant, as we have for *Mark*: seeing *Paul* endeth with forsaking of him, and the Scripture leaveth him in the embracing of this present evil world, so that his repentance is uncertain unto us. Behold here, how this man is set as upon a Stage or Scaffold, a and mark of infamy branded upon him forever, so long as the world shall continue, and the name of Christ Jesus shall be preached, because he withdrew himself from the pains and publishing of the Gospel, and from the company of *Paul*, waxing dainty and delicate, loving his own ease and pleasure too much. From hence we learn, that many which seem faithful and forward in the profession, do afterward fall back and give over. Such as seemed to have life in them, are become dead: such as seemed to have heat in them, are stark cold: such as did run a great pace, and led the way to others, do now some of them stand still, many run back-ward, and others do wander out of the way, and others hinder those that would enter into the right way. These first give their names to Christ, and afterward shake hands with the world, and embrace the friendship thereof. We see this truth verified unto us by sundry examples and lamentable experience of all times. *Judas* was chosen to be one of the twelve Apostles, yet he fell away

dangerously and desperately, he became a Traitor and a Devil, according to the saying of our Savior, *Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devil?* To this purpose the Apostle John describeth such back-sliders, Chap. 2. *They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they should have continued with us.* Hereunto cometh the Parable propounded by Christ, Math. 21, 28. *A certain man had two sons, and came to the elder, and said; Son, go and work today in my Vineyard: but he answered and said, I will not: yet afterward he repented himself and went. Then came he to the second, and said, likewise, and he answered, I will sir, yet he went not.* He seemed forward, but he hung back: he promised much, but he performed nothing at all. The like we might say of the rich man, he came unto Christ, and said unto him, *Good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?* yet when he was tried, *he went away sorrowful,* and his good beginnings were as the morning dew, verifying that which is spoken in the same Chapter *Many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first.*

Our Savior setting down the parable of the sower, yieldeth diverse effectual reasons to move us to embrace this truth. For first, the Devil is a subtle enemy that stealeth upon us, and goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour. If the word be not deeply rooted in our hearts, but do only swim in our brains, and abide in our mouths, it is in continual danger to be taken away from us. Hence it is, that Christ saith, *Whensoever any man heareth the word of that Kingdom, and understandeth it not, that evil one cometh, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart, and this is he which hath received the seed by the way side.* This enemy is ever busy with us, and will never suffer us to have any rest, so long as any good thing appeareth in us.

Secondly, the Cross is for the most part the companion of the Gospel, which while some seek to avoid, they make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. Our Savior describing another sort of hearers saith, *He that received seed in the stony ground, is he which heareth the word, and incontinently with joy receiveth it: yet hath he no root in himself, and endureth but a season: for as soon as tribulation or persecution cometh because of the word, by and by he is offended.* So long as we may profess the truth with peace and liberty of conscience, and with the favor of men, it is an easy and ordinary matter to be a professor of the Gospel, and an hearer of the word. But when troubles and temptations arise, they that are not thoroughly grounded, do quickly fall away.

Thirdly, as persecutions do follow the Gospel, so for the most part doth shame, reproach, and poverty. And as it is a common thing with us to desire the ease of the flesh and the pleasures of the body, so we are inclined to covet the profits and commodities of this life. This caused Demas to forsake Paul, because he embraced this present world. Heerevnto cometh that which Christ teacheth, Math. 13. *He that received the seed among Thorns, is he that heareth the word: but the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he is made unfruitful.* So long as the world (as a rank Thorn) sticketh in our throats, or rather in our hearts, and we begin to prefer it in our thoughts and practices, before the truth, it is impossible that we should hold out our profession unto the end. Wherefore, seeing the Devil is always ready to fist us, persecution to try us, and the world to ensnare us, we must know

that for these causes it cometh to pass, that many fall back, which seemed forward in the faith.

The Uses are many that may be made hereof. First, we may conclude, that woeful is their estate and condition that shrink away, and melt as wax before the Sun. The estate of such men is most fearful, inasmuch as they are become very Dogs and Swine. It had been better for them, that they had never known the truth: nay, it had been better, if they had never been borne, as our Savior speaketh of *Judas*. This the Apostle *Peter* setteth down in his second Epistle, Chapter, 2. *If they, after they have escaped from the filthiness of the world, through the acknowledging of the Lord, and of the Savior Jesus Christ, are yet tangled again therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them then the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have acknowledged the way of righteousness, then after they have acknowledged it, to turn away from the holy commandment given unto them. But it is come unto them, according unto the true Proverb, the Dog is returned unto his own vomit: and, the Sow that was washed to the wallowing in the mire.* It is a notable comfort unto us, when we are as faithful trees in the Garden of God, *That will bring forth their fruit in due season: whose lease shall never fade*, when we do not suffer everyone to go before us, but have an holy emulation and striving to go before others, and even to out-go our selves: so it is an evil sign and a fearful forerunner of condemnation; to run, and then to give over running: to wrestle, and then to give over wrestling. It is an hard thing to make a good beginning: we are not easily brought to set forward: but to trip while we are in our journey, and to wax weary of proceeding, is the common custom of our common professors. We see this in the Children of *Israel*, while they were in the Wilderness going to the Land of *Canaan*, they did not keep a constant course, but sometimes they stood at a stay; and sometimes they went backward, and sometimes they wished themselves again in the Land of *Egypt*. Thus it fareth with us that are Pilgrimes and Strangers in this life, when we have once given our hand to the Plough we are ready to look back, as *Lots* wife did when she was gone out of *Sodom*. Every little thing is able to turn us out of the way: and being once turned out of it, it is harder to bring us into it again, then if we were never entered into it. Woe therefore be unto such as follow *Demas*, *That begin to build but are not able to make an ende*. Great plagues and grievous judgments hang over their heads, they do not return *And repent, and do their first works, and redeem the time, because the days are evil He that knoweth his Masters will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes*. Yea, often-times God giveth over such time-seruers and back-sliders, into a reprobate sense, and taketh away his holy spirit from them, so that they prove mere Monsters, and worse then savage beasts. Who were greater enemies to the Gospel then the *Jews*, that hade the light among them, and offered unto them, whereas by their calling they were the outward Church, and the professed people of God. *Judas* being an Apostle of Christ, became the most deuelish man upon the earth, exceeding all the *Jews* in treachery and impiety. This a grievous judgment of God, punishing sin with sin, and recompensing great vengeance upon their heads, that start from the Faith as a deceitful Bow, and renounce that truth which they have solemnly professed. Let these punnishments be always before our eyes, so often as we begin to slake our course, and to grow negligent and secure, that so we may begin to renew our covenant with God, and to recover our selves from the pit of Apostasy, into which we were falling.

Secondly, this Doctrine teacheth the difference between those that are truly godly and religious, and such as are Hypocrites. Such as profess well for a time, and afterward slide back, are like the Grass or Corn that groweth upon the house top, which flourisheth and waxeth green for a season, but it decayeth incontinently, and cometh not to any seasonable ripeness. Howsoever therefore there be a great likeness, and a near resemblance between the faithful and the Hypocrite, yet God will have the one discerned from the other, and Hypocrisy to be laid open, and seen in his colors as it is. This is that use which the Apostle *John* maketh of this doctrine. Chapt. 2. where comforting the Church against the offenses and stumbling blocks that were rise and common in those days, and persuading them not to be terrified with the falling back of certain, he maketh it plain, that albeit they had place in the Church as corrupt humors have in the body, yet they were never of the Church. Whreupon he concludeth, *This cometh to pass that it might appear, that they are not all of us.* Would we therefore know who are Hypocrites? And would we have eyes to see them, and judgment to discern them? Behold here a plain mark and evident token to bring us to a perfect understanding of them; they shall not always deceive the Church, they shall not always cover their faces with the Vizard of holiness; they shall in the end be made evident to all men, that everyone may point at them with the finger, and say; This is an Hypocrite, this is a Dissembler, this is he that went about to deceive both God and Man, but now he is revealed, that all men may look upon him, and hiss at him. On the other side, it is a notable privilege of a man truly sanctified, to be constant and continually set upon good things, to persevere in good things, and never to repent of the doing of them: he buildeth his house upon the rock, and therefore no blasts or tempests of temptation can overthrow it. He receiveth the seed into good ground, and therefore it taketh root downward, and beareth fruit upward with patience, he is careful to please God in the duties of both Tables, both of holiness and true righteousness, and therefore he shall never be removed.

Thirdly, seeing many begin well, that are as a morning Cloude which is quickly scattered, and therefore do not continue; we learn, not to be offended when we see any or many faint or fall away, nor to be discomfited whē we have examples before our eyes of those that have professed the saith, and been thought zealous above many others, who now are fallen into a deep, or rather a dead sleep, that no life of God's spirit appeareth to be in them. Thus it hath always been in the Church, thus it is at this present, & thus it will be hereafter. When *Samaria* had received the Gospel, *Simon Magus himself believed also, and was baptized, and continued with Phillip, & wondered when he saw the signs and great Miracles which were done:* yet notwithstanding this embracing of the faith, was but as the flash of Lightning, which suddenly appeareth, and presently vanisheth, as appeareth by his offering of money to buy the Graces of the Spirit, and by the answer of *Peter*, denouncing an horrible curse against him, renouncing him for having any part or fellowship in that business, discovering the hypocrisy of his heart, and manifesting to all men that he was in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

The like we might say of *Hymenens, Phyletus, and Alexander*, mentioned by *Paul* in his Epistles to *Timothy*; they were counted famous, and esteemed as Pillers of the Church, yet they fell to renounce everlasting salvation, which was purchased for us by our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us

all hereby be wise and warned, and take heed that we build not upon men, least the foundation sinking and shrinking down, we fall and perish with it. True it is, they shall greatly be punished, that lay a stumbling-block before others, & give occasion unto them to fall & to depart from the faith; yea, it were better that a Mill-stone were hanged about their neck, and they drowned in the sea, then one of the members of Christ be offended. Woe therefore shall be to those that give a scandal to the Church; yet such as follow them, and forsake the fellowship of the Saints, through their evil example, cannot be excused.

Wilt thou refuse thy Corn, because thou seest much Chaff and Trash mingled with it? No man must forsake the Church, because he seeth offenses to arise in it, every man must labor with himself to be good Corn, and then the Chaff shall hurt us nothing at all. And albeit we see some fall away and make a separation every day, the Church looseth nothing, but is made more pure and perfect, even as it hindereth not, nor hurteth the Wheat, that the Tares wither away. When we behold those that were chief men, & reputed as Angels in comparison of others, to fall as Lightning from Heaven, let us not be dismayed or discomforted thereby, though men turn as the wind and the Weather-cock, let us stand fast, and build upon the rock that can never be shaken. Albeit we may point out thousands on the one side, and ten thousand on the other side, let us not fear the falling of the Church, which standeth upon a sure and certain foundation. Thus doth the Apostle comfort God's people, when sundry made Shipwracke of their faith, and fell into Apostasy, *The foundation of God remaineth sure, and hath this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.*

If men show their frailty, and be as a Reede shaken with the wind, it is no marvel nor new thing, we rest not upon them, we build not our Faith upon our Teachers that have been the means of our conversion: so that if they should revolt and renounce the doctrine that they have preached, we must not go with them, nor follow after them. Indeed we should be grieved to see those that seemed forward, to turn clean backward; and as we ought to rejoice to see the Church of God increased, so it cannot but trouble us, to have it diminished: notwithstanding, this must be our comfort, that God will maintain his Church, and keep all those safe and sure which he hath chosen to himself. As for others that are unconstant and give over, they were never true believers, but Hypocrites, which here are for a season mingled together, until the time of separation. But the gifts of God bestowed upon his people (whose salvation is surely laid up with him) *are without repentance.* Our Savior handleth this point at large, *John 6, and 10. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh too me I cast not away.* And again in another place, *I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of mine hand; my Father which gave them me, is greater then all, and none is able to take them out of my Fathers hand.* So then, whensoever any among them that were judged most forward and upholders of others, give back and become unbelievers, we must not by and by dream that the Church of God falleth, he will always have a people to call upon him, and worship him, *so long as the Sun and Moon endureth, from generation to generation.* The Church is grounded upon God, and upon no condition of man. Our salvation is settled upon the election of God, and founded upon his unchangeable decree which can never be altered or disappointed.

Fourthly, seeing the Church hath always had back-sliders, we learn hereby to beware of all allurements and enticements, that may be means to draw us back from the truth which we have embraced. *Demas* (of whom mention is made in this place) had been in good account, he hath an excellent witness even of Saint *Paul's* mouth to be an helper to the truth. Is it a small commendation to be called the fellow of such an Apostle? Is it a little matter to be set up in the midst of the house of God, as a burning Lamp, or a shining Candle, to give light to others in the Church? yet after all this estimation that was had of him, he loved the world better than the word.

Let us therefore walk warily, and look upon our selves in the person of this *Demas*, as in a looking Glass, who is cast in the teeth with his embracing the profit and pleasures of this life, that hindered him in the work whereunto he was called. We must take heed that things present do not swallow up the love of things to come, as they do in many who wax cold and have no desire of the Kingdom of Heaven. These are they that have their eyes so dazzled and darkened with these flitting things, that they break out in an admiration of them, and say: It is good for us to be here: but never think that these delights must have an end, and that the world shall be restored. The Apostle *Paul* teacheth us, that the present estate of the world is like a woman in travail, Rom. 8. *We know that every creature groaneth with us also, and travaileth in pain together unto this present.* The Creatures, as now they abide, are not in their perfection by reason of *Adams* sin (which brought in all disorder and confusion.) There is nothing but is subject to vanity and misery, everything hath some blot of corruption. What a shame then is it for us that are the Children of God, and have received the first fruits of the Spirit, not to draw toward perfection, and not to keep company with the senseless Creatures. Let us learn so to love the truth, as that we prize it above all corruptible things; that must have an end, so as this present world may not stay us from desiring and longing after spiritual blessings. Among all the baits and snares wherewith many are taken, nothing is so dangerous or so common, as the love of this world. Take a view of many that did run well, but now run not at all, and you shall find they are right *Demasses*, the world is a beam in their eyes that they cannot see, a Thorn in their feet, that they cannot walk, a canker in their mouths that they cannot speak, a clog to their consciences that they cannot proceed, and a snare to their souls that they cannot profit or prosper in good things. Our days are full of two many examples of men that are fallen into a deep sleep of carnal security, so that nothing can wake them. Others there are, that shrink back for fear of troubles and crosses, as it may appear this *Demas* also did. He saw many storms come toward him, and he thought it best to put into some Haven or harbor. In the time of peace and prosperity, in quiet and joyful times, and in such golden days as our eyes have seen, and our hearts have enjoyed, many will seem, and do seem to persevere in the faith, and to embrace the word: but when the Sun ariseth in his strength, and persecution cometh for the words sake, by and by they are offended. Satan is privy to this corruption lying hidden in our Nature. For when as God said unto him, *Hast thou not considered my Servant Job, how none is like him in the Earth? An upright and just Man, fearing God and eschewing evil?* He answered the Lord and said; *Doth Job fear God for naught? Thou hast blessed the works of his hands, and his substance is increased: but stretch out now thine hand, and touch all that he hath, to see if he will not blaspheme thee to thy Face.* We see heerby, that God

will have those that think they believe, and would have others to think so also, to be tried and known what they are. Dost thou make show of Religion? Dost thou glory in thy profession? It pleaseth God to offer thee the means and occasions to try thee, he sendeth the persecution of the tongue; thou art reviled, scorned, slandered, and derided for professing the truth, for hearing the word, for frequenting of Sermons: and then it cometh to pass, that rather then they with endure these crosses, they shrink away, and strike hands will evil men, and embrace the friendship of this present evil World. Thus we see how Satan busieth himself to undermine us, and to overthrow us, and what temptations he setteth before us on the right hand, and on the left hand; on the right hand, the profits of the World, and the pleasures of the Flesh; on the left hand, crosses and persecutions for the words sake. These are the means that he useth; these are the allurements whereby he prevaieth; these are the discouragements whereby he terrifieth us.

Fifthly, seeing we are ready to revolt and slack our peace that we have run toward the mark that is set before us, let no man be secure and careless, or presume too much upon his own strength, as though it were impossible for him to fall: but let every man grow circumspect, and beware of Carnal security. Hence it is, that the Apostle *Paul*, mentioning sundry judgments that fell upon the Israelites for their sins and offenses, gathereth this Exhortation; wherefore *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall*. They had the use of the Sacraments, and other pledges of God's favor, yet they could not privilege them, or defend them from the punishments that God brought upon them. Let no man therefore trust too much to the zeal of one or two yeasers, but persevere to the end, and know he must be faithful unto the last gasp. God hath not hired us for a season, to labor in his service for a day, or a month, or a year, neither giveth us leave to depart at a time appointed, nor maketh us a Certificat under his hand, that we are at liberty to serve another: but we must all know, that there is one condition of worshipping him; to wit, that we dedicate both our Soul and Body, both our life and death, both our beginning and ending unto him.

What did it profit *Lots Wife* to go out of *Sodom*, commanded by the Angel, and accompanied by her Husband, in as much as she looked back, and was turned into a pillar of Salt? What profit was it to the *Israelites* to depart out of *Egypt*, and to pass over the Red Sea; seeing afterward they fell to murmuring in the Wilderness, and were destroyed of the Destroyer? What gain, or what good was it to *Jehu*, to slay the Priests of *Baal* with the sword, and to be zealous for the execution of the judgments of the Lord, to deface the Image, and to throw down the house of *Baal*, and to make a Iakes of it forever, seeing he departed not from the sins of *Jeroboam*, and regarded not to walk in the Law of the Lord God of Israel, but worshipped the Golden Calves that were in *Dan* and *Bethel*? It were as good never to begin, as not to continue unto the end. When we have once given our Names to Christ, and tasted of the good word of God, and see many men come far behind us, we flatter our selves in an opinion of our sure standing; we are ready to say: If all the world should turn to be back-sliders and Apostataes, yet we would never slide away. But let us take heed we be not deceived, for God will not be mocked. It is a worthy saying of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Chap. 18, 24. *If a Righteous Man turn away from his righteousness, & commit iniquity, and do according to all the abominations that the wicked man doth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done,*

shall not be mentioned: but in his transgression that he hath committed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. It is not enough to purpose well, it is not enough to begin well, it is not enough to proceed well; it is required of us to persevere well, and to continue in a constant and settled course unto the end.

If a man continue unto his latter days, and then give over, all is gone, all is lost, all is in vain. If a Child that is set to School, do go lustily forward in his Learning a long time, and afterward prove an idle boy, and one that will take no pains, he will never prove Learned, nor is ever like to come to any preferment. If a man begin to build an house, and have laid a good foundation, it is never the better, unless the work be brought to an end and perfection. He that runneth in a race, though he set out never so swiftly, and have passed a great part of the way never so resolutely, yet if he stay in his course, and hold not on to the end, he receiveth not the prize, he obtaineth not the reward. He that is Valiant and Couragious in the beginning of the fight, never winneth the field, nor getteth the Victory, unless he continue to the end of the battle. We are taught and trained up in God's School, we are partes of the building of his house, and as lively stones fitted to make an holy Temple unto him: we all run in a Race, and prove Maisteries: We are the Lord's Soldiers to fight hand to hand against Sin, the World, and the Devil: let us therefore hold out till we come to the mark, and receive the ende of our Faith, even the Salvation of our souls.

Saul began well, but he declined, and in the end became an open persecutor. *Joash* behaved himself uprightly all the days of *Jehoiadah*, and repaired the house of the Lord; but after his death, he fell to Idolatry, he left the house of the Lord God of his Fathers, and he served Groues and Idols; so that wrath came upon *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, because of this trespass. The *Israelites* that would have returned into Egypt, died in the Wilderness. It shall not be needful to heap up mo examples; we have too many such stumbling blocks lying in our way, and set before our eyes; let us take heed by their falls, and learn Wisdom by their foolishness: and constancy by their inconstancy.

Lastly, seeing many slide back, that have seemed forward men, and of great and eminent note above others: it is our duty (in regard of the small strength, and the little power of our own Nature, to pray heartily and earnestly unto God, not to lead us into temptation, nor to take away his holy spirit from us, but that he would stay us up by his grace. We must entreat at the hands of God for our continuance, as well as for our first conversion. For, as the opening of the heart, and the beginning of our regeneration and new birth, is of Grace; so we proceed in the midde way, and persevere unto the end, not by our selves, or anything in us, but by the same grace and goodness of God, who worketh in us both the will and the deed. Hence it is that the Prophet prayeth unto God, *To restore unto him the joy of his salvation, and to establish him with his free Spirit.* And in another place he prayeth to the Lord, who had kept him in his youth, that he also would be his keeper in his old age, when his head was hoare, and hairs gray; *Cast me not off in the time of age, forsake me not when my strength faileth: ô God, thou hast taught me from my youth, even until now: therefore will I tell of thy wondrous works; yea, even unto mine old age and gray head, ô God, forsake me not, until I have declared thine Arm unto this Generation, &c.* The Prophet knew well enough his proneness and inclination to go back, and

that it is at easy to fall through dotage as noneage, and by the weakness and coldness of old age, as by the lusts and frailty of youth. Yea, we see many that have held a good course a long time, and dedicated their young years, as it were bringing their first fruits to God, who notwithstanding have turned out of the way when they have been going out of the World. Even as it falleth out sometimes, that such as have failed safely in the wide Sea, and kept an upright course, that they have escaped the dangers of storms, and tempests, and Rocks, and quick-sandes, have notwithstanding been cast away in the very Haven, through negligence and security, and want of heed taking: so is it with many, that have stood out in dangerous times when the Winds have blown, and persecutions have been hot, who in calm weather and peaceable times, in their latter times have suffered shipwreck, and have dashed the Barks of their Souls against the vain-pleasures and vanities of this World, which drown Men in perdition and destruction.

Hence it is, that the Apostle writing to the *Thessalonians*, prayeth unto God for them in this manner; *Now the very GOD of peace sanctify you throughout, and I pray God that your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, may be kept blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* He saw they had need of God's gracious assistance, even unto the last breath of their body to uphold them, and to keep them in his fear. Let us therefore remember what the Prophet speaketh of those that are truly regenerate, *Psalm 92, 12, 13, 14. The righteous shall flourish like a Palme Tree, and shall grow like a Caedar in Lebanon: such as be planted in the House of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God, they shall still bring forth Fruit in their age, they shall be fat and flourishing.* If we be in the number of these men described in this place, always fruitful in good things, and never barren of heavenly graces, we shall be assured, that we shall never be removed. Trees (as we see by experience) grow barren when they grow old: but such as are planted in the House of God, must be most fruitful in their age. But with many it is clean contrary: the more old in age, the more old in sin, and sapped in all sorts of wickedness.

This is a searefull sign and prognosticate of a final Apostasy, when our ending is not answerable to our beginning. But here some man may say, Can the faithful fall away forever? Can they loose their Faith altogether? I answer, such as live in the Church, and seem to themselves and to others to have faith, may fall away: but such as have the faith of God's elect, can never fall away, God doth stablish them in Christ, *2 Cor. 1, 12. And they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. 1. Pet. 1, 4. So that our life is hid with Christ in God, Col. 3, 3. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance: and he that hath begun this good work in us, will also finish and perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ. Phil. 1. 6. We are persawaded, that neither life, nor death, nor Devil, nor any means whatsoever, shall be able to separate us from the love of God.* Notwithstanding, we must beware of carnal security, least these gifts of God be weakened and diminished in us; for albeit they cannot die, yet they may decay and decrease; and we may fall, though not fall away; and our Faith may be less, though not utterly lost. Christ Jesus hath somewhat against the Angel of the Church of *Ephesus*, because he had left his first love. He was not finally fallen from Grace, but is highly praised for his patience and perseverance, but is charged to have slacked his course, and to have cooled his zeal; and therefore, he is not said to have lost his Love, but to have left his first Love, so that they were not so earnest, so servant, and so zealous as they were at their first Conversion. We have

therefore continual need to be often in prayer, that we may ever-more increase in heavenly Graces, and be preserved by the power of God, that we be not overcome by the power and subtlety of Satan, who desireth nothing more then our Destruction; nothing less, then our good and salvation.

25The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with your Spirit, Amen.

Hitherto of the first part of the Conclusion, which is the salutation sent from others: Now of the salutation that cometh from him-self, which is as his last farewell, and shutting up of the whole Epistle, and (as it were) a solemn taking of his leave of him, and the rest; which is thus much in effect, [*Grace be with your Spirit.*] The first part, or former word, is amplified and enlarged by the efficient cause from whence it cometh and proceedeth; to wit, Christ Jesus, who is also declared by that Sovereign Authority which he hath over all: Our Lord. Lastly, the whole Prayer is garnished with a certain exclamation of hearty well-wishing to them in the last word, [*Amen.*] Thus much touching the Order.

Let us come to the Interpretation of the Words, and search out the meaning of them by other places of Scripture. Wherein we are to consider what is meant by grace: why it is called [*The Grace of our Lord Jesus;*] why he is called [*A Lord.*] why [*Our Lord,*] what is meant by [*Spirit,*] what is meant by [*your Spirit,*] and lastly, what is meant by this word [*Amen.*] First, touching [*Grace*] (whereof we have spoken before, Verse 3.) we must understand, that there is a twofold Grace mentioned in the word of God; One, which maketh a man gracious and acceptable to God, which is the free favor and love of God, whereby he is well pleased, and exceedingly contented with his elect in Christ his beloved son: which is in God himself, and in no Creature whatsoever, either Saint or Angel. The other, is Grace freely given to men, both common to the elect and Reprobate, or proper to the elect only, which are supernatural and saving graces. The former, is called the first Grace, which is no inherent quality in us, but an essential property in God, and the cause of all graces in us, and the Fountain of all benefits that flow unto us. Thus it is taken in many places, as Rom. 1, 7. and 3, 24. and 4, 16. and 11, 6. The latter, is called the second Grace, because it is derived from the former, as we see 1. *John* 1, 16. and 1. *Pet.* 1, 14. and 5, 10. and 2. *Pet.* 3, 18. Now in this place, I understand it of the favor and Love of GOD, with the which he began his Epistle before, and with which here he closeth it up, ending even as he made his entrance.

Secondly, he calleth this [*The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*] for two Causes; first, because he is the fountain of it, he is as the Well-spring, we have it not of our selves, we have it from him, according to that which the Evangelist *John* setteth down, *Of his fullness we have all received, and Grace for Grace.* Secondly, it is called [*the Grace of Christ,*] not of God the father, not of God the Holy-Ghost, but of Jesus Christ our Lord, because he is the means, or as the Cunduit-pipe, whereby he it is brought and conveyed unto us; Thus the same Evangelist speaketh in the words following; *The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.* He it is that is the Mediation and Propitiation for our sins, he hath purchased the favor of God, he hath wrought reconciliation for us, so that through him we are accepted of God the Father, and beloved in his beloved, *Ephe.* 1. 6.

Thirdly, we must consider the Title given to Christ Jesus, he is called a Lord or Ruler, and that in many respects: First, by creation, in that he made us of nothing when we had no being, *For all things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made.* Secondly, by right of Inheritance, *For he is made Heir of all things.* Thirdly, by right of Dominion, for he hath Dominion over all things, and over us also; so that he ruleth, preserveth, and keepeth us as his own to eternal life, being bought with his most precious blood. None of them can be lost that are committed unto him, neither can any pluck them out of his hands. All things are put under his feet, and subject unto him.

Fourthly, he is said to be our Lord; he is not only a Lord, having right and might granted unto him over others, but he is called our Lord. First, because the Father gave him a people and chosen Generation, over whom he should rule. So then, by reason of this donation appointed unto him before all worlds, he is truly called our Lord. Secondly, in regard of the work of redemption which he hath wrought for us, he alone hath paid the ransom for us, and delivered us from the power of the Devil: so that he hath the greatest right of possession in us. Lastly, we are thereby put in mind, that we ought so to believe in Christ our Lord, that we put our trust and confidence in him, and that we rest thoroughly persuaded, that by him we are thoroughly freed and delivered from all evil. It is not enough for us, or sufficient to salvation, to believe Christ Jesus to be a Lord, but we must believe him to be our Lord. For we all know and believe that the Devil is a Lord, and ruleth in the hearts of the Children of disobedience; he is the God of this World, and a Prince that beareth great sway: but we do neither know nor believe him to be our Lord, as we believe Christ Jesus to be the Lord of us all.

Fifthly, he addeth [*With your Spirit.*] He craveth this Grace to be with his Spirit: whereby he meaneth as much, as if he had said with you; one part of man being named for the whole, the more principal part being put for the whole person. For man consisteth of two essential parts, of Soul and Body. True it is, the Apostle *Paul* doth sometimes divide man into three partes; the Spirit, the Soul, the Body; as when he prayeth for the *Thessalonians*; *That their whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, should be kept blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* By the Spirit, he understandeth the mind, reason, or understanding, which else-where he calleth the *Spirit of your mind.* This is nothing else but a faculty of the reasonable soul, which is seen, in invention and judgment. By the the Soul, he understandeth the inferior faculties and powers, as the will, and affections: both which followeth the body, which is the Instrument whereby the Spirit and Soul do work. By the Spirit in this place, is not meant only the mind, or only the Soul, but the whole man is to be understood; as it is expounded *Phil. 4. 23. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.* And *Col. 4, 18. Grace be with you:* yet he nameth the spirit, because it is the principal subject and seat of grace.

Sixthly, the Apostle proceedeth and saith [*Your spirit.*] he speaketh not to *Philemon* alone, saying, [*With thy Spirit;*] but he enlargeth his heart, and saith [*With your Spirit,*] as speaking to many. Whereby we are to understand those to whom this Epistle is written and delivered, to wit; chiefly to *Philemon*, whose Title it beareth, and to *Apphia* his wife, to *Archippus* the Minister, and to the Church that was in his house, to all these he wisheth the Grace of Christ.

Lastly, he endeth with the word [*Amen,*] which is as much as even so, or so be it, or so it shall be. Indeed it is no part of the former prayer, but it betokeneth and signifieth two things; First, an hearty desire, whereby we wish that we may be heard, and that God would answer unto our requests. Secondly, the certainty of our confidence, and the confirmation of our Faith, whereby we trust that we shall be heard. It is an Hebrew word retained by the Apostles in their Epistles, and in other places, wherewith we are taught to conclude our Prayers withal, by Christ our Savior. It is added, to show that we should come with boldness, and believe that we shall obtain, trusting in the truth of God's promises.

Having thus laid open the sense and meaning of the words in this last Verse, it shall not be amiss to speak some-what of the words following, which are the subscription and under-writing of this Epistle, in these words:

Written from Rome to Philemon, and sent by Onesimus a Servant.

It is most likely, that this Epistle was written and sent at one and the same time, with that entitled to the *Colossians*, both because the same persons are named in both the Epistles, the same persons writing, and the same persons sending salutations to others; and both of them in the *Post-script*, are said to be sent by *Onesimus*, as it were by a Carrier; only herein resteth the difference, that this Epistle was delivered to *Onesimus* alone, to be carried to *Philemon* a private man; but the other was conveyed by *Tychicus* and *Onesimus*, to the whole Church of the *Colossians*, whereof *Philemon* and his Family were but one part. But touching this subscription, as also others in other Epistles, we must understand that they were added by men, and are no part of the Canonically Scripture, which is the rule of our faith, & to which we must yield, without all contention or contradiction; and from which, we cannot appeal without intolerable injury to the spirit of God. For, howsoever diverse of these *Post-scripts* may be true, yet it is very plain and evident, that some of them are false, and many of them very uncertain. Of this sort, is the former Epistle to the *Corinthians*, which is said to be written from *Philippi*, and likewise to be sent by *Stephanas* and *Fortunatus*, &c. where two things are avouched, and both of them seem to be false. For first, it appeareth that he was not then at *Philippi* a chief City in *Macedonia*, that is in *Europe*, but at *Ephesus* which is in *Asia*. Secondly, it may be gathered, that it was sent by the hands of *Timothy* and *Erastus*, partly out of that Epistle, and partly out of the Acts of the Apostles. The like we may say of the *Post-script* of the latter Epistle; of both the Epistles to the *Thessalonians*, of both the Epistles to *Timothy*, of that to *Titus*, and others. And as we show that these *Post-scripts*, whether true or false, were not written by the Apostles, but by some other men after their days, for the most part either unlearned, or not so well advised: so we might affirm and confirm the same touching the Inscriptions or titles prefixed and set before the Epistles of *Paul*, *James*, and the rest.

For first, both the inscriptions and subscriptions, are variably set down in Copies, that there can no certainty be gathered out of them, which of them should stand as Authentical. Secondly, some of them have both strange and unfit Titles; as when the seven Epistles, written by *James*, *Peter John*, and *Jude*; are called sometimes Canonical; and sometimes Catholic Epistles: which are Names not found in the Scriptures, and seeming derogatory to

the rest of the Epistles, as though none were Canonical but they. Thus much shall serve and suffice to give warning, both touching Inscriptions and Subscriptions, both which are of one stamp, and no part of the pure word of God: whereof more might be spoken, if it were either necessary, or profitable, or expedient.

The next point, according to the order observed in the former words, is to point out such observations as might be enlarged and amplified for our instruction. First of all, we see here, that as in the entrance of the Epistle, and as it were at their first meeting, he wished unto him the Grace of Christ, so he doth in the farewell and departing: thereby teaching, that nothing is better or more to be desired then his Grace: that all our Salutations and Farewells, should be grounded in his Grace: this must be the beginning and the ending of all our talk and communication.

Secondly, when the Son of God is called Jesus, we observe again that he is a perfect and absolute Savior, the alone Savior, inasmuch as the work of our Salvation and Redemption is wholly and only wrought out by him, and no part left unfinished, and reserved for any Creature in heaven or in earth: *For among Men there is no other Name given under Heaven, whereby we may be saved, but by the name of Jesus.* And the Apostle saith. *Heb. 7. He is able perfectly to save them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* Let us learn by this Name, given to the Son by the Father, and brought from Heaven by an Angel, that in our selves we are as lost Sheep, and going astray. We are wretched Sinners, lying under the heavy wrath of God; he came to seek and to save that which is lost. We are Prisoners, he came to set us at liberty; we are wounded, he came to cure us; we are dead, he came to restore and revive us. No man can truly and with a feeling heart say, Christ is my Savior, unless he find, that without him he is utterly lost and cast away. Again, this is a wonderful comfort to our hearts, that being shut up under sin and condemnation, the Lord had mercy upon us, and made an everlasting Covenant of Grace with us, that his own Son shall be our Redeemer. Hence it is that the Angels *Who desire to look into the Mysteries of the Gospel, so greatly rejoiced when Christ was borne, and themselves sent to publish the glad tidings thereof.* *Luke 2. Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy that shall be to all the people; that unto you is borne in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.* If these blessed Spirits be thus affected at the birth of Christ, who came not to be a Savior and Redeemer unto them, because they did want the benefit of Redemption: how much more ought we to rejoice whom this glorious work doth chiefly concern; yea so much, that if we wanted this Savior, it had been better with the Beasts of the field, and the creeping things of the Earth, and the Fishes of the Sea, and the Fowls of the Air, then with us, with us (I say) that were fallen from him. For the end of the unreasonable Creature, is the end of his woe; but the death of man without a Mediator, is the beginning of woe.

Thirdly, the Son of God is called Christ, which signifieth as much as anointed. In the time of the Old Testament, three sorts of men were anointed with Material Oil; Kings, Prophets, and Priests. This Legal anointing, was a Type and Figure of the anointing of Christ let is, who was set apart from all Eternity, to do the Office of a Media our betweene GOD and Man, and had the fullness of the Spirit poured into his Man-hoode; and therefore he is a King, to

gather and govern his Church; a Prophet, to reveal and teach the will of his Father; a Priest, to make satisfaction and intercession for the sins of his people. From hence we learn, that when we are baptized into Christ, and are called to the profession of the Gospel, we are after a sort consecrated and set apart to be spiritual Kings, spiritual Prophets, and spiritual Priests: we have the same Oil of gladness, not indeed as he hath it which is without measure, but a small pittance of it, and a little measure, whereby we are called Christians of Christ; that is, men anointed with the Oil wherewith Christ himself was anointed, albeit in a far inferior degree. This the Apostle *John* setteth down, *The anointing, which ye received of him, dwelleth in you, &c. and that same anointing teacheth you all things.* Everyone pleaseth himself in the title of a Christian, all men challenge the name of Christians as their proper right, and would cry out of extreme wrong, to be denied a portion in this honor: but ask them what Christ signifieth, and how themselves become Christians, they are able to answer nothing at all. But let us take heed we do not deceive our own hearts, and flatter our selves in a bare title, when the truth of the thing doth not belong unto us. If a poor simple Begger that hath nothing but rags and rents to brag and boast himself off, should foolishly persuade himself he were a King, and Monarch of the world, could this vain opinion any whit avail him, or minister any comfort unto him? In like manner, if we delight to be called Christians, and yet want the anointing of Christ, we are as far from being true Christians, as the former beggar is from being a Prince of the earth. Wherefore, if we will have the thing, with the name, and the truth, with the title, we must be as Kings, bearing sway over our own lusts, and proclaiming continual war against the Devil, the World, and the flesh. We must thus reign over our selves, and then we shall be Kings indeed. We must be careful to have the word dwell plentifully in us, and endeavor to instruct others. We must offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto the Father; we must make prayers and supplications unto him, and resign up our selves, our souls and bodies to his service. A carnal Christian that liveth in the flesh, is no Christian. An ignorant Christian that walketh in darkness, is no Christian. Such then, as are led by their own lusts, and carried away by their own corruptions, giving themselves over to all looseness of life, are not spiritual Kings, but very Slaues and Bond-men, nay the basest Vassals that breath upon the earth. Such as are blind in the matters of God, and have nothing in their minds, but gross ignorance, knowing nothing of religion, nor desiring to know nothing of the means of salvation, cannot be spiritual Prophets, but sottish persons, and blind men that are not far from falling into the pit of destruction. Such as approach not to the Throne of grace with broken and contrite hearts, and call not upon God, are not spiritual Priests, but come nearer to the profane Athiestes, who are said, not to call upon God, and think it no profit to pray unto him.

Fourthly, let us consider the third title given to the Son of God, he is called, our Lord: which teacheth us to acknowledge him to be the Ruler and Governor of his Church, and of every particular member thereof. And if he be the Governor and guide, woe unto them that will not be ruled and governed by him. When he persuadeth us to perform obedience to the moral Law, he giveth this as the reason *I am the Lord thy God.* Thus doth the Prophet bring in the lord speaking unto us, *If I be your Lord, where is my fear?* We must therefore conform our willes to his will, and resign body and soul to be ordered and directed by him. All men are

willing to acknowledge Christ a redeemer, but not a Ruler: a Savior, but not a Lord. Every man would gladly and willingly have a portion in Christ's redemption, but they regard not to perform him any obedience. They are forward to hear of this Mediatorship: but they take no delight to hear of his Lord-ship: they love not to be under his dominion, they care not for the bearing of his yoke, they desire not to yield subjection to his word. They determine to make their lusts to be their Lord's, and themselves servants and slaves to their sins. These are such as have another Lord set over them, which ruleth in their hearts, to wit; the Prince of darkness, and the God of this world, his works they do, his lusts they fulfill, and to him they obey. These are those enemies mentioned by Christ, *Luke 19, 27. that will not that he should reign over them, who in the end shall be brought and slain before him.* Wherefore, if ever we look to find Christ our Savior, let us first make him our Governor: if we would have him be our justification, let him become also our sanctification; if we would have him ease us of our burden, and refresh us of our weariness, we must take his yoke upon us, and suffer our necks to be acquainted with it.

Fifthly, observe that the Grace here asked for *Philemon* and others, to whom the Apostle wrote, is called the grace of Jesus Christ; to teach us that God's graces and benefits come upon us thorough him, and as nothing was made without him that was made, so nothing is given without him that is given. If then, we would have right and interest in any of the blessings of God, we must labor to be in Christ, and to have assurance that we are in Christ. If we touch and taste any of them, and yet be not engrafted into him, we are Usurpers, and no better then Thieves and Robbers; we have no more right and Title to any of the Creatures or Graces of God, then the Thief hath to the true man's purse. Christ Jesus is heir of all things, and we by him. For, if we be sons, then are we heirs, even the heirs of God, and heirs annexed with Christ: as for the ungodly, they are Bastards, and not sons, and the Bastard cannot inherit, he is barred from claiming any interest in the inheritance.

True it is, such as are out of Christ, do many times abound in earthly blessings, and they enjoy Houses, and Lands, and Temporal possessions, and they can show their Writings, and Conueyances, and Leases, & Deeds, and Evidences, how they hold their inheritances from men: yet notwithstanding all these, in the midst of them they are miserable, and that for three causes.

First, because albeit they may have many things, yet they can have right to nothing, and they lay hold on such things as do not belong unto them. God made the world, and all things therein for his own sons, not for the base borne; for his Servants, not the Devils slaves. They are like the Moth which breedeth in another man's Garment, but is soon shaken out: the Moth hath no right to be there, and therefore is brushed off, or picked out, and cast away. This is the comparison of the Holy-Ghost, teaching that all unregenerate persons are Intruders, and can lay no lawful claim by the Law of God, to the things they possess; and therefore, the Land-lord of the world, may and will thrust them out at his pleasure.

Secondly, as their right is nothing, so they want the right use of them. If they had right unto them, yet had no comfortable use of them, it were a great judgment: but these men have neither. The Apostle teacheth, that *Unto the pure, are all things pure: but unto them that are*

defiled, and unbelieving, it nothing pure, but even their Minds and Consciences are defiled. There is no peace to the wicked: in the midst of joy they are in heaviness, in the midst of life they are in death, like *Belshazzar*, who in the midst of his Feast and fullness, saw the hand-writing upon the wall, as a Prognosticate of his destruction.

Lastly, albeit they have the blessings of God, and keep them in bondage, yet withal they possess the Curse of God, which always waiteth upon them, and is ready to seize upon them. The Thief liveth always in fear of the Judge, and of the day of Assizes, so do these men live in continual danger of God's Judgment and punishment, which shall one day meet with them.

Sixthly, observe that he desireth grace to rest in their spirits: and albeit he mean heereby their whole persons (as we have shown before in setting down the Interpretation of the words) yet hereby he assigneth the proper Seat of Grace, to be the Soul. For the Grace of Christ, is an inward and spiritual thing, and therefore taketh up the inward and spiritual part of man. Indeed, when once grace is entered into the heart, and sitteth there as a Queen to order all our thoughts and affections, it will spread it self through the whole man, and afterward as it were go out of the doors into the outward actions. We see hereby where grace is especially felt: for as the Soul is the subject of it, so the Soul hath the especial feeling of it. Our Justification and forgiveness of sins, the peace of conscience which passeth all understanding is felt in the Soul: yea, Glorification and eternal life through Jesus Christ is felt in the Soul. This teacheth us to labor earnestly to have grace in the heart, that from thence it may flow into all our actions. It is not enough to have gracious tongues, gracious words, gracious mouths, we must first have grace within, and give unto God our hearts. Nothing is more detestable to God and man then Hypocrisy: there appeareth grace without, but there dwelleth none within: there is great show, but little truth, or rather no truth at all.

Lastly, observe with me the last word, whereby the Apostle shutteth up the Salutation and the whole Epistle, to wit, [*Amen.*] This is set down in a word, and yet it containeth more then the prayer it self. For in prayer we testify our desire, by this we witness our Faith. By this we observe that unto our requests and petitions in prayer, must be joined Faith and Belief, that God will grant the things craved. This appeareth in the Prophet, Psal. 89. *Praised be the Lord for evermore, So be it, even so be it.* We are taught thus to shut up our prayers, by Christ our Savior in that platform which he hath left us. Thus the Apostle closeth and concludeth his Epistle, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, Amen.* And indeed prayer availeth only in them that believe: *It is the prayer of faith prevaieth much, if it be fervent:* yea, we must ask in faith and not waver, if we think to obtain anything at his hands. From hence we learn, that we ought always to labor to give assent to God's promises when we pray, and to strive against doubting and infidelity. *All the promises of God are in Christ; yea, and are in him Amen, unto the glory of God through us.* This we see in the Father of the Child possessed, Mark. 9. *When Christ Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth: he answered, Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief.* To pray without Faith, is not to pray at all. And to say Amen in the end of our prayers, and yet to pray with doubting, and without believing, is to make a lie, and to teach our tongues to deceive our hearts. For this is a great iarre and discord, when infidelity is in the heart,

and faith in the tongue: when inwardly we waver, and outwardly the mouth uttereth, Amen. More-over, so often as we use public prayers, they must be pronounced and delivered with that plainness, feeling, and zeal, as that the people, being thereby moved, and their faith and affections going with that which is delivered and prayed for, may answer Amen unto that which is desired. This is it which the Apostle toucheth, 1 Cor. 14. *I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, but I will sing with the understanding also: Else when thou blessest with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the Roome of the unlearned, say, Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he knoweth not what thou sayest.* This reproveth the Popish and Romish Liturgy, that use in divine service a strange and unknown tongue, whereby the people are nuzeled in ignorance, and can receive no edification or instruction. And hereby consider the deep devise of the Devil, how far he hath prevailed in this false Church. For when he saw he could not thus far have the upper hand, as utterly to cast the word out of the Church, and to take away the use of prayer; when he perceived it to be impossible to root out the word of God, and to abolish the invocation of his holy name, he fell to work another way, and that is, to suffer the things to remain, and to take away the right and profitable use of them, so that albeit the word is read, it is read without knowledge: and albeit prayers be made, yet they are made without comfort. Thus the names of the word and prayer remaining, the benefite of them is taken away. The like we might say of the Sacraments, especially of the Supper of the Lord: they will seem to have it, yet in truth they want it: to allow of it, and yet they destroy it and abolish it. If the Devil should utterly remove these things out of the way, so that the names, neither of the word, nor of prayers, nor of the Sacraments were heard among them, all men might discover this deceit, no man would easily be seduced by this palpable grossness: but he is a more cunning work-man, he can hide his snares from being seen, so that he will not have them utterly removed and renounced, that the people might say, we have the word read unto us, we have good prayers said among us, we have the Sacraments with us, yet all is done in a strange manner, the Priest useth a strange tongue, and the people are nurtured in strange ignorance. For the word is heard ignorantly, prayers are made ignorantly, and the Sacraments are received ignorantly. The whole frame of the Popish Religion is maintained by ignorance. Thus much of the general observations, that might be enlarged and farther amplified, which I have briefly pointed out: and albeit all of them be very pertinent, yet I will in this manner pass them over. Now let us handle the particular Doctrine that ariseth from this Salutation.

[*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with your Spirit, Amen.*]

This is the last clause of the Epistle, wherein he wisheth the same that he did in the beginning, to wit, *the grace of Christ*. If there had been anymore notable or excellent blessing to crave and desire for him then this grace of Christ, no doubt he would have asked it, and should have obtained it for him. He would have made some mention of it, either in the beginning or at the latter ending, or in some other place of this Epistle. But seeing we find no other blessing rehearsed or required, beside this grace of Christ, it is most certain the Apostle knew no greater or better gift then this grace of christ. And indeed, he which nameth and commendeth the grace of Christ, doth except or exclude nothing which is good for us, or profitable unto us, either in this life, or in the life to come. For the grace of Christ,

whereby we understand the free favor of God, which we by no duties or works have deserved, or can any way deserve, comprehendeth under it, as it were within the compass of it, every good thing, and every perfect gift. For the spiritual blessings of God; as Remission of sins, Justification, Sanctification, and eternal Life, do all flow from this grace as from a Fountain. Now it is called the grace of Christ, and that fitly and worthily; because he hath obtained it for us, by the price of his own precious blood he hath deserved to have the same bestowed upon us. For the grace of God the Father properly belongeth unto him, and Christ Jesus, his natural son, in whom alone he is well pleased, is the Treasure & Store-house of his Father, by whose hand is bestowed whatsoever is bestowed upon us.

Seeing therefore the Apostle maketh so great reckoning of this grace, that he speaketh of it first and last, and remembereth it in the beginning and in the ending, and sendeth this Salutation unto him, we learn from hence, that Spiritual things are to be prayed for and preferred before earthly things: they must have the first place, and earthly things be set in the last place. This appeareth in that form of blessing, which God prescribeth unto Aaron and to his Sons, *Thus ye shall bless the Children of Israel, and say unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be merciful unto thee, The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* Here we see what the Priests and Levites were especially to crave; to wit, the favor of God, and his free grace. This is plentifully proved in the Psalms of David, as Psal. 4. *Many ask, who will show us any good; but Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us:* where he showeth, that the multitude call for Riches, and Honor, and Pleasure, and account them the only good things: but the godly prefer the favor of God before all, and make it their chief felicity. And in another place, *Turn us again, ô God, and cause thy face to shine, that we may be saved.* The Church was now in affliction, they wanted temporal blessings, yet their chief desire was, to feel the loving countenance of God to shine upon them. This appeareth farther unto us, in the Lord's prayer, left unto us by Christ our Savior, to direct us to pray: he teacheth and prescribeth this order unto us, that we first of all ask such things as concern God and his glory, and then those things that belong to our selves. Thus are the prayers directed that the Apostle Paul maketh, and offereth up for the Churches to which he writeth, he craveth above all things grace and peace: he desireth, that they might have *the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation, that the eyes of their mind may be lightened, that they may be strengthened in the inner man.* Yea, this is so plain and pregnant a truth, that the very Heathen in their best meditations have confessed this, that God must have our first thoughts, and the beginning of all our works, who blesseth those that are so begun, and giveth unto them good success. If all these Testimonies, produced out of the Old Testament, alleged out of the New, and confirmed by the uniform consent of the Gentiles, be laid together, we may gather from thence, that in our prayers and judgments we are to prefer and desire especially and principally spiritual things.

If any doubt remain in us, let us consider the reasons, that so it may be removed. First, Spiritual and Heavenly blessings are beyond all comparison more excellent, and bring more sound joy of heart than earthly blessings can do. The Prophet testifieth this by his own experience *Thou hast given me more joy of heart, than they have had, when their Wheat, and their Wine, did abound.* The things of this life are corruptible: the things of the life to come are

incorruptible. The Apostle *Peter* speaking of the inheritance of eternal life, calleth it *immortal and undefiled, and that withereth not, reserved in heaven for us*. But among the earthly Treasures, what more excellent then Gold? Yet he calleth it *the Gold that perisheth*: and afterward, *Ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, from your vain conversation, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb undefiled, and without spot*. If then all worldly things, even those that be most pure and precious, be transitory and corruptible, they are not chiefly to be esteemed.

Secondly, howsoever the wedge of Gold prevaileth much with men, and can in a manner do all things: yet it is of no force with God, it cannot remove his judgments or turn away his wrath from us, it cannot redeem or pay the ransom of one Soul, we were bought with a greater price. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith, *They trust in their goods, and boast themselves in the multitude of their Riches: yet a man can by no means redeem his Brother, he cannot pay his ransom to God*. If riches (that can do much) could do this, then the richest should be the happiest: and the poorest men should be the most miserable. But this standeth not with the will and wisdom of God. To this purpose the Prophet *Ezekiel* saith, *They shall cast their Silver in the streets, and their Gold shall be cast far off: their Silver and their Gold cannot deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord: they shall not satisfy their Souls, neither fill their Bowels, for this ruin is for their iniquity*. The rich man thinketh himself fenced against all dangers of soul and body, and knoweth not his own error, and ignorance, and folly. It is the spiritual Armor that giveth strength, it is the spiritual Graces of God that do defend us: one drop of them is better then an whole River or a great Sea of earthly blessings.

Thirdly, the obtaining of spiritual things is the cause of the other blessings. They bring with them, when they come, earthly things. When we get wealth, we do not by it get Heavenly wisdom: for many times, they have the greatest riches, that have the least Religion. But when we get Godliness into our hearts, it bringeth with it a competent and convenient measure of all outward things. The Prophet saith, *The Lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they which seek the Lord, shall want nothing that is good*. He knoweth what is good for us, better then we do for our selves: as the Father knoweth what is good for the Child, better then the Child doth, and therefore he doth not say, they shall want nothing, but *nothing that is good*. Likewise, the Apostle, *1 Tim. 4. Godliness is profitable unto all things, and hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come*. He doth not say, that riches are profitable to all things, neither doth he affirm that they have the promises of this life and of the life to come; but Godliness hath those profits and promises. So then, if we lay these things together and consider, that the spiritual blessings being incorruptible, and invisible, and eternal, are in themselves more excellent; that they are of great force and power with God; whereas the earthly, are vain and transitory, weak, and unable to remove any judgment, and that Heavenly blessings are causes of the earthly, and companions with them: we may truly gather and collect from hence, that it is our duty to prefer and pray for spiritual things before transitory, for heavenly things before earthly, for eternal things before temporal.

Now let us see what uses will arise from hence. First of all, this serveth to condemn the practice of the greatest part of men that go clean against this rule. There is no truth of God

oftener confessed in word, that is more commonly denied in deed. We are willing to acknowledge in judgment the excellency of spiritual things, above all things that are mortal and mutable, and among spiritual blessings the price & priueledge of God's grace, which bringeth a goodly train and troop of his greatest Treasures: yet notwithstanding our judgment, our affections are chiefly set upon the world, and our desires run after earthly things. Such men are wholly earthly and carnal, according to the rule of our Savior, *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*. Such can never lift up their minds unto Heaven, that account the earth, and earthly things, their chiefest Treasure: as on the other side, they can never settle their desires and studies upon the earth, that esteem the Heavens and Heavenly things their greatest Treasures. When the Stomacke is ouerladen with meat and over-burdened with the same, there followeth an obstruction and stopping of the passages of Nature: so the inordinate desires of the world pressing down better things, bringeth a forgetfulness of God, and so ouerfilleth the heart, that it oppresseth and suppresseth all care and cogitation of a better life. For even as we see, that when the shadow groweth lesser; the heat groweth greater; but when the shadow groweth greater, the heat groweth lesser, so it fareth and falleth out with us, whē this (world which is but a shadow) taketh up the least room in our hearts, then the love of the world to come, is the greatest in us: but when this present world and the things therein, occupy the gretest space and place in our hearts, then the heat that was kindled in us toward heavenly things is abated and diminished. These two, the love of this world, and of the world to come, are so cross and contrary one to another, that they cannot rest and remain in the highest degree within us, but one cooleth and quencheth the other, one overcometh and ouermastereth the other. We would account him a fool and destitute of ordinary understanding, a simple man or a very Child, that would prefer Copper before Gold, a grain of Barly before a Pearl or precious Stone, or would make choice of Chaff before the Wheat, or choose the Huskes before the Corn, and yet there are a thousand and ten thousand worse Fools in the World, which take themselves to be great wise men, prudent and politic men of deep and profound reaches, who would disdain and scorn at it to be accounted either Childish or foolish. *Nabal* was a rich man, and no doubt took himself and was taken of others to be a wise man: yet setting his mind wholly upon his goods, he is called by the Scripture a fool. The rich man mentioned in the Gospel, when his ground brought forth fruits plentifully, thought with himself, *I will pull down my Barns and build greater*, and said to his Soul, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, live at ease, eat, drink, and take thy pastime*: but though he were rich, and therefore thought himself wise, yet *God said unto him, O fool, this night will they fetch away thy Soul from thee, and then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?* Neither was this the case and condition of this man alone, but it is the case and condition of everyone that gathereth riches to himself, and is not rich in God. This rich man is dead and gone: but he hath left a plentiful of spring and a great generation behind him. Look upon men's lives, and see whether the cares of this life, be not the first in their thoughts, purposes, prayers, and practices. Give them enough of this world, and let him that will, take the world to come. All their study, all their toiling and moyling is for the red and white earth, that is, for Gold and Silver, and other trash of this world, as if they could never be full of it, as if they would never be weary of it, as if they should never depart out of it. It is said of *Solomon* Prov. 30 *The Horse-leech hath two Daughters*

which cry, bring, bring, so is it with these worldly minded men, they can never be satisfied, they always cry out for more, they will not be content, they cannot say, they have enough. It is a token of a brood basely borne, that respecteth not the inheritance of sons: so it is an evident sign that we are not the sons of God, when we mind not the Kingdom that the father hath prepared for us, and the son hath purchased unto us. The Beasts were borne and fashioned to look down-ward: man created after the Image of God, looketh upward and beholdeth the Heavens. It is a great discord and iarre between the eye and the heart, which should go together: when the eye is cast upward, and the heart of man groweth downward: the eye is fixed above, and the heart delighteth to be always groveling upon the ground, and glued unto the earth.

Secondly, as this Doctrine meeteth with their corruption that have their conversation below, in the center and bowels of the earth, whereas it should be in heaven from whence we look for a Savior, even the Lord Jesus Christ: so it reproveth such as regard not the obedience to the first Table, and duties of piety and holiness which are to be performed immediately to God. Our Savior, speaking of the first Table of the Law, calleth it the first and great commandment: first, in dignity and order; in dignity, because it comprehendeth and containeth the duties we owe to God: In order of Nature, because from the love of God proceedeth the love to our Neighbor, Likewise great, because it is of greatest weight and stretcheth farthest, and is chiefly to be respected of us. Hence it is, that when an expounder of the law asked him a question, *Master, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?* He answered him, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, this is the first & the great commandment.* These precepts are first commanded, but they are last practiced and least regarded. They are called of Christ, great: but they are very small and little, in the eyes of the greatest part and sort of men. If they lead an honest and civil life before men, if they deal justly and truly with their Neighbors, they think all is well, they esteem themselves as perfect men, though they live ignorantly, profanely, and irreligiously, though they have no knowledge of God and of his word, though they regard not his worship priuatelie or publikelie. If they can say, we are no Thieves, or Murderers, we are not defiled with Fornication, and Adultery, we pay every man his own, and do as we would be done unto; they suppose they bear as good a Soul to God, as the best, and shall be saved as soon as any. But ask them anything of the worship of God, or mark what their practice is touching his worship, they have no love to it, they take no delight in it, their meditation is not upon the word, their care is not to sanctify the Sabboath, and consequently the duties which they perform toward men, have no right ground to stand upon, and therefore, though they may bring profit to others, yet can they minister no comfort to themselves. The first Table is the heart of all Religion, and the foundation whereupon the duties of Righteousness are built. If they proceed not from a religious respect to God, they are as an house set upon the Sand, which wanteth a sure ground-work.

Secondly, we are put in mind from hence, not to care over much for earthly things, or to run so far after them that we forget our selves where we are. True it is, we are bound and charged in duty to use the means that God hath appointed for us, and to exercise our selves with diligence, labor, and industry in our callings; but we must not trust in these means and

put our confidence in them, and distrust the care and providence of God toward us. There is a double care for the things of this Life: there is a good and godly care, which is necessary for everyone; the contrary whereof, is to be careless, idle, wasting, and spending vnthristily and wickedly, such things as are gotten by our labor. This providence and fore-cast is commended and commanded in many places of the Scripture. This the Apostle teacheth and speaketh off, 1. Tim. 5. *If there be any that provideth not for his own, and namely for them of his household, he denieth the faith, and is worse then an Infidel.* The other sort of care, is a care joined with grief and pensiuenesse, and of this the Apostle saith, *I would have you without care.* This care is an over-great care, disquieting the heart and maketh it bond to the unrighteous Mammon; this is always to be condemned, as that which breedeth in us a distrust in God's providence, and choketh the love of heavenly things, and therefore is hurtful and pernicious. This our Savior reproveth in the Gospel according to *Matthew*, Chap. 6. *I say unto you, be not careful for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your Body what ye shall put on, &c. Behold the Fowles of the Heaven, for they neither sow nor reap. Which of you by taking care, can add one Cubite to his stature? And why care ye for Raiment? Behold how the Lilies of the field do grow, and yet they neither labor, nor spin. Therefore take no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewith ye shall be clothed, for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things, &c.* We have the Lord to care for us, who knoweth our wants, and the means how to supply them. He made all things before we had our being, to teach us his providence. All the Mines of Silver and Gold, that lie in the heart of the earth, are his, and at his commandment. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, Heb. 13, *Have your conversation without Covetousness, and be content with those things that ye have: for he hath said, I will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: so that we may boldly say, The Lord is mine helper, neither will I fear what man can do unto me.* Can we therefore doubt of his succouring of us, and the supplying of our wants? If we consider his power, he is God: if his will, he is our Father. Will God forsake or forget his Creatures? Or can a father be unmindful or unmerciful toward his Children? This were to make him no God, no Father, which is Blasphemy and impiety. The Prophet *David* having himself had a long experience of God's watchful eye over him, teacheth us also to depend upon him, Psal. 55. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall nourish thee: he will not suffer the righteous to fall forever.* It is great vanity to be ouergreedy and gaping after the transitory things of this world, to be carking and caring in the seeking for them, and to eat the bread of sorrow in going about them. We should use them, as though we used them not: and enjoy them, as though we possessed them, not. To this purpose the Apostle *Peter* saith, Chap, 5. *Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you.* Wherefore then should we nourish immoderate and excessive cares in our bosoms, seeing we have assurance of God's care towards us? Let us trust in him, and be secure without all distrust and fear. If we have spent our days in the following and pursuing after the vain profits of this life, let us bethink our selves what we have done, and study to redeem the time that is to come, and consider wherefore we were created & redeemed. The things that are seen are temporal, the things that are not seen they are eternal. Let us above all prefer those things that are able best to prefer us. Let us not live here as men that spend all their days in catching after feathers, and following toys and trifles that cannot profit. If we should see a man wast his years, from day today, and from month to month, and from year to year, and having lived forty or fifty years

hath done nothing but catch after shadows, run after Butter-Flies, follow after Gew-gawes, or behold the Moon-shine in the waters, or always look down upon the earth, or always blow up Feathers in the Air: would we not think him stark mad, and judge him out of his wits? Every man is ready to accuse him of Madness, no man would think he did him wrong to call him so, or crave pardon for that he hath done. But be not too hastye to censure such, and to pass the sentence of Madness upon them, least the Parable be applied to thyself, and be verified of thyself. The wise man, who knew best who are Fools, and what to judge of folly, preacheth and proclaimeth both in the entrance and end of his words, *Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, Vanity of Vanities, all is Uanity*. If then these things be all vain, nay; Vanity it self: it is more then certain that such as spend their time, and wast their years, and consume their strength in catching after these toys, these shadows, these shows, these feathers, these follies, these trisles, and spend more years in pursuing after these earthly things, then they do hours in attaining Heavenly things, may truly be accounted Fools, or Mad-men, or sottish, or such as are possessed with a Spirit of giddiness, that run up and down hither and thither, and know not what they do.

We use commonly to pittye such as are mad and beside themselves and out of their right wits. None are farther out of the way, nor more destitute of true Wisdom then these men are, that have the least care of the best things, and the greatest care of the least things. Let us beeware, least while we think our selves to be wise, we become stark fools; while we think our selves spiritual, we be proved to be carnal: and while we loath madness and folly in others, we love madness and folly in our selves?

Lastly, seeing spiritual things must be placed and preferred before earthly, we learn another duty from hence, namely that we ought to make greatest account of the greatest blessings, and such as are highest of all, must also be highest in our estimation. These we ought especially to pray for, of the want of these, we must have a special feeling. We are ready to ask for our daily bread: but we do not desire the bread of life, we do not hunger and thirst after Righteousness. We are wholly ignorant of the right manner and method of praying, we regard not to observe the order which God hath ordained.

Christ Jesus instrcting us to pray, and leaving us a perfect pattern how to make prayer, both for matter and method, hath made this the fourth Petition, to have *our daily bread* given unto us. But we will not pray after this manner, we will not observe this direction, we make this our principal care, we make it the first Petition, nay; we make it both first and second, the third and sournth, the fifth and sixth: we make it the beginning and the ending, we set it before and behind, we enter with it, we conclude with it, we make it all in all, to have earthly blessings, and temporal commodities, and bodily necessities supplied unto us. What a shame is it unto us, that if we will not know the preeminence of heavenly things, above these mortal and transitory vanities, we should be such great strangers at home and so ignorant of our selves and of those parts whereof we consist. Who is so simple that doth not understand, that the soul is more noble and excellent then the body? If then it be more worthy as being a spirit, an immortal spirit: ought we not in the first place to provide for it? Ought we not to adorn it with all spiritual graces? Ought we not so to quallifie it, as that it may be inheritor

of eternal glory? Let us therefore affect the things of certain abode, and seek after Wisdom, Faith, Sanctification, and the true Riches of the Spirit. If our Treasure be in Heaven, our hearts will be there also.

Let us lay up and lock up our Treasure in Immortality: let us be sure to lay a good foundation against the time to come. One thing is necessary, this is the good part that shall not be taken away from us. All human things are full of uncertainties, and the means of their decaying and vanishing are manifold, the Rust, the Moth, the Canker, the Thief, beside a thousand other casualties that take them away from us. It is an holy and heavenly admonition given unto us by Christ, Math, 6. *First seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and then all other things shall be ministered unto you.* This checketh and controlleth the preposterous order and bad practice of most men in their callings, they set the wrong end forward, they labor first of all to get wealth and welfare from day today, and from year to year, but never think of the root of welfare, and from what Fountain all earthly blessings spring, to wit; from the grace of God. Let us employ our pains to get God's favor, and then transitory things, Wealth, Peace, Honor, Liberty, and such like will follow, so far as they shall be expedient for us: otherwise, all our abundance shall turn to be our bane, woe, and destruction, all things shall be accursed unto us, our Table shall be made a snare to take us and torment us. The grace of God in Christ is sufficient to make a man blessed: and without it, all other things (though we had them in the greatest measure) cannot free us from cursedness. Now it is impossible that ever we should seek for these gracious gifts of God, except we feel our own misery in the want of thē. It is the want of health which we desire to have restored, & the feeling of our disease which we desire to have removed, that driveth us to the Pysician. And we have no promise to obtain earthly things, except we seek them as we ought to seek them, and follow the right manner that God hath left unto us to find them. Many seek after them, and pray for them; but they do not obtain, because they ask amiss. It is our duty, not only to pray for lawful things, but also in a lawful manner. A man may do a good thing after an evil manner: it is in our actions, so it may be in our prayers. An indirect and unsanctified order, may mar and corrupt a good and godly prayer. To conclude therefore, let us know, that this grace and favor of God so often remembered in *Paul's* Epistles, and so often craved and prayed for, to be bestowed upon the Saints, is only able to give satisfaction and contentment unto the soul to stay and rest upon, and therefore we ought above all other things to labor earnestly to feel it in our hearts. Indeed, it seemeth nothing and base in his eyes that hath it not: but when a man once knoweth the worth and value of it, and tasteth the sweet comforts of it within him, he is ready to sell all that he hath to enjoy it and retain it, he is content to renounce and forsake all Dignity and Honor, all Glory and Praise, all Health and Beauty, all Friends and Favor, all Wealth and Treasure, all Joy and Delight, all Mirth and Melody, yea; Brethren and Sisters, and Lands, and Wife, and Children, and all things that may be dear unto him, rather than depart from this Jewel of grace, far in price above all the Jewels of this World. It is with us in respect of spiritual things, as it fareth with the buyer, while he is in buying his commodity before he is possessed of it, according to the description of *Solomon*, Prov. 20. *It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone apart, he boasteth.* He diminisheth the goodness of it, he saith it is to much, it is not worth the money you ask for

it, but when he hath purchased and possesseth it, he praiseth his penniworths, and judgeth it better then his money. So is it with all Heavenly graces, so long as we are destitute of them, we think them not worth our labor and travel, & seeking, and enjoying, we esteem every hour too much, that is spent in following the means appointed to obtain them, and albeit God call unto us *to come, to buy and eat, to come I say, and buy Wine and Milk without Silver & without money*, yet we have no ears to hear, nor leisure to attend, nor hearts to consider of his calling. But when once we have found thē, and know the just price and value of them, we would not loose them for all the World, nor for a thousand worlds if they were offered unto us: nay we are willing to sell all we have, to have them continue and abide with us, according to the counsel of the same *Solomon, Prov. 23, 23. Buy the truth, but sell it not, likewise wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.* Let us therefore grow in love with this grace of God, that we may have our hearts established with it. Let us do that now which we would do at the last gasp and breath. Then we are ready to renounce the World, and to prefer one drop of grace and faith before a Kingdom. Let us now begin to learn wisdom, let us prostrate our selves before the Throne of grace, let us never give rest to our souls until we find it, and let us sue unto him that is the Author and Fountain of all grace, to wit; Christ Jesus, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all glory and praise forever, Amen.

FINIS.

P-WA2-2. A commentary upon the fourth book of Moses, called Numbers Containing, the foundation of the church and common-wealth of the Israelites, while they walked and wandered in the wilderness. Laying before us the unchangeable love of God promised and exhibited to this people ... Herein also the reader shall find more then five hundred theological questions, decided and determined by William Attersoll, minister of the word. - Attersoll, William, d. 1640., Attersoll, William, d. 1640. Pathway to Canaan., Attersoll, William, d. 1640. Continuation of the exposition of the book of Numbers.

CHAP. I.

1 The Lord spake again unto *Moses* in the Wilderness of *Sinai*, in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, in the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the Land of *Egypt*, saying:

2 Take ye the sum of all the Congregation of the children of Israel, after their Families, the households of their Fathers, with the number of their names: to wit, all the males man by man. *And so forward unto the end of the 16. verse.*

WE have shown already, that *Moses* in the ten first chapters, prepareth the people of Israel, to undertake their journey toward the promised Land, the land of *Canaan*. If they had been taken unprepared and unprovided, it would have stopped their course, and hindered their way, and encouraged their enemies. Wherefore there is order taken in the first place, that all should be in readiness, fitted to go, and rightly disposed to attain the end of their desires. In these chapters, we must consider three things. First, the numbering of the people, & taking the sum of them. Secondly, laws are prescribed how to keep themselves pure and holy in their journeys. For how should the Lord their God go with them, unless they walked in holiness? Thirdly, the manner of their going is delivered, in what sort they were to proceed. The numbering of the people is set down in the four first chapters. The laws of sanctification are handled in the five chapters following, to wit; the 5, 6, 7, 8, & 9. chapters. The manner of their journey in the tenth and last chapter.

The taking of the number of the Israelites, and setting down the sum of them (which is the argument & drift of the four first chapters) is of two sorts; the one of the people, the other of the Priests and Levites that ministered before God, and served in the Tabernacle of the congregation. The gathering of the sum of the people is in the two first chapters: the numbering of the tribe of *Levi* is in the 3. & 4. chap. Touching y^e numbering of the people, we have a rehearsal and reckoning up of their persons in the first chapter: and of the ordering and disposing of them under several Ensigns and Regiments in the second chapter.

This first chapter, into which we are now entered, cōtaineth these two points: the former is the taking of the sum of the people of *Israel* in the wilderness of *Sinai*: the latter is the

exempting of the Levites, together with the cause wherefore they were not numbered. So then, we see who they were that were numbered, and then who were not numbered. Touching the former, it comprehendeth both the commandment of God to number them, and the obedience of *Moses*. The commandment of God is amplified by sundry circumstances, as of place, of time, and manner of doing. The place is twofold, general in the desert of *Sinai*, where the Law was given: and special in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, from whence God promised *he would declare himself unto them, and tell all things which he would give in commandment unto the children of Israel*. For we must know there were three places, out of which God gave audience to *Moses*, and used to speak unto him. One was at the door of the Tabernacle, where the Altar of the burnt offerings was, as *Exod. 29, 42. This shall be a continual burnt offering in your generations at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord, where I will make appointment with you, to speak there unto thee*. Another was out of the cloud of pillar, *Num. 12, 5*. But this for the most part did concur with the other, inasmuch as the pillar of the cloud did most usually stand in the door of the Tabernacle, whensoever the Lord did from thence speak unto *Moses*. The third was the Mercy-seat, which was the chief and principal place, *Numb. 7, 89. When Moses went into the Tabernacle to speak with God, he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from the Mercy-seat, that was upon the Ark of the testimony between the two Cherubims, and he spake to him*.

The second circumstance, is the time when God commanded the people to be numbered, that is, the first day of the second month, and of the second yere, after they were come out of the land of Egypt. By this it appeareth that the Israelites abode in the desert of *Sinai* almost an whole year. For they came into that wilderness, the first day of the third Moneth, in the first year, *Exod. 19, 1*: and they continued in that place unto this time, neither did they remove their Tents before the twentieth day of the second Moneth of the second year, as appeareth, chap. 20, 11, of this book. The cause of this long stay and continuance in this wilderness was, because God would have his people thoroughly taught and instructed in all things belonging to his worship and service, before they inhabited and possessed the Land of promise. For within this space of time, the Lord published the Law in Mount *Sinai*, commanded the Tabernacle to be built, which *Moses* erected the first day of the second year, and in the days following of the first month, he gave them Laws touching the sundry sorts of sacrifices, and touching the difference of clean and unclean, prescribed at large in the book of *Leviticus*.

The third circumstance is the manner of their numbering, namely, that *Moses & Aaron* must take other Princes, the heads of y^e house of their Fathers to be helpers and assistants unto them, who joining with them, must take the sum of all the Congregation of y^e Children of *Israel*, after their families and households of their Fathers from 20 year old and above, all that go forth to the war in *Israel*. Whereby we see in this particular numbering, who are excepted and exempted; to wit, first, all that were strangers from y^e Children of *Israel*, *Moses* did not meddle with them. Secondly, women, for he was charged to take account only of the males. Thirdly, such as were under twenty year old. Fourthly, old men that were not fit for Shielde and Spear, or to draw the sword. Fifthly, such as were maimed, or impotent, or sickly & diseased, are also essoined by this Law, and have as it were a passport given unto them,

being cashired and discharged from service, and left out of the numbers that are enrolled and recorded.

[Question 1] In this division two questions arise, which are to be answered. First, touching this numbering, whether it were the same which is mentioned in the Book of Exodus? I answer▪ [Answer.] there is a threefold numbering of them described by *Moses*; first, that in Exodus, chapt. 30. The second is in this chapter: the last is afterward in this book, chapt. 26. These sums were taken upon several occasions, at several times, for several ends, and differ much in the number of such as were accounted, as may appear by the several comparing of one of them with another.

Secondly, it may be demanded for what [Question 2] cause God commandeth a particular account & sum to be taken of his people, to whom they were well known. I answer, [Answer.] not because God would understand whether they wer sufficient for number, or able for strength, to buckle and encounter with their enemies, forasmuch as nothing is unknown to him, nothing is hard to him, or impossible for him to bring to pass, who is able to save as well with a few, as with many. The causes are these: First, for order sake▪ that there should be no occasion of contention for primacy or precedency, but that every Tribe and family should know his place and time when to remove, and when to stand still; when to fight with their enemies, and in every point what to do. Secondly, that such things as were to be paid for the use of y^e Tabernacle, might the more easily be collected and gathered, when they were separated according to their Tribes, and the Tribes according to the families, & the families according to the household, man by man. Thirdly, to make manifest the truth of his promise, and the power of his hand: his truth, in performing his promise, made long ago to *Abraham*, y^t he would increase his posterity: in power, partly in multiplying the people so greatly in so short a time, and partly in feeding and sustaining them in the wilderness, without harvest or husbandry, without planting or tilling, without sowing of Corn, or without feeding & breeding of Cattle. Fifthly, to testify his exceeding great love toward them, and special care over them. Such things as are dear unto us, we delight oftentimes to look upon them and to take the number of them, lest any of them should be lost. A faithful shepherd will many times tell the sheep committed unto him, lest any of them should be missing. So in this Commandment to have all his people numbered, is set forth an infallible token of his care and providence toward them. Lastly, they are severally and distinctly numbered every Tribe by himself, that in time to come it might be certainly known and perceived, of what Tribe & family Christ Jesus the promised Messiah should be borne: for as much as according to the ancient promise uttered by the mouth of *Jacob* and other Prophets, he should be borne of the Tribe of *Judah*, and of the house of *David*, to whom also he is often promised. Now let us come to the doctrines of this division.

Verse 2, 3. *Take the sum of all the Congregation of the Children of Israel, &c: from twenty year old and above, all that go forth to the war in Israel, &c.* We see in these words who is the Author of this numbering of the people, not *Moses*, not *Aaron*, not the heads of the house of their Fathers, but God alone who hath sole authority both over Princes & people. From hence we might observe, that God is the director, commander, and instructor of his people: and

therefore we should depend upon him, and ask counsel at his mouth. But we will not stand upon every particular circumstance▪ nor examine every word; here let us mark who they were that God would have numbered, not women, but males: not children, not old men, not impotent men, but such as are able to handle the sword, and to draw the bow, and to fight against their enemies for their lives, for their wives, for their children, and for the maintenance of God's worship. [Doctrine 1] This teacheth us, that a godly man may lawfully be a warrior. If war were not in it self lawful, God would never take order in this place, to have a muster taken of such as are able to bear arms True it is, every good ordinance and profession may be abused, and nothing is so well instituted, but by man's corruption it may be wrested, and the right use thereof overturned. We see in this place, in this Commandment of God▪ that his Church and people may lawfully take up weapons, and make war against their enemies. *Abraham* is said to be the Father of the faithful, and the faithful to be carried into his bosom, and to sit down with him in the Kingdom of Heaven: *Yet he made war, and over threw the enemies that had spoiled Sodom*, and carried away the riches of it as a prey; and was not reprov'd of *Melchizedek*, the Priest of the living God, but refreshed together with his army. The like we might say of *Moses*, *Joshua*, the *Judges*, and other godly Kings, who fought many battles by the commandment of the Lord. The Scripture teacheth that *David* a man after God's own heart, did fight the battles of God, and the people of God standing in battle array against the Philistines, are called, *The host of the living God*. When the Soldiers heard the preaching of *John*, the fore-runner of Christ, they came unto him, and asked of him what they must do: he did not dissuade them from war, or persuade them to cast away their weapons, but gave them directions how to behave themselves in that honorable profession, *Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages*. Neither did *Peter*, being sent for to come to *Cornelius*, a captain of the Italian Band, a devout man, and one that feared God command him to follow a new trade of life. Neither did *Paul* persuade *Sergius Paulus* the Deputy, a prudent man, to renounce that calling: which no doubt they would have done, if the profession of Chivalry, had not stood with the profession of Christianity. The Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, teacheth touching the faithful, that *through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained the promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, of weak were made strong, waxed valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens*. All these testimonies and examples of the old and New Testament, set forth expressly this truth, that it is a lawful thing and allowed to the godly to follow the wars.

The reasons to confirm this truth do follow. [Reason 1] First, God doth command it▪ and therefore doth allow it as just and lawful For he doth not will things because they are just, but they are just because he willeth them. Now the holy Scripture affordeth sundry testimonies of this truth, and setteth down the precepts & commandments that God gave to his people to be their warrant to use their weapon. So he commanded them to destroy the *Canaanites*, *The Lord thy God shall give thē before thee, and thou shalt smite them, thou shalt utterly destroy them, thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor have compassion on them*. Thus he commanded *Saul* to slay the *Amalekites*, who set upon the people of God when they were come out of the Land of Egypt; and as God commanded the work, so he gave a blessing unto

it, so that those enemies were brought to destruction. For we read in the holy history, that God said unto him, *I remember what Amalek did to Israel, how they laid wait for them in the way, as they came up from Egypt, now therefore go and smite Amalek and destroy ye all that pertaineth unto them, and have no compassion on them, but slay both man and woman, both infant and suckling, both ox and sheep, both Camel and Ass.* Many other precepts are found in the word of God, which we cannot stand upon. But God the Lord of hosts commandeth nothing y^t is unjust & unlawful, therefore war rightly used is lawful & warranted.

Secondly, as God gave direct and express [Reason 2] commandment, so the people of God going forth to battle were to call upon him for a blessing, and to sanctify the work by prayer, and in so doing have been heard. Things in their own nature unlawful, are so foul and filthy, that no prayer and invocation of God's name can cleanse them: nay▪ they make such prayer foul and abominable. If an idolater going to worship his Idol, and serve the creature which is the work of man's hands, should pour out his prayers all day long, as y^e Priests of *Baal* did to be heard, *O Baal hear us:* what were this but a bellowing or beating of the air, or what profit should they receive by it? But the people of God having prayed for good success, building themselves upon the commandment of God, upon the promise of blessing, and upon the example of the faithful, have earnestly prayed, and effectually obtained that which they asked and desired. This we see in the practice of the sons of *Reuben*, and of *Gad*, and of half the Tribe of *Manasseh*, *Ualiant men, able to bear shield and sword, and exercised in war: when they made war against the Hagarims, they were holpen against them, & they delivered into their hands; for they cried to God in the battle, & he heard them because they trusted in him.* Seeing therefore God commandeth, and blesseth, and heareth, and delivereth such as go to war, it must needs follow▪ that war & true religion may well stand together, so that one and the same man may be both a warrior and yet religious.

Let us make use of this point. First, it serveth [Use 1] to convince the cursed sect of the Anabaptists and other spiritualists, who glory of the Spirit, and under a color of seeking peace, and establishing unity and concord over all the world, do bring in detestable doctrines and absurd opinions, as if none were the true Church but only themselves. True it is, it were to be wished, that all persons and nations maintained amity and league one with another, and that there might be no more use of the sword: but this is rather to be wished, then expected: and may sooner be spoken, then it will be obtained and effected. They object the Law of God, *Thou shalt not kill*, [Objection 1] Exod. 20, and the words of Christ, *Resist not evil*, [Answer.] Math. 5. But these and such like places must be understood of private persons, and of private revenge. It is unlawful for any person without a public calling to that duty, to kill another: but a public Officer may and ought to do it. So did *Moses* kill the Egyptian: so did *Phineas* those that committed fornication, as appeareth afterward in this book: so did *Elijah* to the Priests of *Baal* that committed Idolatry, and seduced y^e people. And thus it is in all lawful wars, for soldiers have a public calling, they seek not private revenge: and therefore the battle is said, *Not to be theirs, but the Lord of Hosts.* Likewise there is a private revenge which Christ forbiddeth and condemneth; but the public revenge committed to the Magistrate who beareth not the sword in vain, must be duly and diligently executed, that evil may be taken away out of the City of God. For as in necessity it is good for man's body to

cut off a rotten and dead member betimes, lest the sound parts be corrupted, and the whole body perish: so it is profitable for the safety and security of human society, to sweep away as dung hurtful and noisome Citizens, before they infect others that live among them.

Wherefore so long as wicked men live up on the face of the earth, and so long as the Devil stirreth up his instruments to set themselves against God and his truth, and his servants, so long there will be use of the sword and of the Magistrate to handle it. Wherefore the Apostle calleth upon us to call upon God *for Kings and Princes, and them that are in authority, that under them we may live a peaceable and quiet life▪in all godliness & honesty.* If then these be the ends of Magistracy, to maintain peace, to settle quietness, to establish religion, and to confirm honesty of manners, surely it may be discharged and performed by one that is religious and fearing God. Besides, God promised as a special grace and favor to the Church of Christ in the New Testament, that *Kings should be the nursing Fathers, & Queens the nursing Mothers of it:* which could not be unless a godly and faithful man might bear the Office and discharge the calling of a Magistrate, and take vengeance of the wicked, & maintain the cause of the righteous.

Secondly, we learn hereby, that no calling [Use 2] and condition whatsoever, so it be accompanied with faith and the fruits thereof can separate us from salvation, and shut us out of God's Kingdom. For seeing a man may be a good Christian▪ and a great warrior, which profession many times is most stained and corrupt; it cannot exclude any from eternal life, if themselves by infidelity & iniquity do not exclude themselves. And albeit such persons many times have no regard of equity, or honesty or word, or oath, or Law, or shame, or conscience, but entitle themselves to all that their hand can lay hold upon, as men wholly bent upon spoil and rapine: yet the cause hereof is not in the profession, but in the professor: not in the war, but in the warrior: and therefore it pleased GOD to show forth his great mercy in calling to his marvelous light many men out of that kind of life. Such were the Centurion that came to Christ to have his servant healed, who is commended for his excellent faith: *Cornelius* is reported to be a godly man, and to have under him godly soldiers.

Seeing therefore warfare is no hateful [Use 3] kind of life in it self, such as are soldiers and fight in the field have no less access to salvation then others, and shall rest in *Abraham's* bosom, who was also a warrior as well as they; if they labor to be the children of *Abraham*, and study not so much to be soldiers, as Christian soldiers, which aim at the glory of God in all their actions, and not seek to satisfy their own lusts. How many are there that delight in nothing but in effusion of blood and all oppression? in doing violence, and robbing without difference of friend or foe, brother or enemy? If we profess the name of Christ Jesus, and believe to be saved through his name, let us so live in war, as we remember under whose banner we fight, and whose name we do profess, and whose blessing we look for.

If we be assured and persuaded of the lawfulness of the war, why do we not carry our selves as men that fight not our own battles, but the battles of the Lord of hosts? And if we do not run as desperate men, or as the horse that rusheth into the battle, why do we not consider that our soul is in our hand, that we are in continual danger of death, and must give an account of the things done in this flesh, whether they be good or evil?

Lastly, as the godly may lawfully make War, so they must be careful to observe such conditions as make it lawful and allowable: otherwise, the running of men together in hostile manner after the manner of wild beasts, to shed blood, and to take away life, is of it self most savage & barbarous.

The conditions to be observed are these. First, it must be proclaimed by y^e Magistrate, and such as have authority: otherwise it is private revenge, not public justice. We must not be like *Simeon and Levi*, the sons of *Jacob*, who having wrong and indignity offered of the *Shechemites*, revenged their own cause without authority or calling; for *They drew their sword, and went into the City boldly, and slew every male, and took the spoil both of the place and people*. They had no commandment or commission from *Jacob* their father, as appeareth in the reproof uttered unto them, & the curse denounced against them, *Ye have troubled me, and made me to stick amongst the Inhabitants of the Land*. And in another place, *Cursed be their wrath, for it was fierce: and their anger, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel*. We see therefore that the people must not run upon their own head, nor take arms in hand at their own pleasure, but must look for the warrant and direction of the Magistrate.

Secondly, it belongeth to such as go unto war against another nation and people, to offer them conditions of peace▪ and to receive such to mercy as yield unto them, thereby to avoid the shedding of blood, and to show themselves inclined to mercy. This proclaiming of peace is taught by the Lord himself. *Deut. 20. When thou comest near unto a City to fight against it, thou shalt offer it peace: and if it answer thee again peaceably, and open unto thee, then shall all the people that is found there n, be tributaries unto thee, and serve thee: but if it shall make no peace with thee, but make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it, and smite the Males thereof with the edge of the sword*. Likewise when *Joab* pursued *Sheba*, a Traitor against *David*, and besieged him in *Abel*, so that they cast up a Mount against the City, & began to cast down the wall, *There cried a wise woman out of the City: Hear, hear, I pray you, say unto Joab, Come thou hither, that I may speak with thee: and when he came nere unto her, the woman said: Hear the words of thine handmaid, they spake in the old time, saying, They should ask of Abel, and so have they continued*. In which words she alludeth unto the former Law, that before any City were ouerthrown, or any people put to the sword, peace should be propounded, and the Citizens that yielded be received to mercy.

This is so equal and reasonable, that the unbelievers among the Gentiles thought it expedient and necessary to accept of such as yielded; *albe t the Ram* (a warlike instrument in those days, described by *Josephus* in the wars of the Jews) *had shaken the wall*, that is, were even ready to fall down. And the Turks themselves (proud and merciless enemies) that spare not to shed Christian blood, and pour it out as water, are persuaded that God will not prosper them in their affairs & assaults▪ except they first make unto their enemies some of•er of peace. This putteth us in mind, that we should indi•e our hearts to s•e• mercy as much as may be; and not rage with fire and sword, but remember the common condition of mankind, the uncertainty of all human things, and the danger that may fall upon our selves.

Thirdly, keep all lawful promises, even to the enemy; which is a token of an upright heart. When the spies that were sent to *Jericho*, and made a faithful promise, and bound it with an

oath to save *Rahab* and her fathers house from the common destruction of that City, *Joshua* the General of the host, was so far from denying to stand to that oath, that he called the two men that had spied out the Country, and said unto them; *Go into the Harlots house, and bring out thence the Woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her.* Therefore the Prophet teacheth, that he shall dwell in the Tabernacle of the Lord, and rest in his holy hill, *That sweareth to his own hindrance, and changeth not.* If there be no faith in our words, nor truth in our dealings, nor constancy in our promises, but that we can take up the name of God in our mouths and use it as a color to hide our bloody deseignes; we must not look for any blessing from GOD, nor to have him to go out with our armies.

Fourthly, let the ends of our wars be holy and righteous, not tyranny, not vainglory, but to maintain the honor and glory of God, to defend the Church and Commonwealth from violence and invasion, and to establish peace and concord in our borders. The Heathen by Natures light saw these three ends of a just war, first to withstand force by force, and to defend themselves and the things that belong unto them. Secondly, to recover things lost, and regain things taken away. Thirdly, to revenge wrongs and injuries offered, being before provoked. Many examples are set down in the Scriptures, of the godly Kings, and other Governors, who propounded these ends unto themselves, and so were able to warrant to themselves and others, the bearing of Arms.

Fifthly, we must not suffer lewd & evil persons, incorrigible and vnreformable, to remain in the host of God, who may endanger the whole host, and bring the curse of God upon them. For how should God give a blessing to such wicked instruments? or how should he fight their battles that fight against him? Hence it is, that he commandeth, *Deut. 23. When thou goest out with the host against thine enemies, keep thee then from all wickedness. &c.* When the Israelites gathered themselves together to smite *At*, they could not prosper, but were smitten down & overcome by their enemies, *Because they had sinned and transgressed the covenant of God which he commanded them,* for they had even taken of the excommunicate thing, and had stolen and dissembled also, and put it even with their own stuff. So long as *Achan* remained among them, who had taken two hundred shekels of silver, a goodly Babylonish garment, and a wedge of gold contrary to the commandment of God, they could not stand before their enemies, but were constrained to turn their backs.

This example doth *Phinehas* afterward propound as a warning to the Tribe of *Reuben & Gad* and the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, *ch. 22 Did not Achan the son of Zerah trespass grievously in the excommunicate thing and wrath fell on all the Congregation of Israel? and this man alone perished not in his wickedness.* This is the cause why our wars do not prosper, that when we have sent out our armies by thousands, they have returned by hundreds: and when we have sent out hundreds, they have come home by ten's, because they have given themselves to all wickedness and ungodliness: they have broken out into all disorder, and committed all abominations with greediness, and none is careful to restrain them and reform them. They have not desired God to guide them, and as a Captain to go out with their armies; they have had nothing to do with him, nor he with them: they have been led by the devil, he hath gone out with them and returned home with them, & taketh the government of their whole lives;

they live to him, and without repentance they die to him. Sixthly, that we may use our wars aright it behooveth us to put our trust in God alone, to depend upon him, to pray unto him, and to look for safety and help from him. It is not the Shield that can defend us, it is not the sword that can deliver us, it is not the horse that can save us: the best shield is, *The Shield of faith*, the surest armor is *The breastplate of righteousness the helmet of salvation, & the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*. The Prophet *Jeremiah* teacheth, chapt. 17. *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and with-draweth his heart from the Lord. David* putting confidence in God when he went to encounter with *Goliath*, put off *Saul's* armor, and said, *Thou comest unto me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield, but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of boasts, the GOD of the host of Israel, whom thou hast railed upon*. Thus did *Jehoshaphat* arm himself when he was assaulted by his enemies. 2. Chron. 20. *There is no strength in us to stand before this great multitude that cometh against us, neither do we know what to do: but our eyes are toward thee. Saneherib* glorying in his own strength, and boasting of his own power, is driven to flight with his whole army, 2 Kings 19.25. We have seen sometimes the swift not to gain the prize in running, nor the valiant the victory in fighting▪ nor the strong the praise in wrestling: for as *Sa•omon* saith, Prov. 21. *The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but saluat on is of the Lord*. Such therefore as trust in the greatness of their own strength, and do not put their confidence in the living God, lie open as a prey to their enemies▪ and cannot look for God o be their deliverer. Seventhly, no man should go out to warfare but with greese of mind, and sorrow of heart. For albeit the war be lawful yet when the enemies are slain in battle, it is a defiling of men's hands, and a defacing of God's Image. God hath imprinted *his Image in man*, as he teacheth, Gen. 9, 6: in as much as in the image of God he made man. Likewise when *David* would have built a Temple unto God, it was said unto him 1, Chron. 22. *Thou hast seed mu•h blood, and hast made great battles: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, for thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight*. Not that he imputeth it simply for a crime, but to give everyone a lesson and direction which is constrained to fight against his enemies▪ though the cause be just▪ and the quarrel lawful, that they should be grieved, to see the order of nature so troubled and perverted by reason of men's sins and wickedness. We ought so to live together, and love one another as brethren, and acknowledge our own flesh in all that are created after our likeness what corruption then and confusion is this that we shall be driven to destroy each other after this fashion? Wherefore, even in the time of war, he that putteth on armor against his enemies, and girdeth his sword by his side, must do it after a sort against his will, and with sorrow conceived in his heart, knowing that such outrage happeneth not without great iniquity of men; and desiring rather to live quietly, and to maintain peace and concord with all men, as far as it is possible, and as much as lieth in us, as if our hands were tied behind us from committing any outrage or evil deeds. Lastly, because the liberty & licentiousness of Soldiers is many times left free, and is without bit and bridle to restrain them, it belongeth to Captains and Governors of the host to range the common Soldier in good order and military discipline, that they break not out to endamage or destroy those whom they ought above all to protect and defend. War is judged and esteemed of them to be the time wherein laws are silent, and all things held lawful that their own heart lusteth after. Hence it cometh to pass, that there is such thirsting after goods, deflowring of virgins, ravishing of wives, slaughter

of parents, robbing of houses, burning of Churches, and scorning of religion and all holy things, yea making a mock of Christ our Savior. So then, if severe discipline be not used, & order taken that the people living in peace be not abused, all things will be held lawful beside right and honesty: injuries will be accounted good dealing, and all things taken to be common, and to belong to him that first can seize upon them. It is said of the Centurion in the Gospel, that his authority was such over them that belonged to his band, that none durst oppose themselves against him, or resist his charge that he gave unto them, saying, *I am a man also under the authority of another, and have Soldiers under me; and I say to one, go, and he goeth: and to another, Come and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doth it.* This was a commendation both of the Captain that so ordered and ruled them, that he had them so obedient and serviceable unto him; and likewise of the Soldiers that would submit themselves unto his authority, and suffer themselves to be governed according to the martial laws of a well trained garrison. But of this point occasion will be offered to speak in this book afterward, chap. 21. ver. 28. and chap. 24. verse 20. and chap. 25. ver. 17. & chap. 31, 7.

[Verse 5] *These are the names of the men that shall stand with you; of the tribe of Reuben, Elizur the son of Shedeur, &c.* As this Book of Moses beareth the title of *Numbers*; so a great part of it is spent in numbering of the people, to assure us that God hath numbered those that are his, he keepeth the tale of them, & none are hidden from him, none escape his knowledge, or sight. We learn from hence that the Lord knoweth perfectly who they are that are his, both what their numbers and what their names are. When *Israel* had corrupted their ways and set up idolatry, so that *Elias* thought himself left alone; what said the Oracle of God, that made answer unto him? *I have reserved unto myself seven thousand men, which have not bowed the knee to Baal.* Where we see, the Lord saw not as man seeth, he knew those whom *Elias* could not know. To this end the Prophet saith, Psalm 147, 5. *He counteth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names:* albeit to man it be incredible and impossible, that he should number and name the stars in the firmament, yet this to him shall not be hard, much less impossible. Thus saith the Lord also by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, and bringeth out their armies by numbers, and calleth them all by names: by the greatness of his power and mighty strength, nothing faileth.* Hereunto we may refer that usual phrase of speech in the Scripture, that the names of the elect are said to be *written in the book of life* which God hath made: which is a borrowed speech from such records as are kept in a City, wherein the names of the Freemen and Cittizens in the same are written. All these testimonies are so many consents of the Scripture to prove and confirm this truth; namely, that the servants of GOD are known to him, and approved of him; not only in general, but specially and particularly, so that he is able both to number them, and to name them.

The reasons are not hard to be gathered. [Reason 1] First, the knowledge of God is so exact and perfect, that most secret things are known, and the smallest are regarded of him. What is a less matter, or of less moment then a Sparrow that doeth fall to the ground? Or the hairs that fall from the head? yet even these are ordered by him, and his divine providence ouerswayeth them. This Christ our Savior putteth in our minds, in the tenth chapter of Saint

Matthew, and the 29, 30. verses. *Are not two Sparrowes sold for a Farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father: yea, and the hairs of your head are numbered.* If then, things so small and slight, and little regarded of men, be numbered of Almighty GOD; much more are we respected of him? And if our very hairs be numbered, much more are our names.

Secondly, Christ Jesus setteth forth himself [Reason 2] as the true Sheepeheard of his Sheep. A Sheepeheard knoweth his own Sheep, whereof he hath taken the charge and oversight. Christ is the Sheepeheard, the Church is the Flock: his word is the staff whereby he ruleth, and the pastures wherewith he feedeth them; and therefore he knoweth them all by their names. A good Sheepeheard oftentimes numbereth his Sheep, and misseth none of them but he seeketh the lost one. So is it with Christ: he is a far better Sheepeheard and more faithful then those that have the guidance and governance of such as are but for the belly and the slaughter; *For he giveth his life for the Sheep.* This he teacheth at large in the tenth Chapter of *Saint John*, and the 2.3. and 11. verses. *I I am that good Sheepeheard: that good Sheepeheard that giveth his life for his Sheep: to him the Porter openeth, and the Sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own Sheep by name, and leadeth them out.* Seeing then, Christ is a faithful Sheepeheard, he cannot be ignorant of our numbers, or our names, or our natures.

Thirdly, all his people are evermore present [Reason 3] with him, wheresoever they be; yea albeit they be absent from him; yea albeit they have no being. He seeth them when they are from him, he knoweth them when they are not. *Nathaniel* was seen of Christ, and known by name, being far from him, while he was *under the Fig-tree.* *Josiah* was named of God long before he was borne, as we see in the first book of the Kings, chap. 13. and the second verse: (and so is *Cyus*, as appeareth in the prophesy of *Isaiah*.) For, when the Prophet was sent to cry out against the Altar at *Bethel*, he said; *O Altar, Altar, thus saith the Lord: Behold, a child shall be borne to the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon thee shall he sacrifice the Priests of the high places that burn Incense upon thee, & they shall burn men's bones upon thee.* This was threatened long before *Josiah* was borne, yet God knoweth his name before he was, and revealeth him as if he had been alive in that time.

The like we may say of *Cyrus* the deliverer of the Jews, whom the Lord nameth and appointeth to free his people from the bondage & captivity wherein they lived: albeit at that time he was not borne, nor in an hundred years after, nor *Josiah* in three hundred after his name was published. Seeing therefore the very hairs of our heads are numbered; seeing Christ is the good Shepherd of his Sheep; and seeing all things both past and to come are present with God, so that he beholdeth them with one act; we conclude, that the people of God are known to him, and that particularly.

[Use 1] The Uses. First, this giveth singular comfort to all God's children, if anything else be able to minister them comfort. If an earthly Prince should vouchsafe to look upon us, & show us this favor to single us out from the rest, and call us by our names, how would we rejoyce, and how much would we esteem that the King would stoop so low as to know us? So doth this doctrine seal up to our hearts this great consolation, that the King of heaven doth know us by our names. Are we then in trouble and persecution? Are we accounted silly men,

obscure, base, and unregarded? Do we live as contemptible persons to the men of this world? and will they not once vouchsafe to know us? Let not this trouble or grieve us; let it not dismay or discomfort us, we cannot sink down in destruction; but rather let us lift up our heads, assuring our selves, that albeit they turn themselves from us, yet God looketh upon us; though they reproach us, yet he will respect us: and though they seek to root out our names from the earth, yet he will know us, and call us by our names. Thus the Lord speaketh to *Moses*, and encourageth him. *Exod. 33.* and showeth how he regardeth him in all trouble, because he knew him by name, *Thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.* Where we see, he joineth these two together, *Finding grace in his sight, and knowing him by name.* The like doth Christ say to his Disciples that returned from preaching of the Gospel, *In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subdued unto you: but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.* And indeed, what greater comfort can there be then this? If thou hadst all the delights and pleasures of this life for a season, and haddest thy name written in the black book of reprobation, and thy condemnation graven in thy forehead, what could the former allurements comfort thee? Or how could they drive horror and heaviness from thy heart? So when he sent out his Apostles, and gave them power to cast out unclean spirits▪ and to heal all sicknesses, having taught them that the hairs of their head were numbered; he addeth, *Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* So then, here we have the foundation of sound comfort laid before us, and this we must lay up in store against the day of temptation and time of trouble. For albeit we live now in time of peace and plenty: yet we know not how long they shall continue, and how soon they may be taken from us, and we be scourged with the contrary judgments

It is a rule in our holy Religion, that the Church must taste of the Cross▪ and God will try us this way, that we may be acquainted with our own infirmities; that we may be preserved from many grievous sins; that we should not be condemned with the Worlde; that others beholding God's hand correcting his Church for sin, might learn thereby to hate and abhor sin, and to love righteousness; and that the Church might gain glory to God's name, by striving for the truth unto the death. But when the cross is any way up on us▪ and we feel the sharpness of his rod we are ready to sink down to desperation and to say we are no more had in remembrance, as *Psal. 10, 1. Why standest thou far off O Lord, and hidest thee in due time, even in affliction?* And afterward, *Psal. 22, 1, 2. My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me, and art so far• from my health, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry by day, but thou hearest not: and by night, but have no audience.* Thus are we inclined to judge in our miseries, and to think God to have forgotten us, and to be utterly absent from us. But if we in time of trouble remember him and his name, he will remember us and our names for good, & not for evil. If we can say in trouble, *I will delight in thy statutes, I will not forget thy word: behold mine affliction & deliver me, for I have not forgottē thy law:* we may lay this up as a truth, & plant it as a chief plant in the ground of our hearts, that God will never forget us, nor put us out of his sight forever. True it is, he will prove his people, and try their faith for a season, but he will never forsake them, nor leave them as a prey in the jaws of their enemies, who rejoice at their fall, and delight themselves in their adversities. And as true it is, that the ungodly triumph over

them, & trample upon them, even as abjects and men out of the favor of God; but if we wait a little while, he will remember his people according to his mercy, and recompense his adversaries according to their iniquity. This doeth the Prophet declare, Psal. 10. where he complaineth of the fraud, wrong, rapine, and tyranny of the ungodly, *He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth away his face, and will never see: yet thou hast seen it, for thou beholdest mischief and wrong, that thou mayest take it into thine own hands, the poor committeth himself to thee, for thou art the helper of the fatherless.*

Howsoever therefore the faithful say they are forsaken, and the unfaithful judge them also to be forsaken: yet there is great difference between the temptation of the one, and opinion of the other. The godly speak of themselves according to their present feeling and utter such words while the temptation is heavy upon them: howbeit at that time they are unfit judges of themselves & of their condition how it standeth between God & their souls. They are ready to speak according to their temptation; the ungodly utter their rash and uncharitable opinion: the devil broacheth his false and forged suggestion. The faithful indeed do oftentimes cry out in the bitterness and anguish of spirit, *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, forever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? And again, I will say unto God which is my rock, why hast thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning when the enemy oppresseth me? Why art thou cast down my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Waite on God, for I will yet give him thanks, he is my present help, and my God. And Psal. 44. Up, why sleepest thou, O Lord; awake, be not far off forever: wherefor hidest thou thy face & forgettest our misery, and our affliction? For our soul is beaten down unto the dust, our belly cleaveth unto the ground: rise up for our succor, and redeem us for thy mercies sake. And in another place, Will the Lord absent himself forever, and will he show no more favor? Is his mercy clean gone forever, doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be merciful? Hath he shut up his tender mercies wholly in displeasure? And I said, This is my death, &c. Thus do the faithful cry out and complain, as if they were without both faith and feeling of any favor of God: and yet in all these distresses and afflictions God is not absent from them, neither hath forgotten them. Some diseases of the body are so forcible and violent▪ that they seem to have taken away all life, and to have brought present death, yet afterward there is a recovery and raising up again contrary to the feeling of the person diseased, and the judgment of the beholders: thus standeth the case with many dear servants of God, who in the extremity of affliction, and brunt of temptation, seem to themselves and others to have utterly lost the life of faith, and light of grace, w^c in former times they have felt and enjoyed. The trees in winter seem to be dead, without sap, without leaves, without life; nothing appeareth to yield any hope of future fruit in time to grow upon them: but when the winter season is passed, & the Spring approacheth, they show forth by lively effects that they had life in them, and were not dead. The hour of temptation with the faithful is y^e time of Winter, they seem benumbed for a short season: but as they gather strength, and faith beginneth to spring up, they shall find and feel a present operation of unspeakable comfort. And hereunto our present doctrine in hand maketh a way, when it teacheth that God will show his help in time of need, seeing he knoweth the numbers and the names of us. When the Church was in great misery in Egypt, so that his people sighed for the bondage & cried, their cry for the bondage came up to God; and he said, *I have surely seen the trouble of my people**

which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, because of their Task-masters: for I know their sorrows. The Prophet Isaiah to this purpose joineth together their affliction and God's compassion, chap. 49. *But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me: Can a woman forget her child, and not have compassion on the son of her Wombe? Though they should forget, yet will I not forget thee; behold, I have graven thee upon the palm of mine hands, &c.* Loe here what comfort is given against all the discomforts that happen unto us, and against all the disgraces and distresses that are thrown upon us: though men will not know us, but stand far from us, yet GOD will know us, and not be ashamed of us. Our particular estates, our particular names are not unknown to him: so that we may everyone of us say with the Prophet, *The Lord hath called me from the womb, and made mention of my name from my mothers belly.* Let us apply this promise unto our selves and esteem little to be judged by the corrupt judgment of man: neither let us sit in judgment upon our selves to esteem of our selves by our present feeling: for we are not upright judges in time of temptation, and we must walk by faith, not by feeling. For there may be faith, when we are void of feeling, as we heard before in the former examples: we suffer a kind of eclipse as the celestial lights do, but in the end recover the light which we seemed to have lost.

Secondly, we may gather from hence the [Use 2] woeful and wretched estate of all the ungodly, that think themselves happy and blessed men, and yet they find in the end, that they are the only unhappy men in the world, and that it had been good for them if they had neuet been borne. For better never to be borne, then to be borne to hell and destruction. Now as it is a great part of the comfort of all God's children, that he will know them; who as they have a regard to know God in this life, to know him in his word and other means appointed for their salvation, so shall they be known of God in his kingdom, and acknowledged before the Angels in heaven: so this is not the least of the misery belonging unto all that work iniquity, that God will not know them.

Here some man may say, [Objection.] It skilleth not what they do, or how they live, if GOD will take no knowledge of them. I answer, [Answer.] these men might think themselves in good case if God were ignorant of them, and knew not their lives. But all things are *naked to him, & open before his eyes with whom we have to do.* This the Prophet *Jeremiah* confirmeth in his prayer to God, *Thou showest mercy unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of the children after them. O God the great & mighty, whose name is the Lord of hosts, great in counsel and mighty in work, for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give to everyone according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his works.* If then he know and understand all things past, present, and to come, and all persons are evermore in his eye, how can he be said not to know the ungodly? The answer is, there is a twofold kind of knowledge spoken of in the Scripture. One is, that knowledge whereby he alloweth, accepteth, and approveth of his creatures to be his, vouchsafing to them his special favor, & loving them as his own children: of this the Psalmist saith, *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous or godly, but the way of the wicked shall perish.* So the Apostle saith, Rom. 11, 2. *God hath not cast away his people whom he knew before,* that is, whom he approved and loved The other is that knowledge whereby he disalloweth of the wicked, and disavoweth them to be his; and therefore he will not show forth his mercy toward them: and of this we now speak, which

setteth forth the greatness of their misery and unhappiness. Though he know them by the general knowledge of his power and providence, yet he will not see them with the *eye* of his pity, nor touch them with the *hand* of his favor, nor hear them with the *ear* of his bounty, nor speak unto them with the *mouth* of his goodness, nor compass them with the *arm* of his protection, nor come unto them with the *feet* of his presence, nor behold them with *the Face and countenance* of his loving kindness. Can there be a more miserable condition described, and felt then this is? Yet these are they that count themselves happy, and entitle themselves to the Kingdom of heaven. But as soon shall they bring heaven and earth together, and make an agreement between fire and water, between God and the devil between righteousness and unrighteousness, as procure the love and favor of God toward them, so long as they walk in their evil ways. For, as they regard not to know God, in his word; so he regardeth not to know them with his grace in this life, and to crown them with his glory in the life to come. These are they that *Job* speaketh of, chap. 21. ver. 14, 15. *Who say unto God, Depart from us: for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Who is the Almighty that we should serve him? And what profit should we have, if we should pray unto him?* Though they speak not this with their tongues, nor utter such words with their mouths: yet such corruption and Atheism is in their hearts. For there is a double kind of voice, and a twofold speaking. One with the tongue, the other with the heart: and the fool speaketh with them both, sometimes with the former, and sometimes with the latter. On the other side the Lord recompenceth them according to their words and works, and meeteth with them according to their sins: for he will profess unto them his despising of them as they have despised him, and his passing by of them in the day of judgment, as they have passed by him in the day of his mercy. This is it which Christ himself speaketh in the manifestation of the just condemnation of the Reprobate, Math. 7, 23. *Then will I profess to them, I never knew you: depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* Here is a description of the estate of all unreformed and unrepentant persons, God disclaimeth them, & commandeth them to depart out of his sight. Both these are joined together, and both of them are most fearful. If God once disclaim us, who can lay claim to us but the devil? If we may not enjoy the presence of God, whose fellowship shall we enjoy but the devils? And mark with me how God justly repayeth such men, and findeth them out in their own wickedness. They say to God in their life, as we heard before out of *Job*, *Depart from us:* and God in the last day shall say to them, *Depart from me.* They say in their life to God, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: and he shall say in the end of the world, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity. They will not know the Lord who he is, and the Lord will not know them with his favor, but with his fury: not with mercy, but with judgment: not with glory, but with shame and contempt poured upon them.

Hence it is, that in another place amplifying the last judgment he saith, *Then shall they begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets: But he shall say, I tell you, I know ye not whence you are; depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* Let us therefore all betimes seek to know the Lord, to have him dwelling in our hearts, to call upon him, and to attend unto his word with fear and reverence, that he may know us and accept of us. When a certain man going down from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho* fell amongst thieves, was robbed of his goods, stripped of his raiment, wounded in his body, and left half dead, did it not increase

his sorrow and misery, that a certain Priest saw him and passed by on the other side? And that likewise a *Levite* came near to the place, looked upon him, and departed his way without counsel or comfort, without succor or assistance? This did add to the heap of his misery: but how much more lamentable shall it be, when we shall lie not half dead, but without any life of God in us▪ without any pity shown unto us, without any Samaritan to have compassion upon us, to bind up our wounds, to pour in oil and wine, to give us any ease, or to make provision for us? When God will not know us, none of his creatures shall acknowledge us, or comfort us, or call us by our names. It shall be with us, as with the rich man, to whō the Scripture vouchsafeth to give no name, as not worthy to be spoken of, verifying the saying of the Wiseman, Prov. 10, 7. *The memorial of the just shall be blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.* Seeing therefore, God promiseth to take notice of all such as are his, it followeth, he will not know, that is, love or allow the wicked or their deeds, and therefore their condition must needs be miserable, as being out of his number.

[Use 3] Thirdly, seeing all that are God's are numbered of him, and have their names written in his book, this serveth to seal up the assurance of our salvation and election to eternal life. For, if God know us even by name, our names shall never be blotted out of his account, but remain there graven forever. This the Apostle teacheth, 2 Tim. 2, 19. *The foundation of God remaineth sure, and hath this seal; The Lord knoweth who are his: and let everyone that calleth on the name of Christ depart from iniquity.* Where he showeth, that God's decree is infallible and unchangeable, and built upon a sure foundation, that cannot be removed. True it is, Satan will not cease to winnow us, the world to allure us, the flesh to corrupt us, and sundry other temptations to set upon us; yet the elect shall not be seduced and perverted by those subtleties and suggestions, but only the Reprobate which were of old ordained to condemnation.

Christ our Savior fore-showeth of the perilous times that are to come, that there shall arise *false Christ's, and false Prophets*, and shall show great signs and wonders; so that if it were possible, they should deceive the very elect. He addeth, *if it were possible*, because it is altogether impossible, both by reason of Christ's intercession, John 17, 20, 21. & 16, 13. and also through the holy Spirit which is in them, comforting them, and leading them into all truth, Hereunto also he hath respect when he saith unto *Peter, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to winnow you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not.* For the elect are the members of his body, which he will save: the Sheep of his pasture, which no man shall take out of his hand: they are his people, whom because he hath justified, he will also glorify. He hath loved them, and whom he loveth, he doth love to the end; so that no creature shall be able to separate them from his love.

[Objection.] Here a question may be demanded, whether the gifts and graces of God may be lost, or not? Whether they may decay and die in us or not? And whether the elect may lose their salvation or not? I answer, [Answer.] we must consider that there are diverse gifts of God, some general, others particular: some lesser, and some greater. First therefore we must know, that the general or common gifts may be utterly taken away, and quite lost, as if they had never been given, never been received. This we learn in the parable of the sower, Luk. 8,

13, 14. many that are hearers of the word *receive it with joy, and believe for a season, yet in time of temptation fall away.* So the Apostle to the Hebrews showeth, that some who have been enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and made partakers of the holy Ghost, *may fall back again, and crucify to themselves the Son of God,* and make a mock of him. There are other graces and works of the Spirit, which are special, and of an higher nature, & of greater importance; these are proper to the Servants of God: such are faith, repentance, regeneration, sanctification, and other fruits of election, these are of another nature; and shall never be lost, but are as a light that shall never be extinguished.

This the Apostle *John* setteth down, 1 John. 3, 9. *Whosoever is borne of God, sinneth not,* that is, cannot quite fall away by sin: *because his seed remaineth in him; neither can he sin, because he is borne of God.* Hereunto *Paul* accordeth, Rom. 11, 29. when he saith, *The gifts & calling of God are without repentance.* This appeareth evidently unto us in inferior things of this world. Consider the seed that is sown and cast into the earth. Some corn is sown and never riseth, but rotteth in the ground: some springeth up and promiseth hope of a plentiful harvest, yet shortly after withereth: this is soon up, and soon gone. Some proceedeth farther, it groweth up to an ear, and showeth beautiful, yet it is blasted: other—some by God's blessing continueth, and cometh to a timely and seasonable ripeness. And as it is in corn, so we may see the like in trees. Some trees are planted, and never take any root: some take root, and never have blossom: some bear blossoms, but never bring forth fruit: and some by the blessing of him that is *The true Husbandman*, both root deeply, and blossom fairly, and bring forth fruit plentifully in due season. So is it in this matter, touching the gifts of God.

Some, when they have heard the word, which seemeth sowed in the furrows of their heart, do give a show, and offer an hope, but they decay by and by, and wither as fast as they began to flourish. Others have taken deeper root of earth, and hold out a long time, and make promise of better things, yet they decay at the last as corn blasted in the ear, & deceive themselves and others. Others continue to the end; these are planted surely, and built upon the rock, who may be shaken, but cannot fall; neither shall ever be plucked up by the roots, but grow and prosper with much increase. These are described, Psal. 1, 3. & 92, 13, 14. *He shall be like a Tree planted by the rivers of waters, that will bring forth fruit in due season, whose leaf shall not fade, so whatsoever he shall do shall prosper.* And also in another place, *Such as be planted in the house of the lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God: they shall bring forth fruit in their age: they shall be fat & flourishing.* Thus then we see, that some graces may die and wither away, and also what they be, namely, such as are general, and common to the godly and ungodly.

Secondly, touching the gifts pertaining to salvation, they are also of two sorts, some are simply necessary, without which a man cannot be saved; such are faith and sanctification. Other be less necessary, not always going with faith, but sometimes only, & sometimes are separated for a time from it; of this sort are, a plentiful feeling of God's favor, boldness in prayer, joy in the holy Ghost, and a full assurance of salvation: these not being absolutely necessary, nor always found in them (though only proper unto them) may for a time be wholly lost in the best and most approved servants of God. Thirdly, we must know that the

gifts that are simply necessary to salvation; without which, no man of years can enter into the kingdom of heaven, as Faith and Repentance (considered in themselves) may both wholly and finally be lost: for there is nothing in them or their nature, or in us and our nature to make them or us unchangeable. The state of the elect Angels is changeable, who keep their original estate by the power of God confirming them therein. We see innumerable companies of the Angels fell down from heaven, when they were left unto themselves, *And are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.* Nothing is in it own nature unchangeable but GOD, *With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* Hence it is that the Apostle calleth him *the King everlasting, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.* Thus we see that this title of immortality and vnchangeableness is proper to God alone.

Fourthly, those gifts and graces of absolute necessity may perish fully and finally, unless they be confirmed in us by the grace of corroboration: so likewise it was with the Angels, they were subject to fall without special strength, whereby they are enabled to stand, and to hold fast their habitation in heaven. So then, the reason why the elect after their calling do not fall from grace, is not in the nature of faith, or the constancy of grace it self, but it proceedeth wholly from y^e merciful promise of God made to the faithful & to their faith, which he cannot frustrate; and therefore we cannot be deceived, because he that hath made the promise cannot lie We know and are not ignorant, what Christ saith to *Peter*, Math. 16, 18. *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Lastly, these gifts of God, though they cannot totally and finally be lost in regard of God's promise, yet the enemies of our Faith and obedience may greatly assault them, and grievously weaken them, and pitifully diminish them, and thereby make a deep wound and impression in our souls, so that thereby we may lie languishing, gaping and gasping for life, and draw as it were to the point of death. The Prophet felt few or no effects of the Spirit working in him, when he said, *There is no hope for me in my God.* So then, albeit it be sure & certain, that the saving gifts of GOD are without repentance, and that a true justifying faith (peculiar to the elect) cannot totally and finally be lost; yet when we have received them, if we wax proud and wanton; if we grow secure, and give our selves to commit iniquity, these graces of God may so decay in us, as that in our own judgment and feeling, and in the opinion of others, it may seem that they are quite lost, and the Spirit of God to be departed from us. Take the *Galatians* for an example, who were truly called by the Gospel, and received Christ Jesus to salvation, as appeareth in that they received the Apostle *as an Angel of light:* yet by false teachers they so fell away and so dangerously, as that Christ was without fashion in them, & the Apostle did *travel in pain with them as a woman in child-birth, until Christ were anew fashioned in them.* David, by giving liberty to the flesh, and committing of sin, & not watching over his own ways, was brought into that horror and anguish of spirit, as that he entreateth God to *create a new heart in h m, & not to take his holy Spirit from him;* the work of grace seemed wholly perished; and the graces of the Spirit touching▪ his own feeling, were quenched. When a man by the force of a violent temptation, as it were a sore tempest beating him down, hath profaned the gifts of God, and checked & grieved his Spirit, quenching with sin as it were with cold water, the heavenly graces kindled in his heart,

wherewith he was sealed to the day of redemption, it will cost him dear, draw from him many sighs and sobs, drive him into great horror and grievous agonies, and cause him to shed many tears, before he shall recover himself again: yea, he would give the whole world to see the loving countenance of God toward him, to hear God speak peace to his conscience, to feel with comfort the joy of his salvation. The sin of relapse is a fearful sin, as the relapse into a sharp disease is dangerous to the life. God did whip and torment y^e conscience of *David*, that he roared as a Lion for the disquietness of his heart, and *caused his bed to swim, and watered his couch with tears*. The like we see in *Peter* after his falling and denying of his master, *He went out & wept bitterly*, before he could find the favor of God renewed again toward him. Thus then we see y^t albeit upon this ground that our names and our numbers are known to God, we learn that our salvation is sure, and our state unchangeable: yet we must not grow secure, but use all means whereby his graces in us may not be in vain, but be cherished (as a fire is with Fuell put unto it) y^t they go not out, and die in us.

Fourthly, seeing God vouchsafeth in mercy [Use 4] to number us▪ let us labor to learn the Art of numbering & measuring our days and times▪ y^t so we may be wise hearted. It is a great skil & a divine to number aright as we ought. If a man could understand all languages, & speak with the tongue of men & Angels, and were not able to utter the language of *Canaan*, it should little avail him. We must all prepare our selves, if we would have the name and reputation of good Linguists and Artists, to learn the heavenly Arts and the true liberal Sciences. Many there are that are accounted deep Scholars, great Linguists, profound Philosophers, good Grammarians, excellent Mathematicians, sharp Logicians, cunning Politicians, fine Rhetoricians, sweet Musicians, & rare in all witty conceits: yet while they wax old in human learning, and spend all their time therein to delight themselves and to please others, they are utterly ignorant oftentimes of the right use of those arts; catching after the shadow of them they leave the substance; and studying the circumstances, they omit the marrow and pith of them. There is a divine Grammar, a divine Arithmetic, a divine Geometry, a divine Astronomy, divine Music: there are Christian Ethics, & Economics, Christian Politikes and Physicks which are to be known of us and studied by us, without which the other cannot profit. He is the best Grammarian, that hath learned to speak the truth from his heart. It is the greatest incongruity that can be, when the heart and the tongue (between which two there ought to be a concord) do not agree together. If we do not for an advantage lie one to another, we have gotten the right art of Grammar, which teacheth to speak truly. They are the best Musicians that have learned to sing the praises of God, *Speaking to themselves in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord in their hearts, giving thanks always for all things unto God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*. He is the best Astronomer that *hath his conversation in heaven*, and treadeth under foot earthly things; that setteth his affections on things that are above, and not on things that are beneath. He is the most expert Arithmetician that useth daily *to number* not only his years and months, but *his days*, and the short times of his life that he is to live upon the earth. He is the most skillful Geometritian that measureth his days with a right line, and considereth that while the chain is in his hand, some part of his life is consumed and cut shorter. Whosoever amendeth his life, and every day groweth better and better, is cunning

in the Ethics. Whosoever traineth up his family in the fear of God, is a good Oeconomicke. Whosoever is *wise unto salvation*, and prudent in giving and taking godly counsel, is a good Politician: and if he know aright his own state how he standeth with God, he is a right good states-man. But what shall it profit a man to be a good Linguist, and not be able to *speak the language of Canaan*? to abound in the perswasive words of human wisdom as an Orator, and to want the evidence of the Spirit? to be skillful in consort, and to have iarre and discord in his own heart? to be able to measure the whole earth, & yet not to measure the narrow compass of his own life? What shall it advantage a man to be cunning in the heavens, and to have one foot in hell? to number his kine, his sheep, his cattle, and not to number his own days? *Job* was a very rich man, the richest among all the men of the East, yet the number of all his beasts was known, *His substance was seven thousand Sheep, three thousand Camels, five hundred yoke of Oxen, and five hundred she-asses*. There is no Shepherd but knoweth the number of his whole flock, and oftentimes telleth them that he may not be deceived. No man is so simple but he can reckon the number of his Cattle, & rehearse the names of his Oxen. What extremity of folly then is it to have skill to number up his sheep and other goods, and yet in the carelessness of his heart, to suffer whole years to pass over his head, and the greatest part of his age to fly away, and never number his days, thereby to get spiritual wisdom? We see that Merchants & other Trades-men have their counters and counting-houses to cast up their accounts, and to make eeuen reckonings: but alas, it is more then childishnes, and worse then madness to keep right reckonings between man and man, and never to reckon with God, nor to make level with him, The Prophet setting down the shortness of man's life, that his time is threescore years and ten, which pass away as a thought, doth break out into this effectual prayer, *Teach us so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom*. This is divine arithmetic and most heavenly numeration, to enter into our counting houses, that we may understand how short a space we have to live, and thereby become circumspect and heedy how we spend the time of our life that remaineth. If then we remember our last end, and think upon the hours of our age y^t run away swiftly, we deserve the praise and commendation of good Arithmeticians, and we may be said to have the best art and habit of numbering that can be in the world. Al other knowledge of numbering without this, is of less value then a cypher. Besides, the greatest part of men that would be thought cunning in the practice of this faculty, are out of their numbers & much deceived; they evermore busy themselves in addition & multiplication, and dream of many years that they are to live: whereas we must be careful to practice subtraction & diminution, knowing that every day, nay every hour & momēt cutteth off a part of our time. The rich man in the Gospel was a bad cypherer & an evil Arithmetician, whē he set down a false sum to his own soul, saying, *Thou hast much goods laid up for many years*. He set down years for days, like the deceitful trades-man y^t writeth pounds for shillings. The Prophet *David* was more skillful in this art, and had learned better to cast accounts, saying, Ps. 39. *Lord, let me know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, let me know how long I have to live. Thou hast made my days as an handbreadth and mine age is nothing in respect of thee, surely every man in his best estate is altogether vanity: Doubtless man walketh in a shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain, he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them*. In which place, howsoever some impatience appeareth in regard of the present troubles wherewith

on every side he was encombred and compassed about yet he confesseth the vanity of his life, the shortness of his days, and the uncertainty of all his actions. We are ready to promise unto our selves a long life, and to multiply the thoughts of many years, which drowneth us in the desires of this world, and taketh away the meditation of heavenly things. *Job* in sundry places teacheth us this art of numbering, ch. 14. *Man that is borne of woman, is of a short continuance, & full of trouble, he shooteth out as a flower, & is cut down &c.* Let us learn of these godly men the art of arithmetick, and know that we have profited well in y^t school, when by skillful diduction we can bring the years of our life unto a consideration of the number of our days, which pass away and not be recalled.

Lastly, seeing the Lord knoweth us, it is our [Use 5] duty also to seek to know him in all love and obedience. He knoweth us not only with that knowledge wherewith he knoweth y^e wicked; but with a special knowledge of his favor & good pleasure. This must be considered of us. For some man might say Is this any priuiledg y^t God will know us? doth he not also know the wicked? or is there anything dim & dark to him, or hidden frō him? He doth know the ungodly, even all their thoughts and imaginations, their goings out, & their comings in for evermore. It were good for thē if he knew them not, with his all-seeing providence▪ for then they might escape the vengeance of his powerful hand. But they shall know in y^e end, that he knoweth them to their final condemnation. His knowledge of his dear elect is far otherwise, he knoweth them to protect & defend them, to justify and save them. He knoweth them as a father knoweth his children, or as a friend loveth his friend, he knoweth them particularly and by their proper names, he loveth thē with an unfeigned love. On the other side, it standeth us upon to know him with an especial knowledge, as the child knoweth & loveth his father after a special manner and in an earnest measure even from a feeling of that love wherewith the father loveth him. True it is, the child loveth others, but in a general sort; but his own father he knoweth more particularly, & with an inward affection of the heart he knoweth his voice, and can discern it from others. So is it with the sons of God, who have a blessed experience of his love toward them, they love him, they delight in him, and they rejoyce in him; as *John 3.29. He that hath the Bride, is the Bridegroom, &c.* We must all of us begin to know him here in this life, that we may know him perfectly in the life to come. Here we must see him as it were through a glass darkly, that hereafter we may see him face to face fully. If we do not know him in his Word and Sacraments, we shall never know him in his kingdom. For the word is the path way that leadeth unto it, and therefore is called the Gospel of the Kingdom. This teacheth us to consider diligently the saying of Christ, *John 17. This is eternal life that they know thee to be the only very God, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ.* If then we desire eternal life, we must labor to know God, lest he say to us in his wrath, *Depart from me, I know you not.* This knowledge of God necessarily required of us, consisteth in these points following. First, we must confess & acknowledge him to be the soueraign and highest good, *incomparision of whom* 〈◊〉 *things are reputed as nothing* being as dross & draury, and nothing to be desired with him as Christ saith, *Why callest thou me good, there is none good but one, even God.* If we equal ought with him, or prefer anything in heaven or earth before him, we are ignorant of him and know him not.

Secondly, it behooveth us to depend upon him, and to put our whole trust in him alone, not in any man or Angel: for then we make flesh our strength, and so lean upon a broken staff that cannot stay us, but will deceive us.

Thirdly, we must draw near unto him in time of need, as to the fountain of all goodness, with all reverence and humility craving all things of him by hearty and fervent prayer. If we call upon him, he hath promised to reveal himself unto us.

Fourthly, we must give him thanks for all blessings received from him, not only in prosperity, but in adversity. Now we shall show our selves thanfull unto him by doing that which he commandeth, by avoiding y^t which he forbiddeth by praising and advancing his name for all his works, whether they be works of his mercy, or whether they be works of his justice, in correcting of his Children, and in punishing his enemies.

Fifthly, we must seek the knowledge of his ways & word and increase in the knowledge thereof, which bringeth us to eternal life. As we grow forward in knowledge, so we grow forward unto life: and when our knowledge shall be perfected then our life shall be perfected in the next world. Now if eternal life consist in this knowledge, doubtless death is to be found in the ignorance of God. The Apostle joineth these two as companions together, *ignorance and death, They have their understanding darkened*, here is the ignorance of God: & *are strangers from the life of God*, here is death. For the privation or want of the life of God is eternal death. Wherefore whosoever desireth to live the life of God, must avoid ignorance, w^c is the forerunner & cause of death. And what is the darkness of ignorance as it were a mist before our eyes, but the beginning of utter darkness in the pit of destruction, where shall be weeping & gnashing of teeth? Hence it is that Christ saith, John 10, *When he hath sent forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice, and they will not follow a stranger, but they fly from him, for they know not the voice of strangers*. If then we would approve our selves to be the sheep of Christ, we must have this ear-mark, we must know his voice, we must hear his word, we must partake his Sacraments; otherwise we shall be Goats, not Sheep. Many there are that would be accounted Sheep, but they want this badge & cognizance, they are not hearers, but contemners of his word; they follow not Christ Jesus the Shepherd, but fly from him: they know not his voice they are not acquainted with his call, but they think themselves in the best case when they are farthest off from the hearing of it. The Lord calleth us by his word, the preaching of the Gospel is his voice: if we regard it not, woe be unto us, we exclude our selves from his Sheep-fold, and renounce our being in the number of his Sheep. Lastly, we must yield all obedience unto him and his word. For as all his Sheep are hearing Sheep, and none of them deaf & dull eared, so are all obedient Sheep. They have their ears opened, which maketh them hearers: and they have them bored to their heart, which maketh them obedient, and to offer up themselves as a sacrifice well pleasing unto God. But all our hearing shall hinder us, and serve to further and increase our condemnation, unless we join unto it a careful obedience, according to the doctrine of the Apostle, *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves*. If these things be found in us, then we know God aright, & then we may be assured we shall be known by him, and not denied of him. This is that use which Christ himself toucheth, John

10. *I am the good Shepherd, and know mine, and am known of mine.* Where we see, that the consideration of God's acknowledging us to be his, should be a forcible means to make us endeavor to know him. For who are we that he should know us? Yea, what is man, that he should be mindful of him, or the son of man that he should consider him? We are dust and ashes, rottenness and corruption, yea lighter then vanity, no better then enemies to him, and the heirs of wrath as well as others. Seeing therefore the bountifulness and love of God toward us hath appeared, so that of his mercy not our merits, *he hath saved us by •he washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost,* let us pass our pilgrimage here in fear, and above all things let us labor to know him in his own ordinances and to *se•k• the Kingdom of God and his righteousness,* that in the end of our days we may be known of him to his glory, and our endless comfort in Christ Jesus our blessed Lord and Savior.

Verse 17. Then Moses and Aaron took these men which are expressed by their names.

18. And they called all the Congregation together in the first day of the second Month, who declared the kindreds by their families, and by the houses of their Fathers, according to the number of their names, from twenty year and above, man by man.

19. As the Lord had commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the wilderness of Sanai.

Hitherto we have heard and handled the Commandment of God, requiring *Moses and Aaron* to number the people: now followeth their obedience without any delaying or deferring the matter. It is meet that the servants obey the commandment of their Master: and that subjects perform the decrees of their Princes. Hence it is that *Moses* taking to him *Aaron* and the heads of the Tribes, do address themselves to take a survey of the people, discharging their duty with all diligence. He doth not here as afterward in this Book, ch. 20. where he obeyeth with doubting: but he executeth the charge laid upon him with readiness and willingness. This obedience of *Moses and Aaron* is set down, first generally, then particularly. Generally in these words; particularly in the verses following. Here a question may be demanded, [Objection.] whether it were lawful for them to number the people. We read in the holy History, 2 Samuel, 24, that *David* was sharply reprov'd, and severely punished, because he did number them: yet *Moses* numbereth them in this place, and is approved and justified. Some think, [Answer.] that *David* is reprov'd, not simply for numbering the people, but because he would have all numbered, and not only from 20 year old and above. But this was not the true cause of *David's* offense, and of God's judgment: in as much as it is very evident out of the words of the Text and circumstances of the place, that such only were numbered, as were strong men, and able to draw out their swords. Others make this the reason, because the Lord promised to multiply the seed of *Abraham* as the stars of Heaven, which are innumerable, and as the sand on the Sea Shore, which cannot be told, and therefore he was angry & sore displeas'd whē they were numbered, as if it were a calling of his promise into question. But if this reason were good and to be granted, it would follow that they could never be numbered without sin. Neither was this the cause of God's anger, as

others imagine, because after his numbering of them▪ he caused not the tribute to be paid that God had appointed; for *Moses* did not always enjoin any such polle-money to be paid whensoever he nūbred their persons, and besides; the punishment should be inflicted upon *David*, not for numbering y^e people, but for want of payment. The true causes why *Moses* is commended, & *David* condemned for their numbering of *Israel*, are these. First *Moses* was enjoined unto it, & had the express commandment of God to direct and warrant him: but *David* was not commāded of God, he was stirred up of Satan, who tempted him to this evil in setting before his eyes, his glory and excellency, his power & victories. This is one difference. Secondly, it was lawful to number the people, when any public collection or contribution was to be made of tribute or subsidy; for unless an exact account were taken, some should be omitted, others overburdened, and injustice committed. This maketh it lawful for Princes to number their people, & muster them by hundreds or thousands, albeit they have no special warrant or particular commissiō from God. Thus did *David* in another place, and at another time number them without sin. 2 Sam. 18, 1. Again, when any Army is to be gathered, & forces to be levied, it is necessary the people should be assembled and mustered, that fit choice may be made of such as are to go to battle: as *David* did number them without sin. 2 Sam. 18, 1. when he sent an army against *Absalom*: but in this place he did not intend any of these ends, either that Tribute should be gathered, or that soldiers should be mustered: and therefore the warrant of his work, was not answerable to the calling of *Moses*. Thirdly, as they were stirred up by diverse causes, so they respected diverse ends. *David* propounded to himself an evil end, he did it to set forth his own glory, to rejoice in himself, to put his whole affiance and confidence in the multitude of his men: and therefore his pride and presumption, his haughtiness and ambition, his rashness and unthankfulness were punished of GOD. Thus we see, how one and the same thing is praised in one, and reprov'd in another, because howsoever the deed were one, yet the cause was not one from whence it proceeded, neither were the ends one whereunto it was referred.

[Verses 17.18.19. *Moses & Aaron took these men, &c: And as the Lord commanded Moses, so he numbered them.*] Here we have an example of the obedience of *Moses & Aaron*, who lingered not the time to discharge the duty that God had laid upon them. This example offereth unto us this instruction, that it [Doctrine 3] is required of all God's servants, to perform obedience to God's commandments. Whensoever God speaketh unto us, we must hear and obey his voice. *Noah* received a Commandment from God to build the Ark, Genes. 6 ver. 13. *Whereby he and his household might be saved*: many hindrances might have stayed him, and sundry inconveniences might have stopped him, and infinite dangers might have terrified him from that enterprize; the greatness of the Ark, the labor of the building, the continuance of the work, the tants of the wicked, and an hundred such like troubles stood in his way; all which he did ouerstride, as the Apostle witnesseth, Heb. 11, 7. *By Faith Noah being warned of GOD of the things which were as yet not seen, moved with reverence, prepared the Ark to the saving of his Household, through the which Ark he condemned the world, and was made heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*

In like manner, *Abraham* received an express commandment to go out of his Country, and from his Kindred and Fathers house; and he also by Faith (when he was called) obeyed, to go into a

place, which he should afterward receive for inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. So when God charged him to circumcise himself, his son, and all his household, he did not delay the time, but did it the same day: and when he commanded him to take his son, his only son, even Isaac whom he loved, the son of promise, through whom all Nations should be blessed; By Faith he offered up Isaac, when he was tried; for he considered, that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence he received him also after a sort.

When God called *Samuel*, and determined to reveal unto him the destruction of *Eli's* house, and the calamity that hanged over all *Israel*, he said unto him, to testify the willingness of his heart to obey, *Speak Lord, for thy Servant heareth.* This the Prophet *David* witnesseth, *Psal. 27, 8. When thou sayedst; Seek ye my face: mine heart answered thee: O Lord, I will seek thy face.* When Christ commanded *Peter* to launch out into the deep, and to let out their Nets to make a draught: *Simon* answered and said unto him; *Master, we have travailed sore all night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word, I will let down the net.* The examples are infinite and endless that might be alleged to this purpose: but these are more then sufficient, to show, that whensoever God hath a mouth to open, and a tongue to speak, and a voice to utter unto us, we should prepare and make ready an ear to hear, and an heart to obey whatsoever is enjoined unto us, and required of us.

The Reasons are many, to enforce us to [Reason 1] yield hereunto. For first of all, GOD hath all authority in his own power; he is our Creator, and we are his creatures; he is our Sheepeheard, and we the Sheep of his pasture: he is our Father, we his Children: he is our Master, we his Servants: he is our King, we his Subjects: he is as the Potter, we as the clay. Is not the creature bound to obey the Creator? Is not the child to show all duty to his father? Is not y^e servant to stoop down to his Master? And doth not the subject owe honor and homage to his Prince? The Scripture showeth, and nature teacheth, that they do. This is it which the Prophet *Malachi* declareth, chap. 1. ver. 6. *A son honoreth his Father, and a servant his Master: if then I be a Father, where is mine honor? And if I be a Master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts, &c.* These titles of honor given to God▪ and these titles of subjection ascribed to our selves, do serve as so many bands Obligatorie, to persuade us and draw us to obedience.

[Reason 2] Secondly, obedience is so valued and set at such an high price, that it is better worth then all sacrifices that can be offered: and on the other side the Lord abhorreth and detesteth disobedience and rebellion against him as the sin of witchcraft. True it is, God allowed and commanded sacrifices, & he greatly abhorreth sorcery: yet he preferreth obedience before the one, and hateth disobedience as the other. This *Samuel* teacheth *Saul*, when he reproveth him to his face, *Hath the Lord as great pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as when the voice of the Lord is obeyed? Behold, to obey is better then sacrifice, & to hearken is better then the fat of Rams: for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and transgression is wickedness and idolatry; because thou hast cast away the word of the Lord, therefore he hath cast away thee from being King.* This reason is thus framed; If obedience be better then sacrifice, then it is due to God, and with all care to be performed to him. But it is better then sacrifice, therefore it is due to God. Again, if GOD hate nothing more then the disobedience of his

commandments, then is disobedience to be avoided. But he hateth nothing more, inasmuch as he esteemeth it no better then witchcraft or idolatry; therefore it is to be avoided.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, such as are disobedient are sure to be punished. Obedience hath a promise of blessing annexed unto it, and a recompense of reward depending upon it, as appeareth Exod. 19.5, 6. *If ye will hear my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be my ch efe treasure above all people, though all the earth be mine.* On the other side, God abhorreth disobedience to his will and commandments, as a Prince hateth rebellion raised against him▪ which he will not leave unpunished. So doth God esteem those that stubbornly transgress his Laws as traitors unto his person, and rebels against his laws; and therefore such as are rebellious against his word shall be rejected of him, and punished by him When Sau• did cast away th word of the Lord, God proceeded also to cast away him. This the Prophet *Jeremiah* declareth, chap. 4•. ver. 6, 10, 17. when the Captains of the host promised whether it were good or evil▪ they would obey the voice of the Lord God he assured them of his mercy, that *God would build them, and not destroy them: he would plant them, and not root them out.* Contrariwise, if they would not hearken to his voice, and submit themselves unto him, he threateneth that *they should die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence,* so that none of them should escape from the plague that he would bring upon them. Thus doth he command *Moses* to speak to *Pharaoh*, Exod. 8.2. & 10 4. *Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go that they may serve me:but if thou wilt not let them go, behold, I will smi•e all thy Countrie with Frogs, &c.* This reason may be framed in this sort: If the obedient shall be blessed and rewarded, and if the disobedient shall be rejected and punished, then it behooveth us to acknowledge all obedience due unto God: but the obedient and disobedient shall be both rewarded; the one according to their righteousness, the other according to their wickedness.

Let us now come to the Uses of this Doctrine. First, this serveth to reprove diverse [Use 1] and sundry abuses that creep into us, which make our service and worship of God abominable and detestable in his sight. And first of all, there are too many that refuse to hear and to lend their outward ear to listen to the word of the eternal God, to whom all attention is due. These men, as if they had no souls to save, nay, as if there were no God, no heaven, no hell, have shut their eyes lest they should see, and stopped their ears, lest they should hear.

This reproveth the desperate disease of our days: men are so far clogged and cloyed with hearing, that they loath the heavenly food, the bread of life. Who seeth not how we decline in care and zeal, and how the light of the word beginneth to be extinguished? Our change from better to worse touching seeking after knowledge is most fearful, a token that God hath given us deadness of heart, to prepare the way to some judgment. *The Queen of the South shall rise up in judgment, and condemn this froward generation,* who thought it worthy her labor to make a long journey to hear the wisdom of *Solomon*; and yet the mystery of the heavenly wisdom of God laid open in the ministry of the word, *The wh•ch the very Angels desire to behold,* passeth the human wisdom of *Solomon*, and of all other men in the world. Wherefore to turn away our backs, when we should turn our faces to the word, is a grievous sin, and we shall give an account therefore in the great day of vengeance. This is set forth plainly in the first

chapter of the Proverbs, and the 24.25, 26. verses. *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out mine hand, and none would regard, I will also laugh at your destruction, and mock when your fear cometh.*

Thus doth the Lord lay open the people's sins, and his judgments by the Prophet *Jeremiah*: *I rose up early and spake unto you, but ye would not hear, nor answer: I said▪ Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people, and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you: but they would not obey, nor incline their ear, but went after the counsels and stubbornness of their wicked heart, & went backward and not forward: I have sent unto you all my servants the Prophets, rising up early every day, and sending them, yet would they not hear me, but hardened their necks, and did worse then their Fathers.* Thus he layeth open their sin, therefore no marvel if that he threaten to stretch out his hand against them, so that the famine should pinch them, the sword should slay them, the pestilence should waste them, the dogs should tear them, the wild beasts destroy them, and the fowls of the heaven devour them.

Secondly, as it reproveth those that refuse to hear, so it condemneth such as only hear, and go no further; these rest in it as if they had done their duty▪ and as if no more were required at their hands. But know this and mark it, that outward service separated from inward obedience, is not respected, but rejected of God. This naked hearing is an halting with God which he cannot suffer. If we keep from him the heart, he careth not for the eye, or the tongue, or the ear. This is it which the Prophet saith, *When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh Moneths, even these seventy y^ares, did ye fast unto me? Do I approve it? Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried by the ministry of the former Prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the Cities thereof round about her, when the south and the plain was inhabited?* To like purpose is *Isaiah* bold, and saith, *What have I to do with the multitude of your Sacrifices, saith the Lord? I am full of the burnt offerings of Rammes, I desire not the blood of Bullocks: when ye come to appear before me, who required this of your hands to tread in my Courts? Bring no moe Oblations in vain: Incense is an abomination unto me: I cannot suffer your new Moons, nor Sabbaths, &c. they are a burden unto me, I am weary to bear them: and when you shall stretch out your hands, I will hide m^ene eyes from you and though you make many prayers I will not hear.* Were not these his own ordinances? Did not he appoint the solemn times of his worship, and command sacrifices and oblations to be offered unto him? Yes, he set them in his Church, and was the Author of them; but they performed them in an evil manner without faith, without repentance, without love, without conscience, and therefore as they did them, God loathed them. So may it be said of our common and customary hearing, removed from faith & obedience, Who required it at our hands? The Lord cannot abide it he cannot suffer it: it is a burden unto him that he cannot bear. God joineth hearing and obeying together, and cursed is he that maketh a divorce between them. This doth the Prophet *Jeremiah* denounce against all hypocritical hearers chapt. 11. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this Covenant which I commanded unto your Fathers &c.* He protested unto them and their Fathers rising early, and saying, *Obey my voice, yet they would not obey nor incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of his wicked heart: thus they made a conspiracy against God▪ and he brought his curses upon them, Thus our Savior*

teacheth it shall be with many in the last day, that saw his person, and heard his doctrine, they conversed and continued with him, and were partakers of his miracles and ministry; who shall then begin to say, *We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets: but he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.* Woe shall then be to all such hearers, and cursed shall their state and condition be. These have an heavier account to make then such as never were hearers, and never had so great mercy offered unto them. Hence it is that Christ pronounced sundry woes against *Bethsaida, Corazin, and Capernaum*, who had the word and other means of salvation offered unto them, yet lived without repentance, and are pronounced to be worse then the *Sodomites*. For the greater mercies are abused, the deeper judgments are deserved. Let us set this *Capernaum* a Citty in *Galilee* before our eyes, and look upon it as in a glass, that therein we may behold our selves. The Lord Jesus was brought up there, and because he did so much frequent it, and was conversant there, many thought he had been borne there, so that it is called his own City, Mat. 9, 1. Secondly, the miracles which he wrought there were many, he healed the servant of the Centurion, and a man that had an unclean spirit, in so much that the *Nazarites* as it were envying and repining thereat, that that place should be preferred before them, said unto him, *Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do it here likewise in thine own Country:* thereby implying that the greatest part of his miracles had not been done among them, but among the *Capernaites*. Thirdly▪ there he began to preach, saying, Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand: and there he preached of the eating of his flesh and drinking of his blood: likewise he taught on the Sabbath day in their Synagogue with power and authority, so that they were astonied at his doctrine. In all these respects and privileges▪ partly of the presence of his person, partly of the working of his miracles, & partly of the preaching of his Gospel, Christ pronounceth that they were *lifted up to heaven*, & highly advanced above many other Towns & Cities that wanted the seeing and hearing of him: but because they became unthankful, and to all these did not join true obedience, he denounceth against them that *they should be brought down to hell:* the reason hereof is rendered in the next words, *For if the great works which have been done in thee, had been done among them of Sodom, they had remained to this day: but I say unto you, that it shall be easier for them of the Land of Sodom in the day of judgment, then for thee.* An heavy doom, and a most fearful sentence, and yet most just and righteous, if it be weighed in the balance of justice. *Sodom* indeed was guilty of uncleanness and beastliness one with another, whereby man with man wrought filthiness, & received in themselves such recompense of their error, as was meet; their sins were fullness of bread, abundance of idleness, contempt of the poor, and pride of life: yet *Capernaum* treading under foot the glorious Gospel, and despising the word of salvation was the greater sinner, against which sort of sinners, the Apostles were commanded *to shake off the dust of their feet, as a witness against them;* the which showeth the horribleness of their sin that make no reckoning of the preaching of God's word offered unto them to reconcile them to God. *Sodom* had the light of nature that shined in their harts, and preached within their consciences in that they were men, that those sins were unlawful; of which the Apostle saith, *That light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not:* but *Capernaum* had a greater and perfecter light, even the light of grace to teach them, and the Sun of righteousness to shine upon them, which far excelled the other, and gave them a more

certain direction to lead their lives. *Sodom* indeed had *Lot*, an holy and righteous man among them, whose soul they vexed from day today by their unclean conversations: but *Capernaum* had a greater then *Lot*, they had the gracious presence of Christ Jesus, whose word was with authority, and not as the Scribes; whose glory was as the glory of the only begotten Son, full of grace and truth, John 1, 14. Again, *Sodom* had not so much as the types and shadows of the Law, they wanted the sacrifices and ceremonies which the Jews had: but *Capernaum* had the body it self, they saw him, they touched him, they heard him, they handled him, yet they repented not, but remained disobedient. *Sodom* had only the making of the Creatures, and the workmanship of the Heavens as God's great book to behold and look upon, to be their schoolemaisters & instructors, which declare the glory of God, & show forth his Deity: but *Capernaum* had more, even a plain path beaten before them to walk in, and a sit light to guide them in all their ways, the eternal word of God that endureth forever. If then *Sodom* shall be whipped, surely *Capernaum* must be scourged. If *Sodom* rebuked, *Capernaum* punished. If *Sodom* imprisoned and damned, *Capernaum* shall be thrown down into the neathermost hell and gulf of perdition. If the burden laid upon *Sodom* be grievous, that laid upon *Capernaum* shall be more grievous and intolerable. For God will reward every man according to his works, so that with what measure we mete, with the same it shall be measured to us again. *Sodom* was the less sinner, & therefore liable to the less punishment: *Capernaum* was the greater sinner, a greater contemner of greater blessings, and therefore guilty of the greater damnation. To what end, may some say, doth this comparison serve? or what have we to do with *Sodom* which was consumed to ashes with fire and brimstone long ago? or what doth *Capernaum* belong to us? Yes, it concerneth us, and if we change the names, the times, and the places, this whole comparison teacheth us wisdom, and toucheth us nearly. For hath any nation under y^e heavens been lifted up higher toward the heavens then we? Hath not the word been plentifully preached among us? Have we not had the Sacraments duly administered unto us? Have we not received his mercies abundantly poured upon us? yet what people hath been more unthankful? more disobedient? more rebellious? What could the Lord have done for us, that he hath not done, and shall we so reward him with unkindness for his mercies? Let us take heed lest if we be like *Capernaū* in sin, y^e threatening do fall upon us, that it shall be easier for *Sodom* & *Gomorrhah* in the day of judgment, then for us. For if *Sodom* did not escape the hand of God, who had only the light of nature, not the lantern of the Scripture to shine among them, & to give light unto them: how shall we escape, or be without excuse, if we tread under foot the Son of God, if we cast out of our hearts the Gospel of peace, if we count the blood of the Testament as an unholy thing, and do despite the Spirit of grace? Thirdly, this doctrine reproveth those that are ready to hear, and content to obey, but it is no farther then standeth with their own lust and liking. These are like *Saul* in obedience, they think they have great wrong to be charged with rebellion and disobedience, they have open mouths to say, Blessed art thou of the LORD, I have fulfilled the commandment of the Lord, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, I have gone the way which the Lord sent me, &c: yet he is there charged with treason and rebellion against God, and threatened to have the Kingdom rent frō him. Thus is it with many in our days, they profess obedience, but their life swarmeth with the fruits of disobedience: like to y^e son, who being commanded of his father to go & work in his vineyard, answered, *I will Sir, but he stood*

still & went not. These are they that draw near to God with their mouth, but are disobedient in deed, & their real disobedience shall procure a real vengeance on them.

It is strange to see how many of this sort of men pretend a willingness to obey, & would be accounted in the number of obedient children, as if they were wholly made of obedience; and yet they will not submit themselves wholly to the will and pleasure of GOD, but mince the matter, and part stakes with God: somewhat they will do to stop men's mouths and to get the applause of the world, and to be accounted religious; but they are not minded to deal sincerely and entirely with God, like those that having a journey to go, are soon weary and stand still, when they are gone half the way.

These are they that will not be Atheists, but have the true God for their God; yet do they love their riches, their pleasures, their bellies, and their delights above him, and set their affections wholly upon them. They cannot abide Idolatry, nor to be esteemed idolaters; yet they make no conscience of the worship of the true God, of praying unto him publicly and privately, neglecting the ordinances of God, hearing of his word, reading, meditation, conference, and such like helps; being in the number of those the Apostle reproveth, Rom. 2, 22. *Thou abhorrest Idols, yet cōmittest sacrilege.* They will not forswear themselves, nor fall into perjury: but they will swear and lie too for an advantage. They will not seem to abuse the titles of God, and to take his name in vain; but ye shall hear them even in their communication to swear by their Faith and troth, and they engage thē so long, until they have little left, or none at all themselves. They will not work upon the Sabbath, nor go to Plough: but they will not stick to go to play, and use pastimes; to follow idleness, and to be ordinarily absent from the holy ordinances of God. They scorn to be accounted rebels, as too gross a term for them: yet they can disobey superiors, yea mock and deride those that are set over them, both Magistrates and Ministers. They abhor the name of a murderer: but they can fight and quarrel, brawl, fret and fume against others; forgetting the rule of the Apostle, *Whosoever hateth his Brother, is a man-slayer: and ye know that no man-slayer hath eternal life abiding in him.* They will not be Adulterers & Fornicators but they break out into wantonness, and nourish the occasions that engender them, surfeiting drunkenness, idleness, wanton looks, wanton company, wanton daliance, and such like. They hate the name of Thieves and robbers, and those that will stand by the high way and take a purse: but they will cozen and circumvent their neighbor, defraud and oppress him in buying & selling and bargaining with him, if by any means they can go beyond him; never remembering either the commandment or punishment set down by the Apostle, *Let no man oppress or defraud his Brother in any matter: for the Lord is an avenger of all such things, as we also have told you before time, and testified.* These are they that will not bear false witness; but they are inuenters of evil, or spreaders abroad of evil reports to the hurt of their brethren, & make no conscience at all of a lie. These are not dutiful children which obey to halves, & so fail in their obedience. For (as the Apostle teacheth) *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, & yet faileth in one point, he is guilty of all, &c.* Thus then we see by this doctrine, they are reprov'd that contemn the word, and will not hear: that are content to hear, but will not obey: and such as obey, but it is not fully and faithfully; it is so far forth as pleaseth themselves, not regarding to please God, to whom they either stand or fall.

Secondly, seeing our duty to Gods Commandments [Use 2] consisteth in obedience this teacheth that it is necessary for all men to know them. We cannot call upon him of whom we have not heard: we cannot believe that which we never learned: we cannot practice those things which we do not understand. A servant can by no means do his Masters will before he knoweth what is his will. This showeth the miserable condition of ignorant people, besotted in their own simplicity, and muffled in the mists of palpable darkness: none are more grossly misled, none more disobedient to God then these ignorant persons; none greater enemies unto the serving and obeying of God, then such as are enemies or hinderers of the teaching and preaching of his word. Our Savior sending out his Apostles into all the world, charged them *to teach them to observe all things whatsoever he commanded them*. First then, there must be teaching before there be observing: so that ignorance is the mother of all disobedience. This appeareth in Moses, Deut. 4, 1. *Hearken, O Israel, unto the ordinances, and to the Laws which I teach you to do, that ye may live and go in, and possess the Land which the Lord God of your Fathers giveth you.* The Israelites were commanded to learn the commandments of God that they might do them; so that there is no doing and discharging of the works and will of God without knowing them: nor no true knowledge where there is no practice. For indeed we know no more then we make conscience to do & perform. Wherefore (my Brethren) be careful to learn the ways of God, and to know what he requireth, that you may be fitted to do them: and assure yourselves, that they are the greatest enemies of God, and of your salvation, yea the most proud and pestilent instruments of the devil, to cause him to be honored, and to erect the kingdom of darkness, that do disgrace teaching, and dissuade from hearing. And let us set this down as a rule, that such as are undutiful to God in the chiefest works and the highest duties, will never make conscience of the smaller & lesser. Such then as any way hinder the publishing of the Gospel, and seek to stop the free course of it from passing among men, do over-turn all godliness, and shake the very ground—work and foundation of true obedience. The greatest and best works commanded of Christ are the duties of the first Table; to preach and to hear his word, to be often exercised in his worship, to be religious, to visit his Courts where his name dwelleth, whereof the Prophet saith, *God delighteth to dwell in it, yea, the Lord will dwell in it forever.* He that maketh no conscience this way, will make no conscience of the lesser and latter duties, to wit; of the fruits of righteousness.

Hence it is, that our Savior saith to the Sadducees, Math. 22, 23, *Are ye not therefore deceived, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?* The ignorance of God's word is the true cause of all error. If we did know the Scriptures, they would direct us to all duties necessary for us both to know and practice. And as knowledge is the beginning of all obedience, because we must know before we can obey; we must learn before we practice: so it is required of us all to get knowledge and understanding, howbeit it is not necessary for all to have knowledge, alike. Wherefore, that we may be instructed aright, and be guided what our knowledge ought to be, and what measure thereof should be in us, it is requisite that we mark and remember these four rules following, all of them being grounded upon the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles. No man must be ignorant, no man shall be excused for his ignorance: every man must attain to some knowledge. First, our knowledge must be

according to our age. If GOD have blessed our days with many years and long life, he looketh for greater knowledge at our hands, then he doth of babes and sucklings. This the Apostle pointeth out unto us. 1 Cor. 14, 20. *Brethren, be not children in understanding, but as concerning malicioiusness be children, but in understanding be of ripe age.* In these words the Apostle intimateth a double kind of knowledge; one fit for children, for God would have none brought up in his School, and to belong to him, that are *non proficiencie*: he would have children taught and trained up in the faith and fear of God. It is noted of *T•mothy*, that he had the *knowledge of the holy Scriptures of a child, which are able to make him wise to salvation, through the Faith which is in Christ Jesus.* This doth the Prophet *David* teach. Psal. 119, 9. *Wherewith shall a young man redress his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy Word.* Such as are young in years, must learn to serve God in the flower of their age, and to serve him with the first fruits of their life. Howbeit though their knowledge cannot be great and at the full, yet it is such as is fit for their years, and it sufficeth that they be young in knowledge as they be young in years, & that their understanding be little, as their stature is.

There is also a second kind of knowledge, and that is for men of riper age; God requireth more of them and looketh to receive increase at their hands in greater abundance. Hath he granted us our life for nothing? And hath he doubled and trebled the years of the former sort that we should stand at a stay? No, he would have us that have been planted in his Church, to be growers forward in knowledge as we are in years. But doth the case thus stand with us? Are our old men grown also old and ripe in Faith and Religion? Are we more expert in the ways of godliness now then we were twenty or forty years ago? Can our aged men that live among us stand forth and avouch this, or speak it in the truth of their harts, & to the comfort of their souls, and to the honor of God, that they are bettered in judgment, and increased in obedience? that albeit *the outward man decay and perish, yet they are renewed daily in the inward man?* Nay y^e greatest part are so sapped in ignorance, that they are as blind as the Mole, as deaf as the Adder, as senseless as the stones, and as rude & ignorant as the brute beasts; nay more dull of understanding then they, as the Prophet chargeth the people of *Israel*, *Isaiah 1, 3. The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Ass his Masters crib, but Israel hath no• known, my people hath not understood.* They should be examples to others in godliness, but many of them are Ring-leaders to all kind of wickedness. Many children go before them in knowledge, and may instruct them in the principiles of religion. My Brethren, these things ought not so to be.

The second rule is this▪ that our knowledge ought to be according to the means y^t God hath afforded unto us, and according unto the plenty or scarcity of those means doth he require a growing and proceeding in us. There is no Master, but exacteth at the hands of his Scholar, an increase in learning proportionable to the greatness of his labor. The Husbandman that hath fowed much, looketh for a plentiful harvest. The Gardener that hath long digged and delued about his trees, and duned them with great diligence, hopeth to have much fruit in the end. So is it with God, the best Master, the true Husbandman, when he hath taught us often, and sowed good seed in the ground of our hearts, and watered the dry furrows of our consciences with the water of life, he looketh to reap much fruit, and to find great increase.

This the Apostle teacheth, when he reproveth the Hebrews for their dullness in hearing and slowness in profiting, Heb. 5, 12, 13, 14. *Whereas concerning the time ye ought to be teachers, yet have ye need again that we teach you what are the first principles of the words of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat: for everyone that useth milk, is inexpert in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe: but strong meat belongeth to them that are of age, which through long custom have their wits exercised, to discern both good and evil.* Where he teacheth them, that after so long teaching they might become teachers of others: and he saith it to their shame, that after the having of plentiful means to further them in their knowledge, they were very novices and young scholars, not able to bear strong meat. Hath God set up the preaching of his word among us, as a candle set on the candlestick, to give light to all that are in y^e house? Hath he caused it to be truly preached & applied unto us? Have we the means also in plentiful measure afforded us to bring us to godliness? Let us take heed to our selves, & look to our ways, God will not be mocked. Where he hath sown plentifully, he will reap plentifully; and upon whom he hath bestowed much, he looketh to receive much again.

This he setteth down to strengthen the rule that now we deliver, Luke 12.48. *Unto whom much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men commit much, the more of him will they ask.* If a man should have much teaching, and go long to school, & yet should be always in his horn-book, and stand at A, B, C. like a little child, and never go forward, we would account him a very dullard: so is it with us, if we have spent much time in his school, where we have had a liberal diet prepared for us, and been feasted at his table richly furnished, and yet stand at one stay, we do not use the means aright, but deceive the hope and expectation of God, who hath in such manner and measure blessed us from heaven.

The third rule touching our knowledge, is, that it must be answerable to the gifts that God hath given unto us. He hath not furnished all men with gifts alike, he hath not bestowed an equal measure of his graces upon all; to one he hath given more, to another he hath given less, according to his own pleasure. This is declared unto us in the Parable of the talents, Math. 25, 14, 15. A certain Nobleman going into a far country, called his servants, and delivered unto them his goods; *Unto one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to every man after his own hability.* If then he have given unto us five talents, he looketh that we gain five other with them. If he have bestowed two upon us, he will require of us the gain of two others; not the increase of five, as of the former. If we be not wholly barren and unfruitfull in good things, he will accept and approve of us. This is a notable comfort to all those that have a little portion and few gifts given unto them: albeit we be newet so simple, yet if we have single and simple hearts, it shall be said to us, *It is well done good servant and faithful, thou hast been faithful in little, I will make thee ruler over much; enter into thy Masters joy.* He that by employing and diligent use of his gifts had gained only two talents, had gotten little in comparison of the former servant that had increased five talents, yet he is commended by Christ our Savior for a good and faithful servant.

In like manner, when he commendeth the saving hearers, and compareth them to good ground, he saith; *He that received the seed in the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth some an hundred fold, some sixty fold,*

and some thirty fold. The ground that yieldeth thirty fold, is little in comparison of thar which yieldeth the increase of an hundred fold, not half so much: yet it is accounted good ground. All ground is good in God's account, that is not altogether unfruitful: and everyone receiveth praise and commendation from him, who hath a good heart, albeit it be mingled with many wants, and much imperfection. This must not make those that are weak and simple to please themselves in their weakness and simplicity, nor cause them to be puffed up with envy toward such as have a greater measure and better portion of gifts then they have; but seeing God hath appointed his word to give unto the simple sharpness of wit, it must stir them up to do their best, to strive with all their strength to be led forward to perfection, and to crave a continual supply of God's grace, which in the midst of all their infirmities and imperfections shall be sufficient for them. Then it shall come to pass, that albeit they behold a double portion in others, and a poor pittance in themselves, yet they may truly say unto the Lord, Thou wilt require no more of thy servant then thou hast given him. To this end speaketh the Apostle writing to the *Philippians*, *I am persuaded of this same thing, that he which hath begun this good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Chr•st: for it is God that worketh in you, both the will and the deed, even of his good pleasure.*

The fourth Rule touching our knowledge is, that we must all labor to have so much, as that we may be able to give an account of our faith, when we shall be lawfully called thereunto. It is not enough for us to say, we believe as well as the best, and then cannot declare how we believe; neither is it enough for us to have the implicit faith of the church of *Rome*, to believe as the Church believeth, & then cannot tell how or what the Church believeth. This is the Colliars faith, not the Christian faith: this will not shielde us from the darts and devices of the devil, but layeth our hearts open to all his fiery temptations. The ancient Christians that believed in the Son of God, were able not only to make confession of their own faith, but to defend and maintain the true faith against their enemies and persecutors, as all histories do declare. The Prophet teacheth us, *That the just shall live, not by another's, but by his own Faith.* We are all taught to say, I believe, not, we believe: and therefore it is requisite that we be endued with true faith, and have such a certain and particular knowledge of the chief and fundamental points of our religion, that we be both able and ready to render a reason thereof; which cannot be, unless we have learned the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Hence it is, that the Apostle *Peter* exhorteth to this rule, 1 Pet. 3, 15. *Sanctify the Lord in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that ask•th you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness & reverence.* The practice hereof we have in *Stephen*, and *Peter*, and *Paul*, and others in the Acts of the Apostles, Acts 2, 15. and 3. chapt. who made confession and profession of their Faith with boldness and cheerfulness, so often as the glory of God did require it. Now albeit the Apostles teach, that we must be enabled to confess our Faith, and to show before all men how we have profited, having a good conscience, that when they speak evil of us, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed which slander our good conversation in Christ: yet he doth not require such exactness and perfection to be able to dissolve all doubts, to answer all questions, and to vnloose all knots, which is not to be looked for at the hands of the teachers themselves: but as we must know the fundamental points of true religion, whereupon our Faith is built, so we must be strengthened and grounded in them,

that we may be able all of us both young and old, to show in whom we have believed; what we are by creation, what by reason of our transgression, and what by Faith in Christ and by the fruits of regeneration. No man must be ignorant of these substantial points, that we may understand what title and interest we have to the inheritance of the heavenly Kingdom.

[Use 3] Lastly, seeing obedience is so necessary a duty, without which we cannot please God, let us labor to perform our obedience unto him aright: to which end, we are to be careful to observe these rules of ordering and directing our obedience, that it may be approved in his sight. First of all, we must be assured that we do these things that are warranted in the word of God, and that they be done according to his will. He will not be served of us by good intentions, or human traditions, or blind superstitions, but he will be worshipped according to his own pleasure. This the Prophet *Isaiah* expresseth, chap. 29. verses 13, 14. *This people come near to me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me was taught by the precept of men.* This our behaviour teacheth to be a vain and idle serving of him. If our obedience be framed to the doctrine of man, not of God, it is foolish and without understanding. Such is the Religion for the most part of the Church of Rome, where men's inventions are set up, and many times magnified above the ordinances of God. There are many great fears wrought in the consciences of the poor people from the impositions of men, as heavy burdens laid upon them to observe and keep, *as eat not, taste not, handle not* upon peril of condemnation: and there are many fair promises offered to men for their zeal in running on pilgrimage, honoring of Relics, visiting of Idols, invocation of Saints, saying of Masses, offering for the dead, Dirges, and such like dregs, which are not in the word, nor according to the word, but beside the word, nay against the word: which things indeed *have a show of wisdom in voluntary religion & humbleness of mind, and in not sparing the body which are things of no value, since they pertaine to the filling of the flesh.* All these therefore are false fears false devotions, false dangers, false promises, false prayers, false comforts, and briefly false worshippings, which are of no value or virtue, of no worth or reckoning. The least duty that God requireth that may be called the work of Christ is better then all the stately works of men: and so to take up a rush (if it stand with the will of God) to make clean platters, or spits, or shoes, is more acceptable to him, if it be our calling, then to build memorials or Monasteries for idle and superstitious Monks without word or warrant.

Secondly, as our obedience must have the word for a foundation, so we must perform the same heartily: not for outward show and fashion, or to be seen of men, but do all as in the sight of him that looketh upon the heart. It is said by the Prophet, Psal. 40, 7, 8. *In the volume of thy Book it is written of me, I desired to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy Law is within my heart.* Our obedience must not be parted and divided between God and the Devil. God will have entire obedience, or accept no obedience at our hands. Hence it is, that the Wiseman exhorteth us, *To give God our heart, and let our eyes delight in his ways.* This discovereth the sin of all hypocrites, who pray, but not with a pure heart; they hear, but it is not with good and honest hearts: they believe but it is not with the heart: they love, but it is not in deed and in truth: they obey, but they are not obedient from the heart unto the form of doctrine: and whatsoever they do, they do it ceremonially and externally, not heartily as to the Lord, but

hypocritically as to men; like idle and slothful servants, who perform no more to their Masters but eye-service as men pleasers. If then our heart be away, all is away, the soul and life of every action is wanting: and we offer the dead carcas of a sacrifice to God, which stinketh as an unsavory thing in his nosethrils. This made the Prophet say, Psal. 25, 1, 2. *Unto thee, O Lord, I lift up my soul.* And Psal. 108, 1, 2. *O God my heart is prepared, so is my tongue, I will sing and give praise.* If once the affection of the heart be settled, the tongue tarrieth not behind, but is ready to publish the praises of God. Thirdly, our obedience must be done with all our power cheerfully and willingly: which dependeth upon the former, albeit distinguished from it. Although we fail in many circumstances, God will not lay it to our charge, nor stay the course of his blessings from coming unto us, so long as he seeth in us a willing heart. He respecteth more the affection to obey, then obedience it self: and alloweth of our good desire, more then of the performance of the duty.

We see this in the poor widows mite which she cast into the Treasury, of which our Savior saith, Mark 12, 43. Luke 21, verse 23. *Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor Widow hath cast in more then all they that have cast into the treasury.* She had not cast in more, if we considered the quantity and greatness of the gift (for what was two mites but a quadrin?) but it was more in regard of the quality and affection of her heart, which is much set by of Almighty God. Hereupon it is that the Prophet saith, Micah 7, 18, 19. *Who is a God like unto thee, that taketh away iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his wrath forever, because mercy pleaseth him: he will turn again and have compassion upon us, he will subdue our iniquities, and cast all their sins into the bottom of the Sea.* Thus we see how favorable the Lord is toward his children that are desirous and willing to serve him.

To this purpose speaketh the Prophet *Malachi* in the third Chapter, and the seauenteenth verse, *They shall be to me, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day that I shall do this, for a flock: and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.* The Father, when he shall set his son to any business, if he show his good will and endeavor to do his best, will be pleased with him and accept of the work, though it be done vnperfectly, rawly, and untowardly. He takes in good part his good desire. Even so is it with Almighty God, if he see in us willingness, we shall find from him forgiveness, and our imperfections to be passed over. The Apostle *S. Paul* teacheth this in the second Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter eight, and the twelfth verse. *If there be first a willing mind it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not.* Thus doeth God encourage us in our obedience, assuring us that the measure of grace that he bestoweth upon us, shall be sufficient for us.

Fourthly, we must perform the fruits of our obedience entirely, not to halves; sincerely, not parting stakes between God and the Devil, and our selves, as we noted before. Many will do so much readily as may stand with their own liking, and agree with their own ease and profit, but they will go no farther: they are content to do diverse good things, but they continue and persevere in some sins that mar all. They can hate pride, but they contemn the Gospel: some will show love to the Gospel, but are lascivious, hard-hearted, unjust, doers of wrong, and evil speakers. It is a foolish conceit of many, that think they may lawfully live in some known sins, and yet be God's servants still: these deceive themselves, and discover the

hypocrisy of their hearts. Such as continue in drunkenness, fornication, Adultery, uncleanness, hatred, and covetousness, will presume to come to the place of God's worship, and shroud themselves into the company of the faithful, and present themselves in the presence of God, and receive the Lord's Supper once a year, and then think that God will and must have respect unto them. These are like the dissembling and deceitful Jews mentioned by *Jeremiah the Prophet*, *Ierem. 7, 9, 10. Will you steal, murder, and commit Adultery, and swear falsely, and burn Incense unto Baal, and walk after other God's whom ye know not? And come and stand before me in this house whereupon my name is called, and say, we are delivered, though we have done all these abominations? Saul would do the works of GOD in outward pretence, and show himself obedient in part: but he kept Agag alive, and spared the fattest of the Cattle, contrary to the commandment of God. Herod heard John willingly, revered him, received the word with joy, and did many things at his preaching; but he would not leave his Incest, and depart from his brothers wife. The godly do not deal thus falsely and fraudulently with God; they give him the possession of their whole hearts, and keep not back a part thereof. Josiah is commended for walking in all the ways of God, and for taking away the abominations of the land. The Prophet David witnesseth, that he had respect to all the commandments of the law. Moses professeth boldly before Pharaoh, that they must carry their Cattle with them into the wilderness to offer sacrifice, and he would not leave an hoof of them behind him. Let us labor after this sincerity, otherwise our obedience is stained with hypocrisy: for God that made all, will have all, or none at all.*

Fifthly, our obedience must be a constant obedience, it must not be by fittes and pangs (as the coming of an Ague) for a day, or a short and set time. Such as are sick of an Ague, have a cold fit at the first, & then an hot: with these time-seruers it is quite contrary, they are hot at the beginning, and afterward wax cold at the latter ending. But we must continue out to the end. There is no promise made but to such as persevere. He that endureth to the end, shall be saved: and if we be faithful to the death, *We shall receive the crown of life*. If we would give right judgment of a man how his case standeth with God and what his conversation is, we must judge of him by the whole course of his life, not by this or that action, no nor only by his behavior at the hour of death, for that is a deceitful rule, and may lead us into error. If a man in the course of his life yield obedience, and seek to approve himself unto God, we have good and firm hope of such a one that he is the child of God, yea albeit at the end of his days, by violence of some sickness and want of natural rest and distemperature of the brain, and impatience of the flesh, he should talk idly, rave grievously, and blaspheme horribly: we are to judge of such a one by the strictness of his life, not by the strangeness of his death. If his life have been sound and sincere, his imperfect obedience shall be accepted, and all his frailty shall be remitted: so that an evil end never followeth a good and godly life. But if the course of a man's life be wicked and his ways crooked, though he die calmly, and go away quietly like a lamb, and cry, *Lord have mercy upon me: yet he may be a reprobate and go to the pit of destruction*. Hence it is, that the ungodly are described, *Job 21. to say unto God, Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: who is the Almighty, that we should serve him, and what profit should we have to pray unto him?* yet for the most part they live pleasantly, and having no bands in their death, they die quietly, they spend their days in wealth, and

are not tormented with long sickness. They are not afflicted and affrighted as other men. Contrariwise, the godly are daily punished, and chastened every morning, they die in the bitterness of their soul, & never eat with pleasure, *Psal. 73.4.14. Eccle. 9.1.2.* Who doubteth of the integrity and sincerity of *Job* and *Jeremiah*? we know they were just and eschewed evil: yet *they cursed the day of their birth, and the night wherein it is said, there was a manchild conceived.* And if they had died presently, they had been saved undoubtedly, albeit the corruption of the flesh for a time prevailed: even as it fell out with *Jacob*, who wrestled with the Angel, but his thigh was so crushed, that he halted ever after. So may it fall out with many of God's children, the force & fierceness of sharp diseases, proceeding from hot causes, may so disturb the head & distemper the powers of the mind, as that they may break out even into blasphemy, yea be so distempered and distracted by the violence thereof, as that they fare as men out of their wits and right mind: yet they may notwithstanding all this, remain still in God's favor, and die in his fear. For they may say, and say truly with the Apostle, *It is not I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* He saith, his whole desire was to give himself to the serving of God, yet he was hindered and hampered by his own nature which was ouerweake: so that in striving against sin, he ceased not to receive many wounds, and to take sundry foils & blows, and therefore could not accomplish the good that he desired. Let us all be constant unto the death, & then our obedience shall have his recompense of reward. Lastly, our obedience must not be delayed from time to time, supposing we shall find a fitter time hereafter to hear the Lord speak unto us. The longer we defer the time of repentance & the practice of obedience, the more unfit, vnready, and vnresolved we shall find our hearts to be. Every sin helpeth to harden the heart, until we be turned and transformed into stones. Wherefore the holy Ghost saith, *To day if ye will hear his voice, &c:* The acceptable season is the present time. So soon as God commandeth & revealeth his will unto us, let us not linger or prolong the time, but immediately prepare our ears to hear, our tongues to speak, our feet to walk, our hands to work, & every part of us to perform his Commandments. He loveth such a servant, he accepteth such a service. Will we regard such a servant, as whē we speak unto him, & show him what we would have done, turneth his back from us & regardeth not our business, or saith he will do it another time, when he is at fitter leisure? If we will not take such service at his hands, or put up such contempt, shall we think the Lord will be mocked to his face, & dalied withal as with a child? When he saith, Come, shall we answer, we will not come? When he comandeth us to hear his voice *today*, shall we answer, we will not hear it today, but y^e next day, or peradventure the next year? When he saith, This is the acceptable time, shall we answer, I will find a fitter & more convenient time hereafter? If he shall say unto us, the time of repentance is the present time, shall we presume to cross him, and to reply, the time to come is the best time, w^c God hath reserved in his own hand, & is to us unknown? How many are there y^t have neglected the voice of God calling them & crying unto them, that were prevented by sudden & untimely death, and thereby taken away in their sins? The foolish Virgins delayed so long, that y^e Bridegroom came, & they were shut out of the Kingdom, where they knocked, but could not be received. To conclude, let our obedience be surely grounded upon the infallible rock of y^e scriptures: let it be performed heartily, not hypocritically: let it be discharged cheerfully, not grudgingly: let it be done entirely, not to halves: let it be constant, not intermitted and interrupted: lastly, let it be

present, not put off from day today: then shall we be sure to be accepted, and that God will crown our obedience in this life, with a full and final recompense in the life to come.

20. So were the sons of Reuben Israel's eldest son, by their generations, by their families, & by the houses of their fathers, according to the number of their names, man by man, every male from twenty years and above, as many as went forth to war.

21. The number of them, I say, of the Tribe of Reuben, was six and forty thousand and five hundredth.

22 Of the sons of Simeon by their generations, their families, and by the houses of their fathers, according to the number of their names, man by man, every male from twenty years and above, as many as went forth to war.

23 The sum of them I say of the Tribe of Simeon, was nine and fifty thousand, and three hundredth.

24. Of the sons of Gad by their generations: *and so forward unto the ende of the Chapter.*

In the words before we have seen the obedience of *Moses* set down in general, that he did all as the Lord had commanded him. Here we are to consider the same more particularly, what was the sum of every Tribe: wherein somewhat is set down common to them all, that they are numbered, first, by their generations, secondly, by their families, thirdly, by y^e houses of their fathers, fourthly, according to the number of their names; fifthly, man by man sixthly, every male: seuenthly, frō twēty year and above: eightly, as many as went forth to war. These things are noted of every Tribe particularly: somewhat is set down that is proper to each Tribe, to wit, to what sum it accrued, to wit;

- 1. *Of the Tribe of Reuben were numbered, 46500.*
- 2. *Of the Tribe of Simeon, were numbered, 59300.*
- 3. *Of the Tribe of Gad, were numbered, 45650.*
- 4. *Of the Tribe of Judah, were numbered, 74600.*
- 5. *Of the Tribe of Issachar, were numbered, 54400.*
- 6. *Of the Tribe of Zebulun, were numbered, 57400.*
- 7. *Of the Tribe of Ephraim, were numbered, 40500.*
- 8. *Of the Tribe of Manasseh, were numbered, 32200.*

- 9. *Of the Tribe of Benjamin, were numbered, 35400.*
- 10. *Of the Tribe of Dan, were numbered, 62700.*
- 11. *Of the Tribe of Asher, were numbered, 41500.*
- 12. *Of the Tribe of Naphtali, were numbered, 53400.*
- The total sum—603550.

Here is a particular view and survey taken of this people together, with the general sum of the whole. From hence diverse Questions arise, that are to be answered before we do handle the doctrine proper to this [Question 1] place. First, it may be demanded, how this people could multiply to so great a number in so short a time. For from the birth of *Isaac*, to the muster here taken, are not much above 400, years, and they went into Egypt with a few souls; how then could one family, the Tribe of *Levi* also excluded, and the vnwarlike company of women and children, of old and sickly persons not comprehended, how I say, could one family grow to so great a multitude? The Atheists account this incredible and impossible, [Answer.] and therefore make a mock at it, as they do at many other partes of holy scriptures, which they wrest to their own destruction. Neither is this to be believed by the authority of the Church rather, then thorough the testimony of the Scripture and the holy Spirit speaking in it, as some of the Papists speak of many like places. Herein appeareth indeed the wonderful blessing of God in increasing seventy persons to such a multitude, in the space of two hundred & sixteen years; for so long was it and no longer from the coming down of *Jacob* into *Egypt* with his family, unto this numbering of them by *Moses* in this place: whereby God did make good his promise unto *Jacob*, *I will make of thee a great Nation*. For as his justice appeared and the severity of his hand, that of all this great multitude which came out of Egypt, only two of them, to wit, *Caleb* and *Joshua* entered into the Land of *Canaan*, all the residue, because of their murmuring, idolatry, and disobedience perished in the wilderness; some were slain with the sword, some were swallowed up of the earth, some were consumed with the pestilence, some were stung with the serpents, some died a natural death; so that neither their eyes saw, nor their feet trod upon the Land of promise, as the Lord threatened them: so the wonderful mercy, & exceeding blessing of God was seen & shown in this wonderful multiplication, until they came to so huge a multitude. Neither need we to hold (as many do) that this was miraculous, and contrary to the course of nature: or that everyone brought forth two or three at every birth. We see by experience in numbering, that a small number by addition and multiplication, and doubling thereof, in a small time ariseth to a great and an innumerable company. Some in our time yet living, avouch, that they have known in their own days, one woman, who saw of her posterity that came out of her own womb, an hundred and sixty persons, and yet a principal part of them had no issue at all, some of them leading a single life, others being prevented by death. The heathen report in their Histories, that the Egyptian women bring forth many at one burden: but to leave them, it is most probable, that all the Hebrew women were very fruitful, and none of them barren; and that they began betimes to bear children, and continued long, the LORD thereby making a way for the execution of his decree, and the accomplishment of his promise,

notwithstanding their cruel bondage, heavy yoke, & intolerable labor wherewith they were oppressed and oppugned. Now to give a taste of this increase how it might be effected by ordinary means (albeit by an extraordinary blessing, that God might verify the word spoken unto *Abraham*) consider with me, that seventy persons in thirty years, supposing they begat everyone but one only in a year (as many might do moe) will bring forth two thousand & one hundred persons. If we cut off the odd hundred, and admit that the third part only of the former number was apt for generation, to wit, six hundred, which make three hundred couples, and so many marriages; these considered as the former, in thirty year more will beget and multiply nine thousand; and yet we are come but to sixty years after their coming into Egypt. The third part of this nine thousand being three thousand, maketh fisteene hundred couples or persons to marry, who having every year one child (who in less then a year may have more then one) will increase the next thirty years forty five thousand, which bringeth us to the ninetieth year after their coming into Egypt. The third part hereof being fifteen thousand, will make seven thousand four hundred couples or marriages, omitting the odd hundredth, which may beget by the twelve year 222000. persons: the third part hereof being seventy four thousand, maketh thirty seven thousand couples, and will beget at the hundred and fifty year, 1110000. souls. The third part hereof being three hundred seventy, thousand persons, maketh one hundred eighty five thousand marriages, which will multiply by generation the next thirty years, which falleth (being expired) into the 180. year, 555000. souls: the third part hereof being one hundred eighty five thousand, maketh besides the odd thousand, 920000. marriages, which will beget by the two hundred and tenth year, 27600000. that is, seven and twenty thousand and six hundred thousand. This particular supputation we have made, to show that the Israelites bringing forth abundance of increase, as the spawn of the fish in the waters, did not multiply by a miraculous generation, but by an extraordinary benediction, GOD giving a special blessing unto them, partly to vex their enemies; and partly to verify his own promises.

[Question 2] Secondly, it may seem strange in this place, that *Reuben* the eldest son of *Jacob*, and the beginning of his strength, placed also in this muster in the first rank, cometh far behind many other, in the number of posterity. For, if we compare that Tribe with those that follow, and namely, with *Simeon*, *Issachar*, *Dan*, and *Naphtali*, we shall find they are much more populous. *Joseph* was one of the sons of *Jacob*, and one of the last and youngest, yet he exceeded and surmounted him almost half in half. But in the Tribe of *Judah*, the blessing of God doeth most apparently show it self according to the ancient prophesy of *Jacob*.

I answer, though *Reuben* had the privilege to be the first born, [Answer.] yet he lost his birthright, and for his wickedness committed against his Father, he was thrust down from that seat of honor. This is it which *Jacob* foretold long before, Genesis 49, 3, 4. *Reuben mine eldest son, thou art my might, and the beginning of my strength: the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power, &c. Thou shalt not be excellent, because thou wentest up to thy Fathers bed, then diddest thou defile my bed, thy dignity is gone.* This threatening was denounced by the mouth of his Father, but he was therein the mouth and minister of GOD, and therefore it must be in time accomplished. God maketh way for the effecting of it; and this was a sign of the fulfilling of that curse, that his posterity is diminished, and others taste of God's blessing

before him. And, as the birth-right had two privileges, the rule over his Brethren, and a double portion of the Fathers inheritance: the former fell to *Judah*, upon whose posterity the kingdom was cast; the latter to *Joseph*, whose two sons had a twofold portion; so that *Reuben* lost the one and the other. For it standeth with God's justice, that he who climbed up where he ought not to have touched, should be thrust from y^t which of right to him belonged; according to the saying of Christ in the Gospel, *Whosoever lifteth up himself shall be cast down and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted*. This is y^e cause also that *Judah* and *Joseph* so much increased & multiplied above their fellows, to the end, that God might make good the promise he made unto them: *For heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of this word shall not pass, but be fulfilled*. But of these things we shall have occasion offered to speak more in the next chapter, whereunto I refer you for farther direction.

Thirdly, the question may be asked, for [Question 3] what cause *Moses* numbering the Tribes severally, useth the same words, and maketh so many repetitions, whereas he might have cōprehended the same in a shorter sum? For, he saith of every Tribe, that they were numbered by their generations, by their Families, and by their Fathers houses, according to the number of their names, every male from twēty years and above, as many as went forth to war: was it not enough to have said so once for all, but he must repeat it so often? I answer, [Answer.] there are no vain and needless repetitions in the Scripture; every word, & syllable, and letter hath his use, and standeth for some purpose, albeit we do not always know so much. One cause may be in respect of God; to teach, that as with him is no respect of persons, so he hath a care as well of one as of another; he is a common Father of them all, he neglecteth none, but remembereth them with his kindness, and spreadeth the wing of his protection over them. Thus doth God deal with us at this day, he keepeth us in his book of remembrance, no less then he did y^e Jews, inasmuch as there *falleth not a Sparrow to the ground without his will, and the hairs of our head are numbered*.

The second cause may be, to graft in our minds, and imprint in our memories this so great a blessing in multiplying them unto the number of so many thousands in so short a space. If he had spoken it once, and in few words, it might soon be forgotten, & lightly pass from us: now he standeth upon it at large, that the often repetition and commemoration might ingraft and engrave it in our hearts, that there it might continue; for we are apt to ascribe God's works to nature, and to take them to our selves, & so to make no profit of them.

Thirdly, he maketh as honorable mention of one as he doth of another, without any difference, that one should not envy at another, neither one condemn another, but that mutual love and friendship should be maintained among them as among Brethren. A little title of honor and dignity is able to make us swell one against another. Least therefore he should seem to neglect one, and prefer another, he keepeth an even hand, and equalleth one with another, so far as lieth in him. He giveth no occasion of advantage to such as were ready to seek all occasions: but cutteth them off, by speaking that of one, which he had affirmed of the other. Thus much of the Questions that may be made and moved out of this division: let us now come to the Doctrines that are to be gathered for our instruction.

[Verse 20, 21, &c. *So were the sons of Reuben, &c*] Moses setteth down in this place, the particular number of every Tribe, & then the general sum of the whole gathered together into one, the which amounteth unto 603550. persons that could draw the sword. This may seem very strange unto us, that so small an handful of 70. souls should multiply so greatly in the space of 216. years. But herein we are to consider the truth of God joined with his power, who because he is true of his word, and able of his power, performed that to this people which he promised long before to their Fathers. For we must fetch the cause of this extraordinary increase a little higher, and observe that God had passed his promise long before to *Abraham*, that albeit he were old, and his wife both old and barren, yet he would bless him with a great seed & posterity, as the dust of the earth, as the stars of heaven, and as the sand on the sea—shore which could not be numbered, as Ge. 12, 3. *I will make of thee a great Nation, I will bless thee, & make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing.* And chap. 13, 14, 16. & 15, 5. & 17, 2, 4, 5, 6. *Lift up thine eyes now, and look from the place where thou art, Northward and Southward, Eastward and Westward, I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed be numbered.* Likewise Chap. 15. he brought him forth, and said, *Look up now unto heaven, and tell the Stars, if thou be able to number them, and be said unto him, So shall thy seed be.* So Chap. 17. *I will make my Covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly, Neither shall thy name anymore be called Abram, but Abraham, for a Father of many Nations have I made thee; & I will make thee exceeding fruitful, & will make nations of thee, yea Kings shall proceed of thee.* The same promise is likewise renewed to *Jacob*, Gen. 46 2, 3. *I am God, the God of thy father, fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great Nation.* Thus did God speak from time to time to the Patriarchs, and thus did he promise to bless them, & did renew the promise for their farther assurance and consolation. Behold here, the accomplishment of the same promise, and the verifying of it to the full, for he increased his people exceedingly, & made them stronger then their oppressors: yea, he brought them forth with silver and gold, and there was none feeble among their tribes. Frō [Doctrine 4] hence we gather this doctrine, that all the promises of God made to his children, shall in due time be accomplished, so that he will not fail nor falsify the word that is gone out of his mouth. The truth hereof appeareth by sundry consents of Scripture. This is it that *Joshua* declareth, chap. 21, 44, 45. The Lord gave rest unto *Israel* round about, according to all that he had sworn unto their Fathers, there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; for the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand, *There failed nothing of all the good things which the Lord had said unto the house of Israel, but all came to pass.* Where he showeth, that as God promised to defend his, & to defeat their enemies, and to give his people peace, so he failed them not, but fulfilled his promise. In the Book of the Kings mentioning the siege of *Samaria*, we read, that in the great famine wherein the City was pressed, the Prophet *Elisha* prophesieth, that tomorrow this time, a measure of fine flower shall be sold for a shekel, & two measures of Barly for a shekel in y^e gate of *Samaria*. And howsoever this seemed impossible to such as were blinded with unbelief, & looked upon ordinary means that shown themselves before them, who feared not to say, *Though the Lord would make windows in heaven, this thing could not come to pass:* yet it did come to pass, & nothing was left vnperformed, for *the people went out and spoiled the campe of the Aramites, so that a measure of fine Flowre was at a Shekell, and two measures of Barly at a shekel, according to the*

word of y^e Lord. True it is, God sometimes promiseth that w^c he doth not by and by accomplish, because the promise is for the appointed time; but in the end it cometh and shall not stay. In the beginning of the world it was said immediately after the man's fall, Gen. 3, 15. *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed & her seed: he shall break thine head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* Many years passed over the heads of God's people before this was performed, yea many Kings and Prophets, and righteous men desired to see these days, that longed for the coming of the Messias, and the consolation of *Israel*: but *when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, and made under the Law, &c.* God promised, and *Noah* prophesied, and the Scripture hath published, that God should persuade *Japheth* that he may dwell in the tents of *Shem*, so that the Gentiles should be converted unto the faith, and won by the ministry of the word, not by the force of the sword to embrace the Gospel. This promise was long deferred, yet in the end truly verified, when the Apostles were called to preach unto them, prepared for it by the gift of tongues, and enabled to go through the work, as appeareth at large in the Acts of the Apostles. The old and New Testament do give testimony one to another. The Old Testament containeth many and sundry prophesies: and what is the new, but an accomplishment of the same? All these allegations, as a cloud of witnesses, confirm this point; that God, as he maketh his promises in mercy, so in justice and righteousness he accomplisheth the same.

[Reason 1] Neither let this seem strange unto us. For first consider with me, who it is that maketh the same; not man who is deceitful, but God who never failed or falsified his word. He is true in all his sayings, and faithful in all his doings: he is as ready to perform, as he is to promise, and never repenteth or recalleth that which is gone out of his mouth. This the Apostle as a faithful witness testifieth, Rom. 3, 3, 4. *What though some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, and every man a liar, as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy words, and overcome when thou art judged.* The reason used in this place is this; God is true in his word, and constant in his promise; therefore he never deceiveth nor deludeth those that are his with vain words, whose truth reacheth unto the clouds.

[Reason 2] Secondly, as he is true in nature, so he is unchangeable in will; he is not like man that he should lie. Man is subject to vanity & inconstancy, as to speak, and not to do it: to promise and not to keep it: but it is not so with God, who hath opened his mouth, & will perform it. This doth *Job* plainly declare, Chap. 23, 13. *He is in one mind, and who can turn him? Tea, he doth what his mind desireth: for he will perform that which is decreed of me, and many such things are with him.* There is no variableness with him, neither shadow of turning, he remaineth the same evermore. To this purpose *Moses* declareth that *Balaam* could not curse the people of God, but was constrained against his will to bless them, because *God is not as man that he should lie, neither as the Son of man that he should repent; Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Hath he spoken, and shall he not accomplish it?*

Thirdly, he is powerful, and of himself [Reason 3] able and sufficient to work out his own will; so that nothing shall hinder him, or delay the doing thereof when the time is come. It falleth out oftentimes with man, when he hath promised to accomplish a work, that he is not

able to perform it, either through weakness in himself, or through the over-ruling power y^t is in another. It is not so with God; whatsoever he decreeth, he doeth: whatsoever he willeth, he worketh and performeth. When after God's gracious promise to give flesh unto his people in abundance, *Moses* doubted thereof in regard of the want of those means which he saw not, and the multitude of the people which he saw; the Lord said unto him; *Is the Lord's hand shortened? Thou shalt now see whether my word shall come to pass unto thee, or not.* Seeing therefore, God is true of his word, unchangeable in his will, and powerful in his works, we may build our faith upon this truth, that his promises shall never fail any of his children.

Let us now apply this doctrine to our selves. [Use 1] First, is this certain that God will perform whatsoever he hath promised? Then we may conclude this, that whatsoever promises are not yet fulfilled, shall in due time be accomplished? How many promises hath he already verified? Could any power or strength of man prevail against him to frustrate them, and to make them of none effect? Many there are y^t he hath made which are yet to come, they also shall be made good; for even they are as easily brought to pass as the rest which we see already performed. We have a prophesy & promise of the calling of the Jews, that they shall be gathered into the Sheepfold of Christ and profess his name, for God is able to graft them in again. Hence it is that the Apostle saith, *I would not Brethren that ye should be ignorant of this secret (lest ye should be arrogant in yourselves) that partly obstinacy is come to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.* See then hereby the prophesy inverted. Once it was, as we heard before, that God should persuade *Japheth* to dwell in the tents of *Sem*: but now the promise is, that God will persuade *Sem*, to dwell in the Tents of *Japheth*. As therefore the church of y^e Jews is brought in praying for the conversion of the Gentiles, so should we by an holy emulation from them, apply unto them, and for them, their own words, Cant. 8, 8. *We have a little Sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our Sister when she shall be spoken for?* The calling of the Gentiles once seemed as vnprobable and impossible, yet did God take away all obstacles and stumbling-blocks, and brought them unto the faith by y^e power of his two-edged sword: so we cannot doubt (for faithful is he y^t hath promised) but in his good time he will in mercy look upon the natural branches, and according to his ancient bountifulness, graft them into their own Olive tree. They are the first borne of God, and as it were the elder Brethren of the house; albeit they seem disinherited for a season, and cast out of the house, yet God will admit them again, & receive them into the adoption of sons. And our doctrine serveth us as a prop and pillar to under-prop our faith touching this point. Again, God hath promised that he will free us from all sin and misery, that he will wipe away all tears from our eyes, and make us without spot and wrinkle, so that we shall hunger and thirst no more. We see not this with our bodily eyes, neither are we made partakers of this promise: *For behold unto this hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain abiding place: we are reviled, and yet we bless: we are persecuted, and suffer it: we are evil spoken of, and we pray: we are made as the filth of the world, the off-scouring of all things, unto this time.* This doctrine therefore serveth to uphold our faith in this point. Thirdly, God hath promised to raise up our bodies that have lien in the dust, and are rotted in the earth, by his almighty power, who calleth things that are not as if they were. True it is, it goeth above natural reason to conceive & understand this truth; yet the Apostle saith, *If*

the Spirit of Christ that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies. How soever then our bodies be either burned, or drowned, or devoured, God will raise them, for with him nothing is impossible. We see what men are able to do by Art and workmanship: of ashes, they are able to make costly and curious glasses; by distillation they are able to extract the spirit and quintessence of sundry things: out of one metal it is not hard with them to draw another; as Silver out of Lead by melting and refining; by sowing their corn that rotteth in the earth, we see it hath a new body given it. Therefore it is not impossible in it self. Notwithstanding we see not this as yet performed; the bodies of the Saints remain in the earth, and see corruption. This doctrine therefore serveth to uphold our faith in this point, & to make us rest in hope, that he will not always leave them in the grave, nor suffer them to perish therein for evermore.

Lastly, God hath foretold that there shall be an end of this world, that the Lord Jesus shall break the heavens and come to judge all flesh, so that the dead shall rise, and all shall stand before his judgment seat to receive according to their works, whether they be good or evil. Then shall the faithful be fully glorified, and inherit the crown of eternal life. This howsoever it be oftentimes and faithfully promised of God, yet hath been and is derided of many, who shall in the end pay the price of their folly and infidelity, & feel that God's truth is stable, and surer then y^e heavens. This is it which the Apostle *Peter* testifieth, *This first understand, that there shall come in the last days mockers, which will walk after their lusts, and say, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the Fathers died, all things continue alike, from the beginning of the Creation.* But whatsoever these Atheists dream of the glorious appearance of Christ his second coming, and howsoever they put the evil day far from them: yet the Lord of that promise is not slack (as some men count slacknesse) but is patient toward us, and would have no man to perish. Nevertheless, the day of the Lord will come as a Thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the Elements shall melte with heat, and the earth with the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. This we see not yet performed, neither are we made partakers of eternal life, when we shall ever rest & remain with the Lord, and nothing shall separate us from his glorious and comfortable presence. This doctrine therefore serveth to uphold our faith in this point. And whensoever we read of any promise that God hath in mercy made to his Church, albeit it be for a time deferred, not presently accomplished, let us wait with patience, and build our Faith upon the experience of his former promises, which we see already fulfilled; and say with the Apostle, *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* We are sure we build not in the air, we beat not the air, but we build upon a sure foundation, that shall never decay or deceive us. For whoever put his trust in him, and was confounded? Or who did set up his rest on him, and went away ashamed? Hence it is that Christ saith, *Math. 5, 17, 18. Think not that I am come, to destroy the Law or the Prophets, I am not come to destroy them but to fulfill them: for truly I say unto you, till heaven and earth perish, one jot or one tittle of the Law shall not scape, till all things be fulfilled.* This is needful for us to consider & remember, for our faith is often shaken with doubting and infidelity: that which we see not we many times believe not; and so we are shaken through our

weakness as with the wind: but we must make God our rock, and rest on his unchangeable word, who is truth it self, and cannot lie.

Secondly, seeing God's promises are so [Use 2] surely grounded upon the immutability of God's truth, that it is impossible y^t they should fail, or he deceive; this teacheth that it is as true, that his judgments shall not fail, but follow the wicked at the heels. For God is as unchangeable in the one, as in the other. It is a foolish error to imagine that God will undoubtedly perform the promises of his mercy, and not the threatenings of his justice. True it is, many presume of his goodness, but they doubt of his righteousness. This is to set up an abominable Idol in our hearts, and to deny the infiniteness of his glory and majesty, and to devise a God made altogether of mercy. If God be true in the one, he is also as true in the other: if he fail in the one, he changeth also in the other. This use is directly concluded by *Joshua* in the exhortation that he maketh to the people, that they should not join themselves to the idolatrous Nations, but love the Lord their God, and cleave unto him with full purpose of heart, when he saith, Chap. 23. ver. 14, 15. *Behold this day do I enter into the way of all the world, and ye know in your hearts, and in all your souls, that nothing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God promised you, but all are come to pass unto you, nothing hath failed thereof: Therefore as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you, so shall the LORD bring upon you every evil thing, until he have destroyed you out of this good Land which the Lord your God hath given you.* In which words he teacheth, that his threatenings are of the same nature with his promises, and his judgments as certain as his mercies. This appeareth by a notable example which God shown at the breaking up of the long siege of *Samaria*: he promised to the faithful that would believe, plenty and abundance the next day; and he threatened to the Prince, on whose hand the King leaned, that he should see it with his eyes but he should not eat thereof. Here God did promise good, and threaten evil. Did he show forth the work of his mercy, and not of his judgment? of his goodness, not of his wrath? Yes, of his wrath and judgment; for the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died, *as the man of God had said, so it came to pass.* This serveth to show the woeful estate and condition of all ungodly men & unrepentant sinners: for howsoever they flatter themselves, & put away the evil day far from them, being deluded, and as it were charmed with a proud presumption of God's mercies, yet the threatening of God, the curse of the Law, and the terror of their conscience which standeth against them shall abide forever: and therefore so long as they go forward in sin, and proceed in y^e wickedness of their hearts, they have just cause to mourn and lament, forasmuch as the threatenings manifested in the word, are inviolable and unchangeable. Let all those that lie in any sin repent, & while it is called today hear his voice, lest the curse of the Law, which shall certainly be fulfilled, do seize upon them, and they be carried to utter destruction. The Prophet *Isaiah* denounceth many woes against wicked men, *Woe unto them that join house to house, and lay Field to field, til there be no place for the poor. Woe unto them that rise up early to follow drunkenness, and to them that continue til night. Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as with Cart-ropes. Woe unto them that speak good of evil, and evil of good; which put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, & sweet for sour. Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, & prudent in their own sight. Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and to them that are strong to pour in*

strong drink. Here are many woes, and fearful threatenings of many miseries, and do the ungodly think to escape? or that these things do not deeply concern them? Our Savior denounceth a great woe, against all contemners of the Gospel, & telleth them, *It shall be easier for Tyre & Sidon, nay for Sodom and Gomorra in the day of judgment, then for them.* Must not these denunciations be accomplished? Or do we remain as Infidels, and think they shall never be performed? Or if they be performed, that we shall be exempted or excused? It cannot be that his word should fall to the ground, and take none effect. Let us fear these terrible threatnings, humble our selves before him, and forsake our evil ways: let us betake our selves unto him, and let us turn unto his word, for the word will never turn unto us, and bend it self to our pleasure. The Scripture is full, & replenished with such heavy threatnings, as may serve to strike a fear and terror into our hearts. The Prophet *Amos* denounceth a *Woe to them* that are at ease in *Zion*, that put far away the evil day, and approach to the seat of iniquity, and are not sorry for the affliction of Joseph. The Prophet *Malachi* foretelleth, that *the day cometh which shall burn as an Oven*, and all the proud, yea all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, and shall leave them neither root nor branch. These threatenings are surer then the heavens which shall pass away, but these shall never pass away: and therefore woe to them that repent not, nor return to the Lord; for they must needs be taken suddenly in them as in a snare, and no man shall be able to deliver them. They may think themselves forgiven, or at least forgotten, but poor souls they are deceived. It is not length of time that can help them, nor strength of their arm that can save them, nor the wedge of Gold that can deliver them: for *Riches avail not in the day of wrath*, nor serve to pacify his indignation; but righteousness delivereth from death.

Thirdly, as we learn the truth of God in [Use 3] his threatenings, so there ariseth from hence a most excellent ground of assured comfort for all God's servants, to establish their hearts in the immutability of all his promises. Manie are the particular promises set down in the word, & as many as are there mentioned, so many particular comforts are ministered unto us as from the hand of God, to the end that we believing them, and as it were, clasping our arms about them, might have strong consolation and boldness to come to the throne of grace. Wherefore, whensoever we feel the weakness of our faith, we must have recourse to his word. As they which have a dim sight and weak eye, use the help of their Spectacles, and thereby find comfort: so should we when we are at any time troubled with doubting, help our spiritual eye-sight with often looking into the glass of his word, and meditating continually upon his promises. It were endless and infinite to speak of all his gracious promises mentioned in his word: some are of temporal blessings, and other of spiritual and eternal; in both we ought to rest upon the vnchangeableness of his will, who is not as man that he should any way deceive us; as those that use to promise much, & perform little. His promise is certain, and very good payment, if we dare trust him of his word. It is he that hath said, *I have been young, and am old, yet I saw never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.* It is he that hath spoken, *I will not fail thee, neither forsake thee, so that we may boldly say, The Lord is mine helper, neither will I fear what man can do unto me.* It is he that hath promised, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be ministered unto*

you. We see how much many men vex & torment themselves about earthly & transitory things; they fear they shall want before they die, and give themselves to unlawful shifts to maintain themselves and their estate: the reason hereof is, because they have unbelieving hearts; they cannot cast themselves and their care upon the Lord, they will not seek his love and favor, they labor not to be reconciled to him in Christ Jesus, and whatsoever he promise unto them of his word, they believe nothing at all.

Take an example of God's providence over his people, whiles they walked and wandered in the Wilderness, they had neither seed time nor harvest, and they were an huge multitude, of more then six hundred thousand, beside women and children, yet he sustained them, and provided for them till he brought them into the land of *Canaan*. He is not as a poor Father that hath moe children then he is able to sustain; or as a state that is constrained to disburden it self of their superfluity and overflowing multitude, and so to send out many Colonies to plant themselves in other places: he hath all the earth in his own power, & is able to provide for all his children y^t wait upon him, and put their trust and confidence in him. This must be our comfort in time of trial and temptation, that he hath promised never to fail us nor forsake us: and albeit man's promises may deceive us, and his deed come short of his word, yet no jot or portion of God's promises shall remain vnfulfilled; and therefore in all our necessities, let us possess our souls with patience, and wait constantly for the accomplishment thereof, which in due time shall take good effect. The fault is in our selves, who will not lay hold upon the same, he hath said he will be our tower of defense, and City of refuge to shield us from danger & all distress; but we will not trust him of his word, but use unlawful means for our deliverance. That which hath been said of transitory and temporal blessings, may also be spoken of eternal. God hath promised the renewing of our hearts, the forgiveness of sins, and the kingdom of heaven, as Ier. 31, 32, 33. Heb. 8, 10, 11, 12. Isaiah 40, 1, 2. *I will put my Laws in their mind, and in their heart I will write them. I will be their God, and they shall be my people. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and I will remember their sins and their iniquities no more.*

These are great and precious promises: here are sweet comforts of life and salvation offered unto us on God's part: let these be to us as the Anchor of our souls both sure and steadfast. These are immutable things, *Wherein it is impossible that God should lie*, and therefore let us be established in them, and lay hold upon that hope which is set before us. And if we believe not, *yet abideth he faithful, he cannot deny himself*. No greater comfort can be given, no greater promise can be made, then to assure us of the pardon and forgiveness of our sins, which make a separation between God and us. To have a feeling of this mercy, is as sweet Incense unto the soul, and as precious balm unto the heart. Let us therefore comfort our selves with this promise, & howsoever Satan sift us, and seek by all means to take from us this peace of conscience which passeth all understanding, we must shroud our selves under the safety of his word which abideth forever; and when we are tempted to doubt of his goodness in the remission of our sins, let us lay hold on the former promises, and know that the heavens themselves shall fall and be moved out of their places, before the truth of his word (which is truth it self) shall be diminished or disannulled.

Fourthly, is God constant of his word, and [Use 4] faithful of his promise, then it is required of us to be like our heavenly Father in truth and faithfulness. When God hath promised any blessing to his people, he is true of his word, and bringeth it to pass. The Lord said to them, *After seventy years be accomplished at Babel, I will visit you, and perform my good promise toward you, and cause you to return to this place; for I know the thoughts that I have thought toward you, even the thoughts of peace and not of trouble, to give you an end, and your hope.* This did he accomplish by the means of Cyrus, whose spirit he stirred up to make a proclamation throughout his kingdom, that whosoever would, should go up to *Jerusalem* to build it and inhabit there. Now, as God is faithful in his word, so let us follow his example, and make conscience of our words & sayings, that thereby we may assure our selves to be the children of our heavenly Father. We must therefore know that all just covenants and contracts, all promises & bargains must be performed, albeit they be made to our hurt and hindrance, and bind us in conscience and duty, by the Law of God & man, so far forth as he pleaseth to require them, to whom they have been made. The Prophet asking the question, Who shall dwell in the Lord's Tabernacle, & rest in his holy Hill, maketh this answer, *He which sweareth to his hurt and changeth not.* This we see in *Joshua* toward the *Gibeonites*: and in the book of *Judges*, chapt. 1. when the Spies saw a man come out of the City, and said unto him, *Shew us we pray thee the way into the City, and we will show thee mercy:* when he had shown them the way into the City, they smote the City with the edge of the sword, but they let the man & all his household depart. Hence we should learn, to be wary and watchful in our promises, considering as well, whether we be able to perform them, as whether we be willing, and examining our hearts whether they be in our own power nor not, and whether (if they be) it be lawful for us to perform them. For some things are lawful in themselves to pay and perform, which are in no sort in our power: and other things may be in our power, which are not lawful to be done. This fidelity in keeping promise, is *a weighty point of the Law, Math. 23,* and *a fruit of the Spirit:* and therefore it standeth us upon to make conscience thereof. If any man were asked the question, whether he think it his duty to endeavor to be like God, and to strive to resemble him, as the child resembleth his father, he would be ready to answer. It is his duty to do it, and his comfort that it is so: If then we acknowledge the necessity of it, let us follow him in constancy and true dealing, studying to *be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.* This is that use which the Apostle urgeth, *2 Cor. 1. When I was thus minded, did I use lightness? Or mind I those things which I mind, according to the flesh, that with me should be yea, yea, and nay, nay? Yea, God is faithful, that our word toward you, was not yea and nay: for all the promises of God in Christ are yea, and are in him, Amen, unto the glory of God through us.* The Apostle in these words declareth that he was wrongfully slandered, and unjustly charged with looseness and lightness of promise, and unconscionable breaking of his word; inasmuch as he had always before him the example of God, whom he acknowledgeth to be faithful in his words and promises. This serveth to reprove those that will rashly promise anything, as *Saul* did to *David*, as *Laban* did to *Jacob*, and then changed their mind as the weather-cock doeth at every blaste of wind. These are like the reed that bendeth too and fro; but it must not be so with us, we must purpose, and not alter; we must promise, and then perform carefully what we have promised.

Lastly, whensoever God hath made good [Use 5] the words of his mouth, and accomplished his promises unto us, which we have long looked for & expected, it is our duty to praise his name, and to give him the glory of the work, to whom alone it is due. Hath he fed us in time of famine, and made us to see, that *Man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of his mouth?* Let us not sacrifice unto our net, nor burn incense unto our yarne, but say with the Prophet, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the glory, for thy loving mercy and for thy truths sake.* This duty we see practiced by King Solomon, 1 Kings 8. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it: the Lord hath made good his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the Throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and have built the house for the name of the Lord God of Israel.* A worthy pattern and president for us to follow, whensoever we taste of the grace and bountifulness of God, to offer up unto him a song and sacrifice of thanksgiving. And if we must do this for temporal blessings, much more are we bound to do it for such as are spiritual. If God have for a season hid his face from us, that we have seen no light of his grace, but all these things have been covered with darkness and discomfort, as it were the Sun in a Cloud; if our sins as the waves of the sea have gone over our head, and been a burden too heavy for us to bear, and yet in the ende God hath remembered his mercy towards us, and not shut up his kindness in displeasure; why have we still unthankful hearts, & why have we shut up our mouths in silence as dumb men, and why do we not confess the Lord his loving kindness, and his wonderful works before the sons of men? Who is it that liveth upon the earth, and hath not found by daily experience the faithfulness of the Lord, in making good his promises unto him? yet where are they that return to him again with a grateful remembrance of his grace, and an holy acknowledgment of his truth toward him? We are like the Lepers in y^e Gospel, who were all cleansed, but God was not praised of them all, only one was found, who returned to give God the praise. Let us not be like these unthankful Lepers, that swallowed up the goodness of God toward them, and never confessed the receiving of it. He will not suffer such swine to devour his benefits, that can open their mouths wide to taste of his mercies, as the earth that gapeth to receive the showers of rain; but have learned to keep them shut when they should praise God's name with a loud voice. Their tongues are eloquent and learned when they are to crave, but when they have received, they are tongue-tied and cannot speak. Let us be far from such practices, and as we see them, learn to detest them, that God may have the glory, and be all in all. Let us not tread in the steppes of such persons, as albeit the Lord doth continually remember them with his kindness, yet do forget him and the works of mercy that he hath shown toward them.

The former part of the Chapter consisted in numbering of the Tribes: in the latter he declareth that the Levites were not numbered, who were not for the wars, but to serve in the Tabernacle of the Congregation. We shall see them afterward numbered by themselves, but they were not put in the common rank and reckoning, because God had chosen them to be his possession, and separated them from the rest of the people. And lest any man should think, that Moses did extraordinarily exalt, and ambitiously prefer the Tribe of *Levi*, whereof himself descended, he showeth he did it not of his own head, but by the special

commandment of God. Their office is declared, to take the charge of the Tabernacle and worship of God, that when they were to take their journey, they should carry it; and when they were to stay and pitch their Tents, they should set it down, and look to it with all diligence. And as God would not have them entangled and encombred in affairs improper to them, and impertinent to their calling: so he would not have others that were not of their Tribe and family, to break into their function, as it were to invade another man's possession; nay he denounceth death to such as were strangers from that Tribe, that should presume to meddle with those holy things, or set their hands unto thē. An example hereof we have in *Uzzah*, 2. Sam. 6. who, because *he touched the Ark of God* contrary to the Law, was punished with sudden death, and stricken with the immediate hand of God that fell upon him, to the terror of others, and to work reverence in the harts of all men toward the sacred things of his service. God did not admit all men without difference to minister before him, but separated only the Levites, lest holy things should be polluted and profaned; and withal to teach that all men are in themselves unworthy to stand before him and come into his presence, except they have a calling from him. Thus then we see the charge laid upon the Levites, what it is; they are distinguished frō the other Tribes who were numbered for the war: but these are kept to serve in the Tabernacle, to minister in the holy place, to meddle with the holy things, and to take y^e charge of the worship of God, lest vengeance come upon the Congregation of the Children of *Israel*. These things they ought to do, but touching things of another nature, they had nothing to do. We learn from hence, that it is the duty of the Ministers of God's word, [Doctrine 5] to exercise themselves only in things of their calling, they must wait and attend upon the office to which they are chosen and appointed. They are not to be distracted from their calling by worldly matters that no way belong unto them: but considering to what uses and ends they are set apart from others, they should be intentiue thereunto. This is set down afterward more plainly and particularly touching the Tribe of *Levi*. *Bring the Tribe of Levi, and set them before Aaron the Priest, that they may serve him, and take the charge with him, even the charge of the whole Congregation, to do the service of the Tabernacle.* This is it which *Moses* setteth down touching *Levi*, Deut. 33, 9, 10. *He said unto his father and mother, I have not seen him, neither knew he his brethren, nor knew his own children, for they observed thy word, and kept thy covenant: they shall teach Jacob thy judgments, & Israel thy Law, they shall put Incense before thy face, and the burnt Offering upon thine Altar.* The Apostle *Paul* setting down the offices & Officers of the Church, gives everyone his charge, and bindeth them within the limits & precincts thereof, out of which they were not to walk or wander, Rom. 12. 7, 8. *Seeing we have gifts that are diverse, &c: whether we have an Office, let us wait on the office: or he that teacheth, on teaching: or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that distributeth, let him do it with simplicity,* c where he assigneth to everyone his proper duty, as it were his own ground to till and manure, that they should not enter into the possession of another. Thus doth the Apostle *Peter* charge the Elders whose office was to teach the people, *Feede the flock of God that dependeth upon you.* All these testimonies tend to this point, to show that the Ministers are not to encumber themselves rashly in matters estranged from them, but to wait and attend upon the Office unto which they are called.

And doubtless it is great reason that they should content themselves with their own [Reason 1] callings, that so they may please him that hath called them, and forgo all that may distract & disturb them in the course and calling whereunto they ought to tend. We must be like soldiers that are called to bear arms. The reason and comparison is pressed by the Apostle to this purpose, 2 Tim. 2.3, 4. *Therefore suffer thou affliction, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ: no man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, because he would please him that hath chosen him to be a soldier.* This is the order and discipline of war, so soon as the soldiers are enrolled and have given their names to their Captains, they leave their houses, they forsake their families, and forgo whatsoever is dear unto them, to the end they may do their duty to their Captain that hath chosen them, and fight the battles to which they are appointed. If this honor be done to mortal men, what ought we to do to the Son of God, when he is so good and gracious, as to receive us into his service, to give us our press-money, and to pay us our wages? He could want us well enough, he hath no need of us. Were it not then a great shame, and an horrible reproach for us, that poor soldiers who fight & know not wherefore, should notwithstanding do this honor to a mortal man, to forget all their affairs and business: and yet we should be so nice and delicate, that we can bear & forbear nothing for the service of Christ?

Secondly, the multitude is great, and the [Reason 2] difficulty much of those things which are required of the Minister, belonging rightly & duly to his calling, in regard whereof we may say with the Apostle, 2 Cor. 2, 16. *Who is sufficient for these things?* Were that a wise servant, who having both his hands full, and more then he can well do, should besides his masters work undertake a new and another burden of some other man's business, which of right doth not belong unto him? Or were he a wise Steward, who having enough to do, to provide meat for the family in due season, should meddle with other matters unfit for him? In like manner, it cannot be approved, that the Minister of God should intermeddle with things not incident to his office, considering on the one side, the worthiness and weightiness of his calling, which will require all the gifts he hath (if he had a far greater portion) and on the other side, his own weakness and infirmity to stand under so great a charge, which is able to weary the strongest man: inasmuch as the taking upon him two several callings, will cause him to leave undone in one, so much as he performeth in the other. We see this in the example of the Apostles, Acts 6, 2, 3, 4, who were of most eminent and extraordinary gifts, yet their ministry did so busy them and set them on work, that they would admit no other charge with it, but did disburden themselves of that which they had, and cast the care of attending upon the poor to others, *It is not meet that we should leave the word of GOD to serve the Tables: wherefore brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the holy Ghost and of wisdom, which we may appoint to this business, & we will give our selves continually to prayer, and to the ministration of the word.* The Apostles found themselves not able to discharge both these callings, to provide for the poor, & to preach the Gospel. Have any been endued with like gifts, or were they able to match them? If they were not, how can they take upon them that which these master-builders refused? So thē it appeareth that the Ministers must not entangle themselves with anything besides their ministry.

[Use 1] Let us come to the uses. First of all, are they to employ themselves and their time in such duties as are peculiarly belonging unto them? Then this serveth to meet with many abuses that are crept into the Ministry; as namely to begin, such as are idle and do nothing, such as are slothful and slow bellies, that live to themselves, and feed themselves, but feed not the flock that dependeth upon them. Idleness is unfit for any calling, and unlawful in any person: but much more in the Minister of the word. The Prophet *Ezekiel* is earnest and vehement in reproving these drones, chapt. 34, 2.3. *Thus saith the Lord, woe be unto the Shepherds of Israel, that feed themselves: should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the sheep.* Such as will do nothing in the Church, nor take any pains in their places, are worthy of nothing, who seeing they will not labor, are not worthy to eat. Such are to be sent to school to the brute beasts, who by the light of nature have learned to shun idleness. *Solomon* saith, *Go to the Pismire, O sluggard, behold her ways and be wise: for she having no guide, governor, nor ruler, prepareth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in harvest.* It is a foul spot and blemish, especially in a Minister, to be branded with the infamous note of idleness. We see in the Common-wealth, where the fault is not so grievous or so dangerous, how idle persons are evil spoken off, reproached, vnpitied, and oftentimes punished: we see how laws are daily sharpened against them to compel them to labor, and to work with their hands, or else to make them smart for it. When any grow lazy and loitering about their business, we commonly send them to the house of correction. But the idleness of the Minister is a greater offense, and bringeth with it the ruin of themselves and many others. There cannot be a greater scar or scab in the Church, then to have it pestered & plagued with such sores. In former times of superstition we were wont to be troubled with dead Idols: but blessed be God they are pulled down and destroyed, and the names of them are almost unknown unto us. Notwithstanding in these days of the light of the Gospel, we are troubled with living Idols, which do as much harm as the other, and annoy the Church with great danger, and undermine the good estate of it another way. These are Idols that are mufled and tongue-tied; they have eyes and see not, they have ears and hear not, they have mouths and speak not, neither doth any voice pass thorough their throat. Let these men know, that they omit the duties of their calling, & therefore cannot have any comfort in their places. Let them be laborers, or else be no Ministers. Secondly, this reproveth such as are content to take pains in the Church, who would be ashamed to be accounted loiterers, and yet this doctrine seizeth upon them and arresteth them as debtors to God and his people. These are Preachers of the word, but withal they give themselves so much to matters of this world, that they cannot follow their studies privately, nor teach the people publicly as they ought. These have taken upon them to be Ministers, and yet they will be farmers and grazeyers: they will be both spiritual and temporal: they will serve God and the world. But the more these men enwrap themselves in earthly things & thoghts, the more they neglect heavenly: and while their heads are busy in contriving and dispatching worldly matters, they must needs neglect better studies. For the greater their care is in the one, the more their carelessness is in the other: and the more deeply they dive into the world, the more shallow are their meditations in the word. The office of the Deacons to attend upon the poor (to receive the alms with one hand, and to distribute them with the other) was merely Ecclesiastical; and therefore being in part of the

same nature, might with more ease and less trouble be annexed to the Ministry of the word; yet the Apostles (as we heard before) cast it from them as a burden unto them: how then shall we in these days, not to be compared with the Apostles, and for dispatch and expedition, but children to them, presume to mingle and shuffle matters of the world with our Ministry, that are of diverse, nay contrary nature, and think to manage and order them both very sufficiently? He would be accounted a fond and unwise man, who having an heavy burden already upon his shoulders as much as he is able to bear & endure, should notwithstanding lay hold of another as weighty as the former, and yet suppose himself to have sufficient strength to carry it with the same facility.

But some man may object, that *Peter* and [Objection 1] the other Apostles were fisher-men. and did also go to fishing after they were called to be Apostles: and *Paul* became a Tent-maker, laboring with his hands, and exercising a manual occupation.

I answer, [Answer.] this doth not allow the Ministers of the Gospel to be trades-men, or fi•hermen, where there is a Church well established and reformed; they are only tolerated in the ruins and desolations threof. In these cases it is lawful for the Minister to join to his calling another calling, in the poverty of his own person, not otherwise able to maintain his estate, and in the general want and need of the Church, not able sufficiently to provide for him. The causes and occasions of *Paul's* laboring with his hands, were partly that he might not in that point be inferior to the false Apostles, who took no wages or stipend, thereby seeking to win credit to themselves, and to disgrace the true servants of Christ, in regard whereof he sought to cut away occasion from them which desired occasion; and partly that he might help to ease and support the need and poverty of the Church. The Apostles did this in case of necessity: but what is this to justify and bear out the practice of worldly minded men, who do it to be great men in the world, to grow rich and wealthy, and to raise up their posterity to be mighty upon the earth? These are so much choked with the thorns of cares of this life, and deceitfulness of riches, that they can preach sildome, and that so coldly, and rawly, and vndigestedly, as that it may well appear they have earth in their minds and mouths, that their voices are stopped, and their gifts are decayed, and their zeal is quenched. What then, will [Object. 2] some say? Would you have us always poring upon a book? or would you not have us provide for our family that God hath given us? I answer, [Answer.] it is lawful to do the office of the father of a family, to order the matters of his own household aright. GOD commandeth it, man willeth it, nature requireth it, and law alloweth of it; so that *Whosoever provideth not for his own, especially those of his family, hath denied the faith, and is worse then an Infidel.* Neither are men always bound to be in their studies as in a Prison; that which wanteth seasonable rest, cannot long endure and continue. The mind is as a man that trauaileth a long journey, in the end he will wax weary, and must have rest: or as a bow that cannot stand always bent, lest it be overmuch weakened. If an archer should continually shoot in his bow and never vnbend it, he would in short time break it into shiuers, and make it unprofitable. So when the Minister hath wearied himself in the weighty works of his holy calling, he is not denied leave and liberty to refresh himself other ways. If it be in shooting, or grafting, or planting, or such like, he sins not: provided that there be a

difference made between recreation and an occupation, and that they hinder not his general or particular calling.

Every Minister, if aright he consider of his place, shall find he hath as much as he can turn his head and hand unto, when they do their best endeavor.

We are commanded to *give no offense to Jew or Gentile, or to the Church of GOD*. But for us, that profess our selves spiritual men, and yet to live as temporal men, is offensive to the people, and layeth a stumbling block before them, and therefore it is to be avoided of us.

Let us set before us the example of Christ Jesus and his practice, Luke 12, verse 13. *who refused to divide the inheritance among the Brethren*; having respect unto the bounds and limites of his calling: declaring thereby that it belongeth in no wise to the Ministers of the word to intermeddle in y^e judgment of such causes. He failed not in any duties that fell out in the compass of his calling, but performed them willingly: this office he utterly refused, and therefore no doubt was impertinent to the Minister. Likewise when the people would have taken him *and made him King*, he conveyed himself out of their sight, and would not accept such honor at their hands. Thus he also refused to pronounce sentence upon the harlot that was brought unto him, saying, *I do not condemn thee, go thy way and sin no more*: so that he would not meddle with civil and criminal causes. And as he practiced himself, so he taught his Apostles, and others that professed to be his Disciples. When one that was called to follow Christ, said, *Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father*, Jesus said unto him, *Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou & preach the Kingdom of God*. Then another said, *I will follow thee Lord, but let me go first and bid them farewell which are at mine house*; Jesus said unto him, *No man that putteth his hand to the Plough, and looketh back, is apt to the Kingdom of GOD*. To conclude therefore, no man must over-burden himself, with things that belong not to his calling. And albeit some have done such things in the poverty of the Church, yet we must make a difference between those that do it to sustain necessity, and others that thereby maintain superfluity: the one doth it thorough defect, the other in all pomp and excess. Thirdly, this reproveth those that albeit they do not entangle them-selves in worldly business, yet they entangle themselves with sundry livings, that it is not possible for them to do the duties proper to their calling. For while they labor in the one, they cannot labor in the other, and if they be present at the one, they are absent from the other. But the calling of the Minister requireth personal pains, and admitteth not an ordinary Deputy; no more then the Levites could put out their charges to others, who are reproveth by the Prophet, *Because they kept not the ordinances of the Lord's holy things, and themselves had set others to take the charge of his Sanctuary*. Neither can this be any discharge unto us, that we have others to labor for us, men of gifts & knowledge: seeing as the charge is ours, and belonging to our persons, so the discharge should also be ours, and touch our own persons. But of this, we have already spoken more at large elsewhere, and therefore will omit it, referring the Reader to that place for farther resolution.

Secondly, this doctrine serveth for comfort [Use 2] to all those that are true-hearted Levites, and leave all by-matters that stand not with their calling, to serve God aright in their places. If we be truly answerable to the weight and worthiness of our Ministry, and are careful to

bring forth the fruits thereof, and are faithful in performing the duties that God hath bound us unto, we may say with the Apostle, 2 Tim. 4, 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight, and have finished my course: I have kept the faith, henceforth is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that time: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* Paul at this time was near unto death, and the day of his departure was at hand: was he now without comfort? or did he doubt of God's favor? No, he was not afraid of death, but always acknowledgeth it should be *gain and advantage unto him*, so that he desired to be eased, and to be with Christ, which is best of all. What was then his comfort, and wherein did his rejoicing consist? In that he had faithfully done the duties of his calling, and kept faith and a good conscience. This point doth more lively and notably appear in Christ our Savior, in that comfortable prayer which he offered up as Incense unto his Father, making intercession for us; *I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do: I have declared thy Name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word.* This work of redemption and reconciliation of man, is proper to Christ: but every Minister in his calling doth glorify God, and shall receive glory of the Father, whose work he hath finished, whose name he hath declared, whose word he hath published. If he that giveth a cup of cold water, shall not go away unrewarded: surely he that hath distributed the bread of life with a free hand, & the water of life with a full cup, shall receive a Prophets reward, which the Prophet of all Prophets shall give unto him. To this purpose, *Daniel* to comfort such as should suffer death in the troublesome times & bloody persecutions under *Antiochus* saith, *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever & ever.* A notable encouragement this is unto us to do our duties; we rise not early & late, we watch not, we wake not in vain & for nothing, though we have a cold reward many times for our pains of our unthankful people: God that setteth us on work and seeth our harts, will in his good time remember our effectual faith, and diligent love, and the patience of our hope in Jesus Christ. To this purpose the Apostle *Peter* putteth us in good assurance of a sure recompense, *Feede the flock of God which dependeth upon you, &c, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive an incorruptible crown of glory.* Here is a duty, & a dignity; a work, & a reward; a direction, & a consolation. If we care for the flock more then for our selves, the great Shepherd of the sheep will make us partakers of everlasting life. But if we enter upon the flock for the fleeces sake, and do that which we do constrainedly, not willingly: we have our reward, we cannot look for any recompense at his hands, that is the great owner of the sheep. Woe unto all such idle Shepherds, their estate shall be fearful in the fearful day of account, who have gifts given them, and have not used them to the comfort of themselves, to the benefit of the people, & to the glory of the giver. These are like unto the Ostrich, which hath wings, but flieth not with them: so they have gifts, but they employ them not, and it had been better for them, that they had never received them, then to receive them, and not to bestow them to those ends for which they were first given. The stomach that receiveth meat into it, carrieth it over to other parts, and keepeth it not to it self, from whence followeth the health and strength of the whole body. Thus ought it to be with all those that have obtained knowledge and other gifts; they must turn them and transmit them to the good of every part, but if they keep them locked in their own breast,

they will putrefy & corrupt, as meat retained still in the stomach never digesteth. What comfort can these men have, when they shall go the way of all flesh? Nay, what discomfort shall they not find, & what horror and fear shall they not feel, to consider how unprofitable servants they have been? But if we have received gifts, and have been conscionable in the using of them, we have comfort in God, that he will receive us and reward us. Though our gifts be small, yet if we have labored to use them well, we shall be accounted good, and profitable, and faithful servants.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it is required of every Minister to be painful in his place, and to preach in season and out of season, and to give attendance on the flock, *Ouer which the holy Ghost hath made him Ouerseer*. We must therefore be faithful in our callings, observing therein two rules, first, looking to our selves; secondly, to the flock or people committed to our charge. It is not sufficient for us to teach the will of God to others, but we must do it our selves. Our Savior requireth of his Disciples, not only to preach to others, but themselves to observe his Commandments, *Whosoever shall break one of these least Commandments, and teach men so, he shall be called least in the Kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall observe and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven*. It is not therefore enough to teach them, unless we have our selves care to observe them; it is our duty to teach others, but specially & principally our selves, for doing must go before teaching, and observing before edifying. This order doth the Apostle Paul set down to the Elders of Ephesus, *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock whereof the holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of GOD, which he hath purchased with his own blood*. Whereby we see, he instructeth them in the first place to have a care of their own ways, and thereby to give a good example unto them. If then we have a regard to preach to others, we ought much more to preach to our selves; and in vain he instructeth others, that suffereth his own heart to be disobedient. He that preacheth well and liveth ill, confuteth and convinceth himself. To all such the same Apostle saith, *Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that teachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest; a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? &c: The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles thorough you*.

There are two Pillars of a Pastors charge, piety of life, and piety of doctrine. He must not be severe toward others, and loose in respect of himself: he must not lay load upon others, and spare himself. Wherefore the Apostle saith to Timothy, chapt. 4. verse 16. *Take heed unto thyself and unto learning, continue therein: for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee*. Thus doth the Apostle always teach all men, and specially the Ministers, to begin the work of reformation with themselves, and plough up the furrows of their own hearts.

And that this is the best order, first to practice upon our selves as good Physicians, and that from sanctification wrought in us, we should endeavor to work it in our hearers, may appear unto us by these reasons. First, unless we be doers as well as speakers, we utter words with our own tongues that shall condemn our selves, as *Uriah*, that carried about him a letter to further and procure his own death. So shall we often pronounce the sentence of condemnation upon our selves, and it shall be said to us as to that slothful servant in the

Gospel, *Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, O evil servant.* We shall need no other to condemn us, then our selves; we shall be produced as witnesses to convince us, and to stop our mouths, that we shall have nothing to answer for our selves. Secondly, a minister cannot with comfort and conscience preach to others, until in his own person he be a practiser of those things that he teacheth. For if he speak from the heart, the spirit of God must incline it to the obedience of it: such then as are not touched with a feeling of the Word, are but verbal teachers, and may save others, but cannot save themselves. The Apostle would have the Church of God to comfort their brethren by the comfort wherewith themselves are comforted of God: but how can they comfort others in any affliction, that have not tasted of the sweet consolation of his Spirit inspired into them? In like manner how shall the Minister either teach, that is not taught of God; or comfort, that is not comforted of God? Such as are endued with the Spirit of God to teach others, are led by the same Spirit into all obedience. Thirdly, such as are teachers and not doers, do seduce the people, and lead them into all evil ways, and do pull down with the left hand of evil life, faster then they set up by the right hand of wholesome doctrine. Such a confusion doth this work in the people. For while they hear him for his doctrine to sit in *Moses chair*, and behold him for his life to sit in the *Devils chair*, they regard not his preaching, but are ready to run with him into the same excess of riot. What do they care for his words, so long as they see his deeds? Deeds and works are wont to pierce deeper, and to carry a surer impression to the Conscience, then bare & naked words. If a man should ask the right way to any place of another; and whiles he pointeth out one way, discern him walking another way unto it, he will rather follow his footsteppes, then the sound of his words; for he will by and by conceive, Surely if that were the right way, he would walk in it himself. So then the ill life of the Minister is dangerous, not only to himself, but to others, and it shall corrupt more then his doctrine can convert. Lastly, the fruit and efficacy of the Word sealed up in our own harts, is one of the most notable helps for the opening of it unto others. Such a Teacher is worth an hundredth other. He that teacheth from experience of the power of it in himself, is the most profitable Teacher: and except we feel it working in our selves, how can we fitly work by it obedience in others? As then our Savior said to *Peter*, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*: so may it be said of the Ministers, when they are moved, they shall move others: and when they are taught, they shall teach others. Again, when once we have labored and prevailed with our selves to become doers of the word as well as publishers of it, then we must not stay and stand there, but we must teach the same faithfully, & bend our selves to seek the salvation of others. By these fruits we shall be known to be faithful Stewards in his house. True it is, we should aim at the saving of the souls of the people, but this is not the essential property of a godly and faithful Minister, seeing other may do it, and these not do it; but the doing and teaching of the word and will of God. If our consciences can witness with us, that our care hath been to preach the word in sincerity, & to win them by example of life and soundness of doctrine, whatsoever the effect and success hath been, we have comfort in the discharge of our calling with diligence. The Prophet complaineth that he *had labored in vain, and spent all his strength in vain.* And *Paul* to this purpose declareth, that *we are the sweet savor of Christ, as well in them that perish, as in them that are saved.* To conclude, we must have these three things in some measure in us: first, a care to win them, a desire to convert them, and

an earnest hunger and thirst after their salvation. Secondly, we must labor earnestly to work their conversion, and not cease or hold our peace when we see them untoward, but hold on in a constant course, *Proouing if God at any time will give them repentance to come out of the snares of the Devil of whom they are holden captives*. Lastly, we must testify our sorrow for our people, & mourn for the hardness of their heart, and be heartily grieved to see their untowardness, that though the Sun shine never so clearly, yet they shut their eyes and will not behold the light of the truth, whose eyes the god of this world hath blinded, and hardened their hearts, lest they should be converted and saved. This affection of unfeigned sorrow was in Christ our Savior, when he had preached with great power, but small profit in the hearers, *He looked round about on them angerly, mourning also for the hardness of their heart*. If these things be found in us, readiness of mind to care for the people, painfulness in our places to turn them to God, and sorrow of heart for their hardness and infidelity, we may truly comfort our selves, and be assured to be honored of Christ both in this life and in the life to come.

CHAP. II.

1. AND the Lord spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying;

2. Every man of the Children of Israel shall campe by his standard, and under the Ensign of their Fathers house: far off about the Tabernacle of the Congregation shall they pitch.

IN this Chapter is set forth the disposing and ordering of their Tents. For in the former chapter, we have heard how y^e people were numbered, the Tribes distinguished, and over everyone several Princes appointed, who were choice men, even the heads of the house of their Fathers, to be Rulers & Governors over this great multitude. For what is the people without Princes, but as an host and army of men without Captains to lead them, as a ship without a Pilot, or as a body without an head, or as an house without a master? The heathen have seen thus far, that the multitude is *as a monster with many heads*, resembling the confusion that was at *Babel*. Wherefore the necessity of overseers being so great, it pleased GOD first of all to appoint them Magistrates to take the muster. Now we have here to consider another testimony of God's mercy toward them, in that he doth divide and distribute them into certain ranks and regiments, and maketh choice himself in what order they should pitch their Tents and likewise march forward toward the Land of *Canaan*, in what manner they should make a stay, and in what manner he would have them remove. This was both necessary and profitable, and not to be omitted, seeing nothing can be more foul and deformed, then to see a company of men gathered together without order, and mingled together in all confusion.

The causes of this dealing of God toward his people, are three: one in respect of himself, another in respect of *Israel*, the third in regard of the enemies of them both, of God and his people. The cause respecting God is, that they and all other might see what a wise God they serve. For he would have his name not only known in *Israel*, but magnified throughout all the world. If they professing the knowledge and service of the true God had wandered up and down in the wild and waste wilderness, in such troops and bands of men, in a confused and disordered manner, not knowing who should go before, nor regarding who should follow after; the name of God would have been dishonored, his wisdom impaired, and his glory diminished. It pleased him therefore, even in regard of himself, to make manifest his wisdom and excellency, in leading them forth in most excellent and exquisite order, and to assign to everyone his proper place, that they might say, What god is like unto our God? Or who is to be compared with him? *Who is so glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?* Let us therefore confess that he is wise in heart, yea the wisest; and mighty in strength, yea the mightiest: so that *the foolishness of God is wiser then men, and the weakness of God is stronger then men*, and therefore to this God only wise, must be praise and glory through Jesus Christ forever.

Secondly, he leaveth them not to themselves, but assigneth to each Tribe his proper mansion, to take away from them all confusion, and to cut off all matter of contention. For except he had established as by a law, the order that should be observed among them, and thereby decided all questions and controversies that might arise touching priority & precedency, many hurli-burlies and heart-burnings would be entertained, and part-takings would be nourished; which being kindled at the first as a little spark of fire, would afterward break out into such a fire and flame as would spread further, and in the ende hardly be quenched. For the tribe of *Reuben* challenging the preeminence in regard of birthright would not easily lose his right, but would take it done in contempt and to his reproach, to be put behind & to come after any other. On the other side, their harts were not so high and haughty, to lift up themselves above their brethren, but the rest of the Tribes would have thrust them down as low, and to their perpetual disgrace and dishonor have sunk them down to the bottom, and appointed them the last and lowest place, in regard of the curse of *Jacob* that lay heavy upon them, who had said long before, *Thou shalt not be excellent, thy dignity is gone*. Again, a new trouble and tumult would arise touching the sons of the Concubines; for such as were borne of *Rahel* and *Lea*, the two wives of *Jacob* would never yield nor think it fit to make thē equal to themselves, much less to suffer them to go before them, and so to carpe and crow over them. For as it was in their fathers (while the corn was in the grass, & hope of posterity was in the cradle) so it would be in the children. We see the emulation that was between *Isaac* and *Ishmael*, between *Jacob* and *Esau*, & likewise between the sons of *Jacob*, who were the founders and fountains of y^e twelve Tribes.

Moreover, such as did exceed the other in multitude of men and strength of arms, & had tasted of God's blessings before others, would judge themselves worthy to be honored and preferred, and themselves wronged & injured, unless they had not only the right hand of fellowship given them, but the upper hand of jurisdiction & authority granted unto them and thus the sons of *Simeon* would never have suffered themselves to be brought into order,

and have pitched under the standard of *Reuben*, but have judged themselves worthy of the place of superiority, and have made the other their underlings, & as a footstool to tread upon. For the Tribe of *Simeon* were far more in number than the Tribe of *Reuben*: how far they exceeded them, and the cause thereof, we declared in the former chapter. It is natural to those that are blessed in children & a fruitful increase, to glory therein, and to triumph over those that either have none, or do come behind themselves. When *Rahel* conceived, she said, *God hath taken away my rebuke*. This appeareth in the behavior of *Peninna* toward *Hanna* (who were the two wives of *Elkanah*) who mourned and wept sore because *her adversary vexed her from day today*, 1 Sam. 1, 6, *forasmuch as she upbraided her, because the Lord had made her barren*.

Lastly, if none of all these occasions of murmuring and muting had broken out, or if they being broken out, had been presently pacified and appeased among them, yet a new broil might arise touching the two tribes of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*. For either the rest might grudge and repine, that *Joseph* being but one of the sons of *Jacob*, should have a double portion of inheritance, which tended to their detriment and disparagement: or else a controversy might fall out not easy to be decided, whether of these twain should obtain the supremacy and superiority either of other. Wherefore to end all strife, & to leave no starting-hole to raise any quarrel or question among them, the Lord himself determineth the controversy, and so disposeth of them, that every Tribe must needs know his own place, and acknowledge the order assigned unto him.

Thus we see the reason in respect of the Israelites themselves, that moved God to range them into order, to wit; that all contention and emulation might be cut off and taken away. This teacheth us to take notice of our selves, and to learn what we are by Nature; we are prone to ambition and vain-glory, & cannot content our selves to abide in the vocation and calling wherein God hath set us. We see this plentifully confirmed in this Book, how *Aaron* and *Miriam*, and many other rise up against *Moses*, and seek to overthrow the order and ordinance of God left among them for the administration of matters belonging to the Church & Commonwealth. The like we see in the Disciples of Christ, he had given them a pattern and example of all meekness and lowliness of mind, yet such was their ambition, that *they strove amongst themselves who should be the chiefest*. It is the counsel of our Savior, when we are bidden of any man to a wedding, not to set our selves down in the chiefest place, but to take the lowest room; & from thence he raiseth a general doctrine, *Whosoever exalteth himself shall be brought low; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted*. Let us conclude therefore, if any lust to be contentious, *We have no such custom, neither the Churches of God*. Let us have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, made himself of no reputation, *and took on him the shape of a servant*: let nothing be done through contention or vainglory, but that *in meekness of mind every man esteem other better than himself*.

Thirdly, they are mustered and marshalled into an exact and exquisite order, to dismay and terrify their enemies, as also to confirm and encourage their own hearts. There is nothing doth more strengthen an enemy, and give him hope of victory, than to behold an army put out of array; in which case, such as have been defeated and overcome, have gathered their

dispersed and despised Companies together, have renewed the fight, & put their enemies to flight. Contrarywise, to behold an host of men settled in battle array, as it were a Tower not to be shaken, or a Mountain not to be removed, doth daunt and dismay all adversary power whatsoever, and maketh them put their surest trust and best confidence in their heels. Great is the force of unity, peace, and concord. One man serveth to strengthen and stablish another, like many staves bound together in one. Many sticks or staves joined in one bundle, are not easily broken: but sever them and pull them asunder, they are soon broken with little strength. Thus the case standeth in all societies, whether it be in the Church or Commonwealth, or in the private family. If our hearts be thoroughly united and fast glued one to another, we need not fear what man can do unto us, or work against us. But if we be at iarre and war between our selves, we lie open to our enemies to work us any despite and indignity whatsoever. I would to God we had not learned this by woeful and lamentable experience, and sealed up the truth of it by homebred contentions, so that we may renew the old complaint, *For the divisions of Reuben were great thoughts of heart*. Everyone seeth with grief the increase of our adversaries, they begin to lift up their hearts and hands against us, they hope to have their Masses, their Maskings, their superstitions, their trumperie up again; all men confess it and complain of it. But will we not behold the cause of all this? and consider that we minister them weapons, and (as it were) put a two-edged sword into their hands to wound our selves? It is our own strife, they are our own contentions that help and hearten them, when brother is set against brother, and striketh one another with the fist of iniquity. So long as these bitter roots of envy and emulation, & the coals of contention are kindled by the mouths and pens of those that love contention, we have much deceived our selves, if we think to suppress the enemies of the grace of God, who make an advantage of our divisions. We may therefore say with our Savior; *Woe be to the world, because of offenses: for it must needs be that offenses shall come; but woe be to that man by whom the offense cometh. It were better for him that a Milstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea*. Thus we see the danger that cometh by hatred and debate: let us therefore follow peace, and stop (so much as lieth in us) all occasions of divisions, that we may live in peace one with another, cleave unto the gospel of peace, and then the peace of God shall be with us.

Hitherto we have spoken of the reasons & causes for which God prescribeth to everyone his order, and limiteth to every Tribe his proper place. In this Chapter we are to observe two things; First, the commandment of God directed to *Moses and Aaron*, telling them and instructing them what his pleasure is touching the order of their marching and proceeding. Secondly, a general subjection and obedience yielded unto this commandment: for so soon as they understand what the will of God was, they murmur not against it, they enquire not the reason of it, they stand not upon their own privileges, there is no man thinketh better of himself then others, nor offereth to break the order & transgress the Law given unto them, *But they did according to all that the Lord had commanded Moses*. The former point that concerneth the Commandment of God, is double; First, it is set down generally in the two first Verses, what belongeth to all the Tribes indifferently, namely, that they must encamp

everyone by the Ensign of his Fathers house: then particularly what concerneth the tribes in special, in the residue of the chapter.

[Verse 1, 2. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying; Every man of the children of Israel shall Campe, &c.*] Here he beginneth to rehearse the order that was to be observed among them. For there are two things which are most needful in everything that is done aright, to wit; number, and order. Wherefore, after the description of their number, he beginneth to direct them in the order which was to be kept among them. We learn from [Doctrine 1] hence (to omit sundry impertinent collections and unprofitable Allegations, which many stand upon, serving rather to please the ear, then to profit the heart; and to delight y^e outward man, rather then to edify the inward man:) I say we learn, that God commandeth a comely order to be observed as well in the Church, as the Commonwealth. When *Balaam* the false Prophet, mentioned hereafter in this book, saw the Israelites thus ordered in their Tents, as God appointeth in this place, he was carried into an admiration of it, Numb. 24, 5, 6. *How goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob, and thy habitations, O Israel? As the valleys are they stretched forth, as Gardens by the Rivers side, as the Aloe trees which the Lord hath planted, as the Cedars beside the waters.* As if he should have said; The Church of God consisting of this people, is the very picture and resemblance of most goodly order. This speaketh the Prophet of the place that God had chosen to set his name in it, Psal. 122.3, 4, 5. *Jerusalem is built as a City that is compact together in it self: whereunto the Tribes, even the Tribes of the Lord go up according to the testimony to Israel, to praise the Name of the Lord: for there are Thrones set for judgment, even the Thrones of the house of David.* This *Paul* saw, and observed, and commended in the Church of the Colossians, Chapt. 2. verse 5. *Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the Spirit, rejoicing and beholding your Order, and your steadfast Faith in Christ.* These things, to which we might add and annex sundry other testimonies, are sufficient to show unto us, that God will have all things in the Church and Commonwealth done in order.

The Reasons are evident. For first, God [Reason 1] is the Author of order, and not of confusion. He appointeth in this Book the order to be observed in their mansion, in their peregrination, in their possession of the Land. The Apostle giveth us this instruction touching God. 1 Cor. 14, 33, *God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace, as we see in all the Churches of the Saints.* Hence it is, that we see an order in God himself, even in the holy and blessed Trinity: though all the persons be coequal and coeternal, yet there is an established order of the first person, of the second person, and of the third person; not in regard of essence which is indiuisible, yet for better order of teaching and instructing of us to attain to so much knowledge of his nature as the Scripture hath delivered, and we are able to conceive. Hence it is, that the Father is first, the Son is conceived and delivered in the next place, and the holy Ghost proceeding from them both, is expressed in the last place; not thereby insinuating any inequality, because none is in nature before or after other; none is greater or less then other; but only intimating an order in existing or working, as he hath manifested himself in his word unto us. As then God hath order in himself, so he commandeth and commendeth an order to be used of us.

Secondly, all wise men will order their affairs [Reason 2] with wisdom and discretion, and will dispose of them with seemliness & comeliness. An expert Captain that goeth against his enemies, will keep his Soldiers in good array, whether he march or retire. If he fly out of the field out of order, one is ready to overthrow another; and all are left to the mercy of his adversary. Hence it is, that they have an eye to these things, to the Sun, the Wind, and the Dust; that the Sun be not in their faces; that the Wind be not against them; that the Dust be not carried upon them. For the Sun shining in their faces, taketh away sight; the Wind blowing contrary, abateth their strength and the blow, but helpeth the weapons of the enemy; the Dust cast upon them, filleth and shutteth their eyes, to their great hindrance. A provident house-keeper, knoweth the necessity, commodity, and profit thereof, in the administration of all his business and affairs, that nothing is so good as the right ordering of them. The Philosophers in all their teaching show us this, who have brought the Arts and Sciences into Method and good order. Common experience declareth, that we love order, when it is wanting we do wish and desire it; when it is present we rest in it; and at all times we praise and commend it.

Thirdly, the Church is not a confused [Reason 3] multitude, shuffled and iumbled together, where no man knoweth his place or his Office; and one encroacheth upon another; but it is *the house of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth*. Now in an house well ordered, is to be seen the Master as the Ruler, & the family subject to his government, everyone employing his proper gifts, and no man usurping the place and calling of another. If this be to be seen in our private houses, which have a weaker foundation to bear them, a less anker to hold them, a feebler shore to vnderprop them, and vnsurer means to contain and continue them: how much more must we conceive this of the Church of God, which is the house that he hath built, the vineyard that his right hand hath planted the spouse of Christ which he hath loved, the mountain of the Lord, which he hath prepared, and the peculiar people which he hath chosen? Thus we see the doctrine sufficiently cleared and confirmed.

Let us before we come to the uses, divert a little as it were out of the way and ordinary path, to answer an objection [Objection.] that may arise from this doctrine. For some man may object, the world is full of mixtures and confusions, so that all is vanity under the Sun. We see good men to suffer evil, and to be oppressed every day: on the other side, evil men enjoy the good of the Land, & have all things that heart can wish or desire. The godly are afflicted, the ungodly are most respected and rewarded: are not these great disorders? I answer; [Answer.] first, confusions as they are thus confused, are not of God: as they are out of order, they proceed not from the God of order, but from the Prince of darkness that ruleth in the air, and the author of confusion that governeth in the earth. The proper cause of disorder, is the Devil, who first disordered himself, and kept not his first estate, but left the heavens and habitation wherein he was formed: he by deceiving our first parents, and tempting them to sin, brought upon them and their posterity, ruin and destruction. So then such as are simply disorders, were brought in by sin, and sin by the Devil. Of this we spake before in the Preface.

Secondly, we must understand that there is order even in disordered and distempered things; the which, albeit it do not appear to us, by reason of the veil of corruption crept in, that shutteth our eyes, yet it is known to God, to whose judgment we must submit our selves, and to whose wisdom we must subscribe, of whom the wise man saith, *He hath made everything beautiful in his time*, howsoever it seem deformed to us.

Thus much of the objection: the uses follow. [Use 1] First, learn from hence to acknowledge an exquisite order in all God's words and works above and beneath, in heaven & earth, and in all places. If we do not always see the same, it is our weakness and want of sight: and it should move us to call upon God to open our eyes to behold the same: and if we do see it, yet to crave we may see it more and more to his glory and our comfort. Let us lift up our eyes and behold the work of creation, he hath made all his creatures in a most pure and perfect order, in number, weight, and measure. He hath appointed the Sun to rule the day, and the Moon to rule the night. The earth with all her furniture, Trees, Hearbes, Plants, Corn, and Grass for cattle and the use of man. The waters with all their store keep their comely course and order, *He hath set them a bound, which they shall not pass, so that they shall not return to cover the earth*. He hath divided the parts of the year, as winter and summer, heat and cold, day and night, which continue in a constant course, according as they are disposed of him. He hath assigned and appointed Kings and Princes, Rulers, and Magistrates to govern his people in all good and godly order. We shall not need to wander far off to learn this, if we can come homeward and enter into our selves, we shall find sufficient testimonies to confirm this point, in our souls and bodies. For as we cannot be ignorant, how in the frame of this Vniuerse, the matter, form, privation, simplicity, mixture, generation, corruption, action, passion, compounded of unlike Elements, of earth, of water, of the air, of fire, is notwithstanding preserved by due and distinct proportion which the parts have severally: and as in the family, the husband and wife, the father and children, the master and servants are knit together by the same reason of analogy: so is it in this little world of man; we behold therein the foot-steps of this comely order, in the soul, mind, understanding, memory, heart, reason, speech, and such like powers: the like might be said of the members of the body, placed in a profitable and pleasant order, manifestly declaring the wisdom of the Creator. And as the admirable works of God are seen in natural and civil things, so much more in spiritual and heavenly things.

If we enter into the consideration of the goodly and golden chain of the causes of our salvation, we shall see a notable order of them so linked and joined together, that no confusion at all appeareth therein, but all tend to the setting forth of the glory of his great Name. This the Apostle teacheth, Rom. 8, 30. *Moreover, whom he predestinated, those also he called, and whom he called, them also he justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified*. This course is never broken off, the links of this chain can never be put asunder, no man can make a divorce and division between them. This cōnexion of causes is to be looked into, and we must dligently mark the coherence of them. We must not aim only at the last in our desires, as *Balaam* did, but we must learn to join them together, and then we shall find comfort in them. And as there is a distinct order in our generation and regeneration, so

there is in our resurrection and glorification: nay there is the perfection and consummation of all order.

To this purpose the same Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 15, 22, 23. *As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; but every man in his own order, the first fruits is Christ, afterward, they that are of Christ at his coming shall rise again.* Albeit therefore the grave seem to bury all things in confusion and *the Chambers of death to be as a Land of darkness, where no order is:* yet the resurrection being as the shining of the day, and the bringing of all things unto light, shall make manifest an heavenly order that God observeth therein. Likewise he speaketh in the same chapter, *There is one glory of the Sun, another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars, (for one Star differeth from another in glory) so also is the resurrection of the dead, &c.* This order we must reverence and acknowledge, this we must believe and hope for; and this we shall have a blessed experience of, in our own persons, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal be clothed with immortality. But among all the works of God, none doeth more abundantly show forth the glory and majesty of him that is the God of order, then the word which he hath magnified above all other names. The work of creation setteth forth the glory of the Creator, inasmuch as *the invisible things of him, that is, his eternal power and God-head are seen thereby:* but the power, and wisdom, and goodness, and truth of God appeareth much more brightly in those sacred oracles brought unto us from his own mouth. True it is, the manner of setting down and placing the several parts of Scripture as they stand in our printed books, is merely human and proceedeth from man, and is diversely published by diverse persons (some putting that book before, which others place after) as we see the books of history are joined together, all the greater Prophets follow them, and the lesser Prophets conclude the volume and Canon of the old Testament. The like we might say of the books of the New Testament, the placing of the four Evangelists first, the annexing of the Acts of the Apostles next, the setting down of *Paul's Epistles* as now they stand, to wit, the Epistle to the *Romans* first, to the *Corinthians* next, &c, is man's appointment & not God's ordinance: but if we consider these books in themselves, and the matter contained in them, the grace of speech that floweth from them, the power and effect that is wrought by them, the whole body of them (thus understood) is inspired of God, and the order of them is divine, inasmuch as the Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists were moved by the holy Spirit, and led by him in the delivery of the matter and manner, both of the things and words. This the Apostle *Peter* acknowledgeth, 2 Pet. 1, 20, 21. *No Prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost.* *Paul* also agreeth hereunto, saying, *The whole Scripture is inspired of God, and is profitable to teach, to convince, to correct, and to instruct in righteousness.* We must therefore both search the Scriptures, & search into the order of the Scriptures, which is most divine and heavenly: whereof we may say, *This is the singer of God.* Here we shall see the whole agreeing with every part, and the several parts agreeing with the whole. When the Queen of *Sheba* upon the report of *Solomon's* wisdom was come to *Jerusalem*, and there saw the sumptuousness of his buildings, the greatness of his wisdom, the meat of his table, the sitting of his servants, the order of his Ministers, the vessels of his house, the multitude of his offerings, and the answering of her hard questions, she was greatly astonished, and said, *I believed not this report till I came, and had*

seen it with mine eyes, but loe, the one half was not told me, &c: Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants which stand ever before thee, and hear thy wisdom. But as our Savior saith, *A greater then Solomon is here:* so we may truly say, greater wisdom, and better order is here, in the divine wisdom of the word that shineth in God's house. And albeit we hear never so much of the excellency of this word, yet if our delight be in it, and our meditation upon it day and night, we shall in the end be constrained to cry out, *Loe, the one half thereof was not told me.* Let us all taste of the sweetness of it: let us continually look upon the beauty of it: let us lift up our ears to attend to the melody of it: let us prepare our hearts to lay up the treasures of it. And let us from a feeling of the worthiness and wisdom of it, and seeing the order of it, confess with the Prophet, *Oh, how love I thy Law! it is my meditation continually.*

Secondly, this reproveth such as know no [Use 2] order but bring in all confusion and disorder in Church or Common-wealth: these have nothing to do with God, but are the Children of the Devil, that hath transformed them into his image and likeness. For from whence are seditions and confusions, but from our own lusts, enflamed and kindled from his furnace? Many there are that can abide no order at all, others will not set themselves against all order to pervert it, but make such a mingling & mangling of it, that they utterly change the nature of it. The Church above all other societies ought to be the picture and representation of right order and comeliness, which is *as bright as the Sun, as fair as the Moon, as terrible as an army with banners.* We see how God hath commanded it to be ruled; everyone hath his proper calling, his proper office, his proper gifts for the discharge thereof. If then disorder creep in it, how great is that disorder? Consider the members of our natural bodies, if the head would presume to walk and usurp upon the office of the feet: or if the hand would take upon it to see and direct the body; if the ear encroach upon the function of the tongue and think it self able to speak: or if the foot would suppose it self to be of greater eminency and excellency, then the heart or the head, and strive for the highest room, or swelling with envy and pride, to behold greater gifts in another member, should refuse to do the office of the foot, what would follow, but the overthrow of the whole body? Who would not but complain of this confusion as most monstrous and unnatural? Let us now consider how the case standeth with the Church. Are there not many, being bold and blind, that teach before they have learned, and run before they are sent, that being without gifts, and almost the shadow of gifts, take upon them the places of Pastors, who were fitter to feed sheep, and to go to some trade or occupation; or to be sent to the Plough tail, to earn their living by the sweat of their brows, rather than by murdering the souls of the people, who many times perish for want of knowledge? Another notable confusion and eye-sore in this body of the Church, is when private persons enter upon the office of the Minister, and dare intermeddle with the holy Sacraments, from which they ought to be as strangers. For what have these men or women to do with setting the authentic Seals to God's promises, who hath committed to them no such office, nor given unto them any such gifts? Who required this at their hands, or if they will be intruders or usurpers, will God accept their service? nay rather will he not punish their sacrilege? Have they any greater privilege then *Uzzah* had, who putting his hand to the Ark of God when the oxen did shake it, *was smitten with sudden death,* and tasted the fruit of his high presumption? Every Sacrament is as the Ark of God, it must

not be touched with unwashen, that is, with common and unsanctified hands. Good intentions shall not go for good payment, nor be able to warrant evil actions. Will-worship is odious to God and abominable in his sight, who will be worshipped according to his own will: so that it is in no wise lawful to transgress the rule and break the order that God hath set. [Object.] Neither let any in the profaneness of his heart, or the ignorance of his mind object; Cannot private persons use the words of Baptism in all points as well as the Minister? observe the words of institution, and pour on water upon the child, which are the essential parts of that Sacrament? I answer, [Answer.] they are able to do this, but forasmuch as they do it without a calling, their doing is as no doing; their pouring on of water is no better then a defiling of it. For who gave them their commission so to do? When possession of any house is given by delivering a white wand and turfe, another man may do as much in show, he may take a wand & turfe as good as the others, and make a delivery of them; and yet those actions may be idle, being done without warrant, neither can assure the bargain and sale. It is no great matter or hard to do, to take bread and wine, and deliver the same by reciting the words of institution: and yet if it be undertaken without a calling, it is a plain and manifest profanation of the Supper of the Lord. If they judge this unlawful, how can they hold the other lawful? The people of God, or any among them were as well able to handle and carry the Ark as the Levites, they were an holy people to God, they were all circumcised, they did all carry about in their flesh the mark and impression of the Covenant, yet the Lord sorted out the Tribe of Levi, *to bear the Ark of his Covenant, to stand in his presence, to minister unto him and to bless in his Name.* He will have us wholly to obey his word, he regardeth not our blind zeal, or purpose to serve him, except it be ordered aright. To proceed, Hath God only placed order in the Church? and not in the common-wealth? yes in the common-wealth also wherein everyone both superiors and inferiors must do their duty. He hath appointed the Magistrates their office, to minister justice without partiality and respect of persons, considering that *they execute not the judgments of men, but of God,* who will be with them. This is the comely order that he hath set; this is the way wherein he will have them walk; this is the ordinance that he hath established. If then laws be bought and sold, or if they be made as the spiders web to catch the silly fly, but to let the hornet escape, or if they punish the poor and let the rich escape, if the weak that cannot resist be entangled, and the mighty be delivered; this is a great disorder, and the Lord will not have these things handled so confusedly. Let such set before them the example of God, *who will reward every man according to his works.* He doth not spare the wicked, and revenge himself upon the Godly: but he showeth mercy to thousands of these, and will not hold the other innocent. So such as God hath called to execute judgment and sit upon the bench of justice, must know what God requireth of them; they must not pervert the right & overturn the Seat of equity; they must not turn the edge of the sword upon the poor, because they are poor, nor put it away from the rich, because they are rich, or from the mighty because of their might, or from the greater sort, because they have many friends; but they must smite them with the sword of Justice, that deserve to be smitten, and defend them from that wrong, that the malice of the oppresser would lay upon the innocent. On the other side, God requireth that such as are inferiors should obey Princes and Magistrates, submitting themselves unto them, reuerencing both their places and persons. They therefore are reprov'd as breakers of this

order of God, and ouerturners of States and Common wealths, that rebel against them, and move sedition among the people. Such walk in the steps of *Corah* and his company, who were consumed and destroyed according to their deserts, as appeareth afterward in this Book. These proud spirits and ambitious men have never prevailed, but ever been punished. Such are they that *Solomon* speaketh off, *Eccle. 10. Folly is set in great excellency; and the rich set in the low place; I have seen servants on horses, and Princes walking as servants on the ground.* Such persons as seek to take away the crowns and kingdoms of Princes, are the very plagues of human society, and go about to take away as it were the Sun out of the firmament, and to leave us in miserable darkness; nay to take from us the breath of our nostrils, and to expose us as a prey to all violence and villainy. Let all such know that they fight against God; and therefore cannot prosper or prevail. All sedition is pernicious to the contriuer and author thereof: and no injury received can be any sufficient cause for any man to plot Treasons and rebellions. *Let every soul therefore be subject to the higher powers, considering there is no power but of God: and that whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the Ordinance of God,* and therefore purchase to themselves damnation.

[Use 3] Lastly, seeing God requireth orderly observation of his ordinances, we learn this duty, that we must be careful to observe it and practice it with a due regard of his Commandment. This is the general rule that the Apostle commendeth unto us, *1 Cor. 14. Let all things be done decently, and in order.* Order is nothing else but the means of peace, and the avoiding of confusion; or it is *a disposing of diverse things, giving to everyone his proper place.* The end of all good order tendeth to profit; as on the other side, the end of confusion, to loss and destruction. The more common & general a good thing is, so much the better it is, and the more to be esteemed above all other. The benefit of good order stretcheth far, to the land and Sea, and to the house and ship, to the Common-wealth and Church. If it be commendable to appoint a profitable order in the lesser charge of a private family: it is a great deal better and more excellent to manage a Common-wealth prudently, and to govern the Church wisely. Government that is right presupposeth order, because it is impossible that any man should rule rightly and duly without order. For government is a right disposition of those things whereof a man taketh charge, to bring them to a convenient end. This is done in the Church of God, when there be Pastors and Teachers to preach the word truly and to minister the Sacraments sincerely, & when y^e people hearken to them & are ready to seek the law at their mouths. This is seen also in the observation of these rules; First, when one alone prayeth: for many cannot pray with a loud voice together without confusion. The Minister is to be the mouth of the people to God, his voice is in public place to be heard, that the people may join with him with pure and humble hearts, and testify in the end their consent *by saying, Amen.* Hence it followeth that he must not whisper to himself or utter a prayer in a low voice, but he must speak with a loud voice that he may be heard, and with a distinct voice, that he may be understood. Secondly, when the action of singing is in hand, it must be performed by many, and not by one alone. For as one is to pray for the rest, so all are to join together in praising God with the Congregation, teaching & admonishing themselves in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual songs; singing with a grace in their hearts to the Lord, and making sweet melody unto him. Thus did the whole Church in *Hezekiah's* time,

2 Chron. 29.28. Thirdly, this must always be observed in teaching and exercising our selves in the Word, that only one speak at once, and that the rest be silent. This is the Apostles rule, 1 Cor. 14. *If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace: for ye may all prophecy one by one, that all may learn, and all may have comfort.* But if many should speak together, and utter their voices at one time, no man can take profit, no man can receive comfort: so that many voices sounding together, hinder edification, & bring confusion, which ought carefully to be avoided in our assemblies. For where disorder is, there is not the God of order. Now as our Church meetings must have all things done in order, so must they be decent. Decency is that seemliness which some things of their own nature bring unto divine actions, which is not of the substance or essence of the thing, nor necessarily required to the being of it; but rather to adorn it, & to procure the greater reverence unto it: as for example, in the celebration of the Lord's Supper; to have a fair Table, a fair Cloath, a fair Cup, the finest Bread, the best Wine, which of their own nature joined to the Sacrament, do bring some great respect to the action, and serve to stir up devotion in the hearts of the Communicants. Order is opposed to confusion: decency to vanity, pomp, ostentation, and uncleanness; all which ought to be far from the Church of God. Both these are seen in a house well governed. An house is said to be decent, when all filth that may offend the sight or other senses, is purged out; and all things are found in a seemly sort and manner, without riot and excess: likewise to be in order, when it is divided and distinguished into superiors and inferiors, and everyone doeth his duty; when there are settled times and seasons of dining, of supping, of laboring, of lying down and rising up, whereby the peace and tranquility thereof is preserved. The Church is the house of God, as we shown before, and therefore therein must be decency, that the place be clean, the vessels pure, and that all the actions of Pastor and people, both public and private, may be finished gravely without all lightness, modestly without filthiness, soberly without superstition, as it were in the presence of God, and his elect Angels: also order, that all things may be done in fit time, that there be some to teach, and others to hear, that there be set times & distinct for preaching, praying, singing, baptizing, and Communicating, whereby all disorder is prevented, and the profit of the Church is procured.

To leave the Church, and to come to the Common-wealth; God looketh for this duty at the hands of all Magistrates, that as the principal end of Magistracy is to maintain order, and to banish all disorder, so they must proceed orderly in their places. They bear not the sword in vain, their office is to punish evil doers, and to weed them out of the city of God. But it is not enough for them to minister Justice, except they consider the order that God hath set down. They must have the fear of GOD always before their eyes, and have a special care for the advancement of God's glory, which will be as a guide to direct them not only to correct sin, but in what manner to do it. For grievous offenses must not be punished slightly, & slight offenses grievously, but there must be a due proportion between the offense and the punishment; that the greater faults may be punished with the more grievous punishment. They therefore that observe another order, begin at a wrong end, and consequently have not that success they desire, neither meet with that blessing that they look for. If a man would stop the course of a stream, he must not look to the channels, but begin at the fountains. If

he stop the spring, the course of the river will in short time be dried up. The foundation of all true obedience is the first Table; all unrighteousness among men, proceedeth from the neglect of the duties that belong to God. The Apostle writing to the Romans declareth, that because the Gentiles dishonored his name, and profaned his worship, and stained his glory, *he gave them up unto their hearts lusts to work uncleanness with all greediness*, and so committed all kind of wickedness condemned in the second Table. The commandments of the first Table, are the first and great Commandments, and therefore the chiefest care of all ought to be, to see them performed. A reproach or disgrace offered to a Prince, is greater then to a subject, as his calling is higher, and his person worthier: so an offense committed against God, is more heinous then an offense against Prince and people. It is therefore a foul disorder and great confusion to punish the offenses committed against our selves, and to wink at the sins committed against God: to punish thefts, murders, rapes, and such like enormities as touch the persons of men or the state of the Commonwealth; and never to revenge the dishonor done to God and the diminishing of his glory, the advancement whereof ought to be more dear to us then our own lives. If then the swarming of sins against the second table, proceed from the swarming and departing from the first Table, we must consider that the cause of the abounding of thieves, murderers, adulterers, drunkards, and such like malefactors, proceedeth from the indulgence and slackness of punishing such as dishonor God, & live in the open contempt of his glorious name. Wherefore if we would have the number of these enormities lessened, and the Common-wealth purged of such pestilences, (as indeed these wretched persons are the plagues of all societies) the edge of the sword and force of punishment must be turned directly and principally against Atheists, Idolaters, blasphemers, perjured persons, profaners of the Sabbath, contemners of true religion and scorers of the service of God. The Lord our God, who is jealous of his honor, and will not give his glory unto any other, put it into the hearts of all Christian Princes and godly Magistrates, to be more earnest to see God obeyed, and his worship maintained; especially seeing thereby they shall procure God to be served, and their own estates to be secured. To leave the farther prosecuting of this point, Is order only to be regarded and esteemed in the Church and common-wealth? hath it place only in these ecclesiastical and civil assemblies? No, it stretcheth a great deal further, and extendeth it self through every part of human life. For there can no kingdom, no house, no City, no society stand without order. The Apostle *Paul* to the *Thessalonians*, describing wicked persons that lived within the compass of no obedience, noteth them by this mark, they were without order; nothing was first or last with them, or at the least, the last was done first, and the first practiced last, they did all things in disorder and confusion. Hence it is that he saith, chap. 3. *We warn you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh inordinately, and not after the instruction which ye received of us: for ye yourselves know, how ye ought to follow us, for we behaved not our selves inordinately among you.* A good action done in a confused manner, is as good as not done: forasmuch as the Lord rejecteth things done not only disorderly, but also preposterously. If this be so in all actions, much more in the commandments of the Lord. We see this in the sons of *Eli*; they did not profanely omit to sacrifice, yet because preposterously they served themselves first, they are noted to be *wicked men* & exceeding sinners against the Lord. Whiles the meat was seething, they fetched

it out of the pot or caldron with flesh hooks, for the Priests diet, and afterward they burned the fat for sacrifice, the which which should have been the first in order: thus they shifted for themselves, in the first place which should have been last, and gave the Lord his portion in the last place, who in religion and reason should be the first, and thereby even by this disorder they provoked the wrath of God against themselves. This appeareth also in the example of the two sisters mentioned in the Gospel, which declareth to us the truth of this point, and what is the order allowed and appointed for us to follow. It was not unlawful for *Martha* to minister to Christ, to entertain him, to provide necessaries for him, and to busy her self in serving of him: but she did it in a wrong course, she should first have chosen *Mary's* part to sit at his feet to hear his preaching, before she had combred and entangled herself with much serving, and therefore she is reprov'd, and her sister commended. For he regardeth more to be heard diligently, then entertained delicately, so that he saith, *Martha, Martha, thou carest, and art troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: Mary hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken away from her.* And if we would have a plainer direction, what ought to be first with us, and what second, yea, a perfect platform of ordering our ways, our Savior showeth us in the Gospel, Mat. 6. *First seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then all these things shall be ministered unto you.* Here is a plain and perfect order, he that keepeth this order is blessed: he that breaketh it, hath no promise of blessing from him. There is a method to be used in all arts, and much controversy hath been what it is, and of how many sorts it is: but behold here the right method, the only method to learn the art of arts, and the science of all sciences; here is first, and here is second. The first thing that we must begin withal, is God's kingdom, then follow worldly things, which are the second. Thus are we taught to make an entrance to religion, and how to proceed, by him that is *Wisdom* it self; here is the most exquisite order laid before us, let us take knowledge of it in our minds, love it with all our hearts, and express it in our lives. We must not be like to him in the Gospel, that was called to follow Christ: he did not absolutely deny it, nor directly refuse it, but he would follow him after his own fancy; he must first take leave of his friends and bid them farewell that were in his house, and afterward he would be a follower, and a disciple. Thus it is with all men of this world, who have not learned Christ aright, they are preposterous in their ways, they invert all good order, they make the first to be the second, and promote the second into the principal place. If a man that knoweth learning, should come into a school, and see those of the lowest form set in the uppermost seats, and the best scholars thrust down into the inferior places, he would think it to be a great confusion, & by and by condemn it as a place without all order.

We should everyone erect a school of God and godliness in our own hearts, in which we must set heaven and heavenly things in the highest room, and earthly things beneath: and then we shall make it manifest that we have learned the best and the rightest method. As for those that prefer Mammon before God, and this world before the world to come (of which sort are too many, as daily experience telleth us,) they are no good Artizans, they are ignorant of the right method, and therefore they run into a thousand mazes and confusions, wherein they loose themselves, and oftentimes their own souls.

To conclude, let us all take notice of this general method, that shall much help us when we come to the particulars, and bear away these few rules of direction. First, we must forsake the evil, and then choose the good. True it is, we must do both, but both in order: first we must pluck up the weeds before we can sow good seed in the garden of our hearts: we must grub up the tares before we can gather the good corn into the barn: first we must remove the rubbage before we can build our house aright. Secondly, we must observe an order both in choosing the good, and in refusing the evil. For as the former rule guideth us to forsake the evil, and then to cleave to that which is good: so this goeth farther and pointeth out an order as it were with the finger, what order to take herein; which is, that in refusing the evil, the greatest evil is most of all to be hated and eschewed, and the lesser in the next place. Contrariwise the greatest good is with the greatest strength to be pursued after, until we overtake it, the lesser is to be chosen in the last place; seeing the very heathen in their deliberations were wont to enquire, of two honest things, which is most honest. Thirdly, we must know that the greatest good, and best work, shall have the best and greatest reward: on the other side the greatest and grossest evil shall in the first place and in the heaviest manner be punished. Every work shall be rewarded of God, whether it be good or evil, the one of mercy according to his promise, the other of justice according to desert; but their recompense shall be best that are best, and their punishment most heavy that are most hateful in his sight.

This is the right method of true Divinity, and until we know this, we have learned nothing as it ought to be learned, nor can discern between things that differ, as between good and evil, between evil and evil, and between good and good.

3 On the East side toward the rising of the Sun, shall they of the standard of the host of Judah pitch, according to their armies: and Nahshou the son of Aminadab, shall be Captain of the sons of Iudab.

4 And his host and the number of them were seventy and four thousand, and five hundredth.

5 Next unto him shall they of the tribe of Issachar pitch, and Nathanael the son of Zuar, shall be the Captain of the sons of Issachar.

6 And his host and the number thereof was four and fifty thousand, and four hundredth.

7 Then the tribe of Zebulun, and Eliab the son of Helon, Captain over the sons of Zebulun:

8 And his host and the number thereof, was seven and fifty thousand, and four hundredth.

9 The whole number of the host of Judah, are an hundredth fourscore and six thousand, and four hundredth, according to their armies: they shall first set forth.

What order and policy God would have generally observed among his people, hath been before declared in the former words, namely, that everyone should campe by his standard, and under the ensign of his fathers house: now, in these words and the other following, he diuideth the twelve tribes of Israel, into four chief standards, & assigneth to every standard three tribes, whereof one was principal, the other two were assistants and helpers. The first standard is committed to *Judah*, to whom he adjoineth *Issachar*, and *Zebulun*: this is contained in these words, and in this division. Behold here the wisdom of God. He honoreth *Judah* with the first place of the first standard, thereby to make as it were a beginning and to give a little taste of the verifying of *Jacob's* prophesy, who foretold of the preeminence should be given unto him above his brethren. He was the fourth son of *Jacob* by *Leah*; with whom he associateth such two tribes, as were in reason most likely to submit themselves to him, inasmuch as *Zebulun* and *Issachar*, were the sons of *Zilpah*, *Leah's* maid, whom she gave to her husband, and set in her own place. The second standard is committed to *Reuben*, under whose Regiment were placed *Simeon* and *Gad*. This tribe coming of the eldest brother, the first borne of *Jacob*, might justly be thrust down into the lowest rank, yet God leaveth them not wholly without comfort, and therefore assigneth them the second place in this army. The two tribes joined with him, were such as could not, nor would not take it grievously to fight under his banners, and to be led into the field by his authority, seeing *Simeon* was his own mothers son, being so near in blood, as they lay both in one womb, and *Gad* was borne of *Zilpah* his mothers maid: these therefore could not refuse to submit themselves to his ensign. The third standard is appointed to *Ephraim*, one of the sons of *Joseph*, under whom are ranked *Manasseh* and *Benjamin*, between whom was the nearest band of consanguinity, and therefore this part of the army could not be put into better order. *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* supplied the place of *Joseph* their father, who had a double portion given unto him, and therefore these are reputed to be as it were the sons of *Rahel*, of whom *Joseph* came, to whom *Benjamin* is joined, who also was the son of *Rahel*, whom she bare to *Jacob*, in the land of Canaan: these therefore are confedered and combined together as children of the same mother; a notable means to move to peace and concord, and to take away all occasion of contention.

The fourth and last standard, is assigned to *Dan*: he was indeed one of the sons of the handmaid, and preferred in degree of honor and dignity, before the lawful son of *Leah*, and the other son of *Rahel*, the two wives of *Jacob*: from hence might hurly-burlies and heart-burnings arise, which are all pacified and compounded by the express commandment of God, who joineth to *Dan*, *Naphtali* his mothers son (for both of them were the sons of *Bilhah Rachel's* maid) and *Asher* the son of *Zilpah*, *Leah's* maid.

Thus was the whole host of Israel divided as it were into four several battles, and to everyone his chief Captain assigned.

The sum of all is this,

- *Of the first standard were*
 - *Judah*
 - *Issachar*
 - *Zebulun.*
- *Of the second standard were*
 - *Reuben*
 - *Simeon*
 - *Gad.*
- *Of the third standard were*
 - *Ephraim*
 - *Manasseh*
 - *Benjamin.*
- *Of the fourth standard were*
 - *Dan*
 - *Naphtali*
 - *Asher.*

Verse 3. *On the East side toward the rising of the Sun, &c.* Here we have a description of the first standard. The use of a standard or ensign is manifold in War, to give direction in fighting and in sudden alarms that fall out, to encourage the hearts of the soldiers, and to strengthen them with hope of victory; and half their substance and goods were kept by them, that no thought of forsaking the standard might enter into them, but that they should fight valiantly for the same. What the ensigns of the Israelites were, the Hebrews do not accord among themselves. Some affirm that everyone had the badge or arms of his ancestors, as that in the standard of *Reuben* was the figure of a man, because *Jacob* said, *Reuben my first borne*: in the ensign of *Judah* a Lyon, because it was said of him, *Judah as a Lions whelp*. In the standard of *Ephraim* the figure of a bullock, because *Moses* likeneth his beauty to a bullock: in the standard of *Dan*, the likeness of an Eagle, which was given unto him instead of a *Serpent*. Thus in their ensigns they will have the four beasts noted, which *Ezekiel* also saw in his vision mentioned in his first Chapter. What truth there is in these allusions we know not, and therefore we leave the credit thereof to the authors and relaters of them. It is more to the purpose to consider, that albeit *Jacob* promised the crown and kingdom to that tribe, yet it is not by and by accomplished; so that albeit, his promises shall all be performed, yet they are not straightway verified, but are oftentimes long deferred. True it is, that the tribe of *Judah* surmounted all the rest of the tribes at such time as God delivered them out of Egypt, yea

Nahasson had the preeminence when the people were to be numbered, when the Captains of the tribes were to be chosen, and when the offerings were dedicated in the Sanctuary. Notwithstanding, all this was but a dark shadow of the former prophesy, for *Judah* still remained without kingdom and principality. Besides, the former prophetical speech might seem to many to carry little truth or likelihood with it, inasmuch as we see God appointeth *Moses* of the tribe of *Levi*, to be the governor of them. After his death and decease, *Joshua* was Captain and ruler over them, who was of the tribe of *Ephraim*: after him succeeded the Judges, who were extraordinarily stirred up to judge his people & deliver thē out of the hands of their enemies, sometime of one tribe, and sometime of another. Then came *Saul*, who was chosen king, of the tribe of *Benjamin*: all this while there is no mention of *Judah*, as if the prophecy were buried in deep silence, and the birthright were utterly forgotten: yet in the end the Lord declareth that his word is not a jest, and that *Jacob* though he were old, yet did not dote when he foretold the same. But to omit those things, let us observe that God providing here for the good of his people, and the ordering of them, appointeth officers and Magistrates over them, and leaveth them not unto themselves, which would have been the occasion of all contention. Thus we see, how he appointeth a captain and leader [Doctrine 2] over every tribe. From hence we may observe, that God giveth to his people rulers to fight their battles, and to guide them in order, and godliness. Faithful Magistrates are needful for Church and Common-weath, who are not only a portion among believers, but the chief parts and stay of them in well-doing, not only in peace but in war. This we see plentifully proved unto us in the book of Judges, where it is testified, that *the Lord raised them up Judges, who delivered them out of the hands of their oppressors: and afterward, when the Lord had raised them up Judges, the Lord was with the Judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the Judge; for the Lord had compassion of their groanings, because of them that oppressed them and tormented them.* This is it which *Jethro* the father in Law of *Moses* saw to be profitable and necessary for the people, when he admonished him, *to provide men of courage, fearing God, men dealing truly, hating covetousness, and to appoint such over them, to be Rulers over thousands, Rulers over hundreths, Rulers over fifties, and Rulers over ten's, and to let them Judge the people at all seasons.* This is it which *Hiram* acknowledgeth, 2 Chron. 2. *Because the Lord hath loved his people, he hath made Solomon king over them.* This doth the Prophet *Isaiah* testify, chap. 22. *In that day will I call my servant Eliachim the son of Hilkiah, the Key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, so he shall open and no man shall shut, and he shall shut, and no man shall open.* To these testimonies we might add infinite others, but in fo plentiful an argument; these shall suffice to teach us, that the people of God stand in need of Rulers to go in and out before them, and to order them in the duties of piety and honesty.

The reasons are evident. First, they are as the props and pillars of the house, and [Reason 1] the cause of good order among the people of God, and the means to keep them in all obedience. On the other side through want of them, many abuses are committed, and much iniquity is practiced. While *Joshua* lived, and the Elders that out-lived *Joshua*, *the people served the Lord all their days, which had seen his great works that he had done for Israel: but when they were gone and gathered unto their fathers, the children of Israel did wickedly in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim.* And again, chapter 4. *The children of Israel began again to do wickedly in the sight of*

the Lord, after Ehud was dead. And before, Chapter 2. When the Judge was dead, they returned and did worse then their fathers, in following other gods, to serve them and worship them; they ceased not from their own inventions, nor from their rebellious way. Add unto these, the conclusion of this book; In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was good in his own eyes; Whereby we see that so long as God blesseth a land with Princes and Magistrates, it is stayed from ruin and destruction: but when they are taken away, it falleth [Reason 2] to the ground, and cannot stand upright.

Secondly, no society can continue without Magistrates, neither defend it self. If an host be without a General, or a city without a Ruler, or an house without a governor, it needeth not foreign force to pull it down and dissolve it; it sufficeth in short time to destroy it self, and from among themselves will men arise, that shall bring it to nothing. Parity is the mother of all mutiny and confusion, whiles everyone, vnderprising another's value and virtue, denieth to be commanded, and being wedded to self-love, esteemeth himself the best able and most worthy to command in all the company. So then, whiles men ouervalue their own worth, & esteem better of themselves then others, contrary to the rule of the Apostle, they are cast away by the tempest of dissention, and torn in pieces as a body without a head by mutual emulations. These diseases of a divided and distracted multitude, without unity and authority of government, caused the Lord to take order for his people that when they should come unto the land which he had promised to give them, and that they should possess it and dwell therein, they should set a king over them from among their brethren. Wherefore seeing Magistrates are a stay to the people in all well-doing, and the want of them is the occasion of all confusion, we cannot but conclude them to be so necessary, as that they cannot be wanted or spared.

[Use. 1] The uses remain to be taught and learned of us. First, it reproveth the hellish and more then heathenish Sect of the Anabaptists, that overturn this order that God hath settled to continue forever; namely, that they are a necessary good for the common-wealth: whereas these damnable heretics hold them neither necessary, nor good, but unnecessary evils, that ought not to be planted, nor grow among God's people; and where they have been planted, ought as superfluous branches to be topped and lopped, or as noisome weeds to be rooted up and removed. But the Scriptures of the old and New Testament commend unto us captains in war, and governors in peace. But those men acknowledge neither the calling of captains, nor the lawfulness of war. The Apostles of Christ, at what time Magistrates are evil, both profane idolaters, and bloody persecutors, command *every soul to be subject to the higher power, inasmuch as there is no power but of God*. The ancient commandment of the moral Law, establisheth this as a perpetual ordinance never to be disannulled, until the universal frame of the heavens be dissolved, that we must *honor father and mother*, that is, not only such as are fathers of the family, but such as are fathers of the Country. He that said, Thou shalt have no other God's but me, Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery; said also, *Honor the King*, 1 Pet. 2.17. For, as the house cannot stand without governors to rule it, no more can the Common-wealth. And as themselves take upon them to order their own houses, and exercise authority and dominion over such as are under their roof, and Regiment: so is the Magistrate called to manage the

affairs of state, and to do that within the walls of the city, which he doth within the walls of his house. The father hath government over his son, the master over his servants, the husband over his wife, the teacher over his scholars: and why then, not the Magistrate over his subjects? Neither doth the Gospel subvert the order appointed by God in the dispensation of the Law: for Christ Jesus, who first preached the Gospel, chargeth us to *give Caesar those things that belong to Caesar, and the things that are God's, we must give to God*. So his Apostles teach, that we must *rather obey God then man*, when their commandments cannot stand together; but when God is not disobeyed, themselves preached and practiced obedience, and reprov'd and condemn'd all disobedience. Secondly, here the Pope and all the Romish Hierarchy and Clergy are reprov'd, who exempt themselves from the authority and jurisdiction of Princes and Magistrates. These call themselves the spirituality, and claim an immunity both in regard of their persons and of their goods, wherein they are confederate and join hands with their brethren the Anabaptists, as wretched enemies to the crowns and scepters of Princes, as themselves. Only here lieth the difference, the Anabaptists confess y^t Magistrates must be obeyed, but they deny that there ought to be any in the Church. Contrariwise the Pope with all the rabble of his horned Bishops, confess that there ought to be Magistrates, but they utterly deny that themselves ought to be subject unto them. Now, it is in effect all one, whether we take away Magistracy, or whether we yield not to their authority. And if there be any inequality between these, the Anabaptists seem to be the better, who live peaceably and obediently under them whose power notwithstanding they deny. He is an evil child y^t denieth his father, but he is worse that is obstinate & stubborn, that will not obey him, but resist him. How many ways the Popish Religion is enemy to Princes, we have shown elsewhere. I speak not now of the wicked practices of their Assassins that murder Princes, but of their doctrine taught for sound and Catholic, by all their school-divines, not by some few only of them. For they teach that their persons in causes Ecclesiastical, Civil, and criminal are exempted from the Courts and Consistories of temporal Magistrates, as appeareth in their public disputations, and by the iudicial proceedings of *Paulus* the fifth, against he *Venetians*, who were excommunicated and the city interdicted, so that their religious men ceased from ministering Ecclesiastical Sacraments. And as they challenge a freedom of their persons, so they claim a freedom from paying tributes and like taxes to Princes, and will be bound to them in no respect. To the end we may see the truth in these points, & be armed against their Arguments, let us see the grounds whereupon they stand: and afterward produce sundry reasons out of y^e word of God to convince their proud and false assertions. First, they object that the superior ought not to be in subjection to the inferior; but contrariwise the inferior must [Object. 1] be subject to the superior: this is the Law of God and man. But the Ecclesiastical Regiment is distinguished from the Civil and political state, and set far above it by the Law of God, as the soul is above the body: therefore Ecclesiastical causes ought not to be judged by temporal Magistrates. I answer, [Answer.] by distinguishing the several callings: for Princes are superiors and inferiors: and Ecclesiastical persons are superiors and inferiors: both of them are above others in the proper duties of their callings. If any reply, to be superior, and yet to be inferior, to be above, and yet to be beneath, are contrary: I reioyne, they are contrary, and yet not contrary; they are contrary, if meant of one, and the same thing, and spoken in one

and the same respect: but if they be diversely considered, in respect of diverse objects, there is no contrariety at all in them. To apply this to the point objected, I say that the superior cannot be subject in those things wherein he is superior, but he may be, and ought to be, in those things in which he is inferior. Now, the Ecclesiastical government, albeit, it be higher then the politic, in the essential duties belonging unto it, to wit, the preaching of the word of God, and the administration of the Sacraments, yet it is inferior in those things that belong to Civil subjection and obedience. Princes must obey so far as the word of God commandeth in matters of faith and piety, neither have they any authority to invent and frame a new Religion, or to change and alter the Religion set down in the Scripture, or to decide and determine the Controversies of Religion at their own pleasure, or to preach the word themselves, or to dispence the Sacraments of the Church. But in respect of Civil power over all persons, they must acknowledge no superior, no equal, they are above all, and under none within [Object. 2] their dominions. Secondly they object, It is absurd and unreasonable, that the sheep should judge the sheepeheard, or rule over him; but all the Laity in respect of the Clergy, are as sheep to the Shepherd. Therefore the Ministers of the Church may not be judged or censured of Lay men. I answer, [Answer.] this whole argument is figurative, and therefore cannot be demonstrative, by the rules of their own School. A figurative speech cannot conclude necessarily, but only probably. If we take the word sheep and shepherd in their proper signification, the sheep being brutish and unreasonable cannot judge the their sheepeheard. But if the words be taken metaphorically or by way of similitude, the Magistrate is not a sheep in all things, but only in Spiritual things, belonging to doctrine and faith and a good conscience, wherein the Ministers are Sheepeheard. If we speak of Civil things, and providing that all things be done decently and orderly in the Church, the Magistrates are sheepeheard of the people, and all the Clergy are his sheep, because they are citizens and subjects of his city and Soueraignty. As then the Magistrate cannot prescribe to the Minister what doctrine he shall teach: so it were pride and presumption for the Minister to set down rules to tie the Magistrate to his lure, in the duties of his calling, for then the sheep indeed should judge their Pastor. Thirdly, [Object. 3] it seemeth absurd that an earthly Judge should take and punish the servants of the chiefest and highest Judge, and those men that are consecrated unto him. I answer, [Answer.] an earthly Judge that sitteth upon an earthly bench, is also the servant of the most High GOD, the Minister of the heavenly Judge, and the Lieutenant of the Almighty, exercising *the judgment not of man but of God*. It belongeth to his office to judge others that are God's servants, so far as they are subject to him, as sheep to their sheepeheard, by the Law of God and man. If one of the Clergy break the Law of God, and of the kingdom wherein they live, by committing murder, theft, perjury, false witness-bearing, or such like, he is punished not as the servant of God, but as the servant of sin; and an offender against the Common-wealth. Against those supposed reasons, we oppose the authority of God's word, that subjecteth all persons to the power of the Magistrate; *Let every soul be subject, put them in remembrance that they be subject to the principalities and powers, and that they be obedient and ready to every good work, therefore submit yourselves unto all manner ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be unto the king, as unto the superior, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent of him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.* We heard before that Christ requireth obedience,

and as he commanded it to others, so he practiced it himself, for he was subject to his parents, and to the Magistrates; he paid polle money for himself, and for *Peter*, not using the privilege he had, and the liberty he might use, for offense sake, lest another emboldened by his example should use the pretence of liberty that indeed he had not. *Paul* also teacheth subiectiō both by word and deed, by his doctrine & practice. For he was subject to the Magistrates and used their authority for his safety when *he appealed* from the malicious Pharisees unto *Caesar*. Thus we see what Christ did, what the Apostles did, what the Christians did, they exempted not themselves from the secular power, but whether they were Apostles or Evangelists, or Prophets, they submitted themselves, and claimed no freedom from their jurisdiction: wherefore they are led by another spirit that broach and practice a contrary doctrine. Thirdly, they are reprov'd, that are seditious persons, and move rebellion and insurrection against Princes, who always or for the most part are met with all in this life, and receive according to their deservings. Of such persons *Jezebel* spake truly, *Had Zimri peace that slew his master?* as if she should have said, Can any Rebell or Traitor, or any that riseth against his superior and Sovereign, prosper and have good success? For *Zimri* a Captain of the host conspired against *Elah* the son of *Baasha* king of Israel, & smote him that he died, & usurped the kingdom: But the time of his reign & the continuance of his sitting on the throne, could not be numbered nor reckoned by years, nor by months, nor by weeks: he reigned only seven days, and then being hardly besieged, he was constrained to burn himself and the kings house with fire; so that as he came to his kingdom by usurpation, and held it a while by effusion of blood, so he ended his days in desperation. Read to this purpose, 2 Kin. 15. where we have set before us the examples of *Shallum*, who cōspiring against *Zachariah*, the son of the second *Jeroboam*, and smiting him in the sight of the people, and reigning in his stead, did not long enjoy his kingdom, but sate in his throne the space of a month; and then himself was slain, & so he found according to his works, so that as he spared: not to shed blood, so his blood was not spared: Likewise the example of *Pekah*, who conspired against *Pekahiah*, and smote him in Samaria, in the place of the kings palace: but did he escape for this treason, and end his days in peace? No, as he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and departed not from the sins of *Jeroboam* the son of *Nebal*, so *Hoshea* wrought treason against him, smote him, and slew him, and paid him home in his own kind. So in the former Chapter we see, that when the servants of *Joash* king of Judah, wrought treason against their master, & slew him, his son did not suffer their hoare heads to go down to the grave in peace, but so soon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand *he slew his servants which had killed the king his father*. Thus it appeareth, that a discontented head, a muttering spirit, and a seditious mind are dangerous, and bring a just reward of rebellion upon their heads that are the contriuers of it, so that they fall into the pit of confusion that they made for others. This is the ende of rebellion, and such recompense have Rebels against Princes. Hence it is that such pernicious persons, being the common plagues of kingdoms and Common-wealths, are hated of God and man, & odious to everyone, yea even to those that used them to serve their own turns in disloyal and wicked actions; so that *albeit they love treason well, yet they hate the Traitor*. For he that betrayeth his Prince, his country, and kindred into their hands, to whom he is not tied with such near and necessary bands, will not keep his faith entire to them, but betray them also when occasion and opportunity shall serve. The Law of God saith, *Thou shalt*

not rail upon the Judges, neither speak evil of the Ruler of thy people. If he be guilty of punishment that railleth, and reuileth them, what punishment and revenge is sufficient for him that seeketh after their life, and plotteth after their death? we have a notable example of a loyal heart in *David* toward *Saul*, who albeit he were elected and anointed King, and were persecuted and pursued of *Saul*, yet he would not lay violent hands upon his person, nor seek to deprive him of his kingdom: *The Lord* (said he) *keep me from doing that thing to my master, the Lord's Anointed, to lay mine hand upon him: for who can lay his hand on the Lord's Anointed and be guiltless? As the Lord liveth, either the Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into battle and perish; the Lord keep me from laying mine hand upon the Lord's Anointed.* This was the protestation of *David*, but it is a word of direction to all, that Princes persons should be inviolable, as sacred and sent of God, whether they be good or evil, whether they be just or unjust, whether godly or ungodly. It is not unknown what manner of king *Nebuchadnezzar* was, even he that took *Jerusalem*, namely, a great oppressor, robber, & cruel tyrant: yet the Prophet *Ezekiel* affirmeth, that *God gave him the land of Egypt, for the reward of his work, and for the wages of his army wherewith he had served him:* and *Daniel* declareth that *God changeth the times and seasons, he taketh away kings, he setteth up kings, that living men may know, that the most High hath power over the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will,* and appointeth over it the most abject among men. And in the second Chapter he saith, *O king, thou art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.*

Who could be a greater tyrant then *Pharaoh*? who could enact more barbarous and bloody decrees then he did? Or what people could be in greater misery, or endure harder bondage and slavery then the children of *Israel* in the land of *Egypt*? Yet they performed obedience, they never prepared or provided to resist the king, they never took up arms, their only weapons were supplication to God & to man. Let us consider a little, what the Lord himself saith, by the mouth of the Prophet *Jeremiah*: *I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power, and by my out-stretched arm, and have given it unto whom it pleased it me: But now I have given all these Lands into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar my servant, and the beasts of the field have I also given him to serve him, And all Nations shall serve him, and his son, and his sons son, until the very time of his Land come also: and the Nation & Kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar King of Babel, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the King of Babel, the same Nation will I visit (saith the Lord) with the sword, famine, and pestilence; wherefore serve the King of Babel, and live.* Out of these words we observe these three points; who it is that diuideth & bestoweth kingdoms, to whom he giveth them, and what end remaineth for those that resist them. He that setteth the Crown upon the heads of men, is God; all power is from him, for promotion cometh not from the East, nor from the West; he setteth up, and he pulleth down at his own pleasure. He giveth the same sometimes to evil men, and these he maketh his servants to serve his providence, and to do his will which he hath to be done by them. And therefore such as oppose themselves against them, do set themselves against God, and *all that resist, shall receive to themselves condemnation.* He will have Tyrants to be obeyed and honored, because they are lifted up to the seat of honor and throne of majesty by his hand.

[Use 2] Secondly, we learn that it is a great blessing to have good and godly Princes set over us, to rule us in justice, peace, and righteousness. They are a covering against the heat, the breath of our nostrils, an hiding place frō the wind, and a refuge from the tempest, as rivers of waters in a dry Land, & as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land. Where they are wanting, the Sun is as it were pulled out of the Firmament, and all things are left in miserable darkness, the weak are a prey to the strong and mighty, as the lesser fish are devoured of the greater, and everyone doeth that which seemeth good in his own eyes, Hence it is, that the Queen of *Sheba*, seeing the power and magnificence of *Solomon*, whom GOD had set upon the Throne of his father *David*, said, *Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants which stand ever before thee, and hear thy w sedome.* To this purpose speaketh the wise man, Eccl. 10, 16, 17. *Woe to thee O Land, when thy King is a Child, and thy Princes eat in the morning: Blessed art thou, O Land, when thy King is the son of Nobles, and thy Princes eat in time, for strength and not for drunkenness.* We must therefore acknowledge it as a great blessing and mercy upon a Land, when he giveth faithful Magistrates, wise Kings, wise Counsellors, wise Nobles, wise Judges, wise Justices, wise Officers, to govern the State, & to sway the Commonwealth. Blessed are such Rulers, nay blessed are the people that are under such Rulers; and blessed is that government and policy so well and wisely ordered. It is a token of God's heavy judgment vpō a kingdom, when he taketh away the Overseers of it. It is a token of the ruin of an house, when the shores and stays that vnderpropped it, are removed. When the Tree is pulled up by the roots, the branches must needs die, the leaves wither, and the fruit fall away. When the feet of a man fail that bear up the rest of the body, he cannot but fall: and when the breath of his nostrils is stopped, he is gone, & quickly returneth to the dust, out of which he was taken. Our Rulers and Magistrates are as the props & pillars that keep the house upright: they are as the root of the Tree, that giveth life, and sendeth forth sap and juice into all partes and corners of the Land, which are as the body of this tree: they are as the heads, that is, the choicest parts of the Commonwealth; and yet as the feet, in respect that they bear the whole frame that standeth upon them. Hence it is that the Prophet threatening from God a grievous judgment to fall upon the Land for the sin of the people, saith, *Behold, the Lord of Hosts will take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah the stay and the strength: even all the stay of bread, and all the stay of water, the strong man and the man of war, the Judge and the Prophet, the prudent and the aged, the Captain of fifty, and the honorable, and the Counselor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent man, and I will appoint Children to be their Princes, and babes shall rule over them.* If then the removing and taking away of the chief parts be a punishment, surely the giving of them, and the continuing of them must of necessity be the giving of a blessing unto us, & the continuing of a blessing among us. When they are gone, the light is taken away, and we live in darkness: our defense is gone, and we lie open to the enemy: the foundation is pulled away, & the house falleth: the breath is gone, and the whole body dieth. The benefit which we receive by our Kings and Princes, by our Rulers and Governors, will yet farther appear, if we consider the discommodities and confusions of an Anarchy, wherein is no Ruler, but everyone would sit at the stern, and command over others: the sword of justice is banished, and the sword of injustice is in a mad man's hand, nay in thousands and millions of mad men; force and violence bear sway, riotousnesse is set at liberty, good men are oppressed, innocence is trodden under foot, and all wickedness is

set aloft. These effects and infinite other not to be numbered, of the same nature, must needs follow, where Magistrates bear not rule: but where they are settled, the godly are encouraged, & the ungodly fear. To conclude therefore this point, it is an happy Kingdom, wherein the Princes are obedient to the Law of God and nature, & of the Land; Magistrates to the Princes, private men to Magistrates, children to their parents, servants to their masters, and all men keep themselves within the limits of their callings, and being linked in love one with another, & all of them with their Prince, do enjoy the sweet fruits of peace, and true quietness of mind.

[Use 3] Thirdly, this must put Magistrates in mind of their duty. For wherefore are they necessary to be over the people, and to what ende hath GOD lifted up their heads above their brethren? Is it to give them bare titles of honor and dignity, and to tread upon their brethren, and to trample them under their feet? No, God advanceth no man for such purposes, but it is in respect of his people to do them good, to procure their wealth, and to provide for the welfare both of their souls and bodies. As then they are to have much honor, great reverence, and due obedience performed unto them, so they must know that sundry duties are to be practiced of them. First then, it is required of them to maintain and set up true religion: to give entertainment to it, and those that do profess it. They must procure that God may be worshipped and served, to which end they are made keepers of both the Tables, to see that God be glorified among his people, as Psal. 78, 70, 71, 72. *He chose David his servant, and took him from the Sheep-folds, even from behind the Ewes with young brought he him, to feed his people in Jacob, and his inheritance in Israel: so he fed them according to the simplicity of his heart, and guided them by the discretion of his hands.* It is not enough for them to have a care that peace and tranquility may be maintained among their subjects, (for so far the Gentiles proceed that know not God) but they must take order that the Law of God may be observed, and piety and godliness continued among the people committed to their charge. True it is, a peaceable and quiet life are great blessings, and most worthy effects of a wise & religious Magistracy, but these are not sufficient, nor the principal duties to be regarded, forasmuch as it is not enough to lead a civil life, but a sanctified life, that hath the glory of God evermore before it: and therefore they must consider that they shall give an account at that great day, not only how peaceably and politikely they have ruled, but how religiously and zealously they have governed their people. Secondly, it appertaineth unto them to deface Idolatry, and abolish all monuments of superstition, and to cast out all Idols, not only out of their Temples, but so much as lieth in them, out of men's hearts. This duty God commended to Moses, in sundry places, Deut. 7, 5, 6. *Thus ye shall deal with them, ye shall overthrow their Altars, and break down their Pillars, and cut down their Groues, and burn their graven Images with fire: for thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a precious people unto himself above all people that are upon the earth.* And what his zeal was in maintaining God's honor, and in revenging the dishonor done unto him in this kind, appeareth by his defacing and destroying the golden Calf that was erected in his absence; for when the people saw that he tarried long ere he came down from the Mountain, they said, *Make us God's to go before us, &c.* but as soon as he came near to the host and saw the Calf & dancing, his wrath waxed hot, he cast the Tables out of his hands and brake them in pieces,

he ground the Calf to powder, he strewed it upon the water, he made the Children of *Israel* drink of it, and caused about three thousand of them to be slain with the sword. It is recorded to the everlasting commendation of *Asa*, that he took away the *Sodomites* out of the Land, and put away all the Idols that his Fathers had made, and he put down *Maachah* his mother also from her estate, because she had made an Idol in a grove, & *Asa* destroyed her Idols, and burnt them by the brook *Kidron*. The like we might say of *Hezekiah* and *Josiah*, whose names are blessed in the book of God, and renowned for the discharge of this duty. Thirdly, Idolatry being defaced, and Idols taken away, they must provide that pure and sincere doctrine may be delivered & preached by the Ministers of the word. For in vain it is to abolish superstition, except care be had of the true religion, that the name of God may be known upon earth, and his saving health may be spread abroad among all their people. When the King of *Ashur* heard that the Colonies that he had planted in *Samaria* were devoured of Lions, he commanded that one of y^e Priests which had been brought from thence, should be carried thither, to teach them the manner of the God of the Country: so that the superstitious King thought it his duty to see them instructed in the truth. A notable example of a godly and religious care this way is in *Jehoshaphat*, who, so soon as *he had taken away the high places and the groves out of Judah*, he sent out sundry of the Levites, *that they should teach in the Cities*: and they taught in *Judah*, and had the book of the Law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the Cities of *Judah*, and taught the people. This is the foundation and stay of all Kingdoms▪ to give entertainment to the word of God, this maketh a wise King and a wise people. So long as Magistrates countenance the truth, and Preachers of it, they secure their own estates, and are blessed of God; which ought to be an encouragement unto them, not to be slack or slothful in spreading abroad the Gospel of Christ. Lastly, because it were troublesome and tedious to go about to rehearse all their duties, we briefly number up the rest. It is their duty therefore to be good examples of piety and godliness of life to the people, and to provide for them all things necessary for the body, to ask counsel of the mouth of the Lord in their weighty affairs, that is, the ministry of the word, and to yield obedience unto it; to exhort their inferiors in time of public calamities to earnest repentance, and to express the same by prayer and fasting; to know y^e cause thoroughly before they proceed to give sentence; to punish evil doers, and defend the innocent, and to establish such positive laws as are necessary for the maintenance of order and decency in the Common-wealth.

[Use 4] Lastly, seeing Magistrates are necessary for the Church and Common-wealth, it putteth those that are under them in mind of their duties, partly in regard of themselves, partly in regard of the Magistrates, and partly in respect of God. Touching themselves, they must know they be no burdens to the Common-wealth, nor superfluous parts that may be spared: they are as the head or heart of the body, or as the eye in the head, all depend upon their welfare; so all depend upon the Kings and Princes welfare. If he be upholden, the Common-wealth standeth: if he be unregarded, the Common-wealth falleth. He is as necessary as the Sun in the Firmament, yea as fire and water, and breathing, without which we cannot live. If we judge otherwise of this ordinance of God, we are deceived, & wrong both them and our selves.

Again, we learn that their life and continuance is greatly to be desired of God's servants. It is the part and duty of all Subjects to crave their safety and protection, that they may safeguard and protect both Church and Common-wealth. Yea Rulers themselves in regard of this end, which ought daily to be before their eyes, may desire of God to lengthen their days, and to continue their happy reign, that together with the Saints they may do service to God in his Church: in this respect I say, they may desire life, not so much aiming at their own private good, (for in that respect it were better to be dissolved & to be with the Lord) as respecting the general utility of their people. What greater glory, what higher honor can they have then this, to be the stay and defense of the church, that otherwise were like to decay and go to ruin, and to continue the several parts of it in well-doing? That good King *Hezekiah* foreseeing by the word of the Lord, the miserable estate of the Church that should be after his death, and considering with great anguish of heart, the woeful effects that were like to follow, he turned himself in his bed to the wall and wept, and was grieved to depart hence, saying: *The grave cannot confess thee, death cannot praise thee: they that go down into the pit, cannot hope for thy truth: but the living, the living, he shall confess thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall declare thy truth.* He desired of God to live, and prayed unto God to prolong his days, not to lift up himself above his brethren, not to glory in the smoke of lofty titles, not to tyrannize over the people, not to command the things that are unjust, or to punish such as do not deserve it: but to do good to the Church, and to set forth God's praise. Death indeed, which bringeth y^e dissolution of nature, is a welcome guest to them that are the Lord's, all the godly do make themselves ready to receive him, to meet and entertain him; and so Kings & Princes among the rest: howbeit, in this respect, that the Church may be benefited by them, it is no matter of impiety to desire a longer continuance among God's people: much more then is it the duty of such as are under them, and governed by them, to desire their continuance as the days of heaven, and as the course of the Sun, to be Nurses to the godly. This was wont to be a common salutation used of the people toward their Princes, not only of the Infidels, but by the faithful servants of God. When the King came to visit *Daniel*, being cast into the den of Lions, the Prophet so soon as he heard him, said, *O King, live forever*, that is, GOD grant unto thee a long life.

Last of all, whensoever we have a wise and worthy, a godly and religious Prince given to us, it is our duty to be thankful. If the Lord grant unto a Land, a prudent and provident Prince to reign over thē, whose heart is bent to seek the Lord, and to serve the GOD of his fathers, the people that breathe under his shadow must praise the holy name of God. It is their duty to pray that princes may be such, and to commend them to God with all faithfulness. For if they must pray for others, much more for them? When *Solomon* was anointed with oil taken out of the Sanctuary, they blew the Trumpet, and all the people said, *God save King Solomon*. So the Apostle writing to *Timothy*, exhorteth that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, *For Kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and a peaceable life in all godliness and honesty; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.* Now, as we are to pray for them, so we are to praise God for them: we are not to forget the least blessings, nor to be unmindful of smaller benefits: and therefore we are much more bound to be thankful for the greater, among which this is one of the

greatest. The Prophet praying for the prosperous estate of the Kingdom of Solomon, saith, *Give thy judgments to the King, O God, and thy righteousness unto the Kings son: Then shall he judge thy people in righteousness, and thy poor with equity.* This duty belongeth to us, and this ought to be our prayer and petition: and as God hath blessed us with a gracious Prince & his hopeful issue, contrary to y^e expectation of many male-contented and hollow-hearted enemies of us and our Religion; so we are often to call to remembrance the joyful and happy time when GOD in his great goodness brought him to this Kingdom, and to sit upon the Throne lineally descended unto him: so that we may say with the Psalmist, *This was the Lord's doing, & it is marvelous in our eyes: this is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice & be glad in it.* Heereby did God allay the bitterness of sorrow worthily conceived, for the decease of our late Sovereign, so that the setting as it were of y^e Moon, was recompensed with the bright shining of the Sun; and the closing of the eyes, as it were shutting the windows of declining age, with a greater perfection of age, of sex, of gifts, and many other perogatives. Thus doth one and the same day minister matter and occasion both of sorrow and of gladness; of discomfort, yet of comfort: of weeping, yet of rejoicing; as a medicine composed of contrary ingredients: so that we may say & sing with the Poet;

I am{que} dies (nisi fallor) adest, quē semper acerbū,

Semper honorandum (sic dij voluistis) habebo:

Hunc ego Getulis agerem si Syrtibus exul,

Argolicoue mari deprensus, & vrbe Mycenae,

Annua vota tamen, solennes{que} ordine pompas

Exequerer: strueremq{que} suis altaria donis.

That is;

This, this day, ever-doleful shall,

and ever joyful be:

Yea merry-sad, and bitter sweet:

(thus God did it decree.)

If I were cast among the *Moors*,

and lived a captive slave,

Yet yearly vows and duties due,

the Altars high should have.

Thus may we, and a great deal more justly say of the day above named, which is heavy, and yet happy; threatening a storm, and yet shining clearly. Who did not greatly fear, and whose hearts were not full of perplexed thoughts, to consider what dangers were likely to fall upon

our heads, when God should call unto himself, *Queen Elizabeth*, and gather her unto her Fathers? But behold God's great providence, dealing in mercy toward us, who shut up the mouth of the Lions, and put up the sword of the enemy, and quenched the violence of the fire, so that no noise, no tumult, no crying was heard in our streets, no sacking of Cities, no tumbling of garments in blood was seen, no alarm of battle was discerned of any, not a dog lifted up his tongue, but all things were submisse and quiet: Thus God brought King *James* unto the kingdom with a train of all estates, degrees, callings, companies, and conditions, with Olive branches of peace in their hands, *sinesudore & sanguine*, that is, without sweating and blood-shedding. No man lost his goods, no man lost his life, no Babylonish cōfusion followed, but everyone held his own with greater certainty and security then before: whereat the enemies of our peace and religion fret and rage, and gnash their teeth for anger, and are like to burst for envy, seeing their expectation is frusted, & all their hopes are defeated. Yea Lord, disappoint them more and more, cast them into the pit which they have digged, and roll the stone upon themselves which they have stirred: let them be consumed and confounded in their own devices, and taste of the fruit of their own malice: let their eyes look for a day of comfort and refreshing, until they fall out of their heads, according to that saying,

Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis, at ill

Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis aeuum.

That is;

They wait until the River waxeth dry,

But he doth run, and shall eternally.

So then, to use the words of the Prophet *Isaiah*, ch. 5, 24. *As the flame of fire devoureth the stubble, & as the chaff is consumed of the flame: so their root shall be as rottenness, and their bud shall rise up like dust, because they have cast off the Law of the Lord of Hosts, and contemned the word of the holy one of Israel.* On the other side, let us acknowledge it to be our duty, to render humble and hearty thanks to GOD for his goodness toward us, in delivering us from the dangers that did hang over us, in frustrating the policies of the ungodly, in continuing among us the Gospel of peace, in maintaining concord and unity among us, & all these, by placing our dread Sovereign over us, and thereby removing a thousand calamities that threatened shipwreck and final desolation. Let us not now grow secure, but oftentimes remember the benefits that we have received. It is noted, that when *Solomon* was set upon the seat of *David* his father, the people came up after him, yea *they piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rang with the sound of them.* So when *Hiram* King of *Tyrus* heard the words of *Solomon*, he rejoiced greatly, and said, *Blessed be the Lord this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this mighty people.* Likewise, when the Queen of *Sheba* saw the glory of *Solomon*, and knew it to be a chief sign of God's favor to have godly and wise Rulers sit in the Throne of justice and judgment, she brake forth not only into an admiration of his wisdom, and his servants happiness, but also into an open thanksgiving, *Blessed be the Lord thy God which loveth thee, to set thee on the Throne of Israel, because the Lord loved Israel*

forever, and made thee King, to do equity and righteousness. These are good examples for us to follow, and teach us what we ought to do, when God blesseth us with an upright *David*, with a wise *Solomon*, with a zealous *Hezekiah*, with a religious *Josiah*, with a reforming *Jehoshaphat*: it is our duty to return praise and glory to God, and withal to pray heartily for the prosperous and happy continuance of such among us, that they may live long upon earth, to promote his glory, to advance the Gospel, & to establish peace, plenty, and prosperity among their people.

10. On the South-side shall be the standard of the host of Reuben, according to their armies, and the Captain over the sons of Reuben shall be Elizur the son of Shedeur.

11. And his host and the number thereof were six and forty thousand, and five hundredth.

12. And by him shall the Tribe of Simeon pitch, and the Captain over the sons of Simeon shall be Shelumiel the son of Zuri shaddai.

13. And his host and the number of them, were nine and fifty thousand and three hundredth.

14. And the Tribe of Gad, and the Captain over the sons of Gad, shall be Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

15. And his host and the number of them, were six and forty thousand, six hundredth and fifty.

16. All the number of the Campe of Reuben, were an hundredth and one and fifty thousand, and four hundred and fifty, according to their armies, and they shall set forth in the second place.

In these words we have a description of the second standard, as appeareth in the shutting up of this division, where it is said, *They shall set forth in the second place.* In this standard, the principal is *Reuben*, his assistants joined with him are *Simeon* and *Gad*. In which combination we see, the particular number of each of them declared, their Captains are specified, and then the total sum is reckoned up. We shown before, that *Reuben* was the eldest son of *Jacob*, to whom as to the first borne, the birth-right did of right belong: yet we see in the former words, that *Judah* was set before him: thus doth God show himself a just Judge in punishing sin, and declareth how odious and abhominable it is in his sight. But see how God dealeth in mercy with him, that is, with his posterity. He deserved utterly to be raced out of the number of God's people, and to be forgotten forever by reason of his horrible incest: and no doubt the rest of the Tribes were ready to hate him, to reproach him, and prefer themselves before him. But behold the goodness of God, that though he will punish sin, yet he doth it in

mercy, not with severity: gently, not rigorously: for correction, not seeking the ruin and destruction of those that belong [Doctrine 3] unto him. From this example of God's dealing toward *Reuben*, we learn, that God's judgments are tempered and mingled with great mercy and mildness toward those that are his. *Reuben* committed horrible incest, and thereby deserved not only to be thrust into the lowest place, but to be cast out of the account of *Jacob's* posterity and to be honored neither of God nor man, neither alive nor dead: yet though *Judah* have the first place, *Reuben* hath the second; so then albeit he was punished justly, he was punished gently. Thus God dealeth evermore, he correcteth both moderately and mercifully: and as the Physician allayeth the bitterness of the potion with some sweetness, so God asswageth the greatness of his punishment with some mildness and favor that he mingleth with it. This doth the Prophet declare, Psal. 89, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. *If his children forsake my Law, and walk not in my judgments: If they break my statutes, and keep not my Commandments: then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with strokes; yet my loving kindness will I not take from him, neither will I falsify my truth, &c.* God will chastise his for their sins, but in the midst of his punishments he remembereth his mercy toward his, and will not utterly forsake them, though he afflict them for a time. So the Prophet *Isaiah* testifieth the like, chap. 54, 7, 8. *For a little while have I forsaken thee, but with great compassion will I gather thee: for a moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee for a little season, but with everlasting mercy have I had compassion on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.* He correcteth his own people, because they are sinful: he correcteth them gently, because he is merciful. This will yet better appear unto us▪ if we take a view of the examples of God's dealing toward his servants in their afflictions. When *Miriam* rose up against *Moses*, she was stricken with leprosy, and shut out of the host seven days, and afterward was received again. When *David* had sinned in numbering the people, the Lord threatened three days pestilence in the Land, & the Angel stretched out his hand upon *Jerusalem* to destroy it: notwithstanding when *David* repented of his sin, the Lord also repented of the evil, and said to the Angel that destroyed the people, It is sufficient, hold now thine hand. When *Zachariah* the Priest would not believe the message that was sent him from God, and delivered by the Angel, that he should have a son in his old age, (then which, what greater dishonor could be done to God? what greater disgrace to his messenger?) It was said unto him, Behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not be able to speak, until the day that these things be done. If *Miriam* had been stricken with leprosie as many years as she was days, or *David* with the pestilence, or *Zacharias* with dumbnesse, they could not have complained against God, but must have acknowledged their sins had deserved more: so that such is the dealing of our GOD toward his children, that he evermore 〈1 page duplicate〉 〈1 page duplicate〉 mitigateth the bitterness of the cup of his wrath with the greatness of his mercy, so that his justice and goodness go together.

This will farther appear unto us, by setting [Reason 1] before us sundry reasons, which will put this doctrine out of all doubt. For first of all, he punisheth his people as it were unwillingly, as enforced and compelled unto it by our disobedience. He had rather spare us, and not correct us, if it were for our good: but he seeth it to be for our benefit, and to further our salvation, who before we be afflicted, do go astray and wander out of the right way. This is the reason urged by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Lam. 3, 32, 33: Though he send affliction, yet will

he not forsake forever, but have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies: for he doth not punish willingly, nor afflict the Children of God. If then he take no delight nor pleasure in it, but doth it of necessity for our profit and amendment, it followeth that he dealeth gently, and not cruelly: mildly, and not rigorously with us.

Secondly, he is as a loving Father that spareth [Reason 2] his son that serveth him. He dealeth not as a tyrant or a tormenter that setteth upon the Racke, and showeth exquisite punishments upon such as offend: but he correcteth his Church, as a father doth his childrē which come out of his bowels, and therefore it must be done with great compassion. This reason is often rendered to enforce this point of doctrine, as Deut. 8, 5. Know therefore in thine heart, that as a man nourtereth his son, so the Lord thy God nourtereth thee: declaring thereby, that his afflictions are signs of his fatherly love toward us. Likewise 2 Sam. 7, 14. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he sin, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the plague of the Children of men, but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from *Saul*, whom I have put away before thee. So then, he dealeth not extremely with his people, but spareth them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, as his nature is to show mercy, so knoweth he the matter whereof we are made, and he considereth that we are but dust. If he should deal with us according to our deserts and pay us home as we have provoked him by sinning against him, he should bring man to nothing, and consume him forever. Wherefore the Lord saith, *I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth, for the spirit should fail before me, & I have made the breath.* We are as a wind that soon passeth, as a breath that is easily stopped, and as the dust that is quickly blown away. The Prophet calleth this to our remembrance, which we ought to learn without the word by daily experience, Psal. 103, 13, 14, 15, and 78, 38, 39 and 30, 5. *As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him, for he knoweth whereof we be made, he remembereth that we are but dust: the days of man are as grass, as a flower of the field, so flourisheth he.* And in another place, *He being merciful, forgave their iniquity and destroyed them not, but oftentimes called back his anger, and did not stir up all his anger: for he remembered that they were flesh, yea, a wind that passeth and cometh not again.* If then we consider that God punisheth unwillingly, that he showeth mercy, and remembereth our frailty, we must needs conclude with the same Prophet, that he endureth but a while in his anger, but in his favor is life: weeping may abide at evening, but joy cometh in the morning.

Let us now observe the uses that may be gathered from this doctrine. First, mark the [Use. 1] difference between God and man, whose ways are not as our ways, nor his works like unto our works. It is not with God as it is with man. Albeit he be daily provoked and offended, yet he is not easily moved; and upon our submission and repentance, he is quickly appeased, and his wrath by and by is turned back. *The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger, and of great kindness, he will not always chide, neither keep his anger forever: he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities: for as high as the Heaven is above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.* But when man is once moved, he sildome keepeth any mean or moderation, & he can hardly or never will be appeased again, albeit he that hath offended and provoked him, do submit himself unto him, and crave pardon for his

offense. Hence it is, that God is constrained to restrain the outrage and cruelty of man in his Law, that as a violent stream breaks out, & can be kept within no bounds of reason; where he giveth in charge, that *if the wicked be worthy to be beaten, the Judge shall cause him to lie down and to be beaten before his face, according to his trespass, unto a certain number, forty stripes shall because him to have, and not past, lest if he should exceed, and beat him above that with many stripes, thy brother should appear despised in thy sight.* This law declareth, that so soon as we are injured, a fire is kindled within us, we conceive rancor and choler, we fret and fume with indignation, and cannot be reconciled; we are filled with our passions, we lay on load and know no moderation. If the Lord should deal with us as we measure to our brethren, we were not able to bear it and abide it. If he should be so fierce and full of rage against us, we should utterly be destroyed and consumed: but there is always mercy with him, that he may be feared.

Secondly, this serveth greatly to comfort [Use 2] all the faithful servants of God, to consider the moderation of his chasticements, and the gentleness of his hand in all his corrections. We see by daily experience how he forbearth us, and poureth not out all his wrath upon us. If it were not so, it would oftentimes go hard with us. Albeit his hand be sharp upon us, yet we must needs confess, our sins have justly deserved greater plagues, longer plagues, sharper plagues. And when his judgments are ceased and withdrawn, our sins are found to be as great and sometimes greater then before, so that we deserve other plagues and punishments to come in place, & immediately to follow the former. Our deliverance therefore is for his mercies sake. Herevpon the Prophet saith, He endureth but a while in his anger, but in his favor is life, weeping may abide in the evening, but joy cometh in the morning. In like manner, sorrow may happen in the morning, but joy and comfort shall abide within the evening, that we may acknowledge the greatness of his mercy, and the shortness of his wrath. We heard how sorrowful a message, and what heavy tidings *David* had brought unto him so soon as he was up; but this sorrow was soon turned into joy, and this heaviness into gladness, when the Angel of vengeance is commanded to stay his hand, and to put up the sword of justice into his sheath. To this purpose the Apostle teacheth the Hebrews, chap. 12. *We have had the fathers of our bodies which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, should we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, that we might live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he chasteneth us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.*

We must evermore remember, that it is his mercy that moveth him to stay his hand and to call in his judgments, and to make our plagues to cease. We cannot stand to plead with GOD, we must not justify our selves, we ought not to hold our selves innocent; but rather persuade our selves that God hath a just quarrel and controversy against us. Hath he visited our brethren that dwell near us, as good and peradventure better then our selves, and yet hath not touched us? Hath he freed us, when others have felt the stroke of his rod? Have we stood upright, when others have fallen down? When his arrows fly abroad, and stick in the flesh, and enter into the bones, hath he passed over us, and hid us under the shadow of his wing, as in a place of safety? Oh consider this, and let us not forget the favor of God toward us: O let us remember his loving kindness, and engrave it in our hearts to work in us the fruits of

obedience. Let us enter into our own selves, and examine our consciences aright, and reason with our selves after this manner: How cometh it to pass, that we have sinned, and yet are spared? that we have been in danger, and yet are delivered, and are not destroyed? seeing so many of our neighbors die round about us daily, how is it that we are spared? Have not our sins deserved to be swept away? or can we say, we are not guilty? If we search our hearts and ways thoroughly, and deal truly with God and our selves, we must confess that there is nothing in our selves but matter to kindle his wrath, and to cut us off, and to punish us with greater plagues then he hath hitherto inflicted upon us. It is his mercy that we live, and have a longer time of repentance given unto us: he might have cut us off as rotten branches, fit for no other use then to be cast into the fire. We must be thankful unto him for this goodness, and not abuse his patience and long suffering, lest we kindle his wrath again, and he reserve us for a greater plague, and so we bring a more heavy condemnation upon our selves. Blessed are we if we can make this holy and sanctified use of affliction, the which, albeit for the present time it seem grievous, and not joyous: yet afterward it bringeth the quiet fruit of righteousness unto them which are thereby exercised.

Thus we see how this doctrine is the cause of much comfort and consolation, if we behave our selves as we ought to do under the Cross.

We have not to do with an hard and cruel father that will not regard us: nor with a weak and impotent father that cannot relieve us: for our God is in heaven, he is able to do whatsoever he will. Little children do oftentimes receive great hurt being far from their fathers sight, and left unto themselves: it is not so with us; we are always in the presence of GOD our Father, he is our eye, to see for us, our ear to hear for us, our hand stretched out to help us, and deliver us. For how should not he that made the eye see? and that made the ear, hear? It is said when *Israel* was in *Egypt*, and there oppressed with cruel bondage, that GOD looked upon the children of *Israel*, and God had respect unto them: so that he did not look upon their miseries as an idle beholder of them, or as one that took pleasure to see their calamities, but as one that was moved with compassion toward them, and pitied their poor estate and condition; for as he saw their troubles, and knew their sorrows, so he came down to deliver them out of the hand of the *Egyptians*. Hec it is that giveth diligent care to all our groans and sighs, he knoweth in what case we stand, and what pains we feel, he taketh so great care and keep of us, that he suffereth not any of our tears to fall to the ground, but putteth them into his bottle, and layeth them up in his register.

Thus doeth GOD remember us in trouble, heareth and helpeth us at all times, hath a continual care of us, that we should not be discouraged, nor drink a full cup and draught of affliction, to be left without comfort under the waves thereof, that might drown our souls. This is the staff of comfort, which Christ giveth unto his Disciples, and all that believed in his Name, even to so many as should see the ruin and horrible destructiō that should come upon the City and the Temple, Math. 24, verse 22. Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, nor yet shall be hereafter: and except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elects sake, those days shall be shortened. In these words the faithful are comforted by consideration of the mercy

of God in the mitigation of those judgments which he would bring upon *Jerusalem*. True it is, some do understand them of the second coming of Christ with power and great glory, according to a rotten Prophecy of one of the *Rabbin's*, setting down the standing and continuing of the world, namely, *Two thousand years before the Law:two thousand under the Law: and two thousand under Christ, but for the Elects sake, those days should be shortened.* The examination of this counterfeit and worm-eaten Prophecy, belongeth not to this place, nor time: the two first parts being untrue, & the third both untrue, uncertain, and unsettled, having no sure ground or foundation to stand upon. For touching the true meaning of the place, it is not to be understood of the day of judgment, but of the destruction of *Jerusalem*. For when Christ speaking by the Spirit of Prophecy, foretold of the taking and ruining of the Temple, so that one stone should not be left up on a stone that should not be cast down, the Disciples (upon occasion hereof) asked the question, when these things should be, and what should be the signs of his coming to judgment? To these two questions he answereth distinctly, not confusedly: and first of all to the first, wherein he giveth them sundry signs going before y^e sackking of the City of *Jerusalem*: as for example, when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, that is, the Roman army (as *Luke* expounds it) sit in the holy place, know that the end is near: then being touched with a commiseration of their sorrows, he saith, *Woe to them that are with child, and give suck in these days; pray that your flight be not in the winter, &c.* Such were no fit persons to fly, such is no fit time to fly from their cruel and bloody enemies, nor to escape the rage of barbarous and merciless soldiers. Then shall be such trouble and tribulation, as no tongue can express, no pen can write, no language hath words to utter. The sword devoured without, and both sword and famine raged & consumed within, so that they were constrained to eat their own children. during the straightness of the siege. These be the days of vengeance; to fulfill all things that are written. Immediately upon the mention of these woes and tribulations, follow these words, *Except those days should be shortened,&c:* as if he should say, If God had suffered those sharp afflictions to continue, and the enemies to rage against them as they desired, and their sins deserved, none of that Nation had escaped, all the Jews had been rooted out as one man. *No flesh*, that is, not a man among the Jews had been left alive. *But for the elects sake*, that is, because GOD had a remnant among them according to grace, even his elect and chosen people (which he would not cast away) for their sakes the days of their great distress in the Land, and of wrath over this people, should be ended and finished: which declareth how precious and dear the faithful that fear God are in his sight, that because of their company he would cease to scourge & afflict the nation any longer: even as at the intercession of *Abraham*, he would have spared *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, if ten righteous persons had been found there, *Gen. 18*. So God shown mercy to the host of *Israel*, because *Jehoshaphat* was present with them. And therefore when *Jehoram* the son of *Ahab* complained for want of water, the Prophet *Elisha* answered, *What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the Prophets of thy father, and to the Prophets of thy mother: as the Lord of hosts liveth, in whose sight I stand, if it were not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the King of Judah, I would not have looked toward thee, nor seen thee.*

So then we see, to return to the former point, that he speaketh of ending the troubles of the Jews, and siege of the City, not of cutting shorter the day of judgment.

Thus God knows how to mitigate the sorrows, and shorten the calamities that threaten the ruin and subversion of his servants. And who is it but desireth comfort in time of trouble? If then we would be assured that these things belong unto us, & take comfort in the meditation of them, let us observe these points as special rules for our edification.

First, it is our duty to acknowledge God's mercy to be great, who might lay a greater load and an heavier burden upon us. When the Angel stretched out his hand to destroy *Jerusalem*, the Lord stayed his hand, & caused the plague to cease, so that when thousands fell down on the right side, and ten thousands on the left side, they were spared and not touched.

Whence did this difference arise? And how came it to pass y^t the City was passed over, & the rest of the Land punished? Was it because these were worse livers or greater sinners? or was it because there were better people in *Jerusalem* then in other corners of the country? Was it because of the goodly buildings in the City, or because of the multitude of rich and wealthy Citizens, or because of the sumptuous stones of the Temple, or because of the sacrifices and service of God solemnized in the Temple, or because the seat of the King and the Thrones set for justice were there? If we think it was for all these, or for any of these, or for any such like outward respect, we are deceived. Indeed the Temple was an occasion of vain confidence to carnal men, who cried out, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, this is the Temple of the Lord; whereas they remained impenitent and unreformed: but as yet it was not built, for *Solomon* built him an house. As for the City and the Citizens, we must look for no great good there; there was want of true piety, store of pride, cruelty and oppression, which had enclosed, nay infected the walls with the cōtagion thereof. In what state it stood, *David* declareth, who calleth to God for help, and saith, *There is not a godly man left, the faithful are failed from among the children of men*, so y^t everyone dealt deceitfully with his neighbor, and spake flatteringly with double harts. To this purpose speaketh *Jeremiah*, chap. 5, 1. Run too and fro by the streets of *Jerusalem*, and behold now, and know, and enquire in the open places thereof, if ye can find a man, or if there be any that executeth judgment, and seeketh the truth, and I will spare it. Thus doth the Prophet *Ezekiel* complain, & painteth out as in a Table the wickedness of *Jerusalem*, chap. 22. There did abound shedding of blood, contempt of superiors, oppression of strangers, wronging of the fatherless, iniurying of the widows, profaning of the Sabbaths, carrying about of tales, cōmitting of idolatry, taking of bribes, perverting of judgment, biting by usury, defrauding of their neighbors by extortion, and forgetting of the Lord. This was the estate of *Jerusalem*, and therefore the cause why the pestilence did not walk through the midst of the City, and the Angel is commanded to stay his hand frō destroying that place which was such a sink of all filthy sins, was the Lord's mercy only, who was willing to spare it, & to give them longer time of repentance. This must we confess, when we are spared, or we are most unthankful unto God. For we have experience of his goodness toward us.

Secondly, we must in time of our affliction pray unto him, and call upon his name, and come with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may put him in mind of his mercies. Thus doth the Prophet behave himself whē he heareth of the havoc and waste that should be made among the people of GOD, he prayeth heartily for the faithful, saying, O Lord, I have heard

thy voice, and was not afraid: O Lord revive thy work in the midst of the people, in the midst of the years make it known, in wrath remember mercy. What greater motive can there be to make us repair to God, then to consider how mildly and gently he dealeth with his people, when he doth afflict them? This was it that moved *David* to make choice of the pestilence having the choice of two other judgments propounded and laid before him, because he was most gracious and full of compassion: Let me now fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are exceeding great, and let me not fall into the hand of man. He had experience both of God's mercy and of man's cruelty. We never profit aright by our afflictions, unless they drive us nearer to God, and cause us to call upon his name. It is the Commandment of God, that we should call upon him in the day of trouble.

Thirdly, if we would have comfort in the feeling of God's hand, we must thereby be drawn unto repentance, acknowledge our sins to deserve far greater judgments then yet we suffer, and consequently, turn unto him with all our hearts. If we remain stubborn and rebellious under the Cross, GOD will not leave us so, but double his strength and strokes upon us, until we be either reclaimed or convinced in our own consciences, and made without excuse. The Lord commanded his Prophet to go and cry these words, Thou disobedient *Israel*, return, saith the Lord, and I will not let my wrath fall upon you, for I am merciful, and will not always keep mine anger. The end that God aimeth at in afflicting his people, is to bring them unto him, and to make them seek him early: and until affliction work in us repentance & newness of life, we have no right use nor true fruit of it.

Fourthly, it is required of us to praise the name of God for his mercy and goodness in sparing of us, and not pouring out the full viols of his wrath and indignation upon us, and not coming out with all his fury and forces against us. The practice of this praise we see in *David*, after the plague was ceased; he built an Altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and the Lord was appeased toward the Land, and the plague ceased from *Israel*. He did not only call upon God, but offered the sacrifice of thanksgiving unto him. Except we follow his example, and practice this duty, we rob God of his honor, and provoke him to take away his blessings from us. When we are in affliction, we are eloquent enough, and have tongues to utter many prayers to have the plague upon us removed from us: but when we are helped and the judgment is taken away, we forget both God's mercy and our own duty, we consider not from whence our deliverance cometh, nor what it challengeth at our hands.

Fifthly, we must remember, that we think not our selves hardly dealt withal, but take heed to our selves that we be far from murmuring and complaining against God. The Lord complaineth by his Prophet, against such hypocrites, *Jeremiah 3: Diddest thou not still cry unto me, Thou art my Father, and the guide of my youth? will he keep his anger forever, will he reserve it to the end?* Thus they flattered with their lips, when malice was in their hearts; they spake fair to God, and pretended a great desire they had that they would fain please him, while his hand is upon them, and while he striketh them with his rod. But what answer doth GOD give and they receive? It followeth in the next words, *Thus hast thou spoken, but thou doest evil even more and more.* And as it was with this people, so is our case, when God at any time taketh us

in hand, we speak him fair, we humble our selves before him, and stoop down to take correction; but either we think the time too long while his rod is upon us, and so will prescribe him the time when to take it away; or else we fret & fume against him as doing us wrong, and we sustained injury at his hands. But if we were acquainted either with our iniquity, or with his mercy, we would be otherwise minded, and would confess that all kinds of punishments are due to us, and indeed too little for us: yea, we would easily perceive that GOD is more sorrowful for the correction which he is constrained to lay upon us, then we are grieved for the sins which we have committed against him. If these things be found in us, if we acknowledge God's mercy toward us in our troubles, if we call upon him earnestly, if we turn unto him unfeignedly, if we praise his name cheerfully, and do not think our selves hardly dealt withal, we shall not want comfort in our sufferings, but be able to comfort both our selves and others.

Lastly, it is our duty to be patient under [Use. 3] the cross, not to discourage our selves in our troubles, whatsoever or how great soever they be, nor to murmur and repine at them: seeing our doctrine teacheth us, that he never poureth upon us all his wrath, nor giveth us a full cup to drink up, even the dregs thereof; but tempereth & seasoneth it in such sort, that together with the affliction we may taste of his compassion. Now to the end we may not despise the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when we are rebuked of him, but may possess our souls with patience and endure constant unto the ende, we are to consider three things. First of all, we must remove all lets and impediments that may hinder us in the course of patience. Secondly, we must learn and mark the motives that may move us to the embracing of this Christian and heavenly virtue. Thirdly, we must examine & prove our selves, whether this grace of GOD be in us or not, seeing upon it as upon a pillar resteth the life of our Christian profession, as we shall show afterward. Touching the first, it standeth us upon to cut off and to cast away from us all such things as may any way hinder our patience. The Apostle writing to the Hebrews, and commending the constancy and patience of the Saints, draweth this exhortation: *Wherefore, let us also, seeing that we are compassed with so great a Cloud of witnesses, cast away everything that presseth down, and the sin that hangeth so fast on, let us run with patience the race that is set before us:* whereby he declareth, that the means to hold on our course with patience, is to remove the lettes and impediments that stand in our way.

The first hindrance is self-love, the very bane and poison of all good and holy duties. We love our selves and our skin so well, that we shrink back our shoulders, and pull in our heads when any peril beginneth to hang over us, as if some storm and tempest were imminent and ready to fall upon us. So long as this thorn sticketh in the flesh, we cannot love the Lord, nor yield obedience unto him in bearing the cross. Hence it is that our Savior Christ saith, Math. 16. verse 24. *If any man will follow me, let him forsake himself, and take up his cross and follow me.* It is to our nature and the natural man hard to suffer, who desireth to sleep in an whole skin.

The second hindrance is desire of revenge. For these two, patience and revenge, are as contrary one to the other, as peace and war, as fire and water, as light and darkness. If *Joseph* had looked to the injurious dealings of his brethren toward him, and to their wicked purposes intended against him, he would never have said unto them, *Bee not sad, neither*

grieved with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: you sent me not hither, but God, who hath made me a father unto Pharaoh, and Lord of all his house, and Ruler throughout all the Land of Egypt. If Job had rested and contented himself in the attempts and robberies of the Sabaeans and Chaldeans, he would never have broken out into these words, The LORD hath given, and the LORD hath taken away. It belongeth not unto us to take or to seek revenge: but to commit our selves and our causes to the God of vengeance.

The third let is infidelity, when we have in us an unfaithful heart, and cast off all confidence in God, who maintaineth the lot of all those that trust in him, and depend upon him. What was the cause that the *Jews*, suffering want in the wilderness, sometimes of bread, and sometimes of water, murmured against God and his servant *Moses*? And albeit they had most manifest experience both of the power and mercy of GOD, in helping them in all times of need, yet they brake out into impatience, Exod. chap. 16, verse 3. *Oh, that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the Land of Egypt, when we sate by the flesh-pots, when we did eat bread our bellies full.*

The cause of this was an unbelieving heart to depart away from the living God. If therefore we believe not in him, to sanctify his Name, and to trust in his help, if we do not commit all our ways unto him, who hath promised that he will never forget us nor forsake us, it is impossible that ever we should possess our souls with patience.

The last impediment is want of premeditation and consideration how we may continue and go through stitch, without starting back from our profession. This is the cause that maketh men impatient and to give over when we are tried, because we never weigh the danger before we are tried. We must cast our accounts, what it hath cost others, & what it may cost our selves; It is worthy counsel given unto us by our Savior Christ, Luc. 14, 28, 29, 30. *Which of you, minding to build a Tower, sitteth not down before, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to perform it? lest that after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to perform it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to make an end.* It is a dangerous case to be found unprepared and unprovided for the assault. It hath wrought a relapse and apostasy in many, so that they have denied the faith, and made shipwreck of religion. Hitherto of the hindrances of patience: now let us consider the motives that may persuade us to seek after it, and to lay hand and hold upon it.

First of all, we must know, that as all affliction is of God, so he will be with us, & have care over us under the Cross. Why then should we be dismayed, or discourage our selves in any troubles whatsoever, seeing we are still in God's sight, and have him ready to hear us? otherwise it could not but go hard with us. It had gone hard with *Moses* being cast into the River among the reedes, except God had looked down from heaven upon him, and directed *Pharaohs* daughter to take him up. The like we might say of *Joseph*, when he was in irons, and his feet held in the stocks: of *David*, when he wandered in the wilderness on the Mountains and in Caues of the earth: of *Jeremiah*, when he was cast in prison: of *Jonah* in the whales belly: of *Daniel* in the den of Lions; and of his fellows in the fiery furnace: all these had experience of God's assistance, who was not far from them in the day of trouble. So it shall be with everyone of us: his countenance doth evermore behold the just in all their sufferings

& calamities, as the Psalmist saith, The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, & his ears are open unto their cry. And indeed we should be most wretched and miserable in all our afflictions, in war, famine, and pestilence, and whatsoever chastisements befall us, except God had an eye to see us, an ear to hear us, an heart to pity us, and an hand to save and succor us.

Secondly, we must consider what we have deserved, and how we may justly be punished, not only in that manner, but in a greater measure. This was the confession of the penitent thief hanging upon the Cross, and speaking thus unto his fellow, Luc. 23. We are indeed righteously here: for we receive things worthy of that we have done: but this man hath done nothing amiss. We show our selves to have a sensible feeling of our sorrows, but are many times without feeling of our sins. If GOD should lay more upon us, he were not unjust, inasmuch as we have justly brought it upon our selves. We see this in the Prophet *David*, acknowledging the same, Psal. 119, 75. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou hast afflicted me justly. We must confess that nothing belongeth to us but shame and confusion of faces.

Thirdly, this meditation must enter into our souls, and never depart from us, that God will turn all our sorrows & sufferings unto the best: so that neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. This is it which the Apostle teacheth, Rom. 8, 28. We know that all things work together for the best unto them that love God, even to them that are called of his purpose. This promise is assured unto us, that he will sanctify unto our singular good, not only his blessings, but his very chastisements and afflictions, so that they shall bring us nearer to God, as the Prophet *David* confessed, he had received good by thē, Psal. 119. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy word.

Fourthly, we are made to suffer here, that we might not suffer elsewhere. For we are chastened in this life, lest we should be condemned in the life to come. If therefore we be without correction, whereof all the sons of God are partakers, then are we bastards & not sons, as the Apostle speaketh to the *Hebrews*. Let us call to our remembrance, what *Abraham* answereth to the rich man, Luke 16 25. Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy pleasures, and likewise *Lazarus* pains: now therefore is he comforted, & thou art tormented. The rich man enjoyed the desires and delights of his own heart in this life, therefore he was tormented in hell in the life to come. Let us patiently abide that which God layeth upon us, wishing rather to suffer here such troubles as are temporal, then the torments of hell after this life, which are eternal.

Fifthly, it is the will of God that we should suffer, to which we must readily obey, and humbly submit our selves, as the Apostle showeth, Phil. 1, 29. Unto you it is given for Christ, that not only ye should believe in him, but also suffer for his sake. The heathen were wont to use this as a reason to bear the cross, because there is no remedy or redress, & that it cannot be otherwise. Seeing then, they could not choose but suffer, they taught that it is better to make a virtue of necessity, then brutishly or childishly to despair under it; and seeing it must needs be so, they must be contented, resolving, as Christ saith, Acts 9, 5. It is hard to

kick against pricks. But we have a better and stronger motive to move us to suffer, then the forcible weapon of necessity, even the unchangeable purpose of God, whose gracious will it is, that through manifold tribulations we should enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Lastly, we must have an eye cast upward to the rich recompense of reward that shall be given unto us. For the greater our trials are, the greater shall our reward be. It is said by the Apostle, that *Moses* chose rather to suffer adversity with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, because he had respect to the recompense of the reward. The afflictions of this present life are all temporal and transitory, they have an end in a short space: but the glory prepared and reserved for the Saints in the next life, shall know no end; for our light affliction which is but for a moment, causeth unto us a far more excellent and an eternal weight of glory: while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Our afflictions shall not continue long upon us, they shall speedily have an end; which ought to devour the bitterness thereof, and swallow up the tediousness that creepeth upon us. Thus much of the means or motives to work patience in us. Now it remaineth, that we examine our selves, whether it be in us or not. For if we be without patience, we shall never be able to hold out our profession unto the end. It is as salt that must season every duty. If then this be not found in us, we are but as time-servers, that continue for a season; or as the morning dew which vanisheth at the rising of the Sun; or as the grass upon the house-top, which flourisheth for a while, and afterward withereth away. Let us therefore consider the signs and tokens whereby we may try our selves, and prove whether it be in us or not.

One sign is an heart resolved to abide whatsoever is laid upon us, whether it be for sin or for trial. For we must understand, that some afflictions are laid upon us for our sins, and some for our trial. Examples of both we have in the Scriptures, to inform us in these points. Touching sin, the Prophet saith, *Lament. 3, verse 39. Wherefore is the living man sorrowful? Man suffereth for his sin.* When Christ had cured the man that had lain eight and thirty years at the pool of *Bethesda*, he found him afterward in the Temple, and said unto him, *Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.* He had suffered a great judgment, yet the Lord threateneth him with a greater: he had been diseased many years, yet he was to fear a worse evil. Touching trial, we may look upon *Job*, all whose sufferings were for trial of his faith, obedience, and sincerity. The like speaketh Christ to the Disciples, seeing a man which was blind from his birth, and asking him, Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was borne blind? For he answered them, *Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be shown on him.* Now then, whether our afflictions be to chastise us, or to prove us, the faithful man is persuaded and resolved to bear them; If his sins be remitted, and the guilt of them removed, he careth not though the cross abide and continue still. He that standeth thus affected, hath laid up a good sign to be known for his patience. The pardon of our sin must more rejoice us, then the feeling of the cross can dismay us.

Secondly, when we suffer, and suffer much, yet we must not cease to love the Lord that striketh us. Though the punishment be bitter, we must not hate the hand that giveth the stroke, but embrace it heartily, and love it still. This affection was in *Job*, when he had sustained the loss of his cattle, of his servants, of his sons, and of all his substance, he hated not GOD, nor murmured against him, but acknowledged in the midst of all, *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the Name of the LORD.* Where we see he blesseth God, not only for his giving, but for his taking away, not only for his blessings, but for his chastisements. A notable example for us to follow, and a certain sign to make trial of our patience. It is the ordinary manner of wicked men, when they have received gifts, and are filled with good things, to give God thanks, and to say, God be thanked: but if their riches, honors, peace, and gifts be taken away, all is done, their thanks are ceased, their mouths are stopped, and their tongues are tied. It is a notable saying of the Prophet, Psalm 130, 3, 4. If thou O LORD, straightly markest iniquities, O LORD, who shall stand? but mercy is with thee that thou mayest be feared.

If our love of GOD be proved, when his justice is shown: and our fear, when his mercy is extended toward us, we may assure our own hearts we have the spirit of patience within us. It is truly said, he loveth the party well, that can love him when he hath done him injury. True it is, GOD can do us no wrong, nor deal unjustly with us; but if he lay heavy punishments upon us, and we do patiently abide them, and love God still heartily and unfeignedly, it is a great comfort that we are his. For who can love God, when he is wounded by his hand, but he that is undoubtedly in his favor and friendship? Wherefore, as God chastiseth those that belong to him, because he loveth them: so it is their duty to love him, because he chastiseth them.

Thirdly, another sign of patience is humility, and humbling our selves under his blows and strokes laid upon us. If once we begin to reason and dispute of the causes for which we suffer, and say, why should the Lord thus deal with us? or to vaunt of our sufferings in the spirit of vanity, and say, who is like unto me? or what man hath endured such things? it is plain and evident, we are far from true humility, and consequently from true patience. *Job* is made a mirror of patience to all posterities, to the end of the world, which did evidently appear to be in him by the lively fruits thereof. And albeit he suffered much more than others, yet in the middes of all his sufferings and losses, he did not sin, nor charge God foolishly: who being moved to confess his hypocrisy, and being judged an extraordinary wicked man, by his extraordinary afflictions, he answered; Thou speakest like a foolish woman: what? shall we receive good from the hand of God, and not receive evil? In all this did not *Job* sin with his lips. Thus let us stoop down, & bend the knees of our hearts unto God, acknowledging the chastisement to come from him, and looking for deliverance to come from him also.

The last property to discern it, is cheerfulness, and joy in suffering: when we are so far from murmuring under it, that we rejoice in it. The Apostles of Christ, being accused for preaching Christ, as for an evil work, & scourged as malefactors by the enemies of the

Gospel, departed from the council, rejoicing, that they were counted worthy to suffer rebuke for his name. This was a sign and proof of their patience. For this are the Saints commended, Rom. 8. who albeit they were killed all day long for his sake▪ and counted as sheep for the slaughter, yet in all these things they *were more then conquerors,through him that loved them.* They are persuaded, that neither life nor death, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall separate them from the love of God. The Apostle testifieth touching the Hebrews, that *they suffered with joy the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves, how that they have in heaven, a better, and an enduring substance.* It was a lamentable case, to suffer the loss of all their substance, gathered together with great labor and sweat, or left unto them by their parents: but to suffer this spoil and pillage at the hands of their kinsfolkes, and countrey men, and Magistrates (whose help they were to call upon, and who ought to have aided and assisted them) this no doubt did double and treble their sorrow and misery: yet such was their Christian patience, that they received those injuries and indignities with joy and great comfort. Not that they rejoiced at their own miseries, as men that were without feeling, or human affections, (for if they had been without sense, they could not be renowned for their patience;) but albeit they were touched with grief and heaviness for their adversities and afflictions, yet they were mindful of their profession, and of Christ's promise, that whosoever shall forsake houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for his Names sake, he shall receive an hundredth fold more, and shall inherit everlasting life. This meditation was it that made them account light of the wrongs they had received, this hope of an eternal recompense swallowed up the sadness that arose in their heart, and wrought in them great gladness. For, what cause hath he to mourn and lament, that maketh an exchange of copper for gold? of chaff for wheat? of dross, for pure metal? So great is the price and excellency of heavenly things, above earthly, that we must be ready to bear with patience and alacrity, the lack and loss of them, especially considering we are not so much owners of them as stewards: neither shall it bring poverty upon us, because God will make us a plentiful amends and recompense: neither shall our enemies thrive with them: or enrich themselves by them: because as thieves and robbers they shall not escape the kingdom of God, but he will feed them with shame, and clothe them with dishonor, and reward them with confusion in the end.

17 Then the Tabernacle of the Congregation shall go with the host of the Levites, in the middes of the Campe as they have pitched, so shall they go forward, every man in his order according to their standards.

We have spoken already of two of the standards, and two other remain behind to be spoken off. In this verse, *Moses enterlaceth the placing and situation of the Tabernacle, which was so inuironed with the Levites, and they flanked and fortified with the whole host, that it remained in the middes, to wit, in a place of the greatest safety and security, fittest for access in regard of the people, and hardest for access in regard of their enemies.* For being placed in the middes of all the host, the Israelites might more easily approach, having a commodious ingresse and egress, and regresse unto it: and the enemies (if any should

enterprise to trouble them) should not be able by any means to disturb and disquiet them, albeit they deferred it never [Doctrine 4] so much. So then we see, that the place of the Tabernacle was not set in a corner of the host, or at the one side, or out of the host, but is commanded to be pitched in the midst of the people. Hence it appeareth, that when the Lord was angry with his people, and would no longer reueile himself unto them by his presence among their tents, it is said, *Moses took his Tabernacle and pitched it without the host, and called it Ohel-moed, that is, the Tabernacle of the Congregation;* Exod. 33, ver. 7. Here the people were to meet together: here the people were to ask counsel of God: and here the Oracle of God would give answer unto them. True it is, this is not to be understood of that holy place, made to be a worldly, that is, an earthly and temporal Sanctuary, called the Tabernacle, whereby they might have a visible testimony of the presence of God, (albeit some are of that opinion) whether we consider the time, or the coming of *Moses* from the mount, or the order of the History. In respect of the time, because the making of that great Tabernacle followeth afterward, Exod. 35. In respect of coming from the mountain, because *Moses* was newly descended, the idolatry of the people newly revenged, and no sufficient leisure afforded for so great a work: lastly in respect of the order of the history, because it must be inverted and transposed. Neither was it some peculiar Tabernacle which *Moses* erected specially for the service of God (as others suppose and surmise) seeing we read of no such commandment given unto him, and it is not to be thought, he would invent anything in the service of God, for which he had no word or warrant. For if in the building of the great Tabernacle he did frame all things, even to the rings and pins, to the snuffers & snuff-dishes, according to the pattern shown unto him in the mountain: how shall we imagine he would set up a Tabernacle of his own head without the warrant and direction of God? Now, assuredly we cannot understand it of the great Tabernacle, much less of any peculiar tabernacle beside, whose author God is not remembered to be: but of the Tent or Tabernacle of *Moses*, which serving first for his private use, is here appointed y^e place where God would manifest himself unto them; so that the removing of it out of the hoaste, is made a sign of his anger and displeasure. To this purpose *Moses* speaketh afterward, when the work of the Tabernacle was finished, *The cloud of the Lord was upon the Tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all his journeys:* where he showeth what was the place appointed for it, namely, to be ever in the sight of all the Israelites. Thus doth *Moses* speak in the second verse of this chapter, Every man of the children of Israel shall campe by his standard, and under the Ensign of his fathers house, far off about the Tabernacle of the Congregation shall they pitch. This doth the Prophet *Ezekiel* testify, Chap. 37. *I will make a covenant of peace with them, and I will set my Sanctuary among them for evermore, my Tabernacle also shall be with them, &c.*

This ordering of the place of the Tabernacle, [Reason 1] was not without reason. For first, God doth hereby admonish them, that they should always have him before their eyes, lest they should forget his worship, or offend him with their sins. Hereunto cometh that which the Lord saith, Levite. 26. *I will set my Tabernacle among you, and my soul shall not loathe you: and I will walk among you, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.* If the

place had been farther removed from their sight, they would have forgotten God and his worship, and more easily have broken out into sin against him.

Secondly, he had respect indifferently unto [Reason 2] all the tribes. For if any had pitched their tents farther then others from the Tabernacle, they would have quarrelled and complained, that they had been contemned and despised. Everyone would have been ready to give wrongful judgment, and to interpret it as done of set purpose to his disgrace. Now, by this situation of it, the mouths of all persons are stopped, and perpetual silence enjoined unto them, that they should quietly keep their standings, and rest contented with the ordinance of God.

Thirdly, the Levites were hereby put in mind of their duty, and therefore are lodged [Reason 3] about it, as likewise it was about the Temple, as afterward we shall see by the example of *Solomon*. It was their duty to look to the worship of God, and to instruct the people that should come unto them: for their lips must preserve knowledge, and the people should seek it at their mouths, seeing they are appointed to be the messengers of the Lord of hosts. Neither need they go far to learn this, inasmuch as they could not abide in their places, but they had a warning before their eyes, to perform their office.

The uses, of placing the Tabernacle after [Use. 1] this manner, are many. First, it assureth us of this excellent promise, that God will ever be in the middes of us, and settle his rest and residence among us. Hereunto cometh the saying of *Moses*, Levite. 26. *I will set my Tabernacle among you, and my soul shall not loathe you: and I will walk among you, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.* So the Prophet having assured them, that his Sanctuary should be settled, and his Tabernacle placed among them, doth add, *yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Seeing therefore the situation of the Tabernacle was such, set up in the middes of the Tribes, so that three of them pitched before, three of them behind, and three of each side, in this respect God is said to dwell in the mids of them, because his Tabernacle which he made his habitation, was in the middes of the host. Now we must know how God is said to dwell among us. For we must make a difference between his general presence, and his special presence. His general presence is in all places: his special presence is in his Church His general presence is of his power: his special presence is of his grace and favor. There is a common manner of God's being everywhere, and in all things, by his essence: there is another special way of God's being present, as that which is loved is present in him that loveth; according to that which Christ hath said, John. 14.23. *If any man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and he will come unto him, and will dwell with him.* It was (we see) God's will to have the Sanctuary seated in the mids of all the people: not that he was enclosed in that Ark, or in the Tabernacle, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain: but to give them a visible token, that they should not doubt at all of him. For such is our weakness and infirmity, that we are always ready to suppose, that he turneth his back to us, and thinketh not upon us, and is too far absent from us, to succor and sustain us with his hand. Therefore then it was the pleasure of our God, that the Tabernacle should be among the people, as a certain warrant of his power and presence, of grace and goodness, which he hath promised to all the faithful. And no man can indeed call himself a believer,

unless he be thoroughly persuaded, that God is with him: yea, this is our comfort and bringeth peace unto our souls, to consider that God is in the middes of us. True it is, God doth sometimes seem to be absent from us, and to hide his countenance from us, and utterly to forget us: yet even then he is with us, and within us, albeit it pleaseth him to try our faith & patience by that means. Again, it is most true, we have not now the Tabernacle with the instruments thereof: yet notwithstanding he standeth not far from us, neither casteth us off from him, but this favor is bestowed upon us in more plentiful measure and in a more ample manner, then it was upon the ancient people under the Law. This appeareth unto us many ways. For first we know, how God is joined unto us in the person of his own only Son. For this cause also is Christ called *Emmanuel*, that is to say, *God with us*. In him dwelleth the fullness of the godhead, so that he is God manifested in the flesh, and we are made members of his body. Though he be now ascended up into heaven, yet he faileth not to fill all, and we are made bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh; so that there is no greater conjunction between the husband and the wife, then is between the Son of God and us. He said to his disciples, I am with you, even unto the end of the world, Matth. 28. Whereby he meant to strengthen them in all the dangers and conflicts which they should sustain.

Secondly, we have with him the preaching of the Gospel, whereby God is as it were brought down to reside and remain among us. So long as the word which is the scepter of his kingdom is with us, we shall not need to fear he will go from us, neither shall be constrained to make long journeys to seek him out. When once his word is departed, and the Gospel gone, his standard is removed, and he is quite turned from us. It is in vain to dream to find him, when we cannot find him in his word. Hence it is, that *Abijam* telleth *Jeroboam* that made Israel to sin, that God was gone from them, seeing he had driven away the Priests of the Lord the sons of *Aaron*: and on the other side he joineth together the presence of the Lord and the preaching of his word, saying, *Behold this God is with us as a Captain, and his Priests with the sounding trumpets to cry an alarm against you*. This then is a special token of God's special presence, when he sendeth his word as a gracious rain upon his inheritance, and thereby watereth the dry furrows of the barraine hearts of his people.

Thirdly, we have the promise of his presence and the seals thereof in his Sacraments, whereby we are at one with him, and he with us. Whensoever we meditate of our baptism, the Son of God doth witness unto our spirits, that we are clothed with his righteousness, as with a garment: *for all such as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ*. Whensoever we receive the Supper of the Lord, he showeth us that he is our food, and that the bread which we eat at our tables, and in our houses, doth not nourish us better, then we be nourished by his substance at his heavenly table, insomuch that we live in him, by him, and through him: according to the testimony of *John*, Ch. 6. Whosoever eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day: for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. Thus we are spiritually one with him, and mystically he is one with us, so that we have a communion with him as the members have with the head: so that we must receive it as most true which the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 10. *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the*

body of Christ? for we that are many are one bread and one body, because we all are partakers of one bread.

Fourthly, when we come together in the Church to call upon his Name, he is near unto us, and most familiar with us. For our LORD Jesus Christ assureth us, that he is there among us, whensoever we are assembled in his Name; and by lifting up our eyes, and holding up our hands toward heaven, we show that our coming thither is to present our selves in the sight & presence of our God To this purpose our Savior saith, Math. 18, 20. *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them:* so that we must consider, that we are here not only before the Angels of heaven, but also that the Son of God both seeth and heareth us. True prayer doeth ascend up to Heaven as Incense, and lifteth us up to talk familiarly with God, and bringeth down his blessings upon us: except we use this heavenly exercise whereby we speak to him, he is a stranger to us, and we are strangers to him.

Lastly, he dwelleth among us whensoever he preserveth us from evil, and delivereth us from our enemies. If the favor of GOD were not a shield & buckler about us, to preserve and protect us from our enemies, we should lie open to ten thousand dangers and deaths. If our Lord had not a continual care over us, and stood not mightily for our defense, we should be a prey to the iaw of the Lyon, and should perish every minute of an hour. We are of our selves over-weak, and have no means to deliver our selves: this is our comfort, that God is on our side, & dwelleth among us. Let us also take heed we walk in fear before him, and do not provoke him to wrath and indignation against us by committing evil in his fight, who can abide nothing that is profane or polluted, as Deut. 6, 15. *The Lord that is in the midst of thee, is jealous, beware therefore that his wrath kindle not, lest thou be rooted out of the Land which the Lord thy God hath given thee.* To this purpose the Apostle speaketh, 2 Cor. 6. *Ye are the Temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell among them, and walk there: and I will be their GOD, and they shall be my people: wherefore come out from among them, and separate yourselves, saith the Lord, and touch none unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.* This showeth, that we ought to walk always as in God's presence, and to consider evermore that his eye is upon us. Our bodies are the temples of the holy Ghost for him to dwell in. If then we shall defile them, and make them as swine-styes, we grieve the holy Spirit whereby our adoption and redemption are sealed, and drive him from us, and chase him away out of our hearts.

[Use 2] Secondly, albeit the placing of the Tabernacle in the midst of the host be gone and past long ago, and were verified among the Jews under the shadows of the Law: yet it serveth to teach us to what end God hath instituted civil States and Common-wealths in this world, to wit, to be stays and props to the Church, to uphold and strengthen the same, that the people of God may assemble together in peace and quietness, and be free from all dangers of malicious enemies that labor to do evil to the Sanctuary. To this purpose the Prophet teacheth, that *The Name of the Lord shall be declared in Zion, & his praise in Jerusalem, when the people shall be gathered together, and the Kingdoms to serve the Lord.* And Psal. 122. *Jerusalem is built as a City, that is compact together in it self, whereunto the Tribes, even the Tribes of the Lord go*

up according to the Testimony to Israel, to praise the name of the Lord. Heereby we are put in mind of three notable duties.

First of all, let all persons, Princes, and people, high and low, do good to the Church of God, and employ their best endeavours to promote the glory of God, and the safety of the Church. For wherefore was the Tabernacle taken and pitched in the midst of all the host, not placed in a corner, nor set in the skirts of that mighty army, but was inuironed round about with the strength of *Israel*: but to teach us, that this must be the end we ought all to aim at, that it is our duty to the utmost of our power to procure the peace of *Zion*, & the prosperity of *Jerusalem*, all the days of our life? For even as the hills and mountains did compass about *Jerusalem*, to defend it from all dangers and inuasions of enemies: so ought all the faithful that are the friends of the Church, seek to defend it from all such as seek the ruin and destruction thereof. They have a promise made unto them, that they shall prosper that prefer it, Psal. 122, 6. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: let them prosper that love thee.* Such was the zeal of *David* for the house of God, that it even consumed and eat him, as the people declare, Psal. 132. *Lord, remember David with all his afflictions, who sware unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob, saying, I will not enter into the tabernacle of mine house, nor come upon my pallet or bed, nor suffer mine eye to sleep, nor mine eye-liddes to slumber, until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob, &c:* Loe, how great his care and zeal was to build the Temple, and to further the worship of God: he spared no cost, but opened the treasures of his house to employ them this way. Thus it ought to be with us, it is the chief end why God doeth bless us with the blessings of this life, that we should pay him his tribute, and be content to depart from them when his glory & worship do require it. If we care not how bountifully we spend and lavish in unprofitable, nay in ungodly uses, and pinch for a penny and an half-penny employed to charitable and godly purposes: we make it manifest to all men that the glory of God is not before our eyes, nor his worship any whit regarded of us. And hence it is, that God oftentimes curseth our store and substance, and bloweth upon it, that it flieth away as the wind that cometh not again. Let us therefore be wise hearted, to refer our goods, our lives, and all that we have, to seek the good of the Church, that it may be safe; and then shall we be safe under the shadow of it. On the other side, the Lord denounceth a sore and severe threatening against all such as do wrong to the Church, so that he will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy pate of him that walketh in his sins. This appeareth by the prayer of the Church, Psal. 74. *Think upon thy Congregation which thou hast possessed of old, and on the rod of thine inheritance which thou hast redeemed, and on this mount Zion wherein thou hast dwelt: lift up thy strokes, that thou mayest forever destroy every enemy that doth evil to the Sanctuary.* Such shall never prosper, (albeit they may flourish for a time) that hate the Church which God loveth.

Secondly, it is the duty of all persons to assemble together, to hear his word, all excuses and delays set apart. For wherefore was the Tabernacle placed in the mids, but to bind all persons alike to come to the exercises of religion, and to perform public worship to God? *Jereboam's* calves (who made *Israel* to sin) were set, one in the North part of the land, the other in the South; but the Tabernacle of God was settled in the middes among them, that all men should have access unto it, and that no man should color his absence with any

pretences. Hence it is that the Prophet, declaring, that GOD had chosen Zion and loved to dwell in it, saying, *This is my rest forever, here will I dwell, for I have delight therein*, doth add, *We will enter into his Tabernacles, and worship before his footstool*. A notable encouragement to move us to resort & repair oftentimes to the place of God's worship, seeing he maketh it his habitation and resting place, and the house where he will dwell, and where we shall find him in time of need. A strong persuasion to work a desire and delight in us to go to the Lord's courts, that we may behold the majesty of the king of glory. To this purpose speaketh David in another Psalm. *The mountain of God is like the mountain of Bashan, it is an high mountain as mount Bashan: Why leap ye, ye hie mountains? as for this mountain, God delighteth to dwell in it, yea the Lord will dwell in it forever*. Where he teacheth, that God's Church, in regard of merciful promises, heavenly graces, and noble victories, doth excel without comparison all worldly things, and all earthly places. All assemblies though never so glorious and glittering outwardly, must give place to it, and are as nothing being matched with it: inasmuch as the excellency, beauty, and continuance of the Church goeth beyond all other congregations of men. Hereupon he inferreth, *Thy Congregation dwelled therein: for thou, O God, hast of thy goodness prepared for the poor*. If then we would dwell with God, let us repair to his house: if we would see him, we shall see him there: if we would hear him, we shall hear him there: if we would know him, we shall know him there: for his face is to be seen there, his voice is to be heard there, his presēce is to be found there. O let us prefer one day in his courts before a thousand elsewhere. Let us rather desire to be door-keepers in his house, then dwellers in y^e palaces of the wicked. If they were called and accounted blessed that stood in the presence of Solomon: how much more blessed and happy are they that stand in the presence of God, and worship toward his holy Temple. Let the same mind and affection therefore be in us which was in David, to say with him with a feeling heart, *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will require, even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to visit his Temple*. Where shall we find in our days this longing, and holy desire to speak with God in his word and worship? where are the ancient wishes of the Saints, thinking it long before they came and appeared in the presence of God? where is now the panting of the soul, and fainting of the heart, and the rejoicing of the flesh in the living God, like unto the earth that gapeth for the showers of rain to refresh it? We are an unthankful people, whom plenty and abundance have glutted, and made to loathe the heavenly Manna given to us.

Thirdly, let us not stand in fear of any enemies, as if they could bear and beat down the Church before them, and raze the foundations of it to the ground; neither let us as graceless children forsake our mother, for fear of troubles that may come vpon her. True it is, the Church of God hath many enemies that threaten the ruin thereof, and employ all their wiles and fetches to work the subversion of it, as if an huge and heavy millstone were cast at it, or as if a mighty tempest were fallen upon it, or as if a sudden flood of waters did overflow and overwhelm it. Nevertheless the Church is set in a safe place, they shall not be able to hurt it: it hath a safe keeper that neither slumbereth nor sleepeth; they shall not be able to destroy it: the gates of hell, and the power of the devil are set against it, but they shall never have victory over it. They may well assault this City of our God, cast their trenches against it,

build Forts and Barricadoes against it, yet they shall never win it, but their losses shall be greater then their gains. Let us comfort our selves in this, that it is impossible the Church should fall, being borne up and upholden by so strong a pillar. For as when we become the enemies of God, & despise his majesty, he is able quickly to consume & confound us: so whē we be in his safe keeping, he will maintain & defend us in such sort, as the Lions & asps, the dragons & wild beasts (whereof we are most afraid) shall not be able to destroy or annoy us. Therefore the Lord speaketh, Deut. 7. *Thou shalt not fear them: for the Lord thy God is among you, a God mighty and dreadful, he will root out all these enemies before thee by little and little.* First he
〈1 page duplicate〉 〈1 page duplicate〉 willeth them not to be afraid of their enemies, and afterward he addeth the reason, because God is among them. We are all of us as in the Tabernacle and tuition of God; let us put on the shield of faith, to repulse all fear: he will not leave us, nor forsake us, so that we may boldly say, The Lord my deliverer, I will not fear what man can do unto me. Let us hold our selves to his promises, and assure our selves of his succor.

[Use. 3] Lastly, this situation of the Tabernacle serveth to conclude the full and final happiness of the faithful, which is begun in this life, but shall be consummated in the end of the world. Then will God dwell with us, and we shall dwell with him: then we shall be admitted into his presence, and never be cast out: then no evil shall touch us, or come near us, and no good thing shall be wanting unto us, that we can desire. Hereunto the Apostle alludeth, Revel. 21. *I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them▪ and they shall be his people, and God himself will be their God, &c.* Consider here the blessedness of that people that shall ever enjoy the immediate presence of such a God as is the fountain of all happiness. True it is, God doth dwell among his people in this life, and he is not far from everyone of them, inasmuch as they have their spiritual life and birth from him: howbeit, it doth not appear to others, nor sometimes to our selves what we shall be.

The Tabernacle of God seemeth now to be removed out of our sight, and to be set in a dark corner, where it lieth hidden. We are here subject to many temptations of sin, to many sicknesses and sorrows, to many pains and aches, to many losses & troubles, which often cause us to sigh and lament: we have not hearts of iron and steel, nor bodies of stone or oake, that cannot be touched with any feeling. We must all pass through these afflictions and tribulations, as the children of *Israel* passed through the red sea. But when the Lord (who is an infinite and endless treasury of all good things) shall bring us into his heavenly Tabernacle in the new *Jerusalem*, we shall stand in need of no good thing, we shall stand in fear of no evil thing, in both which consisteth true felicity. The old *Jerusalem*, though it were called the holy City, and place of God's worship, had many unclean persons dwelling in it: the Tabernacle of the Testimony, though it figured the conjunction of God with his Saints, had many profane persons resorting to it: but in the heavenly *Jerusalem*, and the heavenly Tabernacle (which is the Kingdom of glory) there shall be no unclean thing, there shall rest no vile person, all shall be holy and pure indeed. In them shall be no confusion, no disorder, no broils, no tumults, no turmoiles, no tempests, no sin, no sinful thing, no effect of sin. The Apostle saith, *We look for a new heaven & a new earth, according to his promise, wherein dwelleth*

righteousness. Then we shall weep and lament no more, there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor pain, nor crying: y^e tears which we shed shall be wiped away: the sins which provoke God, shall be blotted out: the kingdom of the devil shall be thrown down, and the kingdom of Christ set up: death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire, and whosoever is not written in the Book of life: long white robes shall be put upon us, we shall hunger and thirst no more, neither shall the Sun shine upon us, neither any heat come near us, *For the Lamb which is in the middes of the throne shall govern them, and shall lead them unto the lively fountains of waters, &c.* This is the dignity unto which we are advanced by Christ our Savior: we shall dwell with God, the great king of glory. Now we are tossed with many storms and tempests. Sometimes we are persecuted and banished from our country: sometimes we are imprisoned, and destitute of things necessary; poor, hungry, thirsty, naked, weary, cold, faint, and feeble, yea subject to a thousand mischiefs, and dangers, miseries and encombrances. In the middes of this boisterous sea of confusions, this is our comfort, that God will rid us, and release us out of them all, and bring us into the quiet haven of rest and happiness. Why then should we be cast down in our temptations, or why should we think that God hath forsaken us? We shall shortly be with the Lord, and the Lamb which taketh away the sins of the world, he will feed us with all heavenly▪ and spiritual dainties. Here we assembled together in tabernacles and Temples, and Churches for the performance of divine duties, where God vouchsafed to be present according to his promise, *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there I am in the middes of them.* There were the Sacrifices and Sacraments, there was the Law and the Gospel taught. These were worthy and notable signs of God's presence. But the heavenly *Jerusalem*, the mother of us all, hath neither tabernacle, nor Temple, nor material building, nor place of instruction, nor sacrifices, nor Sacraments, nor sign of the presence of God. For *John* describing the state of glory after this life, saith, *I saw no Temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the Temple of it: and this City hath no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did light it, and the Lamb is the light of it.* Happy are they that enter into this city, where God is the Temple, where God is the Sun, where God is the Moon, where God is all y^e light thereof, and all the glory and defense thereof. It is a glorious thing in this life, to be Kings and Princes, and to sit upon the throne of majesty: but when they shall inherit the kingdom of heaven, they shall lay down all earthly pomp and magnificence, receiving so great glory in that glorious city, that the glory which they had as kings and Princes shall vanish away, as the light of a candle at the shining of the Sun. The glory of the least of God's Saints is so excellent, that *Solomon* in all his glory, was never arrayed nor advanced like one of these.

The end of all this is, to teach us that we ought to be even ravished with an earnest and longing desire to dwell in this heavenly tabernacle, and to labor to have our hearts purged from an evil conscience, knowing that *no unclean thing shall enter into it, neither whatsoever worketh abominations and lies.* Everyone will seem desirous to dwell in the Lord's Tabernacle, and to come to heaven: but they are loath to leave their sins.

But let us not deceive our selves, neither let us sooth and flatter our selves in our evils; if we follow our ungodly ways with greediness, and will not forsake our wickedness, we shall have the door of God's kingdom shut against us.

18 The standard of the Campe of Ephraim, shall be toward the West, according to their armies: and the Captain over the sons of Ephraim, shall be Elishama, the son of Ammihud:

19 And the host and the number of them, were forty thousand, and five hundredth.

20 And by him shall be the tribe of Manasseh, and the Captain over the sons of Manasseh, shall be Gamliel the son of Pedahzur:

21 And his host and the number of them, were two and thirty thousand and two hundredth.

22 And the tribe of Benjamin, and the Captain over the sons of Benjamin, shall be Abidan the son of Gideoni:

23 And his host and the number of them, were five and thirty thousand and four hundredth.

24 All the number of the Campe of Ephraim, were an hundred and eight thousand, and one hundredth, according to their Armies, and they shall go in the third place.

We have heard before how the Tabernacle of the Congregation was placed in the midst of the host, and compassed about, both in front and flanke, standing strong in battelled in their array, ready to receive a shock, if any enemies should offer to enter upon them. In these words is laid before us the third company of this mighty Army, the principal whereof was *Ephraim*, and his Partizans are *Manasseh* and *Benjamin*, appointed to march under his Ensign, and to be after a sort ranged under his colors. It is not unknown to any that are meanly conversant in the holy Scriptures, that *Joseph* and *Benjamin* were the only children of *Rahel*, the true and beloved wife of *Jacob*, and that both *Manasseh* and *Ephraim*, were the children of *Joseph*, and that the elder was *Manasseh*, the younger *Ephraim*, who notwithstanding hath the first place of honor and preeminence assigned unto him, and *Manasseh* the first borne is compelled to be his underling. What could *Ephraim* claim above his brother, or what had *Manasseh* done to be put behind? It pleaseth God oftentimes to make the first last, and the last first: to thrust down the elder into the place of the younger, and to advance the younger into the seat of the elder.

This appeareth in many places of the Book of *Genesis*, and is so ordinary and common, as it need not to be set down. To insist only upon the present example, we read that when *Joseph* brought his two children before his sick father, *Jacob* stretched out his right hand, and laid it on *Ephraim's* head, and his left hand upon *Manasseh's* head, directing his hands of purpose, neither could be drawn to remove them, but blessed them that day, and said, In thee Israel shall bless and say, God make thee as *Ephraim* and as *Manasseh*; and he set *Ephraim* before *Manasseh*.

Thus God's judgment is oftentimes contrary to man's, and he preferreth that which man despiseth. A notable example whereof we have in *Samuel*, when he was sent to annoynt *David* King, and had the eldest son of *Ishai* before him, he said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him: but the Lord said unto *Samuel*, Look not on his countenance, nor on the height of his stature, because I have refused him: for God seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord beholdeth the heart. *Samuel* was an holy Prophet of God, yet he faileth in binding God's grace to the ordinary course of nature. [Doctrine 5] We learn from hence, that God bestoweth his gifts freely, both when he will, and where he will, and to whom he will. He giveth as a bountiful and gracious father, the graces of election, adoption, justification, sanctification, and all other his benefits of his free love and favor. He lifteth up whom he will, he passeth by, he forsaketh, he putteth and pulleth down whom he pleaseth. Some gifts are temporal, and some eternal: some earthly, and other heavenly: and of both sorts it may be truly said, *Who separateth thee? and what hast thou that thou hast not received? if thou hast received it, why rejoicest thou, as though thou hadst not received it?* This is set down in the song of *Hannah*, The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low and exalteth: he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, & lifteth up y^e beggar from the dunghill, to set them among Princes, and to make them inherit the seat of glory. This appeareth most plainly and evidently in the gifts of God, belonging to a better life, and accompanying salvation. The free grace of god in Christ, is y^e fountain from whence saluatiō floweth, yea it is y^e beginning continuance, & ending of our salvation. The truth hereof may be made plain by y^e particular rehearsal of the several parts thereof, if we consider our election, redemption, calling, faith, justification, regeneration, love, good works, remission of sins, and perseverance in good things unto the end. No man can be saved, and obtain eternal life, except he be predestinated and elected thereunto, before the foundation of the world: for the kingdom of heaven is not given but to those to whom it is prepared of the Father, Matth. 20.23. and 25.34. But election is not of works, but of grace, and therefore is called *the election of grace*. This appeareth, Ephe. 1. *He hath predestinated us to be adopted through Jesus Christ in himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, &c.* No man could be saved, except Christ had come, and had satisfied the justice of God for the sins of the world by his precious blood; for there is no other name under heaven, whereby we must be saved, Act. 4.12. but all his benefits proceed from grace and the everlasting love of God toward us, as John. 3. *God so loved the world, that he hath given his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* No man can be saved, except he be effectually called to Christ and his Gospel, outwardly by the word, and inwardly by the Spirit: but whence proceedeth this grace, but from grace? as the Apostle testifieth, 2 Tim. 1. He hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us through Christ Jesus, before the world was. No man can be saved, except he hath faith in Christ; for the just shall live by faith, Hab. 2.4. and without faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11. But from whence have we faith? By grace, as the Apostle witnesseth, Ephe. 2. By grace ye are saved through faith, & that not of yourselves. None can be saved, except he be justified, as Psa. 34.15, 16. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry; but the face of the Lord, that is, his anger and indignation, is against them that do evil, to cut off their remembrance from the earth. But

our justification cometh from grace, as Rom. 3. We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. No man can be saved, except being justified by faith, he be also sanctified and renewed by the spirit of regeneration; for except a man be borne again, of water and the holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, John. 3. But whence have we this, but from the grace of God? as the Apostle expresseth, Tit. 3. The bountifulness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, and according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. No man can be saved without good works, and a careful and constant endeavor to walk in them; for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus, unto good works which God hath ordained that we should walk in them, Ephe. 2.10. But how are we enabled to perform them, but by the grace and free gift of God? as Ezek. 36. A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your body, and I will give you an heart of flesh: and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

The like may be said of remission of sins. No man can be saved without continual forgiveness of sins, for into many sins and offenses we fall daily, I am, 3.2. But this is given us through his grace only, as the Prophet teacheth, Isaiah 43.1, *even I am he that putteth away thine iniquities for mine own sake*, that is, for no deserts of thine, but thorough grace and favor, *and will not remember thy sins*. and Ephe. 1.7. We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to his rich grace. Lastly, no man is saved, except he persevere and continue in faith, in love, in Christ, in repentance; *in Christ*, and in all good works, as Matth. 24. he that endureth unto the end, he shall be saved, and Revel. 2.10. Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee the crown of life: but from what root and fountain proceedeth this gift? and from whence hath it his beginning? The Apostles and Prophets tell us most plainly and directly, as Jer. 32.39.40. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. God that hath begun his good work in his Saints, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Now as we have said of all the rest, so we may say of eternal life, that it is the free gift of God, and therefore all his gifts, and our salvation, come not from our our merits, but from his mercies; not from our deservings, in whole, or in part, but from his free favor in Christ Jesus.

Let us come to the reasons, and consider [Reason 1] aright the causes hereof. First of all, God will have the praise and glory of his own works, and will not give and grant over the same to another. But if the graces of his Spirit were well deserved of us, and not freely bestowed upon us, we had matter of rejoicing in our own selves, and of boasting against God. The Apostle having shown that the righteousness of God is made manifest without the Law, saith, *Where is then the rejoicing? It is excluded*. And touching Abraham the father of the faithful he saith, *If Abraham were justified by works, he hath wherein to rejoice, but not with God*.

Likewise writing to the Ephesians, chap. 2. *By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of GOD, not of works, lest any man should boast himself*. So then he giveth

all his gifts freely, that he may have the whole praise of his mercy. But so much as we take to our selves, so much he loseth of his glory.

[Reason 2] Secondly, he knoweth we have nothing of our own, we crave our daily bread and drink at his hands. We are beggars and destitute of all good things, and never are able to supply our own wants. Our own penury is such, that we have nothing to boast off, but our misery, poverty, blindness, nakedness, and wretchedness. *We were* (saith the Apostle) *dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in times past we walked, according to the course of this world, and after the Prince that ruleth in the air, even the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.* We are unable to think or to do anything: it is God must work in us the will and the deed: it is he must draw us before we can run after him, or come unto him: and without him we can do nothing, no not so much as think one good thought, or speak one good word, or practice one good work.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, he is a debtor to no man, neither can any of right challenge anything at his hands. He loved us first, and not we him: he made us, and not we our selves: he gave to us, and not we to him: we receive of him, not he of us. The Apostle saith, *Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who was his counselor? or who hath given unto him first, and he shall be recompensed? for of him, and through him, and for him are all things: to him be glory forever, Amen.* Whereby we see he freely bestoweth all things, he oweth nothing of duty he offereth injury to no man, whether he grant, or withhold; whether he give little or much, liberally, or sparingly: to many, or to few. Seeing then, we are to acknowledge his glory▪ and our own poverty, and seeing he oweth nothing to any man, neither is run behind hand in arrearages, as being thereby bound to help him: it followeth that God offereth his gifts and graces freely and frankly unto us.

[Use. 1] What is now to be learned from hence? and what may be gathered for our instruction? First, it serveth to reprove the Church of Rome, that maintain the rags and relics of the old *Pelagians*, and refuse to have the grace of God freely bestowed upon them, lest they should be too much beholden unto him, and therefore they build the castle of man's salvation upon themselves, and lay the ground-work of it upon their own strength, and refuse to set it upon the pillar of God's grace. This appeareth in three respects, in their doctrine of foreseen works, in their doctrine of merits, and in their doctrine of man's free will to good. Thus they build the tower of Babel, that is, of confusion, and establish false causes, touching the order of man's salvation, and err grievously in the beginning, continuance, and perfection thereof. Now, that we do them no wrong at all, in charging them thus far, let us make it manifest in ever particular. The first stone of this tower they lay in such works, as (they say) serve to prepare men to justification, & so they make the foreseen faith of the elect, to be the cause of the election to grace and glory, & that God hath chosen those to eternal life, whom he foresaw would believe and persevere therein unto the end. This hangeth the whole frame of salvation upon the pin of man's faith, as the moving or procuring cause, and not upon the purpose and pleasure of him that calleth us: whereas man's salvation abideth sure and firm, stable, and certain, through him only that hath loved us, and called us to his excellent knowledge; and therefore faith foreseen, is not the cause of

it. The Apostle reasoning of the cause of our election, never affirmeth it to be of him that believeth, *but of him that calleth*: for then it might be said to be of our selves, Ephe. 2. which cannot be. Again, if we observe the golden chain, wherein the causes of our salvation are linked together, we may strongly conclude this point. For our faith is in time after the grace of God, and therefore cannot be the cause of grace, and consequently of election. It is against all rules of right reason, that that which cometh after, should be any cause of that which goeth before. But faith is one of the effects of election, in as much as God hath chosen us, not because he knew we would believe hereafter, but to the end we should believe, that is, that he might bestow upon us faith, and so save us in his own Son, Ephe. 1.4. Tit. 1.1. Act. 13.48. We are elected, *that we should be holy*; and faith is said to be proper *to the elect, and so many believed, as were ordained to everlasting life*.

Thirdly, we are elect, as taken out of the common mass of corruption, as the sons of wrath, borne dead in sins, while we were yet enemies unto him. Now, such as God justifieth, such he also chooseth, and decreeth to justify, as Rom. 4.5. and 5.8. *Unto him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness: and God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*. But in the sons of wrath, and in such as are borne dead in sins, no faith at all could be foreseen: so that the foreseeing of faith could not be the cause of election. For if that which doeth come after, cannot be the cause of that which goeth before, as we have shown already: much less can that which is not at all, be the cause of that which is.

Fourthly, faith is the gift of GOD. It is given of God to us, and the work of GOD in us, John. 6.29. *This is the work of GOD, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent*. So the Apostle saith, *Unto you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also for to suffer for his sake*, Phil. 1.29. It is he that bestoweth it, and increaseth it. Before this gift, there is nothing in us but infidelity and unbelief. As it is not in man's power to repent when he will, but when God will, Lament. 5.21. Ierem. 31. Psal. 51. Act. 11.18. 2 Tim. 2.25, 26. so it is not in man's power to believe when he will, John. 12.39, 40. albeit he have the means, though he hear the word, and partake the Sacraments; wherefore this cannot be the cause of God's election, as if he were moved to elect us by that as by a cause, which he bestoweth upon us, after we are elected: for then the same thing should be the cause of it self, and before it self, which is against natural sense, right reason, and true religion.

Lastly, if faith foreseen were the cause of election, then infidelity foreseen should also be the cause of reprobation: but this is false because then all mankind should be reprobated and rejected, forasmuch as the whole mass of mankind is corrupt, and God could foresee nothing in it, but incredulity and unbelief. Thus we see, that our election dependeth not upon our own works, or our own faith, or anything in our selves, but on the mercy & love of God; there was no cause in us to move him. For if anything had been in us, we might be said to have the first stroke in our salvation, & to lay the first stone in that building, and God should come after us, or behind us. True it is, he hath determined to elect us, and to save us of his good pleasure, but he will bring it to pass by means, to wit, by the merits of Christ, by calling

of us, by giving of us faith, by justifying of us, by sanctifying of us, and by working in us such like effect.

Secondly, this doctrine overthroweth all merits and deserts of man, which abolish the free grace of God. God's mercy is our merit; our works are not, neither can be our merit. If our election be by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace: But if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work were no more work, as the Apostle concludeth, Rom. 11.6. We are justified through faith in Christ: in him standeth our salvation, and by his merits we are made righteous. Christ Jesus is the corner stone of the building, Ephes. 2. he is the foundation of the building forasmuch as other foundation none can lay, 1 Cor. 3. he is also the highest stone of the building, *notwithstanding the mountains*, that is; the strongest opposition of enemies. But let us see what *merit is*, that our understanding may be the better, and our judgment the sounder touching this matter. Merit is a work undue, to which we are not bound, making the reward and recompense that was not due to be due. When a debtor satisfieth his creditour, he payeth that which he oweth him, he giveth no more then is due unto him by Law and equity, by reason and conscience: neither doth he deserve any thanks, but through the fault of men, as the heathen knew well enough, who confess that such was the corruption of the times, that when a man brought to another, even his own, he was to be thanked. Christ our Savior, a better master, teacheth us this more fully, Luk. 17.8. When a man hath a servant, who girdeth himself, and serveth him till he have eaten and drunken, *Doth he then thank him because he hath done the things that were commanded him? I trow, nay; so likewise ye when ye have done all those things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.* Wherefore, we make a weak plea to plead our own merits, who have nothing but by the merits of Christ. But it will be objected, [Objection.] that we find in Scripture no mention at all of the merits of Christ. I answer, [Answer.] It is true concerning the word it self. Nevertheless, if they will conclude anything against the merits of Christ, because the bare name in so many letters and syllables, is not extant in the word of God, they may as well gainsay the Trinity, refuse the Sacraments, deny the Catholic Church, and hold the Son not to be consubstantiall with the Father; Forasmuch as none of these are expressed there. But if they mean, and understand the thing it self, then we have the merits of Christ plentifully preached unto us in the holy Scripture, to whom the whole work of our salvation is ascribed. The Apostle teacheth, that our *redemption is a possession purchased by him*, that is, purchased by the merit of his death. And in the former Epistle to the Thessalonians, he saith, *God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*, that is, procured unto us by his merits. So in the twentieth chapter of the Acts, *Paul*, in his exhortation to the Elders of Ephesus, willeth them carefully to *feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*: where he maketh the blood of Christ meritorious. And elsewhere he saith, *we are justified by his blood, and reconciled to God by his Son*, and so shall be saved by his life, Rom. 5.9, 10. If then we challenge anything to our selves, we take so much from Christ's worthiness. He was not bound in any bond unto us, who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal to God. Wherefore, our works can challenge nothing at God's hands, for as much as whatsoever we can do, is as due debt unto him. Thus the Apostle speaketh, Rom.

8. *Brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; whereby he understandeth the contrary, as a member opposed; but we are debtors to the Spirit, to live after the Spirit.*

So then our spiritual life, is called a debt, which is true in many respects. First, in regard of our creation: Secondly, in regard of our redemption: Thirdly, in regard of our glorification. Our spiritual life is due to God in regard of our creation, because it is God that hath made us, and not we our selves: we are the work of his hands, who hath created us according to his image, and thereby bound us; as by a strong band to know him, and worship him. Hence it appeareth, that *Adam* himself in his estate of innocence, could have claimed nothing of God by merit, because whatsoever he was, he was it by him; & whatsoever he had, he had received it through his gift, so that he should have paid him with his own, which deserveth no thanks, as we heard before. True it is, man fell away, defaced and deformed this image, and made himself liable to eternal destruction: howbeit, he could not thus shake off the yoke of his neck, nor the fetters from his feet, nor acquit himself of the debt and obligation, when of a debtor to God, he made himself a bondslave to the devil. A debtor riotously wasting his goods, and carelessly consuming the stock and substance that he hath, and thereby making himself a bankrupt, is not discharged of his debt, but standeth bound to pay it as before. God will not loose his right, nor let go his hold, and therefore, albeit we are started back from him, he remaineth the same; & as he made us, so we remain obliged unto him. Hence we see, what is the reason, why God commandeth duties of us in his Law, that neither we, nor our fathers are able to perform.

If a father should require that of his son, or a master exact of his servant that which were impossible to do, as to travel an hundred thousand mile in one day, or to fly up to heaven, might he not be thought to be a tyrant? But the case standeth not between God and us, as between a father and his children, or between a master and his servants. For he chargeth no more upon us, then he had enabled us to do, and had given us strength to perform, so that if there be any impossibility to do it, the fault resteth in our selves, and not in God. It is no cruelty in him to require so much of us as he doth, but iniquity in us that doth disable us. He abideth the same that he was, but we abide not the same that we were: so that there is no change in him, but the change is in us: so that where he had graciously bestowed much, he may justly require the more. Again, our spiritual life is a debt, and our works due to him in regard of our redemption, justification, and sanctification; in consideration of all, the which we owe our selves wholly unto God, and he in justice may require all the service that we can possibly perform unto him. A servant bought with money and redeemed out of bondage, is a debtor to his master, and is wholly at his commandment, because he oweth to him his life, his liberty, and all that he hath. How much more then must we consider our selves to be wholly the Lord's, to serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives, being redeemed from the bondage of sin and slavery of Satan, *not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as a Lamb unspotted and undefiled*, 1 Pet. 1. Neither were we once only made free men, but moreover are laden with many benefits by this our Savior and redeemer, being regenerated with his Spirit, to walk before him in newness of life. So that our unthankfulness is exceeding great, if forgetting the greatness of our deliverance; we return to our vomit again, as dogs, and lie wallowing in the mire as filthy swine.

Lastly, in regard of the benefits to come, which by the Spirit of Christ, we do certainly expect and look for, to wit, our resurrection of the body, and glorification in the heavens.

These being exceeding blessings, do make us infinite debtors unto God. Hence we learn to detest the heresy of Popish hypocrites, that dare boast of the merits of the Saints, and of works of supererogation, an evident argument of intolerable proud spirits. For debt and merit are quite contrary; they are so opposite the one to the other, that the first being established, it overthroweth the second, as Rom. 4.4, 5. *To him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt: but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*

If then our whole life be a debt of the Spirit, it must of necessity be false, that there is any meriting of life and salvation by any works, either of congruity, or condignity, or supererogation. For whatsoever it pleaseth them to prate of merits, either publicly, or privately to their disciples, dare any of them when they are ready to go the way of all flesh, and must be presented before the eternal judge, dare any of them, I say, desire of God to give them according to their merits? dare any in the pride of his heart so exalt and lift up himself, as to pray, Lord, I am worthy of thy mercy, I have deserved thy kingdom, pay me that thou owest unto me, I desire nothing at thy hands gratis, or freely, my works are truly and properly meritorious, I have a right to heaven, and deserve it worthily? I expect not eternal life as an alms, but as a price due unto my labors, I am content thou enter into judgment with me, for I have righteousness in mine own person, and therefore I crave not *be accepted in thy beloved*, but in myself. Lord, thou hast made me able to merit heaven for myself, and therefore repay me according to my worth.

I think none of them are come to this presumption, to plead for themselves with God, & therefore whatsoever they write, whatsoever they speak, whatsoever they resolve and determine in their schools and pulpits, they deny it, & renounce it wholly at the point of death, & with their own mouths condemn their own folly. In their life they talk of merits, but at their death they are glad to call for mercy: & so by their own practice prove and confirm the truth of the doctrine of the Protestants, howsoever against the light of their own consciences they oppose themselves flatly as enemies unto it. The debt of the creature, even of the man regenerate, is greater then he is able to pay the thousandth part; nay the more he payeth, the more he oweth; and is bound to pay, forasmuch as the benefits of God do daily grow and increase toward him, and abound in a wonderful measure, that they augment the debt, & strengthen y^e obligation. Neither can they escape and avoid the force of this, [Objection.] by a frivolous and false distinction, that our works are not indeed meritorious in the rigor of Justice, or absolutely considered in themselves, but that they are so by the ordinance and acceptation of God. [Answer.] For albeit God accept of our works, and reward them even to a cup of cold water, Mat. 10. yet he accepteth them not as merits, but as the due obedience of his sons, which he recompenseth freely and fully, because he that cannot lie or deceive, hath promised the reward. Neither is it the ordinance of God, that we should merit by our obedience, but that we should perform the worship and honor that is due unto him, Tit. 3.4. Act. 15. Let them therefore show us, where God hath made any such promise

unto us to accept our works as merits, and we will believe them. The Lord gave the Israelites the land of Canaan, not for their works, *but for his own love, and mercy*. If they could not merit the earthly Canaan, how should any deserve the heavenly? We are taught to pray to GOD to give us our daily bread. If we cannot merit the food of this life, no not one morsel of bread, but must crave it of him as poor beggars do an alms, at the doors of men: much less can we merit everlasting life, *which is the gift of God*, Rom. 6.23. For what is a bit of bread in comparison of the kingdom of heaven? or what is the food of the body, in respect of the food of the soul? Lastly, this doctrine destroyeth another bulwark of the Church of Rome, whereby they set up man's nature, and that is free will, teaching that there is a cooperation of man's free will, with God's free grace in the first act of our conversion. A doctrine full of pride and folly, as well as the former, for as much as this is to part stakes between God and our selves, and to divide our conversion between him and us, and consequently to ascribe as much to man as to God. Christ saith, that without him we can do nothing, we cannot come unto him, except the Father draw us, John. 6. *It is God that doth work in us the will and the deed*, saith the Apostle. We are all by nature corrupt, there is no part sound in us, or without us. We are not only as crazy or sick, but as dead men. God doth all, and we nothing in good things. He preventeth us with his grace, he prepareth us by his word, he enclineth us by his Spirit, and worketh both the beginning and the ending of our Salvation. Wherefore the Church of Rome is deceived, that make us to be as the man that fell among thieves who left him wounded and half dead. We are fallen into the hands of a more cruel and bloody tyrant, who left us not half dead, but hath taken away life from us, and brought us under the dominion of death. We teach that we are able to do no good; we have stony hearts, and are strangers from the promises of God. They divide our goodness between God and man, as when an horse is hardly able to draw a Coach, another cometh, who being coupled with him, do work and walk together: so as that which one could not do alone, he is able being helped by another, who by their joint labours stir it forward. True it is, to use means to obtain faith and repentance, is in our own power after a sort. A man may go from place to place, enter into the house of God, or not enter, hear the word or not hear, meditate upon it, or not meditate; as it is said of *Herod* an unregenerate man, Mar. 6. *that he heard John gladly when he preached the word*. This therefore is left unto us, and put as it were into our hands to make us without excuse, and to teach us to condemn our selves and not God. How many are there that are ready to lay the fault of their infidelity upon God, because (they say) he giveth them not faith, so that it is not in their power to believe? But why do they not that which is in their own power? True it is, God is not bound to give faith to any, or to turn his heart. The cause of infidelity is in himself. Nevertheless, God hath not left himself without witness, nor man without excuse. He carrieth a judge in his own bosom, that shall be able to convince him.

For why do not men that which they are enabled to do? why do they not attend to his word, as to his ordinance? why do they not make conscience of absenting themselves from the preaching of it? They may come if they will, but they will not. They excuse themselves as the guests in the Gospel: they have ears to hear, but they regard not: they have feet to carry them into the Church, but they are slow to this duty, and swift rather to any other: they

have eyes to read the Scripture, yet they seldom or never read it: they have hearts to meditate on the word, but they think upon nothing less. Therefore all these outward helps shall be sufficient witnesses against them

Now then, albeit we may perform such duties before remembered touching the means of our salvation, yet to assent to the word by faith, that thereby we may be converted, enlightened, called, and regenerated to eternal life, is in the hand of God only, and cannot be performed of us.

[Use. 2] Secondly, seeing God's gifts are freely given by him, it is our duty to depend upon him, and to ask them at his hands when we want them. We learn to whom to go, and what way to enter that we may obtain thē. We all stand in need of his help for our souls and bodies. In the soul is ignorance, presumption, blindness, and hardness of heart: pray to him to remove these evils, and as it were to pluck these noisome & loathsome weeds out of our gardens by the roots. If we think our selves able to do it, we deceive our selves. If we feel the burden of our sins to press us, and to lie heavy and hard upon our souls, we must go to him that hath borne them in his body, and is able to take them away. He calleth such unto him as *are weary and heavy laden*, with promise and purpose to ease them. If we want anything for our body, he that is the Creator of the body will not suffer us to pine away, he will not leave us and forsake us. Let us not trust to our own labors, nor riches, nor abundance, as the rich man did in the Gospel, Luk, 12: considering that no man's life consisteth in the multitude of his riches. Hence it is, that our Savior willeth us to ask, and we shall receive: to seek, and we shall find, Math. 7. If we suppose we may attain unto his blessings any other way then by prayer, we are altogether ignorant of the way that leadeth to his Treasury. For, *Except the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain: & except he build the house, they labor in vain that are the builders of it, Psal. 127, 1.* It is in vain for us to rise up early, and to sit up late, and to eat the bread of sorrows, which worldly men take to be the only means to thrive: it is the blessing of GOD upon the hand of the diligent that maketh rich. Let us therefore season and sanctify the works of our hands & the labors of our callings, that so we may have comfort and find rest in this troublesome sea. This will make our labors sweet and pleasant, when we get our living in the sweat of our brows. Besides, when we find any defect of grace in us, or any weakness in spiritual things, as all the faithful do more or less, let us come to him that giveth freely and liberally, and reproacheth no man. He it is that will supply our wants, and increase his gifts in us. This coming unto him for all needful graces, hath many branches that belong unto it, which Christ pointeth unto, Math: 13: when he saith, *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in the field, which when a man hath found, he hideth it, and for joy thereof departeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buieth that field.* If we will attain unto grace, we must depart with somewhat, we must sell all that we have. That which is our own is sin; but we are loath to leave it and depart from it. It cleaveth fast to the ribs, & sticketh fast in the bones, that it will hardly out of the flesh. We delight in it, we make much of it, we are wholly addicted to it. It may seem a strange speech, that we are said to sell all that we have, and buy that we have not. For what have we to sell unto God? or what can we give unto him? or what are we able to buy at his hands? Our selling of all, is our parting or departing from our sins; our leaving of them, our renouncing of them, so that we are determined to keep

them no longer. As it is in bargains and purchases between party and party, whosoever buyeth anything, giveth and taketh; he parteth with somewhat, and receiveth somewhat by exchange: so must it be between Christ and us in this spiritual bargain and sale. We leave that which is evil, we receive that which is good. There is no man that selleth one sin for naught, he hath his reward a thousand fold, because he selleth it to Christ, the best rewarder. All men are content here to sell to him that will give most. Christ is the best chapman, the best buyer, he giveth eternal salvation to us. To draw us from our sins, that do us the greatest hurt, and bring infinite danger upon soul and body, he offereth to recompense us an hundred fold more for withdrawing our hearts from our sins, then the world can reward us for the using of them. Art thou not steadfast in religion, but as a reed shaken with the wind, sometimes carried one way, and sometimes inclined another way? Sell this thy doubting and wavering unto Christ, be no longer unstable & unsettled, and he will give thee constancy to continue unto the end, and *will strengthen that which he hath wrought in thee*. Art thou puffed up with pride in apparel? Sell this corruption, and he will garnish thee with better garments; he will clothe thee with his innocence and righteousness, that the filthiness of thy nakedness shall not appear. Art thou poor and needy? Christ saith unto thee, *The Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*; Wilt thou provide for thy children & thy household? *David saith, I was young and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread, Psal. 37, 25*. Now in this selling of our sins, and parting from them, we must observe these particulars.

First, that it must not be for a short time or for a season, but forever. We must not sell our sins for a season only, but renounce all right, title, interest, and propriety in them; we must depart from them with a full purpose and resolution never to take them up again, never to practice them anymore. To sell anything, is to alienate the property of it from our selves. Blessed are all such sellers. In this point therefore we must not be lenders, as they that challenge the right of being owners, but quite and clean put from our selves all title to our former sins. Many indeed lay them down for a time, as hypocrites do, *wiping their mouths with the harlot, and returning to their vomit with the dog, or to their wallowing in the mire, with the swine*. Thus it fareth with such as come to the word and Sacraments of God, with profane and unreformed hearts. They seem godly while they are in the Church; but their righteousness is but as the morning dew, they hang down their heads as a bulrush for a time, & afterward they are as bad or worse then they were before. This is nothing in the sight of GOD, except we utterly forsake our sins. True it is, the faithful and godly man may fall into some sins which they have forsaken, as *Abraham* did in denying his wife, but they must do it, as strangers to it, not as owners of it, for it is none of theirs, they have given over the use of it, and the right unto it. It is the man that is unregenerate, he may lay lawful claim unto it: as for us, it is no more ours, then the house that we have sold, and so alienated it from us.

Secondly, there is another kind of sale that is faulty and deceitful, which is, when we are content to sell some of our sins, but we will not sell all of them. Some there are so covetous, that they will part from nothing, they will sell nothing: Though they be never so well offered, they are so in love with their own faults and folly, that they will keep them still,

albeit to their infinite hindrance & loss, even the loss of their souls. Others are content to lend their sins, but they will not leave them: they are willing to abstain from them for a time, but they will not renounce them forever. These are like the Israelites, who albeit they were brought with a strong hand out of Egypt, yet they had a mind to return thither again, they thought upon the fish which they did eat there, and remembered the Cucumbers and the Melons, the Leekes, the Onions, and the Garlicke; these they lusted after with all their soul. Or as *Lots* wife being delivered out of *Sodom*, as a firebrand out of the burning, or as two legs, or a piece of an ear out of the mouth of the Lyon, Amos 3, 12, and 4, 11: even a little remnant out of the common destruction of the City: she looked back again toward *Sodom*, and had her mind there upon such things as she had left behind: which showeth she had not sold all, but as he that lendeth his goods looketh for them again, so would she fain return to those things that yet she retained in her heart. If the case be better with us, and that our righteousness exceed these, yet let us not flatter our selves, and deceive our own souls, forasmuch as we must go farther, and step many degrees beyond them. For albeit we can be content to sell, and to sell forever, yet there is more required of us, so that we may say with Christ, One thing is wanting, we must sell all, and must keep back nothing. We must not sell as *Ananias & Sapphira* did, they kept back part of the price: so many make sale, but they are deceitful Merchants, they will not pass all, but leave out somewhat in the bargain. So do many deal doubly with God, they desire to forgo their sins, but they will keep somewhat. But he cannot be mocked or cousened of us. We must renounce our sweet sins & our profitable sins, with all the appurtenances and dependencies unto them. We must abstain from all appearance of evil. We must pull up these weeds by the roots, that they grow not in the gardens of our heart again. God will have all that is ours left, or else he accounteth nothing truly left. *Herod* was content to hear *John*, to fear him, to reverence him, to do many things that he required, and to reform many evils that he reprov'd, and himself had practiced, but when he told him, he must not marry his brothers wife, he stopped his ears and would not hear, he was determined to keep that one sin. The hypocrites in *Micah* are ready to *come before the Lord, and to bow themselves before the most high, to offer Rivers of oil and the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul*: nevertheless the Prophet telleth them that God liketh not of this bargain, inasmuch as he requireth of them to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God. We are like unto the young man mentioned in the Gospel, whom Christ is said to have loved, *When he was bidden to sell all that he had, he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved*. When *Moses* was come to age, he refused to be called the son of *Pharaohs* daughter, and chose rather to suffer adversity with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: but we would be content to serve *Pharaoh* and God also: to join our selves to the Church, and yet to be friends with the world: to live in the Spirit, and yet to follow the delights of the flesh together. The Apostle accounted all things as loss, and esteemed them as dung, *that he might win Christ*, Phil. 3, 8. Wherefore let us follow his steps, and be able to say with the Apostles, *Loe, we have left all, and have followed thee*, Mar. 10, 28. If then we make show of selling all our sins, and retain any part or parcel of them unto our selves, it shall do us no more good, then it did *Ananias & Sapphira* to sell their possession, and to keep back part of the price, which kindled such a fire, as that it consumed them both.

Thirdly, there is another error in the sale of our sins, when we exchange sin for sin. These men sell one sin to buy another, which is a base and beastly kind of merchandize, & a carnal and corrupt trading, which God never accepteth or commendeth. It is no true repentance to turn from one sin unto another, as unruly beasts that break out of one ground into another. True repentance is a turning of the heart from all sin. The repentance of one sin truly, bringeth with it the repentance of all known sins.

Whosoever forsaketh riotousnesse of life, & betaketh himself to covetousness, changeth his sin, but not his heart: as he that is vexed with one kind of fever, by disordering of himself turneth that into another, into a worse feauer. Such a man getteth not health, but altereth the disease. So is it in the diseases of the soul, we chop and change with God, we run out of one evil into another. When we are escaped out of one snare of Satan, he is ready to catch us with another. When we are plunged out of the gulf of despair, wherein we stick fast as in a deep pit of mire and clay, he faileth not to tempt us unto presumption, and to carry us aloft in his arms, that he may give us the greater downfall. Hence it is, that Christ our Savior willeth us daily to pray unto the Father, that *we may not be led into temptation, but be delivered from evil*. For he is an enemy that never resteth, but seeketh as a roaring Lyon whom he may devour. If he cannot keep us in superstition he will draw us to profaneness. If he cannot hold us in the ways of the Gentiles, he will make us lead our lives as loose and licentious Christians. If he cannot deceive us to believe there are many God's, he will tempt us to think that there is no God, no hell, no heaven: This is to pass from one extreme to another, as it were from drunkenness to thirst: whereas true repentance is a changing of the mind, going out of one extreme into the mean, in which we ought continually to continue. And thus we do sell all that we have, all that is ours: howbeit this is not enough: for we must also buy this pearl and treasure, that it may be made ours, which otherwise is not ours. To this are required these three things: First, we must hunger and thirst after it. Secondly, we must receive and retain it. Thirdly, we must grow strong by it, and steadfast in it. Touching the first, we must know that there must be in us a spiritual appetite, that our hungry and thirsty souls may be refreshed by the holy ordinances of God. We must come unto Christ the fountain of all grace; if we be athirst, he will not send us away empty. Indeed we ought to have a feeling of our own misery, but this must always be joined with a desire to drink of his mercy. The knowledge of our own wants must go before, but the feeling of his goodness must follow after. Hence it is, that the Apostle *Peter* saith, *Desire the sincere milk of the word*, but he addeth this condition, *If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious*. Secondly, it is our duty to receive & retain that which we have bought, and not suffer it through carelessness and negligence to slip from us. The wise-man exhorteth us to *buy the truth, but not to sell it*. We have liberty given us at our own discretion to chaffer and change for temporal commodities, we may buy and sell, we may sell and buy, we may let go from us or purchase unto us: but we must take heed we do not so with heavenly things, they are of another nature. When we have sold for gain an earthly thing, we may buy it again at our pleasure or leisure: but if we forgo heavenly wisdom and riches, it may be we shall never get it again, we are in danger to leave it and lose it forever. Wherefore Christ our Savior speaketh to y^e church in *Thyatira*, w^{ch}▪ we ought all to hear and receive as a commandment given unto

us; *Hold fast till I come*. We see how hand-fast worldly men are in the things of this life, they will by no means let them go, nor suffer them to be wrung and wrested from them. O that we would do the like in better things; when we have gotten true religion in our hearts, and planted the fear of God in them, as it were in the doors of our houses: O that we would deny and defy whatsoever goeth about to pluck it & convey it from us. If the world, or the flesh, or the Devil, our three mortal enemies shall assault us, to hold us in their snares, let us break their bands, & cast them to the ground, and tread them as dung under our feet. Lastly, it is our special duty to increase daily in grace, and to grow strong in it, as men that go from strength to strength. It is the exhortation of *Paul to Timothy* his son, that he should *be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. 2, 1. writing to the *Philippians*, he stirreth them up to *stand fast in the Lord*, Phil. 4, 1. He warneth the *Ephesians* to *be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, Eph. 6, 10. He admonisheth the *Corinthians*, to *stand fast in the faith, to quite them like men, and to be strong*, 1 Corin 16, 13. The Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, prayeth for them, that the GOD of peace would *make them perfect in every good work to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ*, Hebr. 13, 21. *It is a good thing that the heart be stablished with grace*, Heb. 13, 9: and that we be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we are all well assured that our labor is not in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. 15, 58. We must have our hearts settled and constant in good things, that we be not as children, carried about with every vanity. We must be resolute in the truth, and stand, having our loins girt about with the truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, &c. As we grow in age, so let us grow in grace: and as every year addeth to our life, so let it add to our faith. If we stand at a stay, we shall never come to the ende of our race: but if we grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall receive the ende of our faith, which is the salvation of our souls.

Thirdly, we learn to confess from whence [Use. 3] we have received life temporal, spiritual, and eternal, one following another, and all begun in this life and to acknowledge our thankfulness to God for these his blessings. The temporal is common to us with the wicked, but the other two, to wit, the spiritual and eternal life are proper to the elect, and make them Citizens of the kingdom of heaven. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases: who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies*. He respecteth not what we are, or what we are worthy of, but as he loved us before we were, which argueth the bottomless sea of his grace toward us, so he never ceaseth to follow us with his mercy, & to add love to his love, always preventing us with his liberal blessings. True it is, the gifts of God are great toward us in regard of temporal things, which are of the least and lowest nature, forasmuch as *in him we live, & move, and have our being*: he blesseth us, he keepeth us, he preserveth us, he defendeth us, and suffereth nothing to do us hurt: but besides these, he giveth us to believe, he calleth us to the knowledge of his truth, he justifieth us, he sanctifieth us, he redeemeth us, he establisheth us that we shall never be removed; and all these are freely and frankly bestowed upon us, not purchased by us. Howbeit, we shall never understand the foundation of God's mercy, nor learn the height, the breadth, and bottom of his love, until we come to behold and consider our free election and

salvation to be merely by his grace. And if once we come to the understanding hereof, it will be most forcible above all the former reasons to move us to magnify his goodness, and to give up our selves wholly to him, and consecrate all that is in us to his glory. Indeed this consideration y^t we have received life & health, and peace, and liberty, & all things belonging unto them (if we had no farther cause) ought to move us to thankfulness & obedience: but this layeth the groundworke, and reacheth to the top of all, that he loved us before the world was, and therefore we must love him again, extol his praise, confess his Name, and fear to offend him, and serve him in righteousness and true holiness all the days of our life. This is the beginning and as it wer the first step to true humility; it is a forcible weapon to strike down all pride and presumption, and to give them their deaths wound: it stoppeth the mouths of arrogant men, who would gladly sacrifice to their own nets, and build their salvation upon themselves. Therefore the Prophet saith in the Name of the Lord, *I will establish my Covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: that thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth anymore, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.* He will have no flesh to rejoice in it self: he will have the whole glory of our salvation: he saw us polluted in our own blood: he found us cast out into the open field, to the contempt and loathing of our person: he set his love toward us, and spread his skirt over us, and covered our nakedness, and said unto us when we were in our blood, *Live*, to the end we should challenge no part of his work to our selves. Vnderdesued love is a great binder. There is no love comparable to this love, which began before we began, and shall live when we are dead and buried. Our salvation having so sure a foundation, is more firm then the frame of heaven and earth: whereas if it were built upon our selves, and committed unto our selves to be kept, alas, it would quickly fall down as a ruinous Palace, or a tottring wall, and we could have no certainty or assurance of it, yea, albeit we were renewed to our first innocence, as appeareth in *Adam*, who fell in the garden, as the Angels themselves had done before that were in heaven. But seeing it is hid with God and put into his hands as a faithful Creator, no creature shall be able to take it from us, as no creature could give salvation unto us. So then, it behooveth us to give him praise for beginning his work in us, for the continuance of it in us, and to crave of him the full & perfect finishing of it unto the day of JESUS CHRIST.

Fourthly, this putteth us in mind to use [Use. 4] all meekness and moderation toward others that are not yet called to the knowledge of the truth, but wander as blind men that cannot find the way. For seeing our calling and conversion, and every good gift is of God's grace, it showeth that *there is no difference* between them and us by nature, but by grace; we have nothing of our selves, being as far from heaven as the most profane, but all is of God's good pleasure. We are all equal and no way better: we are all the children of wrath, as well as others. It is a true saying, that there are many sheep without, and many wolves within. We see this in the examples of the Gentiles, of *Manasseh*, of *Mary Magdalene*, of *Paul*, & many others, of whom we shall speak afterward. The Church of the Jews confess, that they had a *little Sister which had no breasts*: and Christ himself teacheth, he hath *other sheep which are not of this fold*, whom also he must bring home, & they should hear his voice, so that there should be one fold, and one Shepherd, John 10, 16. Thus it should come to pass, when the time

appointed was come, that GOD would enlarge *Japheth*, that he should dwell in the tents of *Shem*, Gen. 9, 17. This use hath many branches, as a fruitful Tree that spreadeth it self many ways.

First, it belongeth unto us to pity them that go astray, & to bewail their ignorance. What grief doth it move, and how great cōpassion doth it work in us by the instinct of nature, to see a man blind, or dumb, or deaf, or in any misery and necessity? But this is the condition of all unregenerate persons, they are blind and see nothing, 2 Pet. 1. They are dumb, and deaf, and dead men, Eph. 2, 1. They have not the life of God in them, they can stir neither hand nor foot toward the kingdom of heaven.

Secondly, if any of our brethren be fallen, let us put under our hand to stay them or raise them up, knowing that it is our duty to exhort one another, lest we be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; and so much the rather let us be careful herein, because the day of the Lord draweth near. If the Ox or Ass of our enemy be ready to lie down under his burden, we are commanded to help him up: and therefore much more we ought to do it unto our brother.

Thirdly, we must condemn no man rashly, nor sit down in the seat of God to judge another man's servant, which standeth or falleth to his own master. Let us set before us the example of God, who is very pitiful and merciful. He calleth at all hours, who hath the times and seasons in his own power, Math. 20, 6. Acts 1, 7. as the householder that hired laborers into his Vineyard all the day long, even unto the last hour. Besides, we are warned not to judge, lest we be judged, Math. 7, 1. So that with what measure we mete to others, with the same it shall be measured to us again. Let us beware of rash judgment, & headstrong and headlong affections. Let us judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, 1 Cor. 4, 5. Many things are hidden for a while, which time shall discover: for though the darkness of the night may cover them, or the ignorance and willfulness of man hide them, yet they shall be revealed, and shall not be unpunished.

Lastly, it is our duty to pray for their conversion that are not converted, and to offer them the means that they may be converted. We must be gentle unto all men, and patient toward them, instructing them with meekness that are contrary minded, proving *whether God will give them repentance*, that they may be recovered out of the snare of the Devil, 2 Tim. 2, 25. We see how Christ prayed for his enemies, that they might have their ignorance pardoned, Luc. 23, 34. *Stephen* desired that the sins of his persecutors might not be charged upon them, Acts 7, 60. *Paul* earnestly wished & craved that *Agrippa* might be converted, and altogether be made a Christian, Act. 26, 29. Hence it is, that many which persecuted Christ, and crucified the Lord of glory, though they were most horrible transgressors, yet heard the word, were pricked in their hearts, and did lay hold on eternal life, Acts 2, 41, 37. Let us commit the success evermore unto God, that hath the hearts of all men in his own hand. If notwithstanding the word of salvation offered unto them, they shut their eyes, and stop their ears, & harden their hearts, & will not turn, lest they should be saved; let us not be curious to search the causes why they do not believe, or expostulate the matter with them

through impatience, but rather leave them to the mercy or justice of GOD, whose judgments are unsearchable, and as a pit whose bottom cannot be sounded: and give unto him humble thanks that hath opened our ears, that we may hear, & our eyes, that we may see clearly into the secrets of his Law. Let us praise him for revealing his truth to us, rather than enquire why he dealeth not so with all others.

Lastly, seeing the gifts of God are freely [Use. 5] bestowed, let us follow the example of our heavenly Father, that is, let us give freely and liberally, and be content to lend to the poor, looking for nothing again, according to the counsel of Christ our Savior. God looketh for no good turn at our hands, our well-doing cannot extend unto him, Psal. 16. He standeth not in need of our help, he wanteth nothing. This use is concluded in the latter end of the fifth chapter of S. Matthews Gospel, where Christ exhorteth to love our enemies, & to do good to them that hate us, &c: *That we may be the children of our Father which is in Heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust, &c.* We are commanded to abound in this grace of liberality toward the poor members of Christ, as GOD hath abounded in the fruits of love toward us. We are not ignorant of Christ's dealing toward us, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich, 2 Cor. 8, 9. Our abundance must supply the want of others, that there may be an holy kind of equality, as it was among them that gathered *Manna*, *He that had gathered much, had nothing over: and he that had gathered little, had no lack.* Hence it is, that the Apostle *James* saith, He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shown no mercy, and mercy rejoiceth against judgment. Whosoever therefore hath this worlds good, and seeth his brother in need, how dwelleth the love of God in that man, if he shut up his bowels of compassion from him? 1 John 3, 17. We see this in the example of the rich man in the Gospel; he had occasion of showing mercy offered unto him, poor *Lazarus* lay at his gate; but he closed his eyes and would not see him; he shut up his heart and would not relieve him: and therefore it came to pass that as he denied the crumbs that fell from his table, a small alms: so he could not obtain a drop of water, a small refreshing. As he stopped his ears, and would not hear, so he asked only to have the tippe of the finger dipped in water to cool his tongue, and yet could not be heard. When the *Sodomites* had once filled up the measure of their sins by pride in themselves, & contempt of the poor, God rained down storms and tempests of fire and brimstone, so that they were utterly consumed, Ezek. 16, 49. Gen. 19, 24. Hence it is that Christ our Savior saith, *Make to yourselves friends of unrighteous, mammon, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations,* Lu. 16, 9. He meaneth not by the *Mammon of unrighteousness*, such riches as are wrongfully and unjustly gotten; for GOD accepteth not such alms or gifts at our hands, neither is he well pleased with such sacrifices, though we give them to the poor, and should relieve thereby the necessities of the Saints: but he calleth them so and giveth them that title, because they may fraudulently, wickedly, and wrongfully be taken from us: so that it containeth the force of a reason, why we ought not niggardly and sparingly to hoard them and heap them up to our selves, forasmuch as we may be robbed of them by the unfaithfulness of servants, by the violence of thieves, by the cunning of forgers, by the force of oppressers, by the deceitfulness of borrowers, by the vnconsciableness of sellers, by the covetousness of Land-Lord's,, by the biting of userers, by the falsifying of

measures and weights, by the couzening of bankrouths, and by such like instruments of injustice. The things of this life are all uncertain, we may return to the earth and leave them, or they take their wings and fly up to heaven, and leave us. True it is, we are not to give hand over head without discretion and difference, neither to maintain strong and sturdy beggars, neither idle and loitering persons, that are able▪ to labor and will not: but wear to consider the wants of such poor as are diligent in their places, especially the poor Saints, and those that are of the household of faith. The alms of *Cornelius did ascend up in remembrance before God*, Acts 10, 4. *Tabitha* is commended to be *full of good works, and alms deeds which she did*, so that the widows shown unto *Peter* the coats and garments which she made while she was with them, Acts 9, 36. And howsoever this be a sacrifice well pleasing unto God, sweet in his nostrils as incense, yet it is unpleasant and unsavory to many men, so that they shun it, and take no delight in it. Hence it is, that they have many shifts to put it off, and are wise to invent and allege many reasons to spare their purses. Some say for themselves, Alas, I am [Object. 1] poor and have but a little, and therefore how should I give relief unto others? I answer, we must remember the poor widows mite, [Answer.] she had but little, and yet is commended, that she cast it into the Treasury, Luc. 21, 4. If we have but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse, *Elijah* must have part of it, and be relieved with it, 1 Kings 17, 12. All that do not receive, should give. The man that getteth his living by his labor, and the servant that earneth wages, should lay up somewhat for the poor. Such as are married and keep houses, and have a family of their own, for which they are to provide, have many ways of employment for their money, and many charges lie heavy upon them both of Church and Common-wealth, besides the care of house-keeping and bringing up their children: the servant hath none of these burdens lying upon him, he hath none to maintain but himself, and therefore he may better spare somewhat for the poor than many others. And who seeth not, that for the most part they spend their wages a thousand times worse, in revelling, in rioting, in drinking, in dalliance, in feasting, in apparel, and in such like excess? One penny bestowed upon the poor, shall be more acceptable to God, and more comfortable to themselves, then many pounds spent in vanity. And howsoever it be *a more blessed thing to give then to receive*, Acts 20, 35. yet if God have denied us the ability, and means to do good, he accepteth the desire instead of the deed: *If there be in us a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2, Corin. 8, 12. Again, others say, they must [Object. 2] spare for their children; God hath given them many, and if they should not provide for thē, they were worse then Infidels, and have denied the faith. They can allege, that the fathers must provide for the children, not the childrē for the fathers. But they must know, [Answer.] that such as spare more then is meet without conscience of this duty, without care of the poor, without employing their substance to y^e ends for which it is given, do gather without mercy, and bring a curse upon their riches, that shall make havoc of them in a moment, and as a swift wind blow them away. We read of many in holy Scripture, that have been cheerful givers, and distributed in the simplicity of their hearts: shall we think that these had no families to maintain, no childrē to bring up, no daughters to bestow, no kindred to relieve? Yes, no doubt many of them had particular charges of their own, wives, children, fathers, mothers, kinsfolkes, and yet they forgot not this distribution. The first Christians sold their substance and laid it

down at the Apostles feet, to be divided as everyone had need. And the Churches which were in *Macedonia*, sent relief to others even above their ability, 2 Cor. 8, 3. They were poor themselves, and yet of their poverty they were content to depart with somewhat. Albeit they had little, yet of that little they were willing to give somewhat. Oh, but if [Object. 3] we should follow such examples, we may want our selves; and bring our wives & children unto beggary. I answer, [Answer.] if we extend our liberality, and the bowels of pity unto other, GOD that hath the hearts of all men in his own hand, will move them to pity us, that we shall taste the fruit that we have sown, and find others as merciful to us as we have been merciful unto others. Liberality is as seed that is sown in the earth. It shall yield a plentiful harvest, and it shall bring to some an hundred fold, to some sixty, and to some thirty fold. As we sow, so we shall reap: if we sow plentifully, we shall reap plentifully: if we sow sparingly, we shall reap sparingly. It is a fruit of infidelity and unbelief, to call the promises of God into question, and when he promiseth to bless us, to fear that he will forsake us. He hath given us his word, that he which lendeth unto the poor, shall not lack, and assureth that he will pay us again. Would we desire a better paymaister? Can we desire or wish for any that is better able, or more willing? The Prophet speaking of his own experience telleth us, that he *was young and now is old, yet he never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging* [Object. 4] *bread, Psal. 37, 25.* Lastly, others pleading for their Corban, and loath to part with anything, allege, that the poor for the most part are lewd and lazy, ungodly and unthankful, wicked & unworthy to have any relief, they cannot afford a good word to their benefactors. I answer, that albeit idle persons are rather to be punished then maintained in their idleness, yet the Apostle after reproof of such persons, addeth this exhortation, *But ye my brethren, be not weary in well doing,* 2^a Thess. 3, 13. Be it that it fall out so (as sometimes it doth fall out) that the tongues of these evil men curse us, yet *their loins shall bless us*, as *Job* testifieth, chapt. 31. Declaring that albeit many things fell out to restrain the course of liberality, as their multitude, importunity and ingratitude that are in need, yet he could not be hindered by any of them, from showing mercy unto them, considering, that if we feed them, their bellies shall bless us: if we clothe them, their loins shall bless us: if we visit them in sickness, their bodies shall bless us; nay their souls shall bless us, albeit their tongues revile us, and their mouths be full of cursing and bitterness. Let us therefore turn our selves from them unto God, who will reward every good work, even to a cup of cold water. Heereby we shall testify our religion to be sincere: hereby we shall be like our heavenly Father, & assure our hearts that we are his children: hereby we shall be made conformable unto Jesus Christ our head, who being equal in glory with his Father, and being in the form of God, made himself poor that he might enrich us: hereby we shall provide well for our selves, by making us friends with the riches of unrighteousness: yea hereby we shall heap coals of fire upon y^e heads of all unthankful persons, doing good for evil, and showing mercy to them that do not deserve any mercy at our hands.

25. The standard of the Campe of Dan shall be on the North side by their armies: & the Captain of the children of Dan, shall be Ahiezer the son of Amm[•]shaddai.

26. And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were threescore and two thousand and seven hundred.

27. And those that encamp by him, shall be the Tribe of Asher: and the Captain of the children of Asher shall be Pagiel the son of Ocran.

28. And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were forty and one thousand, and five hundred.

29. Then the Tribe of Naphtali: and the Captain of the Children of Naphtali, shall be Ahira the son of Enan.

30. And his host, and those that were numbered of them, were fifty and three thousand, and four hundred.

31. All they that were numbered in the camp of Dan, were an hundred thousand, and fifty and seven thousand, and six hundred: they shall go hindermost with their standards.

We are now come to the last standard, expressed in these words. These three, *Dan*, *Asher*, and *Naphtali*, that is, the Tribes that descended of them, being three of the sons of *Jacob*, doth the Lord in this place cast into the last squadron to make up the fourth battailion. And albeit they were set in the last and lowest company of the army, yet we do not read that during the long time of their tarrance in the wilderness, (which was the space of 40, years,) they opened their mouths against the ordinance of God, or murmured through impatience and discontentment at the order established among them; neither did other murmur at them, albeit some of the children of the handmaids were preferred before the natural sons of *Leah* and *Rahel*. An host of men consisting of great multitudes, is like a full or corpulent body that needeth not any external means to throw it down, it being ready to ouerweigh and ouersway it self through it own heaviness. Many estates and kingdoms arising from small beginnings, as it were large stoods from little fountains, have proceeded & swelled so great, that the bigness thereof is comberous to themselves, and the puissance of so mighty people hath wrought their own destructiō. Thus it fell out in y^e commonwealth of *Rome*, whose proper power & strength (wanting a foreign enemy to encounter with all) wrought it own ruin; so that it had no greater opposite then it own too great felicity. But not to trouble our selves with foreign examples, let us briefly touch the example of the Disciples of Christ: they were few in number, they were a little company, like a small boat that might be easily ruled and governed, inasmuch as they had the best Master that ever was to stand at the stern: yet they no sooner heard of Christ's departure out of the world, but they condemned parity, and contended for superiority, Math. 20, 20. Thus we see what our nature is: one man cannot abide any to be his equal, another cannot suffer any to be before him. Wherefore to cut off

all occasion of emulation, and to teach them the benefit of contentation, the Lord assigneth to every Tribe his standing place: and they in humility and obedience rested in the room & rank that God in mercy appointed for the general benefit of the whole, and the particular good of everyone among them.

Verse 25, 26. [*The standard of the Campe of Dan, shall be on the, &c.*] The three combined together in this army (whereof *Dan* was principal, the other two, *Asher* & *Naphtals*, were assistants) are indeed the children of the handmaids, inasmuch as *Rabel* in grief of her barrenness, giveth her maid unto her husband, who beareth him *Dan* and *Naphtali*: *Leah* also following her sisters example, giveth him her maid, who beareth & bringeth forth *Asher*. There can no reason be assigned by man, why they should go march in this order then in any other, but only the good pleasure of God: yet they are quiet, and strive not one against another, being brethren one to another. From hence we learn, that everyone [Doctrine 6] ought to be contēted with his present estate: I say, how mean soever our condition be, yet God requires it as a special duty at our hands, that therewith we be content. Hereunto cometh the commandment given by the Apostle, 1 Corinth. 7, 20, 24. *Let every man abide in the same calling, wherein he was called.* To the same purpose he teacheth elsewhere, that *Godliness with contentment is great gain*: and afterward, *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.* And as he delivereth this doctrine by precept, so he sealeth it up by practice and experience, Phil. 4, 11, 12. *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content: I know both how to be abased, & I know how to abound: everywhere, and in all things I am enstructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.* It is a great and wonderful knowledge, and very hard to be practiced, to know to be rich, that is, to use riches soberly: it passeth our reach, unless we have a special and extraordinary grace given unto us. We must learn also, what it is to be poor, which is as hard a lesson as the former; forasmuch as we are ready to murmur under the Cross: whereas though we should walk naked, be hungry and thirsty, be afflicted and pass by the sword, yet we ought to be patient, & our trust must not fail which we have in God, who will feed us in the time of famine.

[Reason 1] The reasons hereof are of great force, and carry authority unto our consciences. First, God knoweth what is best for us, far better then we our selves do. We seek oftentimes to be aloft, but God seeth it better for us to be below: we desire to be rich, God seeth it better for us to be poor. Had it not been much better for *Hamman* that was advanced to honor, to have sate in the dirt, or on the dunghill all the days of his life, thē in all the height of his honor, *to be hanged on the Gallows* which himself had set up for another, and so to taste first of the punishment he had devised? Had it not been better for the rich man to be clothed with rags instead of purple robes, & to eat a dinner of green herbs instead of his delicious fare, then after all his pomp and pride *to be tormented in hell fire*? We are oftentimes ignorant of that should do us good: God is ignorant of nothing. We are ready to embrace that which will do us hurt, it is God that in mercy withholdeth it from us, and us from it. A sick person longeth greatly for those things which increase his disease, and bring him in danger of death; but the learned and expert Physician will not suffer him to taste of them. A child thinketh he is hardly dealt withal, that he is restrained of his desire, but his wise and discreet parents are constrained to bridle him of his lust, and that for his own good. So

dealeth God with us, we are as sick persons that must be dieted, we are as little children that must be overruled: the Lord our God is a loving Father, he is a tender Physician over us, who albeit he deny us that we desire, yet he will withhold nothing frō us y^t he knoweth to be good for us.

Secondly, we have this comfortable promise from him, that he will never fail us, nor [Reason 2] forsake us, whether we have little or much, whether we be in prosperity or adversity. It is he that feedeth the fowls of the air, it is he that clotheth the Lilies of the field: much more then are we assured that he will feed us and clothe us, who are more of value then all the rest of his Creatures. This is the reason urged by the Apostle, Heb. 13, *Be content with those things that ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*, so that we may boldly say, *The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me*. Where he putteth us in mind of the continual care of God for us, and that his providence watcheth over us, which he opposeth as a buckler against the common temptation that assaulteth us, to wit, the fear of being quite forsaken of him, and left unto our selves, from whence ariseth distrust in our hearts.

Thirdly, nature it self is content with a little, [Reason 3] inasmuch as this is the common condition of all mankind, Princes and people, high and low, noble and vnnoble: it brought us naked into the world, and naked it will carry us out of the world, according to the saying of *Job* concerning himself, *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, &c.* There are two points of man's life, his entrance into the world, and his departure out of the world: there is but little distance, as it were a step and a stride between them. For what is our life but a vapor? The space that is in the midst, which is the time of our life between our birth & our death, hath many differences and diversities that make us unlike one to another: some are poor, and some rich, some have great abundance, some have nothing at all. But in the point from whence we come, and in the point to which we tend, we all meet: the beginning of our life, and the ending of our days are both alike, there is no difference between them. Dust returneth unto dust, and earth into the earth again. If a man have a little journey to make, and a small way to travail, it is folly and vanity to make great provision for it; as he that hath need but of one pitcher of water, shall not deal wisely to go about to draw out a great River. So then, to desire superfluties, is to make open war against the order of nature. This reason is set down by the Apostle, in the place before alleged, where the doctrine had his confirmation; for having shown that when God granteth us raiment to clothe our bodies, and giveth us food to fill our bellies, we ought to be content, he annexeth this consideration to strengthen it, *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out*. We see men die daily, and led to it as flocks of sheep: and when we have taken care day and night what to eat, what to drink, and what to put on, we bear nothing to the earth, but a winding sheet to cover our shame, and to hide our nakedness.

Fourthly, let us consider the contrary fruits. [Reason 4] Such as have a resolute purpose to grow rich, do refer hereunto all their thoughts, words, and deeds, they so thirst after the treasures of this world; that nothing is so sacred and religious, which they will make any

conscience to violate, but they overthrow all law of God and man, and nourish in them the root of all evil, and fall into a bottomless pit of all mischiefs. This the Apostle meaneth, when he saith, *They that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction.* Such are as poor beasts y^t are fallen into the snare of the hunter. The devil is a mighty hunter, he hath many grins to catch us and entrap us, walking about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. We are compassed about with the devil and his angels, as with an army of wolves and wild beasts; oppressed with injuries, and overborne with violence: yet being under the protection of our God, we cannot fail, but be well counterguarded. He hath promised he will have a care of us, so that the Lions shall want and suffer hunger, and not always be able to find their prey, though they be cruel and ravenous: but the faithful man though he have neither teeth nor paws, nor take any man's goods away by fraud or force from him, yet God feedeth him and supplieth all his wants; so that everyone should be pleased with his present estate and means of his maintenance, how mean soever.

The uses follow, which naturally arise frō [Use 1] hence; and those of reproof shall have the first place, which are of diverse sorts. They break out and transgress against this principle, that are discontented with their present estate, and do murmur & grudge at the hand of God upon them, and withal repine at the good estate of others. Thus it fared with the people of *Israel* sundry times, sometimes▪ through want of bread, *Exod.* 16, 2. Sometimes through want of water, *Exod.* 17, 2. Sometimes through want of flesh, *Numb.* 11, 4. Sometimes through fear of their enemies, *Numb.* 14, 2. Sometimes through danger of the way, by which they were to pass, *Numb.* 21, 5. They were never long contented with one estate, but brake out through impatience against God, and brought upon themselves diverse plagues and judgments whereby they were consumed. Thus is it with many in our days, if we be pressed with any want of good things; or if we be chastened with the feeling of any evil things, we break out into rage and choller, and will not submit our selves to him that striketh us. If we be bitten a little with famine, and have not our necessities by & by supplied, we cry out against God and man, we are ready to say, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or what shall we put on? If we fall into any sickness, that continueth with us, we think God hath forgotten us or forsaken us, if he do not presently remove his hand from us, and that no man hath felt that which we feel. If we be in any trouble by losses of temporal things, though they be but trifles, by and by we imagine we are undone, it is too late with us to think how to live, and we are more out of patience, then if we had lost the love and favor of GOD. Thus doth the bitter root of infidelity stick in our hearts, & it brancheth forth into open rebellion against God, like the child that murmureth under the rod; for as that is the cause that the father taketh up the whip to whip him again, so our resisting the hand of God when it is heavy upon us, doth not call in the judgment, but rather constraineth the Lord to scourge us again, & to lay upon our backs more strokes and stripes then he did before. The way to call in his corrections is, to submit our selves unto him▪ to confess our offenses, to acknowledge his just judgments, according to the saying of the Prophet, *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou diddest it,* *Psal.* 39, 9.

Secondly, it reproveth such as use unlawful means, ungodly shifts, & wicked policies to enrich themselves. These men care not what ways they use, or what courses they take to get goods, & to heap up riches for themselves & their posterities, whō they desire to raise up on high, and to make great in this world. This insatiable humor is as the dropsy, or rather as the grave that never saith it is enough. It is ever craving more, as a gulf or whirl-pool ready to receive, but not apt to show what it hath received: and therefore doth God oftentimes cross, and not give any blessings to their labors. These make themselves unfit for holy desires, for heavenly meditations, and for the kingdom of God. If any should ask them, whether their meaning be to make themselves drudges to the world, bond-slaves to the Devil, and so to cast themselves headlong to destruction both of body and soul, they would quickly answer, No; and defy those that should charge them with it. Notwithstanding, this inordinate affection bewrayeth what lieth in the heart, and discovereth that they go about to cast themselves away wittingly and willingly, and to undo themselves utterly. Wherefore, to the end we may use our riches aright, we are to practice two points: First, we must be poor in spirit, not glutted in them, nor glued to them, for then we shall be deceived by them; according to the counsel of the Psalmist, *Trust not in oppression, become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.* We must not be tied to our riches that we can never get from thē, but so to account of them, that whensoever it shall please God to make us poor, and to take our riches from us, to render up y^e whole into his hands, to forgo them willingly, and to resign them up to him that gave them, & is able to restore them. When *Job* had lost all his cattle and children, and was fallen from the top of felicity to the lowest vale of misery, he could say with a quiet spirit, Blessed be the Name of the Lord, it is he that hath given, it is he that hath taken them away. This willingness to depart from them at the Lord's call, doeth make it manifest that he never made the wedge of gold his hope, *nor said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence:* he rejoiced not because his wealth was great, nor because his hand had gotten much, as he declareth in the protestation that he maketh of his integrity. Whereby he showeth, that there passeth a secret communication & conference between the rich man and his riches, applauding himself for his money that he hath. True it is, a man will not speak unto his riches, nor cannot hear his riches answer him: there passeth not an express dialogue between the monied man and his money, when he openeth his chest, or vnlocketh his coffer: but he useth this manner of speech by way of faigning the persons, to set forth the folly & vanity of such as have store and abundance; they make a secret kind of compact and conspiracy with their gold and silver, they set down their rest in it, they repose their trust upon it, and will rather leave all then depart from it. Nevertheless, he doth not reprove all joy and gladness when their goods increase. It is lawful to rejoice in all the blessings of God that he giveth, and we receive. He requireth this at our hands, as it is expressed, Deut. 12, 7. *Ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall• rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee.* This mirth and gladness is so far frō displeasing God, that it is rather a fruit of the faith and fear which is in us toward him, forasmuch as we learn thereby to praise his name, to confess his goodness, & to yield him thanks for the benefits which he bestoweth upon us. He speaketh therefore of a blind rejoicing, of carnal mirth and profane iollity, such as is among worldlings, who are carried away with a love of their riches, so that they forget God & remember no more their

own frailty and mortality. This is a frantic joy that turneth us away from God, and maketh us drunken in the pleasures of this life. Secondly, while we enjoy & possess the things of this world, we must not keep them to our selves, but know how to use them moderately, as God hath commanded. They are given unto us to be used, they are as a talent committed unto us, for which we must give an account. And when the day of audit cometh, & we can say no more then that we have glutted our selves with them, and starved our neighbors, woe will be unto us, the rusting of them shall be a witness against us, and shall eat our flesh as it were fire. It was not so with *Job*, whose example we alleged before: he did not withhold the poor from their desire, nor cause the eyes of the widow to fail: he did not eat his morsels himself alone, but the fatherless did eat thereof: he never saw any perish for lack of clothing, nor any poor without a covering. This was the use he made of his goods, to show pity and mercy when he saw any in adversity. If we say only, My friend, God help thee; & never succor him, it is no better then a mere mockery, & hypocrisy, to make show of love, and yet to do them no good. God hath made us stewards of his goods which he hath committed unto us; if we shall devour all our selves, and not communicate anything to such as have need, we shall one day pay sweetly for this rigor and cruelty, when we shall receive according to our deserts: for we also our selves must appear before God, who will deal with us as we have dealt with others. He hath shown all goodness & kindness unto us, and this ought to have been a rule & example unto us to show mercy to our brethren: but because we have shut up our compassion from them, we shall receive judgment without mercy: and as we would not hear thē in their necessity, so God will stop his ears against us in our misery. If we be careful of these two points in the use of this worlds good, that we do not put our trust in them, but employ them to the good of others, we shall never be drawn away by the nets of Satan, to take away other men's goods wrongfully, to snatch and catch what we can from them, and to circumvent them in our dealing with them. Thus then are they met withal, that use deceit and fraud to beguile & deceive whom they can. This is the tradesmans sin, that careth not how he selleth. He spreadeth his net to catch his brother; and all is fish with him that cometh into the net: he preieth upon him that cometh unto him, as if every buyer or brother were an enemy. He will not stick to swear & to forswear himself, he maketh no conscience to lie at all assaies. He forbearth not to use naughty devises and wicked practices to enrich himself and impoverish another. The root of all these is discontentment with our estate, that we have not learned to rest our selves well pleased with that condition wherein GOD hath set us, and therefore we covet to rise higher then God affordeth means, and to catch frō others that which belongeth not unto us.

Secondly, hereby direction is given unto [Use 2] us touching the things of this present life, what we may crave and desire of God in our prayers. This is called in the Lord's prayer, *Our daily bread for the day*, Luc. 11, 3. We have liberty only to pray for competent and convenient food, and that only for the day. This we see in the practice of *Jacob*, Gen. 28, *If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my fathers house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God*. He desireth not great riches, or honors, or might, or majesty, or earthly excellency & renown, but food and raiment. These two necessary things he contenteth himself withal, and suffereth not his

affections to wander farther. Hitherto cometh the prayer of Agur, Prov. 30, 7, 8, 9. *Two things have I required of the Lord, deny me them not before I die: remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty, nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny thee, & say, who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the Name of my God in vain.* This ought to be the substance and subject of our prayer: a competent measure of earthly things ought to content us: we must ask bread, not fullness of bread: raiment, not costly raiment: necessaries, [Objection.] not superfluities. But may not a man provide for the time to come, and lay up in store for the times of need? I answer, [Answer.] yes, he may, he ought, as God shall afford the means. This is a point of wisdom that God alloweth. It is a token not of niggardliness and miserableness, but of frugality and foresight, when goods gotten are for good uses reserved, and afterward profitably employed, and therefore is not forbidden. But we must remember these cautions and conditions: First, they must be justly gotten. Things evilly gotten, are as evilly kept, & oftentimes as evilly consumed. A little well gotten, is better then the treasures of iniquity. One morsel of bread obtained by the sweat of our brows, is better then an house filled with robbery. That which is not well gotten, is not ours, but another man's. Secondly, as that which is laid up must have a sure foundation, it must be justly and rightly gotten, so we must not put our trust and confidence in it. If God do but blow upon it, he can drive it away, as chaff before the wind: and if he do not take it from us, yet he can make it to be unprofitable unto us. Though he take not away our garments, he can make them that they shall not warm us: and our food that it shall not nourish us; so that albeit we have bread, we shall not have the staff of bread; to teach us, that *Man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* Thirdly, it must not be laid up to be meat for the worm and the canker, but to be spent in lawful uses. Our families challenge one part, the Church of God another, the poor Saints another, yea we are debtors to them that dwell afar off, even to the Turks and Infidels, so it be done in Christ, not against Christ: for we must do all for the truth, nothing against the truth. These rules of restraint being observed, it is required of all, especially of those of mean condition, to have an eye to the time to come. We must consider, not only how we may live presently, but how we may maintain our selves hereafter. Now we live in health, in wealth, or at least in a competent measure: we live in days of plenty, of peace, of liberty, and freedom to follow our business. We have our limbs and strength of body able to labor and take pains. We know not what times and tempests hang over our heads. We may be visited with sickness, or pinched with poverty, or have our limbs taken from us; we may be stricken with blindness, or lameness: and if none of all these afflictions come upon us, yet the infirmities of old age will overtake us, which is as the night wherein we cannot work. Then the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders shall cease because they are few, & those that look out of the windows shall be darkened: so that we should labor in the days of our youth, & in the flour of our age, while the evil days come not nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them. Age is an hasty thing, it tarrieth for no man, it will creep upon us sooner then we are aware. Wherefore doth GOD give unto us all these means and this blessed opportunity▪ (which being once gone cannot be called back) but that we should make use of it? There is no day, but it hath his night: there is no calm, but it hath his storm: there is no peace, but it hath his war: there is no health, but it

hath his sickness. Though we have now sufficient, we know not (alas) what experience we may have of want, and how soon also. We should therefore provide in time of our health, to keep us in our sickness: we should labor in youth to keep us in age: and lay up in time of plenty, to furnish our selves against dearth and scarcity. We see the providence that was in *Joseph*, he laid up corn in the plentiful years, to serve them & save them in time of famine, and therefore he preserved the lives of many thousands, Gen. 41, 48. The Apostles provided afore hand to send succor and relief to *the Church of Judea*, being fellow-members of the same body, and professing all one communion of Saints. So the Apostle teacheth, 1 Tim. 5, 8. *If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse then an Infidel.* But Christ our Savior saith, *Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth,* [Objection.] *where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal,* Math. 6, 19. If then he forbid all men to lay up, who shall dare to hoard up anything? I answer, [Answer.] he forbiddeth in some sort, not simply: to wit, to lay up with respect to our own private profit only, without respect of the good of the Church or Common-wealth; as if he had said, Take heed that ye gather not riches for your own use and benefit alone, as if none should live in the world besides yourselves, and so make your treasures your trust, & place your happiness and felicity in them. But our happiness must be in heaven, and in the life to come, where it cannot be taken from us. Again, [Objection.] it will be said that Christ forbiddeth the care of the things of this life, and to take thought what to eat or what to drink, or what to put on, Math. 6, 25. I answer, there is a double care, [Answer.] a lawful and an unlawful, a godly and an ungodly care. The lawful and honest care is that, whereby a man provideth for things needful in time to come. For if then we should begin to provide: necessaries when we are presently to use them, we should be like to soldiers, that are to seek for armor when they should put it on; or like the foolish Virgins mentioned in the Gospel, that went to buy oil for their Lamps when it was too late. There is an unlawful care, which is joined with distrust. Such men do neither deal uprightly and justly in their callings to labor the thing that is good, and to get the thing that is honest in the sight of all men; neither yet commit the success of their labors to the blessing of God, but use shifts that stand not with equity and a good conscience. This maketh the heart heavy, & withdraweth us from prayer, from hearing the word, and from the worship of God. This is that which Christ forbiddeth in this place. If it be farther objected, [Objection.] that Christ saith, *Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow will take thought for it self: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof;* Math. 6, 34. I answer as before, [Answer.] that the purpose of Christ is not to persuade any to sloth and idleness, or to slake in us diligence in our callings, but to draw us from all inordinate and distrustful care for the morrow, whereby we vex our minds with trouble and turmoile for things unnecessary. Every day by reason of man's sin, hath grief enough, and therefore should every day content it self with his own care, and not cast his projects for days and years.

But while we condemn the unlawful carking, let us take heed we do not cast away that honest and holy care of providing things needful in time to come. Christ our Savior had a bag to keep provision for himself and his Disciples, which *Judas* bare, John 13, 29. Hence it is also, that he gave commandment, that they should *gather up the broken meat*, and addeth this

reason, *that nothing be lost*. This serveth as a notable instruction for men of mean ability and small means, to teach them to provide in time for the maintenance of themselves and their families. This concerneth artificers & tradesmen, husbandmen and day-laborers, to seek as thrifty men to save somewhat (as they say) against a wet day. They must labor and take pains while their strength is great, and their sight is good: that when they shall be old, or weak, or blind, and every way unable to follow their calling, they may find means to maintain them of their own, and not seek relief abroad, and so be a burden unto others: yea when GOD shall call them out of this world, (as we hold our life and all things else with the greatest uncertainty) we may leave our wives and children wherewith they may live with comfort, and not depend upon the kindness and courtesy of other men. This is a point little regarded of drunkards and vnthrifths, who, if they may have for the present to satisfy their lusts, care not though they bring their seed to beggary. Woe be to such merciless Creatures, more cruel then the Tiger or the Bear, exposing their posterity to a sea of miseries. These are worse then the sauages & infidels, and have denied the faith.

Let all poor men beware of idleness; let them not spend in a moment that which hath been long in getting: let them not consume that little which they have in belly cheer, & delicious fare, and in costly apparel, but use the creatures of God soberly, moderately, & sparingly; considering both the shortness of their own lives, and the hardness of other men's hearts. Let them not give sleep unto their eyes, nor slumber to their eye-liddes. Let the sluggards *go to the Ant*, and learn wisdom by her ways, *which having no guide, ouerseer, nor ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest, Prov., 6, 7, 8.*

Thirdly, seeing it is required of us to have [Use 3] contented minds, it putteth us in mind of this duty, that we avoid covetousness which is directly contrary to contentation. It is a common corruption y^t taketh hold of our corrupt nature, & a fruit of the old man which must be mortified of all the children of God, and so much the rather because it stealeth vp̄ us at a sudden, and draweth away our hearts from God and godliness. This is the use directly touched and taught by the Apostle, Heb. 13. *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have.* The greatness of this sin is such that it causeth a man to be an idolater, as Ephe. 5.5. Col. 3.5. *This ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God, and of Christ.* The covetous are idolaters or worshippers of idols two ways. First, because they prefer their riches in their affections before God, the gift before the giver of them; depending upon them as upon God, trusting in them, as in God, saying unto them, *Thou art my confidence*, as we heard before out of the book of Job.

Secondly, because they account their life to consist in their riches, and to rest upon their wealth, rather then to stand on the providence of God, failing of all comfort, and hope, and joy, when their wealth faileth them. Satan used this bait to bring Christ himself to idolatry, when he offered unto him the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. How easily we slip into this sin, appeareth by the example of the rich man that came unto our Savior; when he was bid sell all that he had, he went away pensine and sorrowful, Matth. 19. Hence it is that he saith in another place, *Take heed and beware of Covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not*

in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. We are ready to flatter our selves, and to say to our soul, *Thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry:* until it be said unto us, *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee, then whose shall those things be, that thou hast provided?* This is a sin, not only in the rich, but also in the poor. True it is, such as are in want and necessity, do wash their hands as innocent in this matter, but they do it as *Pilate* did touching blood, which notwithstanding did cleave so fast unto his loins, that all the Fullers earth, and all the waters in the Sea, could not wash away the guilt, and stain thereof from him. So the poor for the most part, put this sin far from them, and think it doth not belong unto them: they cry out against the rich, because they are covetous, as blind men deceiving themselves, and beholding their own faces in a false glass. For first of all, they use ungodly shifts, and unlawful means to store themselves, which is right covetousness. They care not how they come by meat, money, corn, or anything so they may have it.

Again, they bear not the burden of poverty patiently, but murmur and grudge at it, nay, at him that sendeth it: but whosoever disdaineth his present state, because it is not higher, richer, and better, is covetous: therefore the poor may be covetous.

Furthermore, they are oftentimes idle, and live by the sweat of other men's brows, and break out into pilfering and stealing, and so not only covet, but catch and convey unto themselves other men's goods. This also is covetousness, and this is a common sickness and disease of the poor. For as pride may walk and iet up and down in a russet coat, so may covetousness lodge in a simple and smokie cottage. But in whomsoever it be, whether in the rich or poor, it is a dangerous evil, it bringeth the covetous man to destruction of body and soul. It brought the leprosy upon *Gehazi*, that coveted the silver, and garments that *Naaman* offered, *Elisha* refused, but he accepted. It brought a more heavy plague upon the soul and conscience of *Judas*, for when he had betrayed his master for thirty shekels, in horror of himself, and of his fact, he went and hanged himself. He was brought up with Christ and lived with him, who had instructed him not to covet after silver, nor gold; he heard his doctrine, and beheld his miracles, yet he was infected with this disease, worse then the dropsy or the hungry evil. It seeth nothing in another without griefe and sorrow, and is never well contented until he have it himself, and then he cannot be satisfied, but still he would have more.

The more he hath, the more he thinketh he hath not. The more full his coffers are, the more he judgeth them to be empty: for as much as he wanteth as well those things that he hath, as those things that he hath not. It is a great blessing of God, that the earth yieldeth the fat of wheat: but the covetous man is not a little grieved, that instead of ears of corn, it doth not shoot and send forth leaves of gold, that every river doth not run with streams of gold, and that the barraine mountains have not gold to be digged out of them, instead of stones. He is oftentimes grieved at the seasonableness of the weather, at the fruitfulness of the seasons, at the plenty of all things, at the increase of the earth, and at the sweet influence of the heavens; he taketh it heavily, when there is store and abundance, that there is no want, nor crying in our streets; because he cannot fell his corn, his cattle, and commodities at the dearest rate. He hateth all men, both rich and poor: the rich, because he doth not possess

that which they have: and seeth them to abound as well as himself, whereas he cannot abide that any should enjoy anything, and thinketh it lost that passeth by his door: the poor, because they crave somewhat of him, which he is as unwilling to leave as his life: and therefore as if he were hurt, and wronged with all, he is angry and offended with all.

The more he hath, the more he craveth and coveteth. Even as the drunken man is more vexed with thirst, then he that useth to drink with sobriety and moderation, and is therewith contented: so the covetous person, that hath the greatest plenty, is much more tormented with desire of more, then he that is satisfied with a small portion, or pittance of the things of this life.

It falleth out oftentimes that such as have least charge lying upon them, are most overcharged with this, as with a most heavy burden. This is that vanity that Solomon pointeth out, Ecclesiastes chapter 4. *There is one alone, and there is not a second, yea, he hath neither child, nor brother; yet is there no end of all his labor, neither is his eye satisfied with riches, neither saith he, For whom do I labor, and bereave my soul of good?* It is not abundance, or masses and mountains of gold and silver that can quench this insatiable thirst, but thereby it is rather increased. For as more wood put to the fire, augmenteth the flame and the heat: so the desire of many by addition of wealth, is multiplied. He is fitly compared to the man possessed with an unclean spirit, who wore no clothes, but had his dwelling among the tombs and mountains: no man could bind him nor tame him, but he brake the fetters and pulled the chains asunder, and cut himself with stones, Mar. 5.3. Luke 8.27. He was exceeding fierce, but covetous men are far worse. He that was possessed, was delivered by the word of Christ, and the devil was driven away, and left his hold: but they that are servants, or slaves to their money, will not hearken unto Christ; they have so much of this earth in their ears, or rather in their hearts, that albeit they hear him daily preached unto them and sounding as a shrill or loud trumpet, yet they believe not, they yield not, they obey not. The man possessed spared not such as came near him: but they spoil and rauin as well afar off frō them as hard by them; they spare none whom they catch in their snares, not friends, not kinsmen, not brethren: they tear them, and rent them in pieces, whomsoever they can compass. He went naked: but these clothe themselves sumptuously (except such as grudge themselves apparel) with the spoils of others, as if they had taken them prisoners in the day of battle, and make them go naked, or in thread-bare coats that come in their way. He smote himself, not knowing what he did: but these smite and kill others secretly, they grind the faces of the poor, and pull off the skin from their backs. He abode among the graves and tombs of the dead; but these are very sepulchers themselves. For what is a tomb, but a stone covering the body of the dead? What then? are not their bodies much more wretched and miserable then those stones, which cover their dead souls, dead in sin, and as stinking carcasses casting out a loathsome savor? And to this purpose Christ speaketh to the Pharisees, Matth. 23.27. *Ye are like to whited sepulchers, full of extortion & excess, full of hypocrisy and iniquity.*

This sin hath diverse branches under it, according to the diverse practices of it, first, when men seek only or principally for worldly goods, neglecting or not regarding spiritual graces in comparison of them. We are charged to *lay up our treasure in heaven, where the moth cannot*

corrupt it, nor thieves steal it. We are commanded to *seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.* But whatsoever God require of us, the greatest sort do what they list: for as *Esau* sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, Heb. 12.16. So do profane men sell their souls for old shoes, and salvation purchased by Christ at a most dear rate, for a song. This may seem strange unto some, but there is nothing will appear more true, if we consider the course of the world, and observe the lives of men. This is the sin of our age, wherein the least profit and pleasure is cared for above true religion. Every drunken feast is cause sufficient with us to intermit y^e worship of god. Every profane meeting of profane men, is valued and prized above the word of the eternal God. Every feast that after a heathenish manner is yearly solemnized, giveth occasion to multitudes to profane and pollute the Sabbath that ought to be sanctified with public and private duties agreeable unto it; and to set that banquet at naught to which God inviteth us by his Ministers. Our thoughts, our meditations, our desires, our delights, are so taken up with earthly things, that though there be much preaching, there is little profiting; though there be much teaching, yet there is little hearing, little obedience.

The second branch of covetousness, is to put our trust and confidence in the things of this life, which is the idolatry of the heart, as we noted before. If we set our hearts upon our goods, we make them our God, and the earth our happiness. Hence it is, that Christ maketh it so *hard a matter for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven, as for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle*, Matth. 19. because *they trust in their riches*, Mar. 10.24. Likewise the Apostle chargeth *Timothy* to charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, neither trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy, 1 Tim. 6.17. The third branch is, when we regard and respect only our selves. It is not enough, that we do no harm with them, God requireth that we do good. Christ shall say at the last day, *I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick and in prison, and ye visited me not: go into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his Angels.* That evil servant that did not divide his substance among his fellow servants, perished through his covetousness: and he that received one talent, and digged in the earth to hide it, had it taken from him, and heareth this sentence denounced against him: *Thou wicked and slothful servant and unprofitable. God bestoweth not his blessings upon us to fat our selves with thē, as Oxen in a stall, or as swine in a stye, without all consideration of the Church, or Commonwealth, or of the poor: but he hath made us stewards and disposers of them to the glory of God, and the good of others.*

[Verse 31. *All they that were numbered in the campe of Dan, &c:*] We see in this place that this last standard beareth the name of *Dan*; whereby we see that God raiseth up as a chief instrument in this mighty host, one of the lowest sort, one that was obscure in the family of *Jacob*; which serveth to magnify the mercy of God, & to depress the pride of man. *Jacob* in his last will and testament, foretelleth the estate of this Tribe, Gen. 49, 17. *Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall backward:* which declareth, that the power & might of this Tribe should not be great, but prevail rather by fraud and deceit. Thus *Sampson* prevailed against the Philistines, and afterward they overcame the City *Laish*, and burnt it with fire. We learn from hence, that it pleaseth God oftentimes to choose

and use the weakest & meanest men, to be instruments for the accomplishing of his greatest works. He maketh choice of inferior things to perform his decrees, and to do good to his Church, and to serve him wheresoever he purposeth to employ them. This appeareth clearer then the Sun throughout the Scriptures, in preferring the younger before the elder, in the calling of many Judges, in the election of many Kings, in the separating of many Prophets, and in the ordaining of many Apostles, who were of little reckoning and estimation before their honor and advancement, to verify that which the Psalmist saith, Psal. 75, 6, 7. *Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South, but God is the Judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.* Saul was a seeker of his fathers asses, and though he found not them, he found the kingdom, *Samuel* being sent to anoint him, 1 Sam. 10. *David* was the youngest of his fathers house, and the lowest among one of the lowest families, left with the sheep in the wilderness, according to that in the Psalm, *He chose David his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds, from following the Ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.* And as God chose him from feeding a flock of sheep, to feed a better flock, so he chose some of his Apostles from catching fish, to catch fowls. *Peter* was a fisherman, as before him *Amos* was an heard-man. Thus did God throw down the strong walls of *Jericho*, not by might of men, nor by munition of war, but by Rams horns, which were blowed by the Priests, Josh. 6, 20 In the creation, he brought light out of darkness, the fowls out of the waters, and all things out of nothing, Gen. 1, 3, 20. Heb. 11, 3. Christ wrought many of his cures in like manner, in healing the blind man; for he spate on the ground, & made clay of the spettle, and then anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay: then *he had him wash in the pool of Siloam, who by and by went his way, & washed, and came seeing,* John 9, 6, 7. Likewise in the work of our redemption, the truth of this is more apparent, for he wrought by contraries, bringing life out of death. He came down to the earth, to lift us up into heaven, Eph. 2, 6. He suffered the punishments of our sins, that he might make us free from them, Math. 11, 28. 1 Pet. 2, 24. He perfectly fulfilled all righteousness, that he might cover our unrighteousness, Rom. 5, 19. And to the end he might fully satisfy for our sins, he was made sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Corin. 5, 21. He was bound, that we might be loosed: he was condemned, that we might be acquitted: he was crucified in his body, that he might nail our sins to his Cross, and fasten them there forever, Col. 2, 14. He took upon him the curse due to us, that he might appease the wrath of his Father against us, Heb. 10, 10. He died for us, that we might live: he was buried and laid in the grave, that he might overcome death in his own cabin and den, Acts 2, 24. Lastly, he rose again as a Captain and Conqueror from the dead, and could not be holden of the sorrows of death, that we should walk in newness of life, Rom 6, 4. All these examples, of *Saul*, of *David*, of *Amos*, of *Peter*, of Christ, of the Patriarchs, of the Prophets, of the Judges, and of the Apostles, serve to teach us this truth, that it is the manner of God's dealing, to make choice of small means to effect great matters, and to single out weak instruments to work out worthy enterprises.

Neither ought this to be maruelled at, as [Reason 1] strange in our eyes. For if there were no other reason to induce us to believe it, the only will and good pleasure of God ought to be sufficient, as being the highest moving cause, and indeed the cause of all causes. His will is a

law, and who shall herein control him of error, or convince him of folly, or condemn him of insufficiency? If he will let the full & rich go away empty, who shall say unto him, Why dost thou so? Or who can accuse him of rashness? This is that which Christ our Savior setteth down, Luc. 10, 21. *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* Where we see, he maketh the pleasure of God to be the stay of himself: so it ought to be with us, if we once come to know what seemeth good in the eyes of God, though we know no more, though we can see no farther, and though ten thousand reasons as a mighty army may seem to encounter against it, yet we must rest our selves upon it as upon a rock, and build our house upon it as a foundation.

[Reason 2] Secondly, this serveth best to make manifest the glory of God, when as great things are done by a weak hand. Now, the weaker the instruments are, which he setteth on work, the more evidently is his power seen, and the better doth his praise appear. This gave *David* comfort and assurance being a stripling, unarmed and vntrained to the field, to encounter hand to hand in a single combat with a mighty giant: he doubted not to overcome him, but was persuaded in his heart of his help that never forsaketh his that trust in him and call upon him, that he should smite him with his sling, & take his head from him with his sword, and give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines, unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth: and he maketh this the reason of all, *That all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel*, 1 Sam. 17.46. This also doth the Apostle infer and enforce in another kind, speaking of our salvation and redemption, and of those that are counted worthy to be partakers of them, 1 Cor. 1.26. You know your calling, how that not many wise men after the flesh, nor many mighty, nor many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise: the weak to confound the mighty: the base and despised to bring to naught things that are magnified in the eyes of men, *That no flesh should glory in his presence, &c. according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* His glory is less advanced and set forth by great persons; they are as a cloud before our eyes, or as amidst^a and veil to ouershadow us, and to keep from us the glorious light of the bright shining Sun, I mean the glory of the mighty God: as the Lord himself teacheth *Gideon*, *The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me*, Judge. 7.2. So then, whether we do consider the first moving cause which is the will of God, or the last final cause which is the glory of God, it appeareth he will oftentimes accomplish great things by means and instruments of low degree.

[Use 1] Let us proceed to the uses, and handle them briefly. First, forasmuch as God advanceth weak things to work out the decree of his providence, we may truly conclude from hence the powerful hand of God, that is able to bring to pass whatsoever he pleaseth. He worketh after the pleasure of his own will, sometimes by weak means, sometimes by no means, sometimes above means, and sometimes contrary to means. When the chiefest among the sons of men will bring anything to pass, they make choice of the fittest and forwardest means, even such as are most likely in the eyes of men, and in the judgment of

the world. When *Solomon* purposed to build the Temple for the worship of God, he made choice of the fittest wood, and of the fittest workmen: it was in him to choose them, but it was not in him to qualify them whom he findeth in themselves to be unfit. But it is not so with God, he oftentimes employeth the most backward, untoward, unlikely, impossible; because he is able to fit them and furnish them with power, strength, and ability to go through with the work that he setteth them about: so that we may cry out with admiration, *How great and wonderful is his Name in all his actions!* This is concluded directly, *Psal. 8. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy Name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens: out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.* Where we see, that upon God's choice of weak and infirm instruments, he gathereth the excellency of his Name, and the greatness of his power, which he repeateth again in the last verse, *O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy Name in all the earth.* There is none is above him, none is equal unto him, none can be matched or compared with him: all things are put under his feet.

Secondly, we learn another truth to be [Use 2] acknowledged of us, that all things are not to be respected according to the outward appearance. We are oftentimes deceived, and cannot see into the works of God. Our Savior speaketh notably to this purpose against the Pharisees, *Luke 16. Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts for that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.* This may not any way seem strange unto us, forasmuch as God respecteth no man's person, as *Gal. 2.* where the Apostle proving himself to be an Apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, who called him from heaven to preach the Gospel, saith, *Of these, who seemed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me; God accepteth no man's person) for they who seemed to be somewhat, in conference added nothing to me.* In these words he speaketh of the Apostles, *Peter, James, and John,* that had been poor fisher-men, and men of small reckoning and respect, yet they were honored of God to be Apostles and planters of Churches, so that he saith, It skilleth not what they have been in times past. Every man therefore is to be esteemed according to his calling, and to be accounted off according to the grace of God given unto him. Many that are first, shall be last, and the last shall be first. We must esteem of men, not as they have been, but as they are. When men have repented, we may not upbraid them with their lives past, nor cast in their teeth, their former offenses. We must not take occasion by the infirmities of men's actions to contemn their persons. Such is the merciful dealing of God toward us, that he accepteth not of us as we have been, but as we are when we repent and return unto him.

It is the policy of Satan, and the impiety of his instruments to object the weakness and slips of our life past: but we say unto him, and unto them all, Tell us not what we have been: but tell me what by the mercy of God I am, and what by the strengthening Spirit of God I will be. I am a sinner, I confess it: howbeit, I am a penitent sinner. We are not therefore to be carried away with the consideration of men's persons and outward quality or condition of life, as country, or kindred, or sex, or age, or birth, or riches, or poverty, or learning, & such like; for as much as God giveth not his gifts according to the outward appearance of the person, but according to his wisdom and pleasure, which are always just, and *respecteth not the rich*

more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands, Job 34.19. This doth the blessed Virgin acknowledge, Luk. 1. that the Lord regarded the low estate of his handmaid, so that thenceforth all generations should call her blessed. Hence it is that he reproveth the human judgment of Samuel, beholding the person of Eliab the eldest son of Jesse, and saying, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him: Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as a man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart, 1 Sam. 16.7. Those whom God honoreth we must honor, and despise no man for the meanenesse of his place, and baseness of his person, and lowness of his condition. They are therefore justly to be reproveth that reject the Ministry of the word, in regard of the simplicity of their persons that are the Ministers: as they dealt with Christ our Savior, Is not this Joseph's son? from whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him? Is not this the Carpenter? the son of Mary? the brother of James and Ioses, and of Judah and Simon? and are not his sisters with us? Thus they were offended at him. Hence it is, that Christ saith unto them, A Prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house, Mar. 6.4. It skilleth not whether the Ministers be rich or poor, wise or simple, noble, or vnnoble; if they say unto us, Silver and gold have we none but such as we have we give unto you, Act. 3. we must accept of them and of the word of reconciliation, and account their feet beautiful that bring glad tidings of good things. Though they bring heavenly treasures in earthly vessels, yet the excellency of the power is of God: so that the meaner the person of the Minister is, the more we ought to magnify the Author of their ministry, remembering always that we ought not to have the faith of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ in respect of persons.

Thirdly, for as much as God vouchsafeth [Use 3] to choose weak agents to promote his causes and to further his works, we conclude from hence that fearful is the estate of the wicked; if their eyes were opened to behold it, and their hearts enlightened to take notice of it. Howsoever they set their horns & heads on high, and exalt themselves in their own pride, yet the poorest and simplest means strengthened of God, and armed by his power, shall be able to bring them down to the ground, and to lay their honor in the dust. They shall know one day that they fight against God, and rebel against the most High, who wanteth no weapons to destroy them; he can arm the least things against them, as we see in the destruction of the Egyptians, to wit lice, flies, frogs, grasshoppers, and such like, all brought upon them by the rod of Moses. This use is concluded by the Prophet Isaiah, Chap. 27.11. *When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire: for it is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favor.* He showeth in these words, and in this place, the certainty of the destruction of the enemies of the Church, their defended cities shall be desolate and left like a wilderness. But how shall this be? God needeth not the power of mighty enemies, he needeth not armies of men, or legions of Angels, or such like strong means to effect it, *the women shall come and set them on fire*, that is, weak means and silly creatures, even such as are by nature fearful, an army of Hartes shall have strength and courage enough when God setteth them on work. Great is the force of weak Soldiers under such a Captain. If they that have the least power and policy be made the Lord's workmen,

and employed in his service; who shall be able to daunt them and to drive them from their work? who shall fray them and affright them, and make the rest of them turn their backs? They have their calling and commission, and they canneuer cease, until they have ended the business, and finished the work to which they were sent; according to that which *Gamaliel* saith of the preaching of the Apostles, being in themselves, & of themselves simple and unlearned men, *Refraine from these men, and let them alone, &c. for if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God*, Act. 5. This is little regarded or considered of the enemies of God, and the persecutors of the Church, they run on in their wild courses, & think they can do what they list: whereas they lie open to every judgment, and every creature shall be able to work out their destruction.

[Use 4] Fourthly, seeing it seemeth good to God to accept of their service that seem farthest off and most unlikely to do him service: let no man presume upon the greatness of his gifts, and the excellency of his calling: let him not lift up himself above others, to think himself better & prefer himself before his brethren, neither contemn them of lower degree, of meaner place, of lesser gifts. The heart is of the Lord, the blessing is of the Lord, the success is of the Lord. Hence it is that the Apostle saith, *Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou, that thou diddest not receive? Now if thou diddest receive it, why doest thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?* 1 Cor. 4.7. Our Savior rebuketh a young man that would not give over the world, and telleth him, *the first shall be last; and the last, first*, Such as in the visible Church have the chief place, and in the opinion of men are in greatest account, because they carry the greatest name of piety and holiness, are nothing less inwardly then that which they appear outwardly, and therefore notwithstanding the room and reputation that they hold in earth, they shall be quite shut out of the kingdom of heaven, as was verified in the Scribes and Pharisees, and all hypocrites, who for a pretence made long prayers, but shall receive the greater damnation. This he showeth farther by the similitude of an householder, who hired laborers at all hours into his vineyard, and thereupon concludeth the point again, that the first shall be last, and the last first. Presume not therefore of thyself, neither glory in thine own works, nor boast of thine own gifts: it may please God to sanctify others to go before us, and to make them out run us that set out after us. He accepteth them that are of smaller gifts and lower place, and therefore we ought not to reject them or contemn them. When he chose special witnesses of those things that he spake and did, and sent them out to heal the sick, and raise the dead, and cleanse the lepers, to give sight to the blind, and to preach the Gospel, he did not call the learned & wise men of the world, but simple fishermen and such as the world accounteth idiots, and men of no fashion, or estimation. Such then as seem to be behind, are taken forward, and made more profitable then those that were before them. We see this in *Amos*, *He was no Prophet, nor a Prophets son, but an heardman and a gatherer of Sycamore fruit: the Lord took him as he followed the flock, and said unto him, Go, Prophecy unto my people Israel*. The like we might say of *Paul*, he was most unlike to be called and to be employed in the affairs of the Church, as himself confesseth, and the history of the Acts importeth, 1 Tim. 1.13. 1. Cor. 15.8, 9. Act. 8.1. and 9.1. Ephe. 3.8. He confesseth that before his conversion to the faith, he had been a persecutor, a blasphemmer, and injurious: consenting to the death of *Stephen*, and breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the

disciples of the Lord: one borne out of due time, the least of the Apostles, the least of all Saints, not meet to be called an Apostle, but rather a destroyer of the faith of the brethren. But when he came to preach the faith which before he destroyed, he was nothing inferior to the chief Apostles; more then a Minister of Christ, in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft; loving him very much, of whom he had received much, so that he gave no place to the residue of the Apostles.

Even as in the manner of the natural generation, we see that oftentimes, such as are of weakest nature and constitution of body, are blessed with increase of children, and a plentiful posterity, more then those that are of stronger complexion: so such as have mean gifts, and lesser knowledge, and perhaps never trained up in the schools of the Prophets, may save more souls, and bring more to God then such as have taken many degrees, and have attained to a great depth, and profoundnesse of learning, as we shall have occasion farther to show in this book. What then? are Universities to be despised? are schools of learning to no purpose? No: [Answer.] they are nourceries of knowledge, human and divine. They are as those rivers that water the garden of God. The Lord bless them that bless those places, and curse them that are enemies to the peace and prosperity of them, and thrust thorough their loins that wish their hurt, neither let them which go by, say, The blessing of the Lord be upon such, we bless you in the Name of the Lord. Nevertheless, the Lord is not bound to such as are brought up in those places: but maketh the labors of those that want the Arts and Tongues, being conscionable in their callings, very available, to the glory of his Name, and to the saving of many souls.

Lastly, we are put in mind of this duty, that [Use 5] we ought not to rest upon flesh and blood, as upon a reed that will deceive us, but upon God the Rock of our salvation. Some put their trust in horses, and some in chariots, Psal. 20. and some in Princes, Psal. 146. We can make no resistance against the weakest things, which are as warlike weapons, that never return empty, but even they shall be able to push us down and to prevail against us, and to destroy us utterly. Let us not therefore lift up our minds against God, but humble our selves before him. Our strength is nothing, our multitudes are nothing, our Armor and munition is nothing, if God fight against us. Let us not think to escape his hands, who is able to arm few against many, and the weak against the strong, as 1 Sam. 14.6. where *Jonathan* saith to the young man *y^t* bare his armor, *Come and let us go over unto the Garison of these uncircumcised, it may be that the Lord will make for us: for there is no restraint of the Lord, to save by many or by few.* The same in effect *David* speaketh to the Philistime, *The Lord saveth not with sword and spear, (for the battle is the Lord's) and he will give you into our hands.* Thus also *Asa* cried unto the Lord his God, when a great host of a thousand thousand, came out against him: *Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: Help us, O Lord, our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy Name we go against this multitude; O Lord; thou art our God, let not man prevail against thee.* We must therefore renounce all pride in our selves, and that vain confidence which will deceive us. We have to do with God. If he will destroy us, and deliver us as a prey into the jaws of death, though there be no enemy to resist us, nor power of man to overcome us, yet we may not secure our selves, nor suffer our hearts to be compassed

about with presumption, as with a chain, he is able with the breath of his nostrils to blow us away, that we shall be no more.

This use is concluded by the Prophet Jeremiah, chapter, 37.9.10. *Thus saith the Lord, Deceiue not yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire.* Whereby we see that destruction of a kingdom, or of a city dependeth not upon a multitude of men, or upon the valiantness and violence of soldiers, but upon the pleasure of God, who executeth his judgments by what hands soever he will. For when a few and poor remnant remain, and those of wounded men half dead, and wholly unable to resist, even such as are thrust thorough with the sword, gasping for life, and ready to give up the Ghost: yet shall they recover the battle that was lost, and obtain the victory, and conquer the conquerer, and strike down as bulrushes the strongest and choicest men that before prevailed and had the upper-hand.

A notable example and memorable exploit whereof we have recorded in the Turkish history, concerning a Christian soldier, who sore wounded and all bloody, seeing *Amurath* the third king of the Turks, coming after the victory that he had obtained, to take a view of the dead bodies, which without number lay on heaps in the field like mountains, seeing him I say, rose up as well as he was able in staggering manner (as if it had been from death) out of an heap of slain men, and making toward him, for want of strength, fell down diverse times by the way as he came; at length drawing nigh unto him, as though he would have craved his life of the tyrant, and in honor of him have kissed his feet, suddenly stabbed him in the bottom of his belly with a short dagger, so that the conqueror was conquered, and presently died.

Thus it is with poor weak men when God strengtheneth them, for the feeble become strong, and the strong feeble.

32 These are those which were numbered of the children of Israel, by the house of their fathers, all those that were numbered of the Campes throughout their hosts, were fixe hundred thousand, and three thousand, and five hundred, and fifty.

33 But the Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel, as the Lord commanded Moses.

34 And the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses: so they pitched by their standards, and so they set forward everyone after their families, according to the house of their fathers.

Hitherto, we have spoken of the order prescribed unto *Moses*, and the people, to be observed: now followeth briefly the execution of the commandment, as the conclusion and shutting up

of the Chapter, in these 3 verses. Howbeit before y^e performance thereof, Moses addeth two cautions necessary to be observed and considered. First, the total sum of them that were numbered before, which amounted to the number of six hundred thousand, and three thousand, five hundred and fifty. Loe, how great the blessing of God was in multiplying his people, and what the truth of his promise is, that he made to *Abraham*.

Secondly, the exemption of the Levites, who were acquitted and discharged out of the former muster, being appointed to another office of another nature, verse 33. Then is annexed the obedience it self, to the commandment of God: set down both generally, *The children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses:* and then particularly in two points, *They pitched by their standards, and they set forward everyone according to their families, according to the house of their fathers.* No man murmured at the order of God, no man enuyed his superior, no man contemned his inferior, but all of them rested in his ordinance, & marched according to his direction and appointment. We learn from hence, that it is the duty of God's children [Doctrine 8] to yield obedience, not only to some, but to all the commandments of GOD. God requireth at our hands, a full and entire obedience.

Do we require commandments to confirm this unto us, or would we have examples? Let us consider both. And first for precept. The Apostle is plain, 2. Corin. chap. 7.1. *Having these promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* Where we see he persuadeth to make a through work, to cleanse our selves, not only from some filthiness, and to retain some, but from all: not only of the body, but of the soul, even of the whole man. Likewise, in the former Epistle, chap. 5.7. *purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened.* He confesseth that they were renewed and regenerated in part, and therefore concludeth, must proceed and go forward until the work be wholly finished. For the word is compounded, signifying not only to purge, but as much as may be possible to purge out quite and clean, as the Israelites were commended, when they celebrated the Passover to put away all leaven from them, so that whosoever had any in his house, should be cut off from his people.

To this purpose cometh the exhortation of the Apostle, Heb. 12.1. *Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience unto the race which is set before us.* As if he had said, forasmuch as we have so great a multitude of believers (which he compareth to a cloud that is thickened, compacted, or gathered together in the middle region of the air, of vapors) we must do as they that run in a race; they do not only cast away clogges and impediments, but whatsoever may hinder them in their course, as the cares of this life, the delights of the world, the lusts of the flesh, and generally everything that may cloy us, and clog us in our spiritual journey.

Thus we see, how we are commanded to cleanse away all filthiness, to purge out all leaven, to cast aside every weight. Behold, how the Apostle addeth universal notes in every of these places. But are these precepts without examples? are they mere speculative considerations without their use? No: we have in the Scriptures of the New Testament, many among the faithful that receive this commendation from the mouth of God. It is noted concerning *Noah*,

Gen. 6.22. that *he did according, to all that God commanded him, even so did he*. It is recorded of Moses, that when Pharaoh did give them and their children liberty to go into the wilderness, to serve the Lord, only their flocks and their herds should be stayed: he answered boldly, *Our cattle also shall go with us, there shall not an hoof be left behind*, Exodus chapter 10.26. It is testified by the Evangelist Luke, touching Zechariah and Elizabeth, that *they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless*, Luke 1.6. All these particular testimonies do teach us, that it is our duty to labor earnestly and carefully to perform a pure and perfect obedience unto all the commandments of the Lord, that we may be entire, wanting nothing.

Now we come to the reasons, that we may [Reason] be farther confirmed in this truth. First, consider the nature of God, he is perfect in himself, and perfect in all goodness toward us. He faileth in nothing, so that he may truly say, what could I have done more then I have done? we must therefore answer in duty and obedience unto him. Hence it is, that Christ saith, *Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven, is perfect*, Matth. 5. If then we must be like him, and resemble him, we ought to strive to be like him in perfection.

Secondly, Christ Jesus is a perfect Savior, [Reason] a perfect redeemer, a perfect mediator. He hath fully finished our salvation, and he died to satisfy for all our sins. If he were but half a Savior, a party obedience might be sufficient on our part. But he never left the work of our redemption, until he had appeased the wrath of his Father, and nailed all our sins unto his Cross. This caused the Apostle to say, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, Tit. 2.14. Seeing then that Christ Jesus hath redeemed us from all sin, it followeth necessarily that we should follow after all righteousness, and make conscience of all sin.

Thirdly, in respect of the commandments [Reason 3] themselves; for as an heathen man said of moral virtues, that they were linked together as in a chain, so that he which had one truly, had all of them: so we may much better say of the Laws of God, that as there is one lawgiver which is the Author of them all, so they are all knit in a knot together, that the knot cannot be loosed, but all are dissolved. Or they being ten words are as a band, having ten conditions; if one of them be broken, the whole band is forfeited. The testimony of the Apostle James fully accordeth and agreeth hereunto, chap. 2. *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet faileth in one point, he is guilty of all: for he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the Law*. Whosoever breaketh one commandment, and maketh no conscience thereof, but saith he doubteth not to be dispensed withal for it, and that he shall find God merciful unto him therein, hath made himself guilty of the whole Law and of the punishment due to the transgressors of it.

Fourthly, there is nothing done of us in [Reason 4] this flesh, but GOD will bring it into judgment. We run into many evils, because they seem little, and the hedge of God's word is easily leaped over. The wise man teacheth us, Eccl. 12. that *God will bring every work unto judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*. If he said, God will bring many things to judgment, we might have hoped some things should be exempted. But

forasmuch as we must account with him for all things, even *for every idle word*, (as our Savior teacheth) it followeth that we ought to make conscience of all our ways and works whatsoever.

Fifthly, all things commanded of God from [Reason 5] the greatest unto the least, are most just and equal, and therefore to be observed diligently without all parting or partiality. The Prophet reproveth the house of Israel, that said, The way of the Lord is not equal. But the Lord saith, *O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?* This reason is urged by the Prophet David, Psal. 119. *I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right: and I hate every false way.* His testimonies are righteous and very faithful, which he hath commanded, and therefore he hateth from the bottom of his heart all wicked ungodly ways. So then, whether we consider the nature of God, that he is perfect; or the redemption of Christ, that it is perfect; or the dignity of the law that it is perfect: in all these respects, we conclude this truth as honey gathered from many flowers, That it concerneth everyone of us to yield obedience to all the Laws and commandments of God.

[Use 1] Now let us come to the uses which giveth an edge to the doctrine it self. And as it serveth to reprove, so the reproof is of diverse sorts.

First of all, it condemneth those that waste themselves, and spend their strength chiefly about the things of this world, and never labor after regeneration and the things of the Lord. These men never think of any obedience: How far then are they from perfect obedience? when will these come to the journeys end, that are not yet set forward in the ways? When will they finish their salvation, that have not yet made a beginning? How do they look to receive the price, that sit still, and do not yet run in the race? or how shall they obtain an incorruptible crown, that do not strive for the mastery? These think they have no souls to save, or that there is no God to serve, or that there is no life to come, or else they would not live as beasts, or as the horse and mule that are without understanding. If they live as men that regard not the kingdom of heaven, they shall one day know that there is an hell: and if they regard not to obey God, they shall hereafter reap the fruit of their disobedience. *Samuel* teacheth, that *rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity*, and therefore all such as reject the word of the Lord, he will also reject them from his kingdom, and from the glory of his presence.

Secondly, such are reprov'd as content themselves with a small measure of knowledge and obedience, of faith and repentance. For many there are in the Church that think they know enough, or at least y^t much knowledge is not necessary; like to the Deputy mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, that the doctrine of Christ, was a matter needless, frivolous, impertinent, and unnecessary, and a curious question about words and names, whereof a man might be ignorant without danger.

Thus do these judge of religion and of the Law of God, they account basely of it, as a thing that may best be spared. If they had truly tasted of the sweetness of God's word, it would bring them altogether into love of it. Let us therefore labor to grow in grace until we come to perfection, 2 Pet. 3. For whosoever thinketh he hath already attained unto it, greatly

deceiveth himself: we have as yet scarce laid the foundation, and do we as men besotted with folly and spiritual pride, imagine we are come to the top? We are like unto them that are in a dream, that think they are eating to the full, and behold when they awake they are hungry and empty: or they that deeply conceit they are drinking, and when they arise, they see they are thirsty: so is it with these men, they are fast asleep; and do but dream, when they suppose all the world is made of knowledge: whereas if they had shaken off this spirit of slumber, and were thoroughly come to themselves, they would bewail their own ignorance, and as poor blind souls condemn their own foolishness.

Let us therefore store our selves with it: we shall herein (if in anything beside) find the prouder be most true, that store is no sore. It is the ground of our obedience: forasmuch as we can obey no farther then we know. The servant can obey his masters will, no farther then he knoweth it. An ignorant servant must of necessity be a disobedient servant. So is it with every Christian man, his obedience cannot go beyond his knowledge.

Thirdly, it serveth fitly and fully to reprove those that do halt with God, and yield a maimed obedience unto him. The sacrifices of God under the Law, must be whole & sound, not halt, not maimed, not lame: so should our obedience be under the Gospel. Men will not allow of a servant that performeth such service as he requireth at his hands, when it is done to halves: and do we think to be accepted of God, when we cut off his worship in the middes? We deal with God as the king of Ammon dealt with *David's* messengers; he shaued off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, 2 Samuel chapter 10. verse 4. So do we shaue off half of his service, and think to make him be content with that or with nothing. If Christ Jesus had so rewarded us in performing the work of our redemption, and had left off before he had brought it to perfection, woeful had our condition been, it had been good we had never been borne. For if he had not thoroughly finished it, we could not have been saved. Hence it is, that in his prayer to his Father, he saith, *I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.* John 17. Why do we then reward him so unkindly? or what evil hath he done unto us, that we should deal so with him? As he teacheth, that we cannot serve God & Mammon: so we cannot serve God and our selves. There is no parting of stakes with him. He hateth party-coloured Christians, he will have the whole man, the whole obedience, or else he rejecteth all.

Saul performed part of his will, but because he did not all that he required, he was cast off, 1 Sam. 15. Would we have him partly to love us, and partly to hate us? partly to be pleased with us, and partly to be offended? God doth not thus divide his love and hatred. Whom he loveth, he loveth freely, wholly, effectually. He so loved us, that he spared not his own Son, but gave him for us. The like love ought we to return unto him again. *Herod* hearing *John Baptist* preach the word, reformed himself in many things, Mar. 6. *Simon Magus* was baptized, and professed the faith, and continued among the people of God, and wondered at the signs and miracles that were done. But except our righteousness do exceed the righteousness of these men, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. All these are half Christians that serve God to halves, like the Jews that spake half Hebrew, and half Ashdod: and worship God in one part, and the devil in another, like the Colony of the strange nations transplanted in

Samaria, that *feared the Lord, and served their graven images also*; who while they would needs do both, are expressly charged *not to fear the Lord*, neither to do after the statutes, and ordinances, and commandments, which the Lord commanded the children of *Jacob*, whom he named *Israel*. So is it with all such as yield an imperfect and unsound obedience; they think they serve God and obey his commandments, but they are greatly deceived, and they may justly be charged not to serve him at all.

For who required this half or halting obedience at their hands? Against all this maimed and mangled duty, we will oppose the practice of *David*, a man after God's heart, in the 119. Psalm, where he many times discovereth his zealous affection, as verses 5.6. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments*. And verse 13. *with my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth*. And verse 101. *I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep thy word*. Where we see his manner of serving the Lord, how far different it is from ours: he had respect unto all his commandments, & not to some only: he refrained his feet from every evil way, & not frō some only. Let us follow his worthy & holy example, and do that which is right in the sight of the Lord, and not turn aside from anything that he commandeth us all the days of our life; so shall God's name be glorified, so shall he be well pleased with us, and so shall we have comfort, and others instruction through our obedience.

Lastly, they are also reprov'd, that think it enough to serve God outwardly to be seen of men, and worship him through hypocrisy, like unto them that look to the garment, but neglect the body; so do these look to the body, but neglect the soul. For as we shown before, that he who maketh no conscience of one commandment, but of purpose and custom breaketh the same, is guilty of all, because if like occasion were offered▪ he would break all the rest, James chapter 2. verse 10. So such as look only to the outside, and to turn their face toward religion, do make it manifest that there is no religion in them at all.

It is strange to see how smoothly and devoutly some will carry themselves, who notwithstanding bewray the hollowness of their hearts. These are they that make clean *the outside of the cup, and of the platter*: that are like unto *whited sepulchers*, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness, Matthew chapter 23.25, 27. Thus it fared with *Judas*, he served God outwardly, and the devil possessed him inwardly. If a man could deceive the eternal God, as well as blind the eyes of a mortal man, there might be some color for this colorable worship. But God is not mocked. He that framed the heart, looketh into the heart, and searcheth into the corners and secret chambers of the heart. And albeit it be deceitful above all things, yet it cannot deceive him. There was never in any age, place for hypocrisy: but in regard of the loose and corrupt times into which we are cast, if we were but politic and worldly-wise, we would be anything, rather than hypocrites, which is to expose our selves to all infamy, contempt, and reproach. Religion among the greatest sort is made a by-word, and the religious make themselves a prey. What wisdom then is in us to lay open our selves to such indignities, obloquies, slanders, and false accusations, and in the mean season to want the inward peace of a good conscience, and true comfort of a pure heart, and that which is more then all, to want the

favor of God, and his loving countenance toward us, who hateth us as his secret enemies for our hypocrisy? Hypocrites therefore are justly abhorred of God & man. They draw near to God with their mouths, but their minds are far from him, Matt. 15. Their worship is like to counterfect money, which is gilded outwardly: but within is nothing but brass, or such like base stuff, so that all is not gold that glistereth: Or like the apples which grow at the dead Sea (where sometimes Sodom and Gomorrhah stood) which are fair in color, beautiful in show, and marvelous in greatness; but when you come to touch them, or to handle them, they turn to dust, and cast out a filthy savor, more unpleasant to the nostrils, then they were pleasant before to the eyes. Thus it is with hypocrites, they appear beautiful before men, they love to be well thought off by them, and have many times more glorious shows then other that are more sound within, because they study nothing else but how to get the applause and praise of the world. Such a one was *Judas* among the Apostles: Such were *Ananias* and *Sapphira* among the disciples. Let us take heed we be not like them, or if we will be like them, let us know, that as we join with them in their sin, we must also partake with them in their punishments; who died not the common death of men, but the one hanged himself, the others were smitten with sudden death at the voice of *Peter*, as with a thunderbolt, so that they fell down, and never rose up again. A just reward of all such as have a conscience guilt, or rather guilty of the horrible sin of hypocrisy. If a man go about to deceive his neighbor, how is he spoken against? but if he go about like a wretch to cosin his master, or his father, how do all men point at him as a varlet, and abhor him as a beast? God is our Master, our Father, our Husband, our King, all Titles of honor are due unto him, and too little for him, forasmuch as no dignity, or excellency, or superiority, can be given unto him, but his Majesty and honor surmounteth them all: shall we then go about to deceive and circumvent him, though we could carry it away cunningly, and not be espied? Know therefore, that he detesteth all such wickedness, more then man doth the deceitfulness that is practiced against himself.

The first example of hypocrisy, that we have in the Scripture, is *Cain*; he came to the worship of God with his brother, but because his heart was not upright, *God had no respect unto him, nor to his offering*, no more then *if he had cut off a dogs neck, or had offered swine's flesh*, but rejected both his person and his oblation. The like he speaketh to the Israelites, that pleased themselves in outward ceremonies, and turned the worship of God into a lie, *Behold, ye trust in lying words that cannot profit: will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other God's whom ye know not, and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my Name, and say, We are delivered, to do all those abominations? Is this house which is called by my Name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord, &c.* Where we see, we cannot deceive the eye of the Lord with a lie, he knoweth our wicked hearts, and will find us out to bring us to shame in this life, and to destruction in the life to come. We may not dally with him, we cannot deceive him: notwithstanding all our windings and turnings, and altering our selves into all shapes, he will find us out to the contempt of our persons, to the shame of our faces, and to the astonishment of all that behold us.

Secondly, seeing it is a special duty belonging [Use 2] unto us, to yield obedience to the whole will of God and to all his commandments, we have from hence a preservative from the poison that is cast out against us, as it were dung in our faces, to make us deny the faith, renounce our Religion, and start back from our most holy profession. For seeing we must perform perfect obedience, and not limited as we think good, we have direction how to serve him, that he may accept of us, and be well pleased with us. If then *Satan* the master of all mischief, and the author of all confusion, raise up cursed instruments, brought up as cunning scholars in his own school, to scoff at us, and to scorn at our obedience, we must comfort our selves in the Lord, and commit our selves to the word of his grace, knowing that it is God who requireth this entire obedience at our hands, and delighteth in such sacrifice as is without blemish.

Let it not trouble us that we hear such slanderous words, such false reports, and devilish lies, cast out against us: let us commit our causes to him that judgeth uprightly, who will justify us in the ende, and condemn our enemies. Let us be able to say with the Prophet▪ *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.* These are the days of sin, wherein iniquity hath already gotten the upper hand, and such as are truly religious are made a proverb. God requireth of us that we be pure: but who are in greater disgrace, then such as study after purity and true holiness?

If we labor to lead our lives according to the Laws of God, we shall be upbraided with Puritanism: and as the enemies of *Daniel* could find no accusation against him, except they find it against him, concerning the Law of God: so do our enemies deal with us; when they can catch no advantage against us, they pick a quarrel with us about the Scriptures and our profession, as if it were a shame to read the Scriptures, or a disgrace to follow after holiness of life.

The Apostle teacheth, *that we must be blameless, and pure, as the sons of God in the middes of a naughty and crooked nation, among whom we are to shine as lights in the world,* Philippians chapter 2.15. And again, *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report, think on these things.* Our Savior, the author of our salvation, and the finisher of our faith, pronounceth that *the pure in heart are blessed.* Paul willeth his scholar *Timothy* to keep himself pure, and to take heed lest he make himself partaker of other men's sins. 1 Tim. 5.22. He commandeth all men to pray, everywhere *lifting up pure hands* without wrath or doubting: and to have the mystery of faith *in a pure conscience.* And in the second Epistle, he chargeth him *to fly the lusts of youth, and to follow after righteousness, faith, love, and peace, with them that call on the Lord with pure heart.* Here we see what God requireth of us and what he speaketh unto us; this is his voice that ought to sound evermore in our ears, Be blameless, be pure, be the sons of God, in the middes of a naughty nation; blessed are the pure: have pure consciences, pure hands, pure hearts; whatsoever things are pure, and of good report think on them. True it is, there have always been hypocrites in the Church, and *there is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness,* Pro. 30.12. What then? shall we whip their faults upon the backs of those that are of no kin unto them? For the faithful, though they have in them many frailties, and infirmities, yet are washed by the blood of Christ, and by the Spirit

of God from their sins, that they have no dominion over them, and exercise no kingdom in them. Was it ever allowed in any court of Justice and judgment, to take one for another, to accuse one for another, & to condemn one for another? It is the Law of God, that every soul should bear his own sin: that neither the father should bear the iniquity of the son, nor the son of the father: that the righteousness of the righteous should be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked should be upon himself, There was one hypocrite in the family of Christ: should this tend to the reproach of Christ himself, or of the rest of the disciples? ought they to bear the blame of his iniquity? or ought all to be censured alike? or ought we to make no difference? Thus it was in the family of *Adam* from the beginning, he had not only faithful *Abel*, but faithless *Cain*. Thus it was in the family of *Noah*, before the Flood, he had as well cursed *Ham*, as blessed *Shem*. Thus it was in the family of *Abraham*, and of *Isaac*, after the Flood; and where not almost? So that we are not to condemn all for some, one for another, the godly for the hypocrites.

But if we cannot call them back from this false judgment, and rash censuring of the innocent, let us comfort our selves in the uprightness of our own hearts; and when we cannot secure our selves from their unjust accusations, let us be careful and watchful over our ways, that we give them no just occasions. This shall be Armor of proof, and as a brazen wall, to give no offense, and to keep a clear conscience before GOD and men. If then they reproach us, and speak all manner of evil against us, let us possess our souls with patience, and let us rejoice and be glad, in as much as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings. The Spirit of glory, and of God resteth upon us. Let us not be ashamed, but glorify God in this behalf. Thus we shall make them ashamed, that falsely accuse our good conversation. It falleth out no otherwise with us, then it hath done with y^e Saints, and dearest servants of God.

The Apostle putteth us in mind of this truth, by occasion of that fell out in *Abraham's* house, which then was y^e visible Church of God, Gal. 4. *As then he that was borne after the flesh, persecuted him that was borne after the spirit: even so it is now.* It seemeth strange unto them, that you run not with them unto the same excess of riot, and therefore they speak evil of you, *who shall give account to him that is ready to Judge the quick and the dead,* 1 Pet. 4.5. But let not us think it strange to suffer for Christ's sake, who suffered much more for us, the just for the unjust, and bare our sins in his own body on the tree, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steppes. If any man therefore suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this behalf, knowing that hereunto he is called. Affliction for the Gospel is the badge of Christ, and an exceeding honor before men and Angels: so that when we are reviled, and reproached, let us not render like for like, nor be dismayed or pulled back from our profession, but go lustily forward, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. according to the exhortation of the Apostle, *Be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, but be partaker of the affliction of the Gospel, according to the power of God.* 2. Tim. 1.8. that we may be able truly to say, *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* It is better to obey God then man: and to incur the displeasure of man, then to procure and purchase the indignation of God.

We have not yet resisted unto blood, neither have we endured the fiery trial, as many of our dear brethren and sisters have done before us.

Let us not be daunted with a word, or with big looks, and stern countenances, but rather prepare our selves for a fresh assault and new encounter, and say with the Apostle, *With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment, yea, I judge not mine own self*, 1 Cor. 4.3.

Lastly, considering the manner of that obedience [Use 3] which we owe, and ought to perform to God, it is our duty to endeavor to please him in all things, and to labor to obey him carefully & circumspectly in all his commandments. The nearer we come to the mark set before us, the more we please him; & the more we please him, the better we are accepted of him. The Apostle *Paul* had run long in this race, he had made many straight steps toward the kingdom of heaven, yet he saith, *I have not already attained unto perfection, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus: this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, & reaching forth unto those things which are before.* Such as come nearest to obey all the laws of their Prince, are most of all commended, and are accounted the best Subjects: such as perform all the commandments of their masters, are accounted to be the best servants: and such as execute the will of their fathers, and please them in all things, are reputed to be the best children. How then cometh it to pass, that whereas zeal is commended in everyone, in the subject toward his Prince, in the soldier toward his Captain, in the servant toward his Master, &c. such should be least commended, nay altogether discommended and disgraced, that perform most duty to GOD, and labor to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ? 2 Cor. 10, 5. It is strange to see how precise the most men are in all other things, and how loose and licentious in the matters of God, wherein notwithstanding we ought to be most conscionable. It is to be wondered at, to behold the preciseness that is in the world, in all matters, except in religion. We are very curious to have our apparel sit neatly and smoothly, that it be without spot or wrinkle: much more then ought we to be curious and careful in the discharge of our duties unto God, according to the rule of his word. In all things that concern the body, whether meat, or drink, or apparel, or our own delights, no man is ignorant how straight and strict men are. Their eyes are so quick, their ears so dainty, their taste so delicate, that if the least thing be amiss, or out of square, they are displeased and discontented: and yet these men, in things of an higher nature, and concerning a better life, run so wide, and take such liberty, that they think to please God with anything, and to make him take half stakes with them. If we have any garments made for us, and brought unto us, which have anything amiss in them, that we find them not exactly fit for us, but either too big or too little, too long or too short, too wide or too straight, we fret and fume, we chide and chafe, as men beside our selves. Oh, that there were such harts in us to please God Oh, that we would look so narrowly to our own souls. In our apparel, nothing must be out of order in matter or form, to the very skirts and borders of them: but in our lives we can be content to be out of frame, to have poor, rent, and ragged souls, and never to put upon us the righteousness of Jesus Christ, as the richest robes, and most precious garment. The like we require in dressing our meats, which we do in attiring of our bodies; *which are ordained for the belly, and the belly for them,*

albeit God will destroy both it and them, 1 Cor. 6, 13. The least fault is soon espied, the offenders like to be turned out of service, and we soon driven out of our little patience. Nay, in our ordinary delights and recreations, which serve only to please the ear, we see how he that is skillful in music, cannot abide the least jarre and discord, if he espy one finger set out of order, or hear the missing of one minim rest, how impatient is he? how much discontented? how doth he testify his dislike with hand and foot? But touching the leading of our lives and the ordering of our actions, whereupon dependeth the everlasting salvation or damnation of our souls, though there be a thousand jars, and ten thousand discords in them, we think the harmony good enough, and all things to be in tune. This use that now we urge, hath many branches, as furtherances of purity and perfection in us.

First, we must labor to have pure and upright hearts, which giveth life to all our actions, and is much accepted of God. It is the counsel of the wise man, Prov. 4. *Keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it are the issues of life:* and chap. 23. *My son, give me thy heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.* It is as the wheel of the clock, that moveth all the rest: it is the root that giveth life to the boughs and branches, and maketh the Tree yield his fruit. It is the fountain that sendeth forth sweet or bitter waters. Heerevpon the Apostle exhorteth, Heb. 3. *Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.* A pure heart is the scourge of hypocrisy, and as a strong hammer that serveth to break it in pieces. This is first to be looked unto; reform it, and thou art all clean. It is the direction that Christ giveth unto us, Math. 23. *Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.* It is a vain thing to be clean without, & unclean within: to have the outward man appear fair and smooth; and the heart to be foul and filthy. Such then as begin not at the heart, begin at the wrong end. They take long and needless pains, that think to stop the streams, while they let the spring alone. The heart in the body is the member that first hath life in it: so is it in the spiritual life. Hence it is, that the Scripture commendeth unto us the simplicity of the heart, Eph. 6, 5. Col. 3, 21 the circumcision of the heart, Rom. 2, 29: the meditation of the heart, Psal. 19, 15: the uprightness of the heart, 1 Kings 3, 6: a wise & an understanding heart, 1 Kings 3, 9: a perfect heart, 2 Kings 20, 3. 1 Chron. 28, 9: a faithful heart, Nehem. 9, 8: an upright heart, Psal. 11, 2: a pure heart, Psal. 24, 4. Math. 5: a prepared and fixed heart, Psal. 57, 7, and 108, 1, and 112, 7: an honest and good heart, Luc. 8, 15: joyfulness and gladness of heart, Deut. 28, 47; a broken and a contrite heart, Psal. 51, 17: a tender heart, 2 Chron. 34, 24: an heart of flesh, Ezek. 11, 19: a new heart and new spirit, Ezek. 18, 31, and 33, 26: a purified heart, Acts 15, 9: an enlarged heart, 2 Cor. 6, 11: the good treasure of the heart, Luc. 6, 45: and a true heart, Heb. 10, 22. These and many such like testimonies, teach us to begin our repentance from dead works and reformation of life at the heart, & that until we set our hearts and our souls to seek the Lord, we dally with God, and never seriously set upon that work.

Secondly, we must be free from any purpose to live in any known sin, and must be inclined to everything that is good, so that we should be able to say with *Paul*, 1 Cor. 4, 4. *I know nothing by myself, yet I am not hereby justified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord.* The Apostle knew nothing for which he should condemn himself. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith, Psal. 119. *I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end.* And a little before

he saith in the same Psalm, *I have sworn and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* So ought all the faithful to bind themselves by a solemn vow and promise to stir up their zeal, and kindle their affections to all good duties. It is recorded to the perpetual praise & commendation of Asa, that he moved the people of *Judah* and *Benjamin* to enter into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their Fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul, *That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, man or woman: And they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with Trumpets, and with Cornets: And all Judah rejoiced at the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire, and he was found of them, and the Lord gave them rest round about,* 2 Chron. 15. Happy are they that set before them this example, as a pattern and president unto them, to resolve fully with themselves to cast from them all sin as a filthy clothe, and to settle their hearts to seek the Lord, and to hate with an unfeigned hatred, whatsoever may be any hindrance or impediment unto them.

Thirdly, we must all take notice of our own wants and imperfections, and earnestly bewail them and mourn for them. It is a degree toward perfection, to acknowledge & confess our imperfections, and to be grieved for them. For no man can have a feeling of infirmities, but by the work of God's sanctifying Spirit. It is a grace of God to know the want of grace. The ungodly are not acquainted with it, they think themselves full, they hunger and thirst after carnal things, but never after spiritual and heavenly things. The blessed Virgin in her song showeth, that *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away,* Luc, 1, 53. There is a perfection in God's children accompanied with much imperfection, and strength mingled with much weakness, Phil. 3, 15. So that albeit the faithful find their own infirmities, yet they do not please themselves in thē, but continually strive against them, and more and more get the upper hand of them.

Fourthly, we must make conscience of the least sin, that we may be afraid of the greatest. When *David* had cut off the lap of *Saul's* garment, his heart smote him, 1 Sam. 24, 5. How could he be induced to shed one drop of his blood, that confessed he ought not to have touched the lap of his garment? The Apostle requireth of us to *abstain from all appearance of evil,* 1 Thess. 5, 22. If we cast out the mote that is in our eyes, we cannot suffer a beam to stick in them. If we would learn indeed and in truth to strain at a gnat, we should not so easily swallow a Camel. The wages of all sin is death, and therefore we should fear to run into any sin. Pull out the sting of this serpent in the beginning. Cure this sickness at the first, lest it grow incurable. Cut down the tree while it is young and green; one stroke now will do more good, then an hundred when it is grown old, and tough, and hard. The labor is little at the beginning, but custom in sinning, groweth into another nature.

Fifthly, we must grow from good to better. We must not always be babes and sucklings, children and weaklings, but evermore grow in grace. There is a perfection of Christians to which we must be led, as Heb. 6, 1: where he moveth them, that leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, they should *go on to perfection,* not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God. Not that any perfection can be attained in this life, as the Anabaptists and other fantastical persons dream off most falsely,

not knowing themselves nor the law of God: but we must aim at it as at a mark, and make it the end of all our works, forasmuch as in the School of Christ we must wax old, evermore learning somewhat. God accounteth us as pure, & accepteth us as pure (albeit we attain not unto the parts of perfect purity,) for these causes and considerations of apprehension, regeneration, imputation, and glorification. For though we be sanctified in part, yet Christ calleth the Church his Love, *all fair, pure as the Sun, clear as the Moon, bright as the Morning;* because we lay hold on the righteousness of Christ by faith, the work of regeneration is begun in everyone of us, and goeth forward by degrees; the perfect purity and perfection of Christ is ours for the present, in whom we are accounted pure: and for the time to come, we have the promise of glorification, when we shall be without spot or wrinkle, and made so absolutely pure, as if we had never been defiled with sin.

Lastly, it is our duty to pray unto God to give us upright hearts, which in themselves are crooked and corrupt. The Apostle in the shutting up of the Epistle to the Hebrews, prayeth for them, that God would *make them perfect in every good work to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.* That which we desire for another, we ought much more to crave and ask for our selves. Hence it is, that the Apostle assureth his own heart, that *the LORD would deliver him from every evil work, and preserve him unto his heavenly Kingdom,* 2. Tim. 4, 18. If this means be diligently practiced of us, we shall grow more and more in good things, we shall abolish the kingdom of sin and Satan in us, so that the Lord which hath begun his good work in us, will perfect the same unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAP. III.

1. These also are the generations of Aaron and Moses, in the day that the Lord spake with Moses in Mount Sinai.
2. And these are the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadah the first borne, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.
3. These are the names of the sons of Aaron the Priest, which were anointed, whom he consecrated to minister in the Priests Office.
4. And Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord, when they offered strange fire before the Lord, in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children: and Eleazar and Ithamar ministered in the Priests Office in the sight of Aaron their father.

WE have already shown, that the numbering of y^e *Israelites* (which of a small stock grew to so many millions) is of two sorts, one of the people fitted for the wars, the other, of the Priests and Levites that were to minister to God. This whole multitude consisting partly of the people, & partly of the Ministers, are all of them warriors and soldiers, howbeit there is a twofold war, civil, and sacred. Now, of such as were to wage the civil war, we have spoken before in the former chapters. It remaineth to entreat in this and the Chapter following, of such as follow another war, and belong to another warfare, and are another kind of warriors. The former is opposed against temporal and bodily enemies, but this against spiritual: and both of them have their several Captains, their swords, their armor, their furniture, their victories. The former war is carnal & profane; this is sacred and holy. The General is Christ Jesus, *The Captain of the Lord's host*, Josh. 5, 14. The enemies are Satan, the world, and the flesh: the armor, is as the war, wholly spiritual; for our warfare is not carnal, yet *mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*, 2 Cor. 10, 4, 5. We fight not against flesh & blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places, Eph. 6, 12. And therefore our whole armor must be of the same nature, that it may be of proof, *able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*: our breast-plate must be made of righteousness: our shield must be of faith, which is our victory: our helmet must be of salvation: our sword wherewith we are to be girded, is the word of God. Hence it is that the Apostle exhorteth *Timothy* a Minister of the Gospel, to *be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*, and to *endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*, 2 Tim. 2, 1, 3. Now then, as we observed in the two former chapters, concerning the mustering of the people, both their number, and their order: the like we are to consider in handling the rest that remain, who were exempted out of the former training, to wit, the Priests and the Levites. For first of all, *Moses* numbereth them according to their persons, then according to their order and ministry. Touching their persons, in this chapter: touching their ministry, in the fourth chapter. So then in this place the Tribe of the Levites is numbered, who were selected and separated to the work of the ministry, that they might therein serve God and his people.

In this Chapter we are to observe two things: first, a transition or passage by way of preface to this holy numeration, distinct from the former in the 13. first verses: secondly, the numbering it self, in the rest of the chapter. Touching the first point, which is the entrance, we must consider in it two other points, first, a description of the Tribe of *Levi* and of the family of *Aaron*; forasmuch as *Moses* and *Aaron* the two heads of the people, descended out of that Tribe, as is more at large declared in the book of Exodus: and this is amplified by the circumstance of time, in the beginning of the first verse, *In the day that the Lord spake with Moses in Mount Sinai*: as if he had said, Now it is time to proceed to speak of the Tribe of *Levi*, and to set down how great the number of thē was, when God commanded them to be numbered at Mount *Sinai*, (for as yet the people was not departed from thence where the law was given) but first I will rehearse the names of the sons of *Aaron*, who, above or before

others were appointed to the Priest-hood. Secondly, the presentation of the *Levites* before *Aaron* to be numbered, which we will reserve to be handled afterward in his proper place.

Touching the description of *Aaron's* house and family (whereon the numbering of the Priests depended) First, his sons are reckoned, and their ministry declared, verse 2, and 3. of which we have heard more particularly in the book of *Leviticus*, chap. 8, and 9. Then the destruction of two of them (which were the eldest) is set down: for when they transgressed the Commandment of God, & offered strange fire before him, they were consumed and confounded; which is briefly repeated in the 4. verse, but at large expressed in the 10. chapt. of *Leviticus*: whereby it came necessarily to pass, that two being cut off, and leaving no issue behind them, that there remained only two heads or families of the Priests, to wit, of *Eleazar* and *Ithamar*.

[Verse 1. *These are the generations of Aaron, &c:*] We see in this place, how *Moses* immediately after the numbering up of the people, that meddled not with the ministry of the word, or killing of the sacrifices, or administering of the Sacraments, or serving in the Tabernacle, or carrying of the Ark, or teaching of the people, handleth in the next place the form and fashion of the ministry, that labored and spent themselves in the former things. For let there be never so great order, or good policy in the Common-wealth, yet if the care of the ministry be neglected, all is to little purpose. We see from hence, the goodly order that GOD observeth in this great army, he establisheth among them most carefully the holy Ministry, to the ende they might be taught and instructed in the word. [Doctrine 1] Heereby we learn, that among all nations & people under the heavens, the ministry of the word ought to be planted and established. I say, there is a great and absolute necessity of a standing and settled ministry among all sorts and conditions of men, to guide them in the ways of godliness. This appeareth evidently from the beginning: for rather then there should be no teaching, God himself was the Pastor and Teacher, the Priest and Prophet of his Church, and instructed them immediately by his own voice, without the ministry of man: he was then the Shepherd, and they the sheep: he the master, and they the Scholars. So he appeared to *Adam* and taught him, and likewise his posterity after him. Then there was no need of any other Doctor or instructor, he was all in all. For as a man need not light a Candle at noon day thereby to see, when as the Sun shineth clearly in his strength: no more needed man in his innocence to be taught by man, seeing he enjoyed the bright Sun-shining of God's glorious presence. But when once mankind began to multiply and increase out of one house into diverse families, as a tree displaying it self into many branches, God raised up ordinary and extraordinary Teachers. For the father of the family, was the King and Priest of it: a King, to rule: a Priest, to teach the will of God to his children. Hence we read, that *Enoch* the seventh from *Adam* prophesied of the second coming of Christ to judgment, with ten thousands of his Saints, to execute judgment upon all ungodly sinners. So then he was a Prophet raised up of God in those corrupt times, to reprove sin, and to convince all that were ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they ungodly committed. After him he stirred up *Noah*, a Preacher of righteousness, while the Ark was in preparing, when the long suffering of God waited an hundred & twenty years for their conversion. Besides, that the people of God might be sufficiently provided for, the first borne were also sanctified to this Office, as we

shall see afterward in this chap, and the chap. following: and lastly, in their stead the Tribe of *Levi* were set apart, in whom alone it continued (excepting the Prophets that had a special calling) while the Synagogue stood, even unto Christ: who, when he ascended and led captivity captive, gave gifts unto men at his pleasure, and appointed some Apostles, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers, *for the perfecting of the Saints, and for the edifying of the body of Christ*. We see in this place, that so soon as the law was given in Mount *Sinai*, God appointed those that should publish and preach the same: and so soon as the Tabernacle was erected, he ordained *Aaron* and his sons to attend upon it, and to perform their several duties according to his direction and appointment. Thus also did the Apostles deal, so soon as they had preached the Gospel, according to the commission and commandment they had received, & thereby gained a people unto God, they settled a ministry to continue, and appointed Elders and Pastors over that people, for the propagation of true religion, and the strengthening of God's servants in all good duties. This appeareth in the Acts of the Apostles; *Paul* and *Barnabas* confirmed the souls of the Disciples, and exhorted them to continue in the faith, *and when they had ordained them Elders in every Church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whō they believed*, Acts 14, 23. Likewise the Apostle left *Titus* in *Crete*, that he should *set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as he had appointed him*, Titus, 1, 5. Thus we see what the practice of the holy Apostles was toward the Churches which they had planted, so that in all kingdoms, and Countries, and Congregations converted to the true faith, the ministry of the word must be firmly established, well seen unto, and regarded, both to bring them to God, and to settle them in God, and to continue them with God, that they may abide his for evermore.

[Reason 1] Let us search into the reasons hereof, for the confirming of us farther in this truth. First, a certain and settled ministry, is an evident sign and token that God hath a Church and people to be won and begotten by the precious and immortal seed of the word, which is the seed of regeneration, and by their ministry, whom he sendeth and sanctifieth to teach them in the truth. Where he will have much labor to be bestowed, and more planting & watering to be used then in other places, he hath much people to be gained and gathered unto him: where he will have little pains bestowed, there he hath a small people and a little company to be saved. Where he will have no teaching, he hath no Church to be collected and converted unto the faith. When *Paul* had preached the Gospel, & planted a church at *Corinth*, and was ready to have departed, *The Lord spake unto him in the night by a visian, Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this City*. He must labor more plentifully and abundantly among them, because God had a greater people in that place. On the other side, where he would not have them exercise their ministry, it is a sign and token he hath no people there. No laborers, no corn: no harvest men, no harvest: no shepherds, no flock. Hence it is, that *when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the Region of Galatia, they were forbidden of the holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia: and after they were come to Mysia, they assaied to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not*, Acts 16, 6, 7. Thus we see that a standing ministry is a sign of a Church, and where the word is not, there is no Church.

[Reason 2] Secondly, without the light of the word, the people remain in darkness and cannot see, they grope at noon days, and know not what they do, as it was in Egypt, when the plague of palpable darkness was sent among them, they saw not one another, neither arose any from his place, Exod. 10, 23. Thus it fareth with those that want the light of the candle, or the shining of the Sun of God's word among them; they lie under one of the most heavy plagues that can be: but whē the word is sent unto them, they have a great light to direct them in their ways, according to the saying of the Prophet, Isaiah 60, 2, 3. *The darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee: and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, & Kings to the brightness of thy rising.* Such then as have not the ministry of the word, are as a crew or company of infidels, & as an heard of brute beasts and cattle that are running on heaps to their destruction; or like to those swine of the *Gadarenes*, into which the devils entered at the permission of Christ, so that they ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters, Math. 8, 32.

Thirdly, the necessity of a ministry is so [Reason 3] clear and evident, that all the Gentiles had their Priests and Prophets that attended on their profane and superstitious Altars: and it was their first care to establish a religion, such as it was, among them. This were easy to be shown by the testimonies of antiquity out of all histories and records, to have been observed in all places, at all times, among all people. After that *Rome* was built, and a sufficient people assembled in it, immediately they established the worship of their gods, indeed a false worship of false gods, but thereby they testified their great devotion, and their service and sacrifice done unto them, so that they erected a College pontifical, & ordained Bishops, and instituted an High Priest to have authority over their Ceremonies and Laws. From hence cometh the saying in the Poet, *A Jove principium*: that is, Let us make beginning with GOD. But to omit these, we see how *Jeroboam* that made *Israel* to sin, setting up his two Calves, appointed his Priests to attend at them. *Ahab* and *Jezebel* had their idolatrous Chaplains & many Prophets of the groves, 1 Kings 18, 19. The colony brought from *Babylon*, and placed in *Samaria*, are said to make a mixture of religion, and to *make unto themselves of the lowest of them, Priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places*, 2. Kings 17. Thus we see, that among the very infidels, No Priest, no religion. If it were thus among them who saw darkly, and were without the true light of the Scripture: much more ought we to learn it, that have been taught better things, and have the sure word of the Prophets to guide us.

Fourthly, such is our frailty and weakness, [Reason 4] that notwithstanding we live under a settled ministry, and have given our names to the faith, and have yielded some obedience to the truth, yet we are ready to start back again. For as the body is prone to pine away without supply of daily food, so are our souls ready to perish, being destitute of the heavenly Manna of the word of God. The wise man saith, Where is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the Law, happy is he, Prov. 29, 18. The preaching of the word, is the ordinary means of salvation, and therefore without it the people perish. The people of *Zebulon* and *Naphtali*, *were in the shadow of death*, until Christ came among them, and was revealed unto them, Math. 4, 15, 16. The Prophet teacheth, that *the people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*, Hos. 4,

6. When Moses was absent from the host of the *Israelites* only forty days, they fell into idolatry, & worshipped the Calf, *Exod. 32*. So where the Minister and ministry of the word is wanting, there for the most part no evil is wanting, but swarms of drunkards, adulterers, swearers, thieves, liars, and all kind of impieties do abound and overflow. These are (alas) too rife where the word is taught diligently, and published in season and out of season: nevertheless, where it is duly and conscionably preached, without respect of persons, it toucheth the harts of some, represseth the corruptions of others, & is as a warning piece and watchword unto all: so that all persons and people whatsoever, & wheresoever, must live under the ordinary hearing and frequenting of the word of God.

[Use 1] The uses remain to be handled, which ought especially to be marked of us. First, there is offered unto us this truth arising from the doctrine it self, that the preaching of the word by the Minister, and the hearing of it by the people, is no ceremony nor a matter of indifferency, such as may either be done or left undone at our own discretion or disposition; but it is such a part of the public service of God, as ought not to be omitted or neglected without great sin, and breach of the fourth Commandment, which serveth to establish the ministry of the word. It is above the works of mercy and compassion, & therefore the most profitable work that can be done to the sons of men. It is a more excellent and much greater gift to do good to the soul, then to do good to the body, inasmuch as the soul is more precious then the body.

Hence it is, that the Apostles gave over ministering to the poor & attending to their necessities, because *they would give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word, Acts 6, 4*. And before this in the second chapter, describing the Church after the ascension of Christ, he saith, the Disciples *continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers*. Where he placeth continuance in the Apostles doctrine and breaking of bread, before fellowship and communion in temporal things. It is one special mark of a man and woman truly fearing God, to be a diligent hearer of the word of God, and a continual resorter to the preaching of it, and a careful frequenter of the house of God. We see this in *Simeon; he came often into the Temple*, and thereby he found Christ, when his parents brought him in their arms, to do for him after the custom of the Law, *Luc. 2, 27, 37, 41*. The like we might say of *Anna a Prophetess*, which departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings & prayers night and day, verse 37. So *Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover*, by custom and commandment. This was the cause of the great godliness and wonderful zeal that was in *David*, that he desired nothing more, then to appear before the face of God among his Saints. This his affection he testifieth in many places, *Psal. 27, 4. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple*. There is always good hope of such persons, so long as they use the means to be recovered. A sick person may not be despaired off, so long as he is content to use the help and counsel of the Physician, albeit he be very dangerously sick: but when once he refuseth his direction, then we may look for nothing but death. Thus the case standeth with all men; so long as we forsake not the word, there is hope of salvation: when once we refuse it, there is fear of destruction both of soul and body. Wherefore, we are to

judge well and charitably of such as are religious frequenters of the holy exercises of faith: such are never past hope, there is some sign of life in them: and we have more comfort and greater assurance of such, albeit unjust & unclean, then of any civil man that refuseth the means.

Many in the world stumble at the offensive lives of evil professors; but certainly whatsoever men judge, there is more hope of the worst professor that heareth the word and attendeth unto it, then of the best civil men that in profaneness of heart refuse it, and that for two reasons. First, these men though they be evil, yet use good means, which have from time to time done good upon others as bad as they, & therefore may in time to come by the mercy of God, and blessing upon the means, do good also unto them, & be effectual in them. If it do not prevail at one time, yet it may at another. The reformation of a sinner is not wrought at a sudden, but by little & little, like the water that pierceth the hard stone by customable and continual dropping upon it. If thou seest two men most dangerously sick of diverse diseases, and all mortal except they be cured, and one of them putting himself under the Physicians hand, the other rejecting altogether both physic and the Physician; whether of these is more likely to be restored and to live? Is not he that taketh the receipt and medicine that is ministered? So is it in the sicknesses of the soul. If we hearken to the word, which is a spiritual medicine to heal every malady, we may be reclaimed. The word is as *a dragnet cast into the Sea*, which gathereth of every kind, Mat. 13. Yea, it is *quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, Heb. 4, 12. Secondly, it is a sign that those which use the means are not yet sold and settled to continue in sin: for there is no man whose heart is fully set in him to do evil and follow wickedness, that can patiently endure & be content to be an ordinary frequenter of religion, whensoever it is publicly taught and preached. True it is, they may sometimes come to the word for custom, or company, or fear, or praise, or because they have nothing else to do, and cannot tell how else to spend away the time: but if they come ordinarily & continually, they are not become desperate. The hammer of God's word may break their harts, and enter into their souls. As for those that regard not to serve GOD, and use not the assemblies of his worship, they are of all other most wicked and profane, and may justly be said to be of the forlorn hope. They are at the point of death, they lie gasping for breath, nay they are come to the brink of hell. Thus then we see that the preaching of God is of absolute necessity, whether we be converted or not converted, whether we do believe or not yet believe, nay, it is in a manner the only necessary thing. It is the opiniō of many wretched men that are not worthy to breathe in the common air, that it bringeth a great charge and heavy burden upon the people without any necessity, and that it is a needless work; but they are far deceived, as we shall see afterward. Wherefore Christ our Savior commending the practice of *Mary*, that sate at his feet and heard his word, saith unto her sister, *Thou art careful, and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her*. See how contrary these men are unto Christ, and their words to the words of Christ. Can they then be good Christians that are led by a spirit contrary unto Christ? He telleth us that the hearing of the word is necessary: they say it, & by their practice seal to it, that it is not

necessary. Can light and darkness be more contrary then these two? He teacheth that this is one necessary thing; they are not ashamed to affirm with tongues set on fire of hell, that among all unnecessary things this is most idle and unprofitable. This is a deep judgment of God upon them for their contempt of his ordinance. This bewrayeth the corruption of their hearts, that indeed they are of no religion. For he that learneth not religion by the word, never yet knew what true religion meaneth. Such then as have not a settled ministry and Minister to resort unto, are for the most part unsettled in their opinions, unconstant in religion, and unstable in all their ways. Sometimes they hold one thing, sometimes another, and sometimes nothing at all; as a reed that is carried to and fro with the winds, as a weathercocke that turneth often in a day, and stagger hither & thither like a drunken man. And such as live under a ministry planted according to the institution of Christ, but have not their ears settled to hear the fame, forasmuch as they come once, and miss twice, slip in & out of the Church at their pleasure, hear one Sermon, and absent themselves from another; their conscience is seared with an hot iron, & their sin is come up to heaven. Ignorant they are, & will learn nothing: they are fickle in matters of faith and godliness, knowing no point of religion as they ought to know, neither being able to give an account of the hope that is in them. These starters that come and go when they please, have not so much as the outward show of a true Christian, much less the truth of the heart that is within: neither can they look for any blessing from him from whom all blessings do proceed, as from the Father of lights. To conclude then, the power of Satan is great to hold man in sin, but the word is as the Scepter of God to break it, that we may escape, and to overthrow his kingdom. The seventy Disciples, sent out by Christ into every City and place whither he himself should come, returned again with joy, saying; *Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy Name.* And the Lord said unto them, *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,* Luke 10. Behold, how necessary the preaching of it is to all people, to which we ought all to subscribe.

Secondly, it serveth to reprove diverse abuses, [Use 2] I will name three in particular. First, such as think & spare not to say, that the ministry is a vain and superfluous thing, and that the Ministers are men that may very well be spared, as if they were a sixth finger upon the hand, or a sixth toe upon the foot, that is, bringing a burden rather than a benefit; and that their labors may be spared also, inasmuch as they bring with them, in their opinion, needless charges and unnecessary expenses. For as they account the Sabbath the loss of one day in a week, the loss of one week in a month, & the loss of one year in seven: so they account the maintenance of the ministry the loss of their goods and substance, and a departing with the tenth part of their labors to no purpose. These have learned another language then the tongue of *Canaan*: they do not the works that beseem Christians, and they cannot speak as beseemeth those that profess the fear of God, if so be they do profess so much. Is it a needless thing to have the light of the Sun in the Firmament, without which all things are covered with darkness, and nothing can have life and quickening? But the Sun is not more necessary to be in the world, thē the light of the word in the church to give life and light unto them that sit in darkness, Math. 4.16. Is a candle needless to be in the house in the night season, *to give light to them that are in it?* The Church is the golden candlestick, & the word is the candle that shineth in our hearts to guide us in all our ways, Mat. 5, 15. Luk. 8,

16. Is it needless to have laborers to reap down our corn in time of harvest? To have meat brought unto us and provided for us, when we are hungry? or drink, when we are thirsty? The preaching of the Gospel is as light in the Firmament, as a candle in the house, as the eye in the body, as the meat in the stomach, and as the laborer in time of harvest, Matth. 9. The want of this blessing is to cover the earth with darkness, to put out the light of the eye, & to suffer good corn to perish for want of reaping and gathering into the barn; as the state of Egypt was when it wanted corn, and cried out to *Joseph* for bread; or as *Judea*, whē it wanted the light of the Sun. Miserable therefore, and thrice miserable are those people that want this, albeit they were stored with abundance of all earthly commodities under heaven. If they had all the riches of the world, that every nation borrowed of them and they of none, what should they help them wanting this only? Could the other save them, or make them a blessed people? No, no, in the midst of these blessings, they must needs be accursed. Is not that Land miserable that is compassed about with enemies, & yet is without armor? Are they not as a naked people that lie open to become a prey to them that gape after their destruction? Thus notwithstanding it is without the Ministers, who are *the Chariots and horsemen of Israel*, 2 Kin. 2, 12. Is it not a miserable thing to go into wars, and to have no Captains to lead the battle? What hope can there be of victory? Nay, what can be looked for but present destruction? The Ministers are *the Leaders and Overseers* of the Lord's host to rule them and keep them in order, Heb. 13, 7. Is it not miserable to see a flock of sheep without a Shepherd, wandering up and down from the fold, and ready to be devoured of the wolves? But such as are without a teaching Minister, are scattered abroad as silly *sheep are without a Shepherd* to lead them in green pastures, Mat. 9, 36. Is it not a woeful & miserable thing to see Satan's kingdom flourish, and to see him ruling in the hearts of men, and as it were dancing in their souls? No grief or sorrow should be like unto this, to see so many thousands perish everlastingly. But there is no other way to destroy his kingdom, & to make him *fall down like lightning*, then to have the glad tidings of the Gospel spread abroad in the earth, Luke 10, 42. Is it not a miserable thing to see a City besieged round about, and to have no watchman to watch it, and give warning of the approach of the enemy? Who can doubt but such a City is near to be taken and surprised? God hath made the Ministers his watchmen, they must blow the Trumpet, and warn the wicked, that they turn from their wickedness and evil ways, and so die not in their iniquity. Is it not a grievous thing to have meat ready to putrefy and corrupt, and yet want salt to season it? The Ministers of the word are not only the light of the world, but also *the salt of the earth*, without which, the people are as unsavory flesh and stinking carrion in the nostrils of God, or else what needed this salt? Lastly, is it not a miserable thing to be pitied of all men, to stand upon the shore and to see many ready to be drowned and cast away? To behold them tossed up and down with the waves, and at every blast of the wind, like to be swallowed up in the seas? But thus it is with us by nature; we cannot choose but perish, except this means be provided for us as an Ark to save us. Alas, how many dead carcasses may we see swimming and floating in the glassie sea of this world, that have no life in them? This point is pointed out unto us in the vision that appeared to *Paul* in the night, *There stood a man of Macedonia and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us*; whereby he gathered assuredly, that the Lord had called him to preach the Gospel unto thē. There are many things may bring us into misery, & are able to

make us miserable; but the want of God's word and the saving hearing of it, bringeth a misery of all miseries, even an heap of all miseries, which are as it were included in one by the Spirit of God, speaking of the estate of the ten Tribes that had driven away the Priests of the Lord: *Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, & without a teaching Priest, and without law.* Where mark that the holy Ghost joineth these three together, God, the Priest, and the Law: they that were without a teaching Priest, were also without God: and he that is without God, is without all those things that should do him good. The like we see in the 13. chapter of the same book, where *Abijah* concludeth against *Israel* that they could not prosper, because they had banished the Priests of the Lord, the sons of *Aaron* from them: and on the contrary he saith, concerning himself and *Judah*; *As for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him, and the Priests which minister unto the Lord, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business:* and afterward, *Behold, God himself is with us for our Captain, and his Priests with sounding Trumpets to cry alarm against you: O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your Fathers, for you shall not prosper.* If then we would have God to be with us, we must be content to accept and make account of his Ministers: if we cast them out with contempt from us, we say to the Lord also, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: who is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?* Job 21, 14, 15. Likewise the Prophet complaining of the desolation of the Sanctuary, Psal▪ 74, 9. saith, *We see not our signs, there is no more any Prophet, neither is there among us any, that knoweth how long!* It was a great punishment inflicted upon *Cain* to be driven from the face of God, Gen. 4, 14 also upon *Agar & Ishmael*, the bondwoman and her son, to be cast out of the house of *Abraham*, which was the Church of God, Gen. 21, 14, 21. For that is as much as to be separated from God, to be banished from the word, to be separated from his kingdom. The Ministers are the guides to lead us the way, without them we cannot but wander out of the way; we are blind & understand nothing, they open our eyes that we may see the truth, Acts 8, 31, and 26, 18.

Secondly, this reproveth the vain conceit and proud imagination of their hearts, who having learned the principles of religiō, and some grounds of knowledge, proceed no further, as if they had no more use of y^e word: whereas there is matter of instruction always to be learned out of the word for all persons. When we have eaten one kind of meat one day, we eat the next day as hungerly of it as we did before. So ought we to come to the great Supper that God hath made us, again and again, always hungering and thirsting after the same. This is most certain, and set it down as a most true rule, the more knowledge we have, the more still we desire knowledge; the greater our faith is, the more we desire to have it strengthened. It is our daily prayer, that God would *give us our daily bread*: how much more then ought we to crave at God's hand the gift of spiritual food belonging to our souls, that we may be nourished to eternal life? He is a foolish builder that when he hath begun to build, and laid the foundation, giveth over, and never proceedeth *to finish the work*, but suffereth all men that pass by to laugh at him. There is no people ought to be without the ministry, it must always remain among them, that it may build them up forward, and finish that which is begun, *Till we all come in the unity of faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.* Would we have it said of us,

and objected against us, This man began to build, but was not able to make an end? This man laid his hand to the plough, but now he standeth still and looketh back. There is as great use to be made of the word, after we are converted to the faith, & regenerated by the Spirit of God, as when we first believed. They thē are greatly deceived, that being puffed up with an opinion of their exceeding great knowledge and wonderful gifts, (which no man seeth or can see in them, but themselves that are deceived by self-love) suppose they need not frequent the hearing of the word, as if it were for nouices or ignorant persons only that know nothing. Hence it is, that they flattering themselves in an overweening persuasion of that which it is to be feared is not in them, say, What can they teach us, that we knew not before? Can they make us go from the many wiser then we came unto them? Or can they devise any new points of religion, or set up new Articles to be believed that we never heard off before? I answer, we go not about to broach any new doctrine, neither do we coin any new counterfeit faith. *If we or an Angel from heaven teach any otherwise then the Fathers believed from the beginning, we are accursed. We teach Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever, Hebr. 13, 8.* The ende of the preaching of the word is not chiefly or principally to plant knowledge: whereas these make it the only end. If a man had all knowledge, and could speak with the tongues of men and Angels, yet ought he to come diligently into the house of God, and to attend carefully to his word. For albeit we have knowledge for the time present, yet we may forget our knowledge, so as that which we hold this day, we may let slip from us tomorrow. And there is nothing which we know, but we may know it better, and more fully and distinctly. Besides, the word serveth to kindle our zeal, and to stir up our affections, as it were to blow the coals by kindling the sparks, that the fire go not out.

Lastly, they are reprov'd that extol to the skies, the Kingdoms and Commonwealths of the heathen, as the only prosperous, flourishing, and happy Nations: which indeed excelled in outward glory, and thereby dazzled the eyes of many; yet indeed were no better then assemblies and companies of men destitute of religion, and consequently of salvation. Their peace and prosperity, their wealth and dignity, were all carnal and momentary, rising out of the earth, and sinking down into the earth again; their praise also is of men. It is the maintenance of true religion that maketh a people truly happy: and the means of spreading abroad true religion, is the ministry of the word; there is no way to know it & to practice it but by this. Such as embrace it are truly wise; such as forsake it and reject it, *have no wisdom in them, Ier. 8, 9.* No kingdom or State can flourish, no Commonwealth can prosper, no Prince, no Potentate, no people can be wise or blessed in their government, but by honoring, and obeying of Almighty God as he hath commanded. Hence it is, that Moses saith, *I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God hath commanded me, &c. Keep them therefore and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the Nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great natiō is a wise & understanding people.* Likewise the Lord promiseth, that this obedience to the precepts of God, without adding or diminishing, should make them blessed every way, in the fruit of their bodies, of their fields, of their cattle, and in everything that they put their hands unto: wheras if they did not keep the Law of the Lord their God, his judgments and statutes which he had commanded them, he threateneth to bring all curses upon them, as famine and hunger, nakedness and poverty,

dissolution and captivity, until he had cast them out of the Land which he had given unto their fathers, Deut. 28. All Cities & Commonwealths are to be the hosts of y^e Church, and dwelling places for the faithful: without giving entertainment to the truth & Gospel, they are as Lanthornes without a light, or as the Firmament without the Sun. There is no kingdom, no town, no family, no person that can attain unto happinse and true blessedness, except they worship the Lord aright according to his word. If we be with him, he will be with us: he will honor those that honor him, and despise those that despise him, 1 Sam. 2:30. It is true religion that establisheth our seats, and maketh them prosperous: contrariwise, impiety, and superstition, and false worship, are the certain ruin and destruction of the Nation that embrace them. But it will be objected, [Objection.] What say you of the kingdoms of the heathen? Had they not large Dominions? Were they not the Monarchies of the world? & did they not greatly prosper in this world? I answer, [Answer.] it is true, they wanted not outward peace, honor, dignity, wealth, pleasures, dominions, and largeness of Empires: howbeit the cause of their prosperity was not their idolatry, and false worship: this is to allege a false cause instead of a true; forasmuch as their detestable abominations and horrible profanations of the service of God, were the causes of their final overthrow, which never ceased to call and cry for vengeance to God, until he with his thunderbolts from heaven had stricken them down to the ground. The true causes of the prosperity of Pagans and heathen are these: the first, is the great mercy and goodness of God, who doth good to the unthankful and ungodly: *he letteth his rain to fall upon the fields of the just and unjust*, and causeth his Sun to shine upon the godly and ungodly, the Christian and the heathen. And albeit he be provoked every day, and therefore may justly pour down the full viols of his wrath & indignation upon the earth, yet he is a God of patience and long suffering, waiting for the conversion of men; so that if they repent not, both they are made without excuse, and the justice of God is cleared when he judgeth. This is one cause why he suffereth them to flourish. Another is, that he may give thē the greater overthrow. For the higher their heads and horns are lifted up, the more is their fall when they go to ruin. The greater their sin is, the greater must their punishment be. God hath made himself known among them, and not left himself *without witness, in that he did good, and gave them rain from heaven, & fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness*. He gave much unto them, and therefore required much of them again. Thirdly, it was his pleasure to provide for his Church, that lived and sojourned among them, that they might be as Inns to lodge them, and as Cities of refuge to entertain them, whē they fled unto them from the avenger of blood. He gave them peace, y^t the Church also might enjoy peace among them: he made them to flourish, that his people that lived with them might flourish also. If they had been grievously afflicted, the Church must also have tasted of the same cup in some measure. Thus were the people of God commanded to pray for the peace of *Babylon*, the place whither they were carried captive, which was given them as a Sanctuary and place of retire, Ier. 29. *Seek the peace of the City whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof, shall ye have peace*. God giveth the Infidels prosperity, and blesseth them with an extraordinary peace, howbeit he respecteth the good of his Church therein. Lastly, herein we are to consider also the justice of God. For the Lord purposing to execute his just judgments upon the Kings of the earth for their idolatries, oppressions, violences, tyrannies,

murders, adulteries, and such like impieties, hath raised up from time to time, some to serve him in the execution of his high justice against them, punishing those that are evil, by others as evil as themselves. For this cause, to make way for the accomplishment of his decrees, he maketh some Nation to grow strong and mighty as y^e oakes of the forest, and to flourish for a while as the Cedars in Libanus, that he may use & employ them as a staff in his hand, to chastise the rebellions of the ungodly: and when he hath poured out his wrath upon them, and executed his indignation to the full, he casteth the rod into the fire, & raiseth up another for the consuming of them. The *Assyrians*, the first Monarchy of the world, ruled in a manner all Nations for many years. After them arose the *Persians*, who subduing the *Assyrians*, obtained the Monarchy, and reigned likewise a long space, many Kings succeeding one another in that royal seat, Then came the *Grecians*, who prevailed against the *Persians*, as they before had done against the *Assyrians*, made themselves Monarchs and masters of them, and almost of the whole world. Last of all, all these being cut down, and so grubbed by the roots, that the place of many of them is no more to be known; the Roman Empire abolishing the former, succeeded in the souereignty, & possessed the dignity first in *Rome*, and after in *Constantinople*. Thus the sword of one hath been drawn out against another, & all hath been ruled by the just judgment of God, to punish those that neither loved nor embraced the truth. The like we might say of *Tamerlanethe Tartarian*, the scourge or God & terror of the world; he was raised up of God and had his time, who whipped the Turks by him, as they had served others. All these horrible tyrants prospered in the world, but it had a sudden end, because it was never well grounded. But to leave them, and to come home to our selves, let us learn what maketh us to prosper, what shall make our names great, and our families to flourish, when all other shall wither as the grass that today is green, and tomorrow is cast into the Oven: it is the embracing of true religion. *Bethlehem* was in it self *little among the thousands of Judah*, yet it was notwithstanding exalted and advanced, because out of it came Christ to rule his people *Israel*. The Temple of *Solomon* was of wonderful glory and renown, yet the Lord telleth the people after their return out of captivity, that the glory of the second Temple, even of that *latter house*, should be greater then of that former, and in this place he would give peace by him that is the Prince of peace. In like manner he telleth *Joshua*, that if the book of the Law depart not out of his mouth but that he meditate therein day and night, & observe to do according to all that is written therein, *then he shall make his way prosperous, and shall have good success* in all his enterprises. Do we then desire to be happy? Do we wish blessedness? Labor to be truly religious, and to have the power of godliness dwelling in thy heart: *Aduance it, And it shall advance thee*; it shall bring thee to honor when thou dost embrace it. This is the way to find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man. As for others, that make a mock of religion, and do not choose the fear of the Lord, that never regard to set it as a precious plant in their souls and in their houses, they may peradventure build their nests on high for a time, and make their children great upon earth for a season, but in the end their names shall consume as dung, their root shall be rottenness, and their bud as dust that is suddenly blown and borne away with a violent wind.

[Use 3] Thirdly, must the ministry be established among all people under heaven? Then let everyone of us be careful for our parts to plant it among us, and to bring it home to the places of our abode. In the most corrupt and ruinous times of the Church, the people were careful of this duty. *Micah* in the book of *Judges* is said to have entertained and maintained a Levite to instruct him and his family, and said, *Now I know that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my Priest. Judge. 17, 13.* It is noted in the Acts of the Apostles, that when *Paul* and *Barnabas* were come to *Salamis*, they preached the word of God in the Synagogues of the Jews, & they had *John* also for their Minister. Every place therefore ought to have their proper Pastor, as every flock their Shepherd, and every City their watchman. *David* was careful above all Princes to settle good order among the Levites, y^t God might be served, and the people edified. He divided them into certain orders, that so their labors might be equally & indifferently divided for the benefit of all persons. He was zealous in bringing home the Ark of God. *Jehoshaphat* sent out Levites to instruct the people. This is a duty that doth nearly concern us & our families, not only to be content to hear it abroad, and to resort to it in other places, but to join together to bring it home to our own doors or parishes, that we may have provision of food our selves, and not be driven to seek for it elsewhere. A point wherein (alas) we are too careless, and thereby make little conscience to seek after knowledge. For how many think themselves discharged frō hearing the word, and attending to the ministry of it, because they have not the word ordinarily taught among them? If it were settled among them, they could be content to give the Ministers the hearing; but if they have it not, they never think it any part of their duty to resort to the places where they may be instructed, as the people on the Sabbath days and other solemn meetings, repaired to the Prophets, when the Priests either were ignorant & could not teach, or else were idle & would not teach. But herein they greatly deceive themselves. Others, when they may hear it & do hear it in other places, think themselves in good case and feel no want; and so neglect the ordinary means of edifying their consciences, and of advancing the Gospel and kingdom of God, everyone in the place whereunto by more special duty he is bound, and where he may have a more special promise of blessing. They then that are careless to provide an ordinary sufficient Pastor in their several parishes, whereby the people are for the most part untaught, as a field that bringeth forth weeds & briars for want of tillage, do greatly fail in this duty that now we urge & deal withal, to wit, that every flock should have his own Shepherd. This containeth many branches under it. First, we must use the ordinary means that God hath sanctified to this purpose, we must pray to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest. We are ready to pray for an healthy body whē we are sick, but we forget to beg an healthy soul when we are ignorant. We that are the Lord's remembrancers, let us *give him no rest until he repair, and until he set up Jerusalem, the praise of the world.* *Isaiah 62, 7.* We want these laborers, because we are wanting unto ourselves: whereas if we did constantly crave this blessing, we should find grace in time of need, *Mat. 9.* The Ministers are our spiritual Physicians under Christ. This we pray, when we crave that God's Kingdom may come everywhere, and that every Lantern may carry a bright shining light in it. Secondly, we must be content rather to bestow somewhat to attain to this blessing, then want it, it being a precious pearl, which *when a man hath found, he selleth all that he hath, and purchaseth it, Matth. 13.* *Solomon* that was not ignorant of true wisdom, *Prov. 23, 23.*

counseleth all men to *buy the truth, but not to sell it*. This will try us, what account we make of this blessing, and in what price we have it. Thirdly, it is our duty to rejoice in spirit when it is liberally bestowed upon us, and graciously supplied unto us; which serveth to put us in mind of these profitable meditations. We must testify our thankfulness to God for his holy ordinance set up among us, lest he be constrained to take it away from us: for if once he pull up his standard, he will remove also and be gone. We must submit and subject our selves under it, that our judgments may be rectified, and our wills and affections settled in the truth. We must confess it to be no small part of our happiness, that with us are the Ministers of the Church, and the seals of the Covenant, 2 Chron. 13. Let us prefer his Courts before all other places of resort, Psal. 27, 4. and 84, 10. Let us lament the estate of Jews and Gentiles, and all particular places among our selves, that want these signs of God's favor, and tokens of the Covenant, to wit, the Word and Sacraments, and the Ministers of them both. Who can but lament to see so many silly sheep ready to be devoured of the wolf, and as a prey in the jaws of the Lyon? We ought to have compassion upon such, if there be any bowels, and pity and mercy in us, and if we have not stony hearts, we ought to melt and mourn for these things. Lastly, let us earnestly long for their joining to the Church, that such as wander from the sheepfold, may be joyfully brought home upon the shoulders of the Ministers who ought to seek them out. Then we shall have *one Shepherd, and one sheepfold*: then we shall with one mind and mouth glorify God. Thus is the Church of the Jews brought in by Solomon in his Song, chapt. 8. desiring most heartily the conversion of the Gentiles, *We have a little Sister, and she hath no breasts; what shall we do for our sister, in the day when she shall be spoken for?* Thus ought we to be affected toward the Jews, We have also a sister that hath no breasts to nourish up children: let us have a desire to procure and further her salvation, forasmuch as we have a promise that the Jews shall be called and converted unto the faith of Christ, Rom. 11.

[Use 4] Fourthly, let the Ministers be careful to discharge their calling, and to teach the people in season and out of season. They must be lights of the world, and as savory salt to season them with wholesome doctrine. It is a straight account that they are to make, not for silver, or gold, or such like corruptible things committed unto us, but for men's souls the price of Christ's blood, Acts 20. Never was there such a reckoning, never was there such an account either given or taken, as shall be at the great audit, when it shall be said unto us, *Come, give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward*, Luke 16, 2. This consideration is profitable both for the people and the Pastor himself. Let the people think with themselves, that we do not trouble them more then is needful, & busy our selves more then we have thanks for our labor. True it is, we serve many thanklesse masters, that could be content we should spare our pains; but we cannot so discharge our consciences, & deliver our souls. Let the Minister think, that *a necessity is laid upon him, and woe unto him if he preach not the Gospel*. Oh, that this day of account were ever set before our eyes, how would it set us on fire, and kindle our zeal and diligence? This doubtless were enough, and more then enough, to open the mouths of them that now are dumb and cannot speak, and make them lift up their voices as a Trumpet, to tell the people of their sins, and the house of Jacob their iniquities. But the watchmen are blind, *they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot*

bark: they can look to their own gain, but they endeavor not to gain souls to God. There is not a soul that perisheth by our negligence, but we must answer for it, when the blood that we have shed shall be required at our hands. This will be an heavy day, when the blood of many souls shall cry out for vengeance, and shall accurse us that ever we came among them to be the occasions of their destruction and damnation. Now we must know, that in the Scriptures we have many motives to spurr us, and to stir us up to diligence, and to increase all care in us to do our duties. First, the excellency of our Office. It is a *worthy Calling*, 1 Tim. 3, 1. If we were employed in some base office, not beseeming our persons, we might have some color and pretence to shun and avoid it. But having an excellent function, wherein the Son of God, Jesus Christ served before us, it were intolerable pride to scorn it, as too simple for us. We may be a means to bring men to salvation, which we must account our crown and glory. Secondly, the glory of God ought to move us, which is to be preferred before all things in the world. Thirdly, the love of Christ, the Prince of all Pastors ought to contstrain us, who gave him-self for his sheep.

We must therefore understand, that they are not so much our sheep as his: he hath a special care of them, or else he would never have paid so dearly for them. His wonderful care of their good, appeareth in this, that demanding of *Peter*, *whether he loved him*, and asking the question of him again and again, he said, *Feed my Sheep, feed my Lambs*: thereby giving all the Ministers a rule of trial, to prove themselves whether they love the Lord Jesus or not.

If all were examined by this rule, and their love to Christ proved by this note, it is to be feared, that little or no love at all would appear in them, toward their Savior and Redeemer. As all men have tasted abundantly of the love of Christ, so all men profess to love him again, as well as *Peter*, and would be as ready to answer, Lord thou knowest that I love thee. It is easy to profess it, but it is not so easy to approve it, and manifest it▪ If we would assure our own souls, that the love of Christ is in us, let us feed the flock, let us speak boldly in the Name of the Lord, without respect of persons; let us teach, improve, correct, instruct, admonish, exhort, comfort, and strengthen, as we see the state of the flock to require.

Let us duly administer the Sacraments, according to Christ's institution: let us rule and govern the Church committed unto us: let us pray for them, and be examples unto them in life, that when the great Shepherd of the sheep shall appear, we may receive an incorruptible crown of glory.

[Use 5] Lastly, let the people carefully attend to the Ministry of the word, where it is settled and planted, with a good conscience, as to God's holy ordinance, vouchsafed unto them. Let them bring attention in hearing, diligence in marking, and obedience in practicing. Let them put away all pretences and excuses, let them not invent carnal reasons against themselves, and their own souls. Let them not use any delays to shift off the performance of this duty. But there are many men in the world, that are wise to their own destruction, and seek sundry colorable devises to hurt themselves, and hinder their own good. For this ordinance, albeit comfortable and necessary, aiming at nothing else but our salvation, findeth through the malice of *Satan* and opposition of his instruments, strong enemies that assault it and undermine it, to make it fall down. He knoweth well enough that if this were thoroughly

received, and generally established in all places, his kingdom could not stand, but would fall down as lightning, as we heard before, Luke 10. When the trumpets sounded that God appointed, though they were of Rammes horns, the walls of Jericho fell down, Josh. 6.20. The preaching of the Gospel seemeth a weak and contemptible thing, and is accounted of *them that perish to be foolishness*, 1 Cor. 1.18. But if it were as unlikely to do any great work, as the rams horns, yet being employed of God, it shall be able to *cast down all imaginations, and high things, that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God*, 2 Cor. 11.5. Forasmuch as to *them that are called, it is the wisdom of God and the power of God*, 1 Cor. 1.24. Hence it is, that the great enemy of our salvation hath stirred up his disciples the Anabaptists, and other detestable and damnable heretics, to subvert the faith of many, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them. These seduced persons, seeking also to seduce [Objection 1] others, reason thus; No creature can work faith and regeneration in us, it is God that doth it alone. But the word preached is but a creature, nay, it is the voice only of a creature, and a bare sound consisting of letters and syllables, so that the virtue of it can be no more, but to signify unto us the will of God. I answer, the word preached, [Answer.] and the use of it are to be distinguished. The right use thereof, is to understand it, to meditate upon it, to endeavor to believe it, and to obey it. The word preached is of force and of power, not simply, because it is uttered and published, and the bare sound thereof cometh to the ears of the hearers; for then all men should know and understand it, receive it by faith, and practice it by obedience: but because when it is preached, through the blessing of God, and his secret work in us, we hear it with an attentive ear and a tractable heart: so that *his spirit and his word*, go together, Isaiah 59.21. our hearing with the ear, and *his opening of the heart*, accompany one another, Act. 16.14. Hereupon it is called *the power of God to salvation*, that is, an effectual instrument of his power to everyone that believeth. The Ministers are said to be laborers together with God, 1 Corin. 3.9. to be workers together with him, beseeching us not to receive the word of God in vain. 2. Cor. 6.1. and as the Ambassadors of God, to pray us in Christ's stead, that we be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5.20.

Secondly, others object, None can be saved, [Objection 2,] but such as are elected: but all ordained to eternal life shall be saved, whether they hear the word preached or not; forasmuch as all the elect shall of necessity be saved: and therefore there is no need of hearing, to bring us to salvation: election is sufficient. [Answer.] I answer, this is a dividing of those things that cannot be divided; and a separation of those things that cannot be separated. If any should reason touching the temporal life, as these ignorant persons do, touching the eternal, every man would soon espy the fraud, and be able to answer the objection, and put to silence the folly of the objecters. For we might as well reason thus, All that are appointed of God to live, shall live: and therefore it skilleth that what they do, whether they eat or drink, or sleep, or clothe themselves, or whether they do none of all these things. This conclusion is of the same nature & force with the former, and both of them stark naught, and deceitful. Everyone hath knowledge and understanding enough to answer the latter, and to say that as God hath appointed us to live, so he hath appointed us the means to maintain life, and therefore if we would live, we must feed our selves, clothe our selves, refresh our selves. In like manner, they that are ordained to eternal life, cannot

but hear the word, I say they must and shall of necessity hear it, they can do, they will do no otherwise; as Act. 13.48. *When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.* All then that are ordained to the end, are also ordained to the means: forasmuch as *whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified,* Rom. 8.30.

[Objection 3] Thirdly, to these that would seem learned, and to know somewhat more then their fellows, are joined as brethren in evil, sundry of the common sort and profane persons. The Preachers (say they) are weak and frail, simple and sinful men. If we might hear Christ himself or an Angel from heaven to teach us, we would believe The voice of our sweet Savior would move any man that: hath any goodness in him. [Answer.] I answer, the people of Israel could not hear and bear the voice of God, but desired of him that *Moses* might speak unto them, Exod. 20.19. and now, that we have our own request, and he hath sent us in a *Moses*, I mean a Minister, will we call for God again? will we have sometimes God, & sometimes *Moses*, at our own pleasure, like wayward and wanton children that will be pleased with nothing? When God speaketh, then in all haste we must have *Moses*; and when *Moses* speaketh, we cry out for God, whose voice notwithstanding shaketh the heavens, and cleaveth the rocks in pieces; and moveth the foundation of the earth out of his place: so that this was a common saying among the people of God, *We shall surely die, because we have seen God,* Judge. 6.22, 23. & 13, 22. It is therefore God's great goodness (which we must not abuse) to put his heavenly treasures in earthly vessels, that man might be instructed by the Ministry of man, to the end that the glory might be his, and the benefit ours Such as *hear them, do hear Christ: such as despise them, despise Christ himself.* Doest thou then desire to hear Christ? hear his Ministers, who hath put the word of reconciliation into their mouths, and in his stead beseech us to be reconciled unto him.

[Objection.] Fourthly, others of the same spirit, object in this manner, We have the Scriptures in our houses, we can read them, •or we hear them read unto us at home: there are set down the most perfect Sermons of Christ, of the Prophets, and of the Apostles: can our preachers amend them? [Answer.] I answer, the Sermons of Christ and his servants are most absolute and perfect, and profitable in themselves, as also all-sufficient: but not so to us, until they be explained and applied to the consciences of the hearers, in the ministry of the word. A loaf made of the finest & fattest of y^e wheat is nourishable in it self, but it is unfit for our nourishment, until it be cut and divided into pieces, that everyone may have his portion, and therefore whosoever is a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, *must rightly divide the word of truth,* 2. Tim. 2.15. The Eunuch sitting in his chariot, had the Scriptures with him, and read in them in his chariot, as well as we do in our houses; yet when *Philip* said unto him, *Vnderstandest thou what thou readest?* he answered, *How can I except some man should guide me?* Thus we see, y^t albeit we have the Scriptures lying by us, in which we are to read, that they may dwell in us plentifully: yet we shall always want the gifts of the Minister for the interpretation of them, as children do the help of one to cut their meat when it is prepared and provided for them, or else they shall remain an hungered.

Lastly, there are others, whose consciences [Objection 5] condemn them of wickedness and profaneness, that object, There are none worse then those that are common and continual hearers of Sermons: if then it be so good, why doth not the word make them better? [Answer.] I answer, this is a common and a cursed slander. This is the old language of the devil, and of his instruments. If *Job* be accounted a just man, fearing God, and eschuing evil the devil will not stick to face it out, that he is an hypocrite. The Pharisees, which were his hired servants, could say, *None regarded Christ, but the people that are accursed.* John. 7.48, 49. Wherefore, it is false that all are so: they only utter the gall and malice of their devilish hearts, who envy the grace of God in others, and cannot abide that any should be more forward and fervent then themselves.

Secondly, if this be granted and yielded unto them, the which notwithstanding, is most uncharitably surmised, and unconscionably alleged of them, yet they show themselves wrangling Sophisters, arguing from a false cause: forasmuch as this badness and beastliness that appeareth in the lives of many hearers, is not an effect of preaching or hearing, but a sin resting in the persons and proceeding from the profane and unregenerate hearts of those that hear, as *when good corn is sown in barren and unfruitful ground*, or as if an husbandman should plough up the fruitless sand, or sow among thorns. These instruments of Satan, that seek to disgrace the saving hearing of the Gospel, and whip the faithful for the faults of hypocrites, never cry out against open and notorious offenders, against blasphemers, against whoremasters, against drunkards, and such like Profane beasts; but if any be an hearer of the word, and study to reform his life according to the straight line thereof, he is a great eyesore unto them, because the light that shineth in them, serveth the better to discover the darkness of their lives. Thus many filthy swine and foul-mourhed dogs, have liberty to profane the holy things of God. The hearers of Christ's Sermons, were of four sorts, three were evil, and received the word no otherwise, then if seed should be cast in the high way, or in stony ground, or else among thorns, where it bringeth forth no ripe fruit: only the last sort heard the word with good and honest hearts, & brought forth fruit with patience; Whereas these that are carried away with rash judgment make all alike, put no difference between one and another, and will have all hearers to be bad men.

Thirdly, God hath appointed the preaching of the word, not only to convert the elect, but to harden the wicked: as the Sun serveth not only to soften the wax, but to harden the clay. Hence it is, that many are made worse by the word; but that falleth out through their own corruption, not through the nature of the word. Hence it is that the Lord saith, *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their hearts heavy, and shut their eyes: lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and convert and be healed,* Isaiah, 6.10. Be it therefore that none are commonly worse then common hearers, who hear indeed, but do not understand, and see indeed, but do not perceive: yet is the word to be preached and published, though it be the savor of death unto death, in those that hear it. It is as the rain or snow that falleth from heaven, which returneth not thither again, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bud and bring forth, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so is it with the word that goeth forth out of the mouth of God, *it doth not return unto him void, but it accomplisheth that which he pleaseth, and prospereth in the thing whereunto he sendeth it,* Isaiah 55.

Lastly, the wickedness of evil hearers ought to be no bar against the preaching of the word, forasmuch as evil persons are oftentimes won by the Gospel. Publicans and harlots are brought by it to the kingdom of God, Matth. 21.31. Many of these that crucified the Lord of life, and put our Savior to death, *were pricked in their hearts, and said to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Act. 2.37. They gladly received the word, and were baptized, so that in one day there were added to the Church about three thousand souls. The like we might say of the jailour, notwithstanding his cruelty and persecution of the Apostles, he came to them and said, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* Act. 16, 30. Who preached unto him faith in Christ, by whose Ministry he was converted. Shall we then reason as these men do, Hearers are wicked, and as bad as others that hear not: therefore away with the word out of the Church, pull down the chair of *Moses*, and down with all preaching? let us have no more hearing, and let the sound of the word be buried forever? O foolish reason! O damnable conclusion! Nay, we may infer contrariwise, Such as heard long, are sinful still, therefore let them hear more cheerfully, and let the Minister deal more roundly with them. Let them be told and taught that God will take an account of their hearing, according to the means he hath afforded unto them: that by the word they shall be judged at the last day: and that as much hath been committed unto them, so much shall be required at their hands again: that they are to hear the voice of God, while it is called today, and are to take heed they neglect not the accepted time: and that as Christ hath knocked long at the doors of their hearts, so they know not how suddenly he will depart from them.

Verse. 4. [*And Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord, &c.*] We have already declared, how God immediately after the ordering of the Armies of the Israelites, describeth the tribe of *Levi* that was exempted and privileged out of that muster and multitude, and of what family *Aaron* came. Now we are to show what became of his sons, who, albeit they were the sons of one man, yet they neither lived nor died after one manner. For the two eldest *Nadab* and *Abihu*, presuming to offer incense to God, and to burn it with strange fire, were themselves consumed with fire: there went a fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord with sudden death. Thus by the same thing wherein they offered, they perished: strange fire brought down a strange judgment, to declare the justice of God against sinners: but of this point we shall have better occasion to speak farther in the fifth Chapter. Thus it fell out in the family of *Aaron*, his two sons died by fire, even *they died before their father*, and had no children to whom the Priesthood might descend; therefore *Eleazar* and *Ithamar* executed the Priests office. When the Levites did offer sacrifice in the Tabernacle, *God sent fire from heaven*, to consume the sacrifice: whereupon he commanded the Priests that the fire should be kept evermore burning upon the Altar, and never be suffered to go out, Levite. 6.13. Which the Gentiles also observed by a foolish imitation.

So then, their transgression against God, consisted in these two things: First, they used *strange fire*, contrary to the commandment of God, whereas they should have taken it from the Altar, Levite. 1.8. Secondly, they entered into the holy place, which was not lawful for the high Priest himself to do, but under certain conditions, and at a certain time, Levi. 16.1, 2. Exod. 30.10. Heb. 9.7. Thus then, as they sinned openly, so God punished them openly, and made them public examples unto others that should succeed them, and come after them in

that office, as he speaketh, Then Moses said unto Aaron, *This is it that the Lord spake, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people, I will be glorified.* It was but yesterday as it were that Aaron and his sons had a famous and a glorious consecration into the greatest and highest dignity upon earth, but these sons so lately exalted and honored, now lie destroyed before their fathers face, to his overmuch grief and anguish, not by any ordinary and accustomed death, but by fire from heaven, for their sins, and breach of the Law, and commandment of God. We learn from hence, that Godly parents have [Doctrine 2] oftentimes ungodly and disobedient children. Such as are reformed themselves have children unreformed. We see this in Adam the first father, he had not only Abel the righteous who obtained good report that he pleased God, but also Cain who was of that evil one and slew his brother, 1. John. 3. *Because his own works were evil, and his brothers good.* Noah a just man and perfect in his generations, Gen. 6.9. had cursed Ham, as well as blessed, Shim, Gen. 9.26. We see this in Abraham's house the Father of the faithful, who receiveth this commendation from the mouth of God himself, Gen. 18. *I know him that he will command his children and his household after him that they keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him:* yet he had in his family (which was the Church of God) not only Isaac the son of promise in whose seed the nations of the earth should be blessed, but Ishmael that was borne after the flesh, that *mocked his brother, & persecuted him that was borne after the spirit,* and in the end was cast out of the Church, Gen. 21.9, 10. Gal. 4.30. And as it was with the father, so was it with the son: for we see this in the children of Isaac, who strove and struggled within the womb of their mother, Gen. 25.22. and when the time of her deliverance came, she brought forth, not only Jacob, who afterward was surnamed Israel, obtaining a far more honorable name than all the *Affricani, or Germanici, or Asiatici* among the Romans, whose praise was wholly from the earth, and a blast of the mouths of mortal man; whereas he wrestled with God in *Peniel* and prevailed: but also *profane Esau*, so branded as it were in the forehead by a mark of iron, by the Spirit of God, who sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage. For the children being not yet borne neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to the election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, *It was said unto her, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated,* Rom. 9.11.13. Samuel was a man that feared God exceedingly, and governed the people uprightly, so that he appealed to the people, and to the consciences of all men, to witness his innocence and integrity, *what wrong he had done them,* whose ox he had taken, and whose ass he had taken, or at whose hand he had received any bribe to blind his eyes, 1 Sam. 12.3. Yet when he was old and made his sons judges over Israel, *they walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre,* they took bribes and perverted judgment, 1 Sam. 8.3. David was a man after God's own heart, yet he had not only Solomon that was beloved of God, but also incestuous Amnon, ambitious Absalom, and treacherous Adonijah: the first defiled his own sister, and wrought folly in Israel; the other two rebelled against their father, and sought to take away the kingdom from him. The like we might say of Eli, who sate upon a seat by a post of the Temple, and by his residence on his charge and daily attendance, to give answers to the people that came unto him, gave testimony of his godliness: yet his sons were *the sons of Belial, and knew not the Lord,* 1 Sam. 2.12.

To conclude (for the examples that might be brought to this purpose, are infinite) who was more Godly then *Josiah*, who remembered his creator in the days of his youth, and reformed religion betimes in his kingdom? yet his children followed not the ways of their father, but *did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that their wicked forefathers had done*, 2 King. 23.32, 37. Jer. 22.18. To all these testimonies of Scripture, if we add also the testimony of common experience, of all ages and times, and places and persons, we may gather, that all the children of the faithful, have not been always continued under the covenant of God, nor followed the steppes of their faithful parents to be like unto them.

Now, because this is a point diligently to [Reason 1] be marked of us, let us consider the reasons whereby it may be better confirmed unto us. First, to show the election of God, which is the highest step of our salvation to stand upon the free will and purpose of God, and not upon ordinary succession, or natural generation, or any causes in our own selves: to the end that all, both parents and children should confess, that such as have received this power and prerogative to believe in the Name of Christ Jesus, are borne, *not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*, John. 1.13. This reason is noted concerning *Jacob*, *that the purpose of God might stand according to election*, not of any works, but by him that calleth: this was it that made difference between him and his brother.

Secondly, that the best servants of God [Reason 2] may acknowledge, that they can by no means convey to their posterity the graces of God, the gifts of sanctification, & repentance from dead works, which themselves have received from God by supernatural means, and not by natural: they begetting naturally children of wrath, as well as other men, even sinful children tainted and defiled with original corruption. *Adam begat Seth in his own image*, that is, in his natural inclination to evil. Gen. 5.3. Hence it is that *David* acknowledgeth, *he was shapen in iniquity, and that in sin his mother did conceive him*, Psal. 51. So then as the corn that is purged from the chaff and made clean, bringeth up corn again, together with the chaff: and as the father that is circumcised begetteth children that are uncircumcised: so such parents as are sanctified themselves, cannot leave to their issue any sanctifying graces, which must come only from above, from the Father of lights.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, God hath a purpose to show his justice in the destruction of the stubborn and disobedient, as he doth his mercy in the salvation of those that are godly and obedient. This is the reason rendered by the Spirit of God, that albeit the sons of *Eli* were reprov'd by their father, yet they hearkened not unto his voice, *because the Lord would slay them*, 1 Sam. 2.25. God is determin'd to glorify himself, and his great Name in their destruction, as they resolved and settled themselves & their whole lives to dishonor him, to their confusion.

[Reason 4] Lastly, the children even of faithful and godly parents do oftentimes want the good means of a godly education, and therefore no marvel if their hearts, not being ploughed up, do bring forth cockle and darnel, instead of good corn. For the children of God, do themselves through human frailty and infirmity sometimes fail in the performance of this duty. They cocker them and are too choice and nice over them, they dare not offend them, or speak a word against them; which overweening and suffering of them to have their will too much, God punisheth in their children: whereof we have a worthy example in *David*

toward *Adonijah*, who exalted himself against his father, saying, I will be king, and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. The occasion of this presumption, and rebellion is noted to be thus, *His father had not displeased him at any time, in saying, Why hast thou done so?* He failed toward him, more then *Eli* did toward his sons; for he said, It is no good report that I hear, ye make the Lord's people to transgress.

But *David* was loath to displease his son, but sought to please him in all things, and (behold) what came of it; it turned to his hurt, and in the end, to his utter overthrow. If then we lay these several points together, that God will show our election, and the election of our seed, to stand firmly and only upon the purpose of his will, and cut off all occasion of boasting from us that we are able to derive grace unto them, lest thereby we should ascribe their regeneration & conuersiō to our selves, & so take the glory frō God to whom only it is due, unto our selves to whom in no sort it is due: that God in his counsel purposeth to destroy some of them, and that they often want education, a good means to bring them to God: we may truly conclude this point with which we deal, namely, that godly parents which do believe, have many times ungracious and unrighteous children that do not believe.

This often falling out to the most faithful [Use 1] that desire to leave an holy seed behind them, let us consider what we are to learn from it. And first, this sealet up this truth: as a principle that never faileth, namely, that the father is not saved by the child, nor the child by the father. The Prophet saith truly, *The just shall live by his faith;* not by the faith of the father, nor by the faith of the son, but by his own faith. The faith of the godly father shall not save the ungodly child: neither shall the faith of the godly child, save the ungodly father. Thus are God's ways cleared, to be equal, which are oftentimes challenged and slandered to be unequal. This doth the Prophet *Ezekiel* handle at large, Chap. 18. and 33. *Behold, all souls are mine▪ as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth shall die.* If a man be just and do that which is lawful, and right, if he beget a son that is a robber, or an oppresser, he shall surely die, his blood shall be upon him. But if he beget a son that seeth all his fathers sins which he hath done, and considereth and doth not such like, he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live: *The soul that sinneth it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be vpō him* Where he showeth, that if the father that is righteous beget a son unlike unto himself, the righteousness of the father shall nothing profit or avail him, he shall receive such a recompense of reward as is due to his impiety. He mentioneth in this place three several persons, the grandfather, the nephew, and in the middle between them both, he setteth the son of the former, and the father of the latter.

Of them all he setteth down this rule, that everyone shall be rewarded as he hath lived, and receive according unto his works. The blessing of GOD shall rest upon all those that are just, whatsoever their posterity shall be, as *Isaiah* Chapter 3.10. *Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings:* and to that purpose we read in the *Psalm*, *Men shall say, verily, there is reward for the righteous, verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.* God is a just Judge, and therefore rewardeth every man as his own life is. They

therefore do greatly deceive themselves, that run into all excess of riot, and think to have mercy shown unto them, because of the godliness of their parents: whereas rather this shall serve to heap up farther judgment upon their heads. On the other side, it serveth to comfort those that forsake the wickedness of their parents & progenitors, forasmuch as god will accept of them and embrace them in the arms of his tender love, and never charge upon them those sins, nor upbraid them with the same. Blessed therefore are all that walk in his ways, but unto them that turn away from righteousness, and commit iniquity, and do according to all the abominations that the wicked man doth, all his righteousness that he hath done, shall not be mentioned, in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. Wherefore to conclude, it is required of us not to stand upon the goodness of our ancestors, but upon that which we find in our selves: inasmuch as many of the godly and righteous servants of God have had children appointed to wrath and destruction. The people of the Jews gloried and boasted that they had *Abraham* to their father, albeit they did not the works of *Abraham*, but of *their father the devil*, John. 8.44. Hence it is, that *John* the Baptist exhorteth them to *bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and not to think to say within themselves, We have Abraham to our father*, forasmuch as God is able of the stones to raise up children unto *Abraham*. It is a vain thing in earthly things, for a man to boast of his predecessors. The heathen man could say, that stock and ancestors, and such things as our selves have not done, we may scarcely call our own. Much more doeth this hold in heavenly things, and in true religion, which go not by kind or kin, they descend not from father unto son, as temporal inheritances do: *no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him*, Matth. 11. Let every man labor to know God, and to plant the fear of him in his own heart, that so we may live by our own faith, as his life is maintained and continued by his own soul.

[Use 2] Secondly, let no man be discouraged, though they see their seed untoward, and ungracious. Religion cannot be conveyed to children by parents, as house and land, neither can they leave it unto them, as they leave them a possession, to descend by a continued succession from the father to the son, and to the sons son in one race and generation. Godliness cometh not to us by natural generation, but by spiritual regeneration: neither hath the first-borne greater title to it, then the second. That which the Apostle speaketh of the Ministry, that *Paul* may plant, and *Apollo* water, but it is God that giveth the increase, may be truly spoken of the bringing up of children in the nurture and information of the Lord. We may and ought to take pains to teach them in their youth what trade they shall take, but we cannot give a blessing unto our own labors. The husbandman may plant and sow, yet he cannot bring down the early and the latter rain: and if he could do this, he could not make the corn grow for the use of man. So is it with us, we may teach and reprove, exhort, and admonish, but except GOD open the heart, the heart remaineth unreformed. It is not to be doubted, but *Samuel* bestowed great labor and diligence in discharging this duty, both because he was a faithful and godly man, Heb. 11.32. And because he had seen with his eyes, an example of overmuch lenity in *Eli*, and had heard with his ears, a fearful threatening of judgment against him, revealed by the Lord: yet his children followed not his steppes, but declined from the ways wherein he walked. Let all godly parents therefore comfort

themselves in the consideration and contemplation of such like examples, knowing that they can only use the means, and that it lieth not in their power to make them truly religious. In deed if we have been negligent in bringing them unto God, and let them run into all riot, and not restrained them, we have cause to lay it to our consciences, and to think with our selves, that we that gave them life, have also been instruments of their death. But if we have done what lieth in us to do, if we have warned them, and they would not be warned: if we have taught and trained them up in the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom, and they have broken the bands asunder, and cast the cords of duty and discipline from them; we may comfort our selves as the Minister doth, when he seeth his labor is spent in vain.

If he have been faithful and conscionable in his place, whether men regard the word, or not regard it: whether they believe, or do not believe: whether they obey, or do not obey, he is *the sweet savor of Christ, even in them that perish*, because even then it worketh the will of God, and accomplisheth that for which it is sent. The Prophet prophesying of Christ's coming among the Jews, bringeth him in with this complaint, *I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught, and in vain, yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.* God respecteth us according to our work, & not according to the event, or success of our labor: he will reward us according to our conscience in teaching, not according to the people's diligence in hearing of us. Thus it shall be with all Christian parents, to their endless comfort: God will not be unmindful of their pains that they have taken, albeit they see not that fruit of their labors that they desire. [Object.] Here some man peradventure may object that the Apostle saith, *The woman shall be saved in child-bearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness with sobriety*, 1 Timothy chapter 2. verse 15. Where he seemeth to hang the salvation of the mother, upon the faith of the children, as if she could not be saved, except they continued in the truth. I answer, [Answer.] this place is in deed so understood, and wrested by many interpreters: but that cannot be the true meaning. *Jerome* an over-great prayser of virginity, and none of the greatest friends of matrimony, draweth the words to that sense, that he may by this means commend the single life; and withal withhold women from marriage, while they hear that they can no otherwise be saved, then if their children continue faithful unto the death.

The purpose of the Apostle in this place, as appeareth by the the circumstances going before, is to comfort the woman, that she should not cast away all confidence as one without hope, as being the cause of one of the greatest sins which brought the ruin of all mankind.

The feeling of this heavy burden, lying upon her conscience, might terrify her and work much fear and amazement in her soul and apprehension of the wrath of God, and therefore he comforteth her, and giveth her hope of salvation. But if the former exposition be received, that her salvation be suspended upon many others, he should cast down Thunder and Lightning upon her head, able to apall and dismay her; he should not comfort her, but terrify her: he should not lift her up with hope of life, but cast her down into despair, through fear of death, when she should understand that she could not possibly be saved, except her children did persevere in the faith.

Again, it lieth not in the power of women, to give them faith and love, much less the grace of perseverance, to continue constant unto the death: so that the Apostle should lay a burden upon their shoulders and put a yoke about their necks, which neither they, nor their fathers were able to bear. This is not the easy Yoke, nor the light burden of Christ. For albeit they strive with all their strength, and labor with all their power, to bring up their children in godliness, yet oftentimes they are obstinate, stubborn, headstrong, froward, perverse, and rebellious; so that they can do no good with them, because they will not obey them, nor hearken to their commandments.

Furthermore, this care of the instruction and institution of children, is a duty required rather of the father who is better able, then of the mother who is every way the weaker vessel, as appeareth by the Apostle, Ephes. 6.4. *Fathers provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

Lastly, the virtues here commended bebelong rather to the mothers, then to the children, as when he requireth of them holiness with sobriety, as Tit. 2.3, 4. it appeareth: The aged women that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, &c. that they may teach the young women to be sober, &c. If any farther object, that if the Apostle had meant to refer these last words to the woman, he would have said, if she continue in faith and charity, not, if they continue: I answer, [Answer.] nothing is more common and usual then the change of number, especially one of the words being a nowne of multitude. For it is plain and manifest, that the Apostle doth not point out someone certain woman, but speaketh in general of woman-kind, or of all women.

Thus doth the Apostle vary and alter the number in this present Chapter, sometimes speaking in the plural number, as of many, *In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel:* sometimes speaking in the singular number, as of one, *Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.* This is also easy to be shown in other places, as Galat. 6.1. *Ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.* Where we see, he beginneth the sentence with the plural number, and endeth it with the singular.

Wherefore, to return unto our purpose, from which we have digressed to answer an objection, and to open the interpretation of this Scripture; faithful parents, who have endeavored to sow the seed of eternal life in the minds of their children, are not to be censured and condemned, because they have lewd and ungodly children, that give evident tokens rather of reprobation then of salvation, as if it were their fault and offense: for as much as they may be careful to use all means of faith, and furtherance to eternal life, and yet notwithstanding fail of their end. If they do not discharge their duties, they shall be guilty of their blood: but if they do teach them, they are free, they have delivered their souls. If we have used diligence, and be evil spoken off, let us comfort our selves in the Lord, and rest our selves in the cleerenesse of our own consciences, and comfort our hearts in the testimony thereof, being well assured that in the great day of account, the LORD shall acquit us, when the mouth of iniquity shall be stopped. [Use 3]

Thirdly, from this ground ariseth great consolation to all faithful parents, who are to comfort themselves in this, if among many children and a plentiful issue, they have some few of them, yea, but one only that appeareth to be the faithful child of GOD, albeit it be otherwise with the rest. GOD indeed will receive glory in all, though some of them be reprobates: this must prevail with our natural affections, and teach us to suppress our grief and sorrow. No doubt it is cause of y^e greatest grief, and maketh their head as waters, and their eyes a fountain of tears, that they make their bed to swim and water their couch with weeping; which striketh nearer unto them, to behold their ungodly ways, then to see them suffer a thousand deaths. *Abraham* was exceedingly moved, when he was commanded to cast out of his family, his son *Ishmael*, for the thing was grievous in *Abraham's* sight, because of his son; and before this, he had said, *O that Ishmael might live in thy sight*: yet nevertheless he yielded to the will of God, who would therein be honored.

So when GOD respecteth us, and confirmeth his covenant toward us, and taketh unto himself any of our seed, we ought rather to praise God for this mercy and goodness toward us, in saving one, then murmur against him, or ask the question of him, why he calleth not all. If it please God so to deal in mercy toward us, that he vouchsafeth to be both our God, and the God of all, I say, of all our seed, we are bound unto him in so much greater duty, and he requireth of us the greater obedience, and looketh for a sacrifice of greater thankfulness. He dealeth not so with all good men, even such as have faithful souls, and desire to approve their service unto him: who when they have given them what education they can, and heartily craved of GOD his blessing upon their holy endeavors, yet have found many crosses, and such inward griefs, as have been ready to break even their heartstrings, and to bring their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Nevertheless, we must not suffer our over-strong affections to prevail too far within us, and to swallow us up with overmuch heaviness, when we behold with our own eyes the wickedness of our children that are come out of our own loins and are of our own blood, when we see them without hope of being reclaimed and reformed, as those that run into all excess of riot: no, though we should see them taken away in the profaneness of their hearts. For why should we repine at it, to consider how God glorifieth himself, albeit it be in the destruction of some of ours? Of this we have two most notable examples in *Aaron*, and in *Eli*, never to be forgotten of us, recorded in the Books of *Leviticus*, and of *Samuel*. Touching *Aaron*, his two eldest sons, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, (of whom we now speak) sinned against the Lord in offering strange fire, and serving of God otherwise then he appointed; which is a thing detestable in his eyes, and there came out a fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.

Here was a grievous sin committed, here was a grievous punishment executed upon them; and their father did behold it with his eyes, and how they were carried out of the campe in their coats. *Moses* told him, that the LORD would be sanctified in them that come nigh him, and before all the people, he will be glorified, so that *Aaron* held his peace, *Leviticus* chapter 10. verse 3. So touching *Eli*, when he heard a fearful judgment denounced against his posterity, he said, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, 1 *Samuel* 3.18.

Thus ought we to do, and not vex and turmoyle our selves without reason, for that which we cannot remedy and redress. All the children of the faithful, are not the children of the promise: they that are the children of the flesh, are not the children of God, Galatians chapter 4. verse 23. All that are the seed of *Adraham*, are not the children of *Abraham*, Romans chapter 9. verse 6, 7. neither are all the Israel of God, which are of Israel.

Here it may be objected, which the Apostle [Objection 1] *Peter* speaketh to the Jews, The promise is made to you, and to your children, Acts 2.39. God is the God of the faithful, and of their seed.

I answer, The Apostle answereth this in the next words, [Answer.] *even as many as the Lord our God shall call*. So many as have God to be their God, shall in his good time be called to the knowledge of the truth. Hence it is, that in the promise annexed to the second commandment, it is said, *he showeth mercy to thousands that love him, and keep his commandments*. Thus he limiteth the promise of mercy, he restraineth it to those that love him. This promise is performed, when it holdeth in any, albeit a far off.

Another objection ariseth out of *Paul's* words to the Corinthians, where the seed of [Objection] the faithful are said to be holy, that is, sanctified and cleansed, *The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean, but now are they holy*. If then they be all clean and holy, it followeth they are also under the election of grace.

I answer, they are holy touching the outward covenant, and general election, [Answer.] as to be of the visible Church, to have right in the Sacraments, and to have interest in the outward privileges thereof, as in the word, prayer, and such like. Thus the whole nation of the Jews are said to be chosen, and thus they may be said, and are said to be sanctified.

They are therefore deceived that think the Apostle meaneth that they are legitimate borne in lawful wedlock, for as much as the children of infidels are borne Legitimate, and not base borne: so that if he were so to be understood, he should ascribe no more to the children of believers, then of infidels, because before the conversion of either of them, their children were lawfully begotten: and therefore no doubt but they remained so afterward.

The question in this place is, whether a faithful person that is married, might lawfully dwell with the unfaithful? He proveth it ought to be so, because the unfaithful person, is sanctified by the faithful, so that their marriage is holy and pleasing unto God: which he confirmeth by an effect of their marriage, because the children begotten in it, are not unclean, that is, are not Gentiles, but Christians; they differ from the seed of Pagans and infidels, that are aliens from the Church.

[Object.] If any ask what we are to think of the infants of such as are Christians. I answer, we must judge of them according to charity, who have interest in the outward covenant, until by infidelity when they come to years of discretion, they shall cut off themselves; grounding our selves upon the promise of God made to *Abraham*, *I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee*, Gen. 17.7. Nevertheless, albeit some cut off themselves, yet if the covenant be

confirmed unto some of them, we have cause to comfort our selves herein. The Apostle *John* writing to the elect Lady, rejoiceth greatly that *he found of her children walking in the truth*: he saith not indefinitely, her children, nor generally all her children, but among her children, that is, some of thy children which inferreth that they did not all become faithful, although her self a most worthy and faithful woman, and had used (no doubt) the means of their conversion and continuance under the grace of GOD. We must content our selves with that favor which GOD showeth unto us, whether he call many of our children or very few of them.

[Use 4] Lastly, let all parents, be careful of their children's benefit, and seek to do them good, and not evil all the days of their life. We do all by a natural instinct love them, and are inclined to show compassion unto them, and to seek their promotion and preferment in temporal things. Our Savior saith, *If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?* We will not give them what we know will hurt them, albeit they should earnestly desire it, and request it of us. We all desire to leave an happy issue behind us: and some are more careful for them, both living and dying, then for themselves. This duty hath many branches: for though all seek to leave them great, and taking deep root in the world, yet all do not take the right course. Some give themselves that liberty, that they are like to leave them little in the world.

Wherefore the first branch is to begin with our selves, to seek unfeignedly to fear God, and to lead our lives according to his commandments. This doth the Lord himself deliver, Deuter. 5.29. *O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever.*

If parents themselves will fear the Lord, and obey his will, they have a promise made to them, and to their children: but if they will not be the Lord's faithful servants, woe to them, and their posterities also. All parents that fear God aright, do not only lay up a good foundation for themselves, but provide well for their children after them, and are profitable instruments to derive God's blessings unto them abundantly after their departure. God hath promised and cannot deceive, to show mercy to thousands, of them that love him and keep his commandments, Exod. 20.6. If then we truly love our children, not only their bodies, but their souls, and chiefly their souls (which is the truest and soundest love,) we must endeavor above all things, to lead a godly life, and to go in and out before them, by a good example: *We must behave our selves wisely in a perfect way: we must walk within the doors of our house, with an upright heart: we must set no wicked thing before our eyes.*

Contrariwise, such parents as fear not God, themselves bring a down-fall and ruin to their families and posterities, and are the greatest enemies unto their children. How unnatural, or rather how monstrous a thing is it for parents to be instruments to bring children into the world, and then when they have brought them forth, to be the chief means to send them to hell? How woeful and lamentable a thing is it to cast their progeny and posterity into the curse of God, more bitter a thousand times then death, and more cruel, then to thrust them upon the swords point? It is noted in the Scriptures, and all men are ready with one voice, and one consent to acknowledge it, as an horrible impiety in those parents (forsaken of God,

and given over to fill up the measure of their sins,) that spared not to make their children pass through the fire, and to offer their sons and daughters to devils. We condemn this all of us to the pit of hell, as a foul and fearful practice: and yet how many, (alas) how many in the world do practice this, nay, that which is ten thousand times worse then this? For all such wicked and profane parents as are careless and negligent of the fowls health of their children, committed as a precious treasure unto them, and do give them evil examples of all abominations, do give them an easy passage into hell fire, and do make them no better then a sacrifice to the devil.

Hence it is, that the LORD saith, Deut. 28.46. *Because thou didst not serve the Lord thy God with joyfulness and a good heart, for the abundance of all things, therefore these curses shall be upon thee for signs and wonders, and upon thy seed forever.*

The second branch of seeking their good, is to give them good education, and to plant in them the principles of religion, that they may know GOD betimes. So did *David* to his son *Solomon*, 1 Chron. 28.9. *to know the GOD of his Father, and to serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind.* So doth *Solomon* instruct parents to *train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* So doth *Paul* exhort fathers to *bring up their children in the nurture of the Lord*, [Object.] Ephes. 6. If any object against these commandments, They will be unruly and disordered, albeit, they be never so well brought up: and though their parents be very careful, they will be very careless; and therefore they were as good hold their peace, as to speak to them, and not to be regarded.

[Answer.] I answer, so it is sometimes, but always it is not so. Many that have feared GOD with all their housholdes, have received much comfort by their children and servants, that have had good instruction put into them, as pure and wholesome liquor, into a vessel, and have seen the fruit thereof, to the unspeakable joy of their hearts. This we might show at large, in the reformed families of *Abraham* and *Cornelius*, and sundry others. As they planted and sowed good seed in the parts of their families, as it were in a fruitful field, so they reaped a plentiful harvest. *Abraham* had servants that were also God's servants, and prayed earnestly unto him. *Cornelius* had a soldier that waited upon him, that feared God, yea all his band of Italian soldiers, were Christian soldiers. Again, we must trust GOD with the effect and success of the education that we give them. He will work thereby by his Spirit in all that belong unto him, as seemeth good to his heavenly wisdom. If he do not give a blessing for causes unknown to us, but known to him, let us leave God's secret, yet just judgments to himself.

The third particular branch, is to pray to God for them to guide them in his ways, and to bless them in his fear, and to bless our labors bestowed among them. This we see in *Job*, Chapter 1. toward his children, *When the days of their feasting were gone about, he sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for he said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.* He was careful for those which were committed unto his charge, and feared they might offend God in their meetings, albeit he knew no such evil by them. The wise man saith, *Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart, shall fall into mischief*, Prov.

28. A like example we have in *David*, Psalm 72. where he prayeth for *Solomon*, *Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness to the kings son, he shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.* So then, the faithful are to entreat and crave from God, the continuance of his covenant to their children, and to beg from his hands, an holy and sanctified seed: We must not presume, because we are faithful, and have received to believe, that therefore our seed must of necessity be so likewise: for then we shall but deceive our selves. Let not us therefore fail in craving a blessing from God upon our children, if we desire to make them heirs of blessing.

Fourthly, it is required of us, to rejoice in the blessing of God upon them, and to give him praise and glory, when he vouchsafeth to show mercy upon them, and upon us. If he did leave them in their sins, and in that corruption which they received from us, as it were by inheritance, we could not find just cause of complaint against him, who is bound neither to us, nor to our children: but forasmuch as he showeth much mercy to our posterity, as he hath done unto us, we have matter of praise and thanksgiving given unto us, whereby also we shall procure their farther good. It is noted of the *Iailour*, Acts 16. that *he rejoiced that they of his household also believed in the Lord.* He accounted it not sufficient for himself to believe, nor rejoiced only in his own salvation: but forasmuch as God had vouchsafed greater mercy unto him, to call his family also to the faith, this cheered his heart much more. If we have tasted of the like mercy, let us not be forgetful of the like duty.

Lastly, it belongeth unto us for the furtherance of their good, to give those all good encouragement in well doing, that are conscionable in their duties to God and to us▪ we are bound to praise and commend them, to comfort them, to cheer them up, and to defend them against all malicious enemies, that seek to disgrace them. The *Apostle Paul* willeth parents not to provoke their children, *lest they be discouraged*, Coloss. 3.21. It is a means to cool and quench zeal, to find discouragements in godly proceedings. On the other side, we ought to show all dislike and hatred against evil, and an angry countenance toward such as are unreformed. The *Prophet*, touching the right ordering and good government of his house, declareth that *he would not know a wicken person, and him that hath an high look, he will not suffer:* His eyes should be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with him, he that walketh in the perfect way, he shall serve him.

This is a good means to make both houses to prosper, and kingdoms to flourish, when the godly are advanced, and the evil doers are beaten down: but when evil is set aloft, and goeth vnchecked and vncontrolled, and godliness is driven to the wall, it prognosticateth, and foretellethe the ruin and utter desolation of those societies, albeit for a time they may continue.

When they offered strange fire before the Lord in the wilderness. We have hitherto spoken of the destruction of *Aaron's* sons before the face of their father: now let us see for what cause it was done. The sin of his sons is remembered to be this, they offered strange fire, that is, such as was not appointed and commanded of the Lord; they took not the fire from the altar to burn incense with— all; which came down from heaven, and was preserved by the diligence of the *Priests*, until the captivity of *Babylon*. Now, whereas the author of the second book of

Maccabees telleth us, that whē their fathers were led into Persia, the Priests that were then devout, *took the fire of the altar privily*, and hid it in an hollow place of a pit without water, where they kept it sure, so that the place was unknown to all men, hath no testimony of truth out of the sacred Scriptures, as we shall show more in the 26. Chapter of this Book of Numbers. *Moses* maketh mention of this example of the sin and punishment of *Aaron's* sons, to the end the Levites should be more wise and wary in the execution of their office, because God hereby showeth, that they shall never escape his hand, y^t do not rightly discharge the duties committed unto them. For the examples of God's judgments upon the corrupters and contemners of his worship must make us more careful and fearful to offend. Now, whereas they are punished according to their sin, that is, their offering strange fire with strange fire, we shall speak afterward in the fifth Chapter.

Here we will observe, that this fact of these, may seem in the eyes of many to be a small offense, and not to deserve so heavy a censure, and so grievous a punishment. For it may be said in defense of them, either that they had a good intent and meaning, though they missed in the manner; or that this fire which they offered, would serve to burn the incense as well as any other, and what skilleth it by what fire it be done? But all these are [Doctrine 3] vain pretences, forasmuch as God had commanded the contrary. We learn from hence, that nothing in matter or form, concerning the worship of God, or the administration of the Sacraments, ought to be added or altered, or detracted, but all must be done as God hath determined and directed. Our own dreams and devises must not sway us in the matters of God, but it is his will and word, that must will and govern us. The Lord himself challengeth and defendeth his authority, in laying down the manner and way of his own service, not leaving it to the liberty of any creature, men or Angels to intermeddle with it, forasmuch as he will have all things done, as himself hath prescribed. He is well pleased and contented, that men shall make Laws and statutes for human matters, concerning their temporal estates in this world, as shall be fittest for the places where they rule and for the persons whom they rule, as touching treasons, murders, thefts, oppressions, slanders, routs, riots, and such disorders: but for the divine worship how God shall be served, we must leave it unto him, he only can prescribe what must be done, he only will appoint what must be left undone.

It is true, the strange fire that *Nadab* and *Abihu* took, was as well able to burn the incense, as that which burned evermore upon the altar: and yet because God had not sanctified it for that purpose, they were fearfully and dreadfully devoured with fire from God. When God instituted the Passover in remembrance of his merciful deliverance in passing over the houses of the Israelites, when the first borne of the Egyptians were destroyed, the whole order is set down both for the matter and manner of celebrating and solemnizing that ordinance: he instructeth what they shall take, what ceremonies they shall use, what gesture they shall observe, and what he will have them not to do. *Moses* doth many times in the book of the Law, give this direction, Deuter. 4.2. *Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you:* and in the 12. Chapter, *ye shall not do after after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes:* and afterward, *What thing soever I*

command you, observe and do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it. On the contrary, we see how *Saul* was punished with the loss of his kingdom, because *he would offer sacrifice contrary to the express will of God made known unto him*, 1 Sam. 15.23. The like might be said of *Jereboam's* two golden calves erected at *Dan* and *Bethel*, without warrant, and worshipped without warrant, it was the overthrow of himself and his posterity, 1 Kings 14.7. &c. For this cause the Apostle speaking of the institution of the Lord's Supper, saith, 1 Corin. 11. I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord the same night, in which he was betrayed, took bread, &c. whereby it appeareth that it is no small matter, it is no toy or trifle to worship GOD otherwise then he in his word appointeth unto us, considering the saying of the wise man, *Add not thou unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.*

This crosseth man's devises which are [Reason 1] bold to step up in God's place, and therefore let us see the reasons. First, God will be acknowledged to be the only Law-giver, the king of his Church, and the only Prophet to instruct it in y^e will of God. This is that which the Apostle *James* witnesseth, chap. 4. *There is one Law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy*, that can cast body and soul into hell fire, Matth. 10. He is the master of the house, that must set down orders for the government of his house. None can make a Law in the kingdom, but by authority of the king: none can alter it being made, but the king, So is it in the Church, none can appoint any word, any Sacrament, any worship but God himself, none can reuerse any institution without him. So that additions, or detractions, or alterations, or any mixtures whatsoever, are so many abuses of the Sacraments, of the word, and of the worship of God.

[Reason 2] Secondly, there is promise of blessing to them that serve him with a perfect heart: and there is threatening of most heavy curses, and judgments to come upon their souls that worship him after the commandments and precepts of men. Our Savior chargeth his disciples to *observe all things, whatsoever he commandeth them*, and then he addeth, *Loe, I am with you to the ende of the world*, Matth. 28.20. It appeareth in many places of the book of Judges, the Israelites are delivered over to their adversaries for transgressing in this kind, even for worshipping him after other ways then he had appointed. There is a fearful denuntiation in the shutting up of the Revelation, against all that shall dare either to add or detract anything in the holy things of God: *I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the Prophecy of this Book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written, in this Book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the Book of this Prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of life, and out of the holy City, and from the things which are written in this Book.* Wherefore it is no small matter, to follow the private willes of men in the worship of God, and not to suffer our selves to be guided and directed by his word and commandment.

[Objection.] This may seem to tie up the desires of man too strictly, and therefore his wisdom that he hath by nature Ministreth many objections against this truth, to which we are to give answer as briefly as we can. First the question may be asked, whether Princes have not power to make laws in the Church? have they nothing to do with the Church? may

they intermeddle only with the Common-wealth? hath not God made them overseers of both states, as also committed the charge unto them of both Tables? [Answer.] I answer, the care of Religion belongeth to all Princes, and therefore the godly kings of Judah made it their first labor to establish God's worship.

But touching the worship of God, we must observe that Church laws and constitutions, are of three sorts, Material, Ministerial, or circumstantial. Laws that concern the matter, substance, and parts of God's worship, are already established by God in the word; nothing is left to Princes or Pastors of the Church, nothing ought to be invented of man, nothing may be hammered in the forge of our brains, which are too shallow to meddle in such deep and profound matters; as Christ teacheth, Matthew chapter 15. verse 9. *In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men.*

These Laws we are to leave to God only, which touch the substance of his worship. Ministerial Laws, are such Canons as command the practice and execution of the former Laws, wherein the Prince is as it were the Minister, commanding under God. It belongeth to him to see both Ministers and people to do their duty, 2 Chronicles, chapter 30. verses 12.16. and to provide that all his subjects reform themselves in those things that pertain to the worship of God: and to punish idolaters, Exodus chapter 22. verse 20, blasphemers, Leviticus chapter 24. verse 16. false Prophets, Deuteronomy 13.5. and profaners of holy things, Numbers chapter 15. verse 35. These belong unto him, these he is to look unto.

Lastly, other Laws are circumstantial, such as are constitutions made in things merely indifferent, which vary according to times, occasions, places, and Churches. These Laws also he hath authority to make and meddle withal, provided that the rules of the word, be not transgressed, but carefully observed. So then, albeit the Prince ought not himself to execute the things of God, as to preach the word, or to administer Sacraments, or to practice the discipline of the Church, yet he is bound to see them done, and that all things be done in order & comeliness in the Church.

Again, it may be objected, [Object.] that the Scripture doth often mention, that sacrifices were offered otherwise then God appointed, & yet accepted. They ought to be brought to the door of the Tabernacle, and not offered elsewhere. I answer, [Answer.] the question is not so much of the fact, as of the right: not what was done, but what ought to be done.

This is the cause that the Lord complaineth both against their persons and their doings, and brandeth them both with a mark of dishonor, in this manner; *Jehoshaphat* did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, *but the high places were not taken away*: he walked in all the ways of *Asa* his father, he turned not aside from it; nevertheless *the people offered, and burnt incense yet in the high places.*

The like is remembered of *Iehoash*, he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all his days, wherein *Jehoiada* the Priest instructed him; *But the high places were not taken away, the people still sacrificed and burnt Incense in the high places*, 2 Kings 12.2, 3. When *Manasseh* was brought again to *Jerusalem* into his kingdom, he sought the Lord his God, & took away the strange gods, and repaired the Altar of the Lord: nevertheless, the people did sacrifice still in

the high places, yet unto the Lord their God only. God required to be worshipped not only as he appointed, but where he appointed, and therefore the contrary practice is noted to be a transgression & a breach of the Law of God.

Thirdly, it may be said, that the Prophets [Objection 4] of God, who could not be ignorant of their duties, did not sacrifice as God commanded, and yet are blameless. They did not bring their sacrifice to the Tabernacle, nor unto the place that God had chosen, but offered in other places, as *Samuel* in *Mispah*, 1 Sam. 7, 9. and elsewhere, chap. 16, 2.

I answer, he did it as one of the Prophets, who were extraordinary persons, and not tied to the ordinary rules in all their actions. So we see *Elijah* offered in Mount *Carmel*, 1 Kin. 18. But we are not to follow extraordinary matters without a special calling, forasmuch as we live by laws, not by examples. So then it was lawful in the Prophets, in regard of their personal vocation, which without it had been utterly unlawful.

Lastly, it may be objected that *David* is [Objection 4] commended, because he intended to build an house to the Name of God. He had received no commandment from God to build the Temple, it was his good meaning and good intent, yet he is expressly commended of God, 2 Chron. 6, 7.8. where *Solomon* in praising God, saith, *It was in the heart of David my father, to build an house for the Name of the Lord God of Israel: but the Lord said to David my father, forasmuch as it was in thy heart to build an house for my Name, thou diddest well in that it was in thy heart.* If then *David* having no word or direction from God did well, how is all will-worship evil?

I answer, in this God respecteth not the deed it self, but the intent of the doer: so that when it is said, *Thou hast done well*, it is as much as if the Lord had said, I know thou hadst a good meaning in it; as it appeareth by the reasons used in the second book of *Samuel*, where *David* saith to *Nathan* the Prophet, *See now I dwell in an house of Cedar, but the Ark of GOD dwelleth within Curtaines:* where he compareth himself with God, and his own house of Cedar, with God's Ark within Curtaines. This reason carrieth with it a great show of comliness & seemelinese. For some might think with themselves, was it meet that himself should dwell in his seeled house, & the Lord's house lie waste? Notwithstanding in matters of God we are not to reason according to our own opinion and outward appearing, but according unto the word of God. And herein was *David* deceived, that he went beyond the Commandment of God. To build a Temple to God, is not in it self evil, GOD had promised that the Tabernacle and the Ark should have a resting place, Deut. 12, 5, 6. 1 Kings 8 but to seek to prevent God, was to be reprov'd. As to set a King over them was not in it self unlawful, Deuter. 17, 15. but when they attempted it before the time, and waited not God's Commandment to go before them, they are reprov'd and punished for it, 1 Sam. 12, 16. *David* in this place had received no direction touching this matter, either of the time, or of the place; there was no Commandment either who should build it, or when it should be built, or where it should be built. Hence it is, that the Lord sent *Nathan* unto him, who said unto him, *Shalt thou build me an house to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the Children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a Tent and in a Tabernacle. In all the places wherein I have walked with all the Children of Israel, spake I a word with any of the Tribes of Israel whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of Cedar?*

So then seeing it might be said to him, Who required these things at thy hands? Who commanded of thee any such work? Who ever spake unto thee to do it? Howsoever his purpose might be commended, yet the fact is reprov'd. And God useth two reasons to call him back from his desire and enterprise, one taken from his own person, the other from the person of *David*. From the person of God, because hitherto he had lived in a Tabernacle, so that there was no cause in respect of him to trouble himself with the building of a Temple. From the person of *David*, because he was to consider that there were many in *Israel* besides him, many Judges and Princes beside him and before him, yet none of them had any such charge laid upon them, or committed unto them, or required of them: so that he ought not to have enterprised that which was commanded to none of them, nor to himself. True it is, GOD saith in the book of Deuteronomy, that there should be one place where he would be worshipped, but what, or where that place was, he did not foreshow; & therefore his farther pleasure to be revealed, was to be expected, and an express commandment to be waited for. For we see in the Scriptures, that oftentimes somewhat is commanded, which cometh not by and by to be practiced and executed: as we declared before, touching the choosing of a King *from among their brethren, when they came into the Land which the Lord their God had given them*. So Christ sent out his Apostles into all the world, and commanded them to teach all nations; but at what time they should go forth, they were to expect a new commandment and commission: so that albeit they were bidden to go, yet if they had gone before they had known when to go, they had offended. The sum and effect of this answer cometh hereunto, that *David's* thought and purpose was good and godly, if we consider the root of it, inasmuch as it proceeded from a desire of promoting true religion: nevertheless although God approved his intent, yet he suffered him not to go forward, because he wanted his word to warrant his intent, and therefore did not obey God, but follow his own mind and device.

Thus we see the cause why God forbad *David* to build him a Temple, and yet afterward the people in the days of *Haggai* are reprov'd, being returned from captivity, because they built not. Here he forbiddeth, that which there he cōmandeth. These things seem not to agree together, but to be contrary one to the other, and yet, though different in show, they agree very well in deed & in truth. For in this place *David* is pulled back from his purpose, as running too fast, traveling as it were without his guide, and sailing without his compass, because he had not the word of God: whereas they were reprov'd, because, albeit they were stirred up by the Prophets, and called continually to that duty by the word of God, yet they could find no leisure to fall to work, but followed wholly their own profits and pleasures. Thus we have answered the objections: let us now come to the uses, & see what we are to learn from hence.

[Use 1] First of all we are taught, that touching things that are to be done or not to be done, we are not to judge by the false rule of our own carnal and corrupt reason, but according to the sure word of the Prophets and Apostles. It seemeth a small thing in our own judgment to *burn Incense with strange fire*: but it is a most grievous sin, and deserved a most grievous punishment, if we consider the word of God thereby transgressed, or respect his commandment thereby violated. For these two sons of *Aaron* died not the common death of all men, nor were visited after the ordinary visitation of the rest of the sons of men, but God

wrought a strange work, he brought fire from heaven, and consumed them. The like we might say of *Korah* and his company, they contented not themselves with the ordinary calling of the Levites, to do the service of the Tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the Congregation to minister unto them, but they would also take every man his censure, and put incense in them, but they sought the Priesthood also, and usurped the office peculiarly appointed to *Aaron* and to his sons. It might seem a small thing, to set up others to burn incense, and a man might say, Why might not *Korah* do it as well as *Aaron*? What skilleth it by whom it be done? But hereby the will of God is broken and little regarded, yea, God himself is contemned and little esteemed in our eyes. This then bindeth every soul to humility, not to think anything better, wiser, or more expedient and profitable to the Church, then that which is prescribed unto it; neither yet to account anything idle or superfluous, or unnecessary, or that might be amended. There be many profane men that think most basely and contemptibly of the most excellent things of God, as of the Word, of the Ministry, of the Sacraments, and of the prayers of the Church. It seemeth to many a slight thing, not to be washed with the water of Baptism: but it is not so with God, who hath instituted that Sacrament, and therefore woe unto them that neglect it, or despise it. The like we might say of the Lord's Supper, it is accounted among many a small matter, whether they come to the Table of the Lord, or not. But we must measure the necessity of it, not by the outward show of the outward actions, but by the Commandment of God: because whatsoever Christ hath instituted for the perpetual use and benefit of the Church, we are commanded to yield obedience unto it. Whosoever neglecteth to do what he appointeth, sinneth most grievously against him. Wherefore the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 11. *As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.* Such then as come sildome to this Sacrament, declare plainly that they regard not the death of Christ. They look to receive life and salvation from him, but they do not esteem the means whereby they may be made partakers of them. The Apostle speaking of the word of God in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, declareth that by the preaching thereof, Christ Jesus was so clearly *set forth*, that he was as it were *crucified among them*: much more may this be said of the Supper of the Lord, which is a most lively remembrance of his death, and of the shedding of his most pure and precious blood? This use hath many branches. First, we must think our selves *fools* in the matters of God, that we may be made *wise*: such as think themselves wise, do thereby profess themselves to be no better then fools, 1 Cor. 3, 18. Secondly, to account God only wise, yea, wisdom it self, as the wise man saith, Prov. 9, 1. *Wisdom hath built her an house.* Thirdly, add nothing to the word of the Lord, which were to make our selves wiser then God, and to show our selves to be worse then mad men. *We must not turn aside to the right hand or to the left*, Deut. 5, 32. nor decline from any of the words which he hath commanded us, Deut. 28, 14. for that were to wrestle against the Lord, who is too strong for us: his will must stand upright, when our will shall be overthrown and cast down to the ground. Lastly, we must think nothing small or little in God's service. He took order for the least things in the Tabernacle, and left them not arbitrary. A little thing done amiss, bringeth all out of square in the worldly affairs of men: and so it is with God's matters. In the business that concerneth our selves, wherein we take our selves to be any way interested, we account nothing little; if we be injured or wronged therein, we take it to heart, we cannot abide it, we storm against thē that cross us. And shall

we think God is careless what becometh of his service, and consequently of his glory? Woe unto us, if we judge so of honoring him.

[Use 2] Secondly, this serveth (seeing all worship of God ought to be guided by his word, and directed by his commandment, not by the private wills of men) to reprove the wonderful pride of men in all ages, who have always presumed to add somewhat of their own to the ordinance of God in his worship, and accounted it too gross simplicity to cleave to y^e bare and naked word, & so have made a mixture of his religion with our own invention, as it were to sow our field with diverse seeds. The Scribes and Pharisees, added the traditions of their fathers, *as washings of cups, of beds, and of tables*: yea, they so abounded in them, that they made the Commandments of God of none effect, thinking it great reason they should give place to their devices. The Papists have added to the word of God, apochryphall books; many unwritten verities; the decrees and decretals, the inventions of their Popes; which they hold in as great reverence as the holy Scriptures. They have added unto the two Sacraments instituted by Christ, five other; to make the number amount to seven. To baptism, they have added exorcismes, spittle, salt, cream, and other such like trash and trumpery. To the Supper, they have added Transubstantiation, the real presence, the merit of the work, the Mass propitiatory for the quick and dead, crossings & creepings, elevation, reservation, preservation by sea and land, in wars and in journeys. To the Ministry of Pastors & Teachers, they have added an idle rabble of Pope, Cardinals, Abbots, Monks, Friars, Jesuits, Votaries, Nuns, Acolytes, Exorcistes, & a multitude of drones, as croking frogs arising out of the bottomless pit. To prayer and pure invocation of the Name of GOD, they have added prayers to Saints, prayers in a strange tongue, prayers before Images, and in their Idol Temples, prayers said by tale, and numbered, or rather mumbled upon their beads, their canonical hours, and such like superstitions, partly idolatrous, and partly heathenish, and partly blasphemous. Thus they have corrupted God's worship, and defiled whatsoever they touch, and turned his truth into a lie. It is reported of *Gregory Bishop of Rome*, the best of all those that followed, but the worst of thē that went before him, that in a most grievous and contagious plague, he invented and appointed sundry superstitions and supplications directed to Saints, set down in the Litany; having neither commandment, nor example, nor any warrant in the word: but God so revenged this boldness and presumption, that in one hour, fourscore of those that so prayed and rehearsed those suffrages, suddenly fell to the earth, and breathed out their last breath. Thus God disliketh and disclaimeth the devices of men in his service. Of all which practices, which are no better then mere dotages, the Apostle saith, *They have a show of wisdom in will-worship*, but they bring a bondage to the rudiments of the world, frō which Christ hath freed us, and therefore ought not to be entangled by them, being after the commandments and doctrines of men. The heathen knew by the light of nature, that every God must needs be served according to his own will, and not according to the will of them that are their worshippers. All voluntary worship is utterly condemned, and GOD tieth us strictly to his word, without adding or diminishing. Our good intents cannot prevail with him, when the thing we do, is not warranted unto us. Hence it is, that the Lord saith not, *You shall not do evil in your own eyes*, but, *Thou shalt not do that which seemeth good in your own eyes*: they must keep them precisely to his commandments.

There is a way (saith Solomon) which seemeth right unto a man, but the issues thereof are the ways of death. Wherefore, let our conceit be never so good, yet it profiteth nothing, being not grounded upon the word, but upon man's wit. Our Savior foretelling the troubles that shall come upon the people of God that profess his Name, saith, *They shall excommunicate you, yea, the time cometh, That whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service.* They imagine they do good in such persecutions, as no doubt it fell out in *Paul* before his conversion. What then? Shall their good intent excuse their evil actions? and go for current payment with God? No, in no wise; because he measureth not our doings by our purposes, but by his own precepts. When *Peter* bad Christ his Master to pity and spare himself, Mat. 16, 22. and the Disciples forbad little children to come unto Christ; and at another time would have commanded fire to come down from heaven to consume the Samaritans; did they not offend, or can any defend them, because they had no evil intent? Why then is *Peter* called Satan, and bidden to come behind? And why are the Disciples reprov'd for discouraging the people that brought little children unto him, who ought rather to have encouraged them? Or why doth Christ tell them, they knew not of what spirit they were? *Joshua* had no evil meaning, when he advised *Moses* to forbid those that prophesied in the host, Numb. 11, 28. *Peters* meaning had no hurt in it, when he would not permit Christ to wash his feet, John 13. Yet doth *Moses* reprove *Joshua* as one carried away with the spirit of envy: and Christ telleth *Peter*, that if he washed him not, he had no part in him. So then, we are to understand, that as there is a God, and that God will be worshipped, so he will be worshipped according to his own word and will. If we decline from his will expressed in his word, we may well please our selves, but we cannot please him: we may think our selves wise, but he holdeth us for no better then fools: we may for a time go on in our ignorant courses, but he will in the end call us to a reckoning for them, and set all in order before us, to the confusion of our faces.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is our duty to study to acquaint our selves with the Scriptures, and let us read them with all diligence. The word is a Christian man's true and perfect guide, and in all doubts it is his Counselor. Let it not grieve us to be ruled by it, nor account it an heavy burden, or an uneasy yoke to be held hard unto it, seeing it is so sure a way for us to walk in. Let us take this to be our guide, and we shall never step one foot awry. As the Teachers of y^e word are not to deliver that which they never received of the Lord to his people: so we must follow no more then is warranted unto us from thence: it must be shown unto us there, before obedience be yielded unto it. He hath prescribed in it a form of serving of him, that only he accepteth, other he abhorreth and punisheth. The examples of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, mentioned in this place, & afterward again in this book, do preach this doctrine unto us, and cry out aloud as with a lively voice, that we should take heed by their harms. In other things God is full of patience, but in this he is full of wrath, and his jealousy burneth as fire. He hath authority over his house, to appoint his own worship, and he cannot endure to have it taken away from him by any man. Wherefore it behooveth us to search the Scriptures, that we may learn his will; and we must suffer them to dwell plentifully in us, that we may obey his will. First, we must know it before we can obey it: if we decline and depart never so little from it, our work is out of square. The Prophet reproveth *Saul*, because he performed his will to halves, and saith unto him, *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in*

*obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice: and to hearken, then the fat of Rams, 1 Sam. 15. He commanded Joshua to have the book of the law continually before him, and he pronounceth those blessed that delight in it, and do meditate upon it day and night. Woe then unto those that hide the book of God from the people, and take away the key of knowledge, that they should have no entrance into the kingdom of heaven. These are they that are the murderers of many thousand souls, that might come to the knowledge of the truth, if these false Prophets did not lock up and keep close the Scriptures from them: and therefore they are guilty of shedding blood, and bring a famine, not of bread; a thirst, but not of water: the people cannot hear the words of the Lord. They feed them with lying legends, with deceitful fables, and with human traditions, which do no better than starve them, and are not able to keep life in them: whiles in the mean season they hide the Scriptures in an unknown tongue, so that albeit they hear them, yet they cannot profit by them. Thus the blind lead the blind, until both the leader, and he that is led, fall into the ditch. And woe unto those also that live in the Sun-shine of the Gospel, & yet shut their eyes that they should not see. They have the light brought unto them, they need not say, *Who shall ascend into heaven, or who shall descend into the deep to bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither need any say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.* It is brought unto our doors, & preached upon the house tops, that is, it is set forth openly, it is published by authority, it may be professed with liberty of conscience, and no man is endangered to lose life or limb, or to have one hair of his head touched for it. Such are the days wherein we live, that we may truly say with the Apostle, *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid in them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ (who is the Image of God) should shine unto them.* As these men are ignorant, so they are willingly ignorant; they know nothing, because they will not understand. They profess themselves to be Christians, and yet they have many of thē no more knowledge of Christ than Turks and Infidels. What a lamentable thing is it that such as bear the Name of Christ, should know nothing touching Christ? It will be thought strange, that any such should be found in such a flourishing Church as ours is, where the Gospel is sincerely taught, & hath had a free passage so many years. It is true indeed, it may seem very strange, and yet (alas) it is too common. Let the Ministers of the word take an account of those that come to receive the Supper of the Lord, what they have learned, let them make a through search and suruay how they have profited, and they shall find that to be true, which I affirm. Many know nothing at all what Christ did for them, neither ever heard what he should do for them: his Name they confess hath often come to their ears, and they have heard very many speak of him, but they know not how or which way they should be beholden to him, or indebted unto him for anything or what he hath done for them. Is it not possible that many of the Saracens or sauages should hear & know more of Christ Jesus, than these falsely called Christians? As this is enough to break the hearts of the Ministers, and to make them labor more conscionably than they have done, so it should stir up the people to seek after knowledge, which is as the light of the eye, or as a candle in the house, whereby we may see what we do, and how we serve God, whether truly or falsely, and whether we go right or wrong. It is enough with the greatest sort, to do as*

most do: and to practice that manner of the worship of God, which is countenanced and continued by authority, albeit they can give no reason of it, neither know how to warrant it. It belongeth unto us not only to profess the truth, but to be able to maintain the truth which we profess, against all gainsayers, and such enemies as seek to rob us of it. It is a duty required of us, not to content our selves to do as the rest of our neighbors do, but *to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness of spirit*, 1 Pet. 3, 15. Every man presumeth he hath the truth, and therefore they never enquire farther into the matter, nor labor to satisfy their own hearts upon what grounds they stand. They do as their honest neighbors: they think it no good manners to differ from them: they account it folly to seek to be wiser then their forefathers: & so they iumpe with the Church of *Rome*, that teacheth her Disciples to believe as the Church believeth, albeit they can yield no reason how the Church believeth. Whereby it appeareth, that albeit all men are worshippers of God, yet the greatest sort know not how they worship God; so that we may say unto them, as Christ spake to the woman of *Samaria*, *Ye worship ye know not what*, John 4, 22. Let all such know, that they want true comfort in their worshipping, forasmuch as they know not whether they please God or not. They are like men that shoot at a mark, which know not whether they shoot short, or shoot beyond the mark; or whether they shoot wide or how much they are wide, or whether they hit the mark. Thus it fareth with ignorant worshippers, they are wholly ignorant whether they go astray in the matter or in y^e manner of his worship, whether they do that which God requireth, or that which he condemneth. For this is no otherwise, nor nowhere learned but by the word: so that all such as are ignorant thereof, are in a wretched case and woeful condition, and not far from destruction, whatsoever they do esteem of themselves, or others judge of them.

5. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

6. Bring the Tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the Priest, that they may minister unto him.

7. And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole Congregation before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, to do the service of the Tabernacle.

8. And they shall keep all the instruments of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the Tabernacle.

9. And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel.

10. And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their Priests Office: and the stranger that cometh nigh, shall be put to death.

11. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

12. And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel, instead of all the first borne that openeth the matrice among the children of Israel; therefore the Levites shall be mine.

13. Because all the first borne are mine: for on the day that I smote all the first borne in the Land of Egypt, I hallowed unto me all the first borne in Israel, both man and beast, mine they shall be: I am the Lord.

Hitherto of the first part of the Preface, consisting in a description of *Aaron's* sons, and in a relation what became of them: part of them dying in their sins, and part succeeding in the Priests Office. Now followeth the second part in these words, which is a presentation of the Levites before him. Touching this whole Tribe, we must observe that it was divided and sorted into two ranks, whereof the first is the Priests; and the second, the rest commonly called by the common name of Levites, who were not admitted into the former order, as appeareth more evidently in the 16, chapter following, as also in the 18, chapter.

Touching the Priests, they are of two sorts, the one was as y^e head, the other as his hands: one was the chief above all the rest, the other were inferior, as assistants unto him. The chief was the high Priest, of whom the Scripture setteth down four things.

First, his consecration; he was brought before the Altar, he was washed with water, he was clothed with those holy garments that God had appointed, he had the sacred oil poured upon his head; lastly, sacrifice was offered on the Altar for his sanctification, and his garments were sprinkled with the blood of it.

Secondly, the things that were required in him being consecrated in the former manner, which are cheefely these; he might not be defective or deformed in body, his wife must be a virgin of his own people, he might not uncover his head, rent his garments, nor go in to mourn for any that was dead, though it were his father or mother.

Thirdly, the Scripture setteth down his employment, which was to go daily into the Sanctuary, to light the Lamps, to burn Incense, and every week to provide the show-bread,
〈1 page duplicate〉 〈1 page duplicate〉 on the feast days to offer the people's sacrifices with the other Priests, and once in the year, on the day of expiation to enter into the Holiest of all, to make prayer for himself and the people.

Fourthly, his attire or holy vestiments in which he was to perform this service of God, which were these six in number, a breast-plate, an Ephod, a Robe, a broidred coat, a miter, & a girdle.

Touching the Priests of inferior condition, they had the same kind of consecration which the high Priest had, in sacrificing they were like unto him, and in the service of the Sanctuary, in

burning incense, in providing the bread of proposition, and in preparing & looking to the lamps and lights. This was the difference in these between him & them, that he was the chief, and they were helpers: he was the director, they were directed and guided by him. Besides, this was peculiar to the high Priest, that he consulted with God by *Vrim and Thummim*, and entered into the holiest place to make atonement, to cleanse and hallow it from the sins of the people. Their vestiments were the same, saving that the high Priest only had the breast-plate and an Ephod of gold; which is to be noted, because the rest of the Priests did sometimes wear a linned Ephod. They might have no blemish or deformity, Levite. 21, 18. They might drink no wine nor strong drink when they were to enter into the Sanctuary, Levite. 10, 9. They might not defile themselves by the dead, nor come nigh any that was dead, except it were their father or mother, son or daughter, or sister unmarried, Levite. 21, 1. They might not shave their heads nor beards, nor cut their flesh; they might marry no harlot, nor woman divorced, Levite. 21, 5, 7. The first that were consecrated to this office, were *Aaron's* sons *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *Eleazar* and *Ithamar*. From *Eleazar* in *David's* time (who established an exact order among them) were issued 16, families, and from *Ithamar*, eight; that is from them both, 24, families. These he sorted and separated into four and twenty classes or courses, & named each of them after the name of him who was the chief of each family; and concerning the ordering of them, and setting one before another, (to avoid contention) they cast lots. All of them could not attend every day without confusion and disorder, & they must have intermission and times of vacation, so that one course performed the service one week, and another course another week. Hence it is, that it is said in the book of Chronicles, that *Jehoiada* the Priest *dismissed not the courses*; that is, he sent not away the troops and companies of the Priests that attended the service of the Temple, when their time of waiting was expired; so that according to the order appointed, they should have departed, and the next course have succeeded: because he meant to make good use of them in the deposing of wicked & usurping *Athalia*, and in the establishing of the royal throne of *Joash* the lawful King of *Judah*. This also appeareth in part in the New Testament, Luk. 1, 8, 9. *It came to pass, that Zachariah of the course of Abia, executed the Priests Office according to the custom of the Priests, &c.* Thus much touching the Priests Office, who were *Aaron* and his sons, whom God chose out of all the families of the Tribe of *Levi* to minister before him.

It remaineth to consider, how the rest or residue of that Tribe were employed. They were not to be idle, but to serve also first in the Tabernacle which *Moses* erected, and afterward in the Temple which *Solomon* built. When these grew up and increased in great number, they were sorted by *David* for orders sake into four ranks. Some were appointed to be Ministers of the Priests and Temple: some to be singers: some to be porters: and others Scribes and Judges.

Touching the first, specially called Levites y^t attended the service of the Sanctuary, their Offices were to carry the Tabernacle, and the Ark of the Covenant in the removes of the people, until God according to his promise fixed and settled them in one certain place, whither the Tribes should resort; and then they were to take care of them, and the vessels appointed to be used in the service of GOD. Unto these offices in latter times were added the flaying of the beasts that were to be offered, as 2 Chron. 35, 10, 11.

Touching the second rank, to wit, the sweet singers of the songs of *Zion*, we read in the first book of the Chronicles, chap. 25. they were to sing prophesies with harps, with viols, and with cymbals.

Touching the Porters, which were the third rank, they were appointed to see, that no uncircumcised, no polluted or profane person should enter into the house of the Lord, 1 Chron. 26: and to guard the same in such sort, that all things therein might be in safety, as the sacred vessels, the treasure of the house, and the treasure of the dedicated things.

Touching the Scribes, which are the last rank, they were such as read the Scriptures, and expounded the Law of God in the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and in the Synagogues that were in all parts of the Land; who were also called Doctors, that is, Interpreters of the Law of God. All which we may read at large in a learned Treatise of the Church, Lib. 5. Cap. 5, & 6.

Having thus briefly considered the distinct offices of such as were set apart to the Ministry among the people of GOD, who *made his Covenant with Levi, of life and peace*: let us now return to the words of *Moses*, and proceed to the second part of the Preface, which is the presentation of the Levites before *Aaron*, to be as his hands and helpers, that they might minister unto him. Wherein we are to observe two points; first, the commandment of God to *Moses*; and secondly, the reason of the commandment. For touching the execution of it by *Moses* according to the commandment of God, which is in other places most usually added, is in this place omitted, but must be supplied and understood from that which followeth: for when once the Levites were offered and presented, then presently he proceeded to the numbering of them, so that his obedience in this respect is sufficiently justified.

Touching the commandment of God directed unto him, we are to mark these several points, and of them the Author is GOD; for in divine matters nothing must be attempted without commandment from him, he must warrant thē, or else they are not to be allowed.

First, the substance of the commandment, verse 6, 7, 8. The Levites are given to *Aaron* the Priest, that they may minister unto him, and that they may do the service of the Tabernacle, and that they may keep the instruments or vessels thereof.

Secondly, the order, that *Aaron* and the Priests should be superior unto them, and be as Overseers of them, providing that no stranger should thrust himself into this calling, contrary to the ordinance and appointment of God, Heb. 5, verse 4. *No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*: so that he excluded from the ministry of the tabernacle, all other that were not Levites; of the other Tribes no man gave attendance at the Altar, they were strangers from the Priesthood, and the Priesthood from them. Not as though in the New Testament, there should be one only family separated, to which the administration of holy things should belong. For after Christ was ascended, and had led captivity captive, the distinction of Tribes and families was taken away in regard of the functions of the Church: so that the Ministers may be ordained and called out of any estate & degree whatsoever, being furnished with sufficient gifts for that purpose.

Thus much of the commandment: the reason followeth, verse 11, 12, & 13: in which God himself assigneth the cause why he did take unto himself the Levites to succeed in place of the first borne. For unto this time, the first borne both in the private families & in the public assemblies of the Israelites did execute the Priests office, as persons consecrated unto God, as we have shown and expounded, Exod. 13, and 19, chapters, and as we shall show farther in this chapter. Hence it is, that he saith, *Every first borne is mine*: which is to be understood, not in regard of the common right of creation, as sometimes the earth and all that filleth it, is said to be the Lord's, and all the beasts of the Forest, but they are so called in another respect.

For the better understanding whereof, we must consider that things are said to be the Lord's in three respects.

First, in regard of duty and service. Thus all creatures are the Lord's, because he is their Creator and maker, in regard whereof everything created oweth a duty to him, as to the great Lord, to whom all things visible and invisible owe their homage, as Psal. 24. the Prophet saith, *The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is*: and he rendereth this reason; *For he hath founded the world, &c.*

Secondly, all creatures are said to be the Lord's also, in regard of that power and authority whereby he ruleth all, to which jurisdiction of his, all men, how wicked & perverse soever they be, are subject. Thus Cyrus King of *Persia*, though he knew not the Lord, yet is said to be the Lord's *Shepherd*, and his *anointed*, and to perform all his pleasure, Isaiah 44, 28, and 45, 1. He did the work of the Lord ignorantly and blindly, yet God was his Lord, and he his servant in proclaiming that *Jerusalem* should be built, and the foundation of the Temple erected. So the Prophet speaking of the world, and of all things therein contained, saith, *They continue this day according to thine ordinances, for all are thy servants*: as if he should say; All creatures in heaven and earth continue safe and sound, even from the beginning to the present times wherein we live, and so they shall do unto the worlds end, through thy word and appointment: so that as they were created by thy word, and are preserved in their estate, so they are at thy commandment to do thy will, even as servants obey their masters. Thus the diuelles, though they resist him and rebel against him, may be said to be his servants, because they are constrained to serve his providence. They be far from yielding faithful service and dutiful obedience unto him, yet they must stoop down unto him; he hath in such sort put his hook in their nose, and his bridle in their lips, and his chain on their hands, and his fetters on their feet, that they cannot start from him, but they shall do him service for the execution of his secret will. Therefore the Prophet saith, Psalm 135, verse 6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the sea, and in all deep places*. To the same purpose the Apostle writing to the Philippians, and speaking of the power of Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal unto God, saith, chap. 2, verse 9, 10, *God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, & things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, unto the glory of GOD his Father*. Thus also the beasts of the Forest are the LORD'S, and the cattle on a thousand

Mountains, Psal. 50. Not only because all creatures owe a duty unto him, but because they are governed by his rule, ordered by his power, and ruled by his providence.

Thirdly, some things are said to be the Lord's, in respect of a propriety and immediate right that he hath in thē, being separate from the use of man. For then they become the Lord's, when they are alienated from men. Thus tithes in the word are said *to be the Lord's* Levite. 27, 30. *All the tithes of the Land, both of the seed of the ground, and of the fruit of the trees is the Lord's, it is holy unto the Lord.* Where the last words expound the former, according to the usual manner of the Scripture, and show in what sense *tithes are the Lord's*, because the propriety is not in man, but in God only: forasmuch as that which is holy to the Lord, is separate from man and from his use, and cannot be alienated by him without sacrilege and usurpation. So in this place, the Levites are said to be the Lord's, and the first borne are said to be the Lord's, not only in respect of their duty to him, and of his power over them; for thus all creatures are his, all people and nations of the earth are his: and in these respects, not only the tithes are the Lord's, but the other nine parts as well as they. But they are sanctified to him, and are to be employed in his service, being separated from the use of man, as the rest are appointed and left to the use of man.

Thus then the Lord challengeth authority to bestow the tenths of their increase, so that man could not employ them to himself without sacrilege. If any of the Levites should be taken from the Altar & sent into the wars; they had profaned God's service, and abused their persons to another end than GOD had ordained. The like might be spoken also of the Sabbath, that is *the Lord's day*; he claimeth it to his own use, he separateth and sanctifieth it to his own service. The six other days are ours, and God giveth us liberty to call them ours, and to bestow them as ours, in our own business, Exod. 20, 9. Revel. 1, 10.

Such therefore as make no conscience to take the LORD'S day from him, and use it as their own, are spiritual thieves, and meddle with that which is not their own. If their servants should deal in such sort with them, and employ any of the six days in their own work, and leave their business undone, they would quickly complain of the injury. Or if any of their neighbors should come into their house, and take away any part of their goods, we would bid them learn to know their own, and be ready to call them thieves. But we deal with GOD a thousand times worse than we would suffer other men to deal with us. We can take the Lord's day, nay the Lord's days, one after another, and spend them about our own profits and pleasures, and vanities, and yet never consider the wrong & injustice we offer unto the Almighty. Oh that men would lay this unto their hearts, so often as they profane the Lord's Sabbaths; that so they might call it a delight to consecrate it as glorious to the Lord, and learn not to follow their own pleasures and pastimes, nor to speak their own words therein.

[Verses 7, 8. *They shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole Congregation, &c.*] Hitherto of the meaning of the words: let us now come to the doctrines arising from hence.

We see in this division, that *Aaron* and his sons being consecrated to the office of the Priesthood, have also the Levites given unto them, to help them in that holy calling. *Moses* is commanded to present them before *Aaron* the Priest, that they may minister unto him: and

all this is done by the authority and appointment of God. Moses was a great Prophet, to whom God spake face to face, like unto whom arose none before him, nor yet after him: nevertheless he durst not presume to do this, until he had received commission from God.

From hence we learn, that God hath sole [Doctrine] authority to ordain the Officers and the Offices of his Church. No ministry is allowed and approved, but that which hath warrant and direction from God. We see this in the setting apart of the Tribe of *Levi* among all the rest to this office, *Levite. 8. verse 2. The Lord said unto Moses, Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, &c:* and *Deuter. 18, verse 5. The Lord thy God hath chosen him out of all thy Tribes, to minister in the Name of the Lord, him and his sons forever.* This truth is noted oftentimes in the New Testament. In the conference between *John the Baptist* and the Pharisees, when he said plainly, he was not that Christ, nor *Elias*, nor a Prophet, they replied, *If thou be neither Christ, nor Elias, nor of the Prophets, why baptizest thou?* This had been a weak argument, and an unlearned question, if *John* might have executed some other function thē that which was ordinary in the Church, and instituted of God.

Hence it is, that the Baptist, to establish his special calling and extraordinary function, alledgeth the word of God, *Mark 1, verse 1, 2.3. I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Isaiah.* So that both ordinary and extraordinary offices, have their allowance out of the high Court of heaven. When Christ asked the question concerning the baptism of *John*, whence it was? Whether from heaven, or of men? he meant thereby to confirm his ministry. In like manner, when he was teaching in the Temple, the chief Priests and Elders of the people came unto him, and said, *Math. 21, verse 23. By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?* declaring that no man ought without authority and commission from God to execute any function in the Church, so that no man should take this honor unto him, but he that is called of God, as *Aaron* was. We see then by the whole practice under the law, that the Ministers thereof both ordinary and extraordinary, had their calling from heaven, not from the earth; from God, not from man. And in the New Testament, the Apostles had their calling from Christ, *He chose them*, he sent them out, to him they gave an account. He appointed the seventy Disciples, and sent them two and two before his face into every City, *Luke 10, verse 1.* And when he led captivity captive, he gave Pastors and Teachers, for the work of the Ministry, *Eph. 4, verse 11.* When a new Apostle was to be chosen in the room of *Judas*, who purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out; *Peter* alledgeth unto the Church the word of God: It is written in the book of Psalms, *Let another take his charge* or office. Albeit then the callings of the Ministry be executed by men, and the Ministers that were to continue in the Church, were chosen by men like to themselves, yet the Office is of God: so that as it was not lawful to bring in any strange doctrine, so it was not lawful to teach the true doctrine under the names and titles of any other function then was instituted by God. He that hath set down the doctrine hath also set down the Teachers of the doctrine: he that hath appointed what shall be taught, hath also appointed who shall teach it and deliver it to his people.

This is taught unto us by sundry reasons. [Reason 1] First, observe with me the types that the scripture useth to express this point: I will name these three for example; the Ark, the Tabernacle, and the Temple. The Ark was a lively figure of the Church, all that were out of it were drowned in the waters. God leaveth nothing to man's wisdom or policy, though never so wise or righteous, but he appointeth to *Noah*, the matter and form, the length, and breadth, and height of the Ark, the wood and several sorts of it, Gen. 6, 14: and as GOD would have it built, so he appointeth the builder.

In the work of the Tabernacle, the Church is more expressly shown; God stirred up the spirits of those that should be the workmen, and left nothing to the will of *Moses*, but set down the pins, the snuffers, the boards, the bars, the hangings, and the vessels; all was finished according to the pattern that he had seen in the mount where he talked with God, Exod. 39, 42. Heb. 8, 5.

Likewise, touching the Temple, which came nearer to the times of Christ, *Solomon* was appointed to build an house to God, who did nothing in it, either touching the building of it, or the vessels in it, or the beauty of it, but according to the form and fashion that was enjoined him.

Again, the titles whereby the Ministers [Reason 2] are called, and the names whereby they are named, do enforce the acknowledgement of this truth; they are called sometimes the servants of God; sometimes the builders of his house; sometimes the sowers of his ground; sometimes the watchmen of his City; sometimes the Captains of his host; sometimes the Shepherds of his flock; and sometimes the Stewards of his family. Shall the servant attempt anything of his own head, and exercise dominion without the appointment, or contrary to the appointment of his master? It is noted to the commendation of *Moses*, that *he was faithful in all his house, as a servant to him that appointed him*, Heb. 3, 5. The Ministers are builders, and the people are God's building, 1 Corinth. 3, 9. It is in God therefore to make choice of the builders, and to lay the whole plot before them. They are the seedmen, Mat. 13, verse 3: the watchmen, Ezek. 3, verse 17: the Leaders, Heb. 13, verse 17: the Shepherds, Eph. 4, verse 11: the Stewards, Luke 12, verse 42. Shall the Ministers then, being Officers only under another to serve him, presume to do anything in their own name, and not acknowledge their subjection unto another?

Thirdly, the Ministries that are expressed [Reason 3] in the word, are all sufficient to bring y^e church to perfection, and to make it a complete body; as appeareth by the Apostle, where he serteth down the Officers that have received gifts for the instruction of the Church of Christ, Eph. 4, 11, 12, 13. *Christ gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, and for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.* If then these suffice for the bringing of the work to perfection, all other invented by men, are needless and superfluous, and may be cut off as superfluous branches.

Lastly, none can appoint new Officers or [Reason 4] strange Ministers in the Church, but he that can give them gifts to discharge the Callings that they undertake. For what is an office without strength and ability to execute it, but an idle name without the thing, as it were an empty box without the ointment? But no mā hath it in his power to bestow any gifts to set up a new office, neither ought he to set on work the gifts that God hath given, otherwise then he appointeth, as it were to till the earth with another man's heifer: & therefore it belongeth not to any man to institute any new Ministries, or to employ them that are warranted, contrary to the will of him y^t hath called thē: and consequently it is God only to whō it belongeth to choose such as shall minister before him, as the master appointeth his own servants that shall serve him in his house, and do his business.

[Use 1] Let us in the first place see what profitable uses arise from this doctrine. First of all, we learn that no man hath any authority or jurisdiction to pervert or euert that order that God hath set in his Church, whether it be by devising new Ministries, or by destroying & diminishing of the old. For as well do they err in building, that add such as are not warranted, as they that take away such as are established in the word. It is a true saying, worthy to be observed, delivered by Christ our Savior, *Every plant which mine heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up*, Matth. 15, 13.

It is the word of GOD that endureth forever; all man's devices are as the flower of the field that fadeth in a moment. There is nothing shall continue constant which standeth not by the strength of God. The traditions of men, howsoever they may seem to be firmly rooted, and strongly backed by the best devices and policies that flesh and blood can devise, yet they are as chaff which the wind driveth away, and they shall not be able to endure. It is truly spoken of *Gamaliel*, though it be evilly applied, Acts 5, 38. *Refraine from these men, and let them alone, for if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to naught*. The Church is the body of Christ, wherein nothing is too much, nothing too little, 1 Corinth. 12, 12. For *as the body is one, and hath many members*, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so is it in the mystical body of Christ whereof he is the head. In the natural body of man, if it should have three legs, or three hands, or diverse heads, it would be a monstrous body; it would not rejoice or take pleasure in that excrescence or abounding of proud flesh: Or if it had only one leg, or one eye, it could not delight in it, but would be grieved at the defect. So is it in the body of Christ, which is the Church. God hath made it a perfect body, he hath given it hands & eyes to guide it self into the way of peace, and to bring it unto the kingdom of glory. If we will add other eyes, or other hands, then God hath fitted: or tie them that it hath from employment to the good of the body, we do injury to the body of CHRIST, and make the Church disfigured and deformed. If we should see a man in our days, like to the giant mentioned in the second book of *Samuel*, whose stature was exceeding great, that should have *on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number*, we would think it uncomely and ill-favored, and no ornament unto the body. So is it with the Church, which ought to have her form and feature in every part. It is for beauty and comliness compared to a *company of horses in Pharaohs Chariots*, Cant. 1, verse 9, and to a *row of Jewels*. It is said to be *beautiful as Tirzah*, Cant. 6, verse 4. *and comely as Jerusalem*, that is *compact together*, Psalm 122, 3. It is said to look forth as the morning, *to be fair as the Moon, clear as the*

Sun, and terrible as an army with banners, Cant. 6, verse 10. If then we shall strippe the Church of any of her ornaments, if we shall wound it, and take away her veil from her, Cant. 5, verse 7. If we shall give her any new parts, or rob her of any of her true parts, we make her no longer beautiful and beloved, to say of it as Christ doth, *Thou art all fair my Love, there is no spot in thee*, Cant. 4, verse 7. We make it deformed as a body that is either maimed or monstrous.

This is the commendation of the Church, that her glory is absolute & perfect throughout all the parts of her, and that it hath no spot, no blemish, no imperfection. Such a glorious body is meet to be joined with so glorious an head as Christ is. When we suffer the Church to be all black and foul, full of wrinkles and withered deformities, how should it be united unto him?

Happy is that Church that hath all her parts, and none but her parts, like a body that retaineth the natural luster. But if it want any members that it ought to have, or have gotten an overplus that it ought not to have, they serve to no other use but to disfigure the body, and to disgrace the head. The true natural parts are much ashamed both of those wants, and of those superfluities: the which, the more they are, the farther is that Church from perfection.

Some Churches have somewhat too much that ought to be pared away: some Churches have too little, that ought to be restored: and some Churches are deformed both ways, they have too little one way, and too much another way: and yet (alas) they see it not, they know it not, they feel it not. Or if they do know it, they will not acknowledge it: or if they feel it, they will not reform it, and if they see it, they glory at it and rejoice in it. It were a strange thing to see anybody to be merry and make a triumph of it, because it wanteth an eye, or an hand, or a foot? But thus the case standeth with many Churches, they consist of confused bodies, one member encroching upon the office of another, they want their eyes to see withal, and yet they dream of perfection, and despise other that are more fair and forward in good things than themselves.

Nothing continueth long at one stay in this life: nothing is so well ordered, but Satan and his instruments seek to put it out of joint. We must pray to God to open our eyes to see our wants and wrinkles, and to labor earnestly, as well to restore that which is wanting, as to cut off that which is abounding.

Christ is the King of this Church: shall any presume in his kingdom to set up or pull down, to place or to displace, to plant or to destroy? This is God's office, it belongeth unto him only to do them: such therefore are no better than usurpers.

[Use 2] Secondly, this serveth to reprove the state of the *Jews*, as it stood in the days of Christ. It was time for him to come to reform and restore all things, they had many strange plants growing in the garden of God, which his right hand had never planted, that were as naughty and noisome roots to be pulled up; and as byles and blisters in the body. We heard before, that in the Church under the Law there was found no other Ecclesiastical ministries which were ordinary, then those orders of the high Priest, the inferior Priests, and the rest of the Levites, all which were appointed by the law of God. And if any were raised up

extraordinarily, the same had their calling confirmed from heaven, either by inward motion of the Spirit, or by working of miracles, or by evident testimonies of the mouth of God. But this government of the Church stood not long without change and alteration: for though the field were sown with good seed, yet the envious man sowed tares in it, so that in latter times there arose many sects and sorts of teachers among thē, who by schisms were ready to rent that body in sunder, departing from the simplicity & sincerity that was established by God's institution.

Some of the ancient, that have taken pains to discover to the world, the heresies that sprung up and grew apace where once they took rooting and footing, and so to give notice of them that they might be avoided, do testify, that seven several and principal sects arose among the Jews, whereof some are mentioned in the Scriptures, and other are not.

The first, was that of the Scribes, who were Interpreters of the Law, but withal (as if the law were too base a thing to stick only unto it) they delivered many traditions as from their Elders, not contained in the Law, and sought (taking counsel of human wisdom) to bring in a more exact kind of the worship of GOD, then Moses and the Prophets ever taught, consisting in many voluntary observations and customs devised by men, which they are wont to magnify & prefer before the Commandments of God, Mat. 15. Colossians 2. Thus would man become wiser thē GOD, who forbad *all adding or taking from his word*.

The second sect were the *Sadducees*, which were of the race of the *Samaritans*, and had their name of one *Sadoc* a Priest: these denied the resurrection of the body, and believed not that there is any Angel or spirit, Acts 23, and consequently overthrew all religion, as 1. Corinth. 15. For if there be no resurrection of the body, or immortality of the soul, then are we of all men the most miserable that profess Christ. In vain we believe in his Name, and in vain we fight with beasts at *Ephesus*, in vain we suffer crosses and afflictions for the Gospels sake; it were better for us to do as the most do, and to be wicked and ungodly, if there were no other life or reward in another world. *If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if CHRIST be not raised, our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins.*

The third sect were *Pharisees*; these were the strictest of all others, and most revered and best esteemed: these believed the rising again of the dead at the last day, and that there were both Angels and spirits (as the Scribes also did) and that all shall come unto judgment, to receive according to the things they do in this flesh, whether they be good or evil, Acts 23. When *Paul*, being accused by his enemies, perceiving that they were partly Pharisees, and partly Sadducees, he cried out in the Council, *Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead, I am called in question.* They much honored virginity and single life, they paid tithes of the smallest things they possessed, Luke 18, verse 12. They washed cups, platters, beds, and all kind of vessels that they used, they fasted twice every week, and differed in their habit from other men. Against these are many woes denounced by our Savior Christ in the Gospel, Math. 23, verse 23, for their hypocrisy, that delighted more in outward shows, then in the truth of the heart.

The fourth sect were the *Hemerobaptists*, or *Quotidian washers*, who thought, that no man could be saved, if he were not washed every day, that so he might be cleansed from the impurity and filthiness of sin. It is not the water in the whole sea, nor any fountain can wash away the sins and corruptions of our life, or of our heart. It hath no force in it, either by any natural power, or by any voluntary use. Christ is our Purgatory and purification: it is he that must wash us, or else we remain impure and unclean. He is the water of life, *whereby our consciences must be sprinkled*: he is the laver of regeneration, by whom we are borne again, and washed as with pure water. If he make us clean, then we are clean indeed. His passion and the shedding of his blood, must be communicated to us, and the sanctifying grace of the Spirit of God. And this is necessary unto salvation, not any outward washing of the body, which may cleanse the flesh, but cannot touch the soul. This is made available three ways. First, by faith, which serveth to apply Christ unto us and all his benefits. Secondly, by repentance from dead works, whereby we die unto sin, & rise again unto newness of life. Thirdly, by the use of the Sacraments, which require both the former points, to wit, faith and repentance.

The fifth sect were the *Essees*, who are not spoken off in the Gospel, because they retired and withdrew themselves from the society of men. They despised marriage, and lived without the company of women. They had no children of their own, but they adopted as their own, such as voluntarily came unto them, and betook themselves to their sect: in regard whereof they continued for many generations, and never failed. These were like the Anchorites that lived in the wilderness, and choosing a solitary life, sequestered themselves from the company of others. These *Essees* were as it were Popish Monks: and the Monks were a kind of Jewish *Essees*, and both of them chose a manner of living not allowed of God. For he never appointed that any of the godly should renounce & abjure marriage, which the Scripture pronounceth to be *honorable in all, and the bed undefiled*, Hebr. 13, 4. He never allowed them to hide themselves in caves or cloysters voluntarily, or to institute new rules and laws that he never commanded. Nay, Christ commandeth his Disciples *to observe whatsoever he commanded them*, Mat. 28, 20. The Scripture commendeth to us the works of charity, James 1, 27, and requireth of us to do good to all men, and forbiddeth to separate our selves from the communion of Saints, Heb. 10, 25. The more good we do to our brethren, the more we please God: but these choose a kind of life, wherein they can do little or no good to others. To whom it may be said, Who required this at your hands?

The sixth sect among the Jews, were the *Herodians* which are mentioned in the Scriptures, Math. 22, 16. Mar. 3, 6, and 12, 13. who were indeed of the Jewish religiō, but thought *Herod* to be Christ, because the Scepter was departed from *Judah*, and the Lawgiuer from between his feet, when *Herod* obtained the title and power of a King, and ruled over the people of God. But the propheties that went before of the Messiah, can in no sort agree to *Herod*, nor to any but to Christ Jesus. For the Messiah promised by the Prophets, must not be a forraigner, but one of the Jews; *for salvation is of the Jews*, John 4. He must be of the Tribe of *Judah*, and of the stock of *David*, Psal. 110, 1. He must be borne at *Bethlehem*, & borne of a virgin, &c: none of which can agree to this alien or counterfeit Christ. These then were such as depending upon

Herod had made a mixture of religion, partly from the Pagans, and partly from the Jews, as also the *Samaritans* had done long before.

Lastly, another sect among them were the *Nazarens*, who in all other things were Jews, but held it unlawful to kill any living thing, or to eat the flesh of anything wherein the spirit of life had been; they condemned the bloody sacrifices appointed in *Moses Law*, and therefore could not be induced to think that so good a man as *Moses* was the Author of those books, that bear that title, & pass as current under his name. These Jewish *Nazarens* are a kind of paganish *Pithagoreans*: and the paganish *Pithagoreans* are a kind of Jewish *Nazarens*. True it is, many are of opinion, that flesh was not eaten until the flood: but they were held as Sectaries, that held it afterward to be unlawful. Yea, whether it were ever forbidden from the fall to the flood, is altogether uncertain: & rather it may be thought, that GOD permitted the free use of clean beasts for meat, as well as for sacrifice, then that mankind was restrained from them the space of more then sixteen hundred years: for so long it was unto the flood. It is confessed, that it was lawful to offer them in Sacrifice, and then why not to eat them? Especially considering there were other kind of sacrifices wherein the sacrificer and the bringer of the sacrifice had his part, as well as the whole burnt offering which was all consumed? *Abel* is renowned in scripture, that *he offered the first fruit of his Sheep, and the fattest of the fold*: but it had been a small praise for him to offer the firstlings & the fatlings, if they were such as himself had no use off, if he were not accustomed to eat of them. It had been all one to him, to offer the fat or the lean, the first or the last, the weak or the strong, the male or the female. But herein no doubt he is commended, that he preferred the service of God before his own private use and benefit: which verifieth the saying of the Apostle, *Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?* And who can deny, but he had as fair a warrant to feed himself with the flesh, as to clothe himself with the wool of his sheep. And if it be lawful to kill them for apparel sake, how can we think it standeth with the will and counsel of God to have the flesh cast away, inasmuch as Christ in the Gospel commanded his Disciples to *gather up the broken meat, that nothing at all be lost?*

Again, if the eating of flesh had been forbidden so long, the earth would in that space have yielded such abundance of increase, that the cattle would have annoyed mankind, and consumed the fruits that should have nourished themselves. The Lord promiseth it as a mercy toward y^e *Israelites*, that he would not destroy the *Canaanites* before them, Deut. 7, 22. *Lest the beasts of the field should increase upon them.* For these helped to destroy them, and did eat the unclean, as swine and such like, both which by their multitudes might have been an annoyance unto the people of God. But there was greater fear of ouerspreading the earth with herds of cattle as with swarms of bees before the flood, if man had not been permitted to feed of them, and so to diminish the number of them.

Thirdly, we read in the Scripture some footsteps, albeit dark and obscure, whereby to trace out this truth, serving as marks to give us light in this matter: for the beasts were killed, and man was *clothed with their skins*, Gen. 3.21. Why then might he not as well eat them as kill them, and clothe himself with them? Besides, there was even from the beginning a difference *between clean and unclean* beasts, long before the flood, not only in regard of

sacrifice, but also in respect of common eating, as appeareth in the reviving of this law afterward, Levite. 11.47. *That there may be difference between the clean and unclean, and between the beast that may be eaten, and the beast that may not be eaten.* Whereby we see, why some of the beasts were said to be clean and some of them unclean, namely, because some might be eaten, and some might not be eaten.

Lastly, in the Book of Genesis, Chapter 9. Where the eating of flesh is most of all expressed and mentioned, there seemeth to be made no new grant in those particulars, which in that place are remembered, but only the old privileges renewed, as the fruit of multiplication, the dominion over the creatures, and the replenishing of the earth. Wherefore seeing all these were in use before, it is very probable, that *as the green herbs* were eaten before, so was the flesh of fish, and of the beasts, albeit there be not express mention of them made before: *Every moving thing that liveth, shall be meat for you, even as the green herb, have I given you all things.* These things being true, the former sect of the peevish and perverse Nazarees, are more strongly convinced and ouerthrown, forasmuch as they make that unlawful, which from the beginning was used and practiced as lawful. These were the sects among the Jews, which they invented unto themselves, when they departed from the purity and simplicity of the word of God. This we may read largely and learnedly handled else-where.

[Use 3] Thirdly, this reproveth the hierarchy of the Church of Rome, from the highest to the lowest, their Popes, their Cardinals, their Abbots, Monks, Friars, Priors, Nuns, Jesuits, and the rest of that race and rabble, which are as croaking frogs, or devouring locusts, that covered the face of the earth, and ascended out of the bottomeless pit: of which the word hath not spoken anything, but quite overturneth that whole generation. For to set the government of the whole Church upon one man's shoulder and to put all other under his feet, is a burden able to break his neck, and to crack his shoulders, which no man is able to bear. This man of sin they make the head of the Church, and the vicar of Christ. This is to thrust down Christ from his dignity, and to depose him from the headship of the Church, or else they make it a monster of two heads, or rather of many heads. For this is an high honor peculiar to Christ, to be *the head of the body, which is his Church*, Ephes. 1.22, 23. and 4.12.15. and 5.23. Coloss. 1.24. and 2.19. And that for these causes: First, by way of excellency. Secondly, by reason of fullness of grace. Thirdly, because from him floweth all graces of faith and other blessings, into his members. He it is, that gave some to be Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, and some Pastors and teachers, to build up the Church to the end of the world. These he thought to be sufficient without Popes, and Cardinals, that is, without such heads and shoulders. He called his Apostles, and made them all equal, none superior, none inferior to other: but commanded them indifferently, to preach the Gospel to every creature. The Commission which he gave unto them, was equal, in feeding, in binding, in loosing, in remitting, and retaining, none was before or after other: as Luke 9. He calling the twelve Apostles, gave them power over all devils, and to heal diseases, and sent them to preach the kingdom of God. They had all of them the keys of it, equally committed unto them. But they will object [Object.] the words of Christ to *Peter*, Matth. 16. *I say unto thee, that thou art Peter: and upon this Rock, I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind*

on earth, shall be bound in heaven: whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. [Answer.] These words we acknowledge to be the words of Christ, howbeit they are too weak a pillar to bear up the Papacy. First, let us speak of *Peter*, and then of the Pope, that claymeth to be his successor. For if *Peter* himself in those words, had no superiority or Monarchy bequeathed unto him, or sole regiment of the Church, then he could not leave it as a legacy to the Bishop of Rome, nor make him his heir of so fair a patrimony, that he might claim authority and supremacy from him. This is without all question, and both sides yield unto it, that *Peter* could give no more then he had himself, and the successor can have no more jurisdiction then he had, into whose room he succedeth.

Now, touching *Peter*, observe this as another rule, which also is received without controversy; that nothing in this place is given to *Peter*, but promised only, as appeareth by the form and phrase of speech that is used, and by the words uttered in the time to come. For Christ saith unto him, *I will build my Church upon this Rock, I will give unto thee the keys of heaven; the gates of hell shall not prevail: whatsoever thou shalt bind, whatsoever thou shalt loose:* so that the manner of speaking in the time to come, argueth that nothing is here really granted, but only graciously promised to be granted. He doth not say unto him, I do build my Church, I do give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but *I will build, I will give.* This is so plain, that our adversaries are necessarily constrained to yield unto it. So then I ask the question, and demand of them, where this is given, and how this promise is performed? Whatsoever Christ promiseth, his word is not yea and nay, he cannot lie, he will not fail his people. [Objection.] If any reply, it is no great matter where we read the promise to have been performed, seeing no doubt Christ meant to be as good as his word? I answer, It mattereth much to understand where it is, forasmuch as there can be no better way to make trial of the promise, then to know the gift.

To which purpose they are wont to allege two places, and we are content to stand to both of them. The one is in the Evangelist, Matthew, chap. 18.18. *Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* Where we see Christ speaketh to all the Apostles, and not to *Peter* alone, or to him more then to any other, but applieth the same power of binding and loosing, to everyone without exception or limitation. The other place is in the Gospel according to *John*, chap. 20. where Christ standing in the middes of them, saith unto them, *Receive ye the holy Ghost, whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, & whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.* In which words Christ also doth equally speak unto them all, *whose sins ye remit, whose sins ye retain:* not, whose sins, thou *Peter*, remittest or retainest: so likewise he saith, whatsoever ye (all) bind on earth, whatsoever ye (all) loose on earth; not whatsoever thou *Peter* alone bindest or loosest on earth. And this is acknowledged to be the power of the keys by the Romanists themselves. The use of keys is to open and shut: so then they that have their sins forgiven, and as it were the bands loosed, have the gates of heaven opened wide unto them: and contrariwise, the doors of heaven are barred fast as with lock and key, against them whose sins are retained: So that we may rightly conclude that seeing the power of binding and loosing, is the power of the keys, and given to all the Apostles, that it is not peculiarly and properly bestowed upon *Peter* alone, excluding and shutting out all the rest. If then here

were an headship promised and bestowed, we must have a body with twelve heads, according to the number of the twelve Apostles: for every Apostle must be an head, as every of them had authority to bind and loose, to remit and retain, that is, had the keys of the kingdom of heaven delivered unto them.

[Object.] But it will be further said, Christ speaketh by name to *Peter*, *I say unto thee, Thou art Peter*, To thee I will give the keys, &c. I answer, he saith indeed, he will give them unto him, but he saith not, I will give them to thee alone: he will bestow them upon him, but not upon him alone: for here is nothing either expressed or understood, to exclude the other Apostles. The Lord saith to *Joshua*, *I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee*: shall we conclude from hence, that he will leave other of the faithful, because he speaketh particularly unto him? will God renounce or disclaim others that fear his Name? No, in no wise: for albeit he uttered it unto him, yet it is to be stretched to all believers, and as true toward them all, as toward him, as appeareth evidently in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is one thing therefore to speak unto *Peter*, and another thing to speak unto him only.

But will some say, [Objection.] why doth not Christ name others, as well as him, if he understood others as well as him? for that might have put the matter out of all doubt, and stayed much contention that hath been about these words in the world. I answer, [Answer.] the words are not doubtful, but to those that purpose to make them gainful. They are plain to such as will understand. *Peter* spake in the name of the rest, as the mouth of the Apostles: Christ answereth to him also in the rest.

He had asked the question of them all, *Whom say ye, that I am?* All of them could not answer without confusion, and disorder; it was necessary that one should be the speaker, as it were the foreman of the Jury: and *Peter* in the behoove of others, as well as of himself, confessed that he was *the son of the Living God*. Shall we say, the rest did not believe as much? A like example we read in the second Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where, they being filled with the holy Ghost, and speaking with diverse languages, are derided of many, and accused to be drunken: *Peter* standing up with the eleven, did lift up his voice, and say unto the Jews, *Be it known unto you, and hearken unto my words: for these are not drunken, as ye suppose, &c.* Doth he plead only for himself? and not rather undertake the common cause of them all? yes: he is only the mouth of the rest, and speaketh for the rest. So in this place he made a free confession of his faith, and the faith of the Apostles, who believed no less than himself: and Christ, suiting and shaping his answer according to *Peters* confession, speaketh unto him, but in him understandeth all the rest.

Neither let us go about to gather more from them, then Christ scattered, or the Apostles collected. For they did not conceive, that Christ by those words before remembered gave any supremacy or superiority, any primacy, or principality of power to *Peter*; for then they would never afterward have contended which of them should be the greatest and the chiefest, forasmuch as this whole controversy had been decided and determined by the mouth of Christ. But long after this, *there arose a great strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest*. Therefore they acknowledge no more authority given to *Peter* by those keys of the kingdom of heaven, then to themselves. Neither doth Christ build his Church

upon *Peter*, nor call him the Rock: for it is built upon the Rock which *Peter* confessed, that is, upon the Son of the living God, so that *the Rock* (as the Apostle saith) is *Christ*. Hence it is, that *Matthew* distinguisheth between *Peter* and the Rock, *Peter* is one, and the Rock is another; otherwise *Christ* would have said, Thou art *Peter*, & upon this *Peter* I will build my Church, or upon thee will I build it: he speaketh not after this manner, but, *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock*; which must necessarily be referred to his former confession, the name and person being changed.

Again, there is an express place in the Apostle, which teacheth that *no man can lay any other foundation then hath been laid, which is Jesus Christ*. 1 Cor. 3.11. *Paul* inspired by the Spirit of *Christ* can find no other foundation of the Church, then *Jesus Christ*: they then y^t acknowledge, and receive, and teach any other, are moved by the spirit of *Satan*, and speak in the spirit of *Antichrist*. Furthermore, *Peter* was one of the master workmen, or master builders of the Church, as he is bidden to feed the flock of *Christ*, 1 Cor. 3. so that he cannot be called properly the foundation of the Church, and a builder of y^e Church; the foundation being one, and the builder (that layeth the foundation) another: for that were to confound the workman, and the work; the founder, and the foundation: the builder, and the building. The builder buildeth upon the foundation, and therefore it is against natural reason, that the Carpenter which layeth the foundation, should himself be the foundation, unless peradventure by a new kind of transubstantiation, never heard of before this time, as senseless as the old (if that may be called old which had no footing in the Church, for a thousand years after *Christ*) whereby they turn the laborer into his labor, and the builder of the house into the ground-work of the house.

But suppose all this had been spoken to *Peter* alone, that to him alone had been given the keys, that he alone should open and shut, bind and loose, remit, and retain at his own pleasure, and that the Church had been built upon him, as upon a sole foundation; which notwithstanding is all false, the rest being made equal with him: what is all this to the Bishop of Rome? who is neither *Peter*, nor any builder of the Church, but rather a destroyer and puller of it down. *Peter* is not now upon the earth, neither doth *Christ* speak any one word of his successors, for then he would have said, Upon thee and thy successors, I will build my Church; whereas *Christ* saith not, either upon him or upon his successors, but upon the Rock, which neither he nor they were. And if *Christ* had said, upon thee and thy successors I will build my Church, what had this been yet to the Bishoppe of Rome, more then to the Bishop of Constantinople, or of Alexandria, or of Antioch, where also *Peter* sate? what is there uttered, or what can there be gathered out of *Christ*'s words, sounding for him more then for them? So then as the Romanists crave of us to produce one place of Scripture to prove the continued succession of our Churches: so we ask of them one place of Scripture to prove this succession of *Peter*, or this deputation which they challenge to themselves. For as they claim to be his lawful heirs alone, and to receive from him a twofold sword which *Peter* himself did never handle, and a triple crown, such as *Peter* himself did never wear, who preached but Lorded it not; whereas they Lord it, & preach not: let them bring forth the Tables, and produce the Testament, let us see the writings, that we may examine the truth, and discuss his title; then which nothing can be demanded more just and equal. But mark a

little, even ye that have but half an ear, how partial Judges, and corrupt esteemers they are of things, that any way go against them! In the point of justification, when we teach agreeable to the Scriptures and to all antiquity, That we are justified by faith alone, they cry out that we abuse the people and falsify the word, forasmuch as the Scripture never saith by faith alone ye are justified. Whereas in the controversy of *Peters Primacy*, they deal deceitfully, and teach that the Church is built upon *Peter* alone, that the keys of the kingdom of heaven are given to *Peter* alone, that he is ordained to bind alone, and to loose alone; as if he might play fast and loose, at his pleasure, and send thousands of souls into hell, and yet no man to say unto him, sir why do you so? as the Canonists teach. They can never prove that either Christ spake or meant all these, or any of these to *Peter* alone: but in the question of justification by faith alone, though it be not found in so many words & syllables in the Scripture, yet the sense and substance of them is found, nothing being more usual in the Scripture than this, that we are justified not by works, but without works; not of the law, but without the law, Rom. 3.20. and 9.11. and 11.6. Gal. 2.16. Ephes. 2.8. 2 Tim. 1.9. Tit. 3.5. If then we be not justified but by faith, what is this, but by faith alone? So that we add no more to the meaning of *Paul*, then Christ added to the meaning of *Moses*, which was nothing at all; and yet where *Moses* saith, *Thou shalt serve the Lord*, Christ saith it is written, *Thou shalt serve him only*, Matth. 4.10. This then is one note of their partiality, that they may add and alter, correct, and corrupt at their pleasure: we may not explain and expound the true meaning of the Scripture, by the addition of one word. Another is this, when we say that these words of Christ in the Evangelist, *To thee I will give the keys*: and whatsoever thou bindest or loosest, are not to be restrained to *Peter* alone, but ought to be communicated to the rest of the Apostles, in whose name he answered: they cry out with a loud voice, and storm mightily at it, that we do extreme wrong and injury to *Peter* the Prince of the Apostles, whiles we stick not to extend and apply the same words to others, which are peculiarly spoken unto him; and thereupon they urge against us in the very words, *I say unto thee*, and *Thou art Peter*, and will not suffer us by any interpretatiō (though never so evident) to depart one jot from the syllables, but tie us fast, and keep us close to these particulars, and as it were pin us to *Peters* sleeve. Whereas by this limitation, they cease not to wound themselves more then us, even unto the heart, and yet do not feel the force of the stroke, that tendeth unto death. For they are not afraid to stretch these words in length, until they crack again: and albeit they be uttered in the singular number, yet they extend them to all the Bishops of Rome, from *Peter* who (they say) was the first, unto *Paulus Quintus*, that now sitteth in that Sea; as if Christ had said, I will build my Church upon thee *Peter*, and upon all the Popes of Rome after thee: and thus (as I have heard) they bear the simple people in hand that take up all things at the second hand, that Christ said, I will build my Church upon the Bishop of Rome.

What is now become of the words themselves which they pressed against us? did they not tell us that Christ said, *Thou art Peter*? have they forgotten what was spoken, *I say unto thee*? It is the fairest flower of the Popes garland, and as it were the soul and life of the Papacy, to enlarge the words as far as may be, and to understand them of the whole rabble of usurpers, and devils incarnate, that have ruled in these last days: and yet they cannot abide, or endure that we should extend them to all the Apostles. And if I should ask them, how the Bishops of

Rome can challenge a right to be *Peters* successors, forasmuch as they can never evidently prove by any testimony of holy Scripture, that *Peter* ever was at Rome, it would trouble their patience, and put them into a sweat, and yet do no good: forasmuch as the contrary rather appeareth, as I have shown else-where. Thus much of the partiality of these men, who like envious persons are content to pull out both their own eyes, that they may put out one of their fellows.

Hitherto we have spoken of the counterfeit head of the Church of Rome: the like might be said of the rest of that proud generation, who by sacrilege, and usurpation, are grown to be great princes and lords of the earth; and namely of the Cardinals, the Popes late creatures, who glory to be called the princes Electors, and think themselves to be equal to the greatest kings of the world, who not long since were content to be Parish Priests. He hath advanced them, and they advance him, and one claweth another. There is no testimony of antiquity, nor footstep found in the word of God, to justify or warrant that calling; and the greatest Rabbin's that are clothed in Scarlet, and have written in defense of it, do show themselves more then ridiculous, in their Apologies, wherein they do nothing but vent their own vanity, and publish their own shame, to the view of all men.

The like might be said of the swarms of Monks and Friars, and those pestilent Orders that trouble heaven and earth, Church and Common-wealth, true religion, and external peace and policy in bodies politic. Are these officers or offices ordained of God? are they any plants of his setting in y^e Church? have they received any authority from his mouth? Or is there any syllable in the Scripture to avouch these Orders? or are they not rather the Popes dear sons, and of his creation? Jesus Christ never knew them, they grew up *while his servants slept* that should have looked better to their false fingers. He never instituted this kind of life, he never commanded or counseled men to go into the wilderness, or to coope up themselves in a Monastery, or to vow single life, or to renounce their temporal possessions, or to betake themselves to voluntary poverty, thereby to follow a new rule of life, and to prefer the commandments of men before his Gospel, and to place the state of perfection, in the observation of certain vain traditions which they have undertaken.

The vows that they have taken upon them to observe, are these three, the vow of poverty, the vow of obedience, and the vow of chastity. First, touching poverty, or rather beggary, as it pleaseth them to boast off, which indeed they profess, more then practice, like to such as *Solomon* painteth out, Prov. 13.7. *There is that maketh himself poor, having great riches*: Christ never ordained such a kind of life, neither taught any to enter into it; for himself had bags and money to buy things necessary, as appeareth, John. 12.6. and 13.29. Nay he saith, It is a more blessed thing to give, then to receive, Acts 20.35. The like we might say of the Apostles, they never vowed such a life themselves, nor approved of it in others. For albeit they forsook all, that they might follow Christ, and preach the Gospel, yet they reserved and retained the propriety of them, it is the use of them, and the pursuing after them; that they gave over. When Christ on the Cross, said unto *John*. *Behold thy mother*, from that hour he took her home to his house, John. 19. but how could he take her to his own, if he had nothing his own? And when *Peter* after the Passion of Christ said, *I go to fishing*, John. 21. it is not likely he hired a

ship, and used another man's nets, but rather had them of his own, which he had left and forsaken for a season. Again, neither did Christ ever say to his Apostles, or the Apostles to any others, Vow ye poverty: but rather, *Give ye alms*, Luke. 11.41. *remember the poor*, Gal. 2.10. *distribute to the necessities of the Saints*, Rom. 12.13. *He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly*, for God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. 9.6, 7. *To do good, and to communicate, forget not*, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased, Heb. 13.16. These things they could not perform; but of their own substance, except they should give the Mammon of iniquity, taken away wrongfully from others. Hence it is, that the Scripture so often exhorteth to works of mercy, to fruits of love, and liberality toward the poor, that we should lend unto them, looking for nothing again, Luke 6. Ephes. 4. 2 Cor. 8. promising that if we give, it shall be given unto us. They therefore that vow poverty, cast away the blessing of God and such helps as might serve them to show their love and liberality unto their brethren.

Lastly, beggary is threatened as a punishment, and therefore not to be undertaken as a state of perfection. *David* complaining of his slanderous and malicious enemies, doth under the person of *Judas*, devote them, or proscribe them: *Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow: let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg, let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places*, Psal. 109.9.10. If then it be a state of perfection to be a beggar, it is also a state of perfection to have his posterity cut off, to have the extortioner catch all that he hath, to have none to extend mercy unto him, to have his name blotted out in the generation following, and his memory razed out of the earth: all which, and many other like, the Prophet joineth with begging of bread in that Psalm; which being heaped upon one man, would keep him from perfection. And if with begging of bread were always annexed this, that none should show favor unto them, nor extend any mercy to their fatherless children, it is like it would bring out of use, this beggarly occupation in a short time. The same Prophet noteth it as a special blessing of God upon his government, *I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread*, Psal. 37.25. It is the ordinance of God, that there should be no beggar in Israel, Deut. 15. The wise man prayeth against that estate, Prov. 30.8. that he might have *neither superfluous riches, nor extreme poverty*. Now then, either the state of perfection is not so glorious a thing as they boast off, or else the wise man prayeth against this perfection, which these hypocrites do embrace and voluntarily choose unto themselves.

Secondly, touching obedience to be performed to the superiors of their orders, they profess to follow his rules and iniunctions, as the Franciscans must follow the rule of Saint *Francis*, and so the rest bind themselves to observe the precepts of their governors; which sometimes are sottish & senseless, and sometimes impious and blasphemous, whereby they leave the commandments of God to execute traditions. The Apostle saith, *Ye are bought with a price, be not servants of men*, 1 Cor. 7.23. But such as vow Monkish obedience in things not prescribed in the word, make themselves servants and slaves of men.

Again, he reproveth them that said, *I am Paul's, I am Apollos, I am Cephas*, because they addicted themselves as bond servants to men: they then are much more to be condemned than are the slaves of *Dominic*, of *Francis* of *Ignatius*, and the rest? The Apostles themselves never made any such vow, nor taught it to others: they could not abide to have any disciples consecrated

unto them to bear their names. Christ our Savior showeth, that no man can serve two masters, because one only is our master. For when they command contrary things, we cannot cleave unto them both: but such things may superstitious superiors and governors command, nay have commanded. Besides, it is folly to lay a burden of human precepts upon other men's shoulders, when as we cannot perfectly observe and fulfill the commandments of God.

Thirdly, touching continency and single life, which they call chastity, they all praise it, but not many practice it. They think this vow to be very rightly and religiously observed, and that they have fulfilled it to the full, if they lead their life out of marriage, and renounce chaste wedlock: for when they speak of the vow of continency, they understand nothing else but single life. They suppose it and both openly and odiously defend it, to be a more heinous sin, for any of the Clergy to marry a wife, then to have the company of an harlot, and to embrace the bosom of a stranger. *Costerus* the Jesuit maintaineth (to whom others assent) that a Priest that is married, sinneth more grievously, then he that keepeth a concubine, or committeth fornication. The time was, when it was made a capital crime worthy of no less punishment then death, for a Clergy man to marry; but when the same Law was urged to be established against such also as entered into stews and brothel-houses, and kept harlots, it could not pass, but was nipped in the head, as the green herbs with a frost. Thus while they forswear and forbear to have wives of their own, to avoid fornication, they do not abstain from whoredom and uncleanness. Thus they prefer abominable whoredom, before honorable wedlock, strange flesh before the bed undefiled, and the laws of men, before the commandment of God. For no man can vow continency, but he to whom it is given from above, to be able to contain and continue a single life, as our Savior hath taught, Matth. 19.11, 12. *He that can take it, let him take it.* And he showeth, that all men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. So the Apostle to the same purpose saith, I wish all men were as myself, *But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that,* 1 Cor. 7.7 We have not in our own power the things that are God's: the gift of God is one thing, the power of man is another: again, to be willing is one thing, and to be able is another. The gifts of others are not in our power: but the gift of continency is the gift of another, to wit, of God. Therefore it is not in our power.

Again, the Scripture commandeth them to marry, that cannot abstain without burning, as 1 Cor. 7.2, 9. *They that cannot contain, let them marry.* Also he saith, *To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife; It is better to marry, then to burn.* And he writeth to *Timothy*, *I will that the younger women marry, &c. giving none occasion to the adversary, to speak reproachfully.* Nothing must be vowed against the commandment of the holy Ghost: but they which cannot contain, and yet vow continency, sin against the commandment of the holy Ghost. Therefore such persons ought not to vow continency.

Lastly, this sort of votaries is a new doctrine, or rather dotage. For neither under the Law of nature, nor under the Law of *Moses*, did ever any utter or minister such a vow of virginity, albeit we read many laws concerning vowing, Levite. 27. Numb. 6. and 30. Deut. 12. and 23. Yet nothing concerning any such matter. In the Law of nature, it was said, *Encrease, and*

multiply, Ge. 1.28. In the garden of Eden, even in the time of man's innocence, God the author of marriage, said, that cannot lie, *It is not good for man to be alone*, Ge. 2 18. Christ himself, though he lived most purely and perfectly, yet made no vow of continency, The like might be said of the Apostles. To conclude, it is the property of heretics, and *the very doctrine of devils to forbid marriage*, and for religions sake to dissolve it. Thus did *Marcion*, and the *Manichees*, and therefore are condemned.

[Use 4] Fourthly, we learn from hence a notable comfort, having assurance that our calling is of God. Let everyone look to the Lawfulness of his calling, and to the warrant of his work, and be able to approve it to his own conscience. The word of God is able to give us peace and comfort. We are sure, if we do our duties, to meet with many enemies and oppositions. How often did the people murmur against *Moses*? was not *Elijah* esteemed the troubler of Israel? was not *Jeremiah* borne as a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth? was it any better with Christ himself and his Apostles? The LORD of life was hated and persecuted and crucified, being delivered into the hands of sinners. The Apostles were *made a spectacle unto the world*, and to Angels, and to men, being sent forth as men appointed to death. It fareth not much better with the Ministers of the Gospel, who succeed them in the government of the Church; they are slandered and reviled, they are mocked and misused, and accounted as the off-scouring of all things. We shall never go through with the work of the Lord, that is in our hands, except we rest in God who hath called us to the Ministry. Thus did *David* comfort himself in the Lord, when they would have stoned him, 1 Sam. 30.4. The like we see in the Apostles, when they were threatened, and commanded to speak no more in the Name of Christ, they answered that they could not but speak the things which they had seen and heard, Acts 4.19.20. and professed that they ought to obey God, rather than man, Acts 5.29. The consideration of their calling, warranted unto them from God, put comfort into them, and gave them all boldness to set themselves against their enemies, and made them pray earnestly to Christ Jesus, the Lord of the harvest, and the great Shepherd of the sheep, to stand by them, and to be present with them in the business he had committed unto their charge. Wherefore, whensoever we see the truth of God oppugned, and our Ministry any way resisted, let us comfort our selves from hence, that we are not usurpers, or intruders into this office, but having our calling sealed up unto us, let us boldly proceed, and go forward to make known the truth of God to the consciences of all men. That which the Lord saith of the first borne in this place, that they are his, may be said of all the Ministers of the Gospel that succeed them, and therefore he will succor and sustain them.

If then we find this in our own souls, that we entered into this calling, not as thieves that come in at the window to steal, and to kill, and to destroy, John. 10.10. not as soldiers, that seek their prey and booty to enrich themselves; not as idle drones that seek to live at ease, and in pleasure: but to work in the Lord's vineyard, and to labor in his harvest, we shall be sure to have God on our side. He will not send us out, and then see us to take the foil: he will not put us into his service, and then lay us open, and leave us naked to the contempt of every base companion. Let us not shrink back as faint-hearted soldiers, when a cross word is cast out against us, which is but as a brutish thunderbolt, that can do no harm: but let us remember our calling, and who it is that hath set us in that function. When *Amos* was

slandered and reviled by the Priest of Beth-el, and had no less crime laid to his charge, then high treason, and conspiracy against the king, he did not sink under the burden, or cease to Prophecy anymore, but he confirmeth himself, and hardeneth his face, and remembereth who put him in that place: *The Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, Prophecy unto my people*, Amos 7. What greater comfort could Paul have against the oppositions and blasphemies of obstinate enemies that he found at Corinth, then the gracious words of the Lord? *Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee, to hurt thee: for I have much people in this City*, Acts, Chapter 18. verses 9.10.

So is it with us, and in this manner doth the Lord speak to every of us; if we be assured in our own conscience, that God hath ordained us and set us apart to our office, he chargeth us not to be afraid of the faces of men, he giveth us certain hope of his presence, and will suffer no man to do us hurt. On the other side, if our office be of men, and we entered into it also to enrich our selves, not to feed the people of God, we can have no comfort in the evil day, nor promise to our selves any hope or expectation of a blessed issue of our labors. We entered not in at the door, and the shepherd of the sheep will not acknowledge us to be his servants, but account us as hirelings that serve our selves and our own bellies, and care not for the sheep whether they sink or swim, whether they prosper or pine, whether they live or die.

[Use 5] Lastly, when God setteth up the Ministry of his word among us, as a light that shineth in dark places, and as a beacon upon an hill, it is the duty of the people to hearken reverently and attend diligently unto it, as unto the voice of Jesus Christ, and not as to the word of a mortal man. We must not consider the Ministers that speak unto us in the Name of the Lord as bare or mortal men, albeit they be so indeed, and subject to the same infirmities that we our selves are: but we must observe of them that they sustain another person then their own; they are God's messengers unto us, the Lord hath sent them *as his embassadours*, they come from the high court of heaven, to tell us the will of him that hath called them.

The want of this due consideration, that the Ministers sustain two persons, one private, to wit, their own: the other public, to wit, of God: is the main cause why the Ministry is so slenderly regarded, and so few are edified by it. When a Prince employeth a mean person in his service, and sendeth him to make known his will unto us, if we only respect his person as he is of himself, and consider not the person whose mouth he is, and in whose name he speaketh, we will never regard the message he bringeth as we ought. So it is in the matter of the Ministry

The king of heaven and earth determineth to call a Church, and gather a people unto himself; he sendeth out the Ministers as his messengers to make known his will unto us, and so putteth heavenly treasures of great price and value in earthen vessels: if we respect the men no otherwise then according to their names and persons, and not according as God hath vouchsafed to employ them, we can never receive the word with meekness and reverence, that is able to save our souls. Know it therefore, and learn it diligently, that a Minister is not only a man as all other are that bear the image of God, but more then a common man, even a Minister of the Gospel, and a messenger of Jesus Christ: so that whosoever receiveth them

and heareth their words, entertaineth Christ himself; and whosoever dispiseth them and their sayings, rejecteth Christ himself, and shall be arraigned as guilty of the contempt of his person. The Apostle writing to the Hebrews, showeth, that *God hath spoken by his own Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things*, Chapter 1.2. and thereupon concludeth, that *we ought to give the more earnest heed to the the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*

Thus duty hath many branches under it, which spread themselves far and near, but I will briefly touch some particulars.

First, we are to consider that in hearing the word, we have to do with God. If we exempt our selves from his presence, who hath promised that whensoever two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will be in the middes of them, we shall never profit as we ought, nor consider the work we go about. It is noted of *Cornelius*, Acts 10.23. That when *Peter* was come to tell him and to teach him what he ought to do, he said, *We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.* Thus ought it to be with us, when we are entered into the house of prayer, we must remember that we sit down in the presence of God; not of men only like unto our selves, but of him that is the searcher of the heart. Let this be our first rule: and except we do this, we do nothing in our hearing as we ought to do.

Secondly, we must empty our selves of all clogges and emcombrances that may hinder the saving hearing of the word. Let us *cast off every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us.* Let us disburden our selves of *the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things*, which if we bring with us ouerlaying our hearts, they will stop our ears, that the things cannot enter into us. Therefore the wise man giveth this counsel, Ecclesiastes, Chapter 5. verse 1. *Keep thy foot when thou enterest into the house of God, and be more ready to hear, then to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.*

Thirdly, set a price upon the word above all things of this life that may be most dear unto thee. Desire it *more then gold, yea, then much fine gold:* labor to find it *sweeter to thy taste then honey & the honey comb*, Psal. 19.10. Love it above all riches, and rejoyce in it more then they that find great spoils. Account the *merchandise of it better then the Merchandise of silver*, and the gain thereof more precious then Rubies, so that nothing that we highly esteem can be compared unto it. Prov. 3.13, 14. Magnifie it as a treasure of that value, that rather then thou wilt leave it, thou wilt be ready to forsake all that thou hast, Matth. 13. There is nothing that more slaketh and shaketh off our devout attention, then to account the precious word of God vile and base in our eyes, according to the corrupt custom of many in our days, that prefer husks fit to feed swine, before the fat of wheat that is sent to nourish the sons of God.

Fourthly, we must know that there is great hope of those that refuse not the means, but submit themselves unto it: but none at all of those that utterly refuse it. What God may work extraordinarily, who sometimes feedeth by miracle from heaven, as he did the Israelites, and *Elijah* in the wilderness, we cannot affirm, and they that wait upon such vanities, forsake their own mercy. But of this point, we have spoken already.

Lastly, it is our duty, to lay up the Word in our hearts, that it may not be taken from us: but that we may practice it, and profit by it. For all our hearing must aim at profiting. We must desire the sincere milk of the Word, *that we may grow thereby*. Now, it can never take root, except we hear it *with an honest and good heart*. If we have it only running in our mouths, or swimming in our brains, it is *as the grass upon the house top, which withereth afore it groweth up, wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom*. Let us therefore first of all, give our hearts unto God, pray him to reform them, and to open them, that so we may attend to those things that are delivered unto us. As for those that have their mouths open, but their hearts empty of the word, they are as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; they may please themselves, and deceive others for a time, but their hypocrisy shall be uncased, their deceitful dealing manifested, and themselves proved to be no better then vessels that make a noise, but are without all substance in them.

[Verse 11, 12. *And I, behold, I have taken the Levites, &c.*] Hitherto we have spoken of the commandment of God, directed unto *Moses*, that he should present the Levites before *Aaron* the Priest, that they may minister unto him: now we are to proceed to the reason of the commandment, where we see the cause rendered why they should be given unto him, because even unto this time the first borne had executed the Priests office, being consecrated unto God, and preserved out of the common destruction, when the first borne in Egypt were destroyed. He putteth them in mind of God's mercy toward them, who might justly have destroyed them as well as the Egyptians, if it had pleased him. When we see a common desolation or destruction, and our selves as a remnant taken out of the common calamity, it ought to make us thankful unto God, and to acknowledge that we hold our life of him in chief.

Thus did *Noah* stand affected, when he offered sacrifice to God, after he was come out of the Ark, and was preserved with his family from the flood of waters. Thus doth *Daniel* teach *Belshazzar* the king to *humble his heart*, knowing the heavy judgment that God brought upon his father, and took his glory from him. We must profit by the examples of God's works, both of his mercy and judgment upon others, We learn from hence, [Doctrine] that the first borne were from the beginning the Lord's, and consecrated to serve him, and to instruct others. This dignity and preeminence of the first borne began among the sons of *Adam*, and continued in his posterity, as well before, as after the general destruction of the old world: the eldest ever succeeding in the kingly and Priestly office, unless for some open impiety, or other secret cause best known unto God, and unknown unto the Church, he were rejected; so that there was evermore some excellency, until that Israel came out of Egypt, and the Church became national.

Hence it is, that God saith to *Cain*, the elder son of *Adam*, *If thou do well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door: and unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him*, Gen. 4.7. To this purpose *Jacob* speaketh to *Reuben*, *Thou art my first borne, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power*. Thus he was by privilege of birthright, and thus was every son by creation *that first opened the matrice*. Whereby we see, that in the family of the faithful, from the first man that God

created, until *Aaron* was sanctified to be a Priest unto God instead of the first borne, the eldest of the family ordinarily had both the kingly and Priestly direction of the rest of his brethren. As we saw this before in the house of *Adam*, so it appeareth also afterward. For when *Cain* the eldest son of *Adam*, to whom the dignity of the first borne did pertain, was for his iniquity rejected from y^t honor, and excommunicated from the Church, which was a spiritual kind of banishment; God raised up *Seth*, who being taught by his father, touching the fall of man, touching the punishments of sin, and the promised Savior, assisted him while he lived in guiding his family, and succeeded him after his death in the government of the Church of God, which was as a little flock in comparison of the race of *Caines* posterity, that married many wives, and increased in great multitudes. In like sort *Enoch* succeeded *Seth*, and dying, left that honor to *Kenan: Kenan to Mahalaleel, &c.* These were *preachers of righteousness* and repentance, & some of them endued with the spirit of *Prophecy*, to convince that wicked generation.

These Preachers of God being contemned and despised in the world, (such entertainment have his servants ever found) the flood came and swept them away. *Noah* governed as a father the Church of God before and after the Flood, and left the same dignity and office to *Shem* his second son (*Japheth* his eldest son being put behind for secret causes known unto God) even as his father had committed it unto him. Thus we might proceed and go forward to show in succeeding ages of the Church, how God continued this favor to the first borne, and thereby set as it were a crown of honor upon their head. Hence it is, that at the giving of the Law they are called Priests, *Exod. 19.24. Thou shalt come up, thou and Aaron with thee: but let not the Priests and the people break through, to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them.* At this time *Aaron* and his sons were not consecrated to the office of the Priesthood, neither was the tribe of *Levi* chosen to come near to the Lord: and therefore these Priests could be no other but the first borne that were sanctified unto the Lord, which is the point that now we deal withal.

[Reason 1] This will farther appear unto us, if we consider what their dignity was, and wherein it consisted, who excelled from the beginning in three things.

First, he was Lord over his brethren, according to that of *Isaac* when he blessed *Jacob* the younger instead of the elder, and thereby preferred him to the dignity of the first borne, *Gen. 27.29. Be Lord over thy brethren, and let thy mothers children bow down unto thee.* The like we see in the book of the *Chronicles*, *Chap. 21.3. touching the sons of Jehoshaphat, Their father gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram, because he was the first borne.*

Secondly, he had a double portion, *Deut. 21.17.* that is, two parts of all that the father had, whereas the rest were contented with a single portion. And this was so firmly established and decreed, that no man upon private affection, ought to be disinherited: and the reason is rendered, *for he is the beginning of his strength, and therefore the right of the first borne is his.*

Thirdly, he was holy unto God, and was the Priest of the family under his father, whom for the most part he used as an assistant unto him, in the managing of all the affairs thereof. All

this appeareth plainly in the dissoluteness that fell out among the sons of *Jacob*, which was sufficient to have wrought the dissolution and desolation of that family: when *Reuben* sinned against his father, and defiled his bed by horrible incest, he was disinherited, and his excellency was divided among his brethren, *Judah* gate the scepter, *Levi* had the Priesthood, and *Joseph* obtained the double portion, 2 Chronicles, Chapter 5. verses 1, 2.

Again, as nothing is more natural, then [Reason 2] that the father instruct and direct his children, and set them forward in the ways of godliness and well doing: so nothing is more seemly among brethren, then that the elder should help the younger, the stronger assist the weaker, and the richer help the poorer. Now, none could be fitter to assist the father in the Kingly and Priestly office while he lived, and to second him in them both when he died, then the first borne, who is said to be *the beginning of his strength, the excellency of dignity and of power*, Genesis Chapter 49. verse 3. Seeing then, it is just, and right, and profitable, it ought to be confessed and acknowledged of us.

Lastly, hereunto in process of time was [Reason 3] added another reason, and a new necessity of lifting up their heads, when GOD destroyed all the first borne in the land of Egypt, so that *there was no house wherein there was not one dead*. Now, inasmuch as the first borne of Israel escaped out of this common calamity, as it were a brand taken out of the fire, God saith unto *Moses, Sanctify unto me all the first borne, whatsoever openeth the womb, among the children of Israel, &c. it is mine*, Exodus, Chapter 13. verse 1. From hence we may conclude that all the first borne were consecrated unto GOD, and were to be employed in his service.

This is indeed a type and figure, and hath [Use 1] not place among us: howbeit, it is written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come, and offereth many good and profitable instructions for our edification. This teacheth who are chiefly bound to serve the Lord. The greater our gifts are, the fitter we are for God, and none is to disdain to employ themselves, and all that is in them, to his service.

To this purpose cometh the saying of the wise man, Proverbs, Chapter 3. verse 9. *Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase*. Such as have received the greatest measure of grace, are bound to yield unto him the greatest honor, and to bring forth the greatest obedience, as the field that hath most cost bestowed upon it, giveth the greatest increase. Such as have received five talents, should gain with them other five.

If he have made us as the first borne, & preferred us before many other, and doubled his Spirit upon us, as it were a double portion, let not us content our selves in any wise, to give him a simple and single gift or recompense of all his labors bestowed upon us.

This reproveth those that scorn the Ministry as base, and reject the calling it self as needless, and superfluous in their eyes; that account it too contemptible to employ the best and chiefest of their children in it. In former times the first borne were teachers of the families, and Ministers of the Church, until God set apart the tribe of *Levi*, to serve at the altar & in the temple. The best things that we have are not too good for God, even to give them unto him all the days of their life. For whom are the best fittest, but for him that is best? He

challenged the eldest to serve him, the rest he permitted to the father, to be employed as he saw good.

First, God will be served, as it is great reason he should be, and afterward he giveth us leave to serve our selves. *Jesse* served the king with *his eldest son* in the wars, and kept his youngest at home, and bestowed him about his own business. If any think his first borne to be too good to minister before the Lord, he honoreth them above the Lord. Doth any think himself too good or too great a man to be sent as an embassadour from the Prince to foreign estates? or rather do not men sue for such high places, and think themselves happy when they attain unto them? How cometh it then to pass, that men of countenance are ashamed to see their children to be the embassadours of the king of kings, and to be employed in the greatest service, to make peace between God and man, and to save souls from death and destruction? If a man be blessed with many children, if any be more toward in wisdom, in learning in judgment, in stayednesse, and in gifts, he were fittest for the Lord. But the Ministry of the word in our days, through the abundance of sin and of iniquity getting the upper hand, is grown into disgrace and contempt, because men cannot abide to be reproved: whereas to them that are sanctified and shall be saved, *it is the power of God, and the wisdom of God*. Such are ready to say with the Apostle, Rom. 10.15 *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things?* *Nebuchadnezzar* chose men to wait on him among the Jews, such as were of the kings stock, comely, witty, and every way well qualified both for lineaments of body, and ornaments of mind; he required that the chiefest should attend upon him, he would not have the refuse to stand in the kings court. Shall they then that are to stand up in the Name of the LORD, be of the basest and of the off-scouring of the people? If a man have many sons (such is the contempt of the Ministry) the eldest he must be the heir: if any be more beautiful or personable then the rest, he must be a Courtier: if any be disfigured or uncomely, he is set apart (if he list) to the Ministry.

This is not to honor God with our first fruits, this is to serve him with the blind and the lame, and to give unto him such as are not fit for anything else. But of this we shall have better occasion to speak farther afterward.

Secondly, this sanctifying unto God the best thing that we have, serveth to reprove such as never offer unto God the first and flourishing part of their age, neither sanctify unto him their young years: but as if they were too good for him, they will serve sin and Satan first, and afterward when they can follow them no longer, then they will think of sadder matters. Hence it is that young men for the most part do think themselves exempted and privileged by their age, to commit sin with greediness, and without controlment, and that they are free to do what they list, to fetch their vagaries, and to run into all excess at their own pleasure. But the holy Ghost is so far from giving liberty unto them, that he provoketh them in good time to dispose of their life, and even then especially when their affections begin to boil in them, and endeavoreth to pull them in as it were with the cords of discipline, and the Law of God.

Solomon is so far from allowing this reason, to warrant the looseness of young men, that is, to say, We are yet as youths, and therefore we may be let alone a while, we will be wiser

hereafter; that rather with a sharp, but yet just taunting & laughing it to scorn, he speaketh to this age, *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the light of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment.* As if he had said, If thou wilt needs go forward, and wilt not be reclaimed, be it so, take thy pleasure, pass on thy days in thy delights, follow the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life, glut thyself with chambring and wantonness, and take thy fill of dalliance: yet know that at the last thou shalt be called unto judgment, & give account for those things which thou hast committed. The children that mocked the Prophet, and reproached him for his infirmity, were *torn in pieces with Bears that came out of the wood,* 2 King. 2.24.

Therefore doth Solomon exhort them in another place, *to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.* God hath honored them as his first borne, and given many gifts unto them, as learning, wit, knowledge, beauty, strength, health, quicknesse, and readiness, to do all things, which are not so common to every age; let them not abuse them, but honor him with them, that gave them. If you spend your first days loosely, and licentiously, and offer your old age to the LORD, when you can follow the pleasures of sin no longer, that endure for a season, he will not accept such a service and sacrifice at your hands. If you would have God to be your God in your old age, serve him in your youth, lest as you regarded not to know him in your youth, so he give you over, and know you not in your elder years. For if an earthly man have the wisdom and discretion, not to admit, and receive into his service, a doting and decrepid man, such a one as can stand him in no stead, but will readily answer him, *Go thy ways, thou art no servant for me,* let him that had the use of thy younger days, take that fruit of thy old age, that thou canst yield unto him: Shall not the Lord, the most wise God reject and cast us off in age, if we pass the flower of our youth, in serving sin, Satan, and the world? What assurance can we have, to be accepted when and at what time we list? may he not justly say unto us, *Thou hast all thy life time served mine enemies, of whom I said unto thee, Serve them not; and now at last, when thou canst serve them no longer, comest thou unto me? How often have I called thee and offered to be a master unto thee, but thou refusedst to become my servant? now it is just with me to stoppe mine ears at thy cry, Go thy ways: Let him that had thy youth, take thine age also: let him that had the beginning take also the ending.* If we spend our strength in vanity, and our days in folly, thus will the Lord answer us: *God is the creator of the young man, it is he that hath made him, and not he himself: he is subject to death in his youth, as well as the old man in his age: the glass that is newly made, is as brittle as the old: the Lamb goeth to the shambles, as soon as the sheep. And the young man shall be brought to judgment for his tricks of youth: for God shall bring every work to judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil,* Eccle. 12.14.

Wherefore to conclude, let young and old honor the Lord with the first fruits of their increase, & give the best things that they possess: yea, the more we have, the more he requireth of us. Such as are rich, and have this worlds good, must not be as barren trees, and unfruitful in good works. Whatsoever we enjoy, we have received it of his goodness, it is as a

stream issuing from his fountain, and therefore we must return the glory to him and communicate the benefit thereof unto our brethren.

[Use 2] Secondly, another spiritual application of this type and figure of the first borne is, that it calleth to our remembrance what we are both by nature and by grace. By nature, that we are all the children of wrath and destruction, without the mercy of God freeing & delivering us from the sentence of death gone out against us; Even as the children of Israel had been all the children of death, as well as the first borne of Egypt, had not God in great mercy and compassion spared them. For albeit he delivered Goshen where the Israelites were, from the plagues that wasted and wearied the Egyptians: was this, think we, because Israel deserved to be spared? or because God could not in justice comence any action against them? No, they had learned too much the manners of Egypt▪ they believed not the word of the Lord for their deliverance, but murmured against the Ministers of God, sent unto them, albeit they had seen his wonders and signs that were wrought among them. Their first borne therefore had been in no better case then the first borne of Egypt, had not God been merciful unto them and shown pity upon them. So then we are all put in mind of our natural corruption by sin derived from *Adam*, in regard of which corruption which is spread as a foul and filthy leprosy over all the powers of the soul and parts of the body, we are guilty both of temporal, and eternal death, unless we have redemption by Christ the promised Savior of the world. We are by nature wretched and miserable sinners, borne as it were out of due time, and deserve *the wages of sin*, that is, death, Rom 6.20. We our selves were in times past, unwise, disobedient, deceived, serving diverse lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. There are many branches of this corruption and sundry points necessary to be known of us concerning the same. First, we must acknowledge no difference between our selves and others. *Are we better*, or more excellent then they? No, in no wise. We all lie under sin, and have the seeds thereof within us. Rom. 3.9. and are ready to fall into all the most horrible sins can be named, if we be not stayed by the hand of God. Secondly, we must look into the Law of God, as in a glass, that we may see our defects and deformities. We are blind, and cannot see: the Law is a true glass, and will show us our face truly: it telleth what is amiss, and flattereth no man, *for by the Law cometh the knowledge of sin*, Rom. 3.20. There cannot be the least spot, but it will be made to appear: so that he which is ignorant of y^e Law, knoweth not himself. Thirdly, we must confess the love of God to be great toward us, in freeing of us from the bondage of sin, and setting us at liberty to be the servants of righteousness.

Thus doth the Apostle, Rom. 7.24, 25. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord, &c.* Fourthly¹ we must learn the vileness and greatness of our fall, which *Paul* calleth *the disobedience of one man*, containing all sins of what kind and nature soever, which may be considered in those few particulars.

First, he regarded not the promise of God, whereby he was willed to hope for everlasting life, so long as he continued to eat y^e tree of life.

Secondly, he despiseth the commandment of God, restraining him from the forbidden fruit, and maketh no account of it.

Thirdly, he breaketh out into horrible pride, and ambition, whereby he would be equal unto God, and seek an estate higher then that wherein he had set him. He was not content with his present condition, albeit it were most excellent.

Fourthly, he showeth an unfaithful heart to depart away from the living God his creator, so that he did not believe or not regard the threatening of God, which was, that when he sinned, he should die: he becometh the most unkind and unthankfull wretch that could be, not considering what infinite benefits he had received for himself and his posterity, and that he was to loose them, and leave them in such sort, that they departed both from himself, and from his posterity.

Lastly, he brake out into foul and fearful Apostasy, from God to the devil, from his maker to the tempter, giving more credit to him that charged God with lying, with envy, and with malice, then to the Almighty, of whose goodness he had so great experience. Thus he preferred the father of lies, before the God of all truth. So that in the first sin of man, we may discern many sins, if it be divided into his particular parts, and considered severally as it ought to be of us.

The fifth branch is, that we must all of us take notice of the fruits and effects of the former disobedience, whereby the image of GOD, after which we were created at the first, is blotted out, only some few remnants remaining of it; so that instead of wisdom, power, truth, goodness, holiness, and righteousness, wherewith our first parents were clothed, as with garments more precious then the carpets of Egypt, and all the ornaments of gold and silver, wherein the Nobles of the earth are attyred, he punished them with the contrary evils, and pulling these from them and stripping them stark naked, they appeared most deformed, through blindness, weakness, falsehood, foolishness, profaneness, and unrighteousness, which swarmed in them, and all their children. A cursed root, cursed fruit: a wretched cause, a woeful effect. Hence it is, that we are prone to fall into all evil, and not able to think one good thought, 1 Cor. 2.14. 2 Cor. 3.5. we are borne dead in sins and trespasses, Ephe. 2.1. Ier. 17.19. Job 15.15. And yet this is not all our misery; but it brought in as by a violent wind, or a raging flood, an heap of sicknesses, diseases, aches, and a train of ten thousand calamities that attend upon our whole life, until they bring us into the chambers of death.

Lastly, when we have taken good notice of the former miseries and bondage, under which we lie, and thought well upon them with due meditation, they will drive us out of the love of our selves, and make us labor to be regenerated *and borne again by the spirit of God*: we must seek to repair the decayed image of God, & to be renewed in our minds, that we may be no longer the servants of sin, but of righteousness. Our old man must be crucified, *that the body of sin may be destroyed*. Let it not therefore reign in our mortal body, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof: neither let us yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness, but yield our selves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

Again, as the figure of the first borne expresseth the natural condition of all mankind, deserving to be destroyed, so it setteth forth the prerogative of the faithful, and showeth

what we are by grace. For as Christ being the first borne among many brethren, Rom. 8.29. is the Priest of his Church, because he offered up himself to his Father, as a perfect sacrifice to satisfy his wrath for our sins, and maketh intercession for us: and the king of his Church, because he hath authority in heaven & in earth: so *he maketh us kings and Priests unto God his Father*, Revel. 1.6. and 5.10. Priests, that we should make known his will, call upon his Name in spirit and truth, and offer up our selves to him a spiritual sacrifice: and kings that we should conquer sin, Satan, and the world, through faith in Christ; for *this is our victory, even our faith*, that overcometh all these enemies. We have also the adoption of sons, and we are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that we should show forth the praises of him, who hath called us out of darkness, into his marvelous light, 1 Pet. 2.9.

Thirdly, this layeth before us the dignity [Use 3] of Christ Jesus our Savior, touching whom we learn, that he is in deed and in truth, the first borne of God, by whom we are delivered from the wrath of God, and redeemed from hell and destruction, forasmuch as he was consecrate unto God, and made a sacrifice of atonement for us, who by sin were become his enemies, as we noted before. Now he is the first borne in these four respects: first, according to his divine nature, being begotten of the Father before all creatures, after an unspeakable manner, being of the same substance with him, and is therefore called *the first borne of every creature*, Coloss. 1. verse 15. Rom. 8. verse 29. He is the eternal son of God, being borne of him before any creature was created. Whereby we learn against the blasphemous opinion of the Arians, that he is true GOD, not a made or a created God, but being God from all eternity.

Secondly, according to his human nature, even as he took upon him our flesh, and was borne of the virgins *Mary*, so he was also *her first borne*, Matthew 1. verse 25. Luke 2. verse 15. Not that the blessed Virgin had other after him, but because she had none before him. For he is in Scripture called the first borne, that first openeth the matrice, whether other be borne after or not.

Thirdly, he is called by this title, because he was the first y^t arose out of the grave, & made a way for us unto everlasting life, because it was impossible that he should be holden of the sorrows of death. And therefore he is said by the Apostle to be before all things, *the beginning, and the first borne from the dead*, Col. 1, 18. This is a notable comfort unto us, that forasmuch as our elder Brother Christ Jesus arose from the dead to the everlasting possession of eternal glory in heaven: it followeth, that we also shall rise again, and not forever lie in the grave; and then be partakers with him, of that blessed inheritance prepared for us from the beginning of the world. He is gone before to prepare us a place, and when he cometh again, we shall enter into that blessed estate and condition, everyone according to the measure of the grace and gift of Christ. For as Christ *was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows*, so he was rewarded with the possession of glory above his brethren, and highly exalted far above all principalities and powers, who ascended above all heavens, *that he might fill all things*, Eph. 4, 10. Neither let any object, that some did rise again before him, for they arose again to this present life, and died again: but he arose again to die no more, death had no more dominion over him: but to take possession of the kingdom of

heaven; and therefore it followeth in the next words, *that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

Lastly, as the first borne was set apart, and then sacrificed unto GOD, I mean the first borne among the beasts that were killed: so Christ *was separated from sinners*, Heb. 7, 26. as the unspotted Lamb of God, holy, and acceptable; and then made a perfect oblation of himself, not for himself, but for the sins of his people, Heb. 7, 27. He must be holy both in his conception and life, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-Priest, and make reconciliation for us. For he that must be a Mediator between God and us, and restore us into his favor, must of necessity be himself in the favor of God, and never have offended him. Neither could he have access to the Throne of God, who is most holy, to make intercession for us, unless he had been holy, harmless, undefiled, and made higher then the heavens.

Hence also we have unspeakable comfort, we are assured that the wrath of God is pacified, the curse of the Law is cancelled, and all our sins are purged and done away: Who is it now that *shall be able to lay anything to our charge*, or to the charge of any of the elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for us. There is nothing then that shall be able to separate us from this love of Christ, neither tribulation, nor distress, neither persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword, neither life, nor death; forasmuch as in all these we are more then Conquerors, through him that loved us.

Lastly, seeing God separated the first borne [Use 4] or eldest of the family from the rest of his brethren, as also he did the Levites from the other Tribes to serve him, it teacheth, that all the faithful ought to be separated from the company of wicked men, and to abhor them as a sink of all filthiness and annoyance, that we may more freely and faithfully serve the Lord: as the Prophet saith, Psal. 119. *Away from me ye wicked, and I will keep the Commandments of my God.* Thus we see the Church of God to be described to be an holy people elected out of the rest of the world, Numb. 23.9. *They shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the Nations.* God revealeth his will to them, he governeth them, he protecteth them, he careth and provideth for them, no less then parents for their first borne. Hence it is, that he willeth Moses to go to *Pharaoh*, and to say unto him, *Israel is my son, even my first borne: let him go that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, Behold, I will slay thy son, even thy first borne*, Exod. 4. The like we read in the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, chap. 31, 9. *I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first borne.* He hath a greater care of them then of all other nations and people. The elect are the first borne of God, because they are most dear unto him, and chosen before the foundation of the world. For even as men among all their sons, do most of all delight in their first begotten, as in the beginning of their strength, rejoicing most of all in the good that befalleth them, and greeuing most in the evil that cometh unto them, Psal. 89, 27. Zach. 12, 11. So doth God express his special love toward us, not only by calling us his sons, but by calling us his first borne sons. Among the sons of men it was always an honor and privilege to be the first borne, it is but one among many can attain unto it; it is not common to everyone. But the sons of God are all of them as his first borne, they are dear unto him, as they that are dearest. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that

we should be called the first borne sons of God! therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. So sometimes the faithful are called *the first fruits of his creatures*, because as the first fruits in the time of the Law were a small portion gathered out of the rest, and offered to God: in like manner are the people of God as an holy kind of offering, taken out of the residue of men, few in number but precious in account with God, I am. 1, 18. Thus then we must know that we are consecrated unto God to belong unto him, and to serve him: as for
〈1 page duplicate〉 〈1 page duplicate〉 the company of the wicked, they are forbidden to us as the touching or tasting of the forbidden fruit was to our first parents, as bringing great danger and destruction unto our souls. The wise man saith, *Be not among wine-bibbers, among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.* Hereunto cometh the direction of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 5, 11. *I have written unto you, not to keep company: if any that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolatour, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one, no, not to eat.* And in the next Epistle he exhorteth to come out from among them, and to touch no unclean thing, and then GOD will receive them, be a Father unto them, and they shall be his sons and daughters, 2 Cor. 6, 17. Likewise he chargeth the *Thessalonians*, and commandeth them in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that they *withdraw themselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of them*, 2 Thess. 3, 6. All flesh resort to their like: and every man will keep company with such as he is himself. For how can the lamb agree with the wolf? Or how can two walk together, except they be agreed? The heathen Philosopher, sequestering himself to a strict kind of life, confesseth, that he could never bring home again those manners that he carried abroad with him: but what he had well ordered in his life, was easily disturbed and disordered; and those vices that he had put to flight, quickly returned upon him. Even as it befallerth a sick person, that hath kept long within doors, being recovered of some weakness or sickness, cannot without danger walk abroad in the open air, but straightway he is cast down again: so it happeneth unto us, whose hearts have begun to shake off the sicknesses of sins and vices, the conversation of the wicked multitude is a great enemy like the infectious air unto us: every mate being ready to commend unto us, and to thrust upon us, both by word and practice, some noisome vice or other, some to bring us to drunkenness: some to uncleanness: some to riotousnesse: some to gamings: and so to infect us therewith at unawares. Whereby it cometh to pass, that we sildome go unto them, or keep company with them, or continue long with them, but we learn some evil, or vnlearne some good, and so return from them more profane and polluted then before. This duty hath under it many branches.

First, it standeth us upon, to make choice of our company that we frequent, as a man that chooseth out his ground before he build: and not to be more careful what we eat or drink, then among whom we eat or drink. Vnwholesome meats may pester or poison the body, but ungodly company many times destroyeth the soul. We see how careful men are about their meats and drinks, what they eat, and what they drink, every little thing doth trouble and disquiet them: but in matters of far greater danger, as blind men we swallow many a fly, and converse with such as we may justly fear they may bring us to perdition, as men that strain at a gnat, and swallow a camell.

Secondly, we ought to pray to God daily, that we may not be led into temptations. It is the direction that Christ our savior giveth, that so we may *be delivered from evil*, Math. 6, 13. Daily prayer for wisdom is a preservative against the wicked. Such as walk in the morning in noisome airs, carry somewhat in their mouths to keep them from infection. If we pray faithfully, we are fenced and fortified against the assaults of evil persons. This was the practice of *David*, wherein he hath given us an example, Psal. 141.3, 4. *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips: incline not mine heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity.* If then we are to pray to be preserved from such tempters and temptations as would draw us into evil, and withdraw us from good: surely we are not wittingly and willingly to run into them; for then we mock and dally with God, & become tempters unto our selves. And how shall we dare to kneel down in the presence of the eternal God, and to desire of him not to lead us into temptation, and so soon as we are gone frō prayer, and the house of prayer, by and by to haunt evil houses, and seek out allurements, and wait for occasions, & wish for our companions, until we return home worse then we were before?

Thirdly, it is our duty, and a special point of wisdom, not to presume upon our abilities, nor to glory in our own strength. There cannot be a more deceitful bait then this is, when men foolishly persuade themselves, that albeit they run into evil company, and hold familiarity with drunkards, and continually haunt alehouses and places of disorder; though they be hail-fellow well met with them, and join hand in hand with them, yet they can keep themselves from infection; so that they will never be overtaken with their sin. And as well may a man rush headlong among such as have plague sores above them, and live with them, and yet never be infected: whereas few dare adventure their bodies in such cases. But put the case it were lawful; yet *all things that are lawful are not expedient: all things that are lawful, edify not.* We must take heed we do not give offense to others, neither destroy him for whom Christ died. So then, the best way for us to avoid evil, is to take knowledge of our own weakness, and to strive against our own infirmities, and to fly as far as we can from danger.

Fourthly, let us not flatter our selves with an idle conceit and foolish opinion, that we by keeping them company shall be able to draw them and persuade them to goodness. For we see this by the ordinary course of human affairs, that when the good and evil meet together, and are joined in friendship, the godly are rather corrupted by the ungodly, then the ungodly corrected by the godly. This may appear unto us in *Solomon*, a man greatly beloved of God, and greatly blessed with wisdom: *nevertheless, even him did outlandish women cause to sin.* This was signified also in the Law, holy flesh carried in the skirt of a garment did not make it holy: but *the polluted person, touching anything, did pollute it*, and make it unclean with his filthiness. It is an harder thing to cleanse and purify, then to defile and make unclean: and therefore they will sooner tempt us, then we shall teach them. What then? Is vice of more force then virtue? and shall evil prevail more then good? I answer, we consider not good and evil as they are in themselves, but as they are in us: not as they are being separated from us, but joined to us. The evil men are wholly evil, whereas we are but in part good: and therefore they are strong, we are weak: they are wholly flesh, we are not altogether spirit, but only in part regenerate: so that they hale us and hold us with all their power, with all

their might, and with all their strength, that we must use violence to get from them, or else we are undone. They are as men that set all their strength to the work, and labor night and day with both their hands; we have our strength divided, and work as it were with one hand, and set too but one shoulder. They run in the ways of evil, we do as it were *halt with one foot*, like *Jacob* when he wrestled with GOD, whereby he had the hollow of his thigh put out of joint. They fare as men that descend down a Mountain with great violence, and have no stay of themselves until they come to the bottom: we creep up toward the top with all four, like *Jonathan*, that went over to the garrison of the uncircumcised; we are fain to climb up rocks and cliffs, and craggy places, upon our hands and upon our feet, with much labor and great sweating, and oftentimes faint by the way. That which they do, they do with ease & pleasure: but we find many enemies to buckle withal, and are constrained not only to fight with beasts at *Ephesus*, but to wrestle hand to hand, *against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places*: so that it is more than need to take to us the whole armor of God, that we may be able both to stand, and to withstand in the evil day.

Fifthly, thou must esteem of evil company, as of him that hath a running sore of an infectious disease, and hate all vice in thy dearest companions, more than the plague. They that have sound eyes are fearful of themselves, & careful to refrain from looking upon their eyes that are sore and bleared, lest they should be hurt. Can a man have his conversation among thieves, and not at one time or other be robbed of his treasure? Such as have nothing are sure to lose nothing: but they that have treasure about them, by conversing with deceitful couzeners and cheating companions, are in danger to be deprived of it. So if we live among these spiritual thieves, that are more common and subtle, and therefore more dangerous than the other, we cannot but be spoiled and stripped naked of the precious pearls of God's graces which enrich our souls, and are more of value than all the gold and silver that is digged out of the earth.

The sixth and last branch is, to teach us to be in love with good company, whereby we may be bettered and edified. Evil persons that infect, as a filthy dunghill that casteth up an unsavory sent, are compared to pitch that defileth, to leaven that soureth, to the canker that consumeth, and to the scabbed sheep that infecteth an whole flock. But good and godly company is as the sweet ointments or perfumes of the Apothecaries, a man cannot come among them, but all his garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. They are anointed with the oil of gladness in their measure, and delight greatly the nostrils of such as live with them. If we converse among them we shall somewhat savor of them. So then by the works that we practice, it may be known what company we frequent. The wise man saith, Prov. 13, 20. *He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed*. Great is the force of company, whether it be to good or to evil. With the good, we shall learn goodness, & reap the fruit of it to our souls. Among the ungodly, we shall learn nothing but wickedness, and in the end receive nothing but a crop of care, and shame, and dishonor, and rebuke, and that which is more than all the rest, death and destruction forever.

14. And the Lord spake unto Moses, in the wilderness of Sinai, saying,

15. Number the children of Levi, after the house of their fathers, by their families: every male from a month old and upward, shalt thou number them.

16. And Moses numbered them according to the word of the Lord, as he was commanded.

We have spoken hitherto of both the parts of the preface, that go before the enumeration of the Levites, consisting partly in the description of *Aaron's* sons, and partly in the presentation of that Tribe before *Aaron* and his sons to serve in the Tabernacle. Now we come to speak of the numbering of them, which is done apart in a peculiar manner from the rest of the people. For God would not have the Levites numbered with the rest of the Tribes, to the end he might free them from the wars, and except them as a chosen portion to himself from civil affairs; and that they might more diligently, more seriously, & more carefully, without all disturbance and distraction apply and employ themselves in that holy function whereunto they were appointed. So then, after that the people are numbered and ordered exactly and exquisitely, *Moses* proceedeth to the numbering of the Levitical Tribe, which only remaineth unnumbered.

This is done two ways: first simply, being considered in themselves without reference and relation to others: secondly, comparatively, being compared with the first borne, in whose place and room they succeeded. The simple enumeration is twofold, first general, in these words; and then particular in those that follow. The general numbering hath two parts, the commandment, and the execution of it. The commandment is amplified by the author of it, *The Lord spake unto Moses*; then by the place, *in the wilderness of Sinai*, there it was given: for as yet they were not gone from the Mount where the Law was given. Thirdly, by the manner, number them *by their families, after the house of their fathers*. Lastly, the persons to be numbered, *every male from a month old, and upward*. The obedience of *Moses* is in the 16, verse, where he is commended by the manner of it, he did it *according to the word of the Lord*, in all points *as he was commanded*. The particular numbering, being set down in the verses that follow, we are to reserve to his proper place.

In this division two questions arise, upon the different order observed in the numbering of this Tribe, compared with the numbering of the former Tribes, which are to be decided. For here *Moses* is commanded to *number all the males from a month old and above*, but he did before number the other Tribes from twenty years old and above, chap. 1, 3. Wherefore, first of all the question may be asked, why the Levites are not numbered as the rest are, from twenty year old, but from a month old? Secondly, why they were not numbered as well so soon as they were borne and brought forth into the world, as when they were a month old? Wherefore we are to enquire, why they were numbered so soon, and then why no sooner?

Touching the first, to wit, why they were [Question 1] numbered from one month and upward, and not at twenty years old and upward, as the rest were, it was done for three causes.

First of all, the Levites were numbered at a month old, because at that age they were fit to be presented before the Lord, and offered unto him, Luke 2.

Secondly, another cause of taking their number according to these young years, was, to bring the number of this Tribe unto an equal proportion with the other Tribes; for at this God aimed, as we shall see afterward: whereas if the number had been taken only from twenty year & upward, it should never have been known what number there was of the first borne, and so the recompense and satisfaction would have been altogether uncertain and unjust.

This showeth, both that the Tribe of *Levi* was in comparison few in number, even the least of all the rest, and that by this gracious dealing and merciful favor of God, the people ought to be inclined, more quietly, patiently, willingly, and cheerfully to pay the tax and tribute that was laid upon them for the overplus among themselves.

Thirdly, they are numbered at that age, because it was not necessary they should be fit for the wars, whom GOD had exempted from such service, which was one difference between the Levites and the other Tribes. They were numbered at twenty years old, because then they were holden and judged fit to go out to war, as among us and in our Common-wealth, the State thinks it fit to have all warned from sixteen to threescore years, as able men to bear arms, and to serve their Prince, and to fight for their country. Whereas the Levites had nothing to do with handling the sword, and putting on armor, and following the wars: they were to attend on holy things, and to minister in the Tabernacle: they are made word-men, not sword men: they are fishers of men, not fighters with men: and albeit *they walk in the flesh, yet they do not war after the flesh*, 2, Cor. 10, 3.

Touching the second question, to wit, [Question 2] wherefore they were not numbered before the month was expired? This was done, because all the male children by the ceremonial law, were impure and unclean for the space of *one month*, Leviticus 12, verse 4. as also all the maid-children were unclean *threescore and six days*, Leviticus 12, verse 5. At what time the mother brought unto the Priest, *a lamb of a year old, for a sin-offering*, who offered it before the LORD, and made an Atonement for her, Leviticus 12, verse 6, 7.

So then, as the male children were unclean an whole month, so after that space of time limited and determined, they ought to be purified.

True it is, they did belong unto GOD at all times, for unto such pertained the Kingdom of Heaven from the beginning: he had evermore a right unto them, who had said unto *Abraham*, *I will be thy GOD, and the GOD of thy seed*, Gen. 17. Notwithstanding they could not be presented unto him, because they were holden as unclean, according to that law that continued for a season, & for y^t cause God would have those only reckoned in this account which were a month old. This did put them in mind, as also it teacheth us, that we are all by nature

sinners and unclean. We are conceived and borne in sin, and from that which is unclean, who can bring that is clean? Our natural estate is notably described by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, chap. 16. under the similitude of a wretched infant polluted in his blood. There is not one that doth good, no not one: so that every mouth is stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.

[Verse 15. *Number the children of Levi, after the house of their, &c.*] Here is set down a commandment directed to *Moses*, and a commendation of *Moses*, who was faithful in the house of God as a servant. A servant will do nothing before he know the mind of his master; and when he knoweth his will, he is ready to accomplish it. The house is the Church: the master of it is God: the Stewards of it are the Teachers, who rule in this house at the appointment of God: and none of them durst presume to do anything therein without his direction: so it is said in this place of *Moses*, that he followed not his own device, but did all things as the mouth of God directed him.

We learn from hence, that the word of [Doctrine 1] God is able to inform the Church generally, and every man particularly, in all things pertaining to this life, and to direct them, both what they are to do, and what they are not to do. Whatsoever falleth out into the parts of man's life, must receive warrant from the will and word of God. This doth the Prophet *David* teach in many places of the Psalms, *By them thy servant is warned: by them the youngman may by taking heed, cleanse his ways: by them all men shall be made more wise than their enemies, more learned than their teachers, more prudent than the ancient: by them they shall make their way prosperous; and by doing according to that which is written in them, they shall have good success.* Of this is *Solomon* also another witness, *Prov. 2, 9. My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments within thee, &c: then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity, & every good path.* This is directed not only to Princes and Magistrates, (as appeareth in the Epistle to the Hebrews) but to all the children of God, of what calling soever they be. So the Apostle speaking of our ordinary meats and drinks, declareth that *they are sanctified by the word of God, and by prayer*, 1. Tim. 4, 5. That which he speaketh of our use of the creatures, must be understood of all things else, and stretched to all our actions, forasmuch as the word must be our warrant, whē to do everything, how to do it in a good manner, how to fly evil, and how to use Christian liberty in things that are in themselves indifferent.

[Reason 1] This is so evident, that we want not many reasons to confirm it unto us. First, the titles given to the word, do teach it. For it is called *the statute law* of God. Are not the statute laws of the kingdom, sufficient to direct us what to do, and what we ought to do? They are able to secure us from danger, without any foreign helps. Hence it is, that the Prophets cry out in every place, for obedience *to the statutes of God*, they will tell us what we ought to do. Likewise the word is said to be our Counselor, as it were a man of Law, to which we ought evermore to resort, as we see men in matters of doubt, repair to their learned counsel, that they may do nothing without advice.

Secondly, the Apostle setteth down this [Reason 2] rule, that whatsoever we do, whether we eat, or drink, or enter into any action, we must set before us, as the chief and high end of all,

the glory of God. There may be indeed, and are other ends of the things we do, but this ought to be the principal. If this be wanting, what other ends soever we have, the work is defective and unholy unto us. But no man can glorify God in anything without obedience; and there is no obedience, but in respect of the commandment and word of God. The Prophet saith well, *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of Rams.* Hereupon therefore it followeth, that the word of God directeth a man in all his actions: whereas all things done without the testimony of the word of God, are without obedience. The rule is general, *Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God:* and therefore nothing which is done without the warrant of the word can be done to the glory of God.

Thirdly, the Apostle speaking of things [Reason 3] that are in their own nature indifferent, concludeth that *whatsoever is not of faith, is sin*, Rom. 14, 23. If any say, the Apostle meaneth a full persuasion of that which he doth to be well done: It is true; but from whence can that assurance grow unto the conscience, but from faith? and how can we persuade our selves that we do well, but when we have the word of God for our warrant? The argument then is thus framed, wheresoever faith is wanting, there is sin: but in every action not commanded and allowed, faith is wanting: therefore in every action not commanded and allowed, there is sin: and consequently to approve our actions, we must have the precept and commandment of God, and the allowance of his word.

Let us after these things thus confirmed [Use 1] to our consciences, proceed to the uses. First, forasmuch as we must fetch the warrant of our actions from the pure fountain of the word, it teacheth us the perfection and all-sufficiency of the word of God. It needeth no human verities or popish traditions to be patched or put unto it, which were as much as to add a rag to a new garment that needeth it not. *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul*, saith the Prophet. *The whole Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*, saith the Apostle. It is able to make us wise unto salvation, and to furnish the man of God to every good work. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think to have eternal life*, saith Christ. But are all things that we are to do, expressed in the word? I answer, all things are not expressed word for word in so many syllables, but all things are contained in the Scriptures. For we must know the rule of *Nazianzen*, and it is a sure one, that such things as are gathered out of the Scriptures, are even as if they were written, they are of like nature, of like force, of like authority.

First, some things are not in deed and in truth, and yet are said to be in Scripture, as that God sitteth, that he hath eyes, ears, hands, mouth, and such like.

Secondly, some things are in deed, and yet are not said to be, to wit, expressly and in so many words; so that though the words be not there, yet the doctrine is, as that the holy Ghost is God, that he proceedeth equally frō the Father and from the Son; that there are two Sacraments, that Christ is God of himself, and consubstantiall with his Father, and an hundred such points, which are necessarily collected and concluded from them, as he that saith twice two, saith four: and he that saith twice twenty, affirmeth forty, though not in so many words.

Again, some things neither are, neither are said to be, as that an image and an idol are different in themselves. And lastly, some things are, and are said to be in the Scriptures, as that there is one God and one Mediator between God and man. Now we say, that all things necessary are contained in them, but not expressed, as the baptism of infants, and original sin, yet are distinctly and demonstratiuely inferred out of them: and so are all things that belong to faith or obedience, whatsoever we are either to believe or to practice. *Abraham* saith to the rich man, *They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them:* if they hear not them, *neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.* He understandeth hereby the writings of the old Testament: these he opposeth against all visions and revelations, as we also do against all traditions: these, these I say are sufficient to bring us to Christ, to salvation, to heaven. These are sufficient to keep us from hell and destruction, and every evil way. Wherefore, whatsoever belongeth to doctrine or to good life, is found in them, we have direction by them to all things whatsoever belong unto us to do. It is the commendation of a good Law to leave as little vndecided and vndetermined, and out of the compass of the Law as is possible. Such as write of the government of Common-wealths do give this rule, that it behooveth these rules that are well made, as near as may be to determine of all things, and to leave as few as they can to the arbitrement and discretion of the Judges. Men are oftentimes passionate, & passions hinder judgment and the finding out of truth. The Jews, to whom were committed the Oracles of God, were directed by them in the least things they had to do. Our estate is not left worse then theirs, who, beside the same direction that they had, have also the noble addition of the New Testament, which were written that we might believe, and in believing have everlasting life, John 20, 31.

Secondly, this doctrine serveth to direct & inform the Ministers what to teach & preach [Use 2] unto the people, and the people what to believe, wherein to rest, whereupon to build their faith, and to settle their conscience. The matter given them in charge to deliver and commend to the care and consideration of the hearers, is the word of God. They are to teach nothing else, but what Christ their Lord and Master *hath commanded to be observed*, Mat. 28, 20. We must follow the example of *Paul*, 1, Cor. 11, 23, who delivered nothing to the *Corinthians*, but what he had *received of the Lord*. If they strike at sin any otherwise, their weapon is not sharp enough to cut it down; for whereas they should draw out the *sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*, they give it a blow with a leaden dagger: and whereas they should overthrow it with the push of a pike, they run at it with a bulrush. It is the word that is mighty in operation, and entereth into the soul, & is able to cast down everything that exalteth it self against the kingdom & knowledge of Jesus Christ. It is the word only that is the food of the soul, and is able to afford wholesome nourishment. Let us not teach the people our own devises, which is, to feed thenwith chaff that hath no strength in it. Let us deal as *workmen that need not be ashamed, dividing the word of truth aright*. And concerning the people, they must not affect such teaching as is most plausible, but such as is most profitable: not that which may please the ear, but that which may move the heart. The end of our coming to the house of God, must not be to delight our selves, but to reform our lives. Neither ought we so much to attend what learning they show, as what sin they reprove, that

so we may come to repentance. The more they open our understandings by the key of the Scriptures, the better we are to account of them.

Thirdly, it serveth to reprove those that [Use 3] do rush headlong & headstrong in their actions and course of life, not caring what they do, as desperate men that fear not their flesh, or as foolish Mariners, that run their Ship upon the Rocks, and never ask counsel at the mouth of the Lord. If any ask how this may be done? and say, we desire nothing more then to know the mind of the Lord: but how can this be, seeing he is in heaven, and we are upon the earth? I answer, it is not hard or impossible for us to consult with God, and to resolve as from God, and to know his will. We must search into his word; for he yet speaketh unto us in the Scriptures. When the word speaketh, know that God speaketh unto thee: and set it down with thyself as a certain truth that is surer then the heavens, that when thou hearest the word, thou hearest him: and whensoever thou despisest the word, thou despisest him. The Scripture is as the voice of God, and therefore the Prophets so often repeat this to the people in all their sermons, *Hear ye the word of the Lord, thus saith the Lord*. A man will not adventure upon a temporal possession, without the advice of his learned counsel: nor a sick person upon strange meats, without the advice of his Physician. How then shall we dare, in matters that concern our souls, and may put us in hazard of our salvation, to undertake sundry actions without knowledge of the word, and so without warrant & assurance whether they please God?

Hence it is, that God oftentimes reproveth his people, because they did that which he had not commanded: & the Prophets charge them with this as a sin against him, because they entered upon those things whereof he had not spoken, and which never entered into his heart, as Jer. 7, 31, 32. *They have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart*. And to that purpose saith the Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 30, verse 2. *They walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth, &c.*

Neither let any object, that this is spoken in matters of great weight and importance, as in points of faith, or of the worship of God, without which a man cannot be saved, and which the word in other places hath determined: for this were great injury to the word of God, to pin it and pound it up in so narrow a corner, & so short a compass, that it should be able to direct us only in the cheef & principal points of our religion, and not in matters of lesser moment of our profession. This doth mightily shrink up the sinews of the Scripture, and bind up the arms of it, which otherwise extend far and near. Remember that in the book of *Joshua*, the children of Israel are charged by the Prophet, that *they asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord*, when they entered into covenant with the *Gibeonites*: and yet that covenant was not made contrary to any commandment of the Lord. For howsoever it seemeth to many, that they ought to have been put to the sword, and to have died the death, because they were in the number of those Nations that dwelled in the inheritance of the people of God, promised to *Abraham* and his posterity long before: yet if the matter be well considered, it will not be hard to understand, that with condition of yielding themselves to the subjection of the Jews, and of conformity to the true religion of God, they might be received.

For what was the cause that they were forbidden to enter into league with them, but this, that they dwelling among them, might draw them to a false worship of God? *Lest they teach you to do after all their abominations which they have done unto their gods, so should ye sin against the Lord your God.* But when they offered to yield themselves to the Jewish, both religion and subjection, there was no fear of defiling thē, or of withholding and withdrawing them from the service of God.

True it is, if they did resist or withstand them, as the greatest part of the *Canaanites* did, who came out to meet them, and provoked them to battle, and were so far from submitting themselves to God & his people, that they stirred up one another, and joined their forces together to stand out unto death; it was not lawful to spare either sex or age, either women or children, either young or old. If it had been utterly unlawful, and against the express word of God to make any league with any of the *Canaanites*, *Joshua* and his Princes had done wickedly to have kept their oath with them, after they had understood their fraud and falsehood; considering that all oaths made directly against the word of God and his express commandment, are utterly unlawful, and consequently to be broken, lest we add sin unto sin.

The Spies also sent out by *Joshua* had done evil, which entered into a league with *Rahab* the harlot, *and bound themselves with an oath*: which oath notwithstanding was solemnly observed. Yea, *Solomon* had done evil, who in his best and flourishing state of his kingdom, received the *Amorites*, which voluntarily yielded themselves unto his obedience, and (that which is more) to the obedience of the Lord; who notwithstanding grew into one body of the Church of GOD with the people of Israel, and joined themselves with them freely & forwardly in the restoring of y^e Temple. The like we might say of *David*, (whose example we touched before) albeit the LORD had expressly revealed in his word, that there should be a standing place, where the Ark of the Covenant should rest, and the Tabernacle with the service belonging unto it, should have a certain abiding; and albeit there was no express word of God that forbad him to build the Temple, yet the LORD reproveth his resolution, albeit he commendeth his zeal and good affection, because he had given no commandment concerning the person that should build it, 2, Samuel, chapter 7, verse 7; or the time when it should be built.

So then, we learn by all these examples, as well by such as did against the commandment, as by those that did attempt and adventure upon things without a commandment, that they are justly reproveth, that never regard the word of God in any of their ways, neither ask counsel at his mouth, that never consider what GOD alloweth and approoueth, but rashly break into the practice of things incident to their life, and yet have no other guide to lead them, nor counselor to advise them, nor teacher to instruct them, nor warrant to bear them out, otherwise then their own mind and meaning, which in matters of God, and parts of his worship are blind and perverse. Ask these men what approbation they have from God; or what assurance to their own consciences y^t they please him, they are able to say nothing at all. Let me tell these men, that which I would have them mark, and oftentimes to think on it upon their beds, even between the Lord and their own souls, as they will answer it before

the great Judge of all the world, when they shall appear before him; that whatsoever you do, though they be good things, yet to you that are ignorant, and know not what you do, to you it is a sin, and in you it is no virtue. It is a notable duty to hear the word of God, it is one mark of Christ's sheep, and one step into his kingdom: but if ye come to this ordinance of God, *as the people commonly use to come*, only to do as your honest neighbors do, and because the law requireth it, & have no other knowledge of it, your hearing is abominable in you, and no more pleasing in the sight of almighty God, then if you should cut off a dogs neck to offer unto him, Isaiah 66, 3.

We are commanded to come often to the holy Supper of the Lord, and to prepare our selves reverently and religiously to that action. It is a worthy instrument of God which he hath ordained for the confirmation of our faith, & many of us come often unto it, all of us at Easter; but if we come unto it only because it is a common custom so to do, and we are loath to be singular, and know not that both God commandeth the practice of it, and our own infirmity crieth out for the necessity of it, his table is made a snare unto us, and we sin against Christ: so that we receive no more benefit by eating the bread and drinking of the cup of the Lord, then the Gentiles that *were partakers of the table of devils, and did drink the cup of devils, and did offer sacrifice unto Devils*.

Woe then to all ignorant persons, that take upon them to perform duty and service unto God, and yet know not what duty & service he requireth at their hands. Oh that they would or could understand, that the best works which they do perform, even such as God commandeth, are no better then sins and abominations in them, that do they know not what, as blind men that shoot at a mark. Oh, that they would or could pray unto God to open their eyes, to see their own wretchedness, and to consider that the most holy parts of God's worship which they perform, are a sacrifice of fools that know not that they do evil. Then would they learn the difference between things done in knowledge, and such as are done in ignorance: then would they praise GOD for the light of his truth revealed unto them: and then would they confess with all their hearts, that they would not stand in the former state wherein they lived, if an whole kingdom, or all the pomp and glory of the world were given unto them.

To conclude, let them bear this away with them also, that God will not be served with good meanings or good intents, which is all that the greatest part can say for themselves, we are simple people, we are not book-learned, we mean well, we hope we have as good souls unto God, as the proudest of them all, we do what we can, we hope God will bear with the rest.

This is the religion of such as think themselves devout, but is indeed the language of the devils. God respecteth not such foolish devotions, he requireth of all persons the knowledge of his word, as we shall show afterward, and he will be worshipped according to the knowledge thereof.

The Apostle reproveth the Jews for their zeal, a virtue that ought to be in all the faithful, forasmuch as God will spew all that are lukewarm out of his mouth: nevertheless he accepteth it not in them, because it was not *according to knowledge*. We must know what God

alloweth, if we would have him allow & approve of us. If we regard not to know him, we may well assure our selves that in the day of account he will not know us, but turn away his face from us.

The second reproof meeteth with all such as do things doubtfully and waueringly, not knowing whether they do well or ill: these do attempt things, either against their conscience, or without the comfort of a good conscience: and therefore, albeit it be good in it own nature which they do, and good in regard of the will of God, yet to them it is not so, because they are not assured by the word, whether it be lawful or unlawful, and therefore it is turned into sin. This is that which we heard before out of the Apostle, *Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin*, Rom. 14, 23. All such need not another to condemn them, they condemn themselves in that which they do.

The unfaithful and unregenerate man sinneth in everything he doth, even in his best actions. We must please god before any of our works can please him. The Apostle saith, *Unto the pure, all things are pure, but unto thē that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled*, Tit. 1, 15. And S. James in his Epistle, chap. 1, 7, 8. *He that wauereth, is like a wave of the sea driven with wind and tossed: for let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord; a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways*. Wherefore it standeth us upon, to consider the three general rules set down by S. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, chap. 14, to direct us in all our actions.

First, he is happy that condemneth not himself in the use of those things which he knoweth to be lawful. This concerneth those that are strong. This is a golden rule, and a great honor & happiness of Christian men, that their own consciences do not accuse them to allow and admit of that which they judge not to be good and lawful. They know by due trial and examination, that the same which they do, agreeth with the word of God so that they are assured to build vpon the rock. Though all men should accuse them and condemn them, yet their conscience grounded upon the word of God, would acquit & discharge thē, which cannot but give an inward peace and sweet contentment to their souls. This the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 1, 12. *Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, &c*. To the same purpose Job speaketh, chap. 27, 6. *My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live*. Likewise John in his first Epistle, saith, *I four heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things: beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God*. This comfort of a good conscience they cannot but want, which doubt whether that which they do, please God or not; they are far from this happiness which the Apostle pronounceth upon such as know well, and are thoroughly assured what they do: the rest are like drunken men that stagger & reel too and fro, & cannot keep themselves upright upon their feet.

Secondly, no man must do anything with a doubtful conscience, for such a one woundeth his own conscience, & offendeth God. The Apostle saith, *He that doubteth, is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith*. He that is not persuaded that it pleaseth GOD which he doth, cannot direct it to his glory. Every work that cometh short of his end, is sin: and therefore Abraham is commended, that *he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was*

strong in faith, giving glory to God, Rom. 4, 20. This rule belongeth to those that are weak, who waver up and down in their opinions, like a ship that tottereth hither and thither in a tempest. Woe unto such, they need no other witness or judge against themselves, but themselves. They do many good things that do displease GOD, which would please him, if they were well and rightly done. If then thou wouldst have any fruit and comfort in those things which thou doest, inform thy conscience aright, be persuaded thoroughly of that which thou doest, and build thy faith upon the sure and infallible rock of God.

Thirdly, whatsoever proceedeth not from faith, is a sin committed against God, and condemneth him that doth it, forasmuch as *without faith, it is impossible to please God*. Outward shows and appearances, though they be never so pompous and glorious, are not respected of him: he inquireth whether those things we do, proceed from true obedience, & whether we believe by the word that they are required of God, and so please him. This last rule engendereth two other: first, whatsoever proceedeth from pure naturals is impure, and whatsoever cometh from the force of our free will, is sin in the sight of God. Such as the fountain is, such are the streams: as the root is, so are y^e branches: like mother, like daughters: like cause, like effects. Doth a spring send forth out of the same place sweet water and bitter? *Can the figgetree bear Olive berries, either a vine, figs? A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit*. Secondly, all the virtues and actions of the infidels and unbelievers, albeit in regard of themselves and the substance of the works, and as they are the gifts of God, they be not evil, but good: yet in the judgment of God they are sins. The whole life of unbelievers and unregenerate men is nothing else but a whole practice of sin in a continued course without stay or interruption from the beginning to the ending, but they are like those that run a great pace out of the way. They may do many things beautiful in show, but they are more in show, then in substance: in appearance, then in deed and truth. All their virtues are shadows, and therefore called by one of the fathers, *splendida peccata*, beautiful sins. They lay an evil foundation, & have a wrong beginning, they do them without faith: and they also propound to themselves an evil end, as either vain glory to be esteemed of others, or the merit of the work, that they may be rewarded of God, and do not refer them to his glory. But *not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth*, 2 Cor. 10, 18. *Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, & then shall every man have praise of God*, 1 Cor. 4, 5. Wherefore all their works are as the apples of Sodom, which are fair in outward appearance, and yet are rotten and corrupt. So may unbelievers do sundry works that are beautiful in outward show, but they are like unto painted Sepulchers, which appear glorious to the sight, but they are within full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness. For their heart, which God especially beholdeth and searcheth, is foul & filthy, and can no otherwise be made clean, then as it is purified by faith.

Let all men therefore take knowledge of their natural condition, that they are of themselves abominable, and to every good work, reprobate, until they be borne again, and regenerate by the Spirit of God.

The third reproof is of such, as notwithstanding the necessity of the word to direct our actions, which without the light of it to shine in our hearts cannot please God, yet regard not the knowledge of it, but contemn both it, and the means that lead us the way unto it. This is an horrible sin to forsake our own salvation, and as it were to cut our own throats, or to cast our selves willfully into the midst of the seas. It is a grievous sin to be ignorant of the Law of God, not to know what he commandeth, or what he forbiddeth: but it is more fearful to despise knowledge offered, and so as it were to despise the Spirit of grace: what remaineth for such, but *a fearful looking for of judgment and indignation, which shall devour the adversaries?* Heb. 10, 27. Such can have no comfort or consolation in any of their actions. For as the eye is the light of the body, and directeth the rest of the members in all things they go about, or else the feet might carry them into some pit of destruction: so is the word of GOD our *Lamp* or *Candle*, whereby we see how to walk and direct our selves into the way of peace; we know what we ought to do, and from what to refrain. And as the body runneth violently into an heap of dangers where the eye is blind, and can perceive nothing, until it fall headlong into them: so is it with such as regard not the knowledge of the scriptures, but say unto GOD, as may appear by their practice, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways*, Job 21, 14. This world is as a wilderness full of Lions, Bears, Tigers, and other ravenous and venomous beasts; or as a sea standing out with rocks & replenished with quicksands. We can no sooner step out of doors, but we shall be assaulted one way or other, nay we our selves are temptations unto our selves. For rather then we should lack tempters, we tempt our selves, like unto a State, that wanting foreign enemies, falleth out within themselves, and by civil wars destroy one another. So is it with us, when we are free from open enemies, we become enemies to our selves. If then we want the guidance and governance of the word, we are in danger to be overcome, and to take the foil. Our Savior willeth us as we heard before, to search the Scriptures, because in them we think to have eternal life: and therefore without the knowledge of thē, we deceive our selves if we dream of eternal life. So in another place he maketh the ignorance of them, to be the cause of all evil and error in judgment, as Mark 12, verse 24. *Are ye not therefore deceived, because ye know not the Scriptures?*

[Object.] But some peradventure will say, it belongeth to the Ministers only to search them: it is their office to look into them.

I answer, [Answer.] it is a duty belonging unto all persons to know them. Christ exhorted the people to search them. It is required of all to have them dwell in them plentifully, Colossians 3.

If we would be preserved from error, we must know them: if we desire salvation, we must search them: if we would be able to resist the temptations of Satan, we must be armed with them. They are as the will and Testament of Christ, whereby he hath bequeathed unto us an heavenly inheritance, and a most rich possession, and therefore it behooveth us to read the will, to know how we hold it. Thou wilt object, [Object.] they are hard, and I am simple: they may lead me into errors, as many have fallen into strange opinions by reading of them. Art thou simple, thē thou art the rather bound to read them, for they were written, [Answer.] *to give unto the simple sharpness of wit; and to the child knowledge and discretion.* The whole Church

is commanded this duty, both Jews & Gentiles; were there no simple men and women among them? Neither oughtest thou to be afraid to be led by them into error; for they were written to preserve thee from error, and to lead thee into all truth. It is the unstable that wrest them to their own destruction. Read them with humility, with reverence, and prayer. Be thou lowly in thine own eyes, and take heed of a proud spirit: be conversant in them with reverence, & learn to *tremble at his word*: crave the assistance of God's Spirit to guide thee, and to open thine eyes that thou mayest understand his secrets; and thou shalt not need to stand in fear of being carried into error. And touching the hardness of them, be not discouraged from the reading of them. Some things indeed are hard to be understood, but there is nothing hard in one place, but it is made easy in another, and it shall be made easy to us by diligent meditation in them.

Besides, all things that are necessary to salvation are plainly set down, that the people may understand them. It is the lying spirit of the devil in the false Prophets of Antichrist that crieth out, The Scriptures are hard and full of knots; the people may not read them. *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God or not, for many false Prophets are gone into the world*, 1 John 4, verse 1. They are blind leaders of the blind: they play fast and loose with the people, as Juglers do with the simple, and cast a mist before their eyes, that they should not espy them. They lead them into error, and then take the light from them, whereby they might be convinced.

It is the great policy of that great Antichrist, *and man of sin*, not only to forbid the reading of our books, but the free use of God's book. Let that once have a free passage, and none is so simple, but he may soon discover a pack of devises, who are wise in their generation: and therefore they suffer none to read it but such as it pleaseth them. Separate some time to this purpose, and thou shalt quickly see that to be most true which I say unto thee.

If thou wilt say unto me, I cannot read the Scriptures, I was never brought up unto it.

Be it so; yet do not allege this to excuse thy ignorance, or to shift off from thee the knowledge of them; forasmuch as everyone must know the Scriptures. Recompence that want by much study and often meditation. Let not the love of the world thrust out of thy head & heart, the cogitation of better things. Many that cannot read, are more prompt and ready in the Scriptures, then such as have that gift. God will bless them that endeavor to know him and his word, and will one way or other supply their wants. Such as *hunger & thirst* after knowledge, *shall be satisfied* and replenished. Acknowledge this want mourn for it, and if it be possible (though thou be old) learn to read. It is never too late to begin to do well: the benefit will easily make amends for the time bestowed upon it. Few there are, but every year spend more time in vain, either in gross idleness, or in much sleep, or in vain company, or in unnecessary cares for the world, which might this way be better employed and redeemed. The mind is all in all, it is not any hardness in the matter it self that should discourage us. He that hath once determined to do it, hath overcome the difficulty of it which standeth in resolving and hath more then half attained unto it. But if we cannot or will not strive to come to this gift, we must know that ignorance shall excuse no person: and he that knoweth not his masters will cannot escape, *he shall be beaten*. If there be no knowledge of God in the

Land, he *hath a controversy against it*, and will cause it to mourn: if it will not lament for their own ignorance, he will make them lament for the judgments that shall fall upon them, Hos. 4, 1, 2.

But we cannot plead ignorance through want of means, we have the means and are weary of them, as Israel was of Manna; we make account of it as a light meat, and are willfully blinded: we have the light among us, & yet shut our eyes, that we should not see.

[Use 4] Lastly, it is needful for us to be careful to take profit by reading the Scriptures, that so we may have direction in all our ways, and learn how to please GOD, and to abstain from all things that do displease him. It is not the bare having of the Scriptures with us in our houses, or a naked reading in them by our selves, without farther consideration, that will serve to direct us in all the actions of our life, but there is farther required of us an applying of them, & an edifying of our selves by them, that it may be seen how we profit in them. This duty hath many particular parts or branches belonging unto it.

First of all, we must have recourse unto God the Author of the Scriptures, he only is able to unlock them, and so to bring us into the secret chamber of his presence. We ought to pray unto him earnestly, that he would vouchsafe to teach us the way of his statutes, to give us sound understanding of his will, & to direct us in the paths of his commandments. We see this by the practice of the Prophet *David*, Psal. 119, who craveth oftentimes to *have his eyes opened* to behold the mysteries of his words, *and the wondrous things of his law*. Our eyes naturally are shut, and we cannot conceive them, which are spiritually discerned.

Secondly, we must keep such order in the reading of them, as may stand with our calling and state of life, and take all opportunity to do it. It were to be wished, that we would set apart some part of every day to be employed in this exercise, that so we might read over the whole Scriptures oftentimes: and if at any time we be hindered by necessary occasions, which happen to us without our searching of them, *to redeem the time* afterward, and so to recompense that which we have left undone. This is an holy restitution much pleasing unto God.

Thirdly, we must understand to what ends and uses the Scriptures were written. They were penned to teach, that we may learn the truth: to improve, that we may be kept from error: *to correct*, that we may be driven from vice: *to instruct*, that we may be settled in the way of well-doing: and *to comfort*, that in trouble we may be confirmed in patience & hope of an happy issue.

Fourthly, we are to remember, that the Scriptures contain matter, concerning all sorts of persons and things, which may be reduced to five heads.

First, touching religion and the right worshipping of God: they teach how to serve him, and what to believe touching God, and touching mankind: That he is one in essence, and three in persons. Touching our selves, that by creation we were made good, holy, and righteous. By our fall, we are become wretched by reason of sin, and not able to think one good thought, or to stir one foot forward to the kingdom of Heaven. By regeneration we are borne again,

and made the sons of God by adoption, and by faith we lay hold on Christ, *our wisdom, our sanctification, our righteousness, our redemption*. Touching the Church, we are instructed by them, that it is the company of the faithful that have been from the beginning: we are led also by them to know the two Sacraments, and what to believe of the general judgment that shall be of the godly and ungodly.

Secondly, they inform us touching kingdoms and common-wealths, and touching the duties of Magistrates and Subjects, how the one ought to rule, and the other to obey: and neither the one nor the other do their duties for conscience, till the word inform them.

Thirdly, they handle matters touching families and household affairs, in which are the husband: and wife, parents and children, masters and servants: no duty required of them is omitted, but contained in them.

Fourthly, touching the private life of every particular person, how to behave our selves in wisdom and folly, in love and hatred, in sobriety and incontinency, touching mirth & sorrow, speech and silence, humility & pride, to embrace the one, and fly from the other.

Fifthly, touching the common life of all men, we learn in them how to lead our lives in every estate, whether we be rich or poor, whether we be high or low; we can be in no estate, but we shall find sufficient store of heavenly precepts and examples to teach us the way wherein we are to walk.

Lastly, we must have the doctrine of the Scriptures plentifully dwelling in us, not in the mouth, but seated in the heart: that we may be able to stand in the truth, to continue unto the end, to rise up being fallen. We are every hour subject to be tempted of the devil: his temptations are many and strong: he is an expert and experienced captain: he looketh where we are weakest: he is a spy that cometh to search and see the nakedness of our souls. And therefore we must be able to draw out the spiritual sword put into our hands upon every occasion, that we may put him to flight. This is the way to resist him: this is the way to overcome him, I am. 4. We have the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, the head of his Church, he said, *It is written*: he handled this sword at every temptation, to teach us to furnish our selves plentifully with the doctrine thereof, that so we may remember to apply the same to every present purpose.

17. And these were the sons of Levi, by their names: Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari.

18. And these are the names of the sons of Gershon, by their families: Libni, and Shimei.

19. And the sons of Kohath by their families: Amram, and Izehar, Hebron, and Vzziel.

20. And the sons of Merari by their families: Mahli, and Mushi: these are the families of the Levites, according to the house of their fathers.

Hitherto we have spoken of that numbering of the Levites which is general; the particular followeth, which is both propounded and concluded: the former beginning here, continueth to the end of the 37, verse: the latter is comprised in the 38, and 39, verses. This particular reckoning up of the Levites is performed, by setting down such sons or issue, as were begotten immediately of *Levi* himself: then such as descended of his sons: and lastly, such as proceeded of his sons sons. The sons of *Levi* were three in number, *Gershon*, *Kohath*, & *Merari*, Gen. 46, 11. These are described according to the number of their families: so that of *Gershon*, came two families, the *Libnites*, and the *Shimeits*. Of *Kohath* came four families, the *Amramites*, the *Izeharites*, the *Hebronites*, and the *Uzzielites*. Of *Merari* were spread two families, the *Mahlites*, and the *Mushites*.

In this division is laid down before us a description of the genealogy or generation of the Tribe of *Levi*, by their names and by their families: wherein is set down, both what children *Levi* had, and what were his children's children: insomuch that many did spring and spread themselves as branches out of that root. This we also find set down afterward, chap. 26, and in other places of the word of God: and yet it may seem unto some very unprofitable, and to minister little or no instruction at all to the Church of God. Besides, the Scripture speaking of Genealogies, doth oftentimes call them endless, and fruitless, and brand them with this note, to minister occasion of *strife and contention, rather then of godly edifying, which is in love*, 1 Tim. 1, 4, and Tit. 1, 4, and 3, 9. But we must know that the Apostle condemneth not all Genealogies, forasmuch as the Scriptures are full of them, and the Jews kept public and private records of their tribes and families, Numb. 1, 18. Nehem. 7, 62. This was observed until the desolation of the City and the Temple. *Paul* was able to prove himself of the stock of *Israel*, of the tribe of *Benjamin*, an *Hebrew*, of the *Hebrews*, by lineal descent, if any had doubted of it. The first book of the *Chronicles* is full of such genealogies; so is *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, and few historical books of the Old Testament without them. Hence it is, that the Apostle joineth foolish Questions and Genealogies together: where he condemneth not the moving of every question, in handling the word, or conferring of it; for both *Christ* asked his Disciples many things, Mat. 16. and there are many questions godly and profitable, whereof we may enquire and reason, which breed sound knowledge, wholesome instruction, and fruitful edification to the hearers. He is marked out as with a note of folly, that rashly and headily believeth everything, Prov. 14, 15. And therefore the questions that are to be suppressed, he calleth foolish questions, that is, idle, superfluous, vain, and unnecessary, serving to no use or profit.

The same title, as a brand set upon the head of them, is to be stretched also to Genealogies, foolish genealogies must be stayed, such as are of no moment, such as serve to nourish vain glory, and serve not to the benefit of the faith of the Church. But such as the Scripture setteth down, are very profitable, sometimes to teach us the accomplishment of God's promises, sometimes to give light to other Scriptures, sometimes to show the continuance of the Church, from age to age, sometimes to discover the enemies of true religion which often drive it into a corner of the world, and sometimes to manifest the true Messiah, that the scepter departed not from *Judah* till his appearing. But to omit this, here we are to consider and to compare the curse of *Jacob*, with the blessings that we see descend upon this tribe. *Simeon* and *Levi*, instruments of cruelty in the destruction of the *Sichemites*, have an heavy

curse laid upon them by their father, Gen. 49. Yet God raised out of the same these honorable families, and turned the curse into a blessing, as he promised to that tribe, for their zeal in destroying the idolaters. We learn from hence, that God many times chooseth his servants, as his instruments to bring worthy things to pass, even out of low and mean degrees. He chooseth weak means and unlikely in the eyes of the world, and maketh them his instruments to work his will.

This doth *Hannah* confess; she was contemned and reproached by her adversary, which caused her in the anguish and bitterness of her soul, to pray to the Lord: but having experience of his mercy toward her, she saith, *The Lord maketh rich, and maketh poor: he bringeth low, and lifteth up: he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, & lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among Princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.* So he dealt with *Joseph*, he brought him out of prison, and lifted up his head above the Princes of Egypt, Gen. 41.40. Thus he speaketh to the Israelites, Deut. 7.7, 8. and putteth them in mind of their natural condition: *The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people, (for ye were the fewest of all people) but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.* The like doth the blessed Virgin confess, Luke 1.48. *He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed: for he that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is his Name.* She was a poor despised handmaid in Israel, yet chosen to be the mother of Christ. The Apostles were many of them taken from base trades, & other from ignominious offices: some were fishermen, called as they were mending their nets: *Matthew* was one of the Publican's, which were contemned of the people of Israel; yet God made them master builders of his Church, and appointed them to lay the foundation, and so had the highest and chiefest place of honor and preferment, to be made planters of Churches throughout the whole world. God therefore useth when it pleaseth him, persons of inferior place and condition to effect great and mighty things.

And, why should it not be so? forasmuch as [Reason 1] all things are ruled and ordered by his providence, he disposeth of them in his wisdom, as seemeth good unto himself, *for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them,* 1 Sam. 2.8. All the frame of heaven is whirled about the poles: this is the order that God hath set, and who is able to alter it? whatsoever things come to pass in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, are all the works of his hands, he setteth up, and pulleth down at his own appointment, and who shall be able to control them?

Secondly, in the choice of simple and untoward [Reason 2] means, such as have little or no force in them, his glory is most of all seen. Now, he will maintain his own glory, and will have it acknowledged and magnified of his creatures, and requireth that he which glorieth, should glory in him, as 1 Cor. 1.29. he will have *no flesh glory in his presence*, neither the rich man in his riches, nor the strong man in his strength, nor the wise man in his wisdom, but let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord. So then, he chooseth foolish things before the wise, & weak things to confound the mighty, and base things of the world, to bring to naught

things that are, because he hath respect to the manifestation and setting forth of his own glory.

Thirdly, we are not to marvel that God [Reason 3] maketh such a choice of his instruments, which carnal men might account an evil and ungrounded choice; because he respecteth the heart, and not the outward appearance. When *David the least*, and so the most unlikely both in his fathers family, and in the eyes of the judgment of men, was anointed to be king, & chosen as he followed the Ewes great with young, to feed his people in *Jacob*, and his inheritance in *Israel*, the Lord said unto *Samuel*, *Look not on the countenance of the eldest, nor on the height of his stature, because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth: for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* Thus then we may conclude, that God raiseth up weak instruments to honor him, and employeth them to serve him in the works to which it pleaseth him to fit them.

Let us therefore make some uses of this [Use 1] Doctrine, which serve unto us for great profit. First of all, it ministereth great comfort to such as are poor, and of low degree: for albeit men contemn them, and disgrace them; albeit they are ready to tread them under their feet, and thrust them to the wall; albeit they be hissed at in the streets, and oppressed by the mighty, yet God vouchsafeth to respect them, and in great mercy to look upon them. This we see in our spiritual estate and condition. What are we but a mass of sin, the children of wrath and condemnation? yet God vouchsafeth to elect us, and call us by his grace to the knowledge of his truth from our natural life, led in the time of our ignorance. It was the mercy of God to call *David* from the sheepfolds, and from following the Ewes great with young, *Psal. 78.* But it was a greater mercy to call us from the greatest bondage and slavery that ever was, bound faster then with chains of iron, which giveth us no time to rest or breathe, or feed, or sleep, but setteth upon us continually day and night. This thralldom is worse then that of *Egypt*, it is endless, intolerable, deadly, and without intermission. What an honor and dignity then doth God do unto us, who were strangers from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us, to deliver us from this captivity, and to bring us into the glorious liberty of the sons of God? Our *perdition is of our selves*, *Hos. 13.9.* but *our salvation is of the Lord*, *Revel. 7.10.* *He will not give his glory to any other:* and therefore let not us ascribe it unto our selves, or to any creature, but magnify the goodness of the Creator, who is blessed for evermore. We are raised up from the greatest misery to the greatest glory, as the lowest ebb hath the highest tide; and therefore let us show all thankfulness and obedience unto him. Before the children of *Israel* entered into the land of promise, he gave them warning and a watchword, that they should not say in their hearts, nor speak it with their mouths, that it was for their own righteousness they were brought into *Canaan*: and shall we think, that we are delivered from the slavery of sin and Satan, and made the freemen of *Jesus Christ*, by our own deserts, and so give the glory of our salvation to our selves? Let this be far from us, even as far as he hath removed our transgressions from us. So then, here is matter of great comfort, that our sins are forgiven us, and though the remnants of them remain in us, yet they have received their deaths wound, and shall in the end utterly die in us. And in the mean season, while we bear about with us the body of this sin, the Lord calleth us *spiritual*, and esteemeth us according to his grace, not according to our corruption. If there

be one spark of grace, and one drop of faith, as a grain of mustard seed, God acknowledgeth us to be his; *he seeth none iniquity in Jacob, he beholdeth no transgression in Israel.* He that is evil can see nothing in God's servants but evil; if sin be in them, Satan will charge them, that sin reigneth in them. It is otherwise with God, he judgeth not of us by the relics of sin, but by the beginning of grace. If we have the first fruits of the new man in us, the remnants of the old man shall not hurt us. Satan would persuade us we are wholly carnal, because we are in part unregenerate: but God receiveth us as his children, and accounteth us his Saints, because we are in part sanctified; so that we have hence exceeding comfort, that of such base slaves of all sin, he vouchsafeth to accept of us, passing by what we are by nature, and acknowledging us as we stand by faith.

Secondly, considering what instruments [Use 2] God maketh choice off, in his service, they y^t are rich in this world, ought not to despise the poor, neither yet the high those that are set in low places, who indeed are most subject to contempt. This the Apostle *James* inferreth, Chap. 2. *Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of his kingdom? but ye have despised the poor, &c.* This is to cross the proceedings of God, and to set our selves against him, casting down those whom he lifteth up, and lifting up those whom he casteth down. This falleth out many ways: First, when they are afflicted & persecuted by the mighty men of the world. Our poor brethren before us had woeful and lamentable experience of this point, who suffered for the religion of Christ, for the defense of the Gospel, for the profession of their faith, and the testimony of a good conscience. This Christ foretold, Matth. 10.22. Thus the Apostles found it, and such as followed them, and believed their doctrine, had no better entertainment: for the world is always like it self, we shall never prove it to be any changeling. An enemy it was to the saving knowledge of the word, an enemy it is at this present, and an enemy it will be in the ages to come,

Secondly when the rich men of this world deal hardly and harshly with them, in the affairs of this life, wringing and wresting from them unconscionably, and deceitfully what they can. This is forbidden in the Law, Levite. 25.14. *If thou sell ought unto thy neighbor, or buyest ought of thy neighbors hand, ye shall not oppress one another.* And the Apostle in the Epistle to the Thessalonians, *Let no man ouerreach or defraud his brother in any matter, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such.*

Thirdly, when they waste and were out their bodies with toilsome labors unrewarded, as the Egyptians did deal with the Israelites: and as the Apostle *James* complaineth at large, Chap. 5. that the rich lived in pleasures on the earth, and fatted themselves as in a day of slaughter, and kept back the hire of the laborers by fraud that reaped their fields.

Fourthly, we must consider that the elect are not always eased of the burden of poverty, but it lieth heavy sometimes upon them, that God may try their patience, and others benevolence. God maketh them objects of our pity, and therefore he will not have all to be aloft. Our Savior teacheth, that *the poor we must always have with us.* The love and favor of God must not be measured by the deceitful rule of outward things. He maketh the poor oftentimes to be rich in faith, and heirs to a kingdom, while he sendeth the rich empty away.

Are we then in want? and do we stand in need of the things of this life? we must take up our cross willingly, and follow our master cheerfully; he saith, *The Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath nowhere to lay his head.* We are by Christ made heirs of glory, let us by faith wait for that inheritance, which shall abundantly supply all our wants.

Fifthly, let those that have this worlds good, look to themselves, that they be not high-minded, *neither trust in uncertain riches,* 1 Tim. 6. God can make them low when it pleaseth him, and therefore they are not to advance themselves above their brethren. He can lay their honor in the dust, and make all their glory vanish away, as the flower of the grass: and therefore *let him that is rich, rejoice in that he is made low,* 1 am. 1.10.

Lastly, let us not have the faith of Christ in respect of persons, neither esteem of the religion of Christ by outward things, as the greatest sort do. Who are judged (by such indeed as want judgment) to be in the best case, but such as flow in wealth and abound in riches? who are most admired, and accounted the only men of the world, and set before us as examples and presidents in all things to be followed, but such as *have their portion in this life,* whose bellies the Lord filleth with his hid treasures, and they leave the rest of their substance to their babes? To do as they do, to live as they live, to love as they love, is made as the star, by which all should sails and guide the ship. If they be irreligious, and no fear of God before their eyes, others take this as a good warrant to themselves to be contemnors of holy things also. If they think scorn to attend upon the ordinance of God, and to be conscionable hearers of his word, it were no good manners for the meaner sort to go before their betters, and to be more forward then they.

Thus are men become partial judges, when they account such as carry the greatest pomp and show, to be the only religious men, and patterns for other to follow: by which means such as are religious indeed, grow vile and contemptible. Hence it is, that the Apostle *James* saith, Chap. 2. *My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.* The meaning is not, as if the higher places did, not pertain to the higher persons, and the chief rooms to the chiefest degrees among men; but that in matters of religion, we must not be carried away with a prejudicate opinion to cleave to those, and to their judgment that are mighty in the world, only because they are mighty; and to reject those and the truth which they profess, because they are poor and lowly in the eyes of the world.

The persons of men, that is, the outward qualities of their birth or honor, or riches, must not set a bias upon our judgment to sway us that way, to conclude that they are of a false religion that are poor in this world; and contrariwise, that their religion must of necessity be sound, because they are great, or honorable, or wealthy, or noble, or prosper in the earth. This is a deceitful rule, and yet it is the square whereby the greatest sort measure all things. If they see a multitude follow one course in matters of faith, and run by heaps and throngs all one way, they also for company thrust in themselves among them, and conclude, that this must needs be the best way, because the most walk in that broad and beaten path: forgetting the commandment of God in the Law, *Thou shall not follow a multitude to do evil:* and the counsel of Christ in the Gospel, *The gate is wide, and the way broad that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat,* Matth. 7.13. Wherefore we must learn, that multitude is

no note of true religion, nor riches, nor prosperity, nor glory, nor outward blessings: forasmuch as these are common to the godly and ungodly, to the believers, and to the infidels; The word of God must be our rule in this life, which shall be our Judge in the life to come. This is no way partial, neither can it deceive any.

Lastly, seeing persons weak and contemptible [Use 3] in the world, are oftentimes highly regarded of God: it teacheth us to praise the Name of God for it, and to acknowledge it to be his gift, and to return him the glory, who *out of the mouth of babes and sucklings ordaineth praise unto himself*, Psal. 8.2. We see this in the song of *Hannah*, 1 Sam. 2.1. she prayed and praised the Lord, *her heart was enlarged over her enemies, she rejoiced in his salvation*. So in the song of the blessed Virgin, Luke 1. *My soul magnifieth the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior, for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaide, &c.* In like manner Christ gave thanks to his Father, *that had hid the mysteries of his kingdom from the wise and prudent of the world, and revealed them to babes*, Matth. 11.25. Thus doth it belong as a special duty unto us, whensoever we see these works of God (as if we open our eyes, and will not be blinded, we may daily see them) to adore them, and to magnify his power, and to praise his Name.

This hath many particular branches. First, we must confess our selves miserable by nature, and no good thing in us to raise up our selves above others, being no way better then others. We cannot too far cast down our selves, nor pull down the pride of this flesh that is ready to lift up it self against his Maker. We are a lump of earth, and worse then the brute beasts▪ and the dust out of which we were taken. We are fallen from God, our excellency is gone.

Secondly, whatsoever we have, it is his gift, we have received it at his hands, it cometh down from above: and therefore let us not glory, as if we had not received it, 1 Cor. 4.7.

Thirdly, let us walk worthy of our calling, even of those mercies, which we have tasted, and acknowledge our selves to be unworthy, of them. Then we are indeed thankful unto him, when we are dutiful unto him.

Fourthly, let us be humble in our own eyes, and not boast of anything in our selves, or in our own merits, neither let us think our selves worthy to be regarded of him. This is the way to stop the course of his mercies, to boast of our own merits. *Jacob* did not so, he accounted himself *less then all the mercies of God, and the truth which he had skewed unto his servant*, Gen. 32.10. The Saints do all, and always, cast down themselves before him in true humility; whereas hypocrites are puffed up with the wind of their own conceits, and swell aloft like the Surges of the sea, as we see by the example of the Pharisee, Luk. 18.11. he *gave thanks to God for fashion sake*, but pride possessed his heart, and wrought in him the contempt of his brother, that was more righteous then he.

Fifthly, from hence we may assure our selves of greater mercies, and farther blessings. One mercy draweth on another, until they flock together on a heap. If we be thankful for lesser, we are assured of greater. They are as the first fruits that sanctify the whole. *Paul* having found by experience that God had oftentimes delivered him from present death, hath his confidence in him that *he also will deliver him*, 2 Cor. 1.10. This is as a sure staff to lean upon in all distress, to be assured that he is unchangeable, with whom is no shadow of turning; he is

said *to repent of the evil that he hath spoken that he would do*, and not to do it, but he repenteth not of the good that he showeth to his servants, forasmuch as whom he loveth, he loveth them to the end.

Sixthly, let us keep a register of his blessings, and so settle them in our hearts, that we never forget them, but may thereby be provoked to set forth his praise. We cannot open our eyes in the day, nor think upon him in the night season, but we have innumerable testimonies of his love toward us. Let us not therefore be silent and hold our peace, but say to our own souls, with the Prophet, Psa. 103 1.2. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name; bless the Lord, O my soul, & forget not all his benefits.* Give him therefore the glory in all things, and let us provoke others to praise him, and tell of his wondrous acts. It is a sweet smelling sacrifice that God delighteth in, he smelleth the savor of it a far off, and is well pleased with it. This duty ought to be the continual practice of our life, it should arise with us in the morning, and lie down with us in the evening. We have received much from God's good hand, shall we return nothing to him again like the barren earth that yieldeth no increase? The waters that by secret conduits, or conveyances do come to the sea, return openly into it again, so that all men see it and behold it, how *the rivers run into the sea*, Eccle. 1.7. So the graces of God's Spirit as the waters of life, which God doth secretly convey into the hearts of the godly, ought publicly to have their recourse unto him again, by praise and thanksgiving. There is no great Lord that bestoweth any possession or tenement upon his tenant, but he reserveth some rent, to acknowledge the service and homage he oweth. God hath bestowed much upon us, we are all his Copy-holders, we hold at the pleasure of our grand Lord: The rent that he hath reserved, is praise and thanksgiving: if we withhold this from him, and will not pay him, we have forfeited our estates, we have deserved to have all taken from us and seized into the Lord's hands again, from whom they came.

21 Of Gershon was the family of the Libnites, and the family of the Shimites: these are the families of the Gershonites.

22 Those that were numbered of them, according to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, even those that were numbered of them, were seven thousand and five hundred.

23 The families of the Gershonites shall pitch behind the Tabernacle Westward.

24 And the chief of the house of the father of the Gershonites shall be Eliasaph the son of Lael.

25 And the charge of the sons of Gershon, in the Tabernacle, of the Congregation, shall be the Tabernacle, and the tent, the covering thereof, and the hanging for the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

26 And the hangings of the Court, and the Curtain for the door of the Court, which is by the Tabernacle, and by the altar round about, and the cords of it, for all the service thereof.

We have seen already the numbering up of the sons of *Levi* in general: and then in particular such as come immediately of his sons, whose posterity are farther set forth unto us in this division, and afterward, according to the three chief and principal families. Of all observe in general thus much, touching the order, that there are five points set down by *Moses*; First, the families are numbered that came of them. Secondly, the particular number of the persons is described. Thirdly, their place of abode is limited and appointed. Fourthly, the chief ouerseer, or superintendent of the house is named. Fifthly, their office and charge is assigned to everyone, as it were a field in which they ought to labor, and as a garden in which they ought to plant.

The truth of these things shall farther be opened unto us in each of them, in the families of the Gershonites, and in the families of the Kohathites, and in the families of the Merarites. Touching the Gershonites, they are described unto us in these words, from the 21. verse, to the 27. The families descended of *Gershon* are two, the Libnites, and the Shimeites in the 21. The persons amount in the whole to seven thousand and five hundred, in the 22. their mansion was behind the Tabernacle Westward, in the 23. the chief captain of them was *Eliasaph*, the son of *Lael*, in the 24. Lastly, their order and office was to carry the covering and the hangings of the Tabernacle, in the 25. verse. Thus we see, that things were not shuffled and confounded together, but everyone of them knew their station. All things were not confusedly committed to all, but everyone had his peculiar office and charge, which was as it were the vineyard that they were to dress. We learn from hence, that everyone in the Church, both Minister and People, have their proper and peculiar charge different frō other. The Lord did by precept distinguish not only between the calling of the Levites and the people, but between Levite & Levite. For y^e Levites were either called Priests, or by the common name of Levites which were not Priests. The Priests were either the high Priest, as *Aaron* the father, and *Eleazar* his son after him, &c. or such as were under him over the rest, as *Eliasaph*, the ouerseer of the Gershonites, or *Elizaphan* the ouerseer of the Kohathites, or *Zuriel* of the Merarites. Their office was publicly to teach, to pray, to offer sacrifice, and to keep the vessels of the Sanctuary. The office of the other Levites was to minister and serve the Priests in all things belonging to the discharge of their necessary duties. Thus God allotted to everyone his several office to be as his standing place in the army, out of which he should not step forth one foot either to the right hand, or to the left. This appeareth most notably in the first book of the Chronicles, where *David* setteth a particular order among the families of this tribe, and sorteth out to everyone his special charge, both for the Priests & Levites, who should be singers, who should be porters, who should have the charge of the treasures, and who should be appointed officers and Judges. This appeareth more plainly in the New Testament, as, 1 Cor. 12.28.29. *God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles secondly, Prophets; thirdly, teachers: after that miracles: then gifts of healings, helps in government, diversities of tongues. Are all Apostles? are all Prophets? are all teachers? &c.* All have not one office; all have not one gift; but as he noteth in the beginning of that chapter, there are diversities of gifts,

diversities of administrations, diversities of operations: and afterward, *To one is given by the spirit, the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit, and to another the working of miracles, to another Prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, &c.* This he showeth also expressly in the Epistle to the Romans, chap. 12.6. *Seeing we have gifts that are diverse, according to the grace that is given unto us, whether we have Prophecy, let us Prophecy, &c. or Ministry, let us wait on our Ministering. &c.* The Apostle Peter hath a general sentence tending to this purpose, *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.* Lastly, we read in the Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. 4.7.11. *Unto everyone of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, who gave some to be Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers. Thus God hath appointed, that everyone should have his proper function and office.*

For as it is in the natural body, so is it in [Reason 1] the mystical body of Christ, which is the Church. But in our natural body every part hath his office, and knoweth his place, and dischargeth his duty without intermeddling, and encroaching upon the right of another. So should it be among the faithful, we have diverse and distinct gifts, for the good of the Church. This is the reason of comparison, used by the Apostle in sundry places, as Rom. 12.4, 5. *As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another.* Where he teacheth, y^t as we have in our natural body many members, so we have in one Church many members: as all members in the natural body have not one office, so all the members of the Church have not one office: as the many members in the natural body, have one head wherein they are, so many members in the mystical body, have one wherein they are: and last of all, as in the natural body, every member is another's, so in the Church every member is not his own only, but another's, and is set in the body for the benefit of the whole. The same similitude, to y^e same purpose, is used in the former Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 12.12.14. *As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ, &c. for the body is not one member, but many.* For if they were all one member, where were the body? but now there are many members, yet but one body: therefore also there must be many members in the body of the Church.

Again, such as transgress this rule, and [Reason 2] break those bounds that God hath limited unto them, cannot prosper. For as Christ our Savior maketh this a general rule as the ordinance of the eternal God, which none must dare to violate, *Those things which God hath joined together, let none put asunder,* Matth. 19.6. So is this also a certain rule to be observed, to the end of the world, That whatsoever things God hath separated, no man must presume to join and iumble together. For as the Lord knew this order of distinguishing offices to be very expedient and good for the Church: so he hath not ceased to punish the breakers, and to revenge the contemners of it most severely, of what calling and condition soever they were. This we see verified in *Corah, Dathan, & Abiram;* they presumed above their vocation, & would needs *take upon thē the Priesthood, to burn incense before the Lord,* contrary to the ordinance of God, & therefore went down into the pit, and died not the common death of other men: for the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up with all that they had, and fire came

down from heaven, and consumed the residue. When *Uzzah* supported the Ark being ready to fall (*for the oxen stumbled*) the anger of the Lord was kindled against him, & he smote him, because he put his hand to the Ark, so that there he died before God. The like we might say, touching *Azaria* the king of Judah, who was stricken with an incurable and irrecoverable leprosy, because in the pride of his heart, he forgot the office of a Prince, and usurped the office of the Priest, and *went into the Temple, to burn incense upon the Altar*. All which direful and dreadful examples ought to teach us how acceptable this comely order of several callings is to God, both to breed in our hearts a care and endeavor to keep it, and a fear and terror to break it.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, Christ is as a wise master of the house, that fitteth to every man his standing: he is the Lord of the Church, he appointeth callings, and hath in himself fullness of grace, from which everyone receiveth his measure, John. 1.16. Col. 1.19. Hence it is that he is compared to a great Prince, who, going into a strange country, called his servants, and delivered them his goods, *to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one*, to every man after his own ability, and straightway went from home. As we have wisdom, skil, knowledge, and experience given unto us to deal, so God dealeth with every man. A Captain in war, is careful to set everyone in his proper place, that he may know his Captain, his colors, his standard, his march: out of his standing he dareth not to remove, that he may please him that hath chosen him to be a soldier. Christ is the *General of his Church*; the faithful are his soldiers: all their life is a continual warfare, which costeth them great pains and much sweating, & sometimes they *must resist unto blood*, striving against sin. As then soldiers in war have and hold everyone his standing place in the sight of their captain: so every Christian should keep his several calling in the presence of the Lord of life, who hath in great mercy and wonderful wisdom appointed them thereunto.

[Use 1] Now the uses remain to be opened & expressed for our edification. And first of all, it teacheth that distinct callings in the Church and commonwealth are the ordinance of God and his appointment, not the inventions and devises of men. The Apostle saith, *He gave some to be Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers*: and elsewhere he addeth, *Are all Apostles? are all Prophets? are all Teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all the gift of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?* The like he speaketh of the private families, and of the duties that belong to everyone therein, both to husbands and wives▪ to masters and servants: to parents and children. As then God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called everyone, so let him walk. This is ordained to be observed in all Churches. We shall never learn to perform our duties to God, and to each other, except we be persuaded and resolved in this point. The husband will be ready to forgo his authority, and the wife will presume to step up into the place of her husband. The child will behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honorable. We shall see folly set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place: it will not be strange to behold servants aloft upon horses, and Princes walking as servants upon the earth. Hath God placed us in the calling of a servant, and set masters over us? We ought to learn & know whence this is, and to consider from whom it came. It is the Lord's doing, who can abide no disorder and confusion, but will have some inferiors, and some superiors, according to his

own law, *Honor thy father and thy mother*. This doctrine serveth to establish that commandment, and to make it a perpetual ordinance to remain forever. God hath not made all men excellent alike, he hath not qualified them alike, but hath given more to one, then to another, and would have one to receive profit from another. And herein doth his infinite wisdom wonderfully appear, and diversely show it self. God is in himself most excellent, worthy of all honor and reverence, and having all things under his feet, he would have a pattern of that excellency and subjection imprinted in his creatures. In the Angels he hath set a difference, and made degrees and orders among them, one, an Archangel; other, principalities; other, thrones: other, dominions: some are called, Seraphims; other, Cherubims: and therefore there is a distinction between them, as he hath made every star to differ from another in glory, 1. Cor. 15.41. He created man to rule over the fowls of the air, over the beasts of the earth, and over the fishes in the sea. The Apostle teacheth that in a great house are diversity of vessels, some to honor, and some to dishonor. There is no man great, but he hath his greatness from him that is the greatest. There is no man made low, but he must acknowledge that the Lord hath set him there. The servant must know that God hath put him in that service, and not seek to break the bonds wherewith he is tied: but thereby receive encouragement in the performance of such duties as lie upon him.

[Use 2] Secondly, this serveth to reprove sundry errors and abuses of such as transgress against the truth of this doctrine. And first hereby falleth to the ground, the heresy and impiety of the Anabaptists, who utterly evert all orders and ordinances that God hath established both in the Church and commonwealth, and instead thereof bring in all confusions and tumults into the world. For, the end of Magistracy is not wrongful usurpation over others, tyranny and oppression of mankind, *as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord*, grew thus to be great; but that we should lead a peaceable and quiet life in all godliness and honesty, 1 Tim. 2.2. They then that abolish Magistracy, overturn peace, concord, honesty, and piety: inasmuch as the Magistrate is the preserver and maintainer of all these, and when there is no king in Israel, every man will presume to do what he list, and who shall control him? Hence it is, that all Christians are oftentimes called upon to perform obedience to the civil Magistrate & the higher power, both to the king, as to him that is supreme; and unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. We must therefore detest those Libertines, who hold that Christians need no Magistrates, but that every man should be a law unto himself, and not be controlled by any other, how wretchedly soever he live, how unjustly soever he deal, how profanely soever he walk. Nevertheless, though these be most mad and monstrous opinions, yet these monsters will not seem to be mad without reason, as we have declared elsewhere in sundry places. First, they say all Christians are the Lord's freemen, and therefore must not be brought under the subjection of any, 1 Cor. 7.22, 23. I answer, liberty is twofold, outward and inward, or bodily and spiritual. For servants may be freemen, and freemen may be servants. Civil freedom is a right or power resting in the person to do according to his own purpose and pleasure, without being forbidden or hindered and interrupted by any other. Contrariwise, servitude or bondage is a depriving of one from this right, whereby he is bound to live according to the discretion of another, and to do as he is enjoined and

appointed by another, so that he cannot live as he list. There is besides this, another kind of freedom & bondage, which is wholly spiritual. This is a freedom of the faithful, from the wrath of God, from the power of Satan, from the dominion of sin, from the curse of the Law, from the kingdom of darkness, from the terrors of eternal death, as also from the burden of ceremonies, and the bondage of human traditions; obtained to us & purchased for us through Christ Jesus. This is called Christian liberty, the freedom of the spirit, the freedom of the Lord, and of Christ, and such like. Now, there is also a Christian servitude, not contrary to this freedom; or opposed against it, but set under it and well agreeing unto it; which is an obligation whereby we are tied to serve God in holiness and righteousness. On the other side, the bondage that is contrary to this freedom, & bondage of the spirit, is, the slavery and captivity under sin and Satan, and therefore called the bondage of the flesh, of sin, and of unrighteousness. This servitude is damnable, and more to be shunned and eschewed, then to be taken captive of tyrants, and to be holden of them in a deep dungeon, or in a close prison, or in chains of iron. From this it is, that the Scripture dissuadeth and discourageth us, because *the end of it is death*. Some of the Philosophers of the strictest sect, maintained this assertion and opinion, that *Only the wise are free, and that all fools are slaves*. This hath been accounted an hard saying, and a strange position: but it is most true in the Church of God. For such as know God, and believe in Jesus Christ his son, are truly wise, and truly free; free I mean from sin and death, even the freemen of God and of Christ, according to that saying in the Evangelist *John, If the Son shall make you free, then ye shall be free indeed*; whereas all infidels and wicked ones, are fools, and servants of the flesh, yea bond servants of sin and death. This distinction between freedom of the body, & of the conscience being retained, will shut the mouths of all those enemies that reason against Magistracy under this color, because we are y^e Lord's freemen: Forasmuch as we have shown, how far we are free, & how far we are not free; what freedom God hath given, and what he hath not given.

Secondly, [Object.] they pretend that the just need no laws to guide them, or restrain them, but are a law unto themselves. The Apostle teacheth, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawles & disobedient, for the ungodly, and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, &c. I answer, [Answer.] this sauoreth rankly of the Nouatian heresy: for no man is wholly or perfectly just as these suppose, but they leave many good things undone, and they do many evil things: so that *in many things we sin all*, & therefore we stand in need of the law to admonish us, to teach us, to reprove us, to threaten us, yea, to curse us and condemn us, and so to urge us to that which is good. For who is so righteous & reformed, that he needeth not the law to be a spurr unto him, to be clapped in his sides to help him? or who runneth so swiftly that he needeth not some encouragement to amend his pace? And if the law of God were not made against thē, yet it is for them & their benefit. And if they should commit no evil in all their life; yet they might suffer much wrong & injury from y^e hands of others, wanting the defense of the Law to protect them.

So then, the Law in some respect was given to the just man, and in some respect it was not. So far as he is regenerate by the Spirit of God, he obeyeth the will of God cheerfully, and willingly, and so needeth not the Law: but so far as he is in part unregenerate and sinneth daily, he standeth in great need of it. The Apostle hath to do with false prophets, which

maintained and taught that the Law was necessary, and sought justification by it. This he reproveth and rejecteth in two respects, First touching justification, which we cannot attain by the law, but must seek it in Christ. Secondly, touching the rigor of the law, and the commination annexed unto it, which serveth to terrify the ungodly.

[Objection 3] Thirdly, they say they need no protector, but the Lord: he it is that keepeth Israel, that neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. He is our buckler and shield, that we want not the help of the Magistrate to bear us out. I answer, The protection of the Law, is the protection of the Lord, forasmuch as it is his ordinance: as when the Laws of men protect us, so that we have benefit by them, it is the Magistrates protection. True it is, God hath promised that he will not leave us, nor forsake us, nor suffer an hair to fall from our heads without his providence; yet we must not separate his providence and the means whereby it is executed, one from another, whereof this is one means. The Magistrate is nothing else but the Minister of God for our good, who sitteth in his seat, and executeth his judgment; so that they are not contrary one to another, the one being set under the other.

[Objection 4] Lastly, the badge of Christians is love, which covereth a multitude of sins, and never seeketh to revenge or resist evil by carrying of tales, and complaining of others before Magistrates. I answer, [Answer.] It is true, love bringeth a cloak to cover all things that ought to be concealed, *it hopeth all things, it believeth all things*, 1 Cor. 13.7. It is not ready to believe an evil report flying abroad from one talebearer and whisperer to another: it is ready to interpret doubtful matters in the better part: it is ready to keep secret the offense of our neighbor, if by private admonition he may be won: it will not relate bare words against the sense and meaning of his brother. True it is also, that Christians must suffer, not offer, and rather bear two blows, then give one; which is the meaning of Christ's words, Mat 5.39. *commanding not to resist evil: and charging that whosoever shall smite us on the right cheek, we turn to him the other also.* But notwithstanding all these things, we may lawfully defend our selves by the law, though we do not offend others against the Law. The word therefore forbiddeth not the use of the Law, but teacheth us how to use it aright. And when we use the help of the Magistrate, & call upon him to do justice upon our adversaries, it is no unlawful, or private revenge, which only is forbidden: but to go to the ordinance that God hath appointed, that is, to the Magistrate, who is the Vicegerent of God or his Lieutenant, to take vengeance on evil doers, Rom. 13.4. 1 Pet. 2.14.

Secondly, it reproveth all such as think all callings to have their ground out of the ground, and to fetch their foundation from earthly men out of the earth, by chance or fortune, and never have so much as any thought arising in their hearts, whence their calling should come: whereas we must set this down as a rule, That the Lord himself is the author of every lawful calling; the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 7. *As God hath called every man, so let him walk.* We are therefore in our calling by the appointment of God, as the soldier is in the Camp, by the assignment of his Captain, and not by the bare will & pleasure of men themselves.

Thirdly, it convinceth them of sin, that live in no warrantable calling. Every man must live in some lawful calling, wherein he is to exercise and occupy himself. *Adam* was employed in a calling in the Garden of Eden. *Cain* was a tiller of the ground: *Abel* was a shepherd: *Noah* an

husbandman. All the Patriarchs, brought up their sons and daughters frugally to labor, none was allowed and permitted to be idle. The Law is general, Gen. 3.19. *In the sweat of thy brows, shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground.* Such then are condemned as live in idleness, all Rogues & Vagabonds, that run up and down among us, cozeners, shifters, cheaters, carders, dicers, such as live by maintaining houses of gaming, such as live by playing, and by delighting to follow those corrupt courses, which are against the word, and have no print or footstep out of it. But is it not lawful to use recreation? I answer, it is in it self a thing indifferent. Indifferent things must be used without offense. They should have this end to fit us to better things. No recreation must be made a vocation, or an occupation, for then it ceaseth to be recreation, and changeth his nature. It must not be used to hinder us in our estates, much less to our undoing or decaying: for that argueth great unsteadiness of affections, and want of discretion, that cannot bridle themselves in such trifles. If such as pretend the use of recreation for the abuse of these things, were entreated to give away their gains and winnings to the poor, and to bestow them upon good and charitable uses, as relieving of the needy, redeeming of Captives, raising up such as are in debt and decay, maintaining of learning, establishing of the Ministry, and doing good to widows, strangers, and fatherless children, it could not be obtained at their hands by any means: which argueth that it is another thing that possesseth the heart, which they respect and aim at, and more then a naked recreation. If there were a law made to bind all such as play at any games, to give but half of their winnings to the poor, I think few or none would approve of it, or use any pastimes at all. As then all lawful and honest callings are of God, so are all unlawful of the devil, he is the master teacher of them.

Fourthly, it convinceth all such as are not content with that place wherein God hath set them, but are disturbed and disquieted in mind, through the troubles that arise from thence; as there is no calling but hath some crosses accompanying it, and attending upon it.

The common calling of a Christian, is not without his crosses; whosoever will be the Disciple of Christ, must take up his cross and follow him. The Prophets and holy men of God, have suffered many injuries and reproaches.

As then the former sort that live out of a lawful calling, are as members in the body that are out of joint, & gone out of the place wherein they ought to be: so these that are carried away with discontentment of their own, and so break into other men's callings, are like beasts that leap over other men's hedges, and eat up their pasture, and are not content to go into such places as are appointed for them. We are ready to cry out against brute beasts and unreasonable creatures, that will not tarry in the pastures fitted unto them; whereas oftentimes the owners of them are more unruly and vnpatient, that bear the image of God, and profess the Name of Jesus Christ, and therefore ought to learn contentation in all estates. Such hath been the weakness of many, that they have not been able to bear and brook the injuries and indignities that have been offered unto them, & thereupon have been ready to forsake their places, and to leave their callings.

Hence it is, that Christ willeth his Disciples to possess their souls with patience, Lu. 21: and *Paul* chargeth the Philippians, to let their patient and equal minds be known to all men. But of this virtue of contentation, we have spoken at large before.

Fifthly, it reproveth such as contemning their own callings as vile and base, become male-content, and think better of themselves and their own gifts then there is just cause, and better then they would indeed, if they rightly and truly knew themselves. Such are all ambitious and aspiring spirits, that love to be aloft, and scorn to be below: that seek for themselves an higher place, and a better estate then God hath allotted unto them, as if the bramble should seek to be promoted over the rest of the trees.

If our first parents, through the temptation and instigation of Satan, grew discontent with that estate wherein they were created, & sought to be as God's, knowing good & evil, Gen. 3, verse 5: no marvel if their posterity draw this corruption from them, as the child that sucketh the breast of his mother.

Absalom through his high mind, was moved to fawn upon the people, and to seek his fathers kingdom and life also, judging basely of his present estate, and climbing up to an higher. What caused the Scribes and Pharisees to contemn and disdain Christ and his Disciples, but this, they loved the chief places at feasts, and desired the highest seats in the assemblies, and looked to be greeted and saluted by men, *Rabbi, Rabbi?*

What was the cause that *Diotrephes* would not receive *John*, and the other faithful Ministers of the word, but *did prattle with malicious words against them*, neither would he himself receive them, nor suffer others to entertain the brethren? *He loved to have the preeminence* in the Church. Loe here the horrible plague, and as it were the rank poison of pride, vainglory, and ambition! These are the causes of all confusion and disorder. These weeds must be pulled out of our hearts by the contrary graces, if we would have any wholesome herbs grow therein. We have many sharp tools lent us, & put into our hands, if we list to set them on work to grub them up by the roots.

First, we must consider the state of our bodies what it is. We are but dust and ashes, and to dust we must return, Gen. 3. What a vain and foolish thing is it to think so highly of our selves, that were raised out of the earth, & do carry about us the matter of our mortality? If we had come down from heaven, and had our beginning above the Clouds, we should have had wherein to glory: but being all of us frail and mortal creatures, that are here today, and lie in the dust tomorrow, *like the grass of the field*, which flourisheth for a time, and by and by withereth away: what vanity hath possessed our hearts, that earth & ashes should wax proud? Our life standeth wholly in uncertainty; it is appointed to all men, once to die, and after death cometh judgment, Heb. 9, 27. Neither do we know at what hour the Lord will come, Math. 24, 42. Why then should we soar so high, seeing we must lie so low? Why should we say in our hearts, I will ascend into heaven, seeing our pomp shall be brought down to the grave, and the worms must cover us?

Secondly, we are altogether set upon sin, and bring forth the bitter fruits of our corruption, in regard whereof we are more wretched then other creatures. They sin not against God,

they provoke him not to anger, but keep their original condition wherein they were created: but we miserable sinners are turned out of the right way, and *become abominable; so that there is none that doth good, no not one*, Rom. chapt. 3, verse 12. If then we will glory of our selves, or anything in our selves, we must glory in our shame, having nothing of our own, but sin and iniquity.

Thirdly, we are not able of our selves so much as to think one good thought, neither are we sufficiently furnished to do the least and smallest duty that God requireth of us: we have the spawn and seed of all sin in our nature. We are ready to fall into the most horrible sins, except God sustain us, and hold up our heads, and strengthen our weak knees. We cannot set forward one foot toward the kingdom of heaven. It is as impossible for us to do any good, as for a dead carcass to fly. We are as poor miserable wretches, that are dumb, and cannot speak: blind, and cannot see: deaf, and cannot hear. The Prophet acknowledgeth that he is *a man of unclean lips*, and another confesseth, *he could not speak*: our ears also are stopped, so that we cannot hear the voice of God, that we might live: our eyes are closed up *so that seeing, we see not*, but grope as blind men in the darkness. *The light shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it no*, John. 1.5. Men naturally take themselves to be sharp eyed, and quick sighted, but because they say, *We see, therefore their sin remaineth*: because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be, Rom. 8.7.

Fourthly, whatsoever gifts are bestowed upon us, we must think meanly and humbly of our selves and of them. The Apostle willeth us to decke our selves with lowliness of mind, and that *each esteem other better then themselves*. We know that our best gifts are stained with many blemishes: we feel our own corruptions, more then the corruptions of other men, so that God's grace, and our nature are joined together in one subject. We are not therefore to despise other men, or dwell in the contemplation of their imperfections: but be always working upon our selves, and considering our own unworthiness, that so we may more and more mortify the deeds of the flesh, and grow in the graces of God's Spirit.

Fifthly, let us set before us, the example of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ: we must be ready to learn of him the lesson that he offereth to teach us, by word & example. Hence it is, that he calleth all to him, that are weak and weary, and saith, *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls*, Matth. 11.29. He disdained not to wash the feet of his disciples, to teach them humility, not only by doctrine, but by practice. He is a perfect pattern, as of all other virtues, so also of this: and therefore the Apostle setteth him before us, for our imitation, Phil. 2.5, 6. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, &c.* He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man. When the disciples began to contend for place of superiority, so that a strife arose among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest, he propoundeth unto them his manner of living, and conversation, and thereby dissuadeth them from ambition, Luke 22.27. *Whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.* The whole life of Christ, even from the first moment of his conception, unto the last period of his assumption and ascension from

the earth, do preach unto us, as with a lively voice, his wonderful humiliation, that he made himself as a worm of the earth, who was equal in glory with his Father. If this example of him that is the author and finisher of our faith, will not move us to true humility, nothing in the world will move us.

Lastly, pride is the preparation of us unto a fall, and the ready way that leadeth to destruction. The proud man that climbeth aloft, worketh his own overthrow and confusion: and the higher we ascend, the greater is our down-fall. *Solomon* in the book of his Proverbs, beateth much upon this point, as Chap. 11.2. *When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom:* and Chap. 16.18. *Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall:* & chap. 18.12. *Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honor is humility.* This may be farther confirmed unto us by three famous and memorable examples recorded in the Scriptures, to wit, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Haman*, and *Herod*. The first, while he was boasting of great Babylon, which he had built for the chamber of the Empire, *by the might of his power, and for the honor of his majesty*, was driven from the company of men, and had his habitation with the beasts of the field, and did eat grass as oxen.

The second, to wit, proud *Haman*, swollen with the conceit of his own greatness, while he thought to be clad in royal apparel which the king used to wear, to be mounted on horseback that the king rideth upon, and to have the crown royal that he weareth to be set upon his head, was driven to play the lacky on foot, and to dance attendance as a Page, and not long after fell from the highest top and tower of honor, to the lowest degree of shame and reproach.

The third and last example is of *Herod*, who being puffed up with the Syren songs of Sycophants and Flatterers, thought himself worthy to take upon him the honor of God: *but immediately the Angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten up of worms.* Behold here, how the greatest sort of men are wonderfully deceived in their own imaginations, deeming pride as a stirrup to mount up into the saddle of honor, whereas it is a step to bring them-down, and a means to make them fall into shame and confusion.

Lastly, it reproveth such as envy at the better and higher callings of others. These are even ready to die & consume away, when they see others placed in greater places, and adorned with greater gifts than themselves. This is a common sickness and sin, and the cause of many evils that swarm in Church & common-wealth. When *Joshua* heard the Elders in the host to prophesy, he envied them for *Moses* sake. The like we see in *John's* disciples when they heard of Christ's glory and fame increasing more & more, they feared it would turn to the diminishing of the credit and estimation of their master. The remedies, to prevent this mischief before it come, or to pull it up when it hath taken hold of us, are many. First, let us acquaint our hearts, to rejoice at the good that doth befall them, and to be glad when anything befalleth them for the comfort of their souls or bodies, as when one member is had in honor, all the rest are cheered and refreshed by it. Secondly, we are to consider that all places of preferment come from God, as the Prophet teacheth: *Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South: but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another.* Thirdly, we must all of us make this account of our gifts, y^t they are bestowed for

the common good, and not only for the private benefit of such as possess them: so that the eye cannot say to the hand, nor the head that is highest to the foot that is lowest, I have no need of thee, without the destruction of the whole body. Fourthly, the fewer our gifts, and the lower our places, and the smaller our callings are, the lesser & lighter account we are to make; whereas such as have the greatest charges have the greatest account to make, according to the rule of Christ: *Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

The higher therefore a man is exalted, the more is he bound to God, and to them over whom he is set, and to those among whom he liveth; so that there is no gift, no honor, no calling without his burden and account. For as the stars have light▪ but for man's use: so we have gifts, but for others benefit. Lastly this consideration (if there were no other) is sufficient to correct all pride and ambition in us, to wit, to examine our own ability, and we shall find, that there cannot be so small a charge committed unto us, but the same is able to make our shoulders shrink and crack, yea to bow and break, if we do our duties as we ought to do. For our infirmities are so great, and our strength so little, that whosoever sifteth himself thoroughly, and trieth his own gifts without hypocrisy and flattery, shall find that he is able to do as good almost as nothing at all. If we think upon these things, it will be as a bridle to restrain us from soaring and climbing so high, and a forcible means to breed in us contentation in our places whatsoever they be, whether high or low, whether great or little.

Thirdly, it is a comfortable thing to a man's [Use 3] conscience, in life and death, in prosperity and adversity, to remember that we have thus served God, & fulfilled the callings with a good conscience that he hath laid upon us. The faithful servant, that hath given to his fellow servants their portion of meat in due season, shall be most happy, and be made ruler over all his goods. He that occupied his masters talents, and gained by them, heard this comfortable voice, *Well done good and faithful servants, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* Every calling fitted unto us, is as a field given us to till. We may praise and commend the greater farms, but it is better to husband the lesser, forasmuch as our eye may more easily oversee it, and our loss shall be the less if we neglect it. We shall find enough to do in the manuring of a little ground, if we will keep all things in a right order. So it is, much more, in those places wherein God hath set us: the highest calling, deserveth greatest commendation, howbeit, it draweth with it the greatest duties, it requireth the greatest gifts, and bringeth the greatest account. Wherefore the lesser our calling is, the better it may be employed, and the more easily it may be dispatched. If we look into the duties of the lowest callings, we shall see they require great labor, diligence, care, and faithfulness. The greater our employment of those gifts hath been which we have received, the more shall our comfort be, when we must go the way of all flesh. We see this in the Apostle Paul, 2 Tim. 4.7.8. who being in a manner at the point of death, found great joy of heart in the remembrance of this, that he had endeavored with a good conscience toward God and man, to walk in his calling: *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that that day, &c.* Thus it shall be with us, if we walk in his

steppes: if we be faithful in our places, we shall find the same comfort in our death and departure out of this world, and say with joy of heart, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, Luke 2. The contrary practice will be most fearful and terrible unto us. He that is a wicked man and an unprofitable servant and slothful, that hideth his talent in the earth, or smiteth his fellow servants, and beginneth to eat and drink, and to be drunken, persuading himself that his master delayeth his coming, shall have his talent taken from him, and be cast into utter darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

If then we would have this comfort to belong unto us, and this threatening to be put far from us, we must be careful to perform the duties both of our general and special callings. If we perform the general & common duties of Christianity, and yet fail in the particular parts of our callings, we shall want this joy of heart, which we desire to feel in our selves. Everyone of us hath a double calling: and we must show our selves to be the servants of God, not only in doing general duties, as in coming to Church, in hearing the word, in receiving the Sacraments, in following peace, and walking in righteousness; but also by employing our selves, in our particular vocations, as in being a Magistrate, or Minister, or householder, or subject, or servant, or child, or Artificer, or husband, or husbandman, and such like: that so we may please God by bearing our selves in them with good conscience, and thereby receive occasion to rejoice before him. There can be no comfort unto them, that they belong to God in Jesus Christ, that do follow the general, and fail in their particular calling. The Minister that liveth in all common duties, unblameable in life, devout in prayer, fervent in love, careful in the fruits of righteousness, cannot comfort himself, if he be a dumb dog, and an idle shepherd, not able to guide the people of God, and to feed them with the wholesome word of life: Forasmuch as he is an evil Minister, and a fearful woe pertaineth unto him, 1 Cor. 9.17. The governor of a family, that regardeth not the education of his children in the fear and information of the Lord, and to provide necessary things for them, (so far as God shall enable him) with a good conscience, is a wicked parent, howsoever he seem otherwise never so devout and religious. What we are in truth, is better discerned by our carriage at home, then abroad: in our private families, then in the company of others. Many are religious, because the company is so, and because they are present with those that do affect it. But we must not be esteemed & judged off, by one brunt or pang, which may deceive; our heart shall better be made known by our ordinary demeaning of our selves, among those with whom we have our callings. It was a notable testimony of true piety▪ & a religious heart in *David*, when he professed that *he would walk within his house with a perfect heart*, Psal. 101.2. Every hypocrite will talk of religion, when others do so, but we must make it our talk and communication within our houses, reforming them according to the ordinance of God, and instructing them that live under our roof in the word of God.

Lastly, it is our duty, as we have received [Use 4] a proper and peculiar calling, so to walk in the particular duties of our several callings, whereunto we are called, that so we may serve him that hath set us in them, and receive occasion to rejoice before him. As he hath called us, so let us walk, whether we be Ministers or people, husbands or wives, in Church or Common-wealth. This is the general rule often remembered by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7.20, 24. *Let every man abide in the same vocation, wherein he was called*, and a little after, *Let every man*

wherein he was called, therein abide with God. Let us not stretch our selves beyond the bounds of our calling. If the hand through envy of the greater gifts of the eyes, would needs take upon it to see, and by seeing to direct the body: or if the eye, not contenting it self to see for the whole, would seek to speak and utter a voice, as the tongue: if the head would attempt to walk and take up the office of the feet: or if the left hand having the same gift with the right, would malign it, because it is more apt, strong, ready, quick, and able to execute the function belonging unto it; who would not complain of this confusion, as most unnatural and monstrous, threatening the ruin of the whole body? This duty hath many branches. First, it teacheth, that everyone ought to have a proper and personal calling, wherein he is to walk diligently, carefully, and painfully, whether he be high or low, rich or poor, bond or free, all without exception, must have a particular vocation of his own. Christ is called in the Gospel *the Carpenter*, Mar. 6.3. *Moses kept his fathers sheep*, Exo. 3.1. *David followed the Ewes great with young*. Everyone must labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Secondly, it is very comfortable to us to be busied in them: we must look for a blessing upon us and them, while we continue in them. God appeared to *Moses* in a slame of fire out of the middes of a bush, while he kept the flock of *Jethro* his father in Law. *David* was chosen and taken from the sheepfolds to feed the people of God. The Lord took *Amos* as he followed the flock, and said unto him, *Go, Prophecy unto my people Israel*. While the shepherds were attending their flocks by night, and abiding in the fields, *an Angel of the Lord brought them tidings of great joy which should be to all people, that to them was borne that day in the City of David, a Savior which is Christ the Lord*, Luke 2.10, 11. The like we might say of *Jacob*, while he was faithful in his calling, the Lord appeared unto him. He chose his Apostles as they were busy in their callings and painful in them: *Peter and Andrew, as they were casting a net into the sea: James & John his brother, as they were mending their nets*, for they were fishers: *Matthew the Publican, as he sate at the receipt of custom: he saith unto him, follow me; who arose immediately & followed him*, Mat. 9. While we walk in our callings, we may look for a blessing, but when once we go from them, and either forsake our calling, or busy our selves in other men's callings, we can expect no blessing at his hands; for when we leave them, he leaveth us: when we return to them, he returneth to us.

Thirdly, everyone must judge and esteem his particular calling to be the best and fittest for him. The Apostle confirmeth this by his own practice and example, Phil. 4, 12. *I have learned in whatsoever estate I am, therewith to be content*. This will arm us against all discontentment and murmuring against God, and make us quietly to keep our own standing. When *Absalom* was not content with the place of a Subject, and to be accounted the Kings son, but said, *O that I were Judge among you*, 2 Sam. 15, 4. then he sought his fathers kingdom. When the sons of *Zebede* contented not themselves with the calling of Disciples, but were enflamed with the thirst of honor, and desire of dignity, to be the greatest in the kingdom of Christ, then arose envy and heart-burning among them. It is altogether impossible, that we should rest well pleased with our callings and conditions, and not climb aloft above the places wherein we are set, except we set down this as our rest, that our calling, such as God hath appointed, is the fittest and meetest for us.

Lastly, everyone is bound to glorify God in his calling, though it be never so mean or base. Wives are charged to be obedient to their own husband, *that the word of God be not blasphemed*, Tit. 2, 5, 10. Servants are commanded to please their masters in all things, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things, Tit. 2, 10. *That the Name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed*, 1 Tim. 6, 1. This ought to be propounded unto us, and set before our eyes, to make it the end of all our actions, that whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we may do all to the glory of God, 1 Cor. 10. It is not the highness or lowness, the greatness or meanness of our calling, that God so much respecteth, as the sincerity of the heart of him that walketh in his calling. If it be not sound, all our actions are corrupt. We must not think, that only men of high callings are to give glory unto God, it is a common duty required of all: and woe unto us, if we do it not. The heavens declare the glory of GOD, much more ought man, endued with reason and understanding.

27. And of Kohath was the family of the Amramites, and the family of the Izeharites, and the family of the Hebronites, and the family of the Uzzielites: these are the families of the Kohathites.

28. In the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, were eight thousand and six hundred, keeping the charge of the Sanctuary.

29. The families of the sons of Kohath shall pitch on the side of the Tabernacle, Southward.

30. And the chief of the house of the families of the Kohathites, shall be Elizaphan the son of Vzziel.

31. And their charge shall be the Ark, and the Table, and the Candlestick, and the Altars, and the vessels of the Sanctuary; wherewith they minister, and the hanging, and all the service thereof.

32. And Eleazar the son of Aaron the Priest, shall be chief over the chief of the Levites, & have the oversight of them that keep the charge of the Sanctuary.

Now we come to *Leuies* second son. We have spoken before of *Gershon*, of whom came the Gershonites. It followeth to speak of *Kohath*, for to him & his posterity were committed the most honorable offices, as we shall see afterward in the next chapter. Touching whom, we may observe (as we did in the former) these particular points: First, the families that descended of him, which are four in number; *the Amramites, the Izeharites, the Hebronites, and the Vzzielites*, verse 27. Secondly, the number of the males that came of them, to wit, eight thousand and six hundred, verse 28. Thirdly, the place where they pitched, to wit, the South-side of the Tabernacle, verse 29. Fourthly, the ouerseer, or superintendent of them, namely,

Elizaphan the son of *Vzziel*, verse 30. Fifthly, the charge and function committed unto them, were the chief things within the Sanctuary, verse 31. Sixthly, the overseer of all these overseers, and the chief of them that were the chief, was *Eleazar* the son of *Aaron*, who had authority over all the Priests and Levites, verse 32. He was under *Aaron* appointed to have the oversight of them that had the charge of the Sanctuary. For *Aaron* himself was the high Priest, and his eldest son *Eleazar* was under him, as it were the second Priest: even as in the reign of *Zedekiah*, the high Priest was *Seraiah*; the second Priest was *Zephaniah*, as we read in the second book of the Kings, chap. 25, 18. *The Captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief Priest, & Zephaniah the second Priest, and the three keepers of the door.* The second Priest is thought to be one appointed to succeed in the high Priests room, and to supply his place, if he were sick, or otherwise hindered and letted by necessary occasions.

Of this family of the *Kohathites* came *Moses* and *Aaron*. And albeit the Lord appeared in special manner to *Moses*, called him to be a most excellent Prophet, to whom he revealed himself as it were face to face, and chose him to be the Governor of a mighty people, yet he would have his children to content themselves to be ranged among the ordinary Levites, though they were not advanced to be in the number of the Priests, much less to be the high Priests. And note the sincerity of *Moses* himself, that he is not ashamed to set down this in writing, and to commit it to posterity; so that he cannot be suspected of any show of ambition, or to give any the least occasion to the ungodly of slandering him. Thus do the writers of holy Scriptures deal, without all partiality, even in matters that do concern themselves. This we see in *David*, Psal. 51, in the title of it, who mentioneth his committing of adultery with the wife of *Uriah*, and his repentance for the same. The Prophet *Jonah* reporteth his flying from the presence of God, and the judgment that fell upon him for it, in that Prophecy. The Apostle *Paul* spareth not to tell the Church, and to leave it to all posterity, that he was a *blasphemer, a persecutor, and an oppressor*, 1 Tim. 1, 13. *One borne out of due time, the least of the Apostles, not worthy to be called an Apostle, because he persecuted the Church of God*, 1 Cor. 15, 8, 9. Behold therefore the purity of the word of God, & learn to confess it, and endeavor to find this effect of it in our hearts.

Besides, we are to observe and mark from hence, that the Tribe of *Levi* of small and little beginnings did make wonderful proceedings: for whereas he begat three sons: *Gershon* had only two: *Merari* two, and *Kohath* four; who could have expected so fruitful a posterity, that twelve men in so short a time should swarm into so many thousands? Thus doth GOD work mightily by weak means, both in the natural generation, and in the spiritual regeneration, that his glory might more brightly and beautifully appear. We have seen and shown already, how God, even when his people were most vexed & oppressed, did then most of all increase and multiply them, and so manifested his power in their preservation.

Likewise also we see in the New Testament, he chose out twelve Apostles, and sent them into the world, not furnished with carnal weapons, nor armed with the force, or favor, or friendship of mortal men. By such as were unskillful, he overcame the wisdom of the wise: by few in number, he subdued very many Nations: by the weak, he vanquished the strong: by an vnwarlike company, he conquered every high hold that lifted up it self against God, & laid

it equal with the ground: by such as were vnnoble and unknown, he dimmed & darkened all the glory of the world: by silly and simple sheep, he tamed the fierceness of roaring Lions, that is, the cruelty of bloody tyrants: and by innocent Doves, he drave away wily and subtle serpents.

Last of all, albeit *Kohath* were not the elder brother, and consequently the Ruler of *Leuies* house, yet in the common ministry he was preferred before the rest, and had the chiefest preeminence and place of honor above thē; to teach us that God showeth mercy from the fountain of his own holy will and pleasure, even as he advanced *Moses*, and called him from feeding his fathers sheep, without any dignity or desert that was found in him. Let us all confess this, when we receive any kindness and mercy from him: otherwise we rob him of the glory due to his name. But of these points we have spoken elsewhere: and therefore we will come to the doctrines.

[Verse 27. *And of Kohath was the family of the Amramites, &c.*] We are to note that which was expressed before, and is repeated again hereafter, but especially is pointed out in this division; that the office committed to this family, is called *a charge* and ministrations, they had *the charge of the Sanctuary*, verse 28. Again, *their charge shall be the Ark, and the Table, and the Candlestick*, verse 31. And afterward, *Eleazar shall have the oversight of thē that keep the charge of the Sanctuary*, verse 32.

From hence we learn what the office of the [Doctrine] Ministry is, namely, that it is an office of charge. It is required of all the Ministers, carefully to look to the Churches and charges committed unto them, and to attend to the flock that dependeth upon them. The Ministry is a great burden, and a work full of employment. This doth *Peter* by way of exhortation teach the Elders, *Feede the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, &c:* 1 Pet. 5, 2. Thus doth *Paul* instruct the Elders of *Ephesus*, Acts 20, 28. *Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.* And when he writeth to *Timothy*, he saith, *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work.* So likewise in the same Chapter, *If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?* And in the second Epistle, chap. 4, verse 1, 2. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all suffering and doctrine.* Whereby we see, that the Ministry is an oversight, and the Ministers, Overseers, and the end of their office, *a caring for the Church of God* diligently and incessantly.

This may farther be shown unto us by the [Reason 1] force of reason. First, all the titles that are given unto them, are as so many goads to prick them forward, or as spurs clapt to their sides: I will only speak of two, that they are Shepherds and Watchmen. The Ministers are *Pastors or Shepherds*, & the church of God is as a flock of sheep subject to many enemies, as the devil, seducers, deceivers, heretics, evil doers; even as an heard is to many wolves, and therefore they must be carefully looked unto. Besides, they are called watchmen, the Church is as a City besieged day and night by strong and mighty enemies, Ezek. 3, 17. *Son of man, I*

have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, & give them warning from me. It behooveth therefore the spiritual watchman, to keep diligent watch.

Secondly, the Ministers are fitly called the [Reason 2] Lord's committees, and therefore they must give an account for the souls committed unto their charge. Our life must go for their lives, & our soul must answer for their souls, if they perish through our default. This the Apostle declareth, Heb. 13, 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, & not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you.* Some offices have no accounts, or easy and very small belonging unto it: but this hath an heavy and straight accounts: because the blood of such as perish, shall be required at the watchman's hands that hath neglected his duty.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, we have a gracious promise of a great reward. Our pains shall be so rewarded, that greater reward shall be for greater pains, as the Apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. 3, 8. *He that planteth, and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor.* The Apostle Peter concludeth this, chap. 5, 4. *When the chief Shepherd shall appear, we shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.* This ought to encourage us to our duty, to consider that our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

[Use 1] The uses remain. First, seeing the Ministers must keep watch & ward over the souls of the people, it serveth to reprove such as make it a matter of ease, and therefore when they are once entered into that calling, do give themselves to idleness and security, not considering that it is a work, full of labor and employment, full of difficulty and business. True it is, the Ministry is an honor, but withal it is a burden: so that whosoever will have the honor, must bear the burden upon his shoulders, for these cannot be separated. These two are as companions that cannot be divided. Everyone is willing to hear of the dignity, but everyone is not willing to discharge the duty: everyone is ready to be preferred, but everyone is not so ready to profit others. God requireth of all Pastors, that they should instruct the ignorant, bring home them that wander, heal the diseased, comfort the distressed, support the weak, admonish the disorderly, convince the erroneous, reprove the vicious: but these sluggards that sleep and delight in sleeping, will do nothing at all, regarding the fleece rather than the sheep, and the benefit to themselves, more then profit to their hearers. Woe unto such idle bellies; woe unto such hard masters, who reap where they have not sown, and gather where they have not strewed, who hiding their talents, are convinced of grievous iniquity in the sight of God and man. For besides those euilles which they have of their own, they are guilty of the death of other men, not only as accessories, but as principal procurers of their destruction.

This is a certain truth, never to be forgotten, but to be engraven in the hearts of every Minister, as it were with a pen of iron, or the point of a Diamond, that so many we do kill, and even murder their souls, as we suffer thorough our negligence and silence to perish, & so to fall into the claws and jaws of the devil, who goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour. The Devil standeth at receipt as a cunning huntzman to cath his prey. Now he hunteth for souls, a more cruel hunter then ever *Nimrod* was, and these are as the devils dogs to drive them into his nets.

If we will approve our selves to be true Ministers indeed, we must confess that we are bound with a treble band of necessity, to discharge our duty, as it were with 3, strong chains that are not easily broken; one, in regard of our selves; another, in regard of the people; and the third, in regard of God and his glory, that ought evermore to be before our eyes. The Apostle saith of himself, 1. Cor. 9, 16. *A necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel.* They are subject to the curse of men, that in time of famine & dearth, do withhold the corn, Prov. 11, 26. *Such the people shall curse, but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.* In like manner, such as withdraw the food of men's souls, and gather it as ingrossers into their own hands, are accursed, not of men only, but also of God, and his curse shall enter into their souls, and not leave them until he have rooted them out: because they feed not the flock, but feed upon it: prey upon it, but do not pray for it. In regard of the people, our Savior saith, Luke 10, 42. *One thing is necessary,* and woe to them that hear not the Gospel: for as great a necessity is laid upon the hearer, as vpō the Minister, so that *where there is no vision,* the people perish. If then we take heed to our selves, and unto the doctrine, and continue in them, in doing this, we shall both save our selves, and those that hear us, 1 Tim. 4, 16.

Lastly, the consideration of God's glory ought to be as a spurr to prick us forward to do our duties. The Apostle speaking of the Thessalonians, a most worthy Church abounding in all heavenly graces, calleth them *his glory, his joy, his hope, his crown* in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming. Howbeit his glory was joined with the glory of God, otherwise his glory would have turned to his shame. Hereby is the Father glorified, when we bring forth much fruit to the obedience of the Gospel: and therefore the love of God should compel and contstrain us to publish the glad tidings of salvation Hence it is, that Christ exhorteth *Peter* again and again, as he loved him, to feed his sheep and his lambes, John 21, 16, 17. So then, such as are negligent in their duties, declare plainly, that they neither love God, nor care for the people, nor regard their own souls.

Secondly, they are reprov'd that are ignorant and cannot, as they that are idle and will not teach: they that are unskillful, as well as they that are willful in detaining the word of life, the food of the soul from the people. These have no knowledge themselves, and therefore cannot build up others in knowledge. They starve themselves, and therefore have no bread to bring forth to save the lives of others. They have nothing in them, and therefore cannot show any old or new store. They are poor, and therefore have no treasure to bestow upon others.

No man ought to adventure his own soul, though he might advantage himself thereby, *to win the whole world,* as Christ teacheth, Math. 16, verse 26. For what should this profit him in the end, when he hath cast up his accounts, and compared his gains and losses together? But these foolish men, to get not the gain of all the kingdoms of the earth, but the tithes and revenues of someone little parish, do hazard their own souls nay more then that, the souls of many people, whom they rob sacrilegiously of the means of their salvation. These also are cruel mothers, or land-monsters, that instead of feeding their children, do starve them, being worse then the sea monsters, who draw out the breasts, and give suck to their young

ones; whereas these are become cruel, like the Ostriches in the wilderness, so that the tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst, the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them. They are silly watchmen, that instead of warning the people, do deliver them & betray them into the hands of the enemy. They are miserable shepherds, who instead of pasturing their sheep, do pester them and poison them rather, and suffer the wolf to rent them in pieces. Christ sent out his Disciples, as sheep among wolves, Math. 10: but these are wolves among sheep, sent out by Satan to annoy the Church. They take upon them to be Captains to conduct the host of God, but they have no skill to do it, and therefore woe to the people that are under them. It were better for them to take the place of a common soldier, and comfortably to serve in it, then by taking upon them an higher charge of command then they can manage, to destroy themselves, and overthrow many others that depend upon them. It were better for them to learn, then to teach: and to be hearers of others, then speakers to others. Let them not despise this counsel given unto them, who are fitter to be governed and commanded by others, then to rule and command over others, lest they repent when it is too late.

Thirdly, seeing the office of the Ministry is an office of trust, it reproveth all such as take the charge of souls themselves, and commit them to a curate or substitute, contenting themselves to reap the profit, but contemning to discharge the duty which they ought to do. They go away with the fattest of the fruits of the earth, and have oftentimes poor hunger-staruen deputies to supply their places, whose mouths they stop with a little morsel, by which means also, the people go away with hunger-staruen souls. Christ preached not to the people by substitutes, to ease himself, or enrich himself, or magnify himself, sitting Doctor-like at home; but took pains in his own person, he went about from City to City, teaching and preaching in their Synagogues, taking all occasion to do good to their souls and bodies; to their souls, by instructing of them: to their bodies, by healing of them. He was anointed as the Prophet of the Church, *to preach* good tidings unto the meek; and was sent to bind up the broken hearted, and to proclaim liberty to the captives: he doth not account his duty discharged, by sending out his Apostles, like to those that lay heavy burdens vpon other men's shoulders, and will not touch them with their little finger; but he joined his labors with theirs, jointly to build up the house of God. The Prophet saith, *Woe to the idol Shepherd that leaveth the flock: the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened*, Zac. 11, 17. These are no better then hirelings, who care for the hire, but not for the heard: they are willing to catch from them what they can, but deliver unto them little or nothing. It is a ruled case by the Apostle, Rom. 12. He that hath an office, let him attend on his office: if then themselves must wait, they cannot be discharged of their waiting by any deputies, where their presence in their proper persons is required.

Hence it is, that the Apostle joineth their own labor, and their own reward together, 1 Corinth. 3, verse 8. If then labor be not proper, the recompense should not be proper: if it be another man's pains, it ought to be another man's reward. If then they labor by another, they shall be rewarded by another; and therefore let them take heed, lest as they deprive the

Church of their labors, themselves also be deprived of their reward, when the great Shepherd of the sheep shall appear in glory.

Let them therefore always have in remembrance the good affection of the Apostle toward the people, 2 Corinth. 12, verse 14. *Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be burdensome unto you, for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.* Here is the duty of a right Pastor, not to seek gain by the sheep, but to save the sheep. His desire was not to enrich himself but the people. The mark that he aimed at, was not covetousness; but to plant godliness in the people, and so win them to God.

Woe unto them that are otherwise minded, for God will reveal it in due time. What then? should not the Minister live of his labors in the Church? Or is it unlawful to take any recompense of his hearers? Was not *Paul* the father of the Philippians, because they maintained him, and ministered unto him being absent? Or was none of the rest of the Apostles a father, because the Churches supplied their wants? I answer, the Apostle hath no such meaning: forasmuch as natural parents themselves are to be nourished by their children in their old age, or when they fall into decay, as we see in the example of *Joseph*, who preserved alive both his father and brethren in the years of famine: but he declareth, that whatsoever he did unto them, proceeded from a fatherly affection toward them, and that as a father he desired to enrich them with heavenly blessings in Christ, being careful by all means to gain their souls to God, not their wealth unto himself. O that all such as are entered into this office, & have taken this charge upon them, were thus minded! O that the zeal of God's house had even eaten them up, that they would prefer the salvation of his people, before their own greedy and covetous affections! O that they could in these days set before their eyes, the account that they are to give for the sheep committed unto them!

Give me leave in this place, though it be not according to mine ordinary manner, to lay before you a parable, which also is a true history, and therefore may not unfitly be called an historical parable, or a parabolical history, it being indeed both of them: and for our better knowledge, I will set down certain marks instead of the men, defining the persons by certain letters, but concealing their names.

G. A certain man traveling by the way, & meeting with a Minister that was also holden skillful in the laws, said unto him, Sir, I am glad I have met with you so fitly at this time, for I am like shortly to come into some trouble, if I do not look to myself to prevent the danger: now I have always taken you for my friend, and therefore let me be so bold as to ask a question of you, wherein I understand and know very well, that you are able to resolve me in this and a far greater matter.

C. The Minister answered, I am no lawyer; yet (my friend) I will do what I can for you, and give you the best counsel that lieth in me.

G. Sir, the case is this; There was a Gentleman not far from us, committed to my custody certain sheep to keep, and indeed I cannot deny, he gave me a great charge of them, and promised me a good reward for my labor, so that I undertook the looking to them, and the

feeding of them. But because I had other sheep of mine own also, so that I could by no possible means look to both flocks; I put them out to another, who agreed for a certain stipend covenanted between us▪ to look unto them: yet he was careless altogether in the business, so that some of them stragled from the flock and were lost; others starved for want of feeding; others were too high of the gall; others the worms did gnaw and eat unto the bones; and others died of the rot; woeful is the state of that flock. To be short, and not to trouble your patience any farther, the owner of them refuseth to deal with him that suffered the flock to go to havoc, but cometh upon me, and requireth them at my hands, and threateneth to trouble me for them.

C. No marvel, said the Minister: you are bound to answer for them: you undertook the keeping of them, and therefore you are to be charged with them. If I commit a treasure unto you to keep, I must ask it again of you, and not of another. If you put out your child to nurse, you will require it again of the Nurse that undertook the keeping of it.

G. I confess (answered the other,) this to be true: but by your leave Sir, the case is altered in my matter. For there seemeth unto me small reason in it, and little conscience, to require that parcel of sheep at my hands, forasmuch as I designed them over to another, and he promised before many witnesses to discharge me.

C. The Minister replied, That is no matter, it is a plain case; you took upon you to see unto them, and therefore it is great equity and conscience, that you make them good. This standeth with good reason, & is grounded upon the law of God and man. I dare assure you, the law will pass against you by any verdict of twelve men in England, and you will be constrained to pay for them. The Gentleman trusted you with them, and not your deputy, and therefore I know no remedy for you, nor any way to help you.

G. I am now satisfied, I think you have given a right judgment. But good Sir, if the case be thus, how cometh it to pass that you do the like, and yet do not see it, or if you do, yet think yourself blameless? The great Shepherd of the sheep, Christ Jesus, hath committed his sheep to you; and you having also other sheep, have committed one parcel to your Curate and Substitute, who is careless and unconscionable, and suffereth them to perish: how is it then that you, who went about to persuade me, do not persuade your own heart, that his negligence shall not excuse you, but that the master of the sheep will require them at your hands? Is it law against me, and not against yourself? Is it equity, reason, and conscience, that I should answer for them that are lost: and doth it not stand with as great equity, reason and conscience, that you should answer for such as you suffer to perish? I may say therefore to you as *Nathan* did to *David*, You are the man. The case is yours, and the danger is turned upon your own head. Repent and amend, lest Christ say unto you, *Thou evil and slothful servant, out of thine own mouth will I judge thee*. To leave this parable, let us learn to look to our several functions with all diligence, remembering the great charge we have taken upon us, the maintenance that we do reap from it, and lastly, the accounts we shall give of it.

[Use 2] Secondly, it teacheth the Ministers, as they desire the salvation of their people, whom Christ hath redeemed with his most precious blood, so they ought to be diligent in

preaching the word in season and out of season; that their consciences may bear them witness, that above all things they seek to glorify God in the instruction, conversion, and salvation of the people. Great was the care of the Prophets to warn the people of God of their sins. They stood upon their watch towers to descry the enemies. They attended the flock committed unto them. We have a multitude of examples as it were a cloud of witnesses that have gone before us in this office: but especially let us look unto Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, O what diligence unspeakable appeared in him? The Evangelist noteth this out by many circumstances, Math. 9, 35, & 4, 23. *Jesus went about all the Cities and Uillages, teaching in their Synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness, & every disease among the people.* The very word of *going about* from place to place, doth carry with it a manifest signification of painfulness. He refused to tarry long in one place, as appeareth in his answer to the Samaritans, John 4. It was his meat and drink to do the will of his heavenly Father, for therefore he was sent. He preached and wrought miracles, not only to those that came unto him, or were brought before him, but of his own accord he went about vnrequested.

Secondly, it is a sign of no small diligence, in that he offered his travel, not only to one place, but to many: not only to great Cities, but also to small towns and to little villages; as appeareth in the perambulation or visitation that he made for the instructiō of the souls of the poor people that wandered as sheep without a Shepherd, preaching diligently in every place as he went.

Thirdly, he leaveth not unvisited and vnfrequented every Synagogue or place of public assembly for the preaching of the word, he took all occasions, and watched all opportunities to do good; he taught in the City, in the wilderness, in the high ways, on the sea-shore, in the Ship, on the plain, on the Mountain, in the public Temple, in private houses, in the corn fields, and where not?

Fourthly, the matter which in his doctrine he handled, namely, the Gospel of the kingdom, serveth to commend his painfulness unto us: forasmuch as truly and sincerely to preach the Gospel, is a work of much labor, wonderful care, and great diligence.

Fifthly, his desire was to do all good that might be, not only to their bodies, but to their souls: seeing he did not only teach them, but healed, not some sorts, but all kinds of sicknesses and diseases. None of them, though never so dangerous and desperate, were to him incurable.

Lastly, he could not be stayed from preaching sound doctrine, and healing unsound bodies, by the uncharitable slanders and wicked reports of the Scribes and Pharisees, who, ascribing the working of his miracles, to the power of *Beelzebub* the Prince of diuelles, spake all manner of evil against him. This worthy example and perfect pattern of all righteousness, the chief Pastor of the sheep, ought we all to imitate that are entered into this calling: let it be as a glass to behold our faces, and as a rule or squire to examine all our actions by it, that thereby we may stir up our selves to be diligent in our Ministry. This hath sundry branches pertaining to it, & issuing out of the same root.

First of all, all Pastors must be diligent to know the state of their flocks, and to take heed to their herds, as Prov. 27, 23, 24. Forasmuch as riches are not forever, and the crown endureth not to every generatiō. Such as are absent from them ordinarily, cannot possibly know in what state they stand, they must of necessity be ignorant of their condition. When the master of the family is away, the fellow servants begin to smite one another, & to eat and drink with the drunken, Mat. 24, 49. When *Moses* was in the Mount, & absent from the people, they fell into idolatry, and worshipped a golden calf, Exod. 32. The presence of the Minister ought to be an example of virtue, and a stay to them in all well-doing.

Secondly, we must not be discouraged by the ungodly speeches & venomous tongues of wicked men, thereby growing negligent in our functions. Christ himself was evilly entreated, counted a devil, called a Samaritan, esteemed a wine-bibber, and branded to be a glutton, a friend of Publicans and sinners; yet he ceased not to teach and preach in every city and village. *Elijah* is charged to be a troubler of the state, yet he shrinketh not back, nor spareth to rebuke the idolatries of the Priests of *Baal*, 1 Kings 18, 17. *Paul* and *Silas* are reported to trouble the City (as *Elijah* before was to trouble *Israel*) yet they continue and are not afraid to preach the Gospel of salvation. *Amos* was accused to the King by *Amaziah*, to have conspired against him, yet he would not give over, nor hold his peace. This is a common practice of lewd and profane persons, to persuade mē of great countenance and high places, that we preach against them, and that it is not the word of GOD that reproveth them, but that we single them out, and so entitle them to our reprehensions; verifying the saying of the Prophet, *They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly*, Amos 5, 10. But sin must not be left vnreproved, and we must with deaf ears, and dumb tongues, and blind eyes pass over such slanders, as unworthy to be answered or regarded; and let us, endeavoring to carry a clear conscience, go forward diligently and earnestly in the course of our Ministry, remembering the example of Christ our Savior, whom no cavils nor quarrels of his enemies, could restrain from preaching the word to instruct the soul, neither from working miracles to do good to the body; and considering that he pronounceth all those blessed that are reviled, persecuted, and slandered for the truths sake, *Because after the same manner they dealt with the Prophets that were before us*, Mat. 5, 11, 12.

Thirdly, we must not be afraid of the faces and frowns of men. It is the weakness and frailty of many men, that they are ready to stand still and start back at every high and big look of the wicked, and thereby wax feeble and faint-hearted at the great threatenings of the mighty.

Hence it is, that the Lord saith, Ezek. 3, 8, 9. *I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads: as an adamant harder then flint have I made thy forehead; fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house*. So he willeth *Jeremiah* to speak unto the people all that he commanded him, and that he *be not dismayed at their faces*, lest he be confounded before them.

Lastly, we must wisely apply the word to the capacity and understanding of all. To speak generally to all, is as it were to hover in the air, and in effect to speak to none. The hearts of men are stony, and are not easily broken. They are as tough wood, that must have many

strong blows to cleave it. This is *to divide the word of truth aright*, to give everyone his portion of meat in due season. Then doth the word become effectual and is made profitable unto us, and preached with power and authority, when it is brought home to the doors of our hearts, and applied unto our consciences.

True it is, we cannot abide to have our sores touched, and our wounds searched: but this is the only true and right means to be cured. We must therefore make much of such teaching and of such Teachers, and as we tender the salvation of our souls, so we must desire to have the word thus opened, & when it is so delivered and handled, let us submit our selves unto it with all reverence and carefulness. It is a spiritual knife to launce us, and to let out our corruptions, which are ready to fester within us, and to hinder the work of it.

Lastly, this serveth for instruction in a necessary [Use 3] duty required of the people toward their Pastors, that seeing they have a great charge over them to teach them, they ought willingly to give unto them recompense of their labor, and a liberal maintenance for the work of the Ministry. It is the ordinance not of man, but of GOD, that they which spend their time, their study, their gifts, their strength, their substance, and even themselves in the most profitable and necessary service of the Church, should be bountifully provided for, and have no just cause to complain of want. This will appear very plainly unto us, if we consider what allowance was given to the Levites under the Law, and how the maintenance of the Ministry standeth under the Gospel.

First of all, the Scripture teacheth, that they had 48, Cities, and two thousand cubits of ground from their walls, which I may call as it were their glebe lands, Numb. 35. This was to them a liberal portion, and in so small a country, a great proportion.

Secondly, they had the tithes of corn, of wine, of oil, and of all fruits & herbs, together with the tithes of the herds and flocks.

Thirdly, they had the first borne of all sorts of cattle, as of Beeves, of Sheep, & of Goats, as also the prices of the rest according to the Priests estimation, Ezek. 44, 30. Neh. 10, 36. Likewise they had the first borne of men redeemed at a certain price, to wit, at five shekels a man.

Fourthly, there was appropriated unto thē the first fruits of wine, of oil, of wool, of corn, and of their dough, Numb. 18, 13.

Fifthly, he had all the oblations and vows, and whatsoever was dedicated unto God and separated from the common use, Numb. 18, 8. Ezek. 44, 29, 30.

Sixthly, the meat offerings, the sin offerings, & the trespass offerings, the heave offerings, and the shake offerings, and the show-bread, Numb. 18, 9, 11. Levite. 24, verse 9. Mat. 12, 5.

Seventhly, the abundance and multitude of the sacrifices yielded unto them a great allowance: of the peace offerings they had the breast and the shoulder; of others, they had more, of every sacrifice they had somewhat. Numb. 18, 18. Levite. 7, 31, 32, 34. Deut. 18, 3. Levite. 7, 8.

Eighthly, all the males were to appear thrice a year before the Lord, Exod. 23, 15, and 34, 20: but none were to appear empty before him.

Ninthly, if any man had defrauded his neighbor, and purloined his goods from him, and he have no kinsman to recompense the trespass unto, the trespass is to be recompensed to the Lord, even to the Priest, Numb. 5, 8. The doer of wrong is not to retain it, but it shall remain to the Priests use, in case the owner be dead and have left no kinsman behind him.

Lastly, all these former duties were to be paid in kind; if any desired to redeem them, he must pay, not after his own pleasure or price, but according to the Priests valuation, and must add a fifth part thereunto: if any part or parcel were detained, he was to bring a Ram for an offering, & to make good that which he withheld, & as an overplus to add a fifth part thereunto. Wherefore, all things being duly considered, the maintenance of the Priests and Levites was both liberal and honorable. Liberall, in regard of quantity and quality.

Honorable, in respect of the manner, inasmuch as they were commanded to bring their offerings or gifts into y^e Temple, that from thence they might receive thē as from the hands of God himself, lest the people when they brought any of their duties should upbraid the Priest, as if he were beholden unto them. This is the fashion and corrupt course of many unthankful wretches in these our days, that plead for nothing but for their backs, and bellies, and coffers, that care not whether religion go forward or backward, that hit the Ministers in the teeth with their paiments and liberality toward them, & think they live an easy and pleasant life by the sweat of other men's brows.

So then, seeing the Ministers under the law that served at the Altar had such means of maintenance, that they might give themselves wholly to holy things: much more ought the Ministers of God in the time of the Gospel to be well provided for. For as their office is greater, so the reward of their labors should be better. Our Savior teacheth, Math. 11, verse 11. that he which is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater then *John* and the Prophets; that is, the Ministers of the Gospel have received an higher calling then all that went before them, and therefore there ought not to be a lower respect had unto them. God therefore would have them well maintained, as not pompously, so not poorly: as not wallowing in superfluity, so not wanting through necessity. They must be relieved bountifully, not live beggarly: liberally, not sparingly or pinchingly, to the end they attend and employ themselves in the duties of their callings, and not to be driven or distracted from them through penury. The Apostle pointeth unto this in the Epistle to the Galatians, ch. 6, v. 6. *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things.* And in the 9. chapter, verse 7, of the former Epistle to the Corinthians, he confirmeth this truth at large, *Who goeth a warfare at his own cost? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit of it? &c.* The Ministers are the Captains or Colonels of the Lord's host; they are the planters of his vineyard; they are the shepherds of his flock: and therefore ought to have maintenance from the Church.

Secondly, it were a kind of wrong and injustice to *muzzle the mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn*: the calling of the Minister is laborious, they are the Lord's ploughmen, seedmen, and harvest-men. His ploughmen, *to plough up the ground of men's hearts*, Ier. 4, 3, 4: to harrow

them, and as it were to fashion them anew, that so they may be fitted to bring forth fruit, when all thorns and thistles are grubbed up and removed. His seed-men, to sow the precious and immortal seed of the word in their hearts, whereby they are regenerated and borne anew, Luke 8, verse 11. 1 Pet. 1, verse 23. His harvest-men, to gather his corn into his barn, that the sons and daughters of almighty God may have the food of life broken unto them, and not perish through famine.

Thirdly, the Minister communicateth spiritual things unto the people, which are of much more value then all temporal and earthly things. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *Is it then a great matter, if we reap your carnal things?* As if he should say, If we bestow upon you the greater, we may well receive the lesser things, not as a benevolence, but as a recompense, albeit no sufficient compensation of our labors can be bestowed upon us, forasmuch as they owe unto us, even themselves, as *Paul* speaketh to *Philemon*.

Fourthly, as the Levitical Priests for their service in the Sanctuary had a large and liberal maintenance, so ought the Ministers of the Gospel: *They which minister about the holy things, live of the things of the Temple, and they which wait at the Altar, are partakers with the Altar: even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel*, 1 Corinth. 9, verse 13, 14. This condemneth the covetous practices and niggardly dealings of worldly minded men toward the Ministers, who account them that attend upon this calling unworthy any allowance, as being in their foolish opinion and devilish conceit, an idle, and needless, and fruitless function. These men are of so wretched and corrupt consciences, and so void of the fear of God and man, that whatsoever they can cunningly purloine, and fraudulently convey away from them, they think it well gotten and gained. But let these men know, and lay it up in their hearts, and apply it to their consciences, that as the Ministry of the word is the ordinance of God, and the maintenance of the Ministry is the ordinance of God: so such as set themselves with might and main against it, either to disannul the preaching of it, or to hinder the free passage of it, whether it be openly or covertly, whether it be directly or indirectly, do fight against God, provoke his wrath against them, sin against their own souls, and overthrow the salvation of many thousands that might be called and converted by it.

Many damnable hypocrites there are in the world, that dare not openly speak against the Ministry of the word, and the preaching of the Gospel; for then all men would condemn them, and be ready to cry shame upon them, all men would paint and point them out with the finger, and hiss at them as they go in the streets: everyone would shun them as diuelles incarnate. Whosoever should forbid the Trumpet to be blown in time of war, would be taken for a traitor, and as one that goeth about to betray the army into the hand of the enemy. Or he that should forbid the soldiers to gird their swords by their sides, would he not be esteemed to be an hollow hearted friend, and secretly to favor the contrary side? So is the case of such, as would not have the Minister cry aloud, *to lift up his voice as a Trumpet*, and show the people their transgressions; nor to strike at the sins of men with the sword of the Spirit, they do undermine the City of God, and utterly betray the cause of religion. If we look to have religion prosper, we must look to the Ministry that it be upholden: if we let it alone,

& have no regard unto it, whether it flourish or decay, and suffer every base and beastly companion to flout at it, and insult over it, we strike at the heart of religion, and give a deadly blow unto the cause of God. Wherefore, they are constrained to put on a vizard, and as it were to mask themselves, that they may play their parts, & not appear in their proper likeness: so that all their quarrel is against the Ministers in outward show, they are made the causes of all divisions and contentions in the places where they live & preach the word. These Sycophants would make the world believe, that Preachers make debate among men, and they know whole towns divided one against another, since they had a teaching Minister; so that whereas before they lived & loved together as honest neighbors & good friends, now there is dissention sown among them, and they hate one another as enemies. These are they that hold, that the dogs are the cause why the sheep and wolves do not agree, whereas if they were tied up, the whole flock would quickly be a prey to the wolves. Thus did *Ahab* charge *Elijah to trouble Israel*, 1 Kings 18, 17. So the Apostles are accused *to trouble the City*, while they taught the people.

If *Paul* cry out against *Diana* and the gods that are made with hands, and the idolatrous worship done unto them, there will arise no small stir among those that seemed quiet before: forasmuch as *Demetrius and the rest of the workmen of like occupation* (that thrive by such means, and get their gain by unlawful ways) will be full of wrath, and fill a whole City with confusion.

There is a carnal peace which is in the flesh, which Christ professeth he came to dissolve & disannul, Math. 10, 34. *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword, &c.* God and the devil cannot agree together, light and darkness will not be companions: the godly and the wicked cannot be at one. So thē, the fault of contention is to be laid upon the wicked and ungodly, who fret and rage against the word, because it layeth open their filthiness, and bewrayeth their corruptions. While darkness covereth the earth, much foul matter is hidden and is not seen: but when the day appeareth, and the Sun shineth, it can no longer be kept secret, for the light, as the Apostle saith, doth manifest all things, even the counsels of the heart.

But to return to the point before handled, from whence we have a little digressed, to answer the objections of these cauillers, whose mouths must be stopped, who, while they take from the Ministers their maintenance, do through their sides give a sore wound to the word it self, and take away the key of knowledge from the people. The wise man faith, Prov. 20, 25. *It is a snare to the man, who devoureth that which is holy.* Tithes are consecrated unto God and to his service, and therefore are not to be applied to common uses, or detained from the right owners of them. Properly God challengeth them as his own, and he hath assigned them to his Ministers. When *Belteshazzar* abused to common & profane uses *the golden vessels of the Temple, which Nebuchadnezzar* carried away, he enjoyed not his pleasures long; for in the midst of all his iolity, came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote his destruction upon the plaster of the wall of his own Palace. It was sacrilege in *Achan*, to take away any part or parcel of that which was consecrated to God, and in the end the Lord found him out, and he was stoned. It was sacrilege in *Ananias and Sapphira* his wife, to detain any whit of that which

themselves had consecrated unto God, and might before been lawfully enjoyed: yet was that possession a snare unto them, and brought sudden death by the heavy hand of God upon them. O that all Church-robbers, and Minister-robbers, and Religion-robbers would have these examples as fearful spectacles continually before their eyes, and be moved thereby liberally to give that which they cannot conscionably detain: forasmuch as it is an audacious and sacrilegious robbing, not of man, but of God himself. It is an infamous crime to be a thief and a robber, but it is much more reproachful to be a spiritual stealer.

Hence it is, that the LORD saith by his Prophet, *Will a man spoil his gods? yet ye have spoiled me. But ye say, wherein have we spoiled thee? In tithes and offerings.* Where we see, the Lord accounteth it a spoiling of himself, even because the right of the tithes and offerings was alienated & averted from the right use, and thereby his service was greatly profaned, and the edification of the people shamefully hindered.

If these rhinges will not enter into our stony hearts harder then the adamant, if the glory of God, which should be more dear then our lives, be not precious unto us; if the destruction of thousands souls, for whom Christ died, be not regarded of us; if the decay of religion and the ruin of the Gospel, be as a toy or trifle unto us: yet at least let us always have before us the judgment of God upon our selves, and be well assured, that the wrongful and unjust detaining of the Lord's portion from the Lord's Pastors, shall bring such a curse upon the rest of our substance, that it shall be as the ears of corn that are blasted: yea, it shall kindle such a fire in the midst of our houses, that it shall consume them with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof. The Lord having by the Prophet *Malachi*, charged his people with spoiling him in tithes and offerings, he addeth this in the next words, *Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have spoiled me, even this whole Nation.* The zeal that *David* had for the house of GOD was very great, so that he professeth, it *had even eaten him up*, Psal. 69: and indeed he showeth no less by his own practice. For when *Araunah* the Jebusite, as a King in the willingness of spirit, offered to give to *David* Oxen for burnt sacrifice, and the threshing instruments for wood, that he might build an altar and offer thereon: he would not accept of it at his hands, *neither offer to the Lord his God* that which cost him nothing, as one esteeming (in so doing) the precious things of GOD, light and of small account. O how far are these men from this heavenly affection of this holy servant of God? He accounted nothing too good to give to God: but they account it an happy turn, if they might go away scotfree, and pay nothing at all toward the maintenance of the Ministry of the word. It is strange to see how bountiful many are, and even prodigal, that they care not what they waste and consume in following their own pleasures, pastimes, and vanities of their corrupt hearts; and yet how backward and pinching they are oftentimes for one halfepeny that is going from them, and coming either toward the poor, or toward the Minister. But mark the secret and just judgment of God upon them, and tremble at it, or rather fear him that inflicteth it, and payeth them home in their own kind, & punisheth them proportionably according to their sin: for he detaineth his graces from them, and sendeth them poor and lean souls that are ready to famish and perish, through want of heavenly and spiritual food. True it is, there have been two extremes in the world, both touching the estimation of their persons, & touching the compensation of their labors. In former times, the people did so highly account

of them, that they did stick and cleave too much to their persons, and therefore *Paul* saith, 1 Cor. 3, 5, 7. *Who is Paul? and who is Apollo? but the Ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man: so then, neither is he that planteth, anything, neither he that watereth, but God that gave the increase:* but in our times, there appeareth not such forwardness, wherein they are contemned & despised. This is one extreme. Likewise, in former times, they were ready to give all, and yet they thought all to be too little: now they would willingly (if they might) take away all: so that if some positive laws did not stay them and restrain them, their consciences are so large, that they would suffer them well enough to take the corn, and feed the Minister with the straw: they could be content to fill themselves with the Calves out of the stall, and to eat the fattest of them, and then to reserve the refuse for the Minister, and to give them the bones to gnaw upon, which they offer to their dogs, and yet think that too good for them. A goodly recompense for their great pains! They are not ashamed to share the wool of the flock among themselves, and to clothe themselves therewith: and then to cast the tails to their Teachers, and to stop their mouths with the dung and drauery that is good for nothing. Thus are they affected toward religion, and the promoting of the word and worship of God: they care not though all rudeness and barbarisme were among us, and the world were become a receptacle of all atheism, like a wilderness overgrown with nettles, briars, and all noisome weeds, if so be they might get any advantage by the ruin and overthrow of the Gospel. In the late days of superstition (which many now living can yet remember) the people generally were most bountiful to their sacrificing Mass-Priests, who fed them with corn that is musty and mouldred, or rather with husks, fitter for swine then for the servants of God: and yet they thought nothing too good for them, nothing too much to bestow upon them, as the idolatrous Egyptians nourished their idolatrous Priests in the years of famine, Gen. 47: so that their Land was not set to sale, *having a portion assigned unto them of Pharaoh*, and eating the portion which he gave them. Now our people are better taught, yet they pay all duties and demands for the most part grudgingly, and murmur at all things that go from themselves, as if a man did cut a piece of flesh out of their sides, or let them blood at the heart vein. Then they had a zeal, though not according to knowledge; and a conscience, though it were blind: now indeed, by reason of the labors of the Ministers which stretch out their hands all the day long, & spend their strength among them, they have science, but little or no conscience; the Gospel would be welcome unto them, at least in word, provided that it do not any way displease them or disease them, neither be costly or burdensome unto thē: otherwise, if they must depart with any of their morsels, they care not for it, nor esteem anything of it, nor will be ruled by it, nor order their lives after it.

33. Of Merari was the family of the Mahlites, and the family of the Mushites: these are the families of Merari.

34. And those that were numbered of them, according to the number of all the males from a month old and upward, were six thousand and two hundred.

35 And the chief of the house of the families of Merari, was Zuriel the son of Abigail: these shall pitch on the side of the Tabernacle Northwards.

36. And under the custody and charge of the sons of Merari, shall be the boards of the Tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and the sockets thereof, and all the vessels thereof, and all that serveth thereto.

37. And the pillars of the Court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords.

38. But those that encamp before the Tabernacle toward the East, even before the Tabernacle of the Congregation Eastward, shall be Moses and Aaron, and his sons, keeping the charge of the Sanctuary, for the charge of the children of Israel: and the stranger that cometh nigh, shall be put to death.

39. All that were numbered of the Levites, which Moses & Aaron numbered at the commandment of the Lord, throughout all their families, all the males from a month old and upward, were twenty and two thousand.

We have already handled the numbering of two of the families, that have their foundation in the sons of *Levi*, to wit, the *Gershonites* and the *Kohathites*. Now followeth the third and last, that is, the *Merarites*; touching whom, we are to consider sundry particular points, as we have done in the two former divisions. For first, the families descended of *Merari* are named, which are two, the *Mahlites*, and the *Mushites*, verse 33. Secondly, the number of persons: the sum of them according to the number of all the males from a month old and above, was six thousand & two hundred, verse 34. Thirdly, the Overseer, or Superintendent of them all, was *Zuriel* the son of *Abigail*. Fourthly, the place of their abode in the host, was on the North-side of the Tabernacle, verse 35. Lastly, the office and function committed unto them, was y^e woodworke, and the rest of the instruments. These things were committed to their charge and custody.

Hitherto we have handled the numbering of this Tribe, simply considered in it self, according to the particular families of it: now let us observe how it is concluded. In this conclusion set down in the two last verses of this division, we are to mark two points; first, the persons that went before the Ark of the Covenant on the East-side: secondly, the total sum of the whole Tribe is reckoned up. The persons that were to pitch on the fore-front of the Tabernacle toward the East, are these: both *Moses* himself as the chief Captain & Commander over the whole, and also *Aaron* with his sons the Priests, ministering unto God and his Church: whereunto is annexed a certain prouiso, that none should dare to thrust himself into their office, verse 38.

Secondly, the total sum of all the former particulars is brought together, and the accounts cast up, which are said to amount to two and twenty thousand, v. 39. Out of which general number, must be deducted the Priests and the first borne of the Levites themselves; for otherwise the whole Tribe of *Levi*, consisting of the Priests and such as are called by the common name of Levites, amounted to the number of twenty and two thousand, and three hundred souls.

[Verse 33. *Of Merari was the family, &c.*] In this division, we see more plainly and particularly that which was in part noted before, namely, the several mansions and situations that these Levites had about the Tabernacle, which being the place of God's public service, they compassed it round about, that they might not be far from any of the people of God, but always resident among them. The *Gershonites* pitched behind the Tabernacle westward, verse 23. The *Kohathites* pitched on the south-side of the Tabernacle, verse 29. The *Merarites* pitched on the north side of the Tabernacle, verse 35. Now, lest any part should be left unfurnished and unprovided, *Moses* and *Aaron* and his sons are commanded to take up the fore-front of the Tabernacle, and to pitch on the East-side. GOD might have put and placed all the Levites in one corner of the host, if it had pleased him: but in great mercy both toward the Levites and people, they are seated in the midst of the army, and charged to compass the Tabernacle round about, to the end they might serve the better for giving direction and instruction indifferently to all the rest of the Tribes that were to use their Ministry. Thus we see, that neither the Teachers were constrained to go far to their hearers; nor the hearers to take any tedious journey to their Teachers.

This teacheth us, that God will have every part of his people taught. Such is the goodness [Doctrine 1] of almighty God, that he will have none of his servants untaught, how small soever the places be, how mean soever the persons be. None are too high in regard of their great places; none are too low in regard of their obscure callings; none are too good to be taught, whatsoever their degrees be.

We see this most evidently in the Tribe of *Levi* it self: To what end and purpose were *they divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel*, Gen. 49, but that all the Lord's people might be instructed from the highest to the lowest, and have their portion in due season allotted unto them of God? This is givē as a commendation of the Levites, and of *Jehoshaphat* that sent them, 2 Chron, 17, 9. *They taught in Judah, and had the book of the Law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the Cities of Judah, and taught the people.* This we see in the Apostle *Paul*, writing to the Ephesians, and setting down the notable fruits and ends of the Ministry of the word, Eph. 4, 13. He gave some to be Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers, *Till we all meet together in the unity of faith, unto a perfect man, and the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ.* Touching the practice of this duty, we have a notable example in Christ our Savior, in many places of the Evangelists, Luke 8, 1. *It came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every City and Village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and chap. 13, 22. He went through the Cities & Villages, teaching and iournying toward Jerusalem.* The like we read of the twelve Apostles, who walked in the steps of their master, going *through the Towns, preaching the Gospel, and healing everywhere*, Luke 9, 6. So also

it was with the seventy Disciples, the Lord sent thē two and two before his face, *into every city and place, whither he himself would come*, Luk. 10, 1. Seeing then the Priests and Levites, Christ & his Disciples, went about through all the Cities of *Judah*, published the Gospel in every city and village, preached everywhere, and went into all places, we conclude, that it is the ordinance of God, that all places, great and small; all persons, high and low: all congregations, big and little, should have the word of God established and settled among them.

[Reason 1] This will be made plain and clear unto us by diverse reasons. First, consider with me the titles that are given unto God in y^e Scriptures. He is worthily called the King of his Church, and the Lord & Master of his house-Is not he *the Shepherd of Israel that leadeth Joseph like sheep?* Psal. 80, 1. Will a Shepherd that hath any care of his Sheep, or any love unto them, look unto some of them and not to all? Or will he not rather, *if any be gone astray, leave ninety and nine in the wilderness, and seek that lost one until he find it?* So is it the will of our Father that is in heaven, that not one of these little ones should perish, Mat. 18, 14. He commandeth, that not one of these little ones should perish, Mat. 18, 10. He maketh us to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth us beside the still water, he restoreth our souls and leadeth us in the paths of righteousness for his names sake, Psal. 23, 2, 3. *Jacob*, that fed the sheep of his father in law, testifieth touching his care, that *the drought consumed him in the day, and the frost pinched him in the night, and sleep departed from his eyes*: so that whatsoever was torn of beasts, or stolen of thieves, was required at his hands, he bare the loss of it. Much more then will the Lord care for the sheep of his pasture; his rod and his staff shall comfort them, and although they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they shall fear no evil. Will a king regard only the chief Cities and most populous places of his kingdom, and suffer the rest to live as they list, without laws & good orders? Or will the master of an house look to some in his family, and not to all? If then, God be our King, if he be our Master, he will look to all his subjects and servants whatsoever they be, that they shall have their meat in due season.

Secondly, such is the grace and goodness of God, that he would have all his people [Reason 2] come to knowledge. Such as know not his will, are none of his servants. If then he require the understanding & knowledge of his ways, not only of rich men, of great men, of learned men, and of the Ministers, but of all the people, of what calling and condition soever they be, how mean and simple soever they be: we must hereof conclude, that he hath ordained, that all of them should have the means of knowledge and salvation offered unto them, and published among them. To this purpose the Apostle saith, *He will that all men shall be saved, and come unto the acknowledgement of the truth*, 1 Tim. 2, 4. And *Peter* in his second Epistle, chap. 3. teacheth, that *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise (as some men count slackness) but is long suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*. This is that which the Prophet *Ezekiel* setteth down, chap. 18, 11, 23, 32, and 33. *Have I any pleasure at all, that the wicked should die, saith the Lord? and not that he should return from his ways, and live?*

Thirdly, the word of God was penned for all estates, degrees, and conditions of men. It [Reason 3] serveth as eye-salve to clear the eyes of all persons, and to *make the simple wise*, Psal. 19, 7. and 119, 99, 100. It cleanseth the way of the young man, if he take heed thereunto with all diligence, Psal. 119, 9. The book of the Proverbs of *Solomon the son of David, King of Israel*, was written to *give subtlety to the simple, and to the young man knowledge and discretion*, Prov. 1, 4. The Apostle *John* wrote to the *Fathers*, because they had known him that is from the beginning: he wrote unto *young men*, because they have overcome the wicked one: he wrote to *little children*, because they have known the Father. If then the word do serve for all sorts, and sexes, and ages whatsoever, it followeth, that all must be taught from the greatest to the least, from the highest to the lowest.

Fourthly, all persons, whatsoever they be, have souls to save; simple persons, small congregations, [Reason 4] little assemblies, as well as others that are many in number. We consist not only of bodies, we must not only provide for this present life, but we have also souls to save and must prepare for the life to come. We shall all give an account of the things that we have done in this life, whether they be good or evil: forasmuch as *the Lord will reward every man according to his works*, Rom. 2.6. The day of our particular death, and the day of the general judgment, are both of them days of reckoning and account: and as the soul is most precious, so the account to be given for it is very great: and therefore from these premises we may necessarily deduct this conclusion, that it is the will and pleasure of God, that every place and person should be carefully instructed.

[Use 1] It remaineth therefore that we come to the uses, and as from a good tree, gather such fruit as groweth from thence. First we learn, that it is God's ordinance and appointment, that every congregation should have a learned Minister, to teach them the true religion and fear of God. It is not enough, that there be a settled & standing Ministry in one place or corner of the land, or in every great city; but he will have his people in all places, whether great or small, to be cared and provided for, & every Church have a sufficient Minister to instruct every member of it. Hence it is, that the Evangelist declareth, Acts 14.23. that *the Apostles Paul and Barnabas, ordained Elders by election in every Church*, and then they commended them to the Lord, in whom they believed. And in the Epistle to *Titus, Paul* saith unto him, Chap. 1. verse 5. *For this cause left I thee in Creta, that thou shouldest continue to redress things that remain, and shouldest ordain Elders in every City, as I appointed thee*. By every Church and every city in those places, we must understand, that wheresoever there is a body of people gathered together fit for a Congregation, there ought a Minister to be chosen, appointed, and set over the same. For wheresoever a Church is planted, and a distinct congregation established, there is an absolute necessity of a settled Ministry, (as we have shown before in the beginning of this Chapter) so that it is altogether impossible that without it religion should prosper or continue. The Lord had no sooner given his law concerning the erecting of the Tabernacle, but *Aaron & his sons* were anointed, and the whole tribe sanctified to the office of the Ministry, to attend on holy things, to teach the people, to offer sacrifices, & to perform such duties as were required of them. He knoweth that every man standeth in as great need of food for the soul, as he doth of nourishment for the body: and that as the body decayeth without sustenance, so the soul famisheth and

pineth away without the bread of life. Wheresoever the Ministry of the word is wanting, there wanteth one of God's ordinances, one of his special blessings. We see by common and continual experience, when the corn is blasted, and the harvest of the field is perished, and the labor of the husbandman is destroyed, what crying & lamentation is made: how much more ought we to be grieved, to see the famine of the word brought upon us, and thousands perish thorough want of this ordinance of God? yet nevertheless many never lay it unto their hearts.

Secondly, it is required of the Ministers of [Use 2] the Gospel, whom the holy Ghost hath made overseers of their several flocks, to look to their whole charge from one quarter or corner of it to another. Neither may they think they have discharged their duties by casting an eye over some part of their congregation, but they must overlook and overview it all throughout, considering they are to give an account for every soul that dieth through their ignorance, or through their negligence. There is none of them, but they are content to take benefit and to receive maintenance from the poorest and lowest that depend upon them: and therefore as they are not ashamed to receive temporal things of them, so they ought not to disdain or refuse to minister unto them in spiritual things. For if we take from them their goods, and seek to do no good to their souls, we rob them and steal from them: nay so much as lieth in us, we are no better then murderers and manslaughterers. Wherefore we must endeavor to set up the candle upon the Table in the Lord's house, that it may shine and give light to all that are in it. Let us as the Lord's trumpeters sound the silver Trumpet of the word aloud, that all the host of God may hear the sound thereof, or at least may be without excuse, if they do not prepare themselves to battle. A good Prince taketh care for all his poor subjects, and receiveth them into his protection, and beareth the sword for their preservation. The soul of man quickeneth the whole body and every part of it, it giveth life to the hand as well as to the head, and to the foot as well as to the eye, as well to the parts that are lowest as to such members as are highest: so that no limb is destitute of the functions and operations of it. The head serveth to the benefit of every member which by certain joints and bonds are knit unto it, that they receive plentiful increase, and want no succor or strength necessary for any part, how little and mean soever it be. So ought it to be with the Ministers of the Gospel, who are made as it were *stewards of the Lord's family*, which is the Church, they must give them their portion of meat in due season: *Blessed is that servant whom his master when he cometh, shall find so doing*, Mat. 24.46. This serveth to reprove such as absent themselves from their charges, because they are small; and all proud and lofty spirits that think it a disgrace and dishonor unto them, to submit themselves to the lower sort, and to take pains to bring them to the knowledge of true religion. Hereby indeed they starve the fewest souls, but the loss of one soul is more heinous then the killing of many bodies. For the body may die, yet the soul may be saved in the day of the Lord. And this is one cause of Non-residency, in that such as are of proud spirits, do scorn the simplicity and poverty of their hearers. Wheresoever there is an haughty man and high-minded, there can by no means be an heart to serve the Lord in his Ministry. Where ambition and vain-glory bear sway, they are always joined with the contempt of others; which ought not to be among y^e Ministers: for how then shall the poor, the weak, the simple, be instructed by them? The Minister of the

word must be affable, easy to be spoken withal, and familiar with the meanest and lowest: he must abase himself to reason and confer, and converse with the poor Artificer and tradesman, as well as with y^e Yeoman, or Gentleman, or rich man. The Apostle hath laid before us his own example, how he behaved himself when he was at Ephesus, Acts 20.18, 19, 20. Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations which befell me by the laying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shown you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, &c. He was not inferior in gifts to any, even the deepest doctors in our days, but went far beyond them all; *he was caught up to the third heaven, even into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter:* yet he made himself equal to the lowest, and stooped down to every degree, *that by all means he might save some:* Humility is a notable virtue, that decketh & adorneth all Christians, and is necessary to be in all that profess the fear of God, Col. 3.12. and is oftentimes commended unto us among the fruits of a regenerate person, which the Spirit of God would have us beautified withal. The Apostle Peter, chap. 5.5, 6. giveth this exhortation, *Be all of you subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and gives grace to the humble: humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.* This heavenly gift is opposed to that vain-glory, pride, and ambition which naturally groweth in us, as Phil. 2.3. *Let nothing be done through strife, and vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves.* Howbeit this virtue is most notable and necessary above all other, to be in the Ministers of God's word, as Christ himself both by word and by example in his continual practice taught his disciples, Matt. 11.29. *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.* And when he had washed his disciples feet, he said unto them, *Know ye what I have done to you? If I your Lord and master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet: for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you,* John. 13.14, 15. The place of the Apostle is worthy of our remembrance to this purpose, 1 Thess. 2.7. *We were gentle among you, even as a nurse that cherisheth her children, &c.* Where Saint Paul, noting out his meekness and diligence in preaching unto them, showeth it by a familiar comparison, taken from a natural nurse-mother, who thinketh no service too base or mean in the washing, and wringing, in wiping and cleansing, in feeding and bringing up her tender infant. What is it that she will refuse to do? what pains will she not take for her child? what savors is she content to endure? how ready is she to break her sleep and rest in the night season, and never repineth at it? and albeit it be teasty and wayward, yet she maketh much of it, and loveth it never a whit the less. Thus it ought to be with the Ministers, whensoever any, even of the lowest that pertain unto their flock, when the tradesman, the Shoemaker, the Weauer, the Husbandman, when the servant, & the poor soul that hath scarce what to eat, or what to drink, or what to put on, shall resort unto them for comfort or counsel; then is there place especially for this grace of humbleness and lowliness of mind, they must make much of such as come unto them, and bear themselves familiarly and plainly toward them, entertaining them with all gentleness, and giving them encouragement with all patience▪ in hearing of them, and in bearing with their wants and imperfections. But many there are that take themselves to be such profound doctors, such learned Clearkes,

such deep Divines, and iolly fellows, that they think it were a great disparagement unto them, to bestow their labor and learning among such sottes. They say, I could be content to take greater pains to teach Gentlemen, and those that are more civil; but these rudesbies, and Russet coats, who can abide to live withal? who can endure to spend his days among Clownes and clouted shoes? Thus they deal with Gops people, thus they speak of God's people, for whom Christ died: Thus they account of those that hunger and thirst after knowledge: thus they bewray the pride of their own hearts, and testify against themselves, the little love they bear to the sheep, to the sheepfold, and to the sheepeheard of the sheep. Let them step but one step forward, and then they will plainly discover their own hypocrisy, and evidently show that they differ little or nothing from the Papists themselves. For they, to discourage simple people from reading the Scriptures, call them dogs and swine, to whom holy things are not to be delivered; and to that purpose allege the words of Christ, *Give not that which is holy, unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine: lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you:* so these men account them as clownes and Coridons, and cast out what words of contempt they can against them: they bid them follow the plough tail, get them into their shops, and busy themselves in their trades; as though conference and communication with them were in no sort to be admitted, or as; though they had no souls to save: so that in short time peradventure these high minded men will esteem them as dogs and swine also, which ought not to tread in the LORD'S courts. These are far from the mind and example of Christ, who being equal with God, made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant; he vouchsafed to confer with rude and simple men, he taught men and women, high and low, rich and poor, he refused none. He taught indeed in the Temple, and in great cities, and in populous assemblies, but he disdained not to teach also in their villages and towns, and to instruct plain countrey men, and had oftentimes more comfort of his labors among such, then among men of greater callings. In like manner we that are called to this office, and have our special and particular place of teaching assigned unto us, ought to know that we must be no choosers, When the Lord of the harvest hath sent us into his field, the chief Shepherd of the sheep hath set us over his flock, and the householder hath hired us to labor in his vineyard, it is our duty to follow the example of our Lord and Master, and to apply our selves in our charges, that we may discharge them faithfully, zealously, carefully, and diligently. Let us not dislike our places in the country which we have taken, because the people are few, or rude, or simple, or poor, or of mean conceit and understanding in them. These men will do nothing in secret, but seek to be famous and to be known openly: they affect honors and promotions; they resort to great places, and solemn assemblies, and desire to preach in the Universities, at the Court, at *Paul's*, at the Spittle, or to be heard of great men, and noble personages: and in the mean season, absent themselves from their own cure of souls which are like to perish, for whom they must give account and come to their reckoning; and so disdain to have any dealing with such as are simple, as if they were too good, and the people too base. Let us seek to shake off this high conceit of our selves, and take heed of a scornful and disdainfull heart, which naturally accompanieth all, and especially those of great gifts, & of high places. We see this in Christ's own disciples, notwithstanding his own example of humility daily before their eyes, even when he was preaching most seriously and earnestly unto them of

his death and departure, of his Cross and Passion, of love and humility, Luke 22.22, 23. they began to strive for superiority, & contend *which of them should be accounted the greatest.*

Thirdly, we have warrant and direction [Use 3] from hence, to desire most earnestly that the kingdom of God may flourish everywhere: Christ our Savior teacheth us to pray that *his kingdom may come*, Matth. 6.10. and so to be erected in the hearts of men. It was an holy affection in Moses, to desire that *all the Lord's people were Prophets*, Num. 11.29. so ought we to crave that God's word might be established among all men, and made manifest to all people of the world. This use consisteth of many branches: First, it is our duty, to bewail such places and persons as lie in darkness and ignorance, and consequently in the shadow of death. Christ had compassion of such, and his bowels yearned within him. Such as have not the light of the Gospel shining among them, are said *to sit in darkness*, and to live *in the region of death*, Matth. 4.16. There are many places of the land, & many thousand poor desolate souls that lie in great ignorance, and have no knowledge of the ways of God dwelling in them. The fields are ouergrown with briars and nettles, *which should be white unto the harvest*, John. 4.35. The devil smileth at it, and rejoiceth to behold the desolations of the Church, because it is the exalting of his throne, and the setting up of his kingdom. He is the king of the world, as Christ is of the Church: and his scepter is ignorance, as the scepter of Christ's kingdom is his word. And therefore when the seat of wickedness is overthrown by preaching of the Gospel, we may see *Satan as lightning fall down from heaven*, Luke 10.18. If then we can behold the ruins of the Church, and the destruction of many of our brethren through want of knowledge, and yet are not grieved at it, nor lament for it, we have not the affection in us of Christ the head, neither the grace of compassion that ought to be in us toward our fellow members.

Secondly, we are bound to desire, that wheresoever there is a candlestick, there may be a candle; and where there is a lamp, there may be oil in it; and where there is a Church set up, it may bear in it a burning and shining light: forasmuch as the doctrine that we deal withal doth teach us that it is the ordinance of God, that all places and persons wheresoever and whatsoever should be instructed. We see this in the counsel that Christ giveth to his disciples, Matth. 9.37, 38. When he saw the people scattered abroad as sheep without a shepherd, he said to his disciples, *The harvest truly is plenteous but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.* It is our duty to pray for the preaching of the Gospel, as it were the standard of God, with all other ordinances of God, whereby his kingdom may be erected and established in perfect beauty, that it may be bright as the Sun, fair as the Moon, and terrible as an army with banners.

Thirdly, our desire must be, that the publishing of the Gospel may be blessed, where God hath vouchsafed it; for as the wanting of this comfortable means of salvation offereth much matter of mourning: so the planting of it in any place, ought to draw from us many prayers, for the more free passage, and good success of the word, that God may more and more be glorified by it. This we see in the blessing of Moses, the man of God, wherewith he blessed the tribe of Levi before his death, Deut. 33.11. *Bless, O Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands, smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise*

not again. Hath God then bestowed this blessing upon any people? Craue the continuance of it where it is once settled, to the glory of God, and the good of his people: for this is the way that leadeth to the kingdom of immortality. Heaven is as a City: the Church is as the Suburbs that giveth passage or entrance into it: and the word is the statute-law by which it is ruled and ordered. The Prophet craveth oftentimes the blessing of God upon his Church, and his ordinances that are therein, Psal. 51.18. and 122.6.

Fourthly, we learn that it is required of us to be thankful to God, and to praise his name, when he hath been favorable to Zion, and built the walls of Jerusalem, and sent faithful *Pastors according to his heart, that may feed his people with knowledge and understanding,* Jer. 3.15. When he hath enlarged his Sanctuary, and spread abroad his saving health, we ought to conceive great joy of heart, and express our thankfulness by duties of obedience under the Ministry of the word. For as the want thereof is a token of God's great judgment and displeasure, so the enjoying of the means, is a testimony of his great goodness toward the people of those places; and therefore it ought to draw from us a subjection to his ordinance, and an acknowledgement of his free favor toward us, and a furtherance of us in his fear and our faith.

Fifthly, we must all labor in our several places, and according to our several callings, to embrace the love of God's service and Sanctuary, hungering after the salvation of our brethren. One neighbor is *to call another,* and one friend is *to speak to another,* as if he invited them as guests, to a royal and sumptuous feast. This we see in the Prophet, *Many Nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths, &c.* Mich. 4.2. A farther practice of this we see in Christ's disciples, so soon as they had found Christ, they guided others in the way, and pointed him out with the finger, that he might be known of their brethren. If we lay all these things together, and deeply consider with our selves in the meditation of our hearts, of the estate of our present times, in which we live, and compare them with the days of Christ our Savior, it will cause us to wish with the Prophet, that *our head were waters, and our eyes a fountain of tears, that we might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of our people.* If Christ were now again upon the earth, and should make a visitatiō of this kingdom, as once he did of Galilee, he would (alas) have just cause to complain of the estate of the Church among us, and to account of a great many Congregations, as he did of them, namely, to be poor silly sheep scattered and wandering abroad without shepherds, and therefore might as truly say of us now, as he did of them then, *The harvest is great, but the laborers to gather the harvest are few, &c.* There wanted not in those times store of Priests, Scribes, Pharisees, but these were loiterers, not laborers: idle bellies, not painful teachers: so there is plenty of Ministers in our times, no place is empty no Church is void, no assembly is destitute, nay the number of them is in so great abundance, that many wander up and down the country, as servants without a master, or travelers without a dwelling, ready to be hired for a little, if any *Micah* will give them their diet, *and ten shekels by the year, and a suite of apparel,* Judge. 17.10. being glad to serve *for a piece of silver, and a morsel of bread,* as the Lord threatened the posterity of *Eli,* 1 Sam. 2.36. But concerning faithful sheepeards, and painful Pastors that make conscience of their places,

and keep their watch day and night in their watch tower, to descry and discover the approach of the enemy, and to lead their sheep in the green Pastures of holiness & righteousness, the number is small, so that in many shires and countries, scarce the twentieth parish is provided of one that is able and willing to teach them. In some places we have Non-residents, that post over their charges to others: in other, we have men of great gifts, but of little grace to make conscience of their duty: in many there is no ability or sufficiency to stand up before the people, and to divide the word of truth aright unto them. All these are as Caterpillars that devour the fat of the land; or as locusts and cankerwormes, that take the spoil of whatsoever they can lay hands upon. No marvel therefore, if there dwell in the people such horrible and palpable darkness, like that of Egypt, so that the greater part of them may well be likened and resembled to the horse and mule, in whom there is no understanding. For where there are idle shepherds, there are also idle hearers: and where the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch, Matth. 15.14.

Lastly, this doctrine serveth as an instruction to all Magistrates (as their places serve [Use 4] them) to further the preaching of the word, and to furnish such places as belong unto them with able teachers. This is required of all godly Magistrates, whether they be supreme or subordinate, that they endeavor to be nursing fathers to the Church, Isaiah 49. that they by their authority may encourage and countenance, all such as are Pastors and teachers, to the end they may go boldly forward with that worthy work which is in their hands. A notable example hereof we have in those Princes that were sent out by *Jehoshaphat*: for albeit they did not preach to the people, in the cites to which they came, nor minister the Sacraments, nor offer the sacrifices, nor burn incense, inasmuch as they had the Levites with them to do that service: yet it is not to be omitted or concealed, that they did countenance them, and accompany them; and this their authorizing or backing of them is called *a preaching*, because it made a plain way, and set open a wide door for the people's better receiving of the word with readiness, cheerfulness, and obedience.

The example of great personages is of great force, and is a strong cord to draw inferiors after them. Whensoever such men of high place make account of the Ministers, & highly esteem of their message and Ministry, it moveth others most mightily to show reverence to this holy ordinance of God. Especially it belongeth to them that are Patrones, & have the presentation and collation of spiritual promotions, to have an especial care and regard that the Churches committed to their tuition may be sufficiently furnished, and that as well the small flocks, as the greater herds be provided of godly and learned teachers: for as much as Christ himself, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom from place to place, as occasion served, and the necessity of the people required, delivered the joyful news and glad tidings of salvation, as well to the people of little villages, as to the inhabitants of famous towns and populous Cities: not only to thousands that flocked to hear him, but to hundreds and ten's that came unto him. He shunned popularity, and the applause of men, and shown not himself always openly, nor any otherwise then as he might do most good to the people, and gain greatest glory to his Father. He was not ambitious, or vain-glorious, *nor sought the praise of men*, John. 7.10. and 5.41. and 8.50. When God determined to destroy the Cities of the plain, at the request of *Lot* in mercy he saved Zoar, a little town, Gen. 19. God hath his people

whom he created, and Jesus Christ redeemed, even in little places as well as in great parishes: in small villages, as well as in large Cities. These have souls to save as well as others. Little flocks would have their shepherds, as well as great herds: such as are poor servants of the family, would be glad to have food to eat, as well as the chiefest persons. To instruct a country-village, is a work of mercy, as well as to teach the mother-Cities of a kingdom: and to be careful of the high or head places, but careless of little hamlets, is as unmerciful a part, as to pamper up a great family, and to let a little one starve for hunger: or as if a Prince should provide for the safety of great multitudes of his subjects, and neglect the lesser companies that abide in poorer villages: or as if a man should tender the welfare of his head, and never regard his foot, or his finger. Wherefore all Magistrates must set before their eyes the example of God, as a clear glass to look upon, appointing the ordering of the Levites in such sort, that all the Tribes might be instructed, being so divided & scattered among the rest, that their labors might be communicated to all: as also the example of Jesus Christ, who in the days of his flesh, taught and preached everywhere, not only at Jerusalem, but in Galilee, and other desert and desolate places; so that they ought to have an especial care and regard, that every Congregation have his sufficient Minister. And that they may be constrained to yield to this truth, or at least persuaded to the practice and performance of this duty, or if not persuaded, yet convinced in conscience that it should be done, and that it is their sin if it be left undone: let us a little consider somewhat farther the fact of God, how careful he was thereof, in the land of Israel, that as well the little towns, as the greater Cities might have able teachers.

Hence it is, that he commandeth the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites, the ordinary teachers of the people, of the inheritance in their possession, Cities to dwell in: all the Cities which they were to give to these Levites, were eight and forty, Num. 35.2, 7. The accomplishment whereof, we may read at large in the book of *Joshua*, chap. 21.4, 5, 6, 7. In every Tribe they had four Cities, and so were by the ordinance of God divided in *Jacob*, and scattered in Israel, according to the ancient Prophecy of *Jacob*, Gene. 49. For out of the Tribes of *Judah*, *Simeon*, and *Benjamin*, they had 13. *Cities*, verse 4. Out of the families of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, and out of the Tribe of *Dan*, and out of the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, they had 10. *Cities*, verse 5. Out of the families of the tribe of *Issachar*, and out of the Tribe of *Asher*, and out of the Tribe of *Naphtali*, and out of the half tribe of *Manasseh* in Bashan, they had 13. *Cities*, verse. 6. Lastly, out of the Tribe of *Reuben*, *Gad*, and *Zebulun*, they had given and granted unto them 12. *Cities*, verse 7. By this means was the instruction of God's people provided for plentifully, through a multitude of Cities appointed unto them, not altogether, or in one place of the land, but dispersed here and there according to the infinite wisdom of God, and the absolute necessity of the people. We heard before, what wonderful care godly *Jehoshaphat* the king of *Judah* had, who sent the Levites throughout all the Cities of his kingdom, which *carried with them the Book of the Lord, and taught all the land*, and his zeal was rewarded *with riches, honor, and great prosperity in abundance*, 2. Chron. 17.5.9. The like commendation is given of *Josiah*, who appointed the Priests to their several charges, and encouraged them to the service of the Lord, and said unto the Levites that taught all Israel,

which were holy unto the Lord, *Put the holy Ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build, &c.*

So then, for as much as Christ preached to small villages, as well as to bigger towns: forasmuch as it was the wise policy of God, to place the Levites round about his Tabernacle, and to grant unto them cities throughout every Tribe; forasmuch as it was the carefulness of *Jehoshaphat* and *Josiah* to have all places of their kingdom replenished with good and able teachers; and forasmuch as the Apostle would have Elders chosen by election in every City: let all those that are Patrones of benefices, and bestowers of Ecclesiastical livings, look out godly and learned preachers where there is want, that even small preferments in little Parishes and villages, may have Ministers of more ability then commonly they have, lest even the blood of them that perish through the ignorance of the one, and default of the other, be required at their hands. If the cure or Congregation be small, it is by many thought to be a sufficient cause to bestow it upon an insufficient person, and sometimes upon their porters or other servants, if so be they can in any reasonable or tolerable sort read English, and satisfy the Law, they think no more is required at their hands: and all this is practiced, because (forsooth) it is a little Parish. But Christ hath shown by his own example, that little Parishes are to be instructed as well as great and wide Cities. And if this example cannot teach us, it shall be able to condemn us of unfaithfulness, and of want of mercy and compassion toward the souls of men.

The Lord put it into the hearts of such as are to dispose the livings of lesser Congregations, to set over them such Pastors, as may feed them with the bread of life, that is, with the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom.

40 And the Lord said unto Moses, Number all the first borne of the males of the children of Israel, from a month old and upward, and take the number of their names.

41 And thou shalt take the Levites for me (I am the Lord) instead of all the first borne among the children of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites, instead of all the firstlings among the cattle of the children of Israel.

42 And Moses numbered as the Lord commanded him, all the first borne among the children of Israel.

43 And all the first borne males, by the number of names, from a month old and upward, of those that were numdred of them, were twenty and two thousand, two hundred, and threescore, and thirteen.

44 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

45 Take the Levites instead of all the first borne among the children of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of their cattle, and the Levites shall be mine: I am the Lord.

46 And for those that are to be redeemed of the two hundred threescore and thirteen, of the first borne of the children of Israel, which are more then the Levites,

47 Thou shalt even take five shekels apeece, by the polle, after the shekel of the Sanctuary shalt thou take them: the shekel is twenty gerahs.

48 And thou shalt give the money, wherewith the odd number of them is to be redeemed, unto Aaron and to his sons.

49 And Moses took the redemption money, of them that were over and above them that were redeemed by the Levites.

50 Of the first borne of the children of Israel took he the money, a thousand, three hundred and threescore and five shekels of the Sanctuary.

51 And Moses gave the money of them that were redeemed, unto Aaron and to his sons, according to the word of the Lord, as the Lord commanded Moses.

Hitherto we have spoken of the numbering of the Tribe of *Levi*, simply without any relation to others. Now we are to speak of it comparatively. For in this place the Levites are compared with the first borne among the people, whom God commanded to be redeedeemed by substitution of the Levites, and appointing of them in their room. This hath two parts: First, the enumeration it self, comparing the persons to be redeemed with those that are to succeed them, and come in their places, to the 44. verse.

Secondly, the manner of matching or equalling of them both, whose number was different, to wit, the Levites, and the first borne, by a Pecuniary redemption of those that did amount to more then the Levites, to the end of the Chapter. Touching the first, we are to consider these particulars: first, the commandment of God, charging *Moses* to number the first borne that are males among the children of Israel (the Levites being already numbered, as we have heard in the former part of this Chapter,) from a month old and above, and to take the number of their names; and then commanding him to substitute the persons of the Levites for his service, and their cattle for the cattle of the first borne. Secondly, the obedience of *Moses* to this commandment; all the first borne of the males being numbered, amounted to the number of two and twenty thousand, two hundred, seventy and three.

The second point is the paralleling or equalling of them both, by redeeming the overplus of the first borne, wherein also we may behold the commandment of God, and execution of it by *Moses*. The Lord commandeth the Levites to succeed the first borne, and whereas there were 273. moe of the first borne, then of the Levites, he ordaineth that five shekels of the Sanctuary should be paid of the people, for every person that was above that tribe, which money was to be given to the Priests. The execution of the commmandement followeth in the three last verses, wherein we may see how *Moses* obeyeth in them both; for he took the redemption money of the people, and gave the money of them that were redeemed to *Aaron*, and to his sons according to the word of the Lord.

Out of this division six questions may be demanded, all which we will run over, and briefly dispatch, that we may proceed to the doctrine.

[Object. 1] The first question may be asked, how the number of y^e first borne which came to 22273 surmounted the number of the Levites which amounted to the number of 22300. For if we consider what *Moses* hath expressed before in the particular sums of the several families mentioned in this Chapter, it may seem at the first sight, that the Levites were moe in number then the first borne, & exceeded them by 27. persons. For the sum of the family of the Gershonites, was accounted to be 7500 persons, verse 22. The sum of the family of the Kohathites, was accounted 8600. verse 28. Lastly, the sum of the family of the Merarites, was said to be 6200. The total sum of these three particulars amounteth to 22300. whereas the first borne amounted only to 22273. I answer, this difference is only in show, and not in substance; for in the family of the Kohathites, the Priests also were comprehended, and the first borne of the Levites: so that, whereas the number of these amounted to three hundred, the Levites are rightly said to be two and twenty thousand, verse 39. and the first borne among the Israelites to be two and twenty thousand, two hundred seventy and three.

[Object. 2] Secondly, the question may be asked, how the money commanded to be given for the redeeming of the 273. persons that were above the number of the Levites, was paid: whether by the first borne that were last numbered, or by the people? [Answer.] I answer, by the people, to *Moses*, for the Priests: for so doth common equity require, that one might not be eased, and another burdened. But if these first borne had borne the burden, and others been freed from the payment of this sum appointed and enjoined, there had been no equity nor equality observed, which the dignity of holy things seemeth to require.

[Object. 3] Thirdly, it may be asked, wherefore God challengeth the first borne to be his? I answer, we see the cause, [Answer.] *Exod.* 13. because he preserved them, when he had made a general destruction of the first borne among the Egyptians.

Fourthly, wherefore would God have the Levites taken instead of these first borne? and [Object. 4] to seru him in their room? I answer, [Answer.] first he did it in mercy toward their parents, who might through this liberality use them as their own, and employ them in their service: so that whereas before they were the Lord's, now they are returned to their parents. Secondly, to show the accomplishment of *Jacob's* prophesy, that they must be scattered among the other Tribes, *Gen.* 49. Thirdly, to commend the dignity and worthiness

of the Ministry, in that they succeeded such worthy and honorable persons, who were the flower of all the family.

Fifthly, whereas the price of redemption [Object. 5] and satisfaction for the 273. is commanded and appointed to be five shekls for every person, after the weight of the Sanctuary: the question may be asked, what a shekel is, and what is the shekel of the Sanctuary, and how it differeth from the common shekel. [Answer.] I answer, first touching the shekel, then touching the kinds of it.

The shekel was partly a piece of money, and partly a weight. The value of it according to our coin and common money, seemeth to be two shillings sixpence, and weighing half an ounce in weight, as the best Hebrew writers testify: of which you may read at large in the learned Commentaries of our own men, set forth in our English tongue, the sum whereof is this: That two several pieces have been seen and weighed, one weighed just half an ounce, which had upon one side the *pot of Manna*, with this inscription, *Shekel Israel*, and on the other side was stāped *Aaron's rod*, with this title; *Jerusalem Kedeshah*, holy Jerusalem, in the ancient Samaritan characters. Likewise, there is another piece with the same pictures which was but half so much in weight, being but half the shekel.

Beza setteth down the very same description of the shekel, Matthew, chapter 17. verse 24. which was given unto him by *Ambrose Blancerus*. *Arias Montanus* affirmeth also, that while he was at the Council of Trent, there was brought unto him by a friend, an ancient piece of silver, with the very same figures, and Characters, which he likewise found to weigh half an ounce.

Touching the diverse kinds of the shekel, there are diverse opinions why it is called the shekel of the Sanctuary. *Arias Montanus* affirmeth that it is called the sacred shekel, because it was the shekel that the Israelites used, who were an holy people unto God. But forasmuch as God speaking to his own people, & *Moses* writing to this people make this difference, it seemeth rather that there was a difference of shekels, not only between the Israelites and the Gentiles, but among the Israelites themselves; otherwise that distinction had been needless and superfluous. Others hold, that it is called the shekel of the Sanctuary, because the standard measure was kept in the Sanctuary, that there might remain a just and full weight without imminution or corruption: forasmuch as the weights and measures that were commonly used, were oftentimes altered and changed according to the covetous affections of corrupt men, as the Prophet *Amos* noteth, chap. 8.5. *When will the new Moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the abbath that we may set forth Wheat, making the Ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?* That is, in selling, they used small measures, and in buying great weights, so y^t they did buy with one weight, and sell with another. But howsoever many of the learned lean to this opinion, yet in my judgment it seemeth unprofitable, forasmuch as we never read (to my remembrance) that any weights or measures were kept in the Sanctuary, which was a place for holy things, and a figure of things to come, so that both the whole and every several part had their several significations, and looked unto Christ to come. Besides, the Apostle writing to the Hebrews, chap. 9.4. setteth down the particular things that were contained in it, as *the golden Censer*,

the Ark of the Covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had Manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the Tables of the Covenant, and over it the Cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat, &c. Where we see, he mentioneth what was in the Sanctuary, what was near unto it, what over it, &c. yet we have no naming of keeping any shekel in it. Furthermore, if this weight were there, to avoid the practices of injustice, why had they not also the like provision in other weights and measures also, as well as in this? was there no fear of fraud, but in this? or must the arms of injustice and wrong be tied up in one kind, and left at random in all the rest? Why had they not also the Gerah of the Sanctuary, the Omer of the Sanctuary, the Ephah of the Sanctuary, and so of the rest? Lastly, to omit other circumstances and considerations, this most holy place seemeth of all other, to be most unfit for the keeping of such human and worldly things, whereunto also the people could not have free ingresse, and egress, and regress, at their pleasure, when they should try the truth of their weights and measures. Seeing they had not access to this place when they would, it was not fitted to such a purpose. The third opinion whereunto the greatest number of writers do accord, which seemeth most likely, to which also I incline, is, that there are two kind of shekels, the one common or profane, the other sacred or holy called the shekel of the Sanctuary, double so much as the former; the common shekel amounting to two shillings sixpence, the valuation of y^e other coming to five shillings, according to our money, that is in use among us.

Sixthly, where it is said that the shekel is [Object. 6] twenty Gerahs, verse 47. the question may be asked, what a Gerah is? I answer, [Answer.] the shekel being justly valued, it will easily appear what a Gerah is; but because we shall have fit occasion to discuss this point afterward, in the fifth chapter, we will refer the reader to that place.

[Verse 41. *Take the Levites instead of all the first borne, &c.*] We see here, that the Levites were substituted in the place of the first borne, who did first of all execute the Ministers office. The Lord, if it had pleased him, could have served the Church with them forever: but for the causes before rehearsed, he exempted them from this service, after that for a small time and a few years, he had tried their obedience to his holy will and commandment. Now, in their stead he taketh the Tribe of *Levi* to minister unto him, and for his [Doctrine 1] people. We learn hereby, that the office of the Ministry, is a most worthy and excellent calling. This is that which the Apostle saith writing to the Hebrews, chap. 5.4. *No man taketh this honor to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron;* If then it be an honor to be called to this office, it followeth to be an high and honorable calling. Likewise, writing to the Romans, and declaring that none can preach except they be sent, he addeth out of the Prophet, *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things?* Rom. 10.15. And instructing *Timothy* touching this office, he saith, *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a worthy work;* and afterward in the same Epistle, cha. 5.17. *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, specially they who labor in the word and doctrine.*

Seeing then, the Ministry is an honor as the Priesthood of *Aaron* was, seeing the office is a worthy work, and seeing the feet of the Ministers that bring the word unto us, are beautiful,

so that they are worthy, not only of single, but of double honor; it followeth that the calling is exalted above many others, and ought to have a reverent and special account among us.

The truth hereof will farther appear [Reason 1] unto us by the force of reasons, as so many props to stay it up. First, we must consider the title given unto them of an Ambassador: what greater honor, then to be the Ambassador of a Prince? The Minister is more, he is *the messenger of the Lord of hosts*, and cometh from the King of kings, and Lord of lords. He is instead of Christ, appointed and sent of him to reconcile men to himself, and to save them.

So then, the Ministers supply the office, and sustain the person of the Son of God, who is the word and wisdom of his Father. Not that he would have the Ministry of his word less esteemed, then if he should speak from heaven with terrible signs of Thunder and lightning; but that he might by this means teach in a more familiar manner, and so make the better trial of our obedience. Therefore the Apostle saith, *He that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth us not, hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.* We must hear the word preached by man, not as the word of man, but as it is indeed the word of God, and so set our selves in his presence. Hence it is, that he saith to the disciples whom he had sent out, *He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* If then the Ministry be an embassage sent unto us from God, whereby God after a sort sueth to us for reconciliation, it serveth to set forth unto us the honor of this calling.

Secondly, the honor of the Ministry is to [Reason 2] save men's souls, which of all works, is the highest, the holiest, the heauenlyest, the greatest. What other calling can compare with it in this respect? Other professions and ordinances, respect the good of this life, as peace, or health, or wealth, and such like: but the end of the Ministry alone is the salvation of souls. *Paul willeth Timothy to take heed to himself, and unto doctrine, adding this reason, for in doing this, thou shalt save both thyself, and them that hear thee.* It will be objected, we are saved by Christ only, as I have been oftentimes answered: we have salvation by no other then by him. It is true indeed, Christ hath performed so much as is sufficient for the salvation of all, yet none are actually saved, but they only to whom the benefits and merits of the Messiah are communicated. Now his merits are applied two ways, by the Ministry of the word, and by receiving of the Sacraments, for which cause the power of salvation is ascribed unto them. We do not teach that men are saved by the preaching of the word, to drive men from Christ thereby, or to build our salvation upon any other; for we preach nothing, we regard to know nothing, but Christ and him crucified. We go not about to lay any other foundation, but the question is of the means how we shall come to the saving knowledge of Christ, which is ordinarily done by the sound and sincere preaching of the Gospel: so that this calling is a most excellent calling.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, this truth is farther confirmed and strengthened by the contrary, in that without it ordinarily no man can attain to salvation, as may appear by the means whereby it is effected, and by the degrees whereby it is finished. None shall be saved but such as are effectually called: but what is the Church other, then a company of men called? and they are called by the Ministry of y^e Gospel, made powerful and effectual by the Spirit of God: *Ye are*

called by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. By it, our minds are enlightened to see our own miseries, and God's infinite mercies, and then by it, as by the strong arm of God we are drawn unto him. Again, none are saved, but such as are justified, being acquitted from their sins, and accepted in Christ as righteous, and as heirs of eternal life. But we are justified by faith, and *faith cometh by hearing the word of God*, so that the Preachers are *the Ministers by whom we believe*. Lastly, none are saved, but such as are sanctified by the Spirit of regeneration, and whosoever is in Christ, is become a new creature: but we are borne again by *the immortal seed* which is the word of the eternal God, so that we are begotten into him by y^e preaching of the word. In this respect the Ministers are called spiritual *fathers*, because they beget us as children by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus then we see the worthiness and excellency of this calling, and what we are to esteem thereof.

As then we heard the reasons, so let us hearken [Use 1] to the uses. First of all, this ought to be a strong motive unto us to move us to desire this calling. It is an encouragement unto us to enter into it, & a good warrant that it is lawful to desire it. Who doth not desire honor & excellency in this world? *Saul*, being threatened to have the kingdom rent from him, desired that *Samuel* would honor him among the people. God lifteth up the heads of those that are fitted to this calling, who are as *one of a thousand*. But is it indeed lawful, will some say, to affect this calling, & to desire the office of a Bishop? may a man seek and sue for it? I answer, [Answer.] neither every man nor all desire is warranted. There are two sorts of men, & two sorts of desires. Some men are fitted, and some are unfit. There is a desire that is good, and there is a desire that is evil, according as the fountain is out of which they issue & proceed. The corrupt desire ariseth sometimes from ambition, and sometimes frō covetousness, delighting to set out themselves, or coveting to enrich themselves. For some are possessed and puffed up with the spirit of pride and vain glory, setting out themselves with shows of worldly wisdom, and magnifying themselves and their gifts, to tickle wanton and delicate ears: others make the Ministry as their last shift and refuge, when they have made shipwreck of a good conscience, and know not otherwise how to live. This is a wicked & preposterous desire. For as such as have neither learning nor honesty, neither are willing to labor for their living, when they can no longer maintain themselves, their last remedy is to turn Ale-house-keepers, and to set up tippling houses: so such as have gottē a little smattering knowledge, as shreds or scraps gathered from other men's tables, & have peradventure baited their horses in the University, though they be as far from sound or settled skill in Divinity, as their horses, when they know not which way to turn themselves to live, neither can shift anymore, their scandalous and lascivious courses, being descried and perceived of all men, begin to think of the Ministry, and make that a means to maintain them idly, loosely, and wickedly. This desire is sinful and carnal, woe unto such as thus desire the calling: woe unto such as help them to it, and as it were hold the stirrup unto them, while they mount up into *Moses* chair: woe unto them that suffer them to have entrance and give them easy passage to make houocke of the sheep of Christ: and woe unto that people that have such a plague sent in among them, to destroy their souls. But besides this, there is an holy and godly desire coming from the true fear of God, and the zeal of his

glory, when he giveth unto a man this purpose and resolution, to consecrate himself to the Ministry of the Church, and to put in practice such gifts as are bestowed upon him. The former sort desire the honor, not the work: the maintenance, but not the pains. Such as desire it to be revered, are ambitious: such as affect it, to be maintained, are covetous. They that are set in this calling ought to be revered, but they ought not to respect that as the end of their entrance into it: they ought to be maintained, but that should not be their principal mark, but God's glory and the people's good.

Blessed are they that have this godly desire; blessed be God, that hath put it into their hearts: and blessed are that people that have such a conscionable Pastor set over them to reveal unto them the counsels of God and the mysteries of salvation. These men feeling the blessing of God upon their studies, and themselves in some good measure fitted and furnished for this function, are willing to exercise their gifts, and employ their talent, which is indeed one part of their calling. Hence it is that *Paul saith, Ro. 1.15.16. So much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also; for I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth, &c.* He acknowledgeth himself a debtor unto all men: God is the creditor, who hath given out his money to everyone of his servants, that they should gain everyone to their master, not to themselves: the money committed is his gifts and graces that he hath distributed unto them according to his own pleasure: so that we having received, not only to believe our selves, but to teach faith unto others, ought to be ready, willing, prompt, and prepared to employ such gifts as are bestowed upon us. Thus also doth the Apostle *Peter* teach the Elders, to *feed the flock of God which is among them, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly: not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, &c.* And in the Old Testament, the Prophet *Isaiah*, (when his tongue had been touched with a coal from the Altar, and that he had heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send?) doth of his own accord offer himself and his service, *Behold, here I am, send me.* Wherefore, whomsoever the Lord God shall call immediately by his Spirit, and furnish with gifts requisite for a Minister, he will also touch his heart with willingness and readiness to employ those graces, and to set them on work; he will give him a desire to glorify him in the service of the Church, and to gain souls to his Master Christ.

Secondly, it reproveth sundry abuses of [Use 2] such as transgress against this truth, and dash their foot against this doctrine, as against a stone; as if they meant violently to oppose themselves against it, or knew not that therein they fight against God; which may be reduced to three heads. First, such as abuse their persons, and tread upon them as their footstool: Secondly, such as contemn the Ministry it self as base and vile: Thirdly, such as deny them any maintenance fit for their calling. One sort are wretched and profane, another proud & high-minded, the third worldly and covetous.

Touching the first sort, it is too common a practice in the world to scorn and scoff at the Ministers of the Gospel, which is as much as to make open profession to be void of all soundness and sincerity of religion. For such as hate them and despise them, because they are Ministers, do despise, nay despite God himself, and Christ our Savior, as *Luke 10.16. He that despiseth you despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* Where Christ

setteth down this as a rule, whereby every man may examine his own heart, and make trial of his religion and piety toward God, even by his affection and behavior toward the Ministers of God. It was never known since the world stood, that he did ever so much as savor of any goodness, that could not abide a faithful Minister. I deny not, but he may deceive himself, but God is not mocked: he may pretend piety, but it is nothing but cursed and cankered hypocrisy. The word is the seed of regeneration: it cannot therefore be that such as have been brought to the state of grace and salvation by this precious seed of the word, should abase & abuse those by whom they have been begotten. Will a son, except he do degenerate and become a monster, revile him that brought him into this world, and gave him life and breath? So is it as unnatural, and much more, to contemn the spiritual fathers of our souls: forasmuch as of the fathers of our bodies, we receive only temporal life, but of these, eternal. It is well said by one of the ancients, that whosoever despiseth the Preachers of the Gospel, is an Atheist and profane person, and a despiser of Christ himself.

These do not only sin against God, and against the Gospel, but against their own souls; they hinder their own salvation and the salvation of many others, and so make their means vnavailable, and commit a sin more heinous and horrible then that of Onan, *who spilled his seed on the ground, least he should give seed unto his brother, Gen. 38.9.* The seed of the word is immortal and remaineth forever, and therefore is of greater price; so that they are spiritual murderers of thousand souls that seek to spill it and spoil it, as water on the earth, least it should fructify in the hearts of men. If we should see a man pull out his own eyes that he might not see, or cut off his ears that he might not hear, we would all pity his case, and say he were running mad. But thus it fareth with these irreligious persons; they make themselves blind, that they might be without seeing, they make themselves deaf that they might be without hearing, and they harden their hearts that they might be without feeling. This is spiritual and desperate madness to despise so great a blessing without which we cannot be saved, nor obtain any good things promised unto us. And howsoever these men, to excuse their own impiety and to blind the eyes of the simple, will pretend love and liking to the word it self, yet they utterly deceive themselves: for this is one rule to be observed and learned of us, that whosoever abuseth the Ministers despiseth also the Ministry, as he that liketh the Physic by which he is to be recovered, will also make much of the Physician, whose counsel he hath used. Whosoever accounteth not the feet of those beautiful that bring glad tidings of peace, will not much esteem the Gospel it self: and whosoever despiseth the Messenger, will not regard the message that is delivered unto him.

For the Ministry is the ordinary means, whereby it pleaseth God to save those that believe, Rom. 1.16. 1 Cor. 1.21. Let this be also another rule, y^t whosoever account the Ministry of the Gospel as vile in their eyes, *it shall be easier for them of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, then for them, Mat. 10.15. and 11.24.* yea, Christ our Savior willeth his Apostles to shake off the dust of their feet, as witness against them that hear not their words, neither receive their persons. Wherefore this also shall be another rule, that to abuse the Ministers of the word, and esteem them as the of-scourings of the world, whose feet (as we heard) are beautiful to all the elect, because they bring glad tidings of peace and of all good things) is an horrible sin highly displeasing to God, grievously provoking him to anger, and swiftly

calling down judgment upon their heads. Wherefore he saith in the Prophet, *Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* And Moses prayeth to God on the behalf of Levi, to smite thorough the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again. The persons of Ambassadors are by law of all Nations, sacred and inviolable; the heathen saw it and set it down, and never ceased to revenge the wrongs done unto them, both upon particular persons, and upon whole Cities. The Law of God and man, sacred and profane, account the injuries done unto a messenger, as done against him who sent him: and therefore they were wont to be safely garded and protected, not only in times of peace, but amidst the weapons and naked swords of the enemies. *David* revenged most sharply the injuries and indignities offered to his Ambassadors with the overthrow of the Ammonites, 2 Sam. 10. and never did he show the like exemplary punishment in that extrem manner. Do earthly Princes and States revenge the wrongs offered to their servants sent out by commandment and commission from them: and shall we think that the Lord of hosts, the king of kings, who is the God of vengeance, will suffer the opprobries, contumelies, and contempts offered to his messengers, to go unpunished? The Ministers are the high Ambassadors of God, so that they send not themselves, but are sent out of him, and they execute not their own willes, but his will: and therefore the infinite Majesty of almighty God is violated and abused in the indignities that are offered unto them, and doubtless he will avenge his servants *which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with his enemies.* I tell you, he will avenge them speedily. No man offending in this kind of unkind abuses toward them, ever escaped the punishments of God. How often did God plague his people in the wilderness, when they rose up against *Moses* and *Aaron*, the Ministers of God for their good, who taught *Jacob* his judgments, and *Israel* his laws? When *Jeroboam* stretched out his hand against the Prophet to lay hold on him, his hand wasted and withered, so that albeit he put it out, yet he was not able to pull it in again. The two Captains with their fifties, sent out by *Ahaziah* to apprehend the Prophet, were destroyed with fire from heaven, and never returned to bring their master word how they spedde. The lewd and ungracious children that mocked *Elisha*, and upbraided him with his baldnesse, were torn in pieces by two Bears that came out of the wood upon them. The people of *Israel* that misused the messengers of God, and contemned the Prophets, that spake unto them early and late, were rejected and carried into captivity, into the land of their enemies. Neither is it to be maruelled at, that God hath sent such strange examples of his wrath and indignation upon the contemners of his Ministers, forasmuch as they are as Cyants that fight against God, and therefore he appointed death to him that rebelled against y^e Priest, as those rebels were swallowed up of the earth that made insurrection against *Aaron*, and usurped the Priesthood contrary to the institution of God: in which place, *Moses* saith, *It is not Aaron that you strive against, but even against God himself,* Numb. 16.11. If we follow these men in their practices, let us also fear to fall into their punishments. For God will not be mocked, though the Ministers be misused: and his hand is not shortened, though they be taunted and reviled of us. He will account these reproaches to reach unto heaven, and they shall be of sufficient force to cast us down into hell, except we repent of these evils.

But let us pass from their persons, and come to the function it self. Many there are that are grown a degree farther in impiety, who making no conscience to go out of the way, do wander farther from home then many other. There are indeed some who stick not to account of the Ministers as the filth of the earth; they will give no reverence unto them, they acknowledge them not to be sent to reconcile men unto God, but disgrace them and dishonor them what they can: howbeit they will not break out in open contempt of the Ministry it self, but seem to esteem highly and reverently, and religiously of it. There is some hope of these, that by the mercy of God, they may be reclaimed and reformed. Others spare not to speak against the calling it self, and utter slanderous words against God's ordinance, as men that are come to the height of sin, and have filled up the measure thereof to the brim. These are like *Ahab*; when *Elijah* came into his presence, he charged him to be the troubler of Israel, *Art thou he that troubleth Israel?* They are the Captains and Caualleers that were in the company of *Jehu*, that accounted him who came to anoint *Jehu*, a mad fellow, *What said this mad fellow unto thee?* *Paul* and *Silas* are accused to trouble the City, and to turn the world upside down, and to teach customs which were not lawful to receive and observe, Act. 16.20 *Tertullus* an eloquent Orator, abusing a good gift to an evil purpose, chargeth him deeply to be a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarens, Chapter 24.5. To contemn this calling, is to contemn God: and to dishonor it, is to dishonor God: and yet the Ministers for the most part are esteemed according to their low and mean estate in this world. If they be poor, they are indeed poorly accounted off. If they be not great in the world, they are not regarded and respected of worldly minded men; but these account themselves better then the Minister, because they are richer. But such as are rightly religious, are otherwise minded. *Obadiah*, the governor of *Ahab's* house, refused not to do reverence to the Prophet, to the contemned Prophet *Elijah*, 1 King. 18.7.9. *Joash* the king disdained not to visit *Elisha* when he was sick and lay on his deathbed, and to weep upon his face, and said unto him, *O my father, my father, the Chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof*, 2 King. 13.14. Thus it was in former times, when Kings and Princes were not ashamed to acknowledge them: but as sin aboundeth, so the Ministry is contemned.

The third reproof, is against those that are so taken up with the thoughts of this world, that they refuse to allow them any means of maintenance, and grudge them meat and drink to relieve themselves and their families. This is a fruit of the former sins, and proceedeth from a contempt, either of their persons, or of their calling, or of them both. For when they are grown to contemn them, no marvel if they grudge to maintain them. Some think the calling needless, and superfluous, and well gotten that is detained from them. Others account it voluntary, and arbitrary, which they may give, or not give, yield or not yield, at their own pleasure: others will needs pay it, howbeit not as a duty, but as a gratuity: not as a recompense of their pains, but as a benevolence at pleasure: they will have nothing bestowed as due, but as an alms to the beggar that cometh to their doors. The first sort are plain Epicures, earthwormes, knowing no God but Mammon, and serving no God but their belly. The other two carry more show of profession, and yet they make little conscience of God's religion, or of their own salvation. For if they did hope to inherit heaven, they would

be forward to magnify and further the means that lead us unto heaven, and account it an honor in equity and justice due unto them, to yield unto them a sufficient maintenance, which cannot without sacrilege be detained from them. Who is it that provideth not for his oxen and cattle, that labor for him? who feedeth not his sheep in sweet pastures, that feed him and clothe him? What hearts then have we harder then stone, that do not any whit regard to see them comfortably and competently maintained, that labor for us, search the Scriptures for us, are careful to provide for us, and to feed us with much better food? If a man should see any of us lying in a pit like to be drowned, and reaching out his hand unto us should draw us out, how would we esteem of them? The Ministers draw body and soul out of the deep dungeon of eternal death, and from the pit of destruction, and guide them into the way of peace: and therefore it is great reason, that having received comfort from them, we should comfort them again, and thereby show how we respect them.

If we were borne blind, and wanted the light of the eyes, as the poor man mentioned in the Gospel, and one should restore our sight, we would account nothing too dear for him, nothing too good for him, if we gave him all the wealth and treasure of our house.

But this is our condition spiritually, we sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, we know no more of God naturally, then serveth to make us without excuse. The Ministers are the light of the world to enlighten them, to open their eyes, and to bring them out of darkness into a marvelous light: and yet the idolatrous Priests among the heathen were more esteemed, and better rewarded, then the true Ministers of Christ among us; which redoundeth to the shame and reproach of such as profess themselves to be sound Christians. But Christ saith, [Object.] to his Apostles, *Freely ye have received, freely give*, Mat. 10, 8. How then may the Ministers receive any reward for their labors? I answer, Christ speaketh in this place especially of working miracles, as appeareth in the words immediately going before, where he willeth them to heal the sick, to cleanse the lepers, to raise up the dead, and to cast out devils. If they be extended farther, because he willed them to *go and preach, saying, The Kingdom of God is at hand*: he forbiddeth them to set the Gospel to sale, as that which standeth at offer and proffer: so that the Minister must not be given to filthy lucre, 1 Tim. 3, 3. Tit. 1, 7. So then, they do give freely, who do not intend gain as the reward of their labors, nor set it before their eyes as the mark they aim at, but desire nothing more then the glory of God, and the salvation of the Church, and refer thereunto all their studies and endeourss. They that only or cheefely seek their own wealth, are truly called hirelings; whereas the servants of God have him before their eyes of whom they are sent, that so they may feed the flock with knowledge and doctrine. Again, it may be said, that *Paul* witnesseth he took nothing of the Corinthians, and that he labored with his own hands, Acts 20, 34. 1 Cor. 4, 12. I answer, the Apostle in taking nothing of that Church, considered what did belong to the edification of that Church: nevertheless, the brethren that came from *Macedonia*, supplied his wants, and helped him in his necessities. But of this we spake more at large in the former doctrine.

[Use 3] Thirdly, let no man presume to refuse and reject the Ministry, as thinking themselves or their children too high, or this calling too low for them; thinking themselves

too honorable, and this office too contemptible for their persons. No man is too good to serve God at the Altar, and to minister in his Sanctuary. If any refuse the Ministry in regard of his birth, and his wealth, or worth, or gifts, he deceiveth himself, and ouervalueth his own condition: for *who is sufficient for these things?* We are a thousand fold more unworthy to be Ministers, then the Ministry can be thought unworthy of us. *Noah* was the Prince of the world, yet a *Preacher of righteousness*, 2 Pet. 2, 5. *Melchizedek* was both King of *Salem*, and a Priest of the most high God, Heb. 7, 1. *Gen.* 14, 18. *Samuel* was both a Judge of the people, and a Prophet of God, 1 Sam 3, 20. and 7, 15. *David* was both a King & a Prophet. And albeit certain Kings have been Prophets, yet it was no greater credit to the Ministry, that Kings were Prophets, then commendation to Kings themselves that they were Prophets: as it was a greater glory to Kings that they have been Philosophers, then credit to Philosophy, that Kings have studied, professed, and embraced it. The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, before his incarnation was the Teacher of his people; for by his Spirit he spake in the Patriarchs & Prophets, and was the Messenger of God, and therefore called the Angel of the Covenant: and after that he took our flesh and nature upon him, being the seed of *Abraham*, he professed that he was sent to *preach deliverance to the captives, & the acceptable year of the Lord*, Luke 4, 18, 19, 43. He was equal in glory with the Father, yet this was his calling and work while he lived upon the earth. God the Father thought it a meet office to be committed to his only begotten Son, and should it seem a reproachful office to his servants? If he were anointed to be both our King, Prophet, and Priest, let not us despise prophesy. Nay, not only the Son of God, as he was man, disdained not this function, but God himself in Paradise was a Preacher of the Gospel, Gen. 3, 15. *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpents head:* and the Spirit of God is as it were a fellow-worker with the labors of the Ministers. Besides, the Angels themselves, most glorious creatures, that always behold the face of the Father that is in heaven, have not refused to be the publishers of this message, Luke 2, 9, 10. Wherefore, all such as GOD hath blessed with forward and toward children, as a special mercy toward them, and withal bestowed the goods of this world upon them, enabling them to maintain them in schools of learning, ought to further the building of God's Church, and to think it no disgrace or disparagement unto them, to apply their sons to be workmen in this spiritual building, and so to dedicate them unto God, as godly *Hannah* gave *Samuel* unto the Lord, *that so long as he lived, he might be given unto the Lord*, 1 Sam. 1, 28. It is a thing greatly to be lamented, that this high office of preaching the word is so contemned by all of high calling, that the Nobility utterly shun it, & the greatest part of the Gentry of the Land generally refuse it, either as base in it self, or at least as base to them, or in them. Great men's children are set to study man's law, but it beseemeth not their greatness to study God's law. To be sent on Embassy in the affairs of a Prince, is a great honor; but to be sent with God's message in his mouth, is esteemed a disgrace. Ye fools and blind, whether is greater, God or man? Whose message is most honorable, God's, or else man's? We see in the Popedom, how men of countenance and estimation are not ashamed to give their children to the Popes service, and bear the mark of the beast, and refuse not to have thē nearly and ill-fauouredly shaven, until they have scarce one hair of an honest man left unto them: nay, some of the blood royal have taken upon them the orders or rather the disorders of that Hierarchy, as we have examples in our own Chronicles. Princes themselves have renounced their crowns

and kingdoms, and entered into Monasteries, & have put their sons and daughters into Cloisters. It is very apparent, that Princes among the Heathen, were also Priests. Shall not these being poor blind Idolaters, that knew not GOD aright, stand up at the day of judgment against us to condemn us, that have so little care or love to the Lord's Temple, that the serving of him there, is become so vile a thing, as it is not beseeming a man's son of any countenance and reputation in the world? So that they will not set their hand to the Lord's Plough, but scorn it almost as much as to go to plough and cart. The Prophet *Isaiah* (as it is probably collected) was of a very noble lineage, son to *Amos*, who was brother unto *Amaziah* King of *Judah*, and therefore thought to be of the blood royal, as the Hebrew writers agree, who had the books of Genealogies extant among them. The Prophet *Daniel*, with *Hananiah*, *Mishael*, & *Azariah*, were of the Kings seed, Dan. 1, 3. We heard before that Christ himself the Lord of life, and the most honorable person of highest descent that ever lived upon the earth, who was not only of the lineage and stock of *David*, and heir unto the Crown & Kingdom, but the son of the eternal God, yet he disdained not to serve, but vouchsafed to minister in this office, and hath given example to all posterity, that none should account themselves unworthy of it, or it unworthy of thē: forasmuch as *the Gospel began to be preached of him*, Heb. 2, 3: who is the brightness of glory, and the express image of his person, and upholdeth all things by the word of his power, Heb. 1, 3.

Seeing then Princes and Peers, and noble men, yea such as have been of the Kings blood have employed themselves to the Lord's service: seeing sundry of these among both Pagans and Papists have exercised this function: seeing some of the elect Angels were Preachers of the Gospel: what a slander and reproach is it for us that are dust and ashes, and worms of the earth, and no better; that are called Christians, and would be accounted great professors, who, in so great want of laborers and harvest men to reap down the corn, do bestow our youth, rather any way then this that is the best way? It is incredible what great good such might do in the church. O what a furtherance would it be to true religion, and a notable means to gain many souls to God! For how many be there, that contemn the Ministry of the word, and consequently the word it self, because (for the most part) they are mean and poor men that are the Ministers and Preachers of it? Even as when the professors of the truth consist of the lowest sort, it hindereth the faith of diverse, to consider that none of the rich or of the Rulers believe in him, but the people that are accursed: so is it in the Ministry also. When such as are ignorant of true religion, cast their eyes upon the poor condition of the teachers of it, and behold the worshipful and noble shun it, and shake it from their shoulders, they are offended, and grow into hatred and contempt of the Calling, and regard not such as have taken it upon them. Whereas, if the men of great places would stoop down unto it, (if this may be accounted a stooping down) and as well preach Christ as believe in him, it might be a forcible and effectual means to further and foster true religion. Is it not a comfort to all godly parents, to see their children well bestowed? Can we have them better bestowed, then to serve the Lord, and to labor in his harvest, and to be made Rulers or Stewards in his house? Is there anything we should rejoice more to see, then our sons put in trust with the price of the blood of Christ, and by preaching to win many souls, and send them to heaven? How do men seek to shroud themselves under the cloth of noble men, and are glad of places

and offices under them; like to *Zebedees* childrē that would sit at the right hand and at the left hand of Christ in his Kingdom? But the Ministers are the servants of the most High, they serve the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lord's, then which, what service can be more holy or honorable? The Prophet *Haggai* complaineth, chap. 1, 4, that the whole people from the highest to the lowest, neglected the building of the Temple, and followed their own profits & pleasures, *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your sieled houses, and his house lie waste?* And therefore he threateneth in the words following, to punish those grievously, that were so reckless and careless for the helping forward of this building. Let *Zerobabel* and *Iehoshua* with the remnant of the people diligently consider this point, and meditate seriously upon these things. And let all have a tender regard to employ and set apart some of theirs to work in the Lord's vineyard as painful laborers.

True it is, some go about by pilling and polling to bring the Church to beggary and slavery: but this ought not to discourage any from serving in this calling, nor to withdraw any of his children frō preaching of the word. *The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof*, Psal. 24, 1. *All the silver and gold* in the world is at his commandment, Hag. 2, 8. He will never leave nor forsake those that be his. He will pay good wages to all that are his servants.

They shall be sure of their pay that reap his corn, and bear the burden of the work, and the heat of the day. He hath the hearts of all Princes and Potentates in his own hand. He moved the minds of pagan and heathen Kings, to contribute things necessary for the repairing of the material Temple, as appeareth in the books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*: and therefore he will not suffer such to lack, which labor in his spiritual Temple, under godly and Christian Princes. Seeing then, we ought to make a great account, and have a reverent estimation of the Preachers of the word, and esteem the Calling given them an honorable office, inasmuch as Christ the everlasting Son of the Father, the wisest, the worthiest, the noblest, the notablest person beyond all comparison, of all that ever were, or shall be, or are, in heaven or earth, hath taken up the office of a Preacher, Priest, and Prophet, to teach the people and to pray for them; let us also further this work by all the means we can: and let the Ministers comfort themselves in this their holy vocation, having a multitude of such excellent predecessors, as it were a cloud of witnesses going before them, to be examples to encourage them; and let us not be discouraged by the taunts & opprobrious terms of the ungodly, to dislike and forsake our function, or to be ashamed of it, or to think scorn to labor in it, howsoever many scorn at it, as too mean and base a thing for themselves. For albeit the Ministry above all other callings, is most subject to the contempt and disgrace of profane and godless men: yet let us be assured, that as it is in it self, & in regard of the ordinance of God, as also of the benefit of it unto mankind, a worthy and excellent calling, so they that enter into it, shall be honored of all those which are the children of God. Let us tread those disgraces & contumelies under our feet, and be so far from being dismayed at them, that rather we ought to account our selves *happy for them*, Mat. 5, 11, 12. Seeing we are thereby made conformable, not only to the Prophets and Apostles of Christ, but to our Savior himself, and shall in the end be like unto him in glory and eternal life. Yea, we are assured that in the midst of all disgracings and defacings of us, we are the sweet savor of God, not only *in them that are saved, but in them also that perish*. And albeit we spend our strength in

vain, and for nothing, yet our judgment is with the Lord, and our work with our God, Isaiah 49, 4, 5. In the mean season, let our labor be answerable to the greatness of our calling, that so we may be worthy of that honor.

[Use 4] Lastly, seeing the function of the Ministry is of great excellency and dignity, we must understand, that great gifts are required in the Ministers, and they must in a good measure be qualified thereunto. This use doth the Apostle make, 1 Tim. 3. The office of a Minister is a worthy work, therefore he ought to be of blameless conversation, and apt to give instruction to the people. He must show both integrity of life, and light of doctrine, which is as *the Urim and Thummim* that the Priest did bear on his breast-plate of judgment. It is the best harmony that can be made, when life and doctrine agree together; otherwise, we are as iarring cymbals.

Hence it is, that the Prophet speaking of the Covenant of life and peace made with *Levi*, Malac. 2, 6, saith, *The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips, &c. and he did turn many away from iniquity.* The Ministers are called by Christ, both the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. In like manner *Paul* exhorteth the Elders of Ephesus, Acts 20, 28. *Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which, the holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.* They must take heed to themselves, by living well: and to the flock, by feeding well with wholesome food. They must *show themselves patterns of good works*, Titus 2, 7, 8. If the calling were mean, mean gifts would serve to furnish them that are chosen and exalted to that calling: but seeing it is great, we ought to labor after great gifts, and to be adorned with worthy graces.

They that watch over souls, ought to have a quick and sharp sight, that they may descry the crafty wiles and guiles of Satan. They ought to have a wonderful care of their duty, that are to attend the flock of God day and night, and be able to teach all, and to deal with all sorts of men, as Math. 13, 52. He must be *a Scribe taught of God*. No young scholar, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed who see and try his work, dividing the word of truth aright. They must be able to seek out that which is lost, able to strengthen the weak, able to heal the sick, able to bind up the broken. No skill is sufficient for these works, to be the Lord's husbandmen, to dress and husband the Church, that it become not an unfruitful and barren wilderness. No skill in us is sufficient to make us the light of the world, Math. 5, the salt of the earth, the builders of Christ's body, the coworkers of God, 1 Corinth. 3, 19: the Ambassadors of Christ, 2 Corinth. 5, 20: the Stewards of the house, Titus 1, 7: the fathers of the Church, 1 Corinth. 4, 15: the fishers of men, Math. 4, 19: the Ministers of the Spirit, 2 Corinth. 3, 6: the builders of the Temple; the Shepherds of the sheep, Eph. 4, 11: the planters and waterers of the garden, 1 Corinth. 3, 6, 7: the watchmen of the City, Ezek. 33, 7. Heb. 13, 17: the Trumpeters of the host, and the stars of the firmament, Revel. 1, 20. Dan. 12, 3. The City of God which is the Church, is a more glorious and beautiful work, then is the fabric or frame of the whole world besides. On the other side, see the misery of blind guides, and the mischief that cometh by dumb dogs, yea, the desolation that cometh upon the people that have such Pastors or Shepherds: they are altogether unworthy of that calling. No man will make him his horsekeeper, that hath no knowledge nor skil in horsemanshippe, nor any

experience that way; nor his Cook that cannot tell how to dress his meat: nay, not his swineheard that is no better then an Image or Idol, and cannot tell how to guide or govern them. And yet behold the simplicity and sottishness of the world, and wonder at it! They regard not to commit the souls of men, that are most precious, to such as we will not willingly commit an heard of brute beasts to be kept. Ezek. 33, 6. The watchman that is blind and dumb, and the City that setteth up such an one, shall perish together: and our Savior testifieth, that if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch, Mat. 15, 14. Woe unto such leaders; woe unto such as are thus led.

These make this a base calling, as if *Jereboam's* Priests were fit enough, that were taken from the lowest of the people.

CHAP. IIII.

1. AND the Lord spake unto Moses, and Aaron, saying,
2. Take the sum of the sons of Kohath, from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers.
3. From thirty years and upward, even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the Tabernacle of the Congregation.
4. This shall be the service of the sons of Kohath, in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, about the most holy things.

IN this Chapter we have another numbering of the Levites: howbeit, it is in another kind then the former in the former chapter. For in the third chapter, the Tribe of *Levi* is numbered according to the persons: but in this chapter it is numbered according to their office and Ministry, so that there is a great difference between this and the other. True it is, in them both, this Tribe is numbered, but not this Tribe only, nor all the same persons, nor yet to the same end. We saw before, a general enumeration of the families of the Levites, as they succeeded in the room of the first borne, who had been separated & sanctified to the worship of God, to the Ministry of the word, to the service of the Church, and to the spiritual government of the people: so that as well the first borne as they are numbered: But in this chapter, only the Levites are numbered, not all, nor any of the first borne, who were now freed and exempted, and fully discharged from that ministration. Again, in the former chapter, all the Levites are numbered from a month old & upward: but in this, only such as

were fitted by their years to undertake and execute the office of the Ministry, which lawful age is here defined and determined to begin at thirty, and to end at fifty years. Lastly, that numbering in the former chapter, was to another end and purpose then this. There they were all numbered frō one month, that it might be known what overplus there was of the first borne: but here they are accounted from 30. years old to 50. that according to the number of the persons, there might be an equal division and distribution of their functions.

Now for the better understanding of this numbering, here commanded and executed, we must know that the reckoning up of the Levites, is not done after one manner, but is much differing, not only from the other tribes but also from it self: so that this Tribe is numbered diverse ways. The first is from a month old and upward, as we have learned out of the third chapter, because then they were fit to be offered to the Lord. The second is *at five and twenty year old*, at what time they began to be tried and proved, whether they were fit or not; this is set down, chap. 8, 24. The third is at 30. years of age until 50, when they executed their office fully without any denying or gainsaying. Thus we see the different account that is taken of this Tribe, and the reasons thereof: now let us proceed to the order observed in this chapter.

Herein we are to observe two parts. The first containeth a commandment touching the numbering of the Levites from 30. years old unto 50. together with a description of the proper and distinct office of every family. Secondly, the obedience of *Moses*, in the execution of the commandment of the Lord. Touching the commandment of God, we are to consider, that the whole service of the Tabernacle is parted according to the will and pleasure of almighty God the author of the Ministry, among the three families, springing out of *Levi*, and spoken of in the former chapter, namely, the *Kohathites*, the *Gershonites*, and the *Merarites*. Here *Moses* doth a little invert the former order, and beginneth with the *Kohathites*, because the Priests were chosen among them, and he insisteth longer upon them, then upon other, both because many things are spoken of them, which notwithstanding are not properly to be restrained to them alone, but generally to be applied to the rest; and likewise because they had a more worthy & honorable office, so that the chiefest charge was committed unto them. The commandment is general in this division, & then particular in the verses following. The general showeth who among them were to be numbered, to wit, all persons from thirty years old to fifty, to do the service of the Tabernacle. Thus much touching the order.

Before we come to the doctrines, we are to answer two questions, thereby as it were to vnloose the knots that might trouble those that are weak in knowledge, and slender in judgment. As first of all it may be demanded, why the Lord commanded the Levites in this place to be numbered that were full 30. years old, and not before? I answer, it was, because he would have those that served him in the Sanctuary, and did as it were represent his person to the people, and were to teach them, to be ripe in knowledge, in judgment, in experience, in moderation, in learning, and such like gifts of his holy Spirit. Young men for the most part have green heads, light brains, rash wits, shallow judgments, head-strong passions, being altogether unsettled and ungrounded. Thus it was in *Rehoboams* Counsellors, 1 Kings 12, 8. where we see young Counsellors, young counsel; grave Counsellors, grave

counsel; as the men are, so is their counsel. Such as were to follow the wars, were numbered from 20. years old and upward. *Moses* the muster-maker took their names, and enrolled them at the age of twenty: but such as were the Lord's warriors to fight his battles, and as it were *the Chariots & horsemen of Israel*, must not be fresh-water, or white-liued soldiers; they must not turn their backs to their enemies, nor be afraid to look them in the face, nor shrink back at the push of the pike, nor have their sword rusty in their sheath, but always be prepared, & stand ready for the encounter. But if such had been admitted to this office as were young in years, their lightness in gesture and behavior, might have cast a contempt upon the holy things of God, and caused the people to abhor the word which they deliver, and the Sacraments which they administer: whereof we have an example, 1 Sam. 2, in *Eli's* sons, *The sin of the young men was great*, and they caused the people to contemn the offerings of God. To this end the Apostle adviseth and admonisheth *Timothy*, chap. 4, 12. *Let no man despise thy youth: but be thou an ensample to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.* But of this, we shall have occasion to speak more afterward.

Secondly, a man may ask the question, whether the Priests and Levites ceased the execution of their office at the age of fifty? For seeing God commandeth in this place, all to be numbered that were employed in the work of God, and none were numbered that were under thirty, and above fifty; it may seem to some, that they did nothing afterward. What then? Were they as soldiers dismissed of their service, and put to their yearly pension? Or were they released from all labors, as those sword-players, that had a rod delivered unto them in token of discharge? I answer, this was done for diverse causes. [Answer.]

First, such as execute this holy calling ought to be qualified with judgment, gravity, sobriety, integrity, diligence, yea with power, courage, strength, and to have agility and ability in mind and body, that they may do all things wisely, exactly, studiously, & constantly. But all these agree to a man most fitly and fully between the age of 30. and 50. limited in this place. Youthfull age may be adorned with strength, courage, and earnestness: but it is not so well furnished with judgment, gravity, skilfulnesse, and staidness. On the other side, old men in their declining age, albeit they be filled with knowledge and understanding, and seasoned with moderation of affections, yet through weakness of nature, debility, and other infirmities that follow them, grow dull and heavy, slow and cold, and have not that quickness and readiness of dispatch, which they had, and others have: so that their body is not answerable to their mind, nor the outward man to the inward.

Again, this was the ordinance of God, that they should give place to younger men, that under them they might be trained up to the service of the Sanctuary, that he might never want any to attend in that calling. Whereas in the multitude and increase of that Tribe to so many thousands, if they had all served during the term of their lives, many of them could never have been employed, whose labor might be profitable in y^e church. So then, they were at that age to cease, to make way and passage for the employment of younger men.

Thirdly, as religion is more precious then all earthly things, so God hereby took order, and provided, that the weakness and infirmities of the Ministers, should not bring the holy ordinances of God into contempt.

Lastly, this law seemeth to be restrained to such Levites as bare the burden of the Tabernacle, the Sanctuary, & all the instruments of it. For God will have no man to live without a calling, he alloweth idleness in no estate and condition. What then did the Levites? They trained up younger men, they instructed them, and were no doubt as the Overseers of the schools of the Prophets: in them were the younger sort brought up, and called the children of the Prophets. Besides, they preached to the people, and taught the Law of the Lord, which is no idle work, but a matter of great labor & exceeding pains, so that albeit they bare not material burdens, which required strength of body; yet they bare weightier burdens than those, they had the charge of men's souls lying heavy upon them, which is able to press down the feet, and to weary the shoulders of the strongest man.

Last of all, no doubt they were present & president at the oblations that were brought, they offered sacrifices, and burned incense unto God in the Tabernacle, so many of them as were of the number of the Priests; as appeareth by the age of *Aaron*, who ministered in the place of God's service after the age of fifty. It is noted of *Zacharias* the Priest, that he was an old man, *he was well stricken in years*, which cannot be supposed or imagined but he was above 50. years of age; yet he ceased not to execute the Priests office before God, in the order of his course, and burned incense in the Temple. Nay, the circumstances of the text in that place do rather guide us, and as it were lead us by the hand to think, that he was more than threescore, peradventure fourscore, and it may be above, otherwise there had been no great bar and impediment on his behalf, but he might have a child; whereas he objecteth against the Angel, not only the age of his wife, but also his own age, *Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years?* So then, all the Levites being come to the age of fifty, trained up young men under them, they were as tutors unto them, & taught the people knowledge, sitting in the chair of *Moses*, and the Priests offered sacrifice to God, first in the Tabernacle, and after in the Temple: their time of vacation therefore was granted from such labors and service as required the strength of the body, which *Moses* himself seemeth to point unto afterward in this book: *From the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof, and shall serve no more, but shall minister with their brethren in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, to keep the charge, and shall do no service, &c.*

Verses 2, 3. *Take the sum of the sons of Kohath, &c: from thirty years old and above, &c.*] See here a different manner observed in numbering of this Tribe from the former. Before they were numbered at a month old, because then they were fit to be presented to God, but yet not fit to execute the office of the Ministry, or manage any business of charge and importance. Now none are numbered under thirty, because before they were not capable of this office. Such as were to serve in the wars among the other Tribes, were numbered at 20. years old: but such as were to appear before the Lord to do *the warfare of his service*, as the Scripture speaketh, must be 30. years of age; so that he requireth greater maturity in the gifts of the body and mind, greater wisdom & understanding in such as minister in the Tabernacle, then in such as pitch up their Tents, and go out with an army. There is wonderful skil required in leading an host of men against the enemy: but to be a Captain over the Lord's people, and to conduct them into the field against the spiritual enemies of our souls, where the danger is greater, is a matter of deeper knowledge, policy, experience, and judgment. We learn from hence, how

the [Doctrine 1] Ministers of the word ought to be qualified; they must be men of gravity, wisdom, sobriety, and moderation of all their affections. For if this were required of those that served in the Tabernacle and the Temple in the time of the Old Testament, that only they of 30. years old and above, even until fifty, should enter into that calling, who then were in the prime and flower of their age, and had the greatest gifts: much more is it necessarily required of the Ministers of the Gospel, that they be men of sobriety, constancy, staidness, wisdom, judgment, and diligence. Such as were to build the Tabernacle, and to frame all the instruments of it, and appurtenances unto it, *were filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship.* All such as had any hand in the erecting thereof, were fitted to it, for God did *put wisdom in the hearts of all that were wise-hearted,* that so they might make all that he had commanded them. The building up of God's Church is a greater work, and therefore the workmen appointed to the edification of it, must not have lesser gifts, or baser qualities. Hence it is, that the sons of *Eli* are noted to be *wicked men & grievous sinners that knew not the Lord,* because they bare themselves without sobriety, temperance, and discretion: they were full of lightness, wantonness, excess, and covetousness. The sins of *Jeroboam* are set out, that he made not choice of the Tribe of *Levi*, but took the scum of the people and *the basest of them,* men of evil note. Christ willeth his Disciples, *to be wise as serpents.* The Apostle *Paul* describing what the Ministers ought to be, teacheth, that they must be vnreproueable and blameless, they must be wise, just, patient, temperate, discreet, not self willed, not soon angry, not given to fighting and brawling. So that the Ministers set apart for the work of the Ministry, must not only be apt to teach, and able to divide the word of truth aright, but there is farther required of them, that they be qualified with wisdom, with knowledge, with gifts of government & discretion in their calling and conversation.

As this is plainly proved unto us by these consents, so it may be strengthened by these [Reason 1] few, yet forcible reasons. First, because they have oftentimes given unto them in the scripture, the name of *Elders.* Many titles are given unto them, and everyone of them carrieth some instruction and admonition with it unto the conscience. They have not their names in vain, they are not idle sounds of vain words, but they offer the signification of some duty to be performed, and lead to the consideration of something to be practiced, as Shepherds call to their remembrance to be busied in feeding: watchmen, to prove to them that they ought to have a vigilant care of the City of God, and to be on their watch tower: Messengers, that they must not do their own business, but his that sent thē. So they are called Elders, 1 Tim. 5, verse 17, 19. 1 Pet. 5, verse 1. Acts 14, verse 23. and 15, 2. and 16, 4. and 20, 17. to imprint and engrave in their hearts, the cogitation and consideration of the care, wisdom, sobriety, and stayednesse that ought to be in men of that calling: all which gifts are for the most part proper to that age: *for days shall speak, and the multitude of years teach wisdom,* Job 32, verse 7. And therefore they are resembled unto them, not because they are so always in age, but because they should be like unto them, and have the properties and qualities of them.

[Reason 2] Secondly, the Ministry is an high calling, of great weight and worthiness, of great excellency and importance, standing up not only in the place of the people to offer up their

prayers, but in the room of God, to declare his will to the people. If then the work be so worthy, if the office be so weighty, if the calling be so honorable, then it followeth by a good and necessary consequence, that such ought to be well fitted and filled with wisdom, gravity, and sobriety, that undertake it. This is the reason urged by the Apostle, 1 Tim. 3, 1, 2. *He that desireth the office of a Bishop, desireth a worthy work: a Bishop therefore must be unblameable & vnreproueable.* Who is it that mindeth to build an house, but he will look out a fit workman for his purpose? Or who will commit the government of his family to an unwise Steward, that knoweth not how to manage the affairs thereof, to give everyone his portion in due season? Thē much less ought the Church of Christ to be committed to unwise, unlearned, indiscreet men, that are ignorant both how to rule it, & which way to reform it.

Thirdly, such as are called to this office, [Reason 3] must be careful to look unto their ways, that their calling be not blemished, and their Ministry reprehended, so that they ought to bear themselves worthily and wisely. Everyone in the profession must labor to adorn the Gospel, and walk vnblameably in the midst of a naughty and crooked generation, Philip. 2, 15. It is required of wives to be chaste, and keepers at home, *that the word of God be not blasphemed*, Titus 2, 5. and of servants, to count their masters worthy of all honor, that the Name of God and his doctrine be not evil spoken off, 1 Tim. 6, ver. 1. Much more then ought the Ministers to magnify their office, to beautify their calling, to watch in all things, and to make full proof of their Ministry, 2 Tim. 4, verse 5. They ought to shine as bright and burning candles, and as Christ saith, they must be *lights of the world*, being set as a *City upon an high hill*, which cannot be hidden.

Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *Give no offense in anything, that the Ministry be not blamed, but let us in all things approve our selves as the Ministers of God, in much patience, in necessities, in distresses, &c.* If only our persons should be blamed, and receive a check, the matter were the less: but the Ministry it self shall be reproached, and the ordinance of God reviled, and therefore we ought to look more carefully & circumspectly to our ways, that have the eyes, ears, & tongues of all men turned toward us. Their eyes are fixed upon us to behold our actions: their ears are prepared to hear whatsoever they can of us: their mouths are opened, and their tongues vnloosed, to speak everywhere of us, so that we are set as upon a stage, & can by no means cover our persons or our practices from the sight and knowledge of all men.

Lastly, the Ministers is to utter the word [Reason 4] of wisdom, whereby both himself and his hearers shall be made wise unto salvation. The Apostle putteth *Timothy* in mind, that he had been brought up in the Scriptures of a child, *which are able to make him wise unto salvation*, 2 Tim. 3, verse 15. and Psal. 119. the Prophet thereby was made wiser then his teachers, then his enemies, then the ancient. Hereupon the Apostle *Paul* saith, 1 Corinth. 12, verse 8. *To one is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom, to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.* And in the first chapter of the same Epistle, verse 23, 24. *We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews, a stumbling block, and to the Grecians, foolishness: but unto them which are called, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*

Seeing then, we are to utter the words of wisdom, so called, both because they are the words of the most wise GOD, and because they are able to teach us the truest wisdom, we are to speak them, as it becometh them to be spoken, to the end, that in nothing we may be blamed or ashamed.

To conclude these reasons, and to bind them all in a bundle together, forasmuch as the Ministers of the Church are Elders, both in name and nature, and we are to utter the words of wisdom; forasmuch as the Ministry that we have obtained, is a weighty and worthy calling, and that it ought no way to be blotted and blemished of us by any indiscreet and indecent carriage; it followeth, that such as are set apart to this work, must be men of wisdom & moderatiō, of experience and excellent government of themselves, of their words, of their gestures, and of their ways, whether they be public or private, whether they be open or secret, whether they be at home or abroad.

[Use 1] We will now proceed to set down the uses of this doctrine, that we may be benefited and instructed by it. First, it serveth to reprove diverse sorts of persons that go against this rule, who, albeit they be ready to receive this truth, and to approve of it in judgment, yet they transgress it, and cross it notoriously in their practice.

And here we are to meet with the shameful abuse, and detestable corruption, that is too common in the Church of Rome, where children and boies have been admitted and ordained to Ecclesiastical dignities, before they had any understanding what the office requireth, or how it can be discharged. Thus hath the Bishop of Rome, that challengeth to be the high Priest of the world, the Vicar of Christ, and the successor of *Peter*, profaned this calling, and promoted, sometimes through covetousness, sometimes through favor, and sometimes through a respect they had to advance their kindred, such as are altogether unfit for such high places.

Hence it is, that *Sixtus* the fourth, is justly charged and challenged, to have instituted the son of *Ferdinand* King of *Naples*, being a child, to Ecclesiastical orders, which the heathen, for a reverent respect they had to sacerdotall dignities, would never have done; and gave him the oversight and circumspection of the Church of *Tarentum*. *Leo*, the tenth of the house of *Medices*, being a child of thirteen years of age, was made Cardinal by *Innocentius* the eight. Thus hath the chair of *Moses* been defiled, if *Moses* chair haply were then among them, whereof we may dispute and demure, not without just cause. The wise man saith in his *Ecclesiastes*, chap. 10, 16. *Woe to thee, O Land, when thy King is a child:* so we may say truly, *Woe unto thee, O Church, where thy Minister is a child, that knoweth not how to go in and out before the people.* This is a foul abuse, and cannot stand with the institution of God: well may such unseasoned timber serve to build up *Babel*, but in the house of God it can have no place. It is as untempered mortar, fit enough to set together a false church. Where the people are children, carried about with every wave, and are without knowledge, nay, refuse the means of knowledge, it is God's judgment to send thē children to be set over them, that so one child may lead another by the hand, children in age. such as are children in gifts. We conclude then, that the popish Church is a childish Church, and the Roman Byshoppe, is a

childish Bishop, or else he would never have ordained children to that calling, and laid his hands upon them, and appointed them to such functions.

Secondly, it reproveth such, as having the oversight of the Church to make Ministers, do indeed commit a foul oversight through carelessness and neglect of their duty, and so thrust upon the church such as are unwise and indiscreet, who are as unconscionable in executing, as they were careless in choosing of them. For albeit these that are thus ordained be not young in years, yet they are young in manners. There are two sorts of young men, and there are two sorts of old men. Some are young in age, others are young in conditions: so that albeit they do not make choice of little children, yet they make choice of such as are little better; whereas men of gravity and entire conversation ought to be elected, and not rash headed persons obtruded upon the Church. This was the cause why *Paul* left *Titus* in *Crete*, that he should ordain Elders in every City: and for this cause he chargeth *Timothy*, that he should do nothing through partiality, neither lay his hand rashly upon any man, lest he were partaker of their sin. For when as a man is ordained through favor and friendship, or other sinister and sinful respect, who, having the door of entrance opened unto him, maketh hauock of the Lord's flock, partly by teaching corruptly, and partly by living scandalously, he that doth ordain him is guilty of those crimes, and himself may be charged to be a false teacher, and an evil liver. For whosoever doth not hinder the sins of others, but give way unto them that they pass forward, is partaker of them: he that beareth with them, and winketh at them, is as well guilty, as he that walketh in them. Hence it is, that he exhorteth *Timothy* to keep himself pure, and unspotted.

But peradventure they will object, [Objection] they knew not what he was, they were ignorant of his wickedness and looseness. [Answer.] But this doth not excuse them, because they ought not rashly to have given him admission, until they had made diligent search and inquisitiō. Such as were to buy a bondslave, were wont to demand the Physician touching him, to ask of the neighbors, and to require a time to make trial of him: and therefore much more ought there (if in anything else) to be advise, and deliberation taken, when any is to be admitted to the calling of a Minister, and no place left, either for fear or favor, either for hatred or covetousness. For judgment is corrupted four ways.

Sometimes through fear, when we shake and shrink back from speaking the truth, for fear of offending great persons. So did *Pilate* wrest the Law, and sin against his own conscience, for fear of *Caesar*: because they cried out, *We have no King, but Caesar: if thou let this fellow go, thou art not Caesar's friend*. Somtimes through covetousness, when we are corrupted through bribes, and hired for money, which blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. So did *Felix* gape after gain, and looked for rewards, Acts 24, 26. *He hoped also that money should have been given him of Peul, that he might loose him*.

Sometimes, through hatred and malice; for as *Naboth's* vineyard was *Ahab's* sickness (a strange disease) so he dealt corruptly with *Michaiah*, because he hated him, and could not abide him, 1 Kin. 22, 8, 27. *He put him in prison, and fed him with bread of affliction, and with water of afflictiō*, yet he had done nothing worthy of imprisonment or of death.

Lastly, through favor and friendship whē we seek to gratify and pleasure our kinsmen or acquaintance, as *Pilate* did to please *Herod*, and for that care not what wrong we do to others. Wherefore the Lord would not have *the poor man countenanced in his cause*, Exod. 23, 3. And *Festus* the Deputy saith, *It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused, have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself*. All which corruptions of justice, if they ought to be far from the tribunals of earthly Judges, much more ought they to be removed from the Courts and Consistories of the Church-officers, whensoever the question is in hand of admitting any to the holy Ministry, or of removing any from the Ministry.

This is a capital sin, and yet (alas) there is not that conscience made of it that ought to be. It is a sin that draweth on many others, as it were with cart-ropes. It giveth encouragement to him that is ordained, to go forward in his sins, when he considereth by whose means he was admitted. For thus he strengtheneth and emboldeneth himself to go forward, If I were not in good case, such persons as sway the matters of the church, would never have given me entrance. It heartneth and helpeth forward others of like quality, to resort unto them for spiritual preferment and promotion, who say to themselves, Why may not I get into the Ministry as well as such a one, I am not worse and more unworthy then he; I cannot be a more beast then he is; and indeed as well the one as the other are unfit & unmeet to have the charge of sheep, or of old shoes. It discourageth those that labor painfully in this calling, and weakeneth the hands and hearts of those that are diligent in their office. It bringeth a slander upon the Church of God, and emboldeneth many to go forward in sin, while there is for the most part, like Priest, like people: like master, like man: like mother, like daughter. And last of all, it bringeth inevitable perils and dangers upon the people, whose souls perish through their ignorance and wickedness that are entered into this calling.

The third reproof is the haste, which for the most part, young men (that run before they are sent) make to the Ministry: wherein the common proverb is true, That haste maketh waste. The zeal of these persons is very preposterous, forasmuch as they have not that judgment & knowledge, that wisdom and experience, that grace and gravity, that stayednesse and moderation in ordering and bridling their affections, that is needful in those that are to teach others the way how to do it: lest it be said unto them, *Physician, heal thyself*, Luke 4, 23. and as the Apostle showeth, *Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?* Rom. 2, 21. In former times of the Church the Prophets well qualified hung back, and shunned the burden: but we are fallen into another extreme, whereby it cometh to pass, that we desire to be soon employed, albeit rawly furnished, as if a Captain should lead his soldiers unto the battle, before they be half harnessed and prepared.

But some may say, [Objection.] Are none to be chosen to the Ministry that are young men? Or is this Law given to the Levites, remembered here, a moral precept to which the Church is necessarily tied? None were to serve in the Tabernacle or Temple, until thirty years, is this precisely to be kept in the New Testament? I answer, [Answer.] not all that are of that age are to be admitted, nor all under that age are to be refused. For as there are two sorts of young men, set down before, so there are two sorts of Elders, some are old men in years, and

some are old men in gifts: and thus may the Ministers be said sometimes to be both old and young: young in age, old in the graces given unto them necessary for this calling: as on the other side, a man may be old in years, and have many gray hairs on his head, and yet in regard of necessary gifts that ought to have been in him, be a young man, a child, an infant.

If it be farther said, [Object.] *John the Baptist* began to preach at that age; and so did Christ himself: yet had these great gifts, and who is like to them? or who may compare with them? [Answer.] I answer, these examples are not to be drawn into imitation, to make of them perpetual Canons and constitutions of the Church. And this was indeed a long time after observed in the Church, & all such kept out as by a strong bar, that had not attained to that age. We have laid before us the doctrine and life of Christ to be followed, not the years: ability, not age. The Apostle warneth *Timothy*, so to behave himself, that *none should despise his youth*, 1 Tim. 4, verse 12. He would have him learn, before he go about to teach others. It is said in the book of *Job*, chapt. 12, 12. *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days, understanding.*

Nevertheless, albeit this be ordinarily seen, yet God is not tied to any age, but bestoweth his gifts, where and unto whom he pleaseth, as appeareth in *Joseph, Jeremiah, Samuel, Solomon, Daniel, David, Timothy, Titus*, and sundry others. Howbeit such examples are not common, but rare and unwonted, like a shining star in a cloudy Firmament. No man chooseth young men to be Generals of an army, saith the heathen Philosopher. That Physician is thought to be the better, who hath most conversed and lived longest among the sick. In the host of *Alexander the Great*, none was suffered to lead the bands into the field, that was not elder then three-score. In the state and common-wealth of *Rome*, none under full age were chosen to bear any office. None was chosen to be a Senator, before 25. years; nor Pretor, before 30: nor Consul, before 43. How much more is this to be regarded in the regiment of the Church, where, as the calling is weightier, so the danger is greater, when these pastoral charges are bestowed upon unfit persons. For a special care must be had, that such as are advanced and promoted, whether young or old, do not cause their ministry to be contemned, especially considering that it falleth out (as we see) by continual experience, that even his doctrine is little regarded, whose person is despised. Some are old in years, but young in wisdom, and *at an hundred years old*, are as children, touching use and experience; who stain and disgrace their hoare heads & white hairs with foolishness, sottishness, and more then childishness. In the art of nauigation, this law was wont to be precisely observed, that none should be chosen Master of the Ship, or Masters mate, that hath not first been a skuller and rowed with oars, and frō thence been promoted to sit at the stern. In military discipline, a man was first chosen a soldier, then he rose higher to be a Centurion, before he could be General of the host. God would have the Levites to be at the first as it were probationers, before they were allowed to be practitioners. They were taken in for trial at 25. years of age, as it followeth in the 8. chapter, and so continued unto 30. at what time they were suffered to minister if they were found faithful and painful. But it may be said of many in our church, that *they run before they be sent*, and thrust themselves into the Vineyard before they be hired. These are young in years, and as young in qualities and conditions required of a Minister, that have not yet shed their colts teeth, nor scarce sowed their wild oates, as we say in our common

Proverbs: so that we may say with the Prophet *Hosea*, chap. 9, 7. *The Prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad.* And another Prophet, *Her Prophets are light, and treacherous persons, her Priests have polluted the Sanctuary they have done violence to the Law.* *Zeph.* 3, verse 4.

[Use 2] Secondly, it teacheth a good duty and profitable to the Ministers, that remembering this lesson, and considering how they must be adorned, and with what gifts endued, they look to themselves that they give no occasion of scandal and offense, of evil speeches and contempt of their calling, but keep themselves unspotted and vncorrupted. This the Apostle teacheth his *Timothy*, 1. ch. 4, 12. *Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example to the believers, &c:* and 2 *Tim.* 2, 15. *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* And afterward, verse 22. *Fly youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.* When *Eli's* sons, light headed persons, meddled with the sacrifices, the people began to abhor the offerings of GOD, 1 *Sam.* 2. There are many several branches of this use, sorted out into many particular points.

First, every Minister must consider how precious his calling is, and what person he sustaineth, that he is as the mouth and messenger of God to the people, and the Interpreter of his will: he is as it were the Lord's hand in separating between the precious and profane, the holy and the unholy: he is to keep the people out of the snares of the devil, and therefore not to deliver them as a prey unto him through his evil life.

Secondly, they must often enter into this meditation with themselves, that they are as actors upon a stage, or as beacons set upon an hill to give light to others. They are seen afar off, and a little blemish is soon espied in their coats. Every thing that they speak or do, is observed and marked, so that some follow them, and others carpe at them; some are grieved and offended, others revile the whole Ministry, for the sin and scandal of a few.

Thirdly, let us labor to stop the mouths of the enemies, that are ready to open them against their actions and persons, and thereby take occasion to blaspheme the Name of God and the glorious Gospel of Christ, and thorough their evil life, wound the truth it self. Heereby they shall be means to gain them to the faith, that such as receive not the truth, nor the love of the word, may without the word, beholding the pure and holy conversation of the Ministers thereof, embrace the word. On the other side, the profane lives and lewd examples that many in that calling give, do make the true religion stink in their nostrils, and become loathsome and noisome unto many, and so lay a dangerous stumbling block before such, as being blind, are made more blind, and being haters of good things are more hardened in heart. Woe be to such as give offense: *it must be that offenses come, but woe to them by whom they come*, *Math.* 18, 7. These are glad to lay hold upon every small occasion, to speak evil of the word & ways of God, as also of the Ministers, Ministry, and the profession of the Gospel. The Apostle admonisheth the Minister, 1 *Tim.* 3, 7, that he must *have good report of them that are without, lest he fail into reproach, and into the snare of the devil.* We ought so to behave our selves, that the enemies of God and his word, may have no just cause to speak against us, or to complain of us through our desert. But if we be without fault, and have the testimony of a good conscience to witness with us, it ought not greatly to trouble us, though we be

burdened and borne down with false reproaches & calumniations: nay rather we have matter of rejoicing offered unto us, *if we suffer for righteousness sake*, Math. 5, 10: and we must boldly go forward, *through good report and evil report*, always bearing about in our body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Christ Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

Lastly, it is the duty of the people to yield them reverence, and to make a good account [Use 3] of them, in regard of that weighty and blessed work that is in their hands. This is a notable sign and fruit of our love toward them. For if it be required of the Ministers to be thus qualified, it followeth, that they ought to have the honor and estimation that is fit for them, as Levite. 21, 8. *Thou shalt sanctify him therefore, for he offereth the bread of thy God: he shall be holy unto thee: for I the Lord which sanctify you, am holy.* And the Apostle, 1. Thess. 5, 12, 13. saith, *We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love, for their works sake, &c.* We shown before, how basely and brutishly every base & brutish companiō accounteth both of the Minister and of his calling; as we saw in *Ahab*, in the Captains, and sundry others: and all this falleth out, because they rebuke and convince the world of sin, as *Jeremiah* found by experience, and acknowledgeth, chap. 15, 10. *Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth: I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury, yet everyone of them doth curse me.* This duty hath many branches under it, as it were diverse sciences that come out of one root.

First, we must pray for the Minister, that the Lord would give him wisdom & knowledge in all things, 2 Tim. 2, 7. *Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.* There is a carnal and fleshly wisdom, which is corrupt and devilish: and there is a wisdom which is true and heavenly. We must desire such only as is grounded on the word of God.

Secondly, the Church must take notice what her power and authority is in choosing of Ministers. It hath no absolute authority to ordain whom it listeth, and then to obtrude them unto the people; but it is hemmed about and compassed within certain lists and limits, out of which it ought not to wander any way.

Thirdly, it is the duty of the people, so to use themselves toward their painful & careful, and faithful Ministers, that they may take occasion to rejoice in their calling and charge over them, that they may see they have not labored in vain, as Hebr. 13, ver. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you; and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.* Nothing doth effect this more, then when we profit by their labors, and fructify by their husbanding of us, and when we gain knowledge, faith, repentance, and salvation by their Ministry. This doth refresh the weary spirits, and cheer up the heavy hearts of the Ministers, who are oftentimes made sad and exceedingly humbled by the ignorance and profaneness of a perverse people. But when they see the word of God cast behind men's backs, and though the seed be plentifully sown, yet nothing cometh up but weeds and thistles, so that the field yieldeth nothing but a crop of cares, then they hang down their heads, their joy is gone, their crown is taken from them, and they go mourning all the day long. This we see oftentimes in the Apostle *Paul*, 2 Corinth. 2, verse 3. where he testifieth this affection; *I wrote*

this same unto you, lest when I come, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice, having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.

It is a common case with the Ministers that labor abundantly, they receive sorrow at their hands that ought to have rejoiced them: and have much affliction from those that should minister comfort unto them. And afterward in the same Epistle he saith, chap. 12, verse 20, 11. *I fear, lest when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you, such as ye would not; lest there be debates, enuyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults; and lest when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciuiousnesse which they have committed.*

The Minister hath no other true and hearty rejoicing, but the growing of his people forward in good things. The Apostle saith, What is our rejoicing? even you in the day of the Lord, 1 Thess. 2, verse 19, 20. and chap. 3, verse 7, 8, 9. If they stand fast, the Ministers are alive, Col. 2, 5.

We cannot render sufficient thanks for the faith, love, patience, and increase that we see in the Church, when the kingdom of Satan is cast down, and the kingdom of Jesus Christ is set up. The contrary, is the greatest grief and sorrow, anguish and vexation of spirit that can be. This also he doth often complain of, as Galath. 4, verse 19. *My little children, of whom I travel in birth again, until Christ be formed in you.* And in the Epistle to the Philippians, chap. 3, 18. *Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies unto the Cross of Christ.*

Fourthly, the hearers ought to joy in the joy of their Ministers, 1 Cor. 2, 13. But many please themselves in nothing more, & rejoice in nothing more, then in the heaviness and sorrow of their Minister: nay, they delight to disturb and disquiet, to vex & trouble him, and offer him daily occasions of affliction. Thus did the Jews deal with the Apostles, they killed the Lord Jesus, & their own Prophets, and have persecuted them that preached the Gospel, 1 Thess. 2, 15. They can never profit by him, whom thus they spurn at and despise. The *Nazarites* that heard Christ, could not believe his word, because they cōtemned and hated his person, Luke 4.

Fifthly, we ought to be ready to hear and obey in all things delivered and made known unto us out of the word. We must not single out what we list in part to follow, and cast from us another part of the word: but whatsoever we hear, whether judgments or promises, let us say with *Hezekiah*, *The word of the Lord is good, that thou hast spoken.*

Lastly, let us love them sincerely and heartily, this will cause reverence and regard of them: let us account them as our spiritual fathers, 1 Cor. 4, 15. *Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.* Moses speaking of old age, giveth this precept to young men, that they rise up before the hoare head, and honor the person of the old man, Levite. 19. The Ministers are Elders of the Church, and the Fathers of our souls, to whom we owe reverence, as a due debt unto thē, forasmuch as they watch over us for our good. But we can never reverence those whom we

do not love. Let us not say as *Ahab* did touching *Michaiah*, I hate them. It is the common practice of the world, to hate those that reprove them, and to account them our enemies that tell us the truth. We love to be flattered, and desire to have pillows sowed under our elbows, according to the saying of the Prophet *Amos*, chap. 5, 10. *They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly*. We would sleep securely in our sins, and go to hell with ease. We cannot abide to be roused up, nor be disturbed in our evil ways. This is the cause that the Ministers are hated, & accounted men of strife and contention. But if we did indeed love our selves, we would also love them: & if we had any care of our souls, they would be most dear unto us, that watch over our souls, and desire nothing more then to bring us to salvation. Every man by the light of nature will love those that love him, and it is no singular thing: but let us assure our selves, there is no love comparable to the love of our souls: and they love our souls, that seek to gain them to God, and to put them in possession of heaven. If we knew these things aright, and had a true feeling of them, we would esteem of the Ministers of God as our fathers, and the word which they teach, as the seed of regeneration.

5. And when the Campe setteth forward, Aaron shall come and his sons, and they shall take down the covering veil, and cover the Ark of the Testimony with it.

6. And shall put thereon the covering of Badgers skins, and shall spread over it a cloth wholly of blew, and shall put in the staves thereof.

7. And upon the Table of Shewbread, they shall spread a cloth of blew, and put thereon the dishes, and the spoones, and the bolles, and covers to cover withal; and the continual bread shall be thereon.

8. And they shall spread upon them a cloth of scarlet, and cover the same with a covering of Badgers skins, and shall put in the staves thereof.

9. And they shall take a cloth of blew, and cover the Candlestick of the light, and his Lamps, and his tongs, and his snuff dishes, and all the oil vessels thereof, wherewith they minister unto it.

10. And they shall put it, and all the vesselles thereof, within a covering of Badgers skins, and shall put it upon a bar.

11. And upon the golden Altar they shall spread a cloth of blew, and cover it with a covering of Badgers skins, and shall put to the staves thereof.

12. And they shall take all the instruments of Ministry, wherewith they minister in the Sanctuary, and put them in a cloth of blew, and cover them with a covering of Badgers skins, and shall put them on a bar.

13. And they shall take away the ashes from the Altar, and spread a purple cloth thereon.

14. And they shall put upon it all the vesselles thereof, wherewith they minister about it, even the censers, the flesh-hooks, and the shouels, and the basons, all the vessels of the Altar: and they shall spread upon it a covering of Badgers skins, and put to the staves of it.

15. And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the Sanctuary, and all the vessels of the Sanctuary, as the Campe is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

16. And to the office of Eleazar the son of Aaron the Priest, pertaineth the oil for the light, and the sweet incense, and the daily meat offering, and the anointing oil, and the oversight of all the Tabernacle, and of all that therein is, in the Sanctuary, and in the vessels thereof.

In this division, the particular charge beolnging to the sons of *Kohath*, is both propounded and confirmed. Touching the special parts here remembered; First *Aaron* and his sons (as overseers of the rest) are charged when the host of God remoueth, to cover the Ark of the Testimony, the Table of show bread, the Candlestick of light, the vessels of oil, and such like. Secondly, the duty of the *Kohathites*, is set down, that so soon as *Aaron* and his sons have made an end of covering the Sanctuary, and all the instruments of the Sanctuary, they must come to bear both it and them, as it was delivered unto them: provided that they did not touch any of them, or meddle with them until they be covered, lest they be destroyed. Thirdly, the office of *Eleazar* the Priest, the son of *Aaron* is specified; to him belonged the oil for the light, the sweet incense, the daily meat offering, and the anointing oil, with all the oversight of the Tabernacle. These several points thus largely laid open, may seem needless and unprofitable to be thus particularly rehearsed: but as all things were done in types and figures unto them, so they had their uses to them, and serve also for our instruction to the end of the world.

Touching the instruments belonging to the Tabernacle, and the vessels that were used, as the oil, the lamps, the candlestickes, the show bread, the incense, and what were the significations of them, we have already declared in the books of Exodus, and Leviticus. Now we will only call to remembrance these three points, and briefly note what we are to learn from thence: First, the Tabernacle was removed from place to place, and the parts of it taken asunder, and joined together. This was a figure of the Church, and showeth that the faithful, so long as they live in *this Tabernacle of the body*, are absent from the Lord, and so shall

continue, until they obtain a stable inheritance in the heavens. We are not as yet *come to the rest*, and to the inheritance which the Lord our God shall give us. We have here no continuing city to dwell in, we are as Pilgrimes and strangers in this world. We seek a country else-where. Let us therefore use this world, as though we used it not, 1. Cor. 7.31. Be not deceived with the glorious and glittering shows of earthly things. If we did consider the frailty and uncertainty of all human things here beneath, that they are the suttle and sugared baits of Satan, which catch and condemn many thousands in the world, and bring men to *many foolish and noisome lusts that drown them in perdition, and destruction*, we would not so easily wound our consciences, and sell our souls for gain, as the manner of many is, who in all things wherein they have dealings and doings with others, regard nothing but their own wealth, albeit it be joined with decay and undoing of our brethren. Secondly, observe in this place that the Sanctuary together with all the frame and furniture thereof was covered with badgers skins, a very sure covering: to teach us that the whole Church, & every particular member thereof, are under the protection of God, as it were under a covering. Hereunto the Prophet alludeth, Psal. 27.5. *In the time of trouble he shall hide me, he shall set me up upon a Rock.* And the Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 4. 5, 6. *The Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a defense: and there shall be a Tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.* This ministereth great comfort to all the faithful servants of God, to consider that howsoever the Tabernacle was subject to the violence of wind and weather, yet it could sustain no harm, because it was most surely and safely covered against all injuries, tempests, and storms whatsoever. None lie open to such troubles and turmoiles as the Church: none are so garded & regarded as they are. It were impossible that we should hold out and continue in our profession against such dangers, except we had a covering upon us as the helmet of salvation. He is our defense, and a buckler round about us. He will never leave us, nor forsake us, so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my deliverer, I will not fear what man can do unto me.

Lastly, we see the Tabernacle had diverse and sundry instruments in it, belonging to the worship of God, and sanctified and set apart to holy uses: so is it in the Church of God; the word, the Sacraments, the preaching, the praiing, the praising of God, the gifts of sundry sorts bestowed upon the Church, are all of them sacred and holy, by the special institution of God. Hereunto doth the Prophet *Zacharias* allude, chap. 14. 20, 21. *In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord, and the pots in the Lord's house, shall be like the bolles before the altar: yea, every pot in Jerusalem, and in Judah, shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts, and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seeth therein: for in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.* The things that God hath appointed to the glory of his Name, and the furthering of his worship, are all of them holy: and there is as it were graven upon them, as once *on the forehead of the high Priest, Holiness to the Lord.* Hence it is, that the word is called the holy Scripture, and all other things belonging to the service of God, are holy also. This teacheth how we should be affected when we present our selves in the presence of God, and come to be partakers of the ordinances of

God. Here are holy things, for such as are holy: if we come unto them with sanctified hearts, and touch them with sanctified hands.

Such as come profanely unto them, receive no benefit by them. He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer is abominable. If we come wickedly and unworthily to the Lord's Supper, we eat and drink our own damnation. Let us therefore examine our selves, and prepare our hearts before we come, that so we may be meet partakers of those holy mysteries.

[Object.] Before we come to the doctrine offered unto us in this division, we are to answer one objection that ariseth from hence. For the question may be asked, whether this charge here spoken of, were perpetually enjoined to the Levites, that they should carry the instruments of the Sanctuary, and the Ark, whether I say, they were always to bear the Ark, [Answer.] or not? I answer, this commandment was temporary. It was their duty for a time, until the Priests were increased and multiplied in number, that they were sufficient and enabled to carry it, Deut. 31, 9. But afterward all the examples of the histories mentioned in the books of Joshua and the Judges, of Samuel and of the Kings, do manifestly declare, that it was the office of the Priests themselves, Josh. 3, 6. 1 Sam. 14, 18. 2 Sam. 15, 29. 1, Kings 2, 26, and 8, 3, 4. For the most worthy things were to be handled by the more worthy persons, thereby to testify the worthiness and dignity of the things themselves, and to procure the greater reverence and respect unto them. Wherefore, the commandment enjoined in this place, was for a season only, until there were a sufficient number of the Priests to do it. The setting of the Ark upon a Cart, was *David's* infirmity, though otherwise a man after God's own heart; for Princes may err, the best of them may be deceived. They followed not the ordinance of God, and caused it not to be carried on the shoulders, either of the Priests, or Levites, but followed the example of the Philistines, who *made a new Cart*, and laid the Ark of the Lord upon the Cart: so did *David* and all the people, they set the Ark of God upon a new Cart, and brought it out of the house of *Abinadab*. Again, we read sometimes in the Scriptures, that the Levites did it, 1 Chr. 15, 2. *Then David said, None ought to carry the Ark of God, but the Levites: for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the Ark of God, and to minister unto him forever.* Thus was *David* made wiser by the former breach of God's wrath among them, whereby *Uzzah* was destroyed. Howbeit we must understand hereby, the Priests that were of the Tribe of *Levi*, as appeareth by the 26, verse of that chapter, *It came to pass, when God helped the Levites to bear the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, that they offered seven Bullocks, & seven Rams.* Where we see, that such as did bear the Ark, did also offer sacrifices; but the Priests office only was to offer sacrifice; therefore they only did carry the Ark. For all the Priests were Levites, but all Levites were not Priests. The name of Levites, was a common name to all that belonged to that Tribe, whereof some were called Priests, & other by the common name of Levites. But concerning those that executed the Priests office, and were not of that Tribe, they were no better then intruders and usurpers.

[Verse 5, 6, &c. *And when the Campe setteth forward, Aaron shall come and his sons, and they shall take down, &c.*] *Moses* mentioneth and setteth down in this place, the particular calling of all the Levites, what they ought to do, and what they ought not to do: wherein they are to busy

themselves & exercise their gifts, and how they may approve themselves in their places: as if he should bring everyone of them into their proper field that they were to till. For even as a master of a family, appointeth everyone of his servants their task and work that he will have them do: so doth the Lord our God deal with his Ministers and all his people; he giveth them their peculiar office, and showeth how and wherein they must employ themselves. We learn [Doctrine 1] from hence, that every man, whether out of the Ministry, or in the Ministry, must learn and know the duties of his own calling: what charge God hath laid upon him, and what service he requireth at his hands. At the giving of the law in Mount *Zion*, everyone had his standing place assigned unto him, which he might not pass: for as God hath set bounds unto the sea, that though it rage, yet it can go no farther then he hath appointed; he hath said, hitherto it shall go, and it can go no farther: so *Moses* is charged to deal with the people, that they do not break thorough unto the Lord, *Exod. 19, 12. Thou shalt set bounds unto the people, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the Mount, or touch the border of it, &c.* Thus also the Lord speaketh to *Jeremiah*, *chapt. 1, 5, 10. Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee: and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a Prophet unto the Nations.* The Prophet *Jonah* is reprov'd, that being to go to *Nineveh*, rose up to fly unto *Tarshish* from the presence of the Lord. Thus doth *Paul* speak to *Timothy*; for having set down before him the duty of his calling, he saith, *Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.* Everyone is taught to labor with his hands the thing that is good, *Eph. 4, 28.* and to withdraw himself from every brother that walketh inordinately, and not according to the doctrine received. The reasons to confirm us [Reason 1] in this truth, are many. First, we can never practice y^e duties of our callings, except we know them. This is the eye that leadeth us to the doing of thē, from the beginning to the ending of them. The blind man cannot see his way, *John. 13, 17. If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them.* When once we know what duties are laid upon us, we are already entered into the way to do them and perform them.

[Reason 2] Secondly, such as transgress the bounds set before them, shall surely perish and be punished. When the people before the Law was given, were limited how far to pass, *Moses* addeth, *whosoever toucheth the mount, shall be surely put to death:* and the Apostle prosecuteth the threatening further, *If so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.* So then the consideratiō of y^e punishment threatened, & denounced against all that break the listes set unto them, (which is farther confirmed by sundry examples of *Uzzah*, and of *Corah* and his company,) ought so far to prevail with us, as to teach us to continue in the works of our own callings.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, it bringeth great confusion in family, in Church, & in common-wealth, when one executeth the calling of another. If the private person should step into the place of the Magistrate and handle the sword of justice, it would overturn the whole State. When *Peter* drew out his sword, and cut off the ear of the high Priests servant, Christ said unto him, *Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword.* Everyone would be a Magistrate, and presume to sit in the seat of justice, and no man would be content to lead a private life, if he might do what he list. The like we might say of a family. All men should know their standing: the wife must not leap into the place of the

husband, nor the servant into the place of the son: but everyone do his own duties, and we shall find enough to do our callings, if we be faithful and diligent in them.

[Use 1] The uses are next to be considered. First, it reproveth such as are altogether ignorant, and neither know, nor desire to know their duties. A fault in all, but especially in the Ministers of the word, that should give light to others. God requireth of them to teach the people, Mal. 2.7. *The Priests lips should preserve knowledge*, that so they may show themselves to be *the messengers of the Lord of hosts*. They must out of their treasury bring forth things both old and new. They can never teach, until they be taught: but these occupy the place of teachers before they have learned. It is a most ridiculous thing for a man to take upon him to run a race, that wanteth his legs: or to be an Orator and eloquent pleader that wanteth his tongue. Christ Jesus taught his Apostles, before he sent them to teach into all the world. This was shadowed out under the Law, *Aaron* must put on his belles, that his sound might be heard, when he went in unto the holy place before the Lord: but now we have Idol-ministers that have mouths, but cannot speak: the belles lack the clappers: they may be moved, but they cannot be heard. It were fit, that he which is to build up the house of God, should be ignorant of nothing, if it were possible: for he may at one time or other, make use of his knowledge. *John* instructed the soldiers, the Publicans, and the multitude that repaired and resorted unto him, Luke 3. he shall be better able to apply his doctrine, when he hath skill in every man's trade and occupation: Especially he ought not to be ignorant of the Scriptures, but to know them plentifully, and labor they may dwell in him abundantly, that from them as from a storehouse, he may furnish himself with plenty of all good things. Ignorance is a fault in any that would be accounted a Christian: it is a double fault in him that is a Minister. Secondly, it reproves such as omit their own duties, but rush upon the callings of other men. These are as a servant that is too diligent. These are not idle, but are busi-bodies in others men's matters, as 2 Thess. chapt. 3.11.12. *We hear that there are some that walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies: them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.*

So then, whether we be idle, and do nothing, or else busy in the duties belonging to other men, in effect it is all one, both are evil, and vices to be reformed in us. And the same Apostle, 1 Tim. 5.13. setteth down an heap and multitude of many sins, *They learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, & not only idle, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.* Here is knit together as in a chain, a company of vices: the idle, wanderers, pratlers, curious, and vncomly speakers. The fountain of all is idleness, which is ranged in the forefront, and draweth after it a tail and train of diverse evils, like a fruitful mother that hath many children. He speaketh by name against women, who ought to be painful, not idle: keepers of the house, not walkers and wanderers out of the house. The virtue that adorneth that sex is silence, and therefore they should not be tattlers and pratlers, or their tongue like the Aspen leaf, that never standeth still. They should meddle with their own business, and not be busy in other men's.

Secondly, seeing God hath set everyone in [Use 2] his calling, it is our duty to walk as we are limited by the word. The word of God is the warrantise of all callings. We must do our duties

with faithfulness, diligence, patience, and wisdom. These are required to be performed in duties between man and man. This is to *walk worthy of God, who hath called us unto his kingdom of glory*, 1 Thess. 2.12. Many there are that profess the fear of God, and bear themselves as the disciples of Christ, who neglect the duties of their particular callings. True it is, the blessing of God is all in all. For *except God build the house, the labor of the builder is in vain*, and except God watch the City, the labor of the watchman is in vain. We confess also, that God requireth of us to search the Scriptures, to pray unto his Name, and seek after knowledge: nevertheless, these do not discharge us from following the duties of our private callings. It is not enough for us to say, that God will provide for us, that he hath promised to bless us and to supply our wants, and that he hath said, he will never leave us nor forsake us. For God hath promised no blessing to them that be idle; he sendeth them to school to learn of the Ant, *which provideth her meat in Summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.* Prov. 6, 8. Solomon calleth aloud to such, *How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard, when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep: a little slumber: a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that trauelleth, and thy want as an armed man.* As for those that pretend God's providence, & hold out the doctrine of it as a buckler to defend them in their evil and idle courses, they do most shamefully abuse it, which is to be furthered by the means that GOD hath appointed, and in his wisdom annexed thereunto. Neither let any think to obtain anything at his hands, that sit still & do nothing, that say, they will trust God with their life, & are sure that he will provide for them. The heathen men by the light of natural reason, saw well enough the foolishness and absurdity of these men's doings. *They commend the prayers of that Captain, that prayed for victory with his sword in his hand, and fighting, did call for aide: and on the other side, dispraise the practice of him that withdrew himself out of the battle, so soon as it was begun, under color & pretence of praying for good success, affirming, that God doth not accept the sacrifice of Cowards, neither receiveth their prayers, because they are unreasonable. For they held it no reason, that he which shooteth not, should hit the white: nor that he should win the victory, that abideth not the battle: neither that he should have any good, that doth nothing toward it.* As then victory is won by labor, not by sloth; so shall we attain the blessings of God by our endeavor, not by our idleness. It is required therefore of everyone of us, to consider our callings wherein we are placed. We have not all of us one calling, but diverse. Some are set in the private family, and some in the common-wealth, and some in the Church of God: all have not one office, but diverse. We are traualers in this world, as passengers in a Ship, who being there, some for one business, and other for another purpose, do never meddle one with another, but everyone careth for the discharging and dispatching of his proper office. So ought it to be with us, we have our proper calling, and proper duties to be performed therein. Be diligent in the duties of it, and thou mayest look for a blessing upon thy labors. Sanctify thy daily labors with daily prayer; but presume not that prayer shall help thee without thine own labor. If thou shouldst pray to God all the day long, to feed thee, to clothe thee, to sustain thee and thy family, the idle man's prayer availeth nothing. We must pray unto him when we begin our labors; and bless his name when we have ended our labors: but to call upon him, determining with our selves, not to take pains, or not determining with our selves to take pains, is no better then to dally with GOD, and deceive our selves.

Lastly, it is our duty to seek to be acquainted [Use 3] with the word, where we shall find that plainly and particularly set down, which we would know. In what state soever we are set, we shall have a sure guide to begin the works of our calling, to go forward in them, and to persevere unto the end. Heereby we shall be able to warrant our works, and know what duties God accepteth, and what he accepteth not. It is *a light unto our eyes, and a lantern unto our steppes*, Psal. 119, 105. It is the commendation of God's children, to be conversant in it. In darkness we cannot go safely without the help of a lantern: so are we borne and brought up in ignorance, and continue therein, unless we be guided by the word of God and his Spirit. Many that want the knowledge & direction of the Scriptures, think they live in the light, walk in the light, and behave themselves as children of the day, and are in as good a case, and have as good souls toward God, as they that study the Scriptures, and meditate in them day & night. They think it is not for simple men to meddle with the Scriptures, but for Preachers and Divines. They think that knowledge maketh men worse, and that none are worse men, that none will deceive a man sooner then they; and therefore such as seek to know God, and to serve him according to his word, they call in contempt and derision, Scripture men. But these ignorant beasts, speak by the spirit of the devil, and oppose themselves against the express commandments of God, and the approved examples of his setuants. The Lord himself speaketh, Hos. 4, 6. *My people perish for want of knowledge*. The Apostle saith, 1. Cor. 14, 20. Be not children in understanding, but in maliciousness, be as children. The men of *Berea* are commended, because *they searched the Scriptures* privately, to prove the truth of the doctrine which they had heard delivered publicly. But if knowledge, as is pretended, do make men worse, then is it evil in it self, and not good: forasmuch as that which is good, cannot make a man evil. What then? Dare any two-legged beast presume in the profaneness of his wicked heart, to say, that to know God and his will which is most pure and holy, can make a man any worse? Or, that the more a man knoweth of Jesus Christ and Christian religion, the worse he should be? A vile blasphemy: O detestable impiety. Will it make a servant worse, to know the will of his Master? Or a subject, to know the Princes laws and statutes? It will be farther objected, [Object.] There was never more knowledge, and less practice: a man may hear many speak much out of the Bible, who notwithstanding are naughty men. I answer, be it so: yet the cause is not their knowledge, but want of grace: it is not in the word, but their own corruption. They *are fools* (saith *Solomon*) that *hate knowledge*, and are enemies unto it. For all well doing in our callings, proceedeth from faith, and faith is grounded upon knowledge, and doth increase through knowledge. Where there is no knowledge of God's sacred and heavenly will, men *break out* without all conscience into swearing, lying, stealing, whoring and killing. Moreover, all they that can talk of the Scriptures, & make show of them to others, have not by and by the knowledge of them: for as much as they may allege more a great deal then they understand. Shall none then be saved, will some say, but such as know the Scriptures; can we not be led by God's Spirit, and serve him, except we be conversant in them? I answer, no. The Spirit guideth no man without the word. We are begotten anew, by the immortal seed of the word, saith *Peter*. Of his own accord, he hath begotten us by the word of truth, saith *James*. If then we be begotten by the word, to a new life, we are dead without it, or rather have no being of a true Christian. No man can truly serve God, until he know how to serve him. It is God that teacheth how he

will be served, and he teacheth only by his word. He hath no other school-house, but the Scriptures: such as think to learn his will elsewhere are much deceived, and will in the end prove themselves the disciples of the devil, not the scholars of Christ: forasmuch as *he that is of God, heareth God's word: ye hear it not, because ye are not of God.* No man can be saved without faith, for without faith it is impossible to please God: but *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,* Rom. 10.17. No man can be saved, except he be regenerated, for except we be borne again, we cannot enter into the kingdom of God, John. 3. but *wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his ways, but by taking heed thereto according to his word?* Psal. 116.9. No man can be saved, except he fear God▪ forasmuch as the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, Prov. 1.7. whereas fools despise wisdom and instruction: But none can possibly come to y^e fear of God, but such as earnestly endeavor to know God, as we see, Pro. 2.1.5. *My son, if thou receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee, &c. then thou shalt understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.* None can be saved that are foul and filthy in their lives, and impure in all their ways, for no unclean thing shall enter into his kingdom: but where there is no knowledge of GOD, there the mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, the throat is an open sepulcher, the feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways and therefore the Prophet saith, *I have hidden thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee,* Psal. 119.11. If his word dwell in us, we have a bridle to restrain us from evil doing, and when we are ready to break out into sin, it pulleth us back, and saith unto us, Do it not. It layeth before us the will and wrath of God, it teacheth us what we ought to do, and telleth us the danger if we do it not. It is our duty therefore to pray to God to give us the understanding of his word, and to resolve with our selves to perform whatsoever we read in it. If then we have a warrant for that which we do out of the word, we have comfort in our callings: but if we follow the motion of our own brains, and have no other light but of our own nature to direct us, we live in darkness. Such as have the light of the Sun, do travel safely in respect of their bodies: so if we *have the sure word of the Prophets and Apostles, as a light that shineth in dark places,* we are in the safe way to salvation, and are certain we cannot miss of a perfect direction touching all the duties of our callings.

17 And the Lord spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, saying,

18 Cut ye not off the Tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites.

19 But thus do unto them, that they may live, and not die: when they approach unto the most Holy things, Aaron, and his sons shall go in, and appoint them everyone to his service, and to his burden.

20 But they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die.

The particular duties of the Kohathites, being declared, the reason is added and rendered in this division, and then he passeth to the duties of the next family. Here then *Moses* showeth

the cause why the Priests ought to cover all the Sanctuary, and the appurtenances, so that they ought not to be handled of the Kohathites, until they were covered, lest such as presumed to pry into them, or to meddle with them, otherwise then became the dignity, honor, and estimation of them, were stricken with sudden death, and so perish in their sins. Thus God restraineth the curiosity of man's nature, and teacheth it to be wise according to sobriety. We are wont to contemn the duties of our own calling, as vulgar and common: and to search into the things that belong not unto us: yea, the more we are forbidden to meddle, the more we are desirous to be meddling. The reason in this place, is framed thus,

If the irreverent handling of holy things procure the wrath of God, and our destruction, then we must take heed to the charge belonging unto us.

But the irreverent handling of holy things doth so: Therefore we must take heed to the charge belonging unto us, and not curiously meddle with other things.

Thus doth God hate, and his soul abhor the contempt of holy things, when men give way to their own affections, and through curiosity search farther, then God alloweth.

[Object.] Before we proceed to the doctrine, a question may be asked out of these words, why God permitteth the Priests only to handle the instruments of the Sanctuary, but forbiddeth the rest of the Kohathites, upon whose shoulders he layeth the burden to bear them: so that he bindeth their hands from touching of them, and restraineth their eyes from beholding of them, under a great penalty, *lest they die*. I answer, [Answer.] this was done for diverse causes; in respect of the ordinances themselves, in respect of the other Tribes, in respect of the Levites, and in respect of the Priests themselves.

First of all it was prescribed to procure greater reverence unto these holy ordinances of God, among the people. For when they should see how carefully they were to be handled, how circumspectly to be covered, and how orderly they were delivered from one to another; it served to touch the hearts of all men, with a reverent regard and opinion of them, and to deliver them from the contempt of men.

Secondly, when the rest of the Tribes of Israel should behold, that many even among the Levites themselves, albeit they were to minister to the Priests, to do the service of the Tabernacle, and to draw near unto God, above the rest of their brethren, yet even they were kept from the touching of the Sanctuary; I say the rest of the tribes were more humbled by it, were touched with a feeling of their own unworthiness, and were moved to give honor to the Priests of God, and those that were appointed to be their teachers.

Thirdly, all occasion and matter of envy was quite banished and taken away, when the rest of the Levites heard with their ears, and saw with their eyes, that their brethren the Kohathites had a charge so full of danger put upon them, and committed unto them. For God threateneth to destroy all such as presumed to touch anything that was forbidden them. An example whereof we have in the men of *Bethshemesh*, *whō the Lord smote with a great slaughter, because they looked into the Ark*, 1 Sam. 6.19. which showeth the greatness of their sin.

Lastly, the Priests themselves, the sons of *Aaron*, were admonished to take heed, lest through their negligence and carelessness, they destroyed their brethren: forasmuch as if anything remained uncovered, it would turn to their destruction. Hereupon two other questions may arise; first, how it standeth with God's justice to punish the Kohathites for the fault of the Priests? and whether the sons of *Aaron* should escape, whose fault it was, if ought remained uncovered? I answer [Answer.] the fault is not the Priests alone, nor the Kohathites alone, but they partake together in the sin, and should suffer together in the punishment, as they are threatened, *Exod. 28.43.* We see it also in the example of *Nadab*, and *Abihu*, who were consumed with fire, because they offered strange fire before the Lord, *Levite. 10, 1, 2.* But most plainly, *Num. 18.3.* *The Lord said unto Aaron, Thy brethren of the Tribe of Levi shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the Tabernacle: only they shall not come nigh the vessels of the Sanctuary, and the altar, that neither they, nor you also die.* Where we see, God doth threaten *Aaron* and his sons, as well as the rest of the Levites.

Verse 18.19. *Cut ye not off the Tribe of the families, &c.* We have in these words the reason of the former institution: it is drawn from the danger that will ensue the careless and irreverent handling of the instruments of the Tabernacle. *Aaron* and his sons must appoint to the Kohathites their several offices, and show them what part every particular person must bear, to the end the wrath of God do not break in among them, and cut off every soul that sinneth. The consideration therefore of the wrath and indignation of God, ready to come upon the offenders, ought to increase their care to do the duty that God requireth. We learn from hence, [Doctrine 1] that all holy things must be handled rightly, reverently, and religiously. Whatsoever matters of God we meddle withal, whether it be hearing of his word, or receiving of the Sacraments, or calling upon his Name, or reading the Scriptures, or conferring with others for the increase of our knowledge & obedience, we are to be careful to do them with all possible fear and reverence. This duty the Lord urgeth by his Prophet, *Isaiah 66.2.* *To him will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my word.* The Apostle writing to the Hebrews, persuadeth to labor to have grace, *whereby they may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear,* *Hebr. 12.28.* They that will please God in the duties of his worship, must be humbly affected, and base in their own eyes. Hence it is, y^t Christ willeth us to be careful, not only *what we hear,* *Mar. 4.24.* but also *how we hear,* *Luke 8.18.* We must regard not only the matter that is delivered, but the manner how it is received: forasmuch as we may hear the word, and yet sin in our hearing Thus were the servants of God affected, when they came before him, to pray unto him, *O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lif. up my face to thee, my God, for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens,* *Ezra 9.6.* Wherefore whensoever we have to do with God in any part of his word, or worship, let us come in humility and lowliness, let us approach near unto him with a broken heart, with a contrite spirit, & with an humble soul falling down flat before his footstool, and worshipping toward his holy Temple.

[Reason 1] The reasons hereof are evident. For first, we have to do with God in matters of religion. When the word is preached or read, the Lord speaketh to us: when we pray to God, we speak to him that is glorious in power and praises. *Abraham* praying unto God, confesseth his own baseness and unworthiness, *I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but*

dust and ashes, Gen. 18.27. And *Daniel* in his prayer saith, *O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day*. Dan. 9.7. Children dealing before their parents will be wary how they behave themselves: subjects in the presence of the Prince will be most dutiful: so ought it to be, and much rather, when we appear before the King of kings, considering with whom we have to deal. So likewise touching the word, it is not man that doth deliver it, God is the Author of it, and therefore we are oftentimes commanded to *hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches*, Revel. 2. and 3.

[Reason 2] Secondly, such as come without reverence, and due regard into his presence, do lose the fruit and benefit of their coming. We are willed to give earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip, Heb. 2.1. This is it that Christ our Savior teacheth. Lu. 8. For having given warning that we take heed how we hear, he giveth this reason, Mar. 4.24. *With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear, shall more be given*. Where we see, God will deal with us, as we deal with him, and serve us as we serve him. Such measure of attention as we bring with us, such measure of grace shall we receive from him. If then we come careless, it is no marvel if we depart fruitless. Lay then these two things together, that we have to deal with a most terrible and fearful God, who is even a consuming fire; and that with what measure of reverence and attention we mete, it shall be measured unto us again: it followeth from them both, that God must be served with fear and trembling.

[Use 1] Let us now come to the uses of this doctrine, which remain to be considered of us. First, this reproveth all such as come without reverence, to the exercises of religion, never considering whereabouts they go, but rashly and unreverently, disorderously, & vndecently behave themselves in the house of God. If a man should come to hear a speech uttered by his Prince, so contemptibly, all men would cry shame of him, and account him worthy severe punishment, and censure him as guilty of the contempt of his person. I should think I had done a great work, and laid a worthy foundation, if I could thoroughly teach you this one lesson, and ground you in this one point, to behave yourselves with reverence in the place of God's worship. He that hath learned to come reverently, and behave himself in the service of God, as in his presence, hath made a notable beginning & a good entrance to work in him right hearing and careful practicing. Scarce one among an hundred maketh conscience of this duty, and our ordinary assemblies have scarce the outward face of a Church, in regard of the want of this duty, in the greatest part of hearers. If the lest occasion be offered, our eyes and feet, and tongues and hands, are set on work another way, that we have quite forgotten God, his word, the work in hand, the matter, the time, the place, and our selves also, as if we were an assembly of fools. What is now become of our hearing? or where is the attention that ought to be in us? If any man come into the Church, our eyes are fixed upon him, our feet are ready to carry us unto him, our mouths are opened to speak unto him, our hands are stretched out to draw him as it were with violence unto us: and sometimes whiles one haleth him one way, another pulleth him another way, that we seem to strive who shall most forget himself, and be author of the greatest disorder and confusion in the house of God, wherein all things ought to be done decently and in order.

When Christ came to Nazareth, and as his custom was, went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath day to preach the Gospel, *the eyes of all them that were in the Synagogue, were fastened on him.* Our eyes, either are not fastened on the speaker, or if they be, they are soon removed. Every fancy carryeth us away, that we seem to mind nothing less, then y^e business in hand; or as if it were of so small importance, that it skilled not what we did: or as if our friends that come into the Church, were to be respected above God. In the time & place of God's worship, our minds ought to be settled and attentive to the work we have in hand, y^t we should know no friends, nor gaze after the comers in, but cut off all lets and impediments, that may hinder the saving hearing of the word. When we have done all that we can, & labored earnestly to gather home our wits from wandering, & straying from the matter we are about, we shall find all to be little enough: but if we nourish occasions to withdraw our minds and are glad to catch hold of them, when they are offered, we shall never want occasions, but an army of them will present themselves before us, and so entangle us in their snares, that we shall never profit our selves by the word, nor suffer others that would to profit, but hinder them greatly that desire to be better employed. Our feet, which have brought us into the house of God, and set us in our places, ought there to rest, until the time of our departure. The Psalmist saith, *Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.*

We must not therefore stir up and down, and remove out of our seats to the loss of God's word, whereunto we should attend. It is noted to the commendation of king *Josiah*, when the Law was read in the ears of the people, that *he stood in his place*, and made a covenant before the Lord to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments. This also shall be our praise and profit, if in time of hearing the word of God, we keep in our places, and abide in them without removing to other men. We use our hands to pull in others, when we should use our own ears to hearken after the sound of the word: we use our tongues to talk unto them, whereas the fittest ornament that becometh the Church, is the silence of the hearer, to give audience to the speaker Neither let any object, they can do both, attend the word, and intend others, hear and speak at one time, and use their ears and mouths together. For the one is an occasion to distract and disturb the other. Our minds are not infinite, but finite: we cannot occupy them about matters of a diverse nature, but one object is ready to thrust the other out of place.

Besides, the word is so precious, that it worthily craveth all the powers and faculties of the soul! Whosoever busieth himself in other things, as removing, talking, beckning, nodding, and such like gestures, while he is hearing, heareth but with half an ear, if with half an ear, whereas both are too little for so high a work. For as the Apostle speaketh of preaching the Gospel, so we may say of the hearing of it, *Who is sufficient for these things?* The occasions that hinder the saving hearing of the word, are many in number, I will reckon up a few of them, which all are to be cast away as clogges and impediments from us, and enemies to our attention.

The first is, straying & wandering thoughts; whereas the powers of the soul should wait upon the voice of the Preacher, and follow him whithersoever he goeth, our minds are

musings upon other things, sometimes upon our coffers, sometimes upon our pastures, sometimes upon our pastimes, sometimes upon our companions, sometimes upon our worldly business, whereby it cometh to pass, that being present, we are absent: being in the Church, we are out of the Church; being hearers, we are no hearers. For albeit we be present in body, we are absent in mind, and make our selves idol-hearers. The Scripture noteth a kind of idle and Idol Pastors, that have mouths and speak not: so the number is not small of idle and idol hearers, which have ears and hear not: who sit in their seats as images in glass windows, or like to the pictures of dead men upon their tombs, bending their knees, lifting up their eyes, holding up their hands, keeping silence, and yet are never the wiser, nor the better, nor the holier. So do these living images, they make show of one thing with the outward man, & perform another with the inward. We must desire of God to give unto us, constant, steady, and stayed hearts, that having ears to hear, we may hear indeed.

The second unseemly, and unsavory gesture, which is another great impediment, is a wandering eye, gazing and gaping after every occurrent and occasion that is offered. It is wisely spoken of the wise *Solomon*, The eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth; and on the other side, he saith, The wise man's eyes are in his head. Take heed to this abuse, which quickly draweth the heart after it.

The third hindrance is, removing of the body, not only shifting and stirring of it up and down, but arising out of our places, and removing to place other, or beckning with our hands, or nodding with our heads; which bewray manifestly that the mind is otherwise occupied and exercised then about the present work which we would seem to regard, and ought indeed to attend. *One thing*, saith Christ, *is necessary*: busying of our selves in other matters is not necessary, but bringeth with it apparent hurt, and detriment to the soul.

The fourth impediment is irreverent talking and vncivill laughing, as if the Temple of God (which is the house of prayer) were a Theater for sights, or a place of mart and exchange for commodities, where every man might single out companions. When any man heareth the voice of a crier ready to utter a Proclamation in the name of the Prince, he is ready to hold his peace and keep silence. The Ministers are as God's Heralds, or as *the voice of a crier*, they come as sent on a message unto us from God, and therefore all must hearken what they bring unto us, and none withdraw his ear from hearing of the Law.

The fifth is a secure and senseless sleeping, when we have drowsy ears, and cannot hold up our heads an hour: for some are no sooner in their seats, but their hearts and bodies are asleep. Some men regard not the word at all, they care not for it, they will not come unto it, albeit it come unto them, and be brought home unto their doors. The world accounteth this no sin at all, or at least a venial sin, because the laws of men lay not hold on them; but Christ accounteth it a great and capital sin. He willeth his disciples to shake off the dust of their feet, as a witness against those that willfully contemn this ordinance of God, as if the earth itself were infected, and the places of their abode corrupted by the contagion of their sins: and in the next Chapter, he maketh such to be worse then the Sodomites. For the contempt of the word is an abridgement of all sin gathered together in one. Woe unto us for this neglect and contempt of the word, we are so far from trembling at it, that some will not step

out of their doors: others, are content to come, but they are so far from showing reverence, that they fall fast asleep and will not be awaked. These irreverent actions and gestures show they regard it not, neither are touched with a feeling of it. Do these men tremble when the Minister reproveth sin? Do they examine their hearts whether they be guilty or not? Do they say unto their own souls, *What have I done?* Alas, how can they, when they have heard nothing? Neither let them go away in the dark, and seek to cover their drowsiness of spirit, under the name of an infirmity, or weakness that is in them: for they are not sometimes overtaken with it, but make a daily practice of it: they never strive against it, but nourish it in themselves, as those that are delighted in it, They cannot say, *they do that evil which they would not*, but that which they would do. They frame their bodies, and settle them of purpose to sleep, and so they may do it closely that they be not espied, they regard no more. They never call themselves to an account what they have heard: nor whether they have been overtaken this day; neither if they have, do they resolve with themselves, they will sin no more. If ever they had truly repented of this sin, they would endeavor not to be overcome again by it. If ever they had been truly sorrowful, it would bring forth in them a watchfulness over themselves, and a care to prevent it in time to come.

The last abuse is in careless coming, and shameless departing out of the Church, and separating our selves from the Congregation, before it be dismissed and dissolved. We use to reprove those and complain greatly of thē, when they are invited as guests to a feast, that come too late, and make the rest of the company to stay for them; or make haste to be gone away before the feast be finished. We desire that all our neighbors that are invited, should sit down together, and arise up from the table together. The word of God is a continual feast, the exercises of our religion are as a dainty banquet, we should come unto them, as men do to good cheer, & feed hungerly and heartily upon them. The Prophet witnesseth concerning his own practice, that *he had gone with the multitude into the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, as they that keep a feast*, Psalm. 42, 4. Is it so with us? Do we flock together to the hearing and handling of holy things, as we do unto a feast? If we did hunger and thirst after the word of God, as we do after bodily food, we would be as greedy to be partakers of the one, as we are forward to taste of the other. But the case is with us, as it fareth with those that have full stomachs: we desire not spiritual food, and therefore make no haste unto it. Now one cometh, and then another: now one droppeth away, and then another, and they think they have tarried too long. This is an open protestation or proclamation, that we are weary of holy things, and loathe them more then Israel did Manna. These men are Church-sick, or Sermon-sick, a common disease among common hearers. The Church is with them as a prison: they are as weary of staying in the Church, as the malefactor is of lying in prison: for as the prison holdeth them where they would not be, and from the place where they would be: so do profane persons account the Church as a place that restraineth their liberty, that they cannot do what they would do, nor be where they desire to be, nor resort to that company that they better affect, nor follow those sports and delights wherein they take the greatest pleasure.

The faithful in former times have accounted it a punishment to be driven from the house of GOD: but these men account it a sore punishment to be there. They desired to dwell in it all

the days of their lives, but we care not if we never come thither. They judged it the greatest famine to want y^e word, but if we be held never so little a time from our dinner, we complain as if we were like to starve. They longed to have the Sabbath day come, but these men would fain have it ended, and think it to be the longest day that is in the year, and the most tedious.

Secondly, it is the duty of the Minister to preach the word & administer the sacraments [Use 2] with all due regard and respect to the person they sustain, and the things that they meddle withal. We must do nothing that may make our Ministry fruitless, and bring it into contempt, but seek to adorn it and beautify it by all reverent carriage of our selves in it, and in the discharge of the duties of it.

This hath many branches: First, it behooveth us to set our selves in God's presence, and consider that we are his messengers, & speak in his name, and are as it were his mouth. How shall the hearer learn, that in his hearing he hath to do with God, and cometh *to hear what he shall say unto him by our mouths*, Acts, chapter 10, verse 33. if we do not remember that we stand in the place of God, and do after a sort represent his person? This is the counsel that the Apostle *Paul* giveth to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. chap. 2, 15. *Study to show thyself approved unto GOD, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*. Whensoever we get up into the Pulpit, before all things we must know, being placed in that office, whose message we deliver, and that if we speak not uprightly as becometh his Majesty, we must give a reckoning unto him. Wherefore, we must so teach, as if God were present with us, as if a Secretary should speak before a Prince: for he is his instrument, who is Lord over all. We must be able to make this protestation before men and Angels; I stand here as it were a chosen vessel before the Lord, to bear his Name unto his people: I am not to be the messenger of mine own words, but to be his mouth: I must lay aside whatsoever passions are in me, & utterly disclaim mine own affections, that I may protest indeed, that whatsoever I speak, is from God, and have drawn and derived it from him.

Secondly, it is our duty to aim at his glory that hath called us. We must not sit down in *Moses* chair to preach our selves, and to get credit to our own names: if we make this the end of our preaching, it cannot be, but we shall profane the holy word of God, and disguise it one way or other. The Apostle regarded little *to be judged of men*, and esteemed nothing the vain applause of the world, but preached Christ among them, and him crucified. Hence it is, that our Savior saith, *How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?* It is a note of a true teacher, to seek his glory that sent him, as contrariwise it is the note of a false teacher, if any in delivering his doctrine, seek himself rather than God. This is the difference between a true and false teacher, as Christ showeth at large, John. 7.17, 18. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself: he that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him*. That is true doctrine that giveth glory to God, and they are true teachers that seek to set it forth only. Let us consider of this a little farther.

If any be desirous to know, whether any doctrine be true, and have God the Author of it, let him labor to find it by this note. The doctrine of predestination hath been taught diversely, one way that it is of foreseen works, another, of the purpose of God according to election, Ro. 9.11. If any desire to know whether of these two opinions is the truer, let him examine them both by this rule, and try them by this touch-stone; which of them doth best serve to set forth the glory of God? Not that which imputeth our predestination, to our selves, and our own works, but the other which ascribeth all to his good pleasure, who hath elected us to *the praise of the glory of his grace*, Ephe. 1.6. The like we might say of justification and salvation of the elect, touching which are different doctrines delivered: Some teach that we are justified by faith alone, that is, by Christ's satisfaction apprehended and applied by faith: others, that we are justified by men's merits, and not by Christ's obedience alone. These two opinions are clean contrary, and cannot agree together, if one of them be true, the other is false. Now by this we shall be made able to judge, mark whether of them giveth God the glory alone: They that set up man's merits and deserts, and make him to have power to work out his own salvation, do give the glory to man, and so rob God of his honor and glory, and therefore they cannot teach the truth. But they that impute justification to Christ's righteousness, who is our merit, do commend his grace and mercy alone; and therefore they teach that doctrine which is of God. If this course were well noted and observed, it would shake in pieces many articles in controversy between the Church of Rome and us. We should not have occasion to dispute so often, and to reason with them touching man's freewill, indulgences, pardons, intercession of Saints, and such like points, which lead away our minds from God and his glory, from the Creator, to the Creature. Let all the Ministers of God therefore prove themselves and their teaching by his note; let them set his glory before their eyes, according to the example of Christ their Master, John. 8.50. I seek not mine own glory, there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

Thirdly, it belongeth to the Ministers duty, to come well prepared and provided as a wise Scribe taught to the kingdom of heaven, *bringing forth out of his treasure, things both old and new*, Matth. 13.52. The Ministers must come with good advisement and premeditation, and so handle the word with fear and reverence. There is no man that is sent on an embassy, but will think before hand what to say: much more is required, and ought to be practiced of the messengers of God. They must *eat the roll* of God's book, and have *their tongue touched with a coal from the Altar*. They must not utter whatsoever cometh into their mind, but that they have before well chewed and digested. He that speaketh suddenly, shall never speak profitably: but presumeth too far upon his own gifts, regardeth not as he ought the good or the people, and cannot have that comfort to himself which were expedient.

Fourthly, they must regard not only the matter which they handle, but the manner of handling. Some are so negligent and careless in delivering the word, that they regard not what words they use, and so let slip from them such homely phrases, as it were kitchen-stuff, that it bringeth the Minister, and his ministry, and the word it self into contempt. It is noted of Christ, that there proceeded *gracious words out of his mouth*, Luke 4.22. according to the saying of the Prophet, *Grace is poured into thy lips*, Psal. 45.2. Let us so speak the word of God both for matter and manner, as it ought to be spoken, and as we are persuaded, Christ

and his Apostles would have spoken it, if they had delivered it to the people. Our ordinary talk and communication should be as it were seasoned with salt, and minister grace to the hearers: how much more therefore when the word of God is in our mouths, and uttered by us? If we set this as a rule and caution before our eyes, it will serve as all-sufficient to inform us, and make the word reverent in our mouths. Some take upon them to reprove sin, but it is in such a foolish manner, in such a jesting vein, and after such a scoffing fashion, that they rather persuade to sin, then dissuade from sin, and bring the people in love with it rather then out of the love of it.

Therefore let this be another rule added to the former, that no man must gird and glance at sin, to show forth his own wit, and to magnify himself, to be accounted and esteemed that way. Rather let us pierce the very heart of it, with the *two edged sword of God's word*, and strike downright blows at it with the *hammer of God's word*, that so it may be broken in pieces. Sin is grown to a great head: it is not to be dallied withal. He that playeth with a serpent, may happily be stung of it, before he be aware.

Fifthly, it is required of the Minister to speak to the people with understanding. We must not fly aloft above the reach and capacity of those to whom we speak; and consider not so much what is lawful for us to deliver, but what is fit for the people to hear. It is better to speak *five words with understanding, then ten thousand in a tongue that is not understood*, 1 Cor. 14.19. as the Teacher of the Gentiles testifieth, who spake languages and tongues more then all we. We are commanded to lift up our voice as a trumpet, to tell Israel their sins; but *if the trumpet make an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?* The Apostle allegeth it as a judgment upon the hearer, not as a praise and commendation of the speaker, *With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people.*

Our Auditors are all, or at lest for the most part, rude and ignorant, and it is our duty to bow and stoop down to their capacity: and when we think we speak plainly, we shall find oftentimes that we speak darkly and obscurely, not plainly and familiarly enough.

Lastly, let us content our selves with the purity and simplicity of the word, which is sufficient in it self to expound it self, and able, yea, only able to give direction and satisfaction to the conscience. It may be truly said, that the Minster sitting in *Moses chair*, is, as it were set upon a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures all the people behold; and therefore albeit he be never so precise in the discharge of his calling, the hearers that can see but the outward actions, and not inward affections, will judge of the heart by the appearance, and of the substance by the circumstances: so that if any lightness or dissoluteness appear, they by and by conceive that all is amiss, and little regard anything that he doth deliver and speak unto them. True it is, this is their fault and infirmity, howbeit we must provide that we give no occasion, and cut off occasions from all such as are glad to lay hold on occasions.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is our duty, when we come to the house of God, to take heed to our feet, lest we depart from the Church, as the foolish virgins from the gates of heaven. We must learn

how to prepare our selves, that we may profit thereby, as the Lord would have the people sanctified before the Law was to be delivered, Exod. 19.

This preparation to be duly performed hath many particular parts, as several branches issuing out of one root.

First, it is our duty to come together into one place to hear the word, and to call upon his Name. For albeit we must read the Scriptures privately in our houses, yet we must have them publicly expounded and interpreted: and albeit private prayer be not unprofitable, and private exhortations be oftentimes available: yet our public assemblies have a more special blessing promised unto them, Matthew, Chapter 18. verse 20. *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the middes of them.* Before we can hear the word, it is required of us to come to the place of hearing, Psal. 34.11. and 122.1. The Centurion telleth our Savior that he had such servants under his authority, y^t if he said to one *Come, he cometh*, Matthew, 8.9. God our greatest Master, under whose authority we are, and he under the authority of none, sendeth out his messengers, and calleth his guests, *Come and eat of my meat, and drink of the Wine that I have drawn:* yet we seem deaf, and cannot hear: senseless, and cannot move.

The unreasonable creatures, even the worms that creep in the earth, put us to shame and serve to condemn us: when God in the beginning said, Let there be light, It was so: Gen. 1.24. *Let the earth bring forth her living creatures after their kinds;* the earth did so. When God intended to bring a plague upon the Egyptians, and called for the Grassehoppers and Caterpillars, Psalm 105. verse 34. *He spake, and the Locusts came, and Caterpillars, and that without number.* When he asked for them, they delayed not, but went out to do his will. But GOD hath spoken many times to us, and we regard not his call: and if we come sometimes at his bidding, we think we have done our duty, and him a pleasure.

We must come constantly and continually, *Blessed are they that dwell in his house*, Psalm 84. verse 4. The Church is not as an Inn to sojourne in, but an house to abide and dwell in, that Christ may find us there: but many prefer the Inn and Ale-house before it. It is better for us to be found in the Temple, then in the Tavern, and in the house of prayer, then in a den of Thieves. Let the zeal of his house eat us up. Let us consecrate the Sabbath as holy to the Lord, and make it a day of holy rest, not of unholy and ungodly riot.

Secondly, as we must come diligently, fo we must attend carefully, when we are come, otherwise what benefit can we have, or look for by our coming? The Prophet joineth these together, and coupleth them as two friends in one chain, Psal. 34.11. *Come, and hearken.* If it were enough to come and hear a voice, the ox and asse might do that, as well as we: for they can apprehend an outward sound. Therefore we must do more then that, we must set our minds upon that which we heave, or else we hear no otherwise then the beasts that are without understanding. This attention is a notable virtue, it is a Jewel for the ear. We see how many in our days delight to have Rings and Jewels hanging at their ears, and they account it a great ornament unto them. I will not say unto them, as the heathen Poet in scoffing manner answereth, that *it is because they have no fingers on their hands*, as if the

fingers, not the ears, were made for rings: but this I will say, that if we had the richest Jewels that the East or West could afford unto us, if we have not an ear bored through to the heart, to hear y^e word of God, they are no better then as Jewels put into a swine's snout. Happy is he that weareth this Jewel of attention, a Jewel of infinite price and value: this is to have an hearing ear, whereas all others have ears and hear not.

Thirdly, we must remember what we have heard, and not suffer it to slip from us. For what availeth it to be attentive for the time, and so soon as we are departed to forget all, thereby suffering the birds to pick up that which is sown? that is, Satan to steal out of their hearts that which hath been taught them. The Apostle *James* compareth such a man to one that beholdeth his natural face in a glass, who goeth his way, *and forgetteth immediately what manner of one he was*. The word of God that saith, *O my people hear my Law*, Psal. 78.1. saith also else-where, *My son forget not my Law*, Pro. 3.1. The Lord commanded the Israelites to bind his words upon their hands for a sign, that they should be as frontlets between their eyes, and write them upon the posts of their houses, and gates of their Cities: all these were as helps for memory against forgetfulness, as if he had said unto them, Have them always in remembrance. Of all persons old men seem to have the weakest memories, which decay with their age; and these do most of all complain of them: howbeit the heathen man telleth us that there is no man so old, that hath forgotten where he laid up his treasure. All men remember the things they most regard, & such as they love, they will not forget, forasmuch as *Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also*, Mat. 6.21. If then we remember not the things of God, the chief cause is because we do not much esteem of them. Set an high price upon them, value them above thy silver and thy gold, esteem them beyond all pearls and precious stones, and thou shalt find thy memory much bettered and increased.

The fourth is, to plant in us true godliness, and reform our lives, as it were to rid our ground of all briars & bushes before we sow anything in it. The gate of God's house is *the gate of righteousness*, because none but *the just* and righteous ought to enter into it, Psal. 118.19, 20. This is the cause that *Jacob*, when he went to Bethel to worship God, first cleansed his house of the filthiness of idolatry, and commanded his household *to be clean, and change their garments*; thereby understanding the purity of the heart, and the changing of their minds, by the renewing of them according to true godliness. Thus doth the Lord command the Israelites *to wash their clothes*, and sanctify themselves, before they came to hear the law at his mouth, Exo. 19.14. To this purpose *David* saith, Psal. 26.6. *I will wash mine hands in innocence; so will I compass thine Altar, O Lord*. If we come into God's presence, without sanctification, we offer a sacrifice full of blemishes which his soul abhorreth. He rejecteth our prayers as abominable, and our hearing of his word is turned into sin.

Lastly, we are bound to lay up in the heart that which we hear, for God especially requireth the heart. If that be wanting, he misseth it by and by, he espyeth it so soon as we come; as he did him that came to the marriage feast *without his wedding garment*, Mat. 22.11. There is no man hath any treasure that leaveth or layeth it commonly and carelessly, but he locketh it up, that no man should take it from him: the word is a pearl, and a pearl of such price, that when he hath found it that knoweth the worth of it, *he selleth all that he hath to buy it*: the

heart is as it were the coffer where we ought to keep it. If we hold it in our hands, or have it in our heads, or suffer it to dwell in our mouths only, and cannot afford to give it room and lodging in our hearts, it is in danger every foot to be taken from us, and we surprised of it. Such persons *honor him with their lips*, but their hearts are far from him, Matt. 15. The blessed Virgin is commended that *she kept those sayings in her heart*; So did Isaac go out into the fields *to meditate*, at eventide: he chose a solitary place and fit season, to call to mind such things as he had heard. Wherefore, let us also lay up in our souls and ponder in our hearts, such good things as we have learned, and let us hide them as in the casket of a good conscience, that in all times of need, we may bring forth these precious treasures to help us. We know not into what troubles and perplexities we may come, how we may be tempted & assaulted, & into what dangers of spiritual enemies we may fall: how bitter will those days be unto us, if we have no word of God dwelling in us, to comfort us, & raise us up again? It will then be too late to go and buy oil in our lamps, when we should use it. Let us store our selves with plenty of heavenly meditations, that we may never be too seek; and arm our selves with such sufficient furniture, that wheresoever the enemy seek to foil us, and to make a breach into our souls, we may be able to resist him, and to stand fast in the power of God against all the wyles of the devil.

21. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

22. Take also the sum of the sons of Gershon, throughout the houses of their fathers, by their families.

23. From thirty years old and upward, until fifty year old shalt thou number them: all that enter in to perform the service, to do the work in the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

24. This is the service of the families of the Gershonites, to serve, and for burdens.

25. And they shall bear the Curtaines of the Tabernacle, and the Tabernacle of the Congregation, his covering, and the covering of the badgers skins that is above upon it, and the hanging for the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

26. And the hangings of the Court, and the hanging for the door of the gate of the Court which is by the Tabernacle, & by the Altar round about, and their cords, and all the instruments of their service, & all that is made for them: so shall they serve.

27. At the appointment of Aaron and his sons, shall be all the service of the sons of the Gersbonites, in all their burdens, and in all their service: and ye shall appoint unto them in charge, all their burdens.

28. This is the service of the families of the sons of Gershon, in the Tabernacle of the Congregation: and their charge shall be under the hand of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the Priest.

Hitherto, *Moses* hath spoken of the *Kohathites*, and he hath done it more largely then he doth handle the other families, for the causes noted before. In the next place he proceedeth to the *Gershonites*.

Touching these; first, God commandeth them also to be numbered, and their age is appointed and limited, as in the former, from thirty years old and upward, until fifty.

Secondly, their proper and peculiar charge is expressed, what burdens they are to bear, to wit, the Curtaines and the coverings, the cords, the veils, and all the instruments appertaining to their service.

Thirdly, all these things before mentioned, must be done at the commandment of *Aaron* and his sons.

[Ver. 22, 23. *Take also the sum of the sons of Gershon, &c.*] Observe with me in this division, that *Moses* repeateth sundry points that are set down in the former chapter, as will evidently appear unto us, if we make trial and comparison, in everyone of the three families; as for example, touching the *Kohathites*, that which he speaketh of them in this chapter, verse 5, 7, 9. compare it with the 31. verse of the third chapter. Secondly, touching the *Merarites*, which are another of the families, what he saith of them, verse 31, of this present chapter, compare it with the 36, and 37, verses of the former chapter. Lastly, touching the *Gershonites*, the 25, ver. of this fourth chapter, with the 25, verse of the third chapter: and we shall see, he telleth them again and again, what burdens they are to bear, and what service they are to perform. He might have referred us to that which he had before set down, but he doth again particularly rehearse and repeat it. God forbiddeth needless repetitions in prayer, and condemneth much babbling that bringeth no benefit with it: & therefore he useth it not himself, neither do any of the Penmen of the holy Scriptures, who wrote as they were inspired by the Spirit of God, the Author of them. They were chosen vessels of God, and as it were his Secretaries, so guided by him that they could not err in writing, no more then in speaking of it.

We learn from this practice of *Moses* in this place, that it is lawful for the Ministers and Teachers of the Church to make repetitions of things formerly taught, and to deliver the same points and parts of religion again and again, both for matter and form, not thereby to ease themselves, or to maintain sloth in thē, but for the benefit of the Church. *Moses* in the book of *Deuteronomy*, repeateth to the people, many things done before, and expressed in the former books, and therefore it is fitly called a repetition of the Law; and there he rehearseth the ten Commandments again, Deut. 5. So do the Evangelists declare, how Christ our Savior often repeateth the same things, and preacheth again the same points he had delivered before: and therefore his practice may well be our warrant, and his example our direction. Thus doth the Apostle *Peter* show what he did, and what he will do, 2 Pet. 1, 12. *Wherefore, I*

will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. And afterward in the same Epistle, he professeth, that he had written to them of those things, whereof his *beloved brother Paul had written in all his Epistles*. The Epistle of *Jude* is a repetition of those things handled by *Peter* in his second Epistle, and is as it were an abridgement of it. So the books of *Chronicles* do repeat many things before set down in the books of the *Kings*: albeit it be done with much access of matter & profit to the reader, as we shall see by diligent observation in the reading of them. In like manner the Apostle *John*, wrote unto them those things which they had been taught before, *I have not written unto you, because ye know not the truth but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth*, 1 John 2, 21. This may plentifully appear unto us, in the comparing of the old Testament with the new; one strengtheneth and confirmeth another, and sundry things are repeated in the new, which are delivered in the old. We see the Gentiles in the Acts of the Apostles, besought *Paul* and *Barnabas*, that *the same words might be preached unto them the next Sabbath day*, which they had first offered unto the Jews. All which examples, as it were a cloud of witnesses, do confirm the lawfulness of their practice, that teach again what they have taught, and deliver the same points which before they have delivered, and so bring forth out of their storehouse, things both old and new: for this custom could not be used without some access and addition of new matter, according to the manner of God, used in the holy Scriptures.

[Reason 1] This is not done without cause and good reason. For first, men are commonly dull in hearing, slack in coming, weak in remembering, and slow in practicing. They are as a tough oake, that is not felled at one stroke, & as an hard stone, that is not broken in pieces with one blow: they are as marble, that is not pierced with once dropping of water upon it, but requireth a constant and continual falling upon it, according to the Commandment of God, directed to his Prophet, Ezek, 21, 2. *Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and drop thy word toward the holy places, and Prophecy against the Land of Israel*. For albeit we be often taught and plainly instructed, here a little, & there a little, yet we cannot conceive and carry away the things we hear. The Apostle saith, *We have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing*: where he giveth this reason, why he had need begin again the first rudiments of Christian religion, as it were to lay the foundation of the house again, before he went forward with high mysteries, even in regard of their dullness and slackness in learning.

[Reason 2] Secondly, it is safe and sure for all hearers to have often repetitions. It hath his good use, and special benefit. Many witnesses do make sure work, and confirm strongly and steadfastly the things taught. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, writing to the *Philippians*, chap. 3, 1. *To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous: and for you it is safe*. That which is once spoken, is through our infirmity and corruption, as good as never spoken; as one witness is no witness. GOD would have every truth confirmed by two or three witnesses: and forasmuch as the history of the life and death, of the doctrine and miracles, of the resurrection and ascension of Christ, is so main a pillar of our religion, in the knowledge whereof, our salvation consisteth, he would have it confirmed by four authentic witnesses, and Christ carried by them as on a fourfold Chariot in triumph like a mighty Conqueror, that hath subdued all his and our enemies. Thus doth God provide most plentiful means to remove our infidelity, to take away our doubting, and to remedy our infirmity.

Thirdly, repetition worketh a deeper impression [Reason 3] in us, and serveth to beat it into the conscience, as well as into the understanding. It is necessary that we be stirred up & quickened to the practice of good things by the goad of repetitions. This consideration made the Apostle say, I think it meet, as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance. Practice is an hard thing and rare. We are not easily brought to perform such things as we know. If then, once speaking take not hold on us, it may the second time, being commended unto us again.

Fourthly, we ought not to forbear from [Reason 4] this course, because our life is short, we know not how soon we may be called out of this world, and give an account of our Ministry, how careful we have been to gain souls unto God. The Apostle having declared, that he would not be negligent to put them in remembrance of the same things, and that he thinketh it very meet to do so, addeth this as a reason & motive to move him, which also ought to encourage us, *Knowing that shortly I must put off this my Tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shown me: Moreover, I will endeavor that you may be able after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance.* And then indeed we have done our duty, when we have taught the truth in this manner to our people, not only once and away, as it were glancing at it, but continually dwelling upon it, teaching them line upon line, and precept upon precept; like masters that teach young scholars to read, that must not content themselves once to tell them, but must oftentimes put the same things into their mouths and minds, or else they forget them straight-ways.

Let us now make application of the Doctrine, which is the life of instruction: forasmuch [Use 1] as teaching without applying, is as the body without the soul. First of all, we learn hereby, that the perpetuity & standing course of teaching, is most needful and necessary in every Congregation. It is the Ministers duty to sow, and to continue sowing: to weed, and to continue weeding: to teach, and to continue teaching: to convert, and to continue converting: to convince, and to continue convincing: to instruct, and to continue instructing. For as we have always need of meat, and that as we eat, so we must continue eating, or else we famish and perish: so the Minister must feed, and weed, and watch over his people, and abide continually in it without ceasing and intermission. This is it the Apostle teacheth *Timothy*, 1 Tim. chap. 4, verse 16. *Take heed to thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue therein: for in doing this, thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee.* So then, it is not enough to take heed unto himself and his doctrine, to live well, and to teach well, but he must continue in them both, and not give over. It was well said of the heathen man, *It is no less virtue to keep, then to get; to preserve, then to obtain.* Many know how to get, but they know not the art how to save that which they have gotten, and therefore it passeth away suddenly, as grease that melteth before the Sun. If the husbandman should only plant and never water, he might look for no fruit to come of his labor. It is not enough for the watchman to have discovered the enemy once or twice, unless he descry him so often as he maketh an approach: so it can be no discharge to the spiritual watchman of souls, to have given warning by blowing the Trumpet, unless he do it during the whole time of the war, which is perpetual and continual. We can take no truce, nor make no league with our spiritual enemies; *Our adversary the devil goeth about continually, seeking whom he may devour.*

Hence it is, that Christ requireth of *Peter*, not only to feed, but to feed again and again; *Feede, feed, feed*, according to the charge committed unto him: and *Paul* would have *Timothy* be *instant in season and out of season*: so that there is required diligence, faithfulness, painfulness, and continuance in teaching. It is worthy to be well considered which the Lord saith in the Prophet *Isaiah*, ch. 62, 6. *I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace, day nor night*. We know not at what time the Lord will call effectually, and touch the hearts of those that we teach. He must first feed with milk, before he give them strong meat: for *everyone that useth milk, is unskillful in the word of righteousness, inasmuch as he is a babe: but strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*, Hebr. 5, 13, 14. It is the Ministers duty to ring the alarm bell continually; he hath some work always to do, to strengthen & fortify, to comfort and raise up, to exhort and admonish, to heal the sick, to bring home them that wander, to encourage the weak, to establish them that are strong, and to answer doubts that arise among his people. If it were possible, to teach all truth particularly that is required of a Christian man, yet we have not then time to be idle, and sit down at our ease, but even then we must go over the points again, that our people that have learned them, may learn them again: and if they know them, they may yet know them better: if they remember them, that they may remember them better: if they practice them, that they may practice them better and better. Yea, if we be grown old in learning, we must learn still: for we must live and die, learning something. Everyone both Minister & people, must be a scholar in the School of Christ. *Timothy* himself must *give attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine*: all men must *stir up the gifts that are given unto them*, which will soon decay without use and diligence, as the fire will go out, except the coals be kindled, and more wood added. When Christ had distributed his talents among his servants, he said, *Occupy till I come*. Albeit then by the Ministry of the word, we have received to believe, yet this must not abate our diligence in hearing, but we ought as carefully to seek the food of our souls afterward as before: forasmuch as without continuance of attendance to this ordinance, it is impossible that any should be saved, God not suffering the means of salvation appointed by him to be neglected or contemned.

Secondly, this reproveth sundry abuses, [Use 2] both in the Ministers and in the people, as first of all the niceness of many Teachers, who because they would be singular and popular, gaining to themselves many followers, and seeking the praise of men, more then the glory of God, labor to bring new doctrines into the Church, never heard off before, not proportionable to the ancient faith of the Prophets and Apostles, but of a new coin and stamp. These cannot abide to be beating upon old points, they think it a discredit and disgrace unto them, to tread in the beaten path trodden by others that went before them; they must ever be seeking of unknown and uncouth ways; this is their delight, and in this they glory. This hath been the poisoned and pestilent humor of heretics and of false teachers, to draw away the minds of the simple and unlearned from the ancient truth received from the Scriptures, and to turn them out of the right course followed by all the faithful. Such were those false Apostles that troubled the faith of the Galatians, and brought into that Church, *another Gospel*, even a new Gospel. Such are they in these days, that

hammer cockle and darnel upon the anuill of their own brains, broaching strange positions long since buried, & raking them out of the graves or ashes of Pelagians, and other forlorn heretics. These glory in their own wits, and account themselves happy, that they can maintain new assertions, & trouble the peace of the Church with them. Secondly, they are reproved, that scorn to take this course which Christ and his Apostles took, to deliver precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. They think it no way agreeable to their learning and high places, to insist upon one thing, and to beat upon the same matter: who are like unto a master that is greedy to teach his scholar faster then he can learn. But having taken upon us the charge of souls, we must submit our selves to the slow and slender capacities of the people, and make it our chief end to profit thē. And touching the people themselves, it brandeth those with a note of fickle and itching eared hearers, that loathing the old wholesome doctrine of salvation, turn their ears from the ancient truth, and being like the Athenians mentioned in the Acts, do hunt after novelties, and only do like new doctrines, new teachers, new matters, that they never heard off before; lusting after change of diet, like to their wicked forefathers, that loathed the heavenly Manna (whereof they had often tasted) as a light meat: they must have variety, and be fed with quail to fill their delicate and dainty stomachs. There is little hope to do any great good vpō these nice and new fangled hearers, that are ouergone and overgrown with a dangerous disease. Of such the Apostle hath foretold, 2, Tim. 4, 3, 4. *The time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching ears: and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, & shall be turned unto fables.* Such were some of the Galatians, who were bewitched by false teachers, *that they should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth and crucified among them.* Gal. 3, 1. Many such are in our days in town and city, that surfeit through plenty, and wax wanton through abundance of God's blessings. Were not he an unwise man, that would leave his old Physician, to whom he hath been long accustomed, and who knoweth by long experience the state of his body, and foolishly long after others, that neither he knoweth them, nor they know him. So is it exceeding folly to loathe the known Physician of thy soul, that knoweth the state and condition of thy soul, and consequently is most likely to do thee most good; and to haunt after new teachers, that may feed thee with wind instead of sound and wholesome nourishment: or at least, though he teach soundly, yet cannot speak so powerfully, and apply his word so profitably, and know thy necessity so fitly, as thine ordinary teacher that hath the oversight and charge of thy soul.

[Use 3] Lastly, this admonisheth all hearers to be content to be ordered in this manner, and not to think amiss of their Ministers for delivering unto them known truths which they have read, and heard, learned and known long before. For it is the old commandment, the common and ancient faith which they must teach, and teach again, which are the true Pastors. He that bringeth in another Gospel then that which hath been already received, if it were *an Angel from heaven, let him be accursed.* Wherefore, whosoever findeth fault with them for these repetitions, reproveth Christ himself, and checketh the holy ordinance of God. These are they, that while they would be thought wise, become fools: they will take a course by themselves, & set Christ and his Apostles to school to learn, as if the blind should teach

them that can see, to hit the mark. For if we will consider the matter, and judge it aright, the truth is more fit to be remembered and recommended to thē that do already know it, then to those that are ignorant of it. This is the duty whereunto *John* doth prepare his hearers in his first Epistle, chapt. 2. *Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment, which ye have heard from the beginning: I write unto you, babes, because ye have known the Father: I write unto you fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have not written unto you, because ye know not the truth, &c.* We that are in the number of God's people, must learn to know our own good, and hear greedily & diligently, the same things which we have heard and learned, as they that have eaten hungerly of one dish of meat today, come to it without any loathing the next day again.

But some will say, what need have we to hear the same things, as coleworts twice sodden? especially considering there is such variety and diversity of matter for the Minister to insist upon. I answer, [Answer.] there are many causes to bear out this practice, as we noted before. For, who knoweth anything as he ought to know? And who practiseth any duty, as he ought to practice? Who hateth any vice so fully and perfectly as he ought to hate it; or is so armed and strengthened against the assaults and temptations thereof, as is required? Who is so fenced against errors and heresies, but he may daily fortify himself better, and scour up his rusty armor? Or who remembereth anything so well as he should, and is not prone to forget what he hath once known and learned? It may be we have received to believe, and obtain Christ to repent and fight against sin: howbeit our knowledge, our faith, our obedience are imperfect: our combats with Satan are mingled with much weakness, and oftentimes we are constrained to take the foil: so that it is necessary, that we should be continually put in remembrance of these things. The Apostle writeth to the Philippians, that *it grieved him not to write the same things*: there is more cause to speak the same things, then to write them, because the things spoken, pass away and are soon forgotten, whereas the things written, remain and continue. Where are they then, and how great is their ignorance, shall I say, or folly, that when they hear one doctrine twice, or peradventure thrice, do repine and disdain at it, and think it not worthy to be spoken and commended unto them again, or themselves too worthy to hear of it again? but if it fall out to be delivered the second time by a meaner Minister then it was before, inferior in degrees, or weaker in gifts, then they abhor it so much the more, and cry out aloud, that they are shamefully abused. They reply, Can he say anymore in it, then hath been said? I heard this point learnedly discussed at such a time, and such a place, by such a profound scholar and a great Clearke, and I need hear it no more, I will be gone. O beware and take heed of this spiritual pride & queasic stomach, that refuseth wholesome meat, because he liketh not the messenger, or the dish wherein it is brought, or because he hath tasted such food better dressed. The herb is not rejected that is wholesome for the use of man, because the Gardener that planted it, was inferior to many other Gardiners, that were more excellent and cunning handed. Will any, coming into a garden, refuse the sweet and pleasant flowers, because he hath seen and smelled such before? In like manner ought it to be with us, when the savor of the word of God, more precious then all the spices and sweet perfumes that are of the earth, shall come unto us, albeit we have been delighted with the fragrant smelles thereof a thousand times,

yet ought we no less to be desirous of it then we have been before. As the Minister must one day give an account how he hath taught; so must the people how they have heard. He oftentimes blesseth the faithful labors of poor and mean workmen, & furthereth their holy endeavours, according to his gracious will and pleasure. Let us not therefore discourage the hearts, and weaken the hands of the dispensers of God's word, nor refuse to hear it at their mouths, albeit other have greater gifts. For God hath not variably disposed of them, and given unto one a greater portion, and to another a less, that one should be honored, and the other contemned; one heard, and the other not heard: but to set forth his own mercy, and to further the good of the Church. In the building of the material Tabernacle, not only they are accepted, that brought gold or silver, or blew silk, or purple, but also such as were poor, and brought Goats hair, Badgers skins, a little Sittim wood, & such like stuff of inferior nature and less value. There is great variety and diversity of God's gifts, given for the building of his spiritual Temple, and all of them profitable. Such as he hath bestowed mercifully, such should we bring cheerfully, and such shall be accepted: to teach us at this day, to despise in no man what the Giver himself approveth. Away then with all disdain and pride of heart, to reject those whom he accepteth. The small gift of the poor widow that cast her *mite into the treasury*, was better accepted & commended, then the rich offerings of those that cast in of their superfluity. Let us therefore despise no man that aimeth at a good and right end, and bendeth all his gifts to profit the Church. For if we, upon whom God hath bestowed much, shall proudly scorn, & contumeliously disdain and deride him that hath little, and yet is faithful in dispensing of that little, to the greatest gain of his Lord and Master, God doth behold it and abhor it, and he will surely and severely punish it. What is it that we have not received? And how do we deceive our selves, to think that we are full, who (alas) are either dry brooks and empty vessels, or at least hold very little water?

Let us then humble our selves before him that only giveth the increase, and cast up our eyes and hearts unto him that is able to make us more lowly in our own eyes, remembering that as some men want of that measure of learning, wisdom, knowledge, eloquence, and such like gifts to build withal which we have: so in like manner do we want as great a portion of others, who as far excel and exceed us, as we in our own conceits go beyond other men. And let us all that be hearers, set before us the example of the blessed Virgin, *who kept all those sayings, and pondered them in her heart*, which she heard of the Shepherds. These were poor simple men, to whom the birth of Christ was first revealed by an Angel, as they *abode in the field, and watched their flock by night*; whereas it was hidden from *Herod*, from *Pilate*, from the Scribes and Pharisees, and from the noble and rich men that lived in *Judea*: but as Christ took upon him the state of humility, so he manifested himself to these poor instruments, and commanded them to publish abroad what they had seen and heard. The Virgin *Mary* had been informed and instructed touching the incarnation and birth of the Messiah, by a more worthy instrument: the Angel *Gabriel* was sent unto her, who told her the matter before hand: and what learned she by the words of these shepherds, which she knew not before? yet she scorneth not to hear the same again by the mouth of these shepherds, and layeth it up also in her heart. She did not say to the shepherds, wherefore do you come and tell me this? Or what need so much ado? It is no news to me, I know it far better then yourselves, I

have been told it before by an Angel from heaven. Wherefore should I give ear unto it again, as if I had nothing else to do? She doth not reason in this sort, but is *humble and lowly* in her own eyes, Luke 1, 48. as often as God hath a mouth to speak, she hath also an ear to hear. She knew well enough, she had not so learned it, but she had need to be confirmed in it by the mouths of other witnesses. The more the witnesses were in number, the greater strength of faith she gained. She considered that it was God that had revealed this matter and mystery unto them, who guideth the tongues and hearts of all men, and therefore it was meet, that she should mark attentively, and hearken diligently to every word that should proceed from them,

It standeth everyone of us in hand that are present, to reason thus with our selves, What is that which I hear? I have heard this oftentimes before: I thought with myself, I had learned this point sufficiently, but I see I am far deceived: God will have me learn it yet better: it may be, he seeth, I shall have farther *<1 page duplicate>* *<1 page duplicate>* use of it in the practice of my life, he knoweth the weakness of my judgment, of my faith, and of my obedience, he would have me thoroughly confirmed in this truth. It is his love and mercy unto me, I see it, I confess it, I praise his Name *humbly* and earnestly for it, and therefore I will hear it as diligently, and carefully, as though I had never known of it before at any time. If I hear the doctrine of the Trinity preached, I must consider, I am not sufficiently armed against heretics that may shake my faith in this Article: if I hear the deity of Christ proved, I must not suffer it to pass slightly from me, as a plain point that needs no confirmation or demonstration out of the Scriptures; but lay hold of it, and know that the Arians and other enemies of God are many and strong, that may seek to undermine my faith, and take my shield from me.

When I hear the truenesse of Christian religion so much stood upon, remember that many false Prophets are gone into the world, who devise subtle arguments, as it were weaving the spiders web, that they may not be espied: there are sundry Atheists and Libertines that fear not to shake the foundation of all the building, and we shall lie open unto them as a prey, except we be daily fenced against them. When we hear any gifts and heavenly graces of God commended unto us, *•s* patience and such like, think not there is *<◇>* *•re* ado a great deal made about them, *<◇>* *is* need; we know not what storms and *<◇>* *•ts* hang over our heads, and what af• *<...>* may befall us, and therefore we have *<...>* *•uch* patience, *that after we have done <...> God, we may receive the promise.* When *<...>* *•re* any doctrine in controversy, between the Church, of Rome and us, mark the points wherein we agree, mark wherein we do dissent: learn how to answer their objections: and though we hear these things often, yet we must not hear them negligently; we know not what use we may have of these weapons, and how soon we may be called *to give a reckoning of the hope that is in us*, 1, Pet. 3, 15. Our adversaries grow every day more subtle then other, and therefore we must not be simple, lest we fall into their snares. This is the use of repetitions toward the godly. Moreover, when such as have refused to hear the word of the Lord, and pulled away their shoulders as disobedient children, do again hear the same doctrine sounding in their ears, the same vices reprov'd, & the same threatenings doubled and trebled upon us, as it were a

stroke drivē to our heads with the two edged sword of the Spirit; should they contemn it again? and suffer it to pass from them without taking heed? Nay, they also ought to make good use and instruction of these repetitions; and say with themselves in a feeling of their former negligence, Why doth God offer me this again? Doth not he know my sinfull heart, that I have heretofore despised it, as a vain word concerning me? and that I would not suffer it to enter, but put it from me far o•? It is he that searcheth the hearts and reins, he understandeth the imaginations of my thoughts: it is his kindness and favor toward me, to offer it unto me yet once again. Now is the acceptable time; now it is called today; now God *knocketh at the door of my conscience*: if I do not at this present entertain him, I know not whether ever he will offer it unto me again. Lord, I am unworthy of the least of all thy mercies, I have grievously offended against thee, and I have rewarded thee with unkindness, contemning so often thy word, and casting it behind my back. Lay not this sin to my charge, but for thy goodness & truths sake be favorable unto me. Now give me grace to lay hold on thy word, and not suffer it to pass from me, as I have done heretofore. Blessed is that man that can make this use of the word of God, & stretch forth his hand, or rather openeth his heart to receive & embrace it, before it go from his doors, never to return anymore. As for all those that are often invited, and yet will not come to this feast; that are called, and will not answer, fearful shall their condemnation be.

29. As for the sons of Merari, thou shalt number them after their families, by the house of their fathers.

30. From thirty years old and upward, even unto fifty years old shalt thou number them, everyone that entereth into the service, to do the work of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

31. And this is the charge of their burden, according to their service, in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, the boards of the Tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and the sockets thereof.

32. And the pillars of the Court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords, with all their instruments, and with all their service: and by name ye shall reckon the instruments of the charge of their burden.

33. This is the service of the families of the sons of Merari, according to all their service in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the Priest.

The last of the families remaineth, to wit, the *Merarites*: touching whom, first, the numbering of them is commanded, from thirty years old and upward, even until fifty. Secondly, their office and charge is rehearsed; they are to carry the boards and bars of the Tabernacle, the

pillars, the pins, the sockets, the cords, and all the instruments. Thirdly, the Superintendent or Ouerseer of them, is appointed to be *Ithamar*, the son of *Aaron* the Priest.

Thus we have seen how the several offices are distributed among these families, to stop contention, to repress ambition, and to avoid confusion. The wise man saith, *Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom*, Prov. 13, 10. We see by experience, how ready we are to wander out of the way, except we have our bounds set unto us. Wherefore, to make an end of all controversies, the Lord himself interposeth his authority, bridling the out-courses of the unruly, and keeping everyone within his compass. True it is, the sons of *Kohath* have a more honorable function committed unto them then the rest, which proceedeth from the mere mercy of God, not from any merit in themselves, who had not so much as the privilege of the birth-right by nature, so that they had no cause to lift up their heads above the rest: for neither might they contemn their brethren, neither their brethren envy them, forasmuch as they usurped not this prerogative of themselves. They had the keeping of the Sanctuary; not that it was lawful for them to handle any part thereof with their hands, or to see when they were covered, lest they died: but their office was to carry on their shoulders the instruments and the vessels wrapped together, folded up, and covered by the Priests. For when they were to take their journey, God commandeth the sons of *Aaron* to gather together the parts of the Sanctuary, and with all care and diligence to cover the veil, the Altar, and other instruments, before the sons of *Kohath* come to carry them, to the end the people of GOD might have the worship, service, and Sanctuary of God in greater reverence.

[Verse 31, 32. *And this is the charge of their burden, &c.*] The sons of *Kohath* had the most honorable charge. The charge committed to the sons of *Gershon* and *Merari*, were in comparison of the other, of little value and estimation: besides, they were very combersome & troublesome, and consequently, the work hard and servile: and among these two, the sons of *Merari* had the least and lowest charge: yet notwithstanding, they pulled not away their shoulders, they shrunk not under the burden, they disdained not their brethren, they were not ashamed of their office, they were not hindered from the execution of their function through pride, or weariness, or envy, or contempt. All of them had not one office, but everyone bare his part, *The body is not one member, but many*: if they were all one member, where were the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If all had one office, it would minister much occasion of contention. And as in the body every part is not alike excellent and honorable, yet everyone contenteth himself with his proper place; so was it among the Levites: some of the charges were worthier then other, yet they that had the charge of least importance did patiently and quietly undergo it. We learn from hence, that how mean [Doctrine 1] and low soever our places are, we must not murmur at them, but be contented with thē. No man ought to disdain at the dealing of God toward him, in that he hath placed him no higher. Those laborers in the Gospel that wrought in the vineyard, are reprov'd, because they were discontented that others were made equal unto them, and had their penny as well as they, Mat. 20, 11. they grudged that themselves had no more, they repined that others had so much; & so *murmured at the good man of the house*. The wiseman saith, Pro. 10, 22 *The blessing of the Lord maketh rich; and he addeth no sorrow with it*. And chap.

13, 25. *The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want.* The Apostle giveth us this direction, that *having food and raiment, we should therewith be content*, 1 Tim. 6. This rule that he giveth & teacheth to other, he had learned himself, *in whatsoever estate he was, he murmured not at it, but was contented with it*, Phi. 4.11. Al which testimonies serve to prove, that no man ought to show any dislike or discontentment, as if his place and estate were too base and low for him.

This is not so easily persuaded as it is spoken, [Reason 1] and therefore we are to use a few reasons for farther confirmation and strengthening of it to the consciences of all of us. First, contentation is a ready and approved medicine for all miseries and maladies whatsoever. No man is troubled with any grief or disease, but he is most willing to hear of a salve for it. This is souereigne for this purpose. It easeth the burden of all afflictions, it taketh away the smart of all sores: it poureth wine and oil into our wounds, and of half dead, maketh us alive again: it maketh a rough way plain, & crooked things straight. It casteth down high hills, and maketh the path easy before us. It turneth outward wants into inward comforts. It maketh the bond to be free, the poor to be rich, the sick to be whole, the miserable to be happy, & such as are owners of nothing, to be Lord's of all things. Give an hearty draught of this strong drink, to him that is ready to perish, and a cup of this wine, to him that hath an heavy heart; it will make him forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more. This we see in the Apostle *Paul*, he had drunk of the wine of contentation, 2 Cor. 6, 9, 10. and therefore saith, *As unknown, and yet well known: as dying and behold, we live: as chastened, and not killed: as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing: as poor, yet making many rich: as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.* These things seem to some to contain flat contradictions, & to be directly opposite the one to the other; but this is the benefit of contentation, that it reconcileth things contrary, & maketh thē good friends to live together in one subject: so that when he did undergo many kinds of affliction, he was refreshed in spirit, & cheered up in all his sufferings.

[Reason 2] Secondly, we have a gracious promise from the mouth of God, that cannot lie, or deceive or defraud us, that he will not suffer us to lack, nor leave us destitute of help, but will supply our wants, and minister unto our necessities. Many troubles may set upon us on all sides, as an host of armed men, but they shall not prevail against us, we shall overcome thē all at the last. They may threaten, but they shall not hurt us, for God hath pulled out the stings of these serpents. The Prophet *David* had good experience thereof in his own feeling, Psalm. 34, 9, 10. *O fear the Lord, ye his Saints: for there is no want to them that fear him: the young Lions do lack, and suffer hunger, but they that seek the LORD, shall not want any good thing.* And Psal. 37, 4, 5. *Delight thyself in the Lord, & he shall give thee the desires of thine heart: commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.* If a man of great account and estimation in this world, should behold a poor man, and give him this comfort in his necessity, Be of good cheer, I will never see thee want, as long as I live; how would this revive the spirits of a man, now almost at the point of death? It is GOD that saith unto us, I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee: shall we not then boldly say, and in the assurance of faith conclude, *The Lord is my deliverer, I will not fear what man can do unto me?* So that there is no just cause of discontentment, whensoever we are brought into trouble, albeit we see no way

to get out, forasmuch as he is able to break the bars of brass, and break a bow of steel, and make an happy issue, as he caused *the chains of Peter* when he was in prison, *to fall from his hands*, and the iron gate *to open of his own accord*. Act. 12, 9, 10.

Thirdly, the providence of God ruleth all [Reason 3] things, so that nothing cometh upon us, or befalleth unto us, by his will and pleasure, & therefore we ought to rely our selves wholly upon him, and submit our willes unto his will; our corrupt willes, unto his most holy will. Our Savior teacheth his Disciples, Math. 10, 29, 30. to rest upon his providence, *Are not two Sparrowes sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered*. This is an effectual argument to move us, and thoroughly to persuade us to contentation of mind, & to bear whatsoever befalleth with patience and comfort, forasmuch as he, that is infinite in wisdom and knowledge, and infinite in grace and mercy, doth so order, dispose, & govern all things by his over-ruling and over-reaching hand, that neither a Sparrow lighteth upon the ground, nor an hair falleth from our head without his appointment. This reason is used by Christ our Savior, Mat. 6, 26. where, persuading us to lay aside all carking & caring for worldly things, and to rest wholly upon God, he doth chiefly beat upon this point, & groundeth his reason upon God's providence, who *clotheth the Lilies, feedeth the Ravens*, and ministereth food to all living creatures.

Lastly, no man hath so mean an estate and condition, but he may gain some glory to [Reason 4] God in it: yea, all that befalleth unto us is for the best: & the calling wherein we live, howsoever it may seem to us evil and full of misery, is unto us most good and profitable, seeing as it is allotted & allowed unto us of God, so if we be found faithful in it, we may glorify his great Name in it; so that we may conclude with the Prophet, *The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage*. Though our estate be not best considered in it self, yet it is best to us: and we ought to praise the Name of God for that which we have, and not murmur for that which we have not: to content our selves with things present, and not desire the things that are absent, considering the dealing of God in mercy and compassion toward us, withholding nothing he knoweth to be good for us.

The uses of this doctrine are to be known of us, that we may reap benefit by this benefit [Use 1] of contentation. First, it reproveth those that are never satisfied with the mammon of this world, but so set their hearts upon the earth, that the more they devour, the more they desire, like men insatiable, as *the grave or the barren womb, that never saith, It is enough*. They are like the lean kine of *Pharaoh*, when they had eaⁿ up the fat ones, themselves were in never the better liking: or like the dropsieman, who, the more he drinketh, the more he calleth for drink: or like *the horse-leech, that ever crieth out, Bring, bring*. The wise man telleth us, there is no end of covetousness: he that is infected with it, *coveteth greedily all the day long, but the righteous giveth, & spareth not*, Pro. 21, 26. And in the book of Ecclesiastes, *He that loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver*, Eccl. 5, 10. nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity. An example hereof we have in *Ahab* King of *Israel*, he had the wealth and riches of a Kingdom, and yet he greedily and insatiably coveteth after *Naboth's vineyard*, vexing his heart more for that little which he had not, then taking joy in all the abundance &

superfluity which he had, which cost poor *Naboth* both his life and his living. So the rich man in the Gospel had filled his house, but not his heart: and therefore resolveth to enlarge *his barns*, and to make them answerable (if it were possible) to his mind: which was a foolish conceit, it being altogether impossible to find a proportion between that which is finite, & that which is infinite. For when he had built more, & added more to that, and multiplied more to that he had added, and filled them also full to y^e top: yet that would not have satisfied him, because the capacity of his heart was far greater; and as the fruits of the earth had increased, the heart would still have swelled like the surges of the sea more and more, and never made any end.

These are they which place their felicity in the abundance of riches, and put their trust in their wealth. Such are called and accounted by the Apostle, *worshippers of images*, Col. 3, 5. The covetous man can never be satisfied, albeit his coffers be filled: the more he heapeth together, the more he hopeth after. Those treasures, which while they were only desired, seemed great to them that desired them, when once they are purchased and possessed, are lightly esteemed, and other which yet they want, are coveted. *Solomon saith, Hell and destruction are never full, so the eyes of man are never satisfied*, Prov. 27, 20. And as *all Rivers run unto the sea, yet the sea is not full*: so riches haste unto the covetous, yet the covetous man is never full. How wretched is their estate, that are evermore pressed & pinched with hunger and thirst, and cannot be satisfied? So is it with those that are sick of this sickness of covetousness: for all discontented persons want that they have, as well as that they have not: as fast as money increaseth, the love of it increaseth, so that the richer they are, the poorer indeed they are. Sufficiency standeth not in abundance of the things possessed, but when the concupiscence of the heart is limited. If our insatiable desires be confined within the compass of contentment, we shall find sufficiency in the meanest estate. Thus we may be rich in the midst of poverty, and it shall be truly said of us, which the Spirit speaketh to the Angel of the Church of *Smyrna*, *I know thy poverty, but thou art rich*, Revel. 2, verse 9. He only is rich, who groweth rich toward heaven, and setteth his mind on Eternity, considering, that *godliness is great gain with contentation*, 1 Tim. 6, 6.

[Use 2] If we live according to nature, we shall never be poor: if according to opinion, we shall never be rich: if according to godliness, we shall ever be content. Nature desireth but a little; opinion is evermore insatiable, godliness directeth us to set our affections above, where is all happiness and contentation.

Secondly, we learn from this truth to derive and diduct another, as it were a stream from the fountain, to wit, to acknowledge it to be the will and heavenly pleasure of God, to make some low and poor in this world, and to set them in places inferior to others. It is not his ordinance that all should be alike, or that all should be aloft, or that all should be rich.

True it is, it lieth in his power to make them so, who is the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, & hath all treasures at his commandment to bestow them as pleaseth him: but he hath variably disposed his blessings in great wisdom, to one he giveth much, to another he giveth little: to one, great riches; to another he sendeth poverty and want. In a great house and noble family, all servants are not equal, neither have they all one office, neither have they

all one wages; but one receiveth more, another less, according to the different place wherein they are set. The Church of God is a great house, there are many servants and many offices in it; some are placed over others, and some appointed under others, and everyone should continue in his state and standing, without breaking the bounds limited unto him. If he be cursed of God and man, that *remoueth his neighbors Land-mark*; much more are they to be reprov'd, that exalt themselves beyond their callings, like the servants that break from their masters. The Elements keep their places, and the whole frame of heaven & earth stand by the appointment of him that set them, and set forth *the glory of God* therein: so ought it to be with us, we have our places assigned unto us. In every estate, whether we want or abound, whether we be full or empty, we should be content, Philip. 4. and not wittingly murmur against God, or enviously grudge against our brother, or fraudulently purloine away his goods.

For first of all, may not the Lord of all, *do with his own what he will?* Math. 20, verse 15. Or, *is our eye evil*, and our hand false, *because his eye is good*, and his hand liberal and bountiful? Or who are we that thus dispute with him? Is it not enough to be of the Kings household, but we must also climb higher, and seek to be of his privy counsel? Or is it not sufficient to be servants in the family, but we must also be Stewards over others? Is it not foolishness, and extreme madness, to refuse to enter into the kingdom of Heaven, because we may not be choosers of our own way? as if a servant should scorn to do his masters service, except he may wait vpon him in a better coat then his fellows. We were wont to say in a common Proverb, that beggars must be no choosers: we are all of us poor beggars, and live by alms: for albeit others beg of us, yet we all stand at the gate of God's mercy, and beg our bread of him, saying, *Give us this day*, and this day *our daily bread*. We cannot live one hour without him: nay, *in him we live, and move, and have our being*, Acts 17 28. If he stop our breath, we are gone, and therefore we must depend on him.

Again, it is the preserving of human societies & common-wealths, that some should be superiors, and some inferiors: some should honor, and some be honored: *some rich, and some poor*: some weak, and some be strong: some learned, and some unlearned: some noble, and some vnnoble: without this no policy can stand. No man must think the condition wherein he is placed, more unfit for him then for another: nor imagine that he hath deserved better then another at GOD'S hand, to be preferred before him, nor surmise that he hath anything which he hath not received, nor judge by ouervaluing: himself and his own worth, that he hath merited much more then he enjoyeth.

We see how it is with us in our natural bodies, every part is not an head, or an heart, or an eye; we have also hands and feet, and these are necessary in their places. Some members are more excellent, and some less excellent, but none can be spared. Such then as lift themselves up above their brethren, and disdain the places appointed for them, because they are not high enough, do carry about them even in their own bodies, a sufficient witness against themselves.

Thirdly, the Lord thus dealeth to manifest the glory of his wisdom and power; he will cast down those whom he purposeth to advance, and many times afflict them with poverty,

whom he meaneth to enrich with endless glory. The Apostle *James* calleth us to the consideration of this point, ch. 2, 5. *Hearken my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him?* It is a general rule set down by Christ our Savior in the Gospel, whosoever lifteth up himself, shall be cast down, and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted. Thus he dealt with *Joseph*, with *David*, with *Moses*, with *Hannah*, and diverse others, yea, with his own Son, Luke 24, to whose image we must be like, who must suffer many things at the hands of sinners, before he entered into his glory: and the liker we are made to him, the more happy are we.

Fourthly, let us consider that we are here as it were in a prison or pilgrimage, in a place of bondage or banishment. This world was not made to be our heaven or Paradise, where we should have joy without sorrow, pleasure without pain; abundance without want, health without sickness, riches without poverty, and happiness without misery. We are here as pilgrims and strangers: when we come into our Country, and enter into that City, *the builder and maker whereof is God*, we shall rest from our labors, and receive an incorruptible crown of glory. It were too great covetousness, to desire two heavens, one in earth, another above the earth, one in this life, another after this life. Our Savior speaketh unto us as unto his children, *Fear not, little flock: for it is your Fathers good pleasure, to give you the Kingdom*, Luke 12, 32. We are not now at home, but from home, neither can we obtain anything here that can make us happy: we are like to vanity, and our days are as a shadow that vanisheth away. We sigh and are burdened, because we would be in our own habitation. This world and all things in it, shall have an end, and there is no trust in it.

Fifthly, it is God's will to prove our patience how we will bear affliction, and take up our cross, following him as becometh the good Disciples of Christ. Not thereby to gain any knowledge unto himself, but to bring us to the knowledge of our selves. Hence it is, that the Apostle *James* saith, *The trying of your faith worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed.* We think our selves strong, before we come to the battle, but what our courage is, cannot be known until the field be fought. If we have resisted the enemy in the face, and not given back when we have been assaulted, we have sealed up to our own souls, what we can suffer for Christ's sake, knowing that which the same Apostle saith afterward, *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

Lastly, let us set before us the example of Christ, who being the natural Son of God, Lord of heaven and earth, the heir apparent of God's glorious kingdom, took upon him *the form of a servant, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.* As his birth was, so was his life: and as his life was, so was his death. He was conceived of a poor Virgin; he was borne in a stable; he was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger: he was persecuted of *Herod*: he was tempted of the devil: slandered of the Pharisees; condemned of *Pilate*; and crucified by the Jews. He that is the first begotten of the dead, the Prince of the Kings of the earth; he that is *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and the last; he that hath the seven stars in his hand, and the keys of hell and death, was despised and rejected of men, and *brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his*

mouth. We cannot compare in highness and greatness with him whose eyes are like fire, and his feet like brass, who is the beginning of the creatures of God, yet none hath sunk down so low into sorrow as he hath done, neither been baptized with the baptism that he was baptized withal, Math. 20.

Let us not therefore think it strange that we are made low, but rejoice that we are made like unto Christ himself, while the wicked are so pampered with delights, and fatted as Oxen unto the slaughter, that *pride compasseth them about as a chain, and violence covereth them as a garment*, Psal. 73.6. Luke, chapter 16, 25.

Lastly, let us use all good means that God [Use 3] hath appointed to begin in us this sweet grace of contentation. There is no heavenly gift, but God hath appointed some ways to breed it and beget it in us.

The first means is to resign up our selves wholly to the will and pleasure of God, and to submit our willes to his will, that as we pray, God's will may be done, we may be careful indeed to do it, and that for diverse causes. First, as he is infinite in wisdom, so he knoweth much better then we our selves, what is best for our selves, especially for the salvation of our souls.

We see how children take no care nor thought for things of this world, how they shall live, what they shall eat, and what they shall put on. We are content when we are sick, to accept upon the Physicians word, of any receipt: yea oftentimes bitter pilles and potions which our stomach loatheth; because we know he loveth us, and that his skill exceedeth ours. We are desirous of riches, or of honors, to be great in the world; he in his great wisdom denieth them, because he knoweth they are hurtful to us, not healthful for us, but as it were windy meat, which would not nourish our souls, but puff them up with pride, and make them poor in grace: so that we should be as unfit to enter into the straight gate and narrow way, as the Camel to go through the eye of a needle. This reason is used by our Savior, Math. 6, verse 32. *After all these things do the Gentiles seek, for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* Where he laboreth to work contentation in us by this consideration, because God our heavenly Father knoweth better then our selves whereof we stand in need. Again, he is Almighty, and therefore fully able to supply our wants: as he can give riches without contentment, so he can give contentment without riches: for it is *he, that can satiate the weary soul, and replenish every sorrowful soul:* so that we have no cause to doubt of his sufficiency, who hath said, he is God all-sufficient. He filleth the hungry with good things, and sendeth the rich empty away. Moreover, he is as merciful as he is powerful, and infinite in love toward us, who hath so dearly loved us, that he hath not spared his own Son, but given him to suffer death for us, that so he might bring us to life and salvation: and if he have given us his Son, *how should he not with him give us all things else?* There is no son but resteth in the care and provision his father maketh for him: and by this we may prove whether we be sons or not.

Another means, is to live an holy & godly life, serving him in sincerity of heart and uprightness of life. Godliness is a jewel of such value, that it will enrich us, and fill our

houses with treasures, because *it is profitable unto all things*, and hath the promises of this life and of the life to come. The Prophet saith, *He will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly*, Psalm 84, 11. It is *a good conscience, that maketh a continual feast*, Prov. 15, verse 15. God is rich in promising, and gracious in performing: he oftentimes performeth more then he promised, neuerlesse. He saith, *If we seek first of all the kingdom of God and his righteousness*, all outward and earthly things shall be ministered unto us, Math. 6, 33. He maketh a merciful promise, howbeit he addeth a condition, which on our part must be performed. If we be not behind in this duty, we may safely, yea securely cast our selves upon his promise and providence, having sure interest in them, and a good title unto them. But such as live in their sins, and mind not the matters of his kingdom, can never have this contentation, because they can never with comfort and assurance of his help fly unto him, as a child to his father: but rather run away from him, as the malefactor from the Judge, or the traitor from his Prince, who beareth the sword to take vengeance on him for his evil deeds and deserts.

Thirdly, it is our duty to be thankful for things present: let us cast our eyes unto them and look steadfastly upon them, and never turn our selves from him that is the giver of them, and consider that we have not deserved the thousand part of that which is bestowed upon us. Be it that we want many things, yet hath God dealt graciously with us, and sent a gracious rain into our harts: the good things that he withholdeth, he doth not of malice and envy, as the devil persuaded our first parents, but in love and mercy toward us, as we noted before. If he should take from us all his blessings, which are innumerable, & bring upon us all his judgments for our sins, we could not complain against him, forasmuch as they have justly deserved it. Besides, how many blessings do we enjoy, that others have not, who are no worse then we are, and peradventure better? And from how many calamities are we freed, which have fallen upon others, who were not greater sinners then we are, and peradventure lesser? It is a sign of unthankfulness, to lessen the gifts we have received, and to value them as matters of no worth, in comparison of such blessings as our selves do want, or as others have obtained.

If this point be well observed, it will condemn many of us, who are guilty of grievous sin against God this way.

34. And Moses and Aaron, and chechiefe of the Congregation, numbered the sons of the Kohathites after their families, and after the house of their fathers.

35 From thirty years old and upward, even unto fifty years old, everyone that entereth into the service, for the work in the Tabernacle of the congregation.

36. And those that were numbered of them by their families, were two thousand, seven hundred, and fifty.

37. These were they that were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all that might do

service in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, which Moses and Aaron did number, according to the commandment of the Lord, by the hand of Moses.

38. And those that were numbered of the sons of Gershon, throughout their families, and by the houses of their fathers.

39 From thirty years old and upward, even unto fifty years old, everyone that entereth into the service, for the work in the Tabernacle of the congregation:

40 Even those that were numbered of them throughout their families, by the houses of their fathers, were two thousand, and six hundred, and thirty.

41 These are they that were numbered of the families of the sons of Gershon, of all that might do service in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, whom Moses and Aaron did number, according to the commandment of the Lord.

42 And those that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, throughout their families by the house of their fathers,

43 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, everyone that entereth into the service, for the work in the Tabernacle of the congregation:

44 Even those that were numbered of them after their families, were three thousand and two hundred.

45 These he chose that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

46 All those that were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron, and the chief of Israel numbered after their families, and after the house of their fathers:

47 From thirty years old and upward, even unto fifty years old, everyone that came to do the service of the Ministry, and the service of the burden in the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

48 Even those that were numbered of them, were eight thousand, and five hundred, and fourscore.

49 According to the commandment of the Lord, they were numbered by the hand of Moses, everyone according to his service, and according to his burden: thus were they numbered of him, as the Lord commanded Moses.

In the former part of the Chapter, we have spoken of the commandment of God, wherewith Moses and Aaron were instructed to take the number of the Levites: now of the obedience yielded unto it, which is answerable to y^e commandments. A threefold commandment bringeth forth a threefold obedience. So then, we are to observe, that as they received the commandments, they executed them in order as they were directed unto them. When God required three things at their hands, they accounted not themselves discharged by performing one of them, and leaving the other two: nor by performing two of them, and leaving the third undone, as if the doing of part should bear out the neglect of the other part: but three they received and three they executed. Their obedience therefore was perfect and entire. A point worthy of our imitation, an example that should be put in practice of us. We must show our selves to be his children, by our obedience: forasmuch as his servants we are to whom we obey.

Besides, in the numbering of these families, they did not follow their own humors, to do that last which they were commanded to do first, or first which they were appointed to do last; but without all show of innovation, or desire of Soueraignty, or note of partiality, or suspicion of vain-glory, or contempt of any family, they observed the course and order precisely, w^{ch} God charged them to observe. He willed them to number the family of the Kohathites first, then the Gershonites, and last of all the Merarites.

Thus then do they testify their obedience, for they number them all, and they number first the Kohathites, secondly y^e Gershonites, and thirdly the Merarites. This is done two ways, first particularly, then generally. Particularly, touching the Kohathites, he setteth down the lawful age of all that were to be numbered from 30, years old and upward, unto 50. years old. Secondly, the sum of the family, which amounted to 2750. persons, ver. 36. Thirdly, the end of this numbering, that they might do service in the Tabernacle of y^e Congregation, ver. 37. The second family is of the Gershonites, of whom we are to observe, 1. the lawful age of them. 2. the just number of them. 3. the end of numbering of them, as we did in the former. The last family is of the Merarites: first, he showeth at what age they were numbered. 2. to what sum they amounted: and 3. the end of their numbering. And this is the particular sum of them: the total sum of all the families put together, is handled in the last part of the Chapter. Where also mark the age of all that were brought within the compass of this numbering, to wit, all from thirty year old to fifty, fit to do service in the Tabernacle. Secondly, the manner of the performance of their obedience, ver. 49. according to the commandment of the Lord.

Before the doctrine of this place cometh to be handled, certain questions arising out of the words, are first to be answered. First, it may be asked, how so many could be employed in the Ministry? I answer, [Answer.] not all ministered at one time, but in their courses and turns, as we may see, how *David* afterward did distribute them, and so divide their labors

according to their families, 1 Chron. 24, 1. and in the New Testament we read that *Zacharias* the Priest was of the course *Abia*, Luke 1.5.

Again, it may be demanded, whether all these that are here numbered, served in the Tabernacle, or not? Are we to think that all could be fit for the Lord's service? or that who so would, might be consecrated? and that none of all these or of their children, were kept from the altar? I answer, [Answer.] as before, they had their courses, and several offices, some for burden, some for sacrifices, and such as were sufficient for teaching, taught the people: and when unlearned Levites, occupied the chair of *Moses*, God stirred up Prophets extraordinarily, to whom the people resorted, 2 King. 4.23. But touching God's ordinance, we see he would have his Church richly furnished, and plentifully provided of able teachers, that all might be instructed, and that none should be ignorant of his ways.

Thirdly, how doth this stand with the commandment of God, in the first Chapter? There he chargeth *Moses*, that he should not number the Tribe of *Levi*, chap. 1.49. Here he is appointed to number them. Hath God now changed his mind, and altered his purpose, to command that which before he forbad? I answer, the meaning is to be taken out of the words themselves. For he saith in the place before named and mentioned, *Thou shalt not take the sum of them among the children of Israel*, that is, while thou art reckoning the number, and taking the muster of the other Tribes, thou shalt not meddle with this Tribe, who were exempted from the wars. And the reason thereof is rendered, Num. 1.50. *Thou shalt appoint the Levites over the Tabernacle of the Testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong unto it.* He calleth it sometimes the Tabernacle of the Congregation, because the people assembled at it for the worship of God: and sometimes the Tabernacle of the Testimony, because in the Tabernacle was placed the Ark, and in the Ark, the two Tables of the Testimony, in which the ten commandments were written, whereby God testified his will to the Israelites, both what he would have them do, and what he would not have them to do.

[Verse 34. 35. *And Moses and Aaron, and the chief of the Congregation.*] In these words beginneth the execution of the Commandment of God, *Moses* numbering the Levites according to their families, and assigning to everyone of them their several offices and charges. This obedience of his is worthy of great praise, inasmuch as in this description of the numbering of these families, he remoueth far from himself, all suspicion of giving scope to his own affections: and therefore he signifieth that he did nothing of pride, or partiality, advancing the Levites before the other Tribes, or preferring the family of the Kohathites before the rest of the Levites; but hath dealt in all things, as became the true minister of God, even according to the commandment and commission that he had received, of whom it is said afterward, chap. 12. *My servant Moses is faithful in all mine house;* even as in the building of the Tabernacle, he added nothing of his own, but did all things according to the pattern that was shown him in the mount. We learn from hence, that whensoever we have heard the word, and had the will of God revealed unto us, we must yield [Doctrine 1] obedience to the same. It is a duty required of us to practice so much of God's truth, as is in mercy made known unto us. So did *Noah* Gen. 6.22. when he was commanded to make an Ark, *he did it as God commanded.* So did *Abraham* when he was commanded to circumcise himself and the males in his family, Gen.

17. This is it that Moses teacheth the people after all his teaching and exhorting of them, Deut. 10.12.13. *Now Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul? that thou keep the commandments of the Lord, & his ordinances, which I command thee this day, for thy wealth?* And in the beginning of the next chapter. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments always.* The Apostle James urgeth this duty upon those that are swift to hear, and have received the word with meekness, which is able to save their souls, chap. 1.22. *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own souls.* Christ our Savior, describing the good hearers, by the good ground, saith, They bring forthwith patience some sixty fold, some thirty fold, and some an hundred fold, everyone some fruit, no man is barren altogether.

To conclude this point, it was the exhortation of Moses, and of the Priests and Levites, which they spake unto all Israel, *Take heed and hearken, O Israel, this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God: thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments, and his statutes which I command thee this day.* So thē, we must all know what is required of us, to wit, to be doers, and not bare hearers: to be practicers, and not talkers: to be obeyers and followers, not idle professors.

Maruell not at all at this. For first, to incline [Reason 1] our hearts to walk in his ways that we have learned, is an infallible sign that we truly fear God. This we see in the example of Abraham, God tempted him, and said unto him, *Take thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt offering: he preferred the commandment of God before the love to his own son: God accepted his willing mind, and therefore he heareth this comfort, Lay not thine hand upon the lad neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.* Not that he was ignorant before, but because he made that known to himself and to others, which before was known to him alone, and not thoroughly to Abraham himself. For what is in us we know not certainly our selves, until we be proved. Thus then we see that Abraham's notable obedience in so great a trial, was an evident testimony that he truly loved God.

[Reason 2] Secondly, obeience is always joined with recompense, God-rewarding it to the full, who is a most rich pay-master. No man shall serve him for naught. If Laban could say thus to Jacob, *Because thou art my brother, shouldst thou therefore serve me for naught?* will not the Lord much rather say to us, because ye are my children, should ye therefore serve me for nothing? The Prophet David, setting down the singular fruits and effects of the word of God, saith, *By it is thy servant made circumspect, & in keeping of it, there is great reward.* Consider brefly how it was with Abraham, of whom we spake before, he received an hard commandment, himself to offer up in sacrifice his only son; yet because he delayed not to put it in present execution, he received a threefold reward, first God delivered his son from death: secondly, he commendeth the faith of the father: and thirdly, he repeateth the promise to him, and confirmeth his faith in it Gen. 22.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, if we hearken unto him, he will hearken unto us: if we serve him, he will not be backward or behind hand with us to serve us. This doth the Prophet Isaiah point out

unto us, chap. 58.9. *Thou shalt call, and the Lord shall answer: thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am:* On the other side, if we will not hearken to obey him, he will never hearken unto us, neither regard when we call upon him. The wise man bringeth in wisdom crying without, and uttering her voice in the streets, *Because I have called, and ye refused: I have stretched out mine hand, and no man regarded: but ye have set at naught all my counsel and would none of my reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.*

Such measure as we mete, it shall be measured unto us again, and God will deal with us as we deal with him. If we set our faces against him, *he will set his face against us.* If we will not be reformed, but will walk contrary unto him, then he also will walk contrary unto us, and with the froward he will show himself froward.

Fourthly, they are to be obeyed that have [Reason 4] no absolute authority, but are themselves under the authority of others. God commandeth to honor father and mother, Exod. 20. albeit themselves are to honor God. Thus doth the Centurion reason from the less to the greater, Matth. 8.8, 9. from himself to Christ: *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof, but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed: for even I am a mā under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth: to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doth it.* If then such as are mean men and have inferior places of command, are notwithstanding obeyed by those that are under them, much more ought the Lord himself to be obeyed, who is above all, and all under him.

[Reason 5] Fifthly, the Rechabites obeyed *Jonadab* their father, and received a blessing for their obedience. He restrained them from many profits and pleasures of this life, and his charge unto them might seem very hard and harsh, being restrained of wine, and forbidden to build houses, to sow seed, and to plant vineyards: and when they had these set before them, they answered, *We have obeyed the voice of Jonadab, the son of Rechab our father, in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, and daughters.*

This example is the Prophet *Jeremiah* commanded to set before the people of God, to show them their sin, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Go and tell the men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words, saith the Lord? The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed, for unto this day they drink none, but obey their fathers commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking, but ye hearkened not unto me.* Shall we make less account of God, then the Rechabites did of their father? and value his commandments less worth then they did their fathers commandments? If we have had the fathers of our flesh, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits, and live? Hebr. 12.9.

Lastly, there is a special relation between [Reason 6] God and his people. The subject oweth obedience to his prince: the servant to his master: the child to his father. God is all in all; he is our king, and we his subjects; he our master, and we his servants: he our father, and we his children, according to the saying of the Prophet *Malachi*, *A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear, saith the*

Lord of hosts? So that disobedience is as the sin of rebellion, and God detesteth those that commit it, as rebels against him. All these reasons serve to preach obedience unto us whensoever the word and will of God is made known unto us.

The uses of this doctrine are very profitable [Use 1] unto us. First, learn from hence, and let it work an impression in our hearts, that nothing can be more agreeable, or a more effectual mark of our Christian profession, then to obey and hearken unto the voice and word of God.

This made *Samuel* say to *Saul*, *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? behold, to obey, is better then sacrifice; and to hearken, then the fat of rams.* When the Lord was to deliver his Law in mount Sinai, he said, *If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine,* Exodus, Chap. 19.5.

By the voice of God we are to understand not the letters or so many syllables of the Scriptures, but the preaching and publishing of the same according to the doctrine, interpretation, exhortation, reproof, comfort, and such like. For the word taught and applied, according to the true sense and natural meaning of the Scriptures, is as well the word, as that which is written; forasmuch as by the gift of interpretation bestowed upon his servants, the mind and meaning of them is opened. That then is not Scripture only which is expressed in so many syllables; and therefore the Apostle saith, when they deliver pure doctrine *with integrity and gravity*, they deliver y^e wholesome word which cannot be reprov'd. They are the seedmen, the word is the seed; and therefore they deliver the word. The voice of God's messengers in the ministry of the word, is to be heard and esteemed as the voice of the everliving God, and not as the voice of a mortal man. The Prophets call upon the people, to hear the word of the Lord, when themselves spake unto them, and not the Lord immediately. The Apostle declareth that *God in old time spake by his Prophets*, Heb. 1.1. according to the saying of Christ, that whosoever hear his disciples and Ministers, hear him: and they, who contemn them, contemn him, Luke 10.16.

Thus in all ages have the faithful esteemed the Ministers as the messengers of God; and the Ministry of the word, as the voice of God himself. This is witnessed by sundry testimonies of holy Scripture, speaking of the Church generally, and of the servants of God particularly; The Church saith, *Isaiah 2.3. Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.* *Cornelius* having sent for *Peter*, saith, he was *present before God to hear what he would speak unto him by Peters mouth.* Acts 10.33. The *Thessalonians* received the word, not as the word of man, *but as it is indeed the word of God*, 1 Thess. 2.13. Thus must we esteem of it in judgment: thus must we obey it in practice. When sin is reprov'd, it is God that reproveth it. When the sinner that is penitent is comforted, God is the comforter. If the word find out our secret sins, we must be no less terrified and humbled, then if God should proclaim open war against us, and utter his Thundering voice against us. If the sweet consolations of Christ are offered to them that mourn in Zion, and hang down their heads through feeling of the wrath of God, for their manifold sins, they are to be comforted as well thereby, as if the Lord himself from the highest heavens, should comfort them, and speak peace unto their consciences. There

cannot be a greater enemy to the saving hearing of the word, then to imagine this, that we have nothing to do with God, but all with man, when we hear the word. This shaketh attention, cooleth zeal, breedeth negligence, and hindereth obedience.

Secondly, this serveth to reprove all such [Use 2] as yield no obedience unto God and his will, but rebel against him openly and stubbornly, and will do nothing at all that he commandeth. These are not unfitly called traitors and rebels against God. The name of a traitor is most odious among all men, no man can abide to be so accounted. But what shall it avail us to be faithful unto men, and unfaithful to God? to obey them, and to disobey him? *Moses telleth the people of Israel, that they have been rebellious against the Lord, from the day that he knew them.* Such as rose up against *Aaron*, and would not submit themselves to God's ordinance in his Ministry, are called *the children of rebellion*, Numb. 17.10. and they are exhorted *not to rebel against the Lord*, Numb. 14.9. It is a vain thing to say, we are no traitors, we hate the name of treason: if we nourish open rebellion against God, who is the King of kings. Such as set themselves against God's word, and yield no obedience unto it, are rank traitors, and we need crave no pardon, if we call them the children of rebellion.

Secondly, it reproveth such as prolong the time with God, & have no leisure to hearken yet unto him, and so make him attend upon them. No man must stand to debate or consult with flesh and blood, whether he should obey God, or not: the wisdom and policy of man must not be our counselors, they will deceive us, and withhold us from yielding obedience unto God's commandments. In his matters we must not plead policy, but when he commandeth, we must with all speed yield obedience. *The Prophet that contrary to God's commandment did eat bread and drink water in the house of the old Prophet*, was devoured of a Lyon: this was the judgment denounced against him, *Foras much as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee, &c. thy carcase shall not come into the sepulchers of thy fathers.* The fruit of all disobedience is our own destruction, notwithstanding our own good intents, which may please our selves, but cannot please God. When we have his word, we must not suffer our selves to be deluded by traditions, by visions, or by pretended revelations. The only word revealed unto us must put all other means to silence, and make them give place. He that was commanded by the word of God, to strike the Prophet, and refused it, was slain by a Lyon. Let these examples make us wise: and their falls teach us to stand upright. It is extreme folly to yield to the false and feigned persuasions of ignorant men, who go about to tell us, that it is not so necessary a duty to obey the word of God delivered unto us, as many would make us to believe: that we shall be hated and derided of all men, and therefore it is better for us to seek the favor and good will of men and the applause of the world, then to be singular, and so contemned. Let not us be lulled asleep with these sweet songs, which are no better then cunning enchantments; neither be led a side by such deceitful counselors as go about to bring us into eternal perdition.

Thirdly, it reproveth such as part stakes between God and themselves, and regard not to yield entire obedience unto him, but obey to halves; For as *Agrippa* was persuaded somewhat to become a Christian, so are these resolved a little to obey. *Saul* was commanded to root out

the Amalekites, with all that was theirs from man to beast: but he set his own wisdom before the wisdom of the Lord, sparing *Agag* and the better part of the sheep to offer sacrifice unto him. But God spared not him, for his kingdom was rent from him, and given to his neighbor that was better then he. The children of Israel were straitly charged of God to destroy the nations, into whose land he would bring them, lest by suffering them among them, and by joining themselves with them, they should learn their manners, and serve their Idols, which would turn to their ruin and destruction. They executed part of his commandment, they destroyed many of them, & took their cities: yet because they saved a part, and spared a remnant of them, they found them by woeful experience to be *thorns and pricks in their flesh*, and afterward they lived many years in their slavery and subjection, as the book of Judges doth witness. God looketh for full and perfect obedience, so that there is no halting or faltering before him. We see how *Ananias* and *Sapphira* were smitten with sudden death, because they kept back part of the price of that which they had vowed and dedicated unto God, Act. 5. This turned to their utter destruction, albeit they were taken to be zealous and forward disciples. So shall it be with us, if we be like unto them. Let us take heed of hypocrisy: let us labor to be entire, and give him the whole heart.

[Use 3] Thirdly, let us seek after knowledge and understanding of the will of God. For how can that servant practice and perform his masters will, that never knoweth nor regardeth to know what he requireth? or can that subject obey the law of the Magistrate, that is wholly ignorant of the Law? The Apostle requireth, that *the word of Christ dwell richly in us in all wisdom*, Col. 3.16. The true knowledge of God is the fountain and foundation of all true obedience. From hence as from a root spring forth and spread abroad faith in Christ, hope in the promises, love to the brethren, the true worship of God and fear of his holy Name. As on the other side, from ignorance proceed, infidelity, distrust, despair, presumption, hatred of God, malice, superstition, idolatry, disobedience, and all impiety. Hence it is, that the Prophet *Hosea* complaineth, that God had a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, and that there was much riot and excess of unrighteousness among them, by stealing, lying, whoring, swearing, and killing, *because there was no knowledge* found in that people: thereby implying, that they were utterly destitute of all grace and goodness, of all piety and true religion. Such as know not God, nor his will, are ignorant what pleaseth, or what displeaseth him, and therefore cannot but offend him in both. He that doth the will of God ignorantly, like the blind man that hitteth the white, cannot be accepted of him, or look for any reward at his hands. God will accept of none to be his servants, that know him not.

Will any man receive into his service one that cannot see to dispatch his business? and shall we think that God will admit blind men, that regard not to understand his ways, and want their spiritual eyes to discern between good and evil? This we see by sundry examples, as Psal. 95.10. where the Lord rendereth this reason, why the people erred in their hearts, and grieved him forty years in the wilderness, *because they had not known his ways*. It was the cause why the Sadducees denied the resurrection, Matt. 22.29. *Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God*. This caused the Jews to crucify the Lord of life, Act. 3.17. *Now brethren, I wote that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers: for if they had known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of life*. This is it that maketh the proud iusticiaries of the

world to rest in their own righteousness, *because they know not the righteousness of God*. This was the cause of the idolatry of the Gentiles, Gal. 4.8. *When ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no God's*. So what was the cause, but ignorance, that moved Paul to persecute the Saints? he rendereth this as the reason, *I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief*. And as it is the root that brancheth out into many sins: so it is as pitch that defileth whatsoever it toucheth, & turneth good affections into evil, and maketh them to decline and degenerate into sin. Religion, devotion, hope, fear, being joined and guided with the eye and light of knowledge please God; whereas without this sight they highly displease him.

For religion joined with ignorance, begetteth and bringeth forth idolatry: devotion accompanied with ignorance, is no better then superstition: hope joined with ignorance, worketh presumption: fear joined with ignorance, engendreth desperation. If we have not knowledge to support and season us, we err out of the right way, and are deceived beyond all measure. Love blinded with ignorance, becometh sottish. Zeal, patience, and such like corrupted with ignorance, are turned into brutish and savage passions.

This reproveth three sorts of men. First, the practice of the Church of Rome, that taketh away the key of knowledge from the people, and seeketh to bring in palpable darkness. These false teachers cannot endure that the people should enjoy the light of the Scriptures. They read them in an unknown tongue, persuading them they may be most devout, when they are most ignorant; that it shall go well with them though they have no faith of their own, but an implicit faith to believe as the Church believeth, albeit they know not what it believeth. These are they that notably abuse the people to their perdition, and bewitch them with spiritual socery, as they that bring God's judgments upon their heads: for when a land is destitute of y^e knowledge of God, all things are covered with darkness, and the persons are liable to his fearful judgments, as is evident by sundry places of Scripture. *David* saith, the blind and lame that mocked at him were hated of his soul: so that such should not enter into his house, 2. Sam. 5.8. Such as are spiritually blind, shall never enter into God's kingdom, they are all seers that shall come thither.

The want of natural sight is nothing in comparison of the want of the eyes of the mind. Our Savior pronounceth them blessed that are pure in heart, *because they shall see God*. This sight of the mind is twofold, partly in this life, & partly in the life to come, one of them imperfect, the other perfect, when *we shall see him as he is* This is eternal life to know God: it is eternal death not to know him, and to be ignorant that God is our father, that Christ is our redeemer, and that the holy Ghost is our sanctifier.

The second reproof is of those that are children in knowledge, that live in the light, and yet can see nothing. The Sun shineth brightly in their faces, yet they shut their eyes. Many think they have religion enough, if they have a good mind and meaning, and lead a civil life among their neighbors, who like not such busy fellows that will be meddling evermore with the Scriptures. They are accounted honest men, and are well liked of all, they pay that they owe, they are just of their word, they deceive no man. But this civil conversation and honest behavior shall profit them nothing, nor be able to bring them into the favor of God, nor give

them any title to the kingdom of heaven, so long as they are destitute of knowledge: forasmuch as they have God their adversary, who will contend with them, and plead against them: neither will he know them, that regard not to know him. Others despise it and contemn it, like the fool or idiot, that casteth away a pearl or precious stone not knowing y^e value or worth of it. These come to the Church sometimes, and hear the word of God both read & preached, and yet are not so much as acquainted with the histories of the Scripture, & the principles of religion, which are as milk for young children. They know not what faith is: they are not acquainted with the means of our justification: they know not the difference between the Law and the Gospel, neither the use of the one or y^e other: they cannot discern anything between the religion of Christ and of Antichrist.

Lastly, it serveth to stop the mouths of all proud and malicious slanderers of the Gospel, that accuse the preaching and publishing thereof, as the cause of the sins and enormities that abound among us, as also of the plagues and punishments that God hath inflicted upon the land. These men, uttering the froth and scum of their soul mouths, and belching up the venom of their poisoned hearts, cry out. It was never well since this new religion sprung up, & since there was so much teaching and preaching: that we have so much knowledge and learning, that we are well the worse for it. The cause of God's judgments is not the preaching of the Gospel, but the contempt of the Gospel: and because we have the light, but love darkness more then the light. God justly giveth over such profane beasts into a reprobate sense. Our great ignorance is the cause of our sins, and that we are children of darkness, rather then of the day: of the night, not of the light. Are not these ashamed to say, that the light of the Sun causeth men to stumble and go out of the way? that the Chirurgicalian and his salve make the soar? that the judge maketh the thief; and the law the malefactor? For they may as well affirm all this, as that the word is the cause either of our sins, or of our punishments: which serveth to keep us both from [Use 4] the one and the other.

Fourthly, hereby we must try who be good hearers of the word, and who be not. All of us should come constantly, diligently, and continually: but many among us come seldom. We would be loath to be accounted recusants: but if we should come a little less, we might worthily be so accounted. We would be loath to be accounted Papists, and indeed I think we should have injury done us to be so called: forasmuch as we live more like unto Atheists. We would think our selves greatly slandered to be reputed worshippers of a false God: and indeed we might so, forasmuch as we are found to worship no God at all. They will plead no doubt for themselves, that they are saved and sanctified hearers, as well as the best: and they would be ready to complain of great wrong, if they should be charged to be in the number of evil hearers. But as Christ saith in the Gospel, *Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven:* so, not everyone that challengeth the title of a right hearer, is a good hearer indeed; but the obedient hearer that bringeth forth fruit. The end of the Law, is obedience, as Deut. 6.1, 2, 3. *These are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land which ye go to possess: that thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy sons son, all the days of thy life, &c. hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it, that it*

may be well with thee, &c. Wherefore, the doctrine that now we deal withal, is as a touchstone to try what we are, whether we be fruitful or fruitless hearers. It will be no hard matter (if we set our minds unto it) to make proof and trial, whether we be altogether barren in bringing forth fruits or not. The fig tree that had nothing but leaves upon it, and no fruit at all is cursed, and hath this denounced against it, *No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever*, Mar. 11.14. The dresser of his vineyard said of another fig tree, whereon he sought fruit and found none (for there is store of such) *Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none, cut it down, why combreth it the ground? John the Baptist* preaching repentance to such as came out of Jerusalem to his baptism, saith, *Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire*, Matth. 3.10. The Apostle writeth to the Hebrews, to stir them up to be more zealous, and telleth them that *the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns ana briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. If any be an hearer of the word, and not a doer, the Apostle James maketh him like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and streightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.* No man thinketh it hard to be able to discern of land whether it be fruitful or barren, forasmuch as the crop that the field yieldeth will easily discover and discry the nature of the soil. If the seed of the word that is sown in our hearts do spring up, and bring forth new obedience, it is a good heart, fear it not, doubt not of it: but if there follow no growth or increase at all, it is a barren heart, look to it, plough it up, dignity about it, and dung it, that it may bear fruit, otherwise it shall be cut down and cast into the fire. If we must all undergo this trial what hearers we are, woe unto very many that are among us, fearful will their estate be, and lamentable will their bareness and barrenness appear to be in good things. There is no tree more destitute of fruit, then their hearts are of faith and good works. There is no ground so full of thorns & bushes, as their hearts are of sin and corruption. How many are there that live in y^e Church, that hear many instructions, exhortations, admonitions, & threatenings from the word, that might make the stones relent? yet nevertheless, the more they hear, the more deaf they are: the more they are charged to do, the less they regard to practice; the more the word would soften them, the more their hearts are hardened and set against the truth; *they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.* These are they that come together, not for the better, but for the worse, 1 Cor. 11. and make the word to be the savor, not of life to life, but of death unto death, 2 Cor. 2. How many are there that have had and heard many persuasions to piety and godliness of life, and yet show themselves more wretched and profane then before? like unto *Pharaoh*, who when he had heard the word of y^e Lord, hardened his heart, and would not let the people go: or like the Israelites, who being moved to repentance, that they should make their ways and their works good, answered desperately, *We will walk after our own devises, and we will everyone do the imagination of his evil heart.* How many are there, that have been often stirred up to sobriety and temperance, in the use of God's good creatures, that are so far from bridling their unruly & riotous lusts, y^t they are grown more excessive & intemperate in drinking and quaffing, and spare not to rise early to follow drunkenness, until the wine inflame them, and take away their wits from them? *Woe* saith the Prophet, *to all such.* When the commandment

came unto them, sin revived, so that the commādemēt which was ordained unto life, is found to be unto death. The like we might say of diverse and sundry sins, reprovēd by the word. God hath said, *Swear not at all, neither by heaven, nor by earth, neither by any other oath, but let your yea, be yea: and your nay, be nay: lest ye fall into condemnation:* Let us see, what this hath wrought, & still worketh in us: have not many the more inured themselves to that horrible and detestable sin, committed against the high Majesty of God? Is not every other word almost an oath? can they speak without it? Is it not become in the opinion and practice of the most sort, a grace and ornament to their speech, and a gentlemanlike exercise? Are they not accounted fools and Puritans, that use it not themselves, or seek to reprove it, & repress it in others? Some will say, It is a foolish custom that I have gotten, and I cannot leave it, but I mean no harm or hurt by it to any man. Thus do men go about to excuse sin which they have no purpose to forsake, but rather a desire to continue in it. Do you call it a foolish custom? nay, it is a vile & wicked custom. Give it his true name, and disguise it not; name the child aright, call it with Christ, a devilish custom, *it cometh of that evil one*. This is so common a sin among men and women, among old and young, & hath taken such deep roots, that the axe of God's word and of his judgments, cannot cut it down. The fathers infect their children, and one learneth of another, until the greatest part are become licentious and abominable. Let us come to the sanctification of the Sabbath; the more many hear of it, the oftener the commandment is urged unto them and pressed upon them, the more dissolute and disordered they grow in the profanation of it. They cannot be ignorant, that they ought not to follow their pleasures on that day, but to call the Sabbath a delight, and honor him on it, *not doing their own ways, nor finding their own pleasure, nor speaking their own words:* but when this holy day of the Lord cometh, they forget all, their pleasures so round them in the ear, that they run madding everyone after his own vanities, and the least occasion draweth them from the exercises of religion, as if they meant to bid defiance to God, and to provoke him to battle, which they do against their own souls. For are we stronger then he? or able to make our party good against him? No, no, we deceive our selves; we are no fit matches to deal with him, who is able to arm the smallest & weakest creatures to our confusion.

[Use 5] Fifthly, we have all need of patience, without which we shall never be able to go through with our obedience. It is no easy thing to yield obedience. We have many enemies and oppositions that stand in our way to hinder us. We have many corruptions within us: we have the world & a thousand allurements without us, all of them set in battle array to encounter with us. We are like ground that yieldeth nothing of it self but thorns and thistles, without much labor and pains, without often ploughing and tilling, and turning up. Hence it is, that the Apostle entreateth the Hebrews, and beseecheth them *to suffer the words of exhortation*. We do not easily brook and digest the word, but with great difficulty. It is hard meat lying heavy upon the stomach, and will not soon concoct. To mortify sin is to deny our selves, and as it were to cut off the right hand, and to pluck out the right eye, Mat. 5. It is not done without great grief and anguish. It is almost death to the Swearer to obey this exhortation, *My brethren swear not at all*, I am. 5. It is as painful to him, as if you cut off a piece of his tongue, or sewed up his lips, or dashed out his teeth. It is in effect to strike off a limb, to tell the drunkard, he must live sober, and not run into excess, and that drunkards shall

not inherit the kingdom of God: he judgeth it so hard a doctrine, as if he were in danger to die for thirst. Seeing therefore obedience to the word is painful, we have need of patience to stay us up, that we shrink not away, and go clean backward. Besides, we do not by & by enjoy the promises y^t God maketh unto us, they are for an appointed time, he will try us in waiting for thē. So he dealt with *Abraham*, he had promise of a son, but it was not immediately accomplished, he was fain to expect long time for it. So the Psalmist speaking of *Joseph*, confirmeth notably this point: He had sundry dreams, which were predictions, and presages of his future advancement: yet after this *he was sold for a servant, his feet were hurt with fetters, and he was laid in iron, until the time that his word came, the word of the Lord tried him*. We must be faithful unto the death, and then we shall receive the crown of life. God trieth us all at one time or other, and one way or other: we see not his promises by and by performed unto us: let us wait for them with patience, and put on the hope of salvation as a shield: for surely they will come, and he y^t hath spoken the word cannot lie. Lastly, we must here endure sundry afflictions, and shall meet with many scorns and scoffs of wicked men, seeking to turn us from our due obedience to God and his word; and therefore *we have need of patience to hold us constantly in the faith without wavering*, Heb. 10.36. Christ Jesus forewarning his disciples what troubles hanged over their heads, that they shall be persecuted, and delivered up to the Synagogues and into prisons, and be brought before kings & rulers for his Names sake, giveth them this exhortation, *In your patience possess ye your souls*. As *Ishmael* persecuted him that was borne after the Spirit, even so it is now, and ever will be, Gal. 4.29. Many have turned back from the truth through these temptations. They cannot abide to be reviled, though it be for righteousness sake. Let us not think the Christian man's life to be an easy and lazy life, nor the way to it pleasant, nor the gate that leadeth and openeth to it, broad and wide: it is a continual warfare, 2. Tim. 2, 3. *suffer affliction as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*. Heerupon we are charged to strive to enter in at the straight gate, Mat. 7. There is no salvation without striving: we must suffer many a blow, and endure many a wound. We must be content to bear many showers and sharp storms. The husbandman suffereth much labor before he reapeth. We must not dream of the victory before the battle. Our Savior speaking of the good and saving hearer of the word, such as all of us ought to be, describeth him by these notes, that *with an honest and good heart he heareth the word, keepeth it, and bringeth forth fruit with patience*. This is so excellent a virtue, that God vouchsafeth to be called *the God of patience*, Rom. 15. When once we begin to yield obedience to the word, and to frame our lives according thereunto, and to bring forth the fruits worthy amendment of life; when we are freed from the tyranny of Satan, and made citizens of the kingdom of heaven, we must look for the cross and persecution to follow us: forasmuch as *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution*, 2 Tim. 3.12. This virtue do those hearers want, which in time of peace and prosperity will profess the same, but when trouble ariseth, forsake the faith and give over their profession, and embrace this present world. But we must learn better things, we must build upon the rock, that we be not shaken.

This maketh us stand assured of God's promises, and breaketh the stroke of all afflictions, that they cannot hurt us, nor be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, but maketh us in y^e end to be more then conquerors through him that loved

us, Rom. 8. so that we may glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience: and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed.

[Use 6] Lastly, it is our duty to labor to grow in obedience. It is not enough for us to bring forth some fruits, but we must strive to perfection, and to the greatest measure of fruitfulness. This is laid before us in the parable of the sower, Mat. 13. some bring forth fruit an hundred fold, some sixty, and some thirty fold. Let it be with us, as it is with worldly minded men, that seek to increase their stock and store, and to make it greater. This duty hath many branches, as it were appurtenances depending upon it; First, we are not to be discouraged, though we attain not to the highest degree & greatest measure of obedience. For such as are evermore growing, have not yet attained to the end of their growth. There are diverse degrees of good ground, and there are diverse steps before we can come to the top of any high thing. The husbandman, though he receive not a crop of an hundred fold, yet will think it well and count the ground good, and his labor well bestowed, if he might receive sixty or thirty fold. Wherefore, albeit we be not the best ground, yet we may be good ground, as he may be a good servant, that is not best of all. No good ground shall be rejected, it is the barren ground that he accepteth not. If we bear any fruit, he will make much of us, and work in us more obedience, as John. 15.2. *Every branch that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit.* So then, there is fruit, and there is more fruit: First we must labor to bring forth fruit: then we must strive to bring forth more fruit. Secondly, we must beware that we do not decay in grace, and so grow every day less fruitful then other. This is contrary to that growth that ought to be in us. This is the estate of many professors and sluggish hearers, that were more forward and fervent many years past then now they are at this present, to whom belongeth the exhortation given to the Church of Ephesus, *I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love: remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.* The Apostle, writing to the Galatians, was afraid of them, lest he had bestowed all his labor among them in vain, Gal. 4. For as the Minister, through want of teaching and using of his gifts, becometh unprofitable to himself and the Church, and suffereth his gifts to decay: so is it with many hearers, if we stir not up the gifts given unto us, we shall grow cold and fruitless in good things. Thirdly, we must take heed to our selves while we are growing, lest Satan cast his darnel among us, and make us grow proud of our proceedings, and measure the forwardness of our obedience, by the backwardnesse of others disobedience. This we are ready enough to do, and to esteem highly of our selves. The Apostle declareth that *lest he should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given unto him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure.* We cannot so much as think one good thought. We have nothing whereof to be proud and highminded. When any good work is done in us, it is not we that do it, but the grace of God in us. Fourthly, it is required of us, not to disdain or contemn others that come farther behind us, both because GOD accepteth of their mediocrity, though they have not attained to the greatest measure, neither are gotten up to the top; yet so long as they are climbing up the ladder that reacheth to heaven, they are in the right way, and therefore we must take heed

lest by our unseasonable disgracing of them, and carping at them, we drive them out of the path wherein they walk. Whatsoever we our selves enjoy, *We have received from the gift of God*, and we are indebted unto him for it, so y^t we are *not to boast our selves as if we had not received it*, neither ought we to lift up our selves above or against our brethren, lest God's hand in justice pull us down, which in mercy did set us up. Fifthly, it behooveth us to use all good means both to come to obedience, and to continue us in the fruits of obedience, all the days of our lives. God hath commanded no good thing, but he hath appointed unto us the means whereby we shall attain unto it. And he hath appointed no means in vain, but they are sanctified and blessed to those that carefully use them, to the bettering of their souls, and the increasing of his graces. The first means commended unto us for this purpose is the sound preaching, and the saving hearing of the word, which is of great force and effect to change our hearts and to work obedience in them, as Rom. 1.17. the Apostle *Paul* desireth to preach to them at Rome, because by the preaching of the Gospel, *the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith*. Another means is prayer. God hath bound himself by promise, he cannot go back from his word, nor deny himself, forasmuch as he is unchangeable in goodness. He hath spoken it, and he will perform it, that if we ask, we shall receive: if we seek, we shall find: and if we knock, it shall be opened unto us. A third means to work obedience may be meditation of the things that we have heard; an infallible testimony of our love to the truth, and of our delight in it.

That which we often think upon we love much, *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day*. Such are pronounced blessed by the Prophet, that *meditate in the Law of God continually*, for they shall be as trees planted by the rivers of waters, which shall bring forth their fruits in due season. The last is conference with others, thereby stirring up one another, and receiving benefit by the company of others.

This was the practice of the Prophet *David*, he was *a companion of all them that feared God, and kept his commandments*. He joineth these two together, the company of the faithful, and the keeping of his laws, because the one is a principal help unto the other. Thus I have run over the chief means that serve to further us in obedience, by these we must seek it, or else we shall never obtain it. The more we use them and frequent them, the greater shall our growth be in obedience. The less we use them, the less obedient we shall be. They that use them not at all, can have no measure at all of obedience. Shall we think to walk in the ways of godliness, and never exercise our selves in the means appointed for us? Or is it possible for such to please God in obedience, as neglect such ways as he hath left unto us? Do we then see men contemn the word of God, and make no conscience to attend unto it? neither regarding diligently to resort to the hearing of it, nor hearkening carefully to it, when they are come to it? Are there not many that never call upon God, nor beg of him the graces of his Spirit, and that have not the spirit of prayer, to ask of him such things as they stand in need off? Is not meditation with our selves, and conference with others grown out of use, and rarely to be found among men? An evident token that there is little obedience to be found in the world, but a sea of disobedience that ouerfloweth all places. For where there is little conscience in hearing, little care in praying, little use of meditating and conferring, we may boldly

pronounce without fear, that there is little obedience yielded to the laws and commandments of God.

CHAP. V.

1 AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.

2 Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the campe, every leper, and everyone that hath an issue, and whosoever is defiled by the dead:

3 Both male and female shall ye put out, without the campe shall ye put them, that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell,

4 And the children of Israel did so, and put them out, without the campe: as the Lord spake unto Moses, so did the children of Israel.

Hitherto we have spoken of one part of the preface, wherein we have seen a rehearsal of the order commanded of God to be observed in the mansions and remoouings of the children of Israel. Nevertheless, one thing is wanting, to wit, that order be taken, that this multitude be free from all pollution and impurity or uncleanness, and follow after sanctification. For what is an unregenerate and unsanctified company, but a rout of rebels, and an heap of confederates, conspiring together against God? Wherefore, we are now to proceed to the second part of the Preface, which concerneth the purity of this people. The former Chapters serve to manifest them to be a great people: the chapters following, to make them an holy people. The former show what they are; the chapters following what they ought to be. The former chapters declare what they are by the course of nature: the next will declare what they are by the means of grace.

Heerin we are to observe two things: first, the laws that are given them to this end. Secondly, the laws concerning the manner of their removing and marching in the wilderness. The laws that concern their sanctification are either general and common, or else particular and special. The general are in the 5 and 6 chapters, and come first to be handled: the particular are in the 3 chapters following. The general laws are of two sorts, some are necessary and commanded in the law; other are voluntary or vowed, being undertaken by a free profession of their religion. Moses handleth in the first place such laws as are commanded, and necessarily to be practiced, and setteth them down in this chapter. The vowed or voluntary service is noted in the chapter following.

In this fifth Chapter he entreateth of the means of sanctification, & it containeth two parts. First of sanctification in matters fully and certainly known: Secondly, of sanctification in matters that are doubtful and unknown, depending upon the opinion or suspicion of others. The first kind consisting in matters certain, is double; first, he entreateth of casting out of the impure and unclean out of the host, in the four first verses. Secondly, of cleansing and purging the trepasse and damage done to our neighbor, to the 11. verse. The second part, standing in that which is doubtful, is the trial of the honesty and innocence of the suspected wife, to the end of the chapter. Thus we see, that as soldiers are wont to be cassired and turned out of the campe, and put from their wages: so when God numbered the people that were fit for profane and sacred war, he doth after a sort depose and dismiss all those that were defiled through any impurity of body or mind, thereby declaring both what manner of persons he would have all those be y^t profess to worship him, and how he abhorreth and detesteth whatsoever is foul and filthy, polluted and profane: and therefore he willet all lepers, all that have an issue, or have touched any dead corps should be cast out of their tents. Moreover, all deceitful and fraudulent persons, that have beguiled their neighbors through falsehood and forgery, shall no otherwise be accepted, then by confession unto God and restitution unto men. Lastly, the jealousy of the suspicious husband, is so corrected & reformed by a ceremonial observation, as by a special remedy, that either he is compelled to acknowledge his suspicion to be false, or else if the affection be just, he understandeth it to be approved by the testimony of God himself; and so evil is taken away out of Israel by the sentence of God the avenger.

Touching the first point, which is concerning the putting out of their tents y^e unclean, we are to observe 2 things. First, the commandment of God: secondly, the execution thereof. The commandment is propounded, and then confirmed by strength of reason. It is propounded both by his parts, and by the manner of it. The parts of the commandment are three, distinctly set down; first, touching the lepers, they must be put out from among thē, and have a place assigned unto them to dwell apart by themselves, out of the tents of the rest of the Israelites, lest by daily conversing with them, they should infect and corrupt others. Secondly, touching such as have running issues about them, of which we have spoken before, in the book of *Leviticus*, these also must depart out of the host. For albeit there were no fear of infection in these, as also in those that follow, yet there was a legal impurity, and a ceremonial uncleanness in them, putting them in mind of the foulness of sin. Thirdly, such as have touched a dead carcass, must also go out of the host; these were also unclean for a certain season. The first sort, to wit, of the lepers, was infectious: the two latter were accounted unclean and abominable, in respect of the law and ordinance of God that forbade those ceremonies, until the time of the restoring of all things: and yet some of them could not be avoided, as the touching of the dead.

These are the parts: the manner followeth, showing that this commandment is general, and toucheth all ages and sexes, young and old, male and female, Prince and subject, rich and poor, there must no partiality be used, God will have none of these unclean persons to be spared or suffered among his people, from the king that setteth on his throne, to the beggar that lieth on the dunghill. Hereupon *Moses* saith, *both male and female ye shall put out, without*

the campe shall ye put them. And in the book of Deuteronomy, it is said, *Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and do according to all that the Priests & Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do: Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of Egypt.* She was the sister of Moses and Aaron, & had gone before the women in singing the praises of God, for their deliverance at the red sea; yet when she spake against Moses, *she was shut out from the campe seven days,* according to the law, *All the days wherein the plague shall be in him, he shall be defiled, he is unclean, he shall dwell alone, without the camp shall his habitation be.* The practice hereof we see in Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, because he had taken two talents of silver contrary to the will of the Prophet, he said unto him, *The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed forever; and he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.* In the seige of Samaria by the Syrians, it appeareth that four leprous men dwelt out of the city, who for fear of that great and mighty host abode *at the entering in of the gate,* and were the first messengers of glad tidings, that the enemies had broken up their campe in haste and were fled away. When Ahasiah presumed in the pride of his heart to execute the priests office, the Lord smote the king, so that *he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house.* Thus we see how this law was executed without all respect of persons or degrees and estates of men, high and low, bond and free, master and servant.

The reasons of the former commandment follow, which are two in number: the one drawn from the nature and condition of these unclean persons: the other, from the person and presence of God, The former reason concerning the foulness of the leprosy, in these words, *lest they defile their camp,* may be thus concluded,

If the lepers defile the places of their abode,
then they are to be removed.

But the lepers defile y^e places of their abode,
Therefore they are to be removed.

The conclusion of this argument, is y^e commandment it self mentioned in the 2 verse: so also is the second part in the end of y^e same verse. The first proposition is to be supplied. The next reason, drawn from the Lord himself, in these words, *I dwell in the mids of them,* is thus concluded,

If God dwell among his people, then no unclean thing is to be tolerated among them. But God dwelleth among his people, Therefore no unclean thing is to be tolerated among them.

The parts of this argument are partly expressed, and partly understood, as we shown in the former that went before, and therefore need not be repeated.

Thus much of the commandment: the execution hereof followeth in the 4. verse, set down, first generally, and particularly. Generally, *the children of Israel did so,* Particularly, *they put them out of the campe, as the Lord spake unto Moses.* Now whereas the tents among the Israelites were threefold: one, of the Tabernacle: another of the Levites: the third of the Tribes: sundry

of the Hebrews hold that such as were *leprous* were banished from them all three: that such as had *running issues*, were suffered in the campe, but neither in the court of the Tabernacle, nor among the tents of the Levites: and that such as were *defiled by touching the dead*, were only banished and excluded out of the court of the Tabernacle and the Tabernacle it self. But these are more curious speculations, then well grounded observations, whereof the Hebrew Rabbins are full, and seem to be overthrown in this place, where they are thought to be established, forasmuch as *Moses* joineth all these 3. together, and turneth them out of the host.

Before we proceed to handle the doctrines of this division, it shall not be amiss for us to answer one objection, which we will do briefly, and that is, whether God, in requiring the lepers to be put out of the campe, do respect the bodies of his people, or not? forasmuch as the leprosy was a contagious and infectious disease. I answer, I am not ignorant how diversely diverse men do carry this, and understand hereby, that God as a prudent and provident Lawgiuer, giveth wholesome counsel and direction, lest contagious diseases should creep among the people, and so infect one another. But this is too weak a conjecture and collection, & reacheth not to the purpose, nor attaineth to the intent of God, who respecteth the soul rather then the body. For he doth not in this place give counsel as a Physician that provideth for the health of his patient: but he dealeth as a Physician of y^e soul, and therefore under these outward rites and ceremonies, he would train them up, & teach them to give themselves to holiness of life, to study to attain unto, and acquaint themselves with purity, and to beware of all filthiness and uncleanness. This appeareth in the example before set down of such as were driven from the company and society of men, being stricken with the leprosy by the hand of God. Besides, this reason is rendered of their casting out of the host, lest they should defile the campe in which the Lord dwelled. Lastly, we see that such as have issues in the flesh, & such as touch the dead, which are no infectious diseases, and the one no disease at all, are joined with the leprosy in this chapter, so that the drift & intent of God in this place, is, not to provide for the body, or to keep the people in health and strength, but for the soul, that they may be preserved from sin, & from the infection of sin.

Now, if any ask whether the disease of the leprosy be not contagious, and therefore whether it be not expedient, that all such as are taken and touched with it, should be barred and banished from the society of men: I confess this is true and convenient, & ought to be so: but this was not the chief and principal end that God respected, and therefore this is left to the Physicians and Masters of that profession to judge according to the rules of art and experience. God committed the matter to the Priests, that they should order all things according to the directions given unto them: it had been much safer to have committed and commended the matter to such as had judgment in that faculty.

Moreover, we must consider, that as this disease was foul and filthy, ugly and fearful, so there are three sorts of it named in the law, to wit, the leprosy of the body, the leprosy of the garments, and the leprosy of the house: so that it is most probable according to y^e opinion of the learned, that the Jews in a proper and peculiar manner (unknown to us at this day, and

unknown to the Jews themselves at this day) were troubled and tormented with this disease. Even as we, that are cast into the last age of the world, have diseases that follow some sins, which in former times, were not known to the Physicians themselves. And hereupon no doubt profane writers took occasion to devise sundry lies and slanders against, the whole nation of the Jews, as if it were hereditary unto them, and that all the posterity of *Abraham* were full of botches and blisters and itches, and therefore were driven out of Egypt by force, lest they should corrupt the rest with their infection. This forged surmise had ancient Authors to rest upon, and is as likely to proceed from the Egyptians themselves, a proud and haughty people, as from any other; who being ashamed of the plagues that were sent among them, and inflicted among them, and desirous to blot out the memory of the reproach of their nation, and of the vengeance of eternal God, turned the judgment of scabs & blisters that fell upon thē, from themselves, to the people of Israel, as if they had infected them, & were for that cause compelled to banish them out of Egypt, lest they should corrupt the whole country with their maladies. But if this had been the true reason of their departure, why did they retain them so long among them, and in the end, bestow upon thē silver and gold, jewels and precious stones, thereby spoiling themselves to enrich their enemies? or why did they persecute them with such hatred at the red sea, that themselves were drowned? Furthermore, among y^e curses that God denounceth to bring vpō his people for the contempt of his word, & disobedience to his laws, he threateneth *to smite them with the botch of Egypt, and with the hemroids, and with the scabbes, and with the itch, whereof they should not be healed.*

Lastly, if the people of God had been haunted and vexed with any such filthy diseases, the Lord would never have established such sharp and severe laws among them, the like whereof were not to be found among foreign nations, whereby such were separated from the company of men, as had any loathsome and noisome ulcers and sicknesses following them: yea, if any suspicion did arise, they were severed and sundered from the rest for a time, until the truth were thoroughly known, and found out, as appeareth at large in the book of *Leviticus*.

[Verse 2. *Command the children of Israel that they put out, &c.*] Here we have a plain and express commandment of God, charging *Moses* to put out lepers & unclean persons from the Congregation. The Apostle *Paul* speaking of fornicators and incestuous persons that were unclean livers, unclean in body and in soul, useth the same word, *Put out such from among you*, 1 Cor. 5.13. thereby [Doctrine 1] showing what God intended by this Ceremony: the substance whereof teacheth this truth, namely, that obstinate sinners are to be cast out of the Church. All open offenders and unreformed persons by the dreadful and direful sentence of excommunication, as it were by the two edged sword of God, are to be cut off from the fellowship of the Church, and from all the privileges that belong unto the faithful. This ordinance of God hath good ground upon the separation mentioned in this place, which was not commanded as a civil policy to keep the whole from the sick, but as a part of Ecclesiastical discipline, inasmuch as the Priests the sons of *Aaron* had the whole knowledge of the cause, as well the shutting of them out, as the receiving of them into the host, as we shown by sundry examples before. There are that draw the original of this Church-censure

even from *Adam*, whom the Lord cast out of Eden, and set an Angel at the entry of the garden, who by shaking the blade of a glistering sword, feared him from re-entering, and suffered him not to touch or taste of that tree which was a Sacrament of life unto him. The like do the Hebrew interpreters observe touching *Cain*, whom the Lord cast out and banished *from the face of God*, as the lepers were cast out of the fellowship of men. For what else is the face of God, but the place appointed for his worship, where he was wont to appear to the Fathers, and where *Adam* and his family met together to serve him and to sacrifice unto him? And all this was before the law, when the sons of God were manifestly distinguished from the sons of men, Gen: 6.1. In the time of the Law, we have many ceremonies to this purpose. We see that the unclean were kept from coming to the Tabernacle, from entering into the Temple, from the partaking of the sacrifices, and from eating the Passover. So in another place, the Lord threateneth, that he shall be cut off from his people, that being unclean eateth of his sacrifice, and that the sacrifice shall profit him nothing, nor be accounted to him to take away his sin, but that it shall remain upon his own head. These are no obscure types & dark shadows, but lively pictures and patterns that represent unto us y^e nature of excommunication. Let us come to the New Testament. The use of the *keys to open and shut*, and the words of *binding and loosing*, come directly to this purpose. And as this truth is taught by precept, so it is farther enlarged and warranted by sundry examples. *Abraham* is commanded to *cast out the bond woman & her son*, out of his family which was the Church. *Hymenaeus* and *Alexander*, concerning the faith made shipwreck, & are delivered up unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. The Apostle commandeth the Church of the Corinthians to *purge out the old leaven*, that is, as it is expounded afterward in plain words, *put away from yourselves that wicked person*. Wherein he alludeth to the law of *Moses*: such as were to eat of the Passover, were bidden to put leaven out of their houses, and to provide that no leavened bread were found among them. The Israelites were not to kill the Passover, before they had rid their houses of it. It was not enough for them, not to use, or not to touch leavened bread, but they were charged to remove it from them, and then they should be sure not to be partakers of it, nor to be tempted by it, to eat thereof. To these evident proofs, it were easy to add sundry other, but these are sufficient to show unto us, that open and obstinate sinners are not to be fostered in the Church, but to be put out of it.

The reasons hereof are diverse, and that in [Reason 1] diverse respects, both in respect of God, and in respect of the Church, and in respect of the offenders themselves. First, it would be reproachful to God and his son Jesus Christ, if they that lead a wicked and wretched life should be admitted freely to his Table, as if his people were a company or conspiracy of profane persons: whereas the Church is *the body of Christ*. If then his body should consist of such filthy loathsome & stinking members, the reproach of it, would redownd unto the head. The Apostle telleth the Jews that *the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles* through them. If then wicked men should be suffered and cherished in the Church, the enemies of the Gospel, would take occasion thereby to blaspheme the Name of God, as if the Christian faith did either make men wicked, or did wink at wickedness, or did encourage them to live wickedly.

Secondly, by continual company with the [Reason 2] wicked, the godly are corrupted. We are all prone to evil, as *Adam* to lay hand on the forbidden fruit, we are ready to go out of the way: and when we have evil examples before our eyes, we soon take the occasion that is offered, as when fire and to we come together.

This reason is urged by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 5, 6, 7, 11. *Your rejoicing is not good: know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?* There is danger to the rest of the Church to retain among them evil men. It is a means to spread sin abroad into every part, until the whole body become abominable, and therefore it is better that one member be cut off, then that the whole body of the Church should perish. The offender then is to bear the punishment of his sin, that the rest may be kept from sinning.

Thirdly, they are to be cut off, to the ende [Reason 3] that such as are wicked livers, may begin to be ashamed of themselves and their wickedness. It is profitable to themselves, that their ungodliness should be punished, that they by the feeling of God's chastisement may awake out of their sleep, who, by sufferance & winking at their sin, would grow more obstinate. This is the reason set down by the Apostle in many places. The incestuous person, that had committed such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, must be barred and banished from the city of God, and delivered unto Satan, *for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*, 1, Cor. 5, 5. We must have no company with scandalous livers, *that they may be ashamed*. In like manner also heretics must be proceeded against, and cast out by the highest censure, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Before we come to the uses, let us answer [Objection 1] a few objections, thereby to clear this point which hath been gainsaid and contradicted by many. First, there is objected against it, the Parable of Christ, Math. 13, 30. touching the tares, where the householder commandeth his servants to *suffer the tares and wheat to grow together until the harvest*, that is, the end of the world, verse 39. then shall the tares be gathered and bound in bundles to be burned, but the wheat shall be gathered into the barn. This they expound, as if Christ should command the Ministers not to excommunicate any of the wicked, but to tolerate them together with the godly. But this were to make Christ to speak with two tongues, and to utter things contrary one to another: for in the 18. chapter of that Gospel, he doth expressly command it to be practiced. Besides, we are not to sift every part of a Parable, but to mark the scope. Now, his purpose is not to set down the duty of the Ministers, but to comfort all the servants of God, when they behold public scandals and open offenses everywhere to arise, even in the midst of the Church, so that it cannot be clean purged; forasmuch as in the end it shall come to pass, that albeit notorious sins break out as ulcers in a body, yet all stumbling blocks shall be removed and taken out of the way, and all that work iniquity shall be cast into hell. This is it that he teacheth, chap. 18, 7. *Woe to the world, because of offenses: for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh*. And the Apostle saith, *There must be heresies, that they which are approved, may be made manifest*, 1 Cor. 11, 19. Here the faithful and hypocrites are mingled together in the Church, as wheat and chaff in the floor, and as good fish and bad in the net. When we see this, we ought not to be

discouraged, but rather labor that we may be good Corn, fit to be gathered into the Lord's Garner, when he shall send his Angels to gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; then he shall cast them into a furnace of fire, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, Math. 13, 41, 42. That this is the drift of Christ, and the meaning of the Parable, appeareth by the interpretation that is given of it in that place, wherein he maketh no mention at all of those servants which are supposed to represent the Ministers: which, if it had been as these would infer, he would not have left out. But he insisteth chiefly and principally upon this, that when all things shall be dissolved, all offenses and offenders shall be gathered together, and cast as it were one bundle into hell. They then are deceived, that think it is not necessary to purge out the great and gross offenders. The Church is the City of God, excommunication is the sword: it is the School of Christ, this is the rod, as the Apostle calleth it: it is the Temple of God, this is as it were the whip, to scourge out such as abuse it & themselves: it is the body of Christ, this is as a medicine to cure the diseases of it: it is the vine and sheepfold, this serveth to keep the foxes and wolves from it.

Secondly, some object that it is not needful [Objection 2] under a Christian Magistrate, who is charged to punish such as live dissolutely and disorderously, inasmuch as he beareth not the sword in vain, Rom. 13. It belongeth unto him to take away life or limb, according to the nature and quality of the offense. What place then is there for excommunication and Ecclesiastical judgments? I answer, [Answer.] Christ hath settled this as a perpetual order in the Church, Math. 18, 17. *If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a Publican.* Where, alluding to the custom of the Jewish Church, he showeth also, that the Christian Church cannot want this spiritual jurisdiction. These thē are not contrary, they stand well together, neither doth the one hinder or overthrow the other. Neither are we to think, that Christ pointeth out the civil Magistrate, when he saith, *Tell the Church:* as some suppose, but an Ecclesiastical Senate. Neither doth he mean when he saith, *Except he hear the Church, let him be to thee as an heathen or a Publican,* except he hear the Magistrate that is of the same faith and religion with thee, thou mayest go to law with him, as if he were an heathē or Publican, and have him before the Roman Magistrate that is profane. For Christ speaketh not only to the Jews that then lived, but giveth a remedy to be used at all times. The promise that followeth, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, &c. belongeth not to one time, or to one place, or to one people, nor to the civil Magistrate, nor to civil wrongs; but pertaineth to the conscience, and had been impertinently & improperly added, if Christ had spoken of seeking civil remedy, against civil harms and injuries: which will farther appear by the reasons following.

First, if by the word Church, the civil Magistrate were to be understood, then y^e words concurring in the text touching binding and loosing, and used elsewhere to the same effect touching opening and shutting, remitting & retaining of sins, showing the Churches power, do not signify spiritual power, but civil: but they do not so signify, neither were ever so understood of any until our times.

Secondly, the authority here spoken of was such, as the Disciples present should sometimes in person exercise and execute, for so Christ saith unto them, verse 18. *Whatsoever ye shall*

bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, & whatsoever ye loose in earth, shall be loosed in heaven. But these exercised not civil power, but spiritual jurisdiction: therefore this authority here spoken of, was spiritual, not civil.

Thirdly, Christ's words are in this place imperatiue, *Tell the Church*. Whosoever saith that these words are but permissiue, only suffering men so to do, and not imperatiue, enioyning the same, he goeth against the letter of the text and propriety of the words. But Christ commandeth no man to prosecute his brother civilly offending him, before the civil Magistrate. He commandeth to forgive him and to be ready to take another injury, rather then in law to pursue him, Math. 5, 40. Therefore, this action here in this sort enjoined and required at the offended brothers hands, in that Christ saith unto him, *Tell the Church*, is not a civil action, but must needs be a spiritual duty, whereby the offenders soul (abiding in sin, and so in danger to be lost) is to be recovered, if it may be by this means.

Fourthly, the ground and matter of this action (whereupon the whole is inferred) is not civil, for then it should more fitly have been named, 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, an injury: but here it is not so called, but it hath the express name of 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, sin. Therefore the remedy also is spiritual, and the means to bring it to pass.

Likewise, he teacheth a little before of offenses spiritual, and of the cure of them: then he showeth our duty of seeking and recovering even one brother going astray, comparing this to the seeking and recovering of a lost Sheep straying from the flock in the wilderness, which also is a spiritual affaire and business. These things being thus laid together, with the words immediately following, and both compared together; there is no show of reason, why it should not concern the same matter with the former, there being still one coherence and knitting up of the argument, and that most fitly in this discourse.

Lastly, Christ was no civil Lawyer, neither set any civil Courts and courses of law, neither was this his calling. But this was his office, to give order for his Church, and to establish the government thereof. Neither was there any special occasion to speak of civil going to law: here was no question put to him concerning any such matter, so that he should thus have answered nothing to the purpose. Wherefore, by these particular considerations we may conclude, that to take the word Church for a company of civil Magistrates, using civil, not spiritual authority, for a bench of Iusticers, or a Senate of Magistrates, hath no approbation of any author. In profane writers, it signifieth a whole ordinary assembly of people met together for ordering civil affairs, guided therein by some Magistrate. They then are very much deceived, that take the word in a civil sense, & understand it of civil proceedings.

Again, when the Apostle, speaking of the incestuous person, willeth him *to be delivered to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh*, they expound it of an extraordinary punishment inflicted upon him by the devil, whereby he tormented his body. Such a miraculous punishment was laid upon *Ananias and Sapphira* by *Peter*, and upon *Elymas* by *Paul*. But this is not the right interpretation & true exposition of this place. For albeit God oftentimes use the devil as his instrument, both to chastise his children, as we see in *Job*, and to punish the ungodly, as we

see in *Saul*, so that the power of Satan is the power of God; yet this is not intended by the Apostle, as appeareth by the circumstances which may be observed in this chapter.

For first, he reproveth the Corinthians, that they had cherished a most wicked man among them, and had not long before put him out, as verse 2. *Ye are puffed up*: but he did not, neither could he reprove them, because they had not wrought a miracle, because the gift which *Peter* and *Paul* had as the Apostles of Christ, was not common to every Christian, nor to all Churches: therefore he reproveth them because they neglected an ordinary duty.

Secondly, he commandeth them that themselves should take him away, saying, *Put him out from among you*: but it had been unreasonable to require a miracle at their hands, which he knew they were not able to work.

Thirdly, if he had intended such a miraculous action as they performed against hypocrites and enemies of the truth, what need had there been of a solemn assembly and consent of the Church? But in putting of him out, the Congregation had an interest, ver. 4. *When ye are gathered together; &c: my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

Fourthly, this appeareth also by the end for which he was to be delivered to Satan, *for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*; that is, that he may repent of his wickedness in this life, and so be saved in the life to come. This also is noted to be the end wherefore he delivered *Hymenaeus* and *Alexander* to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme, that is, y^t they might renounce their heresies, and embrace the true faith, and so repent of their former impiety and iniquity. Therefore he would not have him smitten with sudden death, and taken out of this life, and so the time and gift of repentance to be cut off from him.

Fifthly, what it is *to deliver to Satan, and to take away*, the Apostle expresseth in other places; keep not company with them, with such eat not, purge out the old leaven, that they may blush and be ashamed, & so amend their evil ways.

Sixthly, if this had been meant of such extraordinary punishments, the Apostle might have done this by his Apostolical authority, and needed not to have troubled the whole Church with it.

Seventhly, that which the Apostle here commanded, the Church no doubt practiced: but they did not take him away out of this world by any miracle, neither delivered him to be possessed and punished bodily by the devil, but rather proceeded against him with the censures of the Church, as appeareth in the second Epistle, where he willeth them to *comfort him* being afflicted, to receive him being penitent, and to cure him being wounded.

Lastly, if he had willed them to kill him, he had willed them to rush into the Magistrates seat, which he would never do: for this is proper to the Magistrate alone that beareth the sword. Seeing therefore we have the commandment of Christ, and the practice of the Apostle, to warrant the sentence of excommunication, there shall always be place for it in the Church, even where the Christian Magistrate is settled & established. *Paul* would have them assemble together *in the Name of Christ*, that is, by his will & commandment: and

afterward he showeth that the Churches office is *to judge them that are within*, albeit the Magistrate have a sword put into his hand by the ordinance of GOD. What then? There is a twofold sword, material, and spiritual; he taketh up the material sword, and striketh with it. The Church handleth the spiritual sword, which is the word of God: so that the Magistrate taketh away the wicked one way, the Church another way. The Magistrate killeth and taketh away life, if the cause require: the Church meddleth not with corporal punishment and shedding of blood. The Magistrate proceedeth directly according to the Laws against offenders, albeit they repent; because he respecteth the execution of justice, and the revenge of the dishonor done to God: The Church proceedeth not in that order, but observeth the degrees appointed by Christ, *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone, &c:* and if the offenders repent, they are ready to forgive thē. For this is the mark wherewith excommunication aimeth, and the end whereto it tendeth, y^t the sinners being ashamed, may be brought to repentance, & that such as live in the church might not be corrupted, forasmuch as *a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*

Lastly, it may be said that we should rather [Objection 3] labor how and which way to bring more into the Church, then to exclude any out of the Church. Men are ready to go fa^{••} enough out of it, but they return slow enough to it. We are to endeavor to call men to the Sacraments, w^c are encouragements to godliness, rather than to keep them frō them for their wickedness. It is a sign we lack charity toward them, when we hide from them that which should do them good. I answer, [Answer.] it is our duty to do both of them, to wit, both to encourage them to godliness, and yet to keep them from them so long as they lie in open wickedness not repented of: not the first without the latter, nor the latter without the first, lest we be compelled to give that which is holy to dogs. Did the Lord himself want charity toward Adam, whē he sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, *lest he put forth his hand and take also of the Tree of life, and eat, & live forever?* The Sacraments of God cannot profit or help wicked men. The Supper of the Lord is only available and comfortable unto them which come worthily, to wit, with true repentance, with sound faith, and with unfeigned charity: touching others, it turneth to greater judgment and condemnation. This doth the Apostle teach, 1 Corin. 11, 27. *Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.* Is it not a work of charity to stay his course that is running into danger, and like to hurt himself? to hinder our brother from such an action as that he eateth judgment to himself, and maketh himself guilty of horrible sin? This were a strange kind of charity, to suffer a man to thrust himself through with his sword, or to cast himself down headlong from a steep Rock, when we may hinder him from so doing. The Apostle Jude giveth us other direction in his Epistle, that we should *have compassion of some making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.* Wherefore, there is no wrong done to impenitent persons, if they be excommunicated, and consequently barred from the Supper: but rather a great benefit is bestowed upon them, and their salvation furthered by this means. Neither let any say, [Object.] that the Church usurpeth upon the Magistrate, and taketh from him his office. For if this were a good reason, [Answer.] it was never lawful, neither ever shall be, for the Church to excommunicate any offenders: because it belongeth to the Magistrate as his duty to punish offenses, whether he be a Christian, or

no Christian. How then is it, that we take away this authority from the Church, in the time of a Christian Magistrate, and yield it to the Church when a wicked Magistrate is set over it, forasmuch as there is like reason and office of them both? If it be farther objected, [Objection.] that there are some sins which an evil Magistrate will not meddle withal, as blasphemy against Christ, heresy, and such like, as *Gallio* the Deputy of *Achaia*, accounteth the mystery of religion concerning Christ, a question of words and names, and professeth, *he will be no Judge of such matters*; whereas, if it were a matter of wrong, he would hear thē, Acts 18, 15. Wherefore, under a wicked and idolatrous Magistrate, excommunication may be used, not otherwise. I answer, [Answer.] from the lawfulness of it under a Magistrate that is no Christian, we cannot conclude the unlawfulness of it under a Christian Magistrate: for this is no good consequent, neither is it a sufficient cause against the express commandment and institution of Christ. The cause of the institution of excommunication is not the punishment of sin, but the salvation of a sinner, the edifying of the Church, and the glory of God. But the scope of the civil Magistrate and his office, is to punish sin, and respecteth not either the salvation or damnation of the sinner, so that albeit he repent, yet he spareth him not, but suffereth the law to proceed against him. The Church according to the doctrine of Christ, smiteth none with the spiritual sword, but such as are impenitent; and doth not this unto death, but unto life, and therefore receiveth them that repent. Again, the manner that they both use in correction is diverse: the Church correcteth by the word, the Magistrate by the sword, or such like outward punishment. To conclude this point, the use of excommunication ought to be perpetual in the Church, whether it have a Christian Magistrate or not, whether he do his duty, or do it not. For first, the doctrine of reprovng our brother between us and him alone, as also of taking two or three witnesses, ought to remain in the church and have continual use, whether the Magistrate be a Christian or Pagan. Therefore that also which followeth, *If he hear not the Church, let him be to thee as an heathen or a Publican*, whereby the doctrine of excommunication is established, ought to be perpetual. If one part of this discipline stand in force at all times, then doth the other also, forasmuch as Christ maketh no exception between the one and the other. Again, it is lawful for the Church, whether the Magistrate be a Christian or no Christian, to loose them that are bound, and to receive into the Church such as are cast out for their contumacy and continuance in sin, when once they repent. Therefore also it is lawful to cast out, and to bind those that are impenitent: and as the first is always ratified in heaven, so also is the latter. For Christ without any difference or distinction gave both these iurisdictions & authorities to y^e church, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*, Mat. 18, 18.

Lastly, where the causes of the Law are perpetual & universal, there the law must also be acknowledged to be perpetual and universal. But the causes of this power of the church, are perpetual & universal, as first the commandment of Christ, Mat. 18, 18. 1 Cor. 5, 5. Secondly, that obstinate sinners being made ashamed, may be brought to repentance. Thirdly, that no others should be infected by their evil life and corrupt example. Fourthly, because it is the ordinary office of the Church *to judge them that are within*. Therefore, the Church hath this authority, when it hath Christian Magistrates, as well as when it is without them.

Thus far touching the removing of objections. [Use 1] The doctrine being cleared from all doubts that might distract us, let us now come to the uses. And seeing there ought to be excommunication of scandalous and impenitent offenders, it should move us to enquire and learn what excommunication is, not as it is commonly used, but as it ought rightly to be practiced, to the end we may esteem of this censure and sentence, and stand in fear of it: *Excommunication therefore is a sentence of the Church, whereby a member thereof, convicted of some grievous crime, and by no means brought to repentance, is driven out of the Church, and cut off from the communion and fellowship of the faithful, that thereby he may be driven to repentance.* This description consisteth of diverse parts: first, it is a sentence of the Church: secondly, it must be executed upon him that is a member of the Church. Thirdly, the party delinquent must be convicted of some grievous crime or crimes. Fourthly, it stretcheth to him that cannot be otherwise brought to repentance. Fifthly, he is driven from the visible and outward communion of the Saints. Lastly, the end or use of it, is to make him ashamed that hath offended. These six several points touched before in the former description, have evident confirmation out of the word of God, which I will briefly prove, and then make use of every particular.

First, I say, that excommunication is a sentence of the Church. Our Savior commandeth to *tell the Church*, Math. 18, 17. Loe here, to whom he sendeth us. Again, he saith, *If he hear not the Church, &c.* So the Apostle speaketh, 1 Cor. 5, 4. When ye are gathered together in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ; From hence we learn sundry points: first, such as are themselves out of the Church, and no true parts of it, have nothing to do with it. They have no authority committed unto them, and therefore whatsoever they shall do in this behalf, is of no force, and no better then a sword in a mad man's hand. The keys of the Kingdom of heaven are committed to the Apostles, and to their successors by Christ himself, that they should open the gates of heaven to the penitent and believers, & shut the gates of hell: on the other side, open hell to receive the impenitent, and shut up heaven against them.

Secondly, we are taught from hence, the honor and dignity of the Ministry, how great it is, to bind and loose offenders, to open and shut heaven, to remit and retain sins: so that it belongeth not to private persons. It is accounted, and most worthily, a miracle to be wondered at, that *Elias* did by his prayer shut up heaven, that it rained not on the earth; and again opened it, so that *the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.* But this power of the Ministry is more marvelous, inasmuch as he brought only a temporal punishment of famine upon the land, but they inflict an everlasting judgment upon the unbelievers and impenitent persons. Great is the authority of Princes and Rulers of the earth. They may banish from their kingdoms such as are offenders, but they cannot banish and exclude any from the kingdom of God. They may bind the hands and feet of the body, but they have no power to bind the soul and conscience. The Magistrate may say, Take his body; but the Minister may say, Let him be delivered to Satan.

Lastly, we see from hence, that those Churches are deceived, that cast from them this holy ordinance of Christ Jesus: they are as a body subject to many diseases, yet want a sovereign medicine to cure them. For albeit they have the Christian Magistrate to assist them, and to

resist evils: yet his judgment is external, not internal: he may punish, he cannot amend and reform. Every Church therefore ought to have this remedy, to take away evil out of Israel.

The second point in the description of excommunication is, that it must be executed upon him that is a member of the Church. For as it is the sentence of the Church, so it extendeth only to such persons as are professors in the visible Church, and have given their names to Christ, and submitted themselves to the doctrine and discipline thereof. This is expressly grounded upon the words of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 5, 11, 12. *If any that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a drunkard, &c: with such a one eat not. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?* In like manner, Christ in the Gospel prescribing this spiritual physic to recover dangerous sinners, saith, *If thy brother trespass against thee.*

From hence we learn, what person is to be excommunicated, to wit, such an one as was called our brother, and registered in the number of the children of the church. For how can he be excommunicated, that is, cast out of the communion, who never was in the communion? Wherefore it belongeth nothing at all to those that are out of the church, as Turks, Persians, Jews, Pagans, and other Infidels, that were never baptized in the name of the holy Trinity, neither had entrance into the church. This censure concerneth such as are reckoned among brethren, and not accounted strangers from the faith, and aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel. Hence it is, that when *Paul* had written in an Epistle to the *Corinthians*, that they should *not keep company with fornicators*, lest they should think he wrote this of all the fornicators of this world, he expoundeth himself, that he understood it not of all wicked persons in general, *for then they must needs go out of the world*, but of such as were members of the church, and would needs be called brethren. These are they that give scandal to the enemies of God and his Gospel: through them the Name of God is blasphemed, the church is contemned & slandered, the word is reviled, the weak are offended, and the rest of the parts infected, and therefore deserve worthily to be excommunicated. The church taketh care of all her children, she is as a careful mother and tender Nurse that hath promised to bring them up, & to see them rightly ordered and governed, and therefore ought to use all good means for their recovery, that their spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

Again, we are put in mind hereby of the folly and corrupt dealing of the Church of Rome, who directly cross the doctrine of the Apostle, and set themselves in the place and seat of God. For as they have defiled the most holy ordinances of God, the word, prayer, sacraments, and worship of God, so they have horribly abused the institution of excommunication, as we shall see farther afterward. The truth is, they have nothing to do with excommunication, they are fallen from grace, they have denied the faith, they have defiled themselves with Idols, they will not have Christ's righteousness imputed unto thē, they set up their own works, & seek justification by thē, they will not receive Christ to be their only King and Priest, they will merit salvation for themselves, and therefore they are not a true, but a false Church. But excommunication is the Churches right, it is none of theirs, that are not the Church: so that albeit they curse us and banne us every year, yet it hurteth us not,

forasmuch as the curse that is causeless, shall not come. But suppose they were the true Church, and we out of the Church, (who hold all that refuse to be subject to the Popes supremacy, to be no Church at all) how cometh it to pass that they dare excommunicate us, who never were of their communion, and do not belong to their jurisdiction? They teach, we are out of the bosom of the Church; and *Paul* affirmeth, that the Church is not to judge them that are without: they are therefore abusers and profaners of this ordinance, even by their own confession. Let them either admit us to be parts of the true Church, or else remit us to the judgment seat of God, who *judgeth them that are without*. For as a Prince draweth out the sword against none but his own subjects, so is this censure to be drawn out against none but such as are subject unto it; that is, the Church. If the Church proceed any farther, it may be said unto it, Who made thee a Judge and Ruler over them?

Lastly, let not ungodly persons & atheists that are out of the Church, be encouraged hereby to continue in sin, neither let any envy their freedom and liberty, because they are not to be touched with Church-censures: but rather let them consider that they shall not escape scotfree; they have God the Father, high possessor of heaven and earth, a sharp and severe Judge against them and all their evil deeds: for *thē* that are without, God judgeth, who will give to everyone according to his deserts. Thus much of the second point.

Let us go forward in the description. The third thing necessary to be observed in excommunication, is, that the person offending be convicted of some grievous & heinous crime either against the first or second Table of the law. Hence it is, that the Apostle nameth, not only whoremongers, covetous, drunkards, railers, and extortioners, but also *idolaters*: so that as well heretics and worshippers of Images, sorcerers and enchanterers, and such like brethren, as drunkards and adulterers, are to be excommunicated. In like manner, Christ himself expresseth not the several kinds of sins, for which the brother that offendeth, is to be excommunicated, but contenteth himself to say only in general, *If thy brother trespass against thee*. So the Apostle *Paul* teacheth, Tit. 3.10. *A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject*. Hereby then we see, that a man is not to be excommunicated and put out of the Church for every trifle, or for every sin, but for scandals and offenses that are notorious. A master will not discharge out of his house a servant that hath served him, for every trespass: neither doth the Magistrate draw the sword for every breach of the law. So ought it to be with the officers of the Church. Again, excommunication must not be used at the first, but as the last remedy. A Chirurgeon accounteth lancing, searing, & cutting, a desperate cure. When he cometh to his patient, and findeth swelling and soars in the body, he doth not by and by proceed to cutting off an arm or leg: he useth first purging and other gentle means to try whether he can do any good that way or not. So should it be with us, according to the counsel and commandment of Christ, he requireth private admonitions & exhortations, private reproofs and rebukes: and then two or three with us, *that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established*. There is required of us, patience and much lenity, waiting whether he will by this means be amended. Lastly, we may gather from hence, that whiles sin is secret and unknown, no man can be excommunicated: but then only when it is made public and manifest unto all. Now then it is made public, when the Church is acquainted with it.

The fourth point in excommunication, is this, that it stretcheth to him only that cannot otherwise be brought to repentance. The cause then, why the church is compelled to proceed so far against some of her children, is, obstinacy & impenitēcy. For when there is in such offenders, both open wickedness, whereby the Church is offended; & notable stubbornenes, whereby the church is contemned, so that they can by no means of the word publicly, & of y^e admonitiō privately, be reformed, excommunication must follow of necessity, that hereby (if it be possible) some good may be wrought in them. Hereupon Christ himself saith, *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen, or a Publican*, Mat. 18, 17. Such therefore as have offended, and truly repent of their sins, giving evident testimonies of their unfeigned conversion, ought to be spared, & not censured: to be comforted, not terrified: to be retained in the church, not rejected & cast out of the Church. Secondly, this showeth that impenitency is a most grievous sin, and next to infidelity the greatest. For as faith is the mother of repentance, so is an unbelieving heart the cause of impenitency. Of all judgments that God bringeth upon the sons of men, none is greater then the want of repentance, to have an heart that cannot repent. To fall into whoredom & drunkenness are grievous sins, and wound the conscience, & weaken our comfort and assurance: howbeit to continue in them without feeling of them and turning from them, is worse then the committing of the sins themselves. This made the Apostle say, *Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearing, and long suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thine hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God*. Among all the blessings of God given unto us, we must make great account of a soft and tender heart, which the Prophet calleth *an heart of flesh*, opposed and set against the stony heart. Such are soon checked and controlled. Lastly, we learn from hence to make a difference between sin and sin, and between sinner and sinner. All men fall into sin, and if we say, we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and make God a liar. Nevertheless, some are penitent sinners, they hate their sins, and do with might and main strive against them. They fight against them as against their enemies. Others, cherish sin in themselves, and are resolved to continue in them. They make no conscience of them, and cannot be brought to repent for them. Such are not fit to be held members of Christ, and Citizens of the kingdom of heaven, & therefore justly deserve to be cast out of the church.

The fifth point containeth and includeth in it the substance of excommunication, namely, that it driveth impenitent offenders from the visible and outward communion of the Saints from whence also it hath his name. Open sinners and scandalous livers are not worthy to live among the faithful, nor to come to public prayers, nor to be partakers of the Sacraments, nor to be admitted to the assemblies of the Church; forasmuch as they would profane all they touch, as *Adam*, the tree of life, and therefore was driven out of the garden. Hence it is, that Christ would have us *account them as heathen and Publican's*. The Gentiles for religions sake were enemies to the church, and therefore in religion the Jews were to abstain from their society & fellowship, whereas in common affairs of this life they were not so restrained. The Publican's were such as had received an office from the Romans (to whom the Jews were subject) to gathet tribute, being as it were Collectors of subsidies, tasks, and

tallages impoled upon the Jews, who thought it unfit and unjust that they being the Lord's people, should pay tribute and custom to the Gentiles, as appeareth in the history of *Hezekiah*, and of *Ioachim* in the books of the Kings, and by the question propounded unto Christ in the Gospel, *Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?* Wherefore they were accounted the enemies of the people, and the betrayers of their own Nation, they coupled them with sinners, and hated thē unto the death, albeit they professed the same religion, and oftentimes met together in the place of God's worship. They abhorred these, and could by no means brook & abide these men, who for the most part were extreme covetous and catch-polles, exacting more then was due for them to receive, or the people to pay: howbeit they hated them not as the enemies of their religion, but as men of a wicked & offensive life. The Apostle likewise decreeing and determining what should be done with the incestuous person, willeth the church to *deliver him to Satan, to purge out the old leavē, and to put away from among themselves that wicked person.* Heereby then we see, that these obstinate offenders are to be separated frō those good things which the Lord commandeth & communicateth in his church, as the word, sacraments, & prayers. These are holy things for holy and sanctified persons; but they are as filthy swine, to whom holy things may not be cast, and as dogs, to whom the children's bread doth not belong. Now one of the chiefest ends of the censures of the Church, is to preserve holy things in their purity, and to deliver them, as much as may be, from contempt. [Objection.] If it be said, the word is the ordinary means of salvation; if then they be denied the word, they be barred from the means of repentance. I answer, [Answer.] these are such as the bare word can work no good upon, and therefore they are unworthy of it: except peradventure when some part of the Scripture is expounded, and such doctrine delivered, as by all probability and likelihood may serve to bring them to repentance. To admit of them at such times, may seem not altogether unprofitable, as for example, when the Minister shall have or take occasion to handle excommunication, and to show what a fearful thing it is to be cast out of the Church, and to be delivered to Satan, the enemy of mankind, and to become his bondslave. Besides, they want not altogether the means of repentance, seeing they are privately to be admonished, not to be hated and counted as enemies, but everyone is to labor their conversion. This appeareth farther in these four points. First, we must love the persons of the excommunicate in the Lord, and thirst after their souls health. Secondly, it is our duty to exhort and rebuke them, so that albeit we love them, we must take heed we do not flatter them, and so harden them in their sins. Thirdly, we are bound to pray for those that are bound by the Church censures. We are not to pray with him, but it is required of us to pray for him, that God would open his eyes & turn his heart. Lastly, we are to assure him, that upon his repentance we are ready to embrace him and to receive him as a brother: forasmuch as there is joy in heaven for one sinner that converteth. Again, it teacheth us to avoid the conversation of such as are cast out of the Church, so far as we can, & are not by some necessary duty as by a band or chain tied unto them, as we shall farther declare afterward. To be familiar with such, giveth thē encouragement to continue in that dangerous and damnable estate. Lastly, we see it is the duty of the Church, to purge it of such offenders, as a corrupt body of gross and superfluous humors. We see in the time of the Law, they had in the Tabernacle, not only the Candlesticks and the Lamps, to give light: but also pots, pannes, shouels, beesoms, snuffers, snuff-dishes,

& such like vessels and instruments as served to carry and conuay away all filth and uncleanness from the place of assembly of the Congregation.

The Lord will have *the dross taken from the silver, that there may come forth a vessel for the finer*: neither will he have any root that bringeth forth gall and wormwood to be among his people.

Now we are come to the last, but not the least point to be observed in excommunication, which is, that the principal scope and end of it, is the salvation and recovery of the offender, and the bringing of him out of the wilderness into the sheepfold of Christ, frō which he wandered and went astray. By his repentance the knot is loosed, which before was strongly tied. It is a medicine, bitter indeed, but wholesome: unpleasant to the flesh, but profitable to the soul; as an hot iron that seareth and putteth to pain, but it tendeth to health: it worketh sorrow, but it is the godly sorrow that causeth repentance not to be repented of. The Apostle showeth this at large in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, speaking of the fruit of the excommunication of the incestuous person, it wrought many worthy effects of true repentance; he was ashamed of himself and of his sin, he had sorrowed greatly for it, and was very near to desperation, so that he willeth them to *forgive him, to comfort him, to love him*, and to receive him again as a Christian brother. Let no man therefore condemn this censure, or open his mouth against this ordinance of God, so souereigne, so profitable, so necessary: forasmuch as the Church casteth them out for a season, that it may receive thē again forever. Secondly, let no man condemn such persons as stand excommunicated; though we cannot admit of them as Christian brethren, yet they are natural brethren, & may belong to God's eternal election. The incestuous Corinthian *was judged of many*, and put out of the society of the Church; yet he was brought to repentance, & laid hold of the promises of the Gospel. We have this notable example commended unto us, that we should make good use of it. He suffered a grievous punishment for a grievous offense, but it was only to humble him, and to bring him to see his sin, which otherwise he could not, he would not. Lastly, we see that whatsoever power is given to the Pastors of the Church, is given *to edification, and not to destruction*, 2 Cor. 10, 8. God intendeth and the Church respecteth the destruction of the flesh, and the mortification of the deeds of the old man, but the salvation of the spirit in the day of the Lord. If then this ordinance work not this saving effect, it cometh through their fault that do abuse and contemn it.

Secondly, seeing obstinate sinners are to [Use 2] be excommunicated, it doth show unto us the fearful estate and condition of such as are justly excommunicated, & cut off from the society of the Church, and from the company & communion of believers. They are dragged as dead carcasses out of a City, that others should not be annoyed with the stench and contagion of them. This may appear unto us by many particulars.

First, they have their names blotted out of the number of the people of God, Gen. 17. Luke 6, 22. This maketh their names to rot, & as dead branches to wither away. No man looketh vpō them but with remembrance of their sin, & with terror and detestation thereof. This is the highest punishment in y^e church, it is as a piercing thunderbolt cast down from heaven upon the heads of dissolute livers and incorrigible persons. What greater honor can there be, then

to be the sons and daughters of God, whereby God is made their God? as for others, they are cut off from his protection, they can look for no blessings to come from him, but all plagues and curses to overtake them. This is a misery of all miseries: for as he is the God of his people, so he is *a consuming fire* to burn up all his enemies. If then we be his people, he loveth us, he defendeth us, he heareth us, he receiveth us, he honoreth us: if not, he hateth us and withdraweth his grace from us, he leaveth us as a prey to our spiritual enemies, and clotheth us with shame as with a garment. For as the Psalmist pronounceth *that people blessed, whose God is the Lord*: so we may truly affirm on the contrary, Cursed is that soul y^t hath not the Lord for his God. So thē, the excommunicate are contemptible persons, and as it were outcasts, the shame of men and the contempt of the people. They are the sons of the earth, and may worthily blush to have any of God's servants look upon them. They may wander up and down in the night times, like Owls that hate the light, but may be ashamed to come out of their houses in the day. It were happy for thē if no man did know them, or did speak of thē; whereas now they are never remembered without a brand of reproach. All men point at them in the streets, and are ready to hiss them out of their sight. No man regardeth them that regard not the Lord and his law.

Secondly, the sentence that is pronounced on earth, is ratified in heaven. These men think and persuade themselves that they have to do only with men, and so shake it off and set lightly by it, that it might not fit in their conscience: but being justly pronounced against them in the Consistory of men, it is strongly confirmed in the highest Court of Heaven, as Christ testifieth, *What soever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven*. Let no man therefore diminish his sin and lessen his disobedience, as if it were done only unto men, or published only by the Minister, forasmuch as the Lord verifieth the sentence pronounced by him. For Christ Jesus is the Author of it, 1 Corinth. chap. 5, ver. 4. the Corinthians being charged to put out from among them him that had offended, must do it *in the Name*, that is, by the commandment of *CHRIST*. It is no device & invention of man, for then it might be either contemned, or less esteemed; but it is the sentence of the great Judge, more fearful than the message of death, instituted of him for the recovery of such as are fallen, and he will make all his ordinances available and sufficient to accomplish his will. The end of it is not, to make him that was our friend, to become an enemy: him that was our brother, to become an alliant: him that was in the covenant, to become a stranger to the covenant: but the use of it rather is, when a man is become an enemy, to reconcile him unto us: and when he hath made himself a stranger from the covenant and Church of God, to call him back to an holy communion with us. For the Ministry of the word, and the discipline of the Church, do tend to the salvation of men, as we noted before. If the Ministry of the Gospel fall out to be the *savor of death unto death*, it is not the proper effect of the Gospel: the fault is in them that perish, and are of old ordained to destruction, 2 Cor. 2, 15, 16. So then, this censure shall not be without his effect one way or other, but shall work either the destruction of the impenitent, or the salvation of the penitent. Seeing therefore God himself ratifieth this solemn sentence, we should stand in fear of it, & take heed we contemn it not. Let it move us unto repentance, being assured that it shall not be in vain. Is not the prisoner afraid of the sentence of the Judge? and when that is published, doth he not cry out for mercy? When the

Lyon roareth, do not the beasts of the forest tremble? Let us not therefore be more senseless then the Ox and Ass, then the Horse and Mule that are without understanding, but tremble under the mighty hand of God's chastisement, as the child under the rod, considering, that when the Minister pronounceth the sentence on earth, God denounceth judgment from heaven, and threateneth to perform it to the utmost.

Thirdly, the excommunicate are barred from the Word and Sacraments, and from the prayers of the Church. The word can do them no good, the sacraments would do them hurt, we cannot join with them in prayer, nothing will prevail with them. We cannot bless them & salute them in the Name of the Lord. We pass by them without acknowledging any fellowship or brotherhood with them, *neither do they which go by, say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you, we bless you in the Name of the Lord.* They are swine that must be kept from the food that God hath prepared and provided for his children. Who doth not account the state of *Nebuchadnezzar*, most wretched and lamentable, when for his pride and presumption against God, he was *driven from the company of men, and did eat grass as Oxen?* He that before was fed with the fattest and finest of the wheat, when *his heart was lifted up*, and his mind hardened, had his glory taken from him, and was deposed from his kingly throne. But the condition of these beasts is worse, they want the food of eternal life, and are fed with husks; they are not suffered to sit at the Lord's Table, nor to be in company with his people. They are as runnagates and fugitiues from the face of God, as *Cain*. They are possessed in a fearful manner with Satan, as *Judas*. The Spirit of God is departed from them, and an evil spirit is upon them, and vexeth them as *Saul*. Their hearts are hardened, and they are turned into stones, as *Pharaoh*. They are stinking channels and filthy sinks, and are swept away like dung, as the house of *Jeroboam*. They are most profane, and have sold their birthright, as *Esau*. They say in their hearts, there is no God, like the foolish atheists. They pray not unto God, and if they should, their prayers are not acceptable, but abominable. All that they do, is rejected and despised, so long as they continue in this estate. If these things were duly considered, as hitherto they have been opened unto us, and that they had eyes to see them, they might be all-sufficient to break their stony and steely hearts in pieces, and to enforce them not to remain one hour in this condition. But behold, yet greater things and more fearful then these.

Fourthly, our Savior teacheth, that they are to be called and accounted *as the heathens and Publican's*, Mat. 18, 17. We see then, what we must account of them, no otherwise then Christ hath taught us, though they were our wives, or our husbands, or our children, or our servants, or our kinsfolkes, or our friends, they have their names given unto them, they are no better then *the heathen and the Publican's*. He speaketh in these words according to those times, as if it were said to us for our better understanding: Let him be to thee no longer a Christian brother; let him be no part nor member of the Church; account him no faithful person, but as a Turk or Sarazin. We glory in the name of Christians, but such are not to be held in the number of them, but are as rotten members to be cut and pulled from the body. The heathen had no communion with the Jews, nor the Jews with them in matters of religion. The Publican's were men given over to covetousness, unrighteousness, extortion, oppression, and to all kind of iniquity. If a man should meet them, and tell they are as the

Pagans and Paynims, or call them Publican's & sinners, they would scarce endure it, they would be at defiance with him, they would think they had wrong offered unto them. Nevertheless, we hear and cannot be ignorant, what Christ hath pronounced with his own mouth; shall he say, that if these cannot be gained, neither by the private admonition of the brethren, nor by the public warning of the Church, *Let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a Publican:* and shall we be afraid to speak as he speaketh, to call them as he calleth, and to name them as he nameth them? These are as true & as fit names for thē, as that which they received at their baptism. If they be ashamed of the names, let them also be ashamed of their sins: and if they scorn to be branded and up braided with them, let them consider the cause which maketh them to deserve them. Wherefore, all excommunicate persons are infamous, and of evil note. Every man must think of them, and speak unto them, as they deserve, that they seeing how others are ashamed of them, may learn at last to be ashamed of themselves.

Fifthly, the Apostle teacheth, that such are to be delivered over to the power of the devil, that they may be known not to be the members of Christ, but limbs of Satan: neither to be heirs of heaven, but inheritors of hell: not under the protection of GOD, but in the power of the Prince of darkness: forasmuch as such as contemn the admonition and reprehension of the Church, have lost the communion of Saints, and are become the bondslaves of the devil. This we see very plainly, 1 Cor. 5, 3, 4, 5. *For I verily as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such a one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, &c.* So was Hymenaeus and Alexander delivered unto Satan, that is, cast out of the Church of Christ. The reason of this manner of speaking, is this, because Christ is the head of the Church, and promiseth that he will be our King, and maintain us by his power. Wherefore, whensoever we are cut from the Church, and have Christ no more to be our head, needs must we be laid open and naked as a prey, to the tyranny of Satan. For Christ reigneth among his own, he keepeth his sheep in his fold; such as wander from it, are left to be devoured of the wolves. He speaketh of two persons whom he singleth out for examples sake. We are not so moved with judgments as we ought to be, and therefore it is requisite, that we have some men set before our eyes, that we may consider better of our selves and learn to walk in fear before him, and carefully to take heed to our ways. And if by this separation from the Church, and deliverance to Satan, they be not reformed, yet it shall shut their mouths, and bridle their tongues from speaking evil against God and his truth, and preserve the Church in purity and verity. For to this end he setteth a note of infamy upon them, and brandeth them with a mark in the forehead, (as we see malefactors burned in the hand) that they might no longer be of any credite, either to hinder the salvation of the godly, or to draw the weak to destruction. If any man had the question asked of them, whether they would willingly be delivered over to Satan, to have him their Lord to rule them, their Prince to lead them, their God, to have the whole government of them, they would shake and tremble at the thought of it. For who would openly profess himself to be the servant of such a master? & the bondslave of such a tyrant? Notwithstanding, this refusal and denial in words, all excommunicate persons must know, that while they remain out of the Church as filth cleansed out of the street, or as dung swept

out of the house, they are committed to the custody of Satan, as prisoners to a Jailor, who will keep them safe and sure if possibly he can. For who reigneth out of the Church but the devil? The world is his kingdom, and their hearts are his throne, where he sitteth as in a principality. These men, so long as they continue thus separated, cannot be saved; forasmuch as out of the Church there is no salvation, but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.

Sixthly, this also serveth to note out the most fearful and dreadful condition of all excommunicate persons, because, being cast out of one Church, they are banished out of all churches. All are to take them as Gentiles and heathen men, wheresoever they live; all are to shun them, among whomsoever they come. This point also notably showeth the greatness of their punishment, and serveth to add somewhat to the heap of their judgments. When they are cast out of one Church, if they might be received into another, and by changing their dwelling, be admitted as members of y^t Church, it might much mitigate the sharpness of the censure; for that were but as it were to leave one house and betake them to another, as a stranger that is driven out of one chamber, and lodged in another. But it is not so with them. The Churches throughout the world, as loving sisters, do hold communion one with another, whom one receiveth, all do receive: whom one rejecteth, all do reject: and such as have dealt otherwise, have been sharply reprov'd, as were easy to be shown out of sundry Histories, Fathers, and Councils, if it were expedient or necessary. If a servant that belongeth to one certain family, did certainly know, that being cast out from thence, he could be received nowhere beside, it would make him careful to please his master, and fearful to offend him. If a man that hath his dwelling in a house where he is well entertained, did know that if he should be turned out of it, he could be suffered to dwell in no other place, but must wander up and down as a sheep from the sheepest, it would make him make much of that house, and to take heed he were not removed and displaced out of it. Thus should it be with everyone of us; the Church is God's house, and his children are of his family: if we be put out of it, as a servant turned out of service for his misbehavior and misdemeanor, whither shall we go? or who shall receive us? we must say as the disciples did to Christ, To whō shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life, John 6, 68.

The Churches of God have all cast him out, whom one hath cast out: and therefore he is become a member of Satan, and a limb of his Church. For as God hath his Church, so the devil hath his chapel. If we be not parts of the Church of God, we belong to the Synagogue of Satan. It were good therefore that all those that are Church-officers would look to this, and have a great care that no excommunicate persons, such as they hear or know to be excommunicated in other places (as well as those that dwell among themselves) do shroud in themselves as the guests *that had not on his wedding garment* came unto the feast, Mat. 22, 12. When they are cast out of the Church, and cannot resort to their own parish, they betake themselves to other, being ashamed to be of no Church: albeit so long as they stand in that estate, their hearing and praying are abominable. Let not us therefore harbor any such unruly and disordered persons, who shake off the cords of discipline from their shoulders, & suffer not themselves to be tied with any chains of order and obedience.

Lastly, to these things we might add sundry decrees and constitutions established by human laws and ordinances of Princes; the which albeit they be not instituted of God, and expressed in his word, yet they are not contrary to the word, but serve to add farther strength to these things, and to set forth the horrible and hideous condition of such persons as are put out of the Church: to the end that such as will not be won by a love of the word, may by increasing of the punishment, & as it were by doubling of the strokes, be made to stand in more fear. They are reputed as outcasts and outlaws: we heard before, that they were out of God's protection: now we must understand, that they are out of the Princes protection, and have no benefit by the law. Others shall have actions against thē, but they against none: others may sue them, and recover their right from them, but they can wage law against none. They are not allowed to dispose of their goods, and to make their last will and testament to set their house in order. They are not thought worthy to be witnesses to testify any truth: for whatsoever cometh out of their mouth, is holden either false or suspected. They are not to be buried in Christian burial, but as they are out of the Church in their life, so they should not come near it after their death; and as they would not live among the faithful, so their bodies should not lie among the faithful, nor come into the sepulchers of their fathers, that they might not be honored either dead or alive. Thus standeth the case with these wicked mē, this is the fearful condition of such as are justly excommunicated: they are shut out of y^e Church (where only salvation is to be sought and can be found) as heathens and Turks; they are accounted as dogs and swine, to whō holy and heavenly things do not belong: they have no title or interest to the kingdom of God: they are excluded from Christ, & remain under the subjection of Satan: they have no right in the privileges of the Church: they have not God for their Father: they have not Christ for their Redeemer and Savior: they have not the holy Ghost for their Comforter and Sanctifier: they have not the Church for their mother: they have not the faithful for their brethren: they have not the Angels for their guard: they have not the use of the word and prayer with the Saints: they have no remission of sins, and therefore can look for no resurrection to life and immortal glory: for that they are in worse case then dogs, then swine, then toads, then serpents, while they stand in that heavy state. They are bound on earth, and therefore do remain fast bound in heaven. We have profited well, if we have learned to fear the bloody stroke of this censure, which woundeth deeper then a two edged sword. If any say, how can the Church of God deal thus toward any, [Objection.] which is a loving and tender mother, not an unjust stepmother? I answer, the Church of Christ is not only a tender mother to the obedient, [Answer.] but a sharp executioner against the disobedient, having vengeance committed unto her of God, to correct and punish, nay, without repentance utterly to destroy. Hence it is, that *Solomon* in his most excellent song, describeth it to be *comely as Jerusalem, and terrible as an army*: and *Psal.* 149, 6, 7. *Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance upon the heathen, & punishments upon the people.* Hence also it is, that *Jude* exhorteth the church, in taking pity of some, to save others by fear, *pulling them as it were out of the fire.* But the Church in those days had no other means to strike any fear into the hearts of stubborn persons, & obstinate offenders, that were as it were firebrands half burnt and consumed, but by this Ecclesiastical punishment. Such are to be cured with mercy & compassion, as sin of ignorance and infirmity: but such as otherwise are incurable, must be

terrified & affrighted as it were with the stroke of a thunderbolt, and the flash of a lightening, and the force of a sword, that if it be possible, they may be saved with fear and terror. True it is, the means of fear are two, the one civil, by the power & authority of the Magistrate, who beareth not the sword in vain against offenders, as the Apostle teacheth, *If thou do evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the Minister of God, a revenger, to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.* This means, which is in it self an wholesome preservative, the Church wanted at that time, and therefore it cannot be understood in this place. The other means is spiritual which indeed is y^t which the Apostle: meaneth, respecting the soul, not the body. This is of three sorts, and all of them have their proper time, and place, and use, and object, according to the nature of the offense, and party offending, to wit, admonition, suspension, and excommunication. The first is admonition or exhortation to amendment, which also is joined with reprehension and denuntiation of God's judgments against the party not repenting. This is done with words alone. The practice hereof we see in God toward *Adam*, Gen. 3, 11, and toward *Cain*, Gen. 4, 6, 7. The abuse of it we see in the high Priests & Scribes Acts 4, 18. who threatened the Apostles streitly, and commanded them not to speak henceforth, nor teach anymore in the Name of Jesus. This is the beginning and first degree of the Church-censures. The second proceedeth farther, and that is suspension, which taketh place when the former taketh no place. Suspension is a punishment inflicted, whereby the offenders are for a time barred from the Lord's Supper. This is not a separation from all the holy things, but from some only: which howsoever those of the separation that are fled from us, scoff at and deride, yet it hath good warrant and sure foundation out of the word. And as it is an higher censure then admonition, so it is lower then excommunication. Of this the Apostle seemeth to speak, 2 Thess. 3, 14. *If any man obey not our word, by this Epistle note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed, yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.* The person excommunicated, must be counted as an heathen and a Publican, the party suspended as a brother: these two, to be accounted as an heathen, yet respected as a brother, cannot well agree together. This was shaddowed out in the book of Leviticus, by the ceremonial law, chap. 13. where the Priest is commanded to judge of the plague of leprosy, if at the first the leprosy did not appear manifestly, by such signs as are there described, he should *shut him up seven days*: and at the seventh day, he should look upon him again: and if as yet it did not appear plainly and evidently what it was, he was to shut him up seven days more, and afterward should pronounce him clean or unclean, according as he should find by the tokens and arguments prescribed in the word of GOD: even so in judging of the spiritual leprosy, the like wisdom or rather greater is to be used by the Governors of the Church under the Gospel. If a brother should be vehemently and publicly suspected to have committed some notorious crime, to the dishonor of God, to the wounding of his own conscience, and to the scandal of the Church, and thereupon the Church-Governors after citation of him, should enter into the examining of the matter, and at the first, find only great presumption, or some cause of suspicion or probable conjecture, but no plain or manifest proof against him; it is meet they take farther time for more certain trial of the matter, and in the mean season suspend him from the use of the Sacrament, but not frō hearing the word, until it may farther appear and better be gathered (if it be possible)

whether he be guilty or not guilty: and charge the faithful to have no fellowship with him, that he may be ashamed. The third censure is excommunication, which is a separation from all holy things and the privileges of the Church, casting out of their public communion and private fellowship, such members as openly offend by some grievous crime, because to their sin they add the obstinate contempt of the admonitions given unto them: to the end themselves may be ashamed, and others warned & feared by their example, and kept from the like infection. We are forbidden to eat and drink with such, if they be known to be so: and to keep company with them familiarly, as their friends, fellows, and companions: for this were to be one with him that is as an heathen and Publican, and delivered up to Satan. Seeing then, this censure is so full of horror and terror being used according to the word of God, it followeth, that they which do not reverence and regard it, are desperate sinners, of whom we can have little or no hope so long as they continue without the public means of salvation. They are as it were the forlorn hope, and near unto destruction, while they lightly esteem this sword drawn out against them, or do make a sport at it, or are not humbled by it, or seek not to be absolved from it. They that are thus minded, stand not in fear of God or the devil: they regard neither heaven nor hell, neither salvation nor damnation. They are under God's wrath, and yet feel it not: they dwell in the suburbs of hell, and yet know it not: Satan hath set up his throne in their hearts, and yet they see it not: they are shut out of heaven, and yet they mourn not for it: they are captives and bondslaves under sin, and yet they have no desire to be restored into the liberties of the sons of God, nor any care to have their lives reformed. They cast up a savor in the nostrils of God & men, which annoyeth the house with the loathsome and filthy stench of it. Such as are hotly pursued by enemies, and fly to some City for succor or sanctuary, if the gates be shut against them, they are left as a prey to the mercy of others that are merciless. God hideth those that be his, in his Tabernacle, and keepeth them safe as it were under his wings: but these are delivered up to the devil, who governeth them and worketh in them, yet (alas) they are not afraid to serve such a master. God hath left them and forsaken them, who have left and forsaken him, and even shut up heaven gates against thē, as it were with strong bars, which were enough to astonish them, if they had any life of God's Spirit in them: notwithstanding, all this cannot enter into their dead hearts.

God give them grace (if they do belong unto him) to think upon these things, and seriously to consider of them in their hearts, while the acceptable time is: if not, he will *glorify his great Name* in their confusion, as he did in the destruction of *Pharaoh*, Exod. 9.16. And we that hear these things this day, must perform these four things. First, we must mourn for them as for the loss of a member, though themselves do not: and pray for them earnestly, to him that hath the hearts of all men in his own hands, that he would open their blind eyes, albeit they cannot pray for themselves. Secondly, we must beware and look to our selves that we come not into that estate. Happy is he, whom other men's harms can make watchful. Thirdly, we must take heed we be not a means to harden them in their sins, but seek to reclaim and recover them. While they stand in this desperate estate, we must have no delight in them, but shun them and avoid them. What greater means can there be, to move such to repentance, then for them to mark how everyone shunneth them, and separateth himself

from them, and accounteth them as Turks and Pagans, and no better? The incestuous person that was at Corinth, being thus censured, and delivered for a time unto the power of the devil, (then which what could be more fearful?) being, I say, thus thrust out of the Church and banished from the liberties of it, and abandoned of all good men, and seeing himself in a manner forsaken, that none would keep him company, or vouchsafe once to drink with him, began to bethink with himself what he had done for which he was shunned, and shamed, and abhorred.

Then he was thoroughly touched with sorrow for his offense, then he asked forgiveness of the Church, then he desired to be restored, and the Apostle writeth to the Church in his behalf, *sufficient to such a man is this punishment which was inflicted of many*: so that contrariwise they ought to comfort him and forgive him. Lastly, we must be careful over our ways, that we do not commit close and secret sins, which we may keep from the sight and knowledge of the world. For albeit the Church judgeth them that are within, yet it cannot judge such sins as are hidden in darkness, for that were to judge before the time. Nevertheless, we must know, that albeit we be not bound on earth, yet we may be bound in heaven; as on the other side it may fall out, that we may be bound on earth, and yet not be bound in heaven. For such as are appointed to handle the keys, may take a wrong key, which will neither open, nor shut. But albeit all men should acquit us, and discharge us, yet if sin remain upon us unrepented of, God will not remit us, or loose us, we stand bound in heaven. God cannot err or be deceived, man may: for he often bindeth those that should be loosed, and looseth them that should be bound; as the Pharisees *cast him that was borne blind, out of the Synagogue*, who deserved better to be in the Church, then themselves.

Thus they are stricken with the edge of the sword, that have done nothing worthy to be touched with the back of it. Notwithstanding, whatsoever befalleth us among men, we must remember that so often as we harbor any notorious sin or sins in our hearts, and can carry them away cunningly, that none can condemn us or accuse us, yet as they are registered in the book of our conscience, so they are sealed up in heaven, and bind us to undergo everlasting punishment, except we repent. Many escape in this world, but none shall escape in the world to come: many sinners are not known of men, but none can be unknown to God, before whom all things are naked and open: here they may walk and iet up and down as free men, but when the Lord shall come to judgment, *and make the counsels of the heart manifest*, he will bind them hand and foot as poor prisoners, and cast them into destruction, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Thirdly, this serveth to reprove sundry abuses [Use 3] that are crept into this holy and wholesome ordinance of God. There is no ordinance so just, but it may be abused, as we see in the word and Sacraments. First, it reproveth the Church of Rome, and all other Churches that doth draw out this sword of God upon every light and slight occasion. He were not worthy to have a sword committed unto him, that would always have his hand upon it, ready to pull it out. For as Christ our Savior speaketh concerning diuorse between man and his wife, It is not lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause; so may it be said touching excommunication which is a diuorse between a Christian and the Church, that it is

not lawful to cast out a member of it for every cause. It is a spiritual banishment from the city of God, and the privileges thereof. No incorporation taketh away the freedom of the city and the liberties of it for small matters, it is for some heinous crime: so should it be in the Church of God, none should be denied the benefit, and as it were the enfranchisement of the Church, except by his offense and obstinacy therein, he have made himself unworthy and incapable thereof: All laws should not be written with blood: nor all offenses take away the liberties of the Church. No Judge will draw blood, and take away life for every cause. It is the next way to bring this high ordinance of God into contempt, where this divine justice is executed for toies, and becometh as the fools dagger, that is always ready to be pulled out, to strike the standers by for trifles. Matters of smaller weight and importance, are to be censured by admonition, and reprehension, and are not to be punished with this fearful sentence, then which there cannot be a more fearful. All the abuses of this ordinance proceed from the Church of Rome, and are as it were the tail of that beast. A Surgeon that for every swelling, & all superfluous proud flesh, would cut off a member, were not worthy nor fit to be so much as an horseleech, nor to have our swine committed to him. The abuse of this that now we deal withal, was practiced in the Jewish Church, John. 9.22.23. and 12.42. and 16.2. and it creepeth also into other Churches, among whom many times not only the good are punished, but also the bad are tolerated. When this is used against any without just cause and good advise, as for default of appearance or want of payment, it is no longer a sharp two edged sword, but as a leaden dagger, or paper shot, or painted fire, if it be so good. It is but a show or shadow of excommunication, which maketh it indeed ridiculous and contemptible, and not feared of any as it ought to be, if it were rightly administered and executed. Many times also it falleth out, that such are not able to pay the fees and demands that are required of them, who deserve rather to be pitied, then to be punished so deeply.

Hence it is, that in the Church and courts of Rome they censure those that make default in appearing or in paying, when as in y^e mean season they leave adulterers, drunkards, railers, oppressors, incestuous persons, and such like altogether vnpunisht. Again, as all things are set to sale among them, and bought, and sold for money, so these covetous merchants, these spiritual, or rather carnal judges, bind for money, and loose for money, playing indeed fast and loose with the souls of men. They excommunicate out of the Church for money, and they receive into the Church again for money. They keep a market or rather a solemn Faire to set forth and sell, and send abroad their pardons and indulgences, absolving men from their sins at their own pleasure. They never regard whether they repent or not, but whether they have money, or not: they say not unto offenders, Repent of your offenses, but, Pay your fees and be gone, discharge the court and get you hence. It is noted touching *Irenaeus*, that he earnestly reproved *Victor* Bishop of Rome, because he went about to excommunicate many Churches in Asia, not for matter of heresy or apostasy, neither for any other cause then this, that they would not agree and consent with the Church of Rome, in the celebration of Easter.

Thus we see how that Church was always prone to draw out this censure for things indifferent and matters of a mean nature, like quarrellers that have their hand upon their dagger for every word speaking. Again, as it is an abuse through lightness and rashness to

pronounce and denounce so sharp a judgment, to cut off offenders as a razor from the body of Christ, without just & weighty cause: so it is a great fault, when through remissnesse and negligence, this wholesome severity is not executed. Thus partly through levity, and partly through lenity due discipline is omitted, when just occasion requireth it should be practiced. For as letting of blood is not to be used for every cause, so to preserve life it is to be used. Great is the reverence that is to be used when we come to any of the exercises of our faith and religion, and therefore the mysteries of God and godliness are not through great licentiousness, and without any punishment to be profaned, and so holy things to be prostituted and set open to adulterers, fornicators, drunkards, blasphemers; contentious persons, and to all kind of vicious and sinful livers. This were as Christ our Savior teacheth, Matth. 7.6, *To cast precious things before dogs and swine.* For as it is an offense to denounce the sentence of excommunication when it ought not, and where it ought not: so is it also, not to denounce it both when and where it ought. As justice is one of the sinews of the Commonwealth, so is it of the Church.

Beside this, there is also another danger to the Church it self. For it is to be feared, lest the rest of the body be infected with the same contagion, forasmuch as one scabbed sheep infecteth the whole flock: yea, themselves that be such, do heap up and double their condemnation, when they presume to come without repentance to the Lord's Table. This fault was found by Christ with the Church of Pergamos and Thyatira, Revel. 2.14, 15, 20. *It had those among them that maintained the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing Christ hated: and suffered the woman Jezebel to teach and to deceive his servants, to make thē commit fornication, & to eat meats sacrificed to idols: w^c things ought not to have been winked at.* It is the duty of the Church to purge the body from such, and to ease it self of them. It is worthy counsel given by the Apostle, Hebr. 12.15. *Look diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness, springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.* Where he chargeth the Church not to suffer profane persons to remain among thē, to the infectiō of others, & that they should provide that no poisoned root continued with them.

This is to be understood rather of the persons, then of the crimes committed by the persons, as is that place also, Deut. 29.18. from whence it is taken, and to which he alludeth. This is a fault in many good and flourishing Churches, as it were a blemish in a fair face, or a spot in a comely garment: and this is a great occasiō of stumbling, to those that have separated themselves from us. They think us to be no better then a crew of conspirators against God, and as a rout of rebels, and a confused multitude of disordered persons. Wherein albeit they are deceived, yet that is not enough to clear our selves, forasmuch as we ought to consider, whether we do not lay a stumbling block before them to make them fall. True it is, it may be a Church where this key is not rightly handled, and where excommunication is not, as life in that body that is full of evil humors which are not purged out. So may it be where the Sacraments are disorderly administered and received, and where they are not. For excommunication is not of the essence of the Church, no more then the wall of a city is essential to the city, or the hedge essential to the vineyard.

The wall may be cast down, and yet the City stand: the hedge may be pulled up, and yet the vine remain. The Church of the Corinthians was touched and blamed sharply for this default, in that they retained the incestuous person among them: yet he writeth to them as to the true Church of God, sanctified by Christ, and Saints by calling. The discipline is not the heart or life of the Church: it is only as the pulses, and serveth as it were to feel the strength of it: or it is as a purgation that serveth to procure the health of the body: so the want thereof is the sickness and disease of the Church, and maketh it not so fair, so glorious, and so beautiful as it would be, neither so strong and mighty to keep out wolves and other noisome & ravenous beasts that would root up the vineyard, or at least deface it and disgrace it: because, where it is practiced & duly executed, it as a wall of brass, that the enemies cannot break into the field of God. We confess therefore, that albeit we have the Church of God among us, which is the body of Christ, yet is it not without some imperfection. We have very many trees of righteousness growing in this Orchard of God, planted by the rivers of water, & bringing forth fruit in due season; yet bushes and briars that are fit to be burned, are not cut down by this axe of God, that ought to have been laid to the roots of them long ago. It is a foul fault to the garden, to permit such bitter roots to spring up in it, and not to hook them and root them out by fit tools provided for that purpose.

These noisome plants are to be displaced and displanted, being more bitter then gall and wormwood: and they ought to be so far from remaining in the Church it self, that they should not be suffered to sit in the Church porch. They ought to be so far from coming to the Lord's Table, that we should not permit them to sit at our own table. We ought to be so far from keeping them company, that we should not bid them GOD speed. We ought to be so far from delighting in them and resorting to them, that we should not eat and drink with them. We ought to be so far from suffering of them in the house of God, that we ought not to come to their houses. For so often as the word cannot prevail with such, the sword of God must be taken in hand against them. Lastly, it reproveth the proud Bishop of Rome, that taketh upon him to excommunicate Kings and Princes to depose them from their crowns, to deprive them of their kingdoms, to free their subjects from their allegiance, and to bestow their dignities & dominions to whom he pleaseth. This is highly to abuse this high censure, as they do also other ordinances of God. What is more comfortable then the Supper of the Lord? yet they have horribly and shamefully profaned it, nay, they have altogether abolished it and brought it to nothing, by the abominable idol of the Mass, which they have set up instead thereof. Suppose this man of sin had jurisdiction and authority to excommunicate for sin, yet from whence had he right to apply it to the deposition of kings and alienation of subjects, and other temporal matters, but from him that is the author of sin, to wit, the devil? It was well said of *Bernard*, to the Bishop of Rome, *Your power standeth in censuring crimes, not in taking away possessions*: but a kingdom is a possession: and therefore his power extendeth not unto it.

Besides, the committing of any heinous crime is not a sufficient cause to deprive them of their Crowns and Scepters. When a private person is censured with excommunication according to the merit of his offense, he loseth not his substance, he forfeiteth not either house or land, he loseth no part or parcel of his possessions, neither is there any cause why

he should, neither was there ever any such claimed, or challenged, or practiced, or assayed. What then? is the nature of this censure changed when the Bull roareth against Princes? & shall it take frō him his possession, w^c it doth not from any other? The law of God saith, *Thou shalt judge the small as well as the great, and not respect persons in judgment*, Deut. 1.17, But according to the corrupt proceedings in their courts, it were better to be a private man then a Prince. To ascend a step higher, that we may pull down the pride of Rome a step lower; is it otherwise in the degrees of honor and dignity, whereunto men are advanced, then with private persons? when a Knight is excommunicated, is he disgraded of his knight-hood? hath he his spurs smitten off with a knife hard by the heels? hath he his coat of arms torn from his body, and other ornaments and ensigns of renown and worship taken from him? •r doth the noble man forfeit his nobility, & lose his Barony: or of a Baron is he made no Baron? This was never attempted or heard off: The lightning that descended from the Vatican never touched either the private man's possession, or the noble man's honor: how then should it go worse with the king himself, then with all his subjects, that he should lose his royalty, and not the Baron his Barony? Moreover, it is the Apostles rule, That *God judgeth those that are without*: the Church cannot give sentence against such as are not of the Church, 1 Cor. 5.12, 13. as we noted before. Some are in the Church, and some are out of the Church.

The Church is the house and City of God, the faithful are his household servants, they live and abide under his roof, they eat of his meat, and therefore happy is their condition. Such as are not of the Church, are not of his house, and therefore must perish, as all they were drowned that entered not into the Ark, and as all perished in the sacking of Jericho, that were not in *Rahabs* house, and therefore their condition is woeful and miserable, as Revel. 22.15. These shall not go unpunished, God shall enter into judgment with them, the Church hath nothing to do with them: God will proceed against them, so that they shall not escape, let us therefore remit them to his seat of justice. But the Church of Rome holdeth that we are heretics, & schismatics, and I wot not what else, and so out of y^e bosom of the Church. For so many as do not submit themselves to the Popes supremacy, him they adjudge and condeme of heresy. If then we be none of the Church, they cannot smite us with their censures, nor thunder against us with their excommunications, whereby notwithstanding they have especially raised up their state to the top of greatness, and have laid such a burden upon their heads, that in time is likely to break their necks. Excommunication then, being a cutting off from the Church of such as are of the Church, it cannot touch us even in their own judgment, whom they teach in all their books of Controuersies to be out of the Church. Furthermore, this is such a censure, as never any of the Apostles, nor their successors practiced, to meddle with such as were heathen & Pagans, or to touch their persons, or to take away their possessions.

This is a bar or block that lieth in the way to hinder the conversion of kings that are Gentiles. For who among them would willingly embrace the Christian religion, who being before an absolute Prince, should by his embracing the faith, and receiving the Gospel, put his head under the Popes girdle, and offer his neck to be led up and down in a string, at the discretion of his good lord and master, and be a king no long then it pleased him? He shall make his estate much worse, then 〈◊〉 his people, as if the Church were a tender mother to

private men, but a step mother unto Princes. Again, God hath provided by this ordinance, that none should be censured but he only that hath committed the fault: and that such as have not offended, should not be punished and chastened. The kingdom is an inheritance, and admitteth a successor of the same line. If the father be dethroned and deprived of his kingdom, and it be given away to another, or left to him that can seize upon it, the son cannot reign by succession from his father, albeit he be innocent; he shall not inherit the kingdom, albeit he be in no fault at all: so that the son must bear the iniquity of the father, contrary to the Law of God, Deut. 24.16. and the practice of the godly, 2 Kings 14.6. The Prophet *Ezekiel* handleth this at large, chap. 18. ver. 20. *The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.* What justice then is this, to strike the innocent with the guilty, and to bind them together as it were into one bundle? It was well said of *Abraham* in his prayer to God, Gen. 18.24, 25. *Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city, wilt thou also destroy, and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee, to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked, and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: shall not the Judge of all the world do right?* If this be far from God, it ought also to be far from the Church of God. If the judge of all the world will do right, shall he that holdeth himself to be the head of all the Church, delight to do open wrong? But these men regard not to pluck up the wheat with the tares, which a good husbandman will not: and to pull by up the roots wholesome herbs with unwholesome weeds, which a good gardiner will not: and to cut off good citizens together with the bad, which a good Magistrate will not.

Lastly, in the censure of excommunication there is place left for repentance, nay, this is the end of every censure of the Church, not to destroy, but to amend and reform: so that when the offender returneth again into the way, he holdeth his place that he did before in the Church, neither receiveth any hurt, or loss, or reproach, by the fault which he hath confessed and forsaken. This is the institution and ordinance of God, this he hath appointed; of this had *Peter* experience after his threefold confession that followed his threefold denial. Of this also had the incestuous person experience, when he sorrowed for his fornication; for then he was joyfully received again, forasmuch as *even the Angels in heaven rejoice at the conversion of a sinner.* But he that being excommunicated is driven out of his kingdom, and seeth it translated to another, hath no place left him to recover his kingdom, his repentance cometh too late to do any good to himself. The usurper that hath once invaded his seat, and set himself down in his throne, will not easily depart from it and let it go again, until a stronger then he cometh, and overcometh him: he shall never attain to his right again, neither shall find place for repentance, though he seek it carefully with tears.

This is to arm Prince against Prince, and to set kingdom against kingdom: forasmuch as the right owner will never give over his right, so long as he is able to right his own cause. Thus we have seen, how excommunication is abused in the Church of Rome, and that which was by institution from God an wholesome medicine, to save, not to condemn; to help, not to hinder: to edification, not to destruction; is now by corruption of man turned upside down, and the nature of it quite overturned.

The injury that is offered to none of the lowest rank is offered unto Princes, who are thereby in worse condition then any of their people. A Christian Prince is made in worse condition then an heathen. The heir is punished for his fault, to whom he is heir: the son, for the father: the successor for the predecessor: the innocent, for the nocent: the infant, for the aged: the child unborn, for him that is borne: and lastly, he that repenteth, cannot be restored into his place again, so that it is all one to be penitent or impenitent. All these injuries, indignities, and miseries, to which we might add the shameful arraignment, endighting, condemning, and burning men for heretics after their death; all these exorbitant courses proceed from the abuse of this censure: and of all who is author, but the Pope of Rome, who advanceth himself above all that is called God, and is an utter enemy to Princes?

[Use 4] Fourthly, seeing such as are incorrigible, are to be thrown out of the Church, it followeth that all such are to be shunned, and their company to be avoided. We must have no fellowship with them, lest we be defiled by them. If there were that sense of sin in them that ought to be, they should not need to be separated and sequestered from the company of others, forasmuch as themselves would be as open Heralds & public cryers against themselves, saying with the lepers in the Law, *I am unclean, I am unclean*, Levite. 13.45, 46. But because they have no feeling of their spiritual leprosy, but thrust themselves among the faithful, like to the generation that are pure in their own eyes, although they be not washed from their sins, it is the duty of all the faithful to avoid them. If any ask the question, from what things the excommunicate persons are to be excluded; I answer, not only from the use of the Sacraments, but from the privileges of the Church: they must be strange unto us, and we strange unto them, so that we must not live and converse with them, we must have no society, conference, and communion with them, otherwise then for necessity, and rather then haunt their company, if we see them come at one side of the street, we should go to the other. The Apostle speaking of suspension, a lower and lesser degree then excommunication, maketh two parts of it: first, *he must be noted*, as *Cain* was, Gen. 4. God *set a mark upon him*. He meaneth, he must be branded as with a mark of shame and ignominy, we must not spare his name, but put him to all the reproach we can, we must set him out in his colors, and make it known what he is. True it is, before the sentence published, while they continue in the Church, we must as with a cloke cover the multitude of sins through love, as *Shem* and *Japheth* did the nakedness of their father, while by private admonition they may be won: but when once they be cast out of the Church, we must forbear them no longer, that others may beware and be warned of them. For there is no better means to do them good, but this: and if this way they will not be reclaimed, they can no way be brought into the way. It is better in this world to suffer a short reproach for our good, then endure everlasting *contempt* in the world to come, Dan. 12.2. This is one point to be observed and practiced: another point is seen in refraining his company that is so made infamous, as 1 Cor. 5.9. *I wrote unto you in an Epistle, not to keep company with such fornicators*. This is fitly and not without cause added to the former. For if we be familiar with such a man as with a friend, we harden him in his sin, and as much as lieth in us, we keep him from repentance, and so from salvation.

The use of shunning and eschewing of him is, that he may be ashamed: and the end of shaming of him is, that he may come to amendment of life, and consequently to be saved.

But when no man avoideth him, and abhorreth from his company, it is so far from working shame in him, that it maketh him think well of himself. Such as delight to be evermore with them, are partakers of their sins, and become as loathsome and shameful as they. Moreover, the Apostle saith, 1. Cor. 5.11. *Now I have written unto you, not to keep company: if any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one eat not.* We ought not to receive him into our houses, nor bid him God speed, 2 John. 10. but wholly decline from him, and shun him, as we would him that hath a plague soar. To sit at the Table is a sign of friendship and familiarity, as with a brother or neighbor: but we must hold no friendship with such as are enemies to God, and are at war and defiance with him. *Jehoshaphat* is reprov'd for a less matter, 2 Chro. 19.2. If any man ask, [Object.] whether the children must shun their father, the servants their master, the wife her husband, &c. I answer, [Answer.] we must have no such familiarity, as is free for us to refuse and deny, neither voluntary society which we may avoid. Unnecessary fellowship is forbidden and is offensive, such as is for pleasure and delight. As for children, servants, subjects, wives, and such as are bound by band of duty, and obliged in the family or common-wealth, they are not by this doctrine discharged from their duties, but must be subject even to such as are excommunicated, provided that they take heed so far as lieth in them, that by their conversation with them they do not consent to their sin, like of it, delight in it, defend it, commend it, but rather according to their place and calling, mourn that they are compelled to be with such, and therefore must exhort and admonish them to return to the Church, as it were to the fold of Christ. This then serveth to reprove all such as delight & make choice to be in company with excommunicate persons, such as receive them to their houses, such as ordinarily eat and drink with them, knowing them to stand in that fearful case. These partake with them in their sins, and keep them from repentance, as much as in them lieth. While we are familiarly conversant with the wicked, it will be hard not to be stained with their sins. For how can a man walk among thorns, and not wound himself?

[Use 5] Lastly, we are warned hereby, to lead our lives circumspectly and soberly, that we be not cast out. Let us hold faith and a good conscience, as the Apostle saith, 1 Tim. 1.19, 20. *Which while some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck, of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.* This use hath diverse particular branches.

First, we should desire evermore to live in the Church. It was the prayer of *David*, Psal. 27.4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple.* It is recorded to the great commendation of *Anna*, that *she departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayer night and day.* We must therefore live orderly, not as fools, but as wise: redeeming the time, because the days are evil, that we may continue as children of the light, and members of the Church. If once we become profane, and as dogs and swine, we must be kept from holy things, and barred from the word and Sacraments. It is the duty of the Church to keep the holy ordinances of God from all contempt. Some that live in the Church, are open blasphemers of the name of Christ: others are heretics and corrupt the faith: many give scandal and offense to others by their looseness of life; all these are to be barred and

excluded from the word & Sacraments. For a man living in the middes of the Church, may be worse in the practices of his life, then an open enemy, of which the Apostle *Paul* speaketh, Tit. 1.16. *They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.* This care of keeping his ordinances from open profanation, Christ himself shown in reforming the abuses of the Temple, when in great zeal of spirit that had eaten him up *he whipped the buyers and sellers out of the temple*, because they had made his Fathers house (which was the house of prayer) an house of merchandise, and a den of thieves.

Secondly, we must do nothing, and speak nothing, that may give occasion to the world, to revile the religion of God, or slander our holy profession. This is *Paul's* charge to servants, that they so carry themselves toward their masters, *that the Name of God and his doctrine be not evil spoken off*, 1 Tim. 6.1. The faults of men are wont to be cast upon the doctrine which they profess, and to be whipped upon the back of the author from whence it came. Such as men's life is that they lead, such is the doctrine and religion judged to be which they believe. Wherefore we must take heed, lest the Name of God be blasphemed through us, Isaiah 52. *David* is said by his sins to cause the enemies to blaspheme, 2 Samu. 12.14.

Thirdly it is our duty, to pray that the word of God may be glorified, 2 Thes. 3.1. It is that which we are taught to ask in y^e Lord's prayer, Matth. 6.9. that *his Name may be hallowed*. Now, God's word is his Name, forasmuch as thereby he is known unto us, Psal. 138.2. It was *David's* prayer, Psal. 119.39. *Turn away my reproach which I fear, for thy judgments are good.* As if he should say, keep me from doing that which may bring rebuke or reproach to thy word.

Fourthly, it is the duty of all faithful Pastors and Ministers, to keep the people from profaning the holy thing, Ier. 15 19. they are as the Angels of God set with a glistening sword, to keep the way to the tree of life. It is the duty of the shepherd to sever the infected sheep from the sound. The dispensation of the Sacraments is committed to the Ministers, to deliver them to such as are worthy, & to withhold them from such as are unworthy, lest we give them a sword into their hand to kill themselves: because obstinate sinners that come unworthily & impenitently to the Supper of the Lord, do eat and drink their own damnation. *John* the Baptist would not admit unto his baptism any, but such as confessed their sins, and was persuaded they had truly repēted, Mat. 3. But is it not enough for them, to say they repent? No: for every hypocrite may thus repent. A man may confess in words, that which he denieth in his deeds: and therefore he must have the undoubted testimonies of true repentance, weeping, humiliation, prayer, amendment of life, & such like. Besides, by this account, everyone that cometh to the Lord's Table, repenteth, and no man cometh unworthily, or without repentance, forasmuch as everyone will say he repenteth, no man will confess he is impenitent. Nevertheless, we cannot account him to be a true penitent, that hath given no sign of repentance.

Fifthly, this sentence is to be denounced with meekness and moderation, with all patience and long suffering, yea with much grief and sorrow. It must not be done ordinarily and commonly, The cutting off of a member is no usual thing: the Pysician trieth all ways and means before he attempt that desperate cure: and oftentimes he findeth it fitter not to cut

off a part, then to bring the life of his patient into danger. So should it be in the Church: it may be willing and desirous to keep it self within the degrees of admonition, exhortation, & reprehension, rather then to proceed to the utmost, to wit, to excommunication. We must remember to take heed of extremity, and be sure always to temper severity with compassion, setting the example of God, evermore before our eyes, who *in judgment remembereth mercy*, Haba. 3.2. The Church hath the help of the Christian Magistrate, he will take order and make laws, that the obstinate shall be chastened, if any presume to contemn the first, second, and third admonition; so that the sword of excommunication shall seldom and sparingly be drawn out, as it hath fallen out in many Churches. But when these will not serve and suffice, the Church ought to proceed further, lest contagion as an infectious disease, enter in among the sheep of Christ, to the destruction of many souls.

Lastly, it is evident that this discipline, prescribed by Christ, delivered by the Apostles, and practiced by the Churches, ought to have place in every congregation: and where it is not, let the Pastor supply that want by his duty and diligence, in teaching and preaching of the Gospel: which is as his fan to blow the chaff away, and as the shrill trumpet waxing louder and louder to make them afraid. Especially we must beware, lest we should condemn that to be no Church, where there is want of this censure, or where it is not duly executed, as if there could be no school without a rod. This was the opinion of the Donatists in former times, and this the sect of the Anabaptists holdeth at this day: which is as absurd, as if one should say, that it could not be a sound body that never had member cut off, nor that be a good Physician, that never came to cutting and caulterizing; neither that an expert Surgeon, that useth not a saw, and other tools to pare away, and to open. If we have the right use of the word, let us submit our selves unto it, which is able to cut off the head of sin, as with a sword, and to burn up our corruptions, as with violent and devouring fire, and to break in pieces the stony hearts of such as go forward in their iniquities, as with an hammer.

[Verse 3. *Both male and female shall ye put out,*] After that we have set down the particular parts of God's commandment, touching putting out of the campe the lepers, and such as had issues, and them that were defiled by touching of the dead: we are now come next in order to the manner of the commandment, showing how far it is extended; it layeth hold on all sorts and degrees, *both male and female*.

And we shown before, diverse examples of the truth hereof, in the beginning of this Chapter: from whence we might observe, that the ordinances of God must be handled without partiality and respect of persons. The word of God serveth, not only to reprove the lowest and poorest, but as well the highest and chiefest. And the Ministers of God have their office committed unto them to reprove sin for all, and not sow pillows under the elbows. So ought it to be in the censures of the Church. But to pass over this point, let us come to the reasons serving to confirm the former doctrine, whereof the first is, that because sin defileth, therefore the obstinate sinner is not to be suffered.

The strength of this reason enforceth the putting out of the Church the leprous, that is, sinful persons, in consideration of the nature of sin, that it is filthy and infectious. So that the consideration of the contagion of sin ought to move the governors of the Church, to

remove such out of it, as are of a corrupt and wicked life. But to omit this also, we see how he expresseth the nature of sin, *it defileth their camps*: and it defileth three ways, persons, actions, and places. From hence we are to learn, that all sin is foul and filthy, unclean and loathsome, infectious and contagious in the sight of God. Hereunto cometh that which Moses saith, Levite. 18.24. *Defile not yourselves with any of these things: for in all these, the nations are defiled, which I cast out before you.* The Prophet Ezekiel warneth the people of Israel to take heed, *they did not defile themselves with idoles*, Ezekiel, 20.18. Our Savior reproveth the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees, maketh the point plain with which we deal, Matth. 15.19, 20. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, These are the things that defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands, defileth not a man.*

Hereunto we may add directly to the purpose, the exhortation of the Apostle Paul 2 Corinth. 7.1. *Having these promises, dearly beloved let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* And in the Epistle to Titus, chap. 1. ver. 15. he saith, *Unto the pure, all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving, is nothing pure: but even their mind and conscience is defiled.* The Apostle James calleth sin *filthiness and superfluity*, chap. 1. verse 21. whereunto we might add sundry other places, Zeph. 3.1. Revel. 21.27. and all of them aiming at this, that as all sin is contagious unto men, so it is also foul and filthy in the sight of God.

Let us see this yet farther assured and confirmed [Reason 1] unto us by the word of GOD, first; by such comparisons as the Scriptures use, to express the nature of it. It is as an unclean clothe, Isaiah, chapter 64. verse 6. *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away.* It is compared to *the blood of pollution*, for which the menstruous woman was put apart seven days, so that whosoever touched her, was unclean until the even, Ezek. 16.6, 9, 12. Levite. 15, 19. We come into the world more defiled in soul, then polluted in body: and more unsavory in the nostrils of God, then a dead carrion lying long in a tomb, is stinking in the nostrils of men, Matth. 23.27, 28. Can you name anything more unsavory and unwholesome then these things? who doth not loath them at the naming of them? and yet sin is more odious and abominable then all these.

[Reason 2] Secondly, all sin defileth the soul, more then mire and dung can defile the body and garments of those that are soiled with it. It defileth the person that doth commit it and continue in it without repentance; it polluteth and profaneth the actions of greatest devotion in the service of God. The Prophet Haggai saith, Hag. 2.13. *If one that is unclean by a dead body, touch any holy thing, he maketh it to be unclean unto him.* It defileth also the land and places wherein sinners are conversant, Levite. 18.24, 25. God loatheth the houses and habitations of such soul persons, albeit they be decked with ornaments of gold and silver. Sin depriveth a man of all those graces that did adorn him in the sight of God and men, and causeth God to turn away his favor and loving countenance from us, Deu. 23 14. In his favor is life, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore: if he turn away his face and favor from us, and deny his loving kindness unto us, nothing shall do us any good.

[Use 1] We are now to handle and hear the uses that arise from hence. First, we may conclude that such are blessed as keep diligent watch and ward over themselves, lest they fall asleep in carnal pleasures, in the cares of this world, and securely wallow in sin, and so be spoiled of the precious robe and raiment of the soul, which is given us in Christ Jesus. This admonition is often given in holy Scripture, especially in the New Testament, because as the world groweth nearer to his end, so sinful men will grow less wary and watchful in mind to good things, and therefore we must look the better to our selves. This use is concluded, Revel. 16.15, *Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and men see his filthiness.* If we had spiritual eyes to see and discern the ugliness of sin, and could behold it in its own nature, we would account them happy that escape it. On the other side, their condition is cursed and wretched, that give themselves over to the lusts of all kind of sin, they are polluted and abominable in the sight of God. If we should see a man wallowing in the mire, or tumbling himself in his own dung, that nothing appeared upon him but filthiness, how would we loath him and shun him? how squeamish would we be to come near him? how fast would we fly from him? Or if we should see a man turning to his own vomit, how would our stomachs abhor and rise against him? we would account such as dogs and swine, and no better.

But thus the case standeth with all unregenerate persons, whose whole life is a continual practice of sin: they wallow in the most stinking and filthy mire that may be found, and turn to their own vomit, and eat up worse than their own excrements. No spots and blemishes are like to the spots and blemishes of sin, that do leave a stain and guiltiness in the soul. This doth the Apostle Peter aim at in his second Epistle, chap. 2. ver. 22. *It is happened unto them according to the true proverb: the dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire.*

True it is, sin carrieth with it a beautiful show, howbeit, it casteth a false light; it carrieth with it a false gloss, like the harlot that painteth her face that she may seem fair. It is like the forbidden fruit, whereof our first parents did taste, the tree seemed *good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, and to be desired to make one wise;* but when they had once eaten, they saw the filthiness of their own nakedness, and hid themselves from the presence of the Lord. It is like the harlot mentioned in the Proverbs; she caught a young man void of understanding she kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, *Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning, let us solace our selves with loves.* With much fair speech she caused him to yield, and with flattering of her lips she forced him, till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. And in another place the wise man saith, Pro. 5.3, 4, 5. The lips of a strange woman drop as an honey comb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two edged sword, her feet go down to death, her steps take hold of hell. Here we have a most true and lively description of the nature of sin: look upon this picture of an harlot that Solomon hath drawn before our eyes, behold the shape and image of it, and we shall quickly and easily know what sin is. It fawneth upon us and flattereth us, it speaketh fair unto us, but in the end it will destroy us. It is like unto Joab, and is ready to serve us as he served Amasa: *He said unto him, art thou in health, my brother?* he took him with the right hand to kiss him, but withal he smote

him with his sword and shed out his bowels to the ground. Or it dealeth with us as *Iael* dealt with *Sisera*, Iud. 4.18. & 5.26, 26. She cried unto him, Turn in my lord, turn in to me, fear not. He asked a little water to drink, and she gave him milk, and brought him butter in a lordly dish; but withal she put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmans hammer, and with the hammer she smote him and then cut off his head, when she had pearsed and stricken through his temples. Thus doth sin come to us masked and covered, it offereth us many sweet delights, many carnal pleasures, many goodly profits and commodities, so that we will turn in unto it, and commit it without fear: but the issues thereof, are the issues of death, it taketh an hammer and knocketh us on the head. In the book of *Job*, *Zophar*, speaking of the state and portion of the wicked, compareth sin to sweet meats, which oftentimes have sour sauce. Let us hear it in his own words, Job 20.12, 13, 14, 15, 16. *Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue, though he spare it and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth: yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Asps within him: he hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again, God shall cast them out of his belly, he shall suck the poison of Asps, the vipers tongue shall slay him.* Sin is as an hook that is cunningly baited every way to catch us and entrap us, but the wages of it in the end is death. It dealeth with us as the devil dealt with Christ, *he shown him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them*, but then he must fall down and worship him. Woe unto them therefore that have their eyes closed and shut up, that they cannot see the deformity of sin in his natural colors, but look upon it in a deceitful glass. It fareth worse with such, then if they had many foul diseases about them that can only annoy the body, but are not able to hurt the soul: whereas sin infecteth the soul in which it dwelleth.

For as a man consisteth of two parts, the body, and the mind: so he is afflicted with two kind of maladies, and the evils of the mind are greater then the evils of the body, and more danger cometh from them then from these. We must have a true and right judgment of sin. The common sort think him to be much more miserable that hath a dropsy, who, the more he drinketh, the more he desireth, then the man that is possessed with covetousness, which is a spiritual dropsy, and is never satisfied. As on the other side, they hold him to be more happy that hath a fair and comely body, then such a one as hath a fair and beautiful mind adorned with all good qualities of piety, and the fruits thereof. These prefer the body before the soul, and earth before heaven.

The diseases of the body are many in number, but the sicknesses of the soul are in a manner infinite and cannot be told, and as they are moe in number, so they are worse in working and in their effects, they corrupt the best part of us, and make us evil and miserable. So do not the diseases of the body, they may vex us and pain us, afflict and disquiet us; but though we were sick from the crown of the head, to the sole of the foot, though no soundness were in the body, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying soars, as it was with *Job*, who seemed a very picture and pattern of all misery, yet they cannot make us evil men, they cannot hurt the soul, they cannot separate us from God. Nay, the diseases of the body, are so far from destroying of us, that oftentimes they are medicines to cure the diseases of the mind, and chastisements are notable instructions; whereas the maladies of the body, do for the most

part arise of the maladies of the mind. For sin is the cause of sickness. If we had not transgressed, we had not been visited with such diseases, and in the end with death.

Moreover, those bodily diseases are judged to be most dangerous and desperate, that take away from the sick party all sense and feeling of his estate, all grief and anguish of his misery▪ forasmuch as the less he feeleth, the more fearful is his estate, & the more near to his end. He that is afflicted with the gout or the stone, and crieth out of his misery, and willeth the Physician to be sent for in all haste, is in better case and hath more hope to be eased and healed, then he that hath a lethargy, or frenzy; of which, one thinketh himself sound, the other assaulteth the Physician that cometh unto him to do him good. Such for the most part are the diseases of the soul, and such for the most part, is the condition of sinful persons: they think themselves to be sound men, they think they need not the help of the Physician, they would defy him that should tell them, that they are dangerously sick even to the death. They are captives and bond-men, and know it not. They have one foot in hell, and see it not. They are in great misery, and feel it not.

Besides, the mind is able to judge of the diseases of the body: but how shall it tell and declare the diseases of the mind, seeing it is it self diseased? If that part be sick, how shall it judge of sickness? A Physician that is sick cannot judge of himself, but resorteth to some other, because his mind is troubled, which is the instrument of judging. So is it with all unregenerate persons, they want a right reformed judgment to judge of themselves, and therefore oftentimes take, or rather mistake vice for virtue, darkness for light, and error for truth. Hence it is, that they color and disguise the face of vice, that it might not appear ugly and deformed, as it is in his own proper likeness.

The unquenchable thirst of getting and having, is called providence and forecast: envy is accounted zeal: the love of himself is reputed to be wisdom: evil speaking is covered with the title and style of liberty in speaking.

Lastly, the diseases of the soul are more foul and infectious, they pierce deeper, and spread farther then those of the body. The diseases of the body though they seize upon some part, yet they leave other free that they come not near: if they be in the feet, they do leave the eyes and ears, and sundry other parts whole and sound: yea, such as have someone disease, are observed to be free from the rest.

There are some diseases that do not touch or trouble old men; some that vex not young men. But it is not so in the diseases of the mind; they corrupt the whole mind, and bring a train and tail of other with them, so that one cometh not alone. These are as the plagues and pestilences of the soul, they spare not any degree, any age, any sex, they cannot be kept within any bounds, but wander over the whole world with wonderful speed and celerity. Wherefore this reproveth all such as make a mock of sin, delighting in it, and dalying with it. Who will play with a serpent, or sport himself with the cockatrice? Sin is worse, it bringeth all diseases, plagues, pains, and miseries whatsoever. It is great folly to shun sickness and death, as most fearful things, and not to shun the causes of them.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing sin defileth both the persons that commit it, and the places where it is committed, it is our duty to walk so circumspectly, that we beware of the contagious nature of it, and that we be not soiled with it. This one use hath diverse branches, and by them spreadeth it self hither and thither. First, it teacheth us to look to our footing, that we do not fall, but that if God have given us grace to stand, we pray him also to give us grace to continue and persevere unto the end. It is a great mercy that God vouchsafeth unto those that are his, when he keepeth them from evil, that it hurteth them not.

The sorrows of death compass us, and the pains of hell get hold upon us: we find trouble and sorrow, we want not sundry enemies that environ us round, and seek to prevent us and to circumvent us: they wait upon us, and watch over us for evil: we have the devil our enemy: the world our enemy: our corruption our enemy: what shall we then say, but pray to the Lord in the midst of all these dangers, *O Lord, I beseech thee deliver my soul?* And when he hath heard our prayers, and we found his help at hand, and succor in time of need, what can we but in thankful feeling of his favor, cry out with the Prophet, *Return into thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee: for thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling?* We must vow unto him a faithful serving of him, and perform our vow before him in the truth of our hearts, saying, *I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.* We must return the praise and glory unto him, to whom alone it is due, uttering this voice of thanksgiving in a sweet meditation of his goodness, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take up the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.* Wherefore, albeit we have many perils without us, and within us, yet we rest in the arms of Christ, and abide under the shelter and shadow of the Almighty: so that we have this comfort, *his left hand is under our head, and with his right hand he doth embrace us.* If it were not for this protection and upholding of us, we could not endure here in the world.

Secondly, it warneth all those that are cleansed to keep themselves in such sort, that they be not polluted, Deut. 23.9. This shall bring great comfort to the conscience, and great peace that passeth all understanding. The burnt child dreadeth the fire: he that hath once been in danger of drowning, will hardly be brought or drawn to the banks side: an horse that hath once been plunged in some deep quag-mire, will with much ado pass that way again. He that once hath found and felt the grievousness of sin, and the terrors of conscience, and the wrath of God, and the flashings of hell fire, will fear to fall and offend again. If we did duly consider how dearly it did cost Christ our Savior, to redeem a soul from damnation, and that the weight of sin did make him sweat drops of blood, and to cry out upon the Cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,* when we have been once cleansed, it will make us careful to keep our selves clean: when we have washed our feet, it will work a care in us, that we do not defile them. It is such an heavy burden, that whosoever hath once felt the weight and smart of it, dareth not stand under it again.

Thirdly, this circumspect walking before him warneth us to forsake the company of the wicked, and society with them, as 2 Cor. 6.16. *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.* Our doctrine teacheth us that sin defileth and polluteth a man, so as there is no filth or dung upon the earth defileth

the body, as sin defileth the whole man before God, and therefore we should loath the fellowship of evil men and wicked persons.

If a man should offer himself into our company that had wallowed and tumbled in some foul and filthy channel, we would shun him and be ashamed of him, we would not abide him, but thrust him from us. For we know we could not be near him a little while, but he would make some of his filth to cleave unto us. Thus it is with bad men. As themselves are loathsome and filthy, so they will leave part of their filthiness behind them, among whomsoever they converse, like unto some beasts that leave such a rank savor after them wheresoever they become, that it may easily be known thereby, as by an infallible token, that they have been there.

If we cannot draw these men from iniquity, let us withdraw our selves from their company. There is not a more deceitful bait to catch us, then to come within their reach. Many have been stricken down with this stroke, that have stood as valiant and invincible men against many other dangers. Let us be wary by their harms, and learn wisdom by their folly, and to bear our selves upright by their falls. But it may be demanded, whether all keeping company with them be unlawful, or not? I answer, all company with them is not absolutely forbidden, but to be familiar with them is forbidden, to delight in them, to be of one heart and of one mind with them, to be yoked unto them, & so to delight to be among them, that we like better of them then of any other, and never think our selves well until we be with them. If any farther ask the question, in what cases it is lawful to be among them? I answer briefly, first when we seek to reclaim them; when we have this end to confer with them, to instruct and admonish them, as the Apostle speaketh of an heretic, that he must be *once or twice admonished*, & then being obstinate, *he must be avoided*, Tit. 3.10. That which he speaketh particularly of an heretic, may be spoken generally of every wicked person that is incurable. Secondly, when we are bound by the band of a necessary calling to be in their presence and company. For God hath set us in our several standings, out of which we may not depart. We shown in the former doctrine, that if a man were excommunicated by the Church, yet such as belong unto him in the family or in the Common-wealth, ought to be subject and obedient unto him. The wife must yield to the husband due benevolence, the child must honor the father, and a servant his master, so far forth as they do not encourage him in his sins, nor join with him in a liking of them.

Lastly, it teacheth us to avoid all occasions and inducements to sins, yea, all appearances of evil: Hence it is, that *Jude* saith, ver. 23. *Hate* even that garment which is spotted by the flesh, not only the sins themselves, but the occasions of them. And hereby we may try our selves, whether we make conscience of sin or not. Every commandment that forbiddeth any sin, forbiddeth all the allurements that may draw us into the same. This is one of the general rules that help us to understand the law, & to come to the true meaning thereof.

Lastly, seeing sin soileth and defileth, we learn to put this duty in practice, to crave of God to wash us and cleanse us from the defilements of sin. Let us follow the example of the leper, Matth. 8.2. who fell down at the feet of our Savior, and besought him that he might be cleansed, *Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*: so ought we to come into the presence of

Christ, and worship him, and crave of him to cleanse us from the filthiness of our sin. It so staineth and polluteth, that none can wash away the blots and spots that stick so fast unto us, but he. This we see in *David*, Psal. 51.2, 3. *Wash me from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin: for I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me.* True it is, God sometimes willeth us to wash our selves, as he commanded the Israelites to wash their garments when they were to hear the law, Exod. 19. Ier. 4.14. *O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved.* And I am. 4. *Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you: cleanse your hands ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.* What need God to wash us, will some say, seeing we are willed to wash our selves? God doth not by these commandments attribute a natural power and strength to man's will, as if they were able to wash themselves, but he stirreth them up to use the means, that so they may be washed by him.

Whensoever we use the instrument of the word, which is a pure word, whereby the *ways of a young man are cleansed*, Psal. 119.9. together with prayer and invocation of God's holy Name, and such like means to be washed; we may be said after a sort to wash our selves, because God doth wash us by us, and not without us: as also he y^t made us without us, is said to save us not without us. For a desire to be washed is our washing of our selves.

So the Minister is said to *save himself*, when he delivereth his soul from the curse denounced against unconscionable watchmen, and useth the means by which God will save him and them that hear him. It is the work of God alone to wash and to cleanse us, Ezek. 16.9. Where he telleth his people, that he had washed them with water: and John. 13.8. Christ declareth to his disciples, that except he wash them, they had no part in him: for that which he speaketh unto *Peter*, he speaketh to them all. And the Apostle *John* teacheth us, that *he hath washed us from our sins in his blood.* Wherefore we must go unto him to have this pure water and clear streams to wash our souls. We are foul and filthy creatures by nature. No leper so foul and ugly. We can no more cleanse our selves, by our own power, then the Ethiopian or black More can change his skin, or the Leopard his spots.

This use hath many branches contained under it. First, we must labor to come to the knowledge of our sins, and to be touched with a feeling of them. For we can never be earnest in prayer to God for mercy, or have assurance that our request shall be granted, until we come to have a sense of y^e grievousnes of sin: as they that know not their disease, make no haste to send or seek to the Physician. We must therefore have our eyes opened to see sin, and to understand what dependeth upon it, that we may prevent it, or recover our selves being fallen into it. Hence it is, that so many sin with greediness and eagerness, because they do not thoroughly weigh and consider themselves what they have done, as Luke 23.34. *Jesus said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.* And y^e Apostle speaking of the ignorance that is among men concerning Christian religion, saith, *Doubtless if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* They delight in swearing and blaspheming, because they know not how fearful a thing it is, to take the Name of God in vain. They make no conscience of the Sabbath, because they know not what danger it is to profane it. Secondly, we are put in mind to confess our sins and uncleanness, that so we may be washed by him that purgeth us. So long as *Adam* did hide his sins, he was not cleansed of them. It is

not with God, as it is with men: if we confess unto men, we are oftentimes taunted for them, and upbraided with them, and checked for them. But if we acknowledge them unto our gracious God, he will never hit us in the teeth with them, but *he is merciful and just to forgive us our sins*, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But because we shall have fitter occasion to speak farther of this point, in the next division, I pass it over. Thirdly, we must know what means God useth to sanctify us; it is by the blood of his own Son, for *the blood of Christ purgeth us from all sin*, 1 John. 1.7 and Heb. 9.14. *The blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, shall purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.* Naaman the Syrian washing in the flood of Jordan seven times, was healed of his leprosy, and had his flesh come to him again, like the flesh of a child: how much more then shall we be cleansed from the leprosy of sin, when the Lord shall wash us in the blood of his Son? Fourthly, we must seek mercy while it is offered unto us; when our hearts are terrified for sin, let us have recourse to the fountain of his love which can never be drawn dry. This did the Prophet Psal. 51.1.2. *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions: wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.* And the Prophet Isaiah calleth the people to repentance, cha. 55. ver. 6, 7. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* God hath his time of mercy, when that is gone and past, the time of justice cometh.

While we have ears to hear, let us hear; when the ears are made dull of hearing, we may hear, but we shall not understand. While we have eyes to see, let us behold his goodness and mercy toward us: when they are once shut and closed up, we may see, but we shall perceive nothing at all. While we have soft and tender hearts, let us humble our selves before him, and tremble at his word: if once our hearts be hardened as a stone, and become past feeling, there is little hope of our conversion, that we should turn and be healed.

Fifthly, we must buy of Christ white garments to clothe us, and to cover our deformity, Revel. 3.18. that the filthiness of our nakedness do not appear. True it is, there is nothing properly bought and sold between Christ and us, but this is spoken by way of resemblance. For in bargaining a man that will buy, first understandeth his want: then he cometh to the place where it is to be bought; afterward he cheapneth it: and lastly he maketh exchange with money, or some other commodity.

So he that will come to Christ, must first feel himself to have need of Christ, and see his own misery, otherwise he will never desire him. Secondly, he must hunger after Christ to be partaker of his merits. Thirdly, he must prize Christ above all other things, Phil. 3.8. Lastly, he must make exchange, he must give him his sins, and lay them upon his shoulders, that so we may receive to us his righteousness. We remain foul and filthy in God's sight, until we be clothed with the glorious robes of his righteousness. Last of all, it is our duty to forsake our sins, and to walk in the statutes of God. This is the exhortation of the Prophet, Isaiah 1.16, 17. *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well.* To this purpose speaketh Ezekiel, chap. 20. ver. 18, 19. *Walk ye not in the statutes*

of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols: I am the Lord your God; walk in my statutes and keep my judgments, and do them. We are then washed from our sins, when we have learned to walk in the ways of God. If we do not bring forth the fruits of obedience, we lie wallowing in the mire of our sins, and God will find us out. There is no hiding of our filthiness from him, his eyes see the sons of men, and ponder his paths.

That they defile not their camps in the midst whereof I dwell. We have spoken already of the first reason drawn from the effect of sin; it defileth our persons, our actions, and our places. The second reason is taken from the consideration of God's presence. From which reason he reasoneth thus, I dwell among you, Therefore ye must be an holy people, and hate all uncleanness and unholiness, and do that good which I command you.

But here some will say, how is God said to dwell among his people? The heaven is his Throne, and the earth his footstool: he dwelleth not in Temples made with hands, forasmuch as the heavens of heavens cannot contain him that filleth with his presence and power both heaven and earth. Doth he not dwell also among the ungodly and infidels y^t know him not? Or can any hide himself in secret places, that he shall not see him? I answer, this phrase is a borrowed speech from the sons of men, whereby is understood, that God is conversant with us, & doth keep his mansion in our hearts, ruling in us by his Spirit and by his Word. Even as a master of a family ruleth and guideth his house wherein he dwelleth: so doth God rule us & overrule us, and taketh up his rest and residence among us, determining to continue with us. He is present among the ungodly by his power, but not by his grace: they cannot hide their faces from him, but he hideth his favor from them. So then, this manner of speech, importeth these three things. First, it showeth the effect and efficacy of his presence, whereby he possesseth & governeth the faithful which are as his Temple to dwell in, having dominion over them, enlightening them to know, and guiding thē to practice his will made known unto them. Secondly, it signifieth that his presence is perpetual and permanent, and continual, for when a man meaneth to inhabit in any place, it is a sign he doth not determine to flit away, as a bird that wandreth from her nest, but to abide there without departing away. He is not as a guest that lodgeth with his friend for a day or two; nor as a stranger that taketh up his Inn for a night or two; nor as a sojourner that meaneth to remove when his term is out: but as an owner and possessor, that meaneth to set down his rest, and not to leave that place, as John 14, 16, 17. *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever: even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* Thirdly, it noteth the manner of his presence, not by the infiniteness of power, as he is present with all his creatures, to sustain them and uphold them, but by his grace and gracious effects, uniting us to Christ, regenerating us to be lively members of his body, *crying in our hearts, Abba, Father,* and witnessing thereby our adoption, Rom. 8, 9. *Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.* Christ is also said to dwell in our hearts by faith, Eph. 3, 17. Now let us examine the reason, included in these words, *in the midst whereof I dwell:* and consider the strength and power of it, how he provoketh them to study to be an holy people, separate from all pollutions and provocations of sin, by the assurance of his gracious presence.

We learn from hence, that the consideration of God's presence and help that ever goeth [Doctrine 1] with his children, must provoke them to well-doing. His presence ought to move us to all good duties. This point is taught in many places of the word of God, as Numb. 35, 34. *Defile not the Land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel.* Where we see, he reasoneth thus; I dwell among the Israelites, therefore they must take heed they defile not the Land. Thus also he speaketh in Deuteronomy, chap. 23, 14. *The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy Campe be holy, that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.* Here he moveth them to holiness toward him, because of his continual presence with them. Thus doth the Lord speak to Solomon, concerning the house which he was building. *If thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments, to walk in them: then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy Father: and I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel.* So the Prophet Isaiah reasoneth, chap. 52, 11, 12. *Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence: touch no unclean thing: go ye out of the midst of her: be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord: for ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your reward.* In all which places, the presence of God that is most holy, is brought in, urging us to the duties of holiness of life.

The reasons are very plain to prove the same. First, because God is the Lord: he is of [Reason 1] absolute power to command and rule over all, and therefore he being the Lord God, his presence with us must provoke us to watch over all our ways, and to walk in fear and trembling before him. This reason is expressed in the first chapter of the book of *Joshua*, verse 9, where the Lord saith unto him, *Bee strong, and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee, whither soever thou goest.* Where he concludeth and assureth him thereby, that God is with him, because he is the Lord.

Secondly, the consideration of his presence [Reason 2] must work in us obedience toward him, because he hath graciously promised, that he will never fail nor forsake those which are his. He will not leave us in the work which we undertake, but be with us when we begin it, and when we finish it. This reason is given by *Moses*, encouraging the people to fight the battles of God against the Nations, whom he had promised to deliver into their hands, Deut. 31, 6. *Fear not, nor be afraid of them, for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee, he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.* Where he proveth the truth of his presence by the comfortable effect of it, that he will deliver them in time of need, and will not leave them as a prey in the hands of their enemies.

[Use 1] The uses are in the next place to be handled. First, we learn from hence for the increase of our faith, to conclude the happy and blessed estate of the faithful, that have such a faithful deliverer, and so sure a promise of deliverance. They are esteemed of the greatest part of this wretched world, to be as men unhappy and forlorn, and so to be far from true happiness. But seeing they have his help ready at hand to keep them from danger, and to preserve them in danger, being always safe and sure under his protection, who is as a shield round about us, it showeth apparently and most certainly, that they are a blessed people that are thus, and may comfort themselves heerewith, in the midst of all discomforts and

discouragements that they shall meet withal. This doth the Prophet *David* declare, *Psal. 40, 1, 2. He waited patiently upon the Lord, who brought him out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set his feet upon the rock, and ordered his goings.* Where we see, that God's gracious deliverance and preservation provoked him to depend upon him, and to praise his Name: whereupon he inferreth in the next words, *Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.* None therefore are comparable unto them, none are happy but they.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing we have God's presence ever with us, to be an instructor and admonisher of us, and as a guide and governor to us in well-doing, let us be of a good comfort, and cheerful in all duties that God layeth upon us, and requireth of us. It cannot be denied but we have many and sundry discouragements and pul-backs to hinder us from the execution of all good duties both general and particular in our callings: but this consideration and meditation is able to ouerweigh them all. This serveth as a wonderful comfort to all sorts, both to the Ministers and people, and should never be forgotten of us. Touching the Ministers, it is given by our Savior, *Mat. 28, 20. Acts 18, 9, 10. Exod. 4, 12.* If his presence must be as a spurr unto us, to quicken us being dull and heavy, and ready to draw back: let it put life into us, and cause us to teach the people cheerfully to observe whatsoever Christ hath commanded us. What though we have many crosses in our way, and many enemies that set themselves against us, yet greater is he that is with us, then they that are against us: Satan cannot be so malicious to hurt us, as God is gracious to deliver us: and his instruments shall not be so strong to cast us down, as the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah* shall be victorious to hold us up: and therefore let us not fear them that can kill the body, but him that is able to cast body & soul into hell fire. Touching the people, it serveth also to comfort them, and to work in them perseverance in their callings. Let them boldly go forward in hearing and professing his word, forasmuch as his presence doth guide us thereunto. To this purpose doth *Moses* call *Joshua*, and say unto him in the sight of all Israel, *Be strong, and of a good courage, for thou must go with this people unto the Land which the Lord hath sworn unto their Fathers to give them, and thou shalt cause them to inherit it: and the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee, he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, &c.* Having therefore so sure a Rock to rest upon, it is a sign of great weakness and infirmity, or of want of faith, to start aside from our holy profession, and not to rest upon him that hath given us the promise of our deliverance, and the assurance of his presence.

Lastly, seeing God is in the midst of us [Use 3] to succor and save us, and thereby to stir us up unto well-doing, let us open our eyes, and behold the great works that he hath done in the earth for his own people. Let us not forget his mercies toward us, but keep a register of them, as the Prophet exhorteth, *Psal. 46*, which is a Psalm of thanksgiving, which the Citizens of Jerusalem sung to God, for the preservation of Jerusalem, against certain terrible and troublesome enemies y^t did assault it, *ver. 8, 9. The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge: Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath done in the earth.* Where we may see, that upon this consideration that God was among them, as in an high place whereunto they should resort, he provoketh them to a serious contemplation of such works of mercy and judgment, as God had shown in their defense against their enemies. This use

concerneth no people under the heavens, more then us. We have found and felt the gracious and glorious presence of God to be with us and among us. We have had a wonderful experience of wonderful deliverances against close, and subtle, and malicious enemies. They have opened their mouths as the grave: they have stretched out their hands against us, and their feet have been swift to shed blood. They have prepared their fireworkes; they have diued down to the nethermost hell to take counsel against us: and they have sought to quench the light of Israel. Destruction and calamity hath been in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known: so that except God had been on our side, they had swallowed us up quick, and the waters, even the swelling waters had gone over our soul. But God hath broken their snare, and quenched their fire, he hath preserved Prince and people, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and called upon him. As for his enemies and the enemies of his Church, they have been consumed with the flame of that fire which themselves had kindled, as they were burned that cast the three children into the Furnace, Dan. 3, 22. and as the Lions brake their bones in pieces, and tore them in sunder, that had cast *Daniel* into the den, Dan. 6, 24. Thus shall it be with all persecutors that plot the ruin of the Church. They may gather themselves together, but they shall be scatterd: they may pronounce a decree, but it shall not stand: they may dignity deep to hide their counsels, but they shall be discovered, & come to nothing. He hath not made his Church a prey unto their teeth, but hath utterly destroyed them, and made havoc of them, that they became dung to the earth, and a prey to the fowls of heaven. They then are greatly to be reprov'd, who behold everywhere and at all times the works of God, both of his mercy toward his people, and of his judgments against his enemies, and yet are never moved to glorify his Name, nor to walk in obedience before him.

[*In the midst whereof I dwell.*] We have heard the strength of the reason, and how necessarily and demonstratiuely it concludeth: The presence of GOD with us is a forcible means to prick us forward, and to provoke us to holiness of life, and to all well-doing. Now let us consider the words in themselves, without the consideration of others. Wherein we see, he giveth his promise for his presence, or setteth down plainly unto thē, that he is continually among them, to wit, the holy God among his holy people.

This teacheth us, that God is evermore present with his people, he is in the midst of them, he is never absent from them. He watcheth over thē for their good, he never slumbereth nor sleepeth, he never forsaketh them, that he should bring them into danger. This appeareth in the example of *Joseph*, Gen. 39, 21, 23. *The Lord was with him, and shown him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.* Where having shown that God was with *Joseph*, he expoundeth and expresseth what his presence was, and wherein it consisted, and how it was manifested. He was cast into prison, and lay in great misery, yet did not God forsake him, but was with him, even in prison. God abhorreth not the loathsome prisons▪ into which his servants are cast. He commandeth us to visit his Children that are put in prison, much more therefore will he do it himself. This is set down in the prayer of *David* for *Solomon* his son, *Arise and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.* 1 Chron. 22, 11, 16. and in the prayer of *Solomon*, at the dedication of the Temple, 1 Kings 8, 57. *The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our Fathers, let not him leave us, nor forsake us.* This also is that merciful promise which he maketh

to his people, Exod. 29, 45, 46. *I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God, and they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the Land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them, I am the Lord their God.* Heereby doth the Prophet comfort himself, Psal. 23, 4. *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear none evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff doth comfort me.* This is such a principle as is so plain, that it needeth no farther confirmation, that wheresoever two or three are gathered together in his Name, he is in the midst of them, Mat. 18.

I will propound a few reasons, and that [Reason 1] briefly. First, he will save those that are his. His presence is not a vain presence, neither is he an idle beholder of things that are done, but his presence is to prosper and to save. The end of his being with us, is the salvation of us. This is the reason that God giveth to his people, and the promise of deliverance after long trouble, Ier. 30, 11. *I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all Nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.* And to the same purpose he speaketh in the 42, chapter, *Bee not afraid of the King of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid: be not afraid of him, saith the Lord: for I am with you to save you and to deliver you from his hand.* We must not therefore dream of a presence that effecteth nothing: he is not one that standeth still and doth nothing, as he that is in a dream, but rather willeth his people oftentimes to stand still, while he worketh all in all.

Secondly, they have good success in their [Reason 2] lawful labors and honest endeavours, so that he maketh the works of their hands prosperous. Except the Lord do build the house, & watch the City, the labors of the builder, and the cares of the watchman, profit nothing at all. This reason is rendered in the example of *Joseph*, Gen. 39. God was with him, and he made all that he had to prosper. So it is said in the book of the Judges, *The Lord was with Judah, & he drave out the inhabitants of the Mountain.* In like manner we read concerning *David*, 2 Sam. 5, 10. *David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him.* Seeing then, God saveth his people in times of danger, and prospereth the works of their hands that they undertake in his fear, it followeth, that he is continually with them.

Let us now come to the uses that arise from [Use 1] hence. First, for the increase of a sound faith in God, in whom we are to trust, we may conclude, that seeing God is with his servants, therefore they shall not fall down, or take the foil, but shall prosper and prevail. He leaveth them not to themselves, he withdraweth not his strength from them, he delivereth them not to the lust and pleasure of their enemies. This is it which he telleth *Joshua* after the death of *Moses*, Judge. 1, 5. *There shall not any be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.* Whensoever we prosper in our ways, & find the blessing of God to have been with us in our actions, let us not ascribe it to our industry and policy, to our own diligence and endeavours, but acknowledge from whence it springeth and proceedeth; it is because God is with us. This is a notable comfort unto us, to consider that the gates of hell shall never be able to prevail against the Church, to deface it and to root it out and to destroy it. If the Church fail, God shall fail with it. If this be impossible, so is the other. If the church should fail, Christ must also fail, and all the benefits of his death and

passion: which can never come to pass, forasmuch as he died not in vain, but will make his death available in all the members of his body unto the ende of the world. Let us evermore lay hold on this, especially when we see the enemies of the Church multiply, and to affront the true servants of God: the presence of God must stay us up, and support us in the midst of all dangers.

[Use 2] Secondly, this teacheth us this good duty, that we take heed we do not defile our selves with the pollutions of sin. For how shall we dare to commit sin, that is so highly displeasing in his sight, forasmuch as he is with us to behold us and all our actions? Nothing is more loathsome to GOD, then the filthy stench that sin casteth up in his nostrils: so that we should hate it in all men, but especially in our selves with a perfect hatred, even more then the devil of hell himself. True it is, many men cannot abide to hear him named, they defy him in words, but they do not deny him in deeds. We hate him as he is deformed, not as he was formed: not as the creature of God, but as he is degenerate from his original estate. He is the creature of God, but sin is the work and child of the devil, John 8, 44. he is said to be *a liar from the beginning, and the father thereof*: and as he is the father of lying, so also of all other sin. He is said to be a murderer from the beginning, and the Pharisees are charged to be his children. The wicked are named *his seed*; and *Cain* is said to be *of that evil one*, because he slew his brother, 1 John 3, 12 We must therefore be afraid of sin, and be as unwilling to entertain it, as to entertain a child of the devil. If once we lodge it, it will not be easy for us to dislodge it: if once we suffer it to fasten upon us, it will be very hard to loose his hold again. It will stick fast upon us as pitch, and defile us also, as dirt and dung. The means to bridle and suppress it, is to set before us the presence of God. The Subject will do nothing unseemly in the presence of his Prince, nor the child in the sight of his father. We are always in God's eye, he beholdeth all things that are done of us. This is that of which *Moses* putteth the people in remembrance, Deut. 23, 14. *The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy Campe, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee, therefore shall thy Campe be holy, that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.* No unclean thing like to the uncleanness of sin, it is worse then all excrements which we do loathe and abhor. It driveth him from us, that he will no longer walk among us to do us good. Thus speaketh *Phinehas* the son of *Eleazar* the Priest, to the Tribes that inhabited beyond the River, *This day we perceive that the Lord is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the Lord: now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the Lord.* Where he proveth, that they had rightly learned, and also reverently regarded the presence of God, because they had learned thereby to abstain from sin, which is abominable and filthy before him. For this cause the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 6, 17. *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.* Then he promiseth to dwell in us, and to walk among us; he offereth himself to be our God, & to account us to be his people. All men will in words confess, that they believe the presence of God in all places, and his all-seeing eye reaching and stretching over all persons: howbeit this confessing in word is not an argument of sound believing in heart: forasmuch as many acknowledge it with the tongue, that do utterly and openly deny it in their deeds. If his presence work in us a conscience of sin, and a care to please God in all things, it is an evident token that we are good Scholars, & remember this

lesson well, which is here delivered unto us, touching his presence everywhere. Let us oftentimes examine our selves by this rule: and know that we have so far profited in the doctrine of it, as it brideleth our corruption in us, and no farther. If we be loose in life, and everywhere profane, never regarding what we do, or what we speak, or how we break out into all wickedness, we may well talk or tattle of God's presence, but we turn him into an Idol, and with the Epicures make him sit idle in heaven, to know all things, but to regard nothing.

Lastly, it is our duty to have a care to promote [Use 3] his worship and service, in all things to farther it, and to cut off all impediments and hindrances that stand against it. This is the use that is often made of this doctrine, as Exod. 25, 8. *Let them make me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.* Where the Sanctuary of God is, there will he be: where it is not well looked unto, but wholly neglected, there is he gone from that people, and departed. This we see in the words of *David*, exhorting and commanding all the Princes to help *Solomon* his son in building of the Temple, 1. Chron. 22, 18, 19. where he saith, *Is not the Lord your God with you? and hath he not given you rest on every side? For he hath given the inhabitants of the Land into mine hand, and the Land is subdued before the Lord, and before his people: now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God: arise therefore, and build ye the Sanctuary of the Lord God, to bring the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, and the holy vessels of God into the house that is to be built to the Name of the Lord.* As they had experience that he was among them, so he would have them go lustily forward in furthering of his worship & the means of it. Could their enemies have taken the foil, and been delivered as a prey unto them, who had so long dwelt among them, and taken deep root in the earth, as a Tree that could not be shaken with the wind, except the Lord had been with them, and holpen them, and fought their battles for thē? Thus they were assured of God's presence with them, and therefore they ought to be sttong and courageous in promoting his glory and setting up his service, that he might remain among them, and never depart from them. To this purpose speaketh the Prophet *Haggai*, when he saw the wonderful backwardness of the people of Israel, in building the Lord's house, that they gave themselves to their own profits and pleasures, but let the Temple lie waste, chap. 2, 4. *Be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord, & be strong, O Iehoshua, son of Iosedech the high Priest, and be strong all ye people of the Land, saith the Lord, and work, for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts.* There he gave them visible signs of his gracious presence, and was not called upon in vain; which mercy is called dwelling among them.

This use hath many branches: First, we must give cheerfully for the building & preparing of a place decent for him to be served. So did the people in the time of *Moses*. God must have a fit place for his service. Our churches are as the Tabernacle and Temple to the Jews, they are as an house to him. They must not be suffered to decay.

Secondly, the profaners and spoilers of the places of his worship, are worthy of severe punishment, forasmuch as God accounteth of it as *a spoiling of himself*, Mal. 1. If any were asked, whether they would spoil God himself or not, they would deny it, and constantly avouch it, and be offended with them that should affirm it: nevertheless, if we be careless of

the means of his worship, he accounteth it as sacrilege, and condemneth it as a robbing of himself.

Thirdly, seeing it is the house wherein he dwelleth, it teacheth with what zeal & forwardness, with what desire and delight we should resort unto it, with what reverence we should remain in it, and how unwillingly we should depart from it, before the end of those holy exercises. Touching our joy in coming to it, the Prophet *David* testifieth in many places: when he was hindered by his persecutors, that he could not be present in the Cōgregation of God's people, he was sore troubled, and grievously complaineth of it, Psal. 42, 1, 2. He came to the house of God, as we go to the house of our neighbor, being invited to a feast. So Psal. 26, 8. *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth.* And Psal. 122, 1. *I was glad, when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.* Thus ought it to be with us, we should love it above all other places, & delight in it greatly, rather than elsewhere. We should never be weary of it. Touching our reverent behavior when we are come, we learn it by *Jacob*; he had no sooner perceived the presence of God, but he was touched with fear, Gen. 28, 16, 17. *Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not: and he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place? This is none other, but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.* When we come to tread in the Lord's Courts, we must be stricken with fear, and set before us his presence, and say to our own souls in a comfortable meditation of it, *Surely the Lord is in this place.* We must not think only, we shall meet with men there like unto our selves, but there we shall meet with the Lord himself, and shall have his presence. And thus did *Cornelius* stir up himself and the rest that were to hear *Peter*, Acts 10. And touching our departure, it ought not to be before the end, as we have shown at large elsewhere. The latter end belongeth unto us, as well as the beginning: and then peradventure we may hear that which we shall never hear again. The Word is no more at our choice to devise, & to choose what we will hear and what not, then the Sacrament. If we should see a man at the Lord's Supper, whē he had received the bread, which is one of the outward signs, to depart out of the Church before he had received the cup containing the wine, which is the other sign, all men would be ready to condemn him of intolerable contempt, and that most justly. The whole word preached, and all the prayers that are offered up to God, belong to us as well as the whole Sacrament. God will not have us know a part only of his will, but all his will, and learn his whole counsel. If the Subject should deal so unreverently in hearing his Prince speak, as we unconscionably deal with God, when he speaketh, he might well gather he were contemned. The Minister therefore must make an end of speaking▪ before we should make an ende of hearing the word that he delivereth unto us from the mouth of God.

[Verse 4. *And the children of Israel did so, and put them out, &c.*] The commandment that God gave to *Moses* of putting out these unclean persons out of the Campe, together with the reasons whereby it is confirmed, hath hitherto been handled. Now we see in these words, the execution thereof set down generally and particularly; they did put them out, and suffered them to remain no longer among them. When God had once decreed and determined they should be removed, they durst not permit them to have any residence with them. The commandment was given unto *Moses*, the execution of it is done by all Israel. The

Governors pronounced the sentence, the whole Congregation gave their consent. It was done in their presence, and they did approve of it.

This practice teacheth us this doctrine, that no Church should suffer among them open wicked persons to live unpunished and uncensured. No Church ought to tolerate, wink at, or bear with any filthy livers, or unclean persons, or notorious offenders among them, as Deut. 23, 17. *There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a Sodomite of the sons of Israel.* The Corinthians are sharply reprov'd, because they suffered one incestuous person to live among them, 1 Corinth. 5, 1, 2. *It is reported commonly, that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his fathers wife: and ye are puffed up, & have not rather mourned, that he who hath done this deed, might be taken away from among you.* So the Apostle, giving rules of direction to y^e church how to live, Eph. 5, 3, 5. saith, *Fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh Saints: such have no inheritance in the kingdom of heaven and of God.* Christ our Savior reproveth sundry Churches in the Revelation, that suffered wicked persons to rest in their bosom & did not cast them out, Revel. 2, 14, 20. as namely the Angel of the Church in *Pergamos*, and the Angel of the Church in *Thyatira*, & therefore he had a few things against them: so that we may conclude, that no Church can without blame and blemish tolerate among them such as are wicked livers and notorious offenders.

This truth may be farther strengthened by [Reason 1] many reasons. For first, it is a comely thing for the Saints of God to do so: that as they differ from heathen men, so they may differ from heathen meetings. Moses teacheth, that they ought to put out evil from them, *because they are an holy people*, Deut. 23, 14. The Apostle would not have fornication and uncleanness to be once named among them, because so it becometh those that are Saints to do, Eph. 5, 3. Now they were made light in the Lord, that were sometimes darkness, and therefore they must walk as children of the light.

Secondly, for the neglect of this duty, the [Reason 2] wrath of God falleth upon the sons of men. He is the God of order, and requireth that all things in the Church be done in order. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, Col. 3, 6. *For such things sake, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.* And we have sundry examples of this, in the people of Israel, who were diversely destroyed, because of their sins, 1 Cor. 10, 5. *With many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the Wilderness.* If then notorious sins bring down God's wrath, notorious sinners are not to be winked at, to the end that his wrath may be turned away.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, we shown before that they were as swine and dogs, or as unclean beasts, and should not be admitted to the fellowship of Christ's sheep which are clean, lest they defile them and corrupt them through their contagion, and tread down with their feet, the residue of their pastures. The Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 5, 6. *Do ye not know, that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?* Sin therefore being infectious, the sinner is not to be tolerated in the assembly of the righteous.

The uses remain to be handled. First of [Use] all, it should minister great matter of much grief and sorrow to every society of Christian men and women, when any of the Congregation grow to be thus profane and defiled with the contagion of sin. Is it not a great grief to have any one member of the body cut off? Or can any endure it without pain and anguish? So should it be when any that is called a brother, is put from the rest of the body of the Church, and severed from the external communion of Saints. This the Apostle teacheth, 1 Corinth. 5, 2. *Ye are puffed up, and have not sorrowed.* This reproveth those that regard not this censure, whether it be executed upon themselves or others, neither are touched with the dishonor that is done to God, when heinous and horrible sins do break out of the bosom of the Church. The Prophet testifieth, Psal. 119, 136. that *his eyes gushed out Rivers of tears, because they kept not his law.* So the Lord speaketh to the man that was clothed in linen, whom he appointed to preserve such as were his, Ezek. 9, 4. *Go through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations, that be done in the midst thereof.* If any man be present, and behold the Chirurgical ready to cut off the arm or leg of another, he is moved with a kind of compassion and commiseration, and is touched with grief for it: how much more ought we to be grieved, when a brother is cut off from the communion of the Church, which is the mother of us all? The Prophet rejoiced, whē they said unto him, Let us go into the house of the Lord: so it ought to minister matter of mourning, when any have this grievous punishment laid upon them, as to be turned out of the Church. It ought therefore to be accounted, neither matter of joy, nor matter of gain, neither should we be glad to hear that any are so proceeded against.

Secondly, it is a cause of great mercy, and [Use 2] of a wonderful blessing from God, whē such as transgress, are resisted and punished. So long as sin is suffered, God is offended, and his wrath is extended over those places and persons. He hath a controversy against those that sin against him. The host of Israel could not prosper so long as *Achan* remained among them, the enemies prevailed against them, and they turned their backs unto them: but when he was taken away, and the glory of God revenged which he had defaced, *Israel* prospered and had the upper hand. They could not stand before their enemies, until they had put the accursed thing from among them. And how much he hateth sin, he declareth sometimes in his own servants: for *Jonah* must be cast into the sea, or else the Ship and the passengers in it shall ever be in jeopardy; & therefore he said unto the Mariners, *Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea, so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know, that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.* If then he spare not his own people, how should he spare others that are his enemies? We have a notable example of this, afterward in this book; when y^e people of *Israel* began to commit whoredom with the daughters of *Moab*, & bowed down unto their God's, and so coupled themselves unto *Baal-peor*, God brought a fearful judgment upon them, *and there died in that plague, four and twenty thousand*, But *Phinehas* the son of *Eleazar* rose up from the midst of the Congregation, and with his spear he smote the adulterer and the adulteress, *so the plague ceased from the children of Israel*, the anger of God being turned away from them. A contrary example is to be seen in *Eli*, 1 Sam. 2. he winked at the wickedness of his ungodly sons, and it brought down a grievous judgment upon them, and upon himself, and upon the

people. Such churches therefore as are careful to put from among them notorious offenders, are blessed of God. Sin is the cause of all judgment, and the removing thereof bringeth all blessings with it.

Thirdly, every Congregation is bound to [Use 3] purge their own body from such excrements and filthiness as annoy it. We must have herein true zeal & godly courage in the cause of God and his truth. We must not stand in fear of the faces of men, though they be never so great and mighty. The censures of the Church must not be like the spiders web, which catcheth flies and gnats, whereas the bigger creatures break from it. They must be administered indifferently, without all respect of persons: otherwise it layeth open a gap to destroy religion, faith, honesty, justice, and equity, & maketh a way to wrong and all impiety. This reproveth such as dare not deal with great mē, rich men, and mighty men: they are afraid to touch them, lest they purchase their displeasure. These are like to fowlers, that pitch not the net to catch kites or Hawkes that do hurt, but for such as do no hurt. They suffer great men to do what they list▪ and see thē not: they let them alone, & either through negligence they will not, or through fear they dare not controlle them: according to the saying of the Poet,

Dat veniam coruis: vexat censura columbas.

They that are censors or chastisers of the manners of others, do pardon such as are most wicked and greatest malefactors, but do condemn them that walk in innocence, or at least sin of infirmity. But whatsoever the men are, when they wax impenitent, the Church must spew them out, as an unprofitable burden that lieth upon the stomach. It reproveth those also that would not have the poor complained off, or brought before thē, whatsoever they commit, and how much soever they offend, because they are not able to fill their purses, or to pay their fees, or to give them money. These are such Officers as regard their private gain before the churches good: and measure all things by their own profit, not by the Churches benefit: and seek to enrich themselves, not to reform the offender: and to advance their own estate, not to promote the glory of God. But the Church ought not so much to look upon the persons of men, whether they be high or low, rich or poor, as upon the cause: not so much what they are able to pay, as what their sins deserve: following the example of our heavenly Father, who rewardeth everyone according to his deserts.

Lastly, Is no Church to tolerate any open [Use 4] offenders among them? then they must use the censure of excommunication as an ordinance of God, not an invention of men: and not only know the nature and use of it, but practice it to the glory of GOD, and to the good of others. This is it which our Savior Christ hath left and commanded to be executed among us, Math. 18, verse 17. *If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a Publican.*

This use hath many particular branches, but before we come unto them, we are to make it appear, that in this place Christ our Savior speaketh of excommunication. For the words themselves going before, and following after, are plain and evident. In the circumstances before, it is manifest that he spake of private admonition, this here delivered is a public censure: that was done before two or three, this before many. And afterward our Savior

saith, *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* What is it to bind, but when the Church knoweth a man to be frozen in the dregs of sin, separated from the spiritual communion of Christ and the Church, and made the bondslave of Satan, to pronounce and declare him to be an impenitent person? and to remain as a captive bound in the chains of Satan, and to keep him out of the Church, as a prisoner kept in prison, until by this sharp remedy he be healed & brought to repentance, as it falleth out to the elect, who are always bettered by it? And what else is it to loose, then when the Church seeth by the true fruits of his repentance, that he is freed, delivered, and loosed from the hands and bands of Satan, by the mighty power of Christ's Spirit, to pronounce him set at liberty to have communion & fellowship with the members of Christ.

Let us now come to the several points to be observed in this ordinance. First, observe what excommunication is, that we be not deceived in the practice of it, passing over those that ought not to be passed over, and striking those that ought not to be stricken. For sometimes they are smitten with the sword, that deserve not to be touched with the scabbert: and they feel the bluntnes of the back, that deserve the sharpness of the edge. Excommunication therefore is an action of the Church, performed in the Name of Christ, whereby a brother grievously offending, and remaining impenitent, is separated from the Communion of the faithful, in those things especially y^t pertain to the worship of God; aiming thereby at the good of the Church, the salvation of the excommunicate person, and at the glory of God. No man ought to deny, that this authority is givē to the church, or to make any doubt of it, and so call it into question.

[Objection.] But peradventure some man will say, that Christ saith not, Let him be to the whole Church an heathen, or a Publican; but to thee against whom he hath trespassed, and to whom he will not be reconciled: whereas excommunication separateth from the whole body. [Answer.] I answer, this is a frivolous objection, and a poor shift to shake this holy ordinance of God in pieces, which is not able once to stir and remove out of his place. For no man ought to be esteemed and accounted as an heathen and Publican, of any particular member, who is acknowledged by the whole Church to be a brother, and communicateth with other of the brethren in all the privileges of the Church. And as though he hath not offended the Church, who beside the offense, whereof he was reprov'd, and wherewith being now revealed and manifest, he hath hurt the Church, hath been stubborn and obstinate against the same, nay stubborn & stiffnecked, obstinate and obdurate against the word of God, by which he was convinced, and exhorted. The Church hath not one cause and another to esteem of him, and to judge of him, but we proceed by one and the same rule. Seeing therefore the whole Church hath the same cause which I have, why he ought to be reputed as *an heathen and a Publican*: to wit, sin committed and perpetrated, and joined with stiffnesse and stubbornness, with contumely and contempt: what reason can be rendered, the cause being common, why he should be to me alone as *an heathen and Publican*, and not also to the whole Church?

Moreover, the ende why he ought to be unto me as *an heathen & a Publican*, is the same with the Church in all respects, namely that the brother not repenting nor returning, should be ashamed, and as it were by force & compulsion, be drawn & driven unto repentance. Therefore as well to the whole Church as unto me, he ought to be as *an heathen and a Publican*, that is, an excommunicate person: so that under the person of one, we must understand the whole Church, as if Christ had said, Let him be unto thee, and to all the brethren, and to the whole Church, as *an heathen and a Publican*. They thē that restrain these words, *Let him be unto thee*, to one member of the Church alone, are like to the Doctors of Rome, who, because Christ said to *Peter*, *To thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven*, conclude, that they were given to *Peter* alone, that thereupon they may build the foundation of a counterfeit and supposed supremacy: whereas he gave them to all the Apostles alike, as if Christ had said, I commit the keys to thee, and to the rest of the Apostles, and to their successors. So when he saith in this place, Let him be to thee as *an heathen and a Publican*, he meaneth, both to thee and to the rest of the parts of the Church, one being named instead of all the rest.

Lastly, the text it self being rightly weighed and considered, will make it plain and apparent, that this is a foolish cavil and a slender evasion, to understand the words thus, *Let him be to thee*, that is, Let him be to thee alone and to no others: for Christ having said, Let him be unto thee as an heathen man: to the end he might strengthen and confirm this, that he would ratify all this in heaven above, he annexeth immediately after, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*. Behold here the change of number used by Christ. Tell me then, wherefore, when he had said in the singular number, *Let him be unto thee*, as speaking of one, he spake afterward in the plural, *whatsoever ye shall loose, whatsoever ye shall bind*, as speaking of many? What was the cause of this difference, but only to signify, that under one person he understood the Church? To shut up this first point, we are not to doubt, but that Christ gave power and authority to the Church, to excommunicate wicked persons that are obstinate and impenitent, when by private admonition they cannot be won, as we shall show more at large afterward.

Secondly, we must consider, when any man is to be excommunicated; the fit season whereof is, when he hath contemned all admonitions and exhortations of private men, and is waxen proud and self-willed, & setteth himself against the Church; and not before. For then he manifesteth, as clearly as the light that shineth at noon day, not only his obstinacy & resolution to go forward in sin, but his contempt of the word, and of the Church, and of Christ himself, the author of the word, and the head of the Church: so that he is separated from the communion which all the faithful servants of GOD, have with Jesus Christ and the Church, whereof we say in the Articles of our faith, *I believe the holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints*. Whereby it appeareth, that he who is excommunicated, is not properly by the Churches censure separated from God and his people, but is declared & pronounced to be separate: forasmuch as properly it is sin which separateth, *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God: and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear*. Excommunication then doth not separate, but serveth to show who are separated: even as

the fan doth not make the chaff, but showeth it manifestly, which before lay hid among the good Corn. Whensoever therefore sinners grow obstinate, it is high time to draw out this sword of justice, to cut off from the Citty of God, such incorrigible persons.

Thirdly, Christ our Savior showeth to whō excommunication belongeth, and who are subject unto it. He is under it that is called a brother, and being exhorted, will not hear; being admonished, will not obey: being reproved, will not repent. He must be a brother, he must be admonished, reproved, and convinced. He must be told of his fault or faults privately and publicly. He must be one that hath confessed Christ, and called upon God the Father together with us, albeit he have denied him in his deeds. It is the Lord that will *judge thē that are without*, the Church hath nothing to do with them. God will punish those that are in the Church, & those that are out of the Church, forasmuch as all belong to his jurisdiction: it is not so with the Church, they have nothing to do with such as are infidels, and never gave their names to Christ, as Turks, Jews, Pagans, and such like. For as they that never were in the Synagogue and of the Synagogue, could not be put out of the Synagogue: and as they that were not of the communion, cannot be thrust out of the communion: so they y^t were never of the Church, or in the number of the faithful brethren, cannot be cast out of the Church. For these only are they that are spots and blots to the church: these are they that cause the Name of God to be evil spoken off: these are they that lay stūbling blocks before the weak: these are they that regard not the first or second table of the Law: these are they that tread under foot all counsels, persuasions, and admonitions made out of the word of God: these are they that are settled and resolved to continue in evil, whatsoever the Church say unto them.

Fourthly, he is to be excommunicated only, that hath in this manner offended; neither is it to be suffered, or allowed, or practiced, that one should be excommunicated for another, except peradventure he also offend, and be entangled in the same sin, or have given consent unto it. The son is not to be excommunicated for the father, nor the father for the son. The rule of the Apostle is to be observed, Gal. 6, 5. *Every man shall bear his own burden*. It is a common proverb among us, Every vessel shall stand upon his own bottom, that is, everyone shall bear the punishment of his own sin. This is it which the Prophet *Jeremiah* teacheth, chap. 31, 30. *Everyone shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge*. To this purpose speaketh *Paul*, Roman. 14, 12. *Everyone of us shall give an account to God for himself*.

If any object, [Object.] that we are to give an account to God, not only for our selves, but for these also that belong unto our charge, as the father for himself and his children, as we see in *Eli*; the Shepherd for his sheep, and the watchman for the souls of the people, as the Lord saith, *His blood will I require at thy hands, Ezek 33.10.* and *Hebr. 13, verse 17. They watch for your souls, as they that must give an account*. [Answer.] I answer, they shall indeed give an account and be punished, howbeit it is for their own sins, and no farther. Parents, Masters, Magistrates, and Ministers, shall not answer for their sins that are committed unto them, for the sins of their children, their servants, their subjects, and their hearers, but for the sins which themselves commit by their negligence, because they do not look unto them, nor

admonish them, nor reprove them, nor restrain them, as it is plainly expressed in the Prophet Ezekiel, chap. 33, verse 8, 9. *If thou doest not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand: Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way, to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul* So then, he that is impenitent, is to be excommunicated, even he only, and not others that are not partakers of his sin. S. Augustine hath a notable Epistle to this purpose written to a certain Bishop called *Auxilius*, who being a young man, for the offense of the master of the house, excommunicated all the rest of his family, and would not deliver the Sacraments to his children and household: whom he persuadeth to lay aside anger, and to reverse his sentence, lest the man perish that is a friend, & the devil rejoice in it that is an enemy. In this case in a manner do they offend, who refuse to baptize the children of thē that are excommunicated, & such as are borne in fornication, because their parents are impenitent, as though the son should bear the iniquity of the father, or the wife of the husband, or the servant of the master, or he that is not yet born, the iniquity of thē that are borne. What hath the infant offended that is borne in the Church, that he should not be baptized of the Church? The Prophet saith, *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, nor the father, the iniquity of the son; but the soul that sinneth, it shall die.* This also is the resolution of *Beza* in one of his Epistles, proving that the children of the excommunicate may be baptized. We conclude therefore, that they only, which have offended, and remain obstinate in their offenses, are to be excommunicated: forasmuch as Christ never said, if he hear not the Church, let him and all that belong any way unto him, be as heathens and Publican's, but let him be unto thee, that is, him only. This serveth to condemn the horrible and abominable tyranny of the Bishops of Rome, who have not only raged upon the bodies of the Saints, but also exercised dominion over their consciences. These are they that send out their curses, and smite the chiefest Monarchs of the world, as it were with thunder & lightning. They pronounce sentence of excommunication for trifles, and they absolve from it for trifles. They excommunicate one for another, and they absolve one for another. They cast out of the Church, those that do not belong to their jurisdiction: for what have they to do with Princes? When Princes are supposed to have offended, they curse & condemn whole states and Kings, as they have served heretofore the Kings of this Land, and lately the State of *Venice*. They have interdicted whole Realms, they have forbidden divine service to be said, and the Sacraments to be administered.

Fifthly, we must learn from what things excommunicate persons are excluded, that we may y^e better know how to behave our selves toward them. Christ saith, let such be *as heathens & Publican's*; that is, abstain from such false brethren, and communicate not with thē, either in matters of religion, or in common conversation. But how far we must forbear their company and conversing with them, we shall speak afterward. The word excommunication and to excommunicate, note out a cutting off frō the communion; which Christ noteth by the branches that bring forth no fruit: *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.* The Evangelists also call it to *put out of the Synagogues*, that is, out of the fellowship of the faithful, met together in one place. Hence it is also, that they were said to be accursed, being out of the

Church, as they are blessed that abide in the Church, having a communion together in matters of religion, and fellowship one with another. Now we must understand, that there is a twofold communion, from whence an excommunicate person may be said to be excluded: the one is inward and spiritual, the other outward and corporal. The inward communion is that, which every faithful one hath by faith and love, first with God, and then with the Saints of God, and therefore in the Creed it is called, y^e *Communion of Saints*. For all the Saints are joined together with Christ their head, by the band of the Spirit, & among themselves, and with the whole body of the Church, 1 Cor. 10, 16. *The bread which we break (in the Supper of the Lord) is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* saith Paul. And the Apostle John in his first Epistle, *That which we have seen & heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*. From this fellowship, can none be excluded but by sin. The Prophet saith, your sins have separated between me and you. And John teacheth, that *if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin*. And Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, showeth particularly, that there is nothing under heaven can separate us from Christ and from the love of God, *neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature*: among all which he doth not reckon sin, and therefore it is sin alone which can separate any man frō the grace of God, and from communion with him. The excommunication of the Church can bar and shut out no man from this communion. For if any man be truly engrafted into Christ, endued with faith in Christ, and repentance from dead works, being a member of his body in deed and in truth, excommunication shall hurt him nothing at all, in regard of that spiritual communion; forasmuch as the sentence so given, is void and frustrate, and the door is shut up & locked fast with a false key. Such an excommunication is a blessing not a cursing. Again, albeit a man justly deserveth to be excommunicated through his sin, & to be separated from God, yet excommunication is not the first or chief cause of it, but his own sin, and the continuance in it: seeing it doth not sever him from God, but declareth him to be severed through his impenitency, as y^e Priests under the law, putting out the leprous, did not defile them with the leprosy, but pronounced them to be defiled; & as the Judge giving sentence upon a malefactor, doth not thereby make him a malefactor, (for he was so before) but pronounce him to be so; and as a thief that is found guilty, is not thereby made a thief. But here a question ariseth, how can it be, [Object.] that any having a true fellowship with Christ, can be separated from it through sin? Can he that is a member of Christ, be made no member? All men are either reprobate or elect. The reprobate are not, neither were, neither ever shall be partakers of this communion: how then should they be separated frō it, that were never of it or in it? And touching the elect, they can never fall from the grace of election; *the foundation of God remaineth sure, & hath this seal, the Lord knoweth who are his*, so that it is unchangeable. Besides, such are also engrafted into Christ, and cannot be separated from his communion, according the saying of Christ, John 6, ver. 37. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me: and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*. And the Apostle John saith, *They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us*. If then the reprobate were never of this

communion, and the elect can never fall from this communion, it may seem that none can be said to be truly excommunicated, that is, to be separated from that spiritual communion which we have with Christ and with all the Saints by faith, hope, and love. I answer, that which is affirmed of the elect and reprobate is most true, nevertheless that which is concluded from thence is most false, as the learned have well observed. For first of all, touching the reprobate, that being hypocrites were once in the Church, though they were never of the Church, neither truly partakers of this spiritual communion of the Saints, yet then they are said to be separated from it, when they are manifested & declared to have been always strangers unto it, and separated from it: as when *David* prayeth in the Psalms, that they might be *blotted out of the book of life*, Psal. 69, 28. as if he had said, declare it & show it plainly, that they were never written in the book of eternal election. Secondly, touching the elect, the question is more difficult, and yet the knot is not so intricate or entangled, but it may be loosed. For albeit they cannot be cut off from the grace of election, because *his gifts and calling are without repentance*, Rom. 11, 29. neither can be wholly and altogether excluded from that communion which they have by faith with Christ, and by love with the Church, both by reason of the stablesse of God's promises, and by reason of the efficacy & force of Christ's prayer heard of the Father, Luke 22, 32. Yet in some sort & in some respect they separate themselves as much as lieth in them, when they fall into grievous sins, as *David*, when he committed adultery, and *Peter*, when he denied his Master. The gifts of the holy Ghost are as a flame of fire kindled in us: such sins are as water poured upon them to quench it: and except GOD did grant his Spirit to dwell in them, and preserve it as fire hidden under the ashes, they would lose it wholly, & be quite and clean excluded from this spiritual communion. Notwithstanding, our salvation is sure for his promise sake, who hath promised to put his fear in our hearts, that we should not depart from him, and for Christ's prayer, who prayed for *Peter* & all the elect, that their faith should not fail. Hence it is, that he keepeth a remnant of grace in them, and cherisheth the fire of his Spirit, that it should not go out; so that the flame is slaked, and the heat is diminished. But in his good time, he kindleth the fire, and stirreth up the heat, sometimes by his word, and sometimes by his corrections; and therefore the Apostle willeth *Timothy* to stir up as coals, *the gift of God that was in him*: & *David* having experience hereof, prayeth unto him, to *create a new heart in him, and not to take away his Spirit from him*. Ps. 51, 10, 11. Thus we see how the faithful are not wholly, but yet in some part separated frō the communion of Christ, because they are deprived of the sweet comforts that they felt before, & of the large measure of grace which they find greatly diminished by the committing of sin and continuing in it. This is the spiritual communion.

The external communion standeth in a common partaking together in the word, in prayers & in the receiving of the Sacraments, and in familiarity and friendship one with another, as *Luke* speaketh of the Church of Christ after his ascension, Acts 2, 42. *They continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers*. Excommunication separateth from all these. But some will say, [Object.] doth excommunication take away all commercing and conversing one with another? May not one in any sort live with such? Or doth it dissolve all bands of nature and policy? I answer, [Answer.] no. There are some bands

so firmly and closely knit & tied together, that nothing can loose them, and abrogate them. Some duties are natural, some domestical, and some civil, which no excommunication can diminish or dissolve, or dispense withal. The Apostle giveth this as a general precept, *If thine enemy hunger, give him meat, and if he thirst, give him drink.* If an excommunicate person be in want and in any distress, we must help him and minister unto him such things as are necessary for his preservation: we must not cast away all care of him, and all love unto him, forasmuch as God hath made us keepers one of another. Again, it is lawful to buy of him, & to sell unto him, and to bargain with him, albeit we should not converse and commerce with him as with a friend. Moreover, if we owe personal duties to such a one as is in the family with us, we cannot shake them off under any color or pretence of excommunication. The wife must perform due benevolence to the husband, the children must obey their parents, the servants must count their masters worthy of all honor, and contrariwise: provided always that they do not cease to pray for thē, to admonish them, and to hate their sins, and that they look to themselves that they do not defend them in their wicked courses, and join with them in opinion, for then we make our selves partakers of their sins.

Lastly, let us set before us the ends of excommunication, which also have been considered in part already. One end of it is, the good of the person excommunicated, that if it be possible he may be won. Christ delivereth *the doctrine of salvation, & the Gospel is the power of God to salvation, to everyone that believeth.* For whereas Christ Jesus saith of himself, *y^t he came to send fire and sword into the world,* and that he is appointed *for the fall of many in Israel,* Lu. 12, 46, & 2, 34. & *y^t the Gospel is the savor of death unto death,* 2 Corinth. 2, 15. Yet this is not the proper end of Christ or the Gospel, but as it were beside their purpose through the malice and wickedness of men. The Apostle speaking of the Law, saith, Rom. 7. *It is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.* The like we may say of the discipline of the church; it was ordained not to destruction, but to salvation: and if it attain not to this end, the fault is in the person impenitent, not in the ordinance of God: as when a good & approved medicine well applied, recovereth not the patient, the fault is not in the Physician, but in the desperateness of the disease. This ought to teach all persons excommunicate for their sins, to submit themselves to the stroke of God's own hand, that thereby they may be healed. Impenitent persons are as those that are diseased: sins are as sicknesses, or wounds, or soars; excommunication is as physic for the soul, and a souereigne medicine to recover them: and the Governors of the Church, are as good Physicians, or tender Surgeons, who, when all other remedies of admonition, and exhortation fail, are compelled to sear, and cut, and launce, and apply as it were desperate cures: not that they delight to be sawing and searing, but because the cutting off of one member, serveth to preserve the rest of the body. Let us be content to suffer for the benefit of the soul, as we are for the health of the body. Remember the counsel of the best Physician that ever was, Christ Jesus, who came to seek and to save that which was lost, *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.* The end of excommunication, is the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. It is a bitter medicine, and unpleasant to the taste, howbeit it is wholesome and healthful. It is as a saw that cutteth off a dead member, or as an hot iron

that seareth an ulcer: howbeit the effect is pleasant and profitable. It maketh sad, howbeit it is godly sorrow that causeth repentance never to be repented off. It is like the seed, the which, except it be cast into the earth and die, it can bring forth no fruit. But it may be objected, [Objection.] how can excommunication make to the good and salvation of him that is excommunicated, forasmuch as it cutteth him off from the body of Christ, and from the communion of Saints, that he may be no longer a member? A member that is once cut off from the body, receiveth no more life from it, neither can be joined to it again, as a branch that is cut frō the vine, withereth, John. 15. How then can excommunication be any way profitable? I answer [Answer.] as before, that all they who are in the body of the church, & enrolled in the number of the faithful, are not after one manner members of the church, neither are all cut off alike by y^e two edged sword of excommunication. Some are in the church as evil humors in the body, but are not of the Church, as all hypocrites, who have givē their names to Christ, but are not Christ's, because they have not the Spirit of Christ. They have a show of faith & godliness, but they are as Idols, that seem to be that which they are not. They seem to have a communiō with Christ, but they have not; like to one y^t hath a wood leg so artificially joined to his body, that there is none which taketh it not to be a true leg indeed, whereas notwithstanding it is not so. When the Church proceedeth to excommunication against these, it cutteth them off and casteth them away altogether, so that such a separation cannot tend to their salvation, but is a fore-runner of their destruction. Others are true members of the church, & have a true communion with Christ & his Church. These are of two sorts, some are so kept by the power of the Spirit in obedience, that albeit they sin, (for who is it •hat sinneth not?) yet they give no offense to the Church, & are not obstinate in their sins, but being admonished, or without admonition they repent and amend. Now, where there is repentance from sin, and amendment of life, there is no need of excommunication. There are another sort that want this remedy, and cannot otherwise be cured; the fiery darts wherewith Satan hath wounded them, are so deadly. These the word cannot restore, and the admonitions of a few and of many they contemn: to these, excommunication is profitable, when all other means fail. This foundation being laid, the answer to the former objection is easy, to wit, that it cannot be profitable to be separated from the body from whence it had life, no more then for the branch to be cut away from the vine: forasmuch as we must consider, that there is a twofold separation, in whole, or else in part, and therefore the similitude is not to be presfed farther then the purpose of it. That separation which doth altogether separate any member from the body, cannot be profitable unto it. But excommunication maketh not such a separation, neither diuideth the elect (of whom we speak) wholly and finally from the body of the Church, but only in part, in respect of the flesh, not according to the Spirit, in regard of the corruption of the old mā, not in regard of the renewing of the inner man. The second end of excommunication is the salvation of the whole Church; for the Corinthians are willed *to put away the evil one frō among them, and to purge out the old leaven*, that they might be a new lump. Where the Apostle showeth, that the casting out of a wicked man from the company of the faithful, is to this purpose, that if he will not repent, yet at least others should be provided for, th•t they be not infected with his impiety, as it were with a leprosy. The third ende is, that the rest may fear, and be kept within the bounds of their duty. That which the Apostle speaketh of public

rebuking, *Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear*: may also be applied to excommunication, namely, that the stiffnecked should not be spared no more then wolves be suffered among the sheep, to the end that others by their example may take heed. This is to pull out of the fire, and to save with fear. It is better for us to learn by the punishments of others, then to be censured our selves for our own sins. *Daniel*, setting before *Belshazzar* the king his manifest offenses, who was weighed in the balance, and found wanting, doth aggravate and increase his sins, that he had seen his father *deposed from his kingly throne, and driven from the sons of men, and fed with grass like oxen*, yet he had not humbled his heart though he knew all these things, but lifted up himself against the LORD of heaven. So when we behold any cut off from the society of the Saints, and do not fear the same sentence, it argueth that we are as members benumbed, and want that lively feeling which ought to be in the members.

The fourth end is, that those punishments, which hang over the Church for sin, may be avoided. For so long as they that deserve to be excommunicate, remain in the Church, God is provoked to plague that Church, as we saw before in the example of *Achan*, Josh. 7.11. When the Church hath done what lieth in them to do, God is appeased▪ and his wrath turned away, as we noted by *the zeal that Phinehas shown* against the adulterer, and the adulteress, Numb. 25.7. Psal. 106.30. *he stood up and executed judgment*, and so the plague was stayed.

Lastly, the glory of God which is the ende of all good things, is another end of excommunication. This the Church ought to aim at, and if this be before their eyes, that are the governors of the Church, it will keep them from declining either to the right hand, or to the left hand, both from sparing the guilty, and from punishing the guiltless, from winking at the sins of great ones, and censuring the faults and infirmities of those of low degree too sharply; from winking at great beams in some, and having Eagles eyes to pry into the motes of others. This will make us walk in the beaten path of God's word. If then, in the least things, as our *eating and drinking, we must do all to the glory of God*▪ how much more ought we to respect it, when we are to deal in so serious and weighty a cause? For his name is honored and glorified in the salvation of the Elect, and in the just condemnaon of the reprobate, both which are furthered by this ordinance of excommunication being rightly used.

5 And the Lord spake unto Moses▪ saying,

6 Speak unto the children of Israel, When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit to do a trespass against the Lord, and that person be guilty:

7 Then they shall confess their sin which they have done: and he shall reompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed.

8 But if the man have no kinseman to recompense the trespass unto, let the trespass be recompensed unto the Lord, even to the Priest: beside the ram of the atonement, whereby an atonement shall be made for him.

9 And every offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they bring unto the Priest, shall be his.

10 And every man's hallowed things shall be his: whatsoever any man giveth the Priest, it shall be his.

The first part of the Chapter hath hitherto been handled, touching the putting of lepers and other polluted persons out of the host: the second part followeth concerning falsehood committed, whereby our brother is damnified, beguiled, and deceived, to the 11 verse. Our neighbor trusteth us, and repositeth confidence in us at our word, but we often make no conscience to deceive and defraud him, so it may be to our own gain and commodity, against the common rule that nature taught the Gentiles themselves, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*, Matth. 7.12. In this division therefore we are to consider two things: first▪ the promulgation of the law instituted of God to amend and correct this fault. Secondly, the application of this particular to the general law touching the Priests maintenance. The law is first propounded and enacted, and then amplified by a prouiso or exception set down by way of preventing of an objection. The substance of the Law is this. If any man or woman have dealt falsely with his brother in any part of his goods, by circumventing of him fraudulently, or detayning any of them wrongfully, whereby he is injured, and God is offended, so that his own conscience accuseth him & witnesseth against him: this course is to be taken, he must seek to blot out and wash away his trespass and offense which he hath done, three ways. First by confession: secondly, by restitution: thirdly, by reconciliation.

First, he must confess his sin, and crave pardon from the bottom of his heart; he must submit himself unto God, and acknowledge freely & willingly, what he hath done, knowing that he can by no means hide his sin, nor by any color keep it from the sight of God. It booteth him not to deny it, or defend it, or excuse it, or diminish it, or turn it over upon others. If he would receive pardon and forgiveness, it is necessarily required of him, that he use hearty confession, both of this, and all other trespasses and transgressions.

Secondly, we must make satisfaction to him whom we have wronged, and from whom we wrested anything. It is not enough to make open confession unto God, unless also we make actual restitution unto men. For the sin is not pardoned, except that which is taken away be restored. Wherefore, that the party offended should be recompensed, and the party offending should be punished, he must together with the principal, make good the damage, and put a fifth part more thereunto, and give it unto him against whom he hath transgressed. This is done, to discourage injurious persons, and to make them afraid to do

wrong, whether by fraud or violence. For if they should only restore the principal, they knew, if their offenses were found out, they should be no losers.

Thirdly, he must seek • reconciliation and atonement with God, by offering up of a ram in sacrifice, which figured out the suffering of Christ, and offering up of himself once upon the Cross, for the discharge of our sin, and appeasing of the wrath of his Father. It is in vain to make satisfaction unto men, except we know how God will be satisfied: and it shall profit us nothing to be at peace with men, except we be at peace with our God.

This is the enacting of the Law: an exception is annexed by way of prevention. For the offender that hath trespassed against his neighbor, might object and say, How can I restore that I have taken? it may be the party is dead; it may be he hath neither son nor daughter; neither brother, nor kinsman: may I not then lawfully conceal it and justly retain it unto myself? I answer, nay; the Lord answereth, Thou shalt by no means detain the goods that are not thine own, if thou look for any good at my hand: as if he should say, when thy neighbor is any way damnified, let the loss be recompensed, and the damage restored, provided always, and be it farther enacted, y^t if the owner be dead or unknown, and he have none of his kindred and alliance living to be his heir, it shall not be thine, it is the Lord's, and he giveth it unto the Priest for a recompense of his labors in the Tabernacle, and his service of the Lord, and his teaching of the people, God is the Lord of the soil, he challengeth it at his own, and he disposeth it at his own pleasure.

Thus much touching the Law: the applying of it followeth, where God ordaineth it as a Law, that all such things as are purloyned and conueyghed away from the right owners and possessours, should (in case they or any of them fail) be bestowed upon the Priest, which is amplified by an equal comparison of the like; all other things offered should be his also, and might not be altered to any other use: as if he had said, As I have given them the offerings of the people, so I have given to them this also, that they shall have right as well to the one as to the other by my gift.

[Verse 5. *When a man or woman shall commit any sin, &c.*] After we have seen the order of the words, let us make a collection of doctrine. And first observe, that Moses speaketh in this place, not of any sin committed against piety and godliness, but against the equity and justice that ought to be among men: not of the immediate worship of God prescribed in the first table, but of wrongs done to our brethren, forbidden in the second table, as appeareth by sundry circumstances, both because he speaketh of making him recompense, which no man can give to God, it being impossible to make satisfaction to him for the least offense; and because the trespass shall be recompensed to the Priest: yet notwithstanding he calleth it a trespass against God. Heereby we learn, that all sin, even the breach of the second table, is committed against God. Whatsoever injuries and offenses are done against our brethren, are sins and offenses committed against God. This appeareth evidently in other places of the Law, as Levite. 6.2, 3, 4. *If any man sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and deny to his neighbor that which is taken him to keep, &c.* Where he teacheth, that to deny the thing committed to our keeping, to break the trust reposed in us, to rob our neighbor violently, to

take his goods from him, to deny that which we have found and our neighbor hath lost, are all of them sins against God, though trespasses against men.

The charge also that *Nathan* layeth upon *David*, together with his answer, make this truth most plain, 2 Sam. 12.9.13. The Prophet reproving him saith, *Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.* To this heavy message from God delivered by his servant the Prophet, doth *David* submit himself, and in the humility of his soul consesseth, *I have sinned against the Lord.* This is that which *Joseph* witnesseth, when he was enticed to commit folly with his wanton mistress; (but yielded not unto the temptation) he saith unto her, *How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* He doth not say, against my master, and so render evil for good unto him, as he might truly have said, but he speaketh with a feeling conscience that he should sin against God, in offending against his master.

To all these we may also add the testimony of the Lord himself uttered unto *Cain* that had conceived malice and murder in his heart against his brother, a sin against the second Table, the sum whereof is, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* Gen. 4.6, 7. *Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance cast down? if thou do well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, &c.* It is a notable exhortation that *Moses* giveth in the behalf of the poor that were among them, Deut. 15.6. *Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release is at hand, and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him naught, and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee.* Whereby we see, that not only such as take away other men's goods wrongfully, do commit sin against God, but they that detain their own goods couetously, and do not bestow them upon the relief of the poor: so that a man may sin in his own, as well as in other men's, in overmuch sparing, as well as in wronging others. To the same purpose he speaketh in another place against the oppressing of an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he were of their brethren, or of the strangers in the land, Deut. 24.15. *At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it, lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.* All these places prove unto us, that all sin is committed against God, and respecteth him, either immediately when we sin against the first Table, or mediately when we sin against the second Table.

This will better appear by such reasons as [Reason 1] are grounded out of the Scriptures, and serve to confirm this truth, and to establish our consciences in it. First, sin is nothing else, but the breach of the Law of God, 1 John. 5.17 and the party that is offended properly & directly, is God himself. For except there had been a law given of God forbidding or commanding, there could be no offense against any creature. If God had not said, *Thou shalt not steal*, theft had not been a sin: and lust could not be accounted as a sin, *except the Law had said, Thou shalt not lust*, as *Paul* confesseth he had not known sin, but by the law. And in another place he testifieth that *where there is no law, there is no transgression*, forasmuch as by the law cometh the knowledge of sin. If God had not said, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*, *David* had never offended *Uriah* in taking his wife. If he had never said, *Thou shalt not kill*: it

had been no offense to take away life. *Absalom* had never transgressed in dishonoring his father, *Cain* in murdering his brother, *Ziba* in slandering his master if God had never published a law against these things. Hence it is that the Apostle *John* saith, *Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the Law*. This is a full and perfect definition of sin, so that as the definition, and the thing defined, are both one, so are sin, and the breach of the Law. For as every sin is the transgression of the Law, so every transgression of the law is sin, and nothing else but sin; as every man is a reasonable creature, and every reasonable creature is a man. If then by sin the law of the eternal God be broken, we see how it toucheth him nearly, so that his Majesty is offended, and his justice violated.

Secondly, every sin is liable to judgment, [Reason 2] against whomsoever it be committed, it is punished of God, he taketh the matter into his own hand, as Rom. 1.18. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, which hold the truth in unrighteousness*. And chap. 2.9. *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man, that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile*. To this purpose speaketh the Apostle *James*, cha. 4.12 *There is one Lawgiuer, that is able to save, and to destroy*. He punisheth sin in whomsoever he findeth it, and letteth not the transgressor escape scot free; that so he may be acknowledged to be a just and upright God, that hateth wickedness, and loveth righteousness. For he will show himself just, as well in his reproofs and threatenings, as in his judgments and corrections. Now, he could not correct all sin, except all sin were committed against him. And if he should, he should be an unjust judge through too much rigor and severity, as the Apostle concludeth in the Epistle to the Romans, cha. 3.5, 6. *Is God unrighteous which punisheth? (I speak as a man) God forbid: for then, how shall God judge the world?* Forasmuch as he which is to judge all the world in righteousness and truth, cannot but deal justly and uprightly, Gen. 18.

Thirdly, as he punisheth all sin, so he only [Reason 3] can forgive sins. This is that which the Prophet setteth down: *Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back*, Isaiah 38.17. And to this purpose speaketh *Micah*, chap. 7.19. *He will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea*. If then it belong to God alone to forgive sins, it followeth that they are committed against him.

Fourthly, the love of our brethren is made [Reason 4] the fulfilling of the whole law, and the trial of our selves whether we love God, or not. This the Apostle maketh plain, Rom. 13.8,9, 10. *Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law: for this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, &c. it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law*. In setting down the sum of the whole Law, Christ and his Apostles oftentimes pass over the first Table, and make no mention of the duties thereof. He calleth the most weighty and principal matters of the Law, *judgment, mercy, and fidelity*, Matth. 23.23. and when the young man in the Gospel, asked the question, what commandments he must observe that he may enter into eternal life, he sendeth him not to the first Table, but to the second, and saith unto him, *Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt commit adultery, &c. thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*, Matth. 19.18. He

might have taught, that he should have no other God, but the true God of Israel, and that he must love him, believe in him, and put his trust and confidence in him: but the obedience hereunto stood for the most part in the inward affection of the heart, or in outward ceremonies. The affection of the heart doth not appear outwardly, and the outward ceremonies of his worship are oftentimes counterfeited thorough hypocrisy: but the works of charity are witnesses of true righteousness. Our outward works toward men are signs of our inward piety toward God: so that he will have our faith toward him to be known by these fruits. Wherefore, forasmuch as we have plainly shown and firmly proved, that all sin is a transgression of God's Law, that he is a punisher of sin, rewarding everyone according to his works, that he only can forgive sins, and that he trieth how we perform our duty toward him, by our love and charity toward our brethren: it followeth necessarily, that howsoever men are many ways and oftentimes greatly wronged, yet therein also God is most highly offended.

Now, albeit the doctrine may seem sufficiently strengthened by these consents and reasons, yet some scruple and doubt may remain in us, except we shall remove one objection. For in that prayer which the Lord taught his disciples, we are taught to ask forgiveness our sins at the hands of God, forasmuch as we also forgive our debtors, Luk. 11.4. The creditor is God, the debtor is man, the band or bill is the Law, the debt is sin, the prison is hell. Hereupon the question may be asked, [Object.] how all sin can be made to be committed against God, seeing we are also said to sin against men, and to be indebted unto them: for debt and sin are used indifferently the one for the other? If then we be said to sin against God only, how are we said to trespass against our brother, and our brother to trespass against us? and how are we said to forgive one another? I answer, in every trespass that we do against our neighbor, we are to consider two things: first, the injury done to man: secondly, the offense done against God. The loss and damage that man receiveth, either in his body, when he is wounded, or in his substance, when it is purloyned, or in his good name when it is abused, he may forgive and remit: but the sin against God and his Law, God only can remit and release. If a man be slandered, and thereby receive much hurt, he may pardon that, as we see in *David* who, flying from his sons rebellion, was cursed with an horrible curse by *Shimei*, one of the family of the house of *Saul*: he accused him to be a *bloody man*, and reviled him as a *man of Belial*; yet he put it up, and would not be revenged of it, neither suffer others to take away his life. Nevertheless, as his vile slanders and false surmises were forbidden in the ninth commandment, and were breaches thereof, he did not, neither could he forgive, he hath nothing to do with that; nay, all the men in the world are not able to make it no breach of the law, and consequently no sin against God. If a man cause a blemish in his neighbor, he may forgive the blemish he hath received, as *Stephen* his persecutors that stoned him to death, and prayed for them; but he cannot blot out the stain that the sin maketh in his soul, nor forgive the breach of the sixth commandment. If a man have his goods stolen, he may pardon the thief, but he cannot remit the theft; for as much as the eighth commandment will take hold of him as a Sergeant, and judge him as guilty in the sight of God.

Besides, as there is a twofold trespass, so there is a threefold kind of remitting or forgiving, to wit, remission of revenge, remission of punishment, and remission of judgment.

Remission of revenge belongeth to all persons, both public and private, and restraineth the hands of Magistrates and subjects; for neither superiors nor inferiors, ought to do anything in malice and grudge, or to satisfy their own lusts. If a Judge in proceeding against malefactors, pursue his own quarrel rather than execute justice, he sinneth and offendeth, albeit the party be guilty, and deserve death: for vengeance belongeth to the Lord, and we are not to requite like for like. Remission of punishment belongeth to private persons that bear not the sword: but as all cannot inflict, so all cannot remit punishment. For the Magistrate though not sometimes, and in some cases, and in some persons he may remit, which are not needful here to remember; yet not always, nor all offenders, nor in all offenses, because God will have the sentence of the law proceed, and the execution of justice have his course. This extendeth not to Magistrates, for then evil doers should not be punished, nor evil deeds rooted out of the city of God. Remission of judgment, is when we conceive a good and charitable opinion of those that have offended us. But thus we are not bound always to forgive, neither to remit the censure which evil men justly deserve for their evil deeds. For the Prophet *Isaiah* pronounceth a woe against all such *as call evil good, and good evil: sweet sour: and sour, sweet.* It is lawful for us to retain our judgment and opinion of wicked men, so long as they be impenitent. Of this Christ speaketh, Luk. 17.3 *If he repent, forgive him,* that is, that hard censure of him, and count him as a brother. But of this we have spoken at large elsewhere, and therefore this shall suffice for the answer to this objection.

The uses that arise from hence are many, and [Use 1] of special note. First of all, is all sin, even the trespass against men, committed against God? doth it offend him, and violate his law? yes doubtless: not only man is injured, but God himself is offended, as hath been sufficiently proved: and therefore it should teach us what a grievous and fearful thing sin is, in what account it ought to be with us, and how everyone should learn to aggravate and augment with God his own sin for his farther humiliation. This was it that grieved and vexed *David*, and as it were pierced his very bowels in the matter of *Uriah*, namely, that his sin was against God, who knoweth sin perfectly, and beholdeth it in his natural colors, so that neither it nor we can deceive him. Wherefore, this lesson must duly be considered of us, and enter deeply into our hearts, Who it is that we offend. This was it that moved *David* to know sin, and to mourn for it, Psal. 51.4, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.* Where note, that he is not content to say once, *against thee*, but he doubleth it *against thee, against thee*: and addeth with great force and vehemency, *against thee only.* But did he not sin against man? or is not murder a breach of the sixth commandment, and adultery of the seventh? I answer, yes, these sins are condemned in the second Table. He had slain *Uriah* with a sword; he had committed adultery with his wife; he had been the chief cause and principal means of the slaughter and destruction of others, and so brought blood-guiltiness upon himself; he hardened the Ammonites in their sins, who opened their mouth to slander the word, and to blaspheme the holy Name of God; he sinned against the child that was mis-begotten, which also died through that unfaithful act; he sinned against his own house, in that he kindled a fire throughout his family, & brought sticks with his own hands to raise up the flame that was not easily to be quenched: for one of his sons taketh up the sword, and killeth another,

the brother committeth abominable incest with his own sister of the half blood; and another of his own sons taketh his wives and lieth with them not in the dark of the night, or in a secret corner of the house, but he spread a tent openly, and in the sight of the sun. Lastly, he sinned against the whole Church and people of God, who by means of his sin were offended, and troubled with tumults and seditions, so that the whole land was in an uproar and insurrection from one end to the other. All which points show that his sin went far against men, it touched *Uriah*, it touched *Bathshebah*, it touched the child, it touched the Ammonites, it touched his family, it touched the whole Church: yet these bloody, and crying, and heinous sins so far as they concerned men like himself, he seeth to be as nothing (albeit they were notorious) in comparison of God against whom they were especially committed: he had rather have all men set against him then to have God his enemy, and to come out in battle array against him, and therefore he crieth out in great anguish and bitterness of spirit, *O against thee, against thee only have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight*. As if he should say, Although the whole world should absolve me, and no man could accuse me of sin, yet this troubleth my conscience, this stingeth and striketh me to the heart, that I must have thee to be my judge. I am free from the judgment seat of men as being myself supreme, and under the jurisdiction of no other: but (•lasse) what can this comfort me, so long as I have thee to give sentence upon me! He that is thus overburdened and overwhelmed with a feeling of the greatness of God's judgment, as *David* was, needeth no other accuser, forasmuch as God standeth and serveth instead of a thousand.

If the whole world should accuse a man, and conspire together to charge him with any crime, yet if God acquit him, his own conscience will minister peace unto him, and comfort against all slanders and imputations laid against him. For *if God be on his side, who shall be against him?* but if God be against him, and lay grievous things unto him, woe, woe, unto him, who shall speak for him, though he had the praise and applause, though he had the gain and glory of all the world? If he condemn, who shall justify? if he say guilty, who dare plead, not guilty? He found out *Adam*, when none accused him, when there was no man upon the face of the earth to accuse him, and said *Adam, Where art thou?* He sound out *Achan*, who had stolen the Babylonish garment and wedge of gold: he had hidden it privily, and conveyed it closely into his tent, howbeit he could not hide himself, but the eye of God easily espied him: so that the host of God could not prosper, so long as he remained in it, but received an overthrow at the siege of Ai.

Wherefore, what shall it profit us to be absolved by the voices and sentences of all men, or to be winked at, as if we were clear & innocent, when our conscience accuseth us before God, or he be displeased with us, and angry against us? We must enter into our selves, and consider how the case standeth between God & us, and not think it enough to know how the case standeth between man and us. What though we can bribe them, and stop their mouths, and make them hold their peaces, and cause them to be content to take a little at our hands (when we have done them much wrong) rather then they will go to law with us, because they are weak, and we mighty, they are poor and we rich, they are empty and we full? we shall not be able to bribe the Lord, who is stronger then we are, and taketh the cause of the oppressed into his hand. When we have offered injury unto them, it is not enough to confess

our fault unto them, and to humble our selves before them, and to seek to make amends unto them; all this we may do, and then go to hell; yet there are many that do not come thus far. So then, we must remember whom we offend, that is, God; and thereupon to account all sin heinous and capital, forasmuch as it is against the highest Majesty of infinite power and authority. The greater the person is that is offended, the greater the sin is. If a man speak evil of the Judge or Justice, he shall be imprisoned; howbeit it is not so heinous, as to rail at the Prince, because his person is greater and higher. But what are all Princes, but mortal men whose breath is in their nostrils, whose bodies must go into the grave, and turn into dust, out of which they were taken, in comparison of the immortal God, who is a person of infinite and incomprehensible Majesty? If he give us once the sight of our sins, and touch our hearts with a feeling of them, though they were as hard as steel, as senseless as the dead, and seared as with an hot iron, he can make them alive, quick, and tender enough, that we shall go roaring all the day long, and find comfort in nothing: if his hand be heavy upon us, he will turn our moisture into the drouth of Summer, and make all our bones that are broken to clatter: so that our life shall abhor bread, and our soul dainty meat, and our flesh shall be consumed away, that it cannot be seen. It is not therefore for us to dally with him as with a child, or to play with his justice, as the fly doth with the candle, til she be consumed: but rather let us remember the exhortation of the Apostle, Heb. 12.28. *Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence & godly fear, because our God is a consuming fire.* If his wrath be kindled, yea, but a little, blessed are all they that trust in him. As then we are to mark what we do, so we are to mark against whom we do it, lest we taste of destruction at the last, and then would give all the world (if we were owners of it) to be eased and released of our horrible plagues, as it fared and fell out with the rich man in the Gospel, Luk. 16. Let us not think to escape from him, by denying our sins, as the reprobate shall do at the last day, who being accused of sin committed against God, shall answer, *When saw we thee a stranger, or naked, or hungry, or thirsty, or in prison:* but Christ Jesus will reply against them, and take away all excuse from them, and so stop the mouth of iniquity, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of these little ones, ye did it not to me.* And hereby we may try our selves, whether we have truly repented of sin, or not, if this note that abounded in *David* be found in us. For his conscience doth not so much accuse him for any fact and offense committed against *Uriah*, as against the Lord himself, and from hence came the lively feeling of his sin. So if our conscience accuse us much more for offending of God's infinite Majesty, then for the injury which we have done unto man; if we stay not beneath upon the earth, but lift up our hearts unto God, and consider that we have to do with him, we have attained to a good measure of true repentance. But so long as we regard nothing but men, we shall never behold the true face of sin, nor see it as it is in his own likeness. To conclude, let us learn, that of all enemies, God is the most fearful and terrible, if he set himself against us.

Secondly, seeing God is the person that is [Use 2] hurt and offended, we learn that vengeance belongeth unto him only. When injury is done unto any, we must esteem the wrong as done not only unto men, but to God, and therefore is to be left unto him, whose commandment is transgressed. For except the Law of God had been violated, the creature should have had no

cause to complain of any injury. It is the law that maketh it a sin and an injury, as we shown before out of the Apostle, Rom. 7. No man therefore is to revenge his own cause, but must commit vengeance unto God, and to that person that sustaineth God's person on earth, to wit, the Magistrate, who beareth not the sword in vain, whose judgment is the judgment of God, whose revenge▪ is the revenge of God. This doth the Apostle set down as a rule to guide us, Rom. 12.19. *Dearely beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord.* A lesson often urged, always confessed, and yielded unto, but smally regarded and seldom practiced. For as if there were no God in heaven, no God's on earth that bear his name and title, men run together like wild beasts, or as horses that rush into the battle, and revenge their own quarrels, as if sin were wholly committed against themselves, and not at all against God; as if they were specially interested in it, and God had little to do with the matter: as if the wrong touched them, and no way concerned him. From hence it cometh to pass, that whiles they go about greedily to revenge wrong done unto them, judgment falleth upon their own heads, and God executeth vengeance upon them for their revenge: and so while they go about to hurt others, the greatest hurt falleth upon themselves; and while they show themselves enemies to their brethren, they draw an heavier enemy upon themselves, to wit, God himself. Before we pass from this so necessary a duty, it shall not be amiss for us, both to observe such motives as may stir us up to the practice of it, and to answer such objections as may hinder us from yielding obedience unto it. First of all, let us lay before us the example of Christ the author and finisher of our salvation; who had greater wrong offered unto him then he had? who was more innocent then he, that was as a sheep dumb before his shearer, and opened not his mouth? and therefore the Apostle Peter saith, chap. 2.22. *Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.* This farther appeareth unto us, in that he prayed for his enemies that persecuted him. He had power in his own hand to have resisted their force, & revenged his cause. He could have prayed to his Father, & *he would have given him more then twelu legions of Angels:* yet notwithstanding he suffered patiently, *the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* If any think or allege, y^t this example is too high for us above our reach, and too eminent in regard of his person, who is God above to be worshipped: let us set before us y^e examples of the faithful servants of God, y^t have lived in all ages, in the time of the law, and under the Gospel, that this may be another motive unto us. How often did the children of Israel murmur against Moses and Aaron, and sometimes went about to stone him? yet he never sought revenge against them, albeit he had been able to right his own cause by force. When Miriam & Aaron spake against him by reason of the woman of Ethiopia, *and said, What? hath the Lord spoken only by Moses? hath he not also spoken by us?* Moses held his peace, and gave not taunt for taunt, & rebuke for rebuke; *he was a very meek man, above all the men that were upon the earth.* Thus was it with David, a man indeed after God's own heart, though he were a king, and wanted not servants to execute his will, yet he would not himself revenge, neither suffer any other to take revenge on Shimei, albeit *he cursed the king* with an horrible curse. Saul sought his life, and preferred him to be his son in law, for no other cause, but to lay a snare before him, & when David had his life oftentimes in his hand, to save it or to destroy it,

ye he was so far from seeking revenge, that his heart smote him for *cutting off the lap of his garment*. When Stephen had made a worthy defense for himself and his own innocence, that the enemies could take no just exception against him, their hearts brast asunder, and they gnashed at him with their teeth, & ran upon him violently all at once: but *he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord lay not this sin to their charge*. The Church of Rome are not ashamed to teach, thereby to strengthen the hands of traitors & rebels that rise up against Princes, that Christians of old deposed not Nero, and Dioclesian, and Julian the Apostate, and Valens the Arian, and such like persecutous and heretics, *because they wanted temporal power, and if they had had power, they would have done it*. If this be true, all their patience was perforce, and is not thank-worthy. But they testify in many places that they had power sufficient, but held it unlawful to resist and rebel. They had filled all places, Cities, Islands, castles, borowghes tents, tribes, bands, palaces, the Senate and Court not excepted, so that they *wanted neither number nor strength* to make their party good. They profess, that albeit they be equal in power, yet with them it is more tolerable to be killed, then to kill. They affirm freely, God forbid that his religion should be maintained with fire, and sword. They acknowledge no other weapons to be put into their hands, but prayers & tears. They never practiced any reuēge against their persecutors, and those that hated them. One night with a little fire would have served and sufficed them largely to be revenged of their enemies, but they accounted it unlawful to requite evil with evil. But to leave this consideration to another occasion, let us come to a third motive, & that is, the office which is proper unto God, to whom it belongeth peculiarly to take vengeance, and is therefore in holy Scripture called the God of vengeance, *O Lord God, the avenger: O God the avenger, show thyself clearly*. It is a grievous sin to sit down in God's seat, and to rob him of his right and royalty. Let the enemies of God and his people know, that he is the God of revenge, as well as y^e God of salvation, and that he will as well right their causes, as save their souls. He is a just God, & will recompense tribulation to all that trouble those that are his, and therefore hath said, *Vengeance and recompense are mine*: but he never said to private persons, Vengeance is thine, neither did he ever put the sword into their hands. A fourth motive, to persuade us to lay aside private revenge, is drawn from the gracious promise that God hath made unto us, namely, that he will take our causes into his hand, and pay them home that do oppress us. For God doth not restrain us, & as it were tie up our hands, to expose us to all injuries, and to leave us as a prey in the jaws of the Lions, but because he hath passed his word unto us, *I will repay, saith the Lord*. So then, we must know that God is called the author and executer of vengeance, not only because the power and right belongeth unto him, y^t he is able to take vengeance of all our enemies, how many and mighty soever they be, but because he hath used this power & executed this office from the beginning of the world, and as yet useth it, and will use it to the full, in the great day of the general judgment. He knoweth best of all the greatness of the injury that is done unto us, because he searcheth into the thoughts of the heart, and understandeth not only what is done, but the manner how it is done.

Seeing then, he hath promised to pay them home into their bosoms y^t wrong us, it were a fruit of infidelity in us, not to believe him at his word. A fifth motive, which ought to be very effectual, is the consideration of the forgiveness that we receive at the hands of God. We are

much indebted unto him, there is no sin that we commit, but increaseth our debt, so that we are no way able to pay it. He is content for his sons sake to forgive us all, & therefore we ought to put off anger, wrath, malice, and revenge; and on the other side, to put on the bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, and long suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, *if any mā have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave us, so also we must do.* Hence it is, y^t Christ teacheth us to ask forgiveness at the hands of God, as we show our selves ready and willing to forgive: for we say, Forgive us our sins; as we also forgive the trespasses that are done unto us: and he addeth immediately after, *If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* If then we carry grudgins spirits and revenging minds boiling in us, we turn this comfortable petition into an horrible imprecation against our selves, and pray that God would not forgive us, but condemn us, forasmuch as we determine not to forgive, but to be revenged on our enemies that offend us. If we could be persuaded of this truth, then which nothing can be truer, we would not seek revenge to gain a kingdom, considering that we call down vengeance with our own mouths upon our selves, which is a most fearful case. For do we think that when sin lieth at the door, vengeance will be far from us, and not come near us, except we cry for it our selves? Let us take heed we do not dally with God, who will in justice repay us, because we take upon us to repay, and will pour upon us the vengeance which we ask against our selves. Lastly, we are moved to put up wrongs & suffer injuries, to refer all revenge unto God, and not to requite evil for evil, because it is against all good law, right reason, & common sense, that any man should be accuser, witness, judge, and executioner. But everyone that taketh upon him to right his own cause, and to revenge himself, doth all these together, he executeth the office of four several men. It is no reason that he which layeth any accusation against us, should be admitted to be witness against us, because a witness should not be partial nor any way suspected to be party. Whosoever refuseth to refer his cause to the judgment of God, and will take up the weapon and instrument of revenge into his own hand doth more then this; he cannot be content to be an accuser and witness of wrong, but will also sit as judge to condemn, and as executioner to punish, which is against all right, law, equity, and conscience. No man therefore ought to engross so many offices which of right belong unto several men. It is impossible, that there should be just proceeding, where matters are carried in this order. If then we would be Christ's disciples, let us possess our souls with patience, and commit our causes unto God, that the spirit of glory and of God may rest upon us.

Notwithstanding all these motives, which may serve as so many bands to tie us to this duty, [Objections answered.] the nature of man that is corrupt, striveth to break them all, and to be at liberty to do what it list, and therefore ministereth many objections which are but carnal reasons to warrant the practice of private revenge. Let us see what they are, and apply several remedies to everyone of them, to stay us up from offending this way. First of all, it will be said, If we [Object.] should put up wrongs, this were to make our selves as fools for everyone to laugh at, and as blocks for everyone to insult over us, and to tread upon us. I answer, [Answer.] it skilleth not what the world esteem of us, and what they speak against us. If we were of the world, the world would love his own, but *because we are chosen out of the*

*world, therefore the world hateth us, reuileth us, taunteth us, and speaketh all manner of evil against us. If we regard the judgment of God, we must pass very little for y^e judgment of men: & if we receive praise of God, it skilleth not if we be dispraised of men. And as they speak evil of the servants of God that are themselves evil: so they will account us fools that are indeed fools themselves. For there is no fool like to the wicked man, and therefore he is in Scripture oftentimes branded with this name and note. As for those that account godliness folly, and place wisdom in committing wickedness, let us leave such wisdom to the wise of this world, and be content to be esteemed as simple fools, to y^e end we may be like to the wise God, who is a God of patience, and so be partakers of the heavenly nature. He turneth the wisdom of this world into foolishness, and the foolishness of this world he accepteth as true wisdom. Wherefore, let us hearken to the counsel of the Apostle, *Let no man deceive you: if any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.* It were better for us to be accou^{nt}ed fools in this world by wicked men, then to be judged fools forever in the world to come.*

Again, some will object, If we always sufser [Object. 2] wrongs, we shall make our selves a prey, & set an edge upon others to lay on load upon us. For we shall never be quiet, but evermore be abused. I answer, [Answer.] the condemning of vengeance, is not a taking away of just defense. God tieth up our hands from unjust revenge, but he shutteth not our mouths from just complaint. For we may claim the help of the Magistrate, either for y^e preventing of wrong, or for the punishment of the doer of wrong. The Magistrate is God's deputy, and his office is to relieve the oppressed, to defend the innocent, & to execute judgment on malefactors. When certain of the Jews, more then forty men, banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, that they would neither eat nor drink, til they had killed *Paul*, *he sent to the chief captain*, to be defended from their conspiracy.

And when he saw the malice of his nation against him, y^t they ceased not to lay grievous complaints to his charge, he appealed unto *Caesar* y^t he might not be delivered into y^e hands of the Jews that sought his life, and thirsted for blood, *I stand at Caesars judgment seat, where I ought to be judged*: So then, God hath not left us as it were to the wide world, to shift for our selves, but he hath appointed y^e Magistrate to be his Lieutenant. As in the private family where many servants are, he hath not left one servant to quarrel with another, and to draw upon another; he hath set y^e master over them all, *for the punishment of evil doers, & for the praise of them that do well.* If any of thy fellow servants do wrong thee, give not hurt for hurt, or blow for blow, or taunt for taunt; for that will make thee guilty of sin, though otherwise thou be innocent, and thy cause be just and righteous: ye have one common master y^t is set over you, go unto him, plead your cause before him, & accuse him in wh^o any wickedness is found. Every man is presumed to be partial in his cause, let the master be judge between you, who is no way interested in the business. And as the master is judge within the walls of his own house, and appointed to decide the controversies that arise therein: so the Magistrate is his ordinance to end the matters that fall out between neighbor and neighbor, and therefore we must not think our selves wiser to determine our cause then he, or God himself. So th^e, we must practice two points, first, we must bear wrongs patiently, and put away all revenge far from us, whereby we hurt our selves much more then we do our

enemies: for we may annoy them in their bodies or goods, but we make a deep and dangerous wound in our own souls. And therefore Christ saith, *I say unto you, Resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also, &c.* Secondly, we are to use the Magistrates help when we are wronged. For always to suffer the rod of the malefactor upon our back, & never to seek redress, were to make our selves Asses to receive every burden that will be laid upon us. Albeit therefore we are not to resist evil, but if any man will sue us at the law and take away our coat, we should give him our cloak also: and whosoever will compel us to go a mile, we must go with him twain, to wit, rather then we should revenge our selves (for this is to be understood as spoken by comparison) yet we are not forbidden hereby to have recourse to y^e Magistrate, who beareth not the sword in vain, *to whom every soul ought to be subject.* For as it is a fault to suffer nothing, so it may be our fault as well to suffer too much, namely, when we will bear all things whereby we shall be gulled, and forbear to crave and call for the help of the Magistrate. God is offended as well when lawful means are not used, as when unlawful means are practiced.

Thirdly, the question may be asked, what if a man be violently assaulted, either in the private house, or in the high way, whether by thieves that would rob us, or by quarrellers that would wound us, may we not resist & revenge, [Object.] to save our lives or our goods? I answer this is a case of necessity, wherein a man cannot have the benefit of Magistracy: but is himself a Magistrate unto himself. A man being thus assaulted, must use the sword as the last remedy and refuge. Wherein we must observe these cautions & conditions. First, we must not thirst after blood, nor be willing to take away either life or limme, if we can choose. Secondly, we ought to the utmost of our power, to strive to free our selves from them & their assaults and invasion, that there be no blood shed, if it be possible, using all good and lawful means we may in favor of life. Thirdly, we are so to behave our selves, that we rather defend then offend, and seek more to save our own lives then to take away another man's. Fourthly, if we can no way escape the hands of the oppresser, by flying, or calling for the help of the Magistrate, it is lawful so far to stand in our just defense, as that we should choose to kill rather then to be killed: for now God calleth us to be a Magistrate to our selves, & puts a sword into our hands, to execute revenge upon our adversary. Hence it is, that albeit God saith unto private men, *resist not evil:* yet might they lawfully kill a thief in the night season, without breach of law, & guilt of blood, *If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.* This is to be understood of the night thief, when a man being assaulted, cannot run to the Magistrate, and therefore God alloweth him to be an officer & minister of justice, even in his own cause wherein necessity pleadeth for his defēce. Lastly, if a man in this case be compelled to take away life, & to shed blood, he must be grieved and mourn for it, that he hath defaced an image of God. These conditions being observed, a man may lawfully withstand force by force, and violence by violence, & defend the goods that God hath given him, even with the sword, if it be used as the last remedy and in the last place.

Fourthly, others will say, it is a commendable [Object. 4] thing to put up wrongs patiently, I would I could do it, I wish it with all my heart: but we are flesh and blood, we are not able to bear the injuries that are offered unto us, they are so great. I answer, [Answer.] never lay the

blame upon flesh & blood, never acuse thē of this fault. For thou makest them in such sort a common pack-horse to bear the burden of all thy sins, as that thou art resolved to be flesh & blood still. Thou never desirest God to give thee grace, and to guide thee by his spirit: thou never laborest with thine own heart to pull out the root of revenge. Answer me one question which I will demand of thee, Thou sayest thou art flesh and blood, and flesh and blood cannot put up these things: but art thou flesh and blood only, or in part? art thou nothing but a lump of flesh, or else art thou partly flesh, and partly spirit? One of these two thou must needs be; both of thē thou canst not be.

Tell me thy meaning, and express more plainly what thou art. If thou be nothing else but flesh & blood, then woe be to thee. Thou confessest against thyself y^t thou art yet carnal, unregenerate, dead in sins and trespasses, the bondslave of Satan, the heir of destruction, *without Christ, without hope, without God in the world, an alien from the Commonwealth of Israel, and a stranger from the covenants of promise.* For flesh & blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God: and if ever we look to be saved, and to be partakers of eternal glory, we must be more then flesh & blood. Thou wilt therefore be ashamed to confess that thou vnderstandest by flesh and blood, that thou art nothing but a lump of flesh. What then? art thou flesh in part, & spirit in part? as thou must acknowledge thyself to be, if thou be the Lord's. Why then dost thou not perform the works of the spirit? *They that are after the flesh do savor the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.* To be carnally minded, is death; but to be spiritually minded, is life and peace. The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through y^e spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of GOD: so then they that are in the flesh, cannot please God. Thus we see, that the flesh and the spirit are always opposed the one to the other: so that by this we may prove our selves whether we be regenerate or not. Let us not therefore boast our selves that we are flesh & blood, forasmuch as such as are only flesh, cannot yet assure their own hearts, that they are the Lord's.

[Object. 5] Fifthly, it may be objected, that to repulse wrong, is a note of courage and fortitude; and to put up wrong, a token of pusillanimity and of a faint heart. If then, I must not revenge, I shall be accounted not only a fool, but a dastard and coward. [Answer.] I answer, this is no better then the devils sophistry, and openeth a gap to the common practice that is in the world, to quarrel for every word speaking. It is no argument of courage to be ready to draw the sword and dagger, but rather of rashness, headinesse, unsteadiness, and of a ruffian like spirit. And it is no disgrace to be of a bearing and forbearing nature. Our chiefest honor consisteth in fighting against sin unto the death, and showing all might and manhood in the subduing of it. He is stronger that overcometh his own passions, then he that winneth a city. We must remember that we are made kings and Priests unto God the Father: and therefore let us not make our selves slaves and captives to Satan, to sin, and to the world. This then serveth to meet with three sorts of men, & to condemn their evil courses, whose whole life pleadeth for nothing more thē private revenge. First, they are reprov'd that for every cross word & supposed injury are ready to challenge one another into the field; & the accepting of that challenge when it is given. This fighting a

single combat is unlawful That which the natural man accounteth valor, God esteemeth a vice; and therefore it is no disgrace to refuse it, but rather true grace in yielding obedience unto God. For we must set down this as a rule, that no man must sin against God for the saving of his credit & reputation among men. And if we did duly consider what sin is, against whom it is committed, and what punishment is procured thereby upon our selves, we would never question the former ground set down unto us. Secondly, out of the case of challenging the field, y^e common practice of fighting & quarrelling is condemned, which are no better then forerunners of murder, and have a bloody face in the sight of God. The Apostle *John* saith, *Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.* Many there are that hold it utterly unlawful to give the first blow, but if another strike them, then they think that thereby they are warranted to strike again. If any give the occasion of a fray, they hold him worthy to be condemned: but if they be provoked by another, they account themselves to be bound to return him the like. This is directly contrary to the doctrine of Christ, whereunto all must submit themselves that will be the disciples of Christ. He would have us take many wrongs, and not seek to revenge our selves. And it is contrary to the practice of Christ and of his Apostles. When one of the officers of y^e high Priest *smote Jesus with the palm of his hand*, because he held his peace & would answer nothing, he smote not again, as these men think he was bound to do for his honor. But this was no disgrace or reproach to Christ, how then should it be any shame for a true Christian? We will needs be accounted Christians whosoever say nay, but we scorn and disdain to follow the example of Christ. *Ananias* the high Priest *commanded them that stood by to smite Paul on the mouth:* he reproveth him fought it, but he smote not again; & this was no infamy, but a glory unto him. Lastly, their opinion also is condemned, that make it a matter of praise, and an argument of valor, to turn away his face frō no man. This indeed is fool-hardinesse. It is the commendation of Magistrates to be men of courage, to fear the face of God, but not the faces of men. They must accept no man's person in judgment, neither decline to the right hand or to the left. But a private man may turn his back to his adversary without any impeachment of his credit, or diminishing of his valor, or lessening of his honor, or slander to his reputatiō. But of this we have spoken sufficiently before, & therefore we will proceed.

Lastly, it may be objected, that under the [Object] law of *Moses*, when any man had killed his neighbor, the avenger of blood might slay the murderer whensoever and wheresoever *he met him*, Numb. 35, 19. If a man had killed any person at unawares, and hated him not before, he must fly to one of the Cities of refuge, *and abide in it unto the death of the high Priest, which was anointed with the holy oil: but if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the City of refuge whither he was fled, and the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the City of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer, he shall not be guilty of blood.* If then he be not guilty of blood, how is it that God alloweth no private revenge, but commandeth to render good for evil, to pray for them that curse us, and to do good to our enemies, and such as persecute us? I answer, the political laws serve not to bring men to perfection, such as are made for civil government. When God speaketh as king of Israel, and maketh statutes tending to outward peace and tranquility, he aimed not at the spiritual perfection which is

contained in the moral law, which is the rule of all holiness and righteousness. Hence it is, that God tolerated many things among his people, which he never allowed simply, as appeareth in the case of diuorcement, and many other of like nature. So he suffered the next of kin to pursue him to death that had slain his kinsman, if he were taken out of the City of his refuge; but God nevertheless did never approve of this, to set upon the person that had done him no harm, neither alloweth any to follow the rage of his choler, and to execute the malice of his heart: so that this law hath no place among us. For we must mark this as a certain rule, that civil government cannot change anything in the ten Commandments, or set down anything to the prejudice of them. Many things were permitted unto the Jews, *because of the hardness of their hearts*, Math. 19, 8. *but from the beginning it was not so*. They then that would put away their wives for every cause, might as well allege the law of giving them a bill of diuorcement, as others produce the avenger of blood to justify the prosecution of private revenge: forasmuch as the one is a breach of the seventh Commandment, the other is a breach of the sixth Commandment, And thus much in answer of the objections.

Thirdly, we are put in mind of this duty, [Use 3] that seeing all sin is committed against God, we should be afraid to sin against him, and ought above all things to take heed of his wrath and indignation. We are rather to choose any course, or take any way, then run into his displeasure. Thus it was with *Joseph*, of whom we spake before: he was content rather to be slandered unjustly, and accused falsely of his lewd and lascivious mistrisse, yea, to be imprisoned and punished by his over-credulous master, then he would make a breach in his own soul, & sin against God. Let a man once perish his conscience, the wrack is not easily made up again. It is like a water-course, which is not easily stopped. It is better to fall into the hands of men, then of God; for he can make our innocence known, and the uprightness of our cause to appear, that it shall break out as the light, and shine as the Sun at noon days, as we shall show more evidently in the end of this chapter. True it is, the greatest sort of men make it a common matter, & because it is common, they account it a small and light matter to sin against God. When they hear that by cōmitting evil they sin in God's sight, and provoke him to anger, they regard not much those threatenings, they make a mock of sin, and fear not the event of it; not considering they play with a serpent, that will in the end sting thē unto death, when it hath wrapped them fast, as it were in fetters that they can by no means escape. We must account no sin to be in it own nature little as a mote, but esteem of it as a great beam, albeit there be difference between them, and some be greater then other. This cogitation once taking place in us, will make us fear and tremble at the naming of it. The Apostle speaking of fornication and uncleanness, and such like evils, saith, *Let it not be once named among you, as it becometh Saints*. For the Scripture layeth hold on our straying thoughts and wandering motions of the mind, though we never give assent unto them, but labor to remove and repel them so soon as they arise in us, and abhor them and our selves for them. These first motions and lusts are a breach of the Law, Rom. 7. and deserve condemnation: how much more therefore the transgressions of our whole life that are much more abominable?

Besides, we are taught, not only to look into the glass of the law to see the heinousness of our transgressions, but also to consider the punishments due unto them in this life, and the

life to come: for thereby we are subject to all woes and miseries and death it self, as we may see by the examples of our first parents, of the old world, of Sodom, of *Pharaoh*, and his host, of the Jews that were carried captive, and many of God's own people, that by infirmity have fallen and felt sore chastisements from his hands, as appeareth in *Moses* and *Aaron*, in *David*, in *Hezekiah*, in *Josiah*, in *Solomon*, and sundry others.

Lastly, we may behold the grievousness of sin in the example of Christ our Savior, who albeit he were without sin, and none iniquity was found in his mouth, yet bare he in his body our sins, and felt that burden which would have crushed us in pieces, and broken all our bones in sunder: forasmuch as he apprehended the wrath of God in his soul, which caused him to sweat water and blood, and to cry out upon the cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Such then as never fear to offend God, have no feeling of God's justice, no feeling of Christ's suffering, no feeling of the vileness of sin, no feeling of their own punishments that hang over their heads, & shall (without repentance) seize upon them to their final damnation.

Let us awake cut of our deep sleep, and take care of our salvation: let us take heed we grow not senseless and hard-hearted. Let us learn to know our selves better, and consider what we have done. Let us fear to offend God, and stand in awe of his judgments: so that if we sin against him, we may be well assured to be punished for it. But some will say, [Object.] God is gracious and merciful, he will not plague us and strike us though we sin, he is not hard as many would make him: doth not the Scripture tell us that he is merciful? and shall we not believe the Scripture to be true? Let them say what they will, I will believe the Scripture. [Answer.] I answer, in saying thus, thou doest nothing but deceive thyself, and dally with the word of God: and indeed doest not believe it to be true? For if thou diddest acknowledge God to be the author of it, thou wouldest submit thyself to every part of it, thou wouldest not embrace what thou likest, and refuse what liketh thee not. Thou mayest as well say in plain English, that part of the word of God is false, and there is no truth in it, and I will sin without controllement of it: nay, while thou reasonest in that profane manner, thou sayest in thine heart, Tush, God is not God, but an idol that sitteth still, that hath eyes and seeth nothing; that hath hands, and doeth nothing: that hath ears, and heareth nothing. True it is, men are ashamed to utter these reproachful words, and to belch out of their filthy mouths, such horrible blasphemies: but if we will rippe up to the quick their former presumptions, we shall find their case and condition to be little better. If they were demanded what they think of the word, and of God the author of the word, they would acknowledge the Scriptures to be most true, both the promises that are made, and the threatenings that are contained in it; they would confess that God is a most just God, even visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation: yet it skilleth not what they speak with their tongues, so long as we may even openly read the secrets of their thoughts, and the imaginations of their hearts in their outward practices. For touching the word of God, it is most true, and it cannot be denied, we read oftentimes that God is also merciful, we read of *the riches of his grace and bountifulness*; of his abounding in compassions, and reserving mercy for thousands. What then? or what is all this to them? shall we continue therefore in sin, that grace may abound? ought not rather the riches of *his bountifulness, and patience and long*

suffering lead us unto repentance? Shall we after our hardness and hearts that cannot repent, heap up unto our selves as a treasure, wrath, against the day of wrath and the just declaration of the judgment of God, who shall give to every man according to his works? It is a good lesson which the Prophet teacheth us, that *there is mercy with God*, not that we should presume of his mercy, and run into all excess of riot, *but to the end he may be feared*, Psal. 130.4. Hence it is, that *Moses*, Deut. 29.20. strippeth all such, as flatter themselves with hope of pardon, and conceit of mercy, and opinion of escaping, from that foolish imagination; *He that blesseth himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst, The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon •im, & the Lord shall blot out his name frō under heaven.* These persons may call for mercy, but he will not answer them in mercy: they may seek him early, but they shall not find him: because they hated to be reformed, and did not choose the fear of the Lord, Prov. 1.28, 29. He is very gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, Psal. 103.17, 18. Howbeit, it is to the penitent only, not to the obstinate.

The Prophet saith, *The mercy of the Lord, is from everlasting to everlasting, and his righteousness unto children's children, to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.* Where we see, the Scripture maketh a difference and division between man and man, and giveth to everyone his portion, so that albeit he be merciful, yet it is to those only that keep his commandments. For although all be sinners, and thereby seek to creep away closely that way, as it were in the dark, that they might not be espied, yet we must know this, that some are repentant sinners, for whom there is mercy in store; some are obstinate sinners, the Scripture hath no mercy for them, but terrors, & threatenings, and judgments, and punishments, because *upon such wicked he will rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest, this shall be the portion of their cup, for the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright*, Psal. 11.6, 7. Now such as continue in the course of their sins, are ready to believe that God is merciful, but they believe not the Scripture, that he is merciful only unto such as repent: they persuade themselves falsely that they may run on in evil ways, and yet find mercy at the latter end, which is directly contrary to the whole doctrine of the Scriptures. And yet these men ask, *shall we not believe the Scripture to be true?* Whereas they believe one part of the Scripture, but they call into question another part: they lay hold on his promises, but they stop their ears against his judgments: nay, they do not so much as believe the promises aright, neither will learn to whom they are delivered, & in whom they shall be verified; which savoreth altogether of infidelity and unbelief. Besides, as they derogate from the verity of y^e Scriptures, so they deny God after a sort, and turn him into a lie, & make him an idol to stand still and do nothing. For to imagine in our heart a GOD wholly compact of mercy, that seeth sin, but will not punish it: that knoweth who sinneth, but will let him alone: is to deny the true God, who as he is merciful, so he is also just. This the Prophet *Nahum* testifieth in the beginning of his Prophecy, *The Lord is jealous, and the Lord revengeth: the Lord revengeth, and is furious, the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and reserveth wrath for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger, & great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked, &c.* And hereunto accordeth the description of him, Exod. 34, 6, 7. *The Lord God,*

merciful, and gracious, long suffering, & abundant in goodness and truth keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generation. Such then as think they may proceed and go forward in their transgressions, without controlement or punishment, because God is a merciful God, do utterly deceive themselves, & make a snare to entrap their own souls. The wise man saith, that *to justify the wicked, and to condemn the innocent, are both of them an abomination unto the Lord*, Prov. 17, 15. If then he hate it in all the sons of men, how shall we imagine, that the Lord will do, or can do either of thē? Let us therefore so conceive of God, as he hath taught us in his holy word: let us not make a counterfeit god, nor set up an Idol in our heart: for he will be served no therwise then he hath appointed. To conclude we must know that whosoever denieth 〈◇〉 of the threatenings denounced in the word, denieth a part of the Scripture, and (as much as lieth in him) maketh God a liar, who will as well execute his judgments, as perform his promises, forasmuch as he is faithful in both. And whosoever imagineth that God is only merciful, & consequently denieth his justice, hath not the true God for his God, but committeth horrible idolatry in cōceiuing wrongfully of his Majesty.

[Use 4] Fourthly, seeing such damages and injuries as are offered to our brethren, do reach to God, & are condemned as sins against him, it should teach us to look to our own ways, to practice justice and equity toward them, & to take heed of all fraud, forgery, falsehood, & oppression whatsoever, forasmuch as he will take an account of us, and bring us unto a reckoning. He that thinketh he can make sufficient amends to men, that there shall be no farther enquiry into the matter, reckoneth without his host, and therefore must reckon once again. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, 1. Thess. 4, 6. *Let no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, because the Lord is an avenger of all such.* We must know that God hath to do with it, and will punish severely for the breach of his law. There are many sorts of coniunctions whereby mankind is coupled & combined one to another, as the conjunction of consanguinity, of affinity, of amity, of city, of country of humanity: some have more of these bands linked together, & all have some of them to unite them in one, and thereby as it were to bind them to the peace, & to their good behavior, that they should abstain from all violent and fraudulent conveyances one from another. Among all knots that serve to link us and lock us together as friends which are as our own soul, none is greater or faster then that conjunction which we have with Christ our head, and which the members of his body have one with another: whereby it cometh to pass, that *we are all made in himself, of twain, one new man*, Eph. 2, 15. and every man of us *members one of another*, Rom. 12, 5. This spiritual conjunction is more effectual to procure the mutual good of the parties conjoined, then either that which is natural, or that which is civil. Nevertheless, we must do no wrong to any man, God hath made us keepers of the body, of the substance, of the dignity, of the honor, and of the good name of our brethren: if they be men, and be alied unto us no other way but by the commō band of humanity, we must do them no injury, although they be our utter enemies. If we have farther bands to chain us together, it is so much the greater sin if we break those cords, and will not suffer our selves to be tied with them. And mark the reason that the Apostle urgeth, he doth not say. If we do any way defraud them or circumvent

them, the Judge shall judge it, or the Magistrate shall punish it, but *God is the avenger of all such dealings*, and will not suffer them to escape. The like threatening we read in Moses, Exod. 22, 22, 23, 24. *If the oppressed cry, God will hear their cry, so that they shall be delivered*, and their oppressors punished. If we could suffer this consideration to enter into our hearts, that though all should acquit us, or no man durst lay hold upon us, yet God himself will take their cause and quarrel into his hands, & execute sentence upon their enemies, it would be an effectual argument to move us to make conscience of all sins; even of such as immediately and directly do concern men, and not only of such as concern God and his worship. If we were assured, that the injuries which we do unto others, should be answered before the Magistrate, and we stand at the bar to plead guilty or not guilty, we would be afraid to deal hardly with them or to show any indignities toward them. How much more then ought we to tremble and to quake every joint of us, to consider that the time of vengeance shall come, when we must appear before the throne and tribunal seat of Jesus Christ our Lord, to receive according to the works that we have done in this flesh? Sundry of the ancient have observed four crying sins mentioned in the Scriptures, the which albeit they go away many times unpunished in the world, yet vengeance will not suffer such to live, but God findeth them out in their sins; as the crying of blood, the lust of the Sodomites, the noise of the oppressed, and the hire of the laborers: these are often passed over with silence, and tolerated among men, but they sound shrilly in the ears of God, & ascend up to his judgment seat. Albeit there be no man to accuse them that commit these sins, yet without farther process or enditement they suffer them not to rest, but summon them to his bar, and call without ceasing for judgment against them.

The first is willful murder, and shedding of innocent blood; for when *Abel* the righteous was slain, the Scripture saith, *The voice of thy brothers blood crieth unto me from the ground*; whereby is signified, that the godly, though secretly and seditiously slain of the ungodly, & patiently bearing the injuries offered them without murmuring and complaining, yet after death, when their mouths seem to be stopped, and their tongues tied, cease not to accuse their murderers as guilty before God, and to lift up their voices out of the earth, to call down vengeance against them. The Prophet saith, Psal. 116, 15. *The death of the Saints is precious in the sight of the Lord*: and Psal. 72, 12, 14. *He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also and him that hath no helper: he shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight*. So likewise the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, cry with a loud voice, *O Lord, holy and true, doest thou not judge & avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* This ought to minister contentment unto them, and to teach them patience, forasmuch as God hath a care of them, and a tender respect unto them. He numbereth the hairs of their head, Math. 10. He gathereth their tears in a bottle, Psalm. 56, 8. He heareth their sighs, Psal. 69, 33. He telleth their steps, and ordereth their goings, Psal. 56. He understandeth their complaints, Psal. 145. He hearkneth to their prayers, Psal. 34, 6. and he keepeth all their bones.

The second crying sin, is lust and uncleanness, of which the Lord speaketh, Gen. 18, 20, 21. *Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me: and*

if not, I will know. True it is, those Cities were culpable of sundry sins, as Ezek. 16, 49. *Pride, fullness of bread, abundance of idleness, and contempt of the poor:* howbeit when the Lord saith, their sin is very grievous, he pointeth out this outrageous and accursed sin, which the pure God abhorreth as a fruit of impurity. See here the difference between the Spirit of God, and the spirit of the devil. Such as are filthy livers, and possessed with the spirit of uncleanness, do account fornication and adultery to be tricks of youth and sports of pleasure; whereas God maketh them in his word to be sins that lift up their voices, & cry unto him for vengeance. When *Pharaoh* King of Egypt had taken away *Sarah*, *Abraham's* wife, *The Lord plagued him and his house with great plagues*, until he had restored her. If a bare purpose to commit adultery, and that ignorantly, called for judgment upon an heathen king; how much more shall the living in this sin bring moe stripes upon us that live in the light of the Gospel, & have the truth plainly revealed unto us? forasmuch as he that knoweth his masters will & doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.

The third crying sin, is the oppression of such persons as are destitute of help, which is joined with cruelty: as for example, such as are widows, fatherless, strangers, poor, & innocents, whose cry God hath promised to hear, and to help them. This we heard before out of the book of Exodus, *If you afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows, and your children, fatherless.* The Prophet *Habakkuk* prophesieth against such, and painteth out their sin in lively colors, chap. 2, 9, 11, 12. *Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil, &c.* The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it. One shall say, *Woe to him that buildeth a Town with blood:* another shall make answer, *and stablisheth a City by iniquity.* These oppressors do suck out as it were the blood and life of the needy, that have none to whom to cry out for redress, but in the ears of the Lord. They dare not buckle and encounter with the mighty, for as when the pot of earth and of iron meet together, the earthen vessel is dashed in pieces; so when the mighty and the needy strive, the poor man striveth against the stream, and bringeth much misery upon himself. Their help is only in God, the Father of all consolation. If men stop their ears against them, and will not rescue them out of the snare of the fowler, and the net of the hunter, let them abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and shroud themselves under his wings, who will cover them with his feathers, and hear them in their afflictions.

The last crying sin, is the poor laborers wages that are wrongfully and unjustly detained; this also crieth aloud, and never ceaseth, until God hearken to the cry of it. Many think it goods well gained, that can be gotten from the poor, but they shall find it fret as a canker, and consume as a moth the residue of their substance. Hereunto cometh that law of the Lord, Deut. 24, 14, 15. *Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor & needy, &c. thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.* Where we see, that this consideration of committing sin against God, ought to enter into us to restrain us from doing wrong against any, especially the poor and needy brother, or the stranger that is in the Land. And to this purpose speaketh the Apostle *James*, chap. 5, 4. *Behold, the hire of the laborers which have reaped*

down your fields (which is of you kept back by fraud) crieth, & the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Saboth. Whereby it appeareth, that there is a double kind of crying, one of iniquity and wickedness, the other of the oppressed and afflicted. If one of these cease, yet the other shall never cease crying. It falleth out oftentimes through the power and might of the greater sort, that the poor dare not mutter or murmur, & if they begin to cry out and complain, their mouths are soon stopped, because their angry looks make them afraid of their displeasure, & their severe threatenings are too heavy a burden for them to bear: but the other shall never give over crying; the sin of the oppressors shall cry against them for vengeance, as we see whē Abel could not cry, yet his blood cried and was heard. Sin hath a voice more shrill then the sound of a Trumpet, for that, be it never so loud, vanisheth in the air, & cannot pierce the Clouds; whereas the noise that issueth and proceedeth from sin, out-reacheth the Clouds & entereth into the ears of the Lord of hosts. What then? Must we imagine that sin is a bodily thing, that hath a mouth to speak, & a voice to cry? No, this cry is nothing else but the unchangeable order of God's justice punishing sin, even as at the instance and importunity of the innocent party, a just Judge cannot but relieve the oppressed, and punish the guilty, and so do justice according to the office committed unto him. As if it were said, blood will have vengeance, uncleanness will have vengeance, oppression will have vengeance, fraud and deceit will have vengeance: God cannot but punish all these crying sins, because he is a just Judge, otherwise he were unrighteous. It is the nature of all sin to provoke God to enter into judgment with the sinner, but especially these horrible and abominable crimes mentioned before. And as it is the nature of sin to cry out to GOD for vengeance, so it is the nature of God to punish sin, and to take vengeance of it. Therefore they greatly deceive both themselves and others, that make him like to one of the gods of the Gentiles, not to be offended at all, or very little displeased with sin, and not to regard what men do. As if justice were not essential unto him, or as if he could deny himself, or as if he could cease to be God: for as soon he may do these as the other. But if it can in any sort agree to him, that he can be not willing to punish sin, then he can also not hate sin, forasmuch as to hate, is nothing else but to be willing to punish & reject. And if it be incident to him, not to hate sin, then also it will follow, that he can love and like sin. If he can love sin, he can deny himself and destroy himself, he can like of the works of the devil, which is impossible to do, and horrible blasphemy to affirm.

Lastly, seeing whatsoever is of the nature of sin, is against God, it directeth us what [Use 5] we are to do when we have any way sinned, and desire to have peace of conscience; we must not go to Saints or Angels whom we have not offended, who are not able to be revenged of us; but it is our duty to call for mercy at his hands against whom only we have sinned, and to seek to be reconciled to him whose laws we have transgressed, and who is able to cast body and soul into hell fire. For seeing we offend him, to whō should we repair and come for pardon, but unto him that is offended? It is he that can give us pardon both of sin and punishment. The practice hereof we see in the Prophet David, who because he had sinned against God, against God only, he flieth unto him for the forgiveness of his sins, Psal. 51, 4. *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions; wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my*

sin, &c: against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight. Let us not continue in sin, but labor earnestly and speedily to come out of it, as he that is fallen into a pit, desireth nothing more then to get out, and putteth to all his strength to be delivered. If we get not a general pardon for all our sins, woe unto us, we are in a most wretched and miserable condition. One sin left unpardoned, is able to cast us out of God's kingdom, and to give us our portion among the unbelievers. We see this in the fall of the Angels, who left the state and habitation wherein they were set, they sinned, and were cast out from the presence of God, and are reserved to destruction. It is a good sign, and a true note of repentance, to thirst after mercy. This is the penitents song; he never pleadeth merit, but evermore prayeth for mercy, and prizeth it above all other things. First, we must see our sins against God, and the sentence of death pronounced against us: and then confess the same to be just and equal against our selves. As then our sins cry to God for vengeance (as we shown before) so let them cause us to cry unto God for deliverance from them, and the forgiveness of them. Though we have sinned against him, yet let us not despair of mercy, for that were willingly and wittingly, and willfully to cast our selves into the Lions den, with whom is no pity or compassion; as if he that were like to be drowned, should refuse to be helped out of the waters. Let us not say that God hath forsaken us & cast us out of his sight: let us not think we are out of the hope of his favor. When we seek not God, he will seek us out, and he seeketh out no man, but he findeth him And herein appeareth the infiniteness of his love, the bottom whereof, no man can sound, whereof many can speak to their endless comfort, and to his endless glory and praise. Such as sought not the means to bring them home to God, God hath brought the means home to them, and directed them to use thē to their consolation and salvation. Not that we should abuse or neglect the means, but to kindle our love and zeal unto them so much the more. For if he have been found of them that sought him not, much more will he offer himself in kindness and mercy, to those that with pure hearts and upright consciences seek unto him and crave a blessing of him: as sometimes he hath rewarded temporally those that have humbled themselves hypocritically and unsoundly, to declare how greatly he regardeth true repentance indeed. From hence is reprov'd the doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome, that teach, that the Pastors of the Church have full and absolute power to forgive sins as Christ had, as though whosoever doubteth of their right and jurisdiction, might as well doubt whether Christ have authority to remit sins. This is the pride and presumption of the man of sin, to challenge this preeminence, who setteth himself down in the seat of God, and boasteth himself as God. For this is one of the regalities and perogatives of God, which he will give or impart in whole or in part, to none other. It is an honor that belongeth peculiarly unto him. This the Scribes and Pharisees confessed in the Gospel, Math. 9, 3. Mar. 2, 7. *Who can forgive sins, but God only?* Christ therefore is the only author of reconciliation, the Ministers are only the Lord's messengers and ambassadors to declare his will out of his word, 2 Cor. 5, 18. *All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.* If the Bishop of Rome had this authority, then we ought to crave mercy at his hands, and say unto him, Have mercy upon me, O Lord God the Pope; which is intolerable blasphemy, & impiety against God. [Objection.] But it may be said, If he do not sometimes forgive sins, then it shall seem to be false which Christ saith, *Whatsoever ye bind on earth, shall*

be bound in heaven: and whose sins ye remit, they are remitted, &c. I answer, [Answer.] this power given to the Apostles and their successors, is a commission in the Name of Christ, to declare and pronounce remission of sins to them that are truly penitent. They have no power actually to remit sins, they are only as dispensers and stewards: they are not made competent Judges, but only as the Lord's messengers to publish the will of God out of his word. They are as Ministers, not enabled to reconcile men unto God, but to pray *and beseech them to be reconciled through Christ*. Christ then is the reconciler, they are the Ministers of reconciliation. Their commission stretcheth no farther, but to declare the Princes pleasure. If then God only forgive sins, surely no man can do it, doubtless the man of sin cannot forgive sin, he cannot forgive himself, much less another. He is a sick man himself, and needeth the Physician, if haply any physic will do him any any good, which is much to be doubted. He cannot be an absolute Physician to others, that needeth the Physician himself; he cannot save others that cannot save himself, neither reconcile others to God, who hath himself need to be reconciled by another. Christ Jesus himself could never have reconciled us to his Father, if he had needed his Mother, or any Saint or Angel to reconcile him to God. We must all, high and low, rich and poor, go together to the Physician that he may heal all of us. It is Christ's shedding of his blood that remitteth sins, it is he that hath made satisfaction to God, so that it belongeth to God only to forgive sins properly. It is Christ that calleth all unto him that are *weary and heavy laden*, and promiseth to refresh them. The Lord saith in the Prophet, *I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel thy Savior*: and afterward, *I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Savior*: and yet again more plainly, *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins*. Neither doth Christ reprehend the Scribes because they confessed this point of God's power (for they did rightly affirm, that none could forgive sins but God only, Luke 5, 20, 21,) but this was their error, in that they did not acknowledge Christ to be God, who, in the person of the Mediator, even in the state of humility while he lived here, and was conversant upon the earth, might by his divine authority forgive sins, as likewise by the same power he did heal sicknesses and diseases among the people. God then doth properly and absolutely forgive sins committed against his law and eternal Majesty. The Minister by his appointment doth assure all penitent sinners of the forgiveness of their sins, through the mercy of God, and the merits of his Son Jesus Christ: and therefore in this sense he is said to forgive sins, as he is also said to *save men's souls*, to whom he preacheth salvation. An Ambassador is said to make peace or war, when he declareth according to his commission, his Princes pleasure and determination touching either of them. The Kings Deputy or Lieutenant (having warrant from him) offereth and granteth pardon to rebels or other offenders, when notwithstanding he doth only make known the Princes pleasure in remitting their offenses, and releasing their punishments, forasmuch as it is in the Princes power only to pardon traitors & transgressors. The Minister of the word, as Christ's Deputy or Lieutenant, is said to retain or remit sins, even as the Priest in the time of the Law is said to make the Leapers clean or unclean. His sentence touching that disease, was but declaratory, pronouncing who was stricken, or who was healed by the hand of God: he had not power himself to strike or to heal, to lay it upon any, or to take it away from any person. So it is the ordinance of God, that the Ministers should be declarers, interpreters, and expressers of his will and word

concerning remission of sins: not properly pardoners, forgivers, and remitters of sins (for then they must also take away sins) as though the sentence in heaven did depend upon the sentence on earth, whereas the censure of men must depend upon the sentence of God. To forgive sins properly, is to take them away, and to remove the punishment. But God only can do this: to God therefore alone let us fly, of him let us look for mercy, and from him let us never go to any man. If we have recourse unto him, we shall find mercy in time of need, which is better then thousands of gold and silver. This is able to appease the inward trouble of a distressed conscience, and ministereth sound comfort to the afflicted soul that is humbled and cast down to the gates of hell. If we had all the jewels and precious stones that can be found, we were not able to buy out the punishment of one sin. The Prophet saith, Ps. 49, 6, 7, 9. *They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give a ransom to God for him, &c.* The value & worth of the whole world is too vile and base to answer for one trespass: for it cost more to redeem one soul. It could not be done with silver and gold, and such like corruptible and transitory things, *but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.* If we would come before him with burnt offerings and calves of a year old, or would think to please the Lord with thousands of Rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil, or persuade our selves that we can make satisfaction for the sins of our souls by the fruit of our bodies, even by giving our sons and daughters, we deceive our selves, and know not the greuousnesse of sin, nor the infinite wrath of God, nor the exceeding value of the death of Christ, nor the endless torment due unto sin, nor the unspotted purity of the law of God, which is transgressed by it. If we had all things, and wanted his mercy, we have nothing: if once we have it, it is sufficient to cover all our infirmities, and to blot out all our iniquities, according to the saying of Solomon, Prov. 16, 6. *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged, and by the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil.* Such as never felt the burden of sin, never regard the benefit of mercy: but such as have their hearts in any sort touched with it, acknowledge them blessed that find it, and all those miserable that are destitute of it. It is not instruments of music, it is not dainty fare, it is not outward delights, it is not merry company, it is not riches, or honors, or friends, or nobility, or pleasures, or sports and pastimes, that can alay and appease a troubled mind & perplexed conscience. *David* wanted not any of these, he was the sweet Singer of Israel, he might have his consort, he could not want mirth and music of singing men & singing women: yet he preferred a drop of mercy before all these; he followed not the practice of *Saul*, who when an evil spirit sent of God, vexed him and disquieted his mind, listned unto them that told him of a cunning Musician to play before him: but he never sought to God, nor craved mercy at his hand, and therefore albeit he were eased for a time, yet his trouble returned more fiercely upon him then before, and ended in a fury and frenzy, so that nothing could pacify or appease him. This is the common course of the men of this world, if at any time their hearts accuse them, and sin begin to terrify them, & judgment press sore upon them, they seek by merriments, and drinkings, & feasts, and their companions to put that terror away. And this is the only counsel their friends can advise them to take. Like friends, like counsel: carnal friends, carnal counsel. But they and their friends are greatly out of the right way, and are wholly ignorant of the true means of comfort. All sound comfort cometh from God and from his word: and therefore he hath this title given

unto him, to be called, *the Father of mercies, and the God of all consolation*. He sendeth his holy Spirit into our hearts, whē they are cast down, who, by way of excellency, is called, *the Comforter*. He will not leave us without comfort, if we crave it of him. We must go unto him, and never give him over. He is a fountain that can never be emptied and drawn dry. Besides, we have his word, which being reverently heard and read, is able to raise up and cheer up our heavy hearts. The Apostle showeth, that the Scriptures were written, *that we through patience and comfort of them, might have hope*. And the Prophet David in sundry places setteth down this effect, which himself from time to time had found and felt in his troubles: as Psal. 19.8. *The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes:* and the 119. Psalm is a plentiful storehouse to furnish us abundantly with matter of comfort, *Thy testimonies are my delight, and my Counsellors:* and again, *My soul melteth for heaviness, strengthen thou me, according to thy word*. This is the true way sanctified unto us to drive away heaviness: this means the children of God have used, & have found by experience and good proof, the force and effect of it. It hath been very available unto them, and filled their bones with marrow and fatness. To this end he saith afterward, *Unless thy law had been my delight, I should then have perished in mine affliction*. Thus do the faithful rejoice in his Testimonies, as much as in all riches, forasmuch as his statutes do rejoice the heart, make wise the simple, enlighten the eyes, and convert the soul; then which it is impossible to find greater matter of comfort.

To conclude, we have seen, that there are two means to obtain comfort: the one is from the work of God in our hearts by his holy Spirit, which leaveth us not desolate and destitute. The other is the use of the word, which is sweeter then the honey and the honey-comb, and more to be desired then much riches. Let us have an heap of sorrows cast upon us through enduring of the Cross, and let us sink never so deep into afflictions, the word of God is able to raise us up again, & to cheer up our hearts.

[Verse 7. *Then they shall confess their sin which they have done.*] We shown before, that Moses setteth down three ways, how this damage offered to men, is to be blotted out. The course which they ought to take to purge it away, is first of all to make confession of their sin to God, forasmuch as where the confession of man goeth before, there the forgiveness of God followeth after. We cannot lie hid from him, nor conceal our offenses, and therefore it is best to acknowledge them before him.

From hence we learn, that whosoever looketh for forgiveness, must confess his sins to God. This is the practice and property of a true penitent, to lay forth his sins to God, both original and actual, and to discover them in his sight. This we see in sundry examples remembered in the old & New Testament. When David was reproved of Nathan the Prophet, who set his sins in order before him, he answered, *I have sinned against the Lord*. The Publican, going up into the Temple to pray, and standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, *God be merciful to me a sinner*. The prodigal son having wasted his substance with riotous living, when he came to himself, he went to his father, and said unto him, *Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son*. The like confession we read in Daniel, chap. 9, 5, 6, 7. when he perceived by the

word of the Lord, that the seventy years were accomplished in the desolations of Jerusalem, he prayed unto the Lord his God, and made his confession, *We have sinned and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments, &c.* The like we might show out of Ezra 9, 5, 6. and Nehem. 9. and many other places, which teach, that it is a duty required of us to make humble confession of our sins unto God.

[Reason 1] The reasons are weighty and effectual to enforce this duty. First, we shown in the former doctrine, that all sin is committed against God. Howsoever we may hurt men, and damnifie them in their bodies and goods, yet the chiefest dishonor is done against God, whose law is broken and transgressed; as Psal, 51, 4. *Against thee, even thee only have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight.* If then the injury done to man, be an iniquity committed against God, we are bound to confess our sin unto him. But all the wrongs offered to our brethren, are sins against God: and therefore confession ought to be made unto him.

Secondly, we have shown also before, that [Reason 2] it is in God's power only to forgive sins, and free us from the punishment due unto sin. He only can give pardon for sin, that carried our sins on his body. The Scribes and Pharisees had grievously corrupted the purity of doctrine by the leaven of their own traditions: yet they held soundly and sincerely this principle, that *God only forgiveth sins.* They falsely interpreted the law of God, and perverted the true meaning of it by their gloses, yet they retained this truth, that *none can forgive sins but God only,* Mark. 2.7. If then God alone can forgive sins, then we must confess them unto him. But he alone can forgive sins, and therefore we must confess them unto him.

Thirdly, without confession of our sins, [Reason 3] there is no forgiveness nor hope of pardon: for God cannot in justice forgive us, except in humility we confess unto him, seeing without it we have no promise made unto us to find favor at his hands. If we be not ashamed to uncase and uncover our sins, he will not be ashamed of us, but show mercy toward us; as Prov. 28, verse 13. *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but who so confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.* And the Apostle John affirmeth the same, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,* 1 John 1, verse 9. The like remedy Paul delivereth to the Corinthians, who, for their irreverent & unworthy partaking of the Lord's Supper, were some of them weak, some sick, and some dead: *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord.* 1 Corin. 11, 31. And the Prophet David declareth the same by his own experience, Psal. 32, verse 5. *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* If then there be no forgiveness of sins without confession, it followeth, that it is our duty to confess them before him.

Fourthly, where there is no true confession [Reason 4] of sin, there is no sound repentance for sin. For the inward sight of sin and humbling of our selves for it, will open our mouths, & cause us to lay them open. As then the confessing of them with the tongue, is a sign and testimony that the heart hath forsaken them: so on the other side, the shutting up of our mouths and hiding of our sins, is an evident token, that as yet we lie in them, and have no purpose and resolution to depart frō them. We have never truly repented, until our

iniquities be confessed. When *David* had numbered the people, and his heart did smite him for it, he cried out, *O Lord, I have sinned exceedingly, in that I have done: now, O Lord, I beseech thee, take away the trespass of thy servant, for I have done very foolishly.* If then we would assure our own hearts, that we have truly repented of our sins, and do not yet lie wallowing in them as a sow in the mire, let us by this fruit of our lips, confession to God, assure it. If we do not assure it this way, we shall never be sure.

Fifthly, this confession tendeth to the glorification [Reason 5] of the Name of God. The hiding of our sins and the smothering of them, as fire under the ashes, dishonoreth him; whereas by revealing of them, his Name is honored, forasmuch as we make manifest thereby the glory of his mercy, of his patience, and of his justice. Of his mercy, in sparing of us, and showing compassion toward us. Of his patience, in long forbearing of us, and waiting for our repentance, whereas he might have suddenly destroyed us. And of his justice, by acknowledging, that if he should punish us and proceed against us, we had our desert, he should do us no wrong, *that so he might be just in all his doings*, Psal. 51, verse 4. This is that reason which *Joshua* urgeth unto *Achan*, Josh. 7, verse 19. *My son, give I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done, hide it not from me.* Where we see, he joineth giving glory to God, and making confession of sin, together, so that the one cannot be separated from the other. For sin doth no more serve to the dishonoring of God, then the sincere confession of sins serveth to the glorifying of his Name: and as the committing of it causeth his Name to be blasphemed, so the confessing of it causeth his Name to be honored and magnified. Such as cannot repent of their evil ways, do by their hardness of heart and obstinacy of mind, more dishonor and reproach the Name of GOD, then by committing most grievous sins. For to settle the heart upon wickedness, with a purpose to continue therein, and so to oppose himself against grace, against the calling and threatenings of God, is no better then to accuse God of lying and injustice. Of lying, whiles he calleth us unto him, and denounceth his judgments against us. Of wrong and injustice, whiles he chastiseth us for our sins, and doth not spare us.

[Use 1] The doctrine being thus fully confirmed, the uses arising from hence are to be learned. And first it serveth to reprove sundry abuses of those that fail in the performance of this duty. Among which enormities, the corrupt practice of the Church of Rome is not the least, who abuse this doctrine of confession, and make it as an hook to catch men's goods, to know all men's secrets, and consequently a means to enrich themselves, and to empouerish others.

Hence it is, that they teach auricular confession to be necessary under the pain of damnation, for everyone that receiveth the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, immediately before it.

First, they will have all men confess, and then they must hear Mass: a fit door to such an house. And what are their Priests for the most part, to whom they send us to make confession, but ignorant persons, not able to minister a word of comfort in due season? Are we to acknowledge all our sins unto him, that hath an ear to hear us, and not a tongue to instruct us? But many of their Clergy are unlearned, and yet of greater learning then

conscience; so that men ought no more to reckon up their sins to such confessors, then in sickness, to take counsel of one that is ignorant in physic. We have shown before, that the Priest cannot properly pardon sin, forasmuch as he cannot pronounce pardon and forgiveness to any man, except he be truly contrite and penitent before God. But God only and the party penitent, know and understand the contrition of the heart, without which, the dearest sellers and setters out of pardons, dare not say that a sinner is pardoned. For hypocrites may dissemble in their confessions, and by their dissembling, deceive such as have the quickest sight, and the greatest knowledge, and the deepest judgment, who, by all their skill, are not able to dive down into the secrets of the soul.

If then *God only know the heart*, and understand the imagination of all thoughts of the children of men, how can their Priests simply and absolutely take upon them to forgive sins, seeing they are not able to judge of the soundness and sincerity of the heart? Nevertheless, the consciences of these men are so seared and so senseless, that without any color of truth, or show of godliness, they are not ashamed to teach, that the want of their popish penance, will drive all men, either to desperation, or to security and presumption: whereas the clean contrary is an evident truth. For the doctrine concerning that supposed and pretended Sacrament, offereth manifest occasion both of presumption and of desperation, as might be made plain by many examples. Of presumption, in them that are carnally minded. Of desperation, in them that have broken hearts and tender consciences. Such as are secure, it maketh them more secure; and such as are too much cast down already, it driveth them directly toward the pit of hell. For the one thinketh with himself that he hath a very easy remedy for his sins, and that he need not to trouble himself much with them, nor break one hour of sleep for them, nor forbear one jot of pleasure to be eased of them; he can quickly discharge them and easily disburden them into a Priests ear, and thereby hath a passport given him to commit sin afresh? the other, considering the impossibility of confession to be performed, and the insufficiency of the satisfaction enjoined, which notwithstanding are made the parts of this counterfeit Sacrament, can find no comfort in the Priests absolution.

[Object 1] But they object, that after Christ was risen again, he sent out his Disciples, and breathed upon them, saying, *Receive ye the holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose euers sins ye retain, they are retained*, John 20, 22, 23.

I answer, [Answer.] they can never establish their shrift out of these words, but do plainly show, that either they want their eyesight, or else they think others to be stark blind. For seeing Christ sent his Apostles into the whole world, that they should *preach the Gospel upon the house tops*, that is, openly and evidently, who will be so foolish as to imagine, that this can be understood of Auricular confession? This authority is joined with the Ministry of the Gospel, as the Apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. 5, verse 18, 19, 20. *God hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that GOD was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, &c.* Thus we see, that sinners are reconciled to God, and obtain remission of sins by the Ministry of preaching the Gospel, apprehending and receiving the benefit thereof by faith, not by confession: forasmuch as we have in the word, neither precept nor example of reckoning our sins in secret unto the Priest, to the ende we

may obtain forgiveness of them. All the examples and commandments mentioned in the Scriptures, call us with a loud voice, and carry us the direct way unto God, advising us to speak to him, who we are sure will answer us: to crave of him, who we are certain will hear us. The Prophet saith, *I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord, and thou forgavest me.* Psalm 32, verse 5. The same we read in Hosea, chap. 14, verse 2. *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips.* Yea, the servants of God were so far from binding themselves to number up all their sins, that David saith in the Psalm, *Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults?* Psalm 19, 12. and 38, 5. True it is, many of the ancient do oftentimes speak much of confession, but it is of public confession in the face of the Church, made by him that had committed some public and notorious crime, and given scandal to the whole Church: whereas there was no law set forth of this auricular confession before Innocent. the third, who first of all made an act and decree touching the same. For they call men back from running unto men to tell them their sins, who may put them to shame and rebuke, make them blush, and hit them in the teeth with them, and also bring them to the knowledge of others: but to the Lord that careth for us, to him that is our Physician, and cureth our wounds: as the servant, when he hath offended, craveth not forgiveness of his fellow-servant, but at the hands of his master. And why should we fear to vnburden our conscience of that, which we feared not to commit in his presence? If we come unto him, we may be assured he will turn away his face from our iniquities.

Again, some object the words of the Apostle [Object 2] James, chapter 5, verse 16. *Confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.* Loe, say they, here is an express commandment given unto us to confess our sins. And we see the practice of it to John, Math. 3, verse 5, 6. *To whom went out Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.* These are the Scriptures that the Rhemists use to establish their error, as the groundworke of their building.

I answer [Answer.] unto them both; and first to the commandment, then to the example or practice of it.

Touching the precept or commandment, howsoever it may carry some show, yet if we mark it, the place rather marreth their market, then helpeth the matter. For the confession of faults here spoken off, is in time of sickness at the private houses of the diseased, when the sick person acknowledgeth to the standers by that come to visit him, wherein and in what manner he had offended them; & the standers by, wherein they had offended him; and both of them desired to be reconciled one to another, and so depart hence in peace, Math. 5, verse 23. It was not made therefore alone and apart in the Church, in time of health, in the ear of the Priest, in the supposed holy time of Lent, a little before Easter, or before they prepared themselves to hear Mass.

Secondly, here he requireth that we confess our sins and offenses one to another, not all to one: so that this text belongeth to mutual confession, not to sacramental confession. Whereby we may evidently prove, that their popish Priests are as well bound to confess themselves to lay-men, as the lay-men are bound to confess themselves to popish Priests.

Otherwise, how can we be said to *confess one to another*? If any confess unto me, and I confess unto none, how have we kept this rule? How have we confessed our faults one to another?

Thirdly, as we are commanded to confess our faults one to another, so we are also charged to pray one for another: for the Apostle joineth these two together.

But they are ashamed to say, that this pertaineth only to the Priest to pray for others: wherefor then should confession pertain unto him more then the prayer here spoken off? forasmuch as there is a like respect of both these, *Confess one to another, and pray one for another*. This point therefore is so clear, that the Rhemists themselves confess, that it is not certain, but only probable, that the Apostle speaketh here of sacramental confession: and besides, Cardinal *Caietane*, in his Commentaries upon the same place, observeth, that it cannot be understood of the Sacrament of Confession, because the Apostle doth not say, Acknowledge your faults to the Priest, but one to another. Touching the practice of the people that came to *John's* baptism, they confess their sins in general, and not all of them in particular: not compelled unto it, but voluntarily moved. For if they had confessed their sins particularly, *John* must have stood from morning to evening many years together, because Jerusalem, and all Iewry, and all the Country about Jordan came unto him: in which number no doubt were many thousands, and an innumerable company that were never shriven before; so that their confessions must be very long, & he must of necessity have shriuing work enough all the days of his life, & therefore it was impossible there should be a particular enumeration of all their sins.

Secondly, it reproveth such as hide their sins, and cannot be brought to confess thē. Such as do deny them, fail in this duty, and are far from true repentance, and consequently from free forgiveness. They have skill and will to set out other men's sins, and to stretch them at large to the uttermost, that they may make them seem greater then they are: but touching their own offenses, either they will not understand them, or they will excuse them: and you shall be sure to get thē to confess no more then you can prove against them. Look what you can convince them off, they will confess, because they cannot deny it: where you stick at the proof, they will stick to lay open themselves, and they will go no farther then you can go, but impudently deny the rest. They will never be brought to confess they have sinned, until they be taken in their sin, so that the first time of their taking, shall be the first time of their sinning.

This is a corruption, the which we have drawn from our first parents, to hide our sins, as *Adam*. When he was examined by the most upright Judge, he posted the matter over, from himself to his wife, Gen. 3, 12, 13. *The woman that thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat*. And the woman after his example, went about to clear her self, and laid all the blame upon the Serpent; *The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat*. But all this served not their turn, God found them out, and punished them for their sin. In this number we may range all such as keep silence, and hold their peace, when they have committed sin, albeit they hear it inquired into: as *Achan* did, when he had stolen away the wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment, Josh. 7, 16, who hid his sin until he saw it detected by others. Thus do very many account it a notable point of wisdom to keep their own counsel; and if they can cunningly

carry it away, they glory in it, and rejoice in their own wicked devices. Others that are driven to speak somewhat touching their offenses, will notwithstanding answer nothing to the purpose, as *Gehazi* did, whose confession was no confession, *Thy servant went no whither*. When God called *Cain* to an account for the horrible parricide he had committed against his own natural brother, and began to question with him about it, Where is *Abel* thy brother? he answered, *I cannot tell, am I my brothers keeper?* He would not confess it, but stood in defense of it, or at least would shake it off from him, as a matter impertinent unto him, and no way concerning him. This was a sign of his impenitency & hardness of heart: it is a sure testimony, that as yet he had no touch of conscience, nor feeling of sin, nor regard of punishment. Thus the case standeth with many among us they care not how they run on in their sins, yet cannot be brought to confess them to GOD, that they may find mercy. Such have no comfort of heart, nor peace of conscience, but lie under the wrath of God, and come far behind *Judas*, the son of perdition.

Thirdly, there is another sort, that will not hide their sin altogether, but yet mince it & diminish it, as if it stuck between their teeth, and they were loath to utter it, so that they are unwilling to declare what they have done. They can amplify the sins of others, but they will extenuate their own: and confess them so slightly and coldly, that thereby they farther discover their own wickedness▪ and that they are not touched at the heart with a feeling of them. A cold confession bewrayeth and argueth a cold repentance, and shall bring as cold an effect and fruit of consolation. For like confession, like consolation. If a Subject that hath offended his Prince, should crave pardon of the Prince, in such sort as many ask forgiveness of God, he should be assured to find little favor. If he should say unto the Prince, I confess I have rebelled and offended, but many others have offended the Law, as much or more, I was not the principal agent or doer in it, I was drawn into it by others; would this submission be accepted at his hands? How then shall we think that God will approve of us, when we cut short our sins in confessing, which we have enlarged in committing? We are not ashamed to say, I am not the greatest sinner; I pray God I may never do anything worse, and then I hope I shall do well enough; I am not the first that have sinned, and I am sure I shall not be the last; I am not alone, but others are as bad as I; let everyone look to himself; I am (I thank God) neither whoremaster, nor thief, nor murderer, nor drunkard. These are they that justify themselves, like the Pharisee in the Gospel, Luke 18, verse 11, 12. who prayed thus with himself, *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican*. These are they, that peradventure will not stick with you to acknowledge some of their sins, especially such as are in the eyes and ears of the world, seen and heard of all men: but they will not confess all, nor the greatest, nor the chiefest, nor the most secret: like unto those foolish Mariners that go about to stop the least and smallest holes in the Ship, and let the greatest and widest alone; or like unwise patients that would show to the Surgeon their lightest wounds, & hide from him the most deep and dangerous; or like a watchman that should discover a little band and troop of enemies coming to assault the City, and conceal a great army that is ready to enter, and to cast down the walls. We must keep none of our sweet sins, nor of our profitable sins, but confess them all to him that hath promised to cover them, and not to impute them unto us. Such are in the right way to true blessedness;

as for others, they are out of the right way. For it condemneth such as are content to confess in general terms, that they are sinners: but you shall as soon wring water out of a flint, as any particular confession out of their mouths; they are too much in love with themselves, they are too much in love with their own sins.

If we look for pardon at the hands of God, we must not be ashamed, or afraid, or astonished to set them out at large, with their parts and circumstances, at what times, in what places, after what manner, and among what persons we have committed them. Thus have the faithful servants of God done, and found comfort by it. This is the right way to obtain forgiveness, and to procure a blessing at the hand of almighty God, & a plain proof of true humiliation: without which there is no forgiveness at all can be assured unto us.

[Use 2] Secondly, this confession of our sins unto God, ministereth wonderful comfort to all such as are truly grieved, and heartily sorrowful for them. When we can freely pour out our meditations before him, and lay open our secret sins, that neither friend nor foe knoweth, or can touch us withal, whē we can hate with an earnest hatred our best beloved sins, that have been as dear unto us, as our right hand, or our right eye; when we can complain of them, speak evil of them, deface, and every way disgrace them, as carnal men do their utter enemies, it is a true sign that our hearts are touched by the Spirit of God; as our Savior Christ teacheth, John 16, verse 8. *When the Comforter is come he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*

We have no greater enemies then our sins, which are many in number, strong in power, deceitful in snaring, and dangerous in subduing of us. They are in number as the sand on the sea shore, that cannot be reckoned, and moe then the hairs of our head, or then the hours that we have lived. They are as strong as an army of men set in battle array, who by their power and puissance, have struck down the chosen men of Israel. They deceive with their pleasures, as the bird is taken in the snare, and as the subtle harlot that flattereth with her mouth. They bring danger both to soul and body, and leave us not till we perish forever, and be cast into the pit of hell, from whence there is no redemption.

Seeing then their nature is such, that they carry us headlong with violence into perdition, we should also malign them and hate them as death, nay, as him *that hath the power of death, that is, the devil*. Hebr. 2, verse 14. If we find them too cunning and crafty for us, and our selves too weak to deal against them being armed with all the forces of Satan and of the world, let us go to him that being *stronger then that strong man, is able to take away all his weapons*, (Luke 11, verse 22.) and bind him in chains, even *the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah*, (Revel. 5, verse 5.) that is able to stop the mouth of that *roaring Lyon, which seeketh whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. 5, 8. He knoweth whereof we are made, he remembereth that we are but dust.

And as he is of power to help us, and subdue our corruptions, so he is of infinite mercy to pardon us our sins. He knoweth what is in us, better then we our selves know our selves: forasmuch as he is greater then our hearts, and knoweth all things.

If then we confess our sins truly and unfeignedly, as he is *faithful and just*, (1 John, chap, 1, verse 9.) so he will forgive us: he hath made the promise, and the word is gone out of his

mouth, which he cannot call back again: he hath uttered his voice, and he cannot deny it, no more then he can deny himself.

If he should retain our sins, we being penitent, he should forfeit and falsify his truth, which cannot agree to the divine nature, and therefore (as one rightly speaketh) he should be a greater leaser then we. This is evidently to be seen in the Psalms of repentance penned by the Prophet *David*, as Psalm 32. At the first he sought by all the means that he could, to hide his sins, he sendeth for *Uriah*, and useth sundry shifts to convey him unto his house, and thereby to cover his sin. When that policy would not serve, he sendeth secretly to *Joab*, to put him in place of danger, and thē to retire from him, that he might fall by the sword of the Ammonites. But whiles he seeketh all means to cover it, God, the searcher of hearts, doth discover it, and sendeth his Prophet unto him, to reprove him. Heereby, even by the Ministry of the word, his heart is touched, and he is made to see the greuousnesse of his sin, & against whom he had sinned; then he is not ashamed to acknowledge it, and to leave a memorial of it in the Church for the good of others. Thus he found wonderful comfort by his confession, and could find none without it, *I acknowledged my sin, and thou forgavest mine iniquity.* Psal. 32, 5. The consideration of the multitude of our sins is able to bring us to despair: but the confession of our sins is able to raise up to hope again, and to stay us up with the mercies of GOD, which are as flagons of wine to refresh us. When *David* had thus confessed that he had sinned, God sent him a comfortable message that cheered his heart and quieted his conscience. The Prophet that before threatened & thundered out the Law, now applieth precious balm, and poureth wine and oil into his wounds▪ saying unto him in the Name of God, *Thy sin is pardoned.* They that are escaped by the mercy of God (as it were from a dangerous shipwreck) out of their sins, would not come into the same case and condition again, for to gain a kingdom, nay, all the kingdoms of the world. When the sinful woman confessed her sins by shedding abundance of tears, and wiping the feet of Christ with the hairs of her head, he answered concerning her as the Lord of life and comfort, *Many sins are forgiven her, for she loved much,* Luke 7, verse 47. Thus he spake graciously and comfortably to the penitent thief on the Cross, accusing himself, reprovng his fellow, justifying Christ, confessing his faith, and asking forgiveness, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise,* Luke 23, 43. The more often we go unto God, and confess our sins before him, the better it is for us, the more mercifully he will deal with us, the greater grace he will bestow upon us, the farther he will remove his judgments from us, and the nearer he will approach unto us.

[Use 3] Lastly, let us all labor after a right confession. Many have confessed their sins, and yet found little comfort, as *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *Judas*, the Israelites, and many others. If we hope to speed better then these men, then we must confess better then they did. If we sin with them, and confess as they did, we shall reap no better fruit then they did. We are apt to favor and flatter our selves, we are possessed with self-love. We cannot look upon other men's virtues, nor our own vices: we are blind in seeing our own faults, whereas we are sharp sighted and quick eyed to espy a little mote in other men's faces. We should rather consider our own wants to be humbled for them, then the graces we have, to be puffed up by them. No man seeth the spots that be in his own face: so he discerneth not the sins that are in his own soul.

He that would know his deformities, taketh a glass, which showeth unto him what he is, and how he is: so if we would understand our secret & open sins, we must behold our faces in the law of God, *for by the law cometh the knowledge of sin*, Rom. 3, 20. We must therefore examine our selves touching this duty of confession, and observe diligently the true properties of it. Not everyone that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Not everyone that saith, I am a sinner, I am unclean, is a true convert, and a right penitent. Nothing is more common thē to hear men say, I confess myself a sinner, all men are sinners, there is no man that sinneth not, God be merciful unto us: this is the ordinary confession of every man. These are no better then words of course, it is rotten at the root, it is blasted in the ear; it is green in the leaves, but beareth no fruit; it is beautiful without, but soul and filthy within; it is formal in show, but fading in substance. Wherefore, that we may not deceive our selves as a great part of the world do; we are to understand the properties of true confession, that we may comfort our selves in them, if we find them in us: or else labor to attain unto them, if we feel the want of them: and seek to increase in the knowledge of them, if we have already received them.

First of all, we must confess to God our special and particular sins, as the patient that would be cured, not only telleth the Physician that he is sick, but acknowledgeth in what part and in what manner, & how long he hath been sick. When men complain to Magistrates, of the wrongs that have been done them, they will express in what particulars and in what sort they have been damnified. Shall we not much rather seek to the Physician of our souls, and acknowledge to him how sorely we are sick, especially considering he knoweth our diseases better then our selves? If there were no other motive to stir us up to this duty of confession, this were sufficient: because we cannot hide them from him. We may conceal them from the knowledge of men, but with all our craft and cunning, with all our devises and policies, with all our fetches and falsehood, we cannot conceal them from God, whose eyes pierce into the bowels of the earth, and into the depth of hell. This is that which the wise man delivereth, *Hell & destruction are before the Lord, how much more the hearts of the sons of men?* Pro. 15, 11. So y^t there is nothing so deep, nothing so secret, w^c can be hidden frō the sight of God. Hence it is, that *David* confessed oftentimes, that he had sinned: & addeth in what kinds, *in blood-guiltiness, and in numbering of the people*: so *Paul* confessed, that he was a *blasphemer, a persecutor, and an oppressor*, the chiefest of all sinners, 1 Tim. 1, 15. We see then to whom we must go to confess, and in what manner we are to perform it: which serveth to reprove those, that when their sins are discovered and come to sight, that they can no longer hide them, do submit themselves unto men, and stoop down to them, but never humble themselves before God, whom they have offended, nor acknowledge how shamefully they have broken his laws. We have many false tears shed to blind and blear the eyes of men, but they never seek unfeignedly to reconcile themselves unto him that is *able to save and to destroy*, and never stand in fear of him that *can destroy body and soul in hell fire*. Let us take heed of this hypocrisy, which is a most vain and fruitless kind of humiliation, of which we shall speak more afterward.

Secondly, we must set out our sins in their right colors, as beggars that uncover their sores to men, that they may behold them and show mercy. We must be so far from making our

sins lighter and lesser then they are, that we should enlarge them to the full, and labor to make them appear vile & heinous as they are. A notable practice of this we have in *David*, Psal. 51, 5. he ascendeth up from his present sins to his original corruption, *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*. The like we see in *Ezra*, chap. 9, verse 6. when the people had transgressed by making affinity with strangers, taking of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, he fell upon his knees, & spread out his hands unto the Lord his God, and said, *O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens*. We must confess, when, and where, and how we have sinned. We must confess how much we have dishonored God, and scandalized the Church, and how long we have lived and continued in our sins. We must confess, that if he should condemn us, he should do us no wrong, but we must clear him and the course of his justice, when he proceedeth against us. We heard how *Paul* confessed his sin in the time of his ignorance, that he had *persecuted the Church of God extremely*, and made havoc of it horribly, Gal. 1, 13. and therefore was not only the least of all Saints, but the greatest of all sinners. Neither doth he, in uttering this speech, make a lie, or speak for modesty sake, but as he thought in his heart, esteeming no man's sin like his own, nor understanding another man's as he doth his own, nor feeling another man's as his own. Thus do the servants of God deal with themselves, & with their sins, and thereby show that they were out of love with themselves and their sins. This reproveth those that content themselves with a word and away, they cannot abide to stand long in their confession, as if they were afraid to humble themselves too far: whereas we cannot make our selves too vile, nor hate our sins too much. Many confess thē, as if they meant presently to return unto thē, like to the harlot that *wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have not committed iniquity*, Pro. 30, 20. whereas we should hate thē with a perfect hatred as our utter enemies y^t seek our destructiō

Thirdly, our confession must proceed from the heart, it must be sound at the root, otherwise the fruit will be blasted, rotten, corrupt, and unsavory, as *Prov. 4, 23. Keep thine heart with all diligence, for thereout cometh life*: and chap. 23, 26. *My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes delight in my ways*. Thus it was with *David*, Ps. 6.7, 6. whose soul was troubled very sore, *I fainted in my mourning, I cause my bed every night to swim, and water my couch with my tears*, and the more he was afflicted, the more unfeignedly he came to God. Such was the confession of the Publican, when he smote his breast, and said, *Lord be merciful to me a sinner*. When he laid his hand upon his breast, if it had been possible, he would have touched and taken his heart to have offered it up to God. If we bring unto God only an outward confession, fetched no farther then from y^e mouth, it returneth empty to us again, and never obtaineth any blessing. This lip-labor God hateth as a lame offering, and a maimed sacrifice, The heart is as salt that seasoneth every part of the worship of God, & every exercise of our religion, & every fruit of our most holy faith. This is commended to have been in *Ephraim* by the Prophet, *After that I converted, I repented: and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh, I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth*. Ier. 31, 18. Hypocritical confession is no confession.

Fourthly, we must confess our sins with an hatred of them. For where there is no feeling of sin, there can be no pardon of sin: and therefore Christ calleth such to him as were *weary and heavy laden*, and ready to faint & fall down under the burden of them, Mat. 11, 28. The Prophet confesseth, that his sins were as a weighty burdē too heavy for him, so that he went crooked, & bowed very sore. So long as sin appeareth unto men small as a mote, light as a feather, pleasant as a sport, y^t it groweth to be as common with them as going in the high way, drinking iniquity as water, and delighting in it as in meat & drink, it is plain they know not the nature of it. Many hypocrites like *Judas* have confessed their particular sins, who said, he had sinned *in betraying innocent blood*; but it is of custom without conscience, or of passion without remorse, or of fear without change: because they are weary of the punishments that lie upon them, but are not weary of their sins that are y^e causes of them: their plagues seem heavy, but their sins seem light, whereas the sins that are in us, should more grieve us, then the judgments that are upon us. Such men are for the present touched with the stroke of God's hand; but after they have confessed, and the punishment is removed, they are the same that they were before, and are found no changlings, they return again to their old sins, as the dog to his vomit, and practice that which before they seemed to abhor. Let us therefore hate sin much more then the punishment, lest we be as malefactors that oftentimes cry out for the punishment, but seldom or never for their offense. Sin is the breach of God's law, and the procuring cause of all punishment. If we be careful to stay the cause, we shall quickly and easily stay the effect: and if we would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord. Fifthly, our confession must not be extorted or enforced, but freely and willingly performed. Many men confess their sins, but this is no free will offering, they are forced unto it by the rigor of the Law, or by the anguish of the soul, or by violence of sickness, or by fear of death, or by the crack of God's judgment, or by the censure of men. If we be as forward to confess them to the glory of God, as we were forward to commit them to his dishonor, we have comfort in the performance of this duty, and it will work in us repentance never to be repented of. But if necessity compel us to this, as it did *Pharaoh* and *Judas*, and *Achan*, while the rod was upon their backs, or God otherwise had found them out, it is our crosses that make us confess, and not our sins, as Psa. 78. When the wrath of God was heavy upon them, so that he slew them, and consumed their days in vanity and their years hastily, then they sought him and they returned, and sought God early, they remembered that God was their strength, and the most high God their redeemer: *but they flattered hem with their mouth, and dissembled with him with their tongue*. Every duty must be performed to God cheerfully, if it be done otherwise, God regardeth it not.

Sixthly, this must be observed in our confession, that we ought not so far to dwell upon the meditation of our sins, that we forget the mercies of God, and faith in his promises, and forgiveness of our sins. *Judas* confessed against himself his own particular sin in betraying his master, and shedding of innocent blood: howbeit this being wrested from him, through horror of his conscience, and the fearful apprehension of God's wrath, he never expected any mercy, but went his way solitary, *and hanged himself* desperately. He had no belief of pardon, nor hope of favor, nor desire of repentance, and therefore his confession served to no other end, but to acknowledge as on the one side the Justice of God, and the equality of

his ways, so on the other side, the merit of his own punishment, and the sealing up of his own just condemnation, by his own mouth. It was far otherwise with *Peter*, after he had denied and abjured his master, *he repented* of his sin and *wept bitterly* for the same, he believed the promise, and laid hold on mercy, and was saved. This confession was joined with faith, which sanctified it to his comfort. Confession joined with infidelity is no confession, for unbelief is as a bitter root that poisoneth it, and maketh it unsavory and vnhealthfull.

Seventhly, it belongeth unto us and to our confession, to join prayer to God for the pardon of our sins. It is our duty together with our acknowledging of our faults, to ask forgiveness, and to pray for mercy to the God of all mercy, against whom we have trespassed without which all is in vain. Thus did not *Cain* that despaired and cried out, that his *sin was greater then he could bear*, and therefore received no comfort nor grace in time of need. How many and great soever our sins are▪ let us never give over prayer for pardon. It is one of the engines of the devil whereby he betrayeth our souls, and he catcheth many in his snare. He knoweth, that they are holden fast as slaves in chains and fetters, that are persuaded to give over prayer. He is in the way to Atheism, that *prayeth not* at all, Psal. 14.4. He is forsaken of God that thinketh it needless and superfluous, as appeareth in *Saul* when the noise that was in the host of the Philistines spread farther abroad, he said unto the Priest that brought the Ark of God, *Withdraw thine hand*, as if he had said, There is now no time to ask counsel of the mouth of God, Numb. 27.21. It is otherwise with the servants of God, though they have been overcome by the strength of their corruption, by want of watchfulness, by the subtlety of sin, and by the temptation of Satan, yet they would never shut up their mouths from the invocation of the Name of God, and from calling for mercy at his hands. We see this in *David*, both in the book of Psalms & in other places, Psal. 51.1. We see it in the penitent Publican, Luk. 18.13. and 15.1. and in the prodigal son that returned to his fathers house. We see it in the Israelites, and in many others. To this doth the Prophet exhort them, Hos. 14.3. *Take unto you words and turn to the Lord; and say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips.*

Thus we see, confession of sin, and asking of pardon, must join hand in hand and go together as friends that are agreed: so that we should not hope for pardon, but pray for pardon of God, whose nature is to *forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin*, that is, sins of all sorts, how great and heinous soever they be. If we sin against God, and never ask forgiveness of God, we shall never receive forgiveness at his hands.

Lastly, we ought so to confess our sins, as that we have also a purpose to leave and to forsake our sins. We must not think to find mercy, so long as we have a desire to continue in them.

Hence it is, that the Prophet saith, Isaiah, 55.7. *Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous his own imaginations, and return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he is very ready to forgive.* This is true repentance to fly from sin, forasmuch as *everyone that nameth the Name of Christ, must depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2.19. This is a faulty confession of sin, when there appeareth no change or alteration in them that do confess. We must confess both some of our sins and all of them, and *keep none of the sweetness of them under our tongues*, as *Job* speaketh: but refrain from them, and be afraid that they will be unto

us as the gall of Asps. We must *cast aside everything that presseth down, and the sin that hangeth so fast on*: he will bring all sin unto judgment, and therefore we should confess all of them, if we would have pardon of all of them. We desire to have them all pardoned, so that we must hide none of them, nor conceal them, for thereby we shut up God's mercy, and are enemies to our own peace.

And shall restore the damage thereof with his principal, and put the fifth part of it more thereunto, &c. The second means of expiation of our sins, or of receiving forgiveness of them, is restitution; which is set down three ways. He that hath wronged his neighbor must restore, first *the principal*: secondly, *the damage*: and thirdly, he shall add a fifth part thereto: to the end that all persons should be terrified from committing this or the like sin, and the owner may have a full amends, and receive a perfect satisfaction. True it is, our offenses are forgiven freely without our deserts, and certain it is, we cannot make amends and satisfaction to God: but we can, and may, and ought unto our brethren which are damnified by us.

Now, if God had ordained, that such as purloyne from men their goods, either by open oppression, or by forged caullation, or by violent extortion, or by colorable circumvention, should only restore the principal portion which they have taken away, it might have encouraged many in their wicked ways, and have strengthened the hands of the fraudulent dealer. For he might reason thus with himself, I will enrich myself with my neighbors goods, and draw unto me that which is his: I will go closely and covertly to work, it is a thousand to one that ever it be known, or I espied: and if it come abroad to the open light, I know the hardest and the worst that may befall, he can have but his own again; and so, though I be no winner, I am sure I shall be no looser. To prevent this mischief, and to stop the mouths of all those that are ready to do wrong, the Lord decreeth, that such a one shall restore not only the principal, but he shall repay the damage that the owner hath sustained by the lack or loss of his goods and besides he shall add a fifth part thereunto, whether it be more or less that he hath taken away. From hence we learn, that whatsoever is unjustly taken away from the right owners, ought to be restored unto them again. It is a duty required at our hands to make restitution to our brethren, whensoever we have wronged them, and whatsoever we have taken from them. When *Abimelech* had taken away *Abraham's* wife, while he sojourned in *Gerar*, the Lord said unto him in a dream, *Deliver the man his wife again, for he is a Prophet, and he shall pray for thee, that thou mayest live: but if thou deliver her not again, be sure that thou shalt die the death, thou, and all that thou hast.* Gen. 20.7. *Abimelech* is commanded to restore her again to him, whose by right she was, and to whom only she pertained. Many laws to like purpose are set down in the book of *Exodus*, chap. 22.1, 3, 4, 5, &c. *If a man steal an ox or a sheep, and kill it, and sell it, he shall restore five oxen for the ox, and four sheep for the sheep, &c. If a man do hurt field or vineyard, and put in his beast to feed in another man's field, he shall recompense of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard.* So in the book of *Leviticus*, chap. 6.1, &c. the Lord ordaineth, *If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, it shall be, because he hath sinned, that he shall restore, &c.* And to this purpose, *Samuel* appealeth to the consciences of the people 1 Sam. 12.3. *Behold here I am: bear record of me before the Lord, and before his Anointed; whose ox have I taken? or whose asse have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? or*

whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received a bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you. Everyone that hath government over others, cannot truly say thus, but everyone ought to do thus. Whereby we see, that howsoever God commandeth us to confess our sins which we have committed unto him, yet that is not sufficient, unless we also make actual restitution to him whom we have offended.

This truth is yet better to be confirmed [Reason 1] by strength of reason. And first we must know that it is a fruit or sign of true repentance and turning unto God, and of an heart touched with a feeling of his former offenses, that he which hath stolen, will steal no more. This we see in the example of *Zacchaeus*, Luke 19.8. when once he believed in Christ, who had as it were lighted a candle within his heart, y^t he began to see his own unrighteousness, and so his unworthiness to receive any good thing, he stood forth and said unto the Lord, *Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor▪ and if I have taken away anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.* He testifieth his repentance by his readiness to make restitution; whereas he that keepeth stolen goods, stealeth still, and is no better then a thief, and consequently far from repentance.

[Reason 2] Secondly, without restitution there can be no remission: forasmuch as repentance is falsely counterfeited, and not truly practiced. God will not forgive such as retain with them their neighbors goods. To steal from them, and to keep that which is stolen, is a plain token that we are resolved to continue in sin. He that is persuaded and determined not to depart from stolen goods which are sweet morsels unto him, is resolved to be a thief, and not to give over. Thus God is mocked and dallied withal, and his law neglected and despised. This the Prophet *Ezekiel* pointeth out, chap. 18.7, 9, 12, 13. and 33, 15. *He that hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God: but he that hath oppressed the poor and needy, and hath spoiled by violence, and hath not restored the pledge, &c. he shall surely die, his blood shall be upon him.* Seeing then, such as restore and so make recompense of that they have taken away, have promise of forgiveness, & contrariwise, such as never make restitution have a terrible threatening of death denounced against them, it followeth that this is a duty required of all persons.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, the performance of it is a very special means to bring a blessing upon us: a blessing, I say, from him to whom restitution is made. For, when he shall see how God hath touched their heart with a feeling of their sin, that they can no longer keep that which is not their own, albeit power be in their hand to do it, it shall stir him up to desire and procure their good: and to crave a blessing to come down upon them. This is that which we read in *Moses*, Deut. 24.12, 13. *If the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge, &c. that he may bless thee.* This end is not to be neglected, forasmuch as the ears of God are always open to hear the cry of the poor, and he hath promised to help them, and to bring a curse upon all their oppressors, to their destruction.

[Reason 4] Fourthly, as the loins of the poor shall bless them that restore, so God will accept it, as a work of justice and righteousness, and as a fruit of his spirit, justifying us by the righteousness of Christ Jesus his Son, and sanctifying us to his glory. In the place of Scripture before remembered, *Moses* teacheth this, and layeth it down as a strong reason,

Deut. 24.13. where speaking of such as had taken pledges of the poor, he saith, *In any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the Sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, &c. and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the Lord thy God.* This also is a most forcible reason to move us to restitution, forasmuch as God sets it down as an infallible testimony of a justifying faith, and therefore the contrary is a fruit of infidelity; so that we shall never repent us of that we have done, nor wish it to be in our own hands again.

[Reason 5] Fifthly, the unjust retaining of other men's goods, hindereth many good things from us, inasmuch as God will accept no service nor duty at our hands, until we have rid our hands of things evilly gotten. We may come to hear his word, and to call upon his Name, and sit among the Saints and servants of God in the Congregation: howbeit, we hear without fruit, and we pray without profit. For this poisoneth and corrupteth unto us the best things of God. This is that which Christ teacheth us in the Gospel of Matthew, chap. 5.23.24. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee (but he hath some just action against us, so long as we keep any of his goods wrongfully from him) leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* If then we desire that God should hear our prayers, or be well pleased with the hearing of his word, we must be careful to make recompense and satisfaction for such injuries as we have offered, and our brother hath sustained.

Now let us come to the uses, which are as [Use 1] it were the life and soul of this point, that hath been proved. First of all, it serveth to reprove all such as neglect this duty, and so offend against this doctrine. And among them, it meeteth directly & chiefly with those that commit sacrilege, robbing the Church, and defrauding the Ministers of that portion which God hath granted unto them in his holy word. The wise man saith, Pro. 20.25. *It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy: and after vows to make inquiry.* Our Savior himself saith, Matth. 10.10. *The laborer is worthy of his wages.* The Apostle Paul saith 1 Cor. 9.14. *The Lord hath ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.* This sin came first from the man of sin, by whom tithes were first alienated, and impropriations erected, and Church-livings spoiled, for the maintenance of idle persons that sate still, and did nothing but eat and drink, and fat themselves in cloysters, as oxen in a stall: and these deal with the goods of the Church, as the soldiers did with y^e garments of Christ, *they parted his garments among them, and cast lots for his vesture.* The Centurion is commended in the Gospel, that *built a Synagogue* for the Jews: but these men do what they can to pull down Churches, and to impoverish the Ministry, and to destroy the souls and salvation of many whom Christ redeemed. These spiritual thieves and Church-robbers, must learn to pay their due, and *not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn,* 1 Tim. 5.18. They rob God greatly of his honor, and dishonor him more then the heathen did their idols which are no gods.

These men glory in their Christianity, and yet are enemies unto Christ. So that the Gentiles that knew not God, shall arise in judgment against them, and condemn them. Secondly, it reproveth all oppressors that fill their houses with the spoils of the poor and needy: as Isaiah 3.14.15. *The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of the people, and the Princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard, the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye that ye beat my*

people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor, saith the Lord God of hosts? And to this purpose speaketh Micah, in his propheties against this sin, chap. 3.3. *They also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them; they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron.* In the day of judgment, when an end of all things shall come, such shall be cast into hell as are covetous and have not given of their own, who have seen the naked, and not clothed them; the hungry, and have not fed them; the thirsty, and have not given them drink: the sick, and have not visited them: how much more shall they be condemned, that behold their brethren clothed, and take away their garments: that see them to have meat and drink, and spoil them of it? The example of the rich man teacheth this, Luke 16.23. He took nothing from Lazarus, he robbed him not of his rags, he took not from him a crumb of bread, or a drop of water, and yet he is accounted cruel and unmerciful, and *is cast into torments.* This man shall rise at the day of judgment, & condemn many among us, who not only do no good, but much harm, and exercise cruelty and oppression over the poor that dare not lift up their voice against us. *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire,* Matth. 3.10: and not that tree only that bringeth forth evil fruit. Hence it is, that it is said by Elishu in the book of Job, cha. 34.28. *They have caused the cry of the poor to come before the Lord, and he hath heard the cry of the afflicted.*

Thirdly, it reproveth the poor that steal from the rich, and think they may do it lawfully, and are not bound to restore what they have taken. Pouerty, how great soever it be, is no privilege or protection, to take one sheep or Lamb out of the flocks of Job that was so rich, and had so many: or one lock & handful of wool from the wealthiest Cloathier: or one pound or penny, out of the house of the best moneyed Merchant: or one remnant of clothe or parcel of ware out of the shop of the stored Tradesman. In times of dearth and famine, when it goeth hard with the meaner sort, they think they have a warrant to shift for themselves howsoever they can, & to get for themselves whatsoever they are able. But the Law of God serveth as a bridle to restrain all persons, both rich and poor, both high and low, in times of plenty and scarcity, *Thou shalt not steal.* When the Lord forbiddeth theft generally, wilt thou mince it, and distinguish where he doth not distinguish, & say, I will steal in time of need? It is our duty to pray to God to *give us our daily bread,* and not to take from others their bread. What needed the wise Agar mentioned in the Proverbs, to pray unto God *not to give him poverty,* if he might lawfully relieve himself so easily by the store and substance of others at his own pleasure? Bur some will object the words of Solomon, [Object.] Prov. 6.30. *Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul, when he is hungry.* To this I answer, [Answer.] that the wise man speaketh not simply, but comparatively. For he compareth two sins together, adultery and theft, the greater with the lesser. It is a great shame to take away other men's goods from them, howbeit theft is not so foul a fact and fault, as to defile another man's wife: for the thief may make restitution, and thereby after a sort put away his discredit: whereas the adulterer cannot make amends, nor blot out the reproach, neither will the husband of the whorish woman be reconciled, or forget the wrong offered unto him. True it is, he that did steal to preserve life, was to be punished by the law of God, Exod. 22.1. for he was to make restitution, or to be sold as a bondman; but the adulterer and the adulteress were to die the death. The purpose of Solomon therefore is not to defend the thief, or to

excuse the theft, or to abrogate the Law, or to plead for malefactors, or to open a gap to the committing of evil: forasmuch as he saith afterward *Whosoever is partner with a thief, hateth his own soul*: And Paul teacheth that *thieves shall not inherit the kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. and in another place he exhorteth, that *he which hath stolen should steal no more*, Ephe. 4.

Nevertheless, albeit theft be a foul sin in it self, and excludeth from everlasting life▪ yet in comparison of a greater and fouler sin, it doth not appear and show it self so filthy. So the Prophet *Ezekiel*, chap. 16. saith, that the Sodomites were better then the people of Jerusalem, who by their greater ungodliness *justified them*: not that he exempteth them from blame, but because the other were worse and worthy of greater blame. The objection being thus answered, and the place cleared, we return to the former point and conclude, that no pretence of poverty or allegation of necessity can excuse theft, forasmuch as the Law of God standeth evermore in his full force.

The Scripture chargeth us to get our living with the labor of our hands, and to eat our own bread in the sweat of our brows; to ask our food of God, and to depend upon his providence, and rather to perish for hunger then to rob our brother and offend against God. Moreover, our Savior setteth it down as a certain rule to guide us in our dealings one with another, Matth. 7.12. *All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets*. If then being rich, we would not have the poor steal frō us, we our selves being poor. ought not to deceive and defraud the rich.

Fourthly, it convinceth many in y^e Church of Rome, that slander us, and bring up a false report of our doctrine and profession, who teach and publish to the view of the world, that we require not of any persons to make real restitution of goods wrongfully gotten. This is a notorious and notable slander, and testifieth how much destitute they are of true accusations, when they are compelled to make such open and odious lies against us. We require restitution to be actually made, as well as they. We teach, that there is no repentance, nor forgiveness without it. Indeed we cannot make amends for our sins to God; that is done only by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, *which cleanseth us from all sin*. So then, our doctrine being plain and evident, their mouths are stopped, and they are convinced to be liars, as in this, so in many other points of greater importance: and therefore they do us wrong which affirm that we hold, that doers of wrong should not restore.

Lastly, such are reprov'd also, as get and gather into their hands, other men's goods by flattery & fair promises to make restitution, and then never regard to pay what they have borrowed. They care not how deeply they run in other men's books and bands, but are slack to return that is due debt unto them, and to make payment of that which they owe. This also is a breach of the eighth commandment, and made a note of a wicked man by the Prophet, Psal. 37.21. *The wicked borroweth, & payeth not again: but the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth*. Here we see, who they are that never repay nor restore that which they have borrowed, they are such as are justly branded with the title of wicked men A little that a righteous man hath, is better then the riches of many wicked, forasmuch as their riches many times are not their own, if every bird had his feather, and every owner could get that which hath been

taken from him. It is the property of the ungodly, to hold fast other men's goods which they can get to themselves. These are of two sorts, some are rich, and some poor.

There are some rich men, who, albeit they be proud and prodigal, yet are careless to pay their debts, which through their riotousnesse and excess they run into: or if they pay them, it is so hardly wrested from them, y^t they show how unwilling they are thereunto. If they set men at work, they are backward to pay them their wages, and to give the recompense of the labors of their hands. Others do store and enrich themselves by borrowing wares and other like commodities, and then of purpose break, rather than of necessity: if they be cast into prison, they live delicately and at ease with their stolen goods, as I have shown at large elsewhere. Thus are many poor men, their wives & children, oftentimes undone by these bankroutes, of whom we may say, it skilled not if they were also neck-rupt, rather than so many innocents should perish through their wickedness.

Some again are of the poorer sort, and earn their living by daily labor, who had rather follow idleness, and live of other men's purses, than busy themselves painfully in their callings. These are constrained through their own folly to borrow what they can, and are so importunate, sometimes by complaint, and sometimes by flattery, that they get money into their hands of other men's; and when they once can seize upon it, as a prey or booty, they no sooner obtain it, but they lavish it out in eating, in drinking, in gaming, in feasting and good fellowship (as they call it) as if they had found a treasure, or as if it had been freely given them, and as if they should never give an account for it, or restore it to the owner. These men, when they are asked again those things which they have received, do reproach their creditors, and return unto them evil words for their good wills.

They are not ashamed to tell them, that they are no Christians that ask again that which they have lent, and by such like cozening tricks they seek to delude, and do dally with their creditors. When they come to borrow, they speak with other tongues, and have learned another language: then their words are softer than butter, then they will promise anything. But when the day of restoring cometh, they have forgotten their own words, and they have lost the conscience which before they seemed to have had: so that we may say to them as it is in the Psalm, *Thou lovest evil more than good, and lying▪ rather than to speak righteousness: thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.* Both these kinds of men are to be avoided of us, and their practices are to be abhorred, as they that savor altogether of impiety, and no whit beseem the profession of Christianity.

Secondly, it is not sufficient for men to get [Use 2] goods into their hands (a thing that most men do aim after) by raking, and scraping, and scratching, to become rich; but they must know how they are gotten, and with what conscience they are kept and detained, forasmuch as goods evilly gotten, shall never prosper, but will surely bring vengeance upon their heads which withhold them, as Prov. 22 16. *He that oppresseth the poor, to increase his riches, shall surely come to poverty.* We have many examples of this point left unto us in holy Scripture, both of the old and New Testament, That we should beware by their harms, and be wise by their falls, and take heed by their ruins. *Achan* did steal away the wedge of gold and a Babylonish garment, but it cost him his life, Josh. 7.25. *Ahab* took possession of *Naboth's*

vineyard, whom he had caused to be stoned to death but it brought the destruction of him and his posterity. *Gehazi* coveted after an evil covetousness, and gave himself to receive bribes, but he gat with it the leprosy, so that his loss was a thousand times greater then his gains. *Judas* sold his master for thirty pieces of silver, but he was never quiet after he had received it, so y^t he brought back the money, and went and hanged himself, Matth. 27.5. The like we might say of *Balaam*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, and was hired with love of reward, to curse y^e people of God; he went his way without his hire, and lost his life among the Midianites, Numb. 31.18. It is not enough to get goods, but we must get them justly and lawfully. It is not enough to eat bread, according to the exhortatiō of the Apostle, 2 Thes. 3.11, 12. *We hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busi-bodies: them that are such, we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.* Our Savior teacheth us to ask at the hands of God the Father *our daily bread*, Matt. 6.11. and not other men's. For it is so called, because it is gotten by our lawful labor, and by honest means, and is provided for us of his liberality. If we do not consider this carefully, we may get goods, and withal get a curse with them, so long as we have the least jot of other men's in our own keeping.

And howsoever we judge of our selves, we are no better thē thieves, so long as we retain in our houses or our hearts, other men's goods. Let us remember the saying of the Apostle, Ephes. 4.28. *Let him that stole, steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* Many there are that make no difference between their own and other-men's, as if all things were common. They care not whose they have, so that they have what they lack. It is sweet unto them, whatsoever they can fasten and lay hold upon. But evil gotten goods go never alone, the curse of God doth ever go with thē, which will bring upon them all miseries of soul and body. If this were always set before our eyes, it would be sufficient to restrain our harts from coveting, our eyes from desiring, our hands from handling, and our houses from holding other men's substance, lest while we catch after that which belongeth to our neighbor, we lose forever that which is our own.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it serveth to admonish all that possess anything wrongfully, to restore it again accordingly. There can be no excuse to such as hold fast what they have once gotten. They are much worse then *Judas*, and come far behind him. He cometh nearer to repentance then they, forasmuch as they go not beyond the reprobate, nay, they come far short of them. For when he felt the wrath of God, and the horror of his conscience, he brought back again the thirty pence which he had taken of the Pharisees to betray his Master, and cast them down in the temple. This example will be a witness against these men, in the day of judgment, and be sufficient to condemn them. True it is, Satan will move us, and our own nature will persuade us, that there is profit in keeping, and no such danger in retaining other men's goods, but rather that it may bring hurt to our substance, shame to our persons, and reproach to our name, to restore the riches of iniquity, and so to make our faults publicly known. But we must not hearken to such evil persuasions of a corrupt counselor, that never giveth good and wholesome counsel, Wherefore the question may be asked, whether restitution [Objection 1] be necessary to true repentance; so as without it, we

cannot repent at all. I answer, [Answer.] it is necessary, as we shown before in the example of *Zacchaeus*, Luke 19. and therefore it is a common, but a corrupt custom and practice of such as in death seem devoutly to bequeath their souls into the hands of God, & their evil gotten goods into the hands of their heirs, children and friends without restitution. It is usual with most men, when they are to go the way of all flesh, to make show of repentance, of forsaking their evil ways and turning unto God: but this repentance is no repentance, so long as the things of our neighbor remain in our houses. No man can give any legacies or show any liberality of that which is not his own, forasmuch as he hath no right unto it. If he should give it unto the poor, it is no sacrifice that God accepteth; it may do some good to the receiver, but it can bring none at all to the giver. Indeed, we are bidden to give alms to the poor, *that they may receive us into the heavenly habitations*, Luke 16.9. but we must not be liberal of other men's goods, but of our own: neither open others men's hands, and shut our own; neither bestow other men's, but restore them justly and truly. Besides, this bringeth a curse upon the residue of our goods; & causeth God to blow upon them, so that albeit we leave them to our heirs, yet they seldom enrich our posterity.

But it may farther be said, What if a man [Objection 2] be not able to restore? he may peradventure have good will, but no ability by reason of his poverty. I answer, [Answer.] where the deed cannot be, if there be *a willing mind God accepteth it*, according to the rule of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 8.12. In this case it is our duty to acknowledge our fault to God, & withal to submit our selves to him whom we have offended; and make a covenant with God, with our own hearts, and with our brother, to make actual restitution, whensoever God in mercy shall give us sufficient to do it. Let our promise be joined with a full purpose to do it, for God is not mocked, or deceived. We may deceive our neighbor, and our own hearts, but we can never deceive the Almighty, who searcheth the hearts & the imaginations of all thoughts. In the mean season, poverty may be some dispensation, because where there is nothing, the king loseth his right, and necessity hath no law, as commonly we say in our common prouerbs. But although there cannot be a real restoring, there ought to be an hearty desire, which, we may assure our selves, God in mercy will accept. For there is a twofold restoring, and both well pleasing to God, the one actual; the other mental. The actual required of such as are able, when we return back willingly, whatsoever we have takē away unjustly. The mental is only in purpose and desire of the mind, when we are able to do no more, and to go no further; which is accepted of them that are poor, and are sorry that they have it not in their hands to give to the owners which they have taken away. Again, it will [Objection 3] be said and pretended, If I must of necessity restore, it will undo me, it is as much as I am worth, all that I have will do no more then pay it. I answer, the contrary will rather vndo thee. To restore stolen goods, will undo no man: it rather bringeth a blessing with it. For take this for a certain truth, & set it down as an undoubted rule, that no man shall be undone by yielding obedience to the law of God. But to restore is God's ordinance & appointment, & therefore none shall vndo himself by following of it. This then properly is no loss, but gain; and albeit we depart with somewhat, yet in the end it shall bring more with it, forasmuch as God is able to bless our store, and to give us more then that. When *Amaziah* should send back his hired soldiers at the commandment of God, who would not give a

blessing by them, because God was not with them, he would not give victory by them; and he seemed unwilling to do it in regard he had paid an hundred talents before hand to have their help: the man of God answered, *The Lord is able to give thee more then this*: showing thereby, that if we depend upon him, we shall not need to be troubled in worldly things. If we leave our selves never a penny, let us not despair, but trust in God's providence, who will supply our necessities, and not suffer us to want any good. Lastly, it will be objected, what [Objection 4] if the parties be dead, how can we possibly restore anything to them? may we not in this case keep it to our selves? I answer, if the owner be dead, restore it to his heirs, evē to such first as are nearest of kin, and if he have none such, to such as are farther off. If there be none, either nearer or farther off, we must restore it to God, that is, to the maintenance of the Ministry, and service of God, or to the relief of the poor; bestow it upon godly uses, but to our selves we may not keep it. God would not have the Priests, that served in the Tabernacle, & ministered at the altar, to be enriched by the hurt of others, as we see in this place: neither would he have injurious persons freed from blame, if they should offer that to the Priests, which they had taken away from others.

Wherefore, if there were none to whom they could restore, yet he would have their houses to be blameless, and no part of filthy gain to stick and cleave unto their fingers, seeing it is required of us to have pure hearts, and clean hands. Except God had thus determined, no wicked person would have spared to catch and snatch, by force or fraud, the goods of the dead, especially if he were childless.

Lastly, this duty of restitution rightly and [Use 4] religiously practiced, ministereth great comfort and contentment, to feel himself ready to do this to any that charge him justly with any wrong or injustice. *Paul* a Minister of the Gospel, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, appealeth to the people whom he had taught, how he had behaved himself among them, Acts 20.18. *Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews. Samuel* a Magistrate of the people and judge of Israel, when he was to resign his office, and to give place to the king whom God had chosen and set over the land, maketh them witnesses of his soundness and sincerity. 1 Sam. 12.3. he asketh of them *whose ox or asse he had taken?* or who could accuse him of oppression, or corruption? *and they said, thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand.* Yea, he proceedeth farther, and calleth God to record of his integrity, *The Lord is witness against you, and his Anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in mine hand: And they answered, He is witness.* If then we desire peace in our soul, we should thrust away from us as it were with both our hands, whatsoever we have wrested from others, and wrongfully gotten, & say to it with detestation and indignation, as the Prophet willeth men to say to their relics of idolatry, *Get thee hence.* Now that we may have indeed comfort herein, it shall not be amiss for us to consider more particularly the doctrine of restitution, and to learn what it is, whether the same thing which is taken away ought to be restored, whether it be sufficient to restore the principal, whether a man be bound to restore that which he never took away, whether it be always necessary to make restitution to him of whom we have received somewhat, whether he be always bound to restore that he hath received,

whether they which have not taken or received anything, be bound to restore, and lastly, whether a man be bound to restore forthwith without all delay or deferring the time, or else whether he may lawfully put off the time of restoring. To restore properly, is to set a man again into the possession and dominion of his goods, which is taken, either with his good will, as in that which is borrowed or committed to our custody; or against his will, as in theft and robbery.

Restitution therefore is an act of justice, whereby we make some recompense for that which we have wrongfully withholden.

Secondly, it is demanded whether it be necessary to salvation, to restore y^e same which is taken away? And the answer is affirmative, that it is necessary, so far as it may, and it is possible. *Augustine* saith truly, if another man's goods may be restored & are not, repentance is not practiced, but counterfeited, because justice and equity are not observed. If the thing it self cannot, then that which is equal unto it (as near as may be) ought to be restored. He that hath maimed his neighbor in any of his members, ought to make recompense in money, or otherwise as the judge shall determine. He that hath taken away his brothers good name, & raised up a false report of him, ought to confess his fault, & restore his good name to the uttermost of his power, and acknowledge that he hath done evil: and if this be not sufficient to repair it, he ought otherwise also to make amends.

Thirdly, the question is asked, whether it suffice to restore the principal. It is sufficient, whē the party wronged is no whit damnified: but if he have received any hurt by want of his own, or by receiving wrong, he is also to have some amends made unto him, and therefore beside the principal, the doer of wrong must recompense the loss: and this hath warrant out of the place that now we deal withal. As for the fourfold restitution of *Zacchaeus*, it is no work of supererogation, but an act of his liberality, and a fruit of his repentance, a testimony of his love to Jesus Christ, a signification of the greatness of his sin, and a voluntary confession y^t he had gotten his goods fraudulently, unjustly, and wrongfully. Fourthly, we are to know, whether a man be bound to restore that which he never took away? Answ. A man is not bound unto it: forasmuch as the rule of justice cannot exact this at our hands, wherein there could be no equality, but one party should be wronged. A man may be damnified two ways, when somewhat is taken away which he had actually, or which he might have had being in the way, or in a good forwardness to have. When that is taken away w^c we had already in possession, the loss is to be recompensed by restitution of y^t which is equal unto it. When we hinder our brother that he cannot compass & obtain that which he was in possibility to have, we must restore somewhat; but the restitution ought not to be equal to the benefit that might in time to come redound unto him, and the loss must be esteemed as it is in the time present, not as it might be hereafter. For first of all, it is a less matter to have a thing in possibility then to have it actually: and herein the common proverb is true, that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Secondly, otherwise we should not only restore y^e principal which was taken away, but multiply it beyond measure, which we are not bound to do, and so for nothing we should restore something, & give that which is, for that which is not. Thirdly, we are not charged to equal a loss that may be, and give a certain benefit for an

uncertain damage, because the good that might fall unto us, may many ways be hindered, and we cannot make our selves sure of anything until we have it in present possession. We say commonly, & we say it truly, that many things fall between the cup and the lip, between the meat and the mouth: the meaning whereof is this, y^t nothing is so certain, but it may be prevented, nothing so near, but may be disappointed, and therefore we are not to make our selves too sure of anything. He that hath sowed his seed, hath not yet ripe corn, neither hath seen the time of harvest: & he that hath money, hath not yet gotten gain by it: we must therefore take the loss as it is, not as it may be. To return to the point that is in hand, we hold that no mā is bound to restore to another that which he took not away: forasmuch as that were to accuse himself falsely, and rather to give then to restore. True it is, the Prophet saith, *He restored that which he took not away*, but he complaineth of the wrongs & injuries which he received and suffered wrongfully; wherein he was a notable type and figure of Christ, who suffered punishment for the fault which he committed not, which after a sort, may be called a restitution; he was not guilty, but died for us that are guilty: he was innocent, and yet suffered for us sinners: he did no evil, yet was crucified for us evil doers: He stood in our place, the just for the unjust.

The fifth point to be considered, is, whether we ought always to mak restitutiō to him, of whō we have received and taken somewhat? The answer is, whatsoever belongeth to another, and is not our own, ought to be restored, because there ought to be an equality of commutative justice: and the Apostle willeth us to *render unto all men their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due: custom to whom custom: fear to whom fear: honor, to whom honor*. Nevertheless, if that which is to be restored be hurtful to him to whom restitution should be made, or to any other, it ought not to be restored, but rather to be kept close, and laid up safe, y^t when better occasion and fitter time serveth it may be restored. For restitution rightly made respecteth his profit and benefit to whom it is made. When a thing is given unlawfully, so that the gift it self is unlawful, as we see in Simony (when holy things are bought and sold, as sheep in the market) no restitution is to be made to the giver, that deserveth justly to lose whatsoever he hath given; neither ought the receiver to retain it, because he can lay no just claim and title unto it: so that it ought to be bestowed upon godly and holy uses. The heathen man speaking of justice, and making it a part of it, to give to every man his own, maketh this exception, that it is unlawful to deliver into a mad man's hand his own sword, which he committed unto us: and sometimes the case falleth out, that a man is by no means to keep his promise that he hath made. And to this purpose he setteth down these two general rules to be observed in the particular duties of justice, first, that we hurt no person▪ then that we serve the common profit of men, forasmuch as we are servants unto all. Moreover, if he to whom we are to restore, be unknown unto us, we must make diligent enquiry to know him: if he be dead, restore it to his heirs that he hath left behind him: if he be removed far from us, it ought, if it be possible, to be sent unto him: if it cannot be done safely and fitly, it ought to be laid up in some safe place, and then the matter must be signified to the owner, that he may take order by some means to have it, or to dispose of it at his own pleasure.

The sixth doubt is this, whether he be always bound to restore which hath taken anything? I answer, he is always bound so long as he hath anything in his keeping. Restitution belongeth to satisfaction: but he that hath offended ought to satisfy. Now albeit he that hath taken away anything, have it not in his own keeping, but another, yet because the owner is destitute of his goods, he is bound to restore them in regard of the injury that he hath done, or to procure the restoring at his hands that hath them in his possession. Besides, a man is bound to open and uncover his own fault, not only to God by confession, but to his brother by satisfaction. Many will never acknowledge the matter, until they be taken with the manner. Moreover, when many jointly together have taken away from any man, that which belongeth unto him, and someone of them hath made satisfaction unto him, fully so much as he can require, the rest are bound to content him that hath satisfied the person injured, they are not to pay it unto him that was damnified. For then he should be paid doubly, which double payment he cannot receive without injustice, seeing he that is wronged may as well offend by taking too much, as they that do wrong by restoring too little. Therefore they are repooed, that having had their share and portion in evil gotten goods, say, what need I to give anything back? the party wronged is satisfied. But if one man have returned as much in value and quantity as many took away, the rest that were partakers of the booty are bound to satisfy him that hath paid the whole, not him that was wronged, because he hath received so much already as he could challenge.

Seventhly, we are to know and inform our selves, whether they that have not themselves in their own persons taken away anything, may notwithstanding be justly bound to make restitution, and tied necessarily to this duty? I answer, that even such as have not taken anything with their own hands, are charged to restore, because they may be the cause of unlawful taking, if not directly, yet indirectly. For y^e Apostle saith, that *they are worthy of death not only which commit evil things, but such as consent to them that do them, or have pleasure in them*. And we may be partakers of other men's sins, and so draw upon our selves the punishments due unto them. We are ready to justify our selves and to wash our hands when we practice not evil; but it is as *Pilate* washed his hands, who made himself guilty of innocent blood by consenting to the Jews and by pronouncing sentence against him to please & pleasure them, as well as they y^t were the executioners, and pierced his hands and feet: so that all the water in the river Jordan, or in the wide sea, is not able to clear him and acquit him of putting the Lord of life to death. Now, if we desire to know how we may be accessories to other men's sins, and draw them as it were with cart-ropes upon our selves, it may be considered of us in those few words,

Iussio, consilium, consensus, palpo, recursus,

Participans, mutus, non obstans, non manifestans.

Whosoever is any cause of any unjust dealing is bound to restore; such are they that command, or counsel, or consent to evil; such as flatter any in their evil by commending them for it: such as are abettors to them, receiving, aiding, helping, and assisting them: such as are companions of them and take part with them: he that is dumb and holdeth his peace as if he neither saw nor heard any evil committed, albeit he see it with his eyes, and hear it

with his ears: he that suffereth it to be done, and doth not hinder it and withstand it, being able to do it: Lastly, such as seek shifts and shelters by all means to cover evil, and do not disclose the same when they are privy to it. For he that hideth it, doth show thereby that he fauoreth it, and furthereth it so far as he can. By all these ways we are made partakers of other men's sins: and not only doth he trespass and offend which executeth and practiseth any sins, but he that is by any of the former means, a cause or occasion of them.

Notwithstanding, among these there is some difference. For flattery, and counsel, praising them that do evil, and counseling them to do evil, do not always oblige and bind to restitution, but then only when it appeareth evidently, that unjust dealing hath proceeded chiefly or only from these causes: where he that is principal in the action, is principally bound to restitution, to wit, he y^t requireth & cōmandeth, then he that executeth it. And concerning the rest, to wit, such as do not bewray, or not hinder, or not reprove a thief that stealeth, are not always bound to restore, but then only when an absolute necessity lieth upon them, and no great danger follows by this negligence & default.

Lastly, it remaineth to show this doubt, whether a mā be bound to restore by & by, or whether he may put off and delay the discharge of this duty? Everyone is charged necessarily to hasten restitution, so soon as he is able and conveniently may do it. God loveth a cheerful giver, and restorer: whereas delay in any good duty, argueth an unwilling mind. It showeth that we are not thoroughly resolved to do it. It maketh us every day more unfit then other. It manifesteth, that we are more then half willing to keep it by us still. He that hath hired a poor servant to do his work, *must give him his hire before the Sun go down*, Deut. 24, 13.

And as it is a sin against justice to take away another man's goods, so it is likewise to deteine it with us, because the owner thereby is hindered from the use thereof, and so a double injury is done unto him: but no man is allowed to stay any time (though it be short) in sin. Nevertheless, if a man be not able to make present restitution, he is to crave pardon and desire respite of him whom he hath wronged: but without his consent that is damnified, he hath no liberty to keep evil gotten goods, that is of ability to make restitution. The counsel that *Solomon* giveth to the man that hath this worlds goods, that he must give speedily, and not bid his neighbor *come again unto him*, (Prov. 3, 28.) if he have at the present for him: it must also serve as a good direction to him that hath gotten and engrossed into his own hands, other men's goods; he must not say, I will restore them tomorrow, if he be able to do it today.

If we be careful to practice these things which now have been rehearsed, we shall find much comfort in them, and assure our own hearts that we have truly repented of our sins.

[Verse 8. *If the man have no kinseman to recompense the trespass unto, let the trespass be recompensed unto the Lord, even to the Priest.*] In these words, we have an amplification of the former law, by way of preventing an objection, of which we have spoken before: or rather, of many objections together, couched as it were upon an heap. For it may be asked, What if the party be dead and gone from whom we have taken? The answer is, Restore to his child. What then, if he have no child? Restore to his brothers children. What if he have no brother, or

sister? Restore to his next kinseman. But put case he have no kinseman at all? Restore it to the Lord, even to y^e Priest. As if he should say, Though sometimes it fall out, that thou shalt find no kinseman, yet thou shalt never have the Lord to seek, neither the Priest whom he hath set over you. The point then here to be observed, is this, that the Lord and the Priest are put as both one, for it is in the original, *To the Lord, to the Priest*: so that the restitution to the Priest, was a restitution to the Lord. We learn from hence, that whatsoever is done to the Ministers of the word, God accounteth it as done unto himself. If we do good unto them, we do good unto the Lord: if we do evil unto them, we do evil to the Lord himself. We see afterward in this book, chap. 16, verse 11. when *Korah* and his company lifted up themselves against God's ordinance, and the authority of *Moses* and *Aaron*, he saith unto them, *Thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?* They thought they had to do with his servant, but he showeth, they had to do with the Lord. When the people required of *Samuel*, that he would make them a King to judge them, like all the Nations, the Lord said unto him, *Hearken unto the voice of the people, in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.* Their gathering together against the Prophet, was a muster, and mutiny, and murmuring against God.

This is that which Christ spake unto the seventy Disciples, and to the Apostles before them, *He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* Luke 10, 16. Math. 10, 40. Whereby we see, that this is the dignity and authority of the Ministry which God hath established, that how mean soever the persons of the Ministers are, yet he so magnifieth their office, that what is done to them, is offered unto him.

The reasons hereof are most evident. First, [Reason 1] they are the Messengers of God, sent out of him to do his message, and to execute his will, and to speak in his Name, and to deliver that which he shall put into their mouths, and to discharge the commission that he hath given unto them. After that God had made a covenant with *Levi*, so that the law of truth was in his mouth, and he turned away many from iniquity, he setteth down this as a rule, Mal. 2, verse 7. *The Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the Messenger of the Lord of hosts.* To this purpose *Paul* speaketh both touching himself and the rest of the Ministers, 2 Cor. 5, 20. *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God.* If then the Messenger be to be respected as he that sent him, the Minister is to be acknowledged to represent the person of God, in whose Name he speaketh.

Secondly, it pleaseth God to work salvation [Reason 2] in his people by them and their Ministry. For as the Gospel is the power of God, so the Preachers of the Gospel are workers together with God.

Indeed we deny not but he is able and sufficient of himself, to save the souls of men, without the Ministry of men, as he created them without the help of men: Nevertheless, he will use their Ministry at his good will and pleasure, and he will conuay his treasure *in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* Not that he standeth in need of any

help, or could not attain to the end of his purpose without our labor (for who are we that can add anything to his perfection?) but he doth it for our own good, and to manifest his greater love and mercy toward us. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 6.1. *We then as workers together with him, beseech you also, that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.* And in the former Epistle saith, *We are laborers together with God, ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.* Seeing then, the Ministers are workers together, and laborers together with God, so that they are the means by whom we believe, God accounteth that as done to himself, which is done to them, as we are to account that God doth that unto us, which they do being directed by his word.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, he accounteth that which is done to any of his servants and children, as done to himself, whether it be good, or evil, whether it be right or wrong: forasmuch as Christ and the faithful make one mystical body, whereof he is the head, and they are the members. In the day of judgment, Christ will acknowledge that to be done unto himself, which is done to *the least* of them that believe in him, and belong unto him, Matth. 25.40. In like manner when *Paul* was going to Damascus, to bring them bound to Jerusalem that called upon his Name, he called unto him from heaven, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Christ Jesus is touched in his members, when any of them are troubled, so that their persecutions are his persecutions, & their afflictions are his afflictions, according to the saying of the Apostle, Col. 1.24. *I Paul am made a Minister, who now rejoyce in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his bodies sake, which is the Church.* The faithful are as parts & members of *Christ's* body, of his flesh, and of his bones, Ephes. 5.30. and he is the head over all things, Ephe. 1.22. So that as the head hath a feeling of these things that befall the body, so is it with Christ, he doth after a sort suffer with us, and rejoyce with us.

[Use 1] The uses therefore are to bestood upon, that the truth of this may be applied to our instruction, without which the doctrine is as bread cast upon the waters, or as seed that rotteth in the earth, that is, cometh to nothing. First, we are directed hereby, what ought to be our behavior toward their persons; we must take heed that we do neither wrong them, nor hurt them, neither rise up against them, considering that God will take their wrongs and injuries as done unto himself. If a Prince should give us in charge, to beware that we do not hurt some special servants of his house, and should add withal, that he would account their wrongs, if any be offered, as done in disgrace and despite to his person: there is no doubt but everyone would take diligent heed that he did not hurt them. Thus the case standeth with everyone of us. The Ministers are God's servants appointed to do his will, and separated to preach the Gospel of peace: and God hath laid a charge upon men, that they offer no injury nor indignity unto them. If they do, *they touch the apple of his eye*, which is most tender, Zach. 2.8. and therefore they incur his wrath and heavy displeasure.

This is it the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 105.15. *He reproveth kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* They▪ then shall not escape the revenging hand of God, that set▪ themselves against the servants of his house, and the truth of his word that they deliver. Their word is mighty and shall prevail, it is God's word that they bring unto us,

and he will take their cause into his hand. It is true indeed, they are above all other persons and callings in the world, subject to many and great abuses, they are made a reproach to men and Angels, they endure the nippes and quippes of wicked men with silence and patience, so that we may cry out with *Jeremiah* in the bitterness of our souls, *Woe unto us, we are borne to be men of strife and men of contention to the whole earth.* But seeing God hath a sight and sense of these unjust and injurious dealings toward them, and accounteth them and accepteth them, as done against himself, we see it is no small sin to wound them with the tongue of malice, to smite them with the fist of iniquity, or to spurn and kick them with the heel of contempt and reproach. It stirred up *David* to show exemplary punishment upon the wretched and wicked Ammonites that abused grossly and grievously his servants whom he sent among them; for he put them under harrowes and iron sawes, and so revenged thereby with rigor, the disgrace brought upon them, as if they had done it to his own person.

They could not more have offended him and provoked him to wrath, *if they had cut off his garments in the middes, and shaued off the one half of his beard,* 2 Sam. 10.4. and so done him all the villainy that might be. This therefore giveth us a notable warning, to beware that we offer no hard measure unto the messengers of God, lest we make our selves guilty of insurrection and rebellion against God, and of resisting his will, forasmuch as we shall answer unto him for this sin committed with an high hand.

Let us remember the saying of Christ touching the Ministers of the word, John. 13.20. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me: and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.* Here are three persons named and joined together that are received, the servant, the Lord Jesus, and the heavenly Father. He that receiveth and entertaineth one of the $\langle \diamond \rangle$ aketh them altogether: he that receiveth the servant, receiveth the Lord: he that admitteth the least, admitteth withal the greatest of them, as Christ himself speaketh, *That which ye have done to the least of my brethren, ye have done to me.* If any were asked the question, whether he would willingly *open the door* to Christ and sup with him, when he cometh unto us standing at the door, knocking, and desiring to be admitted of us, he would answer, *We would have him to dwell with us & to reign over us, we would rejoyce to see him come under our roof.* And if we should be charged to stop our ears, and to pull away our shoulders, and to refuse to hearken unto his voice, and to make him dance our attendance without the doors, as if he were a stranger to us, and we strangers unto him: we would complain of great wrong done unto us, and say, we were notably abused. But hereby we are to try our selves, as gold is by the touchstone: we must measure our affection to Christ, by our affection to his Ministers; if we receive the Lord, we must for his sake entertain his servants.

Besides, this order is to be observed in the receiving, albeit the Lord Jesus be the sender, yet first of all, we must receive the servant, that is, the Minister, and then the master himself. For mark this, that Christ doth not say, *he that receiveth me, receiveth the Minister whō I send unto you;* but contrariwise, *He that receiveth him whom I shall send, receiveth me.* On the other side, whosoever refuseth one of these refuseth them all jointly together: he that refuseth the least of them, refuseth the greatest; as at the last judgment Christ shall

say, *Inasmuch as ye have not done it to one of these little ones, ye have not done it to me.* It is a vain pretense and frivolous excuse to surmise that we love the Lord Jesus, the shepherd of the sheep, when we reject the Ministers of the word, that seek to make us of the number of his sheep, and to bring us home into the sheepfold. If then none do receive the Lord Jesus, but such as receive his Ministers, the number is small of those that entertain Christ, whatsoever they think of themselves, or howsoever they glory in themselves.

[Use 2] Secondly, this doctrine serveth for reproof of sundry abuses and gross corruptions. The measure which we mete to the Ministers of God, is mete to God himself; which first meeteth with those that excuse their contempt of the ministry of man, and say, If we had the Lord himself present among us, we would hear him, and do all to please him. They do deceive themselves, and teach their tongue to lie. For learn this of me, and set it down as a certain rule, Whosoever receive not the servant, will not receive the master himself. He that regardeth not to hear him that is sent, will not respect him that is the sender of him. He that doth kill the servant, would also put the Lord himself to death, if he were able. The reason is, because the hatred of the Lord, is the original cause of hatred against the servant, so that they persecute the servant for the Lord's sake. We know *the parable of the vineyard*, let out to unthankfull husbandmen, Mark 12.1. The laborers caught the servants, and beat them, *they handled them shamefully*, and killed some of them: but did they entreat any better their masters only begotten Son and heir, when he came among them? No, they said among themselves, *This is the heir*, Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours: *so they took him*, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. True it is, no man is so profane to utter such reproachful and blasphemous words against Christ Jesus, nor so desperately given over to all wickedness, to say openly in the audience of all men, Let us kill him: but if they would take notice of their secret corruptions, and examine their inward thoughts, they should find as little love to the Lord, as they bear to his Ministers, and when they contemptibly use the one, they spitefully hate the other. Hence it is, that *Stephen* reproveth his persecutors that would seem jealous of the Law, Acts 7.52. joineth these two together, and maketh them walk hand in hand one with another, the persecution of the Prophets, and the murdering and making away of him that is the head of the Prophets: *Which of the Prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shown before of the coming of that Just One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers.*

Where we see, that the betraying of the Lord, and the evil entreating of the servant, are sins near of kin, so that the one springeth from the other. If then God account that done to himself, that is done to his Ministers, he will bring them to a new account, that never set themselves in the presence of God when they are to hear his word. The Israelites could not abide to hear the voice of God that shown it self in fearful manner, but desired that *Moses* might speak unto them; if they should hear him speaking unto them again, *they should die*, Exod. 20.19. It is God's great mercy to speak unto us by men subject to the same infirmities that we are. Let not us abuse his goodness, and contemn his word, & reject his Ministers, forasmuch as the contempt of them is joined, not only with the contempt of his ordinance, but also with the contempt of his person. Secondly, it reproveth such as regard not what they say unto them, neither care for the words that come out of their mouths, whether it be

word of promise, or of threatening; whether of exhortation, or of reprehension: whether of peace and reconciliation, or of war and evil tidings: whether of joy and gladness, or burdens and yokes of punishment heavy to bear.

These think and persuade themselves that they have to do only with men, and are not guilty of any contempt against God; but they are greatly deceived, and shall one day know, that they despise not the word of mortal man, but of the almighty and eternal God.

Hence it is, that we are charged on the contrary, to take heed how we hear, Luk. 8, whē we come into his house. Christ teacheth, that in hearing the Ministers, we hear him, and in refusing them we refuse him, Math. 10. The Apostle commendeth the Galatians for the performance of this duty, that they were as careful to hear him as to hear Christ himself, chap. 4, 14. *My temptation that was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.* What could he say more for them? Or how could he better set forth their zeal, then to give this testimony of them, that they accounted of him in regard of his pains in the Ministry, not as an ordinary man, not as a faithful Minister only, not as an elect Angel only, but as Christ himself, the head of men and Angels, whose person he did represent, and whose Church he did feed with wholesome doctrine? This example should all of us follow; this doth the Lord require of all true Christians, that they receive his Ministers as his Messengers, and reverence them as himself, in regard of their doctrine, and have thē in singular love for their works sake. This we see to be worthily practiced by *Cornelius*, as well became a religious Captain and a devout Christian, Acts 10. *We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.* Loe, how great the dignity of the Ministry of the Church is: loe, how great the excellency of the Ministers of God is; we must hear them as if we heard God, forasmuch as they are sent of him, they preach his word, they deliver no more then they have received, and he hath commanded them to publish it in his Name. But alas, it is most horrible to behold the contempt that they suffer, and the baseness that is cast upon this calling, which is one of the causes of those grievous plagues and judgments that are brought upon the world. The disgrace and ignominy under which they lie, greeueth the hearts of all the godly: and not only greeueth their hearts, but pierceth the Clouds: and doth not only pierce the Clouds, but reacheth up to heaven: and doth not only reach up to heaven, but entereth into the ears of the Lord of hosts: and not only entereth into his ears, but doth stretch it self unto God himself, and return upon Christ, the Prince of all Prophets; which ought indeed to pierce and enter into the hearts of all profane persons, and serve to terrify all those that revile them, and speak all manner of evil against them for the truths sake. Let us remember the saying of the Apostle touching the Thessalonians, *When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.* This is a worthy commendation of this Church, and a notable example which we ought to set before us to follow it: so that we must hear the word as God's word, whose force it carrieth with it. Many hear it, that do not hear it as God's word. It is a rare thing to find such a hearer. Some hear, and then rage and storm when they are reprov'd, Acts 7, 57, & 17, 18, and 22, 23. Others refuse to hear at all, and think such as make conscience of hearing, to be more curious & precise then there is cause. Others embrace the word, but yet not as the word, as we see in Papists and hypocrites. The Papists

affirm, that y^e Scripture or word written, hath no authority in it self, except it be allowed & approved of the Church. What other thing is this, then to embrace the word, but not as the word? The hypocrites also do not receive the word with due reverence, nor express it in true obedience, as their life doth witness against them. These have men only in their thoughts, and have not God in their sight: they may be said after a sort to receive the word, but they cannot be said to receive it altogether as the word. For if they did seriously and earnestly acknowledge it to be of God, and to have him the author of it, they would not lead their lives in that loose manner that they do.

Thirdly, it reproveth those that contemn the doctrine of the Gospel, for the poor and obscure conditiō of the Ministers that preach it. For what I pray you, was the estate of the Apostles? Were they rich and renowned in the world? *Peter and John*, going up together into the Temple, at the ninth hour of prayer, answered the lame man that expected to receive something of them, *Silver and gold have I none*. Were they much befriended & applauded of men? The Apostle declareth and complaineth, that *all men had forsaken him, and no man stood with him*. 2 Tim. 4, 16. And Christ himself foretelleth, that they should *be hated of all men for his Names sake*. Math. 10, ver. 22. Were they honored and magnified above others? Or did they live at ease and in pleasure? *Paul* spareth not to paint out their life, 1 Cor. 4, 9, *I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to Angels, and to men*. Were they clad in purple, and fared they deliciously every day? Did they dwell in gorgeous houses and Princely palaces? In the words following, he telleth us how it fared with him and the rest of his brethren, they were not attired in soft raiment, they did not surfeit through excess, but *even unto this present, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place*. And yet notwithstanding these manifold adversities and trials, the Son of God pronounceth of them, *He that heareth you, heareth me*, and judgeth the wrongs to be done to himself, which they suffer. Let not us therefore require honor, or riches, or glory, or pomp, or outward dignity, in the Ministers of the Gospel, but rather consider the goodness of God toward us, who, knowing that we are not able to bear and abide his infinite Majesty, hath instituted the Ministry of his word, that by men equal unto us and like to our selves, he might teach us his will, and instruct us in his word. We shown before, that when the Lord himself in his own voice preached to *Israel*, at Mount *Sinai*, they were so terrified and afraid, that they asked for *Moses*, that he might speak unto them. If the matter stood thus with them that had seen the wonders of God in the Land of Egypt, and not many days before had passed the red sea, as it were by dry land, what shall befall us, if he should utter to us his terrible voice, as a most mighty thunder? If then we hear patiently, and obey readily the word that is brought unto us by weak and frail man, it is a service that is well pleasing in his sight: forasmuch as we show thereby, that we do not depend on the pleasure of men, but rely our selves upon the authority of God. And as it is the praise and trial of a good subject, who is content to believe and obey the lowest messenger and least officer that cometh unto him with a message and commandment from his Prince: so hereby it appeareth, that we are true Citizens of the kingdom of God, & his adopted children, if we hear his word with fear and reverence, albeit it be preached unto us by the meanest and poorest of all God's servants. On the other side, as

it is a note of contempt toward the Magistrate himself, to disobey or resist any Serieant or servant that cometh from him, how base soever he may seem to be: so we make our selves guilty of rebellion and high treason against GOD, when we despise such as speak in his Name, and contemn them that have authority committed unto them from the most high. All such as loathe the truth for the Teachers sake, when their own consciences convince them that it is the word of God which soundeth in their ears, let them assure themselves and persuade their own hearts, that the contempt of their persons redoundeth to the Son of God, yea to the Father himself. Let them mark this point & weigh it diligently, who take it heinously when they are reprovved of men equal unto them, or inferior to them, or if they be contemptible to the world, by reason of their poor estate.

Lastly, it reproveth those that go about to shake the faith of many, and to weaken the assurance and certainty of our salvation, having the promises thereof propounded unto us in the doctrine, and by the writings of the Apostles.

Hence it is, that sundry scoffers and profane spirits, ask the question, who is *Paul*, and who is *Peter*, or what is *John*, that we should of necessity believe them? Who gave them authority, or whence have they power in the Church, to set down and prescribe unto us a rule of faith? The doctrine that now we deal withal, serveth very fitly to stop the mouths of these Atheists, and containeth a sovereign preservative against the poison that they offer unto us, inasmuch as Christ the eternal Son of God, maketh them his messengers, his witnesses, & his heraulds, to spread abroad his saving health, and avoucheth, that he speaketh in them, & acknowledgeth himself to be author of that truth which they deliver, so that *if an Angel from heaven should preach any other Gospel* then that which they have preached to the Churches, *he must be holden accursed*. This therefore we ought to apply unto our selves, and gather as an argument of great comfort, that when remission of sins and eternal life are promised to them that are truly penitent, and lay hold upon Christ by a lively faith, according to the doctrine of the Apostles, we must assure our selves it is the voice of Christ, and he will ratify it in the highest heavens. Neither is this true only touching the Apostles themselves, that had their calling from God, and not from men, and were conversant with Christ in the days of his flesh: but likewise of all the faithful Ministers of Jesus Christ, that have the keys of the kingdom of heaven committed unto them. When we assure forgiveness of sins to those that have contrite and broken hearts, it is no doubtful or uncertain assurance, but graven with a diamond, and written as it were with a pen of steel to continue forever, forasmuch as it is the assurance of Christ, and of God himself. The voice of the Minister is not the voice of a private man, but of one that is a public person; it is as the voice of Christ himself. Art thou humbled and cast down for thy sins, and doth thy soul cleave unto the dust? He sendeth his Minister unto thee, and putteth the word of reconciliation into his mouth; so that if thou unfeignedly turn unto God, be as well assured of the mercy of God toward thee, as thou heardst Christ himself say unto thee, as he did sometimes to the sick of the palsy, *Son, be of good cheare, thy sins be forgiven thee*.

Again, when the Ministers of God on the other side, do threaten and thunder out the sentence of condemnation against the unbelievers and such as cannot repent, this also is no

less the voice of the Son of God, which no power of the world, nor authority of man can hinder or call back: forasmuch as *whose sins they retain, they are retained*. This judgment, howsoever it be either denied, or derided, or doubted off among the ungodly, yet will Christ make it good, and execute the same upon them to their confusion.

This doctrine reacheth to the true Ministers of the word, who have their calling from God & his word. As for the Bishop of Rome, that challengeth sole authority to forgive sins, and will have all his decrees and decretals no less acknowledged then the word of God, it is more then childish and ridiculous. For he hath nothing common with the Apostles, and cannot prove his succession wherein he glorieth by any sound reasons, and yet arrogateth more unto himself then GOD gave, or the Apostles took, or the Church acknowledged to be due unto the Apostles: forasmuch as the Lord tied thē by an express commandment, that they should teach the people to observe those things which he had commanded them.

[Use 3] Thirdly, this serveth to inform the Ministers, that it concerneth them much to adorn their calling, and to magnify their Ministry, that it be not blemished and evil spoken off through their default. This ought above all other things to be a spur unto us in our sides, and as a fire kindled within our bowels, to inflame our hearts with a zeal of God's glory, with a love of his people, with a care to discharge our office committed unto us, & with an earnest desire to increase the kingdom of Christ Jesus. For seeing God accounteth us as his own Ambassadors, sent out to do his will, and vouchsafeth to join our labor with man's salvation, we are bound in duty and conscience to preach the Gospel truly, purely, painfully, sincerely, and soundly. It is required of us, not only to teach, but to teach the truth, and to teach the truth with a right affection. For we can never challenge the names and titles (of being the Messengers of God) unto our selves, and to be respected as the person of Christ himself, except we preach the pure word of God, and commend to the Church the pure doctrine of Christ. If we preach corruptly, and make merchandise of the word of God, and mingle wheat with chaff, and good corn with darnel, or that which is worse; we are not to be accepted & received as Christ, but to be rejected and refused as false teachers, that speak in their own names, and not in the Name of God. They cannot say, *Thus saith the Lord*; but, this I say unto you: not, hear ye the word of the Lord, but, hear ye my word: not that which God commandeth to observe, that do ye; but keep my word, *the commandments of men, the traditions of the Elders*, the superstitions of the Fathers, and such like human ordinances, whereby they make the word of God of none effect. This carrieth no authority to the consciences of the hearers, but it is as a sword that is blunt, whose edge is turned, that it cannot cut or enter into the flesh. The word thus delivered, can never open the corrupt heart of man, or do any good unto the conscience. If then we do not teach the flock of God, both by sincerity of doctrine, and by innocence of life, we show our selves to be messengers of Satan, not the Ministers of God: to be false Prophets, not true Teachers. We are joint laborers with God, and therefore he will be sanctified in all that come near unto him. He feedeth the flock by our hands, he converteth the souls by our Ministry, and he saveth the hearers by our preaching, and therefore we must not cause our office to be hated and contemned, but by all means maintain the dignity and authority of it, to the uttermost of our power. It is not only the corrupt doctrine but the evil life of the Ministers, that maketh

their calling to be vile and void in the eyes of worldly men. If the persons that preach it, be profane, they reject Ministers, Doctrine, and Calling, they set all at naught, and let all alone. And this is the deep policy and subtlety of Satan, whē he dareth not openly oppose himself against the doctrine that is according to godliness, nor encounter with the word of truth, hand to hand, he goeth to work another way, that he may cunningly undermine it: to which purpose he striveth to make it hateful and contemptible, by occasion of the Ministers, and he duly observeth their errors, their faults and failings, that with some color he may cavil, and so countenance his evil proceedings. Christ our Lord and Savior did well and wisely foresee this, and carefully did prevent this. The treachery of *Judas* was well known to the Jews themselves, *he betrayed* his master, forsook the Apostles, joined with the Pharisees, and in the end *hanged himself*. This must needs bring a great scandal, and much hinder the proceeding of the Gospel, cause the Disciples to be evil spoken off, and the truth it self to be reviled. Besides, the Apostles might be afraid, lest all their labor should be in vain. Wherefore to the end the Lord might add strength & courage unto them, and repress the slanders & calumniations of the enemies of the Gospel, and withal leave a perpetual direction unto the whole Church, that no man should refuse the purity of doctrine, for the impurity of the lives of such as are the Teachers, he uttereth and oftentimes repeateth this sentence, *Verily, I say unto you, he that heareth you, heareth me; and he that heareth me, heareth him that sent me: he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*. In these words he establisheth the authority of the Apostles doctrine, and reproveth all those that judge of the doctrine by the Ministers, and esteem of the truth by the teachers. For even as Kings and Princes will not lose their right, nor diminish the authority of their commandments, albeit their Officers or Ambassadors should exceed their calling, and go beyond the bounds of their commission: in like sort, whatsoever the Ministers of the Gospel shall be, yet the word always remaineth the same, the promises and threatenings that are written in it, shall be ratified, & by it we shall be judged at the last day. We must turn unto it; that shall not bow and bend to us. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man, is as the flower of grass, *The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever*. 1 Pet. 1, 24, 25.

To conclude therefore, we must not cast our eyes so much upon the Ministers that are the disposers of the mysteries of God, as upon the author of the Ministry▪ which is the Lord himself: neither be so careful and attentive to hear their voice, as Christ himself speaking in them, in whose Name they are Ambassadors. Doubtless, they shall incur the displeasure of God, and receive grievous punishment, whosoever are evilly affected to the Ministry of the word: and their impiety shall detract and diminish nothing from the worthiness of the doctrine it self, which directeth us to one God, through our only Mediator Jesus Christ, and teacheth us to serve him with a true faith, with a pure life, & with a love unfeigned.

[Use 4] Fourthly, we ought from this ground of doctrine here delivered, to give them double honor, and not withhold from them the wages of their work, and the recompense of their labors that is due unto them, but as every laborer must have his hire, so ought the Ministers above the rest, that labor in the word and doctrine, to be maintained of the Church. As the Church dependeth vpon them for their allowance, so they depend upon her for their

maintenance. Thus the Pastor and the people do feed one another, as a flock of sheep nourisheth the Shepherd, who eateth the milk of them, & clotheth himself with the wool of them; and again the Shepherd coucheth them into green pastures, and leadeth them by the still waters. The people feed him with the bread of this life; he feedeth thē with the bread of everlasting life. They minister to him in carnal things: he to them in spiritual things. They cannot lack him in regard of their souls: he cannot be without them in regard of his body. Thus then they do feed one another, or at least ought to do. If he receive food of them, and give none unto them again, he robbeth them of their goods, and murdereth their souls. If they on the other side receive food of him, so that they be taught of him, and yet make him not partaker of a part of their goods, they rob him, and cause him to depart from them, and so become murderers of their own souls, as if they did lay violent hands upon themselves, or rather as if they did famish themselves by refusing bread provided for them: inasmuch as *where vision ceaseth, there people perish*, Prov. 29, 18. Nay, the Lord accounteth of this sin in another kind and nature, he chargeth such Church-robbers, to be robbers and spoilers of God, no less then they that stand by the high way and take a purse. I doubt not but very many will be ready to scorn this comparison, & say, What? Do you liken us to thieves? Do you make no better of us? We are true men and honest, we pay every man his own; no man can ask us a penny. But if it be so, yet what shall this avail us, if we be found false to God, and stick not to rob him? The tithes are God's portiō; if we wrongfully deteine them from those to whom he hath assigned them, we are no better then thieves & robbers, whatsoever we account of our selves. The Prophet *Malachi* shall be my warrant, to charge this upon them: and if they think I slander them, let them bring their action against him. Hence it is, that he saith, chap. 3, 8, 9. *Will a man spoil his gods? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings: ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole Nation.* In which we may observe these particular points.

First, that it hath been an old and ancient practice, to invert the ordinance of God, and to alienate the right of the Church, and to defraud the Ministers of their due. This ought to comfort us when we find our selves injuriously dealt withal; it fareth not worse with us, then it hath fallen out in the Church in former times. The Priests of God whose lips preserve knowledge, had this portion assigned unto them; they had no inheritance in y^e Land, as the other Tribes had, yet greedy cormorants and covetous wretches grudged this allowance also unto them, and detained it from them.

Again, observe that these caterpillars that devour the fat of the earth, albeit they sin grievously, yet never want pretences and excuses to color their sacrilege: they have somewhat to say for themselves; they will never be brought to acknowledge their offenses: they think it well gotten, which is gotten from the Church: they are of opinion that the Ministers have too much, and therefore think it good policy to shaue thē once a year, and use them as men do their flocks, who sheare the wool from their backs, lest it should grow to be a burden unto them. So is it in our days, partly by improper titles, partly by injurious customs, and partly by unconscionable conuainces, the Ministry in many places is left bare and naked, and the Ministers have not wherewithal to sustain themselves and their families.

Thirdly, notwithstanding the shifts that these men have invented and devised, GOD setteth out their sin in lively colors, & calleth it plain robbing and spoiling of God. For what is theft, but a getting of other men's goods to our selves, whether it be by violence or by other conuayance? Behold the difference between the judgment of God, and the judgment of these men concerning themselves. They account themselves honest men, and pronounce of themselves, that they are just and true: but God calleth them spoilers and robbers of him. They oppress y^e church, they deceive the Ministers, they spoil God himself, and they hinder the salvation of many poor souls.

Lastly, the Prophet setteth down their reward which followeth their sin, They have robbed him, and are cursed with a curse. God curseth them, and the souls of many that perish do curse them: and therefore albeit they bless themselves, it shall not help them. The Gentiles by the light of natural reason, saw that their Priests which waited upon the service of God, were to be maintained bountifully, and to be provided for liberally, & therefore no marvel though God account the deteining of tithes, and deceiving of the Ministers, to be no less sin then a robbing of his Majesty. This we see evidently in the time of famine that was in Egypt, when no Corn did grow for the space of seven years; for in the common dearth and want of others, they were relieved. For whereas we read the words, *The Land of the Priests he bought not, for they had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave thē; wherefore the Priests sold not their Lands:* some translate the words otherwise, and understand them of the chief Officers, or Rule's, or Princes in the Common-wealth. But albeit the word do sometimes signify so, as 2 Sam. 8, 18. where *David's* sons are called by that name, which could not be in the number of Priests, for they pertained to another Tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the Altar: and Job 12, 19. *He leadeth Princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.* Where he maketh the *Princes* and *mighty* as both one, and addeth the latter to expound the former: yet nevertheless we rather follow the common translation, and the received interpretation, that *Joseph* bought not their glebe Land, because y^e King gave them an allowance, during all the famine, that they should not be constrained to sell their ground. For thus do the seauenty Interpreters read it: thus do *Josephus* & *Philo* understand it: thus also do the testimonies of other Historiographers warrant us to take it, which teach that the Priests of Egypt were wont to have their allowance and portion, publicly provided for them, and supplied unto them as their maintenance for their service. Neither doth it prejudice this truth, or hinder it any whit, because they were Idolaters, and so deserved to be destributed rather then relieved and sustained. For first of all *Joseph* sinned not, because he distributed the corn, not at his own pleasure, but at the Kings appointment: not by his own discretion, but by the Kings commissiō, who would have them provided for. And *Pharaoh* himself failed in his duty, but sinned not in his liberality: not in nourishing the Priests, but in cherishing Idolaters, and in not reforming the worship of God, which is an office both beseeming and belonging properly to Kings and Princes, I mean to purge and cleanse his service from all superstition, as *Jacob* did put away the strange gods that were in his house.

The maintenance of the Ministry is God's allowance, and therefore such as deteine it, and so take from God his part, do oftentimes lose their own portions: not that God hath need of

these things, but because it is the wages & recompense, which he that is the true owner of all that belongeth unto us, hath appointed for their use that wait upon the worship of God, and serve in the Ministry of the Gospel. This sin is not a bare theft, but stealing in the highest degree, even a sacrilege against God, a wasting of his house, a spoiling of his worship, and a ruining of his kingdom: as Nehem. 13, 10. by reason of keeping back the tithes and oblations, the Levites, the Singers, and the rest that served in the work of the Lord, were through extreme poverty and pinching of them, constrained to leave the Temple, and to go home unto their own houses. It is no new thing to have the Ministers defrauded, and the work of the Lord lie waste for lack of laborers. And in the tenth chapter, verses 35, 30, 37, 38. the Israelites promise, that they would truly pay their due to the Levites, that they would bring *their first fruits*, the first borne of their sons, of their Cattle, of their Bullockes, & of their Sheep, and the tithes of the Land unto the Levites and Priests that minister in the house of God: but when *Nehemiah* was absent, they were slack in performance of their promise. We may observe besides, who they are that have the chief hand in this sin, not the men of least account or lowest degree, but the chief sort had the chiefest hand in this trespass. For who are they that most rob the Church, and pill and polle the Ministry, and make themselves fat with the spoils of the tithes, but those that should be greatest friends unto it, even great persons, who make themselves greater by making Church-livings lesser? This we see plainly in the place named before, where *Nehemiah* saith, chap. 13, 10, 11, 12. *I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them, for the Levites and the Singers that did the work, were fled everyone unto his field. Then contended I with the Rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? and I gathered them together, and set them in their place, &c.* Such therefore, albeit they be great & mighty, are to be reprov'd. It is the duty of the Magistrate to see so these things, and to correct the abuses that creep into the Land, and by all good means to release the oppressions that lie heavy upon the Ministers of y^e church. If God take the matter into his hand, he will take an account of them that spoil y^e church, and make them feel the greuousnes of their sin. It is better that *Nehemiah* should correct the sins of the people, then *Nebuchadnezzar*. If God scourge us by cruel enemies, woe be to us; they are without all mercy and compassion. Thus then we learn, how and what to account of this sin, to wit, the withholding of maintenance frō the Ministers, that it is robbing and spoiling of God, a defacing and deforming of his kingdom. This maintenance is the homage and tribute that God doth require of us, for the setting up and continuance of his kingdom among us; whereby it followeth, that tithes are holy & sacred things, not to be deteined, nor employed to any other use. The Apostle therefore saith, Gal. 6, verse 7. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

[Use 5] Lastly, from hence ariseth comfort to such as do good to the Sanctuary, and to the uttermost of their power, further the worship of God: they may assure themselves, that God will account it & reward it as done unto himself. Whatsoever is given to the maintenance of God's service, and the furtherance of true religion, and the propagation of the Gospel, is given to God himself, & serveth to advance the glory of his Name, as appeareth by sundry examples in holy Scripture, worthy both of commendation, of admiration, and of imitation.

One example we have in *Obadiah*, who lived in the days of grievous persecution, whē *Jezebel* made havoc of the Church of God; the Altars were cast down, and the Prophets slain: then did he take an hundred of the Lord's Prophets, and hid them by fifties in a Cave, and fed them with bread and water, 1 Kin. 18. It is an easy matter in the days of peace and quietness to show a love to the Ministers of the word, and to pretend our selves to be friends and favorers of the Gospel: but let us not flatter our selves, for we may herein deceive our selves. This is no evident trial or certain demonstration to prove our zeal to be right: forasmuch as we may do all this, more for the applause of the world, and to be well thought of among men, then for love we have to the truth, or to them that bring the truth & glad tidings of good things. But when all things are in an hurry and uproar, when persecution is raised for the Gospels sake, and *Jezebel sendeth a messenger to Elijah*, that his life shall be taken away from him, or when the Ministers are in disgrace and contempt of the world, & turned out of house and home, when they are left succorless & comfortless, then to stand to them, to relieve them, to countenance thē, and in a good cause to defend them, is a notable sign of a lively faith, and of receiving the truth in truth and sincerity. God will not forget their effectual faith, and diligent love, and the patience of their hope in Jesus Christ: he will have them in continual remembrance, & reward it as done unto himself; as God shown himself in mercy to *Obadiah*, and for his sake sent a gracious rain vpō his inheritance, and filled their hearts with joy and gladness. For even as *Elisha* said to *Jehoram* King of Israel, when they had no water for the host, nor for the cattle that followed them, *What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the Prophets of thy father, and to the Prophets of thy mother: as the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, Surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee*, 2 Kings 3, 13, 14. *Jehoshaphat* was a good and godly King, who feared the Lord, and in all distresses called upon them evermore to ask counsel of the Prophets of the Lord: and God suffereth his word to be declared to the wicked themselves many times, howbeit it is because of the godly that are among them: even so doth God deal with *Ahab*, he would have suffered him to follow the false Prophets that he fed, and to be seduced by them, and to perish in that famine, but that he regarded *Obadiah* and that small remnant for whose sake he shown mercy upon the Land. He had shown mercy to the Lord's Prophets, the Lord showeth mercy unto him again, and is mindful of his goodness, as if he had done it unto himself.

Another example we have in *Jehoiada*, he was honored alive and dead, so that *they buried him in the City of David, among the Kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God and toward his house*. He set his heart to honor God, and was zealous for his glory, he reformed religion, he destroyed idolatry, he freed them from tyranny, he established true piety, and did much good to the Church and Common-wealth: and as he was careful to honor God, so God honored him, and remembered him for good, according to the greatness of his own kindness, and according to his servants goodness.

The like we might say of *Nehemiah*, when the secret enemies of the Church *had defiled the Priesthood, and the covenant of the Priesthood, and of the Levites*, and that many of the chiefest among the Jews, withheld the tithes and offerings from them to whom they were due by the express gift of God, so that *the house of God was forsaken*: he was merciful unto him again and

spared him, and made him to be magnified of all the people, according to the saying of the Lord, 1 Sam. 2, 30. *Them that honor me, I will honor: and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.*

Consider with me farther another example, to wit, touching *Ebed-melech*, when as the Prophet *Jeremiah* by false suggestions and accusations was thrust into the dungeon, where was no water but mire, so that he sunk down and stuck fast in it, and must of necessity perish in short time, if he were not speedily delivered, this stranger spake to the King for him, and was content to take upon him the envy of many that he might expose himself unto: *My Lord the King, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the Prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon, and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is, for there is no more bread in the City,* Ier. 38, 9. So he drew him up with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon. What then? He that remembered *Jeremiah* in prison, hath his own life given him for a prey: and he that lifted up the Prophet out of the dungeon, is assured also of his own deliverance; God doth greatly accept of the compassion he shown, and rewarded it to the full, so that *Jeremiah* is sent unto him with this joyful message in those miserable days, when Jerusalem was taken by the enemies, the Princes were slain with y^e sword, *Zedekiah* the King had his eyes put out, & his sons were slain before his face, the Kings house was burned with fire, the walls of the City were broken down, and the remnant of the people were carried away into captivity: in the midst of all these tumults & public calamities, I say, the Prophet receiveth a commandment from God, to go unto this godly Ethiopian, being one of the Eunuchs that was in the Kings house, and to say unto him, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will bring my words upon this City for evil, and not for good, and they shall be accomplished in that day before thee: but I will deliver thee in that day, saith the LORD, and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid: for I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee, because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord,* Ier. 39, 16, 17, 18. He had done good to *Jeremiah*, God doth good unto him, and accounteth it as done unto himself.

The last example shall be out of the New Testament, mentioned by the Apostle *Paul*, 2 Tim. 1, 16, 17, 18. *The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but when he was at Rome, he sought me out very diligently, & found me: the Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.* Where he prayeth, that he might reap as he had sowed, and gather as he had scattered, and receive as he had bestowed, to wit, mercy for mercy, goodness for goodness, and kindness for kindness: and no doubt God heard his prayer, according to his promise, and recompensed him that had refreshed the Apostle. This is that which the Lord promiseth in the Prophet *Malachi*, chap. 3, 10. *If they would rob him and spoil him no more, but bring all his tithes into his house,* he passeth his word toward thē, that they should see plenty upon their labors, and a removing of those means that caused famine and misery to fall upon them, and to come among them; as before he threatened & denounced, that as they spoiled God, so God spoiled them: and as they caused famine to be in his house by keeping back his portion, so he caused scarceness of bread and cleanness of teeth in their houses, causing extreme want to be in the midst of them, in withholding and keeping back his blessings, and in sending upon them his grievous plagues.

Now he telleth them, that if they murmur not at the maintenance of his Ministers, but pay them truly, and sustain them conscionably, he will satisfy them with good things, and remove from them evil things, *He would open the windows of heaven unto them, and pour out a blessing without measure.*

And thus we see how we may find comfort unto our selves, and strengthen our faith by such examples as the Scripture affordeth unto us.

[Beside the Ram of atonement, whereby an atonement shall be made for him.] In these words we are to consider the last, but yet the chief and principal means of sanctification, which also is a satisfaction to God, and a putting and purging away of the sin of defrauding our neighbor. And herein indeed standeth the only way of expiation & blotting out iniquity, howbeit set down in the ceremony. For neither can confession of our sins to God, nor making restitution of our evil gotten goods to man, put away our sin: we may confess all the day long, we may bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and give our bodies to be burned, and yet our sins shall lie heavy upon us, and press us down to the gates of hell; it is only the blood of Christ, as a Lamb unspotted and undefiled, that can do it.

Neither is it enough for us to say, Christ hath washed us from our sins, he hath paid a sufficient price for them, and therefore it skilleth not, whether they be acknowledged to God, or recompensed to men. For we have seen that GOD requireth *besides the Ram of atonement*, that such as have wronged their brethren, must both confess and restore, or else they can have no benefit of reconciliatiō to God by the death of Christ. We are therefore in this place to mark how our sins are purged; w^c is expressed under a type & figure.

True it is, *the blood of Bulls* and other beasts is not able to take away sin, neither is it possible that the offering up of gifts and sacrifices *could make holy concerning the conscience him that did the service*, and sanctify the comers thereunto, Hebrews 10, verse 1. For sin is an offense done to God, a breach of the Law, and a wounding of the conscience. But what is the blood of Bullocks able to do, touching the curing of these mischiefs and maladies? *Will I eat* (saith the Lord) *the flesh of Bulls, or drink the blood of Goats?* Psal. 50, 13. Doubtless such things of small account and reckoning, have no force or efficacy to appease the wrath of God, which is infinite. Besides, the justice of GOD required▪ that man himself, not Calf or any Cattle should undergo the punishment for sin, because *the soul that sinned, shall die the death*, Ezek. 18, verse 4. and the threatening must be true, that because man sinned, he should die, Gen. 2. *Thou shalt die the death*. So that it was necessary, either that all man-kind by reason of sin, must perish everlastingly, or else Christ *the Mediator of a better testament* must become a surety for us, and satisfy the wrath of God kindled and conceived against us for sin. If any ask the question, if the blood of Bulls & Goats could not take away sin, why did God command them to be offered, and to what end were they appointed? I answer, *[Answer.]* this was not done in vain, but to good purpose. For albeit they could never take away sin, nor purge the conscience from dead works, yet they served fitly to shadow out the death of Christ, and to assure the heart, that it is washed by the blood of the Messiah. This was a notable comfort to the people of God from the beginning, & taught them to look for redemption through him. *[Objection.]* If it be farther said, that God speaketh everywhere in the Law, that the blood it

self of Bulls and Beasts cleanseth and purgeth sin, as Levite. 17, 11. *The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the Altar, to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.* I answer, [Answer.] that place speaketh not properly, but sacramentally: as in the New Testament he calleth in the institution of his last Supper, *the bread his body*, because it is a figure of it: so in this place, to the outward sign he giveth the name of the thing signified, and to the type he ascribeth the proper effect of the blood of Christ, which only is the blood that is able to make atonement for our sins. Otherwise those offerings of beasts should be called in vain, *the similitudes and shadows of good things to come*. As for those heretics that dream, that those oblations did really and indeed cleanse away the sins of the fathers, not by their natural operation, but by the acceptance of God, and therefore were not types of Christ's sacrifice washing away sin, they are evidently convinced by the places before alleged, and throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews.

[Object.] If any ask, how these can be figures of Christ, seeing GOD witnesseth in his word, that he never required them, *When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and Offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me; in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, thou hast had no pleasure.* Psal. 40, 7. Heb. 10, verses 5, 6. If then God would have none of them, how could they be the figures and images of better things?

I answer, [Answer.] God may be said to allow them, and yet to disallow them; to reject them, and to regard them in diverse senses. He willed them as he commandeth them, and commendeth them as a sweet savor unto him, performed in faith, and as types referred to the coming of the Messiah, *and the time of reformation*.

On the other side, he may be said to refuse and reject them, for these three causes. First, when the manner of doing is evil, doing that which God requireth, but doing it in a corrupt manner, to wit, without faith and obedience, as the Prophets in every place reprove the sacrifices of hypocrites & wicked persons: as Isaiah 1, 11, 12. *I delight not in the blood of Bullocks, or of Lambs: who hath required this at your hand? Your new Moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth:* and the reason of this is rendered in the words following, *Your hands are full of blood*. Again, God would not that they should remain & continue forever, but that, though they had place in y^e Church for a time, they should cease at the coming of the Messiah. Therefore Christ being come into y^e world, and manifested in the flesh, God willed thē no longer, but would have them abolished. And this sense doth y^e Apostle principally intend in this place, that the shadows must give place, when the body it self was come in person. Lastly, it may after a sort be said, that God never willed them, that is, approved & allowed of thē as the principal part of God's worship, and as the very price of our redemption, & the ransom for our sins, & our reconciliation unto God: albeit he would have them observed of his people, and used for a time as certain rudiments & rites to bring them to Christ, & to confirm their faith in him. Let us shut up this with the comparison that the Apostle expresseth, Heb. 9, 13, 14. *If the blood of Bulls and of Goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctify to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience frō dead*

works to serve the living God? In these words he compareth the shadow & the body, the type & the truth, the ceremony and the substance together. Frō hence we learn this doctrine, that the blood of Christ taketh away our sins, & reconcileth us to God the Father. Christ Jesus hath in the performance of his Priesthood, freed and delivered us from the guilt & punishment of our sins. This appeareth evidently unto us, by considering & laying before us, the end, the parts and fruit of his Priesthood. The end of the Levitical Priest-hood, and of this figured by it, was to offer sacrifice *for the ignorances*, that is, for the sins of *the people*. The distinct parts of it are two, satisfaction, and intercession. His satisfaction consisteth partly in suffering, and partly in obedience. The second part of his Priesthood standeth in intercession, in that he is become our perpetual and perfect Advocate, that thereby God might be appeased for them, and we reconciled unto him. The fruit thereof is this, that we are delivered, redeemed, ransomed, justified, and freed from the guilt of sin, from the burden of ceremonies, from the curse of the Law, from the wrath of God, and from fear of condemnation. This truth is taught in many places, John, 1, 29. *John seeing Christ coming unto him, saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.* And the same Apostle in his first Epistle, chap. 2, ver. 1, 2. *If any sin, we have an Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* Likewise in the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle, magnifying the mercy of God, and setting out the merits of Christ, he saith, chap. 3, verse 24, 25. *We are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, thorough faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, thorough the forbearance of God.* The Apostle to the Hebrews declareth, that Christ was to offer up himself once, and not often, as the High Priest entereth into the high place every year with blood of others: *For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the ende of the world hath be appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.* By all which testimonies it appeareth, that Christ is our Advocate, and hath wrought our peace and atonement, and thereby made an end of all other sacrifices.

The reasons are plain. First, because God [Reason 1] thereby is well pleased, and his wrath appeased, so that he accounteth his death as a full price and sufficient ransom paid for them. So the Evangelist witnesseth, that *a voice came from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* Math. 3, 17. And in the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Apostle saith, chap. 5, verse 2. *Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet smelling savor.* It is noted in the book of Genesis, that when Noah being come out of the Ark, built an Altar, and offered burnt offerings, *the Lord smelled a sweet savor;* which was not the smoke of the sacrifice that ascended, (for what sweetness could there be in that?) but it was the sweet & precious sacrifice of Christ for which his wrath was appeased, being shadowed by that ceremony.

[Reason 2] Secondly, Christ took the whole burden of our sins upon his shoulders, presenting himself before God in our person, and offering us to God in his person: so that he took upon him our unrighteousness, and imputed to us his righteousness. This the Prophet *Isaiah* did most clearly prophesy off, chap. 53, verses 4, 12. *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and poured out his soul unto death, &c. He bare the sins of many, and made intercession for*

the transgressors. And the Apostle teacheth, that in Christ we are reconciled to God, *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,* 2, Cor. 5, 21. And in the Epistle to the Colossians, chap. 2, ver. 14, 15. he setteth out the fruit of Christ's death, that *he hath forgiven us our trespasses, hath put out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, he took it out of the way and fastened it to his Cross, he hath spoiled principalities and powers, hath made a show of them openly, and hath triumphed over them in the same Cross.* This was notably prefigured and foreshowed in the rites of the Law. For when any propitiatory sacrifice was to be offered for the people, the Priest was to present the beast before the Lord, to lay his hands upon the head of the beast, and to confess the sins of the people upon it, and so it bare their iniquities; the truth whereof, is Christ himself.

Thirdly, there could otherwise be no remission [Reason 3] of sins: so that it is the blood of Christ in the suffering of the Cross, that purgeth away our sins, as Hebr. 9, verse 22. *Almost all things in the Law are purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission:* and therefore it was necessary that Christ should purge and purify us by his blood. The greatness of our sins could not otherwise be pardoned, nor the person that is offended, satisfied: they are infinite, and so require a sacrifice of infinite price and value. No treasures, no riches, no creatures, no sacrifices, no ceremonies could do it, it cost more to save a soul, and to redeem the captives and prisoners that are holden by Satan in slavery to do his will: *Knowing that we are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from our vain conversation, received by the tradition of the Fathers: But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb undefiled and without spot.* 1 Pet. 1, verses 18, 19.

Fourthly, nothing but the death of Christ could quench the scorching wrath of God as [Reason 4] a consuming fire kindled against us, & countervail his severe justice. Hence it is, that the Apostle, writing to the Hebrews, having shown that the blood of Bulls and Goats could not possibly take away sins, addeth immediately after, *When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou ordained me.* Heb. 9, 5. Our sins have a bloody face in the sight of God, and we are enemies unto him, so that *the robes of the Saints must be dipped in the blood of the Lamb,* Revel. 7, ver. 14. All the nitre and sope, and Fullers earth in the world, are weak and insufficient, and have not power and strength enough in them to do it; So that we must say with the Prophet, Psal, 50, 7. *Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter then snow.* Thus then we see, that Moses mentioning here the Ram of atonement, whereby an atonement is to be made for sinners, teacheth under this type, this certain and undoubted truth, y^t Christ our Savior hath by his blood made an atonement between God and us, & thereby reconciled us unto his Father.

The uses of this doctrine are of great weight and importance. First, it offereth to our considerations [Use 1] this meditation, what sin is, & how it is to be esteemed. It is a most fearful and grievous thing, & the wrath of God against it is exceeding great: so that nothing in heaven or in earth could satisfy for sin, but the death of Christ Jesus: the Son must die for the servant, or rather for the enemy: for we are by nature the children of wrath as well as others. The justice of God would not spare him, though he were his only and well-beloved

Son: but forasmuch as he was to bear our sins in his body, he must die for us, Rom. 8, 32. *He spared not his own Son, but gave him to the death for us all.* We are not therefore to be lightly carried into the practice of sin, but to be much grieved at it, to strive with all our force against it, and to endeavor to overcome it; and among other things this is not the least that should trouble us, that we have by sin brought such misery and shame upon the Son of God. We ought to lament for this, and to bewail it every day. For if we had not sinned, and by sin been deprived of the glory of God, he had not taken upon him the shape of a servant, neither been humbled to the death of the Cross. We do daily cry out upon the Jews, and think hardly of them, because they crucified the Lord of glory: but if we would enter into our selves, and consider what we are, we should find our nature as bad as theirs: our sins are they that crucified him: they are the nails that did pierce his hands and feet, and the spear that entered into his side, and shed his blood, Zach. 12, 10.

[Use 2] Secondly, this confirmeth us in a principle of our Christian religion, that remission and forgiveness of sins is by the merit of Christ, because *the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all*, Isaiah 53, 6. And to him give all the Prophets witness, that through his Name, all that believe in him shall have remission of their sins, Acts 10, 43. And the Apostle saith, that in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Eph. 1, 7.

Now then, if we would know, what this freedom and forgiveness is, we must understand, that it is a blessing of God upon his people, procured by the death and passion of Christ, whereby God esteemeth of sin as no sin, or as not committed. This is figured out by many borrowed speeches in the Scripture, as Isaiah 44, 22. *I will put away thy transgressions as a Cloud:* and chap. 38, 17. *He hath cast them behind his back:* alluding to the common practice of men, who, when they will not remember or not regard a thing, do turn their backs upon it, and put it out of their sight. Likewise the Prophet Micah, chap. 7, ver. 19. *He will cast all the sins of his people into the bottom of the sea,* alluding to Pharaoh and his host that perished and were drowned in the red sea. The benefit of this is endless and vncountable; the remission of our sins, the redemption of our souls, and the reconciliation of our persons into the favor of God, being the most wonderful blessing that ever can come to mankind. For every man that hath his sins detained, is more miserable and wretched then the most vile creature that ever was. The dog, the serpent, the toad are not so base; for when they die, there is an end of all their woe and sorrow: but when man dieth and departeth out of this life without this blessing, then is the beginning of his anguish, first in soul until the day of judgment, and in soul and body for evermore, after the general resurrection. This consideration caused the Prophet to cry out, Psalm. 32, 1, 2. *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered: Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.* This was the voice of David, this was the feeling that he had, though otherwise he had the pleasures, and royalties of a kingdom. Ask carnal and corrupt men, who are blessed and happy in this world: some will say, the rich man: some, the wise: some, the fortunate: some, the healthy: some, the honorable: and some, those that are in favor with Princes: or if they will not say so, yet they show evidently that they think so. But this point is never thought upon, it is accounted but a common matter, and therefore it never cometh into their minds, or entereth into their

hearts. Alas, alas, how many are there that did never rightly know, what sin is, what it worketh, how it corrupteth, whom it defileth, and whereunto it bringeth. These are drowsy Protestants of dead hearts, and almost desperate. If we had the right knowledge of our selves, and the least feeling of sin, as it were with the tippe of our finger, we would find our hearts so foul, and our estate so fearful, and the wrath of God so bitter, that if the gain and glory of the whole world were set before us on the one side, and the pardon of our sins on the other side, we would choose the free forgiveness of our sins, before ten thousand worlds, and all the pomp of them. So then, we must hold that the redemption of our souls, is a most dear and costly thing, the dearest thing in the world, and of greatest value. It cost the precious blood of the Son of God, the least drop whereof, being the blood of God, is more worthy and of greater merit, then all the world. The servants of *David* said unto him, *Thou art worth ten thousand of us*: so we may say of the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, that he is more of worth thē ten thousand of us; and yet he accounted not his own life to be dear and precious unto him, but he was content to lay it down for our salvation: and therefore *Paul* saith to the Elders of Ephesus, Acts 20, ver. 28. that *God redeemed to himself a Church by his own blood*, his sacrifice being propitiatory, and sufficient to purge our sins, and to make us clean again.

Thirdly, if we will have any comfort that [Use 3] our sins are washed away by the blood of Christ, whereby the atonement is made, and we reconciled to God the Father, we must leave them and forsake them, and lead an holy and godly life. The Apostle *Peter* teacheth this point, and enforceth this duty upon us from the consideration of the death and passion of Christ, 1 Pet. 4, ver. 1, 2. *Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, for he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin: that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.* And the Apostle *John* saith, *If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, & the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us frō all sin.* They then cannot assure themselves that Christ died for them, that make no account of committing sin, that drink in iniquity as water, and wallow in it as swine in the mire, and cast out sin from their profane hearts, as the dog doth his vomit. Let us mark this as a good note, and set it down as it a rule, that Christ is not dead for us, except we be dead to sin: and he is not risen again for us, except we be risen to newness of life. Indeed he died, it is an article of our faith, but what benefit have we by it, if we feel not the power of it working effectually in us? Besides, this is another principle which is surer then the heavens, that we are not redeemed, except we be sanctified. For are we so foolish to imagine, that he would redeem us from sin, that we should commit sin afresh, and that we should serve sin again? Will any man ransom a prisoner, and pay a great price for him, that so soon as he is freed, he should by and by serve his enemy? So do we deceive our selves, if we imagine that Christ would pull us out of the snare and power of Satan, to the end we should entangle our selves again, and give up our selves to his service, who is the sworn enemy of God; whereas *we are delivered out of the hands of our enemies, that we should serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life*, Luke 1, 74, 75. Labor then to be in Christ, and examine thyself, whether he be in thee or not: study to be partaker of the benefits of his passion, and to be washed

from the filthiness of our corruption. This is a privilege belonging unto the Church of God, as the Prophet *Isaiah* noteth, chap. 33, verse 26. *The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: and the people that dwell therein, shall be forgiven their iniquity.* What then? Shall we continue in sin, because sin is pardoned? Or shall we turn the grace of God into wantonness, because grace hath abounded? *God forbid: how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* Roman. 6, 2. We are baptized into the death of Christ, and are buried with him by baptism into his death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should also walk in newness of life. Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that hence forth we should not serve sin. The more we profit by the death of Christ, the more we grow in sanctification, and the farther we proceed in mortification. It is one thing to talk of the death of Christ, and another thing to feel his death working in us: it is one thing to know that he died, and another, that he died for us. It is not enough to reason of his death, and to confer of it, except it be as a strong purgation to cleanse us from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Holiness in the soul, is as health in the body, and peace in the City, and marrow in the bones. It is the righteousness of Christ that giveth life unto us: so that so far as we live, we are sanctified. The life of an unregenerate man is no life, but rather a death: they are twice dead, dead in soul, and dead in body; there is no life of God in their minds, or willes, or consciences, or affections. They may well breath in the air as the brute beasts do, but they have no heavenly breath, or celestial motion in them. They have the natural life, but they are utterly ignorant what the spiritual life meaneth. But he that is spiritual indeed, and truly sanctified, the farther he proceedeth, the weaker the motions of sin are in him, even as the nearer a man draweth to death, the less motion is in him. If we be once in Christ, and dead with him, the pleasures of the world, the delights of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, the pride of life, and the vanities of carnal men will move us nothing at all. They that were our familiar companions in sin, will be shunned of us, bitter unto us, and banished from us. The evil works wherein before we took our whole delight, will be grievous & Irkesome unto us, so that we will by no means abide to hear and see the unrighteous deeds of the wicked, which before did minister matter of sport & contentment unto our soul.

Lastly, seeing the death and shedding of the blood of Christ, is the means of our salvation [Use 4] and free pardon of our sins, we are to rejoyce at it, and to comfort our selves in it above all things in the world, as that which hath procured the greatest blessing that can befall us: so that if we can find but one drop of his blood, to be by the power of the Spirit sprinkled upon our consciences, to purge us from dead works, it should rejoyce us more then the gaining of a kingdom, or the increasing of our corn and cattle. If a man should live in health & wealth, in honor & preferment, in favor and friendship of the mighty, in credit & estimation of men, in the praise & applause of the world, so that he had no experience of sorrow and sickness, of misery & calamity; yet if he have not this principle writ in his heart, that Christ shed his blood for him, and nailed his sins upon his Cross, and carried them with him into his grave, to bury them in perpetual forgetfulness: What comfort could all these things bring unto him? Or what sound delight could he take in them? Or what were he nearer for them unto salvation? But if we should want all these blessings, of honor, of riches,

of favor, of preferment, and such like: and on the contrary side, taste of the cup of affliction in great measure, and drink up the dregs of it, if we should endure poverty, banishment, infamy, injury, disgrace, distress, discredit, slanders, perilles, persecution, need, nakedness, and all kind of adversity: yet these could not make us miserable, *nor separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* It is he that died for us, yea rather which is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for us. Who then shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect, who have a discharge given them from all their sins? As for troubles and afflictions, they are sanctified unto them, and serve to bring them nearer unto God, and are approved means whereby they are brought to a conformity with Christ. True it is, our nature abhorreth nothing more then affliction, so that it is grievous for the present, and not joyous. It is well observed, that when Jesus went up to the Mountain to preach, all his Disciples went with him, none forsook him nor fled from him: but when he went to Mount *Caluarie* to suffer, they all left him alone. He hath at all times many that are ready to follow him by professing, but few are willing to follow him by patient suffering. We are content to go with him into the Temple, but we will not accompany him to the Cross. *Peter* shown this too plainly, both by his words and by his practice. When Christ once made mention of his suffering, he said unto him, *Master, pity thyself.* And when he was in the High-Priests hall, & was assaulted and tempted, for fear of the persecutors, and danger of death, he denied his Master. Notwithstanding, we must fear to sin against Christ, more then to suffer with Christ: forasmuch as if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified with him. There is nothing can make us miserable, but that which bringeth us out of favor with God, and separateth us from him: now there is nothing can separate us from God, but sin; nothing can destroy the soul, but sin, and sin is able to do it. They therefore are truly happy that have the power and strength of sin abolished, and are no longer servants of corruption, but the Lord's freemen. Let them rejoice and be glad, because their names are written in heaven. Christ willeth the seventy Disciples to rejoice in this, and not so much *that the devils were subdued unto them:* so ought it to be with us, we should find no joy or comfort in our riches & treasures, and in our store and abundance of earthly things, in comparison of those unspeakable benefits which we receive from Christ, and enjoy by Christ. If we had all things without him, they might delight the eye and outward man, but they could not comfort the heart, nor refresh the weary soul: *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* Let us then learn hereby, what true comfort is, and wherein it consisteth; there is no comfort without Christ: he is the substance of the Gospel, and there is no glad tidings can come to the soul where he is not.

[Verses 9, 10. *And every offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they bring unto the Priest, shall be his: & every man's hallowed things, &c.*] In these last words of this division, we have the application or conclusion of the former law, amplified by an argument of the like. God had appointed in his Law, that the Priests should receive the oblations and hallowed things to sustain them, Levite. 10, 12. Now, even as these things belong unto them, so God appointeth that such things as are stolen, and have no owner or heir alive, shall be brought to them, in case the persons be dead, or not known to whom they might of right belong. Thus doth God provide for the maintenance of them that served him.

We learn from hence, that the Ministers of the Church, that labor therein, ought to be maintained of the Church. I will not handle in this place, whether tithes be due by a divine right, or not: but rather come to the equity of it, that in the time of the Gospel, the Pastors of the Church ought to live of the Gospel. For if in time of the Law, the Priests that served at the Altar, had a plentiful allowance, as it were a liberal diet, as we have shown before; forasmuch as they had benefit by the sacrifices and oblations, by first fruits and tenths, and such like: then it followeth necessarily, that the Ministers of the New Testament should have also a good reward and recompense for their pains and labors. And it followeth not by equal comparison, but from the less to the greater, seeing their office is greater, *the least in the kingdom of heaven, being greater then John the Baptist.* Math. 11.11. and therefore the hire of their labor ought not to be less. To this purpose speaketh the Lord by the ministry of Moses, in many places of the Law. In the book of Genesis, whē *Abraham* returned from the slaughter of the Kings, *he gave him tithes of all* the spoils that he had taken in war. God had dispersed the Levites among all the Tribes, and assigned thē Cities to inhabit in all their quarters, to the intent that sound doctrine should be taught throughout the whole Country. They had no inheritance allotted and assigned unto them; God promiseth to become their portion, and therefore the people ought not to defraud them. *The Levite was ever to be with them* that was within their gates. He assigned also to *Aaron* and his sons, a worthy portion, so that none that served at the Altar, had any want. To this purpose the Apostle speaketh to the Galatians, chapter 6, verse 6. *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.*

This precept the Apostle giveth to them that are taught toward their teachers: wherein he layeth down these particulars; first, that the Ministers are to be maintained. Secondly, they are to be provided for at the costs and charges of the Churches. Thirdly, that they are to be sustained honestly, liberally, and bountifully, to the end *the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn*, might appear not to be muzzled. The elders that rule well, ought to have double honor given unto them, 1. Tim. 5.18. Not that all ought to be given into the Ministers hands, that they should abound, and others want: that they should live richly or riotously, & others beggarly, as hypocrites dealt among the Pharisees, and as it is now in the Church of Rome, where they devour widows houses, and under a color of this commandment, have drawn dry the treasures of Princes, and eaten up the fat of the land, as their Abbeyes and Monasteries everywhere testify, so that they have built them palaces and castles like Princes, of the spoils of other men: but the Apostles meaning is, that they ought to have an honest pension and contribution given unto them, not abounding in superfluity, but contenting themselves with a sufficiency, according to the rule of the Apostle, Having food and raiment, let them be content.

[Reason 1] This truth is farther confirmed unto us by the force of reasons, as it were by strong cords that cannot be broken. First, the Apostle writing to the Corinthians, handleth this argument at large: where he setteth down sundry similitudes which serve fitly and notably to illustrate the same, as it were so many lights brought forth to open and discover the nature of things that are dark and doubtful. *The soldier* that goeth forth to battle, fighteth not at his own costs, but hath his pay and wages of his Captain that hath called him. *The*

Planter that planteth trees, eateth of the labor of his hands, and tasteth of the fruit of the things he hath set and grafted. *The Shepherd*, that feedeth a flock, eateth of the milk of the flock. *The sower*, that goeth out to sow, reapeth that which he hath sowed, and gathereth it into the barn. The Ministers of the Gospel are the Lord's soldiers to fight his battles against sin and Satan, by the two-edged sword of the word: they are *the chariots and horsemen of Israel*: they plant as gardeners, they sow as husbandmen, they feed as shepherds; and therefore they all ought to have a recompense for their labors, and maintenance for their persons, answerable or agreeable to the work that is in their hands.

[Reason 2] Secondly, such as are taught and instructed by the Ministers, are debtors unto them. All honest men are bound to pay their debtes, or else they are no better then thieves. There is a mutual band and conjunction between the Minister and the people: and either of them oweth a necessary duty unto the other. It is a part of natural equity, that when we have received a benefit, we should recompense our benefactors. They that have received much are bound to return the more. This is the reason which the Apostle pointeth out, Rom. 15.27. making the Macedonians and those of Achaia to be debtors to them that are of Jerusalem; *It hath pleased them verily, and their debtors they be: for if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.* Where he calleth the faith of the Gospel and Christ with all his treasures, the goods of the brethren at Jerusalem, because Christ was promised to the Jews, and from them salvation came unto the Gentiles, according to the ancient promise and prophesy, Isaiah 2.3. *Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* As then the Gospel came from them, so now they wanted the carnal goods of the Gentiles, and stood in need of their alms. Now, what are carnal goods, that is, uncertain and unsettled and unstable, in comparison of the spiritual riches and treasures of Christ, if they be weighed in a balance? Surely nothing at all, & therefore were y^e Gentiles more then debtors unto the Jews. Thus also doth the Apostle reason, 1 Cor. 9.11. *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing, if we shall reap your carnal things?* Seeing then the hearers are debtors to them that have taught them, they shall never be able to discharge themselves of this debt, except they give according as they have received, and in lieu of thankfulness communicate unto them that have painfully and plentifully instructed them.

Thirdly, all laborers are worthy of their [Reason 3] wages. It is a rule of equity to pay all that have labored for us: and therefore it cannot without injustice and fraud be denied, or detained: as Luk. 10.7. Where he saith to the seventy which he sent before his face into every City whither he himself would come, *Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house: and in the same house remain eating and drinking such things as they give: for the laborer is worthy of his hire.* But the Ministers of the Gospel are laborers: they labor to husband us to God, and to plant us as fruitful trees in his garden: they dignity and delue about us: they plough up the ground of our hearts, and sow good seed in the farrowes thereof. They labor in the word and doctrine, and care for the Church day and night, and therefore have right and reason to be maintained of the Church that are partakers of their labors. Every trade maintaineth the tradesman, and every art the artificer. Should it then go worse with the

Minister, then with other Sciences and handy-crafts? and shall he alone complain that his profession (which is the best of all) hath that recompense which is least of all?

The uses follow to be handled and considered. [Use 1]First, this serveth to reprove such wretched and miserable men as deny them the maintenance that is fit for them, and appointed unto them. Many there are among us that think it lost and utterly perished, that is given unto them: that pay them somewhat for a time, but it is thought to be a work more then needs, and therefore afterward grow weary, as of a burden that they cannot bear. These are never weary of superfluous expēces which they might both with credit and a good conscience cut off: howbeit if they lay out anything to further piety and true religion, they repine and grudge at it, as if they were undone.

Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *We should not grow weary of well doing*, Gal. 6.9. *forasmuch as in due season we shall reap, if we faint not*. For having in the former words exhorted the people to give their teachers temporal things, and to communicate unto them of their goods; he inferreth this conclusion, Let us not be weary of well doing. He that fainteth in a good course, and giveth over before he come to the end, is like to a slothful husbandman, who, having made an entrance to plough and sow, giveth over and goeth back, before he have fully finished his work: or like unto him in the parable mentioned in y^e Gospel, Luk. 14.28. who intending to build a tower, did not sit down first, and count the cost, whether he had sufficient to finish it, and therefore after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to go through, all that beheld him, began to mock him, saying, This man began to build, but was not able to make an end. This hath been the continual practice of this corrupt world, to think it evilly bestowed, which is bestowed this way, being like unto *Judas*, when a precious ointment was poured upon Christ, and his feet anointed with it, he cried out, What needeth this waste? *this might have been sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor*, John. 12.5. So likewise whatsoever is given to the Ministers of Christ, is accounted to be bestowed in waste, & such as might as well be spared, as so spent. The zeal of our forefathers in former times was great, they gave to the Ministers, and pulled not nor pared from them. The Idolatrous Priests that served *Baal*, and attended at his altars were well provided for, and wanted nothing, Gen. 47. Four hundred false Prophets *were richly maintained at Izebels table*, 1 kin. 18.19. where—as the poor and painefull Levites, that taught the people diligently, have been glad to catch at a crust, and to serve for a morsel of bread, and a suit of apparel. The Popish Priests that worship idols, and maintain idolatry, have had abundance, and know not what it is to want, they have no experience of necessity. Nothing was thought to be too much or enough to set up and continue a will worship after the precept and tradition of men.

Such as lived in blindness and palpable ignorance, had a zeal to religion, such as it was, and it shall be sufficient to condemn our coldness and backwardnesse. It was well said and observed, that in old time they were wont to say, *What shall we give the man of God*, 1 Sam. 9. but now the Church-robbers say, *Come, and let us take the houses of God in our possession*, Psal. 83.12. This is an evident token that there is small devotion in men for the maintenance of true religion, as we shall show afterward.

Secondly, it putteth the Ministers in mind [Use 2] of their duty, that they ought to labor among them that do maintain them, and teach them in the word. It is great reason that he which looketh for his hire, should do his work: and that he which intendeth to live of the Gospel of Christ, should preach to others the Gospel of Christ. Such as are Drones and will not labor to bring honey to the hive, are not worthy to eat of the honey. Such as are dumb-dogs and cannot bark, may not eat of the children's bread, nor expect or receive the maintenance that is due to y^e Ministers which are painful. Such will not or cannot labor, and therefore *ought not to eat*, 2 Thess. 3.10. We must care more for the feeding of the flock, then of our selves; and fear more the loss of the sheep, then the lack of the fleece: for which I pray you, is more to be desired and of more price, the sheep it self, or the fleece it carrieth? Is not the sheep? is it not for them that Christ died? and ought we not to leave ninety and nine in the wilderness, and seek out that which is lost, or strayed, that it starve not, and perish? *Woe therefore unto the shepherds of Israel, that eat and clothe themselves with the wool: that strengthen not the diseased neither heal the sick, nor bind up the broken, nor bring again that which was strayed, neither seek out that which is lost.*

Woe unto such as are entered into a painful calling, and yet will take no pains in it: that have a great work to do, and yet lead an idle & lazy life: y^t take upon them the labor of the Ministry, & yet follow their pleasures and pastimes, and do nothing less then labor. What calling requireth greater study, to furnish themselves with matter, and to bring out of their treasury, things, both old and new? And yet many there are that are entered into it, that scarce bestow one hour in a day, and sometimes in a week to preach the word, and to give everyone in the family their bread in due season.

Hence it is, that some preach not at all, neither think it to be their duty to preach to the people. Others do it so rawly and unreverently, that the stuff they bring will not abide workmanship, and the meat they set forth, is undigested. Such is their pride and ignorance that they dare utter whatsoever cometh into their idle brains and their foolish minds: and they fear not to sit down in the chair of *Moses*, that are not worthy to stand at the plough tail, or to sit in the Artificers shop: forasmuch as none of these ordinary trades and occupations can be discharged and performed without some preparation; and yet these dare ascend into the Pulpit, and stand above the people in the Name of God, without any meditation. Others there are that are of no ability, neither have any gifts to teach. None more forward to catch from the people, and none more backward to preach to the people; for indeed they are not able. What should the Church do with such blind guides? When Christ sent his disciples before he went to Jerusalem, to a town that was over against them, and told them they should find an asse bound, and a colt with her, cōmanding them to loose them & bring them unto him, and charging them, *If any man said ought unto them, to say that the Lord had need of them:* so it were fit that these two-legged and dumb-tongued asses were loosed & sent away; howbeit we cannot say, that the Lord hath need of them, or that the Church hath need of them. Neither can we say, *they are the salt of the earth*, forasmuch as they have lost their savor, and therefore are thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, neither are they *meet for the land*, nor profitable for the dunghill, but to be trodden under foot of men.

To these we may join such as are better able to teach, but no whit more willing; that hide their gifts in the earth, and cover them under a bushel, like to that unfaithful and slothful servant that exercised not the talent he had received. The more God hath bestowed upon them, the more he requireth at their hands. Use and practice increase the gifts that are given unto us: but idleness and sluggishness do diminish them. Though they have mouths to speak, yet if they open them not, they may be called dumb dogs, as well as they that are ignorant. Though they have tongues and throats to utter a voice, yet if they hold their peace, they may be called idle shepherds, forasmuch as they are the work of men's hands, and not of God's; Though they have their eyes in their head, and can see far, yet if they shut them and close them up, they may be called blind guides, that take upon them to direct others, but cannot govern themselves. For it is all one to the people, whether their Ministers be ignorant, and cannot teach: or whether they be idle, and will not teach: seeing both these ways the Church goeth to ruin. And if there be any difference, such as are able to preach and will not, do the greater hurt. For touching these poor and silly souls that can do nothing, they are not much regarded, or followed, every man can point them out easily: but as for those that are counted great Clerks, and take themselves to be no small fools, they draw many eyes after them, the people have a great opiniō of them, they submit themselves unto them, and seek no further. They begin to think, that if hearing of the word were so necessary for them as some green heads & precise fellows would make them believe, surely then those Ministers would preach more often; for they know God's will, they are not ignorant of his word. So then, the blind and unlearned Ministers are hurtful, but the meanest sort of men in a manner can say of them, Alas, our Minister is nobody, he is not able nor meet to teach us, and therefore we must seek food abroad, or else we are like to be famished: whereas the other sort are counted grave and stayed men, deep Divines, and great scholars, and the hearers so hang upon their sleeues, that they will hear no other; they check those that go about to controlle him or his doings: they say, If we were out of the way, he would tell us, and if so much teaching were needful, he would teach us: if these things were evil, he would not use them, for he knoweth what is what as well as the proudest of them all.

Nevertheless, Christ our Savior teacheth, that *one thing is necessary*, and that is, the hearing of his word: but these have learned a heerer way to heaven than Christ could show them; and more wisdom than he could teach them. But let them take heed that their wisdom be not turned into folly, and while they seek a nearer way to the kingdom of heaven, let them beware lest they never come there. For if they will learn nothing but when they list, and how they list, and of whom they list, and content themselves with a cold collation once in a month, or twice in a quarter, or four times in a year, they will hardly attain to sound knowledge and understanding in the mysteries of godliness, and they shall be as far from science as their teachers are from conscience. Other Ministers there are that so ouerlade themselves with livings, that their maintenance is greater than their labor, and are willing for single work to take double wages. They labor in one place, and receive recompense for their labor in two places. If we should see a day-laborer work diligently all the yere long with one man, and at the years end ask his hire at the hands of two men, we would account

it injustice, and deny to pay him. These men that now we speak off, who are like unto *Issachar* compared to a *strong asse couching down between two burdens*, can labor but among one people, and yet they will have maintenance of two Parishes. If they object, that they divide their labors, and take pains among them both: I answer, that helpeth not the matter, forasmuch as while they are absent from them and come not among them, they take as much of them as when they preach unto them. If the day-laborer (of whom we spake before) should work half the year with them, and require of them payment for the whole year, they would not be so simple to grant it, though they would be so shameless to demand it. These are they that make the calling of the Minister, gainful rather then painful, and sildome or never think of the account which they are to make for the souls committed unto them: and yet will be sure to have the greatest maintenance that the Church, or Churches can minister unto them.

[Use 3] Lastly, as this duty and doctrine serveth for the direction of the Ministers, that as they look to be maintained, so all are not fit for this office, because they must preach in season and out of season, and not entangle themselves in matters and business of the world, that they cannot intend to give themselves to reading, to exhortation, and doctrine: so it teacheth the people to have a special care of their Ministers, that they leave them not destitute and distracted for want of necessaries. They watch for our souls, and therefore we ought to provide for their bodies. We heard before, that the Apostle willeth the Galatians to *communicate* of their goods to their Pastors that labor among them. Whereby it appeareth, that in those days so soon as the Gospel began to be planted, the Ministers of the word began to be neglected in their daily ministrations. For as the word it self was contemned, so were they also that preached it. If the word it self be had in price and estimation, *the feet of them that bring glad tidings of peace, will be beautiful unto us*, Rom. chapter 10. verse 15. And by this note we may prove our selves, whether the word be precious unto us, or not. If we regard not the Ministers in what condition they live among us but leave thē in a most poor & necessitous estate, it is evident that we make little reckoning of the word it self. Where the Ministers are vilified and basely esteemed, it is manifest that the horrible contempt of the word it self reigneth there. And this is a notable policy of the devil, whereby he vndermineth us and cunningly getteth ground of us. For he defraudeth the Ministers of their maintenance, that the Church may be spoiled of her Ministers. He knoweth well, that if the Church should want the Ministers, and have them taken out of the way, he might rage and rauen at his pleasure, kill and murder freely as he listed: as if the wolves could get the dogs that kept the flock into their hands, they would destroy the sheep without mercy. The devil is a cruel and savage wolf, the Ministers are the keepers of the flock, and watch over it: if they be any way removed, the devil will suddenly prey upon them, and make havoc of them.

Hence it is, that the Lord saith in the book of Deuteronomy▪ chap. 12.19. *Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite, as long as thou livest upon the earth.* And in the 14. cha. 27 verse, he repeateth this exhortation again, *The Levite that is within thy gate, thou shalt not forsake him: for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee.* The Levites were appointed of God to serve him, and to teach his people, that his Law might be known among them: and therefore it was great reason they should have wherewith to maintain them. A part of the inheritance

belonged unto them, as they descended of the lineage of *Abraham*: howbeit God had put them from it, to the end they should not be combred with earthly things, neither troubled with tillage, nor distracted with any other business, but wholly give themselves to the performance of their duties. And the people also must do their duties unto them. Great is the unthankfulness of this unthankfull world. The wretched Idolaters that worship they know not what, spare no cost to maintain their Priests; whereas in the mean season, such as serve God purely in their places, are in no account, and men are content not only to set light by them, but utterly to forsake them. And what is the cause of this? surely because they reprove us for our sins, and suffer not every man to do what he listeth: which made the Apostle say, Gal. 4.16. *Am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?* We all by nature desire liberty, and cannot abide to be touched by God's word, we will not be reprov'd. We had rather maintain such as would never speak word unto us, then such preachers as exhort diligently, and rebuke sin powerfully, and discharge their duties carefully. How many are there, that had rather nourish and keep with great charge a great rabble of greasie Friars, and an whole Couent of idle Monks, to chaunt and howl all the day long, then to find one painful preacher to speak unto them as he ought to do? And how many are there if they might have their own choice, that had rather pay their tithes and give their money to ignorant persons and idle bellies, that can do nothing or will do nothing, then to faithful Pastors that are according to God's own heart, and might turn us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto eternal life? Wherefore it is not without cause, that the Lord would not have the Ministers forsaken which publish true doctrine in his Name. Neither doth this tend to the benefit of the Ministers, either only, or principally: but to the good of the people themselves. For such as refuse to maintain those that bring home unto them the doctrine of salvation, do bereave themselves of the food of their souls, and the bread of life: which is all one as if they should go about to starve themselves for hunger. When the Ministers teach this truth of God, that maintenance is due unto them, they are censured to preach for themselves and to seek their own profit, and to plead their own causes: howbeit this serveth for the common benefit of the whole people, and the general welfare of the whole Church of God, that true religion might be maintained, obedience toward God continued, and the unity of faith established.

So then, the people, in doing some good to the Ministers, do more good to themselves: they minister to them in temporal things, but they receive at their hands spiritual and eternal things: and therefore they are not to leave them and forsake them, but to maintain them, profit them, & to comfort them of whō they receive comfort.

11 And the Lord spake unto Moses saying,

12 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man's wife go aside, and commit a trespass against him,

13 And a man lie with her carnally, and it be hid from the eyes of her husband, and be kept

close, and she be defiled, and there be no witness against her, neither she be taken with the manner,

14 And the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled: or if the spirit of jealousy come upon him, & he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled:

It is well observed by some writers, that *Moses* entreateth in this Chapter of removing of three impediments and hindrances that were among the people of God, one of uncleanness, another of unrighteousness, the third of suspicion. We have spoken already in the former part going before, how impurity is to be banished, and how wrong and injustice is to be purged. Now we come to consider, how evil surmises and suspicions are also to be taken away; which is done, by setting down *the try all of the suspected wife*, whereby the innocence of the woman is revealed, and the jealousy of the husband is removed, and the truth of the matter before hidden, is tried. Before we spake of such crimes as are open & manifest: now of that which is not certain, but only suspected: not clear in it self, but doubtful.

But first let us speak of Jealousy in general, which is the bane and poison of marriage, and maketh that sociable life, to be uncomfortable, and mingleth it with worse then gall and wormwood. Jealousy therefore is a grief of mind, arising from hence, that another is judged to enjoy that which we desire to have wholly and properly as our own, and none beside us to possess any part with us. Here then we cannot abide any community, but hate it as our enemy and the right cause of this jealousy. Or we may describe it otherwise on this manner, It is an affection proceeding from fear to have that communicated to another, which we challenge and covet to retain as peculiar and proper to our selves alone.

From hence it appeareth farther what the nature of jealousy is, to wit, that it is mixed and compounded, partly of love, partly of fear, and partly of anger. Of love, which admitteth no fellow partner in the thing he loveth. For as the king will suffer no companion to be equal unto him, or partaker with him in his kingdom: so will the husband suffer no corriuall to mate him in his love. Of fear, lest another enjoy the use of that which we cannot abide or suffer he should enjoy. Of anger, whereby it cometh to pass, that he is ready to break out to seek revenge and punishment upon him y^t hath offended him that way: as Pro 6.34. he beareth no ransom, *For Jealousy is the rage of man, therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance: he will not regard any ransom, neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.* For in this doth the husband suppose, the estimation of his own person, the dignity of his children, and the honor of his whole family to consist, whiles the wife keepeth the marriage-bed chaste and undefiled, and giveth no just occasion to be suspected of dishonesty and uncleanness. And on the other side, he accounteth all things in the house turned upside down, his person disgraced, his children embased, and his family turned into a stews by the false dealing, and the lewd practice of his unchaste wife. Hence it is, that *Solomon* saith, A virtuous woman is the crown of her husband: and contrariwise *she that maketh him ashamed, is as rottenness in his bones.* Wherefore God established this special Law in this place, both that false suspicion might be resisted, and that no crime (though never so closely and cunningly committed) should be vndetected. For albeit it be practiced secretly, it shall be discovered

openly, according to the saying of our Savior oftentimes repeated in the Gospel, *There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: neither hid that shall not be known.* Now let us come to the order of the words.

In this trial of the woman suspected of adultery, we are to consider two points: first, the setting down of the Law. Secondly, the conclusion of the whole matter. In setting down the law, we are to observe three points; first, the propounding of the cause is noted. Secondly, the determination of the cause is handled. Thirdly, the issue or event of the whole process is declared. Touching the matter or cause it is propounded in these four verses, to wit, from the 11 to the end of the 14 verse: which is twofold in one and the same point of jealousy; one, if the woman have committed adultery, from whence ariseth a just and lawful jealousy: the other, if she have not committed adultery, whence proceedeth a foolish and an evil grounded jealousy. The first point is propounded on this manner, Put the case a man have a wife that hath gone aside and deceived him, and committed fornication, and he doth not certainly know it, neither can evidently prove it, because he can produce no witness that saw her, and she will not make a voluntary confession of her fact committed. This is handled in the 11, 12, 13, and part of the 14. verse. The second is set down in this sort, Put case she have not gone astray, neither hath been defiled, which is briefly signified in the latter end of the 14. verse. In both these, whether she be guilty, or not guilty, the case is doubtful, & the husband in perplexity of the matter: and therefore in the next words that come hereafter to be considered, the Lord himself delivereth the way and means how the doubt may be dissolved, and that which is secret may be cleared and decided. Thus much touching the order.

Before we come to the doctrine that ariseth from hence, it shall not be unprofitable or any whit from our purpose to answer such [Object. 1] questions as arise out of this division. And first of all, forasmuch as nothing doth more cross the law of love and rule of charity, then to suspect evil of our neighbor, it may be demanded, to what end and purpose God giveth liberty to the husband to pursue his wife, following his corrupt humor, and suffereth him to call his wifes name and credit into question, defaming and shaming her with suspicion of adultery, when as oftentimes she is innocent? I answer, [Answer.] that God dealt with his people two ways: sometimes he commandeth that which is simply and in it self good and honest, and forbiddeth that which in it self and own nature is evil, as when he commandeth to restore, and forbiddeth a witch to live, and infinite such like precepts.

Again, sometimes he winketh at some evils that could not be avoided, as it were bearing with an inconvenience, to remedy and to prevent a mischief. To the end they might sly from the greater, he tolerateth and permitteth the lesser evil. This we see evidently in the cause of divorce, Deut. 24.1. He suffereth them to put away their wives upon private grudge and dislike, as he doth allow it simply in the case of adultery, Matth. 5.32. and 19.8.9. Not that he ever approved of it, but Christ saith *it was for the hardness of their hearts*, howbeit from the beginning it was not so. The like we might say of marrying many wives, a common custom among the Patriarchs and godly kings, which was as a mighty stream bearing all things before it, it was permitted but never allowed: it was practiced, but never pronounced to be

lawful. Sometimes therefore God giveth laws, as Lord and God to their consciences, which did bind them forever: and sometimes as a Lawgiuer, he tolerateth that which he could not take away, as Princes do such abuses as have taken root among their subjects, and are grown to an head, so that custom is turned into another nature. For to bear with corruptions is one thing, and to remove them is another. So in this place, howsoever the jealous head of the surmising husband offendeth against God, when upon every light occasion and suspicion he accuseth his wife that is innocent of adultery; yet lest he being wayward and head-strong, should rage and rise against his wife in fury, and lay violent hands on her, and so be his own judge and executioner, it pleased God to remedy that mischief, allowing them an ordinary means, to make trial of their wives, whether they were guilty, or not guilty of unfaithfulness and falsehood toward them. In the mean season God always condemneth jealousy & suspicion arising without just causes, & forbids to receive a false accusatiō, not only against their wives, but against any their friends, neighbors, or enemies, as we shall show more afterward. And the Priest in this case, if he saw no cause of suspicion that he could approve off, no doubt, both might and did put back the husband and reject his needless trial; and therefore he is commanded, when he intendeth such a matter, to go first of all to the Priest, even as the lepers were sent to the Priest, who did pronounce them either clean or unclean, and was made a competent judge in y^e matter. So that all husbands were not altogether left to their liberty, to accuse without cause, & to try without proof, and to suspect without occasion. And albeit the same allowance be not given to the wife, to make trial of the suspected husband, yea though the spirit of jealousy come upon her: yet the husband was warned hereby that he is no less guilty in the sight of God, who would also find him out in his sin: and that he ought to deal with all meekness and moderation with his wife, as it is noted touching the Pharisees, when Christ said to them that would have the woman taken in adultery to be stoned, *Let him that is without sin among you, cast the first stone at her*, they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: Thus much touching the first Question.

Again, others may object and say, What [Object. 2] needed this solemn means of purgation, which was to be put in practice by so many several ceremonies, some to be done by the husband, some by the wife, & some by the Priest: forasmuch as there was a nearer course, and a more ready way to bring the matter to light? For *the high Priest having on his breast-plate*, might in all doubtful and difficult cases whatsoever, have asked counsel of God, and given answer unto men, as Numb. 27.21. Exod. 28.30. and in the books of *Samuel*. This was practiced oftentimes, when the people of God were in distress, and uncertain what to do: Whereas this law of trial of the suspected wife, was not often, if at any time it was practiced. As for that which is read and found in the forged and counterfeit Gospel of *James*, that the blessed Virgin espoused to *Joseph*, had these bitter waters given unto her, and that she drank of them, and thereby cleared her self, is no better then a gross fable of some idle head, hammered in the times of darkness, and vented abroad to deceive the simple. I anwere to the objection, that the having of one means is not the taking away of another. True it is, that it is needless to be done by more w^c may be done by fewer: but repetition and iteration of moe means in God's matters is not needless. In earthly things we say commonly, that store is

no sore: and that if a man have two strings to his bow, it is the better, so that in all things *two are better then one*. A more plentiful provision doth not hurt, but help. Howbeit, it pleased God to add this means also to diverse others, to declare how greatly he hateth and detesteth adultery, and that thereby he might terrify all women, and make them afraid to commit secret sin, through the reproach and infamy they were compelled to undergo, if they should give any suspicion of adultery unto their husbands.

[Object. 3] Lastly, the question must be asked, what is meant in this place by *the spirit of jealousy*, when it is said, *If the spirit of jealousy come upon him*, verse 14. I answer, it is an Hebrew phrase and manner of speaking, noting thereby an eager and earnest desire, a fervent and forward inclination unto anything; which are deeply rooted in their hearts. So that the Hebrews call all earnest inclinations, and passionate affections by the name of the spirit, as *the spirit of lying*, 1 King. 22.13. *the spirit of giddiness*, Isaiah 19.14. *the spirit of drowsiness*, Isaiah 29.10. *the spirit of uncleanness*, Zach. 13.2. *the spirit of fornications*, Hos. 14.12. *the spirit of error*, 1 John. 4.6. In all which places it signifieth the exceeding forwardness and wonderful proneness of man's corrupt nature unto those evils, as though the soul were wholly set upon them, and minded nothing else.

Again, by a figurative speech, it pointeth out unto us the chief author and principal cause from whence it is derived, even Satan the unclean spirit, the evil spirit, the worker of all wickedness, the first father and founder and fountain of all sin whatsoever. For even as when we read of the spirit of wisdom and meekness, the spirit of knowledge and understanding, the spirit of grace and prayer, the spirit of prophesy, of faith, of a sound mind, and such like, it signifieth not only the several effects and gifts, but the author and giver of them from whence they proceed, to wit, the holy Ghost: so likewise, to apply these things to the point and purpose we have in hand, the spirit of jealousy mentioned in this place, giveth us to understand two things: first, the swing and sway that this corrupt affection did bear in this people; as they transgressed sundry ways against their wives, both by taking many wives together, and by putting them away so soon as they displeased them, so they gave themselves exceedingly to nourish evil thoughts, suspicions, and surmises against them, as if they might use them at their own pleasures, and were not given them to be their *companions*, and so made two persons in one flesh.

Secondly, we learn thereby from whence jealousy cometh, to wit, from the evil spirit; the devil is the author of it, who soweth the seeds of malice, and setteth debate between a man and his wife, and disturbeth their peace and tranquility, and kindleth dissension as it were a fire burning among them, that they might pull down their house with their own hands: forasmuch as *an house divided against it self cannot stand, and every kingdom divided against it self, is brought to naught*. Matth. 12.25.

Wherefore, hereby they are put in mind to beware and take heed, lest by these blind and uncertain suspicions, they offend the Majesty of God, that hateth and abhorreth all false suspicions, trouble the quietness of their own family, corrupt the ordinance of marriage, and bring a perpetual slander and reproach upon themselves.

Thus much of the questions: now we come unto the doctrine.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man's wife go aside, &c. In these words we see God maketh a Law touching the jealousy of the husband toward the wife whom he suspecteth of adultery. And albeit this ceremony here touched be a part of the legal worship which hath no place of practice in the Church of Christ, where no such thing is permitted; and though we never read of any that used this remedy to rid himself of jealousy, & to detect his wives adultery: yet there is a moral equity in it, w^c concerneth us & all others to the end of the world: & indeed it belongeth to the observation of the seventh commandment, and of the ninth commandment, which require the chastity of the person, and the innocence of our good name. The end of the seventh commandment, is to teach, both that as God is the author of marriage, so he is the revenger of the breach of it, being the most holy covenant of all other: and that women should not pollute and prostitute themselves to be common through hope of impunity and of escaping without punishment. The scope and drift of the ninth commandment, which forbiddeth false witness-bearing, is to take order for the honor and estimation and good name of our brethren, that they be not slandered and defamed: and if of all our brethren and neighbors, much more of the wife which is the nearest neighbor. So then, God restraining such breaches and abuses, declareth evidently, that he doth not allow the jealousies that every fond or hare-braind husband conceived in those days; neither doth enact or establish this Law in favor of them, but rather in favor of the innocent wives, that they be not headily and hastily cast off without cause, and thereby a way made for more usual and more often diuorsements, which were too common already among that people.

Wherefore, he reproveth and checketh *this evil spirit of tormenting jealousy*, as having no good ground or warrant from God and his word. From hence we learn, that it is the part of a good and godly man, to interpret all doubtful things to the best, as much as may be. This we see practiced by *Jacob*, when he saw the party-coloured coat of his son *Joseph* stained with blood, and knew not what was become of him, he said, *It is my sons coat an evil beast hath devoured him, Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.* The matter was doubtful, how he should come to his end, and very suspicious, the circumstances were to be examined: his brethren were thoroughly to be examined of the time and place, when and where they found the garment, the place was to be viewed where he is supposed and suspected to be devoured, forasmuch as some part and parcel of him would have remained. When *Jezebel* was eaten with dogs *the skull and the feet, and the palms of her hands remained*: so might somewhat of him be found out, or at least the men of that place were to be asked whether any ravenous beast haunted those quarters. But *Jacob* was so overcome with sorrow, that he hath the evil beasts in his own house, and yet cannot discern them, and is so carried away with credulity to believe the forged tale of his treacherous sons, that he least suspecteth where the greatest cause of suspicion was, forasmuch as he could not be ignorant that they *hated him* in former time. But not knowing where the fault lay, nor able to try out the fact, he enterpreteth and expoundeth all in the better part, he concludeth that surely some ravenous beast had torn him in pieces. The like we might say of *Izhak* the father of *Jacob*, when he came to him in the name and garments of his eldest brother, being doubtfull who it should be, because *the voice*

was *Jacob's voice, but the hands were the hands of Esau*, in the end he concluded that it was *Jacob*, and so *blessed him*. We have many examples serving for confirmation of this truth in the New Testament. In the first Chapter of *Matthew*, when the virgins *Mary* was found to be with child by the holy Ghost, and *Joseph* was ignorant what to think of it being espoused unto him, he reasoned with himself that either she had committed adultery after their contract, or else fornication before the contract: in the end of after he had considered this seriously in his mind he resolveth upon the lesser, that she had committed fornication, and so belonged to another rather than to him: as *Matthew 1.19. Joseph her husband being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily, to wit, that she might be given to wife to him that had accompanied with her.*

In like manner after that *Peter* had reproved the Jews, because they had denied Christ in the presence of *Pilate*, preferred a vile cut-throat and murderer before him, & killed the Prince of life, whom God had raised from the dead and glorified in heaven, and set their sins in order before them: he exhorteth them to repentance, saying unto them, *Now brethren, I wote, that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.*

All sin is committed either of infirmity or of obstinacy; either of settled purpose, or of frailty: either of knowledge, or of ignorance: and howsoever it be committed, it cannot be excused, because *the servant that knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, but he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes, &c.* Now the Apostle judgeth and persuadeth himself the best things of them, that they sinned of ignorance rather than of malice.

And in the 26 Chapter of the same book, *Paul*, that he might win *Agrippa* the king to the kingdom of God, and persuade him to become a Christian, saith unto him, *O king Agrippa, believest thou the Prophets? I know that thou believest.* It was uncertain, whether he would believe or not, and therefore by this rhetorical communication he judgeth the best, that he believed. All these testimonies serve to move us to the practice of this duty, that when things are doubtful and may be diversely taken, we ought to expound them with the most favorable construction, and friendly interpretation, and gentle mitigation.

This point is farther to be strengthened [Reason 1] unto us by the force of reason. First of all, it is a sign of charity not to stretch things to the uttermost: as contrariwise it betokeneth little love and much malice, when we open our mouths to speak all manner of evil of our brethren. Hence it is that the wise man saith, *Prov. 10.12. Hatred stirreth up strife, but love covereth all sins.*

And the Apostle teacheth as much of charity, *1 Corinth. 13, 5, 6. It doth not behave it self unseemly, it seeketh not her own, it is not easily provoked, it thinketh no evil, it rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.* If then there be any true charity in us, to seek the good, or desire the good of our brethren, we ought to testify it by this, even by judging of their minds and meanings, of their words and actions according to this rule.

Secondly, it is the rule of common equity, [Reason 2] which nature it self teacheth, that as we wish to be dealt withal, and to be done unto, so ought we to do & deal toward others. Now

there is none of us all, that would willingly be expounded wrongfully, and censured uncharitably, but crave to have all things taken in the better part. We would not have our words altered, wrested, corrupted, stretched, and strained beyond our meaning, as clothe upon the tainters above measure: and therefore we ought so to behave our selves toward others. This doth Christ our Savior deliver to his disciples, Matth. 7.12. *All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.* We are in this case so to deal with others, as we desire that others should deal with us: so that as the former reason was grounded upon charity, this is grounded upon equity.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, it is a sign or fruit of heavenly wisdom given unto us of God, which teacheth us how to carry our selves in our callings one toward another. This doth the Apostle James lay before us in his Epistle, chap. 3.17. *The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.* If then, we be ready always to judge the best, to speak the best, and to think the best of things that are doubtful, we shall show our selves to have the grace of heavenly wisdom, which is a perfect guide to direct us in the parts of our life. On the other side, to carry our selves strangely and uncharitably toward our brethren, is the note of a man carried away with that wisdom, which is earthly, sensual, and devilish: which is bred beneath in the earth, savoreth of our corrupt nature, and is taught unto us by no other master then the devil.

[Use 1] Let us make use of this point to our selves. First, it teacheth, y^t to be whisperers and takers of all in the evil part, is a testimony of an evil conscience, and a token of an evil man. He that is a good man himself, doth hardly think others to be evil: he that hath a sound heart, and is a true Israelite in whom is no guile, doth not easily suspect others to be hypocrites and dissemblers. Such as come into the Lord's courts and present themselves before him, in conscience of their duty, in reverence of his Majesty, and for their increase in true piety, are with much ado drawn to believe, that others *draw nigh unto God with their mouth, and honor him with their lips*, and that their hearts are far from him. Such as labor above all things, to approve themselves before God, the searcher of all hearts, and to do that which they do in godly sincerity, cannot lightly be persuaded that others are so carnal, as to do *all to be seen of men*, and to please themselves with the foolish praise of mortal men. Contrariwise, such as are profane in heart, loose in life, filthy in talk, and every way carnal in conversation, do judge the same of others, and measure them by the deceitful rule of their own actions. This is noted as a capital evil by the Apostle, Rom. 1.29. where he joineth together *maliciousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, such as are without natural affection, vnplacable, and unmerciful*, and showeth that such are full of all unrighteousness. Whisperers are they, that by close and secret accusations raise suspicions and surmises, and sow the seeds of strife and contention, whence is reaped too plentiful a crop of malice and mischief. They set friends together by the ears, and oftentimes as with a violent wind overthrow whole houses and cities, and turn them into dust and ashes: assuring our selves that *where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work*. Whatsoever they hear of others, they are ready to carry to others with a swift foot, and a corrupt tongue, and a malicious heart, to kindle the coals of hatred among

men. They live by the fallings out of others, and thrive by jars, as the carrion crows do upon the carcass. If they know any occasion of anger to arise, they are at hand to turn it into wrath and malice, and to make the parties thereby to be farther from reconciliation; like to *Achitophel* when *David* and *Absalom* were up in arms, who by his devilish policy devised a means to cut off all hope of reconcilment and of uniting them together again. Or they are like to male-contents, that had rather live upon the spoils of others, then take pains themselves, wishing that all things were in a tumult, confusion, and combustion, that they might catch the goods belonging unto others, & holding this principle, that it is good fishing in troubled waters.

Wherefore it is a notable exhortation of the wise man, Prov. 6.16, 17, 18. 19. *These six things doth the Lord hate yea seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and him that soweth discord among brethren.* Of this kind there are many several sorts: first, a relation of the bare words against the meaning, as Matth. 26.69. *At the last came false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and to build it in three days.* Christ spake some such words, John. 2.19. but neither altogether the same, neither to the same end and purpose, because *he spake of the Temple of his body.*

This is a breach of the ninth commandment, the which albeit it be more cunning in the rest, yet it argueth greater malice, when for want of other matter, and better proof, we set their own words upon the rack, and stretch every joint of them out of their place.

Secondly, to open the secret sins of our neighbor to any man, especially if he commit them of infirmity; contrary to the general rule of Christ, Matthew 18. verse 15. *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.*

This is the right and ready way to gain our brother, to make his sin secret and as it were to cover it with a garment, so long as there is any hope by private exhortation and admonition to win him. To blaze abroad and to publish to the knowledge of others their frailty, is not the way to gain them, but to stir them up against us, and to harden their hearts, and to stop their ears when we speak unto them. For except it appear unto those whom we exhort or reprove, that we love them, and that our admonitions proceed from that fountain, we shall never do them any good, neither will they ever regard our words, but they will seem harsh and unpleasant unto them.

Thirdly, evil suspicions, when nothing can be done of our brother, be it never so honest or religious, but we suspect the worst of it, and speak the worst of it; whereas love is not suspicious, but *hopeth all things, endureth all things, beareth all things, believeth all things*, 1 Cor. 13.7. Hence it is, that the Apostle teacheth, that *the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned*, 1 Tim. 1.5. and in the last Chapter of that Epistle, he yoketh envy, strife, railings, and evil surmisings together, the which whosoever follow after, do know nothing concerning godliness.

Lastly, to accuse our neighbor for that which is true and certain through hatred and malice, and with a purpose to hurt and destroy (if we can) him that we accuse, and against whom we complain: as appeareth, 1 Sam. 22.9. in the example of that dogged and devilish enemy *Doeg*, who was appointed over the servants of *Saul*: he said, *I saw the son of Ishai when he came to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, who asked counsel of the Lord for him, and gave him victuals, and the sword of Goliath: of whom David saith in one of his Psalms, Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs, like a sharp razor, working deceitfully: thou lovest evil more then good, and lying rather then to speak righteousness: thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.* All these particular points teach us, to beware of whispering, and construing of all things in the evil part.

[Use 2] Secondly, it condemneth all rash judgment, when we judge amiss of others, both of an evil mind, and for some evil end. Christ giveth us warning to beware of this wickedness, Matth. 7.1, 2. *Judge not, that ye be not judged: for with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.* And the Apostle *James* maketh the like exhortation, chap. 3.1.2. *My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation, for in many things we offend all.* These rash and rigorous judges never regard nor consider their own offenses: they can search and sift into other men's actions, as men winnow wheat, and yet are careless of themselves. The heathen accounted it intolerable, to reprove other men when themselves are as faulty. This is no better then Pharisaiical hypocrisy. This is done diverse ways. The first is, when a man hath done good things holily, purely, and sincerely, we judge them done hypocritically, dissemblingly, and wickedly.

This judgment is a wrong judgment, and forbidden in the word of God. This was the practice of the devil toward *Job*, chap. 1.9. and 2.4. *He was a just man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil.* Satan charged him to do all hypocritically, only because God had blessed him, and made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he had on every side, so that his substance was increased in the land: and therefore he suggesteth, that if God would put forth his hand now, and touch all that he had, he would curse him to his face. As the devil himself dealeth, so deal the children of the devil with the faithful. He is *the old serpent* which deceiveth the world, and *accuseth our brethren before our God day and night*, Revel. 12.9.10. so also do his children that bear his image, and are transformed into his likeness. These are unjust and wrongful censurers of the deeds and actions of other men, whereof there are many in the world.

If the godly give themselves to prayer, a duty that God so often commandeth, and his children have so often practiced with great fruit and success, and would not omit or give over, though it should cost them their lives, Dan. 6.11. it is censured to be counterfeit holiness. If they be troubled more then other men, and are chastened every day, their enemies hit it in their teeth, that they are plagued for their sins. If they be afflicted in conscience, that they feel the burden of their sins pressing sore upon thē, they are judged to be mad and out of their wits. If they delight to hear the word publicly, and to be conversant in reading and searching of the Scriptures privately, they are accused to be precise: and whatsoever they do, they shall be charged to do it, not sincerely, but corruptly: not in truth, but in outward show: not from the heart, but from the mouth and lips only. This was the

offense of *Eli* toward *Hannah*, he being a weak man full of infirmities, though otherwise godly and diligent in his office. For when he saw, *how only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard*, because she spake in her heart to God by prayer, *he thought she had been drunken, and he said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee*. See, how ready he was to judge amiss of her action, and to call good evil. This was also the sin of *Job's* wife, and of his friends, they thought him to be an hollow hypocrite, and a deep dissembler, because they saw him strangely visited by so strange a visitation, *Job* 4.7. Thus did the wicked Jews usurp authority over the Gentiles, and censured them at their own pleasures, they said unto them, *Isaiah* 65.5. *Stand apart, come not near me*, for I am holier than thou; and yet they were grievous sinners themselves, as a smoke in God's eyes, and as fire that burneth continually.

So when the Apostles, were filled with the holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance; others mocked them, and said, *They are full of new wine*, *Acts* 2.13. This judgment is justly condemned, being quite contrary to the rule of love, which doth interpret all things in the best part, and is in nothing suspicious: and therefore we ought not to judge wrongfully, corruptly, and maliciously of those godly actions, which we see the children of God to do. And if it shall fall out at any time (as it may fall out many times) that we be laden with the burden of such surmises and sinister suspicions of hypocrisy and a double heart; yet we are not to be daunted and dismayed by them, or to give over our hold in the faith, but know assuredly that this is no new thing, and therefore no strange matter is befallen unto us. The dearest Saints and servants of God have felt this evil, and have had experience of this mischief of the tongue. We must not look for an higher estate, or better condition, than Christ and his Apostles had. When he sought to destroy the kingdom of Satan, and cast out devils by the finger of God, they charged him to do it by *the power of Satan*, *Matth.* 12.24. It were intolerable pride and presumption, for the servant to climb higher than his Lord, or the disciple to strive to be above his Master.

The second kind of judging, is when men have committed evil things, which of themselves are worthy to be condemned, and we judge them that have so offended to be without all hope of repentance or recovery, and to be cast off forever, to be out of God's favor, and to be reprobates. This is not only to arrogate a mastership over them, but to step up into the seat and secrets of God. For who hath revealed that unto us? or who hath been of his counsel? The things *revealed in the word belong unto us and to our children*, but secret things to the Lord, *Deut.* 29.29. That this judgment is altogether forbidden, may appear both by precepts that restrain it, & by examples that condemn it. Evil men must be instructed with meekness, not condemned with rigor and rashness, proving *if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him to do his will*, *2 Tim.* 2.25 26. Likewise the Apostle setteth down the like commandment, *1 Cor.* 4.5. *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God*. Let us to these precepts add such examples as we find in Scripture, and out of many, select and sort out some few. *Manasseh* king of Israel is one of the most memorable objects of God's mercy; he was a sorcerer and coniuurer, an idolater and murderer, he made his sons pass through the fire, *he dealt with a familiar spirit, and used*

witchcraft, he made Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse then the heathen whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel, 2 Chro. 33.6.9. yet when he humbled himself, and prayed unto God, he was pardoned. Mary Magdalene was a woman defamed and defiled with much sin, out of whom were cast seven devils, yet she was converted and accepted. Paul acknowledgeth himself not worthy to be called an Apostle or disciple of Christ, he had been an oppressor, a blasphemer, and a persecutor of the Church of God; yet he was received to mercy, because he did it ignorantly through unbelief, 1 Tim. 1.13. The Iailer mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles dealt very roughly with Paul and Silas, and cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks: but when God once touched his heart, suddenly he called for a light, and came leaping in, and trembled, saying, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? I will conclude this point with the example of the thief that was condemned for theft, and crucified with Christ, he had spent all his days in his wicked and ungodly courses, he was no better then his fellow, they had one purse and determined to fill their houses with spoil, and privily laid wait for the innocent without cause, and continued thus until the end of their lives: yet God in mercy looked upon one of them, and called him to the state of grace, as it were at the last gasp, and pulled him as a brand out of the fire, saying unto him, This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise, Luke 23.43. A man would have thought that these, at least some of them, had been desperate persons, forlorn men, without hope of repentance or likelihood of salvation: and yet behold how God that hath the hearts of all men in his own hand, turneth whom he pleaseth into the right way and when it pleaseth him, like the householder in the Gospel, in who called laborers into his vineyard at all hours of the day, Mat. 20. The meditation of these things ought to stay us from corrupt judgment, which argueth that we are destitute of true love toward our brethrē, to guide us in all our dealings with them.

The third kind of judgment is occupied about things indifferent. The first was touching good things: the second touching evil things. The first is when good men are made hypocrites, the second is when evil men are made reprobates. The first is, when good actions are made bad: the second, when bad actions are made worse then they are, as if they separated and secluded from heaven. The third is concerning indifferent things, that in themselves and their own nature are neither good nor evil. In this we offend, when men do things indifferent, which being things Lawfull may be done either in faith or without faith, either with a clean heart or an unclean: and we judge such an action to be wicked; which notwithstanding cannot be so censured, but is to be accounted good or evil according to the intention or affection of the doer.

Our Savior Christ did converse much with Publicans and sinners, to the end he might do them good by drawing them to God from the kingdom of Satan, and making them inheritors of the kingdom of his Father. A work which in all respects was most righteous and holy, yet they judged him to be a friend and faouurer of wicked men, as Luke 7.33, 34. *John the Baptist came, neither eating bread, nor drinking wine, and ye say, He hath the devil: the Son of man is come, and eateth and drinketh, and ye say, Behold, a man which is a glutton, and a wine-bibber, a friend of Publican's and sinners.* So when we speak lovingly and kindly, we are censured to be flatterers. Thus was *David's* kindness ill accepted, and worse rewarded of *Hanun* king of the Ammonites:

for when he sent his servants to comfort him after the death of his father, his Nobles persuaded him that he sent not his servants to show him any kindness, but to be as spies to search the city, and to seek means to overthrow it.

This kind of judgment the Apostle forbiddeth, Rom. 14.3.4. *Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him: who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth: yea, he shall be holden up for God is able to make him stand.* Eating or not eating, is a thing indiffrent, & therefore free to do or not to do, so that it be without offense. Wherefore it is a breach of charity (which cannot judge of the secrets of the heart) to make a rent in the Church for so small a matter, as it were of a spark to kindle a great fire. Such as were strong in faith, and did eat all things without difference, knowing that *they are sanctified by the word of God and prayer*, did despise the weak that did not eat, and were persuaded they ought not freely without difference to eat all things: they called them to use their liberty and eat of all that is sold in the shambles, and such as refused, they laughed them to scorn as Jews by imitation not Christians by profession. On the other side, these weak ones, not instructed in the liberty that Christ had purchased, did disdain them as profane persons, as enemies of Moses, and transgressors of the Law of God and made scruple of conscience, to eat that which they accounted unclean. Thus did both sorts sin, and offend against God and their brethren.

The like we might say, touching difference of days, which we spake before of diversity of meats; *This man esteemeth one day above another day, & another man counteth every day alike: let every man be fully persuaded in his mind.* Thus we see, that in things indifferent, even in the Apostles times, the Church hath been oftentimes shaken, and in a manner rent and torn in pieces, like a ship that is riuen and in danger of drowning. For it hath so bitterly contended about ceremonies, that it hath been like almost to lose the substance; as if the servants in a house should wrangle so long whether it be swept clean enough, until everyone in a manner forget to do his duty. And if such contention arose while the master builders were yet alive, and the chief pillars of the house of God remained to bear up the building, and to put them to silence that sought to undermine it: alas how may we think it went with the Church, after their departure? It is needless here to remember, what a trouble and Tragedy, Victor, sometimes Bishop of Rome, stirred up in y^e Church, *about the keeping of Easter, and touching unleavened bread*: as men should contend and go together by the ears about the shadow of an asse, or the hair of a goat, or strive about smoke and matter of no value.

And yet this controversy occupied the heads and pens, and tongues of the learned, almost in all places where the Gospel was preached, and Christianity professed: yea, they proceeded in bitterness of spirit so far, that some were ready to excommunicate others. But we need not fetch examples so far from home. I would we had not lamentable experience of the truth hereof among our selves, these stirs and hurly-burlies remaining in remembrance, and as it were freshly bleeding before our eyes, the which everyone should carry water to quench, rather then pour oil into the fire to make the flame greater: and bring a garment to cover the nakedness of those that have raised them, rather then lay them more bare.

The peace of the Church ought to be so dear unto us, that we should buy it though at an unreasonable rate; and albeit it fly from us, we ought to pursue after it, so that it should not be forsaken through us, neither should brethren contemn or condemn one another for trifles. Let the strong yield and condescend to the weak, and this is to their praise and glory. God receiveth both the strong and weak as his children, so that they are partakers of the adoption of sons: and therefore it is a great shame and reproach to despise or despite one another, forasmuch as that dishonor returneth upon God their Master.

Let us account those as the sons of God, as the members of Christ, and as parts of the Church, which profess the faith, and join with us in the word and Sacraments, and profess the same communion of Saints. Let us *not condemn another man's servant*, as if we had jurisdiction and authority over him: but the strong have no power over y^e weak, nor these have no power over them; for neither of them are masters over other, both of them being servants of one common Lord and Master, who accepteth and receiveth thē for his own servants. Both of them then are another man's servants: both of them are fellow-servants, & subject alike to their Master, *before whose judgment seat we must appear*, Rom. 14, 10, 12. *and everyone of us give an account of himself to God*. Wherefore, it is an unjust thing for one servant to judge another servant, much more to condemn him. Let every man be persuaded of his work in his own heart, and do nothing with a doubtful conscience, whether it please God or not. Let the word of God be the rule of our faith, whereby his will is fully known, and sufficiently proved. Let us in all things give thanks unto God, whether we be strong or weak, young or old in the faith: and let this be the end of all our actions, and of our whole life, to wit, the glory of God. For as he is the beginning, of whom are all things: so he is the end to which all things tend and are to be referred, inasmuch as he hath made all things for himself, so that we must conclude with the Apostle; *Of him, and through him, and for him are all things, to him be glory forever, Amen*, Rom. 11, 36. Let us know, that as we are not to live unto our selves, so we shall not die unto our selves. We are not our own, to do what we list, for that were to live to the flesh: if we live, we must live to the Lord, that when we die, we may die to the Lord. Let us consider that it belongeth to Christ to judge of the works & consciences of others, we shall stand to be judged at the tribunal seat of this common Judge, & therefore ought not to judge one another. Let us not lay snares to entrap, and stumbling blocks to offend our brethren, and baits to entangle them, and hooks to catch them, that we may prey upon them: *For woe to that man by whom the offense cometh*; which is as much as to lay a stone in the way, wherewith the vnwary passengers may stumble. Let us walk by the rule of love, and take heed we hurt not our brethren, for whom Christ died: and as in the members of the body, we favor and tenderly touch that part which is weak, and if need require, bind it up and heal it: so it ought to be in the mystical body of Christ Jesus, that is, the Church; we must love, cherish, and strengthen one another, and do service one to another. Such then as grieve, vex, hurt, and damnifie one another, are destitute of charity, which is a band to knit us together. Let us not strive about things indifferent, that are neither good nor evil: the kingdom of heaven doth not stand in them, neither doth the doing or not doing of them simply please God, neither doth the salvation of the Church consist in them, according to the saying of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 8, 8, 9. *Meat maketh us not acceptable to God, for neither if we eat, have we the more; neither if*

we eat not, have we the less: but take heed lest by any means this power of yours be an occasion of falling to them that are weak. And in the Epistle to the Romans, he saith, chap. 14, 17. *The kingdom of God is not meat, nor drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost:* and 1 Tim. 4, 8. *Bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable to all things, &c.* To conclude, let us do those things that belong to peace, and beware of strife & contention; if any man list to contend about these things, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God: let us join heart & hand together to edify the Church, as they that build an house do communicate their labors, until they have finished and made an end of their work.

But some man may say, [Objection.] Is all manner of judgment unlawful? Or is a man in all cases forbidden to judge? I answer, [Answer.] No: there are some judgments lawful, and these both are public and private.

The first is the judgment of the Magistrate, whose office is to try the lives and actions of men, that they may punish offenders, and reward them that do well. It is their duty to *sing both mercy and judgment.* They bear not the sword in vain, but are appointed as well for *terror of evil doers, as for the praise of them that do well.*

The second is the judgment of the Minister, who, in the dispensation of the word, and preaching of the Gospel, judgeth the actions of his hearers, reprovng and condemning them for their sins. Thus the unbeliever is said to be judged, 1 Cor. 14, 24. *If all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all.* Hence it is, that Noah a Preacher of righteousness, is said to *have condemned the old world,* Hebr. 11, 7. When the unbelieving Jews heard Peter preach unto them touching salvation through Christ whom they had crucified, they were pricked in their hearts, and said to him & to the rest of the Apostles, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Felix the Governor, hearing Paul prophesy, that is, to *reason of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, trembled,* and was afraid to hear him any longer, being convinced by the word and his own conscience. The word of God is lively and mighty, it pierceth deep, and entereth into the thoughts, discovering y^e things that are most secret.

The third is the judgment of a Christian and faithful brother, exhorting and admonishing us for our good. This is commanded in many places of the Scripture. *Moses warneth us, that we should not hate our brother in our hearts but plainly reprove him,* and not suffer sin to dwell in him, or to rest upon him, or to prevail against him, Levite. 19, 17. It is our duty to stir up one another to good things. Whē an house is to be reared & set up, all the neighbors gather together, and set to their hands to help it forward; no man is idle, but everyone is busy, some by lifting, some by carrying others by ordering the whole business to finish the frame: so ought it to be among us that have a better building in hand, we are *God's building,* 1 Cor. 3, 9. and *God's house,* Heb. 3, 6. *If we hold fast that confidence and rejoicing of hope unto the end:* and therefore as we have a greater work in hand, so we ought to be more faithful in it, and more busy about it, *exhorting one another while it is called today, lest any of us be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,* Heb. 3, 13. and considering one another, to provoke unto love & to good works, not forsaking the fellowship that we have among our selves, as the manner of some is: and so much the more careful ought we to be hereof, because we know *the day of the Lord*

and of our account *draweth near*. And as we sit in judgment upon others by exhorting of thē, so we do by threatening and reprovng much more, as occasion serveth, and need requireth. Thus did *John* the Baptist call the Pharisees & Sadducees that came to his baptism, a *generation of vipers*: so Christ calleth the Scribes and Pharisees oftentimes hypocrites, desiring to do all things to be seen of men, Math. 6, devouring widows houses under a color of long prayer, tithing mint & cummin, making clean the utter side of the cup and platter, but within were full of bribery and excess, Mat. 23, 14, 23, 25. Thus he painteth them out in their colors, that others might beware of them, and none be deceived by them. So he called *Herod* a fox, discovering his subtlety and deep devises, that other men might be admonished to take heed of him. So then to conclude, we must understand, that the things commonly reprehended, are either doubtful, or manifest. The doubtful are not to be reprehended, whether in themselves they be true or false, worthy or not worthy of reproof, because as it was said before, love is not suspicious, but covereth the multitude of sins, and interpreteth all things to the best, and expecteth with patience until the light manifest, and time discover the things that are as yet hidden in darkness. This is to be observed in doubtful things, wherein lieth such a difficulty, that we cannot judge them without deserving to be judged our selves; and yet the ungodly and profane persons fear not to proceed against the godly in this kind. Those things which are manifestly known, are either good, or evil. A thing which is good, is to be commended of us, and nothing to be detracted from the worthiness and excellency thereof, whether it be in our friends or enemies: nay, we are to praise and laud y^e Name of God for his graces bestowed upon them, and to take them as a pattern to follow. If it be evil, we are commanded to admonish and exhort, and reprove our brother: and if he be our friend, *which is as our own soul*, we ought so much the rather to do it, howbeit always in love, mildness, patience, and compassion. The evil deeds which are manifest, as they must be reprehended, so they may be judged, considering that *Solomon* saith, Prov. 24, 24, 25. *He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous, him shall the people curse; Nations shall abhor him: but to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.* Of such deeds as are manifestly good or evil, the Prophet *Isaiah* speaketh, chap. 5, 20. *Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil: that put darkness for light, and light for darkness: that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.*

Whereby we do learn, how to answer the ignorant objection of foolish men, [Object.] who whē they offend by continual and common swearing, by lying, by blasphemy, by profaning of the Sabbath, by the contempt of the word, by whoredom, by drunkenness, & such like works of darkness, being reprov'd for the same by the word, & God's judgments threatened against them, are ready to say, You are not to judge of me, no more then I am to judge of you: there be many nowadays will take upon them to judge men, I am sure they do not learn that in God's book, which saith, *Judge not, and ye shall not be judged*: They go beyond their commission, they take upon them God's office, for he is our Judge. See here the peeuishnesse and partiality of these men, to whom it may said, that out of their own mouths they may be judged. For who are they that trespass against their brethren, & transgress against the Law of God more then they, or who sit in the seat of God proudly, & usurp a mastership and authority to judge even the thoughts of men's hearts beside themselves? Who are they that

bolster out evil in themselves, in their companions, and consorts, and cannot abide that any good should be done by others, like those that would *neither enter into the kingdom of heaven themselves, neither suffer them that would enter, but forbid them?* Lu. 11, 52. Every tree is known by his fruit. If I see a tree bring forth good fruit, am I become a Judge, if I say, this is a good tree? And if I see evil fruit, or no fruit, do I step up into the place of God, if I say, this is an evil tree? In like manner, if a man see a common drunkard, or hear a wretched swearer, or mark a continual contemner of the Lord's day, and such as make a practice of all sin boldly, and are not ashamed; if he say, assuredly this is a naughty fellow, doth he judge, because he speaketh the truth, and telleth what he is, and warneth others to beware of him What? Shall he account him a good man, whē he seeth he is stark naught? but thē he should be under the Prophets curse, and bring a woe upon his head, because he calleth evil good, and bitter sweet; and darkness light; as we heard before. And indeed if we will speak the truth, such need not to be judged of us, inasmuch as they have given judgment of themselves, and have shown evidently what they are.

Touching the words of Christ alleged and pretended by them, *Judge not, and ye shall not be judged*, Math. 7, 1. they do not forbid all kind of judgment, but condemn that which is corrupt, rash, and unlawful, which one man giveth unjustly, unadvisedly, and indiscreetly of another; as when we can espy quickly, small faults in others, & are blind to discern grosser and greater in our selves. This practice of rash judgment breaketh out of themselves, as evil savors out of a rotten & corrupt body: for let a man be more careful then themselves to serve God, and to walk in his ways, they will by and by enter into the secrets of his heart (which God only knoweth) & not stick proudly & peremptorily to pronounce that they are hypocrites: whereas let a man show them out of the plain word of God, the profaneness of their hearts manifested by the grievous corruptions of their lives, & the open abominations committed by them in all their ways, they will answer readily, you ought not to judge: so that it falleth full upon them, which the Apostle alledgeth against such men, Rom. 2, 1, 2. *Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest, doest the same things: but we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them that commit such things.*

[Use 3] Lastly, be careful of this duty to maintain the good name of our brother, which is more worth then all riches, and of greater value thē precious stones. We ought to think of everyone as well as may be, and extend our charity as far as possibly we can, albeit they be our utter enemies; forasmuch as *love thinketh not evil*, as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 13, 5 and in the practice of love we are to be followers of the example of God himself, that we may thereby show our selves to be his children, *who maketh his Sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust*. So ought we to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them which despitefully use us and persecute us. *John* in his first Epistle chargeth us to *love one another in deed and in truth*, not in word or in tongue, or from the lips only. And *Paul* chargeth us to *esteem of others, better then of our selves, through lowliness of mind*, Phil. 2, 3.

This use is as a stock that hath many branches, and disperseth it self diverse and sundry ways. First of all, we are willed to rejoice and be glad, when the pleasant savor of our brothers good name (as a precious & sweet ointment to the nostrils) cometh abroad to his praise and commendation. To hear evil of him should no more affect us and delight us, then an evil smell which we abhor and cannot abide, but shun it as far as we can, and testify our dislike of it. We are to be glad for the credit and good estimation of our neighbor. This is a most worthy and principal fruit of the Spirit, set down by the Apostle, Gal. 5. ver. 22. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.* And in the Epistle to the Romans, he *thanketh God for them all, because their faith was spread abroad throughout the whole world*, Rom. 1, 8. In like manner Jethro the father in law of Moses came unto him in the wilderness, and *rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel*, when he had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and brought them over the red sea, Exod. 18, 9. So it ought to be with us, whensoever any good befalleth others, we ought to account it as our own; as we have our part in the profit of it, so ought we to rejoice for it. It is so in the members of our natural body, and it should likewise be so in the members of the mystical body of Christ Jesus.

Secondly, we are bound to acknowledge the good things we see in our neighbors, and to speak of the same. The Apostle warneth us, that *we should speak evil of no man*, Tit. 3, 2. For this is unseemly and unlawful for them that profess the faith of Christ, and the fear of God. Which reproveth those that in company of others, at common feasts & meetings make many of their brethren their tabletalk, and defame them with their evil reports. The Apostle speaking of *Timothy*, noteth that *the brethren reported well of him*. Acts 16, 2. provided always, that we allow not of the faults & offenses that are in them, as 2 Chron. 25, 2, & 27, 2. Contrary to this duty are many abuses which we are to consider; First, to hide the good things that are in them, and to smother and conceal them, as fire is raked up in the ashes, or a treasure buried in the earth, or a pearl cast into the Sea. Secondly, to forge tales to their hurt and discredit, whom the Apostle calleth *inuenters of evil things*, Rom. 1, verse 29. This is to have Satan in our heads. Thus do many invent wickedness in their beds, and put it in practice when they arise. These have not God in their thoughts. Thirdly, to receive and believe them (being invented by others) without ground and warrant: whereas we should not credit flying tales, & uncertain rumors and reports, without just and sufficient cause, though it be bruted and blazed never so commonly, confidently, and constantly. When a fame ariseth upon one man's report and relation, or peradventure more, it may proceed from an evil mind, or some private grudge, or hatred of his person, or dislike of his profession, or other secret cause; and therefore it ought to move us to see farther, & to search deeper into the cause, before we believe the matter, as Exod. 23.1. *Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thy hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.* To this purpose David said to Saul, *Wherefore givest thou an ear to men's words, that say, behold, David seeketh evil against thee?* Such men have the devil in their hearts that believe, and in their ears that hear with delight such slanderous words.

Thirdly, to spread abroad lying and flying tales, invented, heard, and believed. Thus one evil draweth forward another, and maketh no end until all be evil: and one mischief followeth in the neck of another, & is fruitful in begetting children like unto it self. This sin is made the

more grievous & heinous, when we hear tales and taunts begun and furthered by others, and our selves add somewhat of our own, as same for the most part increaseth by going, & every foot getteth new strength; as we see, 2 Sam. 13, ver. 32. When *Absalom* had encouraged his servants to kill *Amnon* his brother, *because he had defiled and deflowered his sister Tamar*; tidings by and by came to *David*, saying, *Absalom hath slain all the Kings sons, and there is not one of them left*. See herein our great corruption, and take notice of it, and seek to redress and repress it every day more and more. We are ready to detract from our brethren in good things, and contrariwise to add unto them, and to ouerlade them with evil things. Thus we will seem to know more of them, and to see farther into them, thē they do themselves. Wherefore *Moses* delivereth this as a warning unto us, Levite. 19, 16. *Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor: I am the Lord*. The devil is in the tongues of those that tell these tales, and in their feet that walk up and down with thē from place to place, from person to person, & from house to house. For this cause *Solomon* saith, Pro. 26, 20. *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth*.

The third branch of the use is this, that we are bound to keep secret the offense of our neighbor, and not to blaze it abroad, if by private admonition he may be won. So dealt *Joseph* with *Mary*, when he perceived that she was with child, Math. 1, 19. *He would not make her a public example*. But it may be objected, [Objection.] that by this means we shall make our selves partakers of other men's sins. I answer, [Answer.] no man must flatter another in evil, for thereby he hurteth his soul, and hardeneth his heart. *Solomon* saith, Prov. 27, 6. *Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful*. This is a grievous sin in any, but more grievous in the Minister, and doth the greatest harm. Hereupon the Apostle speaketh of himself and the rest of the Ministers, 1 Thess. 2. *We used not at any time flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness*. And in another Epistle, writing of such as caused division and offenses, contrary to the doctrine of Christ, he saith, *They that are such, serve not the Lord, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple*, Rom. 16, 18. Of such also the Lord complaineth by his Prophet, Ier. 6, 14. *They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, peace, peace, when there is no peace*. So then, we must know that we make our selves accessories to other men's sins, except we admonish them; for albeit we are to conceal their imperfections, yet we are not to abstain from admonitions. If any be fallen through infirmity, *they that are spiritual must restore such a one by the spirit of meekness*, considering themselves, lest they also be tempted. If any man do err from the faith, we must labor his conversion, assuring our selves, that *he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins*, I am. 5, 19, 20. It is our duty therefore to cover their frailties, while there is hope of amendment: but if by this means the sin concealed be not reformed and repented of, we are bound to proceed farther, even in love and charity to declare it and make it known to those that may correct the persons, and amend the sins. So did *Joseph* deal toward his brethren, Gen. 37, 2. *He brought unto his father their evil report*. And Christ saith, *If he hear not thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established*. Mat. 18, 16.

15. Then shall the man bring his wife unto the Priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an Ephah of barley meal: he shall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon, for it is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.

16. And the Priest shall bring her near, and set her before the Lord.

17. And the Priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and of the dust that is in the floor of the Tabernacle, the Priest shall take it, and put it into the water.

18. And the Priest shall set the woman before the Lord, and uncover the woman's head, and put the offering of memorial in her hands, which is the jealousy offering: and the Priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that causeth the curse.

Hitherto we have spoken of the allegation or propounding of the cause which is put in the former words. Now we must go forward to see the proceeding in it, how it is decided and determined, whereby it cometh to pass, that the same which before was doubtful, unknown, and uncertain, to wit, whether the woman were defiled or not, now becometh plain and manifest. That which from the beginning, was known only unto God, and the persons themselves that sinned or else are suspected to have sinned, is made known to others, both to the Priest, and to the whole Congregation. This is done two ways; first, by setting down such things as go before the trial: secondly, by adding such things as are joined more nearly with it. The things going before are of two sorts, to wit, the works or actions that are used, and then the words that are spoken. The actions used, are in this diuisio•; the words of execration that are uttered, are to be considered afterward. These works that are commanded and are here in order rehearsed in the text, do concern either the duties of the husband, or of the Priest to, whom she was brought. First, the husband must bring his suspected wife to the Priest with an offering, to wit, *the tenth part of an Ephah of barley meal*, that is, an *Omer*, as appeareth, Exod. 16, 36. but he is charged to pour no oil upon it, nor to put any frankincense to it, forasmuch as it is an offering of jealousy, and bringeth iniquity to remembrance, either committed, or supposed and suspected to be committed.

Before we proceed any farther, we are from hence to answer sundry questions that may be [Question 1] asked and demanded in these words. For wherefore is the husband charged both to accompany and bring his wife, and to set her before the Priest, that trial might be made of her: and not rather some other man? I answer, first because he supposeth himself to be injured, and no man else; and therefore seeing it most concerneth him, it is fittest to be done by him. Or if he be not wronged, he wrongeth his wife by needless suspicions. Besides, he was to be an eye-witness, either of her innocence, or of her guiltiness, that he might esteem of her accordingly, and know where the fault resteth, in himself, or in his wife. Lastly, it behooveth that the people of God be free, not only from crime, but from suspicion

of crime, and to abstain not only from evil, but *from all appearance of evil*, 1 Thess. 5.22. as we shall show more at large afterward.

[Question 2] Again, it may be asked, why he bringeth barley meal rather than other, and why without oil and incense? I answer▪ is was an offering of the lowest and meanest grain, used of the poorest of the people, forasmuch as this was a sign that should put the woman in mind to humble her self, being now brought by her husband, not only into the presence of the Priest, but into the presence of y^e Lord himself. It must be offered without oil and frankincense, because they have no affinity or concord with this matter, neither was this offering of the nature of others. Oil did signify the graces of God's Spirit, and therefore it is said that Christ was *anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows*, Psal. 45, 7. Heb. 1, 9. Psal. 133, 2. Incense was a sign of sweet savor, and delight that we should take in the service of God, and of God's acceptance of his gifts, and our duty performed unto him in his Son Christ. Psal. 141, 2. where the Prophet saith, *Let my prayer be directed in thy sight, as incense, and the lifting up of my hands, as the evening sacrifice*: so that neither of them did accord or agree with this oblation, wherein there was no gladness nor joyfulness of heart, forasmuch as the cause or original of it was sadness, pensiveness, and discontentment. And this is the reason rendered by Moses himself, verse 15. *For it is an offering of jealousy*, not an offering that they could go unto with alacrity and cheerfulness. For wheresoever there is either a party suspecting, or a party suspected, there can be nothing but fear, sorrow, care, and a train of such like tormenting affections.

Thirdly, here is mention made of the tenth [Question 3] part of an Ephah. The question hereupon may be asked, what the Epha was, a measure much used, and oftentimes mentioned in the Old Testament, both in the Law and the Prophets? I answer, [Answer.] the first place that mention is made of it (to my remembrance) is at the gathering of *Manna*, when the people were in the wilderness, where it is said, that every man was stinted, and had an Omer for his allowance, and Moses addeth in the end. that *an Omer is the tenth part of an Ephah*. If then we learn what an Omer was, we may quickly, easily, and readily know what the Ephah was, to wit, ten times so much: If we follow the account and estimate that some of the Rabbin's make, which seemeth to be the most sound and most certain, we may hold, that the Omer maketh just three pintes of our alemeasure: so that the Ephah by this reckoning containeth near half of our bushel, not full out four gallons. For thus doth *Rabbi Shelomo* take the computation, as we may read in the learned and laborious commentary set out upon that book;

The Ephah containeth three of the measures called Seah.

Every Seah held six of the measures called Cabi.

Every Cabi held so much as 24. Egges.

So then the Omer being the tenth part of the Ephah, containeth 24. Egges, which maketh just three pintes of ale-measure: and as the Omer is three pintes of our ale-measure, so the Epha being ten times so much, containeth almost half of our bushel. Neither may this seem strange, or against that which we read in the book of Ruth, that she gleaned, &

gathered *every day an Ephah of barley*, and carried it home to her mother; but rather strengtheneth and confirmeth that which hath been said: for as it was not a burden too great for a woman to bear, so it was not a measure too great for a woman to gather; many in our days sometimes using to do as much, who have not that extraordinary favor shown unto them, which she had, albeit she were a stranger. By all this that hath been spoken, we may easily see and perceive, that this tenth part of the Ephah here mentioned, (which was also offered) amounted to three pintes of barley flour of our ale-measure. I am not ignorant that many enlarge these measures much more, and in a manner double the account that I have followed, but this seemeth to be the truer computation: neither will we contend with any in a matter of no higher nature; let the Reader follow that which carrieth greatest show of reason. And thus much of the questions arising out of the first point.

Secondly, having now declared what the husband did, we come to show in the next place, what the Priest did: he must bring her near which is suspected of adultery, *and set her before the Lord*, that is, before the Altar of burnt offerings, standing within the Tabernacle, to the end she should consider, that she stood as it were ready to hold up her hand at the bar of God's judgment seat, where and when she should not escape, if so be she were faulty and guilty of that crime. He taketh holy water in an earthen vessel, and dust from the floor of the Tabernacle, and putteth it into the water, so that they were mingled together: Then he vncouereth her head, putteth the offering into her hand, and holdeth the bitter water in his hand, that causeth the curse.

In this part of the division containing the [Question 1] actions of the Priest, sundry questions are to be considered and dissolved. As first, whence the Priest had this water here mentioned? From what place did he take it? I answer, [Answer.] either it was the water of separation, sprinkled with the ashes of the red heifer, so called, because it was applied unto thē, which for their uncleanness were separated from the Congregation, to the end that being washed and cleansed with it, they might be received again into the host: for which cause it is also named the water of sin, of which we read at large afterward, Numb. 19. or else it must be water taken out of the brazen laver, wherewith the Priests used to wash themselves before they ministered in the Tabernacle. And indeed many understand it of the former. But that was the water used to purge and cleanse, as we noted before, which hath no use in this place, forasmuch as the woman should after a sort be reputed as guilty, and be condemned of the crime, whereof she was suspected & accused, as if it were to be purged by it; which were to condemn the person, before the fact be proved, a thing that cannot be practiced without injustice. This then is the difference between those waters, that was to purge, this is to discover. Forasmuch therefore as it could not be that water, it followeth, that it was the water which was set in the Tabernacle, and taken out of the brazen laver appointed for the Priests to wash withal.

[Question 2] Secondly, it would be known, why this water was called holy? Was there any purity or holiness in it? Or was it better then any other? Or had it any secret force in it to make any man holy? I answer, [Answer.] it was so called, not in regard of the substance of it, or of any natural strength it had in it, but in regard of the use, because it was appointed and

set apart to an holy use, as the water and washing in *Jordan*, *cleansed Naaman*, and *the pool of Siloam* healed the diseased. Thus the instruments of the Tabernacle, the Ark, the Shew-bread, the Candlestick, the Lamps, and the rest of the vessels used in the service of God, were all of them consecrated and hallowed, not in regard of the matter whereof they consisted, neither in regard of the form after which they were fashioned, because they had the one from nature, the other frō art: but in respect of God's ordinance that had separated them to an holy purpose. So we see in the New Testament, whē Christ instituted his last Supper, and thereby commanded his Church to keep a perpetual memory of his death and passion until his coming again, the bread and wine that he set apart to that purpose, are said to be *blessed*; & Paul calleth it, *the cup of blessing*; not that they have any holiness inherent and included in them, or any power to sanctify all the comers and communicants that do receive them, for then no man should eat of that bread, or drink of that cup unworthily, nor make himself guilty of the body and blood of Christ: whereas the Apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. 11, 29. that *whosoever eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh his own damnation, not discerning the Lord's body*. And the Church of the Corinthians was generally chastened of the Lord for this abuse & contempt, as he showeth in the same place, *For this cause many are weak and sickely among you, and many sleep*. It remaineth therefore, that these outward elements are holy, only in regard of God's ordinance and our use, and sanctified to them that come aright prepared unto them. So is it touching the water mentioned in this place, it is called indeed holy water, howbeit not in regard of any holiness that was in it, but partly in regard of the use to which it was applied; partly in regard of the person by which it was used, partly in regard of the vessel into which it was poured, and partly in regard of the Tabernacle, in which it was placed. Touching this holy water, we shall have occasion to speak more in the 18. chap. of this book, and to declare how it was and is abused in the Church of Rome, partly to drive away devils, and partly to wash away sins: and therefore we will defer the farther handling of it until we come to that place.

Thirdly, the question may be asked, why [Question 3] these waters ate called bitter waters? Was it because of the taste of them, that they were like the waters of *Marah*, so that *the people could not drink of them*? Exod. 15, 23. or those naughty waters and unwholesome, *which Elisha healed*? 2 Kings 2, 22. I answer, [Answer.] they are not so called in regard of any property y^t was in them, for they were as other waters: but in regard of the effect, because that when once they were drunk, they brought to the womā that was polluted and defiled, a curse, and a cruel death, and an extraordinary judgment, as it followeth hereafter. For if she did undergo all these works, and proceeded in them unto the end, and then was found guilty, it argued great impenitency and hardness of heart, and in a manner open apostasy and impiety, not much inferior to Atheism, as if there were no God at all, or at least no God that was able to find her out in her sin; and therefore her punishment was more strange, and not according to the ordinary visitation of others, so that the unchaste, woman was made a woeful and miserable spectacle of God's heavy wrath.

As the tree forbidden to *Adam* in the garden was called *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, not as though it were endued with reason to know good and evil, nor as though by eating of it, it could give to our first parents the use of reason and freewill, neither yet had it

this name of the lying promise of getting knowledge, whereby the old *serpent deceived the woman*, Gen, 3.5. forasmuch as God called it so, before the communication that passed between them: but of the event, which God (by giving this name) signified should follow, if man did not abstain from it: for thereby he should know by woeful experience, what great difference is, between the good of obedience, and the evil of disobedience: and should prove to his great hurt and loss, how great good he had forfeited, and contrariwise how great evil he had purchased, and drawn not only upon himself, but upon his posterity, insomuch that he as it were from an high top or tower of happiness, had plunged himself into a deep pit of all misery and wretchedness.

[Question 4] Fourthly, wherefore is the Priest to take the holy water, and put it into an earthen vessel, and not of any other matter or metal? The answer it, because it did belong and was employed in bringing uncleanness to light, if any were committed: not in any holy thing, and therefore God would have no monument to remain of it, but the remembrance to be forgotten and put out of mind, so that after the trial made, and the use of it ended, *it was broken* as we read in cases much lesser; as Levite. 6.28. and 11.33. and 15.12. *The vessel wherein the sin offering is sodden, shall be broken*: but if it were sodden in a brazen pot, it was only scoured and rinsed in water. If the earthen vessel touched any unclean beast, it was to be broken: and if he touch it that hath any issue, it must be broken.

[Question 5] Fifthly, why was the Priest to take of the dust that is in the floor of the Tabernacle, and then put it into the water, as if they made Lye? Here we are to consider two things, the dust that was taken, and the holy place from whence it was taken. As it is dust of the feet, it is base and vile; as it was taken from the Tabernacle, it was holy and pure: both these were needful in this business. For the dust shown the matter to be foul, filthy, and unclean which was in question and controversy: and the place appointed had relation to the sacred action, to wit, an heavenly adjuration, whereby the woman suspected was caused to swear, that so the issue and event of the whole matter might be acknowledged and received as coming from God's determination.

Sixthly, why did the Priest uncover the woman's [Question 6] head, which seemeth to be unseemly, and against the law of nature, 1 Corinth. 11. doing that unto her which she might not do unto herself? seeing the woman ought to have a covering on her head, in sign she is under the power and protection of her husband, and that it is a shame for her to be without this covering? [Answer.] The cause is not as many suppose, to shame her and bring her to public infamy and open reproach, as if the band of marriage were broken; but because she standeth now upon her purgation, and cometh to be tried whether she be faulty or not: whereas if that were true, she should be condemned before she were convicted and found guilty.

But the reasons were two especially; first, by this gesture the woman, being to swear and purge her self by oath, was as it were for the time present freed from the subjection of her husband, and the matter was as it were for a time held in suspense, whether she were his wife or not; and she had the reins of authority put into her own hands that she might swear, to the ende that being cleared and acquitted, she might cover her head again, and so be

restored unto her husband, that ever after he might be the veil of her eyes, and the defense of her person from infamy and injury: or if it fell out otherwise she might undergo the punishment and reward of her offense, and the judgment of God. For while she was suspected, it was very doubtful whether she were her husbands, or not.

Secondly, by this and other ceremonies so solemnly acted, it might be perceived with what mind, with what boldness, and with what constancy she entered into this action. Hence came the proverb 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , to do anything with bare heads, that is, openly without all shame. Such as attempted any shameful act, were wont to cover their heads, as we see in *Tamar*, Genesis, chapter 38. verse 14. *She covered her self with a veil, and wrapped her self, and sate down in Pethaenaim, which is by the way to Timnah, &c.* when she went about an ungodly and unclean action: those therefore that did not so, were accounted impudent, and past all shame.

Lastly, wherefore was the woman to hold [Question 7] the offering in her own hands, whilst the Priest did hold the water of bitterness? The reason is, because both the woman and the Priest stood before the LORD; [Answer.] she as the party accused, he as the Minister of GOD to attend the issue. She stood to be judged, he to be the instrument of the judgment. She was to come unto judgment, he to bring her unto judgment. Thus we have run over the principal questions that were to be touched, in handling whereof, I have followed the judgment of the learned, who have discussed and resolved these doubts and difficulties before me. Now we are to proceed in order to the doctrine arising from hence.

[Verse 15.16. *Then shall the man bring his wife unto the Priest, &c.*] We see in these words, that the man is to bring his suspected wife to the place and means of her trial. If everyone that was suspected might be put away, many husbands not loving, but growing weary of their wives, would readily entertain any the least flying report, and thereupon take occasion to be diuorsed from them. Wherefore, to the end that everyone suspected, should not by and by be condemned, the Lord ordaineth, that he should bring his wife to the Priest, and before him undergo such trial as is appointed for her. We learn from hence, that it is God's ordinance, that no innocent person should be oppressed in judgment, and none at the private pleasure of any ought to be condemned before their trial. Every person must hold up his hand at the bar before he be pronounced guilty. This appeareth plainly in the Law of *Moses*, decreeing against idolatrous cities; if the children of *Belial* have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, Let us go and serve other gods which ye have not known, *Then shalt thou enquire and make search, and ask diligently: and behold▪ if it be truth, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought among you, thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city, with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly and all that is therein, &c.* Where we see, that in the matter of idolatry, which God above many other sins abhorreth as that which goeth nearest to his heart, and as it were pierceth into the very marrow of his worship and service, he would not have every suspicion to be taken, or every report to be received, but he will have the matter examined, and the truth tried out and searched to the full, before any process be made out against them. Hence it is, that *Solomon* complaineth of the contrary course oftentimes observed, Eccles. 7.15. *All things have I seen in the days of my*

vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.

To this purpose speaketh the Apostle *James*, chap. 5.5.6. against the abuse of their power in rich men: *Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton: ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter: ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you.* Thus we set it is no new thing to see innocence it self trodden under foot, and innocent persons condemned. The Apostle *Peter* setting down the duties of Magistrates, willeth those to whom he wrote, to submit themselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake, *whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.* So that it is the ordinance of God, that evil doers should be punished, and that such as do well, should be commended and rewarded: and therefore no innocent person ought to be discountenanced or put to death.

This truth is strengthened unto us many [Reason 1] ways. First, by example, which is beyond all comparison and exception: for no man may compare with him: no man dare except against him: I mean the example of God himself, who goeth before us in the practice hereof, that we should follow him in this duty. Before he brought upon the world confusion of tongues, he is said to *go down among them* to see their fact, Gen. 11.6. Thus he dealt with *Adam* before he pronounced him guilty, and denounced judgment upon him, he called unto him, *Adam*, Where art thou? he examined him, and asked him farther, *Whether he had eaten of the fruit of the tree in the mids of the garden*, of which he had said, Thou shalt not eat thereof, lest thou die. In like manner he dealt with *Cain*, chap. 4.9.10. before he pronounced him cursed from the earth, which opened her mouth to receive his brothers blood from his hand, and that he should be a vagabond and runagate, first he examineth him, Where is *Abel* thy brother? then he endighteth and convinceth him, *What hast thou done? the voice of thy brothers blood crieth unto me for vengeance.* So in the eighteen chapter of the same book, before he destroyed *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* with fire and brimstone from heaven, he said to *Abraham*, Gen. 18.20, 21. *Behold, the cry of Sodom and Gomorrhah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me: and if not, I will know.* Whereby he would instruct us, that before we enter into judgment with any person, or pronounce sentence upon any people, he first taketh good consideration of the fact which causeth his punishment. So ought it to be with everyone of us, we must lay before us this example, if we would be the children of our heavenly Father.

Secondly, it is the ende of all Magistracy, [Reason 2] to protect and countenance the Godly, but to root out and destroy the ungodly: to be a praise and protection to the one, but a terror and fear to the other, as *Romans* chapter 13. verse 3. *Magistrates are not to be feared for good works, but for evil: wilt thou then be without fear of the power? Do well: so shalt thou have praise of the same, &c.*

After that *Jehoshaphat* had been reproved by the Prophet, he called the people again to the honoring of the Lord; he set Judges in the Land throughout the cities of *Judah*, and said unto them: *Take heed what ye do, for ye execute not the judgment of man, but of the Lord: and he will be*

with you in the judgment: wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it, for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, neither respect of persons, nor receiving of reward. 2 Chron. 19, 6, 7. He would not have the stronger to oppress the weaker, and the high to overbear the low, and the rich to eat up the poor, like the greater fish that devour the less, but that everyone should receive according unto his works, whether good or evil.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, it is an abomination to God, for any to oppress the innocent, and as great a sin as to justify the wicked. We ought none of us to do that which is abominable in the sight of God, the which he greatly abhorreth. A Judge may offend two ways, both by oppressing the innocent, and by delivering the guilty person: by pronouncing the transgressor righteous, and the righteous man a transgressor. This is set down, Prov. 17, verse 15. *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination unto the Lord.* Such a one spareth the wolf, and hurteth the lambes: turneth the edge of the sword upon the godly, and the back of it toward the wicked and ungodly.

[Reason 4] Fourthly, God would have no man put to death without witnesses. For wherefore doth he often establish this in the Law, that the witnesses shall come face to face, & be heard, but that no man should perish being innocent? Wherefore doth he ordain that one only witness shall not be taken as sufficient, but that he would have the cause cleared by more witnesses? This is the decree of God, Deut. 17, verse 6. *At the mouth of two or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death, die: but at the mouth of one witness shall he not die.* He will not by any means have innocent blood shed.

[Reason 5] Fifthly, innocent blood crieth to heaven for vengeance, and shall not suffer him that sheddeth it to escape. It is one of the crying sins, as we shown before in this chapter, which ascend up and enter into the ears of the Lord of hosts. There is indeed no sin so little, but cometh up in remembrance before him against whom it is committed: his eyes see, and his ears hear all the works of men, which are *all naked and open before his eyes*, and nothing kept from his knowledge: nevertheless, to note out the horror and heinousness of some sins in comparison of others, the Scripture teacheth, that they cry unto the Lord. Moses, to show the greatness of Caines sin, committed against his natural brother, bringeth in God speaking unto him, *Behold, the voice of thy brothers blood crieth unto me:* and to show the barbarous cruelty and inhumanity of the vexing and exacting Egyptians, whereby they overcharged and overburdened the people of God, he saith to Moses, *I have seen, I have seen the oppression of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, because of their Task-masters.* Exod. chap. 2, verse 9. Thus also he speaketh to Samuel at another time of their oppression by the Philistines, *I have looked upon my people, and their cry is come unto me,* 1 Sam. chap. 9, verse 16. Thus God heareth the cry of the afflicted, Job, chap. 34, verse 28. *They have caused the voice of the poor to come unto him, and he hath heard the cry of the afflicted.* This is the reason urged by the Lord himself, Exod. chap. 23, verse 7. And Jeremiah protesteth and profeseth as much to the face of his enemies and persecutors that sought his destruction, chapter 26, verse 14, 15. *As for me, behold I am in your hands, do with me as ye think good and right: but know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this City,*

and upon the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you, to speak all these words in your ears.

Thus we see, how God showeth himself an enemy against all wrong judgments, and he will not suffer them to escape unpunished, but will enter into judgment with such partial and corrupt Judges.

The uses hereof are to be marked diligently [Use 1] of us. First, this serveth to reprove all rashness, headinesse, and heedlessness of such as make haste to inflict punishment before an exact knowledge of the fact and fault. Such are no better then cruel wolves, that seek and suck the blood of the innocent lambes. This was the sin of wicked *Jezebel*, that caused *Naboth* to be stoned to death, 1, Kings 21.

We read in the Acts of the Apostles, how the chief Chaptaine commanded that *Paul* should be scourged, *that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.* Acts 22, verse 24. Here is a preposterous course, to punish first, and to enquire of the fault afterward: so that the punishment shall be certain, whiles the offense is uncertain. But this is the lot, and ever hath been of God's children; they are punished here oftentimes as malefactors and evil doers, and their enemies both rage and rush most furiously upon them that do possess their souls with patience, and do not by violence resist against them. They are more hungry then Bears, more merciless then Tigers, more ravenous then Wolves, more greedy then Lions, more fierce then dogs against them; they show no mercy, and they extend no compassion at all toward them.

They hate them in their hearts, they slander them with their tongues, they smite thē with their fists, they grin and grind their teeth at them, they nod at them with their heads, they circumvent them by fraud, they oppress thē with sorrow, they take oftentimes their lives from them. Thus did the persecutors deal with *Joseph*, with *Jeremiah*, with *David*, with *Daniel*, with *Paul*, with *Silas*, with *John the Baptist*, with *Stephen*, with *James*, with *Peter*, and many others. But God will in the end make their innocence known, and the justice of their cause manifest to all men. It is noted by the Evangelist touching *Pilate*, that albeit he confessed he found no fault at all in Christ, yet he would scourge him & let him go. He was the Judge, yet by his own mouth he may be judged himself, that adjudged him worthy to be scourged that was unworthy to receive a stripe, in whom he could find nothing blame worthy. He called together the high Priests, and the Rulers, and people, and said unto them, *Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverted the people; and behold, I have examined him before you, and have found no fault in this man, of those things whereof ye accuse him: no, nor yet Herod, for I sent you to him, and loe, nothing worthy of death is done of him; I will therefore chastise him, and let him loose.* Luke 23, 14, 15, 16.

And as it befell the Master, so the lotte fell unto the servants, that they might drink of the cup that he drank off, and be baptized with the baptism wherewith he was baptized. For the Apostles were diligent in preaching Christ, and teaching in his Name, so that their enemies were not able to withstand the Spirit of God that spake in them; and albeit they oftentimes examined them, yet their best arguments, and chiefest reasons, and strongest motives to put

them unto silence, were beatings, scourgings, threatenings, and imprisonments, for otherwise they were not able to deal against them.

Hence it is, that when *Gamaliel* exhorted them to *take heed to themselves, what they intended to do touching those men, to refrain from them, and to let them alone; If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God, ye cannot destroy it, lest ye be found even fighters against God.* They agreed unto him, and left off their consultation of killing them and putting them to death: and albeit they could not convince them of error, neither were able to lay false doctrine to their charges, yet *they suffered rebuke, and were beaten for the Name of Christ.*

Thus do the enemies of God deal in all ages with the godly; they hate them for no other cause, but because they follow goodness, *Psal. 38.* and will not follow them into all excess of riot, *1 Pet. 4.* They can lay nothing to their charge, and yet they think them worthy of punishment. They can accuse them of no crime, and yet they cease not to accuse them. They are not ashamed to cry out upon them, and to speak all manner of evil against them; and yet when they have devised what mischief they can against thē, broached what slanders they can, and uttered all their malice, the greatest fault that they can find in them, is this, that they serve God in the sincerity of their hearts, and labor to please him with uprightness of life. When the enemies of *Daniel* sought occasion against him to bring him out of favor with the King, and into danger of his life, they could find no matter against him in the affairs of the kingdom, albeit they desired nothing more: so that when after all searching and watching of him, they were at their wits end, in the end they concluded thus, *We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him, concerning the Law of his God.* *Dan. 6,* verse 5. This was the heinous crime that they laid to his charge, as if he had committed felony or treason, that he prayed to God, and *made his petition unto him.* verse 13.

Thus fareth it with all those that are the worshippers of the true God, and make conscience of their ways, the wicked wretches of this world revile them and make hue and cry against them, as if they were some great malefactors, and had committed somewhat worthy of death: and yet when all cometh to the upshot, what hath the righteous done? or what matter is it that they have against them? Surely no more then the Presidents and Princes had against *Daniel*, the cause they have against them, is *concerning the Law of their God:* they cannot abide them, because they are too precise in keeping the Sabbath: they will not swear and blaspheme the Name of God: they will not drink and be drunk with them: they will not run riot, and play the good fellows with them: they are never well but when they are reading, or praying, or reasoning and conferring of the ways of God: they are always reproving us, and finding fault with us for one thing or other, I think we shall do nothing for them shortly.

To be short, they deal with the faithful, as *Ahab* spake concerning *Michaiah*, *1 Kin. 22,* verse 8. *There is one man by whom we may enquire of the Lord, but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.* But did he not speak the truth? the King did not, nor could not charge him with uttering lies. He prophesied evil unto thee, O *Ahab*, because thou wast evil: if thou hadst been good, he would have spoken good unto thee. And this is the cause why the ungodly hate the godly.

If then we be thus dealt withal at any time, let it not discourage us, but therein let us rejoice, because we are made like unto the Prophets that were before us, we are made like unto the Apostles, nay we are made conformable unto our Savior Christ himself. We must not look it should go better with us, then it did with them: forasmuch as the world will always be like it self, and unlike to them.

Secondly, no man is to be condemned upon [Use 2] suspicion only, or upon presumption, or bare surmise, or another man's accusation: for if it were enough to be accused, innocence it self cannot escape, and the most innocent shall be soonest made away. True it is, the godly must give no just cause to be evil spoken off▪ but abstain from all appearance of evil, and cut off occasions from thē that seek occasions: howbeit, whether occasion be given or not, every man may suspect what they list, and how far they list, and of whom they list, and who can say against them? So that it is not enough to condemn a man or to account him guilty, to be suspected. Some have such jealous heads and unsettled brains, that they will make occasions of suspicion, which are no occasions. Suspicion is in another man's heart or head, & therefore we cannot always avoid suspicion, except we had the government of their hearts and heads, the which themselves evermore have not. We must be careful to avoid the fault, though we cannot the fame: we must take heed of the sin, though we can prevent the suspicion. The fault and offense is in our selves, suspicion is in another. Even as honor is in him that honoreth, not in him that is honored; and as contempt is in him that contemneth, not in him that is contemned, (forasmuch as it lieth not in our power, to be honored, or to be despised) so it is with suspicion, it hath place in the mind of another, and it lieth not in our choice, whether we will be suspected, or not, no more thē it doth in him that is despised, who would willingly be honored. The brethren of *Joseph* were suspected *to be spies, and to come to see the weakness of the Land*, Gen. 42, 9. True it is, he dissembled with them, & concealed himself from them: but if indeed he had so conceived or rather misconceiued and misjudged of thē, who could hinder or help it? or how could they prevent or redress it; as it fell out with the messengers of *David*, that he sent to *Hanun* the son of *Nahash* King of *Ammon*: for his Princes said unto him, *Thinkest thou that David doth honor thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? Hath he not rather sent his servants unto thee, to search the City, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it?* This they suspected, & returned evil for good. These messengers behaved themselves uprightly in their Embassy, they gave no more occasion of these surmises to *Hanun*, then *Joseph's* brethren did unto him: yet who could stop them in so doing? Who was more innocent then *Joseph*, that hearkened not to the temptations and allurements of his mistress, nor desired or delighted to be *in her company*: yet his over-credulous master, hearing the words and accusation of his wife, not only held him in suspicion, but took him as guilty, and put him into prison: and *Joseph* could by no means satisfy his master, nor blot out the wrong opinion he had conceived of him. The like we might show touching *Saul* toward *Jonathan* his son, and *David* his servant, that were notwithstanding loyal & faithful unto him. He conceived in mind that all had conspired against him, yet *there was none would show him that his son had made a league with the son of less*, there was none sorry for him, or showeth unto him, that his son had stirred up his servant against him to lie in wait to take away his life from him. These two innocent men had made

indeed a league together, but not against the King their father; a league of amity, not of conspiracy, neither had they given the least cause of suspicion to be so hardly censored, and sinisterly judged off, yet who could remove out of his mind that jealousy, or persuade him that they intended no hurt or mischief against him? In like manner dealt the proud men with *Jeremiah*, they charged him to have spoken falsely, and *that the Lord had not sent him, to charge them not to go down into Egypt*: they suspected that *Baruch* had set him on against them, to deliver them into y^e hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put them to death, and carry them captives into Babylon. This was the devise of their own brains, & the imagination of their own harts, yet what could *Jeremiah* do against it, or which way could he stay them from suspecting thus. Whē as *Paul* having appealed to *Caesar*, had escaped shipwreck and was come safe to *Melita*, the Barbarians, seeing a viper fastened on his hand, said among themselves, *This man surely is a murderer, whom, though he have escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live*. Thus we see, that albeit we do not commit any crime worthy to be accused or censured, yet we cannot hinder those that are credulous, from misdeeming and mistrusting of us. It lieth in us wholly to give no just cause of suspicion, but lieth not in us wholly to prevent suspicion. For evil persons may suspect what they please without ground and foundation, without reason and occasion. The Magistrates censured *Paul* to be *a troubler of the City*, Acts 16, 20. the Jews traduced him to be *a polluter of the Temple*, Acts 21, 28. and a Preacher against the Law. *Tertullus* accused him to be *a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world*, and a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarens, Acts chap. 24, verse 5. Thus he is suspected, and how could he avoid it? Wherefore good men depend not upon the opinion of other men, but stand upon their own innocence: they do not rise or go down, stand or fall, as it shall please other men to conceive of them; for that were to walk upon other men's feet, or to lean upon the staff that resteth in another man's hand that may deceive thē, but they build their house upon the foundation of their own virtues, and have, or at least ought to have matter enough within them to commend themselves. It must not seem strange to the godly, when they feel the bitter fruits of these suspicions. It hath evermore fared thus with them. This then ought not to make us waver, or to weaken us in our profession, but rather encourage us to walk through good report and evil report, and to furnish us to pass through fire and water, life and death, knowing that God is able and will in the end bring our cause into the light, and make the innocence of our persons, and the justice of our cause manifest, to the glory of his Name, to the comfort of our hearts, & to the confusion of his and our enemies, as we shall show afterward. Thus he dealt with *Joseph* after he had tried his patience by suffering for well doing: for though *he were laid in irons, and his feet hurt with fetters*, yet the Lord was with him, and shown him mercy, & *gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison*, to whom no doubt he shown his uprightness, and cleared himself of that wickedness which was laid to his charge. So also he dealt with *David*, with *Jeremiah*, and the rest of the righteous. This doth *David* entreat oftentimes, when he was laden with the reproaches of his enemies, when he was bitten with the teeth, and smitten with the tongues of the malignant, Psal. 7, 3, 4, 5, 6 Thus we see, if suspicion were cause sufficient to condemn and censure any, no man could stand in judgment, but equity should be turned into iniquity, truth into falsehood, & innocence it self should receive a check and counterbuffe. Let not then the wicked triumph, as if they had gotten the victory, and given

the godly a foil, when they can allege against them, how many ways, & of how many persons they are suspected, for that as much may be suspected of them, when as nothing at all can be proved by thē. It is not the suspicion, or the accusation, or the condemnation, or the execution that maketh a man guilty of evil, or to deserve death: but the offense that is committed worthy of punishment. If then they be free from crime, they are happy when they are judged unhappy, and may rejoice and be glad when their enemies have cause to weep and wail.

[Use 3] Lastly, let Magistrates and all that are in authority, whether in the common-wealth, or in the family, put this in practice. For seeing everyone should be tried before he be censured, and that examination must go before condemnation, let them not receive every cōplaint and accusation, but let them do justice and judgment, defend the poor and fatherless, relieve the weak and oppressed, & rid them out of the hand of the wicked. Let this be the end of their government to sing mercy and judgment, and diligently to consider the causes that come before them. To this purpose there is required of them two things, wisdom, and patience, without which they shall never proceed aright in taking away evil; but sometimes pluck up good corn instead of weeds, or suffer thistles to grow instead of wholesome herbs. Wisdom is required to find out particular offenses, to know the number, the nature, the measure, the proceeding in them, the increase of them, and all circumstances, as we see, Eccl. 7, 20, 21. This will teach us when to correct, and when we may defer correction in hope of amendment, it being the discretion of a man to defer his anger. And albeit *the blueness of the wound cleanseth away evil*, yet a man ought not to give scope to his anger, neither yet exceed measure.

Secondly, there is required patience, that we be not too hot and hasty upon those that have offended, but to quiet our minds, and hear their answers, what they can allege for themselves, as Job 31, 13, 14. *He did not despise the cause of his man-servant, nor of his maid-servant▪ when they contended with him;* & he grounded himself upon two most notable & worthy considerations, one from the person of God, another from the law of creation. From the person of God, he used mildness toward them, because with him is no respect of persons: *What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?* If he should not deal mercifully and moderately with them, how should he be able to answer it to God, who is the Lord both of master and servant? forasmuch as we all serve one common master, to whō we must give an account: and as our servants come to answer before us, so we must come to answer before God, Col. 4. It shall one day be said unto us, *Come, give an account of thy Stewardship, for we may be no longer Stewards, Luke 16.* This consideration, if it were duly marked of us, were sufficient to stir up all masters & Magistrates to just and equal dealing.

Again, from the common condition of our creation, there is one author of life, in him both master and servant live, and move, and have their being, and both of them must of necessity die and depart out of this life. How mean or how high soever our place of government be, to moderate our affections is a notable virtue in all Governors; albeit by our authority we may command them silence, and stop their mouths, and lade thē with stripes, yet we should give

them leave to answer for themselves, and to plead their own causes, and to debate the matter freely with us.

True it is, *Paul* requireth of servants, that *they should be obedient unto their masters, and please them well in all things, not answering again*: howbeit the Apostle meaneth giving of cross answers, replying again with unseemly and firelike words, such as stand not with the bounds of their calling: but they mutter and murmur with their tongues, so that though they be reasonable in their service, yet they are unreasonable in their cutted and crabbed answers. This is the answering that here is reprov'd in servants, who oftentimes abuse the lenity and mildness of their superiors. *Job* by his own practice showeth that there was no pride, hautinesse, or cruelty in him, he abused not his superiority and authority over them, he exercised not tyranny upon them, he did not trample upon them and cast them under his feet, as if they had been dogs or brute beasts: but he mastered his affections, and bridled his anger, & did bear with them with all gentleness and lowliness of mind. And there are many motives to persuade to this meekness and mildness toward such as are under us.

First, we are all of one molde and matter: all are of the earth, we are no better in reg^d of our original then those that are under us, albeit here we be above them. We are all dust, and to dust we must return. The master is dust as well as the servant. When the poor Jews complained against their oppressors, to whom they had morgaged their houses and lands, and given their sons and daughters into bondage, they use this reason, *Nehe. 5.5. Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children*. To this purpose the Prophet warneth, that *we hide not our selves from our own flesh*, *Isaiah. 58.7*.

Secondly, we have all one common creator, he that made the master, made also the servant, and he that created the rich, created the poor; *God is the maker of them both*, as *Solomon* teacheth in the book of the Proverbs: and this we noted before out of *Job*, who confesseth, that *he which made him made them*, and that they had one which fashioned them in the womb.

Thirdly albeit we ha^e superiority and sovereignty over them yet we must consider *we have one master in heaven*, to whom we must give an account: so that as we are masters over them, so we have a master over us: and as we have servants under us, so we are servants under God. Such then as are superiors cease not to be subjects, forasmuch as God is above all, that will judge everyone according to their works, even toward those that belong unto us. The masters among the Gentiles never considered, that they were as stewards, and must give an account of their calling and government, and therefore they abused it at their pleasure, having power of life and death over their servants: but the Apostle putteth them in mind that the high possessor of heaven and earth ruleth all, and will bring all unto judgment. Seeing then, God hath knit such a fast knot between mankind, that cannot be loosed, to wit, that we have all one matter one common maker, one common master: surely such as shall cut this knot in sunder, deserveth to have his name razed out of y^e number of men, because he acknowledgeth not the nature which God hath put into us, but thinketh he hath the bridle put into his own hands to vex and oppress such as are under him.

True it is, he hath a preeminence over others, and it is meet he should rule as a master and Magistrate in his own house: howbeit such as serve him and are of low degree, ought not to be contemned as abjects, or accounted as our footstooles.

Fourthly, as there is one master both of masters and servants, so there is no respect of persons with him. This is the nature of our heavenly master, he will not sit in judgment upon men according to their nobility, power, greatness, or riches, but deal with them according to their works, as 1 Pet. 1 17. *If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's works, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* When men of might and power vex and tread upon the poor, weak and simple, that dare not resist or withstand them, they go away with it for the most part, everyone is afraid to oppose against them, or to defend the cause of the innocent, because men are blinded, or daunted by the outward glory of their persons, and so they dream, that God is like unto themselves. But the Apostle layeth before their eyes, or rather unto their hearts, that they should *put away threatening*, and deal mildly and gently toward them, forasmuch as God accepteth of no man's person.

Fifthly, they shall receive themselves great benefit and profit by their service. This the Gentiles, though God suffered them to wander in ignorance, knew well enough; and the Philosophers used to move all masters to equity and gentle dealing toward their servants. True it is, menservants and maidservants in those days were not as they are in our times: they had them not by covenant for years, they served them not for wages, but they were bondslaves to live and die with their masters, and they possessed them forever as their oxen or horses, and had power to save them or to kill them at their own pleasure, no man could speak against it, or call them to answer and account for it. Nevertheless, the wise men among them saw by the light of nature, that there was a common equity to be used toward all reasonable creatures, and therefore exhorted them to use their servants well, and to refrain their anger toward them, in consideration of their own gain and profit that should come unto them thereby. They saw not into the force of the former reason, y^t they must give an account to God, but they moved them in regard of their own good & benefit; as also *Paul doth Philemon*, who should find his servant *profitable unto him*, and therefore he sent him again, and would have him receive him again. The heathen could say, Whatsoever thou wouldest not have done to thyself, do not thou to another; which is according to the rule of Christ, Matth. 7.12. *All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.* If then we respect not equity, let us be moved by our own commodity.

Sixthly, we are all as brethren in Christ Jesus▪ howsoever many be of low degree, and despised in the world, yet Christ himself accounteth all that believe in him to be his brethren. If we have God to be our Father, we must confess his children to be our brethren. If we be ashamed to account thus of others, let us take heed lest Christ be ashamed of us, when he cometh in his glory. The Apostle speaking of him saith, Heb. 2.17. *In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high Priest in things pertaining unto God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.* And in the same

chapter he bringeth in Christ speaking, *I will declare thy Name unto my brethren, in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee.* True it is, there is a difference between man and man in outward things, but in the chiefest things they are equal: the lowest have as good a title to salvation and the kingdom of heaven as the highest: there is neither Jew nor Grecian, there is neither male nor female, there is neither bond nor free, but we are all one in Christ Jesus.

Seventhly, this mild dealing toward them serveth to give them encouragement in well-doing. For when they shall see such kindness in their masters, that they are content to hear them patiently, to bear with them meekly, and to entreat them gently, so that they use no unmerciful, or immeasurable, or unreasonable rigor toward them: how is, or at least how ought the heart of the servants to be cheered and comforted in their obedience to them, and in yielding all possible good service to them in the singleness of their hearts? By too much lenity they grow saucie, and oftentimes outrageous. The wise man saith, *Pamper up a servant, and he will be as thine own son.* Give servants the reins of liberty, they wax proud, and know neither their masters, nor themselves, nor their duties: so soon as they are set on horseback, they gallop beyond all measure. There is a moderation to be kept between two extremes, too much and too little, and we may offend by the one as well as by the other. Hence it is, that *Paul* setting down the duties of fathers toward their children, Col. 3.21. saith, *Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged,* or out of heart. Gentle natures are soon dismayed, they are rebuked by a word, and by a look: we must take heed we be not bitter to them.

Lastly, look how we would be dealt withal by others, in like manner ought we to deal with others, and behave our selves toward others. There is none of us all but we desire to have the servants that are under us deal well with us, to serve us willingly, to obey us cheerfully, to honor us readily, and from the heart: we therefore, in our commandments toward them ought to use all humanity and equity, and this the Apostle calleth *to do the same things toward them,* Ephes. 6.9. Again, as we desire that God should forbear threatenings toward us, and forgive us upon our unfeigned repentance; so ought we to do, we ought to forbear threatening, and to forgive them that have offended us, when we see the fruits of a true conversion and turning unto God in them. And this doth the Apostle require at the hands of *Philemon*, howsoever in former times the servant had purloyned from his master, as we have noted at large upon that Epistle.

To conclude therefore, seeing God will have the innocent protected, and not oppressed in judgment, it behooveth everyone to look to the duties of his calling: as the servant should not rise against the master, so the master ought not to oppress the servant. Let all men learn mildness toward their inferiors, that God may be served above all.

19 And the Priest shall charge her by an oath, and say unto the woman, if no man hath lain with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside to uncleanness with another instead of thy husband, be thou free from this bitter water that causeth the curse.

20 But if thou hast gone aside to another instead of thy husband, and if thou be defiled, and some man hath lain with thee beside thine husband:

21 Then the Priest shall charge the woman with an oath of cursing, and the Priest shall say unto the woman, The Lord make thee a curse, and an oath among thy people, when the Lord doth make thy thigh to rot, and thy belly to swell.

22 And this water that causeth the curse, shall go into thy bowels, to make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot: and the woman shall say, Amen, Amen.

Hitherto we have shown such actions as were used to try the faith and fidelity of the suspected woman: now we come to the words that are spoken, declaring the manner how it was performed, from the 19 verse, to the end of the 22. verse. Herein we have laid before us two things: first the oath it self. Secondly the assent of the woman unto the oath. Touching the oath, we have here a prescript form of it, and the words prescribed unto her are ministered to her by the Priest, who uttereth it by his voice, conditionally on both parts; If thou hast not gone astray, and broken the band and covenant of marriage, so that no man hath known thee carnally, be free from this curse: But if thou hast offended this way, and that thou be defiled, the curse come upon thee.

The assent of the woman followeth, being expressed by a common note used in the conclusion of all prayers, *Amen, Amen*. Wherein we are to observe two things, both the signification, and the repetition of the word. Touching the signification, it signifieth as much as, so be it, as the Septuagint expound it. There is a double use of this word, first, to express our desire, secondly, to testify our faith in the assurance of receiving those things that we crave: both which are to be practiced in prayer, and are expressed by Christ, Mar. 11.24. *Whatsoever you desire when ye pray, believe that ye shall have it, and it shall be done unto you.* Where he teacheth, that there ought to be in us both a desire of grace, and an assurance of faith. In this place it is taken in the first sense, to wit, for a bare assent, subscribing to the truth of that which is spoken, and wishing that it may be so, as Deut. 27.15. where speaking of the curses pronounced on mount Ebal, he saith, *All the people shall say, Amen.*

So doth the woman in this place crave and desire against her self, if she be culpable of the crime whereof she is suspected, and have defiled the marriage bed that ought to be honorable, that the curse here threatened, may turn upon her and enter into her. For as the curse that is causeless shall not come, so that which is duly and truly deserved, shall undoubtedly come, and shall not tarry.

The repetition of this word is here set down to note the fervency of her zeal, the innocence of her cause, the uprightness of her conscience, and the purity of her heart: that she cometh not hanging down her head to this trial, as a malefactor that is guilty cometh to the bar, but lifting up her head as going to the place of her delivery where she is sure to be acquitted: not

fearfully & doubtfully, but boldly and confidently, as one that is assured what will be the issue of the matter.

In this division some questions arise, which are to be handled. First the question may be asked, what need there was of these words of adjuration to cause her to take the oath, that the Priest should minister it unto her, and pronounce the form of it unto her, and she answer him again, and then drink up the water, as it followeth afterward? The causes hereof are these, first to teach that every sign or Sacrament should have the word joined to it, that it be not a bare & naked sign, as it were an empty box without his ointment. Secondly, it respecteth the public edification of the whole people, when they should see that she pronounced sentence upon her self, and that the judgment of God took event according to the truth that before lay hid, all might justly fear and tremble under his mighty hand.

Secondly, the question may be asked, what is meant by these words of adjuration, *The Lord make thee a curse and an oath among thy people?* I answer, the meaning is as much as if the Priest had said, God make thee wretched and miserable, yea so unhappy and infamous that it may turn into a proverb, Let that happen to thee, which hath happened to this woman: so that the curse coming upon her shall be alleged as an example of the like to come upon others: both because she had committed so heinous a fault, and because she added unto it these two crimes, impudency, an especial stain and blot in that sex: and perjury, a capital crime in all persons. For it argued great arrogancy and audaciousnesse to undergo all these means of trial one after another, and yet evermore to conceal her offense, and not confess it, like to *Achan*, who having committed a trespass in the accursed thing, did what he could to hide it: *the tribe of Judah was taken*, but he was not moved: the families of *Judah* being brought, the family of the *Zarhites* was taken, and yet he was not touched: the families of the *Zarhites* being brought man by man, *Zabdiwas* taken, and yet he hath no feeling of it, until himself was taken, and that he was pointed out, Thou art the man: or like unto *Judas* that betrayed the Son of God, he knew Christ was apprehended, and yet he repented not: mocked, buffeted, spit upon, and yet he repented not; he saw him condemned to the Cross before he thought, What have I done? So in this suspected wife to go forward from the first action to be performed, and from the first word to be pronounced even until the last without any stay or remorse, was a testimony of shamelesnesse and of hardness of heart.

Besides, if none of all these could have entered into her, and pierced her heart harder then stone, yet a man would have thought when she came to be charged *with an oath of cursing*, she would have stuck at it, and not have swallowed this being greater then a Camel: so that to add to adultery the sin of perjury, as it were drunkenness unto thirst, argued a person given over and forsaken of God, and such a one as had filled up the measure of sin: being like unto *profane Esau that sold his birthright for one morsel of meat*, and *sware to his brother*, and despised the birth-right, Gen. 25.33. As he regarded not to commit sin, so he regarded not an oath, that he might finish it, and give himself wholly over unto it.

[Verse 19. *And the Priest shall charge her by an oath, &c.*] In these words we have a solemn manner set down of the woman's either absolution or condemnation. After that the Priest hath put the holy water in an earthen vessel, and taken dust from the pavement to be cast

into it, he conceiveth words of cursing, to which she is to answer: he goeth before to rehearse them, she is not left to utter what she please lest she should seek evasion by any mental reservation. Thus then she is constrained to appeal to God, and to use his Name, & to purge her self by an oath: which is done to humble her, & to give her warning to take heed that she double not her fault, and join to one great sin another greater, a breach of the first Table, to a breach of the second, that is, perjury to her adultery, an offense against God to the offense against her husband. We learn hereby, that the Name of God is never to be used, but only in cases of necessity: when all other means fail, then it is lawful to take up an oath, whether it be publicly or privately, whether it be before the Magistrate or before any other. This we see in *Abraham*, who said to the king of Sodom Gen. 14.22▪ *I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take anything that is thine*: By this gesture he did appeal unto God, as a witness of his swearing, and a revenger of all forswearing, to bind himself from covetousness; that as before he had overcome his enemies, now he might overcome himself and his own affections, which was a greater and nobler victory then the former.

Thus he showeth himself religious toward God, as well as righteous toward men. The like we see in the Law set down by an express commandment, Exod. 22.10, 11. *If a man deliver unto his neighbor an asse, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast to keep, and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing it: then shall an oath of the Lord be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbors goods, and the owner of it shall accept thereof, and he shall not make it good*. This precept directeth when and in what cases to take an oath, to wit, when the matter is doubtful, and cannot otherwise be decided: forasmuch as the owner of the goods is charged to rest therein, and to acknowledge himself well satisfied. This we see farther in the Apostle Paul, 2 Cor. 1.21 *I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet to Corinth*. He did not break out into this swearing of an ordinary custom, but the glory of God and the salvation of that Church required it; in which cases we are allowed and warranted to use it, and not otherwise.

[Reason 1] The reasons will better confirm this unto us then bare testimonies taken out of the Scriptures, which nevertheless out to be sufficient where no farther proof is used. First, God will not hold him guiltless that abuseth his Name negligently or unnecessarily. He will surely punish them that swear vainly. This penalty or punishment is annexed to the commandment, Exod. 20. *The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain*. It is an heinous sin, albeit it be thought light before men; and then the judgment also shall be heavy that hangeth over their heads that transgress this Law. The free forgiveness of sins is the fountain of all happiness, both present and to come; for *the man is blessed whose sins are forgiven, and whose iniquity is covered, blessed is that man to whom God will impute no wickedness*: and therefore we must needs be in continual misery, so long as our sins are retained. This is a fearful thunderbolt to fright us from the profaning of his Name: he will honor those that honor him, but such as despise him shall come to destruction.

Secondly, the end of practicing an oath is [Reason 2] to decide strifes, and to determine controversies, which disturb peace, and hinder Christian charity. It cannot be but offenses

will come, and many occasions of quarrels and contentions about matters of this life arise daily between man and man, which could not conveniently be taken up, except we had the lawful use of an oath to confirm some necessary truth; as when it serveth to manifest the glory of God, or to clear the good name of our brother, or to obey the commandment of the Magistrate, or to maintain our own credit. This is set down, Heb. 6.16. *Men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.* I call that a necessary truth, when a doubtful cause called into question, cannot be decided without an oath, as we see the practice, Rom. 1.9. *God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit, in the Gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.* It was necessary for the furtherance of the salvation of the Romans, that they should be persuaded of the Apostles affection toward them, but the testimony of men failed to prove this truth, and therefore he was driven to take up an oath, and to appeal unto God. This is also at large delivered by Solomon in that prayer which he made at the dedication of the Temple, 1 King. 8.31. *If any man trespass against his neighbor, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house, then hear thou in heaven, and do and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked to bring his way upon his head, and justifying the righteous to give him according to his righteousness.* Thus we see the constant and continual use of an oath among God's people in matters of weight and importance, in their most serious and substantial affairs.

Thirdly, the Name of God is most fearful [Reason 3] in praises, glorious in holiness, great in might and doing wonders: and therefore it ought not commonly to run in our mouths without necessary cause. This is urged by the wise man, Eccles. 5.2. *Be not rash with thy mouth and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.* And the Lord saith, Deut. 28.58. *If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this Law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful Name, The Lord thy God, he will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, &c.* If then the Name of God be great and glorious, it is not commonly to be used of us, to be turned in our tongues, and to be trodden upon with our feet.

[Use 1] Now let us consider what uses may be made of this unto us. It reproveth sundry abuses & corruptions, both in opinion and practice, in judgment and in life. As first of all the Anabaptists, a proud and fantastical crew of cursed and damnable heretics, that trouble heaven and earth, overthrow Church and Common-wealth, destroy Magistracy and Ministry, disannul the word and Sacraments, and make religion to be no better then a doctrine of liberty. These teach that it is unlawful to swear at all, either in private use, or in place of judgment. This is to run into another extremity, and to fail as much in the defect, as other do in the excess. For albeit all swearing be not lawful, yet it followeth not that all swearing is unlawful. But to abolish all manner of swearing, and all use of an oath, because some abuse it, and use it vainly, is like unto him, who to take away drunkenness, abolished the vines, and would not suffer any to grow in his common-wealth: or as if a man would suffer no corn to grow, because some will surfeit with it. There is no good thing, but hath been or may be abused. The doctrine that is according to godliness is many ways abused. When *Paul* magnified the mercies of God in his son Christ, so that *where sin abounded, grace abounded*

much more, men of evil spirits arose that abused this to carnal liberty, and turned the grace of God into wantonness, and wrested the Scriptures to their own perdition.

[sect 1] The objections of these heretics are not many, but somewhat they allege for themselves. First, they object the commandment of the Lord in the exposition of the Law, Mat. 5.34. *I say unto you, swear not at all, neither by heaven, &c.* If it be forbidden to swear at all, then it is made utterly unlawful.

I answer, the purpose of Christ is to reprove the false interpretations of the Scribes and Pharisees, who wrested the Law, and restrained it contrary to the meaning of the Lawgiuer. They taught the people to beware of perjury, and swearing falsely, and that if so be men swear truly, it was lawful to swear commonly, as if God took no regard of our ordinary communication, and of our common talk, contrary to the doctrine of Christ else-where, that *of every idle word*, much more then of idle oaths, *men shall give an account at the day of judgment*, Matth. 12.36. His purpose is not to condemn the right use of an oth, which is expressly commanded of God in many places, and practiced by the Patriarchs, Gen. 14. by the Prophets, 1 king 17.1. by the Apostles, 1 Cor. 15. by the Angels, Revel. 10.6. by the Judges, Judge. 15.12. by the kings, 1. Sam. 24. and by the Lord himself, Psal. 110.4. Heb. 6.17. And therefore simply it is not a sin to swear. If any reply in their name and behalf, that once it was lawful, but now it is not: in the time of the old testament, but not in the new; we must know, that the Prophets, prophesying of these times of grace under the Gospel, declare that the Church or Christ should swear by the Lord, Isaiah. 1•1•. Jer. 4.2. and therefore he never wholly for bad it, *who came not to destroy the Law and abolish the Prophets*, but to fulfill and perform the Law, Matth. 5.17. Moreover the Pharisees, that were the teachers of Israel, taught that it skilled not, though men sware vainly, by heaven, by earth, by the creatures, so long as they suppressed the Name of God. Wherefore Christ the true interpreter of the Law. teacheth the contrary, to wit, that it is a sin against the third commandment, not only to forswear, but to swear vainly, and commonly, by what name, and in what manner soever it be yea albeit the Name of God be not mentioned, considering *that he which sweareth by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon: he that sweareth by the Temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein: and he that sweareth by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.* This error of these Pharisees is maintained, or at the least practiced commonly by the common sort, they think they may swear as they list, so that they swear truly: and if they have truth on their side, they take liberty to swear and swear again without controlement.

Secondly, they allege also the saying of the Apostle James, chap. 5.12. [Object. 2] *Above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea, be yea; and your nay nay: lest ye fall into condemnation.*

I answer, [Answer.] we must not always take the words of Scripture generally as they seem to be carried, but limit them according to the circumstances of the Text, and the scope of y^e words. The Apostle saith, *All things are lawful for him*, 1 Cor. 6.12. but it must be restrained to things indifferent not forbidden in the Law: for such things as are forbidden, are not lawful. If then we would understand Scripture aright, and not wander from the sound

interpretation of it, we must seek and search out the sense according to the intent and meaning of the Spirit of God; otherwise, not only infinite inconveniences, but diverse absurdities, impossibilities, heresies, contradictions, and impieties will follow: as when Christ saith, John. 10.8. *All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers, &c.* Shall we conclude from hence, that *Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist*, and all the Prophets were no better then thieves and robbers, because they went before Christ in time? No, he pointeth out such as profess themselves to be the door of the sheep, and received or shown any other then himself. So *Paul* saith, he took all things to be lawful for him: what then? might he do what he list? might he be an idolater, an adulterer, a blasphemer, and such like? no, but herein he preventeth an objection, and answereth by supposition, that albeit all things were lawful, yet he would not be brought under the power of anything. So in another place he saith, *I am made all things to all men*, 1 Cor. 9.22. Doth he hereby make himself a Libertine, or establish Libertinism, or purchase a protection for every man to do what seemeth good in his own eyes? Not so, but in matters that are indifferent which may be done or not done with a good conscience, he changed himself into all fashions, and applied himself to the conditions of all, that by all means he might save some. So in this place, when the Apostle saith, *swear not at all*, we must not cleave seruilely to the letter, nor sti•ke to the bare words, but know that the Scripture standeth in the right meaning: so that the doctrine of the servant is not different from the Lord's and Masters that sent him, to wit, to condemn lightnes in swearing, whereby the Name of God is defiled, directly, or indirectly; which ought to be accounted of all men most holy, and used with the greatest respect and reverence that can be. But in cases of importance and necessity, we have examples beyond all exception, of God himself▪ of the Prophets and Apostles that have used an oath, as we noted before, which could not have been, if the use of an oath had generally and utterly been unlawful.

Secondly, to omit this sect, and to proceed, it reproveth such as take the oaths of persons that are unfit and unmeet to take any oaths. For seeing an oath must be taken up soberly, discreetly and advisedly, and only in cases of necessity, when the truth cannot otherwise be decided, it convinceth such of temerity and want of discretion, that make no difference of whom they take an oath. The end of an oath ought to be to confirm the truth; but the testimony of some is suspected, and of others presumed to be false. Many are not to be admitted as witnesses, as children, furious persons, drunkards, common liars, such whose bodies are withered, and consequently their memories decayed, such as are idiots and lunatikes, common swearers, ruffians, and such as are of evil report, rogues and straglers that have nothing to lose, nor nowhere to dwell, infidels, heretics, and unbelievers, all these are as it were bored in the ear, or burned in the hand, or branded in the forehead for insufficient persons: because either they do not know the virtue and validity of an oath, nor the difference and distinction of matters whereupon they are produced, and which are to be decided: or being accustomed to evil, may easily be drawn to add one sin of perjury to the heaps of their other wickedness: or may easily be brought to lift at an oath for a little lucre and base gain; or make little account to renounce and sell Christ himself for thirty pence, as *Judas d•d*, that is, for a small advantage. Such then must be sought out to testify the truth, as

are worthy of credit, as fear not the faces of men, as evermore have God before their eyes. As then such are to be chosen, so these that can do nothing with judgment and discretion, with advise and deliberation, ought to be refused, of which the Prophet saith: *Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come out of the waters of Judah: which swear by the Name of the Lord and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth nor in righteousness.* Hence it is that the Prophet requireth, that our oaths be performed in truth, in righteousness, and in judgment, Ier. 5. which cannot be expected of us, or performed of them.

Secondly, this doctrine directly meeteth [Use 2] with the common, but yet corrupt practice of our times, in which swearing is turned into a custom, so that everyone garnisheth his ordinary talk with graceless and needless oaths, if this may be called a garnishing, and not rather a disgracing. That communication is gracious which ministereth grace to the hearers, other talk is rotten, and reckless, when men make no conscience of taking the Name of God in vain. This is a grievous sin in young and old, in men and women, in rich and poor. It is accounted a special ornament to our speech, and we think it carrieth no credit nor countenance, except it be now and then spiced with an oath. It beginneth everywhere to be esteemed the part of a gentleman, and a note and cognizance to know him and discern him from others. He is judged a puritane and a precise fool that reproveth it, and useth it not. Alas, to what height of sin are we come? the measure is filled up, the judgment is at hand. Herein, O Lord, be merciful unto us: and indeed thou art merciful, a God of pity and patience, or else the land were not able to bear us. The practice of it is of the devil, & yet we are not afraid of it, few men make conscience of it. The children that play in the streets have learned to swear, so soon as they can speak, and are weaned from their mothers breasts. The Rogues and Vagabonds that settle themselves in no family or society, take the sacred Name of God in their mouth, & make it their occupation to beg with it. The chapmen that sell their wares to others, are as ready to sell their souls to the devil to get sometimes one penny. He is not accounted a good shopman that is likely to thrive, that doth not burnish and varnish his bad wares with the glorious Name of God, he is not reckoned worth a chip that will not swear at every word to deceive those that deal with him: and yet God threateneth that he *will cut off as well on this side as on that, everyone that sweareth so that the curse shall remain in the middes of his house, and shall consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof.* But some will say, we do not [Object 1] swear by the Name of God, we swear not but by our faith, or troth, or by our Lady, or the Mass, or by Saint *Mary*. Bee it so: [Answer.] yet even these also are breaches of y^e law of God. Faith and truth are precious jewels that adorn y^e heart of a Christian, they must be kept there as safely as a treasure. Will a man lay a pearl to gage for every trifle? or will a man defile his best raiment with the worst mire? It is to be feared, that these have little faith in the heart, that have it so commonly in the mouth. As for the cross, or the mass, or the rood, and such like relics, they are abominable idols, of w^c the Prophet complaineth, *They have sworn by them that are no gods.* This is called a forsaking of God. The Prophet saith, *They shall fall, and never rise again.* And the Prophet *Zephany* declareth, that y^e Lord will destroy man & beast, because *they did swear by the Lord and by Malcham.* We see hereby what religion and fear of God is in the greatest multitude, for not one of an

hundredth feareth an oth, or refraineth frō swearing. Not a day passeth over their heads, but they break out this way. No occasion is offered unto them to speak, but an oath shall be at one end of their talk. They are so far frō striving against it, that they delight in it, and make no more conscience of an oath, then of a word, and use swearing more then eating and drinking. Where the laws of the land do bridle men, there is some abstaining from sin, and few in comparison of the rest offend. It is true indeed that no punishment, will restrain all persons: yet notwithstanding the most are terrified by severity and sharpness, as in cases of treasons, of murders, of thefts, &c. There are few in comparison of others that are guilty of these: and why? because they are looked unto, that offend this way. If men were let alone in these also to themselves, we should have rebellions, and robberies, and shedding of blood as common as oaths. For where conscience of sin is wanting, fear of punishment and terror of death must keep in awe. But where the laws of Princes are most remiss, there a flood-gate is set open to all impiety y^t ouerfloweth the banks and ouerwhelmeth all before it without measure; as swearing, and blaspheming, contempt of the word, profaning the Sabbath, whoredom, &c. These are common, this is the broad way, and wide gate that many enter into without controlment. The causes of this general abuse and common sin of swearing are these four. First, custom, and common use, whereby many think themselves excused. Tell them of their sin, and advise them to leave it, They will answer, I confess it is naught, and I am to blame for it, it is a custom I have gotten. Thus they defend themselves by custom, & plead prescription: but in the mean season they hold their wicked and unreasonable custom still, and will by no means be brought from it. And yet if we will speak the truth, what is it to pretend custom to countenance sin, but to confess we do and speak all things without the fear of God? For frō whence proceedeth this custom of sinning, but from this root? to wit, that we commit sin upon sin, one day after another, without any reverence of the Majesty of God. Wherefore, it standeth us upon to break this corrupt custom by a contrary custom, & to leave this use by disuse thereof. Although it may seem hard unto us at the first, yet if we labor to discontinue it, we shall find it easy at the last. The second cause is evil examples, when we keep evil company, we hear them, & we learn of them. We cannot frequent the company of swearers, but we shall have oaths rife in our ears. The passage is easy from the care to the tongue. That which we commonly hear, we commonly talk off. If then oaths be rife in our ears, they will quickly be ready in our mouths. And the reason is, because the often practice of any sin, maketh us to have the less sense and sorrow for sin, less hatred and detestation of sin. As it is in them that commit sin, so it is in them that are present at it. Touching these that are the practicers of it, the Prophet saith, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, &c.* So is it also with these that frequent the society of common swearers, it is hard to be with them, & to come from them, but we shall one way or other be partakers of their sins. This sin of swearing is not made the less by multitude of evil examples set before us, forasmuch as the multitude of them that sin doth rather make the sin more to be abhorred, then excused, and provoketh God's wrath more fiercely. *We are not to follow a multitude to do evil.* If we sin together, we shall also suffer together: and if we offend with others, we shall be punished with others. The third cause is want of admonition. For many sin this way, that do not know they sin, many have a custom in swearing, that are ignorant they do swear, or at least that they swear so often, or that the sin & offense is so great; who are of that flexible

nature, & good disposition, that if they knew the greuousnesse of the sin, or the greatness of the danger, would abstain from doing evil. It is an offense indeed in those that swear, albeit they do it of ignorance: so is it also in those, that pretending love and friendship to those that use it, do not by admonition seek to reclaim them. The wise man saith, *Reproue not a scorner, lest he hate thee, &c.* It is a fault generally among us, that we do not exhort one another. A word spoken in due season is comely and profitable, *like apples of gold in pictures of silver, pleasant words are as an honey comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.* No words are so sweet to the taste, as those that aim at the souls good. We may by this means be an occasion of saving a soul: & by want of the performance of this duty, and by keeping silence when we ought not, we may be partakers of their sins, and we may be a means of damning their souls. For what knowest thou, O man, whether thou mayest win thy brother? The last cause, that shall now be touched, furthering the sin of swearing, is want of punishment. It were to be wished that y^e Magistrate would sharpen the Law against this sin, and other of the first Table that are of like nature, & concerned directly the glory of God. The punishment is little or none at all against it, which maketh it so common. And I would to God, that they who should be most forward to redress it, had not the chief hand in this trespass. We are as men afraid to touch this sore, and they that ought to reprove it, have taught their tongues to use it, I mean the Ministers of the word. How then should they teach others that cannot teach themselves? or how should they exhort others not to swear, that have learned commonly to swear themselves? Let all those therefore that are in authority, whether their place be higher or lower, look to those that are under them. There is no smothering of sin, or dealing gently and tenderly with it, if we will repress and redress it. Sin is like unto a nettle, the more lightly you handle it, the more it stingeth: the way is to crush it harder. If we deal mildely with sin, we make it thereby to gather strength. It is *the blueness of a wound*, saith *Solomon, that purgeth evil.* Sin is like a serpent in the egg, or like a wolf and lyon that is young; if they be suffered, they sting unto death, and make us their prey. Slight and sheet punishment of any sin, is after a sort an inviting & encouragement unto it. But some man will farther object, without swearing men [Object. 2] will not believe me: they doubt of my word, an oath putteth the matter out of question. I answer, [Answer.] he that will not believe thee without an oth in thy communication, neither will he with an oth. For he that is a common swearer, may well be presumed or suspected to be a common liar: & whosoever maketh no conscience of the greater, will make no conscience of the lesser sin. The prophet *Hoseah*, complaining of the corruptions that reigned in his time, joineth these together, & as it were coupleth thē in one yoke, *by swearing and lying they break out*, It is not thy facing & out-facing, thy swearing & staring that can procure thee credit among those that are sober minded: forasmuch as they that will commonly swear, will also forswear. *Solomon* teacheth y^t in many words there wanteth not folly: so in many oaths there wanteth not perjury. Wouldest thou be believed? and have mē rest in thy sayings without doubting or gainsaying? accustom thy tongue to speak the truth: be ashamed to be taken with a lie: gain a good report to thyself by government of thy tongue, and setting a watch before the door of thy mouth, pondering thy words before thou utter them, and examine thy speech [Object. 3] before thou speak it. But some will pretend a necessity whereby they are urged, and say, they cannot live without swearing; they object that men will not buy of them, and that they

shall never be able to utter their wares without it. Nay, [Answer.] the wiser sort believe thee the less, and buy of thee the less. It maketh them look the better about them, and watch thy fingers that hast set no watch before thy mouth. They see thou makest no more conscience of an oath, then a dog doth to wag his tail: but thou must remember that goods gotten by forgery, lying, deceit, and swearing, shall not prosper long, nor continue ever. They put *their gains in a bottomless bag*. Solomon is plentiful in handling this point in diverse places. *Wealth gotten by vanity, &c. The treasures of wickedness, &c.* Albeit evil men may prosper for a time, yet they shall not long enjoy their stollē goods. For goods wrongfully gotten, are stolen: and thou hast no better title unto them, then the thief hath to the true man's purse. Thou professest to show friendship unto him, but art ready to cut his throat. Thou speakest fairly, but thou meanest foully. We must not suffer our tongues and hearts to wander so far asunder, but remember y^t *he which keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life, &c.* A little gotten with a good conscience shall bring a blessing with it upon us and our children, *The just man walketh in his integrity, his children are blessed after him.* And howsoever many will account this light gains which is so gotten, yet in the end it shall make an heavy purse, according to y^e true proverb. As for all wicked and unconscionable gains, they are accursed in us, and our posterities to whom we leave them, and by which we think to enrich them, shall feel the smart of our sins. *This is the portion of a wicked man with God, &c.* To draw to an end, let us set this down as a rule, that no man ought to swear or lie for an advantage: neither shall our swearing and lying in the end turn to our advantage, but to our loss: forasmuch as sin shall bring profit to no man. It cannot profit a man to win the whole world, and then to lose his own soul. Such get a penny and forgo a pound: they gain hell and lose heaven: they make the devil their friend, and God their enemy. If we would thus reason with our selves, and cast up our accounts, we should soon see little gotten by these sins, & that when we have attained to the greatest wealth, only godliness is the greatest gains, which shall never be taken from us.

Lastly, it is our duty to be careful to use an [Use 3] oath aright. It is the great goodness of God toward us, that doth so far honor us, and abase himself, to give us leave to take up his Name, and to be present at our controversies, being ready to determine of them. We are unworthy of this preeminence, and therefore we ought to rectify our judgment, and swear aright, to y^e end we take not his Name in vain. And that we may do this, we are to consider these few particulars: 1 what an oth is, 2. who is y^e author of it, 3. what are y^e parts of an oth, and whereof it consisteth, 4. what is the form thereof. 5. what is y^e end: lastly, what be y^e properties of it. Of these in order as we set thē down.

Touching the first, an oath may thus be described. It is a solemn appealing to God, whereby we testify that we speak the truth. It is a kind of invocation of God's Name, though it be used unto men, or before men: it is a referring of our selves to God, and therefore *Paul* calleth God to record. We should consider therefore that we have to do with him, & set him before our eyes for the farther provoking of our selves to fear and reverence, & the farther removing from us all falsehood & untruth. Again, it is said, that we by our oath do testify that we speak and utter the truth with our tongues, but it must be from the heart root. This is the reason that oaths are in use, that the truth, which otherwise lieth hid, may come to light. This truth must be spoken, not to halves, or to hurt by it: but we must speak the truth plainly and

sincerely in the simplicity of our hearts, without all glozing or dissembling through fear, or flattery, or favor, or profit, or pleasing of men: we must speak the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

The second point to be considered in an oath, is, who is the author of it. It is commanded of God, by whom we are to swear, inasmuch as he alone is to be called upon, & worshipped, to whom we ascribe a knowledge of all things, a searching of our hearts, a presence in all places, and infinite wisdom in ordering all things. For an oath consisteth not of manifest matters, whereof there is good evidence, but of hidden and uncertain things, in which God only can judge, whether men deceive us or not. True it is, if there were that perfection in us every way, y^t ought to be, there should be no necessary use of any oath with God or mā. If there were no wavering in us, God needeth not to swear: if there were no forging in us, man needed not to swear: so that unbelief and untruth were the principal causes that brought it into practice. The cause why God sweareth, is for our profit. He is truth it self, *and cannot lie, he cannot deceive, or repent, or deny himself;* howbeit we are frail & weak creatures; though God promise never so faithfully, and give us his word never so certainly: yet we are full of infidelity and doubting, like to *Thomas* one of the twelve Apostles: he had the word of God, the promise of Christ, & the testimony of the disciples, yet he would not believe, *except he might see in his hands the print of the nails, and put his finger into the print of the nails, and put his hand into his side.* It was not enough for him, y^t he might be no longer faithless, but faithful, to see his wounds with his eyes, but he must touch them, and felt thē with his fingers; and then he would believe. Hence it is, that God sweareth unto us for our better assurance, that we should not doubt, but have sure consolation in his promise, and confirmation in his truth. Again, there should be little or no use of an oath between party and party, if there were y^t honesty & fidelity among men that ought to have been: for if we were accustomed only to speak the truth, and that we hated lying, as we do the father of it, what need we any oath? or what should we do with swearing? All men will seem to hate the devil, y^e father of lies: but all hate not his works. They love lies more then to speak the truth, and therefore an oath came in, when the truth could not be found out with much difficulty and long examinations.

The third point is the parts of an oath whereof it consisteth. In every oath pass these four things, confirmation, invocation, confession, & obligation. First, there must be the confirmation of a truth y^t cannot else be known but by our oath, *An oath for confirmation is among men an end of all strife.* An oath is not a customary thing, or a matter wherein we may dally: there must be somewhat that needeth to be confirmed. Where all things are apparent, there is no place for this ordinance. Secondly, there is an invocation of God's Name, who is witness of the truth, and a judge to be avenged of us, if we lie. It is not enough for us to use an asseveration, or to make a solemn protestation: there must be a lifting up of the heart to God, and an appealing to his divine Majesty, as the men of God were always wont to do, as we noted before. Thirdly, there should be confession that God punisheth perjury, either expressed or implied, either openly or secretly. For there is a secret kind of acknowledgment in every oath, of God's purpose & power ready to chastise and correct all such as dishonor God and profane the seat of judgment. Fourthly, an obligation, professing and protesting

that we are willing to undergo the punishment at God's hand, if we perform not the condition. It is very fit and expedient, that all such as are to take an oath, diligently consider and remember these particular parts, that they have them not only before their eyes, but engraven in their hearts, to keep them from all falsehood.

The fourth thing is the form of an oath, which is described by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Thou shalt swear the Lord liveth, in truth, &c.* Behold here, the manner that is to be observed in our swearing, it must be performed truly, discreetly, & righteously. Truly, lest we make God a liar: justly, lest we commit impiety: in judgment, lest we be rash and heady w^t ought not to be in so weighty a matter. Truth ought to be the ground of all our speeches. The Apostle saith, *Cast off lying, and speak every man truth unto his neighbor, for we are members one of another:* howbeit then especially, when we take the God of all truth to witness, we should be careful to speak nothing but y^e simple words of truth without all mixture or error or falsehood. As God is the God of truth, so ought we to be like unto him, if we would have him to be our Father, or assure our selves to be his children. We cannot swear lawfully except we swear truly, & therefore we must be sure before we swear, that we swear nothing but the truth. For we come not into the presence of God, and before the deputy of God which is the Magistrate, to deliver our own foolish opinions, drowsy dreams, private thoughts, or uncertain matters such as we conceive; but what we know and are thoroughly persuaded off. Truth and knowledge are inseparable companions. Again, he that sweareth lawfully should swear *in judgment*. When we are called before a judge to testify the truth, or are to witness in any other lawful cause w^c can by no other means be found out but by an oth, we must deal in such matters soberly, we are to swear with good discretion and aduisement, not lightly, not rashly, not hastily, not headily, but with diligent trial and due consideration of every particular which we are to testify. Lastly, our oath must be taken in righteousness, and be agreeable to right and equity and equity & justice, which serve to give to every man his own, and to God also his due. Thus we see wherein the life and as it were the soul of an oath consisteth: which reproveth the common abuses of those that are sworn men. Our oath must not be an hired oath, nor we hired men to swear whatsoever others will have us: for that were as much as to sell our souls t^o Satan for money. If we would have peace and comfort to our selves, we must not take an oath for fear, or favor, or friendship, or flattery, to do our friends a pleasure, and our enemies a displeasure: but in a godly zeal of the uprightness of the cause, and an earnest desire that God's Name may be glorified in the manifestation of the Truth. Let us also learn to detest the corrupt practice of all double-hearted Papists, who have learned the doctrine of Equiuocations, that swear one thing and think another. These men are content to say anything, because they have their mental reseruations that they keep to themselves, like unto *Hushai*, who pretended friendship unto *Absalom*, and to join with him against *David*: *Whō the Lord and this people, and all the men of Israel shall choose, his will I be, and with him will I dwell*, pretending this to *Absalom*, but intending it to *David*: he maketh show to speak it of one, but understandeth it of another. This legierdemaine he hath bequeathed to his disciples the Jesuits, who are grown much more cunning & crafty then their master. These are they that dissemble with God and man, and have one heart for the Prince, another for the Pope, who is the greatest enemy y^e Princes have. Against these and

others that take y^e Name of God in vain, we are taught here how to swear, which everyone doth not know, & few practice aright these rules. We must not be ignorant, that it ought to be done in truth: such love to God & our neighbor should b^e in us, that we are to deal without colouring of matters, without hypocrisy, without forging, so y^t truth should prevail, and have the upper hand. Secondly, in judgment, for fear of rashness. We must not deal rashly but discreetly: not foolishly, but wisely, and when necessity requireth and urgeth an oath of us. An oath is as a medicine. No man taketh physic for wantonness, being not well advised, but upon necessity, either to prevent, or to preserve, or to restore. So no man useth an oath for delight or pleasure, but sometimes to prevent a mischief, sometimes to preserve from wrong, & sometimes to restore a mā to his right. And this is to swear in judgment. Lastly, it must be done in righteousness, to wit, for the good & profit of our neighbor. For when we are called to an oath, that which we promise or undertake must be honest and righteous, that we do not sin in swearing, which were to heap one sin upon another; as we see in *Herod* the king, who, because he had promised with an oath, sent and beheaded *John* in prison: and in the enemies of *Paul*, who bound themselves with a vow, y^t they would eat nothing, until they had killed *Paul*.

The fifth point in an oath, is the end wherefore it was ordained: one end was in respect of God, the other in respect of men. In respect of God, the end is his own glory, who made all things for the magnifying of his Name, and the manifestation of his glory. This we ought to aim at in all things, *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God*. Secondly, in respect of our selves to confirm some truth, and decide some controversy, as when our name, or goods, or life are in question. To come to particulars, the ends of a lawful oath are these four: first, allegiance and obedience to Princes, as we see in the elders of *Gilead*, who, entreating *Iphtah* to be their captain, & to fight their battles against the Ammonites, *sware unto him* that he should be their head and governor, and that they would be subject unto him, *The Lord be witness between us, if we do not according to thy words*. In like manner *Jehoiada* the Priest, making *Joash* king, whō he had preserved from the massacre executed against the blood royal, and hidden six years in the house of the Lord, took an oath of the captains & guard, that they should obey the king whom he shown unto them. Whereby we may conclude that Christian Princes may bind their subjects by an oath, and that subjects may & ought to swear to do all homage unto their Princes: so that it argueth a treacherous intent & meaning in the Popish sort that refuse to take the oth of allegiance, as if they meant to perform no duty to their lawful Princes. For all such as are the Popes subjects cannot be true subjects: & if he that challengeth a supremacy be their Prince, y^e Prince cannot be supreme. Again, an oath may lawfully be taken to confirm a league and establish a covenant between man and man, to assure those we deal with, that we for our parts mean faithfully, & purpose to keep it inviolable. And we have sundry examples hereof in holy Scripture *Abraham* entered into a league with *Abimelech*, and confirmed the same by oath. For when *Abimelech* said, *Swear unto me here by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, &c. he answered, I will swear*. The like is shown afterward, how *Abimelech* maketh a covenant with *Isaac* at Beer-sheba; he said, *Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee, that thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not*

touched thee, &c. and they arose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another. The like agreement by oath passed between *Jacob* and *Laban*, Gen. 31.53. So did *David* and *Jonathan* make a faithful league between them, and confirmed it with a solemn oath, 1 Sam. 18.3. and 20.8. and 23.18. As then we may swear to witness our allegiance to Princes, so also we may, for the confirmation of covenants betwixt others and our selves. Thirdly, it is lawful to take an oath for the deciding of controversies that arise between party and party, which otherwise cannot be ended. Some things are committed and conveyed away in such secret manner, that they cannot possibly come to light, but only by an oath, so that Magistrates are forced to put men to an oath, to witness the truth in the Name of God. When one is found slain in the field, and it is not known who hath slain him, the Lord commandeth that the elders of that city which are next unto the slain man, shall come into his presence, and to say, *Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people Israel whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto their charge*, Deut. 21.8. So we shown before out of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that the end of an oath is the confirmation of a truth. Woe therefore unto them that use it, and fear not to take it, for y^e confirmation of an untruth. Lastly, we may lawfully swear to justify our religion, and to bind our selves thereby unto his worship. When men grow cold and careless, or stand wavering and halting between two opinions, as if they knew not whether they should worship God, or *Baal*: we may strengthen our selves, and confirm our hearts in the purity of religion; as in the days of *Asa*, *they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul: that whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman: and they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets.* These are the chief ends of an oath: and therefore in every Christian Commonwealth it ought to have place: without which many evils would lie hidden and unknown, many men would be hindered in their right, and many good duties would be vnperformed. It is a good duty to testify our subjection to our Princes and Magistrates. It is a good duty to give assurance to men of our faithfulness in keeping covenants. It is a good duty to end controversies, and thereby to become peacemakers. It is a good duty to bind our selves not to start back from our holy religion & profession, but to continue constant unto the end: all which are the benefits that proceed from an oath.

Lastly, the adjoined properties of an oath, are to be considered. For as every oath is not unlawful, so every oath is not lawful: & therefore we are to mark, what are lawful, & what unlawful. Those are lawful that disagree not with God's word: those are unlawful that are contrary to it. The lawful oaths are undertakē of such things as are true, certainly known, possible, godly, necessary, profitable, weighty and worthy so great a confirmation. If these or any one of them be wanting, the oath becometh wicked: if they concur and meet together, so that we be duly prepared thereunto, it ought to be performed. On y^e other side, if the matters undertaken be false, or uncertain, or unknown, or impossible, or unprofitable, or unnecessary, or wicked, or frivolous and light, the oath is unlawful, and to perform it, is to add sin to sin, as we noted before. For he that sweareth to perform that which is false, maketh God that is truth witness of an untruth: he that taketh an oath o^r uncertain things, sweareth with an evil conscience, and considereth not what he doth, neither regardeth the

presence, the power, and punishment of God, when he presumeth to make God a witness of the things which he knoweth not whether they be truth or untruth: he that taketh an oath of any wicked thing, maketh God to favor and approve that which he hath forbidden in his Law, and is flatly contrary to himself: whosoever taketh an oath of impossible things, mocketh God and man to their faces, forasmuch as he cannot have a purpose and resolution to perform that which he speaketh and sweareth. He that taketh an oath lightly, declareth that he hath no reverence or fear of God before his eyes. And this is a most certain rule, that whosoever commonly sweareth, commonly forsweareth, or at least will make no bones of it, if he see any advantage to come by it: because he that maketh no conscience of the one, will not make any of the other. Thus we have handled y^e doctrine of oaths: let us now make conscience of them, & take heed we take not the Name of God in vain. He is jealous of his honor and glory, let us not abuse his patience. Though *he be slow to anger, yet he is great in power*: and albeit he bear long, & forbear much, yet he will not clear the wicked. Although Princes do not make statutes against it, yet the statute law of God hath decreed against it, and condemned it, & set a great penalty upon the breach of it. We have sundry laws y^t none abuse our names: but we have none for y^e preservation of God's Name, and therefore God will look to it, and take order for it. No commandment hath had more visible judgments executed vpon the breakers of it then this. The plague of God shall not depart from his house that is a swearer, one judgment or other shall overtake him: and if he do escape, the greater torment is reserved for him in the life to come The Prophet *Zacharias* telleth us, y^t God will *consume the timber and stones of his house*.

The son of the Israelitish woman *that blasphemed the Name of the Lord and cursed*, is brought forth without the campe, and stoned to death, Levite. 24.14, 15. and thereupon a Law established, *Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin*, It is lamentable to consider the wretchedness of profane men, notwithstanding the greuousnesse of this sin. Many are of such a ruffian-like spirit, that they fear not to tear in pieces the Lord of life, and to crucify again the Son of God, as much as in them lieth. We our selves are jealous of our own names, and the names of our parents and posterity: no marvel then if God be exceeding jealous over himself. If we will not glorify him, he will glorify himself, and his Name in our destruction. He may wink at us for a time, as also at our manifold and monstrous oaths, but he hath not forgotten them; he keepeth a book of accounts as a register against us, and when the great day of the Lord shall come, he will bring forth the records, and set our sins in order before us. Let us not think to escape, *because sentence is not speedily executed*: the more he delayeth, the more he hoardeth up punishment for us. The longer the arrow is in drawing, the deeper it will pierce when it is shot out against us. He suffereth them to live in security for a time, but they shall taste of severity in the end, Job 24.23. and 21.30. The wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, & they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.

23 And the Priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall blot them out with the bitter water.

24 And he shall cause the woman to drink the bitter water that causeth the curse: and the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter.

25 Then the Priest shall take the jealousy offering out of the woman's hand, and shall wave the offering before the Lord, and offer it upon the Altar.

26 And the Priest shall take an handful of the offering, even the memorial thereof, and burn it upon the Altar, and afterward shall cause the woman to drink the water.

Hitherto we have seen the things that go before the trial: now we come to such as are more nearly joined with it, which are these. He must write the curses in a book, and then blot them out with the waters of bitterness before remembered. But before the woman drink of the waters, he must take the offering out of her hand, and wave it before the Lord, and then offer it unto the Lord. Lastly, he is to burn a part of it upon the altar, and afterward cause the woman to drink the water.

[Object.] Here the question may be asked, wherefore the curse must be written, and afterward blotted out? If it must be blotted out, what need it to be written? If it must be written, why should it be blotted out? I answer, [Answer.] it was written to note out the stableness of God's judgments, and the certainty of his truth. And therefore also it was uttered in words, expressed in actions, and established by writing. In word, of the adjuration: in work, of the drinking up of the water: in writing, of the whole fact, as it was done before the Lord. Nevertheless, this writing was so extant, that it continued not long, but was so clean defaced that none could read it; because God would not have the remembrance of such filthy causes and ielouses, and suspicions to remain to posterity, lest any be inflamed with the like passion, and so bring into imitation such like practices.

[Verse 23.24, &c. *And the Priest shall write these curses, &c.* We see in this place the former ceremonies, and circumstances farther urged and pressed near to the conscience of her that was suspected and stood before the Lord to be tried. She is caused and commanded to drink of these waters prepared for this purpose. These waters that cause the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter.

This is the means that God will use to manifest things that yet are hidden in secret, and such as should bring an heavy judgment upon her that was guilty. We learn from hence, that whoredom is always punished of God, and never escapeth unpunished. Howsoever adultery be not regarded among men, and thought either no sin, or a little and venial sin, yet God findeth it out, and ceaseth not to plague and punish it both temporally and eternally, both in this life, and in the life to come.

This we see set forth before us at large throughout the whole book of God. What was the cause that brought the flood upon the old world, and swept away the inhabitants thereof? was it not for their uncleanness, and the lusts of their eyes, and the looseness of their life?

The like we might say of Sodom and Gomorrhah, and the cities about them, *who giving themselves once to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.* When Balaam was not suffered to curse the people of God, he gave the Moabites and Midianites this damnable counsel, to allure them to commit fornication; by which means many perished, as we shall show afterward in the 25 chapter of this book: whereunto also the Apostle alludeth, 1 Cor. 10.8. when he saith, *Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.* It must needs be a grievous sin that brought down so grievous a judgment. A like fearful example we have in the book of Judges, when the Levites wife was abused unto death, there followed the destruction of the beniamites, so that *there fell of them five and twenty thousand,* & almost one whole tribe of Israel was wanting. This is it which the Lord threatened to his people, Levite. 18.24.25 20. *Ye shall not defile yourselves in any of these things: (among which this was one, to defile themselves with their neighbors wife by carnal copulation) for in all these, the nations are defiled, which I will cast out before you, and the land is defiled, therefore I will visit the wickedness thereof upon it, and the land shall vomit out her inhabitants.* The Prophets are full in all places of the like threatenings. There is a notable testimony to this purpose, Ier. 5.7, 8, 9. where the Lord complaineth of this iniquity, and of the abuse of his manifold benefits, *Though I fed them to the full, yet they committed adultery, and assembled themselves by companies in the harlots houses: they rose up in the morning like fed horses, every man neyed after their neighbors wife: shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? shall not my soul be avenged on such a natiō as this?* We read in the book of Genesis, that when Pharaoh at the commendation of his Courtiers had taken Abraham's wife into his house, *the Lord plagued him and his house with great plagues,* and they ceased not until he had restored her again, and given his servants commandment to do him no hurt.

The like we might also speak of Abimelech the king of Gerar, when he also sent and took her, though he had not yet come near her, but only purposed evil, yet *the Lord came to him in a dream by night, and said unto him, Behold, thou art but dead, because of the woman which thou hast taken, for she is a man's wife.* So then there is ordained for all adulterers and fornicators both temporal and eternal punishments. These sins shall bring a man to beggary, *even to a morsel of bread,* Prov. 6.26 they shall root out his house, destroy his posterity, consume his flesh, waste kingdoms, yea shut out of God's kingdom, and bring to the condemnation of the devil; forasmuch as no unclean thing shall enter into the heavens, but all murderers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and whoremongers shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

[Reason 1] The reasons hereof are these. First, the wrath of God is kindled against such. In his favor is happiness, but if his wrath be kindled but a little, blessed are all that trust in him. For this cause the Apostle saith, Ephe. 5.6. *Let no man deceive you with vain words, for, because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.* In the words going before he had shown, that no whoremonger, or unclean person hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God; the reason is, because such lie under the heavy wrath of God. He is angry with them, and therefore woe unto them. If the child see the father angry with him, how is he grieved? what saith the Lord unto Moses, concerning the sin of Myriam

his sister? *If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days?* And the Apostle to the Hebrews, chap. 12.9. *We have had the fathers of our bodies which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?* What subject can bear the displeasure of a Prince? *The fear of a king, saith Solomon, is like the roaring of a Lyon,* Prov. 19.12. and 20.2. and 16.14. *who so provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul.* If the lyon hath roared, who would not fear? as testifieth y^e Prophet. Seeing then the wrath of a king is as messengers of death, what shall we think the wrath of the King of kings to be? *who is even a consuming fire,* Hebr. 12.29. and devoureth all as straw and stubble before him.

Secondly, it appeareth to be a grievous sin, because it is worse then theft, as Solomon [Reason 2] maketh the comparison, Prov. 6.30.32. *Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul, when he is hungry, &c. but whoso committeth adultery with a woman, lacketh understanding: he that doth it destroyeth his own soul.* It is an odious name to be called a thief: but it is more odious to be called an whoremaster. A thief when he hath stolen is carried to the gallows: but the adulterer deserveth it much more. What an horrible offense is it to destroy a man's own soul? we pity him that layeth violent hands upon his own body, and killeth himself. Who doth not account *Saul*, and *Achitophel*, and *Judas* most infamous, who perished with their own hands? but the adulterer doth a thousand times worse, he destroyeth his own soul, which is a greater price then the body.

Thirdly, adultery and uncleanness defile [Reason 3] the land: not only the persons and the houses, but whole cities and countries, until all become abominable, and the land become full of sin: and therefore no marvel though it be punished of God. To this purpose the Lord speaketh in the Law of Moses, Levite. 19.29. *Do not prostitute thy daughter to cause her to be a whore, lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness.* This sin is of an infectious nature above other: suffer it but a little▪ and it will quickly increase, like fire that is kindled in dry wood, which suddenly taketh hold, and easily passeth from one to another until the whole be enflamed.

Fourthly, we must know what our calling [Reason 4] is. The Gentiles that knew not God, and were ignorant of his law, defiled themselves with these abominations, and were cast out before his face: for the land did spew them out as loathsome. But we have learned better things, and God hath vouchsafed us greater mercy; he hath called us to be an holy people to himself, and redeemed us that we should serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives. This the Apostle noteth, 1 Thess. 4.3, 4, 5, 7. *This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication, that everyone of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God, &c. for God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.* To this we shall add sundry other reasons afterward, when we make use of this doctrine.

[Use 1] This serveth to teach us sundry instructions both touching our knowledge, and concerning our obedience. First, let no man flatter himself in this sin. It is accounted of the greatest sort, a small and sleight matter, a venial sin, a trick of youth. Such scoffers as these, it seemeth, were in y^e Apostles times, but now they are more common, as the sin is more

commonly practiced, and aboundeth everywhere. This doth the Apostle declare, 1 Cor. 6.9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate shall inherit the kingdom of God.* It is a fire that shall devour to destruction, and bring strange punishments upon the workers of such iniquities, Job 31.3.12. This serveth to reprove diverse sorts of men: first, such as think fornication to be a thing indifferent, and no great matter to be stood upon. But is it a thing indifferent unto us, whether we ever come into God's kingdom or not? or is it a trick of youth to loose heaven, and to be banished from the comfortable presence of God? We shown before that whoredom is worse then theft, and to rob any of their chastity, is a thousand times more heinous then to take from them their money. It bringeth with it the heinous sin of idolatry. It spoileth a man's neighbor of an irrecoverable benefit that can never be repaired or restored, being once lost. It dishonoreth & embaseth the children y^t are so begotten, depriving them of the common right of inheritance that belongeth unto others, Deu. 23.2. It bringeth dullness and deadness of heart upon men and women, making them senseless in sin, and to rush without conscience into many, or rather into any other, as the Prophet *Hosea* teacheth, chap. 4.11. *Whoredom, and wine, and new wine, take away the heart.* He joineth together two sins that are near neighbors and very familiar one to another, to wit, uncleanness and drunkenness, which above all other brutish pleasures besot us, and bereave us of understanding, and reason, will and affections, so that we delight and take pleasure in nothing but in sensuality. The better the Lord doth feed us, and the more liberally he multiplieth his blessings upon us, the more we abuse them to wantonness, and spend them in voluptuousness. Such is our unthankfulness to God, that the more he enlargeth our prosperity, the more we kick against him, and lift up our heels to spurn at him that giveth us our meat in due season, and satisfieth our souls with marrow and fatness. Such is the great corruption of our natures, and the contagion of sin that dwelleth in us, that it infecteth God's good creatures, and turneth his benefits into curses. The more our gracious God doth remember us, the more ought we to remember him again: and the more he serveth us, the better ought we to serve him, the more zealous we should be of his glory, the more dutiful and diligent to please him in all things. We are like to the Sodomites; they inhabited a place very fruitful, it was *like the garden of God*, wherein *Adam* dwelt: howbeit they turned Paradise into hell, and abused all his good gifts, to pride, gluttony, drunkenness, wantonness, filthiness, and to all manner of unlawful and unnatural lusts. The more the Lord in mercy bestoweth upon us, the greater obedience we ought to yield unto him: and where he giveth greatest wages, he worthily and justly requireth the greatest work. Woe then unto such as give themselves over to the beastly pleasures of the flesh, that make wise men fools, and turn men into beasts, insomuch as men endued with common sense and natural reason may wonder at them. Their carnal lusts so blind their eyes that they run headlong into all mischiefs. They regard not their good names, neither care what other men think of them. They spend their strength and life upon harlots, they waste their bodies and consume them with foul and filthy diseases. They esteem them of greater excellency then any other; they cast off all care of their wives, of their children, and of their families, as if they were strangers or enemies unto them. They cut short their own days, and waste their substance, &

sometimes bring themselves to extreme beggary; and that which is more fearful then all these joined together and bound in a bundle, they damme and destroy their own souls.

Hence it is that the holy Scripture best able to define wisdom and folly, and to set down who are the greatest fools, doth by way of eminency and excellency, brand the sin of uncleanness with the title of folly, and calleth all adulterers fools. When *Jacob's* sons understood that *Shechem* had deflowered their sister, they were grieved and exceedingly offended at it, *because he had wrought folly in Israel*, Gen. 34.7. *Tamar* dissuading her brother from forcing and ravishing of her, useth this reason, *No such thing ought to be done in Israel, do not thou this folly*, 2 Sam. 13.12. *Solomon* is preferred before all the Princes that were before him, or should come after him for his singular wisdom, and he gave himself above others *to know wisdom and folly*: and therefore let us hear what he saith of it. In the sixth chapter of the Proverbs, he teacheth, that *whosoever committeth adultery with a woman, lacketh understanding*. And in the chapter following, describing the leudnes of wanton persons, he saith, *At the window of my house I looked through the casement, and beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youthes, a young man void of understanding, &c.* yea, such is his resoluteness to go forward, and madness that infatuateth him, that he compareth him to an ox led to the slaughter, and as a fool to the correction of the stocks: and such is their rage and violence in their distempered and disordered lusts, that *Jeremiah* compareth them to *fed horses*, because they neighed after their neighbors wives. Many there are that follow these follies, that think scorn to be ranged and marshalled among thieves, horses, dogs, and to have their impieties expressed with such comparisons: but we need crave no pardon of them, if we cal them as the Scripture calleth them, which knoweth who they are, and what they deserve, and by what names they are to be named. Let us now rip up these things afresh, and examine the difference between the judgment of the most pure and holy God, and the judgment of the impure & unclean men. They account whoredom and adultery to be kindly sins, tricks and toys of youth: but the glass that God setteth before our eyes maketh them look as ugly creatures and most deformed monsters, such as none should be enamored off. These fleshly lusts fight against our souls, and make continual war upon us, seeking to destroy us utterly. Is it a trick of youth to waste our bodies, and to bring upon our names a perpetual blot? Is it a thing indifferent unto us, whether we save our souls or destroy them? Is it indifferent unto us, whether we be reputed wise, or fools: men, or beasts: such as are made after the image of God, or pampered horses, unclean swine, and filthy dogs? Is it a venial sin to defile the land, and replenish it from one corner to another, with all wickedness? Let such take heed, lest in the end they find no pardon at the hands of God for these venial sins: and beware betimes lest these light offenses be so heavy a burden upon their hearts, that they weigh them down to hell. Then they shall find to their cost and sorrow, that it was the greatest folly in the world to run headlong into these evils, and to defer their repentance till it be too late.

Secondly, it reproveth such as live cunningly and secretly in these sins of uncleanness, and think if they can hide them from the eyes of men, and from the sight of the world, all is well, no hurt or harm shall befall unto them, and come upon them. If they profess Christian religion, and resort to the Church, and hear the word of God, and present themselves to the Lord's Table, they suppose they live in no danger, they account themselves as good

Christians as the best. This is a course taken to deceive our selves, and such do no better then make a covenant with death, and a league with hell, *Isaiah 28*. He hath delivered many threatenings in his word against this sin, which must needs be accomplished: because he is not as man that he should lie. It is in vain therefore to flatter our selves with the foolishness of security, or hope of secrecy, or the ignorance of men, or the darkness of the night, or the solitariness of the place, or the cunning of hypocrisy, or any other means of concealment, forasmuch as we have to do with God, before whose eyes all things are naked and open. This committing of sin in secret, and presuming to carry it away close, because no man seeth us, is on the one side to turn God into an idol, making him to sit idle in heaven, and on the other side to transform our selves into Atheists, as if God could be blinded and deceived of us. This made the Prophet to say, *Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I fly from thy presence? if I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there, &c. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me: yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee: for thou hast possessed my reins, thou hast covered me in my mothers womb.*

So then, where the knowledge of man faileth, and the hand of man ceaseth to execute punishment against this sin, God's eye taketh notice of it, and his justice will cause him to proceed against it, so that there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Many indeed are cunning hypocrites, and can deceive the faces of men: but they cannot so color their sins as to cozen God thereby, who will pluck off their vizards, and wash away their paintings, and open their disguisings, that the hollowness of their hearts shall be made manifest to all men.

The last reproof is of the Church of Rome, that erect a stews in all places where Popery is professed, and so warrant the toleration of fornication. The Law of God is manifest, *Deut. 23.17*. *There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be an whorekeeper of the sons of Israel.* God condemneth the thought, and therefore cannot allow the fact of simple fornication, for that were to make the spirit of God contrary to it self. All enticements and provocations unto sin are reprov'd, of which this is a principal. How then can he that boasteth of his Holiness warrant by the word of God the erection and continuance of his stews, albeit he gain thereby a yearly rent into his coffers? Or how could that monster and devil incarnate, *Sixtus* the fourth, set up a stews of both kinds, that is, of men and women, whereby he obtained some years 20000, and some years forty thousand duckats as a yearly pension, which those filthy persons paid for the free liberty of that sin? This was most base and beastly gain, though the man of sin think it sweet gain that is gotten by worse then the excrements of Rome. A man would think it most strange that they should open their mouths in defense of open sin and impiety: and yet many among them are not ashamed to become proctours for the stews. It is well known how commonly the Priests themselves resort unto such infamous places, & therefore no marvel if some of them shame not to open their mouths in defense of their own practice, among which are two of no small note among them, to wit, *Harding* and *Parsons*. *Harding* in his pretended confutation of the apology of the Church of England, calleth the stews a necessary evil for the avoiding of a greater mischief: and though (being charged) he dare not deny there be twenty thousand of that generation in

Rome that prostitute their bodies for gain, yet he excuseth them all, and telleth us that we are too young to controlle the city of Rome in her doings.

The like we might say of *Parsons*, for he in his confutation of *John Nichols* recantation, hath thought it a matter well beseeming his labors to handle this point at large (who is often said to have been under the Chirurgians hand for this sin) and so to justify the doings of himself and of his fellows. I will set down their reasons, that we may see, know them, and examine them, and disprove them. Nothing is so impious & wretched that some men will not go about to justify. It is well known that a Divine, a great Divine among them wrote a treatise in defense of Sodomy, as these do in defense of whoredom. And this is the deep judgment of God upon those that not only restrain but utterly forbid marriage to their Clergy, (which the Apostle calleth *the doctrine of devils*) to give them over both to defend and practice all kind of uncleanness. But let us see their reasons, whereby they would prove this evil to be necessary. [Object 1] First, they allege the heat of the country, and therefore not fit that Harlots should be banished from among them. I answer, [Answer.] this is no sufficient warrant to set up stews, no more then it is to marry many wives. It becometh not a Christian man, much less a professor of Divinity to hold, that where there is greatest heat, there may be greatest whoredom.

This is the rule of God's word, that wheresoever the greatest allurements and provocations are to any sin, there ought to be more watchfulness to cut off all occasions. And why I pray you might not they among the Indians justify the marrying and keeping of a multitude of wives, where the heat far surpasseth the heat of Rome, and of all Italy? or wherefore doth God restrain the Jews his own people from whoring and committing fornication, where the climate is as hot and much hotter then in Popish places where stews are erected? Doth whoredom defile the land, and is it a necessary evil? But enough of this reasonless reason, whereof I think the Popish sort are ashamed, if they have any shame or any reason left in them. A second argument is this, y^t a civil Magistrate, & consequently [Object 2] the Pope, may, for the avoiding of a greater inconvenience, tolerate and permit this sin, without fault and without being charged with any allowance of the sin it self. It is one thing to approve, and another to allow a thing; as God permitteth many wicked acts in the world, which notwithstanding he detesteth. I answer, [Answer.] the comparison is unequal, that I say not, it is blasphemous. It is the fearful judgment of God upon his enemies, to make such monstrous and misshapen conclusions. God hath a royal prerogative above his law, and is not subject unto it, but to the righteousness of his own will. He permitteth the abominations that are committed, that by his infinite power and wisdom he may turn all things to the glory of his mercy or justice. It is not so with the Magistrate, he must be obedient to the law of God, and all his authority is to be subject unto it: it is his office to punish known evil, and not to permit it: neither is he able to turn evil into good by his suffering of it. Besides, it will not follow from hence, to speak nothing of the Popes temporal jurisdiction, and of the right he claimeth to be a temporal Prince; neither can it any way justify his practice, who raiseth rents and taketh fines for bawdry, and therefore maketh himself no better then a bawde to whores and knaves, forasmuch as he maintaineth them, and they maintain him. They have

streets and houses assigned unto them where they shall dwell, and he taketh their money which they pay with ease, and live in bravery and excess with the rest.

Lastly▪ we may conclude from this reason, that Magistrates if they list, may permit all manner of wickedness, and suffer it to escape unpunished, and not be charged with the allowance of it. For if this reason do hold in one particular (God may permit, therefore the Magistrate may) it is good in all; which were to open a gap wide to all profaneness, Libertinism, Atheism, and Epicureanism. A third argument [Object] is this, a naughty thing may sometimes be necessary, and being necessary, and consequently impossible to be removed, it must needs be tolerated without fault, as they go about to prove by testimony of Christ, *there must be offenses*, Matth. 18.11. and of *Paul, there must be heresies*, 1 Corinth. 11.19. Here is a necessity of offenses and heresies, yet Christ and *Paul* were not in fault, neither did they allow heresies. I answer, [Answer] first I would know, whether they mean, every wicked thing, or only some wicked thing. I suppose they mean not in general, that every naughty thing is so necessary that it should be tolerated; for then they must speak plainly with the devils tongue, and openly utter his language. Do they then understand it of some naughty and wicked thing, that is necessary, and so to be tolerated? Then the reason must be framed in this manner, Some evil is necessary, and therefore to be suffered: but the stews is some evil that is necessary, and therefore the stews ought to be tolerated. Everyone meanly seen in the art of reasoning knoweth that: the form of this reason is stark naught, and neither necessary nor to be suffered: for of particulars nothing can follow. Again, they pervert and corrupt the meaning of Christ and his Apostle. Such things as cannot be avoided, may be accounted necessary according to the decree of God. When he purposeth to try his children, & to have them discerned from hypocrites, oftentimes evils, yea, even heresies break forth from the corruption of men. This is true, we confess: and so much the places prove and infer. So then we must distinguish of toleration, which is of two sorts, there is a toleration of necessity, and a toleration of negligence. The one is good, as when a Magistrate having a subject that committeth treason, or such heinous crime that he cannot punish by reason of his own weakness and his subjects power, this he must bear of necessity, because he hath no remedy; so *David* dealt toward *Joab*, when he had slain *Abner* with the sword, 2. Sam. 3.39 *I am this day weak, though anointed king: and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me: the Lord shall reward the doer of evil, according to his wickedness*. Where we see he tollerateth the evil which he could not remedy, and referreth the execution of justice unto God that was of ability and power to punish it. So may the Magistrate bear with patience for a certain season, not failing in his duty: howbeit this must not be always, for when there is no such cause to suffer a known sin to escape unpunished, he may not wink at it and bear with it. There is also a toleration that is evil, which is done of negligence, carelessness, and overmuch lenity and indulgence; this is no necessary toleration, as when *Eli* bare with his sons in his old age, & did not chastise them for their offenses; this way do they offend, that punish not at all those that are to be punished, or punish lightly such as are to be punished severely. This toleration of negligence cannot be implied from the former places of Scripture, seeing that *to justify the wicked and to condemn the innocent are both of them equally an abomination unto the Lord*. Proverbs 17.15.

Lastly, I would gladly understand, whether our adversaries would reason thus, Heresies must be, therefore tolerate heresies, and suffer heretics to remain: therefore burn not heretics, confute not heresies, but let them alone? If they dare not reason thus, why do they press us with the like consequent? if they will needs conclude after this manner, what wrong have they done to our brethren, and how much innocent blood have they shed in the late days of persecution? O that this argument had been coined and urged in Queen *Mary's* days among us, or might now prevail with the Spanish Inquisition: then should not *the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, cry out with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood, on them that dwell on the earth?* The last argument is this, that the Protestants permit usury by their laws, and do not punish [Object 4] men for taking ten in the hundred: which is done to meet with a greater inconvenience or mischief: and so doth the Pope with his stews.

Hereunto we may add, that which *Parsons* patcheth together after his trifling manner, namely, that we allow not the Catholics absenting themselves from the Church, and yet we make them pay for their recusancy? I answer, [Answer.] to the first instance, that if we punish not all biting gain, or suffer the poor to be oppressed, we cannot be excused, but are to be blamed: forasmuch as the word of God forbiddeth to oppress the poor by usury, Exo. 22.25. Levite. 25.35, 36. Deu. 23.19. Touching the second instance or example that he giveth of taking a fine of Catholics by way of punishment for not coming to Church, as the Pope doth a yearly pension to punish the harlots: it is a very unequal comparison, and he dealeth with us as in the former reason. It is of necessity, saith Christ, that scandals must come, therefore the stews must be permitted. That is one false conclusion. Another is like unto it, It must be permitted, therefore it must be let alone without punishment: so that they understand a thing that must needs come, to be all one with this, a thing of necessity must be winked at, and left without punishment. So touching their Recusants, the comparison is many ways faulty. First, if the penalty were duly inflicted upon these his friends, it would pinch them & sting them much more, then the payment which the Pope receiveth from the stews: forasmuch as the Curtezans make such a gain of that filthy market and sale of their bodies, as that they pay that money with ease, such is the custom they have coming in. Secondly, the Papists are not suffered openly to have their Masses, nor to exercise idolatry, nor to have places allowed them in one certain place in all cities and countries, as harlots are permitted to commit whoredom freely, and to recover their hire by action at the Law, in case any deny to pay the price agreed upon between them. If they had free liberty given them to practice their superstitions, it were somewhat that is said of them: but forasmuch as they are restrained, the comparison holdeth not. Thirdly, the Papists cannot make an apparent gain above that which they pay for their not coming to Church, and therefore it differeth much from the Popes punishment, who allow them the means to enrich themselves by the overplus that they retain to themselves. Before we shut up this point, let us use some reasons against this sufferance of open whoredom, not to be suffered in any Christian Commonwealth and therefore wheresoever the Gospel of Christ is openly professed, and freely received, the stews and brothel houses are pulled down, and are dispersed and scattered away as clouds before the Sun.

First, no Magistrate may suffer any sin ordinarily unpunished frō generation to generation, and take a yearly rent for it, which impeacheth the glory of God, hurteth y^e Church, and annoyeth the Common-wealth: but to suffer unchaste women in a certain place, and to permit the people without danger of law, or fear of punishment to resort unto them, is ordinarily to suffer sin unpunished; therefore the Magistrate, who is the Minister of God, bearing his person, and ministering his justice, and executing his sentence, may not, and cannot without contempt of God suffer unchaste women in his kingdoms & dominions: forasmuch as *he carrieth not his sword in vain*, but is an avenger in wrath to him that doeth evil.

Again as no man in general, so no Magistrate in particular may do evil, that good may come thereof, *whose damnation is just*, saith the Apostle, Rom. 3.8. But to permit a stews and to take a rent (not one half of their foul and filthy gains) to the end that adultery may be forborne, is to do evil that good may come of it; forasmuch as to commit any sin is to do evil, and to fail in anything is to transgress the Law, and not to punish when we ought to punish, as we see in *Saul* that spared the Amalekites, 1 Sam. 15. and in *Ahab* that suffered *Benhadad* to escape out of his hand whom the Lord had appointed to utter destruction, 1 King. 20.42. Therefore no Magistrate may suffer whoredom to go unpunished, under what color and pretence, to what end and purpose so ever he do it, though it should be to remedy a greater evil

Moreover it is utterly unlawful to lie, albeit it might redowne to the glory of God, Rom. 3.7. and therefore I may not suffer my brother to lie, if by lawful means I may keep him from it. We may not in God's cause speak iniquity or use deceit, Job 13.7.8. *Will you speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? will ye accept his persō? will ye cōtend for God?* Much less therefore accept the person for avoiding adultery, and take yearly rent of the stews.

Lastly, no Magistrate may openly suffer that to be, which God hath expressly said in his word shall not be: but it is expressly and directly *forbidden to suffer a whore in Israel, and to take the wages of an whore for his house*, and therefore for the Church. This sin is abominable to the Lord, and draweth down his wrath wheresoever it is committed, and therefore albeit they say that in judgment they do not allow it, yet in the judgment of God and his word they maintain it; and so much the rather, because the prohibition of marriage in sundry Orders beareth sway among them. What thing will not these men presume and be bold to defend that spare not to open their mouths and sharpen their pens to maintain incontinent living and confessed filthiness? Or when may we think they will begin to reform the Church of God, that in so long a time cannot redress their open stews? It was truly said by *Bernard*, *Take once from the Church honorable marriage and the bed undefiled, and thou fillest the same full with Brothel-houses, with keeping Concubines, with incests, with pollutions, with wantons, and with all sorts of filthy persons: how then is not he guilty of these horrible abominations that forbiddeth marriage, yet calleth himself the Vicar of Christ, the head of the Church, and the holy One of Israel?* We must abandon vain and vicious remedies which are more grievous then the manifest diseases. *Tertullian* testifieth truly, that *stews are execrable and accursed*

before God. And the Emperor Justinian notwithstanding all forged necessity & falsely named policy, straitly commandeth that harlots be banished out of all towns.

Secondly, seeing God is the punisher of all [Use 2] whoredom and uncleanness, it is our duty to eschew harlots, as the most dangerous creatures in the world. It is well said of Solomon, Prov. 2.18. *Their house tendeth to death, and their paths unto the dead,* And afterward chap. 23.27. he saith, *An whore is a deep ditch, and a strange woman is as a narrow pit:* and therefore it is good to keep our selves from falling or entering into the same. So in another place he describeth the practices, the allurements, and the deceits of such, Prov. 9.15.16.17.18. *She sitteth at the door of her house on a seat, in the high places of the city, to call passengers who go right in their ways; who so is simple, let him turn in hither and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Stollen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret, is pleasant; but he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depth of hell.* Such naughty women are called everywhere in this book *strangers*, though they be too familiar and well known, and thrust themselves into the company of others; because they should be strangers unto us, and not of our acquaintance. There is nothing more common in them, then to entice young men by wanton gestures, lasciuious words, and plausible persuasions, to dalliance and delight: It is a great favor of God to be preserved from their baits, and kept from their snares, yea, it is a far greater mercy to be secured from harlots, then to be kept from the pestilence: & they show greater wisdom that shun and pass by their houses and company, then they that forsake places & persons that are infected with some dangerous and deadly disease. Everyone is forward to beware he come not near any pest-house for fear of his life: but if we assemble into harlots houses, we run in danger of soul & body. It is an easy matter to fall into a pit where a man may be drowned, but it is not so easy to get out of it. The wanton woman is as a deep ditch, and a narrow pit, and a dangerous hole, whereinto a man may slip hastily & at unawares; but he shall hardly come out from thence, or deliver himself, without the special goodness of God, pulling him as it were out of the fire, and setting his feet in safety. For as a thief lurketh in a den or wood to get a prey, so doth she lie in wait, and useth baits to steal away the hearts of men, and thereby prevaieth mightily with many in the world. Among all dangers, this is not the least that Solomon speaketh of, *None that go unto her, return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.* These words do not absolutely deny repentance to them that are fall, or shut the gate of mercy against them that have sinned, but the meaning is, that few, yea very few escape destruction, & return to salvation, because they sildome repent. It is a very rare thing to see a penitent adulterer: they leave the sin when it leaveth them, because they can follow it no longer, but they do not repent of it, they do not sorrow for it, they do not fly from it. Hence it is, that you shall hear many old men, whose strength is decayed, whose bodies are withered, whose feet are already entered in a manner into their graves, laugh heartily at the remembrance of their tricks of youth, and talk wantonly & filthily of the pranks which they have played; so that from the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh, and their corrupt communication testifieth, that they never soundly repented of their uncleanness. No marvel therefore if the wise man peremptorily declare, that few or none of those that are given over to this lewdness of life, do come to repentance: for albeit some few find grace, yet in comparison of such as run on headlong, & live securely

to the end in their wickedness, they may worthily be said to be none at all. They are so blinded & besotted, that they cannot see their own filthiness; they are so dull and deaf, that they cannot hear those that admonish them, nay they hate those that reprove them. The Apostle Paul exhorting the Corinthians to *fly fornication*, which was most common in those days, and esteemed a slight or no sin at all, useth many notable reasons of great weight & importance, & worthy to be considered of us. One reason or motive is this, that our bodies are the Lord's, and must be serviceable unto him, *The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord*. Wherefore hath he given to us our body, but y^t we should serve him in our body? We are not to yield *our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin*, but we ought to yield our selves unto God, as those y^t are alive from the dead, and so make our members as instruments of righteousness unto him. First therefore the Apostle reasoneth frō the end of our creation. Secondly, the Lord Jesus is ordained & appointed to be the Redeemer & Savior, not only of the soul, but also of the body, & therefore he saith, *the Lord for the body*. Fornication and sanctification cannot stand together, but are contrary one to the other, so that they cannot abide in one subject. Christ came into the world to this end that he might redeem our bodies by his death out of y^e power of the devil, and sanctify them by his Spirit. If then we give our selves as servants to obey the lusts of the flesh, we make void the glorious work of our redemption, wherein mercy, justice, and truth kissed one another. For herein we see the truth of God's promise accomplished, that *the seed of the woman should bruise the serpents head*: and the truth of his threatening fulfilled, that man offending, should die the death. Herein we may behold y^e wonderful justice of God, that because man had sinned, man must be punished; for otherwise he had not been a just God. Lastly, hereby appeareth the unspeakable mercy of God toward mankind; who, albeit his justice were such, that rather than sin should go unpunished, he would punish it in his Son, *who bare our sins in his body, and made intercession for our transgressions*, yet found out a way how to redeem us, when we cast our selves headlong into all misery, and made our selves subject to the greatest thralldom that ever was. We are delivered from the hands of our enemies, sin, the world, and the devil, y^t we should be holy unto him that hath called us. The third motive is drawn from the glorious resurrection of our bodies, as the former was frō the gracious redemption of our bodies. If we would have them live with him forever y^t shall raise thē up, we must abstain from filthy lusts w^c defile the body; & therefore the Apostle saith, *God hath both raised up the Lord, & will also raise us up by his own power*. The author of this great benefit and wonderful work, is God, w^c passeth and exceedeth man's reason. Hence it is, that he putteth us in mind of his power, because he is almighty. If it were not impossible unto him to create our bodies out of the dust of the earth, why shall it not be possible to raise them out of the dust again? Nay, if he were able to make thē of that w^c was nothing, inasmuch as the Apostle teacheth, y^t *the things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear*; how much more shall he be able to give to everyone his body w^c he had before? Again, he teacheth, y^t God hath raised already the Lord Christ frō death to life, & therefore will raise us also. We are the members, he is y^e head. Therefore if the head be alive, he will no• leave the members dead, so y^t if he be risen frō y^e dead, we shall rise again. How thē shall we that are appointed to glory, defile our bodies beastly lusts, the end and wages whereof is shame and ignominy? Seeing then Christ Jesus hath determined to make our bodies glorious, let us not make them foul and infamous,

for as much as the reward of fornication is shame, not glory. If then we look that these frail and mortal bodies should be partakers of immortality at the last day, let us keep them as fit vessels to receive honor and glory, and everlasting life. It is no small offense to pollute the body of Christ with filthiness and uncleanness, which God raiseth frō the dead, and maketh it sit most glorious in the heavens. The fourth motive to work in us the detestation, and to lay before us the danger of whoredom, is this; the members of Christ are not to be made the members of an harlot: but our bodies are the members of Christ, therefore we ought not to make them the members of an harlot. Now the bodies of the faithful are called the members of Christ, because Christ is the head of the church, and performeth the office of an head unto it, into which all the elect are grafted by faith. If any man were asked, whether he would willingly rent or pull away a member from Christ's own body, to make it the member of an harlot, he would utterly deny it, he would be ashamed of it, he would be ready to defy him that should charge him with it. Howbeit, the Apostle feareth not to lay that imputation upon such as commit fornication; they separate themselves quite away from Christ, so that it must needs be a deadly sin which parteth and pulleth us from him. Wherefore he saith, *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.* Hereby then we must learn, how heinous whoredom is, because we are the members of Christ; but by it we make our bodies the members of an harlot: which is as much in effect, as to turn Christ himself into an harlot, and to make him a whoremaster, then which nothing is more reproachful and dishonorable unto the glory and majesty of Christ. For *the Church is the mystical body of Christ*, w^c he hath redeemed with his blood, whereof he is the head; and by his Spirit so joineth it to him, that it is made one spiritual body with him. So then, every faithful person is one member for his part of the body of the Church, and of Christ the head, joined with him by faith, & quickened by his Spirit. He y^t joineth himself therefore to an harlot is made one body with an harlot, so that of the members of Christ, he shall make them the members of an harlot, and thereby cease to be any longer the members of Christ; then which, what can be more dangerous to us, or more reprochful to Christ, or more dishonorable to God? The fifth motive to dissuade from fornication, is because this sin is committed against the body, whereas all other sins are without the body. He that committeth whoredom defileth and abuseth his own body, and leaveth a proper stain and blot upon it, making it both the subject and the object of his sin. It is not so with the thief, or the murderer or the slanderer: they deal with the life, with the goods, and with the good name of another. But the whore-master useth his body as the instrument, and sinneth against his own body more then any other. Hence it is that the Apostle saith, *Fly fornication every sin that a man doth, is without the body: but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body.* If a man kill himself, he hurteth indeed, his own body, howbeit he useth sword or knife, or fire, or water, or some such like instrument which is out of the body: but the fornicator both useth and abuseth his own body, he maketh it either instrument or object, or subject, or all of them.

The sixth motive that is used, is this; That our body is the Temple of the holy Ghost: whereupon the Apostle would have it inferred, that a fornicator is a sacrilegious person, because he hurteth and wrongeth the temple of God. But *Whosoever defileth the Temple of God,*

him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple we are, 1 Cor. 3. ver. 17. Temples are ordained and appointed for holiness and pure actions, and are not therefore to be profaned with filthiness, forasmuch as they be consecrated and dedicated to God which is most pure and holy. To this purpose he speaketh and argueth, *What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?* If our bodies be Temples, they ought to be kept clean and decent of us. The Apostle nameth the body in this place, as he did also before, in regard of the matter he hath in hand, to the end he might withdraw us from the defiling and poluting of our bodies. We heard already, that our bodies are the members of Christ, & here he saith, *Our bodies are the Temples of the holy Ghost;* not that our souls are excepted and exempted, for they are made partakers of Christ, and we are the Temples of God in soul and body, as he speaketh in the second Epistle, *Ye are the Temples of the living GOD.* 2 Cor. 6, 16. If he dwell in us, let us beware of fornication, because he will not inhabit and abide in defiled bodies. He is the spirit of purity, therefore we must be pure: he is the spirit of holiness, therefore we ought to be holy, otherwise we are not his. He will dwell in a clean house, therefore not in a sty of unclean and filthy swine. Let us take heed, we grieve not the spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. Eph. 4. The Gentiles knew by the light of nature, that they ought to keep their temples swept and garnished. Christ whipped out of y^e temple such as bought & sold in it: yet what are these, but lime & stone, and such corruptible stuff: how much more then ought we to look to our selves, our souls & bodies, y^t we do not defile them, and God destroy them. The Temple of *Jerusalem* was burned, and the Ark carried away for the sins of the people: there is no holiness of place can privilege us, if sound Religion be wanting in them that inhabit it. Thus was it also at the destruction of *Jerusalem* foretold in Scripture, after the Gospel of Christ was preached, the abomination of desolation was set in the holy place, so that one stone was not left upon another that was not thrown down. If then, God spare not most holy places consecrated to his service, thorough their sin that abuse them, let us not doubt, but our own bodies shall be smitten by the hands of God, except we keep them pure and undefiled.

The last motive to keep us from this sin, is to know that we are wholly God's, and not our own, to do what we list, or to dispose of our selves. We are Christ's, therefore it is our duty to glorify him by living chastely and continently. He hath redeemed us from the power of the devil, by paying the price of his precious blood, as of a Lamb unspotted. God hath good right to challenge us as his own, forasmuch as he bought us at a dear rate, and we cost him more then a world, nay a thousand worlds of riches and treasures. Christ gave his life for us, a price far greater then all men caⁿ conceive. For what can be imagined so precious, as the dignity, the majesty, & the glory of God, which were all after a sort, changed and diminished, when he took our nature upon him, and suffered in it the cursed and shameful death of the cross. Therefore it is that the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 6, 19, 20. *Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, for they are God's.* It is the property of Justice to give to everyone his own, and not to use that which is another man's as his own. Our bodies are another man's right, therefore we may not abuse them to filthiness at our own carnal pleasures. We have not authority over our selves, to dispose of our selves; therefore we are as another man's servants. We belong to Christ and to GOD,

therefore we must live according to his will. Christ hath bought us with a great price and hath redeemed us from hell, from Satan, from death, and from sin, therefore we be Christ's; we pertain as a proper possession to him, and no man can lay claim unto us. Let us live as cometh his servants, our profession, our calling, and our redemption: but they that follow after fornication serve his enemy, forasmuch as our sins were the enemies that put him to death.

[Use 3] Lastly, let all married persons live chastely, and keep the vessels of their bodies in holiness and in honor. There is indeed a twofold chastity, one of the single life, the other of the married. Chastity of single life, is with all carefulness, with fasting and prayer, to keep their minds, affections, and bodies in holiness. Chastity in marriage is, when the pure and holy use of wedlock is observed. Hence it is that the Apostle saith, Heb. 13, 4. *Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.* Matrimony is an holy league or covenant, as it is called in the Scripture. If a man forge or falsify a covenant that is made in bargain and sale, either by conueying some secret title or interest to himself, or by suborning false Witnesses, it is, and ought, to be sharply and severely punished. But behold by an unclean life, the chief and most holy Covenant that can be in the world, is broken and violated. A solemn declaration is made of the faith that the husband oweth to the wife, and the wife to her husband: they come into y^e church (as it were) into the presence, and before the face of God, they call upon him to be a witness and Judge, if either of them keep not promise: yet oftentimes all this vanisheth away and cometh to nothing. Hence it is that the Lord complaining against the people of Israel, and convincing them of whoring, and such like wickedness, threateneth them, that *Therefore the Land shall mourn, and everyone that dwelleth therein, shall be cut off, with the Beasts of the field, and with the fowls of the heaven, and also the Fishes of the sea, shall be taken away.* Hosea chap. 4. and the 2. & 3. verses.

This sin spreadeth far, like a foul and unclean Leprosy, and catcheth hold of one part after another, till the whole body be defiled; like to fire, that being once kindled, runneth from one place to another, until all be consumed. There is an *adultery of the heart*, Math. 5, 28. condemned by our Savior Christ, which being once entertained, is compared to a *burning* or boiling, 1 Cor. 7.9. that so disturbeth and disquieteth the soul, and the exercises of the soul, that it cannot suffer a man to serve the Lord in a quiet mind and a pure conscience. There is an *adultery of the eyes*, which are as the windows of the heart, 2 Peter chap. 2. verse 14. as Saint *Peter* speaketh of fleshly minded men, *Whose eyes were full of Aduiterie.* This made *Job* to make a Covenant with his eyes, that they went not astray, and caused him to go astray. The looking after a woman to lust after her, is called by Christ, the committing of Adultery. And the Prophet reproveth the daughters of Zion, because *they walked without-stretched necks, and wanton eyes*, Esa. chap 3, verse 13. There is an *adultery of the ears*, the which we fall into, when we listen unto unchaste and unclean talk uttered by others, when we have itching ears after it, and are content to hear it, and yet show no dislike unto it, no hatred of it. There is another *adultery*, and that is of the tongue; when we take delight in unchaste speeches, and filthy Ribaldry, by which, the hearts of others are corrupted, and our own are <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> manifested to be corrupt already, forasmuch as *from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*, Mat. 12. What religion soever we profess, it is in

vain, we deceive our own hearts, except we learn to bridle our own tongues, I am. 1, 26. And the Apostle giveth this exhortation, Ephes. 4, 29. that *no corrupt communication should proceed out of our mouths, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.* And in another place he teacheth, that *evil communications corrupt good manners.* Lastly, there is an adultery which is outward in fact, and is called sin finished: all the former are as steps & degrees leading to this, and in the end bring it forth as a birth which they have conceived. For wherefore do unclean persons nourish in themselves the adultery of the heart, of the eyes, of the ears, and of the tongue, but because they purpose to commit the outward act when time, and place, and person, and other occasions shall be offered unto thē? But we must be careful to avoid all these kinds, which should not be named among Christians, *as becometh the Saints of GOD.* No marvel therefore, if this wickedness be punished of God with heavy judgments, as that which in an high degree sinneth against God, against our neighbor, and against our selves, as we have noted in sundry particulars before. We sin against God, because we resist and withstand his will, whose pleasure it is that we bring forth the fruits of sanctification; we pollute and profane the holy ordinance of Matrimony; we make the members of Christ the members of an harlot, and so seek to draw (as much as in us lieth) our blessed Savior into a filthy fellowship of our sin; we defile the Temples of the holy Ghost, and turn them into stews. Against our neighbor, because this sin is not committed alone, but we draw some other to be partakers with us in the same wickedness & punishment; we sin against the wife or husband of the married-party, whom we wrong in the chiefest treasure & possession that she or he hath: we sin against the fruit of our own body, whom we disgrace & brand with a note of perpetual infamy, which for the most part prove a degenerate brood through want of good-education, and especially thorough the secret judgment of God: we sin against our own families, which we oftentimes over-turn by defiling of them, & turn our houses into stews: we sin against the Cities, societies, & kingdoms where we abide, because we defile the land, and cause it to vomit out the inhabitants: we sin against the church of God, both by hindering the propagation thereof, which increaseth by *an holy seed*, and by causing it to be evil spoken of by others, as if it wer a company of unclean persons. Against our selves, because we make our bodies the instruments of sin and Satan: we weaken them, and make them subject to diverse diseases, and we plunge souls & bodies into the pit of hell, which burneth with fire and brimstone. Such then as are adulterers, do not go into hell alone, they carry other company with them. If then the judgments of poverty, beggary, infamy, infirmity, folly, and impenitency will not move us to make conscience of this sin, yet let this prevail with us, that thereby we destroy our own souls, and exclude our selves from his presence. Let us therefore be watchful over our own ways, let us pull up the root of this sin, and all other of the same sort, and mortify the deeds of the flesh, Col. 3, 5. Let us cut off all occasions that may draw us to them, as surfeiting, drunkenness, idleness, wantonness, profane company, and such like. And above all these things, let us observe these three things: First, let us remember that as God is holy, so he requireth an holy people to serve him. It is his will that we live in sanctification, so that *without holiness no man can see God*, or have fellowship with him, Heb. 12. Secondly, we must learn to fear God in his word, and mark the commandment that forbiddeth adultery. Nothing maketh us to fall into sin, but the forgetting of the Law, which saith, thou shalt not

sin. This stayed up *Joseph* in a strong temptation, which being yielded unto, did set before him a fair show and goodly train of all pleasures, profits, & honors; but being withstood, did threaten him with a multitude of miseries, hatred, poverty, sorrow, shame, imprisonment, destruction, and death it self: yet he eschewed the sin by this means, *Shall I do this, and sin against God?* The word of God must be made our wisdom and direction, our guide, and our counselor; it is able to deliver us frō the stranger that flatteteth with her words. This is it that *Solomon* setteth before us, *My son, keep thy fathers commandments, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck, &c. For the Commandment is a lamp, and the Law is light, &c. to keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman.* He teacheth, that the lips of a strange woman drop as an honey comb, and that her mouth is smoother then oil, but her end is bitter as worm-wood, and sharp as a two-edged sword: how then shall we be delivered from her, if the word of truth be not in our mouths, and that which is more, in our hearts, to rule and reform us, and to order our paths aright? Such as are ignorant of the word, are soonest over-taken, and they that have not the love and power of it dwelling in them. The foolish woman, that sitteth at the door of her house, and calleth the passengers that go right in their ways, maketh choice of such *as are simple and want understanding, to turn in unto her.*

Lastly, let us keep inviolable the Covenant of marriage, made in the presence of God, of Angels, and of men: let the married persons make one another y^e delight of their eyes, and the joy of their hearts, and be careful to perform the duties they owe one to another. And, as the unlawful & impure conjunction of man and woman is detested of God: so is holy matrimony ever accepted of him, and adorned with many blessings, and crowned with a continual supply of the fruits of his love and favor. The Prophet saith, *Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, & walketh in his ways; for thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands, happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee: thy wife shall be as a fruitful Vine by the sides of thine house, thy children like Olive plants round about thy table: behold that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.* Riches are the inheritance of parents, but a prudent wife is a special gift of God, and we receive her as at his hands. The Apostle doth beautify it with an honorable title, when he calleth it honorable in all. It is the spirit of error w^c calleth that unclean which God hath sanctified. Adultery is foul and unclean, but the marriage bed is undefiled. Damnable then is the decree of Pope *Syricius*, that marriage it self is the pollution of the flesh, & that the married cannot please God. Devilish also is the law of forced chastity, restraining some orders and degrees from it: whereas to avoid fornication, every man is commāded to have his own wife, and every woman her own husband.

22 And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass, that if she be defiled, and have done a trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot; and the woman shall be a curse among her people.

28 And if the womā be not defiled but be clean, then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed.

We have shown already, that in setting down this law of trial, *Moses* observeth 3. things. First, the cause is propounded. Secondly, the question and controversy is determined. And lastly, the event of the whole is delivered. The two former have been handled before. Now we come to consider the issue and effect of the whole matter according to the determination of God. For, as he foretold what should come to pass, so he faileth not in it, but accordingly verieth the same. Whatsoever he hath spoken shall fall out, whether he promise anything unto us, or threaten anything against us. *He is not as man that he should lie, neither as the son of man that he should repent*, as *Balaam* by the Spirit of God prophesieth hereafter in this book, Chapt. 23. verse 19. And Christ our Savior teacheth. Math. 5, 18. that *Heaven and earth must pass away, but one word of his mouth shall not pass away*, but all shall be accomplished and fulfilled.

This event here mentioned is twofold: First, respecting the guilty in the 27. Verse, where it is shown, that she shall perish according as she sinned, and her name shall turn into a Proverb of cursing. Secondly, in respect of the innocent; because by drinking of the water, she shall receive and feel no hurt, but God will turn that wrongful suspicion, and causeless calumination into a great blessing, and so reward her innocence, that he will turn the heart of her husband toward her (who hath the hearts of all men in his power, and turneth them about as pleaseth him) so that they shall mutually love one another, and be blessed in their children that shall be given unto them.

Now the question may be asked, [Object.] whether this force, to discern between the guilty and the innocent, and to bring to light the things that were hidden in darkness, were in the water it self, and a quality inherent in it, and infused into it? I answer, [Answer.] we must ascribe no power to the water it self, which in regard of the substance, was no other then common Water, forasmuch as both the guilty and the vnguilty did drink of it, or at least might drink of it. The whole force proceeded from the operation of God, and his holy institution. The brazen Serpent, set upon a pole, and looked upon by them that were bitten by the fiery Serpents, did heal them; so that albeit they were stung, yet they died not. How came this to pass? Was it in regard of the matter? or of the form? Surely, of neither; but all the virtue proceeded from GOD, the author of it.

When Christ healed the blind man, John 9. verse 6. *He spate upon the ground, and made clay of the spettle*, he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and bad him wash in the pool of *Siloam*, who went his way, and washed, and returned seeing. All men know, and can easily judge, that this could not by any natural operation, restore sight to the blind; so that it was Christ that healed him, not the spettle, not the clay, not the annointing, not the washing. This may be expressed and conceived by the miracle y^t Christ shown upon the woman that had an issue of blood, Mat. 9, 20. *She came behind him and touched the hem of his garment*, for she said, *If I may touch but his clothes only, I shall be whole*: what then? Did his garments heal her? or were they the cause that her fountain of blood stanchd and dried up? No, it was the

power of Christ that gave a blessing to y^e weak means; and therefore he saith to his disciples, *Some body hath touched me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.* He saith not, out of the border of my garment which she hath touched. She touched indeed the garment of Christ, but it was her faith in Christ that made her whole.

So in this place, both sorts that came to be tried, drunk of the water, and according as they were either innocent or not innocent, so it fell out unto them: howbeit it was God that understandeth all secrets that brought the truth to light, not any inherent strength that was in the waters.

[Verse 27. *And when he hath made her to drink the water, &c.*] Here we have observed, that the success of the whole business is contained: wherein *Moses* declareth, what doth follow, and most certainly come to pass, if the woman have been abused. Here is set down the temporal punishment that shall come upon her. The more she hath stood upon her purgation, and the greater her impudency and shamelesnesse hath been, the more notorious is her sin, and the more notable is her punishment. God having all means in his own hand, could have punished her (if it had pleased him) otherwise: but to make it the better appear, that he is the maintainer and preserver of marriage which is his own institution, and that all might acknowledge the judgment to be from his hand, he punisheth her in those parts wherewith she had offended. He hath all diseases in his own power to bring upon the breakers of his ordinance, and the transgressors of his Law: he might therefore have stricken her with the leprosy, or with plague and pestilence, with the consumption, with incurable agues, or with such an issue of blood, as we heard off before in the woman that was cured by touching of Christ's garment; but to brand her with a perpetual mark of infamy, and to show how he hateth adultery, he meeteth with her in her own kind, and punished those parts of her body which she had abused. She had *opened her feet*, as the Prophet speaketh, *to everyone that passed by*, so that she became as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband. Her filthiness was poured out, and her nakedness discovered, her belly and thighs communicated to another: howbeit her pleasure should be turned into pain, and she should be judged as women that break wedlock: she should feel the curse of God, & end her days in reproach: for as she had sinned with her belly, so her belly should swell through greatness and anguish: and as she had opened her thighs, so they should rot away, so y^t she should be punished where she most deserved, and become a fearful spectacle of a forlorn creature and a living carcass, consuming in her flesh, and dying being yet alive. We do all learn from hence, that God doth not only punish sin, but he punisheth sin in his own kind. He dealeth with men and women in his punishments, as they deal with him in their transgressions: so that according as we sin, so we are punished.

We see this by infinite examples laid before us in the word of God. Consider with me, the enemies & persecutors of *Daniel* y^t sought his life, and caused him to be cast into the Lions den; but how doth God meet with them? he might have revenged himself upon them by his own immediate hand; but he would not, for they perish and are punished the same way: for *the king commanded to bring those men that accused Daniel, and to cast them into the den of Lions*, who had the mastery over them, and brake all their bones in pieces, or ever they came at the

bottom of the den. *David* sinned in committing of adultery with the wife of *Uriah* his faithful servant, and destroyed him *with the sword of the Ammonites*: he is paid home and punished in his own kind: for God, by way of rewarding and serving him as he had served others, as a just judge doth raise up evil against him out of his own house. His own sons break out into the same sins, and he kindleth such a fire in his own family, that they rise up against him, and one against another. *Absalom* spreadeth a tent, and lieth with his fathers concubines in the sight of all Israel: *Amnon* deflowreth his sister *Tamar*; to revenge this, *Absalom* killeth his own brother. Experience teacheth us, that blood requireth blood, so that the murderer requireth vengeance of God, albeit peradventure he escape the hand of the Magistrate. We see this in *Joab*, he shed innocent blood, and escaped a long time as if it had been forgotten, but at length his blood was shed, and *his hoare head went not down to the grave in peace*. This is it which Christ telleth us, Matth. 7.1, 2. *Judge not, that ye be not judged: for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again*. He that rashly and unjustly censureth others, feeleth at one time or other the smart of it in the like kind: for God raiseth up others justly, albeit they defame him unjustly, that thereby he may be recompensed. This is that which *Samuel* bringeth into the remembrance of *Agag* the king of Amalek, 1 Sam. 15.33. *As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women: so he hewed him in pieces before the Lord*. Neither need we go far to fetch examples of this truth, or turn over histories of ages past, for we have it sealed up to us in our days and times wherein we live, I mean in those of the pretended holy league in our neighbor kingdom: they confederated themselves to root out true religion and the professors thereof, out of the face of the earth; they bend all their forces to effect it: but the Lord that sitteth in heaven laugheth them to scorn, and hath thē in derision: he hath rewarded thē to the full, and that in their own kind, he turned their weapons upon themselves, and sheathed their swords in their own bowels, as he dealt with the Midianites that slew one another. The example of *Haman* is famous and well known, he set up a gibbet to hang *Mordecai*, because he bowed not unto him: howbeit *himself was hanged upon it*, and fell into the pit he had prepared for another; but *Mordecai* escaped, and was delivered, and advanced, who spake good for the King, as appeareth in the book of *Ester*.

[Reason 1] The reasons are evident to be seen, and easy to be found out. First, the justice of God is thereby cleared, and the mouth of iniquity stopped. For what have we to allege or answer for our selves, when God retaileth us according to the sin that we have committed? Doubtless, we have no excuse, or pretence, or allegation for our selves; but we must confess with our own mouths, even against our selves, that God is righteous, and we are unrighteous. This appeareth in the book of Judges, in the example of *Adonibezek* being taken by *Joshua* and the people, he had his thumbs and great toes cut off: for he confessed, that the justice of God had found him out, and requited him in his kind, according to his own cruelty, Judge. 1, ver. 7. *Threescore and ten Kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my Table: as I have done, so God hath requited me; and they brought him to Jerusalem, & there he died*. If then God be just, he cannot but measure all his actions by justice, for no unrighteousness is found in him, as he will make men themselves confess.

[Reason 2] Secondly, the Lord cannot abide a measure and a measure, they are an abomination unto God, as Prov. 20, 23. *Divers weights are an abomination to the Lord, and a false balance is not good.* The Judge of all the world, cannot but deal justly and truly. This reason is expressed by the Angel of the waters, Revel. 16, 5, 6. *Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus: for they have shed the blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink.* Where he concludeth, that their blood must be shed, that delighted to shed y^e blood of others, because God is a righteous Lord. His justice shineth among men, in all places, in that he recompenceth the wickedness of men by a like punishment sent from him, so that their punishment is answerable to their sin.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, the ungodly are fully worthy of such punishment. It is meet that malefactors have their deserts: how then can they complain of iniquity or injustice, so long as they receive their own, and he payeth them the debt he oweth them with their own money? GOD will give to every man according to his works, Rom. 2. and give their wages according to their merits. This reason is also added in the former place of the Revelation, where the Angel chargeth them that they had shed the blood of the Saints, and putteth them in mind, that God had done them no wrong, when he gave them blood to drink: then he annexeth the reason, *for they are worthy.* If then we consider the deserts of men, how great they are, we cannot marvel, whē at any time we behold the hand of God stretched out against them in this manner, and recompensing them with such measure.

Fourthly, let us mark what God requireth [Reason 4] at the hands of Magistrates in his Law, to wit, that they recompense like for like. *Moses saith in the Law, Thou shalt pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe,* Exod. 21, 24. *Such a blemish as he hath made in any, such shall be repaied to him,* Levite. 24, 20. Neither was this law repealed or disliked by Christ our Savior, Math. 5, 38. Forasmuch as in that place he only condemneth the abuse of it by private persons, according to their private affections and lusts of revenge, who are not Magistrates. If then the Lord will have the higher powers recompense the sinner according to the manner of his sin: we may not doubt, but he that is above all, will measure his works according to the rule of justice, which is most equal. Therefore, whatsoever measure we mete, *it is just we should receive the like again:* that he which taketh the sword, *should perish with the sword:* that he which spoileth, *should be spoiled:* that he which leadeth into captivity, should be led into captivity, Revel. 13, 10. That what a man doth, the same he should suffer: that by what a man sinneth, by that he should be punished: that evil should hit the worker, and the offender be pressed with his own example. This is the law of equity and equality, that men suffer the same things of others, which they have offered unto others. Thus then we may conclude this truth very strongly, upon the ground of these reasons, that God punisheth men and women in the same things wherein they offended & dishonored him.

Let us make use of this doctrine, which I [Use 1] purpose at this present, briefly to point out, because we shall have fit occasion to handle it afterward in this book. First, this ought to teach us to set a watch over our selves, to keep out the practice of sin, that carrieth such a tail and train after it. The sinner shall never escape, but find a punishment answerable to his

sin. This is a notable bridle to induce us to abstain from all manner of sin. We see this in whoredom, which is the point that is aimed at in this chapter. Forasmuch as men are slack and careless in punishing of it, God bringeth upon them that continue in this sin, and follow it with greediness, such loathsome and noisome diseases, as our forefathers never knew, neither heard off. If we be wise to commit new sins, shall not the wise *God catch us in our wisdom*, and be wise enough to find out punishments that be proportioned according to our transgressions? Let us therefore watch over our hands and hearts, over our tongues and mouths, over our eyes and ears, and over all the members of our body, lest to our great grief and sorrow, we find and feel the fruit of our iniquities. This is that which Christ in one particular pointeth out, Math. 7. *Judge not, that ye be not judged, &c:* teaching us that all such as censure others, procure and provoke judgment upon themselves; so that we ought to keep the door of our lips, and govern our tongues aright. This is one main cause of slanders and defamations that are so common in the world, the beginning of them for the most part, is in the person himself that is defamed. It is the ordinance and appointment of God in his wisdom & providence, that such as give rash judgment, should have rash judgment given of them. Here is then a lesson to be learned, to make us beware of all sin, considering it hath such a penalty going with it, or following it hard at the heels, and lying at the doors ready to enter upon us. If we did only hear and understand that God will certainly punish sin, & that none shall be able to escape at what time he shall search Jerusalem with lights, and visit the men that are frozen in the dregs of their evil ways: were not this sufficient to withhold us from it, and cause us to abstain from all wickedness? For how can we hide our selves from him, or how can we deliver our selves from his presence? He that made the eye, shall he not see? and he that made the ear, shall he not hear? But the doctrine that now we deal withal, doth not only teach us that God will assuredly punish, but that he will punish us according to our sins. It is one part of justice to punish, and another to punish as we have sinned. Both of them do serve to clear God of injustice, and to stir us up to consider, that so often as we provoke him to anger by our sins, he sleepeth not, neither hath his sword rusting in his sheath, but draweth it out after he hath whet it, and striketh the sons of men with a terrible stroke. Nay, that which is more, when we transgress his commandments, & walk stubbornly against him, he holdeth the balance in his own hand, that he may weigh us out our punishment with an equal weight: and when we have filled up the measure of our sins, he will also give us a full measure pressed down, and running over.

Hence it is, that the Lord threateneth, Levite. 26, verse 24. that if we walk stubbornly against him, *he will also walk stubbornly against us, and smite us yet seven times for our sins*. If we set our faces against him, and will not obey him, *he will set his face against us, & will chastise us seven times for our sins* in his sore anger and heavy displeasure, and bring seven times more plagues upon us, according to our deservings. When we have sinned against him, and will not be reformed, it might bring comfort, or at least some ease, if we might be assured that our punishment should be mitigated. For the consideration of a slight and slender punishment, might slake our care and endeavor of striving against sin. But we are taught, that our transgressions against God, and his afflictions upon us for them, shall be squared one to the other. A lesser sin shall not have a greater punishment; neither shall a greater sin

have a lesser punishment: but with what measure we mete to him, with the same it shall be measured unto us again. This doth our Savior Christ press against the Jews, Math. chap. 23, verses 32, 35. *Fulfill ye the measure of your fathers, that upon you may come all the righteous blood that was shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous, unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the Temple and the Altar.* So then, it standeth us upon to examine our selves, and to consider how greatly we sin, and how grievously we offend the Majesty of God. If we add sin unto sin, we may be sure he will add judgment unto judgment. A necessary point carefully to be marked of us, who have received the mercies of GOD in greater measure then many others. If they escape not that have received little, doubtless they shall not escape that have received much. If they shall be beaten with few stripes that know not the will of their master, they shall be beaten with many, that know it and do it not. Luke 12, ver. 47, 48. If Sodom and Gomorrhah were destroyed with fire and brimstone, which knew not the Law nor the Lord, then Capernanm which was lifted up unto heaven, must be brought down to hell: *For if the great works done in it, had been done among them of Sodom, they had remained unto this day.* Mat 11, 23. Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required, and to whom men much commit, the more of him will they ask. If we be not careful to walk in his ways, we are of all people the most unthankful: so that as our blessings have been great, our plagues and punishments shall be grievous, except we repent.

Secondly, as God threateneth to punish according [Use 2] to the manner of our sinning, so he will bless those that please him and serve him in fear and trembling, according to the manner and measure of our walking before him. Here then on the other side we have a gracious promise, not only of a blessing, but of a blessing answerable unto our obedience. This is a notable encouragement unto us in well-doing, and as it were a spurr to prick us forward to perform such duties as he requireth at our hands. This is it which he promiseth to Abraham, Gen. 12, verses 2, 3. *I will make thee a great Nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee &c.* If any did good to Abraham, he should receive good again: if any were a friend to him, he should have God to be a friend unto him. This is that which God performed to Ebed-melech, he saved the life of Jeremiah, and therefore *he had his own life given unto him as a prey.* Ier. 39, 18. For when the Prophet was cast into a deep dungeon, where he stuck fast in the mire, the Ethiopian went unto the King, and spake for him, so that by his means his life was saved, and he was taken out of the pit, where he must have perished. What then? Doth he lose his reward? or is GOD unmindful of him? No, he receiveth blessing for blessing, mercy for mercy, and life for life: and therefore when the King of Babylon took the City, and put the people to the sword, he was delivered, and was not given into the hand of the men of whom he was afraid. Do we then any good to God's Church and Children? it shall not go unregarded and unrewarded to a cup of cold water: we shall receive measure for measure, good for good, blessing for blessing. Can we desire or look for a better recompense? Or would we have a farther means to incite us to follow our calling. We have a double encouragement to serve such a master, who will reward us according to our service. For while we do good to others, we do as much good to our selves. Will any man be an enemy or hindrance to himself? Do we not by the light of nature love our selves, make much of our

selves, help our selves, & wish all good to our selves? This is the way to attain unto our desires, and to receive a blessing from the hands of God, to do good to others: for then God hath bound himself by promise, to be merciful to us. There is that scattereth, saith *Solomon*, & there is more increased. The way and means to receive & increase our substance, is to give and to distribute, like the husbandman that must sow his seed before he can reap his fields, and gather in his harvest. The covetous man thinketh otherwise, because like an Idolater he trusteth in his money; but in the end it bringeth him nothing home. The Prophet *Elijah* was sent of God to *Sarepta*, to a widow in the days of famine, she had no more left but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse, so that she was gathering sticks to dress it for her self and her son, that they might eat it, and die. Nevertheless, of her penury she sustained the Prophet, she made him a little cake first, and brought it unto him. She did good to the holy Prophet of the Lord, howbeit she did more good thereby to her self and her son: she relieved him, and thereby relieved her self, *For the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah*, 1 Kings 17, 16. Luke 4. The like we might say of *Obadiah*; he hid the Prophets of God *by fifty and fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water*, whē many other perished: howbeit he did hereby no small good to himself, forasmuch as thereby he obtained rain, and plenty of all things. This is it which our Savior promiseth in the Gospel, to his Disciples that followed him; *There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the Gospels, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life*. Mark. 10, 29, 30. *Job* is commended in Scripture, to be a just man, fearing God, and eschewing evil, and by occasion of his friends taxing of him with hypocrisy, and accusing him of iniquity, is compelled to stand upon his own innocence, and to make a solemn protestation of his integrity, Job 31, 19 that he had not seen any to perish for lack of clothing, or any poor without covering, he was an eye to the blind, a father to the fatherless, and as an husband to the widow. He had his children, and his substance taken from him, and he bare his cross with patience. What then was the end that the Lord made? or how was he blessed of God? The end of the history declareth this at large, the Lord gave *Job* twice as much as he had before; and as he had comforted others, and visited them in their necessities, so his brethren and sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, resorted & repaired unto him, *and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him*: and as he had been bountiful to others, so *every man gave him a piece of money, and everyone an ear-ring of gold: yea, the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more then the beginning*, so that he obtained many sons and daughters, and a great increase of cattle. *Onesiphorus* oft refreshed *Paul*, and was not ashamed of his chains: the Apostle prayeth, that the Lord would grant unto him, *that he might find mercy of the Lord in the great day*, 2 Tim. 1, 18. This poin• being thoroughly learned, will minister great comfort to everyone of us, being assured that as God punisheth in manner as we sin, so he will bless us and reward us after the manner of our obedience. Have we comforted others? God will comfort us, & turn the hearts of others to comfort us also? Have we done good to others? he will stir up others to do good to us. Have we relieved others? we have laid up a good foundation for the time to come, we shall be relieved by others in our necessities. Do we give unto the poor? We do not only

lend unto the Lord, but we provide well for our selves, forasmuch as that we give shall be paid unto us again.

We read in the book of Nehemiah, not only how zealous he was for the glory of God, but also how careful to show compassion to the people of God, and to provide for them in their necessities, and to deliver them from the oppressions of the mighty: in consideration whereof, he is bold to entreat the Lord to *think upon him for good, according to all that he had done for his people*, Neh. 5, 19. So is it lawful for us to crave of God to be mindful of us in goodness, according as we have done to others, and dealt toward them. If we remember God, we may be assured that he will remember us. If we be careful to hear his word, he is careful to hear our prayers according to his promise. He will return like for like, care for care, hearing for hearing, and blessing for blessing. If we be careful to hear his voice, his ears are open to hear us: and if we bless him, he will bless us. And as he hath promised to hear them that hear him, so he hath threatened not to hear them that will not hear him. Prov. 1, 28, 29. *They shall call upon me, but I will not answer: they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord.* And to this purpose speaketh the Lord in the Prophets; *They shall cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.* This is a grievous threatening, and full of all discomfort. It is as it were the top of all misery, to have God stop his ears against us. To live in this sort, is worse then a thousand deaths. If a Subject had a petition to put up to the Prince, and knew he would turn away his face from him, how near would it go unto him? and how would he be discouraged? Or if a child knew, that whatsoever he asked of his father should be denied unto him, except he obeyed his father in that whereunto he exhorted him; I suppose it would stir up the son to do the will of his father. In like manner it ought to be with everyone of us. Seeing God hath bounded and limited his hearkening unto our voice, when we speak unto him, with this condition, that we hearken unto his voice when he speaketh unto us; it ought to move us to hear his word with fear & reverence, and to express the power of it in obedience, that so we may comfort our selves with assurance of God's mercy toward us, in regard of our zeal and affection toward him.

Thirdly, from hence we may learn to be [Use 3] patient under the punishments that do befall us. For seeing God will punish us in the same manner that we offend, when we feel & perceive that he meeteth with us, and hath found us out, and that we can no longer be hidden nor our actions from his eyes, let us stoop down under his hand, and hold our peace, because he hath done it. Let us not fixe and fasten our eyes upon the earth beneath, nor dwell upon the meditations of men's dealings toward us: but lift our hearts unto God, who always punisheth us justly, he being the righteous Judge of all the world, to whom is incident no unrighteousness. If we be slandered and defamed by others, let us consider whether we have not done the like to others, and therefore the Lord recompenceth us in the same kind, and as it were taketh our feet in the snare that we have laid for others, and casteth us into the same pit which we digged for them, as it fell out to *Haman*, who was hanged upon his own gallows: so that as we have wronged others, it falleth out that we must receive wrong from others. This is the use that *Solomon* pointeth out in y^e book of Ecclesiastes; *Take no heed*

unto all words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse thee: for oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth, that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others. Let us therefore be patient in injuries; let us not slander them that slander us, nor revile them that revile us, nor speak evil of them that speak evil of us. Moses is commended, that when *Miriam* and *Aaron* rose up against him, and moved sedition by reason of the *Ethiopian woman whom he had married*, he possessed his soul with patience and bare all their reproaches with meekness of spirit, for he was very meek, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth, Numb. 12, 3. It is said of *Saul*, being made King of Israel, that when the children of *Belial* said. How shall this man save us? and they despised him in their hearts, he gave them not taunt for taunt, nor rebuke for rebuke, he commanded not the standers by to take away their lives, albeit they deserved it, and he had power in his hand to do it, but he held his peace, and passed by their reproaches, as a blind man that saw them not, as a deaf man that heard them not, and as a man without sense, that felt them not. When *Shimei* reproached *David*, and cursed him with an horrible curse, *David* with patience abstaineth and with persuasion refraineth others from revenge, that offered themselves to take off the head of that dead dog: so that he said, *Let him alone; it may be that the Lord will lock upon mine affliction, and requite good for his cursing this day.* He could have returned upon him curse for curse, nay wounds for words: but he knew well enough, and teacheth it to others in another place, that he which loveth cursing, the same shall come upon him; and he that delighteth not in blessing, it shall be far from him, because as he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so it shall come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones. It is well said of an heathen man, Fear none more then thine own conscience. This is the right and ready way to get a good name, and to keep it being gotten, to judge of others with right judgment and Christian equity, carrying a charitable opinion of everyone, thinking well of them, speaking the best of them, and covering the multitude of infirmities, as *Shem* and *Japheth* did the nakedness of their father. This is true charity indeed, and hereby we may assure our own hearts, that we love not in word and tongue only, but in deed and truth. The counsel of the Prophet is good & wholesome to this purpose, Psal. 34.12, 13, 14, 15. *What man is he that desireth life? and loveth many days that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile: depart from evil, and do good: seek peace and pursue it.* The reason is, because the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry; whereas the face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut out the remembrance of them frō the earth.

Lastly, we may conclude from hence the [Use 4] woeful estate and condition of all cruel and merciless oppressors, that grind the faces of the poor, and pluck off their skins from the flesh, and the flesh from the bones, by their covetous and corrupt dealing; who measure hard measure unto others, and pull from them that which is their own, without conscience of sin, or feeling of judgment to come. These are they that regard not how they rack the poor, how they engross and withhold the fruits of the earth; they make the *Epha* small, and the *Shekell* great, that is, they sell little for much, lessening the measure, and enhauncing the price, they sell a little come for a great deal of money; they make a dearth without scarcity, and bring a famine upon others, when God hath given plenty to themselves. For it falleth out oftentimes, when GOD is liberal to us, we deal niggardly one toward another: and

when the Lord heareth the heavens, and they hear the earth, and the earth heareth y^e come, and the wine, and the oil, and all they hear Israel, what a shame, nay what a sin is this, that we will not hear one another, so that the cry of the poor people is not heard of us, nor the misery of them that are in need, is not felt of us? When GOD sendeth fruitful times and seasons, that *neither the heaven over the head is as brass*, nor the earth underneath our feet, is as iron, but that they yield their rain and fruit in due season; how cometh it to pass, that our hearts are as hard as iron, as tough as steel, and as inflexible as brass one to another? And seeing the eye of God is good to us, how cruel are we that make our *eyes to be evil toward our brother*? These are they that wish with all their souls for dearth and famine, nay they not only desire it, but cause it, when God hath not caused it; and send it upon others, when God hath not sent it upon them. This is to them a day of joy and delight, of feasting and banqueting, of merriment and pastime, when as their poor brethren weep and lament with their wives and children. This is the day that they long looked for, and they stir up themselves to rejoice and be glad in it, that they may enrich themselves with the spoils of them that are in necessity. But let them know, that this sweet meat hath sour sauce belonging unto it, and that a fearful woe belongeth unto thē, w^e shall come upon them, and seize upon their bodies and souls, and sons & daughters, and goods, and all that belongeth unto them, when they shall be dealt withal by others, as they have dealt and distributed the measure unto others. They shall find as little favor in the day of trouble, as they have shown unto others in their trouble. Consider the example of the rich man in the Gospel, when poor *Lazarus* lay at his gate, he called for mercy in his misery, and craved *the crumbs only that fell from his table*, but they were denied unto him. And what was the issue? or how sped he in the end? We read in the Parable, that himself in the end called for mercy at the hands of *Abraham*, but could not have one drop of water to cool his tongue and quench his heat, being tormented in the flames of hell that never go out. He would not grant to *Lazarus* a small request, y^e crumbs of his table, nay the crumbs that fell from his table: and he cannot obtain himself a little water, not so much that *Lazarus* might dippe the tippe of his finger in water, to give him thereby any ease & refreshing. To conclude, he that would show no mercy, findeth judgment without mercy, torment without ease, heat without cooling, and misery without end. The time was, when he was prayed and sued unto, but would not hear: now he prayeth and entreateth, but cannot be heard. All human things are frail and uncertain. He that is today aloft, may be cast down low enough the next day. Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. Pride goeth before destruction, and an high mind before the fall: for everyone that exalteth himself, shall be brought low, and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted. The Lord in the Law forbiddeth to trouble the widow, to vex the fatherless, and to oppress the stranger, lest he punish those that oppress them. But how will that be? and in what kind doth he threaten to punish? he saith, *My wrath shall be kinled and I will kill you with the sword, so that your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless*. See how the Lord threarneth to bring woe upon them that work woe to such as are in misery, and add affliction to them that are in affliction, and multiply sorrow upon them that are in sorrow. This is the use urged by the Prophet *I say*, chap. 33, 1. *Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled, & dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee: when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled: and when thou shalt*

make an ende to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee. God suffereth them to have their times, when he holdeth his peace, and letteth them alone to fill up the measure of their sins: howbeit God hath his seasons also, and hath concluded and determined what to do unto them, and how to deal with them; the spoiler shall be spoiled, the robber shall be robbed, the oppressor shall be oppressed, & they that do wickedly to others shall have others to deal wickedly against them. This is that which Christ our Savior speaketh unto *Peter*, that went beyond the bounds of his calling, and forgatte that the weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but spiritual; and that the sword which he was to draw out and to fight withal, was the two edged sword of the Spirit, coming out of the mouth of God, Math. 26.52. *Put up thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword.* God will set sword against sword, and wound against wound, yea, and life against life. In the book of the Revelation, the Spirit prophesying of the destruction of the Roman Monarchy, which oppressed the church, and persecuted the Saints of God with cruel slaughter, showeth that it should be cast down, and pass the same judgment they gave against others, chap. 13, 10. *He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword.* It is a just thing in all ages and times with God, to recompense tribulation to thē that trouble his Church. Indeed we do not see such judgments executed, and such threatenings performed by and by: we are not to prescribe to God his seasons; he knoweth when to strike, and how to punish. It is well said by the Prophet, Hab. 2, 3. *The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.* For albeit God may seem to us to defer the time, or to forget his servants, yet he will try our patience and obedience, as we see in the place named before, *Here is the patience and faith of the Saints*, Revel. 13, 10. We must not make too much haste, but wait for the accomplishment of those things, having withal a lively faith and full assurance to believe, that in God's appointed time they shall come to pass. He is faithful that hath promised, and cannot lie: he is true of his word that hath spoken, and cannot deceive. Woe therefore unto all those that deal unjustly and violently with God's inheritance: they touch his anointed, and they that do them harm, do touch the apple of his eye, so that they cannot escape vengeance.

[Ver. 28. *And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean, then she shall be free.*] In the former verse *Moses* hath shown the punishment that shall come upon the guilty person; which punishment is suitable to the sin committed, thereby to clear his own justice, and to terrify all persons from committing sin. In these words we have matter of wonderful great comfort for the innocent person. For howsoever GOD setteth down diverse hard and heavy threatenings, as grievous burdens to be borne, against all wicked and ungodly persons; yet he is evermore careful of his children▪ that they be not oppressed with sorrow and overmuch heaviness of mind, forasmuch as he hath a remnant that call upon him, & *wisdom is always justified of her children*. Behold here a contrary effect and operation in drinking of these bitter waters, according to the contrary condition of those that drank of them. Such as were guilty of the sin of adultery, they turned to their horrible destruction, and became as it were rank poison; their bellies swelled, their thighs rotted, and the parts which they had shamefully abused, miserably perished. But such as were indeed innocent, suspected

without just cause, and accused without due proof, and examined without sufficient trial of the fact committed, through the jealousy of their uncharitable husbands, and had kept the marriage bed undefiled; those bitter waters should not be bitter unto them, they should not hurt or hinder them at all, neither work any dangerous effect in them, but rather be wholesome and healthful unto them. God himself the just GOD and the maintainer of justice, will bring the truth to light that was hid in darkness, and turn the hearts of their husbands toward them, so that they should live in godly love and charity together, and see to their endless joy and comfort, the fruit of their bodies, the hope of their houses, the staff and stay of their age, I mean their children, the heritage of the Lord.

We learn from this first promise, [Doctrine.] that God maketh known the innocence of his servants. For howsoever the faithful may be falsely accused, and have many slanderous imputations laid unto their charge, yet God will make their cause to be rightly known, and discover the truth in despite of their enemies. This is confirmed unto us by many examples in the old and New Testament. *Joseph* being sold into Egypt, was grievously accused by his mistress, and cruelly imprisoned by his master: impudency and incontynency in the one, cruelty and credulity in the other, were the causes that *he was put into prison in the place where the Kings prisoners lay bound*: his case might seem now to be desperate, and he to be forever in displeasure and out of favor, and no hope left unto him to be delivered from thence where *his feet were held in the stocks, and he laid in irons*: yet when the appointed time came, and the counsel of the Lord had tried him, he made his cause known, Gen. 39. *The Lord was with Joseph, & shown him mercy, and got him favor in the sight of the master of the prison, &c.* Whereby we see, that at the first he was used hardly, and had fetters of iron cast upon him as an evil doer; but afterward he was more mildely and mercifully handled, when as his innocence was made known. The like we might say of *David*, who in all his dealings toward *Saul*, carried himself wisely, obediently, and uprightly, as became the Kings son, subject, and servant: yet he was persecuted from place to place, and hated even unto the death, and hunted as a Partridge upon the Mountains, yea he found no rest for the soles of his feet, like the Dove sent out of the Ark in the time of the flood, and overflowing of the waters, Gen. 8 9. But when *Saul* saw that the lap was cut off from his garment, and the spear and pot of water that was at his head, taken away, he said to *David*, *Thou art more righteous then I: for thou hast rendered me good, and I have rendered thee evil: and thou hast shown this day that thou hast dealt well with me, forasmuch as when the lord had closed me in thine hands, thou killedst me not, &c. but my soul was precious in thine eyes.* 1 Sam. 24, 18. and 26, 20, 21. So did God deal with *Jeremiah*, when he was slandered and falsely accused to be a conspiratour, and to weaken the hands of the people; and when he was cast into prison, the Lord raised up some to favor him, who made his case known, and he was delivered. Christ Jesus was charged to be a blasphemmer of God, an enemy of *Caesar*, an author of sedition, and a disturber of the peace: howbeit his greatest enemies that sate in judgment of him, pronounced him innocent, and confessed that the Pharisees and Priests for envy had delivered him.

I will add one example more, and that shall be the blessed Virgin, who being betrothed to *Joseph*, before they came together as man and wife, *she was found to be with child by the holy Ghost.* Math. 1, 18, 19, 20. Then she began to be suspected of incontynency, and *Joseph* being a

just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. What then? doth God leave her destitute, and him perplexed? her in suspicion, and him in his resolution to depart from her? No: for as she was innocent and not faulty of that crime, so did he make her innocence and integrity known; for *whiles he thought these things, behold, an Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph the son of David, fear not to take Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her, is of the holy Ghost.* All which testimonies make this apparent, that God will one way or other make the innocence of his people to be known.

[Reason 1] The reasons of this doctrine will farther confirm us in the truth of it: whereof the first may be from the office of God, who is the Judge of all the world. Surely the Lord will not pervert judgment to do unrighteously, neither will he take rewards, nor subvert a man in his cause.

Hence it is, that *Abraham*, making intercession for the Sodomites, that those Cities might be spared, saith, Gen. 18, 25. *Bee it far from thee from doing this thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be even as the wicked, be it far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the world do right?* And to that purpose reasoneth the Apostle, Rom. 3.5. *What shall we say? Is God unrighteous, which punisheth? God forbid: else how shall God judge the world?* If then this title belong unto him of right above all others, then he will at last come forth, though he tarry long, to plead the cause of his servants, & will bring their righteousness into the open light.

Secondly, God is evermore an helper in [Reason 2] time of need, who, albeit he suffer his servants to be exercised and tried by slanders & grievous afflictions, as we heard before concerning *Joseph*, yet he appeareth for their deliverance, and cleareth their names from reproach. When they are in greatest danger, then is he nearest at hand, and so giveth the issue with the temptation. This doth the Prophet *David* acknowledge, Psalm. 118.6, 7. and 56, 4, 11. *The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me: the Lord taketh my part with them that help me, therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.* And this doth the Apostle teach us to apply to our selves, because everyone may boldly say, *The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto me.*

If then he have promised to take our part, and to help us in time of need, when we are oppressed with the evil speeches of our enemies, he will not be far from us, but succor us and sustain us that we shall not fall.

Thirdly, we know well, that howsoever [Reason 3] many things are covered here in darkness, partly through hypocrisy in some, and partly through ignorance and weakness that is in all, we are not able to enter into the actions of men, and dive down so low as to see with what purpose they do them, yet the time shall come when they shall be discovered and manifested. This is the general rule delivered by Christ our Savior, Luk. 12, verse 2. *There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: neither hid that shall not be known.* This is true, not only touching the hypocrisy of the wicked, but also touching the innocence of the righteous: for all shall be known in the end, when the secrets of all hearts shall be discovered.

From hence we have offered to our wise [Use 1] considerations, very many profitable uses, whereof I will point out the principal. First, we are put in mind from hence to commit all our ways and works to God, and to depend upon him to bring to light the truth of our hearts. Let us put our trust in him, and delight our selves in the Lord. Let us possess our souls with patience, when we are slandered and traduced, and resign up our selves to him that ruleth all things. Let us cast our eyes upon his providence, who careth for us, and watcheth over us.

The children of God, when they see the prosperity of the wicked, and how all things in this world for the most part go well with them, are sore troubled, they begin to waver, and sometimes to fret & murmur, as if there were no God to govern all things. This made the Prophet *David* to say, Psal. 73, 12, 13, 14. *Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world, and increase in riches; verily, I have cleansed mine heari in vain, & washed mine hands in innocence; for all the day long have I been plagued and chastened every morning.* But God will not forget us or forsake us, if we trust in him, we shall not be deceived. So often as we have evil rewarded unto us for good, and are ouerladen with the slanders of the ungodly, we are ready to fret and fume, and to seek revenge against them: we have many doubts arise in us, as if it were lost labor to worship God sincerely, and to deal with our brethren justly.

It is not the pleasure of almighty God, that our righteousness should always lie hid in the dark, and as it were creep into corners, forasmuch as he will make it shine as the Sun, and bring it into the open light. This is the use that the Prophet teacheth us to make, Psal. 37, 5, 6. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, & he shall bring it to pass: and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon day.* Wherein he alludeth fitly unto the night, the darkness whereof, the morning arising, scattereth away.

Are we then hardly used? are we shamefully entreated? are we oppressed with slanderous things laid to our charge? and doth God for a time hold his peace, as if he heard them not? or doth he shut his eyes, as if he saw them not? Let us not take it to heart, or be discouraged, this ought to trouble us no more, then when the darkness of the night covereth the earth, because we look for the morning to appear, and the Sun to shine. When all things are dark, that nothing can be discerned, when we know not white from black, nor chalk from cheese, nor fair from foul, we are not to be grieved or disquieted by it, because we live in expectation of the light which we know cannot be far. Then we shall know one thing from another, when all will show themselves in their likeness. From this consideration we are admonished to commit our ways unto the Lord, who will make a notable issue of them, by giving judgment on our side, and delivering of us from the venom of the evil tongue. He forbiddeth in the law, any *to bear false witness* in judgment. Now he is a false witness that holdeth his peace, when he may by his testimony relieve his brother, justify his person, clear his good name, or defend his goods, or right his cause in any matter called into question, as well as *he that speaketh in a cause, to decline after many, to wrest judgment.* He hath made us keepers of the credit one of another: so that we may offend God and our neighbor, as well by not speaking the truth, as by speaking of an untruth.

The law it self requireth such love to be among us, that although we be not requested, yet we should never be wanting to another, but always be willing and desirous to maintain his good

name and estimation, according to the commandment of our Lord and Master, Matthew 7, verse 12. *Whatsoever ye would that other men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.* Doth God require this at our hands, and will not he perform it toward us? Must we clear our brothers good name, and will God himself fail to do it? or do we think we can have a better or greater care of the name of our brother, or of our own name, then God the righteous Judge of the world, hath of us all? That cannot be, he is jealous of our good names, and will not have the truth smothered with a lie, nor innocence buried in the earth. Shall we make our selves more righteous then GOD, and justify our selves above our Maker? There is not a spark of that truth which is in GOD given to us: true it is, he honoreth us by vouchsafing this mercy unto us, to open our mouths to speak his truth, which he is able to avouch and justify against all gainsayers a thousand ways. If we then that are evil, know how to acquit our brethren, we may be well assured, he will be more just and righteous in all his dealings toward us, then we have been or can be one to another. And if we have means at any time to free our brethren from infamy, we may fully and certainly be assured that he will be ready to bring to light our innocence.

Secondly, seeing God hath promised to make our innocence that is derided or denied, [Us; 2] to be known, let us know that it is our duty to go boldly to the Throne of his grace, and to pray unto God to perform his promise toward us.

It falleth out oftentimes that we see no way to bring the truth to light, and we think it impossible that ever we should be cleared: howbeit we have to do with God, to whom nothing is secret, before whom all things are manifest, he is able to bring us into credit again. We take therefore a wrong course, and provide evilly for our selves, to rage and storm against those that revile us and speak all manner of evil of us falsely for Christ his sake: whereas we ought to repair into the presence of GOD, and to crave of him that he would make the justice of our causes to appear.

If any object, [Object.] Is not God without prayer able to make the truth of our causes known? Or hath he need to be put in mind of his office, which is to justify the godly, and to condemn the wicked?

I answer, [Answer.] as GOD is able of himself to do it, so he also hath appointed the means how he will do it. And among them all, none is more excellent then prayer: so that his almighty power doth not exclude prayer, but rather imply it; neither should it keep us from prayer, but rather encourage us to prayer; forasmuch as almighty God useth it as an instrument for y^e performance of those things which he hath promised, and appointed. He that goeth to warfare, prepareth horse & armor, and leuieth soldiers, and getteth what provision and furniture he can; he will by no means be brought to leave thē behind him, or to send them back again, and to rush into the battle without them, because they are instruments by which God is wont to give the victory to such as it seemeth good to him, so that he cannot without rashness lay them aside: so is prayer necessary, by the which the LORD is accustomed to give unto us those things that we want, and therefore it were horrible presumption to neglect it under pretence of his knowledge understanding our cases, or of his power enabling him to do all things, or of his providence determining all

things. As God hath appointed armor to them that desire victory, so hath he ordained prayer for them that would be relieved in necessity.

True it is, GOD knoweth what we need, better then our selves that are in need: & yet is not prayer to be holden superfluous, because God hath commanded us that in the day of trouble we should call upon him, Mat. 7. he hath promised to hear us, and deliver us, Psal. 50. He hath made no promise to us of any blessing, except we ask the same of him: he keepeth us in fear and reverence, and maketh us to acknowledge him to be the giver and author of all good things: he declareth his love unto us that humbleth and abaseth himself to hear our requests & complaints particularly, and thereby enflameth us to love him again, and to put our trust in him: by this familiar communication with him, we grow after a sort familiar with him, and we are bold to shroud our selves under his wing, as the child flieth to his father: and lastly, as we confess that whatsoever good things we enjoy do come from him alone, so it is our duty to return to him the thanks, and to use them to his glory. Wherefore, whensoever we find our selves wronged of our neighbors, we are not to turn upon thē in a rage, like unto the dog that runneth after the stone that is cast at him, and not at him that did cast it: but let us run with boldness unto God, and pour out our supplications before him, desiring him to help us and right our cause. This doth the Prophet *David* in many places, Psal. 4, 1, and 69, 13. *Hear me when I •ill, O God of my righteousness, thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress, have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.* He acknowledgeth in his prayer to God, that he was the witness, Judge, and defender of his innocence and uprightness toward *Saul* or any other: declaring by his own example, that when men unjustly condemn us, we must fly unto God by humble and earnest prayer, who is the patron and pleader of the causes of his people. And in the seventh Psalm, verse 6. *Arise, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thyself, because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded:* and afterward, verse 8. *The Lord shall judge the people: judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.* If God did not lay to his hand and help him, he confesseth that he were utterly destroyed: and therefore he prayeth to be delivered from his persecutors. Whensoever therefore men will not judge uprightly, and have their eyes blinded through malice or favor, we ought by prayer to refer our causes to him that hath no respect of persons and so *commit our causes to him that judgeth righteously.*

Howsoever the innocent cause of the godly may be hidden for a time, and overwhelmed by the slanders of the ungodly, yet if we be not wanting unto our selves, continuance of time the daughter of truth will bring it to light. We cry out against the wicked, but let us go the right way and cry to God: we lift up our voice against them, whereas we ought to lift up our voice unto him who hath his ears open to hear our prayers, and will blow away the storm and tempest by the blast of his mouth.

Thirdly, doth God promise to right our cause, and take upon him our defense? Then [Use 3] let us do good for good, and return unto him like for like; let us yield defense for defense, and plead his cause that hath pleaded ours. For it is our duty to undertake his defense, whensoever his truth is gainsayed, or his name evil-spoken of.

There is no man but is very careful and circumspect to maintain his own name and credit in the world, whensoever it is any way questioned: ought we not then much more to regard the upholding and bearing up the Name of God, which is great and holy through all generations? Hereunto doth *Joshua* seem to allude, chap. 7, verse 9. complaining unto God of the overthrow that the Israelites had received at the siege of *At*, *The Canaanites*, and *all the inhabitants of the Land shall hear of it, and shall compass us, and destroy our name out of the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy mighty Name?* He had greater care of God's glory then he had of his own: and it went nearer unto him to hear God's Name dishonored, then to have his own destroyed out of the earth.

So it ought to be with us; let it not trouble us to be hated and maligned of the unthankful world, and our honor with all contempt and disgrace laid in the dust; but be evermore ready to say, *Not unto us, Lord, not unto us; but unto thy Name give the glory.* Psal. 115.1.

If we be to open our mouths for our brethrē, (as we shall see more at large afterward) when they are laden with scandals and reproaches, much more then ought we to do this in God's cause, and for God's glory. Let us not be ashamed of his truth, lest he be ashamed of us. Let us confess his Name before the sons of men, and we shall be sure to be confessed before the sons of God. If we acknowledge his truth, he will acknowledge us before the Angels and before his Father. This Christ teacheth his Disciples, *Whosoever confesseth me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.* What a shame and reproach will this be unto us, that God should defend our cause, and we shrink back through fear to defend his? Christ our Savior doth oftentimes take upon him to defend his Disciples, when they were assaulted and set upon by the Pharisees, and therefore no marvel though he charge this upon them so earnestly, that they should not be ashamed of him and of his words in that adulterous and sinful generation. We must be all ready to say with the Apostle, Rom. 1, 16. *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth.* He defendeth his Disciples being reproved because they did not fast often, which was the bodily exercise which the Pharisees so much practiced, Luke 18. and wherein they so much gloried, Math. 9, 14. He defendeth them being accused of the breach of the Sabbath, when they were seen to pluck the ears of corn and eat them, Math. 12, 2, 3. He defendeth them being charged to transgress the tradition of the Elders, in that they did not wash before they had eat bread, Mat. 15, 2, 3. Yea, such was his great & wonderful love to those that followed him, y^t when his own credit was touched as well as theirs, he seemeth to neglect his own, and maintain theirs, as we see, Luke 7. When Christ was entertained in the house of one of the Pharisees, a woman in the City which was a sinner, knowing that he sate at meat, brought an Alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet, washing them with her tears, wiping them with her hairs, kissing them with her lips, and anointing them with the ointment: but *when the Pharisee, which had bidden him, saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a Prophet, would have known, who, and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, for she is a sinner.* He conceived hardly of Christ, as well as of the woman: and judged wrongfully of him that he was no Prophet, as well as of her that she was a sinner; yea more corruptly of him then of her, forasmuch as she had been so; whereas he was not only a Prophet, but the

Prince of Prophets, yea, the King of his Church, yea, the Son of God: yet he forbearth to make any apology for himself, & wholly defendeth her, telling him that *her sins, which are many, are forgiven her, for she loved much*. Hath the Lord Jesus this singular care of us, and shall not we be zealous of his glory? Shall we suffer his name to be trodden under foot, and never offer to uphold it? Shall evil men speak evil of his truth, and we say nothing against them? The Apostle *Peter* giveth this commandment, *Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear*, 1 Pet. chap. 3, verse 15. When the Apostles were charged to preach no more in the Name of Jesus Christ, *Peter* and *John* answered and said unto them; *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more then unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard*. Acts 4, 19. Woe then unto those that see and hear God notoriously dishonored, and yet will neither hear it nor see it: they make a law against themselves, and shall taste of the same measure measured unto them again, they shall be censured of others, when they shall have none to defend their causes. This they will judge to be an injury to themselves, and yet cannot perceive the iniquity which they commit against God. If then they will have GOD show this mercy to them in making their innocence known, let them perform this duty to him in pleading his cause, when his truth is evilly spoken off, or any way ouerborne. [Use 4]

Fourthly, forasmuch as this is the merciful dealing of GOD toward us and our good name when it is impeached, that he will make the truth to be known, let us acknowledge this blessing, and give him the praise of it. This also is another duty that we are put in mind off to be performed unto him. For as we are bound in regard of our own good to pray unto him to make manifest the secrets of our hearts, and to bring to the light the truth that is hidden: so whensoever we have found the hand of GOD to be with us, and to have scattered the clouds and mists of falsehood, slanders, and evil surmises, and so made the goodness of our cause, and the cleerenesse of our conscience to appear, as the Sun that shineth in his strength; it belongeth unto us to confess his loving kindness, and by all means to be thankful to him for it, and to express our thankfulness by obedience. Let us not be like unto the Lepers in the Gospel, who were very desirous to be cleansed of their leprosy, *they lifted up their voices and said, Jesus Master, have mercy on us*, Luke 17, verse 13. Howbeit when once they were healed, they went their ways, and never remembered him that recovered them; like to *Pharaohs* chief Butler, that gave the cup into his hand, who *forgot Joseph* so soon as his head was lifted up, and he restored unto his place, albeit *Joseph had entreated him to think upon him, when it should be well with him*, and so to show kindness unto him, for that kindness which he had received. Only one of these ten lepers that were cleansed, returned back to Jesus to give him thanks, and ascribe praise and glory to be due unto him for that work. Thus it is with many of us, we are ready to call and cry out for the wrongs that we sustain, & we are as desirous to have our names cleared, as the Lepers were to have their bodies cleansed: but when God hath helped to clear us who were not able to clear our selves, and so hath wrought means for our good, we rejoyce in our selves and not in the Lord; we praise our selves, and not the Lord: we do so magnify our selves, that we never glorify him: we are so jealous of our own name, that we are never a whit zealous of God's Name. Is it so small a benefit to have

our good meaning manifest, and our righteousness known, that it is not worth thanks? If a man should come as a witness on our side, when our case seemed desperate and out of hope, would we not think our selves beholding unto him? It is the Lord that is the God of our righteousness, it is he that will give judgment on our side, and therefore to him we owe praise, glory, thanks, and all honor. This we see performed in *David*, Psalm. 18, 20, 24, 47, 49. being a Psalm of thanksgiving in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, & from the hand of *Saul*, of whom he was accused to affect the kingdom, and to seek his life. He confesseth how good God had been unto him, that *he rewarded him according to his righteousness, and according to the cleanness of his hands he recompensed him; that it was God that avenged him, and subdued the people under him, and delivered him from the violent man: whereupon he concludeth; Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy Name.* Thus must we do, and this ought to be our song when we have received the same favor. We are acquainted with his goodness in this kind, but he cannot be acquainted with our thankfulness. We can be content to swallow with a wide and open throat his benefits, but whē we should confess his mercy to his glory, our mouths are stopped, and our tongues are tied, and our throats are dried, and our harts are straightened, that we cannot utter a voice nor deliver him a word for the deliverance that we have had experience of.

[Use 5] Fifthly, as our doctrine putteth us in mind of duties belonging unto God, so it offereth us instruction how to behave our selves toward our brethren. Is God careful of our good name? and will he make known our innocence? Then let the same mind be in us one toward another, which is in the Almighty toward us all, let us follow the example of our heavenly Father, and be careful to maintain the good name of our brethren, & show that mercy unto them which we have received of God. We cannot have a better example set before our eyes, then the example of God, who chargeth us to *be merciful as he is merciful*, Luk. 6, 30. As he is ready to forgive us, so ought we to forgive from our hearts, the trespasses that are done unto us, Ephe. 4. As he made all things in six days, and rested the seventh, so ought we to rest from the labors of our callings, and sanctify the Sabbath day, Gen. 2. Exod. 20. As Christ washed the feet of his Disciples, so he gave them an example that they should do as he had done to them; for he is meek and lowly in heart, & they shall find rest to their souls, John. 13. As he being in the form of God, & thinking it no robbery to be equal to God, made himself of no reputation, & took upon him the form of a servant; so the same mind ought to be in us that was in him, that so in lowliness of mind we should esteem each other better then our selves, & have a kind of emulation among us, who should cast down himself lowest, Phil. 2, 5. As he suffered for us, so he hath left us an example that we should follow his steps, 1 Pet. 2.21. As he was reviled, and reviled not again: as he suffered, & threatened not, but committed himself to him y^t judgeth righteously, so should not we give taunt for taunt, and reproach for reproach. And as Christ defended his Disciples when as they were falsely charged, & wrongfully accused, as we shown before, so ought we to deal toward our brethrē. When we hear false reports, which have no ground or good beginning, such as in our own knowledge & conscience we know to be invented in hell, and broached in earth, such I say, as are spread abroad through malice of our brother, and hatred of his profession: what must

we do? shall we believe them, & give credit unto them? Shall we increase them, & add somewhat of our own? or shall we laugh at them, & make our selves merry with them? No, we must not only stop the stream, and stay the reports, & keep our selves and others from receiving of them; but we must open our mouths in the cause of the dumb, and oppose our selves against those that are their enemies. A good name is a precious jewel, it is *better then silver and gold*. It commendeth us to God & his Angels. It is a precious ointment and a sweet perfume that maketh us acceptable to y^e sons of men, and winneth their hearts: yea, sometimes it maketh our enemies to be at peace with us, and to favor us. It seasoneth y^e gifts that we have received, and maketh them profitable unto others. If our gifts be never so great and excellent yet if we have not a good name to grace them and counrenance them, we can do very little or no good with them. If we see a man stealing away the goods of our neighbor, and secretly purloining them away, and we hold our peace, are we not accessory to his theft, and partakers of his sin? So if we hear any raising evil reports of him, and robbing him of his good name, which is more in value then all things in the world, are we not slanderers as well as he, while we join with him, & so become guilty of the same transgression? A good name is many a man's living; take that away, and impair his credit, he is utterly undone, & not able to maintain himself: you hurt him as much as if you took away house and land, corn & cattle from him, or any other thing of worth that is dear unto him. If then it be so rich and precious a treasure, we must be careful to maintain our brothers credit & estimation, being made keepers of his life, of his goods, and of his good name, doing y^e same unto him, which we desire he should do unto us. This is a sign of true love, that we love him indeed, when we will not spare to take upon us his just defense: and on the other side, it is an evident token of cold love, or no love at all, when we see them abused, and do not regard it: the Lord will raise up others in his righteous judgment, who shall do as little for us, as we do for those that stand in need of us.

[Use 6] Lastly, as this doctrine hath offered unto us sundry good meditations of duties, concerning God and our brother, so it sendeth us not away without comfort concerning our selves. Are we slandered and reviled? Are we falsely charged with things which we never spake or did? Let this be our comfort, the time shall certainly come, when the slanderers shall be detected, and put to silence. It ought not to seem strange to us, when such flying tales are noised abroad, rather it might seem most strange as a great wonder if it were not so. The devil will be the devil still, who is the head and prince of all slanderers, and all his instruments will be like him. God's people above all others are falsely accused; *they are not of the world, but chosen out of the world*, and therefore the world hateth them. *Joseph* was accused to be incontinent: *Job* was condemned to be an hypocrite: *Daniel* was charged with disobedience; *Amos* of conspiracy, *Elijah* of troubling Israel, *David* of seeking *Saul's* life; *Paul* was suspected to be a murderer, Christ our Savior was reputed an enemy to *Caesar*, and his Disciples were accused, and judged worthy of stripes, and censured to be mouers of sedition among the people: howbeit all this is but as a cloud, which will quickly be dispersed, & as a dark mist that shall suddenly be scattered away. It is a notable comfort to hear these things, that GOD will not suffer us to sink down under taunts and rebukes of men, but lift up our heads and pronounce sentence of absolution on our side. Let it not trouble us to be

condemned of men, so that we be assured to be justified of God. If a man were wrongfully condemned in an action of slander, or felony in an inferior Court of justice, and there judged to be guilty of some heinous crime; yet if he were sure to be acquitted and discharged by appeal to an higher Court, where he is persuaded he cannot but have justice, because there is no corruption of Judge, or witness: how would he be comforted? and how little should the overthrow he had taken, be regarded? forasmuch as he knoweth the next trial will set all to right again. So is the case with us. It is our lot and condition here *to be persecuted and reviled for righteousness sake*, and we shall be condemned of wicked men unjustly: howbeit this ought not to trouble us, how greatly soever they resist us and rage against us: this is but a condemnation of men upon the earth: we may lawfully appeal from them to an higher Court, and to a greater Judge. When *Paul* was falsely accused by the Jews, and could have no justice at y^e hands of the high Priests, *he appealed to Caesar*, that is, from inferior Governors, to the Emperor that was supreme. So must we do, when we are burdened and oppressed by the poison of evil tongues, and condemned as evil doers of all men, we know there is a Judge that sitteth in heaven, who will acquit us when we come before him, and take the cause into his own hand. And if we see not this always accomplished in this life, it shall most certainly be performed in the life to come, when all the secrets of every man's heart shall be opened. Sometimes he maketh their light so to shine in this world, that they reap great fruit of their godliness, and the Sun beams as it were to refresh them and make them alive again. But if it happen not in this life, yet it shall not fail in the next life, when Christ shall appear in glory, and say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit ye the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world*, Math. chap. 25, verse 34. When he shall break the heavens, and come to judge the quick and the dead, let us lift up our heads and rejoice, for our redemption draweth near. This is the time of our refreshing, here we are ouerweariet with bearing the burden of other men's malice. Then shall all tears be wiped from our eyes, and we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known, as we read, Math. chap. 13, verse 43. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun, in the kingdom of their Father: he that hath ears to hear, let him hear*. To this purpose speaketh *Paul*, Colos. chap. 3, verses 3, 4. *Your life is hid with Christ in God: when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory*.

If then our righteousness be covered here as with a garment, and be hidden as a treasure that is buried in the earth, yet our life shall not always lie in obscurity; for when the night is past, the day will appear, and when falsehood hideth her face, the truth will be made manifest.

Let us acknowledge the power of God that is able to do this: and let us rest patiently in him that is our stay. Let us not fret our selves, because of him that prospereth in his way, and bringeth wicked devises to pass. Contrary-wise, the ungodly have from this doctrine matter of sorrow and heaviness, because howsoever they rule here for a time, and will not be controlled; they say their tongues are their own, who is Lord over them; they think themselves privileged to devise and disperse what lies they list, and none may call them to an account: yet God will one day call them to an account, when they shall receive according to their works: *For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider*

his place, and it shall not be, the Lord shall laugh at him, for he seeeth his day coming. Then it shall be said to all the wicked, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his Angels.* The truth may be over-borne and smothered for a time, yet it cannot be disgraced and concealed forever. It were well for them, if they might lie forever in the grave, and never come into the light: it were well for them if their works might never come to be examined & might die as the untimely fruit of a woman, that never saw the Sun: but it shall not go so well with them, they must not then look for aie comfort, like the rich Glutton who was denied a drop of water to cool his tongue. If then they would give a thousand worlds for one day of repentance, or for one drop of Faith, or for oil in their lamps, they cannot obtain it. Here life is either won or lost: here salvation is begun, or else we never have it. Then all things shall appear as they are, though many things are that do not now appear. Then the vizard of the hypocrite must be pulled off, and he shall deceive no more by shows of honest dealing.

[*And she shall conceive seed.*] In these words we have a second promise made to the Woman suspected of adultery, against whom nothing could be proved. For God maketh a twofold promise to the innocent party. The first was set down before, that she should be free from the imputation of the sin, and from the castigation of punishment. Now cometh the second promise to be considered, which reacheth further then the former, wherein God doth wonderfully recompense the slander charged upon her, and declare himself to be a maintainer of chastity and innocence. For what could a woman in this case have desired, but to have her innocence made known to her husband, and to the whole Church? It was an hard case to undergo this trial, and to have her name in this manner called into question: but after she is tried, God doth abundantly recompense her sorrow and affliction, and doth not only clear her good name, but giveth her issue, making the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. He doth not only set her free, the thing which she desired: but withal, maketh her fruitful, which is more then she could have expected. We learn hereby, that howsoever the faithful are many ways tried and troubled, yet all their sorrows are turned to their good. When the innocence and righteousness of the godly is once made known, God is more gracious unto them then they could desire or crave at his hands. We see this in the examples alleged in the former Doctrine, as in a glass most clearly. Remember what we said of *Joseph*; albeit he lived for a time as a prisoner and was clapt in the stocks, yet he was delivered, and his innocence revealed. But was this all? Or did God content himself to bring his sincerity to light? No, he was advanced to honor, *and made ruler over all the land of Egypt*, which he never dreamed of, nor looked for, nor gaped after. And as it was with the son, so was it also with the father. For *Jacob* vowed a vow to God, that if he would be with him and keep him in his journey that he was to go, *And would give him bread to eat, and raiment to put on, then the Lord should be his God.* His desires are not extended far, but he is contented with a little, he craveth of God his daily bread, the which Christ also willet and warranteth us to ask, Mat. 6 nevertheless, God was more gracious to him then so, and gave him great riches, as himself cōfesseth to God his loving kindness: *I am not worthy of y^e least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shown unto thy servant, for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.* The like we might speak of *Job* the

faithful servant of the Lord; who may be compared to him in the suffering of adversity? Or who can match him in patience? He sustained the loss of his Children, and of his goods, and yet these were but the beginnings of sorrows, forasmuch as he was deeply afflicted in body and mind. What then? did he desire of God in his misery, to have his Asses and Camels, and cattle doubled upon him, and all the substance of his house to be increased? He had no such thought in his heart, and yet it came to pass according to the saying of the Apostle, *James 5, 11. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, for the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.* Let us also call to mind the example of *David*, the least in his Fathers house, he was called of God *from feeding his sheep, and following the Ewes great with young, and was anointed to be King, and appointed to feed his people in Jacob, and his inheritance in Israel.* whereof he never dreamed, *Psal. 78, 71, 72.* The like we might say of *Daniel*, of *Mordecai*, of *Ester*, and many other children of the captivity, who saw great dangers ready to fall upon the church, as it were a gaping gulf ready to swallow them up quick, or as a huge rock threatening ship-wrack; if they had only tasted of the mercy of God and his power in working their deliverance, they would have magnified his great goodness, and sung his praise with the Psalmist, *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all: he keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken,* *Psal. 34, 19, 20.* But besides this, he gave them favor in the sight of Princes, and *raised them from the dung-hill, to make them inherit the Throne of glory,* as *Hannah* singeth, who had good experience of it, who was contemned, but now regarded: who asked of God *one son*, and obtained not him alone, but three other sons, and two daughters. From all which conceits of holy Scripture▪ we conclude, that the faithful and righteous servants of God are oftentimes blessed, not only above their deserts, (which are none at all) but above their desires and demands.

[Reason 1] The Reasons that serve to confirm this truth to our consciences, are to be considered of us. First, God is infinite in his love toward his people: he is no niggard of his goods, he keepeth not all to himself, as the covetous man. He is as the liberal man, that freely bestoweth where he seeth need: we are as poor beggars that have nothing our own but rags and rents; or as poor cripples that can boast of nothing but wounds and sores full of corruption. His grace is the true riches, and by it he hath abounded toward his church. Hence it is that the Apostle writing to the Ephesians, commendeth in many places of the Epistle, the over-flowing grace of God, and showeth that *he is rich in mercy, and aboundeth in kindness,* chap. 1, 7. & chap. 2, 4, 7. he setteth out his great love wherewith he loveth us, & *the exceeding riches of his grace, and his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ.* And chap. 3, 8. he calleth his grace toward us *unsearchable riches.* He doth not keep us to a diet, as though he meant to pine us or famish us: he doth not allow us only so much as serveth to keep us in state, and hold body and soul together, but he dealeth bountifully towards us, & maketh our cup to over flow. If then he be rich in mercy and goodness, and abundant in kindness, if there be in him *exceeding riches, unsearchable riches, riches of his grace and glory,* it is not to be marueiled at, that his childrē find him gracious toward them, above all that the tongue can desire, or the heart can think: forasmuch as his mercy is over all his works.

[Reason 2] Secondly, God is evermore better then his word, and performeth more then he promiseth. He is not as man that he should lie, nor as the son of man that he should deceive,

all his promises are yea and Amen to the praise of his mercy. He promiseth little, and performeth much. He is a Prince indeed that never falsified his word, neither could the unbelief of some that did not believe, make the saith of God without effect, Rom. 3, 3. he remaineth always true and faithful, constant and sure. If we obtain not the promises, the fault is not in the promise of God, but in the infidelity of mā; forasmuch as he never deludeth any, nor dallieth with them; whatsoever is gone out of his mouth, he meaneth it in good earnest. *The word of the Lord is right, and all his works are done in truth, he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail.* Psal. 33.4. and 89. He promiseth in the fifth commandment to give to inferiors that are obedient a long life, yet sometimes they die betimes: and on the other side, the stubborn and disobedient have prospered in this world, and lived long. How then (will some say) is God as good as his word? and how is he certain of his promise? Because, albeit he take us away, yet he performeth it by giving much more then he promised. When Herod promised to his wanton Minion that danced before him, *The one half of his kingdom*, it is certain it had been no breach of his promise, if he had resigned up the whole kingdom into her hands. So, if God promise a prolonged life, and give instead of it a perpetual life, here is more then half in half gains and advantage; as he that promiseth ten pieces of silver, and performeth twenty pieces of Gold; or he that promiseth a yard of clothe, and giveth an ell of Veluet, doeth not break his promise, or falsify his word.

Thirdly, as God is rich in grace, so he is [Reason 3] infinite in power: he is able to do what he will, and more then he will. Nothing is impossible unto him: he hath all creatures in his own hand, to employ thē as it pleaseth him. This is the reason used by the apostle, Eph. 3 20. *Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, be praise in the Church by Jesus Christ, &c.* If then he be able to give us more then we crave or desire, we are not to doubt of his doing of it, and we have all of us many notable experiences of it.

Let us come to the Uses, and mark them [Use 1] diligently. First, let us not be dismayed under the Cross, but assure our selves of a good end, and of an happy issue. It is the cup which we must all drink of, in one kind or in another. Let us not sink down under it, but lay hold on this principle, and fasten our hearts upon the doctrine with which we deal, as on an Anchor cast out of the ship to stay us, assuring our selves that God will be gracious unto us, his mercy shall superaboūd, so that we shall be more then Conquerors. One affliction followeth another, as one wave of the Sea rouleth after another, as Psal. 42. verse 7. *One deep calleth another deep by the noise of thy water spouts; all thy waves and thy floods are gone over me.* And in the 66. psalm, the 10, 11, 12. verse. *Thou, O God hast proved us, thou hast tried us, as silver is tried: thou hast brought us into the net, thou layedst affliction upon our loins; thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water, but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.* Nothing therefore shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath promised us that he will not leave us, nor forsake us. This promise we are to lay hold upon by faith, that he is able and willing to perform it, and that he will be better unto us then his word. We cannot believe too much concerning God: we need not fear to hope too far of his mercy. True it is, we oftentimes presume too far of the kindness of men, and so are deceived of our expectation: we promise to our selves much,

when we go away empty. It is not so with God. There is no sin greater then infidelity, when he speaketh, not to hear: when he promiseth, not to believe: which he suffereth not to go unpunished. If you call his word into question which is passed out of his mouth, you call his nature and being in question; you $\langle \diamond \rangle$ in effect doubt whether he be God or not; yea, whether there be a God or not. The Prince that heard the word of the Lord sent in mercy, during the famine in *Israel*, and the siege of *Samaria*, 2 King. 7, 1. *To morrow this time a Measure of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel, and two measures of Barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria*, did not believe it, because such was their misery, that it seemed not only strange, but impossible unto them that there should be such plenty and abundance at a sudden, and no means appear how or which way it should be done, and therefore said, verse 2. *Though the Lord would make windows in the heaven, could this thing come to pass?* But what followed? The Prophet denounced against him, that he should see the truth of it with his eyes, but he should not eat thereof; and the Lord executed this sentence, and let nothing of that which he had said fall to the ground, for *the people trod upon him in the gate* (he having the over-sight of the business committed unto him) and he died, as the man of God had said.

Zachariah the Priest, had an Angel sent unto him from God, standing at the right side of the Altar of Incense, telling him that *His prayer was heard, and that his wife should bear him a son, and that many should rejoice at his birth*; howbeit he would not believe the message, he measured all things by the course of nature: the word of the Angel would not suffice him, that stood in the presence of God, and was sent to speak unto him, and to show him these good tidings; he must farther hear, verse 18. *Whereby he should know this?* But he that would not rest in these good tidings, is constrained to hear heavy tidings, that *he should be dumb, and not be able to speak until the day that these things be done*, because he believed not his words which should be fulfilled in their season. The like we might also say of the Israelites in the wilderness, as we shall see afterwards in the eleventh chapter of this book of *Numbers*, *Moses* shown the weakness of his faith, and the people the want of their faith, so that the Lord complaineth against them; against *Moses*, that he was of little Faith; against the rest, that they were for the most part a faithless generation, albeit they had known his goodness, tried his power, felt his justice, and seen his mercies and miracles plentifully amongst them; he might justly take up the same complaint against his people, which Christ did against his Disciples, Mat. 17. verse 17. *O generation, faithless, and crooked, how long now shall I be with you? How long now shall I suffer you?* Hence it is, that when *Moses* considering the want they had of flesh, Numb. 11, 21, 22. said, *Six hundred thousand foot-men are there of the people, among whom I am: and thou sayest, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a month long*: Shall the sheep and the Beeves be slain for them to find them? either shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them to suffice them? *The Lord said unto Moses, Is the Lord's hand shortened? Thou shalt see now, whether my word shall come to pass unto thee, or no.* He sent them that which they desired, but he sent it not as a blessing: they lusted with Concupiscence in the Wilderness, and tempted GOD in the Desert; so that it turned to be a curse unto them, for *While the flesh was yet between their teeth, before it was chewed, even the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and he smote the people with an exceeding great plague.* Yea, such was the judgment that came upon them, that the place was called *Kibroth hattaauah*, the graves of Lust; for there

they buried the people that fell a lusting, to keep thereby the greatness of their sin fresh in remembrance▪ verifying that also which the Prophet saith, Psal. 106, 16. *He gave them their request, but he sent leanness into their soul.* They had flesh enough, but it did them no good, they abounded, but their abundance turned to their destruction. So whē they wanted water, and *Moses & Aaron* did not teach them to be patient under the cross, and contented with God's hand, the Lord spake unto them; *Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the presence of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this Congregation into the land which I have given them.* There is no greater wrong can be done to God, then to doubt of his truth: of all sins, this is one of the most highest and most heinous, to have in us an evil heart and unfaithful, to depart away from the living God. Wherefore, when we or any part of the Church are in extremity, and lie under affliction, let us not cast off our confidence that hath great recompense of reward. Here is a stay to rest upon; here is a pillar that cannot be shaken; here is a most sure and firm foundation, upon which we should build our house. Is he more merciful to his Saints, then they can wish or desire? Let us then know for a certainty, that there is great hope of deliverance in the greatest extremitities, though we know no way to escape, but that we rest as a prey in the teeth of the Lyon: yet the love of God toward us is infinite and unspeakable: he can restore us and redeem us by sundry ways that we could not think of, nor dream of, nor desire. This is that which *Mordecai* is bold to put *Esther* in mind of, Ester 4, 14. *If thou holdest thy peace at this time, comfort and deliverance shall appear to the Jews out of another place, but thou and thy Fathers house shall perish,* Faith is the ground of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, Heb, 11, 1. If there be faith in us, as the grain of Mustard seed which is very little, we shall find the benefit and fruit of it. If any grace be wanting in us, the fault is in our selves, and not in God: we have the truth of his word delivered unto us, but we believe not the doctrine which we hear. This we see in the Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 50, 2. *Wherefore came I, and there was no man? I called, and none answered: is mine hand so shortened, that it cannot help? Or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea: I make the floodes desert; Their Fish rotteth for want of water, and dieth for thirst.*

And afterwards the same Prophet urgeth this point, *Isaiah* 59.1, 2. *Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save: neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your GOD, and your sins have hidden his face from you, that he will not hear.* Nay, his ear is so far from being heavy that he cannot hear, that on the other side, he is quick of hearing, and so quick, that he is sought of them that asked not for him, and found of them that sought him not, *Isaiah* 65, 1. Seeing then he is so bountiful above all our desires, woe unto us, if we believe not his word, nor rest upon his power, nor content our selves with his promise. When the *Israelites* were oppressed with the hard and cruel task-masters of the *Egyptians*, what could they desire, or what did they desire at the hands of *Pharaoh*, but to go into the wilderness to serve him, and to carry with them their own Cattle, their children, and their substance? But God did not only grant that unto them, but brought them out with great substance; *He gave them silver and gold, & there was not one feeble person among their tribes.* They never durst ask of God to give them the treasures and the spoils of their enemies, yet he gave them that which they neither dared to ask, nor desired to obtain; for they had many Jewels, and much raiment, so that they were enriched, and the *Egyptians* spoiled. This was a

reward and recompense of their service. They found favor in the sight of God, although they were evilly entreated at the hands of men.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing God is merciful above our hope, we have hereby great comfort in prayer, to call upon him in the day of trouble, being assured that he will hear us, and that we shall obtain more than we desired, and find more than we asked. Are we slandered and reviled, as the case was of the suspected wife in this place? Do we hear evil reports cast out against us? let us not be grieved at it, nor return like for like; but rather call upon him that knoweth the secrets of all hearts: let us crave of him to make our innocence known, as the servants of God from time to time have done, who have received more than ever they asked of him. *David prayed thus unto God, Psal. 7, 3. O Lord my God, if I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hands, if I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me, &c. Let the enemy persecute my soul and take it, &c. Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my integrity that is in me.* He desired no more, than to be esteemed as he was, and to have the truth of his heart manifested; but GOD granted more than that. He heard his prayer, and he obtained that which he prayed not for. Did he ever ask of God a Kingdom? Did he crave that God would make him King of *Israel*? and yet GOD gave the Kingdom unto him. Are we in want, and would have his blessings? We shall find no want in him, who is more ready to hear us, than we are to speak. His ears are often open, while our mouths are shut. If we desire one mercy at his hands, he is ready to grant two unto us. How oftentimes did *Abraham* pray for the Sodomites that the City might have been spared? Yet he gave over and ceased begging, before God gave over granting his requests, *Gen. 18.* Even as he that seeketh one pearl, findeth sometimes more than he sought: so is it with all the faithful. The graces of God are all of them Jewelles of wonderful price. If a man sell all that he hath to get one of them, it is no dear purchase: and if a man depart from any of his saving graces, albeit he should procure to himself by it the possession of a kingdom, his loss were a thousand times greater than his gains: *For what should it profit a man to gain the whole world, and then lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give for the recompense of his soul?* On the other side our Savior teacheth, *Mat. 13, 44, 45. That the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in the field, which when a man hath found, he hideth it, and for joy thereof departeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.* Again, *The kingdom of heaven is like to a Merchant man, which seeketh good Pearls, who having found a pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had & bought it.* Let us all from hence be encouraged to the exercise of prayer, and be bold to be ever begging of him. If a subject had this encouragement at the hand of his Prince, that if he were obedient unto him he would give him whatsoever he should ask, and a great deal more, he should be sure to want no suiters, but must be fain to assign many to receive their petitions. Or if there were any Prince known to be so gracious, that when any of his Liege-people should ask anything of him, he would of his princely bounty and magnificence lade him with benefits more than he desired, it were incredible to think in what flocks and multitudes they would resort unto him. There is no Prince to be compared with GOD, he hath all treasures in his own hand, and his treasury can never be drawn dry: his coffers can never be made empty, and his hand is never weary of bestowing. He giveth liberally to all that ask of him, *And he reproacheth no man, I am. 1, 5.* We ask little, & receive much: we ask spiritual blessings, and receive both spiritual and

temporal: we ask of him *Our daily bread*, and we obtain of him more then bread: we crave of him things for our necessity, and we have given unto us for our Christian delight and pleasure.

There is none of us all that do truly believe, but we have a gracious and blessed experience of this truth. If we be not altogether brutish and blockish, or without feeling and marking of God's dealing toward us we must needs confess, that the benefits of God and his goodness towards us, hath surmounted our hope, and gone beyond our expectation: which ought to give us much encouragement to come unto him, and to approach to the throne of his grace. This we noted before in the prayer of *Hannah*, she prayed to God, and asked a son of him, but God gave her many sons. This is that which *David* spareth not to confess at large, *Psal. 21, 2, 3, 4. Thou hast given him his hearts desire, and hast not denied him the request of his lips: for thou diddest prevent him with liberal blessings, and diddest set a crown of pure Gold upon his head: he asked of thee life, and thou gavest him a long life forever and ever.* The savor of God was bestowed upon him before he prayed, and far beyond that which he prayed for. The like mercy we see extended toward *Solomon* after the death of his Father, when the government of a great people lay upon his shoulders, he prayed unto God, and asked of him nothing but *a wise and understanding heart*, to be able to rule that people, and to go in and out before them, and to discern between good and bad: but the Lord was so exceeding well pleased with it, that he said unto him; *Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding to hear Judgment: Behold, I have done according to thy words; Loe, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart: so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall arise the like unto thee: And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor, so that among the Kings there shall be none like unto thee all thy days.* Great therefore is our sin, if having so wide a gate set open before us, and such a cloud of witnesses compassing us about, we do yet hang back, and do not pour out our meditations before him. This experience of God's favor, was the chief cause that the faithful have been so devout in prayer, that every day they were mindful of their own duty toward him, and of his mercy toward them, so that sometimes at midnight they rose up, and sometimes both evening and morning, and at noon they prayed unto him, and he did hear their voice, as in the 55. Psalm, and the 17. verse. and Psalm 119. Dan. 6.

Lastly, seeing God aboundeth in grace [Use 3] and goodness above our desires, it is our duty to render unto him again the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. For, how shall we receive such unspeakable kindness, and not give him the glory? Or how shall he open his hands in so liberal and large a manner, and we shut our mouths against him? If he be so gracious to remember us, how shall we be so vnmindefull and unthankfull unto him? This use is concluded by the Apostle, *Ephes. chap. 3. ver. 20, 21. having shown that God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we either ask or think, he addeth in the next words, To him be praise in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations for-ever, Amen.* If we would diligently consider what God hath done for us, we shall be compelled to confess, that GOD hath many times prevented us with his liberal blessings, and that he hath been mercicifull towards us above all that we are able to crave or conceive. What then? Shall we do nothing

to him again? True it is, we live not in a giving age; we are hand fast, and love not to part with anything. Do we so reward the Lord? Shall we receive all good things at his hands, and return nothing to him again? Shall we find him better to us than we desire, and shall he find us worse than he deserveth at our hands? Let us therefore give him praise for his unspeakable and unsearchable mercies, let his name be glorified in the Church by us. He showeth his power especially in the Church by work and word, and therefore it is great reason he should receive praise in his church. Hence it is that the Prophet saith, *In Judah is God known, his name is great in Israel: in Salem also is his Tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion: there brake he the arrows of the bow, the sword, and the shield, and the battle.* Here then he teacheth us, that God maketh his name glorious and famous. But where? *In Judah.* His name is great. But where? *In Israel:* and that because he wrought a marvelous work in overthrowing the army of *Sennacherib*, which threatened destruction to the Church, but it was destroyed itself. To this purpose we read in another psalm, *Sing forth the glory of his name, make his praise glorious: say unto God, how terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies be in subjection unto thee.* The like we might say of the word of God, as it is *Psal. 147, 19, 20. He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with every Nation, neither have they known his judgments:* and in another place he teacheth, that *he had magnified his name above all things by his word.* Let this then stand as a firm principle, that God, because he showeth himself diverse ways in his Church, to wit, by his word and works, is therefore to be glorified and honored especially in it. He is gracious indeed to all mankind, howbeit he blesseth no persons in comparison of the members of his Church, so that he is to be praised in no places, & among no persons so much as in his Church, according to that saying of the Psalmist, *Psal. 65, 1, 2. Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion; & unto thee shall all flesh come.* Now God may be said to be glorified in the church two ways; first, privately; secondly, publicly. Priuately, when every man severally and apart by himself doth serve him and worship him, and set forth his praise. For we do receive every private man of us several blessings and benefits not common to others; these we are to acknowledge particularly and privately, and GOD accepteth this service at our hands. Publicly, when we meet in the assembly and congregation of the faithful, that are fellow members of the same body, that so he may receive praise by the mouths of many witnesses. Doubtless, God alloweth the former, and he is delighted with the private sacrifice of everyone, and accepteth the calves of our lips: but especially he is well pleased with the public prayers and praises that are performed by many. This did *David* promise to give unto GOD, because he had not a greater to promise, or to perform, *Psalm 22, 23. In the midst of the congregation I will praise thee.* True it is, God standeth not in need of our praises, neither gaineth anything to himself thereby which he had not before. For, as every beast of the Forest is his, and the cattle on a thousand mountains, *Psal. 50, 10.* so we can yield him nothing, but it must first proceed from him, and be given unto us. He is perfect of himself, and needeth no supply from us: for what can the beggar that hath nothing, give to the King that hath all in his power? Nevertheless, he is delighted in our obedience to his will, and well pleased with our performance of that which he requireth. We must therefore acknowledge our selves unworthy of the least of his mercies, we deserve not one bit of bread, or one drop of wate. In him we live, and move, and have our being.

The Land of *Canaan* was given to the Israelites, of mercy, not of merit: because he loved them, not because they loved him: not thorough their godliness and goodness, but through the wickedness of the nations. The Lord is our *righteousness*, and he hath made us accepted unto his Father. We are of our selves, wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: we are not able so much as to think one good thought. There is nothing due to us but shame and confusion: yet such is God's grace & goodness toward us, that where sin hath abounded, his mercy hath abounded much more. If we ask of him garments to cover our nakedness, he will beside them *decke us with Ornaments, and clothe us* with broidred work, and attire us in silver and gold; he will put bracelets on our hands, a chain about our neck, a Jewel on our forehead, earrings in our ears, & a beautiful crown upon our heads. If we ask of him bread to eat, he will together with it give us wine to comfort the heart, and oil to make us have a cheerful countenance: so that we shall eat fine flour and honey, Ezekiel 16, 13. He is like unto *Iael* that entertained *Sisera*, *he asked water, and she gave him milk, she brought forth Butter in a Lorldly dish*, Judge. 4, 19. and 5, 25. We ask sparingly, and he bestoweth liberally: yea, he giveth freely that which we durst not hope for. This we see in *Jacob*. Genes. 48, 11. When *Joseph* came with his two sons to visit his sick Father, he said unto him, *I had not thought to see thy face; and loe, God hath shown me thy seed*. O the greatness of God's goodness unto us! How unspeakable are his mercies! How infinite is his loving kindness! O well shall it be with us, if we be ever mindful of it, and never forget any of his benefits. For, seeing he is rich in his mercies towards, let us not us be poor in our praises towards him. Christ hath spent himself upon us, let us not be sparing to give our selves unto him again. Let us follow the example of *Jacob*, who was in the earnestness of his affection carried into an admiration of God's favor towards him, and breaketh out into a thanksgiving for his benefits, as if he had said, That which I never thought would have come to pass, nay that which seemed to me desperate and impossible, God hath offered to me in wonderful manner beyond my expectation: I judged my son lost, but I have found him: dead, but I have received him alive. So, let us take pleasure and delight in his mercies: let us confess them in words, and let us praise his power & set forth his goodness toward us. Let us thē be ashamed of our own sluggishnes, seeing God is more willing to bestow, thē we to receive: he is more ready to show compassion upon us then we to be freed frō our misery. His grace is more plentiful then our prayer; for he giveth us more then we ask. The thief on the cross no sooner desired of the Lord to remember him when he came into his kingdom, but immediately he received this answer, *Verily, I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, which containeth more then he was bold to ask. We need not then fear any excess in faith, or that we should believe more then he will bestow, forasmuch as his favor goeth beyond our faith, who hath his hand open to give, before our mouth is open to speak unto him.

29 This is the Law of jealousies, when a wife goeth aside to another instead of her husband, and is defiled:

30 Or when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and shall set the woman before the Lord, and the Priest shall execute upon her all this law.

31 Then shall the man be guiltless from iniquity, and the woman shall bear her iniquity.

Hitherto hath been handled the setting down of the Law. We have heard the cause propounded and resolved, examined and determined. Now we come to the conclusion of the whole matter, and the winding up of the sentence touching the woman suspected of adultery: which is twofold, one belonging to the man, the other to the woman. The man shall be free from sin; the woman shall bear her iniquity. Here the question may be asked, whether it be lawful in our days for the husband to make trial of his wife whō he suspecteth of adultery? may he attempt to discover openly what she hath done secretly? I answer, there is no such law now in force, neither may we give way to any such practice, & therefore it cannot be allowed as lawful. This action commenced against the wife, cannot want sin, and hath an evil foundation.

We that live in the light of the New Testament, who have more revealed unto us then was made known in the time of the Law, must know that no such thing is permitted unto us. What then? will some say, shall the husband suffer his wife to do what she list, and must he be a baud unto her? or be constrained to take all patiently? or shall he be driven to see all, and to say nothing? I answer, if the crime be known, God hath provided in his law to deal severely with such, Levite. 18. and Christian Magistrates must take away evil out of Israel. But if it be secret, they are to wait with patience, until God reveal it, and bring it to the open light. No man may rashly suspect his wife of adultery, or call her name into question, or raise an evil report of her; but labor to keep her within the bounds of her calling, that on the other side she may learn to love him and to reverence him.

[Verse 29. *This is the Law of jealousies,*] We are come to the conclusion of this matter, to wit, of the law of jealousies. We have heard every part of it; we have expounded every circumstance; we have considered every branch of it. True it is, we have no use of the practice of it: *The bitter waters* are not now to be drunken: *the earthen vessel* hath no more place, *the jealousy offering of memorial* is abolished: *the uncovering of the woman's head* is ceased, and the whole manner of trial is abrogated. Nevertheless, albeit the whole law be ended, yet the same God remaineth (the searcher of all hearts) bearing the same hatred to all sin which he did before, and hath the like love to innocence which he had before. What is it that moveth to the committing of the sin of adultery, but the hope to hide it? This bewitcheth the ungodly, and leadeth them to destruction, when they dream that God is like unto them. This is a vain conceit, and foolish opinion, because we see how the Lord himself taketh upon him to discover it, and to be revenged of those that shall presume to break the band of wedlock which he hath made. This was the purpose of this law, to show that the Lord taketh upon him, not only the knowledge, revealing, and punishing of this sin, even when it is most secretly committed without witness of any other man, yea or certain knowledge from the husband himself, or any confession of the party that had done it: but also the defense and clearing of the innocent woman, being oppressed, vexed, and over-burdened with the unjust jealousy of her suspicious husband. He might present his wife (whether she were guilty, or not guilty) before the Priest unto that trial, which God had appointed and established to that

end among them, to avoid thereby a greater mischief. After which matter solemnized with all the ceremonies and circumstances thereof, if the woman were defiled indeed, then should *her belly swell, and her thighs rot*: if she were not defiled, then should she not only be free from this punishment, but also be blessed with fruitfulness, as a reward of her innocence, and a recompense of the injury done unto her, and a clearing of her good name which had evilly been called into question. We learn from hence, that all secret sins, hidden from men, are known unto God, and nothing is hidden from him.

Howsoever many sins be committed very secretly, and carried closely, that no man can accuse them or witness against them, or any way suspect them: yet notwithstanding God will find them out, and arraign them at the bar of his judgment seat. This we shall see proved unto us from the beginning. When *Adam* had sinned, he called him, convinced him, pronounced sentence against him, and caused it to be executed, Genesis, chap. 3.9. We see this in the murder of *Abel*, committed by his natural, or rather unnatural brother, the which albeit it were done out of the sight of man, so that he presumed to deny it and conceal it; yet he calleth him to a reckoning for it, *What hast thou done? the voice of thy brothers blood crieth unto me, from the ground*, Gen. 4.10. *David's* secret whoredom and shedding of innocent blood, were committed closely, yet they were discried and discovered by God, 2 Sam. 12.12. *Thou hast done it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the Sun*. So the secret idolatry of the Jews is shown to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, chap. 8.6. *Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here that I should go far from my Sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations*. When the wise men that were come out of the East began to enquire after the king of the Jews that was new born; *Herod*, being troubled at this news, and fearing the loss of his kingdom, sent them to Jerusalem to seek him, and willed them when once they had found him, to come and bring him word, that he might go, *and worship him*: but God warneth the wise men that he sought to kill him: he hid the secrets of his heart, but God can reveal them: no man could discern what he meant, howbeit God law into him and his counsels well enough. Whereby we see, that sins hidden from the face of men, and neglected by them, are found out, and to be accounted for before God; forasmuch as all secret things shall be brought to judgment whether they be good or evil.

[Reason 1] And as by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word must be established, 2. Cor. 13.1. so by the force of two or three reasons shall this doctrine be confirmed. First, it is impossible that anything in heaven or earth should hide us or our works from the knowledge of the Lord our God. There is neither darkness of the night, nor secrecy of place, nor cunning devises and fetches of political men, can help us or conceal us. This the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 139.9, 10, 11. *Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I fly from thy presence? if I ascend up into heaven, thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me: If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be a light about me, &c.* There is nothing can hinder his sight.

[Reason 2] Secondly, it is the office of God and an essential property attributed unto him to be the searcher of hearts. When men before the flood had corrupted themselves their works, and the earth it self upon which they went and walked, it is said, *God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*, Gen. 6.5. This is it which *Dau•d* layeth before his son *Solomon*, 1 Chron. 28.9. *The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of thoughts*. This also the Prophet *Jeremiah* setteth down, chap. 17.10. *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doing*. The Scripture is full of such testimonies, 2 Sam. 16.7. Psal. 7.10. and 26.2. and 139.13. Ierem. 11.20. and 20.12. This is an attribute proper unto God.

Thirdly, the most deep and hidden things [Reason 3] that man's eye cannot search into, are notwithstanding known unto God. When no man with all his cunning can dive or delue so deep as into the dark corners of the earth, yet the eye of God pierceth into them, as Pro. 15.11. *Hell and destruction are before the Lord; how much more then the hearts of the children of men? Who can pierce so far as to look into the heavens? or who can behold the things laid up in the center of the earth? who can descend into the bottom of the sea, to descouer the treasures that are hidden in the waters? or what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is within him?* so the things of God knoweth no man but the spirit of God. He is able to make all darkness to be light, and all secret things to be open and manifest to the world.

Fourthly, can anything be hidden from [Reason 4] him of whom they had their being, of whom they were created, of whom they have whatsoever is in them is not the work known to the workman, the art to the artificer, and the pot to the potter? He seeth not only near, but a far off: he knoweth our down sitting, and our uprising: he understandeth our thoughts that we conceal from others: he is acquainted with all our ways: our substance is not hid from him, he covered us in our mothers womb. Hereupon the Prophet saith, Psal. 94.9. *He that planted the ear shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know? the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man that they are vanity*. Seeing then God giveth life and being to every creature, and that they have received breath and motion from him, we may conclude that the most secret things committed in the most secret corners of the world are well known to God, and cannot be hidden from him.

This principle being strongly confirmed [Use 1] and so carrying authority to our consciences, let us see what uses may be made of it. First, seeing our secrets are not secrets with God and our counsels are not counsels to him, let us be persuaded of this most certain truth, and have it written in our hearts, that all men in this world, their hearts, their thoughts, their dealings, their desires, their delights, their words, their actions, and all things belonging unto them, are perfectly known unto the Lord, according to the saying of the Apostle, Hebrews, chapter 4. verse 14. *There is not any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do*. It is true indeed, if men were asked, whether they believe that GOD is present everywhere to behold all things that we do, they would freely & frankly confess it with their mouths, & be ready to seal unto it

with their tongues. It would be thought no strange thing to any, but a ground whereunto all persons yield, against which none dareth oppose himself: howbeit, if we come to their works, and examine their ways into which they are entered, we shall see it is far removed from their hearts and innermost parts. We are not therefore to flatter our selves in our sins, as though no eye saw us, or no ear heard us, as the manner of the profane and ungodly is, who say, who seeth me? I am compassed about with darkness of the night, the walls of the house hide me, nobody can behold me, what need I then to fear? There is not one of an hundredth that maketh any bones at sin, so he may carry it away clearly and closely, smoothly and secretly from the sight and knowledge of the world. They stand more upon their credit, then upon their conscience: and regard more the shame of men, then the fear of God. But what shall it profit a man to hide his sins from men, when they lie open to the eyes of God? Nay, albeit we think our selves never so sure and secret, yet we do but deceive our selves, forasmuch as our own conscience, as a thousand witnesses, will not be bribed to hold his peace, but will reply against us within our own bosom, and say unto us, I see thee, I will not keep thy counsel, I will accuse thee, I will bring in evidence against thee, I will indite thee, and condemn thee. So long then as we have a conscience, what are we the better, though we have nobody privy to our sins? for *if our own heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things*, John. 3.20. The conscience is as a watchman set over us to mark all our thoughts, that pryeth narrowly into us that nothing at all can escape him. It is as a Scrivener that always holdeth a pen of iron in his hand to write up all that passeth from us, who doth so firmly ingraue it, that nothing shall be able to blot it out. It is a faithful remembrancer to register and record all our actions; nothing can escape him that was done, or thought, or spoken a thousand years ago.

This serveth to reprove all such as think to delude God and to hide their dealings from him: as the adulterer supposeth to go in the dark, the thief and murderer in solitary places: but the Lord in his word preventeth such peevish and foolish conceits, Psal 10.11.13.14. *He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face, he will never see it: wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, thou wilt not require it. But thou hast seen it: for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to require it with thine hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee, thou art the helper of the fatherless.* Thus we see, God is not in all his thoughts. So in the 94 Psalm, which we cited before, bringing in the ungodly to speak thus, *The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it*, he reproveth them in this manner, *Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?* They then are deceived, that think to escape God's sight and knowledge. Solomon complaining of such as speak evil of Princes and those that are in authority, Eccle. 10.20. declareth that rather then it shall be kept secret, *the fowls of the air shall discover it, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter*: that is, it shall certainly come to light, and be set in the sight of the Sun, that all men may see it. Much more then will God himself find infinite means to lay open the thoughts of our hearts, so that nothing shall escape him. If *Elisha* by the Spirit of God was able to disclose the secret counsels of the king of Syria that he plotted and contrived in his secret chamber, 2 King. 6.12. Shall not God then lay open our secret sins that we commit? or can we hide them from his sight? His eyes are in

every corner of the earth. He seeth not as man seeth, nor looketh upon the countenance, but God beholdeth the heart, even he that formeth the spirit within him.

Secondly, let no man sin with hope of concealment, [Use 2] neither think to escape when he hath sinned. He saw the sacrilege of *Achan*, though he committed it secretly; none of the people could accuse him or detect him. God commanded every family to appear before him apart, and if he had not taken him and singled him out, neither *Joshua* nor the Elders of the people could have known him by all their wisdom and gifts of discerning, Josh. 7 1. It was God that *found him out that took the accursed thing*, it was not in the power and policy of man to bewray the theft. He discovered the hypocrisy of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, & their counterfeit liberality toward the distressed members of the Church. They were taken to be most earnest believers, most forward professors, and most zealous Christians, such as gave example of a good life unto others, & seemed to shine as goodly lights in the firmament; nevertheless, the Spirit of God that searcheth all things did make manifest the hollowness of their hearts, and therefore *Peter* inspired with knowledge from above saith unto them, *How is it, that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? or why hath Satan filled your hearts to lie to the holy Ghost?* He saw into the treachery of *Judas*, when none of the disciples could espy it. For when they sate at the Passover, and Jesus revealed unto them that he should be betrayed by one of them that dipped his hand in the platter with him, they were very sorrowful and knew not whom to suspect, but one said, *Master is it I? and another said, Is it I?* Mat. 26 22. Mar. 14.19. All these were detected of hypocrisy, and all these were punished by the hand of God most severely; *Achan* was stoned with stones, and burned with fire, Josh. 7.25.

Ananias and *Sapphira* were both of them stricken with sudden death, and had no time of repentance given unto them: for *they fell down straightway at Peters feet, & yielded up the ghost, and great fear came upon all the Church, and upon as many as heard these things.* *Judas*, when he perceived, that Jesus, whom he had betrayed, was condemned, brought back again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief Priests and Elziers, and cast them down in the Temple, and departed, and hanged himself Matth. 27.5. We see an this present place which now we have in hand, how the Lord used *the bitter waters of jealousy*, to find but the adulteress. We do not find throughout the whole Testament the like solemnity in the searching out of any sin, no, not idolatry, or witch craft, or sorcery, or blasphemy, or murder; neither was y^e person suspected compelled to subscribe to certain words of execration or imprecation against himself if he had offended, save only in this trial of adultery. So that we must above all things beware we flatter not our selves in these great sins, in hope of secrecy or impunity. This is y^e counsel that *Solomon* giveth upon this consideration, Prov. 5.20; 21. *Why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? for the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* Where he warneth us to beware of secret sins, because the eye of God is evermore upon us, and our most secret actions. We may not bear our selves bold upon his ignorance, or oversight, or slip of memory, as many presume upon these & such like, when they have to do with the sons of men.

For if we have any hope, either that they know not our offenses, or have forgotten them, we lift up our heads on high, and fear not to dare the Magistrate to his face. And indeed it is

true, the wisest men are not always able in so smooth a carriage and so close a conveyance to enter into the secret purposes of deceitful men. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and the corners of it past finding out. Hence it is that Christ saith unto his disciples, when there were gathered together such an innumerable multitude of people that they trode one upon another, *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known*, Luk. 12.1.2.

Adultery and hypocrisy are known for the most part only unto our selves, and therefore we wax the bolder, and proceed the farther in them, according to the Lord's words, Psal. 50.21. *Th•se things hast thou done, and I kept silence: thou thoughtist that I was altogether such a one as thyself, but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes*. The truth of all this we have verified in the late treacheries and treasons conspired against our King, our Queen, our Prince, our People, and our Religion, against the Church and Commonwealth. Our manifold and marvelous, yea, miraculous deliverances do publish and proclaim claim very notably, that there is a God that judgeth the earth, who seeth all things, heareth all things, understandeth all things, and revealeth all things. Happy were it for us if we knew the things aright that belong to our peace.

Have we not good experience that nothing is hidden from God? do we not find to our great comfort, that the plots and projects of our enemies, howsoever sought to be concealed, by taking of oaths and receiving of the Sacrament, are yet known unto God? We serve such a gracious God as watcheth for us, so that he which keepeth Israel, neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. O that we would take notice of these things! O that men would consider when they sin, that the all-seeing eye of God is upon them to reveal them according to his knowledge, and to reward them according to their sin! O that wicked men therefore did know what they do! The men of the old world sinned in all riot and excess, but had they known they had been so near to be drowned by a general flood, they would not have run into those sins, so that our Savior saith, *As in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be*.

If Judas had known what he did, when he betrayed his Master, he would never have received the thirty pence, the price of innocent blood. Our Savior, praying for his persecutors, saith, *Father forgive thē, for they know not what they do*. If the rich man that is now tormented in hell, where is no promise of pardon, nor release of punishment, nor place of repentance, nor hope of escaping, had known or considered, that by his sins he should have heaped up so great wrath against the day of wrath, he would not have needed *Lazarus* to be sent unto him to bring him one drop of water to cool his tongue and to quench his heat.

In him these two sins met together, prodigality and covetousness, the two extremes of too much and too little: he spent too much, and yet he held too fast: he wasted all, but yet he would give nothing. He fared deliciously, and clothed himself sumptuously every day, but he afforded nothing to poor *Lazarus*; he consumed all upon himself, but refused to bestow anything upon him that lay at his gate. So then he was both riotous and covetous: exceeding

costly, and yet exceeding niggardly: a spend-all, and yet a spare-all: but he never marked nor learned what would be the end of both those.

To this purpose the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 2.8. *The Princes of this world knew not the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* So then, the want of the knowledge of God, of sin, and of duty, is the original cause of all misery. And *John* in his first Epistle, chap. 3.6. hath a worthy saying, *Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not: whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him.* Such as commit sin with all greediness, and have it reigning in them, do not know God as they ought to do, howsoever they may boast of their own knowledge. Let us learn therefore betimes to bridle our affections and practices of sin, following the example of *Joseph*, who being provoked to adultery, answered, that he should *sin against God.* Gen. 39.9: and remembering the confession of the Church, Psal. 44.20, 21. *If we have forgotten the Name of our God, and stretched out our hands to a strange god, Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.* They are senseless men that care not what they commit against God, if it may be hidden from the face of men. There is but one step between this and Atheism, to run out into all excess of riot, and yet to think to hide it from God.

[Use 3] Lastly, from hence ariseth great comfort to the faithful. For seeing God seeth y^e thoughts and intents of wicked men, howsoever men cover them with dissimulation and deceit as with a cloak, we may cheer up our hearts in time of trouble, assuring our selves that nothing can come to pass, or fall out unto us which he doth not know and behold. This is that which the Lord telleth *Moses*, Exod. 3.7, 8. when the people of Israel sighed by reason of their bondage, and cried in the bitterness of their spirit, their cry came up unto God, so that he heard their groaning, and remembered his covenant, and had respect unto them, *The Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their Taske-masters: for I know their sorrows, and I am come down to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians, &c.* He is not ignorant what tears we shed, but keepeth them in a bottle of remembrance: he knoweth what prayers we pour out, for they ascend up into his presence as incense: he heareth the sighs and groans that come from us, for he understandeth that language, *The spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* And albeit he hold his peace for a time, and seem to wink at their cruel practices, as if he saw them not, or heard them not, or knew them not, yet when the appointed time cometh, he will no longer keep silence, but show himself to be the deliverer of his people; and the revenger of his and their enemies. We saw before out of the book of *Exodus*, what mercy he promiseth to his people being in misery. He had a feeling of their afflictions, and after a sort felt what they felt. Behold, what words of comfort, sweeter then the honey & the holy comb, he vttrith: *I have seen, I have heard, I know, I am come down.* He saw their afflictions: he heard their cries: he hath known their sorrows: he came down to deliver them from their persecutors. If the Lord had used only one of these words, *I have surely seen the affliction of my people*, it had been as balm to refresh us, it had been as marrow unto our bones, and as wine and oil poured into our wounds: but when he useth four words, it is more then a doubling and a trebling of our comfort, to assuage the bitterness of the cross, so y^t albeit it

be more sharp then vinegar, & more bitter then gal & wormwood, yet they are sufficient to allay the one & y^e other. God doth sometimes after a sort hide himself, and hold his peace, & turn his back from us whē we are in trouble, to manifest the more the greatness of his power and mercy in our deliverance, to stir us up to prayer and calling upon him for help, to teach us to remove all confidence and trust in our selves, or in the sons of men, to wean us from the love of the world, to increase our zeal, to try our faith and patience, and to harden the hearts of our enemies, that he may gain glory to his great name in their destruction. He doth not delay to help us, and put off the time to deliver us, because he hath forsaken us or forgotten us: it is not, because he is not able to restore us: it is not, because he cannot repress and quail the fury of our enemies: it is not, because he hath cast off the care of us; forasmuch as he knoweth what they practice, and what we suffer, according to the heavenly saying of the Psalmist, *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.* Let us therefore comfort our selves in God, while we find no comfort at all in men. Let us put on the armor of prayer and tears: these are our spiritual weapons, strong to throw down mountains, and mighty to prevail against the greatest tyrants that seek to deface the truth, and destroy the Church. The weapons of the Church are not swords and staves, or spears and shields, or munition and multitudes of men: but as the warfare of it is spiritual and that it wrestleth not against flesh and blood, but against principalities & powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places; so the weapons thereof must be spiritual, answerable unto the battle which we are to make, and fit to encounter such adversaries as oppose against us. To this purpose doth the Prophet bring in the Church putting their confidence in him, *Lord in trouble have they visited thee: they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them: like as a woman with child that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs, so have we been in thy sight, O Lord.* The like we see in *Jehoshaphat*, when many enemies came against him and his people to cast them out of the possession which God had given them to inherit, he rested not in his own power, neither trusted he in his own policy, but dependeth upon God, and flieth unto him, saying, *O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon it he: and all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives and their children,* 2. Chron. 20.12.13. On the other side, as this consideration of God's infinite knowledge, and discovery of all secrets, ministereth exceeding comfort to the godly that lie under the cross, and putteth them in assured hope of future deliverance: so it serveth as a terror to all their enemies that oppress them and trouble them; they shall not escape him that seeth their counsels, though they dignity never so deep to hide them, he heareth their slanders and reprochful taunts, though they seek to cover them never so cunningly and secretly. God that is omnipotent cannot be unjust, he will reward everyone according to his works: and therefore *Elihu* saith in the book of *Job*, *His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings; there is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves,* Job 34.21, 22. They think they go closely to work, but alas, poor blind men, they see not that God seeth them. They think they have a vizard over their faces, and cannot be known, whereas their foul offenses are written in their forehead. They think they are in the dark and covered with the night, whereas the

light shineth round about them more clearly then the Sun at noon day. This ought to strike a fear of God's power and presence into the hearts of all wicked men. No man is so impudent and past shame to commit evil in the Magistrates sight, and before his eyes, whom he knoweth to be endued with authority, armed with power, and to bear the sword of justice in his hand to cut off all evil doers. Shall we then dare do that before God, which we dare not do before men? or shall we presume to do that in his sight, which we are ashamed or afraid to do in the presence of mortal man? He is all an eye to see all: he is all an ear to hear all: he is all an heart to understand all. Or shall we be so void of piety, and common reason, to think he is ignorant of that we do, or careless of that we do. Shall we make him deaf, and not to hear us? or blind and not to see us? shall we dream he is far off from us, and knoweth us not? or otherwise busy and regardeth us not? shall we suppose that he which keepeth Israel, doth either slumber or sleep? To say he is ignorant of our doings, is to blaspheme his holy Name and to make him a silly and simple God. To say he seeth them, and would, but cannot punish, is to make him a weak and impotent God. To say, he can, but will not punish, is to make him an unjust God, and one that favoereth sin. To say, he beholdeth all the ways of the sons of men, but that he careth not which end go forward, nor abaseth himself to consider the particular things that fall out in the world, is, with the Epicures & Libertines to make him sit idle in heaven, to suffer men on earth to do all things, and himself to do nothing: which cannot agree to God, but are far from his most wise, most perfect, most pure, most powerful, most just, and righteous nature. Let us evermore walk as in his presence, and set him before our eyes. Let us not make our selves Atheists, either in deed, or in word, or in heart. Some in their works, say there is no God: some in words say, there is no God: and some say in their hearts, there is no God. Few dare affirm it, or avouch it, or maintain it with their tongues; but there are many which are not far from it in their hearts, and they shall see it to be so, if they would examine them aright. Sometimes they are not ashamed to say, there is no God: sometimes they fear not to say, God seeth us not: sometimes they stick not to say, he heareth us not, he forgetteth us, he regard sit not, he turneth away his face, he careth not what we do, he will not punish us. Howsoever these speeches, tending directly to the dishonor of God, and reproach of his holy Name, are not always nor oftentimes uttered with the mouth, yet they stick in the minds, and dwell in the thoughts of profane men, whereby they strengthen themselves in evil, and harden their hearts in wickedness. Such are they that say, *it is a vain thing to serve God*, and it is no profit to keep his ordinances. Such are they, that when they think or speak of the last judgment, say, *Where is the promise of his coming?* Such are they, that say with the evil servant, in his heart, *My master delayeth his coming*. A master is often absent from his servant, and seeth not what he doth. It is not so with God, he beholdeth what we do on earth, and his eyes are evermore upon us. He is included in no place, he filleth heaven and earth. He is not like the idols that neither see nor hear. The author of light cannot be dark: the fountain and spring head cannot want water; nor the fire be destitute of heat which maketh hot other things. God is the author of life, he is the fountain of water, springing up in us to everlasting life. Let this meditation be in us, and this cogitation be continually before us, that he is continually behind us and before us, without us and within us, on the right hand and on the left hand of us. He is always near to us, and never far from us: he is evermore in heaven, and yet never absent from the earth. Let us

then learn, so often as we use the benefit of our eyes and ear, and both see and hear with them, to consider concerning God the Creator and maker of them, how sharply and clearly he seeth and heareth, who hath given unto us the force and faculty of seeing and hearing. Do we think any evil in our minds, and have we deep devises in our hearts? Why do we not consider that we cannot hide our counsel from the Lord, and that it is he which hath given us understanding? Do we speak with our lips, foolish, contentious, filthy and unclean words, and suffer corrupt communication to proceed out of our mouths, which men do hear, and witness well that they do hear them, sometimes by blushing, sometimes by laughing sometimes by reproving, & sometimes by having indignation at them? Why do we not remember, that if man hear us and understand us, how should not God much more hear us? for from whence hath he borrowed his ear to hear but from him? Are we slandered and reviled of any? have we reprochful words, and false reports cast out against us? and do we hear them, repine at them, and seek to be revenged of them? Why do we not think thus with our selves, if we can hear and listen with our ears unto them, how are we so senseless and slow to conceive, that God must needs hear much better, much rather, much farther then we are able? Lastly, Do we commit any evil? Do we run into sin with violence, and will not be stayed or stopped from it? do we shun the sight of men, because we know they have eyes to see us and to perceive our doings? Why then do we not call to mind, that if mortal man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and whose eyes are in his head, can discern sufficiently the works of our hands, how should we be so blockish or brain-sick to imagine, that God seeth not at all, who hath given eyes to man, and power to see? Every man that is well in his wits, and hath his five senses about him, must needs yield to this truth, which God hath sealed up in nature; and yet there are too many in all places that make no use of it. To conclude this doctrine, and with the doctrine this chapter, and with the chapter this book, let us set down this as a sure rule, that then we do know God aright, when we have learned to walk evermore as in his presence, and in all our actions to have him before our eyes, who hath us before his eyes, and to look up unto him, who always looketh down upon us; to whom therefore be praise in the Church throughout all generations, Amen.

CHAP. VI.

1 AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the Lord:

3 He shall separate himself from wine, and strong drink, &c.

OF sanctification necessarily required in the Law, we have spoken in the former Chapter. In this Chapter *Moses* goeth forward to handle this point farther, which is so necessary as that without it none can be the people of God. Herein for order we are to observe two things: first, the voluntary sanctification undertaken by private men that entered into the precise vow of the Nazarites, who, that they might more fully and freely attend and intend the learning of the Law, and give themselves to the contemplation and consideration of the works and ways of God and of godliness, separated and sequestered themselves for a time, wholly from the company and conversation of men, resigning up themselves into the hands of God, and seeking to cut off all occasions whatsoever, that might quench their zeal and hinder their devotion. Secondly, the public sanctification of the whole Church, whereof God is the author, *Moses* the teacher and the interpreter. This is the sum of this Chapter.

Touching the former point handled in the 21. first verses, which is, concerning y^e vow of the Nazarites, before we come to the matter it self, it shall not be amiss for the farther declaration and demonstration thereof, to remove two doubts that stand in the way, arising, the one from the diverse acceptation of the word, the other from the distinction of the several kinds of this vow. Touching the several significations of the word, lest we be deceived by the ignorance thereof, we must understand that there are four acceptations of it distinct the one from the other. Some are called Nazarites some Nazarens, others Nasarites; which words because they are oftentimes by diverse confounded as if they were all one and the same, it is needful to have them distinguished aright the one from the other. The Nazarites, of whom we have mention in this place, have their name of separation, and are written by the letter *Zain*: these by observation of certain ceremonies (of which we shall speak more particularly afterward) dedicated themselves unto God in a more holy manner then the common sort. The second sort called Nazarens, or Nazarites, are distinguished from the former, and written with the letter *Tsadi*, and so to be called Natsarites or Natsarens, so named of the word *Netzer*, which is oftentimes used by the Prophets, and signifieth properly a branch, growing out of the roots of trees, frō whence the Syriac word *Notzera*, or *Notzerath*, or *Natzerath* is derived; and thereof cometh the name of the City or Village of Nazareth in Galilee, because it was situate in a place planted with store of trees and flowers, as *Danaus* testifieth out of *Bernard*. Now Christ our Savior, being conceived and brought up in this place, is in the New Testament called a Nazarene, Matthew, chap. 2. verse 23. and Jesus of Nazareth, John. 19.19. Act. 2.22. and 3. 6. Matth. 26.76.71. Mar. 1.24. and 10.47. and 14.67. and 16.6. Luk. 4.34. & 18.37. & 24.19. Act. 4.10. and 16.14. and 10-38. and 22.8. and 26.9. From hence also the disciples of Christ were first called Nazarites, but afterward they were called Christians, Acts 11.26. at Antioch which professed the faith of Christ, and the doctrine of the Gospel. The third kind of Nazarites differeth from both the former, both in the original of the word, and in wanting warrant from the authority of the Scriptures. For they are otherwise written thē the other were, to wit, with the letter S, and are derived from the Syriac word *Nesar*, which signifieth to cut off or to abolish, because they held that the books of *Moses* and the Prophets (howsoever they carried their names) were feigned and counterfeit things, and withal maintained it to be unlawful to kill any living thing, or to eat of the flesh of any creature wherein the spirit of life had been, and consequently condemned

the bloody sacrifices prescribed in the Law. The fourth and last sort of those whom *Eusebius* remembereth among the Ebionites, howbeit others reckon and range them among other heretics, did after a sort believe in Christ, and acknowledged him to be the promised Messiah; for as the former sort were Jews, so these would be accounted Christians; howbeit they taught that the ceremonies of the law of *Moses* were necessary to salvation, and thereby did covertly and cunningly overthrow the liberty of the Gospel: again, they boasted of their false miracles and private revelations, as the Anabaptists do in these last days. Now as Christ our Savior was commonly called *Jesus of Nazareth*, so to be called Nazarites after his name, as Christians of Christ, was at the first received as a name of praise and commendation, howsoever the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles used or rather abused it, as appeareth Acts 24.5. Where *Tertullus* the declaying Orator accuseth *Paul* to be a ring leader of the sect of the Nazarens: and therefore these heretics gloried and boasted in that name, as in a name and note of honor, as the fittest which they found as with a veil to hide and with a cloud to cover the poison and pestilence of their damnable sect, who under the color of the Christian religion did indeed decline and depart from the true doctrine of Christ. Thus much of the names of the Nazarites, the first whereof, is of such as are mentioned in the Old Testament: the second, of such as are expressed in the new, so named of Nazareth a City of Galilee: the third, of those that altogether abrogated and abolished the Old Testament: the fourth, of such as taught that Christians were bound to observe the ceremonies of *Moses*. These two last have no footsteps in the Scriptures, but they are found in Ecclesiastical histories.

Having thus opened the name, let us consider the several kinds of these Nazarites, mentioned in the first place. They are of two sorts: first, such as were Nazarites by commandment: secondly, such as were Nazarites by vow. Now both these kinds were such among the Jews as were separated from the rest of the people, to a more strict and pure course of serving God than others were, of which the Prophet speaketh in the Lamentations, chap. 4.7. *Her Nazarites were more pure than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of Sapphire.* By commandment were such, as God from the beginning did extraordinarily call to that solemn profession of a special holiness. These were perpetual Nazarites, whose separation from the common sort by a stricter kind of life continued all the days of their life. Of this sort we have sundry examples, some in the Old Testament, and some in the New. In the Old, we have first the example of *Sampson*, then of *Samuel*, and afterward the Rechabites. Concerning *Sampson*, we read that the Angel of God appeared to the wife of *Manoah* his mother, and said to her, *Behold, now thou art barren, but thou shalt conceive and bear a son: and now drink no wine, nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God, from the womb, unto the day of his death:* and afterward *Sampson* himself told his minion all his heart, being besotted and almost bewitched with her love, and said unto her, *There hath not come a razor upon my head: for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mothers womb.* And touching *Samuel*, his mother set him apart to this vow, and said before he was borne, *I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.* In this number we may after a sort range the Rechabites mentioned in *Jeremiah*, chap. 35.6. who, though they had wine set before them and were bidden to drink, yet they answered, *We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of*

Rechab our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons forever. Now this was one part of the vow of the Nazarites, and therefore we may account them a kind of Nazarites. In the New Testament, we see the like in *John the Baptist*, Luk. 1.15, where the Angel foretelleth that *he shall be great, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink, and he shall be filled with the holy Ghost from his mothers womb.*

But these are not altogether the Nazarites here spoken off: let us therefore come to the vow here mentioned, and consider from hence, that among the Jews the vow of the *Nazarite* was allowed and approved of God, used and practiced of that people. This doth *Amos* confirm unto us, Chap. 2.11.12. *I raised up of your sons for Prophets, and of your young men for Nazarites, is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord? but ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink. Of these also we heard before out of the Lamentations, where they are set forth. Of this sort are they, whom James and the Elders speak off, Act. 21.23. saying to Paul, We have four men which have made a vow; them take and purify thyself with them, and contribute with them, that they may shaue their heads: and all shall know that those things, whereof they have been informed concerning thee, are nothing: but that thou thyself walkest and keepest the Law: And before, Chap. 18.18, 20. it is said, that Paul took his leave of the brethren and sailed thence into Syria, and took with him Priscilla and Aquila, having shorn his head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow. And as James persuaded him, so he took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the Temple to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for everyone of them.*

True it is, this voluntary vow was rare and unwonted under the Gospel, and so much the more, because the Synagogue began now after a sort to be buried, and restrained, Act. 15.29. howbeit the Apostle is content to retain some of the ceremonies, not that he placed any religion in them, or thought them necessary of themselves to be observed, which had now received their deaths wound in the death of Christ; but he had respect to the infirmities of the weak brethren among the Jews, that were not yet thoroughly instructed in the liberty of the Gospel, and the freedom which Christ had brought them, in regard whereof to the weak he became as weak, that he might win the weak; to the Jews he became as a Jew, that he might win the Jews; to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that he might gain them that are under the Law; yea he made himself a servant unto all, that he might gain the more, and became all things to all men, that he might by all means save some. Thus then we see that among the Jews that were the people of God, in the time of the Law were such as vowed a special separation to God, consecrating, and sanctifying, and dedicating themselves to his service, who lived as strangers upon earth, as if they were in another world, being as men that had made a diuorse and division between themselves and the profane men and manners of the world, and were eminent among others and above others, as the Cedar among the shrubs, as the stars among the orbs, and as the Sun among the stars.

The reasons why God alloweth and approveth [Reason 1] of this vow are; first of all because mē are by nature so prove & ready to take up & choose to themselves certain sorts and sects of life that there is but a step between them and falling into superstition. Now by binding of them in this sort, he doth cast a cord about their loins, & put a bridle in their mouths; so that

this is as much as if he had said unto them, Forasmuch as I see into your harts how willing you are to devise new forms and fashions of serving and worshipping me, ye shall not do what pleaseth you, but what I appoint Thus he keepeth them within the compass of their duty by this vow, and permitting them somewhat, he restraineth them from more.

Secondly, he doth hereby curb the people y^t they should not follow the trades & desires of the heathen, by finding them work as it were at home, wherewithal to busy themselves: and hence it is, that he willeth the people, Deut. 12.30. to take heed to themselves that they were not snared by following the Canaanites after that they were destroyed before them, & that they enquire not after their God's, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will we do likewise. So then, God ordained this and such like kind of vows, to the end his own people should not follow the fond fashions of the idolatrous heathen that dwelt round about them.

Thirdly, that from hence might spring some maintenance for the Ministry, whereof in all ages and times God hath shown himself to have a special care. This appeareth evidently in the twentieth verse of this Chapter, when the *Nazarite* offereth a Ram for a sacrifice of a peace offering unto the Lord, a part thereof is holy for the Priests use: and therefore in this vow, the Lord had a respect to the upholding and continuing of his service by providing for those that attended thereunto.

Now the parts of the vow are to be considered, before the uses be pointed out. We have heard already, that the *Nazarites* were such persons as vowed a special kind of holiness. The parts of their special holiness are two: first, while they were in this vow; secondly, when the days of it were accomplished. Touching the first, while they continued in their vow, they were bound, not only to keep a temperate diet, but they were utterly to abstain from wine and strong drink, *from vinegar of wine, & vinegar of strong drink, and from any liquor of grapes*, as also from eating *moist or dried grapes*. Again, they must suffer no razor to come upon their heads, but must let the locks of their hair to grow, until the days be fulfilled in the which he separateth himself unto the Lord: besides, they must not defile themselves by any dead body, nor lament for any of the dead; but if any did come near them or touch them, all was frustrate and made void; the days of their separation and abstinence were to begin again, and they stood in the state wherein they were before they entered into this holy vow. The second degree of their sanctification was at the end of y^e days of their vow, then they must be brought to the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and offer their offering unto the Lord, &c.

[Use 1] This is the vow, and these are the Rites belonging unto it: now let us observe the uses remaining for us. For albeit these ceremonies be all abrogated, and seem nothing at all to touch us, and nothing at all to teach us, as things that when they were in their prime and greatest force belonged to the Jews; yet we shall find great benefit to arise from hence to the whole Church. And first concerning the sanctification of these *Nazarites* professing holiness above others, and in this course of a vowed kind of retyrednesse going before others, it was a lively figure of Christ, signifying to them and to us, & to the whole Church the wonderful purity of Christ, who was fully and perfectly separate from sinners. For he was the Lamb

without blemish, or else he could not be a sacrifice for sin, [Object.] Levite. 1.3, 10 But was Christ such a Nazarite as these were here spoken off? and did he literally observe these parts and ceremonies expressed in this vow? I answer, [Answer.] no: he observed no part of this vow. The Nazarites abstained from wine, the fruit of the vine, the blood of the grape: but Christ himself in his own person did not so, he drank of the fruit of the vine, and lived after the ordinary manner of other men, and therefore after he had delivered his last Supper, he saith, *I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Fathers kingdom.* And albeit he were falsely called a wine-bibber, as he was also slandered to be a Samaritan and to have a devil, yet it showeth thus much, y^t he abstained not altogether from wine, yea he appointed others to drink of it, even his disciples & all other Christians at his holy Supper, so often as they drink of the cup of the Lord. The Nazarites had no razor come upon their heads during the days of their solemn vow, but whether Christ nourished his hair, we have nothing either one way or other, that we can gather and conclude for certainty; yet if we consider the words of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 11.14. and mark the common custom of the rest of the Jews which may be understood out of this place, it is not probable or likely, that Christ did ever nourish, and never cut his hair. And lastly the Nazarites were not to come near the dead, nor to mourn for them: but the Evangelists yield us plentiful testimonies, both that he came near unto them. [Object.] But some will say, that he is called in Scripture a Nazarene, or, as some translate it, a Nazarite: It was fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophets, *He shall be called a Nazarene.* I answer, [Answer.] we must distinguish between a Nazarite, and a Nazarene. For Christ is so called because he was a *branch* springing and flourishing from Nazareth, as the place of his conception and education, of which the Prophets speak in many of their writings, and namely *Zachariah. Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man, whose name is Branch, and he shall grow out of his place, and he shall build the Temple of the Lord.* So then the Evangelist hath not respect or reference to these voluntary and vowed Nazarites of the Old Testament, neither doth he point out any certain place out of someone of the Prophets, but alludeth to such places, where Christ is called that holy *Branch*, which God promised he would raise up to *David*. Howbeit he is indeed a true Nazarite, or rather the truth of the Nazarites, separate from all the corruptions that attend upon the rest of y^e sons of men, free from the common defilements of the world; and that holy One which is called the Son of God. To this purpose the holy Apostle speaketh: *Such an hie Priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher then the heavens:* who needed not daily as those high Priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's. For this cause he was conceived by the holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin, *that he might be a merciful and faithful high Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people,* Heb. 2, 17. If any sin had been found in him, his death could not be meritorious for us, he should have wanted a Savior himself for himself. So then he became a pure offering, and an holy sacrifice, that our sins might be washed away, and God's wrath appeased toward us. This is a great comfort for us to consider the excellency of his sacrifice, being without all blame or blemish, without all fault or imperfection: for he was miraculously conceived, partly to fulfill the propheties of the Prophets, Isaiah 7.14. and partly because the generation of mankind is wholly corrupted, therefore in the birth of Christ it was most requisite that the unspeakable

work of the Spirit should come in, that so he might not be tainted with the common and general infection of original sin, but might be endued with most perfect purity and innocence, and so be fully able to cover our impurity and impiety, Ephe. 5.26.27, and withal as by a certain pledge assure us, that in the end all our sins and imperfections shall be done away. In him is that fulfilled therefore which is spoken in the Lamentations, that he was whiter then the milk, and purer then the snow, and it agreeth more fitly and truly unto him then unto these Nazarites.

Secondly, this teacheth that such as were [Use 2] special ornaments of the Church, and have received a more eminent office and calling then others, should also labor to shine before others in holiness of life, according to the measure of grace which they have received, as Rom. 16.7. *Salute Andronicus and Iunia my kinsemen, and fellow prisoners, who are of note among the Apostles.* These thus advanced of God, are in the eyes of the world, as a City set upon an hill; a little blemish is soon seen in their face, a small stain appeareth in their coat: and therefore Satan laboreth especially to tempt and seduce them. These are great moles in Satan's eyes, as marks set up for him to shoot at: because these do most of all seek the subversion of his kingdom, and the withdrawing of others out of his snares wherein he holdeth them captive, and therefore he hateth them to the death. We see he began with Christ, and he evermore desireth to hit the fairest mark, and to strike down the highest tree. It was a cunning policy of a crafty captain, to command his soldiers to strike at no part of the enemy but at the face: and the king of Syria commanded his chief commanders, to fight neither with small nor great, save only against the king of Israel. Such is the policy of Satan, he desireth to winnow and wound the chiefest and choicest of all, and he hath oftentimes prevailed, as we see in the examples of *Noah, Lot, David, Moses, Aaron, Solomon,* and many others: yea, he bendeth his forces and fury so much the more to overthrow and overturn these, because he knoweth that in over-mastering them, he commonly in their fall giveth the foil to diverse others. It is noted that Satan stood at the right hand of *Joshua* to resist him, Zac. 3.1. So *Paul* was assaulted above his fellows because of his rare and excellent gifts; this was the cause why he was so much maligned. And Christ telleth his disciples that Satan desired to winnow them, them I say above others, as their calling was above others: for they were the master-builders, and laid the foundation of the Church, upon which others built. Let all those therefore whose place and calling, and gifts make thē evident & eminent above others, take heed to themselves, to their carriage and conversation: let them labor to cleave more closely to God, and so to let their light shine before men, that they seeing their good works, may glorify their Father which is in heaven. These are as chief Captains of the host, and the ensign-bearers of the Church, to show the way to others, and to go in and out before them in an vnreprouable and unblameable course; and though they draw not all unto them by their example, yet their forwardness and fervency, their zeal & earnestness shall serve to instruct many others.

[Use 3] Thirdly, seeing these Nazarites must keep themselves from wine and strong drink, as also from eating fresh or dried grapes, so long as y^e days of their separation endured, or learn hereby that it is our duty to fly from all evil, even all the occasions and allurements of sin whatsoever, though they be never so pleasant to the eye, or sweet to the taste; inasmuch

as we shall find them in the end to be more sharp then vinegar, more bitter then wormwood, more deadly then poison. *Abner*, the Captain of *Saul* and of his son accounted war as a sport which young fellows did make, howbeit he confessed the end would prove bloody, when he cried out, *Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?* so, howsoever the fool make a mock of sin, and it seem pleasant and profitable at the first, yet the end will be mourning and lamentation. This did *Zophar* teach in the book of *Job*: Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth though he hide it under his tongue, yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him, &c. Hence it is, that the Apostle *James* saith, *Pure religion and undefiled before God even the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.* If we do this, then we shall be true Nazarites separated from the world, and brought near unto God: then we shall bestow our minds and meditations upon him, and withdraw our cares and cogitations from the desire of earthly things. When God called *Abraham* out of *Vr* of the Caldees, he required of him to *walk before him, and to be upright.* Such a spiritual Nazarite was *Noah*, God saw him just in that profane age, when all the earth had corrupted their ways, Gen. 6. Such a Nazarite was *Lot* in sinful Sodom, 2 Pet. 2.7. when he vexed his righteous soul from day today, beholding the unclean conversation of those cursed Sodomites. Thus was *Noah* out of the world, while he was in the world: thus was *Lot* out of Sodom, even while he was in Sodom: and thus should our conversation be in heaven, while we have our being and dwelling upon the earth, Phil. 3. Such a Nazarite was *Nathaniel*, in whose spirit there was no guile, John. 1. for as he is said to be an Israelite indeed, so it may be said, he was a Nazarite indeed. And as these were holy unto God, so must we labor after purity, and offer up our bodies an holy and living sacrifice to God, Rom. 12.1. Everyone that calleth upon the Name of the Lord must depart from iniquity 2 Tim. 2.19. We must labor to be clear from the works of darkness, and from the sins of worldlings and wicked persons, marking what the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 7, 1. *Cleanse you selves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* For as these Nazarites were not to taste of the juice of liquor of the grape, so we should not intermeddle with any sin, but shun and shake off the same much more then we would to be defiled with mire and dirt: remember the counsel of the same Apostle, What agreement, what fellowship is there between light & darkne? therefore come out from among them and separate yourselves, & touch no unclean thing, then shall we be the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

[Use 4] Fourthly, consider from hence the false ground that the Papists build upon to establish the Monkish and Fryarly Orders, whereby they build an house upon the sand, which cannot continue. For, from this ceremony and vow of the Nazarites, being a more strict kind of life in the abstinence from sundry pleasures that others lawfully took in the moderate use of the good creatures of God, and consequently a profession of greater holiness by sequestering themselves from the company of men to give themselves wholly to prayer and meditation, the Popish doctors go about to defend the Monks and Friars, and that swarm and rabble of Locusts that came out of the bottomeless pit, and to set up their vnorderly Orders, to be a profession of life of greater holiness and perfection above others, which the common sort cannot attain unto. Howbeit, if we consider the matter aright, &

compare them together, we shall see there is no agreement nor likeness between them. This vow was grounded upon the word of God, and warranted from thence: the Monkish life is deducted from the puddles of man's invention. These bound themselves with a vow for a certain time, for days, or months, or years: they to y^e end of their life, & account it worse then sacrilege to forsake their dens and cloisters.

These here mentioned did consecrate and separate themselves to the Lord only, they to Saint *Benedict*, to Saint *Francis*, to Saint *Dominic*, and such like counterfeit Saints. These entered not into this vow, as if it were meritorious, and available to obtain remission of sins, and everlasting salvation, as appeareth by the sacrifices which they were commanded to offer for their sin when the time of their vow was expired: they affirm that they merit heaven thereby for themselves, and can spare an overplus for others through their works of supererogation. These abstained from wine, nay from all that cometh of the grape: but they, albeit boasting of Angelical perfection, will not be brought under this yoke, but *caratâ been cute*, are indeed wine bibbers, great drinkers of wine. These did nourish their hair, and suffered it to grow until the end of their vow: but they shaue their crowns, leaving a little circle in which they greatly rejoyce, as if it did merit no less then the crown of heaven. These came not near to the dead, nor approached any carcass of their dearest friends, to be defiled thereby: but they are ordinarily and commonly at burials as willingly as at bankets: for while other men mourn, they are merry: while others weep, they sing: and as vultures they look for the death of rich and noble men, not so much to pray for them, as to make a prey of them. Lastly, these Nazarites might freely marry wives, as appeareth in *Samson* and *Samuel*: they vowed not virginity, to live in adultery, but it was lawful for them to marry wives notwithstanding their vows. Besides, they never vowed counterfeit poverty, or sottish obedience to any superiors: but the Monks and Friars abjure Matrimony and detest it, not fornication and unclean lusts; contrary to the precept of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7.2. *To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and every woman have her own husband.* They vow poverty, but the most of them live pompously and proudly, and prodigally. And what manner of vow is this, to vow to live by the sweat of other men's labors? whereas *Paul* warneth, Ephe. 4.28. *Let him that stole, steal no more, but let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* And in another place, *He that will not labor let him not eat*, 2 Thess. 3.10. Moreover, they vow obedience: But to whom? to the General of their Orders, indeed too general an obedience: to their Superior, without respect to him that is Superior: contrary to the precept of the Apostle, 1 Corin. 7.23. *Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men.* What is more common among them then to say, I hold of Saint *Francis*, I am of *Dominic*, I am of Saint *Benedict*? whereas *Paul* reproveth such among the Corinthians as would be accounted Christians, yet said, I am of *Paul*, and I of *Apollo*, and I of *Cephas*, and I of *Christ*: for is Christ divided? was *Paul* crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of *Paul*?

Thus we see, the Popish doctors do but dally and delude the world, while they would persuade us y^t their Monkish votaries are like the Jewish Nazarites, whereas the contrary appeareth by this comparison, that there is no coherence or communion between them, anymore in nature then in name: and as well they may persuade us, that there is a

corespondence and agreement between the Prophet *Elijah* and the Priests of *Baal*, nay even between Christ himself and the sons of *Belial*.

Fifthly, if these Nazarites had touched the [Use 5] dead, or the dead touched them, howsoever they had passed many weeks or months of their vow, and were come even to the ende thereof, yet their vow was made void, they were to begin the weeks or months of their vow again, ver. 12. *The days of his separation before shall be utterly lost, because he is defiled:* which teacheth us a necessary point to be considered in our obedience, and how careful we ought to be to keep our selves from the corruptions and contagions of the world, that we fall not from GOD: because when once we depart from the ways of righteousness, all that which we have done before is out of date, it shall not be reckoned in our accounts, but be forgotten of God, according to the saying of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, chapter 18.20.24, 27, 28. as these words following testify. *The soul that sinneth shall die. When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all that abomination that the wicked man doth, shall he live? All the righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in the sin that he hath sinned, in them he shall die.* As on the other side, *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, he shall save his soul alive, he shall surely live, and shall not die.* It is not therefore enough for us to begin well, if we do not continue constant, all our labor is lost: nay, it had been better for us, if we had never begun. We see this in *Lots* wife, what auailed it that she went out of *Sodom*, and travailed with her husband toward *Zoar* given unto them as a City of refuge, when as she looked back, and was therefore turned into a pillar of salt? The like we might say of *Judas*, what did it advantage him to preach the Gospel, to work miracles, to be an Apostle, to be conversant with Christ, and to sit at his Table, when after all these privileges, he betrayed his master, joined with the Pharisees, entertained covetousness, shown himself to be indeed a devil, & the son of perdition, and in the end hanged himself. What should I speak of *Phygellus*, *Hermogenes*, *Hymenaeus*, *Philetus*, *Alexander*, and such like mentioned 2 Tim. 1.15 & 2, 17. & 4, 14. If then we look to have any reward and recompense of our labor, & hope to attain to the end of our faith, which is the salvation of our souls, let us so run that we may obtain, let us so sails in the Sea of this world, that we never give over until we arrive in the haven: let us be faithful unto the death, that we may receive the crown of eternal life.

Lastly, these Nazarites were notable Ornaments in the Church, and far separate from the common sort, they labored after perfection of sanctification, and striued much to excel others; yet when they had ended the days of their vow, they must be brought to the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, & offer their offering unto the Lord: which teacheth, that our best works, such as proceed from the best men, and done with the best endeavor of purity and holiness, even when we strive to exceed and excel our selves, and have bent all our strength to serve the Lord in special manner, yet we have need to ask pardon, and confess that we are *unprofitable servants*. We are never so perfect, but we are stained with some imperfections; we cannot be so pure, but we are defiled with some impurity and contagion of sin; so that howsoever, we desire cheerfully and constantly to please God in all things, yet evil is present with us, Rom. chapt. 7. verse 21. and sin doth easily beset us, Hebrews chap. 12. verse 1. so that we all stand in need of the pure and perfect sacrifice of

Christ, the author and finisher of our Faith, without which we cannot be accepted of God the Father. We must therefore from hence learn to acknowledge, that albeit we desire to offer up our selves wholly unto him, yet we can merit nothing at his hands, nor attain unto perfection, but are guilty of his judgments, if he enter into judgment with us, Psalm 143, 2. *For in his sight shall no man living be justified.* It is the sacrifice of Christ, for which he is well pleased, from the merit thereof cometh our merit, our merit is his merit, and the Fathers mercy. He knew no sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth, Isaiah 53. And hence it is, that we shall be acquitted and discharged of sin, so that none shall be able to lay anything to our charge: and though we be in our selves debtors, yet he hath paid our debt, and set us free, to whom be all glory and praise for evermore, Amen.

22 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying:

23 Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them:

24 The Lord bless thee, and keep thee.

25 The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.

26 The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace.

27 And they shall put my name upon the Children of Israel, and I will bless them.

Touching the vow of the Nazarites, the first part of the Chapter, we have spoken hitherto; howbeit of vows in general, we shall have fitter occasion to entreat, in the twenty one, and the thirtieth chapters following. Now we come to the second part of the Chapter, containing the form of blessing the people, prescribed unto the Priests from the mouth of God. But first, let us see the meaning and the method of the Words. Touching *the Blessing*, observe that sometimes God is said to bless man; sometimes, man to bless God; and sometimes one man to bless another. God blesseth man, when he bestoweth good things upon us which we want, and remooueth evil things from us which we feel. The good things which he giveth us, are partly earthly, and partly heavenly, and in both he blesseth us. Touching earthly, we read in the word, Genesis chap. 24. verse 35. where *Abraham's* servant saith, that *GOD had blessed his Master greatly, and he was become great; then he telleth wherein, He hath given him Flocks, and Herds, and Silver, and Gold, and men Servants, and maid Servants, and Camels, and Asses.* The like we see, Deut. 28, 3, 4, 5. *Blessed in the City, blessed in the field, blessed in the fruit of thy body, &c.* Touching heavenly, it is said, *He blesseth with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things thorough Christ,* Ephes. 1, 3.

Again, sometimes man blesseth God, when he praiseth God in word and deed, with mouth & heart, and returneth thanksgiving to him, both for bestowing upon us his blessings and removing from us his blessings *When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.* So Psal. 103, 1. Luke. 1, 68. Now this our blessing of God, is nothing but an effect of y^e former. For as we love God, *because he loved us first;* so we bless God because he blessed us first. We can never return him the glory, but from a feeling of his own mercy. We cannot open our mouth to praise him, except he opened his hands to bless us. Lastly, man is said to bless man; we bless one another, when we pray one for another, Rom. 12, 14. *Bless them which persecute you,* which is expounded by the words of Christ, Mat, 5, 44. *Pray for them which despitefully use you.* To apply these things to our present purpose, we must mark that in this place the word is thrice used, and to be understood diversely: for when the Lord commanded Aaron and his sons to bless the people, the meaning is, they must pray for them, and heartily desire good things unto them. Again, when it is said, *The Lord bless thee;* and when the promise is made, *I will bless thee,* the meaning is, the Lord will bestow all good things on thee, and take away all evil things from thee: so that they blessed the children of *Israel* by desiring and praying, God blessed them by giving and bestowing.

Moreover, the priests of God are taught to crave that God would *make his face shine,* [Objection] & *lift up his countenance upon the people.* It may be asked, hath God any face, visage, or countenance? I answer these things are ascribed to God, [Answ.] not properly, but for our better capacity & understanding. It was the error of the *Anthropomorphites*, who because the Scriptures speak of the eyes, ears, mouth, hands, heart, head and arms of God, did therefore imagine that God is like unto us, and had a bodily shape, whereas he is a Spirit: as also he will be *worshipped in spirit and truth.* This the Apostle teacheth, *The Lord is that spirit and where the spirit of the lord is, there [Object. 2] is liberty.* But these heretics object, that God *made man in his own image and likeness.* Gen. 1. This is true, [Answer.] but their consequent is false. For we are said to be *created according to the Image of God,* not because he hath any bodily shape, for that is against his nature who is infinite, and against his word w^{ch} teacheth the contrary. The essence of God is spiritual, invisible, and most simple; he is a just and merciful God, love it self holiness it self, & goodness itself. In these we were made like unto God, in these we resemble him & bear his image, being *created in righteousness and true holiness.* True it is some place this image of God in dominion over the creatures, others in his immortal soul only, others in reason by which we are distinguished from beasts, but these let pass the principal point, which the heathen man saw, when he said, The virtue which is in a man came nearer to the similitude of God, thē the figure or outward shape. What then can be the shadow of such a substance, and the image of such a nature, and the resemblance of such a power and perfectness, but that which the Apostle teacheth, *Put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him?* Would we then know, what the true image of God is? It is the reasonable soul in man, endued with divine knowledge, holiness, righteousness, & such like. This image is much deformed: for we have utterly lost all supernatural gifts, and corrupted those that are natural: & therefore our whole life is, or at

least, should be, nothing else but a making up of this breach, a stopping of this gap, and a repairing of these ruins.

But to leave these, we must understand that the face of God noteth out diverse things: sometimes it signifieth the invisible nature and essence of God, as Exod. 33, 23. *Thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen*, that is, thou shalt see so much of my glory and majesty, as man in this life can comprehend. But no man can see God in his full perfection & live, if we cannot look upon the Sun without dazzling and dimming of our eyes, how should we be able to behold the glory of y^e eternal God? let it content us to look upon him in his word in his works, in his creatures, and in the face of Jesus Christ our Mediator: these are as perspective glasses, wherein we may after a sort, see the face of God, though it be darkly, yet so far as we can conceive. Secondly, it signifieth the favor of God, as also all his benefits, deliverances, and graces which proceed from his good will as from a fountain, and serve to witness his favor to us, *Cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved*. Thirdly, it signifieth reuēge and punishment, and the signs of his anger; all which do oftentimes appear by the face of man, *I will set my face against that man, and I will cut him off from among his people*. Lastly, it noteth out the place of God's worship, where his face and favor is perceived through delivery of the doctrine of godliness. *Cain* was banished from the face of God, of the which *David* cōplaineth, 2 Sam. 26, 49. So highly did the servants of God prize the holy meetings and assemblies of the Saints, considering that where two or three are gathred together in his name there is he in the midst of them. In this place, the *shining of God's face upon his church & people*, is the refreshing of them with his love, grace, and favor, and a train of other blessings flowing from them, as it is expounded in the words following, added by way of exposition, *Be gracious unto them*.

The last part of the blessing, is the *giving of peace*. This word signifieth sometimes our atonement with God through Christ, by whom he is reconciled to his chosen; who therefore is called the Prince of peace, Esa. 9, 6. and our peace-maker, Eph. 2, 15. Sometimes it signifieth peace of conscience, which is a most sweet quietness and tranquility of mind, arising of a most comfortable feeling and apprehension of our reconciliation with God, as Rom. 5, 1. *Being justified by Faith, we are at peace with God*. Sometimes a prosperous and happy success, when that speedeth well, and is turned to the best, whatsoever a righteous man taketh in hand, as Eph. 6, 23. *Peace be to the Brethren, and love with faith from God the father, &c.* And sometimes the mutual concord & agreement among Christian brethren. Gal. 6, 22. Ps. 34.14. In this place I refer it to the second and third significations; for it is taken for the peace of a good conscience, and an happy and prosperous success in our godly endeavors & enterprises. This is a fruit of our atonement with God, & comprehendeth under it sundry other benefits. For being once at peace with God through the precious blood of Christ, we are at peace with all other creatures in heaven and earth, with the Angels, with the godly, with our enemies, and with the beasts of the field. To conclude, when it is said, *They shall put my name upon the children of Israel*, he meaneth that *Aaron* and his sons should after their solemn blessing lay their hands on the people, and by this sign assure them, y^t all these blessings w^c they had prayed for, should fall on them, because God would bless them.

Touching the order of the words, observe herein two principal points: first, the form of blessing, secondly God's blessing on their blessing, testified by the outward sign of laying on of their hands. The form of blessing is a public prayer to God, that he would bless his church, which stands of 3. points. First, y^t God would save his church, and vouchsafe to hold it up in all dangers. Secondly, that he would as the sun in perfect glory shine upon it with his grace and favor. Thirdly, that he would pour out upon the same the effects of his grace and favor, to wit, joy, peace & prosperity, which are lively fruits thereof. The second part, w^c is a blessing upon the blessing, is noted by a Ceremonial or sacramental sign, which is the laying on of their hands. For when the priests had held up their hands in prayer (as their manner was while they stood in prayer) and prayed for the blessing of God upon the people, afterward they put their hands vpō them, as if they had already obtained a blessing from heaven by their prayers, and bestowed it with their hands upon the people. For God promiseth, that their imposition of hands shall not be in vain, inasmuch as he will ratify & make good their word, as he doth all his Sacraments and ordinances, saying, *I will bless them.*

But before we come to the particular handling of diverse doctrines offered to our considerations in this prayer, I will point out a few general observations to be marked of us. As first, this form of blessing is the same in effect which the Apostles use in their salvations to the Churches, when they wish unto them grace and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. This Apostolical benediction was drawn from this Blessing, which showeth how well acquainted they were with the doctrine of the Scriptures, with the prayers of Moses and of the Prophets, whereunto also we should attend as unto a light that shineth in dark places. Secondly, we have here a fundamental point of our religion offered to our considerations, to wit, the mystery of the Trinity of persons, and the unity of the Godhead. This is gathered by diverse out of these words in that the name of the Lord is 3. times repeated, *The Lord bless thee, the Lord make his face shine upon thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee;* and yet there are not three Lord's, but one Lord: and therefore he saith, *I will bless thee,* and not, *we will bless thee.* This mystery of the Trinity & Unity was taught from the beginning of the world: howbeit the fuller revelation of it was reserved to the times of the Gospel, when the light of the truth did shine as the sun at noon days. Hence it is, y^t at the baptism of Christ, *John saw the spirit of God descending like a Dove, and lighting upon him, and heard a voice from heaven, saying; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;* and when he sent out his disciples into all the world, he willed them to *Baptize in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the holy Ghost.* So doth the Apostle speak, 1 John 5, 7. *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost: & these three are one.* So in this place, when he mentioneth the *Lord* three times, it may note out the *Trinity* of persons: and when he saith, *I will bless thē,* it pointeth out the *Unity* of the Godhead: and so we learn to confess and believe that there is one God, & three persons. Thirdly, we are taught from hence that all good things must be asked of God, and of no creatures in heaven or in earth, forasmuch as it is he only from whom all blessings come. If then we feel any wants in our selves (as who is it that findeth not many?) we know to whom to go, we are sent to the fountain or head-spring, even to the Father of lights. He is able to furnish us, and fill us with that which we have not; he is able to increase the measure of that which we have; he

will not see any want to them that are not wanting unto themselves. Fourthly, seeing we must ask a blessing from God, we are thereby put in mind, that by nature we lie under the curse of God threatened by the Law, by which cometh the knowledge of sin, Romans 3, 20. And the same Apostle, Galat. 3, verse 10. showeth, that *everyone is cursed that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them*. We are stained and defiled with sin from our birth, Psalm 51.5. Job 14. verse 4. We see then, what is our natural estate and condition; we are not heirs of blessing, we cannot claim & challenge any portion to our selves in any of the mercies of God, there is nothing our own but the curse of God, the wrath of God, the judgment of God; these we may truly call our own, these are our lot, this is our cup to drink, this is due unto us in regard of sin, which we drink in daily as water, which we continually swallow as bread. Let us not therefore bless our selves, as if we had some title to the blessings of God, but consider that we lie under all the curses of the law, Deut. 28 so long as we are unregenerate or impenitent: but when once we are in Christ, & have received truly to believe, then we are delivered frō the curse, and have right to his blessings. Fifthly, this solemn blessing commanded in this place to the Priests, doeth shadow out Christ Jesus which was sent of God, y^t according to the promise made to *Abraham*, all the nations of the earth should be blessed in him. For, as they blessed the people when they departed out of the congregation, so did Christ whē he was to depart out of the world, as the Evangelist testifieth, Luke 24, 50, 51. he led them out as far as to *Bethany*, and he lift up his hands and blessed them: and it came to pass while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven. All blessings indeed do come from him, and by him, and thorough him they are conveyed unto us. So then, the Office of blessing, which under the law was committed to the Priests, doeth truly and properly belong to Christ Jesus the high priest of our profession, through whō we receive spiritual blessings in heavenly things, Eph. 1. He is the only author of all blessing, yet that his grace might be more effectual to us, it was his will & pleasure, that the priests in the beginning should as mediators bless in his name. To this purpose appertaineth that w^c is read in Psal. 118, 26. *Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord, we do bless you out of the house of the Lord*. The Apostle teacheth, Heb. 7, 7. that it is a sign of excellency to bless others, because without all question and contradiction *the less is blessed of the greater*: therefore when Christ the true *Melchizedek*, and the eternal priest came into the world to offer up himself, it was meet that in him should be fulfilled whatsoever was shadowed out by the Legal figures; so that he blessed the Apostles openly & with a solemn rite of lifting up his hands, to the end the faithful should fly unto him, so many as desire to be partakers of the grace of God, & to become rich in all heavenly things. Lastly, the priests are to bless y^e people. What then? are they able to bless? have they y^e blessings of God in their own breast? and can they give them to whom they list? no, it is God only that can bless & curse. True it is, this is given afterward to *Balaam* the false Prophet to be able to bless and curse whom he will, chap. 22, 6. As also it is in our days to the bishop of Rome, the true successor of *Balaam* rather than of *Peter*, with whom he hath nothing like. But the priests do bless by praying for a blessing, & pronouncing the people of God to be blessed. So then we see hereby, how the Ministers are said to bind and to loose, to forgive sins & to retain sins: not that they have an absolute power to do these things, for it is God only that properly can forgive sins: it is he that can take away the guilt and punishment of them: the Ministers only

do it ministerially, publishing forgiveness and assuring remission of sins to all that are penitent, and contrariwise preaching that there is no forgiveness to the impenitent. As then the priests did bless only as the Ministers of God, so did the Disciples of Christ, and so do the Teachers of the Church remit & retain sins, only as the Ministers of Jesus Christ, who speak in his name.

[Ver 23. *On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel.*] Now let us come to the particular doctrine. And first there is laid before our eyes a set and solemn form of prayer enjoined to the priests to be used commonly and continually in the assemblies. From hence we learn that a set form of prayer is lawful to be used, whether publicly in the Church, or privately in the family. This point is the more strongly inferred from hence, if we consider the persons to whom this commādemēt was given. For this solemn form is set, not for the simple sort or the most ignorant amongst the people, neither appointed to be used within the walls of a private house, or within the doors of a secret chamber, as if it might be ashamed or blush to come abroad: but it was appointed to be pronounced by the priests, & to be uttered not in a corner, but in the Congregation of the people, and in the Tabernacle of the Lord before many witnesses. Now, if there were any able of themselves to conceive a prayer as the Spirit of GOD should give utterance and ability, undoubtedly they were the Priests of the Lord, whose lips must *preserve knowledge, and the people must seek the law at their mouths*: yet are they both allowed and prescribed to follow a set form in blessing the people. Moses a great prophet, like to whom did not any arise after him, to whom the Lord spake face to face, Deutro. 34, 10. was well enabled to pray without a prescript form, whose prayers were so powerful and effectual, that they prevailed more then all attempt and resistance made by the bodies of men against their enemies, Exod. 17, 11. & 32, 10. nay, they after a sort bound the hands of God as with chains, that he might not destroy them after their Idolatry, Exod. 32, 10. yet did this great prophet use set forms of prayer at their marching forward, and at their standing still: for when the Tabernacle removed, and the Ark set forward, he said, Numb. 10, 35, 36. *Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, & let them that hate thee, fly before thee.* And when it rested, he said, *Return O Lord, unto the thousand thousands of Israel.* Let not us seek nor seem to be better thē he was, whose gifts were greater then ours are, yet he did not refuse to use, or think it unlawful to practice this uniform order in prayer. Paul was wrapped into the third heaven, he saw Christ in his glory, 1 Cor. 9, 1. and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter, 2 Cor. 12, 4. and who was able to pray better then he? yet he used always one manner of salutation in the beginning of all his Epistles, craving grace and peace from GOD the Father; and he ended with a like conclusion, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*, Rom. 1, 7. & 16, 20. 1 Cor. 1, 3. and 16, 23 2 Cor. 1, 2. & 13, 14. Gal. 1, 3. & 6, 18. Eph. 1, 2. & 6, 24. Christ our Savior was filled with the riches of all grace, in whom all treasures of knowledge and wisdom were hidden, Col. 2, 3. who spent whole nights in prayer to God, Luke 6, 12. yet it is most probable y^t he used one of David's Psalms with his Disciples after the institution & celebration of his last Supper, when it is said, *he sung a Psalm, or an Hymn*, which we doubt not was one of the Psalms of thanksgiving set down in holy Scripture. But howsoever this were, or whatsoever that Song were, this is certain, that y^e hour of his passion approaching, when his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, he prayed

oftentimes again & again, that if it were possible, that cup might pass from him. And ver. 44 he left his disciples and went away, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Was it not enough for the Evangelists to note his often praying, but they must add, he *said the same words*? The 92 Psal. was sung usually in the church of the Jews upon the Sabbath day, & was penned for that purpose, as appeareth in the title of it, & the 102 Psalm is a prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed with sorrows, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord, as we may read in that title. This is also the practice of all churches at this day, concurring and communicating with ours in this point. Seeing therefore, it hath been the practice of the first and most ancient church of the Jews, & seeing it is observed of all the reformed churches in Christendom, giving the right hand of fellowship with us, to have an unity and uniformity in public prayers, it serveth fitly & forcibly to confirm us in the present truth that we deal withal, that it is lawful to use either the prayers set down in holy Scripture, or any other godly prayers made by y^e learned to our hands consonant and agreeable to y^e scripture.

For first of all, it were a childish and foolish thing to imagine that God is delighted with choice of prayers, as a dainty stomach is with change of meats, or that he taketh pleasure in novelty of matters and variety of words, or that he hunteth after new forms & alterations of our requests. But to condemn all prescribed forms is nothing else but to be strongly persuaded that God accepteth and receiveth no prayers but such as are new, and cannot abide to hear the same things twice: which is to nourish a wrong conceit & imagination of the most wise & merciful God.

Secondly, all things must be done to edification. [Reason 2] It is the rule of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 14, 12. but set forms in the public worship & service of God tend much to edifying, and help greatly the understanding of the simple. The greatest number of the people are simple in knowledge, and weak in judgment, and therefore to have their ears acquainted with the same form and frame of words serveth most of all for their understanding.

Thirdly, every true child and faithful servant [Reason 3] of God, although he have an honest heart yet he hath not always a flowing tongue and copiousnesse of words, but wanteth the gifts of utterance, of boldness, of knowledge, of remembrance, of invention, of order, and such like. There are many y^t have stuttering tongs, fearful hearts, simple capacities, frail memories, that are weak in devising and framing, in contriving and disposing the things which they desire, whose names notwithstanding we dare not blot out of the roll and register of the chosen ones of God. But to conceive a prayer, all these gifts and many other are required, he must be able to utter, to invent, to discern, & to order he must have gifts of audacity and memory: but this all the godly are not able to do, they are not all thus qualified. He that is lame in his lims, and not able to go upon his legs, yet if he get a crutch to lean upon, he can walk apace: so many are not able to conceive a prayer, or to deliver that which they have conceived of themselves, but if they meet with any one framed unto their hands, they can pray unto God fervently, earnestly, heartily.

This doctrine made thus plain first serveth [Use 1] to convince the error of those of the separation, who condemn our churches, our ministers, our sacraments to be no true

Churches of Christ, no true Ministers of Christ, no true Sacraments of Christ. And concerning our Liturgy or form of public prayer read and prescribed to be read, they account it Antichristian, they utterly detest it, and account it abominable & no more acceptable to God then the offering of Swines flesh was under the Law, which the Lord abhorred as if they had instead of his appointed sacrifices cut off a dogs neck. And albeit we have the examples of all other Churches under heaven, as presidents, that go before us in this practice, and albeit we follow them as they followed Christ; yet they will not allow us to be like to them, nor will permit y^t to the people of God, which he here prescribed to the Priests; yea, albeit they have no examples whom they can pretend to follow, yet they will be singular in their own conceits, & condemn all others that will not join with them. The 136. Psalm was sung in the congregations long after *David's* days as appeareth 2 Chro. 20, 21. what? Did they therein offer up swine's flesh? *Hezekiah* that godly king, that set his whole heart to seek the Lord, whom the Lord healed of an incurable disease, and wrought a miracle in the heavens, to assure him of deliverance from his enemies: this good King so much regarded of God, together with his Princes, commanded the Levites *to praise the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph the Seer*; & so they did, according to the kings commandment, sing praises with gladness, & they bowed their heads & worshipped, 2 Chro. 29, 30. Did the King and the Princes command the *Levites* to offer up swine's flesh? or was their service no better accepted, then the cutting off of a dogs neck? or did it any whit quench their zeal, or slake their devotion, that the words were not their own, but penned long before by *David* the Prophet, and *Asaph the Seer*? No, they praised the Lord with gladness of heart, and humbleness of mind, which they testified by this sign, that *they bowed their heads and worshipped*. [Object.] But it will be said, This was a thansgiuing. I confess it was: but if it be lawful to use a set form of praising and thansgiuing, [Answer.] then also of praying and making petition, because there is a like reason of both. And that we may the better see their error, and themselves confess they are deceived, let us examine some of their objections in this place; the rest we will reserve unto the 10. chapter, where we shall have farther occasion to search more into this point. One objection which [Objection 2] they allege is this, that this set service is to *quench the spirit*, 1 Thes. 5, 19. and to limit him that teacheth us to pray, to tell him how far he shall go, and to appoint him his banks and bounds, beyond w^c he may not pass, whereas we should pray as the Spirit moveth & giveth us utterance. To use a set form, or (if you list to call it so) a stinted form of prayer, [Answer.] is not to stint the Spirit, but to help the Spirit. But doth the Spirit of God need the help of man? [Objection 3] Is not he all-sufficient by himself & of himself? [Answer.] He standeth not in need of us, but is most sufficient; howbeit the Spirit in us is weak, the work of the Spirit is imperfect, and is perfected not all at once, but by degree. If all the true servants of God had received a perfect measure of grace, and if all that have the Spirit of God, had the same Spirit fully without any defect or infirmity, they should not need any human helps, but have sufficient store of their own. So then to the former objection, I answer 3. things. First, if he that taketh a book, and readeth a set prayer, did stint the Spirit, then he that taketh the Scripture into his hands, and readeth a chap. out of the old or New Testament, and then stayeth & goeth no farther, might as well be said to stint the Spirit. Or, he that heareth another pray, should stint the Spirit also, because all such as hear the prayers of others, are stinted what to hear.

All cannot, neither ought to be speakers either in the private house, or in the house of God; this were to break the order of decency required in prayer: now such as are hearers of others, have words after a sort prescribed unto them, and limited how far to go, and yet cannot such hearers be justly taxed to limit or to quench the Spirit. Again, observe that the Spirit of God is never stinted or curbed, neither can rightly be said to be *quenched*, so long as it is kept within his own bounds, that is, the limits of the holy Scripture as it ought to be. He then that prayeth the prayer of Christ, or the salutation of *Paul*, or a Psalm of *David*, which he hath premeditated before, or committed to memory, cannot be said to quench the Spirit, except we will imagine that the Spirit can be against himself.

Lastly, to quench the Spirit, is to oppose against the voice of the Spirit, to cross and contradict the Spirit, and to withhold the truth in unrighteousness. Therefore, although a man doeth not speak everything that the Spirit putteth into his head, and into his heart, yet he cannot be charged to quench the Spirit, except he set himself against it, & that with a set purpose to gainsay and resist it. As for example, when we crave of GOD to feed us with food convenient for us *Pro. 30.8* & to make us content to eat our own bread, *2 Thes. 3, 12*. though we do not expressly pray to God to keep us from using unlawful shifts & ungodly means, whereby we seek to get into our hands the goods of other men, yet we cannot be said to quench the spirit, except we refuse so to pray, because we purpose to live and thrive by injuries and oppressions, by fraud and deceit: then indeed we quench the Spirit, because we control the voice of y^e Spirit speaking to us in his word. Again they object [Objection 4] y^t the scripture teacheth that we know not what or how to pray, *Rom. 8, 26. The spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, &c.* but when we have a set form of prayer framed to our hands, and the book lieth before us, we know then what to pray, and need not the help of the Spirit, and therefore such cannot say with the Apostle, they know not what to pray for as they ought. This is a silly collection, and indeed a mere caullation. I answer therefore 2 things. [Answ.] First, by setting down the meaning of the words; *We know not what we should pray for as we ought*, to wit, of our selves: as *1 Cor. 2, 14, 15. The natural man knoweth not the things of y^e spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned.* So we may say, the natural man cannot tell how or what to pray, but y^e spiritual man that judgeth all things, knoweth both how & what to pray. Flesh & blood revealed not the knowledge of Christ to *Peter*, but the Father which is in heaven; so flesh and blood cannot reveal to us what we should ask in prayer, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities. Where we see, he opposeth the Spirit unto our selves: in that which we cannot do, we shall have the Spirit to be our teacher, and to instruct us how to perform it. Secondly, it is falsely supposed, that when we have a prayer composed to our hands, and we read that prayer, that then we need not the help of the Spirit. For need we not the help of the Spirit to make us lift up our hearts to God, to give us a feeling of our wants, to keep us frō earthly cogitations & wandering thoughts, to stir up faith in us with assurance to receive whatsoever we desire, and many things of like sort? the which, if they be wanting, whether our prayer be conceived or prescribed, read in the book, or made without the book, it is of no virtue or value, neither doth God accept thereof.

Secondly, this is a great comfort to such as [Use 2] as are weak, and yet withal willing to come to the throne of grace, to such I say, as have not the gift to conceive and invent prayer

themselves. Let them from this ground hear a word of consolation. Let no man discourage such from prayer, neither let such discourage themselves. For shall they never pray? or should they never fall down before the Almighty? O yes, let them come, they ought to come: if the mercy of God cannot allure thē, let their own infirmity contstrain them. If they cannot conceive a prayer themselves. shall this excuse them for the intermitting of this duty? Let them come to God and use the prayers of other men. As he that could not come unto Christ by reason of his impotency, did not reason thus within himself, Alas, I am not able to go to him of myself, I will therefore never seek help, or labor to be cured. Nay, he rather reasoned thus, as it appeareth by the means he used, I am not able to go to Christ of myself, I will therefore be borne of others rather than not seek help at all: so should we reason, I cannot pray of myself, I will therefore help mine infirmity by using the benefit of other men's prayers, which is no more then to use the feet of others, when we have not the use of our own. And as it was all one to him that was taken with a palsy, and broug^t in a bed to Christ by the hands and help of others, to be borne to Christ, and to be able of himself to come to Christ, because he was cured and made able to walk, Luke 5, 24.25. So should it be to us; if we come unto Christ, whether we come and beg the graces which we want, in our own words, or whether we beg them in the words of others, it skilleth not greatly, neither is it much material, so that we do obtain. It is not the excellency or eloquence of words, or variety of matter that God respecteth, we must come evermore in *the Name of Christ*, and for his sake we shall be heard. If the man sick of the palsy had been able to walk to Christ, and not stood in need to be brought unto him, what other gracious answer could he have looked for, then y^t which he received, *Arise and walk*? So if all persons that live in the bosom of the Church, were well able to put up their own supplications in their own words, and had the greatest graces of knowledge and invention, what fruit could we reap and receive of such our prayers, but to be regarded? and to have that comfortable answer which *Cornelius* had and heard, Acts 10, 4, 31. *Thy prayers are heard and had in remembrance in the sight of God*? As then *David* did admit *Mephibosheth* to his table though he were lame of his feet: so doth God receive us though our service we perform unto him be weak and many ways defective, as he did those that came to the Passover, 2 Chron. 30.

Lastly, we must learn, that albeit God allow [Use 3] us to pray unto him by the help of others, yet we must strive to go further, and labor in all things to grow to perfection. There is no man that hath any infirmity, but doth gladly seek the means to remedy & redress the same, the lepers to be cleansed, the blind to recover their sight, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear; not to be able to pray to God and to lay open our wants to him, is a great want, and a greater blemish and defect in the soul, then to be blind, or deaf, or lame is to the body. O that all had eyes to see this, & hearts to bewail it. It is allowed to weak Christians to use set forms, as to him that hath weak eyes to use spectacles. But we must not evermore stand at one stay, nor be always as children that must be taught to go, and be stayed up with the hand of another. It is a great weakness to be always weak, and to continue in our weakness all the days of our life. It is our duty to grow in knowledge, in judgment, in understanding, in faith, and such like gifts.

If any ask, [Object.] how shall we be able to attain to this gift? and how shall we be furnished to pray according to the present occasion, & our own present necessities? I answer, [Answer.] we must observe these few particulars: First, we must take notice of our particular sins, that they may be acknowledged. Secondly, we must labor to feel our particular wants, that we may have them supplied. Thirdly, we must call to remembrance the special benefits that GOD bestoweth upon us, that his Name may be praised.

Again, that we should not please our selves too much in our own ignorance sundry cautions & conditions are to be marked in using set forms of prayer: as first of all, we must labor for the graces and affections shown in the said prayers, by the makers, composers and pen-men of them, that we may pray with the same spirit, by which they did endite them. For to pray aright, and to make it available, it is not enough to be present at prayer, or to hear a prayer read, but we must join attention with our presence and with our attention, humility; and with humility, faith; and with faith, lifting up of our hearts to him that sitteth in heaven, to whom we pray. For many a one that cometh to the place of prayer, and into the company of them that pray, doth yet nothing less then pray. Many a Minister that getteth up into the Pulpit, doth nothing less then preach. Many people that come with ears to hear, do nothing less then hear; and to eat the Supper of the Lord, that do nothing less then partake of his holy table. Wherefore, we must be present in mind at holy things as well as in body, or else our presence is no better then an absence.

Secondly, we must yield to this principle, that it is both safer and better to conceive a prayer then to read a prayer, because it keepeth our minds constant, and freeth us from wandering thoughts that carry us oftentimes from the matter which we should altogether mind. For we are ready to go astray, and to set our hearts upon other things, whereas by this means they are kept close and steadfast to the requests which we make.

Again, a man may read a prayer, that never understandeth it, or conceiveth the meaning of it: and therefore it is more profitable to pour out our petitions our selves, then to have our petitions drawn by the hand of another. No man can have such a feeling of our own wants, as our own necessities will make us able to express: neither can conceive such joy and gladness for blessings received, as the experience in our selves of God's benefits will afford unto us.

Thirdly, no man must condemn such as do conceive themselves forms of prayers, & call them conceited prayers, or fantastical prayers. These are envious persons, who envy in others the graces of God, & cannot abide that any should go before themselves, or beyond themselves. These are wise in their own eyes, and indeed themselves wholly conceited and fantastical, which they falsely charge upon others, being utterly ignorant both of God's works, and their own wants. For had they known or regarded the gifts and power of the Spirit which helpeth and assisteth his servants, that their tongue is as the pen of a ready writer, and findeth sufficient matter to utter to their Maker: or had they known themselves thoroughly, what new wants they have, what new sins they commit, what new assaults they undergo, what new blessings they enjoy, which are as so many occasions or rather provocations to open their mouths anew to God, & to sing a new song unto him, they would not blot this ordinance of God with such an odious cavil. So then, whereas all such should be

grieved that cannot frame their petitions according to their present wants, nor pour out their supplications according to their particular assaults, neither make confession to God according to their particular offenses, they are rather grieved that any others can perform these duties better than themselves. And whereas they should strive with might and main to be like unto them, and to follow their example, they would have all other men ignorant like themselves, and please themselves in that ignorance.

On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel.] Note in these words the persons that must perform this duty, and they are the Priests: note also what they are to do, *to bless the people*, & that is, to pray to almighty God for them, that his blessings may come down upon them. From hence we see, that it is the duty of the Ministers to pray for the people. So did *Melchizedek* for *Abraham*, and he was the Priest of the most high God, Gen. 14.18, 19. So did *Moses* often for the people, when God's heavy judgments were upon them, or hanging over their heads, Exod. 32, & 33: he stood oftentimes in the gappe when the hand of God had made the breach, to turn away his wrath lest he should destroy them. So did *Aaron*, as appeareth afterward in this book, when the plague was begun among the people, he put on incense, & made an atonement for them: he stood between the dead & the living, and the plague was stayed, Numb. 16, 47, 48. *Paul* in every Epistle practiseth this duty: and the Apostles committed y^e charge of providing for the poor, and distributing to the poor, to the Deacons, that they might give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. The Prophets also never failed in this duty, as we read almost in every place of their Propheties, they stood upon their watch-tower, having the people continually in remembrance in their holy prayers. Christ Jesus himself, the great Shepherd of the sheep, is a perfect pattern of performing this, he prayed for Jerusalem oftentimes, Luke 19. and for the whole flock of God committed unto him, whō he would not suffer to perish, but bring them to everlasting life, John 17, 20.

Thus then we see, we have the examples of *Melchizedek*, of *Moses*, of *Aaron*, of the Priests, of the Prophets, of the Apostles, and of Christ Jesus the Lord of life, as lively examples to go before us, and as a cloud of witnesses to conduct us in this duty, to prove unto us the truth of this point.

This must the rather be practiced; first, because it is an infallible token of our love toward [Reason 1] them, and of an earnest desire that we have of their good, Psal. 118, 26. And how can we better express even the bowels of our affection, and our longing after their prosperous estate from the heart root, then by our daily praying for them? Rom. 1, 10.

Secondly, the faithful Ministers of God have been much grieved when they were forbidden and not permitted to perform this duty. We see this evidently in *Jeremiah*, when the Lord had said unto him, *Pray not for this people for their good: he said, Ah, Lord God, the Prophets say unto thom, ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place: where we see, he layeth the fault upon the false Prophets, and goeth about to excuse, or at least to lessen the sin of the people, who were blindly led by those blind guides, that thereby he might make a way to move the Lord to hear him for that poor seduced people.*

Thirdly, the flock of God is committed unto them; it is no small charge that lieth on their hands, the price of Christ's precious blood is committed unto them, and therefore by all means they are charged to procure their good, especially considering that the blood of such as perish through their negligence, shall be required at their hands, 1 Pet. 5, 2. Ezek. 3.18.

Fourthly, it is a sin against God as well as against his people, to omit or refuse this duty. And therefore when all the people said to *Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not*: he answered; *As for me, God forbid that I should sin against the lord in ceasing to pray for you.* 1 Sam. 12, 23. If then it be a sin to omit it, it must needs be a duty to perform it.

Fifthly, it should be done to the ende the people might be encouraged, and not faint in their sufferings. For they are oftentimes set upon, and their faith shaken, and they ready to give over, if they be not confirmed by the word and by prayer: and therefore we read, Eph. 3, 13, 14. *I desire that yet faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory: for this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with the might of his Spirit in the inner man.* Our prayers shall be an effectual means to hold them up.

[Use 1] Consider from this ground, why the word oftentimes prospereth not under our hands, and we labor in vain, and strive against a stubborn and disobedient people; even because we forget our own duty, to commend our people to God, and to the word of his grace, that so their eyes may be opened, and they turned from darkness to light, & from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, & an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Jesus Christ. Let us all therefore say with *Samuel* the Lord's Prophet, *GOD forbid that I should sin in ceasing to pray for them, that the word may take good effect in their harts, considering it is in his hands only to give the blessing upon our labors.* For *Paul* may plant and *Apollos* water, but it is God that giveth the increase, 1 Cor. 3, 6. And doubtless God doth often withhold the dew of his grace frō our labors, because we do not desire & crave his blessing. It may be said, what should the Minister ask for them, or for what should he pray on their behalf? I answer, for their conversion, confirmation, consolation, preservation, multiplication, and removing of tribulation.. Many in all Congregations remain yet in ignorance, & are not turned unto God; we must pray that they may be gained and converted, Acts 3, 19. Many are weak and feeble minded, as the bruised reed and as the smoking flax; we must pray that they may be supported and strengthened, Eph. 3, 16. Many are as it were quite out of heart, being tired with the temptations of Satan and tribulations of the world, these must be cheered up and comforted, Math. 26, 41. Acts 14 22. Many have indeed received to believe, but they are ready to stand at a stay, and some at the point to go backward; we must pray that these may be kept and preserved. John 17, 11. *Holy Father, (saith Christ) keep through thine own Name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are.* Many Congregations have the fewest number that have given their names in sincerity and uprightness of heart to God, and resolved to offer up their bodies an holy and living sacrifice unto him, so that the true Church is a little flock: we must pray therefore that the number may be augmented and increased, and that he would every day

add unto the Church, such as should be saved, Acts 2, 47, and 13, 48. and 16.5. So were the Churches established in the faith, & increased in number daily.

Lastly, the Churches of God do often lie under many judgments, and are pressed even above measure with sundry calamities: it is our duty therefore to pray to GOD to have them removed, that they may have a breathing time, & quietly serve the Lord in peace and tranquility, as *Paul* wisheth *Agrippa* were altogether like him, except his bands, Acts 26, 29.

Secondly, this serveth to reprove such as [Use 2] never practice this, neither think it to be any ministerial duty, to pray for the people, and for the blessing of God upon their own speaking, & the people's hearing. And thus is the whole office of the Ministry disannulled. Some that love their own ease more then the people's good, maintain that reading is preaching, because they are loath to take pains themselves, or to maintain any that should take pains. Others that pray sildome, think it needless either to begin their Sermons, or to end them with invocation of the Name of God: and by this means they neither give themselves continually to prayer, neither to the Ministry of the word. And if we mark the people that live under their Ministry, & depend upon them, we shall see them for the most part most ignorant, and such as have no desire of knowledge, except peradventure some few, who have been fed with the crumbs that fall from other men's tables, I mean, that have gotten their knowledge in other places.

Thirdly, it is the Ministers duty to labor after the grace of prayer. For how shall they [Use 3] be able to commend the people to GOD in prayer, if they be not able at all occasions and times to pray for them, being destitute of this holy and heavenly gift, which is a most necessary, a most worthy, a most effectual gift? It is a principal part of God's worship, & oftentimes beareth the name of the whole worship of God, Gen. 4, 26. Acts 9, 14. 2, Tim. 2, 19. It is the means which God hath sanctified to unlock the closet of his graces. They are hid in God, and as it were kept in his secret chamber under lock and key; prayer is the means to open the door that leadeth us the way unto them. God is indeed the fountain of all blessings, but the spring is far; the waters of life are with him, but if we use not prayer, it may be truly said to us as the woman of Samaria spake, John 4, 11. *Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence therefore canst thou have that living water?* If then we account the saving graces of God necessary, we must also account that means necessary, by which we do obtain them. As for those that despise the means, they do also despise the precious graces of God which are obtained by means. The like we might speak of the excellency and efficacy of prayer. But what shall all this avail us, if we be as dumb men, and not able to open our mouths to make petition to God for them? The Apostle willeth *Timothy*, that prayers, supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings should be made to God by him and other Ministers, 1 Tim. 2, 1. We must all labor to know the state of our flocks. If we see any wants among them, we must pray to have them supplied: if any judgments break in upon them, we must pray to have them removed: and if God at any time have graciously heard us, we must be able to give him the glory.

Lastly, let the people answer duty for duty, [Use 4] and prayer with prayer, that so there may be a mutual performance of the same by the Pastor for the people, and by the people for the

Pastor. For seeing the Ministers are commanded to pray for them, why should they be backward to remember their Ministers in their best thoughts? We are debtors one to another, and do owe a mutual duty, Rom. 1, 12, 14. Our duties are not arbitrary and indiffrent, but necessary, to which we are bound in an obligation, tying us to the performance thereof forever. For is it left to our choice and discretion, whether we will pay the debts which we owe, nor not? Hence it is, that *Paul* a worthy and excellent Apostle requested the prayers of the Churches & persons to whom he wrote: and the people were wont to be mindful of their Ministers. When *Peter* was in prison, earnest prayer was made by y^e church for his deliverance, Acts 12, 5. & 15, 40. They stand as it were in the forefront of the battle, and Satan with all his instruments do most of all fight against them, Zach. 3, ver. 1. As then Christ giveth in charge, that we should pray to the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest, Math. 9, 38. so we ought to pray for a blessing upon their labors which are sent forth by the gracious hand of God. The want of this maketh their pains to be unprofitable unto us.

Ver. 24. *The Lord bless you and keep you.*] Now we come to the particular parts of this blessing. First, the protection of the Church is to be prayed for, that it would please God to keep it, guard it, and defend it. The doctrine arising hence is this, God is to be prayed unto, to be the protector & preserver of his church. This must we continually desire of him, our mouth must be opened, and our heart enlarged. This we see to be figured out and represented in the covering of the tabernacle while it wandered in the wilderness, the which was as it were a portable or movable Temple: it had a large and sure covering made of Badgers skins sewed together, to hide and preserve the same & the appurtenances belonging unto it: this did signify the safety and sure estate of the Church, and of every true member thereof, sitting under the shadow & shelter of the most High, whereunto *David* alludeth, Psal. 27, 5. *In time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion, in the secret of his Tabernacle shall he hide me, he shall set me upon a rock.* To this also hath the Prophet reference, Isaiah 4, 5, 6. *There shall be a Tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.* This also was shadowed out in the order of the Tabernacle, set in the midst of four most mighty battailions or squadrons, surrounded by the Levites: so that none of the heathen or stangers could approach by reason of these puissant and powerful armies which guarded the same, and were as a wall and bulwark unto it on every side. This protection was also promised unto the Israelites in times of greatest danger, when they might seem to lie open to evident perils both of domestical insurrections, & of foreign inuasions, while they were celebrating their solemn feasts, & every male was commanded to appear before the Lord, Exod. 34, 24. *I will cast out the Nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy Land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year.* We are commanded to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and for the building up of the walls thereof, Psalm 51, 18, and 122, 6, 7. Our daily prayer therefore must be, that he would do good to Zion in his good pleasure; for our brethren and companions sake, we must say, Peace be within thy walls, & prosperity within thy Palaces.

The reasons warranting and moving us to pray that the Church may be secured, are, first, [Reason 2] because as the state of the Church standeth, so it goeth commonly with the

commonwealth. The Church is the life of the commonwealth, by which it liveth, and as the soul by which it breatheth. For as the soul quickeneth the natural body; so doth the Church give motion and strength to the politic body. If the Church be well seen unto, it cannot go amiss with the civil State. Hence it is, that the Lord willed the Jews, to seek the peace of the City, whither he had caused thē to be carried away captives, and to pray to the Lord for it, for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace, Ier. 29, 7.

Secondly, howsoever the state of the church standeth, so our own particular estate remaineth, whether it have cause to rejoyce or to be sorry, even the same cause have we both of the one and of the other. For how can the child choose but prosper, while the mother is in health and prosperity? Or how can it but be weak and sickly by the weakness & sickness of the mother? The Church is the mother of us all, we suck both her breasts as it were the sincere milk of the old and New Testament. We know, that the man which goeth in a ship upon the sea, his desire and prayer is for the safety of the whole Ship no less thē for his own particular, because he knoweth his own estate dependeth upon the estate of the whole Ship, and therefore he hath good reason to pray for it. And what is the Church of God, but as it were a Ship floating up and down in the sea of this world, tossed too and fro with the rough and raging winds of the wicked? and therefore we ought to pray earnestly for it, lest as *Jacob* said of *Esau*, *the mother and the child be destroyed together*.

Thirdly, it is required of us to have a fellow feeling of the wants and necessities of our brethren, as well as of our own, as Rom. 12, 10, 15. *Be kindly affectionated one to another, with brotherly love: rejoyce with them that rejoyce, and weep with them that weep: because we are all members one of another*. If one member of the natural body suffer, all the rest suffer with it: so the troubles of the Church should go as near unto us as our own private griefs and troubles.

Lastly, the Church hath sundry enemies which plot the death and destruction thereof, and seek to ruin and subvert them that belong unto it, in body and soul. The chiefest and greatest that setteth the rest on work, is Satan, *a man-slayer from the beginning, & a roaring lyon, seeking whom he may devour*. The instruments that he employeth, like the wheel of a clock that giveth motion to the rest, are the flesh, the world, & false teachers. The flesh is full of darkness & doubting, y^e seed of all evil. The world is an hook ready to catch us, baited partly with pleasures and profits, with honors and promotions and partly with threatenings, terrors, and persecutions of enemies. False teachers come disguised in sheep's clothing, and armed with errors & heresies, which may be called the fiery darts of the devil, and the very poison of the soul, whereby we make shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience. If we do not pray that God may be our Savior and protector from these, we cannot be kept safe, but lie open as a prey to all these enemies. [Use 1]

We may conclude from hence, somewhat for the strengthening of our faith and for the increase of our obedience. As first of all, we must confess that our help cometh only from the Lord, seeing we are directed to go only to him to seek protection, who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, Psal. 121, 2, 3, 4 & 91, 1, and 3, 8. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty: he is our shield and buckler, he is our rock and refuge, he is our fortress & strong tower, the righteous fly unto it, and are saved*. Be it that they be

many times and many ways afflicted, yet they shall not be able to hurt them, no evil shall come near unto them, Psal. 91, 10. So then we are taught to assure our selves of the Churches safety, and to confess, that salvation belongeth to the Lord, and that his blessing is upon his people, Psal. 3, 8. and therefore we pray unto him. But prayer must be grounded upon faith, faith upon the promise, the promise upon the word, and the word upon God. True it is, the gates of hell are set against the Church, but the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. [Use 2]

Secondly, this doctrine of the divine protection, is a mere privilege of the Church, and appropriated to God's servants only. The ungodly have no promise of his protection, neither can they expect preservation from his hand. The Lord is no preserver of thē, he hath made no promise of defense unto them, but leaveth and forsaketh them in evil, without comfort, without succor, without deliverance. The Prophet upon this sure ground concludeth, that *evil shall slay the wicked, and that they which hate the righteous, shall be desolate*, Ps. 34, 20, 21. For having shown that God delivereth his out of all their troubles, & keepeth all their bones, so that none of them is broken, he addeth, that doubtless the ungodly shall utterly perish, they lie open to the wrath of God, and have none that can deliver them Vain is the help of man, and weak is the strength of an horse, and foolish is the confidence in defended places, they are not able to save a man. [Use 3]

Thirdly, fear not the rage of mighty enemies, albeit they rage never so much, and dig never so deep with their devises to destroy the Church, though they bend all their force and fury to undermine it and turn it up by the roots that it grow no more in the earth: though they take crafty counsel together against the chosen people of God, and consult against his hidden ones, yet they are hid under the shadow of his wings, and kept as the apple of his eye, Psalm. 17, ver. 8. and they are therefore called *his hidden ones*, because he hideth them with himself, as his precious and peculiar treasure, Exod. 19, 5. and keepeth thē safe and sound from all injuries and inuasions that would do them hurt. True it is, the enemies encourage one another, & say among themselves, Psalm. 83, 4. *Come, and let us cut them off from being a Nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance*: howbeit, the Lord shall do unto them as unto *Sisera*, and as to *Iabin* at the brook of *Kison*, which perished at *Endor*, and became as dung for the earth, verse 9, 10. How then should we stand in fear of them, that do not stand in fear of God nor of his threatenings, and yet have their persons open to all his judgments, to be made like unto a wheel, & as the stubble before the wind? As the fire burneth a wood, and the flame setteth the mountains on fire, so shall they be persecuted by thy tempests, and made afraid with thy storms, so that their faces shall be filled with shame, ver. 13, 14, 15. This use is concluded and collected out of the Psalm 27, 1, 3. *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear, though war should arise against me, in this will I be confident*. Seeing then we have such precious promises, and such worthy examples, to stir us up to be bold in the Lord, building our house upon the sure rock of his defense, it argueth great infidelity, weakness, wavering, feebleness, & faintness to stand in fear of every scar-crow, or of every storm of rain, or blast of wind, or force of tempest, or wave of the sea, that shall threaten to fall upon us.

[Use 4] Lastly, we are from this consideration bound to love the assemblies of the Saints, and labor to be in the number of the members of the true Church. To be a member of the visible Church, is not enough to make us to be a member of the Catholic Church, which we profess to believe in the Articles of our faith. The Catholic Church is the number of the elect and chosen servants of God. In the visible Church are many hypocrites, as chaff among good wheat, which when the fan of God cometh, shall be blown away. The parts of the true Church are as a small remnant gathered out of the multitude, Isaiah 1, 9. as a little flock of sheep gathered into the sheepfold out of an heard of wolves and goats; and as a chosen generation called out of the rest of the world. For these two are as two Cities, one contrary to the other, the one evermore at war with the other, the Church and the world. They that are of the true Church, have made a divorce from it, and are enemies to the world, and they that are of the world, have no interest or privilege in the Church; and therefore Christ saith to his Disciples, *Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Now, as he showeth that he had chosen them out of the rest of the world, so he hath done all the faithful that belong unto him. If then we would assure our selves to be in this number, we must make much of the assemblies of the Saints, otherwise we can never earnestly commend unto God the protection of his Church, if we love not the beauty of Zion, and long not to dwell where the Lord dwelleth. We see that so soon as any certain knowledge of Christ was entered into the hearts of the two Disciples that came unto him, by and by they followed him and said unto him, *Master, where dwellest thou?* So must it be with us; we must dwell with him in his house, and abide with him in his chamber of presence. Howbeit, many come to the house of GOD, as if they were none of his household-servants, but strangers in his house, nay, as if they were strangers to God, & God unto them, as if they had no knowledge of him, or he of them. They come so sildome, that they may appear to belong to some other family or fraternity. But what shall it avail us to pray for the protection of the Church, unless we hide our selves in his paviour, and live under his protection? This use we find, Ps. 27, 4, 5. where upon his assurance y^t God will hide him in his Tabernacle, and set him upon a rock, he setteth down this; *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the lord, & to enquire in his Temple.* They are pronounced blessed that dwell with him who is to be blessed, and is the author of all blessings, Psal. 84. This doth the church testify in *Solomon's* song, *Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions.* As Christ proveth the love of *Peter* by this sign of feeding his sheep, John 21, ver. 16. so we may prove our love to him by loving his Church and Church-assemblies. Doubtless, whatsoever we may persuade our selves to the contrary, yet we do not love Christ, if we do not love the assemblies of the Christians: for where two or three are gathered together in his Name, there is he in the midst of them.

[Ver. 25, 26. *The Lord make his face to shine, &c.*] We have shown before in the interpretation of the words, that by grace we must understand the favor and good will of God: and by peace, the effects of his grace, happiness and prosperity inward & outward, consisting in the peace of a good conscience, and such like benefits. First, we are taught to desire grace, understood

by the lifting up of his countenance and making his face to shine upon us: and then the peace of a good conscience. From hence we learn this point, (to include thē both together) that we must chiefly and principally pray for God's favor, and then in the next place, for peace of conscience. Thus doth the Prophet direct us, Psalm. 4, 6. *Lift up the light of thy countenance upon us:* and 67, 1. *God be merciful unto us and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us:* and Psal. 83, 3. *Cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved:* and to show the necessity of this prayer & the earnestness of his affection, he doubleth & trebleth the same prayer, as if he desired nothing at all in comparison of the shining of his face, and the lifting up of his countenance. Thus doth the Prophet declare, that the Israelites got not the land in possession by their own sword▪ neither did their own arm save them but the right hand of God and his arm, *and the light of his countenance, because he had a favor unto them,* Ps. 44, 3. and Ps. 85, 7. *Shew us thy mercy, O Lord, & grant us thy salvation.* This order we see evermore observed by the Apostle, praying for grace and peace, Rom. 1.1, Cor. 1. This was the course which he took.

[Reason 1] And no marvel. For first, grace is the fountain and beginning of all good things. From whence have we election, but by grace? Rom. 11, 5. Whence cometh our calling to salvation but by grace? 2 Tim. 1, 9. Whence have we faith but by grace? Phil. 1, 29. Whence have we our justification but by grace? Rom. 3, 24. Whence shall we have glorification and eternal life, but by grace? Rom. 6, 23. Secondly, we must lay the foundation of all our requests upon the favor of God, because that being once obtained, bringeth with it all other benefits and blessings whatsoever: and without it, all things are unsavory and unprofitable: if first we seek the favor of God, *all other things shall be ministered unto us.* If we want this, we want all things; if we have this, we have all things. The Apostle *Peter* said to the impotent man, *Silver and gold have we none:* yet in his second Epistle he showeth, that *the divine power had given them all things,* 2 Pet. 1, 3.

[Use 1] From hence we must learn to hate the odious scoffs of the Papists and such like Ishmaelites that mock at our doctrine touching the assurance of God's mercy and love in the pardon of our sins: for we should not be allowed to pray for them, except we had assurance, grounding our selves upon his promise, to obtain them. Neuertheles, such is the sottishness of some of them, that from hence they would conclude, that according to our own principles, our people (forsooth) are in a miserable case, because they are bound never to ask God forgiveness of their sins: and why? Because they are already assured of grace, of the love of God, and of forgiveness of their sins. I answer, that this is a silly shift: for we must pray even for those things whereof we are assured before we pray. And that appeareth by these three particulars. First, though we have some assurance, yet our assurance is not perfect, we must therefore pray for the increase of it; and forasmuch as we are many ways shaken and assaulted, we have need of more and more assurance. Secondly, we must pray for the continuance of this grace. Our assurance may be much weakened, we have therefore need of God's strengthening Spirit to stay us up in this faith. Lastly, we are to pray for a new act of pardon to be daily sealed up in our hearts and consciences, as we daily provoke him by our new sins.

Secondly, above all things desire the grace [Use 2] of God, to be reconciled to God to have our sins forgiven, to taste abundantly of his mercy. One drop of this is more worth then all the gold of Ophir, or all the pearls and precious stones, that the mē of this world take so much pains to enjoy. We see how far men will go, what labor and what loss they will endure, what hunger they will sustain, & what cares they will spend to get the goods of this life. O that we had this care & this love of heavenly things! but alas, the least difficulty that we meet in the way, doth quickly discourage us and put us out of heart. Thus it falleth out that many have the riches of this world, who are poor in the true treasure, and have store of gold that have little store of grace. Let us say with the Prophet, *Lord, if thou lift up thy countenance upon us, thou wilt put gladness in my heart, &c.* And in another place, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee: God is the strength of my heart, & my portion forever.* Let us say with the Apostle, *I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, &c.* Behold the holy affectiō of this servant of God: he suffered the loss of all things, y^t he might win Christ. We are content to suffer the loss of Christ, that we may win the world, like to the Gadarenes. *Paul* accounted the loss of these earthly things to be a gain unto him, we account the gain of Christ to be a loss. He esteemed all earthly things in comparison of heavenly, to be no better then dung: we do so mind earth and earthly things, that we esteem and prize spiritual things as dung in comparison of them. This is the common corruption of our times, we spend our days and strength in seeking, getting, & holding riches, honors, pleasures, and such like, so that we have little leisure to think upon the grace of God and the peace of a good conscience. And yet notwithstanding set down this as a sure rule, that we have no promise to attain any earthly blessings without these. Again, God is most ready and willing to give these, if we were as willing to receive them: and certainly we should never want them, if we were not wanting unto our selves.

Lastly, observe that the true happiness of a Christian man consisteth in the favor & love [Use 3] of God, and the peace of a good conscience. Here is matter of great comfort and consolation to all God's Children in the midst of all the miseries of this mortal life, because whatsoever befalleth us here, though we lie under the cross, or rather a multitude of crosses, yet neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor power, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to make us miserable, or to separate us frō the love of God, being once in his favor.

Hence it is, that *Solomon* calleth a good conscience, a continual feast, Prov. 15, 15. This is the only thing that maketh a man truly happy, the feeling of God's love, and the peace of a good conscience purified by the blood of Christ: without this love there can be no peace, without this peace, there can be no happiness. Woe therefore be to all the ungodly, there is no grace in them, and there can be no peace for them, Isaiah 57, 20, 21. who are like the troubled sea whē it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. For seeing they are not at peace with God, they cannot be at peace with any of the creatures. They cannot assure themselves to find rest and quietness anywhere. The Angels fight against them, and are ready to destroy them. The beasts of the field are their enemies. The stones in y^e street are ready to rise up against them, and every creature is armed for their destruction, & conspire with their Creator for their overthrow. For no creature can be a friend unto them that are not at peace

& unity with God. Nay, they have war within their own bosoms and bowels, and themselves are set against themselves. The estate of a wicked man is an unhappy life, though they be commonly accounted the most happy men in the world: for the meanest and poorest servant of God that liveth in his fear, and dieth in his favor, is a thousand times more happy than he. It is the grace of God that maketh blessed: it is the want of grace that maketh wretched and miserable. *Abraham* being justified by faith, which was imputed unto him for righteousness, was called the friend of God: but the ungodly wanting faith and the righteousness of Christ, are no otherwise accounted off, then as the enemies of God.

[Ver. 25. *And they shall put my Name upon, &c.*] This is the second part of the blessing, which, as we have said, may be called the blessing of the blessing. For by putting on of hands they must assure the people of God's blessing, ratifying indeed the words of their mouths. Now laying on of hands was used four ways, first, in healing of the sick, Luke 4, 40. Mark. 16, 18. Secondly, in the ordaining of Ministers Acts 13, 3. and 6, 6. 1 Tim. 4, 14. & 5, 22. This rite used in the New Testament, was practiced in the old, and indeed was borrowed from thence. Thirdly, in bestowing the gifts of the holy Ghost, Acts 8.17, and 19, 5. Fourthly, in blessing of children, and of the people, Gen. 48, 14. Math. 19, 13. Mark. 10, 13, Luk. 18, 15. Here it was used in blessing the people▪ as an undoubted sign of God's favor: so that as the Priests pronounced the blessing, so God would assuredly bring those blessings upon them.

Hence we do learn, that the work of the Ministry shall not be vnfruitefull, [Doctrine.] but shall serve for the benefit of the people of God, being accompanied with the blessing of God. When *Paul* planteth and *Apollos* watereth, God giveth the increase, 1 Cor. 3, 6. The Gospel is the power of God to salvation, to everyone that believeth, Rom. 1, 16. He did long to see them, that he might impart unto them some spiritual gift, that they might be established, verse 11. and thereupon acknowledged himself to be a debtor both to y^e Greeks and to the Barbarians, verse 14. When Christ sent out his Apostles to preach the Gospel to all Nations, after his resurrection, he annexed this promise to their preaching, *Loe, I am with you always even unto the end of the world*, Math. 28, 20. and hereby was their doctrine made powerful and effectual. The history of the Acts is a most plentiful storehouse of this truth, where we see how the Apostles converted Jews and Gentiles, men and women, rich and poor, noble & vnnoble, Captains, Soldiers, Iaylours, Deputies, Proselytes. Persecutors, Pharisees; it being a most powerful instrument and mighty through God to pull down strong holds, to cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Jesus Christ. As then it is said of the Sun, that his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, & there is nothing hid from the heat thereof: so is the sound of the Word and the Ministry of it gone into all the world, and their words unto the ends of the earth; so that the saving knowledge of the Gospel did lay hold upon the Parthians and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, & Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, &c. Cretes & Arabians, they spake in their own tongues the wonderful works of God, Acts 2, 11, 41. and 4, 4. and 8, 37. and 9, 36. and 10, 44. and 13, 12, 43, 48. and 16, 14, 34. and 17, 4, 11, 12, 34. and 18, 8. and 19, 18.

And how can the word but be effectual, if [Reason 1] we consider the titles given unto it? It is the strong arm of God to pull us unto himself, Isaiah 53, 1. It is as an hammer to strike our stony hearts in pieces, and as a devouring fire to burn up and consume to ashes our corruptions as straw and stubble, Ier. 23, 29. It is as the rain and snow that come down frō heaven and return not thither, but water the earth and make it bud and bring forth, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, Isaiah 55, 10, 11. It is the key of the Kingdom of heaven, Math. 16, 19. It is a fan in the hand of God, Mat. 3, 12. It is as a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathereth of every kind, Math. 13, 47. Lastly, it is called the Gospel of the Kingdom, Math. 9, 35, because it teacheth the way that leadeth to everlasting life.

Secondly, the Ministers are laborers together with God; when they preach, he preacheth: when they instruct, he instructeth: whē they comfort, it is he that comforteth: when they threaten, it is he that threateneth; they are no other but the mouth of God, and the messengers of GOD sent out to speak his word, 1 Cor. 3, 9. They then as workers together with him, beseech us that we receive not the grace of God in vain, 2 Cor. 6, 1. For how can we doubt, but that God will bless his own ordinance?

Thirdly, when Christ Jesus ascended and led captivity captive, he gave gifts to the Ministry, Eph. 4, 8. It is he that putteth heavenly treasures in earthly vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of any man, 2 Cor. 4, 7.

[Use 1] This efficacy of the Ministry, and of every part of it, serveth to many uses. First, it reproveth such as long to be gone out of the house of God, such as think the time lost and ill spent, that is spent in hearing the word, such as so set their minds and affections upon worldly things, that they cannot tarry & abide in the church until the blessing be pronounced, & the assembly be dismissed; whereby they deprive themselves indeed of the blessing of God, of whom we may speak with the Prophet, Psal. 109, 17. *As he delighted not in blessing, so it shall be far from him.* It is the order and ordinance that God hath appointed in the Church, that we should begin and ende the exercises of our religion together. For as God is the God of good order, so the Church which is the house of GOD, is the place of good order, and therefore all the children of the Church must submit themselves to the rules of order and decency.

[Use 2] Secondly, it should be a forcible means to stir us up to diverse and sundry duties. First, it directeth us to go to God, and to crave of him to work by his own ordinance the salvation of his people. We must pray unto him that is the Lord of the harvest, to bless his word, and to open the harts of those that hear it to attend unto it and to embrace it. Secondly, it serveth to work in us diligence and fidelity, knowing that we must give an account to the great shepherd of the sheep. We are hereby encouraged to preach the word in season & out of season, considering that God hath promised to be with us, to stand by us, to assist us, and defend us. Thirdly, we must labor to preach with zeal, with boldness, and with power, and with authority, not carelessly, or coldly, or faintly, remembering that we speak in his Name that sent us and put us in his service, always studying to show our selves workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, 2 Tim. 2, 15. Forasmuch as his blessing doth accompany the faithful deliverance thereof. The word is

evermore effectual in it self, and mighty in operation, sharper thē any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart: let us not therefore by our negligence dull the edge of it, or blunt the point of it, nor be afraid to cut the sinews of sin with it, but speak it as it ought to be spoken.

Thirdly, from hence the people receive diverse [Use 3] instructions. First▪ it worthily challengeth from them reverence to esteem them that preach the word, as the Ministers of Christ, to account their steps beautiful for their message and Ministry sake. The feet of the Prophets of God that brought the people glad tidings of a temporal deliverance from bodily captivity, were very beautiful, Isaiah 52, 7. How much more respected ought the Ministers of the Gospel to be, that bring glad tidings of a better deliverance, even from spiritual captivity and slavery under spiritual enemies to our souls and to our salvation? Rō. 10, 15. This bondage is greater & more grievous, then to lie under the bondage of all tyrants & persecutors. Secondly, we must yield attention to the word of exhortation, and not despise Prophecy, 1 Thess. 5, 20. This is the principal means ordained for our conversion, and for our confirmation, and continuance in the truth. For the preaching of the word is necessary, not only to bring us to the knowledge of the Gospel when we were ignorant, and to work in us the grace of faith when we did not believe; but when we are once borne anew, to make us grow thereby to a full strength and stature, and to establish us in the known truth, Rom. 1, 11. Eph. 4, 12, 13. 1 Pet. 2, 2, and 2 Pet. 1, 12, 13. And we are taught that Prophecy serveth for them that believe, and not only for them that do not believe, 1 Cor. 14, 22. Lastly, we must be content to submit our selves to the word, and to be willing to have it applied unto our consciences, whether it be by exhortations, or by reproofs, or by threatenings, or by comforts. For what shall a salve do, be it never so precious, if it be not laid to the sore? or what can the medicine avail, if it be not applied to the disease? Let us never look to find the efficacy of the word in our souls, except we desire to feel the working and power of it being spread upon our hearts. Lastly, we must yield obedience to that which we have heard. It is said of the Apostles when they were sent forth into all Nations, Mar. 16, 20. that they went forth and preached everywhere, & the Lord wrought with them: if then we be doers of the word, & not hearers only, then the Lord worketh with his Ministers, nay he worketh in the people. This is a blessed work, happy are they that are so wrought upon. The obedient hearer is the only hearer that heareth to salvation, that receiveth with meekness the engrafted word y^t is able to save his soul.

CHAP. VII.

1. AND it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the Tabernacle, and had

anointed it, and sanctified it, and all the instruments thereof, both the Altar and all the vessels thereof, and had anointed them and sanctified them,

2. That the Princes of Israel, heads of the house of their fathers (who were the Princes of the Tribes, and were over them that were numbered) offered:

3. And they brought their offering before the Lord, six covered wagons, and twelve Oxen: a wagon for two of the Princes, and for each one an Ox, and they brought them before the Tabernacle.

4. And the Lord spake, &c.

Hitherto of the sanctification which is general and common: now *Moses* descendeth to particular laws. This chapter containeth two things; first, the offering of the Princes: secondly, the speech of God to *Moses*. The offering of the Princes is set out by certain circumstances, of the time when they offered, when *Moses* had fully set up the Tabernacle, and had anointed and sanctified it, &c. of the persons which offered, the Princes of the Tribes, the heads of the house of their fathers: and of the place where they are offered, it was before the Lord. Then their offering is described by the particulars that were offered, which is performed jointly, or severally. Ioyntly, they brought six covered wagons and twelve Oxen, &c. I will not stand particularly to speak of the sanctifying and anointing of the Tabernacle, handled at large, Exod. 40, 9, 10. Remember in general, that the Tabernacle was a type and figure of the Church, which is a company of men acknowledging and worshipping the true God, whō Christ doth regenerate and sanctify with his Spirit, and purposeth afterward to glorify thē in his kingdom, 1 John 2, 27. Moreover consider, that these Princes here described are called *the heads of the house of their Fathers*. This word is diversely taken in the Scriptures. God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of the woman, 1, Cor. 11, 3. The head of *Syria* is *Damascus*, the head of *Damascus*, is *Retzin*, Isaiah 7, 8. The heads of the Levites are put for the chiefest; and the Priest the head, that is, the chief Priest, Neh. 1, 16. 2 Chron. 31, 10. The King, the head of the Tribes of Israel, 1 Sam. 15, 17. The heads of householders, the Elders, Exod. 16, 13. The head of the people, the foremost, 1 King. 21, 9. The head of the Mountains, the highest, Isaiah 2, 2. The head of the spices, the chiefest, Exod. 20, 23. Among *David's* Captains, the heads are the most excellent, 2 Sā. 23, 8, 13, 18. The Princes mentioned in this place, may after a sort be called heads in all these respects, because they are the chiefest, the foremost, the highest, and the most excellent. And albeit Kings and Princes abstain from this title to be called heads of y^e Church, as pointing out the sovereignty of Christ, and content themselves to be styled supreme Governors, as appeareth by the oath of supremacy used among us, yet we doubt not but they may be called by that name in a kind & degree of resemblance, because they have preeminence of place and government over all people within their dominions. For if *Samuel* tell *Saul*, that when he was little in his own sight, he was ordained to be made the *head of the Tribes of Israel*, being anointed King: it may be thought not unlawful, being rightly

understood, to give Princes y^e name of heads of their people. As for the Bishop of Rome, that challengeth this title, to be called head of the whole Church, we cannot acknowledge him for any such head, but rather the tail, being indeed no sound member of the Church, but the head of the apostasy and falling away from the faith, prophesied of by the Apostle.

Touching the annointing oil, wherewith the Tabernacle and the vessels thereof were anointed; signifying, that all the true members of the Church are endued with the graces of the Spirit: from hence the superstitious Romanists would gather their consecrating and hallowing of Churches with oil and other ceremonies, and hold it unlawful to say their Mass in a Church not hallowed: yea, they will tell us of much profit and many uses thereof, as the increase of devotion, and the expelling of devils. But hereby they run into sundry errors & abuses. They devise and set up a sanctificatiō without warrant of God's word: they prefer their own tradition before the institution of God: they commit idolatry in dedicating Churches to Saints: they make these ceremonies a part of God's worship: they would bring in again the types and shadows of *Moses* law, which do not bind us, but are abolished: they make human traditions and observations not grounded upon y^e Scripture, to be the means to stir up deuotiō. Lastly, they teach, that by this unholy hallowing devils are drivē out of churches, w^c are not cast out but by fasting & prayer, Matth. 17, 21. As for that dedication of Churches which standeth partly in prayer grounded upon the word, and partly in setting of them apart to holy uses, to the preaching of the word, to the administration of the Sacraments, & such like exercises of religion; we do no more condemn then *David's* dedication of his house which he had newly built, Psal. 30. who notwithstanding used neither crossings, nor tapers, nor such toys as are taken up and tolerated in the Church of Rome.

[Ver. 1. *And it came to pass*] *Moses* having provided all things necessary for the service of God, mustered his army, divided them into troops and squadrons before remembered, and appointed them Leaders of all sorts: here he showeth that the twelve Princes, the Captains & Commanders of the Tribes, brought their offerings before the Lord, to wit, six covered wagons, and twelve Oxen to draw them, to transport in them (as they marched) the parts of the Tabernacle with all the vessels belonging thereunto. But were not these things to be carried upon the Priests shoulders? What use then was there, or what need of these wagons or chariots? The Sanctuary indeed or the most holy place, for greater respect and reverence, was to be carried upon the shoulders of the sons of *Kohath*, to whō the charge was committed; howbeit these wagons were appointed to carry and conuay in them the other parts of the Tabernacle, and the vessels thereunto belonging, and were delivered to the Levites for that service, namely to the sons of *Gershon* and *Merari*. Now, we must not forget that the people gave before this gifts of great price, Exod. 35, 27. yet here again (seeing a want) they bring more, and that freely without coaction or compulsion, to finish and perfect fully the work that was so happily begun. The doctrine from hence is this, that a good work begun, especially furthering God's worship, is not to be neglected or intermitted until it be brought to an end and to perfection. We see this in the book of *Ezra*, chap. 5, 1, 2. the building of God's house after the return of the Israelites from captivity had been a long time hindered through the malice of their enemies, yet now they begin with good courage to set

upon the work again, being stirred up by the Prophets, and never give over until it was finished: and chap. 6, 14. they built and finished the house of God and prospered. The like zeal & forwardness we see in *Nehemiah*, ch. 4, 3, 4, &c. he built the wall, which indeed was the first that was thrown down, but the last that was set up: by whose means all the wall was joined together, for the people had a mind to work. When the Jews had begun to destroy their enemies, they did not leave the work imperfect, and therefore *Ester* required that it might be granted to them, to do tomorrow as they had done that day, and that *Haman's* ten sons might be hanged upon the gallows. Hence it is, that *Elisha* reproveth the King of Israel, who smote upon the ground three times and then stayed, saying unto him, *Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times, then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it, whereas now thou shalt smite it but thrice.* He began the work of the Lord well, but he did not make a good end. The Apostle persuading the Corinthians to liberality toward the Saints, willeth the readily to perform that which they had willingly begun. The reasons are plain.

The God of heaven will prosper weak beginnings, [Reason 1] if there be a readiness and cheerfulness in us. This should be a great encouragement unto us, as it was to *Nehemiah*, to arise and build the wall, seeing they had the promise of God's prospering of the work that was under their hands, *Neh. 2, 20.*

Secondly, if we look back we are not apt to God's kingdom, *Lu 9, 62.* It is spoken indeed of the Ministry, which may fitly be called God's Plough, as the Ministers are the husbandmen, the word is the seed▪ the heart of man is the field that is to be ploughed up, tilled, and sowed: but it is true also in all good things and every work of religion, if we give over, we lose our labor, we miss our reward

Thirdly, it is better not to begin, then having begun, not to proceed: better never to lay the first stone in the building, then having laid a good foundation, not to make an end, because it will be said to our reproach, *This man began to build, but was not able to finish, Luk. 14, 30.* It is happened unto such, according to the true Proverb, *The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the Sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire. 2 Pet 2, 22.*

This serveth to reprove such as give over [Use 1] their profession, which rest in a good work begun, and in weak and small beginnings. They are like *Balaam* that wished he might die the death of the righteous, but he would go no farther. Or they are like the morning dew, which by and by the Sun dryeth up: or like *Herod*, that revered *John*, & did many things when he heard him preach, but he would not depart from all sin, and obey whatsoever *John* taught, *Mark. 6, 20.* and therefore it had been as good he had done nothing *Agrippa* was persuaded somewhat to become a Christian, when he had heard *Paul* preach, but he would not become altogether such as he was, as *Paul* desired, *Acts 20, 28.* The stony ground, being by nature hot, made the corn spring up hastily and promise plentiful fruit to the husbandman; but when the Sun arose in his strength, it was quickly scorched & began by little and little to wither away: so is it with many hearers, they receive the word with joy, and believe for a season, but they want root, and in time oftentation they fall away, *Luke 8, verse 13.* A falling back into sin is more dangerous then the relapse into an old sickness: this may endanger the body, but that endangereth y^e soul; this may bring a temporal death, but that will bring a

spiritual, nay an eternal death. Let us therefore take the counsel of Christ given to y^e Church of Ephesus, Revel. 2, 5. *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and do thy first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy Candlestick out of his place except thou repent.* Augustine saith well to this purpose; *Redeat homo per quotidiana lamenta, vnde corrui per vana delectamenta;* As man hath fallen by vain delighting, so let him return again by daily lamenting. Let us make such a firm league and such a sure promise with religion, as *Elisha* did with *Elijah*, 2 King. 2, 6. *As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee:* so let us say, with full purpose of heart & with a settled resolution, I will never depart from the faith, I will never leave my obedience, I will never give over true religion. Thus it was with *David*, he stood not wavering in the matters of God, or hovering up & down in the wind, looking for a change, but he had determined what he would do, Psalm. 119, 93, 106. *I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me.* And afterward, *I have sworn and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* This was an holy oath, whereby he bound himself as it were in a statute from starting back, that he might never entertain any thought of giving over his profession. Let us set before us evermore this example, let us be constant and unmovable, abounding always in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labors shall not be in vain in the Lord.

[Use 2] Secondly, it reproveth such as stand at a stay, like the earth that never moveth: such as neither go forward nor backward, but are always the same men, and look where you left them, there you shall be sure to find them. These are earthly minded and savor only of the earth: yet they think themselves to be somewhat, and such as deserve highly to be commended, because they do not go back, nor wax worse and worse as others do. Thus while they compare themselves with those that are worse, they are grown into an high conceit that they are most excellent. But let them not deceive themselves; they use false weights and false measures to make trial of themselves, of whom I may say as the Lord doth of *Belshazzar*, Dan. 5, 27. *Thou art weighed in the balances, & art found wanting:* for while they measure themselves with the mete-yard of others, they keep a false measure in their own house, which is an abomination unto the Lord, Prov. 11, 1, & 16, 11. Everyone must weigh himself, if he would not be found too light, with the weights of the Sanctuary, and measure himself with the standard of the Scripture, comparing his works with the word of God, and not with the life of other men, then he shall be sure not to be reprovèd.

Every Christian is like the Sun that never standeth still, but is ever in motion. If our conversation be in heaven, we must be goers, walkers, runners: goers in the right way, walking toward our journeys end, and running in a race that we may obtain. We must be as plants growing in the house of the Lord, Psal. 92, 13. *Such as are planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the house of our God.* There must be none of God's servants that must be idle and stand still, doing nothing; they must be laborers that look to receive their penny when the evening cometh, Math. 20, verse 8. He that had received a talent, and digged and hid it in the earth, was accounted an evil and unfaithful servant, Math. 25, 26. Who will entertain a servant, to give him meat & drink and wages, that will do nothing but look about him, and never set his hands to work? and shall we think that God will receive such servants into his house as sit still and will do him no service at all? Shall we put our hands into our bosom,

and never pull them out again to employ them as we ought to do? Let us evermore be doing somewhat that may please God: blessed is that servant, whom his master when he cometh, shall find so doing.

Thirdly, such deserve to be reprov'd and [Use 3] to be ranged in the number of the former who hate and scorn those that go before them and beyond them in the duties of piety, in gifts of knowledge and understanding. But we must take heed we do not oppose our selves against any work of grace that is evident and eminent to be seen in any of God's servants. For this is as much as to hate and scorn the word of God, nay, the Lord himself; the Gospel of peace, nay Christ Jesus the author and first Preacher of it. It argueth a malicious heart against our brethren, and that in the highest degree, like *Cain* who hated his brother, because God accepted his offering. Malice against any man is an evil root that bringeth forth bitter fruits: to malign any for his riches, for his peace, for his prosperity, is very dangerous: but to envy him & repine at him for heavenly riches, for his souls health, for the peace of a good conscience, and for matters that concern his everlasting salvation in God's Kingdom, is a thousand times worse then the malice of *Saul* against *David*, or of *Pharaoh* against *Moses* and the Israelites. True it is, these sought their lives; but such desperate malicious persons that envy glory and immortality, and heaven it self to others, do seek the life of their lives: the other were guilty of the blood of their bodies whō they hated and persecuted; but these are guilty of the blood of men's souls, and their thirst cannot be quenched but by rasing them out of the book of life. These are stamped with the image of Satan the old deceiver, and the first envious person that ever was, who being fallen into condemnation himself, envied the standing of mankind in the state of grace, and therefore could not rest nor be quiet, until he had plunged man into the same gulf of condemnation. So is it with these men, they are backward in the fear of God themselves, and they desire to have all like them, to be backward as themselves. Let us take heed of such envy, let us bar no man of God's Kingdom.

[Use 4] Fourthly, it is our duty to proceed in sanctification, and labor to bring forth fruit evermore in old age, Psal. 92, 15. Let us leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, & go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation, Heb. 6.1. Let us not think we have attained unto perfectiō, but forget that which is behind, and endeavor to that which is set before us: let us press toward the mark for the price of the high calling of GOD, that so we may apprehend that for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus, Phil. 3.13.14. Let us cleanse our selves from all filthynesse of the flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. 7, 1. True it is, that albeit the good work begun in us be but as a spark of fire kindled in wood, or a young plant newly grafted in the stock, or as a drop of rain fallen into the earth, yet Christ Jesus doth accept of the truth & sincerity of the new work wrought in us, be it never so small: howbeit we must not evermore be as smoking flax, & as bruised reeds, and as new-set plants: we must not still be weaklings, but as the grain of Mustard seed, which is one of the least of the sorts of seeds, but it groweth great, and becometh as a tree, and the birds of the air build their nests in it, Math. 13, 32. Or like unto leaven, which though it be small, yet being hidden in three measures of Meale, the whole is leavened, verse 33. Therefore it behooveth us, as we have received how we ought to walk and to please God, so to abound more and more, 1 Thess. 4, 1. Notwithstanding, we must take heed that we do not glory in

our own strength, as if we were able to do the will of God touching our sanctification of our selves without the help and assistance of the Spirit of God, without which we can do nothing at all. True it is, the Apostle willeth us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling: howbeit, lest any should trust in himself as if he were something, or build upon the freedom of his own will, he addeth in the next words, *It is God that worketh in us the will and the deed, of his good pleasure*, Philip. 2, 12, 13. It is a notable token of our continuance in good things, and a comfort to our consciences that we shall persevere unto the end, if we have a care to go forward, and to make our good works moe at the last then they were at the first.

[Verse 2.] *The Princes of Israel, Heads of the house of their Fathers offered.*] Here we have another circumstance to be considered, to wit, a description of the persons that offered: they were the Princes and Rulers, the heads of the people. And albeit they only are expressed, yet they brought their offering in the name of the whole Tribe, as appeareth by the largeness of the offering, and by the first Prince that offered. Thus we see that they being set up in high place above others, do also go before them and give them good example in the best things, & seek to further them in God's worship. We learn hereby, [Doctrine.] that albeit God be to be served of all, and that all persons should show themselves forward and ready to further the work of the Lord, yet above all other, the chief and heads of the people, are to be guides of the way, and leaders unto the rest. The Prophet teacheth, that under the Gospel *Kings shall be nursing Fathers, and Queens shall be Nursing mothers* to the Church, Isaiah 49, 23. *David exhorteth Kings to be wise, and the Judges of the earth to be instructed, to serve the Lord with fear, and to rejoice with trembling*, Psa. 2, 10, 11. When the people saw the zeal and fervency of *Hezekiah*, that he spared no cost to further the worship of God, it kindled in them a love to do his service, and they rejoiced exceedingly, 2 Chron. 30, 24, 25. Such therefore as are advanced above the people as the head is above the body, ought to be more zealous & forward in the ways of God, then others that are of the lowest sort.

Thus it ought to be, because they must [Reason 1] know they lie open to judgment as well as others, if not before others. *Topheth is prepared of old for the King* as well as for the subject: *It is made deep and large* as well for the one, as for the other, Isaiah 30.33. God accepteth no man's person. Nay, they are for the most part chiefly pursued and over-taken with judgments, as Ezra 7.23. *Artaxerxes* decreed, that all should return and build the house of the God of heaven: *For why should there be wrath against the Realm of the King and his sons?* And to this purpose it is said in the Psalm 82, 6, 7. *I have said ye are God's, and all of you are children of the most high: but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the Princes.*

Secondly, they sin by their example, and give offense unto others. When they fall, they make others fall with them, as a mighty Oak casteth down the low and little shrubs that grow nere it. So then, they offend not only by their own transgression, as a private man, but all their actions are exemplary, and they bring a great scandal unto others. They are as a city set upon an hil, or as a light upon a Beacon that is seen far and near: when they sin they make others sin with them. For this cause *Solomon* saith, Prov. 29.12. *If a Ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked.*

Thirdly, wherefore are they separated in calling and condition? and why are they advanced to honor? Is it to magnify themselves? is it to sit at ease? or to live in pleasure? or to delight them in their high titles? or to please themselves to see others creep and crouch unto them? No, but to be pillars in the house of God, and to serve the Church. Hence it is, that *Nehemiah* said, *Should such a man as I fly? Or who is there that being as I am, would go into the Temple to save his life?* As if he had said, Should I fly that am a Ruler of the people? I will not do it. And *Mordecai* persuadeth *Ester* to go in to the King, and to adventure her life for the deliverance of the Church by this reason, chap. 4.14. *Who knoweth, whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?* He putteth her boldly in mind, that God had advanced her to honor, and made her inherit the throne of glory, to the end she should honor him again, and refer all the glory she had attained, to the setting forth of his glory.

[Use 1] This teacheth us, that it is a dangerous state where are no Leaders or Rulers to go before the people, and to hold them in God's service: there of necessity godliness must decay, Justice fall to the ground, and all duties of Religion sink down, as in an army where are no Commanders, in a family where are no Governors, in a ship where are no Pilots, what is there but all disorder and confusion? The last part of the book of *Judges*, setteth forth the truth hereof at large: the *Israelites* corrupted themselves with Idolatry, they defiled the worship of God, and God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, and such like wickedness: and what was the occasion of all? *Judge. 17 & 18. & 19. In those days there was no King in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.* And it is observed by the Author of that Book, that the people feared the Lord all the days of *Joshua*, a godly Governor, and all the days of the Elders that out-lived *Joshua*, who had seen all the great works of the Lord: but when they were dead and buried, *The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim.* We must therefore needs acknowledge the happiness and blessedness of that people, that have godly Governors, such as *Moses*, and *Joshua*, and *David*, and *Jehoshaphat*, and *Hezekiah*, and *Josiah*, and such like, to teach them, and guide them in the ways of godliness. This is a great mercy and favor of God.

[Use 2] Secondly we may conclude, that wretched and miserable is their condition, where Governors are cold and careless in God's service, and enemies to the advancement of his glory. The Prophet showeth, that the *Chief had no knowledge, and the great men had broken the yoke, and burst the bonds. Woe therefore unto the Land, the Lord would visit for these things, and his soul be avenged on such a nation as this,* *Ier. 5, 5, 9.* If it be within the walls of a private family that zeal be found in the Governors, it will appear oftentimes in the lowest servant which goeth to the door, as in *Rhode, Acts 12, 14.* She dwelled in a godly family, where many were gathered together in prayer, entreating the Lord to work *Peters* deliverance: & when she heard his voice standing without, and knocking at the door, she could not open the gate for gladness▪ but ran in to acquaint them with that glad tidings. If *Cornelius* be a devout man, and one that feareth God, he shall have servants and soldiers to attend upon him to be devout also, *Acts 10, 2, 7.* If the Courtier or Nobleman whose son was cured, do believe, his whole house will believe also, and follow his example, *John. 4, 53.* If the Jailor desire to know how to be saved, and if once himself become a believer, he shall not believe alone, his

household will bear him company, and enter into the way of salvation, Acts 16, 34. *Abraham* is noted to be the Father of the faithful, and we see he was not without a faithful servant, not only faithful to his master, but faithful to God, and therefore also to his master. This is noted as the chief cause that religion so much prospered at *Thessalonica*, when the Gospel was preached and published there, *the Noblemen did embrace* it, Acts 17. If the rain once fall upon the mountains, it will quickly water the valleys that are beneath, like the precious ointment poured upon the head of *Aaron*, y^t ran down to the skirts of his garments, Ps. 133, 2. When the Gospel was preached at *Berea*, and such as were of noble birth took hold of it, and they that were honorable by calling, embraced & believed it; then, not a few, but many in number followed after them, with all readiness, Acts. 17, 11, 12. I am not ignorant, that diverse of our latest and lernedest Expositors understand the words otherwise, and think they are called Noble, not in regard of their birth or blood, but of their belief; as indeed true Piety is true Nobility, and true Religion is the truest Honor. Howbeit, I rather understand the word in his proper and natural signification, for these causes. First, it is not needful to fly to a figure, when the proper signification of a word standeth, and containeth nothing under it either against the doctrine of faith, or the instruction of life, or the truth of the history. Secondly, *Luke* useth this word in this signification, as also others: for such as are noble by birth, and not otherwise, as Luk. 19, 12. 1 Cor. 1, 26. Thirdly, the Evangelist hath relation to that which he noted before in this chapter, where he saith, *That not a few of the chief women believed* (verse 4.) *that were at Thessalonica*, howbeit they were more noble than were at *Berea*, who searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Lastly, in these words a reason is rendered, how it came to pass, that the Gospel took such good effect and gained so many souls to God, even because the Nobility and honorable personages gave their names to Christ, & were not ashamed to profess it. The multitude followed their example, as commonly they do imitate the actions of their Leaders. The Poet could say,

—Totus Componitur orbis

Regis ad exemplum: nec sic inflectere sensus

Humanos edicta valent, quàm vita regentis.

The people cast their eyes upon their Rulers, neither are they ordered so much by their laws, as they are by their lives. O that they which are in authority would consider this, that the eyes of all men are upon them: O that they would seriously bethink with themselves, what good they might do, by embracing religion, and by countenancing them that are truly religious: or if this will not enter into them, and that their honors do so dazzle their eyes that they cannot see the truth hereof, O that they would at the least learn what hurt they do, what backwardness they cause, what coldness in Religion they procure, and what floods of wickedness they bring in! Doubtless, if they did at any time meditate on these things, and weigh in indifferent balances either the one or the other, it were enough to turn, nay to break their hearts, and to put greater love and zeal into them of God's glory. For if the Governors of a Family be luke-warm, it may be easily observed, that their children which follow them, their servants which attend upon them, and all the rest of the house which are guided by them, are neither hot nor cold. And if it fall out that the Heads of the house be

profane and irreligious, there is nothing to be perceived in that whole family but notable fruits of infidelity, swearing, blaspheming, breach of the Sabbath, contempt of the word, brawling, contention, and all kind of wretchedness and wickedness. If *Saul* begin to persecute *David*, he shall get many devilish *Doegs* to snarl at him, and find many hollow-hearted *Keilahites* to betray him, & have many pestilent *Ziphites* offer themselves to discover where he hideth himself in strong holds; all as his servants to help him forward in his wickedness. If *Caiaphas* sit in judgment to arraign & condemn Christ, all his servants and his maids will be ready in the hall and at the door to set upon his disciples, and to follow the humor of their master, so that even the damosel that kept the door could not let *Peter* alone, but must assault him. How then can we but acknowledge that it is a very happy thing to enjoy godly Magistrates and Christian Governors? how much encouragement Inferiors have by thē, and how sweet a liberty they find, cannot be expressed. O that we could learn to prize & value this blessing as we ought! It is not a general benefit to be found in all places: y^e godly have oftentimes much disturbance, and suffer many taunts and checks even for their profession sake in profane places. & living under profane persons. For albeit all Magistrates and men in authority (though their office be not great) are set up for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well, 1 Pet. 2, 14. yet oftentimes they turn the edge of the sword the wrong way, and are a terror to good works, but not to evil.

Lastly, having received so great mer·y frō [Use 3] God, and continued among us, to have such as are chief over the people to be chief also in piety, and to go before them in all good •onuersation, whether they be such as be in the house, or out of the house: it is our duty to fall down before the Lord, and to acknowledge this blessing. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men, Psal. 107, 8. So did *Hiram* the King of *Tyre*, rejoice greatly when he heard that *Solomon* was anointed King in the room of his Father, and said, *Blessed be the Lord this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people*, 1 Kin. 5, 17 The like we see in the Queen of *Sheba*, when she had seen his works, and heard his wisdom, she said, *Blessed be the Lord thy God which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel, because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee King, to do judgment and justice*. And doubtless, if we knew the want of such Princes, as our brethren and sisters in former times did, when they were shut up in prisons, and burned to ashes, we would acknowledge the necessity of performing this duty. It is recorded in 2 Chro. 17, 7. that *Jehoshaphat*, who is renowned for his piety and advancement of true religion, sent out his Princes to teach in the Cities of *Judah*: not that they did take upon them the duty of the Priests, or usurp the office of the Prophets; but because they did back, countenance, & authorize the *Levites*, they did embolden & encorage the Prophets. This made an easy way and passage for the receiving and entertaining of true religion among the people with much more readiness and cheerfulness then otherwise would have been. For when they saw and considered, that such noble and worthy persons were the aduancers and upholders of the common Faith, they were the more stirred up to a zealous professing and a careful embracing, and a sincere obeying of the truth that was taught. Seeing therefore such good Princes are such great pillars of the Commonwealth, of the Church, and of Religion; the loss

of them when they are taken away, is one of the greatest losses, & threateneth the ruin and havoc of all that is good. When the good King *Josiah* was taken away, Lam. 4, 20. being taken in the snare under whose shadow they lived in peace, all *Judah* and *Jerusalem* mourned for him, and spake of him in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in *Israel*, 2 Chr. 35, 24 Zach. 12, 11. For as the enjoying of them bringeth many blessings, that we may quietly resort together to the hearing of the word, and peaceably sit under our Vines and Fig-trees, and reason of the ways of the Lord, as it was in the days of *Solomon*, when no man may do what seemeth good in his own eyes (as in the want of them:) so the taking of them away is the cause of many evils & of much wickedness, whereof we may say as Christ doth in another case, *All these are the beginnings of sorrows*. True it is, that the religion of God and the doctrine of the Gospel do not so stand in need of the help of man, as though they must fall whē they fall, because they are set upon such a sure foundation that no force or power of mā can shake them or destroy them, and they took firm root and spread far and near unto all quarters, before any Christian Magistrates embraced them, nay while they remained utter enemies unto them, and open persecutors of them; nevertheless it pleaseth God to use them as his chosen instruments, and by them to bring many thousands to the knowledge of the truth, and consequently to the kingdom of heaven, who otherwise through their ignorance would not see it, or through their carelessness would not regard it, or through their untowardness would not accept of it.

10 And the Princes offered for dedicating of the Altar, in the day that it was anointed, even the Princes offered their offering before the Altar.

11 And the Lord said unto Moses, &c.

We heard before of the offering performed jointly by the Princes: now let us see the Offerings which they brought severally. For besides the Chariots and the Oxen, each of these great Commanders of the people and Heads of the Tribes offered unto God for his service in the Tabernacle, a Charger of fine silver, waighing 130. shekels, a silver Boll of 70. shekles, and one Spooone of ten shekels of Golde, full of Incense: all which they performed at the same time when the Altar was dedicated to God by *Aaron*, and before they marched from *Sinai* (where the Law was given) toward their conquest of the promised land. The weight of all the 12. silver Chargers, and 12 silver Bolles amounted unto 2400 shekels of silver, & the weight of Gold in the Incense spoones, did amount to 120. shekels of Gold which maketh of shekels of silver 1200. every shekel of Gold valewing ten of silver: so that the whole sum which they offered at this time, was about 420 pounds sterling. These Princes offered before with men and women, yet now they come again, & think they can never do enough toward the furtherance of the Tabernacle & the worship of God. The doctrine [Doctrine.] from hence is this, that they which have most outward blessings & greatest ability must be most forward in God's worship and service. In *Ezra* it appeareth, they all *gave according to their ability*, chap. 2, 9. The chief of the Fathers, when they came to the house of the Lord, offered freely for the house of God, to set it up in his place. So in *Nehemiah* it appeareth how bountiful he and the

Princes, and the people were: *They gave much silver and gold to finish the work of the Lord.* The examples of *David* and *Solomon* in this kind are very evident and apparent, for y^t which one of them prepared to the work, and the other employed and bestowed upon the work, is exceeding great, as appeareth in the holy history, 1 Chron. 18, 11. &c.

And so much the rather we should employ our blessings and gifts to the service of God, and so give them after a sort to him that gave them first unto us, because it is a sign that our affection is set upon the worship of God, and an assurance to our own hearts, that we love him and his house, 1 Chro. 29, 3, 4. where *David* showeth, he gave 3000. talents of gold, of the gold of *Ophir*, and 7000. talents of refined silver, because *he had set his affection to the house of his God.* On the other side, where is no liberality, we may conclude there is no worship of God. Secondly everyone is bound to glorify God with his riches, knowing that they are but stewards and dispensers of them, of which they must give an account unto God, Luk. 16, 2. To this end hath God bestowed them, and to this end we have received them, and therefore to this end they should be employed. Thirdly, this is a certain rule, that *To whom soever much is given, of him shall much be required,* Luke 12, 48. He that hath little committed unto him, hath the less account and shorter reckoning to make, but to whom men have committed much, of him they will require more: so is it with God: if he have left us five talents he will ask five of us again; and according as God hath put us in trust with little or much, we must know that he looketh for this at our hands, that we be ready to employ little or much upon his service, everyone according to his ability.

This serveth to reprove the forgetfulness and unthankfulness of such, as never consider [Use 1] the end wherefore God hath blessed them, giving themselves wholly to carnal liberty and security, and so are more backward in good things, then if they had never received so many and so great blessings from God. He hath a plentiful storehouse, and a treasury of all treasures: out of this he dealeth with us, and distributeth unto us plentifully. The Apostle giveth the Church a watchword, and it is very needful he should do so, that *in all things they should be thankful,* 1 Thess. 5, 19. This is the cause why the *Israelites* were forwarned to take heed to themselves, even before they entered into the land of promise, Deut. 6, 10, 11, 12. and should possess great & goodly Cities which they never built, houses full of all manner of furniture and garnishings and ornaments which they never stored, vineyards & Olive trees which they never planted, Welles of water which they never digged, and fields of Corn which they never sowed; then they ought nearly and narrowly to look unto themselves. And why then, rather then at another time? Because riches and pleasures, abundance and ease, would be such baits, that they should then be in greatest dangers (more then when they lived in the wilderness) to be drawn by them to forget God's mercies, by which they were delivered out of many miseries. They thought they should then be safe enough, if once they were come to set foot in the land; howbeit *Moses* telleth them, that then remained the greatest danger of all. They must stand in fear lest they be choked with these thorns, lest they be entangled in these snares, lest they suffer ship-wrack at these rocks, lest they be overcome with these temptations, & lest they be drowned in these deep waters, Luk. 8.14. 1 Tim. 6, 9. This is the corruption of our nature, and the poison of sin, it turneth good into evil, as an evil stomach doth the daintiest and best meats. We do commonly abhor him, and speak all manner of evil

of him, who having received many benefits and good turns, forgetteth his Patron and benefactor, when once he is advanced and promoted to honor; like *Pharaohs* Butler, who having received good from *Joseph*, forgot him when he was restored unto his office, and delivered the cup into the kings hand again; albeit *Joseph* had said unto him, Gen. 40, 14. *Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness I pray thee unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house.* An unthankful person even unto men, is justly abhorred: how much more then unto God the most bountiful Patron! Common experience teacheth, that commonly men are much worse for God's benefits, and grow more profane and presumptuous in sinning against him through the plenty and abundance of earthly blessings. *David* we know was none of the worst men, but one of the best according to God's own heart, yet he saith of himself while he enjoyed the world at will, *I said in my prosperity I shall never be moved.* *Psa.* 30, 6, And in another place, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes: Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy word,* *Psal.* 119, 67, 71. And therefore his benefits did him not so much good as his chastisements, they did not further his salvation so much as his corrections. *Jeremiah* speaketh of the church under the name of *Ephraim*, that it was *as an untamed Calf*, till God chastened it. *Manasseh* learned more at *Babylon*, then at *Jerusalem*; as he lay in prison, then as he sate upon his throne: for in peace & prosperity he fell to Idolatry, to sorcery, to cruelty, and to all kind of impiety; but when he was carried away captive, he besought the Lord his God, who never thought he stood in need of him before; *He humbled himself greatly before the Lord God of his father, who despised him before in the pride of his heart; and he prayed unto God earnestly, who never prayed unto him before.* The blessings of God indeed ought to unite us more closely and conscionably unto him: howbeit it is a rare thing to find, that benefits knit our hearts more nearly unto GOD. Shew me that man among a thousand that can truly say, the benefits of God have made him sounder in the faith, and better in his obedience, until he have been taught and trained up in the school of affliction, and tried in the furnace of adversity. God hath two school-houses in which he doth instruct his scholars: the first is the school of prosperity: there he speaketh to us, but we are deaf and cannot hear; there he teacheth, but we are dull and cannot learn. We are non-proficiency though we tarry long in this school; not through any default either in the master, or in the lesson, or in the school, but through defect in the scholar only. He is constrained therefore to put us into his other school, this is the school of affliction, many profit here that could not profit before. For the heart of man is naturally puffed up with prosperity, so y^t it cannot work in him the performance of greater duty and sounder obedience, as it ought to do. Ther are ten lepers in the Gospel, cleansed of a foul and filthy disease; but when once they saw they were cured & recovered, they forgot who had cleansed them, how they were cleansed, of what they were cleansed, and wherefore they were cleansed; only one of them was found to return and give God thanks. When Christ had found the impotent man y^t had lien 38. years at the pool of *Bethesda*, he saw it was needful to put him in mind, to take heed he *sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon him:* for he knew he was ready to forget what he had been, & how great things he had done for him, and to please himself in the present condition wherein he was made whole, & therefore would have him consider what he might be in time to come, and fear a future relaps into y^e same, nay into greater evils. He to whom 10000. talents were

remitted, shown not mercy again for y^e mercy that he had received: this was all the fruit of his thankfulness that he yielded, *He caught his fellow-servant by the throat, who owed him only an hundred pence, bidding him presently to tender payment.* Iehoash the King of Judah was preserved by Jehoiada, and set in the kingdom y^t had been usurped by the tyranny of Athalia, and through the massacre of the blood-royal; yet this was all the thankfulness that he shown for the Fathers kindness, he slew his son because he reproveth their Idolatry and Apostasy, and so he remembered not the benefit of life & kingdom, and education that he had received, without which, he had not lived, nor reigned, nor received the knowledge of the truth. Seeing then, we are so prone of our selves to forget what y^e Lord hath done for us, and to return him the praise, we must be watchful over our corruptions, remembering what God hath done for us.

Secondly, it reproveth all idle and negligent teachers, who have received many good gifts [Use 2] & graces profitable for the Church of God, & yet never use them, like the covetous person y^t hoordeth up great treasures, but suffereth no man to be the better for them: like the sluggish servant in the Parable, who hid his masters money in the earth, but would not employ it: or like unto those that cover the Candle under a bushel, that it can give no light unto ••em that are in the house, whereas it should be set upon the table, that all might have the use of it, and benefit by it. Wherefore hath God given greater gifts, but that such should take greater pains? How many are there that desire great livings, but they do not desire to bestow great labor among them? Our reward shall not be according to our gifts, but according to our labors. For as many may have great gifts, and yet bestow little labor, so they may have great gifts, and yet have little or rather no reward, except it be for their negligence. Certainly there are many that are rich in gifts, who notwithstanding have but a poor people; for they keep all knowledge to themselves, and impart nothing to others. Such carry the bag with Judas, but betray good Christians for thirty shekels of silver. They regard not what become of God's people, so that they may enrich themselves, who cause the people of God to perish, and themselves perish through Balaam's wages that sticketh unto them. They are dumb dogs that never have enough: they cannot bark, they run after their own gain. They neither enter into the kingdom of Heaven themselves, neither suffer them that would enter. It is a great sin for any to hide their gifts. We must be as *John the Baptist*, he was a burning and a shining lamp, and the people were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. So the Apostles were made the *lights of the world*; and they *made their lights shine before men*: For God that caused the light to shine out of darkness, shined into their hearts, to enable them to give the light of knowledge unto others, 2 Cor. 4, 6. The Ministers are the salt of y^e earth, to season the hearts of men.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it reproveth idle professors that will do nothing, like *Demas* and the rich glutton, that feed themselves, & enrich their own coffers, but will do no good, either in the maintaining of God's service, or toward the relieving of the wants & distresses of others. Such are as c••tous *Nabal*, that would let *David* being in necessity to have nothing: or like to *Laban*, that grudged y^t *Jacob* should have anything. These do no good but to themselves, if to themselves. What account will these give of their stewardship, who forget that they are stewards? It had been better they had never received any blessings, then to make none y^e better for them, no not themselves. The earth that is full of Mines of gold, is barren to bring

forth anything else, as grass, and corn, and trees, and herbs for the use of man: so the wretched soul that thirsteth after silver and gold, & busieth it self day and night to heap up riches, cannot bring forth any other fruit, neither do any service to God, or to the commonwealth, or to the church, or to himself. *Covetousness is the root of all evil*, and therefore it is extreme folly to delight so much in it. He that is to ascend to the top of an exceeding high Mountain, should do marvelous foolishly, if he should bind heavy burdens on his shoulders, and tie bolts and fetters to his feet, because whatsoever he shall pretend, he maketh it manifest, that he never meaneth to mount up to y^e top thereof: so likewise we being called *to dwell in the holy hill of the Lord, and to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of his father*, if we clog and cloy our selves with so many impediments, & lade our selves with so many burdens of earthly cogitations and practices, we show plainly that our conversation is not in heaven, and that we regard not to ascend up to that place. Rich men therefore that have received this worlds goods, and yet will do no good with their goods, are worthily to be reprov'd, because they have received much, and are thereby enabled to do much good, & yet will perform nothing at all. Rich men without religion & knowledge of God, without love of his service, and conscience of holy •••s, have much to answer for themselves. They have a thousād times more means to do good then the poor have, yet they do less: their hands are tied, their ears are stopped, their eyes are closed, their hearts are hardened. They might make to themselves *Friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that whē they fail, they may receive them into everlasting habitations*: but they regard no such friends, they make more account of their fading *Mammon*, then they do of those everlasting habitations. They have more time and leisure to spend in reading the Scriptures, and in getting of knowledge, then the meaner sort who are much distracted to provide for their families; & yet commonly they bestow least time that way, and for the most part have less understanding in the best things. The Apostle denounceth a woe against such unconscionable and irreligious men, *that heap up treasure together for the last days, that live in pleasure upon the earth, that grow wanton, & nourish their hearts as in a day of slaughter*. Let all such at the length remember what they have received, let them learn to be rich in good works, to do good, to be ready to distribute and to be willing to communicate, laying up in store a good foundation for themselves against the time to come, y^t they may lay hold on eternal life. And touching the use of their outward blessings, and the employing of thē to the right end, let them remember the words of Christ, Luke 11, 41. *Give alms of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you*.

Lastly, seeing such as have received outward blessings, ought to be most forward to [Use 4] do good with them, we must know y^t thus also it ought to be in spiritual blessings. If we must be faithful in that which is the least, we must much more be faithful in the greatest: and if we be unjust in little, we will be unjust also in much. God hath in great mercy given us many means to abound in heavenly graces, so that concerning the time we might have been such as might be sufficient to be teachers of others; yet we have need that one should teach us the first principles of the Oracles of God, and have need of milk rather than of strong meat, Heb. 5.12. being altogether babes and unskillful in the word of righteousness, not having our senses exercised to be able to discern between good and evil. They therefore are in a woeful

and wretched estate, that have long lived under the preaching of the word, the means of regeneration in this life, and of salvation in the life to come, and yet are more ignorant, faithless, fruitless, disobedient and profane, then such as have had no such means, nor lived where the sound of the Gospel hath been so plentifully heard. Hence it is, that Christ denounceth fearful woes against *Bethsaida, Corazin, and Capernaum*, where he had preached many Sermons, and wrought many miracles, he threateneth to cast them down to destruction, and telleth them *that it should be easier for Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, then for them*, Matth. 11.24. The Sodomites had an heavy punishment in this life to be destroyed with fire and brimstone from heaven, and to taste of a more heavy judgment of fire and brimstone that burneth in hell; and yet those unthankfull cities that brought not forth the fruits of the Gospel shall have sorer judgment for their disobedience at the day of judgment, when the Judge of all the world shall appear to judge the quick and the dead. If a man after he have received some benefit from another, shall presently fly in his face and offer him open wrong and injury, it is certain that y^e injury & indignity is much more grievous then if he had received no benefit of him at all: so when a sinner hath received great and singular benefits from God, his sin is made the greater by offending him. What blessing is greater then the word, when the kingdom of heaven is offered and opened unto us? and what sin can be so great as to reject it, and to account our selves unworthy of eternal life? Let us therefore take heed how we use his gifts, and endeavor to profit by the means that he affordeth us for our salvation, lest it go worse with us, then with the Turks and Infidels. For except our righteousness exceed others, certainly our punishment shall be greater then theirs: and then it had been better for us that we had never heard the preaching of the Gospel, then having heard it, proudly and presumptuously to reject it.

18 On the second day Nethaniel the son of Zuar Prince of Issachar, did offer•.

19 He offered for his offering one silver, &c.

In these words, as also before, and in the words following, we see what is offered, to wit, silver and gold, they spare nothing, they are no niggards, they bring the best things that they have. Neither do they bring the best in a sparing manner, but they deal bountifully and liberally. The doctrine [Doctrine.] offered & the duty required from hence, is this, We must serve God with the chiefest and choicest things we have, and employ the best things that are fit for his service, and that in a large and liberal manner, according to our several places, persons, callings, conditions, and abilities. We read that to further the building and furnishing of the Tabernacle, *men and women as many as were willing-hearted, brought bracelets, earrings, rings, and tablets, precious stones and jewels of gold; every man that offered, did offer an offering of gold unto the Lord*, no man came empty. So did the Rulers & Princes: yea they were so forward, that the workmen complained that the people brought too much for the service of the work which the Lord commanded them to make. How far are we from this in our days? may we say of our times, The people bring much more then enough for the work of the Lord? Oh that we might come but one degree behind them; that it might be said, our people

bring enough? But we cannot truly testify so much. The Israelites thought they never brought enough, we think we never bring too little. They offered more than they were commanded, we bring no more than we are compelled & constrained to bring. They brought willingly, we give grudgingly. They offered with a glad and cheerful heart, we will do no more than Law urgeth, or not so much. They brought of the best, we think the worst good enough for God and his worship and his Ministers. The Prophet *Malachi*, crieth out against this sin, chap. 1.14. *Cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great king, saith the Lord of hosts, and my Name is dreadful among the heathen.* The Spirit of God commendeth *Araunah* for his forwardness & bountifulness in God's service, *Let the king take and offer what seemeth him good to the Lord; behold here are oxen for burnt sacrifice and threshing instruments of the oxen for wood: all these as a king he gave unto the king.* This also appeareth notably in *Solomon*, touching the building of the Temple, *The king & all Israel offered sacrifice with him, 22000. oxen, & 122000. sheep at the dedication of the house of the Lord.* The like we see in *Hezekiah*: and if we go no farther than to *Abel* in the beginning of y^e world, he shown forth the practice of this duty, for he brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof unto the Lord, and if he had had a better thing to bring, no doubt he would have brought it. So that this hath been the practice always of the best sort, to offer in the best manner the best they have, unto the best, that is, to the Lord himself.

[Reason 1] This they did that God might evermore dwell among them according to his promise, *Exod. 25.3, 4, 6, 8.* A great judgment it is to have him leave us and depart from us. Nothing driveth him away sooner and causeth him to deny his presence, then our dealing deceitfully with him. Secondly, if we give not to God of the best, the worst sort shall rise up in judgment and condemn us, the very idolaters that worship the works of their own hands, and turn the truth of God into a lie, shall go before us into the kingdom of heaven: they think nothing too much, they are content to spoil themselves that they may adorn their idols, *Exod. 32.2, 3.* The Israelites desiring to have an image of God to go before them, were content to break off the golden ear-rings which were in the ears of their wives, and of their sons, and of their daughters. So is it with the Papists, they account nothing too dear and precious which they are not ready to bestow upon their images and such like will-worship. Thirdly, no man should repine to give unto God his own; the best things we have, whose are they by right but his? to whom therefore ought they of right to be returned, and in whose service should they be employed but in his who is Lord of all things? So then we must know that we have God's gifts which must be disposed by us, as *David* saith, *Both riches and honor come of thee, in thine hand it is to make rich and great:* and afterward he confesseth, that albeit they had offered much, yet all things came of him, and that they had given unto him nothing but of his own. We must all then consider that whatsoever we give to the maintenance of his worship, we do not give so much that which is our own, as that which is his. *Cyrus* an heathen king acknowledged that *it was the Lord God of heaven had given him all the kingdoms of the earth, and that he had charged [Use 1] him to build him an house at Jerusalem.*

This reproveth such as bring the worst to God, & yet think the same too good for him. Hence it is that *Malachi* saith, *If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and*

sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the Lord of hosts? Many there are of this sort, I will only touch two. First, such as dedicate to the best service the worst servants: such as choose those to be Seers and overseers of the house of God, which are stark blind, or at least lack their right eye. Such as have not knowledge and yet have a calling to teach knowledge, *God rejecteth that they shall be no Priests unto him*. God would be served, as we have heard before in this book, with the choicest flower of all the people, with the first borne the best is bad enough for him, for who is sufficient for these things? Give not to him therefore the worst. These are blind guides, and unsavory salt, fitter for the dunghill, then to be dedicated to the service of the most High.

Again, it taxeth those that would be thought to serve God aright, and not to offer him the lame and sickely, and yet they halt before him, they will not serve him with the chiefest thing, nor glorify him with the best member that they have. If we draw near to him with our mouths, and honor him with our lips only, but keep our hearts from him, what do we but worship him in vain, and withhold our best treasure from him? Hypocriticall service is a blind and lame service, it halteth with one foot: we keep from God the chiefest, and divide our selves between him and the world. It is impossible y^t with one of the eyes we should look down to the earth, and at the same time look up to heaven with the other: so it is impossible that we should love God, and withal love those things that are quite contrary unto God. The Samaritans were rejected and separated from the people of God, because they worshipped God and did cleave also to the gods of the Assyrians, 2 King. 17.41. *No man*, saith Christ, *can serve two masters*. The hypocrite is like to a Tavern with a bush without at the door, when there is no wine within in the Cellar: or like the gold of y^e Alchemists, w^c appears beautiful outwardly, but will not bear the touch. He is like to rotten wood that shineth bright in a dark night, but hath no true light in it; or to a Painter that beginneth to paint the face & outward feature, but never regardeth what the inward parts be. There is no painting will serve our turn when we come to appear before the Lord, we must bring him the best and offer him the chiefest gift, that we may say with the Prophet, *Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me bless his holy Name*. The wise man exhorteth us to look to the heart, and to keep it with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. If the fountain of water be muddy & miry, it is quickly troubled and made unserviceable: If the root of the tree be rotten, it is sooner turned with wind and weather: so the heart of man if it be corrupt, it soon defileth and polluteth all other things that proceed from it. Halt not therefore with him that can abide no halting, but walk with an upright foot, and offer up all to him of whom we have received all.

Secondly, from offering to God the best [Use 2] things we have to further his worship, we may conclude, that the maintenance of y^e Min•stery should be very sufficient, that so they which preach y^e Gospel might live of the Gospel. And as they do not sow sparingly, so doubtless they ought not to reap sparingly. I plead not the cause of those that are negligent & slothful, that feed themselves but not the flock: but such as open their mouths & spend their strength to feed the souls of others, deserve to have liberal maintenance for their own bodies: and as th^{••} dispence spiritual things, it is no great thing if they receive carnal things.

The heathen men, the idolatrous Egyptians provided liberally for their Priests in the seven years of famine, and would not suffer them to alienate their lands from the use to which they were consecrated, no not in the general alienation of other men. God loveth a cheerful giver, when the gift is given unto men, much more in duties performed unto God would he have us cheerful, forward, and bountiful. There is no calling more honorable in many respects under the heaven then y^e Ministry. I am not ignorant that it is much disgraced, nevertheless it is a great grace to be set in it. The Apostle showeth, y^t by Christ Jesus declared mightily to be the Son of God through the resurrection from the dead, he had received grace and Apostleship. And although some by grace understand the grace of reconciliation and atonement with God, & others refer it to such gifts as did fit him for the function of his Apostleship: yet I rather take it by a Grammatical figure called *Hendiadis*, to signify the grace of Apostleship, or the favor and free gift of God to be an Apostle. So then, it noteth out the nature and fountain of his Apostleship, and showeth that to be in the Ministry is not any disgrace, but a special grace of God, if we believe the Spirit of God speaking in the Scriptures. Hence it is, that he giveth thanks to Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted him faithful, putting him into the Ministry, & enabling him to discharge the same. And this honor farther appeareth, as well by the special gifts given to thē above the rest of the people, as also by the reward & recompense, even a greater measure of glory after a faithful discharge of the duty, when the great Shepherd of the sheep shall appear in glory. It is not therefore to be maruelled at, that *Paul* everywhere magnifieth the grace of God, who had chosen him to be a master-builder in his house, to lay y^e foundation thereof, more precious then the gold of Opⁱir, or then silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times. Now if the calling be in it self honorable, ought it not then to be honored? and how shall it be honored, if they that be in the calling be not maintained? and what should their maintenance be, but as it may be agreeable to their place they hold? And if the maintenance must hold correspondence with the honor of the Ministry, we doubt not to affirm and avouch, that the recompense of the labors of such as are painful and faithful in this calling, ought to be very bountiful and liberal. Our Savior saith of this calling, *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me. He hath committed unto them the keys of the kingdom of heaven.* Tel me, if thou were desirous to see one of the kings houses glistening with much gold, and shining with pearls and precious stones, and at length shouldest find one that carried the keys, who being entreated should forthwith unlock the doors, and bring thee even into the kings privy chamber, wouldest thou not make much of him, and honor him above others? The Ministers of God are they y^t keep the keys of the gates of heaven, they have power from Christ and under Christ to open the doors, ought we not therefore to love thē, to reverence them, to honor them? This made the Thessalonians receive y^e Apostles doctrine, *not as the word of man, but as the word of God;* and he beareth the Galatians witness, *that if it had been possible, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and have given them to him.* Our Savior telleth his Apostles, *that whatsoever they shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever they shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* Did not *Pilate* think himself advanced to great honor, y^t he could say, *Knowest thou not, that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?* If a Prince should impart to any of his subjects this authority, that as high

Marshall he should have power to put in prison whomsoever he would, and again to release them and let them go, he would be thought happy and worthy of honor in all men's judgments. It hath pleased the God of heaven & earth, to bestow a Ministerial power, & to give authority subordinate under his to the preachers of the Gospel, to forgive sins and to retain sins, saying, *Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.* As *Elijah* by his earnest prayer, did shut the heavens that it could not rain upon the earth, and again, by his prayers opened the windows of heaven, that the earth did drink in the rain and brought forth herbs meet for the use of man: So the Ministers by their earnest preaching, do open the kingdom of heaven to all believers, and do shut the door against all impenitent sinners, and by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, do commit such to perpetual imprisonment, and do deliver them to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, if haply by this means the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. This power do the Ministers execute upon earth, which the Angels themselves do not, nor cannot exercise in heaven. To what end have we spoken all this, touching the power and authority of the Ministers? Surely from thence to infer that their maintenance ought to be answerable to their Ministry, and to show that if we withhold from them their due, we withhold from God whose deputies they are, & deny him his right for all the tithe of the land, whether of y^e seed of y^e land, or of the fruit of the tree, is y^e Lord's, it is holy unto the Lord: and consequently we hinder the worship of God, and thereby as much as lieth in us destroy the souls of many thousands, which otherwise might come to repentance, & acknowledging of y^e truth. Remember therefore these two Principles, w^c both join in one, that the tythe of the land is the Lord's, verse 30. *and that the tenth shall be wholly unto the Lord*, verse 32. As then we do tender the continuance of the worship of God, so we should render to the Minister his due maintenance, that he may receive comfort and encouragement in the work of the Lord, and thereby make it manifest that we are ready to bring to God the best sacrifice we have and so to serve him in the best manner.

Thirdly, acknowledge from hence, that it [Use 3] is our duty to honor God with all our substance and that we can no way so well employ our goods, as when God is honored and glorified by them. The wise man saith, Pro. 3, 9. *Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of thine increase.* And we heard before, that *Abel* brought to God of the fattest sheep he had, he offered unto him the best. Gen. 4. he offered a better sacrifice, and also a greater sacrifice than *Cain*, Heb. 11, 4. He spared for no cost, he brought not the worst he had, or what came first to hand, thinking that whatsoever he brought was good enough for the Lord's service, and to be consumed with fire: but he gave the best he had, and would have given better if he could. Whosoever doth to the uttermost the best he can, doth make it plain he would do better if he could. From this practice of *Abel* had the Law his foundation, that was afterwards written, y^t nothing which was lean or lame, or maimed, or misshapen, or blind, or any way blemished, should be offered to the Lord. If any ask how this belongeth unto us. I answer, the Ceremony is ended in Christ, howbeit the equity remaineth and bindeth us forever. Now then, if the question be further demanded how this Law reacheth to us, and how we may honor him with our first fruits and riches? I answer, by giving to him the best in every kind that we have. This consisteth in many particular branches, and teacheth us diverse

particular duties. First of all, here is offered that to us, which we noted before: to be careful liberally to maintain the Ministry, that they may teach us in the word, otherwise we commit sacrilege against God, and indeed rob our own souls, because if we sow sparingly, we shall reap sparingly. The Prophet *Malachi* bringeth in the Lord, speaking and charging the people with no less crime then robbery, and against no less person then himself, *Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tyths and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.* Secondly, it teacheth Parents that are willing to offer to the calling of the Ministry any of their sons, & to serve the Lord in that calling, to offer to him the fittest, not the foulest; the best, not the worst. The best is fittest for the Lord, and doubtless he is most worthy of him. But of this we have spoken at large in the 3. chap. Thirdly, we give to God the best and fattest, when we serve him in our youth, and with all our strength. The young man offereth to God the best thing he hath, when he *remembereth his Creator in the days of his youth*, while his senses are sharp, his memory quick, his wit ripe, his capacity ready, his understanding deep. But if he say to himself, now I will take my pleasure a while, I will rejoice in my youth, *I will walk in the ways of mine own heart*, and in the sight of mine eyes, I will repent at the end of my days, & serve the Lord when I can serve the lusts of the flesh, & the pleasures of sin no longer; if (I say) we reason thus, and offer to God our worn and withered old age, when we can serve Satan no more, what do we but offer to God the lame and the blind, which he abhorreth? How far are we from following *Abel*, who offered the best, forasmuch as we offer the worst of all to God? Fourthly, we must not serve the Lord by halves: we have no other sacrifice to offer but our selves, let us therefore offer up soul & body, and not serve him for company, or for fashions sake, or coldly and negligently, or thorough compulsion and fear of the Law. If we offer no otherwise, our sacrifice and service is no better then the offering of *Cain*, who was rejected both his person and his oblation. Woe unto such that walk in the way of *Cain*, that do not season their first fruits that they bring with faith. God will have all that is in us, or nothing. If we do not consecrate our selves wholly to his service, we cannot be his servants. It is given as a special commendation of good King *Josiah*, that *he turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might*, according to the law of *Moses*; not that he was able to fulfill the whole law without failing in one point, but he did strive with might and main to serve the Lord to the utmost of his ability, and endeavor with heart & life to please him. Lastly, we honor God with our substance when we are merciful in helping the needy with that which is ours. We must not give alms at another man's cost, nor relieve our neighbor by our neighbors goods, but we must honor him with our own substance, not with the substance of others, as covetous persons, users, thieves, & servants do, who give away that is none of their own. Therefore, when God giveth us all things abundantly to use, let it not grieve us to honor the lord with them, and distribute them to the necessities of the Saints cheerfully. The Lord Jesus accounteth it as done to himself which is done unto one of the least of his brethren. Neither let us fear any want our selves, or falling into decay through our bountifulness and liberality, inasmuch as God will make us the more to abound in all things, for he is of power to make us abound in all gifts. The widow that had been the wife to one of the sons of the Prophets, so long as she poured Oil out of the vessel or pot that was her own into the empty vessels, she perceived the oil still to increase; but when she poured

out no longer, the oil ceased and stayed. Even so, so long as we shall help the poor with our goods as it were fill the vessels with oil, our riches shall increase & multiply; but if we stay our hand frō giving our store will quickly fail and our fountain dry up. The more commonly you draw water out of a well, the more plenty you shall have; so likewise the more liberal we are toward those that want, the more we shall increase our own weath. Neither let any man delay the time, & promise to give away much when he dieth; for that is to give them away when we can keep them no longer. He that will not give alms till after his death, is like to a man that carrieth a light behind his back. The hour of death is not the fittest time to do good, then we should look to reap the fruit of a well led life: these are like to a simple soldier that prepareth his armor when he should fight, or like the foolish virgins that went to seek oil when they should use it. A ship that leaketh, must be mended in the haven, not in the sea: a wall that is broken must be made up in peace, not in war. If we forget God in our life, how can we look that he should remember us in our death, and when we lie at the last cast? To conclude, seeing we must serve the Lord with the best things that we have, let the people be ready to maintain the Ministry in the best manner, let godly parents give to God their best children, let the young man dedicate to God his best years, let every Christian offer to God his best member, to wit, the heart: let all rich men do the best good they can with their goods, and lay up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come: thus shall the people, and parents, and young men, and rich men, and generally all Christians follow the example of righteous *Abel*, who offered to God the best sacrifice he had. On the other side, if we maintain the Ministers in the worst manner, if we spend the flower of our age, and the prime of our life in the worst vanities, if we give our best part, I mean the heart, to the worst deserver, that is, the devil, if we employ our riches to the worst uses, we follow the example and offer the sacrifice of *Cain*, and therefore may justly fear to be rejected with him, and after this life to be rewarded with him.

24 On the third day Eliab the son of Helon, prince of the children of Zebulun did offer.

25 His offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bolle of seventy shekels, &c.

Behold here how the other Princes are not inferior to the first that offered, nor the other Tribes to the Tribe of *Judah*. Observe here, that the spirit of God accounteth it not sufficient to set down what was offered in general, neither in particular what *Nahshon* the son of *Aminadab* of the Tribe of *Judah* offered the first day, or what *Nathaniel*, the son of *Zuar* Prince of *Issachar* offered the second day: but he goeth forward to set down the special offerings according to every man's name, and according to the day assigned unto him. [Object.] It may be demanded what was the cause, why these offerings are thus particularly pointed out? why are the same chargers, the same bolles, the same spoones so often repeated? might not all these things here mentioned have been more summarily concluded? what need more words have been used, when fewer would have served? I answer, [Answer.] we must not account anything idle, frivolous, fruitless, or superfluous in holy Scripture. The Lord

knoweth best, what is fittest to be dilated largely, and what to be comprehended shortly. If there were no other reason then this, so it pleased the Lord, it ought to content us and to make us rest in it.

The like example we find, Psal. 136.1, 2, &c. Where, in every verse, and at the recital of every blessing, this reason is repeated, *for his mercy endureth forever*. Add hereunto, Revel. 7.5, 6, &c. where this is repeated according to the number of the Tribes, that twelve thousand were sealed of them. He might have said briefly, of every tribe were sealed twelve thousand: but he repeateth the words twelve times: so in this place, the offerings are repeated twelve times particularly according to the number of the twelve Princes. The reasons may be, first to teach us to be content to hear the same things, though they be oftentimes repeated, as Phil. 3.1. The Apostle saith, *It is not grievous to me to write the same things often, and for you it is safe*. We are ready to forget the best things, and therefore must have them continually sounding in our ears, as many strokes given with a hammer, to make us hear. Secondly, that we should apply these examples unto our selves, and if we pass over one of them without regard, yet we should take hold of the next. Thirdly, to teach us that no man shall have that forgotten to the utmost of his praise, who is any way forward in doing good, because he will honor those y^t honor him, but they y^t despise him, shall be lightly esteemed, 1 Sam. 2.30. The doctrine [Doctrine,] from this particular rehearsal and enumeration of the gifts of those Princes, is this, that all the good works of God's children done to the setting forth of his glory to the advancement of his worship, to the maintenance of true Religion, or the good of his children, shall be reckoned up, rewarded and come up in account before him: he taketh notice of them all, and will never forget any one of them. As their deeds are here registered in the book of God, so the doers of them are registered in the book of life. Our Savior teacheth, that a cup of cold water shall not go unrewarded, that is given to drink in y^e name of a disciple to one of these little ones. And afterward it is said. *A certain woman came unto him having an alabaster box of ointmēt very precious, and poured it on his head as he sate at table: and because she had wrought a good work upon him, verse 10. he saith, Verily, I sayunto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her, verse 13. To this purpose speaketh the Angel that appeared to Cornelius, Act. 10.4. Thy prayers and thy alms are come up for a memorial before God.* So then everything shall be remembered, no one work shall be forgotten.

[Reason 1] For God is a righteous God giving to everyone according to his works. He is the Judge of the world, Gen. 18. and cannot but judge uprightly. Hereupon the Apostle saith, Heb. 6.10. *God is not unrighteous to forget your works, and labor of love, which ye have shown toward his Name, in that ye have ministered to the Saints, and do minister.* He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward, for he will reward very bountifully every good work. If we be not barren in good works, he will not be behind with us to recompense us. Secondly, how can they but come into an account, seeing he accounteth them as done to himself? Matth. 25.40. *When anything is given to the Saints, it is esteemed as done to the Son himself: and when it is bestowed upon one of the least, it is regarded as bestowed upon the greatest and highest.* The servant receiveth it, but the Master will reward it.

[Use 1] Touching the Uses: we may first conclude the happy estate and condition of them that leave this world, and depart this life in the true fear of God, because we hear their works shall be remembered, and therefore the doings of his servants be rewarded with eternal glory, being done in the love of God and of his truth, none of them are forgotten, but they shall follow them, nay go with them, and bear them company. This we read in the Revelations of *John*, chap. 14.13. *I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the spirit, that they rest from their labors, and their works follow them*, to wit, at their heels as y^e word importeth. Death cannot cut them off, though it be a cruel and merciless tyrant, and hath as it were a sithe or sickle in his hand to cut down such as come in his way: yea, though it cut off riches, revenues, honors, pleasures, dignities, delights, wife, children, houses, lands, and life it self, according to the saying of the Apostle, *We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out with us*; yet it cannot cut off good works, neither bereave us of the fruits of a lively faith, which are of such great force and efficacy, that they are able to break in sunder the chains of death and the strength of the grave, and cannot be holden in darkness and oblivion. It were therefore a point of great wisdom and good policy, so many as would willingly die the death of the righteous (as *Balaamites* and all wicked men will seem desirous to do) to provide a goodly train of good works which death cannot keep back; they will press so fast, and knock so hard at heaven gates, that the gates thereof shall open wide, and our works shall enter with us, because they cannot be forgotten, but shall come up into the presence of God. We see how it fareth with Kings and Princes and great men of this world, they have great trains and troupes of servants, and a goodly retinue that follow their heels in the streets: O how happy are they, if at the hour of death, and the great day of account, when their honors and their pleasures, their riches and their friends, their servants and retainers shall forsake them, and all earthly profits shall fail them, they have as goodly a train of good works to attend and wait upon them. They shall find much more comfort and peace in these, then in all their life they felt in all the other; as the wise virgins found much contentment, in that they had store of oil for their lamps.

Secondly, shall good works come into account [Use 2] with God, and be remembered of him? then on the other side we may conclude, that evil works shall also be remembered. True it is, we are ready to forget the evils y^t we commit, but God will never forget them, no time shall wear them out, they are ever fresh in his sight. Hence it is, that *Nehemiah* saith, *Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the Priesthood, and the covenant of the Priesthood, &c.* And Revel. 16.19. *Great Babylon is come in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.* He will remember the sins of the wicked and his own judgments. These though they be great in this world, shall not have their honors and dignities to follow them, but their sins shall all follow them. The swearer shall be sure to have his oaths and his blasphemies laid before him, the adulterer his uncleanness, the drunkard his intemperancy, the contemner of God and of his word his profaneness, the covetous person his oppression; they shall accompany them unto judgment, even unto hell, that there they may receive the reward and wages that their works have deserved. It were a great benefit to the ungodly, if they might appear before the judgment seat of God without

their evil deeds, and that they could wind themselves out of the company of their sins, which will be their strong accusers, and give in evidence against them: but they cannot by any means, for they follow them and pursue after them with a loud cry for vengeance and punishment, and therefore woe and misery shall befall them that commit them. [Use 3]

Thirdly, we must mark this point, albeit good works be so much regarded, yet we must take heed we give not too much unto them, nor ascribe any merit to attain eternal life by faith, that it might be of grace, Rom. 4.16. it is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, Rom. 6.23. If any of our works should merit, then the works y^t are most glorious and eminent above others, which the holy witnesses of the truth of God wrought, who did suffer for the Name of Christ, and resisted the enemies even unto the blood, should be meritorious. But the Apostle denieth this virtue to them, Rom. 8.18. I reckon that the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. If any works might deserve salvation, doubtless the works of righteousness: but it is the kindness and love of God toward man that the Apostle magnifieth, who saveth us, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own mercy, Tit. 3.5. Eph. 2.8, 9. So *Paul* preacheth, Act. 13.48, 39. that through Christ we have remission of sins, and that by him all that believe, are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the Law of *Moses*.

Again, the Lord Jesus himself teacheth us, that when we have done all that possibly we can, we must say we are unprofitable servants, Luk. 17.10. but he that is an unprofitable servant, and doth only what he ought to do, is not in any case of meriting. He that will merit anything at God's hands, must first give him somewhat and so bind him as a debtor unto him: if no man can hinder him anything of his own, who oweth all, even himself to God of whom he hath received all, it is certain that no man can merit anything before him, Rom. 11.35. *Who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?* but no man can do so, verse 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever, Amen.* Now, where is no benefit, there can be no merit, because merit presupposeth a benefit received; howbeit our well-doing extendeth not to God, he can receive no good turn at our hands, 1 Cor. 4.7. Phil. 2.13. Eph. 2.10. When the husbandman bringeth to his Lord, the fruit of his own ground, he meriteth nothing, because he giveth him of his own. Moreover the Scripture teacheth us that temporal benefits and deliverances are not granted and bestowed upon the faithful, for any desert of any their good deeds, Dan. 9.18. much less therefore eternal life. The Israelites had not the nations cast out before them, nor themselves brought in to possess the land for their own righteousness, or for the uprightness of their hearts, but because he had chosen them & set his love toward them. Let us not therefore trust in our own works, which when they are at the best, are imperfect and defiled, but rather (as the very enemies of the grace of God do admonish) in regard of the uncertainty of our own righteousness, and the danger of vain-glory, let us rest wholly (as the safest way) in the only mercy of God. If then this be the surest and safest way, let us all go the safest way, and leave by-paths and dangerous passages unto others. He that walketh safely, walketh surely. There is but only one life, and there is but one right way unto life, namely, Christ, John. 14.6. The way by works is a wrong way, a false way, he shall never come to his journey's end by the way of his works, that is, for y^e merit of his works: because eternal life is never given for

them There is no other name under heaven whereby we may be saved, then by the Name of Christ; but if our works deserved life eternal. there should be another name to save us: because the merit of our work is not the Name of Christ, but setteth up our selves in his place, or at the least to join a fellow and companion with him in the work of our redemption. This would minister occasion to us to glory in our own selves before the Lord, as if we were somewhat and could save our selves, but no man hath anything wherein or whereof to boast himself, Ro. 3.27. and 4.2. 1 Cor. 1.31.

Lastly▪ to bring the adversaries of this doctrine once more to plead for us against themselves: They teach that no man can certainly know that he hath true merits without a special revelation; or that he shall persist and persevere in them unto the end: whereupon we infer and conclude, that therefore we may not believe that we shall obtain eternal life for our works sake, for that were to torture and torment men's consciences, & to set them upon the rack; that were, never to give peace to the distressed soul, but to leave it in doubt and perplexity, whereas the Apostle gathereth the quite contrary from the doctrine of justification, Roman. chap. 5.1. *Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* But from the popish doctrine of justification, we see there followeth no effect of peace, no tranquility or quietness of conscience, because they are taught to stand in doubt of their reconciliation and atonement with God.

Fourthly, this serveth as a great consolation [Use 4] to such as are careful to do good, and to show forth good works, that they shall in time reap if they faint not. This was good *Nehemiah* assured of, and therefore accordingly he desireth God to remember him, chap. 13 31.14. *Remember me, O my God for good:* and a little before, *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof.* And chap. 5.19. having declared his care to relieve the poor and distressed among the Jews, and his own conscience bearing him witness of his sincerity in this behalf, he prayed to God, *Think upon me, my God, for good: according to all that I have done for this people.* *Obadiah* had comfort by the works of mercy, shown to the persecuted servants of God, who in the reign of *Ahab* hid an hundredth of the Lord's Prophets in a cave, and fed them with bread and water: and he had the fruit of it, he was the first to whom glad tidings was offered in the days of famine when heaven was shut up that it yielded no rain, and was made an instrument to publish it to others. No work shall fall to the ground, but come up in remembrance to our comfort. This is as true and certain touching the works of every servant of God, as if the Angel that spake to *Cornelius* were sent unto him to say unto him, Thy works are come up in remembrance before God. An• as God saith, y^t he keepeth the tears of his children in his bottle: so he keepeth the works of his •ildren in his book. This is, and so it ought to be, a great encouragement to us in well-doing, to consider that the number, the greatness, and the measure of all our good works shall be registered and recorded by him. It is spoken in deed for our capacity, for God needeth no writings of record or books of account: the meaning is, he will never forget our good works, but as certainly remember them, as if he had put them all particularly in writing. Hence it is, that the Lord saith so often to the seven Churches of *Asia*, to whom he commanded *John* to write, he knew all their works, nothing was hidden from him, nothing unknown unto him.

[Use 5] Lastly, seeing good works are in so great account with God, it is necessary that we learn what good works are that are pleasing in God's sight, and how they are to be done of us. For there is more required to a good work then the bare deed done. A good work is a duty commanded of God, performed by a regenerate person, and done in faith, aiming at the glory of God and the good of man. Whereby we see, that sundry points are required to make a work accepted of God. First of all, the work must have the will of God which is the rule of all goodness and righteousness, to warrant the same, that so we may do them in an holy obedience unto him. For except he appoint them, he doth not approve them: and unless he command them, he doth never commend them. Will-worship is abominable to God and everywhere rejected, when men thrust upon God their own inventions instead of his service, Col. 2.22.23. Deut. 12.32 Every good work is commanded in the word either expressly, or generally. God is in vain worshipped, when for doctrines, the commandments of men are taught and observed. This reproveth the Romish Religion, maintaining •^t a man may do good works which are never required or appointed of God; and likewise the blind devotion and superstition of the people, that if they in their worship have a good intent and think no man no harm, they do a good work.

Secondly, good works must be done by a regenerate person, that is in the state of grace, that is a member of Christ, and borne again by the holy Ghost. If we be not reconciled to God in Christ, & made acceptable through him, we are as evil trees that cannot bring forth good fruit: whereas no man can gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, Matth. 7.16. The person must please God, before anything that cometh from him can please him: for he had respect to *Abel*, and then to his offering: but not to *Cain*, and therefore not unto his offering. Hence, fall to the ground the works of Turks and Infidels, and mere civil men, who often abstain from outward sins, live orderly among men, and do works of mercy, justice, & liberality; yet in them they are not good, because they proceed from a corrupt heart. The like we may say of the works of all unregenerate persons, be they never so beautiful in the eyes of the world, they are but beautiful sins in the sight of God, whether they eat, or drink, or walk, sleep, or buy or sell, or come to Church, or hear the word, or pray, or receive the Sacraments, the rule of the Apostle standeth forever, *Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled*, Tit. 1.15.

Thirdly, good works must be done in faith: because whatsoever is not of faith, is sin, Rom. 14.23. and without faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11.6. Now there is required in a man, a twofold persuasion, first, an assurance that God hath willed and commanded it to be done; for he that giveth alms, and yet doubteth whether God would have him to give alms, sinneth: Secondly, a persuasion in his own conscience of his reconciliation to God in Christ. This is justifying faith, which purifieth the heart, and doth fit and enable it to bring forth a good work. There is a double use of this gift: it maketh us to begin the work well, and when it is once done, it serveth as a cloak or garment to cover the defects and imperfections of it, applying the merits of Christ. The last point required to make a good work, is, that it be done to God's glory. 1. Cor. 10.31. If we have any other by-respects, aiming at our own glory, or the applause of the world, or the satisfying of God's justice, or the merit of eternal life, or any such corrupt and crooked ends, we lose all our labor, our works cannot come up in

account before him. It is the common and corrupt judgment of the common sort that Papists abound in good works, but let us try them by these rules, we shall quickly and easily find them what they are, failing in the matter, and manner, and in the main and principal end of well-doing. Now to conclude, everyone must do these good works, everyone must be as a tree planted in the garden of God, and bring forth the fruits of righteousness, that he may be glorified, Isaiah 61.3. It is a received opinion among many, that none can do good works but rich men, as if there were no good works but alms; for they have no taste in anything else but that which is given them. Thus do the poor cast off all doing of good works from themselves upon the richer sort, that so they may receive somewhat. True it is, alms are one good work, but yet not the only good work, nor yet the chief and principal. For the poor may do good works, nay must do them as well as the rich. The works of the first Table, are the best works, the greatest works: these they may do, as well as others. To have a care to know God, to believe in him, to love him above all, to fear him, to hope in him, to stay our selves upon him, to approve our selves in his sight, to worship him with the heart, to confess him with the mouth, to pray unto him earnestly, to hear his word attentively, to receive the Sacraments reverently, and such like divine and devout exercises, are all of them good works, great works, gracious works, approved of God: and these may the poor perform. And that the Scripture avoucheth, and God alloweth these for good works, appeareth in the example of *Abraham*, mentioned by the Apostle *James*. chap, 2.21. *Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar?* He shown himself to be a justified man by his good works, and was called the friend of God. Thus did his faith work together with his works. But what were his good works? were they his alms-deeds, and showing mercy to the poor? no, he performed a good duty to God, and preferred his love to him before his love to his son, his only son, even *Isaac* whom he loved, the son of promise, the son in whom the nations of the world should be blessed. Thus must all men do good works, thus the poorest sort are not exempted or privileged from showing forth these good works, and testifying their faith by these fruits. So then when we hear of the necessity, of the dignity and value of good works, let no man think it belongeth nothing to him, but every man be encouraged to set upon the doing of them, *y^t our light may so shine before men, that they seeing our good works may glorify our Father which is in heaven.*

84 This was the dedication of the altar (in the day when it was anointed) by the Princes of Israel: twelve chargers of silver, twelve silver bolles, twelve spoones of gold:

85 Each charger of silver, &c.

We shall not need to stand to speak particularly of every Princes offering: because, as we noted before, the same things are repeated, the offerings are the same, the matter is the same, the form and ende the same, the price and value the same: the difference standeth only in a description of the time, when they were offered: and of the person who offered, described by his name, by his father, and by his tribe. Now, in casting up the value of all these offerings, and setting down the total sum, appeareth the greatness of their riches. For

had they not been much blessed that way, they could not have continued to bestow so bountifully upon the Tabernacle. These they attained unto, partly by their own labor, and partly by entering into the labors of others. For at their departure out of the land of Egypt, they borrowed jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, at what time no doubt they carried with them the chief wealth and treasure of Egypt, & spoiled the Egyptians, which God gave to his people as a recompense of all their troubles. The doctrine [Doctrine.] from hence ariseth to be this, that the blessings of this life are oftentimes bestowed upon God's children. He giveth them riches, honors, dignities, preferments, house, land, peace, and prosperity, at his own pleasure. We have the examples of *Abraham & Lot*, their substance was so greatly increased, that they could not dwell together, the herdmen of their cattle strove and contended one against another, Gen. 13.7. and *Abraham's* servant sent to take a wife for *Isaac*, telleth that the Lord had blessed his master greatly, and had given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, & men servants and maid-servants, and Camels and Asses, Gen. 24, 35. *Job* was a just and an upright man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil, and this man was the greatest of all the men of the East, cha. 1.1, 2.3. and 31 24, 25. his wealth was great, and his hand had gotten much. The like we might say of many godly kings, as of *David*, *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, *Jehoshaphat*, *Josiah*, of *Mordecai*, and *Ester*, of *Joseph*, and of *Jacob*. And in the New Testament, mention is made of *Ioanna*, the wife of *Chuza*, *Herod's* steward, and *Susanna*, and many others, who ministered unto Christ of their substance, Luk. 8.3. Of *Lazarus* the friend of Christ, and *Mary*, who entertained him often in her house, Luk. 10.38. Of *Joseph* of Arimathea, a rich man, Matth. 27.57. an honorable counselor, Mar. 15.43. he was a good man and aiust, Luk. 23.50. which also waited for the kingdom of God; Of *Onesiphorus*, who often refreshed *Paul*, & was not ashamed of his chain, 2 Tim. 1.16. and many other of all estates, some rich, some noble, some wise, some mighty and of great account, 1 Cor. 1.26.

For hereby the Lord showeth what he can [Reason 1] do so often as it pleaseth him to bestow them True it is, sometimes he denieth even to those that are most highly in his favor, these outward and earthly blessings: howbeit it is not because he is not able to enrich them. For as *Moses* prayeth the Lord to spare his people, *lest the enemies should say, he destroyed them in the wilderness, because he was not able to bring them into the land of promise:* so he bestoweth many times wealth and substance upon his children lest the enemies should say, it was because he is not able to increase and enrich them. Thus then by giving unto a few, he showeth that he can store and replenish all the rest if it pleased him.

Secondly, to relieve his own servants in time of need, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine, Psal. 33.19. He knoweth well enough that the very mercies of the wicked are cruelty, Prov. 12.10. they are handfasted and hard-hearted, and they are least of all moved to pity God's people: he therefore provideth for the welfare of his servants, by making one Christian brother able to relieve another, as we have plentiful examples in the acts of the Apostles, chap. 4.34, 35, 36.

Thirdly, he maketh them many times to inherit the labors of wicked men, and of such as are their enemies, as we see his people had the treasures of Egypt, Exod. 12. Psal. 44.3. The Egyptians would not recompense them, therefore the Lord doth recompense them.

Fourthly, they are in Christ heirs of the world: for all that are sons are also heirs, Rom. 8.17. the heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Hence it is, that some recover their possession though all cannot according to their right and title. God made all things for his friends, not for his enemies, who are no better then usurpers.

[Use 1] The Uses follow. First, it reproveth the beggarly vow of voluntary poverty undertaken by the Popish Order. No such vow is found in the Old Testament, whiles vows were most in use and in force. This is accounted a vow of perfection, but it hindereth the doing of much good: because *it is better to give then to receive*, Act. 20.35. Wherefore, the begging Friars are boasting fools, proudly glorying in perfection, when they may worthily be ashamed of their imperfections. They think they deserve heaven by it, when indeed they are in danger of hell. For it is one thing to have riches, and another, to trust in riches: whereas they will seem to cast them away, under a color of fear, lest they should cast them away. But may any among them compare with sundry of God's servants, who kept their goods, and did much good with them, to God's glory and the good of others? may they, even the best of them parallel themselves with *Abraham* in faith, with *Job* in patience, with *Joseph* in chastity, with *Lot* in piety, with *Lazarus* in hospitality, with *Zacchaeus* in liberality, with the godly women in charity, whatsoever they pretend to the contrary? And as riches given by the blessing of God, condemn no man: so it is certain, poverty can save no man, neither can it merit life and salvation, as the cloystermen dream.

[Use 2] Secondly, observe that riches are not evil of themselves or in their own nature: neither are they any way hinderers of God's kingdom, the fault is in the person and in the abuse of them. And the best things are abused as well as riches, yet we may not thereupon conclude that the best things are bad. But it will be objected, [Object.] that Christ saith, *It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, even easier for a Camel to go through the, &c.* I answer, [Answer.] we must compare Scripture by Scripture, as it is said, the Levites did expound the meaning and gave the understanding by the Scripture it self. The Evangelist *Mark* repeating this history, expoundeth it plainly. For Christ having said, *How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of GOD*, and the disciples being astonied at his words, he addeth by way of explication, *Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches, to enter into the kingdom of God!* then this followeth, *It is easier for a Camel, &c.* where we see he distinguisheth of rich, some are such as trust in God, not in their riches; some trust in their riches, not in GOD. Of these that make their riches their God, and their Mammon to be their hope and heaven, it is true that a Camel shall sooner go through the eye of a needle, then such rich men get into the kingdom of God, Mar. 10.23, 24. But they are thorns and snares: thorns to choke, [Objection] and snares to catch and entangle the soul: so they are called in the parable of the sower, Luke 8. and by the Apostle, 1 Tim. 6. I answer, [Answ.] It is true, but the fault is not in the nature of the riches, but in the corruption of the rich man: not by the use, but through the abuse of them. For if they were evil of themselves, then should all rich men be choked and snared by them, & drawn into evil; which by the former examples, and by present experience we know not be so. [Object.] But Christ willeth the rich man to sell the things he did possess, and give them to the poor: by this it should appear to be unlawful to keep them. I answer, [Answer.] this is a particular commandment given to him to try him

and prove what was in him, to discover his pride and hypocrisy, pleasing himself in a false opinion of his strength, sufficiency, and ability to keep the Law, that so, if it were possible, his eyes might be opened to see his own weakness, and himself to be wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. For in that he went away sorrowful, and submitted not himself to the voice of Christ, he declared plainly that he made more reckoning of his wealth than he did of Christ; and that he had more mind to follow the world, than to obey the word delivered unto him.

Thirdly, we must learn, when we have [Use 3] these blessings, to be thankful to God that gave them, and to lift up our eyes to him of whom we received them. For albeit these earthly blessings be common to the godly and the ungodly, yet are they not common to all the godly, inasmuch as they are given unto some, but denied unto other: bestowed upon a few, but withholden from many. This duty hath many branches.

First we must acknowledge from whence they come, and that we have received them of his mere grace. Woe then to those that sacrifice to their own net, and ascribe the blessings of God only to their own labor and industry. For *except the Lord build the house, the labor of the builder is in vain, and except the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh in vain: it is in vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, and to eat the bread of sorrows, it is God that giveth his beloved sleep,* Psal. 127.1.2. True it is, God hath laid upon us this duty to labor, and requireth that every man eat his bread with the sweat of his brows; for no promise is made to the idle: yet we must depend upon him for a blessing upon our labors, or else we are not thankful unto him. Again, we must be careful to use them to his glory and to the good of others. We must refer them to him, as we have received them of him. As all rivers run into the sea, so all our riches should return to God. Thirdly, we must be ready and willing to leave them, whensoever God shall call for them. For he that bestowed them, may he not require them again when he pleaseth? we must leave them rather than leave him. If we have this godly resolution, then may we persuade our own hearts that we are thankful for them. Thus it was with *Job*, when he could say, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord.* Fourthly, we must not put our trust and confidence in them, and if riches increase, we must not set our hearts upon them: because then we commit gross idolatry with them. This is a fearful sin. Many such idolaters (it is to be feared) remain still in great store among us: and albeit idols be banished out of our Churches, yet many do yet set them up in their hearts. This idolatry is so much the more dangerous, because it is more close and secret, coloured under the name of virtue, practiced by such as detest popery and idolatry, and therefore is less perceived and discerned. Lastly, we must not account these the chiefest riches or the best treasures, inasmuch as the ungodly have commonly the greatest share of them, Luke 12. and 16. and therefore we must labor to be rich in faith, in love, in righteousness, in godliness, in patience, in meekness, and in all good works. Here is true riches: if we adorn our selves with these, we shall be truly rich although we be poor, Revel. 2.9. and though we have neither silver nor gold, Acts 3.6. yet he hath given us all things, 2 Pet. 1.3. And though we have nothing at all, yet we possess all things, 2 Cor. 6.10.

89 And when Moses was gone into the Tabernacle of the Congregation to speak with him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him, from off the mercy seat, &c.

Hitherto of the offerings of the Princes, received of Moses, and given to the Levites. Two tribes offered one wagon, and every wagon had two oxen, therefore they offered six wagons, and to draw them twelve oxen These were thus distributed: the Gershonites had two wagons, and consequently four oxen committed to them: the Meratites had four wagons, and consequently eight oxen so that they carried the greatest burdens. Touching the Kohathites, the third family of the Levites, nothing was bestowed among them, because to them were committed the vessels of the Sanctuary which were carried upon their shoulders, so that they had no need either of wagons to bear them, or of oxen to draw them, themselves serving instead of them both. In this verse we see the oracle of God speaking to Moses We might note here that God spake diverse ways to his Church in the Old Testament: as also that all blessings come from God to us through Christ the true propitiatory, covering our sins out of God's sight and revealing God's will to us, that we should know it, and have benefit by his Priesthood. But to pass over these, we may note that Moses went into y^e Tabernacle. The Tabernacle signifieth his Church. There is God to be spoken unto. The doctrine [Doctrine,] is this; God is present in a special manner in places set apart for his worship. True it is, he is everywhere, the heaven is his throne, and the earth is his footstool; howbeit wheresoever his Church and people are assembled, he is present with his Spirit, with his grace, and with his blessing and assistance. Hence it is, that the place appointed for his service is called his face, Gen. 4.14. This is afterward called, the presence of the Lord, verse. 16. So Psal. 46.5. God is said to be in the middes of the City of God; And Christ teacheth, that wheresoever two or three are gathred together in his name, he is in the middes of them, Matth. 18.20. So then wheresoever the place of God's worship is, there is God ever present.

For first, he hath promised to dwell there: [Reason 1] Where dwelleth the master of the house, and where is he readiest to be found, but where he dwelleth? as Psal. 132.13.14. *The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation: this is my rest forever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it.* Secondly, he is known by a special work of his presence sanctifying [Reason 2] those that are his by his word: hereupon the Prophet saith, Psal. 87.2, 3. *The Lord loveth the gates of Zion, more then all the dwellings of Jacob; glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God.* Thirdly, he delighteth in his own ordinances. [Reason 3] *In Judah is God known, his Name is great in Israel: in Salem also is his Tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion,* Psal. 76.1.2. It is God's ordinance that we should meet together in one place; for this cause he commanded the Tabernacle to be built, and afterward the Temple: these he sanctified for the word, for sacrifices, and for prayer: these doth the Lord love, and in those doth he take pleasure, and with them will he vouchsafe his presence.

This being an evident truth, from hence we must learn so to carry our selves in such places as are sanctified and set apart for his service, as that we may call him to be a witness of our sincerity. Will a subject dare to behave himself rudely and unreverantly in the presence of his Prince? or the child in the presence of his father? How then ought we to stand in awe of

the Majesty of Almighty God, whose glory is incomprehensible, who dwelleth in light that none can attain unto? Heerepon the wise man saith, Eccle. 5.1. *Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, then to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.* No man ought to come before the Lord unprepared: or to set his feet in the Lord's house rashly and unreverently. Were it not unseemly and uncivil to enter into a kings palace with foul and filthy feet defiled with dung and mire, or to sit down at a Princes table with unwashen hands? And is it not more indecent and undutiful to come into the house of the great King, the King of Kings, and to be partakers of his Table before we have cleansed and sanctified our hearts? This was shadowed out at the giving of the law, *by commanding them to wash their garments, and to abstain from their wives*, Exod. 19.14, 15. Thus they were to be prepared before they received the Law. Likewise before they could behold the wonderful works of God, they were spoken to, to pull off their shoes, because the place whereon they stood was holy ground. This we should all consider whē we meet together in one place, and carefully remember that the place in which we assemble is holy ground, and therefore we should take heed we do not abuse it. [Object.] But is that ground whereupon Temples or Churches stand more holy then other? I answer, [Answ.] no, it is not in itself, there is no more holiness in it, then in other: but in respect of the assembly therein gathered together, and of the exercises of religion therein performed, it is for that present more holy, and better to be accounted and esteemed then all other places and pieces of ground whatsoever. This made the Prophet say, Psal. 84.10. *A day in thy Courts is better then a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the tents of wickedness.* We see how careful all men are, whensoever they go abroad, and come into any public place and presence of men, to adorn the outward man decently, lest being seen in an unseemly manner they be condemned and despised, especially if they be to appear before some great person, as we see in *Joseph*, Gen. 41.14. When they brought him before the presence of *Pharaoh*, he shaued himself, and he changed his raiment, and so came unto him. How much more then should we look to our selves, to the inward man, to the heart, that we come not carelessly & contemptuously before him that searcheth the hearts and reins? If any ask how we may prepare our selves and behave our selves, [Object.] that we may be accounted fit to come before God's presence? I answer, [Answer.] we must practice three duties: first, we must embrace true godliness and righteousness, and cast out of our hearts, as filthiness out of our houses, all impiety and unrighteousness. The gates of God's house into which he will enter, are the gates of righteousness, and none shall enter into them but the righteous, Psal. 118.16. *Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord: this gate is the Lord's, into which the righteous shall enter.* When *Jacob* went to Bethel to build for God an altar, and to worship him, first he cleansed his house of idols, and commanded his household to be clean, thereby shadowing out the purity of their harts. To this purpose doth *David* testify, Psal. 26.6. that he would wash his hands in innocence, and then afterward he would compass his altar. So then, so often as we intend to come to the house of God, we must rid our hearts of wickedness, as it were our ground of weeds, and so sanctify them that they may be fit vessels to receive heavenly graces. They that do otherwise shall never reap any benefit by the holy assemblies of the Saints, let them resort thither never so often. Secondly, we must not only shun and shake off things ungodly and unlawful in themselves, but even

such things that in time and place may be followed and are commanded to be done of us, to wit, the care of earthly things and thoughts upon the matters of this world. These have their time, but their time is out of time, when the time serveth to serve the Lord, and we are to sanctify a Sabbath unto him. These indeed have their place but they have no place in the place of God's worship, and therefore must be displaced out of our hearts before we come to the house of God. A vessel full of mire and puddle cannot receive any sweet and wholesome liquor, though ye pour it upon it all the day long; and if our minds and hearts be forestalled with the cares of this life, and the cogitations of earthly things; they are no way capable of heavenly things, they are full fraught and stuffed already and so leave, no room or receipt for better things. These are rank thorns that choke the word. Lastly, we must consider that we have to deal with God, and not with man, and be ready to receive without contradiction or resisting, without mincing and mangling, whatsoever is delivered unto us by the Ministers of God, and from the warrant of Scriptures. This must be the end that we aim at when we come into the Church, to hear the word of life, to learn the way of salvation, and to embrace the doctrine of truth and salvation. It was the manner of the Priests and Levites to interpret the Law, and the Prophets were wont to preach their Sermons to the people gathered together in great multitudes in the Temple, Ierem. chap. 7. verse 2. where *Jeremiah* is commanded to *stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word*. Let us therefore prepare our hearts to obedience, by setting before us the presence of God, present by his word, present by his grace, present by his Sacraments, present by all his ordinances, and by his blessing upon his ordinances. Thus doth the Prophet prophesy, that the people call one to another, and say, *Come ye and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us* (he doth not say, the Ministers, but the Lord himself will teach us) *his ways, and we will walk in his paths*. A notable means to work much good in us, and the chiefest way to touch our hearts with fear and reverence, knowing that we have to do with God's word nay with God himself. Thus did *Cornelius* consider, Acts 10, 33. when he said to *Peter*, *We are all here present before GOD, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God*. Let us examine our selves by these few rules, and by them we shall know whether we come aright or not to the house of God, with due reverence and preparation. Let not the Minister sow among thorns, but grub them out of the ground of your hearts, that so ye may bring forth fruits with patience.

Secondly, observe from the law of contraries, [Use 2] that Satan is present in all places of Idolatry, wickedness, impiety, and profaneness. For as God is present where he is worshipped, so is the Prince of this world that •ueth in all the children of disobedience, present also where he is served. Thus speaketh Christ our Savior to the Church of *Pergamos* Revel. 2, 13. *I know thy works, & where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is*. So then where ungodliness is set up and maintained, there is Satan present, nay there he is president; there is Satan's seat, and there he keepeth •esidence. O that all wicked and ungodly persons were throughly persuaded of the truth of this point, and that they would diligently weigh with themselves, that Satan is oftentimes near thē, even at their elbows when they think him to be far from them, and th•mselues out of gunshot as we use to speak, and free from all danger. For if he will intrude himself and wind in himself among the Saints, to hinder the

best works, Zach. 3, 1. Luke 8, 12. like a subtle serpent that he may seduce & deceive us, as he did our first parents: we may be assured he cometh freely and frequently into the company of his professed servants which are his children, John. 8, 44. For as Christ speaketh, that where two or three are gathered together in his Name, he is in the midst of them; so wheresoever two or three are met together at his pleasure & to his liking, and for the doing of his will, he will be in the midst of them (though not in a visible manner) to tempt thē to evil, and to make them glory and continue in their evil. If then we fear such a companion, let us forsake such company. If we will needs frequent the company of wicked livers, we cannot avoid the society of Satan. Do we then see any place where drunkenness, where whoredom, where vanity, where blasphemy and all impiety is maintained & upholden? we may conclude and as it were write upon the backside of it and upon every door and poste within it, This is the devils house, here are the works of the devil to be seen, here is the devil in a special manner present with his tētations, with his allurements, with his instruments to ruin the souls of men, and to bring them to confusion and destruction.

Thirdly, it is our duty to frequent those [Use 3] places that make known his Name unto us, and spread abroad his saving health among all people. Here we may have familiar access to him, & be admitted into his presence. In prayer we talk familiarly with him, Gen. 18, 27. where *Abraham* saith, he had taken upon him to speak to the Lord: and in his word he talketh familiarly with us, and therefore do the Prophets continually cry out, to hear y^e word of the Lord, and tell us that the Lord speaketh to his people. What an high honor is it to a subject to have free access to his Prince, and to come into his chamber of presence? we are so honored of God to come to him without check or controlement; the more boldly we preasse into his presence, the more welcome we are. No man is reprov'd for coming too often. The faithful have accounted it a great part of their happiness to have liberty to meet together with one mind & with one mouth to glorify God & to set forth his praises. This made the Prophet say, *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth.* On the other side, they have lamented their condition with a lamentable & bitter cry, when they have been banished from the place of God's worship, & driven to seek harbor and habitation among the unbelievers. Then their souls longed and fainted for the Courts of the Lord, their hearts and their flesh cried out for the living God; yea, they wept and lamented when in captivity they remembered Zion. They longed for the Courts of the Lord: but many among us long greatly to be out of them. They accounted it a great grief to be out of the house of God; but we account it a great grief to abide in the house of God. They were never well nor quiet so long as they were from the worship of God; we are even sick and discontent so long a[•] we are at it. Finally, they were banished from the Lord's house, we banish our selves: they were compelled to be absent, we cannot be compelled to be present. We would be thoght to be willing to have God in our company, & to desire to have access unto his presence, but if this were truly in us, we would love the place of his dwelling. We shall be sure to find him in his word, to meet with him at the Sacraments, and to speak with him by our prayers.

This then reproveth the carelessness of all such as make no reckoning of Church-assemblies, that account one day or hour of y^e day spent in their own pleasures & vanities better thē a thousand in the Courts of the Lord. These are weary of the heavenly Manna, it is a light and

a loathsome food. This is a fearful sin, to pollute the holy things that he hath sanctified and set apart to holy uses. These are scornful beasts, and profane persons, there is but a step between them and atheism. They are men without religion, and tread under feet the Son of God, and account the blood of the New Testament as a profane thing. Hereby we see the height of that sin which is too rife and common, to wit, the careless, willful, and negligent forsaking of the holy things of God. These are come to the highest step of sin, and are set down in the seat of scorners, Psal. 1, 1. These have faith justly denied unto them, and have not the grace given them to believe, because they contemn the means by which they might believe & be saved, Act. 13, 48. And doubtless he that maketh no conscience of God's worship, will also, if occasion show it self, make as little conscience of anything else that belongeth unto his brother. To conclude, let us have no part or fellowship with these men, but carry earnest affection to the exercises of religion, hungering and thirsting after them with longing desires. When one Sabbath is ended, we should wish for the next: when one Sermon is finished, we should desire another: when one Communion hath been celebrated, we should enquire when the next shall follow; even as the Gentiles besought *Paul* and *Barnabas* to preach to them y^e next Sabbath day, the same things they had offered to the Jews. O that this zeal were found in us! then would God be found of us, O that we would enquire after him! he would offer to us his gracious presence in this life, & we should be sure to enjoy his glorious presence in the life to come.

CHAP. VIII.

1. AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

2. Speak unto Aaron, and say unto him, When thou lightest the Lamps, the seven Lamps shall give light over against the Candlestick.

3. And Aaron did so, &c.

IN the latter end of the former chapter we have seen how God gave answer unto *Moses* from above the Mercy-seat, between the two Cherubims, according to his promise before, Exod 25, 22. In this chapter is recorded what he spake. We have also learned what was the sanctification of the other Tribes testified by the solemn offering y^t they brought at the dedication of the Altar: here *Moses* entreateth of the sanctification of the Church-officers, wherein observe two things; the first, touching the Priests: the second, touching the rest of the Levites. For such as served at the Altar, either were taken into the order of the Priests, or else were of the rest of the Tribe of the Levites that served in inferior places about y^e Tabernacle to assist the Priests in their offices. Touching the Priests, we are to consider two

things: first, the commandment of God, without whose authority nothing is to be imposed as necessary in the Church; which is, that the Priests should light the lamps, not one or two, but all of them to give light in the Tabernacle, to signify y^e light of God's word shining in y^e Church, which ought sincerely to be preached and published by the teachers, to give light of knowledge to all in the house of God: as the Apostle declareth of himself, that he had kept back nothing, but revealed the whole counsel of God; as the Priests kept not any of the lamps vnlighted, but did light thē all. Secondly, the obedience of *Aaron* to the commandment, *he lighted the lamps*, that they might give light round about the candlestick, on every side wheresoever the candlestick could be seen. Upon occasion of mentioning the candlestick, we have a description of it, verse 4, by the matter of it, it was made of gold: and by the form, of beaten gold, according to the pattern shown to *Moses* in the Mount: for he was a faithful servant in the house of God, Heb. 3, 2. But of this we may read farther, Exo. 25, 37, & 40, 25, 26. There was but one candlestick in the Tabernacle made by *Moses*, because this was sufficient: howbeit *Solomon* that built the Temple afterward, made ten candlestickes, whereof five stood at the one side, & five on the other side, 2 Chron. 4, ver, 7, 20. because the Temple was larger and wider then the Tabernacle, and therefore moe were requisite in the one then in the other. The place where the Candlestick stood, was in the Sanctuary next to the most holy place, or in the first Tabernacle, Hebrews, chapter 9, verses 2, 9. Not in the most holy place, forasmuch as the High Priest went into it once only in the whole year, Heb. 9, 7. whereas the lamps of the Candlestick were renewed daily. But let us come to the words as they lie in order; and first touching the lamps appointed to be lighted, we must consider that the Tabernacle with all things thereunto belonging, was a figure of the time present, until the time of reformation, Heb. 9, 9. and when the Priesthood was changed, there must be also a change of the law, Heb. 7, 12. All things had their signification, and the truth which is as the pith and substance of the ceremonies, belongeth to us as well as to the Jews. Hence it is, that the lamps belonging to the candlestick, signify unto us, y^t the word is the light of the church, giving light to the people, as the Sun doth to the world▪ whereby the true light of the knowledge of God, of Christ our Redeemer, of true righteousness, and of salvation, is kindled in the hearts of all true believers. *David* is a certain witness of this truth, who teacheth, that *the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes, Psal. 19, 8. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path, Psal. 119, 105.* So *Solomon* saith, Prov. 6, 23. *The Commandment is a lamp, and the Law is a light.* It is plain therefore that the lamp lighted in the Tabernacle, did figure out the word of God. Hence it is, that the Prophet *Isaiah* saith, *O house of Jacob, come, & let us walk in the light of the Lord:* and afterward he showeth, that if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

[Reason 1] And it cannot be otherwise, because the Lord which is the author of the Scriptures, is light it self; he is called the Father of lights, I am. 1: and the Church acknowledgeth, when it sate in darkness, that the Lord was the light of it, Mich. 7, 8. The Apostle saith, *he only hath immortality, and dwelleth in the light which no mā can approach unto,* 1 Tim. 6, 16. And in the beginning of *John's* Gospel, Christ is called the light of men, John 1, 4. God then be y^e true light, how can his word but partake of his nature, and be lightsome in it self, and bring light to us? Again, the word hath in it the effects of light, it expelleth

darkness, and is very comfortable, and therefore comfort is often called by the name of light, Ps. 97, 11. Ester 8, 16. Ps. 118, 27, and 43, 3. Job 30, 26. Lam. 3, 2. So is it with the word, it driveth away spiritual darkness, and it comforteth and rejoiceth the heart, Psal. 19, 8.

[Use 1] This doctrine serveth to reprove the church of Rome, which bring in their Torches and Tapers, and Candles into the Church, as the setting of them up at burials and funerals, to signify that the souls of the dead are alive; a superstitious custom, condemned by sundry Councils as superstitious and heathenish. Moreover, they observe continually another foolish custom to set up wax candles & Taper lights before their Images, and upon the Altar in their Churches; and this they do not only in the night, but in the day, & at noon, when the Sun shineth in his strength. And lest they might seem to wander without Scripture, and to be mad without reason, they pretend for themselves and their superstition, the continual burning of the lamps in the Tabernacle before the Ark of the testimony, Exod. 25. *Bellarmino* disputing of the relics of the Saints, noteth three ends of this practice because fire is a sign of gladness, a sign of glory, and a sign of life. But all this is no better then will-worship, which is condemned, Mat. 15, 9. Col. 2, 23. of which it may be said, Who required these things at your hands, Es. 1, 12, And this observation in the law touching the lamps, is merely ceremonial, which had an end with the Priesthood, and was honourably buried with the Synagogue, and is not to be raked out of the dust and raised out of the grave again. Also, it is utterly untrue, that these lamps were lighted in the day time; for they were lighted in the evening & burned until the morning, and then were put out. Thus doth *Ahijah* tell *Jeroboam* and all Israel, that they had the Candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof to burn every evening. Therefore it is said in the law, *The high Priest shall light the lamps at even*, the word is, between the twilights, meaning thereby both the evening and the morning, Exod. 30, 8: and *Aaron* must cause the lamps to burn continually, from the evening unto the morning, Levite. 24, 3. In the book of *Samuel* & in other places, it appeareth that they burned all night for those that kept the watch of the Lord in y^e Tabernacle, and in the Temple, but were always extinguished in the morning when it was day, 1 Sam. 3, 3. Thus then we reason against them from their own foundation: The lamps under the law burned only in y^e night, therefore the Papists have no warrant to set them up in the day time. True it is, *Doway-Translators* slubber over the matter in their annotations upon Exodus and Samuel, and tell us that *God would not have darkness in his Tabernacle by day nor night*: but this is a weak and ungrounded assertion contrary to y^e Scripture, as hath been shown, and may also farther be shown out of Exod. 27, 21. The truth is that these noon-day Taper lights in honor of the living or of the dead, are a mere heathenish superstition, as it appeareth out of the history of *Herodian*, lib. 1. And from hence (as also many other toys did) crept into the Church; and therefore *Jerome* saith, *aduers. vigilant. Cereos clara luce non accendimus*. we do not light candles in the day time. But we have some reason to bear with them. For to what end do they use it in the day time, but to make manifest their blindness & ignorance. Their religion is a dark and obscure religion, compacted altogether of many blind doctrines, and therefore they would have some light of their candles, though they have none of their doctrine. The use of a lantern and light is in a dark night. There is no man in his right wits will carry a candle when the Sun shineth clearly and brightly. *Durand* a great patron of these superstitions, can find out

nothing in the word written to justify & defend these wax-candles, & therefore is constrained to establish them upon the rotten decrees of *Zosimus* and *Theodorus*. If any object, that the Christians used lights & lamps in their meetings: I answer, their meetings were in the night time for fear of their enemies. For while the Church was in persecution, they could not safely assemble in the day time, and therefore they used those lights of necessity to remedy the darkness of the night, Acts 20, 8. but when we have free liberty & choice of time & place for y^e exercises of our religion, y^t practice is not to be brought into imitation.

[Use 2] Again, it reproveth them that hold the Scriptures to be so dark and difficult, that it is dangerous for the people to meddle with them, lest they fall by them into errors & heresies. But we hear that the Scriptures are a lamp, as a candle set upon the table, and as a Beacon kindled to show light far and near. What then? Can the light be darkness? surely no more then the darkness can be light. And if they be dark, it followeth, that either the holy Ghost could not express his mind and meaning more clearly and evidently, or else he would not. To say he could not, is blasphemy, and maketh him a weak and impotent God: to say he would not, were to make him an envious God, as if he did envy the good of his Church. But whatsoever was written afore time, was written for our instruction, Rom. 15, 4. 2 Tim. 3, 16. therefore God everywhere commandeth, that they should be read and heard of all, high and low, rich & poor, men and women, old and young, Deut. 6, 9. & 17, 18. & 31, 11. Josh. 1, 8. He will have all sorts of persons come to the knowledge of the truth, that they may be saved, 2 Pet. 3, 9. 2 Tim. 2, 25. But how shall they come to repentance and to the knowledge of the truth, without the Scriptures? Every member of the Church must have them dwell richly in them, Col. 3, 16. All are commanded to search them, John. 5, 39. The men of *Berea* are commended for it, Acts 17, 11. so is the Eunuch, who while he sate in his Chariot, read them, Acts 8, 30. They also are reproveth that were unskillful in them and slow of heart to believe them. They are able to make us wise unto salvation. Out of them as from an armory, we must draw weapons against Satan and his instruments, both defensive and offensive. Christ and his Apostles used these weapons, to beat down all impiety and heresy: whereas the ignorance of them is the cause of error. This armor & artillery must all men procure: and no man be denied to draw this sword that is a soldier of Jesus Christ. From hence therefore is reproveth the error in opinion and weakness of judgment resting in the common sort, they persuade themselves that the knowledge of thē belongeth not to them, but to the Ministers and to the learned, because they take them to be so dark, and themselves so simple, y^t they are as a deep well, and they have nothing to draw; nay, that it is dangerous for them to meddle with them, as if they were a rock at which they might suffer shipwreck. But this is nothing so. Let all such mark that they are as a light shining in the night of this present world, to show us the right way, and to lead us a sure way forward to the end of our faith. True it is, we shall have no need of it, when once we come to our journeys end. For as men whē they are come to their lodging & resting place, require no more the help of the lantern; so shall it be with us, when the days of our passage and pilgrimage are ended, and we be come to the heavenly Jerusalem, we shall no more want this ministerial light: the Lord shall be the light of that City, there shall be no need of the Sun or Moon there to shine in it: then

Prophecy shall fail, & tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall vanish away. Furthermore, we must know that the Scriptures are not hard and hidden in the fundamental points, but all things necessary to saluatiō are easy to them that will understand. They are like to the holy waters that issued out frō under y^e threshold of the house, Eze. 47, 1: which were first up to the ankles, v. 3. then up to the loins, v. 4. which afterward became as a river that could not be passed over, v. 5. In them is strong meat for men, and milk for babes and children. In them the Elephant may swim, and the Lamb may wade. No man must therefore be discouraged from searching the Scriptures, which do give understanding even to the simple, and knowledge and discretion to y^e young man: he may learn by them to reform his ways, and to know how to fear the Lord. But are not many things hard in them? Doth not *Peter* say of *Paul's* Epistles, that they are hard? I answer, he speaketh not of the hardness of the Epistles, as appeareth by the change of y^e gender, but that in the Epistles are many mystical points, and matters of faith rather than of reason, as the doctrine of the Trinity, the union of the two natures in Christ to make one person, and such like, which, albeit they be in themselves dark & hard to be conceived, yet they are plainly set down. Again, he doth not say, all things are hard, or the most things, or many things, but *some things are hard to be understood*. And to whom are they hard? to those that wrest them to their own destruction, to the unstable and unlearned. Now, those things that are dark to the unbeliever, are lightsom to the faithful, as Christ saith to his Disciples, *To you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God, but unto them that are without, all things are done in Parables*. To them that are humble and desire to learn, are plain instructions: but to others that are proud & high-minded, the plainest points are dark riddles. If any ask, whether there be not diverse things hard in Scripture? I answer, there are: and it is the great wisdom of GOD it should be so: tempering the one with the other, to make us devout in praying, diligent in searching, wise in prizing & valuing y^e truth of God, humble in knowing our own wants, and to teach us that God would have some teachers in his Church and some to learn at their mouths, some to instruct and some to be instructed.

Thirdly, we may conclude, that seeing the [Use 3] word of God is the light of the Church, they that now perish, do perish justly and worthily. They have a light set up to direct them, and the Sun shineth most brightly in their faces; if then they shut their eyes; and so stumble and fall down, who will take any pity upon them? who can say, but they are worthy to perish? Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them*. 2 Cor. 4, 3, 4. If we had not a light before us, we might pretend ignorance, and allege the darkness of the way, as a defense of our wandering, but now the vizard is pulled from our faces, we have nothing to answer for our selves. Wherefore Christ saith, *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sins*, John 15, 22. No man can allege any just color or excuse, or find what plea to put in for himself. The light is among us, what shall we say that we walk not in the light? He that walketh in darkness, knoweth not what he doth, or whither he goeth, or how near he is to danger. O that it might be said of us, as the Apostle doth of the Thessalonians, *Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: ye are not of*

the night, nor of darkness. It may rather be said of us, you are children of the night and of darkness, ye are not of the light nor of the day. Christ Jesus is come as a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in him should not abide in darkness, John 12, 46, 48, Whosoever rejecteth him, and receiveth not his words, hath one that judgeth him, the word which he hath spoken shall judge him in the last day, verse 48. Such then shall be taken speechless, and stand dumb having nothing to say, being convicted and condemned in their own consciences, and therefore he that is ignorant, let him be ignorant, 1 Cor. 14, 38. The light was powerfully and plentifully offered unto him, but he closed his eyes that he might not see, and stopped his ears that he might not hear, and hardened his heart that he might not understand. It shall be easier for the Turks and Infidels at the day of judgment, then for many of us. For if the light of the truth had shined so fully upon them as it hath done upon us, they had long ago repented in sackcloth and ashes. Let us consider this betimes, and open our eyes while the light is among us, before it be taken from us, and darkness come upon us. Now is the acceptable time, let it not slip from us.

[Use 4] Fourthly, they should be welcome unto us, that bring this light, that we may say with the Apostle, *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things?* Rom. 10, ver. 15. In winter nights that are dark, and consequently dangerous for passengers, men think they do others a great pleasure, if they hold them out a light to show them the way, and to free them from fear of danger, and it is so. What an happy thing then is it to have a light holden forth to guide us to heaven, and to bring us to everlasting life! We see therefore the necessity of the word of God and of the Ministers thereof. To take away these, is to take away the light in a dark night, nay to pull the Sun out of the Firmament, & to leave men to go and to grope in darkness: forasmuch as it is impossible for us to direct our ways aright without the one and the other. It is the great mercy of God that hath given unto us the Sun to rule the day, the Moon and the Stars to rule the night, Psal. 136, 8, 9. which are so necessary as that without them the life of man cannot be continued and preserved: and as in a dark house nothing can be seen without a Lamp or a candle, so the right way cannot be discerned from the wrong, truth from error, and virtue from vice in the darkness of our life, without the light and luster of the word. There are dangerous pits in this misty world, and many threatening rocks in this troublesome sea which are not seen; we shall fall into the one, and rush upon the other, and ruin our selves by them both, except we carry before us this light and lantern. Let us believe no man that will offer to teach us the way, except he show us this light. The Israelites in the wilderness were governed by a Cloud in the day, and by a pillar of fire in the night, till they came into the Land of *Canaan*, afterward they had no need of the one or of the other: so should we order our resting and removing, our going out, and our coming in, by this light of the word, which will bring us to the heavenly *Canaan*. Our duty therefore must be to take heed to the word, seeing it is a light givē unto us of God. It is our duty to hear it, to believe it, to obey it. We must hear it attentively: we must believe it steadfastly: we must obey it readily. We must hear it without loathing: we must believe it without wavering: we must obey it without resisting.

Hence it is, that the Apostle *Peter* adorning the word with this worthy title, that it is as a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts, draweth from thence this exhortation, that we must therefore take heed unto it. 2, Pet. 1, 19. Who is it that is so simple or senseless, that he will take no heed to the light that shineth round about him? Every man looketh carefully to the light, and taketh comfort at the sight of it. The whole world lieth in darkness, guilty of ignorance, & subject to damnation. The Ministry of the word is ordained to bring men out of darkness into a marvelous light, Acts 26, 18. to reveal to them the knowledge of their sins, and to lead them (as it were by the hand) the way to eternal life.

[Use 5] Fifthly, let all unlearned and unconscionable Ministers know, y^t they ought to be as lights in the world, to teach the people in season and out of season. If they be without knowledge or without conscience, they be lanthornes without light. The dispensation is committed unto them, woe unto thē therefore that preach not the Gospel, whether they cannot or will not, whether they cannot through blindness, or whether they will not through willfulness. Again, they offend, who, as if the word were delivered in riddles, and dark parables rather to work in them admiration, then to bring unto them instruction, do fly aloft, far above the reach of the people: and do not consider that the word is a light, and therefore ought to be spoken plainly and evidently, that all may see it, and discern it. Happy are those lights, I mean those Ministers, that can humble and abase themselves, descending to the capacity of the simple: such shall find greatest comfort of their labors, and shall reap the greatest reward for their labors. As for others, they may please themselves, but they please not God. They may delight the ear, they cannot descend into the conscience. They build Castles in the air, but never lay a sound foundation of the faith, neither shall they ever be able to say with the Apostle, *Ye are our Epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men.* Unto these we may add such as spend their days and grow old and idle in the Universities: who never desire to come abroad to take pains, neither consider that the Church hath need of them. These stand all day doing nothing, and will not be hired to labor in the Lord's Vineyard. They have lived long in the schools of the Prophets, it is high time they come abroad, and leave their places to others. He that engrosseth corn into his own hands, and will not communicate it to others, but keepeth it close to himself, is cursed of the people; but he is pronounced blessed that selleth corn to others in the days of famine. Behold, we live in the days of famine, not of bread, but of preaching and hearing the word, Amos 8, 11. In many places the word of the Lord is precious in these days, 1 Sam. 3, 1. Let them therefore look to it, that tender either the glory of the Lord, or the salvation of the flock of Christ, yea or their own good, that they do not bring upon themselves the curse of God and man, which have stored themselves with much knowledge and learning, and as it were filled their garners with abundance of corn; yet will depart with nothing, but keep all to themselves, and suffer the people of God to starve. On the other side, thrice happy and blessed are they, that considering the necessity of the Church, the ignorance of the people, the overflowing of sin, and the commandment of God, do bring forth the corn which they have gathered, and employ the gifts that they have received, that so none of these for whom Christ died, should perish for want of food. Let such therefore in no wise hang back; when they are thrust

forward, et them not say touching building of the spiritual house of God, as the people said in building of the material Temple, *The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.* Hag. 1, 2. but so soon as they are called, let thē not stop their ears, but answer with *Samuel. Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth,* 1 Sam. 3, 9. and with the Prophet, *Here am I, send me,* Isaiah 6, 8. Let not these I say, object, that the time is not yet come to build the Lord's house, lest they hear as that people did, *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your fair houses, and siced chambers, and this house lie waste? Now therefore saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways,* Hag. 1, 4, 5. And generally, let all such as are entered into this calling, beware they do not hide their gifts; let them not thrust the candle under the bed or under a bushel, but set it upon the Table, seeing they are made lights for others, and not only for themselves. Such have an hard and heavy account to make hereafter; much is given unto them, and therefore much shall be required of them.

Lastly, here is instruction for all; for every [Use] one should be as a burning candle, & a bright shining light, and is bound to let his light so shine before men, y^t they may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven. Every man ought to be enlightened with the knowledge of God's word, & be willing to hold out the light to others. But we cannot give light to another, except we have the light of knowledge our selves. Ignorant persons are darkness and not light, children of the night & not of the day. The Scripture is able to make a man wise, to enlighten his eyes, to direct his steps, and to save his soul. *Bellarmino* confesseth, y^t the Scripture is a light but he telleth us, y^t the reason is, not because they have light in themselves, but because they bring light when they are understood. This is a right fallacy of the consequent: for hereby he maketh the effect to be the cause of y^e cause, and so inuerteth all good order, turning the cause into the effect, & the effect into y^e cause. For he would have the Scripture therefore to be light or lightsome, because being once understood, it doth enlighten the mind. But this needeth no light to discover the fraud & falsehood thereof. For it is not therefore called light, because when it is understood it doth enlighten & give light. And whether we understand it, or no, it skilleth not; for the Scripture is in it self a bright shining light. For as the Sun is lightsome, though all men were blind, and no man did see it: so the Scripture is a light, albeit men turn away their eyes frō it that they will not see it. In the mean season we do not deny, y^t the Scripture being understood doth enlighten our minds, but it is not therefore lightsome because it is understood of us: for then the light thereof should wholly depend upon our understanding. Thus if we understand it, it shall be lightsome; but if we understand it not, it shall not be lightsome. Nay, w^c is much more absurd, if one man understand it, it shall be light: if another man understand it not it shall not be light: thus at one and the same time, it should be both light, & not light. The truth therefore is, that the Scriptures are lightsome two ways: First, in respect of them selves; secondly, in respect of us. In respect of themselves, they are always lightsome of themselves, and have light in themselves. In respect of us, they are lightsome when we understand them, and receive them and light by them. But to return to the former matter, the Minister should be the principal light to hold out the Lantern to bring men to heaven, and to work in them repentance, as *John the Baptist* is said to be a burning and a shining light, John. 5, 35. But everyone also in his place must be a light, to shine in knowledge and obedience, in doctrine

and in life. On the contrary, when men are as candles put out, there falleth great hurt to the church. The danger hereof may be discerned by common experience in an haven town, if the Lantern be taken down, or the candle put out, which should direct the ships in the night season into the haven, all the ships and the souls that sails in them, are left to the mercy of the winds which are without mercy, and so all perish by miserable shippewracke. In like manner, if men have no light in their hearts to guide them into the haven and harbor of the church, and consequently of the kingdom of heaven, they do as much as in them lieth, betray their own souls; and drown themselves in eternal perdition.

[Verse 3. *And Aaron did so, &c.*] The obedience of *Aaron* is here described, and the Candlestick set in the Tabernacle described. It is said to be of gold, as Revel. 1. the most precious of all Minerals, for two causes. First, because as Gold exceedeth all other metals, so the Church exceedeth all other societies of men, because in it salvation is only to be found *Isaiah* 46, 13. all other being ordained to preserve this safe and sound, *Esa.* 45, 14. & 49, 23. Revel, 21, 24, 26. Ye^e, it is the glory and honor, the beauty and ornament of all other societies, kingdoms, cities, towns, houses, and persons, to be parts of the church; inasmuch as otherwise they are parts of the world, of the kingdom of darkness, yea, a^e dogs & swine, and unclean beasts, *Ephes.* 22, 11, 12, 13, &c. Secondly, because it is most precious & dear to God, and to *Jesus Christ*, as gold is to man, because it is an holy company, sanctified by the blood of *Christ*, whom it cost dear to redeem it, *Acts* 20. The Candlestick in the Tabernacle was to hold the light for the direction of all that were therein, from Eueing to morning continually, *Exod.* 27, 22. It is the use of every Candlestick, to hold, to keep, to preserve, to continue, and to yield forth the light to the benefit of others. This doth mystically represent the church, [Doctrine.] & teacheth that the church is as the Lord's golden candlestick, appointed to hold and keep the light & treasury of the Word forever, that it should never be lost or embeselled from us to the end of the world. And as the Candlestick was to hold the light to the first coming of *Christ*, so is the church to preserve the truth until the second coming of *Christ*. It is therefore the office of the church, and of every true member thereof, to keep in it, and to publish abroad, and to hold out to those that are in it the truth of God's word, to direct their paths aright: as *Deut.* 31, 20. The book of the Law, after that it was written, was by the Lord himself committed to the *Israelites* to be kept in the side of the Ark of the covenant. The Prophet *Isaiah* showeth, *That the Word should go forth out of Zion* (where it was kept) *into the midst of the earth*, *Chap.* 2.3. And the Apostle declareth, that the Jews had the Oracles of God committed unto them of trust, *Rom.* 3, 2. and that to *them appertained* (who were y^e only church) *the adoption, and the glory, and the Couenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and the promises*, *Rom.* 9, 4. And *Paul* is said to have written unto *Timothy*, that *he should know how he ought to behave himself in the house of GOD which is the Church of the living God, the pillar & ground of the truth*, *1 Tim.* 3.15. By all which testimonies we are taught, that the Church holdeth and bringeth the truth, and conueieth it unto us, and that we can no otherwise receive it, or be partakers of it.

For further proof hereof, observe with [Reason 1] me the titles that are given unto it. It is a safe keeper or treasurer, to keep as it were under lock and key the holy Jewels of the old and New Testament, that they be neither corrupted by Heretics, nor destroyed by other enemies.

It is as a cunning Goldsmith to try everything: for as he discerneth pure gold from counterfeit mettalles, so the church discerneth true Scripture from false or forged books and writings. It is as a crier to publish and make known the decrees of almighty God. It is an Interpreter to expound the sense, and to open the meaning of the Scriptures according to y^e proportion of faith set forth in other parts. Secondly, it is a great honor and wonderful preferment that God giveth unto the Church above all other societies and places of the world besides. And indeed there can be no greater honor, then to be put in trust with such a treasure. If a man should upon trust, commit unto another a great treasure, and make choice of him to leave it with him, it is a sign he honoreth and respecteth him before and above others: so is it between God and his Church; he hath laid up his truth in his Church, as in his storehouse. He hath given his word to *Jacob*, his statutes and ordinances unto *Israel*, 〈1 page duplicate〉 〈1 page duplicate〉 he hath not dealt so with other Nations, & as for his judgments they have not known them. This made the Apostle say, *What is then the preferment (or advantage) of the Jew? Or what profit is thereof circumcision? much every day:* showing thereby, that God committing his Oracles unto them, did advance and prefer them far above all other Nations. Thirdly, the church is the house & habitation of God, who is light itself, in whom only is light properly to be found, who dwelleth in light that none can attain unto, 1 Tim. 6, 16. He hath called his Church his rest, and the place where his honor dwelleth, Psal. 132, 13, 14. *The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation; this is my rest forever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it.*

[Use 1] This condemneth the Papists who stand from the verdict of this doctrine, as men endited of two crimes and errors: first, they accuse the Scriptures left unto us in the Originals, to be corrupted, the Old Testament by the *Jews*, the new by *Marcion* and other heretics. But it is a vain surmise without proof or probability touching the corruption of the original fountains, which notwithstanding the *Romanists* pretend, thereby to make a way to bring in the Latin translation to be the pure & authentic Scripture, and consequently to be preferred before them: which is as foolish and unreasonable, as to make the mistress to walk on foot like a servant, and to set her handmaid on horseback; & therefore some of their own friends are ashamed of this vanity. It is a shame (they say) to bely the devil. It is a crime to tax the Jews of a crime whereof they are not guilty It is well known, that howsoever they stand affected unto Christ, yet they always were, and now are very religious & respective in keeping the text sound and sincere, and cannot by any means be induced to choppe and change, to add or to diminish anything. And doubtless had they not been trusty and faithful, would God have trusted them with this true treasure? yea, though that Church were oftentimes corrupt, yea sometimes an Harlot, or an Apostat, yet the over-ruling providence of God hath always wrought in them a care and conscience this way, both for their own future happy estate, and the benefit of posterity to come, to keep the ancient records & evidences of the Scripture, sound, sure, and sincere. This appeareth further by the Sermon of Christ in the Mount, reproving the false interpretations of the Scribes and Pharisees, who had very grossly corrupted the meaning of the Law, Mat, 5, 21.27, 31, 33, 38, 43. & 16, 6. The church of the Jews was never more corrupt then in the days of Christ; yet could they never be touched, nor be justly charged with this horrible crime of offering violence to the holy

books of Scripture. And if they might have been endited of this detestable forgery, Christ would not have omitted this greater fault, who often reproveth them of lesser offenses. Besides, our Savior willeth the Jews to search the Scripture, which the Prophets had left unto them by divine inspiration; he sendeth them unto these as then they had thē, to try the doctrine of the Pharisees by them, John. 5, 39. which he would never have done, had they been corrupted, and themselves the corrupters of them.

Moreover touching the Jews, seeing they were mortal enemies to Christ, if they were minded to corrupt the Scripture, they would have corrupted for their own advantage such places out of *Moses* and the Prophets, as concerned Christ whom they hated; but these remain entire, by which they are fully convinced and confuted. And therefore one saith well, that such as holily and religiouslie handle the Hebrew Text, do find therein more notable testimonies of Christ, then in the Latin and Greek Copies. Now, if the true Church had lost the pure and perfect fountains of the Hebrew and Greek Text, how could it be a faithful keeper of his Will and Testament? Howbeit, GOD hath ever had a care of his word and truth, even then when he committed the same to the custody of the Church. Another error of the Roman church is, that they make the churches authority to be our supreme ground and stay of our faith, and set it far above the Scriptures themselves. These assertions are found in their writings touching the Scripture. It is not authentical without the authority of the church: that the authority of the Scripture dependeth on the authority of the Church necessarily, *Pighi. lib. 1. de Hierar eccl cap. 2.* that we are not bound to take them for Scripture, without the authority of the Church: that in respect of us y^e church hath absolute authority to determine which is Scripture, and which is not: that the Church hath power to make a book not Canonical, to be Canonical: and one of them vttred this impudent and shameless blasphemy, that the Scripture should be of no more credit then *Aesop's Fables*, without the approbation & allowance of the church. Howbeit, as we must not take from the church hir right, so we must take heed that we give not to it more then is due, and so rob God of his honor and glory, and derogate from the excellency and authority of the Scriptures. They make the Church the light it self, and not the Candlestick to hold the light, & say, that it also is called light. I answer, it is a borrowed light, receiving all the light it hath from the word, as the Moon doth from the Sun. They make it to be the authorizer of the word, and hold that it is of no force or credit, but is as a dead letter and inken divinity without it. This is no better then to hang the word, and consequently, the promises of God, the kingdom of heaven, & salvation itself upon the pleasures of men; whereas the church is founded and grounded upon the word, not the word upon the Church, as *Peter* is built upon Christ, not Christ upon *Peter*. All the authority that the Church hath, be it never so great, it hath it from the Scripture: for how do we know whether y^e Church erreth, or not, but by the Scripture? The Church cannot give us faith whereby we believe in Christ, and lay hold of eternal life, it is the Scripture that worketh it by the inspiration of the holy Spirit. The Scripture is the chiefest and the highest court, from whence is no appeal: but we may appeal from the judgment of the Church to the Scriptures, not from the Scripture to the Church. The Church, that is, the company of the faithful, are not lords over our faith, they are ruled by faith, not over-rulers of our faith. True it is, the Church is a means to bring us more speedily to know the Scriptures, as the woman of

Samaria was a means to bring the Samaritans to believe in Christ: but as they, when they had heard Christ, believed not so much for her report, as for that themselves had heard him speak; so after the Scriptures are discerned and pointed out unto us as by the finger of the Church, we believe them to be the word of God, not so much because the Church affirmeth it, but because we find them to be so, as the sheep of Christ acknowledged the voice of their Shepherd Christ Jesus speaking in them.

[Use 2] Secondly this assureth us, that the truth of God shall remain and continue forever to the end of the world. It may be sometimes brought into a narrow compass, and be much eclipsed, that the light shall appear to be but little, but it shall never perish utterly or be rooted out of the earth. For seeing y^e Church is appointed the keeper and continuer of the truth, as the candlestick of the candle, and that the Church shall abide forever, because *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*, Matt. 16.18. it cannot be that the truth should fail and decay; as we see, notwithstanding the enemies of *Judah and Benjamin*, the word is kept uncorrupt and inviolable to this day. God will never suffer his people to be robbed thereof, but his special providence watcheth over it for our good.

This doth the Scripture it self witness touching the durableness thereof, *that the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this Law*. Deut. 29.29. The Lord hath founded his testimonies forever, Psal 119.152. Our Savior speaketh more fully, evidently and vehemently, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass*, Mar. 13.31. & again, *Verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one iotte, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled*, Matth 5.18. We know by experience, that all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass, the grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth and falleth away, *but the word of the Lord endureth forever*. This we may see in the books of Solomon, 1 Kin. 4.32, 33. *He spake three thousand Proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five: and he spake of trees, from the Cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes*. These books of natural Philosophy were no doubt the most profitable books that ever were written in that kind, he being endued with the greatest wisdom that ever man since the fall had, Christ Jesus only excepted: yet none of these are to be found, only those that pertain to religion and godliness remain safely reserved for all posterities. This is the more to be considered & wondered at, inasmuch as there be infinite moe in the world that affect the knowledge of natural things, rather than they do spiritual; and of earthly, rather than they do heavenly: yet they could not deliver them from the ruins of time, but they are buried in the grave of perpetual forgetfulness, never to be raised or recovered. These are dead and gone, as if they had never been written, whereas on y^e other side, his holy writings, hated of the most part of the world, and carelessly regarded of the multitude, even of those that lived in the bosom of the Church, have notwithstanding as full a remembrance, as they had the first day the Lord gave them to his people. This serveth to convince those that think many of the books inspired by God to be lost, thereby accusing the providence of God, or at least the church, of great carelessness and negligence, of which crime notwithstanding it is not guilty.

Thirdly, there is no light of truth to be [Use 3] found anywhere else able to guide unto faith and salvation, then in the true Church of God. For all other places are places of darkness, and nothing to be found in them but lies, errors, deceivings, superstition, and the spirit of slumber. As no light was to be found in all Egypt, but in the land of Goshen and among the Israelites only: so no saving doctrine that giveth light to the eyes of y^e mind is to be found out of the Church; they that are in this state, live in palpable darkness, and can see neither themselves nor others, but lie in ignorance and wickedness, as *John* teacheth, *We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness*. Such sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, till this light set on the Candlestick be brought unto them. *Matth. 4 16. The people which sate in darkness, saw great light, and to them which sate in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up*. Therefore to be out of the Church, is to be in the state of damnation, yea to be in the very dungeon of hell, and the kingdom of darkness, & to be under the power of Satan, the prince of darkness; as there was no salvation out of the Church. Let every man therefore seek and endeavor with all care to join himself to the true Church of God, & to be a member of the body of Christ, that so we may attain to the light of knowledge, and the light of the eternal life.

[Use 4] Lastly, it is a duty belonging to everyone, to be an helper to the spreading abroad of the doctrine of godliness, and to do all for the truth, but nothing against the truth, *2 Cor. 13 8*. Every man desireth to be the messenger of good news: so should we desire to publish to others, and to continue to posterity the saving knowledge of the Gospel. For this is the foundation and ground-work of all true obedience. The truth of God is as a precious treasure beset with many enemies that would take it from us, against whom we must always cōtend, that we may *keep faith and a good conscience*. This truth is the instrument of the holy Ghost, to work all necessary graces in our hearts, as *being the power of GOD to salvation*. and it revealeth unto us all things needful unto salvation, concerning things to be believed, or things to be practiced. Hence it is that the Apostle *Jude* saith; *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once given unto the Saints*. The true treasure of the Church is committed to the Saints, they are the keepers of the doctrine of salvation. This is no small trust, it is no small charge that is given unto them; we must therefore fight to maintain it. This must not be a bodily fight, but a spiritual combat, and it consisteth of diverse duties. Every man in his place ought to be as a *Prophet or a Preacher*, for we are made spiritual Priests, both to pray and to preach. We are bound to teach all that are under our roof and jurisdiction, that we may be as God's blessed instruments to convey his truth to others. It is the duty of all parents to teach their children, *Eph. 6, 4*. of Masters, to bring up their servants in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, as *Abraham* and *Cornelius* did, This is a notable means to keep, to maintain, and to defend the truth. As for those that will not teach the truth to thē that are in their houses, they are the devils Prophets, who is the father of error & ignorance. Such fathers and such masters, are the chief means of the decay and decreasing of religion, piety, faith, and righteousness. Secondly, we maintain the truth, and make it known by open confession and profession thereof. Every man must opē his mouth in God's cause, when the gates of hell are opened against it: and we must earnestly stand for it, and constantly bear

witness unto it, whensoever it is oppugned and resisted. The Apostle chargeth to *Sanctify the Lord God in our hearts, & be ready always to give an account and answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear.* Thus did the holy Martyrs at their death, witness a good confession, and thereby draw many to a love and embracing of that truth for which they suffered. If we be bold to confess the Lord Jesus, and his Gospel, *He will not be ashamed of us in his kingdom, but confess us before his father,* Mat. 10, 32, 33. Thirdly, we must lead an holy and sanctified life, and give a good example unto those among whom we live. An unblameable and vnreproueable conversation, is a great means to cause others to embrace godliness, when we are careful to adorn the Gospel of Christ with a good life: whereas otherwise, we cause the enemies of God to blaspheme the name of God, and to speak evil of the truth. Therefore the Apostle willeth us to be *blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we must shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.*

Lastly, we must maintain his truth by the armor of prayer, desiring God to make an open way and free passage for his own ordinance, and also to send forth painful & plentiful Laborers into his harvest, to gather his corn together, and to withstand all false doctrines and heresies. This doeth Christ command, Math. 9.38. This do the Apostles practice, Acts 4, 30. God hath in great mercy vouchsafed his word unto us, it is our duty to seek to uphold and maintain it, that so it may be continued unto us and our posterity forever. Let us therefore practice these few points, and be careful to practice instruction, confession, and invocation. Thus we shall show our love to the truth, a mind ready to receive it, a memory ready to retain it, and an heart ready to practice it.

5 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying;

6 Take the Levites from among the Children of Israel, and cleanse them.

7 And thus shalt thou do unto them, &c.

The second part of the Chapter followeth, concerning the Levites: wherein observe two things. First, the separation of them from the rest of the people: secondly, a limitation of time, by the special commandment of God for the entering into their office. Their separation or setting apart for the ministration in the Tabernacle, offereth unto us the commādemēt of God, and the obedience of *Moses and Aaron*, and the whole congregation, performed to the commandment of God. Their separation is noted by many particular circumstances, they must be cleansed with water of purifying, their garments must be washed, their flesh must be shaued. Verse 7. they must take one young Bullock for a meat offering, and another for a sin offering, verse 8. And *Aaron* must offer them, verse 12. the hands of the Elders must be imposed on them, v. 9, 10. and they must be offered before the Lord ver. 11, 13. Where we see, that such as are appointed to handle the holy things of God, must be washed and cleansed with holy water. It is very meet and convenient, that they should approach

thereunto with pure hands, even in respect of outward cleanness, Exod. 25, 31. But hereby is another thing meant, Namely, that the Ministers and generally all others that draw near to God in performance of any duty, must be cleansed and washed: they must have clean hearts, clean affections, & clean works whensoever they come into his presence. This was figured out to Moses, Exod. 3. when he was about to draw near to see the burning bush, the Lord said, *Put off thy shoes, for the ground whereon thou standest is holy ground.* Solomon willeth us to take heed to our foot, when we enter into the house of God, Eccl. 5, 1. When we go about to pray, we must lift up pure and holy hands, 1 Tim. 2, 8. When we come to the Sacraments, we are willed to examine our selves, and so eat of that bread, & drink of that cup, 1 Cor. 11, 28. Whensoever we present our selves in the Congregation to hear the word, we must lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save our souls, James 1, 21. *We must cast off all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, & envies, and evil speakings, that so we may grow by the milk of the word,* 1 Pet. 2.1.2.

This we ought to do the rather; First, because [Reason 1] God is present everywhere, Mat. 18. *His eye is upon all his suppliants that pray unto him, upon all his guests that come to the table, upon all men that hear his voice,* Mat. 22.11. He taketh a view and surueigh of such as preasse into his presence, Zeph. 1, 12. *That he may give to every man according to his works.* If we search not our hearts, he will search them: if we judge not our selves, he will judge us, 1 Cor. 11. His eye is upon us to approve of us, if we do well: to reject us if we do evil, as the examples of Cain and Abel show. Secondly, without this inward sanctification, all our exercises of Religion are rejected: and therefore we are willed, when we come before the Lord, *To wash us, and make us clean, to put away the evil of our doings,* Isaiah 1, 16.

[Use 1] This reproveth all such as offer to perform divine duties to almighty God without meditation or preparation: such as rush violently into God's presence, without due reverence and regard, Math. 22. as he did that came to the feast without his wedding garment. There was but one such guest, yet the Lord soon espied him, and called him out. If there be but one such in an assembly, he cannot escape the all-seeing eye of God, who hath also a revenging eye, that cannot see his honor and glory defaced. Who would presume or dare to come into the presence of an earthly Prince, in an unseemly manner? or sit down at the table with a Ruler with foul, and filthy, and unwashed hands? Every man of any note would be much ashamed hereof: and yet it is to be feared, that many repair and resort unto the house of God with foul, and filthy, and unsanctified hearts. Howbeit all formal service is utterly rejected. They are pronounced to be blessed, *that are pure in heart,* Math. 5, 8. but the impure are accursed. The sacrifices performed by the wicked are abominable, he heareth not the prayers of the profane and impenitent, but casteth off as an unclean thing both them and their oblation. God requireth no such sacrifices, nor no such sacrificers. The Prophet speaking of observing the Sabbath, of offering up prayer, of bringing oblations, and of assembling themselves together, saith, *To what purpose is all this? And when you appear before the Lord, who required this at your hands to tread in his Courts? His soul hated their appointed feasts, and he was weary to bear thē.* And wherefore was all this? Did not God command all these things? Were they not his own ordinances? Yes, they failed not therefore in the matter performed, but in the manner of their performing: the things were good, but they did them

in an evil manner: and this did corrupt the whole work, and made it unprofitable, nay hurtful to the doers. What then? should they do none of the former things? Should they neither keep the Sabbaths? nor make prayers? nor bring oblations? nor offer Incense? Must they leave all undone, because God was not pleased with that which they had done? Observe what the Prophet saith afterward, *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before his eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well: and then, though their sins were as Scarlet, they should be made as white as snow.* Isaiah 1, 18. So then, we must not leave or intermit the doing of good works, but put away the evil of our good works, and then God will accept both of us and of our good works.

Secondly, it teacheth, that as the Levites [Use 2] in this place when they drew near to God in the execution of their office must be washed, so the Ministers of the word much more, must be Lanthornes of light to others, shining before the people in holiness of life, as the stars do in the Firmament, to which they are oftentimes compared; that by walking in an vnreprouable and unblameable course, they may adorn the gospel of Christ w^c they preach and profess. It is not enough for them to be sound in the faith, but they must be also sincere in life, lest it be said unto them, *What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my word behind thee?* Psal. 50, 16, 17. If then they that preach the word to others do not preach unto themselves, and bring light to others, do live in darkness themselves, how shall they draw near to God, and execute his commandment in holy manner? May not the Proverb be turned upon them, *Physician heal thyself?* Luke 4, 23. and the reproof be justly verified in them, *Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? And thou that makest thy boast of the Law, thorough breaking the Law* 〈1 page duplicate〉 〈1 page duplicate〉 *dishonorest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you,* Rom. 2, 21, 22, 23, &c. Woe then to such as are of offensive life, and lay stumbling blocks thereby before the people to discourage them from the faith, to draw them from the truth, to opē the mouths of wicked men to speak evil of the name of God, of the word of God, and of all the true servants of God. We have a more glorious calling then the Levites had: *For, if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious, how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory: and if that which is done away was glorious, much more shall that which remaineth be glorious,* 2 Cor. 3.7, 8, •, 11. If then the Levites of the old Testaments, minister after a sort of the letter but not of the Sp•rit, that saw only the shadow but not y^e body, must notwithstanding never presume to handle the holy things of God with unwashen hands; how much more is it required of the Ministers of the New Testament to be of holy conversation, and to labor to be sprinkled with the blood of Christ (as the ceremony importeth) least while they preach salvation to others, themselves be reprov'd and condemned? For as a Cook dresseth and prepareth meat for others, and oftentimes tasteth least thereof himself, being cloyed with the savor of it: so is it with many in the Ministry, they prepare the food of the word, and break the bread of life for others, but digest nothing of it themselves, nor receive strength and nourishment from it, as appeareth in *Judas*, who was one of the twelve sent out with the rest to preach the Gospel, but yet he was the son of

perdition, and perished forever. It is required of the Ministers to be examples to the flock, 1 Pet. 5, 3. that so they may convince the gainesayers both by their doctrine and by their life. If there be not an harmony between these two, but y^t we preach one thing and practice another, we disturb and distract the faith of the people, and work such a confusion among them when they see our speaking and living do not accord, that little or no profit ariseth to the Church by all our labors. When our words do cal for righteousness, and our works do proclaim unrighteousness, what do we but build the tower of *Babel*? Gen. 11, 4. and bind heavy burdens grievous to be borne, and lay them upon men's shoulders, but will not move them with one of our fingers? Math. 23, 4. How shall the people follow our example and the lives of their Pastors, 1 Cor. 11, 1. Phil. 3, 17, 18, 21. 1 Thess. 1, 6. if we make no conscience to go before them in the ways of godliness?

[Use 3] Thirdly, it is our duty to prepare our selves to the duties which we perform to God; we must cleanse and purge our hearts, and follow sanctification, without which no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12.14. The Prophet willeth us to plough up our fallow ground, that we sow not among thorns, Ierem. 4, 3. We must circumcise our selves to the Lord, and take away the foreskinnes of our hearts. Every man knoweth, even he that is most simple, that if a mā should cast his seed upon the earth before it be manured and broken up, it is the loss both of his grain, and of his gain. Is there any person so weak in judgment, that he understandeth not these things? doth not common sense and reason teach us? how is it then that we will not understand so much in spiritual things, that if we receive the word with hard hearts that are not broken up, we lose all the profit of the work? May I not say with Christ, *If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not: how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?* John. 3, 12. And in another place, *O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?* Do ye not know that he which doeth not prepare and plough up his ground before the seed be committed to the earth, doth lose all his labor? And do ye not know, that whosoever receiveth the word into an unprepared heart, cannot look for any fruit or expect any increase? And yet not one among many is careful to deal with his own heart before he come to the house of God, or ever considereth what the work is about which he goeth, or once remembereth with what graces he ought to be qualified. If we have a show and shadow of godliness, although we deny the power thereof, we content our selves with it, and think all is well, we never regard any farther search into our souls. The inward purity, which is the life of our works, is altogether neglected; what said I, neglected? nay hated, scorned, taunted, reproached, and reviled by the most odious names y^t malice it self can find it. Christ calleth the pure in heart blessed: but we are so far degenerate from all appearance of grace, that we curse such, and brand them with all terms and titles of infamy & contempt. Thus we make our selves like to the Fig-tree, which because nothing but leaves were found upon it, was accursed, Math 21, 19. Now, to the end we may search our hearts to the bottom, observe these three rules. First, we must consider we have in this business to do with God, and not with men; and with *Cornelius*, let us set our selves in his presence, and make account we hear the word not of man, not of an Angel, but of the Lord himself. Acts 10. Secondly, let us search out our special sins, whensoever we come to his service: let us be grieved at them, and repent for them. If we would draw near to God in such manner as he might draw near unto

us, we are taught by the Apostle, *To purge our hearts, and cleanse our hands*, James 4, 8. But it may be said, Can we have pure hearts? and shall we not be accepted without them? Who then can please God in any duty? I answer, we cannot attain to an absolute pureness, this is reserved to the next life, when we shall inherit the kingdom of God prepared for us. There indeed shall be nothing but purity, piety, innocence, & glory. No unclean thing shall enter into that place, the presence of GOD shall fill it with perfect sanctification; howbeit here we have but our measure of purification, we have but a small portion, we cannot attain to any perfection. The Apostle telleth us, *We have received the first fruits of the Spirit*, Rom. 8, 23. The first fruits were but as an handful of corn in respect of all the rest of the heap: so it is with the faithful, they have here a small portion or pittance of grace in comparison of that which we wait for hereafter. But is not God able to store us here with a full measure? He is able, but it pleaseth him to deal thus with us, because thereby his name is most glorified, 2 Cor. 12, 9, 10. thereby we are most humbled in a feeling of our infirmities, and in a sight of our own imperfections; thereby we are stirred up to seek God, and to pray to him for a supply of grace which we want, I am. 1, 5. and thereby mutual love and charity is maintained and increased, when we see that we stand in need one of another. Thirdly, it is required of us to use the means of sanctification. It is noted of the Israelites, 2 Chr. 30, 1•. that they prepared their hearts, & did seek the Lord God of their fathers. Where we see these two points are joined together, preparing of hearts, and seeking of God. And how did they seek him? In his ordinances, or else they had never found him. And his ordinances are the word, the Sacraments, and the calling upon his name. Thus must it be with us, and then shall we receive the benefit that they received. This shall be a comfort to all that come with sanctified hearts and cleansed affections from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Though there be many wants and imperfections found in them, yet if they examine themselves, 1 Cor. 11, 28. prove and try themselves whether they be in the Faith or not, 2. Cor. 13, 5, if they bewail their sins, and reconcile themselves to God, they shall be accepted, their works shall be crowned, and their imperfections shall be covered and pardoned in and for the perfection which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[Verse 10. *Thou shalt bring the Levites before the Lord, and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites.*] This is another circumstance belonging to the ordination of the Levites, which was done by imposition of hands. This ceremony was ancient and often used in the old and New Testament. *Jacob* used this gesture in blessing the sons of *Joseph*, *Manasseh*, and *Ephraim*, Genesis 48. It is used at the election of *Io•hua*, who was appointed to be the successor of *Moses*, Numb. chap. 27, verse 23. It was used by the Priests and Levites in the sacrifices, to signify thereby, that they were consecrated unto GOD. •his gesture was retained in the New Testament in sundry actions, as we have shown before in the 6. chapter. From this example of the Elders of the congregation (for it is not to be thought that all the people without difference did it) we learn that the Ministers of the Church were ordained by imposition or laying on of hands. [Doctrine.] It is noted of the Deacons appointed to look to the poor, that the Apostles prayed for them, and then laid their hands upon them, Acts 6, 6. *Paul* willeth *Timothy* not to neglect the gift that was given unto him by the prophesy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, 1 Tim. chap. 4. verse 14. And in the next Epistle,

he putteth him in remembrance to stir up the gift of God which is in him by the putting on of his hands, 2 Tim. 1, 6. This was for the most part joined with prayer and fasting, Acts 14, 23. and 13, 3. The work was great, the calling was weighty, the gifts were many required to this calling, therefore they use Fasting to make them fitter to the present action, and more fervent to pour out their prayers unto the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth Laborers into his harvest.

The ends of this ceremony were many, [Reason 1] which serve as so many Reasons to confirm the point of doctrine in hand. First, that such as prayed might be stirred up with greater zeal and earnestness to call upon God, forasmuch as the laying on of the hand did move them and raise them to the lifting up of the heart. For this cause (as we shown before) the manner of ordaining Ministers and sending them into the Church, was ordinarily joined with fasting: not that they placed any merit therein, but to stir them to be more devout in prayer. And hence it is, that prayer and fasting are so often joined together as Luke 2, verse 37. Matthew 17. verse 21. Dan. 9. verse 3. Joel 1, 14. and 2, 15, 17. 1 Cor. 7, 4, &c.

Secondly, to signify that he was as an offering [Reason 2] separated to God and his service, upon whom the hands were laid. For this ceremony was taken from the manner used and observed in the sacrifices, upon which the Priests laid their hands, to show that they were consecrated to holy uses. Thirdly, to declare that [Reason 3] the hand of the Lord would be with them. For as they felt the hand of men upon their heads, so certainly they should find by a continual and comfortable experience, the hand of God to be with them in the execution of the function committed unto them, if they wer faithful in the execution thereof.

Lastly, to procure reverence unto the person [Reason 4] so set apart amongst the people, and especially to the calling it self. It is said in the election of *Joshua*, Numbers chapt. 27, verse 18, 20. that *Moses* must lay his hands upon him, that all the Congregation of the children of *Israel*, may be obedient: and this is one end wherefore this sign was used in the ordination of the Ministers of y^e Church.

[Use 1] Seeing therefore they were appointed to their office in this solemn manner, not in hugger mugger, but openly and publicly before all *Israel*, we learn that it is decent and convenient, that the Ministers should be made in the face of the church, not in private places, without any assembly fit for so solemn and sacred an action. This is a work of the day, not of the night; of the light, not of darkness: and therefore we see in this place, that at the ordaining of these Levites, the *whole Congregation of Israel was gathered together*: so that we may say, as *Paul* doth in another case, and upon another occasion, *These things were not done in a corner*, Acts 26, 26. *Eleazar* was appointed to succeed *Aaron* his Father in the sight of *Israel*, as Numb. chap. 20. verse 27. *Matthias* was elected in place of *Judas*, who was fallen from his Apostleship, when the whole multitude of the believers were gathered together, Acts 1. verse 13. yea the Deacons, an inferior office of the Chutch, who labored not in the word and doctrine, were chosen by the whole multitude, as Acts chapter 6. verse 5.

True it is, mere popular elections are not to be admitted, being the cause of all confusion and disorder; howbeit for the people to give their voices in elections moderated and governed by grave Elders and wise Pastors, hath been used in the Church in times past, & may be again, and is at this day in many places where the state of the Church, and the condition of the people will bear it. And albeit they have no voice or suffrage, it is fit they should give their consent and approbation, because the Ministers should have good report of all, 1 Timoth. 3, 7. And so much the rather ought this to be, because the congregation have a kind of interest in this business, according to the rule in Law, *Quod omnium interest, ab omnibus fieri debet*, that is, That which belongeth to all, should be done by all; and this maketh much for the comfort of the Minister, and for the profit of the people. This reproveth the practice oftentimes used in time of Popery, where Ministers are ordained by them secretly and closely. It is reported of Pope *John* the thirteenth, that he ordained Deacons in a stable: whereas their own Canons and constitutions decree, that the consent of the people should be known: and *Cyprian* is plain, that as God commandeth that the Priest should be placed before the face of the whole congregation of the Jews, so the Ministers ought not to be ordained but with the knowledge of the people standing by: whereby, they being present, either their faults should be discovered, or their virtues commended.

It may be asked, whether this sign, which in a general signification may also be called a Sacrament of imposition of hands, be so necessary as that it may upon no occasion be omitted? The Papists hold an absolute necessity of it, and teach that the graces of the Spirit are also inseparably annexed to it. But we cannot yield to any necessity of it: we confess it is comely and convenient, howbeit it is not of the substance or essence of ordination, no more then fasting, which also was no less joined with it then laying on of hands. Prayer we acknowledge to be needful, and so needful, that it may by no means be omitted, but neither fasting, nor laying on of hands, though both be profitable. When Christ our Savior instituted his Apostles, *He breathed upon them*, John 20, 22. but he did not lay hands upon them.

The like we might say of the election of *Matthias*, Acts 1. neither is grace necessarily tied to this ceremony and outward sign of imposition of hands. For grace is not necessarily coupled with any of the signs in the Sacraments, much less in this counterfeit Sacrament of Orders, devised and received by the Church of *Rome*. They observe indeed this laying on of hands, but it is like *Elisha's* staff laid upon the dead child by his Servant, that is, it was void and unprofitable, so is this gesture with them. For indeed the popish Priests have not any vocation and calling to the true service of God, to be Pastors and Teachers in the Church, but they are appointed to make the body of Christ, which is as much to say, as to be the murderers and killers of Christ. For so often as any Mass is celebrated among them, Christ Jesus the Lord of life is crucified, and as it were betrayed and butchered among them, forasmuch as themselves confess that they sacrifice him to God the Father: but there is no sacrifice without shedding of blood, and therefore the popish Priest-hood is no better then a detestable and a very devilish sacrilege.

Secondly, it is the duty of every Minister to [Use 2] consider diligently and seriously with himself, being warned by this ceremony, that he is separated and sanctified to one of the

greatest works that are under the Sun, being taken as it were by the hand of God out of the residue of his brethren. So then, we must be stirred up hereby to our duties, and have this meditation with our selves, Doubtless I am no longer mine own man, nor at mine own disposition, I am wholly dedicated & consecrated unto God. True it is, all the faithful are so also after a sort, 1 Cor. 6.19, 20. *Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price.* and Ro. 12, 1. We are exhorted by the mercies of God, that we should offer up our selves a living sacrifice unto him. Nevertheless, he that is called to preach the gospel, to break and to bring unto us the bread of life and the food of salvation, is knit unto God by a straighter band, he is wholly appointed for the use of the Church of God. The charge and function is of great weight & importance, 2 Cor 2, 16. *and who can be sufficient for these things?* They are Messengers sent from the King of kings unto us, they reconcile God and man, and make peace after a sort between them, they assure the penitent of the pardon and forgiveness of sins, by the power of the keys committed unto them. This laying on of hands, serveth and helpeth to assure his heart that is called, that God will abundantly furnish him with necessary graces fit for his calling: he will endue them with the spirit of wisdom, of knowledge, of zeal, of constancy, of charity, of meekness, of patience, and such like. As then God maketh all the signs that he hath at any time set in his church, to be available, so that not one of them is vain or unprofitable: so may all the Ministers ordained with this sign assure themselves, that God will pour out his blessings upon them, to the end they may faithfully execute their office. It is not in vain that water in baptism is poured upon our heads, it is a good witness unto us, that we shall be washed and cleansed from our sins by the blood of Christ: forasmuch as God hath instituted it, and his promise is annexed unto it. It is not in vain that we eat a little morsel of bread, and drink a little quantity of wine, it assureth us that we are partakers of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that he is our meat indeed, and our drink indeed, whensoever we come to his holy Table.

The like we may say of imposition of hands, God will not suffer it to be superfluous, but we shall perceive the fruit thereof by his pouring of his gifts into the heart: as it is said of *Joshua*, that he was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for *Moses* had laid his hands upon him: and of *Timothy*, that the gift of God was given unto him by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. But hath the laying on of hands so great power and virtue? No, but seeing this sign was no invention of man, but an institution of God, he will make it available by adding his grace and goodness thereunto. The putting on of hands was a gage thereof, representing God's pouring out of his Spirit. This then serveth to reprove such as have undertaken this calling, and forsaken the Ministry upon carnal respects, not considering that the soldier that warreth, doth not entangle himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier: and our Savior showeth, that no man having put his hands to the plough & looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God, Luke 9, 62. In this number we may also range those that embrace this present world, & live as mere worldly men, choking themselves with the fat morsels that they find abroad, the bones whereof so stick in their throat, that their voice is stopped, and their tongue is tied that they can utter no other words, but, bring, bring. But we must consider, that we are takē as it were by the hand of God from amongst the rest of the Congregation, to teach y^e people, to give an attendance to

reading, to exhortation, to doctrine, 1 Tim. 4, 13. and to take heed to our selves, that in doing these things, we may both save our selves, and them that hear us, verse 16. We are called of God to his heavenly work, who will plentifully reward us, if we be diligent in our duty and his business, Dan. 12, 13. 1 Pet. 5, 4. 1 Cor. 3, 8. He will stand with us, and his hand shall be effectual upon us, if we make conscience of our calling. But if we be careless and unconscionable, negligent and idle, as slothful servants that set not their minds upon their masters business, his hand will be sore & severe against us, to revenge the dishonor done to his name, and the hurt done to his people. The Papists boast of giving the graces of the Spirit by this gesture, they greaze their fingers, and disguise themselves with apish toys, but all to no purpose, as we have proved already, forasmuch as it cannot by the bare outward action confer grace, and therefore it is remēbred touching the Apostle Paul, that *he received grace from God, before Ananias came unto him, and laid his hands upon him, Acts 9, 17.*

Thirdly, hereby ariseth great comfort unto [Use 3] him that is lawfully and rightly ordained. For it serveth much to confirm and strengthen him, being thereby admonished that God accepteth him as an holy offering. Let us remember y^t it is he which hath set us on work, and he will be present with us, to remove our shoulders from the burden, or rather to make the heavy yoke which he hath put upon us easier, and the burden which we bear to be lighter, that we do not shrink and sink down under the weight thereof. True it is, men only did lay their hands upon us, howbeit God is president of the whole action, and he worketh with his own ordinance and institution.

We have from hence an assurance of our calling, that it is not only or principally from men, but from God; which must move us to execute the same with all courage and constancy, being terrified with no fear or danger of enemies or opposition against us, and to ouerstride them all with great cheerfulness. Are we therefore crossed at any time in the discharge of our duty? and do men rise up against us, when we stand up in the name of God? Let us not be afraid and hold our peace, lest he confound us before them, Ier. 1, 17. Let us not stand in fear of their faces, for he is with us to deliver us. Verse 8. and no man shall set upon us to hurt us, as Acts 18, 10.

Let us call to our remembrance our entering into our Calling, that we were ordained by laying on of hands, wherein men were the instruments of Almighty GOD, to assure us of his presence with us, and approbation of us. This consideration stayed *David*, being ready to shrink down under the burden, having the charge of a great people, y^t could not be numbered nor counted <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> for multitude, and it raised him up as it were beaten down to the ground, to wit, that he came not to the kingdom by his own ambition or usurpation, as his enemies falsely charged and accused him, but by the authority of God who called him, and the warrant of *Samuel* the Prophet who anointed him: so that whensoever we find cold comfort in the world, let us comfort our selves in the lawfulness of our calling, and when we are evilly entertained of men, let us remember that God hath entertained us into his service, and therefore let us be found faithful therein.

[Use 4] Lastly, from hence sundry instructions arise to the people. For when they see y^e hands of men solemnly laid upon the heads of those that are to be ordained, and the action

always accompanied with prayer, and oftentimes with fasting, it stirreth them up to be more fervent, zealous, earnest, and vehement, when they brought him that was chosen, as it were before God himself, and presented him before him. So then we must learn, that when we would have Ministers to preach y^e word of God, everyone must have care to pray in this holy action, because it is not a pastime or may-game for little children; it is, that the Church of God may be governed as he hath appointed it, which is a matter of no small importance. The Ministers are called to govern in the house of God (which is the pillar that upholdeth the truth:) seeing therefore so great a Treasure is committed unto them, which also must be brought unto us by their mouths and means, we must for our own parts, be careful to commend them unto his grace, that it would please him *to thrust forth such Laborers into his Harvest*, such as may be faithful and effectual instruments, to bring us to knowledge and faith, to repentance and salvation: and that he would distribute unto them that are chosen, such gifts as are requisite for them to do their duties, and discharge the administration committed unto them. For if we have not such as make conscience of their duties, woe unto the Church, there cannot a greater plague and judgment befall unto it.

Again, it is their duty to have a special care, as much as lieth in them, to choose faithful Ministers, and such as are apt to teach, & every way meet to execute that office. In the function of the Deacons, the Apostles charged the brethren to look out men of honest report, full of the holy Ghost, & of wisdom, whom they might appoint over that business, Acts 6, 3. much more ought this to be in them that have charge over men's souls. But (alas) how many are there, that would with all their hearts, that there were no Ministers at all, that the word of God were utterly buried and banished out of the world, that so they might spend their days in pleasure, and at last go to hell with ease? We cannot say that these do speak lies through hypocrisy, 1 Timoth. 4, 2. forasmuch as they do not hide their iniquity, their impiety, their blasphemy, but like mad dogs, or shameless beasts, do bark and bray against the truth, as if the very sound of the word did vex and torment them. O how, or when will these profane persons be brought to pray that the Flock may be attended with faithful Shepherds, the host of God furnished with trusty Captains, and the Corn of the field reaped by painful Laborers! Seeing then there are such filthy swine among us, that tread the precious Pearls of God under feet, such as care not how y^e church be served, or what Ministers they have, it is just with God to send them such as famish the flock, but do not feed it: such as betray the host, but do not defend it: such as ruin the house, but do not rear it up. Lastly, the Church, seeing this public and peculiar commending of them that are ordained of God, should learn to acknowledge them to be set over them of God, and by it be stirred up to receive them and reverence them, and so have them in singular love for their works sake, submitting themselves unto thē in such things as pertain to their office and function. Let every man therefore be careful, as if it were for his own business, seeing it is for his own benefit and profit. Every man hath his part in this work: and everyone is endangered by it, if it be not sincerely executed.

[Verse 14.15. *Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine. And after that shall the Levites go in to do the service of the Tabernacle, &c.*] Here is a reason rendered, why the Levites must be cleansed and washed when they are brought

before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, because they are his. True it is, all creatures are his, Psal. 50. but the Levites are his by a special right, they are his servants to serve in the Tabernacle. For the better understanding of this point, observe that there is a threefold kind of service and servants, by creation, by sanctification, and by function. By creation, all must do service unto God, and are under his power and providence. All men, though they strive never so much, yet shall be compelled to stoop and yield unto him; *For who hath resisted his will?* Rom. 9.19. Thus all the Reprobate, yea the devils themselves bow to him and do him service against their wills. And in this sense the Prophet saith, *All are his servants*, Psalm 119.91. Such are they whom God useth as instruments to serve his providence, and so was Cyrus (the raiser up of the Persian Monarchy) his servant to do his will, who is therefore called *his shepherd, and his anointed*, Isaiah 44.28. and 45.1. By sanctification they are the servants of God, who are redeemed from the bondage of sin and Satan to serve the Lord in holiness and true righteousness all the days of their life, Luke 1, 74, 75. Rom. chap. 8.22. There is no comfort or consolation in being the servant of God in the first sense, because the devils and dumb creatures, and all damned spirits have as great a portion in it as we: but this is our comfort, if we be his servants by piety and faith. Lastly, such also are said to be his servants as serve him, not only in the common profession of godliness, but in regard of some special function and office wherein they are employed. Thus are Magistrates called his servants, Rom. 13, 6. and Christ himself, Isaiah. 53, 11. *My righteous servant shall justify many.* So Moses, Josh. 1, 2. and David, Psal. 18. Thus are the Levites in this place called the Lord's, and said to serve him in a special work, and Psal. 134, 1. *Bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.* So then, the point to be considered from hence is this, that all the Ministers are the Lord's servants appointed to serve him in the work of the Ministry, whether they be called extraordinarily or ordinarily, they must consider they are the Lord's. Thus he speaketh by the Prophet, Jeremiah 35.15. and 25.4. *I have sent unto you all my servants the Prophets, rising up early, that ye may turn every man from his evil ways.* Thus the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 4.1. *Let a man so think of us, as of the Ministers of Christ.* And in 1. Tim. 1.12. *Christ Jesus accounted me faithful, and put me in his service.* No man therefore must think it any way to be any disgrace or disparagement unto him, but rather a credit and honor to be the Lord's servant employed in a special place of service, as it were near to his person. If it be esteemed as an high degree of honor to belong to some Nobleman, or to some Prince: it is a greater preferment to belong to the King of Kings.

[Reason 1] For the Ministers are called and separated to that end and purpose. Paul speaking of him self saith, *He was a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle*, Rom. 1, 1. *Separated unto the Gospel of God, not of men, neither by man*, Gal. 1, 1. *but by the will of God*, 1 Cor. 1, 1. Every man must be mindful of his calling, and consider by whom he was called, & take heed he pass [Reason 2] not the bounds wherein he is set. Secondly, they have sundry titles given to them, which are not idle, but serve to put them in mind of their service; they are called *Messengers*, Mal. 3, 1. Mark 1, 2. Luk. 7.27. they are called *Ambassadors*, 2 Cor. 5, 20. they are called *Stewards of the house*, 1 Cor. 4, 1, 2. they are called *Soldiers that must seek to please their Captain*, 2 Tim. 2, 1. and such like.

[Use 1] This serveth to reprove such as neither can nor will do their masters business. There are many think it a great disgrace, & a base thing for them to do that service which they ought, who notwithstanding are not ashamed to take wages of their master. Many give themselves to serve the world, and have so filled their mouths with gravel, that they have emptied their minds of grace. These do so savor of the earth, and of earthly things, and busy themselves to enrich their coffers, that they have little care of the flock of Christ. But we cannot serve two masters, we cannot serve God and Mammon, Math 6, 24. We must not entangle our selves in the affairs of this life, 2 Tim. 2, 4 Woe also unto all ignorant Ministers that can do nothing, which are blind guides, and cannot see to do their masters business: if thē these do lead the blind, being blind themselves, both must fall into the ditch, Mat. 15, 14. We may join unto these such as are idle and unconscionable, and cannot be brought to take any pains, who never consider y^t they are charged to preach *in season, and out of season*, 2 Tim. 4, 2. Lastly, it meeteth with such as are scandalous in life, and as unsavory salt, who serve not the Lord, but their own belly, Rom, 16, 18. *A servant honoreth his master*, saith the Prophet, Mal. 1, 6. but such dishonor the Lord by their evil life, and make themselves unworthy either to do the work, or to receive the wages.

Secondly, the Ministers being God's Servants [Use 2] are put in mind of three things, fidelity, sincerity, & conformity. The first is a notable property in a good servant to be faithful unto his master, he must not purloine from him, but show all good fidelity, Tit. 2, 10. that so they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. Thus ought it to be in the Ministers, when they see the sword coming, they must blow the Trumpet, lest if any do perish through their silence, their blood be required at the watchman's hand, Ezek. 3.18. they must keep back nothing that is unprofitable unto them, Acts 20, chapt. 20. but declare unto them the whole counsel of God, Verse 27. It is required in Stewards that a man be found faithful, 1 Cor. 4. verse 2. for they must give an account to their Lord and master, Heb. 13, 17. an account not of silver and gold, but of that which over-valueth all the treasures of the world, to wit, the souls of mē, which cost a great price to redeem, 1 Pet. 1.19. Secondly, there must be sincerity in them and integrity, doing his business with a true heart and a right affection, not for sinister & by-respects, but to obey his will. Blessed are those servants that seek his glory, and not their own; that seek to approve themselves to Christ, not to the world, as men-pleafers; neither hunt after the praise and applause of foolish men: and therefore the Apostle saith, Galat. 1.10. *Do I seek to please men? If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.* Nay, Christ himself witnesseth that he came not to seek his own glory, but his fathers, John. 8, 50. *I seek not mine own glory, there is one that seeketh and judgeth.* Let us altogether in this work forget our selves, that we may remember our master, & tread our own honor in the dust, y^t we may exalt his. Lastly, we must be conformable to Christ Jesus, & be ready as his servants to take up our cross & follow him. We shall be sure to meet with many crosses, and to suffer diverse afflictions in the discharge & for the discharge of our Ministry, all which we must be content to endure, and be ready to possess our souls with patience; remembering that the Apostles departed from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for y^e name of Christ, Acts 5, 41. It is enough for the servant to be as his Lord is, Math. 10, 24. Will any earthly servant desire a better

condition, then his master hath? Let it therefore content us, that we bear no more, nay not so much as he did bear. If we will live with him, we must be ready to die with him; and if we will reign with him in the life to come, we must suffer with him in this present life, 2 Tim. 2, 11, 12, if we deny him, he will deny us before his Father and his holy Angels.

[Use 3] Lastly, the people are from this Title remembered of their duties, which may be reduced to these three heads, a reverend estimation, an humble submission, and withal a necessary limitation. For first, seeing the Ministers of God are his servants, the servants of the most high God, and put in their Office by his authority, *That led captivity captive, & gave gifts unto men*, Ephes. 4.8: we ought so to esteem of them, as of the Ministers of Christ, 1 Cor. 4, 1. which we shall do, if we acknowledge that we have to do with God and his ordinance, whensoever the word is brought unto us. If an earthly Prince should send a messenger unto any of us, he is regarded for the Princes sake that sent him. We are *Ambassadors for Christ*, saith the Apostle, *as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God*, 2 Cor. 5, ver. 20. and therefore we should be heard, received, and respected for our Masters sake.

Again, they must submit themselves to our doctrine, not only when we hear pleasing things, precious promises, and gracious comforts, but when we hear the word sounding an alarm in our ears, uttering reproofs, delivering threatenings, and denouncing judgments. We see in human things, we are content to accept of the excuse of men, that say they are but servants and messengers: they crave pardon because they are servants, and they obtain it. So standeth the case with us, we are sent of God who hath put his word into our mouths, *The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?* Let us not therefore be blamed, we are Messengers, we cannot but do our message, for the love of almighty God & of his people constraineth us. How then should we hold our peace, when we are commanded to speak?

Lastly, this Title importeth a limitation, for no more is to be ascribed unto us then unto servants. We are indeed as the Stewards of the house, not in the number of the lowest and meanest servants, howbeit yet we are servants, as 1 Cor. 3, 5. What is *Paul*, or *Cephas*, or *Apollos*, but the Ministers by whom ye believe? And therefore when *Cornelius* ascribed more to *Peter* then should be yielded to a servant, he forbad him, saying, *Stand up, for I myself also am a man*. But not many in our days offend this way, we have turned honoring of them into contempt, and are so far from falling at their feet, that we are ready to trample them under our feet, and make them our foot-stool: who are for no other cause accounted our enemies, but because they tell us the truth.

[Verse 23, 24. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, This is it that belongeth unto the Levites: from twenty and five year old, &c.*] In these words we have a limitation annexed by the express commandment of God, touching the time of entering into the office of the Levites, to wit, at the age of 25. years. This may seem to be contrary to that which we noted before, chap. 4, 23, 31, 33. where the age of thirty years is appointed. If then it be asked how it cometh to pass, that in these several places several times are assigned for their election into the office? and how it falleth out that five years are cut off which before were granted? I answer, [Answer.] here is no contrariety, these Scriptures are thus to be reconciled. The five years restrained

in this place, which were enlarged before, served for trial and probation of such as entered into the office and service of the Sanctuary. For, when they were five and twenty years old, they began to join themselves with the rest, and to minister before the Lord; but being thirty, and found fit, they entered fully and wholly upon their calling: and therefore Chapt. 4. verse 3. *Moses saith, Fit to do the work:* but in this place they are said, *to go in to execute*. Even as such as must go to war are first trained and mustered, and taught how to fight and skirmish, that afterward they may know how to buckle on their armor in earnest, and to look the enemy in the face: so was it in this spiritual warfare, they were for a certain time trained, which years once expired, they were admitted. The Doctrine from hence is this, that the Ministers must be proved, tried, & examined before they be admitted to teach the people. The Apostles did not by their sole authority, appoint one to succeed in place of *Judas*, who was fallen from y^e Apostleship, but they brought two forth, and presented them or set them up before the people, that they might judge whither they were fit or not, Acts 1, 23. The Church ought not to appoint any to the holy Ministry without good trial of their ability and sufficiency; forasmuch as two were set up, and caused to stand before the congregation, that it might be known whether they were such persons as ought to be chosen, and that any man might object against them, if he had ought to object. [Object.] But it may be said, Is this apposing or examining necessary at all times, and to be used toward all persons? I answer, if they be fully and famously known to them that have the right of choosing and trying, it is not needful: howbeit it is necessary that they should offer themselves to this examination. We see this in schools of learning; such as are to be preferred to any dignity that is void, there is an examination required, albeit the parties to be chosen be never so sufficient, and their sufficiency fully known to such as have the voices of election in their hands: how much more then ought this to be, in this most weighty business of the Church? This is farther apparent out of the Apostle, 1 Tim. 3, 10. Let these also first be proved, then let them use the office of a Deacon, being found blameless; so that they ought not, before they be proved: and when he saith, *Let these also*, he signifieth, that the Ministers of the Church ought to undergo this trial. Besides, they must be without reproof, and have good report of all, Tit. 1, 6. But it cannot be known whether they be blameless without examination and trial going before. And this standeth upon good reason.

[Reason 1] For first, he is to take upon him a greater charge, then they that have most costly jewels and precious pearls of wonderful price committed unto them: forasmuch as he is to govern the sons and daughters of the King of heaven and earth, and hath the price of the blood of Christ committed unto him, Acts 20, 28.

Secondly, there be many subtle workers and deceitful dealers, transforming themselves into Angels of light, 2 Cor. 11, 13, 14, and into the Apostles of Christ: they have indeed sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves, Math. 7, 15. They seek craftily and cunningly to creep in, that they may hurry and weary the flock, and then destroy and devour it, Acts 20, 29, 30. They speak perverse things, to draw away disciples after them, ver. 30. If then there be not a narrow search and trial made of their doctrine and conversation, before they be admitted into the Ministry, they have a gate and gap opened unto them to enter to the ruin of the Church.

Thirdly, the office of Deacons was a function of less duty and danger in the Church; they were only to attend upon the poor, and yet they must not have admission without due trial and examination, as Acts 6, 3. They must look out men of honest report from among them, to appoint over this business: and the Apostle expressly chargeth, *that they should be tried*, 1 Tim. 3, 10. If then it be necessary for a Deacon, much more for a Minister: if for him that hath regard but to one part of the Church, much more for him that hath charge over the whole: and if for him that is occupied in the distribution of money, much more for him that is occupied in the dispensation of the word and Sacraments.

Fourthly, because the counsel and advice of more for trial is thought needful to be used in matters of less importance, in all which, two eyes see more then one: as when a man taketh upon him the profession of physic, whose care is only to see to the health and good estate of the body, albeit he hath spent many years in the study of the liberal arts, yet is he by the law to pass the hands of four approved Doctors, whether he be meet for that practice or not: how much more ought this to be regarded in the spiritual Physician that is to cure the diseases of the soul, which are more manifold to be numbered, more secret to be discerned, more difficult to be healed, and more dangerous if they be not remedied?

Fifthly, this will make them to be more regarded, and better accepted, even as the Ministers of Jesus Christ, and it will procure more authority to their persons.

Sixthly, it will stop the door against all insufficient and unlearned Ministers, they will not dare or presume to offer themselves to have entrance into the Church of God; yea, it will cut off all hope from them, when they shall understand, that there are many vigilant eyes of vigilant watchmen set upon them to keep them out, and to lock the door fast against them.

This serveth notably to meet with the [Use 1] horrible abuse hereof, practiced in popery. True it is, they dare not deny the truth & use of this, or utterly reject this doctrine: yet they do no better then make a mock of it, as they do also of many other things. For do they examine them that come to enter into the Order of Priesthood, according to the rule of the Apostle, 1 Tim. 3, 2. Whether they be vnreproueable, sober, watchful, modest, harberous, wise, gentle, apt to teach, able to convince, and such as govern well their own families? Do they go about to try & prove, or do they demand and enquire, whether they be no drunkards, no quarrellers, no covetous persons, which be the qualities that God requireth them to be adorned withal? No, there is no question made of these, or of any of them, all these lie deeply buried, and little regarded. And instead of these they call the parties before them, then the Bishop or else the Arch-Deacon his Deputy examineth them, I warrant you, of some deep points of profound divinity, able to astonish a young nouice; as first, whether they be 25. years old? Secondly, whether they understand any Latin, which a Grammar-scholar, & a young child may quickly do? Thirdly, whether they be legitimate and not bastards or base borne, that is, whether their father were an honest man, and their mother an honest woman? Fourthly, they must mark and handle every member of their body, whether they be sound, and number their eyes, their ears, their hands, their fingers, their feet; and if they mi: strust, they must put off their shoes, to see whether they be of wood or of flesh: they must have no defect or deformity of body; but of the blindness and blemishes,

of the lameness and maimednes of the mind, there is no enquiry. Fifthly, whether they ha• chaste flesh. What is that? whether they keep a Concubine, and be unclean in life, and given to whoredom? No, but it is, whether they have married two wives, or else a widow: as for other incontinency, the rule is, if they cannot live chastely, they must deal charily, or warily and closely. Sixthly, how long they have been in Orders, and what, when, & of whom they have received their Orders? Lastly, what living they have to maintain them, either by inheritance or by benefice? These are great points of learning, which the popish Priests must be able to answer: these are deep mysteries, but as the Apostle saith, *They are the depths of Satan*. For can day and night, can light and darkness, can heat and cold be more contrary, then these things are to the institution and ordinance of God? To name these fooleries and babbles, is sufficient confutation of them, and therefore we will pass by them, and come to our selves.

Secondly, we have a direction from hence, [Use 2] given to the Overseers of the Church, to take great heed they give not an easy entrance and access into the Church, to such as are for knowledge, defective, and for life, offensive. The Apostle hath a worthy exhortation to *Timothy, I charge the before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality: lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins, &c.* 1 Tim. 5, 21, 22, 24, 25. If some be rash, we must not join with them, & think our selves discharged, if we can say, I was not alone, or I was not the chief and principal, or others were as forward as I; I could not gain-say it, I was loath to be singular & to devide myself from the rest. For we must show our dislike of bad courses, and if we cannot stop the course of evil, we must not be silent and hold our peace, but open our mouths, & speak against it, or else we make our selves partakers of other men's sins. So it was with *Joseph of Arimathea*, he would not consent to other men's sins. He was a Disciple of Jesus, John 19, 38: an honorable Counselor that waited for the kingdom of God, Mark. 15, 42: a good and just man; he consented not to the counsel and deed of them that judged the Lord of life to be worthy of death, Luke 23, 50, 51. For whosoever doth not resist evil, he consenteth and agreeth unto it, and he that doth not avert from wrong and keep away injury from another when he is able, is as much in fault as if he lifted up his hand to do wrong himself. It is not enough for us to look to our own ways, but we must overlook the ways of others: for if we join with them, we are accessory to their evils. In sin, some are principal, and some are accessories, by the laws of GOD and men: and both ways we shall bring upon our selves the judgments of God.

Lastly, let all Pastors, of what gifts soever [Use 3] they be, and how richly soever they are furnished with excellent graces, and in what manner soever they are qualified, though they be abundantly stored and furnished with all learning divine and human, yet they must willingly submit themselves to this trial, and undergo this examination. It ought to be in well ordered Churches, as it is in well ordered Cities. No man is admitted to set up in any mystery, but such as offer some piece of work to the Masters of the Company, to declare their skill in that faculty, for which they are purposed to open their shop: So should such as intend the ministry of the word, as it were to give a taste of their skil & knowledge by subjecting themselves to this examining. It doth not argue any want of gift, to be ready to

have our gifts proved, but the contrary giveth just cause of suspicion of some want. There is no man that hath good & pure gold, is unwilling to bring it to the touchstone, but he that hath the counterfeit. It is not the just dealing tradesman that is afraid to have his weights or the mete-yard brought in place, but the deceiver. The Gentiles which sometimes speak of our religion, do serve as witnesses, to teach us the state of former times. We read in *Lampridius* writing the life of *Alexander Seuerus*, that the Emperor in choice of his Magistrates made them stand openly to be examined of any man, and allowed any to make exceptions against them, *Because* (saith he) *the Jews and Christians used this order in choosing their Ministers.* If both the Jews and the Christians observed this order, what warrant have we to break it, or to take up another order? And if that Emperor would have this observed in the Commonwealth, why not much rather in the Church? It shall be an honor unto us to be content to be tried. It will manifest our humility, that we are not high conceited of our selves and of our own gifts: yea, it shall serve the more to our comfort throughout the whole course of our lives, & the administration of our office. Thus did *Samuel* offer himself to the trial, & was content to hear what any man could object against him, 1 Sam. 12, 3. *Behold, here I am, witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed, whose Ox have I taken? or whose asse, &c.* Happy are those Ministers that follow this example: and happy are those Churches that follow that order which GOD hath appointed.

CHAP. IX.

1. AND the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, &c.

2. Let the Children of Israel also keep the Passover at his appointed season, &c.

IN this Chapter *Moses* proceedeth to show the manner of their sanctification, wherein observe two things: the first concerning the Passover; the second concerning the cloud covering the Tabernacle, and governing the remouings & encampings of the Israelites. The Passover is double, the one for such as were clean, the other for such as were unclean. The former Passover containeth the commandment of God, and the obedience of *Moses*. Touching the commandment, we have here a repetition of the feast of the Passover instituted before, as we see, *Exod. 12.* But wherefore doth God again mention it in this place? It was for two causes: first, because such is our slackness and security in holy things, that except God's commandment be daily urged, repeated, and beaten into our hearts, we quickly forget the same, *Phil. 3.1. 1 Thess. 4, 2.* Secondly, the Israelites did not certainly know, whether they should celebrate it in their journeys in the wilderness, or not, *Exod. 12, 25.*

All feasts were instituted to teach men to know God and his Son Jesus Christ, and to praise him for his benefits. So the Passover was ordained to keep in remembrance the wonderful and miraculous deliverance of the people out of Egypt, and that they might be taught to look for deliverance by Jesus Christ the Lamb of God, slain touching the virtue & efficacy of it, even from the beginning of the world. This Passover was the second ordinary sacrifice of the

Jews, touching the eating of the Paschal Lamb, whereby the remembrance of their departure out of Egypt was celebrated, and the death of Christ the true Passover was represented. So then, it had respect and relation, partly to the time past, and partly to the time to come.

In handling hereof, we must consider, first, the circumstances, both of place where it was observed, to wit, at *Sinai*, where the law had been delivered, for as yet they were not gone from that place: and of the time prescribed before, on the 14. day of the first month. Secondly, the Passover it self, both the substance of it, and the rites; both the matter and the manner of the celebrating of it, Deut. 16, 1, 2. Exod. 12. The Sum whereof is this: Every householder was commanded to take a Lamb without blemish, verse 5. a male of the first year for his house, and kill it at evening, verse 6. then they must take the blood, & strike it on the two side-posts, and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they did eat it, verse 7. and they must eat the flesh of it not raw or sodden with water, verse 9. but roste with fire, verse 8. with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs; nothing must remain of it until the morning: if there did, it must be burnt with fire, verse 10. And all this must be done with girding up of their garments, with putting on of their shoes, & the taking of their walking staves in their hands, as men that were in haste, that must fly for their lives, verse 11. All this being literally considered, belongeth nothing unto us: for the Passover is passed over together with the law of ceremonies, and all these rites have an end: howbeit the Lord meant that these should be figures of things to come, whereof we have now the truth and substance, since the time that our Lord Jesus Christ hath been manifested to the world. This is the cause why *S. Paul* telleth the Colossians, that these things were but shadows, the body whereof is in Christ. Let us therefore come in particular to the uses which we are to make of this Passover; the ground and foundation whereof is to be taken out of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 5, 7, 8. *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* As then the Jews had their Passover, so the Christians have their Passover: as they had their Lamb, so we have our Lamb: as they kept their Feast, so we must keep our Feast. For God never meant and intended to ordain any ceremony among his people, which contained not some inward signification and profitable instruction to the end of the world. If we have ceremonies that serve not to some good end, we may boldly pronounce, that mā and not God is the author of them.

Observe therefore from this type, that Christ Jesus is our Passover that was sacrificed [Use 1] for us. *John* the Baptist pointeth him out with the finger, and expresseth the meaning of this figure, saying, *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world*, John 1, 29, 36. And afterward in the history of the passion it is shown, that the soldiers which brake the legs of the thieves which were crucified with him, brake not his legs, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, *A bone of him shall not be broken*, John 19, 36. These words are spoken in the law of the Paschal Lamb: thus doth *John* apply the type to the truth it self, and thereby maketh the Paschal Lamb a figure of Christ, the only person put apart by God the Father to be the ransom of the world, who hath by his obedience & the merit of his passion taken away from all that believe in his Name, both among the Jews and Gentiles their sins of all sorts, satisfying the severe justice of God to their endless comfort and salvation. Hence it is, that

the Prophets and Apostles say, He was brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth, Isaiah 53, 5. Gal. 2, 20. 1 Pet. 1, 19. Revel. 5, 9. Acts 8, 32. There is no other way that could relieve us and redeem us, all the most precious things in the world were too base, and all creatures in heaven and earth too weak to work this wonderful work, Isaiah 59, 16. Heb. 2, 14. and 10, 14. Now, we must understand, that he remoueth our sins four ways; by ablation, by imputation, by expiation, and by mortification. First, he taketh thē away from us, by removing the guilt and the punishment from us; again, as our surety he put them upon himself. And thus by imputation our sins became his, and his righteousness is made ours, because he that knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2. Cor. 5, 21. He bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we should live unto righteousness, 1 Pet. 2, 24. Furthermore, he hath taken away sins when he removed them out of the sight of God by expiation and propitiation, 1 John 2, 2, 3. Isaiah 38, 17. Mich. 7, 19. Lastly, he remoueth them away in this life by mortification, and in death by perfect sanctification. These things being duly considered, nothing should rejoice a man more then the remembrance of Christ's death, whereby the bondage of all misery and the misery of all bondage is taken from us, Acts 2, 26. This made the Apostle say, *God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Gal. 6, ver. 14. He felt in his soul the wrath of God, the terrors of death, and the torments of hell for us, Isaiah 53, 10, 11, 12. John 12, 27. Math. 26, 38. which made him cry out, that he was forsaken, Math 27, 46. This was figured out by the roasting of the Lamb with fire: for the wrath of God due to us and our sins was kindled as a furnace made seven times hotter then it was wont to be made, and he was cast into the burning fiery furnace. He trode the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him, Isaiah 63, verse 3. In him we have the remedy for all evils, and can have salvation from none other, Acts 4, 12. and therefore we must all come unto him. Whosoever is sick, I speak of spiritual sickness, let him make haste to Christ, for he is the Physician of our souls, Math. 9, verse 12. He that is hungry, let him go to him, for he is the bread that came down from heaven, John. 6, verse 33. He that is dry through heat, and thirsty, let him make haste and run with speed unto him, for he is a well of water springing up to eternal life, John 4, verse 14. He that is covered with the dark mists of ignorance, let him seek to him, for he is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, John 1, verse 9. If we be pressed down with our unrighteousness and our sins, he is our righteousness and sanctification, 1 Corin. 1, verse 30. If we be in bondage, he is our redemption: if we find our own folly and simplicity toward all good things, he is our wisdom. If we fear death, he is our life: if we desire to ascend up to heaven, he is the way: if we would be delivered from error, he is the truth, John 14, ver. 6. If we would come unto the Father, he is the door, no man can come unto him but by him. This should move all impenitent persons to turn from sin unto righteousness, and from the kingdom of Satan, unto God; and this will move us, if anything in the world will. Every man is by nature the servant of sin & bondslave of Satan. Christ Jesus, to heal us of this plague-sore, when no other physic could cure us, made a plaster of his own blood: the pain which he took in the making of it, caused him to sweat drops of water and blood, and cost him his life: then woe be to us, if we lay not this precious plaster to our harts which will draw away the corruption of thē, and work a speedy and certain cure: forasmuch as by continuing in sin, we

frustrate the death of Christ, and as much as lieth in us, crucify the Son of God afresh unto our selves, and put him to an open shame, Hebr. 6, 6. For our sins are the nails that nailed to the Cross his hands and his feet, and as the spear that thrust him to the heart. When the Israelites did eat the Passover in Egypt, and sprinkled the blood of the Lamb upon the posts of their doors, the Angel, sent to destroy, passed over their houses, and destroyed them not: but the Egyptians, whose dooreposts were not sprinkled, were destroyed by the destroyer. So if we feed on Christ by a lively faith, and sprinkle the doors of our harts with his blood, the judgments of God in this life, and the terrible curse of death with the fearful sentence of condemnation, and all punishments rightly due to our sins shall pass over us, and shall not come near to us, so much as to touch us. But contrariwise, if we lay not hold on Christ, all these curses shall come vpō us & overtake us. For as it was not enough for the Israelites to kill the Lamb, but they must sprinkle the blood thereof upon the posts of their own doors, not of other men; so must we by a lively faith apply his merits. And as the blood of the Lamb did figure out the blood of Christ, so the sprinkling of it upon the door posts representeth the sprinkling of it upon our hearts, to deliver us from eternal death, without which it can profit us nothing at all.

Secondly observe, that as the Passover [Use] was an ordinary Sacrament of the Old Testament, so it is a type answering fitly and fully to the Lord's Supper, a Sacrament of the New Testament. For that which the Passover was to the Jews, the same is the last Supper of Christ to Christians, and came in place of it. This is the cause why the Lord Jesus delivered his last Supper at the evening, immediately after the eating of the Paschal Lamb, to show that it came in place thereof: to which circumstance of time the church is not bound, and therefore instead of the evening, we use the morning, and for the day we make choice of the Sabbath before other days, and touching the time of y^e day, we do it before meat, not after supper.

Now consider the resemblances between these Sacraments. As one is called the Lord's Passover, Exod. 12.12. so this is called the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor. 11 20. God calleth the Lamb the Paschal Lamb, because the Angel in the common destruction passed over the houses of the Israelites: so Christ calleth the bread by the Name of his body that was broken for us, Luke 22.19. The Lord speaking of the ends of the rites used in the Passover, saith, This shall be for a memorial, Exod. 12.14. and a sign unto them, Exodus. 13.9. so Christ saith, *Do this in remembrance of me*, Luke. 22.19. God saith of the Lamb, *Take ye*, Exod. 12.5. Christ saith of the bread, *Take ye*, Matth. 26.26. God saith of the Paschal Lamb, *Eate ye*, verse 11. Christ saith of the bread in the Supper, *Eate ye*; and of the Cup, *Drink ye*. Thus we see there is a notable coherence between both these. Wherein we must mark, that the Scripture speaking of the Sacraments, giveth to y^e outward Sign the name of the thing signified, so that they have the names of those things given to them which they seal and represent, Gen. 17.10. 1. Cor. 10, 4, 16. and 11.24. Luke 22.22. Both because to all the faithful and true believers, the things themselves are given with the signs, and because our affections should be lifted up from earth to heaven, from the elements to Christ and his blessings, represented, offered, and exhibited by them; and because we are full of doubting and unbelief like to *Thomas* one of the twelve, we will not believe the promises until in some measure we feel them in our hearts.

Whereby we see clearly and evidently, that the ground of transubstantiation, & of the real presence, is weak and tottering, built upon the sand of man's invention, not upon the infallible rock of the word of God. The Church of Rome will have the words taken literally, and not figuratively: but this overthroweth the certainty of our faith, fighteth against the grounds of right reason, and implieth sundry gross contradictions. For at the first institution and celebration of the Supper, it maketh two Christ's, one that giveth, another that is given: one at the Table, another in the mouths and stomachs of the disciples. In which of these shall we believe? in both we must not, forasmuch as we are commanded to believe in Christ, as in one, not in Christ's, as speaking of many; as it was said to *Abraham*, in his seed, not in his seeds, Gal. 3.16.

Secondly, it overthroweth the Sacrament, consisting of two parts, a visible sign and an invisible grace signified: but if the bread were really the body of Christ, then there could be no outward sign to represent the inward grace.

Thirdly, it maketh the body of Christ to be in more places than one at one time, which destroyeth the nature of a true body.

Fourthly, the Apostle calleth it bread oftentimes, even after consecration, 1 Cor. 10.16. and 11.26, 27, 28.

Lastly, the wicked as well as the godly should receive Christ, nay mice and rattes as well as they; which is horrible blasphemy to imagine and determine. But of this I have spoken more at large elsewhere. But they object, that men in their last Wills speak plainly that they may be understood. It is true indeed, and so did Christ speak plainly; but they make him speak absurdly. To speak plainly, and yet withal, figuratively, are not contrary one to another. For it is plain, that at the same time Christ himself used as figurative a speech as this, John. 14.6. and 15.1. *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: I am the true Vine, ye are the branches:* yea, in the institution of the Supper, we must of necessity acknowledge a figure, Luke 22.10. The Cup is the New Testament. And there is oftentimes more plainness and evidence in a figure, then in a proper speech uttered without a figure: as also these words, *This is my Body*, are much more comfortable to us, then if it had been barely said, *This is a figure of my body*, because they manifest the near conjunction of the sign with the thing signified in so much that they which partake the one, shall be assured to receive the other

To proceed a little further in this point of y^e Passover and the Supper, we have somewhat to observe, touching our obedience. The Jews were to go to the celebration hereof far and near, to the place that the Lord should choose; and therefore nothing should be so carefully esteemed as these exercises of our religion, which by the ordinance of God, represent, seal, and apply unto us the benefits of Christ's death and Passion. The Passover under the Law, was frequented of all Israel, albeit it were done with long journeys and tedious travels and troubles: So ought this Sacrament of Christ's Supper, it should be oftentimes received, 1 Cor. 11.26. Things that are sweet and comfortable, dear and pleasant to a man, are oftentimes remembered and used. If our bodies be hungry, we shall delight to refresh and repast our selves; and if we have hungry souls, that long after Christ the Bread of Life and the food of

them, (for he is meat indeed and drink indeed) we will often desire to feed upon him, which bringeth with it eternal life. If a man have no desire to his food, it is a sign of an evil stomach, and a forerunner of death, when the appetite is gone and cannot be recovered: so when we have no desire at all to the bread of life, neither feel how greatly we stand in need thereof, we have little strength of the Spirit and of the life of God in us, we draw near by little and little unto death, I mean the death of our souls, which is nothing else but a separation of us from GOD and from his kingdom.

Thirdly, they which celebrate the memorial [Use 3] of their redemption and deliverance from hell & damnation by the sufferings of Christ, must purge themselves of their old leaven, that is, ought by unfeigned and renewed repentance to be purged and washed from their wickedness and uncleanness, & bring with them a clear and good conscience, an holy & resolute purpose to serve the Lord in truth and sincerity, in holiness and righteousness.

The Israelites must have no leaven in any of their houses and habitations while the Passover lasteth; whosoever kept any, was to be cut off from his people, Exodus 12, verses 8, 15. and 13, 3, 7. Leviticus 23, verse 6. Numbers 28, verse 17. Deuteronomy 16, verse 4. Joshua 5, verse 11. 2 Chronicles 30, 13, 21. and 35, 17. Ezra 6, verse 22. Ezek. 45, verse 21. Math. 26, verse 17. &c. The Apostle expresseth the meaning hereof, 1 Corin. 5. ver. 7, 8. Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malicioiusness and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth: purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. We therefore that profess our selves to be true Christians, should at all times, but then especially, when we celebrate the remembrance of Christ's death in the use of the Sacraments, prepare our selves in a most religious and holy manner, that so we may come aright, to his glory, and our comfort. When *Jacob* was appointed by God to offer sacrifice at *Bethel*, he sanctified and prepared all his people, Gen. 35, verses 2, 3. All that came to the Passover were commanded to sanctify themselves, 2 Chron. 35, 4. The Priests were commanded to sanctify themselves, and to prepare their brethren, verse 6. This consisteth in two things, in purging out of the old leaven of sin, and in being a new lump endued with the gifts of sanctification, that is, to leave off to do evil, and to learn to do good. And we must in doing good things prove our selves in these few particulars, what our knowledge, faith, repentance, and charity is.

Knowledge is the ground and foundation of all the rest, and therefore it is required of all, to understand the grounds and principles of our Christian Religion, especially we must be acquainted with the doctrine of this Sacrament, both with the signification of the signs and the graces sealed up by them. Faith also we must have in us, which is in truth the first saving grace, it is the hand which we stretch out to touch Christ, in whom all fullness dwelleth; of whose fullness we all receive, and grace for grace, John 1, 16. without whom we can do nothing that is good, John 15, 5. and without faith it is impossible to please God, Hebrews 11, 6. This is the root, the fountain, the mother of all graces; they are as the branches, the streams, the daughters of faith. Hereby we apprehend God's infinite love and mercy in Christ Jesus, and are persuaded that all our sins are pardoned, and that Christ, together with all his benefits is received. Repentance, which is a consequent of faith, is a changing of the mind,

an earnest loathing of that which is evil, and an earnest loving of that which is good. We must learn to hate our particular sins, we must mourn and lament in our inward bowels for them, and we must judge our selves, lest the Lord enter into judgment with us, and so we provoke his wrath against us and those that belong unto us, and stir him up to bring grievous plagues and fearful judgments against us, 1 Cor. 11, 28, 31. Wherefore, nothing ought to bring greater grief to us then this, to consider that we have so heinously offended the Majesty of God: and as our sins pierced him, so let us pierce our own hearts with this spear of repentance, that we have so wickedly misspent our time, abused his benefits, contemned his patience, abused our creation, calling, redemption, baptism, soul, body, word, Sabbaths, yea, all the gifts and graces of God: that we have in deed and in truth joined and even conspired with *Herod, Pilate, Annas, Caiaphas, Pharisees, Soldiers, passengers, Judas, & the rest of the Jews*, in crucifying the Lord of life.

If any ask, how can these things be? The Prophet telleth us, He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, Isaiah 53, verse 5. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed: so that we must acknowledge that our iniquities were the nails that pierced him, and our transgressions the spear that wounded him. We must labor to feel the greatness and horror of our sins, & withal strive to fashion our selves after the image and likeness of God, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives. Let us prepare our hearts and bodies to be his Temple to dwell in, and not make them as sinks for Satan and all foul spirits. Thankfulness is the next duty that is required, that we may be able to say unfeignedly with the Prophet *David*, considering how great things the Lord hath done for us, Psalm 116, verses 12, 13. *What shall I render unto the LORD, for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.* And undoubtedly, if they be no better then thieves & robbers which receive their corporal food and never lift up their eyes to heaven, which cannot be sanctified unto them but by y^e word and prayer: if such, I say, be usurpers that take the creatures of God without thanksgiving, how much rather ought we to give thanks to God for this heavenly food, the nourishment of our souls? The Israelites in remembrance of their Egyptian deliverance were commanded to continue the Passover forever; should not we then much rather keep our Christian Passover for our spiritual deliverance from our spiritual bondage of spiritual enemies? and say with the Prophet in a sweet feeling & mediation of these mercies, *Bless the Lord, O my soul? &c.* The last duty is charity toward our brethren: the former cannot be truly in us without this. *By this shall all men know that we are his disciples, if we love one another.* The effects and fruits of it are described, *It suffereth long, it enuyeth not, it is bountiful, &c.* It is required in so strict a manner, that if our gift be ready in our hands to offer unto God, yet if we be at ods with our brother, we must set it by, until we be reconciled. God is love, 1 John. 4.16. Satan is nothing but malice and envy. If we come in love, we come to God's Table; if we come in hatred, we come to the devils; *we cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: we cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table, and of the Table of devils.* Let us not therefore deceive our selves in thinking & persuading our selves we come to the Lord's Table, when we are far from it. For as God hath his Church, so the devil hath his Chapel: and as there is the Table of the Lord, so there is the table of devils. We must therefore take heed that we do not sacrifice

to devils, while we purpose to sacrifice to God, and I would not y^t ye should have fellowship with devils. To conclude, let this preparation always go before this holy action, let there be a ransacking of all the corners of our hearts and spirits, and a cleansing and clearing of them by true repentance. Let all governors of families prepare these that belong unto them, & fit themselves and them of their house to this work. Let us consider the mystery of the death of Christ to make it the means of our life: the cause of it, our sins: the merit of it, our redemption: the ende of it, the apprehending of Christ with all his benefits: the fruit of it, reconciliation to God, increase of faith, and newness of life.

[Use 4] Fourthly, as no unclean persons that were defiled, Num. 9.6. and no uncircumcised persons whose foreskinne was not cut away, Exod. 12.48. might eat of the Passover: so no profane person uncircumcised in heart, and unclean in his soul and conscience, hath any interest in the Lord's Supper. If he come unto it, and present himself at the Lord's Table, he is like to that guest that came to the feast, but had *not on him his wedding garment*, Matth. 22.11. as he followeth him in the sin, so he shall follow him in the punishment also. I deny not but such may partake of the bread, but they cannot receive the body and blood of Christ: and they shall not only bear the loss of the benefit, but also incur the danger of damnation. For as no unclean person might come to the Passover of the Lord, so no unclean person may come to the Supper of the Lord. Holy things may not be cast to dogs, neither pearls before swine, Matt. 7.6. These have no right to this Communion. Children are barred, because they cannot examine themselves: profane persons because they do not, because they will not. And how many are there that come in worse manner then children would do? For if infants and children were admitted, it is presumed they would come with greater reverence, their greatest sin would be their ignorance. Ignorance therefore is a bar against them: but are there not many in very many places that presume and present themselves at this Table, who besides their ignorance as great and as gross as that in children, do add profaneness of heart, make little conscience of the Sabbath and show small love to the word of God, and therefore do shut out themselves from this feast by a twofold bar?

Lastly, we saw before that *bitter herbs* were [Use 5] added to the Passover, it must not be eaten without them: which signifieth, that as the Passover was eaten with sour herbs, so Christ and the Cross are never severed one from the other: because all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution, 2. Tim 3.12. if we will be the disciples of Christ, we must deny our selves and take up our Cross and follow him, Matth. 16.24. Everyone would be partaker of the Passover, but they desire not the sour herbs: we would willingly taste of the sweet, but we care not for the bitter. We seem all ready to embrace Christ, but we shun the Cross, it is as bitter unto us as gall and wormwood. We must all therefore frame our selves to suffer afflictions as the good servants and soldiers of Christ for the faiths sake, and be content to drink of this cup which he hath begun unto us. *Paul* lived in great credit among the Pharisees before his conversion, but so soon as he was called to preach y^e Gospel, by and by they fought to kill him. It is a great comfort to suffer for righteousness sake. A good cause doth sweeten the bitterness of the Cross. Such are pronounced blessed by Christ. The Apostles went from the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the Name of Christ. It is no less honor to suffer for Christ's cause, then to believe in his Name.

Our Master Christ Jesus found no better entertainment: the world hated him before it hated us, they called him a Samaritan, and said he had a devil; they reproached him to be a glutton, a wine-bibber, and a friend of Publicans and sinners, he was despised of men, and esteemed as smitten of God; he came to his own, but his own received him not. If they have done this in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? The servant must not look to have a better estate and condition than his Lord, nor the disciple than his master: if they have persecuted him, they will also persecute us, he that is sent must not look to be greater than he that sent him. It is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his Lord: if they have called the master of the house *Beelzebub*, how much more shall they call them of his household? God's children shall be molested and afflicted, even in times of public peace. When the enemies of *Daniel* could find no matter against his person, they began to quarrel about his religion. To serve God in truth and sincerity is an heinous crime in the eyes of the world, who shall in the end give an account to him that will judge uprightly.

[Verse 6. *And there were certain men who were defiled by the dead, &c.*] Here is a description of the second Passover for such as were unclean; unclean, not by any sinful pollution, but by a legal or ceremonial uncleanness: not by any willing choice of their own, but by an inevitable necessity: and not by coming near those that were dead in spirit, but by touching the dead body of a man. In this, observe three things, a question, a consultation, and a resolution. The question is of the people: the consultation of *Moses*, the resolution of God. The people enquire at the mouth of *Moses*: *Moses* inquireth at y^e mouth of God: and God determineth the doubt and resolveth both the people & *Moses*. The question is, wherefor may we not receive y^e Passover with the rest of our brethren? wherefor are we kept back? this is amplified by the occasion, they were defiled by a dead corpse. The consultation is with God, which is the second point, *Moses* willeth them to be quiet & stand still, until he knew the mind of the Lord, ver. 8. he would determine nothing rashly, but he doubted and held them in doubt, until he knew of God what was to be done. A religious example of modesty, humility, and wisdom in the matters of God. He did not glory to have in his own breast an oracle to answer all doubts, nor challenge any power of freedom from error, as the man of sin in the pride of his own heart boasteth of himself. The third part is the resolution and determination of God, deciding the question, and making some laws extending to them and their posterity; first, if any were unclean, they had respite given them unto the second month: they have not liberty until the next year, but to the next month they are dispensed withal. Secondly, the man that is clean and refuseth to come, he shall be cut off, that is, excommunicated from the people. Thirdly, if a stranger desire to be partaker of the Passover, he must embrace the true religion, & be circumcised, *Exod.* 12.49. and then he may come.

Touching the question and the occasion thereof, it appeareth that those good men, which were shut out from this part of God's service by reason they were defiled by touching a dead body, were much grieved at heart, and troubled in mind, that they were barred and as it were banished from the Passover, having as great a desire as others to come unto it. Hence it is, that they make earnest moan and complaint to *Moses* for their separation: and therefore desire to be eased and relieved by him. The doctrine from hence is, that it is a great cause of sorrow and grief to God's dear children, when they are by any just occasion, or by the hand

of God upon them, withheld and kept back from the parts and exercises of his worship. We see this in *Hezekiah*, in his sickness, his chief lamentation and complaint was, that he should not see the face of the Lord in his Temple. *David* often complaineth and lamenteth that he was driven by his enemies from his worship. He maketh the condition of the sparrow & swallow better than his, which might come nearer to the altar than he, his soul panted and thirsted after God. The Church wept by the rivers of Babylon, when they remembered Zion and the songs they had sung in the Temple; and in another place, the Church, being by captivity deprived of the Temple, of their Synagogues, of their sacrifices, of their Sacraments, and of the exercises of their religion, maketh bitter complaint to God, *O Lord, they have cast thy Sanctuary into the fire, they have defiled thy dwelling place.* The incestuous Corinthian, being by excommunication put from the fellowship of the Saints, and the use of the Ministry, became comfortless, and was almost swallowed up with sorrow. 2 Cor. 2.7.

And can it be otherwise? The godly find [Reason 1] such sweetness, such comfort, such spiritual joy in the presence of God, where the exercises of his worship and religion are performed, as nothing in this life is more pleasant and delightful unto them. The Prophet crieth out, as if he were ravished with an holy contemplation of the excellency of this, *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, &c. The word is sweeter to them than the honey and the honey comb, and more to be desired than much fine gold. They feed upon the bread in the Sacraments, as upon the fatness of his house, & drink of the cup as of the rivers of his pleasures, they offer up prayers as sweet incense and lift up their hands as the evening sacrifice.* How then can it be, but y^t the loss & want of all these brought upon thē, should strike them to the heart, and minister matter of much grief and mourning unto them? Secondly, the great love and mercy of God toward his people doth appear in the exercises of religion and the place of his worship to them that are not altogether blind and deaf, and past all sense and feeling of good things, then in all other things throughout the whole world besides, Prov. 9.1.2. And indeed a man or woman that hath once tasted y^e comfort of his adoption and salvation in Christ, taught in the word, and confirmed in the Sacraments, will think it one of his greatest losses, to lose and leave these exercises, and the greatest plague to be deprived of them, and by them of the pledges of his goodness and favor. Thirdly, when these are gone, they know and consider the greatest stays and helps of their standing in the grace of God are utterly taken away from them, & therefore they have cause to lament, as Psal. 74.9. *We see not our signs, there is no more any Prophet, neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.* When he taketh away his word, he lifteth up his standard and goeth away. And can there be greater cause to mourn than when God departeth from his people?

[Use 1] This reproveth such as can lament bitterly and mourn heavily for the least earthly losses and troubles, but never trouble themselves for loss of spiritual things. It was not so with the wife of *Phinehas*, she had many causes of mourning met together by heavy tidings that were told unto her, her father in law had broken his neck, her husband was killed, the host of God discomfited, and the Ark of God was taken; howbeit among all these none went nearer, none so near unto her as the taking of the Ark: and therefore she doubleth this which she could not put out of her mind, and did after a sort put out all the rest, *The glory is*

departed from Israel, for the Ark of God is taken. But there are many in our days, that account it no loss at all, to lose Sermon after Sermon, Sacrament after Sacrament, and one meeting in the house of God after another: they can do this easily, and never mourn for it. Nay, they are vexed and tormented as if they were upon the rack, that they are constrained to come so often to the word, to the Sacraments, and to the house of prayer. See herein the great difference between the godly and ungodly. It is the voice of the faithful, *When will the Sabbath come:* but the unfaithful say, *When will the Sabbath day be done,* Amos 8.5. It is the voice of the faithful, *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house* Psal 84.4. but the unfaithful hold it a misery and bondage to be tied so strictly and straitly to the public exercises of religion. It is the voice of the faithful, *When shall I come and appear before God?* but the unfaithful say, *When shall we depart out of Zion, it is time we be gone.* It is the faithful man's voice complaining, *Woe is me that I sojourne in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar,* but y^e unfaithful think themselves unhappy, that they must sojourne in the Tabernacle of God, and dwell in his house. If then they be the children of God, y^t mourn because they cannot meet with the rest of their brethren in the Temple, and at the Table of the Lord, certainly they must be the children of the devil, that mourn and lament because they are at them, and such as do willingly and willfully, contemptuously and presumptuously absent themselves from them. It is noted of Christ our Savior, that he earnestly desired, or as it is in the Original by doubling the word, with a desire, *I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer:* whereby he showeth his fervent affection to join with them in this duty. So should it be with us: when one Sabbath is ended, we should long for the next: when one Communion is done, we should be ready to enquire after another: when one Sermon is ended, we should prepare for another; and account no day in the week so gracious, so welcome, so comfortable unto us as the Lord's day; then let us cheer up our spirits and refresh our souls with such provision as God hath appointed for us.

Secondly, it is a great judgment of God [Use 2] upon men, howsoever they account of it, and whatsoever they esteem of it, when they are given over to their own ways, and regard not at all the ways of God. Nay, it is an evident token of God's heavy judgment to be deprived of the Word and Sacraments, of the exercises of religion and of the meetings of the godly, as Psal. 74, 1. the church crieth out, *O God, why hast thou cast us off forever? Why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?* We all confess, that dearth and famine is a grievous plague, howbeit commonly we know no other then the famine of the body, when the tongue cleaveth to the roof of the mouth for thirst, and when the children say to their mothers, *Where is corn & wine?* but God threateneth a greater judgment then the famishment of the body, to wit, y^e pining and consuming away of the soul, through the famine of the word. It is accounted a great reproach for a subject to be denied the presence and protection of his Prince, and the freedom of his country; but these banish themselves from the presence of God. We should be all voluntary Communicants, but many are voluntary excommunicants: they exclude themselves from the Church, and execute the censures of the Church upon themselves. The Church complaineth (as we heard before) that y^e Lord cast them off: but these cast off themselves frō the Church, from God, from his ordinances. It is an evident sign of most strange profaneness and deadness of heart, when men have no delight, no feeling,

no comfort, no sweetness in the exercises of religion, when they cannot feed heartily of the fatlings, and drink greedily of the wines that are prepared by God for his family, the most delicate & delightful souls food that can be in the world, to wit, the hearing of the word, and the receiving of the Sacraments, of which more afterward. Esau is a pattern of this profaneness, who esteemed of these precious things more vilely than of a mess of meat, of the good of his soul then of the filling of his belly, of future happiness then of a present and momentary pleasure. Many such Esau's we have in our days, as wretched and profane as he.

Lastly, it ought to be the first and chiefest [Use 3] thing in all our wishes and desires, & we should carefully express it in our love and zeal, to have the pleasure and profit of God's house in greatest account for our good forever. This made the Prophet say, *O Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth.* I have desired this one thing above all other, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, one day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. O what will be their portion in this life, and what will be their punishment in the life to come, who have banished these desires out of their hearts, and renounced them in their practice, accounting the time tedious, and the day lost that is spent this way. O that such could consider betimes the fearful end and fall that waiteth for them, so long as they grow more and more weary of the heavenly Manna that would fall upon their souls as a gracious rain upon the tender herb. And as for us which thorough the goodness of God live under the Ministry of the word and have which Sacraments rightly ministered unto us, let us know & confess which it is our duty to render all praise & thanksgiving unto God, to labor to walk worthy of our calling, to express the power of them in our conversations, & to pray unto him earnestly for the continuance of them among us and our posterities, lest thorough our great unthankfulness and the abuse of them, they be taken from us, & given unto another people that will bring forth the fruits thereof.

[Verse 8. *And Moses said unto them, Stand still, &c.* In these words we have Moses his consultation with God: for here seemed to be a kind of contrary or Antinomy, that is, one law against another. The unclean might not come to the sacrifice; and besides, it was an heinous offense to omit this exercise of their faith, and profession of their religion, no less than excommunication. As for the touching of a dead body, or burying of the dead, it is a duty of charity, of humanity, and of necessity; should a work of such due respect and importance that might not be avoided, debar them from the Passover? These therefore seemed to be in a distress on both sides, and knew not which way to turn themselves in this maze; they might not come, and yet they might not well abstain: they must bury the dead, and yet the burial of the dead did exclude them. What shall they do between these two rocks that threaten shipwreck? if they do not bury the dead, they show want of charity: if they do, they bar themselves from a duty of piety, and could not partake of the Passover until the next year. Moses confesseth himself in this case after a sort entangled, & knew not what to resolve, therefore for his and their satisfaction he resolveth to refer the matter wholly to God; forasmuch as he had no authority to institute for them a new Passover. [Doctrine.] This teacheth us, in all matters of doubt, to ask counsel at the mouth of God. But how may this be? for we cannot ascend up to heaven to speak unto him. I answer, he speaketh unto us at this day, and that two ways, both in his word and by his Ministers; The Spirit speaketh

evidently in the Scriptures, by it he resolveth the Church, no less then by an oracle from heaven: besides, for our farther direction, he giveth the knowledge of his word to the Ministers, who draw all their light from the word, and do thereby ask counsel as at the mouth of God.

The reasons are very evident. First the Scriptures [Reason 1] are all sufficient to improve and correct, to teach and to instruct, to give patience and comfort, that we may believe & have eternal life, and to make us wise unto salvation. Secondly, such as will not believe them and reply upon them, will believe nothing else, no although one come from the dead. It is therefore the foundation of faith to resort to these means to be resolved, as to the oracle and ordinance of God, Psal. 85.8.

Observe from hence that all questions in [Use 1] Religion must be decided and determined by the Scriptures. All doctrines are to be proved by them, and all errors to be convinced by them. The Scripture is the supreme judge of all councils and controversies: it sendeth not the Church to the general consent of the Pastors of the Church, nor turneth them over to expect a general council, nor posteth them over to Rome, as the Gentiles resorted to *Delphos* to consult with the Oracle of *Apollo*. It is in vain to neglect the straight & direct way, to seek out by-paths and uncertain passages. It never taught the Pope and his Cardinals to be the highest court and supreme Judges of Scripture, who oftentimes are ignorant of Scripture. It cannot be interpreted but by the same Spirit by which it was written. It is required of the supreme Judge and interpreter of Scripture, that he cannot err, that no appeal be made from him, that he be no way partial, and that he have power to compel y^e parties dissenting to yield obedience. These properties agree not to the Bishop of Rome, he is not free from error, for many of thē have fallen into heresy, have taught contrary things one to the other, have made many foolish interpretations: he is a mere man and can compel no man's will to yield unto him; he is partial in his own cause, and therefore to appeal to him, is to ask ones fellow if he be a thief.

Secondly, the Scripture containeth all [Use] things necessary to salvation; to withstand temptations, Matth. 4. and to build us up in all truth. So that it is simply and absolutely necessary. The doctrine of salvation cannot be learned but from it. The knowledge of the law is necessary, Rom. 7.7. the knowledge of the Gospel is necessary, Tit. 2.11.12. Neither let any object, that the Church wanted Scripture along time, even from the creation to the days of *Moses*; for the Question is not, what was necessary in the beginning, but what is now necessary. The mothers milk is sufficient for the infant, while it is a child, but it is not sufficient afterward, when once it is grown up. Neither is it true which the Jesuit objecteth, that Christ commanded not anything to be written, but is overthrown by many testimonies of Scripture, 2. Pet. 1.21.2 Tim. 3.16. Revel. 1.11. and 14.13.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it teacheth that the Ministers ought to be ready to answer the questions and doubts that trouble the people any way. Therefore they must be faithful in their places, and skillful in the Scriptures, Hag. 2.12.13 they must not be blind guides & dumb dogs, Ezek. 34.4. their lips must preserve knowledge, and the people seek the Law at their mouths. Again, it is required of them to be resident upon their flocks, attending on them as watchmen watch the

city always in danger of enemies, to discover the approach of them; and as shepherds attending their flock for fear of devouring wolves. The people are as a prey in the jaws of all heretics where teachers are not attending and residing. The Israelites fell into horrible idolatry, when *Moses* was absent from them, *Exod.* 32.1. But how shall the Ministers be consulted withal, being absent from the people?

[Use 4] Lastly, it serveth for instruction for the people. They are not to consult with witches and wizards, but to resort to the Ministers of God *Deut.* 18.15. and to the word, to the law and to the testimony, *Isaiah*, 8.19.20. Princes therefore must not contemn them, nor respect thē as the lowest and basest of the people. And all people, high and low, rich and poor, must search the Scriptures, who think to have eternal life in them, *John.* 5.39. They are greatly commended that were diligent in the reading of them, *Acts* 8.30. and 18.11. *David* did exercise himself in them day and night, *Psal.* 1.2. None are to be forbidden the reading of them, forasmuch as the Gospel is the power of God to salvation to all that believe, *Rom.* 1.16. They are greatly reprov'd and rebuked •hat were ignorant in them, *Mar.* 12.24. that were slow of heart to believe them, *Luk.* 24.25. Every man therefore must seek to be assured & persuaded in his heart of that which he doth, and seek to warrant his own work. All things must be done in faith, *Hebr.* 4.2. *Mar.* 11.24. *I am.* 1.5. without which no man can please God. This reproveth the ignorance that is in the greatest sort, who think it enough to do as others do, to hear the word, because others do so: to receive the Lord's Supper, because they see their neighbors do so: and to come to Church, because the most do so. These think it enough to be present at divine duties, albeit they be indeed far from doing their duties. There are many that come and hear prayers, who do never offer up any prayers: as if there were some hidden virtue in the place or in the prayer, albeit they never lift up their hearts to God. These have not, neither can have any comfort in that which they do. They are without faith, because they are without knowledge. They have no assurance whether they please God or not, but do all things with doubtful hearts and wavering minds, and therein condemn themselves, and sin against God, being like a wave of the Sea tossed with the wind.

[Verse 9.10. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children, &c.* The determination of the question is here set down, and upon occasion thereof perpetual laws established for the direction of the Church. The unclean are put off to the 14. day of the second month: the clean must keep the Lord's Passover at the season appointed. There are two causes alleged, wherefor a man may for a time be excused for not coming to the Passover, and is allowed as unblameable to defer the celebrating of it together with others; one is uncleanness, the other is a journey, both of them must be understood as grounded upon necessity. For to thrust himself into the uncleanness here meant without a calling, or to absent himself by a journey upon every trifling occasion, thereby omitting the business of God, because he would further his own business, is rather to be cēsured very sharply, thē to suffer an excuse vpō necessity; of whom we may say with *Solomon*, *As a bird that wandreth from her nest, so is a man that wandreth from his place.* For there are very many in all places, that had rather leave the Lord's work undone, then spare one day of their own. It is a great matter with them to lose a days work, but they regard it as a matter of nothing to rob God of his day that he hath kept for himself. They had rather go to a drunken feast abroad, thē to feast with

God in his house. They had rather go speak to others in their own affairs, then either to God by prayer, or hear him speak to thē in his word, on the Sabbath day. But to leave this, and to return to the matter in hand, by uncleanness in touching the dead, is meant by proportion all other kinds of legal uncleanness whatsoever, which signify the defilements of sin continued without repentance, the Lord leading his Church in the minority of it by outward things to inward, by earthly to spiritual, by the shadow to the body. The dead body is accounted unclean, because death which hath seized upon it is the fruit of sin. whereby men are truly made unclean. The Passover was to the Israelites, the same that the Supper is to us, the equity therefore and truth of that which is here described, and directed to the people, remaineth to us forever and teacheth, That necessity brought upon any by the hand of God, [Doctrine.] or by an inevitable duty of a man's calling, do for that time free him from the public exercises of religion and of God's worship. If it be to save a man's life, or to preserve his house and goods from destruction, it giveth liberty, a toleration, and dispensation for the present, to leave the immediate worship of God. Such is the immediate hand of God in sickness, as we see in *Hezekiah*, Isaiah 38. Such was the case of *David* in persecution, Psal. 84. Such is the case of those that are in a long journey, as in this place. Likewise whensoever the public means are for a time taken away through persecution, Psa. 74 In time of sickness God requireth another duty of us, to wit, to look to our health: in danger of life to look to our safety: in danger of our goods, to look to our wealth.

[Reason 1] For whensoever God denieth the means, his will is that the things themselves should cease. For other means, may not be invented, or any other form then that which he hath ordained; as Joel 1.19. he threateneth that the meat offering and drink offering should cease. Whensoever the will of God is, that these things shall be done, he will offer unto us, and put into our hands the means, he will give us the time and opportunity to do them.

Secondly, it is God's pleasure to accept of mercy rather than sacrifice. Mat. 12.7. Hence it is, that to save from fire and water, to preserve life, to visit the sick, and to look to them, is to be preferred and more to be respected then going to the Church, or hearing of the word. What man shall there be among you (saith Christ, Mat. 12.11.) that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it and lift it out? how much then is a man better then a sheep? for the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; God ordaining it for our good, not for our hurt.

[Use 1] Hence it followeth that it is not simply the omitting of the Sacraments, but the neglect and contempt of them is dangerous to neglecters and contemners. They shall bear their sin, as they justly deserve, whose default it is. The Israelites in the wilderness were forty years together uncircumcised, yet were they to be holden the people of God, because they cannot be charged with negligence, nor reprov'd for any contempt, in as much as they wanted leisure being in their journey, or daily expecting the sign of removing. All the people that came out of Egypt were circumcised, but all the people that were borne in the wilderness by the way, them they circumcised not, and it is excused or defended by necessity. For the Sacraments do not confer grace, neither are they absolutely necessary to salvation, as if without them a man could not possibly be saved. Hence therefore are the

Romanists reproved, that do teach, that children are damned that die without Baptism; as though all the Israelites that died in the wilderness, which were borne there and were not circumcised, were condemned; no, doubtless: no more then that all which were circumcised, were saved. True it is, *Moses* was reproved and was near to death, because he circumcised not his son, who had time and leisure to do it, *Exod.* 4.24. and we must take heed of contempt, which deserveth a cutting off from the people of God, *Gen.* 17.14. because he hath broken the Covenant. Howbeit, as it is said in the proverb, Necessity hath no law. The grace of Christ taketh away all the sins of all believers, and therefore the general guilt brought in by original sin, *Rom.* 5. This grace is not tied to outward signs, but dependeth upon the free pleasure of God. This is received by faith only, as appeareth in the example of *Abraham*, and farther confirmed by the Sacraments. Nevertheless, we acknowledge a necessity in respect of the commandment of God, and of the proper end, and therefore is with all reverence and conscience, and obedience to be yielded unto.

Secondly, where the ordinary and precious [Use 2] means of salvation, the preaching of the word and administration of the Sacraments, are taken away and removed, as the standard out of the campe, or the light out of the candlestick, there the extraordinary and more weak means are to be used of us, and God's blessing in such cases is to be hoped for and looked after. In the days of persecution, private reading, meditation, and conference are blessed of God, and his Church maintained, continued, and increased thereby: yea, the beholding of the constant suffering of the holy martyrs was a forcible means to work the conversion of many, and made them in love with that doctrine for which they suffered and gave their lives In times of famine when there is no bread left in a city, and the inhabitants are constrained to fare hard and short, yet it pleaseth God to preserve life by very weak means, to show that man liveth not by bread only: so is it in the famine of spiritual things. In the days of *Ahab*, when the Temple was forsaken by the ten tribes, and idolatry was erected in Israel, the altars digged down, and the Prophets slain, yet God reserved seven thousand that never bowed the knee to *Baal*, *1 King.* 19.18. *Rom.* 11.4. There were very few laborers in the days of Christ among y^e Jews, ignorance had covered y^e land that they were as sheep without a shepherd; and yet in those barren times, when the seed of the word was thinly sown, there was a plentiful harvest ready to be gathered, for loe the fields were white unto the harvest, *John.* 4.35. Thus doth God bless what means soever it shall please him to use; let them be never so weak in themselves and little in our eyes, yet they shall have force and strength enough, when he will employ them: which serveth as a great comfort to those that have not the best means to bring them to faith and repentance.

[Use 3] Lastly, we must take heed we put not slight and unnecessary excuses for urgent and necessary causes. They that were bidden to the wedding pleaded by way of excuse for themselves, *I have hired a farm, I have bought five yoke of oxen, I have married a wife, I cannot come*, *Luke* 14.18. *Matth.* 22.5. Many in our days would account these good excuses, honest pretences, & lawful defences: & indeed it cannot be denied, but they justify them by their own practices, as *Jerusalem* did *Samaria*. For they go further in their wicked ways, and account it a sufficient color to warrant their absence from God's ordinance, saying, I have a bargain to make, I have work to take, I am bidden to a feast, I must go speak with such a

man, it is rainy weather, there is an yeueall at the next Parish, I must walk about my ground to see my corn and cattle, I am otherwise busy, and therefore I cannot come. Others, that think themselves more wise, yet show themselves more wicked, because they pretend greater love to the truth and liking to Religion then the other, they can read good Sermons, and use good prayers at home, and therefore what need they come? Let all these take heed (to bind them together in one bundle) lest it be said unto them hereafter, as it was said to such as made such like slight and sleeuesse excuses, that none of those that were bidden should taste of that Supper. Necessary causes of absence are such, as require present doing, that could not be dispatched before, neither can be put off until afterward. Heat and cold, rain and shine, hunger and thirst, poverty of estate, or tediousnes of journey could not keep the people of God from the Passover, Psal. 84.6. *They go from strength to strength, everyone of them in Zion appeareth before God.* These can excuse no man to his Prince, no not to the ordinary judge and justice. When a man is cited and summoned by word or writ, to appear at the bar of an earthly judge, will it be taken for currant answer to say, O sir, I was willing and desirous to appear, but it was hot weather, or cold weather, or rainy weather: will such frivolous and fruitless excuses be admitted? and shall we think that the king of kings, and the judge of judges will receive them at such times as he summoneth us to appear before his presence? Let us not therefore offer and perform less duty and service unto God, then we do unto men: nor suppose that God will content himself with less attendance then man doth.

[Ver 10. *If any of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body.*] Here is another cause of being kept from the Passover, to wit, uncleanness. The doctrine is, that open offenders and impenitent persons ought not to have any access to the Lord's Table, but are to be kept from it as unclean birds from the Sacrifice. A stranger uncircumcised had nothing to do with the Passover, Exod. 12.48. The incestuous person was excommunicated from the Church, and the privileges of it, 1 Cor. 5. as *Cain* was from the face of God, Gen. 4. When *Adam* had sinned against God, and eaten of the forbidden fruit, he was put out of the garden, that he might not eat of the fruit of the tree of life, Gen. 3.22, 23, 24. this was as a Sacrament unto him of life, so long as he continued in obedience. The Sacraments are holy things, but holy things must not be given to dogs: the Sacraments are precious pearls, but pearls must not be cast before swine. Now obstinate offenders and notorious sinners are dogs and swine.

The reasons are, as Christ saith, they will [Reason 1] trample them under their feet; Matt. 7.6. they place no holiness in them, they do not esteem them as any pearls, or value them at any rate. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith, If any that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, it shall be unclean, Hag. 2.13 if then the person be defiled. he defileth whatsoever he toucheth, the holiness of the sacrifice cannot make him holy, but the wickedness of the person shall make the sacrifice unholy.

Again, such as come to the Lord's Supper, must show y^e Lord's death till he come 1 Cor. 11.26. That is, he must publish with praise and thanksgiving unto God, the memorial of the greatest wonder and mystery that ever fell out in the world, to wit, the propitiatory sacrifice and precious death of the eternal Son of God. But this can never be done by a wicked man.

Praise in the mouth of a fool is not comely nor commendable, neither God will accept of them any such sacrifice.

Thirdly, they are guilty of the body and blood of Christ, and therefore it must needs be a fearful wickedness to come in such a wretched and profane manner, 1 Corinth. 11.27. They are despisers of the most precious thing in the world, Heb. 10.29. They tread under foot the Son of God, and account the blood of y^e New Testament a profane thing, which caused the Angels of God & the whole frame of nature in heaven and earth to wonder at it, and to be dismayed at the death of the Son of God contemned by these wicked wretches No sin, murder, incest, treason, comparable to this sin.

Fourthly, they have no fellowship with the Church in these holy things; there is no communion between light and darkness, between righteousness and unrighteousness, and therefore *Simon Peter* said to *Simon Magus*, Thou hast neither part nor fellowship in this business, Acts 8.21. Such therefore as are scandalous & profane are to be separated by the Church from others, as ••ule and filthy beasts are to be kept from fair springs, lest with their feet they defile the water.

Lastly, the seal belongeth to such only as have the covenant or testament belonging unto them, but open offenders have nothing to do with them. It will be said, *Judas* was admitted by Christ, [Object.] and therefore wicked persons may be so. I answer, [Answ.] *Judas* was not known to be a wicked person, no more then he was known to be a reprobate. He was a thief, but not known to be a thief: but they must be known wicked persons that are to be exempted and excluded. Again, it may appear that *Judas* was not at the Supper, John 13, 30. *So soon as he had received the soppe, he went out immediately*; but the soppe was in the Passover, so that he was at the Passover, not at the Supper.

[Use 1] The uses follow. First, there ought not to be a general admission of all that offer to come to the Sacraments without difference and distinction. A Turk or Jew if they would desire baptism, may not be received before they make open confession of the faith. When the Eunuch desired baptism, and said, *See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?* *Philip answered, If thou believest, thou mayest*, Acts 8, 36, 37. Such only are allowed to have the benefit of the Sacraments, and to be admitted unto them, that are of the number of believers. None were to be baptized but such as were within the Covenant, 1 Cor. 7, 14. and in that respect are called *holy*. None are meet guests to be at the Lord's Table, but such as know & believe, and practice the doctrine which is according to godliness, as no uncircumcised person and unbeliever was received to the Passover. Thus then we see who have right to the Sacraments, and who have not.

[Use 2] Secondly, this giveth direction and instruction to the Ministers, not to keep back whō they please, or to bar from the communion any vpō spleen or private grudge or revenge, but must take heed they do not mingle their private affections with the public exercises of religion. It reproveth therefore all such justly as turn away those that desire to communicate, through hatred, envy, and malice to their persons, because they have some way offended them, whether it be in deed or in conceit. They have power and authority only

to exclude public offenders, and scandalous livers; as for others, they have no jurisdiction to deny them or bar them the Communion. The Disciples reprov'd those that brought little children to Christ, but they are reprov'd themselves, for Christ was much displeas'd with them, and would not have them forbidden, Mark. 10, 14. So ought we to suffer the people to come unto Christ, yea, to exhort them and stir them up and encourage them, not discourage them, nor forbid them, nor hinder them that would come. If there were a public well for all to draw water out of it, what inhumanity and cruelty were it to keep back any from drawing out of it? These are like to the Philistines that stopped the wells and filled them with earth, which *Abraham's* servants had digg'd, that none could have benefit of them, Gen. 26, 15. When *Moses* was fled out of *Egypt*, and came into the Land of *Madian*, and that he saw the forward Shepherds drive away the daughters of *Revel* frō the well, that they could not water their fathers sheep, he stood up and helped them and watered their flock, Exod. 2, 17. If we be the Shepherds of the Lord's flock, we must not be like to these Shepherds that would not suffer the sheep to be watered, we must be rather like to *Moses* to help them. It is a sign of much envy, and little piety, to hinder those that are willing to come. These are worse thē the woman of *Samaria*, and have less mercy, pity, & compassion then she had; for though she refused to give drink to Christ, because he was a Jew, and the Jews had no dealing with the *Samaritans*, yet she never assay'd to keep him from the well, as these do many of their brethren, more indeed to their own reproach, then to the shame of those whom they turn away; this ought not so to be.

Thirdly, to exercise any part of God's worship [Use 3] profanely, to hear the word unreverently, and to come to the Table of the Lord unworthily, deserveth a great and grievous plague, 1 Cor. 11, 30. For this cause many were weak, and sick, and stricken with death among the Corinthians. Woe therefore to those that are profane, and profane the holy things of God. This is a most fearful sin, they conspire against God, and commit high treason against his Majesty, and therefore God will arm himself against them, and pursue them as his enemies with fire and sword, that is, with his wrath & vengeance at their heels. The wrath of a King is as the roaring of a Lyon, who so provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul, Prov. 19, 12, and 20, 2. His anger conceived is present death, 1 Sam. 22, 18. Ester 7, 9. Mat. 2, 16, and 14, 10. What shall we say then of God, who is a consuming fire? Heb. 12, 29. *If his wrath be kindled but a little, blessed are all they that trust in him*, Psal. 2, 12. We have no defense for our selves, but to say, *Enter not into judgment with thy servants, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified*, Ps. 143, 2. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God: whither shall we fly, to be able to escape his hand, but that he will find us out? His displeasure is like himself, that is, infinite, and cannot be expressed.

Lastly, we learn that such as come to the [Use 4] Table of the Lord, should seriously prove and thoroughly prepare themselves to this so weighty and religious work. It standeth us therefore upon to know wherein this trial and examination standeth, especially considering that many do much deceive themselves therein. Some place it in outward things, as if they fast before they come, if they hang down their heads like bulrushes, if they prepare the body and outward man touching their apparel, and for the present time show humility and abstinence, although presently after they return again to their former conditions and vices,

as to their vomit, making only an intermission of them for a short space, but assuming them again with no small advantage. But this is a vain thing. For our sins must be left quite and clean, so as we never return to them again. It is an easy matter to conceive in our selves that we have faith. But if it be a true & holy faith, it purifieth the heart, Act. 15.9. & worketh by love, Gal. 5.6. First, therefore everyone must labor to be a repentant sinner, which consisteth in unfeigned sorrow for sin, purposing never to fall into it again, & an ardent love toward that which is good. We must confess our sins of omission and commission, of ignorance and knowledge, of weakness and presumption, how we have provoked our good God to anger, in soul and body, abusing our wit, our memory, our authority, our health, our liberty, our riches, our heart, our tongue, our feet, our hands, and all other members, to infidelity, blasphemy, swearing, lying, whoredom, cruelty, injury, theft, gluttony, drunkenness, pride, wantonness, slanders, and such like: making them filthy dungeons and stinking sinks for the devil, which should be the Temples of God. Wherefore we must have earnest grief and sorrow and trembling, that we have hereby not only broken in pieces, and torn in sunder by our sins all the laws of God, but we have also by them crucified upon the Cross, and put to a shameful death the Lord of Life. We commonly lay the whole and only fault upon *Herod* and *Pilate*, upon the high Priests, upon *Judas*, and the Jews, & who is not displeased with these for their cruelty herein? howbeit we should be more displeased with our selves who are as deep by our sins in this sin as ever they, as we have shown before out of the Prophet. And here I summon all profane persons before God, that have no delight in good things, and all such as with greediness and without shame wallow in all sin and wickedness, giving by their leudnesse continual and grievous offense to the children of God. If they dare presume to present themselves at the Lord's Table having their hearts & hands gored with the blood of the Son of God. I would have them answer what they promised to God and his Church in their Baptism, and what they now profess. They promised to forsake the devil and all his works: but sin is one of the chief and principal works of the devil. What, I pray you, could the Lord Jesus have done for us, that he hath not done? and shall we so reward him and requite him for all his pains, his agony and bloody sweat? If a kings son finding us in a filthy sink or miry puddle should help us out with his hands, and wash us in water, and put his precious robes upon us, and after all this, we thrice miserable wretches should presently cast our selves into the same again, what unthankfulness were this? what indignity? Christ Jesus hath redeemed us from the bondage of sin, and washed us in his blood, Revel. 1.5. shall we defile our selves again with worse then mire and dung, and serve Satan and sin, his and our enemies? Again, we must seek to approve our hearts and consciences with love and charity to our neighbors. For we can never come with a good conscience toward God, except also we show the fruits of love to our brethren. We must have peace with all men, without which no man shall see God to his comfort, Heb. 12.14. We are but one bread & but one body, 1 Cor. 12.12. There should be a communion among all the Saints of God, which also we profess to believe. We meet all in one place as it were in one house, we have one head, we hear one word, we eat the same spiritual meat, we drink the same spiritual drink: we are utterly unworthy of all these, if we be infected and poisoned with the bitter roots of hatred, strife, rancor, debate, contention, quarrelling, and such like vnfaury & unsanctified fruits, which

show that we are carnal and faithless men, not fit to be called the servants of Christ, whose love was great even toward his enemies.

[Verse 13. *But the man that is clean, &c. and forbeareth to keep the Passover, even the same soul shall be cut off, &c.*] The meaning is, he shall be shut out from the fellowship of the Saints.

Whosoever through mere negligence and carelessness did put off this duty, and would not with the rest of the people of God keep the Passover, is judged for it, and beareth his sin, that is, is guilty of a great wickedness before God. [Doctrine.] We learn hereby that they which negligently and carelessly omit the parts of God's worship, and the exercises of religion, whensoever they are celebrated in the meetings of God's people, committeth a great iniquity, and lieth under the wrath and judgments God. The uncircumcised male that purposely breaketh the Covenant of God shall be cut off from the people, Gen. 17.14. Moses carelessly omitting the circumcision of his son, was near to be slain of God, Exod. 4.24. He that did not conscionably and religiously keep the Passover, was also to be cut off, as we see in this place: and afterward, he that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day, was stoned with stones that he died, chap. 15.32, 36. Such then as bring not the offerings of God in their season, and are careless in his worship, lie under his wrath, and deserve the sentence of excommunication.

For they neglect the homage and service [Reason 1] due to God, and observe not the seasons appointed of God, as we see in this 13. verse. There is an appointed season for every work under the Sun. God also hath his times and seasons, who hath all times in his own hands, which being neglected, cannot be recalled.

Secondly, all such as contemn the means, are profane contemners of those excellent things that are offered by the means; and the contempt of the word, is the contempt of God. The contempt of this Baptism is the contempt of the remission of sins; the Pharisees, that were not baptized of *John*, rejected the counsel of God against themselves, he that contemneth the Supper, refuseth the merits of Christ's death and passion, and is guilty of the body & blood of Christ, 1 Cor. 11. and maketh a mock of the Son of God. Thirdly, such despise the wisdom of God, accounting that simple, weak, and foolish, which he in his infinite wisdom hath appointed to be the ordinary means of his strong arm and mighty power. His ways are not as our ways, his ways are foolishness to foolish men, 1. Cor. 1.23. and our ways are foolishness to the most wise God, 1 Cor. 3.19. and that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God, Luke 16.15. as that which is oftentimes least regarded of us, is in greatest price and account with him.

[Use 1] Conclude from hence, that the state and condition of all reckless hearers of the word, and of negligent receivers of the Sacraments, is most wretched & accurst. Shall we be so sottish and simple to imagine that God hath ordained these things for nothing? or that he will see his writings and seals trodden under foot, and not punish these rebels and enemies? Is not he that maliciously and contemptibly defaceth the Princes broad seal, a traitor against his Prince? Are these then any better that reject both word and Sacrament? we see this in *Ahaz*, when he had a sign offered unto him from the Lord in the depth beneath, or in the height above, to assure him of deliverance, he contemned and rejected the same, Isaiah 7.12.

howbeit, he never prospered after, but grew worse and worse, 2 Chron 28. True it is, he pretendeth he would not tempt God by asking a sign, but the refusing of a sign when God offereth it, is no better thē a tempting of God. All that refuse the Sacraments tempt God, for they will make trial whether God can or will save them without them. But take this as a certain rule, and build ye upon it, whensoever God granteth his Sacraments, he will never save without them. [Objection] If any ask, cannot God save without these, such as believe? I answer, [Answer.] the question is not what God can do, but what he will do: he hath made no such promise to any man to save without them, [Object.] while we have them. If any farther reply, Is is not enough to believe? is not faith sufficient to save and to join us to God? I answer, [Answer.] such deceive themselves to think they do believe, and yet neglect the use of the Sacraments. And therefore Christ saith, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, he saith not, he that believeth only. Take this therefore as another rule, whosoever truly believeth, is careful to frequent the Sacraments, because when he hath faith, he desireth earnestly the confirmation of it. And whosoever rejecteth the Sacraments as needless and superflous, or despiseth the counsel and commandment of God, that requireth the coming unto them, doth evidently declare that he never had true faith. Thus then we see the woeful condition of all such as refuse the comfortable use of God's Sacraments. The Prophet pronounceth everyone of them accursed that do the work of the Lord negligently. Alas, alas, how many among us lie under this curse! how many are like to perish thorough the heavy, yet just wrath of God! O that these wicked and slothful servants could consider these things! The Lord is near in mercy to those that hear his word diligently, that pray to him earnestly, and frequent the exercises of religion carefully. *Cornelius* was often in prayer, for he prayed God continually, and therefore an Angel is sent to tell him that his prayers were come up in remembrance before God. So it is said of *Hannah*, for which she is highly commended. Let this be our praise and commendation.

Secondly, everyone is bound to prepare [Use 2] himself for such times, to lay all lets and businesses aside, to cut off from us all hindrances and encombrances, except we will our selves be cut off, that so we may join in the solemn exercises of God's people. And as we ought to perform this in all our meetings, so then most especially, when all the helps of faith and furtherances of our instruction meet together, when we have both the Scriptures read, and prayers offered, and the word preached, and the Sacraments administered, together with giving of thanks, and singing of Psalms, and such like. Al Israel far and near came to the Passover, and all nations under heaven professing y^e same faith joined with them. Should not therefore everyone within a small precinct of ground and in a parish give this honor to God? But we have such dissolute and disordered persons in most of our congregations, that think they have done a notable work, and begin to commend their own wisdom, if they can handsomely and cleanly shift off the time of the celebration and participation of the Lord's Supper: Nay, as cunning beggars delight to keep their wounds always bleeding, and their sores ever fresh and running, so commonly these corrupt fellows will have of set purpose some brabbling and brawling with their neighbors, just at the time of Easter when it is required they should communicate, and when they know the eyes of all are upon them more then at other times, then I say they will have some quarrel and contention, that so they may

escape and go away. And if they can defer and delay the matter for that time, they think themselves safe by this ungodly shift, as the Fox in his burrow, until Easter shall come again. But these are not so to be suffered to escape scotfree. Let them be called upon to come the next time. They that were unclean by the dead, or in a journey, that they could not keep the Passover, were they exempted and freed unto the next year? No, they were commanded to come to it the next month, and that under the pain and censure of excommunication, as we see verse 12, 13. of this chapter. And so was the Church in former time wont to excommunicate all such willful and wicked offenders: and never was there more need to take up this course again, against such as seek to slide away slyly as it were in the dark that they might not be espied.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it reproveth such as pretend their defects and imperfections as reasons and warrants to bar them from the Communion, of whom we hope better things then of the former. They espy many corruptions in themselves, that they dare not presume to come, and therefore think it best utterly to abstain. They pretend the danger to come unworthily, and seem afraid to offend by their coming. But let not such deceive themselves. For first, no man for his weakness must forbear the Lord's Table. It was instituted for such as feel their wants. If you feel no weakness of faith, I charge you come not thither, for you cannot be fit receivers. *Come to me* (saith Christ,) *all that are weary, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you,* Matth. 11.28. Secondly, the absenting of our selves from the Sacrament can be no good means to better our estate. For no man can reap any good by abstaining. Do we find much evil in our selves that we cannot come? let us persuade our selves of this, as of a certain truth, that forbearing the Lord's Supper will make us much worse. Suppose we find much hypocrisy, much self-love, much corruption, and much hardness of heart in us: yet to keep our selves from this Sacrament, is the ready way to increase and nourish these in us, and so to make us much worse then we were before, but better it cannot make us by any means. Thirdly, this corrupt practice doth closely and secretly accuse God of cruelty and severity, as if he were a rigorous judge that would accept of none but of such as had attained to absolute perfection; or else with that evil servant in the Gospel, they say, *We knew thee to be an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, & gathering where thou hast not strewed,* Matth. 25.24. yea, in effect they tax him with hatred and envy, whereas he is well pleased with sincerity of heart, though it be accompanied with imperfection of the work, and accepteth the will for the deed, 2 Cor. 8.12. When *Hezekiah* prayed for the people, that the Lord would pardon everyone that prepared his heart to seek the Lord God of his fathers, though he were not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary, the Lord heard him, and hearkened unto him, and healed the people, 2 Chron. 30.18, 19, 20. If there be in us a willing mind, God accepteth us according to that measure of grace which we have, not according to that we want. A good heart shall never be rejected▪ though some evil cleave unto it, and hang about it. Sincerity and truth in the inward parts shall never go away unrewarded. *Job* fought a sore combat as it were hand to hand with Satan, and received many blows and wounds, in the encounter whereby he was sore weakened, and brake out into many unadvised words which he would not and should not utter; yet God laid them not to his charge, but spared him as a man spareth his only son that serveth him, and setteth him forth as a worthy pattern of

patience and of obedience. If then we labor to be upright in heart, the Lord will pass over our infirmities; he will look upon the good we do, and pardon the evil. Lastly, our abstinence giveth evil example unto others, for which also we must give an account. Woe unto them that give offense, and therefore let no person withdraw himself when the Lord doth solemnly invite him to such a solemn banquet. This we shall do, if we labor to find sweetness and comfort in these holy things of God, & avoid all loathsomeness and tediousness, whereby we incur the wrath of God, which fell upon the Israelites that loathed the Manna, Chap. 11.6. We must come to this heavenly feast, as a man would do to a bodily feast, and feast our souls as we do our bodies, that is, we must bring with us a good appetite, *We must hunger and thirst after righteousness*, Matth. 5.6. We see how men that would buy and sell do long after Fairs and Markets. These holy assemblies are the Fairs and markets of God, they are the great feast-days of God; let us therefore desire them with an earnest desire, that we may be stored at them, and all our wants be abundantly supplied.

[Verse 14. *And if a stranger shall sojourne, &c.*] The third law is set down, binding the stranger among them that embraced the Jewish religion, to partake the Passover. We learn hereby, [Doctrine.] that it is necessary for all Christians that are of age and discretion, to partake the Sacraments of the Lord; so he saith, *Take ye, eat ye, drink ye, for the remission of the sins of many*, Matth. 26.26. Again he saith, *Drink ye all of this: and all of them drank of it*, Mar. 14.23. and the Apostle, 1. Cor. 10. showeth that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized under Moses, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; do we not hear how many times the Apostle repeateth, all passed, all were baptized, all did eat, all did drink, and that none were freed and exempted from this general and common duty? Christ sending out his disciples, willeth them to go teach all nations and baptize them, Matth. 28.19. So then, there is a necessity laid upon everyone to come to the Lord's Table, without exception of any estate, degree, or person that is of age and discretion.

[Reason 1] For to abstain purposely is a contempt of the seal of our redemption, and consequently both of redemption it self, and of the redeemer himself. For as he that despiseth baptism, despiseth that which is represented by it, namely, the washing away of his sins: so is it in the Supper, they that despise it, do despise the work and price of their redemption, Luke 22, 19. *This is my body, do this, &c.*

Secondly, they despise the commandment of Christ, nay an heap of commandments multiplied together to enforce this duty; wherefore doth the Lord Jesus say, *Take ye, eat ye, do ye this, drink ye, do ye this?* is it not to teach us that it belongeth unto us to obey?

Thirdly, we have the examples of the faithful as a cloud of witnesses to enforce us to yield obedience. All have submitted themselves to this duty, and all have accounted themselves bound to this practice, as we shown before out of the Apostle. And the people complained that they were kept back from the Passover, testifying that it was their desire to be admitted unto it.

Fourthly, such as do not come, do set light by the happy and holy remembrance of the death and passion of the Son of God, (wherein standeth the comfort of all his children) who teacheth that the faithful celebrate the Supper in memorial of him, as Luke 22, 16. If then we willingly and willfully abstain, we declare plainly, that we receive no benefit by the death of Christ, and care not if the memorial thereof were forgotten. An horrible sin.

Fifthly, the Supper is a notable means to strengthen faith: if then all have need of such helps as God hath left for us and appointed unto us, it followeth necessarily, that they must carefully resort to the sacraments, which serve for that end and purpose.

Lastly, they despise the Church and the union thereof, and do of their own accord after a sort excommunicate themselves from the fellowship of their brethren, and of Christ Jesus the author and appointer of this Supper: and in this respect the Apostle willet them to come together, and reproveth them that were herein slack or singular, saying, *Despise ye the Church of God? in this I praise you not.*

[Use 1] The uses follow. First, we must confess from hence, that it lieth upon all men to be frequent and forward in performing of this duty, & to come often to this exercise of our faith. It should never be celebrated in the Church, but all should come together. He that maketh a feast looketh that all which are bidden should come it. All the Disciples of Christ met together: and therefore *Paul*, who delivered that to the Church which he had received of the Lord, v. 23. chargeth them, y^t when they come together to eat, they should tarry one for another, v. 23. This is a general fault in our assemblies, and a disorder that we must never cease to reprove, which if it were found in our daily dinners that we make for others that are invited, and serve but to feed the belly, of which *Paul* saith, *Meats for the belly, and the belly for the meats, but God shall destroy both it and them:* Who would not think himself wronged to furnish his table, and to provide for his guests, & then none vouchsafe to come but cause him to lose all his cost, and labor, and expectation? We come not to the Lord's house and to the Lord's Table with that zeal and diligence which becometh us. It is said of the Church after Christ's ascension, that *they continued daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread, &c:* and a little before it is said, *All that believed, were together.* But we, as if our brethren that stay to communicate, were not of the Church, or we did not belong to that fellowship, do shuffle away and scatter our selves abroad, as if this business did not belong unto us. If it be said, [Object.] It is a dangerous thing to receive unworthily: we may make our selves guilty of the body of Christ, and bring judgment upon our selves: I answer, [Answer.] it is not enough for careless men and women to hold out this buckler as if it could defend thē against the stroke of God's word, which cannot serve our turn. These are like to the sluggard in the Proverbs, that saith, *There is a Lyon in the way, I shall be slain in the streets:* or as it is before: *A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.* The sluggard never wanteth some defense for himself, *he thinketh himself wiser then seven men that can render a reason.* This is in his conceit a sure defense for his offense in abstaining, Seeing it is so dāgerous to receive unworthily, I will not receive at all, and so I shall escape the danger. But there is a necessity laid upon all that may and do come, and if they will be saved, they must come. For the danger is no less to abstain willfully, then it is to receive unworthily.

These are like to those unskillful Mariners, who while they are busy & careful to shun one rock, do run themselves upon another, & there suffer shipwreck. [Object.] But they will farther say for themselves, they hear the word, and tarry so long as the Sermon lasteth, and the word is y^e chiefest means. I answer, [Answer.] it skilleth not which is more principal and which is less, but it importeth us to know what is God's commandment. As he hath said, *Hear ye the word of the Lord*, so he hath said of this Sacrament, *Take ye, and eat ye, &c.* Will we give ear to one commandment, and not to another? Would any man, if he had some covenant to seal, content himself with the writing, and depart before he hath the seal to it? Or when one is bidden to a dinner or a supper, and hath tasted of one dish of meat, will he rise up and be gone? No, he will be sure to sit down with y^e first, & rise with the last. Or if he should start up and go his ways, will not the master of y^e feast think himself wronged and injured? And we must make no other account in this holy work, but that if we behave our selves in this rude and disordered manner, we shall highly offend the master of the house, and the author of the feast. Wherefore as the Apostle denounceth a *woe against himself, if he preach not the Gospel, because a necessity is laid upon him*, so he might denounce a like woe if he did not administer the Lord's Supper: so we must know that the same woe hangeth over our heads, if we do not carefully and oftentimes receive the Supper of the Lord, because a necessity is laid upon us, and therefore we must deal faithfully with God and our own souls in the discharge of this duty.

Secondly, this serveth as a comfort to all [Use 2] those that come as they ought, to wit, reverently and advisedly, and therefore it meeteth with sundry abuses w^c quench this comfort. Such are justly to be reprov'd, who depart the congregation in time of the administration of it, as though it were no part of God's worship, or did nothing at all concern themselves. Again, there are many that take a lawless liberty to themselves, to receive y^e Lord's Supper as often & sildom as they list, as though it were a thing indifferent, that might be done or not be done, at their own discretion. The common excuse that hindereth men is, y^t they say they are not in charity. But why do they not make hast to reconcile themselves to their brethren? why do they sit still, and never desire to be at unity? The Prophet telleth us it is our duty not only to be at peace with others, that if it be possible as much as lieth in us, we should live peaceably with all men; but also, that we should seek peace and ensue after it. If it fly from us, we must pursue it, and never give over until we have overtaken it, and laid hands upon it. But we are like to a man fallen into a deep pit, that hath no desire or purpose to come out of it. We should *not suffer the Sun to go down upon our wrath, lest thereby we give entrance unto the devil*. If we entertain the one, we can by no means exclude and shut out the other, as the example of *Cain* may teach us, who was of that evil one, and therefore first he hated, and then slew his Brother, 1. John 3, 12.

[Use 3] Lastly, seeing we are bound to come to the Sacraments, let us labor to feel the power, virtue, & grace offered unto us by them. Nothing in the world should be so often remembered of us as the death of Christ. This should be a Christian man's treasury, nothing should more rejoice our hearts, Gal. 6, 14. and therefore if we desire to feel the benefit of it, and to be transformed into a likeness of it, it should effectually move us to be often present, and often to use these pledges & remembrances of his death. In this Sacrament, we do after a

sort see him crucified upon the cross. And to show that we do truly remember his death, let us labor to express the power of it, and answerably bear the like mind toward him. A conformity unto his death, is to die to sin, Rom. 6, 1. They that return to their own vomit, never came with a good conscience. What bitterness of the cross did he patiently endure for us? and shall we with our sins, as with nails and spears, pierce his hands, nay his heart again? These make a mock of the Lord's Supper, which representeth his death, nay they set at naught his death and passion. Others that day, so soon as they have been partakers of this seal, run up and down in rioting and sporting, and Ale-house hanting, and thereby make it evident, what reckoning they make of his death. Do these labor to die to sin, and to be like him? If we do no better die with him then in this profane manner, let us take heed of the second death, for it is to be feared such shall never live with him. If we be not like to him in this life, let us not look to be like unto him in the life to come.

[Verse 15. *And on the day that the Tabernacle was reared up, &c.*] The second part of y^e chap. followeth, to wit, the removing from *Sinai*, when once the Tabernacle was erected. I will from hence observe before we pass farther, [Doctrine.] one point from the building and erecting of the Tabernacle, a place for the congregation to meet together for the worship of God, that Christians also in the time of the gospel should have churches and Temples built, and fit places appointed to meet together for God's service. True it is, in time of persecution, when free liberty of public meetings is restrained, it sufficeth to meet in private houses (if those houses may be called private which are separated for such a purpose;) yet even they ought to be decent and fitted to so holy a work, and sanctified to so holy an end. God commanded *Moses* to set up a Tabernacle for the assembling together of the congregation, *Exod. 25* *David* prepared to build an house to God, & would *give no sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eyelids, until he had found out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob, Ps. 132* 4, 5. *Solomon* afterward built him an house, w^c was called the *house of prayer*, because chiefly it served for that purpose, *Acts 7, 47*. Immediately after the captivity, when *Solomon's Temple* was ruined, it was the principal care of the *Jews* to build it again; and though they were hindered a long time in the work, *John. 2*. yet being reproved for their negligence, and stirred up to diligence by the Prophets, they finished the work. The Apostle speaking of the abuses among the *Corinthians* touching the Lord's Supper, showeth, *that they came together into one place, 2 Cor. 11, 20*. and therefore it is needful to have fit places, by what name soever they be called, wherein the church is to assemble, *Psal. 74, 8. Luk. 4, 16*.

And so much the rather, because y^e Lord hath [Reason 1] promised his presence in them, and to dwell in them by his grace & Spirit. *Exod. 25.8. Let them make me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell among them; for wheresoever two or three are gathered together in his name, there will he be in the midst of them, Math. 18*. Secondly, prayers that are made jointly together by the whole congregation, are always more effectual: they send up a stronger cry, and therefore they are sooner heard. The best melody is of more voices then one: and moe sticks laid upon the fire make the heat the greater. We ought therefore to have fit places for this purpose, that we may as it were with one mind, & with one mouth glorify God.

[Use 1] Is this the end for which Churches are instituted and appointed? Then it reproveth such as invert the right uses of them, to wit, that in them we should come together to hear the word read and preached unto us, to make prayers and supplications, to receive the Sacraments, to sing Psalms, & to offer up praise and thanksgiving to almighty God: of which the Romanists have set up false ends, and established their own devices. They will have them erected for the external sacrifice of the Mass, for their Altars and Images, & such like trumpery; for which they allege the saying of the Apostle, Heb. 13, 10. but the Altar there spoken of is Christ himself, on which every faithful man must offer. The true ends of them we noted before, for the reading of the Scriptures, Acts 15, 21. for the preaching of the word, Luk. 4. for prayer, and for the receiving of the Sacraments, Acts 20, 7. Again, they teach that churches are of themselves more holy ground then other places, and in regard of the holy nature thereof, more available to pray there thē anywhere else. The place is to be accounted holy for the present, while the exercises of religion continue, but the congregation once dissolved, there is no inherent holiness remaining in it more then in any other place. Churches therefore we acknowledge to be holy places, nor in regard of the building and the beauty of them, not in regard of the ground or seat of them, but of the end & holy use for which they serve, and for the holy assemblies that there are made. Here then is the difference between them & us, they make churches to be holy in respect of the place, we in respect of the people. The people make the place holy, not the place the people. We are not therefore to pray to God with any opinion of holiness in one place, rather then in another, John 4, 21. Every place hath God's presence, and everywhere we may lift up pure hands, and therefore is alike sanctified for prayer in it self considered. Furthermore, whereas su•• places should be dedicated and consecrated to the honor of God, they will have thē also built to the name and honor of the Saints, and make them to be Patrons and protectors of them: there they pray unto them as to their mediators and intercessors. But no divine worship is to be given unto them. This is no better then flat idolatry, to pray to those that cannot help us. But to let these go, let us see how these religious places are otherwise profaned. Do we come to them as to God's house? Do we use there that reverence which is fit in his presence and dwelling place? So did the people, while *Zachariah* was burning incense, the multitude were without in prayer. But we commonly come thither rather to talk & trifle, then to pray and hear. In former times men's houses were their churches, but now the churches are turned into their houses, being ordinarily profaned with babbling, & laughing, and sleeping, and what not? Many come hither for no other cause but to buy and bargain, and to meet with others for their earthly profits and worldly business. Where have we commonly more brauling and brabbling then at the church? will not the least penny or occasion make us iar and almost set us together by the ears? We should come hither to please God, but when we are come we displease him, and forget God, and our selves, and the word, and the place and all. There is an Article, and it is a good one, to enquire of Church-abuses, whether there be any plays and interludes, any feasts and bankets kept in our churches, any suppers or churchales, drinkings and tiplings, musters & profane usages in churches, chappels, or churchyards? and whether the parishioners behave themselves rudely and disorderly in time of divine Service or Sermon, as by walking, talking, ringing, or any noise whereby the Minister or preacher is hindered and disturbed? These abuses are committed, and yet

continue in many places. Christ would not suffer a vessel to be carried through the temple; *He went into the Temple, and cast out all thē that bought and sold in the Temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold Doves.* He purged the Temple of these Merchants, and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he scourged them out, he poured out the changers money, and overthrew the tables, as it is written, *The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.* And he said unto them, *Take these things hence, make not my Fathers house an house of merchandise,* ver. 16. This house was the house of prayer by divine institution, but they had made it a den of thieves by profane custom and corruption. Let us therefore all of us remember to what end and purpose Temples were built, that God may be honored, not dishonored of us, and consider y^e presence of God and his angels in such places, to procure the greater reverence unto them.

Secondly, it is required that these places be [Use] kept in good order, that they may be accounted of as the houses of God. Is it meet that a Prince should rest in a simple cottage, or dwell in a stie or in a stable? and shall we entertain the King of kings in a soul and unfit place? There is no man that goeth about to entertain a friend, but he will make clean his house, and purge it of all uncleanness. Shall we have less care to receive the Lord then man? and of the house of God then of our own houses? It is the will of God that all congregations should have a convenient place to resort & come together to perform divine duties. Their zeal & diligence is greatly commended, that have restored and repaired the decays of such places, as we see in the examples of *Iehoash & Josiah*. As then it is required that the people have a convenient place to meet together for public prayer, for it is a good work to set up such places. The Jews commended the Centurion that had built them a synagogue, and made it an argument of his love to their nation: so like wise, such places should be decently kept for public preaching and prayers, that the holy things of God may be revered, & not contemned. Hence it is that the Lord doth sharply reprove, and grievously plague the Jews after their return from captivity, that they could find time to dwell in their settled houses, & yet suffer the Lord's house to lie wast: whereby it came to pass, that they had sown much, but had gathered little; they did eat, but were not satisfied; they did drink, but were not filled; they did clothe themselves, but were not warmed; they did earn wages, but were not enriched, ver. 6. If a man have his private house (wherein he dwelleth) any way decaying and standing in need of repairing, he is ready to redress and re-edify it: yea, he will do it to his barn for his corn, to his stable for his horse, and to his stie for his Swine. Nevertheless, how many think you are there that take themselves to be the people of God, & would be accounted notable good Christians, and think themselves greatly wronged if any should make any question of it, who suffer the houses of God to run to ruin, and to lie pitifully complaining, so wast and desolate, as if some foreign enemy had made hauock of them by a sodain invasion. Thus do many places lie open to wind and weather, and more deformed, defiled, and disfigured, then any poor Cabin or simple cottage whatsoever. Christ our Savior would not celebrate the Passover, but in a chamber trimmed and prepared for y^t purpose, Mar. 14, 15. True it is, the Lord standeth not in need of any man's riches, the whole earth is his with all the frame and furniture thereof, yea, *the whole world with all that dwell therein. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts,* Hag. 2.8. our goods cannot extend unto

him, Psal. 16, 2. yet it is his pleasure to use men as his instruments, to erect & edify to his honor, places fit for his service, and to bestow part of that which he hath bestowed upon them, toward the maintenance of his house, where the word may be preached, and the Sacraments administered unto the praise of his name, and the salvation of our own souls, & the souls of our families, and of our brethren. Again, observe that the Oratories and places of prayer do not necessarily require or admit exceeding beauty and sumptuous costs to delight the eye, whatsoever the Papists teach, neither doeth superfluity of garnishing stand with the simplicity of the Gospel, to have Churches glisten with gold and silver, and precious stones in gay and gorgeous manner, as the Jewish Temple did. Indeed the Prophets do foretell in many places of the glory and beauty of the church, that the glory of *Lebanon should beautify the place of his Sanctuary, he will make the place, of his feet glorious*, Isaiah 60, 13. *He will lay the stones of it with Carbuncle, & the foundation with the Sapphires, the windows with Emeralds, and the gates with shining stones*, Chap. 54, 11.12. But we must understand this of the spiritual beauty, not of any earthly bravery; of the inward glory, not the outward garnishing of the walls and windows. And therefore it is said, Psa, 45, 13. *The kings daughter is all glorious within*. The faithful that believe in Christ are this Temple of the living God, 1 Cor. 3, 16, 17. & 6, 19. 2 Cor. 6, 16. and the house of God, Heb. 3, 6. So then, we must consider, that there is an outward and an inward beauty of the church: & we must esteem of the glory of the church by the better part. We have an article to inquire, whether the church, chapel, chancell, and steeple be sufficiently repaired, in covering, walls, glasing, paving, seats, & bells. And the enquiry is needful, and not without just and good cause. Neuertheles, this is not the principal defect and decay to be repaired and amended. This must be done, but better things must not be left undone. There are in all places almost fair pulpets, but very many places want good pulpetmen. There be bells more or less, but many of them want their clappers, they cannot be heard. The Priests under the Law were to come into the Tabernacle with their bells, that the sound might come to the ears of the people: but the sound of the Ministers in many places is not to be heard, they are tongue-tied and cannot teach the people, like Idols that have mouths but cannot speak. *Bernard* in his time complaineth of superfluous cost bestowed upon churches, & showeth that holiness becometh God's house, which is rather delighted with unpolluted manners then with polished marble. It is a better work to relieve the needy, to feed the hungry, and to clothe the naked, then to garnish churches with gold and silver. It is said, y^t in former times when the church had wooden cups, it had golden Ministers: but now when as they had golden cups they had wood Ministers. What shall it avail to hang the walls of the church with costly and curious ornaments to have pillars shining with Marble, and the covering glistening with gold, whilst in the mean season there is no good choice of the Ministers that may attend on holy things▪ and preach the Gospel in truth and sincerity? Whatsoever the natural man esteemeth of glory and garnishing, whose vain imagination like the child that is delighted with toys and babies, is carried away with goodly shows to the eye, with pleasant smells to the nostrils, and with pleasing sounds to the ear, yet when we have learned to judge aright, & to esteem of things by the virtue and value of them, not by the sight and appearance, we will confess that among all others that is the goodliest Temple, and hath the most glorious ornaments and monuments in it, where the word is most soundly preached, and the Sacraments in the best manner delivered. This we ought to account the

beauty and ornamēt of a Temple; and doubtless without these, it wanteth much of his luster, it is as a ruinous and ragged building, let it be otherwise never so richly garnished. This appeareth evidently at the building and erecting of the second Temple after the captivity, when the people that had seen the surpassing glory of the first house, to wit, the Temple of *Solomon*, the mirror of the world, saw also the simple beginnings and weak foundation of this, they wept with a loud voice, Ezra 3, 12. yet the Prophet telleth them, that the glory of the second house should far exceed & surmount the Temple of *Solomon*: as Hag. 2, 3. *Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory, and how do ye see it now? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?* Yet he biddeth them be of good comfort, and telleth them that the glory of the latter should be greater then of the former house. But wherein stood this glory? or in what did it consist? not in the building, not in the stones, not in the vessels; it wanted the Mercy-seat, the Ark, the Tables, the Vrim and Thummim, and such like: herein therefore consisted the greatness of the glory of it, that while this stood, Christ Jesus should come to be the light of the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of *Israel*, Lu. 2, 32. And this doth *Haggai* teach, Chap. 2, 27. that the *Desire of all nations should come, and so the Lord would fill that house with glory*. A notable argument to convince the Jews, who have seen with their eyes this Temple long since destroyed, and not one stone left upon another that was not thrown down, Math. 24, 42. and yet they do foolishly to this day, look for another Messiah. So likewise the Evangelist *Matthew* speaketh of *Bethlehem*, that it was not the least among the Princes of *Judah*, because out of it should come a Governor which should rule his people *Israel*, Math. 2, 6. Yet the Prophet *Micah* (out of whom the sentence is taken) showeth, *That it is little among the many thousands of Judah*, chap. 5, 2. This may seem to imply a contradiction, to be little, and yet not little: howbeit we must understand, that this place which is in it self or compared with others small and little, yet through the birth of Christ it should be made famous and preferred before many other in *Judah*. Behold therefore wherein the glory of any place or people consisteth, to wit, in giving entertainment unto Christ, and in embracing the Gospel, which bringeth salvation to all men. And this is the glory of particular persons (not to surmount in strength, nor to abound in riches, nor to excel in wisdom, but to *know the Lord, and whom he hath sent Jesus Christ, and him crucified*, John. 17, 3. It is our glory to seek the glory of God, & if we have learned Christ, we have learned the way unto true glory. So then to conclude, we receive & practice whatsoever is fit and decent in setting up and adorning of churches, but we refuse and reject all excess, curiosity, and superfluity, as nothing at all furthering the worship of God, nothing fitting the Gospel of Christ, nothing auailing the salvation of mā, nothing helping to the kingdom of heaven; the folly whereof is so palpable and apparent, that the wiser sort among the Gentiles reproveth it, and inueyed against it, and saw that gold in God's worship auailed nothing at all.

Lastly, this putteth us in mind of a necessary [Use 3] duty belonging to all, to assemble men, women, and children, all that are of understanding for the hearing of the word, and other duties of faith & religion. For wherefore is it y^e will and pleasure of God, that houses and places of purpose should be built? Is it for show or for the name? It were vain and foolish so to surmise, as if he delighted to put his people to idle expenses. No, it is for preaching, for prayer, and for the Sacraments. Therefore was the Tabernacle erected, until which time was

no certain place assigned: afterward, they had the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and Synagogues in all parts of the land, that God in thē might be publicly served and worshipped. Great was the zeal of *David* to these gracious assemblies. His soul longed for the Courts of God, as the Hart desireth the water brooks. His soul was athirst for God, for the living God, to appear before his presence. His tears were his meat and drink, while he was kept from these places, and while they daily said unto him, *Where is now thy God?* He poured out his very heart, when he remembered how he had gone with the multitude, and brought them forth into the house of God in the voice of praise and Thanksgiving. He was glad when they said unto him, *We will go into the house of the Lord.* And as it was with him, so was it with other the faithful. They were earnest to come unto these assemblies, they were loath to depart from them, they were grieved at their own absence that they could not be at them, being driven away by the enemies. The commandment of the Lord is general, that their Captains, their Elders, their Officers, and all the people should gather together. Who is it then shall plead an immunity or dispensation from this duty? May Women or Children? No, they are expressly charged to assemble themselves, Deut. 31, 12, 13. and ch. 29, verses 10, 11. *Men, Women, and Children, from the hewer of thy Woode, unto the drawer of thy Water, even all of them must come together, that they may hear, and learn, and fear the Lord their GOD, and observe to do all the words of the Law.* But is then the stranger exempted? No, he is willed to meet together with the rest. Are the old freed from this duty through their age? It is noted of *Hannah*, that she was an old woman that had been a widow fourscore and four yeas, yet she went not out of the Temple, that is, all her delight was to be there; she was never well and at hearts ease, till she was in God's house; she made the Temple as her own house to dwell in; she made the word & worship of God her meat and drink to feed on, serving him with fasting and prayers day and night, Luke 2, 37. So *Simeon* came into the Temple by the motion of the Spirit, when the Parents brought the babe *Jesus* to do for him after the custom of the Law, verse 27. *Peter* and *John* might have prayed at home in their houses, as many pretend they can and yet do it not; but *they went up together into the temple at the ninth hour of prayer.* The Lord giveth commandment, *Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary, I am the Lord.* Such then as show no love to the Sanctuary of God, have no care of sanctifying the Sabbath, but do defile it and profane it; yea they never consider that they contemn the Lord himself, neither with whom they have to do in this business. Christ our Savior when he could be found nowhere else, by his parents seeking for him, he was found in the temple. Thus we see the practice of *David*, of *Hannah*, of *Simeon*, of the Apostles, and of Christ himself touching the public service of God. But behold the difference between those times and ours, or rather between them and us. *David* longed to be in the house of God, our souls long and faint to be out of it. *Hannah* dwelt in the temple, and could hardly be gotten out of it: we had rather dwell in the tents of wickedness, & with much ado are brought to come unto the Temple. *Simeon* was old as well as *Hannah*; we think our selves too old, and plead weakness and faintness that we cannot go so far, and yet we can stretch out our limbs to go farther at other times, and for other occasions. *Simeon* came into the Temple by the motion of the Spirit; by whose motion do others keep themselves from the Temple? and what shall we say ruleth in them? surely not the Spirit of God: what other spirit then it can be, I had rather leave it to themselves to consider, then declare it to them. Christ *Jesus* could be found nowhere but in the Temple; if one would enquire for these,

yea upon the Sabbath day, yea in time of divine Service, you shall have them rather in the Tavern than in the Temple, or sitting upon an ale-bench rather than in place where it were more meet they did show their presence, even where God hath promised to show his presence. True it is, he hath said, *that heaven is his throne, and the earth his footstool, & that he dwelleth not in Temples made with hands*, Isaiah 66, 1. But the meaning is, that he is not included or as it were imprisoned in them, his power is not tied to any place; nevertheless, he hath made a special promise that *where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst of them*. Wherefore, great should be our zeal toward the house of prayer, we should much desire to be at it, we should more and more be in love with it, and with great reverence remain in it. He that findeth not the Lord here where his honor dwelleth, let him never look to find him elsewhere. For whosoever despiseth in the pride of his heart the place of God's worship, & refuseth to yield his presence there, deceiveth himself if ever he think that God will make himself known unto him any other way.

[Verse 21, 22. *And so it was when the Cloud abode, &c.*] Here we have the cause of their marching and resting declared, to wit, the cloud, which was upon them by day when they went out of the campe, Numb. 10.34. When that stayed over them, whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, they abode in their tents, and iournied not; but when it was taken up, they journeyed. This cloud had the nature of a Sacrament, and signified the presence of Christ conducting them. The doctrine [Doctrine.] from hence is this, that Christ Jesus is the substance of the Sacraments both of the old and New Testament. Whatsoever the signs were, and howsoever they varied, yet he was signified by them all. This appeareth in this book plentifully by the cloud in this place: by *Manna*, chap. 11. and the rock ch. 20. all which were Sacraments unto them, all were the same with our baptism and the Lord's Supper, and all of them were figures of Christ, as appeareth not by some probability, but by the express testimony of the Apostle, *I would not have you ignorant how that all our Fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, & were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea: and did all eat the same spiritual meat, & did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ*. First, touching the cloud & passing over the sea, if we consider the letter of the history, there was a great miracle in them both. The cloud in the day time defended them from y^e heat of the Sun, their passage through the Sea gave them safety and security frō the tyranny of *Pharaoh*, and frō the danger of present death. Nevertheless, this is not all which we are to mark, nor the chief thing which we are to consider, because there lay hid as it were under a veil a greater mystery, inasmuch as both the *cloud* and the *sea* served them instead of a certain kind of baptism, representing and performing that unto them w^c our baptism doth unto us. For as baptism is a sign and signification of the grace of God, a Sacrament of regeneration, and a certain passage from death to life, so the Cloude was in effect to them as much, to wit, a tokē and testimony of the presence of God; & their passing through the sea was as a passing frō death to a new life. For while they were in the depth and bottom of the sea, where were they but in the midst of death? and when they had escaped to the farther shore, did they not after a sort rise from death to life? So then the Apostle teacheth, that both the Cloud and the Sea were as a certain Sacrament unto the Jews, & that common to them all, because all were covered with the

cloud, & all of them passed through the sea, even as we that profess Christ are all washed with water, which signifieth our washing with his blood, and our partaking of his righteousness, Rom. 6, 3. Galath. 3, 27. Hence it is that many are said to be baptized in y^e name of Christ, Act. 2, 38. & 19, 5. which noteth not the form, but rather the end or effect of their baptism. It may be said, we read no such signification of the cloud or of the sea in the old Testament: how then did the Fathers understand them to be Sacraments? True it is, this is not expressed, but the Apostle the best interpreter of the Scripture giveth us a good warrant so to understand them, and to conceive of them. And there is no doubt but *Moses* and *Aaron*, and others instructed by them and by the Spirit of God, thus understood these mysteries. For how can we think that they which dealt faithfully in the house of God, would be silent in these things, & not teach the people? Neither may we admit of the gross conceit of *Illyricus*, who noteth that the Apostle *inflectit paulo violentius ipsum simile*, that is, doth somewhat violently, wrest this similitude. God forbid that we should think that *Paul* would lay violent hands upon the Scriptures, or wrest any part of the word of God from the natural meaning. The unlearned and unstable wrested the writings of *Paul* as they did also the other Scriptures: would *Peter* have complained of such, if his beloved brother *Paul* had done the like? Now it cannot be denied, that they were true Sacraments, because they signified Christ Jesus. True it is, they were not ordinary, nor perpetual, but extraordinary, and temporal, and transitory, howbeit they had a spiritual signification. The cloud was instead of the outward element and visible sign, neither was the word of grace wanting, and therefore it is called the Lord, and the Cloud of the Lord, Exod. 14. Numb. 14. & 19. If then the word joined to the element do make a Sacrament, this also must be acknowledged to be a Sacrament, forasmuch as it was a sign to them of the protection and preservation of God. The like we might say of their passing through the sea; they had this word of promise, *Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord which he shall show you today,*&c. These indeed were outward blessings, but they pointed out spiritual blessings to the faithful, to wit, the favor and grace of God, and led them as it were by the hand to Christ, in whom is the accomplishment of all promises. True it is, all were partakers of the temporal benefits, but all did not partake of the eternal, howbeit this came to pass thorough their own fault & infidelity, inasmuch as they wer offered by God, albeit not received by them. For all have not faith, 2 Thes. 3, 2. and therefore all have not Christ, the pith and marrow of the Sacraments. If any ask why the Apostle maketh choice of these two, [Objection] the cloud and the sea, and calleth them by the name of a Baptism, and doth not rather remember circumcision, which was to the Jews instead of our baptism, forasmuch as their circumcision is our baptism, and our baptism is their circumcision, Phil. 3, 3. Coloss. 2, 11. and both of them are a Sacrament of our regeneration and adoption: The answer [Answer.] is, that in the cloud and the sea is a more plain and evident resemblance and proportion with the water in baptism, and the passage from death to life, was more lively and clearly shown and shadowed in them then in the circumcision. For they that stood under the cloud (as of all them did) what did they in a manner, but stand under death, because the cloud hanging over their heads, seemed ready in a minute and moment to fall upon them, and overwhelm them? So to go down into the bottom of the Sea, what was it to them but a kind of death? and to pass to the other shore, what was it but a rising again from death to life? And this doth the Apostle speak of baptism,

as we have heard. So then the cloud and the sea were as a baptism to the Jews, and our baptism is as the cloud and the sea to us Christians; all looked at Christ, all signified grace, life, salvation, remission of sins, and regeneration thorough him. To these we must join *Manna*, and the rock; the one was spiritual meat unto them, the other was spiritual drink, and both of them the same with the Lord's Supper, and therefore they were not inferior unto us. Our Supper is spiritual meat, and spiritual drink, they also had their spiritual meat and *Manna*, and their spiritual drink out of the rock, and all these had reference to one and the same Christ; and therefore *Paul* saith, verse 4. *The Rock was Christ*. So the *Manna* was Christ, for *he is the hidden Manna, Revel. 2, 17*. These are called spiritual, because they had a spiritual signification. Thus are y^e *Jews* made equal to us in the other Sacrament also, which is a sign and seal of the nourishment which we have by Christ. The Sacraments were diverse in the outward signs, but in the thing signified, they are one and the same. This *Manna* & the rock were as the Supper of the *Jews*: so the Supper of the Lord is as the *Manna* and rock of us that are Christians. Thus then we see, that the cloud was Christ, the red sea was Christ, the *Manna* was Christ, as the Apostle expresseth that the rock was Christ, & as Christ showeth that *the bread was his body, & the cup is the New Testament in his blood, the breaking of bread is the communion of the body of Christ, and the cup of blessing is called the communion of the blood of Christ*, 1 Corin. 10, 16. So that we see all Sacraments whatsoever did figure out Christ, and point him out as with the finger.

[Use 1] This showeth the agreement between the Sacraments of the old & New Testament, they are the same in regard of the grace represented and signified by them. The same Christ is in both: the one figuring him out to come, the other pointing him out as already come in the flesh. Hence it is, that their Sacraments were dark and obscure, ours do serve more plainly and clearly to confirm our faith and to seal up our salvation. For as the Apostle teacheth that the Israelites were baptized as well as we, and did all eat spiritual meat, and drink spiritual drink as well as we: so he showeth that we are circumcised, and have a Passover sacrificed for us, and therefore it followeth that they had the same spiritual communion with Christ that we have. Out of this we have three things to be considered of us. First, that the Covenant of God with man hath evermore been in substance the same: forasmuch as it is a free contract between the Lord and a sinner, concerning the pardon of sin, and life everlasting through faith in Christ Jesus. This covenant he made with Jews and Gentiles. This was made with sinful man immediately after the fall, Gen. 3, 15. This succeedeth the former, which is of works, so soon as it was broken: for the latter which is the covenant of grace, had not been made, if the former had not been broken, and so made insufficient and impossible, Heb. 8, 7. Rom. 3, 23. Gal. 3, 21. True it is, the new Covenant which offereth salvation unto a sinner, is but one in substance, but in regard of circumstances it differeth. For in the Old Testament it was shadowed out by types, by figures, and by shadows before Christ's coming in the flesh. This yoke was taken away when Christ was exhibited, and all these ceremonies abolished, to the great manifestation of God's love toward us, and the special comfort of all the faithful. Secondly, that dishonor is done to God, violence to the Sacraments, and injury to the Fathers, by such as hold, that the Sacraments of the Old Testament were only significatue and mere shadows. For the Apostle

speaking of the Fathers, saith, Acts 15, 11. *We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they:* but they were not saved by shadows of grace: for how can the rock be accounted a mere shadow and nothing else, seeing the Apostle calleth it Christ? If it be Christ, then doubtless they drank Christ himself which drank of that rock; even as if the bread be the body of Christ, and the cup the blood of Christ sacramentally, it cannot be denied, but that all they which eat the bread and drink of the cup of the Lord worthily, must necessarily eat the body & drink the blood of Christ spiritually. If any object, that Christ had not yet taken flesh of the virgin *Mary*, neither was exhibited to y^e world. I answer, [Answer.] it is true; but nothing to the purpose, because faith is the substance of things hoped for, & the evidence of things not seen, Heb. 11, 1. This made the flesh of Christ present, though he had not yet taken our nature upon him, neither were partaker of flesh and blood, Heb. 2, 14, And thus they did find salvation in the flesh of Christ, who was the Lamb slain from the beginning of y^e world, Revel. 13, 18. because God had promised even in the garden, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpents head; so that we may say with the Apostle, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever*, Hebr. 13, 8. And how could the Fathers under the Law have eternal life otherwise, forasmuch as this was evermore a true saying, *Except ye▪ eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you?* &c. John 6, 53, 54. So then the Israelites did seek & obtain salvation in the flesh of Christ which he was to give, whē the fullness of time came, for the redemption and salvation of the world. And through faith they received Christ, not only in the word, but also in the Sacraments. Thirdly, from hence it appeareth, that the eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ, is merely and wholly spiritual, for by faith it is that we are united unto Christ, as branches to the vine, and draw from him everlasting life, and by faith he dwelleth in our hearts, Eph. 3, 17. This communion is common to the Fathers and us: but the Fathers could not communicate with Christ any otherwise then by faith in the Word and Sacraments, seeing he had not taken our flesh upon him: and therefore so it is with us, our communion is not carnal but spiritual. And such a communion did Christ himself teach, John 6, where he overthroweth and destroyeth the carnal eating of his body, both by telling them of his ascending into heaven, verse 62. *What if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?* as if he should say, I will carry up my flesh with me into heaven, whither your mouth cannot reach nor enter: and by showing that such kind of carnal eating can profit nothing, v. 63. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I speak are spirit, and they are life.* This only is necessary & sufficient unto saluatiō, the corporal & carnal eating, which is now maintained and defended by the Church of Rome and others, i▪ neither necessary, nor profitable, nor sufficient, nor any way available unto salvation. Nay, to many it is hurtful, dangerous, deadly, and damnable. These are like to the Capernaïtes, that did adhere seruirely to the letter, & will seem to stick closely to the words of Christ; howbeit he saith not, in the bread or under the species of the bread is the body, but This, that is, this bread which I have blessed, broken, and delivered into your hands to be eaten with the mouth of the body, is my body to be broken for you upon the Cross. But if the bread it self be the body of Christ, thē cannot the body of Christ be said to be in the bread. Wherefore the words of institution do not teach, or require, or confirm the carnal presence of the body of Christ in the bread.

Secondly, if the body and blood of Christ had been really in the bread and wine, Christ should have eaten himself even his own body, and drunk his own blood which was not yet really and actually shed, but rested & remained within the veins. For it is holden that he did eat of the bread and drink of the wine with his Disciples, and therefore he saith, *I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the Vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Fathers kingdom*, Math. 26, 29. And as he was circumcised for us, not for himself, and was baptized for us, not for himself, and did eat the Passover also with his Disciples, so it may well be thought that he did partake of the Supper, as well as of the other Sacraments.

Moreover, Christ is ascended really into heaven with his body, which must contain him until his coming again, Acts 3, 21, and 1, 11. When he ascended, he left this world with his body, John 16.28. We have the poor ever with us, but him we shall not have ever, Math. 26, 11. It will be said, that Christ saith, *Loe, I am with you to the ende of the world*, Math. 28. It is true in respect of his Deity: for the promise is made to the Church of his perpetual presence, providence, and protection by his Spirit. Again, if he were always upon the earth, he could not be our Priest to make intercession for us, as Hebr. 8, 4. If he were on earth, he could not be a Priest, &c. but he is our Priest and sitteth at the right hand of his Father. Besides, if Christ were present bodily in the bread, he were to be worshipped in the bread, and in the mouths and stomachs of these that receive and eat the bread; but that cannot be without committing idolatry. He will come from the heavens to judge the quick and the dead, not from the bread or from the Altars. His body is visible and may be felt, and hath flesh and bones, as our natural bodies have, Luke 24.30. We are forewarned by our Savior, not to believe or give any credit to such as will show him on the earth, and say, *Loe here is Christ, or loe he is there, before his coming again*, Math. 24, 26. *If they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the Desert, go not forth: Behold, he is in the secret Chambers, believe it not:* and shall we believe them that tell us he is in the bread, or in the pixe or on the Altar? but of this I have spoken elsewhere.

Secondly, it is not enough to come to the [Use 2] Sacraments and to be partakers of the outward signs, the chief part that we must look after is Christ Jesus. It serveth therefore to beat down all confidence that we may have in the outward sign. *Simon Magus* was baptized as well as the rest in *Samaria*, Acts 8, 13. but what did that avail him, forasmuch as he remained in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity? verse 23. therefore he had no profit by it, for though his body were washed with water, yet his soul was not cleansed by the blood of Christ. It is noted of the Israelites by the Apostle, that they were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, all did eat the same spiritual meat, and drank the same spiritual drink; yet with many of them was not God pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. What did it advantage thē to be partakers of these benefits? They might bring some good to their bodies, but they brought no comfort to their souls. Al were partakers of the outward signs, but all received not the grace signified, for many of them were destroyed. It hath always been even from the beginning a vain opinion and presumption to ascribe too much to the outward work of every ordinance of God. We know how much the Jews gloried in their circumcision, and preferred themselves before the Gentiles whom they contemned, as if, to have the foreskin of the flesh cut off, were enough to make a man to be undoubtedly

the true child of *Abraham*, nay the child of God, although he did never labor to express the true circumcision, which is the power of it in their hearts. Hence it is, that the Prophets call them back continually from this foolish confidence, and will them to circumcise the foreskinne of their hearts, and be no more stiff-necked. *Stephen* putteth them in mind, notwithstanding the outward circumcision, that they were uncircumcised in heart and ears, Acts 7, 52. As then there is a double circumcision, one outward or of the letter, the other inward or of the Spirt: so may we say of baptism. And as the outward circumcision, notwithstanding all their vain boasting, could not profit, so must we conceive no less of our outward baptism, if we do not labor, when we are come to age and years of discretion, to be washed and cleansed from sin in our souls, as we were washed with water in our infancy. Again, they gloried not a little in the Temple and in the sacrifices offered in the Temple, Ier. 7, 4. they cried out, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, this is the Temple of the Lord;* yet the Prophet faileth not to tell them, that they trusted in lying words, which should not profit, so long as they did not amend their ways and their works. Thus they rested in the deed done, as if they had done a meritorious act, that must needs deserve the love and favor of God. So is it with the ignorant multitude among us, if they come to Church, they think they have done a great work, as much as God can justly or possibly require at their hands. But our coming to our Temples or Churches, shall little help us, except we hear & obey, and become new creatures. This corruption (whereof we speak) we have even drawn from the loins of *Adam*, and sucked it from the breasts of our first mother. When *Adam* and his wife had fallen from God, the Lord cast them out of the garden, lest they should put forth their hand, and take hold of the tree of life, and eat and live forever, Gen. 3, 22. Had the tree any such virtue in it, that if they had eaten of it again, it could restore them to life, and make them live forever? No, but God discovereth the corrupt judgment of degenerate man; they had an opinion that they should recover their former estate again, if once they could lay hold of the tree of life, they thought all would be well, if they might taste of that fruit. Thus it is with many in our days, if they receive the Supper of the Lord, they think it hath an hidden virtue inherent in it, as a medicine that serveth for the body, and that they are as sound Christians as the best. The like we see in the Israelites at another time, when they had received an overthrow by the Philistines, & their forces defeated that they brought into the field against them, they trusted in the Ark rather than in the living God, saying, *Let us fetch the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.* They deemed & dreamed that the bare bringing of the Ark into the host, should defend them and discomfit their enemies. They had a vain confidence in that outward sign of God's presence, but they had polluted the worship of God, and no Ark can save a profane people. So if we be ungodly, profane, & rebellious, though we receive the Supper every day, it should do us no more good then to trust to a broken reed, forasmuch as it will rather serve to further our condemnation by abusing of it.

[Use 3] Lastly, we must take heed how we come to the Sacramens, and bring with us the hand of faith, that we may lay hold upon Christ as well as upon the bread and the cup. With the hand of the body we receive these, but with the hand of the soul we receive Christ. Here is great comfort ministered to all those that come to the Lord's Table aright. For as they that

rest in the outward signs, wherein pride and ignorance meet together, depart without any benefit to themselves: so all such as communicate aright, do receive Christ and all his benefits, then which there cannot be a greater benefit. God the Father offereth and assureth his own Son, whom he hath sealed to be the Mediator of our redemption, & he deludeth and deceiveth no man that cometh to the Supper as a guest prepared for the marriage feast. For as the word turneth to be the savor of death unto death to the irreverent and vnregarding hearer; so in truth is the Sacrament the savor of death unto death to the unworthy and unwise receiver. Let us therefore thoroughly examine and prove our selves, whether we be in the faith or not, and consider diligently what is set before us, and hunger and thirst after Christ, that we may obtain this hidden Manna. This we shall never do, except we observe these few rules. First, we must try our selves by y^e law of God, whereby cometh the knowledge of sin, Rom. 3, 20, & 7, 7. It is a clear glass to show us our faces or rather our hearts, I am. 1, 23. From hence we must frame an editement against our selves.

Secondly, we must labor to understand and believe the common corruption of all mankind, standing partly in original sin, and partly in the fruits thereof, wherewith all are tainted as with an unclean leprosy from the crown of the head to the soale of the foot, Rom. 3, 9.

Thirdly, we must feel the curse of everlasting death due to us, Gal. 3, 10.

Fourthly, we must learn what covenant God hath made with us touching grace and mercy, that we may be raised up to comfort in the Son of God our Redeemer.

Fifthly, we must desire to be made partakers of the Lord's Supper, and feel how much we stand in need of it; which will follow necessarily upon the former.

Lastly, we should fit our selves the better unto the work, by considering the proportion between the signs and the things signified. The beholding of the breaking of the bread, & the pouring out of the wine, should enforce us to remember the body of Christ broken and his blood shed for us.

When we look upon the Minister coming to us and reaching forth these elements, We should consider that the Lord Jesus himself cometh to us, and offereth himself with all his mercies and merits unto us, if we have faith to receive him. And as we lay hold upon the bread and wine, and take them in our hands, so we must stretch forth the hand of a lively faith to lay hold of Christ; for with him we shall entertain all his saving benefits to our endless and everlasting comfort.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1, 2. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two Trumpets of silver, &c.

HEere we have the conclusion of the first part of this book. [Doctrine.] In this chapter we are to consider two things. First, the commandment of God directed to *Moses* to make two silver Trumpets. Secondly, the removing of the Israelites from *Sinai* to *Paran*. Touching the Trumpets, they are described by the matter, they must be made of silver: by the form, of an

whole piece. Thirdly, by the ends, for the calling of the assembly, and for the iourning of the Campe. Fourthly, by the manner prescribed how to use them, to what purpose one alone is to be sounded, to what purpose both: when an alarm is to be blown, and when the alarm is to be blown the second time; when they must blow, but not sound the alarm. Fifthly, by telling who shall be the trumpeters, or sound the Trumpets, the sons of *Aaron* the Priest. Lastly, by y^e time, how long this use shall continue, to wit, as an ordinance forever, even so long as the Commonwealth of the Israelites shall endure. This is the present use of them: there is a double use of them commanded for the time to come; one in time of war, to assure them that God will then remember them for good, and save them from their enemies, ver. 9: the other in time of peace at their solemn feasts, at their burnt offerings and peace offerings.

[Use 1] The uses of them follow, which are partly civil, and partly ecclesiastical. And first, seeing these silver Trumpets served for y^e Camp and the Congregation, to assemble and to remove, and that the power of making them is committed to *Moses*, who hath the sole prerogative to call and to dissolve assemblies about public affairs, we learn that it belongeth to Kings and Princes as their proper right to gather together, and to dismiss them that are gathered together. Everyone hath not authority and jurisdiction to draw multitudes together, we shall have no small ado, if that may be suffered. Acts 1^o, 23. We must have lawful and orderly assemblies, verse. 29. and such as do not savor of confusion. So it was in Egypt, without *Phar•oh*, no man might lift up his hand or foot in all the Land of Egypt, Gen. 41, 44. This right is annexed to the highest power by an estate indefeizable, and by a perpetual law y^t cannot be dissolved throughout all generations. As this power together with the Trumpets was given to *Moses*, so did he and his successors practice the same, who commanded in chief, as Deut. 33, ver. 5. Numb. 31, 6. *Joshua* called and dismissed the people, and they obeyed him in the execution of that power, no less then they had done *Moses* before, Josh. 1, 17, and 24, 28. So did *David* use these Trumpets, 1 Chron, 15, 4, & 23, 2, 3, 6. When the Ark was to be removed, and when the offices of the Tabernacle were to be ordered, which are things merely belonging to true religion. The like we might say of *Solomon*, 2 Chron. 5, 2. of *Asa*, *Jehoshaphat*, *Hezekiah*, and *Josiah*. Thus were all general Councils congregated and called together, and there were none otherwise called for a thousand years after Christ, but by the Trumpet of *Moses*, that is, by the authority of *Caesar*. Thus did *Moses* also in gathering assemblies about public affairs both for consultation and action. For consultation, because many eyes may discern that which few cannot. For action, because many hands may discharge that which is troublesome & cumbersome for one to do, Exod. 18.18. This serveth to reprove three sorts; first, the Bishop of Rome, who as a thief and usurper hath encroched upon the Princes right, and stolen away one of these silver Trumpets and carried to it Rome. He would leave *Moses* but one Trumpet, and would limit his office to civil and temporal things, challenging power in all spiritual causes and over all spiritual persons. Howbeit, *Aaron* the High Priest never offered to wring and wrest out of the hand of *Moses* this power: he was content to blow them at the commandment of *Moses*, or rather at the commandment of God. Nay, such is the tyranny of this proud Bishop, that he contenteth not himself with one Trumpet, though he have indeed right to none, but he beginneth to engross into his own hands the other Trumpet also, claiming power to depose

and dethrone Princes, and to dispose of their crowns and scepters at his pleasure, as if all kingdoms were given unto him, and it belonged to his right to dispose of them. Had *Peter* any such power? or did he ever claim any such dominion? No, the Apostle well understood, that Christ forbid them to exercise any such Lordship, Math. 20, verses 25, 26.

Secondly, it reproveth those that being summoned by the sound of these Trumpets, that is, called together by the Magistrate, refuse to come. *Moses* by virtue of these Trumpets put into his hands, called *Corah* and his company, but that crew answered, *We will not come up*: but if we would know what became of these rebels, some were consumed with fire, and others we must seek for under the earth, for the earth opened her mouth, as they had opened their mouths against *Moses* the supreme Magistrate, and swallowed them up, their goods, their houses, and persons: yea, the Apostle denounceth a fearful woe against them that perish in the same contradiction & gainsaying of *Core*, Jude, verse 11. So then if the Magistrate call, no man must refuse or deny to come. In the natural body, the beginning of all motion is from the head; and so it ought to be in the body politic.

Thirdly, it reproveth those that assemble before they were called; the former would not assemble when they were called, these assemble before they be called. The other were too slow and dull, these are too quick and nimble headed. So then all must keep their places and standings, they must come when they are called, but they must be called before they come. The mutinous company mentioned, Numb. 20, 23. when they wanted water, stayed not for the sound of the Trumpet, but came together in a tumultuous manner; but God sware they should not enter into his rest. This evil is much worse then the former. It is evil not to come when we are called, but to gather together without a calling, is worse & more dangerous, and produceth more dangerous effects. For they that presume to meet without *Moses* his precept, will not stick afterward to meet against *Moses* his person, & in conclusion also to wrest the Trumpet out of the hand of *Moses*. Therefore the Town-Clearke said, *We are in danger to be called in question for this days uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse*. As if he had said, we have done more then we can well answer, seeing we may be endighted of treason or at least of a riot for this days work. We must therefore know, that every such Congregation assembled without a lawful call, is no better then a conuenticle, whatsoever account we make of it.

[Use 2] Secondly, from hence ariseth an instruction to the Ministers of God. For as *Aaron* and his sons, the Priests of God, are commanded to blow the Trumpets, so this is an image and representation of the faithful Preachers and Ministers, who by the clear and shrill sound of the word of God, must bring men to the true knowledge of God: as 2 Chron. 13, 12. where the King of Judah telleth *Jeroboam*, *The Lord is with us for our Captain, and his Priests with sounding Trumpets to cry alarm against you*. It is their office to sound the alarm against God's enemies, and to bid defiance against all sin. So the Prophet *Isaiah* saith, ch. 58, 1. *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a Trumpet, and show my people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins*. Likewise *Ezekiel*, chap. 33, ver. 2, 3, &c. the Ministers are made watchmen over the house of Israel; if they see the sword coming, and blow not the Trumpet, the blood of such as perish, shall be required at their hands. So then, they must have zeal, courage, and boldness,

to reprove sin without fear of men's faces, and without respect of persons, and must strike at it where they find it. Such a one was *Elijah*, that feared not the Kings face, but told him, it was he and his fathers house that troubled Israel, 1 King. 18, 18. Such a Trumpet was *John the Baptist*, who is said to be the voice of a crier in the wilderness, and told *Herod* it was not lawful for him to have his brothers wife, Math. 14, 4. This reproveth such as are dumb dogs and hold their peace, such as cannot open their mouths or say anything, whose breath serveth them not to blow this Trumpet: such also as wink at sin, and will not see it: such also as rebuke coldly and are afraid to speak, whereas they should blow the Trumpet, and even thunder out against obstinate sinners, and make them afraid to sin, seeking to save them with fear, pulling them out of the fire. Hence it is, that *Amos* saith, *Shall a Trumpet be blown in the City, and the people not be afraid? Or will a Lyon roar in the Forest, when he hath no prey?* When a Trumpet giveth a sudden sign by the sound of it out of a watch-tower, all the people hearken and are troubled, and prepare themselves this way or that way, according as the Trumpet giveth the token. So at the voice of God sounding by his Minister, we ought to be attentive and give ear, and to be moved at the noise of it, and as he giveth warning, prepare our selves and look about us while it is time, lest afterward it be too late. For God doth not threaten for form or fashion sake, as if he did not purpose to punish; neither are his threatenings ordinary words of course, forasmuch as the very Lions themselves do not roar, except they see some prey or booty. The word is never without his effect, neither returneth unto God empty, but it accomplisheth that which he pleaseth, and shall prosper in the work to which he sendeth it. As then the roaring and yelling of the Lyon is an assured token of the prey, so the threatenings of God are prognostications and fore-shewings of the wrath of God, ready prepared. Woe therefore unto those, that albeit they hear the sound of the Trumpet, yet sit as stones or steel, and are never a whit moved, but pass over God's judgments and threatenings, as if they concerned them nothing at all.

Thirdly, these Trumpets teach us with joy [Use 3] and gladness to praise God for his benefits bestowed upon us. For the Priests were commanded to blow with the Trumpets at their peace offerings and burnt offerings, ver. 10. and Ezra 3, 10. to be a testimony of their spiritual joyfulness, and to be a memorial before the Lord, as Levite. 23, 24. *In the seventh month, and the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of Trumpets, an holy convocation.* And Psalm. 81, 3, 4. *Blow up the Trumpet in the new Moon, in the time appointed on our solemn feast day, for this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.* As then the Jews on the feasts appointed of God, did set forth his praises with singing and instruments of music of all sorts, the Trumpet, the Psaltery, the Harp, the Organs, the Timbrell, & the Cymbals: so ought the faithful upon the Lord's day, and at all other times set forth the spiritual praises of God with heart and voice. And this was the month, wherein many feasts met together, & after the time they had gathered in y^e fruits of the earth, and received many blessings at the hand of God, that so they might in their public meetings praise God for them, and pray unto him to give them grace to use them soberly and moderately, to the glory of his Name, to the comfort of themselves, and to the refreshing of their poor and needy brethren. Thus we see there is a twofold Trumpet, or rather a twofold sound of the trumpet; one is a terrifying sound, which may be called the Trumpet of the Law proclaiming

the wrath of God both against sins & sinners, of which we read, Zeph. 1, verses 14, 15, 16. *The great day of the Lord is near, it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the lord: that day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble & distress, a day of wastnes & desolation, a day of darkness & gloomines, a day of the Trumpet and alarm gainst the fenced Cities. &c.* The other is a comforting sound, which is the Trumpet of the Gospel, whereby troubled and distressed consciences are lifted up and called to rejoicing, of which the Prophet *Isaiah* speaketh, chapter 27, 13. *It shall come to pass in that day, that the great Trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the Land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the Land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy Mount at Jerusalem.* So then it is our duty to blow this Trumpet of peace, to testify our joy and gladness, when God bestoweth any benefits upon us, Psalm. 33, and 118, 1, 2, and 47, 5, 6, and 48, 1. 1 Chron. 15, 28. 2 Chron. 5, 12, 13. and 15, 14.

[Use 4] Fourthly, these Trumpets (as we have already noted) served for diverse uses, according to the diverse and different sounds, that at the hearing of the noise of them, the people might by and by understand what it meant, and themselves must do. This teacheth us and we are put in mind of it by the Apostle, that as in the host every blast was understood, so in the Church every voice should be understood, and all things should be done to edifying, that they might understand the words of the Preacher what he speaketh unto them: as 1 Corinth. 14, 7, 8. Even the things without life giving sound, whether Pipe or Harp, except they give a distinction of the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the Trumpet give an uncertain sign or sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise you, except ye utter by the tongue, words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air, that is, vainly or idly, to no end and purpose. There is no edification in an unknown tongue: he that understandeth it, giveth thanks well, but the other is not edified. *Paul* himself saith of himself, he had rather speak five words to be understood, then ten thousands in an unknown tongue, that by his voice he might teach others, verse 19. Yet he giveth thanks to God that he spake with tongues more thē they all, to whom he wrote, verse 18. Besides, how shall the people answer Amen, at the giving of thanks, seeing they understand not what is spoken? verse 16. Again, he showeth that there are many kind of voices in y^e world, and none of them are without signification: therefore if we know not the meaning of the voice, we shall be unto him that speaketh, Barbarians; and he that speaketh shall be a Barbarian unto us, verse 10, 11. Everyone must seek to excel, as he may most edify the Church, verse. 12. Rom. 14, 19. Moreover he saith, If I conceive public prayers in the congregation in a tongue not understood, the Spirit moveth and inspireth me well, nevertheless, the meaning & substance of my prayer bringeth no fruit or profit to the Church or to them that hear me: because they may well gaze and gape upon such a one, or haply admire him & be astonished at him; but they may depart as wise as they were before, inasmuch as they receive no benefit by such prayers, v. 14. Hence it is, that he saith, he would pray with the Spirit, and would pray with the understanding also: he would sing with the Spirit, he would sing with the understanding also, v. 15. Strange tongues are not a benefit to the people that hear them without understanding, but a judgment and punishment, v. 21: and therefore such should keep silence if there be no Interpreter, v. 28.

To conclude, all public exercises of our religion, praying, reading, preaching, singing, and receiving of the Sacraments must be used in a known tongue.

This serveth to lay open the grossness of the Roman religion, which have the Scriptures in an unknown tongue, which sometimes the speaker himself doeth not understand, but never the people to whom he speaketh. A most uncomfortable religion, that leadeth men in the dark, and standeth in this & other chief parts of it, merely upon policy. If you blindfold a man, you may do with him what you list: so the Romanists deal, that their juggling may not be espied, and their spiritual or rather carnal couzenage not discerned. The Lord more and more open the eyes of the people, that they may see this which is so palpable, that many of their own side have wished the disorder to be amended. *Lyra* saith, If the people understand y^e prayer or the blessing, they are better brought to God, and do more devoutly answer, Amen. To him consenteth *Cajetan*, who gathereth out of this doctrine of the Apostle, that it is better for the edifying of the Church, that public prayers in the hearing of the people, should be said in a tongue common to thē all. And for our selves, let us acknowledge God's mercy, that hath delivered us from that misery and bondage, & restored unto us his truth, which lay and yet lieth buried in the papacy. Let us walk worthy of the light of the Gospel that is brought home unto us, and bring forth the fruits of it to his glory. But if we refuse to hear the Lord speaking unto us by his servants, and to obey them speaking unto us (in a tongue well known unto us) the wonderful things of God, let us take heed he do not send barbarous enemies using a barbarous tongue, which shall bring us into slavery and subjection. For it is just with God, if we refuse to hear him speaking to us in a known tongue, to compel us even against our willes to hear another speak to us in an unknown tongue to the increase of our misery, and to the danger of our souls: as he dealt with his own people for their unthankfulness, whom he upbraideth that they understood not his speech, and therefore armed the merciless Romans against them y^t spake to thē in a tongue which they understood not, and scourged them by y^t abomination of desolation, the which chastisement continueth upon them to this day.

[Use 5] Lastly, these silver trumpets, serving to sound the alarm in the ears of the people, put us in mind of the last day, when all people shall be gathered together, and arise out of the earth at the sound of the last Trumpet of God. For God will also have his Trumpet. These were blown by *Aaron* and his sons, the last Trumpet shall be blown by the Archangel. Of this we read in many places of the New Testament, of which Christ himself speaketh, and the Apostle in his Epistles. The Evangelist showeth, that the Son of man shall send his Angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, even from one end of heaven to another. And *Paul* speaking of the general resur•ection at the last day, saith, *Behold, I show you a mystery, we shall not at all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a momēt, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last Trumpet: for the Trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised up incorruptible, and we shall be changed*, 1 Corinth. 15, 51, 52. Likewise the same Apostle teacheth, that the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. 1 Thess. 4, verse 16. In the giving of the law, many fearful signs and tokens of God's glorious presence appeared, that made the people fly away & cry out, among the rest,

they heard the noise of the trumpet, Exod. 20, 18. which sounded long, and waxed louder & louder, chap. 19, 1•. This was so terrible, that *Moses* said, *I exceedingly fear and quake*: but at the day of judgment, when God will requi•e an account of the law, and how we have walked in the obedience of it, when everyone shall be judged according to his works, the Trumpet shall be much louder, and the sound of it far shriller, for the dead sh•ll hear it, & arise out of their graves. This shall cause a greater fear in all, then was at the giving of the law, because his coming to judge the quick and the dead shall be sudden, unlooked for, powerful, and glorious. When men shall promise to themselves peace, and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape, 1 Thess. 5, 3. And as it was in the days of *Noah* and *Lot*, when they gave themselves to a general security, and never knew anything till they were destroyed, one sort with water, and another with fire: so shall the coming of the Son of man be, Mat. 24, 37. It shall be also powerful; his first coming was in much weakness, but this with great might, able to sweep away all his enemies to hell. Lastly, it shall be glorious, for he shall be accompanied with thousands of his Angels, that shall attend upon him, as servants upon their master, ready to execute his will, Jude 14. And this his coming shall have a three-fold effect, for there will follow immediately a gathering together, a separation, and then a judging. First, all must be gathered together at the sound of the trumpet, both the dead and the living, they shall rise out of their graves, some to everlasting life, & some to shame & everlasting contempt, Dan. 12, 2. After this gathering, there shall be a separatiō, Christ sitting in his throne of glory, the elect shall be set at his right hand, the reprobate at his left. Thē shall follow the judgment it self, the Judge of all Judges giving a most just sentence, calling y^e elect to inherit •he kingdom prepared for them from the foundations of the world; & casting y^e reprobate into everlasting torments, prepared for the devil & his angels.

[Ver. 11, 12. *And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up, &c.* Here we have the removing of the Israelites from the desert of *Arabia* the stony, which bordereth upon Mount Sinai, where they abode for the space almost of an whole year, during which time, the law was given, the Tabernacle was built, the Priests were consecrated, & the whole worship of God established. In this removing we must observe three things, the form and manner of it, the care of *Moses* in preparing & providing a guide to lead them, and the prayers that he usually and ordinarily made at the beginning of their march, and likewise when the Ark rested. Touching the first, all the people of Israel removed from their encamping at the foot of the Moun•aine *Sinai*, toward *Paran*; the army or great squadron of *Judah*, led by *Naashon*, taking the Vauntgard, followed by *Nethaneel* and *Eliab*, Leadcrs of the Tribes of *Issachar* and *Zebulun*; after whom all the rest marched, as we have seen in the beginning of the book,

From hence we learn, that GOD would have order observed among his people, [Doctrine.] in all his ordinances. The Apostle setteth it down as a precept, 1 Cor. 14, 40. *Let all things be done decently and in order.* He was glad of the comely order observed among the Colossians, ch. 2 5. We saw before how the Lord appointed the Tabernacle to be placed in the midst of all the Campe, and the Levites to attend round about, and all these to be compassed on every side with the rest of the Tribes, And if we will cast back our eyes to the first times, & mark the

creation of the world from the foundation of it, together with all the parts of it, the earth, the water, the air, the firmament, and the heaven of the blessed; who can express the goodly order which they possess & keep? For as they are placed one above the other, so they are pure, subtle, simple, and notable. And as this exquisite order showeth and shineth forth in the Elements and the Heavens, so doth it in the Angels; for as one star differeth from another in glory, so doth one Angel from another. There is one Archangel, others are called thrones, dominions, powers, and principalities; Eph. 1, 21. Col. 1, 16. The day and night have their courses: summer and winter have their seasons: one man hath gifts above another: *Michael* is called a Prince or one of the chiefest of the Angels, Dan. 10, 13. When Christ our Savior intended to feed the multitude that had continued with him to hear his word, he commanded his Disciples to make all sit down in ranks by hundreds and fifties, that is, the five thousand which did eat of the five loaves and two fishes, sate orderly in companies, an hundred in length, and fifty in breadth, Mark. 6, 40. so that he would have all things, even the most common & ordinary, done in order.

[Reason 1] For all disorder and confusion came into the world by Satan, and his chiefest travail and employment is to make a breach into that order which God hath settled and established. He shuffleth and mingleth all together, and seeketh to disturb and destroy what he can, & [Reason 2] how he can. Again, order is a means to preserve every society: the want of it threateneth ruin to every society. When the people were to encounter with the Canaanites, they asked of the Lord, who should go up against them first, to fight against them. Judge. 1, 1. When a Prophet told *Ahab* that the great multitude of the *Syrians* should be overcome in battle, and delivered into his hands, he asked, Who shall order the battle? and the Prophet answered, Thou. The word properly signifieth to bind or to tie, because good order bindeth and tieth as with a chain, the whole host together, and one of thē to another as sticks •^t are bound together in one bundle. Whilst they stand firm and continue close together in good array, they are out of danger: if once they disband, and fall to rout, then followeth a miserable carnage and destruction. Besides, [Reason 3] it giveth beauty & comeliness to every action.

This serveth to reprove such as keep not [Use 1] their places, but break out of order, and will not be held within the compass that God hath set them. Every man hath his bounds set him, & is enclosed in them as in a circle, which he may not pass. In the giving of the Law, when the Lord promised to come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai, *Moses* is commanded to set them bounds, that they may take heed to themselves, and go not up into the Mount, or touch the border of it, ver. 12. if any touched the Mount, he was to be put to death, v. 13. Every creature hath his proper place, and goeth no farther then the chain of God suffereth. The sea though it rageth, yet is held in by this chain, God hath said, Thus far it shall go and no farther. In the gathering of Manna, which was the bread that the Lord gave Israel to eat, *Moses* doth set down y^e order which they must observe; they must leave none of it until the morning, v. 19. On the seventh day every man must abide in his place, no man must go out of his place on that day. No man hath any promise of blessing when he keepeth not the order y^t God hath set him. We know how it was with *Corah*, *Dathan*, & *Abiram*, when

they would encroach upon *Moses* and *Aaron*, and the calling wherein God had set them, it was their own destruction.

Secondly, acknowledge from hence, that [Use 2] the Church is a blessed company, it is the very school of good order, wherein all things are done in number, weight, and measure. When *Balaam* had seen the goodly order of this host of God, as the Valleys that were spread forth, as gardens by the rivers side, as the trees of *Lign-Aloes*, which the Lord had planted, & as Cedar trees beside the waters, he cried out in an admiratiō of this comely, decent, & seemly order, *How goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob! and thy Tabernacles, O Israel!* This heathen man, this sorcerer, this idolater, as blind as he was in the matters of God, saw and could not but open his mouth to confess the glorious condition and estate of the Church. For who is it that ruleth in the Church? and who is it by whom it is guided? Is it not God, who is the God of order? No confusion cleaveth or can cleave to him, he is not the God of confusion: he is light, & him is no darkness at all, 1 John 1, 5. He hath set an order among all his works. He hath appointed in the Church, Pastors and Teachers for the gathering together of the Saints, Ephesians, chap. 4. Some to teach, and others to learn: some to speak, and others to hear: some to minister the Sacraments, and some not to minister them.

This made the Prophet *David* say, *Jerusalem is built as a City that is compact together, whither the Tribes go up, &c.* There is nothing but confusion out of the Church. The world is full of disorders.

[Use 3] Thirdly, when we see this order interrupted and broken off in the works of God, know that it cometh not of God. Acknowledge therein the corruption of man and the work of Satan. What is it that hath brought in trouble and confusion, but the sin of man? That therefore cannot be of God. Frō hence it cometh, that the creature is subject unto vanity, Rom. 8, 20. not by God's creation, but through man's transgression. *This have I found*, saith *Solomon*, *that God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions*, Eccl. 7, 29. Nevertheless we are assured, that as the whole creation groaneth and trauaileth in pain together until now, so it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of GOD, verse 21. And we for our parts, considering the desolations that sin hath brought in, must seek by all means to repair the image of God so much decayed.

[Use 4] Fourthly, whensoever we cannot sound the depth of God's works nor judge of them as we ought, when we see to our appearance much out of square, as soldiers out of their squadrons: we must not condemn y^e works of God, but accuse our own blindness & ignorance: forasmuch as God hath made all beautiful in his season, Eccl. 3, 11. When we behold how the wicked prosper for the most part, and are of great power, spreading themselves like a green bay tree, Ps. 37, 35: and on the other side, the godly all the day long plagued and chastened every morning, Ps. 73, 14. we are ready to misjudge & misdeeme of these works of God. *David* confesseth, that his feet were almost gone, his steps had well nigh slipped, v. 2. He began to think he had cleansed his heart in vain, and washed his hands in innocence, v. 13. Howbeit, the ways of God are not as our ways: this is therefore our weakness in judgment. Thus also was *Jeremiah* troubled, ch. 12, 1, 2. and no less the Prophet *Habbakkuk*, ch. 1, 13. *Wherefore lookest thou upon thē that deal treacherously, & holdest thy tongue*

when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous then he? This which we esteem to be a confusion, is indeed no confusion: and that is in order which we suppose to be out of order. For God is a God of patience and long suffering, who will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies, Naum 1, 2. and therefore is the Prophet (much perplexed in spirit) willed to wait by faith the issue that God will make, for the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry, Hab. 2, 3. Then the Chaldeans, though used of God as his rod to afflict his people, shall be destroyed. Thus God hath set them in slippery places, Ps. 73, 18. *so as they pass away & are not, they are sought, but cannot be found, Ps. 37, 3. The transgressors shall be destroyed together, the end of the wicked is, to be cut off, ver. 38.*

Lastly, from hence every man must learn [Use 5] to do the duties of his own calling. God hath set every man in a certain calling, as it were in a certain field to till, wherein he is to labor. We are apt indeed to break out into the callings of other men, as if we were pinned up in too narrow a room. This made Solomon to say, *I have seen servants on horses, and Princes walking as servants upon the earth.* And as God hath set every man in a calling, so must every man wait and attend upon that calling, whether it be in the Church, or in the family, or in the Commonwealth. In the Church, there is order to be observed in reading, in preaching, in prayer, in the Sacraments, that such as be at them may say in their hearts, Surely God is in this place, and report that God is in them of a truth. To this purpose doth Paul deliver sundry instructions; *if any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two or at the most by three, and that by course, and let one interpret, 1, Cor. 14, 27. Let the Prophets speak two or three, & let the others judge, v. 29, If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace, v. 30. All Churches of the Saints have this order. v. 33. Let your women keep silence in the Churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the Law: & if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for women to speak in the Church.* And if it be not permitted unto them to preach, neither is it permitted them to baptize, which is an appendance unto the Ministry. Their duty is to be in subjection: but to baptize, is a part of power & jurisdiction. So also ought everyone to learn and practice the duties of his calling in the private family. An house divided against it self cannot stand, Math. 12, verse 25. but quickly falleth, Luke 11, ver. 17. Happy is that house, when such as are Governors know how to rule, and such as are inferiors, know how to obey. But if one encroach upon the place of another, there followeth much confusion. And in the Commonwealth, every soul must learn to be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God, the powers that be, are ordained of God; whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist, shall receive unto themselves damnation, Rom. 13, 1, 2. Without this, the whole order of nature will be perverted. A kingdom divided against it self, is brought to desolation. When he sendeth Magistrates and Princes, he meaneth to preserve mankind by them, & he striketh a fear of them, not only into men, but also into beasts, Dan. 2, 38. Such then as rise against them, and labor to set all in a broile, and to bring all things to confusion, are worse then the brute beasts that are without understanding. And it is very apparent, that they are possessed with the giddy and frantike spirit of uproar and sedition, which will not be under the rule of such as God hath

ordained. We cannot honor God, except we honor such as he hath set in his place. He hath printed his own image in them, and in their persons we obey him. And when superiors are no longer revered, all will be set in a tumult and turmoile, and must needs go to spoil and havoc. Now, if we would speak of the practice of the Church of Rome, there is no good order observed among them, but the whole ordinance of God is utterly overturned: the preaching of the word is little esteemed, the word and prayers are in a strange tongue, prayers also are made to Saints, & the use of the Sacraments is horribly profaned: they permit baptism unto women, and the Supper they have quite abolished. Christ and Antichrist are not more contrary, then the Romish church to the true Churches of Jesus Christ. They have pulled up the foundation of Christian religion, and utterly denied the faith. The Scriptures they make insufficient, and to contain a maimed and imperfect doctrine. They subject them to the judgment of the Bishop of Rome and to the authority of the Church. They banish the people from them, as if they were very dangerous unto them. They contemn Magistrates, & claim power to dispose of their kingdoms, if they be supposed to be heretics.

[Ver. 29, 30, &c. *And Moses said unto Hobab the son of Roguel the Midianite, Moses father in law, We are iournying, &c.*] The next point is the conference between *Moses* and this *Hobab*. For inasmuch as the passage thorough so many Mountains and Deserts was exceeding both difficult and dangerous, *Moses* leaveth nothing vnforethought which might serve for the advantage of his enterprize, and therefore instantly entreated his father in law to accompany them in their way toward *Canaan*, promising to him such part and profit of the promised Land as GOD should bestow upon them. True it is, *Moses* had lived long in those parts of *Arabia*, thorough which he was now to travail, yet the better to assure his passage, and to save so many thousand souls as he had brought out of Egypt, which could not be so few as a million, it was needful for him to use many guides and conducters, and therefore he is so earnest and importunate with *Jethro*: who as he was a man of great years and much experience, and of no less judgment & understanding, which appeareth by his counsel that he gave to *Moses* for the appointing of Judges over the people; so he was a fit and perfect guide in all those quarters, himself inhabiting on the frontiers thereof at *Midian*.

What was the answer and issue of this request of *Moses*, Intepreters are divided, & do much vary about it, as also who this *Hobab* was, and whether he yielded to this motion, or not; I assent to those that take it to be *Jethro*; and albeit it may seem at the first sight, by that which we read, Exod. 18, and in this chap. that he yielded not, but returned back into his own country, yet because it appeareth by diverse other places of Scripture, that the posterity of this *Hobab* wer mingled with the Israelites, and had that reward which *Moses* here promiseth, it is most probable and likly, that this his return back mentioned in Exodus, was rather to fetch away his family, and to take his leave of his own country by setting things in order, thē with a purpose to abide there, like to the departure of *Elisha* from *Elijah*. But whether this *Hobab* were *Jethro* himself, or his son, or whether in his own person he returned, we leave in doubt: howbeit these two things are built upon certainty, that *Jethro* did go back again, & that his posterity came afterward to the Israelites.

But why doth he so vehemently desire to have this *Hobab* the guide of their way? [Object.] was not the all-seeing eye of God sufficient unto them? had not he promised to conduct them? and had they not the pillar of the Cloud to go before them? It is true, [Answer.] yet human helps whē they may be had, and God offereth them unto our hands, are not to be neglected. The using of lawful means doth not oppose or confront the providence of God. For faith standeth well with lawful means. Nay, it is rather a sign of infidelity & tempting of God, to cast away such helps and furtherances as we may obtain, and to boast of only faith in God in the pride of our hearts. True it is, we must not put our trust in men, whose breath is in their nostrils, nor depend upon the means as our chiefest confidence, but in the living God, lest we set up men and means as Idols, and offer sacrifice unto them. Therefore, it is the duty of the faithful to use such means as God giveth them for their good. Indeed he can work without means, but we must attend unto his will, & not stand upon his naked power without his will. But of this afterward. The point which here I will observe, is from the offer y^t *Moses* maketh to *Hobab*, who might be instead of eyes unto them because he was skillful in all the parts & places through which they should pass, he was well acquainted with those deserts, and knew what commodities and discommodities they should meet with in y^e wilderness: if he would be partakers with them in the sour, he should aso enjoy the sweet, and he should have his part in the blessings that God should bestow, if he would impart unto them the benefit of his knowledge: and therefore there ought to be a communion of earthly things among all those that profess the same faith and religion. In the primitive Church, no man accounted anything his own, no man kept the temporal blessings of this life to his own use only, but they had all things common, Act. 4.32. neither was there any among them that lacked, verse 34. Thus doth *John Baptist* teach the people that came to his baptism, *He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise*, Luke 4.11. So dealt the widow of *Sarepta* toward *Elijah*, she had only an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse, 1 King. 17.12. yet even of that little pittance she made a cake for the Prophet, verse 15. So it was with *Job*, as he showeth in the defense of his own innocence and integrity, chap. 31. he withheld not the poor from their desire, ver. 16. he did not cate his morsels himself alone, but the fatherless and widow did eat thereof, ver. 17. he saw none to perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering, ver. 19. therefore he did distribute to the necessity of the Saints, Rom. 12.13. and was given to hospitality.

[Reason 1] For the whole multitude of them that believe are of one heart and of one soul, Act. 4.32. As they have but one faith, so they have one desire to glorify God, and to honor him, as if they were but one man. Secondly, we are one flesh, Isaiah. 58.7. therefore to deal our bread to the hungry, is to feed our selves; to bring the poor home that are cast out of their houses, is to harbor our selves; & to cover the naked, is to clothe our selves. We are members one of another, as parts of the same body whereof Christ is the head, and therefore it cannot be but we must have a compassion and fellow feeling of the wants and necessities one of another, 1 Cor. 12.26. Rom. 12.5. We must be like affectioned one to another.

[Use 1] This serveth for reproof. For we have many that appropriate unto themselves y^t which God hath given or lent unto them for y^e good of others. It is noted as the speech of covetous *Nabal*, to say, *Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my*

shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be? 1 Sam. 25.11. The like is the speech of *Laban*, as covetous as he, Gen. 31.43. *These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine.* We are taught in the Lord's prayer, to call it *our bread*, and not my bread. It is remembered of the leapers, that they entered into some of the tents of the Syrians (who had forsaken them) and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver and gold, and raiment, hiding the same to their own uses only, 2 Kin. 7.8 howbeit they by and by recall themselves and say one to another, *We do not well, this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace, &c. Now therefore come that we may tell the kings household.* So should it be with such as have gotten this worlds good, not provide for themselves only, but have respect unto others. Secondly, such are justly to be accused, as contemn those that are in poverty, who cannot abide them, or are ashamed of them, and think themselves disgraced by thē. Let such take heed, lest God also be ashamed of them. *The rich and poor meet together (saith Solomon) the Lord is the maker of them all.* And again, *Who so mocketh the poor, reproacheth his maker: and he that is glad at calamity, shall not be unpunished.* It is a fearful sin for any to presume to mock his Creator, and everyone would be ashamed to be so accounted: howbeit they cannot avoid it, but are justly taxed with this crime. Little do these consider the uncertainty of all human things, how one is exalted, another cast down suddenly, that God often chooseth such as the world rejecteth; and on the other side, they are an abomination unto him, who are highly esteemed in the eyes of men, I am. 2.5. 1 Cor. 1.26. Mat. 11.5. Thirdly, they are reproveth, that repine at the good estate of others, whereas we should be ready to communicate unto them, and not think they have too much already. Such were the laborers that wrought in the Vineyard, who had no less then was their bargain, yet they thought others had too much, Matth. 20.12, 13, 14, 15. Lastly, it reproveth such as do wrong and injury to those that have little and small means to withstand violence, so that they lie open to injuries and oppressions: and therefore *Solomon saith, Rob not the poor, because he is poor; neither oppress the afflicted in judgment, for the Lord will defend their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoil them.* True charity seeketh not her own, but the good of others.

Secondly, it is our duty to relieve and refresh [Use 2] with our goods the poor estate of our needy brethren. The example of the pitiful Samaritan leadeth to the practice of this point. For when he saw the poor traveler lie robbed and wounded in the way by merciless and bloody thieves, he bound up his wound, he poured wine and oil into them, and gave direction to have him looked unto and well provided for, though they were strangers the one to the other. The Priest and Levite pass by him, and regarded him not in his misery and necessity, as if they had not seen him. The Lord hath made us stewards of the things of this life, & we must give an account of the use and employment of them. Whatsoever goods we have, are the Lord's, to whom the earth and the whole furniture of it belongeth, and he hath bestowed them upon us on this condition, that we should despense them to those that have need, and distribute them to such as are in want. To this as we have many hindrances, so we have also sundry encouragements which ought to weigh down the former. One cause pulling us back from the practice of liberality, is a false opinion that we conceive, and weak ground that we build upon, namely, that the goods which we have, whether left by inheritance or

otherwise purchased, are wholly and solely our own & left to our own will. For we must all confess, y^t we have our masters goods in our hands. We are Stewards and must give up our accounts. The first Christians, professing the same communion of Saints, thought nothing they had to be their own; but these will not let go their hold, persuading themselves that all is their own. Oth^{ers} are hindered by a vain & needless fear that themselves shall want, or at leastwise may want before they die. This conceit proceedeth from distrust, and savoreth ranckly of infidelity. For if they did believe the Scriptures, or durst rely themselves upon the sure word and gracious promise of God, they would find that liberality is the way to abound, not a means to bring any to want, as Prov. 19, 17. and 28, 27. Psal. 37, 25. No man feareth to lend a rich man, that standeth upon his word: but he which hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, shall he pay to him again; God becometh surety for the poor, who never falsified his word to any: that which they cannot, he both can and will pay: let us not fear to lose by our liberality, so long as he is become our paymaster. A third sort are hindered by an idle and frivolous pretence, that they have families and charges of their own, they have wife and children to provide for. Had not think you, the first Christians so likewise? Might not they have as fair excuses to hinder them as these? Yet they shrunk not under the burden though it lay heavy upon their shoulders, but they sold that which they had, and made it common, so far as the necessity of the Church required it. Others will reply & say, Alas, I am poor myself, and have but a little, and therefore can give no relief or refreshing to others. Let such consider the poor widows mite: Was not she poor? had she not a mean estate? God accepteth a willing mind, where there is not a wealthy man, 2 Cor. 8. All that do not receive should give, even all that are not in need, Eph. 4, 28. as the laboring man that getteth his living with his labor, & the servant that taketh wages, who hath none to provide for, but for himself and the poor. These are oftentimes very liberal & nothing sparing of their masters goods, but will give nothing of their own. This is rather stealing then giving, and deserveth the title of robbery, then of charity or liberality. Lastly, others allege, that the poor are oftentimes lewd, wicked, idle, and unthankful. True it is, none are to be maintained in an idle course of life: punish them for their idleness, but relieve them in their needinesse. If they be loose and lewd, this may be a means to make them much better and more thankful: for thereby we shall heap coals of fire upon their head. The Apostle, after a sharp reproof of idle persons, 2 Th. 3, 13, saith, *Bee not weary of well-doing*. And though it fall out that the tongues of the poor curse us, yet their loins shall bless us, Job 31, 20. and their own hearts & consciences shall convince them. And hence it is, that the wise man commandeth us, to cast our bread upon the waters, because though it seem utterly lost, as if we should plow the barren sands, yet after many days we shall find it. These are the chief discouragements, which as stones of offense lie in our way to stop the course of liberality. On the other side, we have many good encouragements to help us forward to this duty. First, it hath a promise of great blessing annexed unto it, made by him from whom all blessing cometh, as we noted before. He will not suffer so much as a cup of cold water to go unrewarded, Math. 10, 42. Again, how highly Christ accepteth of it, appeareth hereby, that he accounteth of it as done unto himself, Mat. 25, 40. and the neglect of it, as a neglect of himself, v. 45. Thirdly, it is a forcible means to manifest the truth and sincerity of our religion, I am. 1, 17. Hereby our faith is tried and known to be a sound and saving faith, ch. 2.

Our hearing of the word, and partaking of the Sacraments are not accepted, except they be seasoned with mercy & compassion as it were with salt, Esa. 1.14, 15.

Lastly, seeing we must communicate one with another in earthly things, how much [Use 3] more ought we to do it in heavenly? And if we must procure good to the bodies of our brethren, we are much more to seek to save their souls. This is the greatest love that can be, to be a means to win any to salvation. The soul of a man is of great price, it is more worth than an whole world of wealth. For what should it profit a man to win a kingdom, and then lose his own soul? or what shall a man give for the recompense of his soul? This is a divine labor, and shall have a divine reward. This is an heavenly purchase, to purchase souls. In our days they are accounted the only wise men of the world, that can compass great matters, and purchase house and lands, and leave a rich posterity behind them. Many men make it their glory to vaunt of their purchases, and how they have increased their revenues, and enriched their heirs. But what have they gottē to God? or whom have they won to him? Doubtless to gain one soul to God is better, and shall yield more comfort at the last day, then to get great substance, and to leave a rich inheritance behind us. Hence it is, that *Solomon* saith, *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that winneth souls is wise*, Prov. 11, 30, Dan. 12, 3. The Apostle *Jude* teaching the Saints what love they should show toward their brethren, and what care should possess their harts for their conversion, willeth to have compassion vpō some, putting difference, and y^t they should save others with fear plucking them out of y^e fire. This work of winning of souls standeth in bringing of thē to the knowledge of God, & converting of a sinner frō going astray out of y^e right-way. Some err in opiniō, other are corrupt in life & conuersatiō. He y^t seeth his neighbors Ox or Ass ready to fall into a ditch wherein he might perish, is bound by the law to pluck him out of danger, Exod. 23, 4, 5: or his beast going astray, must bring it home to the owner, Deut. 22, 1. All souls are mine, saith the Lord, Eze. 18, 4. he is the owner of them, he is the Lord over them: when they wander out of the way of truth, they must be brought unto him again. Shall we draw an Ox out of the pit, and not our brethren made after the similitude of God out of the puddles of sin wherein they are plunged? Hath he care over brute beasts, and not much rather over men's souls? It is a point of humanity, to bring the wandering stranger into his way: but it is a part of true piety, to turn them into the pathe that leadeth unto life, who thorough error wander from God and his word. To effect this, we must use these means, and practice these duties. First, to instruct them which are ignorant and walk in darkness, & in the shadow of death, that thereby they may come to the knowledge of the truth, Prov. 13, 14. Secondly, to reprove them of the evil which they have committed, that so they may repent and come out of the snares of Satan, 2. Tim. 2, 25. And thus many have been reclaimed, Prov. 6, 23, Thirdly, to exhort and admonish one another, persuading them unto that which is good, & dissuading them from that which is evil, Heb. 3, 7, 8, 13. and 10, 24. John 4, 28, 29. Thus we shall draw on some, and prevent the fall of others. This we must do in love and in the Spirit of meekness, considering both them and our selves, Gal. 6, 1, 2. Fourthly, to use threatening to them that are obstinate and hardened in sin, denouncing unto them the judgments of God, that their hearts may be mollified and softened, as Physicians deal in desperate diseases. Lastly, to seek to convert them by a godly example of an holy life, 1 Pet.

3, 1. 1 Cor. 7, 16. This is as strong and forcible a means as any of the former, if not more forcible: the other are by word, this is by deed. For when they behold an example of godliness, faith, patience, humility, and obedience before their eyes, it causeth them to fall down on their faces, and give glory unto God whē they see their good works. But woe to all carnal Gospellers, who by profane examples of all looseness, do strengthen the hands of the wicked, & thereby keep them from repentance. Woe unto them by whom any soul is hindered from conversion, 1 Pet. 1, 7.

[Verse 35, 36. *And it came to pass, when the Ark set forward that Moses said, rise up Lord and let thine enemies be scattered, &c.*] This is the last point, setting down the ordinary prayers that Moses used, both when they marched and when they rested. These prayers were not used at this time only, but upon all such like occasions. They never removed, but it was joined with prayer; they never pitched down their Tents, but it was done with prayer. This sanctifieth all, our goings out, and our comings in: & teacheth us to begin our works, and end our labors with it. And to whom doth he pray? He goeth not to Saint or angel, he saith not, Rise up Abraham, o Isaac, or Jacob; but Rise up, O Lord, teaching us that it is a duty due only unto God. But to omit these points that everywhere come to hand, observe this from the practice of Moses, [Doctrine.] that the servants of God may lawfully use a prescript form of prayer, whether it be the Minister in the Congregation, or the Master in his private family, or a particular Christian between the Lord and himself, when he is entered into his Chamber, and hath shut the door unto him. This we have shown already in the sixth chapter, by the blessing commanded to the Priests, to be used in the public assemblies. Now that which was allowed unto the Priests, may not be thought unlawful to the people. Such as brought the first fruits to God to testify their thankfulness unto him for his blessings, and that they held all of him in chief, have a set form appointed unto them, Deut. 26, 5, 6, 7, &c. The Psalms of David were penned, not only to be used at that time wherein they were made, but ever afterward, as occasion served. The 92 Psalm was penned for the Sabbath day: so the 102 Psalm to be a prayer for the distressed, when he should pour out his Meditation before the Lord, as appeareth in their several titles: yea Christ our Savior, that had the greatest grace of prayer, who continued the whole night in prayer to God, Luke 6, 12. yet did not forbear and abstain in prayer, from using the same words oftentimes, Math. 26. verse 44.

This truth will the better appear, if we [Reason 1] consider that the Lord Jesus himself hath left a pre-script form of prayer, not as a pattern or platform only, but likewise to be used as a prayer. So that his doctrine is according to his practice: he prayed in the garden three times, using the same words, and he alloweth his Disciples to do the like: yet who may be compared unto him? He did it not thorough want of words or matter, who had the treasures of wisdom in him. Therefore he said to his Disciples, *After this manner pray you*. If we may pray after that manner, then we may pray after a set form, whether it be read in book, or rehearsed without book. Secondly, [Reason 2] it is the common rule of Christ and his Apostles, that whosoever asketh in faith, shall be heard, whether it be in a prescript form, or otherwise. It is faithful prayer which pleaseth God, and availeth much: and without faith, nothing is accepted. Thirdly, it is requisite [Reason 3] for order sake. For uniformity is a notable means to avoid confusion: and therefore the church heretofore hath used y^e same, & the most reformed

churches at this day use it, from which we are not slightly to dissent and disagree, and so to reject read prayers, and set forms.

Lastly, the Apostle avoucheth, *That he would pray with the Spirit, and he would pray with the understanding also*; but a new prayer, never heard of, is not so well understood & conceived of the simple, neither can they so rightly & readily answer Amen unto it. But the same form used, the oftener it is heard, the better it is understood. In men there are for the most part sundry wants, as ignorance in the mind, forgetfulness in the memory, defect of utterance fit to be in him that should speak unto God, fear and bashfulness in the affections, that they cannot deliver the desires of their heart in the presence of others, much dullness and deadness in the soul; yet we are not to debar such from prayer: all which wants a set form helpeth.

[Use 1] The use hereof is, to convince those that are of the separation, which have rent themselves from us, and made a rent in the Church as Schismatics, who hold it unlawful to use any set forms of prayer, yea even that form of prayer w^c our Savior hath taught and commanded. These do not only hold it to be unlawful, but account it an abominable idol, and as loathsome to God, as the offering up of swine's flesh in the time of y^e law. These be their own words, to be read in the books of *Greenwood* and *Barow*, two principal Sectaries and ring-leaders in this division. They account it no better then lip-labor, nay not so good: they hold it to be a stinting of the Spirit. But to leave words and to pass by their bold assertions, let us hear what they answer to our reasons, & then reason against their answers. We allege, that Christ expressly willeth us to pray thus; and the Priests in the law were expressly charged to bless the people thus. This is our warrant to justify our practice; now mark I pray you their answer, and compare the one with the other. They tell us boldly, that Christ willeth not his disciples to pray this, but thus: and that the Priests were not required to use these very words of blessing, because the Hebrew word [*Coh*] used in that place, is an aduerbe of similitude, as if it had been said unto them, *Ye shall bless them after this manner, or after a like sort*. This cannot be to tie them to the same words, but to do it according to the same instructions. For nothing like to another is the same. But this (by their patience) is no better then a shift and cavil. For be it that they were not required to use the same form and frame of words, yet were they forbidden to use thē? or if they had used them, had they offered up swine's flesh? had they committed Idolatry? had it been an idolatrous kind of service? for they forbid the people to use the Lord's prayer as a prayer. Neither do we say, that the Priests were precisely tied to use the same and no other words, but we would know of them whether they wer forbidden to use the same? To which question, I think they will not answer in hast. The Hebrew word upon which they lay the weight & foundation of all their building is used throughout the old Testament, and the use of it by *Moses* and the Prophets serveth fully and notably to pul up their conceit by the roots: and that the weakness of their answer and exception may appear the better, let us see the use of it in some particular places. When *Moses* was sent to the children of *Israel* to say, *That the God of their Fathers had sent him unto them*, and pleaded for himself that they would say unto him, *What is his name?* God said unto him, *I am that I am: Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you*. Here we have the same word used. Now according to their

exposition, *Moses* is not commanded to speak the same words at any time, because [*Thus*] as they say, is not the same, but the like, and to that effect, and nothing like is the same. So then, if he were demanded, what was his name that sent him? he might in no case say (if we will believe these novelties) *I am that I am hath sent me*, forasmuch as he useth the aduerbe of likeness, for he saith [*Thus;*] which is not the same, but some such like thing. Noy, their opinion is yet more gross and absurd, for they turn God's precept into a prohibition: and whereas God commandeth *Moses* what he shall say, they say he is forbidden to use those very words, and allowed only to speak to that purpose. And afterward when God said unto him, verse 15. *Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, The Lord God of your Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you, this is my name forever; and this is my memorial unto all generations.* If their gloss were granted, he might not say, *The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and of Jacob hath sent me unto you*, this had been utterly unlawful for him, he must take heed he say not so in any case; no, though the Lord tell him, *This is his name and his memorial forever to all generations*, but he must speak some such like words: as if God were delighted with copy and variety of words, or did hunt after letters and syllables: or as if it were a fault to speak as God speaketh; or as if *Moses* could better deliver his message in his own words, then in the words of God.

Again, when the Prophets came from God to the people, and brought their warrant and commission with them from him, and cried out, *Thus saith the Lord*; the meaning must be according to the conceit of these men, God hath not commāded to speak the same words, nay he hath forbidden and restrained them, that they may not use them. This is most ridiculous, both in respect of God, and of the people. For when God saith to the Prophets, *Thus ye shall speak to the people*, they make him say, Take heed ye utter not these words, but speak freely to the same effect, & spare not; and vary them at your pleasure. And when the holy Prophets came to the people, and as they were directed and appointed said, *Thus saith the Lord*, it shall be as much as if they should say unto them, If ye do think that God hath spoken to me these words, which I am to deliver, you do much deceive yourselves, he hath spoken the like, but not the same: I may not speak to you from his mouth, I must speak from mine own mouth. What can be more childish and foolish, then thus to interpret? yet all this is necessarily inferred upon the answer of such as profess themselves to be our adversaries. Therefore, when Christ saith, pray thus, it is as much by their interpretation as if he had said, take heed ye pray not in the same words, but use the like of your own; abstain from mine, I give you liberty to use what other ye list yourselves: all which we see to bear no color or show of reason. I would gladly know of such as are contrary to us in judgment & practice, whether it be not lawful to say this part of the prayer, *Hallowed be thy name?* If this be lawful, is it not as lawful to add the next words in the next place, *Let thy kingdom come?* and to this (I have heard) they yield, and confess it lawful. If this be good, why not afterward to add the rest of the petitions? is one more lawful then another? Or can one part be allowed and not the other? Thus do they confound themselves, and give us an answer out of their own mouths.

Again, they tell us that reading is one thing, and praying is another, and thereupon conclude, that a man cannot pray reading. I answer, they differ indeed, being diverse and

sundry things, so that neither is reading praying, nor praying reading; howbeit, they are not contrary one to the other. A man may read and not pray, he may pray & not read, and yet he may pray reading, and read praying. The like we might say of speaking and kneeling. Speaking is one thing, and praying is another: a man may speak and not pray, he may pray and not speak, and yet he may pray speaking, and speak praying. So kneeling is one thing, and praying is another: a man may kneel down and not pray, he may pray and not kneel, and yet he may pray kneeling, and kneel praying. Wherefore, every reading of a prayer is not praying, except withal there be a lifting up of our hearts to God. I will show this by a familiar example touching the Lord's prayer: when we conclude our imperfect prayers with it, we make request to God, and consequently pray unto God. But when we publicly or privately read the sixth chapter of *Matthew*, in which the Lord's prayer is contained, we read the words and hear them read, yet we confess we pray not. We have then no intent to pray, but to inform our selves in the will of God set down in the Scripture. So then, praying and reading differ thus: the one is a pouring forth of the supplications and requests of the heart, the other is a receiving into the soul, such things as are read. These two we may do easily at one and the same instant, if y fault be not in our own nature more then in the nature of the things themselves. Thirdly, [Objection] they pretend that stinted prayers cannot be made as necessity requireth, but they tie us to our books, and cannot be enlarged according to our wants. I answer, [Answer.] there be things necessary to be prayed for at all times, and of all men, which indeed are the most things that we are to beg of the Lord; of these there may be prescript forms for all times and persons: as for other things, the prayer is to be applied to the time and necessity. For this, we have the Elders of the Church to help us, to whom we are directed to send.

Lastly, they object, [Object.] we must pray as the Spirit moveth us, for the Spirit helpeth our infirmities. Rom. 8. I answer, everyone receiveth not such a measure of the Spirit, as enableth him to this duty. We have but the first fruits of it, and must use all good helps to make supply of our wants; as the sick of the palsy, when he could not go to Christ of him self, was borne by his neighbors, Mar. 2, 3, 4. We are like to a sick man newly recovered, who cannot walk without his staff, or leaning upon the shoulders of another, or except he be stayed by the hand. Many men have grace in the heart, who want words of utterance to express it. All weak ones need help to minister matter of prayer. Wherefore, the help of the Spirit standeth well enough with outward helps. Neither let them reply, that the Spirit is sufficient, and that no other are mentioned: for when the Scripture will set forth the work to be his alone, and the force and efficacy from him, all other means are suppressed and depressed, all helps whatsoever are concealed and cast down, and may not come in account or comparison with him. Nevertheless, fasting, lifting up of the eyes, and of the hands, kneeling and prostrating of the body, are outward means to make the prayer more fervent, and do not take away o• derogate anything from the Spirit.

Secondly, we are directed from hence, to [Use 2] use public and private prayers more reverently and religiously, then commonly we do; both prayers in the Church, and prayers in families, being warranted by the word, though they be read out of the book by the Minister of the Church, or the master of the family. For though the prayers be common, yet

ought they not to be the less regarded. There be two sorts of people which be both in extremities and justly to be reprov'd. The one sort do so highly magnify the common prayers allowed & appointed by authority, that they regard no other, but brand them with the title of conceited prayers, and so do account the preaching of the word as nothing. Another sort seeing the Ministry so vilified, and seeking to shun that rock, do rush and dash themselves violently against another: for they give almost no reverence at all to the Liturgy, neither care to afford us their presence at the same. But we must walk in the golden mean between both these, giving to each that which is meet, without comparing the one to the other, and so yield obedience to both. In the one God speaketh to us, in the other we speak to God. The Wiseman handling them both, beginneth with the preaching and hearing of the word as the most principal part of God's worship, and afterwards he proceedeth to prescribe rules of prayer, Eccl. 4 & 5. So the church is said to have continued in the Apostles doctrine, & in prayers. They then deceive themselves, that under a pretence of receiving the prayers of y^e church, do contemn the Ministry of the word, and think they have done enough, if they have been present at them, saying, We have godly prayers published and set forth by commādemēt of the Prince, why cannot men be contented with them? These speak through hypocrisy, and would seem zealous of public prayers, howbeit they are like to *Judas*, he cried out against the waste of the ointment, as if it might have been better bestowed upon the poor. He seemed very careful of the good of the poor, but he spake this not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and bare the bag, John. 12, 6 So do these men talk much of prayers, as if they were so zealous, that they were altogether given to prayer: howbeit, they do not this for any zeal to prayer, or for any great care they have to frequent thē, but thereby to seek a cover for their own negligence in hearing the word. Such as live under an unpreaching Ministry, think themselves well enough, when as notwithstanding they want a chief and principal part of God's service, the ordinary means of salvation, Ro. 10. I am. 1. On the other side, such as ascribe all to preaching, and regard not the prayers of the Church, are blame-worthy: this must be done, but the other must not be left undone. It is the office of the Ministry to perform both, Act. 6. and the duty of the people to be present at both: yet great is their negligence this way▪ if not contempt.

[Use 3] Lastly, from hence ariseth great comfort to such as are weak in faith, and in the gifts of faith. For God will not reject us or our prayers, though we be not able to perform them as we ought to do. Albeit we come unto him halting, and borne by others, yet he will embrace us and receive us. This may be a notable motive to encourage us to this duty. Christ hath promised, that *he will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed*, Math, 12, 20. Blessed are they that come to him, & creep on hand and foot, if they cannot wall•e upright, but woe unto them that come not at all. If we have but a grain of Mustard seed of faith, he cherisheth it, and accepteth of us. Let us therefore come unto him by prayer, howsoever we come, by our selves, or by others; forasmuch as our coming to him shall have a reward. See more of this before, chap. 6.

[*Rise up, O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee fly before thee.*] This is the prayer made when they began to march. This prayer is short, but it is very effectual. The sum and substance is, to commend unto God the good and preservation of the church

from the many enemies of it. As if he had said, O merciful God, which hast promised thy presence among us, go thou before us, and scatter thine and our enemies, put thē to flight which seek to stop our way, and to hinder us from entering into the land of *Canaan*, which thou hast promised unto us. The prayer consisteth of two parts, a cause, and the effect. The cause is God's arising to y^e defense of his servants, wherein he speaketh after the manner of men, because properly God neither riseth up, nor sitteth down, as also he neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. But it is spoken in regard of a new work, whereby he manifesteth his help to be ready at hand, and showeth that he shrinketh not back in time of need from those that are his. Sometimes he is said to lie still, and to be as it were asleep, when he doth bear with patience, and suffer the wicked to rage and run on against the righteous, and against religion: so when he beginneth to take the cause into his own hand, both by defending his children, and maintaining his own glory against the wicked, he is said to arise and stand up, as 2 Chro. 6, 41. Psa. 44, 23. & 82, 8. & 132, 8. The reason of the speech is borrowed from men, who can do no work of any moment or account while they lie still, but if they will go in hand with anything, they must rise up. The effect of his arising is the scattering of his enemies. If he once arise to the help of his people, then followeth quickly the fall of his enemies. If he fight for them, *They shall fly before him as chaff before the wind and as wax melteth before the fire, so the wicked perish at the presence of God*, Psa. 68.2. We might note from hence, that when once God showeth himself for his people, the enemies are quickly put to flight, Exod. 14. When *Pharaoh* pursued the Israelites, and ouertoole them at the red sea, and that their hearts began to fail and fall away, to be troubled, and as it were to melte away, *Moses* said unto them, *Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he shall show you this day*, 13. *The Lord shall fight for you, and you shall hold your peace*, 14. Deut. 28, 7. and Ro. 8, 31. *If the Lord be on our sides, who shall be against us?* This is a great comfort to the Church, 2. Chro. 15, 2. *The Lord is with us, if we be with him*. Again, let every faithful soul apply this to himself, and gather assurance by it, to stand unmovable under the shadow of the almighty. Lastly, it noteth out the wretched & miserable condition of the enemies of God, and of his children; for when they think to arise, God will give them a sodain and shameful fall. But I only point out this point: and proceed to the consideration of the titles which *Moses* giveth to the ungodly; he calleth them the *enemies of God*, & such as hate him. So then observe, that all wicked men are utter enemies to God, they hate him, they abhor him, they cannot abide him. They say in their hearts, *There is no God*, Psal, 14, 1. God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will not require it, Ps. 10, 11, 13. *The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it*, Psal. 94, 7. *Depart frō us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways, what is the almighty that we should serve him, and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?* Job 21, 14, 15. Exod. 5, 2. Mal. 3, 14. In the second commandment the Lord saith, that he would visit *the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of thē that hate him*, Exo. 20, 5. Howsoever therefore they pretend friendship and love to him, as *Judas* did to Christ, yet their hearts are far from him, they hate him, and cannot abide him.

[Reason 1] And no marvel. For first, they fight against his Laws, and resist his ordinances. They wish there were no God, no hell, no heaven. For as they are the friends of God that do his commandments, so doubtless they are his enemies, that will not submit themselves to his

kingdom, nor do his will. Hence it is, that Christ saith, Luk. 19, 27. *Those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.* They that will not have him to reign over them, and in them, are his enemies: but such are all the unregenerate, therefore they are God's enemies. Secondly, they are under the dominion of the Prince of darkness, who is God's professed enemy, he ruleth in them, to him they give homage and obedience. From him they will not depart, and of him they shall receive their wages. So Christ telleth the Pharisees, they were of their father the devil, John. 8, 44. they did the lusts of the devil, and therefore they were the children of the devil. The God of this world ruleth in them, and therefore they can be no better then the enemies of God: for of whō a man is overcome, of the same he is brought in bondage. Lastly, the godly that seek to fear the Lord, are both called and accounted the friends of God, as *Abraham was, I am. 2, 23.* To this purpose speaketh *Jehoshaphat* in his prayer, *Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend forever?* If then the faithful be the friends of God, doubtless the unfaithful, what are they but his enemies?

[Use 1] The Uses. First, conclude from hence, that most certainly God will be their enemies. Will he hold friendship with those that care not for his love and favor? that profess and proclaim, though not in words, yet in their works, that they are and will be his enemies? No doubtless, he will cast them off, he will renounce them for being any of his people. Thus the Prophet speaketh, Psal. 78, •6. *He smote his enemies in the hinder parts, he put them to a perpetual shame* And Esa. 63, 10. *they rebelled and vexed his holy spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against thē.* Would any man have the displeasure of great men? Do not all men fear to have such as are in high place to become their enemies? But behold, he that is higher then the highest, and greater then the greatest, is an enemy to all wicked persons, as they are enemies to him? Who would not therefore make all possible haste to come out of such a wretched condition, as pulleth the enmity of God upon his head, and setteth God against him?

Secondly, let no man glory in their favor & [Use 2] friendship, or that they are any way nere unto them or great with them. He that toucheth pitch cannot but be defiled with it. He that is inward with God's enemies, will learn in time to be enemy also. We must therefore avoid their company, and entertain no familiarity and acquaintance with them. They are God's enemies, and they are enemies unto us, why then should not we be enemies to them? The Prophet setting down the note of the Citizens of heaven, maketh the contempt of the wicked to be one, Psal. 15, 4. *He in whose eyes a vile person is contemned.* The Prophet *Elisha* witnesseth and avoucheth even to the face of *Jehoram*, the King of Israel, that had it not been that he regarded the person & presence of *Jehoshaphat*, he would not once have vouchsafed to look upon him, 2 King. 3, 14. Whatsoever titles they claim and challenge unto themselves, this is their true title, they are the enemies of God, and we must have no society with God's enemies.

Thirdly, it showeth the certain destruction [Use 3] of all the ungodly, for they are his enemies, and can they then prosper? They fight against him, and he will fight against them,

& are they stronger then he? or able to prevail against him? No, in no wise; for though hand join in hand, and all of them should combine themselves in one against him, yet the breath of his mouth shall blow them away, and they shall not stand in judgment before him. To this end they are compared to chaff, which the wind scattereth away, Psalm. 1. The godly are like a Tree planted by the Rivers side, that bringeth forth his fruit in due season; his leaf also shall not wither: but the ungodly are not so, they are like the chaff, they are of no more reckoning or account with GOD, then the chaff is with men, in comparison of the good corn. Hence it is also, that they are compared to dung, they cast up as soul and filthy a savor in the nostrils of almighty God, as dung doth in the nostrils of men. Therefore the Church, in their prayer against them, desireth God to do unto them as unto the *Midianites*, as to *Sisera* and *Iabin* at the brook of *Kison*, which perished at *Endor*, and became as dung for the earth. So doth *Ahijah* tell the wife of *Jeroboam*, that the Lord would bring evil upon the bouse of *Jeroboam*, and take away the remnant of his house, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone, 1 King. 14, 10. Let them therefore magnify themselves never so much, & lift up their horns on high, they are of no price, they are in no account, they are of no estimation with God, they are loathsome and abominable to him. Their sins cry aloud in his ears; they have a stinking savor in his nostrils, they are odious in his eyes, they grieve his heart; and can they escape? May we not make an undoubted conclusion from all these things, that they shall certainly perish?

[Use 4] Lastly, to shut up this point, it is a duty required of all of us, to seek to be at peace with God, and to give unto him our hands, or rather our hearts. For so long as we stand out against him, and bid him open defiance, there can be no peace between him and us, neither any hope at all of reconciliation. For as Deut. 32, 41. *If he whet his glittering sword, and his hand take hold on judgment, he will execute vengeance on his enemies, and will reward them that hate him.* If a king hear of another coming against him with an huge and mighty host, and consider that he is not able to encounter with him hand to hand, while he is yet afar off, he sendeth embassage desiring conditions of peace, Luke 14, 32. This wisdom ought to be in us. Let no man think to prevail & get the upper hand by standing out against him. He that continueth an enemy unto him, is an enemy to himself, nay to his own soul. It is sin that maketh this separation between God and us, Isaiah 59, 2. We rise up against him, we rebel against the Lord, 2 Chron. 13, 6 and then the Lord riseth up against us. We cannot prosper so long as we provoke him with an high hand. Let us therefore repent us of our evil ways, and turn unto him, assuring our selves that then he will turn unto us. Let us humble our selves under his mighty hand, and he will lift us up. Let us confess our sins unto him, and we shall find mercy, for he is just and merciful to forgive us our sins. There is no peace to be obtained, but under these three conditions, repentance, humility, and confession: these as a trumpet sound the retreat of his judgments: they are as peacemakers between God and us, and are as a strong threefold cord which is not easily broken whereby his hands are after a sort bound from pouring wrath and vengeance upon us.

[*Let thine enemies be scattered, and them that hate thee fly before thee.*] Mark in these words the title that he giveth to those that were ready to hinder their approach unto Canaan: he saith not, Let our enemies and them that hate us be scattered, but let thine enemies and them that

hate thee, &c. Nevertheless, if he had so prayed, the prayer had been lawful: but his words are more powerful and effectual: whereby we see, that the Churches enemies, he calleth God's enemies, and showeth that they hated not only the godly, but God himself.

So then, the doctrine is this, that the enemies of the Church in general, or of any his faithful servants in particular, are indeed and in truth the enemies of God himself. Howsoever they may in the blindness of their harts persuade themselves, that notwithstanding their hatred to God's dear children, they may be the good friends of God: yet they do but deceive themselves, for they are accounted his utter enemies and such as inwardly hate him, as Exod. 15, verses 6, 7. speaking of the drowning of *Pharaoh* and his host in the red sea, *Moses* singeth, that the Lord overthrew them that rose up against him, he saith not, they rose up against Israel. And *Deborah* speaking of the destruction of *Sisera*, Judge. 5, verse 31, saith, *So let all thine enemies, O Lord, perish.* Thus the Prophet alluding to the common prayer of *Moses* in this place, beginneth the 68. Psalm in this manner, *Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered; let them also that hate him, fly before him.* The like we see, Psalm. 83, 2, 3. It is plain therefore that the enemies of the godly are God's enemies, though if they were asked the question, they would utterly deny it, & think themselves unjustly charged with it.

For first, God is entered into a league and covenant with them to have the same friends and the same enemies; as if he should say, as *Jehoshaphat* said to the Kings of Israel, *I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses.* This appeareth in the Covenant which God made with *Abraham*, Gen. 12, 3. *I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee:* and his he verifieth in all that embrace the faith of *Abraham*.

Secondly, wherefore are the ungodly persecutors, enemies to God's children? or what hath the righteous done? and why do they set themselves against them? is it not for the Lord's sake? is it not for his truth and religion? True it is, they may have, and indeed have other colors and pretences, but religion is the cause of all & the true fear of God, as Psal. 44, 22, & 38, 20. Rom. 8, 36. as it is noted of *Cain*, that he was of that evil one, and slew his brother, because his own works were evil, & his brothers good, 1 John 3, 12.

Woe therefore unto them that set themselves against God's people, for they fight against [Use 1] God, and he will fight against them for those that are his. If they cannot prevail against him, (for what is an arm of flesh to y^e Almighty)? then certainly not against the Church. So long as God standeth, the Church shall stand upright, the gates of hell cannot prevail against it, Mat. 16. Hence it is that the Prophet saith, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* We may therefore conclude as a principle not to be gainsaid, the sure and certain destruction of all the enemies of the Church, in as much as he will thrust through the loins of them that set themselves against his sanctuary. They may for a time prosper & prevail, but in the end they shall be confounded and come to ruin. Let them in time consider in what case they stand. They think they have to deal only with men, over whom they may insult at their pleasure, through their might and greatness, but they shall find they have to do with God, who is able to uphold his servants, O that they could consider this!

[Use 2] Secondly, we may truly infer the woeful estate of those y^t defend not the cause of God and his children, that do not stand with them, but stand still as neuters, and look on as idle beholders, and suffer them to be borne down and trampled under the feet of proud men as mire in the street, such as shrink back from them for fear of danger that may befall themselves. For such as forsake the faithful in their just defense, do in the height of their sin, and in the pride of their hearts forsake the Lord himself, and renounce him. This made *David* say, *Remēber Lord the reproach of thy servants, how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people, wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O Lord, wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine Anointed.* As he bare the reproaches of his enemies, w^c were God's enemies, in his bosom, so he prayeth that God would recompense their sin into their bo•ome. Therefore it is, that *Deborah* saith, *Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not out to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* They did not join with the enemies of God, yet they are cursed because they sate still and did nothing and did not join with his friends. We see, we cannot but see and behold with our eyes, the children of God oftentimes hated, maligned, wronged, threatened, oppressed, slandered, reviled, & persecuted; if we opē not our mouths in good causes, in God's causes, we forsake the Lord himself whose cause it is, and bring upon our selves his fearful, yet most just curse.

[Use 3] Thirdly, as the enemies of the Church are the enemies of God, so we may conclude from hence, that doubtless the friends of the church are the friends of God. No man shall do any good to his distressed servants, w^c shall lose his reward. The Evangelist showeth, that Christ our Savior accounteth it as done to himself, whatsoever we have done to one of the least of his brethren. He is fed and harboured in his members, he is clothed and covered in his members, he is received and visited in his members. And if we refuse to do good to the least of these, he esteemeth it as an injury and indignity done unto himself. This is a notable encouragement to move us to open our mouths in the cause of the dumb, to open our hands in the cause of the needy, and to open our hearts in the cause of the afflicted, and to vnloose our tongues to plead the cause of the innocent. Such are the true friends of God. Every man seeketh the favor of great men, and desireth their friendship how ought we then to labor to be the friends of God? *Abraham* believed the promise made unto him, and he is said to be the friend of God; & Christ saith, ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. This is the cause that made *Deborah* pronounce *Iael* y^e wife of *Heber* blessed above women dwelling in tents, because she helped the Lord against the mighty with her mouth, with her hand, with her heart; she smote off the head of *Sisera* when she had pierced and stricken through his temples. Thus it was with *Obadiah*; thus it went with *Ebedmelech*: they shown mercy to the Prophets, & God showeth mercy unto them: they did good to others but they received more good to themselves: And this was the prayer of *Paul* for *Onesiphorus*, who no doubt received much mercy from God in the day of account, as he refreshed the Apostle in the day of his want, 2 Timothy, 1.16.18.

Fourthly, seeing God accounteth y^e churches [Use 4] enemies his enemies, then must our account be answerable to the account of God, we must account his enemies to be our enemies. God's enemies by good right ought to be the Churches enemies. Such then as we

see to be open enemies to god, to fight as it were hand in hand against him, to hate true religion, to scorn the profession of it, to deride the professors of it, we must account thē as our enemies, we must hold no league, no friendship, no familiarity with them, so far as they declare themselves to be such by their obstinacy. This made y^e Prophet say to *Jehoshaphat* after he had made affinity with wicked *Ahab*, who had sold himself as a slave to sin, Shouldst thou help the ungodly? and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath come upon thee from before the Lord. So *David* saith, testifying his affection, *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee, &c.* teaching thereby, that seeing he accounteth our enemies to be his, we ought to account his enemies to be ours. This made the wise *Solomon* to say, *An unjust man is an abomination to the just, &c.* But it may be objected, [Object.] that Christ Jesus willeth us to love our enemies, and to bless them y^t hate us. It is true, [Answ.] we must love our enemies, but we are never commanded to love the enemies of God. Shall we love them that do not love the Lord? did we not see before, how that good king is reproved, not only because he did help the ungodly, but because he did love them that did hate the Lord? So then we must distinguish and make a difference between such as are our enemies, and such as are God's: between such as hate our persons, and such as hate true religion and the holy profession of it.

But how shall we know who are God's enemies, and who are ours? and to bestow our hatred upon a right subject? I answer, as a good tree is known by his good fruit, so an evil tree is known by his evil fruit. It is the evil fruit which they bring forth, which must because of this hatred. Take that away, and let the tree be graffed and bring forth better fruit, we will love both the tree and the fruit. Sin therefore must be the ground and foundation of all true hatred. Secondly, our hatred if it be aright, must proceed from the love of God, and the zeal of his glory, because we cannot love him, but we must hate whatsoever is against him. Thirdly, our hatred must not proceed from any private revenge: for that were to do evil for evil. The cause must no way concern our selves, but only the LORD. A man may be enemy to our person, and yet a friend to God, such we are commanded to love, and we are forbidden to hate. Lastly, we must see them to be obstinate and settled in sin, as dogs and swine that trample holy things under their feet, and are ready to rent them in pieces y^t bring them unto them.

[Use 5] Fifthly, from hence ariseth comfort to God's people, to consider that such as hurt or persecute the members of Christ, do hurt and persecute Christ himself, & wound him through their sides, though now he be glorified in the highest heavens. When *Paul* said, who art thou Lord? y^e Lord answered, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*, Act. 9.5. And the Apostle saith *I rejoyce in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his bodies sake which is the Church*, Col. 1.24. So God the Father is said to be touched with a feeling of the miseries of his people, Isaiah 63.9. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, & the Angel of his presence saved them: & likewise the holy Ghost, 1 Pet. 4.14. When you are reviled, the Spirit is evil spoken off on their part, &c. So then the holy and blessed Trinity have as it were a fellow-feeling of our miseries and afflictions, which serveth greatly for the comfort of all that are in trouble for the truths sake. We suffer not alone, for that were without comfort, we have God the Father to suffer with us, Christ Jesus our Savior

to suffer with us, & the holy Spirit blessed forever to suffer with us. Thus doth God comfort *Abraham*, who hath the hearts of all in his own hand, that he will get him favor in the eyes of many which shall do him good, and for his sake he will also do them good that do good to him. If any shall rise up against him as an enemy, God will shut the mouth of the lyon, he will declare himself to be his enemy, and arise betimes for the defense of his servant. And this appeareth evidently in the hystory that is set down of him. This is therefore the comfort of the Church, that albeit it have many enemies that hate it, oppress it, & persecute it, yet it shall have many patrons, nurses, friends, and favorers, nay God himself will protect it, defend it, and deliver it: nay he promiseth to bless them that bless it, and threateneth to curse them, that curse it: This made *David* say, Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; let them prosper that love thee, Ps. 122.6.

Lastly, it is our duty to labor to be in the number of his children, otherwise these promises belong nothing at all to us. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God, but what is that to us, if we be not citizens of that city? It is a notable privilege, to have y^e same common friends and enemies with God; this is made ours, if we be his: if not, we have no benefit by it at all. What will move us to holiness and righteousness of life, if this will not, that he which toucheth any of those that belong to him, toucheth the apple of his eye? Zach. 2. Could the Prophets have used a fitter phrase to show the care of God toward us, and the desire he hath to further our salvation? If he were a mortal man like unto us, and had flesh and blood together with those parts that we have, he could not more tenderly keep the apple of his eye, then he hath kept his people from time to time. We know it is the most tender part of the body of man, upon which dependeth the comfort of all the rest. If a man were stricken on the head, or hand, or arm, it might be borne: but if he receive a blow in the eye, all the body starteth at it, and we are much grieved by it. Howbeit we are expressly taught, that God keepeth us, not as his arm or as his leg only, but as the most tender part, to wit, his ey, & as the most tender part, of that tender part, namely the apple of the eye. Thus it pleaseth God to speak to us, to make us understand that which otherwise would be high and hard for us, if he should speak according to his own majesty. He hath neither arms nor legs, neither hands nor eyes, but he borroweth this comparison as well known to us, and stoopeth down to our rudeness and infirmity, that we might conceive his works the better. For the meaning is, that he will defend and preserve us, not as a mortal man doth his hands or feet, but as he would do the apple of his eye. This is his goodness toward us, when any of his are hurt, he receiveth a blow on his eye, and therefore cannot hold his peace: and ought not we on the other side for our parts make all hast to register and enrol our selves in the number of his children? All this his favor is lost, if we be not his. Let us join our selves therefore to God's people, let us be one with them, that we may be as one heart, and one soul. And as we noted before, that seeing God reputeth our enemies to be his, we ought to esteem his enemies to be ours; so likewise we ought to account his friends to be our friends. Such shall enter into the Tabernacle of God, and rest in his holy hill, in whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. And if God will honor them that honor him, ought not we also to honor them, and show our selves like to our heavenly Father? The Prophet telleth us, that all his delight was toward the Saints that were on earth, Psal. 16.3. God delighteth in

such, let us follow his example doth the contrary of the ungodly, Psal. 139. Do not I love them, O Lord, that love thee? and do not I rejoice with those that are obedient unto thee? yea, I love them with an unfeigned and perfect love, I account them as my best and chiefest friends, in comparison of whom I do make account of none other. In doing this, we shall have God to be our friend Wherefore, let us remember our duty, to be careful to become sound and sincere members of the Church, by true faith and a right ordered obedience, that so God may accept us to be his children.

[Verse 36. *And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.* This is the second prayer, which Moses ordinarily made at the resting of the Ark, and the pitching down of the tents. Here are two things set forth, first, the act of God, *Return O Lord*: this is also spoken after the manner of men, for properly God neither goeth nor returneth, he neither proceedeth forward, nor returneth backward: but it is spoken in regard of a new work of God to be shown toward his people. The meaning is as if Moses had said, As thou (Lord) wentest before us to drive away our enemies, so having put them to flight, that none can stand before thee, vouchsafe to come again to our tents, take up thy rest & residence among us thy people, as Psal. 7.6.7. *Arise, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies, and awake for me, &c. So shall the Congregation of the people compass thee about, for their sakes therefore return thou on high* Secondly, the persons to whom he should return and among whom he should rest, to wit, the thousand thousands of Israel. From hence we may observe briefly, where it is that God resteth, and among whom he dwelleth, that is, among his own people, he abideth in his Church forever, there he hath pitched down his standard and purposeth to continue; he hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation, This is my rest forever, here will I dwell: And in the next words he giveth the reason, for I have desired it, Psal. 132.13, 14. All creatures are his, so are all places his: he hath his choice to abide wheresoever it pleaseth him; for all the world is his, for who created it and gave it a being but he? Now of all places, he chooseth his Church to be with it, and to rest in it. Thus speaketh the king of Judah, 2 Chron. 13.12. God is with us for our Captain, and Matth. 28.20. Christ saith, even he that walketh among the seven golden candlestickes, Revel. 1.13. *Loe, I am with you to the end of the world.* [Reason 1] For first, who is it that gathereth the Church, but he? can any do this but God by his infinite power? Christ Jesus witnesseth that he would have gathered the people of Jerusalem by his Ministry, but they would not, Mat. 23. So God promised to gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth, Isaiah 11.12. Secondly, he is evermore a present help in time of trouble, willing to hear them with speed, and ready to speak to them with comfort. Whatsoever they ask of him, they shall receive: but if he were not present with us, he could not hear us in our need nor succor us in our wants Psal. 46.5 Thirdly, Satan dwelleth and ruleth in the world. He is called the prince of the world, Eph. 2. who ruleth in the children of disobedience: and blindeth their eyes that they cannot obey the truth, 2 Cor. 4.4. Lastly, his love, his special love is set upon them; and the love, the special love of his people is set upon him: and where should he rest and remain but among them? or how should one be without another?

The uses. This reproveth all such as have [Use 1] no care to dwell with God in his Church, of which the number is not small in all places. These are like unfaithful servants that care not

for coming in their masters presence: or like malefactors, that hate nothing more then the face of the judge. So is it with evil men: they like no place worse then the Church. They take as much pleasure in it, as the thief doth to be in the Iaile, who careth not how soon he were out, and rid of his fetters. The word of God is to the ungodly as bolts and gyues, it fethereth and hampereth and holdeth him, that he knoweth not which way to turn himself. The Church is to him as it were a prison, it restraineth his liberty, & he loveth no place worse then it. It is otherwise with the godly man: he liketh it and preferreth it in his thoughts, in his affections, and in his practices above all other places, because the Lord dwelleth and resideth therein. It is the house of prayer where the people of God meet. God is never absent from hence: and they are happy that may dwell there with him, Psalm 27.4. And we may pronounce this is a certain truth, that such have no company or communion with God that delight not to visit his Temple. Let such look for no blessing at God's hand to come upon them.

Secondly, this proclaimeth woe and misery [Use 2] to come upon all wicked persons, because God is not among them. His presence is the fullness of joy, at his right hand are pleasures for evermore, Psalm. 16, 11. where he is not, there can be nothing but horror and confusion. But he is not in the Congregation & assembly of evil persons. It will be said, Is not God everywhere? He is, with his essence, but not with his grace. And they shall know he is present with them, and they with him, albeit they seek nothing more then to banish him out of their presence and company. They have forsaken the ways of God, and he hath forsaken them for their wickedness. Howbeit in the last day, when they shall stand before the tribunal seat of the Judge of all the world, they will acknowledge their own folly, and desire to behold one comfortable day of the Son of man with the loss of all their pleasures in the days of their vanity, but shall not be able.

[Use 3] Thirdly, hence ariseth comfort to God's children to know this, and to be thoroughly persuaded of it in their hearts. Thus doth *Abijah* the king of Judah comfort himself against his enemies, 2 Chron. 13.12, *Behold, God himself is with us:* and likewise Christ his disciples, *Loe I am with you unto the end of the world*, Matth. 28.20. He need not fear anything that hath God to be with him. He need not fear the subject, that hath the Prince to stand for him. He hath no cause to be afraid of the servant, that hath the master on his side. Let everyone therefore comfort himself in the execution of his calling. God hath set us in the same, and he will bear us out.

[Use 4] Lastly, it is a duty belonging unto all men to seek the Lord, as well where he may be found as when he may be found. For as there is a time when he will not be found, Pro. 1.28. Mic. 3.4. Luk. 13.24. so there is a place where he will not be found. He resteth not in the tents of wickedness. If God be sought in the society and fellowship of sinful men, he cannot be found. He is found in his house and Temple: if we delight in his word and worship, we cannot be far from him, nor he from us. If we show our selves willing to hear his voice, and to go no farther from him, then that we may evermore be within the sound of his mouth, we shall be sure of his presence. There he will be found as in a garden of spices. The Lord is said to dwell in the highest heavens, and indeed this is the city of the great king. Now, the Church is as

the suburbes, and leadeth us the right and ready way to this city. We can never come to it, if we do not enter by the gates of the Church. Here God keepeth his court: here we shall be sure to find him. All men will seem in love with the heavenly Jerusalem, but they care not at all for Zion. They would rest in the hill of God, but they desire not to sojourne in his Tabernacle. They would have heaven, but they will have none of the Church. They love to hear, *enter into the kingdom prepared for you*, but they care not for the feasts of the word and Sacraments prepared for them. These do altogether deceive themselves, and separate those things w^c God hath joined together: for as much as we must long after the place of his habitation upon earth, if we look to be received into the place of his habitation in heaven. For God hath two houses as his dwelling places, one beneath, the other above: the one I may call the lower house, the other the upper house. He that would dwell in the one, must also dwell in the other. One is the Church, the other is the kingdom of glory. If we delight in the first house more then in all other places, let us not doubt, but be well assured, that in his good time we shall have entrance into the second house. But if we will not dwell with him in his Church upon earth, we shall never dwell with him in glory in y^e highest, of which Christ our Savior saith, *In my Fathers house there be many mansions*, John. 14.2. Whereby he meaneth heaven it self, in which all the Saints and blessed spirits of just men perfected shall dwell with God forever in glory and immortality. If we be any way in love with this celestial house, let our care and endeavor be to dwell with him first in his other house which is the lower house, of which sort is every particular assembly, where God doth also dwell, to which he giveth laws and ordinances as an householder unto his house, of this *Paul* speaketh, 1 Tim. 3.15. *Thou must know how to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God*. Let us examine our love to the one, by our love to the other: our love to the kingdom of heaven, by our love to the kingdom of grace. If we care not for the former, we shall never have entrance into the latter. God must know us to be guests in his first house, otherwise he will never acknowledge us as his friends in the second.

To the many thousands in Israel. The words in the original are, *to the ten thousand thousands*: a certain number for an uncertain. A notable description of the church of God. Whence observe, that the people which belong to God, are many thousand thousands. They are a great flock of sheep, they are a plentiful harvest of corn, they are a wonderful host and army of men. This God promised to *Abraham*, Gen. 15.5. he brought him forth and said, *Look now toward heaven and tell the stars if thou be able to number them: for so shall thy seed be*, Rom. 4.18. So Psal. 2.8. *Ask of me the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*. Thus *Isaiah* prophesieth of the amplitude of y^e church, Chap. 54.2.3. *Enlarge the place of thy tent, &c*. In the New Testament Christ telleth us, that *many shall come from the East and West, and sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven*, Matth. 8.11. so that his elect children are many in number.

For first of all, the mercy of God is the [Reason 1] more manifested thereby. He might justly have rejected all, because all had sinned in *Adam*: but the more to manifest the greatness of his goodness, and the largeness of his compassions, it pleased him to call and gather together a great people, that they might take hold of his mercy, and sing of his loving kindness to his glory. *God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all*.

By nature all are alike, all unbelievers, all disobedient, all miserable: the elect are no better than others by birth. He speaketh here of believers among Jews and Gentiles. Secondly, Christ Jesus will not lose y^e price of his death, neither suffer it to be void and of none effect. He died for many, and therefore many belong unto him, as sheep of his pasture, and as members of his body. The Apostle teacheth, that *by the obedience of one (not a few, but) many shall be made righteous, even as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners*, Rom. chap, 5.19. And the Evangelist Saint Matthew declareth Christ in the delivering of the Cup at his last Supper, said, *This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins:whereby he brought many sons to glory*. Thirdly, none is able to count the number of them, which are as the stars that are innumerable, and as the sand on the sea shore. This made Balaam pronounce afterward in this book, chap. 23.10. *Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel?* And John speaking of the number of them that were sealed, saith, *he saw a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, clothed in white robes and palms in their hands*. Revel. 7.9. They must needs be many thousand thousands, seeing the number of them is without number.

[Use 1] The uses follow. See here the key to open and unlock sundry places of holy Scripture, speaking of an universality appointed unto life and eternal glory: as where it is said, God would have all men saved, 1 Tim. 2.4. all men to come to repentance, 2 Pet. 3.9. that Christ died for all, 2 Cor. 5.14. 2 Pet. 2.1: These speeches must be understood of an universality and generality of the elect only: for they alone are elected, they alone are justified, they alone are redeemed, they alone shall be glorified. They must not be understood (though they speak of all) and extended to every particular of Adams seed, nor be taken of every particular person, but must be limited and restrained to believers of all sorts and conditions; as Rom. 10.12. God is rich to all that call upon him: and Gal. 3.22. the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise of faith in Jesus Christ might be given (what to all? no, but) to all y^t believe, John. 11.52. There is therefore an universality and a world of believers, as well as of unbelievers; and they are expressed under the word All, because they are many in number, and consist of thousand thousands which cannot be accounted: and therefore John saith, *Christ is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world*, 1. John. 2.2. that is, for the sins of all the elect, and believers dispersed throughout the world. To conclude, Christ may be said to save all as he is said to heal all sicknesses and diseases among the people, Matth. 4.23. and 9.35. that is, some of all sortes and kinds: and as the Pharisees are said to tithe all herbs, Luk. 11.42. that is, all sorts.

[Use 2] Secondly, we may gather from hence, that most glorious shall the name of Christ be when all me• together in one to magnify his grace and mercy toward them, as appeareth Reu. 7.10, 11, 12. The Angels and the Elders, ascribe blessing and glory, and power, and thanksgiving unto God. When we shall all sing *Hallelu-iah* in the heavens, what a sweet and pleasant melody will this make? O how should we labor to be of this company, that we may bear our part everyone in this triumphant song? Hence it is that the John saith, Reue 19.1.3. *I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia, salvation, and honor, and power unto the Lord our God:* and again they said, *Alleluia!* Blessed are they that accompany the Saints to sing with them, with heart and voice *Alleluia!* If we be not of this communion of Saints, we

cannot tune the right accent, we cannot be in the number of these sweet singers, our music iarreth and hath a discord in the eyes of God: he will soon find it out. Here the godly seem to be thinly sown, as wheat covered with chaff, and so the song to consist of a few voices only. The corn which seemeth little while it lieth in the heap and maketh no show, when once the fan hath scattered away the chaff, it appeareth to be much in quantity: so when the Lord Jesus at his second coming shall have fanned away all the reprobate, and blown them by the breath of his mouth, and the power of his sentence into hell, as the doom of their deserts, then shall innumerable multitudes of the elect stand up and lift up their heads, because their redemption is accomplished, and cry with a loud voice *Hallelu-iah*.

Thirdly, let no man be dismayed at y^e great [Use 3] number of the wicked, and of profane persons that cover the earth as grassehoppers, and swarm in every place as hornets, Idolaters, heathen, barbarians and others out of the Church, together with unbelievers and scorners in the Church. The Apostle saith, the whole world lieth in wickedness, 1 John. 5.19 nevertheless God hath a very great people, even a world of people that belong unto him. *Elijah* could see few, when indeed there were many; when he thought he had been left alone, what saith the answer of God unto him, I have reserved to myself seven thousand which have not bowed the knee to the image of *Baal*, Rom. 11.4. And God telleth *Paul*, he had much people in one only city, Act. 18.10. yea, by the preaching of *Peter*, three thousand souls were gained unto God in one day, Act. 2.41. Let us not therefore be offended at the paucity or scarcity of the godly which embrace the Gospel, as if the harvest were little: neither let us doubt of the truth thereof, nor start back from the profession of it because few embrace it, believe it, and confess it. It hath always been the manner of men for the most part to have respect to the greatest multitudes, and to have the faith in respect of persons, I am. 2.1. because they think it best to do as the most do, and to believe as y^e greatest number do, without any farther search or trial of the truth. These time-seruers and men-pleasers persuade themselves, that it is incredible and unreasonable, that God should suffer the greatest number to run into the way of error, & to fall into the pit of destruction. This made y^e Pharisees say, *Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?* But though these believe not, shall y^e promise be to none effect▪ No doubtless, the Church shall abound with many children as a fruitful mother, and shall stretch forth the curtains of her habitations. But how then is it said to be a little flock? and they to be few that enter into the straight gate and the narrow way? This is spoken by comparison of the ungodly & reprobate, who as they abound in evil, so they do in multitude: and therefore Christ saith, *Many are called: but few chosen*, Mat. 20.16. There are many reprobates, but few elected. The Apostle saith, *Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet but a remnant shall be saved*, Rom. 9.27. Nevertheless, the people of God considered in themselves are many: we shall not be alone, we shall have much company to go with us to the kingdom of heaven.

[Use 4] Fourthly, judge not rashly of particular persons, whether they be in the number of the reprobate or of the elect, whether they be vessels of mercy or vessels of wrath. This is one of the secrets of God, which is hidden from us. No man ought to search into the secrets of a Prince: but who shall presume to pry into the highest mysteries of God? It is enough for us that he hath admitted us to be of his court, howbeit he hath not made us of his privy

counsel. To presume above that which we ought, is a labor like unto his, who not contented with a known and safe foord, will undertake to pass over the greatest river, where he is ignorant of the depths; for so doth the one lose his life, the other his judgment and understanding. We behold the Sun and enjoy the light thereof, as long as we look toward it but tenderly and circumspectly: we warm our selves safely while we stand near the fire, but if we seek to outface the one, or enter the other, we are immediately either blinded or burned. The Apostle saith, *Hath God cast away his people? no, in no wise, not any one of these which he foreknew*, Rom 11.1, 2. And elsewhere he saith, *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart*. He hath many sheep that are without and therefore we must hope the best of all, and not despair of the conversion of any, though they be unbelievers, and unregenerate. For the power of God is greater then our weakness, and his mercy is greater then our sins. It is in his hand to deliver the offender out of prison, and to loose the fetters of unbelief. It is our duty to pray for them unto God, that he would give them faith to believe in his only begotten Son our redeemer. If the Son make them free, then they shall be free indeed.

[Use 5] Fifthly, let us use all good and lawful means to draw on others, seeking to win those that are contrary minded to us, and to vnty the cords of sin, whereby Satan keepeth them as bondmen in chains of iron. We must labor to draw them to a love of the truth, and cast out the net of the Gospel, it may be at length we may catch some. The disciples had labored and toiled all night, and caught nothing; yet nevertheless at the commandment of Christ, they were content to let down the net, and when they had done so, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes, Luke 5.5, 6. We should be all fishers of men, especially the Ministers, but generally all, to exhort, to admonish, to teach, to stir up, and to instruct one another. Such a fisher was the woman of Samaria, who left her water pot at the well, and ran into the city, and provoked them to come forth and hear the Lord Jesus, John. 4.28.29. Such a fisher was *Andrew*, who findeth his brother *Simon* first, and saith unto him, *We have found the Messias*, which is, being interpreted, the Christ, John. 1.41. and he brought him to Jesus. And as *Philip* like a fish was taken with the net of Christ, verse 43. so by and by he playeth the fisher, for he findeth *Nathaniel*, and saith unto him, *we have found him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth*, verse 45. Happy are they that be found such fishers, and happy are they that gain one soul to God, yea happy and thrice happy are they that as good fish are taken with the hook and bait of the Gospel.

Lastly, we are bound to praise God for the [Use 6] increase of his people, & when he addeth unto the Church such as shall be saved. When a member of the body that was without feeling, and taken as it were with a dead palsy, is quickened, and the vital spirits begin to work, all the rest of the members rejoice. So it should be with us, when it may be said, *This my brother was dead, and is alive again, he was lost and is found, it is meet we should make merry and be glad*, Luke 15.32. When the sheep that went astray, is brought home into the sheeppfold, why should we not rejoice? there is joy in the presence of the Angels of God in heaven, over one sinner that repenteth, verse 7.10. When the hand of the Lord was with the Apostles, so that a great number believed and turned unto him, they were glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they should cleave unto the Lord, Act. 11.23. and 13.48. When

therefore we see the Church grow in grace, and increase in number, and flourish in peace, we cannot but rejoice and be glad. This is a notable sign and infallible token that we are fellow members of that body, and that the word of God hath gotten root in our hearts. This use is taught by the Prophet, Psal. 47.6, 7, 8, 9. *Sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises unto our king, sing praises; for God is the king of all the earth, and reigneth over the heathen, &c.* The faithful were wont to give him thanks for the increase of their private houses, much more then ought we to do it, when the house of GOD increaseth, and his saving health is made known more and more. But of this doctrine see more, chap. 23.10.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. AND when the people complained, it displeased the Lord, and the Lord heard it, and his anger was kindled, &c.

HEere beginneth the second part of the book, according to y^e division observed before: wherein we are to consider the journeys of the children of Israel, according unto their particular murmurings against God. Of this chapter there are two parts, which are two of their murmurings, & both of them fell out in their twelfth removing, as appeareth in the 33, chapter afterward, where their several stations are particularly distinguished. The first is in the three first verses, opening unto us their sin, their chastisement, and the event thereof. The cause of their murmuring and the words of these murmurers are not expressed, but may in part be gathered from the end of the former chapter, where it appeareth they departed from Mount Sinai three days journey without resting or intermission, with all their luggage and portage, as it were with bag and baggage; they had rested long at the foot of the Mountain, now therefore it is tedious and toilsome unto them to go so long together, so that they begin to fret and rage, to murmur and complain against *Moses*, or rather against God himself. The judgment followeth the sin, and overtaketh the sinner, for God is offended at it, and sent a fire from heaven which consumed the uttermost part of the Campe, and no doubt burnt up many of them in the same. God hath all creatures in his own hand, sometimes he drowneth with water, sometimes he consumeth with fire, sometimes he infecteth with the air, and sometimes swalloweth up in the eatth, & never leaveth sin and rebellion unpunished, so long as there is any creature in the world to arm against the sinner. Lastly, we have the event and issue of all, the people cried to *Moses* whom they contemned before; and he unto God, who was entreated to spare them: and a monument both of their sin and of God's judgment is described by the place which is named *Taberah*, that is, a burning, upon this occasion.

First of all, let us consider their murmuring. This is a grievous sin, or rather an heap of many sins compacted together, as pride, disdain, unthankfulness, infidelity, impatience forgetfulness, tempting of God, and a violent insurrection joined with fretting and chasing against him, and many such like corruptions. The doctrine [Doctrine.] from this example is this, that it is the property of carnal men, whensoever anything falleth not out according to their corrupt desire, to murmur against God, as Prov. 19, 3. This was the common behavior of the discontented Israelites while they wandered in the wilderness, and sometimes they

wished they had died in Egypt, rather thē they would any way be crossed in their humors, Exod. 16, and 17, 3.

This male-contentedness died not with [Reason 1] them, for first, everyone would have what him listeth, and regardeth not what God appointeth and approveth, Ier. 44, 16, 17, and 18 verse 12.

Secondly, every man would have present help in trouble, he cannot abide quietly to be one moment under the Cross; and if it be not by and by removed, he showeth the corruption that is in him. We are like to him that having received a wound, will be healed presently, or else he will not be healed at all.

Thirdly, they want faith and hope to believe in God and to wait upon him. Now *faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*, Heb. 11, 1. *And if we hope for that which we see not, we do with patience wait for it*, Rom. 8, 25.

Fourthly, they devise and invent to themselves false causes of their crosses, and never enter into their own hearts to consider the true cause, as Deut. 1, 27. *Ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the Lord hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the Land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us*. They should have accused themselves and not God, they should have confessed their own sins, not have alleged the hatred of God, which was to make that the cause which was not the cause, and not to make that to be the cause which indeed was the true cause.

The uses. This serveth justly to reprove all [Use 1] such as mutter and murmur when they have not their own will, like wayward children that will never be quiet but whē their mouths are full. How many are there that mislike their places and callings, and fret against God if he do not please them in all things? If they be touched with poverty, famine, sickness, losses, or any kind of adversity, they are offended and discontented with the Almighty. If God send out any contagious sickness, or blasting, or mildew, or foul weather, &c. how do we take on and vex our selves? We are like the Israelites, we break out into impatency, we never think upon our own deservings, nor consider we have deserved far greater plagues We may say as *Moses doth, The Lord heareth the murmurings of the people*, Exod. 16.12. Or rather, these are like that profane beast in the book of the kings, when in extremity of famine, he said, *Behold, this evil cometh of the Lord, shall I attend on the Lord any longer?* Some there are that smell rankly of the smoke of the Romish religion, who will seem to cast off the Pope, but they have tasted the leaven of superstition, and savor strongly of Popish relics and remnants that remain in them; these will tell us of the former times of old how good they were, and what plenty they had then of all things, when they had the old religion, but since this new learning came up we have had dearths and famines, and penury of all things. These are like the Jews, Ier. 44 18. since we left off to burnt incense to the host of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto the same, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine: but when we burn incense to the host of heaven, we had plenty of vitailles, and were well, and saw no evil. Besides, I could answer them, that their prattling of plenty is a tale of idle brains, for never were their harder times then in the times of superstition, and never

were God's blessings more plentiful thē in the days o• y^e Gospel. But be it all were true which they tell us, it is a falls rule to measure true religion by the belly. Thus do carnal men savor nothing but carnal things, and prefer their flesh pots before Manna. Let us therefore hearken to the counsel of the Apostle. 1 Cor. 10.10. Phil. 2.14. Against such *Solomon* speaketh, *Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better then these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.*

[Use 2] Secondly, it is our duty to beware of unthankfulness, which is the mother of all murmuring. For as the Apostle biddeth us to *take heed there be not in any of us an unbelieving heart to depart away from the living God*, so we must beware of an unthankfull heart to depart from him, which is a capital offense and a mother sin, Job 34.18, 19. And that we may see what an ugly and misshapen monster of many heads it is, let us consider what deformed daughters it bringeth forth into the world, verifying the common proverb, Like mother, like daughter, Ezek. 16.44. First, it maketh us to prefer base, I may say, beastly things before better, and to lift up the earth above the heaven. Secondly, it bringeth hardness of heart, and maketh us without feeling of good things. Thirdly, it stoppeth the course of God's blessings, & after a sort dryeth up his hand, that he cannot stretch it out to do us good. For who will bestow anything upon an unthankfull person? Fourthly, it maketh us like untamed heifers, the more we have, the more we spurn and kick against God, like the pampered horse, that lifteth up his heel against him that feedeth him to the full. Fifthly, it is a thief, which taketh away all that we have, and even robbeth and bereaveth as of such blessings as once we enjoyed: or as a violent fire that wasteth and consumeth whatsoever we had gathered together. For as thankfulness to God vnlocketh God's treasury, and maketh way and passage for us to obtain more: so unthankfulness shutteth the door that leadeth to the storehouse of his blessings, nay it fretteth away, like a canker, whatsoever we have received already. Sixthly, it bringeth down God's judgments, as it did upon the Israelites, sometimes fire, sometimes plagues, sometimes serpents, and sometimes one judgment and sometimes another, until they were all consumed: none of them escaped unpunished. For as *Solomon* speaketh, Prov. 17.13. who so rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house. Shall we sinful wretches so reward the Lord that hath done us good, to do him evil? Seventhly, it blindeth our sight, and pulleth out our eyes, that we cannot discern our own estate, nor consider aright what we have, it maketh us turn the blessings of God behind us, and to set the least crosses before us: it maketh us envy at the condition of others, that they have greater honors, riches, and livings then we have. Lastly, it exasperateth men very much to see themselves to be evilly rewarded and smally regarded at their hands to whom they have done good, as we see, 1 Sam. 25.10. and 2 Sam. 10.6.7. how much more then doth it provoke the most High? and how careful ought we to be to beware of so foul an evil?

Lastly, if we would avoid and prevent this [Use 3] sin of murmuring to which we are so prone, we must learn to be thankful to God for all good things, and continually call to mind y^t they come from no other but from him, Ier. 5.24. I am. 1.17. For as unthankfulness is a kind of idolatry, refusing to give honor to whom it is due; so thankfulness testifieth our love, fear, faith, & hope in God, of whom we receive all things. This duty hath many branches. For such as are thankful must acknowledge in their hearts, and confess with their mouths the

goodness of God toward them: so did the good Samaritan healed of the leprosy, Luke, chapter 17. verse 18. so doth *David*, Psal. 66.16. Secondly, they must be patient, and well pleased with the will of God, though thereby our own willes be crossed and curbed. We must in silence and subjection to his holy and heavenly pleasure yield up our selves and our whole life to be ordered by him, Psal. 4.4. and 29.9. and 37.7. *Isaiah* 30.15. and give the praise to him for them, *Job* 1.21. because even in judgment he remembereth mercy. *Hab.* 3.2. in all our crosses he showeth his love unto us, and dealeth better with us then we deserve, who might justly cast us into hell fire, and yet do us no wrong, nor give us just occasion to complain against him. Thirdly, we must be content with our places, callings and estates, avoiding covetousness and ambition, *Phil.* 4.11. *Heb.* 13.5. Fourthly, we must set our hearts constantly to obey God in poverty & penury, in afflictions and in all adversities, *Phil.* 4.12. *Heb.* 10.34. Fifthly, we must be ready to distribute & communicate the good blessings which we have received unto others, knowing of whom and to what end we have received them. When the fountains of God's mercies flow to us, let our fountain be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets, *Prov.* 5.16. When the clouds have dropped down rain and watered our land, let us break our bread to the hungry, and cover them that are naked. We can never be truly thankful unto God, if we be not careful to do good to his servants for his sake. Lastly, we must show our selves thankful by yielding obedience to God, & by laboring to please him in all things. This is a real thankfulness, and this the Lord looketh for at our hands: this is the consummation and perfection of the former, and without it, all the rest are of none effect.

[Verse 2, 3. *And the people cried unto Moses, &c. the fire of the Lord burnt among them, &c. and he called the name of the place Taberah.* Here we see the punishment of their sin. Observe from hence, that among other judgments of God, fire is to be esteemed as one. Thus he destroyed *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, *Gen.* 19.24. and burnt up both cities and people. So a fire went out from the Lord and consumed *Nadab* and *Abihu* the sons of *Aaron*, because they offered strange fire, *Levite.* 10.2. *Elijah* the Prophet did call fire from heaven, and consumed the captains with their fifty. *1 Kin.* 1.10. The like we see afterward, *chap.* 16.35. according to that in the Psalm, *The flame burnt up the wicked*, *Psal.* 106.18.

[Reason 1] This must be acknowledged to be a grievous and fearful judgment, because we say commonly and truly, fire and water have no mercy. And we see by never failing experience that it is so. Secondly, it is one of the titles of God expressing his nature, y^t he is called a consuming fire, *Heb.* 12.29. *Deut.* 4.24. and 9.3.

[Use 1] This teacheth us, that if it please God to lay this judgment upon us at any time, whatsoever the means or instruments be whereby it cometh, whether by negligence or willfulness, or by the immediate hand of God, we must always lift up our eyes to heaven, and submit our selves with patience to him: we must not rest in second causes, but acknowledge his providence, and consider what is said in this place, that the fire of the Lord consumed the campe. We must therefore no otherwise account of it.

[Use 2] Secondly, it is our duty in this regard to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. We must take heed to our selves, lest we forget the covenant of the Lord our God;

we must make no graven image, or the likeness of anything which he hath forbidden. It is reason we stand in fear of him that is able to destroy us suddenly, and to arm his creatures as his soldiers to consume us in a moment.

Thirdly, it warneth us, that at the last day, [Use 3] the whole world shall be consumed with fire, and the elements shall melt with heat, and the heavens shall pass away as a scrolle. Seeing then all these things shall be dissolved, *What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God!* We never read nor heard of moe burning of towns & houses thē within these few years, testified by the continual collections for the relief of such persons as have received loss that way. It is a lamentable sight and moveth much commiseratiō to see a few houses consumed to ashes: these particular burnings put us in mind of y^t general burning, when all things that worldly men so much esteem, and for which they labor & gape so greedily, shall be on fire. What should we so much delight our selves, in costly apparel bespangled with gold and silver, or why do we dote and set our affections so far upon the treasures of this life, which we know must all be burnt up like stubble?

Lastly, we are hereby admon[•]shed of a more [Use 4] terrible fire and ••ore fearful spectacle then all the former: for they are but as painted fires in comparison of the last fire, which the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle. It was a fearful fire fell upon Sodom which burned their cities to ashes, but their souls suffering the vengeance of God in eternal fire, was more fearful. This is called everlasting fire, which never shall be quenched. Into this shall the reprobate be cast, & be tormented in those flames. These plagues are infinite, unspeakable, & incomprehensible: without end, without ease, without intermission, without remedy, without profit. Other iudgmēt^s have some good use, & many times bring profit to the sufferers after they have been exercised by them, but these shall bring none at all: there shall be weeping & gnashing of teeth.

Again, when the people first murmured, God did not punish them, as appeareth in the book of *Exodus*, they had not yet received y^e law: but after the law was given, & knowledge shined as a candle in their hearts to direct thē, God spared them not, but entered into judgment with them so soon as they sinned against him. We learn hereby, [Doctrine.] that knowledge & the light of God's word received into our hearts, increaseth sin and judgment. *The servant that knew his masters will, and did not prepare himself to do according to his will shall be beaten with many stripes:* so saith Christ of the Jews, If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. For ignorance doth in some sort excuse, that is, make the sin not to be so great. Again, [Reason 1] all color and excuse is taken from such as have the means of knowledge, they cannot say they knew not: the word shall judge them at the last day which they have heard. This then teacheth, that none sin more grievously then such as live in the bosom of the Church, hear his word, and receive his Sacraments. It had been better for them that they had never known the way of righteousness, then after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them, and the last state of that man is worse then the first. Again, mark from hence the cause, why judgment beginneth at the house of God, because here is y^e greatest

light, here God hath vouchsafed the greatest mercy, here he hath rained upon his own city, while other places remained dry and withered. As then they have tasted the greatest mercies, so they must be touched with the sorest judgments. Lastly, it standeth the Church in hand and every true believer, to walk as wisely in the day, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. If y^e word do not work our conversion, it shall further our condemnation, and we make our selves twofold more the children of hell then others that have not been partakers of such graces.

[He called the name of the place *Taberah*.] God doth not content himself to punish their murmuring, but setteth up a memorial or monument of their sin, tha^t others might be taught and instructed by it to fear, by giving a new name to the place where the sin was committed, calling it *Taberah*, that is, a consumption or a burning. The like we see afterward in this chap. ver. 34. [Doctrine.] Learn from these examples, that the judgments of God which befall to men, are not only punishments to the sufferers and offenders, but also documents and instructions to all others that behold thē, know them, and hear of them. The punishments of God inflicted upon one do serve to admonish and instruct another. *Abraham* is commended that he would teach his servants and household to keep the way of the Lord, and to do justice & judgment, when he heard of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrhah. The Lord chargeth, that the idolater should not be spared, but stoned with stones, that seeketh to entice others secretly to serve other gods, that all Israel may hear and fear, and do no more any such wickedness. So the judgments that fell upon the Galileans, and those that perished by the fall of the tower, served as examples and Sermons of repentance. The like we see in *Deuteronomy*, & they were written for our admonition, &c. Iud. ver. 7.

[Reason 1] This is the end of his judgments, he worketh them to this end and purpose, and therefore they must be instructions to us. A few were smitten (saith *Cyprian*) that others might be warned by their example. As in a family the master will not pass by that which the servant committeth, because it may be a warning to the rest, that they might hear and see and commit no such thing, as we shown before out of *Deuteronomy*. Some are punished, that others might not be punished. Secondly, whatsoever was written before hand, was written for our instruction, that we might receive benefit thereby upon whom the ends of the world are come; as it oftentimes happeneth in states that are well governed, where we see not only malefactors executed, but gibbets erected, and other monuments set up in the high ways, to the benefit of those that pass by and come after, that they beholding what befell to such wicked offenders, might not transgress in the same manner.

This serveth to check and control the sacrilege [Use 3] of the Church of Rome, who keep back these examples from the knowledge of the people of God. They cannot abide y^e Scriptures should be common, and therefore do hinder what they can, & forbid them to know these judgments. The Apostle would not have any in the Church ignorant of them, but these keep away the key of divine knowledge which openeth the gate of God's kingdom, neither entering themselves, nor suffering those that would enter. The Priests in the Law were commanded to read the Scriptures to all the people in their own language: but these keep them & read them in a strange tongue, because none should understand them: or if

they be in their own tongue, they have so mingled them with strange words and phrases that the people are never the wiser nor y^e better. And if any in reverence and humility seek to understand them, and show and desire them to be acquainted with them, they shall be so terrified and discouraged, that they are not able to make any profit by them to themselves, or receive any comfort from them. These are like to those covetous wretches y^t withhold corn from y^e people in time of famine, whom God and the people may justly curse.

Secondly, this reproveth those that are ignorant, [Use 2] willfully ignorant, and will not know nor learn the examples y^t God hath set down in his word. For if they be justly condemned that will not have them known, then cannot they be excused that care as little to have thē learned. Woe then to the times & ages wherein we live. For though we may see and read, and hear and know sundry examples of God's fearful judgments, both in the word & out of the word, yet for the most part we want care and conscience to make profit and benefit by them. The judgments of God are before our eyes, yet they are for the most part but nine days wonder, nay rather nine hours wonder, for they are soon forgotten and out of mind. We turn them to another end then that for which God sent them among us. We are ready to bless our selves in our sins, because the like falleth not upon us, and to censure others to be grievous sinners. Whosoever therefore do not make use and benefit by the judgments of God, shall they escape? No verily, they shall bear their condemnation: for it cannot stand with the honor of God to suffer them to abuse his mercy, & to contemn his justice. For as it standeth not with the honor of a state to suffer any person to race and deface the monuments of their justice that they have set up, and therefore he w^c doth it shall be severely punished; so certainly God will maintain his own honor, and get him glory in the confusion and destruction of all those y^t make no use of his judgments, his hand shall find them out, and come suddenly as a whirlwind upon their heads.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it is our duty to learn by his several judgments what he would have us to do, forasmuch as he sendeth them home to our doors, nay to our hearts and consciences for instruction sake. Every judgment is a real sermon of repentance. As it is a sin for a man to go to a sermon & profit nothing, neither in knowledge, nor in faith, nor in obedience, to be neither confirmed in the truth, nor preserved from error, nor raised up with comfort: so is it a grievous sin for any in his corruption to behold the hand of God striking & punishing, and securely to pass by it, & not learn some good instruction from it. Every judgment of God must be to us as a schoolmaster to teach us somewhat, and we should be as scholars ready to learn by that lesson. But what should a man learn by judgments will some say? I answer, that by every judgment we must learn this point, that they are as a sermon preaching to us against that sin for which that man was punished & smitten which lieth under the judgment. All parents must learn what befell to old *Eli* for winking at the faults of his children and sparing of thē, or else certainly they shall answer for it, he brake his neck and died, for he fell from off the seat backward on which he sate, 1 Sa. 4, 18. See the judgment which befell to him y^t gathered sticks on the Sabbath day, ch. 15, 35 to teach us to beware of the contempt of it. Mark what be fell to *Jeroboam*, he lost the use of his hand for a time which he stretched out to offer violence to the prophet of the Lord: we must therefore take heed of this, that we lift not up our hands against his servants. To be short, let us set before us the examples of *Cain*

that hated his brother, of *Cham* that mocked his father, of *Ananias & Sapphira* that dissembled with God, of *Judas* that betrayed his master, of *Eutychus* that slept at the Sermon of *Paul*: by these and such like we must be admonished to avoid maliciousness, mocking, hypocrisy, covetousness, and drowsy affections when we come to hear. We must learn good out of the evils which befell all these: *Cain* and *Cham* were both accursed: *Ananias* and *Sapphira* were stricken with sodain death, *Judas* hanged himself, and *Eutychus* was taken up for dead. If from these examples we do not learn some instruction, doubtless it shall turn to our greater condemnation. Thus much of their first murmuring.

[Ver. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. The second murmuring followeth, which is the second part of y^e chap. handled to the end thereof: wherein observe 3 things. First the people's blasphemy against God, lusting after flesh and loathing Manna. Secondly, the communication between *Moses* & God touching their murmuring. Thirdly, the issue and event of all, containing the execution of God's will after the communication was ended. The murmuring is amplified by y^t occasion, by the manner by the substance and effect thereof, and lastly by the greatness of their sin and offense: all which are set down at large, both that the justice of God in punishing of them might be cleared, and his gracious goodness in sparing and pardoning of them might be manifested.

The occasion of this sin which is the first circumstance, arose from the multitude of the Egyptians that came out of Egypt, and joined themselves to the people of God. Now albeit they had left Egypt when they saw y^e plagues that fell upon it, yet they savored still of the Egyptian manners, and longed after their Egyptian diet, they lust after flesh, and gave great offense to the people of God, they laid a stumbling block before them & caused many of them to fall, y^t they never rose up again.

Their sin is expressed in these words, *Who shall give us flesh to eat?* Then they remembered their former life in Egypt, when they did fill their bellies with store of fish, and did eat Cucumbers and Melons, Leeks, Onions and garlic, which they preferred before the most heavenly meat and Manna bestowed upon them in great plenty. Nay, they show themselves to be so bewitched with these Egyptian tricks, and besotted with the desire of their former food, that *their souls even pined away* and consumed every day, as if they had been utterly famished: so that they cried out, *We can see nothing but Manna*. In this their sin, that we may see it in his true colors, & judge of it accordingly, observe these particulars. First, a manifest contempt of God's ordinance, for they do point it out as it were with the finger, and say there is nothing at all besides this Manna before our eyes. Secondly, they must have their eyes satisfied as well as their bellies filled. It could not content them to have their necessity supplied, they must also have their sight pleased: such was their wantonness, intemperance, unthankfulness, and loathing of that meat wherewith God did diet them. Thirdly, here is a notable tempting of God, as Psal. 78.18. they tempted God in their harts, in requiring meat for their lusts: they would try his power what he could do; he must wait upon them, and do whatsoever it pleased them to enjoin and appoint unto him. Fourthly, blasphemy against God and open contempt of him, setting him at naught, *They spake against God, they said, Can God furnish a table in the Wildernes?* For could they more blaspheme God, or fly in his face with

opprobrious speeches, then to charge and accuse him of pining away his people and starving of them? Fifthly, a vilifying & contemning of their deliverance out of Egypt: they had forgotten the bondage of their persons, the cruelty of *Pharaoh*, the beating of their officers, & the destruction of their children: they renew their old complaint w^c they uttered more evidently, Exod. 16, 3. *O that we had died by the hand of the Lord in th^e Land of Egypt, when we sate by the fleshpots, when we did eat bread our bellies full.* As if they should say, we care not for our departure and deliverance out of Egypt, we think not our selves any way beholding to God for it: for then it was better with us then at this present. Sixthly, they loath their present estate of present blessings, though they had store of Manna, and had not experience of any want, yet they must have their dainty and delicate food, like tumultuous and rebellious subjects that always are weary of the present state. Seventhly, they show their intemperance and concupiscence, lusting after the worse, whē they had the better, of which the Apostle saith, *We should not lust after evil things, as they lusted.* For this cause even to lay open the greatness of their sin, doth *Moses* sundry ways describe this Manna, by the similitude of it, it was like *Coriander seed*; by the color of it, as *Belium*, that is, like the gum of that tree. For it is a tree of the bigness of an Olive, whereof *Arabia* hath great plenty, which yieldeth a certain gum sweet to smell, but bitter in taste. It is farther also described by the sundry uses of it, by the taste of it, and that it came to them without any labor or pain-taking, except in the gathering only, for God did send it down with y^e dew every night, as we read at large. Exod. 16.

Out of this division thus sorted into his parts, arise sundry instructions, part whereof I will only point out. And first behold & wonder, and be astonished, how quickly they sin again. They had been chastened immediately before, the fire entering upon the hindermost of their tents, was scarce quenched, the footsteps of that fearful burning might yet be traced out, and the smoke thereof was fresh in their eyes, yet they fall to lusting and murmuring again. Observe therefore and mark it well, that the entertainment of sin is dangerous. It is not satisfied with the first committing, it goeth and groweth on apace, the practice of one maketh way for another, and openeth the gates wide to all wickedness, Whē sin is suffered to take root, it buddeth by and by, and beareth fruit which is more bitter then gall. And no marvel: for God leaveth such [Reason 1] to themselves, y^t they commit sin with greediness. Such is his justice, that he will withdraw from them, when once they forsake him, all means that should do thē good, y^t they abuse them no longer, and he will punish sin with sin, the first with a second and the second with falling into a third. Sin is like the infant that is in the mothers womb, where it groweth by little and little unto the birth, and never stayeth till it come to perfection. This must [Use 1] teach us, that there is no dalying with sin, it is not barren, but very fruitful. Many think they may stretch their conscience a little, and make bold with God and his law for once, but they deceive themselves, for they sow that seed w^c in short time will spring up and grow a monster. For as the sluggard saith, yet a little more sleep: so the sinner saith, yet a little more sin. He is like the covetous man y^t saith evermore Bring, bring: and as he thinketh he never increaseth his substance enough, so the sinner supposeth he never increaseth his sin enough. This will bite as a serpent in the end, though it delighteth in the beginning. Again, it teacheth us to acknowledge God's great mercy

toward his children, in staying them back that they go not forward being once entered into the practice of it. When *Paul* would have entered in among the furious people, it might have cost his life, if the disciples had let him alone, howbeit they suffered him not, Act. 19.30. So if God should suffer us to run on, it might cost us our lives, and cause us to be condemned with the world. When we open a port and passage for sin, we are as a man that is falling or rolling down a very high mountain, how can he escape death, except he be stayed by a very strong hand? So is it with us, if once we make a breach into our conscience, it is impossible to stop it, if God himself do not set to his hand. If he take the matter in hand, and determine to show mercy upon the poor perishing soul that beginneth to suffer shipwreck, though we had one foot in hell, he can bring us back again. And how should not that soul so delivered, and seeing the snare of death and hell broken, and having experience of the power and mercy of God in raising him to life, but in a sweet feeling of them cry out, *Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given me as a prey unto their teeth*, Psal. 124.6. and again, *My help is in the Name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth*, ver. 8. This mercy is the greater, both because it is rare: for not one among an hundred maketh up the breach, that sin hath made: and because it is wholly gracious and freely bestowed, the sinner deserving to be forsaken utterly who hath fearfully forsaken God. God hath fast hold upon all that are his from their election, and therefore he will never withdraw his hand from them, nor suffer them to be drowned. Lastly, it must be our care to stop the beginnings of sin, Josh. 24.14.15. and then we shall be sure it will never come to perfection.

Again, these murmuring Egyptians, seeing the mighty works and miracles of God in Egypt, would needs become proselites, they join themselves to the people of God, and seem so forward that they forsake their idolatry, their country, and kindred, their own people, and their fathers house: nevertheless they starte back as a deceitfull bow, and they revolt back to their old manners, as dogs to their vomit, and as swine to their former mire & filthiness. Whereby we learn, that many are in the profession of the faith, which are not indeed faithful, neither true members of the Church, as we see in *Ishmael*. Gen. 21, 9. and *Cain*, chap. 4, 3. there are many temporizers that believe for a season, Luk. 8, 13. Others are offended, and fall away, John 6, 66. Such profess that they know GOD, but they deny him in their works, and become abominable and disobedient, Tit. 1, ver. 16. 1 John 2, verse. 19. And no marvel: for many love the praise of the world more then the praise of God, and never had found rooting▪ and therefore though they go far in y^e right way▪ yet they return back, and are never the nearer, nay, they are set farther off then ever they were. The Church had always such, all are not the true seed of *Abraham*, that are of *Abraham*: neither the Israel of God that came of *Israel*. Good fish and bad fish are taken in the net, Math. 13, and good wheat and [Use 1] chaff are mingled together. This teacheth us good uses. First, that it is not enough to salvation, or sufficient to entitle us to God's kingdom, to make an outward profession. The devil himself may this way go as far as the best, for Satan can transform himself into an Angel of light, 2 Cor. 11, 14. & a wolf may put on a sheep's skin, Math. 7, 15. Yea, a Parot and an Ape can imitate: and therefore trust not too much to the outward appearance and profession, if thou go no farther, neither account it sufficient that thou art baptized, and made partaker of the Word and Sacraments, and of the prayers of the church:

this is no better then to trust in lying words which shall not profit nor prosper, Ier. 7, 4. Secondly, we must join to our profession, sanctification and holiness of life, Ier. 7, 5. Such as content themselves with outward shows, are like the tree that hath leaves without fruit, & are rank hypocrites, like weeds that grow among good herbs. God hath chosen and redeemed us that we should be holy, Eph. 1, 4. Luke 68, 75. The condition of such is no better then of the heathen and infidels, Math. 5, 20. Nay it is not so good. Lastly, let us hereby try and prove whether we be in the faith or not, 2 Cor. 13, 5. Many live in the Church that never examine themselves whether they be of the Church, nor consider that they may deceive themselves & many others, forasmuch as an hypocrite and a reprobate may go far in Christian religion. Many have in them the first beginnings of Christian religion, as it were the foundation of a building, and there they stand at a stay: but we must build forward, until the spiritual building be perfected. It is not enough to run, except we obtain the prize. He that doth persevere to the end, shall be saved: and he that is faithful to the death, shall receive the crown of life. Moreover see here, how the Israelites are led by the example of the Egyptians, to murmur with them, and therefore one evil person entiseth, corrupteth, and infecteth another, as *Eve* did *Adam*, and the serpent did *Eve*: Prov. 13, 20. Psal. 106, 35, 36, 39. For sin is as leaven; 1 Cor. 5, 6. and as a contagious disease.

Woe therefore to the world because of offenses; [Use 1] Mat. 18, 6.8. and they are pronounced to be accursed that lay a stumbling block before the blind, to make them to fall, Deut. 27. Again, we must have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; neither be companions with them, Eph. 5, 7, 11. 1 Cor. 5, 11. We must come out from among them, and separate our selves from them, & touch no unclean thing, 2 Cor. 6, 17. and then will God receive us as his children, & be a Father to us. Moreover, all obstinate persons that give offense, should be banished out of the Church, lest as scabbed sheep they infect the rest of the flock. The lepers were not suffered to dwell among men, but turned out of the City, and dwelt apart by themselves. And wherefore was this? to avoid the infection of the body. How much more then ought such as have a spiritual leprosy upon them, be kept from the company of others, lest they bring first infection, and after destruction upon soul & body? Furthermore, it excuseth not to say, I have learned it of others, they were the authors and beginners of the sin. What did it avail the Israelites to fall by the example and allurement of the Egyptians, or by their counsel and persuasion? For it was their own lust that carried them away headlong. God punisheth all such as commit evil, or any way consent unto it, Rom. 1, 32. So God in the beginning punished the devil, the man, & the woman, because all sinned, albeit one by the persuasion of another. Lastly, it condemneth those that glory in their strength, that nothing can make them worse, no time, no place, no persons, no persuasions, no company. They say, no man shall be able to pervert them, or seduce them, or infect them. Are these men better then *Adam* when he was in the garden? if his place could not protect him, nor his innocence keep him, they may justly fear that other places may infect them much rather. *Solomon* was no fool, nay he was endued with great wisdom, and beloved of his God, yet being too familiar with Idolaters, he was overtaken with Idolatry, and became a great Idolater, and his outlandish women caused him to sin. Or are they better then *Peter*, who made a most worthy confession of Christ? yet being among a crew of profane

persons, he was brought to deny his Master, nay in a manner his own saluatiō. Be not therefore deceived, rather fear thine own weakness then boast of thy strength.

[Ver. 5, 6. *We remember the fish that we did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers, &c. But now our soul is dried away, &c.* In these words we see how carnal men conceive carnal things. They prefer their trash before Manna, as if corn being found out, men should love acorns better then corn. The doctrine from hence is this, that the transitory things of this world, are preferred by carnal minded men before heavenly things. The Jews preferred their private commodities before the building of the Temple, Hag. 1, 2. So did *Esau*, Hebr. 12, 16, 17. who is therefore branded of the holy ghost to be a profane person. So did the *Gadarenes* Matth. 8, 34. We have many examples of this nature, *Judas, Demas*, the yongman in the gofpell that came to Christ, howbeit he went away sorrowful from him, for if he might not keep his possession, he would none of Religion. And the Reasons are plain.

[Reason 1] For they that are carnal are carnally minded, they are nothing else but a lump of flesh, from whence nothing can proceed, but that which is corrupt, Io. 3, 6. Secondly, they have no taste at all of spiritual things, as of grace, of heaven, of salvation, of eternal life. No marvel therefore if these be vile and naught worth in their eyes, and the other preferred before them, because where the treasure is▪ there will the heart be also, Mat. 6, 21. Col. 3, 2.

The uses follow. First, see the dangerous estate [Use 1] of carnal men, and how hard it is for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, Mat. 19, 23. *It is easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a Needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.* verse 24. Rich men are thought of the world to be the happiest men in the world: howbeit they stand in a slippery place, and their estate dangerous, if they watch not narrowly over themselves. This appeareth in the example of the rich glutton, Luke 16, 19. he could find no time to search the Law and the Prophets, he was altogether drowned and drunken in his delights, he was corrupted and carried away with pomp and vanity; finally, he forgot and contemned the poor. So was it with him that would pull down his barns and build new, and thought of nothing but of the earth: he said to himself, applauding his own happiness, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry*, Luke 12, 19. This was the cause that moved *Agur* to desire of God not to give him riches, least he be full & deny the Lord, and say, *Who is the Lord?* Pro. 30, 8.9. Such as set their hearts upon the vanities of the world, do commonly neglect heavenly things, and by little and little wax cold in them. Riches are compared to thorns; if then our hearts be not well fenced & counterguarded, we shall be hurt by them. Therefore doeth Christ denounce a woe against all carnal richmen, because they have received their consolation already, Luke 6, 24. They must look for no further reward.

Secondly, we must not be immoderate in [Use 2] seeking after them, neither be idolaters in trusting in them. What was it that destroyed the Sodomites? was it not abundance of all things? was it not excess and superfluity? Eze. 16.49. Let us be contented with our estate whatsoever it be: for a little with a quiet conscience and a true heart to God, is better then a fat stalled Ox. Let us pray for convenient food, *and use this world as though we used it not, for the fashion thereof fadeth away*, 1 John. 2, 17. Let our conversation be in heaven, Phil. 3, 19. Let not

our hearts be bewitched and besotted with these things, that we may depart hence in peace when God shall call us, and so be the Lord's in life and death. It is no profit to win the whole world with the loss of our own souls, Mat. 16.26.

Lastly, let it be our study to prefer as best [Use 3] of all, the best things. They are no better than fools that would prefer rotten wood that shineth in the night, before the finest and purest gold of Ophyr. And who doth not willingly yield and confess the folly of these Egyptians, that made more reckoning of their gross feeding and fogging in of garlic, and Onions, and Cucumbers, and such like grazing^a than of that excellent & precious Manna which came from heaven? We are ready to sit in judgment upon these, and to condemn them: but how many are there of us that are like unto them? I dare boldly affirm and avouch, that the greatest sort of men are such Egyptians, and do daily practice such Egyptian tricks: making more account of this life thē of the life to come; of man more than of God, of y^e earth more than of heaven. Let not therefore temporal things dazzle our eyes, to make us senseless as blocks. If rotten things shine, it is but in the dark, and in the night; and if these transitory riches do besot any, it is such as are blind and cannot see the glory and beauty of the world to come: w^c if we could behold with the inward eyes of a sanctified mind, it would wholly possess and carry us into a love & admiration of it. But such as are nothing but a lump of flesh, can savor nothing but of the flesh. All their cares and cogitations are spent about the world: their hands and harts are full of it, y^t they leave no room for better things. Tel these men never so much of religion, of the word of God, & the fear of his name, you sing a song to a deaf man: by and by they reply, *Who will show us any good?* that is, any profit: they care for nothing else but for the flesh-pots. It is most strange to consider that the life of man, w^c should be spent chiefly to provide for the soul which is immortal, yet this for the most part is the least of our thoughts. We are altogether plodding about getting of riches, and providing for the body and the belly, which are framed of the earth and dust. We dwell in houses of clay, & our eyes do everywhere behold the uncertainty and vnstability of them, yet we cheefely prize and pamper this vassal and slave of death, and forget utterly, or remember at leisure the soul, and cast all our hopes on the peace which we trust to make at the parting, which is an high presumption, & no better than a laughing of God to scorn. And when we have done all, and gotten store of goods, what comfort shall they minister at the last day? for all this is but with the Egyptians to strive for onyons and garlike, it is no better. And when the body must turn to the earth, & we must lay down this Tabernacle, whose foundation is in the dust, what good will our onyons and garlike do us? Will not a little Manna at that day, stored up, stand us in more stead, and bring greater comfort to the soul, than to sit by these flesh pots of Egypt? Alas my brethren, all y^e wealth of this world, if we could heap it up together, is no better than onyons and garlike in comparison of spiritual things. Why then should we exalt the body so high, which must lie so low, and return to dust and ashes, and in the mean season neglect the soul, which shall live (when the body is dead and rotten) either in everlasting life, or in everlasting fire? Such notwithstanding is our madness, that all the stir which here we make, is for onyons and garlike. We labor for nothing but for the belly & meats, and yet *God shall destroy both it and them*. The rich man is

said to fare deliciously every day, howbeit he made ill provision for his soul, for it was carried to hell and torments.

Ver. 7, 7, 9. To enlarge and set forth the sin of these profane persons, Moses describeth what this Manna was. It was not a natural Meteore usual & common in those quarters, as many have imagined. For this fell among them every part of the year, winter & summer and that alike. It served to satisfy many thousands. It fell not at all upon y^e Sabbath day: howbeit on the sixth day fell twice so much as there did ordinarily other days. If it were kept until the next morning, it putrefied, but reserved on the sixth day, it rotted not, but served them for their use upon the seventh day. Nothing could hinder the coming or falling of it, nor frost nor rain, nor heat, nor cold, but this blessing of God always accompanied them whither soever they went. When they were entered into the possession of the Land of promise, then it ceased, but not before. Lastly, Aaron was commanded to keep a pot full of it for a memorial of this miraculous work of God, and it rotted not nor stanke. It is called the bread of Angels, Psal. 78, 25. not that the Angels do eat any corporal or material food, being themselves spirits, but because of the excellency of it, or because the Angels were God's instruments in preparing of it. It was food not only for the body, but for the soul: it was both a visible Manna and an invisible, both open and hidden, both earthly and heavenly. This was a type and figure of Christ the true bread that came down from heaven. 1 Cor. 10, 3. John 6, ver. 33, 35. It was a type of the word which is the food of our souls. Hebrews 5, verses 13, 14. as also of the sacraments by which we are nourished 1 Corinth. chapter 10, v. 3. These three are right Angels food, dainty and delicious fare, sweeter then wafers made of honey, or of the best confection that the Apothecary can afford. This teacheth us, that God hath provided a very large and liberal diet, yea most excellent & dainty fare to nourish his children. The heavenly blessings of God contained in his word, the exercises of our religion, the holy sacraments, especially the Lord Jesus himself y^e bread of life, whom whosoever eateth hath eternal life abiding in him, are costly, plentiful, and heavenly feasts, the means of spiritual nourishment and increase to his servants, which God hath ordained for his sons and daughters. The Prophet speaking of the souls provision, which God our good Shepherd maketh for the sheep of his pasture, saith, *Thou preparest a Table before me, &c: my cup runneth over.* Thus is wisdom the Son of God brought in by Solomon, to have killed her beasts, to have mingled her wine, and to have furnished her Table, Prov. 9, verse 2. *Come eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled,* verse 5. And Math. 22, verse 4. the Kings servants call the guests, and tell them, he hath prepared his dinner, his oxen and his fatlings are killed, and all things are ready. So the Prophet speaketh, Isaiah 25, 6. and Christ himself, Luke 14, verse 16. and Psalm. 36, 19. So then, the souls food & fare is notable good cheer the best that ever was tasted.

For these heavenly blessings and this sustenance [Reason 1] for the soul, doth as fully sustain and satisfy, nourish and maintain the state and strength of the soul, as any outward provision doth or can do the body, John 6, 54, 55, 56. *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed,* that is, they have thē same nature to our souls, which meat and drink have to our bodies.

Secondly, in these and by these is provision [Reason 2] to satisfy all sorts: in the word is sincere milk for children and strong meat for men of riper age, Hebrews, chapter 5. Christ is hidden Manna which all did gather, and were fed and nourished by it: it feedeth small and great.

Thirdly, the provision of God is far better then all earthly provision. This food is [Reason 3] perpetual, the word of the Lord endureth forever, 1 Pet. 1.23. In eating of this food there is no danger of surfeit and excess. This is durable meat, it liveth forever, and maketh us live forever: who so eateth of it and digesteth it, shall never perish for hunger, and who so drinketh of this, shall never thirst again. It is therefore God's ordinance, that his children and household servants should be largely and liberally provided for, to have everyone of them a full meal.

The uses. From hence it followeth, that the soul hath always very great need of [Use 1] food and sustenance as well as the body, and will perish for hunger and die for thirst, even eternally, through want of spiritual food, as <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> well as the body for want of temporal food. The soul hath her diet, as well as the body, & the strength of it is maintained by the bread of life, as well as the state of the body by the bread of wheat. How many are there among us that consider not these things, or at least care not for them! Many there are that have fat and lusty bodies, that have plenty of outward things, who notwithstanding have poor, lean, and pining souls, even ready to starve, and to be famished, and to give up the ghost. For as the wise Solomon teacheth, Prov. 29, 18. *Where there is no vision, the people perish.* And the Prophet threateneth a greater famine of the word, and more dangerous, then the famine of bread, or the thirst for water, Amos 8, 11. If then we be content to take pains and to travail far for this earthly food, as we see in *Jacob*, when he and his family wanted corn: how much more ought we to labor for the bread that endureth to everlasting life?

[Use 2] Secondly, we should come to the house of God with hungry and thirsty souls. We must resort to the Word and Sacraments, and to all the holy ordinances of God, as an hungry person doth to a good feast, Isaiah 55, 1. John. 7, 37. Revel. 22, 17. 1 Pet. 2, 2. Let it be with us as with *David*, he longed greatly, and said, *Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!* Where there is no desire of grace, there is no grace. The faithful have always testified their desire, Ps. 42, 1. The Prophet felt the sweetness of the word and sacraments, & testifieth often what a goodly taste he found in him, as Psal. 119, 103, & 19, 10. *How sweet are thy words unto my taste, yea sweeter then honey unto my mouth!* He that is sick, findeth no taste in anything, the purest honey is bitter unto him: but he that hath a good taste and is in health of body, judgeth and findeth it otherwise. So if our soul be in health, it findeth the word to be sweeter then the honey and the honey comb, and more to be desired then gold, yea then much fine gold. Have we then no taste in the word? doth it not relish with us? then most certain it is we are soul-sick, we are sick at the heart: it is high time to run & poste with all speed to the Physician Christ Jesus, to restore this taste to us which we have lost, or to bestow it vpon us if we never enjoyed it. How irksome is it for a man to have no taste in his meat and drink! *Elihu* saith, *The ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth*

meat. But we should think it a thousand times more troublesome, to have no taste of the good word of God, as if it were no meat for us. The Manna described in this place, which figured out the word, is compared for the taste & sweetness, to *wafers made with honey*, Exod. 16, 31. How then shall we think our selves well, and whole, & in good health, when we have no more taste in it then is in the white of an egg?

[Use 3] Thirdly, here is comfort to all those that are poor Christians, which have little store at home, hard fare, bare bread, small drink, and a thin diet all y^e year. Let us cheer up our harts and refresh our spirits with this consideratiō, that albeit we have a scanty meal at home, yet there is plentiful provision in God's house. We have much matter of great rejoicing, that although there be great difference in fare and furniture between the rich man's table & the poor man's, yet the privileges of God's house are common to them both, the poor hath as good interest in them as the rich, yea sometimes a better portion, if he make greater use of them, and take more benefit by them. The poor are admitted to God's table, albeit they be not to the table of the rich, & have access unto his house and to his presence, where is fullness of joy and pleasure for evermore, and this their joy shall no man take from thē. Nay such as have riches and plenty at all times of all things, which have their tables furnished at home with variety of dainty dishes, & are served in with sundry courses of most choice meats, even they must make account y^t their best fare is in the Church of God, & prefer it far before the other: otherwise they judge not aright between soul & body, between meat and meat, between house and house.

Fourthly, this serveth to reprove papists, Ministers, & people. For first it meeteth with [Use 4] the popish diet, that bar the people from the cup of the Lord, thereby keeping back a part of the spiritual banquet that Christ hath prepared for them, when he spake to the communicants, *Drink ye all of this*. But these Church-robbers allow not to the people any consecrated wine, withdrawing from them a part of their allowance. This sin is no less then sacrilege. Christ saith, *This is my blood which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins*. And who are those many that are there spokē off? Doubtless all that should afterward believe in his Name. From hence then we reason thus, If the blood of Christ be shed for the people, then the cup of the Lord must be communicated unto them: but the former is true; therefore the latter. For as we reason touching baptism of infants, that if the kingdom of God belong unto them, much more the outward sign may be administered unto them: so we say touching the other, that if the blood of Christ and remission of sins belong to the people of God, much more doth the cup which is a seal thereof. Again, they deal no better with thē for the word it self. They have corrupted and poisoned their food with apochryphall additions, with human traditions, with keeping it in a strange toong, as it were under lock and key, and so starve them whom they should nourish and strengthen. And how can they deal better with the people in the word and sacraments, who have set up another Christ, a false and counterfeit Christ? they destroy his natures, & his offices, they deny him to be the only King, the only Teacher, the only Priest of his Church; they make other Mediators and Redeemers, they scoff at our righteousness standing in y^e imputation of his righteousness. So then the diet that the Romanists allow unto men is a poor thin diet, it is not able to maintain life in the body: for whereas the food wherewith the Lord would have us fed, standeth in three

things, in believing in Christ, in receiving the word, and in partaking of the Sacraments, they feed the Church with chaff and husks, & no better then saw-dust; for the word they have corrupted, the sacraments they have mangled, and Christ Jesus himself they have utterly denied. Secondly, it reproveth such Ministers as feed their sheep in short pastures, and allow unto them a more sparing diet, thē the great Shepherd of the sheep hath appointed unto them. They give them no more food (if so much) then serveth to keep the soul in life, and therefore the sheep that depend upon their feeding and allowance are lean and starveling sheep, such as every bush and brier is able to entangle, and every ditch is able to drown. Some feed them with bread that is dry and mouldy, unfit for nourishment. Some think it enough to preach once a month, or once a quarter. It were rather to be wished that they would allow thē two meals a day, that the sheep of Christ may be fat and strong, according to the bodily diet which our selves do take. Let us not therefore feed our selves to the full, and starve the sheep for which Christ Jesus died: and when God hath dealt liberally with them, let us not pinch thē and pine them away, but as good Stewards of the house, bring forth store, both old & new. We ought to preach the word *in season & out of season*, and not deal as greedy and covetous masters do with their servants, that pinch thē of their meat: and seeing we reap plentifully of the people, let us not deal sparingly with them. Lastly, it reproveth the people themselves, that when God would have them well fed in their souls, care not how little food they receive themselves. The Sabbath is the Lord's feast day. Why should we refuse to take two meals on this day, when it is provided for us? If we took our food but once in the day, we should starve our bodies, oh, take heed we do not so to our souls! And let us beware we do not make more reckoning of feasting and filling of the body, then of feeding the soul. Alas, how many are there, that are content to buy their pleasures and pastimes with the loss of the word of God! and yet are never a whit touched with it. Are not these like *Esau*? are not these I say, as profane as *Esau*?

[Use 5] Lastly, it behooveth us to redeem the time that is to come, and to be more careful of the souls health, diet, strength, and nourishment, then of the bodies; according to the counsel of Christ, *Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto ever lasting life,&c.* Seeing then we have such choice and variety of dainty food, sweet meats, banqueting dishes, and all other good things offered unto us, and set before us in God's house and at his table let no other feasting, pleasure, banquet, meeting, or voluptuous living▪ keep us from his house, or make us to come unreverantly or unworthily unto the same. Many do so fill, nay glut and gorge themselves with eating and drinking, that they are more fit to sleep, then either to hear or to pray. Let us be more careful to fill our souls *with marrow & fatness*, then to fulfill the desires of the flesh and to surfeit on our carnal pelights.

[Ver. 11, 14, 15. *Then Moses heard the people weep, &c.*] Thus much of the murmuring: now we come to the communication, which is double. First, the complaint of *Moses*, & the answer of God: secondly, the exception of *Moses* replying against God's answer, as if his word had not been sufficient, and then another answer of God satisfying him. In the first part of the first answer set down in these verses, we have *Moses* complaining of two things both because God had not dealt well & graciously with him, to lay so great a burden upon him, to take the charge of so great a people, without helpers and assisters, which made him even wish for

death; and because he was not able to feed them and to satisfy their requests touching the flesh that they lusted after, saying, *Give us flesh that we may eat.*

It is remembered in Exodus, ch. 16, 12, 13. that they murmured against *Moses*, and lusted after flesh, and had quail sent them: whereupon the question may be asked, whether that history be the same that is mentioned in this place, and whether both were sent at one and the same time? I answer, the histories are diverse, both in regard of the circumstances of time and place. These were given to satisfy them a whole month, the other but one time. These fell a days journey without the host on each side, the other only covered the campe: they lusting after these are sharply punished, the other are not. We may observe out of the words of *Moses*, that many are the failings of the best servants of God, for in many things we sin all.

Again, *Moses* doth rashly expostulate with God, and unadvisedly wish for death. So did *Job*, chap. 3, 3. and *Elijah*, 1 Kings 19, 4. and *Jeremiah*, chap. 15, 10. and 20, 14, and *Jonah*, ch. 4, 30, So it is with many, though they have not yet learned what it is to live, neither are any way prepared for death, yet through impatience under the cross, wish for death. But this is our weakness, rather to wish not to be, then to be in any misery and adversity. Rather it behooveth us to tarry the Lord's leisure & to hope in him, for he shall bring it to pass, Psal. 37.

But to let this pass, observe the title that *Moses* giveth to Magistracy, he calleth it *The carrying of the people in his bosom as a nursing father beareth the sucking child.*

This was the charge that lay heavy upon his shoulders. From hence we learn, that Magistracy is a great charge and burden, and Magistrates themselves are ordained for y^e peace, prosperity, preservation, and good of the people. This is taught in many places, Prov. 11, 14, and 29, 2. The Prophet *Isaiah*, ch. 3, 4, 5, 6. and the Apostle *Paul* willeth us to pray for Princes and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a peaceable and quiet life, with all godliness & honesty, 1 Tim. 2, 1, 2.

This truth is evident, because Princes were [Reason 1] appointed for the people, and not the people for Princes. As Christ saith, *The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath:* so they were instituted for the people's good, and not the people for their good, or themselves to serve for their own good. This is the end of their calling, and at this they ought to aim as at a mark. Secondly, they are as breath is to the body. While the breath continueth in the body, so long the life continueth, but if the breath be stopped or to depart, the body necessarily must perish. Now as breath is to the natural body, so are the Magistrates to the politic body: while he remaineth, the Commonwealth is in peace and prosperity, in quiet and safety; if he be removed and taken away, the Commonwealth is in danger to go to ruin and destruction, *The people shall be oppressed everyone by another, and everyone by his neighbor, the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honorable.* And the Prophet calleth *Josiah* y^e breath of their nostrils. Thirdly, the titles given unto them do fully teach thus much. They are as fathers, that must lay up for their children, not the children for their fathers. They are the fathers of the Country, of the Commonwealth, of their

Subjects. Hence it is, that the Lord comprehendeth all superiors under the name of fathers in the law, Exo. 20, 12. 2 Kin. 5, 12. The Prophet prophesieth, that Kings should be nursing fathers, & Queens be nursing mothers to the Church in times of the Gospel, Isaiah 49, 23. The Nurse is appointed for the good of the sucking child, to keep it in health and strength, as Moses speaketh in this place. Is not this a great charge to look to the being and well being of a child? Again, they are called Shepherds. This also is a great charge to watch day and night for the good of the flock, that the sheep do not wander and go astray, and that the wolf come not among them to make havoc of them. So also are Princes shepherds, Es. 44, 28. Numb. 27, 17. Lastly, they are as Shields to protect and defend them from many blows y^t otherwise are like to light upon thē, as Hos. 4, 18. They may be called the covering of our eyes, as the husband is said to be to the wife, Gen. 20, 16, to keep us from many dangers that threaten us. Fourthly, they are God's Lieutenants and Deputies, and therefore they have his own name commmunicated unto them, Psal. 82.6. They sit in his place to do justice and judgment, and to him they must give an account. Without them the subjects are subject to all manner of miseries, as we see in the end of the Judges, *Every man did that which seemed good in his own eyes, when there was no King in Israel.*

This teacheth us what we are to judge and [Use 1] esteem of the popish religiō, grounded merely upon policy to maintain themselves, howbeit it cannot stand with the policy of any oter state to come under that yoke, neither with the safety of Princes to stoop down their necks to that antichristian government For they are the greatest enemies that a State or Commonwealth can have, worse then the Anabaptists themselves, and holding more dangerous opinions: what said I, hold opinions? nay execute pestilent practices against Princes, & seek the utter subversion of states and kingdoms, if they will not worship the beast, and bear his mark in their forehead. They do not only like *Corah* resist y^e government of Magistrates, but by their treasonable practices and devilish devises labor to suppress and supplant them, to take away their lives and crowns from them, and to discharge their subjects of allegiance unto them. Are not they enemies that pull away the foundation of an house? Yes doubtless, for then the whole building must of necessity fall down. For Magistrates are as the head and the heart are to the natural body; if they be whole and sound, all the other members are in better safety; and consequently if they perish, the whole body must perish also, Isaiah 9, 14, 15.

Secondly, we must be truly thankful to God, seeing they are such a blessing, and undergo [Use 2] so great a charge for us. For notwithstanding the rage & fury, the fetches & subtleties of all our enemies, enemies as well to our temporal state, as to our spiritual standing, the King of Kings hath preserved our King and kingdom in peace & safety, he hath kept head and heart, the breath & being in the body, we have a Father to provide for us, we have a Nurse to bear us, we have a Shepherd to feed us, we have a Shield to protect us, whiles our adversaries gnash their teeth and gnaw their tongues for anger, & are ready to burst for envy and despite at our happiness. We are happy and blessed above many other Nations. We hear the sound of the trumpet in peace and safety, we use it as an instrument of joy & gladness, it soundeth not the alarm to the battle, we have no buckling on of armor, no crying, nor complaining, nor invasion. We sit under our vines & arbours, we walk in our

fields & gardens, and a dog lifteth not up his tongue against us. We have beat our arming swords into plowshares, & our spears, which we did shake against our enemies, into pruning hooks, we have forgotten the use, & almost the knowledge of war. This is the benefit of a good & godly Magistracy: this should provoke us to *take the cup of salvation, and to praise the Lord for his goodness to us.*

We enjoy our King, our Judges, our Magistrates, our peace, our religion, our meetings and assemblies. O how gracious is God unto us, that hath not delivered us as a prey into the hands of malicious enemies, who grin and grind their teeth, thus to see us flourish in peace, against all their devices and endeavors?

Thirdly, seeing Magistrates have so great [Use 3] a charge, and bring so necessary a blessing, it is our duty to perform our duties unto them. We must yield them subjection, fear, honor, prayer, tribute, and obedience, as the Apostle urgeth these particulars, Ro. 13, 1, 2. 6, 7. and it condemneth to the pit of hell, all such as resist them, and rise up against them. Should the son rebel against the Father, as *Absalom* did? Let him then fear the end of *Absalom*, to be hanged in the tree. Should the child strive against his Nurse that beareth him? or the sheep set themselves against the shepherd that feedeth them? Woe then to such as will discharge themselves of the duty they owe to such as have the charge over thē, and will plot against their life of whom they receive life, and goods, and peace, and safety, and all.

[Use 4] Fourthly, it is the duty of all Magistrates, and those that are in authority, to consider what they have to do; their names and titles must teach them what their office is, not to magnify themselves, not to think themselves absolute, not to set themselves against God, not to tyrannize over his people, not to maintain themselves in ease and idleness, in vanity and superfluity, not to follow after their own pleasures, but to do justice to all, without respect of person, to protect everyone from wrong, to maintain public peace and tranquility, but especially to further God's true religion. They must have public minds, and not seek their own good only or principally. It is the ruin of an estate, when public persons have private minds, regarding only to serve themselves, and to procure their own good. These are no common-wealths men, but private wealths men. The Apostles were called to be fishers of men, and Princes are called to be shepherds of men, to feed reasonable sheep; and this is their honor, if they be found faithful, that it may be said of them as it is of *David*, *He fed them according to the integrity of his heart-and guided them by the skilfulnesse of his hands*, Psal. 78.72.

[Verses 16, 18, 20. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the Elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the Elders of the people, &c.*] In these words we have the answer to *Moses* complaint. And as the complaint stood of two distinct parts, so doth the answer of the same points. Touching the greatness of the charge and burden whereof *Moses* complaineth, God commandeth him to gather together unto him seauenty men of the Elders of *Israel*, to whom he would communicate of the same spirit that *Moses* had, howbeit without any diminution of his gifts, although many suppose that the Lord did punish him for his murmuring with the lessning of his gifts: as it is true, he doth sometimes punish in that manner, sometimes by lessening, and sometimes by taking away what he had formerly bestowed, Zach. 11, 17. Mat. 25, 27. But we do not read or find that he dealt so with *Moses*, or

that he was less fit for government then he was before: rather his gifts were derived to others, as one candle lighteth another, and yet the light is not diminished. And what benefit or profit had it been to *Moses* to have these joined, if his gifts had been impaired?

In this place we have the institution and erecting of a new Court among the Jews called the *Sanhedrim*. This honorable Senate at the first founding of it, consisted indifferently of men taken out of all the Tribes, which had some of the Levites to assist them. This court was seated and kept at Jerusalem, and might handle weightier causes, & inflict more grievous then the set Courts and Tribunals of justice appointed, and assembled, and observed in the gates of every City; and to this they might appeal from those inferior Consistories. For such as were instituted thorough the advice and counsel of *Jethro*, Exod 18, 21. were not necessary to be of this number of seventy; they had the hearing and determining of the least causes, and besides they received not an extraordinary spirit, neither was it needful for that calling. This Council of the *Sanhedrim* remained after the captivity, and continued unto the days of *Herod*, who made havoc of many of them, and put most of them to death. Howbeit, some of them remained even to the desolation of the Temple and of the City by the Romans: and of this Christ speaketh, Matth. 5, 20. and 18.17. which the best interpreters understand of the 70. Elders of the great Consistory or judgment place in Jerusalem. But when King *Agrippa* was once driven out of Jerusalem by a rakelly rout of seditious cutters and cut-throats, then were the *Sanhedrim* deposed at their will, when there was none to control them; and other base pesants were set up in their room, who had no laws to restrain them, no Magistrates to punish them, no authority to bridle them. Then was the Priest-hoode made a mockerie: then was Jerusalem without a guide, as an house without a Ruler, or a ship without a Pylot. There was none to manage the state aright, but all government was turned into confusion and disorder.

The second complaint of *Moses* was touching the feeding of so great a multitude, w^c God answereth verse 18, 19. by a promise and by a threatening. He promiseth unto them store of flesh, and to fit them and fill them, not for a day, or two days, &c. but even a whole month. And he that showeth he could do this, showeth also y^t he could do more, if that had been too little: howbeit they should in the end take little delight & pleasure in their delicates after which their souls so earnestly lusted, because he threateneth that in the midst of their abundance it should come out of their nostrils, and be utterly loathed of them.

This answer of God ministereth many instructions. First, that God layeth no more upon any, then he will enable them to bear; & if they think it be too heavy, he will ease them of it. He is not like to *Pharaoh*, that willed more to be laid upon the people then they could compass, complaining that they were too idle, Exod. 5, 17, 18. Neither is he like to *Rehoboam*, that refused to make the grievous service of his father and his heavy yoke lighter, but answered the men of Israel roughly, that *he would add to their yoke; and if his father chastened them with whips, he would chastise them with Scorpions*, 1 King. 12, 11. but God is ready to take away part of the burden, and divide it among others that it might be borne equally upon all their shoulders. Secondly, he furnisheth with gifts all such as he sendeth and calleth, he employeth none in any function, but such as he furnisheth for that purpose. Thirdly, we see

that God is able to feed all his creatures, though they be never so many, yea though we see no means which way he can do it, for he is not tied unto them, but worketh freely sometimes with them, and sometimes without them. Fourthly▪ we learn that all gifts proceed from one and the same Spirit, 1 Cor. 12, 4. John 14, 16. Fifthly, we see in the lusting of these men, that God heareth the prayers of wicked men, and oftentimes granteth them, howbeit not in mercy, but in wrath and judgment, 1 Sam. 8, 5. & maketh their own prayers and desires to be their punishment, and to turn to their destruction: thereby to teach us to be careful what to ask, even such things as are agreeable to his will, not such things as we may spend upon our own lusts. But the point which I do purpose most to insist upon, is the threatening of God, y^t the flesh should do them no good, but *come out at their nostrils*, which judgment he also accomplished, verse 33. For *while the flesh was yet in their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against them, and he smote them with a very great plague*. The doctrine from hence is this, that the Lord doth punish the sons of men, when as in abundance of meat and drink they have no benefit or comfort by them. He punisheth as well in the midst of store and plenty, as he doth with want and scarcity. This he doth many ways, sometimes he withdraweth strength from the creatures, that they cannot nourish, Hag. 1, 9, 6. Sometimes he taketh away men's appetites, and giveth no strength to digest them, or to swallow them: as in this place, though they had meat in their mouths, yet he sent leanness into their souls, and brought his wrath upon the unworthy receivers thereof, Psa. 78, 30, 31. So Esa. 3, 1. & 9, 20. Deut. 28, •7. Mic. 6, 14. Isaiah 28, 7, 8.

It is as great a judgment and punishment [Reason 1] of God, to take away the blessing from his creatures, as to deprive us of the Creatures themselves. To be without meat, without drink, without raiment, without necessaries for this life, is a sore plague, and one of the greatest judgments that God inflicteth in this life. Now certainly it must needs be as great a judgment not to have benefit and comfort by them when we have them. It is all one not to have them, and not to be norished by them. Had not these Israelites been as good be without these Quails, as to have them & not be able to swallow them? Night is as comfortable to a blind man as the day, it is all one to him, and why? because the sight of the eyes is taken from him. Silence is as profitable to the deaf man as the uttering of a voice, let the speech be never so excellent, because he cannot hear. So we may say that the stones are as good for the nourishment of men as bread or flesh, when God with-draweth his blessing from them. It is as great a judgment to want the stand of bread, as bread it self.

Secondly, it is a great punishment, because [Reason 2] to eat and not to be nourished, doth not only decay life and bring an end of our days, but we sustain a more miserable death, then if we died by fire, or water, or sword, or pestilence. This is a languishing and consuming of us by little and little, and a pining of the flesh away as it were by piece-meal.

Acknowledge that it is a great punishment [Use 1] and judgment upon unlawful desires, lusts, and pleasures: they have for the most part loathing following and accompanying the same: yea, many times the after-loathing is far greater then the delight taken before. Vnlawfull pleasure lasteth not long, and the companion following it at the heels is pain, Prov. 14, 12, 13. and 20, 17. and 5, 3, 4. and 23, 31, 32. 2. Sam 13, 14, 15. The forbidden fruit

was delightful to the eye, and pleasant to the taste, but it did sting in the end as a Serpent, and did bite as a Cockatrice. *The rejoicing of the wicked is short*, Job 20, 4, 5. *Like the noise of thorns under a pot*, Eccl, 7, 8. *The pleasures of sin are but for a short season*, Heb. 11.25. Ier. 2, 19. Prov. 7.23. The guilt of sin remaineth behind after the committing of it, and bindeth him to judgment that doth commit it.

Secondly, whensoever this state befalleth [Use 2] us, know we that it is God's hand. We do not for the most part lift up our eyes to God when it cometh, but rather impute it to our own weakness and infirmity, without ascending any higher. Many have great abundance of blessings from God, yet they are not satisfied, they never think they have enough. This is a great judgment of God, this is the curse of God upon the covetous man.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it teacheth that howsoever we have plenty and abundance, yet take heed we do not flatter our selves, for we may meet with a curse not inferior to the curse of those that are in poverty and extreme necessity, which falleth out when the Lord denieth strength to the creature, or to us to receive the same. We have a common proverb among us, that misseth not much of the truth; Men say, the poor may eat when he hath meat, and the rich when he hath a stomach. Whereby we mean, that an appetite is as necessary as our meat. Hence it is that the rich which have plenty, and know not what poverty meaneth, are as much indebted unto God, & bound to be thankful unto him for their daily bread, when he giveth them strength to receive it, and addeth a further blessing unto it when it is received, as the poor man, as the poorest man of all is. For though they have abundance, yet God can curse it: if he blow on it, he can turn away the blessing, and quickly bring it to pass that they shall have no comfort by it, and therefore Christ saith, Lu. 12, 15. *A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of y^e things which he possesseth*. This serveth to admonish rich men to consider what need they have of the blessing of God upon the store & provision which they have. For as it is the curse of God upon covetous rich men, that they cannot be satisfied with riches, so is it upon those which have meat and drink, and cannot be satisfied nor have enough, nor be fed and nourished by them.

[Use 4] Lastly, it is a duty required of us, if we desire to enjoy the blessings of God as blessings, to labor to use the creatures of God in a godly and religious manner. We must partake of them not only soberly and moderately, to strengthen nature, and not to oppress it, but there is more required in the use of God's blessings. We must carry our selves religiously even in eating and drinking. Many of us confine Religion to the church, and think we have nothing to do with it but while we are there, and that it is unseasonable to meddle with it at home. But we must show our selves religious in all our works, even in taking our ordinary meats, 1 Cor. 10, 31. otherwise what do we more then brute beasts? They feed themselves full as well as we. It is our duty to give the Lord thanks for them, and so they are sanctified unto us. For this cause GOD commanded the Israelites in this place to sanctify themselves against tomorrow, and then they should eat. There are many that would be accounted faithful men, and to have more religion in them then many of their fellows, yet have they not learned so much as to give God thanks for their meats, nor to praise his name at their tables. There is no Religion, no knowledge, no faith in these persons: neither do they

consider that God may deal with them in his justice, as he did with these evil men in this place: while the *meat was yet in their mouths, and holden between their teeth, the wrath of God fell upon them*, & a grievous plague brake in among them. And this point we may raise a little higher, and reason from the less unto the greater▪ arising as it were from step to step. For, if the ordinary receiving of our corporal food ought to be done religiously, how much more is it required of us when we come to the eating of the spiritual meat, and to the drinking of the spiritual drink of our souls, I mean to the Table of the Lord, to come worthily and reverently: which is the food of our souls? And if the wrath of GOD came upon these wicked persons, while the bodily food was yet in their mouths, we have just cause to fear lest his judgments come upon us much rather while we have the bread of the Lord in our mouths, or hold the cup of the Lord in our hands: as also it fell out among the Corinthians▪ who for their unworthy and irreverent coming to this heavenly Supper were taken away, as 1 Cor. 11, 30. *And for this cause are many weak and sickly amongst you, and many sleep. And Judas that came with a wicked and profane heart to the Passover, did eat judgment unto himself, for immediately Satan entered into him*, John 13, 27. and brought him to destruction of soul and body, Math. 27, 5. Acts 1, 18.

But to return to the point we have in hand concerning our bodily food, we must be careful to eat and drink evermore as it were before the Lord, and consider that he sitteth as a guest with us, and therefore may justly make every bit to be our bane, if thus we presume to abuse his creatures to our lusts. Oh, that such as are beastly drunkards, worse thē brute beasts, would consider this, & learn this lesson, and be ashamed of the thing itself as well as of the title, that is, of the sin of drunkenness, as well as to be accounted a drunkard. But howsoever they are through custom and continuance in this sin grown impudent and shameless, and every sober-minded man may point at them as they go, or rather as they stumble in the streets, yet you shall sildom or never have any of them confess that they are drunken; and when they cannot utter a word of soberness, yet they will defend and maintain that they are sober. But some will say, How shall we know a drunkard? it is a very hard matter to say who is drunk. I answer, no harder then to a know a mad man, or to know and prove thyself to be sober. The sober man that can manifest himself to be sober by the inseparable properties and true effects of soberness, when he seeth the quite contrary in another, may safely conclude that he is drunken. The Scripture doth not only describe the sin, but showeth us the way to know it. How doth the Physician know a man's disease but by the signs? and by the effects of the diseased? The signs and effects of drunkenness are when the head is inflamed & intoxicated, Isaiah 5, 11. the rolling of y^e tongue, the faltring and doubling of the speech, the redness of the eyes, the want of government of the hands, Prov. 23, 29, 30. Such as are ready to fight and quarrel, such as are mighty to fight combats of drinking; that show their strength & valor that way, which glory that they can lay their fellows under the Table, Isaiah 5, 22. such as reel and stagger as they go, though they be able (after a sort) to stand that they do not fall, yet they go reeling and staggering in the streets, Psal. 107, 27. Esa. 29, 9. They spew and vomit through excess, Ier. 25, 27. Esa. 19, 14. & 28, 8. and they stink of drink that their very breath and belching is noisome to those that are near them, Hos. 4, 18. as many do understand the words of the Prophet. But to leave these, I would also admonish

others, that too often frequent places of drinking, to say no worse of them, & wish them to consider, that albeit they be not grossly drunk, yet God restraineth all superfluity and excess, which the Apostle calleth *drinkings or reuellings*. Every man should walk without offense, and take heed he minister not occasion of stumbling to any through his example.

[Verse 21, 22, 23. *And Moses said, The people among whom I am are six hundred thousand footmen, &c.*] Here beginneth the second part of the communication: wherein, first *Moses* replieth against God, and will not rest in his answer, which was sufficient to have put him to silence, and made him say with *Job*, Chap. 40, 4, 5. *Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer: yea twice, but I will proceed no further;* and chap, 42, 6. *I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* But *Moses* goeth forward, & objecteth the hardness and impossibility to effect this promise of finding such store of flesh, in regard of the multitude of the infantry of the host, in regard of the long continuance of time that they should feed thereon, and in regard of the barrenness of the place, forasmuch as they were in the Wilderness and the Desert of Arabia, which was only stored with wants, and fruitful in nothing but in unfruitfulness. This distrust doth God bear withal, and as it were wink at in this place: but when he was not instructed and bettered by God's patience and longsuffering, it is afterwards punished, chapt. 20. Thus much of the complaint of *Moses*, both touching his disability to govern, & his insufficiency to feed them.

Secondly, God answereth to this objection, verse 23▪ that he would make good his own promise, and all the words of his mouth should be found true, notwithstanding y^e want of means, and the abundance of mouths that were to be filled with flesh.

The people are six hundred thousand footmen, &c. Shall the flocks and the herds, &c? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together, &c? Here is the distrust of *Moses*, though some labor to discharge him of it, and to free him from it, as if he had desired only to know the means that God would use, according as the *Virgin Mary* desireth to be farther informed of the Angel, Luke 1, 34 But this is disproved by the answer of God, who setteth down his own power, not the means how he would effect it. Wherefore I think the learned *Junius* in this place is deceived: and we need not to labor too curiously to clear the faithful of the remnants of sin & other infirmities, forasmuch as he and other the best of God's servants have their failings in faith and obedience, as we see in the examples of *Abraham, Lot, Noah, Isaac, Jacob, David, Peter, Thomas, Zechariah*, and which of them not? 2 Chron. 15, 17, & 16, 12 Rom. 7 17, 18, 19. because we know in part, and we prophesy in part; we are yet in our journey, and walk in our way, and run in a race, we are not yet attained to our iourneies end, we have not yet obtained the crown. Again, we proceed all from an unclean fountain, Job 14, 4. There is a combat remaining in us between the flesh and the Spirit, Rom. 7, 23. Gal. 5.17. and these are contrary the one to the other, and can never be reconciled.

The Uses hereof are, first to show that we cannot keep the Law, but in many things we [Use 1] sin all. Rom. 3, 22, 23. and therefore are subject to condemnation. The Church of Rome teacheth that a man may keep the Law: but they are ignorant of the law, and of the justice of God, of sin, and of themselves. For may they compare with the faithful before named?

2 Secondly, we do all need the benefit of Christ's blood, 1 John. 1, 7, 8. and are justified by him, Rom. 3, 24. but if we could keep the law, or could be without sin, *then Christ had died in vain*, Gal. 2, 21.

3 Thirdly, they are deceived which hold the *Virgin Mary* to have been conceived without original sin, contrary to the tenor of the Scriptures, which layeth open sundry her infirmities; contrary to her own confession, who acknowledgeth her self to have needed a Savior, Luke 1, 47. For seeing she was borne after the common course of the nature of man, who shall exempt her from the corruption and stain of nature? And what need was there that Christ Jesus should be conceived by the holy ghost, if he might have a pure conception free from original sin without it? Wherefore they may as well say, that the blessed Virgin was conceived also by the holy Ghost, as affirm that she was conceived without sin, and so communicate the property and prerogative of Christ's birth to her. For if she were conceived without Original sin, her conception was miraculous, whereas the conception of Christ could be no more.

4 Lastly, let us not rashly censure others for sin, I am. 3, 24. but admonish with meekness, considering our selves, Gal. 6, 1, 2. They are most sharp and severe judges of others, that forget their own infirmities.

Moreover, mark here the ground of *Moses* his unbelief, it is drawn from the course of natural reason, and from the consideration of the want of ordinary means. Observe from hence, that natural reason and carnal Wisdom are oftentimes enemies unto faith. The yielding too much to our own thoughts, & the beholding of things with an eye of flesh, do often make even the faithful doubt of God's promises. We see this in *Sarah*, Gen. 18 12. in *Nicodemus* John 3, 4. in *Zachariah*, Lu. 1, 20. Math. 16, 23. 1 Cor. 1, 23. Thus we are prone evermore to trust unto human wisdom.

For the things of God are oftentimes foolishness unto those that think themselves wiser then God, 1 Cor. 2, 14. Secondly, the carnal reason that remaineth in the regenerate, is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be, Rom. 8, 7. for no man is wholly regenerate, the best consist of two men, for they are partly the old man, and partly the new man, they are partly regenerate, and in part they remain unregenerate.

The Uses. Therefore we must not counsel with flesh and blood in the matters of God & [Use 1] in the mysteries of faith, Rom. 4, 19, 20. Gal. 1, 16. Prov. 3, 5. Let us consult with the Scriptures, and make the word of God our Counsellors, and learn to submit all that is in us to the wisdom of God. The eye is not able to look upon the brightness of the Sun, so the eye of our reason is dazzled at the glorious things of the gospel of Christ, which things the Angels desire to look into. This is the cause that maketh many shrink back, when they see the greatest number to walk in the broad way that leadeth to destruction, when they see the Church for the most part to consist of the poorer sort, and religion to be chiefly embraced of them, they are offended. Whē they see wicked men to prosper for the most part, they walk by reason, and not by Faith; by the light of the eye, not by the light of the Scripture. But we are, even the best of us, fools and blind in the matters of God, and we must know our selves

to be fools before we can learn the wisdom of God and submit our selves unto it. Maruell not therefore if few believe and obey.

[Use 2] Secondly, the natural man cannot please God, Rom. 8, 5, 6, 7, 8. all his knowledge, reason, wisdom, and understanding, cannot make him accepted, Tit. 1, 15. He is without faith which purifieth the heart, and therefore all his works are unsavory before him. Woeful therefore is the condition of an unbeliever, whatsoever he doth is sin: in every thought, word, and deed he sinneth, waking and sleeping: he sinneth even in the actions of religion, and every work increaseth his reckoning, and addeth to the account that he is to make. And as the faithful man the longer he liveth, the more gracious and acceptable he is to God, so the unbeliever the longer he liveth, the more he addeth to the heap of his sins, and the day of his reckoning will be so much the more fearful and dreadful. *Gen. 15, 16.* For as the *Ammorites* were daily filling up the measure of their sins, and so hastening unto judgment, so is it with the unregenerate person. The sooner he dieth and is cut off, the better it is with him, for thereby his sins are fewer, and his judgment shall be easier. It is not so with the godly man. Again, the unbeliever and polluted person poisoneth and infecteth all things that he meddleth withal, he defileth the earth, the air, the heavens, the beasts, the fruits, and all creatures and persons that live with them, *Leuitic. 18, 2.* The land of *Canaan* was defiled by the inhabitants and it is said, that in the end it should spew them out, *Deut. 28, 15, 16, &c. Hag. 2, 14.*

Thirdly, men are unable of themselves to [Use 3] hear the word of salvation, *John. 8, 43.* so that to believe and practice religion is not easy; our natural disposition is as contrary to it as fire and water, *Matth. 16, 17.* The carnal man seeth no more in the word of God, then in the word of man, nay his natural reason will minister reason unto him to think it is foolishness, *1 Cor. 1, 21.* and to persuade him that he need not to be so precise in the hearing of it, nor be so curious in keeping of the Sabbath day. Let us therefore forsake this counselor, it never speaketh good unto us, but evil; and crosseth the motions of the Spirit.

Fourthly, the preaching of the word is a [Use 4] necessary means to bring us to God, and to work in us saving faith, and sanctified obedience. Many men are by nature very wise & deep-sighted into matters of the world, and can dive to the bottom of all human knowledge: nevertheless all this is weak and insufficient to bring us to salvation, as appeareth in the example of *Achitophel*. He was a great politician: his answers were as the Oracles of God, *2 Sam. 16, 23.* yet was not all his wisdom able to guide and conduct him unto heaven or heavenly things, but he ended his days in horror and despair, *2 Sa. 17, 23.* Therefore another means was needful to bring us to the knowledge of God and of our selves, God hath left unto us his word, and would have it preached and expounded in the Church, that thereby we might be saved: as *1 Cor. 1, 20, 21.* *Where is the Scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not GOD made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*

Lastly, we must learn to submit our wisdom [Use 5] and our willes, our understanding and counsel to the will and counsel of God, after the example of Christ, *Math. 26, 42.* *Not my will, but thy will be done.* We must crave of GOD to direct us in his will, and to teach us his ways.

[Verse 23. *The Lord said unto Moses, Is the Lord's hand waxed short?*] Herein we have the answer of God, setting his Almighty power against the want of all means, and as a sufficient remedy of all evils. This teacheth that all things, even above nature and reason, and how unlikely and impossible soever in the eyes of man, are possible with God, and he can easily bring them to pass, Esa. 50.1. Gen. 18.14. Zach. 8.6. Ier. 32.27. Luke 1.37. Matt. 19.29.

[Reason 1] For why? He is in heaven, and there decreeth and accomplisheth whatsoever he will, Psa. 115.3. nothing can give any impediment to his purposes.

Secondly, he made all things of nothing in the beginning, for the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear, Heb. 11.3. he also governeth them all, as a Captain doth his host or army, Exod. 15.3. *He dryeth up the sea, he maketh the floods a desert, and clotheth the heavens with darkness,* Isaiah 50.2.

Thirdly, this is the nature and essence of God to be almighty; take this from him, and we deny him to be God, and make him to be weak and impotent, which can no way agree to him.

[Use 1] The uses. Learn from hence not to tie God to the course of second causes: he made the Sun to stand still, Josh. 10.13. he made the fire cease to burn, that it could not hurt them that were cast into it, Dan. 3.25. Hebr, 11.33. he stopped the mouths of the Lions, Dan. 6.22. Heb. 11.33. he made the iron to swim which naturally sinketh to the bottom, 2 King. 6.6. he made the waters stand still on an heap that they flowed not, and his people passed through as on dry land, Exod. 14.22. Josh. 3.17. Psal. 114.5. It is he that worketh miracles and changeth the course of nature. This showeth the difference between God and all other creatures. True it is, they have power, but they are not able to work miracles, but by the power of him that ruleth the creatures.

[Use 2] Secondly, doubt not of any of God's promises, Rom. 4.20, 21, though they seem never so unlikely or uncertain. Let us not doubt of salvation, nor despair of the conversion of any, Rom. 11. but be assured that he is able to do it. This is a point which we ought to be well grounded in, we have use of it in all estates, and conditions of life, especially in times of affliction and adversity. Doubt not of his favor in providing for us temporal things, he hath promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us, neither in youth nor age, neither in peace nor war, neither in plenty nor poverty: he is able to make good the words of his own mouth, he is our helper and deliverer, Heb. 13.5, 6. Doubt not of his goodness toward us in spiritual things, he is entered into covenant with us, that he will write his laws in our hearts, and remember our sins and iniquities no more, Ier. 31.33, 34. This is our comfort that he whom we serve is a God Almighty.

Thirdly, we see that God can revenge himself [Use 3] of all his enemies, as also of the enemies of the Church, Deut. 32.39, 42. Let them therefore fear him, Exod. 15.16. Heb. 10.31. even him that is able to cast body and soul into hell fire, I say unto you, fear him, Matth. 10.28. they lie under his hand that can execute vengeance; there is no power in any creature to rid himself from his power.

Fourthly, be liberal to the poor, 2 Cor. 9.7.8. [Use 4] God is able to make all grace abound toward us. He is able to make us abound and to preserve us from want, and therefore relying and grounding our selves upon his power, we should make others to abound, & give cheerfully to our brethren that want, and distribute to their necessities according as we have received.

Lastly, we ought to study and endeavor to [Use] be upright in our lives and conversations, Gen. 17.1, 2. Let us humble our selves under the most mighty hand of God, 1 Pet. 5.6. and quake at his judgments, as the child under the rod, Levite. 10.3. Let us repent us of our evil ways, and serve him in newness of life.

[Verse 24, 25, 26. *And Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord, and gathered, &c.* We have in these words to the end of the Chapter, the third point, to wit, the execution both of that which God had promised in mercy, and of that which he had threatened in judgment. Here then is a double affect, one touching the fellow-helpers joined in commission with *Moses* as his assistants. They were as it were of his privy counsel; he prepareth them, and God furnisheth them, and communicateth his Spirit unto them: which is amplified by a double event, the first is common to all the seventy elders, *they prophesied*; whereby God sealed up unto them the assurance of their calling, and procured them reverence among the people, as we see in *Saul* 1 Sam. 10.10. and in *Solomon*, 1 King. 3.16, 28 The second is special, two of these Elders abode behind in the tents, and came not to the Tabernacle, showing themselves (by this drawing back) unwilling, and accounted themselves unable and unworthy to undergo the charge, as *Saul* when he was anointed to be king, hid himself among the stuff, 1 Sam. 10.22. as also *Moses* and *Jeremiah* did, when they were called, knowing that none is sufficient for these things. Hereupon a young man (who he was, or to what end he did it, it is uncertain, because it is not expressed) made report of their prophesying to *Moses*, at the hearing whereof *Joshua* desireth him to forbid them by his authority: he was too much addicted to the person of his master, as many hearers are to their teachers, as *Paul* complaineth that some did hold of *Apollo* and some of *Cephas*, 1 Cor. 1.12. as in our days, many conceive too highly of *Luther*, otherwise a very worthy man: howbeit *Moses* tendering the good of all the people more then his own glory, reproveth his corrupt affection, *Enuiest thou for my sake?* and showeth a contrary disposition in himself, desiring that all the Lord's people could prophesy, &c.

The other effect is touching the flesh provided and supplied, which is enlarged by the instrumental cause, *a wind went forth from the Lord*: by the place from whence they came, *from the red sea* out of *Africke* in great plenty and abundance: by the miserable issue and event of all, *While the flesh stuck between their teeth, they were stricken with a great plague, and perished in great numbers*: and lastly, by a memorial of the sin and of the punishment, the name of the place was called, *Kibroth Hattaauah*, that is, the graves of lust, for there they buried the people that lusted.

In this division it is to be noted, that *Moses* going from the presence of God, relateth nothing but that which God had spoken unto him, and commanded him to speak unto thē; and therefore the Ministers are warned thereby to teach nothing but what they have received

from the word, as it were from the mouth of God, Num. 6, 22, 18. 1 Corin. 11, 23. Mat. 28, 20. They are his messengers and ambassadors employed by him, Mal. 2, 7. This condemneth unwritten verities and traditions maintained in the Church of Rome, under which they would convey unto us a fardell fraught with their own inventions. But let the Ministers give attendance to the reading of the Scriptures, and consult with God by them, 1 Tim. 4, 13, 15, 16, and let all God's people shut their ears against human devises, & open their ears and hearts to receive whatsoever God shall teach them in his word, 1 Kin. 13, 15, 16, 17. &c.

[There ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the campe: Joshua said, My Lord Moses, forbid them. Joshua feared lest the credit and reputation of Moses should be lessened among the people by this communication of his spirit. He had a good intent, howbeit he was jealous of his master amiss, which proceeded from the corrupt fountain of envy, for which he is reproveth. Out of which I might generally observe, that it is the duty of masters to reprove their servants, as Christ doth oftentimes his Disciples. Private men, that have only a general charge, are bound to reprove, Exod. 22. Levite. 19, 17. much more such as have the oversight of the ways of others. Again, connivance & concealing of sin is a kind of consenting unto sin: he that hideth and reproveth not his friends faults, maketh them his own; As it is in provision for the family, so it is in instruction: he that provideth not for the good of their bodies, is guilty of their death▪ if they perish through want of temporal things: so he that regardeth not the good of their souls, their blood shall be required at his hands if he suffer them to perish through want of instruction. This reproveth all such masters as encourage [Use 1] or flatter their servants in evil, or suffer them to do what they list. These cast away all care of their servants, as Cain did of his brother, saying, Am I my brothers keeper? so do these say, Am I my servants keeper? are they not old enough to look to themselves & to take charge of themselves? shall we make them always as babes & children? He is justly accounted a cruel master, that would suffer his servant to drown himself when he may hinder him and save him alive. Eli is punished for suffering his sons to run on in evil. Secondly, inferiors must suffer reproof of their governors willingly and patiently, and not break out into choler against them, like brute beasts that are unteachable and intractable, which kick & spurn at the handling of their wounds and sores, because they want reason to conceive what is good for themselves: so are these utterly ignorant what is good for their souls. The patient loveth the Physician, though his potions be bitter, and the Surgeon mortifieth corrupt members: fools do hate correction, saith the wise man, and it is oftentimes the cause of ruin of vnbrideled youth, these do in truth hate their own souls: which is a fearful kind of hatred. Lastly, let all governors & superiors have an eye ever watchful over the ways of such as are under them, that so they may encourage them in well doing, and reprove them for evil doing▪ This was in Elisha toward Gehazi running after Naaman and hunting after bribes, 2 Kin. 5, 25. Thus also did Solomon, he had an eye over Shimei, and quickly found out his departure out of Jerusalem, and wandering beyond the bounds set unto him, 1 Kings 2, 43, 44. Let everyone therefore take heed to their charges.

[My Lord Moses] Note here the title which Joshua giveth to Moses: he contenteth not himself to call him by his bare name, but before it he prefixeth a title of honor. This teacheth that inferiors must use speeches of reverence & subjection toward their superiors, as Mal. 1, 6. 1

Pet 2, 14, and 3, 6. 2 King. 13, 14. Neh. 2, 5, Ester 5, 4, 8. 2 Sa. 24, 3. 1 Sam. 25, 24, &c. Thus have God's children by the light of the word, and the ungodly by the light of nature performed this duty. And no marvel: because superiors bear God's image to inferiors, & are to them not by man's invention or usurpation, but by the ordinance of God in God's stead, as Moses made Ruler and Governor was to Aaron, Exod. 4, 16. *He shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.* Again, we have the express law & commandment of God binding the consciences of all, Exod. 20, 12. Psalm. 82, 6. Lastly, they are s^t over inferiors, not for their own glory, but for their good, 1 Tim. 2, 2. Rom. 13, 4. He is the Minister of God to thee for good.

[Use 1] This principle offereth these uses; first, a reproof of those that are so far from yielding them reverence, that they reject their authority, and cast off their yoke frō their necks, they mutter at thē & their commandments, they revile them and use irreverent speeches to them and of them, both before their faces and behind their backs, which ought not to be. Hence it is, that Moses saith, Exod. 22, 28. *Thou shalt not revile the God's, nor curse the Ruler of thy people.* And Eccl. 10, 20. *Curse not the king, no not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber, &c.* And the Apostle willeth Titus to exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again, Tit. 2, 9. It falleth out for the most part, that they have least honor at their hands of whom they ought to have greatest. Fathers and masters have many times more honor out of their own doors, then they have within them: & of other men's servants and children, then they have of their own. For as Christ saith, *A Prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, & among his own kin, and in his own house;* so is it for the most part with all parents and masters, Mark, 6, 4.

Secondly, if this duty be to be performed unto men, much more must we hold it to be due unto God. If reverence and obedience be due to mortal men, who have the image of God upon them, and that darkly & obscurely, how much more may God justly challenge these duties, who hath given power and authority unto men? John 19, 11. Hence it is, that God saith by the Prophet, *If I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear?* Mal. 1, 6, 8. *If ye offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil? Offer it now unto thy Governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person?* Numb. 12, verse 14 Heb. 12, verses 9, 10.

Lastly, it belongeth to all superiors so to carry themselves, that they may procure and deserve reverence, & do not justly bring contempt upon themselves. For this cause doth Paul teach Timothy to fly youthful lusts, 2, Tim. 2, 22, and to beware that he give not occasiō to make others despise his youth: which he shall do, if he be an example to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and in purity.

[Forbid them.] Here we see what Joshua would have Moses do: he counselleth him to restrain them. A young man, young counsel. The Doctrine from hence is, that young men are commonly and ordinarily rash in judging others, yea more rash then elder men, & consequently more apt to judge amiss, and to give evil counsel & sentence of such things as are well done. Such were Rehoboams green heads, they gave green counsel, and such as cost him the loss of the greatest part of his kingdom, 1 Kings 12, verses 8, 13, 14. Grauity and

sobriety are commended in elder men, Titus 2, 1, 2. but young men follow the vanity of their young years, Eccl. 11, 9, 10.

The reasons are plain. First, age & years [Reason 1] bring experience and ripeness of judgment, and so wisdom. Youth is as green timber, age as that which is seasoned, Job 32, 7. *I said, Daies should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.*

Again, their affections being hotter and stronger, are more unconstant and vnbrideled, ready to run into extremities, as untamed heiffers not used to the yoke.

Lastly, they put far from them the evil day; they think themselves privileged by their age, and make account they have time enough hereafter to enter into better courses. They live for y^e most part, as if they had made a covenant with death and with hell, and are less careful to be kept and guided within the compass of God's laws. Forasmuch as sentence is not executed speedily against an evil work, their hearts are fully set in them to do evil.

The uses. First, this teacheth us not to rest [Use 1] in the judgment, nor to follow the counsel of young men, except they have old men's gifts and graces in them. For touching gifts, it is true which *Elihu* testifieth, Job 32, 9. Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment. Old men may be young in gifts, and young men may be old in gifts. Secondly, let young men suffer their elders to speak before them, especially in censuring things that are strange. It is a point of wisdom for all, especially for young men to suspect their own judgment and sentence concerning others, their persons, their gifts, and their actions. Thirdly, it reproveth those that set up in the Church, & promote to the office of teaching, such as are young in years and gifts, and not yet seasoned to build up others, but are light, wanton, rash, not grave, discreet, and sober. Add unto these, such as advance those that are planted newly, converted to the truth of the Gospel, before there be sufficient trial made of the soundness of their religion, and the sincerity of their conversation. *Paul* teacheth *Timothy*, that the Minister must not be a nouice, or one newly come to the faith, 1 Tim. 3, 6. lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. It is a fault among us, that we many times give too easy access to the Pulpit, to such as bear themselves as converts among us, I mean such as have been fugitiues and forsaken our Church, and return home again oftentimes worse then they went out, and live scandalously to the dishonor of God, and the offense of many. Such ought to be thoroughly tried and proved, let them live in the place of common Christians, before they be trusted with the place of Captains: and let them thereby purchase to themselves a good degree to farther promotion.

Lastly, seeing rashness and vnadusednesse are specially incident to youth, let them learn to season their years with the word of God, let them make it their meditation, whereby they may repress such hot and hasty & headstrong passions. The Prophet saith, Psal. 119, 9. *Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word.*

And Moses said unto him, Enuiest thou for my sake? In these words *Moses* openeth and discovereth the particular sin wherewith *Joshua* was infected. We learn hereby in this reproof, that all God's people must beware of envy, I am. 4, 5. It is an affection compounded

of sorrow and malice. For such persons are malicious, always repining and grudging at the gifts of God bestowed upon others, and as it were look asquint at them, as Gen. 26, 12, 13, 14, 27, and 30, 1, and 31, 1. Mark. 9, 38. John 3, 26, 27.

First, because it is a fruit of the flesh, Gal. [Reason 1] 5, 21. as carnal grief and carnal hatred are, of which it is compounded: for it maketh mē repine and grieve at the blessings and prosperity of others, and that which is worst of all, to hate the persons that have those gifts, and in the end the good things themselves that are in the persons for the persons sake. This appeareth in the Pharisees, Math. 27, 18. when they saw that Christ was in more account among the people, and did exceed them in all his doctrine and miracles, they repined and grudged at him. It grieved them that any should be equal unto them, much more go beyond them.

Secondly, God bestoweth his gifts where he will, and to whom he will, & in what measure he will, Math. 20, 15.

Thirdly, it procureth the wrath of God, and is never left without punishment, as appeareth in the next chapter, where *Miriam* the sister of *Moses* is *stricken with the leprosy, because she envied the gifts of Moses*, God showing thereby how greatly he detesteth this sin.

Fourthly, whatsoever is bestowed upon any member, is bestowed upon the whole body, 1 Cor. 12. Whatsoever is given to any part is given for the benefit of the whole Church, why then should we envy any, seeing we have our part and portion in it?

Fifthly, it is a devilish vice, it is worse then fleshly, and yet if it were no more, it were sufficient to make us to detest it: howbeit it savoreth not only of the flesh, but of the devil: and it transformeth us into the image of Satan, who envied the happiness of our first parents in the garden, Gen. 3, 5. So *Cain* was of that evil one, 1 John. 3, 12. and envied his brother, because God accepted him and his sacrifice, Gen. 4.5.

Sixthly, it crosseth and controlleth the wisdom of God in the distribution of his gifts & graces, as if God had done thē wrong, and been too good to others: we can challenge nothing as due to our selves, but whatsoever we have, we have it freely: howbeit the envious like not his administration, but dislike that others should enjoy that which they want.

Lastly, it is against the rule of charity, which rejoiceth at the good of others, 1 Cor. •3, and is ready to bestow and communicate good things where is want of them. So then where envy is, there charity is not: and where charity is, there envy is not.

This teacheth us, that all are subject to this [Use 1] evil, even they that are godly, and in a great measure sanctified, are apt to envy at others excelling in the graces of God. And doubtless this is one cause oftentimes of contentions among the faithful, 1 Corin. 1, 12. much more therefore the unreformed and unsanctified are ready to envy them that go before them. Let us not have the faith of GOD in respect of persons, I am. 2, 1. & let us beware of having men in admiration for sinister respects. The best things are subject to be abused through our corruption.

Secondly, it serveth to reprove many [Use 2] malicious persons: some envy others temporal blessings; others (that are worse) envy them the grace of God. If they have more knowledge than themselves, they cannot abide them, but speak all manner of evil against them. These men are possessed, nay poisoned with malice, ambition, pride, arrogancy, and dissimulation: they are utterly destitute of charity, or desire of reconciliation to their brethren. Hence it is, that *Solomon* opposeth envy and the fear of God, as things that cannot possibly stand together, *Prov.* 23, 17. and in another place, a sound heart and envy, *Pro.* 14, 30. If such see another have more wealth and riches than themselves, they so vex & torment themselves, that the things w^c they have, do them no good. Envy is a very torment to the envious, who envying at others, do plague and punish themselves. For as envy hurteth not him at all that is envied, so the envious man carrieth about within his own bosom, an inward and home-bred tormenter that never suffereth him to be quiet. Such a monster is spite & envy, that if he see, or hear, or think another to have more or as much, to go beyond him or be equal unto him; it is a quotidian, nay, a continual fever without any intermission, it paineth him day and night. *Psalm.* 112, 9, 10.

Thirdly, let us use all holy and sanctified means to prevent it, or to purge it away, if it [Use 3] have seized upon us. Let us labor for Christian charity, that so we may rid our hearts of the corrupt weeds of fretting and malice against our brethren, and decke our selves with lowliness of mind, that we may banish pride and self love, *Phil.* 2, 3. Store of charity and humility tempered together, will make a notable defense & preservative against this malady.

Secondly, be well contented with God's holy administration of temporal blessings, spiritual, & eternal, y^t we do not any way charge him with folly, who is wisdom it self; or with partiality, who respecteth no man's person.

Thirdly, to cast our eyes upon the troubles, sorrows, miseries, and calamities of our brethren which they sustain and suffer, as well as upon the gifts, blessings, comforts, & prosperity which they enjoy, that so the consideration of the one, may stay & uphold us from grudging at the sight of the other. But this is our fault, we look upon their good, but will not behold their evil: which if we did, we should find cause many times rather to pity them than to envy them.

Fourthly, to mark that the gifts of others are for our benefit, as the good of one member of the body serveth for the use of another; and therefore we are enemies to our own good and welfare, when we repine at that which others have.

Fifthly, to pray to God for the obtaining of his gifts where we see them wanting; and for increase of them where they are obtained, and for the continuance of them where they are increased.

Lastly, it is our duty to love the graces of God wheresoever we see them, yea even in our enemies. These are approved remedies to keep us from envy.

[Would God that all the Lord's people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them.] See here the godliness and humility of *Moses*; he is so far from envying this gift of these

two servants of God, that he reproveth *Joshua*, and wisheth from his heart, that all the Church of God had y^e same gift which he had, from the least to the greatest. As if he should say, I am so far from envying them in having these graces, though they came not with the others, (seeing God confirmeth even their calling also as well as the rest,) y^t I could rather wish if it pleased God, that all in the host could prophesy, and were endued with mine and their graces.

If any object, that this may seem to give way for unwarrantable wishes, frivolous desires, and vain prayers not grounded upon any promise: I answer, it doth not, for he only testifieth his holy desire of the Churches good; as when we pray that God would keep us this day from all sin. It is against the word of God to hold that we can be without sin, but it is not against it, to testify our desire to be free from it; for it is that which we ought all to aim at, and to endeavor that we may attain unto. Neither doeth this prayer give scope to the wishes of the sottish multitude, that pray for their friends when they are dead, who never prayed for them when they were alive, saying, God have mercy on their souls, or God rest their souls; whereby the Name of God is taken in vain. For they have received their judgment according to their works, and are already either in rest or in torment, frō which they cannot return. We learn from hence that the godly do heartily desire the good and growth, the profit and increase of the whole Church. It is the duty of all faithful persons, to desire that all true Christians may excel in graces, even to be equal or above themselves, how eminent and excellent soever their gifts & places be. This appeareth in *John the Baptist*, John 3, 29, 30. *Now is my joy full; he must increase, but I must decrease.* The Apostle desireth, that the Thessalonians, who were grown greatly in grace, might yet grow more and more, 1 Thess. 4, 1. Rom. 1, 11. This desire of the prosperity and flourishing estate of the Church, made *Paul* to move *Barnabas* to go again and visit the brethren in every City, where they had preached and planted the Gospel of Christ, Acts 15, 36. Rom. 9, 3. Gal. 6, 16. Math. 11, 25. John 17, 24. 2 Cor. 13, 9. As thē *Joab* sent out to number all the tribes of Israel, said unto the King, *The Lord thy God add unto the people (how many soever they be) an hundred fold, and that the eyes of my Lord the King may see it:* so ought we in seeking the increase of the true Israel of God much rather say, The Lord add unto the church such as shall be saved, how many soever they seem already to be, thousand thousands, and that our eyes may see the spiritual growth of them.

For as the glory of God ought to be most [Reason 1] precious unto us, so hereby he is most glorified, whē many lights shine before men, Mat. 5, 16, John 15, 8.

Secondly, superiors in gifts are fathers, and have that title given unto them, as well as superiors by office and calling, and therefore as fathers rejoyce to see their children excelling themselves or others in gifts, as *Solomon* did exceed *David*, so ought it to be in the spiritual growth of the Church; such as are fathers in respect of gifts, should rejoyce and be glad when they behold their inferiors to come forward to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, Eph. 4, 13.

Thirdly, they heartily love one another, therefore they cannot but desire their greatest welfare and excelling in all graces to the greatest edification of other; not envying, but rejoicing in their increasing more and more: & contrariwise sorrowing at their dwarfish

estate, ever learning, yet still needing to be taught the first principles of religion, as not able to bear strong meat, Heb. 5, 12, 13.14.

From hence we have a way left us to examine [Use] our selves and to judge our selves, whether we belong unto God and be truly sanctified, or not: whether we be true parts of the true church or not, even by this desire of the good of the churches of God. Hereby we may discern and try what is in us: by this note we may prove our selves, truly to seek God's glory with sincere harts, to wit, when we can rejoice in the excelling of other men's gifts above our own, whether they be in the same or other callings with us, wishing our selves inferior to all others, and everyone to excel us in gifts to the edification of the Church & God's glory, in the setting up and establishing of the kingdom of Christ. Let us not account it a shame to see a sheep go before his Shepherd, or the son to go beyond the father, or the wife her husband, or the servant his master: if the inferiors have greater & better gifts then their superiors, bless God for it, and pray God yet more to multiply their graces. There are many Pastors that are afraid, lest their people by too often teaching, and by going and growing forward by reading and conference, should be able to teach them their duty, or else control their teaching of others. This is as unnatural, as if a father should be grieved to see his child prosper & to grow in stature. We must desire the conversion of those that be out of the Church, therefore much more the blessing of God to be upon the Church in a more plentiful measure, Acts 26, 29, and 7, 60. He that is desirous of the good of such as are not of the family, will be more careful of those that are of the family. Every part and member of the body, desireth and procureth the good of the other parts: so ought it to be in the mystical body, whereof Christ Jesus is the head, who laid down his life for the Church, and shed his precious blood for the ransom of it, Acts 20, 28. It will be a great comfort to us to find this affection and desire in our hearts, to long after the common good of the Church.

[Use 2] Secondly, it condemneth the Church of Rome, that hinder the growth and increase of, it, deteining the Scriptures from the people, & keeping them in blindness and ignorance, whereas the Lord would have his word communicated unto all. When a Prince hath published statutes for the government of the Commonwealth, they are open for all to read them: so is it with God, after he caused the word to be written, he set them forth for all, commanding all to know them from the least to the greatest, from the lowest to the highest. On the other side, the Papists extol their ignorance, and bar the people from the means of growing.

Again, it reproveth those that seek their own good and glory, and care not how it goeth with others, whereas all the study & desire of *Moses* was, evermore to procure the good of Israel: he seemed utterly to forget himself, and regarded not what became of him, so the Church might prosper and flourish, Exod. 32, •2. So was it with Christ, he sought not his own glory, but his that sent him; and asketh, how they can believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only? Such were *Joseph's* brethren, hearing his dream of their sheaves bowing down and making obeisance to his sheaf, Gen. 37, verse 7. and of the Sun and the Moon, and the eleven stars which made obeisance to him, ver. 9. Such also were *David's* brethren, who hearing him to enquire what should be done to the man that

killeth the Philistim, and taketh away the reproach from Israel, said, *Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride and the haughtiness of thy hear^e, for thou art come down to see the battle,* 1 Sam. 17, 28. These were afraid, he would rise too fast and outstrippe them, and therefore envied him. So is it with false Teachers, who in the pride of their hearts, did seek themselves above God's glory, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom. The false teachers disgraced the Apostles, and preached eniously to add to their sorrows, Phil. 1, 15, 16. Wherefore, let no man envy the good gifts of others.

Thirdly, let the Pastors of the Church be [Use 3] careful of teaching the people committed to their charge, and to polish them as hewn stones for the spiritual building of the spiritual Temple, and diligently to square them out, that so the body of Christ which is the Church, may grow up to a perfect man. We cannot in truth desire the growth of y^e church, if we be not ready to feed it with the word of God? Can the mother be said to be willing to see the growth of her child, when she never feedeth it? No, it is plain, she seeketh rather to starve it? Even so is it with the Ministers, such as withhold the food of life from them do starve them, and are guilty of their blood.

Lastly, all are bound to procure the good [Use 4] of the Church, and to pray to God for the flourishing and happiness of it, Psal. 122, 6, and 51, 18. We see how far men are carried in natural affection toward their children whom they have bestowed in marriage, to desire that they might increase to many generations. This is the marriage blessing, Gen. 24, verse 60. *They blessed Rebecca and said unto her, Thou art our Sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those that hate him.* How much more ought our earnest prayer and desire be, that the Israel of God may flourish and multiply, and have the dominion and upper hand over those that hate them? We must desire that the Church may be a fruitful mother of many children, like *Rahel* and *Leah*, which two did build the house of Israel, Ruth chapt. 4. verse 11. We must be all helpers to help to build the Church by our prayers, by our exhortations, by our life and example. Let us rejoyce when we see it increase, and mourn when we see it decrease.

[Ver. 31, 32. *And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quail from the sea, and let thē fall by the campe, as it were a days journey, &c.* God promised to his people quail, & that in abundance: here we see by what means they are brought among them, *there went forth a wind from the Lord*, to whom the winds and seas do obey. He could have done this by his own immediate hand, if it had pleased him; but hereby he would teach, that in giving his creatures, and in bestowing his blessings, he doth not bestow them immediately by his own hand, but he giveth them by means of the creatures that he hath created, as we see in this place. This we may read at large in Hosea, chap. 2, 21, 22. When he giveth light, he giveth it by the heavens, where he hath set the sun to rule by day, the Moon and the Stars to rule by night, Psal. 136, 8, 9. He hath appointed the beasts of the field to yield us clothing, and the earth to minister bread to the sower, Psalm. 104, ver. 4. Exod. 8, verse 16. Gen. 7, verses 11, 12. The reasons hereof are evident.

[Reason 1] Heereby he doth abate the pride and vain glory of the sons of men, that though they be Rulers of the earth, and Lord's of sea and land, and of all creatures in them, yet must they after a sort be beholding to the meanest of them, and borrow succor and sustenance from them.

Secondly, hereby he blindeth the eyes of those that will not see him, though he daily shine in their faces much more bright thē the Sun in the Firmament that casteth his beams upon the earth, I mean of wicked men that can look no higher then to the creatures themselves, and therefore commit gross idolatry with them, forasmuch as they look not up to God the author and giver of them.

Thirdly, God did appoint *Adam* in the time of his innocence, that he should receive all by means of his labor, for he was set in the garden to dress the garden & keep it. Gen. 2, 15.

[Use 1] Conclude from hence an holy principle of our faith, to wit, the infinite power and glory of God, who hath the souereigne command of all creatures, for great is his Name. He employeth them in blessing and in punishing at his own pleasure, and sendeth them forth for the honor of his Name, Psal. 8, 1. and 78, 16. He could with a word have created these quail as at the beginning, when he spake the word and they were, & used not the wind to bring them forth; but he would manifest his souereignty and dominion over all, that so all might stand in fear of him, to whom nothing is hard, Ier. 32, 27 Doubtless, we must confess that he is worthy of all honor, Reu. 4, 11. Psal. 89, 8, 12. and let men submit themselves to him, Job 36, 36, 37, and 42, 5, 6.

[Use 2] Secondly, from hence ariseth comfort to God's children that live under his protection; he hath all creatures at his commandment for their good. And it serveth as a terror to the wicked that set themselves against him, who doth whatsoever pleaseth him in heaven and in earth, Psl, 115, 3. The Lord of hosts is his Name, who can arm, send forth, and strengthen the least of them to their utter ruin. Wherefore so long as God hath any creature about him, they shall not want means of their overthrow and destruction. And on the other side, the faithful shall not want means for their preservation.

Thirdly, whensoever we want any blessing, [Use 3] we must seek to the Lord; for he can restrain the sweet influence of the heavens when it pleaseth him, so that neither the heavens shall hear the earth, nor the earth the corn, nor the corn the people; he can make the heavens to be as brass, and the earth as iron, that they shall yield us no benefit at all. For albeit he blesseth us by the creatures, yet he doth limit and uphold them from yielding unto us any good whensoever he pleaseth. Therefore is he to be sought unto for a blessing, lest he command them to do us no good.

Lastly, seeing we must seek God in the [Use 4] means, it teacheth us from the example of God, that we also must use means for the obtaining of earthly blessings. We must labor in our places and take pains in our callings wherein God hath set us. We must be diligent and industrious, Prov. 10, 4. *The hand of the diligent maketh rich.* True it is, the Scripture teacheth that it is the Lord that giveth power to get riches; nevertheless, the hand of the painful laborer is said to give riches also. We must pray unto God for a blessing, and depend wholly

upon him, Psal. 127, 1, 2. Yet we our selves must not be idle and do nothing. For as many use the means and never seek to God, so there are others that rely upon God only, and never seek the means at all. These are like unto those that would fain be saved, and yet never seek after the right means to attain to salvation. *Balaam* wished that he might die the death of the righteous, yet he would not join with God's people to have remission of sins, and to hear the voice of God: so do these offend in temporal things, they sit still and will not use the means whereby they may enjoy the creatures of God to their good, although they would fain have them. If we seek them as GOD hath appointed, we shall find comfort.

[Ver. 33, 34. *And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, yer it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague.*] In the midst of their lusts and pleasures, behold how God's judgments come upon them. They had feasted a long time, and had glutted themselves with their flesh; now their sweet meat had sour sauce, for the hand of GOD cometh upon them for their sin, and suddenly the plague sweepeth them away.

The Doctrine arising from hence is this, that the judgments of GOD do oftentimes fall upon men and women very suddenly before they be aware, when they least of all think or imagine of the day of wrath, Job 20.5, 6, 7. & 21.17. Psal. 73, 19. Isaiah 30, 1. Exod. 12, 29. Dan. 5, 30. Luke 12, 20. The destruction of the wicked, shall come as a whirlwind, Amos 1, 14 Christ putteth us in mind of the days of *Noah* and *Lot*, and telleth us that the coming of the son of man shall be when men think not of it; and therefore it is compared to the sudden coming of a thief in the night, and the sudden travel of a woman, Mat. 24, 43. 44. 1 Thess. 5, 2, 3. Acts 12, 23. and like the fall of a ruinous wall at an instant, though it stand long, Isaiah 30, 13.

This is plain, first because they have thorough [Reason 1] God's patience and longsuffering increased the number, weight, and measure of their sins, and thereby compel the Lord to bring his judgments suddenly upon them. They draw out his sword, and will not suffer it to rest in the sheath: they offer a kind of violence to God, and contstrain him to bring his judgments upon them in a moment, they will not suffer him to stay any longer▪ It is just to punish such as abuse his patience: he hath waited a long time, and called them to repentance, they have had time & warning enough, and made him dance attendance, as Prov. 1, 24, 27. *Because I called and ye refused, your desolation cometh as a whirlwind.*

[Reason 2] Secondly, God respecteth herein the benefit of others toward whō he hath not used as yet so long patience, to the end that they seeing others fall into sodain destruction, may learn thereby not to abuse his patience, lest they also be suddenly destroyed, Dan. 5, 22. when *Daniel* had told *Belshazzar* of his father, how suddenly the judgment of God came upon him for his security▪ he addeth, *And thou his son knowing all these things, hast not humbled thyself, but hast committed the same things thyself;* and therefore now also shalt thou suddenly be destroyed: thou shouldst have considered these things before, and have taken warning by thy fathers punishment; but seeing thou hast not looked upon him, as in a glass set before thy eyes, to consider the slippery estate wherein thou and all Princes and people stand, therefore now shall the same heavy hand of GOD find thee out, and his judgments shall presently overtake thee.

[Use 1] The uses follow. First see from hence the happy estate of all such as think of the day of their reckoning betimes, and prepare their garments that they be not taken naked. Men in sudden danger, as in a fire or sodain tumult coming in the night season, are glad to catch anything to cover them, Mark 14, 51. so should we be clothed with Christ's righteousness, Revel 16, 15, Such are out of danger, & have no cause to fear wrath and judgment. It is the wisest & safest way so to do, then we shall be sure to escape and be saved.

[Use 2] Secondly, it serveth to teach us, that we should not envy at the peace and prosperity of the wicked, neither fret at the flourishing estate of the ungodly that live in their sins: for howsoever they be for a time forborne, & all goeth currant with them, yet thereby they are the more hardened in their sins, till a far greater judgment come upon them. Therefore envy not at thē though they grow great, for suddenly shall the judgments of GOD take hold upon them, and arrest them as guilty of death, and then they shall perish speedily; so that there is no reason to grieve or grudge at their prosperity. They shall soon be cut down as grass, and shall wither as the green herb; they shall be consumed as the fat of Lambes, even with the smoke shall they consume away. Psal 37, 1, 2, 20. The estate of all the wicked is very ticklish and uncertain: they are set in slippery places, and God casteth them down into desolation. Their end is sudden and fearful▪ Prover. 6, 15. like a violent storm and tempest, while they are secure and think nothing of their end, while they eat & drink, and are drunken, and given to unlawful pleasures, the judgment of God shall be as a swift messenger, or a sudden wind that shall blow them away as chaff. For though God in patience bear with them, and put off his judgments for a season, yet when they do come, they shall come swiftly and suddenly. Indeed it often maketh the best of God's children to stumble, to see the prosperity of the wicked, and grieve much to see men lying in their sins as swine in the mire, or dogs in their vomit, to grow great and continue long without any cross or affliction, but let them wait but awhile, and suddenly they shall see the judgments of God to overtake them in their greatest ruffe and riot into which they break▪ Let no man therefore envy them, their honor and glory, their riches and prosperity, for they all shall be turned into curses and judgments. Who would repine at it, to see a thief carried along thorough fair fields and green meadows, in a rich coach to the gallows or place of execution? There is cause rather to be grieved at it, and to pity him then to envy him: so likewise why should we envy at the prosperity of the wicked, considering it is the highway that leadeth to death and the very occasion of their ruin, they stand in danger every hour to be overtaken with the judgments of God which come suddenly, that they shall have no time to make their peace, or to reconcilde themselves by true Repentance. Psal. 37.35, 36. We have cause therefore to mourn for them, and not to murmur at them.

Thirdly, from hence ariseth comfort to the faithful. What though on the one side the [Use 3] wicked prosper & increase in riches, though their eyes stand out for fatness, and cruelty compasseth them as a garment? and they have more then heart can wish? And what though on the other side, the godly are afflicted and in trouble, though they be in want and oppressed, though they be in misery and suffer many wrongs? yet we must not be discouraged, nor say, We have cleansed our hearts in vain, and in vain we have washed our hands in innocence; forasmuch as they are brought into desolation as in a moment, they are

utterly consumed with terrors, as a dream when one awaketh. Let us therefore be of good comfort, and not shrink away: they are like the grass or flower of the field, which groweth and flourisheth today, and tomorrow withereth and is cast into the Oven, or rathey they are much more brittle, and subject to a speedier change. Let us commit our ways unto the Lord and trust in him: let us give all diligence to walk in his ways, which are sanctified and holy ways, that we may not be reputed among the wicked; and so partake with them in the sodainnesse of their downfall. Let us wait patiently upon him; for yet a very little while, and the wicked shall not appear; thou shalt look after his place, and yet shalt not find him; sudden destruction shall seize upon him as a sergeant, and he shall be carried away as with a strong whirlwind in a tempestuous and stormy day.

[Use 4] Fourthly, it is our duty to watch and attend with all care for the time of judgment. The day of the Lord, or the time of judgment is twofold, general and particular. General, when Christ shall break the heavens, and come to judge the quick and the dead in the end of the world, when the pillars of the earth and the whole frame of heaven shall be dissolved. Particular, at the day of our death, when every particular soul must appear before the bar, and give an account what i• hath done. Great will be our misery, if God come & find us careless and secure. If a man knew at what hour the thief would come, doubtless he would watch, and not suffer his house to be broken through, Mark 13, 35, 36. And this is the cause wherefore it pleased God to conceal from us as well the day of judgment, as the day of our death; he would not have us know either the one or the other, to wit, whē he will come, or when we shall die, to the end we should always watch and pray, and be in readiness, having our loins girt, and oil in our lamps. Nothing is more certain then that he will come. *Enoch*, the seventh from *Adam*, prophesied of it before the flood, *that the Lord cometh with thousands of his Saints*, Jude verse 14. howbeit nothing is more uncertain then when he will come, for the Angels in heaven, and the Son himself as he is man, know it not, but the Father only, Mat. 24, 36. Mar. 13, 32. So nothing is more certain then our death and dissolution, and nothing more uncertain then the time thereof, that we should learn to look for him every day, nay every hour, nay every minute. It is well observed by *Augustine*, that the Lord would have us to know the time of his first coming, because the knowledge thereof is profitable and necessary: and therefore doth the Lord reprove the Jews, that they could judge the face of the sky, but they knew not the day of their visitation: because he that is ignorant of the first coming, can never prepare himself for his second coming. But the day and time of his second coming is hidden from us, because it is not expedient for us to know the same, lest we should say with the evil servant, *My master doth defer his coming*, and so fall to beat our fellow-servants, Luke 12, 45. We must be wise-hearted, and look for him every day, and not foolishly promise to our selves a long time of his tarrying, lest we deceive our selves, and begin to eat and drink, and to be drunken: whereas the Lord of that servant shall come in a day that he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And if we may not say, our master doth delay his coming, as evil servants; then we may not say, where is the promise of his coming? as profane scoffers and mockers do, that walk after their own lusts. But be it that the general coming of Christ were far off,

yet his particular coming to everyone of us cannot be far off, but is nere at hand, we know not whose turn shall be the next; woe unto us if we be taken unprovided. So then we see, that God hath concealed his coming both general and particular, not to our hurt, but for our good.

Lastly, this serveth to admonish all men, [Use 5] that seeing the judgments of God shall come suddenly, and that sudden death and sudden destruction are fearful to all men, to take heed that we abuse not the patience of God by living in known sin, and flattering our selves in it, lest we be swept away suddenly. Manie men are oftentimes praying and desiring God to keep them from sodain death, they would by no means die suddenly; yet these men by abusing the patience of God, and continuing in sin, do take the direct way and course to bring sudden death and destruction upon themselves. It is a manifest token of a plain and rank hypocrite, to crave to be kept from sudden death, and in the mean season to do nothing but practice and commit sin with greediness. Certainly he that thus prayeth, doth it for no other end, but because he is desirous to live longer to commit evil. He is afraid to come to an account, and yet he would live longer to make his account greater and more fearful. Would we not therefore be suddenly destroyed:? We must labor to see the plague, and fly. But whither? not from God, for he is far swifter then possibly we can be, who rideth upon the wings of the wind, and can quickly overtake us: we must fly to God, and seek to him for pardon betimes, and labor earnestly for a reconciliation with him. The birds of the air escape the snares of the fowler by flying: but whither? and how is it, and what do they? not by flying down on the earth, for so they are taken: but by flying upward; the higher so much the safer. So should we fly, not down from God, but fly on high, fly up to God and seek unto him, for him we have offended, and of him we must crave and shall obtain forgiveness. Let us prevent his judgments by our repentance, otherwise we shall perish suddenly. And when once we have obtained his favor, and made peace with him, though sudden death come upon us, as it did upon righteous *Abel*, well-meaning *Uzzah*, religious and godly *Josiah*, yet happy and blessed shall we be. It is wisdom not to put off the day of judgment, neither our particular day of judgment, Amos 6, 3. It is the occasion of many evils, when a man never thinketh upon the day of his dissolution, and dreameth that the day of coming to his answer is not near. Many impenitent persons put off the day of their repentance in hope to have time enough hereafter; whereas repentance is not in our own power, and that which is late is sildome true: and his judgments are sodain, yea so sodain, that sundry which promised unto their souls many years leisure and liberty to repent, have not had so much warning as to say, *Lord have mercy upon me*. We have had many examples of this daily, and therefore let us be evermore ready and prepared before hand.

CHAP. XII.

MOses in this chapter goeth forward to set down another murmuring, which did nerer touch him then the former. Such as are mentioned in the Chapters before, infected in a manner,

the whole people: this is more particular, and is directed directly against himself, raised by his own sister and brother, both elder than himself. Wherein consider two things, First their sin: secondly, the process of God against them for their sin. Touching the first, observe that though both of them sinned, yet *Miriam* his sister hath the chief hand in the sin, who drew *Aaron* by persuasion into a practice and participation of it, as the people had done before, when they moved him to make the golden Calf, Exod. 32, 1, 2. they were the authors of that idolatry, *Aaron* was drawn to consent unto it. That she was the first in this trespass may appear, first because the verb in the original, is of the Feminine gender, and joined in construction with *Miriam*, which serveth also to strengthen the reason. Secondly, she is named in the first place, not preferred for honors sake (for there is no honor in committing of evil,) but because she had the principal hand in it. Thirdly, because the punishment fell only upon her, and not upon *Aaron*, who was even constrained by her importunity, as it were against his will to join with her.

The occasions which both of them take to exalt and magnify themselves, and to call the authority of *Moses* in question, are double: his marriage, and his calling. The marriage of *Moses* was with the woman that was a *Cushite*, which seemeth to be no other than *Zipporah* the *Midianite*. For first, we read not of her death, who was brought to him by her Father immediately before the giving of the Law, Exod. 18, 5. Again, it is not to be thought that he would marry two wives, especially being now 80. years old, unfit for any new marriage, and it being contrary to the first institution. Thirdly, we read of no other sons that he had but *Gershom* and *Eliezer*, Exod. 2, 2, 22, and 4, 20. & 18, 3. 1 Chron. 23, 14, 15. both which he had by *Zipporah* the daughter of *Jethro*: so that woman is like to be no other than this *Zipporah*, whom he married when he fled out of Egypt and sojourned in Midian. For the Midianites are called Cushites, not that they came of *Cush* the eldest son of *Ham*, Gen. 10, 6. but because they possessed part of the land of *Cush*. And it may well be that some strife and contention arose first of all between *Zipporah* and *Miriam*, a common thing unto that sex, as fell out between *Sarah* & *Agar*, between *Rahel* and *Leah*, and between *Hannah* and *Peninnah*, and haply it might be for place and precedency; *Miriam* bearing her self bold, that she was a Prophetess, and of the seed of *Abraham*, but *Zipporah* a foreigner and a stranger from *Israel*. And on the other, *Zipporah* alleging and pretending for her self, that she was the wife of *Moses*, the chief Governor of the people, and therefore as the chief room was due to him before other men, so to her before other women. The other occasion, was the office and calling of *Moses*, they envied his dignity and authority. For, as in of *Abraham's* house the strife arose among the herdmen of his cattle, and of *Lots*, the flame whereof burned so fast y^t it caught hold upon the masters themselves, and had quite consumed them, had it not been wisely & timely prevented: so this quarrel as a spark of fire arising among the women for the uppermost room and chiefest seat, covered for a season under the ashes, at length brake out into a flame, and caught hold of *Moses*, against whom *Miriam* and *Aaron* strove. As if they should say, Thou art not so great a Prophet as thou wouldest be accounted; have not the seventy Elders the Spirit of God, and the gift of prophesy as well as thou? and have not we that gift also? This is amplified by a double effect, one in God, he heard it; the other in *Moses*, he held his peace and said nothing, giving no occasion of this contention.

But before we come to the doctrines to be gathered from hence, we must speak somewhat of the translation of the words and of the interpretation. The words in the Original lie thus, *And Miriam spake and Aaron against Moses, because of the woman the Cushite, whom he had married: for he had taken to wife a Cushite.* The Septuagint being deceived in turning these words, gave occasion of error and stumbling unto others, making the Cushites to be Ethiopians, and saying that he married an Ethiopian woman, thereby mistaking this place and sundry others: The vulgar Latin followed them step by step, and the Geneva likewise, all of them calling her an Ethiopian. To this purpose I cannot pass over the senseless tale of *Josephus* in his *Antiquities*, which he relateth of *Moses*, when he is said to have served *Pharaoh* in the wars against the Ethiopians at such time as he was brought up in his courts as the son of his daughter: for he transporteth *Midian* over the red sea, and beyond all Egypt, and setteth it in Ethiopia, quite mistaking the seat of Cush. The Ethiopians are directly under the Equinoctiall line, or not far from it, but far from the land inhabited by the Cushites, who are neither black of color, nor in any sort neighbouring the *Torrída Zona*: whereas *Moses* married the daughter of *Jethro* Priest or Prince of Madian, which is part of *Arabia Petraea* bordering the red sea, for he fled from *Pharaoh* into the land of Madian. Now it is manifest that Cush could not be Ethiopia, but Arabia, both that Arabia called the Stony, of which we spake before, and a part of Arabia the Happy & the Desert, which regions Cush and the Cushites presently planted and peopled, after that they left Babylon to Nimrod, wherein they first sate down altogether. But *Josephus* presuming that Cush was no other then Ethiopia, must needs maintain that the wife of *Moses* being a Cushite, was a woman of the Land of Ethiopia, and thereupon frameeth a formal tale that one *Tharbis* the daughter of the king of Ethiopia fell deeply in love with the person and fame of *Moses* while he besieged *Saba* her fathers chief city, and to the end to obtain *Moses* for her husband, she practiced to betray her parents, country, friends, and the city it self, and to deliver them and her self into *Moses* hands.

The substance of this tale is told in this sort, *While Moses was grieved that his army lay idle, because the enemy besieged durst not sally out and come to handy blows, there happened this accident in the mean while: The Ethiopian king had a daughter called Tharbis, who at some assaults beheld the person of Moses, and withal admired his valor. And knowing that Moses had not only upheld and restored the falling estate of the Egyptians, but had also brought the conquering Ethiopians to the very brink of subversion: these things working in her thoughts, together with her own affection (which daily increased) she made means to send unto him by one of her trustiest servants to offer her self unto him, and become his wife: which offer Moses on this condition accepted, that she should first deliver the City into his possession; whereunto she condescending, and Moses having taken an oath to perform this contract, both the one and the other were instantly performed.*

Here is a pleasant tale (for it is no better) whereof *Moses* hath not one word, wherein are many plain mistakings. For as he is deceived in taking Ethiopia to be the country of *Moses* his wife, when indeed it was Arabia, so he erreth no less in naming a city of Arabia for a city of Ethiopia. For *Saba* is not in Ethiopia, but in Arabia, as both *Strabo* and all Geographers ancient and moderne teach us, except haply *Josephus* can work miracles, or rather impossibilities, and persuade us that the Queen of *Saba*, which came from the South to hear the wisdom of *Solomon*, were a Negro or Black-Moore.

Again, while *Moses* kept the sheep of his father in law, the Priest of Madian, he is said to drive the flock to the desert, and so came to the mountain of God in Horeb, Exod. 3.1.2. Now that mount Horeb is not in Ethiopia, every child knoweth; and Sinai where the law was given is expressly said to be in Arabia, Gal. 4.25. But Horeb and Sinai were together, and differ as the whole and the part, Horeb being the name of that hilly coast wherein mount Sinai is situated.

Furthermore, we find that *Jethro* came to *Moses* at Rephidim not far frō Idumea, where perceiving the insupportable government of so great a multitude to lie upon his shoulders only, as a burden too heavy for him to bear, he advised him to distribute that weighty charge among others, and to make Judges and governors of every Tribe to help bear the burden with him, Exod. 18. But if *Jethro* had been an Ethiopian, it had been a very far progress and wearisome perambulation for him to have passed through all Egypt with the wife and children of *Moses*, and to have found *Moses* in the borders of Idumea, the Egyptians hating *Moses* to the death, and all that favored him.

Lastly, if we will believe *Moses* himself, who spake being inspired by the Spirit of God, then doubtless his wife was not purchased after the manner that *Josephus* reporteth, that is, for betraying her country and kindred, her parents and friends; neither had she the name of *Tharbis*, but of *Zipporah*; neither was she a Negro, but a Midianitish woman. For *Moses* flying out of Egypt for fear of *Pharaoh*, and for safety of his life, came to *Midian*, and sate down by a Well as a man distressed, and disconsolate, and a stranger, where he is said to have defended the daughters of *Reguel* from the other shepherds, and drew them water to water their sheep, upon which occasion he was entertained by *Jethro*, whose daughter he married, and not for any supposed betraying of towns and countries. Neither is it anything against this opinion of *Moses* his wife to have been an Arabian, that the Scriptures teach us that he married a Midianitish woman: forasmuch as Madian or Midian, standing on the North coast of the red sea over against the body of Egypt, and nere Ezion Gaber where *Solomon* provided his fleete for India, in the region of Edom, may well be reckoned as a part of Arabia, as the red sea is called *Sinus Arabicus*.

Moreover, these four nations are everywhere mixed in holy Scriptures, because they dwelt confusedly together, to wit, the *Madianites*, the *Ishmaelites*, the *Amalekites*, & the *Cushites*, which were all in one general word *Arabians*, and in the word called sometimes by one of those names, and sometimes by another, as Gen. 37, 25, 27. & 28. it is said that *Joseph* was sold to the *Ishmaelites*, & in the same chap. ver. 36. that the *Midianites* sold *Joseph* to *Putaphar* *Pharaohs* steward, and chap, 39, 1. that *Putaphar* bought *Joseph* of the *Ishmaelites*, which the Chaldean Paraphrast in the same place, calleth *Arabians*. To make this yet more plain, it appeareth Judge. 6, 3. y^t when *Israel* had sown, then came up the *Madianites*, *Amalekites*, and they of the East to set upon them: they of the East were *Arabians* of the Desert, so as where before in the buying of *Joseph* the *Madianites* and the *Ishmaelites* were confounded, here the *Madianites* & the *Amalekites* are made one nation, and chap. 8, 24. these nations are all called *Ishmaelites*, and neither *Madianites* nor *Amalekites*, of which in process of time came the Mahometan *Arabians*. Neither is the marginal note upon chap. 37, 28 of Gen. in the *Geneva*

Bibles, anything to the purpose, who to avoid the confounding of these Nations and taking one for another, tell us that *Moses* wrote according to their opinion who took the *Madianites* & *Ishmaelites* to be all one. For *Moses* wrote the truth as it was in it self, who was no stranger, but well acquainted in *Arabia*, in y^e border whereof and in *Arabia* it self he had formerly lived forty years, and therefore no man was better able to describe these places, so that it is a vain thing to make him utter an untruth contrary to his own knowledge, and to follow the opinion of others that were deceived.

The like mistaking of *Ethiopia* for *Chush* is found in many other places. The first is Gen. 2, 13. *The name of the second river is Gihon, the same is that which compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia*, in Hebrew it is, the land of *Chush*. But the Ethiopians are as much as black or burnt faces, whose proper country is called *Thebaides*, lying to the Southward of all Egypt, far distant from that land which was peopled and inhabited by the *Cushites*. And *Gihon* is a river that watereth *Chush*, and not *Ethyopia*. But it will be objected, [Objection] that *Homer* maketh a twofold *Ethyopia*, the East and the West, which also is found in *Strabo*. For he saith, *Odysseus* lib. 1.

〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 .

(〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 ,

〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉)

Where he showeth expressly, that the Ethiopians are divided into two sorts, some lie under the East Sun, and some under the west. But this serveth nothing to bring these Chusites to be either the one or the other, [Answer.] both of them being found elsewhere. For the East *Ethiopia* is that which compasseth *Nile* to the South of Egypt, and is the south border thereof, now a part of the Empire of the *Abyssines* under *Prester John*: and the west *Ethiopia* is y^t which joineth it self with the river *Niger*, which we call *Senega* and *Gambria*, for there-about are these Ethiopians called *Perorsi*, *Daratites*, with diverse other names which *Pliny* numbereth in his fifth book and eight chapter: and these two do lie indeed directly east and west, I mean that of *Niger*, and the other of *Prester John*. But touching *Chush* and the region of the *Ishmaelites* with the rest, they are extended directly North from that of *Ethiopia*, which is beyond Egypt. The farther mistaking of *Chush* for *Ethiopia* may be shown out of two places in the second book of the chronicles. First, where *Zearah* the *Chushite*, brought an army of ten hundred thousand against *Asa* King of *Judah*: which army whence it came the question ariseth, whether out of *Ethiopia*, or out of *Arabia* where the *Chusites* inhabited? Doubtless not from *Ethiopia*, for that had been a strange march and progress for such a multitude or world of people, having so mighty a King as the King of Egypt, between *Palestine* and *Ethiopia*. But these were the *Cushites*, *Amalekites*, *Midianites*, *Ishmaelites*, and *Arabians* (God having long before promised to make a great people of *Ishmael*, and that twelve Princes should issue from him.) For after that *Asa* strengthened by God had defeated this huge army swarming with such a multitude, he followed his victory, and took some of the Cities of king *Zearah* round about, and among the rest *Gerar*. Now, that *Gerar* should be any City of the *Ethiopians* no man can suspect or defend as appeareth in these places, Gen. 12, 11. and Exod. 17.8. compared

together: *Abraham* departed to y^e south country, and dwelt between *Cadesh* and *Sur*, and sojourned in *Gerar*. Now *Sur* is that part upon which *Moses* and the *Israelites* first set their feet after they had passed the red sea, where the *Amalekites* set upon them in *Rephidim*, supposing they had been weary and unable to resist. And in the history of *Isaac* it is written, that he went to *Abimelech* King of the *Philistines* unto *Gerar*: but no man is so simple as to say, that *Abimelech* and the *Philistines* were *Ethiopians*. The same might be shown out of many circumstances in that chapter. Lastly, *Moses* himself describing the bounds of *Canaan*, to confirm the faith, and to quicken the hope of *Israel*, hath these words, Gen. 10, 19. *The border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar unto Gaza, as thou goest unto Sodom and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lusha*: now *Sidon* was the Frontier of *Canaan* toward the North, and *Gerar* by *Gaza* toward the South. Another place of translating *Ethiopia* for *Chush*, is in 2 Chro. 21, 16. which the Geneva Translators have thus: *The Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and Arabians which were beside the Ethiopians*. But the *Philistines* and the *Negroes* are far asunder, as everyone that looketh upon a Map may easily judge: whereas the *Philistines* and *Arabians* do mixe and join with the land of the *Cushites*, and are distant from *Ethiopia* about 32. or 33. degrees, and therefore cannot be their next neighbors, inasmuch as all *Egypt*, and the deserts of *Sur* and *Pharan* are between them; so that it ought rather to be thus translated, *The Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and of the Arabians which confine (or border) upon the Cushites*: for these indeed are their next neighbors. But the *Israelites* had never any communion or affairs with the *Ethiopians*, nor any intelligence or trade beyond *Egypt* to the South: but the enemies w^c they had on the south and east parts were these nations of the *Chushites*, *Philistines*, *Ishmaelites*, *Amalekites*, and *Midianites*, who in one general name were all *Arabians*.

Another mistaking of *Ethiopia* for *Chush* is in the history of *Sennacherib*, 2 Kings 19, 9. where the Geneva saith, he heard that *Tirhakah* king of *Ethiopia* was come out to fight against him. This army that marched against the king of *Arabia*, not from *Ethiopia*, as *Josephus* himself maketh it manifest, for he confesseth, that this army came to relieve the *Jews* and the *Egyptians*, whom the proud *Sennacherib* sought to oppress together, and marched directly toward him by the way of the Desert. So then, it ought to have been translated *Tirhakah* king of the *Chushites*: for he had great reason to muster his men together, and to put them all in armor, forasmuch as the houses and the cities of the *Chushites* were next to the fire, and upon whom the smoke of *Judah* flaming was blown, being their nearest neighbors, and if the *Jews* had miscarried, their own turn must have been the next.

Having waded thus far in the books of the histories, let us proceed to consider some places as il expounded in the prophets, where also *Chush* is mistaken for *Ethiopia*, and first I propound a place in *Ezekiel*, Chap. 29, 10. where the Lord threateneth the utter subversion of *Egypt* by the *Babylonians*, which is thus described in the translators from the tower of *Seueneh* even unto the borders of the *Black-Moors*: which last words should rather have been converted, *from the Tower of Seueneh to the borders of the Chushites or Arabians*: between which two limites is situated all *Egypt*. For to say, from the borders of *Seueneh* to the *Ethiopians* is nothing at all, and can carry no sense or meaning, *Seueneh* it self being the border of *Egypt*, confronting and joining to *Ethiopia*, or the Land of the *Black-Moors*. So

then, if *Nebuchadnezzar's* conquest had been only between *Seueneh* and the border of *Ethiopia*, it had been a poor conquest, without victory, without enemies, without any land: because as *Junius* well observeth, *Seueneh* was the south bound of Egypt seated in *Thebaida* which toucheth *Ethiopia*, and *Cush* noteth the North bound, as if the Prophet had said, that Egypt should be ouerrun and overcome from one end of it to other; whereas *Nebuchadnezzar* never entered into any part of *Ethiopia*, as appeareth by the Prophet.

Another place in *Ezekiel* is chap. 30, 9. & is thus turned by the Geneuian Translators, *In that day shall there Messengers go forth from me in ships, to make the careless Moors afraid:* which should be amended and reformed by putting the word *Chush* or *Arabia* for *Ethiopia* or the *Black-moors*, as everyone may see which meanly understandeth the Geography of the world, knowing that to pass out of Egypt into *Ethiopia* there need no Gallies or ships no more then to pass forth of one piece of dry land into another, *Ethyopia* and *Egypt* being in one continent & conterminate the one to the other, which are not divided so much as by a river. Therefore in this place of *Ezekiel* it was meant, that from Egypt *Nebuchadnezzar* should send Gallies along the coast of the red sea, by which an army might be transported into *Arabia the Happy* and the *Stony* (sparing the long, wearisome march over all Egypt and the deserts of *Pharan*) which army might thereby surprise them unawares in their security & confidence. For when he was at *Seueneh* within a mile of *Ethiopia*, he needed neither gally, nor ship, nor boat to pass unto it, being all one firm land with Egypt, without any water to divide them; and it is well observed, that if he had minded to row up the river for pleasure sake, he could not have done it, because the fall of *Nile* tumbling over high and steepy mountains, called *Catadupae Nili*, was at hand, and would have hindered him.

And as in the prophesy of *Ezekiel* before remembered, the word *Ethiopia* is inserted in the translations for *Cush* or *Arabia*, which putteth many histories much out of square, one kingdom being taken or rather mistaken for another: so is it also in *Isaiah*, chap. 18, 1. *Oh the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, &c.* whereas it should be, *beyond the rivers of Cush or Arabia*. For the Land here spoken of by the Prophet *Isaiah*, is confessed by all interpreters to be no other then Egypt. They were the Egyptians that sent this message to the Israelites, which *Isaiah* repeateth: so that by the former translation every man may see the transposition of kingdoms: for hereby Egypt is transported to the other side of *Ethiopia*, and likewise *Ethiopia* set next to *Judea*, whereas it is the land of *Cush* and *Arabia* indeed, that lieth between *Judea* and Egypt, and not *Ethiopia* which is seated under the *Aequator*. Now if *Ethiopia* it self lie under the *Equinoctiall* line, with whom y^e Jews had never any acquaintāce, why should any man dream that they could have any knowledge of the Nations far beyond it, & beyond the rivers of *Ethiopia*? except we shall impiously and blasphemously think that the prophet spake he knew not what, or used an impertinent and unprofitable discourse of those nations, which were not discovered in 2000. years after, inhabiting as far South as the *Cape of good hope*, commonly known by the name of *Bona speranza*. Thus I have run over sundry places in the law and in the prophets, which have been mistaken and ill translated, in which *Cush* (which is *Arabia*) is expounded to be *Ethiopia*. Touching all which I do freely and ingenuously confess, I have lighted my candle at his candle, y^t hath with great

labor and industry published the history of the world, having here & there inserted some confirmation of that which he hath learnedly written.

Thus upon the occasion of *Moses* his marriage with the Midianitish woman called the Chushite, we have shown how sundry translators have mistaken the word Chush for Ethiopia, Madian being a part of *Arabia Petraea* or the Stony, as *Junius* hath well translated it, and *Vatablus* before him. It is not worth the standing upon or the gathering up which the same *Vatablus* observeth out of the Jewish Rabbin's, that *Zipporah* the Midianitess, is therefore said to be an Ethiopian, because she resembled the Black-Moors in color, and was tawny or black as the *Negroes* are which live under the line: which hath indeed no color of truth, and therefore we will omit the same, and come unto the words themselves.

1 And Miriam spake against Moses and Aaron, by occasion of the woman the Cushite, whō he had married: for he had taken to wife a woman a Cushite.

2 And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it.

3 But Moses was a very mecke man, &c.

The sum of these words we have shown before: wherein observe in the things y^t *Moses* suffered, that God's children oftentimes find great discomfort at their hands, of whom in all reason they should expect the greatest comfort. When the people did rise against him mutinously and tumultuously, where should he find rest? or in whose bosom should he pour out his complaint? or to whom should he resort for comfort but to *Aaron* and *Miriam*? to his brother and sister? But here we see they are his chief troublers and tormenters. The former was a great temptation, when the people did set themselves against him: howbeit this is greater, wherein not his enemies reproached him, and those that hated him did not magnify themselves against him, but his dearest friends and acquaintance, as befell also to *David*, Psal. 55, 12. The church maketh this complaint, *Cant.* 5, 7. That the watchmen that should have been both her guide and her gard, smote her and wounded her, the keepers of the walls took away her veil from her. And Christ fore-telleth, that a man's enemies shall be they of his own house, Mark 6, 4. This befell unto *Job* a man full of sorrows, his own wife that lay in his bosom, and his friends that were as his own soul, were the chief causes of his greatest anguish. *Abel* found no worse friend then his own brother, that came with him to the place of God's service, Gen. 4, 8. So *Ishmael* persecuted *Isaac*, *Ishmael* borne after the flesh, him that was borne after the Spirit, Ge. 21, 9. Gal. 4, 29. *Joseph* received hard measure of his brethren, who was by them sold for a bondslave, Ps. 105, 17. *Moses* was fain to fly out of Egypt, because a Jew one of his own brethren diuulged his killing of the Egyptian. The same befell *Zachariah* the son of *Jehoiada* the priest, who had saved the kings life, and set the crown upon his head, yet he remembered not the kindness of the father, but slew his son: the father had in a manner given him life, but he took away life from his son, 2 *Chro.* 24, 21. Who vexed the

church and troubled the Apostles more then false brethren? 2 Cor. 11, 26. The cause of this is the enmity between Christ and the serpent, and the seed of them both, w^c shown it self immediately after the fall in *Cain*, who was of that evil one & slew his brother, 1 John. 3, 12.

The uses which we must make hereof are, [Use 1] First, to mark the truth of that which Christ teacheth, Math. 10, 34, 35, 36. that he came not to send peace on earth, but rather a sword: and to set variance between man and man. And in another place, *I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled?* Luke 12, 49. He speaketh not of the effect, but of the event: not what the Gospel bringeth forth properly, but what it worketh accidentally: not what it procureth in the faithful, but what it produceth in the unfaithful.

Secondly, God will have all his to be well tried [Use 2] which are in the faith, even for their own good, that we may know what we can suffer for the truths sake, when we have sealed it up by our patience in all tribulations. Thirdly, hence ariseth comfort in our sufferings. For, do we suffer affliction at their hands of whom we hoped for better dealing? marvel not at it, neither think it strange: but let us comfort our selves with the examples of God's children, who have had the same measure measured out unto them before us: nay let us lay before us the example of Christ himself, who had experience of it not only in his own countrymen the Jews, but in *Judas* one of his own disciples, of whom the Prophets prophesied, *He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me*, Psal. 41, 9. Matth. 26, 23. Lastly, from hence we learn, in all discomforts [Use 4] to fly unto God, after the example of *David*, who gave himself continually to prayer, when he was vexed by such unexpected enemies, *Psal. 55, 16.* when he had complained that his friend and companion rose up against him, he addeth, *As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me.* So it ought to be with us, that we may find comfort in God when we can find none among men.

Again, *Miriam* and *Aaron* were of great reputation among the people, and sanctified in a great measure. *Aaron* was the Lord's high Priest, consecrated and anointed with holy oil; *Miriam* was a prophetesse, and one that sung the praises of God after their deliverance from *Pharaoh*, Exod. 15. yet loe how both of them fail in duty, and sin against God, & oppose themselves against his servant *Moses*: whereby we learn, that none are so sanctified, but they fail many ways. Let no man therefore dream of perfection in this life, Rom. 7, 14, 18, 19, 20, 23.

Moreover, from this example observe, that contentions are oftentimes in the church, even between the members of the same body. True it is, it were to be desired that there were perfect love and unity, peace and concord in the church, but this is rather to be looked for then to be found. There arose strife between *Abraham* and *Lot*, Gen. 13, 8. between *Paul* and *Barnabas*, Acts. 11, 2. & 15, 39. between *Peter* and *Paul*, Gal. 2, 11. So in the Church of the Corinthians, though they were sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be Saints, yet there were contentions among them. 1 Cor. [Reason 1] 1, 11. And no marvel: for first of all we know in part, and we prophesy in part: we know somewhat, but we are ignorant of much more [Reason 2] then we know, 1 Cor. 13, 9. Secondly, there must be even heresies, that they which are approved [Reason 3] may be known, 1 Cor. 11, 19. Thirdly, Satan's malice is exceeding great, he soweth the seeds of discord among the godly; for his hatred is exceeding

great against y^e church and he desireth nothing more then the ruin thereof, Revel. 1.2, 4. Lastly, self-love remaineth in the best men, which is a remnant of the flesh: this spurreth us forward to spurn against one another, and while we challenge too much to our selves, we ascribe too little unto others, 1 Cor. 13, 5.

This offereth to us this truth, that unity is [Use 1] no note of the true church, forasmuch as it is sometimes out of the church, when as contention is in it. The false Prophets were many that conspired against *Micaiah*, *Elijah*, and *Jeremiah*. Christ was condemned by a common voice of the people, and consent of the Pharisees, which cried out, *Away with him*, *Crucify him*, *crucify him*, Luk. 23.18.21. Thus then the mouths of the papists are stopped, which do please themselves in an idle conceit of a general agreement of many people and Nations, which is oftentimes a maintenance of error & vnwholesom doctrine, when it is joined with it. The unity of one faith, and of the same doctrine believed and confessed, we acknowledge to be a true mark of the true Church. Where there is the preaching of this faith, & the doctrine of Christ, and the sealing up of the same with the true administration of the Sacraments, there is a true church of God. The unity which is without that doctrine which is according to godliness, is as the cry of the whole city in maintenance of their idolatry, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*, Act. 19, 28. Or like to the house which the strong man possesseth, where all things are said to be in peace, Luk. 11, 21. Secondly, let us never look [Use 2] for a perfect agreement or perfect unity in this life. Such are fallen into a deep sleep, and dream to find heaven upon earth. We must embrace the truth before all be agreed, or else we shall never embrace it: forasmuch as there is much ignorance (the matter or mother of error) even in the most godly. Happy will it be for us, whē there shall be an end of these days of sin, for then shall be an end also of all contention. Thirdly, let us follow men's examples [Use 3] no further then they follow Christ. 1 Cor. 11, 1. There are defects and infirmities in the best. We aim at perfection, but we cannot hit it. Though we have multitudes to go before us, we must know whom they follow, before we follow and join our selves unto them. Many men may fitly be compared to a flock of sheep, who at the first make many offers before any will adventure: but if one begin to leap over, the rest follow amain: so is it with diverse men that pinch curtesy at the first, and keep themselves entire in the most holy faith; but if they see others give their assent, they follow after & stick at nothing, neither try the spirits whether they be of God or not. Lastly, it is our duty [Use 4] to cut off all occasions of debate, and as it were to take away the fuel that kindleth and continueth the fire. 1 Cor. 1.10. *Paul beseecheth the Corinthians* as brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among them, but y^t they be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.

[Verse 2. *And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses?*] The true cause of this their murmuring and contention, was pride and ambition, self-love, ostentation, & vainglory. Hereby we learn, that there cometh no greater plague to the Church of God then by ambition & desire of preeminence, when men desire to over-rule others, to have the sole command of all things in the church, and never to be commanded. This was the sin that caused our first parents to fall from God, and by their fall to ruin all mankind, they would needs be as God's knowing good and evil, Gen. 3, 5. The ambition and pride of *Amaziah* the priest of *Beth-el*,

would not suffer the Prophet *Amos* in the land of *Israel*, but he commanded him to fly away into the land of *Judah*, and prophesy there, *Amos* 7, 10, 12. We see this apparently afterward, chap. 16. of this book in *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*. This moved the high Priests, the Scribes and Pharisees, to persecute Christ and his Apostles to wit, the love which they had to their own kingdom and hierarchy more then unto the kingdom of God: they feared that if all men were brought to believe in Christ, they should lose their place and authority, *John* 11, 47. *Math.* 23, 6, 7. So was it among the Apostles, they also strove who should be the greatest among them. So the Apostle *John* speaking of *Diotrephes*, showeth that *he loveth the preeminence*, 3 *John* 9, 10. He was a proud and ambitious man, affecting rule and authority over others, and thereby brought much mischief and trouble upon the church of God, prating against the Pastors with malicious words; and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, & forbiddeth them that would, and casteth thē out of the church. Neither is this evil dead with these; for this is a great plague of the church to this day and very pernicious. Nothing hath more ruined the church of God, ouerthrown piety, corrupted religion, hindered the Gospel, discouraged the Pastors and professors of it, nothing hath more erected the kingdom of Anti-christ, then these petty popes, the true successors of *Diotrephes*, such as desire to be universal bishops, and to reign alone, to have all the dealings in their own hands, and the whole flock to stand at their beck, and conclude what they list.

[Reason 1] The mischief hereof appeareth by sundry reasons. First, it causeth a great rent and division in the church, and disturbeth the peace of it, *Nu.* 16, 1. *Korah* and his company went apart as scismaticks, & caused a great contention to arise where was peace & unity before. [Reason 2] Secondly, it setteth up men, & putteth down the Lord and his ordinances, urging, compelling, and commanding against the truth, *Act.* 4, 18, 19. *Annas* the high priest, and *Caiaphas*, and *John*, and *Alexander*, a proud generation of ambitious prelates, commanded the Apostles not to preach and teach, nor to speak at all in the name of *Iesus*, whō Christ had charged and commanded to preach. And whereas he would have them teach whatsoever he had commanded them, *Math.* 28, 20. they will limit them and stint the Spirit of God how far he shall go, and what he shall not do. Thirdly, [Reason 3] it proceedeth from very evil roots, and bringeth forth very evil effects, as an evil tree bringeth forth evil fruits. The causes from whence it floweth, are Satan, pride, contempt disdain of others, self-love in our selves, no love of the truth, no zeal of God's glory, no desire of the good of the church: like mother, like daughter, as the root is, so is the branch. The effects thereof are trouble, disquietness, fear, flattery, envy, and subtlety.

Let us come to the Uses. It reproveth the [Use 1] Bishops of Rome, and the Roman Clergy, which bear themselves as Lord's over the flock of Christ, having all things to stand at their beck: therefore the Apostle *Peter* saith, the Elders that feed the flock must not be as Lord's over God's heritage, but examples to the flock, 1 *Pet.* 5, 3. and Christ our Savior when the two sons of *Zebedeus* ambitiously desired to be above their fellows, and strove among themselves which should be greatest, Christ *Iesus* thereupon showeth how and which way everyone should be great, & who ought to be had in highest regard and reputation, even such and only such as do the best and greatest service to the church, *Mark.* 10, 42. *Lu.* 23, 24. *Whosoever will*

be great among you, shall be your Minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. So then, the honor and the labor should not be divided, but go together: howbeit in the church of Rome they have most honor that do the least labor, and contrariwise, they are least respected, who have most labored and taken greatest pains among the people. But howsoever this be a common & received custom, it shall be altogether otherwise in the next life, when the great shepherd of the sheep shall appear, then shall they be most honored of him that have labored most, & everyone shall receive not only for his labor, *but according to his labor*, 1 Cor. 3, 8. The greatest reward shall be for the greatest labor, and the least for the least labor. O then we shall wish with all the desire of our souls, y^t we had labored more abundantly: and therefore let us be instant in season and out of season, while we have time. The night cometh when none can labor. Hence it is, that Christ promiseth to his Apostles w^c had planted the churches, and bestowed the greatest pains, a chief place of honor nere to himself. Woe then to the bishop of Rome, y^t doth now domineer in the church, and over the faith and consciences of men, who sitteth in y^e temple of God, showing him self that he is God: he challengeth all power due to himself▪ but laboreth not in the word & doctrine: he neither preacheth the Gospel, nor taketh it to be any part of his Function, but rather a great disgrace to his usurped office. This is not to be the vicar of Christ, for he went about all cities and villages teaching in their synagogues, & preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. This is not to be the successor of *Peter*, for he is commanded to feed the Lambes, to feed y^e sheep of Christ, John. 21, 15, 16, 17. and he fed them not only by his deputies or assigns, but in his own person, Act. 1, 15. & 2, 14. & 3, 12. & 4, 8. & 5, 29. and 10, 34. and he requireth all Pastors to do the like, 1 Pet. 5.2. *Feed the flock that dependeth upon you.* Wherefore the man of sin, though he here usurp the highest honor, and challenge a triple crown, and beareth both swords civil and ecclesiastical, to whom indeed neither is due, shall have in the end the greatest shame and contempt poured on him.

[Use 2] Secondly, acknowledge this ambition to be a general corruption, the relics and remainders whereof, are in all the servants of God, yea in all the children of *Adam*; we have drawn it from him, and thereby it hath leavened and corrupted all mankind. It drew, nay it threw *Adam* out of the garden of God: it quickly crept into the family of Christ, and infected his disciples, and therefore being a subtle and secret evil it is to be looked unto, that it steal not suddenly upon us. If any man ask what it is? I answer, it is an immoderate desire after dignity, and of dignity upon dignity, it is a thirst that never can be quenched: for as the covetous person hath never enough money, so the ambitious hath never enough honor: it is a secret poison, an hidden plague, the mistress of craft, the mother of hypocrisy, the father of envy, the fountain of vices, the moth of piety, a blind guide and leader of the hearts of men; finally, we may say of the love of it as *Paul* doth of the love of money, *It is the root of all evil*, 1 Tim. 6, 10. The farther we think our selves from it, the nearer commonly it cometh unto us: and therefore let nothing be done through strife and vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better then themselves, Phil. 2, 3.

[Use 3] Lastly, let all learn to beware of this evil. To this purpose we should entertain these meditations as so many sovereign preservatives, to teach us, first that the ambitious person,

neither knoweth God, nor himself, nor his neighbor, nor his beginning, nor his end; nor the Scriptures: not God his Creator, not himself his creature, not his neighbor, his equal, and perhaps his superior; not his beginning, of the dust of the earth; not his end, the grave, the worms, the dust out of which he was taken; not the Scriptures, w^c teach, *That God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble*, I am. 4, 6. We dream that other men will esteem of us as highly, as we use to do of our selves: but therein we deceive our selves. Humility is the ready way unto true glory, Ambition is the path that leadeth to shame and contempt. Therefore Christ saith oftentimes, *Whosoever exalts himself shall be abased, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted*, Mat. 23, 32. Luke 14, 11. & 18, 24. Secondly, ambition was the downfall of man from the beginning, yea of the Angels, not contenting themselves with their estates. The higher men climb, the more fearful is their fall: whereas he that creepeth low upon all four, never feareth a fall. *Pride is the fore-runner of destruction*, Prov. 11, 2. and 16, 18. & 18, 12. Thirdly, such as have had the greatest gifts, and were best qualified with excellent graces, have been most backward in seeking honors, and been hardly brought to accept of them being offered, even when they followed close at their heels, as the shadow doth the body; as we see in *Moses*, in *Jeremiah*, and others. Such therefore as hunt after preferment, and are most hasty of it to catch it before it fall, as the dog doth a bone, or as the hauke houereth aloft for her prey, it is to be feared they will be least conscionable in it, as giving by their untimely and immeasurable desires, just occasion to suspect that they respect and aim at their own good more then the good of others, or the glory of God; and therefore honor of right ought least of all to be conferred & bestowed upon such. Fourthly, all place of superiority is full of much trouble, and accompanied with many cares and vexations: why then should we desire so eagerly and earnestly that which bringeth so great annoyance & encombrance? what wisdom were it for a man to lay such heavy burdens upon his shoulders, as thereby he is ready to break his back? Yet so is it with haughty and ambitious spirits, they so cloy & clog themselves with promotions & preferments, that they are not able to bear the weight of them, neither any way fit to discharge them, but in sustaining them are like to break their backs, nay their necks. Fifthly, the greater honor we get, the greater account we have to make. The more is committed unto us, the more shall be required of us. We are sharp sighted to espy the least occasion of raising us up: but we cannot see what account will be asked of us. Lastly, such as desire promotion on earth, do oftentimes find confusion in heaven: as we see in *Absalom* and *Achitophel*, one the son, the other the Counselor of *David*, both rebels & traitors to their Prince. Such as will be greatest on earth, shall be least in heaven. The honor which here we have, should put us in mind to seek the true honor of God's kingdom. The earthly honor is but as a shadow, rhe heavenly is the substance. They that honor God shall be honored of him, but they that despise him shall be despised.

[*Hath the Lord spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us?*] Behold here, how in the humor of their pride & ambition, they set themselves against no other then *Moses* himself, a chief & a most excellent servant of God; they strike at the head and not at the feet, & touch him whom God had lifted up above the rest to govern his people. The Doctrine arising from hence is this, that proud and ambitious men do show themselves continually most envious and outrageous, against the most excellent and most painful servants of God. So did *Haman*

against *Mordecai*, the true servant of God, and faithful subject of the King, of whom it is said, *He had spoken good for the king*, Esth. 7, •. So did the high Priests show their malice against Christ, and afterward against his Apostles: *Diotrephes* against *John*, and the most painful Pastors. That Antichrist of *Rome* hath always been most bitter against the chief teachers of the gospel, and the best preachers of the reformed churches.

For first, they stand most of all in their way, [Reason 1] and are a great eye-sore unto them, resisting their tyranny and pride, and discovering to y^e world their Antichristian usurpation. This is the true cause that they have raged against them both alive and dead, Revel. 11, 10. The two witnesses are slain, and they rejoiced in their fall, because they were vexed by them. This maketh the proud bishop of *Rome* (even under his own nose) better to endure the blasphemous Jews or any other professed enemies of Christ, and of the Christian religion, then such as believe in Christ, because the other never trouble his kingdom; but these are ready to cal him to an account, and to answer for the destruction of the souls of men. Secondly, they are afraid lest if these continue and prosper, their kingdom fall. This fear of the high priests was it that moved them against Christ and his Apostles, John, 11, 48, Thirdly, cankered and corrupt envy cannot abide them that do any good in y^e church or commonwealth, much less them that do most good, and labor more then others, but it seeketh the ruin of such. For their diligēce maketh the negligence of those to appear the more. *Saul* envied *David* to the death, especially for the gifts, graces, and blessings of God bestowed upon him.

[Use 1] See from hence this truth, that the best servants of God oftentimes find the worst entertainment in the world, and that at the hands of the highest and chiefest. Thus it fell out with *Moses*, who was driven by *Pharaoh* to forsake Egypt. Heb. 11, 37.38. So *Herod*, *Pilate*, the high priests & rulers of the people set themselves against Christ and his Apostles. Wherefore when we see this, marvel not at it, neither be discouraged by it: when we find and feel the like measure, let us comfort our selves in the examples of the faithful that have gone before us. We must not look to be better then they, nor dream of a condition higher then theirs: it is enough for us to be made like unto them. The more our graces increase, the more will the envy of the malicious increase.

[Use 2] Secondly, this showeth the unthankfulness of the world, who hate them most, and love them least that do them most good. The ungodly reap many benefits by the godly, yet do they recompense them evil for good. The creatures groan under the burden which they sustain, yielding help and succor to the ungodly. By means of *Paul*, all that were in the ship had their lives granted unto them, & yet afterward they would have killed him, Acts 27, 42. Whatsoever the wicked enjoy, it is for the godly's sake. They bring a blessing upon the house, yea upon the land where they live. The faith of *Noah* preserved his whole family though all were not faithful that were in it, Gen. 7, 1. The faith of *Rahab* believing in God and showing the soundness of it by a lively fruit in receiving the spies, saved alive her father and mother, her brethren and sisters & all that they had. But doth the world respect them any whit the more, or love them one jot the better? No doubtless, they will not acknowledge themselves any way beholden unto them, or that they fare the better for them. Whereas

indeed, the godly are their good benefactors and patrons, whatsoever they esteem of them. The poorest man y^t feareth God doth after a sort give life & living to the ungodly. They have cause to thank them for that which they have, and for that consideration to make much of thē. The heavens could not continue as they do, but would fall upon the heads of these profane wretches, if once the number of the elect were accomplished, yet we see how badly and basely they are accounted of, they hate them to the death, and procure what hurt they can unto them.

Lastly, acknowledge herein the providence of God, that the gifts of his children [Use 3] should not exalt them: for all are prone unto vainglory, even they that are sanctified in the greatest measure are spotted with pride and ambition, emulation, and desire of superiority, 2 Cor. 12, 7. Paul saith of himself, *Least I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger Satan to buffet me, least I should be exalted above measure.* We see, he repeateth this twice, and beginneth & endeth the sentence with the same thing, that he had this temptation, *least he should be exalted above measure.* To teach us that this fell out by God's special providence and dispensation. Hereby doth God work out their great good & turneth the envy of enemies to the furtherance of his own and his children's glory, whereby much evil is suppressed, which otherwise is ready to break out.

[*And the Lord heard it.*] This followed their sin immediately as a sergeant y^t doggeth the poor debtor at the heels to attach him & arrest him: God heard the sin that they committed, their words came up to his ears, and he is determined not to keep silence. We learn hereby, that God knoweth, heareth, and understandeth all the ways of men, nothing can be hid from his sight, nothing can escape his hearing: he discerneth and descrieth all the doings of men whatsoever they be. God knew what Adam had done so soon as he had fallen, and eaten of the forbidden fruit, and called unto him, *Adam, Where art thou?* Gen. 3.9. He saw all the wickedness of man upon the earth, and knew that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, was only evil continually, Gen. 6, 5. He was not ignorant that the Sodomites were exceeding sinners against the Lord, Gen. 18, 20. he heard the cry of their sins, which sounded shrilly in his ears, and pierced the clouds, and mounted up to heaven: so Prov. 15, 3, 11.

[Reason 1] He made the eyes, the heart, & the ears, Psal. 94, 9, 10, 11. yea he hath fiery eyes, Dan. 10, 6. Many things hinder our eyesight; the darkness of the night, the distance of the place, the weakness of the sight, the excellency of the object, and the infirmity of old age; but nothing can hinder the light of his eye, no darkness, no distance, no age.

[Reason 2] Secondly, he is infinite in nature, he cannot be excluded out of any place: we may shut out the company of men, and haply the light of the Sun, but it is impossible to shut out him that is evermore present in every place, even as the light is present to those that walk abroad at noon day, whether they open their eyes or shut them, whether they see it or not; so the Lord is present to all men, though he be not seen of all, yet they cannot go from his presence. If then he cannot be far from everyone of us, it will follow from hence that he must needs know all our works and words. [Reason 3] Thirdly, he is omniscient, he knoweth all things, nothing can be hid from him, Prov. [Reason 4] 15, 11. Fourthly, he judgeth all

things, and all men according to their works. It is his office to be the judge of all the world, Gen. 18.25. therefore he heareth, knoweth, and understandeth all things, 2 Cor. 5, 10. otherwise he cannot do righteous judgment. He will not proceed upon the bare and naked information of others, or by uncertain guess and conjecture, but he judgeth according to his own knowledge, which is ever certain, and never doubtful. Every just judge proceedeth upon a known and manifest cause.

[Use 1] We infer from hence, that it is in vain for any man to be high conceited of himself, like the proud Pharisee, seeing God knoweth his estate and condition more truly and thoroughly than himself. *Miriam* and *Aaron* in this place, hold themselves as great Prophets as *Moses*, but GOD knew the pride of their hearts, and the vanity of their words. He knoweth what each man thinketh in his heart, & speaketh with his tongue. In vain do any highly esteem of themselves, and over-value their own worthiness, seeing they are so well known within and without to God: & as he valueth of them, so they are indeed, and not otherwise. If a man know one good thing in himself, the Lord knoweth ten evil things in him, that are sufficient to make him vile & abominable in his sight. The hypocritical Pharisee in the Gospel, knew a few things in himself which he thought and prized to be exceeding good; but (alas) the Lord, that seeth not as man seeth, knew for these seeming good things many inherent evils, that made him hateful to God. The church of *Laodicea* was very greatly conceited of it self, saying; *I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing*; but the Lord heard this; and knew y^t it was wretched and miserable, and poor, & blind, and naked, Reu. 3.17. It is not so with men as they value themselves, but as God valueth thē, for he knoweth all things, yea those things in them & by them, which they know not or see not in themselves. There are three errors which did deceive y^e Pharisee in esteeming of himself at too high a price, which deceive also many thousāds in the world as well as him. The first is, his error of comparison, in comparing himself with another person, w^c was to behold his face in a false glass. For he thought he had found out a man worse than himself, and this made him come boldly and confidently to God with these words; *Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men, nor as this Publican*, Lu. 18.11. This comparison was that wherein he was greatly deceived: he thought himself just, and that he must needs be singular good, because one stood by him, and many others lived with him, whom he thought to be worse than himself. A second cause of his error was his freedom from some gross sins of the second Table, which he judged others to be guilty of: *I am not an extortioner, unjust, or an adulterer*; therefore he thought he must needs be a right honest and just man. His third error sprang from his performance of some duties of religion to God, *I fast twice in the week, I pay tythe of all I possess*; thereupon he persuaded himself, that he was truly religious and holy in God's sight. These were his fond conceits, and all of them erroneous, because he went away condemned by Christ notwithstanding all these gay and glorious works, verse 14. These things touch us also nearly, who are carried away with the same deceitful pretences. For first, we also lay the foundation of godliness upon a comparison, if we can find out any worse than our selves, we take our selves to be simply good men; as a wise historian said of the Popes, that *the bounty or goodness of the Pope is praised, when he exceedeth not the malignity of other men*. This course will utterly deceive us, for when the Lord shall come to judgment, he will not judge by

cōparisons what we are to such a one: but according to his law: & though he find us better then some other men, yet will he enter into judgment with us, because he findeth us to be worse then we ought to be by his word, whereby we must be judged at the last day, Io, 12, 48.

The second error deceiving the Pharisee and others in our age, is, because they are free from some gross sins, and therefore take themselves to be just and upright men: if they can make it good, that they be no userers, no unclean persons, no drunkards, no murderers, oh then they are as honest & perfect men as the best of them all; but God will not save us for some evils which we want, but condemn us for those which we have. For though thou want these, thou mayest abound in other.

Lastly, they think if they perform some duties of the first Table, which savor of religion, they are in very good case: if they can say, I hear often, I pray often, I receive the Lord's Supper, they go away with this strong fond conceit, that they are to be holden religious persons. This therefore cannot serve our turns: for this we may do, and yet be proud hypocrites. We may pray, yet without any feeling, zeal, or good affection. We may hear, and yet practice nothing, but live in disobedience. We may reverence the Minister, and entertain him in our houses, and yet reform no sin that he reproveth. We may come to the Lord's Table, and yet come as *Judas* did, and go away as he did, that is, without a sound heart and a right faith. So that we may say of such, as Christ himself doth, Luke 16, verse 15. *Ye are they that justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed amongst men is abomination in the sight of God.* The Lord knoweth how we pray, how we hear, and how we receive the Sacrament: how highly soever we esteem of our selves by reason of some few good things which we seem to have, yet God cannot be deceived, and it is certain he will not be mocked.

Secondly, there is no dallying with God, [Use 2] or shifting from him, or hiding our ways and works out of his sight, neither can we reap any comfort in the flattering persuasions of others. It is a vain thing for any man to esteem highly of himself, because other men as vain as himself sooth him up, and tell him he is in an happy estate and condition, that he is a faithful and religious person and professor, and shall without all doubt inherit the kingdom of heaven: when in the mean season, his own heart shall condemn him, and convince him that it is nothing so. It is I say, a vain thing to think one whit better of our selves for this, for GOD knoweth thy heart better then thyself, 1 John 3, 20. who knoweth all things. If thine own heart condemn thee, God is greater then thy heart. There is no true comfort that resteth upon the breath of another man's mouth. Tell me, when a man lieth on his death bed, what comfort can the approbation of another man give thee, that thou art a good man, when thy own soul proclaimeth the contrary, and God knoweth thee to be evil? Doubtless no more, then if he tell thee thou art sound and in good health, when thou feelest thyself to be heart-sick, and at deaths door. So if all the world should acquit thee, and thine own conscience condemn thee, what good can y^e vain applause of sinful men do thee? It is true indeed in an earthly estate, it is a great matter to be well thought off by others, because then he shall be sure to be clear from the censure of earthly Judges: but it is otherwise between God and our selves, for he is both witness & Judge of all our actions, and can make our own

hearts to speak for him against our selves. What should it profit a man, if all his neighbors round about him, should conceive an opinion of him that he is rich and wealthy, worth many thousands, and in the mean season he know himself to be poor and beggarly, & many thousands worse then naught, what benefit could any man take by such a persuasion? So likewise what comfort can a man take to hear others tell him of his good estate before God, that he is just and upright before him, a man fearing God and eschewing evil, when his own conscience knoweth by him that which all the world did never know, and God knoweth a thousand times more then them both.

Thirdly, from hence comfort ariseth to all [Use 3] God's true children and faithful servants, because he knoweth what they are & what their condition is: he cannot misconceiue through suspicion or surmise, nor be deceived by misinformation of others, because he knoweth them well, and therefore their estate is happy and blessed before him. True it is, it hath been the lot and portion of the godly to be falsely accused and traduced in the courts and accounts of men; yet in respect of GOD they may take comfort from this doctrine, for they shall appear just before him, & therefore they may defy the malice of Satan and of all their adversaries. If they labor to keep themselves pure and holy before him, howsoever they be esteemed of before men, let them rest and be content until they appear before the throne and tribunal seat of God, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart, and then shall every man have praise of God, 1, Cor. 4, 5. Psal. 7, 8, 9. & the malice of the wicked shall come to an end. This is the consolation that every soul may have, if he lead an upright life; for when men charge him, God will discharge him, and when they condemn him, he will justify him: and it should move us to bring all our thoughts, words, & deeds as into God's presence, being well assured that he knoweth all of them. This will work in us a care to walk warily, as *Enoch* did before the flood, Gen. 5, 22, & *Abraham* after the flood, Gen. 17, 1. The want of this meditation causeth all sin to break out of us.

Lastly, it will teach men to be patient under the hand of God. Are we in any trouble, [Use 4]and do we not know any particular cause why it should be so? Yet let us not murmur, but bear it with patience, because though we know nothing, yet God knoweth there is cause enough. As affliction cometh from him, so he knoweth wherefore he sendeth it, and we should stoop down under his hand. Whē *Eli* heard all that the Lord had threatened against him and his house, this was his resolution, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* We also ought to be patient and to hold our peace, and say with the Prophet, Psal. 119, 137. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments.*

[Ver. 3. Now the man *Moses* was very meek, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth.] The reason is rendered why he put up this wrong, he was a man lowly in his own eyes, of great patience, and singular humility; he did not storm and rage against them, he did not rail at them and revile them, he drew not out the sword of justice against them, or execute his authority, nor complain to God against them, though he himself were wronged, the people offended, and God dishonored greatly thereby. He sought not revenge in his own

cause, neither desired God to be revenged of them. They could not be ignorant of his meekness, for this is such a virtue as cannot be hid

[Object.] Now a question may here be moved, how the pen of *Moses* could thus praise himself in the highest degree, and call himself not only meek, but very meek: and not so only, but meek above all the men upon the earth; considering the counsel of *Solomon*, Prov. 27, 2. For answer hereunto, it may seem, that some things in the books of *Moses* are here and there inserted and dispersed, [Answer.] which could not be written by his hand, and therefore may seem to be added by *Joshua*, or some other of the Prophets after him: as Exod. 16, 35. it is said, that the children of Israel did eat Manna forty years, until they came to a Land inhabited, which is not set down prophetically, but added historically, not by way of foretelling what was to come, but of telling what was already come to pass: but in the days of *Moses* they were not come to a land inhabited, it was *Joshua* that conducted them into y^e land of promise. Likewise the history of the death and burial of *Moses*, recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, chap. 34, could not be penned by himself, but must of necessity be annexed by some of the Prophets. Neither doth this any way derogate from the authority of the writings of *Moses*, which were given by the inspiration of the Spirit, seeing we confess the Prophets which came after, spake by the same Spirit. But howsoever it be, this is certain that *Moses* and the Prophets, whether they praise or dispraise themselves, wrote no otherwise then as they were commanded and appointed. Besides, these words may be restrained to the cause and matter in hand, namely, y^t as by nature he was very mild and gentle, so he departed not from his humility, though he were exceedingly provoked by those whom he least suspected, and at whose hands he least deserved it. He became as a deaf man that heard not, and as a dumb man which openeth not his mouth, but used this as a reason to cast down himself farther before God, and as *David* said, *I will be yet more vile in mine own eyes*: so *Moses* saith, *I will be yet more mild in mine own eyes*. And herein was his meekness seen, hereby it was tried. Every man will seem to be mild when he is not provoked; but when we are teased and troubled, if then we keep our meekness, we show that we have this gift. It is no commendation to keep silence and hold our peace, when no mā wrongeth us, but if we can bear with patience the wrongs that are offered unto us, thē we may assure our selves that this virtue is in us. We learn from hence, That everyone in his own cause should be meek and lowly, ready to put up wrongs offered unto them, Prov. 24, 29. Ro 12, 17. Meekness is a virtue which adorneth all persons, estates & degrees; as the Magistrate, Josh. 7, 19, the Minister, 2, Tim. 2, 25: the master, Eph. 6, 9. Math. 26, 50: the wife, 1 Pet. 3, 4: a meek and quiet spirit is of great price, and much accepted in y^e sight of God: the hearer of the word of God, I am. 1, 21: the servant, 1 Pet. 2, 20. To be short, it adorneth every Christian in his general calling, Eph. 4, 1, 2. The examples of the Saints are many that have gone before us. *David* toward *Saul*. *Stephen* prayed for his enemies. Christ setteth forth himself as a pattern of this virtue, Math. 11, 29. and he hath left himself an example of it, by washing the feet of his Disciples, John 13, 5, 15. and by bearing the reproaches of the ungodly, 1 Pet. 2, 23.

The reasons to confirm the point, follow. [Reason 1] First, God the Father dealeth thus with us, he beareth with patience and long suffering, and forgiveth such as repent. Secondly, vengeance is the Lord's, it belongeth to him only & to his assigns, to wit, the Magistrates, &

not to private persons. Such as take the sword into their own hand, doubt of God's justice, and in effect deny him to be just. Thirdly, meekness is a gift of the Spirit, and the contrary is a fruit of the flesh and of our corrupt nature.

If this be necessary for all, then we must [Use 1] learn the nature of it, and for this purpose consider what it is, the matter whereof it standeth, and the fruits thereof. Meekness is a gift of the Spirit, which moderateth anger & desire of revenge, forgiving offenses and pardoning injuries for peace and quietness sake: so that albeit a man be provoked by injuries received, yet he doth not intend nor enterprize to requite it, but brideleth all hatred & impatience. The matter wherein it must be shown, is private unto our selves. In the wrongs and injuries that touch our persons, we must be as *Moses* was in this place; we must set his example before our eyes: but in matters of God, when his glory is impeached, or his truth diminished, we must be earnest & zealous; not patient, not forbearing, not longsuffering, but as this *Moses* was in the case of God, *Exod. 32 19, 27.* when he saw the Calf, he waxed hot, not meek; whereas in this place in a matter concerning himself, he waxed meek, not hot. So it was with *David*, who held his tongue at his own wrongs, and was as a man that could not hear; yet he consumed away with zeal against the enemies that forgot God's word. The like we see in *Christ* our Savior, he was as a Lamb, meek before the shearer, & opened not his mouth: yet whē the Temple was abused, and the worship of God profaned, *he made a whip of cords, and drave the buyers & sellers out of the Temple.* Lastly, touching the fruits of it, we must understand, first, that it maketh a man with a patient and quiet heart to submit himself to y^e judgments of God; and not to murmur at thē, or to faint under them, as *David*, being in great distress through God's heavy hand upon him doth show forth this grace. Secondly, it maketh a man to bear the injuries of men with a quiet mind, yea to forgive and forget them. Thirdly, it maketh a man not only to bear the injuries of others, but to forbear to offer wrongs and injuries unto others. For whosoever is patient and meek in spirit, will rather suffer then offer wrong.

Secondly, we ought to labor for the moderation [Use 2] of all our affections, especially anger, hatred, malice, rancor, and revenge. The motives to stir and induce us hereunto are many, and of much force. First, it is y^e right way to blessedness, *Mat. 5, 5.* If we would be happy, or any whit regard this promise, we must get the spirit of meekness into our hearts, & express the power of it in our lives. Secondly, we must deal with our brethren, as God hath dealt with us; we daily wrong him by our offenses, and provoke him by our sins, yet he beareth with us: shall we then be so unlike to our heavenly Father, as by and by to revenge the wrongs done to us, and challenge him the combat that any way toucheth our credit and estimation? *Col. 3, 13.* Thirdly, without it we cannot hear the word of GOD to our comfort and salvation, but it is made utterly unprofitable unto us, *I am. 1, 21.* Fourthly, a soft and mild spirit pacifieth wrath, and heapeth coals of fire upon the enemies head. It must be our wisdom to give place to wrath, *Rom. 12, 19.* It is our duty to be pitiful and courteous, and to love the brethren, *1 Pet. 3, 8, 9.* Lastly, it moveth us to cast up our eye to God's providence, and to assubject our selves unto it, as we see in the examples of *Job* and *Joseph*, who never sought revenge on them that did them wrong: but rest in the will and pleasure of him that ruleth all things.

[Use 3] Lastly, it reproveth such as are contrary minded, who never came near where this grace groweth. These offend diverse ways first, by anger, hatred, cruelty, and revenge, directly against the precept of the Apostle, Ro. 12, 19. Secondly, by rejoicing at the calamity of good men, as *Shimei* insulted over *David* when he fled from his son *Absalom*, and was constrained to pass over *Jordan* for safety of his life. So was it with the Babylonians & Edomites over the Israelites, Psal. 137, 7. Obad 12, 13. Thirdly, by envying and grudging to see others prosper, and to grieve at the sight of it. But it will be said, If we put up injuries, [Object.] we shall be accounted no better then fools and cowards, and be laughed at for our labor. Answ. [Answer.] We must not regard the corrupt judgment of man, 1 Cor. 4, 3. These that are wise in their own eyes, love the praise of mē more then the praise of God, John. 12, 48. Let us seek the praise of God, which is indeed the true praise: as for other estimation without this, it is but a shadow of true glory, if it be so much. And this is a certain rule, that it is no cowardice at all to obey God, and to follow his commandments, neither is it any point of wisdom to be ready to revenge, Ier. 8, 9. And tell me, to what end serve Magistrates in the commonwealth? to what ende serve masters in the family? are they not set up of God to end controversies between man and man, and quarrels between servant and servant? It is no want of manhood for a subject to complain to the Magistrate, and to say as the poor widow did in the Gospel, *Auenge me of mine adversary*, Lu. 18, 3. It is no part of a coward for the servant to acquaint his master with the wrongs that are offered unto him by his fellow servant. [Objection] But it is hard for flesh and blood to put up wrongs, and to digest the injuries which are measured unto us. Answ. I will say more then that, it is impossible for flesh and blood to do it, [Answer.] if we be no more then a lump of flesh: but withal I add, that flesh and blood in the matters of God are evil counselors; and if we have no more in us then these, and no farther work begun in us, it is certain we are not God's children, neither shall inherit God's kingdom. If we be not spirit as well as flesh, we are none of his.

4. And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, & unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the Tabernacle of the Congregation; & they three came out.

5. And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the Tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forth.

Hitherto of their sin: now we come to God's proceeding against them, consisting partly in a citation, partly in a conviction, and partly in the execution of punishment upon the principal offender. First, we see how the offenders are cited and summoned to appear before the Judge; for GOD doth as it were send a process for *Miriam* and *Aaron* to appear and hold up their hands at his bar to plead guilty or not guilty. He calleth the parties offending, and the party offended and wronged before him. Albeit the Lord know all things, yet he will proceed judicially against them. The doctrine from hence is plain, that God never bringeth judgments upon any people or person, but he doth first search and find sufficient cause▪ why he doth so. Whensoever he cometh to judgment, he will proceed upon a manifest ground, and upon a

just and known cause; he never doth it rashly, but upon deliberation, Gen, 3, 13, 14, and 11, 6, 7. and 18, 31. Zeph. 1, 12.

The reasons are evident. For first, hereby [Reason 1] the justice of God is cleared: for hereby it appeareth, that whatsoever he doth inflict, he doth it not through any malice to their persons, but because they have justly provoked him by their sins: he doth it in love to justice, and in hatred to sin. He that hateth a man will smite him before he make any enquiry of the matter, as they dealt with *Paul*, they scourged him to know what he had done, and what was the matter of which he was accused, Acts 22, ver. 24. It is not so with God. Secondly, the Lord requireth that all Magistrates should observe this course, Deut. 13, 14. If then he charge them to enquire before they proceed to judgment, much more will the Lord himself observe the same order.

This teacheth us that the judgments of [Use 1] God must needs be acknowledged to be always just: though they be sharp and grievous, yet they are ever righteous. For we see he proceedeth upon known causes, he goeth not upon uncertainties, but seeth & knoweth all things which appear naked and open before him. The heart of man is shut up from the sight of men, and they cannot possibly discern what lieth and lurketh therein: only it is the Lord that discerneth the heart, Psal. 33, 15, 1 John 3, 20. The workman must needs know the work and whatsoever is in y^e work much better then the work it self. God is the maker of the heart of man, & therefore cannot but proceed upon just & known causes.

Secondly, this stoppeth the mouths of wicked [Use 2] men, which are ready to accuse God of injustice, as those in Isaiah 58, 3. where they complain as if GOD did not see or regard them: and Ezek. 18, 2, 3. they took up a proverb, saying, *The fathers have eaten sour grapes, & the children's teeth are set on edge*. These thought that God punished without measure or rather without cause. But as he knoweth all things, so he never doth anything, but he goeth upon a sure ground, he maketh enquiry first of all, and afterward proceedeth to judgment. Many do so harden their hearts, & forget their own ways, that they cannot perceive the just proceedings and punishments of God. If God once open their hearts to see the order which he observeth, they will confess his justice, & condemn their own folly.

Thirdly, it teacheth and instructeth every [Use 3] man, that he should search his own ways diligently, when the hand of God is any way upon him, and consider that God proceedeth in all his judgments justly, and upon a sure and tried ground. And if a man by searching and sifting his own ways, find somewhat in himself worthy of such judgment, he must know that God knoweth much more by him then himself doth, 1 John. 3, ver. 20. If the patient knoweth somewhat of his own disease, the Physician knoweth much more then he doth: so is it in this case, he that is a patient under God's hand, if he know anything by himself, he may well know that God knoweth much more: & if men by examining their consciences can find out somewhat, we may justly fear and suspect there is more behind that is vnespied of us, and therefore we have just cause to humble our selves under his most mighty hand. We should judge our selves, that we may not be judged of the Lord. There is no way to escape his judgment, that knoweth all and is ignorant of nothing.

Fourthly, it is a matter of great comfort to [Use 4] those that are the Lord's, because, though they be oppressed with false judgments & uncharitable calumniations of men, yet when he judgeth, he will judge righteously; when he cometh to try all the children of men, he will first make enquiry, before ever he proceed against them. Therefore this is the comfort of every man, he shall never be wronged before God, howsoever he may be before men; so that he may stand at defiance with all his adversaries whatsoever they be, forasmuch as GOD will proceed so justly and righteously with him. Though they have heavy and horrible things laid to their charge by malicious men, yet God himself will do them right: and albeit they be denied justice upon earth, yet with God they shall be sure to have righteous judgment.

Fifthly, this serveth to inform those that sit [Use] in any place of justice to do right to others, either public or private, in the commonwealth or in the family, namely, y^t they ought not to proceed, but upon a sure and known cause. It is the practice of God, so to do, and it ought also to be theirs, and as it is the practice of God, so also it is the precept and commandment of God, to which they ought to be obedient. Whosoever will judge truly, he must labor so to do it, that he pervert not justice. It is the course that God hath usually taken, and therefore they y^t would be like unto God, must proceed after the same manner, so as they have him for an example. First, we must make enquiry, and after the cause is tried & known, to sit in judgment, otherwise we can never deal justly. Pro. 18, 13. Acts 21, 33, & 22, 24. Some do altogether trust reports and accusations of servants, and have but one ear to hear: but as we have one ear that we lend to the accuser, so we should keep another always for the accused.

Lastly, this putteth us in mind of the general [Use 6] judgment at the last day, that all must appear before God's judgment seat, and be judged of him, Dan. 12, 2. True it is, there shall mockers arise, and there are such atheists already risen in the world, that shall say, where is the promise of his coming? howbeit the justice of God requireth it, though the patience of God do defer it. We see not this always done in this world. At that day shall every man receive according to the things he hath done in his body, whether good or evil. Let us therefore endeavor evermore to keep a good conscience toward God and men.

6. And he said, hear now my words, If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

7. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

8. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, &c.

After the citation, followeth the convincing of those guilty persons to their faces. For in judgment, the parties accused must be present. This conviction hath a preface, commāding them to hear: for it is the duty of all to hear, when God speaketh: and the substance it self, containing God's arguing, pleading▪ & witnessing against them, and a reproof of them. In the pleading God declareth, that he communicateth himself in special manner to *Moses* above the rest of the Prophets: he spake to them by visions and dreams, but to him mouth to

mouth; apparently, not darkly. But did *Moses* see God's essence, & behold him as he is? who is said to *behold the similitude of the Lord*. Answ. No man hath seen God at any time, Deut. 34, 10. Exod. 33, and 34. He saw the likeness of God, not the essence of God. He saw him in a certain resemblance so far as he was able to bear and comprehend, and farther then any other, and in a greater measure and degree then the rest For as God called him to a greater office and function, so he endued him with greater gifts, Heb. 3, 4▪ 5. Observe frō hence, that in former times God used many ways to discover and manifest his truth and will unto his people, Heb. 1, 1. See hereby the greatness and excellency of his hand, he hath diverse ways to manifest his truth, he useth what seemeth best to himself, Job 33. Again, we have occasion hereby to consider, that God's mercy is greater to us, thē to our forefathers: Christ hath left unto us from the bosom of his Father the doctrine of the Gospel shining bright in our eyes.

Moreover in comparing *Moses* with y^e Prophets, and preferring him: We see that God revealeth himself to one more then to another, and giveth greater gifts to some, then he doth to other: to *Moses* more plenti ully then to the Prophets: To the end we should stand in need one of another, and thereby bind us more closely together, and to try us how we will employ them to the good of others, as he doth in earthly blessings. This point is of good use unto us being rightly applied. Let [Use 1] not such as have received a greater portion and measure of grace, contemn such as have less: for should y^e servant disgrace or reproach such as the master of the house doth accept and approve, nay doth grace and honor? Mat 25.23. And as for such as have received less, let not them envy those that God hath made above them: for though one member in the body have more honor then another, yet is there no division in the body: so the stronger should bear with the weaker. Again, let every [Use 2] one be thankful for gifts received, that they may be sanctified to our selves and to others, 1 Cor. 14.18. Lastly, it behooveth us to [Use 3] stir up the gifts that are given unto us, and to desire the best gifts that thereby we may do the most good. It is dangerous to hide the gifts we have received, as the evil servant did his talent: And if to cover them under a bushel, much more to turn them and apply them to the destruction of the Church, & the subverting of the faith, as many do that are not sanctified. Let us labor to use them, and to use them well, that we may grow in knowledge, zeal and sanctification, lest they decay in us, & so be taken away from us, Mat. 25.28

My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all my house. In these words we have a notable description of *Moses* to his perpetual commendation and praise with God and men. It is a notable dignity and prerogative to be the servant of the high God. How do men delight to shroud themselves under the liueries of great men, and how much do they take themselves to be honored by it? how much more ought we to labor to approve our selves in the presence of the mighty God, and to show our selves to be his faithful servants? Observe farther the title given to the church, it is called the house of God, whereby he doth not mean the Tabernacle, but the people of God, over whom he was made ouerseer; so that he putteth the place for those in y^e place, the house for the family of God in the house: as *Cornelius* the captain is said to believe and to be baptized with all his house, that is, his household: so here we understand the family and church of God committed to his charge, which he led, ruled,

and governed aright as a faithful servant to his master. The doctrine is this, that the Church or faithful are the house of God, Hebr. 3.6. 1 Tim. 3.15. 2. Cor. 6.16.

The reasons are plain. God dwelleth in it [Reason 1] as a master in an house, & there doth manifest and communicate himself familiarly to his people, as 2 Cor. 6, 16. Secondly, it is called his portion and his inheritance, Deut. 32, 9. It is his treasure and his flock, Acts 20, 28. 1. Pet. 5▪ 2, 3. Thirdly, it resembleth an house, which hath some builder, owner, and laws by which it is ruled. God is the owner of the Church, he hath built it by his Son, Pro. 9, 1. Hebr. 3, 4. who hath purchased it to be peculiar to himself through his own blood, and therefore the Church may fitly and justly be called his: he bought it with a great price, it cost him dear before he could redeem it. It was before the devils house, Math. 12, 44. He layeth claim to us, and challengeth man to be his own: the Lord Jesus took them out of his hand, & purchased them by giving his life, whereby we are become his possession.

This serveth to prove Christ to be true [Use 1] God equal to the Father, against such heretics as deny his deity. This house wherein *Moses* is commended to be *faithful*, is his house, he is the heir of it, the owner of it, & the great Sheeheard of the sheep; it is he that dwelleth in our hearts by faith, Eph. 3, 17. This house belongeth to none properly but to God; it is not the house of *Moses*, or of any man or Angel, but the house of God. Now this is truly called the house of Christ, Heb. 3. and therefore Christ is God. It is he that did build it, and set it up. No house can build it self, for nothing can be the cause of it self, but must be caused by some other: so must the house be built and made by another.

Secondly, conclude from hence, that there [Use 2] is one only true Church of the old and New Testament. The house of God and of Christ is one, wherein *Moses* long ago was faithful, and it is that which we our selves are. Therefore his dwelling house is the same. This house hath continued from the beginning, & shall continue unto the end. It needeth indeed often repairing, but it shall never be abolished, and taken out of the world. True it is, the Jewish Church had many types and ceremonies, howbeit in substance it is the same with the Christian Church.

Thirdly, we may gather the safe condition [Use 3,] of the Church. For who shall fight against the inheritance which he hath purchased, or ruin the house which he hath built, or enter upon the possession which he hath obtained and bought lawfully at a dear price, and be able to prevail? We see by experience, that a man will spend limb and life for his house & land where he dwelleth, and which he bought and paid for dearly. And will not God defend his inheritance which he knew before? whom he chose to be his before the world? whom in time he called, justified, sanctified, & will glorify? for whom he sent his only begotten Son from his own bosom, to lay down his life? This made the Prophet say, *Israel is an hallowed thing, whosoever eateth it shall be consumed, and come to naught*, Ier. 2, v. 3. John 10, 28, 29, We are his, given unto him by the Father, and he will never lose us: no man can take them out of his hand. This is a singular prerogative of y^e faithful, that Christ dwelleth with them, and abideth in them, John. 14, 23. Eph. 2, 19, 20. He will never suffer his house to perish, but giveth them his assurance and assistance to continue with them, which cannot agree with popish doubting and wavering, 2 Tim. 2, 19. 1 Pet. 1, 5. True it is, such is our weakness, that

we are ready to give over our hold of God, but he will never give over the hold that he hath of us. His ancre is so firmly settled and fixed upon the ground of our heart, that no storms or tempests can shake or loose it. We are prone to leave him, but he is resolved not to leave us or to lose us. The Lord hath bought us too dearly to part so lightly from us. Our state therefore is sure and certain, we shall not fall away forever, whatsoever the Church of Rome holdeth, teacheth, and defendeth.

Lastly, let us labor to be of the household of faith. Let us not be profane in life and [Use] loose in conversation, but separate from the wicked of the world which are no part of God's house. We cannot be of the household of faith, and of the household of infidelity and impiety: forasmuch as there is no concord or agreement, no fellowship or communion between light & darkness, 2 Cor. 6, 19, 20. Let us prepare for Christ a good lodging and entertainment in our hearts, that he may dwell in us. Let us not offend him, or grieve him, or drive him away by our sins and disobedience, as Heb. 3, 6. *His house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end.*

[*Who is faithful in all my house.*] Moses receiveth this commendation from the mouth of God, that he was found faithful; a faithful teacher, a faithful Prophet, publishing the will of God to the Church. The doctrine is, It is required of all the Ministers of God, that they be found faithful and conscionable in their places, 1 Sam. 2, 35. Math. 24, 45. Luke 12, 42. 1 Cor. 4, 2, 17. The Prophets of God did stand upon their watchtower, they hearkened and heard what the people did. So did the Apostles, and so they taught others to do the like, Eph. 6, 21. Col. 1, 7, and 4, 7. 1 Tim. 1, 12, & 2 Tim. 2, 2. A virtue necessary for all.

This appeareth by the titles given unto thē [Reason] in the Scriptures: they are called Ambassadors of God, 2 Cor. 5, 20: the witnesses of the truth, Acts 10, 39. 1 Pet. 5▪ 1. The stewards of the family and servants of the house to give everyone their portion in due season; It is required of an Ambassador, to do the message of him that sent him: of a witness to utter the truth, and all the truth, and nothing but the truth: of a servant, to do his masters business committed to his trust.

Secondly, the good of the Church requireth it: for if it have unfaithful and unconscionable teachers set over it, that seek not the safety of the flock, it cannot be but many of the sheep will perish, Ezek. 3.18. Lastly, such teachers as are unfaithful, bring destruction upon themselves as well as upon the flock. God hath committed the sheep of his pasture to their safe and faithful keeping, such then as deal unfaithfully, shall bear their condemnation, and the blood of others shall be required at their hands, Eze. 33.8. Ier. 1.17. & 14.15.

[Use 1] This grace of faithfulness containeth the sum of all that is required of Pastors and teachers in the execution of their Ministry, and serveth to reprove sundry abuses. First, of such as are ignorant and unlearned, which have taken upon them to be teachers of others, but have not yet learned themselves. These are unfaithful in the house of God, and are not able to break the bread of life, they are entered into the sheepfold but cannot feed the sheep, they would be accounted dressers of the vineyard, but are not able to labor in it. These do greatly hinder God's kingdom, and destroy the souls of men, and further the kingdom of

Satan, and are the main cause of much palpable darkness and ignorance. Such are much like to *Jereboam's* Priests taken out of the basest of the people, these are fit instruments to further idolatry, and all manner of impiety. Secondly, of false teachers, these also are unfaithful in the house of God, & destroy the souls of the people by false doctrine. The former did starve them, these do poison them, and both ways the people perish. It is all one whether we withhold bread from them, or infect it with poison. Such teachers the Apostle willeth to avoid, their false doctrine fretteth, eateth and consumeth as the *Gangrene*. Thirdly, of idle and unprofitable teachers, which eat the milk, & clothe themselves with the fleece of the flock, but feed not the sheep of Christ. These are lazy and loitering servants, that leave their masters work undone, & care not which end go forward; these may be fitly coupled together with the first, for it is all one with the people, whether their teachers be ignorant or idle. But touching themselves, their sin is so much the greater, because they can, but will not teach the people. Idle persons in any society are by the Apostle branded by the name of thieves, where he showeth that not to labor is to steal: not because they violently and forcibly take from others, and intrude themselves into their possessions, but because they are caterpillars and drones, eating that for which they never labored: so these men that live idly in the Church and of the Church, do incur the just rebuke of spiritual theft and felony, in y^t they live by the Church, but do not labor for the Church. The Church setteth them or rather hireth thē to work, but these tie up their own hands because they would not work: they reap temporal things of the people, but do not minister spiritual things to the people. Fourthly, of unskillful Ministers who also are unfaithful: these will needs be doing, but in deed can do nothing: they will needs be working, but they know neither how to begin aright, nor where to make an end. They can get up into the pulpit as well as the best, but when they are there, they do nothing less then preach, but abuse the place, the people, themselves, the word, nay God himself. A faithful teacher must be a workman that need not be ashamed, dividing aright the word of truth. A skillful Carpenter or master-builder knoweth by line & level how to square his timber, but a raw fellow never brought up to the trade, will hack and so mar and mangle the timber. The Apostle compareth the Ministers to skilful builders, not to them that can only hew and chop wood, for so every bungler can do that renteth it and cutteth it in pieces, he careth not how, so it be done. A Minister must be a master in his profession. Fifthly, it reproveth the abuses of scandalous teachers, who build with one hand, and pull down as fast with the other. The Apostle requireth that the Ministers should be vnreprouable, the lights of the world, the salt of the earth, and examples to the flock. These are like images placed and set up in cross ways, that point the way to the passenger, but cannot set a foot forward themselves; like the builders of the Ark that did good to others, but none to themselves; they saved *Noah* and his family, but were drowned and destroyed themselves. So these may peradventure be instruments of conversion to others, and in the end be condemned themselves. Nevertheless their evil life doth scandalize many that are without, and many that are within the Church. And albeit it be a fault to stumble at these, namely, to hear and not to regard what they teach, yet woe be to them that lay such stumbling blocks in the way. Lastly, of flattering teachers, another sort of unfaithful teachers in the house of God, that seek to please men, who sew pillows under every elbow, that say peace, peace, when there is no peace, that daub with untempered mortar. These are

political wise men of this world (but nothing wise for the world to come) who, to secure themselves from danger, refrain themselves from delivering wholesome doctrine and powerful to the conscience of the hearer. If the Physician should deal so with his patient, he should kill him, & not cure him: or y^e Chirurgian so handle a wound taken in the body, he should not seek the healing of the wound, but the hurt of the person. They dare not say as *Nathan* did to *David* the king, *Thou art the man*; they dare not say as *Elijah* did to *Ahab*, *It is thou and thy fathers house that have troubled Israel*, 1 King. 18.18. They dare not say as *John Baptist* did to *Herod*, *It is not lawful for thee to have thy brothers wife*, Matthew 14. verse 4. They dare not say to the Scribes and Pharisees as Christ did, *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, but they are afraid of offending. All these six sorts are unfaithful teachers & we have shown the causes of their unfaithfulness, they are unfaithful through their ignorance, unfaithful through their errors, unfaithful through their idleness, unfaithful through their unskillfulness, unfaithful through their scandals, unfaithful through their flattery.

[Use 2] Secondly, this reproveth the people that upbraid y^e Ministers with too much teaching: for it is required of them that they be found faithful. They must teach & instruct in season and out of season: but many careless hearers advise them to spare their labors. *Paul* saith, *Woe unto me, if I preach not the Gospel*: he labored greatly, that by all means he might save some. Many tell us, we a^r too busy, and do meddle with reprovng sin more then we need: but how then should we be found faithful in the Lord's business? or how shall we escape the punishment of unfaithfulness in the great day of account? None shall receive the incorruptible crown of glory, but such as have been faithful: and none shall be exempted from eternal judgment that have been unfaithful. Such men care not how little they hear, that think the Ministers preach too much: nay they could be content to hear nothing at all, whose reward shall be according to their negligence.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it is the duty of the Ministers to labor for this virtue, and to approve themselves to God in a faithful and careful discharge of their callings. This is a duty which God so often and so strictly commandeth: and by the execution of that commandment we are said to save men by preaching, and to deliver from the pit of hell. This shall also bring unspeakable joy and comfort, peace and quietness to our consciences, when we are desirous to discharge our duties in truth and sincerity. Happy are they that have this testimony of their consciences, that they have this way promoted the glory of God, advanced the kingdom of Christ, and furthered the salvation of men. Oh how happy were it for us, that it might be said of us, as it is of *Moses* in this place, that we have been faithful in his house! and thrice happy shall we be, if at the last day, our Lord and master coming from heaven, as a man that beginneth to take an account of his servants, shall say unto us, *Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*. If I should stand to set down particularly the parts of this faithfulness, whereby we may procure y^e commendation to ourselves which is given to *Moses*, I should stand too long. The Ministers must be men of knowledge, otherwise how should they teach knowledge? they must be men of zeal, of painfulness, and diligence, of an holy and unblameable life, of sincerity and uprightness. They must reprove sin, as God punisheth sin, that is, without respect of persons in whomsoever they find it: they must keep back nothing,

but reveal the whole counsel of God. *Finally they must take heed to themselves and to the flock, over which the holy Ghost hath made thē overseers.* verse 28.

Lastly, that which is here particularly applied [Use] to the Ministers, ought to be extended & enlarged to all others which have received any calling from God, in what place soever God hath set us, we must be faithful in it. The Magistrate must be faithful in the government of his people, he must sing of mercy and of judgment. The Judge must be faithful in the ministering and executing of justice, having courage and hating covetousness, knowing that they judge not for man but for the Lord. The householder must be faithful in ordering and reforming, of his family, and walk in his house with a perfect heart, Psa. 101.2. To conclude, all inferiors must also be faithful in their place, to yield honor and reverence, to show trust and diligence toward their superiors, considering that God hath set them in their places, remembering that every man may gain glory to his Name, if he be found diligent, how mean soever his calling is, and knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

9 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed.

10 And the cloud departed from off the Tabernacle, and behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and behold, she was leprous.

Now we come to the execution of the sentence. For when evil doers stand dumb before the iugde, and can answer nothing for themselves, but confess themselves guilty, what remaineth but to proceed to the punishment? as we see in the example of *Achan* who confessed he had sinned against the Lord God of Israel and was stoned with stones, and of him that came to the feast without his wedding garment, so soon as he was taken speechless, having nothing to answer for himself, the king said unto the servants, *Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into utter darkness.* The punishment is partly signified, in that, *the wrath of God* (by a metaphor drawn from men) is said *to be kindled*, so that he would hear the offenders speak no more unto him, declared by the departure of the cloud: and partly inflicted, *she became leprous white as snow*, that is, she was stricken with y^e most grievous kind of leprosy, because she was the author & procurer of this murmuring. Howbeit afterward it is in part repealed & reuersed, wherein we may see both y^e occasion & the mitigatiō of the punishment. The occasions are two: first the request of *Aaron* made to *Moses*, not to God, who refused to hear him lying in his sin, or rather not sufficiently humbled for his sin; as also he did *Job's* three friends, he would not receive a sacrifice at their hands, but *Job* must pray for them, lest he deal with them according to their folly. This request of his is both general for himself and his sister, that their sins may be pardoned and not imputed unto them; and likewise special for *Miriam*, that she might not be a spectacle and gazing stock to the whole host, and a monument of God's justice forever, but might be healed of that foul and unclean disease. The other occasion is the prayer of *Moses* directed to God; his hand had stricken and made the wound, and it is he that must and can heal & restore again. The mitigation of the punishment followeth, which is restrained to seven days, amplified by an unequal

comparison drawn from the less to the greater, from an earthly father to his children, who if he should show any the least token of his anger and displeasure to his children, they would be afraid and ashamed for a season to come into his presence: how much more then ought she to be ashamed to lift up her head and to come unto the host, among whom the Lord dwelleth and walketh, being stricken with his judgment? For by spitting in the face is meant any token of reproach or disgrace. Therefore she was shut out and separate from the host seven days, during which time the people journeyed not, till that one member, as it were cut off, were again recovered & restored to the rest of the body. Thus much touching the order of the words to the end of the chapter.

First, let us come to the signification of the punishment, *the wrath of God was kindled*. We learn hereby, that the wrath of God is kindled against offenders, Deut. 32.22, 41, 42.

The reasons hereof are evident. First, the nature of God is most pure and holy, and he hateth evil wheresoever he findeth it. Secondly, sin maketh a separation between God and his people, it hideth his face from us that he will not hear. Thirdly, he punisheth sin and executeth judgment upon the sinner, yea he spareth none, no not his own children that provoke him by their sins, much less others; as we see in *Adam*, in *Cain*, in the old world, in *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, in *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians, and sundry others.

[Use 1] The uses remain. First we see, that anger is not simply to be condemned in man, but the excess or defect thereof, when it is too much or too little. It is a natural affection graffed in man, when it is moved as there is just cause; it is an holy affection, noted to be in Christ, he looked angerly upon them, mourning for the hardness of their hearts. And whē he saw the buyers and sellers in the Temple, the zeal of God's house did even eat him up, Now zeal is partly compounded of anger, and partly of sorrow, and partly of love. So must we be angry and grieved, if there be any love of God in us, at sin wheresoever we find it. Anger indeed for every trifle, or more then there is cause, is sinful, as also not to be angry when there is cause. But of this see farther, chap. 16.

Secondly, fear to offend him that is a consuming [Use 2] fire, and is able to destroy body & soul into hell fire. Everyone must learn to know what it is that doth offend him. It is y^e breach of his law: he is offended by blasphemy, by contempt of his word, by swearing, by idolatry, by breach of the Sabbath, and such like impieties forbidden in the first Table. These sins for the most part men do little think upon, and because the laws of men do not take hold of them, they regard them not one whit: whereas God hath most severely punished thē, and revenged the dishonor done to his name. The like we might say of adultery, drunkenness, malice, covetousness, and such like; they are for the most part thought to be no sins at all, and slightly considered off; whereas he is always the same, & his law is always y^e same, & his justice is always the same, and his wrath is kindled against the children of disobedience. Let no man make his mercy an occasion of sin, neither turn his grace into wantonness.

Lastly, let us give our selves no rest, till we [Use 3] be reconciled to God. It is a fearful thing to lie under his wrath. Be not quiet, until he be appeased toward us, & the sword put up into

his quiver. The wrath of a Prince is compared to the roaring of a lyon, he sinneth against his own soul that provoketh him, much more may this be said of God. Use therefore y^e means and remedies to call in his anger, send an ambassage of peace unto him, the procuring of our peace standeth first in seeking above all things the favor and friendship of God. *When Herod was displeased with the Tyrians and Sidonians, they persuaded Blast us the kings chamberlen to stand their friend, they desired peace, because their country was nourished by the kings country.* We are nourished by God in whom we live, and move and have our being, and therefore we have more cause to come to him with one accord, and seek his favor. Secondly, in repentance and turning from our evil ways, whereby we prepare our selves to meet him. Thirdly, in prayer and humbling ourselves before him. Thus doth *Aaron* seek peace by stirring up the spirit of *Moses* to pray for them: and hereby did *Moses* procure their peace. Thus did they stand in the gappe afterward, when the hand of God had made a fearful breach among the people, and the pestilence had slain many thousands, whereby they made a blessed atonement, Num. 16.47, 48. Lastly the procuring of our peace consisteth in believing in Christ, and laying hold upon his merits and righteousness, which was signified by the incense that *Aaron* offered, when he stood between the living & the dead. Christ Jesus is our peace-maker, who hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, he hath reconciled us unto God, so that by him we have an access unto y^e Father; by faith we are joined to him and lay hold upon him to eternal life. If we be earnest in seeking these means of peace, we shall be safe, for the danger of his wrath is gone and past, Psal. 2.12.

11 And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my Lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, & wherein we have sinned.

12 Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed, when he cometh out of his mothers womb.

Here we see (as we noted before) that God would not hear the offenders unreformed speak unto him, neither abide any talking with them: but *Aaron* is fain to go to *Moses*, to entreat him that by his entreaty and intercession unto God, the punishment of leprosy may be removed; which is amplified by a comparison of likeness, that she may not be as one dead whose flesh is half consumed. We learn hereby, that God heareth not their prayers that lie in their sins, and are not reconciled unto him, Job 42.7, 8. Isaiah 1.15. Gen. 20.7.

The reasons why God heareth them not, [Reason 1] are first because they refuse to hear God speaking unto them; it standeth with the rule of equity that God should deal with them as they deal with him, and stop his ears against those that will not hear him. Secondly, his [Reason 2] wrath lieth upon them.

[Use 1] Conclude from hence that the prayers of the wicked are abominable, Pro. 28. Not only their sins provoke God, but their prayers and their best works, so that though they multiply them, yet he will not regard them. This showeth their wretched estate and condition, they have no access to God, they may come to his gate, but they can have no

entrāce, it is shut up against them. They may knock & say, *Lord, Lord, open unto us*, but he will answer, *Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity, I know you not.*

Secondly, let none continue in any known [Use 2] sin, but wash their hearts and be reconciled unto God. For sin stoppeth the ears of God that he cannot hear, and casteth such heavy clogs upon our prayers, that they cannot possibly pierce the clouds, ascend into heaven, and come into the presence of God. Our iniquities wherein we delight, are as fetters and bolts that are fastened to our prayers, or as lead that presseth them down to the earth. The life of a sinner that lieth in his sins is of all other lives the most uncomfortable. For if we cannot pray to God in hope of mercy & forgiveness, when our sins disquiet us: or in hope of deliverance when our troubles oppress us: what comfort have we or can we have in anything under the Sun? On the other side, when the faithful lie under infinite calamities, sickness, poverty, shame, contempt, reproach, slander, infamy, sickness, being forsaken of all, and hated of all, even laden with an heap of misery and adversity; yet this is their comfort, they can freely go unto God, & have access to the throne of grace; they may pray unto him, & as it were pour out their cōplaints in his bosom.

Lastly, it is our duty, being reconciled unto [Use] God, to be reconciled to our brethrē also. For no man is truly at one with God, that is not made one with his brother▪ and except we forgive men their trespasses, our heavenly Father will never forgive us: therefore whensoever we bring our gift to the altar, and there remember that our brother hath ought against us, we must leave our gift before the altar, and go our way to be reconciled first of all to our brother. As then we desire forgiveness of God, so ought we to forgive. God forgiveth upon condition that we shall forgive. Those that are unmerciful shall never find mercy. We cannot have a more perfect president to move us to mercy, then to consider how God dealeth with us; he considereth whereof we are made, he remembereth that we are but dust. We think it much and oftentimes complain, that God will not hear our prayers; but we seeldome or never consider that the fault is in our selves, because we will not hear our brethren. And what exception can we take against our brethren, which God may not ten thousand times better except against us? Have we deserved better at their hands then to be so abused as we pretend our selves to be? so hath God of us, and we cannot deny it. Are we his betters and superiors? So is God ours. We use to say, we are not for him, we live not by him, we can live well enough without him? Neither doth God live by us, but we by him: and he can live without us (who lived before us) but not we without him. Have we often warned him to look to his ways and not to abuse us any longer? So hath God often warned us. Have we received wrong after wrong, and forgiven seven times, or seventy times seven times? So hath God forgiven us ten thousand talents for an hundred pence. If then we retain any malice in our harts, our prayers are not regarded, nay they are rejected as vile and abominable.

Alas, my Lord, I beseech thee lay not the sin vpō us, wherein we have done foolishly, &c. observe here a notable point in *Aaron*: he is not stricken with y^e leprosy, but is free from it altogether; *Miriam* is stricken with the leprosy, but it is *Aaron* that calleth for mercy, when he looked upon her and saw it: for the Priests were appointed to look upon it, and to pronounce the

person to be either clean or unclean; so that punishments upon others should cause us to amend, and to look to our selves. Again, we ought to desire the good one of another, & to have a fellow-feeling of the miseries one of another. See also that he is as much humbled and cast down, nay more then she is for this sin, and confesseth he had done amiss. We learn hereby, that sin committed against God, must touch us and go near unto us though we feel no punishment. It is no great matter to be humbled when the punishment is heavy upon us; but to be brought low, even upon our knees, and to say with *Aron*, Alas, lay not the sin upon us, is a notable and necessary duty required of us. The most wicked men in the world that sin with an high hand will confess their sin under the cross, while the hand of God lieth upon them, as we see in *Cain*, in *Pharaoh*, in *Saul*, in *Judas*, and others, but this ariseth more in consideration of the punishment then of the sin: howbeit *Aaron* in this place felt no punishment, though he were a companion in the offense, which fell out in regard of the Priesthood. For if any ask, why he was not stricken with the leprosy, forasmuch as he was guilty of the same iniquity? I answer, it was not that his offense was slight, but because his office was great; he was a lively image of Christ Jesus our true Mediator, the only begotten Son of God. God would not therefore bring his person into contempt and reproach, lest the Priesthood also should be reproached. Besides, he did not contrive it, but consent to it, and was drawn no doubt after a sort, even against his will by his sister into a fellowship of this murmuring, as he had been before by the people to make y^e golden calf: she had the principal han^a in the sin, and consequently in the judgment. We must therefore be touched with sin principally because it is sin, not because the punishment lieth upon us: but though we should never be punished and plagued, though there were no day of judgment, no fear of hell, no sentence of death, no feeling of torment, yet sin should be bitter and grievous unto us, even because it is sin^a nothing in the world should trouble us more then that the law is transgressed, & God is offended. *David* was not in person stricken with y^e pestilence, though it did destroy at noon day, and thousands fell at his right hand, & ten thousāds at his left, neither came it near him, yet he was no less humbled & grieved in his soul, then if his body had been stricken with many running sores. *Hezekiah* had an express promise from God of adding fifteen years unto his days: and when his heart was lifted up, glorying in his riches and treasures, in his silver and gold, in his armor and ointments, in his spices and jewels, which he had shown to the messengers of the king of Babylon, the Lord threatened that in his sons days all those precious things should be carried to Babylon; so that he had peace and truth in his days: yet he humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

The reasons are plain, for first, this is a [Reason 1] sign of true humiliation & repentance, when we can mourn for sin, being free from the least touch of punishment, it is a plain token that we are touched with a conscience for sin it self. If only we be cast down for sin when God's wrath lieth upon us, we rather complain of the punishment, then cry out for the sin. Secondly, [Reason 2] sin is able to separate between God and us, whereby he is dishonored: and what ought to enter deeper unto us, then to consider how God is dishonored?

We may from hence lawfully and truly [Use 1] pronounce a fearful woe unto them, that are no way humbled when the hand of God lieth upon them and writeth bitter things against

them; doubtless, we need crave no pardon if we affirm constantly & confidently, that they are desperate sinners. They fear neither God nor man, nor hell, nor death, nor damnation it self. They have been stricken from the soale of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in them, but wounds and bruises & putrifying sores, yet they will not know nor understand the hand that hath stricken them. Thus doth the Lord complain by the Prophet that he hath given them cleanness of teeth in all their cities, and want of bread in all their places, yet they had not returned unto him: he had withholden the rain from them, and yet they returned not unto him: he had smitten them with blasting and mildew, yet they returned not unto him: he had sent among them the pestilence after the manner of Egypt, and overthrew some of them as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrhah, and yet they returned not unto him. Thus did they run on from evil to worse, & filled up the measure of their sins, that they could not be reclaimed by any punishments though never so grievous. I will propound one famous or rather infamous example to this purpose very remarkable in the Scriptures, and y^t is of *Ahaz*: the Lord brought great affliction upon him, but he sought to the king of Assyria, who helped him not, but not to the Lord who could have helped; & in the time of his distress, he did trespass yet more against the Lord. This was king *Ahaz*. Woe unto us, if it be so with us: woe be unto us if his judgments do not soften us, but harden us; not better us, but make us worse. The fire purifieth the gold & maketh it more perfect, but the dross and refuse it maketh worse then it was before. So is it with impenitent persons and all the reprobate, whom the Lord will in the end sweep away as dung from the earth.

Secondly, it is our duty to walk in obedience [Use 2] to God, principally because he commandeth it, not for reward sake chiefly, for so do hirelings, who if once the hire cease, will work no longer, We must be obedient for love to God & his law. But is it not lawful to do good in hope of reward, [Object.] & to propound to our selves that end? It is lawful, but that must not be the chief and principal end. *Moses* had respect to the recompense of the reward whereby he did shake off all drowsiness, encourage himself in well doing, and quicken his zeal in the service of God and his people: nevertheless he had other main ends y^t he aimed at. The love of God must constrain us, & his commandment bear sway in our hearts far above all rewards.

So doth *Paul* encourage himself to preach the Gospel, because he should have a reward if he did it willingly, and a fearful woe hung over his head if he did it not, 1 Cor. 9.16, 17. howbeit in another place he telleth us *that the love of God constrained him*, 2 Cor. 5.14. And the Apostle *Peter* stirreth up the Elders of the Church to feed the flock, because when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away, 1 Pet. 5.4. yet himself was stirred up by Christ our Savior to feed his sheep and lambes, if he loved him, John. 21.15, 16. So then, we must labor to do good, though we see no reward, even in conscience of our duty to God. And it is lawful to abstain from sin for fear of punishment, but chiefly because the righteous God hateth it, and the just Judge condemneth it.

[Use 3] Lastly, let us hereby examine our selves, what account we make of sin, whether it be grievous unto us as it is sin, or not. If it be, we may comfort our selves, that we have received grace to humble our selves before the cross cometh: for then it is a free and voluntary

humiliation. If we leave sin, because sin leaveth us, because we cannot follow after it, because we must leave the world, because we grow weary of it, because it bringeth shame and reproach, because we wax old and our youthful years are spent, this repentance is not thank-worthy, but falleth out sildome to be true repentance. This is a forced and constrained repentance, and consequently oftentimes, unsound, seeldome sincere. If we yield obedience for conscience sake, it is a token of sincerity. We see the example of *Peter* after he had fearfully denied his master, and sworn that he never knew the man, it pleased the Lord of life graciously to look upon him with an eye of mercy, and to restore him by the spirit of meekness; he had no punishment upon him, yet he went out of that place and separated himself from that ungodly crew, and wept bitterly, Matt. 26▪ 75. Happy are we if we can do the like. This humiliation shall bring peace and comfort at the last. It is a true note that we have learned to know sin. •f our souls can mourn in secret, whē we are in health, peace, at liberty, and in prosperity, it is a great mercy of God vouchsafed unto us: and his Name is highly to be praised, and his goodness to be acknowledged toward us, whiles others are hardened in their sin, and freedom from punishment emboldneth them to their destruction.

13 And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heale her now, O Lord, I beseech thee!

14 And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out of the campe seven days, and after that let her be received in again.

In these words we have the prayer of *Moses*, and the answer of God; when we cry, God heareth. Where we see, it is our duty to pray one for another, & to commend the causes of others unto God. When we see them in misery and affliction, we must be intercessors for them. We must do it for our enemies and them that hate us and have done us wrong. So it was with *Moses* in this place. Again, it appeareth hereby that the rebukes of parents are not lightly and slightly to be regarded of children, when they threaten or show an angry look or a frowning countenance, it should work shame and sorrow in them, 2 Sam. 14.24. Great is the authority of parents over their children, and great should be the reverence of children toward their parents, of which we shall speak more, chap. 30. They are over their children in the Lord, and must govern them in his fear. Nevertheless, the authority of God is much more over us, then ours is over our children, therefore his chastisements ought to go nearer to us, and more to humble us then the threatenings and chastisements of earthly parents, Heb. 12.9, 10. We have had y^e fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not be much rather in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? for they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. The power of parents is a limited power for they must rule in the Lord: and the obedience of children is a limited obedience, for they must obey in the Lord, Eph. 6.1. but the power, of God is absolute over his children, and our obedience to him must be in all things. Besides, we may gather, that God heareth the prayers of his servants diverse ways: sometimes he granteth whatsoever we ask; sometimes he giveth more

then we ask: sometimes he heareth in part that which we desire, and in part heareth not; part he granteth and part he denieth: and sometimes he giveth not the same which we ask, but some other blessing like it or greater then it: and sometimes he granteth our petitions, when he assisteth us, comforteth us, and giveth us patience to bear that he layeth upon us, of all which we have sundry examples in the word of God. And howsoever it pleaseth him to deal with us, and whether soever of these ways he heareth our prayers, we must submit our willes to his will, and rest our selves contented with that he sendeth. Moreover grievous sinners and open and gross offenders should be shut out of the Church, whereof we have at large spoken before, chapter 5. where we have handled the whole doctrine in a manner of excommunication: but when they be penitent & are thoroughly humbled for their sins, they must be admitted into the Congregation again and received into the bosom of the Church, to be partakers of the privileges thereof. Howbeit through the corruption of Church officers and the abuse of the censurers of the Church, some are cast out that ought to be kept in and nourished as obedient children of the Church; Thus it befell to the blind man, he gave glory to God being made to see, but he was cast out of the Synagogue by the Pharisees, John 9, 34, 35. He was a worthy member of the church, he believed in Christ and worshipped him. It is a comfort to all such as are thus entreated. Again, others are kept in y^e church and fostered in it, who justly deserve to be thrown out by the power of the keys, and to have the spiritual sword drawn out against them: so it was with the incestuous Corinthian that married his fathers wife, 1 Cor. 5, 1. he deserved justly to be put away from among them, yet they suffered this sword to rest in the sheath, and purged not out that old leaven, but suffered him to remain among them. 1 Cor. 5, 1, 7, 13. Such remissness and negligence was found in the churches of *Pergamos* and *Thyatira*, Reu. 2.14, 15.20. Others, that are justly banished out of the Church for some notorious crime committed against God, and offense given to the Church, are notwithstanding unjustly kept out after their repentance and humiliation: so it was with the penitent Corinthian, he was much humbled for his sin and offense, yet the Church was not so careful to receive him in as a member again, as they ought to have been, but as before they kept him in when he should have been rejected, so now they kept him out when he should have been received, 2 Cor. 2.7.8. 9.10.11. And if any be thus dealt withal, as many have been in former times, let us consider that our cause is not strange and singular, it is no other then hath befallen sundry the deer children of God before us.

[Let her be shut out of the Campe seven days, &c.] Notwithstanding the former prayer of *Moses*, *Miriam* must be put out from among them. *Moses* though he were much wronged, yet never complained to God against his brother & sister, nor against their wrongs, yet God will not pardon, but punisheth for those wrongs. For albeit he did pass over those injuries, yet God will not pass them over: and though he did not cry to God, yet their sin did cry, and God heard that cry. The Doctrine is this, that though God's children pray not against their enemies y^t wrong them and oppress them, yet their wrongs cry out aloud, and God heareth and punisheth the doers of wrong. The faithful are of a patient nature, and hold their peace when they are laden with cart-loades of injuries and reproaches, nevertheless God will not hold his peace; they are meek as *Moses* was, and put them up, but God will not put them up, nor suffer them to go unpunished. When *Abel* was slain by the treachery of his brother, he

could not cry out: but after his death, his blood cried out for vengeance, *Gen.* 4, 10. *Heb.* 11 4. and 12.24. *Hab.* 2, 10.11. *James* 4.5. So did *Naboth's* blood cry for vengeance when he was dead, and that cry was heard.

And no marvel. For it is the office of God to execute vengeance, he is the Lord the avenger, [Reason 1] that will not hold the wicked innocent, nor clear the guilty, *Exod.* 34, 7. *He hath said, Vengeance is mine.* *Rom.* 12.19. *Deu.* 32, 35. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Secondly, he requireth it at the hands of all Judges and Magistrates to judge justly, & not [Reason 2] to accept the persons of the wicked: he giveth commandment unto them whom he hath honored with his own name, to defend the poor and fatherless, and to do justice to the afflicted and needy, *Psal.* 92, 2, 3. If then Princes which are God's upon earth must do right judgment, then certainly the God of God's, and Judge of Judges, will judge the people righteously, and govern the Nations upon earth, *Psal.* 67, 4.

This teacheth us, that God heareth, and seeth, and knoweth all things. Though our [Use 1] sins be never so secret, and men convey them never so closely, and labor to hide them by all the fetches and devices they can, yet they are open to him before whom all things are open and naked, *Heb.* 4, 13. *Cain* the first oppressor took his brother aside, and carried him into the field; none was partaker of the murder, or privy to it: yet the blood of the dead did proclaim and publish as it were with a loud and lamentable voice, both the sin and the sinner in the ears of the Lord of hosts, as fully and shrilly as the voices of living men can discover anything. Treasons and conspiracies against Princes, are plotted for the most part closely; for although they prepare many, yet they acquaint few with their most secret designs: nevertheless, God hath many ways to find out those persons and practices, *Eccl.* 10.20. *Curse not the King, no not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber, for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.*

Secondly, we may conclude the woeful estate of all wicked men that are oppressors, [Use 2] which think to over-beat the poor & needy, and sell them for a pair of shoes, *Amos* 2.6. For this should terrify such ungodly persons from sinning in this kind: they may indeed persuade themselves that they shall escape, or rely upon the favor and countenance of men, or that the poor pitifully wronged dare not mutter against them; which are encouragements to the mighty to commit sin and to live in it: howbeit this is a vain hope, and will in the end make ashamed: forasmuch as albeit they may conceal their purposes from men and avoid the place of judgment, yet they cannot escape the hand of God. Many receive great wrongs, that dare not open their mouths against their oppressors: the poor are trodden under foot of the rich, the weak of them that are strong, those of low degree by them that are mighty; nevertheless God will open his mouth in the cause of the afflicted, and stretch out his hand to recompense tribulation to all those that trouble them. This use is handled by the Apostle *James*, chap. 5.1, 2. *Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you, &c.* where he threatened these hard-hearted men with sundry judgments for y^e wrongs they did to just men: let not such therefore flatter themselves, but rather labor to break off

their sins by righteousness, and their iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthning of their tranquility.

[Use 3] Thirdly, seeing God is the great avenger of the wrongs of his children that never call unto him for vengeance, then much more will he pity them and take their cause into his own hand when they call and cry unto him day and night to save them. The Lord gracious and merciful hath promised, that when the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless child are vexed and oppressed, and cry unto him, he will certainly hear them, Exod. 22.21, 22.23, 24. For if God stay not til they cry, because sometimes they cannot, and sometimes they dare not, & tarrieth not til they opē their mouths to complain: then we may be assured, that when the oppressed in their misery and anguish of their soul sigh and groan unto him, his wrath shall wax hot and he will kill their oppressors with the sword of his judgments.

[Use 4] Lastly, we have a singular encouragement from hence unto patience in suffering, even unto the coming of the Lord. He will take their cause into his own hand at the length, though they suffer long. Nay, it is the manner of God for the most part to leave his children in many troubles, until things seem to be desperate and past all hope of help; partly to stir up his people to seek to him with greater earnestness of spirit, partly to show the greatness of his own power what he is able to do, partly to catch the wicked in their own crafty counsels and devises, and partly to make it manifest that all our help cometh only from the Lord, which hath made heaven and earth, to the end that the work being his, the glory also may be his. We are ready to ascribe our deliverances to our own power or policy, and to say in vaunting wise, *Mine hand hath saved me*, Judge. 7.2. God is patient, and suffereth long, but in the end he payeth home, so that the godly shall lose nothing by their patience, and the ungodly shall gain nothing but God's vengeance. This might be enlarged by the example of the Israelites when they were in Egypt, the Lord could have delivered them before any of their miseries were brought upon them, but the time appointed was not yet come, and when all things seemed past recovery, suddenly God appeared for their delivery. Let us therefore be patient and stablish our hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, I am. 5.8.

15 And Miriam was shut up from the campe seven days, and the people iournyed not, till Miriam was brought in again.

16 And afterward the people removed from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.

In these words we see the punishment inflicted upon *Miriam*, God never threateneth in vain, but bringeth to pass whatsoever judgment he hath denounced. He threatened *Miriam* for her murmuring with the leprosy, behold here how he letteth nothing fall to the ground of that which he had spoken. Observe from hence, that such as are the principal doers in sin, are principally subject unto punishment. *Aaron* was accessory to this mutiny against *Moses*, but *Miriam* was chief in the sin, and therefore is also chief in the punishment. *Simeon* and *Levi* were not the only murderers of the Sichemites and inuaders of the city, but they were the

chief ringleaders and therefore are only named, Gen. 34.25. and punished, Gen. 49.5. *Jacob* had a great family, as *Abraham* had three hundred and eighteen persons of his house which he armed and conducted for the recovery of his nephew *Lot* out of the hands of tyrants: so no doubt they gathered together many servants of their own and out of their fathers house, by whose help they slew the men of that place and spoiled the city. See also to this purpose, 1 Sam. 15.9, 21, 24, and 2.27, 28, &c. Num. 25.4. *Joab* offended as the kings instrument in numbering of the people, yet *David* had the chief hand, and therefore he is punished with the diminution of his people, the punishment is proportioned according to the sin, he sinned in numbering of them, the number of them therefore is exceedingly lessened, for there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy-thousand men, 2 Sam. 24.15. So in the killing of *Uriah*, *David* contrived the plot, *Joab* offered the means, the Ammonites put it in execution, 2 Sam. 11.15. 16, 17. Howbeit *David* is charged directly and expressly to have slain him by the sword of the enemies, and is most severely punished, 2 Sam. 12.9, 10, 11, 12. What then, may some say? [Object.] Are the instruments of other men's evils without sin? are they without fault, and to be holden excused, because they are not the first and principal doers? No: they are not without blame. For whosoever practiseth any evil, whether he be principal or accessory, is guilty in the sight of God; and therefore such as are ministers of other men's evils, are oftentimes punished, whether they be reasonable or unreasonable creatures, Gen. 3.14. Levite. 20.15. Exod. 21.28, 29, 32. Josh. 6.17. Isaiah 30 22. As God is just, so he punisheth the instruments of injustice. And as he pronounceth a woe against those that pronounce wicked decrees, so he hath destroyed those that have executed them, as 2 King. 1.9. the captains and their fifty were destroyed with fire from heaven, and yet these were but messengers and ministers of the King. Notwithstanding, though the instruments do offend and not escape, the chief punishment is ever reserved for the chief offender.

[Reason 1] For first of all such as are chief in government ought to stay their inferiors from evil, as the head governeth the members. *Eli* is charged with the wickedness of his sons, in that they made themselves vile, but he restrained them not, 1 Sam. 3.13. Such governors, make themselves the tail and not the head: whereas they should order those of their house, as the soul ruleth the body.

Secondly, God will require the blood of [Reason 2] those that perish, at the hands of the governors; for that which *Ezekiel* speaketh of the watchman chap. 3.17.18. holdeth proportion in every ruler: the Magistrate is the watchman of the common-wealth: the Minister is the watchman of the Church: the householder is the watchman of the family; all set as it were in their watch-tower, and all must give an account for such as are under them.

Thirdly, the sin of those that have the [Reason 3] chiefest hand in it is greater then of others; as then it is greater, so it deserveth the greater punishment: forasmuch as the sin and punishment shall be suitable and proportionable one to the other.

It belongeth to all, especially to such as are [Use 1] superiors, to consider this; they think themselves absolute, and that they ought of right to command what they list to their inferiors. But as they are superior in place, so they shall also be superior in punishment, if they command anything against God and his word. Everyone therefore must look to his

charge committed unto him as a field to till, and be good examples to those that are under them, Pro. 27.23. Psal. 78.71.72. Superiority is both an honor and a burden: as it advanceth to dignity, so it inferreth and requireth a duty. The honor is great, but the burden & charge is far greater.

[Use 2] Secondly, it is the duty of all householders to be careful to order their families aright, and to compel them to serve the Lord; The authority that Princes have in the commonwealth, 2 Chro. 14.4. the same have householders touching y^e ordering of their households, Gen. 25.2. they must reform abuses, & purge their houses of them that be intractable and incorrigible, Psal 101.2. In the fourth commandment, the master of the house is charged to look to his family, to his servants and children. See, see, I say, hereby the misery of our times and people; they suffer those that are under them to go whither they will, and to do what they list▪ they never do so much as call them to an account where they have been, or what they have done; whether they have served GOD or the Devil. So they have their own work done upon the other days, they give thē liberty to all other works upon the Lord's day.

Lastly, there cometh a great blessing upon [Use 3] their heads that are the chief and principal in any good work, that draw on and encourage others in the ways of godliness, for they shall have a chief and principal reward. Happy and blessed therefore are they that govern their charges as becometh them, Gen. 18, 18. *Abraham shall be a great and mighty Nation, and all the Nations of the earth shall be blessed in him:* and the reason is added, *because the Lord knew him that he would command his children and his household after him, that they might keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment.* This is a notable commendation of him, he was chief, and one that went before the rest in good things, & therefore he should chiefly be rewarded. O that the like might be said of us! This should stir us up, not only to do good, but to be chief in doing good, to go before others, to lead them the way, that so we may have the greater and better reward in that great day.

[*Miriam was shut up from the Campe seven days.*] Here we may behold the mitigation of the punishment inflicted upon *Miriam*. If we weigh and consider her deserts, so heinous was her sin in equalling herself unto *Moses*, and despising his calling, that she deserved to be shut out seventy times seven days: but God dealeth not with her according to her deservings: but changeth the perpetual punishment into a temporal chastisement, which should continue not seven years, or seven months, but seven days only. When *Uzziah* usurped the Priests office and would needs burn incense upon the Altar of incense, he was stricken with leprosy, and he remained a leper unto the day of his death, 2 Chron. 26, 21. The sin of *Miriam* was not much less, yet God dealt mercifully with her at the entreaty of *Moses*, so that she was cut off from the host only seven days, that deserved to be stricken all the days of her life. Observe from hence, that GOD doth mingle his chastisements with much mercy, and doth not deal with us according to our sins, Lament. 3, 32. Luke 1, v. 20. 2 Sam. 24, verse 13. Psalm. 125, 3.

Mark the reasons hereof. First, he is slow [Reason 1] to anger, and of great kindness, more ready to show mercy then to send judgment, Psal. 103, 8, 9. Secondly, he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, Lam. 3, 33. Thirdly, he dealeth with us as a father

dealeth with his children, & spareth them as a father doth his son that serveth him, Mal. 3, v. 17. Psal. 103.13. Isaiah. 49.15. Fourthly, he spareth oftentimes the wicked and ungodly, and poureth not all his wrath upon them; and so prone is he to show mercy, that an outward humiliation hath obtained a mitigation and prorogation of the punishment. For when *Ahab*, hearing the threatening of God denounced to come upon him as a fearful thunderbolt, and against all his house, so that such as died in the city should be eaten of dogs, and such as died in the field should be eaten of the fowls of the air, he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth upon his flesh, he fasted and lay in sackcloth: the word of the Lord came unto the Prophet, saying, *Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his sons days will I bring this evil upon his house,* 1 King. 21.27, 29. This was but a temporary repentance, as appeareth in the chapter following, verse 8. yet it was not altogether fruitless, but obtained a blessing answerable to the repentance: the repentance was for a time, the deferring of punishment was for a time also. If God grant thus much to the penitency of an hypocrite, we may be well assured that he will be gracious to such as bring forth true repentance and the fruits thereof. Fifthly, we are the workmanship of God created by him: who willingly destroyeth not the work of his own hand? therefore he is not pleased with the striking of them, Job. 10.8. &c. Isaiah 38. Lastly, he seeth what is in our hearts, he knoweth that we are but dust, even as a wind that passeth away, Psal. 78.39. Therefore he is full of compassion, he turneth his anger away, and doth not stir up all his wrath.

[Use 1] Learn from hence that God is compassionate, he is soon entreated upon our serious repentance. He taketh no pleasure in our destruction, he desireth not to crush us under his feet, he is full of mercy and goodness. This is the nature of God, these are his titles. And howsoever he may seem to our corrupt affections to be severe, and rigorous, as the evil and unfaithful servant speaketh in the Gospel, Matth. 25.24. *I knew thee to be an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed:* yet even in his corrections and our afflictions, his great mercy and moderation appeareth, 1 Cor. 10.13. This is a singular comfort to all that are in distress, whether it be of body or mind, to consider how God is affected toward us.

[Use 2] Secondly, we see that happy is the state of the Church, no evil shall overtake those that are truly the Lord's, farther then tendeth to their good, Gen. 19.16. their afflictions shall fall out to the best. We deserve to be made like to Sodom and Gomorrhah. We know the affliction of *Job*, and the ende that GOD made, for he is very pitiful and of tender mercy, I am. 5.11. Now he is evermore the same, with him is no change or shadow of turning; as he was good to him, so also he is and will be good to us.

Thirdly, is God thus favorable? then be assured that the soul which returneth shall [Use] live, Ezek. 18.25. and 33.11. *As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?* It is with God as it was with the woman that had found her groat, as with the shepherd that had found his strayed sheep, as with the father that embraced his lewd and licentious son.

Such as begin to see their sin, must not think it to be too late to return. When God calleth and crieth out so often, so earnestly, so lovingly, *turn ye, turn ye frō your evil ways*: shall we answer as infidels, or as men in despair, the time is past, it is too late? when God saith, *Why will ye die?* shall we reply against God, nay indeed against our own selves, It is too late to live? Let us bewail the abuse of God's mercy, patience, and long suffering, but withal we must know that the Lord delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but would that the should live.

The people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again. See here the greuousnesse of sin: it was committed by one or two, but the contagion of it passeth farther: it was the worse for them that were near unto it, for the people were stayed and could not go forward. Sin therefore hurteth not only those that commit it, but such also as come near it, and troubleth those that are within the reach or sent of it. Again, as God is just in causing her to be shut out of the host, so he is merciful in suffering her to be brought in. And here is an instruction to the Church of God, that they be not too rigorous in execution of the discipline and dispensation of the keys. We must be as ready to receive the penitent, as zealous in casting out the impenitent. We have spoken already of putting out of the Church open offenders, and of the mitigation of the censure at the commandment of God; now before we end the chapter, observe the quality and condition of the person against whom God proceedeth. *Miriam* was a great Prophetess, the sister of *Moses*, and *Aaron*; and great suit and supplication was made to God for her, that she might be healed of her leprosy, and received again into the assembly, yet she continueth a leper, and as an excommunicate person. We learn hereby this truth, That no man, though never so excellent, of what place soever he be, can be free from God's judgments, when he hath sinned against him. What was it that drove *Adam* out of the garden, and as it were banished him into the rest of the earth? Gen. 3.24. was it anything but disobedience? 2 Sam. 6.7. Who hath sinned against the most High, and hath not reaped the fruit of his own ways? Let the Angels speak that first sinned, and were first punished: who because they kept not their first estate but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto judgment of the great day, Jude verse. 6. Was it any better with the old world, among whom were men of all sorts high and low, rich and poor, old and young; they sinned together, and as it were made a conspiracy with one accord against God, in the end they are swept away together with one universal Flood, Gen. 7. The like we might say of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the cities about them, which giving themselves to fornication, and going after strange flesh, suffered the vengeance of eternal fire, Jude ver. 7. The like we may say of kings and Princes, nobles, judges, Magistrates, old and young, bond, and free, 2 Sam. 12.10, 11. 2. King. 7.19, 20. and 1.9, 10. Luke. 12.20, and 16.22, 23. Psalm. 82.6.7. and 49.2.10. 1. Sam. 2.29.30. Luke 1.20. Eccle. 11.9. 2 King. 2.24.

[Reason 1] God chastiseth his children, that they should not be condemned hereafter, 1 Cor. 11.30, 32 when they run astray, he putteth as it were a bridle in their mouths whereby they are curbed and kept in obedience.

Secondly, he is constrained to take this course, least they should trust in themselves, whereas they should trust in the living God, 2 Cor. 1.8.9. We are hardly driven out of our

selves, and to renounce all confidence in the flesh. We are quickly induced to sacrifice unto our net, and to burn incense unto our drag, Hab. 1.16.

Thirdly, he doth it to humble us and to prove us, Deut. 8.2. Revel. 2.10. and that he may do us good in the latter end, Deut. 8.16. 2 Sam. 16.12. so that he aimeth evermore at our good.

[Use 1] Uses follow. See from hence the cause why they keep God's word, whiles other run on in evil: Psal. 119.6.7.70.71. It is good for them that they are afflicted, for before they went astray and wandered from his commandments. Doubtless, if they had all things that the corrupt flesh desireth and lusteth after, they would run into all excess of riot with other men: for as they are no better then other by nature, so their works would be no better then the works of others. God seeing much dross in them, is driven to cast them into the fining pot to purify them, that they may be as pure and precious gold in his sight.

[Use 2] Secondly, we must learn hereby to justify God and to condemn our selves. For if sin draw down his judgments upon the most excellent that offend, then doubtless we are bound to confess, that in his corrections he is just and merciful, Lam. 3.22. When he afflicteth a nation or particular soul with famine, sword, or pestilence, as his quiver is full of arrows, he correcteth indeed, but the cause is in our selves, for his iugements are wrought out by man himself, and we must learn to search out the cause in our selves. It is sin only that deserveth and draweth down his judgments. We must therefore learn to justify God in all his ways and works, yea, if he should overthrow our nation, and strike down our brethren and sisters, and bring us utterly to confusion because we provoke him daily by our iniquities: his compassions never fail, and for that cause alone we are not confounded.

Thirdly, we learn that there is no respect [Use 3] of persons with God in punishing, for none shall escape his hand. He punisheth not the simple, and letteth others escape, no man can plead any immunity or impunity by his high place, by his honor, riches, possessions, or any other prerogative whatsoever, Rom. 2.6. for he will render to every man according to his deeds. He looketh not upon the outward appearance, but so many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law. As God in the decree of his election respecteth no man's person, nor in bestowing his graces of salvation, which are the fruits of election, as vocation, faith, justification, sanctification, and such like: so in his corrections and chastisements, he doth not strike the poor and spare the rich, wink at the noble and honorable, and strike down the vnnoble and baser sort; but he respecteth everyone as he findeth him, and punisheth sin wheresoever sin reigneth, that all should fear.

Fourthly, conclude necessarily, that the [Use 4] wicked cannot escape. If he strike his friends, he will not pass over his enemies If the gold must pass the furnace, the dross shall be rejected. If the good corn must be ground in the mill before it can be bread for the use of man, the chaff shall be burned up with fire unquenchable, Prov. 11.31. 1 Pet. 4.17, 18. *Behold the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner? and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear?* It is well said of one, that the tribulations and afflictions of good men, do not bring them behind the wicked, but rather

show that the plagues and punishments of the wicked are yet behind, for God reserveth wrath for them, Nahum. 1.2. and will take vengeance of his adversaries, Ierem 25.29. Luke 23.28.31. The death and passion of Christ hath taken away y^e vengeance & curse of the afflictions of the godly, as he hath taken away the sting of death and strength of the law, though both death and the Law remain; so that whatsoever remaineth in the cup for us to drink, is wholesome and medicinal.

The ungodly do now laugh at us and deride us when they see us beaten at our Fathers hand in the house, or at our masters hand in his school: so it was with *David*, they clapped their hands and made a great shout when he was under the rod, saying, *Aha, where is now his God?* Psal. 41.5. now he lieth, he shall rise up no no more, verse 8. Psal. 69.12. but let us wait a while, before the time be long, we shall see them scourged with whippes, and cast in prison where they shall never get out. They shall be put in the stocks as evil doers; they shall be arraigned as guilty persons, and receive the sentence of condemnation, as traitors against God: woe unto them, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[Use 5] Lastly, let us learn to reform our rash judgment touching the suffering of the servants of God. We are ready to judge them as plagued of God, Psal. 73.14. howbeit we are not to judge men to be wicked and ungodly, to be strangers from God and from his kingdom, because we see sometimes the hand of God to be strangely upon them; for as much as they may belong unto God, albeit they suffer in that manner and measure. Rather we ought to admire and wonder at God's judgments, which are so just, that he will not spare his own people when they sin against him: and it is rather an argument that they are the Lord's, because judgment beginneth at his house, and he will begin to plague the city where his Name is called upon. When we see stones cut, and hewed, and squared, should we therefore think and thereby conclude that those stones were not regarded, or that they were good for nothing? We should rather judge that they are fitted to some special part of the building. So if a man come into an orchard, and find many trees cut and pruned, he knoweth it is the better for them, because they are thereby made to bear the more fruit: whereas such as are wild and crabbish are let alone. So in the Church of God we see some men lie under afflictions, and the hand of God sore upon them, these we may judge to be as lively stones cut and hewed for God's building, or as good trees pruned to bring forth more fruit: as for others, they are as stones refused, being suffered to run on in their sins, and not regarded of God. For if God did take any pleasure in them, he would afflict them, and make them fitter for himself. He winketh at many sins in the wicked, which he will not do in his own children, because they are so near to him, they are so dear unto him, therefore he looketh for more at their hands, then he doth of others, as he revealeth more unto them then he doth unto others. He giveth them more knowledge, and he requireth of them greater obedience, or else they taste of his deeper chastisement. A fire although it burn at the last that which is farther off from it, yet at first it taketh hold of that which is nearest to it and burneth it, 2 Sam. 14.30. Exod. 22.6, So God who is a consuming fire, albeit he will punish the wicked that they shall not escape, which are strangers unto him, and far off from him, yet he will begin with his own first, because they are nearest unto him. To conclude, as we are not to think the estate of the wicked the better, because they live in pleasure and prosperity, so we are not to

esteem the condition of the godly to be the worse, because they lie under adversity, and the ungodly deride them and mock and scoff at them in their misery and calamity.

CHAP. XIII.

1 AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Send thou men that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: Of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, everyone a Ruler among them.

HEere is the fourth example of their murmuring. For the Israelites, thorough the occasion of such as searched the land and brought up a false report thereof, murmured against God, as if he had never purposed to give them possession of the land of promise. This point is handled to the end of the next chapter, showing their sin, their punishment, and their reconciliation unto God. Consider in this Chapter two things, the search of the Land, and the report given after the search. In the history of the searching, are set down, the things going before, to wit, God's commandment to *Moses*, but at the people's request, Deuterom. 1.21 For they come to *Moses*, willing him to send men to search the land, being now not far from the borders of it: *Moses* declareth their petition to God, who approoueth of it and showeth that he is well pleased with it, as appeareth in this place.

Secondly, *Moses* sendeth men, not light headed persons or base companions, of no worth or reputation, but the choice of every tribe, that their testimony might be more certain and carry greater credit among the people. These are set down by name, of every tribe one; verse 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, so many, that the matter might be carried without partiality; and no more, lest the discoverers should be discovered, & the messengers intercepted. Again, if all had been of one Tribe, or if these that were selected had been of no note, their testimony might be thought partial and uncertain. But being indifferently chosen from among all the people without inclining or declining to any side, they have their commission given unto them, to view the land, the people, and the cities. The Land, whether it were barren, or fruitful; wooddy, or champion; good, or bad. The people, whether strong, or weak; few, or many. The Cities, whether walled or not walled.

The search it self containeth the fact of these twelve men sent out solemnly by the authority of God, by the commandment of *Moses*, and by the consent, yea the desire of the people themselves. What they did, is set down, first generally, they went up, they searched the Land from the wilderness of *Zin* unto *Rehob*, &c. then specially they came to *Hebron*, where gyants dwelt and inhabited, then to the river of *Es•col*, that is, of grapes, where they cut down a mighty branch with one cluster of grapes, which for the weight & greatness thereof, they

carried on a bar between two of them, with other fruit of the country for a trial, verse 23. Neither may this any way seem unto us either impossible or vnprobable, forasmuch as *Strabo* witnesseth, that in the region of *Margiana*, and under the Mountains of *Taurus* or *Caucasus* (where it is likely the Ark rested after the flood) are the most excellent vines in the world, and clusters of grapes found containing two cubits in length: and it is the more probable, because that place agreeth in climate with this part of Palestine, where the searchers of the Land found these branches of equal bigness. God had promised unto their fathers, to *Abraham* and his posterity, to give them the Land, and he that cannot lie would perform it: nevertheless for the furtherance of his promise, he would have them use the means to work out his providence.

The doctrine. Howsoever God be able without any means and instruments to bring his purposes and promises to effect, yet it is the duty of the godly to further the same by all such means as God putteth into their hands. We see this in *Hezekiah*, he was certified in his mortal and desperate sickness (for there was no hope in any art of man) frō the mouth of God, that he should live fifteen years longer, yet he must apply the dry figs to his boil; and no doubt he used food and raiment for the sustenance of his body, and the curing of his disease, which hereby seemeth to be the pestilence. So Acts 27, 31. This also we see in *Rahab*, albeit she had a promise of the spies for the preserving of her life, the saving of her household, and the sparing of her kindred; yet to be more sure and secure, she useth means, she bindeth them with an oath, keepeth within the doors of her house, and tieth the line of scarletthread in the window, Josh. 2, 18. Likewise touching *Noah's* preservation, he must build the Ark, and thereby be saved, Gen. 6, 14.

For we must consider, that no blessing is to [Reason 1] be looked for at the hands of God when he sendeth means, if we do not use them. Indeed God is not tied to them, but can work without them, yet he will not help us without thē when he affordeth and offereth them unto us. When the Aramites came against *Joab*, he encouraged his soldiers, willing them to be strong and valiant, and to play the men for their people and for the Cities of their God, and then let the Lord do that which seemeth good in his eyes, 2 Sam. 10, 12. So the people of God had promise of the destruction of *Jericho*, nevertheless they must compass the walls seven days together, and blow with Rammes horns, or else they could never have entered the City, Josh. 6, 4, 5.

Secondly, to neglect the means, is no better [Reason 2] then a flat tempting of God. For when Christ our Savior was tempted to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple, he showeth, that the doing thereof were a tempting of God, Math. 4, verse. 7. *It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* He repelleth the temptation by this Scripture. Whereas therefore there was an ordinary and common way to descend by stairs, he could not cast himself down without manifest tempting of God.

It is the duty of everyone in his calling to [Use 1] use the means carefully & conscionably that God hath appointed, if ever we look for any blessing from him. Hence it is, that *Paul* instructeth the Church of the Thessalonians to labor and work with their own hands, and to do their own business, 1 Thess. 4, verse. 11. It was not enough for them to say, they

depended upon GOD for their food and daily bread, but they must work out his providence by their diligence in their calling. We have no promise of blessing without this. God was able to have given the Israelites the Land of promise without this search, yet he would have this means used, for the manifestation of his own glory, and for their further assurance of it. For means are granted to help us, not to help GOD; us, that need them; not GOD, that needeth them not.

Secondly, we must take heed we do not trust in the means, although we be commanded [Use 2] to use them, yet should we not rest in them, but look higher and lift up our eye farther; otherwise they are merely vain, either to help or deliver us, to save or defend. The Prophets teach, that an horse is a vain thing, and Princes vain to trust in. This appeareth in that proud *Goliath*, the chāpion of the Philistines, he came in the confidence of his own strength, with a sword, & with a spear, and with a shield: but did they profit him? nothing at all, his helmet of brass upon his head, his coat of mail upon his body, his greaves of brass upon his legs, his target of brass between his shoulders, the staff of his spear like a weavers beam, could do him no good, they were the god upon whom he depended. Contrariwise, *David* showeth where his hope and trust was, when he said unto him, *I come unto thee in the Name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whō thou hast defied*. The inhabitants of *Jericho* trusted in their high, thick, and strong walls: but this proved vain, for they found little defense and relief in them, when notwithstanding all their courage and confidence, GOD laid them flat to the ground, by weak and simple means, Josh. chap. 6, verse 20. It is in vain to trust in riches, Luke chap. 12, verse 20: or in strength, Judge. chap. 16, verse 17: or in wisdom, 2 Sam. chap. 17, verse 23: or in all these, Ier. chap. 9, verse 23, because GOD can overturn them with the least breath of his nostrils.

[Use 3] Thirdly, learn that God is not tied to use means, he can, when he pleaseth, work without them, as he did in the creatiō, giving light to the world without the Sun, and taking away the light thereof in the time of Christ's passion, Math. 27, 45. Darkness was over all the Land. So he nourished *Moses* and *Elijah* forty days without food. He hath bound us to them when he hath given them: howbeit, he hath not bound himself evermore to use them.

[Use 4] Fourthly, seeing this is required of us in temporal and earthly things, much more is it necessary in heavenly things. Such persons as will use no means, whereby they may come to faith and repentance, do indeed no more repent and believe, then a man can be able to live and prosper, to grow and wax strong without meat and drink. And herein we are to beware of a twofold deceit, whereby many sorts are blinded and bewitched. The end of our faith is the salvation of our souls, 1 Pet. 1, 9. To attain to this, we must use the helps and means that God hath left & sanctified. Nevertheless Satan persuadeth many thousands in the world, that they shall attain well enough to this end, and ariue safely in this harbor, although they never use the means, and that they shall in good time reap eternal life, though they never sow the seeds of a sanctified life. Now is the seed time: now is the time of laboring and of working: we shall never reap a good harvest and a plentiful reward, if we use not the means to come thither. He that sitteth still and runneth not at all, can never win the prize, or wear the garland. But as it is with us in temporal things, for the saving of the body, so it is in

spiritual things for the salvation of our souls. Notwithstanding, men are for the most part great enemies in this respect to their own souls. They say, God is a merciful God, and Christ Jesus is a most blessed Savior, we hope he will save us and bring us to heaven: and yet they omit, and neglect, and contemn the means of salvation, to wit, the hearing of the word, the calling upon God's Name, and the receiving of the Sacraments. They that use these carefully and conscionably, declare plainly, they look for salvation: as for others, we regard not their words, when we see they look one way, and their works another. It is in vain to dream of salvation, without using these. We imagine an heaven to our selves without these, and a salvation of our own devising; but in the mean season, let us take heed lest we be shut out of God's heaven, and deprived of that salvation which he hath appointed for his children.

This serveth to meet with a perverse and profane opinion of such as reject second causes as needless and unprofitable, which reason that if God have elected any to salvation, what need they care what they do? they are sure (howsoever they live) to be saved: and if God have rejected any, they shall be damned, how well soever they live.

To answer these vain and ignorant persons, observe with me two found rules to be known and acknowledged in Christian religion; first, the chief and principal cause being put and granted, it is not necessary that the second and instrumental cause should be removed and taken away: both of them may well stand and agree together. For though one be subordinate to the other, yet both of them as good friends join hand in hand, and neither of them overthroweth the other. The Sun doth not in vain rise and set every day, though God as the first cause created the light. The fields are not in vain ploughed and sowed by men, and watered with the early and latter rain from heaven, although GOD bringeth forth corn out of the earth, and giveth bread to strengthen man's heart, Psalm. 104, verses 14, 15. Our bodies are not in vain refreshed with food, albeit God be the life and the length of our days, Acts 17, 28. And thouching our souls, it is not in vain to believe in Christ, to repent from dead works, to hear the preaching of the Gospel, and to yield obedience thereunto, although our salvation and eternal life be the free gift of God, Rom. 6, 23.

Secondly, whosoever is predestinated to the ende, they are also predestinated to the means, without which the end cannot possibly be attained. Such as are appointed to eternal life, are also appointed to the means by which life everlasting may be got and obtained. For almighty GOD hath from everlasting decreed both the ends and the means, not the end without the means, nor the means without the end, but both of them: and none must make any divorce between these. God himself hath prescribed unto us the means to bring us to the ends: & all that shall be saved, will carefully use them. No man well advised will reason thus, If it be determined, by God's providence, that I shall recover my health, there is no need that I use either food or physic; and if it be otherwise determined, I shall use in vain the help either of the one, or of the other: forasmuch as *Hezekiah* received such promise of delivery and recovery, yet he must take a lump of figs and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, that he may recover, Isaiah 38, 21. No man in his right mind will argue thus, If God have ordained that I shall come to my journeys end, I need not go over the bridge, I may leap into the water, I am sure I shall be safe and not be drowned: Or if it be determined, that thieves shall not rob me

nor have any power over me, I may thrust myself into all companies, I may travail into dangerous places at all hours of the night, and though I stand there of purpose, they shall not be able to lay hands upon me, nor to spoil me of my goods. If this kind of reasoning be extreme folly, how is it that we see not the vanity of the other?

Lastly, as God appointeth good means to [Use 5] bring us to the end of our faith, so it is required of us to beware of evil means and evil ways which lead to hell and tend to destruction. There are many in the world that persuade themselves, they may follow their evil ways with greediness and delight, and yet that they shall escape death and damnation well enough, that albeit they sow to y^e flesh, yet they shall not reap corruption. Thus he tempted and seduced *Eve* in the garden, that she might eat freely of the forbidden fruit, and yet she should never die the death, but be as God knowing good and evil, Gen. 3, 4, 5, But we must know, that God hath linked together as with a brazen chain that cannot be broken, the pleasures of sin and the punishments of sin, Rom. 6, 23, and 8, 2. The Apostle joineth sin and death together, & coupleth them together as the cause & the effect: for the wages of sin is death. Thus we see the devils cunning to beguile, teaching that we need not to do good things, and yet we shall come well enough, soon enough, easy enough to heaven; and that we may follow evil things, and yet we shall escape hell and destruction. See more of this afterward, chapter 20.

17. And Moses sent them to spy out the Land of Canaan, and said unto them, Go you up this way Southward, and go up into the Mountain.

18. And see the Land what it is, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few, or many.

19. And what the Land is that they dwell in, &c.

Albeit the Lord had promised to *Abraham* and his posterity to give them the land of *Canaan* for a possession, yet he will have them bear themselves wisely and warily, prudently and circumspectly in the search and viewing of it, to enquire into the people, their Cities, their Land, their multitude, their strength, and so to get a perfect knowledge of them; and for this cause doeth *Moses* so carefully instruct them.

The doctrine. Wisdom is a gift required of the faithful in all their enterprises, to do nothing headily, rashly, rawly, and ignorantly. We must deal not only lawfully, justly, honestly, and godlily, but wisely, prudently, politikely. *Rebecca* hearing of the purpose and intent of *Esau*, waiting opportunity to kill his brother, and being desirous to preserve them both, but especially *Jacob*, conveyed him away, Gen. 27, verse 43. The like appeareth in *Abigail*, 1 Sam. 25, 18. she prevented *David* and the mischief hanging over her own head, and is therefore commended by *David* himself. So 2 Sam. 20, 16, 17, 18. And 2 King. 4, verse 23. we have a notable example in the *Shunamite*; she wisely dissembleth the cause of her journey, lest she should grieve the heart of her husband, only she desireth leave and liberty of him to go •o

the Prophet. So Acts 23, verses 6, 7. *Paul* knowing the great iarre and division in judgment among those of the assembly, which consisted of two sorts or sects partly Sadducees which denied the resurrection, and partly Pharisees which acknowledged it, he taketh advantage of the present opportunity to sever them, and to deliver himself, Proverbs, chap. 13, verse 16. Rom. chapter 16, verse 19.

For first, wisdom is more worth & much [Reason 1] better then all weapons of war, Prov. 21, verse 22. A prudent man is to be preferred before the valiant, and indeed he can do more. He can by counsel take a City wherein the valiant are, and by his stratagems throw down the bulwarks and Castles thereof, Eccl. chapter 7, verse 12, and cha. ver. 9, 13, 14, 15, 16.

Secondly, if God's servants should not [Reason 2] deal wisely, they should lie open to every enemy to be hurt and destroyed, to be overtaken and circumvented in an excessive hand. The times wherein we live are dangerous, the persons with whom we deal, are pernicious, the sleights of Satan that dealeth against us are mischievous, his instruments are grown cunning and crafty; Prov. 1, verses 11, 12. If then we should not deal, as well wisely as lawfully, we should not be able to withstand them.

If we should not order our affairs discreetly and with good advise, forecasting the issues and preventing their attempts, we should fall into the nets, & be caught in the snares which they lay for us.

Seeing then this is so necessary, we learn [Use 1] that a wise and understanding heart is a great blessing of God. Indeed a simple mind and a single heart is good in godliness, that so we may be innocent as Doves, Mat. 10, 16. Nevertheless, we must be wise also as Serpents. So force and strength are great gifts: howbeit the greatest ornament that GOD giveth, which as salt seasoneth every action, is, when he giveth a wise and understanding heart, so as he enableth us to prevent evils, and to disappoint our enemies, as Christ promiseth, Luke 21, 14. and therefore God's children have asked this above other, 1 Kin. 3, 9.

[Use 2] Secondly, be wise in our generation, that they go not beyond us. It is most true, that he which maketh himself a body of Crystal, that all men may look through him, and discern all the parts of his disposition, doeth withal make himself a tame asse, and thereby teacheth others, either how to ride him, or how to drive him. But wise men, though they have single hearts in all that which is just and honest, yet they are like coffers with double bottoms, which when others look into being opened, they see not all that they hold, on the sudden and at once. For we have enemies, though they often make fair weather toward us, yet are full of subtlety and policy, they are we see in their generation wiser then the children of light, Luk. 16, 8▪ They are ever watchful, dealing by means, whether just or unjust, lawful or unlawful; and malice against God's servants carrieth them so far, that they make conscience of nothing, so they may betray thē. We may say of such as *Paul* doeth of *Elimas* the sorcerer, Acts 13, 10. *O full of all subtlety & all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?* Especially let us labor in things of the best nature, to provide things needful to salvation. The unjust steward is commended by his Lord for proceeding & preparing wisely for himself. If then there be any

true wisdom in us, let us provide things honest & heavenly in the sight of God: for in vain is he wise, that is not wise toward God and for himself.

Lastly, seek to fear God, for that is the [Use 3] beginning of wisdom, Psal. 111, 10. Prov 1, 7, and 9, 10. and let us have his word dwelling in us plentifully & powerfully. The word is the wisdom of God, and it should be our wisdom, because it is able to teach us wisdom, Psal. 119, 98, 99. It is able to make us wiser then our teachers then our enemies, thē the ancient. If this be not in us to guide us, we shall use ungodly and unlawful shifts, wicked devises. and lewd inventions. These cannot prosper long with us, for God will catch the crafty in their own craft, 1 Cor. 3, 18, 19, 20.

26. And they went, and came to Moses and to Aaron, and to all the Congregation of the children of Israel unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh, and brought back word unto them & unto all the Congregation, and shown them the fruit of the Land.

27. And they told him and said, We came unto the Land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

28. Nevertheless, the people be strong that dwell in the Land, and the Cities are walled and very great; and moreover we saw the children of Anak there, &c.

The second part of the chapter is the return and report of the spies. Albeit they went to search out the weakness of the land, yet having warrant from *Moses*, nay from God, they prosper, and his hand was with them in their going and in their returning. Touching the report they make, and the account they give of their travail and perambulation, it is double; first, to *Moses*, and then to the people. To *Moses*, they dare not plainly deliver the poison of their hearts. For howsoever this report may seem at the first, to be the general speech of all the twelve, yet by the words following both in this and the next chapt. it will plainly appear to be the report only of ten of them, *Caleb* and *Joshua* being excepted, who spake better things and convinced them. For the other ten, they, under glorious and goodly words, coloured and covered the wicked purpose and pretence of their profane hearts, thinking to corrupt the people with the leaven of their own rebellion, & to turn them away from attempting to conquer the Land, and to bring them to despair of possessing the same. Wherefore, though they do not openly & professedly dissuade them, yet they speak lies through hypocrisy: they do not deal faithfully and sincerely, but having two tongues in their heads, intended to stir up the people to mutiny and murmuring against *Moses*, by laying before them the difficulty, nay the impossibility of the enterprise. Thus then we see, they perform their Embassy subtly, not sincerely: fraudulently, not faithfully: for they praise the Land with a loud voice, but their hearts are hollow, and they speak the truth to deceive. Their praise is short, but the doubts that they cast into the minds of the people are many. The doctrine. Wicked men do oftentimes then speak fairest, when they intend the greatest

mischiefe, and cloke their evil hearts with soft words, Ezr. 4, 2. Ps. 12, 2: they speak with a double heart. So did *Cain*, Gen. 4, 8: so did *Joab*, 2 Sam. 3, 17.

For first, they have been brought up in the school of a very cunning master: Satan [Reason] can transform himself into an Angel of light, as when he came to our first parents, he wholly pretended their good, and made himself careful to advance them to a better estate, Gen. 3, 4. 2 Cor, 11, 3. Secondly, thereby they know they shall insinuate themselves more closely, and deceive more easily. Open enemies are better prevented, Ps. 55, 12. false brethren hardly discerned: this is the way to catch the simple and vnwary in their snares, Math. 22, 16.

[Use 1] Learn from hence a property of man's heart, that it is very deceitful, Ier. 17, 9, 10. It is the nature of wicked men to suppress the evil which they purpose, until they can see their fit times; according to the saying of the Prophet, *They will deceive everyone his neighbor, and will not speak the truth, they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity*, Ier. 9, 5. *Herod* pretended love outwardly to the new borne King of the Jews, that he also would come & worship him, Mat. 2, 8. but indeed he purposed in his heart to kill him, albeit the wise men perceived it not. Thus do men dig deep to hide their counsels, and weave the spiders web so fine that it cannot be espied: they speak peaceably to their neighbor with their mouths, but in heart they lie in wait.

Secondly, beware of such enemies and believe [Use 2] them not: take heed of them and fly from them, Mar. 13, ver. 21, 22, 23. They have smooth words, but malice lodgeth and lurketh in their hearts. Where the water runneth stillest, there it is most deep and dangerous, Prov. 26, 24, 25. The examples are infinite of such as have been overtaken by them. They that have good hearts are not easily brought to suspect another to be evil: and while they judge others to be like to themselves, they are often taken in their nets.

Thirdly, we must not be simple and sottish, [Use 3,] which have to do with such deceitful workmen that watch and ward for advantage. It is our duty to entreat God to preserve us from them, that we may not be drawn away by thē to do as they do, Psal. 28, 3. *Abel* was too simple for so cunning an enemy as *Cain*; so was *Abner* and *Amasa* for *Joab*; & they paid dearly for it.

Lastly, woe unto all such, they shall in the [Use 4] end be overtaken in their own ways, & shall fall into the pit which they have digged for others. They may hide their counsels from men, but cannot from the all-seeing eyes of God. We see this in *Cain*▪ *Joab*, *Absalom*, *Judas*, and others. The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things, Psalm. 12, •, and 7, 15, 16. Prov. 26.2•. Let such therefore consider betimes the fruit of their leasing, and know that it will be bitterness in the latter ende. They flatter others and themselves: but the Lord will not flatter them, but shall find them out in their sins.

[*They told them and said, We came unto the Land, &c.*] We saw before that there were twelve chosen that went to search the Land: yet among them all, only two deal faithfully and truly, the rest were treacherous & hollow-hear•ed hypocrites. The doctrine arising from this comparison of them is this, that the greatest part are for the most part the worst; the fewest,

the best▪ Luke 17, 11. Gen. •, 5, 6, 8. God looked upon the earth, and beheld it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth, verse 12. *Caines* stock multiplied, whiles *Adam* remained childless, Gen. 4, 25. Many enter into the broad way, few into the straight gate, Mat. 7, 1•, 14. Whē the sin of the Sodomites cried to heaven for vengeance, and all the people both young and old from every quarter wrought villainy, only *Lot* and his daughters were found in the City, that joined not with them, Gen. 19, 4, 16. In the days of *Michaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Elijah*, & *Elisha*, were hundreds of false Prophets: though the children of Israel were as the sand of the sea, yet but a remnant should be saved: & though many be called, yet few are chosen, Math. 20▪ 16. The seed of the word falleth into sundry sorts of ground, yet one only is the good ground. Ten lepers were cleansed as they were going to show themselves to the Priest, but one only returned back to give God thanks. Luke 17, 17, 18, and 13, 23, •4.

For first, God will have his servants proved [Reason 1] and tried in the falling away of multitudes on the right hand & on the left, whether they will cleave unto him and his truth, or not. It is small commendation to continue in the faith, when others stand, for so do many hypocrites: but to hold out when others give over their hold, is the try•ll of a true Disciple, John. 6, 66, 67, 1 Cor. 11, 19. Secondly, men are for the most part addicted to follow the multitude, & to run in great heaps one after another, one giveth evil example unto another, as we see in the men of the old world. Thirdly, sin is very pleasant and delightful to the flesh, it is most consonant and agreeable to our corrupt nature: but grace and piety are repugnant to the flesh, and we strive against it what we can, Gal. 5, 17. Lastly, we heard before, the ordinance and decree of God which must in time take place, that he which calleth many, hath elected out of that number but a few, Mat. 19, 30. The net of the Gospel being cast into the sea, gathereth together good and bad, but the bad are afterward cast away, as unprofitable, as reffuse and reprobate stuff.

This serveth to convince the Church of [Use 1] Rome, and the defenders of the Romish religion, that make universality & the multitude, a mark and note of God's church, whereas the lesser number is rather the truer note. For otherwise we might justify y^e old world against *Noah* & his family, the *Sodomites* against *Lot* and his house. *Paul* complained that at his first answering, no man assisted him, but left him alone, yet he had the truth on his side, 2 Tim. 4, 16. and the Apostle *John* saith, *We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness*, 1 John 5, 19. And if this were a sure note, we might justify the religion of the Turks & Sarazens, which spreadeth the wings of their superstition, much farther thē all popery doth, and occupieth a greater part of the world. But such as profess the truth of God truly, are the true Church, whether they be many or few, whether they be in one part of y^e world, or in many: and such as do not profess y^e true faith, are no true Church, whether they be near or farther off, whether in one place, or dispersed farther abroad. A multitude cannot make any religion to be true, nor fewness to be false.

The reasons which they bring to make the multitude to be a mark of the Church, make nothing to the purpose, but to mark out their own weakness, serving rather for pomp and show then for any weight and substance, as Psal. 2, 8. *I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession:* and Psal. 72, 8. *He shall have*

dominion from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of the earth: so Luke 24, 47, Christ foretelleth, that the Gospel should be preached among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem. In answer, it were no hard matter to produce an hundred such testimonies, and all nothing to the purpose or point in hand. For the drift and scope of them is no other, then to make a difference of the Church under the law, and in the time of the Gospel; at the first it was shut up within a narrow compass & corner of the earth, but afterward it was enlarged. For whereas before the coming of the Messiah, the banks of the Church were the bounds of *Judea*; under the Gospel they should be no longer pent up in so narrow a room, but the curtains thereof should be spread abroad to the utmost parts of the earth. But all this is nothing to prove the multitude to be a note of the Church, forasmuch as many believers may be in one Nation, and few believers in many Nations, and therefore Christ said, *When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?* Luke 18, 8.

[Use 2] Secondly, this serveth to reprove the common corruption that reigneth in the world among the ignorant sort and blind multitude, who build their faith and religion, not upon the golden foundation of Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 3, 11. being the head corner-stone, neither upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Eph 2, v. 20. but upon the common customs and blind fashions of sinful men. For if they can say, Oh our forefathers were of this faith, our ancestors and predecessors believed thus, they were wise, they did think, and speak, and practice this: If I say, they can allege this for themselves, they think themselves safe, they seek no farther, they dream all is well, and take themselves to be sufficiently discharged, if they follow and practice the same that they do; they pray God they may do no worse then they did. Thus while *the blind leadeth the blind, both fall into the ditch*, Mat. 15, 14. These are they that have no sure ground to build upon, and can give no reason of their faith, neither make answer to those that ask a reason, 1 Pet. 4. They go blindfold to work, and grope in darkness, as the Syrians being smitten with blindness walked to and fro they knew not whither, & so at length were led into Samaria, into the midst of the strength of their enemies, 2 Kings 6, 19. Like beasts that follow the heard, who supposing that they are going to some fresh pasture to be filled, are many times driven to the shambles and slaughterhouse to be killed. This is all the religion that they know, to do as the most do, and to go the way that most go. It is a common, but a very devilish proverb, Do as the most do, and then the fewest will speak of it. But if we do as the most do, the best will speak evil of it & condemn it, nay the word condemneth it, nay God himself condemneth it. And if we do that the most do, we must do evil as they do; and if we walk with them for company, we shall also perish with them for company, as it was in the days of *Noah*. This is a sure rule, It is better to go the right way alone, then to wander out of the way for company. It was better for *Noah* to be brought into the Ark with his family only, then to perish in the waters with the profane multitude. It was better for *Lot* with his daughters to leave Sodom, then to tarry in it with the greatest company that were destroyed with fire and brimstone from heaven. Take heed thou do not damn thy soul to the pit of hell for company, because such as sin together, shall be punished together, Ps. 37, 38. If thou shouldst see a multitude of men leap into the fire, or cast themselves into the sea, or adventure to go into a den of Lions, thou wouldst not follow them, because thou lovest thy life & tendrest the good of thy body. The

soul is much more precious then the body, & the loss greater then the loss of gold and silver, of pearls & precious stones; for one soul cost more to redeem, then all these are worth, if they were heaped and hoarded together: if then thou see many thousands before thee leap into the pit of hell where the fire is unquenchable, & cast themselves into the gulf of perdition where their estate is irrecoverable, wilt thou run after them and follow thē for company to thine own destruction? Thou wouldst not do the one, because thou lovest thy body; be sure thou do not y^e other, if thou lovest thy soul.

Thirdly, it is a vain and foolish, nay a wicked [Use 3] and damnable opinion, which many hold with tooth and nail and obstinately defend, that any man may be saved in his religiō whatsoever he profess, and how soever he believe, if he be earnest and fervent in it. If the Pagan might be saved in his paganism, or the Turk in his Turkism, or the Idolater in his idolatry, what needed *Elijah* to have said, *If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him?* 1, Kings 18, 21. he might have said as well, it is all one whom ye follow, the Lord, or *Baal*, if you be faithful and fervent in your religion; and the estate of these worshippers of *Baal* had been very good. For they were very earnest and zealous in their religion, as appeareth by long prayer and loud crying to *Baal* from morning even until noon, *O Baal hear us*; and by the cutting and lancing of themselves with kniues and lancers till the blood gushed out upon them: nevertheless *Elijah* being zealous for the honor of God, commanded thē to be slain with the sword, as false Prophets and seducers of the people. It had been a foolish thing for *Ruth* to leave her country and kindred, and her fathers house, to go among strangers, and to change her religion, if she might have returned with her sister unto her own people and to her false gods and vain idols, if she might have been as well with them; neither needed she to have said, *Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God, whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge, &c.* The Apostles and holy Martyrs had been unwise to thrust themselves into dangers, and to lay down their lives for the testimony of the word, and witness-bearing unto the truth, if they might be saved without this, living in a false religion, being fervent in it. Nay, if this monstrous and mad opinion were true, Christ Jesus should have come in the flesh and died in vain, (which were blasphemous to think:) for what needed he to have suffered, if every man might be saved in his own religion without him? Christ himself saith, *I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me:* therefore he that seeketh any other way, findeth not life and salvation, John. 14, 6. And the Apostle saith, *There is no other way under heaven whereby we can be saved,* Acts 4, 12. And *Paul* saith, *There is one faith, not many faiths, as there is one God, not many gods,* Eph 4, 5. The Idolatrous Ephesians were very zealous in worshipping of *Diana*, when they cried out, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians:* yet did the Apostle cry out against their idolatry. What needed they to teach the Gentiles to turn from these vanities, unto the living God which made heaven and earth? it had been enough to persuade them to zeal and sincerity. But this most devilish doctrine was not hatched and broached in those days, these neuters & cunning polititians of the world, were not then heard of: they are of a later brood sprung up in these last and worst times. It is the commandment of God, that we should not follow the multitude, Exod. 23, 2. But if it were enough to be fervent in that which we follow, we might follow the multitude as well as others, and the greatest par• which commonly is y^e worst part.

Lastly, it is our duty to strive to enter at the [Use 4] narrow gate. The multitude cannot make that which is evil to be good, neither that which is good to be evil: and therefore we may not forsake the truth because the multitude forsaketh it. A great number cannot make unrighteousness righteous, and therefore they cannot make a false doctrine and false faith to be good. Hence it is, that *Joshua* after a general receiving of the covenant of God, and embracing the true religion of the Prophets and Elders which did profess the same, doth solemnly protest to follow this rule, that although all they (which were a great multitude) should go after another religion, and serve other god, yet saith he, *As for me and mine house, we will serve the Lord*, Josh. 24.15. [Object.] But it may be objected, Is that always false which the multitude holdeth? or that ever true which the fewest believe? I answer, No: [Answer.] For when the truth is generally embraced, if any private conuenticle start up afterward with different doctrine from that true Catholic doctrine commonly receive, it is a mark of a false Church, not of the true. It is not a multitude simply that can mark out the Church, but a multitude teaching, professing, and holding the truth. But this is a false conclusion: A few must not forsake the multitude which profess the truth, Therefore a multitude is a mark of the truth. Or thus, It is good in good things to follow a multitude, Therefore it is simply good to follow the multitude. This is no better then a plain fallacy, to draw that to be simply true and in every respect which is true only in some respect.

Besides, by the strength of this reason, why may we not conclude, a few also to be a mark of the Church? For in the time of Christ and his Apostles, when the whole land of Israel boasted of the Law and of the Temple, of the Priesthood, and of the sacrifices, the fewest number were the best, the greatest number the worst. Jer. 18.18. Isaiah 8.12, 16, &c. Revel. 13.6, 7, 8. The true Prophets were in a manner generally resisted, they were reputed as monsters among the people which had made a conspiracy against God. When Antichrist should reign and make war with the Saints, and should overcome, and power should be given him over every tribe, tongue and nation, then a few were the true Church of Christ which keep the testimony of Jesus, that are written in the book of the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world; and all other multitudes were schismatical & heretical, which rose up with different doctrine from the Apostles. Thus we see, that neither few or many are simply the Church; not few because they are few, neither many because they are many; but if a few hold the faith of Christ, those few are the true Church, and not the many that are against them; on the other side, if many dispersed throughout the world believe aright, those many are the true Church, & must be followed, the rest which are few, declining from them, and departing from the truth, are a false Church, and we must decline & depart from them, and join our selves to the former multitude. And as it is in matters of faith, so is it in matter of life and practice. When we see many walk in evil ways that lead to destruction, follow them not, join not with them, neither let us addict our selves to them, but by all means keep our selves from them. Let us not do as the most do, when they do evil: but as the fewest do, when they do good. Let no man be emboldened or encouraged unto evil when he seeth the multitude that run that way: neither let any be terrified or hindered from godliness and embracing true religion by the fewness of the professors thereof. If we walk in the right way, it shall lead us to life, albeit we have none to go with us. Some account it a sufficient excuse to say, I

do but as others do, I shall do no worse then others, I shall escape as well as others. An evil, the more generally it is embraced, the worse it is to be accounted, and the more it ought to be resisted and prevented. The more that go to condemnation, the greater is the horror of the condemned; the more, the more miserable shall their condition be. It shall exempt no man from punishment, though he pretend he was moved and enticed by others. The multitude stirring up *Saul* to spare *Agag* and the fatter Cattle, could not preserve him or privilege him from the wrath of God, albeit he alleged it as a buckler for his defense, 1 Sam. 15, 21. If all the world, taking example one from another, should follow an evil and wicked way, the faithful are bound to maintain the right and truth, both in life and in Doctrine. *Noah* was a preacher of righteousness, when all flesh was corrupted: and *Lot* kept him upright in *Sodom*, and reprov'd their uncleanness. So did *Paul* in *Athens*, Acts 17, 16. his spirit was stirred in him when he saw the City fully given to idolatry.

30 And *Caleb* stilled the people before *Moses*, and said: Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it.

The former evil report brought up of the Land, is illustrated by the contrary testimony of *Caleb*: he resisteth both them and their report, and his faithfulness is set against the unfaithfulness of the other ten. He showeth, that the land might be possessed, and stirreth up the people to the atchieuement of it; he assureth them of victory and good success, if they built upon the unmovable rock of God's power. Now, albeit *Caleb* alone be named, Yet *Joshua* also is understood, as chap. 14, 6. who joined not with them: but because he was the servant of *Moses*, he would not stir up the rage of the people against *Moses* and himself: but he held his peace, until a fitter season were offered, in respect of God, of *Moses*, of himself, of the people, & of the cause. A word spoken in season, is as apples of Gold with pictures of Silver, saith *Solomon*, Pro. 25.11. In this example, *Caleb* speaketh to y^e praise of God in the midst of the congregation, & honoreth God before the multitude, when he was dishonored by others. We learn hereby, that God hath always had some witnesses of his truth in all ages, even whē it hath been most of all oppugned and resisted, as Revel. 11, 4. Ier. 38, 8, 9. Luke 7, 35. Wisdom is justified of her children when others regard it not. *Nicodemus* stood up and defended the cause of Christ, when the Pharisees sought to condemn him, John 7, 35. When the whole multitude had condemned Christ, the penitent thief upon the cross confessed him to be the Lord of life, Luke 23, 42. and when they sate in council upon him to put him to death, and gave full consent to make him away, *Joseph* a good man and a just, consented not to the counsel and deed of them, Luke 23, 50, 51.

And how can it be otherwise? For the truth [Reason 1] shall never decay from the earth, but be spread abroad from place to place, and from generation to generation forever, Psal. 119, 89. We perish and decay, for all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man is as the flower of y^e field, but the word of the Lord abideth forever, 1. Pet. 1, 24. God will have this never to die or decay, never to wither or to be worn away. Secondly, he hath the hearts of all men in his own hand, to turn them and change them at [Reason 2] his pleasure, as we see in *Paul*, who persecuted the church, and bound them in chains which called upon the name of Christ: but

the Lord suddenly appeared unto him, when the poor sheep were near to the shambles, converted him and appointed him a witness of his truth *To bear his name unto the Gentiles, and Kings, and the children of Israel*, Acts 9, 15. So saith Christ, Luke 19, 40. *I tell you if these should hold their peace, the stones would cry*; and therefore he can never be without some witness to maintain and defend his truth.

This teacheth us, that God is most glorious [Use 1] and powerful, he is a most mighty God, and will be known in the earth, Psal. 8, 1, 2. with Math. 21, 15. Acts 14, 17. He chooseth many times instruments in the eyes of the world unfit and unable for to accomplish any great work, that the power and praise may be given to him. We see how he worketh for the most part contrary to the manner of men, that the opinion of our own excellency should not overshadow his power. In war he saveth with few: in the salvation of the soul, which is one of the greatest works, he worketh by weak instruments, and putteth his grace in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us; even as he commanded the light to shine out of darkness, 2 Cor. 4, 6, 7. So that we may conclude with the Psalmist, *O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Who hast set thy glory above the heavens*, &c. Psal. 8, 1, 2. Mat. 21, 15.

[Use 2] Secondly, great and mighty is his truth & prevaieth: he hath always had a church upon the face of the earth, and he never forsaketh it though multitudes conspire against it, and swarms of enemies set up lies, yet it shall have the upper hand at last. This is easy to be shown in the midst of darkness, when the foggy mists of popery had corrupted y^e air, and over-shadowed the truth, yet God evermore raised up someone or other that crossed & opposed the strong faction that was maintained in the church of Rome. Thisf were not hard to show in many particulars, touching the Canon of the Scriptures, touching the sufficiency of the Scriptures, touching the real presence and transubstantiation, touching the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, and the infallibility of his judgment, touching Pardons and Indulgences, and many other points, w^c were never generally received, no not in the Church of Rome. The doctrine of Antichrist hath been reprov'd in all times by sundry persons, even in the greatest darkness of the night of superstition: for as it grew up by little and little, so was it resisted openly & evidently: to which purpose I could produce infinite testimonies, which a man may read at large in *Catalogo testium veritatis*, set forth by *Illyricus*.

[Use 3] Thirdly, be not discouraged when the truth is oppressed, because God is able to maintain it, and raiseth up his enemies oftentimes to defend it and to speak for it, and the professors and preachers of it, Acts 5, 34. He maketh the weak strong: and the fearful to be bold in his cause: so at the passion of Christ, when all forsook him, even his own disciples, he opened the mouth of the thief (as we noted before) upon the cross, to confess him as his Savior and Redeemer, that was able to bestow upon him the kingdom of heaven, Luke 23. He will never want hearts to believe in him, who can change the heart: neither mouths to confess him, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hath perfected his own praise.

Again, observe that he saw what the greatest number of the spies and searchers out of the Land hath reported; yet he is so far from joining with them, that he maketh it plain and apparent, that they should be well able to overcome all their enemies. The Doctrine from

hence is this, The evil of others, yea although they be many, should not be imitated and followed of us. We may not follow the example of evil men that go before us in evil. We see this in *Micaiah* an holy prophet, when the Messenger sent unto him, bad him to say as the rest had said, and to flatter the King; *Let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them which declare good to the King*, 1 King. 22, 12, 13, He refused to assent unto it, but said, *As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me that will I speak*▪ verse 14 So Ezek. 20. ver. 18. *Walk ye not in the statutes of your Fathers, and keep my judgments*, Math. 23, 6, 7. *Noah* & his family were just in that unjust generation, when the whole world had corrupted their ways, and the whole earth was filled with cruelty, Gen. 6. *Elijah* was alone, when idolatry had gotten the upper hand in Israel, 1. Kings 19, verse 10. 1 Cor. 10, 6. The Reasons.

Whatsoever is in it self evil and unlawful [Reason 1] cannot be made good and lawful by any example, nor by many examples. It cannot be warranted by the law of man, much less by the law, the pure law of God himself.

Secondly, no greatness, no company, no [Reason 2] multitude can save a man from judgments due to the least sin: for though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished, Pro. 5. and 11, 21. If we could cover our selves under the might of others from wrath, we might have some cover for our sins: but all this can do us no good, we lie open to God's punishments.

This serveth to reprove many carnal and [Use 1] formal Christians that oftentimes encourage themselves in evil, and strengthen themselves by the example of others, and especially by the fall of such as they find recorded in holy Scriptures. They allege for themselves, that *Noah* fell into drunkenness, *David* into adultery, *Lot* into incest, *Peter* denied his master, *Thomas* one of the twelve doubted thorough infidelity, and such like. These examples are written not to the end we should follow them and do the like, but that others should be warned by their falls not to do the like, and be stirred up by repentance after their example. Nay, these are the rather to be reprov'd, who seem to build upon such examples, because they find that these men were plagued & punished for the euilles which they committed. The Scripture doth not set down their offense and then hide their punishment, but joineth the one with the other, as if this were written before our eyes, *Do not the like*. Seeing therefore others before us have been visited with great judgments for the same sins, fear least the same befall to us also that befell to them. If we will follow multitudes to evil, because such sins are in fashion and in common practice: if we will do as the most do, let us take heed, there is no comfort in such company; neither shall it ease any one to go to hell in a throng. Let us not regard the number, or authority, or learning of evil men; but rather follow the truth in matter of faith and profession, for otherwise we shall quickly be removed from it, Acts. 28, 22. The truth was everywhere spoken against. It hath been the portion of the truth in all ages, Isaiah 55, 1. Who hath believed our report? None of the Princes or Governors believed in Christ, John 7, 48, 49. but a few of the people, whom they pronounced and accounted to be cursed.

[Use 2] Secondly, from hence we ground a reproof for children and servants following their Parents and masters, and thinking it a sufficient discharge to themselves, because they do as

they see them do before them. Woe unto those that give them evil example, and lay a stumbling block before them. Such parents are greatest enemies to their own servants. We must follow our heavenly Father before earthly fathers, & our Master in heaven before our masters on the earth. We must follow them when they command under God, not when they command above him or against him. We must follow our teachers so long as they sit in the chair of *Moses*, and teach us out of the Law and the Prophets, Matth. 23, 2, 3. When the mother of Christ said unto him by way of taxing him for not following them, he answered, *Wist ye not, that I must be about my Fathers business?* The Disciples of Christ replied unto the Council, charging them to preach no more in the name of Christ, *Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more then unto God, judge you, Act. 4, 19.* And Paul willeth the Corinthians to be followers of him as far forth as he was of Christ, 1 Cor. 11, 1. We must give an account to God whose steps we follow, and therefore we ought to say, *We ought to obey God rather then men, Acts chap. 5, ver. 29.*

[Use 3] Thirdly, we may gather from hence a reproof of sottish and ignorant Recusants standing and grounding only upon their Forefathers: such as can give no other reason of their religion, but that they were borne and bred in it. *Psal. 78, 8. They should not be like their Fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.* And indeed what do these poor seduced souls say for themselves which the Turks and Infidels may not object and allege as well as they? For have not they sucked in their superstition and impiety together with their mothers milk, and continued from father to son for many hundred years? It is an horrible abomination wherein they have been nuzled, can it be a good argument therefore from their birth and nurture to conclude their continuance in that damnable religion? If they think this to be a gross comparison wrongly applied unto them▪ because they hate that superstition, and profess the Christian religion, I would know of them whether they think us to be right or not? The most learned and best approved amongst them deny us to be any church at all, because we live not under the government of the bishop of *Rome*; yet this is the Religion that we were borne and bred in, we have had it from our Fathers, we have seen the practice of no other. If then they will not allow us to reason in that manner, and to make the example of our Fathers a president to our selves, how is it that they take liberty to build their faith upon others, and to follow the footsteps of their forefathers? But as our religion though we be ready to defend it to be good, because it is built upon the foundation of the Prophets & Apostles, yet it is not therefore good because we have received it by tradition from men, but because we have learned it from the word of God: so if they have no more to say for the truth of their religion, and the justification of their faith, then that they were born and brought up in it, they build their faith and religion upon the sand which cannot continue, when the rain falleth and the wind bloweth upon it.

Fourthly, this should persuade everyone of us, how to carry our selves, namely, that we [Use 4] should not take any approbation or liking of the evil of other, neither ought we to imitate any in sin, how holy soever they seem to be, neither give consent to them by our practice, forasmuch as God's hand hath overtaken them at one time or other. If a man surfeit on that meat which he hath seen another before him to surfeit, no man will pity him: or if he see

another drink a cup of poison, and thereupon to fall down dead before him, if he notwithstanding will adventure to drink of the same cup, he must needs be without all excuse, and perish justly: so is all evil as a cup of poison, he that taketh and toucheth it, shall speed no better then we know thousands have done before us, who have bought their pleasures of sin at too dear a rate. If men cry out unto us as the children of the Prophets did, *There is death in the pot*, 2 Kings 4, 40. what do we but bring death and damnation upon our own souls, and as it were willingly lay hands upon our selves, if we follow the evil examples y^t are practiced before us? In the things that concern the body, every man will be ready to fly such occasions, and avoid such dangers, because they tender their lives and love their bodies: how strange then and monstrous is it, that mē dare imitate others in their sins and evil practices, which they cannot be ignorant have been the causes and procurers of sundry plagues & judgments upon them. Let every man therefore labor and endeavor against these things, and look narrowly to his own ways, not suffering himself to be corrupted and drawn to sin by the evil examples of others.

[Let us go up at once and possess it.] He stirreth up the people to go forward, as the other persuaded them to go backward. They moved them to rebel, he exhorteth them to obedience.

By this we learn, that it is the duty of God's children to exhort and stir up one another to good things, Isaiah 2, 2. 1 Thess. 5, 11. Heb. 3, 13. We must not only embrace and receive the truth our selves, but there is a farther duty required of us, to admonish & encourage one another to all duties of holiness and righteousness.

And that for diverse reasons. First, we are quickly hardened in sin. We are quickly dull and dead to all good; exhortation made by others setteth an edge upon us, and putteth life into us, Prov. 27, 17.

Secondly, such as continue to the end are made partakers of Christ, and with him of all other graces: this ought to provoke us to practice this duty, the rather seeing so great fruit cometh by it; the benefit of all benefits, and the blessing of all blessings, Christ Jesus is made ours, Hebr. 3, 13.14.

Thirdly, we have other reasons used by the same Apostle, chap. 10, 25, 26. Fearfull judgments remain for all backsliders. Seeing therefore so great danger hangeth over their heads that revolt and turn back, let us with all courage and care set upon the practice of this duty.

Fourthly, the day of the Lord draweth nere, and we must take heed that it take us not vnready and unprepared; we must therefore stir up our selves and others to look for it, and to long after it.

Lastly, we see evil men do it in evil and to evil. They labor by all means to make others as bad as themselves, and oftentimes so corrupt them that they become twofold more the children of hell, Prov. 1, 10. & 7, 21. Gen. 11, 3. This also we see in this place: much more therefore

ought we to teach and instruct one another, and be helpers to the most holy faith one of another.

Seeing then we must perform this duty to [Use 1] others, much more ought we to do it to our selves. It is in vain to go about to move others, and sit still our selves; like to *Herod*, who moved the wisemen that came unto him to go and search diligently for the young child, but neither he nor his courtiers would bear them company, Mat. 2.8. If then we would have others go forward in good things, we must begin and lead the way our selves. The Prophet exhorting the people to praise the Lord, beginneth himself, *I will praise the Lord with mine whole heart*, Psal. 111, 1. If we would move others, and then stand still our selves, we do more discourage them by our deeds, then encourage them by our words. The Prophet *Zechariah* prophesying of the kingdom of Christ, & of the zeal of men embracing the Gospel, saith, that the inhabitants of one City shall go to another, saying, *Let us go speedily to praise the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts, and they shall add, I will go also*, Zac. 8, 21. And thus it ought to be among everyone of us, if we belong to the kingdom of Christ, and have in truth embraced the Gospel, we should call on another with us to go the hearing of the word & calling upon God, to the sanctifying of the Sabbath, and to attend on the Ministry; and add withal, *I will go with you*. The like we see in the prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 12.1, 2, 3, 4. the faithful people of God exhorting others to praise the name of God, do begin the song of praise and thanksgiving themselves, *I will praise thee, for God is my strength and my salvation*. So it is our duty to go about to persuade not only by our words, but by our example: and we must first do those things our selves, which we require of other men. It is a note of hypocrisy to bind heavy burdens and grievous to be born, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers, Math 23, 4. Luk. 11, 46. It is not enough for the husband to say to the wife, *Go to the Sermon*: it is not enough for the parents to say to their children, or masters to say to their servants, *It is time for you to go to the Church*; but it is needful for them to add this withal, *And I will go with you*. So ought one brother, one neighbor, one friend to say to another, *I pray let us go together to such a Sermon*, let us hear what God shall say unto us by his Minister: we cannot testify our love toward them better then this way, and show that we desire their good: howbeit we must add, *I will go with you, I will bear you company*. This is the way for us to prevail with them, and to do good unto them.

Secondly, we must consider the state one of [Use 2] another, how it is with them, whether they increase or decrease, whether they go forward or backward. This is a common default among us all, we are not watchful over y^e ways one of another, we never consider one another whether they stand still or fall: we are in this like to *Cain*, and ready to say, *Am I my Brothers keeper?* Gen. 4, 9. We care not for the most part how it goeth with them. [Object.] But peradventure some man will say, *Who art thou which judgest another man's servant?* to his own master he standeth or falleth, Rom. 14, 4. whereby it seemeth that everyone should be left unto himself. Answer, [Answer.] this place is nothing to the present purpose. For the Apostle speaketh of things indifferent, and showeth that no man should condemn as wicked and profane any of the believing Gentiles belonging unto God, and therefore it belongeth to him only either to approve or disallow the things that are done. Wherefore, we are charged

to take the charge one of another, & to procure their good by all means we can, Heb, 10.24. Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works. And how can we bear the burden one of another, except we know the estate one of another?

Lastly, it is our duty to rejoice at such practice, [Use 3] when we see men ready to practice this duty. As it ministereth matter of such mourning and sorrow to see men drawn away from the faith and obedience of the Gospel, Gal. 4.19 and 5.12. so it giveth great joy and much comfort, to see this zeal and care one of another. The Prophet testifieth this, Psal. 122, 12. *I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, &c.* It would greatly rejoice us to see a man pull the friend whom we love out of a pit into which he was fallen: but it ought more to cheer up our hearts to behold a brother drawn out of the pit of hell & destruction, and made a Citizen of the kingdom of heaven.

31 But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger then we.

32 And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched, unto the children of Israel, saying, The land thorough which we have gone, &c.

33 And there we saw the Giants, the sons of Anak, &c.

Here we have the second report, which they make to the people, now they pull off their vizard, and show themselves in their colors. For after that these turbulent spirits prevail nothing before the Council, they fly to the people, stirring up the multitude to a tumult and commotion; to which purpose they bring up an evil report of the land, as if it yielded nothing without great labor and extreme pains▪ so that when the inhabitants had spent themselves and wasted their strength, yet it was scarce able to maintain them: wherein as Serpents they hiss with two tongues, for they falsify their own words, they confound their own practice, and slander the truth of God with a lie. They bely themselves, because they had confessed openly, that it was a fruitful land: now their tongues are divided, they avouch that it cannot sufficiently nourish the inhabitants.

Again, they confound their own practice, for they did cut down a vine branch with a cluster of Grapes, and bare it upon a staff between two upon their shoulders. Lastly, they slander the truth of God, who promised unto their Fathers to give them a *Land flowing with Milk and Honey*, Exod. 3, 8. If then it were barren and unfruitful, and not able sufficiently, yea abundantly to nourish the inhabitants, God had failed of his promise, and deceived the hope and expectation of his people. True it is, these words are not literally to be taken, for there is in them another trope or figure: for first, a part is taken for the whole, so that the meaning is, that the land abounded with the best fruits: nevertheless, such are named and expressed, as needed least labor and travel of their own. Again, there is an hyperbolical or excessive speech borrowed from the waters of the sea, which often flow out of their banks, the meaning whereof is, that there should be great-store and plenty of these and such other

necessary and profitable things, so that they should have abundance. The commendation whereof is further set down, Deut. 8.8.9. and 11.11.12.14.15. Therefore *Jerome* is much deceived, that understandeth this flowing with milk and honey spiritually: and it is true that the word of God is said to be milk for such as are babes in Christ, 1 Cor. 3, 2. and learn the first principles of the oracles of God, Heb. 5, 12. Likewise to be sweeter then the honey and the honey comb, Psal. 19, 10. nevertheless in this place we must understand it of the land it self and the fruitfulness of it, and so it is said to be, even while the Canaanites did inhabit it, and when the Spies brought with them the commodities of it, long before the word of God was published in it.

Moreover, they make report of great and mighty gyants, in comparison of whom they thought themselves as grass-hoppers. Some think they are so called, because they were tyrants & oppressors, not in regard of strength of body and eminency of stature. But such there were both before and after the floode, Gen. 6.4. and 14, 5. Numb. 15, 34. Deut. 2, 20.21. Amos 1. Deut. 3, 11. Judge. 14.6.19. & 16, 3. 1 Sam. 17, 4 2 Sam. 21, 19. 1 Chron. 20.4, 5, 6, 7, 8. These exceeded the bulks and bodies of men that are now borne in this withered quarter and winter of the world, nature itself and the force of it, as it were waxing old: We see then how these hollow-hearted spies discourage the people, and discover their hypocrisy, for they blow hot and cold almost with one breath, and yet they would have more understood then themselves dare utter. For they say, *The people are strong*, but they mean, too strong for them: they say, *Their Cities are walled even up to heaven*, Deut. 1, 28. but they mean they shall never be able to win them by scalado: they say, *There were Giants in the land*, but they mean they would be able to eat them up as Grashoppers: they say, *The Land did devour the inhabitants*, but they mean that albeit they should have no enemies, yet the Land would in short time consume them. They never once mention or remember the promise of God, but as Infidels distrust and despair, and cause others to distrust and despair, and as Apostataes they slide back from the covenant of God. The doctrine; Euil men, though they long dissemble and hide the evil and corruption of their hearts, yet at last they lay themselves open, and are often contrary to themselves, Luke 9, 59. and 19, 22. and 4, 22.29 Mat. 2, 8, 16. *Herod* sent and killed the infants of *Bethlehem*, intending thereby to kill Christ, whom he pretended to worship: and 28, 12. False witnesses came and said, *The Disciples stole him away while we slept*. But this tale did discredit it self. The Disciples of Christ were few and unarmed, the watch were many, and with weapons. And if they were asleep, how knew they the disciples did it? Wherefore we should rather think, that they do dream when they are awake, then suffer our selves to be persuaded that they were awake, when indeed they did dream. So Prov. 26, 26. *Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shown before the whole congregation.*

[Reason 1] For first, hypocrisy is like a wound healed outwardly, but festering inwardly; and therefore at last the corruption cannot but break out. It is a true saying, *Nemo potest diu personam ferre fictam, cito in naturam suam recidunt quibus veritas non subest*, that is, No man can long continue masked in a counterfeit behavior; the things that are forced for pretences having no ground of truth to stand vpō, cannot long dissemble their own natures. This is the judgment of God upon hypocrisy: at the last it will uncase and uncover it self. Force the water against the current, at last it will break out to his proper course, like to the bow, that

being bent, quickly returneth to his place. Hypocrites have no sound hearts, there is no truth in their inward parts, and therefore they must [Reason 2] needs at length be made manifest. Secondly, a liar at one time or other will show what is in him, and miserably forget himself, and therefore it is not unfitly said, he standeth greatly in need of a good memory: but every hypocrite is a liar, because he speaketh one thing with his mouth, & entertaineth another thing in his heart: he pretendeth one thing outwardly, but lodgeth another inwardly, Psal. 55, verse 21. Therefore doth the Apostle join them together, *They speak lies in hypocrisy*, 1. Tim. 4, 2.

[Use 1] Heereby we learn, that wicked men need no other judges then themselves to condemn themselves. When no man can accuse them of guile and deceit, they shall accuse themselves. Their own consciences and practices shall pronounce sentence against them, and therefore they cannot escape. This we see in the convincing of the unfaithful servant. Do his fellows accuse him? or indite him? Do they lay anything to his charge, whereby he is brought into suspicion? No, his own words are sufficient to lay him open; and therefore his Lord said unto him, Luk. 19, 22. *Thou wicked servant, out of thine own mouth will I judge thee*. It can therefore go worse with none then with the hypocrite, he shall be his own judge. He shall make known his own wickedness, and so bring to light his own shame. Albeit he seek to cover his own profane heart, yet himself shall light a candle to behold it.

[Use 2] Secondly, beware of hypocrisy, which is a capital sin, and hath under it many other evils: it is a sin compounded of many other sins: for they are notable couzeners and deceivers: they are poisoned with this corruption, and use dissimulation toward God, toward man, and toward themselves. They deceive all saving Satan whom they serve. First, such go about foolishly to deceive God himself, that cannot be deceived, and to mock him that cannot nor will not be mocked (for he is the searcher of the heart:) and while they do please themselves, they think by vain shows to please him, Isaiah chap. 58, verse 2. whiles they abound with secret and hidden sins. Such pray with feigned lips, Math. 15. verse 8. They commit close sin that God may not see them, or having sinned seek to hide their sins from God. Secondly, they go about to deceive men, desiring to gain an estimation of true godliness, by contenting themselves with the shining lamp of an outward profession. They desire no more but to seem religious: if men will have them in that account, they regard no more, and indeed that is more then they deserve. Thirdly, such do deceive themselves in the end most of all, James 1, 12. These men therefore must needs be most odious to God, who seeking to deceive God and man, do not deceive them, but beguile themselves. He is a notable couzener that couzeneth himself, and that of set purpose.

Lastly, we must all labor to be sound and [Use 3] sincere, and strive to attain unto integrity, and uprightness of heart. This must show it self in every of our works that we perform: for none of them may be without it, neither prayer, nor hearing the word, nor partaking the Sacraments. In prayer, it is not enough to move the lips, or bow the knees, or lift up the hands, or utter a voice, it must be a prayer of the heart and Spirit, Ephes. 6, verse 18. a lifting up of the heart, Psal. 145. verse 18. God regardeth not the tongue or the number of words, so

much as he doth the heart. The Prophet saith, *If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*: So Proverbs chapter 28. verse 9. Isaiah 1. verse 15.

In hearing the word uprightness is required: and therefore Christ saith, *Take heed how ye hear*, Luke 8, 18. and he describeth the saving hearers, that they have good and honest hearts. Eccles. 4, 17. But such as come for fashion sake, because the world hath got such a custom; or for satisfying the laws of men for fear lest they should be presented: or seem to men to be religious, lest they should be accounted Atheists: or to the end they might see and be seen, because they have a lascivious and wanton eye; or that they might sleep and take a nap there, because they cannot sleep at home; or that they might carpe and cavil, because they love not the minister; or to pass away the time because they have nothing else to do that day: all these are far from truth and sincerity, they are no better then hollow-hearted hypocrites. And that we may show our selves upright this way, we must consider that we are in God's presence, Acts 10, 23. and as the Minister must speak as the oracles of God, 1 Pet. 4, 11. 1 Thess. 2, 13. so he that heareth must hear as the word of God, not of man. Secondly, we must have a desire to profit by it, & a purpose to practice it In the receiving of the Sacraments, we must also have sincerity and integrity. What did it profit *Simon Magus* to be baptized, and yet to lie in the gall of bitterness? Acts 8, 21, 23. *Judas* was admitted to the Lord's Passover, but his heart was corrupt with covetousness. If any ask, how we may know, whether this heavenly grace be in us? I answer, by the infallible signs and tokens thereof accompanying it and going with it. First, if we approve our selves to God in all things, not to man; if we look up and lift up our eyes to God whatsoever we do, if we walk before him, 1 Thess. 2, 4. and seek to have the testimony of a good conscience. The hypocrite seeketh no more then to approve himself to men, he careth not for the testimony of his own conscience, for that is ready to witness against him. Secondly, such are ready to yield simple and absolute obedience to the word of God (though their own reason be ready to cross the same) even to all God's commandments, Psal. 119, 6. Thirdly, to repent of all sin, and not to retain any one, but to hate the same vnfeignedly in himself and in others. The manner of hypocrites is to hate sin in others, not in themselves, Gen. 38, 24. John 8, 9. and to retain someone sin or other, wherein he taketh special delight: as we see in *Herod*, Mark 6, 20. Fourthly, to humble our selves in the sight of God, and to cast down our selves in his presence, and to confess our own vileness and unworthiness to appear before him, after the example of the servants of God, Isaiah 6, 5. Job 42, 5, 6. This note is taught by the prophets in sundry places, Mich. 6, 8. Hab. 2, 4. Contrarywise, the hypocrite is proud, and pride is evermore the companion of hypocrisy. Fifthly, to be confident in good causes, and courageous especially in time of peril, Prov. 10, 9. & 28, 1. Whereas the hypocrite having a corrupt conscience is overtaken with fear and trembling, Isaiah 33, 14. Prov. 28, 1. Lastly to be constant, and to persevere to the end in good things, to be resolute never to give over a continued course of piety. until we give over this course of life: such bring forth fruit with patience, Luke 8, 15. and shall never be removed, *Psal.* 15, 5. Whereas the double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, James 1, 8. his godliness and religion is as the morning dew. Hosea 6, 4. By these signs we may sift and examine our selves whether this grace of sincerity be in us, or not.

And as the gift is excellent, so there are sundry motives to stir us up unto it. For God is good and gracious unto such as are pure in heart, Psal. 73, 1. and 125, 4, 5. he is the Sun and shield to them, Psal. 84, 11. This is the life and substance of all other graces, without it the best things are but counterfeit, and no better then sins against God. Our faith must be unfeigned, and love without dissimulation and our conversion must be a renting of the heart. Consider also, that God is present everywhere and knoweth all things, *Psal.* 139, 7. *Prov.* 15, verse 3.

Moreover, we must meditate oftentimes upon the judgments of God which he bringeth upon the world, but especially of the last judgment in the end of the world, and of our particular judgment at the hour of death, *Ro.* 2, 16. *Eccl.* 12, 14. The heart is the storehouse & keeper of the graces of God, *Pro.* 4, 23. *Mat.* 13, 18, 19. *Lu.* 6, 45. *Math.* 23, 26. & therefore we ought carefully to look unto it.

CHAP. XIII.

1 And all the Congregation lifted up their voice, and cried: and the people wept that night.

2 And all the Congregation of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole Congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the Land of Egypt: or would God we had died in this wilderness.

3 And wherefore hath the Lord brought us into this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return into Egypt?

WE have seen in the former chapter the occasiō of this fourth murmuring, arising from the report of the spies whereby the seed was sown, which in this Chapter groweth up to an open & obstinate mutiny. The fruit was answerable to the seed, the success to the report. And who can stay the stream driven by so violent a wind and tempest? When the arrow is once shot out of the bow, it is too late to wish it may do no hurt where it falleth, because where it hitteth it hurteth. But to come to the present matter in hand; the people giving ear to these false reports, dream of danger where no danger is, like the sluggard that saith, *There is a Lyon without, I shall be slain in the streets, Prov.* 22, 13. To minds that are fearful and perplexed, all fancies and conjectures seem things of truth.

Consider in this chapt. two points: first, the general murmuring of all, that is, of the greatest part of the people: secondly, the proceeing of God against thē for their murmuring. Their murmuring is accompanied with impatience, disobedience, unthankfulness, blasphemy, infidelity▪ and tempting of God, *Psal.* 106, 24, 25, &c. and it is set down generally and

particularly. Generally, they murmured against *Moses* and *Aaron*, amplified by the effect, *they wept all the night*. The cause why they wept is the fear of death, and the sense of their sin: they supposed that they were led as sheep to the slaughter, and brought into the wilderness as to a place of destruction, & had forgotten the promise made 400. years before to their fathers. We see here how quickly and easily they obey evil persons that seduced them: they listen with both their ears unto them, and forget what they had often heard and seen. *Caleb* and *Joshua* warned them, but all was in vain. The doctrine, This is the corruption of our nature, we are prone to be perverted, and ready to hearken to seducers, to follow evil livers and evil teachers, while in the mean season we are hardly drawn to hearken and attend unto those that tell us the truth without flattery or forgery, *Exod. 4, 1*. The prophet of God sent to prophesy against the Altar at *Bethel*, is easily seduced, and forsaketh the word of God, *1 Kings 13, 21*. Our Savior complaineth of the peeuishnesse of the Jews: *We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented, &c.* And *John 5, 43*. *I am come in my Fathers name, and ye received me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive,* *2 Tim. 4, 34. Gal. 3, 1, 2. and 5, 7. Titus 1, 11. Mat. 24, 5.*

First, because in the mind and understanding, [Reason 1] howsoever there remain certain general notions concerning good and evil, as that there is a God, that he is just and a rewarder of them that do well, that we must honor our parents, and not hurt our neighbors, yet even these are corrupt and serve only to take away excuse, *Ro. 1, 19, 20*. and besides, we have all received from *Adam*, ignorance or want of knowledge of the things of God, *1 Cor. 2, 14. Ro. 8, 7*. Likewise disability to understand spiritual things, though they be plainly taught unto us, *Lu. 24, 41. 2 Cor. 3, 5*. & vanity of the mind, thinking truth to be falsehood, and falsehood to be truth, *Eph. 4, 17. 1 Cor. 1, 21. Prov. 14, 12*. So then the original or seed of all errors and heresies is in our nature.

Secondly, Satan is mighty and subtle, he can [Reason 2] transform himself into an Angel of light, & he employeth many instruments in his work to seduce us as he did *Eve*, which also work mightily with strong delusions, *2 Cor. 11, 3*. False Apostles are deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ, *2 Cor. 11, 23, 24, 25*. they come in sheep's clothing, though inwardly they be ravening [Reason 3] wolves, *Mat. 7, 15. 2 Pet. 2, 1, 2*. Thirdly, it is God's deep, yet most just judgment upon all that obey not the gospel, to send them strong delusions, that they should believe lies. This is a punishment sent upon the unthankfulness of men, when they have the light, and yet shut their eyes: hear the sound of the Gospel, and yet stop their ears; and understand the truth, yet harden their hearts against the truth: *Mat. 13, 14, 15. 2 Thess. 2, 11, 12*.

This serveth to reprove and convince the [Use 1] rash boldness and heady presumption of many men, who nothing considering the corruption of their own nature, the vnstaiednes of their judgment, the leaven of error, the subtlety of Satan, the craftiness of false teachers, the perswasible words of man's wisdom, and the judgment of God upon all disobedient persons; make no conscience whom they hear: & living in superstitious and idolatrous places, do adventure too far to thrust themselves with great danger into their assemblies, & stick not boldly to hear the Sermons of Friars and Jesuits; whereas they should rather stop their ears

against such blasphemies and impieties as they are constrained to hear. These presume too far upon their own knowledge, and are oftentimes caught before they be aware, and entangled in the snare before they see it & can discern it. Let us have ears of horn against their songs and enchantments. And it serveth to meet with others, that fail as much in their obedience, who nothing regarding their own frailty and weakness, neither the deceitfulness together with the contagion & infection of sin, dare thrust themselves into all companies, and can glory that none shall be able to pervert them or to make them worse. But it is easier to avoid their society, then to stand in it without yielding to their evil. We must fear our own infirmities, lest we lose the graces of God. A vagrant person that hath nothing to lose careth not whither he goeth, or into what company he cometh, because he knoweth he can lose nothing; but the true man and honest traveler that carrieth a charge about him, and hath somewhat to lose, maketh choice of times, places, and persons. So such as are not settled in religion, and are destitute of the grace of God, care not where they become, or into what temptations they cast themselves, all is one to them in what company so ere they be: but he that knoweth himself aright, considereth his own frailty; and he that hath any precious graces in his soul, will beware to what place or company he resort, lest he be robbed and deprived of them. The least of God's graces is much more precious then all the treasures of the whole earth.

Secondly, the Ministers must watch and [Use 2] attend the flock, over which the holy Ghost hath made them overseers, to feed the church of GOD which he hath redeemed with his own blood, Acts chap. 20. verses 28, 29, 30. Earnest teaching and preaching in season and out of season is most necessary, 2 Tim. chap. 4, verses 2, 3. If the preaching of the Gospel be not heard, all errors, heresies, schisms, vices, and impieties, will flow and abound in the Church. When the light is taken out of the Candlestick, all is left in darkness, and men groape in blindness, not knowing whither they go, or in what danger they remain. The true shepherds serve to drive away the Wolves from the flock, lest they break into it to kill and destroy. When the food of the soul is gone, it cannot but famish and perish, Amos 8, 11. Prov. 29, 18.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is the duty of all, considering how prone we are to yield unto evil, to take heed to our selves, to beware of false teachers, and of wicked persons, lest we lose all that we have learned; to the end we may receive a full reward, • John 8. We must be constant and hold out to the end, keeping faith and a good conscience. Let us exhort one another to this grace of perseverance. It is better never to begin, then not to hold out unto the end.

[Verse 2, 3. *And all the Congregation of Israel murmured, &c. and said, Would God we had died in the land of Egypt, &c.*] In these words, we see their murmuring in particular. They wish that they had died in Egypt, or in the wilderness, not that they might so cease to sin, and enter into the kingdom of glory, for which the faithful desire it, Philip. 1, 23. but through impatience and contempt of the mercies and blessings of God: for they accuse him of cruelty, or couzenage, or both; as if he went about to betray them, and deliver them into the hands of the *Canaanites*, and to destroy them, their wives and children. Thus these traitors do accuse God of treason; and all this, because they should have to do with powerful enemies: as if they

had not found greater experience of the almighty power of God. Besides, they accuse him of weakness, as well as of rigor and cruelty, as if he were inferior to those accursed nations. Lastly, to fill up the heap & measure of their sins, they would needs go back again into Egypt. This mutiny passeth all the rest that went before or follow after, & God did punish the same more grievously than any other. For after so many benefits bestowed, so many remissions obtained, so many judgments inflicted, so many miracles shown, they esteemed this wonderful deliverance from the Egyptian slavery, his feeding and conducting them through that great and terrible wilderness, Deut. 1.19: no otherwise then as notable effects of his hatred, not of his love; imagining and charging *Moses* that they were led as a prey to be slaughtered. All this mischief hatched and harbored among them came to pass through the deceitful report of the searchers, telling them that the Cities of their enemies were strongly walled, and flanked with many Towers and Castles, & diverse of the people were giant-like men, of fearful stature, which so far outtopped the *Israelites*, as that they appeared to them, and likewise to themselves, but as Grasshoppers, that is, of small stature in comparison of them. Hereupon they refuse to go any further, and proceeding in their insurrection, they determine to cast off *Moses*, and to leave him to shift for himself, & so consulted to choose them a Captain, or as they call it nowadays, an *Electo* to carry them back again into Egypt, and to yield themselves again into the hands of *Pharaoh*. They began with weeping and tears, but they end in rage and madness, proceeding from one degree to another; in the end seeking to murder such as exhorted and persuaded them to obedience. The doctrine. It is the nature of wicked men, they do not only sin, but they increase their sins, and add sin unto sin, they proceed from evil to worse, and cease not till they have filled up the measure thereof. Gen. 15.16. 2 Tim. 3.16.17. Mat. 23.32. Rom. 6.19. Eph. 4.19. Being past feeling they wrought all uncleanness.

For first, they are compared to fools & men [Reason 1] besides themselves. *Solomon* affordeth y^e wicked no better title, because though he knew judgment prepared and provided for him due to his sin, yet he runneth on like a fool in his wicked course▪ Prov. 7.22. Lu. 15.17. adding sin to sin, and never applying the threatening to himself. Secondly, they through custom and continuance in evil doing, have quite lost the feeling of sin in their conscience. Even as a man that is possessed with a frenzy, receiving blow after blow, hurt after hurt, and wound after wound, yet still goeth away laughing, because he hath no feeling of himself, Mark 5. verse 5. Even so is it with wicked men, they have no feeling of their sins, their consciences are dead and benumbed, 1 Timothy 4.2. Thirdly, God giveth not repentance unto them, and they can have no heart to it at all, to bewail and grieve for their sins. Until Christ did look back upon *Peter* with his Spirit as well as with his eye, he had no heart at all to mourn and weep bitterly for his sins, Math. 26, 75. Thus doth God punish their want of conscience, and the fear of his name.

Behold from hence the difference between [Use 1] the godly and the ungodly. As there is in the manner of their sinning, so likewise there is a difference in the measure of their sins. The godly do not continually lie in them, and add unto them from day today, as the Sow that walloweth in the mire. It is a most miserable and fearful condition, when men are so far left of GOD, and forsaken in his justice to multiply and increase their sins, till they have filled up

the heap and measure of them, so that one sin toucheth another, Hosea chapter 4. verse 2. We have need continually to seek unto GOD, and to desire him to stop the passage, that we do not proceed in them, and augment them after the manner of wicked men, and multiply one sin upon another. This therefore is a very dangerous estate, even near unto destruction.

Secondly, this giveth good and sufficient [Use] warrant when to judge a man to be a wicked person. If he add sin unto sin, and we do find that he hath given himself over to remain and continue in sin, to be even a slave to sin and Satan, we may pronounce sentence and give our verdict upon him, that such a one is a profane person. This we may boldly avouch and aver without craving any pardon; as one Swallow maketh not a summer, so one sin maketh not a sinner. But as we may judge a man to be of such a trade, if we see him follow it earnestly, continually, constantly, and in a manner to busy himself in nothing else; if he rise up early, and continue at it until night: so we way judge a man to be profane and wicked, if we see him make a trade and occupation of sin, if we see him follow his sin with greediness, rising betimes and pursuing the same till night, if we see him to be a breaker of the Sabbath, a beastly drūkard, an unclean fornicator, or an open contemner of the word, if he delight in swearing, lying, and such like sins, we may judge him to be a wicked and wretched man, such an one as hath given over himself to add and multiply one sin in the neck of another. It may be such profane persons may refrain their sins for a time, while the hand of God is upon them, yet they are still to be holden as evil men: for let God once remove his hand, by and by they fall to sin afresh, declaring plainly thereby, that the heart was wicked & unreformed, and wholly bent to commit sin, albeit they abstained for a short season. We see this in the Sodomites which came to *Lots* house with an intent and full purpose to commit filthiness, God smote them with blindness that they could not do it, Genes. 19, 11. because they could not find the house, yet they were never awhit the less guilty of that uncleanness. The like we might say of *Pharaoh*, who did take away *Abraham's* wife into his house, the Lord plagued him and his house for it, that he could not execute any wickedness, Gen. 12.17. yet he was no less a sinner. So is it with all wicked persons, though they be restrained by the hand of GOD, yet are they not reformed, but remain as evil as they were before.

Thirdly, we ought carefully to resist the [Use 3] beginnings of sin, and to take heed of entertaining a custom in it. Custom becometh as the Black-Moors skin, and the Leopards spots, Ierem. 13, 23. and turneth into a second nature. True it is, a man may be drawn by infirmity to fall; but this must admonish us to beware of continuance in sin: for thereby in short time we shall become senseless. Sin cleaveth fast on, no man liveth and sinneth not, but let us not harbor it, let it not run too far or too fast. Resist therefore the first motions. A little spark nourished maketh a great flame: a little Leaven leaveneth the whole lump. To give way to it, is as the opening of the flood-gates, or as the rolling down a mighty hill: there is no stay of the passage of it. Learn to repress evil thoughts, before consent: if we have consented, yet let us not put it in practice; and if we have practiced, yet repent betimes and lie not in it, James 1, 14. The Apostle *James* maketh many degrees of sin; a drawing away, a con•eption, then the birth, lastly death. One sin draweth on another, until man become abominable. Hence it is, that many make no bones of sin, but swallow as many as are

offered unto them. The common swearer cannot tell whether he doth swear or not, he useth it so familiarly and ordinarily, that he maketh no scruple of it.

Lastly, let the faithful grow better & better, [Use 4] and learn to proceed from grace to grace, and from faith to faith, Rom. 1, 17. and add virtue to virtue, 2 Pet. 1, 5, 6. and as he that is unjust becometh more unjust, and he that is filthy becometh more filthy, so let him that is righteous be more righteous, and he that is holy, let him become more holy, Revelation 22, 11. This is a certain note of continuance and persuerance; also of truth and sincerity, Philip. 3. verse 12. John 15, 2. Let us therefore make a beginning, and enter into the practice of godliness: one good work shall draw on another, and the longer that we continue in the exercise of piety, the more easy shall it be unto us, 1 John chap. 5. verse 3.

6 And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Iephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes.

7 And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land which we passed through to search it, is a good land.

The sin of these persons is further declared in these words, and the rest that follow. They are admonished, but they will not be admonished; rather they grow more obstinate and hard-hearted, verifying the saying of *Solomon*, *Though thou shouldst bray a Fool in a Mortar amongst wheat with a Pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.* Prouerb. 27, 22. Here we have an excellent speech of *Caleb* and *Joshua*, verses 7, 8, 9. They put the people in mind of the goodness of the land, and of the love of God toward them, and that the enemies should be bread for them, that is, they should be as easily consumed as a piece of bread is swallowed: as if they should say, We seemed Grashoppers unto them, but we say unto you that they shall be bread for us, we shall utterly destroy them.

To conclude, they will them not to fear the people of the Land, because God was departed from them, but he was amongst his own people. Nevertheless, they would not hear them, they did sing a song to an heavy heart, Prov. 25, verse 20. nay to an hard heart; they had brazen foreheads, and were ashamed of nothing, and therefore for all the care of them, and the love shown unto them, they went about to stone them to death, had not God protected them that stood in his cause. Observe first of all, in that *Caleb* and *Joshua* rent their clothes, and fell down before the Lord (a gesture usual in these times) when they heard the blasphemous words of these hypocrites, that the faithful are much grieved even for the sins and rebellions of others. This hath always been the holy affection of God's servants, they have not only mourned and lamented for their own sins, but they have proceeded farther, to take to heart the sins of other men, as *Lot*, 2 Pet. 2, 7. and *David*, *Psal.* 119, 136. They that escaped out of the common destruction are described by this note, they mourned and cried out for the abominations that were committed in the land Ezek. 9, 4. Christ our Savior wept for Jerusalem, Luk. 19, 41, 42.

[Reason 1] The reasons. First, they know that God's anger is provoked for sin, and his curse falleth upon the head of the sinner. *Joshua* had cause to mourn when he saw that *Israel* could not stand before their enemies, *Joshua* 7, 8. For *Achan* had sinned against the Lord, and the host could not prosper so long as he remained among them. No marvel therefore, if they be grieved whensoever they behold the wrath and judgments of God procured.

Secondly, if we know their iniquities, and [Reason 2] do not mourn for them, they become ours, and we do thereby make them our own. Thus we are made partakers of other men's sins. If we mourn for them, they are theirs, not ours: if we do not mourn, they are both theirs and ours. Hence it is that the *Corinthians* are reprov'd, that they sorrow'd not for the incestuous person that was among them: yea themselves were defiled by his sin, and became as one polluted lump with him, as the leaven leaveneth three pecks of meal into which it is put. And we see in the prophet *Ezekiel* 9, 5. they are smitten that mourn'd not for the abominations committed, as well as they that did commit them.

Thirdly, hereby much good and many benefits [Reason 3] come unto our selves. Such are pronounced blessed by the mouth of Christ, *Mat.* 5, 4. that mourn, whether it be for themselves or for others, or both, for they shall be comforted. When the heavens water the earth, there followeth a fruitful increase: but when the earth watereth the heavens, there shall follow a more plentiful harvest of all heavenly spiritual comfort. If any ask when the heavens are watered by the earth, [Objection] forasmuch as this may seem to be out of course, and contrary to the nature of them: I answer, whensoever a sinner poureth out the tears of his penitent soul and broken heart into the bosom of God, [Answer.] then the earth may be said to water the heavens. For the tears of the godly fall not to the ground, they ascend upward, they do not descend downward: I understand it of the fruit and benefit of them; the Lord gathereth them when we shed them, as precious pearls, and putteth them in his bottle of remembrance. Every drop that falleth from a penitent soul, is as a precious pearl: nay more worth than many Jewels of the world. It shall little avail us to have many pearls and Jewels hanging about us, and to want those that now we speak of. These do not die and perish, but are sown as good seed in the earth, the fruit whereof is very comfortable, because they that sow in tears shall reap in joy, *Psal.* 126, 5.

Learn from hence the difference between [Use 1] the godly and ungodly. The godly mourn for the sins of others, as if they were their own, whereas the ungodly make a mock of sin, and can laugh heartily at it, as if it were a matter of merriment and of pastime, *Prov.* 14, 9. Here then is a note to know, who are God's Children, and who are not. When we cannot reform and amend evil, yet if God have given us hearts to mourn for it, it is an happy thing for us, a great blessing, and a good sign that we belong unto him. *Lot* dwelt among the *Sodomites*, they were grievous sinners against the Lord, & the cry of them was come up to heaven, he could do no good among them; yet he was so far from joining with them, that he vexed his soul for them. If we do not follow his example, in vain we boast our selves to be the servants of God. This made *David* say, the zeal of thine house hath consumed me, & the reproaches of them that reproach'd thee are fallen upon me, *Ps.* 69, 9, 10. And the *Israelites* carried into captivity wept when they heard the insultings and blasphemies of the wicked,

Psal. 137, 6. The godly must not say, I will walk in the way of the multitude, I will join with them, and that it is in vain to strive against them.

Secondly, see the state of the faithful in this [Use 2] life, somewhat there is always to humble and afflict them, in themselves, or in others. The Prophet *David* testifieth oftentimes his joy of heart which God gave him, nevertheless this is not found without grief and sorrow. We have no joy without grief in this world, but they are tempered and mingled together, bitter and sweet one with another, lest in joy we should be too joyful, & in sorrow we should be too sorrowful, the one serving to allay the other, and the one making the other profitable. Howbeit after this life, when God shall separate the sheep from the goats, these affections also shall be separated, the godly shall have joy without grief, y^e ungodly shall have grief without joy. To have joy without any trouble is not to be looked for upon the earth, it is the condition of them that are glorified and perfected in heaven. On the other side, to have grief and anguish without joy and comfort, is the miserable condition of them that lie damned and tormented in hell, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth, Math. 25, 30. horror without release; weeping, but the tears shall never be wiped away; fire, but it shall never be quenched: this is their cup to drink, this is their portion to inherit. But the godly upon earth, have the gifts of GOD mingled with wants, faith with infidelity, assurance with doubting, hope with despair, love with hatred, perfection with imperfection, sanctification with the relics of sin, as likewise they have grief tempered with joy, and joy with grief. Indeed sometimes they want the sense and feeling of joy and comfort, but never all hope and expectation of them.

[Use 3] Thirdly, we ought much more to mourn for our own sins, otherwise it were gross hypocrisy to mourn for others more then for our selves, or so much for others as for our selves. It is sufficient that we mourn for other men, whose sins we cannot amend: but more is required to be performed toward our selves; we must both mourn for them, and amend them. If we can weep for them, and do not amend them, our tears are counterfeit tears. Let us therefore oftentimes examine our selves, how we are affected toward our selves and toward others, and touching our grief conceived for our sins, and for the sins of other men. Let us mark where we bestow our greatest sorrow, and thereby take notice how it standeth with us, and so learned to reform our practice, if we find it any way to be amiss. The women that followed Christ our Savior to the Cross, wept for him and thought they had just cause so to do; but never imagined that they had more cause to weep for themselves, and therefore he correcteth that practice, Luke 23, 28. *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children, &c.* We shall all of us find cause in our own selves to mourn and humble our selves for our selves.

Lastly, we ought to have a care of the salvation [Use 4] of others, and to desire their repentance, otherwise our mourning is idle and nothing worth. He that is entered into the way of salvation himself, will both hunger and thirst after the salvation of other. And hereby we may try, whether our mourning for others be sanctified or not. For as there is a carnal joy, so there is a carnal sorrow: and as there is a natural joy, such as natural men have, so there is a natural sorrow, arising from natural causes. If we have the spiritual & godly

sorrow, it will work in us a great care and desire of the salvation of our brethren. As godly sorrow causeth in us repentance never to be repented off, 2 Cor. 7, 10. so godly sorrow conceived for the sins of others, will bring forth an earnest longing in us to bring them to repentance.

8. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this Land, and give it us, a Land which floweth with milk and honey.

9. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the Land, for they are bread for us; their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us, fear them not.

Of the interpretation of these words, we have spoken in the former verses. They contain an effectual exhortation able to stop the mouths of the seditious spies, and to persuade the people to proceed, building themselves upon the blessed experience of the love of God toward them, and of his power sufficient to save them, and ready to stand for thē: and touching their enemies, they should be assured, they could not prevail, because God is not among them, he had laid them open to judgment. The Doctrine. God is a shield and defense for all that are his, but as for his enemies, he taketh no care nor charge of them▪ he leaveth them to themselves, Prov. 30, 5. Exod. 15, 2, and 29, 45, 46. Judge. 2, 14. Psal. 3, 3, and 18, 2.

The reasons. God is the Captain of his [Reason 1] host, to fight his own battles against all the enemies of the Church, 2 Chro. 13, 12. Josh. 5, 14.

Secondly, sin maketh naked and bare of [Reason 2] God's protection and defense, Exod. 32, 25. when the people had committed idolatry, *Moses* saw that they were naked, for *Aaron* had made thē naked unto their shame among their enemies.

Thirdly, the enemies of God have forsaken [Reason 3] him, and therefore he will not be with them, because they will not be with him: it is a just thing that he should forsake them that have forsaken him, and that he should not be on their side, who are not on his. They that will not be his people, he will not be their God, Hos. 3, 3, & 1, 9.

From hence it may be objected, [Object.] Is not God said to be everywhere? Isaiah 66, 1. Answer. [Answer.] He is touching his essence, but not in his effectual working by his Spirit to save and deliver. Thus he is only with the godly. Hence it is, that in the end of this chap. verse 42. the Lord said to the rebellious, *Go not up, for the Lord is not among you, that ye be not smitten before your enemies.* He was not among these, to fight for them, and to save them, to defend and deliver them by his power & great might; otherwise by his essence and according to his nature he was even among them, as he is also everywhere. Thus we see, how God is said to be near, and how to be far off. For while he offereth grace by the ministry of his word, and causeth it to be preached unto us, he is near unto us, Isaiah 55, 6. Call upon him while he is near to wit, while his arm is stretched out to receive us; and his mercy is offered to save us. Thus God may be said to be in one place and in one person more then in another, yea in one place and person & not in another: and he is said, sometimes to come, and

sometimes to go away, notwithstanding he be everywhere essentially, and there be no mutation of place, or shadow of change with him. When he beginneth to work by his holy Spirit, faith, repentance, and sanctification, in the hearts of his children, he may be said to come unto them, as John 15, 22. Revel. 3, 20. And when he preached by *Noah* to the old world, Christ is said by his divine Spirit to come among that people, 1 Pet. 3, 19. *He went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometimes were disobedient, &c.* So likewise his absence or departure, is the removing of the effects of his presence, to wit his grace and favor.

[Use 1] From hence arise comfort to all the godly, they are safe and <◇> under the wings of God, he is a buckler round about, he is their castle and their fortress, whereupon they may be bold and confident in dangers, Psal, 23, 4. No enemy shall hurt them, no danger shall overthrow them. The enemies may oppress them for a time, but God is not far off: if he be on our side, who shall be against us?

[Use 2] Secondly, woe be unto all the enemies of God, they cannot stand nor prosper: which serveth to terrify all evil doers. They are as out-laws or rebels, that live no longer under the protection of law or Magistrate: so are the ungodly proscribed of God, and lie open to judgment. They are as soldiers without weapons, they have neither shield, nor buckler, nor breast-plate, nor helmet, nor sword; their loins are vngirt, their feet are unshod, their heads are uncovered in the day of battle; they lie open as naked men to be wounded and destroyed. They have nothing to defend them or to do them good, all creatures are against them, nay the Creator himself.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is the duty of the faithful to look to their ways, seeing the Lord is with them, and dwelleth among them. He is a God of pure eyes, he seeth us and all our ways; let us therefore carry our selves unspotted of the world, and labor to *be holy, as he is holy*, Levite. 11, 44. and 19.1, and 20, 7. lest we give him just cause to leave us. If we have any friend come unto us, we are willing to give him the best entertainment we can, we are loath to depart from him, we are willing to content him: how much more ought we to receive the Lord? for we may expect more of him, and be assured of defense & protection from him; grieve him not therefore nor his Spirit by our sins. So long as they are fostered in us, he cannot be welcome unto us, neither shall we be welcome unto him. They will drive him away & make him depart from us. Our bodies should be the Temples of the holy Ghost, and therefore we must remember, that as we are not our own, but bought with a price, so we ought to glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are God's.

10. But all the Congregation bade, stone them with stones: and the glory of the Lord appeared in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, before all the children of Israel.

These rebels had raged against God, no marvel therefore if they raged against his servants, who notwithstanding had not used any rigor or force against them, only they persuaded the to trust in the promise of God, and boldly to proceed on their journey toward the Land. But this is accounted as an heinous crime, and they deal with them as men worthy of death, according to the saying of *Solomon*, Prov. 9, 7. *He that reproveth a scorner, getteth to himself*

shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man, getteth himself a blot. Thus we see how wicked men can abide no reproof, nay, they cannot suffer a word of exhortation, they cannot abide that others should do better then themselves. Again, such as are carnal and corrupt, are prone to hatred, malice, and revenge, yea when no cause of offense is offered unto them. See also how God protecteth his servants in times of danger.

But to pass over these points, from hence observe, that such as are God's servants, and stand for good causes, shall be persecuted, maligned, and evilly entreated, as if they were murderers and malefactors. Though they deserve to be favored and loved, yet they shall be hated, cursed, and contemned. So it was with *Moses*, when he came to *Pharaoh*, & moved him to let the people go, *Exod.* 5, 1, 2, 5, 6. *Dan.* 3, 19, and 6, 16. *Acts* 4, 20, 21. and 5, 18. *John* 16, 2. *1 Kings* 13, 4. Thus was it with *Elijah* and *Elisha*; thus was it with *Michaiah* & *Jeremiah*: and thus it was with all the Prophets, *Math.* 23, 34.

The reasons; because the world hateth the [Reason 1] truth, and the professors of it: The Preachers and professors of it, because they manifest & publish the truth, *Gal.* 4, 16: The truth it self, because men love darkness more then the light, inasmuch as their own deeds are evil, *John* 3, 19. They are chosen out of the world, therefore the world hateth them; whereas if they were of the world, the world would love his own, *John* 15, 19.

Secondly, Satan is their enemy, and seeth [Reason 2] that by them his kingdom is in danger to be overthrown; hence it is, that he rageth and raiseth persecution, that thereby he may stop their mouths, & stop the course of the truth, *Revel.* 2, 10, and 12, 13.

Thirdly, God will have his servants tried [Reason 3] in their faith, patience, constancy, and obedience, *Revel.* 2, 10. We must learn to walk through good report and evil report, and be ready to renounce all rather then the truth, which we must buy at any rate, but never sel it though we might gain all the world, because all such gain is the greatest loss, *Math.* 16, verse 26.

The uses follow. First, marvel not at it whē [Use 1] we see this come to pass: neither condemn the truth, or the professors of it, *1 John* 3, 13. *Maruaile not if the world hate you.* Let us comfort our selves with this consolation, that it is no rare thing, neither is our case singular, neither do we suffer alone, it hath been the lot of all Christians, nay of Christ himself; let us not seek to be better then he was, the servant may not be above his Lord, if they have persecuted him, they will persecute us, *John.* 15, 2. Christ himself pronounceth such as suffer for righteousness sake to be blessed, for so did they persecute the Prophets that were before us, *Math.* 5, 12. Many men in the world are discouraged from godliness of life and walking in a sincere profession, because they see the godly persecuted, and the ungodly to prosper and flourish: therefore *John* doth forewarn, not to marvel heereat, because this ought not to seem strange unto us, it hath been so from the beginning, and so it hath continued. The world, though it be full of changes, yet changeth not his nature, neither taketh upon it any other shape. Wherefore, we must not cease from godliness for hatred of the world, but rather go more zealously forward, remembering the words of Christ, *Math.* 11, 12. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

Secondly, we must rejoice under the cross, [Use] and be glad when we suffer for the truth, not as evil doers, 1 Pet. 3, 17, and 4, 15. but for well doing. So did the Apostles, Acts 5, 41: so did the Hebrews, chap. 10, 34. They considered with themselves, that they had in heaven a better & an enduring substance, they accounted it a great honor, that they were accounted worthy to suffer for his Name; they knew that they were made partakers of the sufferings of Christ, and that the trying of their faith would work patience, I am. 1, 3, and patience, experience: and experience, hope; and hope would not make ashamed, Rom. 5, 4, 5. The cause therefore for which we suffer, must more comfort us, then the trouble which we endure, dismay us. God will never be wanting unto us, by his grace and Spirit, to hold us up and to stand by us, that either we shall escape the hands of the persecutors, or else he will assist us and strengthen us in the persecution. The affliction is but for a moment, but y^e fruit of it shall remain forever.

Thirdly, we must sit down, and cast our accounts [Use 3] before hand, what our profession will cost, and not think with the sons of *Zebede*, to sit down at the right hand, and at the left hand of Christ in his kingdom. Mat. 20, 21, but rather learn of Christ. Lu. 14, 26. to hate father, mother, wife, children, brethren, & sisters, yea his own life, that he may continue to be his Disciple. When the brethren exhorted *Paul* not to go up to Jerusalem, because a Prophet foretold, that he should be bound & delivered into the hands of the Gentiles, he answered, *What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the Name of the Lord Jesus.* Here was a Christian resolution to undergo all tribulations, and resist even unto blood, if he were thereunto called. The cause of shrinking back, is this want of fore-thinking.

Lastly, we ought to labor to possess our [Use 4] souls with patience, and to show our obedience in suffering, as well as in doing the will of God. There is a twofold obedience required of us, the one active, the other passive▪ Many think themselves discharged of this duty, if they be careful to do as God commandeth: but they never consider that they are bound to glorify the Name of God by suffering, as well as by doing. Christ our Savior the most perfect pattern of obedience, hath performed the will of God both ways: and this is the substance of the Gospel to teach what he did and what he suffered, Acts 10, 39. Wherefore, let our patient mind also be known unto all mē. Phil. 4, 5. Luke 21, 19.

11. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be, yer ye believe me, for all the signs which I have shown among you?

12. I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit, &c.

Now we come to consider how God proceedeth against these sinners; & first touching his threatening, then of his execution of judgment. He threateneth to sweep thē away with the pestilence, and so to root them out utterly. The doctrine is this: Among other diseases and judgments sent for sin, the plague and pestilence is one. It cometh not by chance or fortune, but is sent of God into towns and cities, as 2 Sam. 24, 15. The Lord sent a pestilence in Israel,

from the morning to the time appointed. Deut. 28, 21, 22. Levite. 26, 25. Ezek. •4, 19. Numb. 16, 46, 47.

The reasons; first, because all diseases & afflictions come frō God, Amos 3, 6, they come [Reason 1] not out of the dust, neither arise from beneath the earth, but they proceed frō God. Secondly, the titles given unto them, prove as much; they are called the sword of the Lord, 2 Sam. 24, 16, and the arrow of the Lord, Psal. •, •1.

This teacheth, that the pestilence is not caused only or chiefly by natural means. but [Use 2] the chief and main cause is the wrath of God against sin, Deut. 28, 15. And hence it is, that it bringeth with it horror and fear, weeping and lamentation, terror and astonishment, because God striketh the conscience inwardly as well as the body outwardly. Hence it is, that there is removing hither and thither, flying too and fro, and much amazement in all persons. It is sin that bringeth all, both public and private calamities: and God is able to find out our sins, and us in our sins. And as we sin many ways, so he hath many ways to plague us, and it lieth in him to punish us with one or with many of his plagues together. The Lord, if it had pleased him, could have punished *David* with these three i•gements, famine, the sword, and the pestilence, all together, and his pride and vain confidence in his own strength deserved no less: but he brought only one of them, and put him to his choice, whether of them he would have. We can reason oftentimes among our selves of the causes of the plague, and can tell that it came into such and such places first of all by such a carrier, or traveler, or infected person: nevertheless, though it be not to be denied but there may be such causes, we may not omit or forget the chief and principal. And tell me, how came it at the first? and what shall we make the first cause within us, but sin, and without us, but God? No plague beginneth but by his just and righteous hand, so no plague can cease before God will that sent the same. And how is it, that one city is infected more then another, and one house more then another, and in the same house some are smitten, others are not touched? Is not this the will and pleasure of God also? This then noteth the great folly of such as say, Oh, this is a contagious time of the year, when this season is a little overpast, that we may have some frost, or cold, or wind to purge the air, you shall see all well again, time will wear out all. But if God call not back his hand, and stay his judgment, no wind, no winter, no weather, no cold shall be able to do us any good. And therefore we see oftentimes, that though we have had many nipping frosts, and strong winds, yet this sickness hath increased and not been diminished.

Secondly, the readiest way to avoid the [Use 2] plague, is to abstain from all those things that bring it, continue it, and increase it. Men ordinarily do use sweeping of houses, washing of chambers, cleansing of streets, perfuming of stuff, killing of dogs, taking of physic, and such like: neither doth God condemn or restrain these or any good means to relieve our selves, provided that we trust in God, and not in them: notwithstanding it is certain, that all man's policy without God is able to do nothing. The plague cannot be removed by any man's industry. We must wash & cleanse and purge our hearts by true and unfeigned repentance, I am. 4, 8. Isaiah 1, 16. Ier. 4, 14. Ps. 51, 2, 7. All these places show, how foul and filthy we are by nature. For that which is clean of it self, needeth no washing: but we need washing and

purging, and therefore we must confess we are unclean. Nay, no mire is so foul, or dung so filthy as we are through corruption, Job 14, verse 4, and 25, verse 4. Isaiah 64, 6. Titus 1, 15. There is no sent or savor, no carcass so corrupt and ready to infect, as that which proceedeth from our selves, whereby we defile our selves and one another. This Christ teacheth, Math. 15, verse 18. *Those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man.* Keep out sin from the heart, and the plague shall never defile the man: everyone therefore must labor to cleanse the heart.

Thirdly, seeing it is caused by sin, we must learn to search and find out the true [Use 3] cause of the plague. The enemies of God's word will make the Gospel the cause of the pestilence and of all other calamities. So did *Ahab & Jehoram* make the Prophets the principal procurers of the famine which fell out in their days, 1 Kings 18, 17. 2 Kings 6, 31. Thus dealt the heathen with the Christians that lived under the heathen and persecuting Emperors; when any famine, or pestilence, or overthrow befell among them, they imputed all to Christians, and cried out to have them persecuted and punished, as appeareth at large in the Apology of *Tertullian*. These are blasphemous mockers and deriders of the holy faith of Christ, which open their mouths against heaven. The chief cause of the plague is the contempt of the word, Ier. chapter 29, 17, 19.

Lastly, everyone of us must learn how to behave our selves in the troublesome times of [Use 4] this heavy judgment. We must have a tender feeling of their distressed condition that lie under this grievous hand of GOD. The Church is compared to a body, whereof Christ is the head, Eph. 4, ver. 16, and the faithful are members, Romans 12, 4. 1 Corinthians 12, 12. They make but one body, though they be many different members, and are all under one head, and therefore are to help one another, to bear one another's burden, and so fulfill the law of Christ, Galatians 6, 2, 1 Corinthians 12, verse 24. Let us consider the several duties belonging to several persons in the day of visitation.

The duty of Magistrates, is then especially to see religion established, evil doers cut off from the City of God, and all disorders removed, Psal. 101, 8. They must humble themselves, and cause the people to humble themselves. They must appoint fasting and prayer, that thereby they may move the Lord to call back his judgment. We have a notable example of this in the King of Nineue, when he feared a general judgment to come upon himself and his people, he rose up from his throne, and laid away his robe from him, he covered himself with sackcloth, and sate in ashes, yea he proclaimed that neither man nor beast, herde nor flock, should taste anything, and that they should cry mightily to GOD, saying, *Who can tell, if God will return and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?* Ion. 3, 6, 7, 8, 9. Here is a good president for Kings & Princes, what by their own example & public decrees they ought to do, that there may be a common humiliation of all estates.

It is the duty of the Ministers to preach the word most earnestly, both the Law and the Gospel, in season and out of season; to persuade to repentance, to comfort the feebleminded out of God's word, to stir up the poor to patience, the rich to liberality, and all men to compassion and commiseration. It belongeth unto them as it were to stand in the gappe; they must above others pray earnestly to God, Amos 7. verse 25. knowing that the prayer of

a just man availeth much if it be fervent, James 5, 16, 17. So was it with *Moses* and *Aaron*, when the plague was begun, he willed *Aaron* to take a Censer, who ran into the midst of the Congregation, and stood between the living and the dead, offering Incense, and making atonement for the sins of the people, Numbers 16. verse 48.

It is the duty of all parents, to teach and instruct their children from whence, & for what causes God sendeth the pestilence, and other calamities, Deut. 6.7. They must go before them in a good example of life, Genesis chap. 18, 19. and if they should see all other careless and negligent in this duty, yet must they say with *Joshua*, chap. 24. verse 15. *As for me and mine house, we will serve the Lord.* It belongeth unto them to call their families unto private humiliation, as *Ester* did, chap. 14. verse 16. and every day they should offer up sacrifice for their servants and children, after the example of holy *Job*, chap. 1. verse 5. and pray for their safety and welfare, and every day give thanks for their most merciful deliverance, while in the mean season so many fall on their right hand and on their left.

It is the duty of rich men in time of contagion, to have as at all other times, so then especially a diligent care of the poor, because then the greatest occasion is offered to do good. We must not shut them up in their houses, and then shut up our compassion from them, as it were in a close prison without relief. It is the commendation of the Christian Church after the ascension of Christ, that they had all things common, and no man said that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, neither was there any among them that lacked▪ Acts 4, 32, 34. If they did this in the need of the Church, how much more ought we to provide for those that cannot provide for themselves? He is not worthy to bear the name of a Christian, that at such times would withhold things necessary from those that are withholden from the company of others. Woe unto those that would add so great affliction to those that are deeply afflicted already. The four Lepers that were put out of the city according to the law, & dwelt apart by themselves at the entering in of the gate for fear of infection, were notwithstanding provided for in the straight siege of Samaria: so long as there was anything in the city, they wanted not, but were provided for, 2 Kings 7▪ 4. So it ought to be among us.

It is the duty of the poor & needy to arm themselves with patience, as a shield & buckler in time of trouble; knowing that nothing falleth out without the providence & appointment of God. He will not lay more upon us then he will enable us to bear, but with the temptation will make an happy issue, 1 Cor. 10, 13. he will comfort us in our tribulation, 2. Cor. 1, 4, and pity us as a father pities his children, Ps. 103, 13, 14. He will stir up the hearts of others to whom he hath given this worlds good, to do us good, who hath the hearts of all in his own hand. Such therefore ought then especially to give themselves to prayer unto God; they must also bear themselves thankfully to men that have been raised up to show compassion toward them, but above all to God himself, from whom every good gift cometh, I am. 1, 17. The duties of such as are taken with the pestilence are also to be considered. They must consider that their sins have deserved that judgment, that God thereby calleth them to repentance, stir•eth them to prayer, exerciseth their faith, driveth thē from security, weaneth them from the love of the world, and bringeth them to a love and desire of heaven. Such must renounce

all confidence in the flesh, and commit themselves wholly to God, not doubting of his mercy: they must set their houses in order to avoid contention, they must give testimony of their faith in their sickness, and stir up those that are about them and come to visit them, to the fear of God. Especially let them take heed they do not accuse God of dealing hardly and rigorously with them, because he striketh thē while he letteth others to escape: but let them stoop down to his correction, & submit themselves to his heavenly pleasure with all reverence. Lastly, it is the duty of all men to make solemn profession of their humiliation & repentance, humbling themselves before God by fasting and prayer, against whom they have sinned, 1 Kin. 8, 38. Al bravery and excess ought then to be laid aside, all riotousnesse and luxuriousness should be banished far from us, Esa 22, 12, 13, 14. The Prophet *Amos* reproveth the rich, & crieth out earnestly against their senselessness, living in all kind of pleasures and delights, & nothing at all regarding the affliction of *Joseph* chap. 6. So was it with the rich Glutton in the gospel, though he saw *Lazarus* lie at his gate in great misery, yet *he was clad in purple, & fared deliciously every day*, Lu. 16, 19. such is the pride and delicacy of our times, y' albeit God sweep away many with his fearful visitation, and the cry of the poor at such times be very great, that it might even move the stones to relent, and that it soundeth with a shrill voice in the ears of men and ascendeth up to God, yet the greatest sort are nothing moved: the Lord of hosts calleth to weeping and to mourning, & to girding with sackcloth, *and behold joy and gladness slaying Oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine; let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die*. No man almost will diminish anything of his bravery in apparel, of his daintiness in fare, of his costlinesse in furniture, and of his excess in all things. Let all such as fear God, think upon the evil day, & prepare themselves against the time of affliction, & stoop under the mighty hand of God.

[*I will disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater Nation and mightier then they.*] A most fearful threatening. It is a sore punishment when the father is constrained to disinherit his son, Gen. 49, 3, 4, but much sorer when he must disinherit all of them. God threateneth in this place to disinherit thousands of Israel, and to make of *Moses* a mighty Nation. And as *John the Baptist* said to the Pharisees and Sadducees that came to his baptism, that God was able of those stones to raise up children unto *Abraham*, so doth the Lord say to *Moses*, that he would destroy that whole people, for whom he had prayed before, chap. 10, 36. *Return, O Lord, to the many thousands of Israel:* but of him he would raise up a great and a mighty Nation. This threatening we must understand conditionally, except his anger be appeased at the prayer and intercession of *Moses*. The threatenings of God are twofold, some are peremptory and absolute, never to be revoked, as it is said of y^e laws of the Medes & Persians, that they could not be changed: as Gen. 2, 17. If *Adā* had prayed all the days of his life, that he might not die, but return to his former condition, the sentence of God had not been reuersed. The like we see concerning *Moses*, God threateneth that he should never enter into the Land of promise: *Moses* understanding the threatening conditionally, besought the Lord, that he might go over *Jordan* into that Land, but the Lord was wroth with him and would not hear him, but said unto him, *Let it suffice thee, speak no more unto me of this matter*. The same we might say of *David*, he received a threatening against his sin, that the child conceived in adultery should die, 2 Sam. 12, 14, nevertheless he besought God for the child, with fasting,

weeping, and prayer, v. 16. he said, *Who can tell, whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?* Notwithstanding, according as the Prophet had denounced, the child died. So then, we see that some of God's judgments denounced against the sons of men are absolute and irrevocable, and must take effect: other of them are limited with a condition, and upon humiliation and repentance are changed & altered; and so it is with the promises of God, some of them are absolute, and some are with condition. Such as concern salvation and are necessary to eternal life, are promised absolutely in respect of God; such as are temporal and belong to this present life, are promised conditionally. We learn from hence, that the threatenings and denunciations of God's judgments are for the most part conditional, not absolute, toward his people, and to be understood with this exception, except they repent and amend. This condition is sometimes expressed, and sometimes understood. It is set down expressly, Ier. 18, 7, 8. Sometimes it is suppressed and understood inclusively, Gen. 6, 3.

The reasons: First, because after threatening, [Reason 1] if repentance follow, it causeth forgiveness of sin, and taketh away the cause of punishment. Sin is the cause of God's judgments: if the cause be removed, the effect will cease, Ezek. 33, 14, 15. *Whē I say to the wicked, thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful, &c. he shall surely live, he shall not die.*

Secondly, God is a gracious God, of great [Reason 2] longsuffering, and of much patience, and unspeakable kindness, ready (though much moved) to receive to mercy as soon as we return to him, Ier. 3, 12. He promiseth mercy to them that repent; his anger shall not fall upon them that return, because he is merciful and will not keep his wrath forever.

Thirdly, this is the end that God aimeth at [Reason 3] in all his threatenings, not the destruction of them that are threatened, but their amendment, Ezek. 18, 23. *Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God? and not that he should return from his ways, and live? and ch. 33, 11. Why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

The uses. First, consider that in the greatest [Use 1] and most fearefull threatenings of God's heavy judgments, there is comfort remaining, and hope of grace and mercy to be found, there is life in death, and health in sickness, if we can change and amend. Thus do the Princes of *Judah* profit by the threatenings of the Prophet, when he had threatened desolation of y^e Lord's house, and the destruction of the whole Land, for which the Priests and people would have put him to death; they pleaded the practice & example of good *Hezekiah*, for the comfort of themselves and the people of his time, and thereby stirred up themselves to fear y^e Lord, and to turn from their evil ways, Ier. 26.18. The place is worthy to be considered, where the Princes show that *Jeremiah* did no more thē *Micah* had done before him, yet *Hezekiah* and all *Judah* did not put him to death, but feared the Lord and besought him of mercy, and the Lord repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them. But it may be objected, If God threaten one thing and doth another, it may seem his will is changeable, and that he hath two wills. I answer, [Answer.] the will of God is one and the same, as God is one: but it is distinguished into that which is secret & revealed, as the Church is sometimes visible, and sometimes invisible, yet but one Church. The secret will is of things

hidden with himself, and not manifested in the word. The revealed is of things made known in the Scripture▪ Deut. 29, 29. and by daily experience. The secret is without condition, the revealed with condition, and therefore for the most part it is joined with exhortation, admonition, instruction, and reprehension. But no man is exhorted and admonished to do his secret will, because no man can resist it, the reprobate and devils themselves are subject unto it, and must perform it, Rom. 9.19.

[Use 2] Secondly, it is the duty of the Ministers to propound the threatenings of GOD with such conditions, provoking and persuading all men to repentance and amendment of life, offering grace and mercy to the humble and broken hearted. They are to preach not only the law, but likewise with the law y^e Gospel. And thus they are said both to bind and loose, both to retain sins and to forgive. For as *Elijah* by his earnest and zealous prayer did both shut up the heavens, and open the windows of heaven, so that it gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit: so the Ministers of God by their earnest & zealous preaching, do shut up the kingdom of heaven against all obstinate persons, and also open the heavens to such as are penitent. To propound the threatenings of God without condition, is to bring men to despair, and to take from them all hope of mercy and forgiveness.

Thirdly, it is the duty of the people, whensoever [Use 3] they hear the theaternings of God, to stir up themselves to repentance, thereby to prevent his wrath, and to stay his judgments. Let us take heed, we do not rush on, as the horse in the day of battle, to our destruction. And thus have y^e servants of God understood his threatenings, and accounted them as a Sermon of repentance, as we heard before of *Hezekiah* king of Judah, and all Judah with him, when *Micah* the Morashite prophesied, saying, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Zion shall be plowed like a field, & Jerusalem shall become heaps*: they fell not into desperation, neither concluded an impossibility of obtaining pardon and the continuance of the Temple, of the city, and of the whole kingdom, but besought the Lord, and feared his Name, & the Lord repented him of the plague which he had denounced against them. And no marvel that this godly king conceived the meaning of the threatening in that manner, for so did the King of Nineveh, an heathen and idolatrous king understand the threatening of *Jonah* no otherwise. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, & turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? Thus also did *Hezekiah* before named understand the message sent to him from God by *Esayah*, when he was sick unto death: *Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live; and therefore he turned his face to the wall, and prayed to the Lord of life*. Let us make this use of the Ministry of the word, and of all the threatenings contained therein, to be stirred up to repentance and obedience, lest we be destroyed. If there be no change in us, let us look for a change from God: and he will never change his threatenings, except we change our lives and conversations.

[Use 4] Fourthly, seeing the threatenings of God, suppose a condition, we must also know how we ought to understand his promises, to wit, with a condition. The threatenings of GOD have a condition of repentance: the promises have a condition of faith and obedience. God hath made many merciful promises unto us in his holy word howbeit he hath no otherwise bound himself unto us, then we will acknowledge our selves bound in duty to serve him.

We must not only consider what God promised to us, but withal remember what he requireth of us. Hence it is, that y^e Prophet saith, *I will speak suddenly concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to built it and to plant it:but if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then will I repent of the good, wherewith I said I will benefit them.* He hath promised to love us, but he requireth at our hands, to love him again. He hath promised to forgive us our trespasses, but he chargeth us to forgive them that trespass against us. He hath promised to be a Father unto us, but he looketh for at our hands that we walk before him as obedient children.

Lastly, if God threaten and no repentance [Use 5] followeth, then certainly the threatenings pronounced will come to p^osse. God threateneth not in vain, he terrifieth not without cause. If we do not prevent them, they will prevent us and take us away suddenly. See the fearful examples of the flood, of Sodom, of the destruction of the ten tribes, of Jerusalem and of the Jews, of the seven Churches of Asia, and other Churches planted by the Apostles, supplanted in the wrath of God; all assure us of the truth of this point. Consider our own ways in our hearts. We live where we hear the fearful judgments of God daily and deservedly threatened against us for our sins, and namely for the contempt of the Gospel in all places and among all persons, there followeth little repentance and amendment of life; nay, it seemeth that God hath blinded our eyes and hardened our hearts, lest we should return and be saved. What will follow, nay what must necessarily follow, whosoever hath half an eye may easily perceive. Yet see how we deceive our selves with flattering words, as Ier. 7.4 they said, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord:* so we can say, Tush, The Gospel, the Gospel, it can never be rooted out from among us, Popery shall never be established anymore. But what do we glory so much of the Gospel? or why do we put confidence in this tule? For this Gospel shall be a witness and give in verdict against us, and as an upright judge condemn us. And what is impossible unto God? what cannot his power, what may not his justice do? such as believe not the truth but have pleasure in unrighteousness, shall be damned Can we challenge to our selves anymore then God's own people, that had the law and the Prophets, the Temple and the sacrifices, the Ark and the Covenant? or more then the Churches of Asia, and other founded by the Apostles? who seeth not a general coldness, a palpable deadness, a fearful declining and falling backward generally in all places? All which make a preparatiō to apostasy. Papists everywhere increase, and are winked at: th^y have been threatened with enditements, forfeitures, and imprisonments, but they live at ease, grow rich, have great friends, and laugh all their enemies or opposites to scorn. Such as have been zealous, decay: godly parents fail, and a crooked generation ariseth after them: ignorance aboundeth: wickedness hath the upper hand; and he that setteth himself against evil, maketh himself a prey, Isaiah 59.15. Atheists swarm everywhere, and lift up their horns on high: the people for the most part are fit for any change, to profess Christ, or antichrist, to worship God in truth or in an Idol.

13 Then Moses said unto the Lord, Then the Egyptians shall hear it (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them:)

14 And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou Lord art among this people, that thou Lord art seen face to face, &c.

To the former threatening is annexed an excellent prayer of *Moses* made in behalf of the people. We have not many of his prayers recorded in Scripture: but such as are left unto us, are most worthy and heavenly, testifying that he had the spirit of supplication in a plentiful measure, and therefore no marvel, being so excellent, if they were also very effectual. Whereby we see, it is not for naught, that he is said after a sort to have bound or chained the hands of God, *Exod.* 32.10. and to have prevailed more by his word than *Joshua* by his sword, by his prayers, then the host of Israel by their weapons of war, *Exod.* 17.11. And in this place, after that God had threatened to make a general havoc and destruction of this stubborn people, as a man wipeth a dish and turneth it upside down, he standeth in the gap to turn away the wrath of God, *Psa.* 106 23. which otherwise as a mighty flood would break in upon them, and bear down all before it. Whereby it appeareth, that the words in the former threatening were not uttered definitively, but conditionally, to wit, if *Moses* did not make intercession for them, and stand between God and his people. For if they had been spoken simply, or been understood to be spoken in that sort, *Moses* ought not to have prayed for them, but to have given place to the threatening, and rested in the decree and determination of God, submitting himself to his holy will and pleasure. But he was stirred up thereby to seek and to sue for pardon for them, and therefore he understood the same conditionally.

The sum and effect of the prayer is, that GOD would not destroy his people utterly according as he had threatened; and he moveth him to show mercy toward thē by three reasons. The first is drawn from the consideration of the enemies of the Church, that they might have no occasion to reproach the holy Name of God, and to tread his glory (which is higher thē the heavens) under their feet, taking occasion thereby to blaspheme him, if he should destroy his people, which he with a strong hand had brought out of Egypt *Exod.* 32.12. *Deut.* 9.28. and 32.27. The second reason is drawn from the nature and essential properties of God, he is of longsuffering and great mercy, &c. The third is taken from the former works and examples of his great goodness, wherein he moveth God to pity them, seeing he had oftentimes before shown favor toward them: all which had been utterly lost, if he should utterly destroy them. Out of these words, as also out of all the reasons urged by *Moses*, in general we learn, that the ordinary means and ready way to revoke and call in God's judgments, is true, hearty, and unfeigned prayer, whensoever his hand in any sort lieth heavy upon us, *Ps.* 107.6, 13, 19, 28. and 106.23. *I am.* 5.17, 18. *Numb.* 12.13. *1 King.* 8.33, 35, 37, 44.

The reasons. First it is profitable to all [Reason 1] things, and is of force to obtain every good thing: and if every good thing, then also to remove every evil thing from us; It obtaineth blessings of all sorts, public and private, spiritual and temporal, for our selves and for others, touching this life and a better, *John.* 16.23. *In that day, ye shall ask me nothing: Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* Where we

see the generality of the promise, confirmed by a vehement asseveration. Secondly, prayer [Reason 2] obtaineth the pardon & forgiveness of sins, Act. 8.22. I am. 5.15. 1 John. 5.16. and sin is the true and proper cause of all judgments whatsoever: if then it obtain the removing of the cause, it shall also obtain the taking away of the effect. For the cause being removed, the effect will cease. Thirdly, it is so mighty [Reason 3] that it is able to throw down y^e fastest hold and surest possession that Satan hath gotten: *Paul* having shown that we wrestle not with flesh and blood, that is, not only, or chiefly with them, but with principalities & powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, prescribeth this as a means to subdue and overcome them. And Christ our Savior telleth his disciples, that this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. If then it be able to cast him out with all his forces, it is more able to prevent judgments threatened, or to remove them when they are inflicted.

But against this point, many things are objected; [Object. 1] first it is said in general, that the prayers of many are fruitless: that they call upon God, but can receive no answer; To this I answer, Many make their prayers unprofitable, because they pray amiss, I am. 4.3. the fault is in themselves, not in God. Again, albeit he do not hear and help his servants presently, yet he doth it, when the doing of it is better, both in respect of his own glory and our own good. He best knoweth the times and seasons which he keepeth in his own power, Act. 1.7. Heb. 4.16. For this cause, he would not by and by work a miracle at the request of his mother, John. 2.4.7. nor hear the Canaanitish woman at the first Mat. 15. but delayed her sundry times. Lastly, it falleth out oftentimes, that when the faithful ask one thing, he granteth them another, fully equivalent to that and sometimes far better; and thus he heareth them, 2 Cor. 12.8, 9. Mat. 26.39. *Paul* prayed against a temptation, he hath grace to withstand and resist it: Christ Jesus prayed to hand the cup of the Cross removed: he must drink of it, but he hath strength sufficient given him to overcome it. God therefore heareth our prayers, when he giveth us as good a blessing or a better, though we obtain not the particular which we desire.

[Object. 2] Again, it may be said, *Moses* prayed that he might enter into the land of promise, and yet was not heard, Deut. 3.25. of which we spake before. I answer, he prayed after a sort against the express will of God, only he was ignorant whether the threatening were conditional. Besides, we cannot say that this was altogether frivolous and fruitless, because he obtained to see the Land, so that albeit he did not set foot in it, yet the Lord shown him all the land to his great comfort, & strengthening of faith: so that in effect he said or else might say with *Simeon*, Luk. 2.29, 30. *Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*

[Object. 3] Thirdly, we heard before, that *David* prayed for the restoring of his child to health whē it was sick, yet the child died, and he was not heard, 2 Sam. 12.16. Answer. He was not heard in that one particular: howbeit afterward God gave him another son, another son by the same mother, another son that sate upon his throne after him. Again, God had mercy on the soul of the child, of which he was persuaded, because he saith, I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me, 2 Sam. 12.23. so y^t his prayer was an acceptable sacrifice to God, & a profitable sacrifice to himself

[Object. 4] Lastly, it may be objected, that God (who hath no greater to swear by) sweareth by himself, that though *Moses* and *Samuel* stood before him, yet his mind would not be toward this people, Ier. 15.1. and though these three, *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job* were in the land, they should deliver but their own souls, &c. Eze. 14.14. they should deliver neither sons nor daughters, verse 16. I answer, this is nothing to the purpose, for herein nothing is expressly affirmed, but the matter is only supposed, as 1 Cor. 13.1, 2. Again, it is said expressly, that they should deliver their own souls, and therefore we cannot say, that their prayer is without profit. Now let us proceed to y^e uses.

First, we may hence conclude, that great is the use, utility and necessity of prayer in the church, greater thē of the Sun in y^e firmament. [Use 1] For what have we left when God is offended and provoked, but this? when this is rightly performed, it calleth in his wrath gone out against us. Nevertheless, the Apostle requireth two things to make our prayers effectual and of great profit toward us: the one in respect of the person that prayeth, the other in respect of the prayer of the person. Touching the person of him that prayeth, if he desire to have his prayer heard, he must be just & righteous; it is not the prayer of every man whatsoever he be that availeth much, but the prayer of a righteous man, that feareth God, that believeth in Christ, that serveth him in spirit and truth, and walks before him in holiness and righteousness of life; these are they whose prayers pierce the heavens, and prevail much with the Almighty. This is taught in many places of the word, Psal. 34, 15, and 145, 19. 1 Pet. 3, 10. 1 Tim. 2, 8. Prov. 15, 29. The prayers of such, are like to *Jacob's* ladder which was set upon the earth, and the top of it reached up to heaven, Gen. 28, 12. so do the prayers of the faithful, they are made on earth, but they reach up to the clouds, nay to heaven, and come into the presence of God himself: our prayers ascend to him, and his graces descend to us. On the other side, as the prayers of the righteous are most acceptable to God & profitable to us, so the prayers of the wicked and unrighteous are most abominable. As the one sort are sweet in the nostrils of God, and ascend as incense, so the other are unsavory, and stink worse then dung and mire in his sight. Wherefore let not the ungodly men persuade themselves of God's favor, or think he any whit regardeth the words of their mouths: for such as incline their hearts to wickedness, the Lord will never hear them. Again, our prayers must be fervent & earnest, they must be kindled with a burning zeal against all coldness, they must flow from unfeigned faith against all doubting and wavering, they must be continued with great constancy and perseverance against all weariness and giving over before we have obtained. As then he that prayeth must be righteous, so must his prayer be fervent, if he will obtain anything at the hand of God.

Secondly, hence ariseth great comfort to [Use 2] the people of God that groan under affliction and are ready to sink down under an heavy burden. Let none of God's servants despair of help, but hope in God, who hath left us this as a plaster to heal all our wounds, or as a medicine to cure all our diseases. Hence it is, that the very infidels by light of nature and other superstitious persons have confessed this truth, that have not yielded to the truth of God. The Mariners, that were ignorant of the true God, cried unto their gods, when the sea wrought and was tempestuous against them, Ion. 1.5. and the shipmaster stirred up *Jonah* to pray to his God, if so be that God would think upon them that they perish not, ver. 6. *Pharaoh*

the king of Egypt, knew that the prayers of *Moses* and *Aaron*, the holy servants of God, were very profitable and acceptable; therefore he sent for them and desired them to pray for him, when the plagues of God lay upon him and his people. This also did *Jeroboam*, that wicked king that made Israel to sin, know and understand; for when his hand was dried up, which he thrust out to lay hold on the Prophet of God, he desired him to pray that it might be restored. If these have confessed y^e benefit of prayer, how much more ought we? though there be an infinite distance between heaven and earth, between God and man, yet heareth he from his holy hill the supplications of his righteous servants poured out before him. Affliction taketh away all comfort and joy from the sons of men, that are unregenerate: when they are pinched with poverty, with famine, with misery and calamity, they are quite out of heart, they distrust, they despair, they fret & fume, they mutter and murmur against God. They have no hearts to lift up unto him, neither can they run to the throne of grace to find mercy in time of need, but do oftentimes blaspheme the God of heaven, and repent not of the works which they have wickedly committed. They would fain have some comfort in their sorrows, but they know not of whom to seek it, or where they shall find it. Hence it is, that they run to music and instruments of delight, to wine-taverns, to strong drink, to evil company, and some to witches and enchanters, which they call cunning men, and cunning women. But the servants of God which have learned better things, know that God is the Father of all comfort and consolation, and therefore they fly unto him by prayer, who is able to deliver their souls from death, their eyes from tears, and their feet from falling, *Psa.* 56.12, 13. and 116.8. In troubles therefore, if we call upon him, we have his promise (surer then the heaven) that he will help us and send us a joyful deliverance.

[Use 3] Lastly, let us from hence be moved to be diligent in this duty, and not to give over till the God of blessing pour down a blessing upon us. How heavy soever his hand be, and how long soever, in continuance yet if we can call unto him, we are safe.

Woeful were our condition, if we should cry and there were none to hear: but it is otherwise with us, we do not so soon call, as he is ready to answer. A poor silly lamb entangled in the bushes and brambles, if it can but bleat, the shepherd will quickly help it: so if we be the sheep of Christ, and can call unto him, the good shepherd of the sheep will by and by hear us: if we can lift up our voice to him that sitteth in the heavens, he will soon free us and deliver us out of our affliction. So long as we have a mouth to speak, he hath ears to hear: and when the tongue cannot, if with the heart we can sigh to him, he understandeth that language, and we shall be sure of help, as *Abraham* gave over asking, before God gave over answering, *Gen.* 18.32, 33.

15 Now if thou wilt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying,

16 Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them, &c.

Now let us come to consider the parts of the prayer as they lie in order. And first we may not think that we have the whole prayer which *Moses* uttered, and that he delivered it in no more words: for it appeareth by the abrupt beginning, ver. 13. that he had spoken somewhat before: but this is only the substance of the prayer, and hath the chief reasons which he used. The first argument is very forcible and effectual, and largely pressed upon God, which showeth that y^e nations round about had heard of their deliverance out of Egypt, the Canaanites had heard that God was among his people with his word, with his presence, with his authority, with his signs and miracles: if then God should deliver them to death, these cursed nations would revile the Name of God, and accuse him either of impotency or of tyranny: that by reason of his hatred toward thē, he would not, or of his weakness he could not bring them into the land of promise; whereupon he concludeth that it were far better for God, to free his name from such blasphemous reproaches by sparing his people. *Moses* never once offereth to plead for pardon through anything y^t was to be found in the people themselves, he confesseth that there was matter enough in them to have removed them long ago out of the world: but he lifteth up his eyes unto heaven, and desireth God to look upon himself and to have respect to his own name, lest the infidels and idolaters should take occasion by the destruction of the Israelites to blaspheme him. How forcible this reason is, and how powerfully it pierced as I may say the ears, nay the heart of God, appeareth notably by the mouth and confession of God himself: I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men, were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and should say, Our hand is high, & the Lord hath not done all this. What was it then that hindered him from putting out their name from under heaven? Not that they were not worthy to perish, but it would have opened the mouths of the infidels to scoff at God whom they served, and at his religion which they professed. They would have said, Where is the God that hath maintained them so long? is he fallen asleep? or is he in a far journey? or what ayleth he, that he succoreth them no more? We learn from hence that it is a good plea to move the Lord to show mercy, even for his glory and his own names sake, Josh. 7.8, 9. Psal. 79.8, 9, 10. and 115.1. Dan. 9.19.

The reasons follow. God doth not bestow anything to any other end then this, be aimeth at this mark and hath respect to his own glory, both in giving and forgiving, Isaiah 48.9. Prov. 16.4. and therefore ought we also to set the same end before us in prayer. The Lord in all his actions of mercy and judgment hath evermore a special respect to the promoting of his honor, and the maintaining of his own glory, Exod. 9.6. Rom. 9.17. Exod. 32.11, 12. Secondly, the servants of God have been so far carried with a desire of promoting and preferring of it, as that they have preferred it before their own life, nay before their own soul and salvation when they have come in comparison together, as appeareth in *Moses*, and in *Paul*. Thirdly, God's glory is most dear to himself: if then we will be his children, tender & dear unto him, we must follow his example, we must prize that at the highest rate which he prizeth above all, we must love that which he loveth, and that ought to be most dear unto us which is most dear to him.

[Use 1] The uses. This reproveth the most part of the world, who never set this mark before them to aim at, nor intend the glory of God in their prayers, but the fulfilling of their own

wills and desires, and the satisfying of their own gain and profit. It is nothing precious unto them, but less regarded then their own names. Every man naturally regardeth himself and magnifieth his own name, but the name of God never goeth near them. *Joshua* hath relation to such a point as this, when he saith, speaking of the Canaanites and all that inhabited the land, *They shall cut out our name from the earth, and what wilt thou do unto thy great name?*

Solomon teacheth in the Proverbs, that a good name is rather to be chosen, then great riches, and loving favor rather then silver and gold, & it is better then a precious ointment; but if we speak of the Name of God, which is glorious and fearful, Deu. 28.38. it ought to be more dear unto us then all the silver & gold, then all the Jewels & precious stones w^c worldlings make their heaven and happiness.

[Use 2] Secondly, let us in all distresses and troubles be comforted with this consideration, that he will respect his own glory, and therefore the good of his Church. For the preservation of the Church, and the advancement of God's glory are joined together. He will never forsake those y^t are his, in prosperity or in adversity: because if he should any way fail of his promises, he should lose much of his own glory, which is impossible. The Church shall never sink under the burden that lieth sore upon it It is like the bush that burned, which *Moses* saw in the wilderness while he fed the sheep of *Jethro* his father in law, it flamed but it consumed not: whereby God declared the low ebb of the church into w^c it was brought, distressed in Egypt, but it should not be destroyed; he that dwelled in the bush preserved the same, Deu. 33.16. If then the glory of God shall never fail, the gates of hell cannot prevail against the Church.

Lastly, we must give no occasion of causing [Use 3] the name of God which is holy in it self, to be blasphemed. Let us be no means to make it evil spoken off, but labor by all means to be instruments of setting it forth. Blessed are such as any way advance it. Everyone should aim at it, high and low, rich and poor, master and servant, husband and wife. Everyone may gain some glory to God, how mean soever his place, how simple soever his calling be. The Apostle chargeth the Jews, that through thē the Name of God was blasphemed, because they had the law and made boast of God, they knew his will and were instructed in the word. For as wicked children do dishonor and discredit their parents, 1 Sam. 8.3. so it turneth after a sort to God's discredit in the world, when they which are called the children of God, and named by the name of Christ, do live unworthily so high and holy a calling. There is none that liveth in the Church, albeit in the poorest and lowest calling, but if he profess Christ, and walk not according to his profession, he causeth the Name of God to be evil spoken off: the servant that hath the meanest office, if he will be thought religious and have the Gospel in his mouth, and do not perform the duties of his calling with great care and a good conscience, he causeth the Name of God and his doctrine to be blasphemed, 1 Tim. 6.1. The higher & more eminent any man's place is, the more scandal he giveth and the greater occasion of grief to the godly, of hardening to the wicked, and of dishonor to God. Let a man be as profane as may be, that neither feareth God, nor reuerenceth man, let him live in the grossest sins that can be committed or named; let him be an open blasphemer, a contemner of the word, a profaner of the Sabbath an abuser of the Sacraments and of all good things, there is commonly no great matter made of it, he is neither reproached, no reprov'd. But let

one that professteth religion be suddenly overtaken thorough infirmity in any sin or purpose of sin, not only he is taunted and traduced by the profane multitude, but the truth of God and the profession of the truth, nay the God of truth is evil spoken off, dishonored and blasphemed. These things ought to go near us, even to the heart, and to make us watchful over our ways: seeing we have those that watch over us, to see if they can have ought whereof to accuse us.

17 And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying,

18 The Lord is long suffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, &c.

In these words we have the second reason drawn from the consideration of the nature or being of God, which is seen by showing mercy and judgment, both which are in his hand, mercy to his own people, judgment to his enemies. This description is taken out of the book of Exodus, chap. 34.6. very comfortable to afflicted and distressed consciences. So *Jonah* 4.2. first he is said to be long suffering; then, of great mercy, and thirdly forgiving iniquity and transgression. If any ask. Is he only merciful? is he not also just? The answer is, he will by no means clear the guilty, but will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children. But of this latter clause we shall speak afterward, verse 33.34. Out of the former, note, that it is the property of God to be always of great patience, much gentleness, and long-sufferance. He is of a forbearing nature, and slow to anger, expecting many days the conversion, repentance, and recovery of sinners, *Isaiah* 65.2. *Ier.* 35.15. and 25.5. *Matth.* 23.37. We have many examples hereof in the word of God, *Gen.* 6.3. *1 Pet.* 3.20. The long suffering of God waited in the days of *Noah* while the Ark was a preparing. So *Luke* 13.6. 7, 8, 9. *2 Chro.* 36.15. We have all experience of this point.

[Reason 1] The reasons: first he knoweth our weakness, our corruption and inclination to evil, he knoweth whereof we are made, he remembereth that we are but dust, *Isaiah* 57.16, *Psal.* 103.14. yea, as a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again, *Psal.* 78.38.39. no better then vanity, yea, lighter altogether then vanity, *Psal.* 62.9.

Secondly, his nature is to be merciful & full of compassion, *2 Chron.* 36.15.

Thirdly, the sins of the wicked are not yet full, they have not yet filled up the measure of them, *Gen.* 15.16.

Lastly, he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, and therefore he is not slack concerning his promise, but is long suffering to us ward, *2. Pet.* 3.9.

[Objection] Before we come to the uses of this doctrine, we must remove a few objections that seem to make against this point. And first, how can God be said to be very patient and to suffer long, seeing his judgments are often said to come suddenly & speedily as a whirlwind and a tempest? and when they shall say, peace and safety, his coming shall be as the coming

of a thief in the night, or as travel upon a woman with child, 1 Thess. 5.2.3. [Answer.] I answer, to be long before he come, and to be swift when once he cometh, are not opposite or contrary the one to the other. He waiteth a long time, but when the days of his patience are expired, then suddenly destruction cometh. He giveth warning after warning, and will do nothing but he revealeth the same to his servants the Prophets, Amos 3.7. Dan. 9.5.6. but when his patience is abused and contemned, then he cometh swiftly and stayeth not. The Apostle *Peter* speaking of the second coming of Christ to judgment joineth both these together, and showeth how and wherefore he is both long in coming, and yet swift in coming; he forbeareth because he is patient, and he cometh suddenly in his glory because he is just, 2 Pet. 3.9, 10. first he saith, that God is long suffering, not willing that any should perish: then he addeth, the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. Thus we see how he suffereth patiently, and yet withal how he cometh suddenly.

Secondly, [Object.] the question may be asked whether the Ministers should forbear or abstain from threatening and denouncing of God's judgments against the ungodly, seeing God is gentle and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness? whereby they shall terrify men without cause, and make themselves liars. I answer, [Answer.] it is true that *Jonah* the Prophet was discouraged upon this ground and consideration, from threatening destruction against Nineveh. Though he were sent against the city with heavy tidings, yet he consulted with flesh and blood, & fled to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, Ion. 1.3. because he knew that God was a gracious God and merciful, repenting him of the evil, chap. 4.2. But this was his infirmity, and therefore he is reprov'd, ver. 10.11. Wherefore it belongeth to all faithful Ministers of God as a part of their function, howsoever the judgments of God be differ'd and their Sermons derided, to open their mouths boldly, and to reprove sin earnestly, that they may thereby deliver their own souls and save the people that hear them, 2 Tim. 4.2.

Thirdly, it may be asked, [Object.] whether it be lawful for the godly to crave of God to be patient and longsuffering, to bear with the ungodly and vessels of wrath? especially considering the prayer of *Jeremiah*, chap. 15.15. Lord, remember me and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors, &c. The prayer of *Moses* and of *Jeremiah* seem to be contrary. Answer. [Answer.] The prayer of *Jeremiah* is special and extraordinary, and containeth no general rule and direction for the Church. He spake this as a Prophet, not as a private man, for he foretold to his persecutors the vengeance and wrath of God certainly to fall upon them; the general rule belonging unto all, is set down by Christ, Matth. 5 44. To pray for our enemies and them that hate us.

Lastly, it may be demanded, [Object] whether the publishing and preaching of the doctrine of God's patience and forbearing be not dangerous and hurtful, as seeming to tend to lead men into sin, and minister occasion of hardening the heart, and delaying of repentance. I answer, from God's delaying of his judgments we may not conclude the delaying of our repentance. True it is, the ungodly abuse this doctrine to licentiousness, Rom. 2.4.5. as they do also other doctrines and the Scriptures themselves, to their own perdition: the providence of God to idleness, the predestination of God to wickedness, the mercy of God to

profaneness, the grace of God to wantonness, justification by faith to carelessness of good works, yea Christ himself to be a stumbling block and a stone of offense. Notwithstanding we must use the doctrine of God's patience to our comfort and to bring us thereby to repentance.

[Use 1] Now we come to the uses of this doctrine which are many, serving for instruction, reprehension, consolation, and exhortation. First of all, it serveth for our knowledge and instruction, and teacheth us what a good God we serve and worship, such a one as willeth not and wisheth not the death of a sinner: such a one as is gentle and gracious, merciful, and pitiful, Psal. 145.8, 9. Ezek. 18.23. and 33.11. Again, this teacheth us what is the cause that God spareth so long both his and the Churches enemies, to wit, because he is patient. Thus doth the Prophet tell the Israelites the cause why y^e Lord had spared y^e Assyrians so long, *Nah.* 1.3. We see how profane many are, blasphemers of God's Name, profaners of his Sabbath, despisers of the word, haters of good men; iniquity aboundeth everywhere. We might wonder that such live upon the face of the earth, and wherefore they are spared, but that he is a God of patience and long suffering, or they could not continue. Is not the earth filled with cruelty & oppression, as it was with the old world, that was destroyed with an universal Flood? Doth not pride, fullness of bread, abundance of idleness, and contempt of the poor abound, as in Sodom and Gomorrhah which was destroyed with fire and brimstone from heaven? Ezek. 16.49. So Gen. 19.24. How then could our cities and houses stand and continue, if GOD were not very patient?

[Use 2] Secondly, it serveth for reprehension. For it convinceth those that scoff at his threatenings, because God a long time descrieth his judgments against the ungodly. Hence it is, that they judge them, & persuade themselves of them, to be no better then Scar-crows, and therefore to be vain and not to be feared. Such persons doth the Apostle *Peter* describe, that mock at the second coming of Christ, which shall come as a snare upon all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth, Luke 21.35. 2 Pet 3.1, 2. Ezek. 12.27, 28. Again, it meeteth with such as abuse God's patience to harden their hearts in sin. The more God spareth us, and the longer he waiteth, the more insolent and untoward the greatest sort do grow, abusing the lenity and long suffering of God presuming and waxing bold to offend, because he doth not speedily punish, Eccle. 8.11 Nehe. 9.17. sin is increased by this means: for the more he suffereth the greater is our sin.

Thirdly, this serveth for comfort and consolation. [Use 3] It lifteth up perplexed and disquieted consciences for their sins, trembling under God's hand as the child under the rod, and fearing to be consumed in his wrath. Let no man despair or be out of hope, for this is his nature, he is long suffering, Exod. 34. This is uttered to *Moses* to comfort him, who feared the utter subversion and destruction of Israel for their idolatry in worshipping the golden calf, Exod. 32.2. Psal. 103.8, 9. Again, it serveth to work confidence and assurance of faith and mercy in the hearts of the godly, that if they pray unto him, and desire to have his anger removed, he will be appeased toward them and spare them as we see in this place how *Moses* useth these words to the same purpose. Lastly, it comforteth the Church against the wickedness and cruelty of her persecutors: they stick not oftentimes to shed innocent blood,

and God seemeth for a time to hold his peace, and nothing at all to regard either what the enemies do, or what his children suffer, for he sendeth down no punishment upon them. Notwithstanding, we must not imagine that God hath forgotten us in our miseries, as if he had shut up his kindness in displeasure, but he is patient even toward them, he best knoweth his times and seasons for justice and judgment, as he doth for mercy and compassion. When the time of his patience is run out, then will his time of justice clearly appear. Thus doth *David* comfort himself, a man that had experience of many sorrows, Ps. 86.14, 15. *O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul, and have not set thee before them: but thou, O God, art a God full of compassion and gracious, long suffering and plenteous in mercy and truth.*

Lastly, sundry exhortations arise from [Use 4] hence to sundry good duties, which I will only point out; first, it serveth to move us to break out into the praise of God. Our sins deserve suddenly to be swept away, the measure of them is exceeding great. It is his great mercy that we are not utterly confounded & consumed, Psal. 130.3 4. Secondly, we must be patient toward our brethren, Col. 3.12, 13. Ephe 4.32. Let us dea•e with our brethren, as we see God hath dealt with us. If we be hasty to revenge, let us take heed, lest we kindle the wrath of God against our selves, Matthew 6. verse 15.

Lastly, it is our duty to repent of our sins while we have time, and to seek the Lord while he is near, Rom. 2.4. Joel 2.3.

Verse 19. Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt, even until now.

Here we have the third and last argument of the prayer to move the Lord to pardon them, wherein he putteth the Lord in mind of his works of mercy, and thereupon is bold to pray for the continual course of more mercy, *Pardon this people, as thou hast forgiven them from Egypt until now.* [Doctrine.] The doctrine. All the benefits and blessings that we receive in this life, are such as give us hope and assurance, that we shall receive more blessings and mercies from God; So then the point to be considered is this, that mercies present assure more mercies to come upon the faithful, as Psal. 77.5. Josh. 10.25. 1 Sam. 17.34, 35, 36, 37.

The reasons. A promise in part performed is a good assurance that the rest also shall be performed. So then if God have given to a man any blessing in part, it shall be an assurance unto him, that he shall also receive more from God. Every gift of God is as a pawn or gage laid up and left with us; for when he bestoweth any blessing, he giveth us earnest to assure us of moe that shall follow, and of a greater measure of the same gift, 2 Cor. 1.22. and 5.5. Ephes. 1.14. Secondly, deeds are much more effectual and powerful then words. Albeit the word of God be sure whatsoever he hath spoken, yet we lay better hold upon his works. Men are not so much afraid of God's threatenings to come, as when they see and feel his judgments present upon themselves and others: so is it in this case; for though the promises of God be good payment, because he hath promised y^t cannot lie, Tit. 1.2. yet we are not so easily drawn to believe them, made by words only, as when we find them in part performed

unto us; then we conceive undoubted and assured hope to receive the rest also, because he doth thereby as it were enter payment of a debt, I mean a debt by promise on his part, not by any desert on our part.

[Use 1] The uses follow. First, this teacheth every man, that he ought to observe and keep in mind the benefits and mercies of God both upon himself and other: how God from time to time hath blessed him, that so he may have comfort in time of need. For this is the cause why so many despair and have no comfort at all when the judgments of God are upon them, they forget God's goodness, and never cast their eyes back to the times past, nor remember the former benefits and comforts which they have received from God, and so are wholly destitute of comfort, and remain without hope to receive any more mercies from him. When Moses prayed unto God to show him this mercy, that he might enter into the land of promise, he beseecheth the Lord after this manner, *O Lord God, thou hast begun to show unto thy servant thy greatness and thy mighty hand, I pray thee therefore let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan*, Deuter. 3.24. Whereby we see, he considereth how God had dealt with him in former times, and maketh that a motive to stir up his faith for the time to come, to hope for, and to desire the continuance thereof.

Secondly, this teacheth all of us, whereupon [Use 2] we ought in our wants and necessities to stay our selves and look for comfort: surely in the remembrance of God's former promises. There we shall be sure to find comfort, if we think upon them. For they are as sure pledges to us, that we shall afterward receive more also. And let us labor to rest upon God because he hath given us many blessings and mercies in former times, so that we need not fear for the time to come, but that we shall also receive more at his hands, who giveth liberally one blessing after another, I am. 1.5. Forasmuch as he is God for the time to come, as well as for the time past, and all his gifts and calling are without repentance, Rom. 11, 29.

Thirdly, this should move us earnestly to [Use 3] labor for the first grace, and never to give rest to our selves until we feel an addition and increase of the second and third grace in our hearts, and to multiply them one after another, that they may dwell in us plentifully, and make us fruitful in all holy conversation. If we have the first grace in our hearts, and be careful to use the same well, it is as seed sown in good ground, it will bring forth a wonderful increase, and a notable harvest in the end. *Paul would have Timothy to stir up the gift that was in him*, 1 Tim. 1.6. If we be once in Christ, he will purge us more and more, that we shall bring forth more fruit, John. 15.8.

Lastly, observe that this is a privilege belonging [Use 4] only to the faithful, that they shall have the mercy and favor of God continued unto them. The blessings that God bestoweth upon the wicked do serve to make them without excuse, and are as seals of condemnation: they are not assurances unto them that they shall have more bestowed upon them, he hath made no such promise unto them, neither can they gather any hope to have any farther increase of the same, or any addition of new blessings. Albeit it be so with the godly, yet former blessings of God are pledges of more, yet it is not so with the ungodly, 2 Sam. 7, 17. Judge. 10 12, 13. Eccle. 8.12, 13. Isaiah 65.20. He took away his mercy from *Saul*, but he would never do it from *David*: he delivered the unthankfull and rebellious Israelites out of the

hands of their enemies, but he threateneth that he will deliver them no more. The evil servant hath his talent taken from him, and never restored unto him again: and thereupon Christ delivereth the manner of God's dealing as well toward the faithful, as the unfaithful, Matth. 25.29. *Unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.* For they do abuse his mercies, and never make any good use of them: how then should they be continued unto them? nay, how should they not be deprived of them? They become much more sinful and grow worse and worse by his blessings: God requireth the more of them, but they perform the less duty unto him. It is therefore a vain hope and a mere presumption for such to think to have his goodness continued; rather they may conclude, that God will take them away suddenly, and bestow them no longer upon them, except they turn from their evil ways.

20 And the Lord said, I have pardoned, according to thy word.

21 But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.

23 Because all these men which have seen my glory, and my miracles which I did in Egypt & in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened unto my voice:

23 Surely they shall not see the Land, &c.

24 But my servant Caleb, &c.

We have in these words the effect of the prayer of *Moses*, and the answer that God giveth unto him. The sum whereof is this, that the fathers should die in the wilderness, because, though they had seen his glory and miracles in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet they tempted him *ten times*, that is, not once nor twice, but oftentimes, a certain number put for an uncertain, as Gen. 31.41. Job. 19.3. Dan. 7.10. and therefore they should be all destroyed, excepting *Caleb* the servant of God. If any ask the question why *Joshua* is not expressed, and wherefore his name is concealed? I answer, because the Lord pronounced the former sentence concerning the people that were in their tents; but *Joshua* (that attended upon *Moses*) was present with *Moses* and *Aaron* before the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, therefore the judgment denounced against the people that abode in their tents no way touched him. *Caleb* was with the people, so that it behooved him (who had spoken the truth of the land) to be excepted; *Joshua* was not, and therefore there was no need to have him exempted from them, who was not among them. For being with *Moses* and *Aaron*, he is accounted in their number. Secondly, they are commanded to return back again into the wilderness by the way of the red sea, verse 25 when they were now come to the borders of Canaan; which they could not hear without great grief and anguish of mind. Before they wept without cause, verse 1. Now they have cause to weep for this heavy

judgment. Thirdly, their children should bear the burdē of their fathers sin & wander in the wilderness forty years, howbeit in the end they should enter into the land. Fourthly, the Spies themselves that had searched the land, which were the authors of all this mutiny, and had brought up an evil report of the land, were smitten with a fearful plague, & died suddenly by the hand of God. Here we may observe in these words, that God heareth the prayer of *Moses* and pardoneth the people according to his prayer, so that the Lord heareth the prayers of the faithful according to his promise. Secondly, God's judgments are tempered with mercy. Thirdly, such as have received the greatest mercies and become unthankful and disobedient, are the greatest sinners, and shall receive the greatest judgment. Fourthly, in excepting *Caleb* and *Joshua* from the common destruction, it appeareth that God is a just & righteous God, who as he doth not account the wicked innocent, so he will not account the innocent to be wicked.

The Popish teachers allege this example to prove that God pardoneth sin, and yet punisheth the sinner, & that the same punishment so inflicted is a satisfaction to God for their sin, and that the eternal punishment due to this people was pardoned at y' request of *Moses*. If this were true, then all this people were believers and had true faith in the Messiah, which is a bold assertion without all show of reason, and likelihood of truth; It may probably and charitably be thought, that some of them were believers and repented, to them these were chastisements. The like may be said of *Moses* and *Aaron* and of *David*, of which, they were shut out of the land of promise, and he was punished by the death of his child, and in other his children and house; not thereby to satisfy God by bearing part of the temporal punishment belonging to their sin, but that *Moses* and *Aaron* might learn together with all the people, to put their trust in God's promises made unto them, and to wait on him with patience. The end therefore was not God's satisfaction but their own reformation and the people's instruction. And *David* had many punishments, that the mouths of the heathen might thereby be stopped, who were likely to blaspheme God because of his sin. The truth is, before forgiveness, such judgments are punishments of sin, but after forgiveness obtained, they are the fights and exercises of the just. This is the difference between the afflictions of the faithful, and of the unfaithful; that which is to the just, the exercise of virtue, is to the unjust the punishment of sin. That which is laid upon us after forgiveness in Christ, is only in respect of the time to come, to weaken and wear away the power of sin, and in death utterly to destroy it. If any object, that death is the wages of sin, and that yet it continueth after forgiveness: I answer, it is so indeed, original•y and naturally: but to the faithful it hath lost his sting; the poison of it is taken away and turned into a medicine, and is made the way to life and salvation. That which was the gate of hell is made an entry to the kingdom of heaven. Thus we see, that the Popish satisfaction is weakly grounded, and the gainful fire of purgatory standing upon the rotten and ruinous pillar of satisfaction is utterly quenched, that though the Jesuits and their instruments labor to blow the bellows to kindle it again, yet they are not able to put any spark of heat into it. For this is a certain doctrine, that when God pardoneth sin, he also remitteth the punishment. For first, the fault & the punishment are relatiues which stand together and fall together: admit of the one, you yield the other: take away the one, you overthrow the other. Again, when God doth not remit the fault, he

doth retain the punishment, & who can deny this? therefore on the contrary, when he forgiveth the fault, he doth not retain the punishment. The fault is a greater matter then the punishment: if then God forgive the fault which is the greater, it may not seem strange that he should forgive that which is lesser, and only depending upon the fault. Besides, when once a debt is discharged, it were extreme wrong and injustice to require the payment thereof again: but sins are debts, Matth. 6.12. The obligation standing against us is cancelled, and the creditour is fully satisfied, how then should we fear any arrest or imprisonment? who shall sue us, or who can lay anything to our charge? In a civil court, he were a very corrupt judge, who having acquitted & cleared a man that stood as guilty, from all offense, would notwithstanding give sentence that he should be executed: for this were as much as to pardon the theft, and to hang the thief. They that are justified by faith, are at peace with God, Rom. 5.1. and there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8.1. When God forgiveth the sins and transgressions of the penitent, he remembereth them no more, Ier. 31.34. he blotteth them out of his sight, he setteth them as far from us, as the East is from the West, Psal. 103, he scattereth them as a cloud, and casteth them into the bottom of the Sea, Mic. 7.19. But touching the pardon mentioned in this place, the answer of God is to be referred to the prayer of *Moses*, & is proportioned out according to his request. He desired, that God would not utterly root out that whole people as one man, according as he had threatened: his prayer is granted, and God declareth that he had pardoned them, not absolutely, but according to his word: he requested they might not utterly be destroyed, he receiveth answer, they shall not utterly be destroyed. And concerning satisfaction to God for our sins by our selves, it is more then we are able to make it cost more to redeem a soul and to pay a price sufficient for it. For to satisfy is to yield a sufficient recompense to God for the transgressions y^t we have committed against him. This Christ our redeemer is only able to do, and his satisfaction is all sufficient. [Object.] But they tell us that man's satisfaction is not a supplying of any want in Christ's satisfaction, [Answer.] but an applycation of it to us. A most foolish and witless conceit. For when a man hath a medicine fully sufficient and available for the curing and healing of a wound, what needeth another medicine for the healing the same wound, which he must apply and lay to the former medicine to make it good? is not this applycation needless? And if a surety (undertaking for us) hath discharged our debts, it is very ridiculous to suppose that we must pay the debt again, that so our sureties payment may stand in effect. We read of the satisfaction y^t Christ hath made, and we believe it: but of a satisfaction applying his satisfaction, we read not and therefore we believe not; which is no better then a cloak to cover their shame, and soundeth harsh to the ear of reason it self.

But to pass over these things, let us consider the sentence pronounced against these men, that all of them should die in the wilderness, as they had all broken out into open wickedness. The doctrine, sin generally entertained, bringeth a general destruction: when it is once come to the height in the manner and measure, it causeth destruction to come upon such persons, The reasons follow.

This is agreeable to the course of God's justice, that his judgments may be answerable to the sin. A general sin deserveth a general plague. Secondly, as sins are resembled to sicknesses,

so punishments are to medicines which must be fitted to the diseases, and not to a part thereof. Now if universal and spreading sins should not have universal & spreading judgments brought upon them, the plaster should be less then the wound, & the remedy much weaker then the disease. The uses remain.

First, seeing God giveth sentence to bring [Use 1] desolation upon this people for their common sins, we have great cause to fear, that the day of our desolation and judgment cannot be far off. For seeing it hath been already proved, that we are grown a cold and careless people, a lukewarm Church, neither hot nor cold, seeing we are grown to the height of wickedness, and have added sin to sin, as it were drunkenness unto thirst, what can be expected in the next place, but y^t destruction be brought upon us? If God have destroyed other nations, and rooted them out for the same sins that are found among us, what can be expected by us, but that we having the same weight of sins should also have the same weight of judgment? He hath made us already to drink of many judgments, only this remaineth that as yet we have not drank the dregs; we have not yet tasted of utter desolation. No nation hath brought forth worse fruits, or shown less thankfulness. We have just occasion therefore to fear, that the day of God's visitation cannot be far off by the course of justice, and doubtless it is the nearer, because we are grown sottish and senseless, and have put all fear thereof from us. The land is generally full of retchlesnesse and security; and this addeth to our sin, so that we may say, as it is, Ier. 6.28, 29, 30. They are all grievous reuolters, walking with slanders: they are brass and iron, they are all corrupt, &c. Thus was it with the Sodomites immediately before their destruction, the Sun was risen upon the earth, they thought there had been a fair day coming, but it was a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, for the Lord rained down fire and brimstone upon them, and all the wicked were as stubble. So it was also in the days of *Noah*, and so it shall be in the end of the world.

[Use] Secondly, it teacheth us, who are the greatest enemies to a state, to a nation, to a kingdom, to a land, to a people, to our towns and cities, & to our families; even they that are the greatest sinners. These are they that bring those days of desolation, the days of darkness and gloominesse, the days of wastnesse and confusion, to wit, such as sin with an high hand, that are obstinate and hardhearted and settled to continue in the dregs of them. When Jerusalem was besieged by *Nebuchadnezzar* king of Babylon, Ier. 32.4. who were the chief enemies of the city and kingdom? doubtless, not so much the Babylonians and their army, as the citizens themselves; they were such as lodged within, not they that lay without, 2 Chron. 36.16. Dan. 9.10, 11. Nehe. 13.17, 18. The strongest enemies were in the heart of the city, and they were they that did weaken it. It is sin that openeth the gates, and throweth down the walls, and letteth in the enemy, and maketh havoc of all. The sin of *Achan* made Israel to turn their backs to their enemies, Josh. 7.8. according to the threatening, Deut. 28.15, 25. The contempt of the word, profaning of the Sabbaths, whoredom, drunkenness, covetousness, and oppression do sharpen the swords of enemies, and give them assured hope of victory, Hab. 1.3, 4, 5, 6. If we sin against God with an high hand, and break out into all enormities, it is in vain to trust in our fenced cities and multitudes of men. If our armies be never so strong, if our cities were never so sure blocked, if we had walls flanked with barracadoes and other fortifications, that we feared not to have them surprised by scalado; yet if sin be

suffered and fostered within, it weakeneth all our force, it maketh frustrate all our devises, it throweth our castles and citadels down to the ground, it filleth up the trenches, and maketh the way easy to batter our walls and to break in pieces the towers thereof. Sin is as a Cannon that beareth all before it, and where it beareth sway, an hundred walls cannot keep out the enemy. And this the heathen knew and confessed. But where Religion is entertained, and godliness flourisheth, there the city is notably garded, Deu. 4.6. and 28.1.7.

Lastly, such as have any love to their country, [Use 3] and would have the people freed from destruction, and continue in peace and quietness, let them show it by their love to the Lord and his Law, and by seeking to be at peace with him. If we be reconciled unto him, that he hath no controversy against us, he will make even our enemies to be at peace with him. This serveth to admonish us all to take heed, lest we add sin unto sin. We account him an enemy, and that justly that conspireth and combineth with another to open the gates unto him, and to bring him in to destroy the city and people: such an enemy is sin, it taketh part with our enemies, and they both join together, and tend both to one end, to wit, to overthrow our peace and safety. Stay therefore the course of sin, that it grow not to have the upper hand. Seek not to be acquainted with it, be not any means to spread it farther, and to convey it from one to another. Mark then from this consideration, who are indeed and in truth the best Citizens, and best townesmen in places where they live. Not always the richest, not always the noblest, not always the strongest, not always the most political. The best citizen is the godly man: the best townesman is the man that feareth GOD, and walketh in his ways. Such are the chariots and horsemen of the kingdom. They are the strength of the land that are strong in the Lord. On the contrary side, the worst citizens are the ungodly, who pull it down as it were with their own hands. What hath been the ruin and overthrow of the most famous kingdoms in the world? and what hath turned the noblest Cities into dust? what hath brought infinite calamities of famine, of the sword, of the pestilence, of fire, of slavery, and such like, but the impiety of men? so that the Lord hath been compelled to revenge himself of the very places which they possessed, of the walls and buildings, yea of the cattle and beasts that fed thereupon. Stand fast therefore in the most holy faith, and let not sin enter: for when it cometh, it layeth all waste: from this cometh the ruins of countries, of cities, of houses, and of particular persons.

26 And the Lord spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, saying,

27 How long shall I bear with this evil congregation which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel which they murmur against me.

28 Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the Lord, I will surely do unto you, even as ye have spoken in mine ears.

The Lord as a just Judge proceedeth to give sentence against these wicked men whose destruction was concluded. They had gone back from their obedience, God charged them to

go back again toward the red sea, so that they were forty years before any of that people came into the land, which might have been possessed in forty days. This sentence pronounced by the mouth of God, is either general against the whole multitude, or special against the first contriuers and principal authors of this rebellion. The general punishment is concerning themselves or their children.

Touching themselves as they had sposed, so the Lord would do, they should not come into the land, their carcasses should fall in the wilderness; and touching their children, they should wander in the wilderness forty years. The fathers themselves had murmured against *Moses and Aaron*, verse 2. this doth God account as chiefly done against himself, *You have murmured against me*. He accounteth the disobedience shown to the Ministers that bring the word, as a disobedience against himself the author of the word, as Luk. 10.16. to teach us to submit our selves to God's holy word, albeit it be delivered to us by man, [Doctrine.] like unto our selves. The doctrine, when once the Ministers of God are no longer regarded, when they cry early and late, and we stop our ears, God himself taketh the matter into his own hand. When God sent *Noah* to preach repentance to the old world, and they repented not, he cometh against them to their destruction, Gen. 6.1, 4. *Come thou and all thine house into the Ark, for yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain, upon the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living substance that I have made, will I destroy from off the face of the earth*. So 2. Chro. 36.15, 16. Ierem. 7.13, 14. and 14.15, 16. Zach. 7.11, 12. This is the course of the Lord's dealing: first he preacheth by his Ministers, then he punisheth with his judgments. The reasons.

[Reason 1] First because the word offered and brought unto us, being contemned, they show contempt against God himself, and in despising his word, they despise the Lord himself, John. 13.20. and therefore no marvel, if he be constrained to take the matter into his own hand, and to deal with them himself, that they may know what he can do, who regard not what his servants speak.

[Reason 2] Secondly, God loveth those that are his own, and he is entered into a covenant with them, and cannot but continue his love unto them, John. 13.1. now these that he loveth, he chastiseth, Heb. 12.6. and if they will not be warned by his threatenings, he will make them seek unto him by his corrections and punishments. Job. 33.16.

[Use 1] This teacheth the Ministers of God how they may stay themselves in following the duties of their calling, among so many discontentments that they meet withal, both in the hearing and practicing of the people. For albeit their labor spent early and late cannot prevail, yet the Lord himself will take the matter into his own hand, and deal with them himself. The word which we bring is not our own, it is the Lord's: we are but as the Apothecaries box that holdeth the precious ointment: if then he be patient toward the contemners of it, much more ought we to be patient, and commit the cause to him whose cause it is. *Peter* being a Fisherman before his calling, Matth. 4.18. had toiled all the night, but had taken nothing, yet when Christ bad him continue his labor, he was ready to cast down the net into the sea, Luk. 5.5. and at length he enclosed a great multitude of fishes.

The Ministers are made the fishers of men, Matth. 4.19. to catch them with the angle of the word, and to take them in the net of the Gospel, Matt. 13.47. And albeit we do oftentimes toile and moil and take nothing, because men are grown so wily as to pass by the net, and can by no means abide to come near it: yet we are not to be discouraged, the master of the net commandeth us to labor in season and out of season: and if a multitude of them will not be taken in this net, Christ Jesus will take hold of them another way, to wit, by the net of his judgments.

Albeit therefore we do not see such profit of our pains and labors as we expected and desired, yet let us be content and commit the success of all to him that sent us, he will do that for us which we cannot do for our selves; he will take them in hand that hath their hearts in his own hand, and reform all that belong unto him, & bring everlasting confusion upon his enemies that shall never be forgotten, Jeremiah, chapter 20. verses 8, 9.

Secondly, it serveth to terrify all that obstinately [Use 2] set themselves against the word of God, because God will take the matter into his own hands. If his word cannot be a fire to burn up all corrupt affections in us, Ier. 23.29 God will himself be a consuming fire, Hebr. 12.29. If his word be not as an hammer to break in pieces our rocky and stony hearts, he will be an hammer that shall beat us to shiuers and grind us to powder, Matthew, chapter 21. verse 44. Let all such know, that albeit they escape the mouth of the Minister, yet they shall fall into the hands of God himself, which will be more fearful unto them, for he is able to destroy both body and soul in hell, Matth. 10.28. Indeed he is patient, but he will not bear long with the contempt of his word: and though he seem not to hear at the first, yet in the ende he will make it manifest that he heareth those which would not hear him: Let us therefore hearken unto the word with diligence and attention, while it is offered unto us.

Lastly, let everyone make conscience of hearing the word, and be admonished by it; otherwise most certainly it will fall out, he shall be forced to take us into his own hands, and to deal with us himself. This should move us to reform our selves and to amend our lives by the Ministry of the word, that so we may escape the hands of God, and not lie under his correction. Is it not better for children to be admonished by their fathers servants, then to fall into the hands of their fathers? Is it not better for men that live in lewd courses to be admonished by a friend, then to fall into the hands of the Magistrate, and to go to the stocks for correction? so in this case it is far better for men to be reformed by the word of God, brought unto them by the Minister, then to fall into the hands of the living God to be judged by him. This did *Eli* teach his children, 1 Sam. •, 25. *If one sin against another, the Judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?* Our condemnation shall be so much the greater, because we will not be admonished by his word. Let us therefore be wise in this point. Some children are so wayward and peevish, that no words will serve them, speak unto them never so much, they will not hear, neither will they regard. And *Solomon* saith well, *A whip for the horse, a bridle for the asse, and a rod for the fools back*, Pro. 26, 3: and of children he saith, *Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far*, Pro. 22, 15. So is it with all those that are stubborn and refractory, they esteem words as wind, they never lay them to their hearts: they must be brought low by strong hand, and

they must feel the smart of their sins before they will be humbled. We see this in *Pharaoh* and his people, they had oftentimes heard *Moses* and *Aaron* speak unto them in the Name of the Lord, Exod. 5, 1, 8, 1, & 9, 1, 13, & 10, 3. But what did all this work in him, but as so many hard strokes vpo the anuill, which make it harder? so *Pharaoh* hardened his heart, and would not let the people go, Exo. 8, 15, so that God is constrained to enter into judgment with him, and he that would not give ear to the word, was constrained to give place to the waters, for he and his host were drowned in the red sea. Thus was it also oftentimes with the Israelites that refused & misused the Prophets, they ever brought upon their heads some judgment or other.

33. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness.

34. After the number of the days in which ye searched the Land, even forty days (each day for a year) shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know, &c.

In these words *Moses* farther describeth the sentence of God against these rebels: the punishment rested not only upon their own persons but slowed down to their children, like a violent tempest that first falleth upon the Mountains, and after descendeth into the valleys. Note here first of all, how God dealeth with these mutiners and with their offspring. The spies had been 40. days in searching the Land, and for their wickedness they shall wader 40. years in the wilderness, a year for a day. A dram of sin hath a pound of sorrow. A day of pleasure hath a year of pain. [Doctrine.] Observe from this, that in judging and punishing of sins, God oftentimes punisheth in proportion, so that the judgment is answerable to the sin. Of what kind the sin is, of the same kind is the punishment, Gen. 42, 21. God sent upon Sodom a punishment like to the nature of their sin, they burned in unclean and unnatural lust one toward another, and the Lord sent fire from heaven to burn them up. The people in the wilderness with their viperous and venomous tongues spake against God and *Moses* his servant, and the Lord sent venomous and fiery serpents to sting and to bite them, Numb. 21, 5, 6. So *David* sinned greatly in numbering of the people, through the pride of his heart, and vain glory in his own greatness: God could have punished him many other ways, but he meeteth with him in the same kind, he diminisheth y^e number of his people exceedingly by the pestilence, in whose strength he much trusted. The reasons follow.

First, God hath many ways to punish sin, [Reason 1] yet it pleaseth him to send his punishments according to our sins, thereby to strike us with inward remorse, and to work a deeper impression in the conscience. For when he punisheth after this manner rather than after any other, the judgment it self doth more effectually force the sufferer to acknowledge God's justice in plaguing of him in that sort. This we see in *Adoni-bezek*, who was served himself as he had served others, he had cut off the thumbs and great toes of threescore and ten kings which gathered their meat under his table, the Israelites served him with the same sauce, they also cut off his thumbs and his great toes; this measure repaid unto him caused him to say, *As I have done, so God hath requited me*, Judge. 1, 7. The punishment presenteth the

sin as it were visibly before his face; and when God dealeth thus with a man, it oftentimes bringeth him to think of those sins which otherwise he would never have remembered: so that thereby he may justly acknowledge, that it is justly come upon him. Secondly, this maketh men not only to [Reason 2] justify God, whose judgments are always just, but maketh thē also to judge themselves, and thereby they oftentimes prevent y^e more heavy judgments of God. He doth it for their good, & judgeth no mā twice, if he be wise to judge himself. Thirdly, God hath given a law, [Reason 3] & by y^r law he requireth a proportionable punishment for sin, Levite. 24, 19. This course will the Lord take (who is the supreme Magistrate) so often as it pleaseth him, albeit he do not tie himself to that law.

[Use 1] This serveth to warrant us, that we may lawfully expect judgment from God in proportion upon men for their sins. For y^t which hath been, may be; and that which the Lord hath done, he will certainly do it again, so that we may promise and persuade our selves that they shall in the end be paid home to the full, with due proportion of punishment according to their sins. In the destruction of *Jerusalem*, we read, that the enemies came upon them the same day, that they put Christ our Savior to death, even then, I say, came the sword upon them, and recompensed them in the same manner by putting them to death. How many are there which have sometimes been servants (though now they are masters) and been faithless to their masters? & what hath followed? have they escaped? nay, hath not God met with them in the same manner, by giving to them faithless servants, deceivers, purloiners, and thieves, that have wasted and spoiled their goods, as they in former time did their masters? How many in our days have been stubborn and disobedient against their parents in their youth, never doing them reverence, nor yielding to them any obedience, mocking at their age and other infirmities? Have not these monsters been punished? Yes, God hath paid them home with the like, and sent them dissolute children, disobedient, such as grow weary of them and think they live too long, minding their patrimony, more then regarding their parents. How many are there that have abused and wronged their former wives? and hath not God usually plagued them in the same sort in giving them a second into their bosom which hath embraced the bosom of strangers, and dealt wickedly and falsely with them? 2 Sam. 12, 11. Job 31, 9, 10. God could have met with thē by other means and punished them a thousand other ways, but it pleaseth him to make his punishments answerable, and carrying a likeness with the sin for which it is inflicted: so that they are punished by that thing, by which they have sinned against God. Covetous persons which get their goods by fraud and oppression, are themselves or their heirs many times oppressed, and deceived, and brought to beggary. Gluttony, surfeiting, and drunkenness are oftentimes punished with dropsies and many gross and corrupt humors, distempering their bodies, and bringing them with speed to their graves. But all these judgments before rehearsed belong only to the body, & do not stretch to the soul and conscience: nevertheless the Lord ceaseth not to repay us even in this kind also according to our sin. Hence it is, that he threateneth to send strong delusions upon men to believe lies, which will not receive and believe the truth, 2 Thess. 2, 11. and they which will not believe wholesome doctrine, but having itching ears get them an heap of teachers, shall turn their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables and believe lies, 2, Tim. 4, 3, 4.

Secondly, whensoever we remain under any [Use 2] judgment of God's hand, whatsoever it be, let us labor for spiritual wisdom, that we may be able to see and discern, what the sin is which is the cause thereof. For by the manner of the judgment, we may oftentimes find out the manner of our sin. And doubtless these benefits will come thereof: we shall be able to justify God, and also to judge our selves, and thereby we shall escape farther punishments and plagues that God purposed to bring upon us. This way we shall make the punishment profitable unto us, if we take it and lay it unto the sin, as it were a salve vpon the sore. This will bring us to remember many sins, and to repent truly of them, which otherwise we should not think upon. It will work in us a care to *judge our selves, that we be not judged of the Lord*, 1 Cor. 11, 31, 22. This is no small benefit and comfort and therefore we should entertain a joint-meditatiō, both touching the sins that we have committed, and touching punishments that we have suffered, that so we may to our farther good compare the one with the other.

Lastly, as God dealeth with men in regard [Use 3] of their sins, so he dealeth oftentimes with his childrē in good things & for good things. He will not only reward our good works, even to a cup of cold water, *given to a disciple, in the name of a disciple*, Mat. 10.42. but he will reward according to our deeds, blessing with the same blessing, and mercy with the same mercy, 2 Tim 1.18. *Onesiphorus* shown me^ccy unto *Paul* he prayeth to God, *That he may find mercy of the Lord in that day*. He that is merciful and liberal to the poor, hath a promise that he shall never want. Christ our Savior describing what is true blessedness, wherein it consisteth, saith, among other things Mat. 5 4. *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy*. True it is, God is able to reward such many other ways, but he promiseth and performeth this rather than any other, to strengthen our faith in his word, and to teach us to acknowledge and confess his own in y^t work. And hereby have all such as are any way under the government of others, a notable encouragement in well doing, that God will return them a like measure of blessing according to that themselves have done. If we be truly serviceable and conscionable in our duties toward those whom God hath set over us, we shall by a special blessing of God find in time to come those that shall be under us faithful also toward us. He that will rule well, must first learn to obey well: if we be not obedient to others for conscience sake, let us never think to find others obedient to us. Hast thou been a dutiful child to thy parents, and obeyed them in the Lord? Thou mayest well hope and expect the same at the hands of thy own children hereafter. Or hast thou been a faithful servant to thy master according to the flesh, serving him with fear & trembling in singleness of thy heart? Thou mayest well look for the like service at the hands of others. It is the common rule of christianity, and that which the heathen themselves were not ignorant off, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do you even so to them: for this is the law and the Prophets*, Mat. 7, 12. On the other side, they that are stubborn and disobedient children, evil and unfaithful servants, may justly fear to have the same measure measured unto them again. They that are now young men & live under the roof and government of their parents, if they deal falsely and deceitfully with them, how can they but think that God will make them reap a plentiful harvest of such darnel as themselves have sown & scattered abroad? They that are now children of their fathers & mothers, may in time to come themselves be fathers & mothers of their children, & so have

others stand in the same place to them, that themselves now stand to their parents. If they mock and scoff at them for their infirmities, as *Ham & Canaan* did, Gen. 9, 22. Or contemn their wholesome counsels and holy admonitions, as the sons of *Eli* did: Or if they beguile them, or closely conuay away their money or any of their goods from them as *Micah* did from his mother: as many make it a slight and slender matter to steal from their parents, as if all were their own they can lay fingers upon, even while they be alive; and others give liberty to take and embezell from them, if it be but a little and no great sums: Or if they think they live too long that they may enjoy their living as *Esau* did; let them know that there is a just God in heaven, that will another day withhold his grace from their posterity, that they shall find their own children ready to despise them and set them at naught, to reject their adm•nitions & threatenings, to circumvent them & purloine from them, yea to gape for their death y^t they may have their goods. And when this cometh to pass, then let them consider their own sin as the cause of their children's sin, and that their children do forget them to be their parents, because themselves never remembered y^t they were children. The like we may say of servants; they that are now servants of their masters, may also hereafter come to be masters of their servants. If then you shall deal wickedly with them, in word or in deed, you shall make a straight, yet a just & equal law against yourselves. The Apostle giveth an excellent precept unto such, Tit. 2, 9, 10. *Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.* Let such therefore look to themselves, that they be not paid home in their kind. If they learn to give stubborn and froward answers, and to despise them that are over thē, as *Agar* did *Sarah*, Gen. 16, 4. Or if they return them sleeuelesse answers when they call them to an account of their doings, as *Gehazi* did to *Elisha*; who, when he asked him, whither he went, or where he had been, said, *Thy servant went no whither*, 2 Ki. 5, 25. Or if they slāder and bely their masters, or any way falsely accuse them, as *Ziba* did *Mephibosheth*, 2 Sam. 16, 3. Or if they run away from their masters, and will not tarry in their houses, like the servants of *Shimei* that fled from him, 1 King. 2, 39. Or if they pick and steal from them, as *Onesimus* did from *Philemon*; or any way deal fraudulently & falsely with their masters goods which he hath committed to their trust, as the unjust steward did with his Lord, Lu. 16, 5, 6, 7. Let these look for no better dealing in times to come at the hands of their own servants, but be well assured, that it is just with God to send them the like false and disobedient servants as themselves have been to their masters. Thus then we see how all inferiors should be encouraged to honor their superiors, because God will cause them to be honored and on the other side be terrified from despising and dishonoring them, lest another day he cause them also to be dishonored.

[Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms &c] By whoredom, we must understand the punishment of the idolatry and infidelity of their fathers falling from God, and ceasing to trust in him. For as idolatry, so infidelity is spiritual whoredom. They were as a wife that had forsaken her husband, and broken the covenant of her God. So then observe, that according to the number of the days, in which the fathers had searched the Land, evē forty days, the children must bear their iniquities, and wander too and fro, forward and backward, forty years before they should enter into the Land. The

doctrine from hence is this: [Doctrine.] The judgments and punishments of God, deserved and procured by the fathers sins and rebellions, do oftentimes fall upon their children and posterity: they do not end and cease in themselves, but descend to their stock & issue that live after them, Exod. 20, 5. and 34, 7, 8.

The reasons. First, because the children of [Reason 1] men and their posterity, though they be oftentimes infants, and have not understanding to conceive of sin, yet the same judgments that belonged to the fathers sins, shall light upon them, because God would thereby show his anger & sore displeasure against their sins, in that when it pleaseth him, he will punish those for their sins, which as yet had committed no sin at all, Rom. 5, 14, Gen. 7, 4, and 19, 25.

Secondly, touching those that are of ripe [Reason 2] years, they are of two sorts: either wicked, & so like to their parents, and then it is just with God to bring his judgments upon them, because he would show himself displeased with their sins: or else they are godly, not tainted and defiled with them, yet nevertheless there is other corruption enough in thē, which may lustly & worthily call for temporal judgment.

[Object.] But some haply will object, that this may seem to be quite contrary to other Scriptures, as Ezek. 18, 4, •0. where it is said, *The soul that sinneth, shall die the death:* and again, *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.* I answer, [Answer.] we must mark the occasion of these words. The children of Israel took up a taunting proverb against God, and in their afflictions said. *The fathers have eaten sour grapes, & the children's teeth are set on edge,* v, 2. that is, the fathers have sinned, and the children are punished. These were quick-sighted to look up, but they could not look downward upon themselves: they could see farther off, but were blind nearer home. These were rank hypocrites, who had rather accuse God than themselves; and as *Adam* cast the fault from himself upon his wife, Gen. 3, 12, so do they from themselves upon their fathers. They never think of their own eating of the sour grapes, they thought themselves free frō any sin that should procure such judgments, but God taketh the sons in the sins of the fathers, and then punisheth them for their own sins, taking occasion from their fathers sins. Every man's sin shall be upon his own head, so that though a wicked father be condemned, yet his son not treading in his steps, shall be saved. And though God punisheth temporally for y^e sin of the father, yet he doth not condemn any eternally for the same. For as the godliness of the father shall nothing help the son to eternal life; so his wickedness shall not hinder his salvation, except he be wicked himself; and walk in the steps of his wicked father. [Object.] But it will peradventure be said, that *David* sinned in the numbering of the people, & yet the people were punished, many thousands were plagued for his offense, and he escaped scot-free: *Loe, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me and against my fathers house.* I answer, [Answer.] this is a certain & infallible rule, that there is no unrighteousness with God, who is the Judge of all the world. And touching the people, though they were free from this sin of *David*, yet they had many other grievous sins, for which God might justly punish them, and God, either for some secret

or else some open sin, had a quarrel against them, as is plain by these words; *The anger of the Lord was again kindled against Israel, and therefore he moved David against them to say, Go number Judah and Israel.* It is not said, that he moved David against himself, but against them. So then their own sin was the cause of the kings sin, and the kings sin brought this punishment upon them, and therefore their sin was the cause of the cause of their punishment. It may be they abused the peace & plenty given unto them after the three years of famine, & after the four great battles which they had fought against y^e Philistines: for it is hard to use God's blessings well, our corrupt nature being ready to turn good into evil, and blessings into curses, Deut. 32, 6, 15. Therefore the people are especially plagued, because their sin was the first cause of all, which sin he punished with the sin of David, and both of thē with that grievous pestilence. And touching David, we cannot say, he altogether escaped unpunished, for God by one and the same plague and judgment striketh many ways and many persons: his sword hath many edges, and cutteth every way: he useth no rod that hath not many sharp twigs, nor no whip that hath not many cords of wiar to draw blood in many places. True it is, he was not stricken with this raging pestilence: nevertheless, he was diversely punished with it, with grief and sorrow, with horror & fear, with loss of his subjects & of his honor, Pro. 14, 28

The uses. First, this serveth as an admonition [Use 1] to all parents, to teach thē, that if they love their sons, they must leave their sins, and walk in a careful obedience to the law of God. If they do not remember his commandments, it shall come to pass that he will not remember their children for good, but for evil. If thē there be no love in us, either toward God or our selves, yet for the children's sake of our body, and for our posterity that come after us, we should labor to forsake our sins. For his judgments shall not end in us, but follow us at the heels, and fall upon such as are near us and belong unto us. God will take vengeance of the children for the sins of the parents, although they have in themselves enough to work out their own destruction, yea, though they have no more in them but original sin. Many love their children better then themselves, and desire their good more then their own. If we would indeed show our love to them, we must walk in obedience unto God. To say we love them dearly, and yet to live profanely, is utterly to deceive our selves. To commit wickedness with greediness, is not the way to show our love to them, or to procure their safety, but rather to make them partakers with us in the punishment. Many children may now say to their parents, as *Zipporah* said to *Moses*; for as she said, *Thou art a bloody husband to me*; in like manner may many children say to their parents, *Ye are indeed bloody parents unto us, because they have brought the curse of God both upon themselves and upon their posterity.* Alas, do men marry wives to bring forth children to Satan? to be cast into the fire of God's wrath? Is there no care in you, O fathers? no love in you, O mothers to your own children, the fruit of your own bodies? If there be any spark of piety, nay of pity and compassion in us, let us show it in this, by forsaking of our sins, and by reforming of our lives, whatsoever is amis in us; and by giving unto them a good example of life: otherwise most certainly we shall find the wrath of God extended even to our houses and little ones, he will forget to show mercy unto them, but in great wrath & heavy displeasure will he remember them. Let not these things be forgotten but remembered, & graven in our hearts, to wit, that wicked parents are the greatest enemies to their children. We cannot abide that

others should entreat them evilly, when in the mean season none do more hurt them and misuse them than our selves.

[Use 2] Secondly, it reproveth those parents, that imagine by fraud and oppression, wrongful & injurious dealing, to set up their children and enrich their posterity, and get to themselves great names: whereas this is the ready way to bring the curse of God upon their names, upon their substance, upon their houses, upon their children, upon their labors, and upon all their posterity. Such covetous practices (whatsoever their pretences be) cannot build up their houses, which they might easily know if they did believe the word, which teacheth that God is an avenger of all such things, 1. Thess. 4, 6. And the Prophet telleth us, that *the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it; woe to him that buildeth a Town with blood, &c.* This woe fell upon *Ahab*, that ruined his house: as it doth many great houses in our days.

[Use 3] Thirdly, this warneth us that therefore we should not sleep securely in sin, because God by and by punisheth it one way or other. The wicked are often seen in great power, spreading themselves like the green bay tree, Psal. 37, 35, and they go unpunished for a while, Ps. 73. Job 21. but look upon their posterity, and you shall see GOD meeteth with them in his good time, yea often when they are dead and rotten. Evil doing is always attended with evil success in themselves or in those that are theirs. We see tyrants and bloody persecutors flourish and prosper for a time, howbeit if not in their own persons, yet in the second or third descent, they have been buried under the ruins of those buildings, of which the mortar had been tempered with innocent blood. We noted this before in the person of *Ahab*, after he had shed the blood of *Naboth* the true servant of God and of his children; who, I pray you, could do greater hurt to his own house than himself? Did not he in a manner pull it down with his own hands? for therefore was the kingdom taken away and removed from his house, and his seventy children were all slain with the edge of the sword, 1 Kings 21, 21. *Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, &c.* Thus was it with *Jeroboam* who made Israel to sin, God swept him away and all his stock as dung from the face of the earth, 1 King. 14.10. It behooveth therefore Princes and subjects to pray one for another, forasmuch as GOD taketh occasion by the sin of one man to punish another. This duty should also be performed of fathers and children, of masters and their families, lest God cast them together in one judgment.

Lastly, children ought not in all things to [Use 4] follow the example of their parents. It is no just defense or good excuse before GOD, to say, our parents did so. If they have been wicked, swearers and blasphemers, contemners of the word & of the Sabbaths of God, we must not follow them in their sins, lest we reap the fruit of that which they have sown. Wherefore children must not walk in the wicked ways of their fathers, but rather be humbled and crave pardon and forgiveness even for their sins which they after a sort have bequeathed as a legacy unto them: so that their children inherit their sins as well as their substance, because they send forth an evil savor which bringeth down the curse of God upon them, as Dan. 9, 8, 16, where *Daniel* doth not only confess his own sin, and of others that then lived, but he is wonderfully cast down for the sins of their predecessors: *For our sins, & for the iniquities of our*

fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. And the Lord promiseth on the other side, that he which seeth his fathers sins, & is humbled for them, and doth not the like, shall not be punished for them, but shall find God merciful unto him; but whosoever seeth the wickedness of his fathers, and justifieth them by word or practice, filleth up the measure of their sins, & bringeth down a plague vpon his own head, Mat. 23, 32, 35: Fulfill ye the measure of your sins, that upon you may come all the righteous blood that hath been shed frō the blood of Abel, &c. Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation.

36. And the men which Moses sent to search the Land, who returned and made all the Congregation to murmur against him by bringing up a slander upon the Land: 37. Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the Land, died of the plague before the Lord.

After that God had given sentence against all the murmurers together; now he proceeds against the captains and ringleaders of y^e rest, I mean the men that were sent to search out the land, which opened the mouths of the rest against the Lord; these were smitten down & died by the plague and pestilence, according to the threatening before ver. 12. *I will smite thee with the pestilence, and I will make of thee a greater and mightier nation than they;* and this had been no hard thing with God, who had before as it were hewed them out of the rock, & multiplied them to many thousands out of small beginnings.

[Doctrine.] The Doctrine from hence is this: Such as are leaders and drawers forward of others and solicitors of them to sin, are capital offenders, the burden of the sin & of the punishment thereof lieth chiefly upon them. Judgments are principally intended & directed against those that have the chief hand in misleading others; we see this evidently in the fall of our first parents, the serpent is first punished, then the woman, and lastly *Adam*, Gen. 3, 14, 16. The judgment of God lay heavy upon the idolatrous kings of Israel, which in a few descents were rooted out; Thus is *Jeroboam* branded, that *he made Israel to sin*, 1 Kings 12, 30. 2 Kings 13, 2, and 10, 29. 1, Kings 15, 2, 3, 34. The reasons.

[Reason 1] It is a sin for man to err of himself, and bringeth judgment, to go out of the way, though he be nor set out of it: but it is a greater sin and bringeth a greater judgment to cause others to do soe, for now he sinneth not alone. Satan that old serpent was chiefly punished, because he was the chief procurer of man's fall, but *Adam* escaped not who was seduced, but was no seducer; he was deceived, but was no deceiver: the devil was a deceiver, but was not deceived: the woman was both deceived and a deceiver also. They that cause others to fall, have a greater judgment belonging unto them. We observed this before in *Miriam*, chap. 12, 10. she was a leper white as snow, who drew *Aaron* to join with her against *Moses*, and therefore as she had the chief hand in the sin, so she was stricken with a foul leprosy.

[Reason 2] Secondly, principal offenders in civil states are chiefly punished before such as are only accessories. In evil, we may say, Two are worse then one, because if one determine to give over, he hath a fellow to stir him forward, & if he be ready to cease, he hath another to help him up.

[Use 1] This serveth to reprove such as draw on others to sin, as they are capital offenders, so they shall be punished as capital offenders. Woe to such as lay a stumbling block before others to cause them to fall. In this number I range those that keep common houses of drunkenness, to tempt and seduce others, and such as haunt them continually, & meet there, and intend to make others drunk; of which places I may say as *Solomon* doth of other, Pro. 7, 27. *Their house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.* These men are capital offenders, & are so hardened in sin, that they make a mock and a spott at it as at a pastime yea they make a mock of those that set themselves against it. It serveth also to reprove those that any way make others partakers of their sins, whether it be by commanding, or by counsel, or by persuasion, or by evil example. We shall find the number of our own sins to be great enough, and the account hard enough which we are to make for them, that we should be afraid to heap up more, and so to make the weight greater and the burden heavier.

Secondly, this must teach all such as are Rulers [Use 2] and Governors to look to their ways, and to take heed they be not any cause of the fall of others. A Governor lifted up above others, is as an high Cedar or mighty Oak, above the lower shrubs. The Oak never falleth but it beareth down the lesser trees that stand near unto it. So is it with such as are set before others, in what calling soever it be, they stand not alone, they fall not alone. If they stand fast and unmovable, they are as firm pillars to bear up others. If they fall, they wrap others in their own ruin, & God's judgments will lie heavy upon them and upon those that belong unto them. This doeth the Prophet teach touching negligent watchmen, that keep silence and do not blow the trumpet, and thereby cause many to perish in their sins, Eze. 3, 18. *Their blood will I require at the watchman's hands.* This may be spoken likewise of other Governors. God hath made the Magistrate a watchman, and requireth of him to cause his laws to be observed; and godly *Nehemiah* acknowledged it to be his duty to see God to be served, and his Sabaths to be sanctified, chap. 13, 17. *What evil is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day?* There was buying and selling upon the Sabbath day and he reproveth the buyers by name, as if the fault were chiefly in them; for as we say commonly in another case, if there were no receivers there would be no thieves, so we may as truly say, if there were no buyers, there would be, there could be no sellers. And it is certain, that because these find readily such as will buy of thē, it encourageth the sellers to come and offer their wares. For if the Jews had not been willing to buy their wares, the Merchants of *Tyre* would never have brought their commodities to vent them upon that day. If therefore the Magistrate do not his duty, but hold his peace, the blood of such as perish shall be required at his hands also. The like we might say of fathers and masters that ought to teach and instruct such as belong unto their charge; and this have all godly Governors observed: such then as are negligent in this duty, & open not their mouths, make themselves guilty of the sins that their servants and children commit, as it is noted of *Eli*, and bring upon themselves many grievous judgments.

Thirdly, we must nevertheless understand, [Use 3] that it shall be no just plea or pretence for such as are led aside out of the right way by others, or have a stumbling block laid before them to cause them to fall, to allege for themselves, Alas, I was deceived, I was moved & drawn by others: these are no better then *Adams* fig leaves, he posted his sin over to his wife,

The woman that thou gavest me, &c. So did the woman to the serpent, *The serpent beguiled me, &c.* So it was with Saul, he translated the fault from himself to his people, *The people spared the best of the Sheep and of the Oxen to sacrifice unto y^e Lord thy God*, 1 Sa. 15, 15.28. But God bindeth them all together as it were in one bundle, and they are all punished, the serpent, the woman, the man: And Saul hath the kingdom rent from him, and given to a neighbor of his better then himself. The people for the most part think themselves to be discharged, if they can lay the blame upon their Teachers: Alas, if we had been taught better, we would have done better; our Ministers shall answer for us: if we be ignorant, it is their fault. Thus do many deceive themselves, but this shall never go for good payment. Christ saith, *If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*, Mat. 15, 14. not only the blind leaders, but they also for company that are blindly led. Therefore none shall be excused by the carelessness and negligence of their Pastors, for *they shall die in their own sins and iniquities*, Ezech. 33, 8. Jer. 14, 15, 16.

Thus the case also standeth with servants and others under the government of others, They think all shall go well with them, if they have the examples of their masters and rulers to go before them. The poor think themselves excused by the rich, the lower sort by the greater, the fewer by the multitude, the wife by the husband, the subject by the Magistrate. Thus also it falleth out in the breach of the Sabbath, of which we spake before. The seller turneth it over to the buyer, and the buyer putteth all the fault upon the seller, whereas indeed neither are innocent, but divide the sin between them, and therefore both of them are reprov'd as guilty, and shall divide the punishment also between them.

[Use 4] Lastly, this serveth as an instruction to the godly, that albeit we be overtaken in any sin, and fall into it our selves, yet let us take heed we do not pull others after us. We must not be so sottish as to think, that by procuring and persuading others to join with us as companions and brethren in evil, that the evil is thereby lessened: no, it is thereby rather increased. We should be grieved for our own faults, and know that the burden of our own sins doth press us down so deeply, that we have small cause to add the weight of other men's sins to our own. On the other side, happy are they that lead the way to true godliness, and bring on others unto the true fear of God, *They shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars forever and ever*, Daniel 12, 3. As then, *Whosoever shall break one of these least Commandments, and teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: so, Whosoever shall do them and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven*, Mat. 5, 19. It is a praise and commendation to perform the will of God, and to do his commandments: but it is a double praise, to bring others to the practice of them also. *He that conuerieth his brother to the truth, saveth a soul*, I am. 5, 19, 20. No man can do better service to God, or to his neighbor.

39 And Moses told these savings unto all the Children of Israel, and the people mourned greatly.

Moses rehearseth what the Lord had denounced and determined, or else he could not be said to *be faithful in the house of God*, Num. 12, 7. He hid nothing from them, but revealed the whole

counsel of God. This is the Ministers duty, they must keep back nothing of all the things that he shall say unto them, 1 Sam. 3, 17. Numb. 22, 38. Matth. 28, 20. Otherwise they cannot take the consciences of the people to record, that they are pure from the blood of all men, Act. 20, 26. Again, we see what this message of *Moses* brought from the mouth of God wrought in the people, they mourn and lament, not slightly but bitterly. But they should have taken heed of murmuring at the beginning, and then they had prevented this mourning at the later end. And wherefore do they mourn so greatly? not for their sin, but for the punishment fallen upon themselves and upon their children; as *Judas* and other sons of perdition, who can quickly mourn when they are punished, but are hardly drawn to it when they have sinned. But *Peter wept bitterly* so soon as he had sinned, Mat. 26, 75. albeit he saw no punishment coming. A good child feareth the displeasure of his father more then the rod. So it ought to be with all of us.

We learn from the behavior of the people this Doctrine, [Doctrine.] That sin though it be pleasant in the acting, yet it bringeth much sorrow and bitterness in the latter end. It is conceived in pleasure, but it bringeth forth pain. Gen. 3, 6. Ier. 2, 19. Pro. 7, 22, 23. 1 Tim. 6, 10. *Ahab* took possession with great joy of the vineyard of *Naboth*, purchased with the reward of iniquity, but the prophet is sent unto him with this heavy tidings, 1 Kings 21, 19. *Hast thou killed and also taken possession? In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine*, Luke 6, 25. and 15, 13, 14, 16.

The Reasons: First, because sin is the [Reason 1] transgression of the law, so it is defined by the Apostle, 1 John. 3, 4. *Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the Law: for sin is the transgression of the Law*. Now God hath set a curse to every transgression of the Law, Gal. 3, 10 and this curse must take place upon the sinner, and cannot be severed from the sin.

Secondly, in sin are two things, the act it [Reason 2] self, and the guilt of it • the act it self is transient, and hath the pleasure while it is in committing, but the guilt of it remaineth behind, and bindeth a man to judgment.

This teacheth every man, that he should envy no man in the pleasure of his sinning: for albeit he have some pleasure in the committing of it, yet so soon as the pleasure is gone and past, then followeth the guilt, then followeth the punishment at the heels, and waiteth upon the sinner, as the Sergeant doth upon the debtor. The ungodly are oftentimes thought the only happy men in this world, but there is no happiness to be found in sin; it is the highway to unhappiness, to misery, to grief, to anguish, to judgment, to confusion, to condemnation. These are like to a foolish traveler, who coming to his Inn, calleth for great variety of meat to delight his taste, and taketh great pleasure in eating and drinking of all that is set before him without refusing any; but he never thinketh of the reckoning which is to come immediately after, which dasheth all the mirth and iollitie that went before. Thus it is with the sinner, he followeth his sin with greediness, he taketh delight therein, and cannot be satisfied; but he never remembereth the day of account, neither the reckoning that waiteth upon him hard at the heels. Hereupon *Solomon* singleth out the *young man*, and telleth him, that albeit he follow the lusts of his eyes, the desires of his heart, together with the pride and pleasure of life, yet he must *know that for all these things God will bring him into judgment*,

Eccles. 11, 9. O that every sinner would think upon this, and mark the latter end of sin! This would be a notable means to restrain us from wickedness, and to pull back our feet from those evil ways into which we are entered: if we would remember that the days shall come, yea the times approach we know not how soon, wherein the Lord will say to us, *Come, give an account*: but (alas) these things are now hidden from us.

Hence it is, that *Zophar* setting down the estate of the wicked, Job 20, 12. saith, *Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue, though he spare it and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth; yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Asps within him: He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again, God shall cast them out of his belly.* Where he compareth sin with sweet meat mingled with deadly poison, & he speaketh of goods evilly gotten, w^c turn to the destruction of those that possess them. The same doth *Solomon* teach touching drunkenness, Prov. 23, 31, 32. and touching whoredom, chap. 3, 3, 4. as also elsewhere he showeth, that *in the transgression of an evil man there is a snare.* It is otherwise with godliness, and the fear of God: it seemeth bitter to the flesh and is oftentimes accompanied with many troubles and afflictions which are very unpleasant to the outward man: notwithstanding afterward it bringeth enduring pleasure and contentment unto the soul: for, *our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

Secondly, let no man measure the nature of [Use 2] sin by the beginning of it, but by the end: and when we are devising to commit any sin, let us bethink our selves what will be the end of it: this will be a great means and a sovereign preservative to stop the course of it. For sin is said to have *deceitfulness* in it, Heb. 3, 18. and the pleasures thereof to endure for a season. Heb. 11, 25. The sin of *Judas* that was a thief and kept the bag, and betrayed his master for thirty shekels of silver, was very sweet unto him; but in the end his mouth was filled with gravel, he had enough of them, & too much, for his conscience was vexed with horror, and he felt an hell in his own bowels; so that he carried them back to the Pharisees, and hanged himself, Mat. 27, 5. Then he repented, but then it was too late: and thus do the wicked repent. *Esau* a very profane person, sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, it was sweet meat unto him, but it had sour sauce: for he found no place for repentance, *Though he sought the blessing carefully with tears*, Heb. 12, 17. Thus it was with the foolish Virgins, Matth. 25. and so it shall be with foolish men in the latter end.

Thirdly, we must be careful to take heed [Use 3] of the least measure of sin that can be. There is no sin so little, but if it be neglected, it will increase: and whosoever despiseth small sins, quickly falleth into greater; it is like the infant conceived in the womb, James 1, 15. All sin, though it have not a wide mouth like a Lyon to swallow us at one morsel, yet by little and little it will sting us to death. The sand on the sea-shore, though it be very small and little in quantity, yet too much weight thereof will sink the ship. The drops of rain that fall from heaven are very little, yet they make great showers, and great showers bring mighty floods that sweep away all before them. A little spark of fire neglected, causeth a great

burning, and kindleth a great matter, James 3, 5. If then we desire to preserve our selves safe and sound from the heighth of sin, let us take heed we be not oppressed with y^e weight of it, and set on fire with the sparks, and wet with the drops of it. Beware of small sins, if we would be preserved from the greater, one making an easy path and passage to another.

Fourthly, let us labor to prevent the first [Use 4] beginning of sin, and seek to pull it up as a bitter root in the first sprouting. In the diseases of the body, it is a good rule to withstand the beginning, because it is too late afterward to provide a remedy. Many a wound might have been healed, if it had been looked unto betimes, which by continuance proveth incurable. So the diseases of the soul should be prevented in time, while we perceive them to be growing and going forward. Men are careful to kill serpents in the shell, and to destroy noisome beasts before they can run and rauen abroad, thereby to prevent the danger that otherwise in time might grow by them, if they were suffered and let alone. Thus ought we to deal with our sins, we must endeavor to struggle against them, and to strangle them in the birth and beginning, that so they may never come to perfection, neither bring us to destruction. Destroy them or else they will destroy us: if we do not kill them, they will kill us, *for sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death*, I am. 1, 15. A young plant may easily be pulled up by the roots: but if it grow in the ground till it be a great tree, it can hardly be transplanted and removed. In like sort so long as our sins are young, they may with less strife and labor be rooted out: but if once they be confirmed by age, and strengthened by custom and continuance in our hearts, we shall find it a very hard matter to displace them and dispossess them, Ier. 13, 23. & 2, 22. If once they have gotten the mastery, they will hardly leave their hold. We shall find it little better then to wash a Tile or brick, and go about in a manner an impossible work, they are become a Cart-ropes which are not easily untwisted, Isaiah 5, 18. Or as a threefold cable which is not quickly broken, Eccles. 4, 12. Cōsider the truth of this in these three things, Drunkenness, whoredom, and swearing: what means soever are used to take these away, they are unprofitable: the drunkard will *follow it still*, Pro. 23, 35. Such as comit whoredom sildome return again, and *take hold of the paths of life*, Prov. 2, 19. & when a man hath once accustomed himself to swearing, he cannot but swear at every word, he never *feareth an oath*. Custom taketh away fear of sinning: where no fear is to offend men are bold to sin: & when men are grown bold and past shame they have no sense of sin You shall hear them swear ordinarily and horribly, and yet they know not of it, or at least never consider it, Rom 2, 4. Eph. 4, 19.

[Use 5] Lastly, it behooveth us to use all the means we can to keep us from sin, as we would do to keep us from the pestilence, least we grow secure and senseless, and think our selves in good case, when we are nearest to destruction and farthest off from salvation. The means which God sanctifieth as so many preservatives to work in us a conscience of sin, and to stay us from falling into the same are many: First the ministry of the word. I range this in the first place, both because of the power of it, and because it giveth force unto the rest. God commandeth his Ministers to cry allowed and spare not to preach the doctrine of repentance, and to tell the people their sins, Pro. 1, 20, 21. and 9, 2, 33. Ephes. 4, 11, 12. Thus he sent *Jonah* to the Ninevites, Jonah 3, 4. *Nathan* to *David*, 2 Sam 12, 1. and the prophets continually to the Israelites, 2 Chronic. 36, 14, 15 Acts 2, 37, 38.

Secondly, the benefits and blessings of God which are many and great, daily & continual, upon soul and body; he saveth and preserveth us, in him we live and move, who reneweth his mercies to us every morning, Psal. 68, 18 Lam 3, 23. he daileth loadeth us with benefits wonderfully. Moses telleth the people, that the Lord bestowed so many benefits upon them, that *they should love the Lord with all their hearts, and with all their soul*, Deut. 10, 12. *That they should clean unto him, and knit their hearts unto him*, Josh. 23, 8. and 24, 14. 1 Kings 14.7, 8. Paul beseecheth the Romans *by the mercies of God* to offer up their bodies as an holy sacrifice unto God. God hath made us to abound with this argument, and hath often spoken unto us.

Thirdly, he hath bestowed upon us his own Son, the greatest blessing in heauē or earth, for a greater cannot be promised of God, or comprehended of us, Rom. 8, 32 *He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*, John. 3, 16. He gave his own, his only Son for us his enemies even unto the death, that we should be reconciled unto him. If the consideration of this and the earnest meditation in it, will not move us to repent of sin, nothing in the world will put life into our hard hearts

Fourthly, the corrections and chastisements which are laid upon us, Psal. 89, 31, 32. Job 33, 16. *The Lord openeth the ears of men, even by their corrections which he hath sealed*: so that we should humble our selves when we feel them, Heb. 12, 6, 11. It is our duty therefore to mourn for sin betimes, which will bring with it comfort in the latter end, Luk. 6, 21. *Blessed are ye that weep, for ye shall laugh*. This use did *David* make of them, Psal. 119, 71. To this we may join the chastisements of God sent upon others, though we feel them not ourselves: for if we see them or hear of them, they should be as so many warning pieces to our selves to call us to repentance, Isaiah 26, 9.

Fifthly private admonitions and exhortations, yea reproofs and threatenings of judgment when the former will not serve, Leu. 19, 17. Prov. 9, 8. *Rebuke a wise man and he will love thee*. Math. 18, 15. Thus he may be won by his brother, Psal. 141, 5. Let us not therefore refuse this means, but make good use of it.

Lastly, the inward motions and inspirations of the holy Spirit, which he stirreth up in our hearts, as it is said of *David*, that *God caused his own heart to smite him*, 2 Sam. 24, 10. and Psal. 16, 7. We have all of us at one time or other some good motions and desires put into our minds; let us make much of them and entertain them into our souls, lest he withdraw his Spirit from us, and give us over unto our selves.

40. And they rose up early in the morning, and gate them up into the top of the Mountain, saying, Loe, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the Lord hath promised: for we have sinned.

41. And Moses said, Wherefore now do you transgress the commandment of the Lord? but it shall not prosper.

42. Go not up, for the Lord is not among you, &c.

Here we have the behavior of this crooked and perverse people, hearing from the mouth of Moses the mind of God, that they must go back again by *the way of the red sea*, and shall wander up and down forty years in the wilderness, for the false report which the spies had brought up of the Land, and for their own believing of that report: Now they will not obey, but will needs go forward, though God had commanded them to retire and return. See here the perverseness of our nature, as if we had made a general conspiracy never to obey him, but to oppose against him whatsoever he say, so we evermore strive against that we are forbidden. They refused before to go into the Land, now they will needs in a Brauado proceed when they are forbidden. When they should go forward, thē they will go backward and make them a Captain to conduct them into Egypt. When they should go backward, then they will go forward, though they perish for it. This is our corrupt nature, that which God willeth us to do, we will not do: and that which he willeth us not to do, that we will do: whereby we see that the lusts of the flesh are enmity against God.

Again, observe that when God is not with a people, they cannot prosper, his presence is the cause of victory, 2 Chron. 20, 27. If he be gone from us, and go not forth with our armies, we fall by the sword of the enemy, we cannot stand before them, we go out one way, and fly before them seven ways. Deut. 28, 25. Moreover, we see in the example of this disobedience, that God oftentimes punisheth one evil man by another, one of his enemies by another enemy; nevertheless, afterward they also perish. They are his rod, and when it hath been employed to scourge malefactors, it is cast into the fire. [Doctrine.] But to pass these over, which partly have been handled before, and partly come more fitly to be handled after, let us consider this general point; that wicked men that have sold themselves to sin, do at length come to that measure of sin, that no bands or banks can hold them or contain them. Such as have given themselves up to sin, do not only proceed in sin willfully and violently, but come to that height, that neither the judgments of God, nor his mercies can restrain them, but they break through all, like an unruly beast, whom no hedge can hold, no fence can order, no bounds can keep in, whatsoever they be, Ier. 5, 8. 2 Chron. 36, 13, 14, 16. Psal. 50, 17. Isaiah 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

And no marvel. For their hearts are obstinate, [Reason 1] their consciences are hardened and seared as with an hot iron, so that they cannot be softened with the oil of his mercies, nor terrified with the fire of his threatenings, nor broken in pieces with the hammer of his judgments. They have gotten hearts that cannot repent, and therefore when sinfulness and obstinacy meet together, there must needs be an exceeding great measure of iniquity.

Secondly, because there is in such, a great [Reason 2] contempt of God & his word: now contempt joined with sin, maketh the sin greater. It is noted as the top of Esau's profane heart, that *he contemned his birthright*, Gen. 25, 34. It was a note of profaneness, to set it to sale, to prefer his belly before the pledge of God's favor, to swear rashly, and securely to pass over what he had done; but to contemn and despise the grace of God, passeth all the former, and containeth the height and depth of his profaneness.

This argueth, that the times wherein we [Use 1] live, are grown to a marvelous height of impiety, and that we are come to a fearful degree of all profaneness. For not only gross sins as great beams in our eyes are to be found among us, but evil men are carried violently with a full career in their sins, like an horse without a bridle that rusheth into the battle. We are grown to this perfection, as it were to a complete age of sin in the midst of the blessings and benefits of God, we turn his grace into wantonness, & the more grace aboundeth, the more sin continueth: and though he warn us by his word, yet we will not be warned. His word is as the wind that passeth away. Again, many men live in sin in the midst of the judgments of God, not only general judgments, but even special upon themselves, yet they are settled in the dregs of their wickedness, nothing can turn them or amend them. This cannot but argue a great height of impiety. This maketh all sin whatsoever to be unpardonable, when we grow obstinate and sapped in our evil ways, that nothing can prevail with us. If any have a servant or child, whom he hath warned of his evil course, and lately corrected him for the same, if this servant or this child should (notwithstanding words and blows used toward him) continue to do the same things, would you not think that he deserved a greater measure of punishment? Then let us, I pray you, judge our selves in this case. God hath given us his word and commandments, to tell us what we ought to do, & what not to do, & often sendeth his judgments among us for the farther manifestation of the truth of his word: yet we see men will to their old sins again though they die for it, & that eternally in soul and body. We must therefore expect daily a greater measure of God's judgments then before, because we continue obstinate and rebellious.

Secondly, seeing nothing will hold us from our sinful ways, but we will rush forward, it teacheth every mā, that it is our duty to humble our selves for our obstinacy, impenitency, and hardness of heart, in that we are so dull and slow of heart to believe and to repent of those things which we have heard reproved out of the word of God. The heinousness of obstinate sins committed with an high hand will appear unto us by these particulars. First, obstinate proceeding in sin keepeth all mercy from us, as a thick cloud that suffereth not the comfortable light of the Sun to shine in our faces. This made the Apostle say, that *blindness was happened to Israel*, that they were not his people, Rom. 11, 25. Woe unto them in whom this remaineth, for God hath given unto them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, Rom. 11, 28. Secondly, it maketh the least sin that a man committeth or can commit to be like to that sin against the holy Ghost that shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Mat. 12, 32. For it is not so much sin that condemneth a man (for then all men should be contemned, inasmuch as all men have sinned) as obstinacy and willful continuing in sin. And have we not therefore great cause to humble our selves for the same, and to lament bitterly? Thirdly, it is a sin against the Gospel it self, and against the doctrine of salvation, ought we not therefore to mourn for it? Notwithstanding many are so far from leaving off their continued practice of sin, that they repent of their repentance, they are sorry that they have turned and changed so far. This is such a sin as maketh men odious in the sight of God, and maketh them more acceptable to Satan, when they grieve that they have a little broken off their sins, and made a few steps, & some small beginnings to repentance. This is an high degree of sin: and this

was it that did fill the hardness of *Pharaohs* heart to the full. He and his servants were at the last content that *Israel* should depart out of Egypt: this was some kind of relenting, and a bringing of their former hardness to a better temper: but they are much grieved for that which they had done, and therefore they say one to another, *Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?* Thus it was also with the Israelites themselves, they had hitherto proceeded toward the land of promise, and as it were ranged themselves under the standard of God, but now they repent of all that they had done, and would needs return back again into Egypt. But on the other side, when a man can mourn that he hath not mourned; and repent that he hath not repented, & humble himself because he hath not been humbled, this is a true and great measure of grace: and this is that which a man must first do, before he can truly repent of any particular sin whatsoever. But some will say, [Object.] what need so many words of exhortation to repentance? We hope we have repented long ago, [Answer.] both often enough and well enough. Thus do some proud hypocrites deceive themselves. These are like to the young man, that being sent to the law for the direction of his life, answered, *All this have I done from my youth, what is yet wanting?* This convinceth those men to their faces of want of repentance. For if such men have repented, it is with such kind of repentance as many take up and use after their customary swearing, who when they have sworn and taken the name of God in vain, do presently ask forgiveness and cry God mercy, and yet presently swear again & again, like dogs that return to their vomit: I cannot say like the sow that was washed, walloweth again in the mire, for they were never washed from their sin: but I may more fitly compare them to the harlot in the Proverbs, *That eateth and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.* With such kind of repentance it may be these have repented, whereas in truth it is rather a bold presumption, than a true conversion: for alas, this is no repentance at all, but only a mere deceit and delusion of the devil. This is an evident truth, and a very plain rule not to be denied, or disputed, or gainsayed; Whosoever is come to this pass to think he hath repented enough, it is most certain he never truly repented, he is not in the account of God and his word a true convert or penitent. For all such as have repented aright, do think it, nay they know it to be impossible for them to repent enough: such are our offenses against the eternal and infinite majesty of God, as no man is so humbled for them as that he can say, he need be humbled no more for them. All our life, if it were or could be as long as *Methuselahs*, must be a continual practice of repentance. As we daily sin, so we should daily crave pardon of sin, and daily repent us of our sin, both of our known and secret sins.

Lastly, this serveth to exhort every of us [Use 3] to take heed of obstinacy, impenitency, and resolution to go forward in sin: we must fly from it, and labor against it. Let us break off our sins by timely repentance, & by doing the contrary good commanded. For this also is another rule certain and infallible without any exception or contradiction, that a man can never be free from the forbidden evil, w^c doth not earnestly labor to do the contrary good. A man is never free from unbelief, that is not also furnished with true faith in his heart. For there is no mean between faith & infidelity, between righteousness and unrighteousness, and therefore it is not possible for a man to be free from an obstinate heart frozen in the lees of sin and disobedience, that is not also furnished in some measure with repentance and

other graces of the Spirit. As of ten as a man stumbleth in the streets, so often he will rise again, and that quickly to the end none should espy him in his fall, & point at him with his finger: so it ought to be with us in this case. Whensoever we fall into sin, we ought by and by to labor to rise up again by repentance, lest by delaying and deferring the time, we add impenitency to our impiety. Let us all labor after renewed repentance in this life, without which all must perish eternally in the life to come. This is a necessary duty, we must all strive and endeavor with might and main to attain unto it; & though Satan cast many lets, as it were so many blocks in our way, and seek to entrappe us with his subtle devices, yet we must break through them all, and set our selves close to the practice of this duty. The more profitable and necessary it is, the more doth Satan seek to hinder us and keep us from it. There is no way to come by life and salvation, but by repentance. It is a true saying of him that is *the truth* John 14, 6. *That except we repent, we shall all perish*, Luke 13, 3. *If we will judge our selves, we shall not be judged of the Lord*, 1 Cor. 11, 31. This is a good judgment: happy is he that sitteth thus in judgment with himself, he shall not fear the eternal judgment. Many there are in the world, that think this an unpleasing doctrine and duty, they would willingly come to salvation and to the kingdom of heaven, but tell them of repentance, they account it an hard saying, they are not able to abide it: they are loath to change their lives and become new men, they are loath to leave their sin and the old *Adam*. These may be fitly compared to a traveler, that desireth to be at his iourneies end, and coming to an hard, stony, & straight way, thorough which he must of necessity pass, or else he can never be there; what doth he? He seeketh for some other place or passage, he wandereth up and down, and coasteth hither and thither; and yet when he hath troubled and tired himself, there is no remedy, he must pass thorough the narrow lane, howsoever it seem hard unto him. So is it with us, we would fain have salvation, but how? we would have it by any means rather than by changing the sinful course of our lives, as we see Micah 6, 6, 7. If the Lord would be *pleased with thousands of Rammes, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil*; or if he would accept at their hands *their first borne for their transgression, and the fruit of their bodies for the sin of their soul*, they would be ready to give it unto him rather than mortify any the deeds of the flesh and crucify the old man. There is nothing savoreth more hardly in their ears then the doctrine of mortification. But to dream of an heaven without repentance, is as foolish, as to dream of passing over a broad and deep River without either bridge or barge. There is no coming into the land of the living, of the living God, and of those that live with God, without repentance and change of mind; the bridge is broken down that should transport us and set us over. For this is the only way this is the door by which we must enter, or else no salvation can be attained. Enter then into this way, and set open this gate, that the *King of glory may come in*, Psal. 24, 7, 9, exercise yourselves in this duty, so shall ye be able to stand before the presence of God at that great and terrible day, when he shall judge every man according to his works, Rom. chap. 2. verse 6.

CHAP. XV.

1 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land of your habitations which I give unto you:

3 And will make an Offering by fire unto the Lord, a burnt Offering or a sacrifice; in performing a vow, or in a free-will Offering, or in your solemn feasts, &c.

4 Then let him, &c.

IN the latter end of the former chapter, we saw the desperate folly of y^e people, that albeit *Moses* made known unto them the heavy displeasure of God, that he had left them to themselves, and was no more among them, after they had so often played and dallied with his merciful sufferings, yet they would needs amend their former disobedience by a second contempt, making offer to enter into the land contrary to the direction of God and the advice of *Moses*. But what became of it? The swords of the enemies which God had hitherto bended and rebated, are left no less sharp then death it self, and are without mercy sheathed in their bowels. For the *Amalekites* and *Canaanites* being joined together, and watching their advantage, set upon them, put them to route, and slaughtered the greatest part of them: the *Amalekites* encouraging one another to be revenged of their former loss received at *Rephidim*, *Exod.* 17. the *Canaanites* seeking to prevent their own displantation & destruction threatened: after which slaughter they followed their victory, and pursued those broken and disbanded companies all the way of their flight even unto *Hormah*.

In this chapt. we have sundry ceremonial precepts, which seem to be delivered to them immediately after the former punishment executed upon the offenders: wherein God testifieth, that albeit the *Israelites* had justly deserved to have final destruction brought upon them, yet God would not utterly depart from them, and wholly leave them to themselves, but continue his love and favor toward them, and be reconciled unto them, smelling the sweet savor of a sacrifice, and verifying the saying of the Apostle, *Ro.* 3, 3, 4. Observe here certain new additions propounded as appurtenances to the laws before delivered at large in the book of *Leviticus*. These are four in number: first, touching the sacrifices: secondly, touching the first fruits: thirdly, touching the cleansing of sins that are committed: lastly, touching the fringes they are commāded to make: all ceremonial, all temporal in regard of the letter, but all significant in regard of y^e matter.

But before we come to handle these particulars, it shall not be amiss briefly to show the causes why these sacrifices were instituted in the Old Testament. First, to maintain the public assemblies of the faithful, and their meetings together to serve the Lord. For, if every man were left to himself, religion would quickly decay or corrupt. Secondly, that they might

be shadows of good things to come, and as it were pictures set before their eyes, to put them in mind of Christ and his sacrifice, who is therefore fitly called *the Lamb slain frō the beginning of the world*, Reu. 13, 8. Thirdly, these sacrifices were also as the Sacraments of the church, and visible signs of invisible grace, & testimonies of God's infallible promise made to the fathers touching salvation in the Messiah to come. Fourthly, they served to be as an open confession of their faith, what God they served, & in whom they believed, and that they hated and detested the vanity and idolatry of the Gentiles. Fifthly, they were also a testification of their thankfulness for sundry benefits received that thereby they might be taught to acknowledge from whence they came. Lastly, they served for the maintenance of the Ministry, and consequently for the furtherance of y^e worship of God, Deut. 18, 3, 4. 1 Cor. 9, 13. These were the chief ends for which they were ordained. Now let us retu•n back to the particular handling of the matters contained in this chap.

[*Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them*] The first point is touching the sacrifices, the sum whereof is to teach what oblations are to be used in every sacrifice, how much wine, how much oil, how much flower is to be taken and applied in every special sacrifice. The several sorts of sacrifices are set down in the book of *Leviticus*: [Doctrinē.] but in what proportion these things should be added, is not there described, but here it is declared in this place. And these things thus performed according to the commandment of God, he is said to smell a sweet savor. This offereth diverse good uses unto us, albeit the things themselves be ceased and abrogated. [Use 1]

The Uses. First, the offering is said to *be a sweet savor, or a savor of rest* (often repeated verses. 3, 7, 10, 13, 14) which God accepteth, wherein he delighteth, and whereby he is appeased; such as he resteth in, & so ceaseth from his anger. This is a borrowed speech taken from sweet odors and perfumes, wherein he which smelleth a sweet savor, resteth & contenteth himself. If any ask the question, [Object.] whether God smell any savor or not? I answer, [Answer.] this must be understood figuratively or mystically. For if we speak properly, savor & smell is the object of the sense of smelling, which agreeth to sensible creatures, and not either to God who neither hath senses, nor is sensible; neither is a creature, or to any spirit. For as Christ saith, *A spirit hath not flesh nor bones*, so unto the same agree neither senses nor sensible things. And if it were true, that God were affected with smells, yet the fume and savor that cometh from the burning of the flesh, cannot it self be pleasant and delightful to the senses, but is rather noisome and unsavory, and therefore some other thing must be meant by it. How then cometh it to be a sweet savor? I answer, two ways; partly in regard of their willingness and obedience, w^c God preferreth before all sacrifice that hath horn and hoof. *Behold, to obey is better then sacrifice; and to hearken, then the fat of Rams*: therefore where the external work was separated from the inward devotion & obedience, it was no sweet savor but it was hateful and abominable to God: partly also and principally, because it was a type and figure of Christ, who was indeed an *offering and a sweet savor to God*, Eph. 5.2. He is the truth of all sacrifices, and his blood the accomplishment of all the blood shed in y^e sacrifices. He hath performed all in his own person, & brought an end to them, they are no longer to be continued: he hath appeased the wrath of God, he hath taken away our sins, & thereby testified his abundant love toward us, *for greater love hath no man then this, that a man*

lay down his life for his friends. This sacrifice was very acceptable to God the father, in it he resteth and requireth no further satisfaction at our hands, contrary to the doctrine of the popish church. The force of this sacrifice is very great, not so of any other. None of them were of & in them selves a *sweet savor of rest*, neither brought they pardon of sin, and therefore God testifieth y^t he *stood not in need of them*: but they were a sweet savor as they were referred to the sacrifice of Christ, and were offered by faith in him, as Heb. 11, 4. by faith *Abel* offered, and thereby obtained witness that he was righteous. And now also none of our spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God, but so far forth as they are offered by faith in Christ, 1 Pet. 2, 5. All our sacrifices are acceptable through Christ. [Objection] If any ask, whence it cometh y^t his sacrifice is so effectual and forcible? [Answ.] I answer, first from the dignity of his person, which offered himself for us, for he was true God equal to his Father, & therefore of infinite value, Acts 20, 28. John 6, 62, 63. Secondly, from the fullness of his obedience toward his Father, Phil. 2, 6, 7. & from his keeping of the law perfectly for us, Math. 5, 17. Gal. 4, 4. whence we see that he was tainted with no sin, 1 Pet. 2, 22. John 8, 46. that he should have need to offer first for himself, as the priests of *Levi* were constrained to do in the law, Heb. 7, 27. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *He gave himself for us*, not for himself *who was without sin*, Heb. 9, 13.

[Use 2] Secondly, the sacrifice of the burnt offering made by fire, had a meat-offering joined to it, verse. 4. of a *tenth deal of flour, mingled with the fourth part of an Hin*. This was a measure of moist or liquid things, as the Gomer & Epha were of dry and solid containing six pints, according to the computation of the Hebrews, which ought to have most knowledge in these things. But to leave this, we must consider, that to the burnt offering is joined a meat offering, this meat offering is no other then the flesh of Christ, which he should offer for the sins of the world, John 6, 53, 54, 55. 1 Cor. 10, 3. *They did all eat of the same spiritual meat, and drank the same spiritual drink*, that is, Christ Jesus. [Object.] If any ask how he is made meat for us, and drink for us? [Answer.] I answer, in that he was crucified, dead and buried: our life ariseth out of his death: our strength out of his weakness, & our salvation out of his condemnation. This is our meat offering, as indeed it was theirs also, and this we must eat by faith, if we desire to live forever. This must teach us to hunger after him; the nature of this hunger must be according to the nature of the meat; spiritual meat requireth spiritual hunger in our harts. As truly as we hunger after our meat, so truly should we hunger after this meat-offering. This made the Apostle *count all things as dung*, that he might win Christ, Phil. 3, 8. Nevertheless, great is the profaneness of the world: for we are for the most part like those *Israelites* that preferred *the Onions and Garlic of Egypt*, before Angels food, Numb. 11, 5, 6.

[Use 3] Lastly, the sacrifices offered up, must have *Wine poured* upon them, ver. 5. as also oil, of which we have spoken before chap. 6. Out of which we must learn to acknowledge, that for the faith and truths sake, for Christ and the Gospels sake, we must not account the best things we have, no not our own lives dear and precious unto us, but be ready to forsake brethren and sisters, house and lands, & to offer up our bodies, and to have our blood shed and poured out as a drink offering to God, 2 Cor. 4, 10. Gal. 6, 17. 2 Tim 4, 6. Phil. 2, 17. For as Christ offered himself for us, so should we be content to offer up our selves to him: & as he

shed his blood for us, so should we be ready to give our lives for his truth. *He that will save his life shall lose it; but he that loseth his life shall save it*, Math. 16, 25 This have the faithful done: for they considered that in heaven they had *an enduring substance*, Heb. 10, 34. If they lost a temporal life, they found an eternal: & if they parted from any earthly treasure, they obtained heavenly: and therefore their gains were infinitely greater then their losses. It is not enough to profess the truth in prosperity, so long as it is fair weather, and the Sun shineth warm von us. Every hypocrite will go so far: but we must remember *the pouring out of the wine upon the meat offering*, as the faithful complain that *their blood hath been shed like water round about Jerusalem*, Psal. 80, 3. We must know that it is our duty to stand in a storm as well as in a calm, when the wind bloweth as well as when it bloweth not, and when persecution ariseth as well as in time of peace and plenty, Mat. 10, 32, 33. Think it not therefore strange when trouble appeareth, and the *fiery trial* cometh, *which is to try us*, 1 Pet. 4, 12. We must rejoice under the cross. All men can rejoice and be glad when they have a plentiful harvest, when they find great spoils, & when the riches of their house increase, *Psa. 4, 7*. but we must rejoice if the will of God be to prove us so far, when we suffer the spoiling of our goods, and are companions of them that are so used. To conclude, we have all need of patience, Heb. 10, 36. that we do not faint when we are rebuked. Let us therefore be always ready for affliction, & when we have suffered much, yet make preparation and provision for more, for *we have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin*, Heb. 12, 4. But we for the most part promise to our selves rest and ease, we are willing to hear of y^e *meat offering*, but we care not for *pouring wine upon it*. We would have Christ, but we would not suffer for Christ. We are willing to have him our meat, but not our cross.

13 All that are borne of the country shall do these things after this manner, in offering an Offering made by fire of a sweet savor unto the Lord.

14 And if a stranger sojourne among you, or whosoever be among you in your generations, and will offer an Offering made by fire of a sweet smelling savor unto the Lord: as ye do, so shall he do.

15 One ordinance shall be both for you of the Congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, &c.

Moses having set down sundry rites and ceremonies, showeth in these words the persons to whom they belong, & of whom they must be practiced; they belong even to the strangers & sojourners among the Israelites as well as to the Israelites themselves, namely, if they were circumcised; as it is said before touching the eating of the Passover, chapt. 9. One law is appointed for the one and the other. The doctrine is this: The members of the church (of what place & people soever they are) are one entire body, and are to be ruled by the same laws, Exod. 12, 48, 49. Eph. 1, 22. and 3, 15. & 5^a 21. Coloss. 1, 18. To this purpose it is called sometimes a body, sometimes a city, sometimes a temple, and sometimes a family. But it may be objected, if it be one body, one temple, one city, one family, how is it that we read of

many Churches: as of the Romans, of the Corinthians, and of the seven churches of Asia? I answer, there is one Church, but it hath many particular parts: as the great Sea, though it be one, yet there are many parts according to the several coasts and countries by which they run, as the Britain, the French, the Spanish, the German seas, and yet all but one sea.

The reasons. First, the ruler thereof is one God and one Lord over all, who is blessed forever. This one God hath one church, & hath prepared for it one place and one salvation, Eph. 4, 5, 6. Secondly the body, tied as it were by joints and sinews in the same: the members are diverse, but they make but one body: there is *one hope, one inheritance, one baptism, one faith*, being united by means of the ministry, Ephes. 4, 12. They have the same Sacraments, they eat one bread, and they drink of the same cup. This inward means is one Spirit, by which they walk, 1 Cor. 12, 13. Thirdly, they are ruled by one head which coupleth them together. For, *as one body can have but one head, so one head can have but one body: and though the members be many, yet the body is but one.* Col. 1, 18.

[Use 1] The Uses. First, the toleration of diverse & contrary religions is not lawful. As the church is one body, so it is to be ruled by one law; one law is appointed for all. This toleration and dispensation is like the sowing of diverse seeds together in one field, or the mingling of linen and woolen together in one garment: as if a Painter should join to the head of a man the neck of an horse, & then add to the body sundry feathers of diverse sorts, and make the picture beneath to end like a fish, what a monster would this be? So this linsy-wolsy Religion, consisting of contrary parts, & not one agreeing to another, would make the church a very monster: and it is directly contrary to the first and second commandment, and the office of the Magistrate, appointed and ordained to maintain the pure worship of God. *Ahab* and his people are reprov'd for halting with God and wavering between his opinions. *Solomon* is reprov'd for this, 1 Ki. 11. and contrariwise the best Kings, *Josiah, Hezekiah, Asa,* and *Jehoshaphat* are commended for their constant profession and perseverance in the same truth. Secondly, all monuments of idolatry and superstition must be demolished and pulled down, and idolaters should be slain. Good king are reprov'd for suffering hil-altars and Groues, & not taking them away. Besides, it is a means to overthrow church and kingdom. 1 Ki. 11, 19. If a church be corrupt in the foundation of the doctrine, and the substance of God's worship, we ought to separate from it, & not join as a member with it of the same body. This unhappy toleration is accompanied with sundry mischiefs: it showeth a coldness in God's cause, and little or no zeal in defacing the monuments of idolatry, and no hatred of them at all, being content to give the glory of God to another, which he will not have to be given. It nourisheth a serpent in the bosom, and setteth up uncertainty of faith and religion; leaveth men in a mammering what to do, and to which side to join himself, maintaineth confusion in God's worship, fostereth schisms, troubles, seditions, and rebellions among subjects, breaketh the sweet & comfortable knot of the unity and amity of brethren, and lastly bringeth danger to Prince and State. It is directly against sincere profession, Joshua 24. verse 19. 2 John. 10, 1. The Samaritans served everyone the god of his country, and so served not God at all. The Apostle saith, *There is one faith*, Ephes. 4, 5. *an house divided against it self cannot stand*, Mat. 12, 25. *Frō such separate*, 1 Tim. 6, 3.

Now let us see what may be objected in defense of toleration. First, it is said, [Object.] it giveth to everyone contentment, [Answer.] and therefore it is a safety to a commonwealth. I answer, Contentment must be given by lawful means, otherwise discontentment is better: as just war to be preferred before unjust peace. Again, *there is no true safety without God's blessing*: and as the heathen Philosopher reasoneth against communion of all things, so we may against the toleration of all religions. He taught, *That whatsoever is cared for of all, is cared for of none*: so we may say, whatsoever giveth contentment to all, giveth indeed contentment to none. Hence it is, that there are so many iars and contentions, which indeed are the ruin of a kingdom, Neh. 2, 19, 20. from 1. ver. to the 16. This was the most devilish policy of *Mahomet* to patch up his *Alchoran* with shreds of all sorts of errors, schisms, and heresies, borrowed from Jews and Gentiles, that there might be somewhat to content all persons, that so some of all sects might be allured unto that superstition.

Secondly, [Object.] the Jews warranted by the word did suffer amongst them the idolatrous Gentiles, Deut. 14, 21. Exod. 12, 44. therefore we may do the like. I answer, [Answer.] private toleration in conversation, did not allow any open profession or practice of idolatry in those Nations, Deu. 12, 1, 2, 3. Again; though they by reason of their weak estate suffered many, Deut. 7, 22. yet afterward in a perfect state we find not any. Lastly, some things were tolerated contrary to moral laws, as we see in the case of divorce for trifling causes, and of usury to strangers, which we may not now tolerate.

[Object.] Thirdly, corrupt manners in well-ordered government have had open toleration, therefore the root from whence they spring may also, which is corrupt religion, as toleration of polygamy and of usury to strangers. [Answ.] I answer: first the sequel is false, for there is great difference between manners and false worship, yea between doctrines fundamental & otherwise, 1 Cor. 3, 11, 12, 13. Secondly, touching divorce and polygamy, there is no allowance, but a permission only, Math. 19, 8. and that of usury was particular for those nations, Deut. 23, 20. Exod. 21, 1.

[Object.] Fourthly, it doeth greatly manifest, commend, and extol true religion, 1 Cor. 11, 19. I answer no otherwise then as one contrary being set to another, [Answer.] doth make the same better to be seen: and thus doth sin serve to commend the grace and mercy of God, as Rom. 5, 20. *Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*: howbeit this cometh to pass accidentally, not directly and properly.

[Object.] Fifthly, the conscience is not to be forced, therefore men should be left to themselves. I answer, [Answer.] it is lawful to force them to y^e means. Luke 14, 23. *Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled*; that by the blessing of God upon the use of the means, they may afterward willingly yield, 2 Chron. 34, 33. Ezra 10, 8. The son that answered his father, that he *would not work in his vineyard*, afterward repented and went, Matth. 21, 29. And some have been forced in the beginning to come to the word, who afterward could hardly be forced and driven from it. There is an active violence and a passive. Many are hailed to the means by violence, and come to the church as a Bear to the stake, but afterward the violent take the kingdom of God, and lay hold on it by force.

[Objection] Sixthly, all manner of wicked men and wickedness are to be left unpunished, for the tares and the wheat in one field must be let grow together until the harvest, and then they shall be separated, Mat. 13, 30. the tares shall be burned, [Answ.] the wheat shall be preserved. I answer, the scope is only to show that both good and bad are by God's decree to remain til the end of the world, to uphold the godly against that temptation, as the application or reddition (the second part of the comparison) doeth show in the exposition of it by Christ himself, Mat. 13 36, 37. The godly must not be offended at the multitude and growth of the wicked, we must never look for perfection upon the earth. This parable doeth no way touch the authority of the Magistrate, nor the discipline of y^e church, neither pleadeth pardon and impunity for malefactors, but warneth us that offenses shall never be wanting in the church to the end of the world, but it shall always be troubled with such abuses. There shall always be a mixture so long as the world standeth, and therefore we ought not to depart out of the church as schismatiks do, for the blots and blemishes that appear in it. Thus much of this parable.

Seventhly, [Objection.] every Christian Magistrate is not of power to suppress contrary religions without the ruin of his kingdom. I answer, [Answ.] we speak of such as God hath given power into their hands: whensoever God requireth it at their hands, he will enable them to perform it, and then they ought to set upon that as a special duty. Where there is no power, God accepteth the will for the deed: so that if they endeavor to restrain such and cannot, it is not their sin.

Hitherto we have spoken of false religions in general: now among all other false religions popery is one of the worst, and least of all to be tolerated in any State, or in any sort, as that which raceth the foundation of the Christian faith, and pulleth it up by the roots, as plainly appeareth by these particulars. First, it maintaineth inherent righteousness of their own, and justification by works done by themselves, & in themselves: and thereby make justification and sanctification all one, contrary to the Apostles doctrine, 1 Cor. 1, 30. & 2. Cor. 5, 21. It rejecteth and derideth the imputation of Christ's righteousness, whereby we stand righteous in the sight of God thorough his righteousness and merits imputed unto us. And hence it is, that they make his righteousness imperfect, and give a power to themselves to make satisfaction for sin by temporal punishment, and the sacrifice of the Mass. Secondly, they corrupt the worship of God in substance, by professing and practicing idolatry and worship of images, making the church an harlot, by forsaking her first husband, and bringing in more then heathenish idolatry by adoring Saints, angels, crucifixes, relics, & their breaden god, & by entertaining a mixture of Paganism and Judaism. Thirdly, the church of Rome is the church of Anti christ, therefore not of Christ: for to y^e bysh. of Rome do all the notes and properties whereby Antichrist is described in holy Scripture, agree truly, fully, solely. This will not be hard to resolve if we consider the place where we are to seek him, and where we shall find him: the time when the church was to look for him: and lastly the qualities whereby he is to be known. The seat of Antichrist is mystical Babylon: & mystical Babylon is no other thē Rome itself. For the whore of Babylon is the great city, w^c in the Apostlestime had rule and dominion over the kings of the earth, Reu. 17, 18. and this City is situated upon seven hills. Reu. 17, 9. *the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman*

sitteth: which agreeth properly to Rome, and every historian, nay every Poet almost, cal it the *city on seven hills*. Secondly, touching the time of the revealing and manifestation of Antichrist, it was foretold by the Apostle, that he should come when the Emperors were removed and taken out of the way, and when once the Empire in the west should be dissolved, then should Antichrist succeed in y^t seat, that is, in the government of Rome, 2 Thes. 2, 8. and this we see with our eyes to have long ago come to pass, that it needeth no farther inquiry. The Apostle had spokē plainly of this to the *Thessalonians* by word of mouth, & therefore forbearth to set it down in writing, lest he should bring on his own head, and on the church the needless hatred of y^e Roman monarchy; his own writing remaining as a strong evidence against himself and others. For when the Romans should read or hear that he had prophesied of the dissolution of the Roman Empire, they would soon raise persecution against him and the rest of the believers, as if they expected the ruin, & desired the downfall thereof. And this truth in all likelihood was well marked, and continued in the church from age to age, because it is generally understood of the Roman Empire and Emperor, by most of the Ancients.

Lastly, the conditions and qualities of Antichrist do bewray the same also. Now, he is plainly described by the Apostle, 2 Thess. 2, 4. yea so plainly, as if then he had been already come and revealed to the world. He is said to be an adversary opposed to Christ, yet not professed, but disguised: for under the mask and vizard of hypocrisy, he oppugneth Christ and his truth, and denieth the Lord Jesus to be that Christ, anointed to be the only King, the only Priest, and the only Prophet of the church; in all which the bishop of Rome will have a share, and communicateth them to others. This high priest is no better then an apostate, a star fallen from heaven; he lifteth up himself above all that is called God, that is, all to whom the name of God is communicated, and sitteth in the temple of God as god. Fourthly, a perfect papist, that is, such a one as acknowledgeth the Council of Trent, and is obedient to the doctrine of the Jesuits, cannot be a good subject, neither obey for conscience sake: for he believeth the Popes sentence in excommunication to be good, nay to be God's sentence: he obeys so long as pleaseth the pope and his instruments: he keepeth not promise or oath with heretics, he receiveth pardons to free from loyalty and allegiance, harboreth Seminaries, looketh for a golden day, practiseth the most devilish devices to establish popery; entertaineth conference with his Princes sworn enemies: and maintaineth that this proud prelate may depose Princes by his priestly power. Lastly, it is dāgerous to Prince and State to permit them, forasmuch as hereby they have means to work and wreak their malice: Recusants will converse with Jesuits most freely, and Jesuits shall not be kept to any good terms and behavior: whereby the secrets of the land are disclosed, home-bred foes are increased, good subjects are discouraged, and means afforded to hollow-hearted enemies, to forecast and to fortify themselves.

[Use 2] Secondly, this serveth to reprove diverse sorts that err in practice, & offend against this rule. And first of all, such as seek revenge, and thereby show themselves far from true love. To revenge wrongs is proper to God; we must not intrude upon his office, neither usurp his right Deu. 32, 35. Ro. 12, 19. Heb. 10, 30. Psal. 94, 1. Pro. 14, 29. If we practice this we work wickedness against him, and provoke him to work revenge upon our selves. Is it a small

offense for any subject to usurp the office of y^e Prince? or of the Judge in giving sentence upon any? Such usurpers are such persons against GOD. Again, it serveth to rebuke such as will not forgive; how can such persuade themselves to be members of the church, and one body with their brethrē, while they refuse to be one with them? These do make an heavy law against themselves, Mat. 6, 14, 15. & 18, 22. & 5, 44. 1 Pet. 3, 8. Thirdly, such as have no feeling of the troubles & calamities of their brethren, Heb. 13, 3. much more such as add affliction to the afflicted. The captivate Jews complain against the insolency and cruelty of the Chaldeans, Ps. 137, 3. they required of them in scorn and derision to sing in their hearing one of the songs of Zion, and made themselves merry when they saw them heavy hearted. The enemies of God and his people are vnmerciful & have no pity, Isaiah 47, 6. God reproveth for this, Psal. 102, 19.

Lastly, all members of the church should live [Use 3] in all love, peace, and concord one with another, Gen. 13. considering we are brethren; and avoid all dissention and discord. As in the natural body we see how one member is ready to aid & affect another, and stand for the good of another: so should it be in the mystical body, all should be united together. As the subjects of one Prince that belong to one kingdom, are subject to the same laws, & bound to maintain mutual peace one with another: so if God be our king, and rule in our harts by his word and Spirit: and if we belong to his kingdom, we must embrace one another in love, and endeavor *to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*. We must do *nothing through strife and vainglory*, Phil. 2.3. We must *all speak the same things, that there be no division among us*. Hatred is a fruit of the flesh, Gal. 5, 20. On the other side, to walk in love, is to walk in the spirit, and it is a fruit of the gospel. If we have never so excellent gifts, all remain unprofitable without this. Now, the way to try whether this be in us toward the brethren, is to examine it by these four rules. First, Christian love must not begin for any worldly respects, nor end for worldly respects and considerations, but principally must be for and in God. Carnal love is begun for carnal respects, and therefore soon withereth away. We must love our brethren principally, because they are the sons of God, and members of Christ. They are his brethren, and he accounteth them so: and therefore if God be our Father and Christ our brother, they also must be our brethrē. This is expressed by the Apostle, 1 John 5, 1. *Everyone that loveth him that begat, loveth him also which is begotten*, that is, whosoever loveth God the Father, loveth also the sons of God. Secondly, true Christian love must not be outward in show only, but inward in the heart, 1 John 3, 18. To love in show, is the love of *Cain toward Abel*. Thirdly, we must love those that are our enemies and hate us: for if we love them only that love us, what singular thing do we? or what reward have we? Math. 5, 46, 47. Lastly, Christian love must not be only in time of prosperity, but is chiefly tried in adversity, when most need is. This rule is set down by the Apostle *John, Whosoever hath this worlds goods, and seeth his Brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* 1 John 3, 17. And *Solomon showeth, that a friend loveth at all times, and a brother is borne for adversity*, Prov. 17, 7. In time of peace and plenty, everyone will seem a friend, but not in misery: *The poor is hated even of his own neighbor, but the rich hath many friends*, Proverbs chap. 14. verse 20. howbeit in time of need is the true friend tried.

These rules must serve for our instruction: we must love all those that are the sons of God by grace and adoption: we must love all those y^t are the brethren of Christ by faith & sanctification: we must love them inwardly in truth and in heart: we must love our enemies: and not only in their prosperity and flourishing estate, but in their greatest need, and then be assured that the love of God shall be our shield and protection.

18 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: When ye come into the land whither I bring you:

19 Then it shall be that when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an heaue offering unto the Lord.

20 Ye shall offer up a cake of the first of your dough, for an heaue offering as ye do the heaue offering of the, &c.

21 Of the first of your dough ye shall give unto the Lord, an heaue Offering in your generations.

Here is the law for the first of the dough to be offered to God. This is the same Law in effect with that often repeated touching the first fruits, Exod. 22, 29. & 23, 19. and 34, 26. Deut. 14, 23. The substance of these laws was to teach them to acknowledge from whence they enjoyed their Land, their Corn, their Wine, their Dough, and all their store that they possessed, to wit, by the mere gift and blessing of God. [Doctrine.] The doctrine from hence is this, The author and giver of all outward blessings whatsoever is God, and he alone. Whatsoever we possess, by the sole gift of God we do possess it, Isaiah 26, 12. and 45, 7. Job 21. Psal. 147, 14. James 1, 17. Ezek. 16, 17, 18, 19. Acts 17, 25.

The reasons. First, he hath made all things, and therefore they are his own by right of creation, Psal. 24, 1. & 50, 12 Rom. 12, 36. Secondly, all things are disposed by his providence being his own, for he doth all things in heaven and earth whatsoever he pleaseth, as at the first he made them, Psal. 113, 5, 6. Thirdly, we are sent unto him for our daily bread and for all temporal blessings, and are commanded to go to him in all our need, looking for them at his hands, Math. 6, 11.

This teacheth every man to be content [Use 1] with his portion whatsoever it be that God hath given to him, albeit we have less then others, yet we must consider it is GOD from whom we have it, and therefore we ought not to be discontented with it. Such as any way murmur when they have not their own mind fulfilled, are willful men and check the wisdom of God as if he were unrighteous, because he giveth not to everyone alike. This was the common sin of the Israelites, as we have often noted: we must not be like them, to *murmur as some of them murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer*. This is the mother of

unthankfulness, and robbeth him of the honor due unto him: who better knoweth what is good for us then we our selves, Phil. 4, 11.

Secondly, it is our duty whatsoever we have [Use 2] received, whether it be little or much, to use it well and employ it to good uses. The heathen man could say, We are not born for ourselves only: then much more ought we that are Christians to know and testify that we were not born for our selves, but for the church & people of God, and thereby made servants unto all. We must therefore take special care y^t we do not abuse his gifts, or wrong any of his creatures which we enjoy, for which we must give an account: inasmuch as we in wronging of them do wrong God himself the giver of them; and then we may justly fear lest he take them away, who is as well able to take them away from us, as to give them to us, yea, and he will do it. Hence it is that *Job* joineth both together; *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away*, Job 1, 21. so that we should be careful to use them to the glory of God; it is not enough that we do not abuse them, we shall be called to a reckoning for a farther duty, because we must not only abstain from evil, but do that which is good.

Thirdly, if we would have these blessings [Use 3] continued unto us, we must keep in with God, seeing he is the author of them; let us labor to serve him in righteousness and true holiness all the days of our life, Mat. 6, 33. Seek his friendship, and prefer his love and favor above all things in this world. He did make the world for such as are his friends, and not for those that are his enemies. And albeit the enemies of God have gotten a very great share of these blessings, yet they are no better then usurpers.

[Use 4] Lastly, this offering of their first fruits, was an acknowledgement that they held all from God, and they brought the same as a testimony of their thankfulness, when GOD had brought them into the Land, that they entered into houses which they built not, & fields which they sowed not, he requireth of them to bring the first of all that they had tasted unto him. The practice hereof we see taught to the people when they should come into the Land, Deut. 26, 9, 10. they must confess the benefits which they have received of him, saying, *I have brought the first fruits of the land, which thou O Lord, hast given me: and thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God, and worship before the Lord thy God.* If then we receive his blessings without the praise of his Name, we defile them, and we dishonor him, and his creatures become unclean unto us, 1 Tim. 4, 4, 5. *Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.* Of whom shall we receive our food, if we seek it not at God's hand? If the child want food and raiment, to whom shall he go but to his father? He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young Ravens which cry, Psal. 147, 9, and 104, 27, 28. And as we have our meat from him, so we must eat and drink as in the presence of God, Deut. 14, 26. If this point were well printed in our minds, and grafted in our hearts, that God is present at the Table with us, that he sitteth down with us, and riseth with us, that he cometh with us, and departeth with us, it would teach us more sobriety & moderation then it commonly used among us. The very heathen had some knowledge of this, and were altogether ignorant of it, they called *their Tables sacred*, and thought that their gods were always attendant at their meats and meals. Thus by this light of the truth shining (though darkly) among thē, God left them altogether without excuse. Woe then to us that

profess our selves Christians, if we do not learn that God is present with us at our Tables, & will take an account of us for all our words and deeds whatsoever. If a child be at the table with his father, and his father sitting at the upper end of the board have his eye evermore upon him, he will not dare to use such boldness as otherwise he would if he were absent: for then peradventure he would not stick to play his pranks, to throw his trencher under feet, and to dally as a wanton with his meat: but if he be at his fathers table, and sit at his elbow, and remain in his sight he will behave himself soberly and orderly, or else he shall be rebuked and chastised. So likewise it ought to be with us, if we did consider that God is with us in our eating and drinking, it would be of sufficient force to teach us to behave our selves reverently, and to take heed of all excess; but whether we consider it or not, we shall find in the end, that he is not far from everyone of us that abuse his creatures, to the dishonor of his Name, and to the danger of our own souls. If we do not praise God for our meats and drinks, we are no better then thieves and usurpers, (albeit otherwise they may be called our own) because God hath not wholly resigned up his right unto them, who hath created them.

22 And if ye have erred, and not observed all these commandments which the Lord hath spoken unto Moses,

23 Even all that the Lord hath commanded you by the hand of Moses from the day that the Lord commanded Moses, and thenceforth from among your generations.

24 Then it shall be, if ought be committed thorough ignorance, without the knowledge of the congregation, that all the congregation shall offer, &c.

Here we have a law set down touching the sacrifice for sins of ignorance. If the former laws were broken through error and ignorance, not willfully & of a settled purpose, the manner of cleansing the same is set down, whether it be done by the whole multitude, or by one private man. Where we see, that it may fall out, that the whole Church may err and go astray both in judgment and in practice.

Observe hereby, [Doctrine.] that the ignorance of the will and word of God, in whomsoever it be found, is a great and grievous sin against God, Levite. 4, 2. and 5, 17. Isaiah 1, 3, and 5, 13. and 27, 11. Ier. 10, 25. Luke 12, 48. The Prophet *Hosea* complaineth, that there was no knowledge of God in the Land, chap. 4, ver. 2. They were delivered out of Egypt, planted in a fruitful land, furnished with all commodities, he gave them his word and sacraments, he dealt not so with every Nation, Psal. 147, 20. yet they had no knowledge of his ways, nay they regarded not the knowledge of his ways. This is a foul sin to hate the light, and yet to live in darkness, and to love darkness more then the light, Ier. 4, 22. *They were foolish and knew him not, they were foolish children and had no understanding, they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.*

The grounds of this doctrine are evident. [Reason 1] For first, all the corruption that befell us thorough the fall and disobedience of *Adam*, is sin: therefore ignorance and blindness of

mind being a part of that corruption, must needs also be sin; the natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Corinth. 2, ver. 14.

Secondly, ignorance is contrary unto the [Reason 2] image of God, wherein at the first we were created, and therefore it must needs follow that it is sin. Now a part of God's image in man, was knowledge, Col. 3, 10. as well as holiness and righteousness, Eph. 4, 24. Ignorance therefore being contrary and opposite to this, must needs be sin.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, that for which Christ died to abolish and take away, must needs be sin, for wherefore died he, but *for our sins?* but he suffered even for our errors in life, & for our ignorances; which was represented by this, that *every high Priest taken from among men, had compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity*, Heb. 5, 2. and *he entered into the holiest of all once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people*, chap. 9, 7.

[Reason 4] Fourthly, as knowledge is the beginning and foundation of all piety and obedience: so ignorance is the mother and root of all error, evil, wickedness, and profaneness, Math. 22, 29. *Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God:* and therefore it cannot be but displeasing unto God, Psalm. 94, verse 10.

[Use 1] This teacheth the folly of many men in our times, who think that ignorance shall excuse them; they regard not to learn or know anything, and then think themselves excused, because they know not. These are willingly, nay willfully ignorant, 2 Pet. 3, 5. They know nothing, because they will know nothing, like to him that shutteth both his eyes, because he will not see the light. But this cannot shield and shelter them from the judgments of God and from his heavy wrath, 2, Thess. 1, 8. who will come to render vengeance in flames of fire unto such as have not known the Gospel. We have the word of God among us, and we hear the sound of it, yet few or none at all care to get knowledge and understanding by it. This is a most fearful kind of ignorance, and a great measure of sin. Ignorance is twofold, simple, and affected; and both condemned, and both shall receive vengeance and judgment. The simple, is when we have not the means, and so have not that knowledge which we ought to have: for *he that sinneth without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law*, Rom. 2, ver. 12. This is a fruit of our original corruption, & taketh hold upon all, and is sufficient to condemn the very Turks and Infidels: because, not only to be ignorant of that which we have means to know, but to be ignorant of that which we ought to know, is a sin. Some things we may be ignorant of, without sin: nay, Christ our Savior as he is man, knoweth not all things, Math. 24, 36. Mark. 13, 32. Secret things belong not unto us, but unto the Lord, Deut. 29, verse 29. But the things revealed belong to us and to our children to do them; and to be ignorant of any of these, is a sin in the sight of God. Affected ignorance is, when we have the light of the truth shining in our faces, but we shut our eyes against it, lest it should shine into our hearts: and this is our case. We have the word, we may read it or hear it read, we have it preached, and other means of knowledge offered unto us, therefore all such are left without excuse. It shall not excuse a subject when he hath broken some penal statute, to say, Alas, I knew not the law, I was utterly ignorant of it, I never heard in all my life of any such matter. For the law is

passed, printed, and published, and thou must take knowledge of it. Every man at his own peril must look to it, and if he run in danger of it, it is his own fault: so we may say of the law of God. He hath set it forth to the view of all, and all must make enquiry after it at their uttermost peril.

If then the Turks and Sarazens, if the Infidels and Barbarians that want the means, shall not be excused at the day of judgment by their ignorance, how shall we think to escape that have had the means? And so doth the Lord tell them of Corazin and Bethsaida, and denounceth a fearful woe against Capernaum, because they had much mercy shown unto them, & yet never regarded the same, and therefore telleth them, that it should be easier for *Tyre and Sidon*, yea for *Sodom and Gomorrah* in the day of judgment, Math. 11, 21, 23, 24.

Secondly, woe to our times, woe to the age [Use 2] wherein we live: for little knowledge resteth in the hearts of the greatest part. They know nothing of God, of his nature, of his essential properties, of the Trinity, of the Law, of the Gospel, what faith is, what justification, or repentance. They are ignorant how to worship God, though they be often taught: they remain ever the same men, ever ignorant: ever learning, but never coming to the knowledge of the truth. Two chief causes there are of this, the one in the mind, the other in the will. In the mind, impotency of understanding, they are dull to conceive the things of the Spirit. The wisdom of God is foolishness to them, as man's wisdom is foolishness to God, 1 Cor. 2. The other is in the will, they savor the things of the flesh wholly, they find no sweetness in the word, their hearts are put out of taste by worldly things. These, as they that are evil and blind by nature, so are they become worse by nurture and education, they are nuzled in ignorance all their youth, & for the most part all their life: parents be generally ignorant themselves, and no care is in them to have them instructed. *Solomon saith, Teach a child, or train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it*, Prov. 22, 6. He will both sooner apprehend it, and better keep that which is taught him. If this time be passed over, it is harder to learn afterward; the eyes being blinded and filled with the dust of earthly things, can discern nothing; and when such come to age, they utterly despise the things that belong to a better life. It is with us as it was with the Land of Egypt, it was overspread with darkness, only a small part, where the children of Israel were, being excepted: so hath ignorance overspread y^e greatest part of our land. For look upon very many places, they lie waste as a wilderness for want of builders, the harvest is great, but there is great want of Laborers to gather together the corn, Mat. 9, 37. They have blind guides set over them, that can do nothing to the sheep but fleece them, & they can say nothing to them, but Bring ye, or pay ye. If we cast our eyes upon such places as have able Teachers over them, having gifts sufficient to instruct them, yet many of them are idle without care and conscience of their duties: is it then to be wondered at, that the land is full of ignorance and empty of knowledge? Again, in such places where are able Ministers and willing to take any pains amongst the people according to the measure of grace afforded unto them, yet even there you shall find little or no knowledge at all; and where they have bread enough, they starve themselves and perish for hunger; and where they may have plenty they live in penury and misery, and want of all things. They have meat and drink offered unto them, but they will not reach out their hand to take the same, like to the

sluggard, that *hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again*, Prov. 19, 24. Many there are, that do manifestly and openly oppose themselves against knowledge, and set themselves against seeking after it so far as they can or dare. This plainly showeth, that indeed they never had any true knowledge at all: and others albeit they do not directly oppose themselves against knowledge, yet in the mean season (which is all one) they have no love of it, neither any holy desire to come to knowledge. If we consider farther how empty our churches and seats are, it will appear that our ignorance must needs be very great. For how should such careless & rechesse persons have knowledge? I am persuaded, if these were well and thoroughly examined, they would be found beyond all measure blind and sottish, old and ignorant, worse then infants and little children. Knowledge of God is not natural, it is not borne and bred in us and with us: neither is it to be gotten in our days by extraordinary means: seeing therefore they use not the ordinary, it followeth that they are destitute of knowledge.

Another reason why men are so drowned in the sea of ignorance, is because though they hear much, yet they digest little or nothing at all: like to him that seeth meat before him but tasteth none of it. In the body, he that eateth much and digesteth nothing, cannot have his health, nor prosper: so is it in the soul; it may be these will hear two or three times in a quarter, but they never make conscience to meditate on that which they have heard, but let that slip which they have learned, and so indeed are never bettered by that which they hear.

Another reason why so much ignorance is among men, is, because they want exercising of themselves in the Scriptures: they apply themselves to no constant reading of them, or reasoning and conferring about them; and therefore it is not possible for them to have any sound and well-grounded knowledge in them at all. The Ministers may wast themselves like lights in the Tabernacle, yet these people will never attain to any knowledge. Some allege, that their callings are such as they give them no leisure to attend the Scriptures, or to spend any time in reading. But it seemeth strange to me, that men should find a time for all other business under the Sun, and yet not find any time to further their own salvation. How monstrous a thing is it, that they have time enough and enough for the body, but can find none at all for their souls? They can find time and leisure to provide wealth for themselves and their children, and yet carry poor starueling souls to the grave, suffering them from time to time to languish and to perish for want of nourishment. As these live in darkness and ignorance upon earth, so it shall be just with God to thrust them into utter darkness in hell.

But it may be objected, [Objection.] that the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 8, 2. *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth*. I answer, [Answ.] the Apostle meaneth a false persuasion of knowledge, whereby a man thinketh he hath some great matter in him: & therefore he addeth in the next words, Verse 2. *If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know*. If knowledge puff up any, the fault is in the person or vain persuasion of the person, not in the gift of God. We must know therefore that the Scriptures belong to all, and that the knowledge of them is necessary to all. And who may exempt themselves from them? or who shall say, they belong not unto him? Shall Kings and Princes, and such as sit in the throne? No, though they have a multitude of business waiting upon them; and are many

ways disturbed and distracted by State affairs, yet they must have the law of God with them, & read in it all the days of their life, that they may learn to fear the Lord their God, Deut. 17.18.19. Shall Captains and Governors in war and peace? No, for was not *Joshua* such an one? yet the *Book of the Law* must not depart out of his mouth, but he must meditate therein day and night, &c. For that he might make his way prosperous, and have good success, Josh. 1.8. Shall Noblemen and Gentlemen exempt themselves? No, not they neither: for the Eunuch a man of great authority under *Candace* Queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, while he was in his chariot, read the prophesy of *Isaiah*, to further himself thereby in knowledge, Acts 8, 27.28. and 17.11: also the Noblemen of *Berca* searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so which the Apostles preached. Who then may think themselves discharged? May the Ministers? No, they should be men of knowledge, and give attendance to reading above others, 1. Tim. 4, 13. May the people? No, it is a general precept given by Christ to them, to *search the Scriptures*, John 5, 39. and yet no doubt many among them were poor, and tradesmen: so Psal. 1, 2. Col. 3, 16. May such as are weak in judgment, and simple witted? No, the law of God was written to give wisdom to the simple, Psal. 19, 7: and the Proverbs were penned to give subtlety to the simple, and to the young man knowledge and discretion, Prov. 1, v. 4. May the young man defer the matter until age? No, he must season his young years with the knowledge of the Scriptures, Psal. 119, 9. 2 Tim. 3, 15. May they that are rich and wealthy be privileged from this? No, *Abraham* saith of the brethren of the rich man, *They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them*, Lu. 16, 29. It is in vain to be rich in the world, and not to have the word also to dwell richly in them, that so they may be rich in God. May women be freed frō this duty? No, the grandmother & the mother of *Timothy* taught him & trained him up in the Scriptures of a child, which could not be, if themselves had been without knowledge, 2 Tim. 1, 5. So then we may conclude, that all which live in y^e Church, and would be accounted members of the Church, whether they be Princes or subjects, Ministers or people, noble or vnnoble, high or low, learned or unlearned, young or old, rich or poor, masters or servants, men or women, one or other, all I say, ought to be endued with the knowledge of the ways of God.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it teacheth everyone of us to examine himself and his own heart, how far he is guilty of this sin of ignorance. It is the first degree or step of knowledge, for a man to know and acknowledge his own ignorance. For till we come to this to find our selves to live in ignorance, and to mourn and lament for it, it is impossible for us ever to attain to sound and perfect knowledge. [Object.] But some will say, How shall we attain to this knowledge which you speak of? [Answer.] I answer, the way is to exercise our selves in the reading of the Scriptures. He that would have water, must draw it out of the well: and he that would have knowledge, must draw it out of the fountain of the Scriptures. This doth Christ often point unto, in the Evangelists, stirring up men to read, and reprovng those that would not: as Math. 12, ver. 3. he said to the Pharisees, *Have ye not read what David did?* and verse 5. *Have ye not read in the Law?* and cha. 19, 4. likewise he said to the chief Priests & Scribes, *Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise*, Math. 21, 16. Psal. 8, 2. and verse 42. he said, *Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders refused, the same is become the head of the corner?* and chap. 22, 3. he said to the Sadducees touching the

resurrection from the dead, *Have ye not read that which was spoken of God?* So he speaketh to him that asked what he should do to inherit eternal life, Luk. 10, 26. *What is written in the Law? how readest thou?* And Abraham saith to the rich glutton, *They have Moses & the Prophets, they have their writings among them.* And speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, *Who so readeth let him understand,* Math. 24, 15. The contrary, when we do not and will not read and obey this commandment so often repeated and vehemently urged, is the cause of error and heresy, of evil, of discomfort, and of all profaneness, Acts 13, 27. Mark. 12, 24.

Secondly, such as would have the true and saving knowledge, must first of all lay before him the grounds and principles of Christian religion: otherwise whatsoever he knoweth, he shall know nothing as he ought to know, like him that would build without a foundation, Heb. 6, 1.

Thirdly, earnest prayer to God for the help of his holy Spirit to assist him, and to teach him how to profit aright by the reading of the Scriptures. For he that is the author of them, best knoweth how to give us understanding to edify our selves by them in our most holy faith. And hereby we shall learn more then such as only meddle with the Scriptures, and never practice this duty of prayer, neither crave a blessing of him upon their labors.

Lastly, conference with others, to minister help and comfort one to another. This did the two Disciples use going to *Emmaus, who talked together of all those things which had happened touching Christ:* they reasoned of his passion and suffering, and they are farther instructed in the truth of the matter, and in the understanding of the Scriptures. This was the blessing of God upon their practicing & performing of this duty. If we reason soberly & reverently, Christ Jesus will come among us, and be present with us by the grace of his Spirit, and by his blessing of our endeavors, which ought to be an encouragement to the same.

30 But the soul that doth ought presumptuously, whether he be borne in the Land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from his people,

31 Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off: his iniquity shall be upon him.

Hitherto we have spoken of the sin of ignorance: now of presumption and voluntary sins, which are said in the original to be committed *with an high hand*, that is, proudly, scornfully, arrogantly, despitefully, and desperately against God. And therefore it is said, that *he reproacheth the Lord, and hath broken his covenant*, such a one must be cut off from his people. This cutting off for iniquity, some understand of excommunication by the censure of the Church; others, of killing by the sword of the Magistrate: but which way soever it be taken, it showeth the greatness of this crime. And because there is no kind of sacrifice set down for the expiation of this sin, some do hold, that it figureth out the sin against the holy Ghost, which sin being unpardonable, Math. 12, 32. 1 John. 5, 16, there remaineth no sacrifice for it, but a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries, Heb. 10, 26, 27. Howbeit, I rather think, that no sacrifice is expressed, because there is no new addition prescribed touching any sacrifice, as there is of the other, because

this is already handled in the book of Leviticus, chap. 6, 2, &c. And this sin is opposed against the sin of ignorance: but all sins of presumption are not the sin against the holy Ghost. God forbid, we should so entangle men's consciences, and hold all presumptuous sins to be *that unpardonable sin*. Neither can I be of their opinion, that think God would have no sacrifice offered for such sins, lest the sacrifices should wax vile and contemptible, and men should thereby be encouraged to give themselves over to commit sin with greediness, and never regard whether they sin ignorantly or presumptuously. It is no encouragement to sin of ignorance, because the means is set down to be cleansed of it. And who will willingly wound himself, albeit he have a Physician that can cure it?

From hence we may gather a difference between sin and sin: all break the law and deserve eternal death, Ezek. 18, 4. Rom. 6, 23. Nevertheless some are greater and some are lesser. There are therefore of sins sundry sorts, Jude, verse 22, 23. Hence it is, that sin is divided diverse ways; either it is original, which we draw from our parents, and bring with us into the world: this is an hereditary sin, it is the inheritance that all parents bequeathe unto their children, as Psal. 51, 5. Ro. 5, 14. Or else it is actual, which is a fruit of the former; such are evil thoughts, words, and works, such as agree not with the law of God. This distinction is proved, Rom. 5, 14, and 7, 20. and 9.11. Again, there is a raging and reigning sin, when the sinner maketh no resistance by the grace of the Spirit, Rom. 6, 12, and 1 John 3, 8. *He that committeth sin*, to wit, of set purpose, and delighteth therein, *is of the devil*: it is so called, because we foster and cherish it, and become bondslaves unto it, and likewise because it hath rule over man, & carrieth him headlong to destruction. Such are all sins in the unregenerate, and so continue till there be a new birth; and some also in the regenerate in their slidings and fallings against their conscience: and there is also a sin not reigning, which the sinner repelleth and resisteth by the grace of the Spirit, & daily reneweth his repentance for them. Such are the sins of ignorance, omission, and infirmity which remain in the regenerate so long as they live, which they acknowledge, bewail, hate, and resist, and pray daily that they may be forgiven them, saying, *Forgive us our debts*, 1 John 1, 8. Rom. 7, 17, and 8, 1. Many other such differences of sins might be noted, but these are sufficient to show that there is difference between sin and sin.

And no marvel, because the commandments [Reason 1] of God are not alike, but some are greter and some lesser. The laws of the first Table are called, *the first and great commandment*, Math. 22, 38, and do concern the Lord himself. The laws of the second are inferior to these, as they that concern our brethren like to our selves.

Secondly, there is great difference in the [Reason 2] manner of sinning; some sin ignorantly, some wittingly, Psal. 19, 12, 13. 1 Tim. 1, 13. Some are principal and ringleaders in the sin, others are only accessories; some are only in thought, others in deed; some offend of malice, some offend of weakness; some commit sin; others, besides this, have pleasure in them that do them, Rom. 1, 32.

Thirdly, in respect of God himself, all sins [Reason 3] do not alike dishonor him, neither is his wrath kindled alike against all; some are desperate sinners that will not be reclaimed, and

despite the Spirit of grace, with whom the Lord cannot but be more offended then with such as are humbled for their sin.

This difference serveth to condemn such [Use 1] as make all sins equal, none greater or lesser then others, none before or after other. True it is, the Church of Rome lay this error to our charge (as also they falsely do many other) as if we were of the sect of the Stoics, holding an absurd opinion touching y^t absurd doctrine of the equality of all sins: which showeth that they are far spent and drawn dry, and cannot charge us with true crimes, when they are constrained to object against us such gross opinions as we detest and condemn, & have confuted more then they, both in Schools and Pulpets. What errors and heresies, think you, will these men be afraid to broch against us among their own disciples, that take up all things upon trust at the second hand? and what imputations will they not dare to lay upon us in their Sermons, which they know shall never come to be examined (forasmuch as their hearers are forbidden to read any of our writings) when they blush not, neither are ashamed to publish to the view of the whole world such open and manifest untruths?

[Object.] But they object, that we teach all sins to be mortal and to deserve death, even the least of them. [Answer.] I answer, we teach no other doctrine then the Scripture teacheth us, Rom. 6, 21, 23. I am. 2, 10. Nevertheless it followeth not by any good consequent, that though every sin in God's justice be adjudged worthy of eternal death, that therefore it doth equally deserve it. See more of this, chap. 19.

[Use 2] Secondly, from this doctrine received, it followeth, that the punishments of hell are diverse also, according to the different desert of sin, Luk. 12, 47, 48. Math. 23, 15, and 11, 22, 24. They that break the law and teach others to do the like, are twofold more the children of hell then others. They are the children of hell that transgress the law, but they that lay a stumbling block before others, and draw them out of the way, are guilty of a farther sin, and consequently of a greater punishment. Sodom shall be cast into hell, but Capernaum shall descend deeper and suffer more. This must we lay to our hearts, forasmuch as we are like to Capernaum not to Sodom. Every man must receive at the last day according to his evil works: but God's judgments should not be right, if he did judge sins to be equal, and punish sins equally. On the other side, we may conclude, that there are degrees of glory in the kingdom of heaven; which serveth to stir us up to labor to out-go and out-strippe others, considering that we shall receive a greater reward. It is a point serving to animate and encourage all men in well-doing, to know that the Magistrate shall receive according to his care, the Minister according to his pains, and everyone according to his duty and obedience in the life to come.

[Use 3] Lastly, hence is a direction for Magistrates, seeing offenses are different, there ought to be a difference in punishment of malefactors. All laws should not be written with blood, neither all punishments take away life. But if lesser sins should be punished sharply, & great more remissly, it were against the rule of reason and the law of equity. Hence it is, that Christ teacheth, that among the Courts of the Jews, they always punished according to the quality of the offense, and did not make an equality among offenders, Mat. 5, verse 22.

[Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his covenant, &c.] Here is the description of this sin: whereby we see whereunto it tendeth being once entertained.

[Doctrine.] We learn from hence, that men are come to the height of sin, when they commit sin boldly and boastingly, proudly, and presumptuously, Isaiah 3, 9. Numb. 25, 6. 1 Sam. 16, 22. Ier. 3, 3. Prov. 2, 14. The reasons.

[Reason 1] For this manner of sinning is without any sign of grace, & is done in contempt of God and his laws, as we see in this place.

[Reason 2] Secondly, this kind of sinning doth cry to heaven and calleth down judgment, so that he cannot but punish it severely, Gen. 18, ver. 20, 21.

This reproveth the sins of our times, for *[Use 1]* as we live in the light of grace, so we are come to the light of sin, because some maintain sin, and others brag & boast of those sins that they have committed, and greatly delight in them, Psal. 52, 3, 4. Isaiah 1, 23. 2 Pet. 2, 15. The sin of these men is so much the greater, because here we have the coupling and combining of two sins together, sin and the love of sin. Where there are two strong poisons mixed together, there the party is in great danger that drinketh of that potion: so it is in this case, two sins being joined in one, sin, & impudency in sinning, that person is much more guilty. This boldness and impudency is also accompanied with impenitency, for certainly, he that sinneth with an high hand and with a proud heart, cannot repent and leave his sin, he cannot be sorry for it and turn unto God, but lieth under a great measure and degree of evil.

Secondly, let such as are guilty of these bold *[Use 2]* and presumptuous sins, break them off by true repentance and by reforming such as are committed to their charge. For every sin must be repented off: but greater sins must have greater repentance for them: therefore we should labor to repent of all, whether they be moe or few, greater or less, once committed or often, that so God may pass by us whē his judgments run through the world. Take heed therefore of presumptuous sins. Some are suddenly overtaken, these sin, but not so greatly as they that run willfully and violently into evil. It is an evil to take the Name of God in vain, though it be in heat and in haste howsoever; but it is worse to swear and blaspheme in cold blood, in common talk, & that without remorse. The corrupt affection in these is worse then the action of sin. Such as once fall into drunkenness cannot be excused; but they sin doubly and trebly that delight in drunkenness, & haunt drunken houses, and keep drunken company, and nourish all occasions to bring themselves to commit sin upon sin. So it may be said, touching the breach of the Sabbath, he sinneth that pretendeth some necessity of some great business, and that he is unwilling to absent himself frō the house of God, and doth it sildome; but he that maketh a common practice of profaning the Lord's day, sometimes by saying at home in his chamber, sometimes by walking abroad in his fields, sometimes by lying in an alehouse, sometimes by sitting at tables & cards, do offend much more and come into the number of presumptuous sinners. *[Object.]* But some peradventure will ask the question, How may a man know whether he sin with an high hand, whether he be come to the height of sin, to sin presumptuously? To this I answer: *[Answ.]* it is no hard matter to discern thy estate by these notes.

First, whosoever disliketh and hateth the word of God, may justly fear and suspect himself. For he that cannot patiently endure to read it, or to hear it read or preached, because it layeth open his sin, and as a true glass maketh his corruptions manifestly to appear, he certainly is a bold and presumptuous sinner. So long as a man is content to submit himself to God's ordinance, and to be willing to hear his sins reprov'd, so long there is hope of such a sinner. Again, they sin purposely, and proudly, and presumptuously, that are offended either with the Minister or with a private friend that reproveth him for his sins. These are lovers of their sins and are resolved to dwell in them, because they hate those that love them, and out of love admonish them of their evil ways. And if peradventure they have failed in the manner of their reproof, these by & by conceive that they have sinned more in reprov'g, then themselves in committing the act it self. Thirdly, they are passing apace to the height of sin, that excuse and lessen their sins, or else defend them: such as say, it is no such great matter that they have done. Lastly, they are grievous sinners sapped in them, that make no use of the crosses and afflictions that God sendeth upon them: that are no whit bettered, or reformed, or humbled by his judgments.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is our duty to pray unto God that we may be kept and preserved from this high measure of sin, Psal. 19, 13. The Prophet prayeth to the Lord to *keep him from presumptuous sins*. This showeth to us, that we are ready to fall into them. And what do they but publish this as with a loud voice, that cry out that God is merciful, and thereupon take occasion to go forward, presuming of his mercy? We should be careful to beg from God his grace, that we may resist sin in the beginning, lest *our hearts be hardened by it*, Heb. 3, 13, and we thereby be drawn in the end to make no conscience of sin. If any ask how we may know, whether we be willing to leave sin and resist it in the beginning? I answer, we may examine our selves by the contrary rules to the former. If a man make the law of God his delight, and can therefore love it, & make much of it, because it maketh his sins manifest unto himself, he certainly is no lover of his sins. Thus it was with *Hezekiah*, when he had received an heavy threatening of an heavy judgment from the mouth of God, he submitted himself, and said to the Prophet, *The word of the Lord is good, which thou hast spoken*. Secondly, he loveth not his sins that loveth him that reproveth him for his sins. He that embraceth that Minister or that brother that telleth him of his corruptions, certainly he is not determin'd to embrace and entertain his sins. Thirdly, he that is so far from excusing of his sins, that he is ready to accuse himself; and he that is so far from defending and maintaining them, that he laboreth to reconcile himself to God, and to have a clear conscience toward God and man, he doubtless shall not need to fear to come to the height of sin. Lastly, he declareth that he is not besotted with the love of his sins, that loveth God that chastiseth him, even for his chastisements sake: who, so soon as any cross befalleth unto him, presently runneth home to his own heart, and condemneth his sin, and judgeth himself, and layeth all upon himself, as justly befallen him for his sins. If these things be found in us, we may rejoice and be glad, that albeit we cannot but commit the act of sin, yet we keep our hearts and souls from delighting in sin and the affecting thereof. Thus we may acquit our selves of a great deal of the guilt of sin, albeit not of the outward act it self, by seeking the asswaging and lessening of it.

32 And while the children of Israel were in the Wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks on the Sabbath day.

33 And they that found him gathering sticks, brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the Congregation.

Here followeth an example of God's judgment upon him that gathered sticks on the Sabbath day. This is not to be considered in it self only, but as it dependeth upon the words immediately going before, as a reason or an example of that law, that whosoever doth anything presumptuously or with an high hand, shall die the death: and albeit it be set down after it, yet I take it to have been done before it. The Israelites had found out a man that had sinned, not of ignorance, or one that gathered sticks upon necessity, but they said to *Moses*, as the Pharisees did to Christ, touching the woman taken in adultery; *We found her in the very act*; so did they take this breaker of the Sabbath, in the very act of gathering sticks, who rushed desperately against the law, as a Ship that dasheth it self in pieces against a Rock, for he sinned in contempt of God and his ordinances. The Lord had delivered his law to all Israel, and repeated the same again, he had commanded it carefully to be kept, and *none to go out of his place to gather Manna upon that day*, *Exod. 16, 29*. The observation of this day was the establishing of the whole law, and the breach of it, a destroying of the whole worship of God. This did this wicked person know well enough, but he nevertheless would go out of his place. God hath said, they should not kindle a fire throughout their generations that day, neither could he be ignorant of it, yet he would kindle a fire to provoke God to anger against him. In this we see his sin, and the manner of it, he is brought to *Moses*, and is put in ward. *Moses* asketh counsel of God, what should be done with him: God appointeth him for examples sake, to be stoned to death, which is done accordingly. [Object.] But this may seem a small offense, he did not bear any great burden on the Sabbath, nor labor in the works of his calling, neither offend in any great matter, he did only gather a bundle of sticks and that (as it should seem) but once, he did not make any practice of it, [Answer.] I answer, we must consider, not only the deed done, but also the manner of doing; he did it to despise and despite God, a sin in whomsoever, worthy of no less punishment then death it self.

[Doctrine.] We learn from hence, that every sin is so much the greater, by how much less the thing is for which men sin. I say, the less the thing is for which a man will sin and transgress the law of God, the greater always is his sin. A man would think it nothing to pick up a few sticks, but the less it was, the greater was his contempt of God, that he would run into the breach of the law, and provoke the wrath of God for it. Thus we might speak of the sin of our first parents: God tried their obedience in abstaining from the fruit of one tree, & yet they would taste thereof, and thereby ruined themselves and all their posterity. The matter wherein they sinned, was small, but the sin thereby was made the greater. *Esau* is noted in holy Scripture for his profaneness, w^c was shown in this, that *for one mess of broth he sold his birthright*, *Gen. 25, 33*. *Heb. 12, 16*. So is it spoken of *Judas*, that for thirty shekels he sold his Master, and betrayed the Lord of life into the hands of sinners, *Mat. 26, 15*. & *27, 5*. A goodly

price at which he (that is God of heaven and earth, & heir of all things) was valued, saith the Prophet *Zacharias*, ch. 11, 13. The less the reward was, the greater was his iniquity: for thereby he made it manifest at how vile, how base and small a price our Lord Jesus Christ the Savior of the world was valued & esteemed by him. The like we might say of the sin of the Jews, when they denied the holy one and the just, & desired a murderer to be granted unto them at such time as *Pilate* was determined to let him go, Acts 3, 13, 14. They weighed him & *Barabbas* together in the balance, & they preferred him that was a thief & a robber, John 18, 40. a seditious fellow, Lu. 23, 25. who had also committed murder in the insurrection, Mar. 15, 6. Him I say, they preferred before the Lord Jesus. This might farther be proved out of other places, which I only point out, Prov. 28, 21. Ezek. 13, 19. Amos 2, 6. The reasons.

[Reason 1] First, this argueth plainly to their faces, that such persons are destitute of the fear of God and man, that they dare sin and dishonor God for so small and abject a thing. The smaller the thing is, the greater is the contempt. There are commonly two things that draw men to sin, either the fear of some evil that they would avoid, or else desire of some good that they would enjoy. Now doubtless there is but a small measure of the grace of GOD, whensoever men are drawn to transgress for such slight and slender occasions: Secondly, [Reason 2] it argueth a man's heart to be most corrupt, when he will not stick to sin and offend God for a small thing, and it warranteth others to judge the same man to be very wicked, and to presume he will much rather sin and much more offend for a greater thing, that is so easily brought to commit sin for every trifle of little or no value. He that will pervert justice for a few morsels of bread, will sooner do it for many pieces of gold: and they that will sell the poor for a pair of shoes, will make no bones to do it for a brace of angels. The uses follow.

This convinceth many, that they live under [Use 1] a greater guilt of sin then they are aware of, for they have an erroneous judgment of themselves; they think the less the matter is wherein they sin, the less is their sin, whereas indeed it is for the most part the quite contrary, for the less the thing is for which we choose to sin, the greater is our sin. He that will lie and face, swear & forswear for a small thing, and upon every occasion, certainly God will judge him more severely for it, then he will do those that have had some greater cause to do it, albeit no cause can excuse it wholly. So for a man to rob another, where are but small things to be had, he offendeth more thē others that rob for great store of gold and silver: and the reason is, because it argueth greater contempt of God, and lesser regard of his displeasure and of his law, it bewrayeth greater corruption of his heart, and less love of justice and righteousness: and besides, though he took but little, yet he would have takē more, if more had been to be taken, according to the saying of our Savior, *He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much*, Lu. 16, 10. Again, many a man doth abuse the Sabbath day (which is the point here in question) by walking abroad in the fields, or by following his base pleasures, perhaps he lieth asleep at home, or goeth to the alehouse, or sitteth at cards; such a one worketh not with his hands in his calling, he goeth not to plough, he doth not buy and sell, n••ertheles he offendeth God more, and his heart is more corrupt then he that walketh and worketh in his calling for his necessity.

But it may be objected, [Object.] that then a man were as good offend and transgress for great things as for small. To this I answer, [Answ.] that it is an evil and false consequent: he that so reasoneth, declareth himself to be most corrupt & sinful: for whether a man sin for much or for little, he provoketh God against himself both ways, and therefore both are to be shunned. Everyone in his several place ought rather to reason thus, I may sin against God and offend him in a small thing as well as in a great, and oftentimes move him unto anger more in a smaller than in a greater, therefore I will make conscience of both, I will avoid all kind of evil, I will walk uprightly; and work righteousness in his sight. So shall we be sure to reap the benefit and comfort of it here after in the life to come.

[Use 2] Secondly, it admonisheth everyone of us that we should labor to have such good hearts so sanctified, that not the greatest provocations of pleasure, of profit, of honor, of sin, or anything whatsoever should provoke us to sin; if not the greatest, then not the less; and if not the less, then not the least of all. For as he that withstandeth the greatest evils, showeth himself to have the greatest measure of grace: so he that is persuaded and provoked by small things to sin, it argueth him to have the greater corruption and hardness of heart, and therefore though we cannot be without sin, (*for there is no man that sinneth not,*) yet we should labor to make our sins the less sinful, and our selves the less sinners: which we shall do, if we take heed we be not provoked to sin by small things of little value. Whosoever will sin for a little, he may despair with himself of any great matter, and may well think that he shall never be able to restrain himself to any purpose, but in short time he shall be brought to sin in far greater things. It is the policy of Satan to be content to draw men only to little sins, and to let them continue long in them: for he is that old and subtle serpent, that knoweth there is more danger for the most part in little sins than in greater sins. A mote is not perceived in the eye, whē a great beam cannot be hid: and though a mote be discerned, yet because it is little, it is let alone, the danger of it is thought to be little or nothing. Touching great sins, all men will readily acknowledge and confess them to be sins; whereas little sins make them think them to be no sins, or that they may safely suffer them to remain & continue in them without any danger. Hence it is, that men are so much given to flatter themselves and to think all is well with them, because they find others tainted with greater sins than themselves, as it was with the Pharisee, Luke 18, whereas an enemy neglected and contemned, doth oftentimes more hurt than such a one as we are more watchful over.

[Use 3] Lastly, it reproveth those that give scope and liberty to themselves to follow some sins, because they are little in their eyes. Hence it is, that *Solomon* bringeth in the sluggard, saying, *A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep*, Prov. 6, 10. and 24, 33. So it is with every sinner, he crieth out, a little more sin, a little more evil; the young man, a little more daliance; the covetous person, a little more riches and care: the oppressor, a little more wrong: the blasphemer, one oath more: the drunkard crieth for a little more drink, one pot more is not so much: that is, they persuade themselves they may live in these sins because they are little, or they may add some little more to them without any great danger. But many a little maketh a great deal, every drop of rain helpeth to make the flood, and every corn to fill up the measure; and as a little spark kindleth much wood and maketh a

great fire: so a little added to sin, and to that little a little more, maketh the sin to be exceeding sinful, and the sinner a great sinner before the LORD our GOD.

Moreover, we must understand that God forbiddeth the least sins as well as the greatest; and the Prophet reproveth the hypocrites of his time, who though they would not eat of polluted or unclean flesh, *yet the broth thereof was found in their vessels, Isaiah 65, 4:* and the Apostle delivereth this precept, *Abstain from all appearance of evil, 1 Thess. 5, 22.* If Satan can draw Cain to hate his brother, he will quickly draw him to kill him. If he can entice Achan to *covet the silver and gold which he saw*, it will not be long before he move him to take them away; and therefore in the confession of his sin he joineth them together, *I coveted and conveyed them away.* The Cockatrice eggs are venomous and hurtful, not only to eat, but to tread upon them, and to be sprinkled with them, Isaiah 59, 5. So the least meddling with evil is contagious and bringeth infection. Therefore the Apostle willeth *to hate the very garment spotted with the flesh, Jude, ver. 23.* The smallest sins are to be shunned. Our first parents were forbidden not only to eat of the forbidden fruit, but to touch it, as appeareth by the confession of the woman. It behooveth us therefore to labor for spiritual wisdom that we may be able to see his policy, and for spiritual strength to withstand his strength and provocations, and by these two helps we shall be sure to keep our selves free from the guilt of many sins. And that we may the better do so, two things are required of us most necessary for this purpose, the fear of God and the love of God. If we get into our hearts the fear of God, *who can destroy both body and soul in hell*, we shall easily overcome all other fear of evil, the greater will prevail over the less; neither the smallest nor the greatest delights and desires of the world, shall cause us to offend him, nor provoke us or prevail with us to cause us to sin against him, because his fear doth keep and restrain us. But, where the fear of God is not, there is an easy lapse into all evil, Gen. 20, 11.

Again, we must have the love of God in us. This will cause us to love him better than our selves, and make us loath to offend him though we might get the greatest gain and commodity by it, much less for small and base things. We should account it, if we love him indeed, a more miserable thing than hell it self, to offend him.

Let us all therefore labor for these two, the fear and the love of God, to have them settled in our hearts; these are the strongest of all other passions.

34 And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him.

35 And the Lord said unto Moses, the man shall be surely put to death; all the Congregation shall stone him with stones without the Campe.

We saw before the sin of him that brake the Sabbath: now we may behold how he is first put in ward until the will of God were farther known; then he is commanded *to be stoned with stones*, and by whom? *by all the Congregation.* This was an ordinary kind of punishment among the Jews, and also among some of the Gentiles. Neither had they any set persons appointed to be executioners and ministers of justice, as now is usual in our days, but it stood merely at

the pleasure of Princes & Judges and others officers to name and assign sometimes one and sometimes another, and sometimes many; and it was done without any note of infamy. For it was no more reproach to execute a malefactor, then to condemn him. Neither were they of the baser, but of the better sort that were sometimes singled out for this purpose, Deut. 13, 9, 10.1, Sam. 22, 17, 18. *Samuel* himself hewed *Agag* in pieces before the Lord, 1 Sam. 15, 33.1, King. 2, 31, 34. Judge. 8, 20, 21. Exod. 32, 29. The like might be said of *Phinehas* that stood up and executed judgment, Psal. 106, 30. and of *Elijah*, who slew the Priests of *Baal*, 1 King. 18, 40. This was the order among the Hebrews: but now such persons deputed for executions are commonly evilly spoken off, & of base account; first, because the common sort that commonly offend, are commonly afraid at the sight of them, and their hearts arise against them, and therefore can hardly meet them in the streets, but they set themselves against them. And no man would willingly be punished for his offenses. Thus they hope, if there were no executioner, they should escape and not be executed. Now because the sight of such officers bringeth to their remembrance their own offenses, therefore they cannot abide them, as fearing that in the end they may also take their lives from them. Thus they hate his person more then their own evil: although it be not the person, but their own mischief & misdemeanor that taketh away their lives. Secondly, such persons are of evil note, because many of them lead a wicked & profane life, and are many times as evil as those whom they execute. The office doth not defile them, but rather they defile the office: it is they that make the office odious, not the office them.

But to pass this over, in the punishment executed upon this person that brake the Sabbath, [Doctrine] we learn that the Lord will punish wicked men, not only for sins of injustice, but for sins of ungodliness: not only for the breach of the second Table, but for breach also of the first Table, Exod. 20, 5, 7, and 31, 13, 14, and 32, 10. Ier. 10, 25. Ezek. 20, 13, 21. Neh. 13, 15, 18. Ier. 17, 29. Levite. 24, 11, 12, 14, 15. Deut. 13, 9, 10. This is farther to be strengthened with reason.

First, true godliness and religion have the [Reason 1] promises of the blessings of this life and of the life to come, 1 Tim. 4, 8. Deut. 28, 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. then it will follow on the contrary, that impiety and ungodliness have the curses & plagues both of the one and the other due unto them. For it were great injustice in God, if he should reward the works of piety and religion, and should not as well punish the works of impiety and profaneness.

Secondly, such works are committed directly [Reason 2] and immediately against the person of God himself, but the works of unrighteousness are against men. He is more severely punished that flieth in the Princes face & woundeth him, then he that hurteth any of his servants. Such as *with an high hand break the first Table*, do as it were fly in God's face and rebel against them; such as transgress the second, hurt some of his servants. So then, when we fall to practice against his own person or his honor, there is great reason to think he will visit for those especially, and therefore such laws are called, *the first and great commādement*, Math. 22, 36, 38.

Thirdly, such works of impiety are the causes [Reason 3] of wrong, injustice, hatred, and of all unrighteousness. The breach of the first Table procureth the breach of the second, Rom.

1, 21, 22, 23. Because they regarded not to know God, he gave them over to vile affections. When he gave them up to uncleanness, it was a punishment of their unthankfulness and not honoring of him.

The uses follow. Such are first of all reprov'd [Use 1] as are accounted civil honest men in the world and reputed unblameable among their neighbors. I do not mean that they are to be reprov'd for their civility and honesty, which are not to be condemn'd in themselves (for they are good,) but such as content themselves with an outward civil carriage among men, and to be praised of them, having no fear of God, or care of religion in them: but all their care and conscience is to deal justly with men, and in the mean season wholly neglect their duty to God; these are liable to God's judgments, as well as those that are altogether profane and wicked. These are they that have no care to sanctify the Sabbath, no delight in prayer, no hungering & thirsting after knowledge, but remain in blindness & ignorance, careless in frequenting the hearing of the word, and in receiving of the Sacraments. They will boast, they love the Church as well as any of their neighbors, but small fruits appear of their going thither, or of their coming from thence. They think all is well enough, if they be just in their outward dealings: they make account that they are not to be blamed, and they stand in fear of no judgments of God at all. So it was with the rich man, Math. 19, 20. he thought *he had done all even from his youth, that he lacked nothing*: but being tried by the first commandment, whether he did love God above all, he plainly descried that his civil honesty was mere hypocrisy, and his fulfilling of the law no better then a flattering of himself. In like manner do such men much deceive themselves, and are like to a subject whose whole care is to deal justly and uprightly with his fellows, but utterly neglecteth his duty to his Prince, and practiseth rebellion against him all his life. If such a man deal justly among other men, and will not commit adultery or murder by any means; tell me in reason, can all this his care help him, when he shall be convicted for high treason against his Prince? Certainly this just and upright carriage toward the people shall stand him in little stead. Likewise many men in all places do live continually in the practice of rebellion against the person of God himself, howsoever they seem very careful and conscionable of their duty toward men, yet God will find them out for the contempt of him. For they are grown to this profaneness, What need so much preaching? or so much hearing? and so they begin to scorn and scoff at those that live in the obedience of these holy duties. Let me tell these, though they be never so just in their conversation, doing no wrong, paying all mē, showing mercy to them that need, yet they lie open, notwithstanding all these, to God's judgments for want of the true power of religion. If thou shouldst see a man live in the gross sins of the second Table, in murder, adultery, robbery, drunkenness, false witness-bearing, and the like, wouldst y^u not think him worthy to be plagued by the hand of God? why then should we think that such as live in y^e breaches of the first Table (more gross thē these) which have the first place, are not liable to judgment, as well, or rather much more then the other?

[Use 2] Secondly, this teacheth all such as have any rule over others, to be careful to teach such as are under them in the ways of godliness, that they may know the Father to be true God, & him whom he hath sent Jesus Christ, John 17, 3. First, it is the duty of Princes and Magistrates to have a great care of true religion, that God be faithfully served by their

people. It is not enough for them to provide that they may have a people faithful and loyal to themselves, except they be also faithful to God. The godly kings are commended for their care in advancing the glory of God, and for their zeal in causing all the people committed to their charge to be instructed. It were easy to enlarge this by the examples of *David*, of *Asa*, of *Jehoshaphat*, of *Hezekiah*, and *Josiah*: they made a covenant with God to serve him themselves, and to cause him to be served of their people. *Asa* commanded *Judah* to serve the Lord of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandments, that whosoever would not seek the Lord, whether he were small or great, whether man or woman, should be put to death, 2 Chron 14, 4, and 15, 13. Deut. 17, 19. 2 Kings 23, 2, 3. 2 Chron. 19, 7, 8, 9. Thus it ought to be with all fathers and masters, they must teach their children & servants, that they may know the Lord, and set their hope in him, & not forget his works, but keep his comandements, Psal. 78, 6, 7, & 4, 9, and 11, 19, 21. Eph. 6, 4. *Eli* the Priest of the Lord is first threatened, and afterward punished for neglect of this duty, 1 Sam. 2, and 3. The example is written for our instruction, that we should beware of the like transgression.

Thirdly, see the fearful condition of many [Use 3] men of all sorts, for they live under a fearful judgment of God, and yet do not see it, because through the whole course of their lives, they practice the works of impiety, living in palpable ignorance, in contempt of the Word, Sabbath, and Sacraments. If a man should do nothing but practice treason and rebellion against the King, despising his word and contemning his Proclamations, in what a fearful condition would we account him to be? And when the King himself should appoint a day, wherein he would have his own person specially attended and wholly waited upon, if his household servants should refuse to give him any attendance, but wait worse upon him that day then any other, and give themselves wholly to attend upon their own pleasures, would he not think himself notably abused, and discharge such of his service? and were they not sure to run into his displeasure, and to procure judgment upon themselves?

Notwithstanding, this is the state of many among us. God hath commanded us to reverence his Name, his Sanctuary, his Sabbath, his Word, his Ministry; if then we shall dare to swear & blaspheme openly, to reject the word of God, and to abuse the Sabbath by following after our pleasures and profits, our sports and recreations, and thereby practice after a sort against the person of GOD himself, do they not provoke me to my face, saith the Lord, and shall they go unpunished? No certainly, they shall not, his judgments shall overtake them for these things.

God hath ordained and enacted as by a solemn Proclamation, that all sorts that profess themselves his servants, should wait upon him on the Sabbath; he is then determined to set forth the greatness of his glorious Name, and the riches of his house, and y^e might of his power, and the honor of his Majesty: it is his will and pleasure that men, women, & children should assemble together before him to give him attendance: shall we answer with *Korah* and his company in the next chapter, *We will not come up?* Numb. 16, 14. And albeit we be not so impudent and shameless to say so, yet it is little better, because we do not appear before him. Nay we serve our selves by walking in our own ways, and many serve Satan the enemy of God, by following his ways with greediness. If we give up our selves to our pleasures and profits, we serve our selves: when we give up our selves to our sins, and delight in

drunkenness and such like wickedness upon that day, we serve the devil. And in truth, let any man mark it, he shall see that God is no day worse served of the common sort, then upon his own holy day, so that when he requireth all our service, he can get little or none at all at our hands.

[Use 4] Lastly, let no man flatter himself in performance of duties unto men, and think himself in good case because he liveth vnblameably in the eyes of y^e world. We must learn to deny not only worldly lusts, but all ungodliness: and we must live not only soberly & righteously, but also godly in this present world, Titus 2, 12. Christ gave himself for this purpose, to purge us from all iniquity, and to purify us to be a peculiar people unto himself, zealous of all good works. And indeed the sins of the first Table are the greatest & most heinous sins, and deserve the greatest plagues of God, and most fearful condemnation: he will *reward with everlasting fire*, not only such as know not their duties to men, but *such as know not God, neither obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ*, 2 Thess. 1, 8. And this is noted as a main cause of the destruction of the old world, to wit, disobedience to the word, 1 Pet. 3, 20. When the Israelitish woman's son whose father was an Egyptian, blasphemed the Name of the Lord, and as it were thrust him through with horrible curses, Levite. 24, 11. he is commanded to be put to death and stoned, verse 16, 23. These sins are everywhere little thought upon, and supposed to be either no sins at all, or very little ones. But man's judgment is corrupt in the matters of God, except we look upon sin with the light of the Scripture: and if we shall parallel the sins of the first Table with the sins of the second in equal degree, the greatest of the one with the grossest of the other, & both done in knowledge alike, and ignorance with ignorance, comparing deeds with deeds, words with words, & thoughts with thoughts; the breaches of the law being thus considered, are far greater against the first then against the second Table, because they are committed immediately against the person of the great God, as rebellion against the person of a Prince is greater thē the insurrection against another: the murdering of a Prince more thē of many others, 2 Sam. 18, 3. See then from hence, the woeful abuse of our sinful times & profane people. Such as would seem to make conscience of stealing, of whoring, of robbing, and false witnessing in judgment, and hold them unworthy to live upon the earth that commit these things: mark their ways in matters that concern the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; and you shall evidently perceive, they think it no evil or enormity to be ignorant of GOD and his word, to maintain superstition and set up human traditions, to abuse his Name by cursed oaths, to profane his Sabbath by cursed or corrupt works, to despise his Word, and to refuse his Sacraments. These are so ordinarily, so openly, so impudently committed with bold, nay with brazen faces, and defended also by those that do them, as if we would despite God to his face, and thrust him out of his kingdom and from the government of the world. I will tell you what I have observed by the common course of the world, that moe perish through ignorance and profaneness, then do by all the deeds of unrighteousness. Satan prevaieth more among the people by bringing them to a profane life, and keeping them in sottishness and blindness touching the will of God, then by murder, whoredom, and theft laid together. I know I speak this to many that have most wretched and swinish hearts, but no ears to hear: and therefore regard their own pleasures more then they do their salvation.

These are the dangerous days spoken off by the Apostle, 2. Tim. 3, 1, 4, 5. God in his mercy amend them: if not, let them that be ignorant, be ignorant still, 1 Cor. 14, 38. and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still, Revel. 22, 11. that so they may fill up the measure of their sins, Math. 23, 32.

36 And all the Congregation brought him without the Camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died as the Lord commanded Moses.

It may seem strange at the first, that they should consult with God what to do with this profane person: seeing the Law had appointed death for him that transgressed this commandment, Exod. 31, 14. and 35, 2. why then did they enquire, or wherefore did they put him in mind to know what should be done unto him? Some answer, that albeit God had decreed that such should be punished, yet he had not declared by any law the kind of punishment: and therefore they asked how he should be punished, as for example, whether he should be hanged on a tree, or burned with fire, or stoned with stones, or stricken with the sword. But this answer cannot satisfy me: for when death is appointed in the Law, and the particular kind not expressed, the Magistrate was left free to set down the same, as also when no punishment at all is mentioned. Deut. 25, 13.14. neither were the people bound to ask counsel at the mouth of God upon every occasion of execution of justice against evil doers, where the manner of punishment is not limited. It was the law of God, that *witches should not live*, Exod. 22, 18. *Saul* did well, and is commended by the Spirit of God, that he cut them off that *had familiar spirits out of the land*, & rooted out the wizards; yet he did not ask, neither was he bound to ask counsel now or which way they should be put to death, though God had not defined the particular, Levite. 20, 27. This then is left to the discretion of the Magistrate, when he hath the general, to decree the particular punishment as he thinketh good. In sundry places of the books of *Moses*, we find sundry laws set down inflicting death upon the offenders, & yet the manner of death is not named, Genesis 9. verse 6. Exod. chap. 22, 19, 20. Levite. chap. 20. verses 9, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18. Deut. chap. 20. verse 25. and 24, 17. All this were to no purpose, if the Magistrate might not proceed against them *ex officio*, without knowing the farther pleasure of God. For it had been all one as if no sentence of death had been set down, inasmuch as they might as easily and with as little labor know the punishment in particular as when no punishment at all is expressed. Neither did the Jews take themselves to be bound in that case to enquire of God, Levite. 20, 10. Deut. 22, 22. John 8, 5. Wherefore, I rather think they consulted with God about the quality of the work, then the manner of the punishment. God had threatened, that whosoever did *Work on the Sabbath should be put to death*: but he had not followed his handy-work, nor labored in his calling: he had only gathered a few sticks. True it is, he had done it impudently, yet it was doubt full whether this fact were within the compass of that law or not: and therefore *Moses* would not call the life of this man in question without certain direction from the mouth of God. For life is precious, and blood being spilled, is as water poured upon the earth, y^t cannot be gathered up again. So then they desired to know, whether this fact were worthy of death, not by what manner of death he should die. And as the Jews in other things are full of fables, so in this they have devised of their own brains, that this man was *Zelophehad*, of whom we read

afterward in this Book, chapt. 27, 3. where it is said of him that he died not in the conspiracy of *Korah*, but in his own sin: thereby casting an aspersion upon him, and charging him with an imputation which the Scripture doeth not charge him withal, of which we shall speak more afterwards. But who it was, and what his name was, and whether he were one of the Israelites or of the strangers that came with them out of Egypt, or what his purpose was, it is uncertain; but whosoever it were, he is put to death for profaning of the Sabbath. We learn hereby, [Doctrine.] that the Sabbath day ought wholly to be spent in religious and holy exercises. It is the end why it was sanctified of God, that we should sanctify it, and spend it in holy uses from morning unto evening, Genesis chap. 2. verse 2, 3. Where we see, he blessed it and sanctified it in the Garden, or at least in the time of man's innocence, Exodus chap 16, 20. Isaiah 56, verse 2. & 58, 13. Exod. chap. 20. verse 4. This was the practice under the Law, continued also under the Gospel. It was the custom of Christ to preach the gospel in the Synagogues on that day, he did it not for once or twice, but it was his ordinary and usual manner. So the Disciples, Acts 20, 17. and 17, 1, 2. 1 Cor. 16, 1. Revelat. 1, 10. The doors of the Temple were kept shut the six days, but opened from morning until the evening upon the seventh day, Ezek, 46, 1, 2.

There are many reasons in the fourth commandment, [Reason 1] drawn from the equity and liberality of God in giving us six days, from the example of God's rest, and from the consideration of the end why it was appointed to be kept holy, all these are of great force, Exod. 20, 4, 5.

Secondly, this serveth to preserve men from [Reason 2] barbarisme and Atheism, and all irreligions profaneness. We see notwithstanding this comfortable & profitable ordinance of God, how much impiety and looseness is in the world: but if every man were left unto himself to serve God as himself list, to his private devotions without this general observation: it is to be feared we should shortly have no knowledge, no faith, no church, no religion, no order: that the greatest part would scarce think of God, from one week, nay from one year to another, or have any acquaintance with his word and Sacraments, or read the Scriptures, or pray unto him: nay they would scarce know whether there were any Scriptures or Sacraments, or not. Therefore the Lord saith, *The Sabbath is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you*, Exod. 31, 13 For when do the greatest part read, or hear, or confer, or meditate, or pray but upon the Sabbath? Take away therefore that day, you take away all these. Thirdly, [Reason 3] Christ Jesus vouchsafed to honor this day above the rest of the days of the week after his resurrection, and that by his special appearances in it, as well as by his rising again upon it. If we observe and mark it, we shall see he shown himself to his disciples and followers upon that day especially. First, to *Marie Magdalene* early in the morning, John 20, 1. and 14. Secondly, to the other women, as they were going to communicate to the Apostles the certainty of his resurrection, which the Angels had declared unto them before at the sepulcher, Matth. 28, 9. Thirdly, to the two disciples going to *Emmaus*, which also was the same day, Luke 24, 21, For they said, it was y^e *third day since these things were done*. Fourthly, the same day at night he appeared to his Disciples, John 20, 19. Fifthly, he appeared for the

confirmation of the faith of *Thomas* in the matter of his resurrection upon this day, John 20. verse 26. Upon this day did the holy Ghost descend: and this was the first day of the creation.

[Use 1] The Uses follow. The sanctifying, separating, and keeping of the Lord's day, is a moral duty charged upon every soul, whatsoever & wheresoever we be, in what state and condition soever, in bondage and exile, upon the land or sea, in sickness or in health, at home or abroad, with our selves or with others, whether we be high or low, Prince or subject, master or servant, bond or free, male or female; all persons must know, that this day must be sanctified unto the holy worship of God, and be spent in the meditation of holy things. It is not as some profane persons have said, that favor of nothing but the world, that rich men may keep the Sabbath, but poor men cannot: for GOD will have the poor keep holy this day, as well as the rich. As with him is no respect of persons, so in giving his law he respecteth not persons: we have not one of the Commandments for the poor and another for the rich, but they belong to all, as he is God of all, and will be served of all. And if this be not a moral duty, then we should have but nine Commandments that bind perpetually, whereas they are often called the *ten words*, Exodus chap. 34, verse 28. Deut. 14.13. and 10, 4. and Christ showeth, he *came not to destroy the Law, but to keep it and fulfill it*, Math. 5, 17. Again he saith, *He that shall break one of the least of the commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven*, verse 19. he shall be shut out of it, and have no place in it. But it may be objected, [Object.] we keep not the same day that the Jews did, they observed the seventh day from the creation, we the first day of the week. Why then was this day changed? and who changed it? and whether may it be changed again? [Answer.] I answer first, touching the first; the reasons of the change are to put a difference between the Jewish and Christian Sabbath, which could not be so fitly done but by change of the day. Secondly, to keep a memorial of the day of our redemption: for as the seventh day kept a memorial of the work of the creation, so doeth this first day of the week of our Redemption: as great a work, yea greater then the former, for it was more to redeem us out of hell, then to create us out of nothing, Isaiah 66, 24.

Thirdly, to free the church from the sacrifices and ceremonies of the Jews, and to take from it they yoke that lay as an heavy burden on the necks of those that lived in the time of the Law, Acts chap. 15. verse 10. which neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear: for when this day was changed it was no more tied to the Jewish Sabbath, which was solemnized with many ceremonies belonging necessarily unto it. The Jews were tied to a strict and rigorous kind of rest, they might not *kindle a fire throughout their habitations*, Exod. chapt. 35. verse 3. It was also a figure of the everlasting rest of God's children in the kingdom of heaven, Isaiah 66, 23. Heb. 4, 9. It was observed in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt, which fell out that day, Deut. 5, 15. Exodus 11. It was tied precisely to the seventh day from the Creation, and celebrated with sundry set rites and ceremonies, Numbers 28. verses 9, 10. Nevertheless, there is a Sabbath moral and perpetual, a time to be set apart to the worship of God to the end of the world.

The next Question is, who altered it? I answer, Christ himself is the author of this change. The Apostles often teach, that whatsoever they taught, they received it from Christ: they

learned it at his hand before, either by word of his mouth, or by revelation of his Spirit: but the Apostles enjoined the first day of the week to be kept as a Sabbath of rest, 1 Cor. 16, 1. The Church every first day of the week made a collection for the poor, which followed the hearing of the word, the offering up of prayers, and the receiving of the Sacraments, as a fruit of them, Acts 2. ver. 42. Wherein observe by the way, that the Sabbath was appointed for the benefit, good, and comfort of the poor, not for their hurt or hindrance; whereby as God is glorified, so the poor are encouraged to tender their service to God this day; and the mouths of those carnal men are stopped, that would have the rich keep the Sabbath, but not the poor. If any say collections for the poor were lawful, [Object.] and might be made any day as well as on a Sabbath: I answer, [Answ.] the Apostle doth not only say, that then collections were made, but this was made an Apostolical ordinance and institution to be done that day especially: for he commandeth the Corinthians to observe it that day, as he had ordained it *in the Churches of Galatia*. 1 Corinth. 16, 1, 2. So then, because he gave such order, we may conclude it to be an ordinance.

The Apostles also assembled themselves upon this day, for performance of divine duties, Acts 20. verse 7. *They kept this day for a Sabbath*: neither kept they orderly any other, saving when they came into the Synagogues of the Jews, who were so addicted unto the Law of Moses, that they would meet upon no other day. Besides, it is said of Christ, that after his resurrection, he taught his Disciples whatsoever *belonged to the kingdom of God*, as Acts 1. verse 3. but the alteration of the Sabbath belongeth to God's kingdom. The last questiō remaineth, whether it be in the liberty of the Church to change the day again? I answer, it is not. For as it was not at the first changed without the authority of Christ and his Apostles directed by Christ, *who is Lord of the Sabbath*, Math. 12, 8. so it can receive no farther change without him or them. But if the Church had this power, thē the Church might well be said to be Lord of the Sabbath. Again the times and seasons are in God's hand, Act. 1, 6. but they should be left to the Church as a treasure to dispense, if it might dispose & transpose the Sabbath at her pleasure. Again, one day to be kept in seven, is moral & perpetual, otherwise if once we depart from this simplicity, that we be not tied of necessity unto it, a mā may say, that one day in seuē weeks or in seven years is enough, and so at length it shall be said, we are not bound to meet together publicly, above one day in an hundred years. Therefore I set it down as an unchangeable rule, that the observation of one day in seven, not in five, or one in fifteen, but one in seven, neither more nor less is moral: but if it should ever be changed again, we could not keep the just number of one in seven, but at the first change the proportion and morality would be broken. If any ask, how then was it changed at the first? I answer, the Jews that believed, altered not the morality of one in seven, albeit they changed the day which was ceremonial. For in the first change they kept two Sabbaths together, to wit, the Jewish and the Christian, & yet without breach of the former proportion. The Jews kept the seventh day for the week past, we take the first day which is next to it, and so keep the Sabbath for the week to come: they observed that day in memorial of the work of creation which was past, we Christians keeping (as we have great cause) the remembrance of the work of redemption, begin our Sabbath at the resurrection of Christ for the time following. And thus was the day altered without breaking the morality of one day in seven,

which is impossible ever to be so changed again. The Princes of *Judah* are charged to *change the bounds and landmarkes*, Hos. 5, 10. God hath set stakes and bounds as it were to compass and inclose his Sabbath, by appointing the time and limiting the season, therefore to remove this, is as great an offense to God, as to pull up the pales and hedges of the ground is a trespass to man. If then we take upon us to appoint another day of our own, it cannot be called *the Lord's day*, but man's day, or our own day, or the Churches day. And it may be said of us, as Isaiah 1, 12. *Who required these things at your hands?* To set up another day, is to appoint a strange day, like to *Nadab* and *Abihu* that offered strange fire: If any say, we may serve the Lord as well upon another day, I answer, so might *Nadab* and *Abihu* consume the sacrifice with strange fire, as well as by that preserved on the Altar, yet they were punished of God because they altered his institution, as we have seen before.

Secondly, this reproveth sundry sorts of persons [Use 2] that offend against this doctrine. Of all the commandments of God, none are more often urged, and yet not one is, or hath been more despised and transgressed. The breach of the Sabbath is the main sin of the world, a general evil spreading far and near, an iniquity abounding in every congregation, as if God had never spoken anything touching a Sabbath, or as if it were a mere ordinance of man. Nay, human inventions and traditions are ordinarily better observed and more regarded than this commandment of GOD. Now it reproveth especially three sorts. First, such as make the Lord's day, which should be the market day of the soul, a day of vain pleasures and carnal delights, a day of sports and recreations, thinking it enough if they follow not the works of their calling. For wherefore are the works of our ordinary vocations forbidden upon the Sabbath? and why are we restrained from them? not that they are unlawful in themselves, but because they take up the mind and suffer it not to be employed in God's business. The same may be said of our own pleasures much more, which naturally we follow with more greediness and earnestness. And it is well observed, that the multitude had rather go to Church than go to work, yet had rather go to play than to the Church. This is the disposition of the greatest part, especially of servants and of the younger sort, who commonly make no other reckoning of this day, than as of a day of riot and revelling, of gaming and drinking, never intending the worship of God, which ought then especially to be performed. Thus is the commandment turned upside down, and that day which should be kept holy to the Lord, is spent in the service of the devil. If they have been at the Church in the forenoone, they dispense with themselves to serve Satan in the afternoon. But as Christ telleth us, that none can serve God and Mammon, so no man can serve GOD and their pleasures on that day. Secondly, here are reprov'd such as seem more civil than the former, but yet take liberty to follow their own business & ordinary affairs. Such are they which go or ride about their worldly matters, to buy, to bargain, to sell, to talk with others, robbing God of his day to spare one of their own. God hath kept but one day in the week to himself, and even this also we take from him, and grudge at it to give it to him, like *the rich thief that having many sheep of his own, yet killed his neighbors that had but one*, 2 Sam. 12, 4. A third sort are reprov'd, who think it enough, if they observe so much as is enjoined by laws and injunctions of men, if they be at morning and evening prayer, they think they give to y^e Lord a large allowance, and justify themselves as if they were good observers & sanctifiers of the

Sabbath. Such men take liberty all the rest of the day to do what they list pertaining to themselves, whether to their profit or to their pleasure Thus they make it partly the Lord's day, and partly their own: howbeit there is no parting of stakes with him. We cannot properly call it the Lord's day, except we make it wholly to be his, and consecrate it wholly to his worship.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is our duty to remember this day before hand, that so we may every way fit our selves to the sanctifying of it, and therefore the Lord said, *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy*. Our nature is very forgetful of this performance of holy duties, and therefore we have need to think of them before hand. God hath given unto us sundry commandments, but he commendeth the Sabbath to us especially above all the rest: he dealeth with us like a master, that giveth many precepts to his servant, but willeth him to remember one above all the rest. So it is with the Lord, he saith; *Thou shalt have no other God's before me*, Exodus 20, 3. *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image*. verse 4. *Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them*. verse 5. *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*, ver 7. But above all these, *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy*. For indeed the right observation of all the rest consisteth in the due regard of this. How can we learn obedience to the rest, unless we be careful to keep this day? Or how should we be able to practice them, & to know what God requireth, except we give attendance at the posts of his house to hear his voice? We must evermore remember the precept of the Apostle, Col. 3, 2. *Set your affections on things above, and not on things upon the earth*: but this ought especially to be considered on this day. We must dispatch all worldly businesses before, that they do no way disturb us and distract us. And when the day of the Lord is come, we must assemble together, that so there may be an holy convocation, Levite. 23, verse 3.

It was the custom of the people to come together at such times, Luke chap. 4. verse 16. *Paul showeth that at Antioch, He found the whole City assembled upon the Sabbath day*, Acts 13, 43, 44. This assembly is called God's army, Psalm 110, 3. It was counted an happy thing to dwell in the Lord's house, Psal. 27, 4. and 84, 4. Then ought the word to be both read and preached; so was it in the time of the law, Acts 15, 21. And both of them did Christ himself perform ordinarily, Luke 4. ver. 17, 20. It is a part of the Ministers sanctifying of the Sabbath by doing the same. The idle ministry is a great cause of profaning the Lord's day, both in themselves and in others. It is the duty of the people to hear the word with all reverence and attention, to mark and lay up in their hearts what they have heard, to the end they might put it in practice. And when we are departed, we should spend the rest of the day in private duties, as Prayer, Reading, Meditation, and Conference; things not greatly regarded of the greatest sort. We are soon weary of the best things, and quickly loathe that we should chiefly love. The cause why we profit not by the public Ministry, is the want of the performance of these duties privately.

38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments, throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a Ribband of blew.

39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the Commandments of the Lord, and do them: and that ye seek not after your own heart, and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring.

40 That ye may remember, &c.

This is the law of making Fringes upon the four quarters of their vesture whereby they covered themselves, that they might look continually upon them, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them. Of this read Deut. 22, 12. These Fringes and Ribands served them for a monument, that they might consider they were a people consecrated unto God, not as Infidels to walk after their own fancies. For upon these were written some parcel of the Law. This was also the cause that the Jews were commanded to have the Law written upon the posts of their doors, and likewise that they should bear it about them evermore, & decke themselves with it, that it should be as a ring upon their fingers, as a bracelet upon their hand, & as a frontlet before their eyes, that is, always in sight and remembrance. To this end also it must be written upon the frontiers of the Land, upon the gates of the City, and upon the posts of every man's private house, Deut. 6, 8, 9: that they might have every day & every way occasion given unto them to talk and confer of the word of God, sitting, walking and lying, at home, or else abroad. This usage was afterwards abused by the pride and hypocrisy of the Pharisees, as Christ chargeth them, Matth. 23, 5. who because they would be thought to have a more special holiness then the common sort, had made long gardes, and sentences of Scripture written upon them that might be seen a far off. But for our selves, we must consider, that though this ceremony be no longer in use, and that these Fringes and Laces are shadows, which ended at the coming of Christ, yet an instruction remaineth to us, to exercise our selves in his law day and night, Psalm 1, 2.

Josephus reporteth of the Jews, that they knew the Scriptures as well as their own names, whereas many among us scarce know the names of the Scriptures. We learn from hence, That all sorts both young and old, of what condition soever, are enjoined to know the doctrine of the Scriptures, and the will of God revealed in them, Deut. 6, 6, 7. John. John 5, 39. Coloss. 3, 16. 2 Tim. 3, 15. Psal. 119, 9. The Reasons. First, because God hath appointed such as are governors over others, to be teachers of them that belong unto their charge. Such as are fathers and masters of Families are bound to instruct their children and servants, & therefore none ought to be without knowledge, Ephes. 6, 4. Gen. 18, 19. But how shall they be able to do this, except they have knowledge, whereby they may be able to perform this duty? Secondly, ignorance is the cause of all error, because the natural man perceiveth not the things that are of God, and the wisdom of God is foolishness to man. So then being of our selves blind, and wanting the light of the word, we must needs go astray. Hence it is, that Christ saith unto the Sadducees, *Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures*, Math. 22, 29. Thirdly, the want of knowledge is the cause of sundry fearful judgments, spiritual and temporal, Hosea 4, 6. inward and outward, Isaiah 1, 3, 7. So then as ignorance is the cause of

sin, so it is the cause of judgment the reward of sin. If we care not to know him, but neglect and contemn the means of knowledge, no marvel if we be punished.

[Use 1] This reproveth the church of Rome of an horrible injury offered to the people of God. They teach that ignorance is the mother of devotion, and keep the Scriptures in the Latin tongue, as it were under lock and key. And albeit they have translated them, or the greatest part of them into English, yet they set out sharp edicts ratified under an horrible curse, that no Lay man (as they speak) shall presume to read them, unless they be specially licensed by their inquisitors and confessors: directly contrary to the end of the Scriptures, which were written that we should believe, and by believing have eternal life, John chapt. 20. verses 30, 31. They beat down ignorance, and teach that all ought to know the Lord from the highest to the lowest, Jeremiah 31, 30. and that God will pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, Joel chap. 2. ver, 28. Wheresoever he vouchsafeth great means he requireth a great measure of knowledge. This discovereth the bishop of Rome to be no better, and indeed no other then Antichrist, making laws contrary to God's laws, and yet binding the consciences of men unto them.

But it will be said, that the unlearned and unstable pervert them, 2 Pet. 3. and therefore it is dangerous to read them. I answer, be it that some do so, shall all therefore be forbidden the free use of them? All things, even the best are abused, meat, drink, apparel, the Sacraments, Christ himself, and what not? shall all be barred therefore from the heavenly Manna, which is sweeter then the honey and the honey comb? more to be desired then great heaps of riches? which is much more profitable then is the finding of great spoils? The Scripture is a notable part of our spiritual armor, Ephes. 6, 17. able to offend, and to wound our enemy. If a Captain should go into the field with his soldiers, and suffer them to carry with them no weapons but such as should serve to defend their own bodies, and forbid them such armor as should any way hurt their enemies; if he should permit them the shield but not the sword, or allow them a Corslet, but not the spear: would he not be thought, and that justly and worthily to betray thē into the enemies hand? But thus it is with the Popish captains that must or at least will be accounted the only masters of Israel; they allow to the people after a sort the girdle of truth, the breast plate of righteousness, the shield of faith, and the rest to defend themselves; but touching the sword, *The two edged sword of the word*, Heb. 4, 12: wherewith Christ our Savior resisted, and we after his example must resist the devil, Matth. 4, 4. they forbid them to gird that about their loins; as if it were like *Saul's armor*, which *David* could not go withal, because he had not proved it: whereas indeed it is like *David's sling*, & the stone which he slang that smote the Philistine in the forehead, and caused him to fall upon his face to the earth, verse 49. and therefore what do they but treacherously betray the people of God, and lead them naked into the field to be utterly spoiled, and so to fall before their enemies?

Secondly, it confuteth those amongst our selves, that say what need so much teaching and preaching? There are some that think themselves to be wise men, much wiser then their fellows, that stick not to speak thus: but this their wisdom is no better then foolishness with God. 1 Cor. 1.23. The preaching of the cross I confess is accounted no better then foolishness,

but it is to them that perish: whereas to them that are saved it is the power of God. It is accounted a state-policy nowadays, to defend little preaching and less hearing. But ignorance can uphold no kingdom. Religion and the knowledge of it is the pillar and stay of a State and Common-wealth: the want of it is the cause of tumults, rebellions, insurrections, and seditions. What was the cause of the rebellion in the North in y^e days of our late Soueraign of blessed memory? was it any other then want of knowledge, and of Preachers to plant knowledge in the hearts of the people? but (blessed be God) they have since been better stored, and that hath brought better quietness in those parts. And what is the cause of the often risings, rebellions, and treasons in the kingdom of Ireland at this day, but because they remain either Atheists, or Popish, or sottish, wanting the means of knowledge to instruct and inform them better? True Religion is a bulwark and a Castle of defense to any kingdom, the very chariots and horsemen of Israel, 2 King. 2.12. and godliness hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come, 1 Tim. 4, 8. Wherefore, they are profane speeches of ignorant people, or of idle teachers going about to maintain their ignorance and idleness, who think that a sermon in a quarter is sufficient, either for y^e Minister to preach, or the people to hear. If you mark or would examine what the people are that live under such, and for the most part you shall see they know nothing. But the Minister must preach in season and out of season: & the duller the scholar is, he should have his lesson the more often repeated. Such for the most part are the people, slow in hearing, dull in conceiving weak in remembering & bearing away what they have heard. Some there are, who not only are ignorant, but defend their ignorance, and think men need not have any knowledge in the Scriptures, nor trouble themselves any way about it. These do imagine that it belongeth only to the Ministers and other learned men to know the Scriptures. And it is fit he should have more knowledge then a private man, because he is appointed of God to teach the people, but this exempteth not the people from it. For take this as a certain principle, that the poorest & simplest person must have as much knowledge for matters of salvation as the Minister hath, or else he shall never be saved.

[Use 3] Lastly, let all men know, men and women, children and servants, that in their several places they are bound to exercise themselves in the Scriptures, and daily to meditate in them, that so thereby they may come to knowledge: for without knowledge in the word, it is impossible for any to be saved. The way for a man to get his living by his trade, is not to exercise himself in it once in a week, or to employ himself to it once in a quarter, but he must use it daily and diligently, or else he shall never live by it, or thrive in it. So may I say in this case; a man that hath a desire to be saved, and to live hereafter in a better life, it is not sufficient for him to read the Scriptures, and to meditate in them now and then, or when he hath nothing else to do, and to keep himself from idleness; but he must observe a constant and continual course in the searching and reading of them, that by them he may come to knowledge, by knowledge to faith, by faith to obedience, and by obedience to salvation. Ignorance shall excuse no man at the day of judgment, *He that knoweth not his Masters will, shall be beaten*, Luke 12, 48. Hosea 4, 1, 3. If we think to plead for our selves, and to allege in our defense, that we followed our callings toerne our livings, & to maintain our families, it shall not serve our turns, this will not be taken for currant payment. Our

particular and our general calling agree well together: God hath not joined them in every man. Our particular calling is to follow our business; our general calling is to know the Scriptures: y^e one doth not abrogate the other, inasmuch as God hath commanded them both, & what God hath coupled together, no man shall put asunder, Math. 19, 6.

CHAP. XVI.

1 NOW Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram the sons of Elijah, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men.

2 And they rose up before Moses with certain of the children of Israel, 250. Princes of the assembly, famous in the Congregation, men of renown.

3 And they gathered themselves together against Moses, and against Aaron, and said unto them: Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the Congregation is holy, everyone of them, and the Lord is among them: Wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above? &c.

IN this chap. we have two other murmurings set down; the latter arising out of the former, as one stick on fire kindleth another. The former consisteth of a few, carried away with envy and emulation against *Moses* and *Aaron*; the original whereof arose from *Korah*, of the Tribe of *Levi*, who first blew the bellows, and took it grievously, that the Priestly dignity was translated to *Aaron*; and challenged *Moses* of partiality, as if he had preferred his own Kindred, and followed his private affection, rather than the direction of God. This seditious *Korah* associateth unto himself, *Dathan*, *Abiram*, and *On* of the Tribe of *Reuben*, whom he knew to be ill affected towards *Moses*; because he being the eldest son of *Jacob*, had by right of his birth-right, the Principality and government of the whole people belonging unto him, and therefore they thought themselves as worthy to have the Soueraignty in their hands, as *Moses* was to have it in his hands. All these joining together, made a schism or rent amongst the people, and assemble two hundred and fifty others, all Princes of the assembly, which seem to stand for the good of the whole Congregation; as also all Rebelles have ever had some pretence and color: for they plead that all the Lord's people are holy, *that God is present among them*, and therefore they should no longer usurp the sole government of the whole host. It is usual in all ages of the Church to have schisms and rents to arise in it, and for men to separate themselves from the Church, because (forsooth) it is not well governed as it ought to be. Now, albeit this open insurrection were a flat rebellion against the express ordinance of God, yet they set many goodly shows upon their doings, helping a bad cause with a beautiful color, lest they should seem to be mad without reason, alleging that *all the Lord's people are holy, and the Lord is among them*. We learn hereby that whatsoever corruptions

break out of men and whatsoever evils they do, and howsoever they decline from God, from his word, and from his ordinances, yet they will labor to excuse it, to defend it, to color it, that it should not seem as it is. When evil men have committed evil, they are ready to justify their evils, that they may seem good. We see this in *Saul*, 1 Sa. 13.11.12. and 15.15. so John. 12.5, 6. *Judas* pretended the poor and his great care of them, albeit he cared not for them, but for himself, and chap. 11.48. So *Caiaphas* pretendeth the safety of the people, to wit, if Christ were not put to death, the Romans would come with a mighty army, and ouerrunne them: but the taking of him away and the putting of him to death, was indeed the true cause why the Romans came, and destroyed the Temple, the City, and the people. This we see sometimes also in those that are not the worst men. The fact of *Simeon* and *Levi* against the *Schechemites* was no better then horrible murder committed against the Law of God and of nature, and against the league and covenant that had passed between them, which ought to be held inviolable even among infidels: yet somewhat they pretend to cover it, Gen. 34.31. *should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?* So the *Israelites* touching their Idolatry, Exod. 32.1. and *Aaron*, verse 23. and our first parents, Gen. 3. and in a manner all wicked men do the like, that are unregenerate, without repentance and sanctification. The reasons.

[Reason 1] For men are affected to their actions as they are to themselves. Though they be corrupt & abominable, yet they would not be thought and judged to be so: so it is with their actions that proceed from them, though they be wicked and unjust, yet they would have them accounted just, and therefore they seek excuses for themselves, as *Adam* did fig leaves to [Reason 2] cover his shame and his sin. Secondly, if they should pretend nothing, all would be ready to condemn them, and to pass sentence upon them, therefore to blind the eyes of others, they cast a mist before them as iuglers use to do that they may not be espied. This did *Herod*, Mat. 2.8. he pretended to *come and worship Christ*. For he knew well enough, if he had dealt plainly, and told them he sought the life of the babe, they would have detested his detestable cruelty.

This serveth to reprove diverse sorts that [Use 1] go about to varnish their actions with false colors, thereby to blind the world and to put out their eyes. These show themselves to be rank hypocrites & exceeding sinners against the Lord, which serve to harden their hearts and to hinder them from a sight of their sins and sorrow for them. For no man can return from his sins, and repent of his evil ways, so long as he goeth about to defend them: because all such sinners do declare a firm resolution to continue and go forward in sin, and think themselves safe and sure, because they have some colors for their actions. But y^e first beginning of repentance is confession: a duty oftentimes commended, and continually practiced by the faithful. The first thing that *Joshua* persuaded *Achan* to perform when he was taken as guilty for taking the accursed thing, was, that *he should give glory to the God of Israel, and make confession unto him*, Josh. 7.19. Prov. 28.13. 1 John. 1.9. Whereas such as hide their sins shall not prosper, and they that say they have not sinned, do make God a liar, and his word is not in them. Wherefore we cannot give a more evident sign of our want of y^e grace of repentance, then by defending, denying, excusing, or lessening of sin.

Secondly, this showeth the cause why the [Use 2] dregs of Popish religion are so settled in the hearts of men that they are hardly rooted out; even because such deceitful colors are set upon them and their superstitious practices. If they be accused for their idolatry & worshipping of Images, they pretend they worship God in the Image. Touching the worship of Saints and prayer to them, they say they honor them as the friends of God, and that they are unworthy to approach or to come near to God themselves, and therefore in humility they go to the Saints and Angels: but this is nothing but to speak lies through hypocrisy, Col. 2.23. Concerning their sacrilege in withholding the cup from the people, they have their color, that the labor of the Priest would be too great, if he should deliver the same to all himself, or else that the blood of Christ might be spilled upon the ground: but these excuses cannot deceive God, he seeth their open declining from the word of God, from the example of Christ, and from the practice of the Apostles, their hypocrisy is made open and evident to all, they can now no longer hide it. They teach and maintain that heretical Princes especially being excommunicated, should not be obeyed. Thus they blanch the matter, whereas *Paul* taught and practiced obedience for conscience sake, and that such as resist, *purchase to themselves judgment*. [Use 3]

Thirdly, we are to judge no otherwise of all such as transgress the Law of God, whatsoever their allegations be. How many men are there that think even gross and palpable sins to be no sins at all, because they can blanch and color them over? How many think to excuse their ignorance, as if it were no evil at all? why is there no more store of knowledge in our days among masters and servants? why so much store of blindness in the matters of God? O say they, We are dull and forgetful, we have our callings to follow, we must provide for wife and children. This is a willful ignorance: this shall excuse no man. Such can find and take time enough for the world, but they lack time to lay a good and sure foundation for the world to come. Some pretend their age and infirmity, which hinder them from coming so often to the house of God. But many of them have resorted no better to it in their youth, and as yet they have strength enough also to walk farther for their pleasure. God knoweth their hypocrisy, that they are able to do more in civil things. It is a common practice in the common sort to pray for the dead, God be with him, the Lord rest his soul, God have mercy on him, God send him a joyful resurrection, and such like: What, say these ignorant persons, this testifieth our love and our charity. This is a blanching of the matter, and the casting of a new paint upon a rotten post. For who are these that pray for the dead, but such as never prayed for them being alive? nay, do not indeed know which way to pray? When the Scripture taxeth shows of hypocrisy, and reproveth private prayers in public places; they have their answer ready, they do it to stir up to devotion, and to fill and prepare themselves to perform holy duties. Yea, but this ought to be done at home: private places are appointed for private actions, and public, for such as are public. They kneel down to their own devotions, that sildome or never pray at home, and have no care to prepare themselves privately before they come; whereas GOD knoweth, and man knoweth, and the Minister knoweth, that these men that are so devout at private prayer in open places, sit most profanely, most unreverently and unseemly at public prayers. Touching the Sabbath day, it is notoriously known what blanches they have to cover their vile blemishes, or rather their sores; as that a man may learn as much at

one Sermon in the forenoone, as he can well meditate upon in the afternoon, and practice all the rest of the week. O how do these deceive themselves! God knoweth the heart of these hypocrites. It is not the care they have of meditation and practice, that causeth them to speak this; for how do they spend that time but in pleasure and vanity? So for the Sacraments, they say they cannot come to communicate, because they are not in charity with their neighbors, they are not prepared as they ought to be. Thus they think to creep away in the dark, and to be holden excused. But this is to excuse one sin with another, and to add sin unto sin.

Lastly, this must teach us on the contrary, [Use 4] that we must not color our actions like hypocrites, and pretend to justify our selves when we know they are evil. This is a sign of an evil heart and of a guilty conscience: this is no better then to bind two evils together in one bundle, first to dare them to do evil, and then to color it. And this latter is worse then the former, it showeth less grace and more corruption. God cannot be deceived by any pretence cunningly contrived, though man may be, because our most secret actions and imaginations are manifest before him. This provoketh God's wrath the more, and when we must appear before his righteous judgment, all things shall appear as they are, and all colorable pretences shall vanish away as smoke, and all things shall appear as they are indeed. God is a perfect light, *he dwelleth in light that none can attain unto*, 1 Tim. 6.16. and yet if he be not light enough, he will take other lights to help him, and *search Jerusalem with candles*, that he may punish the men that are settled on their lees, that say in their hearts, *The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil*, Zephan. 1.12. Then certainly he will discover all, even the secret parts of thy heart, which now thou goest about to hide and conceal. Then he will make us know that he knew all things which are written in this book of remembrance.

4 And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face.

5 And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even tomorrow the Lord will show who are his, and who is holy, and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen, will he cause to come near unto him.

6 This do: Take your censers, Korah and all his company.

7 And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord tomorrow: and the man whom the Lord doth choose, the same shall be holy: Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.

Here beginneth the proceeding against these seditious, first by *Moses*, and then by God himself. The Lord first setteth his Ministers on work, to deal with this people, if that will not serve, then he will take the cause into his own hand. First, *Moses fell on his face*, a common gesture used in prayer: thereby no doubt making supplication to God to appease the multitude. Then he turneth his speech to *Korah*, and appealeth to the just judgment of God,

that it would please him to decide the question whom he had chosen to be his Priests, as *Elijah* did, 1 King. 18.24. *in their halting between two opinions*. Then in the end he returneth their false accusation, justly upon their own heads, and showeth that he was not afraid of their faces: they had said to *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the Congregation are holy*; he payeth them home in their own language, *Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi*. Here *Moses* setteth forth the dignity of the Ministry, that there is a special covenant and agreement between God and his Ministers. The doctrine, It is a special favor that God maketh a covenant with his Church, that they shall be a precious people in his sight; but it is a far greater favor, that among or out of his Church in general, the Lord should make a more special covenant with his Ministers, that he should take them to be a peculiar people to himself, 1 Sam. 2.28. and 3.20. Exod. 19.22. 2 Cor. 2.15.16. Mal. 2.5, 6.

[Reason 1] The reasons follow. First, the Ministers are God's servants and Ambassadors, 2 Cor. 5.20. they are in special place about him, such as stand before him, and minister unto him upon earth, as the Angels minister unto him in heaven, Mal. 2.7. and 3.1. Revel. 1.20. and 2.1. and 3.1.

[Reason 2] Secondly, they are as it were of God's privy counsel, not to give him counsel, but to take counsel from him, and to reveal his counsels to the sons of men, Amos 3.7. for therefore he teacheth them, that they should teach his people, Mal. 2.7. True it is, God revealeth his secrets to his people, nevertheless, it is by the means of the Minister.

[Use 1] This serveth fitly and fully to reprove such base persons that think basely of the Ministry, and those that account the Ministers as the scum or refuse of the people, who indeed are little better themselves, (I will not give them the titles which they justly do deserve) dishonoring that calling which God himself hath highly honored, and throw down that which he hath advanced and lifted up. I range among such those also, that think the Ministry too base for their birth or quality, yea they think their kindred exceedingly debased and disgraced, if they have a Minister of their name. We would think it an high honor for any of our children or kindred, to be preferred as a special fauorite about a Prince: and yet we cannot be content that they should have this special calling and judgment of the Ministry, which is not inferior to any place or calling whatsoever in the common wealth, as we have shown often before.

True it is, the greatest part of the world think otherwise, and I confess it: but it is because they have corrupt eyes which the vain pomp and glory of the world do dazzle, so that they cannot see nor perceive the glory of God in the calling of the Ministers of the Gospel. For if they had a better and a clearer sight, they would think it the greatest honor and highest favor to be set in that calling.

Secondly, this is an admonition and warning [Use 2] to all men, that they should not in any case abuse, offend, disgrace, wrong, and revile those that are called of God to be the Ministers of his word, whom he hath set *to be near unto him*: because they are in special grace and favor with God. Dare any oppose against him that is the kings friend or fauorite? Do not all desire and seek his favor? how then dare we disgrace and dishonor those whom God

would have honored, and speak contemptibly and contumeliously of their Ministry, seeing God hath said they are the men whom he would have honored? When the king would have *Mordecai* honored for the good service he had done to his person, he said, *What shall be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor?* The Ministers are God's special favorites, and therefore such as wrong and molest them shall not be left unpunished: for those whom God will honor, they shall be honored, especially of those that know the use, necessity, & profit of the Ministry.

Thirdly, from hence ariseth matter of comfort [Use 3] to the Ministers themselves. Hath he made a special league and covenant with them to favor and protect them? Then we are assured, that the injuries and wrongs which are done unto them, rest not in their persons, but extend to God himself who is wronged with them, so that he will revenge their wrongs, and protect their persons, Deut. 33.11. *Smite through the loins of those that rise up against them, that they rise not again.* We have also comfort as a shield and shelter from the base estimation of the unthankful world; though they hate us as enemies, yet God honoreth us as his servants, nay as his friends, and receiveth us into special favor: so that he often maketh us to be had in great honor & estimation, even of those that before had so basely esteemed of us. Let it not therefore trouble us, though we be not regarded of men, seeing we stand or fall, not to them, but to our own Master, who hath thus far honored us to be put into his service; and therefore let us say with the Apostle, *It is a small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self,* 1. Cor. 4.3.

Lastly, it teacheth what the Ministers of God ought to be, they should be men of an unblameable life and holy conversation, because they come so near to God, lest it be said to them, as Psal. 50.16. *What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.*

If all the people of GOD must be holy, much more then ought the Ministers to be endued and adorned with integrity of life. They must be neither ignorant nor vain, because *they come near unto God.* He that loveth his friend, will be very wary and circumspect what manner of servants he commendeth to his friend to be in his service: and yet how unfaithfully do many deal with God y^t dare commend to him idle & wicked Ministers to be his servants, and to carry his word to his people? It were to be wished, that such as have authority in their hands would turn all such unworthy servants out of his service, and put them to silence, which cause the holy ordinances of God to be profaned and polluted by their wickedness.

8 And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi.

9 Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself, to do the service of the Tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the Congregation to minister unto them?

10 And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the Priesthood also?

Moses proceedeth and goeth forward to see if he could draw these proud conspirators to a sight of their sins, and thereupon putteth *Korah* in mind how graciously God had dealt with him and the rest of the Levites, to suffer them to come near unto him to do the service of the Tabernacle, and to stand before the Congregation to minister unto him: upon which consideration he moveth them, that they should not be carried beyond the bounds of their calling. [Doctrine.] We learn hereby, that the moe means and helps we have to prevent sin and to keep our selves from offending against God, the greater our sin is, and the greater sinners we are, if we break these bands and cast these cords from us. The sins of the Israelites are often aggravated, and made the more grievous and heinous, because the Lord had sent his prophets among them, Ier. 7.13, 14. and 11.7, 8. and 35.14. Psa. 78.17, 31, 35, 56. Matth. 11.21, 22, 23, 24. Dan. 9.5.6.

[Reason 1] The reasons. First, because those men sin against knowledge, having the word to inform them, and their own consciences to convince them. Knowledge maketh every sin the greater, Luk. 12 47. John. 15.22. and 12.48. They are like to a man that hath much meat and digesteth nothing, so that it corrupteth in the stomach and doth him no good at all. Now they that have many means for the soul, are like him that hath much meat for the body: for they that hear much and have many instructions, and yet do not bring forth fruits answerable thereunto, their sin is the greater, and themselves thereby made inexcusable. [Reason 2] Secondly, it argueth obstinacy and hardness of heart; they have many strokes given them, but they feel none of them. For such as transgress in the middes of those helps that serve to restrain sin, do not sin of infirmity or weakness, but of obstinacy and willfulness. Now the more willful a man is, the more sinful he is, and the greater is his sin.

This convinceth our times of much sinfulness, [Use 1] and in these times some places, and in those places sundry persons, to be greater sinners then others. And why greater? Because our times have had more means to prevent and keep from sin then other times have had. *What could the Lord have done for us, that he hath not done?* We have been as his vineyard which he hath fenced, he hath gathered the stones out of it, he hath planted it with the choicest plants, and hedged about it, that the beasts of the field and of the forest should not hurt it: he may therefore justly look that it should bring forth grapes, but it hath brought forth wild grapes, Isaiah 5.4, 5. or as his fig tree which he hath digged and dunged, and therefore he may well seek fruit thereon, especially having waited with patience for it.

What hath not God done for us and to us to reclaim us? Our times and people have had many deliverances from dangers, that other times and people have not had, which threatened us both within and without, both foreign and domestical. We have had greater blessings bestowed upon us then others: we have had the word more plentifully preached to us, then others. All these (we being unthankfull and disobedient) do make us greater sinners then others which have wanted these blessings. Thus do we turn our blessings to be our bane, and God's mercies to be curses upon us. We see many Congregations, where God hath risen early

and late, giving them his word and faithful Ministers as diligent watchmen to admonish them, and to threaten his judgments, are oftentimes more sinful then other places that have wanted these means, and no worse persons in the world then some that live under the standing Ministry of the word, God in just judgment giving them over to Satan. If such be given to common and continual swearing and abusing of the Name of God, to contempt of the word and of the Sabbath, they are greater sinners then others, and are more guilty in his sight, and consequently shall be more sharply and severely punished.

Secondly, it admonisheth all that enjoy the [Use] means of preventing sin, as benefits and blessings, the Scriptures and word of God, his corrections and chastisements, his promises & threatenings, his patience & long sufferance, y^t they labor to make profit by thē & to fulfil all righteousness, lest God account their sin greater then others. For we must know this, whatsoever is a sin in others; is a treble sin in them, because they have the sword of God to cut the knots and sinews of sin in sunder, when others have not had that means. We may with grief speak of many places, that *Israel hath been without a teaching Priest, and without Law*, 2 Chro. 15.3. they have wanted the gracious means of salvation to teach, to reprove, to instruct, and to correct: & therefore no marvel if sin abound. But they that live where sin is daily met withal and encountered, do make their sin out of measure sinful. Let us therefore diligently examine our selves, how we are affected at the hearing of the preaching of the word, and of the threatenings denounced against our sins.

[Use 3] Lastly, learn from hence y^t the word is never preached in vain, whether we be converted by it, or not. For it is like *the rain and snow that falleth from heaven, that returneth not thither again*, Isaiah 55.10, 11. *So the word of God shall not return to him as a void and vain thing, but shall accomplish that which he pleaseth, and shall prosper in the thing whereunto he sendeth it*, But some will say, Then it is better to be without the word, then to have it: if men's sins be so much the greater, because they have been so much taught: and it may seem better, not to hear it at all. I answer, this is true in some sort, howbeit not simply in it self. Let no man think his case the happier, because he wanteth the word; for as *Paul* saith, they that have the law, if they contemn it, shall perish by the law: and they that want the Law, shall perish without the law, Rom. 2.12. Besides, they may be said to have the means, y^t want them when they may have them. No man must reject the word, because they that refuse it are made worse by it. Would a man be willing to cast away his wealth, because he seeth himself made worse by it, more covetous, more cruel, more hard hearted, more high minded? We see no, in the example of the rich man, Matt. 19. rather then he would cast it away, he would labor for a liberal hand and a merciful heart to use it aright: so is it in this case. Indeed, it had been better we had never known the word and the way of righteousness by the direction of the word, then to depart from it: better I say, in respect of the end of our estate and the judgment that hangeth over us, yet we should not therefore wish to be without the word, but rather to have a sanctified heart that we may keep our selves from the sins of others. Then we will account it an happy thing to live in such places, where the word of God is truly preached. Let us therefore labor to make good use of the good means that our good God hath afforded us for our good, and labor to profit by them in faith and obedience, or else our sins shall be made so much the greater, and consequently our judgments the greater also.

11 For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord: and what is Aaron that ye murmur against him?

Here *Moses* farther layeth open the sin of *Korah* and his confederates; neither doth he charge them behind their backs, as if he were afraid to speak to them, but to their faces, that, if they had anything to say, they might answer for themselves. It is the manner of many men, to be liberal of speech of those that are absent, but are ready to hold their peace when they are present to plead for themselves. Now he telleth them that the contempt of *Aaron* was the contempt of God; and their murmuring against him, a murmuring against God. We learn hereby, [Doctrine.] that to rebel against the message of God, to scorn and reject it, is to rebel against God, to scorn and reject God himself, Exod. 16.8. 1 Sam. 8.7. Isaiah 7.13. Whatsoever is brought unto us, whether it be the promises of God for the establishment and confirmation of our faith, or instructions for our obedience, by the messengers and Ministers of God, if it be refused and resisted, God himself is rejected and the Spirit of grace is despited, Lu. 10.16. John. 13.20. 1 Thess. 2.15, 16.

The reasons, because first they come not in [Reason 1] their own name, neither do they discharge their own message: they are no other then the mouth of God; they come not from themselves, neither for themselves, their authority and calling is from God. Therefore *Moses* saith in this place, *What is Aaron that ye murmur against him?* And the Apostle saith of himself & the other fellow laborers, 1 Cor. 3.5. *Who is Paul, or what is Apollo, but the Ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase is all in all.*

Secondly, God doth account all things [Reason 2] done to thē, in the execution of their Ministry, as done to himself, Matth. 10.40. *He that receiveth you, receiveth me: and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me:* therefore he that receiveth the Minister, receiveth with him God the Father.

It is the duty of all to prepare themselves [Use 1] when they come to the Ministry of the word, because then they must consider that they are come into the presence of God himself, to receive, not so much from the mouth of the Minister, as from the mouth of God, direction and instruction concerning his will, Deut. 5.27, 28. Gal. 4.14. 1 Thess. 2.13. O my brethren, if we did believe this to be the truth of God, we would not stumble so much against it, and be so often offended at it, we would not reject it and set so light by it as too commonly we do. Let us be like to *Cornelius*, Act. 10.33. We must set our selves in God's presence, whensoever we begin to hear the <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> word of God. We ought as much as we can, to suppress all thought and consideration of men, and weigh with our selves from whence the word cometh, from whom the messenger cometh, & in whose Name he speaketh unto us. This is a forcible means to make us profit by hearing. He that can see in the person of the Minister the person of God, and settle his affections wholly upon God, whom he knoweth to be present with him, I never doubt of that man, but he will hear to his salvation.

[Use 2] Secondly, acknowledge from hence, that the despising of the word of God, the not believing or not consenting to it when it is taught by men like to our selves, is one of the greatest sins of all other that can fall out among the sons of men. As it is most common, so it is most fearful, and shall receive the greatest punishment from God, Matt. 10.14, 15. Act. 13.51. O that all men would take a scantling of this sin by a right consideration of the doctrine which I handle, and you hear. For the doctrine teacheth that the withstanding of the Ministry of the word, and murmuring against his ordinance, is an open standing out against God, and a resisting of him. Can there be greater pride, insolency, contempt, unthankfulness, rebellion, and disobedience, then to resist the Lord? The Apostle speaking of the Magistrate saith, *Whosoever resisteth the power, shall receive to himself damnation*: if this be true of man, much more may we affirm it of God, that whosoever resisteth him shall bring upon himself swift and sudden damnation. For are we stronger then he? Now, we must understand, that all such as set themselves withal their might and cunning against the Ministry of the word, they do as it were take God to task, they single him out to combat with all, but they shall find in the ende themselves unequally matched. Shall he that is dust lift up himself against his maker? shall he that is no better then a blast or puff of wind contend with him that rideth upon the wings of the wind, and is able to scatter us as chaff before the wind? O then how fearful will the account be of many among us, that show as great scorn and contempt, as great security and infidelity, as the Jews did, 2 Chron. 36. for which they were carried away into captivity and swept out of the land of their habitation! Such persons do in a manner bid God defiance to his face. For when the Minister preacheth, God preacheth: when the Minister threateneth, God threateneth: when the Minister promiseth, God promiseth: when the Minister comforteth, God comforteth. It is he that speaketh by his servants the Prophets, Heb. 1.1. When they beseech us to be reconciled, God beseecheth us by their Ministry, 2 Cor. 5.20. True it is, they speak, but God speaketh to us in them & by them. This made the Apostle say, *We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also, that ye receive not the grace of God in vain*, 2 Cor. 6.1. That which is spoken of the Sacrament of Baptism, may rightly be spoken of the Ministry of the word. It is said, that Jesus came into the land of Judea and baptized, John. 3.23. but it was by the hands of his disciples, John. 4.2. The Baptism was his, but the Ministry was theirs. So doth the Lord preach unto us, as Christ then baptized, he preacheth to us by the mouth of his Minister, he speaketh whē they speak unto us. Such then as yield not to the promises, or threatenings, or admonitions that are offered unto them, what do they but say plainly, I will not believe God, I will not commit myself and mine whole estate into his hands, I do not think that he will do as he threateneth? This is no other then to give unto God the lie to his face.

Lastly, this giveth comfort and encouragement [Use 3] to all the Ministers of God in the thanklesse labors of their wearisome calling. God will care for us, howsoever men reject us. He will confirm our word by testimony from himself, in his mercies toward them that believe, in his judgments upon the wicked that resist, and in preserving us because we have been faithful in doing the message for which we are sent, Ezek. 33.32.33. Matth. 10.19, 20, 22, 26, 28, 29, 30. It is also a comfort to all such as do hear aright, such as bring forth the fruit of the Gospel, do not only receive the Gospel, but they receive God himself.

12 And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, which said, We will not come up.

13 Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a Prince over us?

14 Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land, &c.

Moses having spoken to *Korah* the principal conspiratour that first began to roll this stone, and nothing at all prevailed against him, doth not give over, but trieth if any of the rest had anymore spark of grace, or fear of God in them. But the farther he proceedeth, the less hope he findeth. For *Dathan* and *Abiram* refuse to come unto him. Before this they assembled themselves tumultuously before they were called, but now being lawfully called, they will not assemble. Nay, they open their mouths to accuse him of cruelty and treachery, both of them heinous crimes, but both of them falsely ascribed unto him: Of cruelty, as if he purposed to kill them in the wilderness: of treachery, as if he had brought them from a *land flowing with milk and honey*, but had brought them to possess no land. Thus they prefer Egypt before Canaan, the place from which they were gone before the place to which they were going. And yet this is not the depth of their impiety; for I take this answer of theirs to be a very mock and scoff cast out partly against *Moses*, and partly against God, which will appear if we compare the words of *Moses* to *Korah* with this answer. For *Moses* had said, Seemeth it but a small thing to you to seek the Priesthood also? they borrow his own words and cast them in his own face, Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us into the wilderness to kill us? As if they had said, Thou tellest us that it is a great matter to usurp the Priesthood, but why dost thou not consider, that it is also a far greater matter to kill so great a multitude? And whereas God so often promised to give to Israel a *land flowing with milk and honey*, they turn it into a jest, and tell *Moses* that Egypt was that fruitful land, as for other land they could see none for their feet to rest upon. We learn hereby, that they which are hardened in sin, and resolved not to give over, do not only stop their ears against all reproof, which notwithstanding is a great sin, but revile, rail upon, and despise such as tell them the truth, and lay before them their faults, though they be the Ministers of God that do it; This we saw before verse 3. in *Korah* and his company, *They gathered themselves against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you*, 1 King. 18.17. and 21.20. and 22.8. Ierem. 15.10. and 18.18. and 44.16, 17. Acts 17.18.

[Reason 1] The reasons: first because as no bitter things are pleasant to the sick man, who would ever have his humor served, so no reproofs are pleasant to the sinner, 1 King. 22.7. Every sinner is as a sick man; and every reproof is as a bitter ingredient, nothing pleasing to the taste. A wicked man desireth to hear nothing but pleasing things: to give a reproof unto him, is no better welcome unto him, then if you gave him gall and vinegar to drink.

[Reason 2] Secondly, they are fallen into a sweet sleep of sin, and cannot abide to be awaked, or any way disturbed and disquieted. They love to go to hell with ease, they would not be troubled in their journey. But the reproofs of the Minister do cross them, and therefore they speak all manner of evil against him.

[Use 1] This showeth the miserable condition of such as justify themselves in their sins, who being convicted of a great height of iniquity and impiety, do cast the Ministers reproof as dung into his face, and defend whatsoever themselves have committed. A sick man that is so far from taking the potion given him by the counsel of a learned Physician, that instead of taking it, he doth cast it in the Physicians face, may well be thought to be in a desperate condition and must needs perish: so it is with men spiritually sick with sin, even heart-sick, who are so far from receiving a rebuke at the hand of the Minister, that they will be impatient toward him, and return rebuke for rebuke unto his face, nay storm and rail at him with opprobrious and contumelious terms, it argueth they are forlorn men and in a pitiful and desperate estate. It were infinite to speak of all sorts that are possessed with a spirit of contradiction to gainsay the truth. Some find fault because we reprove such sins as are not found in the place where we preach: others, because by reproofing sinners, we would seem to make the world believe, that they are more sinful then other people, and thereby make them odious to others. Others accuse us, that we reprove sin out of hatred and malice, not out of love: malice to their person, not hatred of the sin. But the Minister is to reprove any sin that is in the land: besides, how know they it is not in that place? And if it be not, we know not how soon it may be. We must learn to detest all sin, but how shall we detest that which we know not? and if we do know it, no man knoweth it so well, but he may know it better: and no man detesteth it so much, but he may learn to detest it more. The assaults of Satan and temptations to sin come suddenly, if we be not forewarned, we may be surprised suddenly.

Again, the reproofing of sin in one place is not the clearing of another, or in one person is not the justifying of another. Lastly, to accuse the Ministers of reproofing through malice, proceedeth in themselves from want of charity. *Ahab* accused *Micaiah* of hatred because *he never prophesied good unto him, but evil*: but indeed the hatred was in himself: as also he charged *Elijah* to be the man *that troubled Israel*, whereas indeed it was he and his fathers house, 1 Kin. 18.17, 18. we are thought to be their enemies, for no other cause but *because we tell them the truth*, Gal. 4.16. [Use 2]

Secondly, behold from hence the cause why the Minister of the Gospel is so ordinarily hated of the wicked world; it is upon no other ground, then because he doth reprove sin. If he would hold his peace and say nothing, or if he would sew pillows under men's elbows, or if he would *prophesy to them of wine and strong drink*, and give them liberty to do what they list, and then tell them all is well done, *he shall even be the Prophet of this people*, Mic. 2.11. The true Ministers of the word are never loved of the world, because they cannot but strike at the head and root of sin with the two edged sword of the word, wheresoever they find it: therefore they are made as marks for everyone to shoot at, John. 7.7. and if themselves spare them, yet they can be content to hear others speak evil of them, without defending them and their righteousness. But howsoever it go with us, it is our duty to preach the Gospel, and

to go through good report and bad report, 1 Cor. 9.16. Eze. 3.17. We have the charge of men's souls committed unto us, we bring *glad tidings of peace, and glad, tidings of good things*, Rom. 10.15. We should be welcome unto our people, and therefore it is unreasonable we should receive such a recompense of our labors, as to be reviled and evil spoken off. But this hath been the condition of the Prophets, of the Apostles, of Christ himself: he was called *Beelzebub*, and charged to cast out devils by the power of y^e devil. Let us wait upon our Lord and master that hath called us, he will give us a better recompense of our service, Dan. 12. We shall shine as the stars, and Isaiah 49.4. My judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

[Use 3] Lastly, everyone ought to examine himself, whether he be guilty of this sin or not: and if he be, to labor to repent of it and to reform himself, if not for the Ministers sake, yet for our own sake, and the salvation of our own souls. True it is, the Ministers are oftentimes forced to speak many things that are not pleasing to the hearers: yet should the people suffer the words of exhortation, admonition, and reprehension, considering that in all of them they aim wholly at their good. The Physician is oftentimes troublesome to his patients, and the father giveth many checks to his sons, yet do they truly love them and seek their good, even while they do molest and trouble them: so is it with the Ministers of God, albeit they do grieve and molest the people of God, yet it is for their good and salvation, and therefore they may say with the apostle, *If any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me but in part: that I may not ouercharge you all*, 2 Cor. 2.5. Therefore it is y^e duty of the people, quietly to suffer the word of exhortation and to digest a reproof, thereby to show themselves obedient in all things, for this is *the proof and trial of our hearts*, 2 Cor. 2.9.

15 And Moses was very wroth, and said unto the Lord, respect not thou their offering: I have not taken one asse from them, neither have I hurt one of them.

16 And Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the Lord, thou and they, and Aaron tomorrow.

17 And take everyone his censer, &c.

18 And they took every man his censer, &c.

19 And Korah gathered, &.

We see here how *Moses* appealeth from them to God the judge of heaven and earth, and referreth the deciding of the controversy unto him. This is the preparation to the punishment of these men: wherein consider, first the anger of *Moses* against them; secondly his prayer to God to reject their offering: [Doctrine.] thirdly, his words to *Korah*. In his anger observe, that it is the duty of all God's children, to be angry at sin, whensoever they see God dishonored, and his ordinances contemned and despised. There is a sanctified and holy kind

of anger, Exod. 16.20. albeit Moses were the *meekest man upon the earth*, as we heard before, Num. 12.3. Yet when he saw their disobedience, he was wroth with them. The like we see Exod. 32.19, 20. and in *Elijah*, 1 Kin. 19.14. Ier. 6.10, 11. it is called *the fury of the Lord*. All zeal consisteth of anger, Numb 25.7. The reasons will farther confirm this point.

For first, in many places of the Scripture it [Reason 1] is attributed unto God, Rom. 1.18. Josh. 3.36. But to the nature of God nothing can agree, but that which is just and holy. Secondly, [Reason 2] that affection was truly and naturally in Christ our Savior, Mar. 3.5. *he looked angerly upon them, mourning for the hardness of their hearts*: so John. 2.17.

The uses: first the affection of anger is not in it self unlawful. True it is, there is a [Use 1] corrupt anger, which we are to strive against and labor to suppress, 1 Tim. 2.8. Matth. 5.23. Job 36.18. there is also an holy and lawful anger, when it hath a good ground, and is seasoned with moderation, Levite. 10.16. 2. Sam. 12.5. and 13.21. Neh. 5.6. Ester 7.7. The Stoics, one of the stricter sects of the Philosophers, condemn all anger; but this is to make men senseless, and to transform them into stocks and stones. For it was created of God, and was in man before the fall, and before any evil entered into the world. All the workmanship of God was approved to be very good, Gen. 1.31. so that being more ancient then evil, it must be holden in it own nature to be good and lawful. But it will be objected that anger in many places is forbidden, [Object. 1] and condemned, Matthew, chapter, 5. [Answ.] verse 22. I answer, not all anger, but all corrupt anger, such as *are angry unadvisedly*. So then, he speaketh of this affection, not as it was created, or renewed by God's Spirit, but as it is corrupted and depraved with original sin. [Object. 2] Again, it will be said, that the Stoics define it to be a perturbation of the mind, [Answer.] and therefore evil. I answer, that perturbation is double: sometimes it is moved upon just causes, and sometimes upon unjust causes. The perturbation of the mind moved upon unjust causes is unjust and evil, the other is just and commendable. The perturbation is good if the causes be good: it is evil, if the cause be evil. Lastly, it will be alleged, that Christ [Object. 3] our Savior teacheth us, [Answer.] when we have received *a blow on the right cheek, we should turn to him the other also*, Matth. 5.39. I answer, the meaning is not, that we should expose our selves to all injuries but abstain from all private revenge, having no calling thereunto. Whensoever those two come in question together, either to revenge or to receive a new wrong and a fresh injury, we must choose the latter: because to revenge is simply evil in the doer, but to suffer wrong is not evil or sinful in the sufferer.

[Use 2] Secondly, this reproveth such as know not what this holy and sanctified anger meaneth, which can prosecute their own causes and quarrels with the greatest desire of vengeance, but know not what it is to be angry in the cause of God. It was not so with *Moses*, as we saw before. Some are provoked by every small and trifling occasion. Heereby charity is violated, which suffereth long, 1 Cor. 13.7. and covereth a multitude of sins, Prov. 10.12. Anger looketh in a deceitful glass, which maketh every Moul-hill to seem a mountain, every small slip is esteemed a capital offense, and every word of disgrace worthy of a stab. Others are provoked when there is no ground but their own suspicion, as *Eliab* was angry with his brother *David*, because he suspected him to have come to the battle in the pride of his heart,

1 Sam. 17.28. And this is y^e common cause of much anger and heartburning in our days, want of love causeth men to interpret the actions of others in worse sense, and upon their own false surmise they ground their anger. One is angry, because saluting his neighbor, he did not salute him again; and speaking friendly to him, he would not speak again: albeit haply he saw him not, or observed him not. Another, because he heareth his vices reproveth out of the word of God, beginneth to rage through impatience; in which regard oftentimes it falleth out, that he incurreth more anger and danger that reproveth sin, then he that committeth it. Of this evil anger doth the Apostle speak, Eph. 4.31.26, 27. and *Solomon*, Prov. 14.17, 29. and 29.22. Many are the evils and mischiefs that follow this evil affection, forasmuch as it overturneth both the Law and the Gospel. It were an easy thing to run over most of the commandments which it causeth men to break, and in a manner defaceth the whole image of God. For first, how should we love God whom we have not seen, if we do not love our neighbor whom we have seen? 1. John. 4 20.

Secondly, it overthroweth the principal part of God's worship which standeth in the invocation of God's Name, Ps. 26.6. 1 Tim. 2.8. Mat. 5.23. Thirdly, it causeth the breach of the third commandment, by causing men through impatience to fall to cursing and banning, to swearing and blaspheming the Name of God. For when they grow choleric against others, they utter sundry horrible imprecations, and begin to fret and rage against God himself. Fourthly, it maketh men altogether unfit for the exercises of the Sabbath, having their minds distracted and disturbed with thinking upon the wrongs and injuries of others and their own revenge. No man can hear the word of God aright that is choked with this thorn, I am. 1.19, 20, 21. 1 Pet 2.1, 2. Neither doth this passion work any better effects in the second Table, for as much as it turneth justice and charity upside down: Justice it self, which requireth that the same be given to everyone which belongeth unto him: whereas anger maketh men not only to neglect doing of good duties which they owe to their neighbors, but to oppress them with injuries and revenge: Charity, which is the sum of the Second Table, the effect whereof is this, that we love our neighbor as our self. But anger maketh men hate them as mortal enemies. It often bringeth forth murder and shedding of blood, Ge. 34.25. 1 John. 3.12, 15. Whereby we are also made like unto Satan, for he is the spirit of dissention, as God is a Spirit of love, and of peace. It is the nature of Satan to delight in rage and fury, for he is a *murderer from the beginning*, John. 8.44. Besides, it is a sin against the Gospel, and maketh us subject to God's anger, and bringeth impenitency and stoppeth the course of God's forgiveness toward us. For as we forgive others, so doth he forgive us, Matth. 6.14, 15. if therefore we retain our anger toward our brethren, God will retain his anger toward us.

Lastly, we must examine our selves, whether [Use 3] our anger be just or not. We are of our selves prone to break out into choler, and to be moved otherwise then there is cause. We must therefore mark two things, the causes thereof, and the effects: If the causes be God's glory, injury offered to our selves or our neighbors, if the cause be weighty, and the affection moderate: If the effects which it bringeth forth be duty to God and man, then it is a lawful anger: but if otherwise, it is unsanctified and unlawful. Let us learn to be most moved in God's cause, as *Moses* was; the glory of God was precious and dear unto him. So it was with *Phinehas*, Numb. 25.7, 8. so it was with *Elias*, 1 Kin. 19.14. because *the children of Israel had*

broken down his Covenant, cast down his Altars, and slain his Prophets. Happy are we if these things move us, and go near unto us.

[Verse 15. *Respect not thou their offering.*] It may seem strange that he which before had spoken against them, should now pray against them. We are commanded to pray one for another, so that *Moses* may seem to break the rule of charity. I answer, this toucheth not their persons, nor their lives, but he desireth their amendment, that they may be ashamed of their own folly, & confounded in their own pride. He craveth of God no more, thē to show and make manifest his own innocence and uprightness, which was to be decided by that offering. We learn hereby, [Doctrine.] that God respecteth not the works of evil men, be they performed never so religiously outwardly, Gen. 4.4, 5. Isaiah 1.11.12, and 66.3. Prov. 15.8. and 21.27. Ierem. 6.20. The reasons follow.

First, whatsoever they do, is sin, 1 Tit. [Reason 1] 1.15 *their mind and conscience is defiled.* Secondly, [Reason 2] their persons do not please him, Gen. 4.4, 5. Mal. 1.10. God regarded not *Caines* Oblation, because he regarded not *Caines* person: and he regarded not *Caines* person, because he was a wicked and faithless man.

[Use 1] The uses. First, we may therefore conclude, that such works as God hath not commanded, shall not be received, Matth. 15.9. *In vain they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* Many do think to please God by their good intents, but that is a *vain worship.* God will be served according to his own will, not after our own fancies. He hath set down and appointed how he will be worshipped, he hath not left it to our discretion, whatsoever the Papists prattle.

[Use 2] Secondly, it reproveth such as think it enough to come to the place of God's worship, and to be present at prayer, the word, and Sacraments, albeit they bring with them no true devotion. These do exceedingly deceive themselves, dishonor God, and profane his holy things, which is a grievous sin. These men do lay the foundation of all their hope, and the stay of all their comfort upon the broken staff of an outward sacrifice, which in the end will fail them. For albeit they be never so loose in their lives, and profane in their conversations, yet they trust by virtue of their good prayers and other good deeds, to pacify God's wrath, to escape his judgments, to make amends for their sins, and to come to heaven by the string of their works. Of this sort are infinite numbers, who, as they satisfy themselves, so they think to satisfy God with external words and works. These are in deed holy in themselves, if they were religiously performed: but as they proceed from them, they are hypocritical and accursed. These are such as shall say, *We have eat and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets:* but he shall say, *I tell you, I know you not, whence ye are, depart from me all ye workers of iniquity,* Luke 13.26, 27. And to all such the Prophet saith, *put away the evil of your works,* Esa. 1.16. Our plausible shows (be they never so great) can do us no good, God seeth the falsehood of our hearts, and hateth the same: as on the other side, he commendeth and rewardeth the meanest service that the faithful yield, being offered in the uprightness of their minds.

[Use 3] Lastly, we must learn to come to God in an holy and right manner, with a true faith, a sincere affection, and a purpose to perform obedience, or else all is in vain. Hence it is that Christ saith, *Take heed not only what you hear*, Mar. 4.24. but also *how ye hear*, Luk. 8.18. If we look as well to the manner, as to the matter of our service, we shall be accepted; and be well assured of happy and good success.

[Verse 16, 18, 19. *Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the Lord, &c.*] In the words before, he protested his own innocence, that he had given them no just cause of this insurrection, he had not taken an asse from them, nor any way hurt them; wherein he speaketh modestly of himself, for he had done them all good, and preferred their safety before his own life, To teach us, that Magistrates should be upright in their government, and seek the good of those over whom they are set. Such was the sincerity of *Moses* in this behalf, that he appealeth unto God for the truth of it.

The like we see in *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 12.3. he made protestation in the sight of the Lord, and before his Anointed, that he had not laid his hand upon any man's goods, so much as a shoe, and no man could accuse him: and in *Paul*, Act. 20.18.33, 34. So Exod. 18.21. They must be men fearing God, and hating coueteousnesse, which is *the root of all evil*, 1. Tim. 6 and no better then idolatry, Ephe. 5. *Gehazi* coveted and obtained both money and raiment of *Naaman*, but he procured from God the plague of leaproisie, as the wages of his iniquity, 2 King. 5. *Achan* dreamed of a golden day, when he stole away the wedge of gold, but he was stoned with stones for his labor, Josh. 7. *Judas* received thirty pieces of silver for betraying his master, but it was not long before he brought them back and hanged himself. But to proceed, consider the care *Moses* hath of the good of these men, he laboreth again and again to reform them.

Hitherto he saw no good of his labors, yet he will not give over, until God command him to separate the people from them, as desperate persons that could not be recovered. The Ministers, though they see little or no fruit of their labors, yet must continue in teaching; and though they gain unto God few or none at all, they must not give over, but be constant in the work of the Lord.

The reasons follow. First, because we [Reason 1] know not when God may be pleased to bless our labors, and hear our prayers, and save the souls of those that are rebellious against him, 2 Tim. 2.25, 26. the man of God must be gentle unto all, *in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, &c.* The husbandman knoweth not what profit he shall receive of his labors, when he hath tilled his ground, and though he reap little profit the first year, he will not give over, but still he hopeth for better increase: so should it be with the Ministers of God, though we see little hope of gaining at the first, yet we should be constant, we know not how soon it may please him to bless our labors, to turn their hearts, and to add them unto the Church.

Secondly, we have the example of God, he [Reason 2] is patient and beareth long with the vessels of wrath, as Christ saith to Jerusalem, *he would have gathered them together*, but they would not, Matth. 23.37.

Thirdly, albeit we gain none, and when we hearken, we can hear no man repent of his wickedness, saying, *What have I done*, Ierem. 8.8. yet we do not altogether lose our labor: and in this it is better with us, then the earthly husbandman; if he have no increase, he loseth all his cost and labor. It is not so with us, for we shall have no less recompense, if we be found faithful in dispensing the word and Sacraments, then if we had gained many thousand souls to God, 2 Cor. 2.15. We are *the sweet savor of God* to every man, we shall have our reward with God. The servants, which our Savior sent out to *invite the guests*, moved none to come to the feast, yet were they never a whit less welcome (when they returned) to the master of the feast: he was indeed wroth with the guests that were bidden, not with the servants that did bid them, because they had done their deuoire. So God will not be offended with his Ministers, when they have done their endeavor, although they gain none to him, and therefore they have reason to be faithful and constant in their places.

[Use 1] This reproveth many Ministers, such as can be content to labor in their youth, and in time of their strength, and so long as they find good entertainment among men: but when once they grow old and are come to their gray hairs, and when they find not so good entertainment as before they did, or as they looked for, they grow idle and negligent in their callings, and as much as lieth in them they betray and deliver the people into the hands of their spiritual enemies. But these men are willing in age to receive the wages as well as in youth; and whether their doctrine be received or not, they are ready to receive their tithes. There is no reason, that while our hands are open, our mouths should be shut. When we are no longer able to labor through weakness of body, and the infirmities of age, we ought to be maintained of the Church, even for labors bestowed and strength spent in our youth. A good master will not turn out of his doors an old servant that hath been faithful to him, but keep him for the service he hath done him in his youth: and some will do as much to their very dog when he is grown old. Much more then ought it to be so with y^e Minister, he should not be turned out to the wide world, but reap the fruit that he hath sown in his youth. Others, while they are in poor and low estate, preach diligently, but when they are once grown warm, and have feathered their nests, and have caught that for which they fished, can be content to hold their peace, and hang up their nets, and say nothing at all. These lie under a fearful curse, *Woe unto them because they preach not the Gospel*.

These men grow rich themselves, but it is to be feared, they make a poor people. The flock hath fed them to the full, but they will not feed the flock, but suffer them to remain empty.

Secondly, this teacheth what love ought [Use 2] to be between the Minister and the people, seeing there is so much required of one toward another. If there be true love on the Ministers part toward the people, it cannot be that he should give over, but rather spend his strength and his time only for the good of those that are committed to his charge. This made the Prophet *Isaiah* answer the Lord, *Here am I, send me*, When he heard the voice of the Lord, saying, *Whom shall I send? and who will go for me: Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me*. So doth Christ charge *Peter* as he loved him to *feed his sheep and his lambes*, John. 21.15. On the other side, it is a great discouragement to the Minister, if he find not some love again from the people, answerable in some sort to his care and diligence. Nevertheless, if he

find no fruits of love from them, it shall not excuse him if he hold his peace, forasmuch as God will give him his reward, upon whom he is to depend.

Lastly, great comfort should arise from [Use 3] hence to every faithful Minister, and make him conscionable in his calling, to know that God requireth of him to persevere in teaching, and therefore he must never give over to speak in the Name of God. Such as *lay their hand upon the plough, and look back, are unfit for the kingdom of God*, Luke 9.62. As then it is said of every Christian man, *that if he be faithful unto the death, he shall receive the crown of life*, Revel. 2.10. so it is true of every Christian Minister, if he be faithful in preaching the Gospel unto the death, he shall receive *an incorruptible crown of glory*, not otherwise.

The prophet *Jeremiah* would have ceased crying, and have holden his peace, but the word was as fire within him, that it could not be smothered and suppressed, but the flame of it brake out. We have no promise, except we continue. Let no man therefore faint and wax weary, let no man give over, but hold out constantly to the end.

20 And the Lord spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, saying,

21 Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.

22 And they fell upon their faces and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, hath not one man only sinned, and wilt thou be wroth with all the Congregation?

26 And he spake unto the Congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye perish in all their sins.

Now doth the Lord take the cause into his own hand, and revealeth to *Moses* what he will do, that he would utterly destroy these conspirators, and all that belonged unto them. Touching the prayer of *Moses* and *Aaron*, who humbled themselves so soon as they heard the threatening of God, it teacheth that God's children have soft and tender hearts, if they hear the sound of God's threatening behind them: for it is as the crack of a terrible thunder like to rent the hard rocks in sunder, whereas the ungodly are senseless and feel nothing, albeit the threatening do concern themselves; see more of this before, chap. 14. Again, behold how, in this destruction, God provideth for the safety of his servants, he could do nothing till they were departed and separated from the wicked. The like we see in God's dealing toward *Lot*, *he being merciful unto him*, Gen. 19.16. for the Angels profess that *they could do nothing till he were gone*, v. 22. and chap. 18.32, We see then how the ungodly do fare the better for the company of the godly: for why were these seditious persons spared so long, but because many good men were among them? and so soon as they were departed from them, the *earth opened and swallowed* some of them, and *a fire came from heaven*, and consumed others. When the Sodomites were taken prisoners and carried away as captives, they were rescued and

delivered, but it was for *Lots* sake, because he was among them. So then wicked men may thank the godly for their deliverance, 2 King. 3.13, 14. Job 22.30. Act. 27.24. And why doth God spare this wicked world? Doubtless it is for his children's sake: but when once the number of them is accomplished, then will he rain down fire and brimstone upon the reprobate. Now from this commandment of God given to *Moses*, and by *Moses* to the people for the separating of themselves from the Synagogue, and departing from the assembly of these sinful men, [Doctrine.] we learn, that they which have society and familiarity with incurable and incorrigible persons, whē God cometh to judge and punish, shall be partakers of their punishment, Gen. 14.12.

The Sodomites had much good, in that *Lot* was among thē; but *Lot* had no good by his being among the Sodomites. They were freed from captivity, because they had him in their company: but he was led captive by the enemies, because he had them in his company. The Scripture is plentiful in this point, Pr. 9.6. and 4.14.15. Act. 2.40. Re. 18.4.

[Reason 1] The reasons are, first, because either they commit the same sins with them, or else they are drawn after a sort to consent unto them, if not in word or deed, yet at least by their silence: and then it will follow in equity, that they which consent with offenders, shall also have one punishment with them. So it is with God in this case, they that partake with other men in their sins, shall also partake with them in the punishment. For as there is an evil in word, so there is an evil in silence.

Secondly, all unnecessary society is a countenancing [Reason 2] and a confirming of them in their evil, and consequently it keepeth them from a sight of their sins & from turning unto God by true and unfeigned repentance, 1 Cor. 5.

Thirdly, except we do renounce their company, we cannot keep the commandments [Reason 3] of God, and obey him. The Prophet kept his mouth as with a bridle, while the wicked was before him, Ps. 39.1. We must not cast pearls before swine, *lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again, and rent us*, Matth. 7.6. Therefore doth *David* say, *Depart from me, ye evil doers, for I will keep the commandments of my God*: as if, while he was in their company and they in his, he could not do it.

This showeth the folly of such as tax those [Use 1] with a note of purity & singularity, which upon a good ground refuse to associate themselves with ungodly persons. They tax them of pride and term them self-conceited brethrē, reviling them & taunting them with one breath. For they call them brethren, no otherwise then in the spirit of scoffing; & self-conceited, in the spirit of *Shimei* railing at them, as he did at *David*, as if they did it for no other end, but because they would be thought better, holier, and wiser then other men; or as if they said, *Stand apart, for I am holier then thou*, Isaiah. 65.5.

Thus they accuse them to be uncharitable men, and to disdain their neighbors, and to think no company to be good enough for themselves. All these are false accusations, alleging false causes of their separation. It is not because they are new fangled, and so forsake their old friends and companions, and cast off all good fellowship: it is the commandment of God that doth require it, and their own both duty and safety that calleth for it.

Secondly, it reproveth such as can brook [Use 2] and digest all manner of people, and never refuse or find fault with any. It is no grief to them to hear and see anything, *they never vex their soul for it*, as righteous *Lot* did, and the reason is, because they want his righteousness, and therefore therefore they can brook, swallow, and digest unrighteousness.

They are not led by the same spirit that *Lot* was, who grieved at the unclean conversation of the Sodomites: neither is it with them, as it was with *David*, who cried out in the bitterness of his soul, *Woe is me that I remain in Meshek*, Psal. 120.5. that I dwell in the tents of Kedar. If they be in company with Ruffians, swaggerers, blasphemers, and drunkards, they can live and converse with them, as well or better then with others. And yet even these, when they come among those that fear the Lord, can discourse of points of Religion, they can report what excellent Sermons they have heard, and give a good testimony of many good preachers.

Thus do they gild and over-lay their tongues with fine gold, whereas there is nothing else but corruption and rottenness within. Take these when they are at the best, they are no better then hypocrites: for certain it is, they must counterfeit on the one side or on y^e other, Prov. 26, 7. But without craving any pardon, we may well conclude of these, that when they live among the worst sort, their behavior is natural: but when they converse among the better sort, it is merely artificial: among the one they show without any vizard what they are; among the other they put on a vizard to appear that which they are not.

[Use 3] Lastly, it teacheth us to beware of voluntary society, and unnecessary fellowship with wicked men, least being partakers with their sins, we be also partakers of their punishment. If the danger of the sin cannot prevail with us to cause us to shun it, let the consideration of the punishment teach us to refrain from them, 1 Cor. 5, 5. and 2 Cor. 6, 17. *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, & touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you*. If any ask what society is necessary, and what is unnecessary? I answer, If it be in necessary things, it is either for this life, or for the life to come. As for example, a man may converse with such in Faire or Market, to buy and sell, to trade and traffic, or in the private house, if our particular calling and abode there do require it: or if a man go to them to seek their reformation by exhorting and admonishing of them: or if a man have public society with them in the hearing of the word, or in receiving the Sacraments, or in joining together in prayer: this is also a necessary, a lawful, and warrantable society, and it doth not wrap a man in the guilt of those sins which are in them with whom we converse; & therefore such as are of the Separation have little reason and less conscience to separate themselves from the Church of God, because of the wickedness of some men which are therein. For be it granted that such are admitted to the public exercises of our religion: it will wrap those only in the guilt of their sins that have power and authority to remove them, and not those that do necessarily converse and communicate with them. No man may forsake the Church, because some wicked men are in it. Notwithstanding, here we are to mark, that albeit there be some necessary society which is lawful, yet under a color hereof we may not plead for that which is voluntary and unnecessary, for thus their sins become our sins. A blessed martyr sometimes made this prayer, O Lord deliver me from my other men's sins, from my guilt of the sins of other men: howsoever he did not commit them himself, yet because being present

he did not reprove them, he acknowledged himself guilty of them. So if we have inward and private society with them, and we freely go to their houses, & invite them home to our houses, and can be content to hear their oaths and blasphemies, and not have an heart and tongue to reprove them for the same, we are thereby made partakers of their sins whatsoever they be. Thou hast power in thine own house to reprove them: there thou art both a Magistrate and a Minister; a Magistrate to rule, and a Minister to teach and to reprove. If thou do not therefore discharge these duties, it shall stand upon thy score and reckoning, & thou shalt give an account for it. We have sins in great number of our own, and therefore we need not draw the guilt of other men's sins upon our own head, to answer for those also which we did never commit in our own persons. The burden is already too great, let us not therefore by this adding to it, make the burden thereof altogether intolerable.

27 So they gate up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children.

28 And Moses said, Heereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works: for I have not done them of mine own mind.

29 If these men die the common death of all men: Or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me.

30 But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth and swallow them up with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit, then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord.

31 And as soon as he had made an end of speaking, &c.

In these words see the willing obedience of the people to the former Commandment. They were willed to separate from the Tents of those wicked, they do separate and depart from them, by and by they gate them up from their Tabernacles. And Moses doth notably confirm them in their obedience, by foretelling both the death, [Doctrine.] & the manner of the death of these rebels. We learn from hence, that God never bringeth any grievous judgment upon any people or nation, nor upon any private person, but he doth always first forewarn the same and foretellet it. God always teacheth before he punisheth, and he warneth before he striketh, Amos chapt. 3. verse 7. Luk. 13, verse 7. 1 Kings 22, 17. We read that the world was once drowned by water, and it shall be destroyed the second time by fire. Of the first destruction, we find that he foretold it unto *Noah*, before ever he brought it upon the face of the earth, Gen. 6. verse 3. Heb. 11. verse 7. 1 Pet. 3.20. And touching the second destruction of the world by fire, GOD hath not left us ignorant, but in diverse places of the Scripture hath set it down unto us, 2. Pet. 3, 7, 10.

The Reasons hereof are partly in regard of the godly, and partly in regard of the ungodly. Touching the first, he would not take his own people at unawares, because he loveth them, and would have none of them to perish *but would have all come to repentance*, 2 Pet. 3, 9. that so they might prevent his judgments, Amos 4, 12. Secondly, touching the ungodly and such as are not the Lord's, they shall thereby be made without excuse, their mouths are stopped, and the justice of God is cleared, they having nothing to answer for themselves, or to accuse God of any unjust dealing, John 15, 22. These men therefore must learn to accuse themselves because they had warning, but they would not be warned: he would have healed them, but they would not be healed, Ier. 20, 6. & 51.9. 1 King. 22, 25.

[Use 1] Acknowledge from hence the great mercy and wonderful patience of God: whose manner is always to give warning before he send judgment. This the Lord needeth not to do, for upon our own peril we are bound to take heed of his judgments before they come: yet so good is our God, that he only deserveth this title to be called *the good Lord*, as *Hezekia* calleth him, 2 Chron. 30, 18. *The good Lord pardon everyone that prepareth his heart*. He would have us prevent his punishments before they fall, and to send out our prayers as Ambassadors to God, to treat of conditions of peace with him. He doth not play the part of a subtle enemy to steal upon us at unawares, forasmuch as before he striketh he always forewarneth, that thereby he might save all those that belong unto him, and bring upon others just condemnation. How graciously dealt he with *Korah* and his fellows? with *Dathan & Abiran*? How often did *Moses* warn them? Who is it then that ought not to confess that God willet not the death of a sinner? Or who can deny but that these malefactors perished most justly?

[Use 2] Secondly, when we see any overtaken with any judgment, we must confess that God is true, as in his promises, so also in his threatenings. If his desire were not that we should prevent them, doubtless he would never give warning of them. If he had a will and purpose to destroy us, he would not tell us before hand; both that he would bring them, and show us the way how to avoid them. There is no man that can justly say, that the silence of God, and the holding of his peace is the cause of his security: he causeth a trumpet to sound y^e alarm before he set himself in battle array against his enemies. For his manner is never to come with any judgment, but he always sendeth a warning piece before. [Object.] But some man will say, It was thus indeed in the time of the prophets: but we have no Prophets in these days to foret l things to come as in former times they had, and therefore we have no such direction. I answer these men as *Abraham* did the rich man in the Gospel, that his brethren had *Moses* and the Prophets among them, *If they will not believe them, neither will they be persuaded although one rose from the dead*, Luke 16, 31. True it is, that *Moses* and the Prophets were dead long before, but his meaning is, they had the books of the Law, and the writings of the Prophets before them, they were read & preached *in their Synagogues every Sabbath day*, Acts 15, 21. So I may truly say, that we have Prophets among us, and all that contemn them shall *know there hath been a Prophet among them*, Ezek. 33, 33. For we have the holy Scriptures, wherein are contained the works of the Prophets and Apostles: and beside these, GOD hath given us his Ministers, that they should as it were put life again into the dead Prophets, that is, that they should open & declare unto us those things that are doubtful and obscure: and therefore if any be admonished by them, that such & such judgments shall come, and they

threaten plagues according to the general directions which they have in the word, Deut. 28, 15, 16. Levite. 26.15, 16. Let us not withstand the Spirit speaking in them, for it is the wonderful goodness of God that he vouchsafeth to send them unto us, and to tell us before of his judgments.

Lastly, it is the duty of everyone to make [Use 3] good use of the word of God, & to know that God looketh for attention and obedience at our hands, that so he may not be enforced to proceed against us in judgment. O happy are they that *seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near*, Isaiah 55, 6. Such then as reject the Ministry of the word, reject their own peace, and bring upon themselves sundry judgments. The word goeth before to prepare our hearts, and it is a two-edged sword, *piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit*, Heb. 4, 12. But if we be so hardhearted, & made of metal tougher than brass and iron, that this sword going out of the mouth of God cannot enter into us, he hath another two edged sword, the sword of his judgment, that shall cut us in pieces, and bring us to utter confusion. If the former be not sharp enough to cut the cords of our sins which we have so strongly twisted, yet the latter shall be able to consume us, and we shall not be able to resist it.

33 And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them.

32 And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.

The threatening of the judgment went before, denounced by God, pronounced by the mouth of Moses: the execution followeth, with wonderful terror and astonishment on every side, when the earth which GOD had made firm, and established by a perpetual decree to stand fast under our feet, could no longer sustain and bear up these wretches, but swallowed them up. We see here, that all the threatenings of God in their times and seasons come to pass, and that all the elements are armed for the confusion and destruction of the wicked. Now these rebels begin to cry, verse 34. but they cry out and howl when it is too late: they should have cried unto God for mercy and forgiveness while it was time, and pardon was offered. Thus no doubt did many men of the old world cry out when they were in the water, but then the acceptable time was past, they should have watered their hearts with the tears of repentance when Noah preached unto them. The Sodomites no doubt cried out when fire and brimstone was come down upon them, but they should have cried to God when he cried unto them by Lot whom he sent among them. But then was the time of judgment, the time of mercy was gone and past. So it was with Esau, when he had sold his birthright, and lost the blessing, he cried with a great cry and a bitter, but it was too late, Heb. 12, 17. Gen. 27, 28. So did the rich man *being in hell in torments*, Luke 16, 23. then he called for mercy, but mercy was departed from him. Here is time and place for mercy, but there is no mercy to be had in hell. The earth is the school of instruction, hell is the house of correction. There the Reprobate cry and yell, where is nothing but weeping & gnashing of teeth, but it is without ease,

without end, without profit. They that could shed never a tear to God in this life, shall be constrained to shed abundance of tears in the pit of destruction. The tears of repentance that we pour out ascend up unto heaven, and are kept in a bottle of remembrance: but the tears that are wrung from the reprobate in hell, are never gathered up, nor regarded of God, and are utterly unprofitable to our selves. Let it therefore be our wisdom to make use of the time of God's mercy and patience, and know that there is no place of repentance after this life. But to leave this to our farther meditations, consider with me in these fearful examples of *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, and their companions (as well those that were swallowed in the earth, as those that were consumed by fire) the end of all Conspirators and seditious persons, such as rise up against Princes and lawful Magistrates, that are the Lord's anointed, & have their power from him; they cannot prosper or have good success, but are made examples to others. The doctrine from hence assureth, that seditious persons come to destruction & to an untimely death, albeit timely enough in respect of their merits and deserts. Such as resist lawful and public authority, are justly cut off by that authority which they resist. I will not handle this point at large as it would require, I will be short in it, as the life of these men also ought to be. Look upon the attainder of the two Eunuchs that sought to lay hands upon King *Ahasuerus*, Ester 2, 21. In whose enditement, though there were no fact found, but only a plot and purpose to have done it, yet they died as justly as *Mordecai* was justly honored and rewarded for the discovery thereof. The Scripture is full of prohibitions and examples ratifying the same, Eccle. 10, 20. Prov. 24, 21, 22. Ier. 27, 8. 2 Sam. 18, 9. & 16, 23. This *David* knew well enough. For when *Saul* was delivered into his hand, and lay asleep in his tent, he would not kill him, neither suffer any to touch him, but said, *Who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's Anointed, and be guiltless?* 1 Sam. 26, 9, 10. and 24, 7, 11.

They that slew *Ishbosheth* and brought his head to *Hebron* unto *David*, looking for a reward were indeed justly rewarded with death, and had their hands and feet cut off, and were hanged up, 2 Sam. 4, 11, 12. he required his blood at those wicked men's hands, and took them away from the earth. Hereunto come the words of *Jezebel*, 2 Kings 9, 31. *Had Zimri peace which slew his master?* But we need not seek so far for foreign examples: we have seen the truth of this oftentimes at home. I may not forget the late examples very memorable and remarkable, I mean the righteous & most deserved execution of those that prepared the powder, and would have lighted the match in that late & monstrous Gun-powder Treason; some of them hang in the air, others hanged themselves, &c. None escaped y^e hand of God or man.

And no marvel: because such as fight against [Reason 1] God, from whom cometh all power, and it is he that setteth Princes upon their throne, John 19, 11. Rom. 13, 1.2. Psal. 75, 7. Prov. 8, 15. Daniel 2, 21. He anointed *Saul* by the hand of *Samuel*, to be *Head over his people*, 1 Sam. 10.1. and he chose him to be *King over Israel* verse 24. He sent his servant *Elijah* to anoint *Hazael* and *Jehu*, the one to be King of Syria, the other over Israel, 1 King. 19, 15, 16. The God of heaven gave to *Nebuchadnezzar* a kingdom, power, strength, and glory, though he knew not God, neither acknowledged the hand that set him up, Daniel 2, verse 27. 2. Chron. 9. verse 8. and 1 Chronic. chapt. 28. verse 4. If then *Caesar* be ordained to be *Caesar* of God, they cannot prosper that set themselves against *Caesar*, because they set themselves against God.

Secondly, such are severely punished, because [Reason 2] disobedience and disloyalty, rebellion & treason, are not one sin only, but the sink of all sins, and as *Paul* speaketh of another, the *root of all evil*. An heathen man could say, That Rebellion is all kind of evil, and as a Channell from whence they do flow. The first spark of that fire is pride and ambition: discontentment giveth it entertainment, envy bloweth the coals, wrath & malice increase the flame, till all things far and near be in a combustion.

Thirdly, as rebellion is an heap of many sins, so it ruineth many persons, and therefore they justly deserve first of all to be buried in those ruins themselves, and to fall into the pit which they digged for another. The life of one Prince is of more value then of many others. Therefore the people suffered not *David* to go in person against *Absalom*, but said unto him, *If we fly away, they will not care for us, neither if half of us die will they care for us, but now thou art worth ten thousand of us*, as 2. Samuel, chap. 18. verse 3. And again, when *Ishbi-benob* which was of the sons of the gyants, was like to have slain *David* with the sword, (had he not been presently succoured by *Abishai*, who smote the Philistim and killed him) his men sware unto him saying, 2. Sam. 21, 17, *Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel*. The King is the Sun and shield of the Land, he is the *light of Israel*, take him away, and all is left in miserable and uncomfortable darkness. Many men's lives depend upon his life: and the safety of thousands upon his safety. Princes are the Fathers of the Country, more dangerous for the subject to kill one of them then for the child to kill the Father, as much more as the ruin of the commonwealth, consisting of innumerable thousands of houses, is worse then the fall of one particular and private house. As then the Captain of an host is worth many soldiers, and the Governor of a ship many common passengers and Mariners, so is the Head of the kingdom more of value then many subjects. Though many soldiers have fallen in battle, yet often the victory hath been gotten: sildome or never when the General falleth, 1 Kings 22, 35, 36. And to this purpose we may well apply that which is written, though spoken to another end, *I will smite the Shepheard, and the sheep of the Flock shall be scattered abroad*, Matth. 26, verse 31.

Fourthly, such as conspire against Princes have been punished oftentimes in their house, in their lands, in offices, in death, in burial, in name, and in posterity. For who knoweth not the custom observed even from the beginning? as we may see also in holy Scripture, Ester 8, 1. 2 Sam. 16, 4. 1 Kings 2.16. Ier. 22, 8. Prov. 10, 7. All dignities and preferments are taken away from such: grievous torments and tortures are laid upon them: a violent death is prepared for them, an honorable burial is denied unto them, their blood is stained and tainted, and the children vnborn feel the smart of it.

[Use 1] This putteth us in mind of sundry duties due to Kings and Princes. First, we must stand in fear of them, *they carry not the sword in vain*, Rom. 13.4. Job 19, 29. It is not put into their hands for a show: for he is the minister of God *to take vengeance on him that doth evil*. Therefore *Solomon* saith, *The wrath of a King is as the Messenger of death*, Prover. 16, 14. and *like the roaring of a Lyon*, chap. 19, 12. We must therefore fear the sword of *Caesar*: and therefore have Princes the sword of justice born before them, that the beholding thereof might put all persons in remembrance of this duty. Among the heathen, the Roman kings, Dictators,

Pretors, and Consuls had their Rods and Axes evermore carried before them, to breed a terror of their authority in all that see them. A good subject (as one saith) feareth blame as much as pain, and reproach as much as death. The good subject hath always one eye upon the sharpness of this sword that he doth not provoke it: and the other upon the heynousnesse of this offense, that he never commit it. This fear is the best porter at y^e Princes gate: it serveth notably to keep all traitors and rebels out of the kings Court, and treachery out of the people's heart. It is as a bridle y^t curbeth all disobedience: where it is not, there is an easy entrance for traitors and treasons: like the horse which having the bridle pulled out of his mouth, rusheth forward into the battle, without order and government. Hence it is, y^t *Solomon* joineth the fear of God and the fear of the King together, *Prov.* 24, 21. where the fear of GOD is, which is the beginning of wisdom, there will follow the fear of superior powers ordained of God.

Another duty is to honor Princes, whom [Use 2] God hath first honored, *Rom.* 13, 7. *Give honor to whom ye owe honor.* So *Exod.* 20, 12. and 22, 28. *1 Pet.* 2, 17. *Ester* would not presume into the presence of the great King, until he held out his golden Scepter, *Chap.* 5, 1, 2. *Joab* though he were Captain of the host, gave *David* the honor of the victory, *2 Sa.* 12, 27. *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Zadok* the Priest, made obeisance before *David* with their faces to the ground, *1 Kings* 1, 23. And *Bathsheba* the Queen, bowed her face to the earth, and did reverence to the King, and said, *Let my Lord King David live forever,* v. 31. Every soul is bound to yield this honor, if they would be honored of God.

Thirdly, we are to perform obedience, [Use 3] whereunto a way is made by the former. For, if we truly honor them, we will readily obey them, even for Conscience sake. This is a duty yielded by the Child unto the Father, by the Servant to the Master: much more then ought it to be yielded by the Subject unto his Sovereign, as in *Titus* chapter 3. verse 1. and in the *1. Peter*, chapt. 2. verse 13. This must be performed readily, sincerely, and heartily. [Object.] But it may be said, That some are evil Princes, wicked men, contrary to God whence springeth all goodness, are such to be obeyed? I answer, [Answer.] It skilleth not what their persons be, the 〈4 pages missing〉 full security, and therefore it is just with God to make us feel his judgments in our own persons.

41 And on the morrow, all the Congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord.

42 And it came to pass, when the Congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and behold the Cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared.

43. And Moses and Aaron came, &c.

44 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, &c.

45 Get you up from this Congregation, &c.

In these words to the ende of the chapter, we see another murmuring the day after the former. The earth that had opened her mouth was scarce closed, and the fire that was kindled, was scarce quenched, when they fell to a fresh conspiracy. This is the nature of wicked men, they are never at rest, like the sea that is ever troubled, Isaiah 57, 20. This is the nature of sin, if it be not by and by stayed and repressed, it winneth ground, and spreadeth farther like a canker. Whereby we see, it is an easy step and descent from one evil to another, as it is to go down a steep hill. Now the sin of these men is three-fold: First, they are as blind men that cannot see the judgments of the Lord, but accuse *Moses* of murder, and impute to him the death and destruction of those that were buried in the earth, & consumed to ashes with the fire. *Moses* was only the Minister of God in their destruction, the cause of their own death was in themselves: as if a malefactor, never considering what himself hath committed, should cast the cause of his condemnation vpon the Judge, and cry out against him as a shedder of blood.

Secondly, their unthankfulness, who will by no means confess that they were saved the day before, and sundry times besides from destruction, by the intercession of *Moses*: if he had not prayed for them, they had perished as one man with the seditious. For they were all become as one sick body wherein no part was sound, but full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores, Isaiah 1, 6. They seek his death that after a sort had given them life; and they rise up against him, that had been the means of their deliverance.

Thirdly, as they did condemn the innocent, so they justify the ungodly, *both which are an abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 17, 15. Such wicked persons as God had rooted out of the Land of the living, and turned them into the earth, which was weary to bear such unprofitable burdens; they call them *the people of God*, which were no better then a cursed crew of conspirators against God and such as he had appointed to manage the State Civil and Ecclesiastical. These men therefore rising up in their stead that were fallen into the pit, and defending their cause (of whom GOD had taken the account) do make themselves guilty of their sins, & are justly swept away with the judgments of God. [Doctrine.]

We learn hereby, that such is the corrupt heart of wicked man, that it will take no warning by former judgments, though they be never so fearful and evident. They had often seen how great things God had wrought among his people, yet they are blind and do not see them; they are willful, and will not regard them; they are sottish, and will take no knowledge of them, Psal. 10, 5. Isaiah 22, 12, 13 Psal. 24, 38, 39. Luk. 19, 42. Dan. 5, 22. This maketh sin out of measure sinful.

The reasons. First, because they see God [Reason 1] is a merciful & patient God, he beareth long and holdeth his peace, and *therefore they think he is like unto themselves*, Psal. 50, 21. so they abuse his patience and will do nothing.

Secondly, they think the day of their judgment [Reason 2] is not near, they set it far off from them. It may be, it may come in time, but they hope there will be peace in their days. Ezek. 12, 27. The people judged that the Prophet had prophesied *for many days to come, and of such times as were far off*: and thereupon they concluded, that the days were prolonged, and every vision failed.

Thirdly, they love their own sins, and [Reason 3] out of that great love to their sins, they are unwilling altogether to take notice of any judgment due to their sin, & cannot abide that the Minister or any other should give thē warning of the same, *for they hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly*, Amos 5, verse 10. The uses remain. [Use 1]

First of all, are men naturally so unwilling of themselves to set before them God's judgments? Then this serveth as an admonition to the Ministers, that they should often threaten God's iudgeme• against the wicked, seeing they are so dull a•d unwilling to take any notice of them, or to be warned by them. God worketh out his judgments in every place, and he setteth his Ministers on work, that they should cry ou•nd not spare to publish them and make them •own, though men be never so much hardened in their sins, sometimes by reason of the profit that they make by their sins, & sometimes by reason of the pleasure that they find in their sins. But howsoever they be admonished of any judgment present or imminent, they are little affected with it, they are ready to say with the Atheists, 1 Cor. 15, 32. *Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die*. Let us alone with our doing for the present, and we will take order for those judgments that are to come hereafter, well enough.

[Object.] If any say, it behooveth not the Minister to be so fervent and earnest in his reproofs, but to handle sin more gently, because many are the worse for sharp rebukes, and few or none the better. [Answer.] I answer, this is our grief, and causeth us often to mourn in secret, but yet this cannot be our discharge: for we must labor to free and deliver all men (so far as we can) from the fierce wrath & judgments of God, otherwise their blood would light upon our heads, and be required at our hands, if they perish through our negligence. It is the nature of the Cock (as some observe) that at the dead time of the night he croweth most loud and shrill: whether he doth so or not, I know not, but this I am sure of, that the Ministers of God ought to do so; when they see men to be most dull and dead in their sins, they should be most earnest and vehement, even at the deadest times of all, they must be most zealous, that so they may deliver their own souls, and not be constrained to answer for the sins of those that perish.

[Use 2] Secondly, this reproveth the age wherein we live, of much corruption, because it can sleep so securely at the noise of God's judgments. These murmurers in this place had heard the pitiful cry and fearful noise of those that were swallowed up in the earth; yet they have already forgotten that which fell out but a day before. We commonly say, A wonder lasteth but nine days: but behold how they had seen one of the greatest wonders in the world, when the earth, *whose foundation the Lord hath laid to be firm and stable, that it should not be removed forever*, Psal. 104, 5) opened her mouth and swallowed these unbelievers, and they had heard with their ears their outcries when they descended into the deep, yet this wonder lasted but one day, nay not one whole day, for on the morrow it was quite out of their remembrance.

We have had all sorts of warnings whatsoever, general & particular: by his word, by his works: by his judgments upon others, and upon our selves; yet we take generally and particularly little warning by them. How hath God dealt with many of us, and how near hath he come unto us with his particular judgments upon our families? We see this with our eyes, we need not say, we have heard and our fathers have told us: for we have seen and have known the hand of GOD heavy upon their wives, their children, their servants, and yet they take no more notice of them, then if they were in another world. Sometimes God doth punish men with less judgments, when they have deserved greater: he doth but as it were touch them with the little finger, when they have deserved to be stricken with his whole hand: and smiteth them with the back of the sword, that deserve to be cut in pieces with the edge. Take example in the sin of drunkenness, and wonder at it. How many drunkards hath God cast down in a ditch, from a bridge, from an horse, where peradventure they have broken arm, or leg, or face, whē God could as easily have suffered thē to have broken their necks, & so to have ended their sinful days wretchedly, as they lived profanely: yet which of them hath been bettered or admonished by it? or who hath taken instruction from it, to fear the Lord, or to repent of the same sin? Many there are that are companions in sin, and brethren in evil; they join together in the practice thereof. God giveth warning sometimes by the death of one of these companions which dieth desperately in his sins, yet will not the rest take warning, but proceed in their wickedness, as if there were no GOD to take vengeance of their presumptuous sins.

Lastly, it belongeth to everyone to take [Use 3] notice of the corruptions of his own heart, that he is very forgetful of God's judgments & very unwilling to be admonished of them, but is ready to pass them over, and to put thē from him, as matters that no way concern him. This is a voluntary and willful ignorance. Let us therefore learn to make good use of them, and to lay them up in our hearts, as we would do a treasure in our coffers. The consideration of these well digested, may do us more good, then all the gold and silver in the world. As *David* said, *I will never forget thy precepts*, Psal. 119, 61. so let us say, *I will never forget thy judgments*. And as he remembered his mercies of old, so let us remember his judgments of old. And whereas the greatest fort make a mock both of their own sins, and of God's punishments, let us say with the Prophet, *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee: and I am afraid of thy judgments*, Psal. 119, 120. He giveth warning of his judgments before he smiteth, and he smiteth one to teach another, that so we should not fall into his judgments, but might learn to prevent them by a timely care of avoiding sin. We are yet safe from his revenging hand; let us not be secure, nor abuse his patience. Security is one of the last sins that shall be in the world. For before the fearful day of the Lord, there shall be a general security, when all are ready to fall asleep. Let us be warned by other men's harms, lest we feel them upon our selves, *Isaiah* 28, 15. Christ our Savior speaking of the last times, saith, *When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?* Luk. 18, 8: and therefore he compareth them to the days of *Noah* and of *Lot*, when they did eat & drink, build and plant, marry and give in marriage, even until his judgments fell in the midst of them, *so shall the coming of the Son of man be*. The more common this sin shall be, the more watchful we ought to be that so against this universal slumber, we may prepare a general remedy.

46 And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the Altar, and put on incense, and go quickly to the Congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun.

47 And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the Congregation: and behold, the plague was begun among the people, and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people.

48 And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed.

49 And they that died in the plague, were fourteen thousand, &c.

50. And Aaron went again, &c.

We heard before the sin, or rather the many sins of these men: now *Moses* setteth down the punishment that fell upon thē. Albeit God at the intercession of *Moses* did not consume them in a moment, yet he sent a fearful plague, and a devouring pestilence among them, that smote down fourteen thousand and five hundred, *beside them that died about the matter of Korah*. And this plague had passed a great deal farther, had not *Moses* and *Aaron* by their fervent prayers prevailed mightily with God to stay his hand, so that we may say as it is in the Psalm, *He said, he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them*, Psal. 106, 23. This is a borrowed speech from warfare and the besieging of a City where the walls are battered with engines that make a breach in thē, so that nothing remaineth but for the enemy to give the assault, and to make an entrance, & put all to the sword: meaning thereby that the wrath of God is as the violent shaking of the walls of a City, there can no strength hold out against him. Now *Moses* and *Aaron* did as it were oppose themselves against God's wrath and the people's danger by earnest and hearty prayer made on their behalf, that God would spare his people & not destroy them with the pestilence. For as in times of greatest danger and distress, the most valiant Captains and Soldiers offer themselves to manifest perilles when a breach is made in the wall for the enemy to enter with all his forces, that thereby they may drive back such as are pressing forward to give the assault: so did *Moses* and *Aaron* stand between the living and the dead, & interposed body for body, and life for life.

We learn hereby, that the necessity, dignity, and worthiness of the Ministry, is exceeding great in respect of the good of the people, 1 Tim 3, 1. Eph. 4, 11, 12, 13. Acts 8, 29, and 9, 11, and 10, 20, and 16, 9 10, 14.15, 29.30. Math. 16, 19.

[Reason 1] This is farther confirmed by the titles whereby they are called and adorned. They are appointed to be Shepherds, by the great Shepherd of the sheep, 1 Pet. 5. Eph. 4, 11, 12: to be Overseers of the Church of Christ, Acts 20, 28: to be as fathers over their children, Exod.

20, 12. 1 Cor 3: to be as nurses over the infants, and to be as stewards over the house to give to everyone his portion.

Secondly, they have charge over men's [Reason 2] souls not to watch over the body only, Eze. 33, 1 Tim. 5, 16.

Thirdly, the Ministry of the word is the only [Reason 3] ordinary means to bring to salvation, 1 Cor. 15, 1, 2. Rom. 10, 14. If then the necessity and dignity of salvation it self be great, then ought the Ministry to be had in great price by which we are made partakers thereof.

The uses. Great should be the love of the [Use 1] Pastor toward his people. Great should their care be over the sheep and Lambes of Christ; for as they love Christ himself the Lord of the sheep who shed his most precious blood to redeem them, so ought they to love his sheep, which are after a sort become their sheep: for as the sheep have taken charge of them to maintain them, so they have takē charge of the sheep to feed them & instruct them. Our principal endeavor ought to be to procure their good, and we must hunger and thirst after their salvation, Exod. 32, 31, 32. They ought to be our crown and glory in this life, if we look for a crown of glory in the life to come, 1 Pet. 5, 4. And as at all times we ought to seek to win men to God, so especially we ought to have a care of these sheep when they are sick: when they are visited by the hand of God we should comfort the feeble minded, and support the weak. We see how *Aaron* the servant of God, when the pestilence was broken in among thē, took his censur, and ran in among them, & stood between the living and the dead, that he might make an atonement for them.

Here the question may be asked, [Objection.] whether it be the Ministers duty to visit those that are sick of the pestilence & other contagious diseases; and so much the rather, because the example of *Aaron* seemeth to infer and persuade no less.

I answer, [Answ.] the practice of *Aaron* in this place is not to this purpose, for he was High Priest, and did this as a figure of Christ. For *Moses* & *Aaron* were not so simple as to think that the burning of a little incense could stay y^e plague: but this did represent the sweet savor of the mediation & intercession of Christ, who made peace between God and man. Again, the Minister is a public person, and the servant of the whole Church, and every man hath interest alike in his office and Ministry, 1 Cor. 9, 19. 2 Corin. 5, 5. *We preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and our selves your servants for Jesus sake.* If then he be the servant of the whole Church, then no one hath so great interest in him as to cause him to endanger his life, and so the whole be deprived of him. So then, before he visit such, he ought at least to have the consent and approbation of the rest of the Church, and be assigned by them unto that office. Lastly, I do not hold the visitation of the sick to be a Ministerial duty, but a Christian duty. It is not laid upon them as they are Ministers, but as they are Christians. For if it were a duty proper to them, as it is to preach the word and to minister the sacraments, then no man ought to visit the sick, but such as are Ministers of the word. I grant indeed, it cheefly lieth upon thē and is required of them, when they are best able to perform it: but sometime the faithful brother is able to do it as well as the Minister himself: and according as God hath bestowed this gift so he requireth the practice of it, Gen. 48, 1. 2 Kings 8, 29. and 13, 14. Job 2,

11. Psal. 41, 4. Math 25, 37, 40. [Object.] John 11, 3. 2 Cor. 1, 4. What then? May the Minister at such infectious times forsake the flock? and leave them to the wide world? may he shift for himself, & leave them without instruction? [Answer.] I answer, in no wise. There is then more cause to call the sounder sheep together, and to pray heartily and earnestly to God for their fellow-brethrē, remembering the counsel of the Apostle, Heb. 13, 3. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them: and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also afflicted in body.

[Use 2] Secondly, see from hence who are indeed the brazen walls that compass the land, and hold out the enemy; not only the policy, and wisdom, and counsel of Magistrates, but likewise faithful Ministers are a strength and defense unto it. For though they be oftentimes contemned and despised, derided and abused, though no account be commonly made of thē; yet they are the strength of y^e strength of the Commonwealth, and they are the pillars that bear up the pillars, and they are forcible and notable means of keeping out the judgments of God. Hence it is, that *Elisha* said of *Elijah*, when he saw him go up by a whirlwind into heaven, *My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof*, 2 Kings 2, 12. And thus also spake *Joash* of *Elisha*, when he wept over his face, when he was fallen sick of the sickness whereof he died, 2 Ki. 13, 14. *O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, &c.* And they may be justly so called. They beat down sin which weakeneth the Land. For what bringeth the change of Princes, the alteration of kingdoms, the ruin of states, the overthrow of houses, the invasion of enemies, and the confusion and desolation of all things, but the provoking of God unto wrath by sin? Sin is as the breach in a wall that weakeneth the City, and openeth a gate to the enemy. Let the walls be never so well flanked with ditches, trenches, barricadoes, citadels, and castles, countermures and fortifications, sin maketh them all unprofitable. Hence it is, that the people falling into idolatry, are said *to be made naked by Aaron*, Exod. 32, 25. Obedience is as a strong bank & bulwark, that keepeth the flood of vengeance & indignation from the city of God. No manner of defense can keep out the enemy, if sin be freely entertained within. The wall is repaired and the breach is made up by repentance.

Thirdly, they are in poor and pitiful case [Use 3] for ignorance, for wickedness, for peril and danger to perish, where yet this benefit is not vouchsafed. They are as a land threatened with infinite and innumerable enemies, which are without chariots and horsemen, without armor and munition. A man of necessity must continue languishing in pain, having a broken member or a bone out of joint, except he have a skillful Surgeon or bone-setter. We are of our selves as members out of joint, rent and divided asunder in opinion and practice one from another, which are coupled and knit together between themselves by the Ministry of the word, which serveth *for the gathering together of the Saints*, Eph. 4, ver. 11, 12. When the blind are suffered to lead the blind, both fall into the ditch. The poor cripple remained for the space of thirty eight years in woeful taking, because he had no mā *when the water was troubled by descending of the Angel, to put him into the pool*: so is it with those that cannot come to the water of life, brought by the Angels of the Churches, they cannot be cured of their diseases. They are in a most pitiful case that want bread to sustain life, they must needs in short time famish because they have no food, Amos 8.11. It is often to be considered of us, what the Prophet *Hosea* teacheth, chap. 9, 6. *The days of visitation are come, the days of*

recompense are come, Israel shall know it: And why so? the answer is, The Prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad. It is very uncomfortable to be in a wide house in a dark night, where is no light at all, and yet much work to be done and no means to give direction: such is their condition that want Teachers, who are the light of the house, and the salt of the earth, without which we rot and putrefy in sin, like flesh vnsalted and unseasoned.

Fourthly, woe to the foolish Prophets, that [Use 4] prophesy out of their own hearts, & follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing, Ezek. 13, 4, 5. These cannot assure themselves to be the Lord's watchmen. These Prophets are like the foxes in the Desert, they have not gone up into the gappes, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Where the Prophet setteth down sundry true notes of false teachers, how we should know them.

First, they teach themselves, and not the truth of God; they are wise out of their own wits, not out of God's word: they are ready to speak for themselves, not in the cause of God. The true Pastors bring the word of GOD that sent them, John 7, 16, 17, 18. 2 Pet. 1, 21, 22. Such then as broach new doctrine which they never learned out of the word, nor received from God, are without question false teachers. Secondly, they are like hungry foxes that lie in wait for their prey, given to covetousness and seeking after their own gain, they will transgress for a piece of bread. These intend nothing but filthy lucre, & love the wages of iniquity, as *Balaam* did, 2 Pet. 2, 3, 13, 14, 15. Jude, ver. 12, 16. Such a one was *Judas*. Thirdly, they never go up to the breach, nor make up the hedge for the City or Vineyard of God, they care not though the enemy spoil the one and root up the other: they never make intercession for the people, they rebuke not, they exhort not, they threaten not, rather they proclaim peace & promise liberty for everyone to do what he list, 1 Pet. 2, 19.

[Use 5] Lastly, the people must perform to their Ministers, such duties as are answerable unto their care. First, they must make good use of the Ministry, desiring truly to be gathered to the Church by the effectual working thereof, Acts 2, 37, 38, 47, & 16, 30. We have shown before, chap. 3, that the most flourishing commonwelths are nothing except this be among them. Secondly, it behooveth us to rejoice in seeing or hearing of any approved man and faithful Teacher brought into the Ministry of the word, and the service of the Church by an ordinary and lawful calling, Lu. 1, 14, 15. 16, 17. & on the other side to be grieved whē such are taken out of the Church, and the use of them denied, Acts 20, 37, 38. or such kept out that have worthy gifts & desire to be employed. But we see commonly men are glad to see such brought into y^e Church, as will speak of *wine and strong drink*, Mic. 2, 11. such as will use them well in tithes, such as will not trouble them long in teaching, such as will feast them often at his table. Lastly they must express their hearty love to their Ministers again, recompensing love for love, and laboring to do them good, whom they see to be so needful for thē: even as necessary as the Physician in time of sickness, as the Captain in time of war, as the reapers in time of harvest. Woe therefore shall be to those that account them worthless, needless, fruitless.

[Ver. 47, 48. *He put on incense, and made an atonement for the people; and stood between the living and the dead, &c.*] Observe again another point, that *Moses* and *Aaron* adventured their own

lives in the time of this plague for the good of the people, they made supplication for them, because they were the people of God, the posterity of faithful *Abraham*, and were committed to their charge & oversight, and because the enemies, both the Egyptians and the Canaanites should not blaspheme the Name of God, and triumph in their destruction. Hence it is, that *Aaron* as he was appointed and commanded, *did put incense in his censer, and made an atonement for the people*. We learn hereby, that the force, efficacy, and necessity of prayer to God is very great, to obtain any blessing, or to remove any judgment, 1 Chron. 21, 17. Phil. 1, 4. 1 Thess. 5, 17. Thus did *Moses* often prevail, Exod. 17, and 32. Luke 21, ver. 36. *Joash* acknowledged that the prayers of *Elisha* an holy Prophet of god stood his kingdom in more stead, then all the horses and chariots of Israel could do, 2 King. 13, 14. The reasons.

First, it is a fruit of faith, and a testimony [Reason 1] to our own hearts, that we do believe. *It is the prayer of faith that saveth*. James 5, ver. 15. But where there is no calling upon the Name of God by prayer, there can be no faith in God at all. These cannot prevail with God, nor obtain anything at his hands.

Secondly, whatsoever we receive frō God, [Reason 2] we must receive it by prayer. For what is it that prayer cannot obtain? whatsoever we ask, we receive, Math. 7.7. Our wants therefore being great, the necessity of this duty must needs be great also.

Thirdly, it is a part of our spiritual armor, [Reason 3] or at least that which giveth us strength to use the armor appointed to every Christian, Eph. 6, 16. without which all the rest will serve us in little stead.

First, this reproveth such as think it to [Use 1] be needless to be performed to God, because he knoweth whereof we have need, and need not to be put in mind thereof. It had been a very needless thing for *Moses* and *Aaron* to be so earnest for the people, to run in with all haste, and to *stand between the living and the dead*, if prayer had been needless or bootlesse. It is true, he knoweth whereof we are made, and it is true, he needeth no remembrancer or informer to put him in mind of what he hath forgotten: howbeit this ought rather to stir us up to prayer, as we see, Math. 6, verses 8, 9. *Your heavenly Father knoweth whereof ye have need, after this manner therefore pray ye*: he concludeth that we ought therefore to pray, because our heavenly Father knoweth what we want: whereas these would gather the clean contrary, God knoweth what we need, therefore pray not at all. If the former be Christ's conclusion, the latter must needs be the devils.

Again, it reproveth those that would overthrow prayer by the decree of God, by the which indeed it is established. For thus they reason; forasmuch as God hath decreed and determined with himself before hand all things, what he will do and what he will not do, what he will give and what he will not give, which purpose of his, our prayer cannot alter, neither can it change the thing that is gone out of his mouth: to what end therefore should we pray? and if we do, what benefit shall we reap by our prayer, more then we should if we prayed not? These are like to those wicked men described in the Scriptures, Job 21, verse 15, *What profit should we have, if we pray unto him?* Mal. 3, 14.

To answer these, we must know that as God hath determined what he will give & bestow, so he hath also determined that we shall use the means to obtain them. The woman of *Samaria*, who pretended that *Jacob* their father had given them the well, whereof *he drank himself, and his children, and his cattle*, yet knew that they must have some waterpot or somewhat else to draw water out of y^e well. God's decree is as a well of living water, & as the headspring of all good things: prayer is as the bucket or pitcher to draw out the waters. As then God hath decreed to give, so he hath decreed to give by prayer, and hath appointed that we should ask, & without prayer we have no promise to receive. God determined that he would not utterly destroy the Israelites for this murmuring, though he threatened them, as we saw before. And why? because he had also determined, that *Moses* should turn away his anger by his prayer for them, so that by means of his prayer, they should be spared. The Lord promised to *Elijah*, that he would send a gracious rain in Israel, which it had wanted for the space of three years and six months; nevertheless, we read that the Prophet ceased not to pray for the performance of it, 1 Kin. 18, 42. I am. 5, 18. God had determined after 70. years captivity to deliver his people out of Babylon, nevertheless, *Daniel* ceased not to pray to God to remember his promise and to bring them back, ch. 9. that their sins might not hinder the work of God. Lastly, it reproveth such as are ignorant, and know not how to pray, neither yet what prayer means: not how to begin, nor how to make an end: neither what to ask, nor how to behave themselves in prayer.

[Use 2] Secondly, everyone must labor to perform this duty, and to make known his wants unto God, publicly and privately, and both of them must be performed constantly and feelingly. Some under pretence & color of their private prayers & devotions, neglect the public invocation of God, and the assembling of the Church. But these dally with the people of God, and deceive their own souls, and have taught their tongues to lie. For who will trust them or believe them? Doubtless, if they thought their own private prayers available, they would much more consider, that the public prayers of the whole Church gathered together in his Name are so, much rather. This is more forcible in it self, more acceptable to God, and more profitable to our selves. More forcible and powerful, because the mouths of many being opened, do make a louder cry in the ears of God, and move him the sooner to hear us, Joel 2, 16, 17. It is more regarded of God, because it tendeth more to his honor and glory, & he is much delighted in y^e joint-consent of his Saints worshipping of him, Mat. 18, 20. It is more profitable to our selves, because it bringeth down a greater blessing: to omit that it serveth as a special means of edification, because our common prayers serve to stir up the zeal and enflame the affections one of another, as every stick put into the fire, serveth to make the hear the greater. Again, others lurking under the shadow of public prayers, think themselves wholly discharged of any farther duty, and not once in all their lives prayed privately. But we must be careful to perform this duty, not only publicly with others, but privately with our families, in our houses, and secretly also by our selves in our chambers, when the door is shut and no man seeth us, but our heavenly Father only, who seeing us perform it secretly, *will reward us openly*, Math. 6, 6. Many think it to be sufficient to pray with others, or to be present at the prayers of others, & think some force to be in it, and some good to come to rhemselves by it: but these do greatly deceive themselves. This

praying in the presence of others only, is only lip-labor; whereas our prayer should be heart-labor. For all the powers of the heart and soul ought to manifest themselves, and to be set on work in that holy exercise. If any sickness or other visitation from God befall them, they will peradventure say somewhat, but this prayer is often as sick as the sick man himself. These are like to wicked *Ahab*, he never prayed but in time of trouble; then they trouble God a little, but it is sore against their wills, for so that they might want their troubles, they could be content y^t he should want, & themselves spare their prayers. Such as pray only in the church, pray only for fashion, or for custom, or for company, because it is the manner of all others to do so. Thus while they think they have performed a service and sacrifice to God, they have rather dishonored and despised him. Every Christian that is of the Church, should make his house a Church, to perform the worship of God in it, Rom. 16, 5. Philem. verse 2. This is a great honor to any house & family. They are unworthy to be fathers and masters of families, that do not ordinarily assemble them to this duty; because thereby, they, and all their houses, their goods, and substance lie open to God's curse, neither can they look for any blessing to come upon them.

Lastly, let us all stir up our selves to perform [Use 3] this duty, let us often exercise it. Christ our Savior, a mirror and pattern of all righteousness, oftentimes used it, and spent *whole nights in prayer*, Luk. 6, v. 12. Psalm. 55, 17. and 119, 62. God hath commanded it; our own necessity hath commended it; the fruit of it hath sanctified it. We have daily sins, daily wants, daily temptations, daily dangers, daily decays in good things: prayer is as food, whereby the graces of God are preserved & increased.

[*Aarō made an atonement for the people, & stood between the living & the dead.*] Observe in these words that Aaron the high Priest, in taking his censer, & offering up with fire taken from the Altar incense to God, is a notable figure and type of the intercession of Christ, the true high Priest of our profession, Heb. 3, 1. that he maketh for all his elect to his Father. The doctrine is this, Christ Jesus hath set himself as Mediator between God and men. For *Origen* saith well, *hom*, 9. in *Numer.* that we must ascend unto the high mystery (or signification) of this Scripture, and consider how Christ Jesus, *the great high Priest*, (Heb. 4, 14.) taking our nature upon him, stood as in the midst between the living and the dead, and brought it to pass by his death, that death should spread no farther, 1 Tim. 2, 5. John 12, 32. Rom. 5, 11. and 8, 34. *He maketh intercession for us*, not that now he boweth the knee to his Father, or lifteth up his eyes, or spreadeth abroad his hands, or uttereth any voice of prayer for his Church being now in the heavens, for this he hath already sufficiently performed, John. 17, 1. Now he presenteth to his Father the merits of his death and passion, of his obedience and resurrection, which hath the force of a lively prayer, and reconcileth the Father unto us. Thus then we see that Christ Jesus is the true *Aaron* the high Priest that maketh atonement between God and us, Heb. 7, 24, 25. Eph. 1, verse 5, 6.

[Reason 1] The reasons. Christ Jesus our Redeemer hath fulfilled all the parts of a Mediator, and left none vnperfected, he alone *hath trodē the winepress of the wrath of his Father*, Isaiah 65, 5. He appeareth before the Father for us and in our names, as we do before the Father in his name, he offereth up our prayers, and worketh our salvation, John. 17, 9. Heb. 4, 14, & 2, 15,

17. *He hath delivered all them which for fear of death [Reason 2] were all their life time subject to bondage.* Secondly, the blood of Bulls and Goats outwardly sprinkled, & the ashes of beasts were not false & lying signs representing that which is not, but true and effectual signs of purifying and cleansing: these did *sanctify the unclean as touching the purifying of the flesh*, because such as were shut out of the Congregation for some legal and external uncleanness, had thereby entrance again into the assemblies, & might lawfully come to the worship of God, and be partakers of holy things: much more thē doth the blood of Christ (which is the truth & substance of all the former) and which indeed is the blood of the Son of God, Acts 20, 28. *purge your consciences from dead works, to serve the living God*, Heb. 9, 13, 14, 14, 24.

[Use 1] The uses remain. First, this teacheth that we have no other Mediator in heauē or earth, but Jesus Christ who maketh intercession for us. In the Old Testament, no prayer is made to *Enoch* though he walked with God; or to *Abraham*, though the father of the faithful: or to *Moses*, though God spake to him face to face: no prayer was offered up to any Cherubin or Seraphin, to any Saint or Angel. The Church of Rome therefore is an Apostate Church, which hath made so many Mediators and Advocates for us in heaven, as there are Saints departed and perfected; yea, which is more absurd, they make one Saint Patron for one disease, and another for another, so that they have left nothing for Christ to do, as I have shown more at large elsewhere. Neither let them object, that there is one Mediator of redemption, but many Mediators of intercession. But as this is an evil distinction, so it is as evilly observed by themselves. And will they bear us in hand that the simple people (simple indeed they are (God wot) among them) understand this difference? and can tell how to distinguish between these, to give to each his due and no more? But what speak I of the simple people? of whom I may speak as *Jeremiah* doth, *Surely these are poor, they are foolish; for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God: I will go unto the great ones and speak unto them.* The learned themselves among them do join with Christ our Savior other Mediators, not only of intercession, but also of redemption and salvation. Hitherto cometh the prayer to the Popes great martyr, *Thomas Becket* of Canterbury, who died in the Popes quarrel, which he maintained against his souereigne king, *Henry* the second, and therefore a false martyr, but a true traitor and rebel.

Tu per Thomae sanguinē, quem pro te impendit,

Fac nos (Christ) scandere, quo Thomas ascendit,

that is,

By the blood of *Thomas*, which he for thee did spend,

Make us (O Christ) to climb whither *Thomas* did ascend.

A most blasphemous prayer, wherein they present not the blood of Christ who gave himself a ransom for us, but the blood of *Thomas* to bring us to heaven. It were endless to show their idolatrous prayers made to y^e blessed Virgin, desiring to have her to reconcile them to her Son. Among the rest, consider this one:

O foelix puerpera,

nostra pians scelera,

Iure matris impera

redemptori.

that is;

O holy mother, which dost purge away our sins, command thou him that is our redeemer by thy motherly authority. And touching *Peter* and *Paul*, they say, *Concede vt amborum meritis aeternitatis gloriam consequamur*, that is, Grant that by the merits of them both, we may obtain eternal glory. Neither shall we need to marvel at these things (although they sound harsh in all Christian ears) if we consider what they ascribe unto the *Cross of Christ*, I mean to the wood & tree to which they make their prayer to this day, saying,

O crux, aue, spes unica,

Hoc passionis tempore,

Auge pijs iustitiam

Reis{que} dona veniam;

that is,

O Cross, all hail, thou that art our only hope; at this time of the passion increase thou righteousness to the godly, and grant pardon to them that are guilty. Other gross blasphemies they have reformed in their Portesse, but this which giveth as great and gross honor to the wooden cross they have reserved and retained. What is become now of their distinction, that Christ is the Mediator of redemption, but the Saints of intercession, when as they ascribe to the *Virgin Mary*, to *Peter*, to *Paul*, nay to a vile traitor, nay to a wooden cross, power to purge away the sins of the faithful, to grant them pardon and forgiveness, and to bring them to salvation? Moreover, the Apostle speaking of one Mediator, and naming Christ to be that one, 1 Tim. 2, 5. speaketh in that place of prayer, and therefore even in prayer he will have us to acknowledge no Mediator of intercession, but Christ Jesus only. A Mediator of intercession as it is defined by *Augustine*, cannot agree to any saving to Christ; for he teacheth, that it is commanded that every Christian should pray for others, *but he, who requests for all, and for whom none requesteth, is the one and true Mediator*. Again, they object, [Object.] that the Saints pray for us, and therefore we may pray to them. [Answ.] I answer, this will not follow. Again, they pray for the perfecting of the body of Christ, & desire the full gathering together of the Saints, they long for the resurrection & restitution of their bodies which lie in the dust, they wish to see the auengement of the blood of the holy martyrs shed for the testimony of the truth, and crave to behold the last coming of Christ to judgment to restore all things: howbeit they know not the particular troubles of God's children, neither understand the inward wrestlings and bucklings with sin and Satan which the conscience sustaineth, no more then *Eli* knew *the trouble of heart that Hannah had, though she prayed in his presence*. Wherefore, let us content our selves with the only and all-sufficient mediation of

Christ, remembering the saying of the Apostle *John*, *We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins*, 1 John. 2, 1, 2. And seeing he calleth us unto himself, let us not refuse to go to him. When he saith, *Come to me*, Mat. 11, 28. shall we say, nay, we will go to some other? When *Mary* called her sister secretly, saying, *The master is come, and calleth for thee; as soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him*. So it ought to be with us, Our master Christ calleth us, why do we run from him, why do we not run to him? why do we run to any other? Let us not refuse to come to him, who gave his life for us that we might live in him. Shall we then depart from him that calleth us, to them y^t call us not, that know us not, that hear us not, y^t help us not, y^t save us not?

Secondly, this condemneth the ignorant [Use 2] multitude, which through palpable and horrible ignorance rush into the presence of God without any Mediator, knowing neither God nor themselves. They dream that God is merciful, & never consider what he is in his own nature, to wit, a God of perfection, a most just Judge: and we can never reconcile his mercy and justice, but by looking upon him in y^e face and countenance of Christ Jesus, in whom only he is well pleased, Mat. 3, 17. We can receive nothing at his hands, except we come to him in his Son. For as he is perfect, so he accepteth of nothing that is imperfect. But we can offer nothing to God, but that which is tainted and defiled with sin; and if God look upon us & our wants out of his Son, we are no better then the children of wrath, he findeth matter enough in us to reject our works, and to condemn our persons. We have our prayers heard no other way but in the Name of Christ. We are no otherwise accepted *but in his beloved*, to wit, in Christ. He is the only Savior of the Church, he saveth his people from death, *and him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil*. He saveth us from our sins, guilt, and punishment. For sin is the power & sting of death, & an ugly serpent; Christ only hath quelled him, he hath merited our salvation by his death and passion, none else hath done it, none else could do it. The Saints glorified, and all the company of y^e elect Angels in heaven were too weak and unworthy to accomplish this work. The Papists, as we have shown, make him but half a Savior, joining others with him in y^e work of salvation. For they teach that with Christ's merits we must join the works of grace in the matter of iustificatiō, & that with Christ's satisfaction of y^e wrath of God, we must join our satisfaction by temporal punishment. But we have shown before, that he will be a sole Savior, or else no Savior at all.

Thirdly, it behooveth us in remembrance of [Use 3] this excellent benefit of Christ's atonement, to be thankful to God. This is the main cause of all thankfulness. The most common blessings which we receive, must at all times move us to be thankful, as meat, drink, health, wealth, liberty, peace, prosperity, and the like; but this should as it were swallow up all the remembrance of all the rest, and the zeal thereof cōsume us: *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord*. What deadness of heart then remaineth in many mē, that never remember this great work, thereby to be provoked to obedience and newness of life, that so we may return our love to God again, who loved us first?

Lastly, we must acknowledge, what we are [Use 4] in our selves, to wit, utterly lost, the enemies of God, the children of wrath, the bondslaves of Satan, and the heirs of

condemnation. This we must confess frō the bottom of our hearts, & have a lively feeling thereof, before we can receive him as *our Peace-maker and Savior*, Math. 18, 11. and 15, 14. Luke 4, 18, and 19, 10. We must say with *Daniel*, *Shame and confusion of faces belongeth unto us*, chap. 9, 8. What was due to the people in this place, and what might they have looked for, if *Aaron* had not made an atonement, but present death? So is it with us, we are borne dead in sins and trespasses, & can look for nothing but wrath, and judgment, and *fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries*, Hebr. 10, 27. if Christ do not make peace between God and us. Let us therefore look for salvation from him, as men hearing of cunning Physicians to cure diseases, do seek and send to thē far and near, Math. 9, 20, 21. John chap. 7, verse 37.

CHAP. XVII.

1. AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

2. Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of everyone of them a rod, according to the house of their fathers, of all their Princes according to the house of their fathers, twelve rods; write thou every man's name upon his rod.

3. And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi, for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers.

WEe have seen in the former chapter, how the people *envied Moses in the Camp, and Aaron the Saint of the Lord*, Psalm. 106, 16, so that he was constrained to ratify & confirm the Priesthood by the swallowing up of *Dathan* and *Abiram* in the earth, and by consuming of *Korah* and his confederates with fire, all of them being *the children of rebellion*, as they are called in this chapter, verse 10. But here we may behold a notable example of God's wonderful mercy, who is more ready to compassion then to revenge, and therefore destroyeth some, that he may instruct others. Wherefore in this chapter *Moses* continueth the same argument handled before, and showeth how GOD once again establisheth the Priesthood to *Aaron* and his sons for an everlasting covenant; whereupon he commandeth that every Tribe should bring a wooden staff, with a name written upon them, & to put them together, so as they might not be discerned asunder, but by the sight of the names. These staves thus prepared and ordered, were laid before God in the Sanctuary, and when they were taken thence again, *Aaron's* staff that had his name upon it, did flourish, and all the rest without any change remained dry and dead, as they were before: whereby the Lord shown, that he had chosen that house to serve in the Priesthood.

Consider in this present chapter, two things: First, the confirmation of the Priesthood to Aaron and his snnnes. Secondly, the repentance of the people, and resting in the ordinance of God, after they were humbled by the plagues of God, and saw the flourishing of Aaron's rod.

Touching the first, to wit, the ratification of the Priesthood, and the deciding of the controversy to whom it did belong, & ought to belong hereafter, we must observe the commandment of God to Moses, and his obedience. God commandeth Moses to take of every Tribe a rod. Now whether it were of several kinds of wood, according to the number of the Tribes, or of one kind only, to wit, the almond, as *Munster* thinketh, it is uncertain. And the question may be asked, whereas every staff must have a name written, that is, the 12 rods, 12 names, what name was written? Some think, that the Tribe of *Reuben* had the name of *Reuben*; the Tribe of *Simeon*, y^e name of *Simeon*, and so of the rest. But it is to be thought, y^t the name of the Prince of y^e Tribe was written, rather thē the name of the author of the Tribe; and the words of the text do favor this interpretation, v. 2. else to what purpose is *Moses* appointed to take several rods of the Princes of every Tribe? so that for example the rod of the Tribe of *Reuben* had the name of *Elizur*, written, and so of the rest, as they have been set down before, ch. 1, 5, 6, 7. and 7, 12, 30, 36. For as the name of *Aaron* was written upon the rod of *Levi*, not the name of *Levi* himself, v. 3. so no doubt the names of other Princes that were heads of the families of their fathers, were written upon the rods of their Tribes, not the names of the authors of y^e Tribes. Al these rods were laid up together in *the Tabernacle of the Congregation*: then y^e Lord giveth them this token to assure them whom the Lord chose and ordained, that there might be no more contention about the Priesthood, namely, that *his rod should wax green, flourish, and bear blossoms*. Thus doth God cut off all occasions of murmuring among them.

[*Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of everyone of them a rod.*] The people ought to have been thoroughly humbled for their offense, & to have their hard hearts broken in pieces by the consideration of God's judgments and miracles, and so thoroughly to be moved to reverence the ordinance of God concerning the Priesthood. But because God is constrained to work another miracle, & to change the course of nature, and to *call things that were not, as though they were*, it appeareth they were not yet sufficiently touched and humbled: for God doeth no work in vain. If then the dignity of the Priesthood had been sufficiently confirmed by the punishment taken of the seditious and their partakers, this new miracle had not been wrought in the dry and withered rod. Wherefore God goeth about by this means to remedy their pride and presumption, and showeth his great mercy and goodness toward them in calling them to repentance and in curing of their infirmities. We learn hereby, [Doctrin^e.] that the Lord is very desirous to have sinners converted and brought to repentance, that so he may save them, *Isaiah* 65, 2. *Ezek.* 33, 11. and 18, 31, 32. *Math*, 23, 37. *2 Cor.* 5, 20. *Peter* preacheth repentance to them that killed the Prince of life and denied him in the presence of *Pilate*, when he was determined to let him go, *Acts* 3, 13, 15. Even to these that murdered and betrayed the Son of God, did the Lord offer salvation. To this end he is of such great patience, because he is not willing that any one should perish, *2 Pet.* 3, 9. The reasons.

[Reason 1] Because first, they are his creatures and his workmanship, and therefore there is great reason, why he should desire their good. Natural parents do desire to save and keep in health their children. They that belong to God are his dear children, Isaiah 49, 15, 16. He loveth [Reason 2] Israel as his first borne. Secondly, he hath not only created them when they were not, but also redeemed them when they were lost, and that with no less price, then with the blood of his own Son, Col. 1, 20. 1 John. 1, 7. Ro. 5, 9, 10. If then he have done this for them, doubtless he will go forward with his love toward them: he will raise up them that are fallen, seek them that are lost, quicken them that are dead, and bring them home that are [Reason 3] strangers to him. Thirdly, it is more honor to God to convert and save, then to destroy and cast away his people. Doubt not, but be well assured, that God will do that which tendeth most to his own glory, Rom. 11, 1, 2. Justice and judgment causeth him to be feared, but his mercy and love is that which maketh him to be honored of men.

[Use 1] The uses remain. Hath God an earnest desire to convert and save men? Then it ought also to be our desire to be like in this to our heavenly Father, that is, to labor to convert and bring home others unto God, that go astray from him: for in so doing we shall follow the footsteps and example of God; dealing with our brethren in mercy and compassion as God hath dealt with us. Let the husband labor to convert the wife, and the wife to win her husband; the parents their children, and the children their parents: and everyone to convert his brother. A duty most acceptable to God, and most profitable to others. An argument of love and charity, greater love then this can no man show. So saith Christ to *Peter*, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*, Luke 22, 32. I am. 5, 19, 20.

Secondly, this serveth to condemn the [Use 2] practice of many men in our times, and to testify that they are far from God, and can have no assurance to themselves that they are his children and bear his image. God is desirous *to seek out and to save them that are lost*, like the good Shepherd that leaveth 99 in the wilderness, and this was the end of the coming of Christ. But we are for the most part careless in this duty: few do think it to belong unto them. Others are so far from seeking to convert, that they rather seek to subvert others: and of these the number is far greater then of the former, who do cross by all means they can, the purpose and desire of God. He laboreth to save, and they to destroy: he to build, and they to pull down; he to plant, and they to root up; he to bring to heaven, and they to hell. These are of their father the devil, and his lusts they do: they join with him, they labor for him, they advance and enlarge his kingdom, and they seek to bring moe unto him. This is a fearful sin, which we must repent of, or else we shall repent of it when it is too late.

Lastly, this must teach everyone to have a [Use 3] special care of his own salvation, seeing God is so desirous of it. For every man should be more careful of his own good, then another, or of another's. It is so in the body, it ought also to be so in the soul. We cannot be more careful of our own salvation then God is: & therefore seeing he is so desirous of it, let every man labor to do what in him lieth toward his conversion, that so God may accept of him.

But some will say, [Object.] It lieth not in my power to convert myself, I can do nothing until it please God to work it. I answer, [Answer.] do that which is in thy power; and God will give a blessing. It lieth in thy power to hear y^e word, to read the Scriptures, and to attend to the

Ministry of it. Come diligently and constantly to the place of God's worship, & God will work in thee his grace to thy conversion. If thou do not, never accuse God, but the frowardness of thine own will which failest in that which thou art enabled to do. For if we say we desire salvation, and yet despise the means, we deceive our selves. On the other side, from hence ariseth matter of special comfort to everyone that truly endeuoreth his own salvation, and can make enquiry into his estate, whether he be one of that number that shall be saved, or not. For although he be clogged with many sins, and daily addeth more unto the burden, yet let him not despair, nor think they shall hinder his salvation.

This is his comfort, that with God all things are possible: and when the desire and power of God go together, how great soever his sins be, he shall not need to doubt of his salvation. Let him look up to Christ, his merits do surmount all our sins.

4 And thou shalt lay them up in the Tabernacle of the Congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

5 And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod whom I shall choose, shall blossom; and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.

6 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, &c.

The Lord goeth forward to declare his will to *Moses*, and foretellet his great and miraculous work, that in one day the rod should bring forth buds, blossoms, and fruits, to stay the murmuring of the people. All miracles serve to some good end, and as a kind of Sacraments do confirm some doctrine. These rods were not green and growing, but were long since cut off from their trees, and altogether withered: and (according to the opinion of some) were such as the Princes for honors sake did carry when they executed judgment. Wherefore it was impossible, according to the course of nature, that any of them should be fresh, and flourish, and bring forth fruit. For as they were all of them laid up together, so they were all of them alike dead, and without life: and therefore, whereas *Aaron's* rod flourished, and by flourishing the vigor of life appeared to be in it, it manifested apparently the power of God, and the Priesthood of *Aaron*. If any object, that the emulation and murmuring could not by this means be taken away between the house of *Aaron*, and the rest of the Levites, seeing his name only was written upon the rod, and not the names of any of them. I answer, that seeing God shown forth his power almighty, in that rod which had the name of *Aaron* upon it, it was a plain sign and infallible token, that *Aaron* was chosen to the Priesthood, and that all others were excluded from that dignity, and so the people confess in the end of the chapt. Now whereas God in the flourishing of the rod, saith that he would show whom he had chosen, he declareth that in bestowing his gifts and benefits in the church, he doth not respect any man's merit, but dealeth with everyone according to his own good pleasure. *Aaron* was not advanced to the Priestly dignity by any virtue of his own, but merely through the grace of

God. So are we adopted and made heirs of everlasting life, not through our own works or merits, but by God's favor, seeing *it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that showeth mercy*, Ro 9, 16. Of this we have spoken before, chap. 2. v. 18.19. Touching this miracle which God purposeth and promiseth to work in the sight of all Israel, we learn, [Doctrine.] That God hath from time to time wrought miracles against the course of nature for the good of his church. He is not tied to the ordinary course of natural things, but he worketh extraordinarily so often as it pleaseth him. All times and ages of the church witness this truth, and testify the miraculous works of his hand, in the Sun, in the Moon, in the Air, in the Waters, in the Fire, in the Earth, and in all creatures both high and low. Thus he plagued the Egyptians, Psal. 105, 27▪ 29, 30, 32, 34, &c. Thus he dealt with his own people when they came out of Egypt, Psa. 78, 12, 13, 14.15, 16. Levite. 9.24. Joshua 10, 12 Judge. 6, 21 & 13, 19. 1 Kings 18. In the New Testament we have sundry miracles of Christ our Savior: and the miracle of all miracles accomplished which was prophesied long before, that *a Virgin should conceive and bear a son*, Isaiah 7. verse 14. Math. 1. verse 23. Luk. 1, 31.

The Reasons follow. First, that so he might [Reason 1] work faith in them that otherwise would not believe. Thus doth God take away all excuse, when he worketh above nature, as Exod. 4, 1. When *Moses* was sent to the Israelites in Egypt, to tell them of their deliverance, y^t God had heard their groans and sighs, & had seen all their troubles and miseries: he alleged that the people would not believe him, nor hearken unto his voice; and therefore did the Lord enable him to turn his rod into a serpent, & the serpent into his rod, that so they might believe that the *Lord God of their fathers had appeared unto him*, Exod. 4, 5. Again, he is willed to put his hand into his bosom, and when he pulled it out, it was leprous as snow, verse 6. and putting his hand into his bosom again, when he pulled it out, *Behold it was turned again as his other flesh*, verse 7. Whereupon the Lord saith, *If they will not believe thee, nor hearken to the voice of the first sign, they will believe the voice of the latter sign*, verse 8. And if they would not believe either the one or the other, he is yet willed to take the water of the River, and to pour it upon the dry land, and *the water should become blood upon the dry land*.

Secondly, God getteth glory hereby among [Reason 2] his children, his praise is by it set forth, when by nothing else. We are moved at strange things, John 11, 15, 45. and taught to believe. *Lazarus* was raised from the dead, who had lain in the grave four days, ver. 39. to show forth God's glory, verse 40. Math. 9, 8. Luke 13, 13. and 23, 47. So that miracles serve to work faith in us, and to gain glory to God. The Uses.

First, consider from hence the greatness and [Use 1] power of God, who is to be compared unto him? Isaiah 44, 24. and 45, 5. None of all the creatures, be they never so excellent in strength and glorious in power, can do such things, & therefore nothing can be matched with him; let him therefore be preferred above all. This is the use urged by *Moses* in his song of thanksgiving after their passing over the red sea, Exod. 15, 10, 11. and Psal. 77.12, 13, 14. He is the only author of miracles, he it is only that properly doth them, and no other. For a miracle is a work wrought above the strength of nature, as we shall show more largely afterward. But no creature can work above the course of nature, he only that is the author of nature must do it.

[Object.] But it may be objected, that some of the Prophets did raise the dead, as *Elijah* 1 Kin. 17, 21, 22. and *Elisha* 2 King. 4, 34, 35. made Iron to swim, being an heavy thing, to ascend upward, 2 Kings 6, 6. commanded fire to come from heaven, being a light thing, to descend downward, 2 Kin. 1, 10. healed many incurable diseases, 2 Kings 5, 10. and wrought many great works, Heb. 11, 33, 34, 35. So did the Apostles raise the dead, cleanse the Leapers, restore sight to the blind, healed the sick, cast out devils, and this was their office & calling to which they were appointed, Math. 10, 8. [Answer.] Acts 5, 15. & 19, 12. I answer, the gift which they had was the faith of miracles. And this was done in this manner. God revealed unto them by his Spirit, that he would work such and such a miracle when they prayed, & thereupon either by commanding the evil spirit to depart in the name of Christ, or by imposition of hands in other works they wrought the same. They having this knowledge by revelation of the purpose of God, believed the same, and were as the mouth of God, and the hand of God, being his messengers, to signify what he would do, Mark 11, 22, 23. Heb. 11, 33, 34. They then had no power of their own, it was the divine power only that wrought them.

[Object.] But some will say, that the devils can work miracles contrary to nature, and therefore it is not proper to God. [Answer.] I answer, he can work wonders, but not miracles. For though every miracle be a wonder, yet every wonder is not a miracle. He can do things extraordinary, or otherwise then the common course of nature, but he cannot work above or against nature. Thus he caused fire to fall from heaven, & the winds to blow down dwelling houses, as we see in the history of *Job*. He also caused blisters and ulcers to arise in his body, and without question they were true ulcers, as y^e Scriptures plainly setteth down, and *Job* truly felt, Job 2, 7, 8. Howbeit this he did no otherwise but by the force of nature, for he cannot make rain, or thunder, or lightning, or wind, or storm, or tempest; this is the work of God, and cometh from his hand, Gen. 7, 4. Deut. 11, 14. & 28, 12. 1 Sam. 12, 17, 18. 1 Kin. 8, 35, 36. and 17, 14. & 18, 1. 2 Kin. 3, 17. Job 5, 10. and 28, 26. and 37, 23, 45. Psalm 105, 32. & 107, 25. & 135, 7. & 147, 8. & 148, 7, 8. Ier. 5, 24. & 10, 13. & 51, 16. Zach. 10, 1. Acts 14, 17. James 5, 18. The devil cannot make the matter whereof the rain is engendered. They then are deceived, that think the devil is able to make rain, or hail, or snow, or vapor, or the least fly that flieth in the air, or the smallest worm that creepeth in the earth. Nevertheless, when the matter of storms & tempests is prepared of God, he can gather it, and hasten it, and make it more terrible, and carry it from place to place, from country to country. For as he can assume a body, but not make a body: so he can use the wind, but not create the wind. If storms and winds might be raised and framed by the power of Satan, they might be said to execute his word, & he might be said to be the father of the rain. So then briefly, it is safest to hold this as a truth, that God caused the fire, but Satan brought it upon. *Job's* flock: God caused the wind, but Satan drave it upon the four corners of the house. For when once they are raised, Satan hath power by God's permission, to carry and transport them from Region to Region: so y^t when naturally they blow one way, he can besides nature turn them another way, nevertheless he is not able to send winds, or raise tempests where none are. It may be further said, [Objection] that the sorcerers of Egypt did bring forth Frogs, and turn water into blood, and rods into serpents and such like, Ex. 7, 11, 22. & 8, 7. I answer, [Answ.] it may be Satan did fetch these frogs and serpents from other places, and convey them in a moment

into the presence of *Pharaoh* and of his Princes; for the effecting whereof, more hast and speed were requisite then power, and yet neither were wanting to him being a spirit. *Sampson* was able by Art and cunning to gather together 300. Foxes in short space, that with his foxes and firebrands he might annoy the Philistines, Judge. 15, 4. Much more is Satan able, who may most truly be called *a mighty hunter before the Lord*, to bring together on a sodain a great number of these Frogs, which could not be far to seek in the bogs, marishes, & fens of Egypt. Or else this was done in outward show and appearance only, not in deed and in truth. If it be further urged, [Object.] that it is expressly written that the sorcerers brought forth Frogs, and turned water into blood, &c. [Answer.] I answer, the Scripture often speaketh of things, as they appear and are offered to the sight, not as they are in themselves. As he that appeared to the witch at *Endor* is called *Samuel*, yet it is certain it was not the true *Samuel*, but the devil in his habit and likeness, 1 Sam. 28, 14. & *Daniel* saith, ch. 9.21. the man *Gabriel* appeared unto him, because he appeared in the shape of a man, whereas he was one of the *Angels that stood in the presence of God*, Luk. 1, 19. so have Images oftentimes the names of those whom they represent. Thus *Josephus* testifieth, that y^e serpents of these Magicians did creep in the show & likeness of true serpents. And *Justin Martyr* one of the most ancient saith (*Quaest. Orthod.* 16) that they did dazzle and deceive the eyes of the beholders, and cast a mist like Iuglers before them. And *Ambrose* calleth their fact, a counterfeit emulation of that they had seen *Moses* do before them. But howsoever this were done, whether by a real transportation, or by a deceitful apparition, certain it is, they could not make true serpents, true blood, true frogs, and y^t for these causes. First, because it is holden, that God only hath power to change and convert a dead substance into a living substance, a rod into a serpent. Secondly, these sorcerers could not do a less thing, therefore not possibly the greater. They could not by all their power and art preserve themselves from the botches & other plagues of Egypt, for the boils & blaines seized upon them that they could not stand before *Moses*, Exod. 9, 11. which notwithstanding is more easy then to make or change a creature; nay they could not bring forth lice, but said, *This is the finger of God*. Thirdly, the true serpents of *Moses* devoured the other Serpents, Exo. 7, 12. From whence *Josephus* and *Ferus* conclude, they were no better then images and representations. For it is not ordinary that one creature should devour another of the same kind, as a serpent, a serpent; or a Lyon, a Lyon. And if this were found, either we must imagine that the Magicians serpents and frogs were exceeding little, or else it is incredible & impossible, that one creature should receive into it self another creature of equal quantity, with preservation of it self. Lastly, if any such power had been in the Magicians, to make true frogs and serpents, they might also by the same power have removed those that *Moses* brought. For he that can build up, can also pul down: and it is one and the same art to knit and vnloose: nay, it is an argument of greater power to make them, thē to remove th•. Now they could not take them away, albeit they were annoyed by them, but were constrained to entreat *Moses* to pray for their removal, Exod. 8, 8. And if they had been able to make them, they should be more cunning artists and craftsmen then their master, I mean the devil. Thus much of the slights & juggling tricks of these cozening sorcerers.

[Use 2] Secondly, we must learn to fear God and to obey him; he commandeth Nature & it giveth place to him, who is the God of power, and he shall reign forever and ever, Exo. 15, 18. He stopped the mouths of the Lions, & quenched the violence of fire. True it is, that ordinarily the Lord governeth the world by second causes, howbeit he is free to use them, or not to use them: and he can change y^e course of them to the preservation of the godly, and to the destruction of the wicked. A singular comfort to all such as belong to him, to move them to cast their care upon him, and to cleave unfeignedly unto him with all our hearts by a lively faith. He never wanteth means to do us good, or to procure our safety. Upon this foundation did those servants of God build, that were threatened to be cast into the hot fiery furnace; for they considered, that the God whom they served, was able to deliver them, and therefore they feared God more then the King, Dan. 3, 17. And albeit God do not ordinarily in our days work miracles, yet he hath the hearts of all men in his own hand, and he turneth them as it pleaseth him, and maketh oftentimes our enemies to be at peace with us, Prov. 16, 7. On the other side, this serveth for the terror of the ungodly, that God hath infinite ways to work out their destruction: the least of all the creatures once armed by the Creator, are of wonderful force, and shall be sufficient to destroy all his adversaries. This doth Moses teach, touching the drying up of the red sea, a work far exceeding all the limits of nature, Exod. 15, 14, 15, 16. The people shall hear of it and be afraid, the Dukes of *Edom* shall be amazed, the mighty men of *Moab* shall tremble, and the inhabitants of *Canaan* shall melt away. Now they knew they had not to do with a weak & impotent God, such as were the gods whom they worshipped, but with him that could command sea & land: and this doth *Rahab* confess to y^e spies whom she received into her house, Josh. 2, 10, 11. Let all these therefore know, that they must fear him that is able to destroy, and to cast both body and soul into hell fire.

Thirdly, we must learn to give God that [Use 3] which is his own and due unto him. We must acknowledge him to be the sole author and worker of all the miracles that have been or shall be in the world. Neither Saint, nor Angel, neither Prophet, nor Apostle, neither Satan the prince of darkness, nor any of the devils, is able to work any miracle; it is the prerogative royal of God. Let us not stand in fear of the devil and his angels, they cannot of themselves do anything unto us, but that which the Lord willeth. The common and ignorant sort of men stand pitifully in fear of witches and of their practice, as the chiefest plagues of a Parish, & they confess they have been as glad to please them as their mothers, & as much afraid to displease them, as ever they were to displease their fathers, as if the whole world were governed by witches. O that these men would be as careful to please God, & as fearful to offend him: as for witches, they are more afraid of them thē hurt: they are but the devils instruments to deceive the world; the devil hath utterly blinded the eyes of these and of many others, to make them believe that they do those things which they never do, neither indeed can do. The devil himself is God's servant or rather slave, to do his will whether he will or no: for he can do nothing but what the Lord willeth. He ruleth all things by his providence, the devil cannot kill a fly except he have liberty given unto him. But to return to the former point, that it is God only that worketh miracles, observe with me that he worketh two ways; sometime by himself alone, and sometimes by some other creature. By himself alone, when he useth no instrument at all, as in the creation of the world, making all things

of nothing, without help of Angel or other matter. So he turned back the shadow of the dial of *Ahaz* by himself alone, and many other such like. Again, when it pleaseth him he useth means, as in the miracles wrought in Egypt, he did them by the hand of *Moses* and *Aaron*. But here we must take heed of two extremes, and God is dishonored by both of them. First, that we derogate nothing from the Majesty of God, albeit it please him to use means in many of his miracles, because he useth thē freely, not of necessity, and he is as well able to work without them as with them. Secondly, that we do not magnify the creatures and instruments which the Lord useth above that which is convenient because that were to set them in the place of God, who have no more power then that which is given them from above. [Object.] But some may here ask the question, why doth God use means in working of miracles? Why did he use the holy Prophets, and Apostles, and sometimes also such as have no justifying faith, as *Judas* and others? no doubt as he preached, so he wrought miracles, for he had the same commission with the rest. I answer, [Answer.] he useth them, not because he standeth in need of them, or is tied unto them, but for these causes. First, to teach us that he approveth the means whereby things are brought to pass, and he showeth by his own example that we should make account of them: so that if any neglect or contemn them, he opposeth himself against the Lord. Secondly, to support and uphold man's weakness, who is not able to look upon his Majesty, when he worketh by himself, as a weak eye cannot see things that are far off, except he put on his spectacles. This is plain in the example of the Israelites, when they heard the thunder and lightning, and the sound of a Trumpet exceeding loud, and the Mountain smoking, they were so afraid, that they desired the Lord to speak no more unto them, but that *Moses might speak unto them, and they would hear him*. Thirdly, the Lord useth means for the trial of our faith, whether we will ascribe the work that is wrought only to the worker thereof, or to the means; or partly to the one, and partly to the other: or as some do, all to the instrument, and nothing to the principal. In the miracles wrought by Christ himself, we see how diversely men were affected: for though they were effected by the finger of God, yet the Pharisees blasphemed, and said, *This fellow casteth out devils, by Beelzebub the Prince of the devils*. This argueth great corruption of nature and want of faith. [Object.] And as we have shown why God useth means, so it may be asked, what means God useth in working miracles? I answer, [Answer.] they are of diverse sorts. First, such as may seem to have some force and power in them for the working of the miracle. When the waters of *Marah* were bitter, that the people could not drink of them, the Lord shown *Moses* a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, they became sweet. Secondly, he useth means that have no appearance of any power or use in the working of a miracle; such was the touching of the hem of Chrsts garment, which infinite numbers touched, and yet received no virtue from thence. Such was the lifting up of the rod of *Moses*, and the stretching out of his hand at the red sea, Such was the striking of the Rock with his staff at the waters of strife, which had no power to make the waters gush out. Such was y^e handkerchieffe of *Paul* to cure diseases, & the shadow of *Peter*, by which many were healed. For these cures were wrought when the Apostles were absent, and knew nothing of them, but were busied in other more important works of their callings. Thirdly, he useth such means as seem no way available unto the work, but rather quite contrary, to hinder it, as curing the blind man, *He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and laid upon his eyes;*

which might seem more available to put out sight, then to restore it, to make a man blind, then to make him see. Thus then we see, and learn to acknowledge, that every miracle is wrought by the sole and omnipotent power of God.

Lastly, we learn hereby, that we have a [Use 4] most sure word of the Prophets and Apostles, whereunto we must take heed as unto a light that shineth in dark places. We are not cunningly circumvented by devised fables, but we have the whole doctrine of salvation delivered in the Scriptures, fully confirmed unto us. For to what end do all the extraordinary works of God, done by the hands of the Prophets and Apostles serve, but to make plain the doctrine which is according to godliness, and thereby to work in our hearts faith and belief? The miracles of Christ unwritten, & therefore now unknown, were not unprofitable to be read, & unworthy to be known; nevertheless these were sufficient. When Christ came into the world, he was many ways *wonderful*, it is one of his names by which he was to be called; he was wonderful in his person, wonderful in his doctrine, and wonderful in his works. In his person, because of the union of his two natures, he was both God & man. In his doctrine, & the word preached by him, because he taught the way of God plainly, clearly, and evidently: nay, as one that had authority, for his word was with power, and they were astonished at his Doctrine. In his works and miracles, because they plainly proved him to be God. The doctrine of Christ served for faith: the miracles served for the doctrine: forasmuch as they tended, either to prepare the minds of men to receive the doctrine, or to strengthen faith in the doctrine already received. Both these were committed to writing by the will and appointment of Christ himself, to further the faith and salvation of the people to y^e end of the world. The doctrine long since written, is no otherwise to be regarded, then the lively voice of Christ if he were among us, & we heard him preach to us, as the Jews did: and the miracles that are written are no otherwise to be esteemed, then if we saw them done before our eyes, so y^t we need no other, no new miracles to confirm y^e doctrine of Christ & of his Apostles. They were needful when the Gospel was first planted, and seemed strange in the world, as it were in the infancy of the Church. That truth is already plentifully confirmed, except we should account it new evermore. Hence it appeareth, how found & unreasonable the Romanists are that require of the Ministers of the Gospel, to confirm their calling by miracles. For thus they reason, Extraordinary callings are to be confirmed by miracles: but y^e planters of our Churches show no miracles; therefore their calling cannot be of God. These are like to the Jews, of whom Christ speaketh, Mat. 12, 38. If I should ask of them what signs and miracles the Prophets shown, *Nathan, Iddo, Obadiah, Micah*, & many others, I think their best answer would be silence. We read expressly, that *John* the Baptist did no miracle, John. 10, 41. yet was his calling extraordinary. The rule that Christ giveth us to discern false doctrine from the true is this, *By their fruits ye shall know them*, Mat. 7, 16. The doctrine that is taught is the true fruit, they are known therefore by delivering the doctrine, not by working of miracles. We teach no other doctrine then is set down in the Scripture, so that it is sufficiently confirmed by miracles already. For if the doctrine of the Apostles be our doctrine, doubtless the miracles of the Apostles are ours also, which may not be severed and divided from the doctrine it self. This then discovereth the weakness of *Turrian* the Jesuit, who is more ridiculous thē the rest, that asketh the question, how we know that *Luther* was a

teacher raised up of God, and what miracle he ever wrought? as also when he telleth us, that if any should ask of them, what sign they have given to them of God; they have this miracle, the Sacrament of orders. A very vnorderly answer: whereby it appeareth, that he knoweth not what a miracle is. For who can call an ordinary thing a miracle? As well we may say, the preaching of the word is a miracle; yea, we may better say that the wonderful effects wrought by the Gospel are a miracle, whereby faith is wrought in the hearts of the elect, and eternal life begun in them. If we will not believe the truth of the Gospel by beholding the glorious effects w^e it worketh in the consciences of men, it appeareth evidently, that we would not believe, though we saw a thousand others, yea though *one should come from the dead unto us*, Lu. 16, 31.

7 And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord, in the Tabernacle of witness.

8 And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the Tabernacle of witness, and behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, & bloomed blossoms, and yielded Almonds.

We have in these words the obedience of *Moses* in word and work to the former commandment, as also the performance of y^e promise that God made touching the budding of *Aaron's* rod. Consider in these words, [Doctrine.] that it is the property of God's children to yield obedience to his word so soon as the same is delivered and revealed unto them. All the faithful are commended in holy Scripture in this respect. The ten lepers that were commanded to show themselves to the Priest, prepared themselves immediately to go, though as yet no cleansing or curing appeared in the flesh, Lu. 17, 14, 15. they never consulted with flesh and blood, they believe that Christ was true of his word, & able to perform in deed what he had promised in word. Thus did *Noah*, whē God commanded him to build an Ark, though he had many discouragements, the greatness of the work, the length of the time, the mockings of the wicked, y^e danger of putting himself into it, and committing of his life to the mercy of the raging waters, yet none of these could terrify him, but *by faith* he overcame them all. *Peter* being commanded of Christ to let down his net to take fish, showeth, that he had wearied himself & his fellows all night, nevertheless at the commandment of Christ he let it down, & hoped for an happy issue, Lu. 5, 4, 5, 6. Thus have God's childrē always done let us therefore beware of disobedience, under what pretence soever it be. *Saul* had his excuse, he could set a fair face upon a bad cause, but he was punished with the loss of his kingdom, 1 Sam. 15. Woe had it been to *Naaman* who shown himself discontented with the Prophet, because he (being before instructed of God) had willed him *to wash himself seven times in Jordan*; he had gone away a leper as he came, if he had not hearkened to the counsel of his servants, 1 Ki. 5, 10, 12. *Moses* was shut out of the land of promise, because he obeyed not God in striking the Rock, *but spake unadvisedly with his lips*. The Prophet received a commandment frō God, that he should go to *Beth•el*, & reprove the idolatrous worship of the two calves that *Jeroboam* had set up, and y^t he should neither eat nor drink in presence with the idolaters, 1 Ki. 13, 8, 9. but because he did contrary to the

commandment, he was torn in pieces of a Lyon, paying the punishment of his disobedience, and teaching us by his example obedience to God.

Again, [Doctrine.] observe that God performeth more then he hath promised. He only told *Moses*, that the man's rod whom he had chosen should blossom, but it appeareth that for farther manifestation of the truth of his word, and the dignity of *Aaron*, he verified more; for y^e Lord did not only cause it to *bring forth buds, and to bloome blossoms*, but likewise to *bear almonds*. We see then from hence, y^t such is the goodness of God, that he performeth and bringeth to pass, more then he promiseth to do. He promised to *Abraham* to give him a child, but he gave unto him many children; for he had not only *Isaac* the son of promise, by *Sarah*, but he had *Ishmael* by *Agar*, Gen. 16, 15, 16. and many other by *Keturah*. God therefore is not only good, but much better then his word.

[Reason 1] And no marvel, for he is of infinite power, and can do much more then he will, Mat. 3, 9. and 26, 53. Secondly, he promiseth afore-hand more then we can look for, to make us ready and willing to obey him, as he did to *Solomon*, 1 Kin. 3, 12, 13. to the end that no man should think it tedious & troublesome to come unto him. The uses remain.

[Use 1] Acknowledge from hence, the infinite goodness, mercy, and power of God. His loving kindness is incomprehensible. Hence it is, that the Apostle prayeth for the Ephesians earnestly, with his knees bowed unto the Father, that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith, that they being rooted and grounded in love, *may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with the fullness of God*, Eph. 3, 18, 19, Thus then we must learn to magnify the exceeding love of God toward us, of which we have daily experience.

[Use 2] Secondly, from hence we may conclude, that much more he will give unto us, whatsoever he hath promised. He cannot deceive, nor fail, nor alter that which is gone out of his mouth; it is God that cannot lie which hath promised, Titus 1, 2. He is faithful, he cannot deny himself, 2 Tim. 2, 13. As he is not deceived, so he cannot deceive; man is subject, even the best men, both to deceive and to be deceived. Doubt not therefore of his word that is better then his word.

[Use 3] Thirdly, we have comfort to go unto him in all our necessities, and great encouragement to pray unto him in time of danger, *He is able to give us more abundantly above all that which we ask or think*, Eph. 3, 20. We see how men in their suite to their betters commonly ask more then they look for, they cannot look for more then they ask; thinking by y^t means of asking largely, to obtain somewhat answerable to their expectation. But God giveth more then we ask, we do not ask more then he giveth, as all the Saints of God have found to their endless comfort, Psal. 105, 20, 21. Gen. 39, 19, 20. and 40, 14. and 41, 14, 41, 42. Ester 7, 10. compared with chap. 9, 10. Lu. 15, 22. Math. 15, 22.

[Use 4] Fourthly, see the difference between God and man. Men for the most part are liberal in promising, but sparing in performing. It is not so with God; indeed he promiseth much, but he performeth more, he is a liberal pay-master, he dealeth bountifully with his servants. When *Jacob* was sent away to *Padan Aram* to his mothers father, God promised he would be

with him, that he would *••epe* him in all places whither he went, that he would bring him again to his fathers house, that he would not leave him until he had done that which he had spoken unto him of: and *Jacob* himself craved no more of God but this, *y^t* he would *keep him in his way that he went, and give unto him bread to eat, and raiment to put on*, Gen. 28, 15, 20. But God performed a great deal more unto him, for *Jacob* received more, & acknowledgeth more, ch. 32, 10. *I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast shown unto thy servant: for with my staff I passed over this Iordā, & now I am become two bands.*

Lastly, it is our duty to be cheerful in the [Use 5] duties of our callings, the Magistrate, the Minister, the master, the servant, everyone as his place requireth, in ruling, in teaching, in instructing, in obeying, seeing God will reward so plentifully. Let no hindrances or pulbacks discourage us, whatsoever we meet withal, let us pass them over, & not regard them. Let us go constantly forward, as *Moses* did; there were many hooks baited and laid before him to catch him, many snares set before his eyes to entangle him: but he escaped *as a bird out of the net of the fowlers, because he had respect to the recompense of the reward.* God rewardeth abundantly, above our deserts & desires. Our deserts indeed are little, nay none at all, but our desires are great: and yet the bountifulness of God exceedeth our desires, though they be often enlarged very far and wide. If this will not give encouragement, nothing will.

[Behold, the rod of Aaron for the tribe of Levi was budded, & yielded almonds.] Out of these words, another point is to be considered, I mean from the flourishing of this rod, & that is, that God is able to quicken & give life to things that are dead & withered: though they have no sap, no moisture, no juice in them, yet God is able to put a vegetable force into them. This we see in *Abraham & Sarah*, they were in respect of generation as good as dead; for *Sarah* was aged and barren, and past bearing of children, *for it ceased to be with her after the manner of women*, Gen. 18, 11. and *Abraham* himself was an hundred year old, Gen. 17, 17. yet he was made a father of many Nations, even before him whō he believed, *who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were.* Rom. 4, 17. This we see evidently in the first creation, when out of the earth, dead in it self, he produced living creatures, and made it bring forth grass, *and hearb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind*, Gen. 1, 11, and 2, 7. So when God had formed man of the dust of the ground, he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, & man became a living soul.

Again, it appeareth how God in all ages raised some out of the grave, and from the number of the dead; the dead man that was cast into the sepulcher of *Elisha*, so soon as he touched his bones, revived, *and stood up on his feet.* This we see among the miracles of Christ. When a young man was carried dead out of the gates of the City, the only son of his mother, he came and touched the Beer, *and raised him to life.* So he raised the daughter of *Iairus*, *for he took her by the hand and she arose.* The like we might say of *Lazarus*, that had been buried and had lain four days in the grave, for when he cried with a loud voice, *Lazarus come forth*, he that was dead came forth *bound hand and foot, with grave clothes.* So did *Peter* to *Tabitha*, a woman full of good works and alms deeds, he *kneeled down and prayed, and turning him to the body, he bad her arise, and she opened her eyes and sate up.* Hereunto also we may not unfitly apply the examples of such as have recovered out of eminent dangers, and have been in a manner, in the jaws of

death, and held their souls in their hands, as Hebr. 11.17, 19. Touching *Isaac*, he lay bound with cords as a sacrifice upon the Altar, the knife was lifted up to have killed him, and his father ready to have offered him for a burnt offering, and therefore he is also said to *have offered him, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure*. The like we might say of many other the Saints, that have had experience of God's power, who being no better then dead in their own opinions by incurable diseases, and incredible dangers, have notwithstanding been suddenly restored. *Hezekiah* was willed to set his house in order, *for he should die*, his disease was mortal, yet by prayer he obtained the prolonging of his days. When *Daniel* was in the lions den, and the three servants of God in the fiery furnace, *Noah* in the Ark upon the waters; *Jonah* in the belly of the Whale, where were they but after a sort in death? yet all these had deliverance, and flourished again *like the Almond rod in this place*. The like we might say of *Paul*, he was pressed with trouble, out of measure, above strength, insomuch that he despaired even of life, and received the sentence of death in himself; yet God which raised the dead, delivered him from so great a death. We read in the acts of the Apostles, that he was stoned with stones, so that they drew him out of the city, supposing that he had been dead, but when the disciples stood round about him, *he rose up and came into the city*. So doth this Apostle speak of *Epaphroditus*, *he was sick nigh unto death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow*. This was likewise the flourishing of *the Almond rod of Aaron*.

[Reason 1] This is not to be marvelled at, forasmuch as God is the living God, he hath life and being in himself, and he giveth life and breath and being unto other things. This is a title proper and peculiar to God, and therefore it is said, *He is not the God of the dead, but of the living*. Secondly, he is of infinite power and was [Reason 2] able in the beginning to create all things of nothing, so that *the things which were seen were not made of things which do appear*. Thirdly, he [Reason 3] can take away life and breath so often as it pleaseth him, yea cast body and soul into hell.

The uses remain. First, this was a type, as [Use 1] also the whole Priesthood was, of the person, doctrine, Priesthood, and kingdom of Christ, as appeareth in many places of the Prophets. Al our salvation springeth from his cross, and our life from his death, He offered up himself upon the cross for the redemption of our bodies, to obtain for us everlasting peace, perfect righteousness, and the kingdom of heaven; he rose again from *death to life for our justification*. This is the *rod* y^t came out of the stemme of *Jesse*; and as a branch that grew out of his roots, who though he were put to death in the flesh, and became as a dry and withered stalk and staff that was not regarded, yet he was quickened *by the spirit, and God raised him from the dead*, so that he became as the flourishing *rod of Aaron, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*, Eph. 1.7.

Secondly, here is also a type set forth for [Use 2] the confirmation of our faith in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body at the last day, which as dry seed is cast into the earth and brought to dust, yet in due time shall flourish again, as the *rod of the almond in this place*. Dan. 12.2. John. 5.25. and 11.24, 25. John. 19.25, 26, 29. This hath been taught in all ages of the Church from the very beginning, Gen. 4.10. and 5.24. Heb. 11.5. Jude ver. 14, 14. Exod. 3.6, 15.

2 King. 2.11. Isaiah 26.19. Notwithstanding in all ages some have been found that have denied the resurrection. Among the people of God, that Sadducees taught that man perished wholly, and that after death there is no rising or returning to life, but that he perisheth as the beast, Matth. 22.23. Act. 23.8. And the Apostle *Peter* foretelleth, that in the last days should mockers arise, that should say, *Where is the promise of his coming?* 2 Pet. 3.3, 4. and what is this else, but not to believe that Christ will come again to judgment nor raise up the dead to life? And in the Church of Corinth some were found, which said, *there is no resurrection of the dead.* 1 Cor. 15.12. Some have confessed the immortality of the soul, as many also of the heathen did, but touching the resurrection they have fancied it to be in this life, and not after death: so that the resurrection with them is nothing else but regeneration, to wit, a dying unto sin, and arising again to newness of life.

The authors of this heresy seem to have been *Hymenaeus* and *Philetus*, of whom the Apostle saith, *Concerning the truth they have erred, saying that the resurrection is already past <◇> thereby do destroy the faith of some,* 2 Tim. 2.18. Neither is this heresy dead with them, but is revived and continued in the damnable sect of the *Family of love*, who hold that *hell and heaven are in this life*, and no other resurrection of the body, or day of judgment, or coming of Christ, thē in this world. To these we may ioin as next neighbors y^e Anabaptists of our times, who utterly deny that the same bodies, which now we have, and shall lie in the dust, shall ever rise again; but they hold, that God at the second coming of Christ, will make us new bodies. This is to maintain a new creation of new bodies, but to deny the resurrection of the former bodies. For it is one thing to make and another to raise up. Against all these errors, we must cleave to the simplicity of the Scriptures. For this is a fundamental point of Religion, if this be shaken and overturned, all religion is pulled up by the roots. Hence it is, that the Apostle reasoneth against these at large, 1 Cor. 15. and proveth the point soundly & substantially by many arguments.

First, if there be no resurrection, then Christ is not yet risen from the dead, ver. 13, 15, 16. but he is already risen, and death shall have no more dominion over him, Rom. 6.9. and if the head be risen, then the members shall rise also. The head cannot be without the members: and how can that head be said to have life in it, if all the members should lie covered in the dust, and never be united to the head, neither one to another?

Again, if no resurrection, then of all men the believers were most miserable, verse. 19. Here they are vexed with sundry enemies, Satan, the world, and the flesh. *Lazarus* here wanteth and suffereth hunger, while the rich glutton is *clothed with purple, and fareth deliciously every day,* Luk. 16.19. The godly weep and lament, while the ungodly rejoice and be glad, John. 16.20. At this stone, the godly have often stumbled, Psal. 73.2, 3. Ier. 12.1, 2. and from hence the reprobate take occasion to harden their hearts in wickedness, because they think there is no God will reward them that seek after him, Mal. 3.14. but they are greatly deceived, Psal. 58.11. For woe were it to all God's servants, if there were no resurrection & eternal life. But they are not y^e most miserable, because they are pronounced blessed by the mouth of Christ, Matth. 5.4, 6, 10, 11. Luk. 16.25. 2 Thess. 1.5, 6, &c.

Thirdly, if there should be no resurrection of the godly, from death to life, then the first *Adam* should be more mighty and powerful, then the second: so that the second *Adam* should be impotent and weak, if he should not be able to deliver them from the jaws of death. *Adam* and Christ are compared unto two trees, and both of them communicate to [Use 4] their boughs and branches such things as they have of their own. *Adam* was as an evil and rotten tree, and therefore communicateth so men these properties and no better. Christ is the good tree and full of sap and life, and he infuseth into his members goodness and life, and no worse then these. It is not possible that an evil tree should bring forth good fruit, or a good tree evil fruit, Mat. 7.17.

Fourthly, all our enemies and the enemies of Christ are to be taken clean away, & made subject to Christ and to us, ver. 25, 26. *All shall be put under his feet*, Psa. 8. and he must reign, *until all his enemies be made his footstool*, Psal. 110.1. The last enemy of the head and members is death, this shall be quite abolished at the last day, and not before. True it is, that Christ himself can die no more, Rom. 6.9. Heb. 7.25. yet he accounteth it his enemy, because it is an enemy to his children: and he accounteth that as done to himself, which is done to any of his members, Act. 9. And it is our enemy, because it daily cutteth off part of our life, and seeketh to take hold of it, it weareth and wasteth our days by his messengers or harbengers, to wit, troubles and calamities, sicknesses, sores and aches: it bringeth sundry pains and dolours, it separateth the dearest and nearest friends that ever were, the body and the soul: it leadeth the body captive, and clappeth it up in a loathsome prison full of worms, and filthiness, and rottenness: it destroyeth that Tabernacle which was at the first a most glorious creature, and as far as lieth in it, it would deprive the body of eternal life, and keep it in ignominy forever under the earth: so that it is a most spiteful & malicious enemy raging upon us without any mercy or compassion.

Fifthly, *If there were no resurrection, to what end and purpose are any baptized for dead? if the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptized for the dead?* This place is dark, and commonly understood of the Sacrament of Baptism, but then it will not necessarily prove the point for w^e it is brought, and it is brought to prove the resurrection. Wherefore, to make the Apostles reason good, we must understand it, either of the washing and cleansing of the bodies of the deceased, as the word baptism often signifieth, Mar. 7.4. He. 9.10. for this was a common custom among the people of God, that first they washed the dead bodies, and then anointed them, Act. 9.37. (yea, among the heathen themselves;) which was a certain testimony to the living of the resurrection of the bodies of the dead. To this purpose doth *Seruius* allege an old verse of y^e Poet *Ennius*,

Tarquiniij corpus bona foemina lauit & vnxit.

That is, A certain devout woman washed and anointed the body of *Tarquinius*. The like doth *Pliny* avouch in one place of his natural histories, as the same *Seruius* testifieth, and expresseth the cause, that thereby they might make trial whether the vital spirits yet remained in the body or not. And *Virgil*, declaring how the Trojanes solemnized the funeral of *Misenus*, hath these words,

Pars calidos latices, & athena vndantia flammis

Expediunt: corpus{que} lauunt frigentis, & vngunt:

That is,

Some brought the waters warm with heat, and cauldrons eke appoint:

The body cold they wash, and then with ointments it anoint.

These witnesses do sufficiently prove, that the Gentiles did ordinarily use to wash their dead, and then to anoint them, and this was a very ancient practice among them.

Or else we may understand the place of the death and afflictions of the Saints of GOD, which they suffer for righteousness sake, in which they are overwhelmed, as the body is plunged in the waters: and thus the word is taken, Luk. 12.50. Matth. 20.22, 23. where our Savior calleth them back from their ambitious thoughts of superiority over their fellows, and warneth them to prepare themselves for troubles, yea for death it self. This is the cup that all must drink off, 2 Tim. 3.13. Act. 14.22. Baptism properly signifieth a dipping or plunging into the water: and the cross is a certain plunging into calamities. Thus then the reason is framed, If there be no resurrection, then should they do foolishly, that would seal up the truth of the Gospel with their blood, and lay down their lives for the testimony of God: but such as resist unto blood and suffer persecution for the words sake, are not foolish. Life is precious and dear unto them as well as unto others, they would not therefore be so lavish and prodigal of it, as to lay it down, except they looked for a better life (which the Apostle farther amplifieth by his own example,) Matth. 10.39, 33. 2 Tim. 2.12. and 4.7.8. 1 Cor. 15.30, 31. Act. 5.41. & 16.25. John. 21.19.

Lastly, the Apostle reasoneth thus, If there be no resurrection of the flesh, then the Epicures and Libertines taught well, that we should follow our pleasures and delights, eat and drink and be merry, and never mind better things, or think of any other life, like swine and beasts that know not God, verse. 32. To tell the young man, that he may freely follow the lusts of his eyes, and walk in the ways of his own heart, Eccle 11.9. or the rich man that he may take his ease and pastime while he liveth here, because when he dieth, all is lost, Luk. 12.19. or the ambitious man, that he may say in his heart, *Who shall bring me down to the ground*, Obad. verse. 3. or the secure person that liveth deliciously, that he may say, *I shall see no sorrow*, Revel. 18.7. *I have need of nothing*, Revel. 3.17. I say to tell them thus, is a damnable and pernicious doctrine, and not to be taught and heard in the Church of God, 1 Cor. 15.33. for this were to open a gappe to all profaneness, and to hinder all practice of piety. This ministereth comfort against all pains, sorrows, afflictions, wrongs, and injuries done unto us, we shall in the end be free from all, all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, we shall shine as the Sun, and be raised again in glory, 1 Cor. 15.43.

Thirdly, is God able to put life into things [Use 3] that are dead, contrary to the course of nature? then from hence ariseth a notable comfort to all that are in trouble and affliction, though they be never so great and so desperate; he is able to restore us & bring us out of the same. When the Israelites went into the red sea, what was it, but as it were to go to present

death, and descend into the grave? yet God brought them out again into a place of rest, and they beheld the confusion of all their enemies, Exod. 14.30. We are ready in every danger and trouble, to doubt, nay to despair of help and succor, which maketh many to seek unlawful means to recover themselves; we little remember *this flourishing of Aaron's rod*, that the Lord is able to quicken the dead, and to preserve in the midst of all peril, Psa. 33.18, 19. and 34.15.19. This point is notably taught by the Lord to *Ezekiel* under a type not much unlike in substance to this, chap. 37.5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14. The Jews lay now under an heavy judgment, they were in captivity in Babylon, their case seemed to be desperate: yet under that parable of the dead bones, doth God comfort the people with assured hope of deliverance. For as those bones, which were shown to the Prophet in a vision, had skin, and flesh, and sinews come upon them, and life and breath put unto them; so should it be with that captived people, they should be restored to their former estate; teaching them, and in them us thereby, that as it was easy with God to raise up these dry bones, to cloth them with flesh, and to quicken them that had been dead, that they stood upon their legs again; so it is as easy, nay more easy for him to bring our souls out of trouble, and to restore us to joy and gladness. It is in his power to hear us and help us in bondage, and banishment, in sorrow and sickness, and to deliver us out of all adversity, Psal. 30.5.11. The arm of God is infinite and stretched out far and near, he is Almighty and able to bring to pass whatsoever pleaseth him.

Lastly, this setteth forth unto us the state [Use 4] and condition of all the faithful, we may behold an image of our natural estate: we are by nature borne dead in sins and trespasses, and there is no life of God in us, Ephe. 2.12. & 4.18. Nevertheless we should not despair of our salvation or of the salvation of any other. There is hope of God's gracious acceptance, though they be grievous offenders. The gate of God's mercy standeth wide open, whose power is so great, that of persecutors, blasphemers, and oppressors of the Church, he can make converts, professors, and preachers, Matth. 21.31, 32. 1 Tim. 1.16. This mercy of God was shown to *Paul*, yet it was not proper to him, but exemplary; he was made a pattern to show the way of forgiveness unto others, that he would deal in like manner with them, if after his example they should forsake their sins, and embrace the Gospel. This doth *Paul* teach touching the Jews, that are now strangers themselves from the covenant of God and from the promises, God is able to graff them in again, albeit blindness be happened unto them, *until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in*, Rom. 11.25. He can say to the dead, live: and they shall live, as he made the withered *rod to flourish*. This is sufficient to keep us and our hope alive, when things seem to be almost desperate, forasmuch as we believe in him, to whom it is not impossible to make them the sons of *Abraham* which are not his sons. And as it is easy for us to call those things that are, so it is not hard to him to raise up those things that are not, and to make them appear. When the Gentiles were no people of God, he made them his people, and raised them as it were from death to life; as also he will do the Jews, if they abide not still in unbelief, Rom. 11.23. for as he brought light out of darkness in the creation, so he bringeth us from the death of sin, ignorance, and infidelity, to the life of knowledge, faith, & obedience in our regeneration.

9 And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord, unto all the children of Israel, and they looked, and took every man his rod.

10 And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the Testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels, and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not.

11 And Moses did so: as the Lord commanded him, so did he.

The former miracle is made clear and open to all Israel. As God made *Aaron's* rod to blossom, so he would have the children of Israel to look well upon it and to take good notice of it, and to believe not the words of *Moses*, but their own eyes. The doctrine, All the miracles of God are wrought openly, apparently, clearly, and evidently to the senses of men, that no doubt or controversy should be made of them, Luk. 7.11, 12. John. 11.39, 44, 45. For either men might feel them as the darkness of Egypt that was palpable, or else they might hear them, or taste them, or smell them, or see them; and sometimes the most of them concur together. When the Lord brought his people out of Egypt, all the miracles which he wrought among them were most apparent unto their senses. When they went through the red sea, he made the waters to divide themselves, and to stand on an heap, on the right hand and on the left, like mighty mountains, that they did most manifestly see and behold the same with their eyes. They saw when *Moses* strake the stony rock, and when the waters gushed out, & they tasted of them. When God bestowed the gifts of tongues upon the Church, they heard the Apostles speak in their own tongues the wonderful works of God, Act. 2.11. When God would confirm the calling of *Moses*, he cast his rod upon the ground, and it became a serpent, his eye saw it, or else he could not have fled from before it, Exod. 4.3. Again, at the commandment of God, he put forth his hand, he touched it, and took it by the tail, and it became a rod in his hand, and therefore he must needs see it. All the miracles wrought in Egypt were sensible. Their water was turned into blood, the eye saw it, the taste discerned it, and they could not drink of it. When God sent down Manna to eat, which fell among their tents, they tasted of it what it was. Whē Christ turned water into wine at the marriage in Cana, the taste of the ruler of the feast discerned it by and by, John. 2.9. And the Jews said unto Christ, *What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou dost these things?* John. 2.18. The reasons.

First, that it might appear that God would [Reason 1] not deceive his people, he dealeth plainly and openly, as he speaketh to *Thomas*, John. 20.27. Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but faithful. Secondly, [Reason 2] he holdeth not his in suspense & doubting, but maketh the truth of his works plain and manifest. When the disciples of Christ were troubled, and their thoughts arose in their hearts, being sore terrified & affrighted, supposing they had seen a spirit, (for he came miraculously among them, and stood in the midst of them) he saith unto them, *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have,* Luk. 24.39. The uses remain.

From this flourishing of the rod openly [Use 1] shown, we learn what a miracle is, to wit, a rare work apparently wrought, by the sole omnipotent power of God above nature or natural causes. It is no usual or ordinary work, but rare and extraordinary: and therefore we read when Christ, or his Apostles by him, did any miracle, the people marvelled and were astonished and amazed, and there came a sudden fear upon them, Luk. 7.16. Act. 2.12. Mat. 8.27. and 9.8. and 12.23. We cannot say, that repentance or regeneration is a miracle, though it be after a sort the raising of a man from death to life, and wrought only in a few men's hearts, in comparison of the multitude, because it is ordinarily and usually wrought in all God's childrē. Again, it must be wrought by God's almighty power as we have declared already. Touching the which we must know, that the omnipotent power of God cannot be communicated to any creature whatsoever, no not to the Angels in heaven. For as the Lord saith only of his wisdom, justice, and mercy, so also of his power, that he will not give his glory to any other. Again, though this power might be communicated to any other, yet there is no creature capable of it, whether in heaven or earth, none I say is able to bear it or comprehend it. This is evident in the example of *Peter*, when Christ had wrought a miracle before him, and thereby shown the glory of his power which in some sort he saw, he said unto him, *Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man*, Luk. 5.8. and Isaiah 6.2, 3, 4, 5. Lastly, a miracle is said to be above or against nature. Nature never had any inclination to work above it self, and so to bring forth a miracle, for that were to confound things natural and supernatural. When at the passage of the red sea, the waters stood on both parts, nature had a desire to make the waters run and flow in their course as before, therefore when they stood still as on an heap, it was contrary to the nature of them. True it is, there are many strange and wonderful works in nature, which yet are not above nature. The adamant, we see by experience, though we know not by what force, will draw iron to it self, though it be heavy, and of it self cannot possibly move from place to place, yet if it be above it, it will draw it to it self, which is strange and admirable: yet because it is not rare but usual and common, and wrought by an inherent force in the stone it self, albeit to us unknown, it cannot be accounted, neither doth any man account it a miracle. So we know the nature and power of some waters to be such, that they turn that which by nature is gold, as also any other metal into an hard stone. We see this to be true by experience, that whatsoever is put into it purposely, or falleth into it accidentally, is also turned into a very stone: as also there is some kind of earth that will turn stakes of wood fastened into it, into stone, as our best Herbalists do tell us. No man can show any sound reason for this, why that water or that earth should do it more then any other water or earth, yet doubtless there is a reason of it: and therefore though it be strange and wonderful, yet it is usual or ordinary, and according to the nature of the things themselves, and consequently no miracle.

[Use 2] Secondly, this condemneth the lying signs and wonders of Satan, which are mere illusions and deceits, and no true miracles. But cannot Satan work wonders & strange things? hath he no power at all that way? yes: Nevertheless, we must understand, that the power of Satan is no way equal or answerable to the power of God; it is not so great, so strong, so large, it is every way infinite less: forasmuch as there can be no comparison between a thing infinite and finite, between a creature and the creator. True it is, it is far

greater then the power of men every way, and yet a limited and finite power, a natural power not a supernatural. Otherwise woe were it unto us, for then doubtless none could be saved, such is his malice and cruelty. If any ask wherein it consisteth. I answer, partly in his knowledge, and partly in his actions. For as man's knowledge is, such are his deeds; and therefore as his knowledge is great, so are his works great also. Touching his knowledge and understanding, he attaineth to it many ways. First, from his own nature, for he is not flesh & blood as we are, but a spirit, and therefore hath by nature such measure of knowledge, as is given of God to a spirit, which cannot be little. There is much more knowledge in man then is in a brute beast, by reason of that nature which God hath given to man above the beasts. And there is much greater knowledge in y^e devil then in all men, because of his spiritual substance. He hath not a body which may hinder him to see the nature, quality, and operation of a spirit. A brute beast is only corporal and visible: man is partly corporal and visible, and partly spiritual & invisible: the devil is wholly spiritual and invisible, so that being a spirit he hath the knowledge of a spirit, and consequently greater familiarity with our spirits, then otherwise he could have. Secondly, by his creation; for he was in his first estate by creation a good angel before his fall, and set by God in the Paradise of heaven, as *Adam* was in the Paradise of the earth: so that he had the same measure of knowledge given of God, which he gave to other Angels. So then what knowledge soever is in a good Angel by creation, the same knowledge is in Satan by his creation, and therefore must be exceeding great. I will not dispute, whether this knowledge be any way diminished, forasmuch as he still beareth the stamp of his creation this way. Thirdly since his Apostasy, he hath increased his knowledge, both of things on earth, and of the ways of God by long observation and continual experience; he knoweth the age of man, his affections, inclinations, nature and disposition; he knoweth what pleaseth him best in his youth, and in his age. If any one man had lived from the beginning of the world unto this day, perfect in sense, in body, in memory, in mind, in reason, and the like, and had daily observed all things that had fallen out heretofore, he might be able to discover wonderful things, and make himself much admired in the world. Therefore the devil must needs have great knowledge, seeing he hath had all these, he goeth about in every country and kingdom, *he compasseth the earth to and fro*, Job 1.7. and 2.2. observing what is done in every place, and is well acquainted with their conversation. Fourthly, he increaseth his knowledge, by communication with God, or rather by receiving commandment from God to execute his will, which he maketh known unto him. The Lord commanded him to appear before him to give an account of the works he had done. God had no sooner named *Job*, but by and by he knew him well enough, he knew his substance, and how God had blessed him, & therefore never asketh who he was, or where he was: he knoweth every man by Name, and he knoweth that man is ready to make show of religion in prosperity, and in adversity through impatience to fall away from his profession. God gave him liberty to afflict *Job* in his goods, in his children, in his body: whence then hath he this knowledge, but from the revelation of the Lord? he knew that *Job* should be visited with great sickness, and with great losses in his children and goods, and thus he knoweth many other things which are to come to pass afterward. And when he hath them thus revealed and made known unto him, he goeth many times to witches and wizards, and

telleth them thereof, and they tell it to others before they happen: by which means he many ways enlargeth his kingdom.

Fifthly, by the revelation of the Prophets in former times he attained to great knowledge, by whō many things were foretold, in which also he hath knowledge, & can allege Scripture to serve his turn, Matth. 4.6.

Lastly, by continual observation of natural causes. An Astronomer, that is skillful in the stars, can tell, nay foretell many things: but Satan is skillful in all Arts, he can speak all languages in the world, he is the best artist and linguist that anywhere can be found. The second thing wherein Satan's power consisteth, is in his deeds and actions. He moved *Cain* to kill his brother, and prevailed. He tempted our first parents, and prevailed. He cometh to a witch in the shape of *Samuel*, and taketh upon him to tell what success *Saul* should have in the battle with the Philistines, and *Saul* thought it had been *Samuel*. He was wont to talk familiarly with men, and therefore God gave a Law, that if *any consulted with familiar spirits he should die*, Deut. 18.11. Levite. 20.27. which law had been in vain, if none had consulted familiarly with them. So he was a liar in the mouth of all the false Prophets of *Ahab*, though themselves did not perceive it. So he possessed men's bodies, as we see in the Gospel, whom Christ oftentimes cast out, Matth. 8.28. and being cast out they entered into an heard of swine, and threw them headlong into the waters where they perished. And when certain Exorcists would have cast out devils in the name of Jesus, *the evil spirit ran upon them, and overcame them, so that they fled out of the house wounded*, Acts. 19.16. Thus we see, that Satan is of wonderful power, to teach us, not to be careless in resisting of him, but to look diligently to our selves, 1 Pet. 5.8, 9. Nevertheless, this is our comfort, that his power is limited: he is as a raging beast, but is tied up with chain: he is the strong man armed, but a stronger then he cometh, and taketh all his armor from him wherein he trusted, Luk. 11.21, 22. And albeit he make show to work miracles, he hath no such power, and therefore he doth them not openly, but closely and in the dark, as they that do evil.

Lastly, it reproveth the miracles wrought [Use 3] in the Church of Rome, of which they talk and write so much. The works whereof they boast and wherein they glory, are dark and obscure, they are not plain, open, and evident. They tell us many a sober tale in sundry legēds of Saints lives, of puling souls that have appeared out of purgatory, and have taught prayer for the dead, adoration of Saints, worshipping of images, & such like superstitious practices, all tending to abuse the people, and to confirm false doctrine repugnant to the Scriptures; of all which we may say as *Augustine* doth, that they are, *vel mendacia fallacium hominum, vel portenta mendacium spirituum*; That is, either cosening tricks of deceitful men, or wonders of lying spirits. But to pass over these, let us by this property of a true miracle, examine the miracle of all miracles, much made off and mightily maintained to be in the Sacrament of the Altar (so called by the Church of Rome,) wherein after the Priest hath vttered and muttered a few words, they teach that a great miraculous work is brought forth, because the substance of the bread which was upon the altar is changed into the body of Christ by a strange Metamorphosis. If this were true, it were indeed a true miracle. But if it were a miracle, men might discern it by sense, as all the miracles of Christ were discerned.

Let them give us an instance, in any creature in heaven or earth, where the Lord wrought any miracle, w^c he did not subject to the senses of man: but here is nothing that can be discerned by y^e senses for as much as the bread by the judgment of all the senses remaineth, and appeareth to be the same in substance which it was before, of the same quality, quantity, color, taste, handling, smelling, virtue, and nourishment: there is not any one sense, or all the senses together that can judge otherwise of it then it did before, & therefore it can be no miracle. No work is a miracle which cannot be felt, smelled, seen, tasted, or perceived. Wherefore, let the Church of Rome teach in their schools, write in their books, preach in their Pulpits, and decree in their Councils never so often, that there is a miracle wrought in their Sacrament of the Altar, yet because we can neither see, nor touch, nor taste, nor feel anything, but the same that it was before, we cannot believe them. But they tell us, [Object.] that though the outward form and accidents of the bread remain, yet the substance of it is turned into the body of Christ: which though we cannot perceive by our senses, yet we are bound to receive by faith. I answer, [Answer.] that if the natural body of Christ were there present, we might feel him, as *Thomas* did, forasmuch as Christ still retaineth his true body, albeit it be now glorified. Wherefore, seeing there is no miracle in the Supper apparent to the senses, there can be no miracle at all. The difference which is, is in the use: before it was common bread, ordained for the nourishment of our bodies: now it becometh holy bread sanctified by the Lord, not so much to feed the body as the soul. To conclude then, by this strange and new found miracle, they overturn the doctrine of the Scriptures touching miracles. For whereas we have shown that a miracle is a rare work apparently to the senses, wrought by the sole omnipotent power of God; they make it to be an usual, common, and ordinary work, wrought by every Priests pronouncing of five words, yet so as no sense at all can discern of it.

12 And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish:

13 Whosoever cometh anything near to the Tabernacle of the Lord, shall die: shall we be consumed with dying?

Hitherto of the first part of the Chapter, here followeth the second part, to wit, the repentance of the people, craving to be delivered from present death, and from their sin wherewith they had provoked God to anger. As if they had said, We acknowledge that we deserve to die and perish through our sins, neither did we know so much until the plague that brake in among us, taught us, and the *blossoming of the rod* convinced us to our faces. We presumed to meddle with the office of the Priesthood that belonged not unto us, and therefore we deserve justly and worthily to die. But is there no place for mercy and forgiveness? We may observe from hence, that this should be the effect of all punishments (which God bringeth upon sinners) to humble us, to make us avoid sin, and to submit our selves to God with all obedience. Again, we must never despair of God's mercy, which is greater then our sins, as a garment wider then the body, and therefore more then able to

cover the nakedness thereof. Thirdly, we must acknowledge and confess our sins to God, because all sin is committed against God, *him only we have offended*, Psal. 51.4. Briefly also learn, that the first degree of pardon, is to know that our sins are pardonable; this is as a spark of light in a dark night, and giveth hope of great mercy. But to leave these particulars, this is the general doctrine, In all chastisements, how grievous and sharp soever they be, God is to be acknowledged just and righteous in laying them upon us, Dan. 9.6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 19. Ezz. 9.6.10, 13, 15. Psal. 51.4, 5. 2 Sam. 24.10.

The reasons which are as the grounds of this truth are evident; First, because his punishments, though many times they be grievous burdens to bear, yet are always less then our deserts and offenses, Psal. 103.10. *He dealeth not with us according to our offenses*. Secondly, our sins are the procuring causes of all the evils which we suffer, Mic. 7.9. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him*. So then the cause of all our sufferings is in our selves. Thirdly, in all his corrections and judgments he remembereth mercy, Hab. 3.2. We see this often in this book, though the whole people sinned as one man, yet judgment came not upon the whole, but the merciful God striketh some to admonish and amende others.

The uses follow. First, it reproveth such [Use 1] as stand out with God, and are ready to justify themselves, and accuse God of overmuch sharpness and severity. These men never consider God's manifold blessings and their own unthankfulness unto him, who *reneweth his mercies toward us every morning*, Lam. 3.23. But we render unto him evil for good, and hatred for his good will. We are like unto stubborn children, that murmur under the rod, and cannot abide correction. So it is with us, we can abide to sin, but we cannot abide to suffer. We regard not how much we provoke him, but we care not how little he punish us. It is one of the hardest things in the world, to justify God, and to condemn our selves worthy of eternal death and damnation. We see it from the beginning in our first parents, they sought shifts and fig leaves to cover the nakedness of their souls, more then they did the nakedness of their bodies; as indeed there appeared much more deformity in the one, then in the other, and they had more cause to be ashamed of the nakedness of their souls, then of their bodies. For sin maketh us naked of God's protection, and causeth him to depart from us: it taketh away *our shield and defense*, and leaveth us in the hands of our enemies.

We see also in the example of *Achan*, & of *Saul*, 1 Sam. 15. how hardly they were drawn to confess their sins: they heard sentence pronounced against them, before they would pronounce sentence upon themselves. Let us not tarry until God judge us, but rather learn betimes to judge our selves.

Secondly, let us humble our selves under [Use 2] the mighty hand of God, 1 Pet. 5.6. and when he draweth out his sword, let us not say, we are righteous, like the Pharisee that condemned another, but justified himself, Luk. 18. rather let us cry out in the ears of God, *Spare Lord*, Joel 2.17. and confess that it is his mercy *that we are not utterly consumed*, Lam. 3.22. When *Eli* heard the punishment that God had determined to bring upon him and his house for the wickedness of his profane sons, he answered with all humility, *It is the Lord, let*

him do whatsoever pleaseth him, 1 Sam. 3.18. God loveth a broken and contrite heart, it is a sacrifice wherein he greatly delighteth.

Lastly, let us make our whole life a continual practice of unfeigned repentance, and labor for godly sorrow, that we may mourn and afflict our souls for sin, because it is sin, a breach of God's law, and displeaseth him. Sin will not lodge long, where it is not cherished, and made much off, and entertained with delight. It is as a ghest that will not lodge in such houses where he is not welcome: but if once you make much of him and delight in him, then he is an importunate and a shameless ghest, you shall hardly rid your house of him. In the word of God, we find sundry means and motives to move us to enter these meditations. First, the commandment of God himself, so often urged and repeated, Ier. 3.12. and 8.6. and 18.11. This was the voice of *John* crying in the wilderness, *Repent, bring forth fruits worthy amendment of life* Matth. 3.8. This doctrine was preached in Paradise to our first parents, and was afterward figured out by circumcision before the Law, and by their purification after the Law, Isaiah 1.16. *Wash you, make you clean*. Again, such as repent not, lie under the bondage of Satan, they are as captives & prisoners bound to obey his will, and to do him service. 2. Tim. 2.26. Thirdly, such as die without repentance, remain forever without remission and forgiveness. They are lost children, and must needs perish, if they repent not before, 2 Pet. 3.9. Luke 13.3. Fourthly, the threatenings denounced & executed upon y^e rebellious and disobedient, are made examples and admonitions unto us: his vengeance justly fallen upon others, should serve to amend us, 1 Cor. 10.5.6. 2. Pet. 2.3, 4. Psal. 7.11, 12. Fifthly, the certainty and suddenness of the last and general judgment, which shall come as a thief in the night, when the heavens themselves shall pass away with a noise, and the elements shall melt with heat, and the earth with the works therein shall be burnt up, *What manner of persons therefore ought we to be in holy conversation and godliness?* 2 Pet. 3.10, 11. and 2 Cor. 5.10. *We must all appear before the judgment seat of God, that we may receive the things done in this body, whether good or evil*. This last day is called *a day of Revelation*, Rom. chap. 2. ver. 5. Lastly, we must be all led to repentance by the unspeakable fruits that follow it; as pardon of sins, reconciliation with God, peace of conscience, hearing of our prayers, and in the end blessedness in the heavens, Ezek. 33.11.

CHAP. XVIII.

1 AND the Lord said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons, and thy fathers house with thee, shall bear the iniquity of the Sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your Priesthood.

2 And thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father bring thou with thee, that they may be joined, &c.

3 And they shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the Tabernacle: only they shall not come nigh the vessels, &c.

4 And they shall be joined unto thee, and keep the charge, &c.

IN the latter end of the former Chapter, the people are brought in confessing their sins, and craving pardon of God: We heard their grief and sorrow for their sins, and bewailing their transgressions past, and saying, *Shall we perish utterly?* and is there no hope of forgiveness? Now we have in this Chapter, the answer of God to this question, which did proceed from a feeling of their sin, and a fear of present death, which they had justly deserved. For *Moses* declareth how God shown himself reconciled, notwithstanding their manifold provocations; he cannot keep his anger forever, but returneth unto them in mercy, when they turn unto him by repentance. Concerning the which reconciliation, we must consider in this Chapter, two points, first the persons procuring the atonement, which were the Priests & Levites attending to the Ministry of the word and Sacraments; secondly, the things appertaining unto them and to their charge: as also the next Chapter delivereth such things as belong to the people. Now the commandment belonging to them both, to wit, both to the Priests and Levites, which are here said to be brethren, is directed to *Aaron*, and not to *Moses*, because this was a mere Church matter; Ecclesiastical, not civil: and his Priesthood was newly ratified to him by the authority of God, and by a notable miracle in the *flourishing of the Almond rod*, Chap. 17.8. The sum and effect is this, that the Priests should minister in the Sanctuary & at the Altar, but the Levites should minister unto the Priests, and both of them both for themselves & the people. First therefore the charge of the Sanctuary is committed to *Aaron* and his sons, and to the oversight of the Levites, to the eight ver. that the service of God might not be profaned either by themselves or by any other, lest they made themselves guilty of sin: whereby the Lord would signify, that there was indeed no cause why any should envy them this dignity, forasmuch as it was joined with such danger and difficulty. The burden of the Priesthood was so great, and lay so heavy upon their shoulders, that they were threatened to be punished, if the worship of God, which ought to be performed with all reverence, were profaned through their default. From hence we learn, that as every sin is in it own nature great, so are these sins the greatest and most heinous, which are committed against a man's particular place and calling wherein God hath set him, Job 2.9. The Prophets denouncing judgments against sundry persons, do single them out for neglecting of personal duties. The Prophet *Micah* threateneth the Rulers and men of might, that they hate the good and love the evil, *Who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones: they break their bones and chop them in pieces as for the pot, and as flesh within the cauldron*, Mic. 3.2, 3. Thus also he noteth out the falsehood of the Prophets, that made the people of God to *err and cry peace*, ver. 5. The idolatrous kings are most of all taxed for the abuse of their calling, not

so much for private faults, as other men; but for their erecting or suffering of idolatry which they ought to have pulled down: yea, the good kings are often blemished that way, because they reformed not the abuses that publicly reigned. The Psalmist, exhorting Judges to their duty, and reproving evil in them, saith, *How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?* Psal. 82.2. The Apostle saith of himself, *Woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel*, 1 Cor. 9.16. he doth not say, if I live profanely, as also he might have done, but he mentioneth the sin of his proper calling as the greater evil. The reasons follow.

[1] First, because God hath set men in several places and callings, and given them their limits and bounds that they should not pass. If then they break these bounds, as the waters do their banks, it must of necessity follow, that they commit a far greater sin against God, because they cast his cords from them, and will not suffer themselves to be tied with them, as we might easily show in the examples of *Uzzah* the Levite, 2 Sam. 6.7. and *Uzziah* the king, 2 Chron. 26.19.

[2] Secondly, from the proper works of our callings we have our name and denomination. For as our calling is, so we are esteemed: as this man is said to be a Minister: that man a Magistrate: another a master; another a servant: and therefore those offenses are the greatest which rush against our proper functions. It is noted that when *Ahab* began to reign, he did *evil in the sight of the Lord, above all that were before him*, 1 King. 19.30. and wherein did he evil? or what is he charged withal? the holy Ghost might have said, because he shed much innocent blood: but y^e evil wherewith he is charged, is, that *he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal which he had built*, verse 32. and made a grove to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger. The uses.

This teacheth that all sins are not equal, [Use 1] and that the same sins in several persons are not equal. The persons make a great difference concerning the sin, forasmuch as the person is, so the sin is. Ignorance is one and the same sin in whomsoever it be, whether in the Minister, or in a private man: but in respect of his office, in the Minister more then in another. If a thief shall rob a man by the high way side, it is an offense, but it is not accounted so great an offense, because it is his practice. But if a Judge, which should minister justice indifferently to all, and doth sit in judgment upon the common thief, if he shall rob or spoil a man, it is much the greater in regard of his place and office, wherein God hath set him. For he sinneth against his own calling, which he professeth: whereas the thief hath through custom made that his calling, albeit a foul and faulty calling.

Secondly, as we must avoid all sin, so especially [Use 2] those sins that are committed against our calling, & against the main scope of our profession, forasmuch as they are most heinous above all others, and do most dishonor God, and deserve the greatest punishment. Some men would account it a small offense for the Prophet, that was sent out of Bethel to cry aloud against the altar, to return back, and to *eat bread and drink water in the house of the old Prophet*: but because he sinned against his special calling, 1 King. 13.9.16. therefore he was devoured of a Lyon. If the Minister of the word shall be ignorant in the Scriptures, and not able to instruct the people, he shall be more punished then a private man, because he ought especially both to have and to teach knowledge. It is more shame for a Lawyer that

professeth the law, to be ignorant in the Law, then for another that is no way toward it. It is a sin in fathers that teach not their children, and masters their servants: but more for the Ministers not to teach their people. This made Christ our Savior pronounce an heavy sentence against the expounders of the Law, Lu. 11.52. *Woe unto you ye Lawyers: for ye have taken away the key of knowledge, ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in, ye hindered.* The woman was created and appointed of God to be an *helper and comforter unto her husband*; if then she shall grieve and vex him, her sin is far the greater then if another do it, because she sinneth against her calling and creation, and is thereby made the less excusable, as appeareth in *Job's wife*, whom he doth more sharply reprove, then he doth others, chap. 2.10. and 19.17. The like we might say of all other callings, of the Minister toward the people, and the people toward their Minister.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it teacheth us the cause why many of God's own people are more sharply punished in this life for the most part thē others, and why they suffer more for less sins then the ungodly do here for far greater, because they sin against their vocation and profession, because *they are partakers of the heavenly calling*, Heb. 3.1. Which words the Apostle useth as a reason to persuade to be obedient unto Christ: and therefore their sins are greater then of others that never had that calling, which know not what this heavenly calling meaneth. *Moses and Aaron* for a little want of *Sanctifying the Name of God*, and that but once at Meribah, were notwithstanding punished with this, that they should never enter into the land of Canaan; whereas many a profane and wretched man that sinned a thousand times more, entered into it: the reason is, because they sinned against their calling, unto which God had called them. So likewise for the children of God, to profane the Sabbath, is a greater sin, and they may look for a more fearful punishment for the same in this life, then the wicked shall have, because they sin *against their heavenly vocation*. And if they be not careful to order their families aright, to look to their children and servants that they serve the Lord, they may expect greater judgments from God then others that peradventure are a thousand times worse, and have their houses more a thousand times unreformed, as we see in the example of *Eli* otherwise a good man: for he & his whole house were overturned and destroyed, 1 Sam. 4.17, 18, 20. because God hath a purpose to condemn profane persons utterly in the life to come. The like we might say of *David*, he committed adultery but once, with *Bathsheba* the wife of *Uriah*, yet did GOD threaten to *raise up evil out of his own house, so that he would take his wives, and give them to his neighbor that should lie with them in the sight of the Sun*: and not long after did his son commit incest with his daughter. Thus did God severely punish his own servant, whiles many unclean persons live in filthy adultery, and daily embrace the bosom of a stranger, who notwithstanding taste no such punishment; their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them, Job 21.9.

Seeing this is so, we should not judge hardly and uncharitably of professors, because we see the hand of God sometimes to be heavy upon them, and more then upon others: but rather consider, it is or may be for the sins of their profession, and that afflictions fall out a like: for *Judgment must first begin at the house of God*, 1 Pet. 4 17. he will first set in order his own house, and his own children, and will deal more severely with them for smaller sins in this life, then he will with the ungodly for greater in this life, whom he specially reserveth for his wrath to

come, Nah. 1.2. Let all those therefore, that *make an holy profession* of serving the Lord in truth, lay these things to their hearts, and not suffer themselves to be carried away with the force of sin: for God will surely meet with them, his hand shall first find them out, howbeit always for their good, whiles he seemeth not to regard nor reward the sins of the wicked: so that we must beware of those sins which are against our place and calling wherein God hath set us.

Lastly, everyone must be careful to walk [Use 4] carefully in the duties of their particular callings with a good conscience, that so they may please God, and take occasion to rejoice before him; looking to the ordinance of God, who hath set and appointed distinct callings in the family, in the Church, and in the common-wealth, 1 Cor. 7.7, 21, 22. Ephe. 4.11.12. Acts 20.26. There can arise no comfort to us that we belong to God, though we seem never so careful in the general duties of Christianity, if we fail in the special parts of our several callings. That Minister which liveth in all the common duties of other Christians, and yet doth not or cannot guide the people and feed them with the food of life, is a wicked Minister, and there belongeth to him a fearful woe, *Woe to the shepherds of Israel that feed themselves; should not the shepherds feed the flocks?* Ezek. 34.2. Ier. 23.1. Zach. 11.17. Such are not able to blow the trumpet, and therefore shall not deliver their own souls. That governor of a family which regardeth not to provide things necessary for them, so far as he may, and according to the means given unto him, is an evil governor, he is *worse then the infidel, and hath denied the faith*, 1 Tim. 5.8.

Again, he that regardeth not the education of his children, *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Ephe. 6.4. is an evil and wicked father, howsoever he may deceive himself in thinking himself to be a good Christian. For hereby we shall indeed try what is in everyone, if we mark and regard what is in them in regard of private and particular duties in their several callings. I have oftentimes observed, that many people when they come abroad, behave themselves in the company of others very religiously and devoutly, they are ready to join with others in all holy duties; but mark what they are at home, and within the walls of their own houses, and you shall see them to be quite other men and women and not the same, never a whit careful to discharge their duties in their special callings.

There are sundry persons that would be judged of others to be Christian men, but they do not show themselves privately to be Christian governors, nor Christian husbands. And many women bear themselves publicly as Christian women of an holy conversation, who notwithstanding want the ornament of *a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price*, neither show that subjection toward their husbands that ought to be in Christian wives, 1 Pet. 3.4, 5. It is not enough to profess our selves to be Christian men when God hath blessed us with children and servants, but hereby we shall be tried what is in us, whether Christ be in us & dwell in our hearts by faith or not, if we approve our selves to be Christian parents, and Christian masters.

5 And ye shall keep the charge of the Sanctuary, and the charge of the Altar, that there be no wrath anymore upon the children of Israel.

6 And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel: to you they are given as a gift for the Lord, to do the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

Here the Lord teacheth how *Aaron* and his sons should behave themselves toward the Levites, and likewise the Levites toward *Aaron* and his sons. For he willeth them to admit the Levites to the administration of holy things, but so, as they help them only in inferior things, not in the chiefest part of their Ministry. He will not have them come near to the Altar to sacrifice, neither to enter into the inner parts of the Tabernacle, which belonged only to the Priests themselves.

Here then we see, that God maketh a difference between the Priests and the Levites, and also wherein the difference consisteth: the more excellent dignity is committed to the Priests, the lesser to the Levites. They that had the higher calling were not to contemn the others, and they that obtained the lower place were not to grieve at it, or to envy at others, but God maintaineth peace and unity among them, so that both must be content, and one be ready to help another. And whereas God permitted not the Levites to offer sacrifice, or to enter into the Sanctuary, and that if either any of them or of the people *should presume to do it*, he appointeth death to them that brake this his ordinance, the cause is, that we should know that none hath power to reconcile us to himself and to give us entrance into his presence, but Christ himself only, whose person and office was figured out in *Aaron* and his sons.

Wretched therefore and blasphemous is the practice of the Papists, who go about to make reconciliation between God and his people by their idolatrous Masses offered up for the quick and the dead, whereby as much as lieth in them, they crucify again the Lord of life, and are no better then the betrayers and murderers of him. Evil also is the practice of all hypocrites, who by the merits of their own good works do think to procure and purchase unto themselves the favor of God: for they are so far from attaining hereunto by their blind devotion, that they offend God the more, and provoke his wrath and indignation against their own souls.

Again, note in this difference which God maketh between the Priests and Levites, how necessary and profitable it is, that there should be order kept and observed in the Church. There is not only one office and function in the Church, but many and diverse: neither can one man discharge all places without presumption, nor all discharge one without confusion, and therefore to avoid both, there ought a comely order to be observed, of which we have often spoken before. As then in the body of man, every member hath his proper function, so that if one should usurp to do all, or all to do one only, there would follow the destruction of the body: for the hand laboreth for the whole, the eye seeth, and the ear heareth for the good of the rest of the parts: the mouth receiveth meat, and delivereth it to the stomach, the stomach employeth it to all the rest: so should it be in the Church, every member must do his own duty, and employ himself to the common profit and edification of the whole. But to omit these, observe that the Levites are said to be given of God to *Aaron* and his sons to assist them, and consequently for the good of the whole congregation. From whence learn this

doctrine, that a good Minister is a special gift of God, and a special token of his favor which he bestoweth upon his Church. The Lord is many ways gracious unto his Church, and poureth out many blessings upon it, howbeit none more excellent or worthy then to give this blessing which now we speak off, to send faithful teachers, Deuteronomy, chapter 18. verse 18. I will raise them a Prophet, Isaiah, chapter 66. verse 19, 31. Jeremiah, chapter 3. verse 14, 15. Matthew, chapter 23. verse 34. When God began to plant a settled state of Religion among his people, he commanded that the Tribe of *Levi* should be sanctified to be the public teachers of the Church, to instruct them in the will of God; showing thereby that Religion would not be upholden, without some special means and instruments to direct the people therein. The reasons are evident.

First, they are his only gift, because he is [Reason 1] the Lord of the harvest, as also he is Lord of the Sabbath wherein they exercise their gifts. Who then shall reap down the corn when the *fields are white unto the harvest*, John, chapter 4. verse 35. and gather it into the barn, but such laborers as he shall set on work, Matth. 9.37?

Secondly, he only is able to furnish them [Reason 2] with sufficiens gifts for the work of the Ministry. Therefore when the Lord Jesus ascended up on high, *he gave gifts* unto men, in the day of his triumph, when he rode in his chariot, as a glorious conqueror, and led all his enemies, even *captivity captive*, as it were in chains of iron, Ephes. 4.11, 12. Hence it is, that the functions and gifts for the Ministry, are particularly named in the most gracious promises which God hath made of the best things to bestow on the Church under the kingdom of Christ, Isaiah 59.20, 21. Joel 2.28, 29.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, the Ministry is the ordinary means which God hath left to bring us to salvation: for *how shall we believe without a Preacher?* Roman. 10.14. For the Apostle showeth that hearing is necessary to faith, faith to prayer, and prayer to salvation, and therefore also it is necessary that there be *preaching*, that so men may *hear*.

[Use 1] The uses follow. First, as good Pastors are tokens of God's love to his people, which do good in their places, and labor *to turn many to righteousness*: so on the contrary, to have evil and ignorant Pastors are tokens of God's wrath and judgment, as *Saul* was given to the Israelites in judgment to be a plague unto them. These win souls to Satan, and increase his kingdom. For an evil Minister is the devils collector, he gathereth souls for him, but he scattereth them from God. Or else I may call them the devils shepherds, whom he hath appointed to keep his sheep. For as God saith, I will give you Pastors according to my heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding: so the devil saith, I will give you idol Pastors according to my heart, that shall fill you full of ignorance and blindness. These supply the places of true Pastors, but they can do nothing, for the sheep of Christ cannot feed in their pastures, they are so bare and so barren that they cannot live upon them, and therefore they that live under them cannot thrive. Happy it were for the sheep, if either such sheepeards were removed from the sheep, or the sheep from such shepherds. Such drones seek nothing but their own ease, who never consider that the Ministry is a calling of great work and labor. These may be Ministers for the devils tooth, or after men's hearts, but they cannot be after God's own heart. They are *blind guides* which run before the Lord send

them, he taketh no pleasure either in these silly sheepeheard, or in those foolish people that are contented with them. These are such merchants as gain many souls to *the devils coffers by doing nothing*. Other merchants gain by compassing sea and land, and traveling far and near, by laboring and taking great pains: but these sit idle all the day long, they labor not in the Lord's vineyard and yet by their ease and idleness they enrich the devils kingdoms, and bring him in many thousand souls. These are the devils factours, by them he getteth, & and groweth rich. The devils traffic is all for souls, he careth for no other merchandise: now the idle and ignorant Minister is his factor who sendeth them in these Wares by heaps and by throngs: he shippeth them with great pleasure, and putteth himself in the same bottom, and then ship and all go to the devil, who sitteth ready in his counting house to receive them all, and to give them such entertainment as he hath to give. Woe unto such factours, woe unto such people: woe unto such deceivers, woe unto them that are so deceived. Nevertheless, it is strange to consider, now the greatest part of the people are enamored of them, though they be the greatest & most dangerous enemies that they have: because howsoever they may, otherwise make much of them, yet indeed they withhold all succor and sustenance from them, and consequently starve them, and kill them.

Secondly, there is great punishment attending [Use 2] upon the contempt of this excellent gift, Deut. 18.19.10, 11. 2 Chro. 36.15, 16. 2 Thes. 1.7, 8, 9. and 2.9, 10, 11, 12. This meeteth with sundry abuses, that savor rankly of the rejecting of this great mercy, and therefore let such take heed that God do not also reject them. Woe then to the Anabaptists, the Family of love, and such like *Enthusiastes*, who refuse the Ministry under the pretence of revelations: whereas the Lord hath revealed unto us the dignity of the Ministry, and therefore the word hath revealed, that their revelations are devilish delusions, whereby they are seduced, to bring them to destruction. Woe also unto the common sort of besotted Christians, who think their home devotions enough, and their own reading sufficient to bring them to heaven: not considering that in their reading they want a guide to interpret. The Eunuch could read the Scriptures as well as they, he needed not to have come to Jerusalem to learn to spell his words and name his letters, and yet when he was asked of the meaning and interpretation, and whether he understood the words of the Prophet, he answered, *How can I except I have a guide?* Acts 8.31. But these will be their own guides, and therefore let them take heed lest they miss the way that leadeth to the kingdom of heaven. They will be their own Pilots to guide the ship, let them therefore take heed lest they suffer shipwreck, and be drowned. Reading is good, but it is not good enough, like a medicine that hath strength in it, but is not strong enough to cure the disease. The men of Berea could read, and did read and search the Scriptures daily at home, yet they came diligently to hear *Paul* preach unto them, Acts, chapter 17. verse 11. Woe also to all profane Atheists, who despise all means of salvation, having no regard at all to God or his word, at home or abroad, publicly or privately.

Do these believe the doctrine that now we have in hand? Do they think that a good Minister is a precious gift of God? when by their continual practice they make it manifest that they regard neither Minister, nor yet Ministry; neither the glad tidings of salvation, nor those that bring the same? The world is stored and replenished with such open contemners of the

Gospel, which are enemies to their own peace, to their own lives, to their own souls, to their own salvation.

[Use 3] Thirdly, from hence ariseth much instruction to the Minister himself. Let us examine our selves, whether we be the true Ministers of God or not, that we may assure our own hearts, we are as a gift of God given unto the Church. This hath many branches. First, we must labor for a competency and sufficiency of gifts, that so we may approve our selves to be y^e Ministers of Christ, planted by him. But such as are rash and headdy in entering upon this calling before they are qualified, I do not mean by men but by God, are presumptuous persons, and are not a gift given to the churches where they have set themselves, because they are no way fitted thereunto. Secondly, we must be diligent in our calling, in the use of our gifts which we have received, that we suffer them not to rest & to rust in us, lest thereby they decay and be lost. If we use them conscionably, we keep them surely: if we use thē not, we lose them. The gifts & graces of God do not wear by use, but do exceedingly increase, for we have a promise, that *we shall have abundance*, Mat. 13, 12. Thirdly, we ought to labor above all things to seek the good of the people, unto whom we are given, not our own good or to get goods, as if we were sent for our own profits. The end that we must aim at, is the edification, instruction, and salvation of others, not our own private gain or promotion, nor the vain applause of the world to magnify our selves, as the manner of many is. The popish Church never regard this: they ordain their Priests to say Mass, & to minister the Sacrament of the Altar, but send them not forth to preach the Gospel. They have many sacrificers, but few preachers. But the ends that we must propound unto our selves, are, the glory of God, the good of the Church, and the discharge of a good conscience, that so we may say with the Apostle, *Brethren, my hearts desire is, that Israel may be saved*, Rom. 10, 1. If we do these things, blessed are we: we shall be such Pastors as God liketh and approveth, such as have our calling from him, and our gifts from him: we shall teach for him, and reprove for him.

[Use 4] Lastly, it is the duty of the people (whatsoever they be) to magnify the work of the Ministers, and by all means to promote it, for thereby we further the glory of God, and enlarge the kingdom of Christ Jesus. This also hath many particular branches. First, we are bound to pray to God and to commend unto him the Ministry as his own ordinance. For if the Ministers *be a special gift of God*, to whō should we go, or of whom should we ask this gift, but of him that is the giver of every good gift, and of every perfect gift? We must pray to God to send them where they are wāting, Mat. 9, 37. We must pray for the continuance of them where they are granted, and for *the blessing of God* upon their labors, that God would *accept the work of their hands*, Deu. 33, 11. We must be thankful to him for bestowing this gift upon us, which he hath denied to many places and people.

Secondly, we must repent of those sins which may hinder either the obtaining or the continuing of it. For as the Prophet truly teacheth, that *our sins withhold good things from us*: so it is certain, y^t God oftentimes denieth this blessing for the wickedness; & being once granted, remoueth it for the unthankfulness of the people, because they are not earnest with God to have it and keep it, neither walk worthy of it when they have obtained it, Isaiah 62, 7. *Give him no rest, till he establish and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.*

Thirdly, we should have *this gift of God* in precious account, to make a reverent use of it, in being subject, unto it, governed by it, and reformed according to the same: because therein we are subject to Christ, as the Apostle willeth us to *obey them that have the oversight of us, and submit our selves unto them, which watch for our souls, and must give an account for us.* Let everyone examine himself, whether he make this use of the word; if we do, then we receive the Minister as a gift of God: if we do not, thē we do not only reject y^e Minister, but God himself that gave him and sent him to us; for he hath said, *He that despiseth you, despiseth me.*

Fourthly, lament the estate of the church▪ which is destitute or deprived of this gift, as Psal. 74, 9. *We see not our signs, there is not one Prophet more, nor any with us that knoweth how long!* We must acknowledge therefore, that great is the misery of that people, which want the ordinary preaching of the word. Alas, they see no vision, how then can they but decay? Pro. 29, 18. They have *no Shepherd*, what then shall the silly sheep do, but wander up and down they know not whither? They have *blind guides* to lead them, how then can they escape falling into the ditch? All knowledge and obedience will soon decay, if the word be not preached, as the grass withereth without rain, the body pineth without food, and the lamp goeth out without oil.

Fifthly, it directeth such as are Patrons of benefices whō they should present, namely such as they may commend as a *gift of God*: let him choose them before they make choice of him: & let y^e gifts of God in him commend him, before any write letters of praise for him. They shall one day answer to God for y^e souls of such as perish through their default, There is no dalying with Church-livings, let them therefore provide sufficient Preachers for their own discharge in the great day of account.

Sixthly, as they must look unto it, that have power to present, so must they that have authority to institute; *for if they lay their hands rashly upon any, they are thereby partakers of other men's sins*, 1 Tim. 5, 22. and therefore they ought to *keep themselves pure.*

Seventhly, touching the people, they must acknowledge themselves unworthy of such a blessing, and not take it as a fruit of their own deservings. We can deserve no good thing, much less the greatest good. We cannot deserve our daily bread that nourisheth the body, much less our spiritual meat that feedeth the soul. A good Pastor cometh not as lands and livings by inheritance: & therefore as *Solomon* speaketh of a good wife, so we may say of a good Minister, *House and riches are the inheritance of fathers, but a good Minister is the gift of God.* Prov. 19, 14.

Eighthly, our duty to God is to love him a-again that hath so loved us; and to give unto him our hearts, our souls and bodies, that hath given unto us such a gift. He could not •estifie his favor toward us more, thē by such a sure pledge and love-token. This the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 147, 13, 14, 15. where he praiseth God for many blessings, but for the word as a most special blessing above all the rest, and far surmounting all such things as are common to all nations and people; *He shown his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel: he hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them.* So then, among all the Lord's gifts none is comparable to have faithful Pastors to feed men's souls

with knowledge and understanding, and so to bring salvation unto them. True it is, God hath many graces in store for us, he giveth riches, and health, and wealth, it is he that healeth all our infirmities, and restoreth us from sickness: but the gift of the Gospel is above all, which being entertained, bringeth salvation unto all men. The other also are graces, they are enriching graces, healthy graces, wealthy graces, healing graces; but this is a saving grace. Therefore the Prophet saith, *If thy word had not been my comfort, I had perished in my affliction*, Psal. 119, 92. Ninthly, the people should love their feet that bring glad tidings of good things, & account them best welcome unto them. True it is, the ungodly and profane of the world can see no such benefit in it, nor such good to come by it, as to be any way beholding to God the giver, or to the Minister that is the messenger: Satan the god of this world hath blinded their eyes, so that they are become like swine which find more savor in the mire of this earth, thē in the sweet perfumes of the Gospel, or like to children that value a beautiful toy before a precious stone. These account them their enemies that tell them the truth as *Ahab* did, 1. King. 21, 20. they think they come to trouble thē, as *Herod* & all Ierusalē thought of Christ.

Lastly, all good people such as are God's people, should earnestly desire to live under y^e Ministry of the word, where this *gift of God* is: that they may always hear the holy doctrine of salvation sounding in their ears, remembering that *faith cometh by hearing*, Ro. 10, 17. We see how careful commonly men are to dwell in wholesome and healthy places, where a sweet air is: so if we desire the health and wealth of our souls, let us frequent the preaching of the word, and keep the Sabbath with our families, by hearing the voice of God. As for those barren places where no corn groweth, and where no dew nor rain falleth, they are unwholesome, fly from them: they are dangerous, come not near them. Hence it is, that the word coupleth preaching and believing together, and therefore let no man put them asunder, John. 17, 20. Acts 8, 12, and 14, 1. 1 Cor. 15, 1, 2. No man can be saved except he be called *for whom he did predestinate, them he also called*, Rom 8, 30. but he calleth none by his voice from heaven but by his word in the earth. Either he calleth immediately by himself, or mediately by his Ministers: but now he hath ceased to call immediately, and if we wait for such a calling, we wait upon our own vanity, & we do but deceive our selves, like *Herod* that waited for the wisemen, but they never came unto him. If then we would be saved, we must first be called: and if we would be called, we must hear God's Ministers speak unto us and call unto us out of his word.

8 And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Behold, I also have given thee the charge of mine heave offerings, of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel, &c.

9 This shall be thine of the most holy things reserved from the fire: every oblation of theirs every meat offering of theirs, and every sin offering of theirs, &c.

10 In the most holy place, &c.

11 And this is thine, the heave offering of their gift, &c.

12 All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, &c.

13 And whatsoever is first ripe in the land, &c.

14 Every thing devoted in Israel shall be thine.

15 Every thing that openeth the matrice, &c.

16 And those that are to be redeemed, &c.

17 But the firstling of a Cow, &c.

18 And the flesh of them shall be thine, &c.

19 All the heave offerings of the holy things, &c.

We see here that God would have the Priests to be wholly occupied in the Ministry of his service: & therefore they could not get their living with y^e labor of their hands, or by tilling of the ground; they might not be Merchants, Artificers, or Farmers, but must wholly attend upon the work of the Tabernacle, so that the Lord showeth by what means they should live, and how he would have them maintained. And first of all he speaketh of the stipend of the Priests which had the worthier calling; they were to be maintained by oblations, whether *meat offerings, or sin offerings, or trespass offerings*: by the first fruits of *the corn, of the wine, or of the oil*: by all things *devoted in Israel*: by *the first borne* that openeth the matrice in all flesh, whether *of men or beasts*: yet so as that the first borne of men and of unclean beasts, which might not be offered, *should be redeemed*, taking for a man five shekels of the Sanctuary, of which valuation we have spokē before. Add to these the *shewbread*, which was changed every week; & lastly, *the tenth of tenths*, which the Levites themselves were commanded to pay them out of those tenths which they had received of the people, of which we shall speak afterward. Thus we see that the Priests were to look to everyone of the people, how God blessed them in the City and in the field; how he blessed the fruit of their body, and the fruit of their ground, and the fruit of their cattle, the increase of their kine, and the flocks of their sheep: yea, how he blessed their basket and their store, and all that they set their hand unto: to what end served all this, but to put them in mind of their duty, that their care of the people should be according to the commodity they reap & receive by them. We learn from hence, that the Ministers of God, as in receiving their duties they look to every particular

person what he hath, and to every particular benefit how it ariseth, so in performing of their duties, & discharging of their places, they must not only have a general care of the flock committed unto them, but also of every particular man. For as they require their duties, so they must be ready to do their duties: and as they look to themselves well enough in the gathering together of their revenues, arising from every particular person, so the purpose of God herein was, that as they should care for the whole flock in general, so also they should care for everyone in particular, Ezek. 34, 4. Luke 12, 42. Acts 20, 20. 1 Cor. 9, 22. 2 Cor. 11, 28. The reasons.

[Reason 1] First, the same price was paid for one that was paid for another: the same blood of Christ which was shed, is that which must save every particular soul, as well as the whole Church. It followeth therefore, that if Christ have shed his precious blood for every soul in particular, then every particular person must be cared for, that so he may be saved by his blood, John. 10, 11. He is that good Shepherd that will *leave ninety and nine in the wilderness, and seek that lost one*, Luke 15, 4, 6. Secondly, the Minister must give an account, as for the whole, so for every particular, Acts 20, 26, that he may *be free from the blood of all*: now he cannot be free from the blood of all, except he be free from the blood of every particular person, so that it standeth him upon, to have as great a care of the salvation of one as of another. Thirdly, because one unsanctified man may easily infect and corrupt the whole congregation, as one diseased sheep may infect the whole flock, 1 Cor. 5, 6. If then the Shepherd be wise, he will as well take care for the curing of that one, as he would do, if the rest were infected: so ought it to be with the Ministers of God, if they be spiritually wise, they should as well have a care of the salvation of each particular, as of the whole in general. The uses follow.

This reproveth all careless Ministers, that [Use 1] yield to have a general care over the flock, but cannot abide to hear of a particular. These are like to those men that yield to God a general care of things that fall out, and a general providence over y^e world, but by no means a special and particular, as if that would trouble him too much. But his providence extendeth to everyone, Mat. 10, 29. *A sparrow falleth not to the ground without the will of God; yea, the very hairs of our head are numbered*, v. 30. So do many acknowledge, y^t the Ministers ought to have a general care over the people, the Apostle is so plain, that they dare not deny it, 1 Pet. 5, 2. but yet they cannot abide to hear of a particular care, for that were to busy thē too far, and to lay too heavy a load vpō their shoulders, and to abridge them of many pleasures which they purpose & propound to themselves to take. But do they not receive part of their maintenance from every particular? Somewhat ariseth as due to them from everyone, though it be but a little, & many of them are such good husbands to look so near to their profits, that they will not lose a penny, nay they will wrangle oftentimes for an halfepeny. For as it was with the Priests in this place, if they had no *meat offering*, yet they had of them a *sin offering*: or if they had not a sin offering, yet they received *the first fruits* that they brought: and if nothing did arise for first fruits, yet for their *first borne*, that was redeemed, somewhat fell unto them: so is it with the Ministers, many of them can look into every quarter and corner of their Parish, to pry out what offals will come to their share: O that we were as careful to know the state of our flock touching their spiritual wants, as for

our own temporal wealth. Let us busy our selves to enquire of their souls, as well as of their substance, and what they lack, as well as what we lack. We see the soul quickeneth every part of the body, and is wholly not only in the whole, but in every part potentially, albeit not essentially: the powers and faculties of it are dispersed to the communicating of life to every member. The Sun lighteneth with his beams the whole world, and there *is no one thing hid from the heat thereof*, Psal. 19, 6. A candle is set upon the candlestick, y^t it may give light to all & everyone y^t is in the house.

The Church is as an household, the governor of it must look to every part, as the father to all his children, from the eldest to the youngest: if he should have care for one, and not for another, feed one, and let another starve, he were an ungodly arid unnatural father. So ought it to be with the Minister, he should be as the soul in the body, as the Sun in the Firmament, and as the father in the family, that is, have care of every soul. Some converse wholly with the rich, but care not, nor indeed cannot abide to come among y^e poor; whereas a faithful Minister shall many times find most comfort, and most comfort because most fruit of his labors among them. Others think it a great disparagement & disgrace unto them to bind them to such particular duties. Again, other in their Sermons so are so high, and fly so far above the slow and slender capacities of the people, that they can learn nothing at all of them. They do so trouble themselves and the people with their latin, that the hearers have almost forgotten their english. There is a small deal of learning lieth in pronouncing a few latin or Greek sentences, which a slender scholar in the Grammar school may quickly do: whereas they ought to labor and strive to profit the meanest of their hearers, in which number the greatest part are. I have heard many judicious hearers many times complain, that the producing of foreign testimonies, and the speaking of strange tongues, much hindereth attention, and disturbeth the memory; they have so much variety of sauce set before them, that they forget to taste and eat of the meat. But our doctrine must put us in mind that the Minister must have a care of every part of his flock. The heathen Orator pronounceth that they are worthily laughed to scorn that use such words, as that they are not understood, *Curandum est, vt sermon eo vtamur, qui notus est nobis, ne, vt quidam Graeca verba incultantes, iure optimo irrideamur*. He wrote this to him that understood y^e Greek, but because he wrote it for the use of others also, he abstaineth from intermingling of unknown words. And in another place he saith, he disliked as much y^e speaking of Greek among latin, as the speaking of latin among Greek. So should we account it as unfit and unseemly to speak latin in an english Sermon, as to speak english in a latin Sermon. Thus the Gentiles that knew not y^e true God, yet by the light or natural reason amended by the help of art and learning, knew the inconvenience and incongruity of this medly: and therefore we should take notice of it. Again, it reproveth such Ministers as are ignorant that cannot, & are idle that will not teach the people: as also *Non residents* that never come among thē for their good, but for their goods not to teach the truth, but to receive their tithes: these do indeed take care of none, whereas they should take care of everyone.

Secondly, let the Ministers labor to practice [Use 2] this duty, & to show their care, as of y^e whole, so also of every part. Doubtless, they have not performed love to Christ, that have not care of his lambes as well as of his sheep, of the feeble as well as of the strong, of the small as

well as of the great, and do not seek to be profitable even to the meanest and the simplest. Little children must have the bread broken unto them, and cut into little pieces for them, that they may eat it: if an whole or hard loaf should be set before them, they might rise up an hungered as they sate down, and we might justly be thought to desire to starve them rather than to feed them. So ought the Minister to *study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed: rightly dividing the word of truth*, 2 Tim. 2, verse 15. A Physician that dealeth with his patient, hath not only a care of the whole body in general, but he applieth his physic to every particular, as he seeth it in his discretion to have need: so he that is a spiritual Physician, must deal after the same manner, he must not only have a general care of all in gross, but a special care of everyone, to apply unto them, either doctrine, or reproof, or instruction, or consolation, as he shall see them to stand in need. He must labor to strengthen *the weak*, to beat down *the proud*, to instruct *the ignorant*, to comfort *the broken-hearted*, to raise up *them that are fallen*, and to deal toward everyone as his condition requireth.

Lastly, seeing this duty is required of the [Use 3] Ministers, it admonisheth the hearers, that they suffer them to deal thus in particular with them. They are wolves and not sheep, that cannot abide that the shepherd should touch them and handle them, whose desire is to tarre them, not to tear them, because he hath a care of their good in particular. It is the common corruptiō of the multitude, they cannot abide that the Minister should strike them home, or apply his doctrine to themselves. Some speak against the Minister because he is too sharp, he points at them, he aimeth at them: like those that would be angry with the Surgeon, because he toucheth the sore, & layeth the plaster upon it. Others reprove the Minister, because he bringeth common & known things, ordinary points: such men have *itching ears*, and hunt after new things, and so *turn away their ears from the truth*, 2. Tim. 4, 3, 4. These do not consider that the Minister hath charge of every soul, and must have a care of the whole and of every particular: and in the Congregation, though some be strong yet others are weak: though some be learned, yet the greatest part are unlearned: whereas their care must be to strengthen the weak, as well as to establish the strong. And as for them that are strongest, their memory is weak, & their affections oftentimes cold, that they have need to be put in mind often of the same things, & *indeed it is profitable to thē*. Phil. 3, 1.

20 And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have none inheritance in their Land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part, and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.

21 And behold, I have given the children of Levi, all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

22 Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the Tabernacle of the Congregation, lest they bear their sin, and die.

The Lord declareth in these words, how the Levites shall be maintained. They had no inheritance in the Land as y^e rest of the Tribes, neither might they take upon them any trade, but must wholly attend the duties of their calling, and therefore they have the tenth in Israel assigned unto them, *for the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation*. The doctrine arising from hence is this. The Ministers of the word of God must be liberally maintained of the people, Mat. 10, 10. 1 Cor. 9, 14. Gal. 6, 6. 1 Tim. 5, 17, 18 God claimeth and challengeth all tithes due to himself, Levite. 27, 30. Here he maketh an assignation or resignation of thē to the Levites, whom he maketh as his Bailiffs or Deputies to receive them as his rent and reuenue, and the Priests are appointed to receive the tenths of their tenths. Here two causes are rendered, wherefore God made over these tithes to these persons: First, because they had no part of the division of the Land, the rest of the Tribes had the Land divided to them by lot, therefore they must be provided for another way. Secondly because their labor was incessant and continual, and they were worthy to be rewarded for it accordingly. They were deputed to teach the people, & bestowed much pains and attendance in the Tabernacle, therefore they were worthy to receive their wages, and ought not to be defrauded thereof. Before the law, *Abraham gave unto Melchizedek, tithes of all*, Gen. 14, 20. And the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, that *even the Patriarke Abraham gave the tenths of the spoils*, Heb. 7, 4. It is therefore both lawful & just, that the Minister should require and receive, and the people pay unto thē that which is due in respect of their labor.

[Reason 1] The reasons are; First, that thereby the Ministers may be encouraged in their duties, 2 Chron. 31, 4. It is said of *Hezekiah*, that he *commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem, to give the portion of the Priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord*. They had received much discouragement and discontentment in the days of *Ahaz* his father, who regarded neither God, nor his word, nor his worship, nor his Ministers, *for he took away a portion out of the house of the Lord, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God*, 2 Chro. 28, 21, 24. And in our days I am well assured, that the Ministers of the Gospel have as many discouragements as ever the Levites had, and therefore stand in need of some encouragements. Secondly, it is an ordinance of God, y^t they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel, 1 Corin. 9, 14. Thirdly, they are to attend wholly upon that calling, and do spend themselves to gain souls to God. Every art should maintain the artificer, and every trade the tradesman, and every profession the professor. The calling of the Minister is not of y^e lowest callings, and it is none of the least labors, so that their maintenance should arise from their great pains that they take in that calling. Fourthly, it is the law of God and nature, that children which have received liuelihood from their parents, *should recompense thē*: the Apostle showeth, that *if any widow have children or nephewes, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents, for this is good & acceptable before God*, 1 Tim. 5, 4. If then children ought to recompense their parents for their care in their education, as *Joseph* did his father *Jacob*, much more ought faithful people to do y^e same to their faithful Pastors, to whom they owe even themselves, and of whō they have received the life of their lives, Gal. 4, 14. 15, 19. Phil. • 10. Lastly, every laborer is worthy of his hire; and whosoever deteineth the wages of the poor laborer, is a great oppressor, & committeth a *crying sin*, and the cry

entereth into the ears *of the Lord of Sabbath*. How then should that w^c is due to all laborers, be denied to the labors of y^e Minister?

And howsoever this be an evident truth, yet it findeth hard entertainment in the world, & men's profits do so rownd them in the ear, that they can quickly find sundry objections against y^e same. I will touch some of the chief and principal. First, the Apostles had great [Object. 1] gifts, yet they preached freely, Math. 10, v. 8. Why then should not the Ministers in our days do the like? I answer, [Answer.] this must be understood of the gift of working miracles, as appeareth by the circumstances, and as I have proved elsewhere. Hence it is, that *Elisha* would not accept, though he were urged, of the blessing y^t *Naaman* offered unto him for the curing of his leprosy, 2 Kin. 5, 16. Again, if they may receive nothing for their labors, how doeth Christ say afterward, *The workman is worthy of his meat?* Mat. 10, 10. Besides, our Savior joineth these two together, receiving freely, and giving freely; and maketh the former the cause of the latter, that they ought to bestow freely, because they had received freely. And how had they received freely? Surely two ways; freely without any of their own deserts, and freely without any their own labor, for they had their gifts by revelation, Gal. 1, 1, 16, 17. True it is, we have our gifts by the gift of God freely, without any the least desert of ours, but we have not received them freely without our great labor and industry: therefore as in this sense, we have not received freely, we a^e not bound by this rule to go about and preach freely. That talent which we have, we have it by our great pains, and therefore it is lawful for us to take for our pains.

[Object. 2] Again, the Apostles are forbidden to provide and to possess gold and silver, Math. 10, 9. I answer, [Answer.] so he forbiddeth them to have two coats, or shoes, or staves for their journey, v. 10. But to observe this perpetually, were contrary to the practice of Christ himself, John 12, 6. and 13, 4. and 19, 23. Luke 22, 36, and of his own Disciples, who no doubt lived according to the direction and instruction of their master, Acts 12, 8. 2 Tim. 4, 13. So then, this precept had place only for that present sending, and was not to bind them forever, much less their successors that came after them: for now they were appointed to make haste, and might carry no provision with thē, but must cast themselves wholly upon the power, protection, and providence of Christ that sent them & gave them their commission.

Thirdly, *Paul* preached to the Corinthians [Object. 3] and Thessalonians without receiving any wages at all of them, 1 Cor 9, 15. 1 Thess. 2, 6, 7. Acts 20, 34. He labored with his own hands, and became a Tent-maker, Acts 18, 3. I answer, [Answ.] the question is not *de facto*, but *de iure*, not what he did or any of them did, but what he and they had right and power to do. For albeit he did not take wages, yet he had authority to do it, as himself professeth, 1 Cor. •, 6, 12. yea he saith, that at such times as he freed them, *he robbed other Churches, and took wages of some to do service unto other*, 2 Cor. 11, 8. And albeit he were well content to depart from his right, yet he ceased not to lay claim to his right, 2 Thess. 3, 8, 9. And in other churches where he preached the Gospel, he lived of the Gospel, and taught all the Ministers by his example to do the like. If any ask the question, why he abstained from pursuing his own right? I answer, that many things are lawful in themselves which are not expedient, and as circumstances often alter the matter, so *Paul* did this for sundry causes expressed in

diverse places: First, lest he should overburden them that had already an heavy burden of poverty lying upon them, 2 Thess. 3, 8.

Secondly, that he might give example to those that were idle, which abounded among the Thessalonians, to teach them to work with their own hands, *and to eat their own bread*, 2 Thess. 3, 9.

Thirdly, that by this means it might manifestly appear, that he sought them rather than theirs, & that he might gain their souls to God, not their goods to himself, 2 Cor. 12, 14, 19. Phil 4, 17.

Lastly, that he might not be any way inferior to the false Apostles, 2 Cor. 11, 12. But let us come to the uses.

[Use 1] First, this serveth to reprove sundry persons▪ First, him that is the grand thief, that first robbed the Church by his dispensations & alienations of the rights and revenues thereof; I mean, the Bishop of Rome, who hath robbed the Church in soul and body, and is grown far with the spoils thereof. This he hath done by degrees: he would not let out all the blood at once, but opened the veins by little & little, that had he continued longer to bear sway he would have left no blood nor lively-hood in the body. The first wrong was offered to the Churches by depriving them of their tithes, in favor of his goodly creatures the cursed generation of his Monks, who obtained of the Pope and other Bishops, that the lands which they held in their own hands, & used for their own benefit, might be freed from any payment of tithes. So the council of *Lateran* under *Alexander* the third ordained, that religious men shall pay no tithes out of such their lands as they till themselves: but if they put any out, and take rent as other men, they shall pay tithe as other men do. Here was the flood-gates pulled up, and a way and passage made for all the mischief and misery that fell upon the Church in succeeding times: for here is the seed sown, that being watered from the *Uatican*, grew up apace to the robbing of many flourishing Churches, to the destruction of many Christian souls, and to the discouragement of many godly Pastors. For this exemption of religious men, I might say, irreligious, was indeed the cut-throat of all religion, and the bringing in of the streams & floods of irreligion; which stayed not here, but prevailed greatly and gate farther footing to the great prejudice of the Church: & therefore this rabble of Church-robbers sought in the next place to exempt all their farmers and tenants that belonged unto them from payment of tithes, the which, albeit it were disliked and resisted at the first in the Council of *Cabilon*, yet at the length it passed and prevailed. Nay, after that they had swallowed up the inheritance of the Church, like wolves that tasted the sweetness of the blood of the lambes which they had hurried & wearied, they went forward to steal, to kill, and to destroy as the thief doth, John 10, v. 10. till they had subjected those Ministers & Churches unto themselves, to whom themselves at the first paid tithes, as belonging to their jurisdiction. Thus these idle drones and evil beasts, were not content to slip their necks out of the yoke, and make themselves free from others, until they had brought others to be in bondage and subjection unto themselves. Thus did one thief make another, and one Church-robber gave free license unto another to rob & spoil, saying one to another *Come with us, let us lay wait for blood let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: let us swallow thē up alive, as*

the grave, and whole, as those that go down into the pit: we shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil: cast in thy lot among us, let us all have one purse. Prov. 1, 11, 12, 13, 14. Thus did one theft and robbery make clear way for another, & in all this time while the church was pillied and polled, and as it were left naked of her garments, the Pope, that would be called the Protectour of the Church, was so far from sitting still and looking on, that he was the ringleader in this sin, that upon his head may justly come all the blood of so many thousand souls as have by this means been lost utterly. Thus hath the wild boar rooted up the vineyard of the Lord, and made it a prey to wolves and foxes that entered into the same: and the ravenous cloisters of the insatiable Monks are guilty of that horrible sacrilege, which hath laid waste and desolate so many goodly Churches, & brought the Clergy to that poor estate wherein to this day it remaineth and continueth in many places. For it is not to be imagined, that any of the people who gave liberally to the Churches, and richly endowed them with lands and livings of their own, would ever have entertained any thought, much less entered into any practice of alienating tithes from the lawful owners, and appropriating them to themselves, had they not seen the way laid plain and open before them, and that by those, who by the original & institution of their order, were to pay tithes, yea and those same tithes consumed in most vile and shameful manner. Neither shall we find, that ever any inherited & possessed this portion by an absolute title of inheritance, as their feesimple and freehold, til the suppression of the houses of these vermin, which were become cages of unclean birds, and dens of thieves and robbers. I cannot see therefore, how at the first laymen could have any better title to these tithes, then their predecessors the Monks had, and therefore they yet bear the names of impropriations, as things that are so holden and possessed by an improper title. In other purchases, the Lawyers are wont to say, (if the case in this be not altered) *caveat emptor*, that is, let the buyer take heed and look to his right and title. To conclude therefore, I would gladly be resolved, whether our Improprieties hold the Church tithes by any better title then the Monks did at the first by the Popes pillage? and whether they were not given to y^e Church by a good law, and taken from it by a bad?

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing it is God's pleasure, that such as preach the Gospel, should be maintained by the Gospel, they are reprov'd that account it an idle and needless function, & care not if we were chased out of house & home, when we have spent our time, our labor, our strength, and our substance for the fitting of our selves to this calling. Such men are wholly carnal, and savor nothing of the Spirit. The Apostle saith, *They that labor in the word and doctrine, are worthy of double honor*, 1 Tim. 5, 17. Meaning by honor, the care and provision that is to be taken for them. And in the Epistle to the Hebrews, they are willed to *be mindful of them that have the oversight of them, who have delivered to them the word of God*, Heb. 13, 8. 1 Thess. 5, 12, 13. To these mis-prizers and false judges of good things, I will add another sort, that hold tithes to be a kind of alms, and so would not have the Ministers challenge anything as due for their Ministry and maintenance, but to stand wholly to the people's devotion & good will; and thus they would make them right beggars indeed. So that as *Jeroboam* made the basest of the people to be the Clergy, so they make the Clergy to be the basest of the people, and desire to bring them to their doors crouching & creeping for a crust of bread. But we demand that for which we have labored, of duty, not of courtesy; and as a

recompense, not as a benevolence; not as their vassals, but as Stewards set over the family, or Captains over the host. In y^e law, the people were charged with tithes of four sorts. First, such as were paid distinctly and directly to the Levites. Secondly, such as were deducted out of these, and to be levied for the use of the Priests: both these kinds of tithes are touched in this chapter. Thirdly, such as the people laid aside for the furnishing of their sacred and solemn feasts when they should be at Jerusalem, to which the Priests were ordinarily invited, Deut. 14, 22, 23, 28, 29, and 26, 11, 12. Lastly, such as every third year were gathered for the relief of the strangers, the fatherless, the widow, and the poor. This last sort I will not deny to be in nature of an alms: but such tithes as were paid to the Priests and Levites were paid as wages is for work. This will be plainly proved by the doctrine of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 9, 7. producing the examples of soldiers, gardners, sheepeheard & such like, all which claim a recompense of debt, not of devotion. If then a common soldier lawfully requireth his stipend of that people for whom he fighteth; the Minister also, fighting for the people against their spiritual adversaries, may do the like: and if he that planteth a vineyard & he that feedeth a flock, may of duty challenge to eat of the fruit of the one, and the milk of the oth•r, then the Minister that planteth the vineyard of the Lord, and feedeth the flock committed unto him, may justly claim to live upon the same. Again, alms do always exceed the desert of him that taketh the alms: they testify the mercy of the giver, not the merit of the receiver: for charity is more worth then single thanks, and good deeds are to be valued above bare words. But it is not so in paying tithes of temporal things, all which cannot sufficiently countervail the work of the Ministry, 1 Cor. 9, 11. *Is it a great matter, if we shall reap your carnal things?* And the Apostle is bold to tell *Philemon*, that he did owe to him even himself, verse 29. It is a principle written in the heart of man by nature, to pay him his wages whom we set on work; not to send him away empty that laboreth for us. As then the laborer hath right to his wages, so the Minister hath his right and part in the goods of those whom he teacheth, & among whom he laboreth, and therefore when he receiveth his tithes, he doth not take alms, but receiveth his own, having as good right unto the tenth part, as he that payeth it, hath to the other nine. No man can say that the beggar is worthy of alms, he receiveth them by y^e law of charity, but cannot claim them as due by the rule of justice. The day laborer that hath labored all day, and wasted his strength and spirits, would think scorn (though he be a poor man) to receive his hire for his labor in the nature of an alms, as the beggar taketh a penny at the door: and shall the Minister receive his wages as a gift or as a gratuity? The householder that hath agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, saith unto them when he came to pay them, *Take that which is thine own, and go thy way:* as then they received their duty, so doth the Minister receive his due & his duty.

[Use 3] Thirdly, they are also justly reprov'd, who treading in the steps of the Bishop of Rome, do deteine from the Ministers of the Gospel, the tithes appointed unto them, which are not unfitly called, God's ancient d•main, founded originally upon the law of nature. For as we learn by the light of nature, that there is a God, and that he is to be honored, so the honor that is due unto him, cannot be performed without Ministers, neither can the Ministers attend their function without maintenance. To this I will add the saying of the wise man, Prov. 3, 9. *Honor God with thy riches.* For seeing he is the high possessor of heaven

and earth, Gen. 14, 19, and giveth life & breath and all things unto us, Acts 17, 24. it is our duty to render back somewhat unto him again, thereby acknowledging, that we hold all of him in chief, except we will yield less unto him then the Infidels did to their heathenish gods. Now we honor God with our riches, not only when we use them soberly without excess, righteously without oppression, and charitably without defrauding of the poor, but when we employ them religiously toward his service. The Nicodemites were content to become Christians thus far, as to give their hearts to God, so that they might have liberty to dispose of their bodies as themselves pleased: but these will step one step farther, they profess to worship God both with soul and body, so they may be discharged & dispensed withal from honoring him with their riches. They will willingly *offer the calves of their lips*, so they may be freed from y^e calves of their stalls. They can be content to travail *from the East with the wise men*, to fall down before him and worship him, but they cannot abide to open their treasures, and present unto him, gifts, gold, frankincense, & myrrh, Mat. 2, 11. Paul had almost persuaded Agrippa to become a Christian when he exempted those bands and chains: and if ever we will persuade these to become Christians, we must also except these bands and chains that we speak off, for they are very heavy unto them, they cannot abide them. The tithes are the Lord's, he hath reserved them to himself, as a rent of the tenant due to the Landlord, or as a tribute and subsidy due to the king: & therefore when they are not *truly paid*, as GOD commandeth, but are unconscionably deteined, he complaineth, that *he is robbed and spoiled*, Mal. 3, 10. so that if we give not unto the Lord the tenth, who hath given unto us the other nine, let us take heed lest he resume the nine parts, and leave unto us the tenth only. And I may say as a worthy and learned knight of our times saith; Such as have taken away the Churches dowry, and s;poiled her of it, it had been great reason they should have made her a ioynter, to recompense the wrong they had offered, and the loss she hath sustained. Solomon saith, Prov. 20, 25. It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, & after vows to make enquiry: but gain blindeth the eyes of the wise. Ananias and Sapphira are severely punished, who withheld part of that money which was consecrated to God by their own gift: these deteine part of that, which neither they nor their fathers ever gave, and yet neither fear it, nor are touched with it. And who can deny but all tithes are due by vow in the times of the Gospel? and that the true and due payment of them is long before all customs and prescriptions? It is a rule of common equity, that no man having passed his consent and his deed, may change it to the prejudice of another. Now that which is given to the Church, is passed over to God for his service, and therefore whosoever shall take it away again without the consent of God whose it is, cōmitteth sacrilege against him, and dealeth worse with him then he will suffer any man to deal with us. [Objection.] But it will be said, the Ministers themselves consented to this alienation, and therefore being willing, no injury can be done unto them. I answer, [Answ.] our consent is not sufficient, because the vow is made to God, and thereby he is entitled unto them, and hath received a right in them by our vow, so that consequently they cannot be taken away without his consent. The donation of Ananias and Sapphira was made to God for the use of the poor, it lay not now in their power nor in the Churches to revoke & reuerse that grant, wherein God became now to be interested. We see this in marriage, published in the face of the Church, solemnized by consent of parties and parents, ratified by the action of the Minister, and celebrated in the

presence of many friends; the knot cannot be untied, no not by agreement of the parents, of the parties, of the Minister, of the friends, & of the whole Congregation, because marriage is not of the nature of a civil contract, but God is a party and hath a special hand in it, and *whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder*, or separate again without his consent. The like we may say of the Church-endowments, they are not merely civil where God is a party, and therefore that which he hath received, let no man take away without his allowance. Great was the devotion & zeal of the faithful gained to the Gospel in the beginning, our forefathers thought nothing too much for the spreading abroad of the saving truth of Jesus Christ. Many ministered unto Christ out of their substance, which he kept in a bag: wherein he kept the things that were given to supply his own wants, and the wants of others, John 13, 29. After the death and resurrection of Christ, when he was ascended into heaven, many devout men sold their possessions, Acts 2, 45, and 4, 34, 35, and brought the price thereof, *and laid it down at the Disciples feet*: which communication of all things, though it tended and extended to the benefit of all, yet was there especial regard had to the Apostles, that they should want nothing. For how unreasonable a thing were it, that seeing they ministered unto the Church all things that pertain to life & godliness, the Church should not minister unto them food, and raiment, and all things belonging unto this life? After the Church was once settled and established among the Gentiles, & dispersed throughout the world which before was contained within the bounds of *Judea*, it was better to give lands (commonly now called the glebe) as being a more sure and settled endowment than money, which as one merrily, but yet truly saith, he would have called the Churches *fixed inheritance*, but that he seeth the same also to be movable. At the first then the church turned their possessions into money, and afterward money into possessions. Thus we see, the zeal and fervency of the first times & ages of the Church, while the blood of Christ lately shed, was yet warm in men's hearts, whereby it came to pass that it had very anciently lands and possessions, both glebe and houses belonging unto it; wherein they followed the president of God, when he appointed Cities for the Levites to dwell in, with a convenient circuit of fields for the maintenance of their cattle, Numb. 35, 2. But never was the zeal of men so hot, but now their devotion is as cold: and we are so far from giving to the Church, that we live in a frozen age, wherein men strive who shall take most from the Church. I have heard some men affirm, who would be thought great friends to the Church, but they are such friends to the Church, as the East wind is to the fruits of the earth, that they are willing to pay so much (and they can see no reason why they should pay anymore) as the soil will naturally yield and bring forth of it self without charge of tillage or manuring; notwithstanding in the late case of Tithewood, which groweth out of the ground without their labor, or without any great cost (no other benefit arising to the Minister from thence) have also refused to pay any wood at all in kind, or anything else in lieu of it. If then these men will allow us, neither the tenth of the earth labored, neither yet y^e tenth of that which groweth without any labor, I would gladly know what they would allow us? Such is the covetousness of many men, that they seek to make new customs and prescriptions every day, and lay the foundation of many injurious courses, which in time to come will tend to the overthrow of religion. But let all such consider & look to themselves, that be any way authors of detaining tithes, and of bringing in prescriptions prejudicial to the Church; for

how many soever perish for want of food in y^e places where they live, are guilty of the murdering of so many souls before the tribunal seat of the eternal Judge, as *Augustine* teacheth.

Lastly, seeing God hath provided that the [Use 4] Ministers should be provided for, and hath taken care that they should be cared for, it is their duty to be diligent in teaching of the people, and preaching in season & out of season. For as they are worthy of their wages, so they must be faithful laborers: and as they must live of the Gospel, so they must preach the Gospel. As the people must communicate unto the Ministers in all good things, so it is required of them to teach & instruct thē; and as they are counted *worthy of double honor*, 1 Tim. 5, 17, so they must rule well. As the mouth of the Ox must not be muzzled, so he must tread out the corn: and they that eat of the milk of the flock, must be careful to feed the flock: even so they that reap *carnal things*, must be as ready to sow *spiritual things*. Such then as are idle drones that will not labor, or dumb dogs that cannot bark, have no right from God to take the maintenance of such as discharge their places with care and diligence. He that hath no lust to labor, ought to have no liberty to eat. But it is the manner of many men, to look more to the feeding of themselves then to the Pastors of the sheep: and to mourn not so much for the loss of the flock, as for the lack of the fleece. These do possess much more than they do deserve. None can call for more duty to be paid nor look more narrowly to the utmost penny; but none perform less duty to the people then themselves. And if the people may not deteine their tithes under color and pretence of not being taught, no more may the Minister withhold his pains under color of having his tithes withholden from him. For albeit the people deal sparingly with us, yet we ought not to sow sparingly unto them. The more sparingly we feed, the more hardly they fare. It is not enough to preach now and then, for that were to nuzzle them in ignorance. O what grief is it to see the sheep of Christ famished, and how should it make our bowels to yearn within us to hear *the young children ask bread, & to have no man break it unto them!* God would have his sons and daughters fed to the full, and the table of his children furnished with bread *plentifully or richly*, and as *David's table*, with a *cup running over*, to keep them not only living, but in good liking; not only from being famished, but also fat and flourishing.

23 But the Levites shall do the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, & they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, &c.

24 But the tithes of the childrē of Israel which they offer as an heave offering unto the Lord, I have given unto the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance

The office of the Levites is set down, they must take the charge of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and do service therein. Now among these (no doubt) were men of all sorts and of sundry gifts, some were more learned, and some less, 2 Chron. 30, 22, yet the dispensation was committed unto them, and therefore all must be regarded and respected, the Levites (though inferior) as well as y^e Priests, and among them both such as were more meanly

qualified. And as God had given thē charge of the Tabernacle, so he giveth charge to the people to accept of their Ministry.

The doctrine is, that all in the Ministry, whatsoever their gifts be, are to be accepted, yea though their gifts oftentimes be small & slender. True it is, they must all have some gifts to fit them to teach the people, but howsoever they be inferior to many others, yet for their office sake they must be regarded. I do not say, the people should depend upon them, that are utterly ignorant and unlearned, but if meanly gifted in comparison of others, the people must not forsake them, neither wāder from one Levite to another. Mark therefore, that Ministers endued with a small, and yet a competent measure of gifts, may notwithstanding do unto God good service in the Church, and gain glory to his Name. He putteth his rich treasures in vessels, not of silver and gold, but of earth. Among the Apostles, it is to be thought, that some had greater gifts then others, some were *the sons of thunder*, and some *labored more abundantly then others*, no doubt according to the gifts they had received, yet all profitable to y^t Church. There is *a difference of gifts by the same Spirit*, nevertheless, *all given to profit withal*, 1 Corin. 12, 4, 5, 6, 7. And *Paul* saith, he spake with tongs more then others, 1 Cor. 14, 18. Experience teacheth this among our selves, that many of mean gifts, and little human learning, yet have been profitable teachers, and powerful instruments of much good in the Church of God, & gaining many to him. The reasons.

First of all, the blessing of God is all in all [Reason 1] upon the labors of those that are called; he for the most part bringeth to pass the greatest works by the weakest means and the meanest instruments, and by them he will get and gain glory to himself, as well as by men of the greatest gifts, albeit they also be of his own planting. Exod. 4, 10, *Moses was not eloquent*, yet *Moses* was potent, he was not fine in speech, but he was full of the Spirit: *Jeremiah* complaineth *he could not speak*, chap. 1, 6. but God supplied his wants, and made him able to thunder out judgments against the impenitent. Secondly, that the power & glory might [Reason 2] be of God alone. If God should always work his will by men of highest place & of greatest gifts, the force of the word and the conversion of the soul would be judged to proceed from man and not from God. As the host of *Gideon* were too many for God to save withal, so sometimes the gifts of men are too great for him to convert with them, lest we should say, we have done it; therefore doth God often put this treasure in vessels of meaner account, *that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us*, 2 Cor. 4, 7. Thirdly, such as [Reason 3] are conscionable in their places, do bring many blessings to the people, and convert many souls, so that the work of God doth prosper under their hands, which seek God's glory, & not their own praise; that the people might thereby be encouraged to hear them, and to depend upon them. It is an hard matter to deny our selves in the work of the Ministry, and to trample our own credit and estimation in the world under our feet, as the great Rabbies know well enough, that we may seek the glory of God only, with a right affection.

What then? Is it needless to have schools [Object. 1] of learning, or for the childrē of the Prophets to be trained up in them, and there prepared for the Ministry? I answer, [Answer.] No; these are notable & necessary helps to fit men to this great work and high calling: & all

means, if they were greater, are little enough, for *who is sufficient for these things?* 2 Cor. 2, 16. We must use these, and leave the success to God's providence, who is not tied unto them, no more thē Christ to choose his Disciples out of the company of the Scribes and Pharisees.

Again, if God work his will, whensoever [Object. 2] he will, by men of mean gifts, then it skilleth not, whether men study or not, or seek to attain to knowledge, and to better their knowledge, because they may do more good with less gifts. I answer, [Answer.] this ought to make no man negligent or careless, but rather to double his care and diligence. For what greater encouragement can we have to perform the duties of our calling, then to hear this voice full of comfort, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter into the joy of thy Lord?* Mat, 25, 21. So then, no man ought to grow careless, because God will bless small gifts, for that were to *continue in sin that grace might abound*, Rom. 6, 1. Lastly, from hence some will object, that then it skilleth not whom the Officers and Overseers of the Church do choose and ordain, how ignorant and insufficient soever they be? I answer, they are to follow y^e ordinary rule, to appoint such as *are apt to teach*, 1 Tim. 3, 2. Again, God supplieth the wants of such as he chooseth, as appeareth in the Disciples, which men cannot. Lastly, there is difference between such as have mean gifts, and such as have none: the one sort are God's Ministers, the other are men's, not God's.

[Use 1] The uses remain. First we see, it is a special gift of God, not a fruit of learning, for a Minister to convert souls to GOD by preaching of the word: for this grace and favor is often denied to many famous servants of God, Isaiah 6, 10, and 53, 1, and 49, 4. Christ himself converted not all to whom he preached, he often complaineth of their infidelity and hardness of heart, *they would not be gathered, whom he would have gathered* and gained to the faith, Mat. 23, 37. Nevertheless, we shall be rewarded, not according as we have converted which lieth not in our power, but according as we have labored, which lieth in our power. If learning could do anything of it self, then the best learned should do most good. But as the most learned do not most labor, so they do not see the greatest fruit of their labor. We must therefore all of us, whatsoever our gifts are▪ depend wholly upon God for his blessing, forasmuch as *Paul planteth, & Apollos watereth, but God giveth the increase*, 1 Cor. 3, 6, 7. nay, he beginneth and maketh an end of his own work it is he that giveth us grace to will and to do of his good pleasure.

[Use 2] Secondly, everyone ought to make it the special end of our Ministry, the edification of the Church, thereby to bring many children unto Christ. This doubtless is the reason, why so many great Doctors and deep Divines are very drones, and altogether unprofitable in their places, albeit peradventure profitable enough to their own purses; they look altogether to the rewards of learning (as they call them) & to popular fame, as though they that had greatest rewards, had always greatest learning: or they that had greatest learning, had always greatest conscience: whereas they should look to the benefit of the people. These hunt after the praise and glory of the world, & desire to be called great Rabbin's, and therefore oftentimes God casteth dung in their faces, that they may learn to be ashamed: so that we may say unto them, as Christ doth, John 5, 44. *How can ye believe, which receive honor*

one of another, and seek not the honor from God only? Whereas we ought to be like our Lord and Master, to be able in some measure to say with him *I seek not mine own glory, there is one that seeketh and judgeth*, John. 8, 50. Such a one as can truly speak thus, so far as human frailty will suffer him, shall have his defects supplied, and God will accompany the labor of his Ministry with the power of his Spirit. One such mean learned man, that hath zeal with knowledge, and knowledge with conscience, & conscience with diligence, & maketh the ends of his Ministry the good of y^e people & the glory of God, is worth an hundred of those proud Pharisees that *love the uppermost seats and to be saluted in the market*, Mat. 23, 6. The Apostle showeth in himself & requireth of others another spirit: He made himself *a servant unto all, that he might win the more*, 1. cor. 9, 19. Never came there greater detriment in former days or present times to y^e Church, then by unconscionable & unfaithful learned men. Who usurped greater tyranny in y^e church then they? Who hath starved moe souls, and sent them headlong in throngs to hell, then they? Who have fallen into the sin of Non-residency, and idleness in their residency, more then they? Who have been greater hindrances to the free passage of the Gospel, then they? Who have more disturbed the peace of the Church, and been the causes of atheism, popery, carnal liberty and open profaneness, then they by reason of their reputed knowledge? who stand so much upon their swelling titles and places of superiority, and yet want conscience of their duty lowliness of mind, love to God, and compassion to his people. What shall all their profound learning avail them, when they want an humble heart to season and sanctify their learning withal? [Objection.] What then, will some say? do you go about to condemn learning, so great an ornament in all? I do not go about to disgrace learning, [Answ.] or to contemn any learned men, or to bar the rewards of learning, much less to bring in ignorance, the mother of barbarisme. Learning is a precious jewel, it is a great blessing of God, it is a notable ornament joined with true godliness, wheresoever and in whomsoever they meet and are coupled together, there followeth an exceeding blessing. For as an unfaithful learned man is a great plague to the Church, so I hold this as a certain rule, there never came greater good to the Church then by a conscionable learned man. I wish, as *Moses said to Joshua, that all the Lord's people were Prophets and that he would pour out his spirit upon them all* Numb. 11.29. I grieve at no man's learning, I envy no man's preferment, I desire that all had the tongue of the learned to *speak the language of Canaan*, Isaiah 50 4. yea *the tongues and gifts of Angels*, 1 Cor. 13 1. whose names they bear, Revel. 1.20. and 2.1. but withal I add, that as a sword is a good thing and of necessary use to defend & offend, yet being put into the hand of a tyrant, or a mad man, it doth much hurt, because it is abused: so learning is a great blessing of God, and maketh us differ not only from y^e brute beasts but from other men also: it is profitable to prove, and improve, reform, & instruct: but being poured into a giddy spirit, and an unconscionable man, as wholesome wine into an unwholesome vessel, it loseth his taste, and becometh not only unprofitable, but hurtful, and bringeth much mischief, and sometimes the utter ruin not only of the person y^t possesseth it, but of the whole Church y^t is pestered with it, yet not of it own nature, but by his corruption that doth abuse it.

[Use 3] Thirdly, from hence ariseth comfort to men of mean gifts & of small knowledge, if they be painful and conscionable. True it is, they must not be *Jereboam's* Priests, that were

neither Levites nor learned, but taken from the basest of the people, as unsavory salt good for nothing: howbeit if with their mean gifts they use not mean diligence, and so discharge a good conscience, God accepteth and approveth of them; yea, he blesseth their labors, & worketh his great work of regeneration by them, & sealet up thereby his favor to their own consciences. We see this in *Apollos* mentioned in the Acts, he was not altogether destitute of knowledge, though he had but little, *knowing only the baptism of John*, ch. 18, 25. that is, the doctrine of *John* preaching repentance which he sealed up by baptism: but his want of knowledge he did recompense with painfulness in his preaching, for he was *fervent in the Spirit, and taught diligently the things of the Lord*: so that albeit he came far behind others in gifts of understanding, yet did he parallel or equal them, and peradventure go before thē in fervency and faithfulness, and in the effect of his Ministry: for he was zealous of God's glory, eloquent in speech, diligent in his place, mighty in the Scriptures, and confounded the Jews that believed not in Christ. But woe unto them that have neither knowledge, nor zeal, nor diligence, nor conscience. It is noted of the Angel, that is, of the Minister of the Church of *Philadelphia*, *that he had but a little strength*, a small measure of graces and gifts, yet he maintained the truth resolutely, and brought much good to the Church of GOD by using them carefully; for he did not only keep the word, and confess the Lord in time of trouble and persecution, but converted many enemies that *they came and worshipped before his feet*, *Reu.* 3, 8, 9, though he had *little strength* yet he had many children whom he converted to the faith. For as the Apostle teacheth out of the Prophet, that *the desolate hath many moe children, then she which hath an husband*, *Isaiah* 54, 1. And as it often falleth out, that a weak man begetteth many moe children then he that is of greater strength: so such as have but weak gifts, do notwithstanding bring many to God. Let not therefore any be discouraged through the weakness of their gifts, from doing their duty, remembering the saying of Christ, *Mat.* 13, 12. *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance.*

[Use 4] Fourthly, this serveth to humble and abase such as have the greatest gifts, and are high Doctors of the Church, that they should not stand overmuch upon the glory of their learning, but crave with all humility the blessing of God, and cast down themselves and all their gifts at his footstool of whom they received them, that withal they may receive comfort in their Ministry from him. Their labors are oftentimes less blessed, because they stand so much upon their school-learning, terms, tongues, titles, degrees, and such like privileges, that they oftentimes forget the principal part of their calling to do good to God's people, & to *know nothing among them, but Christ & him crucified*, *1 Cor.* 2, 2. Many there are that come far behind them in knowledge, that go far before them in conscience: which are beneath them in learning, but above them in labor, and find a greater blessing upon their diligence. For it oftentimes falleth out that such as are great Linguists, and profound Clearks bear themselves so proud upon their reputation, that they never desire a blessing from God, nor crave of him to sanctify their gifts, and therefore they oftentimes beat the air, & never pierce the conscience of the hearers, neither win any souls to God. They speak in the *enticing words of man's wisdom*, & utter strange tongues to gain admiration & astonishment in the hearers, but regard not the *demonstration of the Spirit*, *1 Cor.* 2, 4. whereas others which preach in weakness, and in fear, & in much trembling, that the faith of y^e Church should not stand in

the wisdom of men, but in y^e power of God, are made instruments of bringing a plentiful harvest to God.

Lastly, let the people content themselves [Use 5] with such as God hath set over them, though they be not most excellent in gifts; and count it a blessing from God, not refusing or disdainng to hear them and to depend upon them, as the Pastors y^t *watch over their souls*. They are oftentimes edified in their most holy faith, & profit in knowledge, in repentance, and in obedience under such a one, more then under another. For these do much good in their places, and turn many to righteousness. The diet of *Daniel* and of his fellows was no better then *Water and Pulse*: yet with that they prospered better, then they which had their portion from the Kings Table, because they were dieted at God's allowance, and therefore it was joined with his blessing: so are many fed with plain, yet with pure doctrine, taken out of the holy fountains of the Scriptures, whose souls do thrive & prosper far better in knowledge, in faith, and in obedience, then theirs that are fed after a more stately and costly manner with flowers of eloquence and ostentation of human learning, which puffeth up, but edifieth not. The people that have a painful and conscionable Minister, which bendeth all his gifts to edification that he may profit with them, and useth them not to gain glory to himself, but to God, are in far better case then such as have a great Doctor, a cunning linguist, an excellent Artist, a deep Philosopher, a subtle disputer, an eloquent Orator, an acute Logitian, or a profound schooleman, well seen in histories, and well red in Fathers; and is withal without conscience and leaveth his flock, or (if he be among them) hideth his gifts and burieth his talent: or, if he use his gifts now and then, bendeth them to vanity, not to piety; to ostentation, not to edification: or (as many do) use them against the truth, not for the truth; to destroy, not to build: to root out, not to plant. Woe unto that people that have such a guide: such a one can do no good unto them, whatsoever he doth to himself.

25 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

26 Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, when ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you, &c.

27 And this your heave offering, &c.

28 Thus you also shall offer, &c.

29 Out of all your gifts you shall offer, &c.

30 Therefore thou shalt say, &c.

31 And ye shall eat it in every place, ye and your households: for it is your reward for your service in the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

32 And ye shall bear no sin, &c.

Moses speaking both of the Priests and Levites, speaketh first of their office, and then of their maintenance, for whatsoever they have, they enjoy it for their service, verse 21. it is given unto them *as their reward for their service in the Tabernacle of the Congregation*, ver. 31. Now the Levites are charged to deal truly with the Priests, as they would have the people to deal truly with them. They were to pay tithes out of their tithes to the Priests, by reason of their honor and labor, who did as it were bear the burden and heat of the day: and least covetousness and greediness of gain should make them base minded and hard hearted, he telleth them that they themselves should be no less guilty of theft, if they deal fraudulently and injuriously with the Priests, then the people if they deal falsely toward them. So then as the people must set out their tithes before they presumed to use the rest: so must the Levites the tithes of tithes, before they use the rest of the tithes. We might observe from hence the common rule of equity, *Whatsoever we would that other men should do unto us, we should do the same unto them*, Matt. 7.12. We are ready and forward to require good dealing of others toward our selves, but slack and backward to return the same to others. Beware therefore of hurting and hindering any man in his body, in his soul, in his substance, in his good name by cruelty, by oppression, by fraud, by lying, by slandering: this the darkish light of natural reason may teach us, because we would not have others to defraud & to defame us, to oppress us or to purloine from us, and therefore we ought not to deal so with others: nay we ought to be ready to do good for evil, and in all our dealings one with another to proceed by the rule of love, remembering how we desire others should deal with us. But y^e point which I will insist upon, is this, that it is a sin for any, especially the Minister, to take the profits and commodities of any place, and not to perform the duties that belong thereunto, Isaiah 56.10, 11. Ezek. 34.2, 3. 1 Cor. 9.13, 14. 2 Thess. 3.7, 8. 1 Tim. 5.17.

The reasons: first because profits are given [Reason 1] for duties performed, and therefore he is a thief before God, and stealeth the benefit, whosoever neglecteth the duty. It is a sin therefore, because it is injustice. If a man should make a bargain, and take money upon it, and yet afterward not perform his bargain, like to that son that promised his father to work in his vineyard, but *went not*, Matth. 21.30. every man would condemn him of wrongful dealing: so is it unjust and injurious for a Minister to take the profit that shall arise out of any place, and then not to perform that which is required, as belonging of right unto it, as it is to take a fee, and to do nothing for it.

Secondly, this is an occasion of the perishing [Reason 2] of many people, both of himself and of others committed to his charge, 1 Tim. 4.16. A faithful Minister by doing his duty *doth save both himself and them that hear him*; the unfaithful destroyeth both himself and his hearers. Therefore it must needs be wrongful. If it were so, that he did destroy himself only, it were

no small evil to be a self-murderer: but when with himself he shall ruin many others, it must needs be more impious.

Lastly, because in not performing his duty [Reason 3] he doth defraud the people, and deprive them of that great good which the Lord hath bestowed upon them, and committed unto him to deliver and dispense unto them. He hath trusted them with a great charge, and willed them to keep the same to their use, 1 Tim. 6.20. 2 Tim. 1.14. If he that concealeth and keepeth back temporal things from his brother do offend the Law, Exod. 22. then great is his sin that keepeth back spiritual things from those to whom they ought to be delivered, and so much greater, as the difference is between spiritual and temporal.

This serveth to condemn the Popish teachers [Use 1] that live upon the spoil of the Church, and make merchandise of men's souls. We might tax these, and arrest them as guilty of an horrible crime, from the highest to the lowest, from the head to the foot, from the Pope the mightiest, to the Priest the meanest; they are all idle bellies, and conspire together to destroy the people, and happy is he accounted that hath his hand deepest in this sin.

For though many of them have goodly revenues, and have filled themselves with the fat of the earth, yet they live at pleasure, and are no whit serviceable to the Church, of whom I may speak with the Apostle, Rom. 16.18. *They that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*

The Cardinals do scorn this office as too base and simple for them, and choose rather to reign like Princes, then to rule as Pastors: and make more reckoning of their purple, then they do of their people, and therefore turn over the toile and labor of teaching to the Parish Priests, whereas themselves not long ago were no whit better. The Priests considering that they have no calling to preach, but to say Mass, and to read their portuise, do pass it over as a thing impertinent unto them. The Monks, which of ancient time labored with their hands, live at ease and pleasure in their Cloisters and Couens, but do no good to others. The Abbots fat themselves like boares in their styes, and are no way serviceable to the Church, but make their bellies their god, and their kitchen their heaven, and their table their joy: and the Pope, which sitteth at the stern and governeth the ship, taketh no care of anything, but letteth all alone; so that it is no marvel if all the rest follow his example.

[Use 2] Secondly, to let these pass, and to come unto our selves, it reproveth all such as are content to reap the profits of their places, and swallow great preferments down their wide throats, and yet take no pains at all in teaching. This certainly is a palpable sin, howsoever many, even those that are Non residents already, or would be, open their mouths, and set on work their pens to maintaine and defend the same. This we all confess to be unlawful in other callings, where notwithstanding the danger is not so great, how then should it be allowed and go for currant in that calling, wherein men are put in trust not with silver and gold, but with a greater treasure, to wit, men's souls? Woe then to those that are ready to take, but not to give: to swallow what they can, but will distribute nothing: they may be truly charged to live by the sweat of other men's brows, and to do no duty for it. If any man go about to take from them any part of their living, they cry out of sacrilege, if they have not

their tithes paid to them without any subtraction or diminution; if any claim any customs or prescriptions, they exclaim by and by, of theft and robbing of the Church: when in the mean season, they are the greatest thieves and robbers themselves, and wrong the Church by their own beastly customs, and transgress the Law of God by their own traditions. For they can be content to rob the people, and to keep them from those things that are far more precious, which are due to them by the Law of God and man, whereby it cometh to pass, that the sin of the Minister turneth to be a great plague to the people. It is noted of *Chrysostom*, when they sought to bring him into the Ministry, that he began to excuse himself, and to break forth into these words, What grievous sin hath this people committed, that it pleaseth God to set over them such an unworthy Minister? but he spake this not for any insufficiency, but partly out of his own humility, and partly from a feeling of the weightiness of that high calling: but we may speak it out of experience and say, What grievous sin have sundry congregations committed in this land, that it hath pleased God in justice to set over them dumb and careless Ministers, that sweep away the benefit, but never perform any duty? and therefore whosoever they are that lie under any such heavy burden, they have no cause to rejoice, but rather to grieve and to groan under it, as a fearful judgment sent of God upon them for their contempt of his word, and for their other sins which they have committed against him. For wheresoever any such are settled, as it is a great sin in them, so it is certainly a great plague to the people, and therefore are to sigh and lament for it. I know these men pretend sundry reasons, but all their reasons are suggested from their own profit, and therefore it is no marvel that *Moses* teacheth, Deut. 16.19. that *a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise*, and perverteth the words of the righteous. For many of these are of great sufficiency, yet it may not seem strange unto us, if they be blind in their own causes, and cannot see in matters that should hinder their own profit. They [Object. 1] tell us, that they teach the Church elsewhere, or benefit it by writing, though they teach not where they live and have taken the charge upon them. I answer, [Answ.] first for their writing, that is not generally commanded, nor so necessary to be performed, as the preaching of the word: and therefore though all the Apostles did continue in preaching, yet all of them did not set forth somewhat in writing.

Besides, these men ought to teach, where they tithe it: and it is required of them to show their learning where they have their living. Livings, no question, at the first were given in regard of personal pains where the profit is reaped and received. Is it likely that men would be so liberally minded to part from part of their own goods for nothing? A servant hired by one man may not go to another, and exact the wages of both; he must do his work, where he receiveth his wages, and where he doth no work, he cannot justly challenge any wages.

Again, when he is hired of one, he may not leave his business, and run to another.

[Object. 2] Again, some, say they, are Ministers of the Church of England, not of this or that church: and therefore so that they preach, it skilleth not where they preach. I answer, this is a silly shift, and no better then to receive an alms of one, and to give thanks to another: or to labor at Tarshish when thou art sent to Nineveh. Besides, why more a Minister of Enland, then of Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, and the like? And let such men look upon their

commission which is given unto them to preach. For albeit in their letters of orders they be authorized in general to preach, yet in their institution and induction, they have a particular charge assigned unto them to preach in such or such a place. Again, who can enter upon any other man's charge without the license and allowance of the incumbent? Can any Minister be said properly to be a Minister of England, when he is not allowed to do any Ministerial act without his consent that is Minister of the place, and if he do, he is punishable by the Laws [Object. 3] of the land? But they will object yet further unto us, that they have their charge from men and that distinction of Parishes is not of God or of Divine institution. I answer, all Ministers ought to have special flocks by the Law of God and man: for otherwise what difference between the calling of the Apostles and the calling of Pastors and teachers? Have we Apostles in our days, to take care indifferently and indefinitely of all Churches? True it is, the Church maketh Parishes greater or lesser, wider or narrower, to have moe or fewer hearers assembled together: but God himself limitteth congregations, and diuideth people from people, & appointeth them to be such as one Minister at once may teach them; otherwise we should make him the God of confusion and not of order, whereas he is *the author of order, not of confusion*, I would know therefore of these Ministers of the largest extent, that challenge themselves to have a larger calling then either Bishop or Archbyshop; for whereas they exercise authority over a Diocese or a Province, and out of them claim no jurisdiction, these claim to be Ministers over an whole country or kingdom: I say, I would know of them, whether their calling be Apostolical, or Pastoral? if it be Apostolical, then they are sent into all the world to teach *all Nations*, Matth. 28.19. if it be Pastoral, then they are confined to one place. The same watchman cannot watch in diverse places: the same shepherd cannot attend diverse flocks: the same steward cannot rule and provide for two or three families distinct and distant one from another. No man that is wise will entertain such a watchman, such a shepherd, such a steward, as hath been [Object. 4] already entertained. Lastly, they will plead for themselves, that they preach by substitutes so that though they have taken upon them the care and the cure, yet they have their Curates: and though they be charged with the people, yet they are discharged by their deputies. I answer, [Answer.] in matters of special trust, it is not lawful to substitute by the laws of the land. He that is the Princes Ambassador chosen of him, may not choose another to go for him, forasmuch as he shall be his Ambassador, and not the Princes: and he that is chosen to be a Captain, may not assign another to go in his place, & he in the mean season remain at home. But of this we have spoken elsewhere.

Thirdly, to leave the reproof of the Ministry, [Use 3] from hence by proportion we may extend the doctrine to all others that receive wages for their labor. It reproveth therefore servants and hirelings that serve for hire, whether they work by the day or by the year, and yet do not the business faithfully for which they are employed. Most of these are *eye-servants*, not *heart-servants*, who are more nimble with their tongues, then quick with their hands. These can find time enough to prattle with others, but they care not how little they work for their masters. To give these their right, and to do them no wrong, they are plain thieves, and no better then such as pick their masters purses. The law of GOD esteemeth no otherwise of them, which is the Law and rule of all equity. They ought to labor with a good

conscience, and to be as ready to do their work as to receive their wages, and to be as unwilling to slack their hand in laboring, as they would be to have their master to slack his hand in paying of them.

Again, as they would have their servants in time to come, when God shall bless them with servants, & enable them to set workmen on work, to labor truly, diligently, and faithfully for themselves, so let them deal as true laborers with their bodily masters, that so God may bless them with faithful servants and faithful service another day. And as they ought at all times to be diligent, so then especially, when house keeping is chargeable, and groweth to be double so much as it was before. But what is this to the greatest sort? so that they have enough and feel no want, so their bellies be filled with meat, and they no way pinched with famine, they care not what themselves do, or what others suffer. Nevertheless, as the expenses are double, so their diligence should be double, *with good will doing service, as to the Lord and not to men*, Ephes. 6.7.

Lastly, to return to the Ministers, to [Use 4] whom the doctrine doth especially belong, it admonisheth them, that they should keep themselves from this sin, and seek with a good conscience to discharge their several places, whatsoever duties be required of them. For the Apostle doth set down a woe against his own soul, writing to the Corinthians, Chapter 9, verse 16. of whom he received no maintenance (as we declared before) but labored with his own hands to get his living; then much more shall it bring a woe to those that take the benefit, but do not discharge the function. And albeit many of these are grown great in the world, yet it is not their greatness, nor their dignity, nor their riches, nor their preferments that shall excuse them, but *woe unto them if they preach not the Gospel*. God grant that their rising be not by the fall of the Church, and their mightiness by the miseries of the Church. It should be *our meat and drink to do the will of our heavenly Father that sent us, and to finish his work*, John. 4.34. and the *zeal of his house should eat us up*, Psal. 69.9, And when we must go the way of all flesh and leave our riches and treasures behind us, the good which we have done in the Church shall more comfort us, then the heaping together of much goods. It is reported of *Gregory Thaumaturgus*. when he asked the question, being now ready to leave the world and to give up the ghost, how many Infidels yet remained in the city *Neocaesarea*, and answer was returned unto him, seenteene: that he rejoiced greatly, and comforted himself, and gave thanks to God, saying, There were only so many faithful and believers when I was made Bishop of this place, *Totidem erant fideles, cum coepi Episcopatum*. Let us all apply this unto our selves: you that be Ministers of the word, and have taken the charge of souls, must endeavor yourselves to preach the word constantly; forasmuch as you have undertaken to do it, let it be your care to perform and accomplish it. And you that are the people must give them encouragement, and draw them on to greater labor by your love to the Word. When the people grow careless, it maketh the Minister oftentimes careless also: and so it cometh to pass, that though they take the profit, yet they are no whit careful to take the pains: whereas if they could cause him to see the fruit of his labor, it would constrain him to go forward in his place with cheerfulness. For when doth the husbandman labor with joy, but when he beholdeth the increase of the earth, and his pains to come to some profit and perfection? so likewise doth the faithful Minister labor with comfort and delight, when he seeth his labor

bring forth a fruitful and plentiful harvest in the people. True it is, if the Minister grow dull and dumb because he hath no encouragement from you, it is his sin, it shall be no excuse unto him; but the sin of the people is so much the greater, and their condemnation deserveth to be double. On the other side, if both of them be diligent, the one in preaching, the other in hearing, they shall mutually edify one another, and grow in grace together within the house of God, and hereafter shall receive the fruit and benefit of it in the life to come.

CHAP. XIX.

1 AND the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying,

2 This is the ordinance of the Law, which the Lord hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke.

3 And ye shall give her, &c.

4 And Eleazar the Priest shall take of her blood, &c.

5 And one shall burn the heifer, &c.

6 And the Priest shall take Cedar wood, &c.

7 Then the Priests shall wash his clothes, &c.

8 And he that burneth her, &c.

9 And a man that is clean, &c.

10 And he that gathereth the ashes of the heifer, &c.

AFTER the murmuring of *Korah* against *Aaron*, touching the Priesthood, we shown how God is reconciled to his people, and they brought into his favor again. Touching the which, we considered two points, the first belonging to the Priests and Levites, chap. 18. the other to all the people generally, in this Chapter, to the end they should have an ordinary means to purge and sanctify themselves from their uncleanness at all times. The sum therefore of this chapter is this, God hath instituted the way and means, how the unclean shall be cleansed, whereby to assure themselves, that no infirmity shall separate them from the favor of God. The parts of this Chapter are two, the first is touching the water of cleansing or separation, so called, because such as were separated for any uncleanness, were sprinkled with it: the second touching the persons that were to use it and to be cleansed by it. Touching the water, we are to know the matter whereof it was made, of *the ashes of a red cow, without spot, without blemish, without yoke*. And the rites used about the heifer, before it was offered, and also following the offering, all which may be learned in the words themselves. The persons that were to use this *water of separation*, are the unclean, which are of two sorts, first by touching

a dead body of any man. Secondly, by approaching and coming near to the tent where the dead lieth, &c. It is dangerous to be near any unclean person, which pointeth out the danger of evil and teacheth to have no communion with it. Whosoever neglecteth this law, and being unclean seeketh not to be cleansed, *shall be cut off from the cōgregation*, verse 13, 20. declaring, that we should not suffer sin to rest upon us: though we fall into evil, and cannot keep our selves upright, yet we must not lie in sin, neither give it any entertainment, no not for a time. But to pass over particulars, observe the scope and drift of this chapter; which is, to proclaim the mercy of God to such as confess and forsake their sins. The Doctrine then is this, that all penitent persons shall be received into God's favor, so y^t no evil shall come nere them, Isaiah. 1, 17, 18. It skilleth not what our sins are, or how great they have been, but how true and sincere our repentance is, Ier. 50, 20. 1 John 1, 9. Ezek. 36, 25, 26. This truth is farther confirmed by many examples, as *Manasseh*, 2 Chro. 33, 12, 13. the *sinful woman* that had many sins forgiven her, Luke 7, 48. the *penitent Thief* upon the cross, Luk. 23, 41, 42, 43. To those that *put Christ to death* the Apostle *Peter* preached repentance, and *many of them believed and were saved*, Acts 2.37.

[Reason 1] The grounds of this are first, that no sinner should despair with *Cain*, 1 Tim. 1, 26. or be damned with *Judas*, John 6, 70. or be rejected with *Esau*, Heb. 12, 17.

[Reason 2] Secondly, Christ Jesus hath satisfied for us all, Isaiah 53, 5, 6. Rom. 8, 33. he is our surety, and hath paid all our debt for us, whatsoever could in justice be required of us. God the father is the creditor, we are the debtors. Christ is the surety, sin is the debt, hell is the prison into which we deserve to be cast. But as the creditor cannot come in with any after reckonings, nor put the poor debtor into prison, when once the debt is satisfied by the surety; so the Lord will not *lay anything to our charge*, nor send us to hell as to prison, forasmuch as his own Son hath laid down his life as the full price of all our iniquities, whereby his wrath is appeased, and his justice satisfied.

[Use 1] The uses. First we learn how it cometh to pass, that the sin against the holy Ghost is said to be *the unpardonable sin*, the sin that *shall never be forgiven, neither in this life, nor in the life to come*, Matth. 12, 32. Mark 3, 28, 29. 1 John 5, 16. not because God cannot forgive it, for his mercy is infinite, and greater then all our sins, but because such as commit it can never repent. Such as were once *lightened with the knowledge of the truth, have received the heavenly gift, have been made partakers of the holyghost, have heard the good word of God with joy, and tasted of the powers of the world to come, if they fall away, it is impossible they should be renewed again by Repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the son of God afcesh, and put him to an open shame*, Heb. 6, 4, 5, 6. & 10, 29. These are not only malicious and obstinate offenders, but desperate sinners that dash themselves in pieces against the rock: they know the truth, and salvation to be by no other then Christ, yet they reject and renounce salvation by him. These are like desperate murderers that hang themselves or cut their own throats. True it is, that many weak Christians, languishing under the burden of sin, are oftentimes afraid they have committed this sin, but whosoever feareth he hath committed that sin, I dare pronounce no evil against that soul. For I take this to be a certain rule, that *Whosoever feareth he hath sinned against the holy Ghost, hath not committed that sin, neither can commit it, but is altogether free from*

it. Such as are so forsaken and given over of God to fall into it, are not afraid of it, but rather boast of it, glory in it, and live and die with it. The fear to offend this way, is but the shadow of it, and not the substance: and this shadow is a notable preservative to keep them from it, and it from them; and therefore shall hurt no man, no more then the shadow of the sword can cut in pieces which hath no edge. But those wretched sinners that sin this sin, do it to despite God to his face, & would (if they were able) pull him out of heaven: they tread under their feet the Son of God, and count the blood of the Covenant (*wherewith they were sanctified, as an unholy thing, and do despite unto the Spirit of Grace,* Heb. 10, 29.

Secondly, it reproveth the Church of Rome, [Use 2] and quencheth the fire of Purgatory which they have kindled. They find it to be gainful merchandize, and a fire that heateth all their kitchins: and therefore as *Demetrius* and the rest of the craftsmen which *received no small gain by making silver shrines for Diana*, were zealous for idolatry; because thereby *they had their wealth*; so are the Romanists zealous for their Purgatory, knowing that if that fall, their *whole craft is in danger to be set at naught*, Acts 19, 24, 27. And if they did not find advantage by it, they would soon give over the defense of it. For it is directly against the Scriptures, w^c make only two places, *heaven and hell*. Lu. 16, 23. and two sorts of persons, *such as believe, & such as do not believe*, Mar. 16, 16. And as this is a mere fiction devised in the idle brain of superstitious men, so is their doctrine of praying for the dead no whit better. We read, Levite. 4, 3.13, 22. of sundry sacrifices appointed for all sorts of people, *For the Prince, for the Priest, for the Congregation: for sins of ignorance & of knowledge*, ch. 5, & 6. but we read nowhere of any for the dead. We read everywhere of prayers prescribed for the living, & *Paul* directeth the church how to carry themselves *toward the dead*; but we have no word of praying for them. They that *die in the Lord*, are pronounced to be blessed, Reu. 14, verse 13. even from the time of their death and dissolution; and therefore come not into any fire at all: whereas contrariwise, if we may believe the Popish Teachers that blow the bellows, it is made so exceeding hot, that it scorcheth beyond measure all such as are cast into it, and little difference between that fire and hell fire, but in the continuance. And if this tale were not handsomely tied together, and the furnace heated seven times hotter then ordinary fire, their kitchins would quickly wax cold. But wherefore serve all y^e purgings mentioned in this place & in other places of the Law of Moses, but to assure us that sin is pardoned in this life, and the punishment of sin pardoned also? so that nothing remaineth on our part to be satisfied: for that were to renounce and deny the satisfaction of Christ: But the Papists, making Purgatory neither heaven nor hell, but as it were a middle place between them both, do teach that such as die in venial sin are put in that prison to fry for a season, until by the prayers of the living made to God, but specially by alms deeds given to the Priests and Jesuits, and by the pardons and indulgences of the Popes, they be released. But if Christ have paid the price for our greatest sins, how should we not believe that he hath much more satisfied for the lesser? and they that believe not that he gave himself to redeem us from the lesser, how can they hope or have comfort that he gave himself for the greater? Wherefore this fond distinction of persons, of places, and of sins, cannot stand with the word of God: And as for prayer for the dead, it cometh as a pardon after a man is hanged, or as Physic to the body of him that is departed this life. We know how God appointed sundry sacrifices in

the time of the Law, for all estates in the Church high and low, one and other; but among them all set down in this book and in the book of *Leviticus*, we find none at all, no not one offered for the dead: doubtless either God was very forgetful of them, or else this doctrine was not then hatched. The living are commanded to pray one for another, but never for the dead, for that were to pray with the foolish virgins, *Lord, Lord, open unto us* when the door is shut, Matth. 25.10, 11. And doubtless the Church of Rome in this point have a faith by themselves, for not only we of the reformed Churches have forsaken them, but the Greek Churches also renounce such a Purgatory as the Papists imagine: for they deny any purging fire to be after this life, such as is material and corporal. For albeit some of them think, that there is a middle condition wherein some remain after death, abiding in darkness, without enjoying the light of God's countenance, and are holden in a state of sorrow as it were in a prison, until by the mercy of God, and the prayers of the faithful they be delivered; and incline to this opinion that the lesser sins of men dying in the state of grace are remitted and forgiven after this life, without any punishment at all of fire or any other kind, by the mere grace and goodness of God: yet notwithstanding they confidently pronounce, that no Scripture or Council hath delivered a double punishment by fire after this life; and therefore let all the Romanists and such as adhere unto them take heed, lest while they dream of a temporary fire, they mistake themselves, and fall into the *everlasting and unquenchable fire*, Matth. 3.12. and 18.8. Now to make this more plain I will set down such strong and important reasons as were exhibited to the Council of Florence, and are propounded by others, whereby the foundation of that doctrine is shaken in pieces, and falleth to the ground. To this purpose observe, that as some little good in them that have great and mortal sins hath no reward at all, by reason of the prevailing evil which is found in them: so small sins in them that have great graces & works of virtue, are not to be sharply punished, the better things overcoming and ouerswaying them.

Again, the wills of men that are dead and departed hence, are either changeable or unchangeable, there is no third can be imagined. If they be changeable, then they that are good may become evil, and they that are evil become good, so that neither the good shall be unchangeably happy, nor the evil unchangeably miserable, but that the dead may fall from the top of happiness to the depth of misery, and contrariwise rise from the bottom of misery to the height of all happiness. If they be unchangeable, then they are not capable of any amendment, for he that is corrected from going astray, is set aright, being brought to dislike that which he liked before, and to love that which he hated before, and neither of them can be found in a will y^t is unchangeable.

Another consideration is drawn from the parable of the rich man and *Lazarus* in the Gospel, where Christ Jesus showeth, that the poor man so soon as he was dead *was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom*, and the rich man's soul so soon as he was dead was found *in the torments of hell*, Luke 16.22.23. There is no middle place of temporal torment as there are but two sorts of persons, so but two sorts of places, one dying in the favor of God, the other out of his favor; so there are but these places, heaven for the one, and hell for the other.

Besides, it is no way just, that the soul alone should be punished for the sins of the whole man: but *Purgatory* presupposeth a sole punishment of the soul without the body, which notwithstanding never sinned without the body. If it be justice in God to punish the soul for the supposed venial sins, how should it not savor of injustice to let the body go scotfree and suffer nothing? For what cause or color can they suppose or surmise, why the body, which hath had part and fellowship in the sin, and should have part & fellowship in the glory after the forgiveness of sin, should have no feeling at all, or suffering of the punishment that purgeth our sin? Furthermore, it is more proper to God to reward good things, then to punish evil, because *he visiteth the iniquities of the Fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation, but showeth mercy to thousands*, Exod. 20, 5, 6. & 34, 7. Numb. 14, 18. Ier. 32, 18. If then it be necessary to be believed upon pain of damnation, that the souls of such as are truly penitent should after death go into *Purgatory* punishments, why then ought we not as well to hold and believe, that the souls of such as have kept the Commandments of God all their life long, and at the last turn from their righteousness without repentance, should first go into a place of rest and refreshing, to receive the reward of their well-doing, before they be cast into eternal punishment? But this no man believeth as a truth, neither thinketh it reason, why then should any believe the other? If any object, that when the righteous man committeth iniquity he hath no reward, because all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned, in the trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them he shall die. I answer, that this answer is no answer at all, neither anything to the matter in hand; for if this prove that such as are evil shall not for some good be recompensed and rewarded, because all their good that they have done shall be forgotten: then it will as strongly prove, that the righteous which have committed some small evils should not be punished for those evils, because all the evil shall be forgotten, according to the saying of the same Prophet, Ezek. 18, 21, 2^o. *If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath done, and keep the statutes of the Lord, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die; all his transgressions that he hath committed they shall not be mentioned unto him, in his righteousness that he hath done, he shall live.*

Lastly, whereas they go about to prove *Purgatory* by the custom of prayer for the dead it is very clear and evident, that if once we admit *Purgatory*, we may not pray for the dead at all, because while we pretend to do them good, we shall do them harm. For no affliction is or can be laid upon others but in these three respects. First, when a man out of a cruel and unreasonable passion desireth and delighteth in the torments of others without any cause, as the heathen set forth men in their public plays, exhibited unto the people upon their devilish Theaters to fight, to wound, and kill one another; or else cast them unto Lions and other wild beasts to fight with them, while they in the mean season did solace themselves in it as at a sport: or else secondly for the upholding of justice and judgment, as when murderers and malefactors are put to death: or thirdly, in mercy and compassion, for the benefit of him that is afflicted, as the Physician afflicteth the sick patient. In this last respect, God is said and supposed to afflict souls in *Purgatory*, not to sport himself in their misery, because he is not a tyrant: neither to punish them as malefactors, because he is a father unto them, but to correct them for their souls health as a gracious God. So then as the

Surgeon or the Physician do not delight in afflicting and torturing their sick patients, but deal as tenderly with them as possibly they can, due respect had to the recovering of their health & former estate; so God doth afflict no more, then is precisely necessary for the purging out of sin. As then it were vain and hurtful for the standers by, to entreat the good and skillful Physician that loveth and tendreth his patient, and no way afflicteth him more then is precisely necessary for the recovery of his health, to with-draw his hand, or to remit anything that he intendeth to do: as if he purpose to open a vein & to let him bleed ten or twelve ounces (knowing his disease requireth it) no man entreateth y^t it may be but two or three: or if he purpose to have him purge two or three days, to desire it may be but one day, or if he be constrained to cut and lance, to request him to spare his labor and let the party alone, because that were to hurt the sick man, and a token that we hate him rather then love him: so were it hurtful for the souls departed to entreat God any way to lessen or shorten their affliction which otherwise he would lay upon them, forasmuch as he intendeth not to hurt them at all, but to purge out of them the impurity that is found in them. Thus therefore we reason with them against Purgatory, as *Luther* doth with them about Pardons & indulgences. For as he saith, It profiteth not to be delivered from that which worketh so a man's salvation; but such are the afflictions and punishments of this life, as the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 119, 71. and the Apostle, 1 Pet. 1, 23▪ so that Indulgences should hurt to free us from that which shall do us good: so we may conclude from *Luther's* ground and foundation, that it profiteth not but hurteth, to be delivered from that which worketh unto a man's salvation: but the afflictions and punishments of the next life are such, so that we should not desire and crave of God to be delivered from them.

Lastly, from hence ariseth great comfort to [Use 3] all pen•tent persons, and such as are careful to cleanse their souls and bodies from all sin; they may assure themselves that this work of repentance, though it be painful for a time, ye• shall be gainful in the latter end, for we are assured to find pardon, and purchase favor at God's hand. But the afflicted soul, terrified with the feeling of sin, [Object.] will object the multitude and the exceeding great number of his sins, and thereupon sit in judgment upon himself, and give wrongful sentence against himself, that he neither hath nor can have any hope of obtaining mercy. I answer, we are oftentimes evil judges to judge even of our selves, especially in time of temptation, and therefore I may say unto them, as the Apostle doth in another case, *Are ye not partial in yourselves, and become judges of evil thoughts?* I am. 2, 4. For shall we suffer our hope to fail, or our selves to faint and wax feeble, when God biddeth us hope, and assureth us that he will make us clean from all our filthiness? Ezek. 36, 25. *Ye shall be clean from all your filthiness.* When he saith *from all*. I say *from all*, shall we say not *from all*? Or that they are so many that he cannot, or will not make us clean from all? Can anything be hard to him that is Omnipotent, whose mercy is above the heavens? He hath heaped up mercy in store for us, more then we have heaped sins against him, be our sins never so many. O but our sins, [Objection.] will some say, are not only many, but they are most grievous & horrible, greater they are then can be pardoned. I answer, [Answ.] be it that they are grievous, yet do not say they are greater then can be forgiven. For that is a greater offense against God, then the committing of those sins that lie so heavy upon our consciences. Hence it is that the Lord

saith, *Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: and though they be red as Crimson, they shall be as wool*, Isaiah 1, 18. Doth not he much abridge and cut short the Princes power and mercy, that shall say he can pardon only lesser and smaller offenses committed against him, but cannot pardon. Treason and rebellion? And doth not he shrink up the sinews of God's power that is infinite, and accuse him of impotency and weakness, that chargeth him not to be able to forgive such as are y^e greatest offenders against him? Nay, as the mercy of a Prince is most of all seen in sealing a pardon unto such as have provoked him in the highest degree: so is the grace and goodness of GOD especially manifested in forgiving those that are sinners above others, that so *Where sin aboundeth, grace may abound much more*, Rom. 5, 20.

Again, as well we might say in a pride & confidence of our own works, that our good deeds are greater then he can sufficiently reward, as in despair to pronounce, that our evil deeds are greater then he can pardon: because as his mercy is greater then all our good works, so his power is greater then all our evil works. Who did ever come unto him to entreat favor and forgiveness at his hands that went away unpardoned? *Paul* testifieth of himself, that he was the *chief of sinners*, 1. Tim. 1, 15. and the *least of the Saints*, Eph. 3, 8. yet he obtained pardon. And wherefore? even because this example of God's mercy shown him should be an instruction unto the Church of God forever, that he will deal in like manner with all other that truly repent, how great soever their sins be.

11 He that toucheth the dead body of a man, shall be unclean even seven days.

12 He shall purify himself therewith the third day, and the seventh day he shall be clean: but if he purify not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean.

13 Whosoever toucheth the corpse of any man that is dead, and purgeth not himself, defileth the Tabernacle of the Lord, and that person shall be cut off from Israel, because the sprinkling water was not sprinkled upon him; he shall be unclean, & his uncleanness shall remain still upon him.

14 This is the Law, When a man dieth in a tent, all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days.

15 And all the vessels that be open, which have no covering fastened upon them shall be unclean.

16 Also whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword, &c.

17 Therefore for an unclean person they shall take of the burnt ashes of the same offering, & pure water, &c.

18 And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it in the tent, and upon all the vessels, &c.

19 And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean the third day, &c.

20 But the man that is unclean, and purifieth not himself, that person shall be cut off, &c.

21 And it shall be a perpetual law unto them, that he that sprinkleth the water of separation, &c.

We have shown before how God appointed a red heifer to be offered, and of the ashes thereof hallowed water to be made, wherewith to sprinkle those that are unclean by touching a dead body, or by coming near anything belonging to the dead. The heathen themselves had certain purging sacrifices, & certain holy waters, whereby they cleansed and purified sometimes their land forces, and sometimes their sea-forces, and sometimes their cattle. But that which God prescribeth to his people in this place, is of another sort, and to another end. *Moses* therefore declareth what persons and what things are to be cleansed, verses 11, 14, 15. the time when, verse 12. the punishment of him that omitteth this cleansing, ver, 13, 20. the manner how to cleanse with this water, verses 18, 19. and how long this Law shall continue, verse 21. So then the point that cometh to be considered in this chap. is the water of separation, and the use thereof among the people of God. This though it concerned the Israelites only, and was to remain among them touching the practice as a perpetual statute, yet it had an end in him that brought an end to all types and figures; and he that was buried in the earth for our sins, buried with him in the grave these ceremonies. Nevertheless, as we have often noted before, there do still remain diverse and sundry moral uses from hence for our further instruction, which bind us to the end of the world.

The uses. First of all, this serveth to reprove the Papists, who have patched up their religion with sundry shows of ceremonies, partly Jewish, and partly heathenish. And from an imitation of this *water of separation* commanded in this place to be used in sprinkling of the unclean, their tents also, and vessels, they have brought in their *holy water sprinkle*, and maintain their superstitious blessing with crosses, and their hallowing of wax, palms, ashes, holy bread, salt, oil, and such like trash and trumpery, & bear men in hand that they have power to drive away diseases, and to cast out devils. These institutions are apish imitations of the Jewish rites, & a raising of them out of their graves where they lay buried and rotten long ago, and yet they seek to quicken them and to put life into them again. *Bellarmino*, handling this point at large, delivereth his opinion in two propositions: the first, that water, oil, bread, candles, ashes, palms, and such like are rightly blessed. The second, that they are

rightly used to signify and to work supernatural effects. So then the question and controversy arising between the Church of Rome and us, is this, whether these creatures may be used not only to signify, but to work supernatural effects. To prove this, he alledgeth two testimonies out of this book, y^e one out of the 5. cha. touching *the waters of jealousy*, that if they were drunken, they brought to the adulteress certain destruction, for the water caused the curse to enter into her, so that her belly did swell, and her thigh rot. The other out of this Chapter touching *the waters of separation*, so called, verse 9. and 13. because they were to be sprinkled with it, who for some legal uncleanness were separated from the holy Tabernacle and the company of others. The Jews, were not hereby washed from their wickedness, that were sprinkled with this water, but it was used to wash them from the pollutions of the Law, when they had touched a dead corpse, or such like. But what is all this, being granted, to heal diseases, or to drive away devils, according to their doctrine, teaching that these sanctified creatures may be used to these purposes? And if this *holy water* had any such secret force or inherent virtue, what needed so great a multitude of poor impotent people, *blind, halt, withered*, to wait for the moving of the water of the pool of Bethesda at Jerusalem? or he that had an infirmity thirty eight years to lie languishing so long, for want of one to put him into the pool whensoever the Angel went down to trouble the *water*, John. 5.2, 3, 4? Seeing both he and all the rest might have been healed so easily by every Priest, if *the water of separation*, or *the water of jealousy* could have helped them? We read of many possessed by devils, brought to Christ that he might cast them out of them: could the Jews themselves do it by this *sprinkling of water*? If they could not, then is *Bellarmino* grossly deceived, and goeth about to deceive his readers, when he affirmeth, that these are creatures which were indeed effectual to work some effects, were also effectual to work these supernatural effects, to wit, to drive away devils, and to heal diseases.

This had been a ready way and a quick dispatch, if anything could have been done by them. When the disciples of *John* came to Christ, to know whether he were the promised *Messiah*, or that they should look for another, he wished them to tell *John*, what they had seen and heard, *The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up*, Matth. 11.5. But if the common and ordinary use of the *waters of expiation and cleansing*, could have effected these miraculous works, he would never have gone about to prove himself to be the *Messiah* by these arguments which should have been weak, uncertain, and untrue. Nay, do the Jesuits think that the *waters of jealousy* have now any force to try the adulteress, that after she hath drunk thereof, *her belly should swell, and her thigh should rot*? No, doubtless: and therefore if it retain not the effect which it had at the first institution, how shall we think it can have other and the same far greater and stranger effects? True it is, when God appointeth the creatures to be used, they have oftentimes supernatural effects, as when *Elisha* by *salt* healed the unwholesome waters, 2 King. 2.21. and did cleanse and cure the leprosie of *Naaman*, by his *seventimes washing in Jordan*, 2 King. 5.14. when the Apostles and Elders did anoint *the sick with oil*, Mar. 6.13. I am. 5.14. and when Christ used spittle to heal the blind man, these we confess, were made signs of the power of God: but the question is, whether without any word or warrant from God we may use the creatures to such effects? The *waters* which now we speak off have approbation and

allowance from the mouth of God, and therefore no marvel if they be effectual to the ends for which they were established. In like manner the water in Baptism we sanctify, the bread and wine in the Supper of the Lord we consecrate, as signs and seals of the power of Christ, assuring us of the forgiveness of our sins. See then how our adversaries dally and delude the world, to make them believe that we deny, that any consecrated creatures may be used to work supernatural effects: whereas they should join issue with us in this, whether they be able to do thus without the word of God: but in this they are altogether silent and hold their peace, as if they were stricken dumb. The Prophets and servants of God used these things well, but it followeth not hence, that the Priests of *Baal* the Romish Priests may therefore use them; no more then we conclude, that because the shepherds may eat one of their sheep, therefore the Wolf also may do the like. Or thus, *Ishmael* was circumcised at thirteen years of age, therefore his sons, the Arabians and the Mohammedans after his example might do the like. Or the woman of Samaria conclude, Our fathers *Jacob* and his sons worshipped in *this mountain*, therefore we may sacrifice there also. This kind of reasoning was the error of the disciples, *Elijah* prayed that fire might come from heaven, and consumed them that reproached him, therefore we may use such a prayer, Luke 9. Thus did the Cerinthians, Ebionites, Ethiopians, and other heretics reason, Christ was circumcised, therefore we also ought to be circumcised.

This is the conclusion of *Bellarmino* and of the Wolf, who gathered by the force of this reason, that he might devour the sheep as well as the shepherds; but the Wolf was a thief, the sheepeards did eat that which was their own. So saith the Cardinal, *Moses* used *water* to supernatural effects, *Elisha* cured the waters *with salt*, and the broth with meal cast into it, 2 King. 4.4. Therefore we may use *holy water* blessed after the Popish fashion, both to cure diseases, and to drive away devils, albeit the water were never instituted of God to any such uses and purposes. For we must consider there is great difference of times, of places, and of persons; that which is lawful at one time is unlawful at another: that which is allowed in one, is not to be allowed in another: And that which is good done after one manner, is evil being done in another.

Besides, we are not left to our selves to devise in God's worship what we list, Deut. 12.32. Luke 2.22. with Levite. 12.8. 1 Sam. 15.15 Gen. 22.16. compared with *Jeremiah*, chap. 19. verse 5.

Lastly, this practice giveth way and allowance to sorcerers, enchanters, charmers, and coniurers to use the word and creatures of God to their lewd practices, to cure diseases and such like, whereas God hath appointed no such means to heal them.

[Use 2] Secondly, from hence the Romanists go about to establish their unsound distinction of sin into mortal & venial. Some, they say, are so little as that they deserve not eternal death, but may be washed away with *these holy waters* that now we speak off. Doubtless, these sins must be exceeding little, or the force of these waters must be exceeding great when men are sprinkled with them. Whereas the Apostle is plain, speaking of *this heifer*, and of *this water*, Heb 9. that being bodily they can only purify the body, but in no sort purge *the conscience from dead works*.

True it is, they say these sins do somewhat offend God, yet they add, *facili negotio expiantur*, that is, they are with little ado easily purged and put away. But we teach according to the Scriptures, that all sin in it own nature, even anger and concupiscence which they call venial, is mortal. True it is, there is a difference between sin and sin, both in nature and in the punishment due unto them: some are greater & some lesser, some worther of greater punishment and some of lesser; yet the least sin committed in thought and motion, deserveth everlasting death and separation from the gracious presence of God, if he deal with us according to the rigor of his justice, and look upon us without the satisfaction of Christ.

The writers and teachers of the Popish Religion publish to the world, that we hold the sottish Paradox of the Stoics, that all sins are equal, the contrary whereof is manifest in the harmony of the confessions of our Churches. And why do they slander us with this dotish doctrine? or upon what foundation do they ground this accusation? forsooth because we hold that all are mortal. But this is a weak consequent, and will not prove the point for which they allege it. All men are mortal, even Princes, as it is said in the Psalm, 82.6. shall we hence conclude, that the people are equal to Princes, because they are alike subject to mortality? In the breach of the seventh commandment, there are sundry sortes of uncleanness and incontineny forbidden, as fornication when men defile themselves with filthy harlots and concubines: adultery between them that are married: incest committed with such as are near in consanguinity or affinity: the sin of the Sodomites, *Who leaving the natural use of the woman burn in lust one toward another, man with man working filthiness*, Rom. 1.27. revenged with fire and brimstone from heaven, Gen. 19.

Among all these several kinds, there are degrees of sin, one is greater then other, adultery worse then fornication, incest then adultery, and Sodometry then them all: and all these by the confession of the Papists themselves are mortal, and yet by their own confession also, one is more heinous and horrible then the other. If then their conclusion be good against us, that we hold all sins to be equal, because we teach that they are mortal: how should it not stand as strong and firm against themselves, that they also hold all these sins to be equal, fornication as bad as incest, and adultery as heinous as Sodometry, because they teach that they are all of them mortal? The like absurdity we might easily infer against them in the rest of the commandments, and that out of the Roman Catechism. But to understand this point the better, let us consider that our Churches teach no other doctrine then the Scriptures teach, that as all sins proceed out of the same fountain of corruption and infidelity, so all of them make us guilty of eternal death and damnation, unless we obtain pardon by faith in the Mediator Christ Jesus, Luke 12.47.48. All sins, whether committed of ignorance or knowledge, deserve *stripes*, either many or few, and these stripes are no other then eternal punishments, as appeareth by the words of the Apostle, 2 Thes. 1.8. so that they which *know not God, neither believe the Gospel*, shall be punished in hell; because according to the opinion of the Papists themselves, when the Lord shall come in flaming fire to judge the quick and the dead, Purgatory shall utterly cease and be no more, the prison doors shall be broken, the fire shall be quenched, the place shall be emptied, and the poor souls shall be discharged, then shall be a gaile delivery, they shall be quit by Proclamation. To understand this the

better, we must know that sins may be said to be mortal or venial three ways. First, in regard of the event. Secondly, in regard of the cause. Thirdly, in regard of the nature of the sins themselves. They are venial, in regard of the success or event which do obtain pardon, and when forgiveness followeth them, though they be in themselves most grievous: as 1 John. 5.16. where the Apostle calleth those only *sins unto death*, whose reward certainly is eternal death; and those *not to death*, which may be forgiven, howsoever in their own nature they merit damnation.

Thus we may say, that *David's* adultery and murder were venial sins, because howsoever in the nature of them they were deadly, yet were they venial in regard of the event, because *Nathan* said unto him, *The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die*, 2 Sam. 12.13. No sin is venial so long as we follow it: and no sin is mortal, when once we forsake it, Pro. 28.13. All sins are made venial by repentance: no sin is venial without repentance. Secondly, sins may be said to be venial in regard of the cause from whence they proceed, whereupon they sooner obtain pardon, because they are not done of malice and a settled purpose, but of ignorance and infirmity: as *Paul* showeth this to be the cause, why his sin was venial unto him, and why he obtained mercy and forgiveness, *because he did it ignorantly through unbelief*, 1 Tim. 1.13, And in the fifteenth Chapter of this book it is said, the Priest shall make atonement, when a private person or the whole Congregation hath committed anything through error or ignorance, and it shall be forgiven them, *for it is ignorance*, Numb. 14.25.

These sins springing from this fountain are damnable in themselves: from hence it came that *Paul* was a persecutor and a blasphemer, but the Father of all mercies and compassions, gave him pardon, because he sinned of ignorance and infirmity. So then, his sins were venial in regard of the event and of the cause But sin considered in the nature of the thing it self is not venial, but deserveth temporal and eternal punishment. Now the Papists themselves teach, that sin is truly and properly called venial, when it is so in it own nature, and deserveth only a temporal punishment, either in this life, or in the life to come: so that if God would examine it and enter into judgment with it according to his most rigourous and severe justice, he could not punish it with eternal death, for as much as in it own nature it deserveth pardon, or at least some slight or temporal punishment. And of these, the controversy is between the Church of Rome and us, and not of those that are venial by the event, or by the cause. But the Scripture teacheth us that all sin is the transgression of the Law, 1 John. 3.4. This is a true and perfect definition of sin, for every transgression of the Law is sin, and every sin is a transgression of the Law. From whence we reason thus,

Every transgression of the law is worthy of death:

Every sin is a transgression of the Law,

Therefore every sin is worthy of death.

The first part is plainly proved by many places, Gal. 3.13.10. Deut. 27.26. Matth. 5.22 whereby it is manifest that the Prophet, the Apostle, and Christ himself speak generally without limitation, that whosoever committeth any, yea the least sin, lieth under the curse and wrath of God. Now they that are wretched and accursed, are adjudged worthy of death, by

the sentence of Christ himself the Judge of the world, Matth. 25.41. and none can be free from this curse of the Law, but by the death of Christ, Gal. 3.13. and he died not only for the greatest, but for the least sins, 1 John, chapter 1. verse 7. the least of them cost him dearly, or else we must have paid dear for them.

This point was expressed unto us before, chapter 15. verse 30. for as the soul that committed ought presumptuously or with an high hand must be cut off from his people, so if ought be done by any man *through ignorance*, verse 24. a young bullock shall be offered for a burnt offering, to be a *sweet savor unto the Lord*, and thereby *an atonement shall be made*, verse 25. Now by this offering of every private man or of *the whole Congregation*, they were taught that themselves had indeed deserved death, and that they were delivered by the sacrifice of Christ (as the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world) represented by the blood of these sacrifices.

This is so plain throughout the whole Law of Moses, that the sins committed thorough error and ignorance, even the least they could do, were never remitted and forgiven unto them, but through the benefit of the Mediator Christ Jesus, who suffered death for them, and therefore the smallest sins deserved death, and made the committers guilty in the sight of God. If any should answer unto this, that it doth not appear, that an offering was always offered for the least sins of all, because some were wont to be washed away *with water*, let him know, that by that *washing*, and by *that water*, the blood of Christ also was signified, as well by the death of the sacrifices, as the Apostle teacheth, Heb. 9.10, 11. and he joineth *the blood and water* together, and with both the people *were sprinkled*, verse 19. So then not only they are pronounced accursed, as some of the Jesuits cavil, that commit most horrible sins, as murder, adultery, and the like, but he that continueth not in all: or else we shall frustrate the whole discourse and disputation of the Apostle. And therefore this is but a Popish shift to help at a dead lift. For the Galatians might answer, that they had all, or the most part of them abstained from those heinous crimes, and could not be touched justly with them, and therefore they might have justification by the Law. Against this justification by the Law, the Apostle doth purposely reason, that none can be justified by the Law, because none can keep the Law, and he is accursed *that continueth not in all things*. Forasmuch therefore as all are pronounced to be *cursed* and execrable unto God, which commit the least and smallest sin, and that they are worthy of death that are cursed and execrable, it followeth that every transgression of the Law is worthy of death. [Object.] But *Bellarmino* objecteth the saying of the Apostle *James*, chap. 1.18. *Sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death*: therefore until it be finished, it doth not bring forth death. [Answer.] But he should conclude, Sin before it be perfected doth not deserve death: for these are two several points, and both rest to be proved.

First of all, this is a weak collection, Sin once finished gendreth death, therefore not finished, it doth not gender death. If a man should reason in this manner, the reasonable creature is mortal, therefore the creature except it have reason is not mortal; he should conclude fairly, but falsely for the beasts, and make them noble creatures.

Or thus, All Princes, though they be God's deputies and vicegerents, and susteine his person, yet are mortal: therefore men, except they sustain the person of God are not mortal. These (we see) are weak consequences, and yet they are altogether like to our adversaries, as shall appear, if we consider the words and circumstances of the Apostle. For his purpose is to describe the proceeding of sin in us, and to declare that our sins are not to be imputed unto God, but to our selves to our concupiscence, which seeketh occasions on every side, stirreth up evil desires, bringeth forth actual sin, and then sin leadeth the way to death: howbeit from hence we cannot gather, that sin bringeth not death unto us, *except it be finished*. But what shall we say of evil thoughts that never come into act? As for example, the Pharisees thought and taught, that except a man did commit murder, and by shedding blood did take away life, he was not guilty of eternal death: and except he committed adultery, he sinned not against the Law. But Christ himself showeth, that *whosoever is angry with his brother unadvisedly, is guilty of death*, and he also that *looketh on a woman to lust after her*, Matt. 5.22.28. Neither of these commit the outward deed, and yet because they have given consent, the Papists themselves hold that they are guilty of eterall death: therefore a sin committed in thought only deserveth death, albeit it be not finished in the work, even by their own confession, and themselves being judges. It were endless to follow these fellows, and to trace them out in all their shifts, they have so many windings and turnings which argue a bad cause: but one more I cannot pass over, that *Bellarmino* will have *sin finished*, to be nothing else but sin consented unto: and that concupiscence shall not be sin, except it be consented unto, neither yet be worthy of death. But this is directly against the Apostle, and against his own doctors. For the word 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 which the Apostle useth, Ia. 1.18. signifieth, to perfect & fulfill by work. And so doth *Thomas Aquinas* understand the same and others also, *Aquin. Comment. in Jacob. 1. Gagnae. in Jacob. 1*. But to turn him out of these cavils, we will for this time grant so much as he requireth, what then will he answer, concerning original sin? It is already defined in the Council of Florence, that they are worthy of eternal death that are only guilty of original sin, *albeit they have not sinned after the similitude of Adams transgression*, Rom. 5.14. That is, which never committed actual sin.

So then, to reason in this sort, Sin finished bringeth forth death, therefore except it be finished, it bringeth not forth death, is a false conclusion. Consider this yet farther by another contrary saying of the same Apostle touching good deeds, chap. 1.12. *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life*; No man can reason from hence thus, The man that endureth temptation, when he is tried, shall receive the crown of life: therefore he that is not tried shall never receive that crown. And yet this hath the same force, and looketh the same way with the former. And therefore themselves teach, that infants baptized, though they cannot be tried, yet go immediately into heaven, and receive the crown of life.

But suppose this were a good conclusion, yet he playeth the notable Sophister, in that he proveth not, that sin is not worthy of death, which he ought to have done, before he conclude that some sins are in their own nature venial.

For many sins do not bring death, which notwithstanding are worthy of death: they do not bring death, through God's mercy: but they are worthy of death, through their own merit. Wherefore this place of the Apostle, being well understood, directly overthroweth this distinction of sin, from whence it goeth about to seek shelter and defense.

[Use 3] Thirdly, under these types and shadows here rehearsed, touching the *water of separation* which was made with the ashes of a *red heifer without spot*, wherein *no blemish* was, which was brought out of the host to be killed, and the Priest must sprinkle her blood seven times before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, &c. I say, under these shadows the chief mysteries of our faith are handled. For there was no way of salvation but by Christ from the beginning, and there shall be no other new way unto the end. He was evermore *the door* by which all enter into y^e kingdom of God. He is the same, yesterday, and today, and forever, Heb. chapter 13, verse 8. This the Apostle teacheth us plainly, by alluding to these words, Hebr. chapter 9, verses 13, 14. *If the blood of Bulls and Goats, and the ashes of an Heiffer sprinkling the unclean, sanctify to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, which through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?* Here the Apostle hath reference unto *the red heifer* mentioned in this place, whose ashes gathered together, were sprinkled in the *waters of separation*, and served to sanctify touching the purifying of the flesh, so that such as were shut from the Congregation (being sprinkled therewith) had free liberty to come to the Tabernacle. The truth of all this was Christ Jesus, he is this *red heifer*, & his blood is the true purging, Psal. 51, verses 2, 7. 1 Pet. chap. 1, verse 2. And as the door posts of the Israelites were sprinkled with y^e blood of the Lamb, so must our hearts with the blood of Christ. Now of this type, observe these principal points of religion.

First, that Christ Jesus is true man, found in the form and shape of man, *That he might humble himself and become obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross*, Phil. 2, verse 8. This is the cause that he is pictured out unto us in the color of the *red heifer*, rather than in any other, to put us in mind of his death, and the shedding of his precious blood. Thus also he is described by the Prophet; *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with died garments from Bozrah, &c. I that speak in righteousness to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine fat?* Isaiah 63, verses 1, 2. This is no small comfort unto us, especially in all temptations, though our sins have a bloody face before his face, though they be red as scarlet, yet the blood of Christ hath washed them away: *These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*, Revel. chapter 7, verse 14. He hath a feeling of our sorrows, and is touched with our infirmities, being made like unto us *in all things, sin only excepted*, Heb. 2, 17, 18. and 4, 15.

Secondly, we learn from this consideration, that the Heiffer must be *without spot and without blemish*, that Christ Jesus was a pure and perfect offering without any sin. Hebr. chapter 7, verse 26, he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. This is our comfort also and consolation, for if he had been sinful, we should yet walk in our sins, as an infant walloweth in his blood, and the price of our redemption were yet unpaid. Hence it is, that *Moses* doth so carefully set down this in describing of all

sacrifices, burnt offerings, meat offerings, trespass offerings, peace offerings, all oblations brought to God must be *without spot and without blemish*, thereby to teach the people & us to the end of the world, that there was no sin in him that took upon him our sin, *For he was wounded for our transgressions, and he was bruised for our iniquities*, Isaiah. 53, 5. He suffered indeed for us, but the just for the unjust, 1 Pet. 3, 18, and 2, 22.

Thirdly, in that this Heiffer was such *upon whom never came yoke*, it appeareth that Christ (being at his own liberty & bound to none) offered himself freely for our deliverance, & therefore when such as were sent to take him, told him they sought Jesus of Nazareth, he answered, *If ye seek me, let these go their way*, John 18, 8. He gave himself, not by persuasion of others, not by compulsion from others, but willingly even unto the death, Phil. chapter 2, verse 8. John, chap. 18, verses 4, 5. Isaiah, chap. 53; verse 12. His death was not by constraint, for then it could not be meritorious. If it had not been voluntary, they could not have taken it away from him: for they often lay in wait for him, and sought to put him to death, John: 10. verses 17, 18. What he was able to do, if it had pleased him, he shown in the Garden; for so soon as he had told them that he was the man whom they sought for, *they went backward and fell to the ground*, John 18, verse 6. He knew all things that should come unto him, yet he went forth unto them that were come with Lanternes, and Torches, and weapons, to take him, verses 3, 4. He had therefore power to lay down his life, or not to lay it down, but how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled? But they had no power of themselves to lay hands vpon him, as he telleth *Pilate*, chap: 19, 11. This also serveth for our comfort, that Christ died not against his will but willingly and of his own accord, performing obedience unto his Father. Not y^t his enemies could overcome him, for he overcame them, & cast thē back to the earth with a word speaking. And what words did he speak? Were they terrible and dreadful? Were they words of thunder? No, he rored not as a lyon, but spake mildely as a lamb, *I am he*. Now if the voice of CHRIST, 〈1 page duplicate〉 〈1 page duplicate〉 by gentle and amiable, were notwithstanding so effectual to throw them all down headlong to the ground; how powerful shall the angry voice of Christ be, to throw his enemies as with a sudden flash of lightning into the pit and pains of hell at the last day? And if the voice of Christ in the days of his humility, were so fearful and available in y^e hearts of his persecutors, what a dreadful thunderbolt will he cast down against all his enemies and upon all the reprobate, being in glory and sitting at the right hand of his Father, when he shall utter this final and fearful sentence, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*. Math. chapter 25, verse 41.

Again, we are all put in mind, that his death is meritorious and the full price of our redemption.

Thirdly, we see that he is Lord of life and death, for he raised himself by his eternal Spirit; and as he had power to lay it down, so he had power to take it up, as appeared evidently at his resurrection. Let us serve him that is able to redeem from death such as believe in him and rest upon him for their salvation. He that restored himself to life, is able to give us life: and he that brake the sorrows of death, is able to destroy him that hath the power of death.

Lastly, let us also endure the cross willingly, following his steps, and showing our selves to be like unto him, remembering that the loss of life for his sake, is indeed not a loss of life, but a finding of it, or a changing of it, a temporal life with an eternal.

Fourthly, the heifer here mentioned, was *brought out of the host*, as also other sacrifices were, Levite 4, 12, 21. this signified Christ's suffering out of the gates of the City, as Heb. 13, 11, 12. John 19, 16, 17, 20. This circumstance is not without profit; for first it showeth and signifieth the abolishing of the types and figures of the Law, the truth standing in place of the ceremonies, and the body instead of the shadows: and therefore such as still serve at the Altar, cannot *be partakers of our Altar*, that is, of Christ, Hebr. 13, 10. *We have an Altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the Tabernacle*. The false Apostles taught, that the ceremonies were to be mingled with the Gospel: but these two cannot stand together, because the service performed in the tabernacle, was but a shadow of better things to come, Col. 2, verse 17. *But the body is Christ*. Wherefore, to observe them was to deny Jesus Christ; and to keep them still in force, was as much as to overthrow his sacrifice once offered upon the Cross. They are therefore much deceived, that go about to bring into use again, Altars of wood or of stone in the churches of Christians. For the Apostle speaketh not of Altars as of many, but of *the Altar*, as of one. There is but one Altar in all the Church, not infinite Altars: and by that one Altar he understandeth the offering upon the Altar, which is no other then Christ himself. So then, we may as well bring in the Levitical sacrifices, as the Levitical Altars into the Church of Christ, forasmuch as these depend one upon another, the sacrifice having relation to the Altar, and the Altar to the sacrifice, Math. 23, verses 19, 20. whereas now we have no more need, either of the one or of the other. For we have an Altar and an offering, which by offering of himself once up a full and sufficient price for our redemption, *hath perfected all that are sanctified*.

Again, as Christ was led out of the gates by the Jews, as though he were unworthy of the society of men, and afterward was crucified between two thieves, as if he were the greatest malefactor of all; having before preferred a wretched murderer before him: so let it not seem strange unto us, if the world cannot abide us, and if we be often made *a gazing stock* to men and Angels, and accounted as *the off-scouring of the world, and the filth of the earth*, 1 Corinth. 4, verse 9. But howsoever the world do judge of us, let us appeal from their corrupt judgment to the righteous judgment of God, saying with *Job, Behold, my Witness is in heaven, and my Record is on high*, Job 16, verse 19. He accepteth of us as of his children, and will admit us as heirs of his kingdom, with his Son.

Lastly, Christ was turned out of the City, to teach us what we must account of our selves in this life, that we have here no place to rest and repose our selves, our hope is concerning things that are not seen, Hebr. 13, verses 13, 14. *Let us go forth unto him without the Campe, bearing his reproach; for we have here no continuing City, but we seek one to come*. As then we must be content to bear part of the Cross of Christ, and to be reproached as he was reproached (for if we will not bear part of his cross, we shall not wear part of his Crown) so also we must account our selves as Pilgrims and strangers in this world, that we may enjoy his kingdom in the world to come. We must be content to leave father and mother, lands and lives for his

sake, knowing that we shall find all again with a good advantage. Such as refuse to go out of *the Campe* of this world to Christ, and begin to nestle themselves as if they had here a sure & certain habitation: what other thing remaineth for them, but utterly to perish in y^e Camp of this world together with the wicked? Our hope is in heauē, our ankre is fixed fast above, not in this world, but in the next: we seek not a kingdom upon the earth, for then we should deceive our selves, God hath not called us here to reign, but to suffer. Thus it was with all the fathers, Gen. chapter 47, ver. 9. Hebrews, chapter 11, verses 13, 14. The Heathen people accounted this life as it were an Inn to lodge at for a short season, not an house to dwell in and continue forever: yet those poor souls knew not whither they went, but we know whither we go, and *the way we know*, John 14, 4. We look for a City which hath foundations, whose builder & maker is God, Heb. 11, 10.

[Use 4] Lastly, this purging and purifying *water sprinkling the unclean* mentioned in this place, is a figure of the blood of Christ, fit and sufficient as a well of springing water to purge us from all our sins, Levite. 1, 13. Zach. 13, 1. *In that day there shall be a fountain opened unto the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and for separation from uncleanness;* (so the words are in the original) in which the Prophet alludeth to these *waters of separation* in this place. Christ is this fountain flowing of it self, open and ready unto everyone that will drink of it for the cleansing of sins. And we heard before out of the Apostle, that *the blood of Christ, which through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purgeth our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God* Now the blood of Christ purgeth our consciences two ways: First, by his merit, because his death is the propitiation for our sins, whereby the wrath of God is appeased, and we are absolved, Rom. 3, 24, 25. and 5, 8. Eph. 1, 6, 7. 1 Tim. 2, 6. He paid a great price for us, and thereby hath reconciled us unto his Father.

The other cleansing is made by sanctification of the Spirit, regenerating our nature, and mortifying sin in our flesh by the power of his death and resurrection, Rom. 6, 6, 7, 8. 1 John 1, 7. Heb. 1, 3. The heathen had their continual purgations from offenses by sacrifices, and they had likewise their sprinklings & washings with *pure water*, but all these were impure and unprofitable unto them, because they wanted the inward truth, which was the life of them. Hence it is, that the Poet saith,

—Ter pura socios circumluit vnda,

Spargens roar leui, et ramo foelicis oliuae,

Lustrauita{que} viros—

And again in another place,

—Donec me flumine viuo

Abluero—

That is, they washed themselves, and sprinkled themselves and others with pure waters, & thereby thought themselves cleansed. But these actions were mere nullities, like *Pilate's* taking water, and washing of his hands before them all, saying, *I am innocent of the*

blood of this just person, see ye to it, Mat. 27, 24. but the blood of Christ did cleave nearer unto him, then all the water in the sea could wash away: or like the circumcision of the Edomites and other Nations, they had the outward action, but they wanted the inward signification.

In like manner, the Papists have their *holy-water*, wherewith they sprinkle such as enter into their Churches, and defend their practice from this place. But this is as much as to abolish Jesus Christ, and to bring us back again to Moses: it is no better then when we have the pure fountain, to seek the myery puddles of our own inventions, and to dignity to our selves cesterne that will hold no water. For the Apostle maketh the Jewish purifyings to be a ceremonial rudiment, Heb. 9.19. where he joineth the blood of calves and goats, *with water and scarket wool, and hyssop together, wherewith the book and the people were sprinkled.* Now if they will retain this *hallowed water*, & ground it likewise from the words of Moses, they must make it also of the same matter that this was made off, to wit, of the ashes of a red heifer, and that heifer must be first burned, and also use the other actions and rites here named and remembered. But as they have no commandment to make it, so they have no promise annexed unto it. To leave them, and to come unto our selves, though we have justly abrogated the outward sprinkling with this *holy water*, yet we have the true water, and the true sprinkling. First therefore we learn hereby, that we are by nature unclean and impure, from the which we cannot be freed by the strength of our nature, but by the blood of Christ, represented unto us in baptism, by which we are washed. This is no vain figure, but hath his force from the ordinance of God, Rom. 6.3. Gal. 3.27.

Again, this teacheth us, that we ought to come unto God, & into his presence with all purity and holiness: therefore it is said, that *God heareth not sinners*, such as have sin reigning in them; *but if any be a worshipper of God*, and doth his will, him he heareth, John. 9.31. and we must lift up *pure hands*, 1 Tim. 2.8. Psal. 26.6. and 134.2. The Prophet reproveth the Jews that brought many oblations, and offered up many prayers, but they were all rejected, *because their hands were full of blood*, Isaiah 1. And the Lord foreshewing the state of the Church in the time of the Gospel, declareth that *a pure offering should be offered unto him*, Mal, 1.11.

Lastly, we are all put in mind from hence, to labor after true sanctification and holiness of life, that we may be clean within and without. We must not vainly boast of any inward purity, when none appeareth outwardly; for if we cleanse that first which is within, the outside will be clean also: neither should we foolishly glory of that which is outward, when there is none at all within, for that is mere hypocrisy and dissimulation.

This also doeth the *sprinkling of the water of separation* signify unto us: as also in that they which meddled with the burning of this *red heifer* were unclean until the even, and must wash their garments before they come into the congregation, verse 7.2. The Apostle setteth down the truth hereof, 2. Corinthians, Chap. 7. verse 1.2. *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* So that sin is an unclean thing, like the dung of this heifer which is commanded to be burned and consumed, verse 5. and it maketh us unclean and loathsome unto God, James 1, 21. Rom. 6, 19. Revel. 3, 18, and 22, 11. We see therefore hereby, what to judge of those that live and delight in their sins, namely, that they are as filthy and polluted persons, even as a man that hath a running sore

or issue about him, though he be never so richly appareled, and have all the sweet savors that may be, yet he still remaineth a polluted person: so is it with a man that abideth in sin, though he abound never so much in riches and pleasures, though he be clad in purple, and fare deliciously every day, yet he is filthy, odious, and abominable in the sight of God, of which we have spoken before in the 5. chapter. Again, this teacheth every man to be careful to avoid sin as a leprosy, because it is so foul and filthy, and that which will pollute him, if he suffer it to continue with him.

To conclude, let everyone be willing to suffer the word of exhortation, and be content to undergo a reproof for his sins, that it may be a sanctified means to bring him to be cleansed from his filthiness, and so be made a fit vessel to be received of the Lord into everlasting happiness in his kingdom.

CHAP. XX.

IN the former part of this Book, *Moses* hath set down many murmurings of the Israelites against God, and against *Moses* and *Aaron* the servants of God, through weariness of their journeys, through loathing of *Manna*, thorough the emulation of *Miriam*, through the report of the Spies, through the envy of the Levites, through the indignation and discontentment of the people, for God's judgments against the rebellious; whereby it came to pass, notwithstanding they were compassed about with manifold mercies of God, as with a wall, that they waxed impatient and fretting against God, unthankful and forgetful of his former benefits, distrustful & disdaining the present blessings they enjoyed.

His right hand had delivered them out of Egypt, his out-stretched arm had divided the waters of the red Sea, and set them on an heap, the Cloud had shadowed them, the Pillar of fire had conducted them, the Angel of the Lord had guided them, the Ark had gone before them, and *Manna* from heaven had fed them: yet now all is forgotten, they believe not in God, but tempted and provoked the holy one to anger. And yet behold more provocations then these, in these chapters following; where we shall see how they complain and cry out through scarcity of water, and through weariness of their life, when they were stung with the fiery serpents. But let us consider the words of Scripture, as they lie in order in this chapter.

1 Then the children of Israel came with the whole Congregation into the desert of Zin, in the first Moneth, and the people abode at Kadesh, and *Miriam* died there, and was buried there.

2 And there was not water for the Congregation, and they assembled against *Moses* and against *Aaron*.

3 And the people chid with *Moses*, & spake, saying: But would we had perished when our brethren died before the Lord.

4 And wherefore have ye caused the Congregation of the Lord to come into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there?

5 And wherefore have ye made us to come up from Egypt, to bring us into this miserable place? No place for seed, nor Figs, nor Uines, nor Pomgranates? Neither is there any water to drink.

6 Then Moses and Aaron went from the face of the assembly unto the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and fell upon their faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them.

7 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying;

8 Take this Rodde, and gather thou and thy brother Aaron this Congregation together, that ye may speak unto this Rock before their eyes, and it shall give forth his waters, and thou shalt bring them waters out of this Rock: so thou shalt give this Congregation and their Cattle drink.

9 Then Moses took that Rod from the presence of the Lord, as he commanded him.

10 And Moses and Aaron caused the Congregation to assemble together before that Rock, and he said unto them; Hear now O ye Rebelles: shall we bring you waters out of this Rock?

11 Then Moses lift up his hand, and smote that Rock with his Rod twice, and much water gushed out: so the Congregation and their Cattle drank.

12 Wherefore the Lord spake to Moses & Aaron: Because ye have not believed in me, to sanctify me, before the eyes of the childrē of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this Congregatiō into the Land which I have given them.

13 These are the waters of strife, where the children of Israel strove against the Lord, & he sanctified himself among them.

In this Chapter we are to consider three several things. First, the murmuring of the people: secondly, the purpose of the Israelites to pass toward *Canaan* by the borders of *Edom*. Thirdly, the death of *Aaron* in the Mountain, in whose stead *Eleazar* his son succeedeth, and for whom the people a long time lamenteth. All these particulars are amplified in the beginning of the

Chapter, by the circumstances of time; to wit, the first month of the 40 year after their departure out of Egypt, as appeareth, chap. 33, 38. and likewise of the place, of *Kadesh* a City in the borders of *Edom*, at which time also *Miriam* the sister of *Aaron* and of *Moses* died. These circumstances being set down, the History of their murmuring followeth, which we have often before seen and considered: declaring that whensoever & wheresoever any adversity happened, by and by they became impatient, unthankful, and forgetful of present mercies and favors. A like history to this we saw before, *Exod.* 17. which is not the same recorded in this place, but differing in time & place, as may appear by collation & conference of both the places.

Now let us mark their behavior in this want of water in the wilderness. First, they wish they had died by the stroke of God's hand with the seditious rout of rebels that cōspired against God, whom notwithstanding they call their brethren. Secondly, they expostulate with *Moses* and *Aaron*, that they had brought them out of Egypt into the wilderness, being barren without fruit, miserable without harvest, and dry without water? Whereas they should comfort themselves in the former mercies of God, rest in the experience of his power, and remember his help ever ready in time of need: they rise up against *Moses* and *Aaron* in show, but in deed against God, whom they served; setting down their present condition, and comparing their abode in Egypt (where they had tasted all miseries, felt all oppressions, and groaned under the heavy burdens) with their present estate, to amplify the woe and wretchedness thereof: such is their blindness and unthankfulness.

But what doth *Moses*, whose meek and patient spirit they grieved, and whose righteous soul they vexed frō day today with their ungodly murmurings? He doth not here turn himself to them, nor dealeth with them to reclaim them as he did, chapter 16. but went with *Aaron* to God, flying to the Tabernacle as to a Sanctuary, throwing down themselves on their faces, and comforting themselves in his power, presence, and protection; who being always near to them that call upon him, shown forth his glory, and commanded them to take the Rodde and speak to the Rock, promising them water, and assuring them of an happy issue of all their troubles & necessities. Now, as God commandeth, so *Moses* obeyeth and taketh the Rod.

Here a question may be asked, what Rod God meaneth, and *Moses* taketh? for we read of two Rods famous among them, and well known; one the Rod of *Moses*, that he used when he kept sheep in the Land of *Midian*, whereby he wrought afterward many miracles in Egypt, and at the red Sea, & in the wilderness: the other the Rod of *Aaron*, which did bud and bear blossoms, to confirm the calling of *Aaron*, and to declare that God had separated the Tribe of *Levi* to serve in y^e Tabernacle. I answer, [Answer.] we are to understand in this place, rather the flourishing Rod of *Aaron*: first, because *Moses* made mention of this in y^e last place, not long before, to wit, chap. 17, the other is not spoken off in this book: so that we are rather to refer it to *Aaron's* Rod before specified, then to the other not named. Secondly, this served more fitly and fully to confirm their calling of rule and government over the people, which by these conspiratours was called into question. As if they should say, Do you doubt of our calling, & ask by what authority we do these things? Behold this rod, (do ye not know it?) this flourishing rod shall convince you, and serve to bear witness against you.

Thirdly, *Moses* and *Aaron* were fled into the Tabernacle, verse 6, now chap. 17, 10. it is said, that *Aaron's* rod was laid up before the Testimony, for a token and testimony against those rebellious companies.

Lastly, *Moses* is said, ver. 9, to have taken this rod from before the Lord, or from his sight & presence, where we shown it was laid up: but we never read, that *Moses* his rod, whereby his calling was confirmed, *Pharaohs* obstinacy was convinced, and the red Sea divided, was laid up before the Testimony. So then, here is a charge & commandment, that *Aaron's* rod budding & bearing blossoms, should be taken, the people assembled, and the Rock only to be spoken unto before the Israelites: a promise being added, and again repeated, that waters should gush from thence in abundance, whereof the whole Assembly should drink, and the plenty of it should flow even to their beasts and cattle.

These are the Commandments of God: let us see their obedience, with their failing & halting in it: For it is not perfect and entire, wanting nothing, as appeareth by the threatening presently denounced, and by the punishment afterward inflicted. Indeed they gathered together the people, as God commanded, but they spake not to the Rock as God willed thē: they were charged to speak to y^e Rock only, yet by impatience & doubting, they spake not to the Rock, but complained against the people, and smote the Rock once, and again, not commanded. So then, they that hitherto shown invincible constancy in resisting the rage of the people, and maintained zealously the glory of God, believed faithfully his promises, and stood as Rocks unmovable against all storms that beat against them, now fail in their faith and obedience, both in speaking to the people, and in striking of the Rock. For they ask whether they should bring unto thē *water out of the Rock*, as if it were impossible for God to perform what he had promised, & to make good the word that was gone out of his own mouth. Again, he lifted up his hand, and smote the Rock twice through impatience and distrust: so that albeit he were a notable Prophet and holy man of God, and that God gave this witness of him, that *He was a meek man above all the men that lived upon the earth*: yet as the Psalmist teacheth, they troubled him with their grudgings, and vexed him with their murmurings, that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

But God, with whom is no respect of persons, who judgeth every man according to his ways and works, doth openly accuse & convince them of sin, complaineth that they had not glorified his great Name, pronounceth & decreeth the sentence of death against them, that they should not enter into y^e Land of promise. And lest this failing of *Moses*, and fall of the people should be forgotten, it is named the waters of *Meribah*, or of strife & contention. Thus we see their doubting and disobedience is here reprov'd and threatened, and afterward punished, which is amplified by the reason, because they were so far from strengthening the people, by confirming them in the truth of God's promises, and assuring them of the due accomplishment of them, that themselves waver, doubt, and dishonor God. For as God is much honored when he is believed, and we rest in his word as in a thing unchangeable; so he is greatly dishonored when his power is not acknowledged, whē his promise is not believed, and when his truth is not trusted of us. Thus much of the meaning of the words, as also of

the order and circumstances of this history: now let us come to the doctrines that arise out of the same.

[Ver. 1. *The people abode at Kadesh, and Miriam died there.*] In this first verse, where this murmuring for want of water is described by the time and place, we see mention is made of the death and burial of *Miriam*. She was an excellent woman in the Church, an holy Prophetess, one that went before others in singing the praises of God after their deliverance out of Egypt, after their passing over the red sea, and after the overthrow of *Pharaoh* & his host; yet is subject to death as well as others. From hence we learn, that all flesh, men and women, high and low, rich and poor, godly and ungodly, how great soever their gifts and graces be, are subject to death and mortality. This appeareth, Gen. 5. where in the catalogue of the fathers that lived before the flood, it is said of them all, they died. Albeit God multiplied their days, many hundred years for the increase of mankind, & the spreading abroad of the truth from generation to generation, yet after many days, in the end, all of them died. So Psal. 89, 48. Heb. 9, 27. Job 17, 13, 14. & ch. 21, 23, &c. One dieth in his full strength, being in all ease and prosperity; another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure; they shall sleep both in y^e dust, and the worms shall cover them. And what shall I say more? We acknowledge in words, and see with our eyes, a decay and declining of of all things by experience. All earthly things under the Sun that have beginning, both have and hasten to their ending. The grass, when it is grown, is mowed: the fruit, when it is ripe, is gathered: the harvest, when it is ready, is reaped. The trees that flourish in the Spring and Summer, have their declining Autumn, and their decaying Winter. The Moon set in the Heaven to rule the night, hath her wane. The Sun which cometh forth as a Bridegroom out of his chamber, & rejoiceth like a mighty man to run his race, yet hath his setting and descending: the farther he goeth, & the more degrees he passeth, the nearer he is to the end of his course.

The reasons of this Doctrine, are these. First, [Reason 1] because all are dust; the matter whereof we are made, is the dust of the earth, & therefore must return to the dust, out of which we are are taken. All flesh is as grass, and the glory of man is as the flower of the field, the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth & falleth away. The Sea never resteth nor standeth still, but ever ebbeth or floweth: so is it with the life of man, it never standeth at one stay, every day cutteth off one part of our days, we are nearer to our end in the evening then in the morning, according to the saying of *Job*, we are consumed from morning to evening, & we hasten unto the grave, as the Rivers are carried into the Sea. This is that reason which is used, Gen. 3, 19. *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou turn to the earth; for out of it wast thou taken, because thou art dust, and to dust thou shalt return.* Where the reason is thus framed; Thou art made and taken out of the dust, therefore thou shalt return to the dust.

Secondly, we must all die the death, because [Reason 2] all have sinned, and are deprived of the glory of God: for the Scripture concludeth all, both Jews and Gentiles under sin. True it is, man was created to immortality, and if he had ever loved God and never sinned, he should ever have lived without seeing death. But whē sin entered, death followed in the

world, as the wages doth the work: according to the threatening of God, Gen. 2, 17. *In the day thou eatest of the forbidden fruit, thou shalt die the death.* For as they that are adjudged and condemned to die, are accounted as dead men, albeit they be kept alive in prison: so our first Parents, although they did not immediately die, yet immediately were subject to death by desert of sin. So the Apostle, Rom. 5, 12. *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death went over all men, in whom all men have sinned.* Where he proveth the cause by the effect, that sin was before Moses and the Law given by him, because death was in the world, which seizeth upon young and old, infants & sucklings, whereby everyone is convinced of sin, every mouth is stopped, and all y^e world subject to the righteous judgment of God. Seeing therefore we are all made out of the dust, and carry about with us this body of sin: we have here no continuing City, but are placed in the world for a season, as men set upon a Stage to play our parts, & then must be gone to give room to others, according to the saying of Solomon, *One generation passeth, and another generation succeedeth.*

[Use 1] The uses follow. First, the rich, the mighty, the learned, and men of high degree, must acknowledge, that there shall be no difference between them and the poor, the lowly and unlearned, in the grave, unto which all must descend. True it is, there is a difference and distinction between rich and poor, high and low, great & small, in their life time, in friends, in honors, in houses, in lands, in livings, in food, in apparel, in duties, in dignities, & such like external privileges and perogatives, which shall have an end: yet all these shall cease, and all degrees must equally meet together in the grave: so that albeit an unequal life have gone before, yet an equal death shall follow after. This is it which *Job* pointeth unto, chap. 17, which we named before, where he showeth, that all worldly prosperity and hope shall fail, *They shall go down into the bottom of the pit, surely it shall lie together in the dust.* And the Prophet, Psal. 49, 9, 10, 11. showeth, that neither wit, nor wisdom; neither might nor money; neither favor nor policy, can prevent or put away death: that all without difference & respect of persons must yield to Nature, and that all means which they can devise for the continuance of their names shall come to naught: *For he seeth wise men die, and also that the ignorant, and foolish perish, and leave their riches for others.*

Secondly, let men of excellent and eminent [Use 2] places live justly, and deal uprightly in their callings, wherein they are set. As they are placed above others, so they are seen & marked before others, and notwithstanding all their honor and estimation, their riches and retinue, they must die and depart hence, when it shall be said to them, *Come, give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward.* The remembrance of death must therefore admonish them of their duties, that they dream not of immortality, and they promise not to themselves continuance here and perpetuity. This *David* toucheth and teacheth, Ps. 82, 2, 3, 6, 7. *How long will ye deal unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Do right to the poor and fatherless, do justice to the poor and needy: deliver the poor and needy, save them from the hand of the wicked. I have said, ye are God's, and ye all are children of the most High: but ye shall die as a man, and ye Princes shall fall like others.* So then, when we are tempted to evil, we must remember death, and the estate that followeth death. Therefore the Apostle chargeth them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, neither trust in

uncertain riches, but in the living GOD; because we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain, that we can carry nothing out.

Thirdly, this consideration of the common [Use 3] condition of all flesh, must stir up our affections from resting & relying upon men whose breath is in their nostrils, to depend upon the eternal God, which continueth and liveth forever. Let us beware of all vain confidence. We are ready to rest upon creatures, and stay our selves upon an arm of flesh, as upon a broken Reed, whereby we deceive our selves of our hope, and rob God of his honor. This we learn, Psal. 146, 3, 4, 5. *Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the sons of man, for there is no help in him: his breath departeth, and he returneth to the earth, then his thoughts perish. Blessed is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.* Man is vain, and all his pomp is lighter then vanity. If then we make him our stay and staff, we beat the air, we labor in the fire, we build upon a weak foundation, and rest upon the uncertain life of mortal and miserable man, who vanisheth as a shadow, passeth as a dream, flieth as an Eagle, speedeth as a Poste, consumeth as a garment, and goeth away as a thought that cannot be recalled. His life is as a span soon measured, as a vapor soon gone, as a tale soon told, as an hand-breadth soon measured, as a wind soon ouerblowne, and as the weauers Shuttle, quickly sliding.

Lastly, it is our duty to prepare for it before [Use 4] it cometh, that we may be found ready, and have oil in our lamps, whē the Bridegroom cometh. For death spareth none, it respecteth no person, no age, no Sexe, no State or condition, no power can withstand it, no wisdom can prevent it, no bribe can corrupt it, no cunning can overcome it. And albeit we often recover of some diseases, yet in the ende we are taken away. The whole life of a Christian should be a continual meditation of death, to teach us (as it were to die daily, and to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom: not to set our whole love and liking on the world, which we must shortly leave. Will a man bestow cost and charges on an house and tenement, in which he shall not long dwell, and out of which he is shortly to depart? Or will he be patching that Tent and Tabernacle which he hath pitched for a day or two? We dwell in earthly Tabernacles, as in houses of clay, 2 Cor. 5, 4. 2 Pet. 1, 14. What wisdom then is it, to bestow days, and months, and years, in plotting & plodding for the world, for riches, and the vanities of this life? Let us also prepare and provide before hand for the day of our dissolution, that such as God hath blessed with this worlds good, set their houses and their estates in order, as the Prophet in this regard warneth *Hezekiah*, Isaiah 38, 1. *Set thine house in order, for thou must die.* And we may learn this necessary practice of *Ahithophel*, though living in wickedness, and dying in despair, of whom the Scripture saith, whē he saw that his counsel was not followed, he went home unto his City, put his house in order, & hanged himself. 2 Sam. 17, 23. This duty is to be thought upon in health, as that which deeply concerneth our selves and our posterity. When we have rightly disposed the things of this life, let us prepare for a *Nunc dimittis*, let us commend our spirits into the hands of God, let us resign up our selves willingly to death, when we must enter into a particular judgment. For so soon as the soul is departed and separated from the body, God holdeth his Sessions, to which we are summoned by his messenger death, to come into his presence, to receive in part according to our works, whether they be good or evil. Even as we see in the affairs of this life, how Judges and Justices keep their sessions and assizes, wherein

malefactors brought out of prison, are arraigned: so God holdeth his time of judgment and justice, to reward everyone according to his works. We have all a cause and case to be tried, the greatest, the weightiest, the worthiest that ever was handled, not touching silver & gold, not concerning house or land, not of titles or inheritances, but of the everlasting salvation or dānation of our souls forever: and therefore it standeth us in hand, to be well armed & thoroughly appointed, that we come not as the foolish Virgins, without oil in our lamps, or as the unprepared guest, without our wedding garment. We see in temporal Courts, when men have a cause to be tried, and an action to be determined, either of goods or good name, how careful they are before hand to read Evidences, to produce witnesses, and to search Records, that y^e suite may pass on their sides: how much more careful ought we to be to answer before the eternal Judge, where no man shall be admitted to appear by his Attorney, but all must come in their own persons, none shall be suffered to put in sureties? This will be a great day, whē the whole world shall appear together at once, high and low, Prince and Subject, noble and vnnoble, according to the description that *John maketh, I saw the dead, both great & small stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged of those things which were written in the book according to their works*, Revel. 20, 12.

[*And was buried there.*] Hitherto of the death of *Miriam*: now of that which followed her death, to wit, her burial. See here, when life was departed, what they did with the body; they committed it to the earth.

The Doctrine from hence is this, that it is a necessary duty to bury the dead. This appeareth by many examples of the godly which have practiced this duty, Gen. 23, 4. *Abraham* the father of the faithful, bought a possession of burial of the *Hittites*, who by the sight and light of nature, had their Sepulchers; & therefore answered *Abraham*, *Thou art a Prince of God among us, in the chiefest of our Sepulchers bury thy dead: none of us shall forbid thee his Sepulcher, but thou mayest bury thy dead therein*. So ch. 25, 8, 9. when *Abraham* yielded the spirit and died in a good age, and was gathered to his people, his sons *Isaac & Ishmael* buried him in the Cave of *Machpelah*, in the field of *Hephron*, where *Abraham was buried with Sarah his wife*. The like we see done to *Isaac*, when he gave up the ghost, being old and full of days, his two sons, *Esau* and *Jacob* buried him. Now as *Jacob* did to his father, so his children do to him, according as he had commanded them; for his sons carried him into the land of *Canaan*, and buried him in the Cave of the field of *Machpelah*, which *Abraham* had bought. The like may be said of *Moses*, Deut. 34, 5, 6. for albeit the people buried him not, neither knew of his Sepulcher, lest they should abuse it to idolatry, yet rather than he should want burial, he was buried of God. The men of *Iabesh Gilead* are praised of God, and rewarded of *David*, because they buried King *Saul* and his son, and adventured their lives to do unto him their last duty. 2 Sa. 2, 5, 6. The same might be said of the rest of the Patriarchs, Prophets, Judges, Kings, Governors, and Priests, yea of Christ himself, whose burial (albeit he were able immediately to have raised and restored himself to life) is set down in the Gospel, that his death might be confirmed, and his farther humiliation manifested. These examples teach that it is a Christian and commendable duty of the living to be performed to the dead, of children to be performed to

their parents, and of the people of God one to another, to commit the body of the deceased to the grave, to put dust to dust, and so to cover earth with earth.

And no marvel. For first, among all creatures, [Reason 1] man is most loathsome and ugly when life is departed. As in his birth and bringing forth into the world, of all creatures he is most frail and feeble, without strength to stand, without help to defend himself: so being dead, he is most frail, filthy, and deformed. He that a little before gloried in his beauty, comeliness, feature, & proportion, is now become the mirror and spectacle of a deformed and misshapen carcass. Such a confusion and wrack hath sin wrought and brought into our nature. This made *Abraham* to say to the *Hittites*, *I am a stranger & a foreigner among you, give me a possession of burial to bury with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight*, Gen. 23, 4. This is noted in *Lazarus*, who having been buried but four days, his body stank, John 11, 39.

[Reason 2] Secondly, burial is promised as a blessing from God, and the want of it threatened for a plague and judgment. God offereth it as a mercy to *Abraham*, that he should be buried in a ripe age; and to *Josiah*, that he should be put in his grave in peace, and his eyes should not behold the evil that should be brought upon that place. Contrariwise, the want hereof is threatened as a curse to *Jeroboam* & *Ahab* Kings of Israel, that they and their posterity should be devoured of dogs. And Ier. 22, 19. and 36, 30. because *Jehoiakim* fell from God, it was foretold unto him by the Prophet, that he should not be buried honourably, but he should be buried as an Ass is buried, even drawn and cast forth without the gates of *Jerusalem*. But it may here be objected, that the faithful oftentimes want burial, some consumed to ashes, some drowned in the waters, some devoured with wild beasts, some hanged on gibbets, of whom the world was not worthy: as the Prophet complaineth, Psalm. 79, 2, 3. I answer, all temporal chastisements are common to the godly and ungodly, as famine, plague, pestilence, sword, nakedness, & such like punishments, which God shooteth as his arrows against the sons of men. The favor of God bringing salvation, standeth not in these outward things. For as it cannot profit a wicked and wretched man to be solemnly enterr'd and costly buried, dying out of the favor of God, (as is noted in the parable of the rich glutton:) so it shall not hurt a righteous man to want a sumptuous solemnizing of his funerals.

[Use 1] From this principle we learn sundry instructions. First, we must make a difference between the body of man and beast. For as man differeth from the beast in his life, made after the image of God, fashioned to look upward, created with a reasonable soul, and sundry other perogatives: so he should in his death and burial. The bodies of beasts are drawn forth being dead, to lie in the open air, and to be devoured one of another, and it skilleth not. But it is unseemly and unlawful, against order and honesty, that the dead bodies of men should be cast out vnburied into ditches and dunghills, or such foul and filthy places; and therefore *Jehu* speaking of *Jezebel* cast down out of her window, and having her blood sprinkled upon the wall said, *Visite now yonder cursed woman, and bury her*. 2. Kings 9, 34.

[Use 2] Secondly, observe in this place, that all superstition in burial is to be avoided. We read here of her burial, and *Josephus* addeth, it was done at the common charges with great solemnity: but we read of no masses, obits, crosses, dirges, singing, ringing, watching, holy-water, bell and banner, trentals, & such like trumpery, practiced in these days in y^e Church

of Rome. Thē they praised the Name of God for the dead, to stir up others to an imitation of their virtues: now they pray to God for the dead to get money withal. Then they rejoiced that they had overcome the enemies of their saluatiō, & had received their crowns: now they teach men to weep, for fear of the Popes painted fire of a supposed Purgatory. Thus we see in that her burial is nakedly set forth, without these superfluous and superstitious toys, it teacheth us to condemn shrines, tapers, torches, candles, pilgrimages, and such ceremonies as are hurtful to the living, unprofitable to the dead, chargeable to their friends, and dishonorable unto GOD. For it is great wickedness and gross superstition to hold any holiness in the manner of burial, to make one garment holier thē another, as to be buried in a Monks cool: to make one place holier then another, as to be buried in the Church-yard rather then out of it; to be buried in the Church, rather then in y^e Churchyard; in the Chancel rather then in y^e Church, and near the high Altar, rather then in any other place. This is great vanity, to place any religion in times, in places, in garments, all which we see passed over in this History.

Thirdly, it reproveth all keeping of dead men's bones vnburied, and reserving of relics [Use 3] practiced in the Church of Rome. It is a great part of the religion of Rome, to glory of their devout touching and adoring of holy relics, and to make Merchandize thereof. The Lord said in the beginning to *Adam* and all his posterity, *Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return*, Gen. 3, 19. So that the bones and bodies of men departed, are not to be kept out of their graves, neither can they be preserved without corruption. And when *Stephen* was stoned, we read that certain men fearing God, carried him among them to be buried, which was a duty of charity: and that they made great lamentation for him, which was a fruit of their piety: but we find no mention of shrining up of relics, or keeping any monuments or members of him. They allege for their purpose, the woman's touching the hem of Christ's garment, whereby she was healed. I answer, we doubt not but Christ living upon the earth, wrought miracles with his word, and without his word, present and absent, by outward signs, and without outward signs. But now the gift of miracles is ceased, and therefore to look for help by garments, by napkins and shadows, is superstition and tempting of God. Again, the force and virtue of healing her infirmity, did not proceed from his garment, but immediately from himself; and therefore Christ saith, *Some body hath touched me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me*: he doth not say, virtue is proceeded from my garments. The Disciples confess, the *people thrust and thronged him*. Likewise the soldiers cast lots for his Coat, and parted his garments among them; yet they received no benefit by him or them. Wherefore, it was her faith that healed her. Moreover, they allege the reserving of Manna in the golden Pot, and keeping of *Aaron's* rod in the Tabernacle, Heb. 9. I answer, these were reserved and laid up by the express commandment of God; let them bring forth like warrant for keeping their crosses, garments, images, bones, and such like scraps, and we will receive them. Secondly, as they were reserved by the commandment of God, so by the word of God they were preserved in their full strength from corruption and putrification: whereas their trumpery of Saints relics, rot and consume away, as our Writers have proved, and their own authors have confessed. Lastly, from this reservation, they shall never be able to prove any adoration. For these monuments, the Pot of Manna, and the rod of *Aaron* were never commanded to be

worshipped. But the Romish relics are shown openly for men to fall down to thē, which is superstition and idolatry: and therefore being thus abused, they should be defaced, as *Hezekiah* brake in pieces the brazen serpent (though it were a special monument of God's mercy, and a lively figure of Christ) when it began to be worshipped, and the ordinance of God turned into an idol.

[Use 4] Fourthly, we learn from hence to strengthen our faith in the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead. For burial is a pledge of immortality, a sign of the resurrection, and as a glass to behold the life to come, and therefore the bodies of men are not contemptibly to be cast abroad, but decently to be laid in the earth, as the Corn is cast in the ground, & there rotteth, groweth up, and beareth fruit. We were not created of God to lie forever in the grave, and to end in corruption; but our burial preacheth to us another life, and showeth that we shall be restored into a new and better estate. We are laid up in the safe keeping of God, until the day come that he shall raise the dead again. Let us then stir up our selves to understand, that we are not appointed to live only in this world, but that there is another life prepared for us. This the Apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. 15, 29. *What shall they do that are washed for dead? If the dead rise not at all, why are they then washed for dead?* It was an ancient custom, both among Jews & Gentiles, among Infidels and Christians, to wash the bodies of the dead before they were buried, by which, all other ceremonies belonging thereunto, as embalming, mourning, wrapping, & burying, are signified; as if he should say, if there be no resurrection, why are the dead bodies costly anointed, cleanly washed, decently buried, solemnly accompanied, sorrowfully lamented for, and carefully wrapped in Linnen? Seeing then these rites commonly used, show that our bodies shall be renewed, let us labor to make them members of Christ, and Temples of the holy Ghost. Let us abhor all Atheists, Epicures, Libertines, and such proud heretics, that mock at all religion, & deny the faith of the resurrection, which is the ground-work and foundation of all our comfort. Howsoever therefore the wicked here flourish for a time, and spread as the green Bay-tree; contrariwise, the godly are destitute, afflicted, and tormented, and accounted as sheep to the slaughter, yet it shall be well with them that fear the Lord, and in the end he will reward the wicked according to their works. For it is a *righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you which are troubled, rest*, when the Lord Jesus shall show himself from heaven with his mighty Angels. This is it which *Abraham* saith to the rich man, *Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy pleasures, and likewise Lazarus pains; now therefore is he comforted, and thou art tormented.*

[Ver. 2, 3, 4, 5. *And there was not water for the Congregation.*] The people had been brought out of the Land of Egypt, out of the yoke of bondage, and out of the furnace of iron: they had seen the great works and wonders of God, they had promised to yield faithful obedience, they had tasted of the bountiful hand of God, they had tried his power and presence in bringing waters out of the dry Rock, they had observed many thousands slain for their rebellion in the wilderness; yet behold their fresh unthankfulness; they cast out diverse reproaches, as it were so many darts and spears, not against *Moses*, but against God. The Doctrine from hence is this, that in all wants and dangers we are ready to murmur and repine against God. An example hereof we have, *Exod. 14, 11, & 17, 1, 2.* Whē the people were

come out of Egypt, and saw the red sea before them, the host of *Pharaoh* behind them, the mountains on each side of them, and no means to escape, they repine against *Moses*, as if he had brought them out to die in the wilderness. Hereunto accordeth that which is recorded, chapter 17, when they came where no water was, they contended with *Moses* saying; *Give us water that we may drink*. Tempting God, distrusting his providence, murmuring against his servants, & not looking for succor and success from God. The like example we see *Rahel*, Gen. 30, 1, 2. when she saw her self barren & bare no children, she envied her sister, and said to *Jacob*, *Give me children, or else I die*. She went not to God, who only is able to open the womb, as *Jacob* teacheth her; *Am I in God's stead which hath withholden from thee the fruit of the womb?* but complaineth against her husband, envieth her sister, & manifesteth the corruption of her own heart. Therefore the Apostle exhorteth, 1 Cor. 10, 10. *Neither murmur ye as some of thē also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.*

[Reason 1] The reasons are, first, the bitter root of infidelity. For as the wickedness of man is great, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart are only evil continually: so the fountain of all is an unfaithful heart to depart away from the living God, and therefore the Apostle chargeth, that *There be not in any of us, an evil heart and unfaithful*. Faith, apprehending the mercies of God, and applying the merits of Christ, is the mother of all graces, and the well spring of all obedience. And if we were acquainted with our corruptions, & the force of temptations, we would know the comfortable use, and the great necessity thereof, and magnify it above all other graces. The capital sin of unbelief, striketh at the very heart of God, and what do we leave unto him, if we deny his truth, who is truth it self. This reason is expressly set down, Psal. 78, 18, 22. *They tempted God in their harts, in requiring meat for their lust: because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his help.*

[Reason 2] Again, present things for the most part are wearisome and loathsome unto us, be they never so excellent. This we see in our first parents. What estate could be wished and desired, more goodly, more glorious, more gracious, thē their estate in the blessed time of their innocence: resembling and representing most lively the image of God in perfection of their Nature, in excellency of their gifts, and in preeminence of their place? Yet they were not content with this condition, they restrained not themselves within the bounds of their own calling, but presumed above that they ought to understand, and would be *as God's, knowing good and evil*. What is the cause of tumults and troubles in families, in Churches, in Commonwealths, and in all Societies? Surely even this, we loathe and like not the present estate of things, but seek chāges & alterations.

[Use 1] Let us apply this point to our uses. We are ready to accuse and condemn the Israelites to be a rebellious and stiff-necked people, ever tempting God, & provoking the holy one to anger. In like manner we use to inveigh against the Jews for crucifying Christ, and delivering up the Lord of glory into the hands of sinners: we accuse the partiality of *Pilate*, the treachery of *Judas*, the envy of the Pharisees, the malice of the high Priests, the villainy of the false witnesses, the cruelty of the soldiers, the taunts of the passengers, and the hard-heartednesse of the whole people. But we consider not that the same original corruption is in us that was in them, by the sway & swinge whereof, being all the sons of old *Adam*, we

would have done as they did, if we had lived in those times. So when we hear or read of these murmurings and mutinies of the children of Israel, we are commonly wont to revile them, to defy them, and to account them the vilest people under the heavens. But we must cease to wonder at them, and learn to confess our own corruption of heart, and proneness to yield and fall down in time of temptation, unless we be stayed up by y^e mighty hand of God. For albeit he be most gracious and merciful unto us, hedgeth us round about with many blessings, and compasseth us with riches of grace on every side, yet we forget thē all, if any one cross do any way lie upon us. If the Lord touch us with sickness, as with his little finger; with losses, with crosses, with poverty, or any misery, such is our impatency, that we always dwell upon the meditation of that want, we look upon it with our eyes, we handle it with our hands, we toss it in our minds, and never remember the multitude of his mercies, the peace of a good conscience, the loving countenance of the Lord, the seal of our adoption, the assurance of our salvation, the sweet taste of his love shed in our harts by the holy Ghost; so that one trouble doth more daunt us, and strike us to the heart, then many blessings can comfort & refresh us. But God, taking away outward blessings, giveth spiritual to his children, & doth sweeten the bitterness of the cross with inward consolation, and doth recompense it with heavenly grace, whereby we gain more in the spirit then we lose in the flesh.

Secondly, we are taught hereby to pray [Use 2] to God in our troubles, to hold us up, and stay us with his grace, that we fall not from him. For seeing at all times, and upon all occasions of want, we are ready to repine and murmur against God, who can stand by his own power, or by the strength of his own free will? When a man holdeth fast a staff in his hand, so long it standeth upright as he retaineth it; but if he withdraw his hand never so little, it falleth. Carry up a stone to the top of a Mountain, so long as thou staiest it, there it abideth but if thou leave it, it rowleth down of it own strength, even to the bottom. So unless the Lord, in our calamities and crosses that befall us, do stay us by his heavenly hand, & strengthen us by his Almighty power, we break out into unthankfulness, forgetfulness, impatency, & grudging against him. This made the Apostle, after the reckoning up of the idolatry, fornication, murmuring, and tempting of Christ, to exhort them, that *He which thinketh he standeth, must take heed lest he fall*. As then we ought all to take special notice & knowledge of the corruption of our hearts, and behold a lively and express image of our nature in the glass of this people: so it is our duty to call upon God (from whom every good giving & perfect gift proceedeth) to put to his helping hand, that we may learn to depend upon him, that we may know how to want and how to abound, and in every condition to submit our selves to his heavenly pleasure. For we shall never be able by our own strength to subdue our own corruptions, nor to prevail over our own lusts, nor to overcome the temptations that oftentimes assail us, unless we be assisted from above.

[Use 3] Lastly, our corruption of heart, prone to murmur and complain against God, whensoever he trieth our faith, obedience, and patience, with any misery, warneth us to seek all holy means & remedies, to repress this rage and repining against God: which may be as sure helps to further us in this way, & to furnish us with strength able to hold us up in the day of trial. First, let us consider the high providence of God, ruling all things in heaven or

earth, and ouerswaying all creatures, that nothing falleth out without his will & pleasure, as our Savior teacheth, Mat. 10, 29.30. For who giveth us our bodies? Who clotheth the Lilies, that *Solomon* in all his glory was not like one of them? Who feedeth the young Ravens that cry unto him? Who sustaineth the wicked that are his enemies? Who provided all things for man in the beginning, before he was made & created? Is it not the Lord, whose all the beasts of the forest are, and the beasts on a thousand Mountains? So that the resting of our selves upon this providence that he will feed and clothe us, and care for us, must take away the grief of all our wants that ouerpresseth, and oftentimes overcometh us.

Again, we must learn the benefit of contentation, and to grub up all distracting and distrustful cares, as noisome weeds out of our hearts, bearing with patience and meekness of spirit, whatsoever y^e Lord sendeth. This mind was in *Jacob*, when he went far from his fathers house, he did not desire silver or gold, house or lands, but only a competent & convenient living, *If God will be with me, and will keep me in this journey which I go, and will give me bread to eat, and clothes to put on, then shall the Lord be my God.* So the Apostle teacheth, *Godliness is great gain, if a man be content with that he hath: for we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain, that we can carry nothing out; therefore when we have food and raiment, let us therewith be content.* And in another place; *I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content: & I can be abased, and I can abound, everywhere in all things, I am instructed both to be full, and to be hungry, to abound, and to have want; I am able to do all things through the help of Christ which strengtheneth me.* Lastly, let us set our affections on things which are above, and not on things which are on the earth. If we believe that God doth forbear and forgive us our sins, & not deal with us according to our deservings; if he sanctify us with his Spirit, & make our bodies Temples of the holy Ghost; if he turn us to himself, working our conversion, which is as great a work as at the first to create us: we may be assured, he will deliver our souls from death, & preserve us in famine. For if he spared not his own Son, but hath given him for us all to death, how shall he not with him give us all things also? Fear not therefore the want of outward things which perish with their use; for it is your Fathers pleasure to give unto you a kingdom. If he have promised to give unto us the greater, nay the greatest blessings that can be rehearsed or remēbred, we may ground our selves on this assured truth, that he will not leave us nor forsake us; so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my deliverer, I will not fear what man can do unto me. Indeed, the judgment & practice of carnal men is otherwise, who esteem earthly things above heavenly, and prefer their Swine before Christ-like *Esau*, who prized one mess of pottage above the birthright. If these men be a little pained and pinched with famine, and suffer a little want of food, that they have not their necessities supplied, their bodies clothed, & their bellies filled, they cry out aloud in the anguish of their spirit, What shall we eat? What shall we drink? How shall we live? How shall we maintain & sustain our selves and our families? But (alas) though their souls be hunger-bitten, and hungerstarued, ready to pine and consume away through want of spiritual food, they are never grieved or vexed, it troubleth them not at all. Let us learn better things: let us value spiritual things at the highest rate, and set them in the chiefest place. If thus we set (as our honorable friends) all heavenly things in the chiefest place, and turn all transitory things with shame into the lowest room and rank, as saucie & aspiring guests, usurping & climbing above their betters,

we shall bear all earthly losses and troubles with patience, and stay our selves from murmuring at the feeling of them.

[Ver. 6. *Then Moses and Aaron went from the face, &c.*] We heard before the complaint of y^e people; now let us see the behavior of *Moses & Aaron*. They do not rage, nor revile thē, they do not fret and fume against thē, or ask the life of their enemies, but possess their souls with patience; and declining the violent rage of the people, (as a beast with many heads) they go to the Tabernacle & declare their causes and cases before the Lord. From this their distress we learn this truth, that in all wrongs & injuries offered unto us, we must seek help and comfort of God. I say it is the duty of all the servants of God when they are wronged and oppressed, when they are evilly entreated, and spitefully handled at the hands of sinful men, to vnlade & disburden all their cares into the bosom of God, depending for counsel and comfort upon him alone. In the performance of this duty, the holy servants of God have gone before us. Read the book of the Psalms, as a plentiful storehouse and school-house to teach this truth, as Psal. 3, 1, 2. and 7, 1, 2. where we see, that in his troubles he had recourse to God, who smiteth his enemies on the cheek-bone, and breaketh y^e teeth of the wicked, but was a sure Buckler to him; not such as men hold up, that can defend one part, and in one place only; but a buckler to safeguard him round about, before and behind. And being grievously accused of some heinous crime by some of *Saul's* retinue, he flieth to God, he trusteth in him, who preserveth the upright in heart. So when *Job* had his camels and cattle taken away by the enemies, he did not through the greatness of his affliction and grief of mind rebel against God, but said, *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken it, blessed be the Name of the Lord.* The like appeareth in *Hezekiah*, when Jerusalem was besieged: This is a day of tribulation, and of rebuke and blasphemy, for the children are come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring forth: *Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know, that thou (O Lord) art only God.* All which examples teach us, that when we suffer wrongs, or fall into any wrongs, or fall into any dangers, we must have recourse to God, and crave of him, y^t the malice of the wicked may come to an end.

[Reason 1] The reasons of this doctrine are, first the gracious promise of God, who hath mercifully promised to hear and to help us in all our troubles. This the Prophet teacheth, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* And the Apostle *John*, *This is the assurance that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have desired of him.* Let us not doubt and waver like a wave of the Sea, tossed to and fro by the violence of the winds, but by faith believe that God will grant our requests, which we make according to his will and word. Seeing therefore he is willing to hear, and able to help, and promiseth to grant our requests; our duty is to come when he calleth, to ask seeing he giveth; and to knock, seeing he openeth the gates that leadeth unto his treasures. Some put their trust in chariots, some in horses, and some in Princes, but we must remember the Name of the Lord our God, who never faileth and breaketh promise with these that depend upon him, that fear and trust in his mercy.

[Reason 2] Secondly, as he is our helper, who delivereth our soul from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling, so whither shall we turn our selves to find comfort and consolation, besides in him? When God denieth to send succor, who shall save? When he refuseth to help, who shall deliver? When he shutteth, who can open? If we look to men or Angels, to heaven or earth, to the living, or the dead, we shall be deceived and deluded. The Prophet saith, Psal. 62.8, 9. *Trust in him always ye people, pour out your harts before him, for God is our hope above all; yet the children of men are vanity, the chief men are lies, to lay them upon a balance, they are altogether lighter then vanity.*

[Use 1] Let us now come unto the uses. First, from hence we gather that such is God's great goodness to his children, that he never leaveth them without comfort. For, if he require of us to repair to him in our troubles, surely he will not send us away empty, nor cause us to depart confounded and ashamed. How many came to our Savior Christ in the days of his infirmity, when he lived upon the earth, to be helped and healed; yet who returned diseased to his own house? Who came to be restored to sight, and went away blind? Who sought for help, & turned his back sick? who sought comfort, & went away sorrowful? Who came to him deaf or dumb, or lame, and went away without his speaking, his hearing, his legs and limbs restored unto him? This the Prophet *David* knew, and in the meditation of it found unspeakable comfort in the days of his affliction, when he was in perils among the Amalekites, in perils among the Philistines, in perils among false brethren, in perils in the wilderness, in perils of his own nation, he trusted in his God, and comforted himself in a sweet feeling of his manifold mercies. For when the city where he sojourned was sacked and burned, his wives taken prisoners, and the people intended to stone him, he comforted *himself in the Lord his God*. The enemies of God in their rage and cruelty may take from us liberty, friends, wife, children, lands, possessions, and all the substance of our house; but they can never rob us of this treasure, our comfort in God's promises, our hope in his mercies, and our affiance which we have in him, which are as the Anker of the soul cast in the storms and tempests that seek to drown us in the gulfs & quicksands of despair & unbelief. [Use 2]

Secondly, they dishonor God and deceive themselves, that run to Saints or Angels; from the Creator, who is blessed forever, to the creature that cannot help. The Prophet *David* saith, *Who have I in heaven but thee? and I have desired now in earth with thee*. Therefore the Church of Rome is deceived, and deceiveth others, making other mediators and intercessors, by whō we must have access to God the Father: through the multitude whereof the miserable people are so entangled, that they know not to which Saint they should turn themselves. The Prophet having good experience of trouble, sendeth us to God in the day of trouble. The Father saith, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*. Christ Jesus directing us to pray, willeth us to say, *Our Father* The Apostle teacheth us; that *there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*. And *John* in his first Epistle saith, *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just; and he is the reconciliation for our sins*. To like purpose the same Apostle in the Gospel, *Whatsoever ye ask in my Name, that will I do, that the Father maybe glorified in the Son: if ye shall ask anything in my Name, I will do it*. Let us therefore detest the absurdities and abominations of the Romish Church, who masking under the blind

distinction of mediation and intercession, seek to creep away in the dark, that their mischief may not be espied. They say a Mediator is of two sorts, one of redemption, to wit; Christ alone: another of intercession, and so they make all the Saints. Thus they divide & sever these things that indeed are one. Let us acknowledge one only Mediator of our salvation, let thē keep themselves other mediators of intercession. Notwithstanding, this distinction is not observed by themselves. For if Christ only be the Mediator of salvation, why do they call upon the blessed virgins, *Save thou all them that glorify thee?* Nay, why do they teach the people thus to pray, *Command thy son, use thy motherly authority over him, let him know thee to be his mother.* Howsoever it pleaseth some to excuse these speeches, as spiritual sporting and daliance: yet indeed it is most odious and open blasphemy to be detested of all God's people. And why say they thus of *Thomas Becket*, filled with ambition and vanity, *O Christ make us to ascend unto heaven, whither Thomas is ascended, even by the blood of Thomas which he shed for thy sake.* Here he is made more then a mediator of intercession: and yet he died for willful maintenance of manifest wickedness, to the dishonor of God, and to the infection of the Clergy, and to his own confusion, being a false Martyr, but a true traitor. Now against all these blasphemous trash and trumpery, we must know to whom to direct our prayers, and in whose Name we ought to pray. We must pray to God alone, in whom only we are to believe: and therefore *Paul* linketh prayer and faith together, Rom. 10.14. *How shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed?* And this we are taught in the articles of our faith, to believe only in God the Father, in God the Son, and in God the holy Ghost. But we are not to put our trust in Saints, or Angels; they know not our thoughts, see not our behavior, they hear not our prayers, they fil not all places, themselves are accepted in heaven for the blessed merits of Christ our Savior.

And as we must pray only unto God, so prayer must be mace in the Name and Mediation of Christ, not of any other creature beside, as we shown before. We have no commandment in the Scripture to warrant us, no promise to assure us, no example to go before us, and therefore let us renounce all comfort and confidence in man, and fly unto him that is the God of all comfort and the Father of all consolation.

[Use 3] Thirdly, let us use no unlawful means to come out of our troubles, but wait on God, and depend upon him in our necessities. This the Prophet warneth, Psal. 62. *Trust not in oppression, nor in robbery, be not vain: if riches increase, set not your hearts thereon.* This we see practiced in *Joab*, when he put the army in array against the children of *Ammon*, saying to his brother, *If Aram be to strong for me, then thou shalt succor me: but if the children of Ammon prevail against thee, thē I will succor me: be strong, and let us show our selves valiant for our people, and for the cities of our God, and let the Lord do that which is good in his sight.* So when *Samuel* had told *Eli* the judgment denounced against him and his house, because his sons ran into a slander, & he stayeth them not, he answered, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* This condemneth those, that in their losses and crosses seek strange help, and run a whoring after their own inventions, digging cesterne that will hold no water, and forsaking the living God, the author of salvation. Hence it is, that some send out to witches & wizards, as *Saul*: these cannot say the Lord is my helper and my deliverer, but their refuge and savior is the diuill. Others, in their sickness trust in the Physician, as *Asa* did: not in the living God,

who killeth and maketh alive, bringeth down to the grave, and raiseth up again; he maketh the wound, and bindeth it up, he smiteth, and his hands make whole, he shall deliver *thee in six troubles, and in the seventh the evil shall not touch thee*: In time of war and day of battle, we trust in our strength, armor, men, munition, and defended places, and make them our God; whereas the Prophet teacheth that this is a cursed confidence, and shall not leave a blessing behind it.

Lastly, we learn from hence, not to revenge [Use 4] our own causes & quarels. For if we be taught in this practice of *Moses*, to go unto God in all our wrongs, who will judge his people, then we are not to render like for like, or to requite evil for evil, or to repay wrong for wrong, taunt for taunt, rebuke for rebuke, railing for railing, but contrariwise bless, knowing that we are thereunto called, that we should be heirs of blessing. This use is concluded, *Prov. 20.22. Say not thou, I will recompense evil: but wait upon the Lord, and he shall save thee*. This is the direction of y^e Apostle, *Ro. 12.17.19. Recompence to no man evil for evil: dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but give place unto wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord*. Where we see God claymeth and challenge vengeance to himself, and taketh it from us: so that such as seek revenge, sit down in the seat of God, and as much as lieth in thē, wrest the scepter out of his hands, taking upon them the person of the accuser, witness, judge, and executioner, contrary to all true form of lawful judgment. And albeit it be hard and harsh for flesh and blood to put up injuries, yet if we will be the children of God, we must have more in us then flesh and blood. For they that are after the flesh, favor the things of the flesh, but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit: so then, they that are in the flesh cannot please GOD. Wherefore, when *Zachariah* the Priest, a faithful and fruitful witness of God, was unjustly and cruelly stoned to death, he raged not, he reviled not, he revenged not, but said, *The Lord see and require it*. When the Lord of life, *Christ Jesus* was accused, condemned, and crucified, the just for the unjust, he prayed for his enemies, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*: leaving us an example that we should follow his steps. When blessed *Stephen*, who was full of the holy Ghost, and saw the glory of God, and *Jesus* standing at the right of God, was cast out of the city, and stoned with stones, he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, *Lord lay not this sin to their charge*. When the Archangel mentioned by the Apostle *Jude*, saw that the devil went about to corrupt the pure worship of God, he would not use railing and reproachful speeches, but desireth the Lord to rebuke him, and repay him for his malice. Seeing therefore this duty hath been practiced by Priest and people, by men and Angels, by the head and the members of his body: let us follow those things that concern peace: let us be of a patient and meek spirit, which is much set by of God; and let us commit our causes to him that is the God of vengeance. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Verse 9, 10. *Then Moses took that rod, &c.* Hitherto *Moses* & *Aaron* have behaved themselves uprightly in respect of God, meekly in respect of themselves, and patiently in regard of the people. Now we shall see how they offend by transgressing the commandment of God, by distrusting his word, by raging against the whole assembly. God chargeth them to speak to the rock: they spake unto the people. Again, as if it were unlikely or impossible y^t the rock should yield water, they smote it twice through impaciency & vnbeeleeve. Thus they that

had been the instruments of God in so many miracles, that had seen him face to face as a man seeth his friend that had stood so often in the gap where the hand of God had made the breach, that had divided the red sea, *Moses*, I say, and *Aaron*, the Ministers of God, the witnesses of his works, the pillars of the truth, now begin to fail, to faint, and to fall down, to show us and themselves the weakness that is in flesh and blood. From hence we learn, that many are the failings and falls of the children of God. Howsoever the faithful be borne again, and endued with the spirit of sanctification; howsoever they desire to please God, and endeavor to serve him with all the powers of soul and body, yet they often stumble in their race, thorough the burden that presseth down, and the sin that cleaveth so fast unto them. This truth is confessed and confirmed by many testimonies. *Solomon* in his worthy prayer at the dedication of the Temple acknowledgeth it, 1 king. 8.46. So *Job*. 15.14, 15. Likewise *Prov*. 20.9. And the Prophet, *Psal*. 14 2, 3. All which testimonies do plentifully teach this truth, that howsoever through the grace of God given unto them, y^e faithful fight a good fight, having faith and a good conscience, yet all are sinners and no flesh is clean and clear from sin, which *Moses* and *Aaron* here fall into.

The reasons of this doctrine are. First, because [Reason 1] *the Scripture hath concluded all under sin. That every mouth might be stopped, and all the world be subject to the judgment of God.* All matter of glorying in our selves is taken from us, we are found guilty before God, we have no excuse, no defense, no cloak for our selves to cover our sins: there is no difference, *We have all sinned, and are deprived of the glory of God and everlasting life;* so that all, both Jews and Gentiles are proved to be under sin.

Secondly, we see that death, the wages of [Reason 2] sin, hath reigned, and doth reign over all without difference; yea it taketh hold even on children that sinned not actually like y^e transgression of *Adam*. If then old and young taste of death, all the posterity of *Adam* are corrupted in him, when he wittingly, and willingly, & willfully sinned against God. We flow from an unclean fountain, we grow out of a bitter root, we are as branches of the wild vine. Thus the Apostle reasoneth, *Death reigned frō Adam to Moses, even over them also that sinned not after the like manner of the transgression of Adam, which was the figure of him that was to come* So then, sin and death go together, as mother and daughter, as the tree and the fruit, so that we may prove the one by the other, death by sin, and sin by death, the one giving light and luster to the other.

The uses remain to be considered. First, see [Use 1] hereby a difference between this present life, and the life to come. Here the relics and remnants of sin, as spots and stains in the flesh, remain even in those, that are cleansed by the blood of Christ, and washed by the renewing of the holy Ghost. But when the faithful shall be glorified, they shall be without blame, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Take here the best Examples of the best men that have lived in the best times, as *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Lot*, *David*, and *Peter*, yet ye shall see shame in glory; darkness in light; folly in wisdom; infidelity in faith. But when Christ shall appear, and we likewise appear with him in glory, we shall be made like unto him. Therefore the Apostle saith, noting out this difference *We know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be abolished.* Now we see through a glass darkly, but

then shall we see face to face: Now I know in part, but thē shall I know, even as I am known. Here we cease not to provoke God, and every day of our life addeth to the number and measure of our sins, which should be bitter unto us as gall and wormwood; but when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, and death be swallowed up into victory, the• we shall cease to sin, and shall be as the blessed Angels y^t are in heaven. The fervent desire of y^e creatures waiteth for these times, groaning and traveling in pain even unto this present, to be delivered from y^e bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Much more therefore should we, which have the first fruits of the spirit, sigh in our selves, waiting for the adoptiō, even y^e redemption of our bodies.

[Use 2] Secondly, we learn that such as say they are without sin deceive themselves, and as much as in them lieth, make God a liar: we are deprived of his kingdom, we cannot keep the Law, nor have justification by the Law, or the works of the Law, but are justified freely by grace, and have need of y^e benefit of Christ's blood. If we keep the law, we shall live by it: but if we be transgressors of the law, we are under the curse: For it is written, *Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the book of the Law to do them.* Hereunto cometh that which the Apostle John saith, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive our selves, the truth is not in us, we make God a liar, and his word is not in us.* And to the same purpose the Apostle Paul, *There is none righteous, no not one: they have all gone out of the way, there is none that doth good, no not one: we are justified freely by his grace thorough the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*•ence falleth to the ground the doctrine of merits, that advanceth proud flesh, and lifteth up the supposed worthiness of imperfect works, thereby to procure God's favor and everlasting life. The Church of Rome place such an inward and inherent dignity in men's persons, as maketh them worthy of grace or salvation. Moreover, they dream of such an excellency in the work, as fitteth and enableth them to deserve the favor of God, and forgiveness of sins. But in a sight of our sins, and in a feeling of our own corruptions, we must renounce all merits, and rest only on the merits of Christ. For when we have done all, we must say and confess, that we are unprofitable servants, &c. True it is, God will reward our works: but the reward is of mercy, not of merit; of promise, not of debt; of grace, not of desert. Again, hereby falleth another falsehood of theirs, holding that good works are every way perfect, not stained or tainted with sin, but being tried in the furnace of God's judgment, will suffer no loss or detriment. But the Prophet prayeth, *Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall none that liveth be justified.* And again in another place it is written, *We have all been as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness or good deeds as filthy clowtes:* and therefore no good deed of righteous men is without some stain of sin; neither can we answer him one of a thousand. Lastly, we learn that they are deceived, which teach & preach a possibility for a man in grace to fulfill God's law. For the Apostle taketh it for a grounded and granted conclusion, that the law cannot be fulfilled, when he saith, *It was impossible to the Law to give us life, because we are utterly unable to keep the condition; and therefore God hath sent his Son to take our nature upon him, and to abolish sin in our flesh.* If we could fulfil the law, Christ died in vain, & we might be justified by the law: but Christ died not in vain, neither can we be justified by the law: therefore we cannot fulfill the law. Furthermore, the Apostle complaineth of his failings & defects, *The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin: what I*

would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. I find then that when I would do good, I am thus yoked that evil is present with me, I delight in the law of God concerning the inner man, but I see another law in my members, rebelling against the law of my mind, and leading me captive unto the law of sin.

Now whereas many of the faithful are said to be just, and to walk in all the commandments of God without reproof: the meaning is, they endeavor to perfection, & strive to obey God with all their heart, and with all their soul, as Phil. 3.13. *God accepteth the will for the deed, and the endeavor to obey for perfect obedience*, 2 Cor. 8.12. Secondly, they exempt themselves from none of the precepts of God, but labor to walk in all the known points of his commandments, albeit they fail in the performance of them, & cease not to acknowledge their own imperfections. Lastly, God accepteth them in Christ, as perfectly righteous: so that, albeit their obedience be in itself imperfect, yet is it acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, as if it were perfect; and his righteousness is as truly their own, as if they had wrought it in their own persons.

Lastly, seeing the most faithful have their [Use 3] failings in duties of piety and obedience, we must take diligent heed we do not rashly and rigorously censure others for falling into sin. For seeing we have all our frailties and infirmities, and are not able to keep our selves wholly from evil, we are not headily to judge of others, lest thereby we hasten the greater condemnation upon our selves. This the Apostle *James* urgeth, Chap. 3.1, 2. *My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater judgment, for in many things we sin all*. Let us therefore consider our selves, before we cast our eyes upon other men: for they are the most sharp and severe Judges, that forget their own infirmities. As we would be dealt withal in meekness, so must we deal with our brethren with all gentleness. For howsoever they have sinned, nothing hath befallen them but that which is incident to the nature of man; we may be overtaken with the same sin, or with the like sin, or with a greater sin. The Apostle saith, *Brethren if a man be suddenly taken in any offense, ye which are spiritual restore such one with the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted*. There cannot be a more effectual means to draw us to deal mildly and mercifully with our brethren, then the consideration of our selves. There is no man among us, that dealeth truly with his own heart, and entereth into the meditation of his own frailty with his own soul, but he hath daily experience in himself, how hardly sin is subdued and mastered of us, how many sighs and groanings it requireth, how many tears and prayers it costeth us? What striving and struggling we have with it to keep it under? What battles and combats we have with the flesh that lusteth against the spirit? And yet notwithstanding our continual watching▪ wrestling, laboring, endeavoring, and resisting, it oftentimes breaketh from us, so that the knowledge of our own weakness, must teach us to deal with all meekness and moderation with our brethren.

Verse 11. *Moses smote that rock, and much water gushed out*. We have heard before, the people complaining, and *Moses* praying: now we shall see God helping and relieving them, notwithstanding their rebellion and unthankfulness. The Lord commanded *Moses* and *Aaron*, to speak unto the rock without life, without sense, without reason, to convince those rebels, and to show that there was more understanding in the dumb and deaf creatures, then in this company of conspirators. For now y^e promise of God was performed above all natural means.

True it is, they were unworthy of any mercy, they deserved to perish in their thirst, through want of water: notwithstanding, at the striking of the rock with the rod, he gave unto them their hearts desire. This was the Lord's doing, & it is marvelous in our eyes. This rock was a figure of Christ, as the Apostle teacheth. *Besides, the striking of the rock, was a sign unto them of the gushing out of the waters.* When Samson propounded this as a dark riddle, *Out of the eater came meat, and out of the strong came sweetness:* It was resolved thus, *What is sweeter then the honey, and what is stronger then the Lyon?* But much more may we propound this miraculous work of God, *Out of the hard rock came softness, out of the dry came moisture, and out of the strong came weakness.* For what is harder, dryer, and stronger then the rock? and what is softer and weaker then the water? according to the common proverb, *As weak as water.* And yet the soft and moist waters issued out of the dry and hard rock, suddenly, abundantly, miraculously at the commandment of God. This teacheth us this doctrine, that we live by God's appointment, and in feeding and sustaining us, he is not tied to outward & ordinary means. Whensoever we want meat, drink, apparel, and the necessary helps of this present life, God is able to provide them, and to nourish us without natural means, when it pleaseth him. This Moses teacheth at large, Deut. 8.3, 1. *He humbled thee and made thee hungry, and fed thee with Manna, which thou knowest not, neither did thy fathers know it; that he might teach thee that man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth a man live: thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell these 40. years.*

So we see he fed *Elijah* flying from *Jezebel*, who when he had eat and drunk, he walked in the strength of that meat forty days, and forty nights, unto Horeb the mount of God. The like we see in *Moses*, when he was in the mount with God: and the like we see in Christ our Savior, when he was in the wilderness tempted of the devil. So then, whatsoever the decree & determination of God is, whereby we shall live, whether it be by means or without means, whether by ways ordinary, or extraordinary, the same shall be effectual to man's preservation.

The reasons follow: First, the infinite power [Reason 1] of God which maketh weak things strong, and things of no value, that are despised, to effect great things. He is able to do and deal as he will. His soldiers were flies and lice against the Egyptians; his armies were mice against the Philistines. By such means he is able to work his will, to save his people, and to destroy his enemies. This reason is urged and pressed oftentimes, as Gen. 18.14. 1 Sam. 14.6. Zach. 8.6.

Secondly, hereby his honor and glory is [Reason 2] better set forth, that no flesh should rejoice and trust in it self but in God. Therefore he often worketh above reason, and beyond nature, that all the world may give glory to him, and magnify his great Name. This appeareth in the prayer of *Hezekiah*, who desired the presence of God to be with thē, that he might be glorified in their deliverance, *O Lord our God, I beseech thee save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know, that thou O Lord art only God.*

The uses follow: First, this teacheth us in [Use 1] all wants and necessities to depend upon God, and never to use unlawful means to come out of trouble, and so sin against God. If God send the sword, or famine, or other judgment to walk through the land, as he justly may do

for our transgressions and rebellions, we must learn contentation and patience in poverty, in sickness, in misery, and not to be swallowed up with excessive sorrow. Our life standeth in the word and will of God, who can manifest his power, as well without means as with means in our preservation, and therefore let us not despair or fly from him to any creature for relief and succor. He can feed as well without bread as with bread, who increased the oil in the poor widows cruse, and the handful of meal in the barrel, teaching us to learn and labor to depend upon him. This the three servants of God mentioned in *Daniel the Prophet*, practiced, saying; *O King, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter: behold, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the hot fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand: but if not, be it known unto thee (O king) that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image that thou hast set up.* They confess y^e power of God, they put their trust in him, they resolve to abide the extremity of torments, they know that to save their lives by sinning against God, was to lose them; and to lose them for his sake, was to save them.

[Use 2] Secondly, if we live by God's appointment, and by that which he will bless, then without this special blessing, no means can do us any good. For though we have outward helps at hand, they are unprofitable unto us, when they are not sanctified to our comfort and benefit by his blessing, as our Savior teacheth, Luke 12.15. *Take heed and beware of Covetousness, for though a man have abundance, yet his life standeth not in his riches.* The Lord also often threateneth, that he will take away, not only bread it self, but the stay and staff of bread; that is, the power of nourishing. Take away from a weak and impotent man his staff, whereby he stayeth himself, he falleth to the ground: so take from the means of feeding the virtue of God's blessing, it is unfit and unable to do us any good, or yield us any nourishment. So the Prophet saith, *Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough: and he that earneth wages, putteth the wages into a broken bag.* This should teach us never to presume, to apply any of the creatures of God to our uses and nourishment of our bodies, until we have sanctified them by calling upon the Name of God. For they are not able of themselves, and by themselves to feed and refresh us, being themselves without life, and without heat: it is God's special blessing that maketh them do us any good. O that profane and carnal men, whose bellies the Lord filleth with his hid treasure, would with wisdom remember this: who never consider they stand at God's allowance, nor lift their heads & hearts to heaven, from whence their food cometh, but receive his creatures as brute beasts, like the horse that falleth to his prouender, or like the swine that gathereth up the Mast upon the earth, but never look up to the tree: and when they are plentifully fed and filled, they depart away without remembering the author and giver of their meats and drinks: but as they sate down without understanding, so they rise up without thanksgiving. O consider ye that forget God, that when *Belteshazzar* was eating and drinking with riot and excess, the hand of God writing upon y^e wall, determineth his destruction. When he sent to his own people quail in the wilderness, a dainty food, he maketh them to come out at their nostrils in most loathsome manner, and while the meat was in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them, and slew the strongest of them. So God can make every bit to be our bane, and every morsel we put into our mouths, turn to our destruction. Therefore the Apostle exhorteth us, *Whatsoever we do, whether we eat and drink, or what else soever, we must do all to the*

praise and glory of God. Woe then shall be unto them in the end, that abuse these blessings of God to pride and excess, to surfeiting and drunkenness, to chambering and wantonness, to riotousnesse and forgetfulness of God, by whom they live, move, breathe, and have their being.

Lastly, we must not enlarge our desires, as [Use 3] the grave, which never saith it is enough, nor suffer our hearts to be oppressed and overtaken with the cares of this world, forasmuch as our life and welfare standeth not in these outward things, as food, raiment, house, land, living, and such like, but in the blessing of God: whatsoever he sendeth and affordeth, be it much or little, be it homely or dainty, shall be able to succor and sustain us. *Daniel* and his fellows, feeding on Pulse, and drinking water, appeared in their countenances fairer and fatter, then such as did eat the portion of the kings meat. Therefore the holy Ghost derideth the foolish rich man, Luke 12. who promised peace and plenty, length of days, and increase of riches to his own soul, having much laid up for many years. *So is he that gathereth riches to himself, and is not rich in God: and such shall be the end of those that abound in earthly treasure, which the thief may steal, and the Moth may eat, and the canker may consume; but not in heavenly treasure, which endureth to everlasting life.* Let us rest upon his providence, which arayeth the lilies, feedeth the fowls, clotheth the grass, numbereth our hairs, and promiseth to provide for us in all estates, if we rely upon him. True it is, when we cast up our eyes, and behold nothing but peace and plenty on every side, when we wash our garments in wine, when we abound in corn and pleasant fruits, or have the rocks to pour out rivers of oil, we can bless God, and confess our life dependeth upon his decree. But when we see nothing but horror and confusion, when the Sun seemeth to be darkened, and the day is turned into night, we must learn to wait on God, and to cast our care upon him who careth for us, as well in time of want, as of plenty; in time of sickness as of health; in time of war as of peace. This grace of contentation the holy Apostle felt, *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content, I can be abased, and can abound: I am instructed to be full, and to be hungry.* The cares of this world, and deceitfulness of riches are a rank thorn, that choke the growth of grace in the heart, and as snares that drown men in perdition and destruction: and therefore he chargeth *Timothy, to charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, and that they trust not in deceitful riches, but in the living God, which giveth us abundantly all things to enjoy; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may obtain eternal life.*

Verse 12, 13. *Because ye have not believed in me.* We heard before the sin of *Moses* and *Aaron*, speaking unadvisedly with their mouths, and striking the rock doubtfully with their hands: now let us see the judgment of God waiting upon them as a Sargeant to arrest them, and their punishment lying even at the door. *Because ye sanctified not my Name before the children of Israel, ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them:* He doth not only accuse and convince them of sin, but amplifieth it by the effect, that thereby he was robbed of his glory, and so excludeth them out of the land of promise. We learn from hence that God chastiseth his own children sinning against him. When his children forsake his laws, and walk not in his judgments, although he take not his loving kindness from them, neither falsify his truth, yet he will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with strokes.

This we see thoroughly strengthened throughout the whole book of the Judges, as chap. 4.1.2. When the people of Israel proceeded to do evil in the sight of the Lord, he sold them into the hand of *Iabin* king of Canaan, &c. So when *Jonah* disobeyed the voice of the Lord, calling him to preach to Nineveh, that great City, and to cry against it for their wickedness, he was cast into the Sea as an unprofitable burden of the ship, and swallowed of a Whale; so that albeit he fled from the presence of the Lord, yet his hand followed after him and ouertooke him. When *David* had trespassed in the matter of *Uriah*, by adultery and murder, though he were a man after God's own heart, yet the Lord raised evil against him out of his house, the sword of y^e enemy was shaken against him, and his own wives were defiled in the sight of y^e Sun. When *Miriam* the sister of *Moses* withstood him in the pride of her heart, through ambition and vain-glory, albeit he accused her not, but in meekness of spirit put up the wrong, being lowly in his own eyes, yet she was stricken with leprosy by the hand of God, and shut for a season out of the host. The like we might say of *Solomon*, *Asa*, *Jehoshaphat*, *Josiah*, *Hezekiah*, and many others; all which seal up this truth to our hearts, that GOD spareth not his own people when they sin against him.

[Reason 1] The Reasons of this just dealing of God, are, first to clear his judgment and justice, that we should know him to be no respecter of persons, but to hate sin, whensoever, wheresoever, and in whomsoever he findeth it. He is not a God that loveth wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him, for he hateth all them that work iniquity. This the Prophet *David* acknowledgeth, *Against thee, against thee only have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight, that thou mayest be just when thou speakest, and pure when thou judgest.* If then we break his statutes, and keep not his commandments, when he searcheth with lights and findeth out our sins, we must give glory to God, and make confession unto him, we must pronounce righteousness to belong unto him, and unto our selves open shame: yea, if he should destroy us, we must acknowledge him to be holy in all his ways, and just in all his works, who giveth us to eat the fruit of our own labors. As then he is just and righteous, so he must punish sin in whomsoever he taketh it: and as he denounceth sore judgments and grievous plagues of great continuance, and long durance, so he executeth thē to manifest the truth of his own word, and maketh good his own threatenings gone out of his own mouth.

Again, God chastiseth his own children, [Reason 2] lest they, sinning with the men of this world, whose portion is in this life, should be condemned with the world. For as in punishing of us, he respecteth his own justice, so he doth it in respect of our own good, and the great profit which thereby is brought unto us. If we should always enjoy health, wealth, liberty, peace, plenty, and other good blessings of God according to our hearts desire, we would wax fat and spurn with the heel, forsaking God that made us, refusing the strong God of our salvation, & joining hand in hand with wicked men reserved to destruction. Wherefore affliction is as the messenger of God, to call us back from sin, to wean us from the world, to kindle in us a desire of the world to come. This the Apostle aimeth at, 1 Cor. 11, 31, 32. *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged: but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, because we should not be condemned with the world.*

The uses of this Doctrine are many. First, [Use 1] consider with me the cause why they keep the word, and turn unto him with all their harts, why they run not on in evil as the horse rusheth into the battle, as the ungodly do: the reason is, God calleth them back by his hand, his afflictions are remembrances unto them, and his corrections are their instructions. This the Prophet *David* found true in his own comfortable experience, Psal. 119, 67, 71. *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy word: It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn thy statutes.* The Children of Israel living under the Judges, and sinning against God, making a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, taking their daughters to be their wives, giving their daughters to their sons, serving their idols, forgetting the true God, and doing worse then their fathers: the Lord sold them into the hand of their enemies, whom they served: then they lift up their voices and wept, then they called and cried unto the Lord in their afflictions, and he delivered them out of their distress. The same we see in *Manasseh*, who for his evils that he committed like the abominations of the heathen, was carried away captive, put in fetters, and bound in chains: and when he was in tribulation he prayed to the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his father, and prayed unto him, and God was entreated of him, and heard his prayer, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom, *Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God.* But of this we shall speak more in the chapter following.

[Use 2] Secondly, confess from hence, that great is the wrath and anger of God for sin, seeing he punisheth it so sharply and severely in his children, whom he hath engraven as a Signet in the palm of his hand, and whom he tendreth as the apple of his eye. Mark how he hath many times schooled his own servants offending. When *Miriam* murmured against *Moses*, and made other to murmur, she was stricken by the hand of God with leprosy; and albeit *Moses* made supplication for her, yet the Lord answered, *If her father had spit in her face, should she not have been ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out of the host seven days, and after she shall be received.* Thus he dealt with *David* whom he greatly favored and advanced to the kingdom, when he fell into grievous sins, 2 Sam. 12.9, 10. *Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon: Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house, and I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house.* So soon as *Solomon* set up idolatry, and wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord, he stirred up adversaries unto *Solomon*, and afterward rent the greatest part of the kingdom out of the hands of his son. This serveth to convince all such profane persons as presume of God's patience, and abuse his mercy to all looseness and licentiousnesse, saying, God is merciful, and yet continue in their sins. But we must know, that as he is merciful, so he is just: as his mercy is toward the penitent, so his justice is toward the obstinate: who spareth not his own people that forget his Law, and therefore will deal more fiercely against strangers.

[Use 3] Thirdly, measure not the favor and love of God toward our selves or others, by outward blessings, or outward crosses; by prosperity or adversity, which come alike to the godly and ungodly. Nay, oftentimes the wicked flourish when the faithful are in great misery, as Psal. 73.3, 4, 5. So *Solomon* teacheth, Eccle. 9.2. Therefore Christ our Savior correcteth the wrong judgment of the disciples, supposing that such as *Pilate* slew, were the

greatest sinners of all the rest that dwelt in Jerusalem, because they suffered those things, Luke 13.1, 2, 3. If then we would find sound comfort in our hearts, and feel unfeigned testimonies of God's favor towards us, we must not seek for them in outward blessings, or in want of outward blessings, (both which are common to the godly and ungodly) but in joy in the holy Ghost, in remission of sins, in repentance from dead works, in the spirit of adoption, in faith in Christ, in peace of conscience, which passeth all understanding. As for other things place not thy heaven and happiness in them, if blessings come, receive them thankfully; if crosses, learn to bear them patiently.

Fourthly, we are hereby put in mind to [Use 4] search our own ways, to survey our own hearts, and to prove by the touchstone of the word, our own thoughts, words and works, that we have conceived, spoken, and done; what we have justly deserved if God in justice should proceed against us; examining seriously our own life, mourning bitterly for our sins past, and turning unfeignedly unto God with all our hearts. This duty is urged by *Jeremiah the Prophet*, Lam. 3.39, 40, 41, 42. This is the mark that God shooteth at, this is the end that he respecteth, even by his afflictions to bring us home to himself, not to destroy and confound us forever. Let us not despise the chastenings of the Lord, nor faint when we are rebuked. We have had the fathers of our bodies which corrected us for a few days, and we gave them reverence: should we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, who chasteneth those whom he loveth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth?

Fifthly, let us labor to strengthen our faith [Use 5] by the word and Sacraments, and by such ordinary means as he hath appointed for that purpose. Hereunto the Apostle exhorteth, 1. Cor. 11.30. *To examine our selves, and so to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*, declaring that the judgments of God were broken in among the *Corinthians*, *insomuch that many were weak and sick among them, and many slept*. Wherefore, whensoever we find the hand of God sore and heavy upon us, it is our duty to seek strength of faith by the use of the word and Sacraments, whereby we shall learn to find out the true cause of those judgments, and submit our selves under his hand that striketh us as a father. For the Scriptures serve to direct us, the Sacraments serve to comfort us, *Without which the Prophet had perished in his afflictions*.

Lastly, seeing God chastiseth his when [Use 6] they offend, then most assuredly the wicked that are not his, shall not escape his revenging hand. If he correct the flock of his own pasture, the children of his own household, the citizens of his own kingdom, and the members of his own body, fed at his own table in this life, and made heirs of heaven in the life to come, really possessing that inheritance: with what plagues, punishments, & torments, will he visit the rebellion of aliens and strangers? If the Lord deal sharply toward these to whom he is a merciful Father and gracious Savior, and whom he often preventeth with his liberal blessings: Surely his revenging wrath, full of rage, shall find out all his enemies, whom he wipe will away as a man wipeth a dish, & turneth it upside down. This is that which *Solomon* teacheth in the Proverbs, *Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner?* There remaineth a day of judgment when they shall be punished as they deserve, either in this life, or in the life to come. With this the Apostle *Peter* sweetly accordeth, 1 Pet. 4.17, 18. *The time is come, that judgment must begin at the*

*house of God: if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them, which obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the sinner appear? Where we see that God will scourge & whip his own children for their frailties and infirmities appearing in them. But he correcteth the godly in mercy, the ungodly in anger: the godly as a loving father, the ungodly as a just Judge: the godly to amend them, the ungodly to condemn them: the godly, albeit humbled and cast down with one hand, are comforted and raised up with another, whereas the punishments that fall upon the heads of the ungodly, are but the beginnings of sorrow, and as the flashings of hell fire. Now the earth is not properly the place of vengeance and judgment. For we must understand that God hath appointed three places; earth, heaven, hell, for three several purposes: the earth to be a place of working, the heaven a place of rewarding, hell a place of punishing: earth as a shop of labor, heaven as a palace of glory, hell as a prison of torment. Notwithstanding, rather than sinners should escape, and sin go unpunished, the Lord will call a privy or petty Sessions even in this life, and make the earth his gaile or house of correction. If then God will visit their transgressions with such heavy strokes: Alas, what shall become of all profane persons, unrepentant offenders, obstinate sinners, such as contemn God and his word every day? What shall become of swearers, blasphemers, profaners of the Sabbath, whoremongers, drunkards, oppressers, unmerciful men, and other like? *The Lord indeed will try the righteous in his furnace: but the wicked and him that loveth iniquity doth his soul hate, upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and stormy tempest, this is the portion of their cup.* Indeed he lifteth up his hand to strike the faithful that are his friends: but he will crush his adversaries with a scepter of iron, and break them in pieces like a potters vessel. Indeed he will judge the just man for his sins in this life, but *he will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy pate of him that walketh in his sins.* Indeed the Lord will chastise his Church with the rods of men, yet his loving kindness will he never take from them: but he will correct his enemies with scourges of wyre, and his little finger shall be heavier on the reprobate, then his loins on his own people.*

Tremble at this all ye ungodly, and know that assured judgment is reserved for you at the great day of the Lord's general Assizes, when ye must plead guilty or not guilty at his bar, when the register book of all your actions shall be brought forth, and when you shall wish the mountains to fall upon you and cover you from the presence of him that sitteth upon the throne. Turn therefore unto him, return I say betimes, lest the Lord overturn you. *If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, blessed are all they that trust in him.* This is the difference between a wise man and a fool, *A wise man seeth the plague and hideth himself, but a fool runneth on and is punished. A reproof entereth more into him that hath understanding, then an hundred stripes into a fool.*

14 Then Moses sent messengers from Kadesh, unto the king of Edom: saying, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the trouble that hath happened unto us.

15 How our fathers went down into Egypt a long time, where the Egyptians handled us evil and our fathers.

16 But when we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice, and sent an Angel, and hath brought us out of Egypt, and behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in thine utmost border.

17 I pray thee let us pass through thy country: we will not go through the fields, nor the vineyards, neither will we drink the water of the wells; we will go by the kings way, we will walk, we will not turn either to the right hand, or to the left, until we have passed thy border.

18 And Edom answered him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out with the sword against thee.

19 Then the children of Israel said unto him, We will go upon the high way: and if we shall drink thy water, I and my cattle, I will then pay for it: I will only without any harm go through on my feet:

20 He answered again, Thou shalt not pass through; then Edom came out against him with much people, and with a mighty power.

21 Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.

Hitherto of the murmuring of the people, pretended against *Moses*, but indeed intended and practiced against God: Now followeth the second part of the Chapter, touching Israel's purpose to pass toward the land of Canaan, by the country of y^e Edomites; wherein consider two things. First, the solemn ambassage of *Moses* to the king of Edom. Secondly, the shameful and inhumane denial of the Edomites. Touching the first, having walked up and down thirty eight years, and wandered in the wilderness from place to place, forward and backward, from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people: being now come near to the land, they request passage and safe conduct through the country of Edom, under honest and equal conditions of abstaining from all injuries, and keeping the kings high way, & crave their friendship and favor in respect of their near kindred and aliance unto them, both of them descending of *Isaac*, whose sons were *Jacob*, called also *Israel*, and *Esau* called also *Edom*. Besides, they show what travels and troubles they had sustained what evils they had suffered, what oppression they had endured of the cruel Egyptians; appealing to their own consciences touching the truth of these things, whereof they could in no sort be ignorant, saying; *Thou knowest all the trouble that hath happened unto us*. But because such as are

themselves in prosperity, sildome respect the miseries and distresses of others, and the afflicted are for the most part destitute of all helps, and forsaken of all friends, they put them in mind of the mercies of God, assisting them in troubles, hearing their prayers, and sending his Angel; that is, Jesus Christ (as it is expounded by the Apostle) for their deliverance out of Egypt. And lest they should seem to request and require much of others, but promise nothing for themselves (as those that lay heavy burdens and grievous to be borne upon others, but will not touch them with their little finger) they covenant and condition with them on their parts, to deal uprightly and justly, being as ready to abstain from working injury, as to crave the duties of humanity.

So then, to effect their purpose of passing thorough Edom, and to persuade them to grant their request, they allege four reasons. First, in respect of the person of the Edomites. Secondly, in respect of the person of the Israelites. Thirdly, in respect of the person of God. Fourthly, in respect of the manner of their passage & perambulation through them. Touching the Edomites, they claim the kindred of consanguinity. Touching themselves, they plead their own misery. Touching God, they publish and proclaim his mercy. Touching their journey, and the manner of it, they promise equity and honest dealing. Thus they omit nothing that might serve to persuade the Edomites to pity, and to procure their own safety.

[Reason 1] The first reason, drawn from the right of brotherhood, is included in these words, *Thus saith thy brother Israel*. The Israelites came of *Jacob*, who was also called *Israel*, because he had power with God, Gen. 32.28. The Edomites came of *Esau*, who was also named *Edom*, both of the redness wherewith he was borne, and of the red pottage which he desired and preferred before the birthright. These two therefore were natural brethren, begotten of the same father, borne of the same mother, lying at the same time in the same womb; as if the Israelites should say: May it please you to consider, that we are not aliens and strangers one to another, we descend of two brethren, *Jacob* and *Esau*, you of one, we of the other, as two branches displaying themselves from one stock, we had one common father and mother, *Isaac* and *Rebeccha*, we are of one family and fraternity: so that it is right and equal, that they which are so nearly joined and linked by blood, should perform all kindness each to other. This reason from kindred may be thus framed:

If we be as brethren alied one to another, coming from one root and race: then deny us not this point of courtesy, to grant passage.

But we are brethren alied one to another, &c.

Therefore vouchsafe to give us passage,

The second reason is in these words, *Thou [Reason 2] knowest all the trouble that hath happened unto us, &c.* As if they should say, We have had a lamentable and woeful experience of many miseries, we have been exercised with many sorrows, so as yourselves cannot pretend ignorance of them: you know them, but we have felt thē: you have heard of them, but we have smarted for them. In Egypt we have had our poor infants drowned, our chief officers chastised, our selves every way oppressed with burdens too heavy for us to bear, and nothing but slaughter and destruction breathed out against us. Being delivered out of Egypt,

when we expected an end of all miseries, we perceived that we had changed the place, but not the peril: the soil, but not the sorrow: we have been pursued with enemies, bitten with hunger, wearied with labors, and every way inuironed with dangers. By all these, as by the dearest tears of our inward hearts, we crave some mercy and commiseration. For it lieth in you to make an end of all troubles and to give us an happy issue of them, by opening us a passage thorough your country, that we may no longer wander in this desolate wilderness. The reason may be thus concluded.

If we have been long vexed and evilly handled, now at length pity us & give us passage But we have been long vexed, and evilly entreated,

Therefore at length pity, & give us passage.

The third reason is, verse 16. *We cried unto [Reason 3] the Lord, he heard us, sent his Angel, and he delivered us.* As if they should say, Consider the example of God, (a perfect pattern of all righteousness) he hath in mercy looked upon our misery, be you like to him that ye may find mercy in the day of trouble. It is not meet to leave them destitute of help and succor, whose safety God commendeth, and committeth unto you by his own example. All human things are unstable and uncertain: ye know not what hangs over your own heads. The reason may be thus considered:

If God have begun to be merciful, it is not meet that you should be unmerciful. But God hath begun to show us mercy,

Therefore it is not meet, you should be unmerciful.

The fourth reason is, verse 17. and 19. *We [Reason 4]will not go through the fields nor the vineyards, &c.* As if they should say, We desire not to help our selves to hurt you, we will keep the kings high way, we will deal justly toward all, we will offer wrong and injury to none, no not to the meanest, simplest, and poorest: if any among us shall take from any man by open oppression or forged cauillation, we will make satisfaction and restitution: The reason is thus gathered:

If we will do no wrong or injury to any among you, then suffer us quietly to pass. But we will do no wrong or injury to any among you,

Therefore suffer us quietly to pass.

This was the Ambassage of *Moses*, this was the petition offered, these were the reasons rendered thereof. Now let us see the answer of *Edom*, denying their petition and passage thorough their country. For fearing peradventure the multitude of the Israelites, and thinking they would make more hast to enter into their land, then to depart out again, being (as evil men are ever suspicious, and think others as subtle and deceitful as themselves) the Edomites give them this short, but sharp answer, *Thou shalt not pass*: So that when a man hath to deal with unjust and cruel enemies, whether he use few reasons or many, all is one. The Ambassadors of the Israelites (whether they gave present reply & resolution of themselves, or first returned to *Moses*. is uncertain) made supplication again, and renewed

their request, promised to abstain from all terms of hostility, offered money for water, and every commodity they should use: yet they curiously and unkindly shut up their compassion, and issue forth with all their strength to stop their passage, verifying that which *Solomon* saith, *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast, but the mercies of the wicked are cruel*: wherefore *Israel* turneth from them another way. This is the substance of this division, and the order observed by the Spirit of God in the same: now let us proceed to the doctrines offered herein to our considerations, first the general, and after come to the particulars.

Ver. 14. *Then Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom.* Albeit *Moses* himself were shut out of the land of promise, yet he beareth the judgment of God patiently, and laboreth that the people may enter. And albeit y^e *Israelites* were assured to possess the land of *Canaan*, & had the vⁿchangable word and oath of God to themselves and their fathers, for their farther confirmation; yet it doth not make them idle and secure, but it stirreth them up to use all good and lawful means to effect the same. From hence we learn, that it is the duty of all God's children to use all good means to further his providence, I say, howsoever God standeth not in need of our help to bring his purpose to pass, who is able without all means, against all means, and above all means to work out his own will: yet it is the part of all the godly to further his decree and determination, by using all means that God shall put into their hands. This we see verified in this book, where we see the diligent search of the land, made by the messengers that *Moses* sent, viewing their cities, their country, and the people that were the inhabitants thereof: so that albeit, the land was promised of God mercifully, yet it must be searched of them diligently. The like practice we see in other the servants of God: When *Gideon* was sent to be the deliverer of the people and commanded to go in his might, hath assurance given him to prevail over the enemies, and to save *Israel* out of the hand of the *Midianites*: yet he did not run and rush naked into the battle, but took with him men and munitions, vitales, trumpets, pitchers and other instruments to set forward the work of the Lord which he had to do.

The necessity of using the helps of second causes that God affordeth, and endeavoring to the lawful means appointed, is shown by the Apostle *Paul*; for albeit the Angels of God had told him, there should be no loss of any man's life among them, save of the ship only; yet the decree & purpose of God was to save them together, and therefore he telleth them, *Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be safe.* God is absolutely able to preserve our life without the taking of food, or the labor of our hands, or the apparelling of our bodies, as the fowls are fed, and the Lilies are clothed, which neither sow nor reap, neither labor nor spin: yet he commandeth us to labor the thing that is good. In the garden of *Eden*, in the time of man's innocence, *Adam* was called to labor: and after the fall it was said, *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the earth.* So God can nourish to eternal life, without means of man, otherwise we should diminish his power: yet he will have his word preached in season, & out of season; he will have it heard and attended unto with all diligence, to begin and to increase faith in us, and he sendeth a comfortable blessing upon his own means. And therefore the Apostle teacheth, *Ephes. 4.12. That Christ ascending up to heaven, and leading*

captivity captive, gave gifts unto men for the gathering together of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, fitting teachers to their callings, although he can save without means.

The reasons follow. First we are commanded [Reason 1] to further God's providence by lawful endeavors in our callings. This is to us most comfortable, and giveth evident assurance of the blessing of God, without which holy endeavor we want this comfort and assurance. Thus the Apostle reasoneth directly, 2 Pe. 1. The election of God in it self is sure, for the foundation of God remaineth and hath this seal, *The Lord knoweth who are his*: yet he requireth of us to give all diligence to increate in knowledge, faith, temperance, patience, godliness, love, brotherly kindness, *If ye do these things, ye shall never fall.*

[Reason 2] Again, the end why God hath given us, means, and fitted us to our calling, is to serve his providence, not to make us idle in our selves, & unprofitable unto others. God's gifts are to some purpose, they were not given▪ and granted in vain, we must not hide them in the earth, but employ them to their use. This the Apostle teacheth, *I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of GOD which is in thee by the putting on of mine hands, for God hath not given to us the spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind.* And thus *Mordecai* reasoneth in his charge to *Esther*, that she should go into the king, & make supplication before him for her people, *Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time*: declaring that we have not our callings singled out and fitted unto us to hide our talents in the earth, but to employ them to increase and advantage.

The uses remain. First, we must know that [Use 1] extraordinary courses are not to be looked after, nor to be depended upon; we must leave them to extraordinary times & seasons which are now ceased and not to be expected. Many desire that God should show among his people, such great and miraculous works as he shown in bringing his people out of Egypt, with a mighty hand and out-stretched arm, and so feed themselves with fancies, and are carried away after their own imaginations. God hath tied us to ordinary courses which are more for our comfort, and therefore he that walketh plainly, walketh safely. This use is concluded out of the parable, where the rich man desireth to have *Lazarus* sent from the dead to his fathers house, to warn them, lest they also come into the place of torment. But *Abraham* answered; *They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them*: and when the rich glutton would have other means, if one come from the dead they will repent; he said again unto him: *If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead and come unto them*: Whereby our Savior showeth, y^t whosoever depends upon extraordinary means, visions, or revelations, or dreams, or the dead, when God hath left us ordinary ways, is to follow by-paths of our own, to dig cesternes that hold no water, and to trust in lying words that shall not profit. God hath ordained to teach us by the Ministry of his word, and hath put his hidden treasure in earthen vessels, whereunto we must attend as to a light shining in dark places. This is the ordinary way and common means left us to attain salvation and eternal life: Hereby then all ignorant persons are reprov'd and convinc'd, who (neglecting this usual way to begin and confirm faith and the rest of the graces of God in us) say: O, if God would himself speak unto us from heaven, or if we might hear Christ preach unto us, we would repent and believe the Gospel; as for men, we know not whether they speak the truth

or not. Others say, we have the Scriptures in our houses, we can read them at home, can they by all their teaching & preaching make the word of God any better? Besides, if you urge Sermons so much, we have Sermon books at home, we read them and can serve God in our houses, as well as they that run after Sermons. Others also think they have knowledge sufficient already, that they need neither hear nor read anymore. Lastly, others object, we have good prayers and good homilies, why should not men be content with them, as the law prescribeth and enjoineth? All these excuses are but fig-leaves, to cover over their own shame, when once they are sifted and examined. We answer to the first objection many ways. First we are not able to endure the dreadful presence of Almighty God, and therefore the faithful have cried out, Alas we shall die, because we have seen the Lord. We hear not the thunder without fear: we behold not the brightness of the Sun without dazzling: how then should we hear the immediate voice of God, or see his glory without confusion?

Again, if the Lord should speak from heaven, and utter his voice from the place of his habitation, he would speak no otherwise, he would teach no other truth then the Prophets and Apostles have delivered. And if we should hear one of the elect Angels, he would set before us no new points of religion, he would bring unto us no new article of faith, and therefore the Apostle saith, *Though we or an Angel from heaven preach unto you otherwise then that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* But it is more comfortable and profitable to us to be taught by men like unto our selves, then by the angels that are spirits: we cannot abide their glory through weakness of our flesh; we cannot be familiar with them through disparagement of our nature; we cannot have them always present with us through distance of place. Therefore the Spirit that could have taught the Eunuch by inspiration, commanded *Philip* to go near and join himself to his chariot, to be a guide to the blind, a light to him that sate in darkness, and an instructor of the unlearned. The Angel that appeared unto *Cornelius* could have told him and taught him those heavenly mysteries of salvation, whereby he and all his house should be saved: but he directeth him to *Peter* to tell him what *He ought to do*. Lastly, our own request hath concurred with the ordinance of God, desiring that man, clothed with the same infirmities, and subject to the like passions, might speak unto us. For when the Israelites at the delivering of the Law, saw the signs of his glory, as it were certain prints and footsteps of his Majesty, the sounding of the trumpet, the cracking of the thunder, the flashing of the lightning, y^e trembling of the earth, the darkness of the air, the appearing of the cloud, & the quaking of *Moses* himself at these sights: they cried out to him with great vehemency of spirit, *Talk thou with us, and we will hear thee: but let not GOD talk with us lest we die.* Seeing therefore the majesty of God is incomprehensible, who dwelleth in light that no man can attain unto, whose glory the Angels cannot behold without covering their faces: seeing the excellency of the elect Angels is so great, y^t we cannot so much as endure their presence, neither can we be so familiar with them as we do desire, and should be to deliver our estates to them, neither can at all times when we desire (being on earth) have conference and recourse to them being in heaven: seeing the Word is the same in the mouth of God, in the mouth of an Angel, and in the mouth of the Minister, and is with like regard and reverence to be heard, as Luk. 10, 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.* Lastly, seeing we desired the ministry of man to teach us, and God

approved of our desire, saying: *Oh that there were such an heart in them to fear me, & keep all my commandments always, that it might go well with them and with their children forever:* the intolerable pride and presumption of those appeareth, that embase the high ordinance of God in the ministry of his word, & would call God or his Angels out of heaven to attend upon their fancies, & to minister to their wantonness. To the second objection, pretending reading of Scriptures and Sermons at home, and asking whether we can make the Bible better: we answer, y^t we preach not to make the Scriptures better, but the people; the Scriptures need it not, the people do. And albeit there be enough set down in the written word, yet men understand little, as Acts 8. whē *Philip* heard the Eunuch read the Prophet *Isaiah*, he said, *But vnderstandest thou what thou readest? He said, How can I without a guide?* The reading of the Scripture I confess is profitable, comfortable, and necessary to fit us and frame us to the saving hearing of the word preached, & to keep us that we be not easily deceived by false teachers. But notwithstanding the reading of the Scripture, we must have it further opened, divided, and applied, as 2 Tim. 2, 25. *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, dividing the word of truth aright.* When a mā is grievously wounded, it is the salve that healeth, yet is the skill and cunning hand of the Surgeon necessary, and requisite to make the plaster, to spread it, and apply it to the part diseased. It is the meat that nourisheth the body, yet must it be cut, chewed, and digested. If there be little children in an house, and they have an whole loaf which is great & hard set before them▪ they find the crust too strong for them, so that it must be cut for them, and divided unto them in due season. Moreover, we find by experience, that such as plead for reading, either Scriptures or Sermons at home, when they should attend the public exercises of religion, do indeed spend the time nothing less then that way: as appeareth by their palpable ignorance; neither let such look for a blessing from God at home, when he requires them to join themselves to the congregation of the faithful: so that while they think to deceive others, they do most of all deceive themselves. Last of all, why do they not say as much of the other part of the Ministers Office? For as he is to preach the Gospel, so he is to administer the Sacraments. Now then as they allege they can read Scriptures & Sermons at home themselves, as well as hear them at the mouth of the Minister; so can they not pour Water on the face of their children, and rehearse the words of institution as well as the Minister? Can they not themselves take Bread & Wine, break the one, pour out the other, receive them both, and eat and drink them in their private families, as well as take them in y^e public assembly at the hand of the Minister? But should such water so sprinkled on the child be holy baptism? Or should such bread and such wine, so taken, so broken, so eaten & drunken be the Lord's Supper? No, such idle actions are not holy Sacraments, but shameful profanations of the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Wherefore, notwithstanding all our show of reading in our houses to our houtholdes, yet must the Lord's holy ordinance be magnified among us, to seek the law at y^e Pastors mouths as the Prophet teacheth, *The priests lips should preserve knowledge; and they shall seek the Law at his mouth, &c.* And examine when you will those that pretend reading, to exclude preaching, you shall find them (for the most part) ignorant in the grounds and principles of Religion, knowing neither the use of the Law, nor the end of the Gospel; understanding neither the Petitions of the Lord's prayer, nor the Articles of faith: and therefore if they bestow so much time as they would make the world believe, they

are yet in the number of those whom the Apostle speaketh of, *Which are ever learning, but are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

To the third objection, boasting of sufficient knowledge, we answer: That as we prophesy in part, so we all know in part: and the Ministry of the word, serveth not only to begin faith and repentance in us, but to build us up to the day of Jesus Christ. It serveth not only to teach us knowledge, but obedience; lest our knowledge puff up, and add to our farther condemnation. Therefore, the Apostle writing to the Church of the Thessalonians, (being one of the most goodly and glorious churches that the Apostle planted) who above y^e rest of the churches surpassed in knowledge, excelled in faith, abounded in love, shined forth in obedience, yet he saith to them, *despise not prophesy, and we exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that you increase more & more, as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God.* We are here in our race, we have not yet attained to y^e end of our journey. We see how men think they never have riches and substance enough, they always account themselves poor and needy, and are ever endeavouering to increase & better their estate: so it should be in true and heavealy Treasure, we should hunger and thirst after righteousness; we should grow up in grace, and desire evermore greater strength; assuring our selves that if we have an appetite and thirst after the Well of the water of life, we shall be fully satisfied; only we must use the means that God hath appointed to attain faith and other saving graces: as earnest prayer, reverent hearing of the Word, diligent receiving of the Sacraments, being careful to honor God for that which we have already received: and I am persuaded that he which hath begun his good work in us, will perfect the same unto the day of Jesus Christ. As for the perverse and crooked generation of those that think they have knowledge enough, they manifestly bewray their want of knowledge. For as such as have attained and received the greatest knowledge, do find in themselves the greatest ignorance: so such as imagine themselves to be most richly replenished in all knowledge & understanding, are indeed most sottish and ignorant in the matters of GOD; like empty vesselles which make the greatest sound. Hereby therefore we shall try our selves whether we have attained any measure of acceptable knowledge, if it work and kindle in us a desire of more knowledge; if it light us a Candle to see our own ignorance; and if it teach us that still our wants are greater then our store. The grace of God in the heart, is like a grain of mustard seed, small to see to at the beginning, but being once placed & planted in the ploughed ground of a fruitful heart, it increaseth speedily, and spreadeth itself far and near. The master delivering his Talents to his servants, saith to them, *Occupy til I come;* and not hide them in the earth. And the Apostle exhorteth *Timothy to stir up the gift in him, and to blow the coals, lest the graces of God decay, as fire is apt to go out, being kindled in green wood.*

Touching the last objection of having already good prayers and good Homilies: I answer, as they are hated of God and men, that make dissention between brethren, so such as magnify prayer, to juttle out preaching, which join hand in hand together, and walk as friends that are agreed, are indeed enemies to them both. Indeed we confess the prayers of the Church are good, as it is written, *My house shall be called the house of prayer;* but these men little regard them, save to serve their own turn: for few of them make conscience to be present at the confession of sins, or absolution of a sinner. Nay, if they stand at the Church doors, they

scarce afford us their presence to come in; and if they do, we must be deeply indebted to them for their company. Now where they think to stop our mouths, & to choke us with the Law, they cross the high Ordinance of God, slander the good laws of Princes, and sin against their own souls, making the reading of Sermons and exhortations of equal dignity and preeminence, with the lively preaching of the word. For first, no people under heaven should want (so far as is possible) the preaching of the Gospel, it is the commandment of God, it is his ordinance necessary for the planting and continuance of a Church, which cannot be said of the other, w^c also are appointed to give place & hold their peace as an inferior institution, when any is present to preach unto the people. Again, the lively preaching of the Pastor, applieth Doctrine and exhortation to the present circumstances and occasions of times, and budding of new sins, and broaching of new heresies, so that according to their manifold windings & turnings, it is ready to meet them, & to strike at the very heart and head of them.

Thirdly, there is a great difference in gifts of interpretation, exhortation, zeal, vtterāce, memory, moving of affections, and such like, as the very Heathen have in another case and kind acknowledged. For when the people after the reading of an Oration, penned in the perswasible words of human eloquence, greatly wondered, it was replied: Do you marvel hearing me read it? What affections would it have wrought in you if you had heard himself with lively voice utter & pronounce it? As for godly and learned Homilies, we do not condemn or contemn them in the famine & scarcity of teaching: we know that a cup of cold water is better then no drink, and half a loaf better then no bread; yea as *Solomon saith, the person that is full despiseth an honey-comb, but unto the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet:* yet it is no disgrace or disparagement unto them to give place to the preaching of the word: as a man may say, the Peers & Nobles of a kingdom are inferior to the Prince, without defacing of them, or that silver is baser thē gold without disgracing of it. Thus much in answer of the Objections that are made against the preaching of the Gospel, being the ordinary means which God hath left unto us, to further our salvation.

Secondly, see God's mercy to his Church: [Use 2] his Decree is concluded, his providence is determined, all things are written in his Book, yet he will use men as his own hand and instruments, to do that which himself could work alone: he will have them as Ioynt-workers, and as fellow-helpers with him. This is a great honor, and special prerogative, as the Apostle showeth, *We together are God's Laborers, ye are God's Husbandry, and God's Building.* And again, *We are Ambassadors for Christ, as though GOD did beseech you through us, we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God.* It is a very great honor and dignity to represent the person of an earthly Prince, whose breath is in his nostrils: but it is a greater privilege and preeminence to stand in y^e room of God. They are greatly honored that sit in his seat, whether in the Church, or in the Commonwealth. This is a great comfort to all godly Magistrates, that bear on their shoulders the burden of government, of whom it is said, *I have said ye are God's, and ye are the children of the most High,* to know that they bear the person of God, and that he useth them as his vicegerents. This is a singular comfort also to all godly and painful preachers, whom the Lord useth as his Stewards and messengers, of whom he hath said, *He that heareth you, heareth me,* which ought to be all-sufficient unto us, to make us walk thorough good

report and evil report, and ouerstride all the discouragements and discontentments that the unthankful world throweth upon us.

[Use 3] Lastly, we learn to forsake no work belonging to our calling, yet still to trust in God, & to rely upon him, not to trust in the outward means. Our Savior Christ teacheth, that they tempt God and provoke him to wrath, that refuse or neglect the ordinary means appointed for their life and preservation. He that is sick, and neglecteth the ordinary means of Physic; he that is hungry, and refuseth the ordinary means of feeding; or being in an high and dangerous place, will not descend the common way, but casteth himself down, maketh a needless trial of God's power, and so tempteth God. It is our part not to be idle upon his providence, but to use profitable helps for our safety and maintenance. Our endeavours and labors are required in his providence, who as he ordaineth the end, so he appointeth the means leading and tending to the end. Now, whensoever God hath offered and afforded an ordinary means for our succor and salvation, we are bound to use the same carefully, and not seek redress & remedy another way. This serveth to convince all such as wait upon vanities, and forsake their own mercies; which say, Cannot God save us without so much preaching? hath he no other means to work our conversion? Hath he bound himself to the Ministry of the word? Indeed God hath not tied himself to this ordinance, he can work our salvation by other ways: but he hath necessarily tied us unto it, where he hath sent it unto us, and if we think to find it any other way, we shall toil and trouble our selves in seeking, and shall not obtain it. God norished his people with Quails, fed them with Manna, and commanded the Rock to give them water in the wilderness extraordinarily; but when he had planted thē in the land of Canaan, and given them Corn and provision to live ordinarily, they must use those helps, or else perish and famish for hunger. As he dealt with their bodies, so he dealeth with our souls. If we neglect ordinary means, we may not look for extraordinary. Moreover, this serveth to condemn the practice of such as reason, If we be appointed to salvation, it shall never be taken from us: whomsoever we oppress, whatsoever we commit, howsoever we live. This is to covet the end, but to neglect the means. We desire salvation, but we refuse to walk in the way that God hath chalked out unto us. Such as never use the means, make it plain and manifest, they were never ordained to the end. Wherefore the Apostle saith, *God hath chosen us that we should be holy, and without blame, before him in love.* Repentance, faith, sanctification, are the means and the way, salvation and eternal life are the journeys end. Al such as God hath ordained to eternal life, he hath ordained them to use the means to pray unto him, to hear his word, to receive the Sacraments, to have faith in Christ to repent from dead works, and hereby we shall make our election sure. The more we increase in the gifts of God, the greater shall our assurance be. Thus much of the necessary use of the means used by the people, to further God's providence, and to come unto the quiet possession of the land of Promise.

[Verse 17. *I pray thee let us pass thorough thy Country.*] Before we come to the consideration of the reasons, let us see what their request is of the Edomites, which were a people lying Southward, in respect of the land of Canaan, toward the Desert of Arabia, & the dead sea, and sprang of *Esau*, as we heard before. Now the Israelites were the Lord's own people, the visible Church of God upon earth, which is y^e foundation & pillar of truth, of whom he

said, *Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm*: yet see here, how they are brought to so low an ebb as to ask a License, & to crave a Passport and passage of their enemies. We learn from hence, y^t the true church is oftentimes brought so low, as to stand in need of the help, favor, friendship, and good will of strangers that live out of the church. God doth so far make his servants drink of the cup of affliction in y^e outward wants of earthly things, y^t they must crave help of those that are their enemies. This we see in *Abraham*, he had not a place to bury his dead out of his sight, but was constrained to crave it of the Hittites. So *Jacob* and his household were so sorely pressed with famine, that they came and bowed to the Egyptians for a piece of bread. So *David* being in distress in the wilderness, was driven to send to churlish *Nabal*, to give to him and his whatsoever came to his hand. This misery of the poor church the Prophet confesseth, Lam. 5, 6. As if they should say, We are so oppressed by the Chaldeans, that we are compelled thorough necessity, to crave relief of our greatest enemies. So *Ester* a nursing mother of the Church, begged her own life, and the life of the people of God, at the hands of an Heathen King. Thus we see, that howsoever the faithful be right heirs of the world, & the just owners of all things in Jesus Christ, yet sometimes for their necessary relief in things of this life they stretch out their begging hands unto their enemies, as *Lazarus* did.

[Reason 1] The Reasons are. First, in respect of God, who will try the faith and patience of his servants, how they can bear outward afflictions, whether they will cleave to him in their troubles, not. It is his will and heavenly pleasure to try and prove the obedience of his servants. Not that he getteth or gaineth any knowledge which he had not before, but by trial of his own gifts, to let us see what is in our selves, who are ignorant of the hidden corners of our own hearts. *Peter* supposed himself to be constant and courageous, till he was brought into the field to be tried: like the fresh-water soldier that dreameth of victory before the battle. *Abraham* then knew that he loved y^e Lord indeed with all his heart, when he had sealed it up with forsaking his country & fathers house. And God commanded him to offer up his son to prove his faith. So he humbled the Israelites and made them hungry, to teach and to prove them, that he might do them good at the latter end.

[Reason 2] Secondly, in respect of their enemies, he will also try them whether they will show pity or not. God hath made the needy and oppressed his treasurers, and offereth those men as Objects and occasions to open their bowels of compassion. If they shut their eyes, and stop their ears from the cry of the poor that are in trouble, they are made without excuse, and themselves shall cry in the day of affliction, when they shall not be heard. Thus he tried y^e heart of *Pharaoh*, when the Israelites put up a supplication unto him, to let them go 3. days journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifice. Thus he tried the rich glutton, when he sent distressed *Lazarus* to his gate, showing what was the liberality of one, by the poverty of another.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, in respect of the Church of God, that should acknowledge God to be the Author of every good gift, and should fly unto him in their miseries, who hath the hearts of all men in his own hand, to dispose of them as seemeth good in his divine wisdom. He turned the heart of *Esau* to favor *Jacob*, who came against him with a band of men. Let us first of all

come into the presence of GOD, humbling our selves before him, confessing our sins, acknowledging our unworthiness of the least of his mercies, and praying him to turn the hearts of our enemies to favor us, according to the promise of his own mouth, who hath said, that *whē the ways of a man please God, he will make even his enemies to be at peace with him.* Thus having reconciled our selves to God, let us not doubt but that he which brought water out of the hard Rock, will mollify the stony harts of our greatest adversaries & will make them instruments of our greatest good. This we see practiced by *Nehemiah*, who prayed unto God to give him favor in the sight of that heathen king, and he obtained his request.

The uses are these. First, seeing it pleases God [Use 1] to make his own people to creep and crouch to his and their enemies, we see it is lawful in our necessitous estate, to crave alms & relief of our enemies and those that hate us, to help us for our needful sustentation. This condemneth the niceness and scruple of those y^t hold it unlawful to buy and sell, to deal and Trafficke with the enemies of the Church, or to be any way indebted or beholding unto them. But as we are commāded to do good to them that are without, and are debtors to all men that are our own flesh, and are enjoined to succor thē in their necessities, so far as we do not maintain and help them against Christ: so is it fitting our profession (when God denieth other means) to ask relief and refreshing of them, otherwise we tempt God in despising such means as he openeth unto us for our good. Let us not disdain or refuse to take at the hands of men, but withal acknowledge it to come from God the chief giver, whosoever be the instrument, as *Elijah* received meat of the Ravens, both morning and evening.

Secondly, let us never promise any certainty [Use 2] or assurance of the things of this life. For, as the Kings daughter is said to be all glorious within: so the comeliness, beauty, and happiness of the Church standeth not in meat nor drink, but in righteousness of life, peace of conscience, joy in the holy Ghost, & in the loving countenance of the Lord towards his servants. *For the things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal* So *Solomon* saith, *Riches remain not always, nor the Crown from generation to generation.* And again, *Travel not much to be rich, but cease from thy wisdom: wilt thou cast thine eyes upon nothing? For riches taketh her to her wings as an Eagle, and flieth into the heaven.* And indeed this is the cause why men bear want and poverty so impatiently, because they promise immortality unto themselves, make an act of perpetuity, and wholly toil and moil for the mucke of this world. They dream sweetly of dwelling forever upon the earth, and make their money and riches the god of their refuge. If *Job* had made gold his hope, & had said to the wedge of gold, *Thou art my confidence*, he could never have spoken this in the patience of his soul, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.* Therefore the Apostle teacheth, that if we have food & raiment, we ought therewith to be content. For we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain, we can carry nothing out. Wherefore let us often and seriously enter into the meditation of the poor and low estate of y^e church driven many times into a corner, and constrained to seek help of others, thereby to teach our selves the uncertainty and slippery state of all human things.

Lastly, take this low estate patiently, whensoever [Use 3] such extremities do befall us, as the lot that God hath appointed us. *Let us consider that no temptation hath overtaken us, but such as*

appertaineth to man, and God is faithful which will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will even give the issue with the temptation that we may be able to bear it. Indeed every affliction for the present is grievous, and not joyous, but afterward it bringeth y^e quiet fruit of righteousness unto them that are thereby exercised. So then, we must know that we have need of patience, y^t after we have done the will of God, we may receive the promise. And without this heavenly grace, considering the present or eminent calamities of the Church, we shall never be able to hold out our profession unto the end. We shall never apprehend the love of God in our sufferings, but be always grudging, repining, and rebelling against the will of GOD. This made the Apostle to say, *I have learned in whatsoever estate I am, therewith to be content.* Let us not therefore in our necessities and calamities fret and fume, rage and be angry against God, but pray for this patience & the silence of the heart, which is much set by of God. For albeit the affliction we endure be grievous for the measure, manifold for the number, strange for the manner, and long for the continuance; yet if we put on the armor of a Christian, it shall work in us experience of God's mercy, and bring forth hope of a full deliverance, which maketh not ashamed.

[Verse 14. *Thus saith thy Brother Israel.*] Hitherto of the request sent by *Moses*, delivered by the Ambassadors, and consented unto by the whole congregation: now we are to mark the reasons used to stir up the hearts of the Edomites. The first is drawn from their nerenesse of blood and kindred in the flesh, *We are your Brethren:* Now, if we be Brethren, then help us: *But we are Brethren,* therefore help us. The word [*Brother*] is taken in Scripture sundry ways. First, for such as are brethren by birth, as *Cain & Abel, Jacob & Esau.* Secondly, by affinity, which come of one family, as branches of one root, and streams issuing out of one fountain: so *Abraham* and *Lot* were brethren, and the kinsmen of Christ are called his brethren. Thirdly by Country & Nation: thus all the Jews are called Brethren one to another, Deut. 17.15. Rom. 9, 1. Fourthly, by profession: thus all Christians are accounted Brethren, being of the same religion and profession. Now in this place it is taken in the second sense, for such as were of the same kindred & stock, as if they should say, *We are all the seed of Abraham, we have Abraham and Isaac to our father.* Thus we see they allege their alliance & communion of the same blood, descending long ago by many generations from one father. Observe here first of all the manner of their reasoning, *If we be Brethren of one kindred, deny us not this favor, but suffer us to pass.* Where we see the strength of this reason, how that to persuade some kindness, they plead some kindred, and beseech them by the amiable name of a Brother. From hence we learn, that the consideration of our nerenesse and conjunction of blood, must urge and enforce from us all duties of love and brotherly kindness. Howsoever we are to do good to all, yet our Communion in blood should be a forcible means to move us to all duties of humanity. This moved *Abraham* to take away the heat of contention kindled between his Heardmen and the Heardmen of *Lot*, *Let not us I pray thee strive for we are Brethren.* The like we see pressed by *Moses* to the Israelites striving together to the dishonor of God, to the slander of their profession, and to the opening of the mouths of the enemies, *Sirs, ye are Brethren, why then do ye wrong one another?* This consideration was so strong, that it prevailed with *Laban* toward *Jacob*, saying, *Though thou be my brother, shouldst thou therefore serve me for naught? I will give thee wages?* So *David* upon this ground expecteth kindness, and reproveth

the Tribe of *Judah* for their negligence in bringing him unto his house, *Ye are my Brethren, my bones and flesh are ye; wherefore then are ye the last that bring the King again?*

The Reasons follow. First, the communion [Reason 1] and fellowship of the same nature, ought to move us to be bountiful and beneficial unto men, because we must do to others, as we wish and would that others should do unto us. Let us put the case, & suppose we were in distress, would we not be glad to receive good at the hands of others? and would we not think it a duty belonging unto them as men, to relieve & succor us as men? Even so ought we in like case to do and deal with them according to the rule of the Law, and the exhortation of Christ, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even the same unto them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*

Secondly, the flesh of one, is as the flesh of an [Reason 2] other; all the world was made of one flesh, so that we are as it were parts and members one of another. We see in the members of our body, how one is helpful and serviceable to another; when one is pained, the rest are troubled; when one is honored, y^e rest rejoice. So should it be in the general communion and conjunction of mankind. This is that which the Israelites affirm, being oppressed by their brethrē: *Our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, & our sons as their sons:* and therefore in this consideration, they looked for the duties of kindness, and fruits of humanity to come from them.

The Use of this Doctrine, is first of all, to reprove those that break these bands, and [Use 1] cast these cords from them, wherewith the Lord hath tied us one to another. For, where many times shall you find less familiarity and friendship one with another, then among those that are most nearly linked and allied one to another? Their often jars and most deadly dissensions, proclaim to their open shame, that they are void not only of true piety, but of all due humanity. What a reproach is it? yea what a blot and blemish, that the husband setteth himself against the wife, and the wife against the husband; the father falleth out with the son, and the son with the father: the mother cannot live peaceably with the daughter, nor the daughter with the mother: the mother in law with the daughter in law, nor the daughter in law with the mother in law; and that the love of brethren and sisters is so geason among us? Great is the force and strength of Nature in all such as are not wholly without natural affections, as we see in *David*, albeit he had a godless and ungracious child, aspiring in the pride of his heart to usurp the kingdom, and driving his father out of Jerusalem; yet when he was slain in the battle, the King was moved, and mourned, saying; *O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee. O Absalom my son, my son,* 2 Sam. 18, 33. The like we see in the true mother to her child, whose bowels yearned within her, when *Solomon* called for a sword to divide it. The like force of love could not be dissembled in *Joseph* toward his brethren, but he turned from them, & his heart melted toward them. Yea, cruel *Esau* when he saw his brother a far off, though he had threatened to kill him, yet he ran to meet him, and embraced him, he kissed him, and wept upon him. And yet we now see by lamentable experience, that every toy & trifle maketh debate, not only between dearest friends, but between nearest Kinsfolkes, that they can never be reconciled. And as no band knitteth faster, nor bindeth closer then this, while love and liking lasteth: so

no contention is so bitter, no hatred so deadly, as that of brethren and others that are near in blood, when the knot is broken and dissolved. The tender glass when it is once broken, will never be set together again. No water proveth so exceeding cold, as that which was once heated exceeding hot: so no hatred proveth like to the hatred of brethren, which are often found merciless one toward another, & such as can never be appeased: as we see in the malice of *Cain* toward *Abel*. This is it that *Solomon* pointeth out in *Prov. 18, 19. A brother offended, is harder to win than a strong City, & their contentions are as a bar of a Castle*. For as they loved most entirely & dearly before, so when once they grow enemies, they hate one another most extremely, whose hearts are as stony walls that cannot be pierced, and as bars of iron that cannot be broken. Now as the Prophet teacheth, *That it is a good and comely thing for brethren to dwell together in unity*: so it is a noisome and unnatural thing to behold greatest envy and most mortal malice, where the greatest and nearest bands of kindred should knit together.

Secondly, how much more is it required of those that spiritually are knit together in the profession of the same faith, to love and help one another, that have one God to be their Father, one Church to be their Mother, one Christ to be their elder Brother, one Heaven to be their hope, and one Faith to be their assurance. These considerations are of far greater might and moment, then all bands of other societies, which begin in the flesh, and end in death. Wherefore the Apostle handleth this at large, *Eph. 4, 3, 4, 5, 6. Endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your vocation. There is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, which is above all, and through all, and in you all*. To this purpose Christ our Savior teacheth, that there is a nearer conjunction between himself & the faithful, as also between the faithful among themselves, then between brethren and kinsfolkes in the flesh. For when some of his hearers said: *Behold thy Mother and thy Brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee*: he answered and said to him that told him, *Who is my Mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hands towards his Disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren: for whosoever shall do my Fathers will which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*.

Lastly, there is no man in the world, but we are after a sort charged with him to affect him as a brother, to account him as a friend, to help him as a neighbor, and to love him as he is a man. Albeit he be never so far removed from us, albeit we never saw him, albeit we know him not in the flesh, yet we are appointed as his keeper and guardian, to do him good all the days of his life, defending him from wrongs, garding him from enemies, & saving him from dangers. It was a profane voice of a profane man, who being asked where his brother was, answered, *I cannot tell, Am I my brothers keeper?* Therefore our Savior in the Parable of him that fell among thieves teacheth, that every man is to be called and accounted our neighbor. It is not for any to advance and lift up himself above his brethren in disdain or pride of heart, be he never so high & great in the world, but to acknowldge from whence he came, and in that respect to make himself equal with them of the lowest sort.

[*Thy Brother Israel.*] Hitherto we have spoken of the strength of the reason, and considered the words not simply in themselves, but as they are referred to the point they argue, that is,

to persuade their passage. Now we will weigh them as they stand by themselves. They declare in their plea, that there is a conjunction between them in the flesh. The Doctrine from hence arising is this, Among kinsfolkes, and generally among all mankind, is a certain brotherhood, acquaintance, familiarity, and union one toward another. True it is, there is not fleshly kindred immediately among all men, to make them so near of blood, as to call one another kinsmen, and to descend of the same line and lineage: but there is a certain common kindred in general, to join & bind us one to another. So then, all mankind, though seated and placed far one from another by large and many Countries, and distinguished by several languages, rites, laws, religions, and customs, are one blood, one flesh: yea, all as brethren issuing out of one fountain, & hewn out of one Rock. Everyone is of kin to every man, whether Jew or Grecian, Turk, Barbarian, Scythian, French, Spanish, Italian, German, &c. This appeareth in many places of the word of God. Thus *Ahab* calleth *Benhadad* King of Aram his Brother, that is, his Friend. So Christ compriseth every man under the name and title of a neighbor. This also the heathen knew and acknowledged well enough, as the Apostle testifieth, Acts 17, 26. *God hath made of one blood all mankind, to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath assigned the seasons which were ordained before, and the bounds of their habitation;* declaring hereby, that there is an union and conjunction among all mankind.

[Reason 1] The Reasons are these. First, we had all one beginning from God, who is the Creator and Maker of all things visible and invisible, and therefore he being the efficient cause of all, there must be some dependence upon him, and some fellowship among the works of his hands. This the heathen confessed, as the Apostle alledgeth out of their own Poet, Acts 17, 29. *We are the generation of God.* He is the Creator, we are the works of his hands: he is our Father, we are his children, & consequently brethren one to another.

[Reason 2] Secondly, as we had one beginning, so we all were made of one mould and matter, being framed of the clay and dust of the earth, which the Lord tempered and fashioned to make man, as appeareth in the history of the Creation. So then, the matter of all mankind is remembered unto us to be the earth. This *Moses* teacheth, Gen. 2.7. & 3, 19. Hereunto the Apostle accordeth, 1 Cor. 15, 47, *The first man is of the earth, earthly.* Thus the most noble and notable creature, of a wonderful frame and composition, representing in it the glory of y^e world, was made of the most base matter, and lowest element, as it were the dregs and lees of the Vniuerse.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, touching the form of man's Creation, they are all made in the image according to the similitude of God, which is a certain band of Nature to knit us together. There is one image and likeness of God that shineth in all men, which we must regard & reverence wheresoever we find it. This is it which *Moses* sets down, Gen. 9.5. *At the hand of a man's brother will I require the life of man, for in the Image of God did he make man.*

[Use 1] The Uses are these. First, it serveth to condemn the sundry sects of Monks, Friars, Hermits, and all Cloyster-men, that live apart by themselves in woods and desert places, & separate themselves from others, as if they were borne for themselves alone, and not to do good to others. These live as in another world members of no society, parts of nobody, limbs of no Family, of no Church, of no Commonwealth. Every man must bring some good, not only

to himself, but also to others, & choose some honest and lawful calling When a man is out of his proper lawfull calling, it is as if a member were put out of joint, or a part of the building were thrust out of order. So then that life which is the forsaking of human society, is neither comfortable for themselves, nor profitable for the Church, nor commendable for the family, nor warrantable by the word, doing good neither to themselves, nor to any other. This the Apostle reproveth to the Hebrews, *Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works; not forsaking the fellowship that we have among our selves, as the manner of some is: but let us exhort one another, and that so much the more, because ye see that the day draweth near.*

Secondly, it followeth from hence, that it [Use 2] is a singular and special mercy that grace is offered to some more then to othersome, that one nation or kingdom is preferred before another, that one place or person is respected above another, being by birth like and equal, and seeing there is no difference between man and man by nature. It cometh not of our selves, that the Gospel of the kingdom, and word of salvation is offered unto us, there is no dignity in us above our brethren. This Moses bringeth the Israelites to consider, *Thou enterest not to inherit their land for thy righteousness, or for thy upright heart. Esau and Jacob were brethren, borne of the same parents at the same time, yet one was received, and the other forsaken. So y^e Apostle to the same purpose speaketh, Gal. 3, 28, There is neither Jew nor Grecian: there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are alone in Christ Jesus.* This therefore must teach us to acknowledge our own unworthiness, & to magnify the mercy of God toward us above all earthly things.

Thirdly, we are bound to do good to all men, [Use 3] to be servants one to another in love, to help and succor each other in time of need, as the Samaritan did him y^t fell among thieves: and as the barbarous nations did the Apostle. True it is, the nerer God bringeth men together, and the straighter bands of kindred, acquaintance, society, and neighborhood, he tieth us withal, y^e more prompt & ready we ought to be to do service one to another. But seeing he hath set a kind of brotherhood among all, we must love one another, & be kind-hearted to all our flesh, otherwise we bid battle to God, and are at defiance with nature it self. Notwithstanding, if we consider the common trade & practice of the world, we shall see an open conspiracy to do contrary to the will of God, and the secret instinct of nature it self. For where is this employment of our selves to the good one of another? Do we not see among brethren, many times such divisions, as everyone shifteth for himself, and shrinketh from another; drawing still to themselves without respect of reason, without care of honesty, and without sign of pity or compassion? So y^t the wolves are not at such variance, neither do the Lions or Leopards pursue one another as these men do. But man from man is in daily danger. A storm threateneth before it riseth: a building cracketh, before it falleth: a fire smoketh, before it flameth: even the dog barketh, before he byteth: but mankind hurteth suddenly, they are felt oftentimes before they are seen, they strike before they warn, having y^e shape of men, but the mind of beasts. This made Solomon to give out this counsel, Prov. 27, 10. *Thine own friend and thy fathers friend forsake thou not, and enter not into thy brothers house in the day of thy calamity: a neighbor near, is better then a brother far off.* Where he showeth, that sound and sincere love between brethren is rare, and the kindness of kinsfolkes tried to be no better then unkindness, especially in the day of adversity. Therefore he adviseth, that we go not to

our aliance and kindred in our afflictions, to crave their help, and require their succor, inasmuch as the brethrē of the poor man for the most part hate him, and are soon weary of him. Nature is oftentimes without good-will, but friendship is never without good-will. Natural men may prove to be unnatural, but a friend which is as thine own soul, cannot; and therefore ordinarily will sooner help his friend, then a brother will his own brother, albeit the Son of his own mother. If so little love be among brethren, no marvel if lesser be among the rest of mankind, where lesser bands are to hold them together. What marvel therefore is it, that neighbors fo sildome live as brethren, and generally men with men: seeing such as are Children of the same father show no more friendship one to another then wild beasts? But we, who besides the common conjunction of man with mā, have learned Christ, have all one Father, who hath called us to the knowledge of his Name, & to the inheritance of his kingdom in Christ, by the means of one faith, which is confirmed both by one baptism, being a badge of our engrafting into the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his last Supper, being a seal of our perpetual nourishment from him: we (I say) must practice better things, and seek (if it be possible) to have peace with all men, having this double communion, both in the flesh and in the Spirit to follow after love. Heereby shall all men know that we are the Disciples of Christ, if we love one another: and hereby we shall know, that we are translated frō death to life, if we love the brethren. We must not live as Wolves and Tigers, by rauine and spoil, we must not oppress one another, for God is an avenger of all such things. This is it that Moses teacheth, Deut. 23, 7. *Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother: neither shalt thou abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a stranger in his Land.* Thus the people of Israel complain against the rich, and cry out upon the unequal & injurious dealing of their brethrē, upon this ground; because their flesh was as the flesh of their brethren, the sons & daughters of the poor, as the sons and daughters of the rich.

Lastly, this serveth to reprove & convince [Use 4] three sorts of men. First, it condemned all railing at, and reviling one of another, all words of reproach and contumely, as if they were our slaves and villains; which practice Christ reproveth, Mat. 5, 22. Secondly, it meeteth with such as delight in contentions, as the beggar doth his sores, & nourishing dissention in the Church or Common-wealth, contrary to the amiable name of brethren that ought to be acknowledged among us. All contention is irksome, but especially y^t which is between brethren. All war is lamentable, but especially civil war, where brother is divided against brother, & sometimes the son against y^e father. This victory should not be sounded with triumph, but passed over with silence. Therefore the Roman Captains, after a civil war, never triumphed when they returned victors, as we see in *Cinna* and *Caesar*, in *Silla* and *Marius*. So among all quarrels and controversies, those among brethren are most unnatural. Wherefore, the Apostle *Paul* saith, *I beseech you brethren, mark them diligently which cause division and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.* So the Apostle *James* teacheth, *If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, rejoyce not, neither be liars against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish: For where envying and strife is, there is sedition, and all manner of evil works.* Wherefore let us learn to cut off all occasions of contentions, even from them that seek occasions. Thirdly, this reproveth all unmerciful dealing towards those that are in necessity, such as was in the

Priest and Levite toward him that fell into the hands of thieves & was wounded. Whē we see a poor man or woman destitute of daily food, in misery and want of this worlds good, we must thus think with our selves, This man or this woman is my flesh, my brother, my sister, as good by nature and in creation, as myself, having the same Maker, and made of the same matter, and bearing the same Image of God as well as myself. It is only God's goodness toward me, that I possess those things which he wanteth; the same Lord requireth of me to my utmost power to relieve and help him. This is taught by *Moses*, Deut. 15, 7. *Thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand frō thy poor brother.* Let it not grieve us to give and forgive. Let us have a cōpassionate heart, a pitiful eye, a liberal hand. Remember it is an easy thing with God to bring thee into as low an ebb, though thou be now afloat, as we see it hath fallen out to many great Kings & mighty Monarchs. This is that charge which the Prophet giveth, Es. 58, 7. *Is not this the fasting that I have chosen, to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that wander, unto thine house, when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and hide not thyself from thine own flesh?* Let this consideration move us to love all mē under heaven, and to show the fruits of mercy unto them in distress, as the Samaritan did to the poor wounded man, Luke 10, 33. Let us pray for the conversion of Jews & Gentiles, as *Stephen* did for his enemies.

[Ver. 15. *Thou knowest our trouble, how our fathers went down into Egypt, therefore I pray thee let us pass.*] This is the second reason before remembered, drawn from the woeful experience of many miseries, which they have had in Egypt and out of Egypt. Here we see, they allege the afflictions endured in •gypt, to stir up the Edomites to pity, and to give thē quiet passage. This reason is thus contrived, If we have suffered many sorrows and afflictions, and been evilly entreated in Egypt, then pity our poor condition, and deliver us out of our distress: but we have all suffered many sorrows and afflictions, &c: therefore pity us and give us passage. Mark here the force and strength of the reason: he persuadeth thē to grant them free passage, moved with this consideration, that the miseries of the Church have been many, and as yet they saw no end of them. They were bound by all good means to procure their peace, and seek a blessed end of their present sorrows, that entering into the Land, they might sit under their Vines & Fig-trees, and reason of the ways and word of the Lord without fear. Now the want of this liberty and freedom to serve the Lord, and the distressed estate of the oppressed Church, is made a motive to mercy in these Edomites to redress their troubles, and so the *Israelites* might have been eased, & themselves no way burdened. From hence we learn, that y^e wants and miseries of the Church should move the hearts of others to pity them, and to procure according to their power the remedy thereof. Whensoever we see the people of God in affliction, if there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any compassion and mercy, we must be touched inwardly even to the quick, and put too our helping hand to end their calamities as we are able. This hath been put in practice from time to time by the holy servants of the Lord. When *Nehemiah* heard that y^e people returned from captivity, were still in great misery, Neh. 1, 3, 4, Jerusalem trodden down, the gates burnt with fire, he sate down and wept, he mourned, fasted, & prayed before the God of heaven for the redress of those evils, and for a blessing upon his holy endeavours. The like affection we see in *Mordecai* & *Ester*; chap. 4, 8, 16. when

Mordecai saw what evil was concluded against the Church, and that a commission was sued out at *Shushan* to destroy and massacre the people of God in one day, he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth, he goeth to *Ester*, he chargeth her that she should go in to the King, and make petition and supplication before him for her people. She undertaketh the cause of the Church with the hazard of her life, she relieth upon the all-giving providence of God, saying; If I perish, I perish, I will go in to the King, albeit it be not according to the Law. So the Prophet teacheth, *Psal. 80, 5*, where he complaineth, that God had given them bread of tears, and fed them with tears to drink in great measure; *Thou hast made us a reproach to our enemies, thou hast brought a Vine out of Egypt, thou hast cast out the Heathen, and planted it, yet the wild Boar devoureth it, the beasts of the field eat it up.* Upon this consideration he showeth his affection, and oftentimes doubleth it: *Return we beseech thee, O God of hosts, look down from heaven, and visit this Vine.* The like care of redressing the distressed condition of the Church, appeareth in *Habakkuk*; for when God revealed unto him, that for the wickedness and iniquity, the strife and contention of the people, he would punish and visit them by the Chaldeans, a Nation worsen than themselves, it cōstrained the Prophet to break out into an earnest prayer; *When I heard thy voice, I trembled and was afraid, Lord, in wrath and in the midst of judgment remember mercy.* *Hab. 1, 3, 6, & 3, 2.* What should I add more? The book of Lamentations showeth, that the horrible desolation of the Church did draw up whole buckets of water, and fountains of tears frō the Prophet, even bowels of compassion and most earnest prayer to God for the delivery of his people, being moved with a sensible feeling of the Churches distresses. *Lam. 1, and 2, and 3.*

And although this meditation alone be sufficient [Reason 1] to enforce this affection of compassion, yet it may be more earnestly considered, and deeply enforced by sundry reasons. For first, nothing ought to be more precious and dear unto us, then to see the flourishing estate of the Church: nothing ought to go nearer unto our hearts, and to make our eyes a fountain of tears to weep day and night, then to behold the decayings and desolations of Zion. This appeareth evidently unto us, *Psal. 137, 1, 2, 5*, where the Prophet layeth down the miserable estate of the Church under the Babylonians, and the affection of the Church conceived upon that distress, *We sate down and wept when we remembered Zion, we hanged our Harps upon the willows in the midst thereof; if I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget to play, If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave unto the roof of my mouth, yea if I prefer not Jerusalem before my chief joy.* Wherein ariseth this reason, that howsoever many things are ministered to comfort the people of God, as favor, friends, honor, glory, pleasure, and prosperity, yet above all other joy, the peaceable and prosperous estate of the Church affecteth thē, as that which sticketh nearest, and cleaveth closest unto them, at the sight whereof the Angels take occasion to wonder at the mercies of God. Contrariwise, the troubles and tumults raised against the Church, beginning to prevail against it, and threatening to make havoc of it, have caused the greatest sorrow of all other incident to the sons of men.

We see a worthy and memorable example of this in the wife of *Phinehas*, when the Philistines prevailed over the people of God, many sorrows fell upon her, one in the neck of another; the taking of the Ark, the fall of her father, the death of her husband, the slaughter of her

brother, the overthrow of the host, the triumph of the enemy: yet above all (as if the rest were nothing) the report of taking the Ark, was as a sword to pierce through her soul, and suffered her not to receive any comfort in her travail, but she named her child, *Icabod*, that is, no glory, saying; *The glory is departed from Israel, because the Ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law, and her husband: She said again, For the Ark of GOD is taken.* 1 Sam. 4, 19, 21, 22. Whereby we see, that howsoever we feel nothing but worldly losses, being men of this world, whose portion is in this life, and are acquainted with nothing but worldly sorrows which cause death, choosing rather to leave Christ, then to lose our commodities; to sell our birth-right, then to want our pottage, like profane *Esau*, or the swinish *Gadarenes*: yet she sealet up her sorrow in the name of her son, and repeateth the departure of the glory from Israel, as that which most of all doubled and increased her affliction. If then, all things in this life are not to be compared and matched with the prosperous proceeding & increase of the Church in spiritual things; if no earthly loss of things nearest and dearest unto them, do so far enter into them as the calamities and ruins of the Church, marvel not if the wants thereof go near unto the Church, and stir them up to labor the redress thereof in their best meditations.

Secondly, the distresses of the Church set [Reason 2] open a wide door to faithless and profane men, to insult contumeliously, and to triumph vain-gloriously over the Church, as though God had forsaken them, & left them as a prey in the jaws of the enemy, whereby the truth is slandred, & the Name of God which ought to be precious unto us, is blasphemed. This appeareth, Psalm. 70, 1, 4, 5, 8, 10. when the heathen rushed into the inheritance of God, defiled the Temple, and made Jerusalem an heap of stones, that they were *a reproach unto their neighbors, even a scorn and derision to them that were round about them.* The Prophet expressing his affection, saith; *Lord, how long wilt thou be angry, forever? Shall thy jealousy burn like fire?* And thē he addeth this as a reason: *Wherefore should the heathen say, where is their God? Let him be known among th^e heathen in our sight by the vengeance of the blood of thy servants that is shed.* So then, as on the one side the flourishing estate of the Church is that which giveth inward joy and true comfort of heart above all other things to God's servants, & on the other side, the distresses of the Church do set open a door to faithless and rebellious men, to take advantage to rejoice over the Church, and in the spirit of *Ishmael* to scoff at it with taunts more bitter then gall and wormwood: it followeth, that the troubles thereof must draw us to pity, move us to prayer, and incite us to use all good means to redress them.

The uses follow. First, we must be grieved for the troubles of the Church, as fellow-members [Use] of the same body. Can that be a true and lively member, that is not any way touched with a fellow-feeling of the rest of the members? The Apostle teacheth, 1 Corin. 12, 25, *That the members should have the same care one for another, therefore if one member suffer, all suffer with it: if one member be had in honor, all the members rejoice with it.* Would we then know, whether we have Christ for our head, coupling us together, whether we be members of Christ, and have him dwelling in us by faith, and whether we be made bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, without which we have no salvation? we must examine our harts by this note that is found in all the members of the body one toward another. If any member be hurt or endangered, the rest are ready to help, everyone according to his office; the foot runneth for

it, the eye looketh upon it, the hand stretcheth out it self for the good thereof. If it be so with us in the dangers and desolations of the Church, we have comfort in our own hearts, we carry a witness about us that we are lively members of Christ. But if we have no feeling, no compassion, no pity toward them that suffer for Christ's sake, we are dead and rotten members, we want life and quickening in Christ, we cannot assure our selves that as yet we are engrafted into his body. Therefore the Apostle saith, Gal. 6, 2. *Bear you one another's burden, and so fulfill the Law of Christ.* Again, *Who is weak, & I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* 2 Cor. 11, 29. And in another place, *Be of like affection one to another, rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep,* Rom. 12, 15, 16. Hereunto the Apostle accordeth in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. 13, 3. *Remember them that are in bonds, as though ye were bound with them: and them that are in affliction, as if we were also afflicted in the body:* teaching us hereby that their condition must be as our own condition, and their trouble as our own trouble. So the Prophet uttereth his affection, Lam. 2, 11, 13, 20, that although he should be preserved from the judgment executed, yet beholding Zion lying waste, he crieth out, *Mine eyes gush out water for the destruction of the daughter of my people, thy breach is great like the sea.* And afterward he stirreth up his zeal, *Behold, O Lord, and consider to whom thou hast done thus?* Wherefore, whensoever God offereth us the sight of any chastisement upon our brethren at home, or the neighbor-Churches abroad, we ought not to be as those that are dull, senseless, and past feeling, but to have a simpaty of their sorrows, and draw out the bowels of compassion toward them.

[Use 2] Secondly, woe and woe again to them that are secure, that laugh when the Church weepeth; that live in bravery and excess, whē the Church putteth on sackcloth and ashes; that fill, and feast, and fat themselves with all delicates, when the Church fasteth; that awake not out of their sleep, when the judgments of God are here unto them. This the Prophet reproveth, Isaiah 22, 12, 13, 14. *In that day did the Lord of hosts call unto weeping & mourning, and to baldness, & girding with sackcloth: & behold, joy & gladness, slaying oxen & killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine, for tomorrow we shall die.* When we are once come to this carelessness and contempt of our brethren's condition, the threatening denounced in these words following shall fall upon us: *Our iniquities shall not be purged from us until we die.* A fearful sentence of a grievous judgment, to teach us humility, and to drive away all security. Hereunto also cometh the saying of Amos chap. 6, 1, 2, 3, 4.5, 6. Where we see, he pronounceth the woeful estate and condition of those that lived without fear and regard of God's judgments, neither remembered their brethren carried into captivity, and living in great adversity. We live in the time of the distresses and wants of the Church. This calleth us to practice this duty, of seeking the good of the Church, and using all good means by supplication to God, and by petition to men, for the redress thereof. Especially let us be mindful in our prayers of the peace of Jerusalem, *Because of the house of the Lord our God.* This was the prayer of the Prophet, *Lord, be favorable to Zion, for thy good pleasure, build the walls of Jerusalem.* If then we would have both the Common-wealth and our private wealth to flourish, we must tender the good and flourishing estate of the Church, we must be tender-hearted to procure the prosperous estate thereof. For the Church and Common-wealth are as those twins which are said to weep together, and to laugh together; they flourish

together, they fade together, they fall together. So long as pure religion and preaching of the Gospel are maintained, it cannot go ill with the common-wealth, they are as a brazen wall, as a strong fortress and bulwark, as a Castle of defense, to keep out all invasion of enemies, and crying in our streets. For the one addeth strength unto the other, whilst the Common-wealth fighteth against the visible enemies of the Church by counsel and authority, the Church fighteth against the invisible enemies of the Commonwealth by prayer and supplication. If then the Church be spoiled, & the publishing of the Gospel be hindered, the Commonwealth cannot long go free, but the foundation thereof is dangerously shaken, which hath no promise to be kept in good estate, but as it is a Nurse to the Church, and a Lantern to hold the light of the word. The like might be said of private families, and of particular persons, we have no assurance of the protection of God, & of the continuance of our estate in peace, farther then we promote his glory, and give entertainment to the Gospel. We see in the second book of the Chronicles, ch. 36, 15. when the people of Israel came to this height of iniquity, to mock the messengers & misuse the servants of God, which he sent unto them rising early, *Because he had compassion on his people and on his habitation, then he brought upon them the King of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men with the sword, in the house of their Sanctuary, & spared neither young men nor virgins, ancient nor aged, God gave them all into his hand.* So Christ saith, Mat. 23, 37. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets, & stonest thē that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as the Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, but ye would not.* Now what followeth this contempt of the word, and neglect of the Gospel? *Behold, your habitation shall be left unto you desolate.* To conclude therefore, let us promote true religion, and then we shall prosper and be safe; otherwise we have no promise of blessing.

Lastly, this doctrine of pitying the Churches [Use 3] troubles, serveth most fitly to condemn the contrary practice of those miserable and merciless men that are without all humanity & natural affection, that are borne of wolves, nourished of tygers, and have sucked y' milk of most savage beasts, or rather the poison of asps and vipers, whose very bowels of mercy are the breathings out of cruelty, as the wise man speaketh: who are so far from pitying the miseries of others, and helping them in their distresses, that they add to the heap of their afflictions, oppress them with an heavier burden, and thrust them quite down that are ready even to fall. This the Prophet condemneth, Psal. 69, 26, 27. This is a note of extreme hatred and malice, and yet how many are there among us, that live in the bosom of the Church, who make the miseries of others as a game and pastime to refresh themselves, reviling & reproaching with most bitter taunts and terms of infamy, such as lie under the cross, as those passengers that mocked Christ hanging on the Cross? Let all such remember the wise counsel of the wise man in sundry places of the Proverbs, chap. 11, 8. & 24, 16, 17, 18. Where he showeth, that howsoever the faithful may fall into many adversities, yet their adversaries are not to triumph over thē, and tread them under their feet as dung of the earth, no nor show signs of mirth & gladness in their affliction, lest the Lord who pondreth the spirits, lay the same affliction upon them. So then, to rejoyce at the misery of another, that he may have sorrow upon sorrow, is the ready way to bring misery and draw God's plagues upon our selves: and therefore if at any time we see them sink down in affliction as under a burden, it

is our parts not only to pity them, but to comfort and relieve them, who are commanded to raise up the Ass of our enemy that is fallen down, as we see in the law of *Moses: Thou knowest our trouble, how our fathers went down into Egypt*. Hitherto we have handled the strength of the reason: now let us consider the truth of the words, which set forth the miseries and afflictions of the Church of God. From hence we learn, that the afflictions of the church are many: the troubles that it endureth at the hands of evil men are very great. True it is, the people of God are endued with the first fruits of the Spirit, and are reserved unto a kingdom, yet if we will live with him, we must first die with him: if we will reign with him, we must first suffer with him; if we will have him wipe away all our tears in heaven, we must first shed them on earth. This is expressly taught, *Psal. 34, 19*. So the Apostle *James*, chap. 1, 2. *1 Cor. 4, 9. & 2 Cor. 11, 23, 24, 25, 26*. This was the estate of the whole Church of the Hebrews described, *Heb. 11, 35, 36, 37, 38*. This we might farther consider in the examples of the Patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job, Joseph, David, Jeremiah*, and sundry others, whose lives are a plentiful storehouse to testify this truth, that the people of God do many times endure manifold afflictions from evil men.

The reasons are evident. First, the enemies [Reason 1] of the Church know not the Father, neither Jesus Christ his Son. They have nothing to stop and to stay their fury and violence, being stirred up by their own malice, and set on fire of hell. This is it we read, *John. 16, 2, 3. They shall excommunicate you: yea, the time shall come, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service: and these things will they do, because they have not known the Father nor me*. For whatsoever their pretence be, yet their rage against the servants of God, proceedeth from their ignorance of God, and instigation of the devil, who beareth all the sway in their harts. Therefore Christ saith, *Revel. 2, 10. Behold, it shall come to pass, that the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried*. Howsoever thē, they bear themselves oftentimes in hand that they do well, yet whensoever they take crafty counsel against the innocent, the suggestion is of the devil: when they give their tongues to lying and cursed speaking, they are thrust forward by the father of lies: when their hearts are inflamed with malice, the devil is as the bellows to blow the coals. Finally, whensoever they work injuriously against the Saints of God, he is the master of the mischief, and of him in the end they shall receive their wages.

Again, the delight of God's people is to [Reason 2] follow goodness. Now so long as the devil is in the world, and his instruments stirred up by him that walk after the vanities of their own mind, and the corruptions of their own heart, so long they will always malice and abhor the servants of God, *wherein it seemeth to them strange, that we run not with them into the same excess of riot, therefore speak they evil of us; which shall give accounts to him that is ready to judge the quick and dead*. *1 Pet. 4, 4, 5*. The Spirit of God teacheth this from the beginning, *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall break thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*. Where we see, there is and there must be always a perpetual opposition and enmity between believers and hypocrites, between the godly & the ungodly. The world hateth them that are chosen out of the world, *John 15, 19*. Thus it was in *Abraham's* family which was the Church of God, where he that was borne after the flesh, persecuted him that was borne after the Spirit, even so it is now. *Gal. 4, 29*. Hereunto Solomon had

respect when he said, *A wicked man is abomination to the just, and he that is upright in his way, is abomination to the wicked*, Prov. 29, 27.

The uses now to be considered are these. First, we must learn hereby, that afflictions [Use 1] are not simply evil, neither shall they be able to separate us from God, as we see, Rom. 8.35 28, 38, 39. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, as it is written, for thy sake are we killed all day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.* Nevertheless, in all these things, we are more then conquerors through him that loved us. Where we see, that seeing it is the lot of the righteous to suffer persecution, he concludeth, it shall never be able to separate us frō the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. For God giveth to all those that are his, a sanctified use of the Cross, who disposeth all things to work the best to them that love God, even to them that are called of his purpose. This is the unspeakable mercy of God, that maketh not only the Ministry of the word, the use of the sacraments, the grace of prayer, and such like exercises of our holy religion turn to our good, but blesseth the bitter cup of the greatest afflictions that is offered us to drink, to be unto us the medicine of the soul, the trial of faith, the mortifying of corruption, the school house of humility, the preaching of repentance, the renouncing of the world, the taming of the flesh, and the stirring of us up to prayer. We may now comfortably conclude to our own consciences with the same Apostle, *I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God.* Let us know then there is great use of the cross, being assured, that *tribulation bringeth forth patience, & patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our harts by the holy Ghost, which is given unto us.*

[Use 2] Secondly, we learn hereby, not to promise to our selves worldly peace & prosperity, but prepare to endure the cross before it cometh, and know that the end of one cross is the beginning of another, while we live here. We must not look to find heaven upon earth, we must not dreme of the victory before we fight. We think of receiving the prize, but we would not run the race. We would put on the crown, but we shun the cross, like those foolish husbandmen that would receive the fruits of the earth, but care not for the labor. And surely the reason why we are many ways impatient under the cross, & murmur under the mighty hand of God, is, because we are unprepared & unprovided to bear any storm, or endure any trial. We must not think to live at ease and pleasure, but know, that whosoever taketh not up his cross & cometh after Christ cannot be his Disciple. So *Paul teacheth Timothy, Thou hast fully known my faith and my patience, my persecutions which came unto me, but from them all the Lord delivered me: yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.* 2 Tim. 3, 10, 12. For as the head was first crowned with thorns, so the members must not look to live in pleasures.

Lastly, be not offended at the great afflictions [Use 3] that oftentimes we hear to befall y^e faithful, or we see to be upon such as fear God; let us not marvel and wonder at it, as at some rare and strange thing, much less should we start back from our profession for the persecutions and fiery trials that come upon the Church. Therefore the Apostle *John* saith,

Maruaile not my brethren, though this world hate you: nay, rather we have cause to rejoice, that God vouchsafeth us this honor, not only to believe in him, but to suffer for his Name. This made Paul say, Acts 21, 13. being entreated that he would not go up to Jerusalem, *What do ye weeping, and breaking mine heart? For I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the Name of the Lord Jesus.* Doubtless, if we were of the world, the world would love his own; but because we are chosen out of the world, therefore the world hateth us. It is noted to the everlasting praise of the Apostles, Acts 5, 21. Heb. 10, 33, 34. Cast not away therefore your confidence which hath great recompense of reward. God hath no need of us to maintain his glory, he is able to maintain it without us; therefore it is a great privilege and prerogative, that God calleth us out to suffer for his Names sake. Besides, such and so great are our infirmities, that the Lord might worthily make us suffer for our own sins, and bring shame and confusion of faces upon us, according to our own deservings.

Now, in that he mercifully passeth over our faults and frailties, & covereth our transgressions, and maketh us suffer taunts, reproaches, & persecutions, for his truth and Gospel, it is a great honor and dignity whereunto he exalteth and advanceth us; and therefore our Savior saith, *Blessed shall ye be when men revile and persecute you, & say all manner of evil against you for my sake falsely, rejoice and be glad: for great is your reward in heaven.* Mat. 5, 11, 12. Wherefore, let us not shrink back for trouble, but rejoice in our sufferings, and praise God for our afflictions.

[Ver. 16. *But when we cried unto the Lord; he heard our voice: therefore let us pass through thy Country.* Here we have the third reason used to the Edomites, to persuade them to give them passage, drawn from an experience of God's help, who seeing their misery, and hearing their groanings, brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Now it would argue great cruelty, to forsake those and leave them in their affliction, of whō God hath taken the protection. If then God have helped us, do not you deny us help: but God hath helped us, therefore deny not us your help. Thus the gracious dealing of God is propounded for their imitation.

This is a forcible and effectual reason, teaching us this Doctrine, that the consideration of God's love & mercy shown to his childrē, must move us to mercy. The truth hereof hath the consent and agreement of many other Scriptures. Hereunto cometh the exhortation of Moses, Deut. 10.17, 18, 19. *The Lord your God is God of God's, and the Lord of Lord's, a great God, mighty, and terrible, who doth right unto the fatherless and widow, & loveth the stranger, giveth him food and raiment: Love ye therefore the stranger, for ye were strangers in the Land of Egypt.* Thus the Apostle reasoneth, 1 John. 4, 9, 11. *God hath manifested his love in sending his only begotten Son into this world, that we might live thorough him. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* Wher we see, he persuadeth to brotherly love in respect of the experience which we have of the free love of God toward our selves. So our Savior concludes, Lu. 6, 36. *Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.* Hereunto cometh that which we read in the Apostle John, in another place, *Hereby have we perceived love, that he laid down his life for us, therefore we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren* 1 John 3, 8, 16. There is nothing more effectual to persuade brethren to unity among themselves, thē to know they have a

gentle father that loveth them all. Nothing is able to bind faster those that are fellow-servants in one family, to seek the mutual good one of another, then to consider they have a good master, careful of the good of them all, to give them their portion in due season

[Reason 1] The reasons are evident. First, we are bound to follow the example of God, which must be our direction and instruction. This the Apostle teacheth. Phil. 2, 5, where he exhorteth to humility and lowliness of mind from the example of Christ, *Let the same mind be in you, that was even in Christ Jesus.* And the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. 11.32, having propounded the examples of the Patriarchs and Prophets, y^t by faith received a good report, concludeth, that we must rather look to the example of Christ, *the Author & finisher of our faith, who endured the Cross, and despised the shame for the joy that was set before him.* If thē the example of God be to be followed of us, we must be moved to show mercy where we see y^e bountiful hand of God opened before us.

[Reason 2] Secondly, we are the children of God, we are the servants of God, we are the subjects of his kingdom; we must therefore seek to be like to him, & resemble him in our obedience to his Commandments, as the Apostle Peter showeth, *As obedient children fashion not yourselves unto the former lusts of your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.* And thus saith the Lord by Malachi the Prophet, ch. 1, 6. *A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master: If then I be a Father, where is mine honor? If I be a Master, where is my fear?* Hereunto accordeth and agreeth the exhortation of Christ, John. 13, 12, 13, 14. *Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master, and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am: If I then your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do even as I have done to you.*

[Use 1] The uses. First let us learn to acknowledge from hence this truth, that great is God's mercy, who never faileth nor forsaketh those that are his. For assuredly, his mercy and compassion should never be propounded to us as a rule to direct us, and as an example to guide us, if there were not infinite love in him, and in our God plentiful redemption. Wherefore, we may safely conclude this principle of our faith and teach it to others, that the mercies of God are sure and certain to his Church. This the Prophet handleth at large, Psal. 103, 8, 11, 13. *The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger, and of great kindness as high as the heaven is above the earth, so great is his mercy toward thē that fear him: As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him.* There is no end, no measure, no limitation of his mercy & compassion. The height of it is not to be taken, the depth of it is not to be found, the length and breadth of it is not to be comprehended. It is higher then the heavens, it is deeper then the grave, it is longer then the earth, it is broader then the sea: *Who is it that by searching can find out God, or search out the Almighty to his perfection?* For love, and mercy, & pity, are not in God as they are in men. In us, they are such graces of the Spirit of God as we are qualified withal through his gift, they are streams flowing from his Fountain, and as light drawn from his Candle. But in God are no qualities or accidents, he is of none, but hath his being of himself, & giveth being to all other things. Therefore the Apostle saith, *God is love it self:* not only the Fountain and well-spring of love,

but love it self. And one saith truly and properly: God is not wise, but wisdom it self: not just, but justice it self: not pitiful, but pity it self: not merciful, but mercy it self: not good, but goodness it self. This is a great comfort and refreshing to us in all afflictions, be they never so great, be they never so grievous: there is no infirmity and weakness in God, his mercy is over all his works, he is infinite in compassion, he can no more cease to be merciful, then cease to be God, and therefore it being essential to him, our misery can never exceed or countervail his mercy. Secondly, we must [Use 2] learn from hence, to love all the creatures of God (albeit not all equally) after the example of God. We read everywhere in the Scripture, of the love of God, loving not only his Son, his Church, his Elect, but the rest of the world, the reprobate, and all his creatures, *Giving them rain and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with joy and gladness*. Let us therefore first see what the love of God is. He loveth all his creatures, even all the works of his hands, *He saw all that he had made, and loe, they were exceeding good*. Yea, he doth good to all, in him they move, live, breathe, and have their being. Notwithstanding, he loveth his elect and chosen people, ordained to eternal life, more then the rest of mankind, whom he leaveth in their sin, to work out their own confusion, as the Apostle teacheth, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*. For touching the faithful, he calleth them effectually, he justifieth thē freely, he sanctifieth them thoroughly in soul and body; yea, as the faithful increase in grace & the exercises of piety, so they more and more feel the love of God toward them, as Christ speaketh, *He that keepeth my Commandments, is he that loveth me, and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father*. Here then we have an example before us for our continual instruction to guide us in the matter and measure of our love. For first, the meanest of the creatures are to be loved, none of them are to be abused of us. Hereunto tend the laws givē to the Jews, not to oppress our Cattle, not to musle the mouth of the Ox, nor to take the dam with the young, to help up the Ass sinking & falling under his burden, and such like. Secondly, we must much more love mankind, made after the Image of God; yea even our enemies, according to the commandment of our Lord and Master Christ, Math. 5, 44, 45. This is not a counsel, but a Commandment, charging us to love our enemies, seeking their good, thirsting after their salvation, overcoming evil with goodness, heaping coals of fire upon their head, and thereby gathering an assurance to our own hearts that we are the children of God. Thirdly, it belongeth to the faithful, to love the faithful with an especial love, as children with them of the self same Father, & heirs with them of the same kingdom: for *hereby we shall know that we are translated from death to life, because we love the brethren*. This the Apostle teacheth, Gal. 6, 10. *While we have time, let us do good to all men, but especially unto them that are of the household of faith*. So that in the duties of love, we must prefer our godly brethrē, that are Christians by profession, Saints by calling, heirs by faith, sons by adoption, partakers of the same grace with us; yea, as we see the gifts of God more clearly to shine, and more manifestly to multiply in them, so our love must increase toward them. As they go forward or backward, increase or decrease; as we see them zealous, or cold, or luke-warm, so must our inward love proceed or stay, grow or slake toward them; & always where God showeth forth the abundance of his love shed into their hearts, we must most wisely bestow our love according to his example, which the nearer we follow, the more conformable we are to God, wherein standeth our happiness.

[Use 3] Lastly, it reproveth such as are vnappeasable, and will never forgive and forget the injuries that are done unto them. Assuredly, such shall find judgment without mercy, as show no mercy. Who is there among us, that doth not daily (even with the air) draw in y^e mercy of God. It is his mercy that we are not all consumed. If then, having our selves received so great mercy, we can return in way of thankfulness, no compassion to others, we make a law against our selves, and as it were stop and shut up the spring of grace from flowing unto us. This the Apostle *James* teacheth, *There shall be judgment merciles to him that showeth no mercy, and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.* It standeth us all therefore upon, not to rest in y^e bare and naked name of the sons of God, but labor in the truth of the inner parts and in sincerity of our hearts to be like to him, practicing the exhortatiō of the Apostle, *As the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, &c.* There is no salvation without pardon and remission of sin. Would we then have salvation? Do we desire forgiveness at the hand of God? The means to assure us that we have attained it, is to put away wrath & all maliciousness, and to be courteous & tender-hearted one to another, forgiving one another, if we desire to feel any true comfort to our own souls in the forgiveness of our own sins.

When we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice. The truth of the former reason, setteth down the love of God to his people, hearing their prayers, sending his Angel, and bringing them out of Egypt. The doctrine out of these words considered in themselves, is this; God loveth and favoereth his own people. Howsoever they be hated of the world, because they are not of the world, but are chosen out of the world, yet he setteth thē as a seal on his heart, and as a signet on his arm. Hereunto come the amiable and lovely titles y^t Christ giveth to his Church, calling it, & knocking unto it, saying; *Open unto me my Sister, my Love, my Dove, my undefiled; for my head is full of dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* So the Prophet expresseth his love in the Psalm, toward his people, *Albeit they were few in number, yea, very few, and strangers in the Land, and walked about from Nation to Nation, from one Kingdom to another people, yet suffered he no man to do thē harm, but reproveth Kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* So Moses testifieth the same; *The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a precious people unto himself, above all people that are upon the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you nor choose you, because ye were moe in number then any people (for ye were the fewest of all people) but because the lord loved you, and would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers.* Thus God in great mercy brought *Abraham* from his Country, took *David* from the sheepfolds, chose *Peter* and *Andrew* from their nets, called *Matthew* from the custom, converted the thief upon the cross, and turned *Paul* from a persecutor to be an Apostle, being oftentimes found of them that sought not after him: by all which testimonies and examples it appeareth, that God doth show himself good and gracious unto his people.

The reasons are; First, because they are his [Reason 1] sons and daughters. This is an argument of great love, & a testimony that he will not forsake us forever. We are not only the servants and friends of God, but the sons of God, & the spouse of Christ. Indeed Christ is the natural Son of God, and the eldest brother, by whom we are adopted to be the sons of God. This reason the Apostle propoundeth, 1 John 3, 1. *Behold, what love the Father hath given to us, that we should be called the sons of God; for this cause the world knoweth you not, because it*

knoweth not him Great is the affection of fervent love y^t parents bear toward their children; no heart of any can well express it, but he that hath been a father himself to feel it. Others may, well speak of it, but they are not able to comprehend it. And yet all their love is a cold & frozen love, yea it is no love indeed, yea it is no better then hatred in comparison of the love that the Father of heaven and earth beareth to his children, whose love to us is wonderful passing the love of men and women. This the Prophet teacheth, *Can a woman forget her child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb, though they should forget, yet will not I forget thee.* Es. 49, 15. Likewise Christ saith, Mat. 7, 9, 10. *What man is there among you, which if his son ask him bread, would give him a stone? Or if he ask fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then which are evil, can give to your children good gifts; how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him?*

[Reason 2] Again, he hath sent his Son into y^e world, who came from the bosom of his Father, and took our nature upon him, he endured the infirmities of our nature, the shame of the cross, the wrath of his Father, to bring us into his favor. He was punished, we are pardoned: he was charged with our sins, we are discharged from our sins: he was crucified, we are acquitted: he was condemned, we are justified. Thus the Apostle *John* reasoneth, *Herein was the love of God made manifest among us, because God sent his only begotten Son into this world, that we might live through him. Herein is that love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a reconciliation for our sins.* The natural Son of God was smitten for the unnatural: the only begotten, for the adopted: the beloved, for the enemy: greater love then this could no man show, then to die for his enemies. But God setteth out his love toward us, seeing that while we were yet sinners, [Use 1] Christ died for us. The uses follow. First, we may conclude from hence, that no creature shall be able to hurt his people. If he have takē them into his protection, & loved them with an everlasting love, who shall by the hatred of thē procure their harm? If he be on our side, who shall be against us? If he be our friend, who shall show himself our enemy? What servant feareth the face of his fellow servant that hath the good will of his master? Or what mā feareth the hatred of any subject, that hath the love of his Prince? So then, the consideration of God's love toward us, assureth us of our blessed condition, and of our safety & defense from all dangers that may surprise us. Whosoever dwelleth in the secret of the most High, shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty, he will deliver him from the snare of the hunter, and from the noisome pestilence. This the Prophet concludes, *Extend thy loving kindness unto them that know thee, and thy righteousness unto them that are upright in heart: Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked move me.* Let us labor to have a true feeling of the love of God shed in our hearts by the holy Ghost, then will he cover us under his wings, and we shall be sure under his feathers. The cause why we fear him that can kill the body, is, because we are not rooted & grounded in the love of God.

[Use 2] Secondly, hereby we receive another comfort to our faith; for as the wicked shall not hurt us, so we are assured to have our prayers heard & granted. Why? because God loveth us as his dear children. Comes not that child with boldness unto his father that loveth him in all his need? So if once we have this persuasion settled in us, that God will show himself gracious unto us, we may ask in faith and not waver, but be assured of the promise of God,

that he will give to them that ask, and open the gate of mercy to them that knock. This Christ our Savior affirmeth, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you: Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full: for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came from God.* What greater comfort can there be then this, that God will hear our prayers? that we may vnlade all our cares and troubles into his bosom? There cannot be a greater daunting and dismaying unto any, then when God will not respect and regard them, though they pour out many prayers, yet he will not hear them, as he threateneth those that will not hear his voice, speking and crying unto them in the ministry of his word, *They shall cry and not be heard.* Prov. 1, 28. Zach. 7, 13. So, of all comforts that can befall us in this life, this is one of the greatest, which cannot be taken from us, though our mouths should be stopped, yet we may safely lift up our hearts and souls unto the Lord, from whence our help cometh.

Thirdly, it is our duty to love one another, [Use 3] as everyone of us hath a blessed experience of God's mercy & favor toward us, let us deal in like measure toward our brethren. This the Apostle John exhorteth unto, *Herein is that love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, & sent his Son to be a reconciliation for our sins: Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another: for hereby shall all men know that we are his Disciples, if we love one another. This is my Commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you: greater love then this hath no man, when any man bestoweth his life for his friends.* Great was the love of God toward us, as appeareth by many circumstances & considerations. For he loved us first, not we him; as Christ chose his Disciples, not they him. Heereby God cōmendeth & setteth forth his love toward us, that he loved us first, and not we him.

Again, he loved us when we were not, whē we had not our birth or being, he chose us to be a peculiar people unto himself before the foundations of the world, as Rom. 9. *Before the children were borne, and when they had done neither good nor evil, it was said, Jacob have I loved.*

Thirdly, he loved us, when we were enemies unto him, he was found of us when we sought not after him, nay when we fled from him and rebelled against him, as Ro. 5, 6. & 10. Christ, when we were yet of no strength, at his time died for the ungodly: so as God setteth out his love toward us, seeing that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Fourthly, he loved us frankly and freely, without any merits or deserts of our own, but of his own mere grace and favor only. Our salvation is wholly of grace. *We are elected according to the good pleasure of his will. We are called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace,* 2 Tim. 1, 9. *We are justified freely by his grace, without the works of the Law,* Rom. 3, 24, 28. *We have salvation of grace, not of our selves: It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast,* Eph. 2, 8, 9. Lastly, the love of God is so great, that he spared not his own Son, but gave him to the death, *That whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* If then the love of God be such and so great to his servants, that he loved them first: freely, when they were not, when they were his enemies, & spared not his well-beloved Son for them: how great should our Christian love be one to another, to promote the good one of another, and to relieve the necessities one of another? *We know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he being rich, for our sakes became poor, that we thorough his*

poverty might be made rich: Whosoever therefore hath this worlds good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion frō him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? Wherefore, let us not love in word, neither in tongue only, as Cain, which was of that evil one, and slew his brother; but in deed and in truth; for hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall before him assure our hearts. It is not enough if we hurt no man, it is required of us to do good from the heart, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick, and to seek all occasions of showing our compassion unto them.

[Verse 17. *We will not go through the fields.*] This is the fourth and last reason yielded to y^e King of Edom, to obtain their purpose and passage through his country. Wherein the Israelites promise a peaceable marching, without doing wrong to any. As if they should say, We do not desire that our selves should be benefited, and you hindered; our selves eased, and you burdened; our selves comforted, and you grieved; our selves to gain, and you to live by the loss: we covet no man's silver nor gold, we gape after no man's goods, we will not take any possession of your country, we will not enter your fields, we will not drink of your wels, we will not invade your vineyards, we will not stay to take up your places as our own dwelling, we will only make a thorowfare among you, keeping the Kings high way, and not taking so much as a thread or shoe-latchet from any man to enrich our selves, having learned not to do that to another, which we would not have done to our selves. So thē, the strength of the reason to move them to grant them free passage, standeth in propounding & laying before them their just dealing toward them. This may teach us, that as good men in love and kindness deal with us, so must we deal with them again: and with what measure they measure to us, it must be measured to them again. The Apostle describing the properties and effects of true love, affirmeth, that *It doth nothing uncomely: it seeketh not her own things: it is not provoked to anger: it thinketh no evil.* So our Savior, having expounded the Commandments of the second Table, compriseth the sum of them all in this, saying; *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do ye to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.* And there is good use to be made of this point, that we learn to be so affected to others, as we wish and desire in our hearts to have others minded toward our selves.

Now there is no man but seeketh his own good, and desireth to be respected when he wanteth the help of others; therefore let us do good to other men, let us abstain from wrongs and injuries, let us hurt no man, but procure the profit and safety one of another: and every man be a rule to himself of just and upright dealing toward his neighbors, performing that to others which we require to be done to our selves.

We will not go through the fields, nor the vineyards, &c. We will go up by the high way. Having in the former Doctrine pointed out y^e strength of the reason, let us now proceed to consider the words themselves, by themselves, wherein we see the solemn promise the people make, to observe the rule of charity, & law of equity, to know their own frō other men's goods, & to medle nothing with that which belonged to others. We learn from hence, that God's people must offer no wrong, nor violently intrude themselves upon the possessions of other men. In that the Israelites show their innocence, and harmless purpose, the servants of God must learn to abstain from all injuries; fraud, and oppression. Hereunto cometh the

commandment, Deut. 24, 17. *Thou shalt not pervert the right of the stranger, nor of the fatherless, nor take a widows raiment to pledge.* So Zeph. 1, •. *I will visit all those that dance upon the threshold so proudly, which fill their masters houses with cruelty and deceit.* Likewise when the soldiers demanded of John the Baptist, what they should do, he said unto them, *Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages.* Thus the Apostle also teacheth, showing, that *love suffereth long, is bountiful, envieth not, boasteth not it self, is not puffed up, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.* And in another place: *Let him that hath stole, steal no more, but let him rather labor, and work with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give unto him that needeth.* Thus we see, this is a plain and evident truth, that no deceit & defrauding of our brethren, whether openly or closely, whether in bargaining or out of bargaining, must be used among the people of God.

And no marvel. For first, we are called to better things. It standeth not therefore with [Reason 1] our profession to intrude upon other men's substance, and to use unjust dealing in heart or deed, being forbidden to steal or to hurt any man. This the Apostle urgeth, 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4, verse 7. *Let no man oppress or defraud his brother in any matter, for God hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness.* We must everyone know the end of our calling; which is, that we should be holy & unblameable before him, that hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Therefore brethren, partakers of the heavenly vocation, let us walk so, as we may adorn the Gospel of Christ, and beautify our profession of the doctrine of Christ. If then any that is called a brother, or a Christian, walk inordinately, and live wickedly, if he circumvent any man, if he oppress his brother, this must be charged upon his person, not upon his calling; & be imputed to the man, not to his profession, as the manner of some is, who are ready to catch the least advantage to speak evil of the truth of God. For our calling is heavenly, and our profession is holy, it will not bear out any unjust practice.

[Reason 2] Again, God is a just Judge, an avenger of all wrongful dealing between man & man. It is God that distributeth this worlds good, and the things of this life to whomsoever he pleaseth. He is the general Lord of the whole world, he hath the souereigne right in his own hand, and hath in most excellent wisdom distributed and disposed to every man his several portion, and no man lawfully enjoyeth anything but by the gift and giving of God. So the, whosoever circumventeth his brother, getteth anything from him by fraud, & impaireth any way his wealth, crosseth God's ordinance, inuerteth his order, and will bring in a new and another division of the earth thē God hath made. For whereas God hath said, *This man shall have this portion, he shall have this house, this horse, this land, this money; this corn, this cattle: the thief cometh and saith, The churl shall not have it, or he shall not have so much, I will part stakes with him, and so turneth upside down the distribution that God hath made, making himself wiser then God, and bringing upon his own head the due and deserved curse of God.* For if the Lord pronounce him accursed, *that remooueth the bounds and marks of his neighbor, of ancient time set,* as the listes and limits of men's possession: how much more accursed shall he be, that changeth the bounds which God, *the ancient of days* hath made in the world, having given the earth to the sons of men? Wherefore, God maintaining his own right and office, showeth himself a just avenger of such pride and presumption, as the

Apostle reasoneth, 1 Thess. 4, 6. *Let no man defraud or oppress his brother in any bargain; for the Lord is an avenger of all such things, &c.*

The uses are these. First, it teacheth us to [Use 1] be content and well pleased with that estate wherein we are put and placed by the hand of God. This will be a notable means to keep us from rushing violently into the possessions of other men. Let us not suffer our hearts and affections to overflow the banks and bounds of our condition, but rather show our thankfulness to God for our present estate, considering that how much or how little soever we have, we have more a great deal thē we have deserved. Therefore the Apostle saith, *I have learned, in what state soever I am, therewith to be content.* Phil. 4, 11. 1 Tim. 6, 6, 7. Heb. 13, 5, 6.

Secondly, we must be careful to give to every [Use 2] one his own, that we do no way oppress the fatherless and the widow, neither do injury to the stranger, lest *they cry to the Lord, & he hear them*, and his wrath be kindled: then saith the Lord, I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless, Exod. 22, 22, 23, 29. Again, we must not use false weights and deceitful measures, to enrich our selves by the spoils of others, Levite. 26, 35, 36. *Ye shall not do unjustly in judgment, in line, in weight, and in measure, &c.* Now, greater injustice there cannot be, then to turn the measures of justice to be instruments of craft and subtlety. Therefore Solomon saith, *Divers weights and diverse measures* (buying with a greater, and selling with a less, or selling to the wise and wary• buyer with the greater, and to the simpler sort that trust them too far & see not their fraud, with a lesser, thereby deceiving others to enrich themselves) *both these are such an abhominatiō to the Lord*, as he will not leave vnpunisht.

Lastly, we are from hence instructed to restore [Use 3] that w^c is wrongfully gotten, otherwise we cannot truly repent of our oppression. It is a bad practice used of many y^t grind the faces of the poor, as the Lyon roaring after his prey, or the *wolf in the evening which leaveth not the bones till the morrow*: which do use devoutly to bequeath their souls to God, & presently give their evil gotten goods to their heirs; and therefore God oftentimes bloweth upon them, so that being unrighteously gotten they are vnthriftilly wasted and consumed. The reason is, because with such goods they likewise bequeath the curse of God. It is an evil practice of servants to convey from their masters, and of one man to purloine from another the substance that they have. If such will have God pleased with them, and hear their prayers, they must make recompense and restitution of things wrongfully taken, & unjustly detained, as we have shown before at large, ch. 5. This offer did Samuel make, 1 Sam. 12, 3. *Behold, here I am, bear record of me before the lord, & before his anointed: Whose Ox have I taken? Oy whose Ass have I taken? Or whom have I done wrong unto? Or whom have I hurt? Or of whose hand have I received any bribe, to blind mine eyes therewith, and I will restore it you?* The like we see in Zacchaeus, Lu. 19, 8. He stood forth in the day of his conversion, and said unto y^e Lord, *Behold, half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken from any man by forged cauillation, I restore him four fold.* The performance of this duty is the pathway to life: *Restore and thou shalt live.* The contrary leadeth to death: they are worse then Micah the Idolater, then Judas the betrailer of his master. Wherefore it behooveth all oppressors to practice the counsel of y^e

Prophet; *Let my counsel be acceptable to thee, & break off thy sins by righteousness, & thine iniquities by mercy towards the poor: let there be an healing of thine error.* Otherwise there is no promise of pardon, or hope of life, or assurance of mercy, if God have made him able thereunto.

[Verse 20. *He answered again, Thou shalt not go through. Then Edom came out against him with much people, and with a mighty power.*] We have already handled the request of the Israelites: now let us consider the answer of the Edomites, wherein we see they deny their petition, and withal come out with an host of men to stop their passage. The people of Israel spake kindly, and did no way deal injuriously against them to provoke them: but they answer roughly and curiously, they deal also maliciously and cruelly against them. We see hereby as in a glass, the nature of the enemies of the Church, they are merciless & malicious, destruction and calamity is in their ways, their feet are swift to shed blood, & the way, of peace they have not known, Prov. 12 10. 2 Kings 8, 11, 12. Thus dealt *Hazael* with *Israel*, and *Pharaoh* was no better before him. If all the pictures and patterns of merciless tyrants in the world were lost, they might all be painted to the life in the histories of these two, Exo. 1. & 2. For one of them did set their strong cities on fire, slew their young men with the sword, dashed their infants against the stones, and rent in pieces their women with child. The other, so envied the growth and increase of the children of Israel, that they threw their male children (the fry and seed of the Church) into the waters. A like plot and practice against the Church, we read in the Book of *Ester*, when *Haman* was exalted, and his seat set above all the Princes that were in the kingdom, he sought to destroy all the Jews, without difference of sex or age, Ester 3, 1, 6, 13. The book of the Lamentations is plentiful in this point, as Ch. 5, 4, 5, 10. &c.

[Reason 1] The Reasons are plain and evident, whether we respect the Church it self, or the enemies of the Church. Their malice exceedeth toward the Saints of God, because they follow righteousness, and do not follow them in all excess of riot: so that, *Whosoever refraineth from evil, maketh himself a prey*, Isaiah 59, 15. For albeit when GOD setteth up merciful Princes that rule in peace and quietness, they dare not show y^e inward malice of their hearts: yet hatred evermore boyleth and burneth within: and in the late days of the grievous afflictions of the Church (in the memory of many yet living) they shown it to the full, striking many innocents with the sword, that deserved not to be touched with the scabbard. They raged against young and old, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, men and women, children and sucklings, against the living & the dead. They beat them with rods, they cut out their tongues, they smote them with Halberts, they burned their hands with torches, and their whole bodies with fire: and the poor babe breaking out of the mothers belly they cast into the fire again, as the brood of heretics. This is the reason added by the Prophet, Psal. 38, 19, 20, where he showeth wherefore the servants of God are so much maligned, not because they had holden up their hands to a strange god, not because they had raised any tumult, not because they were found in any wickedness, but *because they follow goodness*. A lively image and picture of this persecuting Church we have in *Cain, who slew his brother: and wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his Brothers good*, 1 John. 3, 12. And this hath been the estate of the Church, even from righteous *Abel* (whose blood cried for vengeance) unto this present time.

Again, as their hearts are inflamed with [Reason 2] rage and fury, so the devil is the bellows to blow the coals, he moveth their minds to madness and mischief, albeit they perceive it not. He is compared in Scripture *to a Lyon, to a Dragon, to the old Serpent*. He was a murderer *from the beginning*; and therefore no marvel if his instruments thirst after the shedding of blood, being no better then a wretched generation of cruel beasts. There is nothing so sweet and pleasant to the Wolf, as to suck the blood of the Lambes. This they have learned of him that is the father of all mischief & murder. This is noted by the Apostle *John Revel. 2, 10*. *Behold it shall come to pass, that the devil shall cast some into Prison, that ye may be tried*. For in all persecutions although the devil be not seen to work and contrive the plot, yet he is the grand Captain and chief agent. It was *Cain* that lifted up his hand against his brother, but it was the devil that set him on work. It was *Judas* one of y^e twelve, that with a kiss betrayed his master, but it was the devil that first *Put it into his heart*, Lu. 22, 3.

Here then is a great mystery and deep secret to be considered. We think men to be Actors of all mischief, but indeed it is the devil in them. *Ahab's* false Prophets bad him go up against *Ramoth Gilead* and prosper, 1 Kings 22.6, 22. but it was a false *and lying spirit in the mouth of all his Prophets* that enticed him and them to their destruction. *Ananias* and *Sapphira* sold a possession, and kept away part of the price, but it was *Satan that had filled their heart, that they should lie unto the holy Ghost*, Act. 5, 2, 3. *Elymas* the sorcerer, withstoode the Ministers of God, and hindered the course of the Gospel, neither embracing the faith him self, nor suffering them that would embrace it, but it was because he was *an enemy of all righteousness, and the child of the devil*, Act. 13 10. The *Sabaeans* took away the Oxen, the *Chaldeans* fell upon the Camels, the fire of God burned up the sheep of *Job*, his sons & daughters were eating and drinking in their elder brothers house; and loe, a vehement and violent wind smote the four corners thereof, that it fell upon all of them and slew them: but Satan had an Oare in this boat, he was the master workman that gave to everyone his task, Job 1, 12. For whosoever is the instrument, the devil is the principal mover and procurer of all evil and trouble unto the Church of God.

[Use 1] The Uses are these. First, marvel not at all, if the Church lie under many great crosses and afflictions, insomuch y^t the ploughers plough upon their backs, and make long furrows, For they have many and mighty enemies that plot crafty counsels against them, and seek to suck out their heart blood, and to draw out their last breath. Many Controuersies and contentions arise in the world for things of this life, for houses, for lands, for possessions and inheritances, for slanders and trespasses, whereby many actions are brought, and many suites commenced between party & party, from whence much hatred and great hartburning oftentimes ensueth: but there is no hatred like to that which cometh for matters of religion, no bands of affinity or of consanguinity can tie them together, as our Savior teacheth, Matth. 10, 34, 35, 36. *I came not to send peace into the earth, but the sword: for I am come to set a man at variance against his Father; and the daughter against the mother, and a man's enemies shall be they of his own household. Ye shall be betrayed also of your parents, and of your brethren, and kinsmen, and friends, and some of you shall they put to death, and ye shall be hated of all men for my names sake*. All questions and quarrels among men for temporal and transitory things find easy means of reconcilment, either the Judge doth judge them, or Arbitrators determine

them, or friends do end them, or the parties themselves (wearied with costs and charges in suites of Law) do grow to an agreement & composition: but the rage of the ungodly set on fire of hell is vnappeaseable; no bounds of reason, no bands of nature, no chains of Law can tie them or tame them, whence once they have set themselves against the truth of God.

The cause of this hurly burly, and of these persecutions is not properly in Christ, or in y^e Gospel of Christ, *For he is the Prince of peace, and his Gospel is the Gospel of peace preached unto them that were a far off, and to them that were near*, Ephe. 2, 17. But the true cause of all these dissensions and troubles in the world, is the malice of the devil and the hatred of y^t world against Christ and against his Gospel. Here is the cause of division and disagreement, that the wicked man is abomination to the just, and he that is upright in his way is abomination to the wicked. Here is the right and proper cause of mortal hatred that the wicked beareth and breatheth out against the godly. Hence came the Popish Canon and conclusion, *That faith is not to be kept with such as they call and account Heretics*. Thus then we see, that the greatest hatred hath risen evermore from difference and diversity in religion. This appeareth in *Cain and Abel*, in *Isaac and Ishmael*, in *Jacob and Esau*, in the Israelites & the Egyptians, in *David and Saul*, in Christ and the Pharisees, in *Paul and the Jews*, in the heathen and God's people, in the believers & infidels. *There is no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness, no communion between light and darkness, no concord between Christ and Belial*: and therefore a confused mixture between the religion of Antichrist, & the Gospel of Christ hath an impossibility of any agreement. This is also manifest in all histories of the Church from the beginning. These things being thus considered and thought upon, we cannot think it strange, that the Church lieth under the cross, and groaneth under the heavy burden of it. So soon as *H•man* was advanced, by & by the Church mourned and sighed. This the wise man teacheth, Prouerb. 28, 28, and 29, 2. *When the wicked rise up, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase*. Let us then acknowledge that the Church is subject to many sorrows and much affliction, as a campe besieged of enemies, as a ship tossed of the winds, as Corn ground in the mill, as a vineyard eaten with beasts, as a building beat upon with storms, and as a flock daily in danger and assaulted with Wolves, whilst the enemies clap their hands, and stamp with their feet, and reioice in heart with all their despite against the Church of God, as the Prophet confessed, Psal. 79, 1, 2, 3, 4. *O God, the Heathen are come into thine inheritance, thine holy Temple have they defiled, and made Jerusalem an heap of stones. We are a reproach to our neighbors, even a scorn and derision to them that are round about us*. The first use is, that which the Apostle *John* directly concludeth from this doctrine, having produced the example of *Cain*, who slew his own brother, gathereth this consideration from thence, *Maruell not my Brethren, though this world hate you*.

Secondly, we learn from hence a point of [Use 2] wisdom and godly policy, to look to our selves, that we do not rely upon them, lest they beguile us and betray us. There is no truth in them, and therefore no trust is to be given to them. *Herod* made a show of love & reverence to Christ, he would needs love and worship him, but his meaning was, he would come & kill him. Beware thou be not seduced and entrapped by such secret enemies which pretend piety, but use treachery: see thou do not rely upon them, commit not thyself unto them. They cannot love thee that do not love the Lord, neither can they be faithful to thee, that are

unfaithful to God. They will close and gloze with thee, til thou be come within their danger, as *Cain* spake kindly to *Abel* til he was in the field, then he rose up and slew him: or as *Joab*, whose words were smoother then oil, and softer then butter, 2 Sam. 20, 9. *Art thou in peace my Brother?* But he smote him that he died, *shedding the blood of battle in the days of peace.* These men have the voice of *Jacob*, but the rough hands of *Esau*: they have the words of a brother, but the hearts of an enemy: they salute with a kiss, but persecute with the sword. For deceitful amity is double enmity, and feigned friendship is a double mischief. The Fisher baiteth his hooks when he would catch the fish: the Fowler singeth sweetly, when he would deceive the bird: the Hunter hideth his nets warily & wisely when he mindeth to take his prey. We have oftentimes to do with such cunning Fishers & mighty Hunters. Wherefore there is great cause to look to our selves: for when they cannot prevail with the Lions paw, they put on the Foxes skin, and go to work with craft and wiliness. Yea, the Church of God from time to time, hath sustained greater hurt by their own simplicity, then by the enemies cruelty: and by their own lightness of belief, then by the sharpness of their sword. When they pretend the greatest courtesy, thē they intend the greatest villainy. When they offer treaties of peace, leagues of marriage, and such like confederacies, then the hook is baiting, the snare is laying, the net is spreading before the eyes of all y^t hath wings, that they may effect their treasons and conspiracies. And this is it which one of the heads of their Church once said, If the keys of *Peter* could not prevail, they would take up and draw out the sword of *Paul*. Thus like false Prophets, and false brethren, they come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves. It remaineth therefore, that we stand upon our guard, and watch over our selves, that we be not intrapped by their subtleties. Upon this ground our Savior warneth us to be wary, Matth. 10, 16. *Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves, be therefore wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doves:* where we are taught, that we must all be armed with wisdom and simplicity against our enemies. Two needful graces to be sought after, as in all ages; so especially in these dangerous times wherein we live. Let us labor to have true policy, and true simplicity, let both these be found in us, that they may accompany always each other, and never be separated the one from the other. For policy without simplicity is deceiveable craftiness, and simplicity without policy, is deceived sottishness.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is our duty to pray earnestly unto God, not to deliver us into their hands whose rage and malice knoweth no end or measure. Indeed our sins have deserved this scourge, but let us rather desire him to correct us by his own hand, for he is gracious and merciful, *He desireth not the death of a sinner, but that he may turn unto him and live.* This made the people of God from time to time, rather then they would fall into the hands of cruel enemies, to be willing and ready to receive any punishment at God's hand. This we see, Judge. 10, 15. when the Israelites had forsaken the Lord and his worship, he complaineth against them, saying; *Did not I deliver you out of the hands of the Egyptians, Ammorites, &c. yet ye have forsaken me, and served other God's that ye have chosen, let them save you in the time of your tribulation:* then they cried in their danger, *We have sinned O Lord, do thou unto us whatsoever pleaseth thee, only we pray thee to deliver us this day from the Ammonites.* This we see yet more evidently in the example of *David*. 2 Sam. 24, 13, 14. when in the pride and presumption of

his heart he had numbered the people, after God sent him this word, and offered him the choice of famine, or sword, or pestilence, he said: *I am in a wonderful straight, let us now fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hand of man.* Who had not rather receive punishment at his fathers hands, of whose love he is assured, then to be punished with the strokes of an enemy, that loveth him not, but hateth him to the death? Men are proud and cruel, fierce & ambitious: but God is full of compassion, and his mercy endureth forever, he knoweth whereof we were made, he remembereth that we are but dust, he considereth that we are mortal, yea a wind that passeth and cometh not again. He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear. Hitherto the Lord hath visited us with his merciful and gentle corrections, famines, sicknesses, and strange diseases. Let us behold his gracious dealing toward us, and profit by these fatherly admonitions; for if he should deliver us into the hands of barbarous and beastly enemies, we should soon discern the difference between the loving chasticements of a father, and the bloody strokes of an enemy.

22 Then they departed from Kadesh, and the childrē of Israel, even all the congregation came unto Mount Hor.

23 And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in Mount Hor, near the border of the land of Edom, saying:

24 Aaron shall be gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the Land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my commandments at the waters of strife.

25 Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and charge them to come unto this Mount.

26 And cause Aaron to strip off his garments, and thou shalt put them upon Eleazar his son: then Aaron shall be gathered unto his Fathers, and shall die there.

27 And Moses did as the Lord had commanded: for they went up unto Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation.

28 And Moses caused Aaron to strip off his garments, and he put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron died there in the top of the Mount: So Moses and Eleazar came down from off that Mount.

29 And when all the Congregation saw that Aaron was dead, all the house of Israel wept for Aaron thirty days.

Hitherto of the Ambassage of *Moses* to the King of Edom: These words contain the third and last part of the Chapter, to wit, the death of *Aaron* after the people were removed from the borders of the Edomites. For albeit the King did so unkindly deny them any passage, yet *Moses* and the Israelites do not oppose themselves against them, or attempt to break through by force of Arms, & multitude of men, and dint of sword, but pass by their borders peaceably, and fetch a compass about their land. True it is, those envious Edomites, were worthy to perish, and to be utterly destroyed for their inhumanity; yet because the time was not yet come wherein the Lord had prophesied and promised, that *the elder should serve the younger*, therefore the Israelites commit vengeance to the Lord *to whom it belongeth*. Now in these verses, we see how God beginneth to execute the former threatening against *Moses* and *Aaron*. For here we are to consider three things. First, the death of *Aaron*. Secondly, the succession of his son. Thirdly, the mourning of the people. The father dieth, the son succeedeth, the people lamenteth the death of the high Priest. If *Aaron* had died without any prediction and foretelling of his death, all men might have thought it had fallen out at adventures, and ascribed it wholly to the decaying of strength, & wasting of nature: but being revealed to *Aaron* himself, and manifested to the whole Congregation, both the time when, and the place where he should die, it appeareth that his days were numbered, and his years limited, which he could not pass.

As then God had determined the death of *Aaron*, and denounced his shutting out of the land of Canaan so that sentence is here executed upon him, the other concerning *Moses*, is reserved unto his time appointed of God. In this place God commanded both of them what to do, even to ascend up to the Mountain, and showeth that *Aaron* shall die there for his disobedience; whose garments must be pulled off, and put upon *Eleazar*, lest by touching of the dead, the holy garments should be defiled. After this commandment followeth their obedience agreeable to the same, they come up to the Mountain, *Aaron* is stripped; *Eleazar* is clothed with them: *Aaron* without fear of death, or longer desire of life, or prayer for life, departeth in peace, according to the word of God, he is gathered to his Fathers, *Moses* and *Eleazar* descend from the Mountain, *Moses*, *Eleazar*, and the people, mourn for *Aaron* thirty days.

[Verse 23, 24. *And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron.*] We see here according to the former threatening pronounced by the mouth of God, verse 12. that *Aaron* cometh not into the land of Promise, but dieth in Mount *Hor*. We learn hereby, that the threatenings of God are accomplished. Howsoever his judgments are many times deferred, and his punishments prolonged because he is patient toward us, and would have no man to perish, but would have all persons come unto repentance: yet in the end all his threatenings shall be verified and fulfilled in their times and seasons. Consider this truth in our first parents, God threatened them that if they did eat the forbidden fruit they should die the death: we see the effect in them, and all their posterity throughout all times and generations. Behold other threatenings of God, we shall always read the execution after the denunciation. So when God by the Ministry of *Noah* a Preacher of righteousness, had threatened to destroy the whole world, if in an hundred and twenty years they repented not; we see how he brought in the flood upon the world of the ungodly, & swept them away from the face of the earth, which

they had corrupted with their cruel and unclean conversation. This we see likewise taught unto us throughout the books of the holy history of *Joshua*, *The man is cursed before the Lord, that ryseth up and buildeth the City Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his eldest son, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it:* meaning thereby, that whosoever should attempt to build this City he should pay for it dearly, because what time he layeth the foundation of the walls his eldest son shall die, and when he setteth up the gates and hath finished it, his youngest son shall die. When this threatening seemed quite forgotten, and consumed with the rust of time, God doeth bring it to pass: as we see in the book of Kings, in *Hiel the Betheli•e*, according to the word of the Lord which he spake by *Joshua*, the son of *Nun*. The like we see in *Zachariah*, when resting in the power of nature, and the strength of his own body, he believed not the Angel, he was stricken dumb, and could not speak unto the people, Luke 1, 20. A memorable example also we have in the straight siege of Samaria, where a Prince answered the man of God, and said, *Though the Lord would make Windowes in the heaven, could it come so to pass? And he said, Behold thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not eat thereof: and so it came unto him for the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died.*

The Reasons here of are evident. For first, [Reason] the Nature of GOD is true and unchangeable: *Heaven and earth shall pass, but one jot or tittle of his word shall not pass, but shall be fulfilled.* This is that which is urged afterward in this book, Chapter 23.19. *God is not as man that he should lie, nor as the son of man that he should repent.* Hath he said, and shall it not be done? hath he spoken, and shall he not accomplish it? Seeing therefore God is unchangeable, with whom is no variableness, or shadow of turning, he will let none of his words fall to the ground; he is in one mind, and who can turn him? yea, he doth what his mind desireth.

[Reason 2] Again, who can hinder him, or say unto him, Why doest thou thus? No might, no power, no policy can withstand him in his works, albeit men rebel never so much, and resist never so mightily against him. There is great power in Princes, they are able to bring mighty things to pass, and to cross the attempts of others, yet sometimes they are crossed and resisted themselves. It is not so with the Lord our God, *Who is in the heavens, and doth whatsoever he will. He hath the hearts of all, even of Princes in his own hand, as the Rivers of waters he turneth them about as pleaseth him.* This made the Apostle cry out, *O the deepness of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who was his Counselor? Or who hath given him first, and he shall be recompensed? And who hath resisted his will?* So then, whether we consider the nature of God without change, or the weakness of man without power, we may safely and truly conclude, that all the threatenings which have been pronounced and denounced by the mouth of God, shall be verified and performed without any altering or diminishing of them.

[Use 1] Let us apply this to our selves, and gather assuredly from hence, the woeful estate of all wicked and ungodly men. For, seeing he doth not dally with us, or scare us without cause, so that all his threatenings faithfully denounced, shall be undoubtedly accomplished: how shall they escape so great condemnation as lieth at the door, and hangeth over their head? Howsoever therefore they put away the evil day far from them, and live as if God sate idle in

heaven, beholding all things, but punishing nothing: knowing all hearts and thoughts, but not regarding the works of men: saying, *We have made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at agreement: though a scourge run over and pass thorough, it shall not come at us, for we have made falsehood our refuge, and under vanity are we hid:* yet he that dwelleth in the heaven shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. For what followeth? *Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when a scourge shall run over and pass through, then shall ye be trodden down by it.* This is y^t which the wise man saith, Eccles. 8.11, 12, 13. *Because sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, therefore the heart of the children of men is full, set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and God prolongeth his days, yet I know that it shall be well with: them that fear the Lord, but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days: he shall be like a shadow, because he feareth not before GOD.* And to the same purpose the Prophet Ezekiel speaketh, Chap. 12, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. where the Prophet reproveth two sorts of persons, open deriders of God's word, as if it should never be performed: and such as prolong the evil days, as if the plagues were for many years, and should not come in their days. But God expressly and directly meeteth with them both, and bindeth them together in one bundle, declaring and making it plain to their consciences, that when he speaketh the word it shall be done, and when he pronounceth a decree it shall stand. Thus in all ages of the Church, satⁿ prevaieth with the children of disobedience, and draweth more to destruction by presumption, then he is able to do by desperation. Let us not harden our hearts thorough the deceitfulness of sin, *Let us seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near.*

Secondly, let us ground our faith in the undoubted [Use 2] performance of those judgments y^t are yet to come: as that the Lord Jesus at the appointed time will break the heavens, and will come to judge the quick and the dead, at his appearance and in his Kingdom: that the wicked shall rise again, and stand before the bar of God's throne. These things we see not yet accomplished; for all things continue alike from the beginning of the creation. Hence it is, that *Mockers arise which walk after their lusts, and say, Where is the promise of his coming? But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the Elements shall melt with heat, and the earth with the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Yea, When they shall say, peace and safety, then shall come upon them sudden destruction, as the travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.* Thus the Prophet Malachi prophesieth: *Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an Oven, and all the proud, and all the wicked doers shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, and shall leave them neither root nor branch.* Thus then we see a day of judgment is decreed and determined, and remaineth for the appointed time, but at last it shall come, and not lie: though it tarry, wait: for it shall surely come, and not stay.

Thirdly, we must not be dismayed when [Use 3] we see the wicked prosper and flourish, spreading themselves as the green Bay tree: for loe God hath set them in slippery places, and casteth them down in the end unto desolation; they are suddenly destroyed, & horribly consumed, as the chaff which the wind driveth away, and as a dream when one awaketh. This temptation hath overtaken the children of God, and caused them oftentimes to shrink back when they saw the prosperity of the ungodly, and on the other side the troubles of the

godly, & hath made them to reason within themselves of the providence of God. But shall not the King rule his own kingdom? or the Master govern his own house as pleaseth him? And shall not we give the Lord leave to dispose of all things in heaven and earth, after the good pleasure of his own will? He fatteth the wicked against the day of slaughter: he leaveth them without excuse, and maketh his blessings as a witness against them. Contrarywise, the children of God, although they suffer afflictions, yet afflictions to them are not evil, but try their faith, as the furnace doth the gold. Let us not deceive our selves in judging and esteeming of good and evil. That is good which maketh us better, that is evil that maketh us worse. The works of the flesh, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, debate, emulations, wrath, contentions, seditions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, covetousness, and such like, are manifestly evil. These God keepeth from his deer children, and his deer children from them, that they reign not in them.

The Israelites in Egypt lived under hard masters, and carried many heavy burdens, and sent up many passionate sighs to God, with deep groans of spirit, whilst *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians took crafty counsel together, and sported themselves in the miseries & mischiefs which they had brought upon them. But whose condition was the more happy, let the red Sea testify, from which the Israelites were delivered, in which the *Egyptiās* were drowned. *David* taken from the sheep-folds, tasted of many sorrows, being in perils among the Amalekites, in perils in the Wilderness, in perils of his own Nation, in perils of his own servants, in perils among false brethren, and was hunted from place to place as a Partridge in the Mountains, whilst *Saul* sought his life, and enjoyed the pleasures and treasures of a kingdom. But whose estate was the more happy, let the end and issue of them both determine; the one lived in glory, & ended his days in peace, the other sheathed his sword in his own bowels, and so died in despair. The Apostle *James* willeth us to *take the Prophets for an example of suffering adversity, and of long patience, which have spoken in the name of the Lord: Ye have heard of the patience of Job, & have known what end the Lord made, for the Lord is very pitiful and merciful.*

Lazarus a poor beggar, destitute of succor and friends, lying at the rich man's gate, having his mind as full of cares as his body was of sores, whilst the rich glutton was clad in purple gorgeously, and fared deliciously every day. But whose condition was the more blessed and happy of them twain, let this tell us and teach us for our instruction, that *Lazarus* when he died had the holy & elect Angels to attend upon him to carry his soul into *Abraham's bosom*, that is to say, into the kingdom of heaven: the rich man also died, & his body was buried, his soul was carried & cast into the torments of hell, *Where the worm never dieth, and the fire never goeth out*: the one unsufferable, the other unquenchable, both infinite. Let us not therefore rest in beholding the present face of outward things, but possess our souls with patience in a sweet meditation of God's providence, considering that it shall in the end be well with all them y^t fear the Lord: and that howsoever the wicked do prosper in the world, & increase in riches, yet if we enter into the Sanctuary of God, we shall see they are set in slippery places, they are lifted up on high, and therefore their fall shall be more fearful, seeing all the threatenings of God must without fail fasten upon them.

Lastly, seeing the menaces and threatenings [Use 4] of God must be performed, this serveth also to assure us that the gracious promises of God made in mercy to his people, shall in truth and righteousness be accomplished. The Lord that is always the same, as he is true in his threatenings to the ungodly, so will he be found true in his promises toward the godly. For, seeing no part of his word shall pass away, & that he will not *falsify his truth, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth*, one part serveth to confirm another; his threatenings are ratified by the assurance of his promises, and his promises are established to be surer then the heavens by the assurance of his threatenings. So then, let us learn to depend upon God, & to trust in him, knowing, *that all his promises are yea and Amen, unto the glory of his name*. Let us rest in him for the pardon of our sins, for the hearing of our prayers, for the feeding of our bellies, for the resurrection of our bodies, for the inheritance of everlasting life, having a strong assurance of faith, that the Lord is just and true in all his promises. This is a notable comfort and consolation to all the childrē of God, to cause us to set our hope in him, having a patient and constant expectation of all things that by faith we have believed, saying with the Apostle, 1 Tim. 1, 12. *For this cause I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.*

[Verse 25, 26. *Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and cause Aaron to strip off his Garments, and thou shalt put them upon his son.*] Here is delivered, how Aaron yet living, his son is invested and installed into his Office with the ceremonies and solemnities thereunto appertaining, at the appointment of God, to show the continuance of the Priesthoode, & to take away all occasions of dissensions from the people. Thus we see the good estate of y^e Church is provided for by Moses before Aaron died, and went the way of all flesh. The Doctrine hence is, that the good of the Church must be regarded of us, to leave it in good case after our death and departure. I say, it is a principal duty required of us, when we must leave the world, to provide for the continuance of the Church and truth of God, that it may flourish after us, and not die with us, or be buried in the earth forever. This appeareth by the Apostle *Peter, I will endeavor always, that ye also may be able to have remembrance of these things after my departure.* 2 Pet. 1, 15. Hereunto accordeth the care of the Apostle *Paul* writing to *Timothy, Watch thou in all things: suffer adversity; do the work of an Evangelist; cause thy Ministry to be thoroughly liked of, for I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departing is at hand,* 2 Tim. 4, 5, 6. This we see many ways in *Moses*, who would not leave the people without a guide, as sheep without a Shepherd, and therefore prayed for a fit Governor, *Let the Lord God of the spirits of all flesh appoint a man over the Congregation, who may go in and out before them.* And therefore it is said, Deut. 34, 9. that *Joshua* the son of *Nun* was full of the spirit of wisdom, *For Moses had put his hands upon him, and the children of Israel were obedient unto him, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses.* Likewise *David* at the point of death exhorteth the Officers of his kingdom, and *Solomon* his son which was to sit upon his Throne, to know the God of his fathers, and to serve him with a perfect heart, & with a willing mind, assuring him, that if he seek him, he will be found; and threatening him if he forsake him, y^t God will cast him off forever. [Reason 1] And great reason it is, we should have this care and consideration of the good & beauty of the Church. For the Church is our Mother, who hath conceived and brought us

forth to live a spiritual life to God, we have sucked her breasts, and through her we have here begun our heaven & happiness. What unkindness and unthankfulness were this to leave her destitute, who hath travailed in pain of us until Christ be formed in us, and to withdraw all duty and endeavor from her touching her condition to come? Were it not a note of an unnatural, a lewd, a shameful child, to forsake his own mother who bare him in her womb, nourished him with her breasts, dandled him in her lap, refused no base service for his good, cared for him whē he could not care for himself, in whose eyes he was tender and dear; were it not (I say) a note of great infamy to leave her in misery, or as a prey to the enemy? We see the Lord Jesus Christ being on the Cross, provided for his Mother, & committed her to the care of the Disciple whō he loved. In like manner the Apostle requireth this duty, *If any faithful man, or faithful womā, have widows, let them minister unto them: And if there be any that provideth not for his own, he denieth the faith, and is worse then an Infidel.* Whosoever therefore hath been brought up in the bosom of the Church, begotten by the immortal seed of the word, nourished at the Table of Christ, and taught to look for an eternal inheritance in the heavens, can never assure himself to be the true child of his mother, but rather a base and bastardly brood unless he show it by the continual care he hath of the safeguard and protection of the Church, which is the mother of all the faithful.

Besides, grievous and greedy wolves enter [Reason 2] upon the labors of faithful and painful Pastors, to make haucock of the Church, and to seduce the people of God. For Satan is never idle, though never well occupied, and as a reverent father once said, he is the most diligent Bishop in his Diocese: he never resteth, but always *compasseth the earth too and fro, and walketh therein:* He hath his instruments which he setteth on work, that poison the church with the leaven of false doctrine, and sow y^e Lord's field with the Darnell of their devilish devices. Therefore the Apostle exhorting the Elders of *Ephesus*, Acts 20, 28, 29, 30 saith, *Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, where of the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood: for I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Moreover of yourselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw Disciples after them.*

Now it remaineth to see the uses hereof [Use 1] First, we learn from hence, the con•inuance of the Church upon the earth, and the perpetual remaining of it, so long as the earth endureth, and so long as the Sun abideth a faithful witness in the heavens. Though it be sometimes driven from place to place, and abideth not in one stay and state, like y^e Moon that sometimes shineth in the full, sometimes in the wane, and sometimes in the eclipse, as the woman constrained to fly into the wilderness, where *she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there:* and as the reign of *Ahab*, when *Elias* thought himself left alone, as a Sparrow upon an house top: yet there always hath been a Church from the beginning, and ever shall be a Church to the end, from *Adam* the first, to the last man that shall stand upon the earth. This the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 72, 5. & 102, 26, 27, 28. Let the enemies fret and storm, let them rage & roar never so much, they labor in the fire, and sweat in vain, they shall perish & fall down; but the Lord that is able of stones to raise up Children unto *Abraham*, holdeth up y^e heads of his people that they stand *as an house built upon the Rock; the rain falleth, the flood cometh, the wind bloweth and beateth upon that house, yet it abideth firmly and*

falleth not, for it is grounded on the Rock, Math. 7, 24, 25, like the bush that burned with fire, but was not consumed. Exod. 3, •.

Secondly, seeing our care must be, that the [Use 2] truth of God may live when we are dead, and remain after our departure: It is the duty of all the Ministers of God to preach the word of God in season and out of season, 2 Tim. chap. 4, verse 2, 3, to be instant in reproving, rebuking, exhorting, with all longsuffering and doctrine: yea, to do these things with all their power, seeing there is neither work nor wisdom in the grave whither they go. For (alas) how shall they mind the future good of the Church after their death, that mean not the present good of the Church in their life? Wherefore, let us take all occasions & opportunities to promote the Gospel, *Let us keep back nothing that is profitable, but reveal to the people the whole counsel of God, knowing that they are redeemed by the blood of Christ, and we are put in trust after a sort with the price thereof.* We have a great account to make in that day, in y^e great day of the Lord; let us therefore stir up our selves to feed the flock of God that dependeth upon us. And surely, the cause of the ruin and desolation of many Churches, is the negligence and idleness of the Pastors thereof, *For while the Husbandmen sleep, the Enemy soweth tares among the wheat.* From hence it cometh, that the people live in ignorance, lie in open sins, and are carried away with every blast of false doctrine, whithersoever false Teachers will carry and conduct them. This the Prophet *Isaiah* expresseth, Chap. 56, 9, 10, 11, 12. *All ye beasts of the field come to devour even all the beasts of the Forest: their watchmen are all blind, they have no knowledge, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark: they lie and sleep, and delight in sleeping: and these greedy dogs can never have enough, and these shepherds cannot understand, for they all look to their own way, everyone for his advantage, and for his own purpose.* Where he teacheth, that the people are ready, and lie open to be seduced by Atheists, by Papists, by Libertines, by Familists, by Anabaptists, by Brownists, where there are blind guides, and idol shepherds, evil beasts, and slow bellies, that feed themselves, but feed not the flock. And he noteth four monstrous vices and capital sins that poisoned the Church. First, albeit they were appointed watchmen, yet they were blind, & their judgment corrupted. They were made Seers, and yet did not see; Lights, and yet were in darkness; Teachers, and yet were unlearned; Instructors of others, and yet wanted knowledge themselves. *If then the light be darkness, how great is that darkness?* Secondly, they were sluggish and slothful dogs, they cannot for drowsiness and laziness open their eyes to see, or their mouths to bark. And when they are called upon and spoken unto, saying, *How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?* They answer, *Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.* Prov. 6, 9, 10. Thirdly, they are greedy of their own gain, covetous, and given to filthy lucre, being carried away by the deceit of *Balaam's* wages. Lastly, they are given to belly-cheer and all riot, *Jude v. 12. They follow their pleasures and pampering of their bellies, making them the god whom they serve, and do not serve the Lord Jesus.* The Apostle said, *I seek not yours, but you*, 2 Cor. 12, 14. but these might say otherwise of themselves, *I seek not you, but yours.* And are not such Pastors to be found among us, that through covetousness & Epicureanism regard not the duties of their calling? They join living to living, as those that joined house to house: they live at pleasure, they eat, they drink, they feast, they say, *Come I will bring wine, and we will fill our selves with strong drink, and tomorrow shall be as this day, & much more abundant.* Heereby they are made

unfit & unable to do the duties of their Calling: so as like crammed dogs they lie bathing and beaking themselves by the fire: and though never so much harm be done in God's church, they cannot be made to awake and bark in any season to warn the people, and to fray away the Wolf. But if any go about to raise and to rouse them up out of their sleep, they disquiet their consciences too much, and trouble their patience so, that they are ready to gnaw, yea they begin to snap and snatch at him with their teeth. So that the best way is to follow the counsel of our Savior which he gave concerning the Pharisees, Mat. 15, 14. *Let them alone, they be the blind leaders of the blind: and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.* Seeing then, such as teach not the people over whom the holy Ghost hath made the Overseers, can never soundly desire the aftergood of them: it behooveth such to labor with all their strength, to build up the people in knowledge, faith, and obedience, that so God may have a people to serve him after their departure.

Lastly, it standeth everyone upon that hath [Use 3] the government of others, whether it be in the Church or in the Common-wealth, or in the private Family, to look to their charges, that by their godly care and holy endeavor, God may be worshipped & served after their departure. This is to be considered of Magistrates, Ministers, and Governors of houses. The Magistrate ruling in the Commonwealth (whether it be the King as the superior, or whether it be other Governors, as they y^t are sent of him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well) must provide to the utmost of his power for y^e godly and peaceable estate of the kingdom, or incorporation where he remains, by maintaining the Ministry, by promoting Religion, and by executing Justice. This Moses did (as we saw before Deut. 31, 2, 6, 7, 8) he assembled the people, he signified his departure, he encouraged them against their enemies, & took order for their welfare after his death, by appointing Joshua to succeed him, and to bring the people into the land which the Lord had sworn unto their Fathers. Thus Joshua dealt, walking in the steps of Moses his master, he giveth the people charge to worship the true God, to stick fast unto him with full purpose of heart, to love him, to fear him, to serve him in uprightness and in truth, and to put away the gods which their fathers served beyond the River. Thus did David set his son upon his throne before he died, 1 Kings 2.2, 3. and gave him a great charge to maintain that Religion which he had established. The duty of all Ministers when they are dying and departing this life, is, to provide as carefully as they can, that the good work begun by them, may be furthered by their successors, and that the truth which they have planted may not be supplanted & pulled up by the roots by such as shall enter into their labors. It is not enough for them to labor in their own persons while they live, but to endeavor that others may succeed them in piety as well as in place, & in diligence, as well as in office. Thus dealt Christ our Savior in calling his Apostles: thus dealt the Apostle in ordaining elders in every City, and appointing Pastors and Teachers in several places so soon as they had gained them to the faith. Lastly, it is the duty of all Fathers and masters of families to provide for the souls and salvation of all such as are under their jurisdiction and government; even of such as are the meanest and lowest in the house, to charge them to know the true God, and to serve him in the simplicity and sincerity of their hearts. This we must do in health, this we must do in sickness, this we must do in death: and so we shall glorify God living and dying. Thus did Abraham teach his children and

servants, and for this is he commended of God, Gen. 18, 19. *I know Abraham my servant, that he will command his sons and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord to do righteousness and judgment.* Thus said Jacob when he died, Gen. 49, 1, 2. & this must all of us be careful to practice, if we will be the children of faithful Abraham, to speak of the laws of God in our houses, whē we walk by the way, when we lie down and when we rise up.

[Verse 27, 28. *And Moses did as the Lord had commanded, he caused Aaron to strippe off his garments, and he put them upon Eleazar his son.*] We see the obedience of Moses to the Commandment of God; for Aaron pulled off his Priestly robes, and they are put upon Eleazar, to whom lineally the Priesthood did descend: whereby we see that there was a personal succession belonging to the Priesthood from father to son, & from one man to another. Hereby we learn, that the Priesthood under the law passed from one to another. The Priesthood begun in Aaron, and continued in his line, rested not in one man, but continued by succession from age to age. This we see evidently proved throughout the old testament: for as they were cut off by death, so others arose in their rooms that served at the Altar. As Eleazar succeeded Aaron so did Phinchas succeed Eleazar, & so the Priesthood proceeded from father to son, and from one generation to another, as appeareth in the genealogies of the Priests. This the Apostle to the Hebrews plentifully proveth, Many among them were made Priests, because they were not suffered to endure by reason of death; declaring y^t the Priests after the order of Aaron, succeeded each other, and confirming it by the reason & cause thereof, because the Levitical Priests were taken away by death, and could not endure forever.

This then we must hold to be one reason forcible and powerful, to prove the continued [Reason 1] succession of the Priesthood of Levi from father to son, because they were cut off by death and so not suffered always to execute their Priesthood. Seeing therefore these Priests were mortal, there must be a succession from one to another. This is that reason which was remēbred before out of Heb. 7, 23. showing that they had many Priests, because they were all subject to mortality, and could not continue through necessity of death.

Secondly, the promise of God made unto Aaron and to his posterity must be accomplished [Reason 2] and performed. He consecrated Aaron and his sons, and made a covenant with them, not with Aaron alone, not with his children alone, but with their posterity, he established it as a testimony in Jacob, and as a law in Israel, that their posterity might know it, and the children which should be born of them should stand up and minister before the Lord, in the beautiful garments and glorious robes of the Priests, Exod. 28, 2. Therefore the Lord said by Moses, Exod, 29, 29, 30. Num. 3, 10. & 18, 7. *The holy garments which appertain to Aaron, shall be his sons after him, to be anointed therein, and to be consecrate therein. That son that shall be Priest in his stead, shall put them on seven days, when he cometh into the Tabernacle of the Congregation, to minister in the holy place.* So God made his covenant of peace with Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, & confirmed the Priests office to him & his seed after him; because in the zeal of his Spirit he had turned away the wrath of the Lord from y^e Children of Israel.

This teacheth us first of all the imperfection [Use 1] and insufficiency of it, both of the Priests themselves, and of the Priesthood it self. It pointed out a better Priest, and a better priesthood, and directed them to rest not in it, but in some other. So the Apostle, Heb. 7, 11, 12. declareth, that the Levitical Priesthood was imperfect, because another Priest is promised a long time after, according to the order of *Melchizedek*: *If any perfection had been by the Priesthood of the Levites, what needed it furthermore that another Priest should arise after the order of Melchizedek, and not to be called after the order of Aaron? &c.* Where we see, he showeth to what purpose there must be a Priest after another rule and fashion; not after the order of *Aaron*, even because perfection is not in the Priehhood of the Levites, nor under the Law which was established under it: so that we must acknowledge it hath an end, forasmuch as with the ceremonial law, the ceremonial Priesthood was cancelled and abolished.

[Use 2] Secondly, from hence we learn to acknowledge a difference between the Priesthood of Christ, and the Priesthood of the Levites. This standeth in diverse points and circumstāces, as the same Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, evidently declareth. The Priesthood of Christ is eternal, as the Prophet declared long before, *Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek*: he was made with an oath by him that said unto him, *The Lord hath sworn and will not repent*. But the Priests of *Aaron's* order were mortal, not eternal; they were made by the word of God, but without an oath. Besides, our great high Priest Christ Jesus, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher then the Heavens, hath a Priesthood *which cannot pass from one to another*: wherefore he is able perfectly to save them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them who by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, and obtained eternal redemption for us, purging our Conscience from dead works to serve the living God; for it is impossible that the blood of bulls & Goats should take away sins. Thus we see, that the Priesthood of Christ can have no succession, inasmuch as being once performed, it hath no imperfection: and whereas the Jews in the time of the law had *Aaron* and his posterity, which were but mortal and miserable men, we have Christ the immortal and blessed God, who liveth forever, to be our everlasting Priest.

[Use 3] Lastly we learn, that seeing the Levitical Priesthood passed from one to another, so as by death they were not always suffered to exercise and execute their Priesthood: we see, I say, that the Church of Rome bringing in again such a Priesthood & such Priests as are cut off by death, do renew the Levitical priesthood, and labor to raise it out of the grave, w^c hath long ago been buried with honor. For this is common to them both, to end their days and leave their Priesthood to others: so y^t the Dart which the Apostle casteth against the Levitical Priesthood, pierceth and perisheth the very heart of the Popish priesthood, when he saith and proveth, that there can be no other Priests but Christ under the New Testament, because *he continueth forever*, considering that the multitude of Priests, and succession of them one after another, ariseth from the imperfection and insufficiency of the Priests, which were continually by death taken away. If then the upstart Priests of the Sinagogue of Rome will be Priests properly, they cannot be Priests after the order of *Melchizedek* (as they wretchedly and blasphemously claim themselves to be) who was both King and Priest; neither cā they be successors of Christ, forasmuch as he hath none to

succeed him. For if y^e Jews might not continue to offer their sacrifices and oblations after the sacrifice of Christ was once offered, because it was perfect and all-sufficient, yea the consummation of all that went before; it followeth, that the Popish sacrifice (being an addition unto that which is perfect) as a rotten and ragged patch to a new garment, cannot stand, but is to be thrown down and abolished like an abominable idol.

[Verse 29. *All the house of Israel wept for Aaron thirty days, when the Congregation saw that Aaron was dead.*] The last point observed in this chapter, is the affection of the people, after the death of *Aaron* one of the chief pillars and protectors of the Church, and of true Religion among the Israelites. They mourn for him, not a day, or a week, but a whole month, to declare what a sensible feeling they had of the incomparable loss of the Church. We learn hereby, that when the chief members, stays, props, and pillars of the church be taken away, the rest of the parts are to be hūbled and touched to the quick for the same. True it is, a measure in mourning and lamentation is to be used, that we be not sorry as men without hope: yet by this example we see it is lawful to mourn for the dead, & the greater loss the Church hath received, the greater lamentation and grief ought to be expressed.

This is evident by the practice of God's servants in all ages of the Church, proportioning their sorrow according to the greatness of their loss. We see Ge. 50, 1, 10, 11. when God called *Jacob* to himself out of this world, a Father of the Church (and a great light that shined not only within the doors of his own family, but in the darkness of Egypt) he was greatly and exceedingly lamented for y^e space of seventy days: so that the Canaanites said, *This is a great mourning unto the Egyptians*. So when *Moses* the servant of the Lord died (like unto whom there arose not a Prophet in Israel) unto whom GOD spake not by vision or dream, but face to face as a man talketh with his friend, Deut. 34, 8. the children of Israel mourned for him thirty days, whom he had guided with a fatherly care many years. So when *Samuel*, another principal pillar of the house of God died, 1 Sam, 25, 1. *All Israel assembled, and mourned for him, and buried him in his own house at Ramah*. When God took away good King *Josiah*, like to whom there was no King before him that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of *Moses*, who bowed neither to the right hand, nor to the left, who remembered his Creator in the days of his youth, and honored God with the first fruits of his life; all *Judah* and *Jerusalem* mourned for him, 2 Chron. 35, 23, 24. yea *Jeremiah* lamented *Josiah*, and all the singing men and singing women *mourned for him in their lamentations, and made the same for an ordinance to Israel & behold they be written in the Lamentations*. But touching *Jehoiakim* y^e son of *Iosia*, who degenerated from his father, & walked not in his ways, it is said, *They shall not lament him; saying; Ah my Brother, or ah my Sister: neither shall they mourn for him, saying, Ah Lord, or ah his glory: he shall be buried as an Ass is buried, even drawn and cast forth without the gates of Jerusalem*. The like comparison we see in the New Testament, when as *Stephen* was stoned, a faithful witness of Christ, a worthy member of the Church, and a constant defender of the faith, certain men *carried him to be buried, and made great lamentation for him*. But when *Ananias* and *Sapphira* filled with Satan, keeping away part of the price of their possession, tempting the Spirit, and lying unto God, fell down and gave up the ghost, young men arose, took them up, and buried them, but no mention of any tears or lamentatiō, much less of any great lamentation made for them. God

swept them away as dung from y^e earth for their hypocrisy; but the Church lamented not the death of these wicked persons. So then to omit many other examples that might be alleged, we see, that howsoever men may be mourned for in a natural affection & compassion by their friends and kinsfolks, yet chiefly and principally we are to bewail the loss of the church, whē such are taken away as might do good service to God and his people.

[Reason 1] This truth appeareth by good force of reason. First, the Ministers are as the Chariots & horsemen of Israel in their Ministry, that is, the strength and defense of the Church and Commonwealth. Therefore *Elisha* seeing *Elijah* taken up by a whirlwind into heaven, cried out, *My father, my father, the Chariot of Israel, & the horsemen thereof*. And as *Elisha* said of *Elijah*, so did *Joash* the King of Israel of *Elisha*. For being sick of his sickness whereof he died, the King came down unto him, and wept upon his face, and said, *O my father, my father, the Chariot of Israel, and the horsemen of the same*. Thus spake the King himself to the Prophet, and these honorable Titles he gave unto him. And no marvel. For they fight and bend their forces against swearing, blasphemy, contempt of God's word, profaning of his Sabbaths, whoredom, drunkenness, idleness, covetousness, and such like, as lay us open to the wrath of God. These and such like sins are they that weaken the land, and lay it naked to the invasion of enemies, as appeareth, Exo. 32, 25. *Moses* saw that by their idolatry the people were naked, for *Aaron* had made them naked unto shame among their enemies. We do oftentimes fear enemies, and invasion by enemies: but we fear not that which bringeth in the enemies, and openeth them a free passage to spoil and destroy without compassion, to wit, sin. So long as we walk with our God, and are reconciled unto him, we are under God's protection, and he is a *Buckler round about us*, we are in league with the stones of the street, and the beasts of the field. *For if God be on our side, who shall be against us?* Rom. 8, 31. If then the Ministry of the word be as a brazen wall, and the Ministers thereof stand in the breach between the living & the dead to turn away the wrath of GOD, when his judgments run through the Land, there is great cause to be humbled, when God pulleth from the Church and Commonwealth, so great posts and pillars that help to hold them up.

Again, it is a sign of God's wrath & heavy [Reason 2] displeasure, and a fore-runner of a farther judgment. When God took away the good and godly King *Josiah*, a nursing father of the Church, that reformed religion in his young and tender years, sought unto the Lord, hūmbled himself before him, and wept when he heard the threatenings denounced against the land: he spared not Jerusalem and the inhabitants thereof long after. If there be a good Pastor in the church, if a good Prince in the land, if a good Magistrate in town or city, if a good Master in a family, and God take him away, there is cause to lift up our voice by mourning, weeping, and great lamentation: this being a token of God's displeasure, & a sign of taking his former mercies from us: so that the seeing and feeling of God's wrath in bereaving us of such as might do good along time publicly or privately, ought to be no small grief to us. The prophet teacheth, that when God hath any vengeance ready to be poured upon a people, he taketh away the righteous from the plague, as he did *Lot* out of Sodom, saying; *The righteous perisheth, and no man considereth it in heart: and merciful men are taken away from the evil to come*. Therefore when God taketh excellent and principal members from the rest of y^e body, it is as a threatening always to those that are left behind, and an evident

testimony to them, that they are unworthy of their company and presence, as the Apostle declareth, *That the world was not worthy of those faithful men that shined as lights in the midst of a froward & crooked generation.* So then, it is a right mourning and well ordered grief, when we lament the taking away of good men, endued with the graces of the Spirit, which have lived in the fear of God, and done notable service in the Church or Commonwealth.

Let us apply this point to our instruction & [Use 1] edification. First, it serveth to condemn the Stoicall senselessness and blockishness of such as take it to be a part of manhood & courage, to be affected with nothing, to be grieved at nothing. It is lawful to mourn for the dead: so did *Abraham* the Father of the faithful for *Sara*: nay, so did Christ the head of the church in whom was no sin, neither guile found in his mouth, mourn for *Lazarus*. These lamented the dead, but not the state of the dead, which they knew to be most comfortable to all the faithful, as the Apostle teacheth, *Reu. 14.13. Blessed are they that dy in the Lord, for they rest from their labors and their works follow them.* In regard whereof, *Paul* warneth the Thessalonians concerning them that are asleep, that they sorrow not even as they which have no hope. True it is, we cannot so renounce or reform our affections, but that there will be always somewhat worthy of blame and fault in us, in our mirth and mourning, in our love and hatred, in our hope and fear, in our anger, and such like passions: and we find it the hardest thing in the world to keep the mean between excess and defect, between too much & too little: yet it is absurd to dream of such a kind of dullness and stupidity as over-turneth human nature, and cannot be found in flesh and blood, yea standeth not with the condition of mankind, as he was created, or as he became corrupted. For so long as man remaineth in this life, he cannot be void of affections and perturbations, or be senseless like stocks or stones: albeit wise men are to moderate their passions, that Reason remain mistress of the soul, as it were the governor of the house.

Wherefore, we must know that Christian Religion doth not abolish natural affections, or pull them up by the roots, but only doeth moderate them and keep them, that they over flow not the banks, and doth bring them in subjection unto the will of God. So the Apostle (as we heard before) did not forbid the Church to sorrow for the dead, but putteth as it were a bridle into their hands, & only restraineth immoderate sorrow. Again, he doth not absolutely condemn and reprove all anger and indignation conceived in the heart, but represseth the excess & abundance thereof, as a wise Physician that seeketh to purge the over-flowing of choller. And in another place, he doth not condemn weeping in adversity, or rejoicing in prosperity, but he requireth *that they which weep, be as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not: and they that use this world, as though they used it not.* Furthermore, Christ our Savior doeth not forbid the loving of Father and Mother, of wife and children, of brethren and sisters, as that which standeth with the law of God and man; but only ordereth it aright, & bringeth it into his compass, saying, *He that loveth father or mother more then me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more then me, is not worthy of me.* Thus then we are taught to use temperance and moderation in all the affairs of our life, in speaking or holding our peace; in joy or in sorrow, that we give not scope to our vnbrideled affections, but always order and dispose them as there is just cause.

[Use 2] Secondly, it condemneth such as are bereft of all sense and feeling of such grievous judgments of God. Alas, how can such assure themselves to be true members of Christ's body? For tell me, Can a man lose a principal part of his body, as his eye, his hand, his foot, and not be grieved? Or can a man be deprived of thē, and make a sport of it as at a play or pastime? Even so, such as in the suffering of y^e members of y^e Church do rejoyce, or in the public joy of the Church do mourn, cannot in truth persuade their own hearts that they have any part or portion in the body of Christ. Wherefore, whensoever God taketh away any principal stay of Church or Common-wealth, we have cause of mourning, and humbling our selves under God's judgment. When the husbandman layeth his Axe to the root of y^e tree, or vndermineth the ground about it, we cannot doubt but he meaneth the felling and falling of it. Or when we see a Gardener take away the hedge or wall of his garden, pluck up by the roots the chieftest & choicest plants disfigure the ornaments and beauty of it, and lay it open for the beasts to enter, we may gather he mindeth not to continue, but deface the Garden. Or, when a Carpenter pulleth down the master-pieces and posts that doth hold up the whole frame, and layeth the foundation even with the ground, we may conjecture by these means, that he meaneth to remove the building to another place. So when we see the evident footsteps of God's wrath, and begin to discern the fire of his jealousy breaking out by the smoke beginning to appear, in taking away serviceable men as plāts of his own garden, as pillars of his own house, and as branches of the Tree which his right hand hath planted, we must lay it to our hearts as tokens going before destruction. This our Savior handleth, Matth. 42, 32, 33. speaking of the signs going before his glorious appearance at the end of the world, *Learn the Parable of the Fig tree, when her bough is yet tender, and it putteth forth leaves, ye know that Summer is near: so likewise ye, when ye see all these things, know that the kingdom of God is nere, even at the door.* And now (beloved) behold and consider, lift up your eyes, and look how God hath dealt with us: and mark whether his dealings toward us be not tokens of his anger and fore-runners of his judgments. Hath he not taken from us a most worthy Prince, our late Sovereign, who by the course of nature might have lived longer? Of whom we may truly say as *David* did, 2 Sam. 1, 24. *Ye daughters of Israel weep for Queen Elizabeth, who clothed you with Scarlet and pleasures, and hanged Ornaments of Gold upon your apparel.* Or else as *Solomon* doth speaking of a good woman, *Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou surmountest them all.* She opened the house of the Lord in the first year of her reign, as good *K. Hezekiah* did: she called back the reverent Ministers fled out of the land as *Elijah* into the wilderness, through the tyranny of *Jezebel*: she brought in the pure worship of God, cast out the Romish abominations, set forth the service of God in a known tongue, repealed the bloody acts of the persecutors: and therefore she thus honoring God, and advancing his Gospel, he likewise exalted her Throne on high, as the Throne of *Solomon*, 2. Samuel, 2, ver. 30. so that she shined in her time in the world, as if all the firmament thereof had been but one star, and as if in all the cope & compass of heauē, there had shined none but she. This star is now set and gone down, which should go near unto us, and pierce us to the quick, and make us (seeing a great Prince is fallen in Israel) never to forget y^e great works which the Lord did among us by her happy hand. Besides, hath not the Lord taken from us many lights out of the Vniuersity, whence flowed many comfortable streams that watered the Garden of God? many out of Cities and particular Churches, whereby the Church hath received a deep and

dangerous wound, and yet we seem to have feared consciences and to be past feeling? When the vital parts begin to fail or to languish, the life of the body is in hazard. While the disease or distemperature is in the outward parts far from the head or the heart, there is hope of health and recovery; but when the lively parts begin to waste and consume by little and little, it is a sign of the decay of life, and of the approach of death. Howsoever therefore, the greatest part never lay these things to their hearts, nor interpret them as present tokens of imminent danger and judgment, yet we that have learned better things, ought to consider, that as they are taken away from the evil to come, & rest quietly in the grave (as in a bed,) even so they have left us behind for the evil to come.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is our duty to pray to God to stay his hand, to show mercy to his Church, and to pour out the full Vial of his vengeance upon his enemies that know him not, and upon the Nations that call not upon his Name. This the Prophet practiseth, Psalm. 74, 2, 19, 20, 21, 22. *Think upon thy Congregation which thou hast possessed of old, and on thine inheritance which thou hast redeemed, and on this Mount Zion wherein thou hast dwelled.* We see how he putteth God in mind of his Covenant, and entreateth him to strike through the loins of his enemies to their destruction; to maintain his own cause, and to spare his people, the sheep of his own Pasture, the dwelling place of his own Name, and the Congregation of his poor afflicted ones. So when in like manner we behold the hand of God upon his own Sanctuary, & to begin judgment at his own house; let us call upon him to consider whereof we are made, and to remember that we are but dust. This did the Prophet *Habakkuk*, when God threatened to enter into judgment with his church, *O Lord, I have heard thy voice, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of thy people: in wrath remember mercy.* Hab. 3, 2. Where he teacheth, that whensoever we hear of the threatenings and judgments of God, we must pray him to repair and restore the state of the Church, which is ready to perish, who is able to heal the wound that his own right hand hath made. True it is, the great sins of this Land do cry out against us, & may justly provoke him to make havoc of all: yet let us call for mercy at his hands, and stay the course of our sins, that so he may stay the stroke of his judgments.

CHAP. XXI.

IN this Chapter we are to observe four principal pointes. First, the battle fought between *Arad* King of the Canaanites, & the Israelites. Secondly, another murmuring of the people (the last recorded in this Book) which God punisheth with fiery serpents, & cureth them with a brazen serpent. Thirdly, their happy proceeding in their journey toward the Land of promise, where God gave them water, and brought them to the borders of the *Amorites*. Lastly, the victories which Israel obtained on *Sihon*, King of the *Amorites*, and *Og* the King of *Bashan*. Now let us come to the first point, which is the encounter with the Canaanites, in these words.

1 And Harad a Canaanitish King dwelling toward the South, heard tell that Israel was come

by the way of the Spies; then fought he against Israel, and took of them a multitude of prisoners.

2 So Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said; If thou wilt surely deliver this people into mine hand then will I utterly destroy their Cities.

3 And the Lord heard the voice of Israel, & delivered them the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them & their Cities, and called the name of that place Hormah.

What Canaanitish King this was, whereof *Moses* maketh mention in this place, is uncertain. Some think it to be the king of the Amalekites, which *Moses* pointeth out; but this carrieth no show or semblance of truth. For first, the Amalekites long since endeavored to stop the passage and proceeding of the children of Israel, and were destroyed with a great destruction; and therefore it is not likely, that now they would come out again to make a new on-set, especially seeing the Israelites invaded not their Land. Besides, the Amalekites cannot be accounted in the number of the Canaanites, inasmuch as they descended not of *Canaan*, but of *Esau*, and so were alied to the Israelites, being of the race of *Shem*. Rather we are here to understand some King of the Amorites, who because they came of one common stock, as *Moses* teacheth, Gen. 10, 15, 16, are comprehended under the Canaanites. But to come to the matter it self, here we see how the Israelites encounter with *Harad*, occasion of the battle being offered by himself. For when by his espials and scouts sent abroad, he had intelligence that Israel approached, he levied an host, armed them, and issued forth against them of his own accord, not challenged, not provoked, not injured by the Israelites, but himself challenging and provoking, rusheth forward to the destruction of his person, and the confusion of his army. The success of this encounter was double. First, the Canaanites had the upper hand, slew some of the Israelites, and took many prisoners, & led them away captives, so that they turned their backs and were not able to stand before their enemies. The people of God having had this loss, & taken the foil, do not fret against God, nor despair of his help, but after this fresh disaster & discomfit, they reconcile themselves to God, they fly to him by prayer, they humble themselves as *Joshua* did, when the mē of *Ai* put them to flight, saying, *O Lord, what shall we say when Israel turn their backs before their enemies*. They vow unto God to turn nothing of this Kings Country to their own use and profit, but consecrate and sanctify all to God, destroying their enemies, and razing their Cities, if he would grant them victory, and deliver the Canaanites into their hands, in whom now was equal their proud insolency, and good success, through the former battle. No doubt the Israelites had sinned before against God, and not repented of their sin, they provoked him by their security, glorying in their strength, trusting in their multitude, and puffed up with the victories w^c God had given them, who had fought their battles gone in and out with their armies, and covered their heads in the day of slaughter: thus lying in their sins, nothing can prosper, God curseth the works of their hands, and letteth them see their own weakness, and that they should not be able to prevail against any of their enemies, unless God did fight for them, according to that in the 127. *Psal. v. 1, 2. Except the Lord keep the City, the keeper watcheth*

in vain: it is in vain for you to rise early, and to sit down late, and eat the bread of sorrow; but he will surely give rest to his beloved. So long as they trusted in their own strength and number, & looked not for victory as a blessing from God, they could not stand: but when they had repented and craved protection from him that is the strength of Israel, they join again their power, unite their forces, order their battails, resist their enemies, prevail and put them all to flight. *For if God be with us, who shall be against us? But if he be against us, who shall be with us, or who shall plead for us?* It is not the wisdom of the Leaders, nor the virtue of the soldiers, nor the counsel of the wise, nor the planting of munition, can any whit prevail, until we be reconciled unto God, and God unto us.

Lastly, the Israelites being masters of the field, having the Cities and persons standing at their mercy, they perform the solemn promise and vow made to the God of heaven, not to halves, or in part, as *Saul* did, who spared the better sheep and the fat beasts: but they utterly destroyed their enemies, & their cities, & in memorial of the great goodness of God, hearing them in their prayers, and respecting them in their miseries, they call the name of y place, *Hormah*, that is, destruction and confusion. This is the principal drift of this division. Now let us consider the doctrines that directly arise from this place, that our faith may be strengthened, & our obedience increased.

[*And Harad a Canaanitish King, &c.*] We see here how the Canaanites appointed to destruction, and to be rooted out, enemies to the people of God, such as had now filled up the measure of their sins, yet here prevail against Israel, kill some of them, and take others prisoners. This teacheth us this Doctrine, that oftentimes [Doctrine] the enemies of the Church prevail over them: I say, the enemies of God and of his people, who in the secret counsel and purpose of God, are vowed to destruction, do insult and triumph over the Church and particular parts thereof, God correcting the rebellion of his children by them. This truth God sealed up in the beginning by the blood of *Abel*, *Cain* spake friendly, *But rose up desperately against him, and slew his brother, because his own works were evil, & his brothers good.* So just *Lot* vexed with the unclean conversation of the wicked (for he being righteous, and dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day today with their unlawful deeds,) was notwithstanding carried away captive by a proud and insolent enemy. Besides, the book of Judges serveth us as a plentiful storehouse to teach this truth, where we see, that whē the people of God did wickedly in the sight of y^e Lord, served *Baalim*, and forsook the Lord God of their fathers which brought them out of the Land of Egypt: the wrath of the Lord waxed hot against them, he delivered them into the hands of spoilers, he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about them, yea whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was sore against them. So that the people of God are oftentimes driven to the wall, and constrained to yield unto the violence of bloody and cruel enemies.

Neither can we marvel at the Lord's doing, [Reason 1] if we consider; First, that his own people sin against him, and therefore God is even compelled to correct and chasten them, howbeit in mercy, not in his fury; for their instruction, not for their destruction. This the Prophet teacheth, Lam. 1, 3, 4, 5. Josh. 7, 1, 4. What father doth not correct when he seeth his children run astray, though he love them dearly? So God chasteneth his dearest Saints and

servants because they should not be condemned with the world. It is the sin of the godly that causeth him to lay sundry troubles and his heavy hand upon them, causing him to correct severely, evē those that he loveth most dearly, as he did *David* and diverse other of his people, that we should repent thereof, that God may cease smiting of us.

[Reason 2] Secondly, he maketh the adversaries prevail over his children, that they may learn to rest in God alone, to put their trust & affiance in him, and not to rely upon vain man, who is lighter then vanity it self. We are ready to rest upon our selves, & upon an arm of flesh, rather then upon the living God, as *David* in his prosperity said, *I shall never be moved*. Some trust in Horses, and some in Chariots, which are deceitful helps, & some in Princes, whose breath is in their nostrils: it is expedient therefore, that God should leave us for a time in the hands of our enemies, that we may learn our own weakness, and acknowledge his goodness. Thus he dealt with *Manasseh*, when he gave himself to sorcery, fell into idolatry, & shed much innocent blood with all cruelty, when he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and caused *Judah* to err, and to do worse then the heathen: *He was led away prisoner into Babylon, being put in fetters, and bound in chains. But when he was in tribulatiō, he prayed to the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.* He learned that in Babylon, which he could never learn at Jerusalem: profited more lying in prison, thē he did sitting on his throne and he got more true godliness in his heart, in the days of his captivity, then ever he gained in the time of his prosperity.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, to harden the hearts of the enemies, that they may run forward to their own confusion. For a little prosperity puffeth them up, thereby they sorget God, they grow in malice and madness, and tip their tongues with the venom of their hearts. Sometimes they are lifted up on high, that God may give them the greater down-fall. So he dealt with the men of *Ai*, Josh. 8, 6: after they had smitten many of the Israelites with the sword, they rushed headlong out of the City, to their own ruin and destruction. So he dealt with the wicked *Benjamites*, triumphing in their victories glorying in their own strength, and saying one to another, *Surely they are smitten down before us as in the first battle, but the judgment fell upon their own heads*, Judge. 20, 39.

[Use 1] The uses remain. First, we learn hereby not to measure the Church or the truth of religion by outward prosperity or peace, which is a deceitful measure and a false rule, seeing God often humbleth his servants under his & their enemies. True it is, God sometimes giveth unto his Church a flourishing estate in wealth and peace, in glory and visible beauty, to give thereby even a taste of all kind of earthly blessings, and that they might have opportunity to serve him, & every kind of comfort and encouragement in well doing: yet he oftentimes altereth the outward estate of the Church in this world, and changeth the condition of his servants from one extreme to another. Let us not therefore measure the favor and love of God towards our selves or others by the blessings or adversities of this life. Here the wicked many times flourish and flow in peace, when the godly live in great grief and misery; and on the other side, the godly sometimes prosper & have rest, and a time of breathing and refreshing granted unto them, whē the wicked are in great distress. This is it which the wiseman teacheth, Eccl. 9, 1, 2. *All things come alike to all, and the same condition is to the just and*

to the wicked, so that no man knoweth either love or hatred of all that is before them. No man can esteem by any outward estate, whether he be loved or hated of God, for neither do the righteous always prosper, neither are the wicked always crossed and afflicted; but the wicked flourish more commonly and more gloriously than the just, and the hand of God lieth heavier and sorer upon the godly, than upon the ungodly: both sorts are subject to death, both are laid in the grave, without any show or appearance of difference between the one & the other. The love of God toward the believers is not discerned by the eye, but apprehended and embraced by faith.

Secondly, we must learn not to publish & [Use 2] spread abroad the miseries and calamities of the Church, that the enemies may not rejoice in the days of her tribulation. We ought not to blaze & brute abroad the private infirmities of private persons, lest we kindle coals of hatred and contention & take away the good name of our brother: much more are we forbidden to divulge the miseries and afflictions of the Church, to give occasion to the enemy to rejoice and solace himself in the sorrows of the Saints of God. We know the rage of enemies, nothing is more joyful to them than to hear of the distresses and desolations thereof. Therefore *David* after the slaughter of *Saul* and *Jonathan* by the sword of the enemy, provoketh to this duty, 2 Sam. 1, 19, 20. *O noble Israel, he is slain upon thine high places: how are the mighty over thrown! Tell it not in Gath, nor publish it in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.* Where he forbiddeth to tell and declare to the profane enemies the fall and overthrow of the King, his sons and host of Israel, lest the Philistines should insult upon them, and scoff at them, and consequently blaspheme the God whom they served and worshipped. The like charge the Prophet *Micah* giveth, speaking of the afflictions that should befall *Israel* and *Judah*, *Their plagues are grievous, for it is come into Judah: Judah: the enemy is come unto the gate of my people, unto Jerusalem: Declare it not at Gath, neither weep ye: in the house of Hophrah roll thyself in the dust.* Mich. 1, 9, 10. He enjoineth the silence, lest the same thereof spread it self to their enemies to increase their reproach, and to multiply their sorrow. For what doth more vex us & double our misery, then to see men so far from pitying us, that they triumph over us and laugh at us? This condemneth many that live among us in these days of dissention, that tender not the peace of the Church, which ought to be as dear unto us as our own lives, but publish the shame & reproach one of another, as with the blast of a Trumpet, albeit our enemies and the enemies of our religion live among us. *Abraham* took up the controversy between him and *Lot*, saying, *Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, neither between my heard-men & thy heardmen, because the Canaanites dwelled at that time in the Land.* If we did aright consider this point that our enemies are among us, y^t are as whips on our sides, and thorns in our eyes, that seek the subversion of the Common-wealth, not the conversion of the Church: there would not be so many bad & bitter invectives written as it were with gall and wormwood, setting on fire the hearts of one against another, as if we were enemies, not friends; strangers, not brethren; infidels, not believers. These contentions are a stumbling block unto the weak, an hardening and heartening of the adversary, and an utter estranging of us one from another. Let us therefore follow those things that belong to peace, and unite our forces

together as one man, that we may seek y^e building up of the Church among us, and double our strokes upon the back of the enemy.

[Use 3] Thirdly, let us use patience under the cross, lying as under God's hand, and in the midst of all our afflictions say with the Prophet, *I was dumb and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.* Psal. 39, 9. This we read to have been worthily practiced of Job, when the cup of affliction began to overflow, chap. 2, 10. *Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.* This also we find expressly required, Heb. 10, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36. Where we see in the example of these afflicted Hebrews, that when our enemies insult over the Church, we must not murmur & tepine, but be still and silent under the cross, and according to the counsel and commandment of Christ, Luke 21, 19, *By patience possess our souls:* and without this, we shall never have comfort and contentment in such afflictions as we are called to endure.

[Use 4] Lastly, seeing God at sundry times and in diverse manners giveth those that are his, into the hands of their enemies; surely in the ende he will not spare the wicked, he deferreth his punishments, but he striketh at the last. As he is longer in drawing his Bowe, and making ready his Quiuer, so his Arrows when they come, pierce the deeper, and wound the sorer. The higher his hand is lifted up before it falleth, the greater the blow is when it lighteth. He hath a leaden foot and hasteth slowly, but howsoever he tarry till the appointed time, yet surely he will come and will not stay, but recompense the slowness of his coming, with the greuousnesse of his punishing, *When he will crush them with a Scepter of iron, and break them in pieces like a potters vessel.* This Moses teacheth in his song concerning God's benefits toward his people, and their unthankfulness toward him; *If I whet my glittering sword, and my hand take hold on judgment, I will execute vengeance toward mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me, and I will make mine arrows drunk with blood.* Deut. 32, 41, 42. Let them not therefore triumph over the Church & people of God: and let us wait a while, and see the end of all her enemies, how God hath set them in a slippery place. We see in this History, that albeit these Canaanites were as the rod of God to chastise his servants for their security, yet God in the end threw them in the fire, and gave them as a prey to his people, as appeareth afterward. The like the Prophet David declareth, Psal. 137, 3, 7, 8, 9, that howsoever the Edomites and Babylonians flouted at the Church in affliction, and they that led thē captives required of them in mockage, songs and mirth, saying, *Sing us one of the songs of Zion:* yet they escaped not the just hand of a revenging God, according to the prayer of his people, *Remember the childrē of Edom, O Lord, in the day of Jerusalem, which said, raze it, raze it to the foundation thereof: O daughter of Babel worthy to be destroyed, blessed shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us: blessed shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy children against the stones.* And the Prophet David being greuoufly persecuted under Saul, and hunted frō place to place as a Partridge in the Mountains, assureth himself that flying to God in his afflictions, and possessing his soul by patience, he shall in the end behold God taking such vengeance on all his enemies, & rewarding them seven fold into their bosom, that he shall in pity and compassion pray unto God for them in their miseries. True it is, he doth not always recompense them presently, so soon as they have sinned, because he is the God of patience, waiting for their repentance,

bearing with the vessels of wrath, and making them without excuse; yet at the length he will reprove them, and set their sins in order before them, Psal. 50, 21.

[Verse 2. *So Israel vowed a vow.*] Before the Israelites trusted in themselves; now being overthrown by the enemies, they turn to God, and learn obedience by the things which they suffered. So then the present overthrow given unto them, maketh them consider their own weakness, and driveth them to God in their distress.

The doctrine frō hence is this, that affliction is profitable to the Church, it bringeth & driveth us unto God. The Church of God in general, and the servants of God in particular, which cannot profitably use prosperity, and bear themselves thankfully in the days of peace, do learn in adversity to turn to God, and are thereby brought unto him. Hereunto cometh the example of the Israelites, Judge. 3, 8, 9, 10. When the wrath of God was kindled against Israel doing wickedly, forgetting God and serving their idols that turned to their ruin, then they cried unto the Lord, and he stirred up a Savior unto them. Hereunto also cometh the threatenings of Moses, Deut. 4, 27, 28, 29, 30. 2 Chron. 15, 3. To this purpose the prophet speaketh, Psal. 107, 6, 13, 19, 28. *Whē they wandered in the Desert, and found no City to dwell in; when they were bound in misery and iron, because they rebelled against the words of the Lord; when they travel by sea and occupy by the great waters, that the winds and storms toss them up and down, so that all their cunning is gone: Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivereth thē out of their distress.* So immediately before their captivity, they mocked the messengers of God, despised his words, misused his Prophets, which spake unto them, rising early and late; and abused their peace when they dwelled in their Cities and abode in their houses: but in the days of their affliction, when the enemies insulted upon them, their hearts were smitten, they could not sing the songs of the Lord in a strange land, then they remembered Jerusalem and the Temple, the sacrifices and service of God in the Temple, w^c they had frequented and too much prophaned, verifying that sentence in the Proverbs, chap. 27, 7. *The person that is full, despiseth an Honey-comb; but unto the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.* This the Prophet *Isaiah* setteth down in the song of the faithful, chap. 26, 16. *Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer whē thy chastening was upon them.* Now let us come to the reasons.

[Reason 1] For, from whence come they? or who is the author of them? Are they not from GOD? *There is no evil in the city, which the Lord hath not done,* Amos 3, 6. He hath his quiver full of arrows. Hath he not the sword to strike us? Hath he not the pestilence to consume us? Hath he not the famine to pinch us and pine us away? Hath he not all creatures in his own hand to send out against us? If then afflictions be the work of his hand, there is great reason and cause the church should turn to him that sendeth them, that by returning to him, the judgment may be removed & put away. This the Prophet teacheth, Lam. 3, 37, 38, 39, 40. *Who is it then that saith, and it cometh to pass, and the Lord commandeth it not? Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord: let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in the heavens, saying; we have sinned and rebelled, therefore thou hast not spared.* Seeing therefore, afflictions are from God, not from men; from heaven, not from the earth; they must needs be of necessary and profitable use to the children of God, to whose good all things tend and fall out.

Again, none else in heaven or earth can [Reason 2] help us. To whom then should we turn but to the Lord? Can any other relieve us, or deliver us? Is there any help on the right hand or on the left hand? Can any take away that which GOD hath laid upon, the children of men? He is God, and there is none beside him: he killeth and giveth life, neither is there any that can deliver out of his hand. This is that which the Prophet urgeth Psal. 142, 4, 5. *I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, but there was none that would know me: all refuge failed me, and none cared for my soul: then I cried unto the Lord, &c.* If then God be the author of afflictions, and if none can take from us the smallest cross and the least touch of his little finger that lieth upon us, there is great cause that in all our troubles we should fly unto God, and draw near unto him.

Now let us consider the uses of this Doctrine. [Use 1] First, seeing the Church is brought to the Lord by afflictions, observe herein the mighty power of God, that hath many ways and sundry means to turn the hearts of men, to humble them, and bring them home unto himself; to call them and cast them down at his footstool. Indeed among all means that God hath sanctified to further our salvation, the chiefest is his messenger, one of a thousand to speak to them out of his word, & to preach unto them his truth, which is the power of God to salvation to all that believe. But he hath also many other ways that he useth when it pleaseth him, as he saith by y^e Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 5, 4. *What could I have done anymore to my Vineyard that I have not done unto it? He hedged it, he gathered out the stones of it, he planted it with the best Plants, he built a Tower in the midst thereof, and made a wine-press therein.* He beseecheth us by his sweet mercies, and when no fair means will serve, yet affliction is often made powerful to turn our hearts, & to prepare the way for repentance, as the needle doth for the thread. This use is made in Job 33, 16, 17, 23. *God speaketh once or twice in dreams and visions, by his Messenger and Interpreter, even by their corrections which he hath sealed, that he might cause man to turn away from his enterprise, and that he might hide the pride of man.* Let us therefore hereby all of us learn to acknowledge the greatness, both of the mercy and power of God in working out our salvation effectually by so many means, who being infinitely good, is able to bring good out of evil, as he did light of darkness.

Secondly, we see that albeit afflictions be [Use 2] grievous and bitter, yet they are not unprofitable to those whom God hath chosen to better graces. Albeit tribulation and anguish, peril and the sword, nakedness and famine fall upon us, *And though we be slain all day long, and counted as sheep to the slaughter,* yet in all these we are more then Conquerors; there is a sweet issue and a comfortable end of them, that thereby we are made better. This appeareth by the confession and experience of the Prophet *David*, Psal. 119, 67, 71, & 94, 12, 13. *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy word.* And again, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn thy Statutes.* And in another place, *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him in thy Law: that thou mayest give him rest from the days of evil, whiles the pit is digged for the wicked.* True it is, we ought to make use of the mercies and patience of God, to be led forward unto repentance, that so where grace aboundeth, our obedience may abound also. But because we make his blessings and benefits an occasion of evil, and turn the grace of God into wantonness, I am persuaded it were a great deal better for many of us in respect of our souls and salvation, that we were in affliction and in

persecution, that the enemies were at our backs, and their swords at our throats, that the pestilence did walk among us, that the sickness destroyed us at noon-day, that a thousand did fall at our right hand, & ten thousand at our left hand, that we heard the sound of the Trumpet, the roaring of the Canon, the clattering of Armor, & crying in our streets: for then it were to be hoped, we would turn unto God in our misery, repent us of our iniquity, and fly unto God in our adversity. We see by woeful experience, that peace & prosperity have lulled many of us asleep in a bed of ease, & have done the Church more harm, then cruel war, and bloody persecution. True it is, the blessings of God are not hurtful of themselves, but our corruption turneth that into a curse which God bestoweth as a blessing, *So that he which should have been upright, is laden with fatness, and spurneth with his heel.* Therefore God is constrained to punish us, to take his benefits from us, and to bring us into order and obedience by the want of them.

[Use 3] Lastly, seeing afflictions and chastisements draw us to God, as loss of the battle did here the Israelites; we learn, that whensoever they lie upon us, and press heavily upon our bodies, our souls, our neighbors, our families, our friends, whether they be common or private calamities; then it is high time to turn unto God, and to search out the cause of our affliction. This must be our practice & feeling when his hand is upon us, when he scattereth the brands of his fire, and shooteth the Arrows of his Quiuer, when he draweth out his glittering sword, and his hand taketh hold of judgment, whē he sendeth famine & dearth of bread, or the famine of his word, which is the sorest and sharpest famine, as the Prophet affirmeth, Amos 8, verses 10, 11, 12. Then is cause of humiliation, then it is time to cast down our selves at the foorstoole of God, to cry to him to spare his people. The Lord threning by his prophet a great and fearful judgment upon the Land, *that shall turn their feasts into mourning, and make it as the mourning for an only son.* Doth he mean the sharpness of the sword, or the arrows of famine, or the invasion of enemies, or the devouring of wild beasts, or the raging of the pestilence or the carrying away into banishment and captivity, w^c are the things that worldly minded men fear and regard? No, *But a famine of hearing God's word: that they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the North even to the East shall they run to and fro, to seek the Lord, and shall not find it:* In that day shall many perish for thirst, according to the doctrine of Solomon, Pro. 29.18. *Where vision ceaseth, the people perish.* Howsoever therefore carnal & profane men, have no sense or feeling of anything but of earthly losses, yet the Spirit of God teacheth, and every faithful soul acknowledgeth, y^t as there is no blessing like to the blessing of the word: so there is no work of his judgment like to the want of his word. And howsoever the Pastor may not want the people in respect of the means of his maintenance, inasmuch as *God hath ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel;* yet the people want the Pastor more, as the child wanteth the nurse, more then the nurse the child, as Lam. 2.11, 12. *The babes & sucklings swound in the streets of the city, they have said to their mother, Where is bread and drink? when they gave up the ghost in their mothers bosom.* Now the Ministers are called not only the Fathers, but the Nurses of the Church, 1 Thess. 2. *We were gentle among you, even as a Nurse cherisheth her children:* and the Apostle exhorteth, *that as new borne babes we desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby, because we have tasted that the Lord is bountiful.* And thus much of the end and use of

afflictions, which God sanctifieth to the good of his Church, that thereby they may draw nearer unto him.

Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou wilt deliverer this people into mine hand, &c. The people pray, promise, and vow unto God the destruction of men & cities, if God would deliver them into their hands. We learn hereby, y^t vows are lawful, & so vowing we are to perform the same. This we see practiced by *Jacob* going to his uncle *Laban* for avoiding the fury of his brother *Esau*, Gen. 28.20.21. *Hannah*, upon condition of having a son, vowed him for a perpetual Nazarite to the Lord. So doth *David* oftentimes make vows to God in the time of his trouble, upon condition to be delivered out of his trouble.

Thus in this example of the Israelites in this place we see, that if God would be on their side when their enemies rise up against them to swallow them up quick, and deliver them as a bird out of the snare of the Fowler, they promise and vow the performance of an outward and bodily exercise. So then out of this place the doctrine of vows may be strongly confirmed, and the lawful practice of them sufficiently maintained, and warranted to be good and godly.

[Reason 1] For, to come to the reasons whereupon the doctrine standeth; a lawful and holy vow is a profitable help to further us in the worship of God. True it is, a vow is not a part of God's worship, no more then fasting is, (as fasting is no more a part of God's worship then feasting, or eating and drinking is) which in it self and by it self considered, pleaseth God no more then external and bodily exercises do: yet it is an help and furtherance of the true service of God, a prop and stay to further the same. The kingdom of God standeth not in outward things, as the Apostle teacheth, *It is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*, Romans, chapter 14.17. But when we promise to God with full purpose of heart some outward duty, it serveth the better to excite and stir us up to repentance and thanksgiving toward God. And thus the servants of God have used it.

[Reason 2] Again, it is far better never to vow, then having vowed not to pay and perform that which is gone out of our lips: so as we may reason as *Peter* doth with *Ananias*, Acts 5.4. Likewise may it be said to such as break their lawful vows offered unto God, was it not in thy liberty to vow or not to vow? how thē hast thou conceived this wickedness in thy heart, to lie, not to men, but unto God? Vowes were prescribed or appointed by the Law of God as testimonies of faith, and bonds of that reverence and obedience which we owe unto him: therefore to vow, and not to pay & perform the solemn promise and covenant that we have made, is impudently to mock God, and consequently to pull great punishment upon our own heads. This the Wise man teacheth, Eccles. 5.3, 4, 5.

[Use 1] Let us apply this to our selves. First, from this example we may learn the doctrine of vows, what is to be holden of vows, & what is not to be holden. For we see here, what a vow is; namely, a free and solemn promise made to God touching such things as please him, tending to the glory of his Name, the profit of our brethren, or the repentance and salvation of our souls. Secondly, we see who may vow, (to wit;) such as are free and at liberty, nor under the power and jurisdiction of others. Thirdly, to whom vows are to be made, not to

Saints or Angels, but to God only, and to him alone they are to be performed, according to the saying of the Psalmist, Psal. 76.11. As he only is to be prayed unto, and from him we are to look for all good things: so to him only we must vow, and offer to him y^e calves of our lips. Fourthly, it appears what we may vow to God; not things unlawful, impossible, and unwarranted by the word of God; not things whereof we are uncertain, whether they please God or not: for who would offer to a Prince, or promise to him such things as he knoweth he will not accept, or doubteth whether he will accept thereof? *Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin*, as the Apostle teacheth: But such things as y^e Scripture warranteth, being the true rule of all right ways, such was this vow in this place. Lastly, we see that vows thus made, are carefully to be kept, and religiously to be performed, having an eye to the party with whom we have to deal. For as they are to be made with reverence, so they are to be performed with care and diligence; otherwise we do foully and falsely abuse the Majesty of God, and take his Name in vain. All these considerations and conditions teach us, that vows are not in themselves unlawful and to be condemned, so as they be restrained and bounded in the compass of the law of God, and not suffered to wander after our own fancies.

Secondly, it serveth to beat down all false [Use 2] doctrine and erroneous opinions touching vowing, which are many: and to rectify our judgments by teaching what vows are lawful, what unlawful.

First, if they be made of anything flat against the word of God, they cannot bind or tie us to the performance thereof; for all the force and power of binding us, is to be borrowed and derived from the word of God. Wherefore it must be agreeable to the will of God, and whensoever it is against the word of God, it hath no strength or efficacy to constrain or command. They which would have murdered *Paul*, and had conspired together by a solemn league of agreement, did make a solemn vow not to eat nor drink, until they had executed their devilish purpose, and put the Apostle to death. But who now dare say, that they were bound in conscience by their vow, or that God liked of it? For this were all one, as if they would make God a companion of their murder. Therefore *David* vowing the slaughter and destruction of *Nabal* and his family, revoked it at the wise counsel of a discreet woman.

Secondly, they must not be made by such persons as want sufficient reason, judgment, discretion, and understanding: as children, fools, or furious persons; for these cannot be made with freedom of conscience, nor can be said to be taken up by a man's own accord, in as much as the mind cannot truly discern what is done, as is proved at large in the thirtieth chapter of the book of Numbers, and the fourth verse.

Thirdly, it condemneth such as vow, having no power or authority in themselves, to bind themselves; such vows cannot bind, being made against the law of nature. For all lawful vows must be made with consent of their superiors, so long as they are under the government of others, as appeareth by the fifth commandment, *Honor thy father, &c.*

Fourthly, they must be so made, as they may stand with Christian liberty: for we may not in any sort make such things absolutely necessary, as God hath left free unto us, snaring the

conscience, and abridging the liberty which Christ hath purchased, contrary to the commandment of the Apostle, Gal. 5.1.

Fifthly, it reproveth such as vow things impossible, and out of the power and liberty of the makers thereof, to do, or not to do: so that a vow made of a thing impossible is no vow at all: but an intolerable presumption, and a willful tempting of God: As if a man should vow to walk upon his head, or to fly in the air, or to stay the stars as *Joshua* did, or to divide the sea as *Moses* did; wherein we have no assurance of any extraordinary gift of God.

Sixthly, they must not be against a man's general or particular calling; that is, neither against his calling as he is a Christian, neither that special calling wherein he liveth. If they be made against the one or the other, they are unlawful: As if the Minister should vow to do the office of the Magistrate in executing justice upon Malefactors; or the Magistrate vow to discharge the function of the Minister in preaching the Gospel: or if a man should vow to live in no calling in the Church, in the Common-wealth, or in the family, but walk inordinately with scandal and offense.

Seventhly, it convinceth all such vows as are rash, heady, sudden, idle, and unadvised; and requireth on the other side, that they be made with advice, meditation and deliberation. For rash vows be not lawful, albeit the things vowed may be done lawfully. Therefore the Wiseman saith, Eccles. 5.1. *Be not rash with thy mouth, nor let thy heart be hasty to utter a thing before God, for God is in the heavens, and thou art on the earth, therefore let thy words be few.* If we make a promise unto a man like to our selves, we will have this consideration, and think with our selves, whether he will accept of it or not, whether his will be to like of it or not. We must not therefore mock with God, and make lighter account of him, then of a mortal man, whose breath is in his nostrils. They ought not to be made without judgment and aduisement, for that were a defiling of God's service, and an abusing of his Name.

Now, as they ought not to be made rashly, but with sobriety, so ought all our vows to be of great moment and importance, and therefore we are forbidden to vow idle and trifling toys to observe, (as is usual in the Church of Rome) where one voweth a pilgrimage to the Saints, another voweth to fast and eat no flesh at such a feasts Even; whereof one is superstitious, the other devilish. As for their pilgrimages, it is a wicked corruption, and an idolatrous service which God rejecteth. For albeit (under the Law) it was the ordinance of God to build one Temple, and to choose one place to which man should resort to worship him, yet this order is now abolished; every coast and country is Iewry, every town and city is Jerusalem, every faithful company, and godly person is a Temple to worship God in: We may call upon God everywhere, and lift up pure hands in all places, no land is a strange land, no ground is unholy ground. And touching their abstinence from flesh on certain times for religion sake, it is a doctrine of devils, 1 Tim. 4, 1, 3.

Lastly, it reproveth such as propound to themselves false and wrong ends of vows, as conceit of merit, and opinion of deserving the favor of God and everlasting life. For the ends which we respect must be good, as to exercise and stir up the gifts of faith, prayer, obedience, repentance, and other graces of the Spirit, and to testify our thankfulness to God for

blessings received at his hands. The intent therefore and meaning is here to be considered, and we must be well advised, not only that our vows be directed to God, but for what purpose, and how we vow to God; not to bind God unto us, but to bind us the closer to God & to render all honor unto him.

Now if we would examine the vows, practiced in the Church of Rome, by these things before delivered, we shall easily perceive the fondness and falsehood, nay the wickedness of them. For here are condemned all vows of pilgrimages, and abstinence from flesh for religion, noted before: their doctrine that children may enter into their orders and cloisters against the counsel and consent of their parents, and that persons contracted either to other, may vow continency without the liking and approbation of the other party, which cannot stand with the doctrine of the Scripture, or ancient councils. For the word establisheth the authority of parents over their children (which the former vows abridgeth and cutteth short) and teacheth, that if a woman vow unto the Lord, and bind her self by a bond, being in her fathers house, in time of her youth, if her father disallow her the same day that he heareth all her vows and bonds, they shall not be of value. Lastly, by the former observations, fall to the ground the ordinary vows of single life, voluntary poverty, and Fryarly obedience to vain and superstitious men, which they absurdly make, and tie themselves necessarily to observe. For such vows are directly and flatly against the former rules prescribed & delivered; impossible. intolerable, beyond our own strength & calling: a will worship, according to the decrees and traditions of men, and directly contrary to the commandment of God, 1 Cor. 7.9. Again, they are not in the power of him y^t voweth, for no man can promise perpetual chastity in single life out of the estate of wedlock. Continency is the special and proper gift of God, who giveth it not unto all, but to whom he will, and as long as he will.

This our Savior teacheth, Matth. 19. *All men cannot receive this thing, save they to whom it is given: he that is able to receive this, let him receive it.* To this accordeth and agreeth the doctrine of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7. *I would that all men were even as myself am, but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.* Furthermore, they abolish Christian liberty, in the lawful use of the good creatures and ordinances of God, as riches and marriage; food and apparel; making that absolutely necessary, which God hath freely left to our liking and liberty. Lastly they are made most commonly to Saints, and not to God, and they are made for merits sake, thereby to deserve salvation, and the substance of religion and worship of God is made to consist in them: whereas the Apostle teacheth, *That bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable for all things.* Therefore these vows practiced and defended by the Church of Rome, being unlawfully, rashly, unconscionably, superstitiously, meritoriously made, and impossible to be performed, cannot bind the conscience, but are better broken, then irreligiously kept, according to the doctrine of the former Churches.

Thirdly, seeing vows be lawful, which are promises made to God, of some duty to be performed to him, to some good end; the vow which all believers have made in Baptism, is, to be kept of everyone: wherein we promised to believe in Christ, to obey God, to bring forth

the fruits of true repentance; to renounce the works of the devil, the allurements of this present evil world, and the lusts of the flesh, which lust against the spirit. And albeit we are bound to these duties by our calling & redemption, without any new vow, yet we may lawfully renew our covenant with God, and so bind our selves faster and faster. As he that hath bound himself in a bond, may yet give greater and better assurance, & bind himself more then before: So be that is bound to have faith in Christ, and to yield obedience to all his commandments, may yet further and faster bind himself, to help his dullness, coldness, and want of zeal, and to make himself more forward and servant in duties of the first and second table: according to the practice of *David, I have sworn, and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* He was bound hereunto, without and before his oath, yet he kindled his zeal, and reneweth his covenant with God by this oath to stir up the gift of God that was in him, and to help his own infirmity. We have all in baptism vowed to consecrate our selves, even our souls and bodies to God, by renouncing the devil, the world, and the flesh: if we go back as cowardly Soldiers from this our vow, shall we not be convinced as false and unfaithful to God? And how shall we conscionably keep any other vows, that break the first vow we made to God? What a fault is it accounted among our selves, to promise and then to break? But have we kept this our general and common vow, to fight under the banner and ensigne of Jesus Christ, against the devil and all his works? Or rather have we not walked, and do we not still walk in the works of darkness, after the inventions of our own hearts? And do not our open sins cry out and proclaim as much to the dishonor of God, and our own reproach: So that all such as walk in the blindness of their own minds, have besides all their other sins, this great burden upon their consciences pressing them down, that they are found vow-breakers, and have broken their faith and promise made to God. Let us all remember, that we have vowed to God our selves, and take heed we perform that which we have vowed, lest it be imputed unto us for sin.

Lastly, it followeth from hence, that such [Use 4] special and peculiar vows as we have made upon particular occasions, as everyone hath had cause in time of war, sickness, necessity trouble, and danger, we must be careful to keep, and to pay our due and debt unto God. If we feel our selves slack and slothful to good duties, we may stir up our selves, and bind ourselves by some earnest and faithful promise to God. If we be inclined to any vice, we are to do the like. If a man have fallen into whoredom and fornication, he may, to bridle and halter his lusts, vow never to delight in the harlots company. If we have fallen into drunkenness, we may vow fasting and abstinence, yea, the abstaining from all hateful houses of drunkenness, being allurements & provocations to the same. The oppressor may vow restitution and mercy to the poor, to stir up his affection the better to perform it. Now in all these, we must beware and take heed, that we be not rash in the words of our mouth nor hasty to utter a promise before the most high. What a reproach and blemish, is it in such as will readily promise much to men, and yet perform at leisure little or nothing? Do not all despise such persons? But the fault and offense is more grievous, when there is a set and solemn promise made to God, and not performed. So then, we that require true, honest, and just dealing toward our selves, and promises to be kept to our selves by a day, have we done the like to God our Lord? Let us enter into our selves, and examine our hearts, a little. We

are ready in sickness, in want, in great affliction and adversity to vow, and solemnly to promise if God deliver us, to glorify him, to be thankful and obedient unto him, to enter into repentance and amendment of life. When a man hath loosely and lewdly spent his time in drunkenness, riotousnes, idleness, wantonness, envy, hatred, contempt of God and his word; if God strike him with grievous sickness, that he feareth death as the messenger sent of God to seize upon him then doth he tremble, then doth he desire that God would have mercy upon him, and then doth he make vows: If God restore me to health again, and give me life, I will never be the man I have been, I have been given to drunkenness, I will never haunt the Ale-house: I have led a naughty life, I have dishonored God, and despised his word, I will hereafter obey his voice, and attend to his word: I have hated the children of God, I will hereafter show my love to them, renouncing my sins, and living to God's glory.

Oh what goodly promises are these; and how well were it, if men did so indeed? and how were it to be wished, that as they have opened their mouth unto the Lord, so they would do according as they have promised? But when God hath heard their prayers, and restored them to health; mark, and ye shall find, that for the most part, so soon as they are recovered, and are able to craule out of the doors, they return again to their former ways, *as the dog to his vomit, and the Sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire*. What shall we say of these men? Nay, what may we not say of them? Are they not covenant breakers, and grievous offenders against God? They are like unto *Pharaoh* King of Egypt, when the hand of God was heavy upon him and his people, then he humbled himself, he confessed the righteousness of God, the wickednesse of his people, and the heinousness of his sins: Then *Moses* and *Aaron* must be sent for in all haste to pray for him, whom he before despised in his heart; and scorned in his talk: yet so soon as the plague was ceased, and the hand of God removed, he hardened his heart, and would not let the children of Israel go.

But he dallyed so long with the judgments of God, that he deceived himself, and in the end was drowned in the red Sea; as the Flye that playeth with the candle, until she be burned and consumed in the flame. So when men have been terrified with the hand of God, have confessed with tears their ungodly behavior, and have promised and vowed to God (if he would restore them) newness of life, and repentance from dead works: and yet being restored and recovered, being as vile in sin, as loose in life, as bestly in behavior as they were beforr: God hath in justice stricken them again for their unthankfulness, so as they have died in fury and frenzy without any appearance of grace, or assurance of mercy, or remorse of conscience, or acknowledgement of sin, or craving of pardon, or hope of forgiveness, or sign of sorrow, or joy of heart, or consolation of spirit, or purpose of amendment: but are wholly possessed with a shame of sin, and guilt of conscience, and fear of judgment, and the flashings of hell fire. Doth not this show that God's wrath is heavy against such unfaithful persons as break their oath, and falsify their promise made unto the Eternal, who always keepeth covenant with us, and will not alter the word that is gone out of his mouth? *O consider this ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none that can deliver you. Contrariwise to conclude let us follow y^e example of David, Psal. 66.13, 14. I will go into thine house with burnt offerings, and will pay thee my vows which my lips have promised, and my mouth hath spoken in mine affliction.*

Verse 3. *And the Lord heard the voice of Israel.* Here is the fruit and effect of their prayer and humiliation, showing also the lawfulness and approbation of their vow; God accepteth, and respecteth them in their distresses. From hence we do learn, that God heareth and granteth the prayers of his children. For howsoever sometimes he deferreth to hear and hearken to their prayers, to exercise their faith, to kindle their zeal in prayer, to teach them whence good things proceed, to sharpen their hunger, to make them highly to esteem the graces long begged, and to prove them by delay; yet in the end God heareth and helpeth, he granteth and giveth the things which they ask according unto his will. This the Prophet declareth, Isaiah 65.24. *Before they call, I will answer: and while they speak, I will hear* And Psal. 120.1. *I called upon the Lord in my trouble, and he heard me.* And again, Psal. 145.18, 19. *The Lord is near to all that call upon him, yea to all that call upon him in truth: he will fulfill the desires of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry, and will save them.* Thus the Lord Jesus, being zealous in prayer, confesseth that his father always heareth him: Thus the Angel telleth *Cornelius That his prayers are heard* Thus the Apostle also teacheth, I am. 1.5. *If any man want wisdom, let him ask of God, which giveth to all men liberally, & reproacheth no man, and it shall be given him.* And in the last Chapter, *Is any among you afflicted, let him pray: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick: Helias was a man subject to like passions as we are, he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth for three years and six months: and he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.*

The reasons to assure us of this truth, are [Reason 1] first, the promise gone out of his own mouth, and the assurance of his own word, who can never deceive nor falsify his truth. This is it which Christ our Savior urgeth, Mat. 7.7, 8. *Ask, and it shall be given you: Seek, and ye shall find: Knocke, and it shall be opened unto you: for whosoever asketh receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.* This is the ground and foundation of our faith in prayer, (to wit,) the promise of God, without which, we can have no confidence or trust in the mercy of God.

Again, what man heareth not, accepteth [Reason 2] not, granteth not the requests of his children that come unto him? Men that are evil and corrupt, that have scarce a spark of the love that is in God, will not turn away their eyes from the miseries of their children, much more then will God open the treasures of his graces to bestow upon us. This comparison our Savior presseth, Mat. 7.9, 10, 11. Where the doctrine hath his confirmation, *What man is there among you, which if his son ask him bread, would give him a stone? Or if he ask fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then which are evil, can give to your children good gifts, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him? And the Prophet saith, Can a woman forget her child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? though they should forget, yet I will not forget thee.*

Let us come to the uses of this doctrine. [Use 1] First, it teacheth the blessed estate of the Church, and a great privilege that the faithful have; so that no man should say, *It is vain to serve God, and what prosit is it that we have kept his commandments, and that we walked humbly before the Lord of hosts?* But it will be said, Here they are in troubles and torments; here they suffer sorrows and afflictions every day. Be it so, *Yet herein they are more then conquerors*

through him that loved them; so that neither life nor death shall separate them from Jesus Christ our Lord. The Lord is the Sun and shield unto us, the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

So then, their tribulations and afflictions shall not hinder their blessedness, but by manifold troubles we shall enter into happiness and everlasting life. Let our present care be to serve the Lord, and then we shall be safe under his protection, and not fear what man can do unto us, as the Prophet teacheth, Psa. 118. 5, 6, 7. *I called upon the Lord in trouble, and the Lord heard me, and set me at large: the Lord is with me, therefore I will not fear what man can do unto me, I shall see my desire upon mine enemies.* Let us therefore walk worthy of this blessed estate and condition, seeing we have God near unto us, and ready to hear us, so often as we pour out our meditations before him. There is no comfort like unto this, in this life; whereby we obtain health in sickness, riches in poverty, safety in danger, rest in trouble, joy in sorrow, comfort in adversity. So then, howsoever the ungodly accounteth the life of the faithful, contemptible and miserable, above all other, yet we see one are truly happy but they. For if I can say, I have been hungry, and the Lord hath fed me; I have been naked, and he hath clothed me; I have been sick, and he hath restored me; I have been in dangers, and he hath delivered me; I have a blessed experience of God's favor given unto me, and an assurance of future happiness reserved for me in the heavens.

[Use 2] Secondly, let us acknowledge it to be our duty to call upon him in the day of trouble, and in all our necessities to come unto him. For if the righteous crieth, and the Lord heareth him, yea delivereth him out of all his troubles, let us fly unto him; the name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous •unneth unto it, and is exalted: Here is the only refuge of the godly against all troubles and adversities; hereby we are instructed to whom we should run and repair in all need and necessities. A strong Castle secureth those that fly unto it for succor and defense. Such is the favor of God toward the elect in Christ, who are sanctified by the holy Ghost, he protecteth those that fly unto him, and they shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty. This the Prophet presseth, Psal. 50.15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble, so will I deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* Let us not look to the hills or mountains; to men or Angels; let us not trust in friends or in riches; in power or policy, but know that our help cometh from the Lord, which hath made heaven and earth, who will preserve our going out, and our coming in, from henceforth and forever. This serveth to condemn the Church of Rome, who refuse the mediation of Christ to come unto God, and set up Saints and Angels in his place to usurp his office. But we are sure that Christ Jesus will never fail us, nor cease to discharge the calling appointed unto him of his Father. Why then do we not go directly unto him, that gently calleth, and lovingly allureth us, *Come unto me all ye that are weary, and heavy laden, and I will refresh you?*

Thirdly, doth God hear us when we call? [Use 3] and when we ask, doth he answer? Then it standeth with the right of reason and with the law of equity, to hear him when he calleth upon us, and crieth unto us. For whensoever we pray unto God, we speak unto him, and call upon him to hear us. Whensoever the word of God is preached and delivered, he speaketh to us, and calleth upon us to hear him. If then we would have God regard us, when we cry to

him, we must respect him whē he calleth to us. We cry by prayer; he calleth us by his word. Therefore, it is that the Lord often denounceth and threateneth all impenitent persons, that he will despise them that despise him, and will not hear them praying unto him, that will not hear him preaching unto them, as Pro. 1.24, 26, 27, 28, 29. Zach. 7.11, 12. Mic. 3.4 Prov. 28.9. Of all comforts that we feel in this life, none is greater then to pray unto God in our troubles, with assurance to be heard: this the ungodly with all their rage and cruelty can never take from us.

Therefore this is a sore judgment, when God openly professeth and proclaimeth, that he will not hear our prayers crying unto him in our miseries. When we are rejected and forsaken of men in our afflictions▪ yet we have our recourse and refuge unto GOD, and we are comforted. How wretched therefore is the estate of all unrepentant sinners, who stopping their ears at the hearing 〈1 page duplicate〉 〈1 page duplicate〉 of the Law do make all their prayers to be abominable. So did God threaten his people to number them to the sword, because (saith he) *I called, and ye did not answer: I spake, and ye heard not, but did evil in my sight, and did choose that thing which I would not.* If then we would have God open his ears to hear us, let us acknowledge it to be our duty to open our ears to hear him. God will never stop his ears against any, but those that have stopped their ears against him.

[Use 4] Lastly, learn to acknowledge the greatness of God's mercy and loving kindness, and return the praise and glory of his own works to his great Name. As he hath heard us graciously, so let us bear our selves thankfully in rendering to him the calves of our lips, and offering to him the sacrifice of praise. Even as he filleth us with his mercy, let us fill our mouths with his praise, and the memorial of his Name, and say: *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.* This use the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 145. having declared that God showeth himself near to those that call upon him and fear him, he addeth: *My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, and all flesh shall bless his holy Name forever and ever.* If I can say, when all men forsook me, the Lord took me up, I have been running into the paths of death, and was near to destruction, but thou hast brought me back, showing me the ways of life and salvation: I have been ignorant, and thou hast instructed me: If I have this experience of his goodness, so many ways toward me he openeth my mouth to praise his mercy, and I can never sufficiently magnify his Name that hath brought so great things to pass for me.

This practice is likewise taught, Psal. 107. where the Prophet mentioning sundry deliverances that God showeth his people in times of famine, and in the days of affliction, by land or by sea, he doubleth oftentimes his affection, *Let them therefore confess before the Lord his loving kindness, and his wonderful works before the sons of men.* [He delivered them the Canaanites, and they utterly destroyed them. See here the uncertainty of war. The Israelites after their overthrow fight again, and have the victory. They were at the first overcome and taken prisoners by their enemies, but now they prevail & get the upper hand. Albeit the righteous fall for a time, yet they are not cast off forever, for the Lord putteth under his hand. Great deliverances giveth he to his servants, he teacheth their hands to fight, and their fingers to battle: he is their strength and their fortress, their tower, and their

deliverer, their shield, and in him they trust. The horse indeed is prepared against the day of battle, but salvation is of the Lord, to whom it is not hard to save with many or with few. This the Prophet setteth down, Psal. 81. *Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways, I would soon have humbled their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.* Heereby we learn, that howsoever God think it meet that his Church lie under the cross, yet in his good time he helpeth, he forsaketh it not forever, but returneth again in great mercy and compassion. Albeit affliction dwelleth upon the servants of God, not only for a moment, but oftentimes presseth them for a long season, that they have no breathing time, *No not to swallow their spittle,* (as Job speaketh:) yet in due time God is not unmindful and forgetful of them. Hereunto cometh the saying of the Psalmist, *He endureth but a while in his anger, but in his favor is life: weeping may abide at evening, but joy cometh in the morning.* This the Lord expresseth in the Prophet, *For a little time have I forsaken thee, but with great compassion will I gather thee: for a moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee, for a little season, but with everlasting mercy have I had compassion on thee.* We see this point largely declared in the book of Judges, when God raised up enemies against the Israelites, and sold them as a vile thing of base account (for whom he took no money) yet when they called and cried unto him, he sent them a deliverer, who saved them out of the hands of their adversaries. This appeareth in the histories of *Joseph*, of *Job*, of the Church in *Egypt*, of *David*, of *Daniel*, who first endured shame and the reproach of the cross, yet afterward he returned unto them when the time of refreshing came from the presence of God.

The reasons are plain: First, his ears are [Reason 1] always open to the cries of his children, he putteth their tears in his bottle of remembrance, and writeth them in his Register, so that when they cry, their enemies shall turn their backs, for God is with his. This he saith, Exod. 2. the children of Israel sighed for the bondage and cried, and their cry for their bondage came up unto God: *Then the Lord said, I have surely seen the trouble of my people which are in Egypt, I have heard their cry and moan, for I know their sorrows, and I will deliver them:* verifying that in the Psalm, *He led his people like sheep by the hand of Moses and Aaron.* So long therefore as we have a voice, so long as we have an heart to lift up to God, and can pour out the meditations thereof before him, we have comfort and assurance to be helped. When the poor infant is fallen into danger of fire or water, or other misery, if he can cry that the father may hear his voice, there is hope of safety and deliverance: So, if we can call upon God the Father in Jesus Christ, in our distresses, our heavenly Father will not leave us nor forsake us in our dangers.

Secondly, albeit the faithful fall into many [Reason 2] afflictions, and their enemies make long sorrowes upon their backs, yet God will not always suffer them to be oppressed, lest they should sink deep, and shrink down under the burden, & so turn from their obedience, and forsake the faith which they have professed; according to the saying of the Prophet, *The rod of the wicked shall not rest on the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness.* He knoweth whereof we are made, he spareth us in our infirmities, he will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength he seeth our weakness, and how unable we are to resist, and therefore he will not give us over to perish in our afflictions, inasmuch as our light afflictions which are but for a moment, cause unto us a far more excellent and an

eternal weight of glory; so that *albeit the righteous fall seven times, yet he riseth again, as the wise man teacheth.*

[Use 1] To apply this unto our selves, we learn first, that the devises and practices of enemies, albeit they be never so secret or malicious, are vain and frustrate. The people of God shall be preserved, howsoever they be ever plotting and banding themselves together, as we see in the days of the Apostle, *Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Priests and people, the Jews and Gentiles conspired together: yet we shall always have assurance of safety, and all shall work for the best to them that fear God, whose love, no powers, no principalities, no Potentates shall be able to remove, as the Prophet teacheth, Rejoice not against me: O mine enemy; though I fall, I shall rise; when I shall sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me, then she that is mine enemy shall lock upon it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the Lord thy God? mine eyes shall behold her, now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets.* This serveth notably to daunt and dismay the wicked and ungodly, who insult over the righteous, and seem wise in their own eyes; considering that *The faithful escapeth out of trouble, and the wicked shall come in his stead.* This truth the Prophet *Isaiah* confesseth and confirmeth, Chap. 8. *Gather together on heaps (O ye people) and ye shall be broken in pieces: take counsel together, but it shall be brought to naught: pronounce a decree, yet it shall not stand, for God is with us.* So then, if the faithful be not ever forsaken, nor stand continually under the strokes of their enemies, but God will put to his hand and his help to deliver them, we see, that all their devises, and all their consultations against them, and insultations over them shall be brought to nothing.

[Use 2] Again, it behooveth us, in all the time of our distress to rely upon him whatsoever temptations come, though we should walk by the gates of the grave, and pass by the gulf of death. Many indeed are our infirmities, fears, cares, sorrows, and troubles: yet in them all we must say with the Prophet, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Waite on God, for I will yet give him thanks: he is my present help and my God.* Let us not therefore despair in the day of trouble, *When the snares of death compass us, and the griefs of the grave take hold upon us, when we find trouble and sorrow to pursue us and overtake us, let us call upon the Name of the Lord to deliver our soul, who is merciful and full of compassion. The Name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth unto it, and is exalted.* This is the surest and safest refuge of the godly against all troubles.

Lastly, let all such learn, as lie not under [Use 3] the cross, to commend the common cause of their brethren to God, as if themselves were in affliction. For wherefore doth God promise to free his from the oppression of the enemy, and to restore them to the joy of their salvation, but to move us to this duty of praying for them, pitying their distressed estate, and seeking by all lawful means the comfort and continuance of the Church? This the Apostle setteth down, 2 Cor. 1.3, 4. Where we see he urgeth the Church at Corinth to think of this point, to be mindful of the miseries of others, and to comfort them that are in discomfort, as God hath comforted us. This is taught by *Moses, Thou shalt not do injury to a stranger, neither oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.* And hereunto the Apostle accordeth, *Remember them that are in bonds, as though ye were bound with them: and them that are in affliction, as if ye were also afflicted in the body.* Where he would have us so much to be touched, as if their misery

were our own. This duty it is needful to think upon. We know not what troubles may fall upon our heads. When we take our selves to be freest and farthest from all dangers, then we may be nearest unto them, and suddenly fall into them, as a bird into the snare of the fowler. Wherefore, let us remember them to God that suffer afflictions, that so we may be delivered, if we fall into any troubles. But if we harden our hearts in the miseries of others, and have no feeling of their sorrows; others shall be as unmindful of us, and unmerciful unto us, as we have been to them. *For with what judgment we judge, we shall be judged: and with what measure we meat, it shall be measured to us again.* Nothing is more grievous unto a man, then to be scorned in his misery, and to be insulted upon in the day of his calamity. The affliction it self is bitter and yrkesome to the flesh, but the derisions & mockings of the enemy serve to double the cross, and to add to the measure and manner of our misery. If then we shall see with our eyes, and hear with our ears, the lamentable condition of the Church, and laugh when the people of God weep and lament, the justice of God shall overtake us, and make us a mock to our enemy.

4 After they departed from mount Hor, by the way of the red sea, to compass the land of Edom, and the soul of the people was sore grieved because of the way.

5 For the people spake against God, and against Moses, saying; Wherefore have ye brought us out of Egypt to die in this wilderness? for here is neither bread nor water, &c.

6 Wherefore the Lord sent fiery serpents, &c.

7 Then the people came to Moses; and said; We have sinned, &c.

8 And the Lord said unto Moses; Make thee a fiery serpent, &c.

9 So Moses made a serpent of Brasse, &c.

Hitherto of the first part of the Chapter, containing the encounter between the Canaanites and the Israelites: now we come to the second part, handling the eight and last murmuring of the people through weariness of their way, and compass they were compelled to fetch, through the unmercifulness of the Edomites; whereby they offended God again. In this history we are to consider sundry circumstances, setting down their sin, who fall again into their former faults and offenses, *As the dog returneth to his vomit, and the Sow unto the wallowing in the mire.* First, the place and occasion hereof is described. Secondly, the manner of their sin. Thirdly, the matter and substance thereof, wherein it consisteth is set down. Fourthly, the punishment, and judgment of God inflicted upon them for their sin. Lastly, the events and effects following the punishment.

First, touching the circumstances of the place, and occasion of the sin: observe that the Israelites departing from Hor, and crossed in their purpose, were constrained to travel all along the coasts of Edom, and to pass over a most perilous and dangerous desert, as it is set forth, Deut. 8.15. *Where the hearts of the people failed and fainted, where the fiery serpents stung and destroyed them, and where thirst pined them away.* It was no small grief and vexation unto them, having only a short cut into Canaan by crossing over the country of the Edomites, to wander up and down, to traverse the ragged rocks, the high mountains and the vast wilderness; and thereupon they brake out (through impatience of spirit) to murmur against Moses. They think themselves in the high pride of their haughty hearts, able to match and to meet with the king of Edom in the field, to give him battle, and to work their own peace and passage by dint of the sword, as they had overthrown *Harad*, a king of the Canaanites, and destroyed his cities; and therefore needed not to stand at the mercy and courtesy of others, nor fetch such compasses as Moses made them to do in the wilderness.

Secondly, the manner of their murmuring is remembered, verse 5. where the hand of God being heavy upon them in that great and terrible wilderness, they do not cry to him, they do not call to mind that blessed experience of his helping hand, which they had found ever ready to succor and sustain them; they consider not the revenge and punishment that God from time to time had taken of their murmurings; but they fly upon him as a mad dog in the face of his master that feedeth and fostereth him, that breedeth and bringeth him up; they revile and rail upon his servant Moses. Such is the slippery place of government, such is the nature of the multitude, and such is the lot of God's Ministers.

Thirdly, the sum and substance of their mutiny and murmuring is twofold. First, a very vehement expostulation with Moses for bringing them out of Egypt: wherein they disgorge their malice with full or rather foul mouths, *As if he had advisedly and purposely brought them into the wilderness to destroy them.* Secondly, observe the reasons of that expostulation, which are two: first, because at this present, no bread, no water, no food appeared unto them, who measured the strength of God by the length of their bellies: now they account themselves ready to be famished. Which kind of death proceeding from hunger and famine, of all other kinds that can be thought upon, is most wretched and miserable; it hath driven men and women to this exigent to eat their own flesh, *and the flesh of their children.* Secondly, because they were weary of Manna, which they call a light, a sight or vile meat, such as no reckoning or account was to be made thereof. Wherein they slander God, bring up an evil name and report of his miraculous work, and complain of their necessity, where no want was; and of hunger, where no hunger was; and so their unbridled tongues testify their unthankful hearts, saying: *That they were weary of their lives for this light meat,* which God notwithstanding had sent them from heaven, *and fed them with Angels food in great abundance,* verifying the saying of the Wiseman, *The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord.*

The fourth point followeth: namely, the punishment which God inflicted without any communication had with Moses, or denouncing of it before it fell, (as God had done before, when he hid not from Moses what he was determined to do before he hid it) but presently

punished them, to show the greuousnesse of their sin, and the greatness of his wrath conceived against them. The punishment was, *That whereas they had sharpened their tongues like Serpents, so as the poison of adders and astes was under their lips,* he sent among them a kind of Scorpions and Serpents, which with their biting infused their venom and poison, which immediately being shed, dispersed it self into all their body; whereby they were inflamed with such extraordinary heat, that they endured great drought, and suffered a great thirst, whereof they complained before. They thought they complained of thirst justly, but now they feel it indeed to the full; so that such are were stung with this venomous biting, died the death.

The last circumstances to be considered, are the effects following. For first, the people in this great extremity, and anguish of spirit, come in haste to *Moses* (against whom before they maliciously murmured) to whom they confess their offense, that now began to lie sore upon their consciences, and desire earnestly his prayers, that they might be preserved, and delivered from the venomous bytings of those stinging serpents; which *Moses* doth willingly & faithfully perform, being mindful of his own duty, and unmindful of their wrongs. Secondly, the Lord having brought the people to a sight of their sins, by a feeling of his judgments, that they humble themselves before him, confess their offenses, and call for mercy: he heareth the prayer of *Moses* (*For the prayer of a faithful man prevaileth much if it be fervent,*) is reconciled unto them, and witnesseth the same by giving them a true token, and showing the means and remedy of their present malady; commanding a visible sign and shape of those fiery serpents to be set up in brass upon an high pole, which the people might behold a far off; so as the Israelites looking thereupon, should presently and immediately be healed of that deadly sting.

Thirdly, the obedience of *Moses* is set down, which is greatly to be praised and commended. For albeit it might seem foolish to carnal wisdom, and impossible to human reason, for a dead image to help the deadly biting of those living serpents, yet he asketh not counsel with flesh and blood, nor measureth the commandments of God by the deceitful measure of man's understanding, but submitteth himself and all his thoughts to the word of God. He did not reason against the commandment of God, as *Nahaman* the Syrian did against the commandment of the Prophet, *Bidding him go and wash seven times in Jordan, whereby his flesh should come again, and he should be cleansed of his leprosy:* But he did simply as God commanded, and as the people desired, he set up aloft the brazen serpent, having the image and similitude of the true fiery serpents; he advanceth it on high, openly, publicly, speedily, in the sight and view of all, at the only beholding whereof, the Israelites bitten, were cured & restored to health, that none of them died afterward of that poison and infection, that did behold the image that was set up.

But before we proceed to the Doctrines of this division, sundry questions are to be demanded, and determined, touching this act of *Moses*, setting up the sign and image of [Objection 1] these fiery serpents. And first of all, how doth this agree with the second commandment, which forbiddeth the making of an image, or representation of anything in heaven above, or in the earth beneath? hath *Moses* so soon forgotten the law which God gave

in mount Horeb? Or doth he now fall into idolatry, which himself so zealously revenged, and severely punished before, in the Israelites setting up the golden Calf, himself now erecting a brazen serpent? I answer, [Answer.] this fact is no breach of the second Commandment, which forbiddeth to make an Image of our own head, by our own authority, at our own will and pleasure, and therefore the Law saith, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image.*

Again, the Law forbiddeth Images which are worshipped, and have divine honor given unto thē, or else are made to be worshipped and adored. But this Image of the brazen serpent was not made by the authority of mā, but by the express commandment of God▪ saying unto *Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent*, that is, a similitude of one of those serpents. Neither was it made to be worshipped, but only to be looked upon: not to bend y^e knee unto it but to fasten the eye upon it; not for it self, but for another end; even to heal the people, and by healing them to represent Christ crucified and hanging on the cross, whereof this Image was a sign and token: & therefore when in process of time it came to be abused to Idolatry, *Hezekiah* stamped it in pieces with contempt. This also we may say and answer to the Church of Rome, maintaining the worshipping of Images, defacing the glory of God, and objecting in defense of them the example of *Moses* making the Cherubims, & setting them over the Mercy-seat. And the Jesuits reason, that seeing they were set in the holy place, they may much more be set in our Churches; seeing the Jews were permitted them, a people prone to Idolatry, & gross in imagination, much more are they allowed to Christians under the Gospel. And lastly, seeing y^e Angels were portrayed, which are mere spiritual substances, much more may the Images of Christ, his blessed mother, his holy Apostles, and his beloved Saints. The Jews were children, and as an heir in his nonage, and were suffered to have these rites and rudiments to be their book to help their capacity, and to instruct them in knowledge; but now the Church, being as a man grown to fuller strength, and able to digest stronger meat, doth not stand in need of such rude Teachers and School-masters. Besides, these were set up by the express commandment of God: we are forbidden to make any images according to our own fancy, and by our own appointment in his service. But when God forbiddeth us the making of Images, he gave not a Law to bind himself, nor restrained himself from commanding & ordaining such signs and similitudes, such forms and figures, as he thought fit for the furnishing & finishing of the Tabernacle.

Again, a particular commandment given of God, doth not give a discharge of the general Law, nor set men at liberty, or open a gap to do at their pleasure that which GOD expressly and directly forbiddeth to be done: so that every commandment must be understood with this restraint and prouiso, *Except God command the contrary.*

Furthermore, it is a foolish comparison and an evil conclusion, to reason, because these Cherubims were set in the sovereign holiest place of all the tabernacle, therefore much more the images of Christ, of his mother, and of Saints, may be placed in churches. For how fondly and childishly do they dispute, arguing from such as were set up by the commandment of God, to justify such images as God never commanded; nay, which are forbidden to be made to any use of religion?

Again, those Cherubims (as themselves confess, though others of them deny it) were set in the most holy place, whereinto the high Priest only entered and that once a yere; where they were never seen of the people, and consequently there could be no danger of idolatry, standing in a place farthest removed from the people's sight: whereas the Romish images are not only set openly in Churches in the people's view and pefence, but are commanded to be worshipped, & men commonly kiss them and creep unto them in sign of honor. Yea, the writer to the Hebrews teacheth, that the holiest place signifieth the highest heavens: Now, we cannot conclude, that because the images of the Cherubims were set up in the place that representeth and resembleth the heavenly condition of the life to come, therefore they may be set up in earth, and in this present life.

Moreover, the comparison will not hold, from Angels to other, that seeing they being spirits were portrayed; such as had bodies may be: as Christ, his mother, & the Saints. For we may better draw a contrary conclusion; that seeing the Lord commanding some images and similitudes to be set up, would have none of such things which can possibly be portrayed by the Art and cunning of man's hand; therefore ought men much less to do it by their sole and single authority. Neither was there any resemblance or representation of the nature, substance, or essence of Angels, but only of their office and function alone: so that if this serve to confirm and ratify imagery in the Church, it can prove no image of the persons of Christ, of his Mother, and of the Saints but only of their office.

Moreover, these new idolaters do borrow the weapons of the old idolaters that lived in the days of *Tertullian*, who alleged this example of the Cherubims, which the Rhemists do: to whom he answereth, it was done for ornament of the Ark, not for worship of the images: so that to warrant any setting up of religious images against the second commandment, a man must have the like special warrant and word that they had from the Lord.

For if *Moses* had set up the Cherubims or brazen serpent for those causes without God's commandment, he had sinned grievously, and committed idolatry, which God abhorreth. And whereas they say, God forbiddeth only the idols of the heathen, made for adoration of false God's, it is a vain cavil, and an old and cold evasion. For the commandment is general, condemning the images of all heretics made for any use of religion.

Again, this conceit is evidently confuted by *Moses*, who opposeth the voice of God heard in the mountain, to all images; and namely to the image of God himself, who is said to have appeared in no likeness, lest they should make an image of him Deut. 4.15 16. *Take good heed to yourselves, for ye saw no image in the days that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the minds of the fire, that ye corrupt not yourselves, and make you a graven image or representation of any figure, whether it be the likeness of male or female: where he reasoneth, that because they saw no image, they must make none.*

The second question is of the manner how [Objection 2] this curing and healing was wrought and performed. It was set upon an high pole or perch to be seen and viewed of all the people. They were stung, they looked upon it, they were by and by healed at the very sight thereof, none that saw it perished, though they were stung before. Now the question is, how this

naked sight and bare beholding of the brazen serpent, could cure this biting, and turn the rank poison into a counterpoison.

I answer, [Answer.] there was no proper force or natural power inherent in the image it self. For in all natural things consisting of the matter and the form, the force which they have, proceedeth either from the one or from the other; either from the matter whereof it is made, or from the form whereby it consisteth. The matter of this serpent was brass, without sense, without breath, without life, which hath no virtue or vigor to cure the stings and bytings of venomous beasts, more then the brazen Lauer, the brazen Grate, the brazen Taches, the brazen Sockets, the brazen Pot, the brazen Censors, the brazen Sea, the brazen Pillars, the brazen Basons, and other holy instruments applied about the Temple and Tabernacle; none of which wrought any such strange and wonderful miracle. Nay some of the Hebrew Rabbin's and Doctors do declare, that the cure was by contraries, inasmuch as the nature of bright shining brass is such, that whosoever being bitten of a serpent beholdeth it, presently dieth.

The outward form of this serpent was not of nature but from Art, made in proportion like to the serpents that stung them: but the artificial form worketh nothing of it self, which it receiveth from the workman: Wherefore this brazen serpent could perform no such work by any force or virtue of it own. Whence then had it this wonderful power and operation? Surely, from the ordinance, appointment, and institution of God only. Thus was the cure performed, not as by ordinary means of Physic or Chirurgery, or by any natural property of the Serpent, such as we know, learn, and perceive to be in herbs & simples, applied to places affected and infected. For this extraordinary work must be weighed, either by the nature of the thing, or by the apointment of God, beside & beyond the nature of the thing it self. But not by'the nature of the thing considered in it self; for we see if a man frame such an image it hath no such strength, neither had this any such virtue remaining after this season. Therefore by the institution of God it was made forcible and effectual, who can heal all our infirmities at his own pleasure, as he healed *Naaman* by washing in Jordan, 2 King. 5, 12. restored a great multitude of sick folk by stepping into the troubled water, John. 5.4. gave sight to the blind, John. 9.6. by making clay of spittle and anointing the eyes of the blind therewith. Now this institution was Sacramental (as we have shown,) for the serpent hanging on a pole, figured out Christ hanging on the Cross, who is made of God, Jesus, that is, *A Savior unto us*, that such as look on him, that is, believe in his Name, *should not perish, but have life everlasting*: and this kind of cure did greatly magnify God's mercy. For if the serpents had been suddenly taken away, as the plagues brought upon Egypt were, it would be thought they had come by chance and fortune; yea, the great favor of God would soon have been forgotten: Now, albeit these serpents remain among the people, albeit they oftentimes sting them, albeit they tread upon them and feel the venom of them, yet they may well bite them, but they cannot kill or destroy them, seeing they had so sudden and sovereign a remedy at hand to restore them.

[Objection 3] Another question may be asked, why this brazen serpent was kept and reserved so long after the serpents were gone from the Israeites, and the Israelites from the

wilderness, and were placed in the land of promise? for it appeareth to have been in king *Hezekiah's* time, seven hundred years after the erecting of it.

I answer, it was preserved to be a monument of this history, to wit; of the people's rebellion, of God's compassion, and of Christ's passion, because it was a lively figure of his crucifying, and of spiritual grace received from him. But when once another end contrary to the first institution and God's ordinance crept in, that the people offered incense unto it, albeit it were the commandment of God, the work of *Moses*, the type of Christ, the cure of the people, yet it was justly demolished, & rightly commanded to be destroyed, that all occasion of superstition and idolatry might be cut off forever afterward.

[Objection 4] But are all things to be destroyed that are abused? and to be abolished that are and have been worshipped?

I answer, [Answer.] no: for then the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars should be pulled out of heaven, Deut. 4.19. Ier. 7.18. in as much as the whole host of heaven have been worshipped as gods. So the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, should be abolished, seeing they have been horribly abused to palpable idolatry. Besides, we must make a double difference in the deciding of this doubt.

First, between the ordinances of God abused to superstition, and the inventions of men abused to superstition. The mere devices of men, when once they are abused, may be taken away; but the ordinances of God, which he hath appointed, must not be repealed and refused for the abuse of them. Again, we must make another difference between the ordinances of God instituted upon special and particular occasion for a temporal benefit at someone time, and such ordinances of God, as have necessary and perpetual use, which for no abuse are to be omitted and cut off, as the Sun, the Scriptures, the Sacraments, and such like. But the brazen serpent was not so: wherefore by *Hezekiah* it was religiously demolished and destroyed; albeit at the first setting up, it were a comfortable and profitable ordinance of God for the present good of his people: yet being grossly abused, and then no necessary use of it remaining to the Church, counteruailing the danger of the continuance thereof, 2 Kings 18.4. he is commended by the Spirit of God for his zeal toward God, in stamping it to powder, and utter defacing that brazen stuff. Neither did he account it sufficient to withdraw worship from it, or to forbid the people to burn unto it, or to send out the Levites to instruct them better in the service of God, or to punish such as gave the glory of God (whereof he is jealous) to a molten image: but cast it down in detestation, and the better to avoid the sin, took away the occasion, which was as a stumbling block before their eyes.

Verse 4, 5. *The soul of the people was sore grieved, because of the way, for the people spake against God, and against Moses, &c.* Here we see how they fall again into their former sin and murmuring, so often noted in this book, and elsewhere, as Exod. 15.24. and 16.2, 3, and 17.2, 3. for the greatness of their labor, for penury of water, for lack of flesh, for want of dainties & delicates, they distrust God's great providence; and for these rebellions they had been often grievously punished: yet loe, they fall into the same sin again. Their tents were replenished with his heavenly blessings, all places did yet smoke with the fire of his

judgments; yet behold, there is no ende of their rebellions, verifying the saying of the Prophet, *Can the Black-Moore change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.* Heereby we learn for our instruction, that lamentable is our condition if God leave us, we fall into the same sins again and again, which before we refused and renounced. I say, such is our great frailty and weakness, if we be not stayed and vnderpropped by the assistance of the Spirit, that we return with greediness unto our former sins which we seemed to have forsaken and abjured. This the Prophet plentifully teacheth, Psal. 78.40, 41. *How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! yea, they returned, and tempted God, and limited the holy one of Israel.* Thus did Pharaoh, Exod. 9.37, 38. *I have now sinned, the Lord is righteous, but I and my people are wicked; pray ye unto the Lord for me (for it is enough) and I will let you go: but when the hail was gone, and the thunder ceased, and the judgment was removed his heart was hardened, and he continued in his sin.* The like we see in Saul, who could clear David more then he? His own conscience roused him up, which before was asleep, and he confesseth with tears, *Thou art more righteous then I, for thou hast rendered me good, and I have rendered thee evil: thou hast shown this day that thou hast dealt well with me, for as much as when the Lord had closed me in thine hands, thou killedst me not: yet the same Saul fell again into the same sin, and acknowledgeth his own wickedness; I have sinned, come again my son David, for I will do thee no harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes.* We see this in the example of the Israelites in the book of Judges, they committed evil again and again, they transgressed by idolatry, they knew what that sin was; they had experience of God's severity against it, they had confessed it and cried for mercy; yet the same people, and the children of the same people, not taught by their former falls, nor admonished by former judgments, nor instructed by former deliverances, do proceed in the same sin, and provoke God to punish them by their relapse into the self same iniquities. Hereunto cometh the allegory and similitude, of the unclean spirit that wandered in the wilderness, and ranged up and down without rest, *but in the end found his house empty, swept and garnished, so that he took seven other spirits worse then himself, they enter in and dwell there.* So the places of the Apostle, Heb. 6. Do directly offer this point, *that many sin again, after the receiving and acknowledgment of the truth,* according to the faying of the Wise man, *As the dog turneth again to his own vomit, so a fool turneth to his foolishness.* So that except the Lord uphold, and hold men back▪ they fall into the same sins before committed, and provoke him afresh by those sins which before they refused.

[Reason 1] For first of all, who is the author of constancy and perseverance in any good work? Is it of our selves? Is it of our own power? Nay, as every good giving and perfect gift is of God, so he that in his nature is unchangeable giveth us the gift to stand, and preserveth us from falling, as the Apostle teacheth, Rom. 11.18, 19, 20. Where he taketh away all occasion of boasting from the Gentiles, against the Jews, reasoning from their chargeable condition, not being firmly fastened, and deeply grounded as the root it self; but moouable and mutable as the boughs and branches knit to the root, being easy to be broken off. So then, God is the author of constancy, and of perseverance, *Who worketh in us both the will and the deed & not man by his own proper strength* who if he be not stayed by him that is the stay and strength of Israel, he falleth into horrible sins, and such as go against his own conscience, as

may appear very evidently by many examples. Again, none can come to God, except the Father draw him. We are the greatest enemies to our salvation. All within [Reason 2] us, is against us: we naturally contemn the word which is the rule of constancy, and the staff to uphold us, and as the arm of GOD stretched out to pull out of destruction. Thus the Prophet chargeth the Jews, Nehe. 9.26.27. *They were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy Prophet, which protested among them to turn thē to thee, and committed great blasphemies.* Man then left to himself, whereunto is he left, but to see his own weakness? And what remaineth in him that may bring him to God, and lead him in the right path? Vndoubtedly nothing is in us, but self-love, pride, hautinesse, contempt of God, neglect of his word, as we see in y^e manifold relapses, & often reuoltings of these Jews, in whom as (in a glass) we may see our own faces, yea our own hearts, seeing we are of our selves no better then they.

Now let us come to apply this doctrine to [Use 1] our selves. First, we conclude, that fearful and dangerous is the estate of those from whō the Lord taketh the light of his countenance. If he leave us to our selves, we work our destruction by rebellion against him. It is a great grace & mercy of God toward us, to be once enlightened, to taste of the good word of God, to be made partaker of the holy Ghost, and to taste of the powers of the life to come (which he denieth to many thousands in the world, who proceed not so far:) now to leave these goodly and glorious beginnings, and fall from light to darkness, and from righteousness into sin, is to make our end worse then the beginning, and our case most fearful by returning to our uncleanness, as the Apostle *Peter* declareth, chap. 2.20, 21. For Satan will enter deeper into such, and take fuller possession of their hearts. Even as a Jailor, when his prisoner hath escaped out of his hands, & broken prison, if he fasten upon him again, will lay better hold, will cast more irons upon him, and keep him faster then before: so will the devil deal with all evil men which are his slaves and prisoners, *So that he that is unjust, shall be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still,* Revel. 22, 11. We see this by daily experience▪ in all such, as having washed their garments, do defile them again, they grow worse and more wicked then they were before. We should *let our light so shine before men, that they seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven.* Mat. 5, 16. So many therefore as have quenched the good motions of the Spirit, and put out the light that began to shine in their hearts, are as smoking Torches, and stinking snuffes, odious in the nostrils of God and men. Let us therefore make much of the least seeds of godliness sown in our hearts, and kindle the flame that is begun in us, if so be we have tasted how bountiful the Lord is. Let us be earnest in prayer to God, that he would stablish us with his grace, and not take his holy Spirit from us, Psal. 51, 11, nor leave us in the hour of temptation when the flesh is weak.

[Use 2] Secondly, let no man presume of himself, or glory in his own strength, *But let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.* If any good be in us, it is of another, who must work the will and the deed, the beginning and the ending; we stand by his hand, we continue by his grace, we run because he moveth, we seek because he preuenth, *We come to God because the Father draweth.* Remember *Peters* cōfident bearing of himself, which was the first step to his fall, as we see, Math. 26, 33, 34, when he said, *Though all men should be offended by thee, yet will I never be offended:* yet Christ telleth him, *Verily I say unto thee, that this night before the Cock*

crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And the Evangelist declareth, that when he saw the swords and staves, the high Priests servants, & the higher powers armed against him, he denied him thrice, first barely & more fearful and faintly, then with cursing and execration to himself. Let every soul learn from hence, that seeing God only must help and uphold us, to lay hold on the sweet mercy of Christ, and come boldly before y^e throne of his grace. Let us not rashly presume upon our selves, but confidently rely on him, and pray him earnestly to preserve us, to bear us in his arms, that we dash not our foot against a stone, nor ruin our selves upon every Rock.

[Use 3] Lastly, hence ariseth great comfort to God's children that fall of weakness and infirmity into the same sin after repentance. Such is the depth of Satan's temptations toward those that are afflicted in conscience, that wrestle with the Law, that feel the wrath of God, that bear the heavy burden of sin, and are entered into the very suburbs of desperation. He telleth them, that the children of God fall not into the same sins again after their repentance. If they do, he subtly suggesteth unto them, that there is no place for a second repentance, nor hope of God's mercy, nor fruit of Christ's merit. This is a false spirit in the mouth of false Prophets, which broach damnable and detestable lies in the Church of God, 1 King. 22, 4, and 2, 37. And this was the error of the *Nauatians*, which denied repentance after baptism for offenses committed even through frailty, through fear and force of persecution. But the promises of God are without limitation of times, or consideration of sins, or respect of persons; he will receive to mercy all repentant sinners, whether the sins be committed before or after baptism, whether once or often. This pardon Christ our Savior publisheth, Mat. 11, 22. *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will ease you.* So the Apostle John testifieth, 1. John. 2, 1. *My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not: if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father JESUS CHRIST the just.* Furthermore, the Lord enjoyneth, that we sinful men *forgive our brother seventy times seven times, if he turn again and say, It repenteth me:* therefore himself will much more freely forgive; whose mercy is infinite, whose favor is incomprehensible, whose loving kindness endureth forever. This also appeareth plainly in the examples of the servants of God. We see how *Abraham* the father of the faithful faileth in calling his wife *Sarah* his sister, whereby himself was injured, the unbelievers tempted, and her chastity endangered; yet he fell again afterward into the same sin, and incurred y^e same danger, and laid a stumbling block before the blind, so that he had ruined himself & his wife, if the hand of God had not assisted and preuēted the mischief. The like we see in *Lot*, in a greater sin, who being delivered out of Sodom, and growing secure, fell twice into horrible incest with his own daughters, and yet recovered himself by unfeigned repentance, The like we see in *John*, one of y^e twelve Apostles, and the Disciple whom Jesus loved, how he fell into idolatry, and worshipped an Angel, for which he was reprov'd of the Angel: yet he failed the second time, in giving divine worship to a creature, which belongeth properly and peculiarly to the Lord the Creator. Here then is comfort and consolation to all such as groan under the burden of sin, & have fallen through infirmity into the same sins: let not such doubt of God's mercy, *Who is much in sparing sinners, and with whom is plentiful redemption.* Psal. 130, 7. Let them not fear the temptations of the devil, *who goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour,* 1 Pet.

5, 8, but assure themselves, that albeit with *Peter* they fall often, yet if with him they repent truly, & weep bitterly for their sins, the Lord is merciful to forgive them their sins. Not that we should sin proudly presumptuously, stubbornly, stiffly and obstinately against him, *that grace may abound*, Romans, chapter 6, verse 1: but if we sin thorough frailty, he will not shut us frō his mercy. The devil will tempt often, the world allure often, the flesh entice often; so we may fall often through the temptations of the devil, thorough the allurements of the world, and thorough the enticements of the flesh. If they did draw us and provoke us to sin but once, we should fall but once; but they are ever at our elbow to work our ruin, and forsake us not forever, as *the devil departed from Christ only for a season*. Luke. 4, 13. But the Lord knoweth whereof we are made, *He remembereth that we are but dust: he considereth that we are but flesh, yea as a wind that passeth and cometh not again*. Psal. 103, 14, and 78, 39. So that albeit we be often overcome by sin, yet if we often repent and return unto him, he is a Father that hath more then one blessing in store, and a liberal giver that reproacheth no man, and pardoneth those that have often asked and begged pardon. It followeth.

[*Here is neither bread nor water, and our soul loatheth this light bread.*] Here is the sin of this people: after God had plentifully and abundantly fed them to the full, they wax wanton and weary of this food, they account their Manna a vile and contemptible meat, albeit it were most precious, and named therefore, Angels food. The doctrine from this corrupt practice, is this; y^t we wax weary, loathe, and contemn God's blessings, which we seemed at the first with joy and gladness to receive. We soon learn to contemn, to make little and light account of spiritual and temporal blessings, for this Manna was both. We see this in our first parents, they were compassed with the kindness of God, and hedged about with his mercies, yet were not long contented with them, nor rested in them with thanksgiving, but lusted to taste of the tree of be knowledge of good and evil, and *would be as gods, knowing good and evil*. Gen. 3, 6. So *Esau* was the first borne, he should have delighted therein as in a pledge of God's favor, and a mirror of his great mercy, yet he grew profane and secure, he sold the birthright, and contemned the blessing. This *Solomon* teacheth, Prov. 27, 7. *The person that is full, despiseth an honey-comb, but unto the hungry soul, every bitter thing is sweet*. The like we read in *Moses*, Deut. 32, 15. *He that should have been upright, when he waxed fat, spurned with his heel: thou art gross, thou art laden with fatness: therefore he forsook God that made him, and regarded not the strong God of his salvation*. Thus we see how ready we are to despise God's graces, and so to come to the very top of iniquity.

[Reason 1] The reasons follow to be considered. First, it is not much to be maruailed at, that we wax weary of good things, because we want the spirit of discerning and of judgment to see into our own selves. Hence it is, that we hold not on in a certain and settled course the way of godliness which we are entered into. We halt in our journey, and many ways trip before we come to the end, thereof. And the reason is, because we weigh not heavenly things with the weights of the Sanctuary, but put thē in the partial and deceitful balances of our own brains, whereby we deceive our selves, rob God of his honor, & prize the best things at a vile rate, as *Christ was valued at thirty pence*. This sencelesnesse & sottishness, Christ himself checked in the Israelites, saying unto thē, when he was come near to the City and beheld it with tears, *O, if thou hadst even known at the least in this day, those things which belong unto thy*

peace; but now are they hid from thine eyes. Where there is this blindness of mind, this security of heart, this want of judgment to discern of their estate & condition aright, no marvel if there be a loathing and leaving of good things, as was among the Israelites in this place.

Secondly, we are so besotted and bewitched [Reason 2] with the glittering show of this world, and of the things in this world, that we have no leisure to mind the world to come, and are so pampered up with the peace, and plenty, and pleasures of the world, that as resty horses we spurn against our Creator, as *Moses complaineth, and we heard before.* As we are of the earth by creation, so we always carry a lump of this earth about us, our hands are full of it, our eyes look upon it, our feet tread upon it, our senses are exercised with it, our talk & communication is upon it, our hearts are possessed with it, and all our life long we dwell upon it. Seeing therefore this mould of earth & earthly things hath taken such root in us, no marvel if we grow carnal and secure, wax wanton and weary of the word, and of those ways that lead unto life and salvation. This doth our blessed Savior teach us, *Mat. 13, 22, in the Parable of the Sower, He that received the seed among thorns, is he that heareth the word, but the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he is made unfruitful.*

The uses hereof are, first to show us the [Use 1] difference between the godly and ungodly. For the godly do magnify God's graces, set them at an higher rate, & make a greater reckoning of them than of all earthly things. This appeareth, *Mat. 13, 44, 45, 46. The kingdom of God is like unto a treasure hid in the field, which when a man hath found, he hideth it, & for joy thereof departeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like to a Merchant man that seeketh good Pearls; who having found a Pearl of great price, went & sold all that he had, and bought it.* So the Apostle Paul accounteth all things loss, and judgeth them as dung, that he might win Christ, & might be found in him; not having his own righteousness which is of the Law, but the righteousness of God through Christ. But the ungodly despise the graces of God, like the *Gadarenes*, who preferred their swine before Christ, *Math. 8, 34,* and like profane *Esau*, who for one portion of meat sold his birthright. If they sustain any damage or loss in their riches, and substance of their house, how are they grieved and vexed? How do they howl and cry out as if they were utterly undone? What seeking and searching, far and near, is made to find the same? And they are of such impatency of spirit, that they are never quiet till they have found the same. *What man having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave ninety and nine in the wilderness, & go after that which is lost, until he find it? Either what woman having ten groats, if she lose one groat, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?* *Luke 15, v. 4, 8.*

But if the gifts and graces of GOD decay in them, if they lose his favor and loving countenance, if they grow poor and thread bare in spiritual blessings, it never troubleth their minds, it never grieueth their hearts, they never complain of any wants: for being wholly earthly, plodding upon the world like earth worms, they have no feeling of the want of heavenly things. Would we therefore know a faithful man from an unfaithful? and would we have some assured mark and token to discern the one from the other? Mark how they esteem things that concern a better life. If they rejoice in the word of God as they that find great spoils, if first they seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, if they labor after

the excellent knowledge of Christ, and stir up the precious gifts of God in them, we have unfeigned testimonies of their unfeigned faith. But if we see any contemn knowledge, and despise the graces of God, if we see them tread under their feet the sweet blessings of God, as swine do precious Pearls, they give evident witness against their own souls, and do carry about them in their own bosoms, a note of horrible profaneness.

Secondly, let us look carefully unto our [Use 2] selves, and learn daily to call our selves to a reckoning & account for the benefits of God which have been bestowed upon us, lest we unthankfully devour and wickedly swallow them up, forgetting both them and the giver of them, which are moe in number then the hairs of our heads. Let us also learn to feel our own poverty and wants. Hunger, we say, commonly is the best sauce; so the surest and fittest remedy to recover us of this sin of loathing and discontentment, is to consider our need and necessity of heavenly graces, and what want we have of the word, which is the food of our souls, *sweeter then the honey and the honey-comb, more to be desired then the finest gold yea, then all riches, more precious then Pearls, and all things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto it.* Psal. 19, 10, and 119, 103. Prouerb. 3, 15.

Now we shall never be weary of this our weariness and contempt of the best things, until we have learned as *new borne babes to desire the sincere milk of the word of God, that we may grow thereby.* 1 Pet. 2• 1. Therefore the Prophet calleth such to hear him, Isaiah 55, 1. *Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and ye that have no silver, come, buy and eat▪ come, I say, buy wine and milk without silver, and without money.* Hereunto cometh that which Christ proclaimed at the last▪ and great day of the feast, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* John 7, 37. This was the affection of the Prophet David, Psal. 143, 5, 6. and 63, 1, 5. *I meditate in the works of thine hands, I stretch forth mine hands unto thee, my soul desireth after thee as the thirsty Land exceedingly.* So thē, when we come to the banquets of God w^c he hath furnished for us, we must come with hungry stomachs, craving to be satisfied and filled with his dainties. We see when men go to a great feast prepared and prouidedfor them, whereunto they are curteously invited, they do not fill themselues before hand, but come with hunger and desire: so must we do in coming to the exercises of our religion. Seeing then, *Wisdom hath built her an house, killed her victualles, and prepared her Table, calling us to come eat of her meat, and drink of the wine which she hath drawn,* Prov. 9, 1, 2, 5, it is our parts to come to the Word and Sacraments, as to the high ordinances of God with a ready mind, with a thirsty soul, and with a good appetite, that we may be satisfied as with marrow and fatness. He affordeth unto us a plentiful allowance, and appointeth unto us a liberal diet: he dealeth not sparingly and niggardly with us, but inviteth us as his guests to good cheare and bountiful provision of his word, prayer, and Sacraments. If then God have denied unto us this worlds good, that we are driven to rise early, & fare hardly at home in our own houses, and sometimes have scarce a crust of bread, and a pot of water, yet here is matter of great contentment and cⁿsolation, that we have such plenty of spiritual provision provided for the soul in the house of God whereby we are nourished to eternal life, and comfortably taught to bear the penury and distresses of the body. A dinner of green herbs, and God's word going with it, are notable sare. For as one said; *The Gospel and brown bread are good cheer.*

Lastly▪ consider from this natural loathing of the blessings and best things of God, why GOD especially punisheth those places and people; even because they are fallen into a spiritual surfeit, as it were into a deadly sleep and slumber, and are clogged and cloied with the store and plenty of that food which God hath given them. When the Gospel was restored to us again, as the book of the Law that *Hilkiah* the Priest found; with what joy of heart, and applause of the people; with what comfort and courage was it heard in the beginning? How precious and sweet was it to our taste? How zealous and forward were we in hearing the Lord, and calling others thereunto? But in these days, wherein we have it continued in plenty and abundance that we may sit under our Vines and Fig trees, conferring and reasoning of the ways of God, how many loathe it? how many neglect it? how few receive it? who doth prize it as he ought to do? We are cloyed with the preaching of the word: we are heart-sick of peace and prosperity. It were an happy and blessed cure to restore us to the former days of our health. This surfeit is the common sickness, & almost desperate disease of our Land, that all her spiritual Physicians know not which way to turn their hands and their heads to cure & recover her. Such as once have taken a surfeit by eating any meat, are ordinarily prescribed by the Physician to fast, to bring them to a stomach and appetite again: and whensoever the body is distempered by repletion, the way to recover, is to take the diet, as the masters of that faculty do affirm. So God, as the chief Physician of the soul, when we once begin to loathe and abhor our meat, and to surfeit of the food which he sendeth, bringeth upon us most worthily and justly the famine of his word. And do we not see (if we be not altogether blinded) how he beginneth now for our sins to diet us? and many assemblies ranged in goodly order, which made heaven and earth to ring and resound with the praises of God, to be left as sheep dispersed abroad, and wandering in the Mountains without a Shepherd? This is that which the Lord long since threateneth to his people, as one of his sorest and sharpest judgments. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the North even to the East, shall they run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it, &c.* Amos 8, 11, 12, 13. A great & grievous Thunderbolt thrown down upon the heads of all careless contemners of the word, they shall have it taken from them. The child that is plentifully and fully fed, and hath whatsoever he craveth and calleth for, at last waxeth wantō, he beginneth to play & dally with his meat, he breaketh it into pieces, & casteth it to the dogs: therefore it is necessary sometimes that he should be abridged & pinched, and cry heartily for it before he have it. So doth God deal with us when the food of his heavenly word is danled and dallied withal, and trodden as a vile thing of base worth under our unclean feet, he is constrained to take away the benefit of his word ftom us, & make us oftentimes in the anguish of our spirit, to call and cry unto him in the want of it, before he restore the same unto us again. And ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence, and give him no rest until he repair, and until he set up Jerusalem, the praise of the world. Let us repent and return betimes, evē while it is called today, lest the Gospel be taken away from us. For as we shown before, among all sins, the contempt of the word is one of the chiefest that crieth to heaven for vengeance to fall upon us. This the Lord Jesus teacheth in many places, *Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or that City, shake off the dust of your feet: truly, I say unto*

you, it shall be easier for them of the Land of Sodom and Gomorrhah, in the day of judgment then for that City. Mat. 10, 14, 15, and 11, 23. Acts 13, 51.

This serveth to comfort the Ministers in the course of teaching, and showeth how much God esteemeth his Gospel, and striketh a fear into all rebellious contemners of his word. This ceremony of shaking off the dust from the feet used among the Jews, served to be as a figure of cursing, & as a witness against the inhabitants of that wicked place, as if they corrupted the earth and infected the places of their abode with their contagion. The Apostles of Christ were not commanded to use such a solemn kind of denunciation and detestation against murderers, drunkards, adulterers, thieves, false witnesses, perjured persons, & such heinous malefactors, but against the contemners of the Gospel; which teacheth that God is not more offended with any offense, then with the contempt of his word: therefore he affirmeth, that such shall be more grievously punished thē the Sodomites, who were destroyed with fire and brimstone from heaven. This toucheth us nearly who yet enjoy the Gospel, and live under the shadow and protection of it: let us remember that we are fallen from our first love and liking of it: let us repent and do the first works, lest the axe being laid to y^e root of the tree, he come against us shortly, and remove our candle-stick out of his place, except we repent from our harts.

[Ver. 6. *Wherefore the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, &c.*] He showeth in these words whence the punishment of fiery serpents came upon them; not by chance or fortune, not from the nature of the soil and wilderness it self, but from God. So then the present judgment upon them is amplified by the author, *The Lord sent them*. This teacheth, that all punishments, diseases, and judgments of what sort and condition soever, are inflicted upon us by the hand of God. Whatsoever visitations fall upon us, and the rest of the sons of men, are laid upon us at the will & pleasure of God. This appeareth in *Moses*, when the old world was not spared, but a general flood brought upon the ungodly, God warned *Noah* to prepare the Ark to the saving of his household, and said, *An end of all flesh is come before me, I will destroy from the earth, the man whom I have created, from man to beast, to the creeping thing, and to the fowl of the heaven.* And speaking of the destruction of the Sodomites, (who were exceeding sinners against y^e Lord) he saith, *The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrhah, brimstone and fire, from the Lord out of heaven.* Gen. 19, 24. So when *Abimelech* King of *Gerar*, took away *Abraham's* wife, & afterward was constrained by the hand of God to restore her, it is said, Gen. 21, 17, 18. *God healed him and his wife, and they bare childrē, for the Lord had shut up every womb of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.* This point is also at large confirmed, Leu. 26, 16, 17. *If ye will not obey me, nor do all these commandments, I will appoint over you fearfulness, a consumption, and the burning ague, the sword, famine, and pestilence to destroy you, and to make you few in number, so as your high ways shall be desolate.* It was the Lord that brought the ten plagues upon Egypt. It is the Lord that smote *Nabal* that he died. It is the Lord that formeth the light, and createth darkness; he maketh peace, and createth evil. It is the Lord that doth all these things. Finally, there is no evil in the City, which the Lord hath not done, Amos 3, 6. All which things agree fitly with this history in hand, that God sent fiery serpents among his people, and do teach us, that he is the author of all judgments & punishments that fall upon us, or upon any of the sons of men.

The reasons hereof are evident and apparent. [Reason 1] First, afflictions come not upon us at all adventures, they proceed not from the earth, or the air, or the heauē, it is the hand of God that lighteth upon us for our sins. For what can any one or all the creatures of God do of themselves? or what power is there in them to be revenged upon us? This therefore is our great folly, that we unwise men, gaze about here and there, wandering up and down in our own imaginations, and searching all the corners of our wits to find out the causes of our calamities out of our selves, and yet all y^e while we perceive not the true and right cause to be in our selves. Whensoever a man hath any adversity, he must look up to God, & into himself. When we see the air infected, it is not so disposed of it self. When God sendeth famine, and maketh the heaven as iron, y^e ground as brass, it is not so hardened of it own nature. When the earth is barren and unfruitful, it proceedeth not of it own kind, but we our selves are the cause of all. Whensoever therefore we have woeful experience, and a lamentable feeling of many miseries, we must not cast our eyes hither and thither, but every man must enter into himself, & search out his particular sins, assuring himself that God knocketh at the door of his heart, and thereby provokes him to consider beter of his own ways. This *Eliphaz* beateth upon, Job 5, 5, 6, 7. *The hungry shall eat up his harvest, and the thirsty shall drink up their substance: for misery cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth affliction spring out of the earth, &c.*

[Reason 2] Secondly, God worketh out afflictions, he claimeth and challengeth them as his own peculiar work, that no man should be able to control anything in this world. This the wise man urgeth, Eccles. 7, 16. *In the day of wealth be of good comfort, and in the day of affliction consider GOD also hath made this contrary to that, to the intent that man should find nothing after him.*

The uses of the doctrine are many. First, we [Use 1] learn in all troubles and calamities on us and those that are ours, to look up to God as the chief & principal author of them frō whence they come, and upon our selves and our own sins, from whom they come. It falleth out with many, as it doth with the dog, if a man throw a stone at him, he runneth eagerly and angerly after it, he falleth upon it, and biteth it: so do men of this world, when God any way visiteth them, they look upon inferior means, as the highest causes which they can reach unto, but never cast up their eyes to the Lord, whose hand and work it is: whereas we are bound to behold the stroke of God in all our distresses. We silly men accuse sometimes heat, and sometimes cold; sometimes drouth, & sometimes moisture; sometimes y^e ground▪ and sometimes the air; sometimes one thing, and sometimes another thing, to be the cause of our calamity, but cannot be brought to find out the true and proper cause. True it is, the Lord hath secret causes that we know not of, sometimes the manifestation of his own works, sometimes the trial of our faith; and we must take heed we measure not the greatness of the sin by the greeuousnesse of the cross, wherein the Apostles themselves were deceived. Notwithstanding, the revealed and original cause of all calamity, hath his beginning and head-spring from our iniquity, insomuch that if we had in us no guilt of corruption, we should not taste at all of the cup of affliction. This the Prophet teacheth, Lam. 3, 39. *Wherefore is the living man sorrowful? Man suffereth for his sin.* And our Savior warneth the man that had been diseased 38 years, finding him in the Temple, to consider the cause of his long

and lamentable affliction, *Thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee*: so that this disease was laid upon him for his sin. He thought himself an happy man when he was restored to health. Now lest he should rest therein, the Lord telleth him he must change his heart, or else God will bring seven times more plagues upon him, according to his sins: though he had been afflicted many years, yet he would make his judgments upon him more wonderful, even great plagues of long continuance, and sore diseases of long durance. To the same purpose the Apostle saith, *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, which with-hold the truth in unrighteousness* Ro. 1, verse 18. Wherefore, every visitation of God, should be a sermon of repentance, to put us in remembrance of our sins, & to admonish us, not to sow upon the furrows of unrighteousness, lest we reap the crop of affliction an hundred fold. Let us desire God to sanctify the cross unto us, that it may consume sin in us, and provoke us to a more holy conversation.

[Use 2] Secondly, the meditation of this, that God is the author of all afflictions, must teach us to have patience in our troubles; not to murmur not to repine, not to grudge when we are under the cross. For seeing God hath visited me with his hand, I must take it patiently, as a dutiful child beareth the chastisements of his father. This the Prophet practiced, as we see, Psal. 39, 9: *I spake not a word, but held my peace, because thou Lord didst it*. This the Apostle teacheth, Heb. 12, 5, 6. *My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and he scourgeth every son that he receiveth*. The flesh always seeketh ease, and is ready to be impatient, if deliverance come not by and by; so that we must remember from whence our trouble cometh, to assuage the sorrow and bitterness of our affliction. For this is a great comfort to God's children, that our sickness, yea every pang & fit of our sickness is from God; the manner of it, the measure of it, the time of it, the matter of it, is of God: which giveth good assurance and affiance that God will be merciful and gracious unto us, seeing he striketh us, that is our Father, and in the stroke (be it never so sharp) he cannot forget his former compassions, but he will make all things fall out to further our salvation; neither will he lay more stripes and strokes upon us, thē we shall be able to bear. He will make a way for us to escape: he will make our bed in all our sickness: he putteth our tears in his bottle: his left hand is under our head, and his right hand doth embrace us. Let us comfort one another in these things.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it standeth us upon, whensoever his hand is upon us, to seek to him for health, that smiteth and no man healeth; that maketh the wound, and no man restoreth. We are directed by this consideration, to whom to seek for our recovery; to wit, first to the hand that striketh, and next to go to man's help, which is his ordinance. We must not first seek to the Physician, as *Asa* did, 2 Chron. 16, 13, but first be reconciled to God, the chief Physician of soul and body, and pray unto him in our trouble, as *Hezekiah* did, Isaiah 38, 2. Let us never look, that any means (be they never so excellent) shall profit us, and prosper with us, until we be at peace with God, and have renewed our repentance from dead works for our daily sins. This the Apostle showeth, I am. 5, 13. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray*. This condemneth those that seek to witches and wizards, and forget the God of their salvation, who killeth and maketh alive, bringeth down to the grave, and raiseth up again. Let us

thereby be put in mind of our death, which is God's messenger and seriant to arest us, and to bring us into his presence. Let us ever prepare our selves to depart in peace, cOnsidering that as the home of death shall take us, so the day of judgment shall find us. Here we repent, or else we repent never. Here is time of changing and turning, but after this life, there is no more place of repentance, but an horrible expectation and fearful looking for of judgment, which shall devour the adversaries. The Scripture teacheth, that *Cain* that evil man, was of evil one and slew his brother: we may multiply thousands of years since he uttered that fearful and comfortless speech, *My sin is greater then ca be pardoned, my punishment is greater then can be suffered*; yet when Christ shall break the heavens, and come to judge the quick and dead, he shall appear no otherwise at the last day, thē as he was taken out of this life. The like we might say of *Esau*, of *Saul*, of *Judas*, and of others, who ended their days in desperation; as they died, so they shall be judged, & abide forever after judgment. As they turned not to God their Creator while they lived, so they shall receive no ease or alteration in their estate when they are once departed, and have received judgment: of whom we may say as Christ once spake of *Judas*, *It had been good for these men, if they had never been borne*. Mat. 26, 24. For not to be, is ten thousand times better then ever to be in a living death, in cōtinuall horror and desperation, where their worm dieth not, & the fire never goeth out. This was the use that *Hezekiah* made of his sickness, Es. 38, 10, 11: *I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave, I am deprived of the residue of my years: I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the Land of the living, I shall see man no more among the Inhabitants of the world*. Wherefore, in sickness we are taught to seek health of God, and to be put in mind of our mortality.

Lastly, when God hath shown mercy upon [Use 4] us in our deliverance, let us spend the residue of our days in a godly conversation. It is a common and ordinary matter to make solemn promises and protestations to becOme new men if we recover. Many do then lament the former errors and ignorances of their life: but when they have obtained mercy at the hands of God, when they have found a blessing and been restored, they become as lewd and profane as they were before. And this moved Christ our Savior to exhort the impotent man to sin no more, lest a more grievous judgment were brought upon him. John. 5, 14. We see how *Hezekiah* being healed, the third day after he went up to the house of the Lord to praise him, & to speak of his goodness, who had seen his tears, heard his prayers, and who had removed his afflictions: *The grave cannot confess thee, death cannot praise thee, they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth; but the living, the living, he shall confess thee, as I do this day, the father to the children shall declare thy truth*. This duty is required of us all, when we are delivered from our sickness or sorrow, from trouble & calamity, to be thankful to God, and mindful of his mercy. Let everyone examine his own heart, how he hath practiced this duty, & what use he hath made of his affliction. There is none of us but hath a blessed experience of God's goodness toward him, he hath oftentimes preserved us from dangers, restored us from sickness, delivered us from diseases, freed us from troubles: happy are we, if thereby we have profited unto amendment of life, and in the study of godliness and be careful that we fall not back again into our former offenses. We must not be like to *Pharaoh*, who

returned to his vomit, and the hardness of his heart, after he was freed from the plagues of God, lest with him we be destroyed by the just hand of God.

[The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, which stung the people, so that many of them died.] God might have destroyed these ever-murmuring Israelites by the Canaanites or Edomites their adversaries; he hath men and Angels at his book and commandment to afflict them, and overthrow them: but he sendeth stinging serpents which tormented thē, and a multitude of venomous beasts upon thē, that they might know, that where with a man sinneth, by the same also he shall be punished, as we shown before.

The Doctrine from hence, is, that GOD hath all creatures in his own hand, and he armeth them at his own pleasure to execute his will, and being so employed, they are of great force. the least, the meanest the smallest of God's creatures being sent of God, do mightily prevail to the advancement of his own glory & to the destruction of all his enemies. This is plentifully taught in the history of the plagues of Egypt; God did not send out his Angels against them, nor leauy an host of horse-men and foot-men, but he sent an army of lice, of frogs, of flies, and these were confessed to be *the finger of God*, Exod. 8, 6, 16, 19, 24, and were able to daunt and bring down all the pride & presumption of the Egyptians. So when God would plague the Philistines, who had destroyed his people, taken the Ark of God, and blessed their Idols for the victory, he sent a multitude of Mice that destroyed their Land, to the ende they might learn to give glory unto the God of Israel, and acknowledge the plague to proceed from him. Thus likewise when the Assyrians, brought into the Cities of Israel, worshipped not God aright, but made them molten Images, and served all the host of heaven, 2 King. 17, 25, he sent Lions among them which slew them. When *Herod* had stretched out his hand to vex certain of the Church, Acts 12, 1, 2.23. had killed *James*, and put *Peter* in prison, intending after the Passover to bring him forth to the people, the Angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not glory unto God, so that he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. The Scripture is full of such examples, how God destroyed the old world with waters, Gen. 7, 41, *Sisera* and his army with the River *Kishon*, that ancient River, the River *Kison*, when the Stars fought in order against *Sisera*. Albeit we say in a common Proverb, *As weak as water*: yet it was strong enough, and it is still strong enough (as we see by experience in such floods and inundations as pleaseth God to send) when he armeth it against his enemies, whereby he taketh away the fruits of the earth, wasteth the increase of our cartell, casteth down our houses and dwelling places, and sweepeth away (as with a besom) the Inhabitants of the earth. Sodom and Gomorrhah were consumed with fire and brimstone from heaven. All these things as examples of God's judgments teach us, that he need not march against us in his own person, or set upon us with millions of his Angels, or assault us with an host of men; he can send out the smallest and silliest of his creatures to our destruction, and make the least and lowest of them accomplish the greatest works, so often as it pleaseth him.

This appeareth by sundry reasons. First, all [Reason 1] power is of God, who as he saveth with many or with few so he destroyeth with many or with few; with the strong, or with the weak▪ with reasonable creatures, or unreasonable, with living things, or wanting life. The

meanest and basest have power enough, the most contemptible have force and might enough to hurt, to punish, and to destroy, when God useth their service; neither can any flesh resist them with all their craft and cunning, they are able to cast down our high looks, when we swell in pride against him. So then, whatsoever the means are, the power of then is of God, Ezek. 5, 16. When weak man taketh up any weapon into his hands (though without sense & life) whē he shooteth an arrow, draweth a sword, throweth a dart, or pusheth with the Pike, we see oftentimes great and deadly effects to follow. How much more whē the strong God armeth himself with any of his creatures, shall he be able to overthrow his enemies, and to bring strange things to pass?

Secondly, it pleaseth God to employ, and [Reason 2] set on work contemptible and base things, to use foolish things to confound the wise, & to choose weak things of the world to overturn mighty things, yea, vile things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, & things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; to daunt pride by weakness, and glory by shame, and honor by dishonor, that no flesh should rejoice in his presence. It more fretteth and galleth an high mind to be crossed and countermanded by mean things, then by things of reckoning and account. We see this in the example of *Abimelech*, Judge. 9, 54. *who being wounded by a woman, besought his servant to slay him, rather then it should be said, that a woman had slain him.* It had been an easy thing with the Lord, whē in the Land of Egypt he turned the dust of the earth into Lice, to have turned it into Lions and Bears, into Wolves & Tigers, of strange greatness, and cruel fierceness; but it pleased him rather to deal in this manner, the more to pull down the mighty, and to scatter the proud in the imaginations of their heart.

Thirdly, he is the Maker and Creator of all [Reason 3] things, so that they are not only his creatures, and the workmanship of his hands, but his servants and soldiers, to serve him, & fight his battles against his adversaries, such as all ungodly persons are; he is the General of this army, and therefore is called, *The Lord of hosts*, Isaiah 1, 9, having these as his serievants and attendants to do his will. When he saith to his army go, it goeth; or come, it cometh: or do this, by and by it doth it.

The uses remain to be considered. From [Use 1] hence we learn, that the power of God is absolute and infinite, without limit or restraint, who is able by an army of mean creatures, to put us to foil & flight, whatsoever our might and manhood be we boast of. What? hath not God, men and Angels to command? Yes, yes, he hath them all at his pleasure to be employed. But he needeth not to arm the sons of men, or troops of Angels, if he do but hiss or whistle for any of his creatures, they come forth with store & strength out of their places against us; as it were in battle array. This the Prophet *Joel* teacheth, chap. 1, verses 3, 4, 19, 20. So then, we must learn to acknowledge the great power of God; who governeth all things in heaven and earth to work his will. For as the Prophet saith, Psal. 94, 9. *He that made the eye, shall not he see? or the ear, shall not he hear?* So may we in like manner reason: He that giveth power, shall not he have power? He that putteth strength into his creatures shall not he be armed with strength himself? Now, we have already declared, that what force and might soever is in any of his creatures, it is a spark of his flame, it is an arm of his sea, it is a gift of his

treasures, & therefore we are bound to acknowledge and confess, to believe and to rest in his power that doth terrible things, for his own Names sake.

[Use 2] Secondly, we are taught hereby to stand in fear of God, to tremble under this mighty Commander of sea and land, and to beware we do not teaze with him, or provoke him to anger & indignation against us, seeing he hath so many royal Camps of armed soldiers in readiness, to be revenged of us, & to destroy us, when, and how, and where it pleaseth him. He is able to cut us down as grass, to blow us away as dust, to sweep us away as dung, & to tread upon us as worms of the earth: he needeth no weapon for the matter, he can scatter us as chaff before the wind, he can make the least dust to be our death, and the smallest vermin to be our destruction. If he arm the silly & simple fly, it is able to work out our confusion, and is far above our power to encounter and buckle withal. These are the men of war that God chooseth to wage battle for him, and to pull down the hautinesse of our hearts. Let us profit to humility, and stoop down under his hand. He can as easily send strange plagues, strange diseases & mortality among us, as he in former times hath done. This the Prophet *Jeremiah* teacheth, chap. 5, 21, 22, 24. *Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding, which have eyes and see not, which have ears and hear not; fear ye not me, saith the Lord? Or will ye not be afraid at my presence? which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it, & though the waves thereof rage and roar, they cannot prevail or pass over it.*

Lastly, this teacheth, that none can escape [Use 3] judgment, and though hand join in hand, the ungodly shall never go unpunished. For as it ministereth comfort to the faithful in all dāgers to put their trust & affiance in God, who hath so many soldiers and servants to protect and defend them; so on the other side it assureth tribulation and anguish, death and destruction to every soul that doth evil. Look how many creatures he hath, so many means he hath to destroy us, and we cannot escape if we be at war and defiance with him. *If God be on our side, who shall be against us?* Rom. 8, 31. But if he be against us, what creature shall stand with us? Nay, what creature is not armed against us? If God be our enemy, nothing in heauē or earth can show us any good, or be in league and friendship with us, but is ready to bid us battle, and to proclaim open war against us. Therefore the Prophet saith, *God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth, he will take vengeance on his adversaries, and here serveth wrath for his enemies: the Lord is slow to anger, but he is great in power, and will not surely clear the wicked: the Mountains tremble, and the Hills melt before him, the earth is burnt at his fight, yea the world & all that dwell therein: Who can stand before his wrath? his wrath is poured out like fire, and the Rocks are broken by him.* If a man were compassed about with thousands of his enemies, and hemmed in on every side with a mighty host ready to draw their swords, and discharge their Ordinance at him, would he not despair of deliverance, and put his soul in his hand as the Prophet speaks? This is the estate of all natural and wicked men. All creatures above their head and under their feet, on the right hand, on the left hand, and round about them, before them and behind them, are set against them, & have made a general conspiracy against them. It were a vain hope and foolish presumption for such a prisoner to dream of freedom & deliverance. The murder of *Abel* lying heavy upon the heart and conscience of *Cain*, made him stand in fear of every creature that came to meet him, or ouertooke him. If then we

would be at peace with the creatures, and find peace in our own selves, which passeth all understanding, labor first of all to be at peace with God. Let him have no quarrel or controversy against us. Let us send out an Embassy of peace, and hang out of our hearts a flag of truce, that he may call back his army from pursuing of us. If he once blow the retreat, all his soldiers retire, they are all able to do us no hurt, the stones of the street shall be in league with us, all creatures shall serve them that serve the Lord. Seeing therefore, the least of God's creatures are made by him too strong for a kingdom, who shall be able to resist his power? Seeing in his wrath he can arm all the creatures in heaven and earth against us, the meanest whereof is above our strength, what vain hearts have we in our breasts, and what wicked tongues in our profane mouths, to think and speak it, that we will shift well enough with his judgments? Let us shake at his infinite power betimes, lest the fire of his jealousy burn against us, and it cannot be quenched. Let us tremble at our security and presumption, that have taken hold upon us, lest the guiltiness thereof shake and shiuer us in pieces for evermore, seeing he bringeth out his armies by number, & calleth them by their names. Isaiah 40, 26.

[Verse 7. *Then the people came to Moses, & said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against thee.*] Mark here, how the Israelites seek help and succor of *Moses*. A man would have thought, that this rout of Rebels, of all other would not have gone to *Moses*, nor have stooped down to him, whom before they had contemptuously scorned, contumeliously abused, and despitefully spoken against; yet in their misery they making a virtue of necessity, come with one accord to *Moses* to be helped & succoured, to be relieved and prayed for; they can find no comfort nor remedy but in him. We learn from hence, this doctrine; Such as are disobedient & wicked, are oftentimes driven to seek comfort and help of the godly, whom they have scorned and derided, reviled and spoken against I say, ungodly men, and such as blaspheme God, and are enemies to God and to his servants, are many times enforced and constrained to sue to them whom they have despised, and to seek to them in their necessity and extremity, when they are in affliction, and the hand of GOD is any ways heavy upon them. This appeareth in many places of the word of God; *Abimelech* having taken the wife of *Abraham*, and wronged him in the most precious part of his possession, standeth in need of his prayer, that he might live, & be healed of the diseases that God had laid upon him and his people. In like manner *Isaac* was hated of the Philistines, they envied his riches, they stopped his wels, they oppressed him with injuries, and banished him their country: and yet behold, they are constrained immediately to seek peace of him, and to make a covenant with him, so that albeit they hated him, and put him away from them, yet the King & his Captain are glad to come unto him, Gen. 26, 24, 25, 26. *For they feared him, and saw certainly that the Lord was with him.* The like submission we see in *Pharaoh*, albeit he hardened his heart, and often had contemned and reviled *Moses*, yet in the greuousnesse of the judgment, he sendeth for *Moses* and *Aaron*, and saith, *I have now sinned: the Lord is righteous, but I and my people are wicked; pray ye unto the Lord for me, that there be no more mighty thunders amd hail.* Exod. 9, 27, and 11, 8. Such an example is recorded, 1 Kings 13, 4, 6, touching *Jeroboam*, who albeit he regarded not the word of the Prophet, but raged against him, and stretched out his hand from the Altar, saying *Lay hold on him:* yet when his

hand was dried up, so as he could not pull it in again unto him, he humbled himself greatly in the present feeling of this punishment, and besought that Prophet to pray to the Lord his God, and make intercession for him, that his hand might be restored. Thus *Saul* seeketh to *David*, 1 Sam. 24, 21, 22. *Beltshazzar* to *Daniel*, Dan. 5, 12, 13. *Zedekiah* to *Jeremiah*, Ier. 37, 3. The foolish virgins to the wise, Mat. 25, 8. *Haman* had conspired the destruction of the Church, and thirsted after the bloody massacre of the Saints of God, (whose death is precious in his sight) yet in the end he saw mischief prepared for him, & he stood up to make request for his life unto Queen *Ester*, chap. 3, 9, and 7, 7. Thus the saying and sentence of the wise man is verified, Prov. 14, 19. *The evil shall bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.*

Neither let us doubt of this truth, or greatly marvel at it. For God hath planted & imprinted [Reason 1] such a majesty in the person of those that are unfeignedly godly, & truly religious, that the most desperate and despicable wicked men fear their faces, and reverence their presence. If then the ungodly fear them, it is no great marvel, though they fall down before them many times in submissive manner. But the ungodly do often fear them, therefore it cannot seem strange unto us, if they do some reverence unto them. This we see in *Herod*, Mark. 6.20. *He feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and an holy, and revered him; and when he heard him he did many things and heard him gladly.* So when the people saw how God heard the prayer of *Samuel*, they feared *Samuel* exceedingly. 1 Sam. 12, 18. Such is the force of innocence, that it convinceth the enemies in their own consciences, and driveth them to do homage, and veil their bonnet to the servants of God.

Again it is the will of God, that all such [Reason 2] as humble themselves, should be exalted, and the lowly in heart should be advanced: so also such as exalt themselves, should be brought low; and therefore it is no marvel, if GOD even in this life do many times for the manifestation of his mercy and justice, lift up the heads of his own children, & cast down the wicked under their feet. Hence it is, y^t Christ Jesus was so much delighted with this sentence so often repeated by him in the Gospel, *Whosoever exalteth himself, shall be brought low, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted*, Math. 23, 12. Luke 18, 14.

[Use 1] Now let us make use of this doctrine. First, seeing the unfaithful be oftentimes constrained to sue to the faithful for their help, as the rich glutton did to *Abraham*; let us all learn to plant true godliness in our hearts, and to turn to the Lord with all our souls, that we may have our part and portion in this preeminence: and let us walk worthy of our places, and of this privilege, honor, and dignity. Seeing almighty God maketh us spiritual Kings to rule and reign, and often subjecteth the wicked under us, let us not be slaves to our own lusts and corruptions, but rule with authority and dominion over them, and labor to subdue sin unto us. We see the Princes of this world will not dishonor and debase themselves with base Offices. We are Kings and Princes to God in this life, let us then walk worthy of this dignity, as the Apostle urgeth this duty from us, 2 Thess. 1, 10, 11. *The Lord shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be made marvelous in all them that believe in that day: wherefore, we also pray for you always, that our God may make you worthy for this Calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.* Where we see, that after he had set

down the great glory that belongeth to God's children at the coming of Christ, he exhorteth them to walk worthy of their calling, seeing it shall be glorious with Christ, and the ungodly shall be brought to utter shame, contempt, dishonor, reproach, & confusion. There is no way to bring any to true honor, but to purchase to our selves true godliness. Therefore the Lord said, 1 Sam. 2, 30. *Them that honor me, I will honor, and they that despise me, shall be despised. Old age is rightly honorable, but it must be found in the way of righteousness.* Prov. 16, 31. This we see to have been in Job, chap. 29, 7, 8. *When I went out to the gate, even to the judgment seat, and when I caused them to prepare my seat in the street, the young men saw me, and hid themselves, and the aged arose and stood up, the Princes stayed their talk & laid hand on their mouth.* Loe, thus shall they be honored that fear the Lord: and therefore blessed is the estate & condition of the godly.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing the wicked (even in this life) are urged to seek mercy at the hands of godly men, so that God here upon earth bringeth down their heads, that before were lifted up in great pride: how much more shall this be verified in the life to come? when the redemption of God's children draweth near, their happiness shall be perfected; then they are appointed to triumph, and to have the victory over all their enemies, & tread the wicked under their feet. For the true children of God shall rule and over-rule the world, and shall trample upon the kingdom of darkness, over hell, death, damnation, the devil, the reprobate, & whatsoever setteth it self against their peace. This the Lord from the beginning taught the Church, Gen. 3, 15. *He shall break thine head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* The devil shall tempt Christ, & assault his members, but not overcome them: whereas Christ shall conquer the power of death, and make his children partakers of his victory. And the Apostle Paul confirmeth the same, Rom. 16, 20. *The God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly.*

Wherefore, albeit there be in this life and wicked world, many beastly minded men, that spread their arms far and near, & seem even to dazzle the eyes of others, through their riches, honors, power, friends, aliance, might, credit, possessions, & dominion over others, so that none dare mutter a word against them; yet the time is appointed & cometh quickly, that the godly shall sit in thrones of glory, & judge these wicked wretches that have been enemies to the Church; they shall stand at the bar like poor caitiffes, and receive frō Christ and his Saints, the sentence of condemnation, as 1 Corinth. 6.2, 3. *Paul calleth the Saints of God to consideration of this prerogative, and checketh them, that they would submit themselves to the ungodly, Do ye not know, that the Saints shall judge the world? If the world then shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not, that we shall judge the Angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?* If then the Lord bring the wicked down, and make them stoop to his servants in these days of their pilgrimage, wherein iniquity is often advanced, how much more shall we see our desire upon our enemies, when Christ which is our life, shall appear? for then we shall appear with him in glory, and be made like unto him, and see him as he is. This the Prophet assureth the Church, Mal. 4, 2, 3. Albeit therefore we be persecuted & pursued in this life, and find no rest or refreshing anywhere, yet there shall be a sudden change of our condition, when we shall triumph with Christ, over all principalities and powers, that lift themselves up against God, who shall •ue shame and contempt poured upon them. The coming of Christ shall lighten

things hidden in darkness, and make a manifest difference between the godly and the ungodly. Let us wait for his glorious appearance: let us hold fast till he come that which we have, that no man may take away our crown. This Christ our Savior (who hath overcome the world) assureth, Revel. chapter 2. verses 26, 27. *He that overcometh and keepeth my work unto the end, to him will I give power over Nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and as the vessels of a Potter, shall they be broken.* And the Apostle Peter assureth us, that *the Lord is not slack of his coming (as some men count slackness) but is patient toward us, that we should not perish, but come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the Elements shall melt with heat, and the earth with the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.* Then woe shall be to the wicked, then they shall be cast down, and never be able to rise again: then they shall howl, and weep, and lament, and never be comforted again: whereas the godly shall lift up their heads, because their redemption draweth near, *When it shall be a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation unto them that trouble you, but to you which are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall show himself from heaven with his mighty Angels.* 2 Th. 1, 6. This therefore is a great comfort unto us, & giveth peace to our souls, that he will deal with all the ungodly, as Joshua did with the Kings which he had conquered and subdued in battle. For he commanded them to be brought out of the Cave where they were hidden, and called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the chief of the men of war which went out with him; *Come near, set your feet upon the necks of these Kings, and they came near and set their feet upon their necks: and Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be faint-hearted, but be strong and of a good courage, for thus will the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.* Josh. 10, 24, 25. So will Christ Jesus deal with all our enemies, who is the Captain of the Lord's host, he will pour shame and contempt upon them, and therefore let us not stand in fear of them, to turn out of the right way, and to forsake our profession, but be steadfast and unmovable, abounding always in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord. Thus if we be faithful to the death, we shall receive an incorruptible crown of glory.

[Use 3] Lastly, observe and mark how God magnifieth the Ministry, and is able to enforce the wicked to the acknowledgement of himself, and the true Ministers of his word: and let this comfort us in the midst of all contempts and disgraces of our God, of our religion, of our faith, and of our persons. Ah, we Ministers despised by profane men, let us mark and consider this, and lay it unto our hearts: let us bear their contempts & contumelies thrown upon us. In their extremities they shall acknowledge us, they shall reverence our Calling, they shall magnify our Office, our Ministry, and Doctrine, they shall justify us & desire our prayers, they shall stoop, they shall stoop when it pleaseth God. And let this suffice all true Teachers & Preachers of the Gospel of Christ, that the power of the truth is such, as that it maketh the enemy bow y^e knee unto it, which before seemed to have no joint to bend. This is the time which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it, when he giveth us a comfortable experience of this doctrine, that the enemies of God and our enemies are driven to resort and repair unto us: and such as made iestes and songs of the word and of the Ministers of the word, cry out, *O, how beautiful are the feet of them which bring glad tidings of good things?* Rom. 10, 15. There is none of us all poor contemned men, that labor in sincerity

in the vineyard of God, & bear the burden of the work and the heat of the day, but sometimes God lifteth up our heads, and honoreth us in the world, that we should not sink down under the burden; and maketh our mortal and greatest enemies, beseech us to be good unto them, and to help them in their extremities. The people of Israel despised the ministry of *Samuel*, & would not hearken unto him; but when they saw the lightning, and heard the thunder, and felt the rain at that unseasonable time, *They feared the Lord and Samuel exceedingly, and they said unto him, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not.* 1 Sam. 8, 7, and 12, 18, 19. Let this profitable meditation of God's mercy toward us, devour and swallow up all disgracing and defacing of our Ministry, and teach us to wait patiently upon the Lord, who, whē the ways of a man please him, will make his enemies to be at peace with him, and alter their hearts as pleaseth him. This is a very great dignity and high privilege that God bestoweth upon his poor and contemptible servants, reproachful in the world, a gazing stock to the wicked, accounted as the off-scouring of the earth, a wonder to men and Angels: this is their honor and preeminence, they are magnified of God, and respected of the wicked in their manifold miseries, when God toucheth them in body, or afflicteth them in mind, or punisheth thē in goods, or layeth his hand vpō such as nearly concern them in the flesh. Excellent then is the estate of God's children advanced by him, and a great honor unto them, that their enemies are brought under them, & are made to sue unto them. God is able to deliver them from contempt, and to give us for the truths sake a due regard and reverence when he will. So he magnified the ministry of *Moses and Aaron* (as we heard before) when *Pharaoh* could find no comfort in his enchanters and sorcerers, nor any help in his gods or Idols, he is forced to seek comfort & help of those despised Ministers & messengers that were before hated of him: for *Moses* must pray unto God for him. So he magnified the ministry of his Apostles, so that the stubborn and stiff-necked Jews, that could not abide the Gospel, nor the Preachers of the Gospel, being wounded in conscience, came to *Peter* and the rest of the Apostles, saying, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Acts 2, 37. The laylour, mentioned in the 16 of the Acts, v. 26, 27 29, put the Apostles into close prison, & made their feet fast in the stocks: but when y^e earth quaked, the prison doors opened, and every man's bands were loosed, when once he was waked out of sleep, and his conscience out of security, *he called for a light, & leaped in, he came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,* & could find no comfort but from them whom before he had cruelly entreated, nor recover himself from the gulf of desperation into w^c he was entering, but by their blessed ministry, who ministered a word in due season to y^e weary soul, to the heavy heart, and to the conscience burdened and oppressed with sin. So he magnified the ministry of *John* the Baptist, who was revered of the covetous Publican's, of the violent soldiers, and of the merciless people, so that they demanded of him, *What shall we do?* Thus hath God dealt from time to time, compelling the wicked to know and to acknowledge his faithful Ministers to his great glory and our endless comfort. It is a vain & needless fear in many, that fear the fall and decay of the Ministry, & the utter ruin and overthrow of the Ministers of the word. There are many trades of this present life, that will never decay nor wear out of use. So long as building, planting, sowing, and tilling of the ground are in request, there will be use of the builder, of the planter, of the husbandman. Who feareth the contempt of harvest men in the time of harvest? Who feareth the discharge of watchmen, while the City is besieged? Who

feareth y^t no reckoning will be made of Shepherds, so long as there are sheep to be attended, and wolves to be feared? The Ministers are the Lord's builders, the people are his building: the Ministers are his husbandmen, the people his husbandry: the Ministers are the Lord's harvest men, the people his harvest to be gathered into his barn. This the Apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. 3, 9, & Christ our Savior, Mat. 9, 37. So long therefore as God hath a *Church* to be built, a *Vineyard* to be planted, a *Field* to be tilled, a *Flock* to be watched, an *Harvest* ripe and ready to be reaped, we need not to be afraid of the decay and downfall of the Ministry. For so long as men have souls to be saved, the means of salvation shall be continued. We see this in the history of the Acts, how diversely it pleased y^e Lord to dispose of this his ordinance. Where he had no people to be called, he suffered not the Apostles to go thither: but where *he had much people*, there he commanded thē to labor more, and to tarry longer, and suffered them not to depart so soon as they would. Wherefore, let us be bold and constant in the work of the Lord, and not fear to labor in his Vineyard, knowing that our work shall not be in vain, & assuring our selves, that he will hold up our heads whom we serve, and maintain his own ordinance unto the coming of Jesus Christ.

[*We have spoken against the Lord, and against thee, we have sinned.*] The people of Israel being brought to true repentance by y^e former judgment of the fiery serpents, do not content themselves to confess their sins in general, saying, *We have sinned*; but they acknowledge the particular offense that had brought upon them y^t particular judgment. As then they felt the judgment in particular, so they have a feeling of their special and particular sin. This teacheth, that howsoever we are to repent & crave pardon generally for general sins & unknown sins, yet we must be most pressed & perplexed, touched and grieved with particular sins. This truth appeareth lively in y^e practice of *Naamā*, who being won to the faith by the experience which he had of the mercy & power of God, as also the Ruler was by the miracle shown upon his son, John. 4, 53, he was touched with a feeling of his former idolatry; and confessed his great blindness in the corrupt worship of false gods. Hence it is that *he desireth God to be merciful unto him, that in going with his master into the house of Rimmon, and he leaning on his hand, he had worshipped that Idol*, to the dishonor of God, and the wounding of his conscience. The words themselves will naturally bear this construction. For we must understand them of the time past, not of the time to come: of his craving pardon for that which he had done, and not for that he would do. He was a true convert, and testifieth his conversion by acknowledging his former impiety, and promising to forsake the same, and to worship the true God hereafter. This is indeed true repentance, whē we are ready and willing to acknowledge those particular sins and trespasses that lie heavy upon the conscience, and have called down particular judgments upon us. We have a notable pattern of this kind of repentance in the Prophet, Psal. 51, 1, 14: thus do the people of Israel deal in their conversion, 1 Sam. 12, 19, and many others. 1 Tim. 1, 13. 1 Cor. 15, 9. Acts 2, 23. Luke 19, 8.

The reasons. First, because repentance only [Reason 1] made generally & confusedly for known sins, is never true repentance, but a common & hypocritical repentance of one resolved and settled to continue in sin, & not yet touched with a true feeling thereof. True it is, for secret and unknown sins, which we in weakness & ignorance commit, the Lord

accepteth a general confession, as we see in the practice of the Prophet *David*, saying, *Who can understand his faults? Cleanse me from secret sins*, Psalm. 19, 12. Thus did the rest, no doubt, of the godly deal, & such an acknowledgment of their unknown sins (which they took not to be sins) did they make in a general manner, which were hidden not only from other men, but even from themselves. This we may say of their polygamy or their marrying of many wives, and other their dail infirmities.

Secondly, we must make a particular account to God at the hour of death, when we [Reason 2] must plead guilty or not guilty at his bar. A general reckoning and account will not then be taken, neither will the Lord set before us gross sums, but the account shall be made of specials; which may cause the stoutest and strongest men to tremble and quake for very fear of that day. All the sins of thy former life shall be represented before thee, like • squadron of enemies ready set in battle array to assault thee, & to give in evidence against thee. This is taught and witnessed unto us by the Apostle *John*, describing the manner of judgment to which we shall be summoned, Revel. 20, 12. *I saw the books opened, and the dead were judged of those things which were written in the books, according to their works*. It standeth us upon in regard of these books, to make up our books, and to look to our reckonings, forasmuch as we must *gave an account of our stewardship*, Luk. 16, 2.

Let us now make use of this doctrine. First, [Use 1] we learn from hence, that it is not enough to say, we are sinners, and so to cry God mercy for a pa•g or a brunt and so away, or to desire God to forgive us our sins; but we must uncase our selves, and uncover our particular trespasses, if we would have God to cover thē with the precious garment of Christ. If a sick man come to the Physician, and only tell him he is sick, and never show him his particular grief and disease that troubleth him, in what part he is pained, and in what sort he is taken, he can never look to be cured and restored to health. If we come unto God, the Father of spirits and Physician of souls; and only say, *We have sinned*, we cannot assure our selves of pardon. We declared before, that we must confess our unknown sins generally, but our known sins we must confess particularly, without any excuse or defense, without any hiding or diminishing of thē; as the same Prophet doth after he had sinned in numbering of the people, *I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing,&c*. Wherefore •t standeth us, upon with great grief & heaviness of heart, to confess our special sins & to give sentence against our selves, and to pray with earnestness of spirit as for life and death, for the pardon of our offenses which we have committed at such and such times, in such places, with such persons and in such manner: otherwise our repentance is only in show, and for fashion sake, which is never acceptable to God; being done in hypocrisy, and without a conscionable feeling of sin in the soul.

[Use 2] Secondly, this particular confession overthroweth and overturneth sundry corruptions and abuses in the case of repentance. It condemneth all impenitent persons, such as live & continue, in one estate, never sorrow for any sin, neither at any time turn from it, neither have any feeling or •eefe for sin, neither know what it meaneth. This is a dangerous estate and a most perilous judgment. For as a sick man is then most dangerously sick when he hath no feeling of his sickness, and is ready to say, he is well, and hath small

sense or none at all of any pain or peril: so sinful man is then in greatest misery by reason of his sins when he thinketh himself to be no sinner. Such one is far off from mourning & sorrowing for sin, from turning from them and returning to God, seeing he taketh himself to be in good case and *to stand in need of no repentance*. Such were the Pharisees in the days of Christ, whom he reproveth, Mat. 9, 12, 13. Besides, it condemneth ceremonial repentance, which carrieth an outward show of dying to sin, but is separated from the inward truth of a sound heart. Thus Saul repented, 1 Sam. 15.74, and 26, 21, and 24, 17, 18. And Ahab rent his clothes, but not his heart, *he fasted from food*, but not from sin, 1 Kin. 21.27.29. Thus the hypocrites repent, mentioned in the Prophets, when a *man afflicteth his soul for a day, and boweth-down his head as a bulrush, yet looseth not the bonds of wickedness*: and therefore immediately afterward, he embraceth his former sins, and returneth to his old ways, as Pharaoh did: who being annoyed with the frogs, smitten with the hail, terrified with the thunders, troubled with the grasshoppers, pestered with the flies, disquieted with the darkness; this was the even and issue of all, as soon as he had rest given unto him, *he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto the Lord*. This is the common sickness of the common repentance, that men ordinarily practice in these days, whereby they deceive themselves and their own souls, dealing in hypocrisy & dissembling with the Lord, catching at the shadow instead of the body, & resting in shows instead of the substance. Lastly, it condemneth all such as have hardened their hearts in sin, and are grown thereby to be past feeling, such as cannot discern between good and evil, nor tremble at God's judgments, but draw sin to themselves as it were with cart-ropes; and work all uncleanness even with greediness. These have their conscience seared with an hot Iron, and it accuseth them not for any sin, but bringeth them into a reprobate mind so that they are so far from confessing their proper and particular sins, that they have no sense or remorse of any sin, but are full of all wickedness and unrighteousness.

Lastly, it behooveth us to search out our ways, to see what we have left undone, and [Use 3] what lieth most upon our consciences, and especially bewail the same; otherwise there is in us no sound conversion. This the Prophet testifieth, Lam. 3, 40, 41. Some are specially inclined to lust & uncleanness, some to covetousness, some to surfeiting & drunkenness, some to envy & revenge, some to swearing & blaspheming, some to pleasures & delights of the outward man; now where we are weakest, Satan will be strongest; where our defense is slenderest there his temptations will be thickest; where the hedge is lowest, every beast will seek to enter; so it is with us: if one place be left open & vnguarded▪ Satan will enter there, as well as if we gave him a passage many ways. One known sin nourished in us, is sufficient for him to bring us thereby to damnation. He can well abide to have us reformed in many faults that we should deny them, defy them, hate them, and cry out against them; yet someone sin or other (whereto we are by nature most inclined) he fosteteth and furthereth in us, and by it in a vile manner he wholly possesseth us, and dwelleth in us. It is a wonderful policy of Satan, when he cannot make us to walk and wallow in all sin, he endevoeth to poison us with someone sin, lest he should wholly give over his hold, and by it will bring us to destruction, as well as by a thousand. A Bird entangled with one foot, and holden in y^e snare of the Fowler, is as unable to escape and fly away, as if she were taken and held by both the

feet. So is it with man, if he beholden in one notorious sin, and flatter himself in it, he is in as great danger of death and damnation, as if he gave over himself to many sins. What I pray you, should it profit, when a City is besieged and compassed with the enemy, to shut up all the gates, and to leave one standing open? May not the enemy enter at that one, as well as at many, and by assault take the City and people? Or what should it avail a Mariner to stop all the holes of the Ship where it leaketh, and leave one vnstopped? Will it not sink the Ship as well as many? So, what shall it profit and help us to set open one corner of our hearts for one sin to enter, albeit we should shut up, and lock the doors of our hearres against all other sins? Will not Satan enter there, and fill us full of all wickedness, & bring us to destruction of soul and body? Consider the examples of *Saul, Herod, Judas, Ananias and Sapphira*, all these turned from sin, yea from many sins, but not from all sin, nor from their special sins whereof they should have repented, and therefore their repentance was but the show and shadow of repentance, and not true repentance indeed. If then we would have that true & godly sorrow which causeth repentance, not to be repented of, we must turn from all our sins to God, and bring forth fruits worthy amendment of life, and hereby learn to try our own hearts by this special conversion. We must consider our proper and personal sins. *Endeuouring to be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect.* Mat. 5, 48, and not exempting our selves from the obedience of any of the Lord's holy Commandments.

[*And Moses prayed for the people.*] They desire the prayers of *Moses*, as we heard before, who refuseth not, but prayeth for thē to God. He was not mindful of the wrongs sustained, and of the injuries received of them, for in all y^e indignities offered unto him he was patient and meek above all men that were upon the earth; therefore he goeth to God, and desireth him to remove the judgment. The Doctrine from this place is this; It is our duty to pray one for another. The Lord requireth of us, not only to commit to God, and commend in our prayers the Saints, but to be mindful of our enemies, and them that hate us, and to desire their good and conversion. This affection we see in *Abraham*, who prayed earnestly and oftentimes for the Sodomites, that God would spare them, & not destroy the righteous with the wicked, but rather to spare the wicked for the righteous sake. This was also in *Samuel*, when the people besought him to pray for thē that they died not, he said, *God forbid, that I should sin against the Lord, and cease praying for you, &c.* 1 Sam. 12, 23. How often did *Moses & Aaron* pray for *Pharaoh*, and spread out their hands unto the Lord, *That the plagues might cease, and that he might know that the earth is the Lord's?* Exod. 9, 29. This duty Christ our Savior setteth down as a rule to guide us, both by word of mouth, and by example of life. For he taught his Disciples this Doctrine, Mat. 5, 44. *Love your enemies: bless them that curse you: do good to them that hate you, and pray for the that hurt you, and persecute you, &c.* Now this point as Christ preacheth, so he practiseth and prayeth for his enemies, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Luk. 23.34. Thus did the faithful witness of God, *Stephen* whē he was stoned, he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* Acts 7, 60.

The Reasons are plain and direct. First, we [Reason 1] are fellow-members of the same body, and fellow-soldiers that fight under the same Captain Jesus Christ. We see them embers of our body are careful for the good one of another, unless they be dead and senseless; so should we be moved at the consideration of the troubles and wants of the Church, as the

Apostle by this similitude teacheth us, 1, Cor. 12, 20, 21. *We are many members, yet but one body: and the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor the head again to the feet, I have no need of you.* So it is in the body of Christ, we cannot want each other, but stand in need one of another, to keep y^e whole body in peace and concord. In regard hereof it is, that we are partakers also of their prayers, so as we pray one for another, and seek the good & benefit one of another, as the Church did the deliverance of *Peter*. Acts 12, 5.

Secondly, this duty of praying for our brethren, [Reason 2] is enforced & charged upon us, because it is acceptable to God, and an oblation wherewith he is delighted and well pleased. For our prayer is directed in his sight as Incense; and the lifting up of our hands as an evening sacrifice. It availeth much if it be fervent, it pierceth the heavens, and obtaineth every good blessing at the hands of God for our selves, & for others.

The Uses fo•low. First, we are especially in [Use 1] duty bound to pray for Magistrates and those that be in authority, as the subjects for their Princes, and the people for their Pastors, that the work of God may prosper under their hands. This the Apostle teacheth, 1 Tim. chapter 2, 1, 2. So the Jews were commanded to pray for Babylon, that persecuting City, where they were captive, Ier. chap. 29, ver. 7. We see in the natural body, that albeit the members have care one of another, yet the chiefest care is for the head. A man, will be willing to receive a blow on another part, to save the principal; it is that which Satan alleged to God, Job 2, 4. *Skin for skin, all that ever a man hath, will he give for his life.* So it standeth us upon, to desire indeed the good of the least and lowest member in the Church of God, but our chiefest and greatest endeavor should be for men in highest calling, who are set in slippery places, compassed with many dangers, environed with many temptations, beguiled oftentimes by flatterers, led away by false informers, so that the higher they are exalted, the greater is their downfall. When they stand upright, they stand not alone; whē they fall, they fall not alone. When a mighty Oak that seemed deep rooted in the earth, falleth down, it casteth down with it the lesser Trees and lower shrubs that grow near unto it. As we have light or darkness from the Sun, so we have vice or virtue from such as are superiors. For all inferiors commonly follow the example and tread the steps of such as are in higher places. This the wise man noteth in his Proverbs, ch. 29.12. *of a Prince that hearkeneth to lies, all his servants are wicked.* This the Prophet toucheth, *Behold, all that use Proverbs shall use this Prouerb against thee, saying, As the mother, so is he• daughter.* Wherefore it behooveth us to remember our Princes and men of great callings in our prayers, as we see *Moses* is ready to pray for *Pharaoh*, & as *Darius* King of Persia willeth the Jews to pray for the Kings life, and for his sons: Ezra 6, 10, according as the Prophet also prayeth, *Give thy judgments O God, to the King, and thy righteousness to the Kings son.* Psal. 72, 1. Thus then it appeareth to be a principal duty, to pour out our prayers and supplications for our Magistrates & Ouer-seers that watch for our souls, and to fall down upon our knees for Prince and Country. The Apostles command it, and the faithful practice it toward Infidels and wicked Kings that professed not the faith, nor believed the truth: how much more careful then ought we to be, to perform all Christian duties to Christian Princes, that are members of the same body, that are the breath of our nostrils, that are nursing fathers and nursing mothers to the Church, that are shepherds of the people of God to feed and govern them, that are chosen instruments to bestow their

power and authority for the preservation of the sheep of Christ, and are firm pillars to bear up the truth upon their shoulders?

[Use 2] Secondly, it followeth that we are to do it much more for our selves. For how can we be truly affected to pray for others, and be inwardly touched with their wants, when we have no feeling of our own? We shall hear many oftentimes very liberal and lavish in offering their prayers, as if they did set them out to sale, or to be hired, saying, *I will pray for you*; who notwithstanding sildome pray for themselves. And what are the prayers of blind and ignorant men, but rehearsing the Commandments, saying over the Creed, & a pattering of the Lord's Prayer without understanding? Besides, prayer is a mutual duty to be practiced one toward another, as we perform the same for our brethren, so do the brethren for us, and therefore we are no more endebted to other for this benefit, then others for the benefit they receive of us. Let us therefore learn from hence, that if we must pray for our friends and families, and other members of Christ, we must learn especially to pray for our selves, and by our selves. We can never of conscience pray with others, unless we sometimes separate our selves from them, enter into our Chamber, shut our door, and pray alone unto our Father which is in secret, *That our Father which seeth in secret, may reward us openly*. Mat. 6, 5, 6. For he that never prayed solitary, never prayed truly. He that never sequestreth himself from the company of others, to humble his soul before God, never knew what true prayer meant, but doth all in hypocrisy for fashion sake, and to be seen of men, and therefore they have their reward accordingly. It is a note of hypocrisy, never to pray but in company; and therefore whosoever always and only prayeth with others, is an hypocrite. Hence it is, that the faithful have used daily private prayer. It is noted of *Isaac*, that he went frō the presence of others, to pour out his meditations before rhe Lord. We see it in *David* in sundry Psalms, yea in Christ himself, though he were Lord of life, and heir of all things: so that this is a sound and infallible rule in our holy and Christian religion, that what man soever never prayed alone, never prayed aright.

Thus then we see how it standeth us all upon, in regard of this general duty to be performed to others, to be principally mindful of our selves, that from a sight of our own sins, from a feeling of our own wants, from a desire of God's graces, we may have a due respect and regard of our brethren. For all our love shown to our neighbor, is as a stream issuing from the fountain of love toward our selves; and the rule to square out the love of our brethren, is the true measure of it to our selves, by due and right proportion. Let us therefore be diligent our selves in prayer, and pour out our meditations before the Lord. It is made a note of a wicked man not to pray, by the Prophet. Psalm. 14, verses 1, 4. *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God; they have corrupted and done an abominable work, there is none that doth good; they call not upon the Lord*. It behooveth us therefore to crave of GOD, the grace of prayer, to the ende we may pray aright as we ought to pray; that so we may learn to pray for others. This we see practiced by the Apostle *Paul*, who having exhorted the Church of Ephesus to put on the whole armor of God, and to pray always with all manner prayer and supplication in the spirit for all Saints: he annexeth hereunto immediately, *and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly as I ought to speak*; and himself beggeth the grace of God to come upon them. So writing to the Thessalonians, and exhorting them to pray

continually, and namely for the preachers of the Gospel, himself giveth an example, beginneth the work, and first prayeth for them, that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with them.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it behooveth us all in our wants and necessities to crave the prayers of the Church, which avail much with God if they be fervent. He hath promised to hear his servants that call upon him. He hath promised, *That wheresoever two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will be present in the midst of them.* He hath promised the graces of his spirit plentifully to them that ask. Wherefore, when *Daniel* was to declare to the King the dream which he had dreamed, and the interpretation thereof, which none of the Astrologians or enchanters could declare, *He shown the matter to his Companions, that they should beseech the God of heaven for grace in this secret.* The like we see in *Ester*, when she heard that all the Jews were appointed to destruction, and of that great danger which threatened the Church, she willed *Mordecai* to go and assemble all the Jews that were found in Shushan, saying; *Fast ye for me, eat not, nor drink in three days, I also and my maids will fast likewise, and so will I go in to the king, which is not according to the Law, and if I perish I perish.* So doth *S. Paul* in every Epistle almost, desire the Church to pray for him, that he might be delivered from unreasonable and beastly men, disobedient to the Gospel, that did vex and trouble him; that his service in his Ministry might be acceptable to the Saints for their profit and edification, that he might have the door of utterance opened and freedom of speech given unto him to publish boldly the will and counsel of God as he ought; that the gifts and graces of God bestowed upon him, might redound to the benefit of the Church, & praise of God. True it is, the wicked and ungodly do many times desire those whom they think to be the children of God, to pray for them. But they want the Spirit of Christ, and the grace of prayer, so that they cannot pray themselves, nor have any heart to lift up to God, as we see in *Simon the Sorcerer*, who craved of the Apostles to pray for him to the Lord, that none of his threatenings might fall upon him. He was not touched with a feeling of his sin, nor desired any pardon thereof, but only craved a freedom & deliverance from judgment to come. So then, he was not grieved for sin, but feared y^e punishment.

Again, as the Reprobate may desire the prayers of the children of God, when they fear judgments to come upon them hereafter, so they may do when punishment is upon them, as we see in *Pharaoh*, who desired *Moses* and *Aaron* to pray for him, that there be no more mighty thunders in the Land. The same we see in *Jeroboam*, the son of *Nebat*, that made Israel to sin; when his hand was dried up, that he could not pull it in again, which he had stretched out to lay hold on the Prophet, threatening the destruction of the idolatrous altar at Bethel, he said to the man of God, *I beseech thee, pray unto the Lord thy God, and make intercession for me, that my hand may be restored unto me.* So then, the wicked desire to be prayed for, but it is only in extremity, it is only to escape punishment, either present, or to come. But the Godly respect sin, and are grieved for it, more then for the punishment, they are troubled more for the loss of God's favor, then of temporal commodities. Therefore when he prayeth for himself or for others, he is moved with a fear and reverence of the Majesty of God to whom he prayeth, he is touched with a feeling of his own wants for which he prayeth, he poureth out his heart before the Lord, and showeth a fervent desire to obtain his wants, he prayeth

not for a brunt or two, but continueth in prayer, he doubteth not through unbelief, but through faith assureth himself to obtain the requests he maketh according to his word.

Fourthly, it followeth also, that when God [Use 4] hath heard us for them, we must praise his Name, and give thanks for the blessings he hath vouchsafed unto our brethren. So doth the Apostle in many of his Epistles, *I thank my God for you all through Jesus Christ, because your faith is published throughout the whole world.* As we are not to pray only for our selves, so we are not to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving only for our selves. This serveth to reprove all those that repine and envy at the blessings bestowed upon others, who have their own eye evil, because the Lord's eye is good. This sometime creepeth upon the servants of God, and therefore ought to make us more wary & watchful over our selves. When *Joshua* the servant of *Moses*, saw the spirit of God to rest upon *Eldad* and *Medad*, so that they prophesied in the host, he said, *My Lord Moses, forbid them:* who answered him, *Enuiest thou for my sake? yea, would God that all the Lord's people were Prophets, and that the Lord would pour his Spirit upon them.* So when the disciples of *John* saw that Christ Jesus made more disciples than *John*, and increased in glory more than he, they complained to *John*, that all men flocked to Christ, and began to forsake him, *John* replied, *Ye yourselves are my witnesses, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him: he must increase, but I decrease.* Let us beware y^t we be not possessed with the spirit of envy: rather let us labor after brotherly love, *which suffereth long, is bountiful, enuyeth not, it seeketh not her own things, it thinketh not evil, it rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, it suffers all things, it believeth all things, it hopeth all things it endureth all things.* Whatsoever good things God bestoweth upon any member of Christ, he hath given them not only for the benefit and comfort of him that hath received them, but for the good of the whole body. Seeing therefore we have our part and portion therein, in as much as there is in the Church one Communion of Saints: it is our duty to return the praise and glory thereof to the giver, and not repine and grudge against him to whom they are given.

[Use 5] Lastly, consider from this Doctrine, whence it is that God spareth the wicked and ungodly, and beareth long with the vessels of wrath, appointed to destruction. It is for the prayers of his people that are his remembrancers day and night, that stand in the gap and breach which the hand of God hath made, that cry unto him without ceassing, *Spare thy people (O Lord) and give not thine inheritance unto reproach, that the unbelievers should say, Where is their God?* True it is, the people of God are contemptible in this unthankfull world, yet were it not for these simple and silly ones, the judgments of God had long since fallen upon us, which by their prayers hitherto they have stayed. For had we continued in peace, dwelled in our houses, possessed our inheritances, enjoyed our lands and goods thus long, but for the faithful servants of God, who mind the peace of Zion? Doubtless, he would not spare the world one minute and moment of time, but for the godly. He would have spared the cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, if ten righteous persons had been found in them. For the faiths sake of *Rahah*, who hid the spies and sent them out another way, he spared her kindred, and her fathers house. For the faith of *Lot*, whose righteous soul was vexed day by day, in seeing and hearing the unclean conversation of those sinful men, he would have saved his sons in law, that should have married his daughters. For *Paul's* sake, a chosen vessel to bear the Name of God to the Gentiles, he gave freely those that sailed with him and saved their lives. Thus we

see, that for the godly, he beareth with the ungodly: but when they are safe and sealed in the forehead, then judgment shall come upon the wicked. Contrariwise, a nation, a city, a town, an house and family is cursed for the society and company of the wicked. The Israelites could not prosper at the siege of Ai, so long as *Achan* was among them. The Sea could not be calm, the ship could not be safe, the Mariners could not be at rest, so long as unrepentant and unreformed *Jonah* was a burden unto it; for he said unto them, *Take me and cast me into the Sea, so shall the waves work no more so troublesomely, for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.* Wherefore, it is a sweet and comfortable thing to be in the number of the faithful; we have benefit by the prayers of the Church, which pierce the ears of God, and bring down his blessings in great abundance.

Verse 8. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent.* We heard before how the people repented of their sins, and how *Moses* prayed for pardon: Now see how God remooueth his hand. *He will not always chide, nor keep his anger forever: he doth not deal with us after our sins, nor rewardeth us according to our iniquities.* Indeed he showeth oftentimes his severe judgments, but so soon as the sinner is humbled, he receiveth him to mercy, the sin is pardoned, and the punishment is removed. The doctrine from hence is this, that God is merciful to all penitent sinners. Repentance once going before, mercy followeth after, albeit we sin grievously against him. This the Prophet teacheth in the Name of God, *Isaiah 1.18. Ezek. 18.21, 22 23. and 33.11. David sinned exceedingly in numbering the people, for which God sent a pestilence three days in Israel, that many thousands died; yet when his heart smote him, that he said, I have sinned exceedingly, I have done wickedly, but these sheep what have they done? Let thine hand I pray thee, be against me, and against my fathers house, and not on thy people for their destruction: the Lord repented him of the evil, and said to the Angel that destroyed, It is enough, let thine hand cease.*

Let us consider the reasons of God's merciful [Reason 1] dealing, which are first the comfort and relief of his people, that none should to the end of the world despair of obtaining of mercy. For the mercy of God in Christ, is above all his works, which he extendeth to thousands; it is infinite, without measure. He pardoneth such offenders, to make them examples to others of God's great mercy, he receiveth them to favor, and remitteth their offenses, not only to manifest his mercy to the offender himself, but to teach others to resort and repair unto him for pardon and forgiveness. When the Prophet testifieth, that by acknowledging his sin unto God, and confessing his wickedness against himself, he obtained the remission of his sin, and punishment of sin: he addeth immediately, *Therefore shall everyone that is godly, make his prayer unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found.* This is the reason that the Apostle toucheth, *1 Tim. 1.* teaching that he was received to mercy, for this cause, *That Jesus Christ should first show on him all long suffering unto the example of them which shall in time to come believe in him unto eternal life.* So then, from these and such like examples of great sinners, that have obtained much mercy, we likewise should be assured of the goodness of God for our salvation, whensoever we can be brought to believe the Gospel, & repent from dead works.

Secondly, the consideration of the nature [Reason 2] of God, ministereth a strong and invincible reason to gain our affections to yield to this truth. For his mercy is abundant, and his goodness is infinite. It surmounteth the reach and understanding of all mortal men: *It passeth the highness of the heavens, the depth of the earth, the breadth of the Sea, the power of the devil, the strength of the Law, the measure of the whole world, and nothing can be compared with the perfections of the Almighty, Job 11.7, 8, 9.* Paul, who before his conversion, to the faith which he sought to destroy, was a blasphemmer, a Persecuter, & an oppresser; maketh this the cause why he was received to mercy, *The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus, that is, giving unto me faith, that chased away infidelity, and love that overcame cruelty.* So the Lord maketh this the chief and principal cause, why he spared that rebellious and idolatrous people, *The Lord, the Lord, strong, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in goodness and truth forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.*

[Use 1] The uses follow of this doctrine. First, we learn, that there is no sin that doth exceed the mercy of God. None can say without injury against his own soul, without reproach against God, and giving the lie to the glorious Majesty of God, *My sin is greater then can be forgiven.* True it is, there is an unpardonable sin, that shall never be forgiven, either in this world, or in the world to come, the blasphemy against the Spirit; but that is, because they cannot relent or repent that commit it; they are so far gone, that they can never return back again; not because God is not able to forgive it, or that it doth exceed the mercies of God. Seeing then, vile sinners find such infinite and unspeakable mercy, let us never despair or doubt of his mercy & favor, though we be suddenly overtaken through infirmity, and fall into diverse and grievous sins. He hath mercy in store for such as have been exceeding sinners against him. If they can repent of their sins, his mercies are as great as himself. Consider the examples of *Peter*, that denied his Master, of *Paul*, that persecuted the Saints, of *David* that committed adultery; of *Solomon* that fell into idolatry; of *Lot*, that lay with his own daughters; of *Noah*, that offended in drunkenness; of *Manasseh* that shed innocent blood; of *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom were cast seven devils; of the Jews that crucified the Lord of life: all which returning from their iniquity were received to mercy, so that where sin abounded, *there grace hath abounded much more.* Hence therefore great comfort ariseth to the heavy soul and troubled conscience, oppressed with the burden of sin, and hanging after grace and pardon. When terrors and temptations grow strong upon us, supposing that our sins are moe then can be forgiven, and the punishments greater then can be pardoned; we must know it is the lying spirit of the devil, to draw us into the bottomless and comfortless gulf of desperation, which is (as it were) the mouth of hell gaping wide, to swallow up the soul quick, to utter and endless destruction. If our sins be never so great and grievous, if they be never so many and monstrous, moe then the hairs of our head, or the sand on the sea shore which is innumerable; as heavy as lead, as infectious as a leprosy, as red as scarlet, as filthy as dung and mire: yet if God give repentance, and we believe, there is promise of mercy, assurance of forgiveness, and hope of comfort and consolation. Such they are that Christ calleth; saying, *Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will ease you; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.* It behooveth us all to seek favor at his hands, to crave pardon and to plead for mercy and forgiveness: of whom to ask it rightly, is to obtain it assuredly.

Secondly, the truth of this doctrine of [Use 2] God's pardoning offenders, and the consideration and feeling of this infinite kindness of God, must work in us unfeigned thankfulness. and continual praise, sounding out and magnifying his mercies, to speak of his goodness, and to show our selves loving and dutiful unto him again, for his exceeding compassion. This sacrifice of thanksgiving, we see offered by the Apostle unto God, for the experience he had of his bountifulness toward him, 1 Tim. 1.12. *I thank him which hath made me strong, that is Christ Jesus our Lord; for he counted me faithful, and put me in his service, when before I was a blrsphemer, and a persecutor, and an oppressor. Now unto the King everlasting, immortal, invisible, unto God only wise, be honor and glory, forever and ever, Amen.*

The like we see in *Mary Magdalene*, who had been a grievous and heinous sinner, as she had received much mercy, so she expressed back again much love and kindness; as she had been delivered out of the chains of Satan, so she followed Christ Jesus with the fruits of piety and thankfulness, all the days of her life; she entered with him unto *Simon's* house, kissed his feet, anointed them with ointment, washed them with her tears, wiped them with her hairs, followed him to the Cross, and was the first with him in his resurrection; of whom the Lord Jesus said, *Many sins are forgiven her for she loved much: to whom a little is forgiven, he doth love a little.* There is a forgiveness in God that goeth before, there must be a thankfulness in us that must follow after: as this womā knows much to have been forgiven her, and therefore she loveth much; even as the debtor loveth that creditor most, that hath forgiven him most; so should the affection of our love toward God be increased, as he giveth everyone experience of his greater mercy. As then we feel this sweetness, and the infinite riches of this benefit, so we should open our mouths, and vnloose our tongues, and enlarge our hearts, to sing and to set forth the praises of God, according to the example of the Prophet in the Psalm, *My soul praise thou the Lord, and all that is within me praise his holy Name: forget not all his benefits, which forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thine infirmities.* And in another place, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord: I will pay my vows unto the Lord even now in the presence of all his people.* For seeing he taketh away all our iniquity, and receiveth us to favor graciously, it is great reason we should offer the sacrifice of praise, and render unto him the calves of our lips. This doctrine of free forgiveness of sins, openeth unto us the most blessed news that ever came into the world; it is the sum of the Gospel, and of the glad tidings of salvation, the key of all our comfort, y^t entrance into life, & the most precious balm of our health and recovery, which giveth more, joy and refreshing to the fainting soul and broken heart, to the tender conscience and weary spirit, then all the glory of the world can minister unto it; as the Apostle testifieth, *This is a true saying, and by all means worthy to be received, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*

[Use 3] Thirdly, seeing there is mercy in store for the penitent, seeing God will have compassion upon them, is ready to fall on their neck, and to embrace them with both his arms, as the father of the prodigal child did: it is required of us speedily to turn, and not defer our repentance from day today, lest our harts be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. No sin is so small, but is able to plundge us down to the bottom of hell, if we live in it without repentance, and continue in it without remorse. The longer we remain in the dregs

of sin, the faster we shall stick in the mire of it, and the harder we shall find it to come out of the prison thereof. This is the use which we are to make of God's mercy to miserable sinners. Let us take heed we abuse not his goodness, nor take occasion of liberty, to turn his grace into wantonness; saying as the manner of some is, Oh, God is merciful, he is gracious to great sinners; and so conclude thereupon, that they may live as they list, and may put off the season of repentance to the last gasp. But the Apostle teacheth us to reason otherwise, *What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid: how shall we that are dead to sin, live yet in sin?* Let us not therefore allege the examples of the faithful that have offended, to encourage us in sin, or hold them out as bucklers to embolden us in falling from God. Take heed of presumption. Many presume confidently with *Peter*, but they weep not bitterly with *Peter*. They fall by frailty with *David*, but they rise not by repentance with *David*. They sin with *Solomon*, but they repent not with him. They sin with the Jews, but they are not pricked in heart with the Jews, saying; What shall we do? They persecute the Saints of God with the laylor, but they tremble not at their sin, nor seek to the servants of God, saying: *Sirs, what must we do to be saved?* They break out with their tongues and justify themselves as *Job*; but they set not a watch before the door of their lips, they do not abhor themselves, neither repent in dust and ashes with *Job*, saying; *I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue, I will keep my mouth bridled.* They fly from the presence of God with *Jonah*, but they remember not to pray with him for pardon, acknowledging that such as *wait upon lying vanities, forsake their own mercy.* Let us therefore all learn to profit by the favorable dealing of God toward offenders, neither abusing his loving kindness, nor continuing in sin, nor presuming of his mercy; assuring our selves, y^t if the persons receiving pardon, be such as are penitent, then assuredly to the impenitent there is no forgiveness. This the Apostle setteth down, Rom. 2.4, 5. The acceptable time of repentance for all of us, is the time present, what time we have to come is uncertain. Late repentance is oftentimes constrained, and sildome true repentance. The longer a diseased man continueth in his sickness, the harder is his recovery. Let us not delay and defer our repentance. This is the blessed time and the acceptable season, *To day therefore if we will hear his voice, let us not harden our hearts in sin,* Heb. 3.7, 8.

Fourthly, let us not spare to seek the salvation, [Use 4] and thirst after the conversion even of the greatst sinners. Let us not account their estate and condition forlorn and desperate, *Neither judge any before the time, until the Lord come, who will lighten things that are hid in darkness, and make the counsels of the heart manifest, and then shall every man have praise of God. The husbandman waiteth for the fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the former and latter rain. Now, we are God's laborers and husbandmen, ye are God's husbandry and God's building. Paul planteth, and Apollo watereth, but God giveth the increase.* So then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. *We are unto God the sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved, and in them which perish to the one we are the savor of death to death, and to the other, the savor of life unto life.*

This must be our comfort in the midst of all discomforts, injurious dealing, and hard measure offered unto us; to know that every man shall receive his wages according to his labor. And the Prophet prophesying of the kingdom of Christ, that he should spread out his hands all day unto a rebellious people, maketh this his stay and staff of rest; *I have labored in*

vain, I have spent my strength in vain, and for nothing: but my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God. Let us therefore go Iustile forward in building up the house of God, preach in season, and out of season, and commit the fruit of the work and success of all our labors to the Lord, whose word is never delivered nor heard in vain, as the Apostle urgeth it, 2 Ti. 2.24, 25, 26.

[Use 5] Lastly, seeing God is merciful to miserable Sinners, as a good shepherd taking them out of the jaws of the Lyon, bringing them unto the sheepefolde, and feeding them in green pastures: let us seek to be like our heavenly Father in showing mercy and forgiveness toward such as grievously offend against us. Every man's experience telleth and teacheth him, the mercy of God to be exceeding great, we feel it toward our selves, we see it daily toward others, we read that blasphemy it self findeth place for pardon. We find this to be the nature of God, *The Lord, the Lord, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in goodness, reserving mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, trangression, and sin.* If we will be the children of God, we must resemble our heavenly Father, we must express the lively lineaments of his face, we must be transformed into his likeness, and bear his image in all holiness and righteousness. This the Apostle teacheth, Col. 3.12, 13. To this purpose Christ propoundeth the parable, Matthew, chapter 18. verses 32, 33, 35. teaching us, that we must forgive small things, that receive the pardon of greater: we must remit a sew pence, because God forgiveth us many talents, an huge sum, an infinite debt. But if we will not forgive, nor forget the trespasses done to us, we are stamped in the image of the devil, who was malicious, and a murderer from the beginning, & we make a law against our selves, inasmuch as we shall find the Lord so toward us, as we deal toward our brethren. *For there shall be judgment merciless, to him that showeth not mercy: and with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again.*

Verse 9. *Moses made a Serpent of brass, and set it upon apole: and when a serpent had bitten a man, then he looked to the serpent of brass, and lived.* We saw before, how the prayer of Moses was heard, and the remedy provided of God to heal the people. We saw in God, the greatness of his compassion; we saw in the people, the fruit of their confession; we saw in Moses, the grace of meekness and gentleness suffering all things, and enduring all things. Here there is offered to our considerations the obedience of Moses, the setting up of the serpent, and the recovery of the people. *Moses* doth not here consult with flesh and blood, neither doth he use carnal wisdom to be his counselor, which in matters of faith is an enemy to God. He doth not reason, whether it were likely that a piece of brass should remedy this biting, or whether a dead thing should give life: but so soon as he receiveth the commandment of God, he prepareth himself, maketh ready a brazen serpent, pitcheth it upon an high pole, the people look upon it, and are recovered. This cure was not by Physic or Chirurgery, or by inherent virtue in the brass, as in a medicine: but by casting up the eye upon the serpent, and believing the ordinance of God, who had appointed the serpent for that purpose. We are all of us from hence, to learn and consider, That the brazen serpent standing on the pole, was a type and figure of Christ crucified and hanging on the cross, who is made of the Father to be a Savior unto us. This Christ himself testifieth, John. 3.14, 15. *As Moses lift up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lift up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.* Hereunto likewise he alludeth, Chap. 8.28, 29. *Then Jesus said unto them, When*

ye have lift up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; as my Father hath taught me, so I speak these things. In both these places our Savior hath respect and reference to the brazen serpent in the wilderness, showing, that as it was erected to heal the body, so must Christ be crucified to cure the soul; therefore this serpent set up, was a type of his death. And howsoever some of reverent account in the Church do understand this lifting up, of the preaching of the Gospel, which is as a banner displayed, that all men may behold him, and esteem the referring of it to the Cross, neither to be pertinent to the matter, nor to agree in the text: yet if we compare the former places & phrases, with another like Testimony of *John*, chap. 12.32, 33. the true interpretation of the words will easily and evidently appear, where Christ speaketh thus to the Pharisees, *Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the Prince of this world be cast out: and I, if I were lift up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* Here, by lifting up, we must necessarily understand the death of Christ upon the Cross, on which he was lifted up on high, and seen a far off, as the Evangelist himself expoundeth it in the verse following; saying, *Now, this said he, signifying what death he should die.*

The reasons of this similitude, shadowing [Reason 1] out the manner of Christ's death, are very evident and apparent. For first, as the brazen serpent in the wilderness, had the show and shape of a serpent, but within there was no venomous or deadly thing, as the true fiery serpents had; so Christ took upon him the shape of a servant, he was made like unto men, he was sent of God in the similitude of sinful flesh, and was counted among the wicked; yet he was pure, and void of sin, neither could be charged of his enemies with any sin: so that this is no vnpropper or far-fet similitude, but fit and natural.

Secondly, even as the brazen serpent was [Reason] lift up on high upon a pole, appointed for that purpose: so was Christ first lift up upon the wood of the Cross, and was after exalted by the Gospel, and set in the sight of all, as the Prophet *Isaiah* teacheth, *Isaiah* 11.10, 12. And as the brazen serpent, before it could be a type of healing, must be advanced and lifted up; so before Christ Jesus could be a Savior of his people, to save them from their sins, he must be fastened upon the Cross, he must have his hands & his feet pierced, that he might spoil the principalities, and make a show of them openly with triumph. As therefore it was not sufficient once to make the brazen serpent, and so to look upon it, but it must as well be mounted as at the first made: so it was not enough to bring us to life and salvation, for Christ to be conceived by the holy Ghost, and borne of the virgin *Mary*, unless he also suffer death for our sins, and so bear our sins in his body on the tree.

Thirdly, as the Israelites which obeyed the [Reason 3] commandment of God, embraced his promise, believed his word, and so beheld the brazen serpent standing on y^e pole, were healed of y^e deadly bitings of these fiery serpents: so all men, who are moved with the commandment of God, & embracing the promise, do behold Christ hanging on y^e tree of the cross, with the eyes of faith, are cured of the sting of that old serpent the devil, and recover of that mortal wound, being freed from death, and restored into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. A serpent did hurt, a serpent did heal the Israelites. Man did destroy us, man did restore us. The first *Adam* did draw into condemnation: the second *Adam* draweth unto

salvation. The brazen serpent albeit it were lift up never so high, and mounted into the open air, profited none, but such as steadfastly beheld it and looked upon it: so Christ crucified, profiteth none but such as believe in him by faith. Many beheld him with the bodily eyes, that reaped no benefit by him; they heard him with their outward ears, and handled with their hands that word of life: yet it auailed them nothing to know him after the flesh, neither furthered them in their salvation.

[Reason 4] Fourthly, as it seemed to human wisdom, a most foolish and ridiculous thing to be healed by the bare and only sight of a brazen serpent; so to all natural wise men of the world, it seemeth as unlikely and unreasonable, that any should be saved by faith in Christ crucified, as the Apostle showeth, *We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews even a stumbling block, and unto the Grecians foolishness: only to them that are saved, Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God.* So then, it is clear and evident, that the serpent set up upon the pole, signifieth Christ hanging on the Cross.

[Use 1] The uses of this type and similitude are many, directing us to sundry points, of religion: As what sin is, whence it came, what it worketh and bringeth forth: likewise, what the force of the Law and Gospel it, who Christ is, how we must use and apply him to have comfort and salvation in him. First, seeing the serpent was a sign and signification of Christ, we learn that Christ was preached and published in the time of the law; albeit, darkly and obscurely. For as there is but one salvation, so there is but one way to attain unto it; to wit, faith in Christ. The faith of the fathers, is one and the same with the faith of the children. There was never any man saved without the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, neither is at this day saved, neither shall be hereafter to the end of the world. This the Apostle teacheth to the Hebrews, *Jesus Christ yesterday: and today, the same also is forever.* And to this truth John giveth witness, *All that dwell upon the earth shall worship the Beast, whose names are not written in the book of life, of that Lamb which was slain from the beginning of the world.* Albeit he were manifested in the flesh, and crucified on the Cross, in the last age of the world, when the fullness of time was come; yet his death was as forcible frō the beginning of the world, is now also as available and effectual, and shall be ever hereafter to the end of the world, as when he hung upon the Cross in the days of his Passion, and when the blood really streamed and issued out of his body. The Israelites in the time of the Law, were the children of God, heirs of eternal life, and had the promises of salvation, as well as we under the Gospel: God did not seed them and fat them as swine in a sty, but under certain figures and types, he gave them a taste of heavenly things. The offering of brute beasts in sacrifice, was a sign, that they were made partakers of the redemption wrought by the blood of Christ, which was shed to wash away our sins. Under y^e promise of giving thē the earthly Canaan, so often remēbred, he gave thē a taste & representation of the heavenly inheritance. The abundance of temporal blessings was a pledge and earnest penny to them of the life eternal, they having the same faith, the same Father, the same spiritual meat, the same spiritual drink, the same Lord, the same hope, the same heaven, the same Christ that we have. Albeit, they were as little children under tutors and governors, and were taught in rude manner, by shadows and ceremonies, which are as certain pictures and looking glasses to behold the outward manner of his dispensation, whereas we are come to man's estate in comparison of them, and behold

Jesus Christ openly in the face, we know his death, resurrection, ascension, and opening the kingdom of heaven to us. Therefore our Savior saith, *John. 8.56. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.* So the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, *That the Fathers died in faith, and received not the things promised, but saw them afar off, believed them, received them, thankfully, confessed that they were Pilgrims and strangers on the earth:* so that they judged the promises made to them to be spiritual, and expected more then temporal blessings. This is one point which we are to learn and imprint in our minds, touching the Jews, who had an image of the serpents lifted up, to teach them the doctrine of Christ hanging on the cross. If then the unbelieving Jews in these days blaspheme Christ crucified, & account the blood of the New Testament an unholy thing, and impossible to give salvation; let thē know, that their fathers received life, and recovered health by a brazen serpent, an image without life and motion: the meaning & signification hereof were not hard, but easy to gather, saving that the Apostle teacheth, that *their minds are obstinate, and that a veil is laid over their hearts in reading the Old Testament, so that they understand nothing, &c.* 1 Corin. 3, 14. Thus doth God send them strong delusions, that *they should believe lies, that all they might be damned which believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* 2 Thess. 2, 11, 12. Thus then we see, that the Covenant which GOD made with man, to be gracious and favorable unto them, is one in substance and matter; seeing there is but one God, one Mediator between God and man, one faith, one mean of reconciliation and one way of salvation to all that are saved, and have been saved from the beginning. *Christ Jesus was appointed over all things, to be the head of the Church, by whom all the body is coupled and knit together* Eph. 1, 22, & 4, 16. *He is the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by him.* John 1, 18, and 14, 6. All therefore (he being only the way) as well under the Law, as under the Gospel, who were to be saved, had respect to the only Mediator Christ, by whom alone they were reconciled to God, and saved by faith. The differences between the Jews and us, were only in certain circumstances, in promising of corporal benefits, in giving them outward signs and oblations, in propounding things more obscurely and darkly, in restraining his gifts, and in limiting them to the Jewish Nation: whereas otherwise the old and new covenant agree together, not only in the Author of them, which is God, and in the Mediator of them, which is Christ, but in the promises of grace, touching remission of sins, and everlasting life to be freely given for Christ's sake; and in the condition, in respect of man, that we should walk before him uprightly, & believe the Gospel unfeignedly.

[Use 2] Secondly, we observe from this similitude, the natural estate and condition of all mankind what it is: we are all naturally stung with the poison of the old serpent, and the wound is mortal. All the Israelites that were bitten by the fiery serpents, whether deeply, or but a little, whether more or less, whether once or often, died the death if they used not the remedy ordained of God, albeit y^e wound were slender and shalow. So such as look not on Christ hanging on the Cross, are sure to fall into damnation. The guilt of sin is as the poison of a serpent; this we have drawn frō our first parents, by whose offense we are culpable of judgment. We are all stung with it unto death. The wound is so deep & deadly, y^t we are guilty of the transgression of Adam, being in his loins. We have the spawn and seed of all sin in us, we are corrupt in soul and body, we are prone to fall into the most dangerous and

desperate sins. The Israelites felt the anguish of the pain, and the danger of death, otherwise they would never have looked up to the brazen serpent. If the sick man find not the want of his health, feel not the grief of his sickness, fear not the loss of his life, he will never seek to the Physician for ease and recovery. And indeed, what should it have auailed these distressed Jews, to have any recourse to the brazen ferpent, unless they had perceived themselves to be stung even to death, and no other way or remedy to procure their deliverance? So it behooveth all of us, to have a lively and sensible feeling of our spiritual wounds. We must know, that sin is as a poison to the soul; and the Law giveth strength to sin. We must be grieved for our sins, which draw upon us the loss of God's favor, more then for the lack and loss of bodily health. Let us not therefore make a mock of sin. We see no man will dally or delight in poison: no poison is so dangerous to the body, as sin is to the soul. Let us beware of the wiles and subtleties of the old serpent, lest as he beguiled *Eve* through his craftiness, so he corrupt our minds from the simplicity that is in Christ, & carry us headlong to destruction and damnation of soul and body.

Thirdly, in this Type we see the nature of [Use 3] the Sacraments. The brazen serpent in it self had no operation to work anything; in it self it had no virtue to cure or recover any man of any disease. The Sacraments of themselves cannot confer grace, only they are instruments of God's mercies, which he useth of his goodness toward us, to convey to us good things. They are as the Kings gracious pardon, that sealeth up unto us forgiveness of sins: so that being by his institution very available, we must frequent thē with a feeling of our wants, with reverence of his ordinances, with hungering after his graces, with calling upon his Name, to fit and prepare us to that heavenly work. God could have healed his people with his word alone, (without the serpent, as well as with the serpent) as the Centurion confesseth to Christ, *Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed*; yet he addeth the serpent set upon a pole for farther assurance of his word, and to be a sign of their recovery: so God can save by the Ministry of his word without the Sacraments, if it please him; yet he addeth and annexeth them as appurtenances to the word, to confirm the weakness of our faith, and to make good the truth of his own promise. And as it was not enough for them to believe the word of God to the curing of their bodies, & the taking away of the stinging of the serpents, unless they used the help of the brazen serpent: no more is it sufficient for us, to believe the forgiveness of sins by Christ, unless we labor to strengthen our faith by the Sacraments. Nay, if any would not vouchsafe to look upon the Serpent, being the means that God ordained for their recovery; it is certain they regarded not the word of God it self, that they should live: so, if any contemn or neglect the Sacraments being holy seals of heavenly blessings, they are plainly convinced to their faces, that they respect not the word it self, whatsoever they pretend to the contrary notwithstanding. This we see in *Ahaz*, who neglecting a sign offered unto him, for the better strengthening of his faith, is said to tempt God, and to despise his word, *Isaiah 7, 12*. The natural reason of man would never believe, that he should be healed by a serpent of brass, having no virtue or vigor in it: so carnal wisdom and understanding cannot discern, how a little water sprinkled on the body, should be the laver of regeneration; or how a small cantle of bread, should bring and convey unto us the body of Christ; or a little wine, offer and exhibit unto us the blood of Christ: So

that as in this bodily cure both their eye did behold it, and their faith did believe: in like manner, in the Sacraments we must shut the eyes of our carnal reason, and open the eyes of faith, believe his word, and we shall be comforted. For every man doth in them receive (through the promise of God,) so much as he believeth he receiveth. This Christ assureth to the woman of Canaan, who had shown an undaunted and invincible faith, taking no repulses, ouerstriding all difficulties, refusing all denials, and striving against all doubts that might arise in her heart, saying; *O woman, great is thy faith, be it to thee as thou desirest.* Mat. 15, 28. So when two blind men followed him, crying & saying; *O son of David, have mercy upon us,* he said unto them, *Believe ye that I am able to do this?* and when they answered, *Yea Lord, he touched their eyes, saying; According to your faith, be it unto you.* Mat. 9, 29. Moreover, albeit the Serpent restored life, yet was not life present and inherent in the brazen serpent, neither abiding in the matter, or resting in the form thereof: so albeit Christ be offered and signified, yea conveyed and conferred unto us in the Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, yet he is not carnally and corporally present, nor carnally and corporally eaten, as the Capernaïtes imagined, but he is spiritual meat for spiritual men; the rest eat the outward signs, but are not partakers of the thing signified. Thus we see, how the consideration of the similitude of the brazen serpent directeth us in sundry conclusions to be holden and acknowledged touching the Doctrine of the Sacraments of the New Testament.

Fourthly, this present type teacheth us, that [Use 4] we are justified by faith alone, without the works of the Law. For as the Israelites stung of these serpents were cured, so are we saved; as health was offered by the serpent, so is salvation by Christ. But the Israelites did nothing at all, but only look up to the brazen serpent, they were not willed to make satisfaction for their rebellion, or to go on pilgrimage, nor so much as to dress and bind up their wounds; but only to behold the serpent set upon the pole, & as Christ saith to the Ruler of the Synagogue touching the healing of his daughter, *Fear not, only believe,* Mar. 5, 36, so is it in the saluing of the sores of the soul, in the attaining pardon of our sins, and obtaining the righteousness of Christ. There is required nothing of us touching our justification and salvation, but to fixe the eyes of our faith upon Christ. True it is, many other virtues and graces are required to make up the full perfection of a Christian man, that he may be complete, wanting nothing; yet he is justified and doth stand as righteous in the sight of God by faith only. It is a great & weighty controversy in these days, between the Church of Rome and us, what is the cause of life and salvation: they ascribe the cause of salvation in part to y^e merit of our own works, and to a righteousness inherent in our own persons, and in part likewise to Christ, who (say they) hath made us able to merit the favor of God, and to satisfy for our own sins. We ascribe all our salvation to the mercy of God, and the merit of Christ, wholly applied to us by a lively faith; the which manner of saving us, most fitly agreeth to the nature of God, the chief Fountain of our salvation, who can abide no pollution, neither can any wickedness stand in his presence; who is of pure eyes, & requireth our perfect obedience, so that wanting the perfect righteousness of the Law, of our own, we must be clothed with the righteousness of another, whereby we may be saved. Even as *Jacob*, though he were not by birth the first borne, yet hiding himself under his brothers garments, and having put on his coat which smelled most sweetly, came into his fathers presence, that

under another man's person, he might receive the blessing of the first borne; so is it necessary that we lie hid under the precious pureness of Christ our elder brother, that having the sweet savor of his garments, our sins may be covered with his perfection, that we may offer our selves to our most loving Father, and obtain of him the blessing of righteousness. And this some of our adversaries themselves cannot but approve, and have given their own fellows the slip. Besides, this Doctrine standeth best with the glory of God, which shineth more clearly in our salvation obtained by justice imputed, then by justice inherent For suppose there were a miserable and desperate debtor, perishing and languishing imprisonment, were it not far more honorable & gracious for a Prince wholly to pay the debt, and to cancel the bond & hand-writing standing against him, then to put into his hands a stock of money, whereby himself might be enabled to work out his debt? Therefore the Apostle teacheth, that we are made the righteousness of God in Christ, *and are saved by grace thorough faith, not of our selves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast,* Eph. 2, 8, 9. Thus Paul concludeth also concerning Abraham, the father of the faithful, Rom. 4, 2. Thus doeth Christ determine this question, drawing a comparison from the brazen serpent, John 3, 14, 15, 16: for he teacheth, that y^e son of man must be lift up on the cross, as the serpent was on the pole in the Wildernes, *that whosoever belieueth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Let us then renounce all merit and righteousness in our own selves, & fly to the merits and righteousness of Christ, according to the practice and example of the Apostle, Phil. 3, 8, 9: *I have counted all things loss, and do judge them to be dung, that I might win Christ, and might be found in him; not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God through faith.* Hereunto cometh the reason of the same Apostle: *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness: now to him that worketh, the wages is not counted by favor, but by debt: but to him that worketh not, but believeth in him that iustificieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness* Rom. 4, 3, 4, 5. True it is, works are necessarily required as the fruits of faith, and of justification by faith: but our justification is one thing, our sanctification is another, for they are made several graces & distinct gifts: neither is it likely, that the Apostle would repeat the same thing twice without cause. And in another place he concludeth, that *a man is justified by faith without the work of the Law: if it be of grace, it is no more of works, for then were grace no more grace: but if it be of works, it is no grace, for then were work no more work.* Rom. 3, 28, & 11, 6. Therefore it is truly said, that good works follow a man being justified, but do not go before; in him that is to be justified. Neither let any say, It is absurd that one should be made righteous by the righteousness of another, for the righteousness of Christ, is both his and ours. His, as being inherent in him, as in a subject. Ours, being given unto us, and imputed to us; so that by it we are justified before God, and accepted to eternal life. And that horrible blasphemy is this, to teach, that by the Popes indulgences, we should be made partakers of the merits and good works of the saints, and to deny it as most unreasonable, what we should be partaker of the merits and righteousness of Christ Jesus. But as the transgression of Adam was both his and ours also; not his alone, nor ours alone, but his and ours together, because he stood in our places, and we were in his loins: so is Christ's righteousness and obedience his and ours. And why should not the righteousness be of another, seeing guilt is of another As another maketh us sinners, why should not another

make us righteous, and justify us from sin? It might seem to flesh and blood as unreasonable, that the brazen serpent in this place, being an artificial work, made with man's hands, without sense & life, should restore health, and give life to such as were mortally bitten: yet we see by beholding it, they were recovered.

Moreover, the people stung by the fiery serpents, ryled out in the anguish and bitterness of the pain, yet none was able to help himself or his brother, by his own power of strength, or by any act wrought by him; no, nor Moses himself could minister any cure or comfort unto them, but only the graces of God, directing them to look upon the brazen serpent set up, (for when GOD had appointed them one way, they must not seek another way:) so although a man feeleth the sting of the old serpent, that is, sin; yet no man can deliver himself or others; nay, if he should fly to the works of the Law, they can do nothing. The Law showeth the disease, it is Christ that must take it away, it is God that must show mercy, it is faith that must justify us. We affirm therefore with the Apostle, Gal. 2, 16, that we are justified freely, not of the Law, not by the Law, not of works, not of our selves, not of the works of the Law, but by faith; all matter of boasting is excluded, justification by grace is concluded, that God may be all in all.

Fifthly, great consolation ariseth from this [Use 5] comparison and similitude, to all such as we weak in faith, & feel the corruptions of their hearts pressing them, and the temptations of Satan often overcoming them, & always assaulting them. For we have great comfort given us to enter into the combat, and to fight the battles of the Lord against the enemies of our souls, by consideration of these fierce and fiery serpents. True it is, they did continually bite & sting the children of Israel, (for otherwise there had been no need of the brazen serpent) yet they could not destroy them; they did not ceaffe to vex thē, but they could not wound them unto the death; for they had a remedy at hand to help themselves, they looked upon the brazen serpent and were healed. So hath God restrained the rage and malice of all the enemies of our peace and salvation. For howsoever the devil & his angels are always tempting, provoking, and seeking to ◇ us as men do wheat, yet their homes and ot short, and their strength is diminished, their will to hurt, is greater then their power of hurting; so that they cannot execute the cruelty they desire, as the Lord himself testifieth from the beginning, Gen. 3, verse 15. Albeit therefore the battle be long, & the skinnis oftentimes hot & bloody; albeit we take many a foil, and have the Bucklers beaten to our heads; albeit we be felled with the stroke, and driven to fight upon our knees, yet the victory shall be ours, and we are assured to prevail over our adversaries, who may fight against us, but can never overcome us.

Again, note that God requireth not of the Israelites stung in the Wilderness, the use of both eyes, nor exacteth a perfect sight to behold the serpent. Such as looked upon it with a weak and dim sight, even with half an eye only, (as no doubt among that great people, multiplied as the fish in the sea in great abundance, there was great difference in sight) there being among them young & old, strong and weak, sharp-sighted, and blear-eyed; yet all that saw the serpent set up, were cured and restored; not for the goodness of their sight, but for the promise and ordinance of God. So such as have a true faith, though it be as a grain of

mustard-seed, which is the least of all seeds, can lay hold on Christ, and apply him to themselves. A small drop of water, is as well and truly water, as the whole Ocean sea; a little spark is true fire, as well as a mighty flame; a little quantity of earth is as truly earth, as the whole Globe thereof. So a small measure of faith, is as well true faith, as a full persuasion and assurance, & the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. The least faith is acceptable to God, *A bruised Reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, until he bring forth judgment unto victory.* A weak faith doth as truly apprehend & apply Christ with all his merits and obedience, as a stronger faith. Even as a small and weak hand, if it be able to carry and convey the meat unto the mouth, serveth for the nourishment of the body, as well as an hand of greater strength, because it is not the strength of the hand, but the goodness of the meat that nourisheth the body: so a weak faith, laying hold on Christ, and applying him and all his benefits to the believer, is sufficient to nourish him to eternal life, because it is not the worthiness or excellency of faith, but of Christ applied, which is available and effectual for our justification and salvation. All the Israelites being an huge host of many hundred thousands, were not alike sharp-sighted, and quick-eyed: but some no doubt were pur-blind, and could not see afar off, and saw the serpent exceeding darkly & dimly; yet was not the blear-eyed man hindered of his health, because of his weak and tender eye, but if he looked thereupon, and were not wholly blind, he was delivered and restored, though otherwise never so slender-sighted. So whosoever are stung to death with sin (as all are by nature, and the wound sticketh deeply in their soul) if they look up to Christ with the eye of faith, resting upon him alone for their salvation; though never so weak in faith, yet shall be restored to the joy and health of their salvation, and be eternally saved. There is a weak eye, and there is a strong eye; so there are diverse degrees of faith, there is a little faith, there is a great faith, and there is a fullness or assurance of faith. And as a weak eye seeth vnperfectly, the strong eye discerneth strongly; so a little faith believeth faintly, a great faith believeth steadfastly, an assured faith believeth fully, under hope, even against hope, with faithful *Abraham*; yet the least of them believeth truly & effectually. The Disciples of Christ said unto him, *We believe and know that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God,* John 6, 69, yet this faith was quickly shaken, when the storms of wind and rain arose, it was quailed in his death, but repaired in his resurrection. Themselves feeling their own wants prayed, *Lord, increase our faith.* Luke 17, 5. The poor distressed man saith in the Gospel, *Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief.* Mark. 9, 24. Where we see (as one noteth) he saith, *I believe,* therefore he had faith: he addeth, *Help mine unbelief,* therefore he had not attained to a fullness and assurance of faith, and yet was accepted. *Peter* was in believing a lively pattern of us all, sometimes he believeth, sometimes he wauereth; sometimes he confesseth Christ, sometimes he shrinketh back from that confession. It was faith that made *Peter* at the word & commandment of Christ to step into the sea, to go to Christ upon the waters, & to believe that he should be safe through his word that commanded, otherwise he would never have adventured to depart out of the ship: yet he believed not with a full persuasion, forasmuch as the weakness of his faith made him begin to sink, and earnestly to cry out unto Christ, *Master, save us;* to whom Christ answered, *O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?* Math. 14, 28. Yet this weak faith was a true faith, and this little faith was a lively faith, because that fear and doubting made him run and have recourse to Christ, expecting all strength and succor from

him alone, finding no power or ability in himself to deliver himself. And thus do many of the faithful believe their own particular salvation, albeit not fully and perfectly, yet truly & effectually to the comfort of their own souls: albeit they sometimes waver and stagger, yet they recover themselves, and increase more & more in strength of faith.

Lastly, this teacheth us what is the nature [Use 6] and property of a true justifying faith, and wherein it consisteth, namely, in a special and particular application of Christ's righteousness to our own selves. It was not enough for these Israelites which were stung, that others should look upon the serpent set up, but it was required of everyone (to work the cure) to behold it himself. So must we have a particular faith in Christ, apprehending his merits. Thus the Apostle setteth down that faith whereby he lived and was justified, Gal. 2, 20. *I was crucified with Christ, &c. who loved me and gave himself for me.* Here we see the right property of a lively faith to stand in application of the love of God, & the merit of the passion of Christ to our selves, albeit there be great weakness in our applying of him, considering that it is not the perfection of our faith that doth save us, but the perfection of the obedience of Christ, which faith apprehendeth. This faith was in *David*, as he witnesseth in sundry Psalms; *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, my God, and my strength, my shield, the horn of my salvation, and my refuge.* Psal. 18, 2. Thus have the faithful learned to apply the general promises of the Gospel unto themselves. When God saith, *Seek ye my face*, Psal. 27, 8, the faithful soul answereth to God, *I will seek thy face.* When God saith, *Thou art my people*, Zach. 13, 9, the faithful resoundeth back again, *Thou art the Lord my God.* When Christ saith, *If thou believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*, Mark. 9, 23, the believer answereth, *Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief.* When God requireth to do his will, the believer saith to him again, *Loe, I come, O my God, I am content to do it, yea thy law is within mine heart.* Hence we must all learn to abhor & abjure the false faith of the false church of Rome, which teacheth that to be true faith, which generally believeth the word of God to be true. This is the faith of the reprobates, and thus the devil and all damned spirits may be said to have faith. For every article of the Creed, teacheth us to believe, not only generally that *there is a God*, a Savior, a Sanctifier, a Church of God, a Communion of Saints, a forgiveness of sins, a resurrection of the body to everlasting life, which the devil and his angels knoweth, confesseth, and believeth: but particularly that God the Father is our Father, that Christ is our Savior, that the holy Ghost is our Sanctifier, that there is an *holy Catholic Church*, and that we are true members of it, that we have our part and fellowship in the Communion of Saints, that our sins are forgiven us, and that we shall rise again to glory and immortality. Hence it is, that we pray daily, not only for remission of sins to be given to the faithful, but for the forgiveness of our own sins. Hence it is, that in coming to the Lord's Table, we receive Christ as the bread of life and the food of our souls. There can be no eating and drinking but by a particular taking and receiving: so can there be no believing in Christ without a special receiving & apprehending of Christ, according to the saying of Christ, John 6, 56, *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him.* No man is fed by the meat that another man eateth: so no man is justified by the faith whereby another man believeth, but the *just man liveth by his own faith*, Hab. 2▪ 4. For he is the bread of life that came down from heaven, *He that cometh to him, shall never hunger: and he that believeth on him shall never*

thirst. Let us therefore labor for this special faith and affiance in the mercy of God, and make particular application of the merits of Christ. Let us believe in him who is the true *brazen serpent*, or rather the truth of the *brazen serpent*; let us make him to be our life, who is of God made unto us to be *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1, 30.

10 And the Childrē of Israel departed thence, and pitched in Oboth.

11 And they departed from Oboth, and pitched in the hills of Abarim, in the Wilderness which is before Moab at the rising of the Sun.

12 They departed thence, and pitched upon the River of Zared.

13 Thence they departed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, which is in the Wilderness, coming out of the Coast of the Amorites: for Arnon is the border of Moab, between the Moabites and the Amorites.

14 Wherefore, it is spoken in the book of the battles of the Lord, against Uaheb in the Land of Suph, and against the Rivers of Arnon.

15 And the stream of these Rivers which goeth down to the dwelling of Ar, lieth upon the border of Moab.

16 And from thence they removed to Beer, the same is that Well, whereof the Lord said unto Moses, Assemble the people, and I will give them water.

17 Then Israel sang this song, Rise up Well, shout ye unto it.

18 O Well, which the Princes digged, the Nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the law-giver, with their staves. And from the Wilderness they went to Mattanah.

19 And from Mattanah to Nahaliel, and from Nahaliel to Bamoth.

20 And from Bamoth to the Ualley which is in the Land of the Moabites, at the beginning of the Hilles, and looketh toward the Wilderness.

In this division is contained the third part of this Chapter, describing the peregrinations and perambulations of the Israelites, in what places they pitched their Tents, till they came to the possession of the Amorites.

Touching these several journeys, some are barely and nakedly mentioned, because no notable matter or extraordinary and memorable accident fell out therein: other are passed over, and not at all mentioned or remembered, because the whole order of their traveling in the Wilderness, is particularly recorded afterward, Numbers, chapter 33, how they removed from place to place, and after what manner. But upon some other of their remoouals, *Moses* doeth somewhat more largely insist, and as it were make a stay as in the setting down of two points: First, rehearsing the bounds by which the Israelites passed into the Land of promise: secondly, describing the well which they digged for water.

Touching the first point, they are said to have pitched in *Oboth*, then at the heaps of the hills of *Abarim*, situate right over against *Moab*; then at the brook *Zared*: lastly, at the borders of the *Amorites* near to the River *Arnon*. Now because these were at the first the bounds and borders of the *Moabites*, *Moses* showeth how by conquest they were lost; declaring both who lost them, and likewise who won thē by the dint of the sword. For he telleth us by the Spirit of God, y^t these places were once in the power, possession, and dominion of *Vaheb*, who before managed the state and kingdom of the *Moabites*: but *Sihon*, thirsting with ambition to enlarge the bounds of his dominion, set upon *Vaheb*, bad him battle, and won these Coasts & Countries from him.

Now to continue the memorial & remembrance hereof to posterity, there was a public register made hereof to posterity, showing that the name of those quarters was *Suph*, and declaring that *Vaheb* had been the lawful possessor of thē, as *Sihon* was now y^e wrongful usurper. Nevertheless, as all things else are ouerswaied by an higher power, so this battle was fought and directed by the providence of God, that y^e Moabites for their horrible idolatry, might be punished, that *Sihon*, provoking Israel to battle, might be repressed, and that thereby an inheritance for y^e people of God might be prepared and obtained. This is the cause why God drew out y^e swords of these Infidels one against another, that the Moabites lost a part of their dominion, and the Amorites enlarged their borders. Thus the Israelites took nothing from the Moabites, neither possessed any part that was in their present possession, as *Iephtah* prescribeth in the book of Judges, chap. 11, 26. For when the King of the Amonites challenged Israel for encroching upon his ancient dominion, & deteining part of his Country from him, to wit, from Arnon unto Iabbock and Jordan, after their departure out of Egypt, and required of them to make present restitution: *Iephtah* convinceth them, and disproueth this allegation as false and unreasonable, declaring (as the truth was) that Israel took not away that land which they claimed as their own, but won it from the Amorites by the law of war, and [Verse 20] by right of conquest, who denying them passage, and moreover making assault upon them, constrained them to draw out their swords & to defend themselves: by occasion whereof they obtained victory through the help of God, and possessed their Cities. And as they took them by force of arms, so they held thē [Verse 26] by *prescription of time*, three hundred years. So that he declareth, that if any had right to those

Cities, or could lay any just claim or title unto them, it should be the Moabites who were the lawful owners of them, before *Sihon* had encroched upon them, and taken them away from the first inhabitants. But the Moabites having once lost them in battle, never asked [Verse 25] them of the Israelites, neither laid any claim unto them: therefore much less should the Amonites, to whom they appertained not by any just title, neither belonged any way unto them, either as owners by law, or conquerors by sword; and therefore they had no cause to dispute what right Israel had unto that Land which now they possessed.

The second point here amplified and enlarged, is touching the well, which by a divine revelation to them they had digged. For when they departed from the River *Arnon*, they came into a dry place where they wanted water, such as the wilderness affordeth many, where the streams are swallowed up in the hot sandes, but at the special commandment of God they were directed what to do; as *Peter* was, where he should cast his Net, Luke, chapter 5, verse 4: they digged and found water in great abundance, and therefore they praise God by an effectual song of thanksgiving, amplified by many rhetorical figures, as goodly flouers, or as precious jewels to beautify and garnish the same withal.

For first, they eloquently by an Apostrophe, turn their speech to the Well it self, though a dumb and senseless creature, and speak unto it, as if it had ears to hear, and understanding to conceive, *Rise up, O Well*: confessing thereby the great power of God, who contrary to the nature of all heavy and weighty things, made the water to ascend, whose property is to descend: and exhorting with many acclamations and loud out-cries one another to the work.

Secondly, they set down who were the laborers and workmen about the Well, together with the tools and instruments wherewith they labored, to wit, the Princes and Nobles, directed by *Moses*, (by whose ministry they received the Law) and holpen with their staves and such like instruments (wherewith they labored) fit for that purpose. And this is the third miracle which God wrought in giving them waters. First, in *Rephidim*, immediately after they had passed over the red Sea, Exod. 17. The second in the desert of *Zin*, whē they came to *Kadesh*, as we shown before in the former chapter. The third is that recorded in this place, in the desert of the Moabites. Afterward *Moses* reckoneth up other places, by which they passed, as *Mattaanah*, *Nahaliel*, *Bamoth*, and so that Valley which is in the plain of the Moabites.

In this History of the passage of the Israelites from place to place, a question ariseth, what is meant by the *book of the wars of the LORD*, mentioned in the fourteenth verse? For where is it now extant? or what is become of it? From hence also, & from such like places many conclude, that sundry books of Canonical Scripture are lost. I answer, [Answer.] the word (*Sepher*) is taken diversely and doubtfully: it signifieth any publishing or rehearsing, whether it be written, or unwritten; whether it be set down by the pen, or uttered by lively voice; as also the word Tradition is taken for that which is delivered, either by word of mouth, or by course of writing. So then we cannot necessarily conclude, It is rehearsed, therefore it is written: Nor thus, It is written, Therefore it is an holy book, and put into the Canon of the Scripture. Let these three things be cleared and decided, that it was a book, that it was an holy book, and lastly that it was a Canonical book, and then we shall easily be satisfied, But *Moses* speaketh barely of rehearsing the wars, not of writing them: as if he should say,

Whensoever the wars, ordered and disposed by the providence of God, shall be spoken off; this war also and work of his shall be remembered, which he hath wisely wrought and accomplished for his people against *Uaheb* King of the *Moabites*, giving part of his Country to *Sihon*, that so his own people might recover the same out of his hands again, and retain it as a possession for themselves, as *Iephtah* telleth the *Ammonites*, Judge. 11, 23, 24, that they had held it by prescription of a long time peaceably without any molestation from the *Moabites*, or desire of re-entry. But if this had been penned in a book, and reserved to posterity, no doubt *Ieptah* would have produced it as a sure witness to clear the whole matter, and to put it out of all doubt.

Wherefore this truth must be holden of us, that no part of the Canonical Scripture, inspired of God, is lost and perished: I mean such as was committed as the Lord's treasure to the Church, for the perpetual instruction thereof in faith and obedience, so that no one oracle or sentence of God can fall away. True it is, these sacred books may sometimes be neglected and carelessly kept of men, they may be furiously burned, and despitefully handled by cruel tyrants that seek the overthrow of all piety and religion, but they can never be finally lost and wholly extinguished. *As he that keepeth Israel cannot slumber or sleep:* so he that keepeth the holy Scripture, the glory of Israel, cannot slumber nor sleep. For first of all, who is the author and enditer of thē but God? and will not he preserve his truth, and keep it for the good of his Church in all ages? Shall we make him unable, or unwilling to defend and continue them? If unable, we make him a weak and impotent God: if unwilling, we make him envious and malicious, both which are far from the pure and perfect nature of God, and cannot stand with his essence. Secondly, all the works of God remain forever and ever, and are done in truth and equity. Take a perfect view of all creatures under the Sun, which are the works of his hands; though they may be abolished and rooted out in one place, yet they continue in another. If thou wouldst ascend into the heavens, or go down into the deep, if thou wouldst take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmost parts of the sea, which of all the Creatures are now missing? What place is void & empty? What hath been, that is not now being, and extant in the world? This is it which the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 111. *The works of his hands are established forever and ever, and are done in truth and equity.* If then all his works abide and continue from the glorious Creatures in the heavens, to the silly worm creeping in the earth: much more the holy Scripture must abide without decaying or diminishing, (as the durable Cedar without rotting and consuming) which is not only his handywork, but a masterworke chief above all others, as the Diamond among pearls of great price. And if the least and lowest creature in the world hath been in his kind continued hitherto, and shall be continued to the end, by the mighty hand of God, upholding and supporting all things that he hath made: much less shall the Scripture perish and fall away, which bringeth greater glory to God, and greater gain to his people? Thirdly, y^e Scripture was written for these ends and purposes, for instruction and admonition, for teaching and confutation, for comfort and consolation, that so *the man of God may be absolute*, 1 Tim. 3, 16, 17. Neither was God deceived in his purpose and intent: so that it must remain & continue, being written for those ends and uses. But what error can be convinced, what comfort can be received, what vice can be corrected, what truth can be published, what grace can be

commended to the Church, out of those books which are supposed to be lost? Let us not therefore doubt of God's providence, and so shake the faith of the Church thereby. Fourthly, we see the Old Testament hath reserved entirely the Genealogies of the fathers, which are not absolutely necessary to faith and salvation, as also the whole body of the ceremonies set down in Leviticus and other places of the Law, which notwithstanding were *shadows of things to come*: why then should we not presume, that the same his providence hath also watched over other books, which more properly belong to our practice and times, and so more fitly might inform us against ignorance, teach us in our religion, warn us in dangers, and comfort us in afflictions? And if we have no word missing or sentence wanting in such books as are left to the Church that there should need a void room: or a *desunt nonnulla*; or an *Asteriscus* and some little star to give warning of some defect, as we see it is in many profane writings, and those of the best note: how should we be induced to believe that whole volumes of the old and New Testament are utterly lost & never to be repaired? Lastly, let us hear the testimony of the Scripture it self, & observe what it can say, and doth witness for it self. Moses an old and ancient witness, teacheth, Deut. 29, 29, that *secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed, belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this Law*. But how do they belong unto us, that are not reserved for us? Or how shall our children be directed by them, that cannot be found in their days, or in the days of their fathers before them? Or how shall either father or son do that which they cannot know? Hereunto David accordeth, Psal. 119, 152. *I have known long since by thy testimonies, that thou hast established them forever*. And our Savior giveth his holy consent unto this heavenly truth, saying, *Truly I say unto you, till heaven and earth perish, one jot or one tittle of the Law shall not escape, till all things be fulfilled*, Mat. 5, 18, and 24, 35. So then, we must hold the durableness and continuance of the Scripture in the Church, which is the pillar of truth, that it cannot fail or fall away, as is proved at large in the answer to the Preface of the Rhemish Testament.

But before we proceed to the Doctrines of this division, it shall not be amiss to answer the objections that are raised and moved against this point, touching the perpetuity of the whole Scripture, and of every part of it.

First, we find often mention made of the books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah and Israel, of the book of the just, & such like, which are lost. If then these be lost, and by no means to be found; how shall we truly say, that the whole Scripture doeth continue?

I answer, these books were never Canonical Scriptures, but civil stories and chronicles of the Commonwealth matters, not of the Church, whereunto the Reader is directed if he be desirous to read and know the History more at large: whereas the Prophets do only touch so much, as served for the edification of the Church, and the building of it in faith toward God. For as all civil Nations have the Chronicles of their forefathers and ancestors acts, Ester, chap. 6, verse 1. Ezra 4, verses 15, 19, so had the Jews their civil Histories; such were those we now speak of, which were good and profitable books of men, but were never committed or commended to the care of the Church to be preserved and maintained.

Again, we read in sundry places, of the books of *Nathan* and *Gad*, the words of *Samuel*, the works of *Ahia*, of *Shemaia*, of *Isaiah*, and other Prophets, which likewise seem to be lost, as well as the other we named before.

I answer, they seem so to such as do not duly consider of them, which indeed are not lost, but contained in the old Testament in the books of *Samuel* and of the *Kings*, which were not written by any one Prophet; but by diverse Prophets at diverse times, even in the several ages wherein they prophesied, albeit their several names be not to every part expressed, as appeareth, 2 Chron. chapter 26, verse 22, where the Spirit of God testifieth, that *Isaiah* wrote the acts of *Uzziah*, first and last: meaning that he wrote them in the second book of the *Kings*, and in his Prophecies, and not pointing out any book which now is lost: both the former books remaining as a treasure to the Church. As then we confess these books mentioned in this objection, to be of another nature then those expressed in the former, so they have been preserved, and ever shall be preserved in the Church, and be as it were laid up in the Ark thereof.

Thirdly, it may be objected, that many [Object. 3] worthy books of *Solomon* are lost which he wrote.

I answer, [Answ.] his works are of two sorts: first, sundry books of Humanity and of Philosophy, natural and moral: secondly, books of Divinity, written as he was moved and inspired by the Spirit of God.

The first sort of human and earthly things, which the Church might best spare without peril or impeachment of faith, have long since failed, as it is thought in the captivity: the rest, which are parts of the Canonical Scriptures do abide. And mark herein a special work of God's providence, preserving his own truth, and reserving it to all posterity.

Few are found in the world to affect or regard the pure and sincere word of God, in comparison of the multitude that seek after human wisdom, and labor to know the nature of Birds, of Beasts, of Fishes of Trees, and of earthly things, which delight the outward senses, and ravish the understanding of natural men: yet see how those books of *Solomon* that handle mere matters of human Philosophy, which the wise men of the world hunt after, are utterly lost: whereas the divine books which he wrote by inspiration, less regarded, and more contemned, are notwithstanding by the watchful eye of God remaining, and are reserved for the comfort of the Church forever.

Lastly, we read of the Prophecy of *Enoch* [Object. 4] in the Epistle of *Jude*, verse fourteenth, who prophesied of the second coming of Christ in power and great glory, with thousands of his Saints: which Prophecy also seemeth to be among those books which are lost.

I answer, [Answer.] this could be no Apochryphall Book of holy Scripture; for *Moses* was the first Pen-man or Scribe that wrote the holy Scripture, whose five books are perfect, and contained in them sufficient instruction for that CHURCH, whereas that Prophecy did not, nor indeed could not.

Secondly, it cannot appear that this Prophecy was ever written. It is said, *he prophesied & foretold the end of the world by the Spirit of God in that most corrupt age that hasted to destruction, to the end that such as were ordained to eternal life might believe, and the rest being hardened might be made without excuse; but it is nowhere said, It was written. It is said to be a Prophecy, but no word or mention is made of the writing of this Prophecy: so that it seemeth, the Apostle learned it by tradition from the father to the son, as the Apostle Paul setteth down the names of the sorcerers that withstood Moses and Aaron. Neither let the Church of Rome lay the foundation of unwritten traditions upon this ground-work: seeing we deny not all unwritten traditions conveyed from hand to hand, but only such as are made rules of God's worship, matters of faith, and parts of religion necessary to salvation.*

To conclude therefore, seeing the providence of God, the fidelity of the Church and diligence of the faithful is so great, that the whole body of the Canonical Scripture hath been kept entire and perfect, without loss or lack of any part or parcel of it, of any book or sentence, we must detest the blasphemous shufflings & shiftings of the Church of Rome that make the Scripture to be *a maimed, lame, and imperfect doctrine*, not containing all things necessary to faith and salvation: whereas the Apostle teacheth, that *the whole Scripture inspired of God, is able to make us wise unto salvation, 2 Tim. 3, 15, 16 17, through the faith which is in Christ Jesus; and is profitable to teach, to convince, to correct, & to instruct in righteousness, that the man of God may be absolute, being made perfect unto all good works.*

[Verses 10, 11, 12, 13. *And the Children of Israel departed thence, and pitched in Oboth, &c.* Here we have painted and portraied out, as in a Table, certain stations and journeys of the Israelites: wherein we may behold as in a glass, the providence of God protecting thē, and the obedience of the people following him. We see how they remove from place to place in the wilderness, they are never long at one stay, but either they went forward or backward, as the sea continually ebbeth or floweth. Now as the Land of *Canaan* was a figure of their rest in the kingdom of heaven: so their wandering up and down in the wilderness, did figure and represent the condition of their life to be vain and transitory in this world.

We learn from hence the state of the faithful, what it is, we are pilgrims and strangers in this life: we are as guests lodging here for a night, but by and by we must depart and be dislodged, we have here no continuing City. This the faithful have in all ages confessed; *Jacob* being brought into the presence of *Pharaoh*, saith, *The whole time of my pilgrimage is an hundred and thirty years, few and evil have the days of my life been*, Gen. 47, 9. But we may say, the days of our pilgrimage are threescore years and ten, if haply we reach so far, to which not one amongst an hundred cometh, few indeed and evil we may truly call them. This *Abraham* pleadeth, Gen. 23, 4, wanting a place of burial to interre his dead, *I am a stranger and a forreigner among you, give me a possession of burial with you.* Thus he confesseth it went with him in *Canaan*, neither was his estate any better elsewhere. This the Prophet *David* acknowledgeth, though a great King, Psal. 39, 12. *Hear my prayer, O Lord, and hearken unto my cry, keep not silence at my tears, for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner as all my fathers: our days are like a shadow upon the earth, and there is none abiding.* So then we see what our life and condition is, we are altogether vanity, like grass that soon withereth: we are as tenants at

the will of the Lord, our age is as nothing, it passeth as a tale that is soon told, it is as an hand-breath quickly measured, surely every man in his best estate is altogether lighter then vanity it self.

The reasons. First, all our days are stinted [Reason 1] and limited: as they are short and vain, so they are uncertain and unknown. The strongest natures and constitutions that seem to be framed & settled as a sure building to continue for many years, yet are soon cut off & are no more. We see this confirmed by the daily experience of many examples, as in *Uzzah* suddenly smitten, 2 Sam. 6, 7: in *Job's* children quickly overwhelmed, Job 1, 19: in *Ananias* and *Sapphira* presently destroyed, Acts 5, 5, 10: in the rich man that had his soul in one night taken from him, Luke 12, 20, and in a continual beholding the hand of God, striking as pleaseth him. If then uncertainty be an apparent argument of vanity, we may conclude from hence, our life to be vain & transitory, inasmuch as God revealeth not, when, or where, or how we shall die and be taken out of this life. We know not when we shall die, at even, or at midnight, at the Cock-crowing, or in the dawning. When we lie down, we know not whether we shall rise again: when we arise, whether we shall lie down again, except we be laid in our grave, and make our bed in the dust. Moreover we know not where we shall die, at home or abroad. When we go out of our houses, we know not whether we shall return to them alive or not, forasmuch as we carry about us evermore houses of clay. And when we come into them, we know not whether we shall go out of them again upon our feet, or be carried out upon the shoulders of others. Lastly, the manner and kind of our death is also as unknown as the rest, whether we shall die a natural or a violent death; a sudden, or a lingering death; whether our life shall be prolonged to the last point and period of nature, our heat and moisture being consumed, as the light of a candle consumeth by little and little and at length goeth out of it self; or whether it shall be taken away by fire, by water, by sword, by famine, by pestilence, by beasts, and such like casualties incident to the sons of men; all which proclaim and publish in our hearts the vain condition of all flesh.

[Reason 2] Secondly, God hath prepared for us a City, whereof he is the builder and maker. This City we seek, being Citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, the mother of us all. For we shall never sufficiently be brought to acknowledge our frail and brittle estate, unless we be raised and lifted up to the meditation of our future condition in the life to come. If then the kingdom of glory be a place of rest, what is this present estate, but a sea of sorrows? If the heaven be our native Country, what is the earth but an exile and banishment? If it be true happiness to enjoy the blessed presence of the living God, then it must needs be a miserable thing, and death it self to want it. If to leave this earthly tabernacle, be a setting of us free and at liberty, what is this body but a prison? If immortality be as *the putting on of a garment*, what is our mortality, but as it were a nakedness? Lastly, if to die in the Lord, be to go unto God, what is this life but an absence from him? This did the Patriarchs profess, and to this they sealed by their practice, Heb. 11 13, 14, 15, 16. *Abraham* possessed not one breadth of a foot, saving the purchase bought to bury his dead: *Jacob* was banished out of that Land, a great part of his life: *Isaac* and the rest of the fathers had but their walk in it, and enjoyed it as a pledge of another Country which is above.

[Use 1,] The uses follow. If we have here no abiding City in the days of our vanity, then acknowledge God's great mercy toward us being so vain. We see other creatures in their estate more permanent than man is, far exceeding and excelling in natural gifts, in seeing, tasting, moving, hearing, touching, and such like properties: yet no creature tasteth of his saving mercies as man doth. This consideration doth the Prophet lead us unto, Psal. 8, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, that *he is mindful of him and visiteth him, and hath put all things under his feet*. There is no merit in us to be a motive to move him to show so great mercy unto us. He findeth us walking in our sins, as it were wallowing in our blood: all our righteousness is as a foul and filthy cloth, Isaiah 64, 6. This use David urgeth, Psal. 103, 14, 15, 16, 18. *He knoweth whereof we are made, he remembereth that we are but dust: the days of man are as grass, as a flower of the field so flourisheth he: but the loving kindness of the Lord endureth forever, he is full of cōpassion and mercy, slow to anger, & of great kindness*. So that he confirmeth himself & others in God's mercy, by the consideration of our own vanity.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing our days be vain & short, why do we care and care so much for the things of this life, what we shall eat, what we shall drink, and what we shall put on? Why do we eat the bread of sorrow, & with too much painfulness heap up worldly things? It may be we shall not come to the sight of the fruit of our labors, much less to the partaking of it. A traveler, the shorter his journey is, the less his provision is. We are all travelers, we are in the way to our country, and we are not far from the end of our journey; what folly then and madness is it to cast all our thoughts and meditations to earthly things, and to care not only for the morrow, but for months and years. This our Savior setteth down, Luke 12, 19, 20, 21, for when the rich man said to his soul, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, live at ease, eat, & drink, and take thy pastime*; It was answered him: *O fool, this night will they fetch away thy soul from thee, then whose shall these things be which thou hast provided*▪ So is he that gathereth riches and is not rich in God. Hereunto consenteth the Apostle James chap. 4, 13, 14, 15. *Go to now, ye that say, today or tomorrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, buy & sell, and get gain, and yet ye cannot tell what shall be tomorrow, for what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and afterward vanisheth away; for that ye ought to say, if the Lord will, both we shall live and we shall do this or that*. Solomon having had plentiful experience of the shortness and vanity of man's life, penned to this purpose the Book of Ecclesiastes, which is (as it were) the marrow and pith; yea, the very quintessence of all his best knowledge, and wherein we may see the refined wisdom of reformed Solomon; he proclaimeth, *Vanity of vanities all is vanity: there is an evil which I saw under the Sun, and it is much among men, one to whom God hath given riches, treasures, and honor, & he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that it desireth: but God giveth him not power to eat thereof, a strange man shall eat it up: & though he leave no spark behind him neither son, nor brother, yet doth he not think, for whom do I travail, and defraud my soul of pleasure? This also is vanity, and this is an evil travail*, Eccles. 1, 2, and 4, 8, and 5, 12, and 6, 1, 2.

To conclude this use, if we be not strangers in this life, we shall have no part in the kingdom of heaven: If we will have God to avow and acknowledge us for his children, let us live here as foreigners and warfaring men in our journey, or rather in our race. We have pitched and patched up a Tent or Tabernacle, for a day or a night, we must not nestle our selves here, we

must not always go groveling to the ground, nor entangle our selves in the affairs of this life to make it our everlasting habitation, but be flying upwards as birds sitting upon a bough. True it is, God is so favorable to many, that they never remove out of the place where they were born, but continue at home in their own houses; they are not driven hither and thither, they are not tossed from poste to pillar; yet must not they make their resting place in this world, & look for heaven upon the earth, but be always ready to follow the calling of God, and know that he hath reserved a better resting place for them in his kingdom. Wherefore the Apostle *Peter* exhorteth, *Dearely beloved, I beseech you as strangers and Pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which fight against the soul; & have your conversation honest among the Gentiles.* This is the beginning of godliness and true religion, to deny this world, and to acknowledge our selves to be but strangers in y^e same. And let us pray with the Prophet, Psal. 119. *I am but a stranger upon earth, hide not thy Commandments from me.*

[Use 3] Lastly let us learn to depend and rest only upon God, who only dwelleth in immortality, and not on the sons of men, who are nothing but vanity and cannot help. Who would in danger rest upon a weak reed, which beside the weakness is ready to run into our arm? All men are frail and transitory, if then we put confidence in an arm of flesh, we shall be deceived. This the Prophets of God everywhere record, Isaiah 2, 22, and 30, 7, and 31, 3. *Ceasse you from the man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be esteemed?* Teaching us to cast off all vain confidence in man, if God stop his breath but a little, he is dead and gone. And chap. 30. *The Egyptians are vanity, and they shall help in vain: they are men, & not God, their horses flesh, and not spirit: and when the Lord shall stretch out his hand, the helper shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall, and they shall altogether fail.* To this purpose *David* exhorteth, Psal. 62, 9, 10. *The children of men are vanity, to lay them upon a balance, they are altogether lighter then vanity: trust not in oppression nor in robbery: be not vain; if riches increase, set not your heart thereon.* Let us set our hearts on our God, and the God of our fathers: abuse not the favor and countenance of great men to do wrong, for he taketh away the greatest: rather let us pray to him *to give us wise hearts to number our days, and to think often of our vanity, thereby to keep us from offending against God, that our life passeth as a sleep in the night, that it groweth up as grass, which in the morning flourisheth, but in the evening is cut down and withereth.*

[Verse 14. *It shall be spoken in the book of the battles of the Lord.*] He declareth that the place mentioned in the former verse, should be so ennobled and renowned, that the memory of it should never die or decay. As if *Moses* should say, when the battles of the Lord shall be spoken off, the River *Arnon* shall be remembered, and the battles that *Vaheb* the King of *Moab* lost. Now they are called the battles of the Lord, that were fought by *mē*. For howsoever men run together like wild Bears, or wild Boars, and leuy forces of *mē*, yet their armies are conducted and ruled by God. From hence we learn, That all watres are disposed & ordered of God. Of all things done here beneath, nothing seemeth more casual or confused, and nothing more out of the right course and order then the time of war, when men seem to run together at all adventures: yet God hath his hand in it, he guideth and governeth the same as seemeth good in his own wisdom. This the wise man handleth, Prov. 21, 31. *The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but victory is of the Lord.* This the Prophet confesseth, Psal. 144, 1. *Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth mine hands to fight, and my fingers to battle.* No war

falleth out in any place, or upon any people, but it is sent of God. When *Abraham* recovered *Lot* his brothers son from the enemies, of whom he was taken prisoner, it was God that gave him good success and prospered the work of his hand. When the Israelites revenged the villainy of the Benjamites, in abusing a woman unto death, it is said, the Lord smote *Benjamin*, and the children of Israel destroyed them. So when *Gideon* was armed with courage and comfort to encounter with the *Midianites*, & to perform the work of the Lord against thē, when he was to join battle, he cried out, *The sword of the Lord and of Gideon*. Judge. 7, 20. Wherefore, howsoever men do manage the battle, yet it is ordered at the will of God.

The reasons are plain. First, who is the [Reason 1] chief Captain of every host and army? Is not the Lord? And is not every battle fought at the discretion & disposing of the General? If then God be the General of the field, and Captain of the host, & President of the war, let us acknowledge that all wars are ordered at his pleasure. This is the Title given unto God, Josh. 5, 13, 14, 15. *When Joshua lifting up his eyes, saw a man come against him, having a sword drawn in his hand, he said; Art thou on our side, or on our adversaries? And he answered, Nay but as a Captain of the host of the Lord, am I now come: then Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshipped him.* This chief Captain and Leader of the people, was the Lord, as appeareth by a like place, Exod. 3, 5, where the Angel appearing unto *Moses* in a flame of fire, is called the Lord.

Secondly, all things whatsoever are ordered [Reason 2] by the appointment and providence of God, that are in heaven and earth; his government over all creatures, and of all actions, is universal, nothing can exempt it self out of the circuit of his dominion, as the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 113, 6. *He abaseth himself to behold things in the heaven and in the earth.* And the Apostle saith, *that of him, and through him, and for him, are all things.* Rom. 11, 36.

The uses come now to be considered. First [Use 1] this teacheth us, that the victory is not man's, but the Lord's. For if the battle be the Lord's, then the victory also is the Lord's, that the glory likewise may be his. It is not the sword, nor spear, nor horse, nor man, nor money, that can save or succor: these are vain things to rest upon: so that *where some trust in Chariots, and some in Horses, we must remember the Name of the Lord our God*, Psal. 20, 7. Therefore the Prophet showeth, Psal. 33, 17, 18, that *a King is not saved by the multitude of an host, neither is the mighty man delivered by great strength: an horse is a vain help, and shall not deliver any by his great strength.* And this *David* confesseth, whē he was to encounter with the uncircumcised *Philistim*, that reviled and railed upon the host of the living God, 1 Sam. 17, 46, 47, and 14, 6. *This day shall the Lord close thee in mine hands, and I shall smite thee, that all the world may know that Israel hath a God, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord saveth not with sword nor with spear, (for the battle is the Lord's) and he will give you into our hands. It is not hard with him to save with many or with few: he maketh the weak strong, he causeth one to chase a thousand, and two to put ten thousand to flight, when the mighty God selleth them and shutteth them up.* An example we have, 2 Chron. 24, 24. when *Joash* King of *Judah* sinned against God, shedding innocent blood, and forgetting the kindness shown to him, the *Aramites* came up against him, *Jerusalem* was besieged, the Princes were destroyed, their goods were spoiled; and though the army of *Aram* came with a small company of men, yet the Lord delivered a very great army into their hand, because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers.

Give God the glory of his own works, and let us not sacrifice to our own Nets. This is the cause why God oftentimes doth not bless and prosper our wars, we glory greatly in our multitudes of men, whereby God is robbed of his glory, and constrained to show us our own folly, and to chasten us for our presumption.

[Use 2] Secondly, it behooveth us to consult with him before we enter into it, to pray for a blessing, and to depend upon him touching the success. If nothing ought to be enterprised rashly, or taken in hand unadvisedly; then should wars be seriously thought upon, and warily begun, and wisely undertaken. The wise man teacheth, Prov. 20, 18, & 24, 6, that by *counsel the thoughts of the heart must be established, and by counsel wars are to be enterprised*. Thus when God promised victory to *Ahab* by one of his Prophets, over a great multitude of the Syrians, that he might learn to know him to be the Lord, *Ahab* asked of the Lord, who should order the battle? 1 Kings 20, 14, & 22, 5. So we must do nothing before we ask counsel of God to know his will & pleasure, as *Jehoshaphat* taught *Ahab*, craving his help against *Ramoth Gilead*, *Ask counsel I pray thee of the Lord today, whether he will make our way prosperous*. When the children of *Dan* sent expert men to view the Land and search it out, Judge. 18, 5, 6, they asked counsel of God, to guide their feet in the way of peace. It is dangerous to be cold and careless in consulting with him, & coming to his ordinance for it. Good King *Joshua* the Pillar of y^e hand, and nursing father of the Church, was killed by *Pharaoh Necho*, 2 Chron. 35, 22, because he consulted not with the mouth of the Lord, but went out to try his own strength. Let us not in the day of battle, think the season lost, or the time il spent that is employed this way: now is the acceptable time, and it is no wisdom to delay or defer it. This was the wickedness of *Saul's* heart, when the noise of the Philistines army came to his ear, & the Priest had brought the Ark to ask advice of God, he said, *Withdraw thine hand*: 1 Sam. 14, 18, 19, that is, the time serveth not to stand & stay counseling and consulting with God, have away these things, and let us draw near to the enemy: an evident testimony that God had forsaken him, and taken his Spirit from him, that he might run from one evil into another, and so work out his own confusion. Contrariwise we see, that while *Joshua* encoūtered with *Amalek*, a malicious and bloody enemy, *Moses* continued in prayer, and he prevailed more to the discomfiture and destruction of the *Amalekites*, by the force of prayer, then *Joshua* by the dint of the sword.

Lastly, let us not fear the enemies of the [Use 3] Church, but be strong and valiant, and commit the cause unto God. Thus did *Joab* when he entered the battle for the defense of God's people and true religion, 2 Sam. 10, 12. *Be strong and let us be valiant for our people, and for the Cities of our God, & let the Lord do that which is good in his eyes*. Thus *David* comforteth himself when he fled from his son *Abson*, an was driven out of his kingdom by treason & treachery, Psal. 3, 6, 7, 8. *I will not be afraid of ten thousand of the people that should beset me round about: O Lord arise, help me my God, for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone, thou hast broken the teeth of the wicked salvation belongeth unto the Lord, and thy blessing is upon thy people*. Be not therefore dismayed & discouraged, when the enemies breathe out their threatenings against the Church, band themselves together against Christ & his religion, and make their unholy leagues for the utter extirpation thereof: the Lord that

sitteth in heaven▪ knoweth how to vex them in his sure displeasure, and to *break them in pieces like a Potters vessel, and therefore blessed are all they that trust in him.*

[Verse 16. *Assemble the people, and I will give them water.*] So soon as they were removed from the River *Arnon*, they came into a dry place where they wanted water, but have it immediately supplied of God. Somewhat we see they had profited by the former judgments which brake in as a fire among them & consumed many. For here being in need and necessity, they do not murmur against God, as they had done before, nor rage against *Moses* as in former times; but they wait the Lord's leisure, until he relieve them, & render thanks unto him for his mercy received. This benefit then is here amplified by the cause, *I will give them water.* From hence this Doctrine ariseth, that the Lord supplieth the wants of his, and helpeth them always in time of need. When we are hungry, he feedeth us; when we are thirsty, he giveth us drink; when we are naked, he clotheth us; when we are destitute, he succoreth us; when we are in want, he supplieth us; when we are in any necessity, he helpeth us; yea, he worketh miracles, and changeth the course of Nature, rather than forsaketh us. He sent Manna to Israel when they wanted bread: he struck the stony Rock when they wanted drink: he sent his Angel to *Elijah* with food to strengthen him. He never forgetteth those that are his, he maketh the rain to fall, and the sun to shine upon the very wicked and ungodly. This the Prophet *David* handleth, Psalm. 147, 9, & 145, 15, 16. *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season; thou openest thine hand, and fillest all things living of thy good pleasure. He giveth to Beasts their food, and to the young Ravens that cry.* This the Lord himself teacheth out of the whirlwind, Job 39, 1, 2, 3. *Who prepareth for the Raven his meat, when his Birds cry unto God, wandering for lack of meat? Wilt thou hunt the prey for the Lyon, and fill the appetite of the Lions whelps?* We know the Lions & other savage beasts are insatiable, they are not filled with a morsel of meat, they couch not down in their dens whē they have taken a little, they require much sustenance, according to their devouring nature. Now who is it that findeth them this food and provision, but he that is the Creator of all things, who saveth man and beast, for the Lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat at God. Then let us come to the comparison which the Prophet maketh, Psalm 34. *If he feed the Lions who suffer hunger, and seek their prey with violence; how shall he forget or forsake us whom he auoweth for his children, and hath created after his own Image? The Lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they which seek the Lord, shall want nothing that is good.* Psalm. 34, 9, 10. All these things teach us, that God reserveth to himself the office and charge of maintaining us, and giving unto us whatsoever is necessary and meet for us.

[Reason 1] The Reasons may easily and evidently appear unto us. First, his providence watcheth over those that are his, for their comfort and benefit, as the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 33, 18, 19. *Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon them that trust in his mercy, to deliver their souls from death, and to preserve them in famine.* This made him say in his old age. *He saw never the righteous forsaken, & their children begging bread.* Psal. 37, 25. This provident eye can never be deceived or disappointed, neither can it deceive or disappoint such as rest upon it for their comfort and preservation.

Again, he is the Creator of all, a merciful [Reason 2] Father, a careful Shepherd, a gracious Redeemer, a loving Husband to his people. Will the Maker forsake the work of his own hands? Can the Shepherd forget his flock and the sheep of his pasture? Can the Father forget his child, or the Mother not have cōpassion on the son of her womb? Can the Redeemer cast off his inheritance that he hath bought and dearly purchased? Can the husband deny protection and provision unto his wife that lieth in his bosom? Thus the Prophet reasoneth, and from the titles of God, assureth his faith, that it should never fail. *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want: he maketh me to rest in green Pastures, and leadeth me by the still waters, &c.* Psal. 23, 1.

The uses of this Doctrine are lastly to be [Use 1] stood upon. First, we are hence to gather, that we ought in all estates to fear God, and not to fear want of worldly wealth, or transitory things: let us have our conversation without covetousness, which is insatiable and enlarged as the grave: let us take heed of diffidence & distrustfulness touching the things of this life: let us as well in adversity as in prosperity, be ready to rest on God's providence, whatsoever fall out unto us. True it is, we ought to labor in our callings, and to take pains to get meat and drink, but we must beware of carking and cares, and using unlawful means to sustain our selves. If we see not such success on our labors as we look for, let us be content: if we see his blessing, let us remember to render him thanks. This duty the Prophet declareth, Psal. 34, 9, & 37, 5, for having declared, that albeit the Lions lack, yet God will nourish those that be his, he concludeth hereupon, *O fear the Lord, ye his Saints, for nothing wanteth to them that fear him. Commit thy way to the Lord, and trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass.* Let us pray to him in our necessities, and call upon him for our daily bread: let us especially be mindful of heavenly things, and lift up the eyes of our minds to that kingdom that is reserved for us. As for this world, we must use it and all the things therein, as if we used them not, and as though they were not our own, but another's; according to the example and practice of the godly Patriarchs. Let us use our houses and dwelling places, as strangers do an Inn wherein they lodge and seek harbor for a night, and then are gone. Let us use our goods and riches, as Pilgrims do other men's goods for a small season, but we must take heed we set not our hearts upon them. Let us reject and cast off all things that may clog and hinder us in the way to the kingdom of heaven, like good travelers, that will burden themselves with nothing that may hinder them in their journey. And let us all learn true contentation of heart in every estate of life, whether in health or in sickness, whether in want or in abundance, whether in trouble or in peace; considering, that as we brought nothing into this world, so we can carry nothing out of the same.

Again, seeing God supplieth the wants of [Use 2] the body, let us seek also at his hands the nourishment of our souls, and depend upon him for our spiritual food. We see how men being in any adversity are vexed and grieved, & how near it goeth unto the quick. If they want bodily food and sustenance, they compass sea and land, they spare no labor, they refuse no charges to have it supplied. How much more should we double our care for the soul, which is of a more divine nature, and cometh nearer to the Image of God? The soul of man is the more precious and noble part of a man, the soul of a man is truly himself, the body is but his instrument: & therefore being of a more excellent substance, it is more to be regarded and

cared for, then the body. If therefore a man would leave country and kindred to provide for his body, he should be willing to go out of house & home; yea, even to forsake himself to save his soul. If a man be ready to travail a thousand miles by sea and land for the increase of his wealth, or the bettering of his knowledge, or the delight of his body: we should not think much to go ten thousand miles, & to take any pains for the good of our soul, and to get food for the same. But the practice of the world goeth clean contrary; the soul is least regarded, the health, the wealth, the welfare, the peace, the sustentation and preservation thereof is nothing esteemed. They that are of the earth, do savor only of the earth: and will never leave caring for it, till their mouths be full of it. As we do tread vpon the earth, so let us tread under our feet all earthly things: and as we are borne to look upward toward heaven, let us have our conversation in heaven, & set our affections upon heavenly things, & as we ask of God our daily bread, so let us depend upon him for the daily food of our souls.

[Use 3] Lastly, let us return to him praise and glory due unto his Name. We see men look for this duty at our hands, as an acknowledgment of their favors, who are but the instruments of God for the good of his people. How much more then ought we to be careful to remember the Lord, and to lift up our hearts to the heavens? We must not be always groveling upon the earth, like the swine that eat the Mast, but look not to the Tree. Wherefore the Prophet teacheth us this duty, *I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: yea, I will glorify thy holy Name forever: for great is thy mercy toward me, and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest grave.* Psal. 86, 12, 13. If we be not careful when God hath opened his hand toward us, to open our mouths, yea our minds toward him, we deprive our selves of many other blessings that God would plentifully bestow upon us. A skillful husbandman will not always till a barren soil, nor cast his corn in the high-way, where it shall neither be increased nor received; so if there be found in any of us a dry and unthankful heart, we stop the stream of God's blessings, and hinder many good things from us. So then, it is not enough to desire a supply of our necessities, & to have a sense and feeling of our own wants, we must not be idle beggars, always craving & catching what we can out of the Coffers of God's Treasury, and never acknowledge what we receive, and from whence we receive it. It is a notable note and token of the child of God, to be often in praises and thanksgivings. If we have received but a little measure of knowledge or faith, learn unfeignedly to be thankful for that, to the end thou mayest procure a farther blessing from God, and that thou mayest grow from faith to faith, and from strength to strength. Many hypocrites & dissemblers, nay many Atheists and Libertines, in trouble and affliction are ready to ask, seek, and knock at the gate of God's mercy, as we see in the Israelites, and in sundry others; but these prayers proceed from fear, not from faith: from a feeling of sorrow, not from a feeling of sin: from a sight of their own necessity, not from a sight of their own misery through want of reconciliation unto God. But we must testify our love to God, and our zeal of his glory, by our acknowledging of his gracious blessings, and rendering unto him the praise of his works of mercy.

[Verse 17. *Then Israel sang this song, &c.*] The goodness of God was great toward the Israelites, in those dry and desolate places to send them water, & reveal unto them where they should dig a Well. Wherefore so soon as they have experience of his kindness, they make a song of

thanksgiving, and sing a song of praise to remain unto all posterity, to testify the acknowledgement of God's mercy toward them.

The Doctrine from this place is this. That it is required as a special duty to God to offer the sacrifice of praise, and to pay unto him the calves of our lips, when we have tasted of his bounty and loving kindness. We must give thanks for mercies received at his hands. When the people of God received any victory over their enemies, they returned the glory to him for their deliverance. Gen. 14.20. Exod. 15, 1. and 18, 10. The Prophet *David*, as he abundantly tasted of the favor of God, so plentifully poureth out praise and thanksgiving, as the 18, Psalm. It is a Psalm of praise, which he sang *in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul*. Likewise Psal. 116, 12, 13. *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the Cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord*. This duty we see practiced by *Melchizedek* on the behalf of *Abraham*, *Blessed be the most High, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hands*. This we see performed by *Moses* and *Aaron*, when they saw the mighty power of God ouerturning the Egyptians; *I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and him that rode upon him hath he overthrown in the sea: they sanke to the bottom as a stone*. This duty is not omitted nor deferred by *Deborah* and *Barak* in the day of their deliverance, *Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel, and for the people that offered themselves willingly*. Judge, 5, 1, 5. This is it also that the Apostle teacheth, Phil. 4, 6. *In all things let your requests be shown unto God in prayer, in supplications, and in giving of thanks*. Yea *Job* fearing God and eschewing evil, performed this duty to God, after the loss of outward wealth, when he had been bereft of his children, robbed of his goods, spoiled of his servants, reproached of his wife, and tempted of the devil, he said, *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return again: the Lord hath given, & the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord forever*. Job 1, 21. Teaching us hereby to glorify God, not only for meat, drink, apparel, peace, liberty, health, children, success in domestical affairs, and such like; but even for the losses & crosses that he sendeth upon us, which he sanctifieth to the salvation of his servants. Let us therefore acknowledge, that it is a duty belonging unto us, to offer the sacrifice of praise always unto God, that is, the fruit of the lips which confess his Name.

[Reason 1] The Reasons remain to be considered. First, we must give him y^e praise of his works, because it is the will and pleasure of GOD (who is so good unto us) to require it of us, who can give him nothing else. For what are we able to require and return to the Lord for his great mercies? Can we deserve them at his hands or glory of any our own merits? Without him we can do nothing. If then we can render nothing but this, let us not deny him this duty of praise. It is the will of God we should not kill, or steal, nor commit idolatry, or adultery, & such like: few but make conscience of these sins, because we see the will of God restraining us, and condemning them. So it is the will of God we should beware of unthankfulness, and open our mouths in setting forth his praises, for his goodness unto men. This reason the Apostle useth, 1 Thess. 5, 17, 18. *Pray continually, in all things give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus toward you*.

[Reason 2] Secondly, of all sacrifices, this is the chief and principal, and groweth in the Garden of God, as one of the Cedars in *Lebanon*, eminent above the rest of the Trees of the Forest. It excelleth and surmounteth all the rest, in respect of the enduring and continuance of it, in respect of the use and end of it, and in respect of our unwillingness and untowardness to perform it. First, touching the lasting of it▪ it was in Paradise before the fall, it was before the flood, it was before the Law, under the Law, under the Gospel, and shall hold to the end of the world. It is performed of men and Angels, in heaven and earth, it shall never end, no not when other exercises of our religion shall cease. The Scripture shall have an end, preaching shall cease, prayer shall fail, the sacraments shall fade, we shall have no need of these things; but the sweet singing of God's eternal praises, shall never cease. *The blessed Saints, and all the host of heaven shall give praise, and power, honor, and glory, to him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for evermore.* Revel. 5, 13, and 11, 17.

Again, it is the end both of the works of [Reason 3] God, and of the other exercises of religion. It is the end of our election, for he *hath predestinated us to the praise and glory of his grace, wherewith he hath made us freely accepted in his beloved,* Eph. 1, 5, 6. It is the end of our creation: for he *hath made all things to his own glory, even the wicked for the day of wrath,* Prov. 16, 4. It is the end of our redemption, for *the holy man blesseth the Lord God of Israel, for visiting and redeeming his people, who would send us deliverance from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us, that we should serve him without fear all the days of our life in holiness and righteousness before him,* Luke 1, 68, 74, 75. And the Apostle teacheth this, Eph. 1, 3, 7. *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins, according to his rich grace.* It is the end of our justification, for we are justified freely by grace, that no man should boast in himself, *But he which rejoiceth, should rejoice in the Lord.* 1 Cor, 1, 31. It is the end of our sanctification, of our salvation, and of our glorification, to return all glory & praise unto God, that sanctifieth and saveth us, & will glorify us in soul and body. And as it is the end of these works of God, so likewise all the exercises of our religion are directed and referred unto it, as to the principal mark they aim at. A chief part of God's service is prayer. But why do we pray unto him, but that obtaining our requests, & having experience of his mercies, we may give him the praise? According to the saying of the Prophet, *I will hear thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* Psal. 50, 15. Wherefore do we hear his word, but that receiving increase of knowledge, and the gift of faith, we may give thanks to God? Wherefore are we partakers of the Sacraments, but that finding and feeling comfort by them, we might return the greater glory to God, the author of them?

Lastly, the unwillingness of our corrupt [Reason 4] nature to do this duty, manifestly proveth the worthiness and excellency of this exercise. We are willing enough to pray for the gift, but we are not so ready to praise the giver: we are forward and fervent in asking, but cold & dull in thanksgiving. In time of sickness and dangers, we are large in promises and protestations; but being delivered, we are backward in performing. We are full of desiring the things we want, but we are empty of praises when God hath heard us, and so lose the fruit of that good which he hath sent us. Seeing therefore the offering to God the sacrifice of praise, is a principal part of his service, and standing directly with his will, it

standeth us in hand to confess before y^e Lord his loving kindness, and his wonderful works before the sons of men, Psal. 107, 8.

[Use 1] Now let us come to the Uses. First, forget not his mercies and goodness toward us. We are ready to remember our own wants, and our mouth with our desire is enlarged to pray for health in sickness, for deliverance in danger, and for comfort in heaviness; but when light is risen in darkness, and joy to the upright in heart, we forget the hand that lifted us up, and that our help is in the name of the Lord which hath made heaven and earth. This use the Prophet *David* maketh, Psal. 103.1.2. *My soul praise thou the Lord, and all that is within me praise his holy name: My soul praise thou the Lord, and forget not all his benefits.* This also *Moses* urgeth to the people, when they were compassed about on every side with the mercies of God, Deut. 6, 10, 11, 12. & 8, 10, 11. *When they should possess Cities that they built not, houses full of all manner goods which they filled not, Welles which they digged not, Vineyards and Olive trees which they planted not: when they have eaten and are full, then he willeth them to beware lest they forget the Lord their GOD, that brought them out of the Land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.* Why is it that he willeth thē especially to take heed to themselves when their bellies are filled, when their cattle is increased, when their substance is multiplied, and when their possessions are enlarged? Surely, because if ever we forget God, it is when we are full. If ever we despise his laws and commandments, it is in the time of plenty & abundance, even then when we are most of all bound to serve him: When he hath been on our side, and made an hedge round about us, then we stand in a slippery place, ready to have our hearts puffed up, & our minds hardened in pride, and to forget God and his goodness, as *Pharaohs* chief Butler did forget *Joseph*, Gen. 40, 23. The more love is bestowed upon us, the less duty is performed unto him, whereby Satan goeth about to take away all the graces of God from us. In 2 King. 20, 8, 13. *Hezekia* was delivered from a deadly sickness, and went up to the house of the Lord to magnify his mercy for his recovery: yet see how soon after he was overtaken with unthankfulness, and lost the comfort of his deliverance, and received heavy tydings that his posterity should be carried away captives into *Babel*. He thought that in his prosperity He should never be moved. This is taught us also in the curing of the ten lepers mentioned by the Evangelist *Luke*, 17.15, 16, 17, 18. of the which one only returned back, and with a loud voice praised God, and gave him thanks: and Jesus answered, saying, *Are there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are none found that returned to give God praise, save this stranger that was a Samaritan.*

Secondly, seeing we must give God thanks [Use 2] for benefits received, of what sort soever they be: then especially we must praise him for spiritual blessings that are of an higher nature, & belong to a better life. This the Prophet, Psa. 103, 1, 3. thought upon, provoking himself to praise the Lord, & preparing his heart with his tongue to extol his mercies he beginneth with this, *Which forgiveth all thine iniquities, & healeth all thine infirmities.* For well did he know that if a man enjoyed the world at will, and yet wanted the persuasion of the pardon of his sins and reconciliation towards God, it were nothing: *For what shall it profit a man if he win the whole world, and lose his own soul? &c.* Mat. 16, 26. When *Israel* was oppressed in *Egypt*, it was joyful tidings to hear of a deliverer, and they rendered praise to God for their deliverance. When they had been carried to *Babylon*, and accomplished the years of

their bondage prophesied by Jer. 25, 12. and the Lord brought again the captivity of Zion, they seemed at the first like them that dream, Ps. 126 1, 2. *Then was their mouth filled with laughter, & their tongue with joy: then the heathen confessed, The Lord had done great things for them:* Then the church sang, *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoice.* Suppose the case stood with any of us bodily, as it standeth with all of us spiritually, without any supposition at all, y^t we were taken by enemies, bound in chains, cast into prison, sticking fast in the mire, pinched with famine, and wasted with despair of ever coming out of such a dungeon: & that lying thus without help or hope, a king should come unto us, smite off our fetters, free us out of prison, pay our ransom, and promote us to honor in his kingdom; would we not render unto him all possible thanks, & depend on him all the days of our life? But we are delivered from greater enemies, and from greater dangers; from sin, hell, death, darkness, the devil, and damnation. For as the devil doth exceed all bodily enemies, and hell fire infinitely surpasseth the pains of this life, which endure but for a season: so we must consider that our deliverance being greater, our Thanksgiving must not be the less: but our praise must be answerable to his power▪ who hath cut y^e cords of our enemies, and restored us into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Let us acknowledge our selves tied to this duty, to offer to him the offering & sacrifice of praise, for the spiritual blessings of our redemption and salvation, for his word & Gospel, he hath not so dealt with every nation & people. This is the only recompense that we can make him, to give him all y^e glory. How shall we requite his 〈1 page duplicate〉 〈1 page duplicate〉 mercies, who finding us neither washed in water, nor swaddled in clouts, nor pitied of any, but cast out in the open field, to the contempt of our person, and polluted in our own blood, covered our filthiness, anointed us with oil, clothed us with broidred work, girded us with fine linen, decked us with ornaments, and entered into a covenant with us to become his? Shall we come before him with burnt offerings, and Calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased & praised with thousands of Rams, and with ten thousand rivers of oil? All these be as nothing; *For all the beasts are his, and the beasts on a thousand Mountains: yea, all the world is his, and whatsoever therein is.* Psal. 50, 10, 14. The service & sacrifice wherein he delighteth is an humble, contrite, and thankful heart, which is more acceptable to him then all sacrifices that have horns and hooves. *Offer therefore unto him praise, and pay thy vows unto the most High, which thy lips have promised in the presence of all his people.*

[Use 3] Thirdly, let us acknowledge this truth, that his name is most glorious, and confess the greatness of his name to be worthy of all glory. Let us not set up our own names, nor sacrifice to our own nets, nor say we have escaped by our own power, but thorough the favor and kindness of God, as the Prophet teacheth, Psalm 124, 1. Let us not claim the praise of God to our selves, nor rob him of his honor, but confess that his mercy endureth forever. This use the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 8, 1, 9, where setting down many arguments of the praise of God which he showeth in the earth, he concludeth the majesty of God to be worthy of all honor: *O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the world?* None can praise him aright, except he be touched with a feeling of God's greatness, goodness, and majesty: even as our prayers are cold when we have a small and slight feeling of sin.

[Use 4] Lastly, seeing praise and glory is due to God for his blessings, it is our duty to pray for thē, and to ask them at his hands. When the Prophet, Psal. 50, 15. had stirred the people up to offer unto God praise, he addeth withal, *Call upon him in the day of trouble, so will he deliver thee and thou shalt glorify him.* For when we come to him by prayer, and have experience of his goodness who delivereth our soul from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling; and are assured that our help cometh neither from the East nor from the West, nor frō the wilderness, that is, from the North, nor South (inasmuch as *Judea* was on both sides included and compassed with a Desert:) we are hereby provoked and pricked forward, to cast down our selves, and all our glory at his feet, to magnify his mercy, to exalt his praise on high, and to say with the Prophet, Ps. 115, 1. *Not unto us O Lord not unto us: but unto thy name give the glory, for thy loving mercy, and for thy truths sake.* But if we trust in our own strength, and rest in our own labors, and think the good things we possess, be y^e works and fruits of our own hands, not the blessings & gifts of God, we shall never give him praise for them, but set up our selves in his stead, to the dishonor of his name, to the confusion of our own faces, and to the hindering of the course of his blessings toward us. Let us therefore confess, that every good and perfect gift cometh down from above, from the father of lights, and then we shall render him the Calves of our lips.

[Verse 18. *O Well, whom the Princes digged, &c.*] We have already declared in the former doctrine, that the people gave thanks to God for sending them water miraculously, and supplying their want in that necessity. Here we see offered to our consideration, who were the chief workmen and principal Laborers in digging the Well; the Princes & Heads of the people, the Captains, and *Moses* himself disdained not to set their hands to work. No doubt many of the people joined with them as helpers forward, but the principal men and heads of the families are here named, because they did direct, strengthen, and encourage others that were under them by their good example. The doctrine arising from hence is this That public persons unto whom God hath granted honor and principality, and preferred before their brethren, are not only to inform their inferiors, and give directions unto them by word, but by their example and practice to go before them. All superiors are to teach by example of life, as well as by word of mouth their inferiors. So then, we are all from this example of the zeal of *Moses*, and forwardness of the Princes of the Tribes, to consider that it is required of chief persons, whose heads are advanced above others, to have in them a zeal and forwardness to further good things in others, that so their care may be answerable to the place wherein God hath set them. This is proved unto us in the example of *Eliud*, one of the Judges, who having slain *Eglon* King of Moab, and knowing there was a greater work behind to do, it is said, he blew a Trumpet in Mount Ephraim, he assembled the people, and he went before them saying unto them, *Follow me.* Mark here, how he thought it not enough to show the Children of Israel what was to be done, and to direct them in the way, but himself joineth with them, nay goeth before them; he followeth not his own ease, he seeketh not his own pleasure, he layeth not the burden upon them to keep at home himself, but being fitted & called of God, he began the enterprize, and looked for the issue from him. His example not only in speaking, but in going before them, was very available. The like we see in *David*, whose zeal for the Lord's house had even eaten him up, having an intent to cal the Ark home

to Zion from the house of *Abinadab*, he called the people together, he praised God with instruments of music, he danced before the Ark, and gave a notable testimony how fervent he was, and with what joy of heart he went about it. The like practice we see in *Solomon's* son who sat in his Throne; when once the Temple was built, when the work of the Lord was finished, and when the people were assembled, he in their sight and hearing doth dedicate the Temple, with a fruitful, comfortable, and passionate prayer, and entreateth the Lord's gracious presence when in that holy place they should call upon him. 1 Kin. 8, 22. The like forwardness in the works of the Lord we find in *Jehoshaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, *Zerobabel*, *Mordecai*, and sundry others; these went before others in zeal, and accounted it a shame & reproach unto them to be matched in goodness of those, whom they over-matched and over-mastered in greatness. This made *Joshua* say (who was Governor of the people) *I and my house will serve the Lord* Josh. 24.15. This made *David* say, Psal 101, 2. *I will walk in the uprightness of my heart in the midst of my house*. This made the Apostle say, 2 Thes. 3, 7. speaking of the idle that walked inordinately, and would not work, *Ye yourselves know how ye ought to follow us, for we behaved not our selves inordinately among you*, urging his own example to provoke and prick them forward.

[Reason 1] This truth will yet further appear unto us when we shall consider how it is proved and under-propped by strength of Reason. •irst, it is the Lord's doing to make them a distinct people and order by themselves. Hath he advanced them to no purpose? had he no end in choosing them from among their brethren, and setting them in degree of dignity before them? We know that all God's works have some end which he respecteth, he worketh nothing idly, every action hath his special and proper end. His separation of them to rule in the Land or Church, is, that they should execute the things that concern God's glory with all zeal. This we see in the book of *Ester*, ver. 4 when she was desirous to shrink back and not adventure her self, beholding the hazard of her life, and the danger of death before her eyes, except the king did graciously respect her, and favourably hold out his golden scepter: *Mordecai* presseth her with this reason, *Who knoweth whether the LORD hath brought thee to the kingdom for such a time?* And *Nehemiah* aimeth at this in chap. 6. ver. 10, 11. where being counseled to hide his head, and to shut the doors of the Temple upon him, because the enemies would come suddenly upon him and slay him, he opposeth his calling, *Should such a man as I fly? Who is he, being as I am, that would go into the temple to live? I will not go in*. As if he should say, God hath promoted me to this place of honor, & hath brought upon me the dignity that I never looked for, and therefore I will adventure to stand out in the discharge of the work of the Lord, inasmuch as promotion cometh neither from East nor West, but from him.

Secondly, such as are advanced above others, [Reason 2] lie open to wrath and judgment as well as others. Albeit they be great in the world, and can plead with men, yet they cannot plead with the Lord, seeing the greatest men lie open to the greatest punishments. If therefore they would not kindle God's wrath against themselves, against their houses, and against their posterities, they must go before others in all godliness, and instruct them by word and by example. This is the reason that king *Artashast* useth, *Ezra* 7, 23. *Whatsoever is by the commandment of the God of heaven, let it be done speedily for the house of the God of heaven*,

for why should he be wroth against the realm of the King and his children? So in Num. 25 4, 9. the Lord commanded a thousand of the Rulers of the people to be hanged before him against the Sun, because they stayed not the people from joining themselves to *Baal •cor*. In like manner, because *Eli* reformed not his sons, but suffered them to run forward in their sins (who through their extreme wickedness caused all Israel to abhor the offerings of the Lord) his house was destroyed, his sons were slain, and himself brake his neck with a fall from his seat.

The Uses are these. First of all, see how comfortable [Use 1] it is to all inferiors, when the Lord blesseth a land and people to give them faithful Rulers, godly Princes, zealous Nobles, righteous Magistrates, painful Ministers, by whose example and practice they are led and guided to all well-doing? It is an ancient saying, Of what disposition soever Princes are, the people will not be unlike •hem. Experience in all ages and places teacheth us, That many wicked men make this an Apology for themselves, and allege it as a suffi•ient excuse for their wickedness, that men of chief place above them, like their courses, and give them directions what to do. This the Prophet pointeth unto, Ier. •4 1•. *It went well with us, when we burnt incense to the host of heaven, and when we poured out drink offerings to them, di•••e it without our husbands?* Thus it commonly falleth out, that wicked persons pretend the example of chief men, and thereby go about to justify their evil doings. Exhort the drunkard and riotous person to forsake his drunkenness, and to leave his beastly sin, admonish him to shun houses of drunkenness the very nurseries of all abominations, what is their answer? We have the chief of the parish to keep us company, we have the best and richest sort to join in our society, they like our doings, they justify our courses, and only a sort of fellows that are more precise then wise, speak against us. Thus do these men take heart, and encourage themselves in all evil practices, yea, are hardened against the reproof of others because they find the chiefest sort to be on their side. Wherefore it must needs be accounted a great blessing to a nation, to send wise, discreet, and faithful Rulers amongst them. This we see in the practice of *Ezra*, when he saw the forwardness of the King, read the Edict, knew the liberty given to all that would return, beheld the Jewels to be restored to God's house, and how the Princes were ready to give a Free-will offering, the perfect Scribes of the Law, together with the fathers of *Judah & Benjamin*, took great comfort, and were greatly refreshed through the hand of the Lord their God: so that among many points of God's mercy toward his people, this is not the least, to have godly governors given unto them. Let us then all of us acknowledge, that it is a great mercy of God to a kingdom, place, parish, family, when the Rulers are reformed and well ordered, touching the service, worship, and obedience of God. When *Solomon* had established religion and justice in Jerusalem, & amended his court according to the ordinance of God, so that all things were performed according to the law: the blessing spread over the whole kingdom, religion flourished, peace and righteousness kissed each other, and the blessings of God came upon the people: *They had Cedars as plentiful as wild fig-trees, Iron was as common as stones, silver as iron, and gold as silver.* They had peace and plenty on every side, there was not so much as a dog that opened his mouth against them.

[Use 2] Secondly, this should serve as an instruction to all Magistrates and mighty men, to endeavor by their godly life and good example to draw on other that are under them to the knowledge and fear of God. Great is the force of evil, and the power of sin in private persons. We see •n our small parishes and little villages in our private families and households, one or two children of *Belial*, wicked men, profane in life, are stronger to poison and pester the whole Congregation, neighborhood, and family, in a short time, then the ordinance of God in the ministry of his word and the company of the faithful in the church or house, are able to bring forward to obedience. One profane person fostered and nourished in an house, is as a scabbed Sheep in a whole fold, and therefore shall more corrupt and infect by secret suggestion & persuasion in a week or two, then a sincere and godly Governor shall be able to edify and build up in a year. Now, if inferior persons can spread sin over all the body, as an unclean leprosy, who are of small account and estimation; what shall the chief and principal members do when they are evil? What an hell of wicked men shall swarm in that corporation or congregation, where both Magistrate & minister, where the chief men as the head, and the Ministers as the eye, are contagiously infected and desperately diseased? For, as there is an happy and blessed union in religion and Christian obedience, where all estates of men do join unfeignedly in it, and help with both hands to build up an holy Temple to GOD; where *Moses* and *Aaron*, that is, the Prince & the Priest, where the Magistrate and the subject, the head and the body, the governor and they that are governed, the Pastor & the people, as one man, with one mind, and with one mouth, seek to set forth the glory of God: so on the other side, what an assembly of wicked and loose persons, what an house of infidelity and profaneness must that be, where the governors and householders have no sap or seasoning of the fear of GOD in them, where none is found to give thē light, but all walk in darkness and ignorance? If the eye be dim, how great is that darkness? Let us therefore remember this one point, That as our place is eminent in the Common-wealth, or in the Church, or in the Family or household, so must we labor and endeavor (as we said before) by example, by exhortation, by admonition, and by reprehension to use all godly means to provoke and stir up others to the fruits of holiness. It is not enough for those in high places, set as on a watch tower, placed as on a hil, from whence they may be seen far and near, to look only unto themselves, and to watch over their own ways; it is not enough to have light in themselves, but they must hold out the candle unto others: they must not only know the way themselves, but be able to guide others in the right way; they must not only give no offense to hinder others, but be examples to instruct others. Lastly, they must not only come into the house of God themselves, but tol the bell to bring others to God with all forwardness and cheerfulness.

Lastly, it is our part that are of the people, [Use 3] to commend them to God in our prayers, to entreat him that hath the hearts of all men in his hands, that in his own wisdom he would dispose them to be careful of our good, that under them we may live a peaceable & quiet life in all godliness and honesty. Good Magistrates bring the greatest blessings unto the people, they are nursing fathers to the church, they are the light of the kingdom, they are the bulwarks of the country, they are the means of erecting up the pure worship of God, and of keeping from us barbarousnes, brutishnes, outrages, violence, and all villainies. Seeing then

we receive these and sundry other blessings from them, it is our bounden duty above all other callings among men to pray for thē, and to praise God for them. And certainly▪ if any nation under heaven be bound to rejoice and praise GOD for their Prince (who is as the comfort and consolation of our life, and the very instrument of our peace) we are they. Under his shadow we live and abide as in a place of rest, and sleep quietly in our beddes, free from all fear and danger whatsoever. This we see described in the peaceable and prosperous days of *Solomon*, there is no crying and complaining in our streets. We are blessed with earthly blessings; we are an astonishment and wonder to our neighbor Nations. They have all deeply drunk of the cup of God's wrath, that hath been filled with full measure, whiles we have looked on, and our soul hath escaped. And above all the rest, we have all this time enjoyed, and do enjoy the bright light of the glorious Gospel, and have been most of us borne under the profession thereof, to the establishing and continuing of many millions of thousands in the coueuant of grace and eternal life▪ when other have been kept in horrible darkness and damnable idolatry to the destruction of their souls. We are therefore unhappy wretches, if among all the mercies of God upon us, this be not remembered as one of the first and chiefest. And let us learn to have in abomination from the bottom of our hearts, the bloody practices and desperate attempts of *all cursed Shemeis, who open their mouths against the Lord, and against his anointed with horrible execrations*, I mean the Jesuits and Priests, (brethren in evil) together with the rest of that damned crew and generation, who instead of prayer and thanksgiving for our Sovereign, use falsehood, practice treasons, and devise mischievous conspiracies, seeking the life of their gracious Prince, and laboring to stop the breath of our nostrils: whereas he that curseth the King should die the death.

The Prophet *Jeremiah* speaking of the estate of the people after the death of *Josiah*, bringeth them in thus complaining: *The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord was taken in their Nets, of whom we said: Under his shadow we shall be preserved alive among the heathen*. Whereby he meaneth, that *the office of the King as the Superior, and of all Magistrates as Governors sent of him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well;* is to protect and preserve the people in peace and safety, even as the breath that we draw in at our nostrils, giveth life and health to the body. Wherefore it standeth us that are Subjects upon, not only to be obedient for conscience sake unto all lawful ordinances of Princes, who are the Lord's Lieutenants appointed of him over his people for their good, but to pray earnestly for them, that they may further us in piety, keep us in honesty, and maintain us in tranquility one with another: piety in respect of God; honesty in respect of our selves; tranquility in respect of others. This charge the Apostle giveth, when Magistrates were Infidels and Heathen, that the Church should pray unto God for them: how much more therefore doth it stand us upon to practice this duty, when as our Magistrates are the children of God, and pillars of the Church? And thus much of the third part of this chapter.

21 Then Israel sent Messengers unto Sihon, King of the Amorites, saying;

22 Let me go through thy Land: we will not turn aside into the Fields, nor into the Vineyards,

neither will we drink of the waters of the Welles: We will go by the Kings way, until we be past thy Border.

23 But Sihon gave Israel no license to pass through his Border: and Sihon assembled all his people, and went out against Israel into the Wilderness: and he came to Iaboz, and fought against Israel.

24 But Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and inherited his Land, from Arnon unto Iabbok even unto the children of Ammon; for the Border of the children of Ammon was strong

25 And Israel took all those Cities; therefore Israel dwelled in all the Cities of the Amorites in Heshbon, and in all the Villages thereof.

26 For Heshbon was the City it self of Sihon, King of the Amorites, who fought against the former King of the Moabites, and took away all his Land out of his hand, even unto Arnon.

27 Wherefore they that speak in Proverbs say, Come to Heshbon, let the City of Sihon be built and repaired.

28 For a fire is gone out of Heshbon, and a flame from the City of Sihon, and hath consumed Har of the Moabites, and the inhabitants of the high places of Arnon.

29 Woe be to thee, Moab: O people of Kemosh thou art undone: he hath delivered his sons which escaped, and his daughters into captivity to Sihon, the King of the Amorites.

30 Their Empire also is lost, from Heshbon unto Dibon, and we have destroyed them unto Nophah which reacheth unto Medeba.

31 Thus Israel dwelt in the Land of the Ammorites.

In these words and those that follow to the end of the Chapter, is contained the last part of this Chapter; to wit, the subduing of two mighty enemies, in two several battles; namely, *Sihon*, King of the Amorites, and *Og*, the King of Bashan. The Amorites were a people that came of *Ham* the youngest son of *Noah*, as appeareth, Gen. 10, verses 6, 15, 16. For *Ham* begat *Canaan*, who disclosed the nakedness of his Grandfather; and *Canaan* begat *Emori*, of whom came the Amorites, who inhabited the Land of Bashan, & Mount Gilead. This History is more at large recorded, Deuter. chapter 2 and 3. •irst, touching *Sihon*, we must observe two things;

the just occasion and advantage which he gave to Israel to subdue him, and take possession of his Land: *For the Lord had hardened his spirit▪ and made his heart obstinate, because he would deliver him into the hands of the Israelites:* Deuteronomy, chapter 2, verse 30. Then secondly, the overthrowing of him, the entering into his Country, & the possessing of his Cities. Hitherto they had compassed the Land of Edom with great danger, with much weariness, and sundry temptations: they come to the Land of the Amorites, there y^e King withstandeth them, and will give them no passage, but fiercely and furiously encountreth with them. Touching the occasion whereby Israel was justly moved & compelled to enter fight with the Amorites, it offereth two points to be considered. First, a friendly and loving request of *Moses*. Secondly, a curish and unkind denial made by *Sihon*. Concerning the petition of *Moses*, observe the Embassy which he sent, together with the reasons, containing both the ground of his reasonable demand, showing the equity of the petition, and laying down most equal conditions of peace: because he desired only passage through his Land, without spoil of the Country in general, or damage to any person in particular. The refusal of the King followeth; and albeit the Israelites freely and frankly professed, that their purpose was to pass by all things as travelers, not possess anything as Conquerers; yet nothing at all (albeit never so right or reasonable, and so equal or honest) is granted & permitted to God's people.

Wherefore *Sihon*, either resolving with himself to deal unjustly and unkindly, or suspecting that under a fair color and outward show of honest dealing, they might have a further project, and hide the depth of their cunning devises (as oftentimes is used at the dyets and consultations of Princes) and being enflamed with the malice of his own heart, he dealeth more unmercifully with thē than the Edomites and Moabites had done, and denieth that favor and friendship which they had found among them. Indeed the Edomites denied them passage thorough their Land, as we saw before, chapter 20, yet they suffered them to travel by their Coast & Borders, and sold them food for their money, Deut. 2, 29. The Moabites (another enemy) permitted them indeed to pass by their Borders, but refused to give them meat or water for money, as appeareth, Deut. 23, 3. But the Amorites, worse then both the former, not only afforded them no commodity, but being destitute of all sparks of humanity, denied thē passage in word and deed. In word, he answered, *Thou shalt not pass:* In deed, he united his forces, he took the field, and so provoked Israel to battle, who lay still, and stirred not against him. True it is, Israel had God's purpose revealed unto them, to subdue them, and enter their Land: but *Moses* waiteth with wisdom, until they were teased and constrained to defend themselves, lest (if they had begun and given the occasion) the enemy should upbraid them with injustice, and charge them with oppression, & challenge them for wrongful usurpation. Now they deal uprightly, even their enemies being Judges, inasmuch as Nature teacheth every man to resist force with force, and defend himself with his weapon against open and outrageous violence.

The occasion being offered, and the fire kindled by *Sihon*, Israel being compelled, fighteth against him, overthroweth him in the battle, and inuadeth his Dominion, and maketh them all pass under the mercy of the sword, without compassion, sparing neither men, women, nor children. This victory is amplified by a particular enumeration of y^e Cities which they subdued, and they inhabited even in the head-Citty, *Heshbon* Afterward their right to these

places is proved and confirmed. For albeit *Heshbon* properly belonged to *Moab*, as a part of his Dominion, yet all that coast, even to the River Arnon, was come by conquest into the possession of *Sihon*, King of the Amorites: so that the Israelites took not away anything from the Moabites, according to the commandment of the Lord, Deut. 2, 9. Josh. 13, 25, but from the Amorites, whose whole Country was allotted to his people, GOD scattering the people that delight in war, and take pleasure to shed blood. This is that mercy of God which *Nehemiah* magnifieth, chap. 9, 8. *Thou madest a Covenant with Abraham, &c.* And Psal. 78, 55. *He cast out also the heathen before them, &c.* Thus did God show himself to be the Shepherd of Israel, that led his people like sheep, and brought them into y^e Borders of his Sanctuary which his right hand had purchased. Here was the beginning of all comfort; here they began to set down their rest: here they saw the first fruits of their labors, assuring them, that as God had begun to perform his promise, so he would continue to finish his own work.

Furthermore, their right in possessing of these places, is declared by a public song of triumph and victory, as it were a Trophie fet up, which was made by the Poets of y^t time, to make known to posterity the victory of y^e Israelites, and their lawful claim to those Cities which they had won by the dint of the sword. This Poeme was not a song made by the Amorites, as many suppose, but composed by the Israelites, as appeareth by these reasons.

First, we see it to be a most common and usual thing with the people of God, when they had obtained any victory, or received any benefit, to leave some token & monument of it to posterity, & to acknowledge by whose hand they have prevailed. This we see in the words going before, ver. 17, 18, where they sang a song of thanksgiving, for the Well which God had granted, and they had digged.

Secondly, it is no ordinary and usual thing with God, to allege the sayings of heathen Poets, and so to sanctify their profane writings to be holy Scriptures. True it is, the Spirit sometimes produceth a short sentence to convince the heathen by their own Prophets, but never citeth an whole Poeme, as *Moses* doth in this place.

Thirdly, in the 30 verse it is said, *We have destroyed them unto Nophah*, and subdued *Sihon* that had conquered the Moabites, by which means Israel came to dwell in the Cities of the Amorites.

Fourthly, here is pronounced and concluded the woeful and wretched estate of *Moab*, for their idolatry and trusting in their god *Kemosh*, which had deceived them, and delivered them into the hands of their enemies; which agreeth not to the Amorites, as deep in the sin of idolatry as the Moabites, and worshipping the same Idol the Moabites did. For *Kemosh* was the god of the Amorites, Ammonites, and Moabites. Therefore as the Prophet saith, that the Gentiles will not change their gods, so it may be truly said, they will not reproach and revile their gods. Thus then we see, this was one of the songs of the Israelites, most likely to be penned and published by *Moses* himself, *who, as he was brought up in all the learning of the Egyptians, so he was cunning in this faculty*, as appeareth in other places of his works.

This Song or Sonnet, remaining as a Testimony and witness of their just conquest to ages succeeding, setteth down both the usurping of the Amorites, & the recovery of those places

out of the hands of the Amorites by the Israelites. First, it showeth how *Sihon* invaded the Moabites, and exhorted his army to play the men, appointing *Rendevous* & place of meeting to be at *Heshbon*, willing them to resort thither to begin the battle, stirring thē up to repair the breaches of that City which *Sihon* made the head and mother-city of his kingdom, and then invading other parts of Moab, which were wasted & consumed with fire and sword. Thus he seemed to have most reason and right, who had greatest strength. They got their superiority by cruel injustice and wrong usurpation, the distressed Moabites choosing to sell their lives in y^e field with honor, seeing they could not enjoy them with safety in their Cities. *Sihon* then being thus Conqueror, the Poet bringeth him in, insulting over his enemies, vaunting in his own strength, and ascribing the victory to his own power: their god *Kemosh* (the Patron of that people) could do them no good, but suffered them to be taken and spoiled. Such is the vain hope of poor Idolaters in their Idols, which cannot help or deliver themselves, much less their worshippers that trust in them.

Lastly, touching the Israelites, they spoiled them that were the spoilers, and conquered them that were the conquerors: for they recovered for themselves, and for their own use, the Towns and Cities which the Moabites had lost. Thus Israel meddled not with the Moabites, neither took anything from them, but peaceably possessed that which they won frō the Amorites, none laying any claim or title thereunto, as *Iephtah* pleadeth, *Judge*. 11, 13. And this is the right which the Israelites had to dwell in the Cities of the Amorites, and to possess as their own goods, the labors and livings of other men: which they could justify by the Law of God and man. For when *Abraham* had subdued in battle the five Kings, he challenged to himself a right in the prey that was taken, and paid y^e tenth of all to *Melchizedek*? Hereunto belongeth the commandment given of God, touching the dividing and retaining the spoils of war; saying, *All the spoil thereof shalt thou take unto thyself, and shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies which the Lord thy God hath given thee*, *Deuter*, 20, 14. And this we might plentifully prove by the Laws, Decrees, and Constitutions of Princes and States in former times.

[Verse 21. *Then Israel sent Messengers.*] In this division generally, is set forth the end of the enemies of the Church, that albeit they prevail for a season, and plow upon the backs of the godly, and make long and large surrowes, albeit they plant themselves strong, & flourish as the green Bay-tree, yet they pass away suddenly, and are cast down in desolation.

The persecutors and enemies of the Church shall perish and come to confusion. Howsoever they lift up their heads & horns on high, and their honor reach up to the Clouds, there shall be a downfall, they shall be confounded and consumed in his wrath. Look upon *Cain*, who was the first persecutor of y^e church in *Abel*, and we shall see the same confirmed which is offered to our considerations in these present examples. *He killed his brother*, *Gen*. 4, 11, and wherefore slew he him? *Because his own works were evil, and his brothers good*. But did cruel *Cain* escape? No, the curse of God came upon him, he was made a runagate and fugitive upon the earth, and so God revenged y^e innocent blood of his brother *Abel*, which he had shed with barbarous and unnatural cruelty. The like we might say of *Pharaoh*, an arch-enemy of the Church in Egypt, who oppressing the people of God with burdens, and destroying their children, was overwhelmed in the red Sea, *Exod*. 14, 28. Another fearful example we have in

Saneherib, which set himself against the people that called upon the living God, and blasphemed his Name which is holy throughout all generations; he was slain of his own sons, 2 Kings 20, 37, which judgment the Lord foretold, that being accordingly performed & accomplished, it might be known whence it was, & wherefore it came to pass. The like is reported & recorded of *Haman* in the book of *Ester*, ch. 7, 9, who procured the Kings writ, to root out, to kill, and to destroy all the Jews, young and old, children and women in one day: yet abusing his high favor with the King, and great honor in the Court, God threw him down, and laid his honor in the dust, so that he was hanged on the same tree which he had prepared for *Mordecai*, that spake good for the King. Thus his mischief returned on his own head, and his cruelty fell upon his own pate, and himself was taken in the snare which he made for another. Hereunto tendeth y^e end of *Nebuchadnezzar*, whose service God used to chasten his own people, to destroy the Temple, to waste the City, and to carry them away captive; he was thrown down, his reason was taken from him, and he had the heart of a beast given unto him.

The Jews, to whom pertained the right of adoption, the glory of the Ark, the tables of the Covenant, the giving of the Law, the service of God, the accomplishment of the promises, the coming of the Messiah, the Oracles of trust committed unto them; were notwithstanding all these privileges, enemies of Christ and of the Apostles, enemies of Christian Religion and the professors thereof, they put the Son of God to death, and persecuted his Apostles that he sent among them to preach and teach the Gospel of the Kingdom: in the end, themselves were justly slain for sedition, which they falsely charged upon the Apostles; nay as themselves cried, *his blood be upon us, and upon our children*: so that which Christ foretold, came upon them in full measure, pressing down and running over, when the abomination of desolation sate in the holy place: there was such trouble amongst them, and so great tribulation came upon them, that the like never was, nor shall be to the end. *Herod* that bloody tyrant, which had slain *James* with the sword, and putting *Peter* in prison, intended the like measure and murder upon him: this wicked wretch escaped not the hands of God; for being arrayed in his royal Robes, sitting upon the Judgment seat, and making an Oration unto the people, *The Angel of the Lord smote him, & he was eaten of worms*, Acts 12, 23. *Judas* the child of perdition, and betrayer of the Son of God, despaired, *Hung himself, burst in the midst, and his Bowels gushed out*, for whom it had been good if he had never been borne. What should I say more? If we remember the late days of persecution, wherein the patience of the Saints was tried by bloody executions, tortures, murders, massacres, hanging, beheading, burning, and imprisonment: we may observe, that the heavy hand of God was one way or other against those bloody Inquisitors, and cruel persecutors, that had imbrued and defiled their hands with their blood, that they died not the ordinary and common death of all, nor were visited after the visitation of all men. Some died fodainly, falling down on the ground that they never stirred, as *Ananias* and *Sapphira*: some had their bowels and inward parts fall out, and died the death of *Judas* their elder brother: some could not swallow and digest their meat, but it came forth again sometimes at their mouth, and sometimes at their nostrils, most horribly to behold. Some were stricken in the one half of their body, that they lay benumbed, half alive, and half dead, to the great terror and astonishment of all that were

present, and did look upon them. Some brake their Neckes: others became mad and frantic immediately after their reproaches and indignities shown against the servants of God, and ran up and down justifying those in words, whom they had condemned in deed. And scarce any of them escaped, but the hand of GOD was strongly and strangely upon them all before they died: To tell us and teach us this truth, that the persecutors of the Church, defiled with the blood of the Saints, shall not always escape unpunished, albeit for a time they do prevail.

The Reasons are these. First, because God [Reason 1] is true in all his words, & just in all his works. He is a most righteous Judge, who will take his own cause into his hands, and be glorified in the confusion of his adversaries. It cannot therefore be that they should escape, seeing GOD so tendereth them, their blood is precious in his sight, Matth. 23, 35. Not one drop of it shall fall to the ground vnreunged: he hath said, Psal. 105, 35. *Touch not mine anointed, & do my Prophets no harm.* He hath put all their tears in his bottle, & such as touch them to do them hurt, do touch the apple of his own eye. Yea whatsoever injuries, wrongs, oppressions, and indignities are offered unto them, he accounteth them as done unto himself. This our Savior testified from heaven, when Paul made havoc of the Church, and breathed out threatenings against the Saints, saying, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* They have not to do only with men, they fight against God, and therefore shall not prevail. This reason is urged by the Apostle, 2 Th. 1.6, 7. *It is a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you & to you which are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall show himself from heaven with his mighty Angels.*

Again, he is a gracious God, and merciful [Reason 2] to his people, therefore in his good time he will punish their enemies and those that hate them. He is as pitiful toward his children, as he is just against all their adversaries. This the Prophet expressly handleth at large, Psalm 136 1•, 16, 17, 18. &c. *He overthrew Pharaoh & his host in the red sea, for his mercy endureth forever: which smote great Kings, for his mercy endureth forever: and slew mighty Kings, for his mercy endureth forever: as Sihon King of the Amorites, for his mercy endureth forever: and Og the King of Bashan, for his mercy endureth forever. And gave their Land for an heritage, for his mercy endureth forever: even an heritage unto Israel his servant, for his mercy endureth forever.*

It remaineth to make use and application of this Doctrine. First, it is a great comfort to the Church, to consider how God is mindful of us in our distresses, he doth not forget our afflictions: he seeth the injuries that are offered unto us, as he surely saw the trouble of his people in Egypt; and therefore we ought not to sink down in our miseries. *No chastising indeed for the present time, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; but afterward it bringeth the quiet fruit of righteousness to them that are thereby exercised:* Heb. 12, 11. So that in the midst of them we must rejoyce, *Knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost which is given unto us.* Rom. 5, 3, 4, 5. Albeit he make us run through fire and water, he will in the ende bring us to a sweet place of rest. Let us not therefore be dismayed for tribulation, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. Let us not be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, *Which is the power of God to salvation unto all that believe.* Let us wait for the day of our deliverance, assuring our selves, that albeit the enemies of God's

people and Religion band themselves and assemble together against the Lord, and against his Christ, yet in the end he shall crush them with a Scepter of Iron, and break them in pieces like a Potters vessel, & not leave so great iniquity unpunished. Thus doth Moses comfort the people, Exod. 14. *Fear ye not, stand still, and behold the salvation of the Lord which he will show to you this day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen this day, ye shall never see them again: the Lord will fight for you, therefore hold you your peace. He will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and will get him honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, and upon all his Chariots, and upon his Horsemen, to show his power in thē, and to declare his Name throughout all the world.* Thus doth God comfort Abraham, Gen. 15, by foretelling that the same Nation which should deal so churlishly and cruelly with his posterity, should not always escape unpunished, but in the end he would recompense them according to their deserts: *Know for a surety, that thy seed shall be a Stranger in a Land that is not theirs, four hundredth years and shall serve thē, and they shall entreat thē evil: notwithstanding, the Nation whom they shall serve, I will judge, and afterward shall they come forth with great substance.* Gen. 15, 13, 14. As if the Lord should have said unto him, I would not have thee dismayed and discouraged (O Abraham) by these heavy tidings which I have told thee, that thy children shall be strangers in a strange Land, and not only strangers, but be made servants and bondslaves, and not only made slaves, but be evilly and despitefully handled: (thus God by a Rhetorical Gradation seemeth to augment his sorrows) rather I would have thee strengthen thy faith against this temptation, & comfort thy heart with this cogitation, that I will in the end punish that barbarous Nation, and bring upon it all those evils which it hath brought upon thy posterity, when they have filled to the full the measure of their sins. The truth of this promise is set down in y^e book of Exodus, from the seventh chapter to the fifteenth, which we may read, and in reading consider, that God is true in all his promises and Prophetesies, and will accomplish whatsoever he hath spoken for the confusion and destruction of his enemies. Let us therefore comfort our selves, and comfort one another in these things, that God will arise, and his enemies shall be scattered.

Secondly, let us refrain anger and revenge [Use 2] toward such as deal evilly with us. It is the nature of flesh and blood to rise in choler, to desire revenge, and not to put up wrongs and injuries. We must be more then a lump of flesh, if we will be the children of God. We see that *Stephen*, when he was stoned, prayed for his persecutors, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* Acts 7, 60. The like we see in Christ our Savior toward those that crucified him The consideration of this truth, that God reserveth wrath for his enemies, and taketh vengeance on his adversaries, will help to redress and repress our corrupt affections, and make us able to prevail over them, and to withstand them. Let us not recompense like for like: let us not measure evil for evil: let us do good against evil, committing our cases and causes to that just Judge, that always judgeth uprightly. Therefore the Prophet ascribeth this Title as peculiar to God to right and revenge the quarrels of his Children, Psal. 94, 1, 2. *O Lord God the avenger, O God the avenger, show thyself clearly: exalt thyself, O Judge of the world, and render a reward to the proud.* It is the proper Office of God to take vengeance on the wicked and ungodly. Wherefore the Apostle exhorteth the church, Rom. 12, 17, 19, to recompense to no man evil for evil, *Dearely beloved, avenge not yourselves, but give place unto wrath: for it is written Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord* So the Apostle *John*, after the foretelling o^r troubles and

persecutions, addeth, *Here is the patience of the Saints*, declaring thereby, what our armor, and what our weapons of defense are, to give us victory over our enemies. Let these things stay us in our afflictions, from breaking out into impatience of spirit, and from returning wrong for wrong; albeit the unfaithful rise up against us, & *the Drunkards make songs of us*, and we suffer reproof and reproach for the Gospels sake: yet he, whose cause it is, will not suffer the water-floods to drown us, neither let the deep swallow us up nor let the pit shut her mouth upon us.

Thirdly, it is the duty of his people to praise [Use 3] him greatly, when he avengeth the cause of his Children. When they see the wicked punished, and those that forget God taken in the snare of their own hands, let them rejoice and be glad, and give unto God the glory due unto his name. This practice we have in the Prophet, Ps. 136, 1. speaking of the overthrow of *Pharaoh* in the red sea, and remembering the slaughter of sundry mighty Kings, yea, even the names of those which we now speak of: he provoketh the people by a most earnest exhortation to give thanks unto God for their destruction, *Praise ye the Lord, because he is good, for his mercy endureth forever*. Hereunto cometh the prayer of the Israelites, enduring the bitter scorns and reproachful tauntes of most malicious enemies in the days of their captivity, who as they demanded an heavy curse against those Edomites, so they pronounced a blessing upon them that shall vex and trouble them. This appeareth evidently in *Ester* 9, 17. when the Church of God saw a great work wrought for them, their enemies destroyed and themselves delivered, they rejoiced with an exceeding great joy, and kept a feast in remembrance of their deliverance. It is not cruelty to rejoice at the destruction of God's enemies, and to magnify his most great name for it. This the Apostle *John* teacheth, *Reu.* 19, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. where the heavenly companies of Angels and blessed souls set forth their gladness and triumph, that God had judged the enemies of his people. So chap. 18. v, 20. *O heaven rejoice of her, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets: for God hath punished her, to be avenged on her for your sakes*. The innocent blood of the patient martyrs so cruelly murdered, crieth out for vengeance in the ears of the Lord of hosts, as the blood of righteous *Abel*, and shall not the Judge of all the world do right? It is his office to render into the bosom of his adversaries seven fold. Now as it is our duty earnestly to desire the accomplishment of his judgments, so when they are performed (as surely they will come and not tarry) we must glorify his blessed name, with all rejoicing that we can conceive and express.

Lastly, this serveth to be a terror to the ungodly, [Use 4] when this Doctrine shall sound in their ears, that God will judge the wicked for persecuting the members of Christ Jesus. If they escape in this world, the Lord reserveth them for greater judgment. When the Lord Jesus cometh *with thousands of his Angels, he will render vengeance unto them in flaming fire, and punish them with everlasting perdition from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*. This the Prophet assureth. *Isaiah* 8, 9, 10, 14. & 17, 11, 12, 13, 14. where by an Ironicall insulting, he setteth down the ruin of the enemies of the Church, who albeit their rage be restless, and their malice endless, yet they shall not stand, and their counsels shall come to nothing: they do fight against God, and against his son Christ Jesus, who is the invincible Rock whereon the Church is built, against which the gates of hell shall not be able to prevail, *So that whosoever shall fall on this stone, he shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will*

dash him in pieces, Mat. 21. Thus shall all the ungodly be scattered as chaff before the wind, and swept away as dung in the just judgment of God. So let all thine *Enemies perish*, O Lord: but *they that love him shall be as the Sun when he riseth in his might*, Judge. 5, 31.

[Verse 21.22. *Let me go through thy Land: We will not turn aside into the Fields, nor into the Vineyards, &c.*] Here Moses setteth down another danger of the Israelites, greater then the former remembered in the former chapter. Thus one trouble followeth in the neck of another, *As one deep calleth to another deep by the noise of his water spouts*, Psal. 42, 7. We see here again, how Israel is driven to the same exigent they were before. After they have compassed the land of Edom, they come to the Amorites, and crave of them some help and compassion. They seek comfort and an end of their sorrows, at the hands of *Sihon* a wretched Idolater, an enemy of God, and of his people. Thus low are the people of God oftentimes brought, to stand in need of the favor of the ungodly, as we have shown in the former chapter. Furthermore, *Moses* assureth before hand what their behavior shall be, and promiseth to abstain from all hurt & wrong. From hence we learn this doctrine, That the people of God must abstain from all violent incroching upon the goods and possessions of others: they must not intrude them selves upon their goods and substance, they must keep their hands from robbing and stealing, and their hearts from coveting and desiring that which is another's, and not their own: they must not take of all that is another man's, so much as a thread or shoo-latchet to enrich themselves. Hereunto come the laws given of God unto his people, Exodus 22, 1. *If a man steal an Ox, or a Sheep, if a man hurt his neighbors field, or Vineyard, his Corn or Pasture, he shall make recompense of the best of his own Felde, or Vineyard, or Corn, or Pasture.* Likewise in Deut. 19, 14. *Moses* chargeth them not to *remove their neighbors mark, which they of old time have set in their inheritance, that they might peaceably inherit the Land which God had mercifully given unto them.* This Christ teacheth the young man in the Gospel, Mark 10, 19. *Thou shalt hurt no man*, meaning by force or fraud, or by any other mean whatsoever in his goods. Thus John the Baptist instructeth the soldiers that came unto his baptism, demanding what they should do, Luke 3. verses 13, 14. *Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your Wages.* And hereunto cometh the general rule, being the law of Nature and Nations, Matth. 7, verse 12. *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do ye to them, for this is the Law & the Prophets.*

The reasons of this doctrine are many. First, in respect of God, who is an avenger of all such dealings. Oftentimes it falleth out, that men cannot right their own causes, and Magistrates to whom they should fly, will not. For who are they that for the most part lie open to violence and oppression, but the poor and fatherless, the widow and stranger, and such as are destitute of friends to help them in their good and lawful causes? But God, both can right the causes of such distressed persons, because he is Almighty; and he will remedy them, because he is merciful. He is *God of God's, and Lord of Lord's, a great God, mighty and terrible, which accepteth no persons, nor taketh reward, Who doth right unto the Fatherless and Widow, and loveth the stranger, giving him food and raiment*, Deut. 10, ver. 17, 18. This reason the Apostle urgeth, 1 Thess. 4, 6. To this purpose *Moses* speaketh, Exod. 22, 21, 22, 23, 24. So the Lord threateneth in the Prophet *Habbakkuk*, chap. 2. This ought to prevail with us, to teach us equity, forasmuch as GOD threateneth to be revenged of all iniquity.

[Reason 2] Again, God is the God of righteousness and judgment, therefore he commandeth and commendeth unto his people that which is just and equal, and forbiddeth them the contrary. He hath the Sovereign right of all things in his own hand, and hath in most excellent wisdom distributed and disposed to every man his several portion. If this then be the nature of God to deal justly and righteously toward everyone, that no man can cōplain of wrong and injury done of God toward him: then such as are the Children of God, must resemble their heavenly Father in doing the works of righteousness and equity. This the Prophet in many places teacheth, *Thou art not a God that loveth wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee: the foolish shall not stand in thy sight, for thou hatest all them that work iniquity.* Seeing therefore God loveth righteousness & hateth wickedness, he must needs detest and abhor whatsoever is contrary to his nature; to wit, all unrighteousness and injustice.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, we are brethren, we pr fesse the same faith, we worship the same God, we look for the same inheritance, we are sealed with the same baptism, we are nourished at the same Table, we live by the same faith, we wait for a better life by the same hope; and therefore being called with such an heavenly calling, oppression and deceit stand not with our holy profession, as Moses speaketh to the Israelites, when it came in his heart to visit his brethren, to join himself to the Church, and to forsake the treasures and pleasures of Egypt, Exod. 2, 13. *Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one another?* This is the reason that Abraham used to Lot, to take up the contention begun among their servants, as it were a fire kindled in their houses, threatening to consume them with the Timber thereof, & stones thereof, *Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me, neither between thy Heard-men, and my Heard-men, for we are brethren.* Gen. 13, verse 8.

Let us see what may be the uses and applications [Use 1] of this point. First, all community, maintained by the Anabaptists, and Family of love, is overthrown, (being contrary to the direct Law of God.) To possess goods in private as proper to one, is approved by the examples of the Christian Churches planted by the Apostles: and therefore to hold and teach, that nothing doeth, or ought peculiarly and properly to belong unto another, is reprov'd and rejected by the doctrine of the Apostles. The eight Commandment being moral and perpetual, forbiddeth us to hurt and annoy our neighbors goods, and establisheth a distinction of goods and a propriety of possessions. They are therefore greatly and grossly deceived, and do notoriously deceive others, that imagine the difference and distinction of lands and goods, to be brought in by tyranny, not by law; by violence, not by justice; by force and fear, not by right and reason; because as children of the same Father have the same right and interest in the goods of their Father: so all men have equal right and jurisdiction in the earth, and in all things that are upon the face of the earth: and for this cause they suppose all things common, & nothing proper by the Law of God. But this opinion falleth to the ground, [Answer.] and shall fall so long as the Commandment standeth in full force, strength, and virtue, as a Bond and Obligation that bindeth us and our posterity forever. For if all were a Commons, and nothing enclosed, if the hedge of propriety were pulled up, and all lay wide and waste as a Wilderness without inclosure; then there could be no stealing, no injury or wrong offer'd, every man should take his own by his own right: and God should forbid that by Law which cannot be committed. As if a Law were made, that man should not

fly in the air, nor climb up into Heaven, nor walk upon his head, nor be in many places at once, which things are impossible to human Nature. But God forbiddeth nothing in vain.

Again, if propriety of goods were not ordained of God, but devised of man, God by precept and commandment should establish and confirm the violence and usurpation of men, and as it were give them a free Charter, and his broad Seal to have and to hold all goods wrongfully gotten, as if a Prince should make a Law, that whatsoever thieves & robbers catch by hook or crook, they shall possess them by a good and rightful title: then which what can be thought more unreasonable, or spoken more absurdly? Besides, what need were there to set bounds and marks in Lands and possessions? And wherefor are they accursed of God and men, that remove ancient bounds and marks, if there were no propriety? Now where theft is restrained, where wrong is condemned, where abstaining from the goods of others is required, there is a difference supposed between thine and mine.

Moreover, there could be no giving, nor buying, nor bargaining, nor selling, nor hyring, nor lending, if all things were left to the wide world, to be caught and snatched according to the lust and pleasure of every man: in all which notwithstanding, God by special Commandments tieth up and restraineth the gripings and greediness of covetous men. For if the Corinthians had had all things in common no strife could arise among them of things pertaining to this life: but inasmuch as they wronged one another in these temporal things, and wrangled for them under the Infidels, it is plain, that every man had his own portion distinct from the possession of other men. And the same Apostle, bridling the gaping and greedy desires of men, teacheth, that *they that use this world, should be as though they used it not, and they that buy, should be as though they possessed not.* 1 Cor. 7, 30, 31. Therefore by this exhortation, buying is allowed, possessing is granted, so that the heart be not set upon the world. This is farther confirmed by sundry precepts of the Apostle, *Let him that hath stolen, steal no more, but let him rather labor, and work with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* Eph. 4, 28. The wise man saith, Prov. 25, 17. *Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbors house, lest he be weary of thee, and hate thee.* But if all were common, it were lawful to enter everywhere, and use all things at our own pleasure.

Lastly, to what ende and purpose should the word of God strictly command alms-giving, and the works of mercy and charity, if there were no propriety or seueralty, but an equal communion of all worldly goods? So to what ende should the Apostle *charge the wealthy in this world to do good with their goods, and those that be rich, to be rich in faith, and in good works, to be ready to give to such as are in need, and to lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come?* Surely the difference between rich and poor could not stand, between high and low, but all should be shuffled together in great confusion, contrary to the order and ordinance of God, who is the God of all order and comliness among the people. Neither let any object the practice of the Primitive Church, [Object.] Acts, chap. 4, 32, & chap. 2, 44, where it is said, *The multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul: neither any of them said, that anything of that which he possessed, was his own, but they had all things common.* For there is a double kind of communion, [Answer.] in respect of propriety, and in respect of use. The community in the faithful, stood in y^e use of these outward things, which they

employed for the good of their fellow-members. And therefore albeit some sold their goods and possessions, and parted them according to the necessities of the poor members of Christ, yet the Apostle *Peter* saith to *Ananias*, who had sold his possession & kept away part of the price, *While it remained, appertained it not to thee? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?* But how could they sell their goods, if they were not right owners and lawful possessours of them? Neither doth the Text say, that those Christians sold all they had possessed. It is said indeed, *As many as were owners of lands and houses, sold, & brought the prices of those things which they sold, and laid it before the Apostles feet.* The Scripture showeth, they sold and brought the price of that they sold: but it saith not, they sold all, and then brought the price of all: for it appeareth, that *Philip*, one of them kept his house still, & entertained the Apostles in the same, and consequently had it furnished for these uses, and fitted to lodge and harbor the godly & faithful brethren.

This community should be in every lively feeling member of Christ, who in the public want of the Church, should be ready and willing to dispossess themselves of somewhat, for the succor & comfort of other members. So then, they are overthrown, which do affirm, that it is unlawful for Christians to have or possess any riches: whereas no man in the Primitive Church was compelled to make his goods common. For *Peter* plainly avoucheth, that it lay in the power of *Ananias*, whether he would sell his Land or not: and when he had sold it, the money was his own, so that he might have kept it to himself if he had listed. His sin was, that he pretended to bring the whole price of that which they had sold, whereas they brought a part thereof, & so lied unto God. But God requireth at our hands, that we should give cheerfully, not grudgingly; willingly, not constrainedly, readily, not backwardly.

Secondly, everyone must look that he [Use 2] live in a lawful calling, wherein he must abide, eating his own bread, and laboring y^e thing that is good. So we shall defraud no man, but deal righteously and justly, and get by lawful means: we must restore again that which hath been unlawfully gotten, and unconscionably deteined, though haply hidden from men, so that the world cannot lay it to our charge, yet our own heart knoweth it, and chargeth it upon us, and our conscience will not pass it over, but we must evermore hear of it, and receive a check from it. The crying of an accusing & condemned conscience cannot be stopped, but is as a thousand witnesses against us.

Again, goods wrongfully gotten & kept from the Owner, do cry against us, and do lay bitter accusations to our charge. This the Prophet *Habbkkuk* teacheth, chap. 2, 9, 10, 11. True it is, the stones have no mouth to cry, neither the timber any feeling to suffer wrong at our hands: but the Scripture useth such manner of speech & form of words, to make us perceive the better, by this vehement raising up of the dumb and senseless creatures, that if we do amiss before GOD, and deal wrongfully with men, the creatures shall bear witness against us, and ask vengeance upon us at the latter day. Therefore he bringeth in the several parts of the house answering one another, and singing one to another: one side crieth out, behold blood: the other, behold murder: the one, behold deceit: the other, behold cruelty. Thus the Apostle *James* speaketh, chap. 5, 4. *Behold, the hire of the Laborers, which have reaped your field (which is of you kept back by fraud) crieth, and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into*

the ears of the Lord of hosts. Thus we see, how the creatures abused, do groan to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, & cry out against oppression: the oppressed crieth in the ears of the Lord, and the conscience of the oppressor as an honest Iurate witnesseth against him, and crieth for vengeance. And shall the Lord be deaf, and not hear such great and loud out-cryings of so many distressed and oppressed persons entering into the highest heavens, and piercing the ears of the Lord of hosts? *Shall not God avenge his elect which day and night cry unto him, yea, though he suffer long for them?* I tell you, he will avenge them quickly, to the comfort of the oppressed, but to the confusion of the oppressor.

[Use 3] Lastly, seeing wrongful dealing must be avoided, it serveth to condemn all inordinate living in no settled or lawful calling, idly, vnthriftily, and prodigally. For every man living in the Church, of what degree or condition soever, must have some particular calling to walk in, how high soever his estate be, how great soever his revenues be: which condemneth the wandering up & down of rogues and beggars, the Cloisters of Monks and Friars, the idleness of rich men that have lands and livings, all such as are Drones, unprofitable to the Church or Common-wealth, or family, wherein they abide. *Adam* in time of his innocence immediately after his creation in the Image of God, had a special calling appointed him to dress and keep the Garden. It was likewise said to him and his posterity immediately after the fall, *In the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread, till thou return unto the earth, out of which thou wast taken* So the Apostle saith, 2 Thess. 3, 11, 12. Christ Jesus, the head of men and Angels, before the solemn inuesting and entering into his Office, lived privately in *Joseph's* house, and wrought in his trade, and therefore it is, that the Jews call him, not only the Carpenters son, but a Carpenter. If then we would settle our selves in a lawful calling, eating our own bread, trusting in the providence of God, contenting our selves with our present estate, thinking it the best and fittest for us, we should keep our selves from oppression & wrong. But because some live without any calling, some without a lawful calling, others live distrustful & discontented, it driveth them to make ungodly shifts, and use unlawful means which God abhorreth. Let us lay these things to our own hearts, and not spend our days in ydlenesse. The time is precious, let us seek to redeem it. Let us every day do some good or other, let us learn some good of others, or be teaching some good thing to others. But alas, how many are there in all places that spend whole days, and months, and years in vanity? who if they would call themselves to an account of their lives past, might see and perceive many days pass over their heads without doing any good, whereof, albeit they will take no account of themselves, yet they must give an account to God at the day of judgment.

Verse 23. *But Sihon gave Israel no license to pass through his Border: and Sihon assembled all his people, and went out against Israel into the wilderness, &c.* The request to give the Israelites a quiet and peaceable passage, being quiet & peaceable men, was just and reasonable; yet the petition is denied, and the people themselves that made it, are persecuted. They offered no wrong, they drew no sword, they shot no Arrow, they cast no Dart, they took away nothing, yet they are hated and hurried unto the death, and assaulted without mercy. This teacheth, that the ungodly do hate and persecute the godly without cause. This is the practice of wicked men, to pursue the children of God with all injurious and despiteful dealing, albeit they offer no occasion of hurt or harm unto them. We see this practice in *Cain*, who hated his

brother, and albeit he spake friendly unto him, yet drawing him into the field, he rose up against him & slew him. This the Prophet complaineth of Psalm. 69, 4, and 35, 7. *Joseph* was sold as a slave, and imprisoned as a malefactor. *Jeremiah* was many ways troubled and clapped up. *David* was hated & hunted frō place to place. The Apostles were whipped and scourged in the Synagogues; *Stephen* was reviled and stoned; Christ was scorned and crucified: *Paul* was buffeted and persecuted. The Saints were tried by mocking, burned in the fire, slain with the sword, they wandered in the wilderness, they were hidden in caves and holes of the earth.

The Reasons are very plain & direct. For first, it seemeth unto them more then strange, [Reason 1] that the faithful are not brethren with them in evil, but separate themselves from them, & will touch no unclean thing. *If we were of the world, the world would love his own, but because we are chose out of the world, therefore the world hateth us.* So long as *Paul* ioynd with y^e Pharisees in persecuting the Church, & imprisoning all those that called vpō the Lord Jesus, who was in greater favor and credit with thē? But whē he was called to preach y^e truth which before he had oppugned, and became zealous in the faith which before he destroyed, by & by the Jews took counsel to kill him. Christ Jesus the Lord of life, before he was installed into his Office, was in favor with God and men: but when he was baptized, albeit he was always in favor with his Father, yet immediately afterward, he was tempted of the devil, contemned of his Country-men, and led to the edge of an hil to be cast down headlong. This is that which the Apostle *Peter* witnesseth, 1 Pet. 4.4, 5. But it is better for us to have the hatred of men, and the ill will of all the world, then fail in any part of our duty unto God, who is able to cast body and soul into hell.

[Reason 2] Secondly, no marvel if the wicked hate the godly, for the world hateth Christ. He was called a Samaritan, he was counted a Coniurer, he was esteemed as a drunkard, a deceiver, a devil, a friend of Publicans and sinners, If they have thus reviled the Master of the house, no marvel if they respect not the members. *The Ambassador must not look to be greater then he that sent him: the Disciple must not dream of a better condition then the Lord: if they have done thus to the green Tree, what will they do to the dry and withered?* If they deal thus with him that is always fruitful & flourishing, and liveth forever, we must not look that they should deal better with us that are unfruitful and full of the unsavory fruits of our corruption. This Christ himself teacheth in sundry places, Mat. 10, 24 25. *The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord: it is enough for the Disciple to be as his Master is, and the servant as his Lord: if they have called the Master of the house, Belzebub, how much more them of his household?*

[Use 1] Now let us see what uses may be gathered from hence. First, we may assure our selves, that it is a lamentable and woeful condition to live and dwell among such mallitious & mischievous enemies. They grin and grind their teeth at us like Dogs: they gape at us with their mouths, like the ramping and roaring Lyon: they push at us with their heads like the fat Bulls of Bashan: they run at us with their horns like the Unicorn, they whet their tuskes at us like the wild Boar out of the wood: they seek to eat us up like the savage beasts of the Field and Forest. Would we not take it to be a fearful condition to be carried into a great and

terrible Wilderness, and to be compassed about with Dragons, Tigers, Bears, and other devouring beasts, ready to eat us in pieces while there is none to help? But man unto man, is many times all these; especially the unfaithful man to the faithful. •or what *fellowship is there between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent? Wh^t communion between light and darkness? and what concord between Christ and Belial.* This the Prophet acknowledged & felt by experience in his own person, *Woe is me that I remained in Meshech, & dwell in the tents of Kedar: my soul hath too long dwelt with him that hateth peace: I seek peace, and when I speak thereof, they are bent to war.* For, as the society of the faithful is good and comely, like the precious ointment upon the head of Aaron, and as the dew falling upon the mountains of Hermon and Zion, because they take sweet counsel together, and go unto the house of God as companions: so the accompanying & conversing with evil persons is irksome and tedious unto the godly, as if they lived with Wolves and wild beasts in the Wilderness. True it is, the people of God hate and abhor the sins of the ungodly, but yet love their persons, as the Physician hateth the disease, but loveth the person of his Patient. But the ungodly hate not only the infirmities of the faithful, but their persons, even to the death, as the dung of the earth, and the off-scouring of all things: and therefore we must needs account it a woeful condition, full of grief, anguish, and vexation of Spirit to live among them. This life is as a continual death.

Secondly, seeing this is the entertainment that we must look for, and shall find in the [Use 2] world to be hated and harrowed by the ungodly, it standeth us upon to live in unity and to love one another, as the children of the Father and the disciples of Christ. When enemies daily increase and join their forces together in a common band, & an united league it standeth all those upon that are of the communion of Saints, that are come unto Mount Zion, to the City of the living God, and to the assembly and congregation of the first borne, which are written in heaven, to unite & combine themselves together as one man. The adversaries of the Church are many, their power is mighty, their malice is insatiable against y^e little flock of Christ: it is time therefore for us to join our selves against the common adversary. Who can be ignorant how the popish crew associate themselves together, seeking to subvert the state, and to overthrow religion established among us, being resolved by murderous Mass-Priests, and set on fire of hell? We have also many hollow-hearted hypocrites, damnable Atheists, filthy Libertines, & sundry loose livers, y^t can abide none to make any sincere profession of godliness. The poor sheep and innocent Lambes of Christ amidst so many subtle Foxes and cruel Wolves, had need love one another, being hated of the world, and seek the good one of another, being maligned of the wicked.

Hereunto Christ exhorteth in sundry places as John. 13. *A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* And in the 16. Chapter he moveth the Disciples to love one another, seeing they are hated of the world as their Mayster was. This therefore is the comfort of a true Christian, that albeit he be hated of the ungodly, yet there is a true communion among the believers of all gifts and graces granted unto them, being ready to teach the ignorant, to gather home them that go astray, to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort the weak, to convince the deceived, to admonish the unruly, to stir up

them that are dull, & to encourage all in well-doing. And touching the bodies of our brethren, those that have this worlds good, must show themselves willing to help the poor, to feed y^e hungry, to clothe the naked, to raise up the distressed, to visit the sick, and to do good to all, but especially to them that are of the household of faith. Gal. 6, 10.

Lastly, seeing hatred lodgeth in the heart [Use 3] of a wicked man toward the faithful, it is our duty to pray to God to be delivered from unreasonable and evil men, *Seeing all have not faith; and that living among them, we may be established and kept blameless, and pure from evil, and may shine as lights in the midst of a crooked & naughty Nation, holding forth the word of life.* This the Prophet David declareth, Psalm. 35, 12, 13, 15, 16.17. Thus doth God wean us from the love and liking of this world, that we should look and long after his kingdom, where is fullness of joy for evermore.

Verses 25, 26. *And Israel took all those Cities: therefore Israel dwelled in all the Cities of the Amorites in Heshbon, and in all the Villages thereof.* These Cities taken by the Israelites did sometimes belong to the Moabites, as appeareth, Judge. 11. But *Sihon* had taken them from *Veheb* the former King of the Moabites. So thē in these words we have the preventing of an Objection, as *Lyra* well observeth upon this place, where it is said, that Israel dwelt in Heshbon, & in the Villages thereof, which properly belonged to the Land of Moab, as part and parcel thereof, being now rent and torn in pieces as a body that had lost many limbs and members. Some man therefore might ask the question, how came the Israelites to possess that Land, seeing they were expressly restrained and forbidden of God to fight against the Moabites, & they were told that they should have no part nor portion of their Land given unto them? Deut. 2, 9. *Thou shalt not vex Moab, neither provoke them to battle, for I will not give thee of their Land for a possession.* To this *Moses* answereth, that albeit it could not be denied and gain-said, but that the Cities were in former time within the Borders and Territories of Moab, yet *Sihon* had taken them away by right of war, and conquest of the sword: so that now they were alienated from the Moabites, and appropriated to the Amorites, who possessed them and dwelt in them. So then the Israelites offered no wrong to the Moabites, but recovered the places to their own use out of the hand of the Amorites. Neither did Moab lay any claim to them for many generations, as *Iephtah* declareth, Judge. 11. And this is the right that Israel had to these Cities.

Thus we see what dealings passed between the Moabites and the Amorites, before Israel came to these places: both of them were idolaters, both wicked men, both grossly ignorant of the true worship of God, and desperate enemies to the true Church: one is ready to cut the throat of another, and killeth one another in battle. We learn from hence, that God punisheth oftentimes one wicked man by the hand of another. He raiseth up and armeth one of them to destroy another, to eat up and consume another. This truth appeareth in many other places of holy Scripture. *Chedor-laomer* usurping dominion over other Nations, made war against them, and took away all the substance as a prey & booty out of Sodom and Gomorrhah. God in his providence causeth one evil man to slay another. The Sodomites were exceeding sinners against the Lord. He raised up an enemy, not much better then themselves for their destruction. The like we see in the example of the Midianites, *Who*

sheathed their swords in their own bowels. Indeed *Gideon* gave his men at arms, that went with him to that service, Lamps, Trumpets, and Pitchers, and thus he marched against his enemies: they sounded their Trumpets, they brake their Pitchers, they lighted their Lamps, then the host of the Midianites fled, & every man's sword was set against his neighbor, their own weapons were their own bane, their own men were their own murderers, and so they destroyed one another. This the Prophet *Habbakkuk* showeth, when the Law was dissolved, Justice oppressed, cruelty practiced, and all wickedness was advanced among them, the LORD would work a wonder among them *He would raise up the Chaldeans against them, a bitter and furious Nation to destroy them, a people worse then themselves.* This is that which *Isaiah* the Prophet pointeth unto, when he saith, *Everyone shall eat the flesh of his own arm, Manasseh Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh: and they both shall be against Judah,* *Isaiah* 9, 21. Likewise he prophesieth the destruction of *Babylon* by the *Medes* and *Persians*, chap. 13, 17. The destruction of the *Egyptians* by the *Assyrians*, chap. 19. *Yea he would set the Egyptians against the Egyptians, so that everyone should fight against his brother, and everyone against his neighbor, City against City, and Kingdom against Kingdom.*

The reasons of this order and manner of God's working, are not hard to find. For first, [Reason 1] who shall limit him what means to use, and what persons to employ in his service? Dare any Subject prescribe unto his Prince whom he shall send? Or shall a servant teach & appoint his master whom he shall entertain to perform his business? Or will any Magistrate & master take well such pride & presumption? Shall God then, the King of Kings, & the master over all men, be stinted and limited whom he shall use? As none can appoint him what he shall do, or when he shall punish, or whom he shall correct: no more can we decree or determine the means and manner of his proceedings. He appointeth the times and seasons of punishing, he singleth out the persons to be punished. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who was his Counselor? He will find out his enemies in their sins, and he will choose out the instruments of his own judgments. He armeth many times men of evil hearts, and of unclean hands to do his works diligently, and to accomplish his ways fervently. When the Lord would smite the house of *Ahab*, and avenge the blood of his servants the Prophets, *Jehu* is anointed King over *Israel*, & made the Rod of the Lord, who performed his word and will to the full, he slew *Jehoram*, cast down *Jezebel*, and slew the Priests of *Baal*: yet notwithstanding all his zeal which he pretended for the Lord, his heart was not upright before him, neither regarded he to walk in the Law of the Lord God of *Israel*, neither departed he from the sins of *Jeroboam* which made *Israel* to sin. As then the work is the Lord's, so is the workman: and as the judgment is his, so is the instrument which he chooseth and fitteth to effect the same, without the prescription & appointment of any other.

[Reason 2] Again, albeit they be wicked and ungodly men, infidels and idolaters that he imploieith to finish his work, & to bring his decree & determination to pass, yet he frameth their hearts to serve his providence, as seemeth good in his heavenly wisdom. He hath the hearts of all men in his hand, even of Kings, to turn them about to be instruments of his will. If then he can change the hearts of enemies, no marvel if he use them as his servants. So he useth the service of the devils and evil spirits, and maketh them to do his will, and against

their will▪ & further the salvation of his children, whō they purposed to bring to despair and damnation, as appeareth in the History of *Job's* temptations. Albeit they be not his faithful servants to do his will cheerfully, yet they are his slaves to serve him by constraint and compulsion. This the Apostle *John* declareth in the destruction of that great whore which is drunk with the blood of the Saints, with whom the Kings of the earth committed fornication; namely, *that they gave their power and authority to the Beast; but they shall hate the whore, make her desolate, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire: for God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to do with one consent, for to give their kingdom unto the Beast, until the words of God be fulfilled.* Reu. 17, 15, 16, 17. Nothing is done without the will of God. He holdeth in his hands the hearts and purposes of Princes, and great men upon earth, and directeth them by a secret motion to work what he pleaseth, whether they know his will, or know it not, the whole action cometh of him, and from him. For howsoever it might seem hard and harsh, that the Angel saith, it was GOD that put it into the harts of Kings to advance the Papacy, which was the work of the devil to seduce the world: yet after a sort the Lord also doth it, who as a just Judge for the wickedness of the world, and contempt of y^e Gospel, letteth loose Satan, to deceive in his heavy, yet righteous judgment. So the Apostle teacheth, that *God shall send strong delusions, that they shall believe lies, that will not embrace and receive the truth.* 2 Thes. 2, 11.

The uses are to be thought upon, and to be [Use 1] learned of us. First, marvel not if wicked mē many times prosper and prevail. For if God use them as his Rods, and enableth them to work his will, albeit they do not fear God, nor purpose to serve him, nor aim at his glory, yet they shall overcome and have the upper hand, for God hath sent them, God hath armed them, God hath said unto them, go and prosper. Let us not therefore think when evil men prevail, that all things are shufled & hudled together: let us not doubt of God's high providence over-ruling the world: let us not make prosperity a note of the Church, as if it were always here in flourishing estate, multiplying in wealth, abound•ng in friends, glorious in victories, flowing in honors, increasing in multitudes, and excelling in outward privileges, for God many times raiseth up the heads of evil men to bring mighty things to pass. This the Prophet *Ezekiel* declareth, chap. 29, 18, 19, 20. *Son of Man, Nebuchadnezzar King of Babel, caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was made bare: yet had he no wages, nor yet his army for Tyrus, for the service that he served against it: therefore thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will give the Land of Egypt to the King of Babel, and he shall take her multitude, and spoil her spoil, and take her prey, and it shall be the wages of his army: I have given him the Land of Egypt for his labor that he served against it: because they wrought for me, saith the Lord God.* Where the Prophet showeth, that *Nebuchadnezzar* had served God's providence in the siedege and sacking of *Tyrus*; and therefore he had another kingdom given him for it, and blessed with victory over other enemies. This is the reason why evil men are set up, and have a reward of temporal blessings, because they are God's soldiers, and are under his pay, who suffereth them not to go and depart without their wages. Thus all earthly things fall out alike to all, & there is the same outward condition belonging to all, *To the just and unjust, to the pure and to the polluted.* Eccles, 9, 2.

Secondly, let us from hence know assuredly, there are no ways to withstand his wrath, [Use 2] no policy to prevent his judgments, no force that can resist his purposes. We see how many means he hath to bring forth his decrees: he can make the ungodly serve him, whensoever he will command them. True it is God's children guided by his Spirit, and framed to the obedience of his will, will always be serviceable to him with cheerfulness of heart and willingness of mind. If he command his adversaries any work, they must obey him, albeit against their wills: he enforceth them as slaves to do his will. Whatsoever their purposes be, God disposeth them to bring his own decrees to pass. What man then can promise to himself rest and peace, or think to wind himself from the hand of God, or escape the sentence gone out against him, or stand against God coming out to take vengeance upon him? Seeing he hath so many servants in readiness set in battle array to perform his purposes, and can single out what instruments he listeth, albeit as evil as themselves. This the Prophets teach everywhere, to the terror of all God's enemies. Consider that *Jeremiah* is bold, and saith to *Zedekiah* King of Judah, *Deceiue not yourselves, saying; The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us, for they shall not depart: for though ye had smitten the whole host of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet should every man rise up in his Tent and burn this City with fire.* The destruction of the ungodly hangeth not upon the power and pleasure of men, nor on the might and multitude of Soldiers, but on the judgment of God, who giveth strength to the weak, and courage to the coward, and might to the maimed man, to root out and to destroy. This should greatly humble and terrify the wicked man, that promiseth safety & security to himself, who notwithstanding lieth open every way to the wrath and indignation of God.

Lastly, let the people of God comfort themselves, [Use 3] though they be over-burdened and over-mastered by them. A time will come, and loe, it tarrieth not, when those wicked men that oppress and vex the Church▪ shall be rooted out. The Lord of hosts hath men and Angels, and all creatures to work out their destruction: he can whistle for other enemies, as evil as themselves to come against them, to conquer and overcome them. Be not therefore daunted to see them rule and reign: *Fret not thyself because of the evil men, neither be envious for the evil doers, for they shall soon be cut down like grass, and shall wither as the green Hearb. Trust in the Lord and do good, dwell in the Land, and thou shalt be fed assuredly. I have seen the wicked, strong and spreading himself like a green Bay-tree, yet he passed away, and loe he was gone, and I sought him, but he could not be found.* Let us therefore no whit be troubled to see the enemies of God and of the godly exalted and lifted up; they are set in slippery places, they are suddenly destroyed and horribly consumed as a dream when one awaketh: *For God sendeth an evil spirit among them, as he did between Abimelech and the men of Shichem, to be revenged of the cruelty which they had shown toward the 70. sons of Ierubbaal.* Judge. 9, 23, 24. We see this in the delivery of the Church out of Babylon; God stirred up the Medes & Persians, as great idolaters, as proud and profane persons as themselves, and by *Cyrus* delivered them, whom long before he had designed and deputed to that work. This the Prophet *Isaiah* showeth, chap. 21, 2, 10. So the•• albeit y^e Church were as it were thrashed with a Flaile, and a Cartwheeled upon their backs, albeit their loins were filled with sorrow, yet shall their enemies come to ruin and destruction, *Babel is fallen, it is fallen, and all the Images of her God's*

hath he broken to the ground. Isaiah 21, 9. Howsoever therefore the estate of the Church in Babylon seemed desperate, and past all hope of recovering her former glory, yet we see God wanted not ways and means to free his chosen people, and set them at liberty, he raised the Medes and Persians to lead them by the hand out of y^e hand of their oppressors. His hand is not now shortened, his power is not now weakened, he can deal thus with all his enemies, & the enemies of his Church. If he blow upon them with the blast of his mouth, they pass away suddenly, as the chaff is scattered before the wind. An example hereof is recorded in the holy History, 2 Chron. 20, 23. when a great multitude of the Moabites, Ammonites, and Amorites, assembled themselves to fight against *Jehoshaphat*, after he had set himself to seek y^e Lord, proclaiming a fast throughout all *Judah*, asking counsel of the Lord, and praying to him in the zeal of his spirit, the enemies slew one another with the sword. Thus doth God turn the edge of the sword drawn against the Church, upon themselves, & rescueth his people when there is none to help. We have had experience of God's protection of his church, our eyes have seen, and our ears have heard how one hath butchered and murdered another, whereby God hath given a time of rest and breathing unto his servants. He is the same without changing, with him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; if we turn to him with all our hearts, he will turn to us, and not suffer the rod of the wicked always to rest on the lot of the righteous, lest they should put forth their hand to wickedness.

Therefore Israel dwelled in all the Cities of the Amorites in Heshbon, and in all the Villages thereof. We have heard of the murders & slaughters that were between the Moabites & the Amorites, in the which, howsoever one sought to defend himself, the other prevailed by usurpation (as might sometimes over-cometh right:) yet the purpose of God, who over-swayeth all actions of men, and draweth good out of evil, was to give rest to his people, and to make them inherit and inhabit the Cities and Villages which the Amorites had wrongfully gotten. Hereby we learn for our instruction, that God oftentimes bringeth the godly and faithful that please him, to inherit the Lands and possessions of the wicked and ungodly. Howsoever the believers that fear God, are many times thrust out of house and home, and have their lawful possessions taken from them, as we see in *Naboth's Vineyard*, and in *Abraham's Well*: yet sometimes God returneth in mercy to the faithful, and maketh the substance and inheritance of the unfaithful, to descend unto them. This is confirmed in the Book of Exodus, at the departure of Israel out of the Land of Egypt, at which time GOD recompensed the sore labors and heavy travels of his people, imposed upon them by cruel task-masters, *For they asked of the Egyptians Jewels of silver, and Ingots of gold, and change of raiment; then the Lord gave them favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted their requests, enriched the Israelites, and spoiled themselves.* Exod. 12, 35, 36. This goodness of God the Prophet with praise acknowledgeth toward his people, saying; *He cast out the Heathen before them, & caused them to fall to the lot of his inheritance, &c.* Psal. 78, 55. This verifieth the saying of the wise man, Prov. 28, 8. *He that increaseth his riches by usury and interest, gathereth them for him that will be merciful to the poor.* And in another place, *The good man shall give inheritance to his children's children, and the riches of the sinner is laid up for the just.* In like manner *Job* describing the condition of the ungodly, fheweth, that *though he should heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay; he may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.* Thus God

taketh away the things of this life from such as use thē wickedly, and bestoweth them upon such as will employ them lawfully.

[Reason 1] The Reasons remain to be considered to strengthen this truth, and to make it appear to the consciences of all of us, to be a necessary and apparent truth. First of all, the mercy of God, toward such as are sealed up to be his servants, is without end; there is no brim nor bottom of it. If then his mercy surmount our thoughts he will let pass no part of his kindness toward them that do fear him. Thus the Prophet reasoneth, Psal. 136, 21, 22. Where, upon these examples of God's great kindness toward Israel, in overthrowing *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*, and *Og* the King of *Bashan*, he saith, *He gave their Land for an heritage, for his mercy endureth forever: even an heritage unto Israel his servant, for his mercy endureth forever*, Whensoever therefore we see this come to pass, we must acknowledge the cause of it to be in God, who ceaseth not to be good to those that be his.

[Reason 2] Again, God maketh known his power among his people, to teach them to depend upon him, to show unto them that they serve not a weak and impotent God, & to instruct them to walk in the obedience of his ways. This the Prophet pointeth out, Psalm. 44, 2, 3, and 111, 6, & 105, 44, 45.

[Use 1] The uses follow. First, this truth teacheth, who is the sovereign disposer of all things in heaven and earth; namely, God. He ordereth kingdoms, and disposeth Countries, he giveth and taketh away, he increaseth and diminisheth, he maketh rich, and maketh poor. It is not our own strength or policy; it is not our own care or labor, it is the bountifulness and blessing of God, that is all in all. We have here beneath upon the earth, Owners and Land-lords, we have such as account themselves possessours of houses and lands: but we must know that we are all Tenants at will, we enjoy nothing by Lease or Indenture for term of years, but hold the tenure of the Lands and livings at the will and pleasure of the great and high Land-lord of all the world. This is the confession of *Hannah* in her song of thanksgiving, 1 Sam. 2, 7, 8. *The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich, bringeth low, and exalteth: he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among Princes: and to make them inherit the seat of glory, for the Pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them*. Whatsoever therefore we have, let us acknowledge therein, not our own deserts or merits, but the goodness of God toward us, filling us with good things to serve him.

Secondly, let us from hence confess, that [Use 2] all the cark and care of man with his best endeavours, cannot always attain to the benefit and fruit of his travel, but he provideth that which another enjoyeth. This the Prophet *Haggai* testifieth, chap 1, 6.9. *Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat but ye have not enough; ye drink but ye are not filled; ye clothe you, but ye are not warm, &c.* According to that which our Savior addeth, Math. 6, 27. *Which of you by taking care, is able to add one cubite unto his stature?* This the wise man teacheth in the Proverbs. chap, 12, 27. *The deceitful man roasteth not that he took in hunting; but the riches of the diligent man are precious*. Wherefore it standeth us upon, not to be immoderately pensive, and distrustfully careful for the profits and commodities of this life, nor trust in the labors of our own hands, but pray to God to send us his blessing, & to pour down the riches of his grace

upon us, as the shower upon the herbs, and as the great rain upon the grass. It is not our own work that can give us wealth, or our own labor can make us rich. *Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it: except the LORD watch the City, the keeper watcheth in vain: it is vain for you to rise early, and to lie down late, and eat the bread of sorrow, but he will surely give rest to hi• beloved.* So thē we must confess, that nothing in house or City, nothing in Church or Common-wealth can be enterprized & finished aright, except God be the directer and guider of it. To the end therefore y^e blessings of God may ever concur with our lawful labors, let us sanctify thē with prayer, & crave of God his special favor to bless the works of our hands to his glory and our comfort.

[Use 3] Thirdly, seeing wicked men after all their pains and labors do lay up in store for the faithful, both the one and rhe other sort must lay this unto their hearts. Let the ungodly lament and howl their folly, and not trust in their own strength. It is a great grief for a natural and carnal man to depart from his substance and treasure, upon which he hath set his heart; but this doubleth his grief, and increaseth his sorrow, to see such as he holdeth his enemies, to enter upon them, & quietly to enjoy them. What can more humble them, then to take from them the comfort wherein they rested, and the staff whereon they leaned, and the confidence wherein they trusted, so bereaving them of the fruit of their hands, which was the joy of their hearts, the hope of their lives, and the key of all their comfort. This use is directly concluded by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, chap. 42, 3. *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will cause a noise of war to be heard in Rabbah of the Amonites, and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burnt with fire, then shall Israel possess those that possessed him, saith the Lord. Howle, O Heshbon, for Ai is wasted: cry ye daughters of Rabbah, gird you with sackcloth, mourn & turn too and fro by the hedges, &c.* Wherefore let us not put our affiance and confidence in these earthly, transitory, and uncertain things, which take their wings as an Eagle, and fly into the heaven. On the other side, this should comfort the faithful in the uprightness of their harts, and teach all persons to labor to be truly godly and religious. For this is the fruit and advantage that righteousness bringeth with it, it causeth a man's own goods to be stable and continue in his family, and draweth unto it the riches of others by the free gift of God. Thus we see, Deut. 28, 30, 31. that whereas in the law it is denounced as a curse, that a man should build an house, and another should dwell in it: plant a vineyard, and yet shall not eat the fruit: have his Ox slain before his eyes, and not eat thereof: it showeth the woeful condition of the ungodly, that he shall not reap the fruit of his labors, nor attain to the end he expecteth. Contrarywise, the godly are comforted, and have their bowels refreshed, forasmuch as they learn by this dealing of God, that the wicked man is so far from leaving his goods to his posterity, that they are oftentimes stripped from him, & put upon the righteous, who by the providence of God is made heir against his will. Wherefore, if we desire to leave our posterities in good estate, we can no way better provide for them, secure their persons, and settle their estates to continue, then if we lead a godly life, and keep a good conscience toward God and men.

[Use 4] Lastly, this Doctrine declaring how God translateth the substance and possession of the ungodly to the godly, ministereth matter unto them to praise the Lord, who is the giver of every good giving, and of every perfect gif•. This the Prophet teacheth Israel to

acknowledge, Psal. 44, 3. & 105, 2, 3, 44, 45. & 136, 1, 21. that they inherited not the Land of Promise by dint of the sword, by the strength of their arm, by the multitude of their men, but confess the power of God's right hand, the light of his countenance, and the comfort of his favor. Hereupon he stirreth up the people to praise him, to call upon his name, and to declare his works to their posterity, *Sing unto him, sing praise unto him, and talk of all his wondrous works, rejoyce in his holy name, and let the heart of them that seek the Lord, rejoyce.* We are unworthy of these exceeding mercies, not only to find the comfort of our own labors, but to inherit the possessions of others, if we do not endeavor to stir up our hearts, and all y^t is within us to praise his holy name. Therefore *Moses* putteth the people of Israel in remembrance of this duty of thanksgiving whē they should come unto the land of Canaan, to Cities and houses built by their enemies, they should take heed they forgot not that good God that should bring them thither. This sacrifice was offered willingly and joyfully by the Israelites, when they saw their desire upon their enemies, and their goods given to the members of the Church: they rejoyced and were glad, joy and gladness arose among them.

[Verse 27. *Wherefore they that speak in Proverbs.*] Here is mention of a piece of Poetry, and an ancient song made by some skilful Poet, as *Moses* or some other among the people of God, containing *Sihons* invading of the Moabites, his possessing their Cities, with the cause, to wit, their idolatry, and the Israelites recovering and regaining them out of his hand to their proper use. This Poem was made in verse, both for the better remembrance of the singers, and for the more effectual setting down of these victors, to move attention, admiration, and other affections. We learn from this practice of the people of God, that Poetry is ancient in the Church of God, and commendable among the godly. The setting forth of the works of God, not only truly, soundly, and simply, in a plain form & frame of words, but strictly, poetically, artificially, is worthy of praise and commendation. This appeareth by the manifold practice of the Patriarchs, Prophets, Prophetesses, and other holy men and women in the old & New Testament. See the examples of *Moses* singing the praises of God after their deliverance out of Egypt, after the overthrow of *Pharaoh*, and after their passage over the red sea; he footed it not in a low, but in a lofty style praising God in verses, not in prose, for the greater efficacy of the matter, and the better expressing of their affections. The like we might say of his sweet song sung not long before his death, Deut. 31, 19, 22. & 32, 1, 2, &c. which he taught the children of Israel, thus did *Deborah* and *Barak*. And thus did *David* make an Epitaph in verse upon the death of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, after they were slain by the Philistines, not penned after the plain and vulgar manner, but with many rhetorical flourishes of Tropes and figures according to the nature of the verse, and the substance of the matter.

[Reason 1] The Reasons hereof are easy to be conceived, to avouch the lawfulness & praiseworthiness of this Art. For first, every Art and knowledge is of God. Every good giving and every perfect gift (saith the Apostle *James*) is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights. Every Mechanical trade and handy-craft is the gift of God: there is no excelling in any of them but by his special gift, who is the God of knowledge: which maketh a difference, not only between man & beast, but between man and man. Such as found out curious works in Gold, Silver, & Brasse, in grauing of stones, in caruing of wood, in making any Needle-

work about the Tabernacle, *Were filled with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in knowledge, and understanding.* As it is God that frameth the hand to such inventions, so it is he that guideth the pen, & giveth the tongue of the learned, to speak or write after an excellent manner. The Heathen men were wont to say, That Poets were inspired of God to go beyond the reach of the vulgar sort. So then, this gift being more then ordinary, must needs in a peculiar and special sort be from God.

[Reason 2] Secondly, sundry parts and books of holy Scripture are penned poetically, and those of excellent & worthy note; albeit we know not the kinds and measures of them (howsoever sundry have labored to find out the several numbers and natures of them) inasmuch as every Language hath his peculiar frame & fashion, yet not only some certain parts and parcels, but sundry whole books, as hath been said, were Poetically penned, and in that respect may be fitly called Poetical Books. Of this kind and nature, are the book of *Job*, the *Psalms of David*, the *Proverbs of Solomon*, the book of the *Preacher*, and the *Song of songs*: all which seem to be contained & comprehended by our Savior Christ, under the title of the *Psalms*, when he diuideth the whole Scripture into the *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Psalms*, as *Luke 24, 14*. Besides, when anything of greatest note, worthy of greatest remembrance and commendation was to be set down in the Scriptures, the *Prophets* did choose to speak in this artificial composition of words & sentences to give a greater grace, and add greater glory unto the same, as appeareth in sundry places of the *Law* and *Prophets*.

[Use 1] The uses of this truth, direct us to sundry profitable meditations, and weighty considerations. For first, it teacheth us in part the majesty and authority of the Scriptures. They are not certain rugged and ragged writings to be contemned for their rudeness and simplicity, and to be condemned for their baseness and homeliness, as the *Atheists* and others, that boast and brag of their fine wits, are not ashamed to give out; but Books full of holy excellency, and wonderful stateliness; not only working grace in the hearts of the hearers, but carrying a grace to the ears of the hearers. Books filled with true eloquence, and more able to persuade, then all the enticing words of human wisdom. Therefore, the Lord to deliver his word from disgrace & reproach, doth sometimes fly aloft with a majestic gravity, and stately port, able to astonish the outward senses, & sufficient to draw the whole man into admiration; and thereby showeth what he could do in the rest of the holy Scriptures, if it had pleased him. Let a man read with singleness of heart, and with the eye of judgment the 104. Psalm, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. verses, describing the Majesty of God: or *Ecclesiastes* 12. verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, &c. describing the approaching of old age: or the first chap. of *Isaiah*, verse. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, &c. describing the unthankfulness of the people; and having diligently read, and advisedly perused them, let him tell me whether he do not despise in comparison of them, not only the descriptions of *Homer* and *Virgil*, but the *Orations of Tully* and *Demosthenes*, as froth and scum, having only the empty shadow of the true and right eloquence.

So the Apostle *Paul* being charged to be rude in speaking, doth not confess any want in his style, or crave pardon for any fault, but doth justify his manner of writing, & purposely auoideth the wisdom of man's eloquence. He opposeth his plainness to the set and curious

speech of the false Apostles, who came in gay appearance, and hunted after fine phrases, and show of words, as if they had had all the strength of truth that might be on their side: yet notwithstanding, in this plain style the Apostle showeth himself most mighty, and most eloquent, garnishing his words, and adorning his sentences with all the figures that Art can afford, so far as served to move affections, and to touch the conscience. For the power of the Scriptures inspired by God, stādeath in the inward force and virtue, working upon the soul, piercing the heart, casting down the imaginations that lift up themselves against the truth, converting the whole man, and entering through to the dividing of the soul and spirit, of the joints & marrow, yea discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart. The Apostles of Christ, subdued the whole world, not with fire and sword, not with carnal and bodily weapons, but by the plain preaching of Christ crucified, as *Paul* himself confesseth, 1 Cor. 2, 2. *He regarded to know nothing among them, but Christ Jesus, and him crucified.* And in 1 Cor. 2, 3, 4. *I was among you in weakness and in fear, and in much trouble: neither stood my word and my preaching in the enticing speech of man's wisdom, but in plain evidence of the Spirit and of power, that your Faith should not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* Seeing therefore it hath pleased God to give us a taste, and to leave as it were the prints and footsteppes of all learning and Arts in the world, insomuch that no form of reasoning, no ornament of speaking, no gift of persuading is read in any profane author but the same is found in the Scripture, as in a plentiful storehouse: yea, with far greater grace and excellency then anywhere else; let us acknowledge the majesty of the word, and reverently esteem of it above all other Writings.

Secondly, seeing Poetry is a good gift, to [Use 2] be revered and received for the antiquity and worthiness, it serveth to reprove those that abuse this gift, to the reproach of the Art it self, and to the dishonor of the giver. And howsoever many among the Heathen excelled in this kind, and have lighted a candle to others, yet was this Art nowhere more disgraced and disgraded from the former glory, and ancient estimation thereof, then amongst themselves. For, whereas Poetry at the first was used to express some memorable accident, and record some great work to posterity, that it might be better remembered and regarded: they turned these uses into wrong ends, & changed the truth into horrible lies. For, what are all the Poems of the Infidels & unbelieving Gentiles, but a detestable mingling of histories with Fables, of truth with lies, of deeds done with their own dreams and inventions? And whereas of old time, there was no difference between a plain story and an artificial Poem, but in the manner of penning and enditing: the one being easy and evident, the other curious and cunning, more exquisite and labored: they have set the one against the other, and opposed them as contraries; charging an history to speak the truth, all the truth, and nothing but the truth, but discharging a Poeme of this burden. They require the foundation to be some deed done indeed, and then build upon it Fables and falsehood: so that the plain song being a truth, the descant shall be a lie. Neither hath this Noble Science been abused only among the Gentiles, but the remnants of it have crept into the Schools, and defiled the pens of many Christians. We must feek to restore its ancient honor, and being a grave matrone, we must pull from her the Ornaments and deckings that do not become her. Therefore, let not young men addicted to this Art, abuse this gift, but use it to the praise of God and to the publishing

of his works. Let them in their Poems show themselves Christians, and manifest themselves to differ from the unbelieving Gentiles that know not God. Let all songs and Sonets of love, or rather Lusts, all scurrilous jests and Satyricall Pamphlets, be banished from us; which are not the fault of Art, but of the Artist: not of Poetry, but of the Poet: not of the matter, but of the man. Let all invocation of strange gods, and heathenish inducing of many gods, be odious to our ears, speeches usual among many, but not seasoned with salt as they ought to be. We have liberty enough to follow the verse without wandering into such licentiousness; whereunto the Apostle directeth us, Ephes. 4, 29. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouths, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*

Lastly, seeing the Art of Poetry is lawful [Use 3] and laudable, let us praise God and sing to him in spiritual songs penned by the Prophets, and endited by the Spirit of GOD, for the instruction and direction of the Church, not only in the book of Psalms, but in other places of the Scripture. And surely, it were a worthy and profitable labor, tending to the advancing of the glory of God, & serving for the comfort of the Church, if all the songs of prayer and praises which are found in the Law and the Prophets, were turned and tuned for the ordinary use of our assemblies, and joined to the book of Psalms, as the song of *Moses*, of *Miriam*, of *Deborah*, of *Isaiah*, of *Hezekiah*, of *Habakkuk*, of the *Canticles* and *Lamentations*, together with some others in other places to be found; that we might have plentiful matter, and perfect direction, to lift up our hearts and voices unto God upon all occasions that shall be offered unto us. Hereunto cometh the exhortation of the Apostle *Paul*, Col. 3, 16. *Let the word of God dwell in you plentifully in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing your own selves in Psalms & Hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with a grace in your hearts to the Lord.* This duty of singing Psalms is not proper to the Church and the public assemblies of the Church, but an exercise of our Religion to be used publicly & privately, whether we would give thanks for some deliverance, or crave forgiveness of sins, or desire restoring of health, or crave the graces of God's Spirit, which we want. True it is, there are many abuses of this part of God's service (as also in the rest) yea even in singing y^e Psalms of *David*, 1 Cor. 14, 15, 26. as using of an unknown tongue without understanding, the spending of too much time, shutting out thereby the preaching of the word, and hindering other exercises of our Religion: as we see it usual in the Church of Rome, where the chanting of their Mattins and Masses hath iustled out the publishing of the Doctrine of the Gospel, making the deed done, to be meritorious, available for the forgiveness of sins, singing many sinful and superstitious things touching the intercession of Saints and such trumpery, bringing in their broken Music, that nothing can be understood anymore, thē if it were in a strange tongue, & an unknown language; whereas all things should be done to edifying in the Church of God.

Notwithstanding all these abuses, we must maintain the right and holy use of singing in the Church, and in our houses, which is an exercise excellent in it self, acceptable to God, profitable to our selves, and those that hear us. The Apostle exhorteth the Ephesians, *Not to be drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but to be filled with the Spirit, speaking unto themselves in Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual songs, making melody to the Lord in their hearts.* Ephe. 5, 18, 19. Likewise the Apostle *James*, chap. 5, 13. *Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry let*

him sing Psalms. This was the practice of *Paul and Silas*, while they were in prison, *They prayed at midnight, and sing Psalms unto God.* Let us follow these examples of godly men, and take up this exercise better then we have done, being a notable gift of God: which duty, albeit commanded by precept, and commended by example, is greatly decayed in all places, and among all estates of men; instead whereof, profane songs and beastly Ballads are come in places, filling and defiling all shops, houses, and meetings, iustling out the other, to the decay of Religion, to the disgrace of the Psalms, to the corrupting of youth, to the contempt of the word, and to the dishonor of God.

[They that spake in Proverbs, say: Come to Heshbon, let the City of Sihon be built and repaired, &c.] The end of this Song, made of the people of GOD, was to keep a perpetual memory of the victories that God gave to the Israelites, and to teach the posterity to come, how they came to be owners and possessours of these Citiss. We learn from hence, That it is the duty of the faithful to remember and publish the works of God, whereof we are partakers or witnesses. Whensoever GOD showeth any of his works of mercy or judgment, toward our selves or others, toward soul or body, we must not hide them and bury them in forgetfulness, but spread them abroad, and make them known to others. This appeareth in sundry places of the word of God. The Prophet teacheth this duty, Psalm. 105, 1, 2. *Praise the Lord, & call upon his Name, declare his works among the people: Sing unto him, sing praise unto him, and talk of all his wondrous works.* And Psal. 107, 8. *Let them confess before the Lord his loving kindness, and his wonderful works among the sons of men.* So likewise Psalm. 111, 2, 3. *The works of the Lord are great and ought to be sought of all them that love them: his work is glorious and beautiful, and his righteousness endureth forever.* So Psal. 66, 16, 5, he provoketh all men to hear what God hath done for him, *Come and hearken, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done to my soul:* and in the same Psalm he reproveth the dullness of men, that are cold in the consideration of the works of God, *Come and behold the works of God, he is terrible in his doing toward the sons of men.* When the Shepherds had found the word of the Angel true, and seen the Babe laid in the Cratch, *They published abroad the thing that was told them of that child, to the great wondering of all those that heard it.* And when the man, out of whom a legion of devils was departed, besought Christ that he might tarry with him: Jesus sent him away, saying; *Return into thine own house, and show what great things God hath done to thee; so he went his way, and preached throughout all the City, what great things Jesus had done unto him.* When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, from whence they had been commended to the grace of God, to the work which they had fulfilled, having gathered together the Church, *They rehearsed all the things that God had done by them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.* Acts 14, 27. The practice of this duty, Christ commanded to the man that he had dispossessed, Mark. 5, 19, 20. *Go thy way home to thy friends, & show thē what great things the Lord hath done unto thee, & how he hath had compassion on thee: so he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis, what great things Jesus had done unto him, and all men did marvel.* All which precepts and examples teach us, that it is not enough to have received God's benefits, and to be mindful of them our selves, but also we are bound to make others according to our places to profit thereby, and to praise God for them, agreeable to the words of Peter and John to the council, *We cannot but speak the things which we have seen & heard.* Acts 4, 20.

The Reasons of this Doctrine are diverse, [Reason 1] whether we consider God, or our selves, or the faithful with whom we live. First, in respect of God, inasmuch as it standeth us all vpō, to set forth his glory, with all our strength and might. This is the chief and principal end, that we must aim at in all our ways, to seek to gain glory to his great Name, according to that general precept of the Apostle, *Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* So when God doth make known to us the works of his own right hand, this must be one motive to stir us up to spread them abroad, that thereby his Name may be glorified, and his saving health published among all Nations, as we see the practice in the Apostles.

Secondly, in respect of our selves. For this is a notable sign and token of a true and lively faith, that we believe the works of God, and lay them up deeply in our hearts, when we hide them not under a bushel, nor cover them in the ashes, but lift up our voice, as a Trumpet, to declare to others what our selves have learned. This the Prophet testifieth in his own practice, *I will walk before the Lord in the Land of the living, I believed, and therefore did I speak.* Psalm. 116, verses 9, 10. This is not peculiar to the Prophet only, to testify his faith by the words of his mouth, but is made general and common to others by the Apostle, *Because we have the same spirit of Faith, according as it is written, I believed and therefore I have spoken: we also believe, and therefore speak.* Such as do not believe the words and works of God, can never be fit instruments to give notice of them to others: but such as do in heart believe them, cannot but with y^e tongue confess them, thereby to assure their own hearts, and to confirm their own faith more and more.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, we must have respect to others. For as Christ speaketh to *Peter*, when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren: so when we believe the works of God, we must labor to bring all other to a sound faith and right judgment. It is our duty to hunger and thirst after the salvation of others: and being called to the profession, we must toll the bell to others. There is no man that hath been truly acquainted with the works of God, and hath in conscience been convinced of the undoubted truth thereof, but ought to be as a public Cryer, and as the Lord's Herald to blaze them and publish them abroad for the good of others. This is the reason that moved the Prophet *David* to make such often & so many protestations, to speak of all his wondrous works, to tell his marvelous works, to publish the praises of the Lord & his great power.

This is the reason that *Peter* immediately after his deliverance out of prison came unto *Mary*, where many were gathered together in prayer to entreat the Lord for the enlarging of his liberty, saying unto them, *Go show these things unto James, and the rest of the Brethren.* Acts 12, •7. So then, whether we do consider that it is required of us to seek the glory of God, to testify the assurance of our Faith, or to win our brethren; we must acknowledge that it is a special duty laid upon us to publish the works of God, whereof any of us be witnesses, of the truth whereof we are convinced. Indeed Christ charged the Leaper not to publish and spread abroad the miraculous work of his cleansing: but this was to correct the perverse judgment of the people, who regarded more to see his miracles, then to hear his doctrine, and that he might have the greater liberty to teach from the persecutions of the Pharisees. Mar. 1, 45.

[Use 1] Now let us proceed to the uses of this Doctrine. First, it teacheth that we must not slander and discredit any of his works, but say with the sorcerers, *This is the finger of GOD*, Exod. 8, 19. When the Pharisees heard that Christ cast out the devils by the power of his deity, they back-bited and blasphemed the works of God maliciously, saying, *This man casteth out devils no otherwise but thorough Belzebub the Prince of devils*. Matth. 12, 24. & 28, 12, 13. So the watchmen set to keep the sepulcher of Christ sure, shown unto the high Priests all the things that were done; who took wicked counsel, and gave large money unto the soldiers to spread abroad that his disciples came by night, & stole him away while they slept. Likewise, when the holy Ghost fell upon the Apostles, that they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance, they mocked and slandered the work of God, saying, *These are full of new wine*, Acts 2, 13. so that Peter justified as well the Apostles of Christ, as the miracle of God. In like manner are we to do in like cases: when an evil name is brought upon the works of God's election or reprobation, upon y^e works of his providence, and protection of his people, we must stand forth to give glory to God and to stop the mouth of iniquity when it is opened against heaven. For if a man be commanded to open his mouth in the cause of the dumb, much more in the cause of God. It is one kind of taking the name of God in vain, to hold our peace when any reason & dispute against God's works. If we deny him any way before men, Christ Jesus will deny us before his Father. We must therefore open our mouths in defense of God and his works, & put the obstinate gainsaiers to silence, & wipe away the slanderous reports raised of them, lest others receive hurt thereby, and to the end God may have the glory and praise of his own work. And albeit we do not always conceive the right cause and reason of them, let us not deride but admire them with the Apostle, Rom. 11, 33. *O the deepness of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out?* If a man should take upon him to judge those that are out of his liberty, and over whom he hath no authority, and to pronounce sentence upon their doings, would a worldly man think well of this presumption? But it is less wisdom, and greater p^re^sumption, to take upon us to rule God, and to give him his lesson, and to enter into judgment of his works. Therefore Elihu wisely teacheth in the book of Job this point; *Who hath appointed unto him his way? Or who can say, Thou hast done wickedly? Remember that thou magnify his works, which men behold*. Job 36, 23, 24.

Secondly, it is required of us to be diligent [Use 2] markers and observers of the works of God's providence. For how shall he report them & remember them to others, that is not careful to muse upon them, and to mark them himself? Or how shall he open his mouth to declare them, that shutteth his eyes lest he should see them, and stoppeth his cares lest he should hear of them? It standeth us therefore greatly upon, wisely to obs^rue the works of God, and suffer nothing to pass from us, nothing by us, without making profit of it to our selves, & bringing it to the use of others. This wisdom Eliphaz one of the three friends of Job teacheth, having shown that the ungodly shall not escape unpunished, but that God will find them out in their hypocrisy, he addeth, Job 5, 27. *Loe, thus have we inquired of it, and so it is, hear this, and know it for thyself*. This we are all to mark by continual experience, how God dealeth with the godly, sometimes chastening them, sometimes blessing them, never

forsaking them, albeit sometimes leaving them for a season, yet in the end returning in mercy unto them.

Likewise, how he dealeth towards the wicked, thereby to avoid their steps, consider that though they flourish for a time, it is but the pleasure of sin for a season that they enjoy: and always God's judgment in this life arresteth some, and maketh them fearful examples unto others. Thus did the Prophet ponder in his heart the ways and works of God, and profited thereby to his great comfort: as we see, Psal. 37, 35.36. *I have seen the wicked strong, and spreading himself like a green Baytree, yet he passed away, and loe he was gone, and I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the upright man, and behold the just, for the end of that man is peace; but the transgressors shall be destroyed together, and the end of the wicked shall be cut off.* And if we will give our hearts to this meditation on the works of God's providēce, ruling the world, and disposing all things, we shall see how he always meeteth with the ungodly, though they dignity deep to hide their counsels, and dive down unto the depth and bottom of their devices, yet the hand of the Lord doth find them out, and bringeth to judgment every secret work. So if we shall weigh with wisdom his works toward his own servants, as he doth love them with an everlasting love, so is he always gracious unto them, and maketh all things fall out to further their salvation. This the Wiseman teacheth by his experience, Eccles. 8, 11, 12, 13.

[Use 3] Lastly, let all Fathers of families teach the works of God's mercy, and the works of his judgments, according as they see them to be offered unto them. For to whom should we rather publish them then to our posterity, & the children that come out of our loins? when a Father beholdeth the Lord punishing the ungodly, and taking vengeance on the contemners of his word, the blasphemers of his name, the profaners of his Sabbaths, the uncleanness of adulterers, the beastliness of drunkards, the oppression of userers, the perjury of false witnesses, and the cruelty of merciless dealers: should he suffer such public examples to die, and these works of God to sleep in the dust? Nay, seeing God doth single out some, and maketh them examples & admonitions unto others, we ought to whet them upon our children and servants, & teach them thereby to serve the Lord, and to hate those heinous and horrible sins that provoke such great and grievous judgments.

Abraham is commended by the Spirit of God, for this care and conscience of his duty, when he should behold the woeful destructi- of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, Genes. 18.19. *I know him that he will command his sons, and his household after him that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham, that he hath spoken unto him.* This the Prophet urgeth, Psal. 78, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. So the Prophet *Joel*, or rather the Lord by the Prophet, threatening a grievous plague of dearth and famine, that the field should be wasted, the corn destroyed, the new wine dried up, the oil decayed, and the husbandmen howl, because the harvest of the field should perish, saith, Joel 1, 2, •. *Hear •e this. O Elders, and hearken ye all inhabitants of the land, whether such a thing hath been in your days, or yet in the dayers of your Fathers. Tel you your children of it, and let your children show it to their children, and their children to another generation.* Thus we see how God requireth of us a diligent consideration of his judgments, seeing he smiteth one to admonish another: we must not

account these strokes only as punishments upon the offenders, but as examples offered for the amendment and repentance of others, as our Savior taught his disciples of those that were murdered by *Pilate*, and of those were slain by the fall of a tower, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*, Luke 13, 1, 2, 3, 4.

[Verse 28. *For a fire is gone out of Heshbon, and a flame from the City of Sihon, and hath consumed Har of the Moabites, &c.*] When war is once begun and set on foot, it is not so easily laid down, neither is the thirst of ambition in a proud man so easily quenched. Therefore this song decla•eth, that when Sihon had assaulted and taken Heshbon, he rested not there but proceeded farther, and led his army against the villages adjoining, dealing with them as he had done with the inhabitants of Heshbon. Thus we see the people bordering upon the Heshbonites, are touched with their ruin, and companions with them in their adue•sity: as when a mighty tree falleth, it throweth down with it the lesser & lower shrubs. Now *Moses* in this borrowed speech, setteth forth the misery brought upon the Moabites, which like a violent and vehement fire consumeth wheresoever it lighteth. Mark therefore in this place the comparison & similitude which the Spirit of God useth, to express the rage of war, wasting far and near, as a mighty flame of fire. We learn from hence this Doctrine, That great is the misery and mischief of war, whereby blood is shed, Nations are spoiled, Countries are ruined, Cities are disp•pled, Murder is committed, and the image of God defaced. And albeit the life be spared, yet liberty is restrained, and oftentimes death is better than b•ndage, and the sword not so bitter as captivity, even to become slaves to them, who are slaves to Satan. This we see expressed in the war of *Chedarlaomer*, Genes. 14, 5, 6, 7. who coming to chasten the rebellion of Sodom, and other Cities in the plain, he seized upon the people bordering, so that they tasted the bitterness of the sword, being neighbors to the Nations offending against him. This *Moses* expresseth, Deut. 28, 50, 51, describing the fierceness of the enemies, and the plague of wars; saying, *They shall not regard the person of the old, nor have compassion of the young, they shall eat the fruit of thy Cattle, they shall consume the profit of thy land, they shall besiege thee within thy walls, they shall drive thee to eat thy children, the fruit of thy body, during the siege and streightnesse where-with they shall compass thee in thy Cities.* Hereunto that Proverb guideth us, used by the King of Israel against such as boasted before the victory, *Let not him that girdeth his harness, boast himself, as he that putteth it off.* Hence it is, that we read, how thousands and ten thousands are consumed in battle, which devoureth one as well as another, to teach us the casualty and calamity of war.

[Reason 1] The Reasons are not to be forgotten, that we may the better settle this Doctrine in our hearts. First, it is threatened as an heavy plague and fearful judgment to be brought upon that people that set their faces against God, and walk stubbornly in the breach of his commandments. It is one of the arrows of God, which he hath in his quiver, & reserveth to shoot against all the contemners of his Statutes; he will send upon them famine to punish them, evil beasts to spoil them, the pestilence to consume them, & blood to pass through them. This is that which the Lord threateneth, Levite. 26, 25, 31. *I will send a sword upon you that shall avenge the quarrel of my Covenant, and when you are gathered in your Cities, I will send the pestilence among you, and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy, & I will make your Cities desolate.* If then God proclaim open war against such as bear themselves stoutly and

stubbornly against him, if he be at utter defiance with them that despite and despise him, if he denounce against those the day of battle, as a day of wrath, a day of trouble and heaviness, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of obscurity and darkness, a day of clouds and blackness, a day of the Trumpet and alarm against the strong Cities, against the high Towers, and against mighty warriors that their blood shall be poured out as dust, & their flesh made as the dung; it must necessarily follow, that the time of war is the time of woe, yea, of weeping and wailing, and great lamentation of young and old, rich & poor, women and children, babes and sucklings.

[Reason 2] Secondly, great is the benefit of peace, and many are the blessings that come with it and ensue after it. If then peace be a great benefit, then must war needs be acknowledged to be a great want, and a fearful judgment. The peace of a State, is as the health of a body of strong constitution: therefore war is a dangerous disease in anybody political, whē it cannot be purged and washed without blood. We see how *Moses* among the blessings that shall come upon Israel and overtake thē, reckoneth up peace in their borders, *I will send peace in the Land, and ye shall sleep, & none shall make you afraid, and the sword shall not go through your Land.* If there be but a iarie in a private house, or a strong faction in any society, it threateneth the ruin thereof. If an house or City be divided against it self, it cannot stand. If a kingdom be divided against it self, it is brought to naught. But when God giveth peace and rest to his Church, many blessings come with it and great contentment on all sides, and in all estates; especially the free liberty of the Gospel with the preaching and professing of it, which we should account as the life of our lives. Seeing therefore, on the one side, War is the just wages of great sins; and on the other side, peace bringeth with it many blessings of all sorts, spiritual and temporal, we conclude, that many are the miseries of war.

The uses are in the next place to be thought upon, and application •o be made of this Doctrine. [Use 1] First, let us pray earnestly to God, and call upon him faithfully, to keep from us both wars, and the rumors of wars, and continue peace in our borders, with the free & public use of the Gospel, to us and to our posterities: that there may not be the voice of lamentation lifted up in our streets, weeping & mourning, and great howling, *Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not.* Mat. 2, 18. Ier. 31, 15. We live in a plentiful and well-peopled Land, no Nation under heaven is more populous. This is a blessing of God, as *Moses* declareth, Levite. 26, 9. Likewise Proverbs 14, 28: Yet many times we repine at his mercy, we think the Land will be too little for us, and that we shall not be able to live one for another. He can make room enough for us, if he once send y^e bright weapons of war, and the glistering sword of the bloody enemy among us. He can make fewer of us and turn our Land into briars & thorns, and make it a place of Salt-pits and Nettles. *Then shall a man nourish a young Cow and two Sheep: and for the abundance of Milk that they shall give, he shall eat Butter.* The number of men shall then be so small, tha^a a few beasts shall be sufficient to nourish the remnant abundantly. Then shall seven women take hold of one man, saying: *We will eat our own bread, and will wear our own garments, only let us be called by thy name, and take away our reproach.* Let us therefore in this great increase of the land and store of people, acknowledge his mercy, let us rejoyce in the society one of another, and pray that we taste not the bitterness of war, & that there be no slaying with y^e sword, no shedding of blood, no

carrying into captivity. This the Prophet teacheth, Ps. 144, desiring God to continue his benefits toward his people, the fruit of the womb, the filling of store-houses, the increase of sheep, & the quietness of peace, Psal. 144, 12, 13, 14, 15. *That our sons being as the plants growing up in their youth, and our daughters being as the corner stones, may be the building of the temple: that our corners may be full, and our Oxen strong to labor: that there be no invasion nor going out, nor no crying in our streets: O blessed are the people that be so, yea blessed are the people whose God is the Lord.* Where we see, the Prophet prayeth, and directeth us to pray, that there may be no taste of the sharpness and misery of war, nor we know the assaulting of our Cities, nor going out to warfare, that there may be no sorrow of heart, no weeping of eyes, no wringing of hands, no shrieking of voices among us. Were it not a woeful and lamentable thing, to see fire without mercy, and without quenching, consuming houses, eating up all things, and sparing nothing? How much more to see, and hear, and feel the affliction of war, when all things are in confusion and combustion? For, this is one great mischief and bitterness of war, that all things are holden to be lawful, and all men make themselves to be lawless. There is no regard of right or equity, of shame or conscience, when many times the soldiers are as hungry as wolves, as cruel as Tigers, as fierce as Lions, as merciless as Bears robbed of their whelps, which spoil in the evening, and leave not the bones until the morning. Liberty is oppressed, good men fear, evil men expect, knowing it is best fishing in troubled water; if there be any place free from tumult, at least there is none void of suspicion and free from jealousy; few then are to be trusted, and none assured; all things in confusion, violence, spoiling, blood, murders outcrying, and nothing else before our eyes, but a lamentable face of all calamities & extremities. The Prophet *Zacharias*, describing the golden days of a peaceable life, w^c should be given to the Israelites when they were returned from captivity, saith; *Zac. 8, 4, 5. There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age; and the streets of the City shall be full of boys & girles playing in the streets thereof.* Then is the mouth of the people filled with laughter, and their tongue with joy, Psal. 46, 9. *When the Lord maketh wars to cease unto the end of the world, he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear, & burneth the Chariots with fire.* But in the time of war, and in the day of battle, all things are turned topsie-tururý, all things lie open to sacking and pillage, to insolency of soldiers, to desire of revenge, and to most horrible accidents. Then we are constrained to see and lament the slaughter of men, the ravishing of women, the deflouring of virgins, the spoiling of goods, the robbing of houses, the taking of prisoners, the breaking of laws, y^e defacing of justice, the intermission of sowing, the innovation of estates, the subversion of realms, the desolation of countries, the violation of religion, the destruction of Cities, the effusion of blood, the suffering of famine, and sometimes the extremity of eating children, and always the overthrowing of all order and honesty. Who is able to recount & rehearse the great horror and fear, the sorrow and mourning, the weeping and lamentation, the seditions, tumults, outrages, villainies, insurrections, conspiracies, calamities, dangers, difficulties, and the miserable train of infinite miseries and maladies that war bringeth with it? No marvel therefore, if *David* preferred the pestilence before the sword, 2 Sam. 24, 14. *desiring that he might fall into the hands of the Lord, because his mercies are great; and not fall into the hands of man, whose bowels of pity are instruments of cruelty.* Let us therefore pray earnestly and fervently unto God, that we may not have experience of these

troubles, nor endure the violence of this fire, and entreat him to continue a gracious God to us and to our posterities forever. This we see fruitfully and profitably practiced by the people of Israel, when the Lord for their idolatry threatened to deliver them no more out of the hands of their enemies, and bad them cry unto the gods which they had chosen, that they might save them in the time of their tribulation: they said unto the Lord, *We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever please thee, only we pray thee to deliver us this day from our enemies,* Judge. 10, 10, 11, 12.

Secondly, let us learn by the horror of the [Use 2] sword, and trouble of war, to be thankful for our long peace and prosperity, and pray for y^e continuance thereof among us. We may sit everyone under his Vine, and under his Fig-tree; we may rest in peace in our gardens and Orchards, reasoning of the ways, and conferring of the word of the Lord, whilst many of our neighbor-Nations are shaken and tossed with the tempest of wars, and all things round about us are in an uproar. Let us desire God to spare them, and be touched with a feeling of their sorrows. And if there be such fearefulness and devouring in the sword, let us cast off all dissensions and debates, let us cut the cords of all contention, and live peaceably as brethren one with another. Hereunto the Apostle *James* persuadeth, ch. 3, 15, 16. & 4, 1, 2 *This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish: for where envying & strife is, there is sedition & all manner of evil work.* From whence are wars and contentions among you? Are they not hence, even of your pleasures that fight in your members? Let us take heed we give no occasion of contention, nor sow the seeds of division, which in time to come may yield a comfortless crop of cares and confusions. *Let us not go forth hastily to strife, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy Neighbor hath put thee to shame.* Pro. 25, 8. It is in vain to desire considerations and conditions of peace, when we have laid the foundations of war: like as the bow being drawn, and the Arrow discharged, it is too late to wish it may do no hurt where it falleth. For after that the coals of contention be once kindled, there is no long expectation for the fire to flame, and burn amaine with a swift course, even as when a cloud is gathered to his thickness, the storm of rain that hath been long in breeding, is ready to fall and disperse it self. It belongeth to all wisemen to foresee a mischief before it happeneth, & it is the reward of men unhappy to lament it when it is once felt. The counsel is without fruit that cometh after the fact; it is too late to apply the remedy when the evil is happened. The soldier serveth to no turn, that beginneth to march when the battle is done. The Medicine that is ministered out of time, worketh not to the benefit of the Patient. It is too dangerous to broach a vessel of poison, and have the virtue of the Antidote or counter-poison uncertain, or far to seek. A smoke suffered long to continue, conceiveth a spark, a spark of fire let alone ingendreth a flame, and the flame burneth without mercy and measure. Let us therefore resist the first beginnings as it were the first motions of malice and strife. Small things increase by concord, great things fall and come to ruin by discord and disunion. We must therefore desire peace, and follow after it albeit it seem to fly from us, let us pursue it with all our strength vnt^l we overtake it & bring it home as a blessing into our own houses and habitations: as a man of war concludeth, 2 Sam. 2, 26. *Shall the sword devour forever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long then shall it be ere you bid the people return from following their brethren?* As if he should say, If we shall join

army against army, and forces against forces, we shall fall down on every side, one brother shall devour and destroy another without pity and compassion. This serveth to reprove those that provoke to battell without cause, and delight in war as in a matter of sport and play, who delight to shed blood as water. Thus speaketh *Abner* Captain of the host, 2 Sam. 2, 14. *Let the young men now rise and play before us.* Whereby we see, that murder is made as a game & pastime to laugh at. Let every man live contented with his own estate. Great is the benefit of contentation. Beware of ambition and aspiring thoughts. The power of many rising suddenly to height and Soueraignty, taketh end with a ruin more sudden. They are like to a tree that groweth till he cometh to his height, and then is plucked up by the roots in a moment. The heavy stone commonly ouerwhelmeth it self with his own weight. Whosoever coveteth the fruit, and never considereth the height of the tree whereon it groweth, let him take heed that whiles he laboreth to climb to the top, he fall not with y^e boughs which he clasps and embraceth with both his arms. It is the part and property of a wise man, to consider always his own estate: whereas the vain ambitious man liveth for the most part in the remembrance & contemplation of those things which make him to forget himself. Let us therefore all labor in our places to quench this thirst, before it do grow to be as a dropsy that can never be cured, especially it standeth great men of high callings upon (even y^e greatest men of highest callings in hand) to look to this swelling of the heart (an evil whereunto they above all other are most inclined) that they lift not up their hearts against their Brethren, neither forget that they are mortal and frail men.

Lastly, seeing the sword respecteth no person, neither old nor young, neither learned nor [Use 3] unlearned, but destroyeth father and son, maketh the wise widow, and the child fatherless; it is our parts when we see such judgments present or imminent, to humble our selves unto God, to desire him to remove the fearful noise and rumor of war: and in the mean season, to pray that we may use our peace aright, lest he bend his Bow, and shoot his Arrows, and draw his glittering sword upon us. We see how *Hezekiah* when he saw the host of the King of Ashur, sought y^e Lord carefully, and prayed unto him to fight their battles, 2 Chro. 32, 20. & 20, 3. so *Jehoshaphat* when a great multitude banding themselves together, came against him, set himself to seek the Lord, reconciled himself to him, asked counsel of him, & proclaimed a Fast throughout all *Judah*. Thus the Prophet, Lam. 5, 20. considering that the strong men were trodden down, and the enemy rejoiced at their trouble, prayeth unto God, because the sword devoured without, and the people were led into captivity; *Behold (O Lord) how I am troubled: my bowels swell, mine heart is turned within me: for I am full of heaviness, the sword spoileth abroad as death doth at home.* We live (as yet) in great plenty and prosperity, we enjoy life and liberty, we sleep quietly in our beds, and rest in our houses in peace; we hear not the sound of the trumpet, the clattering of armor, the fury of the enemy, the noise of gunshot, the cry of the wounded; we see not the blood of the slain on the right hand, and on the left hand; we know not what the misery of slavery and slaughter meaneth; we do not behold our Cities besieged, our Countries wasted, our Towns entrenched, our walls better'd, our houses fired & consumed; blessed be the great name of our most gracious God therefore, for evermore. Let us then take heed that we abuse not these mercies and good things of Almighty GOD, lest he take them away from us in his fierce wrath and

indignation. O, that there were in us wise hearts to consider these things, whilst we dwell safely in these our houses and habitations, and before the enemy approacheth ne•e unto us, and casteth a trench about us. But if we provoke God and make war with him, how can we have peace with men? how can we look to live in safety any longer with our wives and children? This our Savior hath set down, and with •ears taught the Jews long before their destruction came upon them. For when he came near and beheld the City, he wept for it, and passionately said, Luk. 19, 41, 42, 43, 44. *O, if thou haddest even known at the least in this day, those things which belong unto thy peace! But now are they hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, & keep thee in on every side, and shall make thee even with the ground, and thy children which are in thee: and they shall not leave thee a stone upon a stone, because thou knowest not that season of thy visitation.* Let us apply these things unto our selves, and if we desire to live peaceably with men, let us first seek to be at peace with God; and if we would be reconciled to our brother, let us in the first place be reconciled to our God, and then all things shall speak peace unto us.

[Verse 29. *Woe be to thee Moab: O people of Chemosh, thou art undone: he hath delivered his sons which escaped, and his daughters into captivity to Sihon king of the Amorites.*] Here the Poet rhetorically turneth his speech to the Moabites, describing their foolish confidence in their dumb Idoll'es, Psal. 115, 4, 5. *Which are the work of men's hands, which have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, they have a mouth and speak not, noses and smell not, hands & touch not, feet and walk not, neither make they a sound with their throat; they that make them are like unto thē and so are all they that trust in them.* The Nations of the Gentiles had multitudes of gods, and every Nation his several Idol-go•: As *Chemosh* was the idol of the Moabites, *Baal* of the Chaldeans, *Ashteroth* of the Sidonians, *Moloch* of the Ammonites, *Rimmon* of y^e Syrians, *Dagon* of the Philistines. These are false gods, and had the godhead or divine nature falsely ascribed unto them, who were not able to save such as did worship them, as the author of this song here declareth, *He hath delivered his sons and daughters to captivity, and was not able to deliver them out of the hands of Sihon king of the Amorites.* For as the Israelites cried for fire to come from heaven from morning to noon, *O Baal hear us:* so no doubt did y^e Moabites for deliverance from their enemies, cal to their idol *Chemosh, O Chemosh hear us,* but there was no voice, nor any to answer, so that they fell into the hands of the Amorites, and received no profit or benefit by their idol service. Here then we see, how the idolatrous Moabites, worshipping a false god, and trusting in their great Idol, are defeated and destroyed. Hence we learn, That Idolaters lie open to judgment. The worshipping of Images, howsoever it be coloured with false reasons, is the true cause of God's judgments. We see here how the Moabites were rooted out of their Towns and Cities for this sin. Hitherto come the threatenings of the Prophets against the Nations by *Isaiah*, chap. 46, 1, 2. and *Ier.* 46 & 44, 7, 8. for their idolatry. We see in *Judge.* 2, 11. when Israel committed idolatry, & began to cleave to strange gods, and forsook the Lord God of their fathers, God sold them into the hands of their enemies, so that they could no longer stand before them. This was the destruction of *Jeroboam* the son of *Nebat*, that made Israel to sin: and of *Jehu*, who set up idolatry after he had destroyed it. This was the cause that the wrath of God brake in upon the Israelites, when they had erected the golden

Calf, which sin was revenged with a grievous and horrible slaughter. Hereunto also the Prophet hath relation, Psal. 106, 34, 35. *They destroyed not the people as the Lord had commanded them, but were mingled amongst the heathen, and learned their works, and served their Idols, which were their ruin.* Thus we see, how idolatry turneth to the destruction of the idolater.

The Reasons follow. First, God is the husband [Reason 1] of his Church, and can no more abide to have his honor and worship communicated to any other, then the husband any partner or fellow in his love. Prov. 6, 35. *•ho cannot bear the sight of any ransom, neither will he consent, though thou augment the gifts.* Idolatry therefore is spiritual whoredom, and God is a jealous God of his honor and glory, and will not suffer the same to be given to any other, Isaiah 42 8. Exod. 20, 5. This is notably declared, and worthily expressed by the Prophet Hosea, where the idolatry of the Israelites is resembled to the adulterous and whorish woman, that doateth upon her lovers, that forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God: *Their mother (saith y^e Lord by his Prophet) hath played the Harlot, she that conceived them hath done shamefully, &c.* As then God is the husband of his Church, so our spiritual worship is as a certain marriage of our souls consecrated unto the Lord: & therefore all false and forged worship is spiritual whoredom and adultery toward him. To this purpose speaketh Hosea, ch, 2, 19, 20. *I will marry thee unto me forever: yea, I will marry thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, &c.* Thus also the Prophet Jeremiah speaketh, ch. 2, 2. *Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee with the kindness of thy youth, and the love of thy Marriage, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness in a Land that was not sown.*

Secondly, Idols are the works of men's [Reason 2] hands, whether they be of Silver or Golde, they are the work of the Founder: or whether they be carved or graven in stone or timber, they are the hand of the workman: or whether they be wrought in blew silk, or purple, Jeremiah 10, 9. *All things are made by cunning men.* Hereupon it followeth, that they that depend upon them, and seek help of them, do seek help of flesh, and do make stocks and stones their god, and therefore they cannot prosper, but shall be confounded. This the Prophet Hosea testifieth, chap. 8.8, 9. *Israel is devoured, now shall they be amongst the Gentiles as a vessel wherein is no pleasure: for they are gone but to Ashur, they are as a wild Ass alone by himself, Ephraim hath hired lovers.*

The Uses are in the last place to be observed. [Use 1] First, this teacheth that the idol is vain; yea, vanity it self. Howsoever the idolater be enamored of it, and greatly dote upon it, yet it shall be a broken reed, which in stead of staying him that leaneth upon it, breaketh in his hand, and the shiuers thereof serve to wound him that leaneth thereon. For if it could deliver any, it should save them th^t have their hope and confidence in it. But such are deceived and deluded to their destruction. This the Prophet Ier. 3, 23, 24. & 10, 15. witnesseth at large in sundry places, *Truly the hope of the hills is but vain, nor the multitude of mountains, but in the Lord our God is the health of Israel: for confusion hath devoured our fathers labor, &c.* Hereunto cometh that saying, Isaiah 44, 9, 10. *All they that make an image are vanity, and their delectable things shall nothing profit: and they are their own witnesses that they see not, nor know, therefore they shall be confounded who have made a god, or molten an Image that is profitable for nothing.* They are not therefore lay-men's books, neither have any profitable use, but an

abominable abuse, being vanity and the work of errors, in the time of their visitation they shall perish. The Assyrians were famous, or rather infamous for Idols, and great boasters of thē; yet the Prophet showeth they should come to confusion: hereupon the use is inferred, what profiteth the Image? For the maker thereof hath made it an Image and a teacher of lies, though he that made it trust therein, when he maketh dumb Idols: woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; and to the dumb stone, Arise up, it shall teach thee: behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and yet there is no breath in it. Thus the vanity of Idols is set out by the destruction of the Idolaters.

[Use 2] Secondly, let them labor to see their own blindness. It is a great judgment of God upon thousands and ten thousands in the world, that worship the works of men's hands, and yet think themselves wise. We see also the preposterous and disordred desire of the children, to follow the idolatrous ways of their parents: whereupon it cometh to pass, that they excuse their sin by the example of their parents; and because they were borne in it, they are resolute to die in it, never examining how their religion standeth with consent of the Scriptures. Thus we see, that all idolaters are blind, and because they say they see therefore their sin remaineth. This the Prophet teacheth, Isaiah 42, 17, 18, 19. *They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed that trust in graven Images, and say to the molten Images, Ye are our gods. Hear ye deaf, and ye blind regard that ye may see. Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as the messenger that I sent? Who is blind as the perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant? If therefore we would not grope in ignorance, as the blindeman that gropeth in the dark, let us fly Idolatry, and keep our selves from Idols.*

Lastly, let us bless and praise the name of [Use 3] God, whē he delivereth his people from idolatry, to serve him purely and sincerely. Let us ever be mindful of his mercy, and walk as a thankful people redeemed out of so great a thralldom. This sacrifice of praise we see required in the Prophet: for having set down the folly & vanity of Idolaters, who cut down a Tree, warm themselves with part thereof, roast their meat with another, and with a third part make a god and worship it make it an Idol, and bow unto it, pray unto it and say *Deliver me, for thou art my God*: he acknowledgeth God's great mercy in forgiving these sins of the people, Isaiah 44, 21, 22, 23, *Thou art my servant, O Israel forget me not: I have put away thy transgressions like a cloud, and thy sin as a mist, &c.* Behold the beastliness and brutishness of these god-makers, not much unlike y^e Romish idolaters, who knead their dough, & of one part they make bread, and a god of the other. If this be the dot•ge of idolaters, we have great cause offered unto us, to magnify the mercy of God toward us, that hath freed us from such devilish devices of the false worship of God. He hath restored to us the true worship of God according to his holy word, he hath rooted out the Idols that were set up to be adored, he hath given us the Scriptures in our mother tongue, he hath free•d us from the burden and bondage of the Popes Decrees and Decretals, he hath pulled down the great idol of the Mass, and hath abolished the manifold heresies and corruptions of false Doctrine. What shall we now render to the Lord for all these tokens and testimonies of his love toward us, but take up the cup of salvation, and praise with tongue and heart the name of God, acknowledging his only goodness in delivering us from the bondage of Idolatry; and laboring to bring forth y^e fruits of his Gospel, to his glory, and our own comfort in Christ Jesus.

32 And Moses sent to search out Iaazer, and they took the Towns belonging thereto, and rooted out the Amorites that were there.

33 And they turned and went up the way toward Bashan: and Og the King of Bashan came out against them, he and all his people to fight at Edrei.

34 Then the Lord said unto Moses, Fear him not, for I have delivered him into thine hand, and all his people, and his Land: & thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon the King of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

35 They smote him therefore, and his Sons, and all his people, even until there was none left him: so they inherited his Land.

Hitherto we have spoken of the first Enemy overcome by the Israelites, to wit, *Sihon* King of the Amorites: the second enemy w^c they subdued is *Og* the King of *Bashan*, an enemy more mighty and terrible then the former. For he was one of the race and posterity of the gyants, at whose sight the scouters and espials sent out to serch the land were afraid, and despaired of inhabiting and inheriting of the land, and weakened the hearts & hands of the people as appeareth in the 13. chapter of this book, *We came into the Land whither thou hast sent us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey: nevertheless, the people be strong that dwell in the Land, and the Cities are walled & exceeding great: and moreover we saw the sons of Anak there.* And more plainly and particularly *Moses* describeth this King, Deuter. 3, 11. *Only Og the king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the Giants, whose bed was a bed of Iron: is it not at Rabbah among the children of Ammon? The length thereof is nine cubits, and four cubits the breadth thereof, after the cubit of a man.*

Now the more mighty and monstrous t^{is} Giant was, the greater occasion had the Israelites to ascribe the victory to God, and to give him the glory alone. And the Prophet singleth out these two enemies by name, Deu. 29, 7. Psal. 135, 11. & 136, 19, 20. *Sihon* the King of the Amorites, and *Og* the king of *Bashan*, above all other kings, and in the meditation of God's mercy delivering them into their hands, stirreth up the people to praise y^e name of God: which showeth that they were enemies greatly to be feared, and such as brought great terror unto the Israelites, yet no power can prevail ag^{inst} God, *There is no counsel, nor wisdom, nor understanding, nor strength against the Lord. The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but salvation is of the Lord.* The land of *Bashan* was a fertile & fruitful soil, commended in sundry places of the Scripture: it was a goodly mountain abounding with rank and rich pastures, yielding cattle of great bone and bigness, and flourishing with sundry commodities, which kindled a desire in the two Tribes and the half, to have it given them in possession. Wherefore *Moses* commending the bountifulness of God toward his people, Deut. 32, 14. showeth, *that he gave them butter of Kine, and milk of Sheep, with fat of the Lambes and Rams fed in Bashan.* And *David* to express the lustinesse and loftiness, the pride and

presumption of his enemies, resembleth them to y^e mighty bulls of Bashan, fed to the full in most fruitful pastures. Moses knowing the goodness of the soil, the strength of the Cities, and the malice of the enemies, sendeth out his scouts and espials, to search out the situation of the places, and the purposes of the persons that inhabited therein; and having taken Iazer, he marched toward this Bashan whereof we speak. The king advertised of the matter, and understanding the drift and design of the Israelites, cometh forth to meet them, and to hinder their approach to his Towns and Dominions, thinking his safety to consist only in his weapons, forgetting that all mortal things are mutable, and the end of war uncertain, and providing more for revenge, then for his own defense. Hereupon Moses before he made an head against the enemy (as it should seem) made a stand to know the will of God, whether he should fight with them in y^e place, and whether God would deliver them into their hands. The answer of God showeth, that they were greatly afraid, and stood in need of comfort: wherein consider, first the Commandment of GOD, *Fear not your enemies*: Secondly, the reason rendered to encourage thē, *I will deliver all your enemies into your hands*: which is amplified by a like example, and by the former experience which they had of the mercy of God in the destruction of *Sihon* king of the Amorites. After this comfort and raising up of their hearts that began to shrink, they joined battle, they fought with the king of Bashan, they overcame their enemies, and put them all, men, women, and children to the sword, and possessed his Land as he did the Land of the Amorites. Thus God gave them a joyful victory, who had before determined the destruction of *Og*, even while the giant thought nothing of the hand of God against him: and who is it that knoweth what God intendeth against him in heaven, while he offendeth him, and sinneth against him on the earth? The Lord that sitteth in Heaven, seeth the wickedness of man's heart abiding on Earth.

[Verse 33. *And they turned and went up the way toward Bashan: and Og the King of Bashan came out against them, &c.*] We see here another judgment of God upon another enemy of the Church, and the mercy of God in his overthrow, after the destruction of the former enemy. God could have brought them together, and bound them in one bundle to be cast into the fire, but they are destroyed one after another: some in the days of *Moses*; others are reserved for *Joshua* who succeeded *Moses* in the government of the people. We learn hereby, That the enemies of God and his Church are not consumed in a moment, but wasted and consumed in the providence of GOD by little and little. True it is, God is able to rain down fire and brimstone, snares and stormy Tempests upon them, he is able to bring them unto nothing at once with the breath of his mouth, when once the Coals of his wrath and indignation are kindled; but it is his pleasure to wast and consume them one after another: now one, and then another, that sin against him. This *Moses* declareth unto the people of Israel, Deut. 7, 21, 22, 23. *Isaiah* 9, 22. The Prophet *Amos* setteth down the dealing of God in the destruction of his enemies, chap. 9, 10, 11. So that God brought not all his judgments upon them at once, nor discharged the whole volley of shot against them together, but one punishment came in the neck of another, & the first was overtaken of the second, and the second of the third. The like may be said of the plagues which God brought upon *Pharaoh* and the rest of the Egyptians, he did not draw out his arrows, and empty his Quiuer at once, but wasted the Land, consumed the fruits, smote the cattle, and destroyed the inhabitants one after another: some were

destroyed with hail; some were slain by the destroyer, others were drowned in the red Sea: these came not altogether, but as a softly fire consumed them, or as a lingering disease pined them away by little and little, until they came to utter ruin.

The Reasons remain to be considered. First, [Reason 1] God will not root them out at once, to the end, that by them he may try the faith, & exercise the patience of his servants. There are none that have received to believe, but God will have thē proved, to declare to themselves, and manifest to others, what is in their hearts. No marvel if others be oftentimes deceived in us, and are ignorant of the secrets of our souls, seeing we our selves know not thoroughly our selves, until we have ended and endured trial. For such we are indeed as we are in the time of temptation. Therefore *Solomon* teacheth in the Proverbs, chap. 24.10. *If thou be faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.* Wherefore, it is necessary, that so long as we live in this world, we should be kept in a continual exercise of faith, of prayer, of repentance, and of obedience: as the Lord speaketh evidently in the book of Judges, chap. 2, 20. *Because this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their Fathers, & hath not obeyed my voice, therefore will I no more cast out before them, any of the Nations which Joshua left when he died; that through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord, to walk therein or not: So the Lord left those Nations, and drove them not out immediately, neither delivered them into the hand of Joshua.*

[Reason 2] Secondly, the people of God trespass against him, so as the Lord cannot root out their enemies together, but leaveth some among them, as we saw before, the Nations were left among the Israelites, to be as snares in their paths, whips in their sides, and thorns in their eyes, because they transgressed y^e Covenant that God had made with their fathers. So the Prophet speaketh, Psal. 81, 13, 14. *Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways, I would soon have humbled their enemies, and turned mine hand against their adversaries.* Likewise *Moses*, among the curses and judgments denounced against such as are disobedient to the laws of God, Leu. 26, 18, 21, 24, 28, showeth, that when he hath chastened and corrected us for our sins, yet if we go forward to despise his ordinances, & our soul abhor his laws, he will punish us seven times more, according to our sins. And if we proceed to walk stubbornly against him, he will then bring seven times more plagues upon us, & walk stubbornly against us in his anger.

The Uses of this Doctrine remain to be considered, & are not to be passed over. First, [Use 1] this teacheth, that the prosperity of the wicked, cannot assure them of the favor of God, nor secure thē from his punishments. It showeth indeed the patience and longsuffering of God toward the vessels prepared to wrath, to make them without excuse: but when they have filled up the measure of their sins, they shall know that GOD hath not forgiven or forgotten them. This the Prophet teacheth, Psalm. 50, 19, 20, 21, and 73, 6, 7, 18. *When thou seest a thief thou runnest with him, & thou art partaker with the adulterers: thou givest thy mouth to evil, and with thy tongue thou forgest deceit: thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, and slanderest thy mothers son. These things thou hast done, and I held my tongue, therefore thou thoughtst that I was like thee, but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thee: O consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none that can deliver you.* And in another place it is declared,

that albeit the wicked be malicious, speaking wickedly, talking presumptuously, and setting their mouth despitefully against heaven; yet GOD hath set them in slippery places, and cast them down into desolation. Wherefore, whensoever we see the wicked prosper and flourish, and the glory of his house to increase, let us not conceive evil of God, as though he loved unrighteousness, or favored the sins of men, nor think that the wicked shall escape: therefore *Elihu saith, Job 35, 15, 16. Although thou sayest to God, thou wilt not regard it, yet judgment is before him, trust thou in him; yet his anger shall visit the evil, and call them to an account with great extremity.*

Secondly, let them not set their hearts upon [Use 2] evil, *But let them seek the Lord while he may be found, let them forsake their wickedness & ungodliness, and return unto the Lord, that he may have mercy upon them, who is very ready to forgive, Isaiah 55, 6, 7.* What maketh many sin against God, but a vain confidence and presumption to escape the judgment of God? What maketh them to put off the evil day, & to make a league and covenant with death, but the abuse of God's patience, who doth not presently punish them? This the wise man teacheth, *Eccl. 8, 11, 13. Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the children of men is fully set in them to do evil: but it shall not go well with them, he shall be as a shadow, because he feareth not before God.* Albeit therefore they seem to sin scot-free, and without punishment, yet the greater patience appeareth to be in God, the greater destruction is reserved for them. Even as whē the shadow groweth to be longest, then the light fadeth and departeth soonest, and the night approacheth nearest: so when God hath waited a long time for our conversion, & the ungodly flatter themselves in their sins, thē suddenly is the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men: so that the greater y^e stay & delay of his judgments hath been, the heavier will the stroke fall upon them. The punishment is prolonged, it is not forgotten. Their judgment is coming, and sleepeth not, it gathereth force in going. The higher the axe is lifted up, the slower it striketh, but the deeper it pierceth into the wood. If then God do not by and by smite the offender, and strike him in the profaneness of his wicked heart, let us not be secure and continue in sin: God doth not at once make hauock of his enemies, but bringeth them to judgment one after another. Wherefore let us conclude with the saying of the Prophet, *Say ye, surely it shall be well with the just, for they shall eat the fruit of their works: woe be to the wicked, it shall be evil with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.*

[Use 3] Lastly, as the bodily enemies of the Church shall be wasted with lingering & long lasting judgments, so shall it be with the enemies of our souls. The spiritual enemies of our souls and of our salvation, are not brought under our feet at once to trample upon them, and to triumph over them, they are brought in subjection by little & little. For as these enemies are cast down, so our sanctification ariseth. As the Corn which the husbandman soweth, before it can come to ripeness, and yield a plentiful increase, must first take root, shoot into a blade, and spring up by little and little, till it bring forth an ear: so is it with the grace of sanctification and newness of life. *The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustardseed, which a man taketh and soweth in his field, which indeed is the least of all seed: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among Herbs, and it is a Tree, so that the Birds of heaven come and build in the branches thereof. Again, the Kingdom of heaven is like unto Leaven, which a woman taketh, & hideth in three*

pecks of Meale, till all be leavened. So is the work of God, little and small in the beginning, it is as a building that goeth slowly forward, there must be much sweating and toiling about it, there must be great laboring and hammering before we can bring it to any greatness. The more we increase in grace, waxing strong in faith, firm in hope, and constant in our profession, *The more do we grow to be conquerors through him that loved us.* 2 Cor. 4, 16. Let us always fight against sin, watching in prayer, *fervent in spirit, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, cleaving to that which is good, procuring things honest in the sight of all men: and the God of peace shall tread Satan under our feet.* Rom. 12, 11, 12, & 16, 20. Let us always in this life look for enemies, and prepare to with-stand them; let us stand on our watch-tower, and descry the approaching of them. Let us *know that our adversary the devil, goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour, and be strong in the grace which is in Jesus Christ.* Here is not the place of triumphing, but the place of fighting. No man is crowned, except he strive as he ought to do. The husbandman must labor before he receive the fruites of the earth. We must die with Christ before we can live with Christ. We must suffer with him, before we can reign with him. So long as we live in this life, we are soldiers and live in warfare, we must not dream of the victory before the combat. If we will here skirmish with our enemies, putting on the whole armor of God, the day shall be ours, we shall win the field. Here is our comfort, that when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal hath put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 1 Cor. 15, 54. *Death is swallowed up into victory, which is the last enemy that shall be subdued.* If we be the children of God, and are escaped from the bondage of corruption, if we cast off Satan and his temptations, we must never think to live in rest, but look for him to buffet and batter us, that he may re-enter the Fort, which he hath forsaken. We must be content sometime to take a foil, and to have the Bucklers and Wasters driven to our heads, yet so as our stepping back, should be but to recover the greater force and strength. They indeed that have not a lively faith in the Son of God, nor have given their names to their Captain, to serve in the wars, against the flesh, the world, and y^e devil, do not know at all, but are altogether ignorant, what the suggestions of the flesh, & allurements of the world, and the temptations of the devil do mean. They strive not, they fight not, they resist not, they overcome not: they understand nothing what killing & conquering meaneth. This our Savior teacheth in the Parable, Luke 11, 21, 22. *When a strong man armed, keepeth his Palace, the things that he possesseth, are in peace: but when a stronger then he cometh upon him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and diuideth his spoils.*

Verse 34. *Thou shalt do unto him, as thou didst unto Sihon, King of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.* In these words is an illustration and amplification of the promise of deliverance, and assurance given them to prevail, drawn from a present and comfortable experience, which they had of the power of God in subduing *Sihon*, King of the Amorites. As if the Lord should have said unto them, Why do ye shrink and hang back, when ye should make an head against them, & look them in the face? What though this King be puissant and of great stature, of the race of those mighty Giants? Have ye forgotten my power? And do ye not remember what I did to *Sihon* King of the Amorites, how I gave him, his people, and his Cities into your hand? Have ye not experience that I give the victory to whom I will? Is my hand

shortened, that it cannot help? Nay, be of good comfort, & assure yourselves I will not leave you nor forsake you, but as you have overcome those that have hitherto stood against you, so ye shall see your desire upon all your enemies. Whereby we learn, That the experience of God's former favor, casteth off fear, causeth affiance in him, and assureth future grace to come from him.

Among other means to work faith in him and a resting our selves in his promises, the blessed experience and comfortable proof which we have had of God's mercies toward us in former times, is one of the chiefest to cause us still to trust in him, and evermore to call upon him in our necessities. We see this proved unto us in sundry Psalms of the Prophet, as Psal. 4. *Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast set me at liberty when I was in distress, have mercy upon me, and hearken unto my prayer.* Where the Prophet reasoneth from the time past, to the time to come, and entreateth God to hear him, because he hath already had mercy upon him. The like ground of his assurance we find again, Psal. 22, 9, 10, 11. *Thou diddest draw me out of the womb, thou gavest me hope even at my Mothers breasts, I was cast upon thee even from the womb, thou art my God from my Mothers belly: be not far from me, because trouble is near, for there is none to help me.* In these words we see how the Prophet by benefits past, assureth himself of deliverance from dangers present, and in time to come. As if he should say, seeing I was committed to thy providence and protection so soon as I was borne, and came into the world, when I could not feed and defend myself, and seeing I have hitherto received so many benefits from thee, do not now depart from me when affliction is at hand, and when there is none beside to help. So the same Prophet layeth the foundation of his hope, expecting mercy from God, upon the consideration of God's dealing with him before, as in the third Psalm, verse 4, 7, where being combred and compassed with a wonderful number of adversaries revolting from him in the conspiracy of *Absalom*, he gathereth comfort to himself of God's present aide, from the experience he had felt before, saying; *I did call upon the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy Mountain: O Lord, arise, help me my God, for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek-bone, thou hast broken the teeth of the wicked.* This is farther confirmed and strengthened unto us, in *David's* faithful behavior, going to encounter with the uncircumcised Philistim, 1 Sam. 17, 34, 35, 36, 37. *Thy servant kept his fathers Sheep, and there came a Lyon & likewise a Bear, and took a Sheep out of the flock, and I went after him and smote him, and took it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by the beard and smote him, & slew him: so thy servant slew both the Lyon and the Bear: therefore this uncircumcised Philistim shall be as one of thē, seeing he hath railed on the host of the living God.* Whereby it appeareth, how he strengtheneth his faith by the experience y^t he had in time past, of God's helping hand, nothing doubting, but the same God that had preserved him from the iaw of the Lyon, and the paw of the Bear, would keep him in this single combat with that Champion that defied Israel. This the Apostle *Paul* also concludeth, 2 Cor. 1, 9, 10. *We received the sentence of death in our selves, because we should not trust in our selves, but in God which raiseth the dead; who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver us, in whom we trust, that yet hereafter he will deliver us.*

The Reasons follow. First, his gifts are freely and frankly bestowed, he never repenteth [Reason 1] of them, he never changeth nor altereth that which is gone out of his mouth, he

giveth liberally, and reproacheth no man. Therefore the Apostle saith, Rom. 11. *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance*: so that whom he loveth, he loveth to the end, and where he hath once shown mercy, he will persevere in in his kindness, and he that hath begun his good work in us, will perfect the same unto the day of Jesus Christ. He never waxeth weary of well-doing, but delighteth in the works of mercy. When the Lord would reveal to *Abraham* the father of the faithful, his decree touching the destruction of Sodom, he maketh this the reason and motive to move him unto it, because he had begun already to show him mercy: *Shall I hide from Abraham my servant that thing which I do, seeing that Abraham shall be indeed a great and mighty Nation, and all the Nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?* Gen. 18, 17, 18. If then he never repent him of his gifts that he hath bestowed, nor reuoketh the riches of his graces that he hath granted; Then we see, that the giving of one gift assureth that a multitude shall follow after, as *Leah* said, *A company cometh*.

Secondly, he is merciful to his enemies, and [Reason 2] them that hate him, to such as never seek after him, or the knowledge of his ways: he maketh the Sun to shine, and the rain to fall upon the godly and ungodly: yea, his mercy stretcheth to the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air. *He prepareth showers for the earth, he maketh grass to grow upon the Mountains, he giveth to beasts their food, & to the young Ravens that cry.* Psal. 147, 8, 9, and 36, 6, 7. He saveth man and beast; so that we may boldly say; *How excellent is thy mercy, O Lord; therefore the children of men trust under the shadow of thy wings.* He is merciful to our bodies, in him we live, and move, and have our being, he hath given us life and breath; much more therefore will he be the GOD of our spirits, and maintain our spiritual life with the continuance of his graces, and sending fresh supply of his Spirit, after he hath once given us faith, and wrought our conversion; he which hath vouchsafed some portion, as it were the first fruits of his mercy, will add greater store of mercy unto it, as it were store upon store, and heaps upon heaps.

The uses are next to be considered. First, [Use 1] we learn from hence, to acknowledge his great mercy, that maketh mercy the seal of mercy, and one grace as the pawn & pledge of receiving and obtaining a new grace. O the unspeakable mercies of God, who can sound the bottom of them, or who can ascend up to the height of them! Can any tongue express, or heart conceive this goodness of God, teaching us to draw an argument from his first mercy to a second, and from a second to a third, always to arise from one degree to assure another, & to conclude a farther proceeding from the first beginning? What man or woman hath not received thousands, and ten thousands of mercies from the Father of mercies, and much consolation from the Father of all consolation, and thereby so many comforts to his own soul, to assure him that he will never forsake him? so that we may boldly, & with a cheerful heart, say, Lord be merciful to us, because thou hast begun to be merciful: we have received much mercy, therefore continue thy mercy toward us, not because we have been good and profitable servants to thee, or have deserved thy favor, but because thou hast been gracious to us. If our own works, if our obedience, if our righteousness were to be made the ground & reason to persuade the Lord to have compassion on us, we should build upon a weak and sandy foundation, our comfort were gone, and our hearts should fail us. For we know our own wickedness, and our sins are ever before us. But since former mercies are arguments of further mercies, and the granting of one grace, is a key to unlock the gate, and open an

entrance for the rest to follow; since the first love is a testimony and token of more love to be shown and continued; we abound with such arguments to move his Majesty, blessed be his Name for them, whereby we may be assured that he will add mercy to mercy, and favor to favor. Thus we see how fruitful the loving kindness of God is, always producing more, as one Corn increaseth an hundred fold. This was the stay and staff of *Paul the Apostle*, when he was in danger of death, and was brought unto his answer; *At my answering no man assisted me, but all forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge: notwithstanding the Lord assisted me, and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles should hear, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lyon: & the Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly Kingdom, to whō be praise forever & ever, Amen.* 2 Ti. 4, 16, 17, 18.

Secondly, it is a special comfort to the afflicted when they are fallen into diverse temptations. [Use 2] For when the Tempter cometh unto us, and persuadeth us that God hath cast us off forever, and that we are none of his, tempting us to despair of his mercy, and suggesting unto us our unworthiness: let us record and recount God's former mercies, taking sweet comfort therein, and stirring up our selves to prayer, with assurance to be heard. If he go about to persuade our harts by a strong illusion, that we are not effectually called, or freely justified and elected, or endued with faith, and therefore shall be certainly condemned: let us never yield to Satan, nor to his Angels, neither to their helpers & assistants, the flesh and the world. When we are enticed to commit sin, yield not to the subtleties and suggestions of the devil, but fly from it, and follow after the contrary virtue very earnestly. When he calleth to our remembrance our sins and falls past, let us call to mind the remembrance of God's mercies past, and rest in them as in a Sanctuary or place of refuge against all the storms that Satan raiseth, and the floods that he sendeth to sink our soul in the gaping gulf of hellish despair. So long as God bestoweth upon us one drop of mercy, let us never doubt of his great goodness to be continued toward us and to dwell in us forever. Wherefore the Apostle *Paul* saith, *We rejoyce in tribulation, knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost, which is given unto us.* This is an excellent & notable virtue, to be thoroughly acquainted with God's providence & dealing toward us, wrought in us by patience, & to have experience of his continual eye watching over his. Now we can say to our endless comfort in this manner: God hath kept me from many dangers, he hath blessed me with many graces, he hath assisted me against many enemies, I will therefore still trust in him, and depend upon him; thus one benefit draweth on another. From this experience we have a certain hope of his mercies to be continued toward us, and are assured of the truth & constancy of God's promises, and of his good will toward us: so that in all tribulations and afflictions we must consider with our selves the former benefits of God, and from them gather new hope of the continuance thereof, whose mercy is a Fountain that never can be dry, but springeth up to everlasting life, and as a Tree that is always green, and yieldeth the sauory fruits of righteousness.

Thirdly, this Doctrine teacheth a notable [Use 3] difference between God and man, in bestowing of benefits. We see men are soon weary of their liberality, & cannot abide continual beggars.

It is not so with the Lord our God, rich in mercy, abundant in kindness, and plentiful in redemption toward all that call upon him. The more bold we are in asking, the more bountiful he is in granting. It is a common thing in the richer sort, to check a man for often craving, and to upbraid and reproach the poor with those things they have bestowed upon them, as when they say, Why do you always come to me, and beg of me? I have given you this and that, at this time, and at that time, in such and such a place; ask no more of me, for if you do, you shall go without. Thus do men reprove and reproach for often demanding. But see the different dealing of God to our endless comfort unto the faithful, he doth never upbraid his benefits, he is not unwilling to grant, he refuseth no man's person, he giveth liberally and bountifully to all that come unto him. This is also a singular comfort to the weak conscience and afflicted soul, whē he is tempted to reason thus, Will God hear me, or respect me? Will he show his loving countenance toward me a grievous sinner, a miserable and wretched sinner, a silly and simple soul? Ask boldly of him, he reproacheth none, as the Apostle *James* teacheth, chap. 1, 5, 6. *If any of you want wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, & reproacheth no man, and it shall be given him.* The oftener we ask, the better we are accepted. The more we do desire, the more always we do obtain. He chargeth us to call upon him in the day of trouble, and assureth us of our deliverance, *Psal. 50, 15.* He would have all come to him that are heavy laden, with promise to be refreshed and eased. This is a notable encouragement to all persons to fly unto God, not to run to Saints or Angels, which neither can hear us, nor give any gifts unto men. Let us always be ready to crave of him, & praise him for his mercies received, seeing they assure more unto us, as we see the Apostle doth, who having experience that God had delivered him, and gathering from thence, that God would deliver him, breaketh forth into this thanksgiving, *To whom be praise forever and ever, Amen. 2 Tim. 2, 18.*

Lastly, let us not stand in fear of any enemies [Use 4] that rise up against us, and conspire to hinder the peace of the Church, and stop the passage of the Gospel; when God beginneth to take the cause of his people into his own hand, and smiteth any of his enemies on the jaw-bone, the rest are reserved to the like destruction. For wherefore doth God punish his adversaries, and enter into judgment with them? Wherefore doth he visit them, & strike them down with his right hand? Is it only to take vengeance on their sins, & to show his justice in their confusion? No, it serveth for the comfort and consolation of his servants, that howsoever God be patient, yet in the end they shall not escape. This did *Joshua* the Captain of the Lord's host, teach the people and men of war, chap. 10, 24, 25, when they had brought out those Kings unto *Joshua* which they had taken, he called for all the men of Israel and said unto the chief of the men of war, which went with him, *Come near, set your feet upon the necks of those Kings: and they came near and set their feet upon their necks. And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be faint hearted, but be strong, and of a good courage: for thus will the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.* Where we see, that as God destroyeth not all the enemies of his Church at once, but singleteth out some, that y^e rest might have a time of repentance: so

if the rest despise the riches of his bountifulnes, patience, and longsuffering. *Not knowing that the bountifulness of God leadeth them to repentance*, Ro. 2, 4, they shall be bound up in the same bundle, and be cast into the fire, as the Tree that being spared, brought forth no fruit.

[*The Lord said unto Moses, Fear him not, for I have delivered him into thine hand, and all his people, and his Land.*] This King of Bashan was a strong and dreadful enemy, descended (as we have shown) of the race of the Giants, mighty in body, fearful to behold, terrible to the Israelites, as may appear by the comfort ministered unto them. For God never exalteth and raiseth up in vain, he never willeth any to cast off fear, where no fear is. From hence we learn, That the enemies of the Church are not to be feared. Howsoever such as set themselves against the people of God be many & mighty, growing in strength, excelling in malice, raging with cruelty; yet must not God's servants be fearful and distrustful by dreading the power of men, but always rely upon God, keeping faith, and a good conscience, depending upon him in life and death. Thus did the Lord strengthen the feeble heart of *Hezekiah*, when *Rabshakeh* with his bold and blasphemous mouth had railed upon the strength of Israel, and had proudly threatened the King and his people, that they should be compelled to eat their own dung, and to drink their own water: *Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, behold I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a noise, & return to his own Land, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own Land*, Isaiah 37, 6, 7. And afterward, chap. 43.1, 5, when the people of God were grievously oppressed by their bitter and bloody enemies, so that they were robbed, spoiled, snared, thrust and thrown into Dungeons, fettered in prison-houses, and every way evilly entreated; he speaketh unto them on this manner, *Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by name, thou art mine: fear not, for I am with thee.* So Christ forewarning his Disciples what entertainment they should find in the world, Mat. 10, 26, 28, and how hardly they should be tried; as to be betrayed, hated, persecuted, imprisoned, scourged, railed upon, and in the end brought to their end, he prepareth them to this duty, and repeateth it oftentimes, *Fear them not.* And the Apostle *Paul*, after he had earnestly instructed the *Philippians* to grow in all graces, & to lead their conversation worthy the Gospel of Christ, he remembereth thē of this point, *In nothing fear your adversaries*, Phil. 1, 18 Answerable to these precepts, are the worthy practices of the faithful. Hereunto cometh the example of *Moses*, Heb 11, 27, when he led the people of Israel out of Egypt, notwithstanding the threatenings and bloody words of *Pharaoh*, he feared not the fierceness of the King, but endured a constant maintainer of the Church of God, & ceased not to encourage the people against their enemies, whose hearts failed and quailed when they were pursued and overtaken by the Egyptians. Likewise, the three servants of God being threatened by that great Tyrant *Nebuchadnezzor*, to be cast into the fiery Furnace, were not daunted or feared by his high power & fierce displeasure, but answered him; *We are not careful to answer thee in this matter.* Dan. 4, 15. This appeareth at sundry times, & upon sundry occasions in *David*, whē he waxeth bold and courageous in the Spirit, & saith, *I will not be afraid for ten thousand of the people that should beset me round about.* Psal. 3, 6.

[Reason 1] The reasons follow. First, God is with his people. If he be with them, shall we fear any to be against them? If we have a protection from the Prince, shall we fear the face of the subject? If the Lyon fight for us, shall we fear the fly or the worm, y^t are weak in strength?

This is the reason urged by the Lord in the Prophet, *Fear not, for I am with thee*, Isaiah 43, 5. Now God is with us by his power and providence. If we consider these things that are in God, as his general & special providence, which guideth and overruleth all things for the glory of his Name, and the benefit of his children, the holy meditation hereof ought to remove from us all distracting and distrustful fear. When Christ had dissuaded his Disciples from the fear of men, he saith; *Are not two Sparrowes sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father? Yea, the hairs of your head are numbered*, Math. 10, 29, 30. And indeed the cause why in trouble we faint and fail for fear of men, whose breath is in their nostrils, and whose malice is limited, is, because we distrust God's promises and providence, which is indeed a fearful sin. Again, if we consider that God is with us by his power, which being endless & infinite, is able to redress & repress the greatest tyrant and tyranny in the world, we shall find nothing more available to keep us from the excessive fear of weak man, seeing he can restrain them when it pleaseth him. This the three servants of God acknowledge in their danger, *Behold, our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the fiery Furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King*. Dan. 3, 13.

Again, let us have our conversation without [Reason 2] fear, in regard of the persecutors themselves, and the power which they have. For consider the difference between that which God can do, and that which man can do. The most vile and cruel tyrant that breatheth out threatenings and slaughter against the Saints, when he hath done his worst, and raged to the utmost, when he hath disgorged all his malice, and quenched his thirst in blood, can go no further but to kill the body; but God can go further, who hath the keys of hell and death. Nay, these enemies cannot so much as kill the body or touch the skin with all their power, without the will of God, as our Savior speaketh to *Pilate*, when he boasted of an absolute power in his own hands to bind or loose, to crucify, or to absolve, *Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above*. John 19, 10, 11. This is that reason which Christ himself expresseth, Mat. 10, 28. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*.

Thirdly, the enemies shall be destroyed. [Reason 3] They fight against God, they fight against his people, & therefore they cannot prosper. True it is, they may for a time prevail and proceed in their evil enterprises, and God may for a season use them as his Rod, to try the faith of his children; but when he hath used them as instruments to bring his judgments to pass, they shall prevail no longer. This consideration served to encourage the people of Israel, when *Pharaohs* host pressed upon them, and marched toward them: *Fear not, stand still, & behold the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you this day; for the Egyptians which ye have seen this day, ye shall never see them again: the Lord shall fight for you, therefore hold you your peace*. Exod. 14, 13, 14.

The uses remain to be stood upon. First, this teacheth, that the child of God must be [Use 1] a man of valor and courage, and as a mighty man of war, not to be daunted with any terror to forsake his faith & a good conscience: but such an one as is able by the fortitude & power of Christ, to undergo all trials, to over-stride all dangers, to overcome all enemies, and to triumph over all things that oppose themselves against their peace. So then the godly,

whose faith overcometh the world, are not only soldiers, but valiant soldiers, and victorious conquerors. The Apostle having commended Moses, that he forsook Egypt, & feared not the fierceness of the King, addeth this withal, *For he endured, as he that saw him which is invisible.* Some were racked, tempted, tormented, burned, stoned, & would not be delivered. A wicked man is a very dastard and coward. He feareth every creature, which is a great judgment upon him that will not fear God. The darkness of the night, the solitariness of the place, the falling of a leaf, the crawling of a worm, the flashing of the lightning, the cracking of the thunder, the guilt of conscience doth terrify them. But the godly are endued with true fortitude & magnanimity of mind, springing from the grace of faith, *and are bold as a Lyon,* Prov. 28, 1, they are resolved of God's presence with them, and of his providence over them, being ready to say with David, *The Lord is my light and my salvation, of whom shall I be afraid? The Lord is the strength of my life, whom then shall I fear? Though an host pitched against me, mine heart should not be afraid.* Psal. 27, 1, 2, 3. This made the Apostle, when he heard that bands and afflictions abode for him in every City, to say, *What do you weeping and breaking mine heart? For I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the Name of the Lord Jesus.* Acts 21, 13. The faithful indeed walk thorough many temptations, on the right hand, and on the left, and enter into many combats; yet they sh•nne not the brunt of the battle, nor fear to loke the enemy in the face, nor shrink back from the push of the P•ke, because they have put on the whole armor of God, and have their hearts settled, and their heads covered in the day of trial. Therefore the Apostle exho•teth, that *we should be strong in the Lord, and put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the assaults of the devil, & to resist in the evil day.* Eph. 6, 11, 12, 13. It is not enough for us to provide armor, and to have it lying by us, as we see men in •heir houses have Pikes, and Halbets, Corslets, and Muskets, hanging by the walls, waxing rusty through want of use: but we must put them on, and buckle them about us: we must always have our loins girt, & our lights burning, having on the breast-plate of righteousness, taking the shield of faith, and drawing out the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Neither is it sufficient to defend us, to put on armor, but we must put on the whole armor of God. We must be armed from top to toe, and leave no part unarmed and vnguarded, lest the enemy espye his advantage, and work our destruction. We must be armed within and without, before us and behind us, in soul and in body, in tongue and ear, in head and heart. For if Satan (*who as a roaring Lyon seeketh whom he may devour*) find us in any part or member naked, & vndefended, we lie open to him to surprise us at his pleasure, and to bring upon v• swift damnation. David was armed with the armor of God, being a man after God's own heart; bu• because whē he saw the beauty of Bathsheba, he made not a covenant with his eyes not to lust, Satan ensnared him to commit folly. At another time, leaving his ears unarmed, and setting them open to the false information and accusation of Z••ba, he was drawn away to pervert justice, and to betray the cause of the innocent, and to condemn the just without hearing. So four ear be at any time unarmed, it is ready to hear and receive, and believes slanders & false tales against our brethren. If the Helmet of salvation do not cover our head, if y^e toong be not fenced, the devil will set th• on work, to devise evil slanders, and to publish them to the disgrace and discredit one of another. Jonah was a man of God, and a Preacher of repentance to the Ninevites; yet because he left his tongue unarmed, and did not set a watch before his mouth, he brake out into an

open and insolent contempt of God, saying, *I do well to be angry unto the death*, chap. 4.9. Seeing therefore, we are compassed about with such an army of enemies, that watch all occasions, and seek all opportunities against us, they are greatly deceived, that make the life of a Christian to be an easy and idle profession, & take the Gospel to be a profession of liberty: (as y^e enemies of the grace of God object against us) for it may cost us dearly, even the resisting unto blood, and the forsaking of all earthly commodities, that the wo^eld holdeth in greatest price. Let us therefore as wise builders, sit down and cast our accounts before hand, what our work may cost us. For such only as continue to the end, shall be saved.

Secondly let us go boldly forward in the [Use 2] duties of our calling. The Church of God is not always in one state. Sometimes it liveth in quiet and peaceable times, when the Gospel is publicly preached & professed, taught & received with liberty of meeting together, & with freedom of conscience, without opposition or gain saying, as by the blessing of God it is among us. Sometimes the truth of God is resisted, the professors are persecuted, the Gospel is suppressed and oppressed by the rage of the enemy, the faithful are slain and put to death with all kind of cruelty. Notwithstanding let us not fear their fear, neither be troubled, but sanctify the Lord in our hearts, & be ready always to give an answer to every man, of the hope that is in us, with all meekness and reverence. So then the godly should not fear the threatenings of the ungodly, nor so be troubled as thereby to abstain from such necessary duties, as their callings do lead and direct them unto; but on the contrary, make the Lord their fear and their dread, and make a bold confession of the precious faith they conceive, as those that labor to maintain a good cause with a good conscience. Let us all go forward with courage and constancy in our callings, let us perform with diligence the duties laid upon us; and albeit crosses do cross us in the way, and many dangers meet us, we must not shrink back, but stand fast, and go forward in our profession. This should be in all Magistrates, that are as the God's of the earth, and the Ministers of justice, they must be men of courage, to perform the duties of their calling, Exodus, chapter 18, verse 13: they must be endued with the spirit of power, and of godly boldness, to go through with every good work with a constant resolution, and not stand in fear of any man, considering that the cause is the Lord's which they handle. They must call and compel others to walk in their duties, that so the sword of the Magistrate may be joined with the word of the Minister. This should be also in all Ministers of the Gospel, though the power of man rise up against them, they must depend upon him that is highest in power. This Christian courage appeareth to have been in the Apostles, when they were persecuted & imprisoned for preaching in Jesus Name the resurrection from the dead; considering the multitude of enemies, the assembling of the Rulers, the corruption of *Pilate*, the malice of *Herod*, the cruelty of the Pharisees, the rage of the Gentiles, & the tumult of the people, they prayed, saying; *Now O Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants with all boldness to speak thy word*. And this generally should be practiced of all the godly that have in mercy received to believe, they must go forward in their holy faith and obedience, and arm themselves against the temptation and fear of restraining their liberty, of losing their goods, of laying down their life: and when men persecute us for embracing the faith, and professing of godliness, we must remember

God's care over his servants, and his special providence over them that fear him, with the most blessed end that shall certainly follow, to wit; the kingdom of heaven, and an exceeding weight of glory.

Lastly, seeing the godly must lay down all [Use 3] fear which the wicked seek to cast upon them for righteousness sake, let us labor truly to fear God. For if we may not stand in fear of men, let us know whom we ought to fear and reverence, even the Majesty of God, fearing to offend him, as a good child feareth his Parents, as the Prophet teacheth, *A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master: If I be a Father, where is mine honor? If I be a Master, where is my fear, saith the Lord of hosts?* Mal. 1, 3. This fear is the beginning of wisdom, as the wise man showeth, Prov. 1, 7, for this fear the holy man *Job* is exceedingly commended in the Scriptures: & this fear should be stronger in us to keep us from sin, in respect of God, then in respect of mē. This is the use directly made by the Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 8, 11, 12. *Say ye not, a confederacy to all them, to whom this people saith a confederacy, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid of them: Sanctify the Lord of hosts, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.* Where we see, that having removed from them the false fear of men, he planteth in them the true fear of God: having shown where it should not be, he teacheth where it should be: having declared what fear is evil: he toucheth the remedy. The ready way to take from us the fear of men, & dangers that may fall upon us from men, is the fear of God. For whosoever feareth God aright, he will not provoke him to wrath for fear or love of any creature, knowing that God is stronger and mightier then all, and assuring himself that if God be offended no creature is able to secure him and safeguard him from danger of judgment Again, whosoever hath God his friend, shall not need to fear man to be his enemy. If then we seek to fear God with all our heart above all things, we shall be free from the immoderate and excessive fear of the mightiest enemies. But if we do not fear to offend him, we shall be constrained always to tremble at the least occasion, and to fear the wicked, the devils, death hell, and damnation. Every storm of troubles shall be able to overturn us. Let not our hearts therefore be troubled, let us rest in God, and believe in him. Let no danger drive us to deny h•m, lest we be denied of him in his kingdom. And let us consider the heavy punishment determined and reserved for all distrustful and fearful men which shall fear man more then God, and so make ship-wrack of faith and a good conscience, they shall be punished with unbelievers, with the abominable, with murderers and whoremongers, with idolaters and liars, in the Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.

CHAP. XXII.

1, After the children of Israel departed, and pitched in the plain of Moab, on the other side of Jordan from Ierico.

2 Now Balak the son of Zippor, saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites.

3 And the Moabites were sore afraid of the people, because they were many, & Moab fretted against the children of Israel.

4 Therefore Moab said unto the Elders of Midian, Now shall this multitude lick up all that are round about us, as an Ox licketh up the grass of the field, and Balak the son of Zippor, was King, &c.

5 He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor to Pithor (which is b• the River of the Land of the children of his folk) to call him, saying; Behold, there is a people come out of Egypt, which cover the face of the earth, and lie over against me.

6 Come now therefore, I pray thee, and curse this people, for they are stronger then I:) so it may be that I shall be able to smite them, & to drive them out of the Land: for I know that he whom thou blessest, is blessed, and he whom thou cursest, shall be cursed.

7 And the Elders of Moab, and the Elders of Midian departed, having the reward of the soothsaying in their hand, and they came unto Balaam, and told him the words of Balak.

8 Who answered them, Tarry here this night, and I will give you an answer, as the Lord shall say unto me, so the Princes of Moab abode with Balaam.

9 Then God came unto Balaam, and said, What men are these with thee?

10 And Balaam said unto God, Balak the son of Zippor, King of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying:

11 Behold, there is a people come out of Egypt, and covereth the face of the Earth: come now, curse them for my sake, so it may be that I shall be able to overcome them in battle, and to drive them out.

12 And God said unto Balaam, Go not thou with thē, neither curse the people, for they are blessed.

13 And Balaam arose up in the morning, and said unto the Princes of Balak, Return unto your Land, for the Lord hath refused to give me leave to go with you.

14 So the Princes of Moab rose up, and went unto Balak, and said, Balaam hath refused to come.

Hitherto we have seen y^e prosperous and happy success, which y^e Israelites had against three mighty enemies, and the threefold triumph over them. But here ariseth a new enemy, with a new device, or rather a knotte and band of many enemies, to stop their passage, to lessen their multitude, and to weaken their strength. Moses therefore first declareth what lets and impediments they had, as blocks lying in their way, and what stopping of their quiet and peaceable proceeding. Thus they meet with many stays, and encounter with many dangers that will dwell in Canaan. They had already ouerpassed many perils, and overcome sundry enemies, now they might begin to look for rest, and to repose themselves in peace and quietness. But see here in the example of the Israelites, as in a glass, the life of a Christian: here is no time long to sit still, here is no place of pleasure, when one danger is past, we must look for another. For when they had overcome some of their enemies, as the Canaanites and Amorites, now the very jaws of death, & the very gates of hell seem to be opened against them, and the devil to pour out, as it were at once, all the venom of his malice upon thē. These hindrances which here they meet withal, are set down in four chapters, whereof some are outward, & some inward, partly from others, and partly from themselves, so that they had missed of their inheritance, both through the counsels & plottings of their enemies, & through their own sins and wickedness, had not God in mercy defeated the one, and pardoned the other.

Touching these hindrances cast in their way; observe first of all the preparation of thē in this chapter: Secondly, the substance of them, and setting of them on work, in the two next chapters following. Lastly, the conclusion of those hindrances, both prepared & employed in the 25. chapter. Touching the preparing and providing of means to stop the Israelites, consider in the first place a seeking and trying to get them: secondly, the obtaining and procuring of them. But first, the occasions of seeking and sending abroad are noted. The Israelites possessed the plain of *Moab*. *Balak* had heard wha^t the Israelites had done to his neighbors the Amorites, their victories bred in him fear, and fear ingendered a very wary proceeding. He saw an huge multitude of them encouraged with their late prosperous success, and lying as Grashoppers upon the earth, ready to eat up all that was round about them, as an Ox licketh up the grass of the field. He thus beholding his neighbors house on fire, nay consumed with the fire, and his own in imminent danger, thought it high time to look about him, and to seek new remedies for those new accidents. For fearing in himself what might be the event, fretting inwardly against his enemies, & doubting the loss of his own kingdom, he resolved not to be idle, but to procure means to work their confusion, knowing, that providing before is better then repenting after, and esteeming it an high point

of wisdom, not at all to trust, rather then afterward vainly to accuse those whom thou hast foolishly trusted.

Now because nothing serveth so fitly to avoid rashness as counsel, and that two eyes see more then one, and three more then two, he associateth unto himself the Midianites his neighbors, bordering upon him, & therefore hopeth, that the nearness of the common danger would easily join them in the same cause. These entering into a confederacy, as brethren in evil, after long aduisement and consultation had among themselves, in y^e ende do resolve to join together against Israel, as against a common enemy, thereby to lessen his number, to weaken his strength, & to impair his greatness rising by degrees, who seemed able to eat up the Moabites, to consume their Towns, to possess their substance, & to take both their Cities & substance into their own hands. And because they thought it a great dishonor & disparagement unto themselves, to sue to Israel for peace, and yet find not themselves able to meet him openly in the field, they determine to send to a with & wizzard, who for magic was renowned among the Infidels, that when they could not prevail by help of man, they might overcome by the help of the devil, like unto the desperate resolution of *Juno* in the Poet:

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta mouebo.

that is,

What should I doubtful stand, where ever

I can my friends to make?

Since Heavens I may not move,

yet pits of hell I will vprake.

Thus the wicked forsake God, and go for succor to the devil, and therefore, while they seek to avoid one mischief, they draw upon themselves many. Wherefore, messengers are directed, and great men are sent with great gifts from them of the league to *Balaam*, who in regard of his City was of *Pethor*, which *Ptolemy* calleth *Pacor*, lying on the River *Euphrates*; in regard of his Country, he was of *Mesopotamia*, a part of *Syria*, as appeareth in many places. In regard of his profession and practice, he was a Sorcerer and Soothsayer, as we shall see afterward: He was sent for to curse the people, that is, to bewitch them, to weaken them with his charms and spels, that so they might be able to match them, and to encounter with them, presuming upon him (as the Church of Rome do of the Pope) that he hath blessing and cursing in his own sleeve, to apply and use either of them at his own pleasure But we know indeed, that he is blessed whom the Lord our God shall bless, (though the devil and his instruments should throw and thunder out their curses against him) and he is accursed, whom our God shall curse (though all the world should pronounce him blessed.) As for the blessings & cursings of cunning men and women, they are nothing; neither the one helpeth, nor the other hindereth, nay the devils themselves, wholly set upon mischief, cannot hurt us any further then God permitteth. True it is, Satan, and consequently Sorcerers, his slaves and vassals, sometimes do effect great things, as we see in the history of *Job* chap 1, 12, and

in the temptations of Christ, Mat. 4, 5, they exercise their power, not only over the goods, but over the bodies of men, even of the believers; yet without the sufferance of almighty God, they can do nothing. They could not enter into the Swine before they were allowed. *The hairs of our head are numbered. Not a Sparrow falleth to the ground without the will of our heavenly Father.*

When *Balaam* saw the messengers, that they came not with their hands empty, but brought great gifts, and promised greater, which oftentimes *blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous*; the covetous wretch thirsted after the wedges of gold. as the wages of unrighteousness, and his heart ran after filthy lucre to curse the people of God, that he might enrich himself, and so to become a cursed instrument to y^e cursed counsels that were taken against the people of God: whereas the true Prophets are not beguiled with bribes and led away with gifts, 2 Kings 5, 16. Dan. 5, 17. He desireth of the messengers one nights respite to bring his business to good effect (not able at the present to resolve them) to see whether he could draw the Lord to favor his purposes and proceedings. God appeareth unto him, and asketh him what the men were that came to him; not that God was ignorant, and needed to be taught or instructed what those persons were, but to draw from him a voluntary confession of the matter, which being truly opened and declared, God forbiddeth him to go to the Moabites, because they had a mischievous purpose, and to curse the Israelites, because they were a blessed people. Whē he perceived to his great grief, that God had concluded and determined to continue his mercy and blessings upon his people, which no device of man could diminish, no works of the devil could abolish; the morning being come, he returned an answer to the messengers, and sent them back without their long-hoped desire, excusing himself, that he could not go with them, as himself desired, and as they had deserved at his hands; and having his mind wholly fixed on his reward, he saith, Return back to your Lord; as for me, I desired nothing more then to accompany you, but the Lord hath stopped and restrained my purpose, and will not suffer me to go with you, or to help you. Wherein observe how this covetous hyreling, & false Prophet, being willing to undertake y^e work, because of the wages, and to promise his best help, that he might finger the hire, behaueth himself fraudently and unfaithfully (as hyrelings do) mincing the matter, and revealing one part, but concealing another part of the revelation given him of God. For whereas God had said, *Thou shalt not go, thou shalt not curse the people, because they are a blessed people*, denying unto him, as well his purpose of going, as his promise of cursing, he declareth the former, but dissembleth the latter; he showeth to the Princes and Governors, that GOD restrained him from going, but hideth this, that the same GOD had forbidden him to curse the people, together with the reason of it, *That they are blessed*, lest the messengers should be offended, and his expected hire denied & detained.

This is the sum and substance of this division. But before we enter into the handling of the Doctrines offered herein to our considerations (to the end we may clearly see into the meaning of the whole history) it shall not be amiss for us to answer certain doubts and difficulties that arise, as well from the purpose of *Balak*, as from the person of *Balaam*. Some of reverent account in the Church, interpret this history otherwise then can stand with the circumstances of the Text, and the proportion of faith in other Scriptures. For they suppose

that *Balak* sought help of the true God, revered his Prophet, and had the seed of religion remaining in his heart. If this were so, why doth he not himself fly to God by prayer? And why doth he not stir up his people to prayer? Why do they not all as one man, join in supplications and intercessions to be helped of God? Why did he require *Balaam* to come with cursings and bannings against Israel, if there were any spark of true piety left in his heart? Again, it is imagined, that *Balaam* was a Prophet of God, and endued with the spirit of Prophecy, to whom GOD used oftentimes, and ordinarily to appear, & so do make him as it were a mean between the true Prophets and the false Prophets, thereby God making himself known among the Infidels, and never leaving himself without witness. Such were the Sybils thought to be, living among the Gentiles, and giving testimony to the truth of God. But we know no such mean between true and false Prophets. For whosoever is not a true Prophet, is a false Prophet: and whosoever is a false Prophet, cannot be a true Prophet of God. He that is of God, is a true Prophet: he that is of the devil, is a false Prophet. Neither doth the delivery and utterance of some truth, make a true Prophet, for then the devil should be a true Prophet, who sometime speaketh the truth, albeit to a sinister end. For he confessed the *Messiah* to be the Son of God, thereby to darken the Doctrine of Christ, and to discredit the power of the Gospel, raising a suspicion that he hath some familiarity & friendship with Christ, & by drawing men to doubt of the truth of our redemption, inasmuch as the devil is a liar from the beginning, & the father of lying. And touching the Sybils, they carry not any certain credit and authority, being all, or the most part, forged & foysted in, to win credit to the word of God, which needeth not the lies of any, to uphold the truth and authority thereof. For they are brought in, speaking more clearly and evidently, more plainly and particularly of Christ and his kingdom, then any of the Patriarchs or Prophets, then *Moses*, or any that lived after him. *Isaiah* is worthily accounted to be an Evangelical Prophet, prophesying distinctly and determinately of the passion & sufferings of Christ, yet it is as nothing in comparison of that the Sybils express, touching the name and nature of Christ, touching his original & offspring, touching his death and resurrection, touching Antichrist and other enemies of the Church. Now shall we think that God would reveal more to them then to his own Prophets, and the sons of the Prophets? to such as lived out of the Church, more then to all that were brought up in the Church, and sucked the sincere milk of the Scriptures, and had the most sureword of the Prophets, to the which they did take heed, as to a light that shineth in a dark place. Besides, we cannot hold this *Balaam* for any true Prophet, but for a false Prophet, such as *Simon* the Sorcerer mentioned in the Acts: Notwithstanding all the goodly glozes that he maketh, to win himself credit and estimation, whereof we shall speak more afterward. Furthermore, others think that *Balaam* meant his own false gods, when he saith, *Tarry here this night, [Object.] and I will give you an answer as the Lord shall say unto me.* And again, *Return into your Land, for the Lord hath refused to give me leave to go with you,* but that he was prevented of his purpose, by the true God appearing unto him. But this conjecture is overthrown by the express words in this place. For the word is *Jehovah*, [Answer.] a name always in Scripture given to the true God only, and never applied to any false gods; yea, the true God was known by his name among the Gentiles, and by it was discerned & distinguished from the Idols of the Nations, which indeed are no God's.

Now that we may attain to the true meaning of this Scripture, and resolve of the right interpretation thereof, I will set down certain rules and conclusions, which concern the matter in question, which being fully determined, and thoroughly descided, the truth will evidently appear to all men, how to carry this whole history, and make one part to agree with another. The first conclusion is, that *Balaam* was a lewd and wicked man. True it is, if we look into his bare and naked words without the matter, and examine his sayings without his practices, he may seem a very faithful and right religious man; yea, a most worthy and notable Prophet. He hath God always in his mouth, and at his fingers ends, he will not resolve the messengers before he have asked counsel at the mouth of y^e Lord: if he might have an house full of silver and gold, he cannot go beyond the word of the Lord his God to do less or more: he telleth them he can deliver nothing unto them, but what he receiveth of the Lord. But if we consider the matter aright, and try his fair speeches by the touch-stone of his foul life, and measure his wretched acts with his wicked counsels, we shall easily discern in his smooth carriage, a deep dissembling, and the Lord to be sparingly in his heart, that was abundantly in the mouth. He had a profane mind, & evil meaning, loving the wages of unrighteousness, and being carried away with desire of money (which is the root of all evil) to curse the people of God, as the Apostle teacheth, & therefore he was rebuked by a dumb beast for his iniquity. He also was *Balaks* school-master, and instilled the greatest mischief that might be into his heart, informing him how to subdue the people of God, and teaching him how to lay a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to draw them to spiritual and bodily fornication, when he saw that by his charms he could not prevail against them. And albeit the Israelites were increased as the Fish in the Sea, and as the Stars of Heaven, wherein were many thousand persons that could not discern between their right hand and their left hand, yet he was ready and willing to curse, where GOD had not cursed. And as a wretched death followeth a wicked life, so the justice of GOD found him out lurking among the Midianites, Numb. 31, 8, to verify the threatening of the Prophet; *As he loved cursing, so it fell upon him, and as he loved not blessing, so was it far from him; as he clothed himself with cursing like a raiment, so it entered into his bowels like water, & like oil into his bones.* Psal. 109, 17, 18.

Thus we see, as his life was, so was his death, a cursed beginning, a fearful ending; God swept him away by a violent & sodain death, together with those that set him on work, that as they conspired together, so they might be consumed together. If then he be a wicked man that intendeth to curse the people of God, that hath his heart possessed with covetousness, that loveth the wages of unrighteousness, that layeth a bait and snare to entangle men in evil, that seeketh to draw upon them the wrath of God, and after all is slain by the sword of those whom he intended to destroy, himself falling into the pit which he had digged for others: then the first conclusion holdeth as a certain truth, that this *Balaam* (whatsoever vizard of piety and holiness he pretend and put on in outward show) was indeed a very lewd and wicked man.

The second conclusion is, that *Balaam* was no true servant of God, but an open Idolater. This confirmeth further, and giveth strength to the former point. As he was lewd in his life, so he was corrupt in his religion, one of the idolatrous Gentiles, an alliant from the Commonwealth of Israel, a stranger from the covenant of promise. For whether he were one of the

Midianites, as some imagine, or whether he were one of the Aramites, as we declared before; whether he were sent for, nearer or further off, the conclusion holdeth, that he was none of the Israelites, Rom. 9, 4, to whom pertaineth the adoption of Sons, the Ark of the Covenant, the Tables of the Law, and the service of God. Moreover, when he was come into the presence of *Balak*, Numb. 22, 41, and 23, 1, 2, they both went up into the high places of *Baal*, where that abominable Idol was worshipped, where no doubt they served *Baal* in the Idols Temple. Besides, it is apparent in the whole history following, that he joined with *Balak* in his idolatrous sacrifices. If then he had not been one of the Idolaters, he would not have gone to that Idol, nor have erected new Altars, contrary to the will of God, who would only be served in the place that himself had appointed.

The third conclusion is, that *Balaam* was a very witch and wizard, a false Prophet, but a true sorcerer, famous, or rather infamous for his devilish magic which he practiced among the wicked and idolatrous Nations. Such a one was *Simon* that sorcerer, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, chap. 8, 9, 10, 11, and 13, 6, 8, *who used witch-craft, and bewitched the people of Samaria, saying, that he himself was some great man: to whom they gave heed from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is that great power of God; and they gave heed unto him, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.* Such a one also was *Elimas*, who was likewise a Sorcerer, a false Prophet, the child of the devil, and an enemy of all righteousness, withstanding the preaching of the Gospel, hindering the hearing of the word, and perverting the straight ways of the Lord. So had this *Balaam*, through his enchantments and superstitious arts, obtained a great name far & near among the Infidels, so that they resorted to him as to an Oracle, and esteemed him as an Angel of God, being able to help or to hurt, to further or to hinder, to bless or to curse whomsoever he pleased. Such were wont to be in great favor and credit with Kings and Princes, as appeareth by the enchanters of *Pharaoh*, Exod. 7, 11, 22, and by the Sorcerers and Astrologians of *Nebuchadnezzar*, Dan. 2, 2, who were oftentimes called into their presence, and brought before them, as men in whom their special delight was, & their confidence reposed. These men, howsoever they were magnified in Princes Courts, and had an honorable name among the Nations that knew not God, yet were profane Prophets of profane men, & the very chaplains of the devil, practicing charms and conjuring, which by the judicial Law of God was death, Exod. 22, 18.

Thus the Scripture calleth him a Sorcerer in plain terms and express words, Josh. 13, 22. *Balaam the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword, among them that were slain.* The word which the holy Ghost there useth, is *Chosem*, which signifieth one that diuineth by divination, and fetcheth answers from the devil whom they took to be God; and it is one of those eight sorts of witches and practicers by devils, mentioned in the 18, chapter of Deuteronomy. And his very drift and purpose was to curse; that is, to bewitch them, and so to weaken them with his enchantments, that they might be a cursed and detested, a loathsome and forlorn people. So it is noted, that when the Ambassadors came first unto him to acquaint him with the purpose of *Balak*, *they had the reward of the soothsaying in their hands*, Numb. 22, 7. Yea, when the Lord opened the mouth of *Balaam* to utter his will against his own will, & the truth hath this wretch upon the rack, he confesseth, that all his sorcery and soothsaying could not prevail against God's people, saying; *There is no sorcery against Jacob*,

nor soothsaying against Israel. Numb. 23, 23. This also sundry of the Fathers affirm, that he was famous in art-magic, and mighty in working by hurtful charms, and thereby grew in great estimation among all the people of the East. This likewise is the judgment of *Origen, Gregory, Nissen, Basil,* and others, reputed him as a Prophet of the devil, thinking he had been oftentimes hired for like purposes, & persuading themselves he had made many like experiments of his science in former times. Lastly, the manner of his whole proceeding, in going to fetch diuinations and answers from the devil, and in preparing seven Altars, seven Bullocks, seven Rams, seven sacrifices, is altogether correspondent and answerable to the ancient Discipline of the Magicians, who ascribed a certain kind of heavenly force and virtue unto uneven numbers, as appeareth by the Poet, *Numero Deus impare gaudet,* that is,

A mystery divine it is, that God

Delighted is in numbers that are odd.

This devise proceeded at the first from the Pythagoreans, who made all things to be the resemblance & similitude of numbers, whom *Aristotle* and *Galen* in many places laughed to scorn. Wherefore seeing we have sufficiently proved by testimony of the Scripture, and authority of the ancient Fathers, that *Balaam* was no better then a Witch & Sorcerer, therefore he dealeth in all his actions according to the learning of the Augures and soothsaying, which we will unfold for our better understanding of this History in the last conclusion.

Hitherto we have spoken of the person of *Balaam*, and have discovered his wicked life, his wretched idolatry, his execrable sorcery: we have made it plain, that both *Balak* the King, and *Balaam* the false Prophet, were of the unbelieving Gentiles, without hope in God, without belief in Christ, without taste of religion, without spark or spice of godliness: so that in the next place we will lay down certain rules of the base or bastard religion of these Nations, and upon those cōclusions as upon a sure and certain foundation we will build the interpretation of this place.

Therefore the fourth conclusion shall be, that the Gentiles had and held many gods, & only the people of Israel believed and worshipped one God, to whom *Moses* said; *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is Lord only.* Deut 6, 4. When *Solomon* by marrying strange wives, embraced also a strange religion, it is noted that his wives turned his heart after other gods, *So that he followed Ashtaroth the god of the Zidonians, Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites, and Chemosh the Idol of the Moabites.* 1 Kings 11, 4, 5. This the Apostle *Paul* plainly teacheth, 1 Cor, 8, 4, 5, 6. *We know that an Idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one: For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be many gods and many lords,) yet unto us there is but one God, which is that Father of whom are all things, and we by him.* Where we see, the true religiō touching one God, is opposed against the superstition of the Infidels, touching the plurality and multitude of gods. Thus then we see, that in the corrupt opinion of corrupt men, they had many gods; some worshipping the Sun, the Moon, the Stars: some the Angels, others Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Diana, and many such of like sort. For being left to the vanity of their own mind, they gave divine worship wheresoever any divine gift

appeared in any creature, *And so while they professed themselves to be wise, they became fools. They turned the truth of God into a lie, & worshipped the creature instead of the Creator, which is blessed forever: so God gave them up to their hearts lusts, and delivered them up into a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.*

The fifth conclusion is, that as they believed many gods, so they imagined that every people had his protecting god to be their patron and protection, to store them with blessings, and to preserve them from their enemies. In each Town and City one was chosen to be the *Deus tutelar*, that is, the Patron of the place: (for every house is a little City, or rather every City a great house. *Uiuus his annot. on August. de Ciuit. Dei. lib. 1. cap. 3.*) When he was well pleased then they prospered; when he was angry they were overcome & destroyed, as is testified by sundry writers of good credit. Thus do the Papists at this day. For as they call upon sundry Saints for sundry purposes; upon some for the plague, upon others for the safe deliverance of women, upon others for the tempests on the sea, upon others to obtain fair weather, and have a several Saint for every season; so they account them their Patrons, and call them by the name of their protecting gods, as appeareth by *Paulus Iouius* one of their own writers of histories. Thus we see, that the idolatry of our time is indeed and in truth the same with the ancient idolatry of the heathen: so that albeit the names of the Idols be changed, yet y^e nature of the idolatry is still retained. Now the truth of our conclusion is evidently collected & gathered out of the Scriptures. Hereunto cometh the reason produced by *Iephtah* to avow the lawfulness of inheriting the Cities of the Amorites which Israel had conquered by the sword, & held by prescription for three hundred years, *Judge. 11, 24. Wouldest not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever the Lord our God driveth out before us, them will we possess.* This also appeareth in the description of the wickedness of *Ahaz*, *2 Chron. 28, 23. In the time of his tribulation did he yet trespass more against the Lord, for he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which he falsely supposed had plagued him, and he said, Because the gods of the Kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice unto them, and they will help me; yet they were the ruin of him & of all Israel.* It was the Lord that smote him, not the gods of the Aramites: so that he is deceived in thinking they were holpen by their protecting gods. For such was the wickedness of his profane heart, that he did not acknowledge the hand of God to be gone out against him, but ascribed it to the power of those false gods, and therefore sacrificed unto them to his own confusion, to the ruin of Israel, and to the dishonor of God. Therefore the Prophet before reproveth *Amaziah*, *2 Chron. 25, 14, 15, who after the slaughter of the Edomites, brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and worshipped them, Why hast thou sought the gods of the people, which were not able to deliver their own people out of their hand?* Hereunto also cometh the boasting of *Saneherib* over Jerusalem, *2 Chro. 32, 13, 14. 2 King. 18, 33, 34. Know you not what I and my father have done unto all the people of other countries? Were the gods of the nations of other Lands, able to deliver their land out of mine hand? &c.* Thus in the heathenish Religion every wood and field had his local gods, without whose good favor no human action could in that place have any happy success, as appeareth in sundry Authors: when *Cambyses* and *Cyrus* departed out of Persia, they besought the gods protectors thereof, to send them forth favorably and with good speed. We see then that Idolaters held this as a certain ground and principle of their religion, that every place, every people, every

Province and Kingdom, had a peculiar god to be their patron and protector, to defend their worshippers, to fight their battles, and to deliver them out of the hands of their enemies.

The sixth and last conclusion remaineth, (which is the chief point to be considered) that is, y^t the Gentiles going to war against any nation, used ordinarily to conjure & call up the protecting god of that people, to forsake them and come on their part, promising to bestow either that place on him again, or else a more large and spacious place, so that he should be sure to lose nothing by the bargain. This is recorded at large by *Pliny* in his natural histories, where he saith; The first thing that the ancient Romans were wont to do when they laid sledge to any City, was to bring forth their sorcerers, and by them to call forth the god or goddess which was the patron or patronesse to protect that place: therefore it was never known and diuulged what god was y^e protector or patron of *Rome*, lest some of our enemies should assay to conjure him forth, and so deal with us as we do by them. Hereupon *Saint Agustine* saith, that *It was their predecessors manners, that long ago chased all their great multitude of little gods from the City Altars like so many flies. For where was all this nest of deities when the Gaules sacked the City long before the ancient manners were contaminate? Were they present and yet fast asleep? The whole City was a^l subdued at that time, only the Capitol remained: and that also had been surprised, if the Geese had not shown themselves better then the gods, and waked when they were all isleepe.* And in *lib. 1. cap. 3. de C^oit. Dei*, he saith, *Would any wiseman have commended the defense of Rome unto gods already proved to be unable to defend themselves?* Notwithstanding, saith *Macrobius* (*lib. 3. cap. 9.*) the name of their protector is registered in the books of the ancients, albeit much disagreeing and diuersely dissenting among themselves: some thought him to be *Jupiter*, some *Luna*, some the goddess *Angerona*: but others that thought it to be *Ops*, are of better credit. This is also avouched by *Plutarch* a learned Philosopher in his Roman questions; where demaunding the question why it was accounted an heinous & horrible offense, either to ask or to utter the protecting god of *Rome*, whether it were mad or woman, he answered, That there are certain Charmes and Sorceries, whereby the gods are fetched up, which the ancient Romans using, and thereby prevailing in battle, and drawing the gods of their enemies to their side, they provided by this deep silence of their own Patron, that none should be able to deal with them as they had done to others, nor render unto them the measure that they had measured unto others. And therefore *Valerius Soranus* lost his life for being so bold as to name that name, as *L. Uiuēs* observeth in his Annotations upon the first book and the third chapter of *S. Agustine de Ciuitate Dei*. This is it which the Poet remembereth in setting down the destruction of *Troy Virg. lib. 1. Aenead.*

—Quae fit rebus fortuna videtis,

Excessere omnes adytis, aris{que} relictis

Dij quibus imperium hoc steterat.

That is;

The state of things ye see,

the seats and Temples left alone:

The Altars and the gods whereby

this Empire stood, are gone.

In these words it is observed by the interpreters (*Seruius in lib. 2. Aeneid*) that the gods of the Troyans were gone away, and departed from them, and turned Grecian, because to avoid sacrilege they were called forth by their enemies. And *Viues* in his Annotations, *Lib. 2. Cap. 22. de Ciuitat. Dei*, telleth, that *Seruius* and *Macrobius* think these verses of *Virgill* to belong unto this calling out of the gods, because when as a City was besieged, and the enemy had an intent to raze it to the ground, lest they should seem to fight against the gods, and to force them from their habitations and places of abode against their willes (which they held to be as a most wicked deed) they used to call them out of the besieged City by the General of the army that did besiege it, that they would please to come and dwell amongst the Conquerors. So did *Camillus* at the *Veij*, so did *Scipio* at Carthage & Numance, and *Mummius* at Corinth, Hence it is, that *Liuy* the flower of the Roman Historiographers, bringeth in the same *Camillus*, going to the assault of *Veij* a City of Hetruria, praying thus, *Tuo ductu Pythice Apollo, tuo{que} numine inductus pergo ad delendam urbem Veios, tibi{que} hinc decimam partem praedae voueo: te simul Juno regina quae nunc Ueios colis, precor, vt nos victores in nostram tuam{que} mox futuram urbem sequare, vbi te dignum amplitudine tua Templum accipiat:* that is, As by thy conduct and divine power (O Apollo) I do enterprize the sacking of the City *Veio*, so I vow unto thee the tenth of all the booty: and thee I request Queen *Juno*, that sittest as Patron of this place, to accompany us as Conquerors into that City which now is ours, but by and by shall be thine, where thou shalt receive a Temple beseeming thy might and Majesty. And to conclude, if we would yet further understand the order and manner of this Magicall supe•stition, we may read the very form and fashion a• large (which those nations used) in *Macrobius* whom before we recited, *Si Deus, si dea est &c.* that is whether it be god or goddess that have undertaken the guidāce and gardianship of this City and people, we pray and beseech you to forsake this City and people, to relinquish their places, temples, & holy things, and to depart without them; strike ye a fear into the hearts of that people and City, betray them, and come to our side: defend our Armies protect our Cities, & safeguard our Temples &c. This was the charge that was used when they went to the sledge and sacking of any City: and in this manner they prayed, which was made when the Romans as called out the gods of Carthage to come unto them. The like we read in *Appian* also, in his book of the Parthian wars.

I confess I have stood ouerlong in handling and debating these points, which I have laid as the foundation of all that followeth, and serveth to clear such doubts as arise out of the text, and is nothing at all from the purpose of that which we have in hand. For these points, as certain Principles being thus concluded, may easily be applied to our present purpose, and comparing the fashions of the Gentiles with the fitness of the person that the King of Moab chose, and by whom he proceedeth in this practice, we may evidently gather the true sense of this history, and see how the whole matter was carried and conue•ed. For, as the manner of the vnbel•euing N•tions was to sue and seek to the gods of th••r enemies to forsake them, & betake them selves to their side; so *Balaam* being a notable and notorious sorcerer (as we

have proved before in the third Conclusion) worketh by the Principles of sorcery, and intendeth to begin his business and whole action, by calling up the protecting God of the Israelites, which indeed was the true *Jehovah*; as we see in the Chapters following by the words of *Balaam* himself. Besides, we may be the rather induced to receive and believe this truth if we consider that all this sorcery and superstition had his first original and beginning out of the East (from whence *Balaam* came) these were the manners of the men of the east, as appeareth in *Pliny* before remembered, and in others, who excelled all other people in the Art of Magicke: so that the manners and the man arose both of one place. Furthermore, as the sorcerers in Egypt being confounded by the mighty power of God in a base creature, confessed the miracles of *Moses* to be wrought by the finger of God; so when this soothsayer hath assayed at sundry times, and in diverse manners to work his will, in the end he witnesseth with his own mouth. Numb. 23, 23. that there was no sorcery effectual against *Jacob*, nor soothsaying against *Israel*.

Lastly, we may observe how he calleth the Lord his God, verse 18. *I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God*: because he knew if he should work anything against *Israel*, he must do it by their own God. For he doth not use these words as the faithful do in a special feeling of God's favor, and in the particular assurance and affiance of their own faith, inasmuch as he was a covetous wretch, and an old witch (as the Scriptures witness;) but his meaning is, he is the God whom in all this cause I have heed of, and by whō I must of necessity deal withal. He saith no more of him then he would have done of the Idol-god of any Idolatrous people, he would have called him his god, as being the god by whom he must work all his feats. Thus then *Balaam* intending to bewitch *Israel*, he must by the rules of his own profession conjure up the God of the Israelites, whereupon it was that he deferred the Messengers sent unto him. As if he should say unto them; If I work not by him, ye cannot prevail over his people, he must first be drawn to your side, and afterward ye shall easily obtain the other. Neither let any here object against these things, that *Balaam* was ignorant of the true God, or that it agreeth not to the nature of God to reveal himself to Magicians, and to attend upon their trumpery. For albeit he did not acknowledge him to be the Creator and Governor of the world, by whom all things stand or fall: yet he knew him to be the God of the Israelites, which was sufficient for his purpose: so that he meaneth not in speaking of the Lord, his own false gods, but he consulteth with the true God, as sundry places in this present Chapter make manifest, Numb. 22, 8, 18, 19. as when he saith, *He would answer them as the Lord should say unto him, and that he cannot go beyond the word of the Lord*. So that he asketh counsel of the true God, and receiveth his answer of the true God. And this he doth not as a Prophet of God, but as a Sorcerer. Neither may we think it strange that God should have ought to do with witches and wizards, seeing he giveth answer not only to his own people that cleave unto him, and call upon his name, but to such as are out of the very bosom of the church for his people's sake, sometimes reproveth them, sometimes instructing them, sometimes convincing them of evil, and always leaving them without excuse. As here he teacheth *Balaam*, that all his coniurations & enchantments were vain and void, seeing he hath decreed and determined so to continue his blessing unto the end toward the Israelites as that no

device of man, or work of the devil, shall be able to hinder, or lessen, or abolish the same, as we shall see afterward.

[Verse 3. *And the Moabites were sore afraid of the people.*] Having in the former words searched into the meaning of this history, and examined the several circumstances thereof: now let us come to the doctrines that arise out of this division. And first, see the occasion of the Moabites confederating themselves with the Midianites, and the project of them both, in sending out to a cunning man to help them; namely, a sudden fear arising in their hearts, danting all their courage, weakening all their strength, and driving them into despair. Israel was an innocent and harmless people, professing righteousness, abstaining from all wrongs, surceasing from all injuries, for conscience sake, as we saw before when they desired passage through the lands of the Edomites and the Amorites, Numb. 20, 19. Deut. 2, 25. they would not enter into their fields, they would not meddle with their vineyards, they would not drink of their water freely; yet see with what a terror and trembling they were stricken at the approach of the Israelites near their borders. And this was the heavy hand of God upon them, as Moses declareth, Deut. 2. *This day will I begin to send thy fear and thy dread upon all people under the whole heaven, which shall hear thy fame, and shall tremble and quake before thee.* Heereby we learn for our instruction, That the enemies of God and his people are many times afraid where no true cause of any fear is. Evil men are often afraid of the people of God, that fain would live in peace. So *Saul* lived in continual fear of *David*, 1 Sam. 18, 15, 29, he was vexed & disquieted in heart, and never in rest, although he we•e harmless, though he sought peace, and ensued after it; yea, the more *David* prospered, the more *Saul* feared him. So did *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians fear the Israelites, when they began to multiply and increase in abundance. Exod. 1.12. Thus *Herod* feared *John*, knowing that he was a just and holy man, reuerencing him greatly, hearing him gladly, & doing many things at his preaching, Mark 6, 20. Thus the high Priest feared the Apostles, and the officers of the people, Acts 5, 26. Whē *Herod* and the rest of Jerusalem heard of the birth of a new King, they were greatly troubled and perplexed in mind. Mat, 2.3. Al these things confirm the truth of this doctrine, & verify the saying of the wise man, *The wicked fly when none pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a Lion*, Prov. 28, 1.

[Reason 1] The Reasons are these: First, because an evil man carrieth in his own bosom a conscience for sin, which striketh and accuseth him, which citeth and summoneth him before the bar of God's judgment seat. Albeit no man can be deposed against him, albeit none can give sentence and judgment against him, yet he carrieth that about him which is instead of all, *Mala men's, malus animus* as the Poet saith; An evil mind, an evil meaning, an evil conscience arraigning him at the Tribunal of the eternal Judge, who shall give to everyone according to his works. It shall serve as plaintiff, witness, judge, and executioner against him. This is confirmed unto us by many examples in the word of God. When *Cain* had slain his own brother, & shed his innocent blood which cried for vengeance unto heaven, the revenging hand of God pursued him, Gen. 4, 10, 12, 17. living as a runagate and vagabond upon the earth, and fearing the sight of every creature to be armed against him: he began to build a City to hide his head, to yield him comfort, to provide for his safety, and to defend him from injury: but there also the justice of God ouertooke him the vengeance of his hand

followd him, and he was driven from that enterprize. The like we see in *Belteshazzer*, Dan. 5.56. when there appeared fingers of a man's hand, which wrote over against the Candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the Kings Palace; albeit he knew not the substance and signification of the miracle, whether it fore-shown good or evil, yet he carried his witness with him, that could not be bribed or corrupted, so that his countenance was changed, his thoughts were troubled, the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against the other. This terror of conscience the Lord fortold as the punishment of sin, Leu. 26, 17, 36, 37. and Deuteronomy 28. verses 65, 66, 67.

Again, no marvel if the wicked be oftentimes [Reason 2] smitten with fear, as with the spirit of giddynesse, because they want the shielde of Faith and the helmet of Hope, which are as two strong Anchors to hold the ship that it be not shaken in pieces with the storms, or dashed on rocks, or drowned in the water, or swallowed in quick-sands. A lively faith in the Son of God is the mother of all true comfort, the peace of the soul, the life of good works, the key of heaven; for being justified by Faith, Rom. 5, 1. *We have peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoyce under the hope of the glory of God. We have not received the spirit of bondage to fear again, but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father, Ro. 8, 15. We have boldness against the day of Judgment, there is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, for fear hath painfulness and he that feareth is not perfect in love. 1 John 4, 17, 18.* The stronger our faith is, the less is our fear, as one increaseth, the other decreaseth. If our faith be little, our fear is great: as our Savior showeth in the example of his disciples tossed with a tempest on the sea, crying unto Christ, & saying, *Master, save us, we perish*, Mat. 8, 25, 26. who said unto them, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little Faith?*

Now let us come to the Uses. If this be the [Use 1] nature of the wicked, that he carrieth about with him a troubled and trembling conscience, then a wicked man is a very coward & faint-hearted, being afraid of everything. True it is, there are many who neither fear God nor the devil, who seem to be valiant, to adventure their flesh, and to expose themselves to desperate dangers in fighting and quarrelling, as the manner of sundry Ruffians and swashbucklers is, who fear not to meet any man in the field at any weapon, and for every cross word are ready to give the stab: yet bring these venturous and fool hardy fellows to encounter hand to hand with the enemies of our souls, to wrestle against spiritual wickednesses in high places, and to strive as for life and death against pride & profaneness, against concupiscence of the flesh, and contempt of the word, against idle games of evil report, against our lusts and sins which fight against our own souls, we shall see no child so weak and willing to turn his heels as these Ruffian-like spirits; who albeit they walk with long blades by their sides, or long poles on their necks, and iet up and down as •ords of the earth, ready always to lay the hand upon the dagger, and to pick a quarrel at every word, yet they have not the hand or the heart to strike one stroke, to conquer sin, and the tyranny of the devil in themselves, but yield themselves like slaves and captives to do his will, and are led away to destruction as an Ox to the slaughter. Notwithstanding, this is true valor and manhood, to wound more and more the corruption of the old man. *He is stronger that conquereth himself, then he that winneth a City*, Prov. 16, 32. He is a better man of his hands that overcometh his own concupiscence, then he that hath the upper hand in battle. Let us

everyone learn this use, and apply it to our hearts, that the wicked man, what face soever he set on the matter, can never have a good heart, but standeth in fear of every creature in heaven and earth. Genes. 4, 14. like *Cain* affrighted at the sight of everything, and thinking whosoever findeth them, will slay them. Do they look up to heaven? there they have God their enemy? Do they look down to hell? there they see Satan their tormenter, and his angelles their executioners? Would they take y^e wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea? they shall find every creature to fight against them, and to conspire their death, and even to groan to be delivered from such an unprofitable burden. The heaven saith, Why do I cover him? The air saith, Why do I yield him life and breath? The water saith, Why do I not drown him as *Pharaoh* & his host? The fire saith, Why do I not consume him as Sodom and Gomorrhah, as the Captain and his fifty? The earth saith, Why do I bear him and sustain him? and not swallow him up, as *Dathan* and *Abiram*? His food saith, Why do I nourish & not choke him? His apparel saith, Why do I warm him? The ground saith, Why do I yield him increase, and bring forth any other crop then thorns and briars, then nettles and thistles? Death saith, Why do I spare him, & not strike him? Hell saith, Why do I not receive him? The sword crieth, Why do I not smite him? Famine, Why do I not pine him? The Pestilence, Why do I not waste him and make havoc of him? The Sun and Moon say, Why do I give him light? His bed saith, Why do I give him rest? Thus every creature is up in arms, and rebelleth against him that rebelleth against God: they sound defiance unto us, and proclaim open war against us, whē we are not at peace with our God. What then? Shall he look homeward, & turn his eyes toward himself? There he findeth and feeleth an accusing conscience as a thousand witnesses against him to whip & terrify him. Howsoever the evil man rejoiceth in his wickedness, and glorieth in his own shame, Deut. 29, 19. howsoever he put away the evil day far from him, and promise peace unto himself, yet a man would not have the heart of a wicked man for a thousand worlds, nor possess his pleasures to have his pains. Thou knowest not the torments of his conscience, when he feeleth the strength of the Law, the terrors of the Almighty, the temptations of the devil, the gripings of death, and the flashings of hell fire: howsoever he seemeth to make a mock of sin, and foolish men, as vain as himself, do flatter him in his sins, *Yet in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness. There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the issues thereof are the ways of death.* Wherefore, seeing the evil man feareth oftentimes where no fear is, trembling at the fall of a leaf, starting at his own thought, and shaking at his own shadow: we conclude that he can have no true might and manhood in him, but is a dastard, and a coward, in regard of true manhood and fortitude, which are far from him.

Secoⁿ•y, it standeth us upon to be at peace with God, and learn to lead a godly life. For so long as we live in our sins, we are as a loathsome carcass and carrion, casting out a filthy favor, and stinking in the nostrils of God. A wretched and profane man, lying rotting and rioting in his sins, is more loathsome to God then any dead body is loathsome unto our senses. So long as we corrupt our ways before him, the Lord hath a controversy with us, and will commence an action against us. And we shall never have true peace with men, nor true peace with our selves, but shall feel the terrors of our own consciences, and be at deadly and dangerous war with our own hearts, until we be reconciled to God. But if we be truly godly

and religious, and be indeed at peace with God, we shall be at peace with others, and with our selves, nothing shall be able to hurt us. For whom should we fear, or whereof should we be afraid? God is become our Father, *Whom have we in heaven but him? and whom can we desire on earth with him?* Psal. 73, 25. The Angels are our attendants, they pitch their Tents round about us to deliver us, they are charged to keep us in all our ways, and to bear us in their hands, that we dash not our foot against a stone. Psal. 34, 7, and 91, 11. *For are they not all ministering spirits, set and sent out to minister for their sakes, which shall be heirs of salvation?* Heb. 1, 14. The Saints in heaven and earth are our fellow-brethren, *so that we are Citizens with •hem of the same kingdom, and of the household of God.* Eph. 2, 19. The Lord Jesus, to whom all judgment is committed, (who shall judge the world with thousands of his Angels,) is become our Savior; *So that we shall never come into condemnation, but shall pass from death to life.* John. 5, 24. The creatures are our friends, nay as our sworn servants, by the law of their creation to do us good, and not evil all their days: *The stones of the field are in league with us, Hosea 2, 18: and the Beasts of the field shall be at peace with us, Job 5, 23. Death shall not be able to hinder or to hurt us (though it be a Scorpion or Serpent) the poison is dispersed, the sting is pulled out,* 1 Cor. 15, 54, 55. The devils and all the powers of darkness shall not destroy us, *Christ hath spoiled Principalities and Powers, and hath made a show of them openly, and hath triumphed over them upon the Cross, as a mighty conqueror in a chariot of triumph.* Col. 2 15. He hath bruised his head, he hath crushed him at the heart, *so that the Prince of the world is cast out, John 12, 31.* What then? *Shall tribulations and afflictions, or anguish, or persecution, or famine or nakedness, or peril, or the sword, separate us from the love of Christ, and peace with our God?* Rom. 8, 28, 35, 37. Nay, these proceed from a loving Father, and end at our own good, who sanctifieth all things, and maketh them work together for the best to them that love God: *He will cover them under his wings, and they shall be sure under his feathers: they shall not be afraid of the fear of the night, nor of the arrow that flieth by day, nor of the pestilence that walketh in the darkness nor of the plague that destroyeth at noon-day: a thousand shall fall at their side, & ten thousand at their right hand but it shall not come near unto them.* Psal. 91, 4, 5, 6, 7. Lastly, as they shall fear no danger that can hurt them, so they shall not be afraid of themselves, their own hearts shall minister comfort unto them, for they shall be at peace with themselves; so that *Howsoever all the days of the afflicted person are evil, yet a good conscience is a continual feast,* Prov. 15, 15. Behold, what a blessed and comfortable thing it is to be a true Christian, in whose heart is no guile: O consider this, ye sons of men, that such as have a sound faith in Christ, and lead a godly life, are at peace with God! Wherefore let us conclude with the saying of the Prophet, Psal. 31, 11. *Be glad ye righteous, and rejoice in the Lord, and be joyful all ye that are upright in heart, seeing that neither life, nor death, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Rom. 8, 38, 39.

Thirdly, see the difference between the [Use 3] godly and ungodly, between a good and an evil man. Nothing can make the faithful man wretched and miserable, nothing shall be able to daunt him or dismay him: *He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, for his heart is fixed, and believeth in the Lord, who in his good time will deliver him,* Psal. 112, 7. He repositeth himself on the heavenly providence of God, and casteth all his care upon him that careth for him, being

bold as a Lyon, like the child that in danger runneth to the lap of his father. This the wise man further declareth, Prov. 3, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26. This is the condition of the godly, both at home and abroad, with themselves and with others, in the day time, and in the night season, when terrors most trouble the heart, and enemies most practice mischief, & conceive malice, they shall be safe and secure without trouble and perplexity of spirit. But the wicked man is never at rest, he knoweth not what the peace of conscience meaneth, which indeed passeth all understanding, he feareth where no fear is, every creature helpeth to increase his misery; yea, the things that are not, trouble him no less then things that are, and the greatest terror that he can never shake off, is his own conscience. Whē *Felix* only heard the Apostle reasoning and disputing of the judgment to come, he trembled, and commanded him to depart out of his sight. Acts 24, 25. When they take themselves to be most sure, and speak peace unto their own souls, then they shall be taken with fear Psal. 14.5, and 53, 5, because God is in the generation and assembly of the just. This the Prophet *Isaiah* teacheth, chap. 57, 20, 21. *The wicked are like the raging sea that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt: there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked: I create the fruit of the lips to be peace peace unto them that be far off, and to them that are near, saith the Lord, for I will heal him.* Where the Prophet maketh a flat opposition between the faithful and unfaithful, he calleth the elect by the preaching of the Gospel, which is the power of God to salvation, 2 Cor. 5, 20. So that they break out into this admiration of the mercy of God, and into a joyful embracing of the Messengers sent unto them, *How beautiful are the feet of them which bring glad tidings of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!* Rom. 10, 15. Contrarywise, the unfaithful and impenitent are never at rest and quiet, but as a troubled sea tossed with the violence of the winds. And howsoever they seem to them selves and to others, to be happy, and sleep securely in sin, yet the terrors of the night, and the troubles of their own Conscience shall awake them, and rouse them out of this security, Prov. 23, 34. *So that they shall be as one that sleepeth in the midst of the sea, and as he that sleepeth in the top of the Mast, that is always in danger.*

Thus we see, that the fears of profane persons are not rightly ordered, but evilly placed. For what do they fear? Not God, not his heavy displeasure, who is able to destroy soul and body in hell, and cast them into utter darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, Matth. 10, 28. nor to commit sin, for that is their delight: *So that they eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.* The things that they cheefely fear, are afflictions, troubles, crosses, losses, and temporal calamities, like those that dread their friends and familiars. They are more troubled for outward damages of this life, then for the loss of God's favor: like profane *Esau*, who preferred a mess of pott•ge before the blessing, and like the carnal *Gadarenes*, who preferred their filthy Swine before Christ the Lord of life. The Lord Jesus compareth the Jews to children sitting in the Market place, Luke 7, •2. so are wicked men in the bestowing their fear like unto little children: Tell them of bugs or beggars, of goblins or shadows, that are nothing and cannot hurt, they are greatly afraid: but of fire and water, of candle or knife, & such like edge-tools which are hurtful and dangerous, they are bold, fearing no harm or peril. Thus it is with all the ungodly. Tell them of sin, of hell, of death, of damnation, of eternal separation from the most sweet and comfortable presence of God, and of the fellowship with the devil and his angelles, they are not moved at all, but

dally with their own souls. But if they hear of afflictions, & fear any losses to come upon them, which cannot hurt or hinder our salvation, if we be in Christ: they are oftentimes brought to their wits end, and break out into all impatience of spirit. But the godly fear nothing more then to offend God their merciful Father: nothing is more bitter unto them then to feel his anger, and the turning of his loving countenance from them: and therefore there is as great a difference between the fear of the one, and the fear of the other, as between heaven and earth, as between good and evil, as between light and darkness.

[Use 4] Lastly, seeing evil men fear whereas no fear is, this overthroweth all Atheists, Epicures, Libertines, and loose livers, which do think there is no God at all, teaching every man to do what seemeth best in his own eyes, and hold Religion to be nothing else but a policy and invention of man to keep the people in order and obedience. This profaneness and Atheism is a grievous sin; it is the very top and height of all impiety and iniquity, committed of those that are forsaken of God, and given over to work all uncleanness with greedynesse. The Apostle speaking of one only part of religion, saith, *If there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen: and if Christ be not raised, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins.* 1 Cor. 15, 13, 14, 17. So if there be no belief in Christ, nor truth in religion, nor knowledge of God, nor salvation of souls, y^e foundation of all go•lines is shaken, and the word of God is made of none effect. Wherefore those Atheists and godless persons, which hold in judgment, affirm in words & avouch in disputation, contrary to Scripture, Nature, Laws, and common reason, that there is no God at all, ought worthily according to their deserts to die the death. Murderers and malefactors, thieves and robbers, for their own offenses have the reward of death, & are carried to the place of execution: of how much sorer punishment suppose you shall they be worthy that commit high treason against God, murder the souls of men, tread under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the Testament as an unholy thing, and do despite the Spirit of Grace? Of which sort there are too many that find greater favor then such as better deserve it.

And first, the universality of Religion, dispersed over all places, entertained of all persons, embraced & acknowledged at all times, proveth it to be no device of man. We have read and heard of diverse and sundry Nations and people, that have lived without Laws, without Magistrates, without Mariages, without Garments, without Houses, without civility and common honesty, wandering nakedly up and down in holes and caves of the earth; but never of any Nation or people so barbarous and beastly, from East to West, or from North to South, which were without God, without Religion, without worship, without prayers, or without sacrifices. Albeit there be indeed diversities and differences in their Religion, being destitute of the knowledge of the true God; but there hath been no Region without some Religion; which proveth it could be at the first entertained, and afterwards retained by no compact or conspiracy amongst men. Besides, we may reason from the spiritual Natures that reason and experience teach: namely, that there is a devil and his angels set upon mischief, and going about seeking whom they may devour, Contraries compared together, do receive light and luster one from another, as black laid to white, and virtue matched with vice, are better seen and manifested what they are. All laws divine and human, all Nations both Jews & Gentiles, (*Cicero de legib. lib. 1.*) even the twelve Tables of the Romans, decreed against witches and

sorcerers, which have familiarity with devils, and work by evil spirits. And we see by Witches and Coniurers, that Satan is stronger and mightier then we. If then, the devil have a spiritual nature, and be our enemy, he would have brought desolation and destruction upon us, had there not been a Sovereign and superior power above him to restrain his will, and to keep him short. But this superior power can be nothing else but God himself: otherwise, how is it that we are not all destroyed? Why do we not perish and come to confusion, if we stood at the mercy of this our great adversary? Whereas this is our comfort, that his power is limited, and that he can do nothing farther then he is licensed and allowed. All the hayres of our head are numbered. He cannot hurt a Sparrow or a Fly, without the will of God. He could not touch the body of *Job* before he was permitted, *Job* 2. verse 6. He could not enter into the Swine before he was suffered, *Matth.* 8, verses 31, 32. He cannot run out at his own liberty, but is restrained and reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day, *Jude* 6.

Thirdly, men in all dangers by sea & land, in time of sickness, and in extremity of their distress, by the very light and instinct of nature call upon God: which showeth that we have naturally a common notion that there is a God. We see it not only in the Children of God, *1 Kings* 22. verse 32: as *Jehoshaphat*, when by his confederacy and friendship with *Ahab*, he was in danger of sudden death, he cried unto the Lord for help in the battle, but in the very Infidelles, when a mighty Tempest threatened to overwhelm them in the Sea, the Mariners being sore afraid, they cried every man of them unto his God, *Jonah* 1. verse 5. These principles written in Nature, engraven in the heart, and sealed up in the conscience of man, remain to give light as a flash of lightning in the dark night, and teach a difference between good and evil; between right and wrong, to those that never knew the law of God, and to such as thorough profaneness regard not his ways. *Ham* and *Canaan* being both evil men, and scoffers at godliness, *Genesis* 9. verses 22, 25. and 23. verse 42, saw it was uncomely and indecent for their father to lie with his shame uncovered, being overcome with wine. *Esau*, though a wild and wicked man, yet he would not kill his brother *Jacob*, till the days of mourning should come for the death of their father. *Absalom*, though he wrought wickedness in the sight of God, and rebelled against *David* his Father, yet rebuked unkindness and unthankfulness in *Hushai* toward his friend, *2 Sam.* 16. verse 17. These general notions, as sparkles kindled in our hearts by the gift of Nature, serve to set forth the difference between righteousness and unrighteousness, and to make men altogether without excuse, *Because when they knew God, they glorified him not as God*, *Rom.* 1, 20, 21.

Lastly, not to use in an vndoubtfull point unnecessary proofs, nor to prove that the Sun shineth at noon day, (which were to make a question of that which is without question) every man carrieth a witness about him, to wit, his own Conscience. He that hath committed any sin, as blasphemy, rebellion, murder, adultery, fornication, robbery, and such like; albeit he can so smother and conceal it, that no man living know it, or can accuse him of it: yet oftentimes he hath a grief and griping in his Conscience, and feeleth the very flashings of hell fire; the which proveth inuincibly that use which now we urge against all Atheists whatsoever, that there is a God, before whose judgment seat he must one day stand and answer for his fact and fault which he hath so heinously committed. Neither let any say, that

this cometh thorough the guiltiness of the Law, shame of the world, and fear of punishment: for, let them have security given them from all Law, a discharge from all reproach, and freedom from all punishment, yet a murderer should never be quiet, his Conscience would ever beat and whip him, trouble and torment him, affright and follow him up and down in all places, and open his own mouth to betray and bewray himself. For GOD hath many ways to discover most secret sins, and most close dissembling sinners: he maketh them either in their sleep to dream of it, or in frenzy to rave upon it, or in sickness to confess it, or unawares to disclose it, or in anguish of the mind to void it and vomit it up, verifying the words of the Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 66, 24. *Their worm shall not die, but always gnaw upon them with continual torment.* As also Mark 9, 44. Thus is God's judgment upon them, that they should fear all things, who will not fear him that made all things. If a man had all the pleasures & treasures that heart could desire or delight in, yet can they give him no true comfort and contentment, when the conscience is guilty of horrible sins.

These terrors, are those Furies which the Poets fain, *Cicer. pro. Ros. Amori. & Orat. in Pisonem*; which never suffer offenders to be at rest, as we have seen in the examples of *Cain, Belteshazzar, Saul, Absalom, Judas*, and others. The noise of the Thunder-claps, *Psal. 29, 3, 4, 5, 7.* which is the voice of God, hath so danted the vildest Atheists, that they have covered their heads, hidden them selves under their beddes, and been ready to creep into every hole. Thus we see, how the ungodly are punished in this life, how they are arraigned as Malefactors at the bar, how they lie confounded in themselves, and how the testimony of every man's conscience proclaimeth and crieth out, *Psalm 58, 11. Verily there is fruit for the righteous, doubtless there is a God that judgeth in the earth.* So that they shall sooner pull their hearts out of their breasts, then God out of their minds. And albeit the conscience of carnal men, that never truly repented of their sins, seemeth to be at rest, yet it is as a wild and savage beast, which lieth asleep, seemeth tame and gentle; but being raised and roused up, flieth in a man's face, and snarleth at him. *Joseph's* brethren were not much troubled for their vice and villainy, in selling their brother, at the present time: but long afterward, when they were afflicted with extreme famine, and distressed in Egypt, they remember the iniquity which they had committed, and the cruelty which they had shown, and not truly repented of, *Genesis chap. 42. verse 21.* Let us therefore strive by all means, & always endeavor to keep a good conscience toward God and man, and take heed how we break out into open sins, provoking God unto anger, wounding our own souls, offending our brethren, diminishing the graces of God, lessening our assurance of his favor, and greewing the Spirit of God, by whom we are sealed unto the day of our redemption.

[Verse 4. *Therefore Moab said unto the Elders of Midian, Now shall this multitude lick up all round about us, as an Ox licketh up the grass of the field, &c.*] Hitherto of the occasion of the proceedings of the Moabites: now we are come to the plottings and conspiracies of the enemies of the Church, the Moabites joining and combining themselves with the Midianites, men as wicked as themselves. See here how the adversaries of Israel associate themselves to destroy the Church, though differing in Nation, in Religion, in Tongues, in gods and Idolles, among themselves, not because Israel had offended, but because they thirst after blood. Heereby we learn this Doctrine, y^t the enemies of the true Church, howsoever they differ in

judgment and affection, yet they are ready to join and iumpe together against the children of God. Notwithstanding the differences and divisions amongst the enemies of God and his truth, they can join hand in hand together, to oppress the Church. This is noted in diverse and sundry practices of the wicked in all ages of the Church. The wicked *Midianites & Amalekites* with those of the East, not inhabiting in the land of *Canaan*, but both Nations dwelling beyond the River, differing much in their courses and conversations, and serving vain gods and Idolles, assaulted Israel, came into their land to destroy it, as is witnessed in the book of *Judges*, chapt. 6, 3. So against *Jehoshaphat*, a godly King, that sought the Lord God of his father, and walked in his Commandments, *Came the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir to battle*, 2 Chron. 20.1, 2, 23. This likewise the Prophet *David* teacheth & declareth, Psal. 83, 5, 6, 7, 8. *They have consulted together in heart, and have made a league against thee, the Tabernacles of Edom and the Ishmaelits, Moab, and the Agarims, Gebal and Ammon, &c.* Where he noteth out the multitudes of the enemies which the Church had, albeit at jars among themselves, and fighting sundry battles one against another, yet notwithstanding consent & conspire together to destroy God's chosen. This also is plentifully taught by many examples in the New Testament. As Mat. 22, 15, 16. when the Pharisees *had taken counsel against Christ how they might entangle him in his talk, they sent unto him their disciples with the Herodians*. So *Herod and Pilate*, Luk. 23, 12. agreeing like Cats and Dogs, were made friends together, and pleasure one another, which had been enemies one to the other, to the end they might make a mock of Christ. Thus the hatred of godliness, joineth the wicked together. This is it which the Apostles confessed in their prayer, Acts 4, 25, 26. & 6, 9, 10, *Why did the Gentiles rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth assembled, and the rulers came together against the Lord, and against his Christ: for doubtless against thine holy son Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, gathered themselves together*. Moreover, when the Apostle disputed against the idolatry of the Athenians, Act. 17, 18. then *certain Philosophers of the Epicures and of the Stoics banded themselves together against him*, albeit they were two contrary sects that never agreed and consented: one strict in opinion, the other loose in conversation; one placed their happiness in virtue, the other in pleasure; making a mock of all Religion. We see this true by common & continual experience. Look upon the enemies of the truth, there is no love or liking among them one of another: they dare not trust or believe one another, yet they strike hands & join together against the faithful, like to *Samson's Foxes*, Judge. 15, 4. who albeit they look several ways with their heads yet they join tail to tail, to burn up the harvest & vineyard of the Lord.

The Reasons are evident. For albeit they be [Reason 1] separated one from another, and often spoil each other, yet they unite themselves in league together, because they fear the faithful, and the decay of their own kingdom. They persuade themselves, that the rising up and flourishing of the Church, will be the pressing down and frustrating of all their hope & expectation. This appeareth in the book of *Ester*, when *Mordecai* was honored of the king for his faithful service, in detecting and disclosing the conspiracy intended against him, *Haman's* wife and his wise-men said unto him, Ester chap. 6. verse 13. *If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shall surely fall*

before him. And hereunto also come the words of the Moabites & Midianites to *Balaam*, Numb. 22. verses 5, 6. *Behold there is a people come out of Egypt, which cover the face of the earth, they are stronger then we.* So that they joined together, because they feared the multitudes of Israel, lest they should lose their Dominions and their ancient glory through their conquest.

[Reason 2] Again, they hate the people of God and their Religion. Although the Church be weak, and want human strength, so that the enemies need not fear it: yet still they plot and bring forth new devices, & the children of *Belial* are always packing and contriving mischief against the Church. For as true faith and love of religion, uniteth hearts together, that we may with one mouth glorify God the Father: so contrariwise, where hatred of the true Religion reigneth, there can be no love to the Professors thereof. No marvel therefore, if such join in league against God's people. As we see, when the Rulers and Governors could not find any fault in *Daniel*, in regard of his faithfulness concerning the kingdom, envying his honor and promotion, *They picked a quarrel against him in matters of the pure worship of the true God.* So then, whether we consider that the wicked fear their own fall, and hate the faithful with a deadly hatred: in both respects we may conclude this as a most certain truth, that notwithstanding the bandings and brawlings of the wicked and ungodly among themselves, yet they can consent and consort themselves together, to impugn and slander the Church of God, and the doctrine of Christ.

[Use 1] The Uses now remaining to be handled, are these. First, this teacheth, that seeing sundry sects dissenting and varying greatly one from another, do many times join together in one: unity is not always a note of the Church, except it be conjoined with verity. For as dissention is sometimes in the church, so agreement is oftentimes out of the Church among the enemies of Christ. There was an unity between the Moabites and the Midianites: between the builders of *Babel*, between the Priests of *Baal*, between y^e Scribes and Pharisees, between the Rulers and the people. There is an unity between thieves, conspirators, murderers, and malefactors: there is an unity between the Turks against the Christians: between Antichrist and his adherents, between Satan and his members; yea, between the devils themselves, all using the same means, all aiming at one end, all conspiring & consenting against the kingdom of Christ. Howbeit the agreement of evil men is not truly to be termed an unity, but rather rightly to be called a conspiracy. Wherefore, they are greatly deceived, that make all agreement and unity an essential and inseperable note of the Church. If we would know what are the proper marks and evident notes of the Church, agreeing to every Church, always and only, they are the powerful preaching of sound doctrine, the right administration of the holy Sacraments, the spiritual worship of the true God, and holiness of life and conversation. Where these are not found, it cannot be that there should be the true Church.

This the Evangelist Saint Luke testifieth in the second of the Acts, verses 41, 42, 46, 47, *They that gladly received the word were baptized, and the same day there were added to the Church about three thousand souls: and they continued in the Apostles Doctrine, and fellowship, and breaking of bread, and prayers.* So Christ calleth and accounteth those as his *Brethren, Mother, and Sisters,* that hear his word and keep it: and those his *Disciples* that abide in his word, and his *Friends* if they do

whatsoever he commādeath them. as Luke chap. 8. verse 21. and chap, 11. verse 28. John chap. 8. v•se; 31, and ch. 15. ver. 14. These are the notes that are peculiar and proper to the Church: by these we shall find the true Church, and learn to join our selves unto it wh•n we have found it, and descry the false signs of the Romish Synagogue, where neither the gospel is truly preached, nor the Sacraments rightly administered, nor the pure worship of God is spiritually instituted, nor holiness of life is sincerely practiced. As for unity, universality, antiquity, succession of Bishops, multitude of believers, the title of Catholic, the working of miracles, the glory of victories, obedience to the Pope, and such like, which the adversaries of the grace of GOD make notes of the Church, (which is an assembly of Antichrist) they are not proper only, nor always, nor unto all Churches (for this is indeed to be proper, as all know that have tasted the first rudiments of Logic.) Besides, these supposed signs are subject unto the outward senses, are open and visible unto the eyes, not matters of faith which are to be believed. They are as obscure, dark, and hard to be known, as to know which is the the Church; they may be claymed and challenged by every heretical congregation. Wherefore as *Hilary* in one place teacheth. *The name of peace is beautiful, & the opinion of unity is fire.* Notwithstanding far better is a dive•s•ty in judgment, then an unity in falsehood, The Apostle *Paul* commending concord and consent to the Church, addeth that all our unity must be in Christ, Ro. 15, 5.6. *The God of patience and consolation give you that ye be like-minded one toward another, according to Jesus Christ: that ye with one mind, and one mouth may praise God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Let us therefore seek for unity in verity, and honor it as the greatest comfort of our hearts: otherwise a just war is far better then an unjust and an dishonest peace. The true and Christian unity is, when the sheep of Christ hear the voice of the shepherd, and follow him: and that our Sheeheard is Jesus Christ, by whom alone we enter into the sheepefold.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing diverse men at great variance within themselves, yet are content to join together in wicked amity and unity against the Church of Christ; we must confess that the salvation and safe keeping of the Church is only of God. If men of all lewd devices, & of different opinions, men at mortal hatred and deadly war amongst themselves, cloase together and plot against the Church: how shall they be able to stand of themselves, being few in number, weak in strength, destitute of friends, and lying open to so many and mighty enemies? For the Church albeit it be the house of God, the mother of the faithful, the body of Christ, and the pillar of the truth, yet it is as a flock of Sheep in the jaws of the Woolfe, and as a prey in the teeth of the Lion: so that the Church standeth, and the truth preuayleth, albeit the power of men, the malice of the devil, and the gates of hell be set wide open against it.

Wherefore, in this distressed estate of the Church, being as a Citty battred on many sides, besieged of many enemies, smitten with many weapons, and assaulted with many Engines; let us not boast of our own power, nor glory in our own greatness, as though we stood by our own strength, held out by our own might, and overcame by our own multitude. For if the Lord should leave us, yea, but a little, and suffer these enemies to rise up against us, they would soon devour us with open mouth, and we quickly see our own weakness. This then is

our duty, in the deep consideration of this unity of the enemies, in such great diversity of hearts, to ascribe all the glory of our safety, to God and to acknowledge his only power in our standing: least if we presume of our selves, the Lord in justice leave us unto our selves.

This is it that the Prophet *David* confesseth and practiseth in many places, as Psalm 3, verses 1, 2, 6. *Lord, how are mine adversaries increased? How many rise against me? Many say to my soul, There is no help for him in God at all.* Hereupon he concludeth, *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord, and thy blessing is upon the people most of all.* And Psalm 124. verses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. *If the Lord had not been on our side, may Israel now say: if God had not been on our side when men rose up against us, they had quickly swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: then the waters had drowned us, and the stream had gone over our soul: Praised be the Lord, which hath not given us as a prey unto their teeth. Our soul is escaped, even as a Bird out of the snare of the Fowler: the snare is broken and we are delivered: Our help is in the Name of the Lord, which hath made heaven, and earth.*

Thirdly, seeing so many of so diverse dispositions [Use 3] plot against the Church, it is required of us to be the Lord's Sollicitors and Remembrancers, calling upon him night and day, to be merciful to his Church, to be a buckler about them, to be a Rock of refuge, and a Tower of defense to those that be his. Wherefore, as at all times we ought to be mindful of the flourishing estate and welfare of the Church, so especially when we see enemies of such nature & disposition to increase, it standeth us upon to be mindful of the Lord, and to give him no rest, *Till he repair, and until he set up Jerusalem the praise of the world,* Isaiah 62, 6, 7.

This we see to be practiced by the Prophet *David*, in the 64. Psalm, verses 1, 2. where he prayeth against the fury of his enemies: *Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer, preserve my life from fear of the enemy: hide me from the conspiracy of the wicked, and from the rage of the worker of iniquity.* This also was put in practice by *Jehoshaphat* and *Hezekiah*, 2 Chron. 20, verse 3. and chap. 32. verses 7, 8. seeing the multitude of their enemies, and acknowledging their own weakness, not able to deliver or help themselves, or to save others; the Children being come to the birth, and there was no strength to bring forth; they called upon the Lord, set themselves to seek him with all their hearts, and proclaimed a solemn Fast to be kept throughout the land. So when we see the enemies consult and talk together, and take crafty counsel against the servants of God, and against his truth, then it s high time to join with pure hearts in prayer to Almighty God, to protect his people, to turn the wisdom of his enemies into foolishness, Psalm 83. verses 13, 14, 15, 16. *O my God, make them like unto a wheel, and as the stubble before the wind: as the fire burneth the Forest, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire, so persecute them with thy Tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm: Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek thy name, O Lord. Let them be confounded and troubled forever, yea, let them be put to shame, and perish.*

Lastly, seeing there is a league and confederacy [Use 4] amongst the wicked conspiring together, notwithstanding their own contentions at home, let us not stand in their ways, let us not walk in their paths, let us not be partakers of their counsels, lest we be partakers also with them in their punishments. Albeit they agree as brethren in evil, we must take heed we have no fellowship and familiarity with them. This is it which *Solomon* teacheth, Prov. 1, 10,

11, 15. *My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not: if they shall say, Come unto us, let us lie in wait for blood, let us freely hide our selves against the innocent: My son, walk not in the same way with them, draw back thy foot from their path.* We are by the corruption of our own nature prone to evil: Now if beside the inward inclination of the heart, there be an outward temptation and allurement, we are carried unto evil as a violent stream, or as the horse that rusheth into the battle. Many have dashed themselves into pieces against this rock of offense. Wherefore, although we hear their words, we must not follow their deeds. Let us not have our ears open to such seducers, but stop them (as the Adder) when they seek to draw us into their counsels and practices. This is that which *Jacob* speaketh, *Genes. 49, 5, 6. Simeon and Levi Brethren in evil, the instruments of cruelty are in their habitations, into their counsel let not my soul come, my glory be not thou joined with their assembly, for in their wrath they slew a man, & in their self will they digged down a wall.*

[Verse 5. *He sent Messengers to Balaam the son of Beor to call him, saying, Behold there is a people come out of Egypt.*] Mark here the resolution and determination of the Moabites, confederate with the Midianites in their distress, fearing Israel, and perceiving themselves not able to meet them in y^e field. They do not seek the Lord in their trouble, but they send out to an old witch, & to a notable Sorcerer. Hereby we see, that it hath been the usual practice and custom of the wicked in their crosses, troubles, and perplexities (seeing no other help) to repair and resort to witches and sorcerers. I say, evil men in dangers and distresses amongst other unlawful means, use to go to coniurers and cunning men, which are very witches and wizards. This we see in the example of *Saul*, when the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by *Vrim*, nor yet by the Prophets; and when the Philistines assembled themselves, & pressed sore upon him, he sought to the witch at Endor, which had a familiar Spirit, & raised up the devil in the likeness of *Samuel*. The like is approved unto us by the practice of *Amaziah* King of Israel, in the second book of the Kings, the first chapter and the second verse: *When he was fallen thorough the Lattice window in his upper Chamber which was in Samaria, and thereof grew sick unto the death, he directed Messengers to go and enquire of Baallzebub the god of Ekron, whether he should recover of this his disease.*

So did *Haman* likewise, an enemy of the Jews, and one of the race of the Amalekites, thirsting after the blood of *Mordecai*, and the destruction of the whole Church, dealt by Sorcerie for to effect his intended purpose, *Ester chap. 3, verse 7. And cast Pur, that is, a Lot; to know when he might have a lucky and prosperous time to enterprize this business.*

Moreover, it is noted by the Prophet, that when *Nebuchadnezzar* King of Babel was come out of his kingdom with a mighty host, and stood at the parting of the way, doubting unto what place he should go, whether against the Ammonites, or against the Tribe of Judah, as in the one and twentieth chapter of *Ezekiel*, and the eleventh verse, *He consulted by Diuination, and made his Arrows bright, he consulted with Idolles, and looked in the Liver.* Hereunto cometh the threatening denounced against the Egyptians by the Prophet *Isaiah*, in chapt. 19. verses 3, 4. *The spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst of her, and I will destroy their counsel, and they shall seek at the Idolles, and at the Sorcerers, and of them that have spirits of Diuination, and at the Soothsayers, And I will deliver the Egyptians into the hand of cruel Lord's, and a mighty King shall rule over them,*

saith the Lord God of hoastes. Thus we see it was very usual with the wicked, when they saw no other help at hand, to seek unto witches, and to resort unto enchanter.

The Reasons hereof are these: first, because they want Faith and belief in God, they trust not in him, they look not for salvation from him, they dare not repose their confidence in him. This we see in *Saul*, when he had once forsaken God in breaking his commandment by sparing the Amalekites, in offering sacrifice, in killing the Priests, in persecuting the Saints, in refusing to consult with God as a needless thing, and proceeding from one degree of wickedness to another; in the end he said unto his servants, 1. Sam. chap. 28. verse 3. *Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and ask of her.* This is that reason which the Spirit of God poynteth out in the first book of the Chronicles, and the tenth chapter, *Saul* died for his transgression that he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord which he kept not, and in that he sought and asked counsel of a familiar spirit, and asked not of the Lord, therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto *David* the son of *Ishai*.

True it is, we read in the first of *Samuel*, chapter 28. verse 6. that he asked counsel of the Lord: and here we hear he asked not counsel of the Lord: these are not repugnant and contrary one to another, no more then these words, in the eleventh Chapter of *S. Matthew*, and the fourteenth verse, *John the Baptist is Elias, and John the Baptist is not Elias.* Christ said of *John the Baptist*, *This is Elias.* *John the Baptist* said of himself, *I am not Elias,* John 1, 21. Notwithstanding, here is no contradiction: for Christ understood it one way, & *John* another. Christ meant he was *Elias* in spirit, Luke 1, 17. as coming in the spirit and power of *Elias.* *John* meant he was not *Elias* in person, which the Pharisees thought and imagined. So these words seem contrary in show, but are not in substance, and in deed: In deed he asked of the Lord, but not in faith, nor with a purpose to cast himself upon God but in hypocrisy, and with resolution to go to the witch. As *Ahab* consulted with y^e Prophet of the Lord, but he was before determined what he would do, whatsoever the Prophet should say. Wherefore, that which was not done rightly and religiously, is as it were not done at all, as the Apostle, speaking of irreverent coming to the Lord's Table, saith, *This is not to eat the Lord's Supper,* 1 Cor. 11, 20. Where he denieth that absolutely, which many did corruptly.

Again, no marvel if the wicked forsake God in their troubles, betake themselves to Sorcerers and Wizards, which are the enemies of God, seeing sorcery is the invention of the devil, and a manifest work of the flesh. If then it came from the father of lies, and be a fruit of our own corrupt nature, it is not strange or to be wondered at, that carnal and corrupt men give themselves over to this practice. This the Apostle teacheth, Gal. 5, 19, 20. *The works of the flesh are manifest, which are, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, witchcraft, and such like.* Seeing therefore evil men want faith, joining to God, purifying the heart, working by love, & making up the marriage between God & our souls; and seeing witchcraft is a work of the flesh, it is natural to natural men, in their distresses to use unlawful means, as charming, figure-casting, and such curious acts and arts as are wrought by the device of the devil.

Now let us make use of this Doctrine. First, [Use 1] this condemneth the common custom and practice of the people in our days, who when the hand of God is any way on them or theirs,

when they be strangely visited, or their children grievously afflicted, or their Cattle either lost or languish with any extraordinary disease (at which time especially they should acknowledge God's over-ruling and over-swaying providence, that not a silly Sparrow falleth to the ground without the will of our heavenly Father) by and by they send out to that cunning man, or that cunning woman, & so forget God that made them. These men will not tarry the Lord's leisure, nor wait upon his mercy for ease and comfort, they will have present help, or else they will run to the devil, resort to witches, and fetch health out of hell it self. This is the folly and vanity of such as know not God, neither acknowledge that all things are disposed according to his purpose and good pleasure. Let us beware of this sin which is a forsaking of the true God, a renouncing of help from his holy place, and an entertainment of familiarity with the devil, which is the very height and top of all iniquity. This the Lord himself teacheth, Levite. 20, 6, 7. *If any turn after such as work with spirits, and after soothsayers, to go a whoring after them, then will I set my face against that person, and will cut him off from among his people: Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the Lord your God.* Now what a foul shame and reproach is it for those who profess Jesus Christ, & have solemnly vowed in baptism to renounce the devil, and the works of the devil, yet in their trials and temptations to consult with the devil, to abjure the Lord of life, and to resort to witches and wizards, the very instruments of the devil, then which, nothing can be imagined more horrible? Let us therefore all take heed of this practice; let us beware of all compact and society with the devil: let such as hate it, learn yet more to hate it, and fly further from it; and such as have followed this way, and followed after these abominations, crave pardon of God, and confess their own wickedness.

Secondly, acknowledge hereby the difference [Use 2] between the godly and the ungodly. So soon as the sons and daughters of God are smitten, they cast their care on God, and quiet their hearts in his will. They turn unto God by true and unfeigned repentance, and bring forth fruits worthy amendment of life. They believe in God, and trust in him for help: they say unto him, *Thou art my salvation.* As for the ungodly, when they are visited with any judgment, & are punished in soul, or body, or goods, or children, or servants, or cattle, they do imagine that they are hurt by witches, and presently challenge and charge someone or other of witchcraft: then by and by they send out without delay, for fear lest they should come too late, to some cunning man, in whom they repose all their confidence, and so they make the devil their God.

Furthermore, this is their common practice, to foretell things to come, by chattering of Birds, by crying of Ravens, by turning down of Salt, by having a Hare cross him in y^e way, by sudden bleeding, and such like, which are accounted unlucky and ominous signs. Thus doth the devil craftily creep, and cunningly convey himself into the ignorant minds of unbelieving people, by making them retain the remnants of the old superstition, when he cannot prevail to bring in the devilish divination, practiced in former times. Therefore the Lord saith by Moses, Deut. 18, 10, 11.12. *Let none be found among you that useth witchcraft, &c.* This also the Prophet reproveth, Isaiah 8, 19, 20. The children of God must in all their afflictions ask counsel of God by his word, and by his Ministers. They do not wait upon lying vanity, nor

forsake the mercy of God. They say, *Though the Lord would kill me, yet will I trust in him*, Job 13, 15. Though they be brought to the gates of hell, they will not cease to depend upon him.

Thirdly, we learn in all our dangers to [Use 3] seek comfort at God's hand, while he may be found. This is the use that we ought to make of all our troubles and tribulations, thereby to be drawn and driven nearer unto God, & unto his word, and to stoop down under his mighty hand. This humiliation we see in *Job*, he did not seek to God's sworn enemies for help, he sought not to cunning men and women, he did not ask counsel of Coniurers, he knew he must seek to the Lord, and lift his eyes to him that had made the wound, saying; *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, blessed be the Name of the Lord*. Job 1, 21. We must not therefore renounce the Lord in the day of our calamities, but cleave unto him with full purpose of heart. Let us say with the Prophet, *Why art thou cast down my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Waite on God, for I will yet give him thanks: he is my present help, and my God*. Psalm. 42, 5, 11, and 43, 5. Wherefore, if it be the practice of the wicked in their troubles to seek to the devil; let us on the other side go unto God, *Who killeth & maketh alive, who woundeth and maketh whole, who bringeth low, and exalteth: neither is there any that can deliver out of his hand*. Deut. 32, 39. 1 Sam. 2, 6. Let us make the word of God our chief stay and comfort. This was the practice of the Prophet *David*, Psal. 119; 29. *Except thy Law had been my delight, I should now have perished in mine affliction*. And this is the end for which the Scriptures were penned by the Prophets and Apostles, that in our distresses we should not be left destitute, as the Apostle declareth, Roman. 15, 4. *Whatsoever things are written afore time, are written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of Scriptures might have hope*. Though God for a small season bring troubles upon his dearest servants, yet he will not always keep them in heaviness, he will return again in compassion at his appointed time. *For he endureth but a while in his anger, but in his favor is life: weeping may abide at Euening, but joy cometh in the Morning*. Psalm. 30, 5. So then, afflictions shall not always claspe and compass y^e loins of the godly; the days and years, the hours and months of their sorrows are numbered and determined. And albeit we, as evil measurers of times & seasons, do judge every hour a day, and every day be reckoned with us a year of affliction; yet if we had wise hearts to number our days aright, either in respect of God's eternity, or in respect of the due desert of our sins, or in respect of the glory of immortality reserved for us in the heavens, it would make us rest in God, and to possess our souls with patience, & to consider whatsoever our crosses and losses are, yet he is able to recompense them another way, and render them an hundred sold into our bosoms. This we see in the example of *Job*, before remembered, upon whom the Apostle *James* willeth us to look, saying; *Take my brethren, the Prophets for an example of suffering adversity, and of long patience, which have spoken in the Name of the Lord: Ye have heard of the patience of Job, & have known what end the Lord made: For the Lord is very pitiful and merciful*. For albeit he did drink deeply of the cup of afflictions, & God for a season did hide his face from him; yet with everlasting mercy he had compassion upon him, his substance was increased, his cattle were doubled, other sons & daughters were granted, his honor was augmented, and his days were prolonged upon the earth. The like mercy of God we see in the words of the Prophet to *Amaziah*; he had hired Israelitish soldiers for an hundred Talents of silver, he was commanded to dismiss and cashire them, 2 Chron. 25, 9. *Because the Lord was*

not with Israel, nor with all the house of Ephraim. Then the King said to the man of God, What shall we do then for the hundredth Talents which I have given to the host of Israel? Then the man of God answered, The Lord is able to give thee more than this. This is that which Christ assureth, when he saith to his Disciples, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath forsaken house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my sake and the Gospels, but he shall receive an hundred fold now at this present; houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, & in the world to come, eternal life. Let us then be patient in our troubles and losses that are sent upon us: let us not seek to restore them and recover out of them by unlawful means, and running to witches: if we depend upon God, we shall not need to be troubled with these worldly respects, he will give us all things necessary, and is able to restore more than he hath taken from us.

Lastly, this Doctrine teacheth us the reason why wicked men do not prosper, but seeking comfort from coniuers and cunning men, are more tormented, even because they forsake the Lord, and seek help where no help is to be had. This appeareth in the examples of *Saul* and *Amaziah*, they sought to witches, but they found not that which they sought for. The devil was a murderer from the beginning, is he now become an helper? He was an enemy to mankind, is he now made a welwiller unto them? He was an adversary, is he now reconciled unto us? Nay, he is to be feared, not only whē he ladeth us with sorrows, and laboreth to draw us to despair, but much more when he offereth us his gifts, and pretendeth friendship toward us. And albeit he sometimes speak the truth, and reach out his hand to help us, it is but to deceive and delude us, and to claspe us the faster in both his arms. For as God hath his word & sacraments instituted for the comfort and consolation of his Church; so the devil hath also his means and ways to train up his disciples: he useth certain charms and characters, certain spels and enchantments, which are as it were Satan's sacraments. All these have no power or force at all, unless we believe strongly and steadfastly that they can do us good. As then God requireth faith toward him, so doth the devil require a sound belief in these toies and trumpery, otherwise they are not available. This the very heathen confess, as appeareth in *Pliny*, that no charms or enchantments can work any cure without belief. But this faith is a false faith, and no better thē the service of the devil; as the believing in God, is a principal part of the worship of God. For we must believe nothing, we must trust in nothing, we must depend upon nothing, against the direct and express word of God: if we do, we enter into a covenant with the devil, and offer sacrifice unto him, which is an abomination against God.

[Verse 6. *For I know that he whom thou blessest, is blessed, and he whom thou cursest, shall be cursed.*] These words show the great confidence they have in him. It doth not appear that they were spoken to flatter him, or uttered to him otherwise than they thought of him, as *Origen* supposeth; but are as a reason rendered to induce him to come unto them, because their trust & affiance was set upon him, and they had made him their only refuge in their trouble. Indeed this is peculiar and proper to God alone to be able to bless & curse, to save and to condemn, to bind & to loose, as we have the like speech of the Lord to *Abraham*, Gen 12, 3. *I will bless them that bless thee and curse them that curse thee, and thou shalt be a blessing.* This is most truly spoken of God, which they vainly boast of *Balaam*, who could do nothing

against his people, yet they rest and rely upon him. This was a weak and devilish means, thinking to curse the Israelites, and so to prevail against them: yet see what hope they had in him, and how they repose themselves upon this frail and foolish, this wicked and unlawful means. Heereby we learn the vanity and folly of evil men, resting upon most vain things which cannot help them, they trust to a broken Reed, they stay upon an arm of flesh. The wicked enter into lewd and licentious practices, grounding themselves upon weak and vain means that will deceive them. Thus God upbraideth oftentimes the confidence of the Jews in their vain Idols, *Let them rise up and help you, let them be your refuge: Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen, let them save you in the time of your tribulation.* Deut. 32, 37, 38. Judge. 10, 14. So the Philistines gloried and boasted in their great Captain and Champion *Goliath*, 1 Sam. 17, 10, triumphing upon his strength, insulting over the servants of *Saul*, reproaching the childhood of *David*, and defying the host of Israel So the *Aramites* were proud & confident in their army, resting upon weak means, glorying *that the dust of Samaria should not be enough for his host to take every man an handful, and blaspheming with open mouth, that God was the God of the Mountains and not of the Uallies.* 1 King. 20, 10, 23. All these examples teach the vanity of proud flesh, resting on weak and deceiveable means, that cannot profit or prosper.

And no marvel if vain men rest upon [Reason 1] vain things, and build upon a sandy foundation, because the GOD of this world hath blinded their minds, that the glorious Gospel of Christ, which is the Image of GOD, should not shine unto thē. 2 Cor. 4, 4. Thogh the Sun shine never so bright and clearly, yet if the eyes be closed, a man cannot see the light thereof. So when Satan worketh strongly in y^e children of disobedience, he prevaieth so far with them, that they glory in their own shame, fortify themselves with weakness, and build their house upon the sand.

Again, they want true faith in God's promises, [Reason 2] to make him their stay & staff to lean upon: for all have not faith (as the Apostle teacheth, 2 Thess. 3, 2.) to rely and rest with confidence upon him. Hence it is, that some trust in Horses and Chariots, some in the strength and multitude of men, some in Princes and Potentates of the world, but never look to the Holy one of Israel. So then, whether we consider the illusion of the devil in blinding, or the want of faith in staying men, we may conclude the former Doctrine, offered to our considerations in the vain confidence of the Moabites and Midianites, that vanity is exalted among the sons of men, that they rest upon a broken hope, and trust in vain things, to their own confusion and destruction.

The uses of this Doctrine are many. First, observe the difference between the stay of [Use 1] the godly, and the hope of the ungodly. The righteous man resteth on God, he maketh him his refuge, he fasteneth his heart on things that the eye seeth not, and trusteth not in any carnal means which are deceitful: but the ungodly (being of the world) rely on worldly means, and put their confidence in an arm of flesh. This difference *David* acknowledgeth and setteth down, Psal. 20, 7, 8. *Some trust in Chariots, and some in Horses, but we will remember the Name of God our Lord: They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen & stand upright.* Where the Prophet declareth the diverse practices of the men of this world, & the children of God which are not of this world, and showeth the issue of them both. The godly shall stand

upright, and abide unmovable as a Rock, but the other shall fall to the ground, and vanish as a shadow. The godly grow strong, and their defense is sure: albeit many oppose themselves against them, and intend mischief to overthrow them, yet still they rest in God, and remain undaunted, and therefore shall prevail in the end: whereas worldlings that put not their trust in God, but in the things which they behold with a fleshly eye (which are temporal) deceive themselves, and all their hope shall perish.

Secondly, let us mark the certainty of the [Use 2] destruction of carnal men, concluded with God. For if their confidence be weak, and all their hope and expectation vain wherein they trust, then let them not think to escape, whē they promise unto themselves peace and security; suddenly the day of vengeance cometh, and shall light upon them, and all their trust shall be as the Spiders web, which albeit today it be built aloft, yet tomorrow it is swept away. For they lean on a broken staff of wood, which not only cannot help, but the shiuers run into their hand, and wound it. 2 Kings 18, 21. Ier. 17, 5, and 49, 16.

[Use 3] Lastly, let us learn this duty, not to depend on vain things, as riches, friends, honors, and policies, but on God, which is unchangeable & unmovable, and let us resign up ourselves into his hands. This the Prophet urgeth and exhorteth unto in many places, Psal. 62, 8, 9, 10, & 118, 8, 9, and 146, 3, 4. True it is, we are not to refuse good means offered and afforded of God unto us, but are bound to use them as blessings and instruments by which he will help us; for then we trust not in the creature, but in the Creator himself, in whom only we must confess, is the power to help. It is a great cause why God oftentimes blesseth not good means when we trust in them, rob God of his glory, and do not wait for a blessing at his hands. This causeth the Lord to cross us, & to curse his own benefits, because we seek not him, but sacrifice to our own Nets, Hab. 1, 15, 16, & burn Incense to our own yarne, we put our confidence in the outward means, sometimes in Princes, sometimes in policies, sometimes in men, sometimes in Mountains, forsaking God; and therefore when we hope for help by them, God bloweth upon them, and turneth them to our hurt and destruction. *Asa King of Judah, Being diseased in his feet, sought not the Lord in his disease, but trusted in the Physicians, 2 Chron. 16, 12, & therefore they could do him no good. The rich man in the Gospel, that said to his soul, Luke 12, 19, 20, 21. Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, live at ease, eat, drink, and take thy pastime, received this answer, O fool, this nigh• will they fetch away thy soul from thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that gathereth riches to himself, and is not rich in God.* Wherefore it standeth us upon, to call upon God, to give a blessing upon his own helps and means given unto us: otherwise, though we have all helps in our own hands to defend our selves, and offend the enemy, fenced by the Sea, fortified by Ships, blessed by Princes, backed with friends, stored with munitions, ayded with confederates, and armed with multitudes of men; yet must our comfort, affiance, and confidence be in the Lord alone. Hereunto cometh that which the Prophet *Isaiah* saith, chap. 31, 3. *The Egyptians are men, and not God: and their horses, flesh, and not spirit: and when the Lord shall stretch out his hand, the helper shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall, and they shall altogether fail.*

[Verse 7. *And the Elders of Moab and of Midian departed, having the reward of the soothsaying in their hand.*] In these words note the policy of the wicked, they lay a bait before him to catch him, and carry not their hands empty, which was a great trial and temptation to a man of his humor, and one of the devils hungry Chaplains. For albeit Wizards and Coniurers, and such as are counted cunning men and women, offer to help others to money, and to enrich them with treasures; yet live most commonly basely and beggarly themselves. Take a view of Witches and Coniurers, that sell their souls to the devil, and receive his mark as the badge of their profession, and behold how wretchedly and miserably they live above all others, in a poor and simple estate, glorying to be able to stand others instead, but not enabled to help themselves. Wherefore, these leaguers knowing the disposition of *Balaam*, carry their reward and his wages with them, to make him to assent to them, and to grant their petition. This teacheth, That gain and rewards are a great temptation to attempt evil actions. Man (I say) is of himself prone to wickedness, but when gain is offered, and gifts are given, they are a powerful means to deceive and corrupt the conscience. The devil being by long experience privy to our corruption, and knowing how effectual bribes and rewards are to draw men to sin, laid his bait before Christ, and offered all the *Kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them if he would fall down and worship him*. Mat. 4, 8, 9. So when he entered into Judas, and filled him full of all iniquity, he prevailed this way with him, to sell his Master for money, & to betray him into y^e hands of sinners, saying; *What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?* This prevailed in Lot; he forsook Abraham, dwelt in Sodom, was carried away with earthly commodities, and smarted for it. This the Apostle noteth to have been the cause that Demas fell from the truth, *Because he embraced this present world, forgetting y^t the amity of the world, is the enmity of God, insomuch that whosoever will be a friend of the world, maketh himself the enemy of God*. 2 Tim. 4, 10. I am. 4, 4. This also our Savior declareth by the Parable of the rich man, Luke 14, 16. who sent out his messengers and bad his guests, who refused to come, pretending sundry excuses; one said, *I have bought five yoke of Oxen, and I go to prove them, I pray thee have me excused: another said, I have bought a Farm, and I must needs go out and see it, I pray thee have me excused:* showing hereby, that the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the commodities of this life are lets and pull-backs from embracing the Gospel.

The Reasons of this truth are very apparent. First, the profits and pleasures of this present life, are as rank thorns that choke the precious and immortal seed of the word of God, that it cannot grow up in our harts. For when once they are received into the soul, they choke the truth of God, and give a check to the Spirit of God. These two can never lodge together, so fast as one springs, the other withereth. This our Savior teacheth in the Parable of the Sower, where he saith, *The seed is of the word of God; that which fell among thorns, are they which have heard, and after their departure, are choked with cares, and with riches, and voluptuous living, and bring forth no fruit*, Lu. 8, 11, 14. This caused the Prophet to pray unto God, *to incline his heart unto his Testimonies, and not to covetousness*. Psal. 119, 39.

Secondly, gifts and rewards put out the eyes of those that saw clearly before, and stop the ears of those that could hear before, and shutteth up the mouth of those that could speak before. If then the receiving of bribes, and taking of gifts, be a setting of justice to sale, if they have force to pervert and corrupt, not only such as are lewd and lime-fingered to draw

presents unto themselves, but the wise and righteous: then we must acknowledge them to be dangerous temptations, laid before us of Satan to surprise us by his wiliness. This Moses teacheth the Judges and Officers which were to be chosen in the Cities: *Thou shalt not wrest the Law, nor have regard of persons: Thou shalt not take any reward: for gifts blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.* Deut. 16, 19. Neither let them say, though I take rewards, I will never swerve from Justice, for that is to presume vainly of thine own strength, and to give the Spirit of God the lie, that speaketh the contrary.

Let us proceed to the uses of this Doctrine. [Use 1] First, this teacheth us, not to love the world, nor the things of the world, but to beware we be not deluded by the glittering show of this earthly vanity. Take heed of cares and covetousness, which is an immoderate desire of getting & enjoying the wealth of this world. For it stealeth away the heart of man from God and godliness, and maketh him bend the whole course of his life on earthly pleasures. This is the common sickness and disease of this age wherein we live. For give me one among many, that is not overcome with the pleasures of sin, and the profits of the world? It stealeth on such as have sanctified affections, and have escaped out of the filthiness of the world, through the acknowledging of the Lord, and seeketh to overcome them. It is so deceitful and dangerous a sin, that it hath greatly assaulted, and fearfully overcome them after their calling to the truth, and profession of the glorious Gospel of Christ our Savior, and after they have begun to make some conscience of their life and conversation. Nay, such as before their calling and conversation felt no such desires and cares, now begin to be pressed, combred, and tempted with them. For as Satan by all means seeketh whom he may devour, and how he may hinder the repentance of sinners, so when he cannot any longer hold men in horrible sins of Idolatry, Blasphemy, Adultery, and contempt of GOD, then like a wily and subtle serpent, he creepeth in another way before we can espy him: then he suffereth us to hate evil company, surfeiting, drunkenness, riot, and excess, but he driveth to another extremity, and possesseth us with distrustful cares, and immoderate thoughts of this world, to desire greedily, to seek continually, to keep wretchedly, and to depart heavily from the vain and momentary things that perish with the use. And as this is a secret and subtle sin (albeit deeply rooted, yet hardly espied) so is it sildome cured and recovered, because men do not much consider of it & regard it, but please and flatter themselves in it. If we would willingly attain to our former estate, and see the danger of this disease, consider the vanity and uncertainty of all worldly things; compare them with spiritual blessings, and they are as dung and dirt matched with gold and silver: acknowledge that nothing is more unseemly for those whose conversation should be in heaven, then to be plodding upon the earth, & wallowing in the puddle of profane pleasures. Therefore the Apostle *John* saith, *Love not the world, neither the things that are in this world, &c.* John. 2, 15, 16, 17. Hereunto cometh the counsel of *Paul*, 1 Tim. 6.17, 18, 19.

Secondly, seeing gifts and rewards offered, [Use 2] be as a bait laid up to entrap the soul, let us refuse them, and not hunt after them as the manner of some is. Therefore the Prophet said to his servant, detesting his covetous mind, *Is this a time to take money, and to receive garments, and Olives, and Vineyards, and Sheep, and Oxen, and men servants, and maid-servants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and to thy seed forever.* So when *Simon* the

Sorcerer offered to the Apostles money, to have power to bestow the gifts of the holy Ghost, Peter said unto him, *Thy money perish with thee, because thou thinkest that the gift of God may be obtained with money.* Acts 8, 20. Likewise when the King of Babylon offered unto Daniel, garments of purple, and a chain of gold, for the interpretation of his dream, he would not sell the gift of God, but said, *Keep thy rewards to thyself, and give thy gifts to another, to one of thy enchanters, that set to sale their superstitions.* Dan. 5, 17. So then the servants of God must always aim at, and seek the glory of God, and their daily prayer must be, *That he would give them clean hands and a pure heart* Psal. 24, 4. They must not rashly gape after gain, but follow the duties of their calling, with a single and sincere affection, knowing *That their labors shall not be in vain in the Lord, and that they have a reward laid up for thē in the heavens.* This was it that Moses looked after when he was come to age, refusing the aliance of the King, partaking with the adversity of the Church, and esteeming the rebuke of Christ, greater riches then the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect to y^e recompense of the reward. *It is enough for us that we shall be glorified, albeit we be not rewarded at the hands of men.*

[Use 3] Thirdly, let us follow after the best gifts which may further the salvation of the soul. Those indeed are good gifts, that make the possessors of them better. This duty the Apostle declareth, 1 Tim. 6, 9, 11. *They that will be rich, fall into temptations and snares, and into many foolish and noisome lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction: But thou, O man of God, fly these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness faith, love, patience and meekness.* The things of this life are common to y^e godly and ungodly, nay, oftentimes the ungodly have the greater share and portion in them: let us therefore labor after those graces that accompany salvation. Let us lay up our treasure in heaven, *Where neither the Moth nor Canker corrupteth, and where thieves neither dig through, nor steal.* Mat. 6, 20. These gifts in the day of trouble, and in the hour of temptation shall minister more comfort and more true peace unto us, then all earthly and transitory things, which end in corruption. But a lasse, if it were possible for us to gain the *whole world, what should it avail or advantage us, and afterward lose our own souls?* Or what comfort can we take in our riches and possessions, when it shall be said, *Thou fool, this night shall they fetch away thy soul from thee, then whose shall all these be that thou hast gathered? For so shall it fall out to all those that are rich, but not in God.* Luk. 12, 20, 21. So then, let us learn to trust in the living God, and not in uncertain riches: let us cast all our care upon him that hath cared for us: *And let us first of all seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be cast upon us.* Mat 6, 32.

Lastly, let us learn to bear the yoke of poverty with patience. If we want this worlds goods, let us not be discouraged. God oftentimes recompenceth the want of earthly blessings, with great abundance of heavenly graces, *Making the poor of this world, rich in faith, and such as have nothing to inherit, to be heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him.* I am. 2, 5. This Christ declareth in the Epistle which he commanded John to write to the Church of the Smyrnians, *I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, but thou art rich.* Revel 2.9. He maketh them rich in knowledge, in faith, in obedience, and joy in the holy Ghost. He blesseth them with inward comfort, and with peace of conscience that passeth all understanding. He giveth them patience in troubles, meekness of spirit, and an holy contentation, to sustain the weight of their affliction. And albeit they bear a grievous burden, yet he hath eased them

of a greater, (to wit) the burden of their sin, which in Christ they feel to be lightened and remitted. This the Apostle testifieth, 2 Cor. 6, 10. *We are as dying, and yet behold we live, &c.* Hereunto acords the witness of *Peter*, who albeit he said, *Silver and Gold have I none*, yet he confesseth, that the Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the acknowledgement of him that hath called us unto glory and virtue. This is that *Jacob* persuaded his own heart, and told to his brother, Gen. 33, 11 *God hath shown mercy unto me, and therefore I have all things.* Seeing therefore riches are as thorns to choke us, and as snares to deceive us, let us learn to be content with our estate, and not greedily desire that which may turn to our destruction.

[Verse 9. *Then God came to Balaam, saying, &c.*] We shown before, that the purpose of *Balaam* the sorcerer, was to raise up the God of the Hebrews to consult with him, and to entice him to leave the protection of the Israelites, according to the guise and fashion of Coniurers, as we declared before in the sixth conclusion. For when the unbelievers began to lay siege to their enemies, they called forth the god or goddess of that place, to forsake that people, and come unto themselves. Thus did the devil seduce the world, and set up the kingdom of darkness in the children of disobedience. The Infidels indeed thought they dealt with their god, but they had to do with the devil. We see in all histories, how carefully they resorted to the Oracle of *Apollo*, as it were to know the will and pleasure of God in things to come; but a lasse (poor souls) they were deluded by the voice of the devil: so that whilst they supposed they asked counsel of one, they received answer of another. Therefore the Apostle *Paul* saith, *These things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not unto God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with the devils.* 1 Corinth. 10, 19, 20. Wherefore, when the sorcerers and soothsayers used to call up the protecting god of their enemies, the devils ordinarily used to return them their answer. But in this place, whilst this enchanter goeth about his superstitious practice, (supposing the true God to be like their false gods of other Nations) & so thinketh to bring up the God of the Israelites, God suffereth not the devil to give him answer, but himself preventeth his apparition, & appeareth unto him, both to procure the good of his own people, and to make known his power: to convince the rage and madness of the enemies, and to declare to all the world, the blessed estate of the Church. Heereby then we learn, in that God came unto him, and shown him what to do, that God sometimes speaketh to wicked men, and revealeth his will unto them. God (say I) not only teacheth and instructeth his own people, and hath appeared to them by visions and dreams, but hath appeared and made known his will, even to his utter enemies, and to open Idolaters that know him not. Thus he spake to *Cain*, Gen. 4, 6, 7, and reproveth him for his malice against his brother, exhorting to repentance toward God, and reconciliation toward his brother, and threatening him with destruction if he continued. So he dealt with *Abimelech*, when he had taken away *Sarah* from *Abraham*; God came unto him in a dream by night, and said unto him, *Thou art but dead, because of the woman which thou hast taken, for she is a man's wife.* Gen. 20, 3. So he did to *Laban* the Aramite, speaking unto him in a dream by night, and saying; *Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob, ought save good.* Gen. 31, 24. Thus he dealt with *Pharaoh* King of Egypt, God shown him in a dream what he was about to do, which was a means used of God to deliver *Joseph* out of prison, where the iron entered into his soul; and

to provide for his Church in time of famine that was to come Thus he revealed his will to *Necho*, King of Egypt, God willed him to make war against the Assyrians, and commanded him to make haste: but *Josiah* would have stopped his journey, and hearkened not to the words of *Necho* which were of the mouth of God. The like we may consider oftentimes in the book of *Daniel*, when *Nebuchadnezzar* had dreamed a dream which was not human, but divine, neither of a natural cause, but of a supernatural, wherewith his spirit was troubled, *Daniel* said unto him, Dan. 2, 28. *There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and showeth the King what shall be in the latter days.*

The Reasons are evident. First, to set down his great love and favor to his Children. For as God did show himself in sundry manners, and speak by lively voice to the ungodly, so in all the manifestations of himself unto thē, he had respect and reference to his Church, as appeareth in the former examples. Herein therefore appeareth the wonderful love of God to his chosen people, who hath the harts of all men in his own hands, and turneth thē about as pleaseth him. This is that reason which the Prophet pointeth unto, Psal. 105, 13, 14, 15, where speaking of *Abraham* & his posterity, he saith, *Albeit they were few in number, yea very few, and strangers in the Land, and walked about from Nation to Nation, from one Kingdom to another people, yet suffered he no man to do them wrong, but reprov'd Kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.*

Secondly, it pleaseth God to make himself and his great Name known out of the limits and circuit of the Church, to contstrain even the wicked to clear him in his proceedings, to acknowledge his judgments to be just and righteous, & to give sentence against themselves. For God is holy in all his ways, and pure in all his works: he causeth their own consciences to be witnesses against thē, to accuse and to convince them, inasmuch as they become unthankful, and do not glorify him as God, who is worthy of all glory, and never leaveth himself without witness, no not among the Infidels.

Thirdly, he declareth and revealeth himself [Reason 3] to Infidels, not because they be worthy, but because by the mouth of the very Infidels, he will strengthen and confirm his children. True it is, the chief and principal means which he useth, is to teach them by his servants the Prophets and Apostles, by Pastors and Teachers, which he hath set in his church: but he will also use the tongues of profane men to his own glory & comfort of his children. This we see evidently shown, Judge. 7, 13. When *Gideon* came to the outside of the host of the enemies. *Behold, a man told a dream unto his neighbor, and said, Behold I dreamed a dream, and loe, a cake of Barly-bread tumbled from above into the host of Midian, and came unto a Tent, and smote it that it fell down & was overturned: and his fellow answered, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon, for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all his host: When Gideon heard the dream delivered, and the interpretation opened, he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Up, for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.* Whereby we see, that God made known his purpose to these unbelievers, for y^e strengthening of *Gideon's* weak faith, and the enabling of him to the work whereunto he was appointed

The uses follow. First, confess from this [Use 1] dealing of God, not only that he is great in •ion, and high above all the people, but •hat his Name is great & glorious among his enemies.

He reigneth as King, not only over his Church, but over all creatures, and he maketh them to acknowledge his greatness, & stoop down under his hand. •his we see in the Prophet *Daniel*, chap. 6, 26, 27, by the decree that *Darius* wrote unto all the people, nations, and languages that dwell in all the world *I make a decree, that in all the Dominions of my kingdom, men tremble and fear the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, and remaineth forever, and his kingdom shall not perish, and his Dominion shall be everlasting: he refuseth and he delivereth he worketh signs and wonders in Heaven and in Earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the Lions.* The like confession *Nebuchadnezzar* maketh before, chap. 3, 32, 33. *I thought it good to declare the signs & wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me: How great are his signs, and how mighty are his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his Dominion is from generation to generation.*

Secondly, we see that God leaveth not men [Use 2] without excuse, because he maketh known his truth unto them: they have some means or other offered unto them, to teach them to acknowledge God, and to glorify him whom they have acknowledged, Rom. 1.20.24. So Christ our Savior speaketh to the obstinate Jews, John, chapter fifteen. verse 22. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they should not have had sin, but now have they no cloke nor color for their sin.* Thus was *Pilate* the Judge of Iewry convinced in his own conscience of wrongful judgment against Christ, being warned of his wife, to whom God had revealed his innocence, that he was a just man as a Lamb unspotted and undefiled. For the Evangelist *Matthew* testifieth, that when *Pilate* was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying; *Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream, by reason of him.* Mat. 27, 19. This was no mere human or natural dream, arising from multitude of business, or proceeding frō an evil constitution of the body, or evil digestion of meat, or such like ordinary causes as daily befall us; but it was divine from the special instinct of God, and the inspiration of the Almighty. For as God the Father diverse ways approved the innocence of Christ, that it might appear he died not for his own offenses, but for ours, & for our redemption: so did God send terror and trouble upon the Judges wife in the night season, to discover his hypocrisy, & make him without excuse altogether, in condemning the Innocent, that all the water in the wide sea was not able to wash away the guilt of his sin, much less the water he called for to wash his hands before the multitude, when he said, *I am innocent of the blood of this just man, look you to it.* Math. 27, 24. The stain of sin soyleth the soul, and defileth the conscience, & cannot be washed away with water, which only putteth away the filth of the flesh, and cleanseth the body, but cannot enter any further.

Thirdly, seeing God hath shown and manifested [Use 3] himself to wicked men unworthy of his favor, we may be certain and well assured, that he will never leave his own children destitute of instruction, that call upon his Name. If he deliver his will to his enemies, he will show himself to his friends. If he vouchsafe to instruct such as be strangers, doubtless he will open himself and reveal his secrets to those that be Citizens of his kingdom. If the servant be taught by him, who doth not know what his master doth: he will not pass over his own sons, who shall be heirs of his inheritance that he hath prepared for them that desire the knowledge of his ways. *For he will fulfill the desires of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry and will save them,* Psalm. 145, 19. Thus did *David* assure his son *Solomon*, standing by him when he was going the way of all flesh, *If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou*

forsake him, he will cast thee off forever. 1 Chron. 28, 2. & 2 Chron. 15, 2, 3. So when the noble Eunuch repaired to Jerusalem, and gave himself to read the Scriptures, that his knowledge might be increased, & the word of God dwell plentifully in him, the Lord sent *Philip* unto him, who joined himself to his Chariot, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. Likewise when *Cornelius* the captain, a devout mā and one that feared God, had prayed to God for further knowledge, that God who had begun his good work in him, would bring him to perfection: he is directed to send for *Peter*, who should tell him what he ought to do, verifying the saying of Christ, Math 13, 12, and 25, 29. *Unto every man that hath, it shall be givē, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.* Would we then know why we are ignorant in the ways of God, weak in faith, bare and barren in the gifts of God? We do not believe the promises of God, offering himself to those that seek him, and opening to those that knock at his gate, neither hunger and thirst after his graces, nor know the want of them in our selves or others.

Fourthly, let us follow the example of God, and do good to those that are evil. *He maketh the Sun to rise upon the evil and the good, he sendeth rain on the just and unjust: so should we do good to all, although especially to the household of faith.* Math. 5, 45. Gal. 6, 10. Let not their unworthiness hinder our goodness, but labor that our light may so shine before them, that we may gain them to the faith, & heap coals of fire upon their head. Let us admonish and exhort them with all patience and longsuffering, that they may come out of the snare of the devil, of whom they are holden. Let us preach the Gospel in season and out of season, and 1 Cor. 9.22, take all occasions to win those that are without, that by all means we may save some. What though they be not turned and converted to God by the preaching of the Gospel, & we seem to bestow our labor in vain? Many are enlightened of God, that are not saved; they attain to knowledge, that never grow to faith. *We are the sweet savor of God, as well in them that perish, as in them that are saved, to the one we are the savor of life to life, and to the other, the savor of death to death.* 2. Cor. 2, 15, 16. And this must serve and suffice to comfort us, and strengthen us, to bear out the heat of the day, & the weight of the burden that lieth upon our shoulders; to consider that howsoever our persons be entertained, & our doctrine received, and our strength be wasted and consumed in vain, yet our judgment is with the Lord, and our work with our God, who will reward us according to our labor.

Lastly, seeing GOD maketh known his will and word to wicked and profane men, who are sundry ways enlightened with many gifts of the Spirit: let us not rest in seeking after common gifts, but labor to be partakers of such as are proper to the elect, and do always accompany salvation and eternal life. This is it that the Apostle exhorteth unto, 1. Cor. 14, where mentioning diverse gifts of the Spirit, as the gift of knowledge, y^e working of miracles, the word of wisdom, the power of healing, y^e discerning of spirits, the diversity of toongs, the interpretation of tongues; all wh^{ch} are common to all sorts of men both good & bad: he addeth as the use that now we teach & persuade, *But desire you the best gifts, and I will show you a more excellent way.* 1 Cor. 14, 30, 31. Let us not therefore content our selves with such knowledge and illumination as the reprobate and ungodly have: but let us covet such as are peculiar and proper to the elect, that we may be the Temples of the holy Ghost, that the Spirit of God may dwell in us, not for a time, but forever; and dispose our hearts as the

owner of the house, and govern it wholly after his own will. Let us labor to feel a *certain knowledge of our reconciliation to God in Christ, the gifts of regeneration, a dying unto sin, arising up to newness of life, the grace of hearty prayer, comfort in distress, and such like*, which y^e elect of God find in some measure wrought in them. These are infallible notes of election: these are the best gifts that y^e Apostle urgeth: these are such fruits of the Spirit, as we must delight in, and follow after. If these be in us, & do abound, we shall have that peace of conscience through them that passeth all understanding; if these be not in us, whatsoever knowledge we have beside, though we have tasted of the heavenly gift, been enlightened by the Spirit, been partakers of the holy Ghost, tasted of the good word of God, and received the Gospel with joy: we shall find no more sound comfort in them, then *Balaam* did in this place by the revelation which he had received from God.

15 Balak yet sent again moe Princes, and more honorable then they.

16 Who came to Balaam, and said unto him, Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor, Be not thou staide I pray thee from coming to me.

17 For I will promote thee unto great honor, and will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: Come therefore I pray thee, curse for me this people.

18 And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more.

19 And now I pray you, tarry ye here also this night, that I may wit what the Lord will say unto me more.

20 And God came unto Balaam by night, and said unto him, Forasmuch as men are come to call thee, rise up, and go with them, but only what thing I say unto thee, that shalt thou do.

21 So Balaam rose up early in the Morning, and saddled his Ass, and went with the Princes of Moab.

Hitherto we have heard the message and sending out to this cunning man, seeking to draw him to come to curse the people. Now followeth the second part of the Chapter, wherein is published, how *Balak* prevailed with him, by offering him present gifts, and promising to him future honors. And because in the former message, *Balaam* had rather cunningly delayed, then flatly denied them, and rather craftily allured them, by protracting the time, then withstood them by giving thē the repulse, to the end they should buy his cunning the dearer, as well became a man of his trade and occupation; therefore here the Spirit of God

proceedeth to declare how the message is continued, the suite renewed, and their purpose obtained. Wherein we are to observe these three things. First, the departure of the Magitian with the messengers. Secondly, the anger of God for his departure. Thirdly, the entertainment which *Balaam* sound at y^e hands of *Balak*, when he was come unto him.

The first part touching the journey of *Balaam* (having obtained leave, or rather wrung it from God by his importunity) is contained in the words before remembered and recited; wherein behold how the desires of men are kindled & increased by delay, and give them no rest, until they enjoy the things hoped for. *Balak* the King, and *Balaam* the false Prophet, are here described, being pointed and painted out unto us in very lively colors. *Balak* proud in his Riches, ambitious in his honors, prodigal of his gifts, scorning to receive foil or repulse: On the other side, *Balaam* base in mind, covetous after money, thirsting after honor, as unwilling to give a denial, as the other to take it. Wherefore, as he sendeth a new ambassage, so he employeth more honorable men to credit and countenance the action the better, he furnisheth them with other gifts, he promiseth him in the word of a king to promote him to some place of dignity, and omitteth no human policy to draw him to his lure. The messengers mindful of their charge and commission, and considering the weightiness of the cause, do bend all their wits, and set on work all their cunning to effect the matter committed unto them; they stir him up to be forward, they add great promises of high honors, they allure him with great hope of rich rewards, which were effectual baits to entrap, and indeed the mightiest Rhetoric to persuade, and to prevail with a covetous man.

This was the Message of the King, thus was the employment of the Messengers: Now let us consider the answer of *Balaam*, wherein a man at the first sight would think he carried himself most uprightly toward men, and most religiously toward God, like a true-hearted man, and a faithful Prophet: he telleth them, *If Balak would give him the Riches and revenues of his Kingdom, he cannot go beyond the will of the Lord his God.* But all is not Gold that glistereth (as the Proverb teacheth) & sometimes a subtle Serpent lurketh in the green grass. A man would likewise conjecture, that when God bad him go with the Messengers, he was pleased with his journey: but the wrath of the Lord was kindled against him for his disobedience and presumption, which was no better then a tempting of God. So in this answer of the Wizard, we are not to consider the outward sound of the words, but the inward purpose and intent of the speaker. For his reply is thus much in effect, as if he had said unto them, Why do you thus solicit and importune me? Do you think it resteth in my will to come, or not to come? Or if I do come, that I can in this case do what I list? Or that the God of Israel is like the gods of the other Nations? He compelleth me to tarry here, he forbiddeth me to go with you, he is stronger then I, and I am constrained to obey him. You know my desire, but it lieth not in my power to curse your enemies, (unless I can charge and charm their God to leave & forsake them,) albeit the King would give me a great reward: What said I, a rich reward? Nay, if he would fill for me this Palace with silver and gold, replenish all his storehouses with treasures, I cannot accomplish mine own purpose, I cannot perform the desire of mine own heart. The God of the Israelites is too powerful and mighty for me, he it is that restraineth me, by whom notwithstanding I must only work in this my business, or else I cannot profit you nor pleasure myself, nor effect my purpose. Neuertheles be not discouraged and

discomfited, I am yet in good hope to prevail, and I will yet try him the second time, although before he utterly denied me to go with you.

This is the sum and effect of *Balaam's* answer, which consisteth of two parts. First, he stayeth them to be advised what to do. Secondly, he granteth their request, to go with them. Touching the staying of them, when he hath excused his former refusal and denial, to go with the former messengers (inasmuch as he could not alter and change the decree of the Lord, whom he saw to over-rule him in all this business, he promiseth to try him again, whether he could draw him to stand with thē, and to withstand the Israelites. And here again (as before v. 8.) observe how he worketh, not in the open day, and in the light of the Sun, which is the fittest season to work in, but as Coniurers use to do, he chooseth the night season for his purpose. For as Sorcery is one of the fruits of the flesh, and the work of darkness, and proceedeth from the Prince of darkness: so it fitteth best the children of darkness, & serveth to be practiced in the time of the night, according to the saying of him that is the author of life and light, *Every man that evil doth, hateth the light, neither cometh to light, lest his deeds should be reproved: but he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds might be made manifest, that they are wrought according to God.* Well, God appeared unto him, and made himself known unto him. whatsoever his purpose and intent were, not by any force of his sorcery, but for diverse and sundry other reasons; first, because he would put an hook in his jaws, and a bridle in his mouth, to stop him from cursing Israel. For his whole drift and meaning was to curse thē, in the accomplishment whereof, he is hindered and stayed by the appearance of God unto him. Secondly, because he would hinder the devil from giving *Balaam* an answer, and so deluding him, as in former times he was wont to do, when he was hired and sent unto for such purposes. Thirdly, it serveth greatly for God's glory, to make his Name known even among the Infidels, when they should learn, that he is the God that ruleth and ordereth all things in heaven and earth, that disposeth the counsels of his enemies, and maketh them further the good of his people that depend upon him. Yea, when God saw his covetous humor and wicked heart, that he would not rest in his word, nor obey his commandment given unto him, first by way of an *Ironicall concession, he biddeth him go*, howbeit in his wrath & indignation, but yet reserveth to himself the rule of his tongue, the power of his speech, and the government of all his works, as seemed good in his heavenly wisdom. As if the Lord had said, Forsomuch as the messengers be so importunate with thee, and thou so earnest with me, that thou wilt take no denial, nor rest in my word, nor yield thyself to my charge; go to, go forward, follow thine own course, run on of thine own head: yet will I bridle thy tongue, thou shalt not speak what thou desirest, nor do what thou delightest in, but what pleaseth me. *Balaam* glad of this answer, and thinking this concession better than a denial, rejoiced in his heart that he had leave, as if there had been some change in God, and told it to the Ambassadors, he prepareth for the journey, sadleth his Ass, and consenteth to go with them, which is the second part of his answer. Here observe with me againe a false finger, most wretchedly dissembling one part of the divine Revelation, imitating therein his master the devil, who in his temptation of Christ, and allegation of the Scripture, omitteth a principal part to pervert the meaning of the words, and to draw our Savior into wickedness. So whereas God had challenged as proper and peculiar to himself,

the ordering and disposing of all his affairs, that albeit he had liberty to go, yet his going was with restraint and limitation, that he should speak no more then God should put in his heart: yet the wizard never declareth this to the messengers, which neither pleased him, nor would pleasure them, neither profit him or them. Only he feedeth his own foolish fancy in this, that he was bidden to go, which God before had denied unto him: Now he taketh hold presently on these words, and went with a joyful heart, hoping that in time the same God would suffer him to curse them also. For as God had said at the first, thou shalt not go, yet after said, Go with them: so he supposed, that albeit he had forbidden him to curse the people, yet afterward he hoped to find a change in this, as he thought he had gained in the other, and so conceived a strong imagination, that the Moabites should be fully satisfied, himself plentifully rewarded, and the Israelites miserably cursed and detested. This is the sum and effect of these words: Now let us come to the Doctrines arising out of the same.

[Verse 16. *Be not stayed from coming unto me, for I will promote thee unto great honor.*] Consider here the covetousness of this false Prophet. He had received a charge and commandment not to go; yet seeing new regards come with y^e new messengers, he would not rest in God's former answer. He had heard the will of God, wherein he ought to have rested: but pricked forward with covetousness, and allured with the recompense of reward, he comforteth the men that were sent unto him, to attain their purpose. This the Apostle *Peter* noteth, describing the false Teachers, which privily brought in damnable heresies, he saith; *They forsook the right way, and have gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, &c.* 2 Pet. 2, verse 15. And the Apostle *Jude*, speaking of such like Teachers as turn the grace of God into wantonness, and bring upon themselves swift damnation, saith, *Woe be unto them, for they have followed the way of Cain, and are cast away by the deceit of Balaam's wages, and perish in the ginesaying of Core.* See here the force and power of worldly wealth, it is able to set open the gates that are shut up with bars and bolts. And albeit this point hath in part been handled before: yet because it is offered to our considerations again in this place, it is not to be passed over without further meditation. From hence we learn, that the love of this world, and the hunting after honor and dignity, preferment and promotion, cause men to make shipwreck of a good conscience, and draw them from observing the laws of God, and from resting in the known will of God. Hereunto cometh the reproof of *Reuben*, who being called, came not to y^e battle fought against the Canaanites, neither furthered the work of God that his people had in hand, but had their minds fastened to their riches, and dwelling in a fat and fruitful soil, they set their hearts upon the world; *For the divisions of Reuben were great thoughts of heart: Why abodest thou among the sheep-folds, to hear the bleatings of thy flocks? for the divisions of Reuben were great thoughts of heart.* Judge. 5, 15, 16. The like appeareth in the Prophecies of *Haggai*, where the people fell to build their own houses, and left the house of the Lord desolate, & therefore the Prophet saith, *Is it time for yourselves to dwell in your seeled houses, and this house lie waste?* What was it that prevailed with our first Parents in the Garden, to entice thē from God, and to hearken to the temptations of the devil, but hoping for honor and advancement in a better condition? This bait was laid before *Moses* in *Pharaohs* Court, he was tempted with dignities, allured with delights, provoked with profits: he had laid before him the glory of a kingdom, the pleasures of the Court, and the treasures of Egypt: yet he

preferred the suffering of adversity, the shame of the Cross, the fellowship and communion of Saints, that so he might be received into the bosom of the Church. Thus we see, that the love of the world. & the things of this world, drew this Sorcerer away from upright & just dealing If honor had been offered unto him alone, or riches alone, if they had come severally unto him, they had been of great force; but coming jointly together, and rushing upon him as an armed man, they are more forcible and powerful to prevail with him.

The Reasons are to be wisely weighed of [Reason 1] us, to gain our affections to embrace the Doctrine before delivered. First, the setting of the heart upon the love of riches, is the beginning of all evils, and the fountain frō whence sundry mischiefs do proceed, & is available to draw from all good, into all evil. This the Apostle urgeth, 1 Tim. 6, 9, 10. *They that will be rich, fall into temptations and snares, and into many foolish and noisome lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction: for the desire of money is the root of all evil, which while some lusted after, they erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* Where Paul teacheth, *That there is no evil which covetousness cannot bring forth.* It is a monster of many heads, and a fruitful mother of many bad children. From hence oftentimes come hatred, contention, envy, unthankfulness, treasons, treacheries, perjury, poisoning, deceit, couzenage, oppression, and what not? It bringeth in, as a violent stream, contempt of God, & it turneth God into an abominable Idol. It worketh a wretched trust in earthly possessions & treasures, more then in the living God. It is a bottomless pit of all iniquity.

Secondly, there is a contrariety between [Reason 2] God and the world, and they draw contrary ways, there is no affinity or agreement between them. This Christ our Suiour setteth down, *No man can serve two masters, for either he shall hate the one, and love the other, or else he shall lean to the one, and despise the other, ye cannot serve God and riches.* Mat. 6, 24. Hereunto cometh the exhortation of the Apostle John, 1 John 2, 15.

The uses are now to be thought and entered [Use 1] upon. First, consider from hence the dangerous estate of the men of this world how hard it is for them to enjoy eternal life and to enter into the kingdom of heaven See therefore, how riches are often reserved to the hurt of the possessors, & wrack of the owners thereof. Many seeking to enri•h themselves, and to scrape much together for th••posterities, do lose the favor of GOD, the quiet peace of a good conscience, and heap to themselves wrath against the day of wrath. This the Apostle James leadeth us to consider, Chap. 5, 1, 2, 3. *Go too now ye rich men: Weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you: your riches are corrupt, and your Garments are moth-eaten, your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire: ye have heaped up treasures for the last days.* If therefore outward things pull away from God, & hinder the duties of godliness, then assuredly men whose heart is glued unto them, and governed by them (they being made their chief treasures, and the god of their hope) cannot yield to the power of godliness, but by a special and extraordinary work of God in their hearts.

True it is, they may hold the profession, they may receive baptism, they may partake of the Lord's Supper, they may hear y word, they may hold salvation by Christ alone; yet unless they feel a peculiar sanctifying grace of God's Spirit, they shall find an hard entrance into

life, and the way leading unto the kingdom of heaven, hedged & stopped up. This our Savior teacheth his disciples, upon the occasion of the young man's sorrowful departure from him, having great possessions, Matth. 19, 23, 24. *Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of heaven: It is easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a Needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.* Wherefore, it behooveth all rich men that have this worlds good to pray unto God (being compassed with such dangers, and clogged with such cares) to govern them by his Spirit, and to preserve thē, that they be not overcome with the temptations of the world, and to teach them what it is to abound, Phil. 4, 12. which is far harder to know and practice, then to learn what it is to want.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing honors and riches choke good things, follow not them that walk that way, and be not drawn away by the evil examples of others, but follow the examples of the godly, according to the exhortation of the Apostle Phil. 3, 17, 18, 19. *Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is damnation, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, which mind earthly things.* Hereupon followeth the use before remembered; *Brethren, be followers of me, and look on them which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample.* How many be there in the Church, that live of the Gospel, and therefore in reason sould preach the Gospel, who corrupt their own consciences, and wound their own souls by hunting after promotion and •ignity, who for money sell their master with Judas and are carried away after the wages of iniquity with Balaam, and gape after gain only like hyrelings, who join Living to living, as it were, house to house, and field to field; eating the fat, and clothing themselves with the wool, *But they strengthen not the weak, they heal not the sick, they bind not up the broken, they seek not that which is lost, they raise not such as are fallen.* *Woe be unto such idle shepherds that feed themselves: Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?* Ezek. 34, 2, 3, 4. Let not us walk after such examples, which in the just judgment of God, are reserved to death & shame: who albeit they regard their pleasures above all, yet as they walk inordinately, so the things they rejoice in, shall be their confusion: but let us propound to our selves the examples of the godly, for our instruction and imitation in well-doing, Heb. 6, 12. *That we be not slothful, but followers of them which through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

Lastly, let us not be immoderately careful [Use] for them. The more careful we are for these things, the more careless we are in better things. The more our affections are set on the earth, the less care we have of heaven & immortality. It is no profit to win the whole world with the loss of our own souls. It is an incomparable loss, greater then the loss of a kingdom. Job had a great loss, when he lost his Sheep and Asses, his Oxen and Camels, his Servants and his Children, Job 1, 14.15. But all this is scarce to be mentioned or spoken of, being compared and laid in the balance with the loss of the soul. Let us therefore be contented, and rest satisfied with the estate wherein God hath set us. A little with a good conscience, and with peace, is better then a stalled Ox, Prov. 15, 17. *Godliness is great gain with contentation,* 1 Tim. 6, 6. *Let us use this world as though we used it not,* 1. Cor. 7, 31. All is vanity, nay misery, if we depart not hence in the fear and favor of God. Let us so live, that in life and death we may be the Lord's. Affect not only or chiefly the things of this life, but let us have before us the example of Lots wife, made unto us as a fearful spectacle and terrible monument of carnal

and careful thoughts, whose heart was wholly set upon those things which she left behind, and therefore was turned into a pillar of salt. We are borne again unto a better life. If a Princes children should give themselves to base courses, to follow Fairs and Markets, pitching up their standings, and selling pins and points like Pedlers and petty Chapmen, would not all men think it a great reproach and high disgrace to their estate, being royally descended, and borne to a Kingdom? We are the sons and daughters of almighty God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and it is his pleasure to appoint us heirs unto a Kingdom. Luke 12, 32. We are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood Reu. 1, 6. an holy nation, 1 Pet. 2, 9. a people set at liberty, that we should show forth the virtues of him that hath called us out of darkness into this marvelous light. Shall we then being Kings children, and borne to inherit a kingdom not of this world, but of the world to come, so much debase our selves as always to look downward, and go poring and stooping to the earth like brute beasts, and not cast our eyes upward like men, made after the likeness and similitude of God? Let us seek those things which are above, Col. 3, ver. 1, 2. where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; let us set our affections on things which are altogether above, and not on things which are here beneath upon the earth. It is unfit for our calling and holy profession, evermore to have our hand on our half-penny, making gain to be godliness, and our belly our god, wholly minding earthly & transitory things. Let our conversation be in heaven, Phil. 3, 20 and from thence look for a Savior, to change our frail and mortal bodies, and to make them like to his glorious body: we are free denizens of that City made without hands, whose builder and maker is God, & therefore let us not spend all our days in vanity, and waste our years in folly, Math. 6, 25, 33. nor be excessively careful what to eat, or what to put on: but have our conversation without covetousness, and first of all seek y^e kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Verse 20. [*Forasmuch as men are come to call thee, rise up and go with them.*] These words contain an ironical concession, not a plain approbation: a figurative tainting, not a simple allowing of his journey, or a giving of him liberty to depart. As if the Lord should have said: If being warned of me thou wilt take no warning, but art resolved what to do, and standest firm in thine heart to be gone; go too, proceed in thy purpose, and walk in the ways of thine heart, but know, that thou makest hast to thine own confusion, and that all thine endeavors shall turn to thy destruction. Thus we see God reproveth him by a tant, because he rested not in the will of God before delivered unto him, and uttered in a plain manner. Thus, when as men receive not the love of the truth that they may be saved, God sendeth them strong delusions that they might be seduced and deceived. Heereby we learn, That all reproving of sin and of sinners by way of tainting, is not unlawful, and unbeseeming the profession of godliness. All jesting and mocking are not forbidden to be used & practiced of the godly. This we see by the example of the Lord himself, Judge. 10, 14. *Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen, let them save you in the time of your tribulation.* Thus Moses speaketh to the people, Deut. 32, 37, 38. *Where are their gods, their mighty gods in whom they trusted? Let them rise up and help you, let them be your refuge.* The like we see in Job, vexed unjustly, and censured rashly by his friends, when he saith, Job 12, 12. *Indeed because that ye are the people only, wisdom must die with you.* So the Prophet Isaiah speaketh to the enemies of the Church, Isaiah. 8, 9. *Gather together on heaps*

O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces, gōrd yourselves, take counsel together, pronounce a decree yet it shall not stand. Thus the Prophet dealeth with Amaziah, 2 Chron. 25, 7, 8. *Let not the army of Israel go with thee, for the Lord is not with Israel: if not, go thou out, make thyself strong to the battle, but God shall make thee fall down before the enemy, for GOD hath power to help, and to cast down.* And if we would farther see the warrant of this practice in reprovng, we have examples of it in Christ our Savior, when he said to Judas, *That thou doest, do quickly,* John 13, 27. And when he spake to his disciples, *Sleep henceforth & take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the son of man is given into the hands of sinners.* Al which examples, in the old and New Testament, of God, of the Prophets, of Christ, and other holy men, serve to teach us, that all reprovng of sin by sharp tants, is not unlawful and unwarrantable.

The Reasons justifying this practice, are: [Reason 1] First, to make Idolaters and wicked men, to see their sins, and the greatness of them, to move them to repentance, and to come out of them, to bring them to be ashamed of their offenses, and so to move them to turn unto God. This the Prophet *Isaiah* urgeth, chap. 46, 6, 7. *They draw gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a Goldsmith to make a god of it, and they bow down and worship it: they bear it upon their shoulders, they carry & set him in his place, so doth he stand and cannot remove from his place, though one cry unto him, yet he cannot answer, nor deliver him out of his tribulation: Remember this, and be ashamed, bring it again to mind, O you transgressors.* This then is one reason why the holy Ghost reproveth and reproacheth in a deriding manner, to bring offenders to true wisdom and to open their eyes which are blinded, that they see nothing.

Secondly, an holy deriding may be used [Reason 2] to disgrace and discountenance sin, and to set it out in his colors. For, when it is magnified among the sons of men, & followed with all greediness, the servants of God must uncover, and uncase it and lay it open, that others may eschew it. Thus we see the prophet *Elijah* dealeth with the Priests of *Baal*, he scoffeth at their simplicity, he derideth their folly, and in an holy manner triumpheth over their vanity, when he saith, 1 Kings 18, 28. *Crie a loud, for he is a god; either he talketh, or pursueth his enemies, or is in his journey, or it may be that he sleepeth, and must be awaked.* Where he doth not stir them up to their Idolatry and idolatrous worship of *Baal*, nor allow their superstitious prayers, but mocketh at their madness, to disgrace their wickedness, and to reproach their falling from the true God.

The Uses are to be considered in the next [Use 1] place. First, this teacheth, that the Minister: of the word, may in their teaching use this figure when they deal with an obstinate people, and reprove obstinate offenders. True it is, the man of God should be patient toward all men, 2 Tim. 2, 25: *suffering the evil, instructing the ignorant, and waiting for the repentance of such as are fallen: but when they refuse to hearken or pull away their shoulder, and stop their ears, and make their harts as an Adamant stone, it is both lawful & requisite after a sort to insult over them, not that their persons should be scorned and contemned, but that their profaneness should be corrected and amended.*

Thus doth *Solomon* deal, Eccl. 11, 9, when he hath to deal with proud and insolent young men, that think themselves privileged by their age, to run riot with all greediness, and without all controllment, *Rejoice O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheare thee in the*

days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment. This we see practiced by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 24, 38. *If any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.* And the Apostle John speaketh after the same manner, Revel. 22, 11. *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.* Whereby we see, that the Spirit of God doeth not give leave, neither doth encourage, or command men to be filthy or unjust; but seeing them in a settled rage and willful course, obstinately bent and resolved to go forward, that they will not be hindered, nor hearken unto any wholesome counsel, he telleth them they may proceed, but they shall smart for it in the end. If the Ministers in the zeal of God's Spirit, tread in these steps, & follow the example of God, of Christ, of the Prophets and Apostles, they have a fair warrant set before them, & cannot be reprov'd for this imitation. They may say unto the stubborn and stiff-necked contemners of the word, If ye will needs be ignorant, be ignorant still, but God will find you out in your blindness and ignorance. If ye have the light, and yet will willingly and willfully shut your eyes, go forward, yet God will open them in the day of his visitation, that ye shall see your own misery. If ye have the bread of life, and food of salvation brought unto you, and yet ye will needs sterue and famish, what remedy? Pine away your souls, and sterue them: but know, that it will be bitter in the latter end.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing this scoffing at evil is lawful, let men take heed they deserve not thus to be dealt withal. When we have the word of God in all meekness and gentleness, with all patience and long suffering offered unto us, let us rest in it, and not reject it from us, let us believe it, and obey it, and grow every day from faith to faith. When *Micaiah* the Prophet saw *Ahab* addicted to flatterers and false informers (two very dangerous plagues to Princes) he judged him not worthy to have the truth revealed unto him, and therefore in derision he saith unto him, *Go up and prosper, and the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the King,* 2 Kings 22, 15. It is a grievous thing to be scorned and derided, and we hardly brook that indignity. If then, we would not be so roughly and tantly handled in the ministry of the world, let us hear the voice of God while it is called today, lest being hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, the Lord be compelled so to deal with us. It is used for our benefit and salvation, albeit it be bitter and sharp. But many times bitter things be most wholesome and healthful. And this answereth the objection of carnal men, when they are admonished to turn to the Lord with all their hearts, to attend to the ministry of the word, and to walk before the Lord with a perfect mind; they answer, If I shall come to be a professor, and make profession of the word, I shall be mocked, everyone will deride and flout at me; I shall be a laughing stock to the world, I shall become a Proverb unto them, and the drunkards will sing songs against me. But choose whether thou wilt endure a reproach here for a season, or be mocked of the Lord forever. It is better for thee here to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to have the Lord scorn thy folly forever. Therefore, the wise man teacheth us this doctrine, Prov. 1, 25, 26. *Because ye refused my counsel, and would none of my correction, I will also laugh at your destruction, and mock when your fear cometh.* And the Prophet *David* declareth, that when the wicked band themselves against the Lord, and against Christ, *He that dwelleth in the Heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision,* Psal. 2, 3, 4.

True it is, this is spoken according to our capacity and understanding: not that there is any disposition of laughing, or affection of scorning in God, but he leaveth men in their miseries, and maketh them oftentimes a mocking stock to the world. They shall have no comfort from his presence, he shall rejoice in the day of their calamity, which shall be to them as bitter as death, and as hard to be born as hell it self.

Lastly, hereby a door is not set open to fleering and flouting one of another, which proceedeth from the scum and froth of many men's wits. For, as all deriding is not unlawful, so all taunting is not lawful. Wherefore, whatsoever mocking proceedeth from the gall of our hearts, from the contempt of our brethren, from pride, disdain, lightness, bitterness, biting, disgracing, and reproaching of others, cannot stand with our holy profession, but is a fruit of the flesh, & a corruption of the old man, which must be pulled up. Therefore the Apostle writing to the Ephesians, and instructing them to walk in love, as Christ hath loved us, saith, *Fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let them not be once named among you as it becometh Saints, neither filthiness, neither foolish talking; neither jesting, which are things not comely, but rather giving of thanks.* Where he doth not simply forbid all mirth and jesting, but the peevish humor of many men that delight in jesting and gibing against others, who regard not what jests they break upon their brethren, so they may revenge their own malice, and disgorge the venom of their own hearts. These men seek to build up their own names by the ruin of others, and desire to grace themselves by the disgrace of others. Such persons may well be in love with their own wits, but all discreet men may espy the want of much wisdom in them. This biting and bitterness one toward another cannot stand with our calling, to the truth and profession of the faith. We have not so learned Jesus Christ. We must account the good name of our brethren, as their chiefest Jewel. The credit and reputation of many men is as their chiefest Jewel. Therefore the wise man saith, Prov. 22, 1. *A good name is to be chosen above great riches, and loving favor is above Silver and Gold.* Eccles. 7, 4. Wherefore, let no man think to raise himself by the fall of others, or to gain estimation to himself by the discredit and defamation of other men.

[But only what thing I say unto thee, that shalt thou do.] In the•e words, God before hand instructeth and informeth *Balaam* what shall be the event and issue of all his desires, namely, that howsoever he coveted to curse the people of God, and so to earn his wages and hire by the practice of wickedness; yet he should be compelled and constrained against his will, to wish the flourishing estate of the Church, and to pronounce the blessing with his own mouth. Howsoever therefore he were maliciously bent, and carried with extreme fury and frenzy against the godly, yet God declareth that all his rage should turn to the good of the Church, and his tongue should vary from his heart. Hereby we learn, That the malice of the wicked, how great soever it be, is limited and restrained. Albeit the enemies of the Church be oftentimes suffered to proceed and prevail, and to lay very great afflictions on the servants of God, yet all their power is stinted and determined, & they can proceed no further then God suffereth and permitteth. This truth is taught us in sundry Scriptures for our instruction. When *Laban* intended evil against *Jacob*, God appeared unto him, and said, Gen. 31, 24 *Take heed that thou speak not unto Jacob ought save good:* and *Jacob* telleth him, that except the God of his father, the God of *Abraham* and the fear of *Isaac* had been with him, he

would have sent him away empty; but God beheld his tribulation, and the labor of his hands, and rebuked him yesternight. When *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians pursued after Israel with horses and Chariots, and sought their utter destruction, *God fought for his people while they stood still and held their peace*, Exod. 14, 25. This is it which our Savior signified when y^e Pharisees said unto him, Luke 13, 32, 33. *Depart and go hence, for Herod will kill thee*, Then he said unto them, *Go ye and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and will heal still today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected: nevertheless, I must walk today, and tomorrow, for it cannot be that a Prophet should perish out of Jerusalem*. So *Isaiah* comforteth the messengers of *Hezekiah* against the blasphemies of *Sancherib*, against the dangers of the city, and against his railing on and reproaching the living God, 2 Kin. 19, 6, 7. *So shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, Behold I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a noise, and return to his own land, because he hath raged against me, and his tumult is come up into my ears, therefore I will put my hook in his nostrils & my bridle in his lips, and I will bring him back again the same way he came*. All these things teach us the truth of that doctrine which we have in hand, namely, that howsoever the ungodly rage and fret against the church of God, yet their malice and madness is limited, and the time of the continuance thereof appointed of God.

The reasons to confirm our faith farther [Reason 1] in this point are these. First, the providence of God ruleth all things in heaven and earth, the least and smallest things are ordained and ordered by him, nothing falleth out by chāce, neither is whirled about in the wheel of fortune. *The Birds fall not to the ground, the hairs fall not from our heads without the will of our heavenly Father*, Matth. 10, verse 30. Howsoever therefore the enemies of the Church do take crafty counsels, and make bloody decrees against the peace and prosperity thereof, yet they can do no more then God hath concluded, and then he hath in his purpose determined. This the Apostles acknowledge, Acts 4. verse 2^a, in their prayer to God: *Doubtless against thine holy Son Jesus, whom thou hast annoⁿted, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel gathered themselves together, to do whatsoever thine hand and thy counsel hath determined before to be done*. They cannot satisfy th^eir own lusts, nor accomplish the desseignes of their own hearts, their rage is restrained as with a bit and bridle, that it should not hurt the people of God.

Again, marvel not that the course of wicked [Reason 2] men is stopped by the hand of God, for the devils are limited, and all the power of darkness is curbed, so as the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church. We see this in Job 1, 12. & 2, 6. he could not slay his servants with the sword, burn up his sheep with fire, spoil him of his Camels by Robbers, destroy his children with winds, and touch his person with boils, before the Lord had said unto him, *Loe all that he hath is in thine hand, but save his life*. Likewise when the Lord Jesus dispossessed the two possessed with devils which came out of the graves very fierce, so that no man might go by that way, Matth. 8, 31: the devils could not enter into the heard of Swine, before they had besought him to suffer them to enter into them: so that we may be assured, that howsoever they be bloody spirits, and greedy to hurt, yet their tyranny is bound up, being compassed within the listes and limites of the power of God, and enclosed within the circle of his jurisdiction, that they cannot annoy such as are created after the image of God, and

redeemed with the blood of Christ, without the divine permission. For, the Prince of this world is judged, and cast out, John 12, 31. and 16, 11. his weapons are taken from him, & the spoils divided, his works are dissolved and loosed, his head is bruised and broken.

[Use 1] The uses of this Doctrine minister great comfort and instruction unto us. First, we learn from hence to acknowledge the infinite power of God above all earthly power that is in flesh and blood. True it is, the rage of the enemies is great, and the gates of hell are set wide open against y^e church of God, yet they cannot prevail or have the upper hand, for God is with us, his power is manifested, and his malice is abridged. It hath always been an hard matter for men to stay in dangers and fear; the remnants of infidelity and the dregs of distrust, do rest and remain in the best men. The truth and omnipotency of God is hardly yielded and consented unto, as appeareth in the example of *Moses & Aaron*, Num. 20, 12. *They believed not God to sanctify him in the presence of the children of Israel, but spake unadvisedly with their lips.* The like we see in the siege of Samaria, when the Lord promised, that tomorrow that time should be great plenty of Barley and fine flower to be sold, a Prince answered and said, 2 Kings 7, 2. *Though the Lord would make windows in the heaven, could this thing come to pass?* This appeareth in *Zacharias*, Luke 1, 18. when God promised him a son in his old age, he said, *How can this thing be? And whereby shall I know this?* When the Israelites were pursued & overtaken by the host of the Egyptians, and were in present danger of death, they wer so^e afraid, and forgot the power of God, able to deliver them. So the experience of our own hearts in all dangers and difficulties, that ordinarily fall upon us, doth tell us how hard it is to rest upon God, as an all-sufficient helper in time of need. We distrust God's promises, and fear in every evil that he will not or cannot succor us. Forasmuch therefore as we are privy to our own corruptions, being ready to think our help and deliverance to be impossible, let us in all troubles build on God's power, as on a firm rock and sure foundation, that can never be removed.

Secondly, hereby we have a great comfort in our troubles and sufferings, to consider the strong hand of God prevailing over them that do insult and triumph over the Church. The years and days, the very hours & moments of time touching the Churches afflictions are determined of God, so that the ungodly shall rage but their time. This is it which God speaketh to *Abraham*, Gene. 15, 13. *That his seed should be a stranger in a Land that is not theirs, four hundred years, and shall serve them.* Thus when the people of Israel were carried into Babylon, *The days of their captivity are determined to be seventy years*, Ier. 25, 11, 12, & 29, 10. When *Pilate* the Lieutenant of the Romans, and Judge of Judea had said unto Christ, John 19, 10, 11. *Knowst thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to loose thee?* Jesus answered, *Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.* Let us therefore go constantly forward in our vocation, to do our duties, to speak freely in the midst of the enemies, though they do hear us & sit among us. This we see to have been the behavior of Christ, John 8, 20, 21. *These things spake Jesus in the treasury as he taught in the Temple, and no man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come.* Where we see, the place, the persons, the time, seemed to favor his enemies: yet he taught boldly, and preached openly amongst them. This example must be our imitation. Though we live among many dangers, & are enclosed with a thousand deaths, yet we must know that we are protected, regarded, &

defended of God, we are by his right hand made able to stand, when so many devices of the ungodly assault us, and so many horns of the wicked push at us to overthrow us. It is an admirable and marvelous thing, considering the enemies of the Church and Gospel (both open and secret, professed and close, known adversaries, and close brethren, all mischeeuous, having also such men and means to work their malice) that any Church continueth in the world, being as a little flock among many wolves. Wherefore, if there be any light of the Spirit of God in us, the consideration of this, that their rage is determined, must give courage and constancy both to us that be teachers, and to you that be hearers, and work in us all assurance of help and assistance, to come from the highest heavens.

Thirdly, this doctrine is a great terror to [Use] the wicked persecutors and malicious enemies, to consider their estate, and to remember their condition, that they cannot do what they list, but what God will, they cannot execute wh• they please, but what pleaseth God. This limitation of their rage & abridgement of their doings, is sufficient to dane their hearts, and to pull them back from fighting against God. If they could prolong their days and double their strength, as they can increase their malice, and double their devices, they might have some cause to insult and triumph over the faithful. But seeing they are stinted as the hireling that hath his task shared out unto him, it serveth notably to abate their pride, to asswage their malice, & to confound their devices and enterprises against the servants of God. They are not their own men, they are not free and at their own liberty, God holdeth them in, and tieth them short, that they cannot rage and reign at their own pleasure. *Herod and Pontius Pilate*, the Gentiles and the Jews, could do no more then God had determined. Let all the ungodly remember this doctrine, and consider it in their hearts, it will be a notable bridle to restrain them from all evil practices, and to stop the course of their corrupt purposes. They cannot prevail over the Saints of God, albeit for a time they have the upper hand. The time shall come when they must give an account of all their works.

Lastly, seeing the times of the enemies [Use 4] prevailing be set, let us not fear the faces of men, they can but run the race that God hath set them, albeit they rush forward like blind men, and think themselves able to do great things, yet their power is subject to an higher power, and their malice shall quickly have an end•. If a Prince should encourage any of his poor subjects against the might and oppression of any of his Nobles, and say• unto him; Fear not his fear, I will be thy defense and protection, I will stand between thee & danger, he shall do thee no harm: would not this make him joyful, and banish all fear from him of being overborne and over-matched by his might? But this is our case and condition lying under the cross, afflicted of enemies, and persecuted for our profession: the Lord hath promised to bear us out, and to be a buckler round about us. *If then the Lord be our light, and our salvation, whom shall we fear? If the Lord be the strength of our life, of whom shall we be afraid?* Psal. 27, 1. Therefore, Christ Jesus comforting and imboldning his disciples against dangers to come, Matth. 10, 25, 26, 28, 31. & forewarning them that they should be delivered up to the Councils, be scourged in the Synagogues, be brought before Governors, and be hated of all men for his names sake, exhorteth them to patience & courage; *I care them not, for there is nothing covered that shall not be disclosed; nor hid, that shall not be known: Fear ye not them that kill the body, & are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body*

in hell. We are safe under God's shield, they cannot cut off one hour of our life, they cannot shorten one moment of our time. But God will cut them off when it pleaseth him, & will stop them at a sudden, that they shall proceed no further. This is that which was laid before the Church of the Smyrnians, to assuage their sorrow, Reuelat. 2, 10, Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: Behold it shall come to pass, that the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, &c.

12 But the wrath of God was kindled because he went: and the Angel of the Lord stood in the way to be against him as he rode upon his Ass, & his two servants were with him.

23 And when the Ass saw the Angel of the Lord stand in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand, the Ass turned out of the way, and went into the field: but Balaam smote the Ass to turn her into the way.

24 Again, the Angel of the Lord stood in a path of the vineyards, having a wall on the one side and a wall on the other.

25 And when the Ass saw the Angel of the Lord, she thrust her self unto the wall, and dashed Balaam's foot against the wall: Wherefore he smote her again.

26 Then the Angel of the Lord went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand, or to the left.

27 And when the Ass saw the Angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam: therefore Balaam was very wroth, and smote the Ass with a staff.

28 Then the Lord opened the Mouth of the Ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me now three times.

29 And Balaam said unto the Ass, Because thou hast mocked me, I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee.

30 And the Ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine Ass which thou hast ridden upon since the first time unto this day? Have I used at any time to do thus unto thee? Who said, Nay.

31 Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way with his sword drawn in his hand. Then he bowed himself, and fell flat on his face.

32 Then the Angel of the Lord said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine asse three times? Behold, I came out to withstand thee, because thy way is not straight before me.

33 But the asse saw me, and turned from me now three times, or else if she had not turned from me, surely I had even now slain thee, and saved her alive.

24 Then Balaam said unto the Angel of the Lord, I have sinned: for I wist not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore if it displease thee, I will turn home again.

35 But the Angel said unto Balaam, Go with the men, but what I say unto thee, that only shalt thou speak. So Balaam went with the Princes of Balak.

In the words going before, we have seen the departure of *Balaam* with the Princes: Now, we are to consider what befell him in the way in these words, and what entertainment he had at the kings hands, when he came to his journeys end, in the words following, to the end of the Chapter. Touching the former point, we see the wrath of God breaketh out and proceedeth against him for his going. For this journey being undertaken with a resolute purpose to curse the people, as *Moses* testifieth, Deut. 23, 5. hoping to prevail with God to have his consent; we see how God setteth himself against him, and reproveth him two ways: first, by the Ass, and afterwards by the Angel: and yet in the end sendeth him away to those his masters that had hired him.

[Object.] But here the question may be asked, Why God was angry? and wherefor his wrath was kindled against him, seeing he had granted him leave before, saying; *Rise up, and go with them?* if then God consented to his departing, why is he offended with his going? [Answer.] I answer, God did never simply allow and approve of his journey, but *Balaam* through ambition & covetousness rushing into evil, & not hearkening to the voice of God restraining him, he permitteth many things which he doeth not approve, *and granteth the petitions of men, sometimes in wrath and indignation, as when he gave the people flesh in the wilderness, and set over them a King after the manner of the Nations round about them,* Numb. 11, 12. So we have shown before, how God ironically taunteth and derideth the importunity of this sorcerer, but never gave his consent and approbation unto his wicked intent; and therefore the judgment of God attended upon him as a Sergeant to arrest him as he sate on his beast, and as his two servants waited upon him. For to the end he might be the better accepted of the King, and respected in his divination, the cunning man goeth with his two men to attend upon his worship. The true Prophets of God (as we read in the holy history) had but one man, as *Gehazi* served *Elisha*, 2 Kin. 3, 11. & *Elisha* poured water on the hands of *Elijah*, 2 King, 5, 20. & 6, 17. so *Baruch* was y^e servant of *Jeremiah*, & *Joshua* of *Moses*. Exod. 24, 23. Nu. 11, 28. Deut. 1, 8. But this false Prophet is attēded with his two servants, whose praise and estimation was from men, & not of God.

Now the wrath of God appeareth against him two ways, and both miraculous and extraordinary. For first, he is convinced by the dumb beast that bare him, who had more wit then the wizard that rod upon her. Therefore the Apostle teacheth us, 2 Pet. 2, 15, 16. *That because he loved the wages of unrighteousness, he was rebuked for his iniquity, for the dumb beast speaking with man's voice forbad the foolishness of the Prophet.* Secondly, he is reprov'd of y^e Angel of God, who was ready to smite him, & to destroy him for his iniquity. Touching the first point, the Spirit of God setteth down three marvelous things to be thought upon of us; the quickness of her sight, the speech of her tongue, and the discourse of reason, or y^e communication between her and her master. The sharpness of her eye is first of all noted as strange in that beast, who saw that which *Balaam* could not see. The Ass by nature is dull and heavy, slow and sluggish by kind above every beast of the field, both slow paced, and dim sighted: therefore where as she saw the Angel, her eyes must of necessity be opened of God, and endued with force above the course of hir nature; so that when the Angel stood armed in the way three times with his drawn sword to smite *Balaam*, she three times avoided the stroke by declining out of the way, & at y^e third time saved her master by sinking down under the burden: and yet for hir good service was three times smitten with the staff in his hand. And as God opened her eyes, so also he opened her mouth, which is a wonderful miracle above nature; and gave her power to speak, which is a peculiar preeminence of mankind. True it is, God hath given many gifts to the unreasonable creatures, wherein also they excel man; yet to none hath he given the use of speech and benefit of language but unto man only, among all the works of his hands. And as he gave her the use of the tongue to speak with man's voice, so he gave her the benefit of reason, to speak with understanding. For she discourseth as a reasonable creature, and showeth forth the Art of concluding from many particulars, clearing her self of present blame by her by-past actions, and appealing to him as a witness and judge in that matter. Where she reasoneth after this manner:

If I have done thee from the first time I came into thy possession hitherto faithful service, then am I at this present faultless:

But I have hitherto served thee faithfully,

Therefore, I have not at this present mocked thee.

The assumption is proved and confirmed by an human testimony, for she appealeth to *Balaam* to speak his conscience what he had ever found in her. And albeit God stirred up the Ass to be his schoolemistris, & wrought a wonder to check him to his face, yet the wretch is not moved at the matter, nor stirred up at the miracle to lay his hand on his mouth and give glory to God, but bursteth with anger, threateneth with words, and striketh her with a staff, & recompenceth evil for good. He chafeth and fretteth that the asse had mocked him: he considereth the fact of the asse, but marketh not his own fault, which was far worse, who had mocked with God. For y^e authority of God is greater over man, then of man over his beast: and there is a greater difference and disproportion between the Creator and the creature, then is between creature and creature. There is greater equality between man & beast, between the work & the workman, between the potter and the clay between the saw and him that moveth it, between the Axe and him that heweth with it: then is between man

whose breath is in his nostrils, and the eternal God, who is even a consuming fire. For every creature is finite, God is infinite, between which is no equality or proportion: so that the asse deserved not to be smitten of the man, but the man deserved to be stricken of God, as the Angel witnesseth.

But how could the Ass speak? or how could a brute beast, which is without reason, as the Apostle teacheth, *discourse and conclude*? Or where learned she the art of Logic, which is nothing else but the art of using reason, teaching to invent arguments, and then dispose them in order with good judgment? This seemeth to minister matter to *Atheists* and *Libertines* to deride all Religion, and to scoff at the Scriptures, taking occasion at this and other like places. For when they hear that an Ass could speak and reason the case with her master, they believe it no more then one of *Esopes Fables*, or a strange tale out of *Ouids Metamorphosis*, where trees, and birds, and beasts are made to speak. I answer, touching our selves that are nourished in the bosom of the Church, and been instructed in the Gospel of Christ, and trained up in the school of the Prophets, it is sufficient for our faith and staying up our consciences in the truth, to know that which *Moses* mentioneth verse 28. *the Lord opened the mouth of the Ass*, the which was as easy for him to do, as to give us reason and reasonable souls at the first. For when thou hearest that GOD opened the Asses mouth, it is as much as if it had been said, He that is almighty, powerful, and all-sufficient did it, that is without want or weakness, with whom nothing is impossible, who sitteth in heaven and doth whatsoever he will above the course and order of nature. And albeit we have not any like example in former times, nor in the generations afterward of the like work of God, yet whence hath mankind the use of speech and understanding, but that God gave it in the creation? We see sometimes he denieth it to some men that are borne deaf and dumb, and cannot speak, to the end we should acknowledge speech to be the gift of God, rather then of Nature. Sometimes also the Lord hath taken away the use of the tongue for a time, as we see in *Zachariah*, and peradventure also of his ear that he could not hear, inasmuch as the people spake not to him when they came together to be present at the circumcision of his son, but made signs to him how he would have him called. As then the Lord denieth the gift of speaking, and depriveth of it where he once hath given it: who can limite the holy One from bestowing speech, & framing the tongue of a beast to utter a voice and communication, as with the tongue of a man? or to give to the creature inferior in nature, that which is proper to the superior? For albeit God hath set, & settled an order in nature, yet himself is not ever bound unto it. Neither is this miracle in this dumb beast more marvelous, then that of *Nebucadnezzar*, he was driven from the society of men, he did dwell with beasts, he did eat grass like the Ox and the Ass, his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till the hair of his head did grow as Eagles feathers, and the nails of his fingers like birds claws, and to conclude, he wanted all use of reason and understanding. Now the Ass did no more in this place resemble man, then this man did resemble a beast: as the Ass had reason given her, so had the King his understanding taken from him, being stricken by the hand of God with madness, and bereft of common reason and judgment, for it is said afterward, *that his understanding was restored*. Besides, we see the devil in the beginning used the tongue of the serpent to speak to our first parents. If Satan did this in the serpent, shall not the author of Nature be able to do it in the

tongue of the Ass? for as the serpent by nature can do no more but hiss, so the Ass can do no more but bray. Shall we not ascribe so much to God, as to the devil? Could the devil use the serpents tongue as his instrument, and cannot God open the mouth of the Ass to teach a false and ignorant Prophet? Or if we confess that God can work miracles, why not this among others? If not this, then neither others. Now touching *Atheists* and *Infidels* that believe not the Scriptures, nor the power of God; to convince them that are patrons of Nature, but enemies of the God of Nature, we see how in Pies and Popin-iayes, he hath left a certain resemblance of speech, and thereby showeth forth what he is able to do in the rest when it pleaseth him. We know by experience in all ages, and learn by relation and report of all histories, that the devil hath spoken in the mouth of other creatures: what impiety then is this, to yield that to the devils which they deny to God, and detract from the most High?

Hitherto of the reproof of the Ass reprehending his master, now of the reproof of the Angel. True it is, he was unworthy of any other teacher then his own Ass, being a fit master for such a scholar: for such as refuse to hear the Lord speaking, are worthy to be sent to learn of brute beasts and senseless creatures. Notwithstanding, because this proud Prophet scorned so base a teacher, and disdained to learn wisdom in y^e Asses school, to y^e end he should not be exalted out of measure, nor insult with contempt over his beast, the Angel of God appeareth unto him, represseth his folly, and giveth light and sight to his blind eyes. This showeth that his eyes were first of all closed and shut up, whereby he was withholden from discerning the Angel. And this restraint was rather miraculous then natural. For if it had been natural, it would have failed in the discerning of other objects, as well as of this one. But his eyes being opened, then he began to behold the Angel, to cast himself down before him, to confess his own wickedness and ignorance, & to submit himself wholly to his pleasure, after that the Angel had reproved his cruelty, and testified the Asses innocence; who, if she had not been warier and wiser then her master, had procured the speedy death and destruction of the Sorcerer. Lastly, *Balaam* having acknowledged his sin and confessed his ignorance, the Angel giveth him leave to go his journey: so he goeth merrily with the messengers, hoping that as he had obtained liberty to resort & repair to the *Moabites*, (which before was denied unto him) so he should in time likewise draw the Lord to give his consent that he might curse the people. But here the question may be asked, who, or what this Angel of God was, that had this conference & communication with *Balaam*? whether it were one of the created Angels, or not? Some suppose it was *Michael the Archangel* that was appointed ruler over that people. Some, that it was another of the elect Angels and invisible spirits. Others affirm, that it was Christ Jesus the Angel of the covenant, the Prince of the Angels of God, and the head both of men & Angels. And this I rather assent & subscribe unto, for these causes and considerations. First, because so often as *Moses* doth make mention of the Angel of God, for the most part, or always he understandeth Christ the leader and conductor of his people in the wilderness; and therefore the Apostle saith, *They tempted Christ in the wilderness, and were destroyed of serpents*. Whosoever shall diligently read the books of *Moses*, & carefully observe his manner of speaking, shall easily find, that when he speaketh of the Angel of God, and the Angel of the Lord, he meaneth Christ Jesus, & calleth him sometimes the Lord, as *Gen. 16, 7, 13, & 22, 20, 12, 16, & 31, 11, 13. Exod 4, 19*. So in this place, he calls him sometimes

the Angel, sometimes the Angel of the Lord, sometimes the Lord, understanding by them all, one & the same Christ. Secondly, it is said, verse 31. *that Balaam fell down and worshipped him*, which no one of the elect Angels and blessed spirits (albeit excellent and glorious creatures) would ever have accepted, but all of them would with one consent have refused and rejected the same. For when *John*, ravished with the glory of the Angel, fell at his feet to worship him, he forbade him, and shown the reason thereof, *Revel. 19, 10. & 22.8. See thou do it not, I am thy fellow-servant, and one of thy brethren the Prophets, & of them which keep the words of the prophecy of this book worship thou God.* Now the Angel of God in this place doth not forbid divine worship to be exhibited unto him: but if he had been a creature, and had usurped the honor of God, he should be an angel of the devil not of God, Neither let any say, *that he bowed himself upon his face, adoring God, when he saw his Angel ready to take vengeance of him*, which doth not appear by any circumstance of the Text, but rather that he understood this Angel to be the same Lord y^t had before appeared and spoken unto him. This Angel of the Lord talketh with him as God himself, *Ver. 32. saying, I came out to withstand thee, because thy way is not straight before me:* he doth not say, his way was perverted before the Lord, as *Peter* speaketh to *Simon the Sorcerer*, *Acts 8, 21.* Lastly, *Balaam* speaketh to him, as to that God which had before appeared unto him, restraining him from cursing the people, and the Angel repeateth the same words, verse 35. which the Lord himself had uttered before, verse 20. For the Lord *Jehovah* had said unto him, *Forasmuch as the men are come to call thee, Rise up, and go with them; but only what thing I say unto thee, that shalt thou do:* so here the Angel is brought in, speaking in the same manner, *Go with the men, but what I say unto thee, that only shalt thou speak.* He saith not, what the Lord saith unto thee, but what I say unto thee. Now then, if it were the Lord that said before unto him, *What thing I say unto thee, that only shalt thou do:* then the same words being also pronounced by this Angel, making himself equal with the Lord, must needs be accounted to be uttered by God himself. Neither let any think it unfit or unlikely, that Christ should appear to a Sorcerer, for we heard before, how the Lord oftentimes appeared unto him; and we see, that when *Agar* was fled from *Abraham's* house, the Lord spake unto her from heaven. Thus much touching the order of the History, the interpretation of the words, and the clearing of the Objections that arise out of the same. Now, let us come to the doctrines, which the Spirit of God offereth to our considerations, to be marked and remembered of us.

Verse 22. But the wrath of the Lord was kindled because he went, and the Angel of the Lord stood in the way to be against him.

Here we have to weigh and ponder in our hearts, in these words, the care of the Lord watching over the godly. The *Israelites*, after the fresh discomfiture of their enemies, do think themselves out of all danger, and imagine not, either *Balak* to be consulting, and the *Midianites* to be assisting, or *Balaam* to be practicing, and all of them joining and confederating against them, they know not that a pit is digged, and a snare to entrap them. But behold, how the Angel withstandeth, reproveth, and forbiddeth him again to attempt anything against his people. We learn hereby, that God delivereth those that are his, from dangers unknown to them, and when they have no power to deliver themselves. This the Prophet *David* testifieth, *Thou didst draw me out of the womb, thou gavest me hope, even at my*

mothers breasts, I was cast upon thee, even from the womb, thou art my God from my mothers belly. He provided for his Church, by selling & sending *Joseph* into the land of *Egypt*, when they knew nothing of the famine that was to come, whereby he saved much people alive, neither were they any way able to save themselves.

Herod the King invented great mischief against the *Messiah*, whereby also *Joseph* and *Mary* were in danger, he disclosed the secret counsel of his heart to none, but pretended worship toward him: yet we see how God preserved them all from the imminent dangers, which Christ through his tender age, and his parents thorough ignorance of his bloody purpose could not prevent, by sending them out of the reach of *Herod*, and commanding them to fly into *Egypt*. The like we see in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, *Chap.* 12. where we read of another *Herod*, that slew *James* with the sword, and put *Peter* in prison, intending the next day to bring him forth to execution: no doubt he kept his intent secret to himself, yet by the earnest Prayers of the Church he was delivered from the imminent peril, and the Church comforted. In the dangerous voyage and shipwreck mentioned in the same book, wherein *Paul* was, who had deserved well of all the Passengers, had comforted them in their distresses, and had assured them of safety: yea, they were all saved for his sake: yet the unmerciful & unthankful Soldiers consulted to kill him, while he suspected nothing, but the Lord delivered him out of their hands, and moved the heart of the Centurion to save him. Whereby we see, that the afflictions of the righteous are many some known to them, and some unknown, but the Lord in mercy is mindful of them, and bringeth them out of them all, as he did the *Israelites* in this place, from the cursing and conjuring of this Sorcerer.

The Reasons serving to confirm this doctrine are many. First, consider for this purpose, the titles of God whereby he is called, for our comfort. God is named a Father. Will a father save his son only from the perils that he seeth before his eyes, or will he suffer him to run into unknown dangers of fire or water, which the child could not understand, or understanding, could not prevent, but the father in his wisdom and providence knoweth? *If we then that are evil know how to help our children, how much more shall our heavenly Father, that knoweth all things, give good things unto his children?* God is called a shepherd; will the Shepherd see the silly sheep run ignorantly into places of danger, and not with his staff bring them back again? So the Lord watcheth over us, *He will make us rest in green pasture, and lead us by the still waters, so that his mercy and kindness shall follow us all the days of our life.*

[Reason 2] Again, we are guarded by the Angels, so that there are more with us, then are against us. They are sent out to be ministering spirits, they incamp themselves about the Church for their protection. Wherefore, albeit we be simple & ignorant, & know not oftentimes the plots & policies of our enemies, yet seeing we have such mighty helpers, & such safekeepers, we must know that we shall not fail to be delivered. This the Prophet teacheth, *Psal.* 3•7. & 91.11.12.

Thirdly, God would stir us up to be [Reason 3] thankful, and teach us wholly to depend upon him in all our dangers. Now what is able more effectually to work this in our hearts, and to open our mouths to the praise of our God, then to have a blessed experience of the comfortable presence of God for our deliverance, when we neither know our own miseries,

nor find any means in our selves, •o rid our selves? Therefore the Prophet promiseth, being delivered from the mouth of the Lyon, *to declare the Name of God unto his brethren, and to praise him in the midst of the congregation.* Again, *what may teach us better to trust in him, and to wait upon him for our salvation, then to consider his knowledge of our estate in the ignorance of our own dangers?* Thus did David behave himself, thus he did dwell in the secret of the most High, and thus did he abide in the shadow of the Almighty, and being assured of his protection, he resteth in him. *I will say unto the Lord. O mine hope, and my fortress, he is my God in him will I trust, he will deliver me from the hunter, and from the noisome pestilence.*

The uses follow. First, this doctrine should [Use 1] direct us, and instruct us, to whom to go when we lie under the cross. For if God fore-see the dangers which we over-see, and keepeth us from those perils that we know not, whither can we go for help, but unto him? Shall we go to Saints or Angels? Doubtless thou art our Father: though *Abraham* be ignorant of us, and *Israel* know us not, *Yet thou O Lord art our •ather and our Redeemer, thy Name is forever.* Shall we trust in chariots or in horses? *An horse is a vain thing to save a man, and shall not deliver any by his great strength: hope in the Lord, be strong, a•d he shall comfort thine heart & trust in the Lord.* We cannot honor him more then when we depend upon him, and rest upon his mercy. This doth *Ezra* notably declare at the retu•ne of the Jews from captivity, saying, *I was ashamed to require of the King an army, and horsemen to help us against the enemy, because we had ••oken to the King, saying. The hard of God is upon all them that seek him in goodness, but his power & h•• wrath is against all them that forsake him.* e thought it fi••er & far better, to commit himself to the protection of God, then by craving these ordinary means, to give any occasion, either to the weak brethren, to doubt of God's power, or to obstinate enemies to blaspheme God, and to say, What? is not the God whom ye serve able to defend you? he hath brought them out maliciously to slay them, & was not able to bring them again into their land, without our strength & help! Wherefore, to stop the mouths of the Gentiles, to avoid all offenses, & to strengthen those y^t were weak in faith, (albeit it were not in it self unlawful to ask aide, and to crave help of the higher power, but only in respect of circumstances) he proclaimeth a Fast, he humbleth himself before God, and looketh for all help to come from him.

Secondly, let us not stand in fear of them, but fear him before whom all things are naked and open, who discloseth the hidden things of the heart, who hath said, *There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed: neither hid, that shall not be known. Hell and destruction are before him, how much more the hearts of the sons of men?* Indeed the heart of man is an hidden thing, and an unsearchable thing: howbeit, God not only searcheth the heart and trieth the reins, but understandeth the deepest things of the earth, he knoweth the state of the dead and damned souls that are in hell, which things of all other are most hidden from the eyes of man. Albeit therefore the ungodly conspire against the Church never so closely, and albeit they conspire never so deeply to hide their counsels from God's all-seeing Spirit, yet he shall find them out in their sins, and bring them unto judgment; he shall bring to light their privy devices, and scatter them in their own imaginations in his good time. This serveth to put life and courage into us, to lift up our hands which hang down, and strengthen our weak knees. Let us not fear them that fear not God; but fear God, and comfort our selves in him.

[Use 3] Thirdly, seeing God breaketh the snare of the Fowler that is hidden, and setteth his servants at liberty, that want the knowledge of the danger, and means of escaping: let us seek betimes to be parts of his family, to be citizens of his Kingdom, to be members of his body, and to be children of the true Church, that we may be under the protection of this mighty God, whose presence is every-where, whose Throne is the heaven, whose footstool is the earth, whose Dominion is infinite. If a man abounded in wealth, lived in honor, bathed himself in pleasures, yet if he be not in the number of the faithful, he cannot take any sound comfort in all these, For all outward blessings in an unsanctified man are unsavory; *To them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure, but even their minds and consciences are defiled.* To the pure are all things pure, but the unfaithful defile all things that they touch and handle. Their sweet savors and pleasant smells are stench. Their good meats and strong drinks are gall and worm-wood. Their delicious fare is as poison. Their costly apparel is as a menstruous clothe. Their beds of ease are sinks of sin. Their life is a death. The best things they do are foul and filthy. So long as we continue in this estate, *and have not our hearts purified by faith, we cannot please God; (For without faith it is impossible to please him) neither can we be under the wings of his defense.* This therefore shall be our comfort, to be sheep of his fold, that he may be our Shepherd to seek us when we are lost, & to bring us home when we are gone astray, to feed us in his green Pastures, & to pull us with his right hand out of dangers, when we are falling into them. Otherwise, if we content our selves to be in the Church, and labor not to be of the Church, we can look for no defense or deliverance from him, but rather destruction of soul and body, and calamity upon calamity, to fall upon us.

Fourthly, this doctrine teacheth, that seeing [Use] God bringeth us out of unknown and desperate dangers that we think not of: how much more can he, and will he deliver us, when we knowing them, do call and cry unto him for help, that we may escape them? If he be not far from us when we do not pray unto him, but be found of them that sought him not, and answer them that asked not for him: how much more may we assure our selves, that he will preserve us from dangers, when we crave his aide and assistance? seeing his hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither is his eye dim and dark, that he cannot see and behold our miseries that are upon us.

This doctrine therefore serveth greatly to comfort and encourage us to pray unto him in all our afflictions, and to increase a double care in us, to pour out our Meditations before him. How many in their troubles and crosses into the which they are fallen, begin to sink down under the burden, and to cast off their confidence, which notwithstanding hath great recompense of reward? Surely, if we did wisely consider the watchful eye of God's providence over us, who fore-seeth our dangers before they come, and preserveth from the troubles which we through our blindness and ignorance cannot understand; we may assure our selves of the presence of his hand when we know our selves to be in trouble, and pray unto him for deliverance out of trouble. When a son hath had experience of the loving kindness of his father, in pulling him out of danger, as it were out of the fire, which he saw not to be kindled against him: can he doubt or despair of the care of his father over him, or think he will leave him, when he calleth unto him for help out of dangers that are seen and felt? Doubtless, he that hath an eye to fore-see dangers, will have an ear to hear in the time

of danger. Let this comfort us greatly, and cheare up our hearts, while we lie under the cross; let us persuade our own souls, that he which performeth the greater, will always be ready to accomplish the less: he that delivereth from the pit that was hidden, will help us to escape from that which lieth open▪ and he that discovereth a secret snare laid to entrap us, will not leave us, nor forsake us when we entreat for succor in the midst of our greatest afflictions that we find and feel to be upon us.

Lastly, we are admonished by this favor [Use 5] of God towards us, to give him the praise and glory of his own works. True it is, when we have used all holy means for our delivery, yet the praise is due to the Lord. How much more therefore ought we to render all thanksgiving to God, when he hath done it without our means? and confess that he hath done great things for us?

Thus did the people when they returned out of Babylon, as the Prophet declareth, *Psal. 126. When the Lord brought again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream: then was our mouth filled with laughter, & our tongue with joy; then said they among the heathen. The Lord hath done great things for them: the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoyce.* He watcheth for us, when we rest: he waketh for us when we sleep: he heareth, when we are deaf: he riseth up for us, when we lie down: he is a buckler about us, when we are assaulted: he is the God of knowledge, when we are ignorant. And if ever there were people under the heaven that hath experience of God's watchfulness in this kind, it is this Nation of great Britain. O unthankfulness, if we do not acknowledge it! O wretchedness, if we do not ever remember it! O wickedness, if we do not teach it to our posterities! For hath not God delivered us from the most cursed and execrable plot of desperate enemies that ever was contrived, against the King, the Queen, the Prince, and the rest of their progeny? against the Lord's, the Commons, the whole Church & kingdom, determining suddenly to have blown up the whole house of Parliament with gun-powder. Now as this was an invention bloody, an intention barbarous and inhumane, so by what means were we delivered? was it by our fasting and prayer? was it by humbling our selves before our God, and crying strongly in the ears of the Lord of hosts? was it by our tears and weeping for our sins; saying, spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine inheritance into reproach, that the Priests and Jesuits should rule over them? Nay, we used none of all these, we suspected no danger, we feared no enemies, we dreamed of no devilish devices against the land: so that to detect and disclose the fore-named cursed conspiracy was the Lord's doing only, and it is marvelous in our eyes. When an invasion in the year 88. was intended by the supposed invincible *Armado*, glorying in their strength, munition, ships, preparations, & confederates, it was indeed the Lord's mercy toward us, to cross and curse their attempt, and to raise the winds and seas against them; howbeit this was not without using of means, as rigging of ships, arming of men, mustering of soldiers, yea it was not without sanctifying of fasts, calling solemn assemblies, and crying unto the Lord. If then we did sing songs of thanksgiving for that deliverance, how should our hearts be kindled and inflamed with joyfulness, and with what praises should we express our thankfulness, but even vow unto the Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to offer them up a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto him? For, as many have been the practices of the malicious and bloody Papists, yet this surmounteth them all: so many have been the

deliverances of our Princes, of our Rulers, of our Magistrates, of our Ministers, of our people; but this surmounteth and surpasseth them all. *Let us therefore rejoice unto the Lord, let us sing aloud to the rock of our salvation: let us come before his face with praise, let us sing loud unto him with Psalms: for the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. He sitteth in heaven, and laugheth to scorn the devices of the wicked. He ruleth in earth, and maketh all his enemies his footstool.*

Verse 28. [Then the Lord opened the mouth of the Ass.] When Balaam had smitten his Ass three times y^t had saved his life, it pleased God to work a wonder, to alter the course of nature, to give speech to the Ass, & to make her able to reprove her master. God indeed could otherwise have set his sin in order before him, but a dumb beast is teacher fit enough for the falls Prophet. We see hereby, that God so often as it pleaseth him, worketh above nature & ordinary means. Hereunto come all the miracles w^c God hath shown from the beginning of the world. He gave unto Abraham & Sarah a son in their old age, *who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were.* He stayed the course of the Sun, divided y^e red sea, fed his people with Manna, stopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, opened the earth to swallow his enemies, brought water out of the hard rock. He sent signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, unto this day, & in Israel, and among all men, & hath made him a name, as appeareth this day. *He brought his people out of the hand of Pharaoh with signs & with wonders, & with a strong hand, with a stretched out arm, and with a great terror.* He gave power to a virgin to conceive & bear a son, y^t he might save his people from their sins.

The reasons remain to be considered and [Reason 1] handled, to confirm us farther. First, mark the nature of God, he is great in counsel, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, mighty in his works, and in his enterprises. Who made the heaven? who framed the earth? and laid the foundation thereof upon the depth? who brought light out of darkness? Is it not the Lord that doth whatsoever he will, in heaven, in earth, in the depth, and in all the world? This the Prophet Jeremiah teacheth, chap. 32. *Ah Lord God, behold thou hast made the heaven, and the earth by thy great power, & by thy stretched out arm, and there is nothing hard unto thee he maketh the barren fruitful, he brought all things out of nothing, who only doth great wonders, for his mercy endureth forever; who by his wisdom made the heavens, and hath stretched out the earth upon the waters, for his mercy endureth forever.*

Again, thereby he maketh his name known, [Reason. 2] and his power to be acknowledged in the world. This is declared by Nehemiah in the prayer of the Levites, chap. 9. *Thou hast considered the afflictioⁿ of our fathers in Egypt, & heard their cry by the red Sea: and shown tokens and* *<1 page duplicate>* *<1 page duplicate>* *<1 page duplicate>* *<1 page duplicate>* *<1 page duplicate>* *wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of the land: for thou knowest that they dealt proudly against them, therefore thou madest thee a Name, as appeareth this day.* Wherefore, to the end the power and presence of God may be known both to the Church and the enemies of the Church, he breaketh and interrupteth the natural order and course of things. Hereupon it is, that Joshua calleth the children of Israel, and telleth them, that by the miracle of dividing the waters of Jordan, *they should know that the living GOD was among them, and would cast out the Canaanites before them.*

[Use 1] The use of this doctrine may be made in this manner. First, it serveth fitly to condemn all *Atheists* and earth-worms, that advance nature to throw down the power of God. Indeed if GOD only wrought by ordinary means, and according to the strength of second causes, some pretence might be alleged, and some color of reason produced to doubt of the divine power. But seeing GOD worketh not only by nature and by means, but sometimes above nature, and without all means, and sometimes against all means; the evidence of this truth is cleared, the power of GOD is manifested, and the mouths of all Infidels, and of iniquity it self is stopped. Our faith must go beyond reason, if we will profess our selves scholars in the school of Christ. In the schools of the Philosophers, reason goeth before assent; but in the school of GOD, first we have use of faith, and after followeth discourse of reason. Let us therefore learn to magnify the Scriptures, and by the authority of them tread and trample upon all *Atheism* and *Prophaneness*. As many miracles as we find expressed and wrought by the finger of God, so many testimonies and evidences we have against these patrons of Nature, who being wholly carnal & corrupt, know nothing that is spiritual. These deny the resurrection of the body, and the immortality of the soul, that so they might escape the sentence of the eternal ludge, by whom they shall be judged in the last day, and shall know to their confusion that there is a GOD whose power is infinite, who will not make the wicked innocent, *but visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon children's children to the third and fourth generation, and reward everyone according to his works*. He is able to be revenged on all his enemies, who shall sooner pul their hearts out of their breasts, then God out of their minds. This Moses setteth down *Deut.*2.Behold now, for I, I am he, and there is no gods with me, I kill and give life: I wound and I make whole: neither is there any that can deliver out of mine hand: If I whet my glittering sword, and my hand take hold on judgment, I will execute vengeance on mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me, I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall eat flesh, for the blood of the slain, and of the captives, when I begin to take vengeance of the enemy*. This is God's arrow against all *Atheists*: this is a fearful thunder-bolt thrown down upon their heads, which shall crush them in pieces, & testify their destruction, which shall come upon them when there is none to help. Let such therefore betimes acknowledge a God of Nature, that he may be to them a GOD of grace: let them confess him to work when he will, by extraordinary means, that he may direct them in the ordinary paths that lead to salvation and eternal life: let them reverence him as the ruler of the world, that he may rule in their hearts by his Word and Spirit, and Sacraments, whereby he applieth to us his heavenly gifts.

Secondly, let us learn by this miraculous [Use 2] manner of working, to trust in him when all means fail us: and tie not him to the ordinary course of second causes, that is able to make the Sun and Moon to stand still, as in the pursuit of *Joshua*: and to bring the Sun back again many degrees in the Diall of *Ahaz*, as in the comforting of *Hezekiah*: and to turn the Sun into darkness, as we see in the time of the passion of Christ. He is able to do whatsoever he will, and more then he will do. It is an easy matter for every man to say he trusteth in God, and boast of his faith, when no means fail him, when he hath abundance and store of all things, when he is fed to the full with his hid Treasure, that they leave the rest of their substance for their children: when God compasseth them about with his mercies, *That they wash their*

paths in Butter; and have the Rocks to pour them out Rivers of Oil, as Job speaketh, it is quickly said and spoken, that we will rely upon God, and acknowledge his providence. But if GOD blow upon our means, they shall do us no good: he can take us from them, as he dealt with the unfaithful rich man: or he can take them from us, as he dealt with his faithful servant Job▪ We must therefore depend upon him in time of war, as well as of peace: in want, as well as in time of wealth: in sickness, as in health: when he shall make the heaven as iron, and the earth as brass; when he shall take away the staff of bread: when he shall cause thee to walk through the valley of the shadow of death, thou must then call on him for thy daily bread, and say with Job: Loe, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. Commit thy ways and works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be directed. Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you. Such we are indeed, as we are in adversity. Such is our faith, as it is found in the day of temptation. Wherefore, let us lift up our eyes to him that sitteth in the heavens, and swayeth all things by his providence, and say with the Prophet, Psal. 28. The Lord is my strength, and my shield, mine heart trusted in him, and I was helped; therefore mine heart shall rejoice, and with my Song will I praise him. The Salvation of the righteous men shall be of the Lord, he shall be their strength in the time of trouble. For the Lord shall help them and deliver them, he shall deliver them from the wicked, and shall save them, because they trust in him.

Thirdly, let us not doubt of the promises, [Use 3] or providence of G G D, who is able to make good the words of his own mouth, how incredible or impossible soever they seem in our eyes. Therefore, the faith of *Abraham* the Father of the faithful is commended by the Apostle, that above hope he believed under hope, that he should be the Father of many Nations, and he not weak in faith, considered not his own body which was now dead, neither the deadness of *Sarah's* womb, neither did he doubt of God thorough unbelief; but was strengthened in the Faith, and gave glory to God, being fully assured, that he which had promised was able to do it. This is a great comfort, if at any time we see the miseries and ruins of the Church, if we behold the desolation & havoc that is made of it, that God is able to restore the flourishing estate thereof again. God can work above means without; so that albeit we can see with an eye of flesh no way to work the safety of the Church, let us not despair or cast away our confidence and hope, which hath great recompense of reward. We read how God saved *Israel*, when there appeared no means of deliverance in the eyes of men, the rocks and mountains hemmed them in on both sides, the red Sea was before them, the host of the *Egyptians* marched behind them, no way was left them to escape the dangers in man's judgment. But as the Church in this world, is ever subject to affliction, and to lie under the cross; so God doth not incontinently deliver it out of danger, but many times continueth their troubles, and augmenteth their calamities, to exercise their faith, to try their patience, and to prove their obedience; notwithstanding, in the end, God maketh an happy issue, and showeth that the gates of hell shall never prevail against the Church. Therefore, when the *Israelites* began to murmur, and not so much against *Moses*, as against God, and looked more to the danger of death before them, then to the power of GOD above them, and considered more what they did want, then what they should believe; *Moses* said unto them, *Fear ye not, stand still, and behold the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to thee this day; for the Egyptians, whom ye have seen this day, ye shall never see them again: the Lord shall fight for you, therefore hold you your peace.*

When there was a great persecution raised against the Church at *Jerusalem*, so that the sheep of Christ were scattered abroad, and nothing but threatenings and slaughter breathed out against the Disciples of the Lord, *Authority being given by the High Priest to imprison all such as called on his Name*: rather than the Church should be rooted out, the Lord Jesus appeared in the Heavens to *Paul*, as he was in the way, being now come near to *Damascus*, called him to the knowledge of the truth, and appointed him to be a teacher of the Gospel that before he destroyed, so that we may renew the ancient Proverb, *Is Saul also among the Prophets?* So when we see the dangerous times, and perilous seasons of the Church, let us not hang down our heads, but rather lift up our hearts, and cry unto God, saying; Help Lord in the time of need, forsake not thine inheritance, which thou hast purchased, nor the Vine-yard which thy right hand hath planted. And let us assure our selves, that when the cause thereof seemeth most desperate, and help appeareth to us to be farthest off, then is his mercy greatest, and his presence nearest; then is his power made perfect through our weakness. This is that which the Prophet *Zacharias* witnesseth, *chap. 8.* speaking of the return of the people from captivity unto *Jerusalem*, and of the loving kindness of GOD to be extended toward them. For albeit the residue that were left, were reproached, the City ruined, the gates burned, and the wall broken down, yet he prophesieth. *That old Men, and old Women shall dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and the streets of the City shall be full of Boys and Girls, playing in the streets thereof. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Though it seem impossible in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it therefore be impossible in my sight, saith the Lord of hosts?* [Use 4]

Lastly, as this Doctrine teacheth us to believe the promises of God, so it teacheth us not to doubt or despair of the saluatiō & conversion of our brethren; for God is able to call and convert them to the saving knowledge of the Gospel. This the Apostle urgeth, entreating of the calling of the Jews, to embrace the faith of the Gentiles, *And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.* Likewise when the Disciples saw and heard the difficulty of entering into heaven for those that trust in their riches, that they have need of a singular gift of God, to escape out of the snares & subtleties of Satan; Christ Jesus beheld them and said unto them, *With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.* He calleth at all hours of the day, *at the dawning of the day, at the third hour, at the sixth, at the ninth, and at the eleventh hour.* For as he is bound to no person, so he is bound to no time: he calleth whom he will, he teacheth and toucheth the heart when he will. This we see in the example of the Apostle *Paul* (which we spake of before,) he was at the first a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an oppressor, yet he was received of God to mercy, to the encouragement of them which shall in time to come believe in him unto eternal life. So was *Mary Magdalene* a grievous sinner, an unclean liver, out of whom he had cast seven devils, yet *many sins were forgiven her, inasmuch as she loved much; & was the first to whom the Lord appeared after his resurrection.* Wherefore, albeit we see men run on in their wickedness, and shut their ears against the wholesome admonitions of the word of God, albeit their whole life be a continual practice of sin, and that they drink in iniquity, as the fish doth the water, yet we must judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will lighten things that are hid in darkness, and make the counsels of the hearts manifest, and then shall every man have praise of God.

God is not tied to ordinary causes, but as he fed the people with Quails in the wilderness, so he can inwardly instruct the conscience, he can make the least means powerful and effectual to salvation: so that as many which are first shall be last, so sometimes the last shall be first. He called *John the Baptist*, as it were in the dawning of the day, *whom he sanctified from his mothers womb*. He called *Timothy* and *Titus*, & some others as it were at the third hour of the day, *Who were brought up in the knowledge of the Scriptures of children, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through the faith which is in Christ Jesus; and honored the Lord with the first fruits of their life*, He called *Paul* to be an Apostle, *Mary Magdalene* to be a believer, as it were at the sixth hour, who after their conversion redeemed the time; and though they were inferior to other in respect of time, yet they were equal unto them, or before them in regard of zeal, & other graces of God's Spirit. He called the thief upon the cross, as it were at the eleventh hour, to be partaker of his kingdom, to whom Christ said, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*. Let us not therefore enter into judgment against our brethren, let us commit them to God, *Seeing it is not for us to know the times and seasons which the Father hath put in his own power*. Let us pray for their conversion to God, that he would give them repentance to know him, and to come out of the snares of the devil, of whom they are holden captives. In the mean time, until this wonderful work of grace be wrought in thē, *Who art thou that condemnest another man's servant? he standeth or falleth to his own master, yea he shall be established, for God is able to make him stand*.

Verse 31. [*Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way with his sword drawn.*] The Lord that before opened the mouth of the asse, now openeth the eyes of *Balaam*, who is here called, the Lord, and the Angel of the Lord. Not that his eyes were shut or closed before, or that he was blind; but his senses were holden, that he saw not the Angel of God who appeared in a visible and bodily shape, otherwise he could not be seen of the Ass. And the Lord Jesus did often appear in the Old Testament in a bodily shape, to teach the Church, that when the fullness of time should come, he would take upon him the nature of man, made of a woman, & made under the Law. Thus he appeared to *Abraham*, accompanied with two of his Angels, *Genesis 18*, For we do not read that God the Father ever took upon him the shape of man, or God the Holy-Ghost: to show that the second person in Trinity only, should be incarnate, & neither the Father, nor the Holy-Ghost. The senses of this Sorcerer were so astonied, that before his eyes were opened, he discerned not the Angel standing by him with a drawn sword ready to strike him: now he perceiveth the presence of the Angel. We learn from hence, that we can have no use of the senses further then God enableth and blesseth. True it is, nothing can be more natural, and nothing seemeth more in our own power, then for the ey to see, the ear to hear, the heart to understand, the hand to handle, the foot to walk; yet all our senses, gestures, and motions of the body, are ordered at the will & pleasure of God. We cannot open our eyes to see, further then he will: and when they are open, we shall discern no more then blind men that grope in the dark, without his direction. Hereunto cometh the example of the *Sodomites*, *Gen. 19*. who pressing upon *Lot* with threatening words, and unclean thoughts, and running with rage to break open his doors, *The Angels smote them all both small and great with blindness*. They could have stricken them with sudden death, but they are reserved to a greater judgment: and this work of God

is the greater, in that their eyes are open, & they are not utterly deprived of sight, and yet they see or discern nothing at all. Thus they stand amazed, going up & down, & yet not knowing whither they went. That which was one, seemed double: the thing near at hand seemed far off: that on the right hand seemed to be on the left: that before them, seemed to be behind them. Thus they see the door, & seek to break it up, but know not where it standeth, or which way to find it. The like we see afterward, *Chap. 21.* when *Hagar* the bondwoman with her *Ishmael* were cast out of *Abraham's* house, and wandered in the wilderness of *Beer-sheba*, God opened her eyes, & then she saw a Well of water. Hereunto also come the prayers of *Elisha*, both touching his servants, and the *Aramites*. For when the King of *Aram* sent horses and chariots, and a mighty host to take the Prophet (who had discovered his secret counsels) and his servant beholding the Army, cried out, *Alas Master, how shall we do?* he answered, *Fear not for they that be with us, are moe then they that be with them: and he prayed, saying, Lord I beseech thee open his eyes, that he may see; and the Lord opened the eyes of the servant, and he looked, and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.* Again, when the *Aramites* came about him, and thought themselves sure of him, he prayed unto the Lord to *smite this people with blindness:* He did not pray unto GOD, to kill and destroy them, that they might fall into the pit which they had digged for his life: neither did he pray to GOD to take away wholly the use of their sight, and put out their eyes. They saw their way, they saw the Prophet, they saw the towns and cities as they took their journey; but they discerned not the way, they knew not the cities, they perceived not the Prophet who he was. So then, howsoever we have eyes to see, and ears to hear, & want neither wisdom nor counsel, yet we can see, hear, mark, and perceive no more then God will have us: our sight is confused, as at the building of *Babel*, their language was confounded.

[Reason 1] The Reasons are: First, because nothing can prosper or be blessed unto us without his special guidance and direction. We cannot perform and accomplish anything, except the Lord's blessing concur with the same. This the Prophet *David* teacheth, *Psal. 127. Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the keeper watcheth in vain.* Whereby we see, that all the labor and industry of men, in governing a family, or in upholding a Commonwealth, shall prove vain and unprofitable, unless God guide them, and give good success unto them.

True it is, the providence of God ruleth ouerall, and nothing is impossible to him to bring to pass, he is able to change Nature, and to alter the course of natural things. For shall anything be hard to him who worketh miracles and wonders at his own pleasure? And we must not neglect the means, but use them to his glory, and our comfort: and yet no means can do us any good any farther then they receive strength and virtue from him.

[Reason 2] Secondly, if we consider who made all things, and gave them unto man, we shall not greatly marvel that God hath the sovereignty and dominion over all that we have. For, who made the eye of man? who fashioned the ear? who created the heart? who gave to men wisdom and understanding? Is it not God who maketh all things in all men? If then he made the eye, how can we doubt but he hath power and authority to open and to shut, to lighten and to darken, to give sight, or to strike with blindness? If he planted the ear, and fashioned

the heart, it is certain he can bore the ear, and open the heart, or he can harden the heart, and make the ear heavy. For as he knoweth what is in the heart, so he hath the ordering and disposing of it at his pleasure.

[Use 1] This doctrine offereth to our considerations, very good uses. First, seeing we can neither see, nor hear, nor use the means open before us, except God open our eyes; let us pray to God to guide us in the right use of our senses, as he hath given the senses themselves. Let us use all the means that God hath put into our hands, always with prayer to God, to bless them to us, and our comfort. Especially, when we come to hear his Word, let us crave of him to open our hearts, as he did the heart of *Lydia*, that she attended unto the things which *Paul* spake: so he that hath ears to hear, shall hear. For by nature we have uncircumcised hearts and ears: and through our corruption, we are as closed vessels unfit to receive the wholesome liquor, and pure waters of the Word of God, which is oftentimes preached to the condemnation of those that hear it. Therefore the Lord speaketh by the Prophet, *Ye shall hear indeed, but ye shall not understand, ye shall plainly see, and not perceive; make the heart of this people fat, make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and he heal them, even until their cities be without Inhabitants, their houses without possessours, their fields without tillers of them.* He doth not always take away his Word, for the sins of men, but causeth it to be preached to their condemnation that will not obey it, nor express the power of it in their conversations. And surely, if we would know the cause of the ignorance & contempt of the Word, of the want of profiting and regarding of the preaching of the Gospel, which is the high ordinance of God in his heavenly wisdom, sanctified for the salvation of his Elect: we shall find this to be the chiefest: we rest and trust in our selves, we think it sufficient to bring our natural eyes, and carnal ears with us: whereas we should earnestly desire of God, the true use and comfortable fruit of them, otherwise we may see and hear to our further condemnation. This we see in the same sort practiced by the Prophet *Elisha*, when he was compassed with his enemies, he prayeth God to open the eyes of his servant, to see the help that God had sent him: he prayed likewise to God touching his enemies, first, to strike them with blindness, y^t they might run into danger, then to open their eyes to see themselves in danger. Let us also continually give him thanks so often as we find his hand to be with us, and feel him with his gifts, to bestow upon us the use of his gifts, whether natural, or spiritual; to bless our senses, to direct our judgments, to sanctify our understandings, to soften our hearts, and to circumcise our ears. Now, if we must be fain to beg of God the proper functions, and right uses of our outward senses (which we have by nature) as if we had them not, and render praise unto God for them: how much more are we to ask of God a pure and clean heart, an humble and contrite spirit, the gift of repentance, and the grace of regeneration, which we have not by nature, but are contrary to nature? For the Apostle teacheth truly, that the wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God, because it is not subject to y^e Law of God, neither indeed can be. And again, *The natural man perceiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* It is God that must reveal unto us by his Spirit *the mysteries of his kingdom, which none of the Princes of this world have known: the spirit searcheth all things, even the*

deep things of God. This we see noted unto us in the communication and conference of Christ with the two disciples that went to *Emmaus*; he drew near to them to hear their reasoning together, of the things that happened at *Jerusalem*, touching the passion of Christ, but *their eyes were holden that they could not know him.* His body indeed was not invisible, the change was not in him, but in their eyes which after a sort were dim'd & holden back, that they should not discern him for a season, & afterward their eyes were opened, that they knew him, as likewise *Mary Magdalene*, albeit she were neither blind nor deaf, yet discerned him neither by seeing, nor hearing of him. Wherefore, we have not an absolute power over our senses, it is God that giveth the eye, y^t must open it: much less have we power over our understanding, will, judgment, memory, & affections: & least of all concerning heavenly things, in which we are wholly blind, as we have already declared: so that it behooveth all of us to acknowledge all these to be in the power & disposition of God, either to diminish or restrain them, or utterly to bereave us of them, & take them away from us at his pleasure y^t is the giver, & consequently we are always to entreat him to give us grace and power, that we may carefully use them as we ought to the glory of his Name, the profit of our brethren, and the comfort of our souls and bodies.

[Use 2] Secondly, let us take heed how we abuse them to our own hurt that have received thē, & to the dishonor of God that gave them, frō whō every good giving, & every perfect gift proceedeth. If we see not but at the pleasure of God, who is able to strike us with blindness & mists, that we shall grope in darkness, & seek some to lead us by the hand; or if we have our eyes open, we shall discern & distinguish nothing, but have the outward & inward senses dazzled, until he take away the scales from our eyes that cover them. The Apostle *Peter* complaineth in his time of corrupt men, led with sensuality, *having eyes full of adultery, & that cannot cease to sin.* We must beware how we turn our sight to a contrary end, then for which God hath lent it unto us, but rather with *Job*, *We should make a covenant with our eyes, that they wander not after folly:* and pray with the Prophet *David*, *Psal. 119. Turn away mine eyes from regarding vanity, & that they be not carried away after covetous affections.* If we have ears by nature, yet hear at y^e pleasure of God, how shall we thē give over our ears, & hearing to hearken to hateful slanders, lewd surmises, evil backbitings: flying tales, false accusations, & hurtful reproaches, raised and forged to the hurt of our brethren? He is able to try and touch us with dumbnesse, as he did *Zacharias*; with lameness, as he did *Jacob*; with blindness, as he did *Elymas*; with crookedness & deformity, as the woman in the Gospel; with foolishness, as he did *Achitophel*; with want of reason & understanding, as he did *Nebucadnezzar*; to teach us to take heed to our selves and our senses, lest we abuse them to our destruction.

Lastly, seeing God can blind the eyes, and [Use 3] bind up the senses when it pleaseth him, let us go forward & walk boldly in the duties of our calling, let us not fear any enemies, seeing the Lord hath so many ways to help his chosen people, to succor them, & to save them harmless Let us commit & commend our selves to his providence, who albeit he suffer us to fall into many dangers, yet he can smite his enemies with many & sudden judgments. He can visit them oftentimes & in sundry manners. Every thing serveth to his will, & therefore, if we serve God, let us be assured he will make it serve to our benefit. They shall not stir a foot, or move any member, or lift up an hand, but at his beck and appointment.

Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the Altar to lay hold on the Prophet, but immediately it dried up, and he could not pull it in again unto him. Ananias & Sapphira his wife, were among the Apostles, and seemed to be in perfect health & far from death: yet suddenly they fell down, & were carried out. Olde Eli, whose sons walked not in the steps of their father, sate upon a seat by the way side, waiting for the success of the battle fought against the Philistines. A man would have thought he sate safely and surely at his own pleasure, and no doubt he judged no less himself of himself; but when he heard that the Ark was taken, suddenly he fell from his seat backward, and his neck was broken. When Uzziah King of Judah presumed to burn incense upon the Altar of incense, & lift up his heart, to his own destruction, while he waxed wroth against y^e Priests of the Lord, & had the incense in his hand to burn it, suddenly the leprosy arose in his forehead, & he was compelled to depart out of the Temple. We are able to do nothing of our selves, as of our selves, seeing that in him we live, & move, and have our being. Let us in all our sufferings comfort our selves herein, that the Lord holdeth the wicked in his own hand, & turneth their wisdom into foolishness. Absalom rebelled against his father, and was assisted by Achitophel. David's companion, and chief counselor: (for the counsel which he counseled in those days was like as one had asked counsel at the oracle of God) David prayed unto God to turn his counsel into foolishness, God heard his prayer, and confounded the deep wisdom of this great Politician so that he set his house in order & hanged himself. He catcheth the wise in their own craftiness, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: the Lord knoweth that the thoughts of the wise be vain: If any therefore seem to be wise in this world, let him be a fool, that he may be wise. All human wisdom in the unregenerate is oftentimes turned into extreme folly. Jezebel enemy against the Church, hated Elijah unto the death, but sending him this word by a messenger, The God's do so to me, and more also, if I make not thy life like one of theirs (whom thou hast slain) by tomorrow this time. 1 Kings 19, 2.3. hereby he had fit occasion and opportunity to fly away and to shift for himself, receiving warning, and learning wisdom by his enemy. Herod, a subtle Fox, and withal a bloody Lyon, and wise in his generation, might have sent one of his Courtiers with the wise men for his greater assurance, yet he sendeth them alone, and appointeth not one to go with them. Mat. 2, 8. Thus the Lord striketh his enemies with the spirit of giddiness, and turneth all their devices into sottishness: he circumventeth the wise in their own policies, and the counsel of the wicked is made foolish: They meet with darkness in the day time, and grope at noon day as in the night: but he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the violent man, so that the poor hath his hope, but iniquity shall stop her mouth. Job 5, 12, 13, 14, 15. Indeed they seek ways & imagine means to destroy the godly, but they cannot find them out: they are endued with wisdom, judgment, & counsel, they are very subtle and deceitful, but that which happened to the eyes of the Sodomites, falleth upon their minds, They are smitten with blindness and madness, & are smitten with astonying of heart, &c. Deut. 28, 28, 29.

[Verse 34. *Then Balaam said to the Angel of the Lord, I have sinned.*] Here is offered to our considerations, the corrupt conscience of an evil man. So soon as the Lord charged him with his sin, by and by his heart smote him, and he confessed his offense. Here was no true sanctificatiō of the conscience, which indeed did check and condemn him for his disobedience and covetousness, but did not bridle & suppress the inclination of his heart

unto evil, neither could testify that his transgression was pardoned. We learn in this example, that evil men are oftentimes compelled to confess their own sins. God wanteth not many ways and sundry means to draw from men a confession of their own iniquities. This we see in *Pharaoh*, when the hand of God was heavy upon him, and his plagues pressed sore against him, he called for *Moses* and *Aaron*, and said unto them, *I have now sinned, the Lord is righteous, but I & my people are wicked.* Exod. 9, 27. Albeit he could not believe to obtain remission, yet he confessed his sins to his condemnation. The like we see in *Saul*, who persecuted *David*, and sinned against his own conscience; yet when he saw that *David* had saved his life, when some willed and cried to kill him, he said, *Thou art more righteous than I, for thou hast rendered me good, and I have rendered thee evil: I have sinned, come again my son David; for I will do thee no more harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes, &c.* 1 Sa. 24, 18. and 26, 21. So then, howsoever the ungodly delight in sin, and regard not to provoke God to wrath, yet their own mouths are made witnesses against themselves and they publish their own shame as with the blast of a Trumpet.

The Reasons are these: First, the wrath of [Reason 1] God is gone out against them, and their own consciences summon them unto judgment, to answer for their sins, before the high Judge of heaven and earth; so that the more they seek to cover and smother them in the ashes of their own corruptions, that the flame of them break not out, the more do the sparks fly out & are scattered abroad, to the shame and confusion of their own faces. This is it which the Prophet noteth in the people of Israel, whom God of his mercy had chosen to be his Church above other Nations, *When the wrath of God came even upon them, and slew the strongest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel, then they returned to him and sought him early, then they remembered that God was their strength, and the most high God their redeemer: but they flattered him with their lips, and dissembled with him with their tongue, for their heart was not upright with him, neither were they faithful in his couenat.* Psal. 78, 31, 34, 35, 36. Where we see, that howsoever hypocrisy were in their secret souls, and deep dissimulation in their secret parts, yet a counterfeit repentance is in their mouths, & their own harts had taught their tongues to lie against God.

Secondly, they would be like the children [Reason 2] of God in their afflictions, whom they regard not to follow, in their conversations. They hate them with a deadly hatred, and cannot abide them in their life, so long as themselves live in peace and sleep in security: but when the hand of God is heavy upon them, thē they would follow their example, and would give a world that they were like unto them. *That they might die the death of the righteous,* Numb. 23, 10. yet is their confession no true confession, because it proceedeth not from a feeling of the filthiness of sin, but ariseth from a fear of punishment; and therefore it is without conversion to God, without hope of mercy, without prayer for pardon, without hatred of sin, and without purpose to amend.

The uses of this doctrine are these. First, [Use 1] this overthroweth the doctrine of the Church of Rome, which teacheth that confession is a part of true repentance, which is a turning of the heart, and a right reformation of the life. For they make three parts of repentance, cont•ition of the heatt, confession of the tongue, satisfaction of the work. But

these are not to be holden of us as essential parts of a right repentance, inasmuch as they may agree to the Reprobate and unregenerate, and are all of them found in *Judas* that betrayed his Master, Math. 27, 34. For when he saw that Christ was condemned, he sorrowed, & was stricken with grief for the treachery he had committed: again, he confessed his sin before the high Priests, in betraying innocent blood. Lastly, he made satisfaction and restitution of the money which he had received. Besides, if we mark their own doctrine, who teach that contrition is an act of a man's free will proceeding from it, not an act of the Holy-Ghost: and, that satisfaction may be performed by another, one satisfying for another, as well as for himself; we may truly and soundly conclude from their false and unsound doctrine, that the reprobate may have sorrow of heart; yea, make confession and satisfaction, and consequently, their confession is no true member of repentance. This therefore cannot be the true Religion which faileth and faultereth in the chief points and foundations thereof. The like we might say of the faith of the *Roman Church*, which a reprobate may attain. For they define it to be a gift of God, and a certain light of the mind, whereby a man giveth a sure and a certain assent to those things that are revealed in the Word of God. And therefore our English *Rhemists* write, that we may know and feel whether we have faith, but cannot know whether we be in the state of grace. So *Bellarmino* in his first book of *Justification* avoucheth, that whereas we are taught in the Creed to believe the forgiveness of sins, *The meaning of that Article is not, I believe or trust that my sins are forgiven, but I believe and confess that the gift of forgiving sins is found in the Catholic Church, which is received by Baptism, and other Sacraments.* All this is but an historical and general faith, which the devil himself hath, who believeth and trembleth (as the Apostle teacheth, and therefore also the reprobates, whose minds are so far enlightened to know the truth. This is to believe as the Church believeth, albeit they know nothing how the Church believeth. If then the reprobate may be made partakers of the faith and repentance of the Church of *Rome*, which are the two chief parts of Religion, it confuteth those Politicians (wise in their own eyes) who neither shame, nor fear to maintain that the *Romish Religion* differeth not in substance from the doctrine of the reformed Churches, and consequently that they may be united & reconciled. If they can make a fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness, a communion between light and darkness, & concord between Christ and *Belial*, then they may make an harmony and hotch-potch between these two, so contrary the one to the other. But they shall as soon bring the North and South pole together, and cause heaven & earth to join in one, as these two; the one grounded upon the infallible rock of the Scriptures only, the other built upon the traditions of their fathers.

[Use 2] Secondly, we must learn that they are further from the Kingdom of heaven that deny their sin, that hide it, that excuse and justify it; the reprobate shall rise up in judgment, and condemn this generation. It is one step toward the Kingdom of Heaven, to tremble at the judgments of God, to fear to commit sin, to sorrow and weep for it when a man hath committed it, to humble himself, and acknowledge his particular sins before men's, and to pray to God in his distresses; yet the reprobate may go thus far in his profession, and afterward fall away. This we see in *Ahab*, when *Elijah* had reproved him for his bloody oppression and Idolatry, and had denounced the wrath of God to fall upon him and his

posterity, *He rent his clothes put on sackcloth upon him, fasted, and went softly in token of mourning.* Thus he humbled himself for some sins which he had committed, yet not for all his sins, neither did he ask pardon for them. So the *Israelites* murmuring against God, & desiring flesh for their lusts in the wilderness, had their prayers granted. If then the ungodly may go thus far in Religion, then they are hereby condemned, that justify themselves in their iniquities, and cannot be brought to a free confession of them, but hide them as *Adam*, or excuse them as *Saul*, or deny them as *Achan*, or defend them as *Cain*. Therefore, if we would find pardon at the hands of God, we must confess unto him as *David* did, weep for them as *Peter* did. If we uncover them, he will cover them; if we condemn our selves, he will justify us. Therefore the Wiseman saith, *He that hideth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

Lastly, we see hereby that sin endeth [Use] not as it beginneth. Albeit the fool maketh a mock of sin, yet when the soul is tormented, and the conscience oppressed with desperation, and can find no ease, then a man ceaseth not to utter his secret filthiness, to the shaming of himself, and to the astonishment of the hearers. Let us not look for *Pharaoh*, or *Saul*, or *Judas* to come out of hell to warn us. These things are written for our learning, we have *Moses* and the Prophets, let us hearken to them. When as terrors take hold upon the soul, we cannot cover sin any longer. Howsoever therefore sin to the carnal man be sweet unto the taste, and Satan baiteth his hook with profit on the one side, and with pleasure on the other, yet afterward it shall prove more bitter then gall and worm-wood, it shall wound the conscience, as with a deadly dart, and pierce the soul through with many sorrows. For albeit it begin in sport, it shall end in horror and despair. This we see in the example of *Cain*, *My punishment is greater then I can bear.* So *Judas*, when he saw Christ condemned, felt an hell in his conscience. The money was pleasant, and the gain was sweet unto him, but it was as a two edged sword, that woundeth incurably, and as the teeth of a Lyon that biteth mortally. It seemed unreasonable to *Gehazi*, that *Naaman* the Syrian should depart with so great a benefit, by so little a consideration, 2 King. 5, 23, 27. *And therefore followeth after him for a bribe and reward, but with the reward he gained the leprosy, that did cleave unto him and to his seed.* This is the deep subtlety of Satan; before sin be committed he hideth the deformity of it from the eyes of men, he maketh as if it were no sin, or a little and venial sin, or a little punishment due unto it; or that there shall be time enough hereafter to repent of it; he be cometh a preacher of God's mercy and pardon, he telleth the sinner that God is gracious and merciful. Thus he covereth the greatness of sin, and hideth the greuousnesse of the punishment, and concealeth the wrath of God that is drawn upon us. But when he hath once prevailed and ensnared the poor soul that hath swallowed the bait, he openeth the eyes which before he had darkened, he rouzeth up the conscience which before he had seduced, he striketh the heart which before he had hardened, he vncovereth the fire of God's indignation and jealousy, which before he had smothered. Then he maketh sin appear as vile and ugly as he can, then he layeth it open in his colors, then he will make a small sin appear the greatest; then he setteth forth the justice of God due to the least sin, and all to bring the person that hath sinned to desperation. Wherefore let us fly from sin, as from the biting of a Serpent,

that we be not stung therewith to eternal death, *Knowing that the wages of sin is death*, Rom, 6, 23.

36 And when Balak heard that Balaam came, he went out to meet him unto a City of Moab, which is in the border of Arnon, even in the utmost coast.

37 Then Balak said unto Balaam, Did not I send for thee to call thee? Wherefore camest thou not unto me? Am not I able indeed to promote thee unto honor?

38 And Balaam made answer unto Balak: Loe I am come unto thee: and can I now say anything at all? The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.

39 So Balaam went with Balak, & they came unto the City of Huzoth.

40 Then Balak offered Bull•kes and Sheep, and sent thereof to Balaam, and to the Princes that were with him.

41 And on the morrow, Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people.

In these words, being the shutting up of this Chapter, is contained the last branch of *Balaam's* going to curse the people. We heard before of the wrath of God against this Wizard, who would not be stopped from his desired journey, and therefore the Lord opened the mouth of the dumb beast to reprove her master; and afterward the Angel of God, further to discover the hollowness and hypocrisy of his heart. Here we are to consider the meeting and coming together of the King, and the false Prophet, together with the entertainment he findeth at *Balaks* hands. Herein we are to observe two things: First, their talk and communication; secondly, the actions of them both. In the first part containing the speech that passed between them, we are to mark, that the King to honor him the more, so soon as he is advertised of his approach near to the borders of his kingdom, he goeth out to meet him. For no doubt he sent the Princes and messengers of the Moabites back, to go before to give some notice and bring joyful tidings of his coming to their Lord. Therefore the King hearing the message, and conceyuing (no doubt) in his mind, the utter overthrow of the Israelites, stayed not until he came within his dominion, but met him in the bounds and limites thereof, and brought him home with him to go about his business. When they are met, note in their talk first the question moved by *Balak*, then the answer of *Balaam*. In the question we see, that albeit he had basely dejected himself, and crept lowly into the favor of the false Prophet, honoring him to his own dishonor, going out, to bring him in, and after a sort casting his crown and dignity under his feet; yet on the other side he glorieth in his own power, and boasteth of his high dignity, as if he had all the riches and honor in his own

hand. *Balaam* doth not deny the favor of the king, placing him with his Princes, rewarding him with his presents honoring him with his own presence, and sending for him from far, but maketh a short answer unto him truly, albeit unwillingly, that albeit he were come at the kings desire, and brought by his deserts, yet it was not in his own power what to do: he could go no farther then the Rules and Principles of his Art would suffer him: he had called up the God of the Hebrews to forsake them, and he must of necessity speak that which God should put into his mouth. As if he should say, I cannot speak what I would, but shall be constrained to speak that only which he willeth me.

After the communication of these parties, followeth a description of their actions; when the king had brought him into the City, he spareth for no cost and charges, he feasteth him with his Princes, as if they were his Companions, and laboreth by all means possible to give him contentment in his abode. Having now refreshed himself after his journey, and having had experience of the kings good estimation of him, he is employed in the business for which he was sent for, and carried up to the high place of *Baal*, where no doubt was a solemn Temple consecrated and dedicated to that Idol, and from thence he beholdeth the whole host of Israel. Thus much of the order of the words: Now let us come to the doctrines arising out of the same.

[Verse 36. *When Balak heard that Balaam came, he went out to meet him.*] The cheef point offered to our considerations in this division is, to mark the honor done unto *Balaam* by the King. Himself goeth out to meet him, as if he had been some great Prince or Potentate, he bringeth him honourably into the City, he setteth him among his Princes, and maketh him inherit the seat of glory: he killeth bullocks and sheep to prepare a royal feast for him. From this example we learn, that Idolaters and Infidels were wont greatly to honor their Priests and Prophets. Howsoever they were destitute of the, knowledge of the true God, and served the creature instead of the Creator, which is blessed forever, Amen: yet they accounted it a special duty to honor the Priests of their Groues and Altars, and persuaded themselves they should never receive any blessing at the hands of their gods, unless they honored those that were esteemed as the servants of their gods, and greatly in their favor. This is taught us in many places of the word of God. Hereunto cometh that which *Moses* witnesseth, touching the Egyptians, during the dearth and famine that was in Egypt, when the king had received all the money, bought all the cattle, and purchased all the land of the people to supply their necessity, and to save their lives, Genes. 47, 22. *yet he would not buy their Priests lands, but sustained them for their office sake. He removed the people unto the Cities from one side of Egypt, even to the other: only the land of the Priests bought he not, for the Priests had an ordinary of Pharaoh, & they did eat the ordinary which Pharaoh gave them, wherefore they sold not their ground.* This also further appeareth in the book of *Exodus*, chapt. 7, 11, 22. and is confirmed in the Prophecies of *Daniel*: where we see, when *Moses* and *Aaron* wrought miracles, *Pharaoh* sent for his sorcerers that came into y^e kings presence. So when *Nebucadnezar* had dreamed a dream, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep disquieted. Dan. 2, 2. and 4, 3, 4. & 5, 7. be commanded to call the enchanters, the Astrologians, the soothsayers, and the Chaldeans who were about him, and near unto him, and in credit with him. The like we read in *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 6, 1, 2. when the Ark of the Lord was in the country of the Philistines, they called

their Priests, and consulted with their soothsayers what they should do with it; and without their counsel and advice, without their direction and commandment, the Princes would do nothing. So when *Ahab* purposed to go to battle against *Ramoth Gilead*, he assembled the Prophets of his idol groves, whom he used familiarly, who were in credit and authority with him; insomuch, that one dareth smite *Micaiah* in the Kings presence, 1 Kin. 22.4, 6, 24.

The Reasons follow in order: First, naturally [Reason] all men are extremely given to superstition, and even dote in corrupting the worship of God, being destitute of the true knowledge of the true God, and the right manner of his service, who will be worshipped according to his own will and word, not after the inventions and devices of the wisest men. Christ Jesus teacheth in the Gospel, John 15, 19. that the world will always magnify and make much of his own, *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own*. And likewise the same Apostle saith elsewhere, *They are of this world, therefore speak they of this world, and this world heareth them*. If then men naturally turn the glory of the incorruptible God, into the similitude of corruptible creatures, and so change the truth of God into a lie, no marvel if they be greatly beloved and befriended, w^c further their idolatry, and help forward that worship of God which they have framed and fashioned to themselves.

Secondly, the false Prophets have always [Reason] been honored as fathers in the world, and therefore it cannot seem unto us strange, that they be highly esteemed. For as the true teachers are indeed spiritual Fathers, and spiritual Nurses of the Church as the Apostle declareth, 1 Cor. 4, 15. *Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many Fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel*. So likewise idolaters did respect and reverence their Teachers as their fathers, giving them all honor, and accounting them worthy of all estimation. This we see in Judge. 17, 10, 11. & 18, 19. in the corrupt and ruinous times of the church, *When there was no King in Israel*, and the Levites (confined unto their Cities by the ordinance of God) wandered now up and down from place to place, for want of maintenance and employment, & glad as journey men to be hired for meat and drink, for ten shekels of silver, and a suit of apparel yearly. For *Michah* entertained one of them, and said to him, *Dwell with me, & be unto me a Father and a Priest: now I know that the Lord will be good unto me, seeing I have a Levite to my Priest*. So in the chapter following, when the Danites were come unto the house of *Michah*, they allured the young man the Levite to go with them, saying, *Come with us to be our Father and Priest*.

The uses are in the last place to be considered [Use 1] of us. First, we learn from hence, that all men have some light and sight of religion, & of God, by nature, though not so much as may bring them to salvation, yet so much as may suffice, and so far as serveth to make them without excuse. For why did they honor, reverence, and obey their idolatrous Priests, but because they were conversant about their holy things, and had their calling to further and finish the worship of their gods? Acts 14, 13. This therefore serveth to stop the mouths of all Atheists, that say in their hearts, defend with their tongues, and maintain with all their wits, that there is no God; speaking of him contemptuously, using reprochful words against him, savoring of profaneness and contempt. These are as mad dogs which fly in their masters face, that keepeth them, and feedeth them: so do they blaspheme the most High that made

them, that ministereth all things unto them, in whom they live, and breath, and to whom they shall one day give an account, when all flesh shall appear before h^m. Would not he be judged among men a most ungodly and ungracious child, y^t should slander, and curse, reprove and reproach his •aren s with contumelious words? And if he should deny his father that he knoweth him, •r only doubt of it, would not such an one be thought unworthy to live upon the earth? How much more are they to be abhorred and •etested that blaspheme the name of GOD, which is blessed and holy throughout all generations? Which say unto God, *Depart from us for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: Who is the Almighty that we should serve him? & what profit shall we have if we should pray unto him?* Job. 21.2• 25.

[Use 2] Secondly, see hereby how forward & zealous men are in their will-worship; and let us take notice of our own dullness & backwardness in the true worship of the eternal God, in comparison of these poor blind Idolaters. We see this evidently in the Israelites, when they determined in the absence of *Moses* to set up the golden Calf, Exo. 32, 3, 6. they pulled off their earrings, they bestowd their gold, they spared no cost, to the end they might have a service of God after their own fancy: and when it was made, they rose early in the morning to worship it, and expressed their delight in it by •eaping and dancing before it. We see it also in the old Idolaters, they were so zealous and superstitious, that they were content to part with things most dear and precious: they offered their sons and daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they offered to the idols of Canaan. This also appeareth by our ne• idolaters, by their pilgrimages, vows, garnishing, g•lding, and clothing of images. Let us therefore be zealous in the true worship of God, and learn of these blind men to be ashamed of our coldness and carelessness, of our backwardnesse & unwillingness in the best things. When the mother of *Machah* would make a molten image, Judge 1•, 3• she dedicated eleven hundred she•else unto the Lord, to make thereof a graven image or idol. Whereby we see, in this voluntary worship and will-service (being agreeable unto the corrupt n•ture of man) how forward and fervent, how ready & willing they were to follow and further their idolatry. But how many be there that live in the bosom of the Church, and profess the true religion, prospering under the shadow of it, and tasting how bountiful the Lord is, y^t to maintain the truth, repine and grieve to give one half penny? Albeit they waste their years in vanity, and think nothing too much to bestow on pride, drunkenness, riotousnes, whoredom, and all excess; to the dishonoring of God, to the impairing of their estates, and to the destruction of their souls and bodies: yet when they should bestow and contribute anything for the maintaining of a learned ministry to instruct them & their families in the word, which is able to save their souls, how do they pinch and repine at it, as if they were like to be undone? Or if a collection or contribution be to be made for the poor, to relieve them in their necessities, one penny given this way doth more grieve them, & make them grudge at it, then a pound co•sumed in bad• and baser uses. What a shame is this, for those whom the Lord hath blessed with abundance, that they should spend all on their backs and bellies, on hawks or houndes or whores, and nothing at all to the glory of God, to the comfort of their souls, and unto the help of their brethren: nothing on the Church of God, and upon their brethren in Christ, dearly bought with y^e blood of Christ, as of a Lamb unspotted and undefiled. To this purpose

Solomon speaketh also, Prover. verse 23. *Bu• the truth but sell it not; likewise wisdom, instruction, and understanding.* This our Savior Christ teacheth also, Mat. 13, 44, 45, 46.

Lastly, seeing the heathen were wont to [Use 3] esteem highly, and provide liberally for their prophets and soothsayers, how much more ought the faithful and painful Ministers of God that labor in the word and doctrine to be maintained? For seeing they plant in the Lord's vineyard, 1 Cor, 9, 7, 13, 14. why should they not eat the fruit, and gather the profits thereof? Seeing they go a warfare, and fight the battles of God, why should they not take their press-money, & receive their pay? Seeing they feed the flock of God committed unto them, whereof the holy Ghost hath made them overseers, why should they not eat of y^e milk thereof? Seeing they be nurses to nurse the sons and daughters of God, with the two breasts of the Olde and New Testament, why should they not receive their wages? If they sow spiritual things, why should they not reap carnal things? Seeing they minister about holy things, why should they not eat of the things of the Temple? And seeing they wait at the Altar, why should they not be partakers with the Altar? If they be the Lord's Laborers, why should they no• have the reward and recompense of their work? For the Lord himself hath decreed and ordained, that they which do preach the Gospel, should likewise live of the Gospel. All the Heathen people throughout the world, are bountiful, and open their hands wide to their Priests and Prophets. *Jezebel* so provided for the Priests of *Baal*, and the other Prophets of the Groues, that she kept four hundred at her own Table, 1 Kings 18, 19. The Papists have thought nothing too much, nothing too dear to be bestowed upon their Priests and Jesuits, and upon their foolish superstition. And as they do liberally maintain, so they do greatly honor and highly advance them, they account them as the Fathers and Pillars of the Church. This should stir us up, having a founder religion, and making a better profession, to have the Teachers thereof in singular love, for their works sake that is in their hands, 1 Thess. 5, 12, 13, and to account their feet beautiful, that bring glad tidings of good things, who are as spiritual fathers of our souls, and as *Joash* said to *Elisha*, the Chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. For when *Elisha* fell sick of his sickness whereof he died, the King came down unto him to visit him, and wept upon his face, saying, *O my father, my father, the Chariot of Israel, & the horsemen of the same.* 2 Kings 13, 14. This serveth to condemn our contempt toward the Messengers and Ministers of God, that rise early and late to speak unto us in the Name of the Lord, who instead of honor are disgraced: instead of countenance, are contemned: instead of maintenance, are every way defrauded, partly by profane Atheists, partly by dissembling hypocrites, and partly by cunning Papists. Hence it is, that the Church is oppressed, and groaneth under the burden of sundry corrupt customs, and injurious prescriptions, to the decay of religion, and hindrance of the true worship of God. If these mē had only cut off the lap of our garments, it were reason they should have some remorse for it: and it were well with them if their harts would smite them for it. But they have served us as the Ammonites served the messengers of *David*, whom he sent to comfort the King, who shaued off half their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, 2 Sam. 10, 4. Of whom we may say as *Paul* said sometimes of the Jews; *Thou that abhorrest Idols, committest thou sacrilege?* Rom. 2, 22. That is, thou hatest the false gods, and yet thou spoilest the true God, which seemeth to be much worse then the worshipping of Images, and the giving of our

selves to the sin of Idolatry. Thus we *offer to the Lord, the lame and the sick, the torn and the blind, which if it were offered unto thy Prince, would he accept it at thy hands, & be content with thee?* Mal. 1, 8, 9, 13, 14. yet we think him deeply indebted unto us. Thus do we spoil the Lord of hosts *in his Tithes and Offerings, yet the Idolaters will not spoil their gods, as we have spoiled and do spoil the true God.* Mal. 3, 8. Thus oftentimes it fareth better in this world with those which prophesy errors, and speak flattering things, which daub with untempered Morter, and preach of wine, and of strong drink, thē with such as are found faithful witnesses of y^e truth, denouncing the judgments of God, and dealing faithfully with his people. Whilst the true Prophets of God *are hid in Caues, and fed with bread and water, to sustain their feeble souls and faint lives: four hundred Prophets of the Groues are fed to the full, and fare deliciously every day at Iezebels Table,* 1 Kings 18, 13, 19. Whiles *M•chaiah* is clapt up in the Prison house, *and fed with the bread of affliction, &c.* the false Prophets walked at liberty, were richly provided for, tasted of the best, and did eat the portion of the Kings meat. Whilst *Jeremiah* the true Prophet of the Lord is put in the court of the prison, & hath given him daily a morsel of bread out of the Bakers street, and is cast into the Dungeon, where was no water but mire, where he stuck fast: the false Prophets insult over him, and live in all pleasure & abundance. Whilst *Daniel* and his companions feed upon Pulse, and have water given them to drink, the Priests of *Bel* with their wives & children made merry with the meat allotted to the Idol. But howsoever this hath ever been the lot and portion of the Prophets and Apostles, and of other servants of God, and the recompense of their labors, who spend their vital spirits, and waste their strength, to speak to an unthankful people: let us (notwithstanding the disgraces and indignities offered unto us) go forward in our callings, looking for our wages and reward at the hands of GOD, in whose service we are employed, and who hath promised, *That they which are wise, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, &c.* Dan. 12. Thus the Apostle exhorteth the Elders to feed the flock of God, which dependeth upon them, assuring themselves, *That when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they shall receive an incorruptible crown of glory,* 1 Pet. 5, 3, 4.

[Verse 39. *So Balaam went with Balak: He took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people.*] After the communication, followeth a description of their actions, they prepare for their coniuration, they offer sacrifices, and going into the Chapel of *Baal*, they take a view of the utmost part of the people of God. God hath set himself against *Balaam*, he had forbidden him to curse his people, the sword was drawn out against him for his disobedience, and he promised to submit himself unto the good pleasure of God. All this was known also to *Balak* that set him on work, and payeth him his wages; yet see here how they proceed and go forward in their wicked course, and cannot be stopped & hindered from it.

From hence we learn, that howsoever the ungodly be checked & reprov'd of God, yet they continue in their ungodliness: howsoever they be crossed and contradicted, they hold on their course in sin which they have begun. This appeareth in the example of *Cain*; albeit he were admonished and reprov'd of God for his wrath and malice against his brother, yet he runneth forward, and never ceaseth till he had killed him. This is seen likewise evidently in the example of the old world, when the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in

the earth, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually, he stirred up *Noah* a Preacher of righteousness, and gave them an hundred and twenty years to repent; yet they sinned still, corrupting their ways, and defiling the earth with their cruelty; they did eat and drink, and gave themselves unto all excess till the flood came, and swept them all away. Hereunto cometh the practice of *Pharaoh*, Exod. 6, 34. what could the Lord have done unto him that he did not? He sent *Moses* and *Aaron* to speak unto him, he brought sundry plagues upon him, he corrected him by diverse and sharp afflictions, yet he waxed obstinate, and hardened his heart more and more, to his own destruction. This is that which the Apostle *Paul* teacheth, 2 Tim. 3, 1, 2, 3. *This know, that in the last days shall come perilous times; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, cursed speakers, disobedient to parents, unthankfull, unholy, &c.* So that it appeareth to be an evident truth, that the wicked are so obstinate and hardened in their evil, that by no means they can be brought from it, Pro. 27, 22. *And if thou shouldst bra• a fool in a mortar among wheat brayed with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.*

[Reason 1] The Reasons to strengthen and confirm this truth to our consciences, are to be considered. First, sin is as the Gangrene or Canker, i• fretteth and cateth further and further, the hand infecteth the arm, and the foot the leg, unless the part that is infected be cut off at the beginning, as the Apostle teacheth, 2 Tim. 2, 16, 17. *Stay profane and vain babblings, for they shall increase unto more ungodliness: & their word shall fret as a canker, of which sort are Hymenaeus and Philetus.* So the Apostle *James* resembleth and compareth sin to child-bearing for the fruitfulness of it, I am. 1, 15, *When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* Likewise, it is a leaven which leaveneth the whole lump, and therefore no marvel if it proceed by little and little, from one degree to another.

[Reason 2] Secondly, evil men are given over of God into a reprobate sense by his judgment, so y^t it is no marvel if they become vile and abominable. This *Paul* declareth, Rom. 1, 26, 29, 30. This is likewise noted of the sons of *E•i*, who albeit they were reprov'd of their father that they caused the lords people to trespass, *Yet they continued in their sin, and obeyed not his voice, because the Lord would stay them*, 1 Sam. 2, 24, 25. And the Apostle writing to the Thessalonians, maketh mention of the unbelieving Jews, who killed the Lord, murdered the Prophets, persecuted the Apostles, withstood the truth, and forbad them to preach unto the Gentiles, that they might be saved, *To fulfill their sins always, for the wrath •f God is come on them to the utmost.* Seeing therefore such as cast away the warnings of God, are themselves cast off and given over of God to fill up the measure of their sins, and seeing sin is of it self fruitful, branching and budding as a Tree, fretting as a canker, souring as a leaven, growing as a child, multiplying as the fish in the waters: we are not to marvel, if men once beginning to sin cannot be stayed and stopped from whatsoever they have imagined to do.

Now, let us apply this doctrine to our uses. [Use 1] First, seeing the ungodly proceed and persevere in sin, assuredly great shall be their judgment: and as they increase in sin, so shall they increase their punishment, and hoard it up as a treasure against the day of wrath. This the Apostle setteth down as an evident truth. *Despisest thou the riches of his bountifulness and patience, and long sufferance, not knowing that the bountifulness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

But thou after thine hardness, and heart that cannot repent, heapest up as a Treasure unto thyself wrath, against the day of wrath, &c. This ought to be a terror to all the ungodly, to consider that as their hearts are hardened, and their consciences seared, so the plagues and punishments of God attend upon them, and always grow according to the degrees of their sins. This the Lord threateneth in the Law, Levite. 16, 21, 23, 24. *If ye walk stubbornly against me, and will not obey me, I will then bring seven times moe plagues upon you, according to your sins: but if by these ye will not be reformed by me, but walk stubbornly against me, &c.* Thus we see the equal proportion between our sins, and God's punishments.

Secondly, see how dangerous it is once to make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, and to wound our souls by falling into sin. The further a disease runneth, and the longer it continueth, the more vncureable it is. The further a fire spreadeth, the more it consumeth. The more sin groweth to an head, the more the Spirit of God is quenched, & the work of grace is diminished, the assurance of comfort is weakened and lessoned. Let us therefore always keep a diligent watch over our souls, let us seek to cut off all occasions of evil, and endeavor to stop the first beginnings. If a disease be taken in the beginning before it spread and seize upon the vital parts, it is easily cured. A fire when it is first kindled, is quickly quenched. The Spring of the year is the best and fittest season to purge out evil humors, and to apply medicines unto the natural body. When a ship hath an hole that it beginneth to leak, it is soon stepped. So if we will labor and strive to purge out the old leaven betimes, before it gather strength, we shall with more ease & less difficulty be able to withstand the force thereof: whereas the more sin is practiced, the more the heart is hardened, according to the saying of the Prophet, Ier. 13, 23. *Can the Blackmoore change his skin? Or the Leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good which are accustomed to do evil.* Therefore the Lord seeing that Cain had offended, and that his countenance was dejected (which were the fore-runners of murder) stirred him up to look unto these things. Gen. 4, 7. *If thou do well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.* This is that use which the Prophet pointeth out, Isaiah 5.11, 18. *Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sins as with cartropes. Woe unto them that rise up early to follow drunkenness, and to them that continue until night, till the wine do enflame them.* Where he teacheth the woeful and miserable condition of all those that run from evil to worse, as it were, adding drunkenness unto thirst, and warneth us to take heed lest at any time there be in any of us an evil heart and unfaithful, to depart from the living God.

[Use 3] Lastly, seeing the ungodly being reprov'd of God, and checked of their own conscience continue in their evil, we must know that on the other side it belongeth unto the faithful, according to the truth of the word revealed unto them, to grow in grace more and more, and to make every day some step to the king dome of heaven. So many as are truly grafted into Christ, as it were into a vine, must draw juice from him continually, and bring forth fruit plentifully, according as he teacheth, John 15.22. *Every branch that beareth not fruit in me, he taketh away, and everyone that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.* It is the commendation of the Church of Thyatira, Revel. 2, 19. *That their works were more at the last, then they were at the first.* Let us begin to believe in Christ, and to express the power of godliness, neither let us be terrified and dismayed from a constant resolution, to forsake

sin, and embrace righteousness, with the hardness and difficulty, with the lets and stumbling-blocks that lie in our way, with the troubles and temptations that abide for us: all these are hard in the beginning. A settled course, and a continual practice of faith and repentance, shall make the matter easy, and the way plain before us. An Apprentice that first beginneth to learn his trade and occupation, is much troubled at the strangeness of it, he findeth in himself great unfitness and untowardness, he saith he shall never attain unto it, he shall never go through with it, and the reason is, because he hath not used it: but when once he is entered into that course, he taketh delight in it, and wondereth at his own folly and simplicity. A Scholar that first beginneth to read, to write, or to learn any liberal Art, is discouraged through the hardness of it, and if he might be put to his choice, had rather give over then hold out; but use and custom makes it easy, and then he learneth with great pleasure & little pain: for that which a man doth often, he doth easily. So is it with all Nouices and young Scholars in the school of Christ, when first they begin to be trees of righteousness, set in the garden of God, they meet with many hindrances and pull-backs, they wrestle with many temptations, and encounter with sundry enemies: but when they have once practiced the duties of the first and second Table, and entered into the race of Religion, they run swiftly, they obey God willingly, and follow their calling cheerfully. For now they practice all holy duties often, and therefore do them easily and willingly, not grudgingly and untowardly.

This Solomon teacheth, Prov. 14, 6. *A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not; but knowledge is easy to him that will understand.* And hence it is that Christ our Savior exhorteth us, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, for I will ease you: For my yoke is easy and my burden light,* Matth. 11, 28. So the Apostle John testifieth, *This is the love of God that ye keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not burthenous: for all y^t is born of God over cometh this world and this is that victory that hath overcome this world, even our Faith.* 1 John 5.3, 4. They have their transgressions of the law pardoned, they have Christ's obedience in fulfilling the law imputed: repentance from dead works is wrought and effected in them. All things saith Christ are possible to him that believeth, Matth. 17, 20: according to the saying of Paul, *I am able to do all things through the help of Christ which strengtheneth me.* Let us do his will cheerfully, readily, willingly. For as God loveth a cheerful giver, so he loveth a cheerful servant. Let it be meat & drink unto us to do the will of our heavenly Father, and finish his work appointed unto us.

CHAP. XXIII.

1 And Balaam said to Balak: Build me here seven Altars, and prepare me here seven Bullockes, and seven Rams.

2 And Balak did as Balaam said, and Balak and Balaam offered upon every Altar, a Bullock and a Ram.

3 Then Balaam said unto Balak: Stand by the burnt Offering, and I will go, if so be that the Lord will come and meet me: and whatsoever he showeth me, I shall tell thee: So he went forth alone.

4 And God met Balaam; and he said unto him, I have prepared seven Altars, and have offered upon every Altar a Bullock and a Ram.

5 And the Lord put an answer in Balaam's mouth, and said; Go again to Balak, and say on this wise.

6 So when he returned unto him, Loe, he stood by his burnt-offering, he and all the Princes of Moab.

7 Then he uttered his Parable, and said, Balak the King of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the Mountains of the East, saying; Come curse Jacob for my sake, come and detest Israel.

8 How shall I curse, where God hath not cursed? Or how shall I detest, where the Lord hath not detested?

9 For from the top of the Rocks I did see him, and from the Hills I did behold him: Loe, the people shall dwell by themselves, and shall not be reckoned among the Nations.

10 Who can tell the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.

11 Then Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast blessed them altogether.

12 And he answered and said, Must not I take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?

IN the former Chapter we have heard the busy preparing and providing of an enchanter and sooth-sayer, to weaken and bewitchthe people. Now in this Chapter and the Chapter

following, we see his diuinations delivered, and his sorceries explained unto us. For *Balaam* being gotten and hired with the wages of unrighteousness, he laboreth and sweateth by all means to waste and weaken the host of Israel, but effecteth nothing against them, verifying the saying of the wiseman, Prov. 21, 30. *There is no counsel nor wisdom against God, who scattereth the purposes and policies of the wicked.*

In this Chapter observe two principal points (to wit) two devilish attempts to destroy the Israelites with Magicall enchantments. Touching the first endeavor and practice, we are to consider, both the facts & actions, and then the issue and events thereof. The first action is, that *Balaam* (as the masterworkman in this business) commandeth preparations to be made for his diuinations, he must have seven Altars built, seven sacrifices prepared, seven Bullocks, and seven Rams offered; seeking to please and appease GOD thereby, and to draw him to favor the Moabites, & to forsake the Israelites, for he knew he could do nothing for the one, and against the other, until he had procured the God of the Israelites to depart from them.

But here it is to be observed, that he dealeth wholly by odd numbers, willing all to be done by seuens. The number of seven was always accounted an holy and sacred number, and religiously observed, even from the Creation, whereof the Gentiles marked sundry examples in Nature, and in the worship of God. Besides, a certain divine force was imagined to be in the odd number, and therefore the Sorcerers and Enchanters did for the most part deal with these uneven numbers. This we see in the Poet *Uirgil, Eclog. 8.*

I twist for thee even first of all, th•se threads in number three,

In color threefold differing, and thrice about these Altars

I draw thy lively counterfeit: God joys in number odd.

The like appeareth in another Poet, describing the practices of certain witches, as *Medea, Circe*, and others. He bringeth one in, speaking thus:

The Stars alonely fair and bright,

did in the Welkin shine,

To which she lifting up her hands,

did thrice her self incline:

And thrice with water of the Brooke,

her hair besprinkled she,

And gasping thrice, she opt her mouth,

and bowed down her knee.

And afterward,

Loe, thrice with Brimstone, thrice with Fire,
and thrice with Water pure,
She purged Aesons aged corse,
that stepped and slumbered sure.

The Altars being made as *Balaam* commanded, the King and this Sooth-sayer offer thereupon to God. For Nature taught, that there is no access to God, without a sacrifice: as God from the beginning of the fall of man, trained up his people in the rudiments of the Law, & enjoined them this carnal service, and these carnal ceremonies which now are ceased, in as much as we have the *consummation and perfection of all in the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ once offered upon the Cross, who sitteth forever at the right hand of God, and with that one offering, he hath consecrated forever them that are sanctified*, Hob. 10, 12, 14 Now they offer these kind of Beasts rather than any other, because they had heard that the God of Israel commanded them to offer Bullocks and Rams unto him, so that they would give him his own desire, and please him with the service he seemed to be delighted in. But God regardeth *not sacrifices that are offered with a corrupt heart*. Again, they offer seven Bullocks and seven Rams upon the seven Altars, because as this number was thought to be holy, so it was supposed to be of secret virtue, seeing God sanctified & separated from the beginning, the seventh day, and nature hath left examples of sundry sevens in the heavens, as the *Pleiades*, the Planets, and many other. Lastly, he commandeth the King to stand by the sacrifices and burnt-offerings very devoutly, and whiles they were burning, he withdraweth himself, & seeketh a secret place to work his feats, as the witch of *Endor* did, 1 Sam. 28, 13, and as Sorcerers do; to the end that by this separation of himself he might raise a superstitious opinion in *Balak* of his doings, and the better being solitary, to put in use his ceremonies. The events ensuing after these actions before handled, are double: First, in God, and afterward in *Balaam*. God appeared to this profane man, as he hath done to diverse of his enemies, for his children's sake, not for their own sakes, as also *Elisha* said to *Jehoram*, *As the Lord liveth, in whose sight I stand, if I had not regarded the presence of Jehoshaphat, I would not have looked toward thee, nor seen thee this day*. 2 Ki. 3, 14. Now as all hypocrites please themselves in their outward ceremonies, so *Balaam* telleth God what Sacrifices he had offered unto him, that he had spared no cost nor charges. And as he thought he had done well, so he looked to have been respected; he telleth of his good deeds, he boasteth of his works, he numbereth up his burnt offerings, he hopeth by these allurements, that God would change his mind. He thought him to be as one of the gods of the Gentiles, which were devils, & not God's, and they that sought unto them, sought unto devils, not to God. But whereas he glorieth in the works of his own hands, and putteth confidence in his worship performed to God, he receiveth no answer hereof, only the Lord willeth him to return back to the King his master, that set him on work, and speak unto him what should be put in his mouth.

Touching *Balaam*, he goeth, he obeyeth, he uttereth a Prophecy before the King and his Nobles, speaking after the manner of the true Prophets, not moved by the spirit of the devil, but inspired by the Spirit of God, and declaring truly what he had received of God. The

Prophecy and Parable of *Balaam* is first uttered, then the effect of it is set down and declared. The Prophecy hath three points to be considered: First, the entrance: Secondly, the substance and matter it self: Thirdly, the conclusion. Touching the entrance into the Prophecy, it is taken from the present work now in action, and detecteth the folly and dotage of *Balak*, who had sent from far to fetch a Sorcerer, and doubted not of the force of his diuinations, seeing he was cunning in the East manners. Thus were Idolaters given over, by the just judgment of God, to believe lies. The substance of this Prophetical speech followeth, first propounded, and afterward proved and confirmed. For he showeth, that Israel is blessed of God, and therefore not to be cursed. Israel is protected of God, as with a shield, and therefore it lieth not in his power, or in the power of any man to make them a cursed people, to be had in execration and detestation. This sentence is uttered by way of an interrogation and asking a question, for the greater force, and giving power unto it, for the better assurance of the truth of it, and to put it out of doubt, *How shall I curse, where God hath not cursed? Or how shall I detest, where God hath not detested?* Now he proveth that they could not be cursed of God, nor hurt by the enchantments of the devil, nor annoyed by the devices of men; first, by his own testimony in the present seeing of them, and the comely order observed among them, *From the top of the Rocks I did see them:* as if he should say, The very sight of this people, and of their government, daunteth my heart, and dasheth my purpose, so that I am called back from conceiving a thought of cursing them, both by the authority of God, and by the presence of thē which I behold. Secondly, by the pureness and holiness of the people, they walked with God, they dwelled in his presence, they observed his Laws, they submitted themselves to his ordering and government, they embraced his religion, they separated themselves from the Gentiles, they abstained from their superstitions, they would have no fellowship with them, they differed from them in their Laws, in their Religion, in their life, in their sacrifices, in their sacraments, and other ceremonies.

The conclusion and shutting up of this Prophecy is double, and containeth two points: First, in respect of Israel: Secondly, in respect of *Balaam* himself. Touching Israel, he pronounceth the blessing of God towards them, that they should increase as the dust of the earth, *and as the sand on the sea-shore, which is innumerable, according to the promise made to Abraham*, Gen. 12. Heb. 11, 12. And to move the heart of *Balak* and of all the Moabites the more, he uttereth it by way of asking the question, and doubling it, he increaseth God's mercy toward them, and saith, he could not number the fourth part of Israel. Touching himself, he testifieth, that the blessedness of this people was great in regard of the life to come, and therefore wisheth that in death he might be like them, that after death, he might be partaker of the same happiness with them. But wishers and woulders were never good Christians. For this is a peevish & perverse kind of wishing, not to perform that which belongeth to the blessedness of eternal life, and yet to wish and desire it to come upon him.

The effect of this unlooked for Prophecy, is set down by a question and an answer. The Question of the King expostulateth the matter with him, why he blessed the Israelites, as one forgetting himself, and unmindful of his business, whereas he was hired to curse them, being his enemies. The answer of *Balaam* casteth the fault upon God, and excuseth himself. For y^e same God that opened his mouth, constrained him to utter this blessing against his will. As if

he should say, I have used all my skill, and practiced my art to the uttermost, but no sorcery will prevail against them: why then dost thou check and controule me, for that which I can by no means remedy & redress? But the question may be asked, whether his charms and coniurations could have hurt the Church, if they had been pronounced against them? I answer, the curses of the wicked cannot hurt or hinder the godly, as *Balaam* in every Prophecy acknowledgeth. And *Solomon* teacheth, *That the curse which is causeless, shall not come.* Prov. 26, 2. Wherefore then did not God suffer him to run his race, & to follow his own imagination? Why did God appear unto him, and not suffer his curses to be denounced? Surely, because hereby the Name of God is more glorified, the Sorcerer confounded, and all the expectation of the enemies dashed, in that the curses are not pronounced, and their desires and endeavours disannulled.

[Verse 1. *Build me here seven Altars, and prepare me seven Bullocks, and seven Rams.*] They begin their work with great pomp & show of zeal and religion, as the manner of the heathen was, when they went about any enterprize. He buildeth not one Altar alone, but seven: he contenteth not himself with one Bullock, and one Ram, but prepareth seven: so that on every Altar he offereth two burnt offerings to appease the Lord toward them. He nameth the Name of the Lord, and goeth apart from the society of men, as it were to have conference with the living God, whereas his drift and purpose was nothing but to practice his sorcery. Thus we see the Gentiles observed the manner of sacrificing, received by tradition from their Fathers, yet not purely and vncorruptly, both because they had not respect to the Messiah promised; and supposed the outward work of sacrificing to be so precious and meritorious, that for it their sins should be forgiven; and because they mingled and corrupted the worship of God, with their own inventions. For the sacrifices instituted of God, are defiled and depraved, partly by the opinion of merit, partly by the addition of new-fangled worship. Hereby we learn, That all religion pretendeth order and zeal, although it be removed from truth. Howsoever all false religion proceed from the spirit of disorder and confusion, that is, the devil: yet it maketh some show of holiness, & putteth on a shadow of the true religion. This appeareth in the high places that *Solomon* built for his outlandish women, *Where they burnt Incense, and offered oblations to strange gods.* 1 Kin. 11.7, 8, and 18, 26, 28. It is noted touching the Priests of *Baal*, y^t they prepared a Bullock, and called upon the name of *Baal*, from morning to noon, *They cried aloud, and cut themselves, as their manner was, with kniues and Launces, until the blood gushed out upon them.* Loc, what zeal and forwardness here was. The like appeareth in *Zedekiah*, one of the former generation; he made horns of iron in resemblance & imitation of the true Prophets, who taught by such signs, and said, *With these shalt thou push the Aramites, until thou hast consumed them.* 2 Kings 22, 11. The same is offered unto us in the Prophecies of *Jeremiah*, chap. 32, 34, 35, where describing the zeal of Idolaters, he saith, *They set their abominations in the house of God to defile it, they built the high places of Baal, and caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire to Molech.* So when *Hananiah* brake the yoke of *Jeremiah*, he said, *Thus saith the Lord, Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar King of Babel, from the neck of all Nations, within the space of two years,* Ier. 28, 10, 11.

The Reasons are to be considered: First, [Reason 1] because Satan can turn and transform himself into a resemblance of the glorious Angels that dwell in the heavenly light; albeit he dwell in utter darkness, yet he never appeareth in his own likeness, he shadoweth his lies with the Name of God, and covereth his temptations with the vizard of holiness. This Reason the Apostle useth, 2 Cor. 11, 13, 14, 15. If then Satan hide his horns, and dissemble the hollownes of his dealings, so that his baits and snares are not perceived, and the poison of them is not seen, no marvel if his instruments that are led by his spirit, follow their master in their hypocrisy. For as the spirit is that leadeth them, so are they that are led.

Secondly, it satisfieth ignorant and foolish men, from further searching and enquiring into [Reason 2] the hidden mysteries of corrupt religion. If it should be propounded in the name of the devil, and the rottenness thereof appear in his likeness, everyone would defy it, and spit at it, and Satan well knoweth, he should gain nothing to his kingdom. But when he taketh up the Name of God, pretendeth the zeal of God, and sometimes alledgeth the Scriptures of God, he carrieth many blindfold to perdition, and leadeth away captive simple souls laden with sins, and led with diverse lusts, for they never make further enquiry, nor dive to the depth of Satan's wiliness. This appeareth in the Idolatry of the ten Tribes, erected by *Jeroboam*, who said to the people, *It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: hold (O Israel) thy gods, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt: and this thing turned to sin, for the people went (because of the one) even to Dan.* 1 Kings 12, 28, 30. Judge. 17, 13. The ignorant multitude ran headlong after this counterfeit worship, coloured with show of reason, and followed those Idols, that they might go with ease to the devil.

[Use 1] Let us make use of this doctrine, and see what may be learned from hence, for our edification. First, acknowledge from hence, that all zeal and appearance of zeal is not good. *Balak* and *Balaam* here pretend the worship of God, and who would think they intended my mischief? Yet they were in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Therefore the Apostle saith of the Jews, *I bear the record, that they have the zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, for they being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to stablish their own righteousness have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.* So the Church of Rome besotted with superstition, and having drunk deeply of the cup of abominations makes an outward show of great zeal, by their multitude of ceremonies, partly borrowed from the Jews, and partly patched from the Gentiles; by their Pilgrimages to Saints, by the counterfeit strictness of their disordered orders, by their solemn vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, by the pretended straightness of their whipping Jesuits, and deluded disciples, imitating herein the Priests of *Baal*, and resembling the heretics, which of whipping themselves, are called *Flagellantes*. But notwithstanding all these shows of holiness, they are far from true zeal, having a voluntary religion, like unto those whom the Apostle *Paul* reproveth, Col. 2, 21, 23. In which place the Apostle doth lively describe what the Roman Religion is, and portrayeth it out as a Table before our eyes: It hath goodly shows, which indeed seem to have some exquisite and excellent thing in them, but the inward and spiritual worship is neglected among them, the Name of God is dishonored, the Sabbath is profaned, the Scriptures are abused, the doctrine of faith and repentance is buried, & many open sins are maintained among them. If that be the true religion which giveth all glory to God,

the Popish religion cannot be so, which giveth all glory to themselves, and robbeth God of the honor due to his Name, by their doctrine of merits, & by their works of supererogation, which indeed is more than supererogation. If it be the true religion that magnifyeth the Scriptures, resteth in the perfection of them, submitteth all persons & causes unto them, and acknowledgeth them the sole and supreme Judge of all Questions and Controuersies of religion, then that must be a false religio, which patcheth other writings and traditions unto them, which in matters of doctrine flieth from them, which preferreth the authority of the Church before them, and enveth to be wholly ordered by them. If that be the true religion, which advanceth the sufferings of Christ, and resteth in his perfect Oblation once performed upon the Cross, which acknowledgeth Christ to be the only Savior and Redeemer of his people, and teacheth to rely upon him alone for our justification: then that must be confessed to be a counterfeit religion, which setteth up a mock Christ, and honoreth instead of him, the cursed Idol of the Mass, whereby the remembrance of his death is shamefully euded, and the people of God are miserably deluded. Learn therefore, that all zeal is not true zeal; and to hate all evil, albeit it have the appearance of good, and come masked under the vizard and habit of holiness. For counterfeit piety, is double impiety.

Secondly, let us not be carried away and [Use 2] seduced with every vain blast of false Doctrine, but stand constant, settled, and unmovable, as they that are built, not on the weak sand, but upon the firm Rock that cannot be removed. This the Apostle teacheth, Heb. 1, 9. *Bee not carried about with diverse and strange doctrines, for it is a good thing that the heart be stablished with grace, and not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied in them.* This use is urged by the Apostle Paul, 2. Tim. 3, 5. *This know, that in the last days shall come perilous seasons for men shall be lovers of their own selves, &c, having a show of godliness, but have denied the power thereof; turn away therefore from such.* We see how easily the greatest part are carried away with shadows without substance, and shows without inward truth. They have itching ears after new Teachers, and forsake the ancient Teachers, that have fed them with the milk of the word, & gained them to the faith of Christ. Wherefore it standeth us upon, to take heed we be not seduced and deceived with false Prophets, and to make a trial of their doctrine, by the truth of the Scriptures, according to the counsel of Christ our Savior, Math. chapter 7, verses 15. 16.

Lastly, it is our duty to learn to discern [Use. 3] the spirits, and to be able to judge of the Doctrine, whether it be of God, or not. Christ commandeth his Disciples to beware & take heed of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, that is of their doctrine: but in another place he chargeth them to hear the Pharisees & obey their doctrine, sitting in Moses chair, because they were appointed for the time to be the Teachers of the Church. Now then, if they must hear and do what they say, and yet avoid their mixtures & corruptions of sound doctrine, it is required necessarily of the people, to discern between the Law of GOD and the leaven of the Pharisees, being charged to cleave to the truth, and to forsake error. This is that use which the Apostle John urgeth, 1 John, chap. 4. verse 1. *Dearely beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of GOD: For many false Prophets are gone out into this world.* And in the second Epistle, chap. 7, 8. he speaketh to the same purpose, *Many deceivers are entered into this world, which confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh: look to yourselves,*

that we lose not the things which we have done, but that we may receive a full reward. Hereunto likewise cometh the exhortation of *Elijah* to all the people that were seduced by false Prophets, 1 Kings 18, 21. *How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal be he, then go after him.* And the Apostle *Paul* chargeth the Thessalonians to *try all things, and to hold fast that which is good.* 1 Thess. 5, 21. This condemneth the Church of Rome of sacrilege, that take from the people the key of knowledge, and nuzzle them in ignorance, as the mother of devotion, accounting it sufficient, that they believe as the Church believeth, and credit in all things their Pastors and Teachers, and forbid them all trial of the doctrine delivered unto them. But the Scriptures require of them the spirit of discerning, and all judgment, that they may allow those things that are best, and that they may be without offense, until the day of Christ; to take heed that they walk circumspectly and wisely, that they may understand what the will of the Lord is, and beware that they be not seduced. And it is no excuse to the people being misled and misguided, to say, Thus have I been taught and instructed: *For when the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the pit of destruction,* Mat. 15, 14. So that if they embrace not faith unto salvation, but withdraw themselves unto perdition, they that follow false Teachers, are sure to perish as well as they that lead them the way, or rather out of the way: and if the Watchman see the sword drawn, and judgment coming, and blow not the Trumpet: albeit the blood of the people shall be required at his hands, yet they shall also be taken away in their sins.

[Verse 5. *The Lord put an answer in Balaam's mouth.*] Here is set down the Author of his Prophecies. He sought a cursing, but God put in his mouth a blessing, so that the spirit of Prophecy is sometimes given to wicked men, as appeareth in *Saul*, & sundry others. Wherefore it is said. God put his word in his mouth, not in his heart. He hath God plentifully in his mouth. but his heart was far from him, so that he speaketh not far otherwise then his Ass spake before, because God compelled him against his will, to utter that which he put in his mouth. Heereby we learn, that God's truth is oftentimes enforced and drawn out of those that know it not, nor believe it. Profane men of an evil spirit, are constrained & compelled to give testimony and witness to the truth of God, the Lord as it were wringeth and wresteth it out of the mouths of those that be ignorant of him; as we see how *Balaam* in this and the chapter following, uttereth excellent and heavenly things (albeit against his will) of God, of the enemies of God, of the Church prospering and flourishing thorough his favor: yet he was lewd in life, and profane in heart, loving neither God, nor his truth. This we see in the Sorcerers in Egypt, when they saw and felt the plague of Lice, but could not with their enchantments bring forth the like, they confessed, *This is the finger of God,* Exod. 8, 19. This appeareth farther in the history of *Gideon*, when one of his enemies had told a dream to his neighbor which he had dreamed, his fellow answered and said, *This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel, for into his hand hath God delivered Midian and all the Hoast.* Judge. 7, 14. This likewise we see in the Centurion and soldiers that were with him watching Jesus, Math. 27, 54, when they saw the renting of the veyle, the trembling of the earth, the opening of the graves, the cleaving of the stones, and arising of the dead bodies, they feared greatly, saying; *Truly this was the Son of God.* Hereunto cometh the confession of *Caiaphas*, an enemy to Christ, and to the doctrine of salvation which he persecuted; for he

uttered a Prophecy of the death and passion of Christ, John. 11, 49, 50, 51, 52. It was an extraordinary motion of God, that guided his tongue to Prophecy of Christ. So he spake afterward in thē that cried out at his arraignment, Mat. 27, 25. *His blood be upon us and upon our children:* which was plentifully performed in its time and season. The like we may observe in *Pilate*, when he was admonished by the Jews to amend this title of Christ set on his Cross, *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews; Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written:* John 19, 22. wherein at unawares he is made after a sort, a Preacher of the kingdom of Christ, who governed his tongue, as here he did the tongue of *Balaam*.

The Reasons remain to be considered. [Reason 1] First, to leave the wicked without excuse, when they hear the truth. For God never leaveth himself without witnesses, no not among the Infidels, as the Apostle declareth, Acts 14, 16, 17. Now if the pouring down showers of rain, sending the fruitfulness of the earth, feeding all creatures with bodily food, be the Lord's witnesses and testimonies of his power, how much more is the word of God, which is the savor of life unto life, to all that believe? Forseeing God opened the mouth of *Caiaphas* (as we shown before) to utter a Prophecy concerning Christ, the obstinate incredulity of the Jews was convinced, when both the cause and virtue of his death was uttered by their own high-Priest, albeit he spake it in another meaning.

Secondly, he speaketh often in wicked men, to increase their judgment, and bring upon [Reason 2] them the greater damnation. If God had not revealed his truth unto them, their punishment should be the less. This we see set down, Luk. 12, 47, 48. This appeareth by the words of Christ to his Disciples, Math. 7, 23. Luke 13, 25, 26. *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not by thy Name prophesied? And by thy Name cast out devils? And by thy Name done many great works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* Thus Christ upbraideth the Cities, wherein most of his great works were done, because they repented not, and telleth them it shall be easier for Tyre and Sidon, for Sodom and Gomorrhah at the day of judgment, then for them. Math. 11, 22.

Thirdly, to strengthen & confirm his childrē [Reason 3] in the truth revealed unto them. Great is their wavering and weakness: when God maketh known his word unto them, & sealeth it unto them by his signs and sacraments, they are full of doubting, and their faith is mingled with infidelity, as we see in the example of *Gideon*, Judge 7, 14. God appeared unto him at the thrashing-floor, commanded him to go in his might to save Israel, promised him the victory, and strengthened him by the signs that he asked, *yet he remained fearful & fainthearted, after these so many means used to give him courage & confirmation,* Judge. 7, 10. Hence it is, that God raised up one in the host of his enemies, and guided his tongue to be a Preacher and publisher of his truth, telling this dream of his to his fellow, that loe, a Cake of Barley-bread tumbled from above into the boast of *Midian*, and came unto a Tent and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the Tent fell down: which is expounded and interpreted to be the sword of *Gideon*. Whereby we see, that God opened the mouth, and directed the tongue of this Idolater, for the strengthening of *Gideon*, and the furthering of him in his work.

Now let us make use of this Doctrine First, [Use 1] behold herein the greatness of his power & Name, causing his enemies to profess and acknowledge it. We see how they resist & rebel against God. We see how they abide not to submit their necks to his obedience, but cast away the cords of discipline from them: yet he overruleth them, ordereth their tongues, and disposeth the words of their mouth to his own glory. This is it which the Prophet declareth, Psal. 8, 1, 2. This also appeareth in the example of *Saul*, and of the messengers that he sent to take *David*, *For the Spirit of God fell upon them, and they prophesied*, therefore it was a Proverb, *Is Saul also among the Prophets?* 1 Sā. 10, 11 and 19 24. This verieth the saying of the wise man, Prov. 16, 1. *The preparations of the heart are in man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord:* that is howsoever a man many times m*streth an whole Army of thoghts in his mind, as it were in battle array, and concludeth with himself, both what, & how to speak: yet man is ruled by a superior power & shall speak as God guideth his mouth, not as himself purposeth and determineth. Seeing therefore God frameth unfit instruments to his own purpose, and maketh them serve for the advancement of his own glory, we must conclude again with the Prophet, *O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy Name in all the world!*

Secondly, it is not hard with God to retain [Use 2] and reserve a people to himself in all ages, albeit there be never so many enemies, & albeit the Church be not always visible to the eye, and kept in outward beauty. He is not tied to any Nation, people, or place. Let us never fear the decay or destruction of the Church: he that did gain it to himself, will maintain it against all the practices and pollices of evil men, so that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. This is it which Christ teacheth, Mat. 3, 8, 9. He can draw the strong and flinty hearts of the adversaries to be his Church, albeit all the Jews were scattered & destroyed. God is not bound to continue his Church among thē, and the privileges which in mercy he vouchsafed unto them: if he remove his standard, and take away his Candlestick, and break off the succession they boasted of, he can call a people unto himself whensoever he pleaseth. As then we are not to fear the falling away of the Church, so we are not to presume of our selves, because we have present testimonies of God's favor, and visible marks of the Church amongst us, but labor to find out our own sins, and turn unto the Lord, assuring our selves, that every Tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.

Lastly, seeing profane persons be enforced [Use] to speak the truth of God, let us know that it is our part, who are enlightened with more knowledge and endued with better graces, in a more willing and cheerful sort then they do, to testify the praises of God for conscience sake, with care and comfort, not grudgingly, nor unwillingly, nor enforced unto it. This the Prophet *Malachi* setteth down, ch. 1, 11. Where he showeth, that the Gentiles knew the excellency of his Name, and were not ignorant of his greatness, and therefore if we be the true children of God, our righteousness and obedience must exceed the righteousness and obedience of others. For what a shame is it, that strangers from the covenant should acknowledge him, and those of his family, and as it were his household servants, come behind them? Let us be like the Angels that be in heaven, Mat. 6, 10, who obey him readily, willingly, cheerfully, perfectly. If we obey him grudgingly, and by constraint, the reprobates, yea the devils do him as good service, as we do. They perform his secret will against their will. Let us accomplish his will revealed in his word, with the full desire of our hearts,

otherwise we shall never find true comfort to our selves in that we do. If we would have God to accept & reward our service performed unto him, we must not do it by constraint, as *Balaam* did, nor to halves as *Saul* did, 1 Sam. 15, 21, 22, 23: nor to merit, as the Pharisees did; but in conscience of our duty, as children to their fathers, that we may receive the inheritance of sons.

[Verse 9 *Loe, the people dwell by themselves, and shall not be reckoned among the Nations*] Now we come to the Prophecy it self, wherein he confesseth the blessed estate of y^e church, so that nothing can make them miserable, or separate them from the favor of God. This we shall have fitter occasion to show afterward. Here let us consider the reason whereon he groundeth the happiness of the Church. In the description of the Church, he saith, they are a people cleaving to God alone, believing in him, and severed from other Nations in religion and laws. From hence we learn, That the Church of God is an holy people, called and gathered by the word, to hear and obey God, separated from the profane of the world in life and conversation. This we see evidently, when the posterity of *Cain* began to multiply and replenish the earth by many generations, who were the malignant Church; the true Church (increasing later) began to divide themselves from thē, to restore the purity of God's worship, and to meet apart by themselves for the public service of God, which the Scripture meaneth, when it saith, *Then men began to call upon the Name of the Lord*. The like we see afterward in *Abraham*, whom the Lord called beyond the flood from serving other God's, to serve him purely apart from the superstitions of his forefathers This was figured in the vow of the *Nazarites*, the intention whereof is expressed in the description of the ceremony of it, *To be separated to the Lord*. Numb. 6, 2. Thus *Moses* describeth the common condition of all that people, to be separated to the Lord, as God himself giveth them to understand, *I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people, &c.* Levite. 20, 24, 26. This is it which Christ our Savior saith to his Disciples, *That they are not of the world, but he hath chosen them out of the world*, John 15, 19. Hereunto cometh the exhortation of *Peter*, preaching repentance & amendment of life, to those that had crucified the Lord of glory, *With many other words he besought and exhorted thē, saying; Save yourselves from this froward generation* Acts 2, ver. 40, 41. Hereunto cometh the practice of the Apostle *Saint Paul*, Acts 19, 9, when the adversaries were convinced, and their hearts hardened, they disobeying, and speaking evil of the way of God, before the multitude, he *departed from them, and separated the Disciples, and disputed daily in the School of one Tyrannus*.

[Reason 1] The Reasons hereof are these. First, there is an opposition between God & the world. The Governor thereof is Satan, *who is the Prince of this world, and hath set up his throne in it: it persecuted Christ and slew him*. Neither do the children of God find *any better entertainment then Christ did, as it hateth him, so it hateth them*, John 14, 17, 30. Again, *The amity of this world is enmity with God: the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God*, 2 Cor. 4, 4. 1 am. 4, 4. And Christ testifieth, *That the works thereof are evil*, John 7, 7. Seeing then it is evil in respect of y^e governor, which is Satan, evil in respect of Christ, whom it hated and persecuted; evil in respect of the Spirit of truth, whō it neither seeth, nor knoweth, nor receiveth; in respect of the Children of God, whom it abhorreth; evil in respect of the friendship thereof, which is enmity; evil in respect of the wisdom thereof, which is folly; and lastly, evil in respect of the

works thereof, which are impiety; howsoever the beauty of it be glorious, and the show gorgeous and glistering; yet the Church is to come out of it, & is clean contrary unto it. For if the friendship of the world be the enmity of God, then the friends of the world are the enemies of God. And as there is an agreement between the devil and the world, so is there an union between God, and his Church. And as God and the world are opposed, so are the Church and the world contrary one to another: so that whilst we are parts of this world, we cannot be members of his Church, and when we are called out of the world, we are gathered into the bosom of the Church.

Secondly, God hath chosen the Church to [Reason 2] himself, before the foundation of the world, to be adopted thorough Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the *praise of the glory of his grace, wherewith he hath made us freely accepted in his beloved*, as the Apostle teacheth, writing to the Ephesians, chap. 1, 5, 6. 1 Pet. 1, 2. Thus the Church is built upon the unmovable rock that cannot be shaken. The foundation of God remaineth sure, & hath this seal, *The Lord knoweth who are his.* 2 Tim. 2, 19.

Now let us see what uses we may rightly [Use 1] conclude out of this doctrine thus confirmed. First, we learn from hence, that the opinion of those is condemned, that bring in universal grace, universal election of everyone, universal redemption of everyone, and universal vocatiō of everyone, to the saving knowledge of the Gospel. For whereas the Church is as it were the Park of God, impaled in from other waste Land, or rather the Paradise of God, wherein the wild beasts of the Forest may not enter; this Doctrine pulleth up the Pale, and taketh away the enclosure, laying it in common, and joining it to the rest of the wilderness. The people of God are the *little flock in respect of the world.* Luke 12, 32. We see frō the beginning of the world, there was a difference and distinction between the sons of God, and the sons of men, Genesis, chapter 6, verse 1, between the Jews and the Gentiles, between the circumcised, and the uncircumcised, between the people 〈1 page duplicate〉 of God, and those that were no people of his, being out of the covenant. To some God giveth faith, to other he giveth not faith, *For all have not faith,* 1 Thess. 3, 1. Therefore our Savior Christ saith, *Many are called, but few are chosen,* Math. 20, 16, and he chargeth his Disciples, when he sent them out to Preach, *not to go into the way of the Gentiles, neither to enter into the City of the Samaritans,* Math. 10, 5. and he showeth, that *it is not given to everyone to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God,* Mat. 13, 11. So the Apostles in spreading abroad the glad tidings of salvation, and working the conversion of the Nations, to whom they were sent to preach the Gospel, are commanded to remain certain years in some Cities, *because the Lord had much people in those places:* and when they were entering into other Cities, the Spirit suffered them not to publish among them the way of salvation. Act. 18, 10.

[Use 2] Secondly, we must look for a full and perfect separation of the Elect from the Reprobate, of the sheep from the goats, of the vessels of mercy, from the vessels of wrath, when the Lord Jesus shall break the heavens, and come to judge the quick and the dead. Indeed here is some separation made by the fan of his word, by the power of the keys, & by the fire or furnace of affliction, yet still the chaff is mingled with the wheat, the Tares with the Corn, bad fish with the good, the hypocrites with the faithful and true believers. But

when Christ shall come with thousands of his Angels and the heavens be dissolved. *The books shall be opened, and things hidden in darkness, shall be disclosed*, Revel. 20, 12. Here a beginning is made, but then shall be an absolute perfection and consummation of this separation. This is opened unto us by the Evangelist, Mat. 25, 31, 32, 33. Seeing this separation shall come, what manner of men ought we to be in all holiness of life and conversation? Let us search and try our own ways, and turn unto the Lord with all our hearts, that when Christ shall appear at the great day of the harvest and solemn season of separation, we may be found good Corn, and not be blown away by the voice of his mouth, whē he shall blow the chaff into unquenchable fire, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. But if we be not here separated from the sins and corruptions of the wicked, whē God separateth the soul and body, we shall be separated from the comfortable presence of God, we shall remain with the devil and his angels forever, never to be separated and sundered from them.

[Use 3] Thirdly, this giveth good assurance and comfort unto them, that God will hear their prayers, and respect them in their miseries. For seeing they are his chief treasure, Exod. 19, 5, 6, (albeit all the earth be his) seeing they are a kingdom of Priests, and an holy Nation, he will not see them want and stand in need of anything which he knoweth to serve for his own glory and their good. This is that use which *Solomon* remembereth in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple, 1 Kings 8, 52, 53. *Let thine eyes be open unto the prayer of thy servant, and unto the prayer of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them, in all that they call for unto thee: for thou didst separate them to thee, from among all the people of the earth for an inheritance, as thou saidst by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God:* whereby we see, that the consideration of the dear account & estimation that God hath of his Church, separating it to himself, and calling it out of the world, ought to move us with boldness to draw near to the throne of grace, and to comfort us with assurance to be heard in our necessities. For what can God deny unto us, that hath given us him self? Or what can we want that know the love of God toward us, before we were? Wherefore, whensoever we are brought into any affliction, and stand in need of help, let us be mindful of the mercies of God toward us, and assure our selves, that he which hath separated and sanctified us from our mothers womb, will perfect his own work that he hath begun, & finish it unto the day of Christ.

Lastly, we must know that it is our duty to [Use] fly from all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to have no fellowship with the ungodly, *nor the vnfruitefull works of darkness*, Tit. 2, 12. This indeed is *pure religion, & undefiled, to keep our selves unspotted to the world*. This the Apostle *Paul* urgeth, 2 Corin. 6, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. We know that a little leaven leaveneth, the whole lump. One rotten sheep infecteth a whole flock. One leaper spreadeth the difeaise further, to the hurt of sundry other. Now there is no leaven like to the leaven of sin, 1. Cor. 5.6. no infection comparable to the infection of sin; no leaproisie so deadly and dangerous as the contagion of sin, which bringeth danger and destruction to soul and body. Therefore we must not join our selves with the ungodly, seeing we are an holy people to the Lord our God, he hath chosen us to be a precious people unto himself above other people that are upon the earth. We are *a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy nation, a people set at liberty, that we should show forth the virtues of him that hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light*.

Seeing we are washed from the corruptions of the flesh, let us not defile our selves again: seeing we are called out of the world, let us not return into the world: and seeing we are freed from the thralldom of sin, let us not sell our selves again to our own lusts, which fight against the soul. We cannot come near an infectious disease without danger of infection. We cannot touch pitch, without danger to be defiled with it. The Apostle saith, *Be not deceived, Evil words corrupt good manners.* The Wiseman teacheth, *That he which walketh with the wise, shab be the wiser, but a companion of fools shall be the worsser.* Prov. 13, 20. *Jonathan* by the friendship and familiarity which he had with *David*, changed his life to better. *Solomon* by the society and conjunction with his idolatrous wives, fell into Idolatry. And *Rehoboam* his son, by walking with his young Counsellors, and following their advice, became worse. If then we would avoid evil, we must beware of all occasions. No occasion more dangerous then evil company. Every man therefore must take heed to himself, and beware how he join himself in acquaintance with all men indifferently. Many that have been of a stayed course, and an approved life, have ruined themselves, by making no choice of their company, and have lost their honor and honesty, a Jewel which being once lost, can never be repaired and restored. This we see by woeful experience confirmed unto us in the examples of many young men and maidens, who hating eu•ll, and making conscience of sin in themselves have fearfully fallen, and made shipwreck of all godliness and goodness, through the seducement of others.

[Verse 10 *Who can tell the dust of Jacob, & the number of the fourth part of Israel?*] Here beginneth the conclusion of this first Prophecy, setting down the infinite multitude of the faithful, compared by an hyperbolical or excessive speech to the dust of the earth, which cannot be numbered. This he speaketh, being as it were ravished and astonied at the great number of them, according as the Lord had promised long before to *Abraham*, *Gen. 15, 5. Look up now unto heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.* Thus then this false Prophet is made a Preacher and Publisher of the glory of the Church, and of the largeness of the bounds thereof. Heereby we learn, That God hath a great & infinite people that belong unto him. Albeit the good Corn be scarce seen when it is mingled with y^e chaff, yet when it is severed and brought together, it maketh a great heap. The number of the elect and chosen people of God, which he hath redeemed, & will in the end glorify, is a great people. This appeareth unto us in many places of the word. The Prophet prophesying of the kingdom of Christ, telleth us, that *his Dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of the Land: that all Kings shall worship him and all Nations shall serve him, bless him, and be blessed in him.* Psal. 72, 8, 11, 17, 19. Christ teacheth us, that *many shall come from East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven:* He saith, that *when the laborers were few to put their sickle in the ripe Corn, yet God had a great and plentiful harvest to be gathered into his Barn,* Math 8, 11, and 9.37, And likewise 26, 28. at the institution of his last Supper, he saith, *This is my blood of the New Testament, that is shed for many for the remission of sins.* This the Apostle showeth to the Hebrews, chap. 2, 10. The Oracle of God answereth evidently at one time, when *Elias* thought he had been alone, that he had reserved to himself *seven thousand that never bowed their knee to Baal,* 1 Kings 19, 18. This truth was revealed to *John*, Revel. 7, 8, 9. So then the Church is stored with many believers, and is as a fruitful mother, that aboundeth with many children.

The Reasons are plain and evident. For [Reason 1] first, it is a matter of faith, and an Article of our Creed to believe the Church to be Catholic. And it is Catholic in three respects; In respect of time, of place, and of person. Of time, because it hath been in all ages and times since the first promise made to our first Parents in Paradise, Heb. chap. 13, verse 8. Revel. chap. 13, verse 8. and shall continue unto the end of the world. Of place, because it is gathered from all parts of the earth, whereas before the days of Christ our Savior, it was included within the Territories of *Judea*, now it is dispersed far and near in the time of the New Testament. Of persons, because it standeth of all estates and degrees of men, high and low, rich and poor, male & female, Jew and Gentile, learned & unlearned, whereas before God called and singled out the seed of *Abraham* to be his people. If then the Church be thus large, and spreadeth it self to all times, to all places, and to all persons, if it be so general and universal, it must necessarily follow, that many are the parts and members of it.

Secondly, we do not marvel that there are many members of the Church made partakers [Reason 2] of the righteousness of Christ, seeing by one man's disobedience many are made sinners. For we are guilty of the sin and transgression of *Adam*, and we sinned in his sin. When he sinned, we sinned, & are made guilty thereof in the sight of God, because albeit we were then unborn, and without a being, yet we are his seed and posterity, and were all in his loins. Through this guiltiness it is come to pass, that we are conceived in original sin, having all the powers of the soul & parts of the body corrupted, and y^e spawn of all sin is infused into us, and we are there by made the children of wra^h, as well as others, the enemies of God, the heirs of hell and condemnation. If then the power of *Adams* fall were so great, as to infect & corrupt all his posterity, then much more shall the righteousness of Christ be imputed to many, and be able to m[•]ke them partakers of everlasting life. As *Adam* by natural propagation hath spread his fault, and guiltiness o[•] his fall, to the destruction of many: so Christ's obedience hath by grace ouerflowed to many, who was appointed for the rising again of many in Israel, Luke, chapter 2, verse 34. This the Apostle teacheth, & thus he reasoneth. Ro. 5, 14, 15, 18, 19. *As by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of that one, shall many also be made righteous.* Wherefore, seeing the Church is every way Catholic in respect of the largeness, and seeing the obedience of Christ is not less available then the disobedience of *Adam*: we fear not to avouch, that the Church hath many children, as a tree with many branches, as a body with many members, as a fountain with many streams, and as an army of many soldiers, making up one Campe.

But before we come to the uses of this Doctrine, it shall not be amiss to answer a question, [Object.] and to remove an Objection that may be raised from hence. For this may seem to be contrary to other places of Scripture, where it teacheth, that few shall be saved, that few are chosen, that a remnant shall be saved, that the flock of Christ is a little flock, that the way is narrow, and the gate straight that leadeth to life, and few enter into it. If then they be few, how are they many? If a small company, how are they moe then can be numbered? To be few, and yet to be many; to be a remnant, and yet moe then can be reckoned, seem not to agree together. I answer, the Church may be truly said to have many children, [Answer.] and few members, in diverse respects For it is considered two ways: First, simply; Secondly, by comparison. First, in respect of themselves, and the several parts thereof: Secondly, in

respect of the unbelievers. If they be compared with the world of Infidels and Hypocrites, with Reprobates and Castaways, with the vessels of wrath that shall be consumed, they be a very few, and as a little handful, like a spark in respect of a great fire, or like a drop of water in respect of a great stream: for the number of the damned is far greater. But if they be considered in themselves, not compared with others, *The multitude of them that are ordained to eternal life, and shall be saved, is very great, and exceeding many, yea, so many, as no mā is able to comprehend the number of them.* Hebr. 12, 1. To express this difference by some similitudes and examples: we see in a common collection and gathering, albeit every man can give but a little, yet when it cometh together, the total sum amounteth to a great matter. When a Captain is to leuy forces, and to muster his soldiers, if he should take but ten out of a Parish through this kingdom, when they come together, and meet in one place, they make a great Army and a Campe-royal: yet if they be compared with the multitude of men, women and children, that are left behind, they are as nothing, they are as an handful, and are scarce missed. So is it with the true Church of God, they are both few, & yet many: they are few in respect of those that shall be condemned, which multiply upon the earth, and cover the face thereof; and yet they are many in number, in respect of the particular parts, as shall appear in the end of y^e world, & when they shall be gathered into one place from all places of the world.

Having answered this Objection, and cleared [Use 1] the Doctrine before delivered, let us come to the uses arising from hence. First, we learn from hence the great power of the word of God. Albeit the Ministry thereof be of the world esteemed foolishness, yet to them that are justified, to them that are sanctified, to thē that are effectually called, it is the wisdom of God, and the power of God. The Church is called our Mother, the word of God is committed to the keeping of the Church, being the Pi•lar of truth; so that by preaching of the word, the Church bringeth forth children to God. The word is the seed of regeneration, 1 Pet. 1, 23: it is milk for children, 1 Cor. 3, 2: it is strong meat for men of riper years, Heb. 5, 14, whose senses are expert and exercised in the discerning of things that differ. If then it work such a glorious effect, we may conclude, that it is lively and mighty in operation, entering through to the dividing of the soul and spirit, the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Seeing therefore the increase of the Church is by the effectual preaching of the Gospel, whereby the members of Christ are united into his body, and the Sheep of Christ are gathered into his fold, we must acknowledge the power and force of the word to be exceeding great whereby it is brought to pass.

Secondly, hereby we have matter of great [Use] rejoicing & praising God, to see the prosperity and flourishing estate of the Church, increasing and growing to so many millions or multitudes, and to consider how glorious the Name of Chr•st shall be, when all concur & meet together to praise him. The honou• of an earthly Prince *standeth in the multitude of his Subjects*, Prov. 14, 28: then how glorious and excellent shall the Name of Christ be, when so many thousands and thousand thousands, that none can number for the infinite multitude, shall assemble together to sing the praises of God, saying: *Salvation cometh of our God that sitteth upon the Throne, & of the Lamb? Prai•e, and glory, and wisdom, and thanks, and honor be unto our God for evermore, Amen* Reu. 7, 9, 10, 12. *Sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises unto our*

King, sing praises: for God is the King of all the earth. Psal. 47, 6, 7. What can minister more joy unto us, then to behold the beauty of Zion, when one member is added unto the Church? We see how men rejoyce when their house is increased, when they have children given unto them, *being the inheritance of the Lord and the fruit of the womb being his reward* Psal. 127, 3. How much more should we rejoyce and be glad, when we see y^e church which is the house of God, to multiply & flourish, *That he ma^reth a barren woman to dwell with a family, and a joyful mother of many children?* Psal. 113.9. It is noted by Christ our Savior, that the Angels rejoyce at the repentance of men when he saith, *I say unto you, that joy shall be in heaven for one sinner that converteth, more then for ninety and nine just men which need none amendment of life:* how much more then ought we to comfort our selves when y^e faithful are increased, when the ways of the Lord are known upon earth, and his saving health among all Nations? The Evangelist Luke testifieth, *That when the Apostles and Brethren heard that God had granted repentance unto life to the Gentiles, they praised and glorified God.* Acts 11, 18. And this is that use which the Apostle Paul teacheth, Gal, 4, 27. It is written, *Rejoyce thou barren that bearest no children: break forth and cry, thou that trauest not: for the desolate hath many moe children, then she which hath an husband.* So then, the increase of the Church (when one member is added unto it) is the joy of the several parts: and the multiplying of many members, is matter of great rejoycing to the whole body, and cause of stirring of us up to the praise of God, who quickeneth th^e that are dead, and maketh them to be found that were lost. In the natural body found deformed or defective, if sight were given to the blind, or hearing to the deaf, or speech to the dumb, if life or limb were restored where it was wanting, what great comfort would this bring, what great rejoycing would it work? So in the mystical body of Christ, when any part, or when many parts are added, as ornaments of the body, and helping to accomplish the number of the elect, let us break forth into joy of heart, and rejoyce that we have part and fellowship in this company.

Thirdly, let us not measure the Church by [Use 3] our own outward senses. When Idolatry and open wickedness, when superstition & cruel persecutions over-spread all, as an universal darkness covering the earth, let us not suffer our selves to be deceived, nor judge rashly of God's people. We think the Church oftentimes like to perish, and to be rooted out of the earth: but the foundation of God always remaineth sure, and hath this seal, the Lord knoweth who are his. Therefore the Apostle teacheth, *That the Lord hath not cast away his people.* Rom. 11, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. When *Elias* saw the Prophets of God killed, and the Altars digged down, God said unto him, *I have reserved unto myself seven thousand men, which have not bowed their knee to Baal.* Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. Wherefore let us not judge rashly of private persons, whether they be in the number of the elect or not: much less of whole Nations and kingdoms. We say commonly, he runneth far that never returneth. *Paul* was a persecutor of the Church, 1 Tim 1, 13, but Christ appearing unto him, made him a Preacher of the Gospel. *Manasseh* was an Idolater, a sorcerer, and shedder of much innocent blood, when he sate in his Throne and kingdom; but he remembered God afterward in the days of his affliction. 2 Chron. 33, 12. *Mary Magdalene*, who led a wicked life, out of whom Christ cast seven devils, Mark. 16, 9, had her sins forgiven, and loved him much of whom she had received so great mercy. The thief that all

his life had run astray, and hunted after the goods of other men, was upon the Cross converted to the faith, he abhorred his former life, confessed his sins, craved pardon, blamed his fellow, and longed after the kingdom of God. This the Apostle avoucheth concerning the Corinthians, when he had taught. *That neither fornicaters, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor wantons, nor buggers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God; he addeth, Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, & by the Spirit of our God.* 1 Cor. 6, 9 10. So thē, *we must judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who shall lighten things that are hid in darkness, and make the counsels of the heart manifest, and then shall every man have praise of GOD.* And let us not be daunted and dismayed at the great number of the wicked, of Atheists, Libertines, Epicures, Idolaters, Hypocrites, Scorners, Blasphemers; seeing there is an universality of the elect and faithful, though few appear to our senses, as did to the eyes of *Elijah*, who in heart & soul join with us, of whose prayers we are partakers.

Lastly, seeing there are many elected unto [Use 4] life and salvation, let us use all means to draw others to faith in Christ, and repentance from dead works. Let us exhort one another *while it is called today, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,* Heb 3, 13. Let us provoke to good works, *and so much the more, seeing the day of the Lord draweth near.* Heb. 10, 25. For what knowest thou (O man) whether thou shalt win thy brother? The husbandman planteth and watereth, he tilleth & soweth, and when he hath done, he committeth the success to God, looking with patience for early and latter rain. So must all the Ministers of God (which are his laborers) preach in season and out of season, divide the word of truth aright, and take all occasions to win souls to God. And this is that use which the Lord himself teacheth and prescribeth. Acts 18, 9, 10. *Fear not, but speak and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall lay hands on thee, for I have much people in this City.* Where we see, that howsoever *Paul* found much opposition against him at Corinth, some resisting, and others blaspheming, & himself ready to depart; yet the Lord appeareth unto him, and encourageth him to continue his labors, with promise of a plentiful harvest, & a rich recompense of reward, that he should not labor in vain, but be the Minister of life unto many. This is the greatest comfort to the Ministers of God, to turn many to righteousness. This shall be our Crown and glory in the great day of account, when the chief Shepherd of the sheep shall appear. Therefore, the Apostle chargeth the man of God to be of a patient spirit, gentle towards all men, 2 Tim. 2, 24, 25. *suffering the evil, instructing them with meekness that are contrary minded, proving if God at any time will give them repentance, that they may acknowledge the truth, and come to amendment out of the snare of the devil, of whom they are taken prisoners to do his will.* To conclude, let us remember the saying of the Apostles *James* chap. 5, 19, 20. *Brethren, if any of you have erred from the truth, and some man have converted him, let him know that he which hath converted the sinner from going astray out of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.* Where the Apostle teacheth, that so many of us as have received any gifts at the hands of God, it is our duty not only to use them to our own comfort, but to labor diligently to profit others, that so we may gain glory and win souls to God, by furthering the salvation of our brethren. It followeth in the Text.

[*Let me die the death of the righteous.*] In these words, is contained the second part of the conclusion of this first prophesy, which is *Balaam's* demand and desire, that after the end of this temporal and mortal life, he may rest with the Saints, and obtain the blessed estate reserved for them. This had been a good and godly prayer, if it had not proceeded from an evil heart, and been stained with a wicked life. This desire of his was not constant, and followed unto the end, but as the sudden flashing of a lightning quickly vanishing, or as a fire kindled in green wood, soon going out again: or as a deceitful bow, that starteth back with great violence. Hereby we learn, That the wicked have oftentimes many good motions of the Spirit, desire the happiness of the Saints, and in the midst of their malice, wish their own condition like the condition of God's children. *Pharaoh*, albeit reserved to destruction, yet had this sight & light in him, when in the remembrance and feeling of his plagues he cried out, *I have now sinned, the Lord is righteous, but I and my people are wicked.* Exod. 9, 27. The sorcerers of Egypt, ministers of the kings lust, had this light, when GOD confounded their wisdom, and they confessed before the King and his Princes, *This is the finger of God,* Exo. 8, 19. This appeareth in the Jews, John 6, 34. they wished to come unto happiness, and in the very midst of their rage there was an inward sighing of the spirit, *that they might eat the bread of life.* They had rebelled against Christ, yet in a certain remorse of conscience they wished to be partakers of eternal life. This was found in the messengers sent to apprehend Christ, and to bring him before the Court and Commission that was ready to sit upon him, when they returned empty, they said to the Pharisees, *Never man spake like this man,* John 7, 46. This is that true light that lighteth all men that come into the world, John 1, 9. & that spark of grace which is kindled in the heart of everyone: and there is no man so far given over unto wickedness of life, but sometimes he hath this touch of conscience, and remorse of heart, and grief for sin.

The Reasons hereof are not hard to be rendered. [Reason 1] For first, the light of their own conscience doth shine in their hearts to make them without excuse. This is the victory and triumph that virtue hath over all vice, and godliness over wickedness, that where it is most hated and abhorred, there it is sometimes desired and oftentimes acknowledged. Albeit the wicked have filled up the measure of their sins, hardening their hearts like the Adamāt, and making their face like flint, yet the force of grace so pierceth their lusts, that they are constrained to say, The way of virtue is better. Consider the impure and dissolute adulterer, that giveth his strength and wealth to harlots, yet sometimes he confesseth the chaste body to be better. There was never so vile and blasphemous a swearer, Acts 24, 25. but sometimes he trembleth at the Majesty of God, and at the remembrance of judgment, as *Felix* did. The proud and ambitious man, that swelleth until he be ready to burst, and exalteth himself to heaven, sometimes is cast down in a feeling of his mortality, and remēbreth that he is but dust and ashes. The beastly drunkard, that wasteth and washeth away his wealth and his wits, confesseth sometimes his own folly, and praiseth the gift of abstinence and temperancy. And this is that which the Evangelist declareth of Christ, the eternal word of the Father, *In it was life, and that life was the light of men, & that light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.* Where he showeth, that albeit the mind of man be darkened, and the will corrupted, yet still there is clearness enough to make him without excuse.

Secondly, the good motions of the wicked [Reason] are not long and lasting, but as a blast, or for a brunt, suddenly decaying like the grass upon the house top, *Which withereth before it cometh forth, whereof the Mower filleth not his hand, neither the gleaner his lap*, Psal, 129, 6. because their hearts are so possessed with evil, and so carried away, sometimes with pleasures, that they cannot bring forth full & perfect fruit to the ripening: so that albeit they begin, yet they cannot make an end, like unto the builder noted of folly by Christ, scorned by all that beheld the foundation of a goodly building, saying. *This man began to build, but was not able to make an end.* This reason is offered to our considerations in the parable of the sower, where sundry sorts of hearers are set down according unto the different nature of ground in which the seed fell. These make many steps in Christianity: They have knowledge, they believe the word, they receive it with joy; yet notwithstanding these beginnings and proceedings, they are resembled to stony ground, and in time of temptation fall away. Seeing therefore the ungodly are left without all excuse, and entertain gross sins in their hearts; we conclude, that they have oftentimes good motions arising in them, yet such as vanish without fruit, and end without comfort, and pass away without profit to their own souls.

[Use 1] The Uses follow of this Doctrine. First, we are taught hereby, that it is not enough to begin well, to entertain holy thoughts, and to have heavenly meditations, but we must nourish and cherish them, we must prosecute thē with continuance and perseverance unto the end. Many make a fair beginning, but y^e end is fearful and dangerous. They lay their hand to the plough, *but they look back*, Luke 9, 62. *Lots wife* went out of Sodom, together with her husband, she seemed as forward as he, she took her journey with him; but she did not continue and hold out unto the end, for contrary to the commandment of the Angel, she looked back, and was turned into a pillar of salt; and being left as a monument and memorial to all posterity, our Savior Christ putteth us in mind of her, Luke 17, 32, *Remember Lots wife.* So in the Gospel, one came *running to Christ, and kneeled unto him, asking him what he should do, that he might possess eternal life:* he seemed zealous in the ways of God, & even to make hast to the kingdom of heaven; but when Christ tried him and his love to God, by one precept of selling his possessions, and taking up the cross to follow him, he was sad at that saying, and went away sorrowful. He had three great pull-backs and impediments as bolts and shackles about his legs, that hindered him in his race; he was a young man, he was a rich man, he was a Ruler, or a man of great authority, and therefore all his good beginnings were but as the morning dew, which at the rising of the Sun fadeth away.

Likewise we see in the Acts of the Apostles when *Paul* had constantly defended himself, & boldly preached the resurrection of Christ, Acts 26.28, *Agrippa* said unto him, *Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian:* but there he stayed and rested, and would proceed no further. These are fearful examples: it had been better for such, *they had never known the way of righteousness.* Wherefore to the end we may not deceive others, nor flatter our selves in the good motions of the Spirit, we must carefully observe these few rules and directions following. First, we must begin to cherish in our harts, a loathing and detestation of all sin. Not of some few sins, and retain others that agree with our corrupt Natures, but we must hate all sin. If the old & subtle Serpent get in his tail, he will wind in his head also, and after

followeth all the body. If we give him scope to possess us in any one known sin, he will thereby bring us to destruction, as we see in *Saul, Herod, Judas, Ananias and Sapphira*. Wherefore, we must truly turn to God, and repent us of all sin. Secondly, we must be changed and renewed in our minds and consciences, & bring forth fruits worthy amendment of life: otherwise we may still suspect our selves y^t saving grace is not yet planted in the heart. Let us carefully look to our hearts that the work of regeneration be truly begun there. If we have once given our hearts to God, all other parts will soon follow. Our ears, our feet, our eyes, will not be far behind where the heart leadeth the way. This is it which *Solomon* teacheth in *Prov. 23, 25. My son give me thine heart, and let thine eyes delight in my ways*. One can take no pleasure but where his heart is. Thirdly, we must not stand at a stay, or look back: we must not think we have knowledge, faith, zeal, and obedience enough: therefore the *Apostle* saith touching his own practice, *Philip. 3, 12. Brethren, I count not myself that I have attained to it, but one thing I do, I forget that which is behind, and endeavor myself unto that which is before, and follow hard toward the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*. And indeed in our Christian race there is no standing at one stay. For either we go forward, or else we go backward. If we do not increase, we do decrease, like the sea y^t never rests, but ever ebbeth or floweth. To stand still is the first step to declining, and declining the first degree of decaying, and decaying the forerunner of a final falling away, and falling away the worker of our confusion and destruction: as the water that hath been heat, first waxeth luke-warm, & afterwards turneth to be key-cold. Lastly, we must endeavor every day to grow better and better, more strong in faith, more constant in hope, more rooted in charity, more settled in obedience, more abounding in all good works. This is made the commendation of y^e church of *Thyatira*, *Reu. 2, 19. I know thy works, & thy love, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works, which are more at the last, then at the first*. So the *Apostle Paul* exhorteth the *Thessalonians* in the *Lord Jesus*, that they increase more and more, as they had received of the *Apostles*, how they ought to walk & please God. Hereunto accordeth the doctrine of *Christ*, where he teacheth, *John. 15, 2. That every branch that beareth not fruit in him, he taketh away, &c.* And *Peter* writing to the dispersed Jews, dwelling here and there, stirreth them up as *new borne babes* to desire the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby &c. But alas, where is this increasing, proceeding, and persevering to be found? He that was ignorant, is ignorant still; he that was faithless, is faithless still: he that was unjust, is unjust still: he that was filthy, is filthy still *Reu. 22, 12. Behold the Lord Jesus cometh shortly, & his reward is with him, to give every mā according as his work shall be.*

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing the wicked do desire the death of the righteous, it is plain and evident that the godly cannot but die well, their end shall be in rest, their departure shall be in peace. Their sorrow shall be turned into solace, their pain into pleasure, their mourning into mirth, their heaviness into happiness. God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. No man so happy as the faithful Christian. He that liveth well, cannot choose but die well, whether he die suddenly or leysurely, whether he be taken away by a natural death, or by a violent death, whether it be by land or by sea, in youth or in age. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints: the Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none that trust in him shall perish, Psal. 116, 15. & 34, 22. Blessed are they that die in the Lord, for they rest from their*

labors, and their works follow them, Reu. 14, 13. Let us solace our selves, and comfort one another with these words. All men naturally have a desire of salvation, whē God toucheth their conscience, and summoneth them to answer at his bar. Ask the most wicked and notorious liver that forgetteth God, and contemneth him every day, that never thinketh of godliness, that giveth himself to blasphemy, profaning of the Sabbath, whoredom, covetousness, drunkenness, cruelty, hatred, slandering, and backbiting his brother: ask him I say, whether he would be saved and inherit everlasting life, he will by and by answer, It is his whole desire, and he will think you offer him the greatest wrong that may be to make a doubt of it. But these words are no better then *Balaam's* wish. *Balaam* would die the death of the righteous, but he would not live the life of the righteous, for he loved the wages of unrighteousness, and thirsted ambitiously after the honor of ungodliness, and therefore he continued in his sorcery, & went still to fetch his diuinations. So likewise many in these days have the wishes of this Wizard, they desire the death of the righteous, but they never regard their life, they desire their end, but they will not walk in their way: they are willing to end with them, but not to begin with them: they catch for the Crown, but will not come to the Cross: they would taste the sweet, but they cannot abide the sweat. If we will live with Christ forever, 2 Tim. 2, we must here die with him for a season: if we will reign with him in heaven, we must first suffer with him on earth: we can never die comfortably, unless we be careful to live vnblameably. If we would find life and peace in the end of our days, we must here seek it. If we would have God to be our God in sickness, we must be his people in our health. If we hate and abhor the life of the righteous, they are foolish and vain wishes of carnal men, to desire to die the death of those that are spiritual. For what shall it profit us to come nere them in our words, and to fly from them in our works? Wherefore, as the ungodly cannot abide the life of y^e righteous, nor seek to cut off the least lust, nor endure the doctrine of mortification, to prepare them to the kingdom of heaven, but follow the fruits of the flesh, the lusts of their eyes, and the pride of life: so they shall find their own death to be far differing from the quiet sleep of the righteous, who see by faith the heavens open for them with *Stephen*, and know that the glorious Angels are their attendants ready to conduct and to direct their souls into glory. They know that their Redeemer liveth, and that they shall see God in their flesh with the same eyes, albeit their reins be consumed within them, for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous. As for the wicked, it shall not be so with them. Psalm 73.19, 20. *They shall suddenly be destroyed, and horribly consumed, as a dream when one awaketh: O Lord, when thou raisest us up, thou shalt make their image despised.* Their death is full of fear and horror, they see three fearful objects represented before their eyes, dismaying all their senses, and affrighting all the powers of their souls, so soon as they apprehend them: thorough all which dying without repentance, they must pass without redemption or deliverance; to wit, death, judgment, and hell, the one following the heels of another. They shall know the pangs of death, they shall appear at the day of Judgment, they shall feel the torments of hell, and fire unquenchable. When they have run out their miserable and wretched race, they shall suddenly be attached and arrested by death, death shall call and cry out for judgment, and judgment shall take them, and throw them into hell, and perpetual perdition. If a man in this life, that hath lived wantonly, been clad gorgeously, and fared deliciously every day, should see these three fearful spectacles, the sword to smite

him, the plague to touch him, and famine to consume him, it were able to astonish him, and bring him to despair. But all these are nothing in comparison of the former: for as it is appointed unto them once to die, Heb. 9, 27. which is the entrance into the next plague, so after death cometh judgment, which shall be according to their works, whē their most secret thoughts shall be written in their foreheads, and graven as with a pen of Iron to remain in remembrance forever; and after judgment cometh hell fire, then shame and contempt shall be poured upon them, then utter desperation shall seize upon them, then an eternal separation from the comfortable presence of God shall overtake them, & fall upon them, and they shall have perpetual fellowship with the devil and his angels. This is it which maketh the ungodly so loath to hear of death, and so willing to wish in word to die the death of the righteous. They would live like themselves, but would die like the faithful. But we cannot sever and divorce the life and the death of the people of God, they must always go together, and follow one the other necessarily. Thus we see, as there is great difference between the godly and the ungodly in their life, so there shall be a greater difference between them after this life. For albeit all sleep in the dust of the earth, & shall awake out of their sleep, yet the godly shall inherit everlasting life, but the ungodly shall go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. This appeareth unto us in the parable of the rich man and *Lazarus*: there was a great difference between them while they lived upon the earth; the one abounded in riches, was clad in purple, and fed with dainty fare, Lu. 16, 22, 23: the other was clothed in rags, covered with sores, and abounded in nothing but in penury and misery: here was a main difference between thē. But when they went the way of all flesh, and were gathered unto their Fathers, then was y^e greatest difference of all, as if the other were not to be thought upon: For when this poor beggar died, he was carried by the Angels into *Abraham's bosom*: the rich man also died, and was buried, and was carried into the torments of hell, to whom *Abraham* said, Luk. 16.25. *Son, Remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy pleasures, and likewise Lazarus pains; now therefore is he comforted, and thou art tormented.* This is that great gulf and wide space set between the godly and the ungodly.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is our duty to stir up the gifts of God in us, and to take heed we quench not the graces of the Spirit in us. The gifts of God given unto us are as a spark of fire kindled in our hearts, our corruptions are as a water seeking to quench them. Wherefore it standeth us upon to be careful and diligent in kindling this fire, and in blowing these coals, that the talents committed unto us may be increased, and the Lord receive at his coming his own with advantage. This the Apostle *Paul* teacheth *Timothy*, who had been brought up in the Scriptures of a child, 2 Tim. 1, 6. *I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands.* Christ Jesus compareth in the Gospel y^e grace of God in the heart to a grain of Mustard seed which is small to see to at the beginning, but when it is once planted in the fruitful ground of a regenerate heart, it springeth up incontinently, increaseth speedily, spreadeth mightily, and prospereth exceedingly. If a man at the first beginning of his conversion, have some little feeling of his wants, some weak and faint desire of faith, and some small testimonies of his adoption, he must remember to be thankful for these, and seek to increase them by the use of the Word, Sacraments, Prayers, Meditations, Conference, and such like helps, that we may be always proceeding,

endeavoring, striving, asking, seeking, and knocking to know the height, depth, & breadth of the love of God <...> we must always grow up• <...> God, Psal. 143, 6. and desire <...> be given us to supply our weakn• <...> must long after him *as the thirsty l•• <...> should pant after him, as the Hart bray <...> rivers of waters, Psal. 42, 1. Blessed are <...> hunger and thirst after righteousness, for t•• <...> be satisfied, Math. 5, 6. He will give to him t•• <ϕ> a thirst, to drink of the Well of the water of <ϕ> freely.* If we have this appetite, using all the means which God hath appointed, and being careful to honor him for that which we have received already, I am persuaded that he which hath begun this good work in us, will perfect and finish the same unto the day of Jesus Christ.

[*And let my last end be like his.*] Here is a lively testimony of the immortality of the soul. For if he had believed that man had ended with death, and then there had been no further reckoning nor account to be made, it had been a vain and idle thing to desire his last end to be like the righteous. We see the ungodly live and wax old, Job 21, 7, 9, 13. and grow in wealth, their children prosper, their houses are peaceable without fear, the rod of God is not upon them, they spend their days in pleasures, and suddenly they go down to the grave. They are not afflicted with tedious diseases, they are not tormented with long sicknesses, they go away many times quietly as a Lamb, their life is with greater delight, their death is with greater ease then the life and death of the righteous. But after this life beginneth the trouble and torment of the Reprobate. Here they have received their pleasures, and the righteous their pains, therefore these are comforted, and the other confounded. They must appear before the judgment seat of God, they must come after this life to their trial, they must all stand at the bar, and plead guilty, or not guilty. The consideration of this day of account immediately after the separation of the soul from the body, made *Balaam* in this place, cry out in y^e sight and feeling of the blessedness of the Church, *Oh let my last end be like his.* From hence we learn this principle of our faith, That the soul of man is immortal, having a beginning yet is without ending, & being severed from the body, it liveth in place either of joy, or of torment, either it receiveth the reward of godliness, or it is plagued and punished for wickedness. This appeareth by many testimonies of the word of God. When the Lord had made man's body of the dust of y^e ground, *He breathed in his face the breath of life, and the man was a living soul able to live of it self, and by itself.* And afterward it is said, *Enoch* walked with God, and he was no more seen, for God took him away; to show that there was a better life prepared and to be a testimony of the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body, seeing he was translated, that he should not see death, neither was he found, for God had translated him. Hereunto cometh the prayer of *Simeon*, Luk. 2, 29. *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:* he was ready & willing to be loosed from the prison of the body, and calleth death a departure from hence. Likewise, it is said in the Parable, that *Lazarus* died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom: *the rich man also died, & was buried, and was thrown into the torments of hell.* And at the passion of Christ hanging on the cross, when the penitent thief prayed, *Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom;* he said, *Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in Paradise,* Luke 23, 43. Furthermore when the Lamb had opened the fifth seal, Reue. 5, 6, 9. *John* saw under the Altar the souls of them that were killed for the word of God, & for the testimony which they maintained.

[Reason 1] The Reasons of this Doctrine are to be known and considered of us. First, if the soul were not of an immortal Nature, the godly of all other should be most wretched, & their life most miserable, unless they did believe that a time of refreshing should come from y^e presence of God: and contrariwise the condition of the ungodly should be most blessed and happy. This the Apostle setteth down, 1 Cor. 15, 19, 20. And if the soul did not remain after this life, being separate from the body, all Religion and piety were in vain, our preaching and your faith were in vain. Why are we in jeopardy every hour? and why suffer we affliction for righteousness sake? nay, why do we not eat and drink, for tomorrow we must die?

[Reason 2] Secondly, nothing that is immortal and transitory can cite a man before God's Tribunal, or terrify for sin unknown to any other. But the soul of man accusing him for secret sins, maketh him hold up at his hand at the bar of God's judgment seat. This we see in *Belteshazzer*, when he saw the palm of the hand that wrote upon the plaster of the wall of his palace, *His countenance was changed, his thoughts troubled him, & his knees smote one against another*. Before he was thus awaked he contemned the true God, and blessed his Idols: but when God manifested a small token of his power and presence, he did shake & tremble every joint of him, for fear of that sight. This is the justice of God, revenging the sin of men, that they should tremble at his judgments that wretchedly abuse his mercies. The like example we see in *Felix*; albeit he looked for a bribe, and set justice to sale at offer and proffer, yet when he heard *Paul* dispute of righteousness and temperance, and of the judgment to come, he quaked and quivered at that discourse, and was not able to endure the mention of it. Now, if the soul were subject to mortality, and to perish with the body, it would not, it could not thus accuse man, nor draw him before the judgment seat of God.

Thirdly, the soul of man can reason of immortality, [Reason 3] it is insatiable in seeking knowledge, and is not changed or altered with the estate of the body, it contenteth not it self to rest satisfied with anything in this life. The more it knoweth, the more it coveteth & desireth to know, & the more it is able to learn, It desireth blessedness and happiness, it respecteth glory and good estimation after death: it hath many actions and operations above sense and the natural appetite of the body; as to love God, to fear God, to put our trust in him, to believe in him, to embrace religion, to cleave unto God with full purpose of heart. The senses of the body cannot climb and ascend so high to know God, and to meditate on heavenly things; nay, they cannot reason, define, divide, number, or order anything. Therefore, the soul that performeth these things, is a spiritual substance like unto Angels, not subject to death or mortality.

Now let us come to the Uses of this point [Use 1] of Religion, and principle of our Faith. First, it serveth to confute & condemn all Atheists, Epicures, Libertines, Sadducees, and the late upstart family of love raised out of the ashes of the old Sadducees, which deny the immortality of the soul. These defy all Religion, and deny any spirits, either Angels of God, or spirits of devils, or souls of men: all which standing at defiance against heaven, and bidding battle to the Lord himself, shall one day know that they had once given unto them immortal spirits, when they shall be cast into unquenchable fire, and endure everlasting torments. The Evangelist noteth out this damnable sect of the Sadducees. Luke 20, 27. Acts

23.8. which denied the rising again of the body, and the subsisting of the soul after the separation. For when *Paul* cried out in the Council, *I am accused of the hope and resurrection of the dead*: there was a dissention between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; for the Sadducees say, That there is no resurrection, neither Angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both. These Christ confuteth and convinceth in the Gospel by the testimony of *Moses, I am the God of Abraham the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.* Matth. 22, 32. Exodus 3, 6. And if these heretics and enemies of God, would not for conscience sake yield to this truth, and subscribe with heart and hand unto it, yet at least for the profit of it, and the excellency above their beastly dotage about the mortality of the soul, they should embrace it, and cleave unto it. For it is surer and safer to believe as the Church holdeth. For if this opinion be true, that the soul is immortal, whosoever believeth it not in heart, and confesseth it not with the mouth, shall suffer eternal punishment and bear his condemnation. If it should not be true (which we speak only by supposition, the doctrine being most certain) there is no danger after death, to have holden the immortality of the soul in the time of our life; forasmuch as if the soul do not remain, it cannot be reprov'd of error, nor punished for sin. Again, it is most honest and honorable, to hold the dignity of our soul received of God, and so to think reverently and religiously of it, resembling it to God & the Angels, not to debase and disgrace it, making it like unto the beasts and unreasonable creatures.

Lastly, it is better to believe the souls eternity, as fitter to stir us up to live soberly, righteously, & godlily in this present world, and to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, to mind heavenly things, that we may be holy as our heavenly Father is holy. For if we believe our selves to be immortal, Math. 16, 26: we will have a greater care of virtue, a greater respect to the reward, a greater conscience of Religion, a greater fear of sin, and of the punishment due to sin. So then, as there is greater verity, so there is more safety & security to hold the immortality of the soul against the erroneous opinions of all heretics that have desperately and damnably denied y^e same, to the decay of piety, dishonor of God and unto the utter confusion of their own souls.

[Use 2] Secondly, acknowledge from hence a great difference between the soul of man, and the soul of a beast. Every beast and living creature hath a kind of soul which perisheth with the body, so that he which killeth the body of a beast, destroyeth also the soul, which ariseth from the mixture and temperature of the Elements. But man was made after the image of God, Gen. 1, 26. according to his likeness, Eph. 4, 24, to resemble him, especially in his soul, which is of an heavenly nature, albeit not of the substance of God. This difference and distinction *Moses* teacheth and observeth Gen. 9, 4, 6. *But the flesh with the life thereof, I mean with the blood thereof shall ye not eat: who so sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God hath he made man.* Where he maketh an opposition between man and beast, and between the soul of man and beast. Man was made in his soul to resemble his Maker and Creator, but the soul of a beast is in his blood. And therefore, God charging his people to abstain from eating of blood, even of clean beasts, useth these two reasons, Levite. 17, 11, 14. First, because their blood is the seat of the soul: secondly, God hath commanded it to be used in attonemēts for sin, as a type and figure of the blood of Christ. The soul of man

is a substance, the soul of a beast is an accident, whose being is always to be in another. The soul of man is a spirit, the soul of a beast is a quality arising of the matter of the body, vanishing also with the body, and having no being at all out of the body.

Thirdly, see here a difference between the [Use 3] soul and the body of a man. For, as this truth teacheth a distinction between the soul of a man, and the soul of a beast, so it maketh a division between one part of man, and the other. Man consisteth of two parts, of the body which is visible, and of the soul which is invisible. The body dieth and is laid in y^e grave, for as it was taken out of the earth, so it returneth to the earth again. But the soul, as we have proved by diverse Scriptures, and confirmed by strong reasons, never dieth or decayeth. Therefore, albeit we be taught in the Articles of our faith, to believe the resurrection of the body, yet we are never taught to believe the resurrection of the soul. For a rising up presupposeth first a falling down. The soul falleth not into the jaws of death, nor goeth down into the house of the grave. This difference the wiseman teacheth, Eccles. 12, 7. *Dust returneth unto the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God that gave it.* The dwelling place of the body is the earth, the habitation of the soul is with God. The soul never dieth, nor decayeth, nor sleepeth, nor riseth again, but is a spiritual substance and invisible, having neither flesh, nor bones; living and abiding forever, as well out of the Tabernacle of the body, as in the same. But the body is an earthly and visible substance, consisting of sensible parts, never living nor breathing without the soul. Wherefore these abide together as two the nearest and dearest friends, rejoicing together, sorrowing together, and alike affectioned one toward another; yet the day of separation cometh, and will come, when a departure must be made of these two, that cannot always continue together: the body must return to the earth, the soul must be carried unto God the eternal Judge, who immediately will pass the sentence of life or death upon the same.

Fourthly, we must be careful to live a godly [Use 4] and upright life, that when we shall go the way of all flesh, our souls may be received up into the heavenly habitations, and be carried by the Angels into the glorious presence of God. There is no man if he be to stand before Princes, and to come into the presence of great men, but prepareth and maketh himself ready for that purpose. When *Joseph* was to appear before *Pharaoh*, albeit he were called hastily, and brought suddenly before him, yet he shaued his head, and changed his raiment. How then ought our care to be increased? and how ought we to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, seeing the day of account cometh and seeing we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive y^e things which are done in this body, whether they be good or evil, so soon as the some & body are separated? *Let us remember our Creator in the days of our youth*, Eccl. 12, 1. Let our conversation while we live upon the Earth be lifted up to the heavens. Let us mortify the lusts of the flesh, and not walk in the ways of our own hearts; assuring our selves y^t for all such things God will bring us to judgment. Therefore the Apostle *Peter* speaking of the dissolution of the world, the passing away of the heavens, the melting of the elements, the burning of the earth, and the destruction of y^e ungodly, draweth from these words this exhortation, *Seeing therefore all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hasting unto the coming of that day of God?* 2. Pet. 3, 11, 12. Let us set this day before our eyes

whatsoever we do, and then we shall not sin forever. Let us arraign our selves at his bar, and thereby provoke one another, and be provoked our selves to our duties: *For if we would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord*, 1 Cor. 11. Let us be careful to lay a good foundation of salvation, and never give over, until we have Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith, and receive the spirit of adoption to cry in our hearts *Abba* Father. For, if we depart out of this life without faith in Christ, and without hope of salvation, it had been better for us that we had never been borne, as Christ speaketh of *Judas* the son of perdition. For what will it profit us to win the whole world, & then lose our own souls? To live in pleasure, & to have all that our heart can wish or desire for a season, and afterward to be tormened in hell fire forever?

[Use 5] Fifthly, this is a great and exceeding comfort to the childrē of God, to know that after this short, this weak, this feeble, this frail life, our souls shall return to the Lord, and be lifted up to the kingdom of heaven. Let us therefore prepare our selves for death, that we may be fit vessels for eternal life, and commend our souls into the hands of God at our departure. This was it which the Apostle practiced, Phil. 1, 23. 2 Cor. 4, 18, & 5, 1.2. The greatest afflictions that can befall us here, are nothing in respect of the blessed reward of immortality, as the same Apostle teacheth, Rom. 8, 18. *I count that the afflictions of this present time are not worthy of the glory which shall be shown to us*. Let us not fear the enemies of the Church: they may separate the soul from the body, but they can never separate the soul from God. They may kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul. They may take from us a little momentary pleasure of this life, but they cannot keep us from the presence of God, at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore. This is that which Christ teacheth his Disciples, Mat. 10, 28. Nay, they have no power over y^e body further then God permitteth them, as Christ answered to *Pilate*, glorying in his authority, & saying. *Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and to loose thee? Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above, therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin*. So then, let us not fear their fear, whose power is limited is limited & restrained: death with one stroke shall set us at liberty, and free us from y^e yoke of all oppression, to our unspeakable and endless comfort. Contrariwise, this is a doleful and woeful doctrine to the wicked and ungodly, who live here after their own lusts, & follow their pleasures, delighting in vanity, and forgetting God, to consider the perpetuity & immortality of their souls; and that they must give a straight account of all their ways and works. This must needs be a doctrine of fear and terror unto them, able to break their stony hearts, and astonish their inward senses, and dash them upon the rocks of hopeless and helpless desperation. What can be more heavy news to a servant that hath wasted & consumed his masters money with riotous living, then to hear of a day of reckoning & account to be given of his Stewardship? So is it with all the ungodly, they fear nothing more then their appearing before the heavenly Judge, to be tried according to their works. Oh, it were well with them if their souls were mortal, that they might sleep in the dust, and lie in the grave forever, to be buried with their bodies, never to be raised again! Oh, their case were happy, and thrice happy should they be, if they might never come to judgment, or had been borne as toads and serpents, or worms of the earth that living their life, they might also die their death! But it shall not be so with

them, their case shall not be so well: the end of this life bringeth them into eternal torments, and when they have tasted the first death, the second death shall take hold on them. Then they shall pronounce a thousand woes against themselves: then they shall wish they had never been borne. Then they shall *weep and howl without recovery: then they shall gnash with their teeth, and gnaw their tongues for anger*, Mat. 22, 12. *Thē they shall desire the mountains to fall upon them, and the hills to cover them from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, &c.* For as they are happy that die in the Lord, being joined to him, and freed from all sorrows: so they are wretched and a thousand times miserable, that depart hence out of God's favor, & have the sins of their youth and age accompanying them: to whom he will say, *Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his Angels*, Matth. 25, 41. We see how the consideration of the Sessions or Assizes striketh a terror into the heart and conscience of the guilty malefactor: how much more then shall the solemn day of the Lord's last judgment, amaze, affright, and astonish the Reprobate, who have drawn sin unto them as with Cart-ropes, and have clothed themselves with shame, as with a Robe? This will be a day of blacknesse and of darkness, a day of clouds and obscurity, a day of horror and confusion unto them that dwell upon the face of the earth, when God shall come to judge without respect of persons. For what rest or comfort can the malefactor take when he is always in expectation of the coming & approach of the Judge? Whereas the godly have peace of conscience, and shall lift up their heads, because their Redeemer draweth nere. So thē, as *Balaam* wished, y^t he might die the death of the righteous, and his last end might be like his: so let us all crave and desire of God, that we may not die the death of the unrighteous, nor our last end be like his.

[Use 6] Lastly, let us care for it more then for the body, & bestow more labot & pains in adorning & garnishing of it. For what is the body, & what is this mortal life, but a little blast? Stop his mouth, & hold his nostrils but a while what is he but a carcass? But the soul, albeit it have time of beginning, yet shall never die, or cease to be, but remaineth eternal without an ending, and shall never be extinguished. It standeth us thereupon, in regard of the divine nature of the soul, and the excellency thereof above the body, to employ more time, and to bestow more pains in beautifying the soul with heavenly graces, then trimming & attiring the body with outward ornaments. For as the body hath his garnishings, so hath the soul likewise her proper deckings. And yet (alas) if we should enter into a survey and examination of the deeds of men, and mark what their behavior is concerning their soul, and compare it with the care they have of their vile bodies and rotten carcasses, we shall quickly perceive and discern, that the provision of the one destroyeth and swalloweth up the preparation for the other. We see how men toile and moile all their life long, rising early, watching long and late, faring hardly, laboring continually, and sweating exceedingly, to provide for the body and for the belly, the things of this life that must fade & perish, according as the Apostle saith, 1. Cor. 6, 13. *Meats are ordained for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them.* But the soul lieth unprovided and unregarded of the greatest number, they pass not greatly whether it sink or swim, whether it starve or prosper, whether it go to hell or to heaven. If a man or woman have a small spot in their garment, or a blemish in their face, we see how careful they are to correct and amend it: but

if their souls lie full of sores and corruption, full of boils and blisters, full of wounds and grievous swellings, they never regard it, they have no feeling of it; they are never grieved at it, or troubled with it. Mark the practice and common behavior of most persons, on the Lord's day, which is the market day of the soul: do they not bestow greater time, & more hours in the day, in trimming of the body, & providing for the belly, then in the exercises of Religion? Which overmuch care of the body argueth a carelessness for the soul. Doth not this bewray our contempt of the food of our souls, & a lamentable loathing of the heavenly Manna of the word of God, following after our worldly profit, & running mad after our vain pleasures? And yet these men, if they were asked, are not ashamed to say, they take more care for their souls than for their bodies. We see how far men will travail, & what tedious journeys they will take to increase their wealth: & if a little famine pinch, & hungerbite them, they will compass sea & land, & wander far & near to serve the body, & fill the belly. If the care for the nourishment of thy soul, were answerable to this diligence, thou woldst not doubt for y^e everlasting good of thy soul, to take at least as great pains to provide for the food of thy soul that endureth to eternal life. For *what shall it profit a man, if he win the whole world, and then lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give for the recompense of his soul?* Mat. 16, 26. *First therefore seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, &c,* Math. 6, 33.

Verse 11. [*Then Balak said unto Balaam: What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold thou hast blessed them altogether.*] Hitherto we have spoken of the prophecy, which God constrained the false Prophet to utter: now let us see the effect thereof. We cannot be ignorant that the purpose both of *Balak* and *Balaam* was malicious and full of cruelty: they looked for a glorious success and event of their labors, but all their practices are defeated and disappointed. *Balak* hoped through *Balaam* to prevail against *Israel*, he comforted himself in this wizard, he carried him to an high mountain to see them; he said before him (as we heard in the former chapter) *Numb. 22.3. I know, that he whom thou blessest, is blessed: and he that thou cursest, shall be cursed:* yet this hope is built upon the sand, or standeth in the air, and faileth him that trusteth in it. From hence we learn, that the expectation, hope, and confidence of the wicked come to nothing in the end. Albeit, they comfort themselves in evil, and promise to themselves an happy end, yet the issue is vain, and the snare is broken. *Esau* in the profaneness of his heart having sold his birthright, promiseth to himself a golden day, to recover again both blessing & birthright, and therefore thought in his mind, and uttered with his mouth, *Gen. 27, 41. The days of mourning for my father will come shortly, then will I slay my brother Jacob.* But notwithstanding this devilish drift and purpose of his, the blessing took place, and this hypocrite was disappointed. The *Canaanites* comforted themselves in *Sisera*, and promised themselves victory over the *Israelites*: The mother of *Sisera* looked out of a window, and cried through the lattesse, *Judge. 5, 28, 29, 30. Why is his chariot so long a coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot? They have gotten and divided the spoil, every man hath a maid or two: Sisera hath a prey of diverse coloured garments, a prey of sundry colors made of needle work for the chief of the spoil.* See how the e-enemies of the Church glory, and oftentimes triumph before the victory, and putting on their armor, boast, as if they were putting it off. This we see in *Rabshakeh* railing against the people of God, and boasting in his own strength. Let not thy GOD deceive thee in

whom thou trustest saying; *2 Kings 19, 11. Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the King of Ashur.* Hereunto cometh the saying of the Prophet *Hosea, Hosea 12, 15. Ephraim is fed with the wind, and followeth after the East wind, he increaseth daily lies and destruction.* Thus they flattered themselves with vain confidence, and rested upon deceitful hope. Thus likewise the Prophet bringeth in the enemies of Christ, & of the Church conspiring against God, and encouraging one another in wickedness, *Psal. 2, 3, 4. Let us break their bands, and cast their cords from us: but he that dwelleth in the heaven shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision, and break them in pieces like a potters vessel.* So then, when the wicked say, peace, peace, unto themselves, and think themselves sure of their purposes, they shall fail in the midway, and suddenly come to destruction, verifying the saying of *Solomon, Prov. 11, 7. The hope of the unjust shall perish.*

[Reason 1] The reasons are, first because as they set themselves against the Church, so God setteth himself against them. Can we then marvel that they are confounded and consumed, against whom God opposeth himself? they are the enemies of God, and God professeth himself their enemy. Who ever arose against him and prospered? Who ever fought against him, and prevailed? They shall consume as the fat of Lambes before the fire, and melt as the wax against the Sun. This hath been the faith and assurance of the Church of God in all their dangers that have threatened and assailed them; namely, that God would take their cause into his hands, and revenge the wrong done unto them. Therefore when the enemies took crafty counsel against them, and consulted cruel things to compass their destruction, saying; *Psal. 83.12. Come, let us cut them off from being a nation, & let the name of Israel be no more in remembrance, and let us take for our possession the habitation of God:* they prayed to God to confound their enterprises, to fill their faces with shame, to make them afraid by his judgments, to turn them upside down as a wheel, to persecute them with his tempest, that they might be as stubble before the wind, as the fire burneth the forest, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire.

[Reason 2] Secondly, they trust in lying words that cannot profit, and consequently they cannot prosper, because no man by his own strength, or the power of his own hand can bring anything to pass. God scattereth the devices of the crafty, and taketh the wise in their craftiness: so that man cannot by his care and confidence attain to the fruit of his desire, *Hagg. 1, 9. For God bloweth upon it, and it cometh to nothing.*

The uses of this doctrine remain to be [Use 1] considered and handled. First, mark hereby the unhappy estate of those that have only eyes of flesh, to rest upon the things which they see. Nothing shall be able to help them, woeful therefore is their condition. This the Prophet teacheth, *Ier. 17, 5, 7. Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, & maketh flesh his arm, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord; but blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.* So then, all they that make not God their Lord, are unhappy. If the ungodly did consider these things, that they setting up their rest upon vain things, and putting their confidence in a broken reed, cannot prosper, it would be a notable means to bridle their vanity, and to suppress their folly. If we should see a man naked & unarmed to go into the field against his enemies, and persuade himself with a blast or bullrush to thrust

them through, and throw them down on every side, and make no doubt to get the victory: we would think him s^ttish, and pity his folly; we would wish him to keep a good diet, and keep himself and his head warm, fearing the man were breeding mad. But thus it is with all the enemies of God and his people, that raise great hope by their own devices, and imagine great matters by their own counsels, they are as distracted and distempered men, they are in a miserable and woeful condition, leaning upon a bulrush, and settling their trust and rest upon a rotten reed. They build up the tower of confusion, God will come down against them, and divide their tongues, as he did at *Babel*. Woeful therefore and wretched is the case of all those, whose confidence raised up to high attempts, falleth on the ground: they trust in an arm of flesh, and are deceived, for GOD laugheth them and their inventions to scorn. They attain not to the end of their desires, but are disappointed, and so their hope perisheth; and this is chiefly in death, when they shall remain in misery forever.

Secondly, let us not rely upon such vain [Use 2] things, nor rest upon deceitful vanity, nor wait upon lying dreams and devices of men, for then all our expectation shall deceive us. What man is there in his right wits, y^t would in danger lean on the spiders web, and yet think to be delivered? Who would trust to a broken staff? who would lay his strength upon a weak reed? This is it that *Bildad* one of *Job's* three friends uttereth, ch. 8, 14. & 20, 5, 6. where he teacheth, *That the rejoicing of the wicked is short, & the joy of hipocrits is but for a moment: though his excellency mount up to the heavens, & his head reach unto the clouds, yet he shall perish forever like the dung, & they which have seen him shall say, where is he? His confidence also shall be cut off, & his trust shall be as the house of a spider: therefore it can minister no comfort to such as catch hold upon it.* Hereunto come sundry exhortations of the Prophet in the Psalms, *Psal.* 62, 10. & 20, 7, & 125, 1. If we rest upon God, we shall have a sure staff that shall never fail: we build upon that hope that shall never make ashamed; *They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but remaineth forever.*

[Use 3] Lastly, seeing the glory of our enemies shall end in shame, and their vain rejoicing be buried in confusion: let us all take comfort and cheer up our selves, and one another, when we see the enemies of the Church plot and conspire against the Church. Albeit they lay their heads together, and be very busy to stop the course of the glorious Gospel, yet this is our hope, that their hope is but on the spiders web, the gates of hell shall never be able to prevail against the Church, and themselves shall work out their own destruction. Thus doth the Prophet comfort himself, *Psal.* 49.5, 6, 7. Let this stay our faith, and comfort our hope, when we see mighty plottings, subtle proceedings, deep devices and conspiracies of the wicked. For why should we fear, seeing they wait on lying vanities, and forsake their own mercy? See this in the example of *Pharaoh*, of *Haman*, of *Sancherib*, of *Herod*, and sundry others. If other enemies in our days follow their deeds, let them also fear their ends. And for this purpose the Prophet speaketh unto them, *Isaiah* 8, 9, 10. *Gather together on heaps, O ye people, & ye shall be broken in pieces, and hearken all ye of far Countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: Take counsel together, yet it shall be brought to naught: pronounce a decree, yet shall it not stand, for God is with us.* Thus the enemies shall be confounded: thus their counsels shall be overturned, so y^t we need not to

fear them, or their devices. They are like a reed of *Egypt*, which if one lean on it, will break in pieces, and run into his hand to his great hurt.

13 And *Balak* said unto him, Come I pray thee with me unto another place, whence thou mayest see them, and thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and thou shalt not see them all: therefore curse them out of that place for my sake.

14 And he brought him into the field of the watchmen to the top of *Pisgah*, and built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar.

15 After he said unto *Balaam*, Stand here by thy burnt offering, and I will meet the Lord yonder.

16 And the Lord met *Balaam*, and put an answer in his mouth, and said, Go again unto *Balak*, and say thus:

17 And when he came to him, behold he stood by his burnt offering, and the Princes of *Moab* with him: so *Balak* said unto him, What hath the Lord said?

Hitherto we have spoken of the former part of the Chapter, which is the first attempt and the first prophecy. Now we come to the second attempt and practice which *Balaam* maketh, to hurt and bewitch the people of God, when he seeth his first succeedeth not according to his purpose and desire. Wherein consider three things: First, their preparation for a new project: Secondly, the second Prophecy: Thirdly, the issue and effect thereof, together with a fresh purpose to make another attempt, and a new encounter. Touching the preparation, after that *Balaam* had shown the true cause of his blessing of *Israel*, and had declared that he was ready for his part to have wrought his skill upon them that they might languish and pine away, and had therefore prepared altars, sacrifices and enchantments; but the Lord put a blessing into his mouth, which he was compelled to utter and pronounce against his will, according to the saying of the Wiseman, *Prov. 16.2. The preparations of the heart are in man, but the answer of the tongue is of the Lord:* After this answer, I say, *Balak* leadeth him to another place, and chooseth such a standing for him, that he should no more see the whole host of *Israel*, but only the utmost part of them, supposing that the change of place would work an alteration of his purpose. For he thought that *Balaam* was dashed and daunted in his intent, by beholding the great multitude and comely order of God's people: so that the superstitious King thought, that the reason of not cursing the people proceeded from weakness and want of courage, not from the vanity of his enchantments. As if he should have said; It may be thou faintest and fearest the people being many (as also I both fear them for their multitude, and hate them for their strength,) and therefore darest do nothing against them: thou seest all of them, and therefore thy heart faileth thee. But come with me, I will bring thee to such a place, where thou shalt take a view only of the reareward of them. So then, be of good courage and fear nothing, I know thou hast skill enough, and therefore that which thou

couldst not do out of the other place, perform thou readily and resolutely out of this place. And for this purpose he brought him into y^e field of watchmen where the sentinell was set, and where the spies lay to mark the marching and approaching of the enemy, & guideth him to the top of a certain hill, where again seven Altars are built, and seven sacrifices are offered.

After this, *Balaam* commanded the King to stand by the burnt Offerings, and himself to please his humor, goeth to see if he can have any better success then he had had hitherto, in raising up the God of the Hebrews. For to color his sorcery, he betook himself to a solitary place, not to ask counsel of God (as the true Prophets of GOD used to do,) but to perform his intended coniuration, & to raise a great expectation of his art, as appeareth in the Chapter following. Now whilst he goeth about his devilish Magicke, GOD met him, and without speaking moe words unto him, he put another prophecy into his mouth, which returning back to *Balak*, he commanded him to utter. Not that God was compelled and enforced by his enchantments to appear unto him, or had any respect at all to his witchcraft; for he was unworthy that God should vouchsafe him a word; but it was in regard of his own people Israel, that their enemies might know they were a blessed people, and witness against their wills, that they were under the power and protection of God, the poorest and lowest member whereof, God more respecteth then a thousand *Balaam's*. This was the cause why GOD suffered him not to go forward in his sorcery, or to raise up the devil to delude and deceive him, as *Saul* was deluded by the likeness of *Samuel*, 1. *Sam.* 28, 14. Albeit therefore this causeless curse could not have succeeded, if he had proceeded: yet this curse made most for the manifestation of God's glory, and the good of his people.

Verse 13. [*Come I pray thee with me into another place, and thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all.*] Here we have another preparation of a cursed plot or project. They change the place, but not their mind. The former atremp^t was dashed and overthrown: yet here we see the net is spread again, and the snare laid, so insatiable is their malice against the Church of God. We see then how he carrieth him to another place, to begin a new practice, the former frustrate. From hence we learn, that the wicked leave no means vnattempted still to seek the Churches overthrow. Although they be oftentimes crossed in their purposes, and find hard success in their intended wickedness, yet they never rest nor give over, like desperate enemies that will never be quiet, whether they be conquerors or conquered, as once *Annibal* said of *Marcellus*. This is it which the Prophet *Isaiah* declareth, *Isaiah* 29.8. Where he showeth, that it is no marvel if the *Chaldeans* thunder against the *Jews*, and suddenly sweep them away, as a whirlwind carrieth away the chaff, seeing their rage against them is insatiable, being compared to hungry men that dream they are eating, and are not satisfied: to thirsty men that think they are drinking, and when they awake, their thirst is not quenched: so the enemies do hunger & thirst most earnestly, so that nothing can content them, but the subversion of the Church. This endless & restless fury we see in all ages of the Church. The *Aramites* were subdued by Israel, and had received a notable foil in open field: but will they give over & desist? No, they persist & proceed, they repair their forces, & will not give over. This appeareth in *Cain* toward *Abel*; in *Saul* toward *David*; in the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* toward Christ; in *Haman* and his sons toward *Israel*; in the chief Priests

toward *Paul*. Albeit they be ouermastered, their counsels detected, their purposes defeated, and themselves be disappointed, that they may see how they fight, not against men, but against God yet their diligence is unweariable, and their rage unspeakable.

This truth will further appear unto us by [Reason] sundry reasons drawn from the person of God, and from the conditions of the enemies of the Church. God seeth the wickedness of their hearts, & heareth the groans & afflictions of his elect, yet he suffereth the ungodly to whet their tongues, & sharpen their swords against them, to the end he may gain glory to his great Name in the confusion & destruction of them. *Pharaoh* contrived sundry plots & fetching devices to subvert the Church in *Egypt*, some secret, some open, *Exo.* 1.17. & 9, 16. *Rom* 9.17. He commanded the midwives to stifle & strangle the young infants coming out of their mothers womb, which are the spawn & fry of Religion, & the hope of the succeeding Church. When this devilish device was discovered and disappointed, because the midwives feared God, & did not as the King charged them, but preserved alive the men children, then he attempteth another way, commanding by public edict to drown and destroy their children, & afterward vexeth them by making bricks, and carrying burdens. Thus he proceedeth from one evil to another. God setteth him up as a mark, and appointed him to show his power in him, and to declare his Name throughout all the world. Thus GOD draweth good out of evil, and manifesteth his own glory in confounding the malice of mischievous enemies.

Secondly, the enemies of the Church run [Reason 2] on in malicious courses to undermine y^e good estate of the Church, because they are led by the spirit of the devil, as his vassals and slaves to do his will. Why did *Cain* burst with envy against his brother, hanging down his head, & drawing his weapon? Because he was led by that evil one, the prince & god of the ungodly *2. Cor.* 4, 4, who blindeth their minds, worketh in their hearts, & holdeth them in full power & possession. The greatest devouring beasts in the wilderness always keep their courses & recourses, either weariness constraineth them to cease, or the light of the Sun affrighteth them, whereby the silly prey getteth some respite and refreshing: *But Satan the Prince of this world is never at rest, he is ever greedy, and never weary, always plotting, practicing, catching, destroying and devouring.* The light of the day, and darkness of the night are both alike to him: *Job* 1, 7. *Who compasseth the whole earth, and walketh in it too and fro,* *1 Pet.* 5.8. *like a ramping and roaring Lyon seeking whom he may surprise and subvert.* The end of one temptation is the beginning of another. He will never make peace with us, unless we deliver our souls unto him in hostage. *Nahash* the *Ammonite* is noted of extreme cruelty, that would no otherwise make a covenant with the men of *Iabesh Gilead*, but on this condition, that he might thrust out all their right eyes, and bring y^e shame upon all Israel, *1. Sam.* 11. But Satan, as he is more mighty, so is he more malicious; he will have both eyes and hands, he will have both head and heart, he will have possession both of soul and body. And therefore no marvel if the sons of *Belial* be stamped with his Image, and resemble him in an unweariable desire of mischief, plotting and performing day and night one mischievous attempt or other against the children of GOD.

[Use 1] Let us now carefully apply this doctrine to our uses. First, consider from hence the cause of the confusion of the enemies of the Gospel, and of the godly. They devise crafty counsels and conspiracies against the faithful, but withal, they work out their own death and destruction, and overthrow themselves in their malice & mischief. For of all such the Prophet saith, *Psal. 7, 15, 16. He hath made a pit, & digged it for another, and is fallen himself into the pit that he made: his mischief shall return upon his own head, and his cruelty shall fall upon his own pate.* The hatred of the ungodly goeth before, and the judgments of God follow immediately after, who hath prepared him deadly weapons, & will ordain his arrows for them that persecute his servants. This the Prophet pronounceth against y' enemies of the Church, *Isaiah 8, 9, 10. Gather together on heaps, & ye shall be broken in pieces: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces: take counsel together, yet it shall be brought to naught; pronounce a Decree, yet it shall not stand, for God is with us,* Behold the horrible down-fall of *Haman* an Arch-enemy of the people of God, raised up from the highest degree of honor and dignity, who thought it too little to lay hands on *Mordecai* alone, but sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom: he fell into the lowest step of shame & reproach, & was hanged on the tree that he had prepared for *Mordecai*. The advancement of the wicked is but for a momēt, & their destruction cometh suddenly, according to the saying of the Prophet *David, Psa. 37, 35, 36, & 58, 6, 7, 8, & in Job 20.4.* Thus we see, that the malice of the wicked turneth to their own calamity and confusion, so that when they have raked & ransacked all the corners of their heart to contrive means to over-throw the Church, they shall find by woeful experience that God hath many moe means and ways, to turn their own devices to their own destruction.

Secondly, see hereby God's almighty power [Use 2] and abundant kindness in saving and preserving the Church among so many enemies, as it were a little flock of sheep among so many wolves.

For we may behold a part of his chastisements upon his Church, by setting them in the world as in a wilderness, and that among the wicked, as it were among so many beasts, whereby their faith is tried, their obedience manifested, and their patience proved: so we see his marvelous mercy in their deliverance from them as out of the den of Lions, inasmuch as we know to our endless comfort, that notwithstanding, all the policies and practices of the devilish and damned crew of most spiteful and desperate enemies, yet God holdeth up the heads of his people that they are not drowned, like the Ark that floated on the waters: *Reu. 12, 15. Howsoever the serpent cast out of his mouth water after the woman like a flood, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.* Let us therefore confess before the Lord his loving kindness, and acknowledge surely that salvation is of the Lord, and not of our selves, of his mercy, and not of our own merit. This the Prophet professeth at large, *If the Lord had not been on our side, may Israel now say, if the Lord had not been on our side, when men rose up against us, then had they swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us. Then the waters had drowned us & the stream had gone over our soul: then had the swelling waters gone over our soul: Praised be the Lord, &c.*

Lastly, let us lay up these things in our [Use 3] hearts, and know the nature of our enemies, and the greatness of our own danger. Let us consider the present peril and estate of the Church, and look for such enemies. Let us all watch over our selves, and weigh our calling and condition. It is not a calling to outward peace and prosperity, neither must we look here to find carnal ease and delight, but when one trouble and tempest is over-blown, and the grief of one affliction is ended, we must not then grow careless and secure, we must not lull our selves asleep in the cradle of sensuality; but in the end of one affliction, we must look for another to begin, & always to keep watch and ward, knowing the frailty of our own flesh, remembering Satan to be an enemy of our peace and happiness, and considering our life to be as a continual warfare, so long as we tarry in this Tabernacle. If we be compassed about with many enemies, and to be put into the furnace of affliction made exceeding hot, let us still have comfort and consolation, God will make the end glorious, & the issue happy. This use is taught and practiced by the Prophet *Daniel*, where a vision of four beasts is shown unto *Daniel*, and the calamities to come successively upon the Church of the *Jews* thereby fore-shown, he apprehended this doctrine by faith, and kept it in his memory, to remain with him for his comfort and instruction forever.

Wherefore, let us not promise rest to our selves after one deliverance, the enemies will gather themselves together again: and when we have victory over one temptation, let us prepare our selves for a new combat, and make ready our armor for another assault. This we see in Christ, the head of the faithful. This we see in *Job* a man that feared God and eschewed evil, who having vanquished Satan in one temptation, he returned eftsoons, and redoubled his forces upon him with another. If this practice of the devil were well pondered and thoroughly considered, it would not only prevent and redress much impatience, but work much peace and contentment in our hearts. For what is the cause that we are so impatient under the cross, murmuring against God in our trials and temptations, accounting them heavy and intolerable burdens unto us, but because we promise to our selves peace and pleasure, in the days of our pilgrimage, and we dream of an heaven here upon earth?

But if we will profit aright in affliction, whereby our faith is tried, and made much more precious than gold that perisheth: we must look continually to be assaulted, if we would not suddenly be surprised, & so come as a prey into the jaws of Satan.

Verse 13.14. [*Thou shalt not see them all: So he brought him into the field of the Watchmen, &c.*] We have heard before how the enterprises of *Balaam* were disappointed of God, and so the wisdom of the wise confounded. Now the King, seeing himself crossed in his purpose, and desiring to make an end of this matter, carrieth him up to another place, where he might only see a part of the Israelites his enemies. Why doth he take this course? Surely because he thought he feared the sight of that great multitude, and considereth not the vanity of his sorcery. Howsoever therefore they might see with their eyes, and (as it were) feel with their hands God fighting against them, yet both of them proceed in their purpose: the King in provoking, the false Prophet in hearkening and obeying. Lo how obstinate the wicked are in evil, & settled with a full resolution to continue in their course; so, that albeit they change the place, yet abide in their former purpose, and cannot be brought to acknowledge their

own folly. From hence we learn, that wicked men when they have evil success, never look up to God whom they have offended, nor consider their sins whereby he is provoked, but lay the fault in second causes, and in anything rather than upon themselves. This corruption appeared in our first Parents, immediately after their transgression. For when they saw the filthiness of their nakedness, and the miserable experience which they had gotten, losing the good, and enjoying the evil, *Adam* laid the fault upon the woman, as the woman did upon the serpent, and could not be brought to acknowledge their own offense. When the *Philistines* were plagued, and the hand of God was sore upon them for abusing the Ark, they did not strike their hand vpon their thigh, and confess they had sinned, but do ascribe all things to blind-chance and uncertain fortune, whereas nothing is done without the decree and providence of God: Therefore, determining to send back the Ark, they reason thus, 1. *Sam.* 6.9. *If it go up by the way of his own coast, it is the God of Israel that did us this great evil: but if not, we shall know then that it is not the hand that smote us, but it was a chance that happened us.*

This like we see in the *Aramites*, when they had ill success in the battle against the Israelites, they said, 1. *Kings* 20.23. *Their gods are gods of the mountains, and therefore they overcame us; but let us fight against them in the plain, and doubtless we shall overcome them.* Hereunto accordeth the saying of the Wise man, *Prov.* 19.3. *The foolishness of a man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord;* that is, when the scourge of God lieth sore upon the transgressors for despising the Word, for abusing the Sacraments, or for practicing any wickedness, they learn not by his plagues and judgments to accuse and judge themselves, but accuse God as the author of their evils and adversities, and murmur against him for dealing so rigorously & sharply with them, like to the dog that byteth the stone, but looketh not after him that casteth it.

The reasons. First, wicked men want the [Reason 1] knowledge of the true God, to judge of their crosses and afflictions; and therefore no marvel if they be disquieted, and fret through the evil success they have in their enterprises. This made the wise *Solomon* to say, *Prov.* 19.3. *They s^et against the Lord.* The want of sound judgment and a right understanding, is the mother of all the corruptions which are in us, and of the sin which we commit. For we should ascribe to our own folly the things that go not well with us, and not through impatience accuse God, neither impute the evil successes of our affairs to him, but to our selves; even as he that stumbleth and falleth against a stone, should not accuse the stone, but his own hastiness and heedlesnes. Now then, if wicked men want the knowledge of God, and the fear of his Name, to guide them in the search and survey of their own ways, to enquire into the true cause of their evil successes, we cannot marvel if they wander up and down in their own imaginations, and can never find the fault to be in themselves.

Secondly, the ungodly are blinded with a [Reason 2] self-love and self-liking of themselves, above God or his Word. The love of the creature, or of our selves more then God, or equal with God, hindereth us in good things, and quite swalloweth up the love of our brethren, and darkeneth the light of upright judgment, that it cannot shine in our hearts. The conceited person thinketh himself a wise man, and imagineth his own course to be the best, using no advice of others, as if he himself were in all things sufficient of himself, to see what is best

for himself. This *Solomon* excelling in wisdom, teacheth to these conceited persons abounding in folly, *Prov. 12.14. The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he that hearkeneth to counsel is wise.* So in another place, *Prov. 18.2. A fool is not delighted with understanding, but with those things which are in his own heart.* And again, *Prov. 26.12. Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool then of him.* These self-loving and self-liking fools are delighted with their own folly, which they labor to publish and make known to all men, and may worthily bear away the bell from all the fools in the world. For these are proud fools that highly esteem of their own wisdom, and scornfully disdain the counsel and wisdom of all other men. Seeing therefore evil men want the wisdom of God that is from above, and abound with self-love, which descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish: we cannot greatly marvel if wicked men will acknowledge no fault in themselves, but wholly look to second causes, and lay the blame upon the most High, when they fail in their purposes.

[Use 1] The uses of this doctrine. First of all, we learn this truth, that no evil man can look for any good success in the matters he taketh in hand: but let him always be sure to be crossed & cursed of God. Albeit thou lay in thine own conceit never so strong a foundation, & work never so wisely in thine own imagination, yet if thou make not God thy Counselor, and his Word thy director, thy wisdom shall be turned into folly, and thou shalt be taken in the snare of thine own hands. For all sin against God bringeth with it the wrath of God, and the evil life of a sinner, draws upon his own head sundry crosses and calamities, causeth him to have ill success, and raiseth up infinite judgments against him. Whensoever we despise his word profane his Sabbaths, defile his Sacraments, and practice any unrighteousness against men, and impiety against God, then followeth and falleth upon us some sickness or trouble, some cross or affliction, one way or another: as the Apostle showeth, *For your dissention and irreverent receiving of the Lord's Supper, 1. Cor. 11.30. many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.* Now, when the rod and scourge of God lieth upon the back of transgressors, and they feel themselves sore plagued, either they accuse God as the author of their trouble, or murmur against his punishment, or rest upon second causes, which are ordered by him, who is the principal cause.

[Use 2] Secondly, we learn, that if we would have God bless us, and the lawful labors of our hands, we must be godly in Christ Jesus. If we lead a sincere and sanctified life, & purge our hearts to be a peculiar people to God, zealous of good works, we have a sure promise of good success, and strong assurance of a plentiful blessing to follow us all the days of our life. There is no good success in anything without God's blessing. And this is the cause why God blesseth us not, because we bless not his Name, we live not as a people under his protection, we do not deny ungodliness & worldly lusts, living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, having our conversation in the heavens, and looking for the blessed hope of glory and immortality. Hereunto cometh the saying of *Solomon, Commit thy works to the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be directed.*

This is a worthy saying to redress our weakness and distrust, and to make us rest and rely our selves on God's good providence. This also the Prophet *David* teacheth, *Psal. 127, 1, 2. All*

the fruit of our labors & cares dependeth upon the providence of God; yea, all our industry and study shall be vain and unprofitable, unless he guide all our affairs. To this purpose the Prophet speaketh in another place, that the godly, refusing the counsel of the wicked, the way of sinners, the seat of scorers, shall bring forth fruit in due season, so that whatsoever he shall do, shall prosper. It is God alone that directeth the ways and works of the faithful, and without him is no good success. This we see verified in *Joseph, Gen. 39, 2, 3. The Lord was with Joseph, & he was a man that prospered, and was in the house of his master the Egyptian: And his master saw the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he had to prosper in his hand.* The like the Scripture testifieth of *Hezekiah*, that he prospered in all his works. So *Jehoshaphat* spake to the people, *Hear ye me, O Judah & the inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the Lord your God, and ye shall be assured: believe his Prophets, and ye shall prosper.* Thus also the Lord exhorteth *Joshua* after the death of *Moses*, *Josh. 1, 8.* We do all of us desire the blessing of God upon our labors, and to have good success in our several callings: this is the pathway that we must walk in, namely, a godly life and conversation: without this, his blessings shall turn into curses, and we shall never attain the end of our hope. This appeareth by the words which the man of God spake to the King of Israel, saying; *Thus saith the Lord, Because the Aramites have said, the Lord is the God of the Mountains, and not of the Valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.*

Lastly, we are bound everyone to consider [Use 3] the true cause of evil success to be in our selves. When the hand of God is any way upon us, that he plagueth us in the house, or in the field, in our persons, or in our families, in our bodies, or in our souls; we must not accuse the air, or the earth, heat or cold, moisture or drouth, but learn to lay the fault upon our selves and sins, and fly to God to have the plague and punishment removed from us. Thus *Balak* and *Balaam* ought to have done, when they saw the judgment of God upon them, crossing their attempts; and not flatter themselves with better success, by changing the place, by renewing their altars, and by multiplying their sacrifices. They should have forsaken their old practices, and not have thought upon new places; they should have changed their mind, and not their place. For GOD is everywhere, and the godly are under his hand and protection wheresoever they are. Therefore the Lord by the Prophet *Jeremiah* saith, *Ierem. 23.23. Am I a God at hand, and not God a far off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him, saith the Lord? Do not I fill Heaven and earth, saith the Lord?* This is diligently to be considered of everyone of us, when we meet with any crosses and contradictions, not laying the fault upon this place or that person; but *let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens, saying: We have sinned and have rebelled, therefore thou hast not spared,* *Lam. 3.40.* We oftentimes can cast our eyes upon others, and sit in judgment upon them, we are ready to censure with a sharp censure, and esteem them as men forgotten and forsaken of GOD, when they are corrected and punished by his hand. So did the friends of *Job*, *Job 4, 7.* So did the disciples of Christ, *Luke 13.1. John 9, 2.* So do the men of this world: we are quick sighted, and have Eagles eyes to look into the actions of others: but we are blind and blockish to perceive the blemishes; yea, the beams that are in our selves. We can see the least mote in the eye of another, but cannot behold the blocks that lie in our own. We set the sins of others before our faces, but we cast our own behind our backs.

We must therefore all remember, to begin with our selves, and so descend to others, lest it be justly said to us, *Luke 4, 23. Physician, heal thyself.* Thus Christ admonisheth and calleth back the proud Pharisees from censuring the woman and requiring sentence against her, whilst they themselves lay without repentance in their sins, and were guilty of the same or greater iniquities. Let us all begin with our selves, and so proceed to others. Let us first of all hate sins in our own persons, and thereby we shall learn to hate them in others.

18 And he uttered his parable and said, Rise up *Balak*, and hear: hearken unto me, thou son of *Zippot*.

19 God is not as man that he should lie, neither as the sons of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? And hath he spoken, and shall he not accomplish it?

20 Behold, I have received commandment to bless: for he hath blessed, and I cannot alter it.

21 He seeth not iniquity in Jacob, and he beholdeth not transgression in Israel: the Lord his GOD is with him, and the joyful shout of a King is among them.

22 GOD brought them out of Egypt, their strength is as an Unicorn.

23 For there is no sorcery against Jacob, nor south-saying against Israel: according to this time, it shall be said of Jacob and Israel, what hath God wrought?

24 Behold, the people shall rise up as a Lyon, and lift up himself as a young Lyon: he shall not lie down till he eat of the prey, and till he drink of the blood of the slain.

In the words immediately going before, we have handled the Preface and preparation for for a new attempt: now cometh to be considered and handled the prophecy it self, which is the second in number: wherein we are to consider two things. First, the entrance: secondly, the matter it self. In the entrance he singleth out *Balak* by his name, and by the name of his father, and stirreth him up to a reverent and religious attention. Now, because he was to speak unto him in the Name of GOD, he commandeth him to rise up, as servants arise when their masters call them, willing him to hear and hearken what he should say unto him from the Lord, Note also, that to make him ready to be taught, and quick to conceive, he doubleth the sentence, and crieth out to have audience given him. Indeed he had rather to have murmured and muttered closely, then uttered openly this blessing, if he might have been at his own choice, fearing to purchase the Kings displeasure, & to lose both crowns and credit to himself: but he is constrained to publish and proclaim it aloud in the ears of *Balak*, and to repeat his words again and again, saying; *Rise Balak, & hear: hearken unto me thou son of Zippor.*

Touching the substance of the Prophecy, we must observe that the matter is first handled, and then concluded. In the propounding and handling of the matter, he showeth, that howsoever to pleasure the King, he would have cursed the people of God, yet he is not able to utter one word against them, but is made against his will, as a crier to publish, as a witness to confirm, and as a messenger to divulge their happiness, and so to strengthen that which before he had delivered and pronounced. But first he setteth down the unchangeable nature of GOD in his decrees and works, who is constant, true, and faithful in performing his will: as if he should say; At thy commandment (O King) I am come up hither, thou thoughtest if I changed my place, GOD would also be changed; but thou art greatly deceived. For GOD is not a liar, nor changeable as a man is, he will not alter that which is gone out of his mouth, nor call back that which he hath decreed, touching the people of Israel. Yea, *Balaam* himself is here made an helper and furtherer of God's providence, in publishing as an Herald, the praises of his people, so that seeing he had received a commandment to bless them, he declareth; that forasmuch as GOD will not alter his purpose, he is not able to alter and change it, neither to stand and resist the work and Word of God, although he desired it never so earnestly and instantly. So then the sum of this Prophecy is this: The people of Israel continue an happy and blessed people under God's mighty protection and preservation, notwithstanding the diverse and devilish practices of all their enemies. This truth is further strengthened and confirmed, both from the person of GOD, and from the person of *Balaam*. To begin with the former point, he setteth forth sundry special tokens and testimonies of the favor of GOD, blessing them both with spiritual blessings in heavenly things, and with temporal blessings in earthly things, In regard of benefits belonging to the life to come and accompanying salvation, he showeth diverse privileges bestowed upon them, concerning their justification, sanctification, regeneration, and comfortable use of the Word vouchsafed unto them, Touching their justification, he saith; *He seeth none iniquity in Jacob, and he beholdeth not transgression in Israel*: Whereby he meaneth not, that they were freed from sin, (for if we say, we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and there is no truth in us) 1. *John* 1, 8. but that he imputeth it not; he layeth it not to their charge, but he covereth it, and freely forgiveth it. He doth not charge them with it, but discharge them from it. He seeth their sins well enough with the eyes of his knowledge; but because they are covered in Christ, he will not look upon them with the eyes of his judgment; he beholdeth them, as well able to discern them, but not with a purpose to revenge them. Touching their sanctification, he saith; *The Lord his God is with him*: not only with his presence, but with his grace and Spirit of sanctification, For if we speak of the presence of his essence and being, he is with all persons, and filleth all places. This *Solomon* in his worthy and excellent prayer, 1. *King*. 8, 27. confesseth to GOD, saying: *Is it true indeed that GGD will dwell on the earth? Behold, the heavens, and the heaven of heavens are not able to contain thee: how much more unable is this house that I have built?* Hereunto accordeth the saying of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Ier.* 23.24. *Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him, saith the Lord? Do not I fill heaven and earth saith the Lord?* How then is this made a special privilege and prerogative bestowed on the people of GOD, to have GOD with them, which is the common condition of all places and persons? I answer, that in respect of his Natute and being, he is no more in heaven then on earth; with the godly, then with the ungodly; in the Church, then out of the Church: but in respect of his

effects, and the presence of his grace, favor and protection. For as the soul of man is wholly in the whole body, and sitteth therein as a Queen, ruling in every member and part of the body, in respect of the essence thereof, and is no more in the head than in the hand, nor in the hand more than in the heel: but it is said to be especially in the head, and in the heart, because there it exerciseth most worthy and weighty effects: so God is present everywhere in the world, even in the wicked and reprobate, in respect of natural gifts of preservation, knowledge, and such like. But he is present in the godly in more special manner, by more special graces of regeneration, and sanctification, of faith and repentance, ruling them by his Spirit, pardoning their iniquities, and remembering their sins no more: so that howsoever he may leave them for a season to see their own infirmity, and the necessity of his mercy, yet he never totally and finally departeth from them, but returneth in compassion toward them, and followeth them with his loving kindness, until he have brought them to eternal life: In these respects he is said, *to be far from the wicked, and not to come near their habitation*. Touching the next privilege, which is his word, he saith: *The joyful shout of a King is among them*, that is; he ruleth them by the Scepter of his Word, which soundeth shrill among them as the blast of a trumpet, whereby is wrought in them both faith and sanctification. Touching temporal blessings, he painteth and pointeth out the long experience which his people have had of his mercy in saving them, and of his power in overthrowing their enemies. This he showeth by a particular example of his wonderful deliverance from the tyranny of the Egyptians, who could not hold them in that slavery and bondage, but were constrained by great wonders and grievous plagues to let them go. And as he delivered them from the hard and heavy yoke of their oppressors, so he armeth them with strength, as with a shield against all their enemies, and fenceth them with his mighty hand, as the Unicorn is with his borne: so that all the devilish devices, that devilish men can practice, can no more prevail against them, then poison against the Unicorn.

For we read partly in the holy Scriptures and partly in other authors that have searched out the nature of four-footed beasts, both of the strength of the Unicorn, and of the nature of his horn to expel poison. This is it which the Lord himself speaketh in the book of *Job: Job. 39, 12, 13, 14, 15, Psal. 22, 22, and 92.11, Isaiah 34, 7. Will the Unicorn serve thee? or will he tarry by thy cribbe? Canst thou bind the Unicorn with his band to labor in the furrow? or will he plough the valleys after thee?* So the Prophet David describing his enemies, resembleth them for their cruelty to the Lyon, for their strength to the Unicorn.

Likewise all men agree about the Unicorns horn. Writers do confess, and experience doth confirm, that it hath force to expel poison: therefore his horn being put into the water, purgeth it, and driveth out the poison, that he may drink without harm, if any venomous beast happen to drink therein before him. So the Israelites are compared to the Unicorn in this place; partly, in respect of their own strength, who whilst they were obedient to God, and served him with a faithful heart, could not be overcome of their enemies, but stood victorious and invincible against all dangers: and partly because no hurtful or noisome arts used against them, should be able to work their confusion.

Now to the latter point, which respecteth the person of *Balaam*, he acknowledgeth, that notwithstanding his sorcery and devilish divination, he was destitute of all power & ability to hurt them by his enchantments, & therefore saith; *There is no sorcery against Jacob, nor southsaying against Israel*: that is, the people of God, which were his posterity, Some understanding these words, as if the people were praised and commended because they were not given to sorcery, and such like superstitions, as GOD condemneth in the Law, and had forbidden to be among his chosen people; but the meaning of *Balaam's* words, rather seemeth to be this; that the elect people of GOD were so protected from above that no sorcery or southsaying could have any force against them to do them hurt.

This mercy of GOD was so great, so marvelous, so miraculous in the eyes of the very infidels their enemies, that from hence forward *Balaam* resolveth to leave his Magicke, and extol the works of GOD toward Israel, that he had done great things for them, saying; *How great things hath the Lord wrought?*

This is the substance of this Prophecy: now the conclusion followeth, shutting up the whole with an admiration and commendation of the power and glory of God's people. whose courage and happiness shall be so great in subduing and subverting their enemies, that as the Lyon resteth not till he hath gotten his prey, so they shall not put up their swords and dwell in peace, until they have sheathed them in the bowels of their enemies, and seen the destruction of them before their eyes. The meaning of the words is not, that they should be cruel and ravenous, or to stir them to be barbarous and beastly in shedding man's blood, and spilling it on the ground, as water that cannot be gathered up again: but to declare and assure, that their hearts were valiant and victorious, so that they should be able to withstand all that did stand against them. This was performed and accomplished in *Joshua* and *David*, who fought the battles of the Lord, and trod down their enemies, *Josh. 23.10. One man of them did chase a thousand, for the Lord their God fought for them, as he had promised them*: but especially it was verified in Christ, *Reu. 5.5.* who as the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah* rose from the dead, led captivity captive, and hath put all things in subjection under his feet.

Verse 18. [*He uttered his parable and said; Rise up, Balak, and hear: hearken unto me thou son of Zippor.*] This is the entrance of the Prophecy, wherein he moveth *Balak* to attention by three words, *rise, hearken, hear*. And when he chargeth and commandeth him in the Name of GOD, to rise up, he requireth of him to give ear with meekness and reverence. This we see in the book of Judges, when *Ehud* appointed to be a deliverer of the people said to *Eglon* King of the Moabites, *I have a message unto thee from God, then he arose out of his throne*. So when *Samuel* was to anoint *Saul* King over Israel, & to be governor over God's inheritance, he said unto him; *Bid thy servant go before us, but stand thou still now, that I may show thee the word of God, & that thou mayest hear it with reverence*, 1 Sam. 9, 27. To the same purpose it is noted, that when the Law of God was read, *Josiah* stood by the Pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord. The like we see in the book of *Nehemiah*, when *Ezra* the Scribe read the Scriptures to the people, and gave the interpretation of them, *All the people stood up in token of their reverence and attention*, Neh. 8.5. So in this place, *Balaam* requireth *Balak* to rise and stand up when he was to speak unto him in the Name of the Lord, as if he should say; Albeit thou be a King, and

sittest in the throne, yet I come unto thee from the King of Kings: thou rulest over thy subjects, but thou must be content to suffer God to rule over thee: thou requirest silence and subjection to thyself, but thou must hold thy peace, & hearken with all reverence & respect when he speaketh. From [Doctrine] hence we learn, y^t the Word of God is always to be heard with great reverence & wonderful attention. Whensoever we come to the exercises of Religion, we must come with humility and humbleness of mind, albeit they be delivered and brought unto us by wicked & ungodly men. The truth of this doctrine is confirmed unto us by diverse precepts, proved by many promises, and sanctified by sundry examples out of the Word of God.

Touching precepts, when *Moses* exhorted the people without adding or diminishing to observe the Law, he saith, *Deut. 4, 1, & 34, 12.13. Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the ordinances and to the Laws which I teach you to do, that ye may live and possess the land. And afterward, Gather the people together, men, women, and children, and the stranger that is within thy gates, that ye may hear, & that ye may learn and fear the Lord your God, and keep & observe all the words of this Law: and that your children which have not known it, may hear it, and learn to fear the Lord your God. This Solomon teacheth, Eccl. 4.17. Take heed to thy foot when thou enterest into the house of God, and be more near to hear, then to give the sacrifice of fools, for they know not that they do evil.* Hereunto accordeth the saying of our Savior so often urged, *Mat. 13, 9. Revel. 2, 17, 9, and 3, 6. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* Touching the promises made to such as come with such an affection, we may read in the Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 66, 2, 5. *To him will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my words. And again, Hear ye the word of the Lord, all ye that tremble at my word.* Lastly, touching the examples of the faithful that have gone before us in the performance and practice of this duty, we have a cloud of witnesses recorded unto us. The Israelites after their return from captivity, are commended, *Neh. 8, 2, 3.* that when *Ezra* the Priest brought the Law before the congregation both of men and women, & read therein from the morning until the midday, the ears of all the people hearkened unto the book of the Law. So when *Samaria* was called & converted to the faith of Christ, by y^e preaching of *Philip*, *Acts 8, 5, 6, 10, 11,* it is said; that the people gave heed with one accord to those things which he spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did, as before they had given heed from y^e least to the greatest, to the enchantments of *Simon* the sorcerer. And in the sixteenth Chapter ver. 14. the Spirit testifieth, that *Lydia* heard the Apostles diligently, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which *Paul* spake. The Apostle *Peter* writing to the dispersed Jews, testifieth this, *2. Pet. 1.19. We have a sure word of the Prophets, to the which ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, & the daystar arise in your harts.* All these precepts commanding, promises assuring, and examples confirming this doctrine, do teach that it is our duty to stir up our attention, and to be forward to learn God's will with all reverence and readiness, when it is revealed and delivered unto us.

[Reason 1] The reasons hereof are plain and evident. For first, it is God that speaketh unto us, so often as his word is preached among us. He is a most mighty and terrible GOD whom we worship, and in whose presence we stand, having all power and Majesty in him, who is even a consuming and devouring fire, and we in comparison of him as dust and ashes, as vile

and base vassals. This is the reason used & urged by the Wiseman, *Eccl.* 5, 1. So the Apostle saith, *2 Cor.* 5.20. *We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you through us, we pray you in Christ's stead, that ye be reconciled to God.* Our Savior sending out his seventy disciples, and giving them in charge how to behave themselves, saith, *Luke* 10, 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* Thus doth the Apostle give testimony to the faith and obedience of the *Thessalonians*; that when they received of him the preaching of God, *1. Thess.* 2, 13. *They received it not as the word of man, but as it is indeed the Word of God, which worketh in them that believe.* So then, to be cold and careless herein, is a plain disgrace and mere mockery of God, worse then mocking and misusing of father and mother. He that hath to do and to deal with an earthly Prince, will be circumspect in his behavior: how much more ought we to behave our selves with all reverence in hearing the Word, having then in special manner to deal with God, who is the author of it, and the worker by it? [Reason 2]

Secondly, we shall be judged by it at the last day, being the rule of our faith, and of all our actions. It is a letter written from God, published by his Son, sealed by his Spirit, witnessed by his Angels, conveyed unto us by the Church, which is the pillar & ground of truth. This is that w^c our Savior Christ teacheth, *John* 12, 47, 48. Seeing then, it shall be the Judge by which we must be tried, and the word whereby our souls shall be saved, it worthily claimeth and challengeth at our hands the greatest attention to be yielded unto it.

Thirdly, negligent and contemptuous hearers, shall be grievously and severely punished, [Reason 3] according to the nature and quality of their sin. The Prophet *Jeremiah* hath a general rule, holding in all things warranted and done by God's appointment, and confirmeth this by a strong reason, when he saith, *Ier.* 48, 10. *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligētly.* This is more particularly touched and taught by the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, chap. 2, 2, 3. *If the word spoken by Angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward: How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be preached by the Lord, and afterward was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?* To this purpose Christ himself denounced and delivered the greatest threatening of most grievous judgments, to fall upon all negligent hearers, *Math.* 10, 14, and 11, 21, 24. *Willing his Apostles to shake off the dust from their feet, as a witness against thew, & telling them that it shall be easier in the day of account, for Tyre & Sidon, for Sodom & Gomorrah, then for them.* So then, whether we consider the person of God that speaketh, or the power of the word that judgeth, or the punishment of death that falleth upon careless contemners, we see that we are all bound to come to the exercises of Religion, with all reverence and attention,

Let us now gather some uses that follow [Use 1] from this doctrine. First, we learn from hence that everyone which cometh to hear the word of the Lord, must be persuaded, that though it be a poor, weak, sinful man, subject to the same passions that we are, which is the minister and messenger to deliver whatsoever we hear, yet notwithstanding we stand and appear before the great God of heaven, and most mighty Judge of the world, to be informed and reformed of him, and to receive his word which is able to save our souls. *Cornelius* the captain coming with his kinsfolke, family, friends, and whole retinue, made this use, which

now we urge, saying, *Acts 10.33. We are all here present before God; to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.* He doth not say, we stand here before thee, but we are all present before God; nor to hear only the Apostle, but all things that are commanded thee of God to deliver unto us. Thus *Paul* commendeth the Galatians, *Gal. 4, 14.* that they received him as an Angel of GOD, yea, as Christ Jesus. It is the high ordinance of God, to put his heavenly treasure in earthen vessels, *2 Cor. 4, 7. That the excellency of that power might be of God, and not of us.* Would it not argue an intolerable daintiness and niceness of a wanton stomach to refuse good & wholesome meat, because it is brought in platters of pewter, or dishes of wood, not in vessels of silver or gold? So is it an evident argument of loathing the heavenly Manna, when we have the precious word of God in respect of persons; and hear it not for the words sake, but according as we fancy and affect the teacher, verifying the saying of *Solomon*, *Prov. 27.7. The person that is full despiseth an honey comb, but unto the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.* This serveth to reprove those which come to the hearing of the word, as to an ordinary matter, and never have any thought or meditation of God's presence to keep them in awe, but come to hear some news, or some new man; & use the practice of the Jews condemned by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, chap. 33.31.32. *They come unto thee as the people useth to come: my people sit before thee and hear thy words, but they will not do them, for with their mouths they make jests, &c.*

[Use 2] Secondly, this serveth to condemn all abuses, unseemly gestures, and irreverent behavior when we come into the house of God. True it is, the devil (if he can prevail) will keep us from hearing the word, and suggest unto us matter of profit or pleasure, to stop & stay us from resorting unto the place of God's worship: but if he cannot so far obtain his purpose, he will go with us, and accompany us thither. When we are nearest to that which should do us good, and further our salvation, *Math. 13, 19, he is ready at our elbow, to hinder the word, and to work our destruction.* Hence it is, that many are present in body, that are absent in mind, forgetting that they have to do with God, and with the means of their sanctification. They have their hearts wandering about worldly matters, they find no joy, they feel no delight, they taste no sweetness, they perceive no comfort nor gladness wrought in them in these exercises of their faith; but they are rather a burden unto them, and take them as a weight and weariness lying heavy upon them. Many come for custom of the time, for fashion of others, and for fear of punishment: whereas, if they might be left free to themselves, and to the liberty of their own will; they could find in their hearts not to pray at all, not to hear at all; not to partake the Sacraments at all; yea to break out into open blasphemy, and say with the Atheists and ungodly men, *Job 21.15. Who is the Almighty that we should serve him, and what profit have we if we should pray unto him?* Many are carried away with dullness and heaviness of body & mind; an ordinary and dangerous abuse, hindering the saving knowledge of the Gospel. This is a subtle slight and suggestion of Satan, whereof many complain, but few strive against, and therefore spend the greatest time allotted and allowed for hearing the word, in drowsiness and sleeping: and whereas they should raise and rouse up themselves, they hang down these heads, and lay them on their seats, and frame themselves to snort and sleep, rather than to hear and attend. An unfit and very unseemly gesture for so high an work.

If thou shouldst so behave thyself to thy father or Prince speaking unto thee, would they not take themselves ••e abused at thy hands? *Balaam* chargeth *Balak* to rise up and hear, but these lie along vnciuilly, or turn their backs vndecently, or lay them down unreverantly, contrary to the religious practice of the people, when Christ preached at *Nazareth* on the Sabba•th day, *Luke* 4, 20. *The eyes of all that were in the Synagogue were fastened on him.* Many are talking and speaking to others, when they should hear God speak and talk unto them: they remove out of their places to place others, and bring them in their s••tes.

True it is, kindness and courtesy are commendable virtues. But it is cursed courtesy which is so dearly bought, even with the loss of rhe least sentence and saying of the word of God. Others are reading in the Church, and bring with them books besides the Scriptures, peradventure of prayers or sermons, or such like godly treatises, (if not of unprofitable matters) in them they exercise themselves, & spend the time; whereas they should hearken to help their instruction, and not read to hinder their attention. But do you condemn reading, will some say? Is it not a good and godly exercise? Do not men rather need to be encouraged, then discouraged from that duty? I answer, that reading is not to be condemned, and no man ought to be discouraged from reading. We do not reprove the work done, but the time wherein it is done. A good thing done in season is twice done. A thing done out of season is evilly done. To all things there is an appointed time, and a time to every purpose under the heaven; there is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; there is a time to read, and a time to hear; a time to pray, and a time to receive the Sacraments. To pray by our selves, or read by our selves, whē we should hear together with others in the Congregation, or to exercise the tongue whē we should use the ear, or to speak to God, when we should hear him speaking unto us, cannot stand with the general rules of Scripture, appointed to direct us in our public assemblies, *Let all things be done to edifying Let all things be done honestly, and in order,* 1 Cor. 14, 5, 40. The Apostle reproveth the disorders crept into the Lord's Supper, that when they should eat the Lord's Supper, every man took his own supper afore, and tarried not for his brethren, whereby it came to pass, that some were hungry, and others full, saith; *Have ye not houses to eat and drink in? Despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not?* 1. Cor. 11, 21, 22. Where he doth not simply condemn eating and drinking, (no more then Christ, when he whipped out of the Temple, such as made the house of prayer a den of thieves condemned buying and selling) but using them at an unfit time. Thus we see how it standeth us all upon, to beware & take heed of all abuses, that take away reverence & hinder attention, to the end we may with meekness receive the word engrafted in us, that is able to save our fowls.

[Use 3] Thirdly, this duty directeth us unto another duty, namely, to prepare our selves before we come, ordning the affections of our minds, and disposing the powers of our souls in such sort, that they may be fitted and furnished for that work. When the people of Israel were to receive the Law on Mount Sinai, they sanctified themselves, & purged their conscience from dead works. The Apostle having set down the institution of the Lord's Supper to the Corinthians, and taught them, that unworthy receivers eat to themselves judgment, and make themselves guilty of the body and blood of Christ, willeth them to

examine themselves, and so eat of this bread, & drink of this cup, 1 Cor. 11, 28, 29, and not to come hand over head in profane manner.

Now to this preparation, sundry things are required. First, we must bring with us diligence, to mark earnestly, and observe carefully the word of God delivered, which availeth and aduantageth us much for profiting thereby in knowledge and obedience. Diligence maketh a rough way, plain; bitter things, sweet; and hard things, easy. This Solomon prescribeth to the sons of God, Prov. 2, 1, 2, 3, 4. *My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments within thee, and cause thine heart to hearken unto wisdom, & incline thine heart to understanding, if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, & find the knowledge of God.* This Christ commandeth, John 5, 39. This also the Apostle requireth, I am. chap. 1, verse 19. We must use labor and industry, not upon some sudden motion and pang, nor by reason of some good company only, or for fear of danger, but in a continual course & earnest manner, as worldlings use to take pains to attain treasure and riches, inasmuch as the heavenly treasures of a better life, do far surpass all earthly riches that carnal men make their greatest happiness. We see how artificers and handy-crafts men follow their Trades, who rise early and sit up late, who labor night and day, who endure cold and heat to earn a little of this worlds good: but where shall we find that Christian, who so eagerly and earnestly followeth after the kingdom of God and his righteousness? Behold how Merchants compass Sea and Land, and sail to the furthest parts of the world, with danger of their lives, to get the goods of the earth. But greater is the gain of godliness and heavenly wisdom, and therefore we should redeem the time, to procure it, and sell all that we have of our own, to purchase it. Mat. 13, 44, 45.

Secondly, we must be touched with the fear and dread of God's Majesty; for fear engendereth teachableness, meekness, & humbleness of mind, & is the beginning of wisdom, Pro. 1, 7. This is so necessary a work, that GOD evermore wrought it in his servants, before he revealed himself unto them. Thus he dealt with *Abraham*, Gen. 15, 12. when he made a fearful darkness fall upon him. Thus he dealt with *Iacob*, Gen 28. He was afraid, and said, *How fearful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.* Thus he dealt with the *Israelites* and with *Moses* himself, at the delivering of the Law, and entering into covenant with them. Thus he dealt with *Paul* at his conversion to the faith, which before he destroyed; there shined suddenly a light round about him from heaven, Acts 9, 4.6. *Whereat he fell to the earth, trembling in body, & astonished in mind, and troubled in conscience.* Thus he dealt with the Apostle *John*, when he saw a vision of Christ, Revel. 1, 17, *he fell at his feet as dead.* The want of this reverent fear, lifteth us up against God, & causeth us oftentimes to check the word, & to be bold to controule it, y^t we cannot suffer our selves to be checked & controlled by it. This fear ariseth in our hearts, and is wrought partly by the consideration of God's Majesty, and partly by the meditation of our own infirmity, and serveth to correct our natural pride, and to redress our corrupt affections. Thirdly, we must bring with us faith in Christ, and believe in the promise and word of God, that it is infallible; as Heb. 4, 2. *Unto us was the Gospel preached as unto thē: but the word that they heard, profited them not, because it was not mixed with faith in those that heard it.* This is that gift of God that purifieth the heart, boreth the ear, and maketh the way for other graces to follow. Lastly, if

we would hear with profit, we must have good and honest hearts, sanctified unto every good work. This our Savior showeth in expounding the Parable of the Sower, *That which fell in good ground, are they which with an honest and good heart, hear the word and keep it, & bring forth fruit with patience*, Luk. 81, 5. This the apostle *James* to the same purpose, (who charging us to be swift to hear, & slow to speak,) addeth, *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness & superfluity of maliciousness, and receive with meekness the word that is grafted in you*, I am. 1, 21. The want of this preparation maketh so many unprofitable and fruitless hearers. No man is so simple and sottish to sow his seed & cast away his Corn, upon ground vnploughed & untilled. Shall we have this knowledge & understanding in earthly things, and shall we discern nothing in heavenly things, but suffer the immortal seed of the word to vanish away thorough want of due preparation? Hence it is, that the Prophet exhorteth to *break up our fallow ground, and not sow among the Thorns; to be circumcised to the Lord, and to take away the fore-skins of our hearts, lest the wrath of God come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it*, Ier. 4, 4.

[Use 4] Fourthly, it serveth to guide and direct the Ministers of the Gospel, to speak the word with all reverence, as the Ambassadors of God, that our preaching be with power and authority, and so minister grace unto the hearers, to the end they may think of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and disposers of the secrets of God. For how shall the people hear it with reverence, if we be not careful to deliver it with reverence as the word of our master that sent us? Hereunto cometh the exhortation of the Apostle *Paul*, 2 Tim. 2, 15. And the Apostle *Peter* speaketh to the same purpose, 1 Pet. 4, 11. Now that this gracious delivery of the word may be retained, some things are to be observed in the very action. Touching the fitting and preparing of our selves to the work of the Ministry, that we may preach with fruit, and speak with comfort, it is necessarily required of us to use prayer, reading, study, meditation, and such like helps, as may further us in our calling. For albeit we have wits quick to conceive, memories firm to retain, and tongues ready to utter, yet we must not abuse these excellent gifts to ydlenesse or vain-glory, but when we have done all that we can, account all our pains and labors too little, saying with the Apostle, *Who is sufficient for these things?* 2. Cor. chap. 2, verse 16. The Prophets and Apostles of Christ were endued with extraordinary gifts, and had a plentiful measure of knowledge given unto them, yet they ceased not to study the Scriptures. *Peter* pronounceth of them all, that *They took great pains in their Prophecies, the Prophets inquired and searched diligently the things that concern the salvation of the Church*, 1 Pet. 1, 10. *Peter* read the Epistles of *Paul*, 2 Pet. 2, 16, and *Daniel* the Prophecies of *Jeremiah*, Dan. 9, 2. *Paul* received the Doctrine of the Gospel by revelation, was taken up into Paradise, and heard words which himself durst not express, and the Saints were not able to conceive: he was ready to lay down his life, & saw himself at deaths door, yet he had a desire still to profit, as appeareth in that he willeth *Timothy* to bring the Books and Parchments with him, when he came unto him. Wherefore it beseemeth not y^e weightiness of the work which we handle, nor the presence of the people to whom we speak, nor the reverence of the place wherein we stand, nor the worthiness of the person whom we represent, to step up suddenly to stand in the stead and room of God, like horses that run away with an empty Cart, and set forward in the way before they have their load. No man dareth to speak of Princes affairs before Princes, with levity: no man dareth give sentence of life and death rashly. The

Minister speaketh of Christ, before God and Angels. He setteth before his hearers, life and death, heaven and hell, and pronounceth the sentence of salvation or damnation upon thē, as *Moses* testifieth, Deut. 11, 26, 27, 28. *Behold, I set before you this day, a blessing & a curse: the blessing, if ye obey the Commandments of the Lord your God; and the curse, if ye will not obey.* Thus much for the preparation: In the action it self, we must use all seemly and decent behavior: comely and reverent gestures of the body, have always a sober look and modest countenance, that it may appear to others, that we are inwardly moved and touched our selves with that we speak. We must utter gracious words, to work godly edifying in the spirit, not ridiculous iestes to procure laughter. We must lay aside the perswasible words of human wisdom. We must not relate stories, and tell merry tales to fill up the time, and to make our auditors merry. We must avoid all light gestures, that may bring our Ministry into contempt. Many use in their teaching, casting abroad of their arms, knocking of the Pulpit, lifting themselves up, and immediately sinking down, hemming in the throat, rolling of the eyes, rubbing of the brows, nodding of the head, stamping with the feet, turning every way with the body, snuffing with their nose, fiddling with the fingers, tuning with the voice, as if they were acting their part upon the stage, or as if they were Fencers playing their Prizes. These and such like abuses we must labor to reform, by using advised deliberation in our selves, & observing what is comely or uncomely, what is decent or defective in others. The world is full of carpers and scoffers. Many will sooner mark what behavior is amiss in us, then what doctrine we deliver, or what is amiss in their own lives. When *Jacob* sell sick of his sickness, whereof he died, he gathered his sons together, to give them instruction before his death, and not being able through weakness to stand on his feet, he raised up himself in his bed, and leaned on his staff, that he might show reverence unto the word that he pronounced, Gen. 47, 31, and 49, 33. The like we see in *David*, he stood upon his feet, to give honor to the word, 2 Chron. 2. To conclude this point, as we have occasions offered unto us to speak of God, of his judgments, or mercies, of sin against God, of the calamities of others, we must always remember to speak of the person of God with reverence; of the judgments of God, with fear; of the promises of God, and comforts of his word, with cheerfulness; of sin against God, with hatred and detestation; of other men's miseries, with feeling and compassion. Thus we shall become most profitable Teachers, and thus *we shall be as wise Scribes taught unto the kingdom of heaven, which bring forth out of their treasure, things both new and old*, Math. 13, 52.

Lastly, we learn from hence, not to forsake [Use 5] the exercises of religion, for the wickedness or unworthiness of the Ministers. Who was it that prophesied in the Name of God in this place? was it not *Balaam*, a lewd liver, a cursed Idolater, a devilish Sorcerer? And yet *Balak* is commanded to rise up out of his throne, & to hearken unto him with all attention. It standeth us upon more to regard the matter, then the speaker, and to mark what is delivered, then the person that doth deliver it. The Pharisees in the days of Christ were lewd livers, and many of them of other Tribes then of *Levi*; yet so long as they sate in *Moses* chair, the Disciples are commanded to hear them, and to observe whatsoever they commanded. We must discern and distinguish the life of the Ministers from their Doctrine. As we are not to receive their doctrine for their good life, so we are not to reject it for their

evil life. Therefore the Apostle saith, *Some preach Christ through envy and strife, and some also of good will. What then? Yet Christ is preached all manner ways, whether it be under a pretence, or sincerely, I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice,* Phil. 1, 15, 18. Although he were sorry that the Gospel was preached by such men, yet he was glad it was preached. This serveth to reprove those that will not hear scandalous Ministers, nor receive the Sacraments at the hands of ignorant Ministers, *Who have itching ears, and after their own lusts get them an heap of Teachers,* 2. Tim. 4, 3. *Who are ever learning, and are never able to come to the acknowledging of the truth,* 2. Tim. 3, 7. Evil Ministers of corrupt life, may deliver the good things of God. So long as they preach the word of God truly, and administer the sacraments sincerely, according to the ordinance of Christ, the wickedness of their persons cleaveth to themselves. If a Prince should send us a message, or offer us some present by the hands of some messenger that were an evil man, would we reject them for the fault of the person, or accept them as the favor of the Prince? So should it be with us, when God's word is preached, and his sacraments administered: we must hearken what it is that is preached, consider what it is that is delivered. If it be of God, we cannot refuse it, lest we be found contemners of his ordinances. The people of Israel abhorred the sacrifices of God, for the profane life of the Priests, but judgment is denounced against them for their contempt.

[Verse 19. *God is not as man, that he should lie, neither as the son of man, that he should repent, &c.*] Hitherto we have spoken of the entrance of this second Prophecy: now we come to the Prophecy it self. Hitherto in the nature of God, is described and expressed unto us, that he is constant in his merciful promises toward his Church, with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. This is one of the names and essential properties of God, whereby he is known to be God, who is unchangeably good, unchangeably holy, unchangeably just and merciful, and is found firm and faithful in all his promises. Against this it may be objected, [Object.] that he is oftentimes said in the Scriptures to have repented, as Gen. 6, 6, 7. 1 Sam. 15, 11. Jonah 3, 9. How then can God be said to be immutable & unchangeable? I answer, [Answer.] the Scripture speaketh of God two ways; sometimes properly, and then he is said to be unchangeable, no variableness to be in him, and that he cannot repent, as 1 Sam. 15. *The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man that he should repent.* Sometimes improperly and figuratively for our capacity, and because of our weakness, not otherwise being able to conceive of the high things of God. Hence it is, that we read of the eyes, ears, hands, arms, the heart of God, and such like. Not that these parts and members are in God, who is a Spirit invisible and infinite. But because we cannot understand how one should see without eyes, or hear without ears, or show strength without arms, these parts are given to God, to teach us that he seeth all things, he heareth all things, he worketh all things in Heaven and earth, as pleaseth him. Thus is God set sometime before us, as it were turned and transfigured into our nature, and (as one said) *He hath not these things by nature, but by effect.* The change is not in GOD, but in his work. Repentance in him is no perturbation or grief, he knoweth all things, and is ignorant of nothing. When he is said to repent that he made man, the meaning is, he determined to destroy him whom before he had created. When he is said to repent of making *Saul* King, the meaning is, he determined to take the

kingdom from him, to whom before he had assigned it, and whom he caused to be anointed. So then, we have here in this attribute, a testimony of the constancy of God.

From hence we learn, that God is vnchangable, infallible, faithful, & true in all his ways, words, and works. His decrees are immutable and irrevocable, and without show or shadow of turning. This is that which the Lord claimeth and challengeth to himself, *I am the Lord: I change not: I am God, and there is none other God, there is nothing like me. My counsel shall stand, and I will do whatsoever I will.* So the Prophet speaketh in the Psalm 105, 7, 8, 10. *He is the Lord our God, his judgments are thorough all the earth: he hath always remembered his covenant and promise that he made to a thousand generations, and since hath confirmed it to Jacob for a Law, and to Israel for an everlasting Covenant.* To this purpose the Apostle saith, *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance,* Rom. 11, 29. By all these places we see this truth plainly proved unto us, that God is unchangeable in his mercy and goodness toward his Church and Children.

[Reason 1] The Reasons follow to be considered. First, he is not like unto man, his ways are not like man's ways, nor his thoughts like unto man's thoughts: but as far as Heaven is distant from the Earth, so far are the works of God from ours. We know by experience y^e changeable nature of man, of whom the Scripture saith, *All men are liars,* Psal. 116, 11. He is ready to say and unsay, to affirm and deny with one breath. He is constant today, he changeth tomorrow. He loveth one day, and hateth another. The people that received Christ with great joy when he rode to Jerusalem, not long after cried out, *Crucify him, crucify him.* It is not so with God, whose mercy endureth forever, he falsifieth not his truth, neither alreth the thing that is gone out of his mouth, *He giveth liberally unto all, and reproacheth no man.*

[Reason 2] Secondly, his love and mercy to his people is not changeable as the Moon, unconstant as the wind, floating as the sea, uncertain as the weather, but stable as the earth that cannot be moved out of his place, and steadfast as Mount Zion that remaineth forever. This will plainly appear unto us, if we consider the similitudes and comparisons whereby it is expressed. His love is like to the Covenant of waters, & as sure as the promise that he made to *Noah*, that the waters should no more overflow the whole earth, as the Prophet *Isaiah* teacheth, chap. 54, 7, 8, 9.

[Reason 3] Again, his goodness is as the ordinance of God, that hath set an order for Summer & Winter, for day and night, for seed-time and harvest, for cold and heat, which shall not be changed, therefore the Lord saith by his Prophet, *If thou can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, that there should not be day and night in their season, then may my covenant be broken with David my servant.* Ier. 31, 35, and 33, 20. Nay, his mercy is said to be more stable then the Mountains; *for they shall remove, and the hills shall fall down, but my mercy shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace fall away, saith the Lord, that hath cōpassion on thee,* *Isaiah* 54, 10. We see the love of mothers is tender & full of pity toward their children, who bare thē in her womb, brought them into the world, nourished them with her breasts, and refused no base service for their good; yet the Lord saith, *Can a woman forget her child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Though they forget, yet will not I forget thee,* *Isaiah* 49, 15. Seeing therefore, that God is not like to the sons of men, and seeing his loving kindness is firmer then the waters of *Noah*, surer then the covenant of the day, faster then

the foundation of the Mountains, and stronger thē the love of mothers toward their children, we may conclude, that the stablenes of his counsels are as the Pillars of the earth, that cannot be shaken, and the changeablenes of his goodness, as the standing Rocks that cannot be removed.

Now let us come to the uses of this Doctrine. [Use 1] First, hereby we learn, that God is to be preferred before all creatures. They are changeable and subject to alteration, which agreeth not with the nature of God. True it is, God hath highly honored and advanced man above the rest of the works of his hands, he made him a little inferior to the Angels, & crowned him with glory & dignity, Ps. 8, 5, he hath made him Ruler over the earth, & put all things in subjection under his feet; yet he is subject to mutability and mortality, and must return unto the earth, out of which he was taken. Great is the excellency of the heavens and the stars, yet they shall be changed & delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But with God is no change, neither any alteration with the Almighty, who remaineth one & the same forever. This difference between the Creator and the creature, between God, and the works of God, the Prophet teacheth; *Thou Lord hast in the beginning established the Earth, & the Heavens are the works of thine hands, They shall perish, but thou shalt remain, and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, & thy years shall not fail.* Thus we must magnify the Lord above all creatures that are weak and frail, and acknowledge a great difference between the infinite and incomprehensible Majesty of God, subject to no change at all, but remaining the same forever; and the creatures of God, subject to vanity & misery.

[Use 2] Secondly, we may from hence assure our selves, that God will make us unchangeable like himself, and we may rejoice in the comfort of this his favor. For seeing his nature is unchangeable, and altereth not, he will make us in our measure partakers of immortality, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, this weak shall put on power, and death be swallowed up in victory, we shall be like the Angels of God; nay, be transformed into the lively Image of God, to reign with him in everlasting glory. This is a great comfort unto us in these days of sorrow, to consider that the time will come, when our state shall be changed, and we continue forever without change. Here we are subject to many turnings and returnings, but after this life shall be no more place for changing: our happiness shall be unchangeable, and firmly established with God. This the Prophet sets down, Psal. 16, 12. *In thy presence is fullness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.* This the Apostle confirmeth, describing the second coming of Christ to judgment, *The dead in Christ shall rise, and we which live and remain, shall be caught up with them in the Clouds, so shall we ever be with the Lord.* 1 Thess. 4, 17. This circumstance serveth to commend the happiness of y^e godly, in that after they have once made an entrance into it, & taken possession of that heavenly inheritance, they shall never have experience of any change, nor find any ende or intermission of euerl•sting glory. When we shall lay down this earthly tabernacle, & be clothed with immortality, we shall taste of a better condition then ever Adam had in his greatest felicity. True it is, Adam in his innocence had a glorious estate, and he was created in the Image of God, according to his likeness; yet withal he was made mutable & changeable, as we see by the event, for he fell from all his glory, so that the excellency of his

dignity, and the excellency of his power were lost, and turned into weakness and misery: but so many as shall reign in the kingdom of heaven, shall live forever, & be unchangeable, they shall never fall away, but shall be unmovable. So then hereby we see to our endless comfort and consolation, that so many as be true members of Christ, have mortified the corruptions of the old man, to bring forth the fruits of a sanctified life, have lost nothing by the fall of *Adam*, but shall recover a more excellent estate in Christ, then ever they lost in *Adam*, so that our loss is turned to be gain and advantage unto us.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it teacheth that it is time for us to repent and turn unto God. Every soul that will escape the wrath of God, and be partaker of his mercies, must be fashioned anew & framed to please God, sanctifying his heart, and changing his will to be agreeable to the will of God. For God will never apply himself to us, nor alter that which is already gone out of his mouth. Many in this life take a privilege unto themselves by reason of their high places, riches, friends, & other outward respects, to sin against God, and claim a toleration and qualification to be borne withal above others. But with the Lord there is no partiality to be found, but being a most constant God in all his doings, he observeth one rule & way with all he regardeth no man's person or persons, nor accepteth any gift or reward; he favoureth the Prince no more then the Subject, the honorable no more thē the base of birth, the rich no more then the beggar, but dealeth with all sorts of men and women, according to that which he hath already in justice and righteousness determined in his word, that is, *To them which are contentious, and disobey the truth, he sendeth indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil, the Jew first, and then the Gentile; but unto those that continue through patience in well doing, he giveth glory and honor, &c.* Rom. chap. 2, ver. 8. This admonisheth us, that we deceive not our selves in hoping for another manner of dealing from God, then he hath already manifested in his word. It is a common practice in the world, when we are admonished of any duty, or reprov'd of any sin, and hear the penalty thereof denounced out of the word, to answer, We hope it is not so hard as you would bear us in hand, we trust God will disspence with us if we do no worse, there are few or none but offend in as great matters as these. And thus, although not plainly and peremptorily, yet in very deed we do as much as if we accused God to be a liar, to be inconstant and deceiveable, and his word to be a counterfeit word, which notwithstanding is said to be like unto silver, which is seven times tried in the fire. It hath no dross or deceit in it, it hath never failed or beguiled any. An unchangeable God, an unchangeable word. Let us be transformed into the obedience of it. It is not a leaden rule to bend every way to us. All our ways must be brought and framed unto it. And when once we are turned to God, let us not return back again to our old ways, but persevere and continue constant unto the end. The unchangeable God requireth an unchangeable servant. As he is everlasting and eternal, so he requireth faith and obedience to remain and endure with us to the last breath.

Lastly, herein is great comfort offered to [Use 4] the seruan s of GOD, as on the other side, horror to the wicked and disobedient. For seeing GOD is immutable, the same now which he hath been heretofore, and so is to continue forever, we may from hence take strong consolation by former examples of God's dealing toward his dearest children, and in all temptations and trials build our selves upon that blessed experience, as upon a sure

foundation that can never fall or fail us. As God hath heretofore never forsaken those that trusted in him, rested and relied upon him, but loved those forever, *whom he loved once*, preserved and defended the godly from the rage of their enemies, his gifts toward them being without repentance: so will he continue unto the end of the world; and therefore *David* saith, that in his experience he *never saw the righteous forsaken*, Psal. 37, 25. And our Savior saith in the Prophet, that *They are Plants, planted by God, that shall never be plucked up*. Isaiah 61, 3. Thus the Apostle teacheth, that *The foundation of God standeth sure, and hath this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his*, 2 Tim. 2, 19. We have heard of the patience of *Job*, and know what end the Lord made, Job 5, 11, albeit he did try him, yet he did not destroy him, albeit he did afflict him, yet he did not leave him, *Many have been the troubles of the righteous, yet the Lord delivereth them out of them all*, Psal. 34, 19. *They have been stoned, they were hewn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword, they wandered up and down in sheep-skins, and in goats skins, being destitute, afflicted, & tormented*, Heb. 11, 37, yet he evermore succored them in their temptations, so that they became more then Conquerors through him that loved them, and were made able to comfort others. His right hand is not shortened, he is ever the same, yesterday, and today, and abideth like himself forever. He will deal with us, as he hath dealt with them. He will show himself toward his children in these days, as he shown himself toward our fathers in former times. He doth not show himself to be one God in our age, another God in another age: but in all ages and generations he is one & the same to his people, to our endless comfort and consolation. And as this ought to be effectual, to stay us in our obedience, because God will continue the same God of mercy and truth unto us, without alteration, which he was to *Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph*, and all the faithful, so highly renowned and greatly commended in the Scriptures: so it must serve to be a bridle in the jaws of the ungodly and profane wretches of the world, that as he hath plagued, consumed, and thrown down into the bottomless pit of hell, the wicked heretofore that rebelled against him, and resisted his will; so he is unchangeable in Name and Nature, and therefore he will do the same to them now, and to as many as shall walk in their steps forever. This we may see to be a plain case in the righteousness of God, Eccl. 8, 12, 13. *Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and God prolongeth his days, yet I know it shall be well with them that feare the Lord, and do reverence before him: but it shall not be well to the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, he shall be like a shadow, because he feareth not before God*. And the Apostle *Jude* in his Epistle, alledgeth and applieth the examples of God's vengeance vpon the wicked past, to those present, and to come; showing, that if God spared not the Angels that had sinned, but cast them down into hell, and delivered them unto chains of darkness, to be kept unto damnation: neither spared the old world, but brought in the flood upon the ungodly, &c. Let us remember, that we shall find God the same toward us forever, & never presume that he can or will be changed now from that which he hath been heretofore toward others.

[Verse 21. *He seeth not iniquity in Jacob, he beholdeth not transgression in Israel.*] Hitherto we have spoken of the vnchangeableness of God's love toward his Church. Now let us see the reasons of it, both in spiritual things, and then in temporal. The chiefest privilege of the Church, standeth in the fruition and enjoying of spiritual blessings. Among all spiritual blessings, this is one of the chiefest, Remission of sins. This is expressed by this phrase, that

God seeth not sin in them, that is, he forgiveth their iniquity, and imputeth not sin unto them. To the same purpose the Prophet saith, *Our sins are covered*, Psalm. 32, verse 1.

These may seem at the first, strange speeches and phrases. For shall not he that made the eye, see? Psalm 94. Shall not he that made the ear, hear? He that made the heart, shall not he understand and know the secrets of the heart? Are not all things naked and open before him? or can any hide himself from his presence, and wind himself from his providence? The meaning is not, that God doth not behold them, but it is a borrowed speech from the custom of men, which lay away those things out of sight, which they do not use, or would not remember: so that he doth not see them when he doth not punish them, he covereth them when he doth pardon them, and account them as if they were never committed. So *Hezekiah* saith, Esa. 38, 17. *God had cast his sins behind his back*. Thus the Prophet speaketh, Isaiah 1, 18. *Though your sins were as Crimson, they shall be made white as Snow: though they were red as Scarlet, they shall be as wool*. And chap. 44, 22. *I have put away thy transgressions like a Cloud, and thy sins as a Mist*, So the Prophet *Micah* saith, chap. 7, 19. *He will turn again and have compassion upon us: he will subdue our iniquities, and cast all their sins into the bottom of the sea*. From all these Testimonies we learn this truth, That to every true member [Doctrine] of the Church, belongeth the forgiveness of all their sins. It is a peculiar privilege of the faithful for the merits and righteousness of Christ, to have their sins forgiven, whereby it cometh to pass, that God esteemeth of sin as no sin, and of iniquity, as if it had never been committed.

Here then we have offered to our considerations, a principal and fundamental point of our Christian Religion, and of the holy faith, That all our sins, wants, and impections, original, and actual, as well in the committing of evil, as in omitting of good, in thought, word, & deed, are covered, healed, and released thorough the righteousness of Christ imputed unto us: which being apprehended by faith, and applied unto us, doth not only make them as if they had never been, but also justify & discharge us, causing us to appear blameless and spotless in the sight of God. Thus God proclaimeth him self to be a most gracious and merciful God, readily inclined to forgive sins, Exod. 34, 6, 7. Isaiah 33, 24. and 43, 25. Ier. 31, 31, 32. and 33, 8.

[Reason 1] And this truth, to wit, that justification stãdeath in the remission of sins, through the satisfaction of Christ, is confirmed unto us by sundry reasons out of the word of GOD. For first we must appear as just and perfect in God's sight, either by the imputatiõ of Christ's righteousness, or by the merit of our own works; there is no third way can be devised. This is a full distribution of causes, as appeareth by the Apostle, speaking of the election and calling of the Jews, Rom. 11, 6. *If it be of grace, it is no more of works, or else were grace no more grace: but if it be of works, it is no more grace, or else were work no more work*. Thus we see he maketh an opposition between the grace of God, and the works of men. But no works can justify us, neither of congruity, nor condignity; neither of nature nor of grace wrought in us by the spirit of God, but by God's acceptation of the intercession and merits of his own Son. This the Apostle witnesseth, Rom. 3, 20. Gal. 3, 6. *By the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified in his sight*. And in another place, *I count all things but loss for the excellent knowledge sake of Christ Jesus my Lord, that I might be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law,*

but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God through faith, Phil. 3, 7, 8, 9.

[Reason 2] Secondly, whatsoever giveth the creature cause of boasting, and robbeth God of his glory, may not be admitted, and cannot be accepted in the work of our justification. But all things saving the righteousness of Christ, minister to us matter of boasting, & deprive God of the honor and glory due to his name. This the Apostle teacheth in sundry places, Rom. 4, 2. *If Abraham were justified by works, he hath wherein to rejoice, but not with God. By grace are ye saved thorough faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast himself.* So then, our justification standeth not in our good works, but in that God pardoneth our evil works. For we have all been as an unclean thing, *And all our righteousness is as filthy clouts,* Isaiah ch. 64. ver. 6.

[Use 1] Now, let us make use of this doctrine. First, this ministereth great comfort to the faithful that are in Christ. The glory and happiness of our souls and bodies in this life, & in the life to come consisteth herein. The forgiveness of sins comprehendeth under it, as it were in a short sum, all the mercies of God. This is it which the Prophet Isaiah teacheth, chap 40, 1. So *David* declareth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not his sin,* Psal. 32, 1, 2, 7. This mercy of God will be sweet unto us, and cheer up our hearts with unspeakable comfort, and give us joy in the holy Ghost, if we consider these circumstances, that we daily offend God after our new birth, that all sin is odious in it self, and maketh us vile and abominable in the sight of God, keeping all good things from us, and pulling down all evil upon us, and that the wages thereof is death, being able to press us down to the very bottom of the gulf of hell, Ier. 5, 25. Isaiah 59, 1, 2, 3. If a man had all the skill of wise *Solomon*, to speak as he did of the nature of beasts, of birds, and creeping things, & knew the virtues of all trees and plants, from the Cedar that is in Libanus, unto the Hyssop that springeth out of the wall, and were ignorant of this blessed privilege, and had not the comfortable assurance of it in his conscience, it could not avail or profit him one whit. It might peradventure delight the outward man for a season, but wanting the sweet feeling of God's favor in washing away his sins, the other can be but vanity and vexation of spirit. If a man were able to measure the heavens, & to tell the order, height, distances, influences, and number of the stars, and yet be ignorant at home, and do not know what is done, as it were within his own house, and within the doors and clossets of his own heart, what should it profit him thus to gaze up into heaven, when the burden of sin is ready to thrust him down to hell? If a man were so excellent and expert, as out of the knowledge of herbs and Simples to remedy all the diseases of the body, yet if he be not able to salve the sores of his soul & know not how the sicknesses and infirmities thereof shall be cured, this can be little comfort to him; for then he may have a sound body, but an infected soul; an healthy body, but a sickly soul, full of the botches and blemishes of sin, which of all diseases is most dangerous and deadly. If a man had the knowledge of all laws, and statutes, and were able to decide any controversy, and end any suite between man & man, yet is not assured how himself shall be acquitted, when the Judge of all the world shall come and hold his Assizes, and how things shall stand with him: it can bring no peace unto

him, seeing God hath a controversy against him so long as his sins are unpardoned Hos. 4, 1. What shall it profit a man to be passing well seen in music, by voice or instrument, to be skilful in reports and descant, and be always troubled with a iarring conscience? Last of all, what shall it avail, if a man understood all Arts and Mysteries, if he could work miracles, and speak with the tongues of men and Angels, if he knew all sciences and secrets of nature, yet were ignorant of the forgiveness of his sins, and of the grace of Christ? whom only if we know, the matter is not great if we know nothing else: whom if we know not, it is worth nothing if we know all things in the world beside.

[Use 2] Secondly, woeful is their estate that are not of the Church, that are not in Christ, that are without true faith and feeling of this heavenly doctrine. Wretched and miserable is the condition of many thousands in the world, w^c want this assurance; it is such a burden as •tayeth us from the heavens, and weigheth us •own to hell. Pouerty is a great burden, the •word, famine, pestilence, imprisonment, sickness, oppression, and such crosses are indeed •eavy burdens; but the burden of sin sur•ounteth them all. Therefore the Prophet •aith Psal. 38, 4. *Mine iniquities are gone over mine head, and as weighty burdens they are too heavy.* Hence it is that the Apostle exhorteth us, Heb. 12, 1, to cast off everything that presseth down, and the sin that hangeth so fast on, that so we may run with patience the race that is set before us. So heavy it was on the Angels that kept not their first estate, *That it cast them down to hell, and they are reserved in chains unto the judgment of the great day,* 2 Pet. 2, 4. So heavy it was upon the shoulders of *Dathan* and *Abiram*, that the earth was not able to hold them, but received them to destruction. Yea, it is so intolerable a burden, as it bringeth terrors and horrors that cannot be expressed, and leadeth to the gulf of desperation, when God chargeth the conscience with sin: so that though a man had all riches and honors, all pleasures and delights, all kingdoms and glory of the world, what joy or comfort can he feel in these things, so long as he is not at peace with his God? Contrarywise, he that is eased of this weight, & lightened of this burden, though he have all the troubles, crosses, and afflictions of *Job*, be laid in fetters with *Joseph*, be banished his country with *Moses*, be cast to the Lions with *Daniel*, he put in the stocks with *Jeremiah*, be fed with bread of affliction with *Micaiah*, and have no more comfort and compassion shown unto him then the poor beggar in the Gospel to have the dogs lick his sores, though his estate be vile, contemptible, and miserable to the world: yet so long as he hath a discharge of his debt, a pardon of his sin, & a cancelling of the bill of enditement drawn against him, written in his heart, and feels that peace of conscience which passeth all understanding, sealing him up to the day of redemption; this man before God is most happy and blessed forever. But if sin be imputed unto us, and God enter into judgment with us, *Who shall be able to stand before him, or be righteous in his sight?* Psal. 130, 3. & 143, 2. This feeling of sin and wound of conscience, which y^e stroke of God's hand hath made, will weary the strongest and lustiest man that liveth, when he shall open the eye to see, and the heart to feel the horror thereof, together with the heaviness of his wrath & indignation for the same. This made *Cain* to speak desperately, *My punishment is greater then I can bear,* Gen. 4, 13. This made *Judas* to do desperately, when he wrought his own destruction, and hanged himself, Mat. 27.5. This made *David* to say, *If thou Lord straitly markest iniquities, who is he that shall be able to endure thy judgment?* They then are grossly

deceived, and most unhappy, who think happiness to consist in committing of sins with all greediness. These are in the number of those fools (howsoever worldly wise) that make a mock of sin, Prov. 14, 9, 12, 13. There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the issues thereof are the ways of death: even in laughing the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness. The world hath always been full of such fools, but if they depart hence without the feeling of God's favor in the forgiveness of their offenses, it had been good for them that they had been brute beasts, or that they had never been borne, as it is said of *Judas*, Math. 26, 24. *No unclean thing shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Such as have not their sins pardoned, have no part in Christ. Out of Christ there is no salvation, nor unto such any imputation of his righteousness. Sin shutteth up the way that leadeth unto life, it separateth us from God and his Kingdom, it maketh us the children of the devil, & God displeased with us: for they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Thirdly, we see some are happy in this life [Use 3] and attain to the certainty of their salvation. The salvation of the Church standeth in the remission of their sins, Luke 1, •7. We do not then begin to be happy when at the end of our days we enter into the kingdom of heaven: but while we are upon the earth, we lay the foundation of our happiness, and set the first stones of it, or else we never attain unto it. We are all in this life builders, 1 Cor. 3, 9. We have a great and weighty work to set up, it requireth a long time and great labor to bring it to pass and perfection. Every day of our life should add somewhat to the building; & this day should make it in greater forwardness then the former. Let us diligently consider these things, and seriously examine our selves what we have done for the furthering of our salvation, whether we have already made an happy entrance into it. So soon as we begin, and the first stone is laid, the door of the kingdom of heaven is opened unto us. The further we proceed, the nearer we come to the mark. This our Savior preached to his hearers, John 5, 24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, & believeth him that sent me, hath everlasting life: and shall not come into condemnatiō, but hath passed from death to life.* When *Zacchaeus* was converted to the faith, and testified the sincerity of his repentance by actual restitution, he said, *This day is salvation come unto this house, forasmuch as he is also become the son of Abraham*, Luke 19, 9. So the Apostle speaketh, Rom. 13, 11, *Considering the season, it is now time that we should arise from sleep: for now is our salvation nerer then when we believed it.* And in that holy Prayer of Christ recorded by the Evangelist *John*, he saith, *This is eternal life to know thee to be the only very God, & whom thou hast sent Jesus Christ*, John 17, 3. This is the great mercy of God to give us here a taste of the glory to come. We have here as it were the first fruits of eternal life, and by hope possess that which we shall really inherit: so we may truly say with the Apostle, 2 Tim. 1, 12, *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* Heereby we see, that it is not a doctrine of pride and presumption (as the Church of Rome teacheth) to believe the remission of our own sins. For generally to believe y^t God forgiveth sin, or that some men have their sins forgiven, is no privilege of the Church, but the common faith of the devils, I am. 2, 19. All the Articles contain the confession of a special faith, and a particular application to our selves. As I must believe God the Father to be my Creator, the Son my Redeemer, the holy Ghost to be my Sanctifier: so I am bound to believe the remission of mine

own sins, the resurrection of mine own body, and that life everlasting shall be given to me. Thus the Apostle speaketh, Gal. 2, 20: *I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* This special faith must be the faith of us all.

[Use 4] Lastly, from hence we are put in mind of sundry good duties necessary to be practiced of us. First, seeing every true member of the Church, hath the forgiveness of his sins given & assured unto him, it is our duty to acknowledge our selves to be grievous sinners, to have godly sorrow for them which may cause repentance, not to be repented of, and to seek pardon by daily prayer for the forgiveness of them at the hands of God. He resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. He filleth the hungry with good things, and sendeth the rich empty away. He is ready to forgive, and to have compassion on his children: he is slow to anger, and of great kindness. He doth not deal with us after our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities. Hence it is that the Apostles have taught, and the godly have acknowledged themselves grievous sinners, yea, even the most regenerate, as *David, Daniel, Paul,* and others. Seeing therefore we have a promise of forgiveness, & as it were a privilege above others of the world, it behooveth us to have in us an humble acknowledgement of our sinful estate, joined with godly sorrow and earnest prayer for the forgiveness of them. Secondly, it is required of us to have a reverent care and fear, not to offend him anymore, as heretofore we have provoked him, yea a most earnest study and desire to please him better thē we have done. This the Prophet teacheth, Psal. 103, 3, 4. *If thou O Lord straitly markest iniquities, O Lord who shall stand? But mercy is with thee, that thou mayest be feared.* This was the instruction that Christ gave unto the diseased man whom he had healed, when he found him in the Temple, he said unto him, *Behold thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee,* John. 5, 14. Thus the Apostle *Paul* describeth true repentance by the fruits and effects of it, 2 Cor. 7, 11. *Behold this thing that ye have been godly sorry, what great care it hath wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea how great desire, yea what a zeal, yea what revenge.* Where this care is not to please God, and fear to fall again and offend him, there was never true repentance, nor any feeling of the forgiveness of former sins. This were exceeding unthankfulness for mercy received, and a turning of the grace of God into wantonness, to commit sin anew that grace may abound. Thirdly, it is our duty to return all praise and thankfulness to God for this so infinite and unspeakable mercy, which appeareth in nothing more thē in the forgiveness of our manifold sins. It belongeth to God only to forgive sins, therefore to him only belongeth the glory of forgiveness, as being only worthy to receive all praise. This *Daniel* confesseth in his prayer, *O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us open shame, as appeareth this day.* So the prophet *David* provoking all to praise the Lord, alledgeth this as the chief reason to move them, *Which forgiveth all thine iniquities, & healeth all thine infirmities,* Psal. 103, 3. This also we see in the practice and example of the Apostle, who mentioning his sins, and magnifying the exceeding and abundant mercy of God in the pardon of them, he breaketh out into a thanksgiving to the eternal God, *Unto the King everlasting, immortal, invisible, unto God only wise, be honor and glory forever & ever, Amen,* 1 Tim. 1, 17. Rom. 7, 25. If we have tasted of this mercy, let us be mindful of this duty: and if we have had experience of this forgiveness, let us be careful to express unto him our thankfulness. Fourthly, we must show

back again our love toward our heavenly Father, according to the measure of his love toward us. The greater sins he hath pardoned, the greater love should be returned. This is it which y^e Prophet professeth to have wrought exceeding love in his heart towards the Lord, when he considered how gracious and merciful he had been unto him, Psal. 116, 1. *I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my prayer.* The practice of this duty is remembered and commended in the sinful woman, Luke 7, 47. *Many sins are forgiven her, for she loved much: to whom a little is forgiven he doth love a little.* Let this example be continually before our eyes. Let us examine our selves how near we come unto her in the practice of this duty. Let us behold our selves in her, as in a glass. If we have had a blessed experience of God's loving kindness toward us, in blotting out and burying our sins out of his remembrance, let us be answerable in love to him again, who hath loved us first. Where little love appeareth to God, there is little knowledge of forgiveness of sins. Where no love is, there is no feeling of the comfort of this doctrine. If we have found God exceeding kind and gracious unto us, it will work an exceeding measure of love, where God hath assured and sealed up that grace by his holy Spirit. Lastly, the receiving of this mercy from God, must work in us mercy toward our brethren, that as we have obtained forgiveness of sins at his hands, so we should be ready to forgive one another, *And so be merciful to others, as our heavenly Father is merciful to us,* Luke 6, 36. This our Savior teacheth in the parable of the King that would take an account of his servants, to wit, that he requireth mercy where he hath shown mercy, and that judgment shall be without mercy, to him that showeth no mercy. Hence it is that the Apostle giveth this in charge, Eph. 4, 32. & Colos. 3, 13. This we are also directed unto in that form of prayer which Christ did teach his Disciples, and hath left unto his Church, warranting us to ask forgiveness, as we feel our selves ready to forgive. This we are to apply unto our selves, and learn every day to be like to our heavenly Father, Matth. 5, 45. *Who maketh his Sun to arise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust.* If then we desire to be partakers of the goodness of God in forgiving the infinite debt whereby we are deeply indebted unto GOD, and would find him merciful unto us (as everyone will seem to be desirous of it) let us show our selves ready to forgive from our hearts the injuries and offenses done unto us. Among all testimonies that we may gather to our selves of God's goodness and mercy towards us, none is more excellent, more comfortable, more certain then this, if we find it in us; that is, the pardoning and passing over the wrongs offered us, and a readiness to forgive, even our enemies that most envy and hate us; and that frankly and freely, as we our selves have received forgiveness at the hands of God.

[*The Lord his God is with him.*] These words contain the second privilege peculiar and proper to the Church, which God hath bestowed upon it, to wit, the presence of his Spirit. True it is, in regard of his essence and deity he is everywhere, the heaven is his throne, and the earth is his footstool, Psalm 139, 7, 8. *So that we cannot hide our selves from his presence. If we ascend into heaven, he is there: If we lie down in the grave, he is there: if we take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, thither shall his hand lead us, and his right hand hold us: if we say, yet the darkness shall hide us, the night shall be light about him.* But in this place this prophesy poynteth us unto us another presence, to wit, of his grace, protection, defense, and deliverance; the presence of his Spirit, sanctifying his children, purging them from dead

works, to be a peculiar people unto himself, working in them regeneration, and finishing all good things in them, to bring them to everlasting life. We learn from hence, That it is a great privilege of the Church, to have God present with it, and president over it. He is not far off from those that are his (howsoever in time of affliction, and in the hour of temptation, he seemeth so to them:) he is near unto them, he is ever with them, he holdeth a gracious hand over them. This is it which the Lord so often promiseth in his word, & truly performeth, to the great comfort of all his children. This is it which the Lord speaketh to *Jacob*, going from his fathers house to Padan Aram, Gen. 28, 15. This also the Prophet *David* acknowledgeth, Psal. 34, 15, 18. And lest any should restrain that exhortation, and take it peculiarly to belong to him alone, the Apostle extendeth it farther, and applieth it to all the people of God, speaking to them as well as unto *Joshua*, chapt. 1, 9. *I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee;* so that we may boldly say, *The Lord is mine helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me.* This is it which Christ our Savior often alledgeth for the comfort of his disciples, John. 14, 18. Math. 18, 20, & 28, 20. *I will not leave you comfortles, but I will come unto you: Loe, I am with you to the end of the world.*

The reasons are these. First, his presence appeareth, [Reason 1] that the faithful might be assured of his protection and defense, being gathered together by his power, without which, they could not have any comfort. If the soldiers should be destitute of the presence of their Captain, the wife of her husband, the people of their King, they would remain comfortless, and in continual fear to do their duties and perform their allegiance. But having their continual presence, they have continual assurance, and joyfulness in their place and charge committed unto them: otherwise, the best servants of God & most painful in their callings, should be in the worst case and condition. To this purpose Christ saith, *Go and teach all nations, to observe whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always until the end of the world,* Mat. 28.18, 19, 20. Seeing therefore God would not have us danted with danger, or discouraged with fear, but to go lustily forward where he hath called us, we cannot doubt of the assurance of his presence with us in all assays and assaults, whatsoever shall be offered unto us.

[Reason 2] Secondly, he is ready to hear their prayers, to help them in their distresses, & to yield them those things that they stand in need of. If he were absent from us, & not present with us, he could not consider of our wants, nor succor us in our necessities, nor deliver us from our enemies, nor refresh us with his help, while we walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Therefore when Christ teacheth, Mat. 18, 20. that by the grace of his Spirit, and the power of his Deity, he is in the midst of the Church, he confirmeth it hereby, that whatsoever they shall desire, it shall be given them of his Father which is in Heaven.

[Use 1] Let us now proceed to the uses of this Doctrine. First, it followeth from hence, if God be still with his Church, then there is never any separation & diuorcement between God and his Church, between Christ & his members; so that whosoever would find the Lord to be his God, he must be in the Church, & of the Church. Christ is said to walk in the midst of the seven golden Candlesticks, that is, of the Church. Christ is evermore in his Church, and wheresoever the Church is there is Christ. No man shall ever find Christ as a Savior, but in

his Church. The Emperor is to be acknowledged wheresoever his standard is: the King is where his Court is. So there is always a near conjunction between God and his Church. Where he is present with his grace, there is his Church. We shall not need to say with *Martha, Lord, if thou haddest been here, my brother had not been dead*, John 11, 21. for God is ever with us, in all dangers he standeth present by us, *His left hand is under our head, and his right hand doth embrace us*. This is a notable and singular comfort to all the true members of the Church, who are assured of y^e spiritual and special power and love of God toward them, supporting them and staying them up with both his hands, that they fall not from him through weakness and infirmity of the flesh. And seeing his love is such unto us that he will not be far from us, but in all our troubles embrace us in both his arms, this ought to stay and strengthen us in all trials, and confirm us in all temptations, which are as it were so many storms and tempests beating upon the barks of our souls, and threatening to make shipwreck of them. We are ready in all our troubles, when we find not present help at hand, to suppose the Lord to be far from us. We are impatient of delay, we cannot abide to wait the Lord's leisure. So soon as we are entered into the Furnace of affliction, y^t we feel the flames thereof to scorch us, and the anguish thereof to enter into our bones, by and by we think that God should help us, every moment and minute appeareth to be a day, and every day seemeth a year unto us, until he scatter the coals, and pull us as a fire-brand out of the fire. This made the Prophet in the heat of his affliction to cry out, *Why standest thou far off, O Lord, and hidest thee in due time, even in affliction?* Psal. 10, 1. Whereby we see, that the children of God are wonderfully assaulted, & the flesh wrestleth against the Spirit, & sometime prevaieth, and for a time getteth the upper hand. So the same Prophet saith, Psal. 13, 1, 2. & 22, 1, 2. *How long wilt thou forget me ô Lord? forever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? &c.* And again, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and art so far fr̄m mine health, and from the words of my roaring, &c?* And in another place, *Will the Lord absent himself forever? and will he show no more favor? Is his mercy clean gone? &c.* Thus his faith was assaulted, and his hope tried, that he should not fall into infidelity, and yield to distrust in God. But seeing our doctrine affirmeth, that God is never from us, howsoever he seemeth to delay and defer his help, let us learn (how great soever our conflicts be) not utterly to despair of God's mercy, though it tarry. Waite, for it shall surely and certainly come, and not stay, when the time, even the appointed time cometh. So when the faithful recover themselves out of the former temptations, as it were out of a gulf ready to swallow them up, they gather strength of Faith, rest upon the power & presence of God, and wait with patience the Lord's leisure, and confess it was their own infirmity.

This the Prophet *David* setteth down, in Psal. 40, 1. and 42, 5, 11. and 43, 5. and in diverse other places. Thus it standeth all of us upon, when affliction trieth us, when the flesh tempteth us, when Satan winnoweth us, and all of them consenting and conspiring together, seek to overthrow us; to consider that howsoever God oftentimes deferreth to help us, yet he is still present with us, and to assure our selves that doubtless he is not far from everyone of us. It is the will and pleasure of God to try our faith, to stir up our zeal, to exercise our patience, and to teach us to make greater account of his blessings, whē we have obtained them: but in the end, to our endless comfort, he will declare by the effects of his love and

favor, that he was never indeed absent from us, howsoever we judge so according to the weakness of the flesh, and he for a time hide his countenance from us. Moreover this serveth to teach us, that in our troubles and necessities we stand not in need of the intercession of Saints and Angels, we shall not need to pray unto them to be our Mediators to God the Father. For seeing God the Father is near us, yea even at hand, shall we turn our backs to him, and go from him, seeing he turneth to us to give us help? This invocation of Saints hath neither commandment to move us to pray, nor example to go before us in the practice, nor promise to assure us that we shall be heard. The direction that we have in prayer, is to go to God, and to say to him, *Our Father which art in heaven*, Mat. 6, 9. This the Prophet acknowledged, when he said, Psal. 73, 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? & I have desired none in the earth with thee.* God is evermore present with us, the Saints departed are absent from us, they know not our particular wants, Isaiah 63, 16, Psal. 94, 9. 1 King. 8, 39. they understand not our desires, they are ignorant of the motions of our hearts, and the estate of our lives. Besides, we are charged to worship the Lord our God, & to serve him only, who only searcheth the hearts, & trieth the reins, as the God that made them in the beginning. Let us therefore go directly and immediately to God, and when we have help at hand, let us not seek help far off. Let us still trust in the living God, for vain is the help of Saints or Angels. Were not he a foolish man, and worthy to perish, who in extremity would refuse the help of an expert & excellent Physician present with him, able to help him, willing to help him, offering to help him and give him present ease, and yet calleth and crieth to some Mounte-bank, a thousand miles from him, not so able, not so skilful, not so ready to relieve & release him? And are not they much more simple and sottish, that when God willeth them to call upon him in the day of trouble, and promiseth to hear and deliver them, will not come to him, but fly from him to the Saints, that know neither him nor his grief? When the Prince is present, and calleth to come to him, were it not madness to go to y^e subject? So, forasmuch as Christ saith, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and laden, and I will ease you*, Matth. 11, 28: let our souls answer, Lord we will come, accept thou the prayers of thy servants.

[Use 2] Secondly, we learn from hence, That as God is near to all those that fear him, not only in respect of the presence of the place, but is with them by the presence of his favor, granting their prayers, and succouring them in their adversities; so he is far from all the wicked and ungodly, not in place, but in help. He will not grant their requests, he will not be their shield and buckler; he will not know them in their miseries. He is indeed near to all *that call upon him, even to all that call upon him in truth, but he stoppeth his ears against the prayers of the ungodly, which are abomination unto him*, Psal. 145, 18. This is it which Solomon teacheth, Prov. 15, 29. *The Lord is far off from the wicked, but he heareth the prayers of the righteous.* Great is the justice of God upon the wicked: and great is his favor towards the godly. True it is, in respect of place God filleth heaven and earth, *He is not far distant frō us, forasmuch as in him we live, and move, and have our being*, Acts 17, 27, 28. but touching his grace he is far from the dwellings of the unrighteous, he is far from hearing their voice, and regarding their necessities: he leaveth them to themselves, and withdraweth his holy Spirit from them. So then, albeit God be in every place, and nigh to all things, yet God will not hear them, no

more then men hear such as are very far off when they call and cry out unto them. This is it which the Prophet *David* setteth down, *Psal. 119, 155. Salvation is far from the wicked, because they seek not thy statutes.* And the Prophet *Isaiah* accordeth here unto, *Chapt. 59, 1, 2. The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save: neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.* They regard not his word therefore he giveth not them his help. They will not hear him when he calleth by his word, therefore he will not hear when they call unto him by their prayers. He is far from them, because they run far from him, and will not know his ways, nor regard his truth that he offereth unto them. Wherefore, great is the misery and destruction of the wicked y^t shall come upon them: they shall call, but the Lord will not hear: they shall cry, but he will not answer. The righteous in this world, do seem to be cursed and forsaken of God, but they are blessed and happy: and this is not the last part of their blessedness and happiness, that he heareth their prayers. On the contrary side, the ungodly seem to themselves & to others to be the only happy men in the world; but they are wretched and miserable: and through their malice, blindness, and obstinacy, this is not the last part and portion of their misery, that they have no agreement with God, he heareth not their prayers, but abhorreth thē, their thoughts, and all their works. When we are in affliction, the chiefest comfort and stay to rest upon is, that God is near us, and ready to help us. The wicked want this staff to lean upon, God professeth himself their enemy, he refuseth their prayers, he forsaketh and casteth them away out of his presence. They can have no peace of conscience, nor comfort in trouble: they *shall howl in their miseries, and not be heard, Zac. 7, 13.* This shall especially appear at the last day, when the heaven shall not receive them, the Lord shall not know them, no creature shall comfort them, no mercy shall be shown unto them; thē they shall weep and wail without redemption, and without release.

Thirdly, it is our duty to behave our selves [Use 3] in all our actions and dealings, as in his presence. It behooveth us to set him always before us, and to know he continually walketh among us. It is remembered of *Enoch*, that he walked continually before God, *Genes 5, 22.* that is, all his life time he considered that the eye of God was ever upon him, knowing that all things are naked and manifest before him, *Heb. 4, 13.* Thus the Apostle chargeth *Timothy*, *in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Jesus Christ, which under Pon·ius Pilate witnessed a good confession, to keep the commandments which he gave unto him, without spot and unblameable.* If the child were always in sight of his parents, the servant of his master, the soldier of his Captain, the subject of his Prince, they would not have an unseemly gesture, a disordred action; how much more doth it stand us upon, to behave our selves honestly, and in order, and to look to all our ways, that we offend not before the majesty of God, in whose presence we stand? When the Minister prayeth and preacheth, when the people attend and hearken, we must know that God looketh upon us. If anything be done unreverantly and wickedly, he seeth it, and beholdeth it when it is committed. We cannot hide it from his sight, and therefore we should do nothing that may grieve him. This is that use which *Moses* setteth down in giving directions to the people when they went to war, *Deut. 23, 12, 14, That they should have a place without the host, whither they should resort for the necessity of nature, and cover their excrements; for the Lord thy God (saith he) walketh in the midst of thy campe to deliver*

thee, and to give thee thine enemies before thee: therefore thine host shall be holy, that he see no filthy thing in thee, and turn away from thee. The truth of this Ceremony leadeth us (as it did them) to a farther matter. Let us let the figure pass, & come to the substance, which teacheth, that we must be an holy people to God in soul and body, and take heed of stayning and defiling our selves. And what is it that doth defile us? It is not that which entereth into man, but that w^c cometh out of a man, as our Savior speaketh of the meats we eat, Matth. 15, 18. *All the evil affections that we have within us, are so many stainings of us before God.* Evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, slanders, are so many infections, and as filthy dirt and dung in his sight. We must all of us learn to purge our selves from such foul and filthy corruptions, if we will have God to rule and be resident amongst us. If a man be to receive any honorable guests or strangers into his house, he will have it swept and kept clean, that he offend not those that he would entertain. It is a great honor unto us, that God will dwell with us, and rest among us, and vouchsafe so to abase himself as to walk among us; ought not we then to be careful how we walk before him, and to be wary everyone of us lest we should displease him? Ought we not to behave our selves with all fear and reverence, seeing he beholdeth us and eyeth whatsoever we do throughout our whole life? For as he is come nearer unto us: James 4, 8: so unless we draw nere unto him, cleansing our hands, and purging our hearts, he will withdraw himself from us, if we make not our souls and bodies pure Temples for him to lodge and abide in. He will dwell with us upon no other condition: if we do not mark and observe this, we make our souls guilty of driving GOD away, that he should no longer remain among us to bless us.

Lastly, we are put in mind by his presence [Use 4] to wait and stay our selves upon his providence, in all things depending upon his protection and deliverance. *Stephen* a faithful witness of the truth, being persuaded of the presence of Christ, stood out to death, and boldly maintained the cause of God against all his adversaries, Acts 7, 56. We are always in such sort under his protection, that we shall not need to fear that his power will fail to maintain and preserve us. When the Lord Jesus said unto his Disciples, Matth. 28, 20. *Go into all Nations, preach unto them, and baptize them,* he addeth, *Loe I am with you unto the end of the world.* Whereby, he meant to confirm and strengthen them in all the combats they were to suffer, and conflicts which they were to endure in the preaching of the Gospel. So Christ appearing unto *Paul*, and promising his presence to be with him, gave him boldness to undergo great dangers, and not to account his own life precious and deer unto him, so long as he might do service unto God: he said unto him, Acts 18, 9.10, *Fear not, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall lay hands on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this City.* Thus the Lord speaketh to the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Bee not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee.* Here we see the presence of God is made as a reason to strengthen him in the duties of his calling. We meet with many dangers and incombrances that assault us and set upon us in the running of our race, and find many enemies that seek to stop our course: & such is our weakness, that we shall never be able to ouermastet them, and to go lustily forward in a resolute and constant course, unless we set before our eyes this doctrine that *Balaam* published as a privilege belonging unto the Church, that God is with us, and will never forsake us. Let us therefore consider, *If he be with us, we shall not need to fear*

who be against us. He will smite our enemies upon the cheek bone, & break the teeth of the wicked. He will scatter their counsels and devices, and cast down whatsoever riseth up against our peace.

[*And the joyful shout of a King is among thē.*] This is the third prerogative granted to the Church, which God as king of the Church, granteth unto it, being as it were y^e Scepter of his kingdom, & the laws by which it is governed. For as no kingdom can stand without statutes, nor the subjects be governd without laws, so it is in God's kingdom. He is y^e King, the church is the kingdom, the word is the statute law, the devil & all his Instruments are Traitors to this kingdom: the faithful and elect are the natural subjects which willingly yield obedience to the word. This word being the arm of God, and the kingdom, must be preached, to draw the elect into his kingdom. This *Balaam* calleth a joyful shout, and the Prophet is commanded of God, *Isaiah 58, 1*, to cry allowed and not spare, to lift up his voice like a Trumpet, showing to the people their sins, and the house of *Jacob* their transgressions. This teacheth us, that it is a great honor and privilege of the Church, to have the joyful shout of the word to sound among them. The Scripture or word of God is a privilege belonging properly to the Church & the use thereof. When God gave his Law in Sinai, it was given only to Israel, as appeareth *Deut. 4, 1. Exod. 20, 11, 2.* where *Moses* stirreth up Israel to hearken to the statutes & ordinances that should be delivered unto thē. So the Prophet speaketh, *Psal. 147, 19, 20. He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so wi h every Nation, neither have they known his judgments.* Hereunto cometh the exhortation of *Moses*, *Deut. 4, 6, 7. Keep his laws and do them, for that is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of the people, which shall hear all these ordinances, and shall say, Only this people is wise and of understanding, and a great Nation.* Thus the Apostle *Paul* showeth the difference and preeminence of the Jews, being at that time the Church of God above the Gentiles, that it was herein most excellent and glorious, because unto them, yea only unto them were committed the oracles of God, even committed unto them of trust: *to them pertained the glory, the covenant, the law, the service of God, & the promises.* Likewise, when *John* the Apostle was commanded to write in a book y^e things which he had seen revealed unto him, he was charged withal, when once they were written, *To send them to the seven Churches that are in Asia*, *Reu. 1, 11.* All which places plainly prove, that it is one of the greatest gifts, blessings, and honors, that God bestoweth upon his people, the giving unto them his word and ordinances.

The reasons are many in number and weighty [Reason 1] in force. For first, hereby we and our children are entered into a solemn covenant with God to be his, and he to be ours forever. A wonderful mercy of God, that a sort of poor sinful men should be admitted and received into a covenant with the eternal God. This Couenan• is a mutual promise & agreement between God and men: whereby on the one side God giveth men assurance that he will be gracious and favorable unto them, forgive their sins, and give them new righteousness & eternal life for his Sons sake: and on the other side, men bind themselves to accept of this mercy with all thanksgiving, receiving this so great a benefit with a true Faith, and promising to yield true obedience to God. The entrance into this Covenant, is as it were the day of our marriage, being more nearly coupled to God, then the wife is joined unto the

husband. This is it which *Moses* is bold to put the people in mind of, exhorting them to keep the words of this Covenant, Deut. chap. 29. verses 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

[Reason 2] Secondly, the Church alone is honored of God, to be the keeper and preserver, the holder forth and publisher of his word, and therefore none have to do with it but the Church. Hence it is, that it is called by the Apostle, *the pillar and ground of truth*, 1 Tim. 3, 15. It is the preserver of it, not the mother of it: the keeper of it, not the author: it is a crier to publish, not a judge to decide and determine: it is as the candlestick to hold the light, not the candle it self to give light. For this cause the vision offered to *John* of the seven golden Candlesticks, Revel 1, 12, 20, is expressly and directly expounded to signify the seven Churches. This then is an honor peculiar to the church, to be the brazen pillar of truth, and the golden Candlestick to hold the light or candle of the word of God unto the people, that they may see how to walk in y^e ways of godliness.

Thirdly, the word is the testament of God. [Reason 3] Now none hath to do with the Testament or Will of any, but they that have Legacies bequeathed unto them by it, as children & they that are of the household and kindred of God; not Strangers, Aliens, and Forreyners, they have nothing to do in it, they are not to meddle with it. Thus the Apostle teacheth, Heb. chap. 9. verse 15, *That the Testament belongeth to them that are to receive the promises of the eternal inheritance.*

The Uses are now to be considered. First, [Use 1] we learn from hence for our instruction, to account the Ministry of the word, the treasure of the Church. Among all the blessings bestowed upon the sons of men in this life, the gift and blessing of the word is eminent. It is an incomparable blessing far above all earthly things, y^e earthly men make their solicity. The Prophet Ezek. 6 10, 11 compareth all other blessings that God gave his people, to the ornaments of the body, as to bracelets, habiliments, rings, fine linen, chains, silk, & such like; but the giving of his word and statutes unto them, to his marriage with thē. And when God was to deliver his laws and ordinances unto *Israel*, *Moses* took them by the hand, and led them forth to meet God, who in the company of the Angels accepted them for his chief treasure & inheritance above all other nations under heaven: so that in the finishing of this match & marriage with his people, *Moses* was as the Father, the Angels, the Bridemen, God the husband, unto whom *Israel* was affianced & coupled in marriage. So then the happiest tidings and greatest dignity that can ever come to any people or several congregation, is the glad tidings of y^e gospel, & the free passage of the word to be brought among thē. The more any are blessed this way the more honorable & glorious they are with God and his Saints, they are thereby made his sons & daughters, yea kings and priests unto him, & they which once were far off, are made near unto him by the preaching of y^e Gospel, whereby he dwelleth among them, and setteth up his throne in their hearts. *Capernaum* is said hereby to be lifted up unto heaven, Luke 10, 15. *Jerusalem* where the word and service of God was set forth, is called the holy City, and the joy of the whole earth, & the resting place of God, Psal. 132, 13, 14. From hence all such are reprov'd, as have not the sight and feeling of this mercy of God in their hearts, to raise them up to rejoicing & thankfulness. And herein (my brethren) we are to call our selves to remembrance, & think what our condition is. We are

indeed a noble kingdom, adorned with many outward privileges and blessings, increased in multitudes, and furnished with sundry commodities; but, if we be compared with the great, large, and wealthy dominions in other parts of y^e world, only a poor corner of rhe earth. But herein we pass them all, as honored above them & preferred before them, that we have the inestimable treasure of the word which they do want, instead of those mines of silver & gold, wherewith they abound. This is our privilege, our glory, our advantage, wherein God hath blessed us above Italy, Spain, and many rich Countries in Asia and Africa, under the Turk and other blind and barbarous Princes, detayned in the kingdom of darkness, and of the devil; we have the truth of God amongst us, the treasure of all treasures, the value whereof is far above all precious stones. The want of this blessing maketh all other blessings to be curses, and judgments unto them that are destitute hereof, & therefore we must all call our selves to an account, what account we make of it. We should make it our meat and drink, a treasure for the obtaining whereof rather than want it, we would sell all that we have: but (alas) what thankfulness hath it wrought in us? We are like unto the Jews; they had this glorious light brought among them, but they loved darkness more then light, because their works were evil. If we be weary of this heavenly Manna, let us take heed lest the Lord grow weary of us: if we cast away his word, he will cast away us, and forsake us forever. The Lord biddeth us take heed to the sound of the Trumpet, Ier. 6, 17: let us not answer presumptuously we will not take heed; let us beware of security, & remember from whence we are fallen, *And let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth the Lord and his word, to his salvation*, Ier. 9, 24.

[Use 2] Secondly, it followeth, that wheresoever God hath established this his ordinance, there certainly he hath a Church and chosen people, and some that belong to eternal life, for whose sake it is sent among them. For as the Spirit of God is the soul of the church, quickening it, and giving it life: so the word is this souls instrument, or the seed whereby it worketh, and the only essential mark thereof; so that where it is sincerely taught, and constantly professed, there certainly is a Church. Where it is not, there is no true Church (albeit it have never so goodly and glistering a show) but a very carrion & carkas of a church without the life of the Spirit: but as an house without light, as the world without the Sun, as a kingdom without the Law. The Prophet *Isaiah* calleth it the standard of God, saying, *I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people, & they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders*, *Isaiah* 49. verse 22 Where the Lord Jesus is compared to a King and Captain, and therefore all that will have comfort that they are members of the church, must range themselves under it as soldiers under the banner of their Chieftaine; otherwise they remain as men In darkness, & in the shadow of death, as straggling and runagate soldiers out of the campe, and as dissolute men under no law to govern them. For they are the vilest and basest that live without it, very dogs and swine. They of the Church are God's chidren, and the word is the Children's food belonging to them only. When the Canaanitish woman would have been partaker of Christ's Ministry, *Mat. 15, 26.* he answered, *It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it unto whelps.* But other are as unclean and filthy beasts: This which now hath been spoken, serveth to overthrow two sorts of people: first, those of the Church of Rome, which make other marks

and notes of the Church; as antiquity, unity, universality, succession, subjection to the Pope, and such like counterfeit marks of their counterfeit church, and leave this which is the most certain and inseparable note. This proveth unto us plainly, that these which most of all boast of the name of the Church, are indeed neither the Catholic Church, nor any sound part thereof, because they want the immortal seed to beget them, the milk and meat of the word to feed and norish them, yea it is accounted an high point of heresy to have read y^e Scriptures, and none is permitted to look into them without a license, so heinous a sin it is to have the word. Secondly, it censureth & condemneth the Donatists, Anabaptists, Brownists, and those of the separation, which condemn our Churches to be no Churches; our Sacraments to be no Sacraments; our Ministers to be no Ministers; and in effect our religion to be no religiō, because we do not with them in matters accidental fully agree, albeit we do consent in matters fundamental: we lay Christ alone for the foundation, on which we build our salvation: we lay hold upon him by faith only: we preach Christ crucified truly, & by their own confession, powerfully. They hold themselves to have received faith among us by our Ministry, before they made this rent and breach in the Church, and that the end of such faith (if they had died in it) had been the salvation of their souls. Let them therefore return, and cause others to return & join with us in hearing the word preached, seeing where it is rightly established, there must of necessity be a true Church. And albeit some of them have written, many of thē have spoken against our Church, yet let them follow the example of that son, who answered his father stubbornly, that he would not work in his vineyard, but afterward repented earnestly, and went his ways.

[Use 3] Thirdly, all such as are this way honored and blessed, must be careful to use the word as an honor and a blessing, by embracing it, by entertaining it, by magnifying this blessing of God, in truth, and not in opinion; in heart, and not in face; in works, and not in words; that we may walk worthy the Gospel, and of the Lord that hath called us, and show our selves careful to bring forth the fruits thereof; saying with the Apostle, Rom. 10, 10. *How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!* Hitherto rendeth the exhortation of the Apostle, 1. to the Thessalonians, ch. 2, 11, 12. Let us be careful to keep this treasure among us, lest the kingdom of God be taken from us. Otherwise instead of being the water of life to save us, it will be a sea to drown us: instead of being the savor of life to life, it will turn to be the savor of death to death: instead of being meat to feed us, it will be our bane to destroy us: instead of good tidings to refresh & comfort us, it will prove the saddest and heaviest news that ever came to our ears, and that day the blackest day that ever came over our heads. Thus our Savior threatened Capernaum, which he had honored with his presence, blessed with his preaching, advanced by his dwelling in it, and lifted up with his miracles, Mat. 11, 26. *Thou Capernaum which art lifted up unto heaven, shalt be thrown down to hell, &c.* Look upon the seven Churches of Asia, we see what is become of them. Behold what y^e contempt of the Gospel hath brought upon the Jews, the like hath not fallen upon any people, since the beginning; what mischief & misery did not fall upon them? It cannot be denied but God hath blessed us as much as ever he lifted up the head of Capernaum, and hath magnified his mercies and love unto us above other nations. The more he hath honored and exalted us above others, the more vile and odious we shall become; he

will pour shame & contempt upon us, he will make us a mirror and example of his judgments to others, unless we bring forth fruits answerable to so great goodness. Who so is wise-hearted, let him consider these things.

[Verses 22, 23, 24. *God brought them out of Egypt, their strength is as an Unicorn: for there is no sorcery against Jacob.*] Hitherto we have spoken of the spiritual blessings bestowed upon the Church, to wit, the forgiveness of their sins, the presence of the Spirit, and the use of the word. Now followeth another privilege, being an effect of the former, that nothing shall hurt them; they may fall into many afflictions, but none shall be able to destroy them. He alludeth in this place to the practice of the Unicorn, purging and cleansing the water with his horn against the poison of venomous beasts. From hence we learn, that no means and attempts shall hurt or overthrow the Church. Whatsoever the enemies of God and his people imagine, what counsel soever they take, what mischiefs they devise, God will make them frustrate and of none effect. This truth appeareth by sundry examples in y^e word of God. When the Church of God was in Egypt, the Egyptians said, *Let us work wisely with them lest they multiply; they vexed them with bondage, they destroyed their children, they oppressed them with burdens, they plagued them with taskmasters, and every way they increased their miseries:* Ex. 1 & 2, & 3. yet after all these devilish practices they prevailed nothing against them. This appeareth likewise in the ambition and pride of *Haman*, Ester 3. and 7, and 9. He thirsted after blood, but the plot he had contrived was disappointed, and he fell into the pit which he had digged for another, the snare was broken and the Church was delivered. Infinite are the examples that might be produced to this purpose, of the Churches dangers and deliverances. The Prophet *David* handleth this argument at large in sundry Psalms. In the 91. Psalm, verses 3, 4, 5, &c. he assureth those that trust in God, that into whatsoever dangers they fall, they shall never miscarry, nor be dismayed in their afflictions. Where the Prophet meaneth, that howsoever these afflictions may come to the godly, yet they shall not be able to hurt or hinder their eternal peace with God, but he will make them and all things besides to further their salvation. This is it which the Apostle teacheth at large, Rom. 8, 35, 37. Thus we see that no attempts can hurt the Church, inasmuch as God taketh the wise in their craftiness, and scattereth the devices of the wicked, as he turned the wisdom of *Ahithophel* into foolishness.

The Reasons of this Doctrine serving for confirmation of us, are direct & evident. For [Reason] first, it is God that watcheth over his to deliver and to preserve them from all the dangers that go over their heads. We shall not need to fear having so good a keeper, & being assured of right good keeping. He will always protect us by his great power and infinite goodness. This the Prophet handleth at large, Psal. 121, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. So *Moses* declaring the cause that *Balaam's* curses & coniurations did not prevail, but were turned into a blessing, saith, *It was because the Lord loved his people*, Deut. 23, 5. No policies can prevail where there is such a keeper, who being on our side, what skilleth it who be set against us?

[Reason 2] Secondly, he hath appointed the Angels also to guard and defend them, to pitch their Tents round about them, to be ministering spirits sent out for their good, which always behold the face of their Father which is in heaven. God is the chief watchman whom nothing can escape; the Angels are second watchmen under God, whom God hath deputed to that

office to serve the necessities of the Church. This the Prophet *David* y^t sweet singer of Israel setteth down, Psal. 91, 10, 11, 12. Where the prophet proveth, that no cross or calamity shall come near them or their dwellings to hurt them, because not only God himself will care for their defense, but appoint the holy Angels as his heavenly messengers to preserve them. Not that the help of God is not sufficient, or that we should put our trust in their help, but to teach us for our comfort, that we have God and all the host of heaven, as an army ready mustered & marshalled to succor and sustain us in all our dangers.

Now it remaineth to consider what Uses [Use 1] may be made of this Doctrine. First, we must confess to our singular comfort, that great is the power and goodness of God, which can never fail or forsake those that are his. No counsel, or wisdom, or policy, can escape his knowledge, or encounter with his power: we see this notably in this example before our eyes. This false Prophet *Balaam* was an enemy of God and of his people, he had set both his heart to covet, and his tongue to say; all his purpose was to curse the people, he leaveth nothing vnattempted to compass and contrive his enterprize, yet we see all is vanity and cometh in the end to nothing. Great therefore is the power and might of God. We heard in verse 19. that he was constrained to say, *That God is not like to mortal men*, & therefore we ought to be ashamed to call the truth or power of God into question, wherein there is neither want nor weakness. All the power that is in men and Angels, is nothing to the infinite power of God. Let us therefore acknowledge and confess this might and majesty of God: let us in all our dangers and calamities reverence it, and rest in it. Let us not measure it by ordinary means, but know that he is able to work as well without means, and against means as by means. The faith of *Abraham* is commended by the Apostle, Ro. 4, 18. Heb. 11, *That above hope he believed under hope, and that God was able of the ashes of Isaac offered up in sacrifice, to raise him again to life.*

Secondly, we may in assurance of his favor conclude the blessedness of the people of God, and their happy estate and condition: yea, we may truly say with the Psalmist, Psal. 144, 15. *Blessed are the people that are so, yea blessed are the people whose God is the Lord.* None are harder assaulted, none are better protected. Their confusion is sought, but they stand in y^e strength of God. This is a great blessing, to be shaken, and yet to abide firm in storms and tempests. Happy are they that have so vigilant a watchman as the Lord is. That City is safe, that kingdom is sure, that house is quyeted, that soul is secured, that hath such a keeper. What City upon the earth (saving the City of our God) hath such a watchman as neither slumbereth nor sleepeth? But the Church w^c is God's commonwealth, hath a governor and guardian, which is all an eye to see their dangers, all an ear to hear the counsels, & all an heart to understand the devices of their enemies, and all an hand and strong arm to scatter them, and to defeat them. This happiness we heard before, verse 10, how *Balaam* praised and desired. He confesseth allowed that the death of the Jews was more to be desired thē the life of all other men, because GOD held them for his people. Though he were a wretched idolater, and sought to turn the truth of God into falsehood, yet standing as it were upon the rack, he was enforced to utter this speech, as if he had said, Who is it that can do anything against Israel, seeing they remain in the favor of their God? Let us learn to magnify the Lord for his mercy, and walk worthy of this our happiness, which the men of this world do want. They

have no protection from God, but lie open and naked unto dangers of soul and body, and have to defend them, not so much as a poor fig leaf.

Thirdly, let us seek to be at peace with God, and labor to be reconciled unto him. If God be against us, what creature dare stand up for us to help and comfort us; nay what creature shall not fight against us to destroy and confound us? For the subject (though never so noble & honorable) that hath the King against him, shall find few others to succor him, or show him any countenance, as we see in the book of *Ester*; so soon as the wrath of the King began to be kindled against *Haman*, by and by they covered his face, and helped forward his execution. So if we sin against God the King of Kings, and provoke him to wrath, who shall dare to plead for us? On the other side, if God be on our side, who shall be against us, or what creature shall hinder our peace? This the Prophet *Hosea* declareth, as a benefit belonging to the Church, *Hos.* 2, 18. In which words the Lord promiseth that he will so watch over his Church by his providence, that they shall have rest and security from all dangers of enemies, and be delivered from the rage of beasts, and the violence of men. But how (will some say) can this be? [Objection.] Seeing the ungodly that have God their enemy, yet have the world and the men of y^e world smile & laugh upon them, and the godly who have God their friend, yet have the world for their enemy? I answer, [Answ.] This seemeth to be so to those that judge of things after the flesh & according to the outward appearing; but if we will judge righteous judgment, and behold them with the eye of Faith, we shall find it to be otherwise; whether we respect the end, or the inward feeling of the soul and Conscience. Touching the end and issue of things, if we wait with patience but a while, and look with a single heart upon the event, we shall see that the ungodly (who have God set against them) have all things to work their destruction, and to further their condemnation; not only their troubles, but even the most holy ordinances of God, the exercise of prayer, the hearing of the word, the partaking of the Sacraments. The things are in themselves, and their own nature the savor of life to life, 2 Cor. 2, 16: but to them they become the savor of death to death. Contrarywise, the godly who have God reconciled to them in Jesus Christ, have all things to further & to finish the salvation of their souls, and to seal up their eternal peace, Rom. 8, 28: inasmuch as all accidents that befall them, tend to bring them to glory and immortality, and work for the best unto them that love God, even unto them that are called of his purpose: not only prayers and praises, not only the Word and Sacraments, which are as the life of their souls and the breath of their nostrils, but all crosses, calamities, and afflictions, are sanctified for their good and happiness. Secondly, in respect of the inward feeling of the soul and conscience. For the ungodly, who feel the wrath of God for their sins, as it were the flashings of hell fire, do find rest and refuge in nothing, but account all the creatures for their enemies, and always stand in fear of them as of God's host and army, set in battle array against them, and as of his instruments to bring them to destruction. The heavens are prepared at the commandment of God to be as brass, as in the days of famine, to punish them, 1 Kings 17, 1. the clouds to pour down showers of rain upon them, as upon the old world, Gen. 7, 11: the waters ready to drown them, as the host of *Sisera*, Judge. 5, 12: the fire to consume them, as it did Sodom and the other Cities of the plain, Gen. 19, 24: the air to poison and infect them, as in the time of pestilence, Ezek. 5, 12: the earth open to swallow

them, as it did *Dathan* and his followers, Numb. 16, 32, the Bears to devour them, as they did the two and forty ungracious children that mocked the Prophet, 2 King. 2, 42: the Lions to destroy them, as they did the Idolatrous Samaritans, 2 King. 17, 25: Fiery serpents to sting them, as they did the murmuring Israelites in the wilderness, Num. 21.6: the basest and meanest creatures are armed with power and will to bid battle against them; Flies and Frogs to annoy them. as they did the Egyptians, Exod. 8, 6.24: & Lice to eat them, as they did *Herod* a bloody persecutor of the Church, Acts 12, 23. Thus do the ungodly fear all the creatures of God, & cannot be secured from any one of them. An example whereof we have in *Cain*, who wandered up and down in the earth, and feared that every creature that found him would kill him, Gen. 4, 14. And no marvel, for *the wicked flieth when no man pursueth him*, Prov. 28, 1. But the godly, who feel God's favor and mercy toward them, and have him for their friend, do find by blessed experience all God's creatures, as it were his soldiers, to stand for them, and therefore do not stand in fear of them, but can say with a feeling faith, Rom 8, 38. *I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* For when the ways of a man please God, he will make even their enemies at peace with them, Prov. 16, 7. All this appeareth in the example of *Adam*, as in a glass: before he fell into sin, Gen. 3, 8. *he walked in the garden without fear, he talked and communed with God without fear; all things were subject to him that was subject unto God.* But when he had nearkened to the old serpent, and disobeyed the commandment of God, the whole course of Nature was turned, he hid himself from the presence of God, and feared the creatures which before he ruled. To conclude therefore, seeing it is God who is the cause of our peace, let us rest upon his providence and protection, and seek earnestly reconciliation with God, that we may have the inward peace of a good conscience, which howsoever the world may strive to disturb and hinder, yet cannot take away from us: as our Savior Christ promiseth, John 16. verse 33, *In me ye shall have peace, in the world ye shall have affliction.* And again, John 14, 27. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you.* So that in regard of this spiritual peace of the faithful, cōsisting partly in our peace with God, which is the Fountain, and partly in our peace of conscience, which is the fruit, our souls are assured to dwell at ease; in the midst of all troubles we shall be comforted, and by his providence and protection be secured, howsoever our bodies be tossed and turmoiled. For this spiritual peace not only may stand, but is evermore joined with crosses and persecutions.

[Verse 24. *Behold, the people shall rise up as a Lyon, and lift up himself as a young Lyon: he shall not lie down till he eat of the prey, &c.*] In these words, the estate of the Church is described after sundry conflictes in this life. It hath many enemies that for a time rise up against it, but in the end the Church shall rouse up it self and arise as a Lyon, who will not couch till he have taken and eaten his prey. This shall be the strength of the people of God in subduing and overcoming all their enemies. This was begun by *Moses*, prosecuted by *Joshua*, continued by *David*, and fulfilled by Christ, *Who ruleth in the midst of his enemies, and shall bring all things in subjection under his feet.* Psal. 110, 1, 2. From hence we learn, That the Church in the end shall have victory over all enemies that set themselves against it. They dash themselves against

the Rock that shall break them in pieces: for howsoever they oppose themselves against the good estate thereof, they do but kick against the goad, as stiff-necked & hard-hearted beasts, that have not learned to bear the yoke of God, nor to acquaint themselves with the ways of godliness. God will show himself most powerful in overthrowing and discomfiting the enemies of the Church. This evidently appeareth by the history of the Church in Egypt, in Babylon, as also in the books of Exodus and Ester. The Prophet *David* declareth, that notwithstanding the rage of God's and his enemies, *He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision, yea he shall crush them with a scepter of Iron, and break them in pieces like a Potters vessel*, Psal. 2, 4, 9. This Christ our Savior teacheth his Disciples, when he sent them forth to work miracles, and to preach the Gospel of the kingdom to be at hand; he prepareth them for the Cross, he foretelleth them what they should look for, *I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves: but beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the Councils, they will scourge you in their Synagogues, they will bring you before Rulers, they will betray you to your enemies, and ye shall be hated of all men for my sake; but he that endureth to the ende, shall be saved.* Matth. 10, 16, 17, 22.

[Reason 1] The Reasons are evident. For first, the Lord Jesus is the King of his Church, he hath the keys of hell and death, *He openeth and no man shutteth he shutteth and no man openeth*, Revel. 1, 18. John 10, 28. He is the Shepherd of his sheep; his sheep hear his voice, he knoweth them, they follow him, he giveth unto thē eternal life, so that they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. He is the *head of the Church, and quickeneth all the members of his body, by whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins*, Col. 1, 18. Seeing therefore Christ Jesus is the King of his Church, the Shepherd of his sheep, the Head of his body, we cannot doubt but he will defend his Church, save his sheep, & keep safe and sound the members of his body, that none shall be able to destroy them, or to take them out of his hand.

[Reason 2] Secondly, our weakness is not hidden from the Lord, he knoweth whereof we are made, he remembereth that we are but dust; yea a wind that passeth and cometh not again Therefore the Apostle saith, that *God is faithful, which will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will even give the issue with the temptation, that we may be made able to bear it*, 1 Cor. 10, 13. So the Prophet teacheth, that *the rod of the wicked shall not always rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness*, Psal. 125, 3• declaring that the Lord appoints his for a time to be afflicted, yet in the end they shall be delivered, and the wicked shall not be suffered in their oppressions.

The uses are now to be handled. First, [Use 1] this teacheth for our instruction, that the Church hath always enemies in this world, against which it must continually strive and fight. There is no victory before the battle, there is no conquest before the fight. We are all soldiers and warriors in this life, to fight the battles of God, we must not dream of living ever in rest and pleasure. Humility and misery must go before honor and glory: the cross cometh before the crown; we must wrestle before we can have the garland; we must run before we can obtain the goal; we must strive before we can have the mastery; we must labor before we can receive the fruits; we must fight before we can win the victory. This is it which the

Apostle showeth unto us, 2 Tim. 2, 5, 6, 11, 12. Thus it was with Christ, first *he suffered adversity, and then he entered into glory: first he endured the Cross, and despised the shame, and then he was set at the right hand of the Throne of God.* Luke 24, 26. Hebr. 12, 2. This is the way, let us walk in it. He is a foolish husbandman that will look to reap before he have sowed. The Disciple must not look to be above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. We must through manifold tribulations enter into the kingdom of heaven: and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecutions. This is our lot & portion, this is the cup which is prepared for us to drink of: we must prepare strength and courage, we must get us faith and patience, that we may be able to hold out unto the end.

Secondly, this is a singular comfort to all [Use 2] the children of God, and able to season and sweeten the bitterness of the Cross, & make us to undergo it with joy and gladness. Whēsoever therefore we shall be hated for y^e Gospels sake, and suffer persecution at the hands of our enemies, let us comfort our selves with these meditations. First, afflictions shall not separate us from God, howsoever for the present they seem not joyous but grievous, yet afterward they bring the quiet fruit of righteousness unto them which are thereby exercised, Heb. 12, 11. This the Apostle teacheth *That neither tribulation, nor anguish, neither persecution, nor famine, neither peril nor sword, shall separate us from the love of Christ,* Rom. 8, 35. Secondly, the afflictions of this present time are not worthy of the glory which shall be revealed unto us, Rom. 8, 1^o: which neither the eye hath seen, nor the ear heard nor the heart of man conceived. True it is, our afflictions are oftentimes great, but the reward is greater: our troubles are of great continuance, & of long durance, but the glory to come is without end, when we shall be crowned and clothed with immortality, 2 Cor. 4, 17, 18. Our persecutions are many, but the joys laid up for the faithful are infinite, & not to be numbered.

Thirdly, all our crosses which we bear and sustain, shall have an happy event, and a glorious end, for such as hold out to the ende shall be saved, Mat. 10, 22, 32, 39. Whosoever shall confess Christ before men, him he will acknowledge before his Father which is in heaven; and whosoever shall lose his life for his sake and the Gospels, shall be sure to find it, inasmuch as he hath committed it to a faith full keeper, who is able to keep that which he hath committed unto him against that day.

Fourthly, we must consider, that the same calamities, nay far greater, have happened to Christ himself and his Apostles; to the Prophets and holy men of God, remembered unto us in the Scriptures. Now the servant must not look for a better condition then the Master, Mat. 10, 24, 25, nor the disciple then his Lord; nor the household, then the Housholder: nay, we must nor dream of a better estate thē our fellow-servants have had before us.

Fifthly, the enemies in their greatest rage, snarling like Dogs, hurting like Serpents, biting like Cockatrices, devouring like Lions, bloody like Wolves, subtle as Foxes, raging as wild Boars, as unreasonable as Beasts; yet can proceed no farther then to kill the body, they cannot destroy the soul; nay, they can exercise no power over the body, except it be given them from above, seeing the providence of God so ouerswayeth all things, that not an hair falleth from our head, nor a sparrow to the ground, without the will of our heavenly Father.

These are great comforts that arise unto us in our troubles, wherewith we should be wholly possessed, that we murmur not against God. On the other side this doctrine serveth to set down the woeful condition of the persecutors and enemies of the Church; they may prosper and prevail for a time, but in the end they shall not escape; for the church and the members of the Church must have the upper hand, when all their adversaries shall be shamefully confounded. This we see notably set before us in the book of *Daniel*; he had many and mighty adversaries that plotted his death, and sought his ruin, incensed the King against him, and caused him to be cast into the Lions den. But what was the issue of these things? Surely he was delivered & they were destroyed: *For by the commandment of the King these men which had accused Daniel, were brought and cast to the Lions, they, their children, & their wives; and the Lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones a peeces, or ever they came at the ground of the den*, Dan. 6, 24. This is it which *Solomon* teacheth, Prov. 11, 5, 8. Look upon the examples of *Pharaoh*, of *Sancherib*, of *Haman*, of *Herod*, and sundry others; in all which we see, that *the wicked shall be a ransom for the just, and the transgressor for the righteous*, Prov. 21, 18. This serveth to terrify all ungodly mē, & to teach them not to set themselves against the godly, that are more righteous then themselves.

Thirdly, here is matter given unto us of [Use 3] praise and glory to be given unto God, for the safety and deliverance of his people. It is the work of his right hand, and therefore the glory also must be his. Our help cannot come by our own strength, nor we overcome by our own policy; when we have searched and examined all that is in us, we shall find it to come short of working our deliverance. It is God only that hath done it, and therefore we must yield him the honor of all the victories that he giveth us against our enemies. When a man hath done us any wrong, or put us to some trouble, and we be delivered from it; we must assure our selves, that it is God that hath given us y^e upper hand, to the end our mouths should always be opened to give him thanks and we by our whole life should acknowledge how much we are bound and indebted unto him. This is it which *Moses* pointeth us unto, •eut. 32, 43, when he willeth the Jews and Genetiles to praise God's Name, *For he will avenge the blood of his servants, and yield vengeance to his adversaries, but he will be favorable to his Land, and be merciful unto his own people*.

Lastly, as *Balaam* here declareth that the [Use 4] Church hath sure and certain hope of victory, and shall rise up as a Lyon in defiance of all their enemies; so th s shall especially appear in respect of spiritual enemies, which fight against our souls. This victory shall be finished and fully accomplished in Christ, who as the victorious Lyon of the Tribe of Judah, with his foot of brass shall stamp down, and trample under his feet by little and little the enemies of our peace and salvation. This is it which the Apostle assureth the Saints of God, Rom. chap. 16, verse 20. *The God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly*. This is a sweet and singular promise, which should be as the Anchor of our souls both sure & steadfast whe•ein it is impossible that God should lie; that we might have strong consolation, which have our refuge to lay hold upon that hope that is here set before our eyes. True it is, the devil doth always renew the battle against the servants of God, he doth sift and winnow them as Wheat, and as it were bruise their heel; but his head is broken. Gen. chap. 3 verse. 15, he hath received his deadly wound, and he shall not prevail over them: for there is no

condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Indeed God is able to foil him and destroy him at once, and to give us a full and final conquest over all the powers of darkness in a moment, if it pleased him: but lest we should be puffed up in pride, and forget our selves, lest we should leave calling upon the Name of almighty GOD, and the sorrowing and sighing for our own weakness; lest we should be besotted with self-love, & fall asleep in security, the Lord will work by little and little, he will proceed as it were by li•• and level, he will root out our spiritual enemies by degrees. Let us not therefore look to be freed wholly from temptations, but know, that it is profitable for us to be exercised under them: *And let us be sober and watch, seeing our adversary the devil, as a roaring Lyon walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whō if we resist steadfast in the faith, he will fly from us*, 1 Pet. 5, 8, 9. I am. 4, 7. Let us put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against all the assaults of the devil. And let us remember, that he is resisted and driven away, not by any superstitious crossing of our selves (which is no armor of proof) but by faith, & by prayer proceeding from faith, which are of great force and effect.

25 Then Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse nor bless them at all.

26 But Balaam answered, and said unto Balak; Told I not thee, saying; All that the Lord speaketh, that must I do?

27 Again, Balak said unto Balaam, Come I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place, if so be it will please that God, that thou mayest thence curse them for my sake.

28 So Balak brought Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh toward the wilderness.

29 Then Balaam said unto Balak, Make me here seven Altars, and prepare me here seven Bullocks, and seven Rammes.

30 And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a Bullock and a Ram on every Altar.

Thus much touching the Prophecy it self: now followeth the last part; to wit, the issue and effect thereof, both in *Balak* and in *Balaam*. For here we see the King chafing, the Sorcerer excusing; he commanding, and the King obeying. First of all, when *Balak* perceived that he was deceived of his hope and expectation, his wrath is kindled, and he chargeth the hyreling, that if he will not curse the people as he appointed, yet he should not bless them as he had enterprised. For the wicked had rather have the truth of God smothered & buried in silence, then themselves offended and disappointed. The mercenary Prophet excuseth himself that he was unjustly accused, having foreshowed, that it was not at his choice to hold his peace, or to speak what he would, but was constrained by a superior power to open his mouth, and to utter that which was delivered unto him. After this answer, the king

taketh him up into another place (to Peor,) in which Mountain their Idol had a Temple, hoping that at the last, y^e God of Israel would change his mind, and grant his request. Behold the perverseness of unbelievers, who albeit they be crossed in their evil intentions & inventions, yet they proceed in their purposes, and between void hope, and vain fear, hold on their courses in the blindness of their hearts. Therefore *Balaam* seeking to keep his credit, and entertaining the King in an expectation of better success to come, reneweth his former practice, commanding seven Altars to be built, and seven Bullocks and Rams to be prepared; to whom the credulous King obeyeth, and suffereth himself to be deluded, by the devilish sorceries and idolatrous sacrifices of that false Prophet.

These particular points have been before considered, and the principal Doctrines arising from hence likewise opened. For hereby we see the rage and fury of the enemies to be insatiable, and vnappaseable, albeit their might be not answerable to their malice, nor their power so great, as their desire to hurt; they are like the sea that never resteth, but casteth up mire and gravel. No malice or cruelty can be comparable to the malice and cruelty of a natural man, undertaken for religion, or rather against religion and the truth of God. The father in this case hath not spared the son, y^e brother hath betrayed the brother to death, a man's enemies have been they of his own house, and they have been as wolves one to another.

Again, we see how evil men, albeit they be crossed in their attempts, yet will not give over, but return to their former sins, *As the dog to his own vomit*. So deceitful a bait is sin, ensnaring the conscience, that hardly they return that are holden in the chains thereof, having Satan at their elbow to tempt them, and their own corruptions within thē to help them forward. Notwithstanding, it shall not be amiss for us to observe the points laid before our eyes; one in the person of *Balaam*, the other in respect of *Balak*, the third in respect of them both.

[Verse 26. *Balaam answered and said unto Balak. Told I not thee, saying; All that the Lord speaketh, that must I do?*] We have oftentimes noted before, that the words which *Balaam* delivered, he spake, as moved and inspired by y^e Spirit of God; his prophesies are not mingled with his own dreams and devices, as dross with pure gold, as chaff with clean wheat, or as saw-dust with wholesome meat: these came not from the will of man, nor proceeded from any private motion and interpretation: he was guided and directed by the holy Ghost, and therefore he saith in this place; *All that the Lord speaketh, that must I do:* and in the chapter following, *If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot pass the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind: what the Lord shall command, that same will I speak*, Numb. 24, 13. So then he declareth, that in uttering & pronouncing these prophesies, he was limited and restrained, & his tongue tied up to that which God should put in his mouth. He was not left at liberty to speak at randon what he would, he must speak only that which the LORD would have him.

From hence we learn, that it is a duty belonging to all the Ministers whom God hath separated and called to that Office, to deliver the will of God fully & perfectly as they have received it of God, without adding to it, or detracting from it. True it is, the Ministers of the Gospel have now no extraordinary revelations or immediate inspirations, God doth not

appear or reveal his word unto them, either by dreams in the night, or by visions in the day, neither do they hear his voice frō heaven: but they have the will of God revealed, and the Lord speaking unto them in his word. This word they must teach, & nothing but this word, and all that is revealed for our salvation in this word. A witness that is brought in to give evidence between man and man, in any hard matter that riseth in judgment between blood and blood, between Plea & Plea, is sworn to speak the truth, and all the truth, and nothing but the truth. So should it be with all Pastors and Teachers, which are as the Lord's witnesses, they must deal fully and faithfully, they must boldly speak that which God in his word hath revealed, & publish unto his people all that which he hath delivered unto them. This is it which the Lord spake to *Jeremiah*, hanging back when God called him, excusing whē God separated him, refusing when God had chosen him; *Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, shalt thou speak*, Ier. 1, 7. 1 Kings 22, 14. Likewise when our Savior sent out his Apostles into the world, he charged them with this as a part of their commission; *Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*, Math. 28, 20. And the Apostle speaking of the Supper of the Lord, saith: *I received of the Lord that which I also have delivered unto you*, 1 Cor. 11, 23. And afterward confirming the faith in the Corinthians, in the article of the resurrection, he saith; *First of all I delivered unto you that which I received, how that Christ died for our sins, and rose again according to the Scriptures*. 1 Cor. 15, 3. Thus doth the Apostle clear himself, being falsely charged by the Jews; *I obtained help of God, and continue unto this day, witnessing unto small and great, saying none other things then those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come*, Acts 26, 22. Yea, this was the usual manner of all the Prophets preaching unto the people, to come unto them in the Name of God: *Hear ye the word of the Lord, Thus saith the Lord*.

[Reason 1] The Reasons for confirmation hereof, follow to be marked of us. First, this appeareth from the sundry titles as names of their Office that are givē unto them in the Scriptures, to put them in mind of the duties of their callings. They are called Workemen, because they should do the Lord's business, and finish the work whereunto he hath called and ordained them. They are called Builders, because they should build upon the foundation. The foundation is precious, even Jesus Christ, who is pure and perfect gold; and they must build upon it, gold, silver, and precious stones; not hay, not stubble, not timber, lest they suffer loss when the fiery trial shall come. Thus the Apostle speaketh, 1 Cor. 3, 12. *According to the grace of God given to me, as a skillful Master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon: but let everyone take heed how he buildeth upon it*. Sometimes they are called Pastors & Shepherds, because they should make the Sheep of Christ to rest in green pasture, and lead them by the still waters. Sometimes they are called Messengers, because they are, or should be God's mouth and messengers unto the people, and instead of God himself to them. Should not the Ambassador deliver the message, and all the message of his Lord and Master? Dare he chop and change, dare he add or alter, dare he invent & devise anything of his own? No, he will not depart or decline from his commission, but faithfully dischargeth the trust reposed in him. The Ministers are the messengers of God, and Ambassadors of Christ, and therefore it is required of them, that they be found faithful in the execution of their office. Hence it is, that the Prophet saith; *The Priests lips should preserve knowledge, and*

they should seek the Law at his mouth: for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts. So the Apostle speaketh; *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you through us, we pray you in Christ's stead that ye be reconciled to God.* All which Titles, do tie up the Minister of God to deliver only the message of God, and do not leave him at liberty to teach what he list.

Secondly, to the end the faith of the hearers [Reason 2] may be certain, stayed upon the power of God, not upon the wisdom of men, which is but a broken Reede, a weak Pillar, and a rotten foundation to bear them up. This is the reason that the Apostle *Paul* useth, 1 Cor. 2, after he had shown, that he spake unto thē the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hid wisdom which God had determined before the world unto our glory, he giveth this reason; *That your faith should not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God,* 1 Cor. 2, 5, 7. God would not have his people left in uncertainties, nor fed with chaff, nor carried about with every wind and weather of doctrine, but built upon a sure Rock, & stand upon a certain foundation. But there is no sound feeding for the soul, but by the word, which is the power of God to salvation; all other food is as dust and drauery. All the fine devices of the wit, delivered in the perswasible words of man's wisdom, that tickle the outward ears, and delight carnal men, sauring wholly of the flesh, and not of the Spirit, are no better then husks, fitter to feed swine, then to nourish the sons and daughters of God •o eternal life. The word of God is a sharp two edged sword: the word of man is as a leaden knife, or a wooden dagger, which may: well threaten, but cannot strike, or if it strike, it cannot enter. The word of God is a consuming fire, Ier. 5, 14, and 23, 29, like to God the author of it, able to enflame men's hearts with a love of God when it is believed: the word of mā is as a painted fire, which carrieth a show, but hath no substance or strength, either to waste the stubble, or to refine and purify silver or gold. The word of God is the Lord's Fan to winnow the people, Math. 3, 12, separating the bastardy brood of *Abraham* from the true sons, venting the hypocrites from the believers, and scattering with the powerful blast thereof, the reprobates from the elect: all other ways & means that are used, are too weak & feeble to work this separation of the chaff from the wheat. And therefore all such as are the Lord's Fanners, that would publish their doctrine, not to please the ear, but to open the door of the conscience, must use no other instrument then this word of God which hath this force and effect.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, God will destroy those that do not deal faithfully with his people. Such as either hide the truth, or withhold it in unrighteousness, such as conceal or corrupt the word to please mē, undergo the curse of God, and bring upon themselves the heavy wrath of God. This appeareth in that charge which the Lord gave to the Prophet *Jeremiah*, chap. 1, 17. Thus the Lord dealeth also with the Prophet *Ezekiel*, chap. 3.18, and 33, 6. So the Apostle saith, *A necessity is laid upon me, and woe unto me, if I preach not the Gospel,* 1 Cor. 9, 16.

[Use 1] The uses of this doctrine are now to be handled. First of all, it followeth that they must know the Scriptures, they must not be young Plants, Idol Shepherds, blind guides, dumb dogs, sleepy watchmen, unsavory salt, which is good for nothing but for the dunghill, if for the dunghill, Luk. 14, 35. Mat. 5, 13. It is a shame for a guide not to know the way for a Seer to be blind, for a Messenger to be dumb. So then, all Teachers should make conscience to furnish themselves as wise Scribes and good Stewards, with profitable & competent

knowledge, spending their days in getting the understanding of the Scriptures that they may minister a word in due season, and be able to feed their fellow-servants with wholesome food, leading them to the fountains of life. So then the knowledge of the word of God, and the gift of interpretation cannot be separated from the function & calling of the Minister, and God doth disclaim and disauow such as are without knowledge, that they shall be none of his Pastors & Teachers. Thus he speaketh by the Prophet *Hosea*, chap. 4, 6. *Because thou hast refused knowledge, I will also refuse thee, that thou shalt be no Priest to me.* Who would not marvel, if a Prince should appoint a Messenger or Ambassador to go to a people, which had no legs to go, no tongue to speak, no language or reason to deliver his message? Who then can be so absurd, as to think that the wise God, the Lord of Lord's, and King of Kings, would appoint any to be as his mouth, and the Messenger of his will, which cannot teach and deliver his will? Who is it that hath an house to build, that will choose such Carpenters and Masons as have no skill to lay a stone, or to hew their timber, or to handle their Tooles? Who will retain or entertain a Shepherd to keep his sheep, an husbandman to till his ground, a Captain to lead his army, a Steward to provide for his family, a laborer to do his work, that is altogether ignorant, and hath no knowledge to do these things? Now God is more prudent and provident then mortal man, and therefore he will reject and refuse all such as are not able to discharge the Office committed unto them through ignorance. God requireth knowledge in all the people, much more in such as take upon them to be the Teachers of the people, which should not only have knowledge themselves, but teach knowledge to others, that they do not perish for want of knowledge. The Spirit of God mentioneth this to be one of the chiefest causes that religion perished among the ten Tribes, and that Idolatry was erected and continued among them, even until they were carried away to perpetual captivity, in that *Jeroboam* made of the lowest and rudest of the people, Priests of the high places; who would, might consecrate himself to that calling. The condition of the Jews was never more dangerous and desperate, and nearer to destruction and desolation, then when they had blind watchmen, and such Priests set over them as had no knowledge; which made the Prophet *Isaiah* call for all the beasts of the field to devour them, and all the beasts of the Forest to eat them up, giving this as the reason, For their watchmen are all blind, and have no knowledge, *Isaiah* 56, 9, 10. Hence it is, that the Prophet *Malachi* teacheth, *That the Priests lips should preserve knowledge, & the people seek the Law at their mouth, for they are the Messengers of the Lord of hosts*, Mal. 2, 7. This therefore showeth and condemneth the gross and grievous sin of many amongst us, that occupy the places of Pastors, and cannot feed; that run before they were sent, take upon thē to be lights, and yet are darkness. These can have no comfort in their calling, because they were never designed or called of God to this place: For whomsoever he calleth to any function, he enableth in some measure to discharge the duty which he hath required of them. They endanger their own souls, & the souls of many other, for when the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch, and one saith truly, that we murder the souls of such as we see run the way of destruction, when we are careless and hold our peace.

[Use 2] Secondly, it behooveth all the Ministers of the word of God, to make conscience to deliver the truth, and all the truth unto the people, howsoever it be taken, according to the

example of the Apostles: *Peter and John answered unto them, and said; Whether it be right in the sight of God, to obey you rather than God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard, Acts 4, 19, 20. And Paul exhorting the Elders and Overseers of the Church of Ephesus, setteth before their eyes his own practice, that he had kept back nothing that was profitable, but had shown them all things necessary to salvation: I take you to record this day, that I am pure frō the blood of all men, for I have concealed nothing, but have revealed unto you all the counsel of God, Acts 20, 20, 26, 27.* If we be careful and conscionable in doing this duty faithfully to God and his people, we shall reap and receive more sound comfort thereby, then by the powerful effect of our Ministry. True it is, all painful Teachers esteem nothing more, nor so much, as of the people whom they have gained to God and godliness, accounting them their joy, & their crown, and their glory; and yet we may reap more true comfort and consolation by discharging our duties carefully, then by saving souls, and by turning many to righteousness, if we could win whole kingdoms to God. For we may save others from death, and convert a sinner from going astray out of his way, and yet after this, our selves become reprobates; we may be the sweet savor of life to life to others, and not our selves to God. Thus was it with many Priests of loose & licentious life under the Law. Thus it was with *Judas*, who wrought miracles, preached the Gospel, and converted souls as well as the rest of the Apostles, yet was the son of perdition. And thus no doubt it was with the Scribes and Pharisees that sate in *Moses* chair, and taught the people what they should observe and do; like unto those workmen that built the Ark for others, but were drowned themselves. Let us then labor after the especial comfort, consisting in the delivery of the whole will of God, that though our hearers perish, and go unto destruction, yet we may find peace and comfort to our own harts. This was it which the Apostle rested in; he preached Christ, not only as a Savior to thē that believe, but as a Judge of them that contemn him: he saith; *We are unto God the sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved & in them which perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other, the savor of life unto life: for we are not as many, which make merchandize of the word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ, 2 Cor. 2, 15, 16, 17.* Thus doth the Prophet *Isaiah* prophesy concerning Christ, bringing him in, on the one side complaining of the contempt of his preaching, and on the other side comforting himself, that his work was approved of God: *I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength in vain, and for nothing, but my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God, Isaiah 49, 4.* If we be found faithful, we shall be partakers of this comfort; blessed shall that servant be, whom his master when he cometh, shall find so doing. So then, this duty serveth to comfort such as have taught the word of God, not only truly, but wholly and only, so that they are able to appeal to the consciences of their hearers, to witness with their sincerity. Thus did the Apostle *Paul* in many places. In the 20. chap. of the Acts, verse. 18, 26, he saith, *Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you; wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.* Where he maketh them witnesses of his diligence in preaching, and of the discharge of his duty in his calling, and therefore they could not deny it. Thus he speaketh in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 3, v. 1, 2 The like manner of speaking & dealing hath been used by the Prophets and Apostles, as appeareth in sundry places; yea, by Christ Jesus himself. *Samuel* cleareth himself before the people, *Behold, here I am: bear record of me before the Lord, and before his Anointed, 1.*

Sam. 12, 3. So Christ speaketh, *Which of you can accuse me, and rebuke me of sin?* John 8, 46. This is a great and singular comfort to all the Ministers, that in truth shall be able to avouch to their people this their diligence & uprightness, and to say in the face of the Congregation, *Ye know that I have done my duty, I take you to record, that I have admonished you, I have blown the Trumpet, and taught you the way of salvation.* This is expedient and necessary for the Minister to utter of himself, both in respect of the godly and ungodly: of the godly, that their souls gained to the faith might clear him, and God have the glory. Of the wicked his adversaries, that they might be left without excuse, that their mouths might be stopped, & they have nothing justly to lay against him. But contrariwise, when the people have been ignorant, and without instruction thorough the want of performance of this duty, this should be as great a grief and anguish of spirit, and bring as great trouble of conscience to consider his negligence and want of love to their souls that were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ,

Thirdly, this serveth to confute and convince [Use] sundry errors, and to correct sundry evil practices and corrupt abuses. First, it meeteth with many errors and heresies of the church of Rome, which maintaineth y^e sour leaven of false doctrine, and poisons the truth of God with their own inventions. And seeing the Minister is to set down but the truth of God, we must learn to detest apocryphall additions, and their human traditions, both which are a derogation to the sufficiency and perfection of the Scriptures. For touching the Apocryphal Books, which they have lifted up into the chair of estate, and given them equal power and preeminence with the Canonical Scriptures, they are but base & counterfeit coin and no part of the Churches treasure; they have dross mingled with them, & are not pure and perfect metal. They were not endited by the Spirit of God, nor penned by the Prophets, the Lord's Secretaries, as the Scriptures were, which have God for their author, and the holy Prophets for their Penmen. Again, they were never committed of trust to the Jews, nor received of them into the Ark, as not only the fathers, but the adversaries themselves confess and acknowledge: but the ancient Church of the Jews received and approved all the Canonical Book, Rom. 3, 2. God did commend them to their care & committed them to their custody; for this was one chief privilege of the Jews, that they were credited with the Oracles of God. And howsoever they shown their ignorance in false interpretations, yet they discovered no unfaithfulness in willful corruptions, additions, alterations, or manglings of any Books; for then they should have been charged with this, as well as with the other. Lastly, they contain sundry things that disagree from the true Scriptures of God, & likewise from themselves, as might be declared and demonstrated by many particulars. Seeing therefore these books called Apocrypha, were neither penned by the Prophets, nor delivered to y^e church of the Israelites, neither are free from diverse contradictions; we conclude, that the Church of Rome hath no warrant to equal them with the holy Scriptures, & make them of like credit and authority with the Scriptures. Again, they offend in teaching human traditions, in making a word unwritten, equal with the word written, and holding the Scriptures to be imperfect, maimed, lame, not containing all things necessary to faith and salvation, not fully enabling the Minister to discharge his Calling. But the holy Scriptures are perfect, absolute, and all-sufficient to teach the truth, to convince errors, to correct vices, and to instruct in

righteousness; yea, to make the man of God perfect, and thoroughly instructed in every good work, and are of strength, ability, and sufficiency, to make him wise to salvation. Lastly, they are accursed that add anything, that take away anything frō that which is written, Deut. 4, 2. Prov. 30, 6. Revel. 22, 18. and therefore no such unwritten verities are to be taught or preached to the people, as the matter of our Sermons or the instrument of our faith, or the means of our salvation. Moreover it serveth to redress and amend sundry corrupt practices too common and familiar among the Ministers of the Gospel: Some instead of building upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles (Christ Jesus being the chief Corner-stone) do feed men with fancies & fond devices, without godly edifying, and teach their own dreams and fables. Let the Prophet *that hath a dream, tell a dream, and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully: what is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord?* Ier. 23, 28. And the Apostle chargeth *Timothy to stay profane and vain babblings, for they shall increase unto more ungodliness,* 2. Tim. 2, 16. Many there are that corrupt the word to please men, and to establish their own errors. We cannot content our selves with the ancient faith, but loathe the heavenly Manna, and wax wanton against Christ. He is not esteemed that preacheth the plain truth plainly in the evidence of the Spirit. He is most magnified and made of, that can bring in some strange matter against the common received faith, and we live in this respect in most dangerous times and perilous seasons, as ever were heretofore. Others shut up their mouths and either through fear dare not, or through flattery and filthy lucre, will not reprove sin. These are men-pleasers, and time-seruers, not remembering what the Apostle saith, Galat. 1, 10. *Preach I man's doctrine, or God's? Or go I about to please men? For if I should yet please men, I were not the servant of Christ.* The Ministers of the Gospel must not sow cushions under men's elbows, nor prophesy to the people of wine and strong drink, they must not apply or fashion their doctrine to the humors and affections of men, as if the word were a crooked line, or a leaden rule, or a shipmans hose; but keep a good conscience. Hence it is, that the Lord chargeth *Jeremiah to take away the precious from the vile, and to do according to his word; Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them. A father will not always feed the fancy, nor follow the disposition of his son that is sick; but will sometimes cross his mind, and restrain his desire,* Ier. 15, 19, and 6, 14. So must the Ministers of God, which are the fathers of our souls deal with such as are sick of sin, not soothe them up with sweet words, nor dawb with untempered Morter, but give thē that precious balm that shall not break their head, Psal. 141, 5. Thus dealt *Elijah with Ahab, Amos with Amaziah, John the Baptist with Herod,* though it cost him his head. And thus should all the true Ministers of God do, without pride or ambition, without fear or flattery seek the glory of God, not the praise of men: and howsoever the people hate him that rebuketh in the gate, Amos, chap. 5, verse 10, and abhor him that speaketh uprightly, yet they should set God before their eyes, and consider they have to deal with him. Lastly, they must not preach part of the word only, and leave another part untaught, but lay before them the whole will of God. Some preach nothing but the law: some teach nothing but the Gospel, & both sorts are greatly deceived, if they look for any great increase by their labors. The Law must prepare and make the way, the Gospel must follow after. The Law casteth down, the Gospel comforteth and raiseth up. The Law revealeth the knowledge of sin, the Gospel revealeth the remission of sin. Both these means are to be set on work, and applied wisely and discreetly to our hearers. Such as are secure and cold in the profession of

the Gospel, such as thorough presumption or ignorance see not their own sins, give them the Law, and apply unto them the threatenings of the same. Such as see and feel their sins, and are cast down by a deep apprehension of God's heavy judgments, minister unto them a plaster of the Gospel made of the precious blood of Christ, that looking upon him as it were upon the brazen Serpent, they may presently be cured and recovered of the sting of sin, and the wound of conscience. Both these are two necessary means that God hath left, the one without the other, hurteth more then healeth. The Law without the Gospel driveth the poor distressed soul upon the rock of desperation: the Gospel without the Law, puffeth up and advanceth proud flesh unto presumption; and therefore the spiritual Physicians and Surgeons are so to temper them, as that the Church may have the profitable and necessary help of both.

[Use 4] Lastly, it serveth to direct the hearers in the right art of hearing: they must submit them selves to God's ordinance, and be ready to know and hear all the will of God. We must not have itching ears, which are not able to suffer wholesome doctrine, some as the Athenians delighting in new things, and in hearing fables; others not abiding to be reprov'd. Therefore the Prophet *Micah* saith, *Are not my words good to him that walketh uprightly?* Mich. 2, 7. The cause why the word to many men is unpleasant and unsavory, is because they delight in evil, and desire to continue in sin, growing to so gross a contempt, as to command the Prophets not to Prophecy; or to prescribe unto them, what they shall Prophecy, or would limit them to their own liking, to serve their own affections and filthy lusts. Many would follow *John* the Baptist, til he required repentance. They would hear Christ, until he spake of taking up the cross. *Herod* heard *John* willingly, and practiced many things but when once he came nearer to him, & taught that it was not lawful to keep his brothers wife, he enjoined him silence, and clapped him up in prison. The Jews seemed for a time attentively to hear the defense of *Paul*; but when he touched his Apostleship to the Gentiles which they crossed & ganesayed, *Luke* testifies, they heard him unto this word, but then they lift up their voices and said, *Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not meet that he should live.* Thus it fareth with many hearers in our days. The drunkard delighteth to hear y^e Minister preach against oppression and covetousness: this pleaseth his humor, this his stomach brooketh well enough. These men hear the word by parts & parcels, they give care till their secret sores be reprov'd, and sit quietly till their sores be rubbed; and when once they are touched, they begin to kick & spurn with their heels against the word, and the Ministers of it. But we must hear all that is taught us, and not certain clauses or cantiles only, we must hear constantly, continually, and universally, as well the things that mislike us, and go against us, as those things that please and content us: as well the judgments of God thundered out against us in the Law, as the sweet promises pronounced and offered in the Gospel: as well the laying open of our own sins, as the publishing of the sins of other men. This kind of hearing the Lord commendeth in his people, after the delivery of the Law, Deut. chapter 5, verses 28.29. *They have well said, all that they have spoken; they were ready to hear all, and do all that Moses should speak unto them.* But if we fall to stint the Spirit, and teach the Lord to speak, prescribing the Minister what he shall say, and restraining our hearing what we will hear,

we shall never hear fruitfully, we shall never practice conscionably what we have heard. Thus much concerning the protestation of *Balaam*.

Verse 27. *Balak said unto Balaam, Come I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place, if so be it will please that God &c.*] Here is offered to our considerations, the profession of *Balaam*. He pretendeth Religion, and the help of God, and professeth to do all things in the Name of the true God, & yet was void of all Religion and sincere dealing, and doth all things by the working of the devil, abusing the glorious and fearful Name of God, to malicious & mischievous purposes. Hereby we learn, that many in the world profess piety and godliness in the tongue, that have none in the heart. They profess GOD outwardly, but serve the devil inwardly. This appeareth in the Jews, who albeit they would not hear the preaching of the Prophets, rebuking them in the Name of the Lord, yet had oftentimes in their mouths, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, this is the Temple of the Lord, Ier. 7, 4. Thus the Prophet *Isaiah* reproveth them in his time, *This people come near unto me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me was taught by the precept of men*, *Isaiah*, chap. 29, 13. So, many that were professors and teachers of the truth, (as Christ testifieth) yea, workers of miracles, and crying unto him, Lord, Lord, yet shall not be acknowledged of him as belonging to him. The Samaritans called and accounted themselves the true worshippers, and pretended the tradition of their fathers, and hated the Jews as false worshippers, yet themselves worshipped they knew not what. All heretics will boast, they teach God's truth; all hypocrites will say, they embrace the faith: all carnal and loose professors will challenge sincerity: all Papists will cry out, they are the Church, the successors of the Apostles, and the true Catholics, yet are no true Church but in show; no true Catholics but in name; no true successors of the Apostles, but in place. In the days of Christ the Jews gloried that they were the seed of *Abraham*, John 8, 44, the sons of the Covenant, the heirs of promise: they pleaded they were the first borne of God, yet he proveth to their faces, that they were the very limbs of the devil. And the Church of *Smyrna* had such among thē as vaunted they were Jews, Revel. 2, 9. that is, the people of GOD, but were in truth the Synagogue of Satan. All which examples, conclude the certainty of the former doctrine, and verify the saying of *Solomon*, Prov. 30. *There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness.*

The truth hereof will farther and more [Reason 1] fully appear unto us, if we enter into the consideration of the causes and reasons of it. The first is pride & self-love, which so overcome their hearts, and blind their eyes, that they cannot see their own wickedness and wretchedness, which are so hud-winked with palpable ignorance of God, as that they cannot judge of themselves and their own misery, as they should. We see the conjunction of these in the King of *Moab* and his Chaplain the false Prophet, that albeit they pretend the holy Name of God, yet through love of themselves on the one side, and ignorance of God on the other, they cannot see that their whole proceeding, is an utter renouncing of God. This reason the Prophet *David* pointeth unto, when he saith; *The wicked hath made boast of his own hearts desire, and the covetous blesseth himself though he contemneth the Lord: for the wicked is so proud, that he seeketh not for God; he is in prosperity, God spareth him in mercy, and he imagineth presently that he is just and holy, pleasing God*, Psal. 10, 3, 4.

[Reason 2] Secondly, the heart of man is many times deceitful. He can speak with his tongue that which he meaneth not in his heart, nor hath any sense or feeling of in his own soul, but beguileth with lying lips and a double toong. Many are under their profession hypocrites, and have hypocritical & hollow hearts, speaking that which they did not mind. For the nature of an hypocrite is to appear outwardly like a painted Toombe, as if there were nothing in him but singleness and simplicity of heart, and until his corruption break out as filthy matter out of a sore (which assuredly it will do at some time or other, seeing there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, Luke 12, 2.) there is none more conformable then he, in the outward exercises of y^e Word, Prayer, and the Sacraments. They draw near with their lips, they listen with their ears, they stretch forth their hands: thus they prepare and make ready their mouths to pray, their ears to hear, their hands to receive. This appeareth in the proud Pharisee, Luke, chapter 18 verses 11, 12. He came into the Temple to pray, he thanked God for his blessings, he fasted twice in the week, he gave tythe of all that he possessed: yet he worshipped God in vain, and departed to his house without profit or comfort.

Now let us handle the uses of this doctrine. [Use 1] First, we learn hereby for our instruction, that outward profession is not enough to assure us of our salvation, or to fit us to God's kingdom: for the devil might go as far as the best of those that rest in the show of godliness, who can turn and transform himself into an Angel of light, 2 Corinth. 11, verse 14. A wolf may put on a sheep's skin; yea, the Parrot and Ape can imitate: and therefore trust not to thy fair shows and external appearance, if thou proceed no further. It is not sufficient for thee to be baptized, to be made partaker of the word of God, of the Table of the Lord, and such privileges of the Church; this is to trust in lying words that shall not profit, Ier. chap. 7, verse 4. The case and condition of many professors, is no better then of the heathen Infidels, as of the Turks and Sarazins, I mean of such as content themselves with the bare name or profession of Christianity, and therein satisfy themselves; nay, it is a great deal worse, as our Savior teacheth, Math. chapter 11, verses 21, 22 23. that *Corazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum* shall be punished more severely then *Tyre and Sidon*, then *Sodom and Gomorrhah*. What comfort in the things of this life can any man take to bear the name of land, and another to have the state; to have the title, and another the interest: to have the empty shadow, and another the propriety and possession? Who would content himself with a bare show of riches, of honors, of health, of profit, and to want the things themselves? We see how all men hate couzeners and deceitful persons that seek to deceive and beguile their brethren: but much more odious and abhominable is it, to go about to delude the LORD, and to make show of loving him, when indeed we hate him. *Saul* pretended great zeal & forwardness in fulfilling the Commandment of the LORD, 1 Samuel, chapter 15, verse 13. but the kingdom was rent from him for his hypocrisy. For there can be no greater dishonor done to God, then to seek to please him with painted worship, as if he were a child that is delighted with Babies or Rattles, or would be pleased with toys and trifles; which is blasphemy once to think of the eternal Majesty, who beholdeth the secrets of the heart.

Secondly, seeing in outward behavior many [Use 2] set goodly colors upon their actions, and pretend great sincerity when the heart is empty, it is very behooveful for us to know them

by their fruits, and to observe the notes and marks of hypocrisy, whereby in the closest and cunningest carriage, it is bewrayed & disclosed. True it is, some by continual practice are grown to hide the holownes of their harts so deep, that it is hardly discovered: yet such is the judgment of God against them, that he layeth them open one way or other, at one time or other, in one place or other, in one company or other, upon one occasion or other, and so pulleth off the vizard of hypocrisie from their faces; and in the mean season leaveth us diverse marks to discern them, and to trace them out as by certain footsteps: first of all, their cheefest care is to seek the pomp and glory of the world, to be highly esteemed of others, and never regard the glory of God, or what he esteem of them. This appeareth in *Saul*, who being reprov'd of *Samuel* for his sin, 1 Sam. 15, 30, thought more of upholding his own estate, then of turning to God by true repentance, and therefore saith unto him, *Honor me I pray thee, before the Elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me.* This also appeareth in the Pharisees, who could not believe because they received honor one of another, and sought not the honor of God alone. Secondly, hypocrites are sharp-sighted, and have Eagles eyes to observe the behavior and look into the lives of other men, but are blind in regarding, and backward in reforming their own, as we see in the Pharisee, Luk. 18.11. *He thanked God that he was just and holy, not as the Publican.* Hereunto cometh the reproof of Christ, Mat. 7, 3, 4, 5. *Why seest thou the mote that is in thy brothers eye, and perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how sayest thou to thy brother, Suffer me to cast out the mote out of thine eye, and behold a beam is in thine own eye; Hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, &c.* Let us learn to begin with our selves, and to end with others: first, to look to our own ways, and when we feel how hard it is to subdue the strength of sin in our selves, and to over-master our own corruptions, we shall be more charitable, and less severe to others. Thirdly, they are more curious in the observation of the ancient traditions of men, of customs of forefathers, and of devices of their own, then of the holy Statutes and Commandments of almighty God. Behold the practice of the Pharisees in this point, as they are painted out unto us in the Gospel, as the Evangelist showeth, Mat. 15, where the Pharisees are said to come unto Christ, and to demand of him, why his Disciples transgressed the tradition of the Elders, and to complain against them, when they saw them eat meat with unwashen hands: for the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the Elders: and when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not; and many other things there be, which they have taken upon them to observe, as the washing of cups and pots, and of brazen vessels, and of beds. They do not charge the Disciples with breaking the laws of God, (which might be justly returned upon themselves) but with transgressing the ordinances of men, and making them necessary to the worship of God, and therefore are taxed as hypocrites. Let us take heed we do not please our selves in vain superstition or worship of God, fondly devised by our selves, and in blind zeal, which is not according to knowledge. Fourthly, they are precise in trifles, and loose in weighty affairs, they stumble at a straw, and leap over a block, they strain out a gnat, and swallow a camell, they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. This is the cause that Christ denounceth such woes against the Pharisees, Math. 23, 23, because they did tythe the Mint, Annis, and Cumin, and leave the weightier matters of the Law; as Judgment,

Mercy, & Fidelity: these ought ye to have done, & not to have left the other undone. Thus they snared men's consciences, and entangled their own about small things, and slender trifles, but neglected the greatest things, and loosed the raynes in things that were simply evil, & provoked the wrath of God. They thought it a great sin to heal the sick on the Sabbath day, to pull and rub ears of Corn on that day to drive away hunger, to converse with Publicans and sinners. They made great scruple of conscience, to put the silver pieces into the treasury, which *Judas* brought back, and cast down at their feet, because it was the price of blood, Mat. 27, 6: but their hearts never smote them, neither counted they it unlawful to hire a traitor to betray his Master, and to shed innocent blood. So at the time of the passion of Christ, their tender consciences suffered them not to enter into the common Hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover: but they were not afraid to oppress the Son of God with slanders, lies, and false witnesses, and to crucify the Lord of glory. Such is the holiness and religion of the Church of Rome standing in outward observations, *Touch not, taste not, eat not, which are after the doctrines and commandments of men, which have indeed a show of holiness, but are things of no value.* Let us not cleave to such vanities, nor advance our own inventions, but make the Law of God a light to our feet, and a lantern unto our steps. Lastly, they do all things to be seen of men, seeking the praise and applause of the world, and hunting after vain-glory; which have received all their reward, they can look for no other at the hands of almighty God. This property Christ observeth to be in hypocrites, Math. chap. 6, verses 2, 5, 16, and 23, 3. They blow a Trumpet before their alms, they stand and pray in the open streets, they disfigure their faces when they fast, and all these ceremonies and circumstances are used, that they may be seen and praised of men. But we must in all our works look unto God, and know that his eye is upon us, who seeth us in all places, and will reward us openly. To conclude, we are all to take knowledge of these fruits and effects of hypocrisy, that we be not overtaken with it: and on the other side, let us first seek the glory of God, reform our own ways, prefer the statutes of God, observe the weighty things of the Law, and content our selves to be seen of God, that so we may have praise not of men, but of God.

Thirdly, it teacheth us what to think of [Use 3] coniuring, sorcery, & enchantment. Sorcerers and Witches will seem to do all things in the name of God, they use many good words, they have the Name of God, and of Jesus Christ, continually in their mouths, & would be thought to work wholly by the divine power of almighty God, whereby they shamefully take his Name in vain, and notoriously deceive such as resort and repair unto them: and therefore we see how God maintained his own glory, and revenged the abuse done unto his holy Name in the Acts, chap. 19, 13, 16. by the example of those which took upon them to conjure and cast out devils in y^e Name of God, and to name over them which had evil spirits, the Name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus, whom *Paul* precheth; for the man in whom the evil spirit was, ran upon them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. Neither let any object and say, there is no sin in seeking to them, seeing they use good words, whereof followeth a good effect, to wit, recovery of health, and restoring of the sick. For herein lieth the deep subtlety of Satan, undermining craftily to hide his purpose. He knoweth that if he were known, and his hand

seen in it, all men would abhor and abjure him. Therefore he useth to assail men disguised, & changeth himself into an Angel of light, that we may be the sooner deceived, and he the better received. Now he can find no fitter color thē to make show of the Name of God, which is horribly abused and profaned, even by such as are accounted cunning men, and cunning women. These, the more they use the Name of God, the more wicked they are: and therefore albeit they speak of God, and Christ his Son, & teach such as come unto them, to use good words, to wear some part of *John's* Gospel, & to do all in the Name of Christ, yet they are the instruments of the devil, profaners of the Scriptures, abusers of holy things, and takers of the Name of God in vain, *whom God will never hold guiltless*, Exod. 20, 7. The devils are not driven out with good words *he is with stood with the shield of faith*, Eph. 6.16, where the Scriptures are not hanged about the neck, but written in the heart by the Spirit of God, and the soul thoroughly armed with the power of them, as with a spiritual sword that is able to wound the enemy.

Lastly, we learn from hence to join to [Use 4] our outward profession, true sanctification, & inward holiness of conversation. True profession bringeth with it true godliness. For all such as have this honor given unto them to be the people of God, and his precious inheritance, must be an holy people to God, as *Moses* teacheth: *Thou hast set up the Lord this day to be thy God, and the Lord hath set thee up this day to be a precious people unto him, that thou shouldst keep all his Commandments, & to make thee high above all Nations, in praise, in name, & in glory, &c.* Deut. 26, 17, 18, 18, 19. Let us not content our selves to have GOD in our mouths, but labor to be sincere, and first of all begin to look to our hearts. He that looketh to have good fruit of his Trees, looketh to the roots. He that would have clear waters in the channels, looketh to the Fountaines. So if we would cleanse our ways in God's sight, this is the right order to be observed, to begin first to cleanse the heart. This Christ teacheth y^e Pharisees, being proud hypocrites, *Ye make clean the utter side of the Cup, and of the Platter, but within they are full of bribery and excess: thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the Cup and Platter, that the outside of thē may be clean also*, Math. 23, 25, 26. This duty must of everyone of us be practiced: First, give unto God the heart, that made it, & be careful to begin the work of repentance there, & take heed of all hypocrisy, which may deceive others, and will deceive our selves, but cannot deceive God. Counterfet holiness is double ungodliness, both because it is ungodliness, and also a counterfetting which God abhorreth. Oh hypocrite (saith one) if it be a good thing to be good indeed, what reason hast thou to appear to be that which thou wilt not be? And if it be an evil thing to be evil indeed, why wilt thou be that which thou wouldst not seem to be? If it be a good thing to appear good, it is better to be so indeed: and if it be evil to appear to be evil, it is worse to be evil indeed. Wherefore, either appear as thou art, in truth, or be in truth as thou appearest. For what shall it profit thee to seem to all others a very Saint, and to be to thyself, nay, to thy God, a devil? It is much more to thy profit and comfort to be that indeed to thyself, which thou wouldst seem to be to others. A wicked man counterfetting godliness, is most ungodly: the deeper his hypocrisy is, the greater is his iniquity and impiety.

[Verse 28. *So Balak brought Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh toward the Wilderness: Then Balaam said, &c.*] Hitherto of two Doctrines, arising partly from the person of Balaam, and

partly from the person of *Balak*. One more remaineth to be considered in the shutting up of this Chapter, from the practice of them both. In all this business we have seen more their policy, then their power: and how they have behaved themselves cunningly and craftily to bring their purpose to pass. Hitherto cometh *Balaks* sending from far, and hyring of a sorcerer to curse y^e people. Hitherto cometh *Balaam's* consenting and coming for lucre, and love of money: & the sacrifices that both of thē did offer. Hereby we learn, That the children of this world are wise in their generation, omitting no manner of means to bring their purposes to pass. We may observe by continual experience, the nature of ungodly men; they are subtle and cunning in their kind, they watch their ways and times to fit them, to work out their wicked devices and inventions. *Balak* knew well enough he was not able to meet the Israelites in the open field, and to put his cause to the trial of a battle, and therefore dealeth otherwise. This is it which *Stephen* in his Apology noteth, Acts 7, 19. *There arose another King which knew not Joseph; the same dealt subtly with our kindred, and evilly entreated our fathers, and made them to cast out their young children that they should not remain alive.* Thus did *Laban* deal toward *Jacob*, Gen. 31, 1, 2, 41, changing his mind, revoking his bargains, altering his wages, murmuring at his prosperity, and changing his countenance toward him. This is noted also in the Parable recorded, Luk. 16, 8, where it is said, that the Master praised and commended his unjust Steward, because he had done wisely, *For the children of this world are in their generation wiser thē the children of light.* This we see by many examples. *Ahithophels* counsel was esteemed like as one had asked counsel at the Oracle of God, so were all his counsels both with *David* and with *Absalom*. The like we see in *Herod*, when he heard of the birth of Christ, as of a new borne King, by the wise men; he pretendeth piety, but useth policy to destroy the Babe our Savior, he calleth the wisemen secretly and privily, he willeth them to return what success they had, and pretended a good end that he might worship him, whereas his meaning was to kill him. The same we might observe in the Scribes and Pharisees after the ascension of Christ, they spared no means to hinder the course of the Gospel, Acts 3, and 4, and 5, but used sometimes fair means, sometimes threatenings, sometimes commandments to stop the mouths of the Apostles. All which Testimonies teach us that which the Prophet *Jeremiah* saith, ch. 4.22. of the people in his time agreeable to the truth of this doctrine, *They are wise to do evil, but to do well they have no knowledge.*

[Reason 1] The Reasons follow. First, they serve a cunning master, the author of all confusion, the contriuer of all mischief, the worker of all wickedness, that old subtle serpent, who worketh in all the children of disobedience. Eph. 2, 2. They serve him as their master, they obey him as their father, they follow him as their captain, they honor him as their lord, they worship him as their god. For *do ye not know, (saith the Apostle Paul) that to whomsoever ye give yourselves as servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether it be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?* Rom. 6, 16. And as *Peter* testifieth, *They promise unto others liberty, and are themselves the servants of corruption: for of whomsoever a man is overcome, even unto the same he is in bondage,* 2 Pet. 2, 19.

Secondly, God giveth even to wicked men [Reason 2] wisdom and understanding, to magnify his mercy, who is good to all, and to aggravate their sin, who are made thereby without excuse. Rom. 1, 20, 21. For he maketh his Sun to shine upon the evil and the good, he

sendeth rain on the just and unjust. Now the greater his goodness is toward them, the heavier shall his judgment and their punishment be. *To whom much is committed, of him much shall be required, and to whomsoever men do give much, the more of him will they ask*, Luke 12, 48. What is it that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received it, why dost thou not glorify him of whom thou hast received it? Thus we see, God giveth wisdom and sundry other gifts to the ungodly, both to show himself to be in his mercies unspeakable, and to leave them in their sins inexcusable.

Thirdly, the enemies of God have knowledge, [Reason 3] understanding, experience, foresight, & forecast; they are as wise as Serpents, as subtle as Foxes, as crafty as Crocodiles, to the ende God may use them as his rods in correcting his Church, and in trying the faith of his people. So he proved the patience of the Israelites by *Pharaoh* & the Egyptians, and by the cunning and crafty fetches, which they practiced for their overthrow and destruction. So he tried *David* by wise *Achitophel*, through whose subtlety & suggestion, *David* was driven out of Jerusalem, and to shift from place to place for the safeguard of life. So he tried *Joseph* and *Mary*, by the dissimulation of *Herod*, by whō they were constrained to depart out of *Judea*, and to fly into the Land of Egypt.

The uses to be made of this Doctrine are [Use 1] many. First, this should on the other side, teach us to deal wisely and warily with them, lest we be snared and circumvented by them. We are set as upon an hill, we are placed as upon a stage; if we profess Christ Jesus, a small spot will be seen in our garment. It behooveth us therefore, to be wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doves, according to the counsel of our Savior, to the end we may stop the mouths of gainsayers, and cut off occasions from them that seek occasions, that when they speak evil of us as of evil doers, they may be ashamed which slander our good conversation. It behooveth us therefore having to do with such adversaries as are their craftsmasters in their occupation, and have learned cunning in their profession, to deal not only lawfully, but wisely. Their wisdom is joined with wickedness, our wisdom must be seasoned and tempered with godliness. Their policy is iniquity, with us policy and innocence must accompany together, and kiss one another. Their wisdom is a circumventing by laying of snares; our wisdom must be to be circumspect in avoiding of snares. If we have this wariness mingled with true sincerity, having our spirits without guile, and all our actions without dissimulation, it is both lawful and expedient to set wisdom against wisdom, and policy against policy, and care against care, and understanding against understanding, that so through their subtlety, and our simplicity, we be not taken in their traps which they have laid for us. The men are mischievous, the times are dangerous, the snares and slights are pernicious: if we should not deal wisely and warily, we should lie open as a prey to the enemies, and should notwithstanding imminent harms and hurts ready to fall upon us. Thus the servants of God have borne themselves in a lawful course with a wise hand. *Rebecca* understanding the hatred, and hearing of y^e purpose of *Esau*, Genes. 27, 41, 46, that when the days of mourning for his father should come, he would slay his brother, being desirous to preserve them both, but especially *Jacob*, conveyeth him out of the danger; she goeth and alledgeth that the daughters of *Heth* were a grief of mind, and a weariness of life unto her, and so sendeth him away from his fathers house for a season. She pretendeth the cause to

be, to take a wise at Padan Aram, but concealeth her principal purpose from her Husband, and dealeth not only lawfully, but wisely and politically. The like we see in *Paul*, perceyuing a dissention in the assembly, and a division in judgment amongst his accusers, consisting of two parts; one of the Pharisees that held the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body; the other of the Sadducees, which denied the one and the other: he took the occasion and opportunity by his calling, and cried out in the Council, *Men and Brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, I am accused of the hope and resurrection of the dead*; whereby he set a rent among them, and by that means the knot was broken, and so their malice was abated. A lawful cause, and a wise course, bring a blessing with them upon those that delight to follow them. A good cause, well and wisely handled, shall find a comfortable issue in the end. This we shall attain unto, if we make the word of God our Counsellors, Ps. 119, 24, 98, 99, 100. The Prophet found by experience, that by his commandments he was made more wise thē his enemies, more learned then his teachers, more skillful then the ancient. For whosoever doth submit himself to God's word, shall not only be safe against the practices of his enemies, but also learn him more wisdom then the masters and professors of it.

Secondly, it is our duty to pray unto God [Use 2] to be delivered from them, and trust in him for his help. For unless our help be in the name of the Lord, which hath made heaven and earth, they will go beyond us and ouerreach us. They deal warily and circumspectly, they work by all means lawful and unlawful, just and unjust: let it be our wisdom therefore to trust in the wise God, and to beg this grace at his hands, as the Apostle *James* teacheth, chap. 1, 5, We must never look to live in peace, or that the world should be reconciled unto us: never marvel as if some strange thing did befall us, when the enemies set their wits on work to devise some mischief: our refuge must be in God in the time of trouble. It is our help to crave this help. This was the hope of *David* whē mighty bulls closed him, and the roaring Lions gaped upon him, he desired God not to be far from him, because trouble was near, for there was none to help him, *Be not far off, O Lord, my strength, hasten to help me: deliver my soul from the sword, my desolate soul from the power of the Dog*, Psal. 22, 11, 12. So the Apostle craveth the prayers of the Church, 2 Thes. 3, 1, 2. So long as we make God our trust and refuge in our affliction, be our enemies never so cunning and wise, we shall not fall down under the burden, but stand upright thorough the power and wisdom of God, who shall catch the crafty in their own craft, destroy y^e wisdom of the wise, and cast away the understanding of the prudent, Job 5, 12. Isaiah 29, 14 1 Cor. 1, 19. Thus *David* prayeth to the Lord 2 Sam. 15, 31. *O Lord I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness*. This the Lord heard, and brought his heavy judgment upon his counsel and person, for his counsel was crossed by another, he himself was hanged by his own hand. The like we see in *Herod*, in whom we may behold exceeding craftiness, joined with extreme sottishnes, and his fury overcome by excessive foolishness. How easy a remedy had he at hand, either to have gone himself, seeing he supposed it to concern his crown and kingdom, or to have sent some of his Courtiers, under color of accompanying the wise men, and so he could not have doubted to catch him in his claws. But the wise men go alone, Matth. 2, 8, 9. he neither detayneth them with him, nor sendeth any with them.

Thus the Lord from time to time delivereth his Church from the paw of the Lyon, from the tuske of the Bore, & from the horn of the Unicorn: and striketh all their enemies with the spirit of giddines and astonishment, that they become foolish, and cannot see the way before them. He scattereth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot accomplish that which their harts have enterprized. An excellent and sweet comfort to all the servants of God, not to fear the high reaches & deep devices of their enemies, seeing they serve that wise God which taketh the wise in their craftiness, and maketh the counsel of the wicked foolish.

[Use 3] Lastly, this serveth to reprove two sorts of men, that esteem not aright of this worldly wisdom of wicked men. For some are offended at their wisdom, because it is so great: others rest contented in it, because it is so excellent. This is the weakness and infirmity of the children of God, when they see the glory, prosperity, and wisdom of worldly men, that they are able to reach so far, and over-reach by their policies many others, they are ready to account them the happiest men, to join with them, and to say, *Certainly we have cleansed our hearts in vain, and washed our hands in innocence*, Psal. 73, 13. For though they talk presumptuously, & set their mouth against heaven, yea and their tongue walketh through the earth; yet God hath set them in slippery places, and casteth them down into desolation. Look upon the wicked lives and wretched deaths of the great wise men of the world, that were deep wise men in their own eyes, and in the eyes of the world, but not in God, nor with the godly; and we shall see they have been suddenly destroyed, and horribly consumed. Look upon the example of *Pharaoh, Saul, Ahithophel, Herod, Haman, & such like*; and tell me whether thou wouldest have their fearful ends, for all their natural gifts, and exchange the wisdom of the Spirit for all their worldly wisdom. The true wisdom which is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without judging, and without hypocrisy. Who then is a wise man indeed, and endued with knowledge? even such an one as showeth by good conversation his works in meekness of wisdom. As for the cunning heads of the world, and such as have nothing in them but human and profane wisdom, they may for a time have the applause and praise of men, but they and their policies shall come in the end to nothing. This wisdom descendeth not from above, James 3, 15, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish. Hereupon the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 1, 20. *Where is the wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made the wisdom of this world foolishness?* If then God hath made it foolishness, let us not account it our happiness, nor those happy men that have nothing to commend them to God and men but that. If God will destroy it let not us think it can save those y^t trust in it.

Secondly, we should not content our selves to be worldly wise. This the Gentiles sought after and obtained. Let not us care so much for this learning, as to be heavenly wise, & to know Christ that we may have him living & dwelling in us. This the Apostle teacheth, Ro. 16, 19. where he saith, *Your obedience is come abroad among all, I am glad therefore of you: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil*. Here he requireth wisdom, but simple; & simplicity, but wisdom. Then he showeth wherein these must appear, and how we must be both the one and the other. We must not be wise to do evil, nor simple unto that which is good. But our wisdom must consist in following that which is good: our simplicity in

eschewing evil. There is a wisdom of God, there is a wisdom of men, there is a wisdom of the devil. The first is heavenly, the second human, the third devilish. The end of the first is the salvation of the godly, the end of the second is the commendation of the world, the end of the third is the condemnation of hell. The first, is a spiritual gift of God, the second a natural gift of man, the third a wretched work of the devil. The heavenly wisdom which is from above, is holy: the devilish wisdom which is from hell below, is unholy: the human wisdom which is from the earth, is in it self, and of it self, indifferent, and partaketh of a mean nature neither holy nor unholy. The heavenly wisdom teacheth to know God, and is the beginning of godliness; the earthly wisdom standeth in human knowledge of natural things, and in understanding the things of this life; the devilish wisdom consisteth in *Machaulian* policies, and in desperate devices, to accomplish by right or wrong, by force or flattery, by life or death that which the corrupt heart intendeth, and hath contryued. This last kind we must always avoid, which was first taught by the devil, and practiced by his disciples. The first day we begin to practice it, we begin to be the devils scholars. The further we go forward in it, the more we profit in the devils school. This was the profound wisdom of *Ahab* and *Jezebel*, 1 *Kings* 12: when as they plotted to get the possession of *Naboth's* vineyard. This is to be found in many fine wits in the world, that set thē a work on wickedness, and abuse it, to the dishonor of God, to the hurt of their brethren, and to the destruction of their own souls. The human wisdom standeth in human things, in ordering matters belonging to the Commonwealth, and private families: whereunto belongeth the knowledge of Arts and Sciences. This differeth much from the former: that being always unlawful, the end being to accomplish some mischief by fraud and deceit, where the end of this is to delight & to profit. And yet this wisdom cannot be acceptable to God, 1 *Cor.* 3, 19, but is foolishness with him, unless it be seasoned and sanctified with the heavenly wisdom which is joined with the fear of God. The heavenly wisdom may stand with the earthly, and the earthly of it self may be joined with that which is devilish. But when the Spirit of God cometh, & putteth true heavenly wisdom into the heart, it rectifieth the human wisdom, and giveth it a pleasant taste that pleaseth God; it separateth and abolisheth all devilish wisdom, and suffereth it not to lurk and lodge with in us any longer. Let us all therefore seek to be wise in God, in his word, and in godliness: and then the natural gifts that God hath given us, shall be sanctified unto us.

CHAP. XXIII.

1 When Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, then he went not as at certain times before to fetch Diuinations, but set his face toward the wilderness.

2 And Balaam lift up his eyes, and looked upon Israel, which dwelt according to their Tribes, and the Spirit of God came upon him.

3 And he uttered his Parable, and said; Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes were opened, hath said.

4 He hath said which heard the words of GOD, and saw the vision of the Almighty, falling in a trance, and having his eyes uncovered.

5 How goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob! and thy Tabernacle, O Israel!

6 As the valleys are they stretched forth, as Gardens by the river side, as the Aloe trees which the Lord hath planted, as the Cedars beside the waters.

7 The water droppeth out of the Bucket, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his King shall be higher then Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.

8 God brought him out of *Egypt*, his strength shall be as an Unicorne: he shall eat the nations his enemies, and bruise their bones, and shoot them through with his arrows.

9 He coucheth and lieth down as a young Lyon, and as Lyon: Who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee: and cursed is he that curseth thee.

IN the former Chapter we have heard and handled the two first prophesies of *Balaam*, wherein we see, how he hath blessed and not cursed the people of God. Here *Moses* proceedeth to finish the rest of the history, wherein we are to consider two things: First, the residue of his prophesies remaining: secondly, the event of thē all. The prophesies are of two sorts; first, special prophesies, concerning special and several people, to the 23. verse; Namely, the Israelites, the Moabites, and Edomites, the Amalekites and the Kenites: secondly, general prophesies belonging to all the nations bordering together, and inhabiting Assyria, Judea, Palestine, and all Syria, which shall taste of the same misery of war, and be consumed with the violence of the same fire. The first point is touching the Israelites, in which prophetical history, we must consider (as we did before) three things: first, the preparation that is made unto it: secondly, the prophesy it self: thirdly, the effects and consequences thereof ensuing.

Touching the preface and preparation unto the prophesy it self, it serveth to confirm the authority and truth of this prophesy. For albeit it were delivered by the mouth of a wicked man, who was convinced by y^e light of his own conscience, and by the testimony of God's

Spirit, that he should not curse his people, yet he worketh and wrestleth against the will of God, as if he could cozen & deceive the most Highest. Therefore, he did not seek a solitary place (as he was wont) to work his witchcrafts, at which time he saw God met and prevented him; but turneth his countenance at a sudden, toward the desert of Jordan, where the Israelites sojourned and pitched their Tents, purposing presently to break out into a cursing of them, before the God of the Israelites should be aware of it, & supposing he would have put no prophesy in his mouth before he should go to fet his wicked and wanted diuinations. Thus he determined with himself to utter the wicked imaginations of his own heart, before God should work any impression in his mind, or reveal his counsel unto him. But God which catcheth the wise in their own craftiness, 1 Cor. 3, 19, 20, and knoweth that the thoughts of the most wily are vain, represseth his devilish purpose, and doeth not only bridle his tongue, but inspireth him with his Spirit (being as it were changed into another man) that he should speak not his own devices, but the words of God. So then, God casting as it wer his hand upon him, taketh hold on him, staying his intent, and stopping his course two ways: the one outward, the other inward. The outward means used of God to hinder him, was the beholding of the dwellings and lodgings of the Israelites, distinguished according to their Tribes. For when he saw with his eyes their goodly and comely order, whereby the presence of God amongst them was clarily manifested, and their faith in him was testified; every man encamping by his standard, and under the Ensign of his fathers house, Numb. 2, 2. he was upon that sight and situation of them, withholden from proceeding in his curses and execrations. The inward means was yet more forcible to stop the stream of the waters ready to overflow y^e people of God: for the Spirit of God came suddenly upon him, that whereas he determined to serve the devil and damned spirits, he is constrained against his will to serve y^e purpose and providence of God, & to speak what God would, not what himself wished & desired: Thus we see, that neither Satan nor his instruments can work any hurt to the salvation of the people of God, but both they and all their endeavours come to nothing.

Hitherto of the preparation: now we come to the prophesy which he uttereth by the Spirit of God. In this we are to consider, first the entrance into it, then the prophesy it self. In the entrance or beginning, to procure attention, and purchase credit to his words, he setteth down three things: first, the inscription and title of the prophesy, wherein is a description of himself by his name, and the name of his father. For albeit *Balaam's* name be of no such weight and moment with us, y^t we should for the persons sake give credit to the prophesy, or respect more who speaketh, then what is spoken: yet this simple & plain dealing, professing his own name, and confessing himself the unworthy instrument of God, serveth to add some authority to the speech that followeth. Secondly, he styleth himself to be the man whose eyes were opened, whereby he teacheth that he would publish nothing of his own invention, but that only which he had received by divine inspiration. As if he should say, Though *Balaam* be by nature as blind as a beetle in the matters of God, and understand nothing of heavenly things, yet he hath received a spiritual and heavenly revelation of the Spirit from above, that of a blind man whose eyes through covetousness of money, and ignorance of God were closed up, he is become a seer to see for others, not for himself, nor his own salvation. Some read the sentence thus, that his eyes were shut up: but the other

reading agreeth better to y^e circumstances of the text and the words following, as even *Lyra* himself confesseth, that he was enlightened of God to see with the eyes of his mind more clearly then he could do with his bodily eyes, inasmuch as the light of the mind is more plain and perspicuous then the light of the body. Thirdly, he confesseth he had heard the words of God. Thus he speaketh after the manner of the true Prophets, who were wont to begin their prophesies with prefixing y^e name of God, *Thus saith the Lord, Hear ye the word of the Lord*, to show, y^t they uttered not their own inventions, but the Oracles of God. Now, as *Balaam's* sight (which is the sharpest & quickest sense) saw nothing before God opened his eyes, so he declareth he was dull and deaf of hearing, before God had opened his ears to hear, and delivered his word unto him. Lastly, he saith he had seen the vision of the Almighty, ravished in mind, but having his eyes uncovered: whereby he meaneth, that being as it were in an ecstasy, he was carried •u• of himself. The like is noted touching *Saul*, • Sam. •9. he went to *Naioth* in *Ramah*, and the Spirit of God came upon him also, and he went prophesying until he came thither. Hereby *Balaam* showeth two things; first, the author of the prophesy, to wit, the Almighty, ascribing all to God, challenging nothing to himself: secondly, the manner of his prophesy, which was in a vision. Ezek. 3, 14: Dan. 8, 27. and 10, 8, which far surpasseth y^e communication of God's will by dream, albeit God be the author of both. Thus hath God oftentimes made himself known among the Infidels, both by visions and by dreams, as to *Abimelech*, *Pharaoh Nebuchadnezzar*, and others, who may be said to have the holy spirit, but had not the spirit of holiness: for wheresoever he worketh he is holy; but he doth not always work holiness and sanctification which evermore accompany salvation. Now because it is said he fell into a trance, it shall not be amiss to show what a trance is, what are the parts and ends of it, being away and means w^c God hath used to reveal his will unto men. A trance is an extraordinary work of the Spirit of God upon the whole man, casting the body and senses into a deep sleep, & withdrawing the soul from the fellowship of the body to a fellowship with God, for the better enlightening thereof. It is I say an extraordinary work of the Spirit above the work of nature or constitution of the body, or strength of the imagination, whereby the whole man is for a time changed in body and mind; the body & the senses thereof both outward and inward, cast into a deep or dead sleep, & made senseless: the soul withdrawn or separated from the communion and fellowship of the body, to the fellowship of God, for the better enlightening thereof to understand the secrets & counsels of God. This is a trance, or to be ravished in the Spirit, which God used often to his Prophets. It standeth in two parts or actions: First, on the body which is cast into a deep sleep, when the senses are for the time bereaved of the present use of thē. Secondly, on the mind: the which that it might be brought nearer to God, is withdrawn from all dealing and fellowship with the body, and enlightened to understand divine things, as Acts 10. *Peter* s•w y^e heaven opened, a vessel coming down, and a voice came unto him. The causes why it pleased GOD to reveal his will after this manner, are; First, that they should take nothing to themselves, but account all received from GOD. Secondly, that their bodies and souls being separate frō all other dealings, might have a deeper impression of the things revealed, and thereby understand them, and keep them the better. Thus much touching the trance of *Balaam*, & the beginning of the prophesy.

Now we come to the substance of the prophesy it self, the sum whereof is first propounded, then amplified, and lastly concluded. The proposition which is proved is described by a question, and by way of admiration, expressing the happiness of the Church: *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy Tabernacles, O Israel!* As if he should say: O how blessed and happy a people art thou, which now livest under these Tents, and dwellest in these habitations! And note here, that he doth not give a touch to their happiness, and then pass away suddenly from it: but he doubleth, and repeateth it, as if he meant to dwell long upon it. There is no part or parcel of God's word in vain. If we see not the use of some things, it is our weakness, & we must confess it not condemn the Scriptures. The Spirit of God forbiddeth vain babbling, Mat. 6, 7: and reproveth idle repetitions, and therefore never useth the same himself.

The Reasons and occasions of repetitions are these three; First, for greater assurance, for God speaking twice doth as it were produce a double witness, and signifieth that it did not slip from him unawares, but is that which he meaneth to stand unto, and to ratify; so that albeit heaven and earth pass away, yet one jot or tittle of his word shall not pass away. Secondly, to testify the speedy accomplishment of that which he hath spoken, y^t it shall not be prolonged and delayed, but be swiftly performed, & shortly be executed. And these two causes are both touched by *Joseph* in expounding the two dreams of *Pharaoh*, when he saith, *The dream was doubled unto Pharaoh the second time, because the thing is established by God, and God hasteth to perform it*, Genes. 41, 32.

The third reason of using repetitions, is, to quicken those that are dull, and stir up those y^t are heavy hearted, that they should shake off all deadness & drowsiness of spirit. Once speaking passeth suddenly away, we cannot hear it: or if we hear it, we cannot remember it; or if we remember it, we are backward in practicing of it. We have need to be often put in mind of the same thing, and for us it is a safe thing. This is the cause that the Prophets of God so often use repetitions. So did *Balaam* before in the former Chapter, Numb. 23, 21. *God seeth no iniquity in Jacob, he seeth no transgression in Israel*. These three causes have place in this repetition used in this place. For their happiness is certainly confirmed, speedily to be accomplished, and the enemies of the people of God are roused up diligently to consider thereof, and think with themselves, surely this is of great importance, seeing God offers it unto me again and again.

This blessed estate and condition of the Church is set down, first comparatively, then simply, whereby the former similitudes are expounded and interpreted. The metaphors and similitudes are many in number, but tending to one and the same purpose: under the borrowed speeches of the tents of the shepherds, of stretching out of the valleys, watering of the gardens, planting of the Cedars, he understandeth the safety, largeness, increase, pleasantness, multitude, and strength of the Church, that shall surmount the glory of the Gentiles, and tread down the kingdom of *Agag*, that is, of the Amalekites, which at that time flourished in the world, and promised unto it self a perpetuity upon the earth; which prophesy was performed in the days of *Saul* and *Samuel*, of *David* & *Solomon*. This appeareth plainly in the second branch, where the comparisons are explained, in which he showeth the

author of their happiness to be God the giver of every good giving, and of every perfect gift; who, albeit they were a small people, and greatly oppressed, yet he brought them myraculously, out of the Land of Egypt, he shall be their protection & defense against their enemies, giving them the strength of the Unicorn, assisting them in all their dangers, and subduing all their adversaries under them.

This is the substance of the prophesy, the conclusion remaineth, consisting of two parts or members: the first, respecting the Israelites, the second respecting others, but uttered for the Israelites sake. Touching the Israelites he inferreth upon the premisses, their peace, safety, and security, tranquility, and quiet, dwelling without fear, expressed by comparison of a Lyon, who eateth his prey without fearfulness of the passengers: so the Jews overcoming all their enemies, shall have rest, & govern their Church and Common-wealth in peace, which came to pass so long as they did cleave to God with full purpose of heart, and worship him according to the precise rule of his word; for then no enemies (albeit never so many or so mighty) were able to prevail against them. Thus did the Patriarch *Jacob* express the preeminence of *Judah*, Gen. 49, 9. *As a Lions whelp shalt thou come up from the spoil my son: he shall lie down and couch as a Lyon, and as a Lyonnesse, who shall stir him up?* The second member belonging unto others is this, that they which *blest thee shall be blessed, and such as curse thee shall be cursed*. A notable commendation of the Church, & encouragement to persuade others to be of the church. As if he should say, So many as shall join themselves of other people to thee, and embrace the same holy Religion with thee (for it shall in the fullness of time come to pass, that God shall allure *Japheth* to dwell in the tents of *Shem*. Gen. 9, 27) shall be partakers of the same blessings with thee which GOD shall pour out upon thee; but all such as separate themselves from thee, and show themselves not brethren, but strangers; not friends, but enemies; not neighbors, but aliens from thee, shall lie under the fearful curse and revenge of God. This is it which the Lord pronounced and promised long before to *Abraham*, Gen. 12, 2, 3. This power did *Balak* before falsely ascribe to *Balaam*.

This is the drift of this division, and the order that the Spirit of God observeth therein. Touching the instructions that arise from hence, we have considered diverse things before. We see how *Balak* and *Balaam* proceed in their devilish purposes, if God had suffeted them, and not crossed them. He revealed his will to *Balaam*, who spake, moved by God's Spirit, and thereby declareth, that he speaketh not only to his own children, but sometimes teacheth wicked men to make them without excuse; and therefore he will not leave his own people destitute of instruction, that desire to fear his name. But of this we have spoken before, chap. 22, 9.

[Verse 2. *Balaam lift up his eyes, & looked upon Israel, and the spirit of God came upon him.*] *Moses* showing the prophesy that *Balaam* uttered, describeth it by the author thereof, the Spirit of God came upon him. In this part of the title he saith, That the things delivered in this prophesy (which were uttered for the Churches sake) were hid & kept secret before they were revealed and manifested by God. This prophesy containeth not a doctrine that is common or communicated by the light of nature to men, but a declaration of such secrets as God reserveth hid to himself in his own counsel, which no living creature could know

otherwise, then as it pleaseth God to disclose it by a gracious participation of it. This teacheth us this truth, That the things of God can no man know, but by the Spirit of God. The mysteries of salvation, and doctrine of godliness are secret and unknown of men and Angels, before they be of God revealed. This our Savior teacheth *Peter*, having made a confession of Christ, *Blessed art thou Simon, the son of Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven*, Matth. 16, 17. And expounding the parable of the Sower to his disciples, he saith, *To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but unto them that are without, all things are done in Parables*, Mark 4, 11. The Apostle teacheth, that the natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. And the same Apostle speaking of the gospel, Rom. 16, 25. Eph, 3, 9. calleth it, *A mystery revealed, which was kept secret from the beginning of the world*. So the Apostle *John* handling hidden visions, and teaching the Church y^e things that must come to pass hereafter, called that Book *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him*, Revel. 1, 1.

The truth of this appeareth, because they [Reason 1] were hid in the treasury of God's wisdom, which is unsearchable, and not to be sounded by any creature, and therefore the Apostle calleth them, *A secret hid in God*, Ephe. 3, 9: so that the Apostles and holy Prophets of God, could deliver nothing of his counsel, before he had revealed it to them. So the Lord speaketh, Numb. 12, 6. *Hear now my words, If there be a Prophet of the Lord among you, I will be known unto him by a vision, and will speak unto him by dream*. The calling of the Gentiles seemed strange to the very Apostles, before it was revealed to *Peter*. Who would ever have imagined that God would have redeemed man by such a wonderful means (the greatest wonder that ever came into the world) by giving his Son, and that unto the death, to ransom and redeem a church by his own blood? Acts 20. This no creature in heaven or earth, would ever have thought upon, if God had not revealed it by his word, and assured it by his Spirit.

Secondly, this receiveth further strength [Reason 2] for the confirmation of it, because the wisest and subtlest that were in the world, were herein overtaken and proved fools; for by all their wisdom (though never so great) they were not able to reach unto it, nor to look into any the least part of it. The Apostle speaking of the mystery of the Gospel revealed by his ministry, alledgeth the prophesy of *Isaiah*, where the Lord threateneth to destroy the wisdom of the wise, and to cast away the understanding of the prudent: and after he saith, *Where is the wise? hath not God made the wisdom of the world foolishness?* 1 Cor, 1, 18, 19.

The Uses remain to be learned of us. First, [Use 1] for knowledge we see, that the mystery of godliness revealed to the world by God in the Gospel, is a most worthy & glorious mystery, greatly to be admired and revered: unto us that are called it is the wisdom of God, and the power of God. So the Apostle saith, *Great is the mystery of godliness, which is, God manifested in the flesh*, 1 Tim. 3, 16. It seemeth far otherwise to the foolish world, it appeareth to thē a base and vile thing, as *Paul* complaineth in his time, *We preach the Gospel, even Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, & unto the Grecians foolishness*, 1 Cor. 1, 23. A stumbling block to the Jews, because they dreaming of an earthly king of this world, to free them from the bondage of the Romans, and thinking they should be Lord's of the earth, were offended at

the low estate of Christ, coming in the shape of a servant: foolishness to the Grecians, because it seemed foolishness to the wise Philosophers among the heathē, to look for life from death, to believe in him that rose from the dead, and that such as are dead shall rise again. How many are there amongst our selves, that are offended at the simplicity of the Gospel, that it is not accompanied with miracles, & that it is brought unto us in earthen vessels? These are they that esteem the Manna as light meat, and therefore loathe it. But let them alone to loathe this Manna, that loathe faith, Christ, and heaven it self; yea, their own salvation.

Secondly, for obedience, we must observe [Use 2] that when these secret things be revealed unto us of God, we ought to endeavor to learn them, to understand them, to publish them & speak of them to others. Whensoever God hath a mouth to speak, we must have an ear to hear. Therefore Moses saith, Deut. 29, 29. *Secret things belong unto the Lord, but the things revealed belong to us and our children to do them.* So the Apostle Paul, when God had revealed Christ unto him, and ordained him a teacher unto the Gentiles, saith, *I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but shown to Jews and Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works worthy amendment of life,* Acts 26, 19, 20. This serveth to reprove all such as refuse to look into these revealed things of God, but dwell in blindness and ignorance. Of this sort are the greatest number in our assemblies. They are wise enough to look into their own profit, but they care not for the wisdom that is of God. They are brought up in the church, but know not the Doctrine of the Church. They are always learning, but never come to the knowledge of the truth. He that setteth his son to school, will look he should learn somewhat, and not ever stand at one stay. We are trained up in the bosom of the Church, which is the School-house of Christ, we must therefore every day be profiting and going forward. God accepteth not of those that look backward, or stand at a stay; he will know them that seek more and more to know him.

Thirdly, it is our duty to beg and crave at [Use 3] God's hands, the knowledge of his will, who openeth the eyes of the blind, and giveth understanding to those that seek it. We have a gracious promise to be heard, Mat. 7, 7. in the prayers and petitions that we make unto him. Hence it is, that the Prophet *David*, a man after God's own heart, and endued with a singular portion of God's Spirit, craveth the enlightening of God's Spirit, and desireth still to be taught of him, Psal. 119, verses 18, 27, 31, 73.

Thus doth the Apostle pray for the Ephesians, chapter 1, verses 17, 18, that God would give them the spirit of wisdom, and enlighten their minds to know what the hope is of his calling, and what the riches are of his glorious inheritance in the Saints. A notable direction for all of us, how to behave our selves when we come into the house of God, and tread in his Courts; namely, not to rest upon our natural gifts, nor to trust in our mother-wits, which are too short and shallow to reach up to the height, and to sound the depth of the mysteries of God.

How many are there in the world, of an high reach and of a deep conceit in the matters of the world, that attain to no measure of knowledge in the matters of God? Talke with them of the things of this life, they are able to discourse with great insight; many of God's children inferior to them, few equal with them, none can go beyond them. They can contrive and

dispatch business of the world with great facility: you cannot speak to them of anything of this nature, but by and by they apprehend it and conceive it. But enter communication with them of heavenly things, of the knowledge of God, of faith in Christ, of the salvation of their souls, they can conceive nothing, they are as blind as Beetles, they are simple and ignorant as little children, that know not the right hand from the left.

This should offer to our wise & careful cōsiderations, a double meditatiō. First, it serves to humble those y^t have these gifts of nature, and are wise in their own conceit, and to make them equal with those of the lower sort: seeing all their gifts which Nature hath adorned them withal, are not able to set them one foot forward toward the kingdom of heaven; nay being unsanctified, they are further off from salvation, then others of smaller gifts. This made the Apostle say, *Let no man deceive himself: if any man among you seem to be wise in this world, let him be a fool, that he may be wise: for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and the Lord knoweth that the thoughts of the wise be vain*, 1. Cor. 3, 18. Where he teacheth everyone to be ready to deny himself, and his carnal wisdom, whose beginning is from the flesh, and whose end is death; to the end we may be truly wise in heavenly things pertaining unto everlasting life.

Secondly, this serveth to comfort the children of God, that want the worldly wit of natural men, and are not able to dive so deep into earthly things as they: though they be simple in matters of this world, yet if GOD have given them a taste of the glory of the world to come, let them rest in spiritual knowledge, and give God the praise, that hath opened the eyes of their minds, and enlightened their hearts to have a feeling of it. This our Savior taketh occasion to practice, and to offer praise and honor to God in a sweet remembrance of this dealing of God; *I give thee thanks, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise, and men of understanding, and hast opened them unto babes: it is so, O Father, because thy good pleasure was such*, Math. 11, 25, 26. Though we be simple in the world, yet if we be wise in GOD: though weak in the world, yet if we be strong in GOD: though we be accounted as fools and silly ones, of the sharp wits of the world, yet if we have learned Christ Jesus, & know the exceeding measure of his love toward us, let this be our comfort and consolation, that God hath abundantly recompensed the want of those outward things, by giving unto us an happy and holy advantage in heavenly things. And indeed all those are learned, that are taught of God; and they unlearned that are not taught of him, although otherwise they abound in other knowledge. Such as have learned Christ Jesus, and him crucified, and so are become new creatures in him, they are learned, though they know never a letter in the book; *For in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom & knowledge*, Col. 2, 3. He that hath not learned Christ, is unlearned, *Although otherwise he be never so learned: for if he be not regenerate and borne anew, but committeth sin with greediness, he hath not seen him, neither hath known him*. 1. John. 3, 6. Wherefore, let us all learn from hence, to depend upon God for his blessings upon us, especially when we enter the Lord's courts, and come to hear his word, let us confess that we are not able of our selves to understand his will; and desire him to open our hearts, as he did the heart of *Lydia*, Act. 16, 14. for otherwise we shall depart away as ignorant and blind as we came, we shall never soundly rest in the truth that is delivered, but always be ready to carpe and cavil at it, to wrangle and reason against it,

saying; How can these things be? And then it may be said unto them as Christ speaketh to the proud Pharisees, who gloried in their own insight, & thought all men blind beside themselves, *If ye were blind, ye should not have sin: but now ye say, we see: therefore your sin remaineth*, John 9, 40, 41. Let us then be ready to renounce our worldly wisdom, and to deny our selves, and beg the assistance of God's Spirit to be our inward teacher and instructor, that so we may hear with profit and comfort.

[Use 4] Lastly, learn to be thankful to God, foreshewing this grace and mercy to us his unworthy servants, when he revealeth and maketh known unto us the hid things of God touching our salvation: without which we have lived in darkness, in the shadow of death, and in the estate of damnation. He hath not vouchsafed this mercy upon all, but hath passed over many thousands in the world, which know not truth from error, nor light from darkness; he might have passed over us, as he hath done them. For are we more excellent or better by nature or desert then they? No, by no means: we are borne dead in sins, & the heirs of wrath as well as others. This made the Apostle, having made mention of the mercies of God shown unto him that had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an oppressor, to render thanks unto GOD, and to give him the praise and glory. Thou hast herein greater cause to bless and praise the Name of GOD, then for thy creation, which only gave thee a being upon the earth; whereas this doth join thee to GOD, and entitle thee to the kingdom of heaven.

Verse 4. [*He hath said, which heard the words of God, and saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance.*] We heard before, how *Balaam* was inspired of God to deliver unto the *Moabites*, *Midianites*, and *Ammonites*, the will of God: Now, here is offered to our considerations, the means and manner that God used in giving unto him his divine inspiration, and that is by a vision, or trance. We heard before what a trance is, (to wit;) an extraordinary work of the spirit upon the whole man, casting the body as it were in a deep sleep, & making the mind fit to receive the things which are revealed of the Lord. Thus it pleased the Lord to deal with *Balaam* at this present, that his words might be known to be divine, not human. From hence we learn, that God in former times hath revealed diverse things unto men by visions, by dreams, and other ways, as seemed good to his heavenly wisdom. God hath not used one means alone, but diverse to speak to the world, either by Angels, or by the cloud, or between the Cherubims, or by *Vrim*, or by dreams, or by visions. To this purpose there is a rule set down, Numb. 12, 6. *If there be a Prophet of the Lord among you, I will be known to him by a vision, and will speak unto him by dream.* This is further taught in the book of *Job* by the words of *Elihu*, instructing *Job* in y^e manner of God's dealing with sinners, & showing how God admonisheth them in dreams and visions: *God speaketh once or twice, and one seeth it not: in dreams and visions of the night, when sleep falleth upon men, and men sleep upon their beds*, Job. 33, 14, 15. So when *Paul* was converted by the voice of Christ, the Lord spake to *Ananias* in a vision to go unto him: and *Paul* likewise in a vision saw him coming in unto him, and putting his hands on him that he might receive his sight, Acts 9, 10 12. When *Peter* lodging with one *Simon* a Tanner, waxed hungry, and would have eaten, he fell into a trance, he saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel came down unto him, as it had been a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and was let down to the earth, &c. Acts 10, 10, 11. So the Apostle being compelled by the false Apostles to glory of himself, maketh a rehearsal of the visions, and revelations of the Lord

that were offered unto him, 2. Cor. 12, 1. Unto these examples we might add sundry others out of the Scriptures, as of *Jacob*, of *Samuel*, of *Ezekiel*, of *Daniel*, of *John*, all declaring that GOD used to reveal many things by visions to his servants the Prophets, and to others when it pleased him.

The reasons are; First, to discover and [Reason] manifest his will unto them, sometimes to admonish them, sometimes to teach them, sometimes to terrify them, and always to declare and reveal his heavenly pleasure unto them, as we heard before out of the book of *Ib*, *Job* 33, 15, 16. For it hath been the ordinary manner of God, even from the beginning to warn, comfort, and declare what he would have done, or forbid what he would not have done, both in the day time, and in the night season; partly by visions to such as were waking, partly by dreams, to such as were asleep.

[Reason 2] Secondly, God would have the revelation of his will appear to be only his, and not of themselves. For howsoever it pleased the Lord to deal with his servants, and what way soever he used to signify his good pleasure, in all these cases he imprinted in the minds and hearts of them to whom he shown himself certain notes and evident tokens, whereby they might expressly and manifestly know that it was his doing. This we noted before to be one of the causes, why it pleased the Lord to deal by visions, that we should challenge nothing to our own selves, but ascribe all unto him.

[Use 1] Now, let us come to the uses. First, consider from hence the greatness and excellency of God's hand, who hath diverse ways to reveal his will, and to teach his people, to call them and gather them unto himself. Some means he hath to preserve a sinner from falling, and some to restore him being fallen. He is the head Physician of the world, he ministereth the best Physic, and of most sure and certain working. He never faileth in his cures, both because he knoweth the nature of the disease, and the working of the ingredient. The woman in the Gospel diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, *suffered many things of many Physicians, and spent all that she had, yet it availed her nothing, but she became much worse*, *Mark* 5, 26. But such as seek to God to heal the diseases of their souls, and submit themselves to be his patients; do always receive from him health, and depart from him better then they came. He useth partly preservatives, and partly restoratives. He speaketh by admonitions in dreams and visions. And these being ceased, he speaketh by chasticements and corrections, he preacheth unto us by the Ministers of his word, and by all means desireth to do us good. True it is, the devil hath his visions, being as it were the ape of God, which are so many delusions of men, as when *he maketh men believe they see that which they see not, or persuadeth men strange things of themselves, that they are that which indeed they are not*, 1. Sam 28.14. His drift and purpose in both is, to deceive and seduce. But God useth sundry means to draw us to himself, to draw us out of our selves, to draw us to his kingdom. He is not as a poor practitioner that hath but one plaster for every sore, or one medicine for every disease: he hath variety of means, & store of provision for all maladies; which serveth to commend unto us the goodness, mercy, greatness, power, and wisdom of God to be acknowledged and confessed of everyone of us.

Secondly, we learn that God never leaveth [Use 2] them destitute of a teacher, that in a reverent fear of his Name seek unto him and call upon him. We see he oftentimes admonisheth and informeth of his will, such as are out of the Church, and know him not: much more will he teach them his ways that fear him, & reveal his secrets to the humble-minded. *Psal. 25, 9, 12.14.* Let us exercise our selves in the diligent reading, hearing, and conferring of his word; let us earnestly desire to profit and grow forward in the knowledge and understanding of the truth from time to time according to the means afforded unto us. We live in the clear light of the Gospel, and in the golden days of God's grace, times that our forefathers never saw: let us not therefore shut our eyes against the truth that shineth in our hearts, or at the least not stop our ears against the sound of the word that pierceth our ears. We have a gracious promise made unto us, that God will give a blessing unto such as seek him: he will be known of those that seek to know him: he will open to those that knock for him. This is the main cause of all ignorance, that we desire not knowledge. It is a grievous sin to be destitute of knowledge, but it is more fearful to have no desire of knowledge. Ignorance is the root of all impiety, of infidelity, of idolatry, of superstition, of presumption, of disobedience, of contempt of the word, and worship of God: as the Apostle rehearsing the corrupt fruits of darkness; the throat an open sepulcher; the mouth full of cursing: the feet swift to shed blood; destruction and calamity in their ways; maketh this the cause of all, *The way of peace they have not known*, Rom, 3.17. So the Lord *Psal. 95, 10*, doth render this as the reason why his people erred, *because they had not known his ways*. This caused the Jews to crucify the Lord of life, and to deliver him into the hands of sinners; *For if they had known the wisdom of God they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, 1. Cor. 2, 8, according to the words of Peter preaching repentance unto them; *Now brethren I know, that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your governors*, Act. 3.17. And as it is the root of all impiety against God, and unrighteousness of men, so it is the cause of all judgments and punishments. The Prophet *Hosea* threatening God's plagues in a fearful hand to fall upon the people, maketh this one cause, *There was no knowledge of God in the land*, Hos. 4, 1, 2. So at the last day, when the Lord Jesus shall come to judge the quick and the dead, *He will come in flaming fire to render vengeance to those that do not know him*, 1. Thes. 1, 8. These things being rightly and wisely considered, should teach all of us to seek after knowledge, as for silver, and search for understanding as for precious stones, assuring our selves that God will never be wanting to help such as hunger and thirst after righteousness, who is near to all those that call upon him, even to all that call upon him in truth.

[Use 3] Lastly, we see his mercy is greater unto us then to the fathers before. The Lord Jesus hath brought the doctrine of the Gospel from the bosom of his Father. Acknowledge then with thankfulness the preferment of these latter times, and let us not seek after dreams and visions which are abolished, but having the sure word of the Prophets and Apostles, rest in the revealed will of God. *Moses* had a preeminence above the Prophets, to whom God spake not by dreams or visions, but face to face, as is declared, Numb. 12, 6, 7, 8. *I will be known to the Prophets by vision & by dream: my servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house, unto him will I speak mouth to mouth, and not in dark words.* As *Moses* was preferred before the other Prophets, so have we a singular privilege above the Patriarchs & Prophets that have gone

before us, who wanted the light that we enjoy, as the Writer of the Hebrews doth testify, declaring that the glory of our time is greater, in which GOD hath vouchsafed to speak unto us by his own son, *At sundry times, and in diverse manners God spake in old time to our fathers by the Prophets: in these last days he hath spoken unto us by his Son*, Heb. 1, 1, 2. So then, the condition of Christians under the Gospel, is better then of the Israelites under the Law, in respect of the manifestation and revelation of God's truth. The Israelites had God revealed by the Prophets, but we have him taught by the Son himself, who is counted worthy of more glory then *Moses*, Heb. 3, 3.4, inasmuch as he which hath built the house, hath more honor then the house, and he that is Lord over it, hath more honor then he that is a servant in it. Hereupon Christ calleth and accounteth the Disciples blessed, *Because they saw with their eyes, and heard with their ears, those things which many Prophets and righteous men desired to see and hear, and yet could not*, Mat. 13, 17. Let us therefore walk worthy of this great grace and mercy: let us embrace and profess the doctrine of Christ with all zeal: and as we have received greater favor, let us bring forth greater obedience. Let us magnify the preaching of the Gospel, whereby Christ Jesus is described in our sight, & as it were crucified among us, which he hath made the strength of his arm, and his great power to save those that do believe, to which he hath given such effectual grace, that it worketh more mightily then all miracles, and pierceth deeper into the heart of man, then all visions and revelations: yea, *Though one should arise from the dead to speak unto us*, Luk. 16, 31. Let us now look for no miracles, nor depend upon strange wonders; the doctrine of Christ is sufficiently strengthened & confirmed, so that no doubt of any part thereof, is to close up our own eyes, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, which is the Image of GOD, should not shine upon us. If the Gospel be yet hid, it is hid to thē that are lost. To conclude, let us all know, that God having brought us into these last times, requireth of us greater knowledge, faith, zeal, obedience, and greater fruits of repentance. For if the word spoken by Angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great saluatiō, which at the first began to be preached by the Lord, and afterward was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? Wherefore we ought diligently to give heed unto the things which we have heard, lest at any time we run out.

[Verse 5. *How goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob! and thy Tabernacles, O Israel, as the valleys that are stretched out, &c.*] Hitherto we have spoken of the preparation and entrance into this third Prophecy: Now we come to the sum and substance of it, uttered by way of an admiration, or exclamation; the diligent consideration of the flourishing estate of the church, ravishing as it were all his senses, and so astonishing him, that he is not able to find words sufficient to express the glory thereof. For here we see he compareth the happiness and blessedness of the Church, to the Valleys, Gardens, Cedars, and such like; all to this end to shadow out unto us the value and worth of it, that it far surmounteth all other societies, and is most precious & dear in the sight of God.

Heereby then we learn, what is the [Doctrine] true Church: it exceedeth all other societies of men, and is most precious and dear unto God, and unto Christ. We see then how from hence we learn, that above all other companies and fellowships in the world, the Church is most

excellent and beautiful, and of GOD most respected. This hath plentiful testimony of other Scriptures. The Prophet saith, *The Kings daughter is glorious within, her clothing is of broidered gold*, Psal. 45, 13. Hereunto come the titles and commendations given unto the Church, in sundry places dispersed in y^e book of Canticles, chap. 2, 2. and 4, 13. and 5, 9. *She is the Rose of the field, the Lily of the valley, the fairest among women, an Orchard of Pomgranats, a Fountain of Gardens, a Well of springing waters, the Spouse and Sister of Christ, the beauty of the earth, the glory of the world, and being compared with other societies, as a Lily among Thorns, & like the Apple among the Trees of the Forest. It is a Citty, whose walls and gates are of precious stones, and the streets thereof of gold*, Revel. 21, 2, 19. It is compared to a woman clothed with the Sun, and had the Moon; that is, all corruptible things which are unstable and uncertain under her feet.

As the Doctrine by these evidences is [Reason 1] made clear, so by the Reasons whereby it is proved, it may be yet made much clearer. For first, it is more excellent then all other societies, as gold above all other metals, because in it alone salvation is to be found, and nowhere else. When the universal flood came, and covered the face of the whole earth, what place wouldest thou prefer before the ark, in which *Noah* and his family were saved, and out of the which all the world beside was drowned? So salvation is taught and received in the Church, damnation is to be found and felt out of the Church. Can there be a greater privilege had, then to have our souls saved? or a greater loss, then the loss of our souls? We read in the Scriptures of many great and exceeding grievous losses. *Job* lost all his camels and his asses, his oxen and his sheep, his servants and his sons, all his goods and riches. *Saul* lost his kingdom and his life. But all these are petty losses and damages in comparison of the incomparable and inestimable loss of the soul, which is a perpetual separation from the glorious and comfortable presence of God, according to the saying of our Savior, Math. 25, 16. *What shall it profit a man if he win the whole world, and then lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give for the recompense of his soul?* The truth of this reason the Lord himself expresseth in the Prophet, saying, *I will give salvation in Zion, and my glory unto Israel*, *Isaiah* 46, 13. The wealthiest country under heaven hath not this treasure; the greatest Monarke in the world hath none of this merchandice; the richest merchant that compasseth sea and land, and trauaileth into the furthest part of the earth, cannot bring home with him this pearl of invaluable price; it is only to be found in the city of God, which is his Church, for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance.

[Reason 2] Secondly, all other sorts and societies of men are appointed and ordained of God to serve and preserve this. This is it which the Prophet *Isaiah* saith, *Isaiah* 45, 14. It shall be the honor of Kings and Princes to do service to the Church, and to promote the good of it. It is the end for which God hath lifted up the heads of rulers and governors above their brethren, to promote the good of the Church, and to advance the glory of God. This the Prophet speaketh of in the Psalm, *Psal.* 78, 71. that God chose *David* his servant, took him from the sheepefold, and preferred him before his brethren, even took him, and from behind the ewes with young brought he him, to feed his people in *Jacob*, and his inheritance in *Israel*: *so he fed them according to the simplicity of his heart, and guided them by the discretion of his hands*. The like we see in the book of *Ester*, when the destruction of the Church was determined and contrived, *Mordecai* said to *Ester*, *Ester* 4.14. *If thou holdest thy peace at this*

time, comfort and deliverance shall appear to the Jews out of another place, but thou and thy fathers house shall perish: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time? So what power, strength, ability, or means soever God hath given, he looketh for this duty and thankfulness at our hands, to seek the safety of Zion, & to advance the glory of Jerusalem, and to know that hereunto we are called.

Thirdly, the beauty of all other cities and [Reason 3] societies standeth in this, that they are parts and members of the Church. This is the glory of kingdoms and countries whereby they are beautified, in that they belong to the true Church: for otherwise all places are as cages of unclean birds, nay, as lodges of unclean spirits, and all persons are as dogs & swine, as Tigers and unclean beasts. Hence it is, that the Apostle describing what we are by nature, saith, Eph. 2, 12. *Ye were at that time without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, and had no hope, and were without GOD in the world.* If then it beautify other places and persons, it must needs be beautiful it self. If it give grace and glory to others that join themselves to it, it must needs be both gracious and glorious it self. For whatsoever causeth a thing to be so, must needs be so it self much more.

The uses of this doctrine are excellent, as [Use 1] the nature of the Church is. For first, we conclude, that they must needs be most happy & blessed of God that are members of y^e Church. For howsoever the world account them miserable, grinning at them with their teeth, nodding at them with their heads, gaping at them with their mouths, hissing at them with their tongues, and every way contumeliously reproaching them with their words, yet they are dear and precious in the account of God, and in the reputation of Christ Jesus, who bought them at a great price, and redeemed them with the ransom of his own blood. 1. Pet. 1, 18, 19. Behold, what love the Father hath given to us; that we should be called the sons of God: for this cause the world knoweth you not, because it knoweth not him. God is become our Father, the Son is our Redeemer, the Holy-ghost is become our sanctifier, the Angels are become our attendants, the Scriptures are become our evidences, the Sacraments are our seals, the creatures are become our servants, our afflictions are our instructions. This the Apostle teacheth the Church, 1. Cor. 3, 21, 22, 23. They are blessed that have their sins pardoned, and not imputed unto them, as the Prophet teacheth; but God saith to every believer, *Thy sins are forgiven thee.* They are blessed that hear his word and keep it: but the sheep of Christ hear his voice, and follow him. They are blessed that delight in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law meditate day and night: but the godly make it their counselor to be advised by it. This use that now we stand upon, is directly urged by the Prophet, Psal. 84. where having made his complaint, that he could not have access to the Church of God, to make profession of his faith, and to profit in Religion, he breaketh out into this passionate exclamation, being touched with an inward feeling of the want of those holy assemblies, Psal. 84, 4, 5. *O Lord of hosts, how amiable are thy tabernacles! & thereupon concludeth the point which we have stood upon, Blessed are they that dwell in thine house: they will ever praise thee; blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, and in whose heart are thy ways.* Howsoever the ungodly that savor nothing but of the earth, want spiritual eyes to behold the beauty of the Church, and account it no part of their happiness to live within the compass and bosom of it; yet the children of God have taken nothing so near to heart, as when they have been driven

from the place of his worship. The Prophet is grieved, that the sparrows and swallows had better access and freer recourse to the houses of men to build their nests, to lay their young, and to rest and repose themselves, then he had to the Lord's Tabernacle, and therefore preferreth their condition before his own. We see how the Jews wept, and pitifully lamented by the rivers of *Babylon*, and hung up their instruments on the willows, saying, *Psal. 137, 1, 2, 3, How shall we sing the song of the Lord in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget to play. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem to my chief joy.* No doubt they might have prayed to the Lord in *Babylon*, and in banishment, as well as in *Judea* and at *Jerusalem*, the Lord heareth in all places, and willeth that men pray everywhere lifting up pure hands without wrath or doubting, *1. Tim. 2.8.* but they mourned because they could not visit the Temple of God in *Jerusalem*, there to make public confession of their sins, and of their faith toward God. They therefore plainly testify that they have no feeling either of the weakness of their faith, or of the greatness of their offenses, that glory in their own shame, and say they bear as good a soul to God, as they which resort so often to the Church, and delight to hear the preaching of the word, and that they can serve God as well at home as in the Church. These are led by another spirit then *David* was, who if he were a man after God's own heart: *Psal. 42, 1, 2, 3.* having such an earnest desire after the service and worship of God, and saying, *As the Hart brayeth for the rivers of water, so panteth my soul after thee, O God: my soul thirsteth for God, even for the living God: when shall I come and appear before the presence of God?* surely these must needs be guided by the spirit of the devil, who so openly scorn all Religion, and are at defiance with God, robbing God of his honor, committing sacrilege in keeping their tongues from the public praises of God, entering themselves off from the mystical body of Christ, condemning and contemning the congregation of the faithful, giving offense to others by evil example, and despi•ng the ordinance of God, who hath appointed & commanded the assembly of his people to meet together to acknowledge their sins, to confess their faith, to pray for things necessary, to praise him for his blessings received, to hear the word expounded, and to receive the Sacraments delivered; so that such as fly from these, do fly from God himself, they fly from their own salvation, they seek a worship by themselves, and they imagine an heaven by themselves. But let them take heed their worship prove not a false worship, and their heaven a false heaven, and a true hell.

Secondly, we must all labor to be members [Use 2] of the Church, rather than of any other place in the world. We see how careful men are, not only to be in great societies & towns, but to be of them, to have the freedom of privileged places and incorporations, *Act. 22, 28. Yea, to obtain it & purchase it with a great sum of money, because it bringeth worldly commodity.* How much more should we endeavor to be members of the Church, whereby we are made free men, and have interest in the blessings of God; yea, we become free denizens of the Kingdom of heaven. How do men esteem their freedom, to be of earthly cities? If we be part of the Church, we have access to the truth: Now, if we shall know the truth, the truth shall make us free, *John 8, 32, 36.* If we be belonging to the Church, we have our interest in Christ: now, if that Son shall make us free, then we shall be free indeed. This made the Apostle say, *Phil. 3, 20. Our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for a Savior.* If we become limbs of the

Church of God, we have the spirit that bears witness to our spirit, that we are the sons of God: now, the Lord giveth his Spirit: 2. Cor. 3, 17, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Such as are free of cities and incorporations, have diverse privileges that others want, obtain many benefits that others want, obtain many dignities that others desire, and have their names enrolled among the free-men: but how much greater is the preeminence of all those that are brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, being made parts of the Church, which is the freest city under the heavens? This city of our God hath the privileges of the communion of Saints, of the forgiveness of sins, of the resurrection of the body to eternal life, and all such as belong unto it, have their names registered and enrolled in the book of life. What shall it profit thee to obtain an earthly freedom in earthly cities, and to be the servant of sin, the bonds slave of the devil, and to want the freedom of the sons and daughters of almighty GOD. The greatest freedom of the chiefest cities, is but slavery & bondage in comparison of the heavenly perogatives that properly belong unto the Church of God

The consideration hereof hath been strong and powerful in all those that are servants in this house, which are the Lord's freemen. This made the Prophet *David* to testify his holy affections in sundry Psalms, *Psal.* 26, 8, and 17, 4, and 36, 8, 9. and 84, 2, 10. Where he showeth that the spending of one only day in the place of the public meetings and assemblies of the godly, was more sweet, comfortable, and profitable to him, then a thousand days elsewhere; yea, though the place in it self were never so pleasant and delightful: so that he preferreth the basest office and meanest calling in the Church, to keep the door, to sweep the house, to cut wood, or draw water for the service and sacrifice of God, then to dwell in the [Use 3] most gorgeous and glorious palaces, wherein the works of wickedness are practiced & professed. If the same mind be in us that was in this Prophet, let it be our desire, rather to be of the meanest account and lowest reckoning in the Church, and among the lowest Saints of God, then to be in the chiefest room, & in the highest place of honor out of the Church, where nothing reigneth but profaneness, and nothing is of price or regarded, but wickedness. This will be a witness to our own hearts, that we are truly religious, and are possessed with a love of godliness, when we prefer the love of God's house before all earthly things, and are careful to come to the exercises therein.

Lastly, it belongeth to everyone to promote and procure the good thereof. If it be the principal society, it must be principally cared for. It standeth all persons upon, Princes, Pastors, Parents, Magistrates, whatsoever in their several places, to seek the peace and preservation of this society, and to further the good of God's Church. We see this in the Prophet, *Psal.* 122, 6, after he had commended the comely order & spiritual beauty of *Jerusalem* the true Church, he saith, *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, let them prosper that love thee: peace be within thy walls, & prosperity within thy palaces: for my brethren and neighbors sake, I will wish thee now prosperity, because of the house of the Lord our God, I will procure thy wealth.* No estate of man so high to exempt himself, no calling so low, to disable himself from seeking the good of his Church. The greater our place is, the more doth God require at our hands, he hath committed the more to our trust, and therefore will take the straighter account of us. It is the end of their honor and advancement, not to lift up their hearts above their brethren,

because God hath lifted up their heads, not to seek their own profits and commodities only, but to advance the honor of that God that hath advanced them, remembering that they are the ministers of God for the wealth and welfare of their people, and assuring themselves that God will honor them that honor him, but such as despise him, shall be despised, 1. *Sam.* 2.36. Moreover, it is our duty to labor within the compass of our calling, to bring other societies to this; the Prince his common-wealth: the Magistrate his incorporation; the Minister his people; the Captain his army; y^e householder his family; by striving to make them Christian commonwealthes, Christian incorporations, Christian parishes, Christian armies, Christian families. This was the care of all good and godly Princes, *David, Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, Josiah*, who made a covenant to seek the Lord GOD of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul. This was the care of devout captains that feared God, as appeareth by the Centurion and *Cornelius*. This was the care of all religious fathers and masters, as we see in *Abraham, Job, Jacob*, and sundry others, whose praise is in the book of God. And unless this diligence be used, and duty performed to those that are set under us by the ordinance of God, what comfort can we find in them, nay, what good can we look for at their hands? It is the knowledge of God, and the power of godliness planted in the heart, that maketh the subject obedient, the servant trusty, the child dutiful, and every degree faithful in his place and calling. But where the fear of God doth not rule, there subjects obey not for conscience sake; there servants are deceitful, & serve with eyeservice as men pleasers; there children are ungracious and unruly, not obeying their parents in the Lord. So then, it standeth us upon to set forward the good of the Church with all our power, and then to bring such as belong unto us into the bosom of the Church, that there they may have fellowship with God, and one with another.

Verse 8. [*God brought them out of Egypt, their strength is as an Unicorn, he shall eat the nations his enemies, &c.*] In the words before, *Balaam* enlarged by sundry sweet similitudes, the excellent condition of the Church, showing, that the place of it was to be chosen above all other places, and the people belonging unto it to be joined withal above other people of the world: Now, in these words he expressed their happiness and blessedness in plain terms and direct words, declaring, that albeit they were a weak people in the land of Egypt, oppressed with burdens, hurried with labors, ouermastred with taskmasters, vnexercised in fears of war, •andering up and down in the wilderness, separated from other nations; on the other side their enemies wer many in number, mighty in strength, rich in furniture, yet GOD brought his people with a strong hand out of Egypt from all their enemies, and sent his Angel before them to lead them in the wilderness, so that no city or nation could prevail against them. Hereby we learn that the enemies of the Church, albeit great, mighty, and high minded, yet are oftentimes brought under, and trodden on by the Church, weaker then they. Howsoever the Church be weak, and want outward power, yet it hath victory over the oppressors of it. This we see plainly strengthened unto us in the book of *Judges*, where we see that the Midianites, and the rest of the league with them lay in the valley like grasshoppers in multitude, and their camels as the sand which is by the seashore, yet *Gideon* and his host being as it were an handful, overthrew them by blowing their trumpets, by breaking their pitchers, and by holding their lamps in their hands. This appeareth in the history of

Shamgar, who slew 600. men of the Philistines with an Ox goad: and in the history of *Sampson*, being enclosed by his enemies, who caught up a Iawbone, and said, *With the Iaw of an asse are heaps upon heaps, with the Iaw of an asse have I slain a thousand men*, *Judge*. 15, 15, 16. Thus the weak are made strong, and the strong weak. Likewise, in the days of *Saul*, the Israelites were all naked and unarmed men, and were not suffered to have either swords or spears, (except *Saul* and *Jonathan*) yet their enemies were discomfited and smitten down before them.

[Reason 1] The reasons are many that may be alleged. First, God is with his people, and if he be with them, strength, power, courage, and victory must be with them also, so that they cannot fall, unless God fall with them, which is impossible. As then the cause is the Lord's, and the people the Lord's, and the battle the Lord's, so he can arm creatures of no account even contemptible people to scourge great & mighty nations, *Exod.* 8, 6, 16. His soldiers in Egypt were caterpillars and flies: his armies against the Philistines were mice. God is infinite in power to do as he will, and what he will, and when he will, and against whom he will, in comparison of whom all flesh is frail and feeble. And as he is great in might, so he is present in help, and gaineth honor, not by the bow, nor spear, nor legs of man, but he fighteth for those that be his. Thus doth *Moses* encourage the Israelites, being pursued by the Egyptians, *Exod.* 14, 14. *The Lord shall fight for you, therefore hold you your peace.*

[Reason 2] Secondly, to gain glory to his great Name, seeing his power is seen in our weakness. When our strength is smallest, then is the glory of God greatest. This made the Lord say unto *Gideon*, *Judge*. 7, 2. *The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel make their vaunt against me, and say, Mine hand hath saved me.* Thus *David* assured both of the truth of his calling, and the goodness of his cause, encountereth with *Goliath*, and showeth that all *the people should know, that the Lord saveth not with sword, nor with spear: for the battle is the Lord's*, *1. Sam.* 17, 47. So the Apostle teacheth that God useth few, weak, and simple instruments, to confound such as are greater in strength, moe in number, wiser in knowledge, higher in estimation, mightier in power, stouter in courage, *That no flesh shall rejoice in his presence, but he that rejoiceth, should rejoice in the Lord*, *1. Cor.* 1, 19, 31,

[Use 1] Now, let us handle the uses of this doctrine. First, we conclude, y^t the safety of the Church is only of God, and not of themselves: so that flesh and blood is not to be rested and relied upon, how great soever the means be: and therefore the Prophet teacheth, that the hills of the robbers cannot help, so that we must rely on God's help, and cease from the man whose breath is in his Nostrils, *Isaiah* 2, 22. He that lifteth up himself, his mind is not upright, but the just shall live by his faith. So than let us cast away our vain confidence in man, whose life is so frail, that if his breath be stopped but a little, he is dead, and cannot help himself or others. God therefore must have the praise and preferment above all creatures, and be magnified above all the works of his hands.

Secondly, this is a notable comfort and encouragement, [Use 2] to do constantly and cheerfully the duties of our calling, notwithstanding the crosses and hindrances to the contrary. For seeing it pleaseth GOD to put strength many times into those that are his, & to deliver his Church by weak means, against strong men, let us proceed with boldness in the

works of our profession, and deal with a good conscience, assuring our selves that God is not far from us. Whensoever we hear of the wicked combining themselves, & conspiring together against the Church, taking crafty counsel among themselves, our hearts quake and tremble, and we are brought oftentimes to our wits end, we are greatly perplexed and disquieted, as the trees of the forest are moved by the wind, *Isaiah 7, 2*: but we must consider, that the victory is of GOD, which casteth down the mighty from their seat, and exalteth them of low degree. Thus doth *Moses* comfort *Israel* terrified and dismayed by the evil report the spies had brought up upon the land, *Numb. 14, 8, 9*. *If the Lord love us, he will bring us into this land, and give it us, which is a land flowing with milk and honey; but rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land, for they are but bread for us: their shield is departed from them, but the Lord is with us: fear them not.* A notable staff to stay them up, both in respect of the presence of God with them, and of his departure from their enemies. And that which was a stay to them, must serve also to comfort and refresh us in all discouragements, to consider that we have a sure buckler with us, but the shield is departed from our enemies. They lie open to the stroke of God's hand, he will draw out his glittering sword against them, & they shall find no shield to award the blow. They are in a woeful case, that having the Lord to be their enemy, and no armor of defense upon them to help themselves. Wherefore, whensoever we see these enemies of God and his people multiply and increase, so that they seem as a violent stream ready to beat down all things before them, let not this disturb or disquiet us, but learn to wait upon God, who will show himself a present help, and our GOD in the time of need.

This temptation, that the enemies are many, and that few stand for us, few have courage for God's truth, few show themselves in good causes, doeth greatly weaken our hearts, and maketh them melt away as water; we straight way conclude, that the enemies must needs prevail, for we are weak and few. But know this, O ye of little faith, and of so great fear, that a good cause shall never fail, albeit there be but few, and those feeble to maintain it. *Jonathan* relying on God, after his calling, and a manifest sign to confirm him, goeth on with a noble courage and resolution, saying; *It is not hard to the Lord, to save with many or with few.* The work of God was never set forward by the greatest number; nay, the profession of God always had the fewest in number, yet no enemy was able to stand against them. The Apostles of Christ were few in number, and the weapons of their warfare were not carnal: yet were they mighty, casting down the imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of GOD, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. *Paul* having appealed unto *Caesar*, and being brought to the defense of his cause, saith; *At my first answering no man assisted me, but all forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge: Notwithstanding the Lord assisted me, & strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully believed,* 2 Tim. 4, 16, 17.

This appeareth in that worthy prays of *Asa*, which he made going to battle against his enemies, 2. *Chron, 14, 11*. *Lord it is nothing with thee to help with many, or with no power: help us O Lord our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy name are we come against this multitude: O Lord, thou art our God, let not man prevail against thee.* Let us not therefore be discouraged and discomfited, when we see many against us, and few to stand for the cause of God; but

consider, that he whose cause it is, is able to defend it, whose power and glory is most of all seen in the weakness of those that are stirred up to maintain it.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is our duty not to fret at evil men, when they are exalted and lifted up on high, but consider the end that the Lord will make, *Nah*, 1, 2. *Who will take vengeance on his adversaries, and reserveth wrath for his enemies.* Though they practice against the just, and gnash their teeth against him, though they watch the righteous, and seek to slay him, though they abound and prosper, and set their mouth against heaven, yet this is a comfort to the godly, *Psal.* 37, 7, 8, 9, 10. *That yet a little while, and the wicked shall not appear, thou shalt look after his place, & he shall not be found. Waite patiently upon the Lord, and hope in him, fret not thyself for him which prospereth in his way, nor for the man that bringeth his enterprises to pass; for evil doers shall be cut off, & they that wait upon the Lord, shall inherit the land.* The destruction which God hath concluded against them is sure, he wants no means to overturn them, he can make things that are not, of greater power then they that are. There is no safety to the enemies of God and his truth, there is no way for them to escape, for the Lord is the God of vengeance. This the Prophet *Isaiah* declareth at large, chap. 30. 14.10, showing that their destruction should be both certain and sudden. This is that which the Prophet assureth *Hezekiah* of, that God would put his hook in his nostrils, and his bridle in the lips of *Rabshakeh*, that railed upon the holy one of *Israel*, *2 King.* 16, 6, 7. *Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard; I will send a blast upon him he shall hear a noise, and return to his own hand, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.* Let us therefore remember always the exhortation of the Prophet, *Psal.* 37, 1, 2. *Fret not thyself because of the wicked men, neither be envious for the evil doer; for they shall soon be cut down like grass, and shall wither as the green herbs: trust thou in the Lord and do good, dwell in the Lord, and thou shalt be fed assuredly.*

Verse 9. [*Blessed is he that blesseth thee, & cursed is he that curseth thee.* This is the conclusion of this prophecy, wherein is shown that God will pour out his blessings upon his people in such a gracious manner and measure, that it shall run over, and fall upon those that are the friends and favorers of the Church; on the contrary side, such as hurt or persecute them, shall undergo the heavy curse of God, as God long before shown unto *Abraham*. From hence ariseth this doctrine, that God will be merciful to all those that show mercy to his Church: and such as are without pity and compassion, shall find judgment without mercy at the hands of God. God will bless those that do good to his people, they shall not lose their labor that favor the Church; but such as are enemies unto them, shall find God an enemy unto them. We see how God blessed the house of *Laban* for *Jacob's* sake: so doth *Laban* confess, *Gen.* 30.27. *I have perceived that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake.* Thus God blessed the house of *Potiphar* for *Joseph's* sake that was sold unto him: for God was with him, and his master saw that the Lord made all that he had to prosper in his hand. *Gen.* 39, 3, Thus have worldly men been blessed for the godly's sake. This is it which *Isaac* uttered in blessing his son, *Gen.* 27.29. *Cursed be he that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee,* Hereunto cometh a worthy example recorded by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, chap. 38, 9. & chap. 39.16, 17. when *Jeremiah* was cast into the dungeon, where he stakke fast in the mire, through the false suggestion of his enemies, *Ebed-Melech* the black Moore spake to the King for him, drew him out with cords, and took him out of the dungeon: and therefore the Prophet is sent unto him with message,

Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good, & they shall be accomplished in that day before thee: but I will deliver thee in that day, saith the Lord, and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men whom thou fearest: for I will surely deliver thee, & thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee, because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord. Thus did God recompense his zeal, and reward his favor which he shown to the Prophet in the miseries and troubles which he sustained. *Rahab* the harlot receiving the spies, sending them out another way, and preferring their life before her own life, was her self saved from the common destruction, and had her fathers household, and all that she had given her as a prey, because she had hid the messengers which *Joshua* sent to spy out *Jericho*, *Josh.* 6, 25. *I am.* 2, 25. *Heb.* 11, 31. The widow of *Sarepta* giving hospitality to *Elijah*, and offering him part of that poor pittance which was left her and her son in those days of dearth and drought, was with all her family miraculously sustained in the famine, continuing three years and six months, *1. King.* 17, 10. The *Shunamite* receiving the Prophet *Elisha*, making him a chamber, providing all necessaries for him, setting him there a table, a stool, and a candle-stick, that he might turn in thither to lodge, when he travailed that way, and eat bread at her house, received both the blessing of a son (her husband being old,) and the raising of him from death to life, to her great comfort. She shown some mercy, but received more mercy; she ministered comfort to the Prophet, but herself received more comfort. This also our Savior testifieth, showing that we shall lose nothing that we bestow on any of the faithful, we serve a bountiful Lord, and a liberal pay-master, *Math.* 10, 41, 42. *He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward, [Reason 1] &c.*

The reasons hereof follow to be considered. First, God will honor all those that honor him, he will despise all those that despise him. This is the gracious promise that is gone out of his own mouth, which he cannot but verify and perform: for he is not as man that he should lie, he is not as the son of man that he should deceive. This is it which the Lord spake by the mouth and ministry of *Samuel*, concerning *Eli* and his house, *Them that honor me, I will honor: and them that despise me, shall be despised*, *1. Sam.* 2.30. And therefore [Reason 2] they shall prosper that love the Church, *Psal.* 122.

Secondly, God hath appointed it to be the end of our obedience; our mercy to others, shall procure mercy upon our selves. This the Apostle setteth down, *Rom.* 2, 10. *To everyone that doth good, shall be honor, and glory, and peace*, *Rom.* 2, 10. We saw this before in the history of *Rahab*, who through faith received the spies: she, her family and kindred were were preserved & married into the family of *Judah*, of whom Christ came according to y^e flesh. [Reason 3]

Thirdly, mercy, a notable fruit of love received, kindleth the hearts, and enflameth the affections of God's people, both to praise God for them, & to pray unto God for them that have been helpful and serviceable to the Church. It is recorded to perpetual remembrance touching *Jehoiada*, that he was buried among the Kings, and greatly honored both alive and dead, because he had done good in *Israel* toward God and his house, *2. Chron.* 24, 15, 16. So when *Paul* remembereth the kindness of *Onesiphorus*, who sought him out, refreshed him, &

was not ashamed of his chain, he desireth the Lord to grant unto him, that he may find mercy with the Lord at that day, 2. *Tim.* 1, 16, 18. Nay, he prayeth not only for *Onesiphorus* self (although he only had helped him) but for his whole house & family: whereby is set down a most notable means and motive to stir us up to do good, and to distribute to all the members of Jesus Christ, inasmuch as God showeth that he will have mercy, and take pity, not only of us, but upon our households, and all those that are near about us. [Use 1]

The uses follow. First, from hence we have the strengthening and confirmation of another holy truth in our Christian Religion, (to wit;) that merciful, liberal, and kind men, shall be surely blessed. No merciful man shall lose his labor, but in the end he shall have his recompense and reward. Our Savior Christ saith, *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.* The Prophet teacheth, *that a good man is merciful and lendeth, and will measure his affairs by judgment: he hath distributed and given to the poor, his righteousness remaineth forever, his horn shall be exalted with glory.* So the Wise man speaketh in many Parables, *Prov.* 11, 25. and 28.27, and 19.17. *The liberal man shall have plenty, and he that watereth shall also have rain; he that giveth unto the poor shall not lack, but he that hideth his eyes shall have many curses: he that hath mercy on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and the Lord will recompense him that which he hath given. Cast thy bread upon the waters, for after many days thou shalt find it; give a portion to seven, and also to eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth,* *Eccl.* 11, 1, 2. On the other side, miserableness and unreasonable handfastnesse are the causes of the ruin of many men, and their houses, and bring curses upon body, goods, soul, children, family, and all things that belong unto them. So it was in churlish and cruel *Nabal*. So shall there *be judgment merciless, to him that showeth no mercy.* And he that gathereth goods by unlawful means, shall leave them to such as will pity the poor. Thus we see, God requireth mercy of us, to be like him.

[Use 2] Secondly, it is our duty to love God's people, seeing such as favor them, do fare the better for them. Such as are friends to them, shall have God to be their friend, who promiseth to bless such as bless them. What greater blessing can there be, then to have God to be our friend? What greater curse and misery, then to have him our enemy? The ungodly have received temporal blessings, for showing kindness to the faithful: the Lord hath sent none of them empty away, that ever did good to his people, as we heard in *Laban*, *Potiphar*, and others. This serveth to reprove all such as hate and revile them, that curse and detest them, that reproach them, and speak all manner of evil against them. And here let us weigh and consider into what evil times we are fallen, times filled and defiled with all iniquity, 2, *Tim.* 3, 1. 2. *Pet.* 3, 3. In former ages the very infidels and unbelievers, confessed that they were blessed for the godly's sake: they were so far from branding and upbraiding them with odious taunts forged in hell, & hammered with the tongues of evil men, that their mouths have acknowledged how GOD hath prospered them for their sakes. This last age is as a common sink, wherein all the wicked inventions and devilish practices do meet, and are gathered together: and therefore, it bringeth forth masters of mischief, and expert practitioners in sin, who are furnished with their own inventions, former examples, and tried experiments of all times, places, and persons. Maruaile not therefore, if the children of God be now scorned, when godliness it self is made a common by-word? In former ages, when as the Prophets and righteous men were persecuted, and their lives sought after,

everyone was ready to help and to hide them. So did *Jonathan* detect the hatred, and reveal the fury of his father against *David*, with the hazard of his own life, 1. *Sam.* 20, 42. So did *Obadiah* in the court of *Ahab* hide an hundred Prophets in caves from the cruelty of *Jezebel*, & sustained them in the time of the famine, of the which we shall speak more afterward. Thus did the disciples let down *Paul* in a basket, when his life was sought for by the bloody Inquisition, *Acts* 9, 21. Woe unto them therefore, rhat betray them into the hands of their enemies, as the *Ziphims* did *David*, 1, *Sam.* 23.20. as *Iruah* did *Jeremiah*, *Ier.* 39.13. as *Judas* did Christ, *Math.* 26, 48. Woe be unto them that falsely accuse them, and any way add affliction to their affliction, whereas they should countenance and defend them to their power, as *Jonathan* did *David*, as *Ebed-melech* did *Jeremiah*: and woe unto them that hurt the godly, for GOD threateneth to curse such as curse them, so that we should fear any way to do them wrong.

[Use 3] Thirdly, hereby we are warned to exhort one another to this duty, and by all means to provoke one another to mercy, in regard of of the great recompense of reward that is laid up for merciful men. The example of the *Sunnamite* before remembered, is a notable & worthy example to teach us this use, and to enforce this duty upon us. She stirred up her husband to good things, and made him that was willing, more willing; him that was forward, more forward; showing her self mindful of the end of her creation, which was to be an helper unto him, especially, in the best things, *Gen.* 2, 18. She said, *Behold, I know that this is an holy man of God, that passeth by us continually, let us make him a chamber that he may turn in thither when he cometh to us.* 2. *Kings* 4, 9. It is not enough for us to be ready and resolute to do good to those that are of the household of faith, and thereby to testify our faith in Christ, but God requireth of us to consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaking the fellowship that we have among our selves, as the manner of some is, but let us exhort one another; and that so much the more, because ye see that the day draweth near, *Heb.* 10, 24, 25 This serveth to reprove such as are backward in doing good, and cause others to be backward: such as are not content themselves to do nothing, but are ready to dissuade and discourage others from works of mercy: as we see the Apostle *John* reproveth *Diotrephes*, who was so far from receiving the brethren, that he forbad them that would, and thrust them out of the Church, *John* 3.9, 10. He was backward himself, and made others backward, his malice did not only keep him from doing good to the Saints, but provoked him to hinder and restrain others. These are like the Scribes and Pharisees, which did shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, neither entering themselves into it, nor suffering those that would enter, *Math.* 23.13. These are like unto the envious Jews, who grew to that desperate madness against the Lord Jesus, that they would neither receive the Gospel themselves, nor suffer it to be preached to others, but forbad the Apostles to preach unto the Gentiles, that they might be saved, to fulfill their sins always, 1. *Thes.* 2.16. They are like to *Elimas* the sorcerer, who was so far from beleuing the doctrine of y^e Apostles, *Act.* 13, 8 that he openly withstood them, and maliciously sought to turn away the Deputy from the faith. And all these may fitly be compared to the dog lying in the manger, which will neither eat the hay himself, nor suffer the Ox or Cattel that would, to eat of it. These shall have the more fearful condemnation, answering to God both for not doing good, and for hindering such as would

do good. These both shut up their hands and hearts frō all duties of love, and tie up the hands of others, so that a double woe hangeth over their heads, which without repentance will fall upon them.

Lastly, this Doctrine is both an encouragement [Use 4] unto us in well doing, and a great comfort in all adversities. It is an encouragement, to consider, that what love and service soever we do show to the Saints, it is put upon the Lord's accounts, and is kept in his remembrance, and shall not be blotted out forever. This is the tenor of the covenant which he hath made with us, to have the same friends and enemies with us. Such as are our friends to do us good, he will account as his friends to do them good; such as are his enemies to hurt us, he will proceed against them, as with his utter enemies to root them out, and to destroy them. This is a great honor and dignity of the faithful. It argued a very near league of amity that *Jehoshaphat* made with the King of *Israel*, when he joined with him, saying, *I am as thou art, my people as thy people, & my horses as thy horses, we will join with thee in the war, all mine is at thy commandment*, 1. *King*. 22.4. 2 *Chron*. 18.3. This is the society and fellowship that God hath with his people; our friends, shall be his friends; our enemies, shall be his enemies; our troubles, shall be his troubles; our wrongs, shall be his wrongs; our persecutions, shall be his pe•secutions. This is it which the Prophet declareth touching the Lord: *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*, *Zach*. 2, 8. So precious and dear are they to him, and so tender is his love toward them, that when the enemies rise up against them to hurt them, it goeth as near to the Lord, as anything can do. We know how tender the eye of a man is, it worketh more grief, then to receive a wound in any other part, to have the apple of the eye stricken: but the Church is so dear to God, that he can no more suffer the enemies to hurt it, then a man can abide to be thrust or pierced in the eye. How could the Lord express how earnestly and ardently he loveth us, and how careful he is for our safety, better then under this comparison? and therefore the Prophet entreateth the Lord to keep him as the apple of his eye. & to hide him under the shadow of his wings, This is it which our Savior signifieth in the description of the last judgment; that when one of the least of Christ's brethren have been hungered, and we have fed them; have been thirsty, and we have refreshed them; have been strangers, and we have lodged them; have been naked, and we have clothed them; have been prisoners, and we relieved them: *Christ Jesus himself is refreshed, and relieved, visited, and harboured in his members*, *Math*. 25, 40 If the Lord Jesus lived now upon the face of the earth, in poverty & great want, if he wanted meat to eat, or clothes to put on, ought we not to relieve him? nay, who is it but would say he is ready to do it? But every faithful man is unto us as Christ himself: whatsoever is done to him, is done to Christ himself, and Christ Jesus, though heir of all, & Lord of the world, doth esteem & account it as done unto himself. On the other side, when the poor members of Christ are in want, & not relieved, are sick and not visited, are hungry, and yet not sustained; Christ himself is vnvisited, & unregarded. A man would be ashamed to do thus to Christ in person, but inasmuch as we do it to the persons of our brethren and his members, he counteth it as done to himself, as he speaketh in the Gospel, *Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me*. This likewise is that which Christ spake to *Paul* from heaven at his conversion. When he breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, and had obtained

letters to bring them bound to Jerusalem that professed Christ; he heard his voice, saying to him, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* His persecution was directly against the Saints, but we hear how the Lord accounteth that persecution to be against himself. This is a singular encouragement to everyone of us, to love the servants of God from our hearts, and to serve their necessities, considering that it is as it were put upon the Lord's accounts, and he will recompense it unto our bosoms. It is a great terror to all merciless & malicious men, for whatsoever mischief they work against the godly, it is done against Christ, and they shall be arraigned as guilty of oppression and persecution against Christ.

Again, as this is an encouragement in well doing, so it is a great comfort unto us in these fruits and works of mercy, that God will remember them, & be mindful of them, and for them will assuredly help us when we are in distress. This the Prophet saith, *Blessed is he that judgeth wisely of the poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble, Psal. 41, 1, 2.* So then, when we have been serviceable & comfortable unto others, especially to the servants of God, there ariseth from hence a great comfort to our consciences, & an assurance of our eternal peace & acception with God, so that we may with boldness come to the throne of his grace, & pray unto him for y^e graces of his Spirit. *Obadiah* proveth y^t he seared the Lord in y^e truth of his spirit, & assureth his conscience thereof, because he had hid the Prophets of God in the persecution raised against them by *Jezebel*, 1. King. 18, 12, 13. Therefore, when he feared that *Elijah* would procure unto him the displeasure of *Ahab*, and so bring upon him a cruel death, he found comfort in the former fruits of mercy, and said to the Prophet *Was it not told my Lord what I did when Jezebel slew the Prophets of the Lord, how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's Prophets by fifties in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? And now thou sayest, go tell thy Lord, Behold, Elijah is here, that he may slay me.* The like we see in *Nehemiah*, when he had relieved the oppressed people, and every way sought rather the welfare of the Church, then his own commodity, he turneth himself to God, and saith, *Neh. 5, 19, & 13, 14, 22, 31. Remember me, O my God, in goodness, according to all that I have done for this people. Neh. 5, 19. And chap. 13, 14, 22, 31. Remember me, (O my God) herein, and wipe not out my kindness that I have shown on the house of my God, and the offices thereof.* He doth not here glory in his own merits, nor putteth his trust in his good works (for before he pleadeth mercy, & craveth pardon) but desireth that God in goodness would graciously reward the works which he had done with a good conscience, and is bold to put him in mind of his promise, who hath promised to repay whatsoever is done for the benefit and behoove of his Saints. A great comfort it is to be able in the simplicity of our hearts, to speak thus. How many are able in our days to say with *Nehemiah, Lord, remember me according to all that I have done for thy people?* For their own conscience would by and by accuse them, and cry out of the wrongs and injuries they have done unto them, how they have hated them in their hearts, smitten them with their hands, wounded them with their tongues, trampled upon them with their feet, and sold themselves to work mischief against them. If they will not remember the servants of God in kindness, let them know God will remember their unkindness; and the children of God may pray unto him, not for desire of revenge, but for the advancement of his glory, to reward them according to their deserts, as we see in *Nehemiah, Remember them (O my God) that defile the Priesthood, Neh. 13, 29.* This must of necessity galle a man's conscience, whē the terrors

thereof shall accuse him for want of doing good service to the Church of God; yea, for doing great wrongs, and offering many indignities against the Church.

10 Then Balak was very angry with Balaam, and smote his hands together: so Balak said unto Balaam, I sent for thee to curse mine enemies, and behold thou hast blessed them incessantly, now three times.

11 Therefore, now flee unto thy place: I thought surely, I will promote thee unto honor, but loe, the Lord hath kept thee back from honor.

12 Then Balaam answered Balak. Told I not also thy Messengers which thou sentest unto me, saying;

13 If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold I cannot pass the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind? What the Lord shall command, the same I shall speak.

14 And now behold, I go unto my people: Come I will counsel thee such things as this people shall do to thy people in the latter days.

Hitherto we have spoken of the preparation into the Prophecy, and likewise of the Prophecy it self: Now followeth the effect and event thereof, expressed partly in *Balak* the King, and partly in *Balaam* the false Prophet.

Touching *Balak*, *Moses* declareth, that when he saw himself again disappointed of his hope and expectation, he bursteth for anger, and smiteth his hands together, in token of the inward indignation of his heart. For as the patient abiding of the righteous shall be gladness, Prov. 10, 28, so the hope of the wicked shall perish. He is content to hearken unto the Sorcerer, so long as he hopeth to hear pleasant and pleasing things of him, but when he is deceived, he rayleth and rageth without measure. His indignation conceived against him appeareth; first, by comparing his own purpose with *Balaam's* practice, when he saith; *I sent for thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast not ceased to bless them now three times*. It is no less absurd and injurious in thee to bless mine enemies, thē if thou shouldest curse my friends: for in that thou blessest them, it is all one, as if thou cursedst me. If thou standest with them, thou standest against me, both of us cannot stand together; If they continue, I fall.

Secondly, he doth cashire him and cast him out of his favor, he withdraweth the present prepared for him, and denieth him the wages and stipend promised unto him: *I said, Surely I will advance thee to honor, but the Lord hath kept thee back from honor*: as if he should say, Depart from me, thou unhappy Prophet, unhappy in thy Prophecy, unhappy in thy preferment, unhappy to me, unhappy to thyself: I called thee not to bless this people, but to curse them. I

have honored thee among my Princes, and would moreover (if that had been too little) have done unto thee and for thee greater things then these. But seeing thou settest so light by my gifts, go thy ways, thy presence is a burden unto me; ask thy reward and wages of thy work, of that God whom thou hast obeyed, or of that people whom thou hast blessed, to whom thou seemest rather beholden, then unto me, and who I am sure are more indebted to thee for thy pains, then I am. This is a most shameful blasphemy of a wretched man whose breath is in his nostrils, against the eternal God that made heaven and earth, who suffereth with patience the vessels of wrath prepared to destruction.

The answer of *Balaam* followeth to be considered, who is brought in by *Moses* excusing himself, and giving wicked counsel to *Balak*, to bring the people of God to ruin and destruction. The Apology and defense that he maketh for himself, is this, that he certified the messengers sent unto him, and declared to *Balak* himself, that he was not at his own choice and liberty to speak what the King wished, and what himself desired, but was as it were chained and restrained by the mighty hand of God, that he could utter nothing, but what he inspired.

Thus the false Prophet seeketh to pacify and appease the angry mind of the King, and the hyreling laboreth to recover his wages that was denied him: as if he should say, Lay the fault where it is, and not where it is not: I have striuen what I can, to do that which thou requirest, but the God of the Hebrews hath hindered thy request, and my desire.

Secondly, he promiseth that being now discharged, and ready to return home, he would give such counsel, which should work out the final confusion of this people, if it were wisely and warily followed. For when he seeth he cannot curse them, he giveth counsel how to hurt them, as if he should have said to *Balak*, I see to my grief, & thou perceiuest to thy cost, that sorcery will not prevail and serve the turn, yet do not despair, but hold on thy purpose, & try a new conclusion another way. I have another plot in mine head, follow my direction, and doubt not but thou shalt bring thy matters to a good pass, and destroy that people, as they hereafter shall destroy thy people. But what this counsel was, is concealed and not expressed in this place, which was not such as the Prophets of God advised and persuaded to the people of God, but devilish counsel, proceeding from that spirit by which he was guided, to open a gap to bring upon them all mischief and misery, and to pull down the wall of God's protection, whereby they were fenced and defended, and to let in their enemies upon thē, God being become an utter enemy unto them. For by the success and event in the chapter following, it appeareth, what this crafty counsel was, by the people's falling in fancy and fellowship with the Moabitish women, whereby they were drawn into spiritual and bodily fornication. And afterward in the one & thirtieth chapter of this book, verse 16, *Moses* speaking of the Midianitish women, saith; *These caused the children of Israel through the counsel of Balaam, to commit a trespass against the Lord, as concerning Peor, and there came a plague upon the Congregation of the Lord.* So the Apostle *John* speaketh, writing to the Church at Pergamos, *I have a few things against thee, because there thou hast them that maintain the doctrine of Balaam, &c.* Reu. 2, 14. Hereby then we see y^t when *Balaam* had sundry ways assayed and attempted to curse the people of Is^{ra}el, and yet his purpose failed him, because God crossed his devices: he

told *Balak* that the last refuge and only way to prevail against them, was to draw them to sin against their God, and so to make a breach between him and his people. Now according as he counseled him, and gave him instructions, so *Balak* confederate with the Midianites, sent forth the most beautiful women in their kingdoms into the Campe of Israel, to entice them to the worship of their Idols, & to banquet with them at their Idol-feasts, whereby they drew them to Idolatry and fornication, sinning against God, and kindling his wrath against them. But of this we shall speak further in the chapter following.

[Verse 10. *Then Balak was very angry with Balaam, and smote his hands together, and said; I sent for thee to curse mine enemies &c.*] See here the event of all the conspiracy against the Israelites, they had conceived mischief, & bring forth a lie. They that travail with wickedness, travail with the wind, and the end is not answerable to the beginning. They vanish away in their own imagination, whilst Israel standeth as a defended City.

From hence we learn, that things practiced inconsiderately, not with good advice, and attempted unlawfully with a wicked purpose, have other events then men think of. Whatsoever we go about with a wicked mind, hath an evil end in the just judgment of God. We cannot expect that any evil action should have a good end. Indeed God doth many times suffer evil men, & causeth them to multiply, because our sins deserve so many chastisements and scourges, as there are wicked men in the world. Again, it is requisite that we should all our life long be kept in a continual exercise of faith, prayer, patience, and repentance, and that they might be as pricks and thorns in our sides. Lastly the Lord by suffering the wicked to prosper and proceed, doth greatly advance his own glory, whiles he reigneth in the midst of his enemies, Exod. 9, 15, 16, and preserveth his Church in despite of Satan and his wicked members, which daily seek the overthrow thereof.

Is it not strange, that an hundred Sheep should live among a thousand wolves, & not be devoured? It is no less wonderful and to be maruelled at, that any of God's people should live upon the face of the earth, being compassed about with an army of wicked men, the very limbs of the devil, that open their mouths to swallow them up, and hate them with an unfeigned hatred unto the death. Notwithstanding, the Lord thus beareth and forbearth, yet in the end he will cut off the wicked, and all evil shall have an evil end. We see this in *Pharaoh* calling for his Sorcerers, they withstood *Moses*, and resisted the truth; they turned water into blood, and rods into Serpents: yet in the end all their cunning was stained, and they confessed it was *the Finger of God*, Exod. 7, 11. & 8, 19. Consider the example of those that would build them a Citty and a Tower, to get them a name, lest they should be scattered upon the whole earth, Genesis ch. 11. verse 4: the Lord came down to see the Citty which the sons of men built, and there confounded their Language, that everyone perceived not another's speech. The Apostle *Peter* maketh a long rehearsal in his second Epistle, chapt. 2. verse 4, of the sins of the Angels, of the old world, of the Sodomites: and setteth down the wages thereof what it was; the Angels were cast down, the old world was drowned, the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrhah were burned. See the miserable ends of *Pharaoh*, of *Ahithophel*, of *Saul*, of *Judas*, of *Herod*, and such others; all the which are written for our instruction, to teach us that all evil works shall have an end answerable to their evil.

The Reasons are plain to assure the truth [Reason 1] hereof. For first, it standeth with God's justice to recompense evil with evil. True it is, he is able by his infinite power to bring good out of evil, and to turn the evil actions of men to serve his own glory, & to further the good of his children; as we see in the history of *Joseph*, who by the false treachery of his brethren, was sold into Egypt, to whom he said, *When ye thought evil against me, God disposed it to good, that he might bring to pass, as it is this day, and save much people alive*, Gen. 50, 20. So *Job* being bereaved of his children, and robbed of his Cattle, confesseth, that the Lord had given, & the Lord had taken away. Likewise the Apostles speaking of the crucifying of Christ, the Lord of glory, declare that *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate* with the Gentiles and people of Israel, had done no more then the counsel of God had determined before to be done. Nevertheless it standeth with the rule of his justice, to cross the attempts and endeavours of evil men, and to set himself against them that set themselves against him. So long therefore as God is so just, the ungodly must not look for any good success of evil enterprises. His blessing is upon the lawful labors of his children, because he is merciful: his curse waiteth upon the unlawful works of his enemies, because he is just. It is his nature to be just, he cannot deny himself.

[Reason 2] Secondly, the Lord will make their wickedness known, and pluck off the vizard from their faces, howsoever they think to proceed, and promise to themselves an happy end. This the Apostle teacheth, 2 Tim. 3, 8, 9, where he showeth, that as *Iannes* and *Jambres* withstood *Moses*, so do these also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith, but they shall prevail no longer, for their madness shall be evident to all men, as theirs also was. Seeing therefore God is a just God, and will uncase the hypocrisy of evil men, we are right well assured, that evil inventions shall come to naught, and have God to cross them.

[Use 1] The uses remain. First, we see from hence, that sin endeth not as it beginneth. Evil men are sure to be destroyed, and that God will call them to an account for those things which they have done, if not in this life, yet assuredly in the life to come. They dream of God, sitting idle in heaven, and seeing all things, and regarding nothing; but in the end they shall know that which now they will not know, and feel that whereof now they have no feeling, And see here how Satan bewitcheth the minds of these men, and blindeth their eyes, that they cannot see sin to be sin, nor cast their eyes to behold the wages of sin reserved for the committers of it. Let all wicked men therefore look for the heavy curse of God. They bless themselves, but the curse of God is upon them, Deut. 32, 41, and ready to overtake them. Woe therefore shall be unto them, though all the world should bless them. They can have no assurance of any good success, nor look for any blessing upon the works of their hands.

Secondly, be not offended when wicked [Use 2] men flourish and prosper, but consider their end and what the end of their hope is, and we shall not be deceived with their outward glory, and present pomp of the world wherein they live. It is a great temptation to the faithful, to behold the prosperity of the wicked. The Prophet *David* declareth how his faith had long wrestled and struggled with this assault, insomuch that his foot had well nigh slipped, Ps. 73, 2. and his steps were almost gone when he saw how the ungodly flourished; and on the other side, that he was daily punished, and chastened every morning. This was it

that troubled *Job*, *Wherefore do the wicked live and wax old, and grow in wealth?* Job 21.7. So the Prophet *Jeremiah* maruaileth at the prosperity of the wicked, *O Lord if I dispute with thee, thou art righteous, yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Why are all they in wealth that rebelliously transgress?* Ier. 12, 1. So the Prophet *Habbakkuk* complaineth unto God, considering the great felicity of the wicked, and the miserable oppression of the godly, which oftentimes endure all kind of cruelty and affliction, and can see no end thereof. But we must enter into the Sanctuary of God, then we shall see the end which God in his just judgment hath appointed to wicked men: when we thought he had no care of their doings, and that they were in the greatest safety and security, we shall see he is holy in all his ways, & true in all his words. This is a great terror unto wicked men, to know that he will lay upon them a fearful end; and on the other side, it is a great comfort unto the godly, to consider, that howsoever God bear a long time, yet in the end his hand shall take hold on judgment, then he shall execute vengeance on his enemies, and reward them that hate him.

Lastly, seeing all evil shall have an evil [Use 3] end, let us have no fellowship with evil men, or evil actions, unless we will partake with them in the punishment. It is our duty to forsake their company, and to leave our league with them, lest we be taken in the net, and be snared in their ways. This is the exhortation given to us from heaven, *Come out of her my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* Many have sustained much danger, & endured much affliction by accompanying and conversing with evil men. *Lot* was never more grieved, nor less secured, then when he was even in the very midst of *Sodom*. He made choice to dwell there, thereby to enrich himself, but he quickly repented him of his choice, Gen. 14, 12. He was taken prisoner by foreign enemies, and was in greatest danger by violence at his own home. Yea so long as he lived in that place, he seemed to live in a little hell, as the Apostle testifieth, 2 Pet, 2, 7, 8, that God delivered just *Lot*, being vexed with the uncleanly conversation of the wicked, for he being righteous, and dwelling amongst them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day today with their unlawful deeds. Let us delight in the sweet society of God's children, & take pleasure to be in the presence of them that fear God. As for the ungodly, let us desire their places rather than their persons, & their room rather than their company. Hence it is, that *Solomon* teacheth us not to enter into the way of the wicked, nor to walk in the way of evil men, Prov. 4, ver. 14, 15, 16, to avoid it, and not to go by it, to turn from it, and to pass by: for they cannot sleep except they have done evil, and their sleep departeth, except they cause some to fall. What an heap of words doth *Solomon* use? and to what ende serve these so many repetitions, but to show y^e exceeding danger of communicating with the wicked, and how hardly we are drawn to leave thē. It is all one, as if a man would throw himself willingly and willfully into the hands of thieves. We would be ready to call and account him a stark fool, without any sign or show of wisdom, that would run into the company of thieves and robbers, especially having any charge of money or money-worth about him. The servants of God that are endued with heavenly gifts, and have the graces of God's Spirit given unto them (which are the chiefest treasure) have a great charge about them, it standeth them therefore upon, to take heed that by evil company they be not robbed and deprived of them. The holy Ghost dealeth with

us, as a Merchant doth with his Factor or servant, whom he sendeth forth furnished with store of money to buy and sell withal; and fearing lest he should be robbed and spoiled, warneth him to avoid suspicious places and passages, and to turn aside out of the path, till he be past the danger. So should we beware of the company & conditions of the wicked, if we count our selves happy to be in league with them, we are utterly lost, and are walking in the path-way that leadeth to death.

[Verse 13. *If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot pass the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind.*] This wicked man, and covetous Prophet, though he neither feared God, nor loved the way of righteousness, yet teacheth what should be in all the servants of God, that they should not for filthy lucre and covetousness, which is the root of all evil, transgress the commandment, or break out beyond their calling.

This teacheth us this truth, That worldly [Doctrine] business should not draw us from Christian duties. Matters of profit and commodity must not carry us beyond our calling, we must not pursue them, and follow after them, when we have no warrant to desire them, albeit there be profit in them. A notable example hereof we have in *Gideon*, he had a kingdom offered unto him; for the men of Israel said unto him: *Reign thou over us, both thou and thy son, and thy sons son*: he thought not government in it self unlawful, or unlawful for them to have a Governor; but he saw no calling from God, and therefore refused it, and betook himself to a private life, saying; *I will not reign over you, neither shall my child reign over you, but the Lord shall reign over you*, Judge. 8, 22, 23 We see that *David* had his enemy put into his hand, *Abishai* besought *David* that he might smite him once with a spear to the earth, and his servants used importunity unto him, as if God had offered him to be slain, saying; *See, the day is come, whereof the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, and thou shalt do unto him as it shall seem good to thee*, 1 Sam. 24, & 26. But he would not hearken unto them, he would wait the time which God had appointed, saying; *Either the Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into battle and perish*. The like we see in our Savior Christ, he refused to be made a temporal and earthly King, John. 6, 15, for when he perceived that the multitude would come and take him to make him a King, he departed again into a Mountain himself alone. We see the Disciples of Christ left all, & neglected the service of themselves, and the seeking of their own benefit for the service of God. Math. 19, 27. So the faithful Christians sold their possessions, being warranted unto it by a special calling, and guided by the work of the Spirit. Acts 4, 39. *Moses* might have enjoyed the treasures of Egypt, and the dignity of a kingdom, yet chose rather to suffer adversity with y^e people of God, and to follow the calling whereunto he was called, Heb. 11, 24, 25. Whereby we see, that albeit profits be in time and place to be looked after, yet we must all look to have our warrant in seeking for them.

The reasons remain to be considered, to [Reason] enforce this truth, and to gain our affections to the embracing of it. For first, by too much following the profits of this life, we may lose a greater profit: if we should win the world, and lose our souls: if we should catch the riches of this life, and crack the peace of a good conscience, it would prove in the end a small gain unto us, but rather the greatest loss. The soul is a precious jewel, and therefore

the loss of it is an incomparable loss. This is it which our Savior saith in the Gospel, *What shall it profit a man to win the whole world, and to lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give for the recompense of his soul?* Mat. 16, 26. Seeing then by seeking the things of this life, we may lose the things of the life to come it followeth, from the danger of eager pursuing after them, that no worldly business should choke us and hinder us from better things required of us.

[Reason 2] Secondly, the things of this life serve only for a season: we our selves are here Pilgrims and strangers, we have no continuing City. The hope that we have is this, we look for a kingdom. We cannot have an heaven in this life, and another in the life to come. The greatest glory that ever was vpon the earth, is gone in a few ages. Therefore the Apostle teacheth, *That the fashion of this world goeth away: This world passeth away, and the lusts thereof, but he that fulfilleth the will of God, abideth ever.* 1 Cor. 7, 31, 1 John 2, 27. So that we must know it is required of us, that we prefer not this world before the world to come, nor be led away from the duties of our calling, by the love of the profits thereof.

[Use 1] The uses come now to be stood upon. First, we see it is a dangerous bait to be in love with the world. How many are there that evē make it their god, and do chiefly mind earthly things? Our Savior in the Parable of the Sower that went forth to sow, declareth that the seed that fell among thorns, signifieth those hearers, in whose hearts the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things do choke the word, & make it unfruitful? Math. 13, 22. What was it that moved *Judas* to betray his Master, but for love of money? for he said unto the High-Priests, *What will you give me, and I will betray him unto you?* Math. 26, 15. Whereby Satan entered into him, & possessed his heart, so that it wrought his destruction in soul and body. What caused *Demas* a professor of the faith to forsake *Paul*, and deny the faith? surely he embraced this present world in greater love then he did the truth that endureth forever, and caught after the shadow instead of the body. Our hearts are as a ground that is rich and rank, and bringeth forth store of these weeds that choke the growing of the word of God: we would fain come to God, yet are so glued to the world, that it drowneth all desire of the world to come. We offer one hand to Christ, and the other to the devil, but he will have both of them, or none at all. If we give the Lord one part of our heart, and lodge covetousness in the other, we drive the Lord from us, and cause him to depart. *No man can serve two Masters: for either he shall hate the one, and love the other, or else he shall lean to the one and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and riches.* Math. 6, 24. This made our Savior say, *How hardly shall a rich man enter into the kingdom of heaven: it is easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a Needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God,* Math. 19, 3: making it as it were a rare & extraordinary work to bring them to salvation. We must use this world as though we used it not: and they that buy, as though they possessed not; knowing that godliness is the greatest gain, if a man be content with that he hath: for we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out; therefore when we have food and raiment, let us be content, for they which will be rich, fall into temptations and snares, & into many foolish and noisome lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction.

What stirred up *Ahab* and *Jezebel* to work out the death of *Naboth* and his children, that the one of them was sick with sorrow, the other caused them to be stoned, but the desire of his vineyard that was a sore in his eye, and lay so fitly for him? And yet when we have done, when we have embraced our dwellings, and encroched on the bounds and borders of others, when we have joined house to house, and land to land, our neighbors hedge must be next unto us, and hold us hard, that we can pass no further.

Secondly, we see that our own private respects [Use 2] are not the chief things that we must respect, but seek a sanctified use of the blessings of this life, and a warrant to our consciences for the right using of them. These blessings of God become curses unto us, unless we use them lawfully. But if we set up our rest upon them, and seek our happiness in them, we prize them at a high rate, and commit the foulest and filthiest Idolatry that can be. For the preferring of private profit before heavenly duties causeth a man to be an Idolater: First, because he preferreth his riches before God or godliness in his affections, depending upon them as upon God, and making them the stay of his life. Again, he accounteth his life to rest upon his wealth, rather than upon the providence of God: as his riches increase, so his hope increaseth, so his comfort increaseth: when his wealth sayleth, all his hope & comfort faileth. Therefore the Apostle chargeth us to mortify our members which are on the earth, the inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is Idolatry: for the which things sake, the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. So then, the things of this life, and the things of the life to come being propounded and set before us, we are to choose the better of them. This our Savior taught *Martha*, Luk. 10, 41, 42. that she disquieted and encumbered her self about many things, but one thing is needful, *Mary* hath chosen the better part, which shall not be taken from her. So likewise our Savior chargeth us, not to lay up treasure for our selves upon the earth, *Where the Moth and Canker corrupt, and where thieves dignity thorough and steal; but to lay up for our selves treasure in heaven, where neither the Moth nor Canker corrupteth, and where thieves cannot dig through and steal*, Mat. 6, 19, 20, 33. Let us first of all seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these earthly things shall be ministered unto us. Let our study and meditation be on heavenly things, whereunto we are called. Let us take heed we lose not greater blessings by affecting the less. Let us remember *Lots* wife, a fearful mirror and monument of careful thoughts, who got and gained nothing by all her cares. Let us wait upon God, and look up unto him, *Who openeth his hand, and filleth all things with his goodness*, Ps. 104, 28. Let us obey the voice of the Lord our God, and then all his blessings shall come upon us, and overtake us.

[Use 3] Lastly, this doctrine serveth to reprove those that esteem earthly things above heavenly, & mind their profits more then their salvation. These invert the course of nature, and turn all things upside down, they set the earth above the heavens, and thrust down the heavens beneath the earth. This is like that confusion and disorder which the wise man speaketh of, Eccl. 10, 6, 7. *Folly is set in great excellency, and the rich set in low place: I have seen servants on horses, and Princes walking as servants on the ground*. These are like to the *Gadarenes* that desired their swine more then Christ, and had rather lose Christ, and have him depart out of their coasts, then lose their swine, Math. 8, 34. These are of the brood and offspring of profane *Esau*, who for one mess of meat sold his birthright, Heb. 12, 16, But we have not so

learned Christ; we must look up to the eternal inheritance reserved for us: we must not make our riches to be our heaven, our belly to be our god, our shame to be our glory, and our own profit to be our happiness. We must account one spark of grace, and the least taste of the kingdom of heaven, and of the joys of the life to come to be better worth, and to bring with it more sound joy of heart, then all these transitory things, and therefore to be esteemed above all the glory, riches, pleasures, and profits of this world. This made the Prophet David say, *Many say, Lord, who will show us any good? But Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us: thou hast given me more joy of heart, then they have had, when their wheat and their wine did abound,* Psal. 4, 6, 7. Hereunto accordeth the Apostle, Phil. 3, 20. So then they are convinced & condemned to be profane beasts, possessed with the evil spirit of *Esau*, that will not keep the Lord's Sabbaths, nor attend upon his worship, but make that day a time of toil and travail about their worldly business, and a day to be spent in dancing and dallying, in surfeiting and drunkenness, in gaming & ydlenes; thereby making that which is the Lord's day by his institution, to be to thē the devils day by their profanation. The Gospel, and all things of a better life, are lightly regarded of all such as are givē to their profits, and pleasures, and delight to pamper up the flesh.

No Religion could enter into the rich glutton that was clad in purple, and fared deliciously every day, Luk. 16, 19. The rich man whose ground brought forth fruits plenteously, whose tongue promised to him perpetuity, and whose heart bred in him security, never thought what should become of his soul, never dreamed of sudden death, never minded his own salvation; and therefore God said unto him, *O fool, this night will they fetch away thy soul from thee, then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* Luk, 12, 16. The Apostle *Peter* maketh it a special mark of the profane beasts in that time, that they accounted it their chief pleasure to live deliciously for a season. And the Apostle *Jude* speaking of the like livers, saith, they were feast-hunters, filling & pampering themselves. Of this sort are all drunkards, gluttons, epicures, and belly-gods: speak unto them to embrace the truth, to mind heavenly things, to consider wherefore they were created, and to remember the shortness of their life; they cannot hear, the belly hath no ears. They are ready to answer with carnal minded men, what will the Gospel advantage me? Why should I be a professor, and become a by word of the world? What good cometh to a man by hearing the word, by reading the Scriptures, or by being the child of God? It can get me neither many in my purse, nor clothes to my back, nor food to my belly, nor any other pleasure to my heart; I had rather have the company of good fellows, and a draught of wine or strong drink, then to hear the best Sermon that can be preached. And here consider with me profane *Esau* once again. When *Jacob* demanded of him the sale of his birth-right, he said, *Loe, I am almost dead, what is then this birthright to me?* Gen. 25, 31. Thus the Atheists speak in the book of *Job*, chap. 21, 15. *Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him, and what profit should we have if we should pray unto him?* Such profane *Esau*s there be many in the world, monsters among the sons of men, proud gyants, that are at opē defiance with God, that regard the cup and kan, the pot and good fellowship, before heaven and heavenly things; that prize the most precious pearls of God most basely, like *Judas* the son of perdition, that valued Christ at thirty pence: so these sell everlasting life, and give heaven, & depart frō salvation; some for their whore, some for

their drink, some for their money, and other for other base and beastly pleasures: all these shall one day know the price of their folly, and confess with their own mouths, that they were worse then fools and mad mē, that everyone is ready to point at with the finger.

Everyone is ready to sit in judgment upon *Esau*, & to condemn y^e profaneness of his heart, because he regarded more the satisfying of his present lust and moment any pleasure, then to be the successor of his father in the Church of God: yet of this number there be infinite thousands in the world, that prize the precious treasure of God's heavenly graces, the use of the Sacraments, the frame of Christian Religion, the glorious ministry of the Word, the hope of a better life, and the endless joy of God's kingdom (things more of value then the whole world beside) as brutishly & basely, as ever *Esau* did his birthright, & are ready to sell them for every filthy gain & drudgery pleasure. They think of no other life then this present, and know no other God but Mammon; and therefore howsoever they have oftentimes the praise of the world, and the commendation to be civil & honest men, they are not only enemies unto their souls, but to the cross of Christ, and are in the fearful estate of condemnation.

[Verse 14. *Come, I will counsel thee such things as this people shall do to thy people in the latter days.*] Here we have set down unto us the chief occasion of that great judgment which fell upon the people; wherein four & twenty thousand perished, as appeareth in the chapt. following, namely, the devilish counsel of *Balaam* which he gave unto *Balak*, to draw the people into fornication. But it may seem at the first sight, that *Balaam* speaketh very improperly. For whereas he saith, *I will counsel thee such things as this people shall do to thy people*, some may suppose he should rather have said, *I will counsel thee such things as thou and thy people shall do to the people of Israel*. Notwithstanding, if we consider the words aright, we shall see his meaning to be so in effect. So then, if we mark what y^e people of God should do to them, we shall find what they shall do to the people of God. The Israelites, as we see in the seenteenth Verse, *Shall smite the coasts of Moab, and destroy them, subdue them, and bring them under*; so was the drift of his counsel, to lay a plot, and prepare a snare whereby the Israelites should be weakened, and many thousands of them destroyed by the hand of God. As if he should say: *I know this people whom thou hatest, shall waste and weaken thy posterity in time to come; but hearken unto me, and obey my counsel, I will show thee how thou shalt ruin them, and compass their destruction, and so do unto them that which they shall do unto thy people*. Thus we see the wickedness of *Balaam's* heart to be exceeding great, who when he was restrained from cursing, opened his mouth to wicked counsel, & thereby the children of Israel fell into horrible sins, and drew upon themselves heavy punishments. Hereby we learn, That to give evil counsel is a grievous sin. It is not enough for us to abstain from doing evil, but we must beware of this great sin, that we do not counsel any to commit evil. This the Scripture setteth before, us in the sin of *Jezebel*, who was a furtherer of *Ahab's* wickedness, when his covetous eye lusted after *Naboth's* Vineyard, she said unto him, *Doest thou sway the Scepter, rule the kingdom, and manage the State? Arise and eat bread, I will give thee the Vineyard*: and afterward she moved him to go and take possession. This is likewise set down in Prover. 1, 11. where he expresseth the sin of seducers. This also appeareth further in *Joseph's* brethren, plotting his overthrow: *Come, let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, a wicked beast hath devoured him, &c.* Gen. 37, 20. So did *Pharaoh* counsel and

encourage the Egyptians, to deal wisely with the Israelites, lest they multiply, and it come to pass that if there be war they should join themselves with their enemies, and get them out of the Land, Exod. 1, 10. This we see also in *Ahithophel*, who rebelled with *Absalom* against *David*, and fearing the reconcilment of the son to the father, and thereby his own just confusion for his unjust rebellion, he gave such counsel as if it had been Oracle, thereby to take away all hope of agreement & atonement between them: *Go in to thy fathers Concubines which he hath left to keep the house, and when all Israel shall hear thou art abhorred of thy father, the hands of all that are with thee shall be strong*, 2 Sam. 16, 21. So the high Priests moved the people to desire that *Barabbas* might be delivered rather than Christ, Mark 15, 11: persuaded *Judas* for a sum of money to betray him, gathered themselves in a council to put him to death, and enticed the soldiours with large rewards to noise it abroad, that his disciples came by night and stole him away, while they slept, Mat. 28, 12.

The Reasons follow. And first of all it is to [Reason 1] be considered, that it is one of the titles of the devil to be a tempter. It is one of his names to note unto us his nature: for he is called the Tempter, because his continual study & desire hath been, is, and will be, by all the means he can, to tempt all men; he omitteth no times, he spareth no pains, he leaveth no means vnassayed to draw men from God, & to bring them to destruction. This the Apostle teacheth, 1 Thes. 3, 5. *I sent to know of your faith, lest the Tempter had tempted you in any sort*. So he tempted *Eve* in the beginning through his subtlety to eat of the forbidden fruit, and beguiled her through hypocrisy, 2 Cor. 11, 3. So he tempted Christ to draw him into infidelity, to distrust, and to presumption, and the Evangelist saith, *The Tempter came unto him*, Matth. 4, 3. Wherefore this being a note and property of the devil, such as craftily seduce others unto wickedness, or hold them back from godliness, such as keep men from the love or practice of Religion, and hinder the means whereby it is fostered and furthered in them, are become tempters and the very children of the devil. The qualities of the devil are found in them, they bear his mark, they <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> <1 page duplicate> are stamped with his image, and they do notoriously resemble their father, so that we may say truly of such, and to such, as Christ speaketh to the Jews, John 8, 44. *Ye are of your father the devil*. Thus when *Elimas* sought to turn away the Deputy from the faith, *Paul* calleth him, *an enemy to all righteousness, full of all subtlety, and child of the devil*, Acts 13, 10. It must needs be a great sin that maketh the devils kinsmen; yea, devils incarnate.

[Reason 2] Secondly, from evil counsels follow most dangerous effects, as filthy puddles from an unclean fountain. From hence many times proceed idolatry, adultery, rebellion, murder, robbery, false testimonies, and all manner of evil works. This might be amplified by sundry examples. The daughters of *Lot*, lately delivered as a small remnant out of the destruction of Sodom, (the fire whereof was yet scarcely quenched (said one to another, *Come, we will make our father drink wine, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father: for our father is old, and there is not a man's in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth*, Gen. 19, 32: and from this wicked counsel of the daughter, followed horrible incest of the father. The like we see in *Jonadab*, a subtle companion, who beholding *Amnon* the Kings son become so lean, and perceiving he fell in love, or rather in lust with his sister *Tamar*, said unto him, *Lie down*

on thy bed, and make thyself sick: and when thy father shall come to thee, say unto him, I pray thee let my sister Tamar come and give me meat, and let her dress meat in my sight, &c. and from this devilish counsel, followed also detestable incest.

[Use 1,] The uses follow. First, we may gather from hence another truth to be diligently marked; namely, that mischievous counsel shall fall out to the greatest mischief of the first contriuer and deuiser of it. It is as a stone that shall roll upon him that first moved & stirred it. It is as a sword, which with the rebounding of the stroke, shall return with great violence, to wound him that first did draw it. This we see in the history of malicious *Haman*, who thought to have glutted himself, & satisfied his long thirst with the blood of the Jews, he took counsel with his wife and all his friends, and they persuaded him to make a tree of fifty cubits high, and to speak unto the King that *Mordecai* might be hanged thereon, Ester 5, 14. This was the counsel, but it became a snare to entrap the counselor. He made a pit, and digged it, *and is fallen into the pit which he made*, Psal. 7, 15. *Daniel*, by the subtle suggestion of the Rulers of the kingdom, and counsellors of the King, was cast into the den of Lions, because he was found too faithful to God; but *Daniel* was delivered, the mouths of the Lions were stopped, and his accusers by the just judgment of God, & commandment of the King, were devoured by those Lions, Dan. 6, 24. This should serve to give wisdom and warning to all men, and to terrify them from plotting evil devises, & from persuading unto wickedness. God will find them out in their own ways, and pay them the wages of their own works. Thus will the Lord be known by executing judgment upon these tempters and enticers to ungodliness, so that the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands, and his foot is taken in the same net which he hid for another. It is impossible (as we see in continual experience) that such masters of mischief should escape unpunished.

Secondly, we see they are greatly deceived, [Use 2] and wander wide out of the way, that think themselves excused and exempted from sin, if they do not execute it in the work, & practice it with the hand. For if the head devise it, if the heart allow it, if the tongue deliver it, if the foot follow after it, sin is conceived, & we are made culpable in the sight of God. So then we must all know, that we may many ways be made partakers of other men's sins, though we be not actual doers in them: God will find us guilty, and convince us to our faces, that we have our part in it, as *David* said to the woman that sought to reconcile *Absalom* to his father, who did it by the counsel of *Joab*, *Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?* 2 Sam. 14, 19. This the Apostle teacheth *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 5, 22. *Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.* And the Apostle *John* saith, *If any man come unto you, and bring you false doctrine, receive him not to house, neither bid him, God speed for he that biddeth him, God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.* Now we may be culpable of the sins of others; First, by commanding by our authority; that which is evil, and by moving those that are under us to go about it. Thus *David* is charged to have slain *Uriah* by the sword of the Ammonites, 2 Sam. 12, 9. For he that willeth and commandeth evil, is as deeply charged with it, as he that committeth it. Secondly, by winking at evil, when we see it, yet make our selves blind, & will not see it, although it lie in our power to repress it, and redress it. This indulgence and lenity, (when offenders are suffered to run on in their sin) maketh them to grow obstinate in sin, and irrecoverable out of their sin. This we see in the example of *Eli*

toward his own sons, his foolish pity made him guilty of their impiety, and brought the judgment of God, not only upon them, but upon himself. Thus many Masters, Magistrates, Ministers, and household-governors, are inwrapped in the blasphemies, perjuries, whoredoms, drunkenness, profaneness, and other sins, that reign amongst those of their families and iurisdictions, and shall be accountable for them, by reason of their cockering and connivance. For by this means, though we do not openly commit them, we secretly consent unto them, & approve of them. This the Apostle reproveth in those, *who though they knew the Law of God, how that they which commit such things, are worthy of death, yet not only do the same, but also sooth them that do them.* Thirdly, they are also partakers of the sins of others, that join in familiarity with the wicked, for by their fellowship with them, they add courage & comfort to them, they harden them in their evil courses, and give great suspicion to the world, that they are like them in affection, with whō they join in conversation. Fourthly, when men are silent, and say nothing at open impieties & blasphemies. If God be dishonored, and we hold our peace, as if it concerned us not, neither seeking to reclaim, nor to correct them, we make their offenses to be our own. The sin of *Hophni & Phinehas* destroyed the family and posterity of their father. *Achan* committed sacrilege, *the whole host partaked of it, and was punished for it.* So then, it standeth us upon, to beware of consenting to sin, and of counseling others to commit sin. If we any way give our assent and consent, if we defend or delight in y^e sins which we hear or see, we are companions with them of their filthiness, and partakers with them in their wickedness.

Thirdly, it teacheth us that we ought not [Use 3] to consent to sinners, nor to follow evil counsel when it is given and suggested unto us. It is not enough for us to make our defense to say, Alas, I devised it not, I was not the contriuer and inuenter of it: if it had not been devised, it should not have been practiced. For as the aduiser shall not herein be justified, because he put it not in execution: so he that is advised shall not be cleared and discharged, because he was not the author of the invention. If it be a grievous sin to seduce, it is a grievous sin to be seduced. God will arraign them as guilty of the same sin, & bind them in one bundle together. Therefore the wiseman saith, Prov. 1, 10, 15. *My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not: walk not in the way with them, but refrain thy foot from their path.* Our nature is easily drawn to incline unto evil, and standeth in a slippery place ready to fall; but when we have counsellors & abettors to allure us, and to provoke us, we had need of a great measure of grace to hold us upright and to keep our feet from falling. We shall have many sweet songs sung unto us, and the pleasures of sin laid before us, but we must stop our ears against such enticements, and not hearken to the enchantments of such seducers. This we shall the better observe and perform, if we look to the practice of these two points: First, if we be careful to avoid evil company, and to fly from them. If a man were to pass through an horrible wilderness, where he were sure to meet with Lions, Dragons, Wolves, Tigers, Bears, & other wild beasts, he would be sure to go armed and well appointed. While we live in this world, we wander in such a wilderness, and albeit we be not in bodily danger of such creatures, yet we are in continual peril to be assaulted by more dangerous and deadly enemies, the devil and his Angels: all the wicked are their host and instruments, we shall be tempted by the enemies of God, by drunkards, and other profane persons to sin, which are as

so many cruel and savage beasts wholly bent to our destruction, so that we must both avoid their company, & put on the whole Armor of God, Eph. 6, 11: that we may stand fast and quit our selves like men in the time of trial.

Secondly, it is not enough for us to fly the company of the wicked and ungodly, but we must also seek for the society of the godly, that all our delight may be in them: *For the way of the righteous shineth as the light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*, Prov. 4, 18. We must make much of the assemblies of the godly, and join one selves in friendship with them, that with the godly we may learn godliness, and with the upright we may learn uprightness. This Solomon teacheth, Pro. 13, 20 *He that walketh with the wise shall be wiser*. This is a notable help against our manifold infirmities, and a strengthening of us against all temptations. *As Iron sharpeneth Iron, so doeth man sharpen the face of his friend*, Prov. 27, 17.

Lastly, it is our duty to follow the good [Use 4] counsel and persuasion of the godly. Good counsel is as the dropping of the honey comb, bringing sweetness to the soul, and health to the body; yea, as *Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart, so doth the sweetness of man's friend by hearty counsel*, Prov. 27, 9. When our brethren teach, admonish, counsel, persuade, or rebuke us, we must not stomach and despise them, but be guided and directed by them, as David was by Nathan, and as Peter was by the Apostle Paul. This is set down in the 141. Psalm, *Let the righteous smite me, for that is a benefit: let him reprove me, and it shall be a precious Oil that shall not break my head*. It is a rare thing to find a man that will counsel to follow godliness. Reverence him as a counselor, love him as a friend, obey him as a father, that will direct thee in the ways of salvation, & bring thee back again when thou wanderest out of the right path that leadeth to life. Thou shalt find many more evil counsellors then good. If one will admonish and persuade thee to godliness, thou shalt meet with one score that will allure thee to wickedness. But we must not follow a multitude to do evil, lest we be punished with the multitude. It must be our wisdom to learn instruction at the mouth of others. The heathen, which had no better star to guide them then the light and law of nature, knew y^t there were two things did greatly adorn a man, and make him renowned for wisdom; one, to be able to give good counsel to himself and others; the other to be willing to hearken to good counsel when it is offered. If we cannot attain and reach unto the former point, w^c is an excellent grace of God's Spirit, to instruct and teach others wisdom; yet let us follow the latter, and give ear to the advice of others when it is given unto us. For whosoever is contented to stoop down to learn wisdom, is always to be reputed a wise man. But he that cannot give, and yet will not take counsel when it is given; he that neither can teach, nor will learn wisdom, may worthily be esteemed and branded by all men, with the name of a fool. If either we can go before others to show them the way, or follow them that lead us the way, we shall not lose the reputation of wisdom. Hence it is, that Solomon declaring precepts of true wisdom, saith, Prov. 12, 15. *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he that heareth counsel is wise*. Not only he is wise that giveth counsel, but he that heareth it. The wiseman speaketh not in these words of the outward hearing of the ear, but of the inward hearing of the heart. For many have the bodily hearing, that want the spiritual. The external use of the sense cannot be available to make us wise; so that we must hear with an earnest affection of the mind, & give all diligence to follow the counsel that is given us in the name of God. To this purpose he

speakeſt in another place, Pro. 15, 22. *Without counſel thoughts come to naught; but in the multitude of counſellors there is ſteadfaſtneſs.* When *Herod* had offered to give to the daughter of *Herodias* (becauſe in her dancing & dalliance ſhe pleaſed him) whatſoever ſhe ſhould aſk, even to the half of his kingdom, ſhe being before instructed by her mother, aſked the head of *John* Baptist in a platter: and from the devilish counſel followed abhominable murder, Mat. 14, 8, When *Rehoboam* followed the raſh counſel of his young counſellors that had been brought up with him, who perſuaded him to make the grievous yoke of his father more grievous: this turned to the ruin and renting away of the greater part of his kingdom.

So then, let us not be aſhamed to follow the counſel of ſuch as are diſcreet and godly. Neither is it greatly material who they be that give us good counſel, whether our ſuperiors, our equals, or our inferiors. For we muſt not weigh ſo much who is the counſelor, as what is the counſel: nor who is the adiviser, as what is the advice. If it be good and godly, think thou that the holy Ghost ſpeakeſt, and receive it as proceeding from the Comforter. If it be evil, reject it, as coming from the Tempter. *Moses* was a wiſe Governor of the people, and a worthy Prophet of God, like unto whom aroſe not a Prophet in *Israel*, whom the Lord knew face to face; yet he thought it no ſhame or reproach unto him to be directed and advised by *Jethro* his father in law (a man far inferior unto him in honor and eſtimation) in hearing the cauſes and controverſies that aroſe amongſt the people: who ſaid, *Here now my voice, I will give thee counſel, and God ſhall be with thee*, Exod. 18, 19. When *Naaman* the Syrian came into the lād of *Israel* to be cured of his leproſy, and the Prophet bad him, *Go waſh himſelf ſeven times in Jordan*, he turned away in diſdain and diſpleaſure; and if he had not hearkened to the advice of his own ſervants who modestly ſaid unto him, *Father, if the Prophet had commanded thee a great thing, wouldeſt thou not have done it? How much rather then when he ſaith to thee, Waſh and be clean?* he had departed a leaper as he came, 2 Kings 5, 13. The like we ſee in *David*, who receiving reprochful words for the good deeds that he performed, and a churlish answer for the kindneſs which he expected, was fully in his fully bent and determined to have been revenged on *Nabal* & his whole houſe for that injury; but by the advice and counſel of wiſe *Abigail*, inferior to him in regard of his ſex and condition, he was ſtayed from that enterprize, ſo that he ſaid, *Bleſſed be the Lord GOD of Israel who ſent thee this day: bleſſed be thy counſel, & bleſſed be thou which haſt kept me this day from coming to ſhed blood*, 1 Sam. 25, 33. So then, we are not to deſpiſe the counſel of thoſe that are put in ſubjection under our feet. The child is ſometimes m•de able to adviſe his father; the ſeruāt may ſometimes ſee more then his maſter; the wiſe may ſometimes give good counſel to her huſband: and it is no diſpraiſe or diſparagement for thē to hearken to their inferiors, but they ought to receive it as a meſſage brought unto them from God: yea, if an enemy ſhould perſuade us to that which is good, we ought to make this benefit and advantage of him, as to hearken to our own profit. This ſerveth to reprove all thoſe that being lifted up in a proud conceit of their own wiſdom; againſt whom the Prophet *Iſaiah* denounceth an heavy woe, ſaying, *Woe unto them that are wiſe in their own eyes, and prudent in their own ſight, do ſcorn and contemn that either themſelves or any oath• ſhould learn anything of their inferiors.* We ſee this, and hear it by lamentable experience in many men of a proud and profane ſpirit in our days. For when the wife, who ought to be an helper unto her huſband, ſhall with modeſty and meekneſs of

spirit it admonish him for the bettering of his estate, for the benefit of his wealth, for the comfort of his family, and for the profit of his own soul, to forsake his evil company, to renounce his drunkenness, or other wickedness wherein he delighteth; what is more common then for his companions to say unto him, Wilt thou be ruled and governed by her? Wilt thou endure her to be thy master? Wilt thou suffer her to crow and to carpe over thee? And thus while they think to become wise men, they show themselves fools. For, are we wiser then our father *Abraham*, who accounted it no reproof or reproach unto him to obey the counsel of his wife, when she persuaded him to cast out the bondwoman and her son out of his house? No woman in Scripture more renowned and commended for subjection and submission to her husband, yet she gave him good counsel to her great praise; and *Abraham* is commanded to listen unto it; for God said unto him, *In all that Sara shall say unto thee, hear hir voice*, Gen. 21, 12. Away then with the pride & peeuishnesse of all those that take it as a discredit unto themselves to be put in mind of their duty by others, and refuse all counsel, whereof themselves are not the authors. Let us put on the spirit of humility, and decke our selves inwardly with lowlynesse of mind, to hearken to everyone that can direct us in y^e which is good. On the other side, it behooveth us to beware of evil counsel, and of evil counsellors, for they are as the instruments of the devil, and lie in wait to entrap us. It is impossible to be free from these sons of *Belial*, we shall be assaulted by them, and therefore thou must be so thoroughly prepared against them, that if thy father that begat thee, or thy mother that bare thee, or thy wife that lieth in thy bosom, or thy friend that is as thy own soul, shall entice thee secretly or openly, to any impiety against thy holy faith or obedience, remember from what better root it proceedeth, and say unto him as Christ did unto *Peter*; *Come behind me Satan*. For when *Peter* began to dissuade him from that great work unto which the Father had sanctified him, and sent him into the world, he said unto him, *Get thee behind me Satan: thou art an offense unto me, because thou sauourest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men*. A notable example for us all to follow when we are moved any way to dishonor our God, and to wound our own conscience by committing of sin.

15 And he uttered his Parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes were opened hath seen.

16 He hath said that heard the word of God, & hath the knowledge of the most High, and saw the vision of the Almighty, and being in a trance had his eyes uncovered.

17 I see that, but not now; I behold it, but not near: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the coasts of Moab, and shall destroy all them that are behind me.

18 And Edom shall be possessed, and Seir shall be a possession to their enemies: for Israel shall do valiantly.

19 He also that shall have Dominion, shall be of Jacob, and shall destroy the remnant of the City.

20 And when he looked on Amalek he uttered his Parable, and said, Amalek was the first of Nations, but his latter end shall come to destruction.

21 And he looked on the Kenites, and uttered his Parable, and said; Strong is thy dwelling place, and put thy nest in the rock.

22 Nevertheless the Kenite shall be spoiled, so long as Ashur shall hold them captiue.

We have shown already that the propheties of *Balaam* do concern either Israel, or such as were strangers from the Commonwealth of Israel. The prophesy belonging to the Israelites hath been already handled. Now *Moses* proceedeth to set down other special propheties which *Balaam* uttered concerning other particular Nations. For it pleased God to use the means and ministry of this wicked man, to foretell the troubles and destruction that should come upon them. The first of all those propheties is against the Moabites and Edomites: the second against the Amalekites, the third against the Kenites. Against all these he prophesieth and foresheweth the ruins of their several States and Dominions.

Now because all these were great & weighty matters, belonging to the subversion, not of private persons or families, but of whole Countries and kingdoms, he useth that preface and introduction which he did before, to procure credit and authority to his prophesy, declaring that he was inspired by the Almighty to speak, of which we have spoken already in the beginning of this chapter. Touching the prophesy against the Moabites and Edomites, which is the fourth in number, and the first of those that concern other nations that were strangers from Israel, he showeth that the glory of the Israelites shall be so great, their dominion so large, their kingdom so mighty and magnificent, that it shall shake the Moabites, Ammonites, and Midianites, and men of the East in pieces, yea shall subdue Edom, and enter into their Cities and country, as their own possession. This shall be the victorious conquest of the Israelites, whose glory is expressed by the name of a Star, and whose kingdom is understood by the name of the Scepter, which is amplified in the beginning of the words, and proved in the end of them. It is amplified by the preventing of an objection, which is *•••*ting, and may be thus supplied; When shall this be? [Object.] Or is the time thereof near; that it should be by and by looked for? The answer [Answer.] followeth: I see and plainly perceive the certain and undoubted truth thereof, howbeit the season is not yet at hand: thou (O King) hast no cause to fear it, for it is not reserved for thy days, b•t must be fulfilled after many generations. For *David* lived four hundred years after the uttering and deli•ering of t•is prophesy, in whom it was accomplished. Thus he comforteth the King, and declineth envy against himself. He proveth and confirmeth his prophesy by the courage and valor of the Israelites, for they shall do valiantly, and destroy the enemies that remain.

Now, in this prophesy thus propounded we are to observe two things: First, the interpretation of some things mentioned herein, and then consider when it had his accomplishment and fulfilling, which is the soundest way to understand a prophesy. The words that require interpretation, are in the end of the 17. verse, *It shall destroy all them that are behind me*. Some read them thus, *Shall destroy all the sons of Sheth*, which they understand, that Christ shall convert all Nations and all mankind to y^e Catholic faith (for *Sheth* was the son of *Adam*, out of whose loins y^e whole world sprang) which is a wrested and far-fet interpretation. Others pass by it, as if they saw it not, or as if it were a stranger to them, and they to it, and therefore will claim no acquaintance of it: wherein we may better praise their wisdom than their knowledge, as those which had rather not shoot their arrow than miss the mark, and stand still rather than go out of the way. Others make these words all one with the former, & understand them of the subversion of the Princes of Moab, which is without all sap or sense; and besides they should set that down obscurely & darkly, which before had been expressed evidently and plainly. Or suppose that some Princes among them might be called by this name; which is, to wander without a guide, to sail without a compass, and to conjecture without ground or warrant. Others (among which some of the Jews also are) take it to be some town of the Moabites, which is here specially threatened. These interpretations (to which we might join sundry others) being mere imaginations without reason, or fond collections without truth, or new conceits without credit, are not to be received of us, or approved by us. So then, all things being duly considered, we are rather to follow them that understand the words appellatiuely than properly, both because such as take them properly, run into an improper and impertinent interpretation, and also because the word is so taken in other places of holy Scripture, as *Isaiah 24, 4*. *2 Sam. 10, 4*: in which places, the word [*Sheth*] both without any affix, & with his affix joined to it, signifieth the hinder parts, which the Physicians by an honest and clean term, do call the fundament and that place which we sit upon. Wherefore, by this borrowed and improper speech, we may gather (not improperly) that *Balaam* understood those people that were behind him, or situate at his hinder parts, having relation to the situation of his body, as then it was placed. For when he uttered this prophesy, he looked toward the West, where he beheld the Israelites pitching their tents beside Jordan and Jericho, as we saw before, *Num. 22, 1*: so that turning his face towards the Israelites, the people of the East must of necessity be behind him, the East and West being two contrary positions of the heavens, so that he w^c turneth to the one turneth from the other; and if the one be before him, the other must needs be behind him. So then, as he stood at that time, he might have called the Israelites the children of his face or fore-parts, being then before him as he stood; as he doth the Ammonites, Midianites, and other Easterlings, the sons of his back-parts, being then situate behind him, whom afterwards the Israelites subdued. Thus much touching the meaning of this hard place in this prophesy: touching the accomplishment of this prophesy, it was fulfilled doubly; first temporally, then spiritually; first properly, then typically. Temporally it was begun in *David*, who overcame the Moabites, and put them to tribute; and figuratively finished in Christ, who is the true day-star arising in our hearts, and the King of Kings, whose Scepter is a Scepter of righteousness, of whose kingdom shall be none end, whose

dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River unto the end of the Land. Psal, 72, 8. & 60, 10. Hitherto of the fourth prophesy.

The next prophesy following is against the Amalekites, which is the fifth in number: but the second that concerneth the Gentiles. For his eyes being cast towards them and their country, he pronounceth two things of thē; the one past, and the other to come, and yet one the fore-runner and procurer of y^e oath. They began to fall already by the sword of the Israelites, as *Moses* hath declared. Exod. 17, 19. This word here uttered shall pursue them, and persecute them unto the death, until they be utterly consumed. God hath determined by an unchangeable decree to have war with Amalek forever, and utterly to put out his remembrance from under heaven. The Amalekites descended of the race of *Amalek* the Nephew of *Esau*, as it is testified in Gen. 36, 12. They were the beginning of the nations that first vexed and assaulted the people of God after they were brought out of the Land of Egypt, they were the first enemies y^t came out against them to stop their way and passage toward the land of Canaan, & therefore they are commanded to have war with them, and to destroy them with the edge of the sword, according to the word of y^e Lord, Deut. 25, 17, 18, 19. The Amalekites at this time thought nothing less then of their destruction to come: yet the sentence of death is pronounced against them four hundred year before, and they cannot escape the danger thereof. This was accomplished partly in *Saul*, 1 Sam. 15, 7, who put many of them to the mercy of the sword; partly and especially in Christ, wh^ose glorious kingdom is the utter overthrow and ruin of all the Reprobate. Thus much of the fifth prophesy against the Amalekites, whose Kingdom then flourished.

The sixth prophesy of *Balaam* is against the Kenites their next neighbors, bordering upon the Amalekites, of whom *Jethro* the father in law of *Moses* came, as appeareth in Judge. 1, 16. 1 Sam. 15, 16: which were part of the Midianites, by whom we may understand the Midianites themselves, one member being put for the whole, one principal family being taken for y^e whole nation. These are here described, not only by their present estate, but also by their future condition. Their present state was peaceable and prosperous, and seemed to promise a continuance of their glory, and is therefore compared to a sure nest built in a strong rock, as in a place of safety & defense. Touching their future condition, he showeth, that notwithstanding their secure dwelling & quiet habitation, and that they were without fear of danger to be hurt of the people of God, who never disturbed their peace, nor offered them wrong; yet in process of time, destruction likewise should come upon them, when once the fire of war should be kindled, and break in amongst them, to wit, in part, when *Gideon* with three hundred men put to flight a great host of them, but most especially when the Assyrians and Babylonians carried them captive out of their own country. For when the Assyrians came up with an army to waste Judea, and to carry away the Israelites, ranging over the land, raging with fire and sword, and wasting the neighbor-Nations, they spoiled the Kenites bordering upon the Jews; which doth verify the common Proverb, It is some evil to be near unto evil. And again, when thy Neighbors house is on fire, it is high time to look unto thine own: and teacheth us to esteem as our own, the damage of our neighbor, and to fear lest in the ruins of others, our destruction be conspired. This calamity and captivity was brought upon them by *Saneherib*, who coming to spoil Israel, spoiled them: and as they were

carried away out of their own country together, so they returned back again into their Country together, as we read in the holy history of the 1. Chronicles, chap. 2, 53. And thus as they tasted of the same misery, so God made them partakers of the same mercy; as they were afflicted together, so also they were comforted together. Thus much of the method and meaning of these prophesies. The doctrines arising from hence are to be considered according to the several prophesies: and first touching the first, against the Moabites.

[Verse 17. *I see that, but not now; I behold it, but not near: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, &c.*] In this prophesy *Balaam* foretelleth the future condition of the Moabites, declaring both that they shall be destroyed, and by whom. For God will raise out of the contemptible stock of *Jacob*, a bright Star, that shall refresh the Church with his sweet influence, and give them comfort against their enemies: This we shown to be performed in the days of *David* afterward, therefore he saith: *I see it, but not now; nor near at hand.* This teacheth us, That sometimes God maketh the Church to flourish in this life. Howsoever God oftentimes bring trouble upon his Church, and affliction upon his people, yet at other times he giveth rest and peace, and continueth their prosperity a long time. This truth receiveth plentiful confirmation out of the book of *Judges*, chap. 3.11, 30. & 5, 31. & 8, 28: it is y^e main drift and scope of it, to show how God in the miseries thereof provideth a remedy, and giveth rest round about from all their enemies. God sometimes giveth them a time of breathing, and recovering their strength, and will not suffer the rod of the wicked always to rest on the lot of the righteous, Psalm 125, 3. We have examples of this in the reign of *Solomon*, *Jehoshaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, and other godly Kings, which were as strong props and pillars in God's house, & a sure stay to the servants of God in well doing: he gave them an outward estate that flourished both in wealth and peace. This appeareth evidently in the book of *Ester*, after he had delivered them from the mouth of the Lyon that gaped as it were after his prey to devour them, the Church prospered, the head of *Mordecai* was exalted, comfortable letters were published and sent abroad for their safety, and unto the Jews came light, and joy, gladness, & honor. So the prophet *Zechariah* prophesying of their return from captivity, saith; *That the streets of the City shall be full of boys & girles playing in the streets thereof*, Zac. 8, 5. The book of *Joshua* is a notable storehouse of God's mercy unto his church, giving them rest from their enemies, as he had promised them, so that none were able to stand before them, Josh. 22, 4. And as he dealeth with his Church in general, so he doth with his servants in particular, as we see in *Joseph*, *Moses*, *David*, and diverse other, turning their mourning into joy, loosing their sack, and griding them with gladness.

The Reasons of this dealing of the Lord are many and most evident. First, his ears are [Reason 1] open to hear the cries of his children, he seeeth their miseries, add putteth all their tears in his bottle of remembrance. This is it which the Lord declared unto *Moses* when he called him to deliver his people out of the thralldom and bondage of Egypt, Exod. 2, 7. *I have surely seen the trouble of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, because of their Taske-masters: for I know their sorowes.* GOD hath made a covenant of peace with his people, & hath a compassionate sense of their miseries, and a feeling of their afflictions. There is a notable agreement and union between God and his Children. They in their crosses and calamities cannot but sigh and mourn: and they cannot so soon utter a groan, but by by

and by the Lord is touched with compassion. This is evidently recorded in the book of Exodus 2, 23, where it is said, *The childrē of Israel sighed for the bondage, and cried: and their cry for the bondage came up to God.* The prayers of the faithful prevail much with God, if they be fervent. He understandeth the words of their mouth, and the groans of the heart, and in his good time will hear them graciously.

[Reason 2] Secondly, he giveth unto his Church oftentimes a sweet taste of earthly blessings, to the end his people might have all occasions and opportunities to serve him. If they should always bear the yoke upon their necks, and have the heavy burden of affliction lying on their backs, though they were strong in faith, and had their hope fixed in GOD, yet they would be soon dismayed and discouraged, and join with the wicked, falling into the impieties of their persecutors. But God is *the sun and the shield of his Church, he will give grace and glory unto it, and withhold nothing that is good from them that walk uprightly*, Psal. 84, 11. He will comfort and defend them in their danger, he will exalt them to dignity after their distresses, lest they should be too much daunted and discomfited. This is the reason used by the Prophet, *The rod of the wicked shall not always rest on the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness*, Psal. 125, 3.

[Use 1] The uses now are to be marked and observed of us. First, acknowledge from hence with a sweet feeling, the infinite love & compassion of God toward his people: he delighteth not to be always chiding, and his anger endureth not forever. He will not have his Church to be always under the cross, but sendeth it some release: *For he endureth but a while in his anger, but in his favor is life, &c. Psal. 30, 5, 6.* Thus doth the Lord give encouragements and comforts unto those that faithfully serve and rightly worship him, whereby he not only testifieth his own love toward them, but allureth others by their example to trust in him, and daunteth all their enemies that hoped to have seen their destruction. Such therefore, as are not moved to confess the love of God unto his servants, and see not his kindness toward them, have frozen hearts; and show themselves unworthy of so great mercy.

[Use 2] Secondly, it showeth us that it is impossible for all the tyrants and enemies under heaven to prolong the time for the further vexation of God's people, when God hath determined the release, and appointed the end of their troubles. All the creatures of God shall help them, and work for them; yea, hasten the purpose and counsel of God. This appeared very notably in the deliverance of Israel out of *Egypt*. When the time of four hundred years (which God had appointed) were expired, albeit the King and his people had concluded to detain them in bondage, they were by the over-ruling hand of God moved to thrust them out of the land, yea, even to hire them at a great price to depart, giving them jewels of silver and gold, and casting upon them the most precious things that were in their possession: *Pharaoh* and his people forced them out of the land in hast, and whē they were hardened to follow after them, & to bring them back again, the wind wrought for them, the sea gave them passage, and GOD that ruleth both wind and sea drowned their enemies. The time of deliverance was come, and who could hinder or defer it? The like we see in the bringing of this people out of captivity and bondage in *Babylon*, nothing seemed more unlikely or impossible unto the Saints themselves; for when the proclamation for the return

of the people was published, Psal. 126, 1, 2. the wonderfulness of the deliverance seemed so great and incomprehensible, that they could hardly persuade themselves of the truth thereof, until they saw the Gentiles speak of it, and help them forward with aid toward their country.

This serveth greatly to comfort and cheare up the hearts of the faithful, that seeing God will give rest unto his beloved people, vain are the practices of the enemies, although they band themselves together, as *Herod, Pontius Pilate*, and the high Priests did in the days of Christ, yet we have assurance of deliverance, they shall not always prevail, the people of God shall be preserved, and all shall work for the best for their own safety.

Thirdly, this must teach us in the time of [Use 3] our distresses, while we lie under the Cross to rely upon God, whatsoever troubles and temptations arise, although we should come to the gates of the grave, and pass by the door of death, we must lift up our heads, knowing that our deliverance draweth nere. This then serveth to work patience in the servants of God, and to teach us to wait upon him, until the time of rest and refreshing come from the presence of God, for surely it will come, as the Prophet *Habbakkuk* teacheth, chapt. 2. verse 3. *The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the last it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait; for it shall surely come, and shall not stay.* So, when the Angel had limited the time of the desolation of the holy people, and of the deliverance of the Church, he pronounceth him *blessed, that waiteth until that time*, Dan. chap. 12. verses 11, 12. And when the souls of them that were killed for the Word, and the Testimony which they had maintained, cried out with a loud voice from underneath the Altar; *How long, Lord, which art holy and true! Dooest not thou judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* An answer was given unto them, *That they should rest for a little season, until the number of their Brethren were fulfilled*, Revel. chap. 6. verse 10.

This the Prophet *David* showeth to have been his practice, earnestly waiting upon the Lord for help and deliverance out of all his troubles and dangers, as Psalm 123, verses 1, & 2. *I lift up mine eyes unto thee, which dwellest in the heavens: Behold, even as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maid unto the hand of her mistris, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us.* Great are our fears and troubles, and many be our infirmities, it behooveth us greatly therefore, to cleave unto the living God without separation, and evermore continue our trust in him, and to pour out our meditations and prayers before him, until such time as he graciously look upon us, and grant our petitions; yea, it is our duty whensoever we perceive the time of our deliverance to approach, or to be expired, or any signs and tokens thereof, as the sprouting of the Fig-tree, to appear and to be offered unto us from GOD: it is our duty (I say) to raise up our faith, and to entreat God to bring his purpose to pass, and to make good the words of his own mouth. When *Daniel* by reading the Prophets of God, knew that the number of years appointed for the desolation of Jerusalem was expired, *he turned his face to the Lord with prayer, in fasting, in weeping, in sackcloth and ashes.*

[Use 4] Lastly, it is the duty of all such as lie not under the cross, to commend the common cause of their brethren to God. Hath God given us rest on every side? Do we live in ease,

sitting under our Vines and Fig-trees, enjoying peace and liberty under a gracious Prince? Do we enjoy health and wealth, and taste not of the bitter cup of affliction that others drink of? It is required of us not to forget the affliction of *Joseph*, but to be mindful of the miseries of other parts of the Church, and to have a fellow-feeling of their sorrows, as that we be thereby provoked to call upon God for them. This the Apostle urgeth the Church of the Corinthians to think upon, 2 Corinthians, chap. 1. verse 7: that they being partakers of the suffering of the Saints, may also be partakers of the consolation. This is a duty needful to be learned and considered. We know not what troubles may fall upon our selves. There is nothing that happeneth unto any of our brethren, but it may fall upon our own heads.

Let us therefore call upon God for others, and remember them that are in trouble, as if we were troubled with them, that so we may have the benefit of other men's prayers, & be delivered when we fall into troubles. It is therefore a duty that we owe to God and our brethren, being touched with a respect of his commandment, & of their misery. His commandment should compel us, their misery should move us not to be forgetful of their condition. And from hence we should have a double meditation. First, it is our parts to praise the name of the Lord, when he giveth to our brethren, or to us, any share of this outward prosperity, and manifesteth his love unto us, by delivering our souls from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling, Psalm 116, 8.14. When he causeth our houses to be inhabited, our streets to be replenished, our Cities to be stored, and great concourse of people to be assembled: it should move us to render thanks to God, to pay our vows in the presence of all his people, and to crave the continuance of his goodness upon us. This is it which the Prophet acknowledgeth, Psal. 116, 12, 13, saying; *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord*, So the Prophet setting down the behavior of the people, what it shall be, being delivered from captivity, showeth, that they shall say in that day, *O Lord, I will praise thee, though thou wast angry with me, thy wrath is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my strength, and song: he also is become my salvation*, Isaiah 12, 1, 2. Let this be our practice when we have tasted of his mercy, and have received any deliverance from him, out of our afflictions.

Secondly, we ought from hence to consider the peace and rest that God hath reserved for us in the life to come. For, they are but a shadow of that comfort which we shall feel in the kingdom of heaven, This is that which the Apostle concludeth from the rest in the land of Canaan, that there remaineth a rest for the people of God, to wit, in the kingdom of heaven, Heb. 4, 9. For, even as the punishments and plagues that befall the ungodly, w^c the Lord raineth down upon their heads, are as the messengers of death, and the fore-runners of destruction, and give unto them a taste of the pains and torments of hell: so the blessings bestowed upon the godly, are as the first fruits of all their comfort. The first fruits which the Israelites under the law offered to God, gave hope and assurance unto them, to enjoy the rest of the increase: so the faithful, having a feeling of the gifts given unto them, and receiving them as assured pledges and tokens of the favor and love of God towards them in this life, do gather hope to have the heavenly inheritance in time to come. For, if God be so gracious and merciful unto us in these days of our pilgrimage, doubtless he reserveth greater mercies for us in the life to come, when we shall possess everlasting joys which no

man shall take from us, which neither the eye hath seen, nor the ear hath heard, nor the heart can conceive, when we shall really inherit that, which now by hope we wait for with much patience, 1. Cor. 2, 9.

[V. 18. *A Star shall come out of Jacob, & a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the coasts of Moab, and shall destroy all them that are behind: And Edom shall be possessed, & Seir shall be a possessiō to their enemies: for Israel shall do valiantly.*] We have heard before, that the purpose of *Balak* and *Balaam* was only to curse the people of God. Here we may see upon whom the curse lighteth and falleth. Wherein see how differing the ways and thoughts of God are, from the purposes and pretences of men. The King of Moab intended a curse against Israel, and a blessing upon himself: in both which he is disappointed. For as *Balaam* before pronounced a blessing upon Israel, so in this place he denounceth a curse to come upon *Moab*. When the King perceived the continuance of *Balaam's* blessings to follow Israel, he bad him in choller and indignation, neither bless nor curse; he would have taken it for a blessing, if *Balaam* would have held his peace & said nothing. But he cannot find this nothing at his hands: for he proceedeth now to deliver sundry curses against the Moabites, as before he had delivered sundry blessings to come upon the Israelites. And hereby is notably verified the saying of the Prophet, Psal. 109, 17, 18. *As he loved cursing, so shall it come to him: and as he loved not blessing, so shall it be far from him: as he clothed himself with cursing like a raiment, so shall it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.*

We have heard already how these things were performed, when God raised up *David* out of the loins of *Jacob*, who smote the Tabernacles of *Moab*, and made the Curtaines of *Edom* to tremble. But these things, howsoever temporally fulfilled in *David* and *Solomon*, have spiritually and forever their accomplishment and consummation in Christ Jesus, he is a King forever, and hath an euerlastaing kingdom, albeit not of this world. Therefore the Apostle saith, *This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, sitteth forever at the right hand of God, and from henceforth tarrieth till his enemies be made his footstool*, Hebr. 10, 22, 23. He is the true star that shineth to everlasting life here spoken of, and the Scepter of his kingdom is a Scepter of righteousness, *He shall be Ruler in the midst of his enemies*. Psalm. 110, 2, and 45, 6. Hence it is that the Prophet *Malichi* calleth him the Sun of righteousness, the brightest of all the stars that shine in the Firmament, and from which all the rest borrow and receive their light, when he saith, *Unto you that fear my Name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise, and health shall be under his wings, &c.* Mal. 4, 2. Thus Christ speaketh of himself in many places, John 8, 12. *I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but have that light of life.* Thus *John* witnesseth, chap. 1, 5, 9. *This was that true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* So *Zacharias* calleth him, *The Day-spring from on high that hath visited us*, Luke 1, 78. And the Apostle *Peter*, *The Day-star that ariseth in our hearts*, 2 Pet. 1, 19. Likewise in the last chapter of the Revelation, verse 16. he saith; *I am the root and generation of David, and the bright morning Star.* Now as he is the Star of *Jacob* to give them light, so he is the King of *Jacob* to rule them, through whom they shall do valiantly, and be enabled to overcome their enemies. Heereby we learn, that the Church through Christ, hath victory over spiritual enemies. The elect in Christ, shall subdue and triumph over all the enemies of their peace and salvation, both wicked mē and reprobate angels; yea, shall in Christ have power over all the world.

This promise was made from the beginning unto mankind, and uttered by the mouth of God, Gen. 3, 15. *That the seed of the woman should break the serpents head;* which belongeth both to Christ and unto his members. For the souereigne power of Christ is not given to the creature, but the ftuite and benefit thereof is given to the elect, and that two ways: first, he maketh all his members partakers of part of his glory in heaven, whereas the whole world besides lying in wickedness, is condemned in hell; and therefore the Apostle saith, Eph. 2, 6, *We are raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* And again, *The Saints shall judge the world: not giving sentence against the reprobate, but approving the sentence of Christ.* For as at the day of Assi•es, the Judges being set to pronounce sentence of condemnation against malefactors, he is accompanied by the bench of Justices, as by an honorable Senate of grave Counsellors, who not only hear the giving of sentence, but are witnesses & approve•s of it; so when Christ shall come as the Judge of quick and dead, accompanied with thousands of his Angels in power and great glory, the elect set at his right hand shall first receive the sentence of absolution & then being taken up into the Clouds, shall sit upon the Throne with Christ, and there approve & allow of the just condemnation of all the wicked. 1 Cor. 6, 2. This is one great fruit & benefit of the power of Christ. Secondly, by this his power he enableth his servants to overcome in their own persons, the lusts of the world, the strength of sin, the power of the devil, the gates of hell, and all the enemies of their salvation. This the Apostle toucheth, Rom. 16, 20, saying; *The God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly.* So the Apostle John noteth this prerogative of the faithful, 1 John 2, 14. And in another place, *All that is borne of God, overcometh this world.* Likewise in the Epistle written to the Church at •hyatira, Christ promiseth to them that overcome and keep his words to the end, *That he will give them power over Nations, so that they shall rule them with a rod of iron &c.* Revel. 2, 36.

The Reasons that may be rendered, will yet farther open unto us this point, and serve to [Reason 1] gain our affections to the embracing of it. For first, they do it by a lively faith in Christ's Name. The Apostle teacheth, that this is the victory that overcometh the world, evē our faith: *Who is he that overcometh the world but he which believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son God?* 1 John, chapter 5, verses 4, 5. Great is the excellency and force of faith, which leaneth and stayeth upon him that is able to do all things. *All things are possible to him that believeth,* saith Christ, Mar. 11, 23. *Through him that strengtheneth me I am able to do all things* saith the Apostle, Philip. 4, 13. In all trials and tribulations a sound faith will minister unto us comfort and consolation, and give strength to stand, an issue to escape, nay victory to overcome. Do we lose temporal and transitory things? it saith, *Thou hast treasure laid up in heaven,* Mat. 19, 21. Do we bear the burden of poverty? it teacheth that our Father which is in heaven knoweth whereof we have need, and what we want. Do we suffer persecution? and are we reviled for righteousness sake? it telleth us, that *ours is the kingdom of heaven, and great our reward shall be in the highest place,* Mat. 5, 10. Are we at the point of death, and ready to go the way of all flesh? it calleth to our remembrance, that *whether we live, we live unto the Lord: or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live or die, we are the Lord's,* Ro. 14, 8 Thus by faith we overcome all things, *Yea, we resist the devil being steadfast in faith, and beat back his temptations,* 1 Pet. 5, 9.

[Reason 2] Secondly, we shall not doubt of the victory, or fear to be overcome, seeing that howsoever he be strong that ruleth in the world, yet he is stronger that ruleth in us. True it is, *the devil goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whō he may devour*, and walketh in the earth too & fro to take his prey; yet the Lyon of y^e Tribe of Judah, that victorious Lion, hath broken his kingdom, hath gloriously triumphed over him, and gotten the victory. This is that reason which the Apostle expresseth, 1 John. 4, 4, declaring that he is in us by whom we overcome; *Little children, ye are of God, and have overcome them: for greater is he that is in you thē he that is in this world*. Here we see he comforteth the elect with a sure hope of victory, not thorough our own power, but thorough the power of God who is greater then all. It was a great comfort to *Elishaes* servant, 2 Kin. 6, 3, 16, to hear that they that were with them, were moe in number then they that were against them: but this giveth greater assurance, that he that ruleth in us is greater then he that ruleth in the children of disobedience, of whō Christ saith, *My Father which gave them me, is greater then all, and none is able to take them out of my fathers hand*, John 10, 29.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, we are partakers of his anointing, he is our head, and we his members: he is the root, and we are the branches: so that every believer may truly say, *I am Christ's, & Christ is mine*: even as the Spouse speaketh in *Solomon's* song, cha. 6, 2. *I am my welbeloueds, & my well-beloved is mine, who feedeth among the Lilies*. It is a near conjunction, nay, the nearest conjunction that is, between Christ & his church. The society of parents and children is great, of masters and servants, as part of one household; likewise the society of brethren, sisters, and kindred. The union and fellowship between man and wife is greater then these: yet the conjunction between Christ & his church exceedeth all other, and is preferred above all other societies, whereby we are made not only the friends and brethren of Christ, but we *are made one with him, and he with us, we are become members of his body, and made flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones*. An heavenly, an holy, a comfortable, and most sweet fellowship: Hence it is that the Apostle saith, *We have an ointment from that Holy one, and know all things necessary to eternal life*, 1 John. 2, 20. As he is the King and Priest of his Church, so he maketh us spiritual Kings and Priests to God his Father: so that his victory and power (as we noted before) is communicated unto us, & being engrafted into him, is made ours.

The Uses are now to be handled as conclusions [Use 1] drawn out of this doctrine. First, this layeth before our eyes, or rather before our hearts, the great dignity of all true Christians, they are victorious conquerors in Christ, and all the wicked are indeed, and shall be manifested at the last day to be their base vassalles and contemptible slaves; yea so is Satan, hell, and death, all which shall be trodden under foot, as dung and dirt in the streets. The godly, that have Christ both dwelling and reigning in them, are with *Abraham* the true heirs of the world, and shall with *Christ their Captain break the wicked into sheards like a potters vessel*, Psal, 2, 9. We see how men admire the proud and haughty of the world, and esteem the ungodly as the great Magnificoes, that may not be contemned or controlled: the poorest and meanest Saint of God, shall in time to come be their Judge, & sit with Christ upon the bench in glory, when they shall stand as their vassals at the bar, and be judged as most wretched caitiffes and malefactors, and receive their wages according to their works. Then they shall say with horror of conscience, We fools thought their life madness, & their end without

honor, but now they are counted among the children of God, and have their portion among his Saints. Hence it is, that the Apostle reproveth the Corinthians that abased and abused their dignity, that did bring their causes to be tried and judged before the wicked, *Do ye not know that the Saints shall judge the world? If then the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters, &c?* 1 Cor. 6. verses 2, 3. This is a great honor vouchsafed to the faithful: no earthly honor can be compared unto it, all temporal glory hath not so much as a show or shadow of it. On the other side, great shall be the dishonor and disgrace, the shame and contempt y^t shall be poured out upon the ungodly, Dan. 12, 2. They have here the riches of the world, the pleasures of this life, the praise of men; they are feared of some, and flattered of others: but when this glory shall pass away as the wind, and fly as an arrow that is shot at a mark, then they shall be arraigned as evil doers, and every servant of God shall tread them under their feet. Then they shall be separated from the presence of God. Then they shall see all the godly whom they have scorned and derided, received into the kingdom of heaven, and themselves shut out of the doors. Then they shall have the continual fellowship of the devil and of his angels in hell fire, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[Use 2] Secondly, we must all be careful to walk worthy of so great a calling. We must be as spiritual Kings, to rule and bear sway over our thoughts, wills, and affections, ouermastering them as much as may be, proclaiming continual war against our corrupt natures, against the devil, and against the world. And verily, he that can bear rule over his own heart, is a true king indeed, and shall surely reign for evermore with Christ in the life to come. He that hath beaten down the kingdom of sin and Satan, and received some measure of grace to reign over himself, hath performed a greater and more glorious work then he that hath subdued a kingdom. For all these enemies of our salvation, be horrible & hideous monsters, and fearful Serpents. Their sting is deadly, their poison is mortal. It is an hard labor to pull out their sting, and take away their poison from them. But they which are carried away with the swinge of their corruptions, as with a violent stream, having blindness & ignorance to reign in their minds, rebellion in their wills, and looseness in their whole life, are not spiritual kings, but base slaves and bondmen. The strong man Satan keepeth the hold of their hearts, and as Lord and King setteth up his scepter there. Wherefore (my brethren) in respect of this our high calling, we must make conscience of every sin. We heard before that we are made the judges of the world. It is a shame for a Judge to be a Thief, that sitteth in judgment to condemn a thief: so is it a shame for us to be given to wickedness, that must judge the wicked world when the just shall appear. A Judge must take heed of those sins in himself, which he must condemn in others, lest it be said unto him, *Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?* Rom. 2, 21, 22. This is that use which the Apostle maketh to the Thessalonians, chap. 1, 10, 11, after he had shown that at the coming of the Lord Jesus in might and majesty, he would be glorious in his Saints, & made marvelous in them that believe, he entreateth that God would make them to walk worthy of their calling. And surely, if we have any the least spark of grace, or any feeling of our natural condition when we were the children of wrath and the fire-brands of hell, it could not but work in us a

marvelous love unto God, a desire to please him, and a delight to bring forth the fruits of righteousness.

Thirdly, our victory in Christ offereth comfort [Use 3] unto us in all troubles, temptations, poverty, and in death it self. We are to arm our selves with this power of Christ against all terrors and fears that seek to dismay us. We are in Christ appointed Kings and Judges over those that trouble us, conquerors over Satan and death. Our fear then is already past, let us lift up our heads, and be of good comfort. This is that which the Apostle is bold to put us in mind of, 1 Cor. 15, 56, 57. *O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory! Now thanks be unto God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* We shall not need to fear the day of judgment, for then our redemption draweth nere. We shall not need to be afraid of the coming of the Judge, for he shall be our Savior. Howsoever therefore we seem base unto the world, and of vile account in the eyes of carnal men, whose portion is in this life, yet we are indeed advanced into the highest honor about him, receiving by our communion and fellowship with him, a communication of his kingly power and glory, to subdue under us the devil and his angels. For, if we fight with him, and under his banner, we cannot lose the field, but shall be assured to reign with him. They then are deceived that think them the scum and off-scouring of the world. This should also persuade all careless and backward persons to embrace true Religion, and give it the chief seat in their hearts, forasmuch as it maketh them of the vesselles of wrath, and vassals of Satan, glorious Kings, and triumphant Conquerors over the powers of darkness. Furthermore, it should encourage the Ministers of the Gospel, and make them glad to labor in preaching the Word, and in winning souls unto God, being set apart by God's mercies, to consecrate men Kings and Priests unto him, which is a great privilege. For they have mighty weapons given them by their captain Christ, to wit, the power of his Spirit, and the vigor of his mighty word, which causeth them to prevail. Therefore, the Lord saith by his Prophet *Hosea*, chap. 6, 5. *I have cut down this people by the Prophets, & slain them by the words of my mouth.* And the Apostle teacheth, 2 Cor. 10, 5, 6, *That the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to cast down holds.* To conclude this use, seeing God hath thus advanced us, let not us disgrace our selves, but maintain our dignity, and adorn our profession, that we may find comfort by it in our chastisements and afflictions.

[*A Star shall come out of Jacob.*] We have seen in the former Doctrine the glory of the Church, that the people of God are set apart by Christ, to be spiritual Kings unto GOD the Father: a dignity given to them by him. Now, before we pass from this place, let us consider of the title that is given unto Christ, where we see he is compared to a Star, and called *a Star that shall come out of Jacob*. This Star we have shown typically to signify Christ, who is called the Light of the world, the Sun of righteousness, the morning star, the day-spring from on high. He is called by this name, and described by this title, First, because he is the fountain of all salvation and comfort. Secondly, to teach that all men by nature walk in darkness, and in the shadow of death. Thirdly, because he will give those that are his, y^e light of knowledge in this life, and the light of perfect glory in the life to come, by which they shall be as stars of heaven, and shine in the firmament afterward.

Heereby we learn, that Christ Jesus is as the morning star unto us, bestowing upon his people two excellent privileges & blessings; First, he riseth up as a bright star in our hearts, casting from the the thick clouds of blindness, and taking away the dark mists of ignorance, enlightening them with the true saving knowledge of God, sufficient for salvation, begun here in this life, but shall be perfected in the life to come. Secondly, he will bestow upon us the light of perfect glory in the kingdom of his Father, by y^e which we shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars forever & ever. These are two unspeakable mercies, vnprizable, unmatchable, to be delivered out of the kingdom of ignorance, and to be brought into the kingdom of light; to be glorified in heaven, and to be made partakers of eternal life. So then, we see by this comparison, that by Christ we have the light of understanding, & shall have the glory of immortality to know God even as we are known. Touching the first clause, that he will manifest all the mysteries of God unto his Church, the Prophet *Joel* foretellet, chap. 2, 28, *That he will pour out of his Spirit upon all flesh, their sons & daughters shall prophesy, their old men shall dream dreams, and their young men shall see visions, they shall be all taught of God, and they shall know him from the least to the greatest.* So our Savior saith to his Disciples, *Math. 13, 12. To you it is given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. Now (saith the Apostle) we see as in a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know as I am known.* 1 Cor. 13, 12. Touching the second clause, that the faithful shall receive the light of perfect glory after this life, the Prophet *Daniel* witnesseth, *That they which be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many unto righteousness, shall shine as the stars forever and ever.*•an. 12, 3. The performance hereof is remembered, where thousand thousands out of every nation, kindred, and tongue, praise the Lamb, for that he hath made them. Kings and Priests to reign over the earth.

[Reason 1] The truth of all this will yet better appear unto us, if we mark the Reasons. First, Christ hath received a fullness of the Spirit and graces without measure, that they might flow unto all his members, who receive from him grace for grace, sufficient for their places in the Church here, and for their salvation afterward. *For in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, as a Fountain that is without bottom, which can never be drawn dry.* Col. 2, 3. Therefore the Evangelist saith, *That of his fullness we all receive, and grace for grace.* John 1, 16. So then Christ is full of heavenly graces, and spiritual gifts, that we might be anointed by him, and receive our portion frō him. For he obtained them, not to keep them to himself, or to cover them under a bushel, but to bestow them upon his Church So long as he is full, we need not fear to be empty, so long as he is stored, we cannot be destitute. If once we depart from him, it is in vain to look for one drop elsewhere.

Secondly, he hath obtained by prayer of [Reason 2] his Father (who can deny him nothing) that from him we should receive the light of glory, because as he is joined to the Father, and one with him so we shall be joined to him & receive of his glory. Here we know in part, and prophesy in part, and all good things are imperfect: but *when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part and imperfect shall be done away,* 1 Cor. 13, 10: *for as he being Mediator between God and man hath received of the Father, so shall we receive of the Father being in him.* This he speaketh to his Father, John. 17.22, 23. *The glory which thou gavest me, I have given thē, that they may be one as we are one I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that*

the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Christ is the band or knot of the union between God and us: for in him the Mediator, heaven and earth is as it were joined together; which otherwise could not be, So then, when he shall appear, we shall appear with him, clothed with righteousness, and clothed with his glory, which he also received to make us partakers of.

Thirdly, such as keep his words, they love [Reason 3] Christ; and they that love Christ, are beloved of him and of his Father, so that he will show himself unto them, and withhold no good thing from them. This Christ our Savior setteth down, John 14, 21.

The uses of this title given to Christ, being [Use 1] called the star of *Jacob*, are diverse. First, this teacheth us that they have no property nor interest in this Star, either touching the light of saving knowledge, or the brightness of heavenly glory, that live in blindness and ignorance, that follow the works of darkness, delight in sinful pleasures, and lead a loose and lewd life. If we have no light of Christ shining in our hearts, & scattering the blackness of darkness from our souls, and yet look to receive any comfort or refreshing from him, when this Sun of righteousness shall appear in glory, we are utterly deceived, and shall be disappointed of our hope. Let us not look for any consolation from him, but woe and confusion of faces. This our Savior teacheth in the Gospel, John 3, 19. *This is the condemnation, that light came into the world and men loved darkness rather than that light, because their deeds were evil.* It must needs be a strange darkness that cannot be driven away by the beams of this bright shining. It must be a very gross and willful blindness, where the continual light of the Gospel proceeding from the loving face of Christ the Sun of righteousness, hath wrought no knowledge nor profit in the ways of godliness. The Apostle in this respect, saith, *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the mind, that is, of the Infidels, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, which is the Image of God, should not shine unto them.* Christ the Sun of righteousness hath appeared, and shined gloriously in this part of the earth; and yet (alas) how many are there stark blind, and willingly blind, even under the ministry of the most painful servants of God, that labor in the Lord's vineyard, and spend their strength to give light to others? If a man hearing the voice of a trumpet, yet will stop his ears, or having the light of the day, yet will shut fast his eyes, this is a willful ignorance, and a presumptuous sin that shall increase their judgment and condemnation. This doth our Savior teach, John 15, 12. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they should not have had sin: but now have they no cloak for their sin.* The Prophets prophesying of the times of the Gospel, and of the people that should believe in Christ, declare (as we noted before) that God would pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, that all should be taught of God, that the earth should be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters do cover the sea. What shall we say of these things? The palpable ignorance and horrible blindness which is seen in the world, showeth plainly, that we are not that people. The Prophet telleth us what readiness and forwardness should be in men to come into God's house for increase of knowledge, to be instructed in his will, and to walk in his ways, that they should say one to another, *Up, let us go and pray before the Lord, let us seek the Lord of Hosts, and I will go also.* Zach. 8, 21. We are far from this zeal, and from encouraging one another in good things, and therefore the blessings of God do stand far from us also. So then, we see such as live in ignorance and sin,

are darkness, and have no communion with Christ; for what fellowship can there be between light and darkness?

[Use 2] Secondly, we must all have a special care that this Star may rise in our hearts, & that the Sun of righteousness may rejoice and refresh us. Now the right way to have him with a gracious aspect to shine upon us, is for us to regard and give heed to the lesser lights, the candle-lights, or star-lights, which are fore-runners of this star, to wit, the light of the Prophets, of the Apostles, and other servants of God, which are appointed to direct us in the course of our life, and to point out unto us this light. So the Apostle saith, *Ye have a sure word of the Prophets, unto which ye shall do well to give heed as unto a light that shineth in dark places, until the day dawn, and the Day-star arise in your hearts*, 2 Pet. 1, 19. And our Savior calleth his Disciples the light of the world, and a City set upon an hill. *John the Baptist* was a burning and a shining Candle, John 5, 35. They that will not follow these lights, nor seek to be guided by these stars, shall never feel the comfort of this Star of *Jacob*. So thē, these places of the world, where those lesser lights have no entertainment, or where by the malice of the people they are removed, or their lights put out, are most wretched and miserable. The people are said in the Prophet to have walked in darkness, Isaiah 9, 2. Math. 4, 13. and to have dwelled in the land of the shadow of death, before these lights shined on them. So long as Israel was without a preaching Priesthood to deliver unto them the Law of God, so long they were without God and his word, 2 Chron. 15, 3. So long as they wanted these Stewards of the Lord's house, to give them their portion of meat in due season, they endured a grievous famine of the soul, and perished for want of food. It standeth us therefore upon, to rejoice in these lights, and to be glad when these stars begin to shine among us, they are the joy and solace of the earth, howsoever they be basely esteemed off in the world, and reproached by them that love darkness more then light, because their ways are evil, John 3, 20, 21: for every man that evil doth, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd; but he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds might be made manifest, that they are wrought according to God. The Galatians did so affect *Paul*, that they would have pulled out both their lights (to wit) their eyes to do him good, Gal. 4, 15. But the practice of our times, and the lamentable experience of our days, showeth the contrary; men seek by all ways and devices they can, to dim and darken these lights, by greeuing and vexing them, by disgracing and slandering them, by molesting and troubling of them, by discouraging and discountenancing of them, that so they might hinder the building of the Lord's house. If these men were asked the question, whether they would have Christ shine in their hearts, and arise as a bright star, to scatter the cloudy mists of their unbelieving minds, no doubt they would answer, it is their desire, and that they find more use of the light of Christ in their souls, then of the shining of the Sun in the Firmament; and yet so long as they do not use those means whereby the beams of this Star of *Jacob* may shine upon them, they make it manifest, they regard not the Star it self. And therefore let no man flatter himself, that he regardeth the Gospel, or Christ the bringer of the glad tidings of salvation, when they will not open their ears to the Gospel preached, by such as Christ hath appointed over us.

[Use 3] Lastly, we must take heed we be not deceived in judging of this light. For many imagine they have the light of this Sun of righteousness, and of this star of *Jacob*, whē they have but a false light. True it is, Christ is in himself, & of himself always a light, howsoever he be received: albeit men shut their eyes, and will not see his brightness, yet remaineth he the light of the world. For the Sun shineth in the firmament, howsoever some are blind, and cannot see, and others might see, yet make themselves blind. Therefore the Prophet *I say* saith, chap. 60.1, 2, 19. *Arise, O Jerusalem; be bright, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee: thou shalt have no more Sun to shine by day, neither shall the brightness of the Moon shine unto thee: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy sorrow shall be ended.* When the Sun which is called the eye of the world, and is the light of the day, riseth upon us, and cometh toward us, it doth quicken and rejoice us, it causeth life & fruit to appear in those creatures which seemed to be dead & dry before: so if this Day-star do truly rise up in our hearts, it will not only enlighten our understanding, but so heat our frozen and dead hearts, as that it will put the life of righteousness into us, and make us walk as children of light, that need not be ashamed who mark their steps and behold their ways. Therefore the Apostle speaketh to everyone of us, that *considering the season, it is now time that we should arise from sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed it: the night is past, & the day is at hand, let us therefore cast away the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light, walking honestly as in the day, not in gluttony and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying*, Rom. 13, 11, 12. We have here a notable direction how to know whether this star be risen upon us or not. If he have wrought these effects & fruits in us, if by the bright beams of his Spirit, & sweet influence of his grace, he hath cast out of our minds the dark clouds of ignorance and blindness, and caused us to see what the acceptable will of God is, if he have sanctified us by the holy Ghost, whereby the kingdom of sin is every day more and more suppressed, and we reformed according to the Image of God, to serve him in holiness & true righteousness; if these things be in some measure in us, we may be well assured, that this star of *Jacob* hath shined upon us. But if these things be not wrought and effected in us, but that we remain still in our sins and ignorances, we have no part in Christ, we have no portion in this Sun of righteousness. He hath never entered into our hearts, his beams of grace and mercy have never shined upon us, we are still holden under the dominion of darkness, and in the condemnation of him who is the Prince of darkness, to wit, the devil. Therefore the Apostle exhorteth all of us, *Awake thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light: walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.* Ephes chapt. 5, verse 14. And the same Apostle in another place saith, *If any man be in Christ he is a new creature*, 2 Cor. 5, 17. *If ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, cast off the old man which is corrupt, and put on the new man which after God is created unto righteousness and true holiness.* Eph 4, 21, 22. Let us all remember this truth, and no more deceive our own souls in persuading our selves to be in Christ, when as yet we never tasted of his Spirit, nor were made partakers of his heavenly graces.

[Verse 20. *And when he looked on Amalek, he uttered his Parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the Nations, &c.*] Hitherto we have spoken of the Prophecy of *Balaam* against the Moabites:

now followeth his prophesy against the Amalekites in these words, which is the fifth in number, and the second among them that concern the heathen that were not of Israel; wherein we have already seen in what sense the Amalekites are called the first of the Nations, not that simply they were first of all people, for they came of *Esau*, as *Moses* witnesseth, Gen. 36, 16: but because they were the first that fought against Israel, after they were come out of the Land of Egypt, & therefore should be themselves destroyed. In setting down this practice of y^e Amalekites, we find it warranted, that wars in the world have been ancient among men. To gather armies, and to muster men to battle, is no new device, but an old and ancient practice among the sons of men. In the tenth chapter of the book of Genesis, verse 9, *Nimrod* began to be mighty upon the earth, and is said to be a mighty hunter before the Lord the beginning of his kingdom was *Babel*. And in the 14, chap. we have mention of two armies, one raised by *Chedor-laomer* and his confederates the other by the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrhah; these rebelling, the other punishing their rebellion, between whom was a cruel battle fought. This we see in the sons of *Jacob*, raising a force against the Sheehemites, under the conduct of *Simeon* & *Levi*, who were the firebrands of war, and the trumpets of sedition; they came upon them on a sudden, and slew all the maies among them, and after this violence offered unto their persons, they spoiled the City. We shall not need to stand further upon this point, the books of *Joshua* & of *Judges*, the books of the Kings and of the Chronicles, together with lamentable experience of all ages and times, confirm this to have been a common practice among men of old, to raise war one against another, and to try their causes and quarrels by the dint of the sword.

The Reasons hereof are not hard to find. [Reason 1] For first, howsoever men are carried headlong with rage and revenge one against another, yet the devil is the bellows to kindle the coals, who was a murderer and a man-slayer from the beginning, as our Savior speaketh unto the Jews, John 8, 44. *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he hath been a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.* This he declareth to the Church of the *Smyrnians*, *That it should come to pass, that the devil shall cast some of them into prison*, Reu. 2, 10: and afterward, chap. 12, 17, it is said, *The dragon was wrath with the woman, & went and made war with the remnant of her seed which keep the Commandments of God.* This is it that *Michaiah* spake to *Ahab*, *Who shall entice Ahab that he may go and fall at Ramoth Gilead? Then there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him*, 1 Kings 22, 20. Seeing then the devil is the stirrer of division, and the kindler of contention between man and man, and between kingdom and kingdom, no marvel if waging of war, & effusion of blood be derived from him, as frō the principal and chief cause.

Secondly, sin is so ugly a monster, that it [Reason 2] hath separated us from God, and disordered all the affections of men, and made them envious, cruel, bloody, covetous, ambitious, and treacherous one against another: as great love as among Wolves, as great mercy as among Lions. This the Apostle setteth down, Titus 3, 3. And to the very self same purpose the Apostle *James* speaketh in the fourth chapter, verse 1. *From whence are wars and contentions among you? Are they not hence, even of your pleasures that fight in your members?* By the law of creation we were created to abide in a fellowship with God, and in an union one with another. But when sin brake in, we fell from God, and one from another, into all misery.

Thirdly, the wise God disposeth all things [Reason 3] by his providence, and turneth the actions of men to set forth his glory, the glory of his mercy in preserving of the good, and the glory of his justice in overthrowing of the ungodly. True it is, among all the works of men, nothing seemeth so vnbrideled and unlimited as war: yet it is ordered and determined of God, so that not a Sparrow falleth unto the ground without the will of our heavenly Father. This is noted in the holy history touching the rough answer of *Rehoboam*, whereby the ten Tribes revolted from the house of *David*, and bloody wars continued between them: where it is said, *It was the ordinance of God, that the Lord might perform his saying which he had spoken by the Prophets*, 2 Chron. 10, 15. and 11, 1. So the people are provoked both to praise the Lord for the avenging of the cause of his servants, by destroying their enemies, and preserving them alive, Judge. 5, 2, 21. and to acknowledge his justice in overthrowing and consuming all their adversaries, Josh. 1, 5. Numb. 31, 1, 2. insomuch that there was no man able to withstand them.

The uses are now to be made of this Doctrine. [Use 1] First, seeing wars carry an ancient stamp upon them, that in all times man hath risen against man, nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and as mighty hunters, have chased and pursued one another to death: let us not marvel when we hear of wars, and of rumors of wars, nor be dismayed when we perceive people in fury carried like wild beasts one against another; these things should not seem strange unto us, neither need we to admire them as y^e wonders of the world. Rather it behooveth us to enter into this meditation, to consider that iniquity doth abound, & that the charity of many waxeth cold. For the more these stirs, tumults, and insurrections do increase & gather strength, the more doth charity decay, & the fruits of love languish and pine away among us, and the more ought we to be prepared for the approaching of the second coming of Christ to judgment. Then will he make an end of all division and contention that are now sorife and common in the world.

Secondly, seeing the mischief of war hath [Use 2] been from old, not lately bred as a new birth, but the child of former times, say not the old times are better then these, grow not wanton & weary of things present, to loathe the blessings we do enjoy, as the manner of many men is. We complain that we are fallen into evil times, we praise the days that are past, & consider not we murmur against God, who hath made all things good, & governeth all things well. Such is the impatiency of men at the feeling of present calamities, that they are ready to break out into a mutiny and murmuring against him, upon whom they lay the cause of heavy and hard times. The present state of things is grievous, because present troubles are nearly felt, and former discommodities are forgotten long ago. This we see notably expressed unto us in the example of the Israelites, whose present condition was loathed, and that past was desired: they cried out, the former times are better, would God we were again in the Land of Egypt, where we sate by the flesh-pots, whē we eat bread our bellies full, Exod. 16; 3. Numb. 26, 3, and 11, 5, & 21, 5: we remember the fish that we did eat for naught, the Cucumbers, the Pepons, the Leekes, the Onyons, and the Garlike. But they had forgotten the fiery furnace, and making of Brick, they had forgotten the drowning of their Infants, and the hard task-masters that were set over thē, they remembered not their service & sore labor with all manner of burdens, and bondage, and cruelty, insomuch that

they uttered many sighs and groans, & grew weary of their lives. And thus it is with many of us, though former times were more lamentable, yet the present are more loathed. How many are there that commend the days already past, and magnify the times of the forefathers? then all things were cheap, then all things were plentiful, now all these are dear and hard to come by. These are like those Idolaters that *Jeremiah* complaineth of in his prophesy, that said, *We will burn Incense to the host of heaven, as we have done, we and our fathers, for then had we plenty of victuals, & were well, & felt none evil: but since we left off to burn Incense to the heavenly bodies, and to pour out drink-offerings unto them, we have had scarcenes of all things, and have been consumed by the sword, and by the famine* *Jeremiah* 44, verse. 17, 18. Thus do many of the men of our times; they esteem religion by the back and belly, and measure the truth of GOD by the line of their own making, to wit, by feeding and filling of the body, But we must consider, that plenty and dearth, war and peace, sickness and health, are sent of God, and acknowledge them to be his works, who is constrained for the abuse of his blessings, and the contempt of his word to take them from us, and to scourge us with his rods to bring us to repentance. This is that use which *Solomon* teacheth in his *Ecclesiastes*, chapter 7, 11, 12. *Be not thou of an hasty spirit, to be angry, for anger resteth in the bosom of fools: Say not thou, why is it that the former days were better then these? For thou shouldst not enquire wisely of this thing.* What sins break out in these last days, that were not in the former? Were not hatred, malice, envy, murder, debate, whoredom, adultery, idolatry, sedition, covetousness, pride, treason, and such devilish practices and inventions in all ages from the beginning? When *Adam* had but two sons borne unto him, was not one of them a murderer? Did not *Cain* hate his brother and slay him? And did not his posterity fill up the measure of their sins, and make the earth to stink with their unsavory works of darkness in the nostrils of God, that he was constrained to wash them away with an universal flood? We must therefore search into the true causes of evils, and not falsely accuse the times, but lay the fault upon them that live in the times. If we would grow better, the times also would become much better. But so long as men's manners are deformed, the times cannot be reformed and amended. Thus then we see, that the confusion of war hath been of old, and therefore they no better; so that it behooveth us to be contented with those things which presently we enjoy, and not to break out blasphemously against God, and ignorantly against the times.

[Use 3] Lastly, seeing the rage of men to join in battle, & meet in hostile manner in the field hath been of great antiquity, let us all consider, that as wars have been of old, so they may come again we know not how soon. Though we seem now to live secure without danger of enemies, or fear of war, yet the miseries of a cruel war, and the looseness of a secure peace, may suddenly meet together. It standeth us in hand to give GOD the praise, that hath sent us peace, and made us to dwell in safety. How many of our brethren do see, and have seen many pitiful spectacles, & felt many woeful mischiefs this way? The butchering of men, the ryoting with women, the ruining of families and noble houses, & the utter sacking of Cities and Kingdoms? Let not us promise to our selves any security, let us not dream of perpetual peace & tranquility, and so lull our selves asleep with deceitful hope. There is nothing that hath been, that may not be again. There is a time to love, and a time to hate: a time of war, and a time of peace. If God send this scourge among us, the Cities full of people are made

solitary, being quickly wasted and made desolate. Let us be thankful to God for the days of our peace, and pray to him to give us grace to use our peace aright, lest he draw the glittering sword vpō us. For if he bring the sword upon a Land, and say, *Sword, go through the Land, and destroy both man and beast out of it*, Ezek. 14, 17. (as we, our fathers, and our posterity, are at his commandment) it is nothing for him to make havoc among us, and to work out a plentiful desolation.

[*Amalek was the first of the Nations, but his latter end shall come to destruction.*] We have spoken already of the former part of these words touching the Amalekites invading of Israel, and making war against them, the history whereof we read in the book of Exodus, chap. 17, verse 16. Now we are to consider the latter part, wherein we may behold the recompense of their work, and how God retailleth the invasion of his people. They sought to destroy Israel, themselves shall be brought to destruction. They drew the sword, themselves are threatened to perish with the sword. That which themselves work, they are constrained to suffer at the hands of other: so that with the same that they do offend, they are punished.

From hence we learn, that God oftentimes plagueth men in those things and by those things wherein they have sinned and offended. God avengeth and punisheth in the same kind and measure as men provoke him. We have a notable example hereof in *Adoni-bezek*, Judge. 1, 6, a proud, insolent, and bloody minded man, he is served as he served others, he had the thumbs of his hands, and of his feet cut off, as he had served the seventy kings which he took in battle. This it is which *Samuel* said to *Agag* one of the Kings of these Amalekites that now we speak of 1 Sam. 15, 33. *As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among other women, and so he hewed him in pieces before the Lord.* *David* defiled his neighbors wife, the hand of God did so follow him, that his own wives were defiled by his own son in the sight of all Israel, 2 Sam. 12, 11. We read how *Ahab* shed *Naboth's* blood to obtain his vineyard, which he refused to sel unto him: but the Prophet was sent unto him with an heavy message, saying; *Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick even thy blood also*, 1 Kings 21, 19, 23. and also of *Jezebel* the worker of all this mischief, spake the Lord, saying; *The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Izreel.* He slew *Naboth's* children, & his own sons were slain. He took possession of the vineyard, but he lost his own kingdom. *The wicked man* (saith *David* in the Psalms) *hath made a pit, and digged it for his brother, and is fallen into it himself, he prepared a sword to kill his neighbor, and it entered into his own heart*, Psal. 7, 13, 15. So the Prophet speaking of *Babel*, the ancient enemy of the Church, denounceth this just retribution of God, *Woe to thee that spoilest, and wast not spoiled: and dost wickedly, and they did not wickedly against thee: when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled, when thou shalt make an end of doing wickedly, they shall do wickedly against thee*, Isaiah 33, 1. And this truth is verified, not only by these examples, but by continual experience. The extortioner and cruel dealing man is oftentimes in his posterity eaten out & consumed by the extortioner. Psal. 109, 13. The Gamester making game his delight, and his pleasure his God, is snared in his own ways, so that gaming is his ruin. The drunkard many times perisheth in his drunkenness, and is brought to an untimely death, sometimes by the immediate hand of God, sometimes by dropsies and other diseases. The unjust and wrongful dealer hath that which he devoured, drawn out of his bowels, and is made by the hand of

God to vomit it up again The covetous man that joineth house to house, & land to land, that heapeth up living and riches by fraud and oppression to his destruction, is made as a sponge, which when it is full, and hath soaked up what it can, is crushed and wrung out to nothing. The unclean liver, and filthy fornicator, hath his strength consumed, his substance wasted, his flesh eaten, and the marks of his beastly uncleanness set upon him by the revenging hand of God, to his perpetual shame, infamy, reproach, and confusion. The like we might say in all other sins, God doth most commonly make every man's sin his bane, his poison, his fall, his woe, his destruction and utter ruin, verifying that which *Solomon* speaketh, Prov. 1, 31, and 26, 27. *They shall eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices: he that digs a pit shall fall therein, and he that rolleth a stone, it returns upon him.*

The Reasons follow. First, God is a just [Reason 1] God, he is the common Judge, even the Judge of all the world, who hath said, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay*, and therefore his justice doth effect it, and bring it to pass. This the Apostle declareth, *It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you*, 2. Thess. 1, 6. So the Prophet teacheth, Hab. 1, 13. *That he is of pure eyes, and cannot see evil, nor behold wickedness to allow or approve it.*

Secondly, it is most agreeable to the precise [Reason 2] rule of equity, that there should be a proportion between the sin and the punishment, that everyone should receive like for like, and drink such as he hath brewed. God commandeth it to the Magistrate, as a law in his proceedings, that there should be an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, hand should go for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe, and life for life. If God impose this upon Magistrates, much more will he himself do it. He that requireth equity in Judges and Magistrates, will much more show himself just and equal. This is it which the Lord enjoineth touching spiritual Babylon, Revel. 18, 6, and 16, 5, 6, and 13, 10. *Reward her as she rewardeth you, and give her double according to her works: and in the cup that she hath filled to you, fill her double. &c.* So then, whether we consider the justice of God, or the rule of equity, we see that God punisheth as man sinneth, he rewardeth according to the manner and measure of his offense.

The uses follow to be considered. Will [Use 1] God thus repay and retaile? Then let everyone look to have his sin brought upon his own head, and to be rewarded fully, according to his own works. The equity of this is acknowledged of *Job*, chap. 31, 9, 10. *If my heart have been deceived by a woman, or if I had laid wait at the door of my neighbor, let my wife grind to another, and let other men bow down upon her.* The like we may say of all other sins; look not to escape the hand of God, but fear to commit sin being thus punished. Hast thou been a bloody beast? look for blood again. Hast thou been cruel? Cruelty & extortion shall both wring and waste thee. He that smiteth with the sword, shall perish with the sword: there shall be judgment merciless, to them that are without mercy. On the other side, in doing good, and exercising love to others, look for love and good from God and man. This made *Nehemiah* pray to God to remember him in kindness, according to all that he had done to his people. Neh. 5, 19. This made the Apostle crave mercy at y^e hands of the merciful God for *Onesiphorus*, because he shown mercy unto him, and refreshed him in his necessity, 2 Tim. chap. 1, verse 16. The widow of *Sarepta*, sustaining the Prophet, & relieving him with part of that poor pittance

that was left her, received an ample recompense, during the time of the famine to her and her son, being miraculously sustained, 1. Kings 17, 14. *Obadiah* fed an hundred Prophets of the Lord, and hid them in caves from the wrath of *Jezebel*, the Lord shown mercy unto him again, so that he was the first that had the Prophet directed unto him to reveal the removing of the present judgment from the land. So then the consideration of this dealing of God against sinners, is a terror to the ungodly, teaching us to avoid sin, and the dangerous society of sinful men, lest partaking of their sins, we partake also with them in the punishment, *Ierem.* 51, 6. And likewise serveth as a great comfort to the godly, assuring them to find the fruit of their love, and to receive mercy at his hands, who leaveth not a morsel of bread, and a cup of cold water, given in faith out of an heart unfeigned, unrewarded.

Secondly, it justifieth GOD in his actions, [Use 2] and proveth that there is no iniquity with our God. This doth *Elihu* set down upon this consideration, *He will render unto man according to his work, and cause everyone to find according to his way. And certainly, God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment,* Job 34, 11, 12. So then, the Lord bringeth his judgments in this manner to pass, that the mouth of the wicked should be compelled to justify God, and to condemn himself, when he receiveth measure for measure, as he hath done. When *Judah* had overcome *Adonibezek*, and had cut off the thumbs of his hands and feet, he did acknowledge it to be just, and that the hand of God had found him out, and repaid him according to his deserts; for (saith he) *Seventy Kings having the thumbs of their hands and feet cut off, gathered bread under my table: as I have done, so GOD hath rewarded me:* so they brought him to *Jerusalem*, and there he died, *Judge.* 1, 7. GOD suffereth them long to escape, and to run on in their evil actions, but in the end he repayeth them; and rather in their own kind, then in another, that it might appear to be his handy work, and not a matter that fell out by chance or casualty upon them, So doth the Church rejoice, that the Lord had done unto them as they thought and intended to do unto the Church.

[Use 3] Thirdly, we are in this respect and consideration, to wait for the performance of this promise, and to look with faith and patience for the justice of GOD in recompensing and rewarding the wicked, with the like to fall upon themselves wherewith they have plagued his people. We see this duty performed by the servants of GOD in the Prophet *Isaiah* before remembered: for having declared that the spoyler shall be spoiled, and the destroyer shall be destroyed, they say, *O Lord have mercy upon us, we have waited for thee: be thou, which wast their arm in the morning, our help also in time of trouble,* *Isaiah* 33, 2. To the same purpose speaketh the Church in the Psalm, *O daughter of Babel, worthy to be destroyed, blessed shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us: blessed shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy children against the stones,* *Psal.* 137, 8, 9. Let this duty be practiced and performed of everyone of us: although we see the wicked proceed and go forward in his wickedness, as if he had made a league with death, and a covenant with hell, yet it behooveth us to possess our souls with patience: and albeit he spread himself like a green Bay tree, yet in the end his leaves shall wither, his branches shall be cut down, and his root shall rot; GOD will draw him forth in his good time unto judgment, and proportion his plagues and punishment according to his sins.

Lastly, this doctrine ought to warn us to [Use 4] take heed that we abuse not any of God's blessings, or any of his creatures to any sin or excess, seeing GOD hath threatened to turn them to our curse and confusion; so that wherein soever hath been our wickedness, therein also shall be our woe: our malice shall turn to our own mischief, our uncleanness shall fall out to be our own undoing. This the wiseman teacheth, that because of the *whoorish woman, a man is brought to a morsel of bread, and such an one will hunt for the precious life of a man*, Pro. 6, 26. So such as delight to follow drunkenness, it turneth to their destructiō, (for y^e very creatures groan & travel as it were in pain to be delivered from this bondage of corruption, in which they are after a sort holden for a time, and do cry out unto God for vengeance against them,) according to y^e saying of Solomon, Prov. 23, 29, 30. *To whom is woe? to whom is sorrow? to whom is strife? to whō is murmuring? to whom are wounds without cause? and to whom is the redness of the eyes? Even to them that tarry long at the wine, to them that go and seek mixed wine.* Wherefore let us use the creatures of God aright, that they may be serviceable and comfortable unto us, and that they may help to further and increase our blessedness, which they will do if they be well used. This our Savior teacheth his Disciples, Math. chap. 13, 16. *Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.* Every gift and creature of God that thou abusest, shall further thy condemnation, and bring upon thy head his just judgment. Every instrument of thy body, and power of thy soul that thou hast abused to sin, shall increase thy woe and torment, as appeareth in the example of the rich man.

[Verse 22. *And he looked on the Kenites, and said, Strong is thy dwelling place, and put thy nest in the rock: nevertheless, the Kenite shall be spoiled, &c.*] In these words going before, we heard of Balaam's prophesy against the Amalekites. Here Moses setteth down his prophesy against the Kenites; which is the sixth in number, and the third among those that are denounced against the unbelievers and idolatrous nations. Concerning the Kenites, we have spoken sufficiently before, which were the posterity of *Jethro*, the father in law of *Moses*, and these dwelled among the *Amalekites*, before they departed from them, as appeareth, 1. Sam. 15, 16, so that they obtained mercy, and were not destroyed, because they shown mercy unto the children of *Israel*, when they came up from *Egypt*. The scope of this prophesy is to declare, that howsoever these *Kenites* thought they dwelled safely, and had their seat as it were a nest made in a strong rock, that might be assaulted, but not subdued; besieged, but not overcome; yet, when they promised to themselves the surest peace, and greatest security, destruction should come suddenly like a whirlwind, and carry them away. From hence we learn, that the judgments of GOD upon secure and sinful persons, do many times come suddenly. Howsoever the Lord be a God of patience, and beareth with the vessels of wrath, appointed to destruction, yet when men think themselves free and far from all danger, judgment lighteth on them, increased by the speediness of the execution. This we see in sundry examples of God's proceedings against the ungodly. The *Egyptians* that pursued after the *Israelites* to the midst of the sea, *were suddenly drowned, the waters covered them, their chariots failed them, the Lord fought against them*, Exod. 14, 26. Whiles *Balteshazzar* made his feasts, drank wine in all excess, and praised his gods of gold and silver, at the same hour appeared fingers of a man's hand, writing on the plaster of the wall, foretelling his final confusion, which immediately after followed, *Dan. 5, 5, 30*. When *Pharaoh* refused to let the

people go, as God commanded and Moses required of him, & had been scourged by many plagues, he, his Princes, his people, and whole land; yet they hardened their hearts, and walked stubbornly against him: suddenly at midnight the Lord smote all the first borne in the land of *Egypt*, from the first borne of *Pharaoh* that sate on his throne, unto the first borne of the captive that was in prison, & all the first borne of beasts, *Exod.* 12, 29. Thus Christ describeth his second coming, that it shall be sudden, speedy, and at unawares, *Math.* 24, 37. So in *Lots* time, *They were given to lust of the flesh, to pride of life, to fullness of bread, to abundance of idleness to contempt of the poor;* *Ezek.* 16, 49: these were the chief and capital sins of the *Sodomites*, others followed and accompanied them, and behold suddenly, the Lord rained down fire and brimstone from heaven, which was their portion, and consumed them, *Gen.* 19, 24. Such shall the coming of Christ to judgment be, when men say, peace, peace; safety, safety, and think not of any danger, sudden destruction *shall come upon them as a thief in the night, &c.* *1. Thess.* 5, 2, 3.

[Reason 1] The reasons for further confirmation of this truth do follow. For first, God is the mighty *Jehovah*, that knoweth all the ways and works of his enemies, which labor in the fire, and conspire in vain against God & his people. Howsoever the ungodly think him to be weak and to want strength, or to be far from them, & not to see their dealings, yet by woeful experience they shall find the power of his hand. This is the reason urged by *Moses* in his song, declaring that they sanke as a stone, and were consumed as stubble; he giveth this reason, *The Lord is a man of war, his Name is Jehovah,* *Exod.* 15, 3. The world hath had many worthies & men of war excelling in might, & glorious in victories; but the Lord passeth them all, whose Name is eternal, and almighty, able to execute all his judgments at his own pleasure. His power is not limited & stinted: there is no power on earth, but that which is received of him, who bringeth all his purposes to pass, and his counsels take effect.

Secondly, the ungodly are of a dead heart, [Reason 2] and despise the warning given unto them of God: they have no desire or affection to anything but the pleasures and profits of this life. This is the reason, why the flood was brought upon the old world, and wherefore destruction shall come upon this old world at the coming of Christ, because albeit they were warned by the preaching of *Noah*, yet they were drowned in the delights of the flesh, and never turned to the Lord till the flood came, *Mat.* 24. Deadnesse of heart, & contempt of the word are fearful sins in the former age, & in these times wherein we live. Such men make but a mock in their hearts of all that God promiseth or threateneth, saying to themselves, where is the promise of his coming? *2, Pet.* 3: and thereupon oppress their brethren, & rage against God and his people, use outrageous & lewd dealings, follow every motion of sin, & break out into all enormities.

Thes uses are in the next place to be handled. [Use 1] First, we may truly conclude, that they are blessed that think of the day of their reckoning, and of the time of the account that they must give of their stewardship, and so prepare their garments, that they be not found naked. We see how men in danger, as in a fire coming in the silence of the night, are glad to catch anything to cover and hide themselves: so must we be clothed with Christ, and put on his righteousness. There fore our Savior Christ saith, *Who is a faithful steward and wise, whom the*

master shall make ruler over his household? Math. 24, 44, 46. And to the same purpose he speaketh in the Revelation of *John, Revel.* 16, 15. There is no way for the ungodly to escape. When a thief, having a purpose to do a mischief, cometh upon an house in the night when all be asleep, and so taketh them unprepared and unprofitable, being in bed and destitute of all help, they cannot escape or shift themselves out of the way. There can be no preventing of this fearful and sudden destruction, by foreseeing the appointed time, and by determining of the season beforehand, so as we may live as we list until that time: *For as the lightning cometh out of the East, and is seen into the West, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be, Math. 24, 27.* So then, we may see the blessed estate and condition of all such as wisely consider the sudden coming of God's judgments, and the falling of men into them as a bird into a snare, being thereby made circumspect and wise, to prevent a mischief before they fall into it. On the other side, we may conclude, the cursed and wretched estate of all ungodly and wicked men, they are suddenly taken as in a net, and horribly consumed. They fall into the pit, before they dreamed of any danger. They feel their own misery to be without redemption, before they would see it to prevent it. Happy are they that see the plague coming, and do avoid it.

[Use 2] Secondly, it is our duty to awake out of sin, & to be watchful over our own souls; we must not sleep in sin, nor give our selves to security, but be careful and circumspect that we be not suddenly overtaken. We ought always to be occupied in the works of godliness, and in the duties of our calling, to perform them as in the sight of God; to the end, that being always ready, we should not fear his coming. This is the charge that Christ giveth us, to be always ready, *Math. 24, 44. Luke 12, 35.* To this purpose doth he give this exhortation, that seeing we know not when the Son of man will come, whether at even or midnight, at the cock crowing, or in the dawning, we should carefully watch, & pray continually; *Mar. 13, 35, 36, 37. Luke 21, 36.* And y^e which Christ speaketh of the end of the world, must be considered of us touching the end of our own days, and must teach us so to number up our times, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom, that we should have our loins girt, and as it were our staves in our hands, that every hour we may look for our Lord's coming. The Lord would have us know his first coming, because the knowledge thereof was profitable and necessary, and therefore he reproveth the Jews, that they knew not the time of their visitation, *Luke 19, 45.* But his second coming he hath hid from us, as unnecessary and unprofitable; nay, as dangerous and hurtful unto us, lest we should say with the evil servant: My master doth defer his coming, and thereupon begin to smite our fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken: whereas the Master of that servant will come in a day when he thinketh not, and at an hour when he is not ware of, and will cut him off, and give him a portion with the unbelievers, The servant that knoweth his Masters will, and prepareth not himself, neither doth according to his will, [Use 3] shall be beaten with many stripes.

Lastly, albeit he be patient, let us not put off from day today the time of our repentance. It is the exhortation of Christ to the Church at *Sardis, Remember how thou hast received and heard, hold fast, & repent, & Reu. 3, 3.* The Prophet denounceth a grievous woe to all them that put away the evil day, that continue still in their wickedness, and think that God's plagues are not at hand. This is the mother of many evils, when a man never considereth of the day of

his death and dissolution, and that the day of his appearing is near, and the time of his answering at hand; he regardeth not what injuries he offereth, he committeth many grievous sins. So then, the consideration of the suddainnesse of God's judgments affordeth a notable use against the drowzie security and profaneness of those that mock and dally with repentance, as if it might be obtained at their own pleasure. These men think it a vain thing to trouble themselves that way, until they be ready to die, and do lie at the very last gasp. These men regard not how they live, so they may have time to call for pardon, and to cry, Lord have mercy upon me. *But understand (O ye foolish men,) that not every one that saith, Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of our Father which is in heaven,* Math. 7, 21.

The judgments of GOD are threatened to come upon thee as a thief, and to sweep thee away suddenly, thou knowest not whether thou shalt have an hour or moment given thee to repent. Thou mayest be smitten with sudden death. When thou risest out of thy bed, thou knowest not whether thou shalt lie down again. When thou liest down in thy bed, thou knowest not what may happen unto thee before it be day. Let God be in our first thoughts in the morning; let him be in our last thoughts in the evening. Let us remember him rising and lying down. Let us call our selves to an account of our doings every day, what evil we have done, what good we have left undone. Let us continually commend our selves, our souls, our bodies, our goods, our brethren into God's hands (as a most faithful keeper) by earnest and faithful prayer; and not go into our beds, as the dog into his kennel, or the swine into his stye, or the Ox unto his stall. Boast not of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth, Pro. 27, 1. Thy self may be dead, thy house fired, thy goods spoiled, thy Children destroyed, and a thousand miseries be multiplied upon thee. And if thy days be prolonged, the longer thou continuest in sin, the harder thou shalt find it to repent. Thy heart is more hardened by custom & continuance. An old ruinous house, the longer it is let run, the more labor, time, and charges it will require in reedifying and repairing. An old disease is more hardly cured. The deeper a nail is driven with the hammer, & the more blows are given it, the harder it is to pluck out again. He that will not be fit today, shall find himself less fit tomorrow, & his heart every day less inclined then other to turn to God, and more and more hardened. Wherefore let us while it is called today, repent and be reconciled to God, that when his judgments come suddenly, y^e destroyer may pass over us, and we remain safe under the shadow of the Almighty.

23 Again, he uttered his Parable, and said; Alas, who shall live when God doth this?

24 The Ships also shall come from the Coasts of Chittim, and subdue Ashur, and shall subdue Eber, and he also shall come to destruction.

25 Then Balaam rose up, and went, and returned to his place: and Balak also went his way.

Hitherto of the special Prophecies belonging to several people, both to the believing Jews, and unbelieving Gentiles: for he hath spoken of the Israelites, Moabites, Edomites, Amalekites, and Kenites. Now we come to the last of his Prophecies, appertaining jointly and generally to many people: wherein we must consider three things; First, the entrance into it: Secondly, the Prophecy it self: Thirdly, the conclusion of the history. The entrance into it, is not set down simply and nakedly, but is garnished with an effectual and rhetorical exclamation, as it were with an earnest admiration of the greatness and horror thereof, *Alas! who shall live when God doth this?* As if he should say, O how great and grievous shall those calamities be? The which, albeit none of us that are now alive, shall live to see or feel, yet they shall most certainly come to pass, and woe unto them upon whom they shall fall. The Prophecy it self followeth, setting down exceeding judgments of God against great kingdoms and Monarchies of the Assyrians and Grecians. The former judgments were against particular Nations: these are against whole Empyres. And first of all, whereas the Chaldeans under *Nimrod*, and the Assyrians under *Ninus*, usurped dominion over whole Countries & Kingdoms: he showeth, that in process of time, ships should come from the shore of *Chittim*, that is, the Navy of the Grecians, and the army of the Seleucians, which should subdue both the Hebrews and the Assyrians. By *Chittim*, in this place, he meaneth *Silicia*, which descended of *Kittim*, one of the posterity of *Iauan*, of whom we read in the book of Genesis, chap. 10, verse 4. For *Alexander* the Great, setting out a fleet rigged and furnished, especially by them of Cyprus, (which is now severed from the continent of *Silicia*) and after him the posterity of *Seleucus Nicanor*, wasted Assyria, Judea, Palestine, and all Syria, with perpetual inroads and incursions which they made into them, and in the ende subjected them all to themselves.

True it is, *Alexander* did rather prosecute his wars by Land service, then by Sea: yet whē the Ambassadors of Tyre, Eze. 28, 2, (an Island situate in the sea) had given him a mock trusting in the fortification of the place, despising his land power, refusing to suffer him to enter into their City, and esteeming themselves worthy rather to join with him as friends and confederates, then to become h's subjects and vastalles; he was constrained before he could do anything against them, to send for his ships from Cyprus, whereby he prevailed more against the Tyrians, then by the Peres and Moles that he built, as *Qintus Curtius* at large relateth in the fourth book of the noble acts of *Alexander*. This is it which *Balaam* spake of in this place. The Assyrians were vanquished by *Alexander*, the Hebrews which came of Eber were oppressed and vexed by the posterity of *Seleucus* descending from *Alexander*, Gen. 10, 21. & 11, 15. & 14, 13.

Likewise when the Grecians had ruled their time, and had proudly borne themselves as conquerors of the world, arising of small beginnings, they also perished after a little time, as *Balaam* here pronounced long before the event thereof came, and as *Daniel* afterwards prophesied immediately before the accomplishment thereof, which was effected and brought to pass by the power and puissance of the Romans, which served them as they before had served others, and took the Empire and Monarchy from them as they had taken it from others. Thus we see how all earthly things, even the mightiest Estates, & greatest Dominions of largest circuit, are subject to their times and seasons of reuolution; so that in mortal felicities, there can be no assurance nor perpetuity. For as it is an infallible property

belonging to all human things, changing with that swift and violent return whereby they did rise to their exaltation and fullness: so these great Princes & Potentates, these Kingdoms and Empires rising with their felicity into humors of pride and security, and forgetting in their greatness the great God of heaven and earth that did set them up and shown that he was able to throw them down (as appeareth most evidently in *Alexander*, who would be called the son of Jupiter, and was content to suffer them to fall down flat upon the ground & worship him:) these I say, saw the declination of their prosperity and great triumphs, thereby showing themselves more happy to get glory, then able to keep it. We see therefore in these examples, that all Monarchies have their periods and points of continuance, as it were the center to which they tend, and in which after sundry mutations and alterations they fully are accomplished.

Thus much of the Prophecies both special and general: Now, in the last Verse, *Moses* hand••th the event both of these Prophecies, and generally of the whole History; *Balaam*, rose up, departed and returned, that is; he went his way with a purpose and intent to return unto the place from whence he came, but he stayed among the *Midianites*, either to expect the issue and fruit of his counsel (among whom also he was slain, as appeareth after in this book) or being hired of them to do some other exploite.

Thus *Balaam* the sorcerer is defeated, the superstitious King is disappointed, the people of GOD are eased of a deadly enemy; and lastly, the exceeding mercy of GOD is commended to the Church, ouerturning the practices of them, making good the words of his own mouth, and causing the inventions of his enemies to vanish into smoke, according to the saying of *Moses*, Deuter. 23, 5. *They hired Balaam to curse thee, nevertheless the Lord thy God would not hearken unto him, but turned the curse to a blessing unto thee, because the Lord thy God loved thee.* And the Prophet *Micaiah* calleth upon the people, to consider this kindness of GOD toward them, chap. 6, verse 5: *O my people, remember what Balak King of Moab had devised, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him, that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord.* We have heard what great preparations were made, what charges the King defrayed to bring his purpose to pass, and yet prevaieth nothing against the *Israelites*; his only refuge was patience, a cold comfort to rest in: his only revenge was complaint, a weak weapon to fight withal. We have heard of *Balaam's* coming to curse the people, of his diuinations, sacrifices and prophecies: his chiefest wages was the Kings wrath, a cold contentment; his highest honor whereto he was advanced, was to take his heels and be gone, a poor preferment. Thus much of the order observed in these words.

Touching the doctrines that arise from this division, we have already handled at large such as are here offered to our considerations. When *Balaam* speaking of great afflictions that shall fall upon sundry places and people, saith, *That GOD shall do this*: chapter 21, verse 6. he teacheth that GOD is author of all chastenings and punishments, there is no evil in the city which he hath not done. Besides, he declareth that GOD raiseth up one evil man to scourge another, chapter 21, verse 25. Lastly, he setteth down the manner of God's punishments to be proportionable and answerable to the offenses and dealing of men, chapter 24, verse 20. GOD punisheth in the same kind as man sinneth. They that took away the Empire from

others, have the Empire taken from themselves. GOD dealt with them as they had dealt with others, and caused them to perish with the sword, that drew the sword upon others. Now, let us proceed to the handling of other doctrines, which may be gathered from hence.

Verse 14. [*The ships also shall come from the coastes of Chittim and subdue Ashur, and shall subdue Eber, and he also shall come to destruction.*] In these words, as we have declared in setting down the method and meaning of them, *Balaam* prophesieth of the rising and falling of great Princes and Empires. They had their heads lifted upon high, and were advanced unto the greatest honor, but suddenly they came tumbling down, and all their glory lay in the dust, From hence we learn, that great men, & mighty Princes sometimes in greatest honor, suddenly decay & come to nothing, they are in a moment cast down, and left destitute when they little think of it, and come to great extremity. This we see verified often in fighting great battles, such as not long afore were in great pomp, in the midst of soldiers, men of might and great command, having strong armies, and many chariots, are suddenly brought low into great misery, fly for their lives, and are glad of a poor harbor to save their lives, as we see in *Sisera*, in *Saneherib*, and sundry others, *Judge. 4, 16*. Behold this in proud *Haman*, he gloried in his favor with the people, in his greatness with the King, in his grace with the Queen, who had none to the feast but the King and him: he repined, and was even consumed with envy, to see one look upon him, and not do reverence unto him: but on the sudden, he lost both honor and life, and was hanged himself on the gibbet which he had set up for *Mordecai*, that spake good for the King, *Ester 7, 10*. This we see in *Agag* king of the *Amalekites*, he flourished in his kingdom, and his people lived securely in their cities, but *Saul* came suddenly upon them, slew the people, and took the King alive. And when he thought the danger gone, he said merrily and pleasantly, *Truly the bitterness of death is passed*; then did *Samuel* hew him in pieces before the Lord in *Gilgal*, *1. Sam. 15, 32*. This likewise appeareth in *Nebuchadnezzar*, whom *Daniel* compareth unto a great and strong tree, the height thereof reached up unto heaven, the sight thereof to the ends of the earth; the boughs thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, it made a shadow under it for the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof and all flesh fed of it, *Dan. 4, 18.19*, who as he walked in the royal palace of *Babel*, and gloried in the work of his own hand, saying; *Is not this great Babel that I have built?* &c. while the word was in the kings mouth, this voice came down from heaven, *Thy kingdom is departed from thee*: So they drove him from men, they turned him out of his kingom, they made him eat grass as oxen, & his body was wet with the dew of heaven. This sudden alteration in a moment sometimes befalleth the faithful servants of God. *David* was made a great man in *Israel*, beloved of the Princes, honored of the King, advanced to be his son in law, of whom they sang by course in their play, and said, *Saul hath slain his thousand, and David his ten thousand*, *1. Sam. 18, 7*. but on a sudden he was in exile among the wild goats, and constrained to put his life in hazard in a strange country. So *Job* was one of the greatest and richest men in all the East, who in the turning of an hand became one of the lowest and poorest; so that they mocked and derided him, whose fathers he refused to set with the dogs of his flocks; that is, with the meanest of his house.

[Reason 1] Neither can we much marvel at this change of the place and estates of the sons of men, confirmed unto us by all experience in the examples of *Pharaoh*, *Achitophel*, *Saul*, *Sifera*,

Saneherib, Herod, and of infinite others in the acts and monuments of the Church; seeing this falleth not out by chance or fortune, but it is the Lord's doing, and the work of his right hand. This is the reason that *Job* expresseth, *Now I am their song, I am their common talk, they abhor me, and fly far from me, and spare not to spit in my face, because that GOD hath loosed my cord, and humbled me*, *Job* 30, 9, 10. This *Hannah* in her song toucheth, *1. Sam.* 2, 7.8. Where we see the Lord lifteth up, he pulleth and putteth down according to his own will and pleasure, who maketh the highest tide to have the lowest ebb.

[Reason 2] Secondly, as he worketh his own will, so he will humble and abase the sons of men to make them know themselves. We think our selves great men, we will ascend above the height of the clouds, and exalt our selves above the stars, we lift up our hearts above our brethren, and will be like the most High: so that God is constrained to bring us down to the grave, & lay our honor in the dust, y^t we may know we are but men, whose life is but vanity & vexation of spirit. We should never be humble and lowly in our own eyes, unless we saw how *God casteth down the mighty from their seats, scattereth the proud in the imagination of their hearts, and sendeth the rich away empty*, *Luke* 1, 52, 53.

[Use 1] The uses follow to be observed. First, from hence consider and confess the difference between earthly and heavenly honor, between the honor of men, and that which is of God. Earthly honor when it is at the highest can give no assurance of continuance, nor minister peace of conscience, nor satisfy with the benefit of contentment, because it endureth but for a season; but the honor which we shall enjoy after this life with God, is like himself. He is unchangeable and without shadow of turning, he is constant and ever like himself: so is the honor and glory which he hath reserved for us, *It is laid up as a treasure in heaven, where neither the moth nor canker corrupteth, and where thieves neither dig through nor steal*, *Math.* 6, 20. We see what the favor and friendship of men is, we see what the highest preferment is that men can attain unto: both they and their advancement fall as the Summer fruit, and their place knoweth them no more. But the honor which we shall find in heaven, and enjoy with the glorious Saints of God in the heavenly habitations, lasteth forever, and there shall be no end thereof. What foolishmen are we therefore, and more then foolish, that so much admire the vain glory of the earth, and have our eyes dazzled with the deceitful beauty of the dignities of this world, and do not consider the stableness of that glory reserved for us, which time shall not consume, nor the enemy abolish? Hence it is that the Apostle *John* saith, *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: and the world passeth away with the lust thereof: but he that fulfilleth the will of God abideth ever*, *1. John* 2, 15, 17. All earthly things last and endure but for a season, men are mortal, riches are uncertain, favor is vanity, honor is changeable, treasures are transitory, pleasures are mutable, profits are corruptible, friends are fading, and oftentimes turn to be enemies: only, the treasures of heaven, the favor of God, the pleasures of eternal glory, the riches of the world to come are immortal, and never decay. *For all flesh is as grass, & all the glory of man as the flower of the field the grass withereth, & the flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord endureth forever*, *1. Pet.* 1, 24 Thus we see, that there is as great difference between earthly and heavenly honor, as is between heaven and earth.

Secondly, we must learn to use this world [Use 2] as though we used it not, and make it as the hand to help us, and further us toward the kingdom of heaven. The hand is made to serve us, and not we to serve it. We must learn to place the world under us, not above us: we must make it servant to us, not Lord over us; we must teach it to obey, not suffer it to rule over us; as the Church is described to be clothed with the Sun, but having the Moon under her feet, *Revel.* 12. For, seeing human things are transitory, mutable, and changeable, it standeth us upon to have our conversation in the heavens, and to cast the eyes of our minds toward the estate of glory, and the eternal happiness prepared for us. A pilgrim in a strange land, hath always his eyes toward his journeys end, & is greatly grieved when he wandereth out of his way. We are pilgrims in this world, and are far from home, so that our hearts should be fully and wholly set on everlasting life, and be grieved when we are hindered from the straight way.

This is the exhortation of the Apostle to the *Corinthians*, 1. Cor. 7, 29. Many follow it with all greediness, albeit it be full of vanity. But if we esteem of heaven, or regard the salvation of our souls, we ought to be little affected to the things of this life, never setting our hearts upon them, but desiring to dwell in that house where we shall abide forever. Many there are that live long in this life, and have been many days upon the face of the earth, who never think of the kingdom of heaven, nor dream of another world, nor meditate of the life to come, until they lie at the last gasp, and are going the way of all flesh: which is a most woeful and miserable thing to consider. Let us not suffer Satan thus to circumvent us, and this present world to abuse and bewitch us: the devil is a deceiver, the world is but a shadow, and hath no true and enduring substance in it. *Abraham* the father of the faithful, is commended by the Spirit of God, who being called of God, willingly obeyed to go into the place which afterward he should receive for an inheritance, so that he departed from his kindred & fathers house, not knowing whither he went; and by faith he abode in the land of *Canaan*, as in a strange country, and as one that dwelt in tents. A natural man would think he had made a simple change, and be ready to condemn him for a fool; but the Scripture giveth this reason, as the cause that moved him, (to wit,) everlasting life; for he looked for a city, having a foundation, whose builder and maker is God. In comparison hereof, let us make little account of this transitory life, or of any the vain profits, pleasures, or honors, that may be found in it.

Lastly, let it not grieve us to see evil men [Use 3] exalted and set aloft: they hold their possessions and honor with the greatest uncertainty that can be in their life time, and when they are taken from hence, they can carry nothing with them of all that they possess. They are oftentimes deprived suddenly of all things they desire and do most of all delight in. Sometimes they are taken away from their goods; sometimes their goods are taken away from them: and sometimes, albeit neither they be taken from their goods, nor their goods taken from them, yet God in his justice depriveth them of the comfortable use of them, while they do enjoy the possession of them. This is the use that the Prophet *David* toucheth, Psalm 49, 5.16, declaring the vanity and uncertainty of mortal things, and the sudden fall of all flesh, he addeth: *Wherefore should I fear in the evil days, when iniquity shall compass me about as at mine heels? Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, and when the glory of his house is increased; for*

he shall take nothing away when he dieth, neither shall his pomp descend after him. We have known many by our own observation gone on a sudden, that looked not for any change. We have seen them set on high, and suddenly they have come to nothing. Who is ignorant that great trees grow til they be great, and then be plucked up from the root in a moment? It is a foolish thing for a man to climb aloft, and not consider that the higher he climbeth, the greater is his fall: to covet the fruit, & not consider the height of the tree whereon it groweth: we must take heed, least while we labor to attain unto the top, we fall down with the boughs that we do embrace. All things are here turned and tossed with uncertainties, and nothing continueth in one stay or state. There is nothing so sure that is not in danger of his inferior. The Lyon hath been sometimes the food of small beasts: and the rust doth consume the iron. Let us therefore like and look after better things that do continue: earthly things, although we have them in greatest abundance, cannot save us in the day of danger: let us not trust in them whose help is in vain.

[Verse 25. *Then Balaam rose up, and went, and returned to his place.*] Here is briefly the conclusion set down, as the event and issue of all the devices and purposes of *Balak* and *Balaam*; they rose up and went their way, without doing anything that they intended. And first touching *Balaam*, we have often noted, that the mark which he aimed at, was his wages: yet see here, how coveting an evil covetousness, and thirsting after money, which he made his god, he is deceived, & loseth his wages; yea, and his life too at length, as appeareth afterward in this Book.

Heereby we learn for our instruction, that they which gape after unlawful gain, and the deceitful wages of wickedness, are oftentimes deceived of that which they look for, and find (contrary to their expectation) loss instead of gain, and hindrance instead of advantage. This is confirmed unto us by sundry examples in the word of God. Look upon the example of *Achan*, recorded in the book of *Joshua* he thought to enrich himself by the wedge of gold, and the Babylonish garment which he had purloyned, contrary to the commandment of God, who would have all those destroyed, not converted to the private profit of any; but it fell out to his own destruction and the destruction of those that belonged unto him, *Josh*, 7, 25, The like judgment came upon *Gehazi*, he turned after *Naaman*, and took of him a bribe to enrich himself; but the leprosy of *Naaman* did cleave unto him, so that his loss was greater then his gains, *2. King*. 5.27, *Ahab* rose up and took possession of *Naboth's* vineyard, which lay commodiously for him; but withal he purchased the wrath of God, the destruction of his person, the ruin of his house, the loss of his kingdom, the vndoing of all his posterity, *1. King*. 21, 16. *Judas* betrayed his Master, and sold him for thirty pence, he was carried after his covetousness, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of the immaculate Lamb of GOD; but how he was enriched hereby, the Evangelist declareth; when he saw that Christ was condemned, he repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the high-Priests and Elders, saying, *I have sinned, betraying the innocent blood.* Hereunto accordeth *Solomon* in his Proverbs, who saith; *He that is greedy of gain, troubleth his own house, but he that hateth gifts, shall live,* *Prov.* 15, 16. Where he teacheth, that such as increase their riches by hook and by crook, they care not how, or gain by wrongful means, are the causes and occasions of many evils in their estate and family. This appeareth also by that which was

spoken to the rich man in the Gospel, *Luke 12.20. Thou fool, this night shall they take away thy soul from thee, and then whose shall all these be that thou hast gathered together?* All which places of Scripture serve directly to prove, that such as are given to unlawful gain, and get the goods of this life wrongfully, are oftentimes deceived of their hope and expectation: which made the Apostle *Jude*, speaking of the matter that now we have in hand, to call the hire that *Balaam* sought after, *The deceitful wages of Balaam*, *Jude 11.*

[Reason 1] The reasons may easily be discerned of us, if we consider that GOD would have his wisdom and justice to appear in crossing their carking and caring for these transitory things. This we see in all the examples before alleged, of *Achan*, *Judas*, of *Gehazi*, *Ahab*, and of the rich man. For God knoweth *to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment under punishment*, *2. Pet. 2.9.* How can it be therefore, that such as fill their houses with the riches of iniquity, and with the spoils of the righteous should prosper, and bring a blessing with them, when as God (which is the God of all righteousness and truth) shall set himself against them, & root out the things which they have wrongfully gotten?

[Reason 2] Secondly, every sin is deceitful, and profiteth nothing, whatsoever show of profit and commodity it make. This is set forth unto us in the book of *Job*, *I have seen the foolish well rooted, and suddenly I cursed his habitation: his children shall be far from salvation, and they shall be destroyed in the gate, and none shall deliver them*, *Job 5, 3, 4.* All sin to the natural man is sweet and pleasant, he findeth it sweet to his taste; but it is as sweet meat that hath poison mingled and tempered with it, *Job 20, 12, 13.* And as poison, though it be sweet in the mouth, bringeth death and destruction with it when it entereth into the body: so it is with sin; it delighteth in the committing, but it biteth at the latter ending: for God turneth it to destruction. Therefore the Apostle saith, we should take heed we be not seduced and deceived through the deceitfulness of sin.

[Use 1] The uses are to be thought upon, that we may apply the doctrine to our selves. First, we see here the common Proverb truly verified, that covetousness bringeth nothing home. So may it be said of all other sins, of profaneness, of contempt of the word, of abusing the Name of God and his Sabbaths, of uncleanness, of whoredom, of drunkenness, and of all sinful pleasures whatsoever, which natural men make their happiness and felicity; they may delight for a time, and please the carnal desires of natural men, but they bring an heavy account and reckoning in the end. So then, we may say to all the men of this world, whose portion is in this life, as *Abner* said in one case, *Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?* *2. Sam. 2, 26.* We heard how *Naboth's* vineyard was an eyesore to *Ahab*, and made him enter into ungodly courses and bloody practices, he destroyed *Naboth* and his children, he seemed to have made his title strong, & secured his estate: but what brought it in the end? the utter ruin of his whole house. Every man can say readily, when a man groweth prodigal and spendeth excessively, and holdeth a right course, and taketh the ready way to bring all to naught, and fall into decay; He is at the door to be blown out. But if he be straight and hold fast, if he get carefully, and labor by all means by right or wrong, to increase in wealth; he taketh this to be the pathway to thriftiness, and the next course to grow in riches;

& carnal men, (that see nothing but with fleshly eyes) are of the same judgment. This is the common opinion, but it is false and wrongful. For all such as give themselves to fraud and oppression, that care not how they store their houses with abundance, and thereby think that neither they nor their posterities shall want, do exceedingly deceive themselves, and offer the greatest wrong to their children that can be. Such (as we heard out of Solomon) trouble their own houses, and are the greatest enemies to those they with the greatest good unto. To this purpose he speaketh in another place, *The treasures of wickedness profit nothing, but righteousness delivereth from death*, Prov. 10.2. This the Prophet setteth down, *Their houses with their lands and wives shall be turned unto strangers, for I will stretch out mine hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord: for from the least of them, even unto the greatest of them, everyone is given unto covetousness, and from the Prophet even unto the Priest they all deal falsely*, Jer. 6, 11, 12, 13. And in another place, *Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers without equity, &c.* Jer. 22, 13. Jehoiakim is threatened, because his eyes and his heart were only upon covetousness, to be cast out without lamentation, and to be buried as an ass is buried, even to be drawn without the gates of *Jerusalem*. To this purpose cometh the sentence of Solomon, recorded in the three and twenty chapter of the Proverbs, verses 4, & 5, *Trauaile not too much to be rich, but cease from thy wisdom: wilt thou cast thine eyes upon it which is nothing? for riches taketh her to her wings, and flieth into the heaven*. Thus he showeth the vanity & unprofitableness of riches, & that we should not travel to hoard up heaps thereof to our own confusion, as many worldly minded men do,

[Use 2] Secondly, it is our duty to walk plainly and sincerely, to be true Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile: so we have hope of sound comfort in the works of our hands that we shall take upon us, whatsoever the success be. This is it which Solomon teacheth, *Prov. 10, 9. He that walketh uprightly, walketh boldly. but he that perverteth his ways shall be known*. It is a gracious thing for a man always to have a good cause, and a good conscience. Such a one feareth none evil, but assureth himself of the protection of the Lord. But such as commit wickedness without care or conscience shall be troubled with inward fears, and chastened with outward punishments. All men desire to avoid perils and dangers, to live safely, and without fear of evil; but all men do not take the right course, nor use the right means to attain their end. None think themselves in greater safety, then such as give themselves to craft and deceitful dealing, to filthiness and uncleanness, to hypocrisy and dissimulation, and to all excess of wickedness. But these men wander wide out of the way, and know not the place where safety dwelleth. For none are further from safety and security then these are who when they shall say, *Peace and safety, then shall come upon them sudden destruction*. Look upon the examples of the old world drowned with the flood, of *Sodom* consumed with fire, of *Dathan* and *Abiram* covered and swallowed with the earth, of *Herod* smitten of the Angel, and sundry other wicked persons, who have felt the truth of this; whose steppes if we follow, we must look to their ends. It is he that feareth God, and walketh uprightly, that is bold as a Lyon, and goeth safely in his ways: he hath this comfort, which the other want, that God will keep and defend him, that he will be his protector and deliverer: and therefore in all assurance is able to say, *Though I should walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear none evil*, Psal. 23, 4, & 27, 1, & 50, 15. Again, *the Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the*

strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? for they know the infallible promise, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.* This serveth to reprove all such, as give or receive deceitful wages, with a supposed assurance of good success, when that which they go about, is against GOD and the rule of righteousness. Thus the high-Priests dealt with *Judas*, they gave, and he took money, to betray into the hands of sinners the Lord of life: but the curse of God fell upon the one and the others. So the Elders took counsel, and offered large money to the soldiers to say, that the disciples came by night and stole away the body of Jesus, *Math.* 28.12, 13. But if we depend upon God for his blessing, and would have him to prosper us in our enterprises, we must not turn into these by-paths, but keep the straight way that leadeth to life, which howsoever fewest enter into it, shall bring us to eternal life.

Lastly, let us learn to avoid covetousness, [Use 3] and be content with such things as God giveth and knoweth to be necessary and sufficient for us, This is it which the Apostle teacheth, *Godliness is great gain, if a man be content with that he hath, for we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain, we can carry nothing out: therefore when we have food and raiment, let us therewith be content,* 1. *Tim.* 6, 6, 8. This is the touchstone to try our hearts whether we be covetous or not. Who is it, if he be demanded, nay convinced to his face, will confess he is covetous? although he circumvent his brother, and defraud him in buying and bargaining, though he long and lust after his neighbors goods, though he live by miserable fraud and oppression, though he grind the faces of the poor, and care not how or which way he get, yet who is it, but will stiffly and stontly deny that he is covetous? Seeing then everyone is accounted covetous, and no man will father that which he doth beget & bring forth, nor confess that which all the world seeth he doth notoriously practice, let us come to the rule, how we may try him. The workman hath his rule and square to try his work. God hath left us the level of the law, & hath set down marks to examine and prove every man's work. The rule to try our affection is, our contentedness with our estate, and a quiet resting in that portion which GOD hath allotted unto us, *Phil.* 4, 11. Thou sayest, thou art not covetous, and thinkest thyself extremely wronged, to be charged with so foul a crime: but art thou contented with those things which thou hast? Doest thou believe the division of God's gifts befallen to thee to be the best measure, and most profitable for thee; yea, all-sufficient unto thee? Then thou art void of covetousness: but if thou do not think thine own portion sufficient, it is certain thou wilt be craving and coveting after another man's. [Answer.] But (will some say) I am a poor man, I have small means to live, and many children to provide for; how can I be content, or how can I think that I have sufficient? I answer, if thou fear God; [Objection.] and have godliness in thine heart, thou hast enough, thou canst not want that which is sufficient. Thou hast the promise of God, that he will not leave thee, nor forsake thee, His word is a sufficient assurance for all things needful. *Godliness is profitable unto all things, which hath the promise of the life present, and of that which is to come,* GOD commandeth that our conversation should be without covetousnesse, The rule to try our practice and obedience is, to be contented with our own estate. The way and means to work in us contentedness, is godliness: for it maketh a man contented with that he hath. So far as a man is godly, so far he is content with his outward condition. Let us therefore labour to

plant godliness in our hearts, and to store them with the true fear of God, which will bring with it contentedness, and sufficiency in every estate.

[*And Balak also went his way.*] *Balak* and *Balaam* laid a plot to curse the people of God, but are disappointed, and part company one from another. *Balaam* returned to his people, that is, he purposed to return, with a full intent to go home; but he was stayed by the way, where he perished among the *Midianites*. *Balaks* hope failing him, he goeth his way, and nothing is done of the one to the other. This event between them teacheth, that the devices of evil men come to nothing. God disappointeth the policies and purposes of the ungodly intended against the Church: so that how cunningly soever they are contrived, he bloweth them away as dust with the wind, and he melteth them as wax with the fire. Many rest in vain hope, and put confidence in deceitful things. *Esau* promised unto himself a time of his fathers death, & of weeping for him, and then he would be avenged for the birthright, and blessing of his brother; but his expectation was made frustrate, and the blessing took place, *Gen. 27, 41*. The *Egyptians* had a purpose to kill all the males of the *Israelites*, that all hope of issue from them might decay; but see how wide they shot, and how far they missed, *Exod. 1, 12*, God increased them exceedingly, and they were constrained to drive them out enriched with the spoils of *Egypt*. The enemies of Christ say in the pride of their hearts, *Let us break their bands, and cast their cords from us; yet he that sitteth in the heaven, laugheth them to scorn, and giveth to his Son the heathen for a possession*, *Psal. 2, 3*.

Hereunto cometh the saying of the Prophet, *Psal. 7, 14*. When Christ had preached the Gospel at *Nazareth*, they were filled with such wrath against him, that they rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him even unto the top of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong; but he passed through the midst of them, and went his way, *Luke 4, 30*. The like example we find, *John 7, 53*, the Scribes and Pharisees being gathered together in a council, where the death of Christ was practiced, God raised up one to speak in his cause, one of their own bench, that sate in the council & consistory with them, so that they brake up in a rage without doing anything. Great matters wer purposed, but nothing determined: mightymen and rulers were assembled, but nothing could be concluded. So we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that certain Jews made an assembly, and bound themselves with a curse, saying, *That they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul*, *Acts 23, 22*: but they were disappointed, and their purpose (though closely contrived) was utterly disannulled.

[Reason 1] The Reasons will make this truth more apparent. First, if we consider this essential property of God, that he is full of justice, he will reward and recompense as our works are. If we rest in vain and wicked practices, he will not wink at them or hold his peace, but throw down that which we build up, and he will disappoint that which we hope for. This the Prophet *David* handleth at large, *Psal. 62, 3, 11, 12*. where he reproveth his adversaries for devising and practicing of evil against him, and showeth that all their devices shall profit them nothing, but be the means to bring them suddenly and speedily to destruction; *The children of men are vanity, the chief men are liars, to lay thē upon a balance, they are altogether lighter then vanity. Trust not in oppression, nor in robbery, be not vain, if riches increase, set not your*

hearts upon them; for thou rewardest everyone according to his work. If their expectation were always satisfied and desires accomplished, God's Justice should be impayed and called into question; so that the crossing of their hopes, discovereth and revealeth him to be a just and righteous God.

Secondly, the expectation of the wicked is [Reason 2] vanity, because they can give no comfort or assurance. No man is able to assure himself of life, or of anything else: for what man can redeem the life of his brother, to keep it from the grave? If then we cannot secure life, either to our selves, or to our brethren: much less can we other things, So the Prophet reasoneth, *They trust in their goods, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches: yet a man can by no means redeem his brother, he cannot give his ransom to God,* Psal. 49, 6, 7.

The uses are next to be considered, as they [Use 1] arise from this doctrine. And first we may conclude from hence the unhappy and wretched estate of them that have only eyes of flesh, to rest on things which they see with their foolish and fleshly eyes. If we regard and receive only present blessings, they are of little account, and of small moment. If then we wait on lying vanities, & forsake God our strength and our salvation, we are unhappy and most miserable. This doth the Prophet preach unto us, *Thus saith the Lord cursed is the man that trusteth in men, and maketh flesh his arm, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord,* Ier 17, 5, 6, 7. And the Prophet rendereth the reason hereof in the words following, *He shall be like the heath in the wilderness, and shall not see when any good thing cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land, & not inhabited:* whereby the Prophet meaneth, that such are like the unfruitful trees, or the parched & barren wilderness; their hope that rely upon men, is frustrate, GOD himself will fight against them, so that they shall never have good success. As the heat of the Sun consumeth and dryeth up the moisture of the trees, and the grass of the field, so that albeit they have roots & leaves, yet are without fruit; so doth God disappoint the ungodly, & maketh all his hope wither away, like the corn which being green in the blade, is blasted in the ear, or as the grass on the house tops, which perisheth before it be ripe, and ready to be cut down, whereof the mower filleth not his hand, neither the gleaner his lap. *Psal. 129, 6, 7, 8.* Wherein the Prophet compareth the wicked to hay or grass, meaning that they shall be of no long continuance, but presently come to destruction, though they be lifted up for a time very high; as the grass that groweth on houses, incontinently withereth, because it wanteth strength of root, and depth of earth to give moisture, and supply nourishment unto it; yea, the Prophet goeth further, to note out the wretchedness of their estate, because such have not the benefit of the Churches prayers, when he saith; neither they which go by say, the blessing of the Lord be with you; noting hereby that it is a great curse & judgment of God upon us, to want the good wishes or godly prayers of the Church. On the other side we may see the happy and blessed condition of the godly, that make God their Lord, that make him their strength and their salvation, that trust in him for their defense. This the Prophet toucheth in the place before recited, *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is,* Ier. 17, 7, 8. He is a tower that can never be scaled; a city that can never be conquered; a buckler that can never be broken; a shield that can never be cracked; a rock that shall never be entered; a fortress and hold that shall never be surprised; so that he which trusteth in him shall be as a tree that is planted by the

water, which spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not feel when the heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green, and shall not care for the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. Such as have their hope in God, shall never be deceived or disappointed, they may feel the heat of trouble and persecutition, but they shall not be scorched and consumed with it. They are so seasoned and moistned with his grace, that they shall want no good thing, and whatsoever he shall do, shall prosper, *Psal. 1, 3.*

[Use 2] Secondly, we learn, that no wisdom, be it never so deep, no understanding, be it never so politick, no counsel be it never so prudent, no subtlety be it never so hidden, shall overthrow the purpose of God, or prevail against his truth, or hinder the execution of his will. For his infinite wisdom is able to ouerreach and over-match all the wisdom that is in the creatures, and to prevent whatsoever devices they have set abroad. This is it which *Solomon* teacheth, *Many devices are in a man's heart, but the counsel of the Lord shall stand, Pro. 19, 21.* So saith the Prophet, *The Lord breaketh the counsel of the heathen, &c. Psal. 33, 10.* Man doth purpose, but God doth dispose. Many heap up riches, but GGD bringeth them to poverty: they hope to enjoy their treasures many years, but their days are broken off in the midst of their course. Some seek to hinder the course of the Gospel, and utterly to root out the truth, but they are deceived of their expectation, and themselves are pulled up by the root. Others seek to prevail, but are overcome. Howsoever the wisemen of this world study to resist the will of God, yet it must be accomplished. Therefore *Solomon* saith, *There is neither wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord: his counsel shall remain forever, and the thoughts of his heart throughout all ages.* There is no wit or wisdom of man can take place against him. True it is, men are grown crafty and cunning, they can dive deep to hide their counsels, and cover two faces under one hood, yet all things are naked & open before him, with whom we have to do, he will defeat their purposes, and they shall know they oppose themselves against him, & fight against heaven.

Thirdly, let us not rely on vain things, [Use 3] for then all our expectation shall be in vain. Who is so simple, that to stay him up from danger, would rest on the web of a spider, or the staff of a reed, or the strength of a rush? All the devices of men, the power of Princes, the courage of horses, the help of creatures, are as a broken weapon, or a rotten pillar unprofitable to defend us, and unserviceable to deliver us. This the Prophet teacheth us, *Psal. 146, 3, 4, 5.* We are prone by nature to put our trust in creatures, rather than in God the Creator: he forbiddeth all vain confidence in them, that God may have the sole and whole praise. Where we see the Prophet yieldeth sundry sound and substantial reasons not to have any affiance in men, how great soever their places, and how high soever their authority be: for they are not able of themselves to help themselves, or others that are in distress. Besides, the shortness and uncertainty of their life is such, that suddenly death cometh, and the breath departeth, and so the hope which men repose in them perisheth. This is the brevity and vanity of man's life, that all which he thought upon, and devised in his imaginations, come to nothing. Hence it is, that the Prophet *David* exhorteth, not to trust in oppression, nor in goods gotten by unlawful means, *Psal. 62, 10.* If riches increase, we must not delight in them, lest our hearts be stolen away from the hope of better things, or be puffed up in pride above measure, against our brethren, through the abundance of outward blessings. *Some*

trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we remember the Name of the Lord our God: they are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright, Psalm 20, verses 7, 8.

Fourthly, when we see the enemies conspire [Use 4] against the Church, let us from this consideration of the vain hope and confidence of y^e wicked, take occasion to comfort our selves, and to cheare up our hearts: their hope hangeth on the spiders web, and all their expectation shall turn into smoke. Let them gather themselves together on heaps, and take crafty counsel one with another, he that ruleth in heaven shall scorn at their inventions, and frustrate them of their hope and mischievous purposes. This is the assured comfort that the Prophet giveth in this respect, *Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, and when the glory of his house is increased; for he shall take nothing away when he dieth, neither shall his pomp descend after him: Psal. 49, 16:* & though he should come to the age of his fathers, and live as long as the most aged, yet this life must have an end. Thus doth our Savior set forth the vain confidence of the rich man, flattrng his own soul, glorying in his goods, living in all delight, taking his pastime, and promising to himself a long life, *O fool, this night will they fetch away thy soul from thee, Luke 12, 20.* But he that resteth upon God, is sure to build upon a sure rock, that in all storms and tempests shall stand unmovable. This meditation will stay our faith, and comfort our hope, when we see the great plottings, and wonderful confidence of wicked men. For why should we fear such enemies? or be dismayed either in regard of our distressed & weak estate, or in respect of that flourishing estate of others, as though we were in danger to be overcome? They rest on lying vanities, and therefore woe unto them. This serveth to terrify them, to consider the slippery ground whereon they stand, and the deceitful foundation whereon they build: for whilst they determine to conspire against other, they confound themselves, whilst they compass to destroy the Church, they deceive themselves; whilst they promise to themselves to work out great matters, they are utterly disappointed of their purposes, and whilst they show themselves to be enemies to God's people, God manifesteth himself to be an enemy unto thē.

[Use 5] Lastly, seeing all evil inventions and devices of the devil are disappointed, let us not stand in fear of any attempts made against us by his imps & instruments. The enemies of the Church had hired a sorcerer and coniurer to waste and weaken them, yet we see his enchantments and diuinations are defeated, and come to nothing. Heereby we learn what to think of witchcraft and sorcery, and of sorcerers and witches, of whom worldly and carnal men, void of true godliness, & the true fear of God's Name, do stand so much in fear of. Thus it appeareth to be a simple distinction of the more simple people, making some to be good witches, and some to be evil witches; not only because all witchcraft is wicked & the invention of the devil, but because such as they account the best are bad; yea, the worst of all, drawing the people from God, & causing them to run a whoring after the devil. For, as well they may make some good devils, and some evil devils (as some prattle of white devils, and black devils) as make some witches good, & others evil: whereas all sorcery (under what color & pretence soever it be used) is abhominable in the sight of God; and all sorcerers (howsoever they be esteemed of in the world) are hated and abhorred of him.

True it is, the common sort of carnal men, and of the ignorant multitude imagine them to be the very plagues of the earth, that they destroy men's goods, torment their bodies, take away their lives, lame their cattle, bring all calamity upon them, & that none can be in safety so long as they remain. Hence it is, that men stand in fear of them, & are afraid to displease thē, they dare not deny them anything; they are as careful to please them, as to please their parents. And yet if we aright consider of the matter, we shall find y^t they are more afraid of them, then hurt by them. The holy Scripture hath delivered full and perfect doctrine, what to hold concerning witches. It teacheth that there are witches, and that they should not be suffered to live, but be put to death, *Deut.* 18, 10, 11. But we must observe & mark for what causes & crimes they are to be taken away frō the earth: not because they raise tempests in the air, or hurt corn on the ground, & fruit on the trees; not because they send their spirits to make men lame, to kill their children, to destroy their cattle: they are never charged with those things, and among all those that have been plagued and tormented by evil spirits, the Holy Ghost never layeth it upon witches. The reasons why they should be put to death, are, because they have a league and familiarity with devils, which are the enemies of God, and because they seduce the people, and draw them into error, to run after devils, and devilish practices. We must know that all affliction laid upon our bodies, our goods & children, is of God, *Amos* 3, 6. His providence ruleth all, so that not a sparrow falleth to the ground, without the will of our heavenly Father. Our sins provoke him to chastise & afflict us. God giveth the devil leave to correct and scourge us for our sins. When he hath obtained leave of GOD, he coveteth to do it in such sort as may further his kingdom, and draw the world into error. When he hath received power to afflict men and beasts with bodily harms, he will do it by and by, but he is cunning and crafty, he will do it to his most gain and advantage. He could do it, and would do it without witches and sorcerers, yet he useth them to set a color and a cover upon his matters. For using them as his instruments, he bringeth them to believe that they do many harms sent by him, and they confess so much sometimes, whereas indeed they are deceived themselves, and do deceive others. And from hence proceed and issue sundry abominations. The people are set on work how to devise to be safe against the witch: then there is running to wizards, to learn to withstand his fury, to expel his spirit, to outwitch and overcome her familiar: he procureth many to use wicked & blasphemous charms, to abuse the blessed name of God, and to profane and pollute his most sacred word: hereby the innocent are oftentimes accused, and innocent blood is shed, which procureth the wrath of God against the Land. Al these mischiefs that are wrought, are set abroach by such as are called cunning men and cunning women: they are thought to do much good, and to help many people, but of all other they do greatest harm in seducing the people, & ought to die the death. Such witches as have familiar spirits are thought to do harm to mankind, and to beasts, and do not, because the devil at the appointment of God executeth it, and he beareth many in hand that he doth it at the request and instigation of the witch; but these, which seem in outward appearance to do good, do harm indeed, leading men into the depth of sin, and drowning men deeper in condemnation. But we must learn and allow these principles, setting down the vanity of this Science. First, there is no more hurt done, nor no less hurt done then would be if there were no witches Secondly, the devil cannot kill man or beast at his pleasure, to gratify a witch. Thirdly, the sending of the devil by a witch cannot give him

any power and commission to do anything. Fourthly, he is more forward and ready to do evil, then the witch can be, and therefore it were peevish and preposterous to imagine that the less forward unto wickedness should set on him, and procure him to evil, that is more forward: so that the witch doth not provoke forward the devil, but the devil bearing sway in her heart, setteth her on. Fifthly, the devil is the commander, the witch is but his servant: he ruleth with power in the children of disobedience, and is the god of the world: she by the righteous judgment of God is servant and subject unto him. Can any then be so silly and simple to believe that the less can give power unto the greater, the weaker to the stronger? Lastly, as the devil cannot hurt a poor Fly, before he have power granted unto him by a greater power then his own, so when he hath liberty, is he so sottish that he will not execute his power, unless some witch or sorcerer send him? So then we conclude that witches, sorcerers, & enchanters are the bond-slaves of Satan, and have themselves no power to do, or to authorize him to do anything. But whensoever God giveth him power to afflict, as the executioner of his vengeance, he useth them as his instruments, not to receive help by them, but only for a color, that he may draw multitudes into sin, and carry them he along into condemnation. Let us not therefore stand in fear of any sorcerers, but of God, from whom all chastisements come, whether such as he inflicteth with his own hand, or such as he giveth the devil power to lay upon men, as we see in the history of *Job*, chap. 1, and 2. and therefore they should humble us and bring us unto repentance. The ungodly look no further then to the witch, they fret against her, they never look up to God, nor consider the cause why the devil hath power over them, they seek not to appease God's wrath. But the godly seek to take away the cause, that they may remove the effects. If our sins have provoked God, and the enemy touch our bodies or goods, we must fall down before his Throne, humble our selves in prayer, entreat the Lord to turn away his displeasure, stand fast in faith and patience, and wait upon God for our deliverance. If we endure temptation, *we are blessed, and shall be crowned with the crown of life*, I am. 1, 12. And thus much touching the vain attempt of *Balaam's* sorcery.

CHAP. XXV.

1 NOW whilst Israel abode in Shittim, the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

2 Which called the people unto the sacrifice of their gods, and the people eat, and bowed down, &c.

3 And Israel coupled himself unto Baal-Peor: wherefore the wrath of the Lord was kindled, &c.

4 And the Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of this people, and hang up to the Lord before this Sun, that the indignation of the Lord's wrath may be turned from Israel.

5 Then Moses said to the Judges of Israel, Everyone slay his men that were joined to Baal-Peor.

6 And behold, one of the children of Israel came, and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the Congregation of the children of Israel, who wept before the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.

WEe heard in the last verse of the former chapter, how *Balaam* arose and went his way from *Balak* the King of Moab. A man would now in reason suppose, that the danger were past, and the storm clean ouerblowne after his departure, and the Israelites wholly set at liberty. But even as a piece of Ordinance being discharged, it is too late and in vain to wish it may not hurt where it lighteth: so *Balaam* had put that in the head of *Balak*, before he departed and took his farewell, which was a snare unto the people of God, whereby it came to pass, that he hurt more being absent, then he could hurt present, and wounded them being further off, whom he could not strike near at hand. For he annoyed thē with this counsel, that could not touch them with his coniuring, & sowed that seed whereof sprung up so plentiful an harvest, that albeit he were gone, yet his advice remained, and cast forth such a stinking breath and filthy savor, as smelled rankly in the nostrhils of God, and infected greatly the people against whom it was plotted and contrived.

Now we have noted before, chap. 24, 14. that this was the crafty and devilish device of this sorcerer, when he saw he could not curse and bewitch them, to entice them to whoredom, to eat of things sacrificed to Idols, reproved by the Apostle, 1 Corinth. 10, 14. and after to worship their false gods, and the Idols of their own invention. *Balaam* knew that God's favor was a sure defense against all invasion of enemies: he knew that sin leaveth us naked of God's protection, & bringeth in the floods of his vengeance upon us.

This wicked wretch knew that they could not be plagued and brought under, unless their God were offended with them, whose favor and friendship is a wall of brass, and as armor of proof, that no weapon can pierce it, no engine can batter it, no force can make a breach to enter upon it. But when we sin against him, we are stripped of our armor, and are left open to all violence, Exod. 32, 25. This is such a principle as was not unknown to the unbelievers, Judith 5, 20, 21. And thus did *Balaam* teach *Balak* to lay a stumbling block before Israel, to provoke and entice them to sin against God, by setting before them the beautiful women, which might allure them to fornication, and draw them to Idolatry, by inviting them to their Idol-feasts, and bringing them into their Idol-temples, which thing we see here to come to

pass. For the childrē of Israel did commit fornication with the daughters of Moab, they went to their sacrifices, worshipped *Baal-Peor*, Psal. 106, 28, 29. did eat the sacrifices of the dead, and provoked God with their own inventions, as t e Psalmist teacheth.

In the former part of this book, we have seen how through famine and weariness, and want of waters, they fell to murmuring impatiently and unthankfully against God: Now having passed over all these disadvantages & discommodities, and being entered into part of the Country, where some of the Tribes had •heyr habitation, *Possessing Cities that they built not, Fields that they sowed not, Vineyards that they planted not, & houses that they filled not, they fall from God through lusts and pleasures, committing bodily and spiritual fornication with the daughters of Moab.* Deut. 6, 10, 11. Thus they are overcome by allurements and enticements of voluptuousness and sensuality, which could not be subdued by war or witchcraft, according to the received opinion, It is harder to overcome prosperity, then adversity; and pleasure then sorrow. Indeed we are compassed about with many temptations, and the subtle serpent layeth baits before us of all sorts; some on the right hand, and other on the left hand: yet none are more dangerous or deceitful, then such as come masking under the vizard of honor, pleasure, profit, and preferment, as we see in *David*, in *Sampson*, in *Solomon*, in *Lot*, in *Noah*, and in the Israelites in this place, all which were caught with these hooks. Wherefore *Moses* having already set down what outward dangers they had ouerpassed, threatening their ruin, and working together to stop their passage into the Land of Canaan: now he declareth an inward danger greater then the former, arising from themselves, and settled in their own bowels, even their own sins against the first & second Table, which had consumed them in the Wilderness, unless God in mercy had been appeased toward them at the intercession of *Moses*, and the execution of *Phinehas*.

Such is our weakness in all our ways, and thus we halt in our obedience: so that our strength is to confess our own frailty, and a step toward perfection, is to acknowledge our own imperfection.

Having therefore in the chapters going before, considered the entrance into this history, as also the history it self of *Balak* and *Balaam*: let us now hear the end and conclusion of all in this chapter, wherein we are to consider three things. First, the sin of the Israelites committed against God. Secondly, the reconciliation and atonement whereby his wrath is pacified. Thirdly, the commandment and decree of God against the *Midianites*, through whom the scandal and offense came. Touching y^e first point delivered in this division, which is, the sin of the people; the Spirit of God setteth down both the circumstances and substance thereof. For first, it is described by the time when it was committed, by the place where it was committed, and by the means or manner how it was committed.

The time and place were, while the Israelites rested and remained in the plain of *Moab*•t *Shittim*, which is the two and forty mansion, and the last place where they pitched their tents in the wilderness, as appeareth in y^e three and thirty chapter of this book of *Numbers*, ver. 50: which serveth to increase the greatness of their sin, in that being now brought by the providence and mighty hand of GOD to the frontiers and confines of the land of promise, they do shamefully and shamelessly fall from him. The manner and occasion of their sin

was, in that the Moabites and Midianite, (brethren in evil) combined together both to one purpose, by *Balaam's* counsel made their daughters common, to entice and allure the Israelites, being no doubt adorned with whorish attire, & decked in all wanton and lascivious manner, fit to bring them to their lure and love, or rather lust, and so to work their overthrow: as we see *Solomon* describing the harlot, painteth her out in her colors and cunning, that she maybe well known, & better detested, Prov. 3, 4. and 6, 24, 25. and 7, 10, 11. and 9, 13, 14.15. Thus much of the circumstances of their sin.

Touching the substance of their sins, we are to observe both their wicked facts, and their obstinate contumacy, and settled continuance in their sin. Their facts or actions are noted to be these three. First, bodily fornication and uncleanness, condemned in the seventh Commandment, defiling the host, hindering true sanctification, and estranging them from God, who is a God of purity and holiness, and who commanded them to be holy. Secondly, Idolatry which is spiritual fornication, forbidden in the first Commandment, which prohibiteth us to have, to acknowledge, and worship strange gods. This is utterly to renounce our faith to God the Husband of his Church, to defile the marriage covenant, Hosea 2, 19. and to deny that true Religion into which we are entered. Thirdly, they coupled themselves to *Baal-Peor*, that is, to the Image of *Baal*, which was adored and worshipped in Mount-*Peor*, Numb. 23, 32. where no doubt the Idol had some Shrine or Chapel erected for his service, in like manner as the Papists do call her the Lady of *Lauretto*, which is worshipped in that place. With this filthy and detestable Idol they joined themselves, and worshipped it with divine worship, and consequently renounced the worship of God, being made one body with the Idolaters. For when once his worship is mingled and corrupted, the true God is turned into an Idol, such worship is Idolatry and abomination in his sight: for (as the Prophet saith) *If God be God, follow him: if Baal be God, follow him*, 1 Kings 18, 21. Now in setting down these sins, mark how the Israelites fell into them by steps and degrees. If the Moabitish women had at the first tempted them to worship *Baal*, and had said unto thē, Come let us go serve strange gods, no doubt they would have detested and abhorred so great wickedness. But Satan is a more expert and cunning workman, and his instruments are more subtle and wise in their generation. Therefore, first they call them to their feasts and banquets, to eat of the meats and delicacies that they had prepared, and afterward they draw them to Idolatry, which for the most part hath fornication a companion with it, as we shall see hereafter further opened unto us.

The next point is their obstinacy and continuance in the dregs of their sins, joined with shamelesse and hardness of heart. But because all stubbornness and contumacy presupposeth of necessity, both reproof and chastisement. *Moses* setteth down the observation of this course and order. For first, the chief heads of that people which fell to commit Idolatry and fornication, were apprehended and executed before the going down of the Sun, to pacify the wrath of the Lord, lest if that wickedness had remained unpunished, the whole body of the people should be defiled. Thus God declareth, Acts 10, 34, 35. *That with him is no respect of persons, but as he that doth righteously is accepted of him, so he that provoketh him, sinneth against his own soul.* The higher the place of men is, the greater is their sin, who hurt more by their example, then by their offense. Thus the chief in the offense, are also the

chief in the punishment. After this hanging up of the heads of this rebellion, he chargeth the Judges and Officers of the people, that had kept themselves pure and undefiled, to kill all those with the sword that had sinned against the Lord, which belonged to their charge and jurisdiction, according to the ordinance of God and order that he had established, Exod. 18, 25, appointing them to be Rulers over hundreds, Rulers over fifties, & Rulers over tens. Thus the wrath of God was appeased, the rest of the multitude were spared, and the plague ceased, which was begun in the host, as appeareth in the words following.

Now albeit these were most lively arguments of the wrath and indignation of God, yet y^e Israelites continued with an high hand, and a proud heart to provoke the most High to his face, so that one not of the least & lowest, but of the principal and chiefest among them, brought an whorish woman into the host to despise God, his people, and religion. This man thought it not sufficient to go out of his Tent to those strange women, but brought one of thē openly without shame into the Campe, before his brethren, before *Moses* and the other Magistrates; yea, to fill up the measure of his abominations, to the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, thereby blaspheming God, reproaching his Religion, enticing his brethren, insulting over *Moses* and the whole assembly, that cried unto God for mercy to stay his judgment, and to spare his people. Loe, such was the impudency of this *Zimri*, that notwithstanding the tumults and hurly-burlyes in the host, yet he is not moved to repentance, either with the punishment inflicted upon the malefactors, or by the plague of God raging among his brethren, or by the tears and supplications of the godly, entreating for pardon, & lying prostrate at the door of the Tabernacle: but in the midst of all these judgments, neither fearing GOD, nor reuerencing man, he seeketh to satisfy his filthy lust in the sight of the Sun, and in the open view of all his brethren, even of the whole host.

Verse 1. *Now whilst Israel abode in Sittim.*] Before we come to speak of the sin of the people, it shall not be amiss to consider the occasion whereby they fell into sin. We have heard how *Balaam* being hired to curse Israel, could not: for God stayed and restrained him, who was greedy of the wages of iniquity. Wherefore he counseled *Balak* to bring the people to destruction, by procuring them to fall into some sin. Thus he laid a stumbling block before the children of Israel, and thereby did draw them to spiritual and carnal fornication. For whatsoever the Israelites here committed, they did through the counsel and procurement of *Balaam*.

From hence we learn, that it is a particular note of false Teachers, and false doctrines, to set stumbling blocks before men, to draw them to uncleanness and wickedness, either against the first or second Table, or both. I say, false Teachers, which are the instruments of Satan (who he hath thrust into the church) have this special care to bring the servants of God into wickedness, to draw them to idolatry, and to destroy their faith. To this purpose *Moses* teacheth, Deut. 13, 1. that false Prophets shall set before them this end, to entice the children of God to serve false gods, but true Idols. This the Prophet *Ezekiel* noteth, chapter 13.19, that they made God's word to serve their bellies, and taught carnal liberty, sowing pillows under every arm hole, polluting the Name of God, for an handful of Barley, and for a piece of bread, slaying the souls of them that should not die, giving life to the souls that

should not live, crying peace, where God proclaimeth open war, & lying to the people that hear their lies. The Scribes and Pharisees corrupted the law by false interpretations and expositions, as appeareth in the Doctrine of Christ, reducing the Law to the true meaning of the Law-giver. So the Apostle declareth, that those ravening wolves which should creep into the Church of God, purpose to make havoc of the people of God: *I know this, that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock*, Acts 20, 29. The Apostle Paul prophesying of the coming of Antichrist, calleth the doctrine of Antichrist, *The mystery of Iniquity*, 2 Thess. 2, 7. It is the common practice of the Jesuits and Seminary Priests, scattered here and there in the Land, to bring the people to Idolatry.

The Reasons of this truth are manifest [Reason 1] First, from the counsel of God: for albeit no wickedness be in the most High, yet it is his wisdom and power to draw good out of evil as he did light out of darkness; that so they which are his, may be tried, that their faith may be proved, their love to God and the truth manifested, and his children always exercised, that they may be made the more careful and watchful, and so find by experience, how they can stand out unto the end of their days in all holy obedience. This reason is laid open in the thirteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, verse 3. where the doctrine hath his confirmation: *If there arise among you a Prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and give thee a sign or wonder, thou shalt not hearken to the words of the Prophet, for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul*. And the Apostle teaching that God hath appointed that heresies shall be in the Church, annexeth this reason, that the faith of God's children, seated in the heart, may be made manifest; *There must be even heresies among you, that they which are approved among you, might be known*, 1 Cor. chap. 11.

Another Reason, is in the malice of those [Reason 2] wicked men themselves. For this is the nature of the devil, and the property of devilish men, and the cruelty of them both; they carry a continual hatred to the truth and the professors of it, they seek to make a spiritual slaughter and havoc of the flock of Christ. Therefore the Apostle exhorting the Elders of Ephesus, prophesieth, *y^t grievous wolves should rage against the sheep of Christ, yea, of their own selves should men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them*, Act. 20, 30. All wolves do account and find by experience, the blood of Lambes to be sweeter thē the blood of all other beasts, and therefore they are sheep-byters, rather than hog-byters, or dog-byters. The profane and heathen are in the power and possession of Satan already, he hath made sure of them: his chiefest labor and endeavor is, to circumvent and subvert the servants of God. So his instruments do hate the faithful (as the wolf doth the sheep:) the lambes are mild, peaceable, and simple: the wolf, bloody, beastly, and cruel; & therefore no marvel if they seek to suppress the truth, and to overthrow the servants of God, which are the professors and maintainers of the truth 2 Tim. 3, 8.

Now let us apply this doctrine to our several [Use 1] uses. First, we may assure our own harts of this, that so long as this world continueth, the Church shall never be without unclean beasts to assault it; either heretics, or false seducers, or hyrelings, that regard the fleece more than the sheep, the dignity more than the duty, the profit more than the labor. Some are cruel and savage wolves, not sparing to devour the flock by open violence. Some are

cunning and crafty Foxes, undermining the faith of the faithful. Many unstable people, that are ever learning, and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth, are greatly offended because of the vanity and variety that is in men's opinions; and hereupon they cry out, they know not what way to take, they know not what doctrine to receive, they do not know in such diversities, what to believe. This scandal is hereby removed, and this objection answered. For seeing we learn that the end of wolves and seducers is to be occupied about God's people to ruin them, it followeth that the Church of Christ upon earth, shall always have some of these wolves and false Teachers, carrying a show of lawful Pastors, but indeed are ravening wolves. Wolves shall always be in the Church, of one sort or other, such as teach false doctrine, or persecute God's servants, or loving the hire more then the sweat or heat of the day, and the wages better then the work, and the gains rather then the pains and labor. Christ our Savior, whē the Pharisees had spoken against him, John 7, 47. and 8, 13. and 9, 16, 24, and sought both by persuasion and excommunication to lead away the people; to make the faithful wise against their practices, declareth his office and person in a Parable, John 10, 14, 30. wherein he compareth God's chosen, to sheep, and himself to a Shepherd: by this occasion he advertiseth them of three sorts of Teachers, which meddle with the flock of God; the first is a Shepherd; the second an hyreling; the third a thief and a robber. Christ also testifieth, that there shall be false Christ's, and false Prophets in the Church, that shall deceive if it were possible, the elect of God, Math. 24, 24.

So then, we are not to wonder at it, as at a strange thing, when we see diversity of judgments, and contrariety of opinions, nor by & by to say, Alas! what shall we do that are simple? There are great Doctors of one side, and as great Doctors of the other side: I will never be settled in religion, till all be agreed. This is a notable illusion of the devil, and a subtle delusion, whereby under a great show of wisdom, he draweth many to destruction. For these men think they speak discreetly and wisely, and yet they speak most ignorantly and foolishly. For wilt thou not resolve of thy religion, until there be a general agreement and a full accord of all parts? Then thou wilt never be settled nor resolved, thou wilt never be of any religion, inasmuch as thou shalt never see that perfect concord which thou supposest & surmisest. Where the good husbandmā soweth his good seed, the envious will sow his darnel, Math. 13, 25. Hence it cometh to pass, that in the Church there have always been Teachers against Teachers, Prophets against Prophets, Apostles against Apostles, Preachers against Preachers. For as God raised up his Prophets, so hath the devil his false Prophets; as Christ chose his Apostles, so the devil called his false Apostles; as God hath his Church, so the devil hath his chapel; and as God hath two or three gathered together in his Name, the devil will have twenty gathered together in his name. When God sent *Moses* and *Aaron* to work miracles in the sight of *Pharaoh*, to warrant his calling, and to bring his people out of the Land of Egypt, the devil had his two ministers, *Iannes* and *Jambres* that withstood *Moses* and *Aaron*, deluding the Egyptians, and hardening *Pharaoh* in his evil. When *Jeremiah* had in the Name of God denounced captivity to be brought upon the people, and determined y^e time to be seventy years, the devil provoked *Hananiah* a false Prophet, to speak in the presence of all the people, that within two years, the vessels of the Lord's house shall be restored, the yoke of *Nebucadnezzar* broken, & such as were carried away, be delivered out of

captivity, Ierem. 28, 3, 11. When *Micaiah* prophesied the overthrow of *Ahab*, and the scattering of Israel upon the Mountains, as sheep that had no Shepherd, 2 Kings 22, 17, 22, the devil bestirred himself, & went out as a false spirit in the mouth of all his Prophets. Here we see Prophets teaching against Prophets, and the servants of God set against the servants of the devil. This is it which the Apostle *Peter* witnesseth, 2. Pet. 2, 1, 2. *There were false Prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false Teachers among you; which privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that hath bought them, &c.*

True it is, it is a great temptation when we behold such difference and opposition. *Moses* and *Aaron* saw the enchanters counterfeit the signs and miracles which they wrought by the finger of God, yet did they not distrust their calling, nor cry out against God. A man would think *Moses* and the Magicians to be of equal power and authority, and one to be esteemed as much as the other. Thus the ungodly shall always find something to delude them, and to hold them in blindness. Such as will not believe the truth, shall be fed with dreams, and be deceived with lies, 2 Thes. 2, 10. Notwithstanding, as the rod of *Moses* devoured the charmers rod, so the truth shall overcome errors, and the light of the Sun shall abolish the darkness of the night. This the Apostle *Paul* alledgeth to comfort *Timothy*, and in his person encourageth all the servants of GOD, and Ministers of his word, showing, *That he will provide that his truth shall not always be oppressed, though it be suppressed for a season, yet in the end it shall prevail*, 2 Tim. 3, 3, 8. God will make it to be received and entertained, when Satan and his instruments shall be confounded. Albeit *Iannes* and *Jambres* withstood *Moses*, and resisted the truth, yet their madness was made manifest to all. Thus then we have two manner of comforts, when we see the truth not received, but resisted; not believed, but contradicted; First, because the Lord useth us no otherwise then he hath used his Church at all times, and in all ages. *Moses* and the Prophets had continual war made against them: CHRIST and his Apostles were gain-said and withstood: therefore let us take it patiently at this day, if we suffer and sustain the like measure at the hands of wicked and ungodly men. For we must not look that our condition should be better then of *Moses* and the Prophets: or what reason have we to expect a privilege or prerogative above them? Secondly, the end shall always be good, & the issue blessed, though it grieve us to fight, and the truth sometimes seem to be in danger, yea, to be utterly abolished; let us wait God's leisure, and consider, that howsoever it may be smothered with the cloudy mystes and darkness of the night, yet it shall prevail and break forth as the light, in the open sight of all men that have spiritual eyes to look upon it.

Seeing therefore the truth of God shining brightly, hath always been resisted, and that the true Prophets of God have been withstood, so as they could never serve God quietly, through the malice of Satan, who continually goeth about to stop the course of sound doctrine; let us not be offended with false opinions; it hath been so from the beginning, and will continue so unto the ending of the world: but rather labor to have our hearts established in the truth, that we be not carried about with every blast, as the waves of the sea; and try all things, holding fast that which is good. 1 Thess. 5, 21. We must not refuse and reject the truth of God, because the father of lies seeketh to hinder the free passage of it, by broaching lies among the people. It is an evident sign that the truth is among us, because Satan sweateth so much against it, and laboreth to poison it with his own inventions.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing false Teachers are thrust upon the Church, to draw it into error and falsehoods, this showeth the great necessity of the Ministry of the word, not only to ingender true knowledge of repentance and obedience to God, but also to continue men in the faith, and to prepare them against heresies and false opinions. And surely the mercy of God herein is great unto us, in commanding the sanctification of the Sabbath (a duty so much neglected of master and servant) whereby we are charged to rest from our labors, to assemble together in one place, and to attend upon the Ministry of the word. For how many among our selves, and elsewhere, do never so much as think of God, or of religion; do never hear of the danger of sin, of the necessity of grace, of the reformation of their life, but on the Lord's day? If there were not a set day appointed for these purposes, and a solemn time of assembling our selves determined: the greatest sort would become as rude and unreformed as the Barbarians, or the wild Irish. If then we would be directed in the truth, and supported from falling into error, we must submit our selves unto the Ministry of the word, Mal. chap. 2, verse 7. and be content to be guided by the ordinance of God.

This is it which our Savior speaketh, reproving the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, *Are ye not therefore deceived, because ye know not the Scripture, nor the power of God?* Mark, chapter 12, verse 24. It is dangerous to rest where there is no bread to sustain the body, and to preserve life. It is dangerous to dwell in a City assaulted by enemies, having no watchman to give warning of their approaching. It is dangerous to have a flock of sheep compassed about with wolves, having no Shepherd to attend upon them, and to look unto them. But of all dangers it is the greatest, to live where the bread of God's word is not broken, where the sound of God's silver Trumpet is not heard, and where God's flock is not led in green pastures. The word is a Pearl of all Pearls, which a wise Merchant would purchase at a great price, rather than live without it. Where the preaching of the word ceaseth, the people perish, Prov. chapter 29, verse 18. Where the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch, Matthew, chap. 15, verse 14. Where the watchman bloweth not the Trumpet, and the people is not warned, Ezek. chap. 33, verse 6, both the Watchman and the people are taken away in their sins. Where the Salt of God's word doth not season the people with holy and wholesome doctrine, Math. chapter 5, verse 13, they rot and putrefy in their corruptions.

As then we would be free from error, and not be carried away with false doctrine: so it is required of us to be careful in using the means that may bring us to the truth, and keep us from the paths of falsehood. And it shall be a vain thing for any man to imagine himself to be able or likely to keep himself pure and undefiled from error and heresy, so long as we despise the ordinary way that is allotted and appointed to preserve us, from falling into false opinions.

Thirdly, seeing it is a note of a false teacher, [Use 3] to lay stumbling blocks before men, and to draw them to evil, and entice them to wickedness: by this rule it will evidently appear that Popish Religion is a most wicked Religion, and the Teachers thereof, false Prophets. The Religion maintained in the church of Rome, established in the Trent-council, & defended by the sworn vassals of the Pope, hath cancelled and disannulled the whole Law of God, it hath abrogated and repealed either directly or indirectly, either expressly, or by consequent,

either plainly, or in effect, all the commandments of the Moral Law, which God hath left to be a rule of righteousness, to remain in full strength, power, and virtue forever.

This will easily appear unto us, if we enter into the particular consideration of both the Tables.

The first Commandment chargeth us to have and to hold the true God only for our God, and to cleave unto him with full purpose of heart. But the Church of Rome resteth not in this one GOD; they teach us to make and acknowledge more God's. They make the Pope to be God, which title both in plain words is ascribed, and in power attributed unto him. For touching the name where by he is named, the Canonists call him, *Our Lord God the Pope*. Others call him, *The supreme God on earth, a visible God, the spouse of the Church, the corner-stone of the Church, the head of the Church, the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah, the light of the world, the King of Kings, & the prince of the Church*. Again, they advance y^e Saints departed into the honor of gods, praying unto them, and making them to hear our prayers, to know our hearts, to understand our thoughts, and to merit for us at the hands of God, which none can do but the Son of God. They do notoriously make the blessed Virgin the mother of Christ, to be as a god, & in express words call her a goddess; yea, they do in effect equal her with Christ, and ascribe as much to her, as unto him. As Christ is called our Lord, so they call her our Lady; he our King, she our Queen; he our Mediator, she our mediatrix; he like us in all things, sin only excepted; so she devoid of sin: he the only means whereby we must be saved, she our life, our joy, our hope, our help, our comfort, our stay in troubles. Lastly, to fill up the measure of their sin, they make the wooden cross as a god, they call it the ground of our salvation, and salute it by the name of their only hope.

2 The second commandment requireth, that we worship the true God purely, according to his most holy word, and forbiddeth all false and forged worship of the true Jehovah. The Church of Rome directly overturneth the intent and end of this Law by their imagery, they teach it to be lawful to make images of the true God, and to worship them with religious worship.

3 The third Commandment prescribeth unto us to give all honor and glory unto God that is due to his great name. The Church of Rome teach men to give this glory to some things else; they hold that the people are to be barred from the free use of the Scripture, & allow to swear by Saints, Angels, Cross, Rood, and such like.

4 The fourth Commandment appointeth the sanctification of the Sabbath. The church of Rome keep the days of Saints more duly and strictly, more solemnly and precisely then the Lord's day, and abrogate the liberty of the six days.

5 The fifth Commandment establisheth the several degrees amongst men. The church of Rome challenge an immunity for their clergy, and a freedom from answering before the secular power: they deny that their holy father oweth subjection to Princes or Emperors: They teach, he hath power to depose Princes, and to discharge their subjects from their allegiance, and may dispose of all kingdoms at his pleasure, Lastly, they free Children from

the obedience of their parents, and allow them to enter into Cloisters and Monasteries, without their counsel and consent.

6 The sixth Commandment bindeth up our hearts and hands from all cruelty, & willeth us to preserve life, and show forth the fruits of mercy. The Church of Rome open wide gappes for the free committing of murder, and shedding of blood. They give Pardons, nay promises of heaven to destroy and poison Princes: they appoint sanctuaries and privileged places for willful murderers, contrary to the law of God, who would have such pulled from his Altar, and no religious place to give them succor or protection, Exod. 21, 11. 1 Kin. 2, 31. And concerning the murthing of souls, a great part of their Doctrine leadeth the highway to it, and giveth them a deadly wound.

7 The seventh Commandment condemneth all impurity and uncleanness of soul & body, and commandeth us to possess our vessels in holiness and honor. The Church of Rome shaketh the foundation of this Commandment, and crosseth the purpose of God therein, by forbidding marriage, by accounting it an unclean life, by establishing vows of single life, by tolerating and defending the stews, by giving liberty for Incest, by allowing the brother to marry his brothers Wife, the uncle to marry his neece; and lastly, by forbidding such degrees as God hath not restrained, to open a way for the Popes dispensations.

8 The eight Commandment chargeth us with the goods of our neighbor. The church of Rome teach it to be lawful to make sale of men's souls out of Purgatory, & as cunning, nay cozening Merchants, they set all things at offer and proffer: they sell Crosses, Images, & Prayers: they sell the remission of sins, and the kingdom of heaven for money, yea, they rob men of their inheritance, defeating & defrauding their posterity, to maintain their idle bellies.

9 The ninth Commandment forbiddeth all false witness bearing. The Church of Rome do bear false witness against God, falsifying the Canon of the Scriptures, and make God speak that which he hath not spoken. They teach, that neither faith, nor promise, nor oath must be kept with Heretics; they maintain and practice the Doctrine of Equiuocation, of mental evasion, and secret reservation unto themselves of an hidden sense, contrary to the common understanding of the same words, thereby overthrowing all equity, & the course of justice among men.

The tenth Commandment restraineth the motions of the mind, and commandeth a pure heart toward our neighbor. The Church of Rome teacheth, that the motions without consent, are no sins at all; so that they expressly repeal this Commandment, and evidently declare, they never understood the meaning of it. Notwithstanding, these are those Teachers that boast themselves to be the successors of the Apostles, and to have the only right calling, yet we see how corrupt they are in doctrine, glorying in the naked name of the Church, and over-turning the foundation whereon it is built.

[Use 4] Lastly, this teacheth sundry duties both to the Pastors and people committed unto their charge. First of all, it putteth the Ministers in mind to look to their flocks, & to take heed to them that they be not seduced. We are all of us naturally inclined to falsehood and

error, and love darkness better than light, that so we may walk at liberty, and not be controlled. But our danger is greater by reason of false seducers which are deceitful workmen, and the instruments of the subtle Serpent, by whom they are inspired. This duty being so necessary in regard of the common danger of the Church, is diverse times urged by Christ and his Apostles. Christ warneth his Disciples to be watchful, because of false teachers that should arise in the last days, Matth. 24, 24. The Apostle *Jude* testifieth, chap. 3, verse 4. that he gave diligent heed to write unto them of the common faith, which was once given unto the Saints; because there were certain ungodly men crept in, which turned the grace of God into wantonness, and denied GOD the only Lord, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle *Paul* exhorting the elders of Ephesus, propounding unto them his own example, & foretelling the danger that hung over their heads, to wit, that their faith should be assaulted, and their zeal tried by false teachers springing up from themselves, saith: *Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the Flock, whereof the holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood: Watch therefore, & remember, that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears, Acts 20, 28, 29.* So the same Apostle chargeth *Timothy* before God, and before the Lord Jesus Christ, *Which shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing, and in his kingdom, to preach the Word in season, and out of season; because the time will come when they will not suffer wholesome Doctrine, but having their ears itching, shall after their own lusts get them an heap of Teachers, turning from the truth, and giving heed to fables.* Secondly, this serveth to instruct the people of God to be thoroughly furnished and well prepared against such seducers, that they may be able to stand our against them, and to resist them steadfastly in the faith. We shall be fitted to bear out this trial, if we be careful to understand the acceptable will of God; and if we be able to wield the sword of the Spirit, w^c is the word of God. Our Savior teacheth his Disciples to beware of *false Teachers, which come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening Wolves, Mat. 7, 15.* This is the use which the Apostle *Jude* maketh, chap. 4: where making mention that seducers were entered secretly and subtly among them, he moved them to strive and contend for the common faith taught by his ministry. If we would know how this should be, *let us have our faith stablished in the grace of God, and our hearts settled in the truth.* Faith is a precious Jewel, the Jewel of Jewels: it must then be kept well and warily. If a man have a pearl of great price committed unto him, he will not let it lie about commonly and carelessly for everyone to pilfer & purloine, but keep it under lock & key, that it may be preserved safe and sure. True Religion built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, is such a Pearl, it must be kept with watch and ward, or else it will be stolen and taken from us. It is such a Jewel, as when a man hath found it, he will sell all that he hath to keep and retain it.

[*The people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.*] We have heard before the author of that stumbling-block, which was laid before the feet of the people of God, to cause them to fall, to wit, *Balaam*; from him the counsel came, by him the net was made, and by *Balak* it was spread to intrap them. Now we see what they committed, & wherein they offended. So soon as the plot is devised, and the counsel followed, by and by the Israelites are taken in the snare. They banquet with the Moabites in the idol feasts, & so fall into fornication. These are temptations on the right hand, delights to the flesh, and enticements

to pleasures. The Doctrine arising from hence is this, That temptations from pleasures & delights, are of all other most dangerous, & more effectual to prevail over us then such temptations as stand on the left hand, to wit, crosses & adversities. Indeed we are assailed on every side; on the left hand by poverty, shame, contempt, persecutions, and such like, w^c cause many to hang down their heads, to cast away their confidence, to renounce their faith, & to depart out of y^e field without striking a stroke: but such as present themselves at our right hand, as riches, power, honor, glory, preferment profit, pleasure, which dazzle the eyes, and entangle the heart with the delights thereof, these are most cunning Engines and instruments, used or rather abused by Satan to our destruction. This was the last temptation, as most available in it self, that the devil used against our Savior Christ, Mat. 4, 8. showing and offering unto him the kingdoms of the world, & the glory thereof. Faire promises of high preferment prevailed with *Eve* to eat of the forbidden fruit. He gave *David* the foil by uncleanness, and *Noah* by drunkenness; *Solomon* by idolatry, and *Hezekiah* by prosperity, when he could not shake them by crosses and persecutions. Gold and silver have opened the gates of the Citty, when the force of the Cannon shot could not. This is that which the Prophet *David* meaneth, when he saith, *I said in my prosperity, I shall not be removed*, Psal. 30, 6. The Church of God was never so overtaken with adversity, as with abundance and prosperity: & more are brought to condemnation by riches, pleasures, and worldly lusts, then by poverty and persecution.

[Reason 1] The Reasons to enforce this doctrine, are diverse. First, prosperity puffeth up not only the wicked, but also the godly, and stealeth away the heart of man before he feel the danger, and can think upon that which will follow. Pleasures make us forget God and our selves; both seducing worldlings, and such as remember not God all their life long, and ouertaking the faithful (which have walked in the fear of God) when they have all things at will, so as they have not known themselves anymore. When *Solomon* was old, his wives by flattery turned away his heart. 1 Kings 11, 4. So did *Delilah* the heart of *Sampson*, judge. 14. & 15, who was made so weak & impotent by the look of a woman, that he yielded himself to her lure or lust most reproachfully, & brought himself into extreme bondage and slavery through her enticements.

[Reason 2] Secondly, carnal pleasures and riches are deceitful, they appear otherwise then they are. They are like to a bait that covereth a deadly hook, they are like the green grass, in which lurketh and lieth a Serpent ready to sting us unto death: they are like some cunning Couering that hideth a deep pit prepared to swallow us. This is the reason used by the Apostle, showing, *That they which will be rich, fall into temptations and snares, and into foolish and noisome lusts*, 1 Tim. 6, 9, 1. *Solomon* speaking of falling into whoredom, saith, Prov. 7, 21. & 5, 2. *The lips of a strange Woman drop as an honey comb, and her mouth is softer then Oil; when as her end is as bitter as wormwood, & as sharp as a two-edged sword: her paths lead to the grave, and her ways tend to hell by this means she catcheth fools, and bringeth them to the stocks as an Ox to the slaughter.*

[Use 1] The uses follow to be considered of us. First, let us learn from hence to confess, that prosperity is a slippery estate, and howsoever it be much desired and admired, yet it is full

of great dangers, and hedged in with diverse difficulties. This is not known nor understood of the men of this world. True it is, whē God sendeth famine, or war, or pestilence, and infectious diseases, all men can say, Alas, these are hard and heavy times, terrible, and troublesome seasons, we are always in danger of death. But we must remember, that when we live at ease, and all of us be at peace, when God delivereth us from diseases, we must not be secure and fall asleep in such prosperity, but consider that we are set in slippery places. This the Apostle *Paul* teacheth, 2 Tim. 3, 1, where he saith, *In the l•st days shall come perilous times: for men shall be lovers of themselves, proud, covetous, boasters, lovers of pleasures more then lovers of God, having a show of godliness, but denying the power thereof.* He speaketh of rough and grievous times, yet he neither nameth nor meaneth plague, pestilence, famine, sword, or such like calamities: but he telleth of things more dangerous, although we take our selves to be free and far from all danger. We account no times tedious and troublesome, but when we live in fear of death, or feel our bellies pinched, or else are crossed in the things of this life. Alas, saith one, how hard are these times? we suffer poverty, penury, and great misery! O woeful and wretched times, saith another; the plague is in such a place, it is come near our dwellings, we may look for it every day to sweep us away; how shall we do in these extremities? or whither shall we turn our heads from these troubles? Nevertheless, we must know, that a man may be free from all these distresses, & yet live in the greatest dangers. We may have peace and plenty, we may enjoy health and liberty, we may abound in riches & prosperity, & yet be possessed and compassed about with a thousand plagues more fearful, more deadly, and more dangerous then the pestilence, sword, and famine, which trouble us so much and bring us to our wits end. Let us take heed of our corrupt judgment of the times, and learn more to fear men that live in prosperity then such as sink down into adversity, inasmuch as their temptations are more strong & effectual. Prosperity, ease, peace, and riches, have turned through our corruption, to be the pests and poison of the Church. This the wise man teacheth, Prov. 1, 32. *Ease slayeth thee foolish, and the prosperity of fools destroyeth them.* It is therefore a great mercy of God, when he teacheth his children to stand upright in this slippery way, and that they make them not their bane, which are given them as a blessing. He setteth before their eyes the daily changes of all things under the Sun, and assureth them that nothing continueth in one estate: he frameth them to the contempt of the world, and setteth their hearts to desire no more then their most wise and provident Father thinketh meet for them. He teacheth them that the most beautiful flowers do fade and lose the glory which for a time they had. They see riches to be uncertain and decei•full, heal•h to be changeable, our friends and acquaintance subject to death, and all human things to be transitory, vain, and soon flitting away. By all these meditations it pleaseth God to stay up his people, that they fall not from him in their prosperity.

Secondly, it should teach us to use patience [Use 2] under the cross, and wisely to bear all the afflictions that God seeth good to lay upon us. We see by experience, that peace and plenty have done the Church more harm then wars and bloody persecutions: not that God's blessings are hurtful and pernicious of themselves, but by reason of our corrupt nature, which is ready to turn his blessings into curses, and his great mercies into so many plagues. This we see in the example of the *Sodomites*, they dwelled in a fruitful soil, like the garden of

Eden, (which God planted, and therein placed our first parents;) but they became exceeding sinners, and abused the blessings of God to their own confusion, *Gen.* 13, 10. How far prosperity & abundance make us to forget God, consider in the examples of *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Herod*, *Haman*, and sundry others. *Job* feared that his sons in their feasting and banqueting, had blasphemed God, *Job* 1, 5. It appeareth in the parable of the rich man, that made a feast, & sent out his messengers to invite his guests, that they refused to come, and pretended sundry excuses, one had hired a farm, another had bought five yoke of oxen, another had married a wife, he could not come: whereby our Savior showeth, what causes commonly they are that withdraw and withhold men's minds from obeying God's word, & embracing the Gospel, to wit, the cares of the world, the commodities of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, the pleasures of the flesh, & the study of earthly things: these were such rank thorns, that they choked all heavenly meditations, & hindered the growth of spiritual graces: these brought a fogginess upon the soul, and wrought in them a forgetfulness of God. Wherefore, let us not murmur and repine under the cross, but stoop down under his mighty hand, who sendeth his correction for our good, that we should not perish, and be condemned with the world, *Heb.* 12, 7. *Psal.* 119, 71. *1 Cor.* 11, 31. He doth not take pleasure and pastime in punishing of us, but as a loving father he respecteth only our benefit. He hath many ways to deliver us, & promiseth that our afflictions shall not be above our strength, but have a good end, and an happy issue. We must be content with the Lord's doings, and know that he will sanctify the afflictions of our bodies, to the comfort of our souls, whilst those that flow in earthly blessings, and abound in outward prosperity, do forget God that made them, and run on in the pride of their hearts to unthankfulness against God.

[Use 3] Thirdly, let us not be deceived with sinful pleasures, when the bait is offered, and the net pitched before us, to take us with the hook, and to catch us in the snare; but be careful to reject and refuse whatsoever tempteth us unto evil. Pleasures are of two sorts: some are simply unlawful, and not to be used at all, being directly contrary to the word of God. Such are the pleasures that carnal men take in eating till they surfeit, and in drinking till they are drunken: such are the pleasures that whoremongers take in adultery, fornication, and uncleanness. Others are of themselves indifferent, and in their own Nature neither good nor evil, but according as they are used, as hunting, hawking, and other lawful recreations; and even these, when they take up all our thoughts, and thrust out better things out of the doors, are called thorns in the parable of the Sower, as well as unlawful pleasures, *Luk.* 8, 14. There is nothing doeth so much choke the word of God, as the pleasures of the flesh; nothing causeth us so soon to forget it; nothing maketh us so soon weary, and loath to hear it, as the desire to follow and pursue after our delights; so that it standeth us upon to cut them up, and to pull them out of the ground of our hearts. We see men will not suffer briars and bushes to spring up where their corn should grow, much more it is required of us to rid our hearts of all occasions and allurements unto sin. The Faith of *Moses* is commended, that he refused to be called the son of *Pharaohs* daughter, and chose rather to suffer adversity with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the rebuke of Christ greater riches then the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. Let us therefore shake off all pleasures of sin, not only such as are in themselves

ungodly and unlawful, but all other whatsoever, when they become clogs and incumberances unto us, and hinder us in the duties of our callings. Many indeed are drawn and driven from the word by trouble and persecution: but many moe fall away by peace & prosperity, by riches, wealth, & pleasures, which (when men are delighted and drunken with them) are more dangerous enemies then affliction and adversity. We see many by experience, who in the days of tribulation have not given over their hold, but endured slanders, revilings, imprisonment, hunger, and thirst in a necessitous estate; yet have been overcome with peace, drowned with sensuality, and lulled asleep in carnal security. Even as a company of Mariners, so long as they are in danger of drowning, through violence of winds, and rage of the Tempest, and working of the sea, do watch and look about them, follow their calling, and keep the ship from sinking; but when all is safe and quiet, do fall out among themselves, or delight in quaffing, and care not which end go forward; so is it with us that live in these days of peace and quietnesse, we remember not what God hath done for us, neither are led by his mercies unto obedience. We cannot deny but that our blessings have been many and great, but as *Moses complaineth*, Deut, 32, 15. *He that should have been upright when he waxed fat, spurned with his heels*. For it may be truly said of us which is spoken against Israel; we are fat, we are gross, we are laden with fatness, and therefore have we forsaken the Lord, & have not regarded the strong God of our salvation: thus like foolish people and unwise have we rewarded the Lord for his goodness, and recompensed the kindness that we have received at his hands.

[Use 4] Lastly, it is our duty to pray continually to God, that we be not overtaken with them. We live in the days of peace, we dwell quietly in our houses, we taste not the bitterness of affliction, as our neighbors have done round about us; let us take heed we fall not into pride and presumption, and so by the just judgment of God for our unthankfulness, be delivered over as bondslaves unto the devil. This is it which is offered to our considerations in the sixth and last petition of the Lord's prayer, where we pray *not to be led into temptation*, but to be *delivered from evil*, Mat. 6, 13. It is not the meaning of Christ in these words, that we should desire of God to be wholly freed from temptations, but we crave his grace, and the power of his Spirit, to sustain & uphold us that we be not overcome, & yield unto them; that we may stand steadfast in our obedience, that we may not be puffed up with prosperity, nor dejected or cast down with adversity. This made the wiseman say to God in his meditations, *Give me not riches, but feed me with convenient food for me, lest being full, I lie, and say, Who is the Lord?* He prayeth in that place, not only against inconvenient want, and hurtful poverty, but against inconvenient wealth, hurtful store, and overflowing and superfluous abundance, lest his heart should be lifted up, and so he turn from the Commandments of God. So then, when we live under plentifulnesse of outward blessings, when we enjoy health, wealth, peace, and sufficiency of all things for this present life, are we free from dangers? have we no need to watch? or may we be secure? Surely, if we will judge aright, and measure our cases, either by the right line of God's holy law, or by our own Christian experience, we shall find our peril to be the greater, when we have such strong allurements and deceivable provocations, to set our delight upon this world, then when we are holden under afflictions. For then Satan as a subtle enemy, craftily windeth in with us, and worketh upon our hearts by occasion of these

blessings of God bestowed upon us. For as the parching heat of the Sun will sooner make a man cast away his cloak than the boisterous and blustering winds: so the gracious days of peace shining upon us, will sooner cause us to cast off our confidence than the storms and tempests that beat upon us. *Moses* charged the people of Israel when they were brought into the land of Promise, flowing with milk and honey, to beware lest they forgot the Lord which brought them out of the land of Egypt, Deut. 6, 12. Whilst *David* wandered in the wilderness, was hunted out of holes by *Saul*, into which he was glad to creep to hide himself, and was trained up in the school of afflictions, he comforted himself in the Lord his God, he made him his rock and refuge, he asked counsel of him, & followed his direction: but when he had rest from enemies, safety from dangers, deliverance from troubles, comfort from sorrows, and freedom from afflictions, he fell into horrible sins, both in the matter of *Uriah*, & in numbering of the people. When *Hezekiah* fell sick, and received a message that the sickness was in it self unto death, Isaiah 38, 2. he turned his face to the wall, he prayed to the Lord, and besought the Lord to remember how he had walked before him in the truth, & with a perfect heart: but after that God had remembered him according to his prayer, he forgot the Lord incontinently: so soon as he was released and restored, he was puffed up with ambition and vainglory, when he shown to the messenger of the king of Babel, the riches of his kingdom, the house of his Armor, the greatness of his Treasure, and the abundāce of his Spices and precious Oyntments. When the rich man in the Gospel was willed to sel all that he had, and give it to the poor, & thereby tried whether he loved the Lord, better then riches, he went away heavy and sorrowful: whereupon our Savior delivereth this warning to teach us wisdom, Matth. 19, 23. *Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.* He doth not deny the rich man entrance, or shut the door against him; but he layeth before him his danger, and telleth us how hardly he shall enter. He never said in the Gospel, how hardly shall the poor man enter into the kingdom of heaven? He never said, how hardly shall he that is persecuted, imprisoned, reviled, afflicted, and tormented, enter into the kingdom of heaven? But he warneth him that liveth in abundance, to look to his footing that he do not slide, and to take heed to his heart, that it be not lifted up. So then, to conclude, when the light of God's countenance doeth shine in our dwellings; when he filleth our houses with store, giveth us an ample portion of wealth & possessions: when he furnisheth our table, and maketh our cup to run over; let us bless the name of the Lord for our plenty which he hath given us: let not us be high minded, and trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God which giveth us abundantly all things to enjoy, which heart can wish or tongue can crave, or hand can receive.

[Verse 2. *Which called the people unto the sacrifice of their gods.*] The purpose of the Moabites and Midianites was to draw the people into sin, and by sin to bring upon them the judgments of almighty God. No doubt they had heard how God had wasted and destroyed them in the Wilderness, as we read in Numb. chap. 14. verse 29, and their carcasses were consumed by diverse and sundry plagues that did break in upon them by the violence of fire, by the edge of the 〈2 pages missing〉 bountiful, yea prodigal, even to waste their wealth, and to consume their substance, rather than be disappointed of their enterprize. Therefore it standeth us upon, to look warily to our selves, and to have an eye unto them, that they do

not suddenly surprise us, & work our confusion. This is the use which Christ teacheth us. Mat. 10, 16. *I send you as Sheep in the midst of Wolves: be ye therefore wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doves.* This is to be marked of us, and to be practiced by us. Our enemies are not simple and sottish, that they should be contemned, but deep in counsel, prudent in enterprising, wary in proceeding, political in preventing, and sudden in executing what they have devised. They are for the most part wiser in their generations, then the children of light. We are light of credit, ready to believe new reconciled friends, forward to trust fair promises, & apt to rest on shows and pretences of a good meaning. This hath bred greater mischief to the Church then open violence. Their subtlety hath cut deeper, and prevailed further then the sword. If we then shall be found sleeping, when they are watchful, or careless when they are prepared, or naked when they are armed, or secure when they are busily employed; we must look for no pity at their hands where we find no piety, but consider that *the mercies of the wicked are tokens of their cruelty, and their bowels of compassion, are the ways of destruction.* Prouerb. 12, 10.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is our duty to pray unto God to be delivered from such ungodly and unreasonable men. If once we fall into their snares, we must never look to escape. We must watch and pray that we fall not into the trappes and trains which they make daily to surprise us. Hence it is that the Apostle saith, 2 Thess. 3, 2. *Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have a free passage, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable & evil men, for all men have not faith.* We are not able to free and deliver our selves nor match our adversaries in deep devices, who make conscience of nothing. Al our hope and trust must be in God, who will catch the wise in their own craft, and confound them in their own devices. He will turn them into the pit which they have digged, and take thē in the snares which they have prepared for others. As they regard not to fill up the measure of their iniquity, and add sin unto sin; so God will bring their works to light, & fill the cup of vengeance unto them to drink. Let us therefore abstain from their ways, & not give liberty unto our selves to follow them in evil, no not a little: but call upon God in the days of our trouble, who will deliver us out of our distress, Ps. 50, 15. This we see practiced by the Israelites, when they were vexed & sore tormented by the Ammonites, they cried unto the Lord, saying, *We have sinned against thee, even because we have forsaken our own God, and have served Baalim: do thou unto us whatsoever pleaseth thee, only we pray thee deliver us this day,* Judges 10, 10, 15. When David after his numbering of the people, had the choice given unto him of three judgments, whether he would have brought upon him the want of bread, or the sword of the enemy, or y^e plague of pestilence: he said, *I am in a wonderful straight: let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hand of man,* as 2 Sam, 24. verse 14. When one told *Jehoshaphat*, that a great multitude came against him out of Aram, he set himself to seek the Lord, he asked counsel of him, he proclaimed a fast, he acknowledgeth his own weakness, he dependeth upon God's power, & prayeth to be deliuerd from them that sought his destruction, 2 Chr. 20, 6. When *Hezekiah* saw the enemy come to besiege Jerusalem, and perceived his purpose to fight against it, he put on sackcloth, and came into the house of the Lord God, he received the blasphemous Letters of the King of *Ashur*, reviling the Lord, defying his people, and disgracing them both: he spread them before the Lord, and prayed

earnestly unto him to save them out of the hands of their enemies, tht all the kingdoms of the earth might know, that the Lord is only God. So it standeth us upon, to fly unto God, & to call upon him to preserve us from our enemies; and then it shall come to pass, that he which was an arm of defense unto them, will be our helper in due time, even in affliction, who never faileth those that put their trust in him.

[The people ate, and bowed down to their gods.] Here we see another sin of the Israelites laid before us; they fall from one evil into another, from the breach of the first Table, into the breach of the second. Such as made no conscience to eat meat in the Idols Temple, and to bow down to strange gods, no marvel if they followed strange flesh, and fell into the sin of fornication.

From hence ariseth this truth, That all such as are impure and corrupt in the worship of God, are commonly lewd in their outward dealing, and loose in their behavior toward men. Spiritual and bodily fornication, do usually go together; Idolatry and Adultery do ordinarily follow one another; as in this place, we see the people sacrificed unto their gods, and committed whoredom. This the Prophet *Hosea* expresseth at large, chap. 4, 1, 2: *There is no knowledge of God in the land. And what followeth hereof? By swearing & lying, and by killing and stealing, & whoring they break out, and blood toucheth blood.* Thus the Prophet, or rather the Lord by the Prophet, upbraideth the people, *Jeremiah* 5, 7 & 7, 9, 10. *How should I spare thee for this? Thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: though I fed them to the full, yet they committed adultery, and assembled themselves by companies in the harlots houses.* The Apostle *Paul* declareth, that the Heathen which knew not God, were full of all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit: they were slanderers of men, haters of God, doers of wrong, inuenters of evil things, disobeyers of parents, breakers of Couenants, destitute of natural affections, and void of all mercy, *Rom.* 1, 29: And the same Apostle writing to the *Ephesians*, chap. 4, 18. This the Apostle *John* noteth in the *Nicolaitanes*, *Revel.* 2, 14, 20: who maintained the doctrine of *Balaam*, counseling *Balak* to lay a stumbling block before the children of Israel, persuading to eat of the things sacrificed to Idols, and alluring unto fornication. This he reproveth in the false Prophetess (whom for her lewd qualities he calleth *Jezebel*) who deceived the servants of God, to make them commit fornication, and to eat meats that were sacrificed unto idols. Thus it fareth with the Nations that know not God, they are ignorant of the duties which are due unto men.

The Turks that have seated their Empire in the East, and made a mixture of all Religions, to the end they might draw some of all sorts unto themselves, do profess and practice most abominable vices, even by the doctrine of their Alcoran, where that false Prophet Mahomet alloweth a man to have four wives, and to keep fifteen Concubines: he forbiddeth any to be accused of adultery, under four witnesses, and accounteth those most holy men, which accōpany with beasts. The Church of Rome defiling the worship of God by detestable idolatry, as gross as the Heathen committed, and in some part exceeding all the idolatry of the Heathen, in that they worship a breaden god: maintain filthiness and uncleanness sundry ways: First, in the toleration of the Stews, flat against the Commandment of God,

Deut. 23, 17. *There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be an whorekeeper among the sons of Israel.* This toleration is a flat occasion to many young men and women that otherwise might abstain from this kind of wickedness. And what monstrous impiety is this, when father and son, Brother and Brother, Uncle and Nephew, shall come to one and the same harlot, one before or after the other? Secondly, they deny marriage as an unholy thing to their holy Clergy, and thereby open a gappe to all kind of pollutions, contrary to the express word of God, that a Bishop should be the husband of one wife, and that marriage is left free, and accounted honorable in all, and the bed undefiled, 1 Tim. 3, 2. & Heb. 13, 4. Thirdly, not to stand further in ripping up these enormities in this place, their Law alloweth the marriage of any persons beyond the fourth degree, whereby in some cases followeth incest. Al these testimonies and examples being thus laid together, do teach us, that corruption of manners, and lewdness of life, do always accompany defects and defilings in the true Religion.

Let us come to consider the causes, to make it more plain and evident unto us. First, such [Reason 1] is the judgment and justice of God, punishing one sin with another, giving over such as make no conscience to know or acknowledge God, into a reprobate sense, and appointing them to be vessels of shame and dishonor. This is the reason which the Apostle directly handleth, Rom. 1, 25, 26. *They turned the truth of God into a lie, serving the creature, and forsaking the Creator, which is blessed forever, Amen: for this cause God gave them up unto vile affections, for even their women did change the natural use, into that which is against nature, and likewise also the men left the natural use of the woman, & burned in their lust one toward another, and man with man wrought filthiness, and received in themselves such recompense of their error, as was meet.* Where we see, the Apostle charging the Gentiles with turning the glory of the incorruptible God to the similitude of the image of a corruptible man, and so regarded not to serve him, declareth, that God gave thē up to their hearts lusts, and delivered them up into a reprobate mind, so that they committed uncleanness, they defiled their own bodies between themselves, & did those things which are not convenient. So the same Apostle in another place teacheth, *That God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe lies, that all they might be damned which believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness,* 2 Th. 2, 11, 12. This dealing is righteous in God, being a punishment for sin, howsoever it be wicked in the committers.

Secondly, the first Table containeth the great and chief Commandments, and the second is like unto it, Math. 22, 38. So then all profaneness is as a bitter and poisoned root, infecting far and near: and as a Tree that ouersadoweth all good herbs, that they cannot grow up or prosper. Our Savior Christ making the sum of the first Table to consist in loving God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind, calleth this the first and the great Commandment, as the fountain and foundation of the other. So the Apostle *John*, making the love to God and to men, necessarily to concur and accompany one another, saith; *If any man say, I love God, and yet hate his brother, he is a liar: for how can he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, love God whom he hath not seen?* 1 John, chapter 4, verse 20. And hence it cometh to pass, that where men have not the fear of God, and the knowledge of his Name, they become abhominable in all their doings.

Thirdly, the devil ruleth & worketh in such as make no care to know God, but walk according to y^e course of this world, in superstition, & in idolatry. The Apostle showeth this to be the cause why they had their conversation in times past, in the lusts of the flesh, & in the fulfilling of the will of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the Children of wrath as well as others, *Because they were ruled by the Prince that ruleth in the air, the spirit that worketh in all the children of disobedience*, Ephes. 2, 2, 3.

Let us now proceed to the Uses. First, we [Use 1] learn from hence, that we may justly fear all injurious, unjust, and unclean dealing, and look for fraud and oppression where there is no true Religion established and professed. When *Abraham* went down into Egypt with his wife, and afterward sojourned in the land of Gerar among the Philistines, where was no true knowledge of the true God, he thought thus with himself: *Surely the fear of God is not in this place, & they will slay me for my wives sake*; and thereby was moved to deny the protection of his wife, and to say she was his Sister, Gen. 12, 12. & 20, 11. This is to be expected & looked for from all such places and persons, that have in them no religion of Christ, no godliness of life, no fear of God; we must prepare our selves to endure all hard & wrongful dealing at their hands. We see this in the example of the Sodomites toward *Lot*, Gen. 19, 9. & in the inhabitants of Gibeah toward the Levite and his wife, Judge. 1•, 22. For where the fear of God ruleth not, there is no virtue, no truth, no mercy, no honesty, no sobriety, no conscience. They refrain not violence, but run into all wickedness. We see then what holdeth out, and letteth in the flood of ungodly-lines into a place, be it kingdom, city, house, family, or particular person: if the fear of God be there, the wall is strong, the bank is sure, the waves of an evil life cannot overflow: if it be not there, nothing is so horrible and unnatural, but it will enter, and it shall easily be entertained. Happy is that place, and blessed y^t person wherein this fear is, and cursed where this wanteth. For as the bank doth keep the water from overflowing, so doth the fear of God in man or woman hold out the floods & inundations of sin, that it ouerspreadeth not, as otherwise it would. A notable proof of this appeareth in the midwives mentioned in Exodus, ch. 1, 17: when *Pharaoh* commanded them to kill every male child that was born of the Israelitish women, what was it that kept out this most cruel murder from heart and hand, but this reverent fear of God more then of man, and of his commandment more then of the decree of the King? for so saith the Scripture, *The midwives feared God, and therefore did not as the king had charged thē*. This fear made *Joseph* that he durst not sin against his master when he was tempted, nor against his brethren by whom he had been injured, Gen. 39, 9. and 50, 19. This fear is the *beginning of wisdom, and a good understanding have all they that do thereafter, the praise of it endureth forever*, Psal. 111.10.

[Use 2] Secondly, we see that they which make no conscience to serve God, and to perform the parts of his worship in the exercises of religion, can perform aright no duties to men in any sincerity or simplicity. Such as have no religion in them, are given over to all licentiousness, they are always justly to be doubted, worthily to be suspected, and hardly to be trusted: we are not to look for good dealing to come from them for conscience sake, more then by constraint or necessity, or for y^e praise or applause of the world. For how can any man suppose that that son will be dutiful to a stranger, that is rebellious and disobedient to his natural father? Or that the servant will be true and trusty to another, who hath plaid the

thief and false varlet to his own master? *God is our Father, the Lord is our master: if any man have no care to serve him, to obey him, to fear him; how can it be expected that he should deal uprightly with men, & discharge a good conscience toward them?* There are no duties of the second table accepted, where obedience to the first table is not performed. So then, no trust is to be given, no truth to be looked for of such as are idolaters, and have no religion at all in them. The Prophet *Micah* complaining of the profaneness of the Jews, that the good were perished out of the land, and the righteous from among men, saith: *The best of them is a abriar, and the most righteous of them is a thorny hedge. Trust ye not a friend, neither put ye confidence in a counselor, keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom: for the son reuileth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother: the daughter in law against her Mother in law, and a man's enemies are the men of his own house,* Mic. 7, 5. This place is applied by our Savior Christ against such as shall hate the Gospel; to trust such too far, though never so near us in the flesh, will bring repentance when it is too late.

Lastly, we learn, that the best way to bring a people to be obedient and well ordered for their outward carriage, is to work in them y^e knowledge of religion. If we would have children in their places to be dutiful, servants to be trusty, and both of them to be subject to such as are set over them, behold here the ready way, and the right course that is to be taken with them, we must plant in them the fear of the Lord. It is a common complaint to cry out of the iniquities of times, & to inveigh against the stubbornness of children & unfaithfulness of servants: but in the mean season we consider not where the cause lieth, & how it is to be amended and redressed. The chief and principal occasion of all household disorder, is the want of Christian instruction. Youth are like to the potters clay, fit to be framed into any fashion: or like the soft wax that is ready to receive any impression. If they be suffered to run on without godly education, & to wax ripe in sin as they grow strong in age, they will sooner break like the old tree, then bend like a tender twigge. *Abraham* is commended by the mouth of GOD for this care; Gen. 18, 19: he had an excellent family, a blessed *Isaac*, an obedient wife, and trusty servants; everyone knew his duty, everyone was found faithful in his calling. How dutiful *Isaac* was, appeareth in the preparation y^t *Abraham* made to offer him up as a burnt Offering to God, according to the commandment of God, Gen. 22, 9: which was a great trial of a great faith, by a great work: he did not rebel and resist his father, but suffered himself willingly to be bound, quietly to be laid upon the Altar, and patiently made himself ready to endure the stroke of the knife. How obedient *Sara* was, is notably shown herein, in that *Abraham* having received an express commandment to go out of his country, from his kindred, and from his fathers house, unto a land which God would show him: she waited not for a special calling to warrant her, nor asked counsel of her corrupt affections, but followed him whither soever he went, and was a comfortable companion with him in all his afflictions. Hence it is that the Apostle *Peter* setteth her forth as a worthy pattern for all women to look upon, 1 Pet. 3, 6. *After this manner in times past, did the holy women (which trusted in God) attire themselves, and were subject to their husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, and called him Sir, whose daughters ye are whiles ye do well, not being afraid of any terror.* And touching the trustines of his servants, we may see it by their readiness to arm themselves, and hazard their lives to recover *Lot* that was taken prisoner, and by the employment of y^e Steward of

his house to fetch a wife for his son *Isaac*, whose devotion towards God, whose love towards his master, whose faithfulness towards *Isaac*, whose conscience in his place, is plainly revealed in the word of God, Gen. 14, 14. & 24, 2. The like we might profitably observe in *Cornelius*, Act 10, 7, he feared God with all his household, & therefore when he was willed by the Angel to send for *Peter*, whereby he might be further instructed with his family, he had a faithful soldier whom he employed in this weighty and necessary business. This was the care of the good and godly kings of *Judah*, *David*, *Jehoshaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, and some others: the first thing which they observed, was the reformation of religion, the establishment of God's worship, and the sending forth of the Levites to teach the people. If these means of instructions were used in Ireland, Wales, & other places throughout the land (for there is want hereof everywhere) if this way were taken in private families by the governors thereof, the people would not be so tumultuous, seditious, and rebellious, and servants would not so break out into swearing, lying, stealing, stubbornness, & all unfaithfulness. We should not have our Magistrates so continually troubled, nor our prisons so much filled, nor executiō so often done upon malefactors. For if we did provide to have them taught the fear of God, we should find them more dutiful & serviceable in their callings. But how can we look that they should be faithful to us when they are unfaithful to God? Or how should they fear us, when they are ignorant of the fear of the Lord? or how should they be obedient to us for conscience sake, when they make no conscience of disobedience to God? This serveth to reprove all those y^t punish severely the transgressions of the second Table, and the trespasses done to themselves, but are loose and negligent in punishing the breaches of the first Table. These men begin at the wrong end. A Physician that would cure a disease, must first take away the cause. He that would dry up any stream or running water, must stop the head & fountain. So the only remedy and right order to purge the commonwealth & family of treasons, murders thefts, and such like enormities, is to be sharp and severe against idolatry, blasphemies, contempt of true religion, and of the service of God. So then, let us in our places endeavor that they which are committed unto us, may know the acceptable will of God, and have it taught among them: this will do them in soul & body the greatest good: this will make them most painful & profitable to themselves, leaving a blessing behind it. For as they grow in godliness, so they will increase in faithfulness.

[Verse 3. *And Israel coupled himself to Baal-Peor.*] We have already seen the sins into which the Israelites did fall: now let us consider the occasion here offered unto us, whereby they were drawn into this spiritual and bodily fornication, *They coupled themselves to Baal-peor*, they frequented the company of the Midianitish women, and used the familiarity of evil persons, & so were brought not only to allow of their sins, but to fall into sin themselves. This teacheth us this truth, that it is dangerous to the Church to have fellowship with the wicked. We are always in danger of falling into evil, the devil is ever at hand ready to tempt, the world to allure, the flesh to entice: but our estate is more dangerous, when we join with wicked men, & grow in a league with them. This apeareth in the people of Israel who dwelt among y^e Canaanites, Judges 3, 5, 6. *They took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.* This is it which is remembered in Psalm 106, 35. *They destroyed not the people as the Lord had commanded them, but were mingled amongst the*

Heathen, and learned their works, and served their Idols, which were their ruin. Hereunto cometh the exhortation of the Apostle, Ephes. 5, 7, 11. Bee not companions with them. And the Apostle John setteth down, 2 John. 10, 11. If there come any unto you & bring not this doctrine, receive him not to house, nor bid him, God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.

This will yet better appear, if we mark the Reasons whereby it is confirmed. First, the godly and ungodly differ as things most opposite, as fire and water, as heaven and hell. It is impossible to make an agreement between things that are so flatly contrary one to the other. It is a vain thing to attempt a reconciliation between extremities. This reason the Apostle urgeth, 2 Cor. 6, 14. *Be not unequally yoked with the Infidels: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? Or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath the believer with the Infidel? And what agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* This opposition being so great, should be effectual to draw us to shake off wholly, and reject utterly, the company and society of the ungodly.

Secondly, the godly are sooner corrupted, [Reason 2] then the ungodly are gained. Nay, one wicked man will sooner seduce an hundred, in regard of the proneness of our nature to wickedness, and our untowardness to the fruits of godliness, then an hundred good men shall win one wicked man from his wicked ways. We see this in *Solomon*; was not he excellent in wisdom, Neh. 13.16, beloved of his God, and renowned above the Kings of Israel? He thought to have converted his wives, but his wives perverted him, and turned his heart after their gods, 1 Kings 11, 2. This we see in *Nehemiah*, who reproving the Israelites after their return from captivity for joining with the Idolaters, presseth unto them the example of *Solomon*: Did not *Solomon* the King of Israel sin by these things? yet among many Nations there was no King like him: for he was beloved of his God, and God made him King over Israel, yet strange women caused him to sin. To this purpose the Apostle compareth sin to a leaven, 1 Cor. 5, 6, whose nature is, in short time to leaven the whole lump. Evil men can teach us no good, but much hurt cometh to us by their infection. Whiles the Israelites lived in Egypt, they learned many Egyptian tricks, and practiced their fashions in worshipping the Calf. And common experience showeth, that they draw vanity and corruption unto themselves that use the company of vain and corrupt men, according to the saying of the Apostle, *Bee not deceived, evil words corrupt good manners*, 1. Cor. 15, 33.

It remaineth to handle the uses of this Doctrine. [Use 1] First, if wicked company be dangerous, much more is wickedness it self dangerous. For wherefore are we to avoid them, but for their wickedness sake? We must not hate their persons, but abhor their impieties. When the Apostle *Paul* had exhorted the Ephesians to be no companions with carnal men, he addeth; *Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darkness, but even reprove them rather.* If then such societies are to be forsaken, much more the works of darkness whereby we are corrupted. For as we are greatly to affect, & earnestly to desire the sweet fellowship of the godly, for their godliness and goodness sake, that we may learn to follow them: so on the other side, we are to shun the evil company of evil men, lest we learn their ways. True it is, if we would abstain altogether from the acquaintance and familiarity of fornicators, Idolaters, extortioners, railers, drunkards, and such like, *We must go out of the world*, 1 Cor. 6, 10. But

albeit we cannot wholly avoid them, yet we must not thrust our selves into them, nor delight in them, but be grieved at them, & so soon as we can, wind our selves out of thē. We shall learn no good by their society. Therefore *Solomon* saith, *He that walketh with the wise, shall be the wiser: but a companion of fools shall learn foolishness*, Prov. 13.20. Now albeit we cannot at all times forsake the familiarity of the unfaithful, yet we must ever abandon and abjure their unfaithfulness and ungodliness: we cannot ever refuse their company, but we must evermore renounce their impiety. Let us take heed we embrace none of their sins. He that standeth farthest from a raging flame, is frees• and farthest off from burning; he that walketh a great distance from the bank of the River, is safest from drowning. He that cometh not near places of infection, is surest to escape the danger. And as we are to beware of all their sins, so especially it behooveth us to be suspicious and fearful of those sins, unto which we know our selves most prone & inclined. For they do most of all delight us, and those are they which will soonest overturn us, and bring upon us destruction of soul and body.

Secondly, it serveth to reprove & condemn [Use 2] all such as are companions with profane men. The shrowding of our selves into such company, argueth a conformity in affections, howsoever we would have it thought to be otherwise. We see in the course of nature, that like will to like, and birds of a feather will fly and flock together. And if they be not yet made like unto them, and corrupted by them, it is greatly to be feared, they will be allured and enticed. *Jehoshaphat* was reproved for his friendship and aliance with *Ahab*, and in the end it was the ruin of his own house. The Prophet came unto him, and said, *Wouldst thou help the wicked, & love them that hate the Lord? Therefore for this thing the wrath of the Lord is upon thee*, 2 Chron. 19, 2. Happy is their estate, whose abode is continually amongst God's people, as the Prophet saith, Psal. 65, 3. *Blessed is he whom thou chooseth, and causest to come to thee: he shall dwell in thy Courts, and he shall be satisfied with the pleasures of thine house, even of thine holy Temple*. On the other side, we must confess it to be a woeful and heavy condition, to endure the company of the wicked. It is a part of our grief and sorrow, to be in their society, being always joined with sin and to the dishonor of God. This made the Prophet cry out with great perplexity, while he lived amongst the ungodly, and to acknowledge his case to be pitiful and miserable, *Woe is me, that I remain in Mesech, and dwell in the Tents of Kedar*, Psal. 120, 5. There is nothing that more discovereth what lieth in the heart, then the company with whom we ordinarily resort, and the places to which we commonly resort. The heart of man is deceitful, and the secret corners of it are past finding out: but the company which we use, shall try what is in it. If the heart be set upon goodness, we will not delight in those that are inclined to leudnesse. The Prophet *David* testifieth hereby the uprightness of his heart, that all his delight was in the Saints, Psal. 16, 3 And Psalm. 119, 63. *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and keep thy precepts*. And Psal. 26. *I have not haunted with vain persons, neither kept company with the dissemblers: I have hated the assembly of the evil, and have not accompanied with the wicked*. Such therefore as make themselves merry with lewd company, and can laugh most heartily at their sins, declare that they have corrupt and sinful hearts, and have not yet given them unto God.

Thirdly, we must learn in regard of the [Use 3] danger of evil company, to cast out every foul spirit out of our societies. We have heard much of some places that have been haunted with

evil spirits: and indeed it is most true: for there are few places or Parishes that are not frequented and pestered with many evil spirits. There is no house or family almost to be found, that doth not hold & boulstersome evil spirit. In the family of *Adam*, was *Cain*: in the family of *Noah*, was *Ham*: in the family of *Abraham*, was *Ishmael*: in the family of *Isaac*, was *Esau*: in the family of *David*, was *Absalom*: and these were foul spirits. The children of God that labor to direct their ways aright, and to have their families purged from gross corruptions, (as *Jacob* cleansed his house from Idolatry) cannot so sanctify and reform them, but some unclean spirit or other will wind in himself, infecting & infesting the family with his presence, and corrupting the rest by his example, and poisoning them by his evil suggestions. *Achan* must be found out, unless we would have the whole host of God to be discomfited, Josh. 7, 11. *Jonah* must be cast out into the sea, unless we would have the Ship drowned, Ion. 1, 12. It was an express commandment of God given unto *Abraham*, Gen. 21, 10. *To cast out the bondwoman & her son because he should not be heir of the inheritance with Isaac*. It was an express charge given to the Church by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 5, 13. *To purge away from among themselves that wicked man, and to deliver him unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*. To these commandments and precepts join y^e practice of the Prophet *David*, where he promiseth to God how he will order his family; *I will do wisely in the perfect way till thou comest to me: I will walk in the uprightness of my heart, in the midst of mine house: there shall no deceitful person dwell within mine house: he that telleth lies shall not remain in my sight: betimes will I destroy all the wicked of the land, that I may cut off all the workers of iniquity from the City of the Lord*, Psal. 101, 2, 7. We see hereby, whom we should entertain in our houses, and suffer to dwell under our roof, to wit, the godly: for he saith, *Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me*: and therefore we must keep none such as are sturdy and stubborn, that are incorrigible, and scorn to serve the Lord. Many there are that make a mock of all religion, and despise all means that can be taken for amendment; these are a burden to the family, and must be cast out. We see in the body, when Nature hath any evil and unprofitable humors that oppress the stomach, it is forced to cast them out, for the preservation of the health of other parts: so should it be with us, when we perceive the family greatly endangered by obstinate and obdurate persons, it should vomit them out as raw and undigested humors, by timely ejection, left the whole head wax heavy, and the whole body sickly, and so the vital parts languish.

Lastly, seeing it is dangerous for us to have [Use 4] fellowship with the wicked, let us avoid their company, and fly their society, as from an infectious and contagious disease. This is that use which the Scripture maketh in sundry places. The Prophet *Jeremiah* teacheth this, ch. 51 9. *We would have cured Babel, but she could not be healed: forsake her, and let us go everyone into his Country, for her judgment is come up unto heaven, and is lifted up to the Clouds*. Hereunto accordeth the exhortation of the Apostle, when he had shown that there is no concord and agreement between Christ and *Belial*, he addeth; *Wherefore, come out from among them, and separate yourselves, saith the Lord, and touch none unclean thing, and I will receive you: and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my soⁿes and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*. 2 Cor. 6, 17. We must all know that sin is of an infectious nature, no disease so infectious, no sickness so

dangerous. In the time of plague and pestilence, the Physicians give these rules and receipts, as directions to be followed of such as would be free from danger: First, that men fly with all speed; secondly, that they fly far enough; lastly, that they return slowly. When the air is once infected dangerously, no remedy can be devised to secure us.

These rules are to be applied of us as carefully in regard of the welfare of the soul, as we are willing to practice them in regard of the health of the body. The plague that breaketh out into a sore, and runneth full of corruption, is no more contagious and venomous then the wicked are: neither doth it more annoy the air then the wicked infect those places wherein they are, and those persons with whom they live. This the Prophet *David* did see and confess, which caused him at sundry times to complain, *Away from me ye wicked, for I will keep the Commandments of my God*, Psal. 119, 115. For we must consider how hard it is to avoid sin when occasion is at hand, and opportunity tempteth to sin. It is easier for the bird to pass by the net, then to break the net: so it is easier for a man to avoid temptations, then to overcome temptations. It is a great deal easier to avoid their company, then to stand upright in their company. *Peter* thought himself a strong man, and avouched with great boldness, that he would rather die, then deny his Master, Mat. 26, 35: but yet warming himself at *Caiaphas* fire, and thrusting himself into evil company, was overcome by a silly damsel, to do that which he never thought, even to renounce and forswear his Lord and Master. He had made a notable confession of his faith, he had acknowledged Christ to be the Son of the living God, Mat. 16, 16, and that he had the words of eternal life, John 6, 68: yet the company of evil persons foiled him. Are we better then he? or are we stronger then he? or have we a greater privilege from falling then he? This serveth to check the folly and rashness of those that haunt wicked company, and drunken ale-houses, and yet say, we are in no danger, we will look to our ways that we offend not, we can leave such places whē we list. This is to check the word, & to give God's Spirit the lie, who in every place warneth us of our weakness. This presumption is the certain fore-runner of a fall. The first step that bringeth us down, is to be puffed up in the opinion of our own strength, as *Solomon* saith, Prov. 16, 18. *Pride goeth before destruction, and an high mind before the fall*. Likewise the Apostle putteth us in remembrance hereof, where remembering the manifold downefals of the people of Israel, consumed by the pestilence, stung by the serpents, and destroyed by the Angel, he maketh this use, *Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall*, 1 Cor. 10, 12. It is a part of the armor wherewith the servants of God are armed, & made able to stand in time of temptation, to fear themselves, and to acknowledge their own weakness: for thereby they are made more wary and circumspect to look to their ways, that they offend not. So it is the beginning of our ruin, & the first degree by which we fall, to thrust our selves into places of danger, and yet think we have a sure footing. For what calling have we to go into such places? Or what warrant can we have to be protected of God, while we wander out of our calling? So long as we walk in the ways that God hath set us in, we have a promise of his protection, and we have comfort in the doing of our duties: but when we pass the bounds and limits of our particular vocations, we have God no longer to be our defender, but we lie open as a prey to the enemy, to wound us to death, and to work our confusion.

[Wherefore the wrath of the Lord was kindled against Israel] We have seen before the sin of the people: now let us hear also the punishment. Their sin was pleasant in the beginning, but it was bitter in the ending, verifying the saying of the wise man, Prov. 16, 25. *There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the yssues thereof are the ways of death.* Hence it is, that Moses showeth in this place, how the wrath of the Lord was kindled against Israel, so soon as they fell into fornication. So then, furnicators and adulterers are here remembered to be great sinners, and very hurtful and noisome unto the people of God.

From hence we learn, that adulterers and unclean persons, draw upon themselves and others, fearful judgments of God. (I say) no sin is more strong and auayleable to call down the plagues and punishments of almighty God, upon a people and company, or upon particular persons, then fornication and uncleanness. This was the chief sin among others, that brought the flood upon the whole earth, and destroyed all mankind, Gen. 6, 1. What was it that caused the Lord to rain down fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrh, Gen. 19, 25. and to overthrow the Cities of the Plain, and the inhabitants thereof, and all that grew upon the earth, but their filthy and unnatural lust, which was grown so outrageous, that the savor thereof ascended up to heaven, and the cry of their sins pierced the ears of God? When *Abimelech* did in ignorance only, purpose and intend the committing of it, a plague came upon him & all his kingdom, Gen. 20, 3, 17. This uncleanness (as appeareth in the book of Judges, chap. 18, and 19) had almost consumed the whole Tribe of *Benjamin*, a few of them only reserved. We see this in the sons of *Eli*, as in a glass, they were wicked men, & knew not the Lord, they caused the people to abhor the offering of the Lord, and lay with the women that assembled at the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, 1 Sam. 2, 22. therefore God at the length found them out in their sins, when they descended into the battle and perished. Look upon the example of *David*, and behold what a fire it kindled in his house, it brought upon his head through the just judgment of God (who punisheth sin with sin) the sword of the enemy, the ravishing of his wives, the deflouring of his daughter, the death of his child, the murder of *Ammon*, the treason of *Absalom*, the revolting of his Counsellors and Captains, & sundry other conspiracies, insurrections, and calamities that fell upon him. This is that which the Prophet *Nathan* told him from the mouth of the Lord: *Because thou hast despised me, and taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife, behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, & will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this Sun; for thou diddest it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the Sun.* 1 Sam. chap. 12, verse 11.

[Reason 1] The Reasons are now a little to be stood upon, to make the Doctrine sink deeper into our hearts and to gain our affections to subscribe unto it. First, all uncleanness bringeth with it a certain curse, wheresoever it goeth, and by whomsoever it be committed. This is it which *Job* affirmeth, chap. 31. verse 12. *It is a wickedness and iniquity to be condemned; yea, this is a fire that shall devour to destruction, and which shall rooe out all mine increase: what portion should I have of God from above, and what inheritance of the Almighty, if I should suffer my eyes to wander after strange women?*

Secondly, it is greater then other sins of [Reason 2] the second Table, that are sharply and severely punished. The wise man teacheth, that it is a more grievous sin then theft. It is a perverting of all right, and an ouerturning of all equity among men. If a man rob another of his goods, he shall be punished. A thief shall be rebuked at every man's hand, he shall be exclaimed upon, and men will spit in his face; and yet adultery is more then a simple robbery for thereby other men are robbed, not of their goods and substance, but of their honor and honesty; yea, they rob not only those that are borne, but those also, that yet are vnfashioned in their mothers womb. *Men do not despise (saith Solomon) a thief when he stealeth to satisfy his soul, because he is hungry: but if he be found, he shall restore seven fold, or he shall give all the substance of his house: but he that committeth adultery with a woman, he is destitute of understanding, he that doth it, destroyeth his own soul,* Prov. 6, 30.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, this sin never goeth alone, but is accompanied with a train of many other sins: as ydlennesse, drunkenness, profaneness of heart and sencelesnesse of spirit. This the Prophet *Hosea* expresseth, chapter 4, verse 11. *Whoredom and wine and new wine, take away their heart:* whereby he meaneth, that the unlawful pleasures, blind the understanding, draw away the will from all goodness, and make the affections so brutish, that they mind nothing, and delight in nothing but in beastly sensuality. This the Prophet *Ezekiel* declareth, touching the uncleanness of the Sodomites: *Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of ydlennesse was* $\langle \diamond \rangle$ *her, and in her daughters: neither did she strengthen the hands of the poor and needy.* Ezek. 16, 49.

The uses of this Doctrine are to be considered. [Use 1] First, we learn that God will never suffer this sin to lie hid, though it be committed never so closely and secretly. We see it evidently in the sin of *David*, he was in time found out, and the hand of God arrested him. They are greatly deceived, that think to hide this sin, and go away in the dark, and not be espied. For howsoever men either do not at all punish this sin, or punish it slightly, as if they did not see it, or not regard it; yet God will be a swift Judge against whoremongers and adulterers. This was notably set forth by the ceremony of the bitter waters. Numb. 5, 12. discovering the guilty wife, which no man on earth was able to accuse. True it is, this ceremony is ended, and these shadows of the law are ceased, yet the eye of the Lord is as quick, and his sight as sharp as ever it was: he taketh upon him the knowing, disclosing, and punishing of this sin. It is impossible to hide it from him, who will reveal the things that are hidden in darkness. Nothing more provoketh to sin, then hope of impurity, and the opinion of secrecy, and carrying the matter away closely. If a man were persuaded that the sins which he committeth, should be engraven in his forehead, or written in great Letters, that he which runneth might read them: it would be a means to make him abstain (if not for conscience, yet at least for shame of the world) from the doing of them. But we are assured by the word of the eternal God, that our secret sins are open and manifest to him with whom we have to do, and he will bring them to the light, what fig-leaves soever we patch together, to cover them from his knowledge. This should move us to beware of committing secret sins, seeing he understandeth all things: *He made the eye, and shall he not see? He made the heart, & shall not he find out the iniquities of our hearts?* Psal. 94, 9. Take we heed therefore of

whoredom, and of all uncleanness, and learn to possess our vessels in holiness and honor, not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles did that know not God.

Secondly, this doctrine reproveth the light [Use 2] account and estimation of this sin. For if it procure and cause great judgments, and destroyeth a man's soul, they are deceived that make whoredom a trick of youth, a venial offense a natural sin, a matter of small importance, and a sport to laugh at. We see in this chapter, that there fell in one day four and twenty thousand for their fornication committed with the Midianites, 1 Cor. 10, 8: he destroyed so many of his own people in one day, and made them examples to us, upon whom the ends of the world are now come, and yet shall we make it a trick of youth? Shall we make a mock of it, and a may-game at it? These profane beasts have filled up the measure of their sin, and are set down in the seat of the scorers. God alloweth no more liberty in sinning to youth, then he doth to age. The wise man willeth such, to *remember their Creator in the days of their youth*, Eccl. 12, 1. & 11. and telleth them that for all the lusts of their eyes, the vanity of their minds, the swinge of their pleasures, and the lewdness of their harts, God will bring them to judgment. The Apostle teacheth, *That whoremongers and adulterers shall not inherit the kingdom of God*, 1 Corinth. chapter 6, verse 9. The wise Solomon saith, *He that committeth adultery with a woman, destroyeth his own soul*, Prov. 6, verses 22, 33. and so is accessory to his own death. And in another place he saith, *He shall find a wound and dishonor, and his reproach shall never be put away*: and shall we make a sport of it, to delight our selves in it? We are admonished by the Apostle Paul, that our bodies are the Temples of the holy Ghost, 1 Corinth. 6, 19. so that seeing God vouchsafeth us this honor, to choose our vile bodies, which are dust and ashes, earth and rottenness, to make them Temples and Tabernacles for his holy Spirit to dwell in, let us not turn them into filthy stables, and unclean styes, and so drive him from us, who would possess us as his mansion and dwelling place.

Heereby then we understand, that we are not to judge of whoredom after the common opinion of men, which make but a sport and pastime of it, as we see how scoffers jest at it, and despisers of God make a game of it. Such mockers were risen up long ago in the days of the Apostle, of whom he exhorteth us to beware. For having said, that no whoremonger, neither unclean person hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God, he addeth in the next place, *Let no man deceive you with vain words: for, for such things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience*, Eph. 5.5, 6. And this example of the people of Israel, which now we have in hand in this Chapter, is able to strike a terror and fear into our hearts, forever breaking out into this iniquity. The life of man is precious and dear unto God, we are creatures created according to his image, he taketh no pleasure in our destruction. Now in that he destroyed such a number of his own Images and Creatures for this sin, must not this sin of fornication be great & grievous, which kindleth such a fire of his vengeance and indignation, that flamed out so far, and could not be quenched, but with the slaughter of so many thousands?

Thirdly, it behooveth everyone, according [Use 3] to his place and calling, to punish this sin severely that so evil may be taken out of Israel. But such as have a light estimation of this sin (which is the cause of the increase of it) do object the example of Christ, who having a

woman brought before him, [Object.] that was sound committing adultery in the very act, would not condemn her nor pronounce sentence of death upon her, but said unto her, *Go, and sin no more*, John 8, 11. Here our Savior seemeth to free her from the law of *Moses*, Levite. 20, 10.

I answer, this is Popish Divinity, [Answer.] taught in the days of darkness, which cannot bear the trial of the light. For this is to make it not only a venial sin, but no sin at all. Christ forgave her freely, and denounced no punishment at all against her, neither of limb, nor life, nor chastisement, nor other mulct be inflicted upon her: so that if it do not prove that the Magistrates should not punish whoredom sharply, it proveth as well that he ought not to punish it at all: & if it ought to receive no correction, we cannot acknowledge it for any transgression. Furthermore, the Jews being in subjection unto the Romans, and constrained to bear the yoke of foreign government, had the civil punishments of death, either wholly taken from them, or at least suspended upon the will and pleasure of their officers, which were sildome upright, often corrupted. This is it which the Pharisees confess in the Gospel. For when *Pilate* willed them to take Christ, & to judge him after their own Law, although the malice of their hearts, and the cruelty of their hands were against him, yet they said unto him, *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death*, John 18, 31. Lastly, the office of Christ was not to be an earthly Judge to give sentence of death, but to be a Savior to call sinners to repentance. Hence it was, that he refused a temporal kingdom when it was offered unto him, and denied to divide the inheritance, when he was requested, as wholly impertinent unto his calling; and therefore he said, *Man, who made me a Judge, or a divider over you?* Luke 12, 14. So then, this Objection being removed, it belongs to all Magistrates to be zealous in punishing this sin, and to sharpen the law against this & other sins, that bud up and grow apace among us, lest they overthrow good Corn. Yea, it appertaineth not only to Magistrates, but generally to all men, to bring such offenders to open shame, that so they may come to amendment of life. The Apostle speaking of unclean livers, saith: *If any that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one eat not*, 1 Cor. 5, 11: and speaking of an incestuous person, he chargeth the Corinthians to put him from among them, and to *deliver him to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*.

Such unclean livers should be swept out of the Church of God, and have the sword of excommunication drawn out against them, that so they might learn not to transgress. But so long as we bear with such persons, and foster them in the bosom of the Church (as the practice is too common) neither are we their friends, neither are we the friends of the Church, neither indeed are we the friends of almighty God.

For if we were their friends, and loved them aright, we would seek their conversion and repentance; we would use the means to bring them to a shame of their offenses, to a sight of their sins, and unto a confession of their iniquities. And if we were the friends of the Church, we would labor to separate the unclean from the clean, and the infected from the sound, knowing that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. And if we were the friends of God, we would be zealous of his glory, and not suffer his Name to be profaned through the lewd and

wicked life of such rotten members. For so long as such are harboured in the Church, which is the body of Christ, the reproach redounds in part to the head.

Fourthly, it behooveth us from hence to [Use 4] learn to avoid all allurements and enticements that may draw us into this sin. For to avoid sin, is to avoid the occasions of sin. Whosoever doth nourish the occasions, cannot be long free from sin. And whosoever maketh no conscience to follow the provocations of lust, and the means that may bring it upon us, will shortly make no conscience of whoredom it self. Therefore our Savior correcting the false glozes of the Scribes and Pharisees, and expounding the true meaning of the seventh Commandment, saith, *If thy right eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for better it is for thee, that one of thy members perish, then that thy whole body should be cast into hell*, Math. chap. 5, 29. Whereby our Savior meaneth, that the Law of God not only forbiddeth the sin expressed, but restraineth all occasions and allurements, though they were as dear unto us as our right eye, or as necessary unto us as our hand.

A notable example hereof we have in *Joseph*, when he was tempted by his wanton mistress to commit folly, he was so far from consenting to adultery, that he absented him self from her company, Gen. 39, 10. Many are the allurements that lead the way unto this sin, wanton apparel, filthy communication, unclean songs, wanton looks, beastly drunkenness, unlawful embracings, excessive diet, hurtful idleness, and too familiar company with those that may entice us, and tempt us to lust. The following after these, & the delighting in them, is the path that guideth us to the practice of all uncleanness: and therefore we must abhor them if we would hate whoredom it self. Such then as say they cannot abide whoredom, and they do detest it from their harts, and yet do not shun these allurements, do not consider their own weakness, but offer themselves, & lead themselves into temptation; yea, as much as in them lieth, they make God a liar, and there is no truth in them.

Lastly, let us according to our duty, with [Use 5] all speed forsake this filthy kind of life, and renounce our former uncleanness, so y^e hearty repentance may follow after, where this sin hath been committed before. For there remains mercy to such, if they repent, and turn with all their hearts, and with all their souls. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy slow to anger, and of great kindness. If the wicked man forsake *his ways, and the unrighteous his own imaginations, if he return unto the Lord, and crave mercy at his hands, he will not always chide, neither keep his anger forever*, Isaiah 55, 7. *He will not deal with us after our sins, neither reward us according to our iniquities*, Psal. 103, 10. *David* through the lust of his eye fell into this sin, and committed folly in Israel: but when he confessed his fault, and forsook his sin, he was received to mercy. For when *David* said unto *Nathan*, *I have sinned against the Lord: Nathan* said unto *David*; *The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die*, 2. Sam. 12, verse 13. The Lord seeketh no more, but that the sinner turn unto him. When once we are reconciled unto him, he hath no more controversy against us. This we see in *Rahab* the harlot, she led a filthy and unclean life among her people: but when she heard of the great works that the Lord had done for the children of Israel, in delivering them out of Egypt, in drying up the red sea, in feeding thē from heaven, and in preserving them from all their enemies; she joined in heart with the Church, forsook her evil life, and in token of her true repentance, she received the

messengers sent unto her with the danger of her life, and sent them out another way. This the Apostle speaketh of the Saints at Corinth; for having denounced a fearful judgment against fornicators, adulterers, & wanton persons, y^t they shall not inherit the kingdom of God, he addeth, 1 Cor. 6, 11. *Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* Seeing therefore God is ready to forgive our sins, why should not we be ready to forsake our sins? This uncleanness maketh us guilty of temporal and eternal punishments, yet God offereth to discharge us of both, and to receive us unto his favor, if we will turn from our sins to him, & bring forth fruit worthy amendment of life. Let us therefore confess with *David* that we have sinned: let us call for mercy at the hands of God, saying, *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy compassions put away mine iniquities: wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin,* Psalm 51, the first & second verses.

Verse 4. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of this people, and hang them up to the Lord before this Sun.]* In the words before, the punishment that fell upon the people of Israel, was set down in general: now he setteth down upon whom it fell in particular, to wit, both Princes & people; for the wrath of God was so kindled against them, that they were cut off as rotten members, & all through the counsel of *Balaam*. For when he saw that God opened not his mouth to curse the Israelites, but rather when he was resolved to utter curses, he was enforced to pronounce blessings: he gave devilish counsel as his last shift to the Moabites, that their beautiful women should allure the Jews into their company, and by their company unto adultery, & by adultery, unto idolatry, whereby they should provoke God's indignation, and so bring upon themselves utter confusion. Now we must observe in this place, that God in punishing these sins, beginneth first with the heads of the people.

From hence we learn, that Superiors, and men of high places, lie open to grievous judgments, as well as others. All sorts of men, high and low, rich and poor, noble and vnnoble, shall taste of the punishments of God for sin. This the Prophet pointeth unto, when he saith, *God poureth contempt upon Princes, and causeth them to err in desert places out of the way,* Psal. 107, 40. In the first chapter of *Isaiah*, verses 10, 23, 24, this truth receiveth plentiful confirmation, *Hear the word of God (O Princes of Sodom) hearken unto the Law of our God (O people of Gomorrhah:) thy Princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves, everyone loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards, they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the widows cause come before them: therefore saith the Lord God of hosts, the mighty one of Israel: Ah I will ease me of mine adversaries, & avenge me of mine enemies.* And in the Chapter following, the same Prophet saith, *The high looks of man shall be humbled, and the loftiness of men shall be abased, and the Lord only shall be exalted in that day,* *Isaiah* 2, 11. And if we would enter into the consideration of examples, we have plentiful testimonies in the word of God; of *Abimelech*, the King of *Gerar*; *Pharaoh*, the King of *Egypt*; *Sancherib*, the King of *Ashur*; *Herod*, King of *Judea*, and sundry Princes and Nobles, who have tasted of the judgments of God, punishing them for their sins, and rewarding them according to their iniquities.

[Reason 1] Neither can we marvel at this dealing of GOD, finding out even superiors in their sins, if we consider that he is no acceptor of any man's person, he is sufficient and able to

make all men stoop under his hand. For howsoever many of high place, blinded with the glory of the world, puffed up with the vanity of earthly things, stored with abundance of riches, and magnified with the applause of the world, think themselves privileged and exempted from the order and rank of all other men: yet their places cannot deliver their persons from punishments, when they provoke the Lord to wrath against them. What privilege to sin, hath the Prince more then the subject? or the rich more then the poor? or what promise hath one more then another, to be freed from the judgments of God when he hath sinned, seeing destruction is threatened alike to come upon thigh and low? So then, howsoever respecting of men for their places and callings, for their riches and friends, and such like outward dignities, be common among men, yet there is no such acceptance in the Almighty. Hence it is that *Job* saith, *With him is strength and wisdom, he that is deceived, and that deceiveth, are his: he causeth the Counsellors to go as spoiled, & maketh the Judges fools: he looseth the collar of Kings, and girdeth their lomes with a girdle: he leadeth away the Princes as a prey, and overthroweth the mighty*, *Job* 12, 17. To this purpose doth *Samuel* exhort the Israelites, *Fear you the Lord, and serve him in the truth, with all your hearts, and consider how great things he hath done for you: but if ye do wickedly, ye shall perish, both ye and your King.*

Secondly, even Princes are by nature but [Reason 2] men. We allow them the chiefest place among men, and honor them as the Lieutenants of God, yet they are not to be exempted from the number of men, and the creatures of God, but are subject to him and his judgments, as well as the rest of the sons of men. This is it which the Lord speaketh unto them, *I have said ye are gods, and ye are all children of the most High; but ye shall die as a man, and ye Princes shall fall like others*, *Psal.* 82, 6, 7. *John.* 10, 34, 35. The Prophet *Isaiah* speaketh in like manner, *Isaiah* 31, 3. To like purpose speaketh another Prophet against the King of *Tyrus*, who had his heart exalted, and thought himself equal with God, *Ezek.* 28, 9. *Wilt thou say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? But thou shalt be a man, and no God in the hands of him that slayeth thee.*

We are now come to make use and application [Use 1] of this doctrine. First, it condemneth such as flatter Princes in their sins, and persuade them that they are exempted and freed from the common condition of men, that they may do what they list, and are not to be reproved of any. And indeed it is true, that Princes have, and ought to have a royal prerogative, howbeit, no prerogative to sin, and if they can claim no prerogative to sin, they can challenge no privilege from the punishment of God. Therefore this kind of people setting up to Princes a freedom to offend against God, and giving them immunity and impunity from the judgment seat of God, are indeed the greatest & most dangerous enemies to Princes and great men. It is well said of one, that it were better to light among carrion Crowes, then among flatterers, because they can spoil the body alone, but these corrupt the mind, foster the sins of those whom they do flatter, color them with the names of virtue, & consequently harden the hearts of such as hearken unto them. There are few men of note and account in the world, but are tried and troubled with these enchanters that bewitch them with their sweet words, and will speak anything for their advantage. When the foolish people heard the eloquent oration of *Herod*, and saw his pomp and glory, they gave him this applause; *The voice of God, and not of man*, *Acts* 12, 22, 23: but immediately the Angel of the Lord smote him, because he was delighted with these Sycophants, and returned not the glory unto God. So

then, it standeth all great men in hand to banish such dissembling clawbackes from them, to stop their ears against their base and abject flatteries and fooleries, and to suffer themselves to be admonished of their duties, reprov'd for their sins, taught by the word, and informed in the ways of godliness.

[Use 2] Secondly, it serveth to instruct Princes to be subject to GOD, and to obey him in all things, seeing GOD will require the breach of his Law at their hands. All superiors and governors over others, must look for God's wrath to fall upon them, and his punishments to overtake them, whensoever they walk in evil ways, and transgress against God's commandments. For as Princes punish such as transgress their statutes; so will God execute vengeance against those that break his Laws. Princes have rule over their subjects, but God ruleth over Princes themselves, and maketh them liable to his judgments. *David* was a man after God's heart, yet the Lord brought many corrections and chasticements upon him, to hold him in obedience. It belongeth therefore as a special duty to men of high place and dignity to turn to the Lord, lest they provoke him to wrath, and so they perish, according as the Psalmist spaeketh; *Bee wise now therefore ye Kings, be learned ye Judges of the earth, serve the Lord in fear, and rejoyce with trembling; Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way; when his wrath shall suddenly burn, blessed are all that trust in him, Psal. 2, 10, 11,* So the Lord having threatened in the Prophet *Zephaniah*, to visit the Princes and the Kings children, he exhorteth all to repentance, before the decree come forth, and they be as chaff that passeth away in a day, and before the fierce wrath of the Lord come upon them, *Zeph. 1, 8, and 2, 2.* Likewise the Prophet *Jeremiah* declaring that the Lord would pour out the viole of his vengeance upon the inhabitants of the land, even the Kings y^t sit upon the throne of *David*, the Priests and the Prophets: he cometh to urge this use unto them, *Say unto the King and the Queen, Humble yourselves, sit down, for the crown of your glory shall come down from your heads, Ier, 13, 13, 18.* There is no way to turn away his wrath from them and their kingdoms, but by turning unto God, and by entreating him to spare them, As their places are great, so their sins are great, and many times draw many to follow after them. If they would blot out their offenses against GOD, and call in his judgments gone out against them, they must show their subjection to him, and give him the reverence that is due to his holy Name.

Lastly, our trust must not be in man, our [Use 3] confidence must not be in Princes, who cannot deliver their own souls from the sentence of death, nor discharge themselves of the punishment which they have deserved, much less can they give safety and assurance unto others. This is that duty which the Prophet *Isaiah* concludeth in the second and third chapters of his Prophecy, where threatening that God will take away from Jerusalem; and from Judah, the st^y and the strength, the strong man and the man of war, the Judge, and the Prophet, the prudent and the aged, the captain of fifty, and the honorable, and the counselor, and the eloquent man; he saith, *Cease from the man whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be esteemed* *Isaiah 2.21, & 3, 1, 2, 3.* Whereby we see, that we must not put our trust in weak man, nor ralye upon him to be our defense, but put our whole trust in God alone. He that putteth confidence in him, shall be blessed, and be like the tree planted by the rivers side, *Ier. 17, 7:* whatsoever changes and alterations others do find in the world, he shall continue in a fruitful and flourishing condition. The staying of our selves on man's

power, ariseth from the forgetfulness of our duty toward GOD, who hath commanded us to trust in him with all our heart, *Prov. 3, 5*: and hath promised that If we stay upon him, he will give us our hearts desire, *Psal. 37, 4*. This trust we shall attain unto, if we use these means; the meditation of man's weakness that cannot help us, the consideration of God's power that is able to strengthen us, and the experience of his mercy that hath delivered other of his children from great afflictions. If these things (as helps to our faith) be laid up in our hearts, we shall be assured to build upon a good and certain foundation, that shall never be removed.

Verse 5, [*Then Moses said to the Judges of Israel, Everyone slay his men that were joined unto Baal-peor.*] The wrath of God was so fierce against those that sinned, that he commanded them to be destroyed. To this end, we see Moses as the chief Magistrate taketh order, that the guilty should not be suffered to live, but suffer punishment according to their offenses. From hence ariseth this doctrine, that Magistrates are appointed of God to govern mankind in the civil affairs of this life, to be the hand of GOD for punishing and cutting off the wicked, and for the supporting and maintayning of the godly. It is the duty of Magistrates to do Justice upon evil doers, and to give comfort and countenance to the faithful. This is it which David promised unto God, when he should bring him unto the kingdom, and set him upon the throne, *I will sing mercy and judgment, unto thee (O Lord) will I sing, Psal. 101, 1*. This is the charge that he giveth to Solomon his son, concerning diverse men, as appeareth, *1. Kings, 6*: for he telleth him he should remember the blood of battle that Joab shed in peace, and therefore not suffer his hoare head to go down to the grave in peace. The like direction he giveth him, to show kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and to let him be amongst them that eat at his table, because they came unto him when he fled from Absalom. This direction did Solomon precisely follow, he slew Joab, Shimei, and Adoniah, and set up godly men in the places of such as were removed from their offices, being more able then his father was. All the precepts that are given unto them to execute justice, tend directly to this point, whosoever sheddeth man's blood, must not be spared, but have his blood shed by the Magistrate, *Gen. 9.6. If a man (saith Moses) cause any blemish in his neighbor, as he hath done, so shall it be done to him, breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; such a blemish as he hath made in any, such shall be repaid to him, Levite. 24, 19*. These examples and precepts serve to teach us this truth, that the end of Magistrates appointed of God over his people, is not to rule as they list, not to be idle and do nothing, not to tyrannize or to be highly accounted of, not to lift up their hearts, or to please themselves in the titles of honor given unto them, but to do good in helping the good, and punishing the evil.

[Reason 1] The reasons to enforce this doctrine, are to be weighed & considered. First, they have to these ends and purposes, the sword of Justice committed unto them, not to let it rust in the scabbard, but to remove all such, as the land for their outrageousnesse is not able to bear. For when they grow obstinate in their sins, enemies to God, plagues to the godly, burdens to the earth, and an infection to all with whom they live, they must be cut off as rotten members, swept away as filthy dung, and purged as evil humors out of the body.

This is it which the Apostle teacheth in his Epistle to the Romans, *There is no power but of God, and the powers that be, are ordained of God: he is the Minister of God for thy wealth, & beareth not the sword for naught, for he is the Minister of God to take vengeance on him that doth evil*, Rom. 13, 4. So then, they are God's Lieutenants in his stead; the judgment is God's, and not man's, *For there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, neither respect of persons, nor receiving of reward*, 2. Chro. 19, 7. Deut. 1.16, 17: so that it is required of them to hear the controversies that come before them indifferently, to judge righteously, to heat the small as well as the great, and not to stand in fear of the faces of men.

[Reason 3] Secondly, they are as bulwarks of brass, as walls of defense, & as maintayners of peace among men. For albeit men be of one self same nature, yet they cannot abide one another, unless they be held in, as with a bit and bridle. Wolves know one another in the woods, the Lions know one another in the forests, so do other wild and savage beasts in the fields: but men have such a corrupt and savage nature, that hardly they can love another, or suffer the company one of another, unless they had rulers & Magistrates set over them. This the Apostle teacheth, *He is the Minister of God for thy wealth*, Rom. 13, 4. And the Apostle Peter, *He is sent for the punishment of evil doers, &c*, 1, Pet. 2, 14.

Now, let us come to the uses which naturally [Use 1] arise from hence, First we must acknowledge that Magistracy is a notable blessing, and by acknowledging of it, learn to be thankful for it. If there were no Magistrate or law, everyone would live as he list, and would be ready to cut another's throat, so that better were a tyranny, then an anarchy. This is sundry times repeated in y^e book of Judges, *In those days there was no Knig in Israel, but every man did that which was good in his own eyes*, Judge. 17, 6, and 18, 1, and 19, 1, & 21, 25. Then was idolatry common among them without any punishment: then they gave themselves to whoredom and uncleanness without controllement: then murder and drawing the sword one against another was practiced, & blood touched blood. This confusion and lamentable disorder and want of lawful Magistracy and government, should teach us to esteem highly of this order and ordinance of God, according to the blessings which we receive by the same. We obtain great quietness by our rulers, and many worthy things are wrought through their prudence and providence. They are the instruments of our peace, the breath of our nostrils, and the means of our preservation. By them we enjoy (under God) all the benefits which we have, our liberty, our lands, our lives, our wives, our children, our possessions, our safety, our houses and habitations, and above all the rest, the comfortable use of the Gospel with freedom of conscience, which is as marrow unto our bones, and as the very life of our lives. How oft had we been overcome and ouerrunne by foreign enemies, how oft had we been surprised by inward rebels, if this ordinance of God had not overshadowed us, and ouerreached them? This meditation must draw out of us all thankfulness to God, and confession of his loving kindness toward us: the practice whereof we have in *Ezra*, chap. 7, 26, 27: when he beheld the forwardness of the King to promote the worship of God, & to publish a decree, that whosoever would not perform the Law of God, & of the King, should have the sentence of God pronounced against him, without delay, whether it wereto y^e taking away of his life, or banishment of his Country, or to confiscation of his goods, or to imprisonment of his body: he gave glory and praise to God, saying; *Blessed be the Lord God of*

our fathers, which so hath put in the Kings heart, to beautify the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem.

This practice of this worthy man must be an instruction unto us to teach us to acknowledge the necessity of this blessing, as great as of the Sun in the firmament, whereby all living creatures are comforted and refreshed, and must cause everyone to return the praise of this mercy to him that is the giver of this, and of every good giving. No people under the heavens have better experience of it, nor are more bound to walk worthy of this then we.

[Use 2] Secondly, it is their duty to hate y^t which is evil with an unfeigned hatred, and to love that which is good, with a special love and liking of it. For, if he be evil, how shall he advance and countenance the godly, or how shall he chastise and punish the ungodly? Can he have or hold the reputation of a good Physician, that taking upon him the curing of other men's diseases, is not able or willing to cure himself? or will not everyone upbraid such with the common Proverb, *Physician, heal thyself?* Luke 4, 23. How then can he with courage and comfort take upon him to correct evil doers, that is himself wholly given to all sorts and kinds of evil? Can a father for conscience sake rebuke his son for sin, as for swearing, lying, drunkenness, and such like disorders, when himself maketh no conscience to be a swearer and blasphemmer, a drunkard and unclean liver? Or can a Master chasten his servants for their rioting, revelling, lewdness, wantonness, and misdemeanors, when the guiltiness of his own heart crieth against him, and condemneth him as guilty of the same crimes? He that teacheth another, should first of all teach himself: and he that reproveth another, should first of all check and controlle himself: otherwise it shall be said unto us, as the Apostle speaketh: *Therefore, thou art inexcusable (O man) whosoever thou art that condemnest: for in that thou condemnest another, thou condemnest thyself: for thou that condemnest, doest the same things: but we know that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things: & thinkest thou this (O thou man) that condemnest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?* Rom. 2, 1, 2, 3. Let all those whose office is to reform evil, learn to remove it, both head and tail, both root and branch out of themselves: let them pull the beam out of their own eyes, that they may cast out the more in their brothers eye. It is a great blot and blemish in a governor, that should punish wickedness in others, to nourish it in his own heart. Hence it is, that Solomon saith, *Woe to thee, O land, when thy King is a child, & thy Princes eat in the morning,* Eccl. 10, 16. Prov. 31, 4. Where the Wiseman teacheth what danger it is to the commonwealth, when the rulers are given wholly to their lusts and pleasures, to surfeiting and drunkenness. If the governor that sitteth at the stern of the ship, or the coachman that driveth the coach be drunken and disordered, who seeth not that shipwreck is to be feared, and the coach ready to be overturned? This is to be considered and regarded of all that have any authority over others, to be careful to order and rule themselves by the word of God. If we have families to govern, we should go in and out before them in all wisdom, and be examples unto them in our lives & conversations. If we see that those that be in places of superiority & jurisdiction negligent herein, & not so circumspect over their ways, as they ought to be, it is our duty to help them by our prayers, and to call upon God to assist them with his grace. The burden is great that lieth upon their shoulders, they many times watch while we sleep, and are much troubled while we are at ease; we must

therefore daily call upon God for them, to be with them in their government, to indue them with the spirit of wisdom and counsel, and to inspire them continually with all holy motions needful for their callings, that their thrones may be established with justice.

This is it which the Apostle urgeth, *I exhort that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for Kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty*, 1. Tim 2, 1, 2. Let us pray heartily for their preservation, life, health, wealth, prosperity, and increase of all honor, considering that the prayer of a faithful man availeth much, if it be fervent. [Use 3]

Lastly, we learn here, to fear them only for evil doing. So long as we do well, it skilleth not who stand by us, and see us, though the eyes of all men be upon us. The duty of the Magistrate, is to allow & approve it, to commend and reward it. This is it which the Apostle teacheth, *Magistrates are not to be feared for good works, but for evil: wilt thou then be without fear of the power? Do well, so shalt thou have praise of the same: but if thou do evil, fear: for he beareth not the sword for naught*, Rom. 13, 3. Where we see, they are in regard of their high place, a terror to men but it must be to the wicked; to the godly they should not bring any terror. This should comfort & encourage all the faithful in well doing; the Magistrate is to them as a sanctuary and city of refuge, they should repair and resort unto them in time of trouble, they are as a buckler to defend them, and as an haven to harbor them from the storms and tempests that beat upon them. This is practiced by the Shunamite, who departed out of the land of Israel. and sojourned in a strange land during the famine; when she returned back, she called upon the King for her house, and for her land; *So the King appointed her an Eunuch; saying, Restore thou all that is hers, and all the fruits of her lands, since the day she left the land, until this time*, 2. Kings 8, 3, 6. She used the ordinance of God as he had commanded, and God gave a blessing unto his own ordinance.

Again, this serveth to terrify ungodly men; let them be restrained from committing evil, if not for conscience, yet for fear: if not for love of godliness, yet for the certainty of punishment that shall fall upon them. Although for a time they may escape, yet in the end they shall be met withal. Moreover, it must put all Magistrates and superiors in mind, to order the ends of their calling aright. True it is, there are two sinnewes of a commonwealth, which knit the parts together, to wit; punishment, and reward. But it is not enough for them to show mercy and judgment, but they must show mercy to whom mercy belongeth; and judgment, to whom judgment appertaineth. It is the office of the Minister to teach, and to reprove; to comfort, & to threaten; to raise up, and to cast down; to root up, and to plant; but if he comfort the wicked, and harden them in their sins, & speak peace, to whom the Lord hath not spoken peace: and again if he threaten judgment, cast down the heavy hearted, and seek to quench the smoking flax, and to break the bruised reed, he is not that wise Scribe, which must give to everyone in the family his portion in due season, nor that workman which needeth not to be ashamed, dividing the word of truth aright. So likewise, it is the office of all Magistrates, to punish and to reward, to correct and to comfort; without these no kingdom can flourish, no city can stand, no house can continue. But it behooveth them to consider, who ought to be the object and subject as well of the one, as of the other. They

must not discountenance the godly, and embolden the wicked: they must not spare the guilty, and oppress the innocent. Their Laws must not be as the spiders web, to catch the fly, and to hold the gnat, but let go greater things, and suffer them to escape & to break away from them. They must make a difference between the clean and unclean, between the holy and profane. He is a bad gardiner, that plucketh up his best plants and choicest herbs of greatest price, and suffereth the thorns & thistles to take root and prosper, which should be cut down, and cast into the fire, *Math.* 3, 10. He is a bad husbandman, that plucketh up the wheat and good corn out of his field, which was to be gathered into the barn, when the time of harvest came; and suffereth tares and darnel to grow, which were fitter to be bound in sheaves and burned, *Math.* 13, 29. It is no mercy to spare the life of the wolf, and to shed the blood of the Lamb. Hereupon it is, that *Solomon* saith, *Prov* 17, 15. *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord.* This appeareth in *Ahab*, who sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of God, and brought destruction upon his own head, as well by slaying the innocent y^t should have been defended, as by sparing the wicked that should have been destroyed. For when the blood of *Naboth* was spilled as water upon the earth that cannot be gathered, it cried to heaven for vengeance, *And the Lord paid him home to the full in his own person, and in his posterity,* 1 Kings 21, 19, and 22, 38. And when he spared *Benhadad* whom he ought not to have spared, the Lord said unto him, *Because thou hast let go out of thine hands a man whom I appointed to die, thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people,* 1 Kings 20, 42. To this purpose we read in another place of Proverbs, chap. chap. 24, 24. *He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous, him shall the people curse, and the multitude abhor him.* Let us all lay this to our hearts. If we have any in our several governments, that are godly & fear the Name of God, let such be made much of, let them find our help and favor, let them be comforted and encouraged in well doing. But on the other side, we are not to wink at the wicked, but labor to find them out, and to draw them out of their dens where they lurk, watching their seasons to pester & poison others: remembering always the ends for which God hath lifted up the heads of all Governors above their brethren, to wit, that evil doers should be punished, and that such as do well should be commended: considering duly & diligently, that the time will come, when they must give an account to God of the Stewardship committed unto them.

[Verse 6. *And behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman, in the sight of Moses, &c.*] In these words is offered unto us an example, expressing the nature of sin, where once it is entertained. For behold here, how they grow in sin, and proceed from evil to worse, from a great sin to a greater. At the first, they departed out of the host of Israel, and went to the people of *Moab* and *Midian*, with whom they coupled themselves: so that albeit they sinned, yet they had some shame of sin, and made some conscience of committing it openly amongst their brethren. But they proceed by little and little, from step to step, and from one degree to another, till they fear nothing, and are ashamed of nothing. Therefore in the example of one man here set before our eyes, *Moses* declares to what impudency & shamelesnesse they were come, that they brought their harlots into the host to despise God, to anger *Moses*, to corrupt the people, & to pollute the worship y^t was set up by the commandment of the Lord. For this man (who is afterward

named) as if he had been absolute in power, as he was indeed resolute in will, & dissolute in his whole life, brought his whorish woman in the sight of God, in the sight of Moses, in the sight of the congregation, and in the sight of the Tabernacle, to show that he had filled up the measure of his sin. The doctrine arising from hence is this, that evil men do not usually make any stay in evil, but proceed from degree to degree, to worse & worse. The nature of sin is, to draw all such as delight in it and follow after it, from one evil to another, until in the end, they become most corrupt and abominable. This is it which the Prophet *Jeremiah* noteth in the people of his time, when he saith, *Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? Nay, they were not ashamed, no neither could they have any shame: therefore, they shall fall among the slain: when I shall visit them, they shall be cast down,* saith the Lord, *Ier. 6, 15.*

The like we see in the 18. chap. following, ver. 11, 12. *Speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I prepare a plague for you, and purpose a thing against you: return you therefore everyone from his evil way, and make your ways & your works good:* But they said desperately, *Surely we will walk after our own imaginations, & do every man after the stubbornness of his wicked heart.* The truth of this hath been evident in all ages of the Church. When the Lord was determined to bring an universal flood upon the face of the earth, for the sins of man, and had given them a time of repentance, while his patience endured, *Gen. 6.12. They ceased not from sin, neither repented of their wickedness, saying, what have I done? Math. 24, 38.* But everyone turned to their race, as the horse rusheth into the battle. For in the time that was limited thē, their sin increased, our Savior showing how they were given over unto all looseness, until the flood came, and swept them all away. This the Prophet *David* noteth (if he were the penner of that Psalm) where he observeth the degrees and stairs by which men ascend to the height and top of sin: first, they begin to walk in the counsel of the wicked, then they proceed to stand in the way of sinners; lastly, they come to sit down in the seat of the scornful, *Psal. 1.1.* And this we may further observe in the failings of the faithful, and in their fallings into sin. No man becometh extremely evil at a sudden, nor desperately settled, and obstinately resolved to continue in sin in a moment: but as he that will climb up to the top of an high tower, doth ascend step by step, and by little & little; so he that maketh no conscience of any sin, but walketh in all profaneness with greediness, cometh to that height by degrees, one sin drawing on another, the lesser making way for the greater, and the greater obtaining passage for the greatest of all. We see it in *Eve*, when she fell from God, first, she listened unto Satan; secondly, she made a light resistance to his temptation; thirdly, she began to doubt waueringly of that which God had delivered absolutely; fourthly, she grew in concupiscence, the eye liking, the heart lusting, and both of them desiring the forbidden fruit; lastly, she fell to flat apostasy, infidelity, and rebellion. This likewise is set before us in the example of *Peter*, who getting into the high-Priests hall, and thrusting himself into evil company, hath left us a strong proof of his own weakness, and of his declining from evil to worse. First, he answereth faintly and fearfully, that he knew not the man, *Math. 26, 70.* A dangerous beginning. When he was further urged and pressed to answer, and that he saw his bare and cold denial would not be accepted, he thought to go one step farther, he denied with an oath, that he never knew him. Yea, when they were importunate upon him, and would not suffer him to be in rest, he began to curse

himself, and thereby to cast himself into the depth of sin, into the gates of hell, and into the hands of Satan.

The Reasons follow. First, sin groweth [Reason 1] in the heart, as the child doth in the womb. For as the infant hath his increasings and augmentations from a small beginning, until he come to the birth, proceeding from one degree and age unto another, as *Job setteth forth our first creation, Thou hast poured me out as milk, and turned me into cruds like cheese: thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and joined me with bones and sinnewes, Job 10, 10, 11:* so is it with a sinner; his beginnings are small, but the further he runneth, the longer he continueth, and the deeper he plungeth himself in sin, the more corrupt and abhominable he becometh. As a spring that ariseth out of the earth is first little and shallow, but the further it groweth, the more ground it floweth, and the more streams come into it, the greater the river is: or as a fire, which at the first is a little spark, being nourished, becometh in short time a great flame: so is it with sin, it is little in growth, weak in strength, slender in appearance at the beginning; but being cherrished and fostered in the soul of the sinner, it multiplieth exceedingly, and bringeth forth many children of the same nature, whereof we may truly say; Like mother, like daughter. This is that comparison, which the Apostle *James* useth, to express the fruitful nature of all the unfruitful works of darkness, *Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own concupiscence, and is enticed: then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and when sin is finished, it bringeth forth death, I am. 1, 15.* Where the Apostle showeth, that first a man is tempted to evil, then concupiscence conveyeth it, after it is in travail and bringeth forth; and lastly, it doth finish it as a perfect birth. This comparison is also used by the Prophet *David, Behold, he shall travail with wickedness, for he hath conceived mischief, but he shall bring forth a lie. Psal. 7, 14.*

[Reason 2] Secondly, the wrath of God falleth upon such as make no conscience to fall into lesser sins, he giveth them over to a reprobate sense, to a slumbring spirit, and to hardness of heart, that they fall to be past feeling, and cannot repent. The Apostle declareth in the Epistle to the Romans, *That such as regarded not to know God, he gave them up to their hearts lust, unto all uncleanness, and punished one sin with another, Rom, 1.28.* For the sin that followeth is a punishment which went before. God forsaketh them with his grace, that forsake him by their sins: and when once God leaveth them, the devil findeth them. Whensoever God departeth out of any person, the unclean spirit taketh possession, for the house is empty, swept, and garnished, and made ready to entertain him, *Math. 12, 44.* This is it which the Prophet declareth concerning the secret judgment of God upon sinners, that make shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience; *My people would not hear my voice, and Israel would none of me: so I gave them up unto the hardness of their heart, and they have walked in their own counsels, Psal. 81, 11, 12.* Where he showeth, that seeing they would not be reclaimed and reformed, he laid the bridle in their own necks, and suffered them to run their full swinge into all wickedness. In like manner the Apostle describing the sins of the Jews that hated the Gospel, stoned the Prophets, persecuted the Saints, and crucified the Lord of life, showeth that they had filled up the measure of their sins, and that the wrath of God was come on them to the uttermost, *1. Thess. 2, 19.*

[Reason 3] Thirdly, sin is fitly resembled to the fretting of a canker, and to the uncleanness of a leprosy, both which go forward, and make no stay, until the whole body be infected and every member endangered. This is the similitude which the Apostle useth; *Their word shall fret as a canker, of which sort is Hymenaeus and Philetus*. For as one serpent engendreth another, so doth one sin conceive and bring forth another. It is like unto the beast, that is said to grow so long as it liveth. So then lay these things together, both that God forsaketh such as make no conscience of sin, and that sin is likened to the conceiving of the womb, to the eating of a canker, and to the filthiness of a leprosy, we may conclude, that sin being entertained, knoweth not stay, but rolleth as a stone, until it come to the [Use 1] bottom.

Now, let us handle the uses. First, consider from hence, how dangerous it is to give entertainment unto sin at the beginning, which groweth to more perfection every day, we cannot stop this stream when we will: it goeth beyond the strength of our nature. God leaveth us further to our selves, when we begin to leave his ways. We see this in the example of *Cain*, he was reprov'd of God, checked for his hatred against his brother, & admonish'd to repent; but *he harkened not to the voice of the Lord, but hardened his heart, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of his brother*, Gen. 4, 8. This appeareth in *Judas*, he entertained covetousness in his heart, from covetousness he fell to plot with the Pharisees, from plotting he proceeded to practicing, and in the end he brake out into treason against his Lord and Master, and ceased not till he brake his own neck, *Math. 26, 15*. The like we may say of *Saul*, and trace out his falling from God, step by step; and the more he continued, the more did the Spirit of GOD forsake him; so that his hidden corruption brake out into open rebellion against God, open persecution against *David*, and open desperation against himself and his own soul. Thus it falleth out with such as sin against their conscience. Some grow to be very devils incarnate, that do every day give strength unto their corruption, and add drunkenness unto thirst, who being past feeling, give themselves to wantonness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. Some are like brute beasts, that are led only by sensuality, carnal and natural men, which have nothing in them of the Spirit of God, *Jude 10*. Continuance in sin bringeth hardness of heart. Such are in greatest danger, and see it not; they are in the midst of the fire, and feel it not; they taste deeply of the judgment of God, and regard it not. Lay before them the grievousness of sin, beseech them with bitter tears, exhort them by the tender mercies of God, denounce all the plagues, punishments, and judgments of hell, offer unto them the sweet promises of the Gospel, entreat them by the death of Christ, and the dearest blood that he shed for them: all these they tread under their feet, and neglect them as things of no price; sin hath bewitched their hearts, Satan hath blinded their eyes, and God hath given them up into a reprobate sense. For as among all the blessings that God bestoweth upon the sons of men in this world, a soft and tender heart is one of the greatest, which is soon checked & controuled, soon made to bleed, and raised to repentance and amendment of life, *Ezek. 11, 19*: so there can be no greater curse and malediction laid upon any man, then to have a stony and stiff-necked, a rebellious and iron heart, which heapeth and hoardeth up every day vengeance against it self. What an heavy punishment was this upon *Pharaoh*, when his heart was hardened? *Moses* and *Aaron* came unto him, they laid before him the word of God, they wrought miracles in the land of Egypt, they called upon him to let the people go:

he was visited with lice, he was feared with thunders, he was plagued with frogs, he was tried with darkness, he was punished with the death of the first borne; yet could not all these enter into his heart, nor pierce his conscience that was seared with an hot iron, so that he proceeded in evil, until he and his whole host were drowned in the red sea. Hereunto accordeth that which the Prophet *Jeremiah* saith, *Can the black Moore change his skin? or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil,* Ier. 13, 23.

Seeing therefore such as begin to sin, can have do stay of themselves, we must needs confess it to be very dangerous and hurtful to our souls. For all such as break out into this sin, are like to those that run down a steep hill, that when they are going, have no power to make any stay or stop, until they come unto the lower end. Thus it is with those that have given the onset upon sin, they do as it wer, open y^e flood gates of impiety, which are not again easily shut up, but the violence of the stream beareth all things before it. For howsoever sin at the first be entertained of men with some dislike, and not without some struggling and striving against it; yet in process of time, and by continuance in sin, they grow shameless, even to have an whores forehead, that they cannot, nor will not be ashamed: though the Sun, the heaven, the earth, and men bear witness against them, they regard neither God nor men, neither heaven, nor hell, neither salvation nor damnation. This is indeed a dangerous estate, and a fearful condition.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing evil men wax worse & worse, we may conclude, that their judgment sleepeth not, but is increased as their sin increaseth; yea, it is not far off, but lieth at the doors. Every sin is in it own nature a sin to death, and a removing from God, the wages of it is death, and provoketh to an utter consumption of us, *Rom. 6, 23*: how then can we answer so many thousands, if one be so grievous? For if the Lord mark what is *done amiss, who shall be able to stand?* Thus the Apostle setteth down their condition, that were settled in wickedness, *That their condemnation long since resteth not, & their destruction stūbreth not,* 2. Pet. 2, 3. So then, we may assure our selves that the judgments of God follow at their heels, when men are come to the top and height of their sins. Thus it was with the old world, when their ways were wholly corrupted, then was the earth universally drowned. When the *Sodomites* became exceeding sinners against the Lord, and their sins cried to heaven, the Lord rained down fire & brimstone upon them. When Israel abounded in all sin, that there was no truth nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land, but that by swearing and lying, by killing and stealing they brake out, and blood touched blood; the Lord denounceth by his Prophet, *That the land shall mourn, and everyone that dwelleth therein, shall he cut-off,* Hos. 4, 1, 2. When the Amorites had filled up the measure of their sins, Gen. 15, 14. they should be rooted out of the Land, and the people of God come in their stead. Where the Lord declareth, that howsoever this people were exceeding sinners in the days of *Abraham*, and deserved to be rooted out at the very first, yet did he withhold his hand, and waited for their repentance a long time, until they were past recovery. Do we then see any wax worse and worse, and increase in sin, as they grow in age? We may conclude, that so soon as they are become ripe, nay, rotten in their sins, the appointed time of God draweth on to destroy them. For even as men when their Corn is waxen ripe, and the fields are white unto the harvest, do thrust in their sickles, and cut it down, so will the Lord deal with all the ungodly; for when their sins

are at the highest, then his judgments are at the nearest, according as the Apostle *John* showeth, that an Angel came out of the Temple, crying with a loud voice unto him that sate on the Cloud, *Thrust in thy sickle and reap: for the time is come to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe*, Revel. 14, 15. This is it which was declared in a vision unto *Amos*, where the Lord shown unto him a Basket of Summer fruit, and said, *Amos, what seest thou?* who answered, *A Basket of Summer fruit. Then the Lord said unto him, The ende is come upon my people of Israel, I will pass by them no more*, Amos 8, 1, 2. Declaring thereby, the ripeness of their sins, and the readiness of God's judgments to give them their reward. Wherefore, whatsoever sins ungodly men commit, the old are not forgotten, and only the new remembered; but all both old and new, do come together, & add unto the heap, that the measure being full, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, certain destruction may fall upon them. Let us not make a mock of sin, or think that God hath forgotten it, when we have forgotten it. The iniquities that men commit one day are forgotten with them the next, and such as are practiced in their youth, are past their knowledge before they come to age: but we cannot hide them from the Almighty, *Who writeth bitter things against us, and maketh us to possess the iniquities of our youth*, Job 14, 26. Psal. 25.7. Every sin shall help somewhat to increase the weight, and make our account the greater in the day of account: for as every Corn of wheat helpeth to fill up the bushel, and to enlarge the heap: so doth every sin that we commit, help to bring our wickedness to the full. And as men keep their books of reckonings and accounts, which they will bring forth when they are to reckon: so the Lord (to the end we may know that he seeth and remembereth our offenses) is said after the manner of men, *to keep a Register of the deeds of men, and to write them up in the same, and every sin serveth to fill up the accounts*, Revel. 20, 12. He noteth so many oaths as every day come from our unclean mouths; our drunkenness at this time, and that place, and in that company; our whoredoms, uncleanness and wantonness; our contempt of his word; our neglect of this sermon, and that sermon, on this Sabbath, and on such a Sabbath: so that we shall find when the day of reckoning cometh sins upon sins, and heaps upon heaps, until the measure runneth over; and when we must go the way of all flesh, they will stand before us as an huge Sea (whereof we can sound no bottom) to swallow us up. For if we must give an account *for every idle word at the day of judgment*, Mat. 12, 36: how much more for our blasphemies, and unclean deeds, which are without number? Which should make us cry out with the Prophet, *O Lord I know that the way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man to walk & to direct his steppes: Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing*, Ier. 10, 23, 24. To conclude, howsoever God spare long because he is patient, yet if we grow worse and worse, and abuse his patience, and run into all riot and excess of sin, he will fill up the vial of his judgment, and pour out his wrath upon us to the utmost. This serveth to answer the curiosity, and to stop the mouths of many men, who seeing wicked men proceed in sin, and prosper in their ways, are offended, and are ready to say, *Doeth not the Lord see this? Or is there no righteousness in the Almighty? Why doth the way of the wicked prosper, and why are they in wealth, that rebelliously transgress?* Ier. 12, 1. God suffereth wicked men a long time, because their sins are not yet full, the measure is not filled up: but wait a while, and they shall not go unpunished.

[Use 3] Lastly, seeing men giving themselves over to sin, come at the last to be frozen in the dregs of it; it is our duty to resist the beginnings, to prevent the breach, and to stop the first course of it. It is as a serpent that must be trod on in the egg; it is as a birth that would be smothered in the conception. Let us take heed that sin grow not into a custom, and get an habit. This is it which *Solomon* pointeth out, speaking against hatred & revenge, *The beginning of strife is as one that openeth the waters: therefore ere the contention be meddled with, leave off*, Prov. 17, 14, Where he teacheth, that as it is dangerous to break a bank or wall which holdeth in the water in his course, lest it overflow the fields and meadows; so if there be a little breach begun in the conscience by sin, the floods thereof will so grow and swell, that the violence and rage of the stream will quickly and easily enlarge the breach, and bring body and soul to sudden destruction. Seeing therefore there is such an inundation and flood of sin, when once it getteth vent, it behooveth us to stay the beginnings of sin, when as first it beginneth to sprout out, and to spring up: now, these weeds will be more easily pulled up, then when they have taken deeper root, *Heb. 12, 13*. The diseases of the body being taken at the first, when they begin to breed, and only a spice of them is marked, are easily cured and healed; whereas the old festered sore is incurable and without remedy. Even so is it in the diseases of the soul, if we nippe them in the head betimes, they are with more ease and less difficulty suppressed: whereas, if we let them have their full swinge, they are hardly bridled and subdued. This we see in the example of *Lot*, when he was fallen into drunkenness, there was an easy and quick passage to fall into incest. When *David* had committed adultery with the wife, he had but a step to run into murder to kill the husband. The devil that old serpent, if he can thrust in his head, will easily wind in the whole body: the way is to quell him quickly, and then shall we be sure to be conquerors, He seeketh to prevail over us by degrees. If the devil had moved *Peter* at the first to curse himself to the pit of hell if ever he knew Christ, no doubt he would have loathed the temptation, and not have hearkened to his suggestion. But he dealt more subtly, and prepared him unto it by certain steppes, whereby he brought him at the last to yield unto that which at the first he detested. When he goeth about to allure a man unto the beastly and more then beastly sin of drunkenness, he will not by and by say to him, Drink till thou be drunken, and transform thyself into a beast, but will make him to delight in evil company, to leave the works of his calling, and to haunt infamous houses, the nurceries of drunkenness. When he would entice a man unto whoredom and adultery, he will not at the first step throw him into the harlots bed, but bring him to look upon her, to like her, to lust after her, to have familiarity with her; and lastly, to commit the sin itself, *2. Sam. 11, 2*: which being first in the devils intention, is the last in the sinners execution. When he went about to bring *Cain* to murder his brother, he did not at the first say unto him, *Kill him, and make him away*; but sowed discord and hatred in his heart, *Gen. 4, 5: and this murder of the heart, engendered the murder of the hand*, *1. John. 3, 15*. If then we would avoid the actual sin, we must endeavor to cut and pare away all occasions, and not give the enemy room, no not a little. But men in these days make a sport and jest of sin, not knowing that they play with a serpent, nor considering that they dally with a cockatrice. They are like to *Solomon's* sluggard, described in the Proverbs, *Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep*, Prov. 6, 10, and 24, 33. So the adulterer saith; a little more uncleanness; the drunkard must have a little more drinking; the covetous person

must have a little more of the world; and everyone must wallow as the swine, a little longer in his wickedness, the time is not yet come to forsake his wicked ways: the blasphemer, that feareth not an oath, must continue yet a little longer in his swearing. These men (like the sluggard) must sleep yet a little while in their sins, and lie a little thought longer in their lusts; but give the devil a little hold, and he will not in haste let go; grant him an inch, and he will take an ell: and so long as thou doest not wholly renounce thy sin, but wilt take a little pleasure at it, and spend a little more time in it, thou art in danger of destruction, as *Solomon* telleth the sluggard.

7 And when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the Priest, saw it, he rose up from the mids of the congregation, and took a spear in his hand:

8 And followed the man of Israel into his stews, and thrust them both through, the man of Israel, & the woman in her womb; ethen the plague ceased from the children of Israel.

9 And there died in that plague four and twenty thousand.

10 Then the Lord spake unto Moses, saying:

11 Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the Priest, hath turned mine anger away from the children of Israel; while he was zealous for my sake among them; therefore I have not consumed the children of Israel in my jealousy.

12 Wherefore say to him; Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace.

13 And he shall have it, & his seed after him, even the covenant of the Priests office forever, because he was zealous for his God, and hath made an atonement for the children of Israel.

14 And the name of the Israelite thus slain, which was killed with the Midianitish woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, Prince of the family of the Simeonites.

15 And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain was Cosby, the daughter of Zur, who was head over the people of his fathers house in Midian.

Hitherto *Moses* hath handled the sins of the people, bringing down heavy judgments upon the heads of the principal authors and committers of them. Now, he setteth down the second point, which is, the reconciliation of God toward his people, *Who will not keep his anger forever*, *Psal.* 103, 9: Wherein we are to observe two things; the execution of Justice, and the

approbation thereof by God. The execution here recorded against the evil doers is double; the one, extraordinary; the other, ordinary. The extraordinary was by the spear of *Phinehas*, whereby God's wrath was turned away: the ordinary, was by sentence of the magistrates that were found free from falling into these offenses; such as were guilty, being hanged up by the express commandment of God. Touching the first, it is noted, that *Phinehas* one of the tribe of *Levi*, and posterity of *Aaron*, arose out of the congregation that wept before the Lord, being stirred up extraordinarily of God, he took a spear in his hand, kindled with a zeal arising from a chaste and pure mind, abhorring all uncleanness and filthiness, and pursued them into their filthy stews and brothel-houses, where he thrust them both thorough, revenging the dishonor done to God, & the scandal laid upon his people. A worthy example for all Magistrates to follow, to be sharp & severe in punishing sin, and taking away evil out of the city of God. Thus the plague was stayed, and the anger of God turned away, after that justice was executed, and so many thousands at one time, and for one sin swept away.

But here two questions arise, which are to be discussed, before we proceed any further: the first touching the fact of *Phinehas*: the second, touching the number of y^e dead here remembered. Touching the fact of *Phinehas*, [Objection.] it may be thus objected: How can it be lawful in him, (being a private person) to exceed the bounds and lists of his calling? He was of the tribe of *Levi*, and of the family of the Priests, to whom it belonged not to draw the sword. For as the other tribes were not appointed to the service of the Altar; so the tribe of *Levi* was not called to the execution of justice. Besides, there are general rules directing all private men, and general Laws restraining them from shedding of blood; as he that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: he that smiteth with the sword, shall be smitten with the sword: love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you. The servant of God must not strive, but must be gentle toward all men, suffering the evil, and instructing them with meekness that be contrary mind, 2. *Tim.* 2, 25. How then can we justify this act of *Phinehas*, departing from these holy rules of God's Religion? I answer, [Answer.] there is a double kind of calling; an ordinary calling, and an extraordinary calling; the one necessarily distinguished from the other. For God doth oftentimes give unto his servants a new and special vocation, and addeth it unto their former function. Hence it is also, that some works are ordinary, and some are extraordinary. Ordinary works must be guided and directed by ordinary rules, such as those are which we have set down before. Extraordinary works proceed from a special motion of God's Spirit warranting them, and making them (albeit going against the common rules) lawful, cōmendable, and necessary. Such was the fact of *Moses*, smiting the Egyptian, *Exod.* 2, 12: the fact of *Samuel*, hewing *Agag* in pieces, 1. *Sam.* 15, 35: the fact of *Elijah*, slaying the Priests of *Baal*, 1. *King.* 18, 4: the fact of the Israelites, spoiling the Egyptians, and such like, *Exod.* 12, 35, who had an inward motion, like to the commandment given to *Abraham* to kill his son. These actions, albeit warranted to the doers, are not to be drawn into example and imitation, unless we have the inspiration of the same Spirit; and therefore Christ our Savior answereth his Disciples, that would have called fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans, *Ye know not of what spirit ye are, for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them*, *Luk.* 9, 55. Now that this fact of *Phinehas* is of the same nature, it appeareth, both because the plague ceased by it, and God's wrath kindled

against his people, was appeased; so that the action is both commended & rewarded. This the Spirit of God teacheth in the Psalm, *Phinehas stood up and executed judgment, and the plague was stayed: and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, from generation to generation forever*, Psalm. 106, 30: which is not so to be understood, as if he were justified before God, by this one act, because whosoever will be just by the Law, is bound to keep the whole law, according to the tenor of the law, *Do this & thou shalt live*, Gal. 4, 12, 20. One good work doth not serve or suffice to make a man perfectly just and righteous in the sight of God, seeing he that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, is accursed. So then, we must know that the Psalmist meaneth, that this fact was lawful, and allowed. For having set down the vengeance that *Phinehas* took upon this adulterer, and the adulteress: he preventeth the Objection which might be made: Was not this horrible and damnable murder in him, who being a private man, had not the sword of justice committed unto him? and being one of the Priests of the Lord, was to meddle only in matters belonging unto God, and not in civil things; who was to draw out the censures of y^e church not a material sword to strike offenders? No (saith the Prophet) it was not murder, it was a righteous and commendable act, he being stirred up by God's Spirit, inasmuch as it proceeded from faith, and aimed at the glory of the great Name of God. Wherefore this place is falsely alleged, and perversely wrested by the Church of Rome, to overthrow justification by faith alone, and to establish justification by good works. For there is a double justification, one of the work, the other of the person. The Prophet speaketh in that place of the justification of the work, which albeit in the sight of men it might seem savage & inhumane, yet God did accept of it, & account it as a good and just work, which pleased him being done in faith, which purifieth the heart, Acts 15, 9. He speaketh not of the justification of his person, which was by apprehending the mercy of God in Christ, by believing, not by doing. Thus the Apostle in the fourth chapter to the Romans, verses 4, 5. maketh a double kind of imputation, saying: *To him that worketh, the wages is not counted by favor, but by debt: but to him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness*. Thus much of the first question touching the act of *Phinehas*, whether it were lawful or unlawful, whether it were private revenge, or public justice.

The second Question is touching the number that died in this plague: [Object.] wherein appeareth some difference and disagreement in outward show, between the Old Testament, and the new. For *Moses* in this place, verse 9, saith, *There died four and twenty thousand*. But the Apostle *Paul* alleging this judgment of God, mentioneth only *Three and twenty thousand*, 1 Cor. 10, 8, subtracting one thousand from the former number which *Moses* added. I answer, some reconcile these places thus: that the Scribes or Penmen failed in copying out the books of *Paul's* Epistles, which should have written four & twenty thousand, where they wrote three & twenty thousand. But this is shifting rather than reconciling; & cutting the knot with a sword, rather than loosing it asunder with the hand, inasmuch as all the copies generally with full consent, as it were with one voice agree in the former reading. Others suppose and surmise that it might be a slip of memory in the Apostle, according to human infirmity. But this answer is worse then the former, and these are unskillful Surgeons, that make a deep wound instead of applying a plaster, and therefore kill where they should cure.

For we cannot admit any faults in memory in the blessed Apostle, who wrote by the direction of the Spirit of God, as also the whole Scripture was inspired by him: and we cannot give any reason to warrant, why it should rather be a slip of memory in *Paul* than in *Moses*, both of them being guided by the same Spirit.

Again, others say, that *Paul* is not contrary to *Moses*, forasmuch as if there were four and twenty thousand, as *Moses* teacheth, there must of necessity be three and twenty thousand, as the Apostle gathereth, seeing the greater number includeth the lesser; and seeing he doth not say expressly there were just so many, neither more nor less. True it is, to make up around sum, & a full number, the Scripture useth sometimes to add, and sometimes to detract; but in this place there is no reason, why the Apostle should use the less number rather than the greater, considering y^e greater number is here as full and perfect a number as the lesser; and therefore no just cause to change & alter anything. Besides, the Apostle maketh the number as directly to be 23000, as *Moses* maketh it to be 24000. Wherefore, to let pass these gesses & conjectures, the best and truest answer is, that *Moses* distinguisheth the history into two parts. First, touching the heads of the people that were hanged up: Secondly, touching the people that were slain with the sword. If we join both these together, as *Moses* doth in this place, it is truly said, There died four and twenty thousand. For he speaketh first of the chief Captains and Ring-leaders to this rebellion against God, then of the rest of the people that walked in their ways, and followed their example: afterward he casteth up his accounts, & setteth down the total sum as it did accrue out of them both. But if we speak of the principal malefactors by themselves, and of the rest of the people by themselves, a thousand of the principal were hanged or crucified; and among the people were slain three and twenty thousand, of which latter, *Paul* only speaketh, omitting the thousand Princes: to show, how fond and frivolous their excuse is, who defend their offenses by the example, or authority, or counsel, or commandment of their superiors: seeing the people in this place following the foot-steps of their Magistrates, were no less punished than the Magistrates themselves. So then, these are most true, both that which *Moses* saith, to wit, that four and twenty thousand perished, joining both Princes and people together; and that also which *Paul* affirmeth, mentioning three and twenty thousand only, omitting the Princes, and reckoning the people: and hence it is, that the sum in *Moses*, amounteth to a thousand more, in *Paul* to a thousand less.

Hitherto of the execution of justice by *Phinehas*, upon two audacious and open offenders, and of discussing the questions that arise thereupon: now followeth the approbation of God, in whose nostrils it smelled as a sweet savor. This fact is commended, his zeal is praised, his person is blessed, and rewarded. For albeit good works wrought in faith, and died with the blood of Christ, do not merit eternal life, *which is the free gift of God*, Roman. 6, 23, yet they are rewarded of mercy in this life, and in the life to come. The blessing of God to rest upon him and his posterity, is set down in two respects: First, generally, *I will make my covenant of peace with him, so that he shall have me a merciful God*: Secondly, particularly; where the manner is set down, that the Priesthood should remain to him and to his posterity forever, so that both his seed should flourish so long as the Jewish Church should continue, and the honor of the high Priesthood should abide among his posterity, *Until the high Priest of our profession* (*Jesus*

Christ) should come to make an end of all Ceremonies, Hebr. 3, 1. The accomplishment whereof is not hard to show in the holy Scriptures, and in other approved Histories. For the lineal succession of the Priesthood from him to the carrying away into captivity to Babylon, is expressed in y^e books of the Chronicles, 1 Chron. 6, 4, 15, from the father to the son, and from one generation to another. From the captivity, until the time of *Alexander* the Great, (to whom the Persian Monarchy befell, and whom *Iadduah* the high Priest met in his Priestly robes coming to conquer Jerusalem) the genealogy is remembered in the book of *Nehemiah*, chapter 12, 10, 22. Neither may it seem strange unto us, that *Nehemiah* should set down the succession so far, seeing from the reign of *Artaxerxes* whom he served (being in chief place about him) to the Monarchy of *Alexander* the Great, (who overcame *Darius*) were not above sixty years, as the Chronology & Computation of the reign of the Persian Kings declareth. And from the times of *Alexander* the Great, to *Aristobulus* and his son (who was the last) whom *Herod* treacherously and cruelly caused to be drowned; the pedigree is to be seen in *Josephus* and others. Afterward the Priesthood was set to sale, and those promoted, that made their own way by sums of money, or by favor of friends, or both together.

After this promise made to *Phinehas*, *Moses* annexeth a description of the whoremaster and the whore, that provoked God's wrath, and troubled Israel: who are set forth by their names, by their family, by their condition and degree. The name of the man was *Zimri*, his family was the tribe of *Simeon*: touching his estate, he was one of the Princes of his tribe, by whom no doubt (being a man of sort and quality) he was accompanied and countenanced; yea, it should appear he was a mover and persuader of others to commit the like wickedness, whereby it came to pass y^t the greatest number of this tribe perished with him, as may be gathered by the new survey and numbering of the tribes which is taken in the Chapter following, *Numb*, 26, 14, and 1, 23. For they which in the former mustering and numbering, amounted unto the number of nine and fifty thousand and three hundred, were now diminished and abated to two & twenty thousand, and two hundred, for their idolatry and fornication: so that with this *Zimri*, the greater number of this tribe perished,

They did partake with him in the sin of whoredom, and therefore they communicated with him in the plague and punishment of it. Hence it came to pass, that whereas all the other tribes in a manner amounted to more then forty thousand: this tribe attained only unto the number of two and twenty thousand, and two hundred. The name of the harlot was *Cosbi*; her stock and kindred was of the Midianites: in respect of her place, she was the daughter of one of the chief Princes of that people, who afterward was reckoned amongst the sons of *Midian*, that were slain by *Moses*, Numbers 31, 8. These names of the two persons are singled out amongst the rest, unto their perpetual infamy and reproach, For as the names of the righteous are registered and remembered, to their everlasting praise: so the name of the ungodly shall rot, Prov. 10, ver. 7. Their families are singled out, that part of the disgrace and dishonor should blemish them, to humble them, and to instruct them to nourish sin in none of their kindred. Their high place is singled out, to teach that GOD the Judge of all the world, judgeth without respect of persons, and that all men, of what credit and countenance soever, should fear before him.

Verse 7. *And when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the Priest saw it, he rose up, &c.]* This holy man of God slew the adulterer and the adulteress with a spear. If he had been a mere private man, this shedding of blood had been unlawful in him, howsoever they deserved it. But the Spirit of God was his direction, and he had a secret calling, to be to him as a sure & safe warrant. So then, albeit private persons may put no mā to death, as appeareth in the Commandment, Exod. 20, 13, yet such as are warranted from God, are his Officers and Magistrates.

We learn from hence, that actions which of themselves and in their own nature are unlawful, unseemly, and against humanity, by a calling from God, become lawful, warrantable, and necessary. This special calling given unto special men, is sometimes outward, and sometimes inward. The inward calling is, when God by the motion of his Spirit, moveth the heart to do some special work against the ordinary rules that he left to the rest of the sons of men. Heereof we have plentiful examples in the book of Judges, in those whom God extraordinarily raised up to save his people, and to destroy their enemies. Whē *Eglon* King of *Moab* oppressed Israel, & kept them in great slavery and subjection, as a tyrant and usurper, the Lord stirred up *Ehud*, Judge. 3, 15, 16. who made him a Dagger with two edges, conveyed it closely under his garment, and when opportunity served, he thrust it into his belly, and flew him. This action had been sinful without this calling; for though *Eglon* were an oppressor, yet the killing of him had not been warrantable. The like we see afterward in the same book set before us in the example of *Sampson*; for there we see, he took to wife an uncircumcised Philistin, Judge. 14, and 15, and 16, he tied firebrands to the Foxes tayles, to burn their Corn, he carried away the gates of *Azzah*, he slew many with the iaw-bone of an Ass, & pulled down the house of *Dagon*, whereby he killed the Princes, people, and himself. He was inwardly called and commanded to do these works of God. For when he spake to his father to give him one of the daughters of the Philistines to wife that pleased him well, his father and his mother faide unto him; *Is there never a wife among the daughters of thy brethren, and among all thy people, that thou must go take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? For they knew not that it came of the Lord, that he should seek an occasion against the Philistines,* Judge. chapter 14, verse 4. The same we noted before in *Moses* slaying the Egyptian, which fact, howsoever some condemn as unlawful, both because he was not appointed a Judge over that people, but was a private man, and because he seemed to pass the bounds of justice (supposing he were a Magistrate) punishing the smiting of a blow, (Exod. 2, 12,) with the taking away of life, seeing God commanded a tooth for a tooth, Exod. 21, 24, wound for wound, and blow for blow: yet it appeareth by the words of *Stephen*, that GOD had given him commission, and endued him with authority, to deliver the Israelites, and to avenge their injuries, when he saith, *He supposed his brethren would have understood that God by his hand should give them deliverance, but they understood it not,* Acts, chap. 7, 25. Again, when *Moses* had received the Law in the Mount, written with the finger of God, and being come down had seen the molten Calf, *He took the two Tables, and cast them out of his two hands, and brake them before their eyes,* Deut. chap. 9, verse 17. He did not this through any unadvised zeal, or hastiness, or fleshly affection, but God governed him by his holy Spirit, & stirred him up by

this extraordinary means, to declare to the people, that his Covenant was broken and disannulled that was made between them.

Likewise, some have had an outward calling, commanding and warranting the doing of extraordinary things. So *Abraham* was commanded by lively voice to take his son, his only son, him whom he loved, even *Isaac*, the son of promise, and to offer him up for a burnt offering, upon one of the mountaynes which God would show him, *Gen. 22, 2*. This also appeareth in one of the children of the Prophets, who willed his neighbor to smite him by the commandment of the Lord, and in smiting, to wound him, that he might disguise himself when he spake unto the King, *1. Kings 20, 35*.

The reasons making these extraordinary [Reason 1] works lawful, are apparent. First, true obedience standeth not in man's will, but in the commandment of GOD. Whatsoever he commandeth, howsoever our carnal reason judgeth of it, and whatsoever iniquity it may seem unto us to contain or prescribe, we must account it lawful. That which he forbiddeth, what show soever it carrieth of piety and holiness, is unlawful. This appeareth in the answer of Christ unto *John the Baptist*, putting him back, and refusing to baptize him: *Let be now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness*, *Math. 3, 15*. And to this purpose the Prophet, speaking of this act of *Phinehas* here remembered, saith, *It was imputed unto him for righteousness*, *Psal. 106, 31*. If then in those actions the children of God obeyed him, and followed not their own corrupt wills, they must needs be held and pronounced to be lawful.

[Reason 2] Secondly, none can withstand his commandments. That is righteous which he accounteth righteous. And if he will have it done, who shall contradict it? Who is so strong, as to resist his will? This doth the Apostle *Peter* declare, when he had been with *Cornelius*, he maketh this defense for himself, *Forasmuch as God gave them a like gift, as he did unto us, when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could let God?* *Acts 11, 7*.

Thus we see the Doctrine confirmed: now [Use 1] let us see likewise how it may be applied. First, mark here the difference between God and our selves. His word is our light and direction. We have no other way or warrant to approve our actions but from God and his word; but he is not tied to any guide or Governor. We are put in mind hereof by *Moses*, *Deut. 29, 29*. *The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of the law*. God is not tied to his revealed will, the Law-giver is above his law. For the law must be understood with this restraint and limitation, except God command the contrary, who is free, and not bound to ordinary rules. He commanded *Moses* in the building of the Tabernacle, to make the Cherubims, and other similitudes; as also afterward, when the people were stung with fiery serpents, to set up a brazen serpent, which without his commandment had been a breach of the second Commandment, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image, nor the similitude of anything in the heaven above, or in earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth*, *Exod. 20, 4*. He commanded *Joshua* to compass the City of *Jericho*, seven days with the men of war, and the Ark of God, seven days together, and therefore also on the Sabbath day, *Josh. 6, 15*: which without the Commandment of God, had been a breach of the fourth Commandment, *Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day*. So God proved *Abraham*, and charged him to offer his son, which he

could not have done without horrible murder, except God had commanded it, being a breach of the sixth Commandment, *Thou shalt not kill*. In like manner God willed his people to ask jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, of their neighbors the Egyptians, Exod. 12, 35, whereby they spoiled them, but never made restitution unto them; which without a peculiar direction from God, had not stood with the eyght Commandment, *Thou shalt not steal*. Thus thē we see for the increase of our knowledge, how the Law of God is to be understood, to wit, with this caveat and *prouiso*, Unless it please God to command the contrary, who always worketh according to his own will. For as such as have to do in the Statutes of earthly Princes, do teach to restrain them, and understand them thus, saving the Kings prerogative: so are we to do in the interpretation of the law of God, always to use this exception of God's prerogative. For if Princes claim a prerogative above their laws, much more are we to give unto the eternal God, a prerogative and privilege above the laws given to the sons of men.

Secondly, we learn from hence, that all examples [Use 2] set down in Scripture, are not set down for our imitation, albeit revealed for our instruction. Our Savior in the Gospel reproveth his Disciples, who would have called down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans to consume them, pretending to follow the example of *Elias*, saying unto them, *Ye know not of what spirit ye are*, Lu. 9, 59. The examples of the godly set down in Scripture are of four sorts. The first, general and common, standing in the law of nature, taught in the ten Commandments, commanding us to worship God, to honor our parents, to do wrong to no man. Hence it is, that we are commanded to follow the faith of *Abraham*, the chastity of *Joseph*, the zeal of *David*, the patience of *Job*, the repentance of *Peter*, the attention of *Lydia*, the restitution of *Zacchaeus*, and such like: these are set before us, both for our instruction, and for our imitation.

Secondly, the godly have many infirmities and imperfections, whereby it cometh to pass, that some of their actions are sinful and ungodly, which are set down for us, not to follow, but to avoid. Such are the incredulity of *Moses*, the adultery of *David*, the idolatry of *Solomon*, the drunkenness of *Noah*, the incest of *Lot*, the ambition of the Apostles. These are not written, that we should allege the falls of the Saints, to warrant and justify our sins, but to teach us, that no mā is free from sin in this life, seeing the elect and regenerate do offend; that we should not, being suddenly overtaken with sin, despair of God's mercy: & that we should be watchful, and look to our footing, seeing these men sinned, being adorned with such great gifts, so highly in God's favor, that shined as Stars in the Firmament, and were eminent above other men, as the Cedars above other Trees.

Thirdly, some things were well done of the Fathers, that cannot be followed of us without offense to God, as those that were ceremonial, and endured only until the coming of Christ, and the restoring of all things by him: as the cutting of the foreskinne, the offering of sacrifices, the killing of the Passover, which cannot be brought into use and practice again, Acts chap. 15, ver. 1, 5, without injury to Christ, and the abolishing of his death.

Lastly, some examples were singular and proper unto those to whom they were given; so as neither others in those days, nor we in our times, may any way follow them, without the same inspiration of the Spirit: and of this number is the zeal of *Phinehas*, mentioned in this

place, and such extraordinary examples as we named before. Thus we see, both that all examples of the faithful are not to be practiced, and likewise what are to be followed, and what are not to be followed. Heereby we learn to meet with all profane men, who resolve to continue in their sins, & defend themselves with the slips and failings of the faithful. These men sin with the godly, but they repent not with them: they fall asleep with them, but they arise not with them out of sleep. Heereby also the Church of Rome is convinced, who allege the making of the Cherubims, of the brazen serpent, and such like; to justify their imagery and idolatry by the example of *Moses*, which we have shown to be special, not general, commanded to him, not warranted to all. Lastly, hereby they are condemned, that would bring in any of the ceremonies of the law, which are long since buried, together with the Synagogue, & cannot stand with the simplicity of the Gospel, and with the sufficiency of the death of Christ.

Lastly, as no man must be rash in pretending extraordinary callings, so we must take heed we be not rash in censuring the doings of other men. Do we know, or can we understand the motions and inspirations of other men? What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him? 1 Cor. 2, 11. We may not therefore examine their callings by our own, nor measure extraordinary actions, by ordinary rules; especially in the times of the decay of religion, of the ruins of the Church, of the planting of the Gospel, when God doth many times give some of his people special motions, & guide them with an extraordinary direction of his Spirit; but every man must look to the warrant of his own work. No man must presume above his calling, but every man *must be wise according to sobriety, and consider what gift he hath received*, Rom. 12, 3. *Peter* when he saw the high Priests servants to lay hands on Christ, drew the sword, and cut off the ear of one of the messengers: but he is reprov'd by his Master, and commanded to put up y^e sword again into his place, *Because all* (being private persons without a calling) *that take the sword, shall perish with the sword*. Whosoever hath received a special calling, God giveth an assurance of it to his own heart, and leaveth no scruple or doubt in him of his calling: so that to ask the question of others, whether a man may have such a calling or not, is an evident argument that he hath not received any such calling. For albeit we cannot judge of the callings of others, yet may we of our own, & know that which no man knoweth beside our selves. The Disciples thought amiss of *Peter* the Apostle for going to *Cornelius*. For when he was come up to Jerusalem, they of the circumcision contended against him, because he went in to men uncircumcised, and had eaten with them, (Acts 11, 2.) until they had heard him give a reason of his doing, & make an apology for himself: then they held their peace, and glorified God. And so is it with those that sit in judgment of other men's callings, & condemn those things whereof they are ignorant.

[Verse 8. *He thrust them both through then the plague ceased frō the children of Israel.*] The sins of this people into which they fell, were very grievous: and the judgments of God that fell upon them, were heavy and answerable to their sins. Some of them to fill up the measure of their iniquities to the full, brought their harlots into the host of GOD, even among them that the Lord their GOD had chosen to be an holy Nation, Deut. 14, 2, and a precious people unto himself, above all the people that are upon the earth. When these were punished, and the

public scandal taken away, God is pacified, the plague is removed, & the people are delivered. From hence this Doctrine is offered to our considerations, that when sin is punished, God is appeased. So soon as evil is taken away, the judgments of GOD are called in. When the old world was destroyed by the flood of waters which God sent upon the earth, and all flesh perished in whose nostrils the spirit of life did breathe; then GOD entered into a new covenant with the remnant that was left; and *Noah* offering a sacrifice, the Lord smelled a savor of rest, and said in his heart, *I will henceforth curse the ground no more for man's cause, neither will I smite anymore all things living as I have done*, Gen. 8, 21, 22. So long as *Achan* was unpunished, the host of Israel could not prosper, but turned their backs before their enemies; but when he was found out, and stoned to death with stones, and burned with fire, the Lord turned from his fierce wrath, & gave unto his people the victory, *Josh.* 7, 26. When he had plagued the people that caused *Aaron* to make the calf that he made, whereby they committed foul and gross idolatry, and turned God into the similitude of a bullock that eateth grass, he was reconciled vn- them, and well pleased with them, *Psal.* 106, 19, 20. So when *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram* were destroyed, and God visited their rebellion with a strange visitation, his anger continued no longer against them. When *Miriam* had been shut out of y^e host 7. days, & punished with leprosy, the wrath of God was appeased, & she restored to the host again, *Nu.* 12, 15. We know how the wrath of God was kindled against Israel, & against *David* for numbering the people, so that he sent a pestilence among them from the morning, even to the time appointed, whereof there died 70000. men: then the Lord repented of the evil, and said to the Angel y^t destroyed the people, *It is sufficient, hold now thine hand*, 2 Sam. 24, 16. All these places of Scripture are evident proofs of this Doctrine, that so soon as execution is done upon malefactors, the sword of God's justice is put up, and his wrath ceaseth.

[Reason 1] And the Reasons hereof are plain. For first, what is it that separateth between God and his people, and causeth a divorce and division between him & them? Is it anything else then sin? When sin therefore or the sinner are taken away, he hath no more controversy against them. This is it which the Prophet *Isaiah* testifieth, cha. 59, 2. *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear; for your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity.* And in the fourth chapter of the Prophet *Hosea*, ver. 1, 2, convincing them of swearing and lying, of killing and stealing, and whoring, he declareth, *That the Lord had a controversy with the Inhabitants of the Land, and would cut off everyone that dwelleth therein.* If then it be sin that causeth judgment, and sharpeneth the point of the Lord's sword against the world, against a kingdom, against a city, against a family, against every particular person; when the cause is removed, the effect shall be restrained, and whē the sinner is reformed, the wrath of God will be appeased: for so soon as we turn unto him, his indignation shall be turned away from us.

Secondly, when sin is punished, it bringeth [Reason 2] down a blessing with it. For so long as ungodly men lie in their sins without punishment, and run on in their wickedness, to the dishonor of God, to the reproach of his Name, to the offense and infection of others, and to the confusion of their own faces; so long the wrath of God is kindled, & his hand is stretched out still. But when they are either plagued of God, or punished of men, he blesseth the places

which before he scourged, & rewardeth the persons by whom justice hath been administered. We have a notable example hereof, in the punishing of the Idolatry of the Israelites, for worshipping the molten Calf: he willed the Levites to consecrate their hands that day, *Exod. 32, 29*, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother, that there might be given them a blessing. The Lord had laid this as a punishment upon *Levi* and his posterity, *To divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel*, *Gen. 49, 7*: but he turned this curse into a blessing, when the Priesthood was translated to this Tribe, to teach *Jacob* his judgments, and *Israel* his law, that no corner of the Land should be without instruction. So in this place, when *Phinehas* rose up, & executed judgment upon the adulterer and the adulteress, the Priesthood was confirmed unto him and his posterity, *verse 12, 13*. If then the execution of justice bring a blessing from God, who is so delighted with it that he will never leave it unrewarded, it must needs testify his reconciliation and atonement. For so long as we live in sin, we lie under the curse and wrath of God, no grace can shine upon us, no mercy can overtake us, no blessing can fall upon us. But when sin is punished, the curse is removed, and the favor of God doth compass us about, as with a shield.

Now let us come to the Uses, that we may [Use 1] have the profit and comfort of this Doctrine. First, we learn, that such as continue in any known sin unrepented of, cannot look for peace from God. So long as sin reigneth in any place, the wrath of God hangeth over it, and will undoubtedly fall upon it. There is no peace, (saith the Lord) unto the wicked, *Isaiah 48, 22*. God doth come into the field, as an open enemy to wage war, and enter into a combat against all impenitent sinners. This the Prophet speaketh, *Psal. 7, 11, 12. God judgeth the righteous, and him that contemneth God every day; except he turn, he hath whet his sword, he hath bent his bow, and made it ready*. He abhorreth all the ungodly, and therefore he will fight against thē as a man of war, he will rain down snares, fire and brimstone, and stormy tempests upon them, he will destroy them in his wrath and fierce displeasure. It is a fearful thing to be a rebel and traitor against a Prince, and to stand out in arms against his Sovereign in the field with weapons; it is high treason, the loss of life, the forfeiture of lands and goods, the staining of our blood, the undoing of our posterity. So to stand out in any sin, is high treason and rebellion against the most High. The continuance in any sin, is rebellion, and they that are the committers of it are rebels against God. This made the Prophet to say, *Destroy them O God, let them fall from their counsels, cast them out for the multitude of their iniquities, because they have rebelled against thee*, *Ps. 5, 10*. To this purpose *Samuel* calleth the disobedience of *Saul*, rebellion, *1 Sam. 15, 23*. Every man knoweth the danger of rebellion against the Prince, it is more against God. When we hear of foreign wars, we fear and tremble, we are much moved and perplexed: and shall we not much more be afraid, when the Lord, the King of Kings wargeth battle against us? Whē God by the Ministry of his word doth reprove sin among us, our ignorance, our loosenes & lewdness, our negligence & security; he doth stand out against us as with his sword ready drawn in his hand, to reclaim us, or to destroy us. We were better to have the whole world set against us, then God to be our enemy. What a monstrous madness is it for a mortal man to stand at defiance with him who is the Lord of hosts? *Do we (faith the Apostle) provoke the Lord to anger? Are we stronger then he?* *1 Corinth. chap. 10, verse 22*. How many are there, which are so witless and

bewitched, that they think themselves strong enough to encounter with God, like the Giants that would pluck God out of heaven? But let them take heed, lest setting themselves against him, they thrust themselves down into hell, to their eternal confusion.

Secondly, it teacheth a notable and necessary [Use 2] duty to all Magistrates, to be zealous for the Lord's cause, to root out evil doers, to maintain the glory of God, and to show themselves enemies unto all iniquity. Do they desire to have their people live in peace & tranquility, and to bring a blessing to those that live under their government? Do they desire to have the curse of God removed far from them? The only way is for them to punish sin, whereby they bring quietness and safety, and move the Lord to dwell among them with the graces of his Spirit. The Lord threatened *Ahab*, because he had let go out of his hands a man whom he had appointed to die, his life should go for his life, and his people for his people, 1 Kings, chapter 20, verse 42. When *Saul* had spared *Agag*, contrary to the express commandment of God, who charged him to smite *Amalek*, and to destroy all that appertained unto them, & have no compassion on them, but to slay both man and woman, both infant and suckling, both Ox and Sheep, both Camel and Ass: the Kingdom was rent from him, & was given to his neighbor, that was better then he, 1 Sam. chapter 15, verse 26. When the Levite had his wife abused unto death, and villainously defiled at *Gibeah* which is in *Benjamin*, because those wicked men were not put to death that evil might be put away from Israel, it turned almost unto the utter destruction of that Tribe, Judge. chapter 20, verses 13, 35, and there fell of them in one day five and twenty thousand & an hundred men, all they that could handle the sword. So the Magistrates must regard to punish sin, if they regard the honor of God, the profit of their people, or the good of themselves. We see what an head sin groweth unto and gathereth strength in all places. It beareth the chiefest sway & preeminence everywhere. He that checketh and controlleth it, laboreth in vain, and maketh himself a prey.

True it is, the Ministers of God's word have the sword of the Spirit put into their hands, to cut in sunder the cords of sin. It is a fire that burneth and consumeth the straw and stubble before it. It is an hammer that breaketh in pieces the hard stones, Ier. 23, 29. and it hath the power of God adjoined with it. Notwithstanding, unless the Ministry of the word be assisted and strengthened by the force of the Magistrate, it is little regarded & esteemed of the greatest number. It is good indeed to have some instruction, but it availeth little without correction. If a master should cry never so often unto his scholar, learn, learn, and dissuade him from his idleness and lewdness never so earnestly, yet if he know his master hath no authority or power to correct and chasten him, he will smally respect the vehemency of his words, but esteem them as a blast of wind, that passeth away. So is it with the people, when the Magistrate and Minister go not together, when the word and the sword do not accompany one another. For these two being the high & holy ordinances of God, do give strength & assistance one to another. The Magistrate would be much more troubled, if the word which is lively & mighty in operation, were not taught to keep men in obedience, and they might sit (as it is said of *Moses*, Exod. 18, 14,) to hear causes from morning to evening, and weary themselves with the toil and trouble of their Office, without comfort to themselves, or profit to others. And on the other side, the Ministers might lift up their voice

as a Trumpet, and cry aloud until they be hoarse, unless they be backed and encouraged by the godly Magistracy. So long as *Moses* and *Aaron* (as two brethren) walk amongst the people of God, (I mean the Magistrate to rule and correct, the Minister to teach and reprove) sin will be suppressed, and godliness will in some measure be promoted and advanced. Here then is a notable direction for all Magistrates, fathers, masters, householders, and governors whatsoever, to set themselves against evil doers, seeing thereby they shall find the Lord favorable unto them. Among all encouragements which Rulers (who are as the gods of the earth) have given unto them to bear the burden of the work and the heat of the day, none is more comfortable then this, that by rooting out of the wicked, and punishing the ungodly according to their ungodliness, they bring a blessing upon their own heads, a blessing upon the places where they dwell, and a blessing to their families in which they live, as we see in *Phinehas* in this place: of whom the Lord saith, *While he was zealous for my sake among them, he turned away mine anger, therefore I have not consumed the children of Israel in my jealousy, and I will give unto him my covenant of peace, and he shall have it, and his seed after him.* Who is it that doth not desire to find the favor of God in this life, & to leave a blessing behind him? But if God have made us Magistrates in the Common-wealth, or Governors in the private family, we cannot look for any blessing at his hands, to follow us, and overtake us, so long as sin is unpunished, and the sinner is not recompensed in the earth. It is not enough for us to be godly men, except we labor also to be godly Magistrates. We heard before, that the boast of God could not prosper and prevail, so long as *Achan* was not found out: but when he was stoned, the blessing of God came upon thē. The Mariners in the ship could not be safe, so long as *Jonah* was in it; but so soon as he was cast into the sea, the sea ceased frō his raging. Mark this (ye Rulers of the earth) and learn from hence ye Governors of ho-ses, a profitable lesson: so long as ye are zealous for the advancement of God's glory, and for the rooting out of iniquity, ye shall be blessed in your persons, blessed in your children, blessed in your families, and blessed in your places and habitations. Set yourselves therefore with courage against sin, and God shall be with you. He will prosper the works of your hands, & nothing shall be able to prevail against you; as the Prophet faith, *2 Chron. 15, 2. The Lord is with you, while ye be with him: and if ye seek him, he will be found of you: but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.* Let everyone so far as his calling stretcheth, deal faithfully with God, and show their zeal in resisting sin, as it is sin, in whomsoever they find it, without respect of persons: not fostering it in some, because they are their friends; nor winking at it in others, because they are their children, their servants, their kindred or acquaintance; nor hating it in a third sort, because they are their enemies: but punishing it, and striking at the root of it without difference and partiality. For many are enemies to some sins, because they are enemies to the sinner: and so hate the evil for no other cause, but because they cannot abide the person. But we should in punishing sin, aim at the good, and at the reformation of those that commit it, we should love the person, and abhor the evil; like the Physician, that liketh his patient, but hateth the disease. But to examine our selves a little: How far are we in these days, from the sound practice of this point? Have we a true zeal to punish offenders? or are we careful to find them out, that evil may be taken away from us? Alas, who seeth not plainly (except such as are willfully blind) how cold and careless we are in setting our selves against sin, and opposing our selves against evil doers? Do not wicked men in all places lift up their crests on

high, and walk with outstretched necks without controllement, that no man dare say unto them, Why do ye thus? Nay, are we not come to this pass, that if one in a Parish settle himself to do good, and offer to put too his helping hand, to weed out malefactors, will not twenty step forth to speak for them, & to cross such as shall go about to punish thē? If any good cause be to be promoted, how backward are we to further it? How nice, how squemish are we, and pinch courtesy, who shall go before, as if we were ashamed of it? But if whoremongers, drunkards, harlots, that are as the off-scouring of the world, and the scum of the earth, be brought before Magistrates, to be rewarded according to their deservings, they cannot want many of their neighbors to countenance them, to go with them, and to speak for them. What persons ever were there so lewd and licentious, that have not found diverse to entreat in their favor? Yea, so desperate are our times & seasons grown, that if the devil himself were incarnate, and dwelled visibly among us, it seemeth likely, that he should find some friends, some spokesmen, and mediators for him. But know this for a surety, and carry it home with you unto your houses, and think of it upon your beds, that so long as you thus back and uphold bad fellows, loose in life, lewd in example, you shall never want store of them. We must not think ever to break the heart of sin, except we join hand in hand one with another, and all draw one way to suppress it. If a thief were to be carried to prison, and one drew him one way, another hailed him another way he were never like to have fetters cast upon him. In like manner so long as we are sundered and divided one from another, sin increaseth and getteth an head. And we cannot assure our selves to obtain any blessing of God, so long as we nourish such serpents in our bosoms, and do not pull out the stings of them.

And as this ought to be a great encouragement to all in authority over others, to consider the blessings of GOD that they bring to themselves, and to their several iurisdictions, by breaking the neck of ungodliness: so on the other side, it ought to terrify all negligent and careless Governors that are not ready & resolute betimes to destroy all the wicked of the Land, Psalm. 101, 8, and to cut off all the workers of iniquity frō the City of the Lord. Such bring a curse upon themselves, a curse upon their substance, a curse upon their children, a curse upon their servants, a curse upon their families, a curse upon their houses and habitations. This should work a fear in their hearts, and bring terror and astonishment upon their consciences, seeing God will take away the sinner in his wrath, but will require the sin at the hands of all those that have suffered and fostered it in others, by their negligence in governing, and remissness in punishing.

We heard this before in *Ahab*, 1 Kings, chapter 20. verse 42, who letting *Benhadad* go free, life must go for life, he should answer for the other. We see this evidently in the example of old *Eli*, who, not controlling and correcting his children when they sinned grievously against the Lord, is himself directly charged to have committed those sins, 1, Samuel, chapter 2, verse. 29, to honor his children above the Lord to make himself far of the first of all the Offerings, and is punished with sudden death, by breaking of his neck. So likewise shall the sins of sinful men, that live under our roof, and shroud themselves under our protectiō, be required at our hands, if we uphold them in their evil, or do not punish them for their evil, according unto the means that God hath given us.

Lastly, seeing God is well pleased & appeased, when sin is taken away as the cause of [Use 3] his displeasure, let us not carry til y^e Magistrate draw the sword out of his sheathe, but everyone turn unto God, and enter into judgment with our selves, that the Lord may not enter into judgment with us. We must be careful to gain and get God to be our friend. The way is to forsake our sin, and to walk with God, as being ever in his presence. Can two walk together except they be agreed? Let us then reconcile ourselves to God, and he will be reconciled unto us: *Let us draw near unto him, and he will draw near unto us*, I am. 4, 8. This must be done of us by cleansing our hands, and by purging of our hearts. *Abraham*, the father of the faithful being righteous by faith, is called *The friend of God*, I am. 2, *3. This is it which our Savior teacheth, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you*, Job. 13, 14. If then we would be at peace with God, and desire the friendship of the most High: if we would have him turn away his wrath and heavy displeasure from us, we must be careful to avoid sin, seeing it bringeth the judgments of God, and putteth a sword into his hand to destroy us. From hence, as from the principal cause, come all manner of punishments, that God inflicteth; war, death, famine, the plague & pestilence, our sins are the fountains of them all. Therefore the Apostle in this respect willeth us to try and examine our selves, that we may find out the true cause of our troubles, when he saith, *For this cause many are weak, and sick among you, and many sleep: for if we would judge our selves, we should not be judged*, 1 Cor. 11, 31.

So then, the best course to prevent judgments, or to remove them which are already brought upon us, is by repentance. The Lord hath many ways visited us for our sins; sometimes by the raging of the pestilence, sometimes by inundations & ouerflowings of waters, sometimes by dearth & famine of bread, all which are as sharp arrows which he taketh out of his Quiuer, and shooteth thē out of his Bow, and we are not able to stand before them: for *who is able to stand before his fierce wrath? Or who can abide the greatness of his power?* Nahum. 1, 6. The only way left unto us to take, is to seek reconciliation with God, and to turn unto him by unfeigned repentance. We must make conscience of all sin. For so long as we flatter our selves in any one known sin, the wrath of God will never be appeased, but he hath still some controversy against us. We must not therefore leave one sin unrepented of. When *Moses* was to lead the people as a flock of sheep out of the Land of Egypt, and *Pharaoh* permitted the fathers and the children to go & serve the Lord in the wilderness, only their sheep and cattle should abide: *Moses* answered, *Our Cattle also shall go with us, there shall not an hoof be left behind*, Exod. 10, 26. So must our obedience be unto God, it must be perfect and entire, we must not repent to halves, we must not leave one sin behind, but search the secret corners of our deceitful hearts. For when God shall search with lights to find out our hidden sins, he will visit the men that are frozen in their dregs, and say in their hearts, the Lord will neither do good nor evil. These never mourn for their sins, and therefore God will make them mourn lying under his wrath. If they will have no feeling of their sin, they shall have a feeling of his punishments, and of the burden of his judgments.

[Verse 9. *And there died in that plague, four and twenty thousand.*] In these words *Moses* setteth down the number of all those that perished as well of the Princes, as of the people. How this agreeth with the Apostle, that nameth only three and twenty thousand, we have already declared in the exposition of the words, and answering of the Questions that arise out of the

words. We have heard before, that albeit *Balak & Balaam* intended by their sorceries to curse the people of God, yet they could by no means do them hurt, they were guarded by the protection of God, as with a sure watch. For God is the watchman of Israel, that neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, Psal. 121, 4. But so soon as they forsook the living God, and fell a whoring with the daughters of *Moab* and *Midian*, by and by God departeth from them, and his heavy judgments break in upon them. The force of sorcery could not hurt them, but the strength of sin doth weaken them, and greatly diminisheth the number of them. Heereby we learn, that sin depriveth us of God's protection, and layeth us naked and open to the fierceness of his wrath, and to the fury of our enemies. The sins wherewith the Church in general, or any member in particular do provoke GOD, bring down judgments of all sorts, cause his wrath to be kindled, and give strength to the enemy to prevail against us. When the people of God had committed Idolatry, & made them gods to go before them, it is said by *Moses*, that *the people were naked, for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies*, Exod. 32, 25. This appeareth also in the book of *Joshua*, when *Achan* had sinned and stolen the babylonish garment, the shekels of silver, and the wedge of gold, they could not stand before their enemies, Josh. 7, 4. but fell before them as naked men, being utterly destitute of God's defense, by reason of the offense committed among them. We see this oftentimes in the Books of the Judges, of the Kings, and Chronicles, when they rebelled against God, and provoked him to anger, presently he sold them into the hands of their enemies, they became subject to sundry calamities, they fell into all kind of miseries that were laid upon them. When they *began to do wickedly in the sight of the Lord, they were made slaves and captives, sometimes to one enemy, and sometimes to another*, Judge. chap. 4, ver. 1, 2. When the Israelites began to loathe the offerings of God, the Lord threatened a grievous judgment to come upon them, and executed it accordingly: for the Philistines fought against them, and Israel was smitten down, every man fled into his tent, and there was an exceeding great slaughter, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. Thus through sin reigning among them the enemies of God are armed, the people of GOD are destroyed, the Ark of God is taken, and the priests of God are smitten with y^e sword. It was the sin of *Eli* and his house especially that drew the judgment of God on the whole Nation. We see this in the example of *Solomon*, when his heart was turned away from the true God, and his hands were holden up to strange gods, the Lord was angry with him, because he had given him a charge concerning this thing that he should not follow other gods: *Then the Lord stirred up one adversary unto Solomon, and afterward another adversary, which did much mischief and evil against Israel*, 1 Kings 11, 14, 23. This appeareth in *Rehoboam* the son of *Solomon*, when once he forsook the Lord and all Israel with him, the Prophet is sent to say unto him, *Thus saith the Lord, Ye have forsaken me, therefore have I left you in the hands of Shishak*, 2 Chron. chap. 12, verse 5.

[Reason 1] The Reasons being considered, will make the doctrine more evident; First, sin maketh us execrable to the Lord, and abominable in his sight. Nothing doth more deforme us and make us cursed and detested in the sight of God. If then sin make us to be had in execration, it is no marvel if we be left destitute of God's protection. This is the reason which the Lord useth why Israel fell before their enemies, and he went not forth with their armies when they fell before the men of *Ai*, *Therefore the children of Israel cannot stand before their*

enemies, but have turned their backs before their enemies, because they be execrable, Josh. 7, 12, 13. We see then the nature of sin; it maketh men abominable and detestable in the sight of God.

[Reason 2] Secondly, God leaveth and departeth from them that fall from him: they forsake him, & therefore he forsaketh them. For so long as we walk in the ways of godliness, and please God in all things according to his will, God is among us, *He dwelleth with us, he will never depart from us, he walketh in the midst of our habitations, 2 Cor. 6, 16.* But when we commit wickedness in his sight, and follow the abominations of our own hearts, he is gone, he will take up his seat no more among us, he will not come nere our dwelling places. This is the reason which the Lord urgeth to *Joshua* in the place before named, saying, *There is an execrable thing among you, O Israel, neither will I be with you anymore, except ye destroy the excommunicate from among you, Ios, 7, 12; 13.* So then our lying in sin doth drive the Lord from us that he will have no more fellowship with us to do us any good.

[Use 1] We are now to set down the uses of this Doctrine. First, this teacheth us to acknowledge that all judgments which seize and fall upon us are just & righteous. God chastiseth us often, but always justly, never unjustly. True it is, the particular cause is not always discerned of us why he chastiseth, and sin is not always the chief and principal cause, as appeareth in the example of the blind man, of whom Christ saith, *Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be shown upon him, John 9, 3:* yet his punishments are always deserved, and never inflicted when he is not moved, who rowzeth up himself as a Lyon out of his den (as the Prophet speaketh) to execute righteous judgments. We see in the book of *Nehemiah*, how the Levites lay open the sins of the whole land, confessing God's kindness unto them, and their unkindness to the Lord, and justifying his name, *Nehem. 9, 33, 34, Surely thou art just in all that is come upon us, for thou hast dealt truly, but we have done wickedly: And our Kings, and our Princes, our Priests, & our fathers have not done thy Law, nor regarded thy commandments, nor thy protestations wherewith thou hast protested among them.* So when there is any imminent danger of judgment, as of the plague, of sickness, of famine, of war, or such like; this must teach us, y^t then especially we should take heed that we lay not our selves naked unto them by rebelling against God. I mean not this of any bodily nakedness appearing to the eye of man, but of spiritual nakedness in the sight of God, whereby man in his sight appeareth a deformed sinner. This is a fearful condition: this is the foulest nakedness that can be. A man or woman by y^e light of nature would be ashamed to be seen naked, which teacheth us to cover the body: but much more should we take heed that we appear not naked to God, and see the filthiness of our hearts. Let us crave the righteousness of Christ to be a covering to clothe our souls, *For they are blessed whose sins are covered, Psal. 31, 1.* When GOD threateneth to bring any plague or judgment upon us, let us not wound our own souls, or lay them open to y^e wrath of God, but rather humble our selves before him, that he may call back the punishments that are gone out against us This is it which *Moses* teacheth, *Deut. 23, 9: When thou goest out with thine host against thine enemies, keep thee from all wickedness.*

Secondly, seeing sin layeth us open to reproaches [Use 2] of enemies, and to the judgments of God, as appeareth in this great plague upon the people: this showeth that whensoever we have laid our selves thus naked by falling into sins, we must not go about to hide and to cover them from God through hypocrisy. For all things are naked and open to his eyes with whom we have to do: so that we must learn to acknowledge them, and confess them before his presence. We see how ready men are to hide their sins with *Adam* from the sight of God; but the more we seek to conceal them, the more we reveal them, & the more ugly we appear before him. What folly or madness is it that is practiced in the world to hide our sins from men, and never regard how bare and naked they be in the presence of the all-seeing God? If a man committing sin, were sure to keep it secret from the sight and knowledge of all others, that none could accuse him or detect him of it: what should this avail him seeing it is open to the eyes of God, and appeareth as plainly as we behold the sores of poor Cripples, that uncover them to the sight, to move pity in the seer? Seeing therefore judgments be the wages of sin, make us fall before the enemy, and bring upon us many calamities, let all such as lie under any chastisement, always search over their ways, and descend into their own consciences, to see how they have moved him to wrath, and provoked him to be their enemy. This we see in the example of *Joshua*, whē he saw the men of *Ai* prevail over them, and the people of God to turn their backs: when he saw they were destitute of God's defense, who would no longer go out with their Armies, he sought to find out the true cause, he humbled himself before God, and never ceased until the sinner were apprehended, examined, condemned, and executed, *Joshua* 7, 7. The like practice doth the Prophet prescribe, *Lam.* 3, 39. *Wherefore is the living man sorrowful? Man suffereth for his sin: Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord: let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens, saying; We have sinned and rebelled, therefore thou hast not spared.* This is the right way to stop the breach of God's wrath, and to call in his judgments. Manie have fought out other ways to weaken the force of the enemy, and to prevent the judgments of God: as in time of war by arming themselves, by hiring of soldiers, by drawing confederates: in time of dearth, by robbing, stealing, lying, defrauding, shifting, & such like: in time of pestilence, by seeking to Witches and Wizards, by taking themselves to flight, and such other ways. But the Prophets and holy servants of God in such times when we lie open to wrath, have called us to Repentance, stirred us up to prayer, moved us to humiliation and acknowledgement of our sins, which have deserved such chastisements. Let us all practice this counsel, and wisely consider with our selves what the lord hath against us, and wherefore he is angry with us, that so we may be reconciled unto him, and brought into his gracious favor again.

[Use 3] Lastly, this serveth as a notable aduātage for the servants of God, when they have any dealings against wicked men: we have comfort and encouragement from hence, that we shall assuredly prevail against them, because we have to do with weak and naked men that are out of God's protection. If two go into the field to fight, and one of them be unarmed and have no weapon to defend himself, he lieth open to the lust of his enemy to be wōded and spoiled of his life, who taketh comfort to see his adversary come out against him without his armor. So is it a blessed and comfortable thing to the children of God, when they are constrained to meddle with evil men which are the enemies of God and of his truth, they

have comfort in God, both in that themselves are under the couerture of his Armor and protection, and in that their enemies are naked men, and lie open unto every judgment. This is it which is afterward remembered unto us in this book, where *Joshua* and *Caleb* comforted the people against the Canaanites, saying, *If the Lord love us, he will bring us into this land, and give it us, which is a land flowing with milk and honey: but rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the Land, for they are but bread for us: their shield is departed from them, and the Lord is with us, fear them not*, Numb. 14, 9. *Abijha* the king of Judah, made this his great comfort going against a mighty army, and spake to this effect unto their enemies, 2 Chro. 13, 10, 12. Where we see, that such as turn unto God with all their hearts, and worship him aright, have God their Captain and Protector, he is their buckler and defense: but such as are enemies to God and his people, are those that receive many blows, and take many knocks on their heads, and yet want a shield to safeguard themselves, but lie open to every danger, and cannot look for victory, they have no armor of proof to defend themselves. This is a woeful and wretched condition; yet so is it with all the ungodly, who have banished the Lord far from them. For as he is far from them in the practice of their life, so he will not be near them in the time of their distress. Let us then make much of this comfort, and lay it as precious balm unto our hearts, let us be assured when we have to deal with the world, or to wrestle with God's judgments, if we have the testimony of a good conscience that God is our defense and deliverance, we shall not need to be dismayed, nor fear what man can do unto us. For there cannot be a more notable encouragement in danger, or in death, thē to have assurance of the providence and protection of God. The Prophet *David* greatly comforted himself in the sweet meditation of this presence of his hand, Psal. 23, 1, 4. and 27, 5. & 31, 20. Let us therefore be bold, and of good courage in the causes of the Lord, for where he is, there is safety from danger, peace from distress, and assurance never to be overcome.

[*There died four and twenty thousand.*] The falling into idolatry and whoredom brought a great plague upon the people, not only to the destruction of many of the Princes among them, but to the ruin of many thousands of the people. See here the greatness of y^e plague, and what hauock was made when wrath was kindled. God did not spare them, but executed his fierce indignation upon them. How great a judgment was this? and how were they weakened by it? Hereby we learn, That the wrath of God against sinners is unspeakable, grievous, and terrible. His wrath being moved is full of rage, and worketh great desolations and destructions in the world. This is it which *Moses* setteth down in his song, Deut. 32, 22. *Fire is kindled in my wrath, & shall burn unto the bottom of hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains, &c.* This hath y^e Lord ever shown in the examples of his justice, When the old world multiplied their sins, and abused the patience of God that abode in the days of *Noah*, his wrath consumed men, women, children, beasts, fowls, creeping things, and all that had the breath of life upon the face of the earth, Gen. 7, 21. So when the *•odomites* exceeded in lust of the flesh, in pride of life, and in security of heart, *The Lord rained upon them Brimstone and fire out of heauē, and overthrew the Cities of the plain, and all the inhabitants of the Cities, and that which grew upon the earth*, Gen. 19, 24. The history of the manifold murmurings and rebellions of the people of Israel in the wilderness, is a plentiful witness of this truth. When they lusted for flesh, and loathed Manna as a light

meat, he smote them with an exceeding great plague, he slew the strongest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel, so that the name of the place was called, *The graves of lust*, because there they buried the people that fell a lusting, Numb. 11.33. When *Korah, Dathan, & Abiram* rose up against *Moses*, backed with certain Captains famous in the congregation, and men of renown, they were swallowed up of the earth, and consumed with fire: and on the morrow when the multitude murmured against *Moses* and *Aaron*, saying, *Ye have killed the people of the Lord*, he sent a plague amongst them, that quickly wasted & consumed fourteen thousand and seven hundredth, besides them that died in the conspiracy of *Korah*. When *David* had sinned in numbering of the people, and in glorying in his own strength, 2 Sam. 24, 15: the Lord sent a pestilence in Israel, and there died of the people from *Dan* to *Beersheba* seventy thousand men. The Apostle *Jude* produceth sundry examples to this purpose, of the Angels that are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day: of the Israelites, who albeit they were delivered out of Egypt, yet were afterward destroyed, because they believed not: of those ungodly mē that turned the grace of God into wantonness, and are ordained to condemnation. The truth here of shall more fully and wonderfully appear in the day of judgment, when justice only shall be executed, and the Lord show himself to the wicked only as a terrible Judge. He shall come from heaven with all his mighty Angels, with a great shout, and with the Trumpet of God, *To render vengeance unto them which know not God, and which obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which shall be punished with everlasting perdition from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*, 2 Thess. 1, 9. Then *they shall say unto the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand?* Revel. 6, 16.

And to the end no doubt hereof should remain [Reason 1] in us, let us consider the reasons. The anger of God is as himself is, infinite and without end, so that nothing is able to stand before him. This is it which the Prophet *David* teacheth, Psal. 90, 11. *Who knoweth the power of thy wrath, or of thine anger, according to thy fear?* As if he should say, when thine hand is any way heavy upon us, no man standeth in awe of thine indignation and fearful displeasure so much, as thou and thine anger ought to be feared of us. Hereunto accordeth the saying of the Prophet, Nah. 1, 5, 6: *The mountains tremble for him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his sight, yea the world and all that dwell therein: who can stand before his wrath? or who can abide in the fierceness of his wrath? his wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken by him.* If then his wrath be infinite, without limitation of time, without circumscription of place, and without respect of person, so that the heavens melt, the mountains are dissolved, and the foundations of the earth are discovered, it must needs be that when he is mooved, his wrath is very full of rage and revenge.

Secondly, we must needs hold, that plenty [Reason 2] of desolation is made in the earth in the wrath of God, if we consider the comparisons whereby it is expressed. It is compared sometime to the roaring of a Lion, which maketh all the beasts of the forest to tremble. It is a fearful voice, it maketh man and beast to stand in fear. This the Prophet *Amos* expresseth, *The Lyon hath roared, who will not be afraid? the Lord GOD hath spoken, who can but prophesy?* Amos 3.4, 8. Sometimes; it is compared to a violent fire, that spreadeth it self far and near.

This Moses did teach the people, when he willed them to take heed to themselves, lest they forga•e the Covenant of the Lord their God, and make to themselves any graven image, saying, *The Lord thy God is a consuming fire, and a jealous God*, Deut. 4, 24. & 9, 3. fire we know is fierce and fearful, wasting and devouring all things before it, so that nothing is able to resist the strength and force thereof. We say in a common Proverb, that fire and water are without mercy. They are of an untamed nature: even so is the displeasure of almighty God being provoked by sin, intolerable, unspeakable, unsearchable, without limitation of time, of quantity, or quality; and therefore he must needs be armed with great wrath kindled against the ungodly.

[Use 1] The uses of this doctrine are very many, but we will stand only upon the principal. First, we may conclude that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of so mighty a God. It is extreme madness for any man to set himself against such a God. Who is able to prevail that hath him his enemy? Take heed therefore, God will not be mocked. Are we stronger then he, that we should fight against him? This is the use which the Apostle maketh in the Epistle to the Hebrews, *We know him that hath said, Vengeance is mine, I will recompense*. Hebr. 10, 30, 31: and again; *The Lord shall judge his people; It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living GOD*. There is no jesting nor dallying with so fearful and dreadful a Majesty, who is so great in power, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, terrible in his anger, and just in all his doings. *Exod, 15, 11*. The heavens, and the heavens of heavens, together with the earth and all the compass of the world, are not able to bear y^e least spark of his displeasure when it is kindled, the flame whereof shall burn up the wicked; and shall we play with him in his anger as with a little child? Alas then, what shall become of the wretched souls of wicked and damnable men, when his wrath shall smoke against them, and the whole viole of his fury shall be poured down upon them! O how miserable shall their anguish and tribulation be, and how infinite and immeasurable their torment, which shall be thus plagued, condemned, and cursed of the Lord! what shall become of swearers, drunkards, whoremongers, and such like, in the day of the Lord's wrath? They shall wish that they had never been borne, *Mat. 26, 24*: they shall think it a benefit if they had been borne toads. And if they could behold at the least in these their days, but a shadow of the misery that remaineth for them, and of the pit of destruction that gapeth for them, it were sufficient to swallow them up in heaviness, and make them even dissolve themselves into tears and torments, as passing all that can be spoken or thought thereof: but now these things are hidden from their eyes, and cannot enter into their hearts, yet this shall be the end of all those that work iniquity. *God will rain down upon the wicked, snares, fire & brimstone, & stormy tempest: this is the portion of their cup: for the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the just*, *Psal. 11, 6, 7*. On the other side, we must needs acknowledge and confess, that it is a blessed thing to be at peace with God. It is a great blessing to live at peace in the world, and to be in unity with men, among whom we live; but much more sweet and comfortable is it to be at one with the eternal God, so as he have no controversy against us. This is it which the Prophet concludeth, *Kiss the son lest he be angry, & so ye perish in the way; when his wrath shall suddenly burn, blessed are all they that trust in him*, *Psal, 2, 12*. So then, as the estate of all the ungodly that are under the wrath of God is most miserable, so the condition of the godly (how soever

accounted of by the unfaithful of the world) is happy and blessed, who are safe under the wings of God, and shall be delivered in the day of judgment.

Secondly, we must be wise and circumspect [Use 2] to take heed that we do not kindle it to our own confusion. This is the exhortation of Moses to the people: *Take heed that there be not among you, man, nor family, nor tribe, which should turn their heart away from the living God; that there should not be among you any root that bringeth forth gall and wormwood: for the wrath of the Lord, and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, & every curse that is written in this book shall light upon him, and the Lord shall put out his name from under heaven, Deut. 29, 8.* This serveth to reprove such as are in this point like the horse and mule, that are without knowledge, and have no understanding. They never regard the judgments of God present, they never seek to prevent them being to come. This is it which our Savior toucheth in the Jews, when he came near the city, he wept for it, and said; *If thou haddest even known at the least in this thy day those things which belong unto thy peace, but now are they hid from thine eyes, Luke 19, 42.* It is therefore our duty, to labor to know the times of his judgments. It is impossible to avoid the wrath of God, unless we have a care to know it. The wrath of GOD to come upon the sons of men, is foreknowne three ways: First, by the oracles of the Prophets, and by reasons drawn out of the Word of God: Secondly, by signs and wonders, which God showeth in heaven, or in earth, or in the sea: Thirdly, by plagues and punishments that he sendeth, the which as they are the beginning of his anger present, so they are testimonies and tokens of greater judgments to come. And as we have shown before, that the wrath of God is resembled oftentimes to a consuming fire: so we understand, that a fire is already kindled, & will grow greater by these three means before expressed, (to wit,) either by the report of credible witnesses, or by beholding of the smoke ascending, or by sensible perceiving of the flame breaking out, which is a fearful sign of a farther fire, and a greater burning, except it be speedily quenched and prevented. First, the wrath of God is foreshowed unto us by the words of the Prophets and Apostles which were inspired by the Spirit of God, and foretell the wrath of God to come upon us for our sins. And as the Law of God setteth down sundry threatenings and curses, so the Ministers of God out of the same do denounce the judgments of God, & gather, that the wrath of God hangeth over a kingdom or City, by an infallible conclusion, without repentance. For where sin reigneth there the wrath of God cometh: but in this Nation, or City, or Family, sin reigneth: wherefor the wrath of God hangeth over such a Nation, City, or house. Such threatenings denounced by the servants of God, collected by certain reasons out of the Scripture, are not to be despised, but feared; not to be passed over, but to be prevented; not to be derided, but to be applied to our consciences, that if we find those sins in us, we may labor earnestly to repent of them. For albeit the Ministers of God do not speak by special inspiration and revelation of the Spirit, as the Prophets; yet their threatenings are not void and vain, but are grounded upon effectual reasons of the word, and the beholding of present wickedness that aboundeth everywhere. We must not therefore account them as scar-Crowes which cannot hurt, for God will make them powerful in the mouths of his servants, so that they which will not be persuaded to fear them, shall be constrained certainly to feel them whether they will or not. Another means to give us understanding of God's wrath before it falleth, is by the undoubted signs and tokens, which

are as the messengers of God, and the fore-runners of wrath, which we see in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters. For whensoever God is determined in his heavy, but yet just judgment, to bring any plague upon the world, and to make manifest his fierce indignation, he useth to send certain tokens of his anger, to testify that it is not far off, which are as the sproutings of the fig-tree, signifying that summer is near. Thus, doth Christ foretell the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world, by the signs which shall go before them, saying, *Learn the parable of the Fig-tree: when her bough is yet tender, & it putteth forth leaves, ye know that the Summer is nere: so likewise ye when ye see all these things, know that the kingdom of God is near, even at the doors.* These appear in the Sun, in the Moon, in the Stars, in the Elements, and in the creatures, when the course of nature is altered & changed, the very insensible and unreasonable things do preach repentance unto us, and therefore are to be marked and not despised. Lastly, the former punishment is a fore-runner of a further judgment; the smaller, of a greater; and the first of a second. God brought sundry plagues upon *Pharaoh* king of Egypt, but such as came after, pressed and punished him more then such as went before. When Christ had foretold many euilles that should come upon Jerusalem for their contempt of the Gospel, and their refusing of all grace offered unto them, he addeth, Mat. 24, 6, 8. *The end is not yet: all these are but the beginning of sorrows:* as if he should say, there shall moe in number, and greater in weight follow after these. When God sendeth the barrenness of ground, the blasting of corn, the unseasonableness of weather, the overflowing of water, the infection of sickness, & such like scourges of his hand, they are evident marks of his wrath, and the very prints of his footsteppes, whereby we may trace him out, coming against us to destroy us. They are the messengers of God to cite and summon us to answer before him for our contempt of his word, and of his former threatenings. When he taketh away faithful men that fear his name & especially good Princes and godly rulers, it is an assured token that his wrath beginneth to be kindled, and will overtake the remnant of the people. When the head is smitten it cannot be but the rest of the body must immediately after smart for it. Thus God threateneth in the Prophet, Isaiah 3, 2. & 57, 1. *That he will take away the strong man, and the man of war, the Judge and the Prophet, the prudent and the aged, the captain of fifty, and the honorable, and the counselor.* And in another place, *The righteous perisheth, and no man considereth it in heart: and merciful men are taken away, and no man understandeth that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.* A notable example hereof we have in *Noah* and his family; so soon as they were entered into the Ark, and the door of it shut up, immediately the rain fell, the flood came, the fountains of the deep were broken up, the windows of heaven were opened, & the inhabitants of the earth were drowned, Gen. 7, 16. & 19, 16. When *Lot* and his family were brought out of Sodom, and set without the City, the Lord being merciful to them, *The Lord rained fire and brimstone from heaven, upon the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.* When the godly King *Josiah* was taken away, y^t his eyes should not see all the evil which the Lord would bring upon the land, the wrath of the Lord arose against them, they mocked the messengers of God, despised his words, and misused his Prophets; and he brought upon them the king of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men with the sword, and spared neither young man, nor virgin, ancient nor aged, God gave all into his hand, 2 Kin. 22, 20 2 Chron. 36, 16. Moreover the Lord hath other scourges which belong to the soul; as when he taketh away godly Ministers, & with them his holy

word. So he threateneth by the Prophet *Amos*, to send a *Famine of his word*, chap. 8, 11. This is a token that God will forsake that people, and condemn them to death when he taketh from them the means and maintenance of their life. These are the beginnings of greater judgments, and by them we may judge the wrath of God to be at hand, which are as a warning piece unto that volly of the Lord's Ordinance, which our great sins have caused him to mount up against us, and he threateneth to discharge upon us. So then, it behooveth us not to be dull and drowzie in marking the judgments of God, & the signs of his wrath, to the end we may be prepared to prevent them, and to meet the Lord by unfeigned repentance, before they fall upon us.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it is our duty to pray unto him, and to entreat him that albeit we continually provoke him by our sins, yet that he would not fall upon us in his wrath, nor punish us in his sore displeasure, but deal with us as a father with his children. This is it which the Prophet craveth at the hands of God, Psal. 6, 1. & 38, 1, 2. To this purpose *Jeremiah* speaking of the captivity at hand, prayeth thus, Ier. 10, 24 25. *O Lord correct me, but with judgment: not in thine anger lest thou bring me to nothing: pour out thy wrath upon the Heathen that know thee not, &c.* If the Lord should deal with us according to our sins, and recompense us according to our deservings, we were not able to stand in his sight. If he should enter into judgment with us, no flesh should be righteous before him. We must therefore desire him to chastise us as a father, not as a Judge; to amend us, not to destroy us, as the Prophet speaketh of his own experience, Psal. 118, 18. *The Lord hath chastened me sore, but he hath not delivered me to death.*

[Use 4] Lastly, we must be provoked, upon the consideration of the wrath of God, full of rage & jealousy, moved with our sins, to seek to please him, to forsake our iniquities, and to be reconciled unto God This is the use which the Apostle maketh, Heb. 12, 28, 29. *Seeing we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace whereby we may so serve God that we may please him with reverence & fear, &c.* So we are charged to mortify our members which are on earth, as fornication, uncleanness, and such like, because for such things the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience, Col. 3, 5, 6. So then, the consideration of the fierceness of God's wrath, must bring us nearer unto him, and make us obedient to his will. Let us walk in all his commandments, and make conscience of all our ways. Let us study to please God in all things, and to be fruitful in good works. Let us live soberly, righteously, and godly in this life, and show forth the lively fruits of him that hath called us out of darkness into this marvelous light, that so his wrath do not overtake us, nor his judgments find us unprepared. We should always live, as if we should die presently, or the day of judgment come immediately. For what shall it profit us to live in all pleasures and carnal delights for a few years, and then to suffer eternal torments? What shall it avail us to win the world, & then to lose our own souls? Matth. 16, 26. Are not they more then mad men, that will hazard their souls, & procure the heavy wrath of God for a little profit and a short pleasure? Let such as will not be drawn from their sweet sins, assure themselves they shall one day pay dearly for it, and taste the most bitter woes that can be conceived when they shall be separated frō God, shut out of his favor, and be barred out of his kingdom. Oh! that there were in us wise hearts to consider these things betimes, and to prevent all the judgments of God that hang over our heads. Let us prepare our selves against the hour of death, then which nothing is

more terrible: against the day of judgment, then which nothing is more horrible: and against the danger of hell fire, then which nothing is more intolerable, the pains & pangs whereof, are without end, without ease, without remedy.

[Verses 10, 11, 12, 13. *Then the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: Phinehas the son of Eleazar, hath turned mine anger away from the children of Israel, &c.*] We have seen the zeal of Phinehas in executing judgment upon the offenders and evil doers, which brought a grievous plague upon the people. His spirit was stirred within him, being first stirred by the Spirit of God, which moved him to take a spear, and to thrust thorough the adulterer and adulteress. Now we shall see the recompense of reward that was given unto him for that work which was acceptable unto God, and profitable unto his people. He hath a covenant of peace made with him, & the Priesthood confirmed unto him and his posterity. He only had appeased the wrath of God, & made up the breach between God and his people, but the blessing is conveyed even to his posterity. He destroyeth two malefactors whereby he bringeth a blessing unto his children. Hereby we learn, That when the ways of a man please God, he will be gracious to his house & posterity. God is so pleased with the obedience of his people, that he will show mercy to such as belong to them. This is plentifully proved unto us in the word of GOD. When God saw Noah righteous before him in that corrupt age and generation, he made all that belonged unto him partakers of a great deliverance, saying unto him, *Enter thou & all thine house into the Ark: for thee have I seen righteous before me in this age*, Gen. 7, 1. This appeareth in the person of Abraham, when God had called him out of his Country, and from his kindred, and made a Covenant with him to bless him, Gen. 12, 2, 3. The Prophet Jeremiah teacheth this in the example of the Rechabites, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts the God of Israel, Because ye have obeyed the Commandment of Jonadab your Father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you, Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me forever*, Ier. 35 18. To this purpose speaketh the Prophet David, Psal. 37.21. *A good man is merciful and lendeth, and his seed enjoyeth the blessing*. If we come to the New Testament, we have many testimonies leading us unto y^e consideration of this truth. When Zacchaeus believed in Christ for his salvation, and testified his repentance by his restitution, *Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come into this house, forasmuch as he is become the son of Abraham*, Luke 19, 9. When the ruler, whose son was sick at Capernaum, saw the great power of Christ in restoring him to health again, *He believed and all his household*, John 4, 13. This is oftentimes remembered unto us in the Acts of the Apostles. When God had opened the heart of Lydia that she attended unto the things which Paul delivered, *She was baptized and all her household*, Acts 16, 15.33. When the Jailor believed in the Lord Jesus for his salvation, and shown his unfeigned conversion by the fruits of his love to the Apostles, he was baptized with all y^t belonged unto him straightway, and rejoiced that he with all his household believed in God.

[Reason 1] The reasons to enforce this doctrine are evident, if we consider either the person of God, or the condition of the faithful. For first, God hath in great mercy and goodness promised to show grace and favor not only to the faithful themselves, but to the seed of the faithful that fear him. It is the nature of God to be merciful and gracious, to be slow to anger, and abundant in goodness, *showing mercy unto thousands to them that love him and keep his*

commandments, Exod. 20, 6, and 34, 6, 7. We see this in the history of the destruction of Sodom, the Lord did not only in great mercy and compassion save *Lot* himself, but said unto him, *Whom hast thou yet here? either son in law, or thy sons, or thy daughters, or whatsoever thou hast in the city bring it out of this place*, Gen. 19, 12. He was ready, not to save him alone, but as an overplus to deliver all that belonged unto him. We see the mercy of God to others for his children's sake, he thinketh it not enough to be good to them, but extendeth his mercies to those that any way concern them.

[Reason 2] Secondly, as the mercy of God is great, so the faith of the godly is effectual for themselves and their children. This is the tenor of the covenant that God hath made with all the faithful, their faith is available both for themselves, and for others. God will be our God, and the God of our seed after us, *Gen. 17, 7*. And this is the privilege & prerogative that the faithful have, they believe this merciful promise of God themselves, and thereby entitle their children unto it. For as a father that purchaseth house or land, giveth thereby an interest unto his son therein; so he that layeth hold on the promise which God hath made to all godly parents, doth convey it unto his children: so that albeit they want faith by reason of their years, yet they are made partakers of Christ, and engrafted into his body. So then we may collect and gather this truth, that the love of God to the faithful shall so abound, that it shall come to their posterity, like the precious ointment poured on the head of *Aaron*, that ran down upon his beard, and flowed to the border of his garments, or as the dew on *Hermon* and *Zion*, which watered the valleys that were beneath, upon which it descended, *Psal. 133, 2, 3*.

The uses remain to be handled. First, we [Use 1] learn, that the children of faithful parents have right and interest to Baptism, and are to receive the seal of the covenant. This the Apostle teacheth, *1, Cor. 7, 14*: when he saith, *The unbelieving husband is sanctified to the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified to the husband, elsewhere your children unclean: but now they are holy*. Seeing then, that faithful parents entitle their children to the blessings which they receive; we see that there ought to be a difference between them and the children of Turks and Infidels. All the offspring of *Abraham* was accounted holy in the time of the Old Testament, because God made with him the covenant of life, and the Apostle reasoneth; that *if the root be holy, the branches also are holy*, *Rom. 11.16*. Hence it is, that he calleth them all his children who are borne of Israel. But since the partition wall is pulled down, the grace of God is not obscured, and less assured unto us then it was before unto the Jews. Infants and children do no less belong to the covenant and Church of God then others do that are of years of discretion, as it is plain by the promise made to *Abraham*, *I will set my covenant between me and thee, and between thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, that I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee*, *Genes. 17, 7*. Where God doth promise, not only to be his God, but also to be the God of his seed. This promise doth *Peter* rehearse to the believing Jews, *To you is the promise made and to your children, and to all that are a far off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call*, *Acts 2, 39*. Baptism in the New Testament, succeedeth circumcision, used in the Old Testament. They have both one and the same promise, the same signification, the same foundation, the same ends. But the infants of the Jews were commanded to be circumcised, and therefore infants ought to be baptized.

Hereupon the Apostle saith to the Colossians, *Ye are circumcised in Christ with circumcision made without hands, by putting off the sinful body of the flesh through the circumcision of Christ, &c.* Col, 2, 11. Lastly, unto infants belongeth the promise of grace, the forgiveness of sins, the regeneration of the spirit, the imputation of Christ's righteousness, the Kingdom of Heaven: and therefore they ought by no means to be denied the outward sign and ceremony, which is the least part of the Sacrament. If the Holy Ghost cleanse them, shall the Minister deny to wash them with water? If the things signified do belong unto them, who shall dare to debar them of the outward sign? Hence it is, that our Savior *commandeth infants to be brought unto him, reproveth the disciples that forbad it, embraceth them in his arms, commendeth them to his Father, and declareth that to such belongeth the Kingdom of Heaven, Math, 19, [Object.] 14.* And if any ask the question, what profit can possibly come by Baptism to a child and suckling that is without knowledge and understanding: [Answer.] I answer, that the profit is not small, but the benefit great, if we consider either the glory of God, or the comfort of the parents, or the edification and salvation of the child. For hereby God is greatly honored, the parent himself is wonderfully comforted, and the child is exceedingly confirmed and encouraged. God is glorified in this, that he showeth himself true in his promises, who hath assured the faithful that he will show mercy unto them to a thousand generations. *He is not as man that he should lie, neither as the son of man that he should deceive, he is found faithful in all the words that are gone out of his mouth, Numb. 23, 19.* Again, the parents are comforted and greatly assured of the love of God toward themselves, that he will never leave them, nor forsake them, but that his gifts & graces toward thē, shall be without repentance, *Rom. 11, 29.* For they see not only that they are beloved of God, but also that the love and grace of God is derived and conveyed unto their children; wherein they are strengthened by that visible sign used in the Sacrament. Lastly, concerning children, they have a double benefit bestowed upon them, being confirmed in the love of God, and encouraged in the duties of godliness. For, when they call to mind, that they so soon obtain the communion of Christ, the partaking of his benefits, and the inheritance of e•ernall life, they are grounded and established in the love of Christ, and assured that he will continue to love them unto the end, that began to show his love unto them, so soon when they were ignorant of him, & were not able to enquire after him, *John 13, 1* And when they remember that God so much regarded them, and esteemed of them, even from their first coming into the world, and while they hanged on their mothers breasts, that presently they obtained fellowship in his covenant, they are emboldened in all well doing, and provoked to walk in the fear of his Name. And seeing he took them for his children, when th• through want of knowledge and tenderness of age, were not able to call him father, let them remember their Creator and Redeemer in the days of their youth, *and pass the time of their dwelling here in fear, knowing that they were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from their vain conversation received by the traditiō of the fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, &c. 1. Pet. 1.17, 18.* Let us also learn from hence to detest the error of the Anabaptists, that deny Baptism unto infants, thereby diminishing the glory of God, weakening the comfort of godly parents, and abolishing the assurance of children, that they ought to have touching the free love of God toward them.

Secondly, we are taught on the other side, [Use 2] that evil parents bring the curse of God into their houses, and upon their posterity. We see this in *Cain*, when he gave himself to murder and impiety, he brought the judgment of God upon his whole race, that were razed out of the earth. Mark the posterity of *Ishmael*, who mocking *Isaac*, and raising persecution against him, was cast out of the house of *Abraham*, out of the Church of God, and his issue were aliens from the faith, and strangers from the promises of salvation. The like we see, and might say of *Esau*, that profane person, who for a mess of pottage sold his birth-right, and hated his brother; his posterity were the greatest enemies to the true Israelites, and were a cursed generation, *Heb. 12, 16*. Consider with me y^e fearful example of *Jeroboam* the son of *Nebat*, that made Israel to sin, and provoked the God of Israel to wrath, *2. King. 15, 30*. This seducer wrought wickedness, and established idolatry, and thereby thought to establish the kingdom to himself, and to settle it in his posterity, that it should never be removed from his offspring, but follow from father to son in a continued succession. Notwithstanding, this fell out not only to his own confusion, but to the overthrow of his stock and lineage. The judgment of God did not rest in his person, but pursued him in his progeny and posterity. This is it which the Lord denounced by the Prophet; *Behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam, him that pisseth against the wall; as well him that is shut up, as him that is left in Israel, and will sweep away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man sweepeth away dung until it be all gone, 1. King. 14, 10*. Where the Prophet showeth and declareth, that God respecteth evil men as filthy beasts, and those that come of them as dung and excrements, which defile the places where they abide, and therefore with the besom of his vengeance he will sweep them away, that they shall no longer offend the nostrils of GOD and his people. Thus it was with *Ahab*, that shed innocent blood, and took possession of the vineyard of *Naboth*, he did the greatest injury and wrong to his posterity, that could be offered: the kingdom was taken from his house, and his children were slain with the sword, according to the saying of *Elijah*, *I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity: I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam, &c:* and also of *Jezebel* spake the Lord, saying; *The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the walls of Izreel*. Who are then the greatest enemies to their children, but ungodly parents? And who bring upon them a greater woe and ruin, then they that should build them up, and leave a blessing behind thē? When *Moses* describeth y^e nature of God, that he is abundant in mercy toward the righteous, he addeth, *Holding not the wicked innocent, but visiting the sins of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation, Exod. 34, 8*. This must move parents and governors, to make conscience of their carriage and conversation, and to bewail their sins, that have endangered their offspring. For God may, and doth in Justice visit with sundry and diverse judgments, those families and societies, where wicked Parents, and profane governors are. All they be cruel & tyger-like parents, y^t be ungodly parents: for they are the murderers and butchers of their children, & overthrow of their posterity in time, howsoever they be spared for a season. What unmerciful & unnatural parents were *Cain*, *Cham*, *Canaan*, *Jeroboam*, *Jezebel*, *Ahab*, & such like, y^t caused everyone of their house, that could water a wall to be destroyed, and utterly to have their race and remembrance rooted out? It is therefore a devilish and wicked Proverb, [Happy are those children, whose father goeth to the devil.] Nay, rather cursed are those children, whose fathers fall into hell: for there is a great presumption that they will

follow them without the great mercy and special grace of God: yea, it is a blessed thing, to spring from a godly stock, & to rise from faithful parents. For often did the Lord spare Israel for *Abraham's*, *Isaac's*, and *Jacob's* sake. When the posterity of *David* became wicked, he continued them in their kingdom, delivered them from their enemies, & did not destroy them for *David's* sake.

When the Lord was angry with *Solomon*, because he had turned his heart from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, and charged him not to follow strange gods, he threatened to rent the kingdom from him, & to give it to his servant; *Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it* (saith the Lord) *because of David thy father*, 1. King. 11, 12. This appeareth more plainly afterward in *Abiham* the son of *Rehoboam*, who walked in all the sins of his father which he had done before him: yet for *David's* sake did the Lord his God give him a light in Jerusalem, and set up his son after him, and established Jerusalem, *because David did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and turned from nothing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matters of Uriah the Hittite*, 1. King. 15.4, 5. 2. Chron. 21, 7.

This is it which the Lord promiseth in the second commandment of the Law, *That he will show mercy to thousands of them that love him, and keep his commandments*, *Exod.* 20.6. Seeing then, wicked and wretched parents are most deadly enemies unto their children, who bear the curses of God upon them for many generations, for the impiety of their fathers; this serveth as a great terror to those parents that go about by fraud and oppression, by wrongful and injurious dealing to enrich themselves, to set up their names, and make their posterity to be great upon the earth after them. For this is the ready way to bring the curse of God upon them, and to pull down their houses. Where the curse of God entereth, it maketh havoc, and wasteth all before it. God is an avenger of all such things, 1. *The.* 4, 6. Surely, if men were not altogether faithless, but had faith to believe the word of God, that all wicked courses, and vile practices, would overthrow their houses, and not build them up: that they could not fill them with evil things, but they will pul down the plagues of God upon them, and all theirs: it would make them fear to offend by fraud and unjust dealing, *which crieth for vengeance unto heaven, and the cry thereof entereth into the ears of the Lord of hosts*, *James* 5, 4, All men by nature have a love unto their children, and a desire to leave them great men in the world; but many are greatly deceived in the means, and wander far and wide out of the way. For if we would leave them a sure inheritance, and settle them in an estate to continue, we must take heed that we do not enrich our selves with the spoils of others, nor fill our houses with the riches of iniquity, lest we fill them also with the vengeance of God which is the reward of iniquity. Let us eat our own bread which we have gotten by lawful means. There is more comfort in a little truly gotten, then in great riches and revenues, that carry with them God's marks and curses, being wrongfully obtained, and unjustly retained.

Lastly, it is required of us to repent & believe [Use 3] the Gospel, that so we may procure a blessing upon our selves, and our children. This duty the Apostle *Peter* preacheth unto the Jews that were pricked in their hearts, *Amend your lives, & be baptized everyone of you for the remission of sins, for the promise is made unto you, and to your children, &c.* *Acts* 2, 38, 39. When

God promised to *Abraham* to make a covenant with him, and to multiply his seed exceedingly, he requireth this condition at his hands, *Walk before me, and be thou upright*, Gen. 17, 1. We must walk in the midst of our houses with pure and perfect heart, and guide them with a watchful eye, we must look to their ways, and to our government, This would be a great help to the Ministry, and a singular furtherance to his labors. The neglect of this care, bringeth utter ruin to father and child. This appeareth in the example of *Eli*, who through his indulgence and negligence, overthrew himself and his posterity. This is the cause of so many cursed youths, so many riotous men & women which procure the ruins of so many excellent houses; their tender age was not sanctified, neither they seasoned by their parents with the fear of God. So then, godly parents must have a care to bring up their children & families in godliness & righteousness. It may be a means by the blessing of God to save thy son from death, and to deliver his soul from destruction, The Lord himself speaketh of *Abraham*, *That he knew him, that he would teach his sons and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and judgment*, Gen. 18, 19. The Apostle chargeth parents to bring up their children in the nurture and information of the Lord, *Eph. 6, 4*. No parents must presume, that because they have obtained to be faithful, therefore their children must of necessity be so also. Faith is the gift of GOD, and not of Nature: It is not common to all, but peculiar to some: It cometh not by inheritance, but by grace. Parents may leave unto their children their houses, their lands, their substance: they may convey unto them their inheritance, but they cannot convey unto them the gifts that accompany salvation. Wherefore all parents that are faithful, are to entreat and crave of God the continuance of his covenant toward their children, and to beg from his hands an holy and sanctified seed to his glory, and their comfort.

Verse 14, 15. [*The name of the Israelite thus slain was Zimri the son of Salu: and the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain, was Cosbi, &c.*] We heard before in the fixed verse, how *Moses* hath laid open the shameless and impudent behavior of this beastly adulterer, who shamed not to bring the Midianitish harlot into the host, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, which were grieved to behold such horrible villainy; nevertheless, we see in this place, that *Moses* is not content in a general manner to describe his wickedness, but singleth him out particularly by his name, by his father by his tribe. Neither doth he content himself to set down the Midianitish woman by her nation, but calleth her by her name, and further openeth the name of her father, and her fathers house. So then, *Moses* having shown who they were that brought the plague of God upon the people: he now descendeth to mark them out by their proper names, and of what calling and profession they were.

From hence we learn, that it is sometime lawful and convenient to reprove by name, special people and particular men that offend in the Church, and to record them in writing. A particular reproof of particular offenders, sometimes standeth with the word of GOD. So did *Elijah* deal with *Ahab* and *Jezebel*, he told him that it was he and his fathers house that troubled Israel.

This we see practiced by the Prophet *Isaiah* against *Shebna*, who being a notable fauourer of evil men, and a great hinderer of good things, is by name threatened to *be carried away with a great captivity*, *Isaiah* 22, 17. Thus doth *Jeremiah* deal with the false Prophets, and other obstinate enemies, *Ier.* 28, 12. Likewise, our Savior Christ denounceth many fearful woes against the Scribes and Pharisees hypocrites, which shut up the kingdom of heaven before men, devoured widows houses under a color of long prayer, compassed sea and land to make one of their profession, tythed mint and annise, and left the weightier matters of the Law; as judgment, mercy, and fidelity. So did *Paul* withstand *Peter* to his face, because he was to be condemned, *Gal.* 2, 11. And when he saw in the Church such as & put away faith and a good conscience, and made shipwreck of the doctrine of Christ, he giveth the Church notice and warning of them, saying; *Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme*, 1. Tim. 1, 20. And in another place, having to do with such as cast off the doctrine of godliness, he noteth the ring-leaders, and principal authors: *Of this sort is Hymenaeus and Philetus, which as concerning the truth, have erred from the mark, saying; that the resurrection is past already, and do destroy the faith of certain*, 2, Tim. 1, 17. In like manner he specifieth *Alexander* the copper-smith, which had done him much harm, 2, Tim. 4, 14. So the Apostle *John* warneth the Church of *Diotrephes*, who loved to have preeminence among them. Al which examples of the Prophets, of the Apostles, & of Christ himself do teach, y^t it will not always be sufficient to reprove the errors and heresies of obstinate sinners; but sometimes it is expedient to lay them open by their names, and to signify them to the Church, by a particular discovering of them.

The Reasons of this practice are to be considered. [Reason 1] First, because the Church should have warning of thē, that others might shun them, and avoid their company. So the Apostle nameth *Alexander* to prepare *Timothy* not to trust him. It is good to know false brethren, lest they spying our liberty, take the greater advantage against us. Hence it is that *Paul* chargeth *Timothy* to beware of *Alexander, who had withstood his preaching sore*, 2 Tim. 4, 15. While we are familiarly conversant with the wicked, it will be hard for us not to be entangled in their sins. For how can a man walk among thorns, & not prick himself? or how can a man touch pitch, and not be defiled? We must fly from such as from a deadly plague. We must separate our selves from them, lest the like vengeance fall upon us also.

Secondly, they must by a special note be made known to the Church, that they may [Reason 2] be degraded and brought to reproach. The Apostle used this remedy, thereby to shut their mouths, and to stop them from speaking evil of almighty GOD and his truth, w^c ought to be precious to us. This naming of them, is to set a mark of infamy upon thē; as if a man were bored in the ear, or burned in the hand for a malefactor. God will have them and their wickedness registered to their perpetual shame in the Church forever, that they should not be of anymore credit to infect the good, and to draw the weak unto destruction. The unnatural & savage dealing of the Amalekites, toward their brethren the Israelites, is by God expressly commanded to be recorded in a book, to their infamy and confusion, *The Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a remembrance in the book, and rehearse it to Joshua, for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven?* Exod. 17, 14. So we have in the Scriptures set forth the uncleanness of *Sodom*, the hard-heartednesse of *Pharaoh*, the conspiracy of

Corah, the covetousness of *Ahab*, the cruelty of *Jezebel*, the disobedience of *Saul*, the treason of *Absalom*, the treachery of *Judas*, and other infamous beasts, the record of their shame is in perpetual memory, and stinketh unto this day. The like we might say of all bloody persecutors in all ages since Christ's time, they have their names and facts remembered in the Acts and Monuments of the Church.

Seeing therefore obstinate enemies must be both shunned & shamed; in both respects we learn, that it is lawful for the Ministers of God to point out some by name, that they may be known, otherwise the Apostles of Christ would never have done it, the Prophets would never have practiced it, Christ himself would never have allowed it.

Let us apply this to our selves. First, it serveth as a bridle to restrain evil men, especially all such as bring a public detriment and hurt to the Church, and are the cause of common [Use 1] mischiefs: they shall to the shame of their persons, to the reproach of their names, to the infamy of their posterities, be registered up in the Monuments of the Church forever, as they that carry a mark of their judgment to the tribunal seat of God aforehand. If the love of goodness, if the wrath of God, if the fear of damnation will not bridle them (as Atheists respect none of these, neither desiring godliness, nor believing heaven, nor fearing hell) yet the perpetual shame wherewith they and their posterities shall be branded, should move them. Albeit sinful wretches be highly magnified in the world, yet all their honor and reputation shall be turned into a blot. It was of late years accounted a great dignity to be a *Wolfie*, or a *Gardener*, or a *Bonner*, but now their names are odious for pride and cruelty, and they no better then wolves, invading and wasting the poor flock of Christ. This the wise man speaketh, Prov. chapt. 10, verse 7. *The memorial of the just shall be blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rotte.* This doth God set forth by his Prophet, Isaiah, chapter 6•, verse 15. *Ye shall cry for sorrow of heart and shall howl for vexation of mind, and ye shall leave your name as a curse unto my chosen; for the Lord God shall slay you, and call his servants by another name.*

We see then that they are greatly deceived, that hope to be famous and to leave a great name behind them, by getting riches, and raising up their houses, as the Psalmist speaketh; *They think their houses and habitations shall continue from generation to generation, and call their Lands by their names: yet they shall not continue in honor, but perish like the brute beast, and be no more had in remembrance, but to their dishonor,* Psalm 49, verses 11, 12. This is it which *David* saith in the ninth Psalm, verse 5. *Thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name forever and ever.*

A great name among the sons of men is not always a good name: and a great name gotten by evil means and open wickedness, is a great punishment, it is a tokē of the wrath of God, upon those that are well spokē of for ungodly deeds. This hardeneth thē in their sins & holdeth then frō true repentance. But whosoever are given up to hardness of heart, & hindered from bringing forth the fruits of repentance, have 2. heavy judgments lying sore upon thē, however they be as blind men & cannot see thē. It is our duty to pray against such a name unto God, & not to desire it to our destruction. Let us fear such a name as may make us reprochful to GOD and to all good men.

Secondly, seeing we must take heed, that howsoever the practice be in it self lawful, to lay out wicked men in their colors, yet we must not single out men commonly, and ordinarily, being oftentimes offensive; sometimes causeless, and always dangerous. When the Apostle reproached such false teachers among the Corinthians as denied the resurrection, and consequently raised the foundation of Religion (for if there be no resurrection, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is the preaching of the Minister, and the faith of the people vain:) yet he doth not express the names of these seducers, but saith, *If it be preached that Christ is risen from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead?* 1. Corinth. 15, 12. And in another place, when he saw his person contemned as base, and his Ministry rejected as fruitless, he answereth the slander, but spareth y^e slanderer; *This I say, that I may not seem as it were to fear you with letters: for the letters, saith he, are sore and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech is of no value,* Let such one think this, that such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also indeed, when we are present. Thus do other the Apostles. Howsoever therefore the practice being wisely and discreetly used, have warrant from the servants of God, yet we are in doing of it to observe these rules following.

First, we must consider our places and callings, we have not the same liberty granted unto us that the Prophets and Apostles had, who received special revelation from God against many of those which they uncased & laid open to the Church, and therefore pray to God to confound them, & to reward them according to their works. We must not therefore make a general rule of it, but remember what Christ said to his disciples, Luke 9, 15. *Ye know not of what spirit ye are.* They pretended the example of *Elias*, but they wanted the spirit of *Elias*. Secondly, we must take heed that we mingle not our own passions with it, for then straight way we pass the bounds of measure and moderation. It is not enough that our zeal be good, but it must be seasoned with such wisdom that the Spirit of God rule over all. We must not be moved with choler and rage, with fury and indignation, but keep under all our affections, that they break not into unlawful courses. Thirdly, we must show pity and compassion of those that sin of weakness and infirmity: we must pray to God for them, that he would *pour out his mercy upon them, and to give them repentance to acknowledge the truth, and to come to amendment out of the snare of the devil.* We must always hope well of such as fall of frailty, until God show that he hath cut them off. Fourthly, it is lawful to reprove by name, when the necessity of the Church urgeth it, and challengeth it at our hands. So that it is in great danger utterly to be corrupted and overthrown, unless false Teachers and seducers be bewrayed and manifestly discovered, that all men may know them and take heed of them. The safety of the Church is especially to be respected of us, and the truth of God must be most dear unto us. Lastly, there is a warrant to single out such men, when there is no more hope of their conversion, and when they are once grown to open blasphemy, to speak evil of, and to slander the doctrine that is according to godliness upon hatred thereof and pretended malice, there is no more place for patience, we are no longer to deal with the spirit of meekness. When a man is so far fallen from all Religion to speak evil of the way of godliness, and to despite the grace of God, malice hath blinded him, the devil hath possessed him, & condemnation waiteth for him. He beareth evident marks of Reprobation, & God showeth

that there is no hope of salvation in him. He giveth knowledge to the Church at sometimes of some particular persons that are castawayes, and have the gate of salvation shut up against them. For otherwise to what purpose is the great and unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost described in the word, unless the sin might be known, and the men also known that do commit it? And to what end doth the Apostle *John* tell us, 1 John 5, ver. 16. *There is a sin to death? and of seeing our brother sin unto death?* If then it may be seen it may be known. And hence it is, that when the Church saw *Julian* the Apostate, who had been enlightened with the truth, and been zealous in the profession of it, to despite God openly, to lift up himself against his word, and to make a mock of all religion, they would have no more to do with him, they accounted him as a devil, and they prayed with one consent against him, that God would confound and destroy him. They did not pray unto God for his conversion, and to give him a new heart, but because he could not repent being past amendment, they called upon God to hasten his condemnation, that he might show thereby what account he maketh of his most holy truth.

Last of all, we ought to have a care to be [Use 3] helpful and profitable to the Church, and to be zealous in the service of God, that thereby to the comfort of our selves and our posterity we may carry a sweet remembrance & a blessed report in the Church forever. The love of *Mary* in anointing Christ with the precious oil which she poured on his head, is promised by Christ to be remembered forever, in what place of the world soever the Gospel should be published: *Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout all the world, there shall also this that she hath done be spoken of for a memorial of her*, Matth. 26, 13. The praise of *Jehoiada* is recorded in Scripture he died an old man, and full of days, & they buried him in the City of *David* with y^e Kings, because he had done good in Israel, and toward God & his house, 2 Chr. 14, 16. This serveth to reprove such as care not at all what men think or speak of them, and regard not what name they have, good or bad; what report is given of them, honorable or dishonorable, sweet or rotten, so they may prevail in their purposes, and bring to effect their devilish devices. An heathen man could say, It is the part of a reckless and dissolute man, to neglect what a man saith of him. *Solomon* teacheth us, that a *good name is more to be desired then great riches, and a loving favor more then silver and gold*, Pro. 22, 1 Eccles 7, 3, This is not attained by flattery or falsehood, but by godliness and righteousness, by humility and an upright conscience. Riches are frail and transitory, subject to vanity and corruption, but a good name and loving favor remain forever. So the Prophet describing the blessedness of the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth in his commandments, saith, that *he shall never be moved: but the righteous shall be had in perpetual remembrance*, Ps. 112.6. A good name is better then a great name. And albeit the godly be despised in the world, yet God will advance their estimation, & give thē a sweet savor among all good men. True it is, sinful men are magnified of sinners (for even the sinners love those that love them, to receive the like of them again) yet they shall be made abominable unto the Saints, and their name shall be cursed, and as much loathed as the filthy favor of his carcass that lieth rotting in the grave. So then, seeing shame shall be as an inseperable companion of wickedness, and no man can separate those things which God hath joined together; on the other side here is comfort to the godly, that GOD will undertake the protection of their

names, so that no creature shall be able to rob them of it: but as he preserveth them to salvation, so he will maintain their credit and estimation. We see this in many the dear servants of God, who albeit they have had their names for a time diminished & impayred, yet they have been restored and recovered. The name of *Naboth* was greatly blemished with the slanderous imputation of treason and blasphemy, but that momentary shame is swallowed up, and recompensed with everlasting honor, throughout all generations, 1, King. 21.10. The like we might say of *Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, Bradford, Philpot*, and many other the dear servants of God, that gave their lives for the truth, howsoever they were condemned for heretics, yet they are renowned for Saints, and shall be so acknowledged to the end of the world,

16 Again the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

17 Vexe the Midianites, and smite them.

18 For they trouble you with their wiles, wherewith they have beguiled you, as concerning *Peor*, and as concerning their sister *Cosbi* the daughter of a Prince of *Midian*, which was slain in the day of the plague, because of *Peor*.

We have hitherto in this chapter handled the transgression of the Israelites, and the reconciliation of God. Now remaineth the decree and determination of God against the Midianites. For after that God had chastened his own people, and judgment hath begun to break out against the house of God, he riseth up in wrath and indignation as a just Judge against his enemies. Herein we are to mark two things: First, the commandment: Secondly, the reasons or causes of the commandment. The commandment and charge directed unto *Moses* in this, *Smite and slay the Midianites*. Thus doth wickedness return upon the heads of the authors thereof. These enemies being drawn into the league to take part with the Moabites, had conspired against Israel, sought to subdue them, not by strength, but by sensuality; nor by force of war, but by lasciuiousnesse and wantonness of women. Now the wheel is turned upon themselves, the stone is rolled upon them that first stirred it, and mischief falleth upon the first contriuers.

[Object.] But here out of this commandment arise two questions fit to be moved, and worthy to be discussed. First, inasmuch as God everywhere forbiddeth revenging of our own causes and quarrels, why doth he now permit and provoke the people of Israel thereunto, as if they were not by nature prone enough to vengeance? I answer, [Answ.] there is a double kind of revenge, one private, the other public. Private revenge is that which proceedeth from the private motion of our corrupt nature, seeking to satisfy our own malice with the hurt of others. This is forbidden by our Savior Christ, *Matthew* 5, 44: commanding us *to love our enemies, and to overcome evil with good*. Public revenge is that which is commanded and warranted by God, being imposed upon us, either mediately by authority of the Magistrate, or immediately by the secret instinct of the Spirit. This is allowed and lawful, as we saw

before in *Phinehas* and others, inasmuch as it proceedeth not from the corruption of nature, but from the inspiration of God. For God the just revenger of all wickedness may use the ministry of men and Angels to execute his purposes so often as it pleaseth him.

Another question arising out of this Commandment, [Objection.] is touching the persons against whom it is directed, as the first was, touching the persons to whom it was directed. For why should the Midianites be named only, seeing the Moabites also were the professed enemies of the Israelites, seeking their ruin, and hyring *Balaam* to curse them? I answer, [Answer.] the Moabites did not escape, but were also punished, as appeareth evidently, Deut. 23, 6. But the Midianites are first in the punishment because albeit they were farther off, yet they had the chiefest hand, and carried the greatest stroke in this wickedness, who made their daughters common; yea even the chiefest among them, by the counsel of *Balaam*, as we saw by one example in this Chapter, the like whereof we do not read to have been in the Moabites. Besides, after that *Balaam* was departed, we read not that the Moabites attempted anything against Israel, but the Midianites gave the Sorcerer farther entertainment, and ceased not (as may be presumed & presupposed) to plot and contrive their destruction.

Hitherto of the commandment, the first part of this division: the reasons enforcing the commandment follow to be considered, which are two in number: First, because they cunningly gulled, and craftily circumvented the people of God. Secondly, because they allured them both to idolatry and to fornication. For this is the meaning of the words, when *Moses* saith, *They have beguiled you as concerning Peor, and as concerning their sister Cozbi: And hereunto John* pointeth in the Revelation, saying; *Balaam taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, that they should eat of things sacrificed to Idols, and commit fornication,* Reue. 2, 14. Both these reasons may be gathered into one, and thus concluded.

If the Midianites drew you into sin, and 〈1 page duplicate〉 〈1 page duplicate〉 brought upon you the plague of God, then spare not to smite them:

But the Midianites drew you into sin, and brought upon you the plague of God:

Therefore spare not you to smite them.

This is the force and strength of the reason, to move the Israelites to make themselves strong, and to be of good courage, assuring themselves that God will give them victory, & enable them to destroy them that did compass their destruction.

Thus we have seen the interpretation of the text, and the order of the words. This is the natural meaning intended by the Spirit of God. But before we pass any further, it shall not be amiss a little to consider the notable abuse of this place, and of other Scriptures, avouched by some of the Church of *Rome*. For one of late, not only a common professor of our Religion, but a public Preacher of the same in our Church, hath revolted from us through some worldly temptations, run into our enemies campe, lifted up his heel against us, and in bitter and biting manner railed at us. This man wanting no good will to write against us, and yet finding no strength in himself to deal against us out of evident and plain Scripture, hath turned all into allegories, and out of his inward and hidden senses, wresteth and wringeth

all things against the Protestants. As for example, when the Lord in this place is said to have spoken to *Moses* in this manner; *Vexe the Midianites, and smite them*, because they troubled you with their wiles, and beguiled you as concerning *Peor*; the meaning according to his interpretation, is this; Christ said to the Vicar of Christ, Suppress the writings of heretics and confute them, because they trouble you with their guiles, and make their false doctrines appear beautiful to the show and outward appearance, the heretics receiving a counterfeit word, (instead of the true Scripture) which is condemned in the day of the Popes censure. Behold here, the heavy judgment of God upon this man, since his apostasy and revolting from the true Church, to the Synagogue of Antichrist. Are not here strange proofs, and far set interpretations, to prove the Pope to be the Vicar of Christ, that the writings of heretics are to be suppressed, and that the heretics themselves do deceive and delude the world under a color of the word of God, & a pretence of the bare literal meaning? And yet this is the profound, inward, mystical, and right Scripture that he so often boasteth of. But let the indifferent reader judge, whether this manner of interpretation be not the highway to set up all Atheism, to overthrow the authority and certainty of the Scripture, to shake the foundation of true religion, & to leave no grounds for Christians to stand upon. And this hath been the ancient practice of such disciples as have learned such divinity in the schools of Antichrist. It is well known that *Pighius* compared the Scriptures to a nose of wax, and to a rule of Lead. The censure of *Colen* affirmeth the like in the same words. And to the same purpose Cardinal *Cusane* teacheth, that the Scriptures must be expounded diversely, and framed to the time & practice of the Church, so that at one time they are to be understood and interpreted one way, and at another time another way. These are some of those bold blasphemies, which many of the Popes Minions have uttered to the world. Now, such as apply the Scriptures to their own fancies, & turn them into allegories, do not come far behind the former. If we suffer the Scriptures of God to be thus wrested and corrupted, the Religion of Christ cannot long continue. If a man pull down the foundation of an house whereon it standeth, or shake the main pillars whereon it leaneth, the house it self cannot long hold out, but must fall down. The Church of God is built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, so long as the doctrine contained in them is maintained and kept pure and undefiled, the Church shall stand upright, and remain without danger of being shaken in pieces. But when once it beginneth to be mingled with the chaff of man's invention, or infected with the poison of the devils device, by and by it tottereth & decayeth, until in the end (no remedy being provided) it languish and die.

Now to apply this to our present purpose: howsoever some glory of the hidden senses of Scripture which they have found out, and please themselves in their foolish conceits, it is no better then *to make merchandice of the word, and to turn the truth of God into a lie*, 2. Cor. 2, 17. For whereas out of this commandment of God, charging *Moses* to slay the Midianites that troubled Israel with their guiles, and drew them to fornication, this construction is gathered, that *Moses* is the Vicar of Christ, that the Midianites signify the writings of heretics, with such like trash, the only naming thereof is sufficient to show the vanity of it. This I confess may not unfitly be called another Scripture then yet hath been known, howbeit not the Lord's, but his own. And if this new and admirable way to a new found land were granted

unto him, what would it make more against us then against himself, and generally against the whole Church of Rome? This shall plainly appear unto us in three respects. For first of all, admit once of these fond guesses and glosses upon the Scripture, and depart from the simplicity of the same, there is a gappe opened wide, to intrude a thousand diverse, nay contrary interpretations, according to the diverse or contrary disposition of the interpreter. As for example, out of this present place, mentioning the commandment of God to Moses, the guiles of the Midianites, and their drawing Israel to fornication, by means of *Cozbi*, a Princes daughter among them; a man might with greater probability gather, and agreeing better with the proportion of faith in other Scriptures, an encouragement to all Christian Princes to pull down the purple whore that sitteth in spiritual Babylon, to reward her as she hath rewarded us, Revel. 18, 6, and to give her double according to her works, and in the cup that she hath filled to us, to fill her the double. For in the former words *Moses* shall signify the Christian Magistrate; the Midianites, the enemies of Christ, the greatest whereof are Antichrist, and his adherents: the enticing of the Israelites to fornication, the committing of idolatry, and running a whoring after Idols; the slaying of *Cozbi* in the day of the plague, the downfall and ruin of their idolatrous worship, which we see God hath miraculously brought to pass. Thus we see, how these words may more fitly and fully be applied against the church of Rome, then against true Catholics, whom he calleth heretics. Secondly, if this be the marrow and pith of the Scriptures, to hide such mystical meanings and secret senses under the outward bark, what hindereth us, but that we may raise as good doctrine out of *Homers Iliads*, and *Odysses*, out of *Ouids Metamorphosis*, or out of *Virgil's Aeneads*, as out of the writings of *Moses* and the Prophets; which were horrible blasphemy once to conceive or imagine? For if a man, by *Vlysses* or by *Aeneas*, should understand Christ; by their companions, his Disciples; by their wanderings, his sufferings; by their going down to hell, his overcoming of the devil, and triumphing over the kingdom of darkness; by their safe arriving in an haven of rest after all their labors, his resurrection from the dead, and taking possession of the kingdom of heaven: he hath as fair a warrant for these conjectures, as this trifler hath for his fooleries: to understand by *Moses*, the Pope; by the Midianites, the writings of heretics; by *Cozbi*, such doctrine as pretendeth the Name of God; and by vexing the Midianites, the stopping of the course of their heretical writings. Lastly, this inward supposed Scripture that this dreamer hath conceited, burieth the true word of God, and setteth up a forged and counterfeit Scripture. For it turneth all things into Allegories, and disanulleth the rules of interpretation. The Allegories that we find not in Scripture, we are at liberty to refuse. He that hath set bounds and banks to the sea, that it should pass no further, hath restrained us how far we shall go. We must not turn either to the right hand, or to the left, Deut. 4, 2. We must walk the kings high way, we must not add or diminish, we must not change or alter anything of Christ's testament. *Origen* the Prince and Patron of Allegories, hath been taxed and condemned of all men, for corrupting and perverting the Scripture this way: but now *Origen* is justified by this new found interpretation, which is no better then a languishing about trifles, 1 Tim. 6, 4, a dotting about questions and strife of words, and a casting of clouds and smoke upon the Sun beams. And howsoever the schoolmen have ouerflowed the banks in the ranknesse and superfluity of their wit, and thereby defaced and depraved the precious word of God purer then the gold of *Ophir*; yet *Thomas*, one of the Princes and gods among

them teacheth, that the literal sense of the Scripture is that which the Author intendeth, and the Author of holy Scripture is God. Now if that be the true meaning of the Scripture which the holy Ghost intendeth, I would gladly know, whether the pretended mystical interpretation of this place, building up the primacy of *Peter*, and supremacy of the Pope, and pulling down the heretics, were intended by the Commandment of God unto *Moses*? Let him tell me whether the words be in the nature of a Prophecy, or of an History? belonging to the present times, or to the times to come? Let him show, whether *Moses* ever understood the commandment of the Lord, as this popish Proctor, (or rather prater) pretendeth? And whether the interpretation now set afoot, were true in the days of *Moses*, or not? Lastly, let him declare, whether *Moses* and the Israelites did ever obey this commandment or not? But if the meaning be, that God spake not to *Moses*, but to the Vicar of Christ, nor gave them charge concerning the Midianites, but the writings of heretics; nor spake touching *Cozbi*, but those that counterfeted the word of GOD: he did delude *Moses* with a vain shadow of words, pretending one thing, and intending another, in outward show giving him authority, but in an inward meaning establishing the Popes superiority, which was not hatched nor heard of in sundry ages afterward. And hereupon it is, that all the sounder Divines of ancient times, and the sounder schoolmen of latter times have rejected this mystical divinity, as unavailable and insufficient, to prove any point of Christian Religion. Thus then we see that the word of God is not to be turned into an allegory, taking away the truth of the history, and the doctrine of faith. In this manner of reasoning notwithstanding, the chiefest keys of Popish Religion are hammered, & so most absurd and impertinent allegories are established. God made two great lights, a greater to rule the day, and a lesser to rule the night; therefore there are two great powers set in the world, the Pope and the Emperor, and the authority of the Pope is so much greater then the authority of the Emperor, as the Sun is then the Moon. God said, *In thy light, we shall see light*: therefore, there must be candles in the Church burning at noon day. The words of the Prophet, *Thou hast put all things under his feet, Psal. 8, 6, 7*: they allegorize thus for the supreme jurisdiction of the man of sin; all sheep and oxen, that is, all men: Foules, that is Angels and devils: Fish in the sea, that is, all souls in Purgatory.

Moreover, as this course of interpretation turneth the Scripture into Allegories, so it overturneth the rules of Interpretation. Saint *Augustine* in his famous books of Christian Doctrine, handleth at large the manner how to expound the Scripture, and what ways are to be taken to find out the true meaning thereof. Where he teacheth, that seeing the love of God and of our neighbor is the end of the whole Scripture, that must be a false interpretation, which doth not build up in this love: that we must expound the dark places by the plain, the fewer by the greater number: that the study of arts & knowledge of the toongs is necessary: that we must expound Scripture by Scripture: that we must distinguish between precepts & precepts, between those that are given to all, and those that were particularly directed to certain persons: that we must diligently mark all circumstances, what goeth before, and what followeth after: that we must pray unto him that is the Author of the Scriptures, who only is able to reveal the meaning of his own word. These rules are diligently to be considered of all those that come to expound the Scriptures. As for hidden and secret senses, we know them not, we acknowledge them not, we believe them not, but

leave them to those that seek an hidden divinity, and a secret religion devised in their own brains, which will not abide the trial of the light. And thus much touching the true understanding of this division, and of overthrowing the false interpretation thereof; now let us come to the Doctrines that arise out of the same.

[Verse 16. *Again, the Lord spake unto Moses, saying; &c.*] We heard before the heavy wrath of God that fell upon the Israelites, the heads of thē were hanged, the rest of the people were plagued with a sore plague, there died in one day, four and twenty thousand. But did the Midianites escape the hand of God, that were the enticers of them, who offered their daughters that they should commit fornication with them? No, they did not escape, God giveth *Moses* charge to draw the sword against them, and to destroy them. Here then we are to observe the order which God observeth in punishing. The Midianites sinned first, but the Israelites are first punished. The Israelites sinned after the Midianites, but the Midianites are punished after them. From this course of God's judgments, we learn this Doctrine, that God first chasteneth his own people. Howsoever he will not suffer the ungodly to escape, nor to go away without punishment, but executeth his just judgments against them: yet he will begin with his own Church, & lay the rod upon them in the first place.

He could if it had pleased him have punished these Midianites first, as the principal authors of all this mischief; but he beginneth in justice with his Church, which were drawn to idolatry and adultery by them. Thus the Lord dealt with *Moses* and *Aaron*, when the people murmured through want of water, repented of their going out of Egypt, and rebelling against God, assembling themselves in tumultuous manner against the servants of GOD that had led them in the wilderness, and carried them in safety, as upon Eagles wings. These were the first and chief in the offense, yet because *Moses* and *Aaron* believed not the Lord, to sanctify him in the presence of the children of Israel, they were first punished, and not suffered to bring the congregation into the land which he had given them, *Num.* 20, 12. This we see further confirmed unto us in the latter end of the book of *Job*: he had indeed offended God, and spoken unadvisedly with his lips, but his three friends had offended much more grossly than he: for the wrath of God was kindled against them, because they had not spoken of him the thing that is right like his servant *Job*, *Job* 42, 7. Nevertheless, *Job* is rebuked first, albeit he were the party that had less offended. First, God findeth fault with *Job*; and secondly, he findeth fault with his companions. The holy history teacheth us, that *Jehoshaphat* joined in affinity with *Ahab*, and went into the battle with him. True it is, he sinned grievously in helping the wicked, and loving them that hated the Lord, for the which he is reprov'd of the Prophet; yet many good things were found in him, and he was righteous in respect of *Ahab*, *2. Chron.* 19, 1: notwithstanding, the wrath of the Lord began first to fall upon him, and he had perished in the fight, being compassed by his enemies, unless he had cried unto the Lord to help him, who moved them to depart from him, *2 Chron.* 18.31. This is it which the Prophet *Jeremiah* declareth at large, showing the order of the Lord's proceeding in punishing such as sin against him; first, he will raise up the Chaldeans to chastise his Church, and then the Chaldeans themselves shall not escape: *I will send and take to me all the families of the North, and I will bring them against this Land, & against the inhabitants thereof, and this whole land shall be desolate, and an astonishment, and these nations*

shall serve the King of Babel seventy years: & when the seventy years are accomplished, &c. Ier. 25, 9, 11, 12. This is it which the Prophet complaineth of in the Psalm, *These are the wicked, yet prosper they always, and increase in riches: Certainly I have cleansed my heart in vain, & washed mine hands in innocence, &c.* Psal, 73, 12, 13. And if we consider either the state of the Church generally, or the condition of the members of y^e Church particularly, we may in all times and ages see the truth of this doctrine, and conclude with the Apostle Peter, *The time is come that judgment must begin with the house of God,* 1. Pet. 4, 17.

[Reason 1] The reasons will further open unto us the certainty of this truth, and serve to clear the justice of God in observing this order. For first, as he that honoreth the Lord shall be honored, so they that despise the Lord, shall be despised, 2. Sam. 2, 30. But none more dishonor GOD then his servants offending against him, whose sins press him down as the sheaves do a cart. They open the mouths of the ungodly, to speak evil of God, and his truth. If then God's own people, the lot of his inheritance do despise him, and cause his Name to be blasphemed, if they neglect his honor, and turn his mercies unto security, and his grace into wantonness, and so with a proud heart, and an high hand set themselves against it, can he bear it? and will he not be revenged on such a nation as this? 1. Sam. 12.14. Rom. 2, 24. There can be no greater despite done unto a man, then when his own children rise against him, and offer all villainy unto him. So there can be no greater dishonor offered unto the most High God, then when the sons of his own house, the servants of his own family, and the flock of his own pasture, rebel and resist against him. The sin of the Jews is greater then of the Gentiles, which sinned of knowledge, and not of ignorance, and therefore should receive the greater punishment, and be beaten with moe stripes, as our Savior teacheth, *Luke 12, 47.* We are not therefore to marvel, if they come into judgment that they may be despised, as they have despised him. For seeing no sins are greater then the sins of his own chosen, they must first taste the scourge of his hand, as they have contemned him and his glory.

[Reason 2] Secondly, his own people have the first and greatest experience of his mercies. They have the chiefest and choicest privileges and perogatives of his graces above all the wicked. True it is, all mankind tasteth abundantly of God's liberal and bountiful hand, to make them without excuse: but to the sons and daughters of the Almighty, *All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth: the secrets of the Lord are revealed to them that fear him, and his covenant to give them understanding,* Psal, 25, 10, 14. He calleth not them his servants, *For the servant knoweth not what his master doth: but he calleth them his friends, for all things which he hath heard of his Father hath he made known to them,* John 15, 15. This is that reason which the Prophet pointeth unto, when he saith; *Loe, I begin to plague the city where my Name is called upon,* Ier. 25, 29: As if he should say, *I have set my Name there, I have given them my word, I have fed them as from mine own table, therefore they shall not escape.* This is it which the Apostle meaneth, when he saith, *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, &c.* Rom. 1, 16. Whereby he declareth, that God keepeth this order, to offer grace first unto his own people.

When Christ sent out his disciples, he commanded them not to go into the way of the Gentiles, neither to enter into the cities of the Samaritans, *But to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,* Math. 10.6. And when the Apostle saw the Jews full of envy, and speak

against those things which were preached unto them, he said; behold, *It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life; loe, we turn to the Gentiles*, Acts 13, 46.

Seeing then, that this is the constant order that God observeth, to bestow his blessings first upon his servants; it followeth, that for the abuse of them they must first feel his punishments. The greater love they have abused, the greater punishment shall be inflicted upon them. This is it which the Apostle remembereth, *Tribulation and anguish shall be upon the soul of everyone that doth evil*, Rom. 2.9.

Let us now make use of this doctrine which [Use 1] hath been made plain to our consciences. First, this serveth to overthrow the Church of Rome, who dream of a Church set in outward pomp and glory, and make it a note of the Church to have temporal felicity, to have earthly triumphs, to have victories, and good success in war against their enemies; as also the unhappy end of the enemies of y^e Church. For our doctrine teacheth us, that the Church is oftener without this flourishing estate in outward happiness than it doth enjoy it. The Kingdom of Christ is not of this world. The Lord declareth to *Abraham*, that for a surety *his seed should be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, four hundred years, and shall serve them, and they shall entreat them evil*, Gen. 15.13. So he threatened by his Prophet *Jeremiah*, and performed it, that they were carried into captivity seventy years, verifying that which is spoken, *I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage: I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies*, Ierem. 12, 7.

Hence it is, that Christ saith oftentimes, *In the world ye shall have trouble: ye shall weep & lament, and the world shall rejoyce*, John. 16, 7.33, The Apostle teacheth, *That all which will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*, 2. Tim. 3.12. It is a worthy sentence recorded by the Prophet, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints*, howsoever the world do account of them, Psal. 116, 15. It is made a note of the Turkish Religion, to have external felicity, & to abound in earthly prosperity. It is the heavenly felicity and everlasting happiness which belongeth to the true Church, and is proper to it. Therefore one of their own writers though not so absurd in opinion and corrupt in judgment, as most of that side, faith, *The cross is a note of the Church: Christ foretold us of troubles, but false Christ's of peace and prosperity*.

So then, by the confession of this man they must be accounted false Prophets, that make outward glory and renown to be the true marks of the true Church. And if we should necessarily urge this as any privilege of the Church, we should long ago have condemned the Prophets, the Apostles, the Patriarchs, Martyrs, yea the son of God himself Christ Jesus, who wanted the favor of the world, suffered the reproach of the cross, and gave up their lives unto the death, that they might receive a better resurrection. If the Church of Rome condemn these, we are content they should condemn us: if they justify them, they must condemn themselves, and renounce this outward felicity as a false note of the Church.

[Use 2] Secondly, we may from this usual order of God's punishments conclude, that the ungodly shall never escape, albeit for a time they be free. GOD hath most assuredly

determined to inflict great and grievous punishments upon the wicked and ungodly that are his enemies, howsoever he bear for a season with the vessels of wrath. This the Prophet is sent to tell the King of Babel and that nation, and sundry other people, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, ye shall certainly drink; for loe I begin to plague the city where my Name is called upon, and should you go free? ye shall not go quit, for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth,* Jer. 25, 29. This we see likewise in the Prophet *Habakuk*; first the Lord raised up the Chaldeans, a bitter and furious nation, whose horses were swifter then the Leopards, and fiercer then the wolves, to chastise his own people: and afterward the Chaldeans themselves shall be spoiled, Chapter 2.

This serveth as a terror to all ungodly men, to consider, that howsoever GOD beginneth to chastise those of his own household, when he doth purpose to bring a plague upon a land, and beginneth not at the unbelievers, but letteth them alone, and spareth them as though he had forgotten their works, or had not seen their sinful ways: yet they must know, that their transgressions are recorded in the book of God, and shall come to account. For he suffereth those whom he loveth not, to wax ripe, yea to rot away in their sins, and in the mean season he chastiseth those whom he hath adopted to be his children. *Gen. 15.*

The state of the faithful is in the fight of man, and in the judgment of the world more miserable then the state of the despisers of God, which rest at ease, and welter in all pleasures. They seem to be forgotten of God and utterly forsaken of help, so that they pine away with sorrow of heart: whereas the wicked lift up their heads and set their horns on high, they are merry and make a mock of sin in the despite of God, and in scorn of all godliness. Alas, how would this trouble and torment us, and bring us to our wits ends, if we had not this doctrine, that judgment entereth first into the house of God, and that when God shall have finished all his work upon mount Zion, then will he not spare the wicked? *Isaiah 10, 12.* God will indeed keep corrections first in his own house, seeing he loveth them most, and seeketh to cleanse them from their sins, he will visit them in the first place, lest they should be condemned with the world; and then a most horrible vengeance is prepared, and a stormy tempest is made ready for those that have long abused his patience and hardened their hearts, not knowing that his long sufferance ought to have led them to repentance, *1. Cor, 11, 32.* This serveth as a notable comfort on the one side to all the godly that are tried by afflictions of long continuance. We must consider, that the more the Lord loveth us, the more forward he is in visiting of us: and when he seeth we have stepped awry and are gone out of the right way of salvation, he watcheth over us, to bring us home again to him with speed.

This is that which the Apostle teacheth the Church of Corinth; For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep: for if we would judge our selves, we should not be judged: but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, because we should not be condemned with the world. Let us not therefore *despise the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when we are rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth: if therefore we be without correction, &c.* *Heb. 12, 5.6.* Even as when a man beholding two children committing evil, correcteth one of them, and letteth the other go

free: the standers by will say, surely that was his son which he did smite and chasten, but the other was not. Besides, we are assured that the wicked shall perish, and that the ungodly shall be punished. Secondly, this serveth to set forth the woeful condition of all the reprobate: for when they see how GOD dealeth with his own dear children, chastening them for their sins, and sending them great afflictions, as appeareth in *David*, that the sword departed not from his house, & that God did visit him with sundry other judgments in his children all the days of his life; it ought to be a fearful threatening to the wicked, to make them afraid of the reward which is laid up in store for them in the life to come. This is that which *Solomon* calleth to their remembrance *Behold the righteous shall be recompensed, &c. Prov. 11, 31.* And to the same purpose speaketh the Apostle *Peter*, *The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of GOD,* 1. Peter 4, 17. If it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them which obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Woe therefore to all wicked men; how wretched shall their end be? how horrible shall their destruction be, when God cometh to give them the hire and wages of their work? Let them therefore repent of their evil ways, and call upon God betimes before the evil days approach, and before judgment do come upon them.

[Use 3] Lastly, from hence arise sundry duties to be practiced, as well of the children of God y^t lie under chastisement, as of others that are beholders of it. First, seeing God will begin his chastisements upon his own children, it teacheth them when they are punished, to consider and search out the true cause thereof, and to call upon him to pardon their sins. True it is, he is able to preserve them in the time of trouble, & he is ready to regard their prayers; but their sins are loathsome to him, and do turn away his loving countenance from them, according unto the saying of the Prophet, *Isaiah 59, 1, 2. Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, & your sins have hid away his face from you, that he will not hear.* When our sins are heartily confessed, they shall be freely pardoned: and when they are pardoned, God is reconciled unto us: and when he is reconciled, his judgments shall be removed. Secondly, let us begin a new life, & walk in the ways of righteousness: for as *Solomon* teacheth, *Righteousness delivereth from death,* Prov. 10, 2. We must turn from our wickedness, and then God will turn from his judgments. We are ready to cry out in the time of our affliction, but we are not so ready to practice true religion. If we would call in God's judgment, we must turn to him by amendment of life. Lastly, when we see y^e Lord strike his own children, we must behold it with an eye of compassion. So soon as we see their miseries and calamities that lie heavy upon them, we must show our selves to have a feeling of their afflictions, we must express our pity, we must manifest our kindness, and we must declare the bowels of our love toward them. This is it which *Job* requireth at the hands of his friends in the days of his sorrow, *The wicked have despised me, & when I rose they spake against me: all my secret friends abhorred me, and they whom I loved are turned against me, &c.* Where we see he showeth, y^t God had chastened him, that his brethren stood far from him, that his acquaintance were strangers unto him, that his neighbors had forsaken him, that his familiars had forgotten him, that his servants disdained him, that his wife loathed him, that the wicked despised him, that his secret friends abhorred him, & thereupon he crieth out for

some to pity him in his misery, and to comfort him in his extremity. This duty should be performed by us, to testify our love unto the servants of God: and so much the rather, because it is so generally neglected. Nay, it is not only shamefully omitted, but the contrary is commonly practiced. For, how many are there that make a mock at the miseries of the Church, as *Shimei* did at the troubles of *David*, who cursed him when he should have comforted him? 2. Sam. 16, 7. Thus are the dear Saints of God dealt withal, thus they are reviled and railed upon with horrible taunts, thus they are slandered and reproached with bitter imputations, such as the devil deuiseth, and malice setteth abroad. The bowels of their pity, are breathings out of cruelty. Their showing of compassion, is the adding to their affliction. Their visiting of them in their adversity, is a casting upon them of the greatest misery. These are the days of the patience of the Saints, which are filled with reproaches, and give their cheeks to him that smiteth them, Lam. 3, 30. Let them commit their causes to God, who in his good time will look upon them for good, and reward their enemies according to their works.

[Verse 17. *Vexe the Midianites and smite them.*] Here is the commandment given by God to *Moses*, and by *Moses* to the Israelites to execute vengeance upon the Midianites, because they drew the people of God into sin allured them to whoredom, enticed them to idolatry, and brought upon them a most fearful judgment, that entered in among them, & destroyed many thousands of them. This commandment given in this place, is afterwards renewed and executed according to the direction given unto them. For inasmuch as they troubled Israel, the Lord troubled them to be put to the sword, so that their cities were burned, their goods were spoiled, their Women captived, their Kings destroyed, and all their males massacred. This is set down more at large in Numb. 31, 1, 2. where the Lord spake unto *Moses*, saying; *Reuenge the children of Israel of the Midianites, and afterwards shalt thou be gathered unto thy people.* And *Moses* spake to the people, saying; *Harnesse some of you unto war, and let them go against Midian, to execute the vengeance of the Lord against Midian.* Seeing then that they have such a charge & commission from God to destroy them, we learn from hence, That war is lawful. The people of God may lawfully make wars both offensive and defensive against their enemies. The truth hereof appeareth in many places of the word of God. This is charged upon the people of God, Deu. 7, 2. & 20, 10, 11, 12, 13. *Whē the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the Land whither thou goest to possess it, and shall root out many nations before thee, then thou shalt smite thē thou shalt utterly destroy them, thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor have compassion on them.* And afterward in the same book, *when thou comest near unto a city to fight against it, thou shalt offer it peace: but if it will make no peace with thee, but make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it, and the Lord thy God shall deliver it into thine hands, and thou shalt smite all the males thereof with y^e edge of the sword.* So when *Amalek* fought with Israel in *Rephidim*, which was the first of the nations that encountered with thē after they came out of the land of Egypt, *Moses* said to *Joshua*, *Choose us out men, & go fight with Amalek*, so he discomfited *Amalek* and his people with the edge of the sword, Exod. 17, 9. The like we see in *Joshua* the General of the Lord's host, at the taking and winning of *Joshua*, so soon as the wall fell down at the sounding of the Trumpets, and the shouting of the people, they took the City, and utterly destroyed all that was in the City, both mā and woman, young and old, with the edge

of the sword, Josh. 6, 21. & 10, 13. This the Prophet teacheth, when he praised the Lord for delivering him from the hand of all his enemies, Psal. 18, 34, 37, 38. *He teacheth my hands to fight, so that a bow of brass is broken with mine arms: I have pursued mine enemies and taken them, and have not turned again till I had consumed them, &c.*

[Reason 1] And howsoever these testimonies may seem sufficient to persuade this truth, yet we shall be better confirmed therein, if we consider the strength of reason to enforce the former truth. First, it is a title proper to God, to be called the Lord of hosts, and all wars lawfully undertaken, are called the battles of the Lord; so that as God is served in the day of battle, so he is the Captain and Leader of the Army. Hence it is that *Moses saith, The Lord is a man of war, his name is Jehovah*, Exod. 15, 3. This is it which *Saul said to David* when he promised to give him his eldest daughter to wife, *Only be a valiant son unto me, & fight the Lord's battles*, 1 Sam. 18, 17. And it is said, that many of the enemies of God's people fell down wounded, because *the war was of God*, 1 Chron. 5, 32. Seeing then, God is the Lord of hosts, a man of war, the Captain of the army, the only author and sole giver of victory, we must needs hold that wars are lawful, and may be lawfully used and taken in hand.

[Reason 2] Secondly, as we are taught the lawfulness of war by the titles of God, so we are farther assured of it by the special commandments w^c God giveth for the carrying of arms against common enemies, as also by his gracious and merciful promises made unto his people, for good success and prosperous proceeding in their just cause & honest quarrel. To this purpose tended the law of God, charging *Saul* to smite Amalek, and to destroy all that pertained to him, and to have no compassion upon them but to destroy them all. Likewise, the Lord charged *Joshua* to take all the men of war with him, and to lie in wait on the backside of *Ai* to take it, and to slay the inhabitants thereof with the sword. Neither had the people of God only the charge of a commādement, but the comfort of a promise: the commandment to warrant them, the promise to strengthen and encourage them. When *Joshua* was to go against *Jericho* (w^c was shut up & closed because of the children of Israel) the Lord said unto him, *Behold I have given into thy hand Jericho and the king thereof, and the strong men of war*. Josh. 6, 2, 3. And afterward, when sundry kings gathered themselves together against the Gibeonites that had subjected themselves to the Israelites, the Lord said unto *Joshua*, *Fear them not, for I have given them into thine hand, none of them shall stand against thee*, Josh. 10, 8.

Thirdly, as the children of God have prayed [Reason 3] for the help of God in the success of their business, and in the works of their hands that they have attempted, and have been heard: so when they have gone into war to fight with their enemies, they have called upon his name, and received great comfort. This we see evidently in the practice of *Joshua*, who prayed unto him in the day when he gave the Amorites before the children of Israel, *Joshua chap. 10. verses 12, 14. Sun, stay thou in Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Aialon: and there was no day like that day before it nor after it, that the Lord heard the voice of a man, for the Lord fought for Israel*. When the Philistines were assembled against Israel, the children of Israel said to *Samuel*, *Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us; that he may save us out of the hand of the Philistines*, 1 Samuel chapt. 7. verses 8, 9, 10. *Samuel* cried unto the Lord, who heard him,

and thundered with a great thunder that day upon the Philistines, and scattered them, so they were slain before Israel. And there is a notable example hereof recorded in the first of the Chronicles, the fifth chapter and the 20. verse, touching the sons of *Reuben*, of *Gad*, and of half the Tribe of *Manasseh*: *They were holpen against the Hagarims who were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them, for they cried to God in the battle, and he heard him because they trusted in him.* If then God do in mercy hear the prayers of those that call upon his most holy name going unto the war, and preparing themselves unto the battle, we cannot doubt of the lawfulness of the work it self, seeing almighty God useth not to hear those that go about evil, but sendeth his curse upon them.

Fourthly, the word of God setteth down [Reason 4] the duties of those that manage the matters of the field, as of the King, of the Captain, & of the common soldier, which it would never do, if the callings were unlawful. For as we conclude marriage to be lawful, and an honorable ordinance of God, because y^e Scripture setteth forth the duties of married persons as well of the husband toward the wife, as the wife toward her husband: so, in as much as we find the duties of such as go to war, as well of those that are commanders, as of those that are under commandment, described plentifully and fully in the book of God, we cannot call the lawfulness of their office in question. Hence it is, that the Lord teacheth *Joshua* the duties of his calling, Josh. 1, 6: y^t he should be strong and of a good corage, that he should meditate in the book of the Law, and assure himself that he would be with him, and not leave him nor forsake him, so that there should not a man be able to withstand him all y^e days of his life. So when the soldiers came to *John the Baptist* to be instructed how to lead their lives, and to be directed how to escape the wrath of God to come, he said unto them, *Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages.* The particular handling and setting down of these duties, enforceth the acknowledgement of the lawfulness of the calling.

[Reason 5] Lastly, we shall see the lawfulness of wars, if we consider the lawful causes of a lawful war. The first is the defense of true religion against the oppugners thereof, as appeareth by the words of *Ahijah* to *Jeroboam*, and all Israel, 2 Chron. 13, 6. The second is, that such as are oppressed for religion, may be freed and delivered, as we see in the histories of the Judges, who raised wars to deliver the oppressed and distressed people out of the bloody hands of the cruel oppressors. The third is for the necessary defense of the Commonwealth, by repulsing injuries offered, by revenging indignities and assaults, and by recovering things lost: as their wives, their sons, their daughters, their goods, their possessions, their cities, their substance & dominions. The overthrow of the Commonwealth, bringeth the ruin of the Churches peace. For as the flourishing estate of the Commonwealth maintaineth and furthereth the Churches peace; so when the Common-wealth is spoiled, the liberty and freedom of the Church is diminished, as appeareth in sundry places of the Lamentations.

[Use 1] Let us now make use of this doctrine, and apply it to our instruction. First it is required of everyone to have courage. We must not grow feeble and faint-hearted, we should not fear nor be discouraged, but be bold as in the work of the Lord, assuring our selves, that *the Lord is our strength, who teacheth our hands to fight, and our fingers to battle*, Psalm 144, 1.

When *Hezekiah* saw that *Zaneherib* was come and that his purpose was to fight against Jerusalem, he said to his Captains & soldiers, *Be strong and courageous: fear not, neither be afraid for the king of Ashur, neither for all the multitude that is with him: for there is more with us than is with him; with him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God for to help us, and to fight our battles*, 2 Chron. 32, 7. This appeareth in the exhortation of *Nehemiah*, when *Sanballat* and *Tobiah* conspired to come to fight against Jerusalem, & to hinder the building of the wall, he said: *Be not afraid of them remember the great Lord and fearful, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses*, Neh. 4.14. The heathen Captains that carried their men to battle, were always wont (as we see in profane histories) to put courage into them, not to fear to look the enemy in the face; but their only or chiefest reason to move them was earthly glory, that either they should live in wealth, or die with honor. It is not so with the people of God, they have greater Reasons to work in them the gift of valor, and hope of victory. True religion therefore doth not weaken the hearts of men, and make them Cowards. It is no enemy to true fortitude and manhood. For first it teacheth and informeth the conscience, that the cause and quarrel in which the warrior fighteth, is good, just, and warrantable by the word of GOD, which maketh him stand upon a sure ground: without which knowledge in the heart, how ugly, how foul, how savage, how cruel a thing is the effusion and shedding of blood? What an horrible and grisly a spectacle is it, to see Villages and Towns burned, Cities and Castles ruined, Churches and religious places overturned, bodies dismembered with Ordnance, the air infected with stench, the ground embrued with blood, the country wasted, grass and corn trodden down and spoiled, and all places with fear and terror filled? Is it not to be esteemed rather a practice of all inhumanity than an exercise of manhood? Secondly, as true religion establisheth the conscience touching the lawfulness of war, so it teacheth them to commit themselves and their lives into the hands of God as unto a faithful keeper, to consider that an hair cannot fall from our heads without his providence, Matth. 10, 30. and to be persuaded that if they stand & conquer, they conquer to the Lord; if they be wounded and fall, they fall and die to the Lord.

Lastly, the word of God teacheth, that the battle is the Lord's, and the victory is also the Lord's, that the honor and glory thereof may be returned unto the Lord. He giveth and taketh away: he saveth with many, or with few: to teach us to depend upon the mouth of the Lord, to be guided by his wisdom, to follow his counsel and direction in all our affairs, that so our battles may be the battles of the Lord. To this purpose did *Joab* speak to his brother going to fight with their enemies, when he saw the front of the battle was against him, before and behind: *If the Aramites be stronger than I, thou shalt help me, and if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, I will come and succor thee: be strong, and let us be valiant for our people, & for the Cities of our God, & let the Lord do that which is good in his eyes*. Thus did *David* comfort himself, when he was driven out of Jerusalem through y^e treason of *Absalom* saying to *Zadoc* the priest, *Cary the Ark of God again into the City: if I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it, and the Tabernacle thereof: but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good in his eyes*. Thus then we see, that all the Lord's soldiers y^t fight his battles, and inroll their names in his muster book, must be men of stout courage, and valiant men at arms, as they that go about a good work:

he receiveth none into his camp that are faint-hearted and white-liuered soldiers which are not able to incorage themselves but are able to discourage others. Hence it is, that the Lord charged the officers or Heralds a• arms, to make proclamation in the audience of the people, *Whosoever is afraid & faint-hearted, let him go and return to his house, lest his brethren's heart faint like his heart*, Deut, 20, 8. God would have wars made in his name, and therefore he would have soldiers go to them without fear. If a man be afraid, it is a token he hath no trust in God, for he hath power to overcome fearfulness. This serveth to reprove all those which wanting the virtue of valor, and this gift of magnanimity, do betray themselves, and yield unto most unequal conditions, and make an agreement with dishonorable terms. When *Benhadad* the king of Aram laid siede to Samaria, and sent unto *Ahab*, saying; *Thy silver and thy gold is mine, also thy women & thy fair children are mine*, *Ahab* stooped and submitted himself unto him, he did not make resistance with courage, but yielded unto him like a coward, saying, *My Lord king according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have*. Our trust & confidence must be in God, and then we shall not fear what man can do unto us.

[Use 2] Secondly, seeing wars are lawful, being undertaken upon just causes, we must depend upon God for good success. We must not trust in spear or shield, in horse or man, but arm our selves with the shield of faith, & put upon us the helmet of salvation: we must put on patience, and humble our selves in prayer unto God, when we go into the field, and are to buckle with our enemies. For how should the Lord help us, when we do him not the honor to call on him in the day of trouble? We must look up unto him from whence our help cometh, that he may cover our heads in the day of battle. This we see practiced in *Jehoshaphat*, when he went into battle against enemies strong in fortifications, valiant in corage, and infinite in multitude, both by word and deed he confirmed the hearts of the people, 2 Chron. 20, 20. *Hear ye me, O Judah, & ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the lord your God, and ye shall be assured: believe his Prophets and ye shall prosper:* and he appointed singers. and them that should praise the Lord in going forth before the men of arms, and saying, *Praise ye the Lord, for his mercy lasteth forever*. We are commanded to sanctify all our works by prayer, we have promise of no blessing from God, otherwise then as we ask it from him. The food of our bodies; the affairs of our life, the works of our hands, the success of our journeys, our sleeping & waking, our health and wealth, are sanctified by prayer, and are not sanctified without prayer. For *except the Lord build the house, and watch the city, the work of the builder and the labor of the watchman is in vain*. If then in the days of peace where the danger is not so present nor so certain, we are charged to commend our selves, our souls and bodies unto God; and all things that any way concern us and belong unto us: much more ought we so to do, when we go into the battle, where the sword devoureth one as well as another, and taketh away life without difference. This use condemneth two sorts of men, which run into two extremities, and forsake this mean propounded here unto us; and required of us. First, such as presume upon their own strength, & do not make God their strength. For as in peace and plenty men trust in their own store and abundance which they have prepared, albeit no man's life standeth in his riches: so in time of war, if once forces be levied, munition provided, and all things prepared to take the field, men grow secure, and think themselves to want nothing. But no man's life consisteth in his armor, no man's defense standeth in his

weapon. It behooveth the Lord's soldiers before ever they put on armor, to reconcile themselves unto God, and to make even reckoning with him, that he may turn his wrath upon their enemies, knowing that he which putteth on his armor, cannot boast as he that putteth it off. And as many sin against God by presumption, so do others by despair: their hearts and hopes are gone, they cannot lift up their eyes with affiance unto the heavens; then which there cannot be a greater dishonor done to the Lord. So then our surest and safest way is to rely upon God for our deliverance, and to entreat his protection, to be a buckler round about us, before us & behind us, on the right hand and on the left. Let prayer be esteemed our best armor and defense. When *Joshua* fought with the Amalekites that fought to keep Israel from the land of Promise, *Moses* continued in fervent prayer, Exo. 17, 13: when he held up his hands Israel prevailed, when he let his hands fall down, the Amalekites prevailed. Thus were the Amalekites discomfited more by the prayer of *Moses* than by the sword of *Joshua*. If this exercise were carefully used and taken up, our wars would prosper better than commonly they do, and many mischeefs that we fall into would be prevented. If we did duly consider the calamities and uncertain end of war, we would be more careful to crave assistance of God to be with us when we go to war. Many of our poor brethren have seen with their eyes the burning of their villages, the beating down of their holds, the battering of their Castles, the sacking of their Cities, the besieging of their towns, the desolation of their houses & Temples. They have heard over all their country and coasts, the sorrowful sighs and sobs of such as lamented, the pitiful howling and shrieking of unhappy mothers bewailing their children, the doleful complaint of the heavy wives mourning for their husbands, and the grievous cries of all men on all sides. If this miserable face of all confusion (that war bringeth with it) were set before our eyes, it would make us cast down our selves under the most mighty hand of God, and call upon his name to be with us when we go out to battle.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it followeth, that the stratagems of war are not unlawful. It is lawful to use subtlety and policy, to lay snares and baits to entrap and circumvent the enemy. In all actions of war, or of peace, we must deal wisely and warily. When we live in peace & quietness it is required of us to walk, not only in a lawful but in a wise course: but much more in war, where the enemy is watchful, the snares are subtle, and the danger is great. This appeareth evidently, both because God commandeth it, and the godly practice it. When God sent *Joshua* to destroy *Ai*, and to take the spoil thereof for a prey, he willed him to lie in wait against the City on y^e backside thereof, Josh. 8, 2. *Abraham* intending to recover *Lot* out of the hands of those that had taken him captive, did not fight with them in a pitched field, and display his banners in the open day, but divided his company, & smote them by night, Genes. 14, 15. When the Israelites went out against the children of *Benjamin*, they set men to lie in wait round about Gibeah, which drew them from the City, & destroyed them by this policy, Judge. 20, ver. 29. When *David* asked counsel of the Lord whether he should go against the Philistines, he answered, *Thou shalt not go up, but turn about behind them, and come upon them over the Mulberry trees: and when thou hearest the noise of one going in the tops of the mulberry trees, then remove, for then shall the Lord go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.* We may therefore hide our purposes from our enemies, we may assault them at

unawares, we may bring them to be careless, and make show of one thing, but do another. True it is, we are to keep promises to all, even to our enemies; we must not lie unto them, but keep the covenants and conditions which we have made with them. We must not promise to save thē and then destroy them; we must not agree to receive them into protection, and afterwards work their confusion. Notwithstanding, we are not bound to make known to them whatsoever we speak or do, but are to conceal our intents, to the end the victory may be obtained:

Christ himself doeth hide many things from the ungodly, which he revealeth to his children, Math. 13, 11. Thus he teacheth, Mat. 7, 6. *That holy things are not to be given to dogs, nor pearls to be cast unto Swine.* In like manner it is not unlawful for us to hide our meanings from our adversaries. All things are not to be made known to all men. The Captain doth not by and by acquaint his soldiers whom he leadeth into the field with all his purposer, much less should he open his drifts and devices to his enemies.

Fourthly, seeing war is a lawful ordinance [Use 4] of God, it teacheth us to use it lawfully, & to behave our selves purely when we go unto it. So soon as war is proclaimed, and the Trumpet sounded, all Laws for the most part keep silence, and equity is buried; there is no mean or measure observed, every man thinketh he may do what he list. Hence it is that the Lord giveth these precepts to his people, Deut 23, 9, 10, 11. *When thou goest out with an host against thine enemies, then keep thyself from every wicked thing. If any among you be unclean by that which cometh unto him by night, he shall go out of the host, and not come into the host again: but at evening he shall wash himself with water, and when the Sun is gone down he shall come into the host again, &c. The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of the Campe to deliver thee, and to give thee thine enemies before thee; therefore let thine host be holy, that he see no filthy thing in thee, and turn away from thee.* Where Moses teacheth, that we must not bear our selves in war, as if all things were lawful: nor give our selves a lawless liberty to be carried head-long into all wickedness. When we are come into the field, and there stand against the enemy, we must not think we have a pardon purchased to fall into all outrage and villainy. For whose are the battles that we fight? Who is it that goeth in and out with our armies? who is it that giveth the victory? If we look for any blessing from God, we must have y^e more care to serve him faithfully, and to depend upon him religiously. We must fight under his banner, we must take him for our Captain. If he be the Leader and Commander to rule the whole host, he will not have lewd ruffians and dissolute persons to be of his band. Profane and ungodly men shall not be ranged in his Army. The Lord will be the greatest enemy unto such: and they have far more cause to stand in fear of him, then of all their enemies besides. So long as there was one wicked wretch in the host of Israel unreformed and unpunished, they could not obtain any victory, but were vanquished by the enemy, Josh. chapt. 7. verse 11: how much less hope have we to prevail, when as the whole Campe shall be nothing else but a band of rebelles, and an host of Conspirators against God, and all godliness? When *Joshua* and the people of Israel should pass over Jordan into the land of Promise, and were to fight with the inhabitants thereof, Josh. 3, 5. they are commanded to *sanctify themselves, for tomorrow the Lord would do wonders among them.* Thus doth *Samuel* exhort the house of Israel, to put away their strange gods, and to direct their hearts unto the Lord, & to serve him only, that so he

might deliver them out of the hands of the Philistines, 1 Sam. 7, 3. And to speak the truth, if we did aright consider the matter, we ought to walk in greater fear and carefulness in the time of war, then in the days of peace. For when there is but a step between death and us, when the drum foundeth, when the Cannon roareth, when y^e sword devoureth, when danger compasseth us about on all sides, when no man can promise safety to himself, ought we not to lift up our eyes and our hearts so much the more unto God? Seeing therefore we are then in the greatest, most manifest, and imminent peril of our lives, the loss whereof sin will hasten upon us, we ought to remain under the obedience of God, and reconcile our selves unto him before wars be enterprized. This is it which the Lord teacheth by *Moses*, Levite. 26, 14, 17. *If ye will not obey me, nor do all these commandments, I will set my face against you, and ye shall fall before your enemies, and they that hate you shall reign over you, and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.* This reproveth such as give themselves the greatest liberty to sin, to use such violence & oppression, when they should live in the best order, and the greatest obedience. *Cornelius* the Captain is commended for his religion, Acts 10, 1, 2. So is the Centurion renowned for his faith, Mat. 8, 10. They that are Captains and soldiers must not give themselves to all riot, as if they had a law to commit sin, and to break all laws of God and man without controlment. Secondly, it reproveth such as make choice of the most loose and ungodly, to fight the Lord's battles, and think Atheists, swearers, blasphemers, murderers, whoremongers, thieves, drunkards, to be fit soldiers to go against God's enemies. These are fitter instruments to fight the devils battles, for he is the Captain and Commander over this cursed crew. They are all the devils band, and of y^e forlorn hope. They are fitter to be mustered and gathered together to fight for some usurper, thē for a lawful Prince that may make his choice, and call whom he will to fight his battles. These may be used in necessity and extremity, rather then where there is store and plenty of many others. It is noted touching *Abimelech*, that when he had slain his brethren with the sword, and usurped the dominion, he hired vain and light fellows (which followed him) to make himself strong, and to settle self in the kingdom, Judge. 9.4. Thus did *Jeroboam* establish his seat and throne, when he rebelled against his Lord, he gathered to him •aine men and wicked, and by them he fortified himself against *Rehoboam* the son of *Solomon*, 2 Chron. 13.7. No trust & confidence can be reposed in such, who being unfaithful to god, can give no comfort or assurance, they will deal otherwise towards men, whereby cometh great loss to the Prince, and great hurt to the Commonwealth.

Lastly, it serveth to overthrow three sorts [Use 5] of men that yield not to the truth of this Doctrine. First, such as murmur and grudge at the hearing of wars, complaining of the expenses and charges that are necessary for the maintenance of them; whilst others lie in the fields, and adventure their lives, they sleep soundly and lie quietly in their beds, and yet repine & disdain to contribute anything in so necessary & just a cause, and are many times great hinderers and pull-backs unto others, that would show themselves forward in the Princes service. It were fit that such as are thus backward to serve with their purse, should be constrained to be forward to serve in their person. Unto these we may join such as cry out, that it was never well since war was used, and do prefer an unjust peace, before a just war. Secondly, this condemneth such as are careless for their own defense & safety, but

suffer the enemies to come upon them, and make no provision or preparation against them. This is noted to have been the behavior of the men of *Laish*, and the cause of their destruction, that *they lived carelessly one with another, and made no fortifications against their enemies*, Judge. 18, 7, 10. For the children of *Dan* came unto them, being a quiet people and without mistrust; and smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire. Thus it is with all that live securely, & do not stand upon their own guard. Thus it is with such as never provide against the enemies, they are soon surprised by them. Lastly, it condemneth the Manichees, the Marcionites, the Anabaptists, the Family of love, and such as call themselves spiritual men, w^c deny the lawfulness of battle, the use of war, the wearing of weapon, the putting on of armor, and the handling of the sword. But do these allege nothing for themselves? Have they no show of reason or color of argument to uphold their opinion? It is a desperate cause that admitteth no defense? It is a foul fall y^t cannot be covered with no fig leaves. Let us see what their objections are, & how we may stop their mouths by answering of them. And as all heretics pretend Scripture, imitating their first father the devil, Mat. 4, 6: who tempting Christ in the wilderness, alledgeth what is written: so have these men sundry goodly glozes, garnished with the name & authority of the word of God. They allege that Christ commandeth, Mat. 5, 39. & 26, 52. & 13, 29: *If one give us a blow on the right cheek, we should turn to him the left: if any would sue us at the Law to take away our coat, we should give him our cloak also: If he compel us to go with him a Mile, we should go with him twain:* and thereupon concludeth, *That we should not resist evil.* He saith unto *Peter*, *He that striketh with the sword, shall also perish with the sword;* and thereupon willeth him to put up his sword: he will not have the tares to be pulled up, but be let alone, and suffered to grow until the harvest. So the Apostle teacheth, Roman. 12, 17, 18, 19. *That vengeance belongeth to the Lord, who will repay: that we must recompense to no man evil for evil: that if it be possible, as much as in us lieth, we should have peace with all men:* he asketh, why we do not rather suffer wrong? why we do not rather sustain harm, then one brother draw another before the judgment seats of Infidels? If then it be not lawful to follow suites, it is less lawful to draw swords. He showeth, that our weapons are not carnal, but our warfare spiritual: that we wrestle not against flesh & blood, but against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickednesses that are in the high places. Add unto these testimonies of the New Testament, the ancient Prophecies of the Prophets, which do foretell, that in the time of the Gospel they shall break their Swords into Mattocks, and their Speares into Sythes, Isaiah 2, 4. Micah 4, 3. Nation shall not lift up a sword against Nation, neither shall they learn to fight anymore. These are the chiefest and choicest arguments drawn out of the New Testament, and produced out of the old; partly from the instructions of Christ, partly from the precepts of the Apostle, and partly from the Prophecies of the Prophets.

Touching the objections alleged out of the words of Christ, when he willeth us to turn the left cheek, being smitten on y^e right, it is a figurative speech, as *Augustine* observeth: for literally it was not observed by Jesus Christ, nor by the Apostles, nor by the Prophets, whē they were stricken on the ear. For what if one smite us on the left cheek, we have now no other left to turn unto him? or shall we restrain his words only to the cheek? His purpose is to forbid private revenge, to recompense injury with injury, and to teach us rather to

prepare our selves to endure another wrong, then to give like for like: but he doth not disannul the office and calling of the Magistrate, nor take away public revenge by him: *Peter* was Christ's Disciple, not a public Magistrate. Touching suffering the tares to grow, he teacheth us the perpetual state of the Church, what it shall be. He speaketh not of the office of the Minister or Magistrate, but of the future condition of the Church, that it shall never be perfect in this life, but we shall have tares with the wheat, bad fish with the good, foolish virgins with the wise, and hypocrites with true believers: & therefore he comforteth the godly against the troubles which they sustain by conversing with them. Hereunto also refer the precepts of the Apostle *Paul*. The Propheties of y^e Prophets touching the turning of the weapons of war into instruments of peace and tools of husbandry, are objected against us also by the Jews that deny the coming of the true Messiah. The Prophets hereby commend the Doctrine of Christ. If we were all such as Christ chargeth us to be, there should be no need of the sword. Such as are true Christians, do live soberly, righteously, and godly, for conscience sake to the commandment of Christ. At the coming of Christ in glory, we shall see the full accomplishment thereof to our endless comfort. In the mean season, such as truly believe in Christ, do so walk, as that no wars are raised through their default. True it is our weapons are spiritual, but we must understand this as we are Christians. But we are not only Christian men, but also men: not only spirit, but also flesh: and therefore as we are men, and clothed with flesh, neither the Apostle, nor Christ that called the Apostles, do take away weapons from the Magistrate, Rom. 13, 4, but put a sword into his hand to take vengeance on him that doth evil. And when the Apostle saith, (Ephes. chap. 6, verse 12,) *We wrestle not with flesh and blood;* he speaketh not simply, but comparatively, as when he saith *Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel,* that is, chiefly and especially to publish the glad tidings of salvation, 1. Cor. 1, 17: so in this place he meaneth, that our greatest and mightiest enemies are invisible: we must not think that our chiefest conflict is with men which are frail and feeble. This fight is nothing at all if it be compared with the other which is spiritual. Thus we see the objections of the Anabaptists answered, and their doubts dissolved, who would banish away all lawful use of sword and weapon, contrary to infinite evidences that may be brought to justify the lawfulness of war. God hath made many laws touching the undertaking, beginning, and waging of wars, but such things as are evil are wholly to be condemned, not to be ordered by Law. The Lord swore, that the Israelites should have war with Amalek forever. *Solomon* prayeth unto God, when his people shall go out to battle against their enemies, to hear them and their prayer and supplication, and to judge their cause, 2. Chron. 6, 34. When any city shall fall into idolatry, & draw away the inhabitants thereof to serve strange gods, he commandeth that *they should be slain with the edge of the sword, & all that is within it be destroyed,* Deut 13, 15. When the Israelites asked counsel of GOD after the death of *Joshua*, who should go up against the Canaanites, to fight first against them, the Lord said, *Judah shall go up, because I have given the Land into his hand,* Judge. 1, 1, 2. It is God that teacheth *our fingers to fight, and our hands to battle,* Psal. 144, 1: but God is no Lord of misrule, he teacheth nothing that is evil. They are the words of *David*, a man after God's own heart, yet he saith, God had taught his hands, his fingers. Besides they are called the wars and battles of the Lord: so *David* is oftentimes said to have fought *the battles of the Lord,* 1 Samuel 17, 18, and 25, verse 28.

When many enemies armed themselves against *Jehoshaphat*, *Iahaziel* inspired by the Spirit of God, said, *Thus saith the Lord unto you, Fear you not, neither be afraid for this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but the Lord's*, 2 Chron. 20, 15. When the soldiers that were converted to the faith, and repented of their offenses, inquired of *John* what they should do, he did not bid them to lay away their weapons, or throw away their swords, or renounce their oaths, or forsake their Captains, or give over their places & callings of life wherein they abode, but charged them to do violence to no man, Luke 3, 14, to accuse no man falsely, & to be content with their wages. So the Evangelist commendeth the faithful Centurion, and *Cornelius* to be a devout man, fearing God with all his household. *Paul* used the help of a band of men, to be rescued out of the hands of the Jews, and to be brought safe unto the Governor. For the Captain out of the Garrison gathered a selected company of two hundred soldiers, and delivered him from them that lay in wait to kill him, Acts 23, 27. The Apostle noteth in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. 11, 33. that *the godly through faith subdued kingdoms*, so that war may be an exercise of faith.

And lest any should apply this to fighting against spiritual enemies, he addeth immediately after; *They waxed valiant in battle, and turned to flight the Armies of the aliens*. By all these testimonies we are taught to receive this truth, that the making of war is necessary, and to maintain it against all the adversaries that seek to oppugn and contradict the same.

[Verse 18. *For they trouble you with their wiles wherewith they have beguiled you as concerning Peor.*] In these words the reason is rendered, for what cause the Midianities were to be destroyed, to wit, because they had a chief hand, and were principal doers in the seducing of the people of God, and drawing them into sin. The Moabites and Ammonites were actors in this tragedy: but the chief part was assigned to the Midianites. The Moabites and Ammonites came of *Lot*, by committing incest with his daughters, Gen. 19, 37, 38. The Midianites came of *Midian*, the fourth son of *Keturah*, which she bare to *Abraham*, Gen. 25, 2. They ought being so nearly joined to the people of God, to have performed all duties of humanity and kindness unto them: whereas they sought their overthrow, and wrought their destruction.

We heard before how the people of God were beguiled and punished: here we may behold those threatened and afterward destroyed, that did trouble them with their wyles, as concerning *Peor*. Before we saw the chastisement of them that were seduced and led into sin, now they are threatened that were seducers. Before we saw the judgment that fell upon them that followed, now we may see the judgments that ouertooke the Captains and Ringleaders.

From hence we learn, that the seducer and the seduced, the Ringleader, and they that are misled, the deceyuer and the deceived, shall perish and be punished together. The Lord will punish not only false Teachers, and such as lead the way unto wickedness, but their scholars and disciples, & such as are brought to lewdness and evil by them. This *Moses* declareth very evidently, Deut. 13, 15. *If a false Prophet arise, and draw an whole City to Idolatry, God's judgments shall be not only against that false Prophet, but against the City, so that not an Ox or a Sheep should be spared, they should, perish and be destroyed together*. When *Gamaliel* gave counsel to take heed to themselves what they intended to do touching the Apostles, he bringeth in the examples

of *Theudas* and *Judas*, Acts 5, 36, 37, which drew away much people after them, but they perished, & all that obeyed them. The Prophet *Ezekiel* denounceth, *That if the watchman seeing the sword coming, did not give the people warning, nor admonish them of their wicked ways, the wicked should die in their sins, but their blood should be required at the watchman's hands.* We see this confirmed unto us, even from the beginning, when the devil abusing the tongue and body of the serpent, had drawn our first parents into sin, the devil was the principal author of this apostasy and falling from God; the serpent was the instrument: the woman did hearken to the devil, and was before her husband in the transgression, *Adam* followed the counsel of his wife, and yielded to sin against God, through her persuasion. The devil was a seducer, *Adam* was seduced, *Enah* was both a seducer, and seduced; Gen. 3, 1, 2, 3, for she was seduced by the devil, and a seducer of her husband, deceiving, and being deceived: so that when God called them to an account, and brought them before the bar of his judgment seat, he punished not only the devil & the serpent, that were the authors, but also *Adam* and his wife that were the followers. Hereunto cometh the saying of our Savior, Mat. 15, 14. *Let them alone, they be the blind leaders of the blind: and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch:* not only the leader, but he likewise that is blindly led. The Lord Jesus reproveth the Church of *Thyatira*, that they suffered a wretched woman which called her self a Prophetess, and threateneth to punish not only her, Revel. 2, 12, but those y^t were her disciples, with great afflictions. And afterward in the same book, they that received the mark of the beast, are put out of the book of life, as well as the beast.

This truth will be more manifest unto us, if [Reason 1] we mark the reasons. •or first, such as are misled and moved to heresy and wickedness in life • doctrine, in faith or manners, in opinion or practice, are culpable of the same sins and abominations, and therefore right•ously to be pu•ished and condemned with such as are the leaders and perswaders unto the same. The Lord himself rendereth the reason why those that were seduced, should be destroyed, *because they had forsaken his ways and commandments*, Deut. 1, ••, They then that are seduced, that are t••ed from the Lord, that are thrust out of the right way wherein they should walk, and commit abominations against him, as well as the seducers, are culpable of the same sins together, and therefore shall partake of the same punishment.

[Reason 2] Secondly, what is the reason that men are seduced? Is it not their own sin and ignorance? They are willfully blind, they are not careful to learn and stand in the truth as they ought. The Prophet *Hosea* speaking of false Prophets, and of the people misled by them, saith; *That they shall all fall, the people by day, & the Prophet by night with them*, Hosea 4.5. This is it which the Apostle urgeth, 2 Thess. 2 10, 11. *Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, therefore God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe lies, that all they might be damned which believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

[Use 1] Now let us come to the uses of this Doctrine. First, from hence we are to conclude, that pretences or excuses shall not bear out the followers and fellows of wicked seducers and lewd leaders from God & his truth, but they shall bear their sins and punishments themselves. We see how ready many are to answer for themselves. A lasse! we are poor simple men, we have no learning, we know not the letters: we are not able to try whether

the Doctrine be good or bad, true or false, right or wrong: we hope God will hold us excused, and not lay it to our charge. These coverings to hide our shame, as so many fig-leaves, shall be pulled from us, and fall to the earth, as weak and unable to uphold themselves. What did the vain coloured shows avail *Adam* and *Eve*, feeding themselves with vain hopes, Gen. 3, 12, 13, and excusing themselves with fair pretences? *Adam* said, *The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, deceived me, and I did ea•e*. The woman said, *The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat*. The Serpent might have said, the devil entered into me, prevailed over me, and abused me to be his instrument. Here are many delays and devices, the man excuseth himself by the woman, the woman by the serpent, the serpent by the devil: but God cannot be mocked, he will not be deluded, and therefore none of them escaped, all of them •re punished, as they were willingly and wittingly deceived. For the devil had his judgment, the serpent had his judgment, the man and the woman had also their judgment. Let this be assured to the consciences or all of us, that seeing God hath created us, and given us our being to serve him, albeit we be redu•ed by others, it shall not profit us, o• deliver v• from judgment. Ignorance shall excuse no man, it is the fountain of all sin, it is the cause of all punishments, Hos. 4, 1. Mar. 12, 24. it is not enough for us to say, we are no seducers and deceivers of others: because if we be seduced and deceived by others, we are partakers of their sin, and shall bea•e our just condemnation.

Secondly, seeing the poor seduced people [Use 2] shall not escape, no more the the chief Ringleaders and heads of the conspiracy against God, it is our duty to search narrowly and view diligently that which is brought and taught unto us: we must beware of seducers and Captains that lead to lewdness of life, or corruption of doctrine. It behooveth us to show such love to God and his truth, as to withstand such as go about to infect us, to shame them, to bewray them, to reprove them, to convince them, and to take heed that we be not drawn away with them, either by their flattery, or by their authority. Hence cometh the exhortation of Christ; *Beware of false Prophets which come to you in Sheepes clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves: ye shall know them by their fruits*, Math. chap. 7. verse 15. By these the LORD our GOD trieth us, whether we love him with all our harts & with all our souls. He chargeth his people to seek carefully, to search earnestly, and to enquire diligently if there be any such wickedness. There is no love to God, where his truth is not professed, followed, and maintained. The Apostle *John* chargeth those to whom he wrote, *Not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they be of God or not; for many false Prophets are gone into the world*, 1, *John* 4, 1. But where is this ability to be found? And where shall we meet with those that are able to discern of spirits? Look upon the greatest part of our congregations, and behold they are not able to make any trial of truth from error. They are fit to entertain any doctrine: They know no difference between the mists of Popery, and the light of the Gospel: They embrace this Religion, because it is established by authority, defended by the Law, professed by the Prince, countenanced by the Magistrate, embraced by the multitude, freed from trouble, & controlled by none. But ask them a reason of the hope that is in them, and call them to an account, of the faith which they hold? Ask them what they believe, and how they think to be saved, they are taken speechless and not able to give any reasonable answer. And how can it be otherwise in many places, where such as should be eyes to others, are blind

themselves? a naked ministry hath made a naked people: an ignorant ministry hath made an ignorant people; a simple Teacher hath made a sottish hearer. For as *Moses* saw that the people were naked, *Because Aaron had made them naked, unto their shame among their enemies:* so we see the people without knowledge and understanding, because the Watchmen are blind, the Ambassadors are dumb, the Shepherds are simple, the Teachers are not able to instruct themselves. The means to bring us to this spiritual judgment to try the spirits, are to observe these few rules and directions following. First, we must have the word of God to dwell plentifully in us, we must read and search the Scriptures, as Christ commanded, John 5, 39 and the men of *Berea* practiced, Acts 17. They examined the Doctrine of the Apostles by the touchstone of the Prophets, and are commended for it by the Spirit of God. We must not take everything that is delivered, but search and try the things that are delivered.

Secondly, we must continue constant in the things which we have learned thence. Thus the Apostle exhorteth *Timothy*, who had been brought up in the Scriptures of a child. *To persevere in the things which he had learned and was persuaded of, knowing of whom he had learned them,* 2 Tim. 3, 14.

Thirdly, we are to avoid those places and persons where abominations are set up and maintained, lest joining and partaking with them in their sins, we be also companions with them in punishments. Thus doth the Apostle teach us to give a farewell to those places, *I heard a voice from heaven say, Go out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues,* Revel. 18, verse 4.

Fourthly, we are to magnify the Ministry of the word, where it is planted and established, we are diligently to attend unto it, and to hear it with all patience and reverence, to increase in us both knowledge and obedience, to work in us faith & a sound belief, to bring us to a true sight of our sins, and to an unfeigned repentance from dead works. If these rules be carefully and wisely observed, we shall be made able to try all things that we hear; to refuse the evil, and to hold fast that which is good.

Lastly, we may from hence conclude the [Use 3] woeful condition of all seducers, that seduce and deceive the simple people, they are sure to perish and to be destroyed. It is a grievous sin not to embrace the truth of God, but to err from the ways of salvation; but it is more grievous to draw away others, and to plunge them into the pit of destruction. They are accursed in the law, *which make the blind to go out of the way, and all the people were to say, Amen.* Deut. 27, 18. If we see a poor blind man wandering hither and thither for want of a guide, and groping to find his way, if we lay stones or stumbling blocks before his feet to supplant him, and cause him to fall down, all men are ready to condemn it of rigor and cruelty. The very heathen, which neither know the Law; nor understand the Gospel, could say, that whosoever showeth not the way to a traveler and wayfaring man, when he seeth him out of the right way, is without all pity and compassion; as if one should refuse to suffer his neighbor to light his Candle (that is gone out) at his Candle that burneth. But if a man should lead his brother being in a strange and unknown Country quite and clean out of the way, & direct him of purpose into places of danger, and thereby as it were blow out his Candle that burneth bright, all men would have accounted him a monster, and unworthy to live upon

the earth. If our brother want our help or counsel, we are bound to do all good unto him; and it is a note of cruelty, to shut our mouths or hands when they should be opened; as we see in the examples of the Priest and Levite, Luk. 10, 31, 32, that saw a certain man robbed of his money, spoiled of his raiment, and wounded of his body, yet departed from him, and passed by on the other side, leaving him half dead. But when we are so far from relieving them in their wants, and comforting them in their distresses, and helping them with our counsel, that we seduce them our selves, or bolster them up in their sins, or draw them into wickedness; we shall draw upon our selves the heavy judgments of God, in the day of his visitation. For if they shall not escape that are led out of the way, and follow the direction of false and lying seducers; of greater judgment and sorer punishment shall they be worthy, that lay snares to catch others, and draw them unto destruction. In the Prophetes of *Jeremiah*, we see *Pashur* the son of *Immer* the Priest threatened, Ier. 20, 6. that because he had preached lies, he and all that belonged unto him should die in captivity. And in another place the Lord denounceth his judgments to come upon the Prophetes which have sweet toongs, seducing the people with pleasing lies. Herevnto we may refer all ignorant Ministers, which are utterly disabled for y^e performance of their duty in teaching the people; they have the place, but want the gifts, 1 Tim. 3, 2, they have the calling, but want the ability: they fill up the rooms of workmen, but are not able to do the work. These commit an heinous sin, not only destroying their own fowls, but bringing the people to destruction. For through their ignorance and insufficiency, they cast away their own souls, & the souls of other men. The wise man teacheth, Prov. 29, 18, that *where there is no vision, there the people decay*. Wherefore to conclude, let all faithful Ministers of God, with care & conscience, be stirred up to deliver that Embassage, which they have received from God, not as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ. And let all the people know, that it becometh them, with all patience and reverence to receive the word of exhortation, which God hath sanctified as the means to work in thē, faith and obedience. It shall excuse no man in the day of the Lord, to say, I would have hearkened to the truth, but I was deceived: I would have walked in the right way, but alas! I was seduced. These are old *Adams* fig-leaves which will not serve to cover our shame, and to hide our nakedness; we must seek after the truth, and learn to discern of it from error. If we be content to live in ignorance, and voluntarily submit our selves to be led, or rather misled, by blind guides, that can neither inform themselves nor us in the ways of the Lord: if we willfully shut our eyes because we will not see; our ignorance is without excuse, and for want of knowledge we shall certainly be destroyed.

Let us all walk in the right way, and make straight steps unto our feet, Heb. 12, 13, that God may be glorified, our souls saved, & we entirely preserved in the truth, through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and glory in the Church forever, Amen.

1 AND it came to pass after the plague, that the Lord spake unto Moses, and unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the Priest, saying,

2 Take the sum of the Congregation of the Children of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, throughout their fathers house, all that are able to go to war in Israel.

3 And Moses and Eleazar the Priest spake unto them, &c.

5 Reuben the eldest son of Israel, &c.

9 This is that Dathan and Abiram, which were famous in the Congregation, &c.

10 And the earth opened her mouth, &c.

HAuing sufficiently seen the weak estate and condition of this people, who (as much as lay in them) rushed forward to their own destruction, and were unworthy of the mercy of God, that they might learn in the matter of their salvation to ascribe all to God, Deut. 8, 17. Let us consider the power of his grace, seen and *made perfect in their weakness*, to the end of this book: wherein we are to mark a description, partly of the *holy and Ecclesiastical Laws* given, to the 31. chapt. and partly sundry *Civil and political Laws*, belonging to their inheritance in the Land of promise. Before both these, we have in this and the chapter following, a new numbering of the people by the commandment of God, wherein we must mark two things; one touching the numbering of them, the other touching the order to be devised in the dividing of the inheritance. Touching the numbering of the people, we must remember that this is now the third numbering, since the Israelites by the mighty hand of God, departed out of Egypt. The first was the same year they were brought forth, when the sum was taken of them, and a general payment exacted of rich and poor, for the provision and preparation of holy things requisite for the Tabernacle, Exod. 30, 14, 15, 16. The second was in the beginning of the second year, when the holy things were made, and an order set down among the people in their journeys, Numb. 1, and 2. The third is that which is in this place. And notwithstanding the two former, this was not without special causes: for there had been a great change and alteration among the people since the second nūbring of them, which was 38. years before, they that were then numbered being dead in the plagues and punishments that fell upon them. Again, the division of the Land, could not but by these breaches among them be very unjust and unequal, unless this sum had been taken, whereas the Land ought to be indifferently divided and parted, to ende all controversies, to cut off all occasions of envy and emulation, and to preserve love and unity among brethren. Thirdly, in regard of military discipline, that they might march in good array, and keep order the better among them: for they were now in a manner come to hand blows with their enemies, and were ready to encounter with them. Fourthly, that the hand of God toward this people might be better seen and known, to wit, both his power and goodness, in that though many thousands of them were wasted & consumed in the Wilderness, yet the number of them was not diminished, but rather increased: & likewise his justice and truth, in that though he

chastened the rebellious and refractory against him, yet he kept the promise he had made to their fathers touching *the multiplying of their seed as the stars of heaven*, forasmuch as *he is able of stones to raise up children unto Abraham*, Mat. 3, 9. And to call those things that are not, as though they were, Rom. 4, 17, 18. Lastly, to show, that as he knoweth perfectly and exactly the number of all that entered into the earthly Canaan, so he knoweth the number of all the faithful that shall possess the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven, prepared for them before the beginning of the world. *He knoweth who are his*, 2 Tim. 2, 19, because all their *names are written in heaven*, Lu. 10, 20.

In this Chapter observe three things. First, the numbering of the Israelites which were fit for war. Secondly, the commandment of God touching the dividing of the Land of Canaan among them. Thirdly, the numbering of the Levites who were appointed for the sacred warfare, that is, to serve the Lord in the Tabernacle. In the numbering of the people fit to bear arms, we may see the commandment of God, and the execution of the commandment. The commandment is amplified by the time, by the persons that were to number them, and by the persons that were to be numbered, and that by their age and ability to go to war. The time of this numbering is said to be *after the plague*, which the learned Junius understandeth of the plagues mentioned in the 14. chap. whereby God threatened to consume all of them in the Wilderness by little and little, now some, and then others, according to their manifold deservings & provocations. But this exposition seemeth to me both to be forced and far fet, and from the purpose. First, because the Article here prefixed, hath relation rather to one certain judgment of God brought upon them at one certain time, whereas that threatening was executed at diverse and sundry times, by the space almost of forty years. Secondly, by the name of plague, a violent death sent frō God is betokened, as for example, when a man dieth suddenly being smitten by some Angel: but the former commination doth not specify any one judgment of that sort, but without any limitation doth generally denounce a consuming of them, which might be done by natural death. Lastly, they to whom that threatening is directed, perished not with *one plague*, nor after one manner, nor at one time, but with diverse judgments, in diverse manners, and at diverse times. Wherefore we must rather understand in this place, *that plague* which is mentioned in the former chapter, where four and twenty thousand died for their idolatry and whoredom *with the daughters of Moab*, 1 Cor. 10.

The execution of the commandment consisteth of three points, being amplified by a declaration of the place where this numbering was made, by a comparison of the like example, verse 4: and lastly, by a particular description of every Tribe numbered, and their families, the Tribe of *Levi* excepted. Where observe, that in this rehearsal and enumeration of every Tribe, there is great difference from the former numbering when they came out of Egypt, which will appear by these particular comparisons set before us.

- 1. *Reuben*,
 - before, 46500.
 - now, 43730.

- 2. *Simeon*,
 - before 59300.
 - now, 22200.
- 3. *Gad*.
 - before, 45650.
 - now, 40500.
- 4. *Judah*,
 - before, 74600.
 - now, 76500.
- 5. *Issachar*,
 - before, 54400.
 - now, 64300.
- 6. *Zebulun*,
 - before, 57400.
 - now, 60500.
- 7. *Manasseh*,
 - before, 32200.
 - now, 52700.
- 8. *Ephraim*,
 - before, 40500.
 - now, 32500.
- 9. *Benjamin*,
 - before, 35400.
 - now, 45600.
- 10. *Dan*,
 - before, 62700.
 - now, 64400.

- 11. *Asher*,
 - before, 41500.
 - now, 53400.
- 12. *Naphtali*,
 - before, 53400.
 - now, 45400.

Here is the same order observed, which we saw before observed, in all which we are to mark, that many do now exceed the former account, arising to many more in this latter computation than in the former, notwithstanding the many thousands that were weeded out of the host of GOD, as noisome plants cut up and cast into the fire, and none of the Tribes continued in one stay; to teach us to make our chiefest reckoning of that place where shall be no change anymore, but we shall be like to the Angels that are in heaven.

[Verse 7, 9. *These are the families of the Reubenites, &c. This is that Dathan and Abiram, &c. who strove against Moses.*] The history of these seditious persons, infecting many others with the leaven of their pride and ambition, and carrying them into the pit of destruction with themselves, is particularly remembered before, chapter 16. They were indeed *famous*, in regard of their places and persons, but they become infamous and ignominious by their sin and punishment. Observe from hence, That irreligion, profaneness and impiety, make men to be reprochful. Of what account and estimation soever they are, be they never so rich, high, noble, & renowned in the world how famous and excellent soever Countries and Cities be, yet this is certain, that sin maketh all places and persons infamous and dishonorable, and justly and worthily poureth disgrace and contempt upon them, as it appeareth afterward in this chap. verse 61, and elsewhere, Deut. chapter 29, verses 23, 24, 25. 1 Kings, chapter 9, verses 8, 9. Ier. chapter 22, verses 8, 9. We see this farther in many examples. *Cain* is noted and marked of God for his execrable parricide unto all posterity, Gen. 4, 15. The like we might say of *Ahaz*, of whom mention is made to his shame and dishonor, that all the glory of his throne, & the title of a king, and the honor of Majesty, is not able to hide and cover the blot and stayne of his offenses, and therefore the Scripture saith of him, *This is Ahaz*, 2 Chron. 28, 22. *Jeroboam* is often said to have made Israel to sin, 1 Kings 15, 30. *Judas* that betrayed his Master, is called, *The child of perdition*, John. 17 and is as it were burnt in the shoulder with the letter R, and marked out for a reprobate, and left upon record to be *a devil*, John 6, 70. that all which hear of it might fear, & learn to hate his sins. So doth the Apostle set down the names of sundry others, that *made shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience*, 1. Tim. 1, 15. and 2 Tim. 2, 17. 2 Thess 3, 14. & Heb. 12, 16. the profaneness also of *Esau* is remembered.

The reasons follow. First, because piety and [Reason 1] religion is the honor & glory of a kingdom or Commonwealth. The dignity of any place is the holiness of the people that are in it, Mat. 2.6, compared with Mic. 5, 2. So *Moses* telleth Israel, that if they keep the statutes of God, and do them, this should be their wisdom and understanding in the sight of the Nations

which should hear these statutes and say, Surely this great Nation is a wise and understanding people, Deut. 4, 6. So then all honor and glory standeth in yielding obedience to Go•.

Secondly, sin is a most foul and filthy thing in the sight of God, Reuelat. 3, 18, and 16, 15. Lam. 1, 9. and therefore it is compared to an unclean cloth spotted with the flesh, Isaiah, ch. 64, verse 6. Jude, verse 23. and to the blood of pollution, Ezek. chap. 16, 6, 9, 22, and to a dead carrion in a Toombe, Math. 23, 27, 28.

Thirdly, sin bringeth us out of love with God, and consequently bringeth the hatred of God upon the people and places where ungodly sinners dwell, and causeth him to turn away his face and favor from them, Deuter. 23, 9, 14. Hos. 2, ver. 5, 9, 10. We read in the Prophecies of Daniel, chap. 3, 29, that the king made a Decree, that every people, nation, and language which blasphemed God, should be cut in pieces, and their houses made a dunghill: in the same manner it is with God, he bringeth reproach and maketh infamous, not only the persons that provoke him by their sins, but also the places and habitations where they dwell. He could have destroyed the men of Sodom & Gomorrhah, and yet have spared their Cities, and houses, and substance; but he destroyed these also, to make them more ignominious to all posterity, Jude, verse 7.

This teacheth us how just it is with God, [Use 1] and how warrantable it is for us to disgrace, and discredit, and discountenance the City and Church of Rome, that they might be odious in the eyes, and stink in the nostrils of all good men, as a dead carcass without life and breath. For although *their faith was once famous through the whole world*, Rom. 1, 8, yet inasmuch as they are fallen from that faith to heresy, and from sincerity to hypocrisy, we have just cause to hate the same & to disgrace it what we can. It is just with GOD that it should be so, and lawful for us to do so, Reu. 18, 2. But to clear themselves of apostasy from the faith, [Object.] they will tell us that we cannot tell them from whence their supposed heresies should first proceed, who was the author of them, and the scatterer of them abroad, as we see in *Campians* sophistical and verbal challenge: he demandeth at what time, under what Bishop, by what steps and proceedings a new religion was spread over the church of Rome and the whole world? I answer, [Answ.] it is not necessary to set down the minutes and moments of time, inasmuch as some alterations are insensible. Many errors creep on secretly, and as it were in the dark. The evil and *envious man in the Gospel, sowed tares among the wheat* in the night when no man could see, Mat. 13.25. The hayres of our head are not all white at a sudden, and old age doth not creep upon us in a day. Take the oldest man that liveth upon the earth, who can tell when he began to be old? We know by sundry infallible tokens that he is an old man, but what day, or week, or month, or year, when he began to be so, who can assign or determine? This is manifest in all things that arise of small beginnings, and grow by little and little to a greater quantity, until they come to perfection. If we see a man sick of the pestilence, or a City corrupt in manners with riotousnesse and wickedness, or an house ruinous and ready to fall, or a ship in the midst of the sea ready to sink, shall we deny all, these to be, because we know not when they first began to be? when that man began to be infected, or the City to be corrupted, or in what year the house began to be ruinous, or in what day the ship began to leak? We know not how and when weeds, and thorns, and

thistles first took root under the ground, but whē once they are sprung up and grown aloft, we see them, we discern them, we feel them, we pluck thē up. So the alterations of the church of Rome are as a mystery, *The mystery of iniquity*, 2 Thess. 2, ver. 7, and albeit we could not show the beginning of them, yet that such desolations and ruins of the ancient building are among them, that they utterly lay waste the foundatiō, we prove by the word of God in the old and New Testament. This is the trial of all errors and heresies. And because the doctrines that they embrace, and the religion that they profess are not agreeable to these ancient monuments and records, which are as the Meteyard or the Standard to try all measures; we therefore say and conclude, they are errors, and we wrong them not at all, though we be not able to produce the first broachers and beginners of them all.

This is enough for us, we find by the word of God that they are heresies, and therefore justly challenge them, and complain that *Bethel* is become *Beth-auen*, and the Church of God become the Synagogue of Satan, Hos. 4, verse 15.

How many heresies have sprung up in the Church, like darnel in the field among the Corn, noted by *Epiphanius*, *Augustine*, and others of the learned and ancient, of whom neither we nor they know the first authors? The Scribes and Pharisees taught many things against the Law, or else Christ would not have reprov'd their false glosses, Math. 5, neither willed his Disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, Mat. 16, 6, that is, of the doctrine of the Parisies and of the Sadducees, verse 12: yet the circumstance of time when these corruptions crept in, and the persons that devised them are altogether unknown, and who is able to tell us? In the primitive Church there were a kind of heretics, called *Acephali*, because no man was found to be their head and master. The like we might say of many other heresies, of which if any should ask (as *Campian* doth) *In what age, under what Pope, upon what occasion, by whose compulsiō, by whose power it came to pass*, I doubt the best answer would be silence. Wherefore it is not necessary to produce the precise time and tokens of every change, because the alteration was not made at an instant, or all at once as when a land is invaded by a foreign enemy that turneth all things upside down; but it entered sliely and slowly into the Church, as a worm that gnaweth the root of the tree by little and little: to omit that we in these last days want the histories and records of many things done before us, and the Roman tyranny hath suppressed or corrupted a part of them that are left us. The Problem is not unknown, which the Greeks so curiously debated, touching the Argos wherein *Iason* sailed for the golden fleece, which at his return and coming home was laid up and reserved in the Road for a great and worthy monument. This ship decaying by little and little (for what is it that time doth not consume as a moth, and eat as a canker?) they always peeced and repaired where it began to wear away, till in the ende the whole substance of the old vessel or bottom wherein *Iason* sailed and made his voyage and adventure, was utterly wasted, and nothing remaining of it but only the later reparations successively made in the room of the other. Now the question was, whether this were the ship wherein *Iason* sailed, or not? or another diverse from it? or whether any wise Athenian could precisely tell, when and by what workman, every piece and parcel was patched and supplied, until the old was wholly gone? or when and at what time it ceased to be that ship, and became a new ship? The Roman Religion is almost become like this ship, it

hath been patched and peeced at several times by cunning workmen, & there is little or nothing remaining of the old ship wherein *Peter* fished, I mean of that Church wherein (they say) *Peter* sate as Bishop; one error succeeding another, and one heresy making way for another, until little faith & truth is found among them. Notwithstanding all the secret conveyances made in that Church, it is not hard in very many particular points, to show the beginning, proceeding, and establishing of the same, touching pardons and indulgences, touching the Popes supremacy usurped, the Images of the Trinity, and the beginning of Idol worship, touching the merit of works, & forbidding of marriage. The Mass (one of the greatest Idols) began not all at once, but came to this height by degrees. It were endless to name all that might be alleged, and to show how and by whom these points were resisted, and the truth evermore defended.

Secondly, this serveth to condemn the [Use 2] foolish practice of popish pilgrims, who undertake long and laborious journeys to Jerusalem and the land of Judea, or to this & that Idol, and make it a meritorious work to visit either the Sepulcher of our Lord, or the Image of our Lady. For albeit this Land have been heretofore famous, because *the Law came from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*, E•y 2, 3, and because Christ himself lived, and preached, and wrought many miracles there, and it be oftentimes called, *The holy Land*; yet the presence of Christ infused no holiness into it, more then into any other place And all the Papists in the world shall never be able to prove, that it is more meritorious to go to Jerusalem in a pilgrims weed, then to go to Antioch, or Ephesus, or Constantinople, or any other City in the East or West: or that it is more acceptable to God, or available to the soul to travail thither, then for the English to go to London, or the French to Paris. The house where the King resideth, all y^e while he is there is an honorable house, and there the Court lieth: but when the king is once removed out of the house, it is afterward never a whit the more honorable for the kings being there before: so is it in this case, albeit Christ in his life time and the days of his flesh, did many great works and wonders in it, yet being ascended, and the Christian religion also removed, there remaineth no more holiness in that place, then in any other, and therefore it is great vanity and idolatry for any people to practice such impiety. These are like to the Pilgrims among the Turks & Sarazens, that go yearly with great show of devotion to *Meccha* to visit the Sepulcher of *Mahomet*, and account it a work very meritorious.

The Cities Gilgal and Beth-el were sometimes famous and renowned Cities, yet true religiō being once removed, the Prophet chargeth *the people not to come at them*, and to have nothing to do with them. Hos. 4, 15. Hence it is, that Christ saith, John 4, 23. *The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth*. If then we may worship God with great benefit to our selves, and as great glory to him in our own Country, I see no cause why we should resort to Jerusalem, or go on pilgrimage to Rome or any other place, forasmuch as we may *lift up pure hands everywhere* and be heard, 1 Tim. 2, 8. But thus these crafty workmen keep the people's heads busy with outward devotions and shows of holiness, that they may not espy their fraud and deceit in greater matters.

Lastly, this teacheth all men how they may [Use 3] make themselves to be of good name, and their houses and habitations truly famous, to wit, by holiness and true religion, by faith & repentance, which are the ornaments of all Christians. Thus shall the noble man make himself and his house truly noble. If they worship God aright, they shall have true worship with God and man: *for he will honor them that honor him*, 1 Sam. chap. 2, verse 30, and without true religion, the most noble blood is stained and tainted, and never restored since the treason and rebellion of *Adam* against God. For that which maketh a man reproachful, or any place reproachful, is sin and wickedness, which *make our names rotte*, Prov, 10, 7. See then the difference between the judgment of God and man. Men do commonly magnify Cities by the stately buildings & goodly Monuments that are found in them, but this is no true or well grounded fame: the true praise and commendation of any City is the piety of the Citizens. A well ordered Town or City embracing zealously true religion, and maintaining the worship of God in integrity, drawing out the sword of justice against vice, and countenancing the faithful in their godly courses, is indeed a right famous and flourishing City. Jerusalem *the City of God, and the praise of the world*, (Psal. 122, 3, 4, 5. and 87, 3, and 48, 11, 12, 13,) was never so famous for her buildings and stately Towers, and outward magnificence, as it was for the word and worship of God. We see then hereby, who they are that are the honor and ornament of Cities, of Towns, and of houses, to wit, such as honor God, and are truly zealous and religious: and likewise who are the shame and reproach, the blot and blemish, the dishonor and disgrace of them, to wit, such as are wicked and profane. Do we see a City, or Town, or private house full of drunkards, of blasphemers, of light and lascivious persons? these are they that pour contempt upon them, and bring shame & infamy unto them. Everyone therefore should be careful to look to their charges committed unto them: the Magistrate to govern the people, the Minister to look to the flock, *Ouer which the holy Ghost hath made him Ouerseer*; every father and mother to have an eye to their children, and every master and governor to look to their servants as their several charges, that their houses may not be houses of wickedness, of riotousnes, of deceit, of cursing and evil speaking, but rather the houses of God. All men are ready to condemn the Ministers that are absent from their flocks, and to call for residency at their hands: but let these look also upon themselves, and consider the duties of their own callings. Doubtless all Governors have a certain kind of residency required at their hands, and their presence is meet to be among them to oversee their manners, to redress their disorders, and to teach and instruct them in the ways of godliness. To these *Solomon* speaketh, Pro. 27, 23, 24. *Bee diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds: For riches are not forever, and doth the Crown endure to every generation?* When the Sheepheard is gone frō the Lambes, the wolf watcheth to take his prey. The husbandman sowed good seed in his field, but *while he slept, his enemy came, and sowed tares among the wheat*. Mat. 13, 25. The devil watcheth all occasions, and maketh his use of all advantages to deceive and seduce, and therefore we must take heed we give him no occasions. *Moses* was absent from the people but forty days, and what a change found he among them at his return? how deeply had they plunged themselves into idolatry? and how had they corrupted the worship of God, and were departed from him? Such is the corruption of nature, and profaneness *of the heart to evil continually*, Gen. 6, 5, that they which are under us are ready to fall into evil, even while we are with them and have them in a manner before

our eyes, much more when we are absent from them, as *Moses* speaketh of the people; *Behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord, and how much more after my death?* Deuteronomy, chapter thirty one, verse 27 Let us take heed of long and unnecessary absence from our private charges, as well as they ought that have public charges, lest while by our absence we provide for their bodies, we do not destroy their souls for want of our presence. I will conclude this point with the words of *Solomon*, Prov. 27, 8. *As a bird that wandreth from her nest, so is a man that wandreth from his place.*

Verse 10. *And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up together with Korah when that company died, what time the fire devoured, &c*, In the description of the Tribe of *Reuben* he fingleth out *Dathan* and *Abiram*, as archconspirators against *Moses*, the lawful Magistrate set over the people, they opposed themselves against authority, and therefore perish. As they withstood *Aaron*, we have spoken before, Numb. chapter sixteen: now consider their facte as *they rebelliously strove against Moses,, and in him against the Lord.*

We learn hereby, that it is a fearful and grievous sin to set our selves against lawful government and authority which God hath set over us. This is a most wicked and ungodly work, and the Scripture condemneth it in every place, Hos. 8, 3, 4. Roman. 13, 1, 2. Pet. 2, 10. Jude, verse 8. The continual practice of all the godly throughout the old and New Testament tend to the contrary, to commend to us obedience *for conscience sake*, and to reprove and condemn all resistance & opposition, as a work of the flesh; for they evermore submitted themselves to those that were Magistrates. Christ Jesus the Lord of all was not bound to *Caesar* in any sort, whether we consider him as God or as man. Not as he was God, *Caesar* was subject unto him, and owed to him homage and obedience: for as *David* in spirit called him Lord, Mat. 22, 43, so might *Caesar* also, and all Princes and Potentates in the world. Not as he was man, because he was of the blood royal, of the seed of *David*, and the right heir to the kingdom; whereas *Caesar* had no other right but what he got by the sword, and therefore he ought to have received, not to have paid tribute; yet because he would give good example to others, *not offense to any*, Math. 17, 27, he gave to the receyuers for himself and for *Peter a Stater*, which is thought to amount to half an ounce of silver, in value two shillings six pence, after five shillings the ounce. And as he taught them by his practice, so likewise he did by words, to *give unto Caesar the things which are Caesars*. Mat. 22, 21. So did *Paul* for the trial of the truth, and the justice of his cause *appeal unto Caesar* from the high Priests, who were carried with rage and envy against him, Acts 25, 11. Psalm. 18, 43, 44.

[Reason 1] The grounds hereof are evident. First, because public authority is God's ordinance, & every soul ought to be subject unto it, *because it is of God*, Rom. 13, 1, 2. and whosoever resisteth it, resisteth God himself. The people of *Israel* were rejected of God for resisting the manner of government that God had appointed, when he set *Judges* over them, and they would needs *have a king to judge them like all the Nations*, 1 Sam. 8, 5, much more then shall they be rejected of God, that resist government it self, and be accounted foul & fearful sinners before him.

[Reason 2] Secondly, because the opposition against government and the denying and withstanding of it must needs bring all confusion that may be, so that nothing can be in

peace and quietness. It is said, and often repeated in the book of *Judges*, that *every man did what he list, because they had no government*, *Judge. 18, 1, and 17, 6, and 21, 25*. God is the God of order, not of confusion, and therefore he alloweth of Magistrates, because he would have order among men. Take away a General out of the field, and expose the whole army to rout, what followeth but the destruction and carnage of the whole host? Take away the Pilot out of the Ship, it is the ready way to perish the Ship: so if you take away the Magistrate (which is as the Chieftaine of the army, and as the Master of the Ship) we shall live a life more savage and unreasonable then the unreasonable beasts lead, the great ones would devour the less; the rich, the poor; the strong ones, them that are weak: nothing would appear but a miserable face of havoc and confusion.

Before we proceed to the uses, [Object.] it is necessary to remove an objection. For to resist government may not be so fearful a sin, forasmuch as sometimes it is said to be of God, as the Scripture speaking of the apostasy of the ten Tribes from the house of *David*, saith, that *the Lord would give them to Jeroboam, and rent the kingdom from the house of David*, 1 Ki. 13, 31: and chap. 12, 15, this was done from the Lord: and verse 24, the other Tribes are commanded not to go up to fight against *Jeroboam* and his followers, for this (saith the Lord) is from me. How then can the rebellion of the ten Tribes be a fearful sin, seeing it was from the Lord. Answer. [Answer.] To clear this point, we must understand, that God's appointment of *Jeroboam* to be King, and the renting off the house of *Solomon*, doth not justify the act of this people that it was not sin in them; for this came to pass by the decree of God, yet the people are not justified in giving him the kingdom, nor he in accepting of it, inasmuch as they did it not out of any obedience to the will of God, but they did it to ease themselves from the cruelty and tyranny that *Rehoboam* was likely to use toward them, and therefore they sinned because they had no commandment from God.

Let us come to the uses. First, this confuteth [Use 1] the doctrine of the Anabaptists or Libertines that deny all authority, as not fitting for Christians to bear. They teach their own dreams, that neither Christians should be Magistrates, nor yet subject to Magistrates: an horrible impiety in them, and it would not be worth the time to show how they wrest the Scripture to defend their own error, which otherwise they nothing regard.

Secondly, it serveth to tax Popery, and [Use 2] that out of their own grounds: for the Rhemists have a rule upon *Jude*, verse 6, that they are heretics that deny authority, and they would father it and fasten it upon us, because we deny subjection to the Pope. But we retort it upon themselves. For never was there any that did cast off the yoke of authority so much as they have done. They have put down the mighty from their seats, and trod upon the necks of Princes: they have dethroned Kings, and armed the son against the father. Under a color of *the holy war* they have sent them abroad, and betrayed them into the hands of the Sarazens, and in their absence seized upon their Dominions. There was never heretic did so shrink up the sinews, and shake off the yoke of authority as they have done. It is a rule that they have, that Ecclesiastical men ought to be free from all civil authority whatsoever, and that Clergy men must be exempted from subjection to the secular powers; so that they, not we, are the heretics that *despise authority*. As for the Bishop of Rome, we owe him no service,

neither may he claim jurisdiction over the universal Church, either by Scriptures, Fathers, Councils, or imperial Constitutions for many ages.

[Use 3] Lastly, this serveth as an information to us, that we avoid all such proud and peevish conceits as these, to imagine there should be no authority: and be provoked to be thankful unto almighty GOD, that we do enjoy authority, seeing by it we are freed from confusion and desolation, from much mutiny and misery that otherwise would befall us. For notwithstanding by the great goodness of God we have authority, such is the fury and fierceness of wicked men, that they break out into strange enormities, and commit many fearful things by poysonings, by stabbings, by cousenages, by oppressions, by forgery, and falsehood, and such like mischeeuous and monstrous practices: what then would they presume to do, if there were no authority to bring them and their doings into question, and to call them to an account for their audacious courses? A man should always have his life in his hand, there could be no peace or safety in our houses and habitations, if there were no authority, to rule, to controlle, to terrify, to punish: and therefore how thankful ought we to be to almighty God for that authority which he hath set over us, and for the peaceable government we enjoy under our gracious Sovereign? Now this must withal be acknowledged of us, that no man can be truly thankful for authority, that is not willingly and cheerfully subject to authority. It is a frivolous and vain thing to pretend thankfulness, and yet not undergo the yoke of obedience with cheerfulness.

[Verse 11. Notwithstanding the Children of Korah died not.

What became of *Korah* himself, we have seen before. His name was *famous in the Congregation*, but he became infamous through his rebellion, and it is called *the gainesaying of Korah* to this day, Jude, verse 11. Notwithstanding mark here, that the sons of *Korah* perished not when their father perished and was punished, who spake evil of them that were in authorty: for it appeareth that they were preserved alive, and became afterward famous in the Church of God, and honorable mention is made of them in the book of Psalms and of the Chronicles, 1. Chronicles, chapter 6, verse 22. Psalm. 42, and Psalm 44, and Psalm 45, and sundry others afterward, as 2 Chronicles, chapter 20, verse 19.

From hence ariseth this Doctrine, that it is no disgrace for godly children to descend and come of ungodly parents. Howsoever sin be a reproach to the parents themselves, yet it taketh not hold of their issue, except they walk in those sins. Ezek. 18, 14. *If he beget a son that seeth all his fathers sins which he hath done, and considereth & doth not the like, &c. he shall surely live.* *Iephthe* is commended for a faithful man, that fought the battles of the Lord, & subdued the enemies of his people, yet *he was the son of an harlot*, Judge. 11, 1. Heb. chap. 11, verse 32. This farther appeareth in *Saul* and *Jonathan*, the one of them the greatest enemy, the other the greatest friend of *David*: the one sware his death, the other his life; the father to kill him, the son to save him, and therefore it was no dishonor to him to have such a father. The like we might say of *Ahaz*, a most wicked man, and *Hezekiah* a most godly King, one of the best sons of one of the worst fathers: yet who accounteth the worse of good *Hezekiah*, because he had wicked *Ahaz* to his father? *Jeroboam* king of Israel set up idolatry, and caused Israel to

sin, and therefore the Lord threateneth to bring evil upon his house, that *the dogs should eat him that died in the City, and the fowls of the air, him that died in the field*, 1 Kings, chapter 14, verse 10: so that they should all be swept away, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone: yet God gave him one good son, whom in mercy he took to himself, and saved as a brand out of the fire, or as a Sheeheard *taketh out of the mouth of the Lyon two legs or a piece of an ear*, Amos, chapter 3, verse 12: and therefore it is said, All Israel shall mourn for him, for he only of *Jeroboam* shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel.

The grounds of this truth follow. First, [Reason 1] that election might stand wholly by grace, forasmuch as almighty God showeth mercy, where and to whom he will. If religion should descend from father to son in a common and ordinary course of generation or propagation without any interruption, it might be thought to be a work of nature, not of grace, and to proceed from parents, not from almighty GOD. Therefore be often breaketh off that course, so that wicked parents have sometimes good and godly children; and contrariwise godly parents have wicked and vile children, *that the purpose of GOD according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth*, Rom. chap. 9, verse 11.

Secondly, it is sin only that bringeth shame and reproach, as we shown and proved in the first Doctrine upon this chapter: and therefore such as come of wicked persons and parents, if they forsake the sins wherein their ancestors and forefathers have walked and wallowed as swine in the mire, can receive no touch of disgrace, or blemish of honor, or stayne of name at all.

Thirdly, it is no credit or grace, for evil and corrupt children, to descend of godly parents; as we see in the children of *Josiah*, he reformed religion betimes, and consecrated his young years, as it were his first fruits unto God: howbeit his children walked not in the ways of their father, *but did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord*, 2 Chron. 36, 5, 12: the righteousness of their father could do them no good, but the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself, Ezek. chapter 18, verse 20.

[Use 1] We learn from hence, that such as have had evil parents, must acknowledge God's great mercy toward them, and never forget what he hath done for them. He might justly leave us in the wicked ways of our forefathers, and give us over to follow their steps. And as one serpent engendreth another, so naturally doth one wicked man bring forth another: and without a special grace preventing, like father, like son: an evil root, an evil tree: an evil fountain, an evil stream. None ought therefore to justify the works of their progenitors, & think it enough if they follow them, but must consider whether they followed the right way, Psalm. 78, 8: rather they must say in humility, *We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against thee*, Ier. 14, 20. Dan. 9, 8. Psal. 106, 6. Isaiah 65, 7. How many do we see run on in evil with their evil fathers? When *Jeroboam* had set up two Calves, the one at Dan, the other at Beth-el, the rest that succeeded him in his seat, followed him in his sin one after another, (like those that run down a steep hill, never stay till they come to the bottom) until a worse arose, I mean *Ahab*, who sold himself to work wickedness, and changed the idolatry of *Jeroboam* into a worse, bringing in the worship of *Baal* a strange

god, whereas before they worshipped the true God, albeit in a false manner. Wherefore when God restraineth the childrē from those wicked ways, and openeth their eyes to see the evil of their parents, how can it but be acknowledged and confessed to be his good hand? and how should we not say, that *the ways of God are equal*? Ezek. 18. Nothing is more natural and ordinary, then of evil parents to have brought forth into the world evil children, Job 14, 4. John. 3, 6. Psal. 51, 5. Every thing fructifieth according to his kind; of briars, what can come but briars? Of thorns, what can we look for but thorns? *Every seed hath his proper body*, 1. Corinth. chap. 15, verse 38. Do men gather Grapes of thorns, or Figs of thistles? saith Christ, Math. 7, 16, yet behold how God, his mercy as it were prevailing and getting the upper hand over his justice, and his power altering our corrupt nature, behold I say, how God by his marvelous and strange work, at which we may all wonder, maketh Grapes to grow of thorns, and Figs to spring out of thistles; *He maketh the barren woman to bear and to be a joyful mother of children*, Psalm. 113, 9. Gal. 4, verse 27: and them that were cut out of the Olive tree, which was wild by nature, to be grafted contrary to nature into a good Olive tree, Rom. chap. 11, verse 24. Whence did *Abraham* himself spring, but of an idolatrous stock? for *his fathers worshipped strange gods on the other side of the flood*, Josh. chapter 24, 2, so that God shown mercy to him, and called him from his Country and kindred, and from his fathers house, Gen. chapter 12, verse 1.

Secondly, we are from hence admonished [Use 2] and provoked to repent and turn unto God. Nothing can blot out the remembrance of the oppression, cruelty, wickedness, and profaneness of ungodly parents, but the repentance of their children, Ezek. chapter 18, ver. 30, 31. A wicked life led by wicked parents, is *as the skin of the black-moore, or as the spots of a Leopard*: it is written or graven with the Pen of a Diamond, all the water in the sea cannot wash it away, nor all the nytre & sope in the world cannot purge it, but it cleaveth to the children, and to the children's children, as a leprosy: only true repentance is able quite to blot it out. This is as the Fullers earth, that can scour out all the staynes and blots of parents, that they shall not cleave to the children, and therefore the Prophet calleth to them *to repent and turn themselves from all their transgressions, that iniquity be not their ruin*, Ezek. 18, 30, 31, they must make them new hearts and new spirits. And until the child have learned this, to blot out his fathers sins by repentance, the reproach of them cleaveth fast unto him: but when once he hateth and forsaketh them, they are none of his, they died in the bed, and are buried in the grave of his father, never to arise nor to be charged upon him or his name. For as repentance blotteth out the remembrance of sin before God, as if it had never been, so ought it much more before men, whose praise is to be like their heavenly Father.

Thirdly, no man ought to object the sins [Use 3] of parents (whether dead or alive) or the punishment befallen unto them, though they have lived an ungracious life, or died an ignominious death, to their children that do not approve of their ways, neither follow them in wickedness. It was no disgrace or reproach to these sons of *Korah*, to have a traitor and rebel to their father, that made insurrection against the lawful Magistrate, and was consumed with fire from heaven, & therefore there is as honorable mention made of them in holy Scripture, as there is dishonorable of their father. It was no discredit for *Ruth* or *Rahab* to come, the one from the Moabites, who were branded with infamy from their first

conception, Gen. 19, 37. the other from the Canaanites who were cursed in their first father, Gen. 9, 25. and all of them vowed to destruction, Gen. 15, 16, 18, 19, &c. If the father be an Ammorite, and the mother an Hittite, yet if the child be a *true Israelite, in whom is no guile*, as it is said of *Nathaniel*, it shall be his greater praise and glory, rather than any shame and ignominy unto him; as it was more admired that any good should come out of Nazareth, then out of Jerusalem. If a man have an adulterer, or drunkard, or murderer, or profane person unto his father, or have had such forefathers for many generations, yet shall their sins die with their persons, and be remembered no more, whensoever the son forsaketh those their wicked ways. No man therefore must cast them in the teeth, or upbraid any believer with the sins of his unbelieving parents. If a man come of Turkish or Heathenish parents, that never believed in Christ, nor acknowledged the true God, yet God will accept of those y^t forsake this infidelity and impiety: who therefore are we that we should upbraid them with the blots and infirmities of their fathers? For, as the godliness of the father shall nothing help the ungodly child, but *the soul that sinneth shall die the death*: Ezek 18, 20: so the ungodliness of the father shall nothing hurt the godly, because he renounceth it and hateth it as an enemy. The practice therefore of those is evil, that lade and burden with cart-loads of reproaches, those that are not to be touched in their own persons, because of the vices and sins of their parents.

[Use 4] Lastly, we must learn, that it shall on the other side be no honor, credit, comfort, or commendation, to descend from godly and worthy Ancestors, if we degenerate from thē as a base and bastard brood, Ezek. 18, 10, 13. It is the manner of many to stand much upon their pedigree, which the very heathen derided as great vanity, and accounted nothing indeed their own which themselves had not done: for what hath a coward to do, to glory in the valor of his Fathers? And they made choice rather to descend of vnnoble Parents, so themselves were noble and renowned thorough virtue, then to come of worthy Progenitors, and themselves to grow base & degenerate out of kind. This did the Prophet tell *Jehoiachim*, Ier. 22, 15, 16. *Did not thy father eat and drink, and do justice & judgment, and then it was well with him? he judged the cause of the poor, &c: but thine eyes and thy heart are not but for thy covetousness, and to shed innocent blood, and for oppression and violence to do it.* Hence it is, that *John the Baptist* telleth the Jews, that they should not boast of their progenitors, to say, *They had Abraham to their Father*, Mat. 3, 8, 9. They gloried much in this carnal privilege, and thought the whole seed of *Abraham* by generation of the flesh to be within the covenant of grace, and should be partakers of salvation; and in a proud conceit of this external glory, grew to contemn the Gentiles as a people forsaken of God. But there is an Israelite in the covenant, and an Israelite out of the covenant, as there is a *Jew that is outward, and a Jew that is inward*, Rom. 2, 29. & 4, 16: as there is an election that is general, and an election more special taken out of that general. There are sons of *Abraham* according to the flesh, and there are *heirs of the faith of Abraham*: as the Lord himself saith, Mal. 1, 2. *Is not Esau Jacob's broth••? Yet I have hated Esau, and loved Jacob.* Wherefore, when the Pharisees said, *We have Abraham to our father*: Christ answered, *If ye were the children of Abraham, ye would do the works of Abraham: but now ye are of your father the devil*, John 8, 39, 44. Let no man therefore rejoice in the flesh, neither stand upon the gifts given unto others, as it were to decke himself with the feathers

of other birds. *Paul* the Apostle of the Gentiles showeth, that he might have confidence in the flesh, and if any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, he had cause much more: he was circumcised the eighth day, he was of the stock of Israel, and of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews, and as touching the law a Pharisee, *Yet what things soever might be gain unto him, the same he counted loss for Christ's sake, yea as dung that he might win him*, Phil. 3, 7, 8. Let everyone therefore labor to have grace in his own heart, knowing, *That the just shall live by his own faith*, Hab. 2, 4. forasmuch as the faith of the father cannot profit the child that is without faith.

12 The sons of Simeon after their families: of Nemuel the family of the Nemuelites, &c.

13 Of Zerah the family of the Zarhites, &c.

14 These are the families of the Simeonites, twenty and two thousand, and two hundred.

In the description of this Tribe, we are to consider the small number and little company in comparison of the other Tribes, and of themselves also, compared with the former sum. For whereas before they were 59300 they are now only as we see 22200. If any ask what may be the cause of this great abatement, [Objection] that there were so many before, & now fallen to be so few? [Answ.] The reason is to be taken out of the last history remembered in the former chapter, to wit, that one of the Princes of the Tribe of *Simeon*, being accompanied with many others of that Tribe, and backed and countenanced with them, committed a most shameful and shameless act before his brethren, and brought a Midianitish harlot into the host in the sight of *Moses*; yea, he was no doubt a mover and persuader of others to commit the like wickedness, whereby it came to pass, that the greatest number of this Tribe perished with him in that grievous plague. For it was reason that as they did partake with him in the Whoredom, so they should communicate together in the punishment. Hereupon it fell out, that whereas all the other Tribes in a manner surmounted the former account, or at least equalled the same, this failed much of the former sum. This is to be noted of us in this place, serving as a good commentary and exposition of the words of *Moses*, Deut. 32, 6. where *Simeon* is wholly left out. This teacheth us, that it is a very hard thing, to avoid, shun, and break off our society with wicked men, when once we are entered into it, but we follow and pursue it with greediness till we be punished together with them. It is hard to be kept from contracting friendship and fellowship with them: they are cunning to insinuate themselves; and if they be not called to us, they will call themselves; and if they be not bidden, they are as shameless guess, they will invite them selves. If at any time they be thrust out of our company, they will seek to enter again: and if the door be barred against them, they will wind in themselves (like the Thief) at the window, rather than they will stand without, that is, they will take all occasions to force themselves upon us. And if we find it hard not to contract it, we shall find it much harder to break it off, being once contracted: & doubtless never harder than in these days of sin, wherein iniquity hath gotten the upper hand, Exod. 33, 32, 33. Deut. 7, 2, 3, 4. 2 King. 8, 18.

[Reason 1] The grounds are, because sin is a cunning Orator, able to move much: so is every sinner, though otherwise never so simple, a cunning Rhetoritian, speaking in the enticing words of man's wisdom, or rather of the devils eloquence: and therefore they seldom plead, but they persuade: they sildom come, but they overcome. They compass sea and land, they spare no time, or place, or means, to win whomsoever they can to themselves, Prov. 7, 21. Secondly, our nature is prone to decline unto evil: for, as sin is strong twisted as a cartrope to draw others, so we are of our selves weak and feeble, ready to yield and to give over upon every occasion, even of our selves through our inbred corruption, though none do entice or entrap us; much more then when we are proved and provoked. We see it by the Israelites that suffered the Heathen to live among them, they soon *learned their ways and served their idols, which were a snare to them*, Psal. 106, 35, 36.

[Use 1] This reproveth all such as enter into league with such persons, they even offer their hands and feet to be bound as it were in chains, and they become afterward as prisoners and vassals to them. The chains of sin are small and subtle in the beginning, they are not easy to be espied while they are more easy to be passed over, or to be broken: and so much less easy they are to be discerned, because they promise pleasure or profit, liberty or life; howbeit afterward having taken hold, they do so claspe and inclose the poor prisoner, that he can hardly free himself. This is the ruin and downfall of many. If we make much of the sinner, we cannot long hate the sin: and therefore the Apostle joineth them both together, and chargeth us to avoid both the one & the other, Eph. 5, 7, 11. *Be ye not partakers with thē*: and afterward he addeth, *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*. If then we be continually in company with evil doers, the continual custom of seeing and hearing evil, dimmeth our fight, and stoppeth our ears, and hardeneth our hearts, and taketh away out feeling, that we can neither see the vglines of sin, nor hear the cry of it, nor feel the foulnes of it, yea it stoppeth our mouths that we cannot, nor dare not for fear of offense reprove any of their evil ways, but first we wink at them, and afterward we join with them.

Secondly, we see hereby the error & vain [Use 2] persuasion of many men, that for pleasure or profit, or such like carnal respects yoke themselves with profane persons, who glory and boast that they can easily and quickly break off society with them whensoever they list, & leave their company at their own pleasure or leisure. But these men are much deceived, & know neither the deceitfulness of sin, nor cunning of a sinner, nor the judgment of God. For mark when we list, we shall find by experience few examples of such as have returned from carnal and corrupt company. And hereby it appeareth to be true, because when as such as delighted to stand in the way of sinners, once went seriously about it, to shake off their fellows, and to leave their folly, they have been discouraged with the difficulty of the work, and found it as hard as for a prisoner to shake off his fetters that are made fast about him. When *Peter* lay in prison, he could not with all his might free himself from his irons, it was *the hand of the Angel that delivered him from those chains*, Acts 12, 7: so all the power and strength that we have is not great enough to set us at liberty from the snares of sin, it must be a superior and supernatural work, that we may confess and say, *This is the finger of God*. The strong man keepeth us under lock and key, *Till a stronger then he cometh, and taketh from*

him all his Armor, wherein he trusted, and diuideth the spoils, Luk. chapter 11, verse 22. Nay, the more strength a man thinketh he hath to withstand any sin, or to resist the sinner, the sooner he is overtaken with the one & the other. For this persuasion ariseth from presumption in himself of his own gifts, and this breedeth in him security, and so in the end thorough a proud opinion he hath of his great strength, he groweth so reckless and careless, that he feareth not to commit any sin whatsoever. This we might express and enlarge by the example of *Peter*, Math. 26. The Scripture setteth him down as a glass before us, that so often as we look upon him we should take notice of our own frailty and weakness. And doubtless this is the cause why God oftentimes in his just judgment forsaketh men, and leaveth them unto themselves, because they make flesh their arm, and presume upon their own strength. Hence it is that they are oft•n overtaken with those sins, which otherwise, if they had feared with a godly jealousy their own hearts, he would have kept them from the pit of them. So then it is a vain thing for men to use the company of those that are profane and wicked, under an evil-grounded conceit and foolish imagination of their own ability to stand fast, seeing it is so hard a thing to forsake and shake off their society.

[Use 3] Lastly, it admonisheth everyone, that there is required great wariness and watchfulness of him, to forsake the company, and abandon the society of those that are wicked men. For the hardness of this duty should stir us up to be so much more careful and fearful of our selves. Therefore we ought to labor after a sound faith, that we may believe this to be true: for this is the foundation of the whole building. Faith is that which will beget fear, and fear will beget diligence and circumspection to avoid that which is evil. Thus it was with *Noah*, he did believe that GOD would destroy the world, or else he had himself been destroyed with the unbelieving world: therefore also he feared, knowing that he who had threatened would perform. And what did this fear work in him? was it idle? No, it caused him *To prepare the Ark to save himself*, and to enter into it, going from the rest of the world, and separating himself and his family from them, Heb. 11, 7. So then these three go together, faith, fear, and diligence. Faith breedeth fear, and fear bringeth carefulness. If we have faith to believe the danger of evil company, and how hard it is to separate from them, and to touch nothing of theirs, as we heard chap. 16, 26: where *Moses* saith, *Depart, I pray you, from the Tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins*: this will make us begin to be fearful, to fear our own estate, lest we be suddenly surprised and supplanted, and then it will make us careful and watchful over our own harts. But where there is want of this faith, there men are rash and fool-hardy, and fear nothing at all, and so like blind men they fall into the pit, & cause others to fall. This is the cause that Satan in the beginning labored to batter this fortress, and to undermine the faith of our first parents, that they should not believe y^e word of God, and so entertain communication with him, Genes. 3. So he sought to shake the faith of Christ in the first place; but the Prince of this world found nothing in him. Let us therefore take to us *the shielde of Faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*, Ephes. 6, 16. And albeit we cannot but live in the world with wicked mē as the Apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. chap. 5. verse 10: yet must we beware *we do not eat with them*, verse 11. that is, converse with them, and join in league with them, lest if we run with them into evil, it turn to their and our destruction. To conclude

therefore, let us remember that if we be partakers with them in their sins, we shall also be partakers in their punishment; and learn to be faithful, fearful, and careful.

52 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying:

53 Unto these the Land shall be divided for an inheritance.

54 To a few thou shalt give the less inheritance: to everyone shall his inheritance be given, according unto those that were numbered of him.

55 Nevertheless, the Land shall be divided, &c.

56 According to the lot shall the possession thereof be, &c.

In these words, we have the second part of the Chapter, containing the commandment of God, touching the dividing of the Land, amplified by the form or manner of the doing of it: first, by an Arithmetical proportion according to the number of names, having regard to the multitude or fewness of them, they that were more in number were to have the greater inheritance, and they that were fewer, a lesser. And this was one end of this new numbering taken of the people in this place, whereas they had been numbered before. Secondly, to avoid partiality and contention, it must be done by Lot, that they might rest in that division no less then if it had been done by the immediate voice of God from heaven. So then, as all the Tribes had not an equal number of persons, so they were not to receive an equal measure of inheritance: and as they differed in multitude, so they were to differ in their portion and partition of the Land. If they had received all an equality, some should have been burdened with superfluity, and others straightened through penury.

The Doctrine arising from hence is this: That God provideth sufficiently for all his people. Every man hath his portion assigned him of God upon the earth. It is his will and pleasure that all should have their measure of earthly things, not some to have all, and some nothing at all, but all to have some part, Deu. 15, 7, 8, 10. God would have no beggar in Israel. When the Lord sent down Manna, and fed his people with Angels food, all the host from the highest to the lowest had enough; *He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little, had no lack*, Exod. 16, 18. 2 Cor. 8, 15. To this end he instituted deacons in the Church, merciful men to look to the poor, that *none should be neglected in the daily ministrations*, Acts 6, 1, 3. & 4, 34: there was none in the Church of Christ that lacked, forasmuch as distribution *was made to everyone according as he needed*. This was no Anabaptistical communion, but a Christian communication of outward and earthly things, *as every man had need*. And here we have not a disanulling of propriety, but an establishing of charity. The Evangelist Luke describing the state of the church after Christ's ascension, saith, that *the multitude of them*

that believed were of one heart and of one soul, neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common, Act 4, 32. Rom. 12, 13, 2 Cor. 9, 9.

[Reason 1] The reasons are manifest. For he provided for man in the beginning before he had any being or beginning, as he prepareth milk in the mothers breast before the infant be brought forth into the world. He made all things necessary for man, before he made man himself, Gen. 1. & 2. much more will he provide for us after we have life and bodies given unto us.

Secondly, who gave unto us life? & whence have we received our bodies? Is it not from God? is not he our Maker? and are not we y^e work of his hands? Our Savior teacheth us, *That the life is more then meat, and the body thē raiment,* Matth. chap. 6, 25. If then we have received life from him, we shall also receive meat to sustain life: and if he have given us our bodies, he will give us garments to cloth our bodies, and to cover our nakedness.

Thirdly, he feedeth all his creatures that he made, *He causeth grass to grow for the Cattle, & herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth,* Psal, 104, 14. *Yea, the young Lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God,* verse 21. *He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young Ravens that cry,* Psal. 147, 9. *The Lord is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works,* Psal. 145, 9. So the eyes of all wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due season, he openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing, verse 15, 16: much more then will he provide for man whom he made after his own image, and set him to rule over y^e beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven.

Fourthly, every man by the instinct of nature, and the light of grace provideth for his own children, and supplieth all their wants, and every Governor ministereth food and necessary things for his family, Prouerb. 31, 15. and he that doth not this, *Hath denied the faith and is worse then an Infidel,* 1 Tim. 5, 8. We are God's own people, we belong to his household and family: he is the Creator, and we his creatures: he is our father, and we his children: he is our master, and we his servants: he is our shepherd, and we his sheep. If then he should not feed us and provide for us, he should deny himself, and falsify the word that is gone out of his own mouth, which is impossible. This reason is urged by our Savior Christ, Matth. 7, 9, 10. Luke 11, 11, 12, 13.

This reproveth those that never think they [Use 1] hau^e enough, neither will know what is sufficient, no not when God hath given them great plenty and abundance. They that have much are yet desirous of more, and they that are full think themselves empty. Hence it is, that though *they have much laid up in store for many years,* Luke 12. yet they have no use at all of it, no benefit by it, no comfort in it. As it is a great blessing of God to give riches, and an heart to use them, nay it is a twofold blessing: so on the other side, it is a great judgment to have this worlds good, and to be a slave unto it, to serve it as his master, and to worship it as his god. For first of all these men do wonderfully fret and fume, vex & torment themselves, especially when anything crosseth their desire (and the least occasion will do it) the want of contentation setteth the mind upon the Racke, that they have less peace of heart and comfort of their life then the poor man. For when his labor is done (which thorough custom

and continuance is made light and easy) his sleep is sweet, and his rest is pleasant: whereas the other disorder, disquiet and distemper themselves in heaping up riches, and cannot tell who shall enjoy them, or whether their heir will prove a wise man or a fool, Eccles. 2, 19. 1 Tim. 6, 9, 10. Secondly, they bewray much impiety and infidelity, that their hearts are destitute of true godliness, whatsoever show they make to the contrary, 1 Tim. 6, 6. Psal. 119, 36. James 1, 27: for the immoderate desire of riches overturneth the order and course of nature, and maketh the soul which is heavenly to be altogether earthly. Thirdly there is no sin which a covetous man will not commit for his gain, and therefore the Apostle calleth it *the root of all evil*, 1 Tim, 6, 10. It is in effect the breach of the whole law. It setteth up a strange or false god in the heart, and therefore is called, *The worshipping of Images*, Col. 3, 5. and the covetous person an *Idolater*, Ephes. 5.5. He will swear and stare, he will curse and blaspheme to get an halfepeny, Prouerb. 30, 9: he regardeth the Sabbath no more then his old shoes, & will damn his own soul to fill his purse, and to feed his belly, Amos 8, 5. It is therefore a mother sin, and a capital evil. It was the cause of lying in *Gehazi*, 2 Kings 5, 25. of murder in *Ahab*, 1 Kings 21, 19: of treachery in *Judas*, Matth. 26, 15. of theft in *Achan*, Josh. 7, 21. of Apostasy in *Demas*, 2 Tim. 4, 10. Lastly, it worketh a distrust for the things of this life in the goodness and providence of God, that they dare not trust him for their daily bread, who notwithstanding provideth for all his creatures, that they might have what to suffice them, and learn to depend upon him.

[Use 2] Secondly, it is the office of God to provide for all living things that have life and breath in them, he hath enough to sustain them all, but we are more worth then thousands & ten thousands of them; and he maketh them to feed us, as he commanded the ravens to feed *Elijah, who brought him bread and flesh in the morning and in the evening*, 1 Kings 17, 4, 6. Do we then at any time want provision, so that we know not what to do, or where to become, or which way to turn our selves? It is as much as if God told us, it is his charge to give us whatsoever is meet and sufficient for us, as a faithful Steward that provideth for all his family, be it never so great. And seeing he feedeth the wild beasts which howl and bray, without knowing that there is a maker which should nourish them: how then ought we to depend upon him, who are sure that he hath set us in the world, to maintain us as his creatures, and to feed us as his children in it? This is after a sort natures prayer, to make suite to God for succor and sustenance, as Job 38, 41. *He provided for the Raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God*. Their crying is as it were a confession of their need, which cannot be supplied and relieved but by God only; and therefore he will not leave us destitute, Math. 6.26. But some may say, how doth the crying of the Ravens, [Object.] and the roaring of the Lions tend to God? or how do they ask their food of him? Alas, they know nothing concerning God: the swine that grunteth under the tree, never lifteth up his eyes so much as to the tree from whence the Mast falleth. How thē should they seek their meat at the hands of God? Or how should they understand the things of God, who understand not the things of men, but as unreasonable creatures are led only by sense and appetite? [Answ.] I answer, there is no more ascribed to the Ravens and Lions, then is to be understood of all other creatures. But it importeth these two things: first, that it is God who through his providence provideth, and through his goodness giveth meat unto the Lions and all other creatures. It is

he that upholdeth all the works of his hands that none perisheth that was formed in the beginning, Psal. 111, 4. Secondly, the crying and yelling of brute beasts, wrung from them by the force of famine and hunger, is instead of a calling on him, and hath after a sort the nature of a prayer for meat & maintenance. As if one should say, that the young child, the infant and suckling that hangeth at the mothers breasts, when it crieth, seeketh to the mother for food and sustenance, albeit it have no knowledge of the mother, neither of the mothers duty or tender care over it: but because the necessity of the child doth properly belong unto the care of the mother. Now then to apply these things, if the cry of the unreasonable creatures have the force and power of a calling upon him, how much more are we to believe, that the prayers and groans of the faithful, have indeed the force of a fervent and earnest prayer, yea albeit sometimes they speak nothing distinctly and directly unto him?

Thirdly, it is our duty to praise the name [Use 3] of God, and to give thanks to him humbly and heartily, *when he hath fed us with his blessings every day*, Psal. 104, 1. & 103, 1.5. where he provoketh his soul to offer up this sacrifice, and all that is within him to bless his name, who redeemed his life from destruction, and satisfieth his mouth with good things. Let us not therefore be unthankful for his mercies, nor forget any of his benefits. The natural man taketh his daily bread as a fruit of his own labor, not as the gift of God, & therefore no marvel if he do ascribe the praise and glory to himself. But if we consider aright that it is God who feedeth us, and that we have not so much as a bit of bread, or a drop of water to do us good, but we must ask it & receive it at his hands, it will teach us to give the glory to his name, and to lift up our hearts in thanksgiving to him.

Lastly, it becometh us to ascend as it were [Use 4] by stepes to an higher comparison, from the body to the soul, and from the meat that perisheth to that which endureth to everlasting life. For seeing we understand that GOD is thus careful to feed our bodies, it is much more reason that we should seek at his hands the nourishment of our souls. If we have not this skill and consideration in us, the Fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field will be witnesses against us to condemn us. This is the voice of faith, the other the voice of Nature. Nature is wise enough to tell us when we want provision for the body, but it must be the office of faith to tell us when we want food for the soul. We are ready to cry out oftentimes, *What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewith shall we be clothed?* Mat. 6. but few feel the wants of their souls though they be like to perish and pine away; wherefore our Savior teacheth us, Matth. chapter 6. verse 33. *First of all to seek the Kingdom of God, and then all other things shall be ministered unto us.*

57 And these are they that were numbered of the Levites, after their families, of Gershon, &c.

58 These are the families of the Levites, the family of the Libnites, and the family of the Hebronites, &c.

59 And the name of Amrams wife, &c.

60 And unto Aaron was borne Nadab & Abihu, Eleazar and Ishamar.

61 And Nadab and Abihu died when they offered strange fire before the Lord.

We have here the third and last part of the chapter, touching the numbering of the Levites apart by themselves, branched out into three principal families, but specially Aaron is insisted upon, to whom the Priesthood was given, who is described both by his parents and by his posterity, and among his posterity Moses again singleth out the fact of *Nadab & Abihu, who died when they offered strange fire before the Lord*. And albeit we have spoken of this before, chap. 3, 4. yet being offered again let us consider better of it. For whereas God commanded fire to be duly and diligently kept always burning upon the Altar, wherewith the sacrifices were to be consumed, and must never be suffered to go out, Levite. 6, 9, 12, 13. they presumed to offer sacrifice with strange fire, and therefore died before their father; for as well they might have taken a strange beast, as a strange fire, the one being no less forbidden thē the other. Whereby we see, y^e evil persons are cut off betimes, 1 Chro. 24.1, 2: and are not suffered to live out half their days. This heavenly fire which GOD sent to consume his sacrifices was brought into the Temple built by *Solomon*, and there it continued from one generation to another until the destruction of the Temple and the City. True it is, the author of the second book of *Maccabees* telleth us a tale, that when *Nehemiah's* had built the Temple and the Altar, he offered sacrifice with this fire: for when tht Fathers were led into Persia, the Priests that were devout took the fire of the Altar privily, and hid it in an hollow place of a pit without water, where they kept it sure, so that the place was unknown to all men: wherefore he sent for the posterity of those Priests that had hid it, howbeit they could find no fire, but thick water, which being sprinkled upon the wood and sacrifice, there arose a great fire, so that every man that saw it maruelled, 2 Maccha. 1, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. Wher we see, two things are coupled together, the building of y^e Temple and Altar by *Nehemiah*, and the sending of fire from heaven by God; these may well be joined, the one being as true as the other. But it is plain by the whole Scripture, that *Nehemiah* built not the Temple, if we shall consider the circumstances either of the persons, or of the time, or of the place. For the Altar was built by *Zerubbabel* and *Joshua* in the reign of *Cyrus*, so soon as by his proclamation they returned from the captivity of Babylon, to wit, the seventh month after, Ezra 3. And touching the Temple, though the foundation began to be laid while *Cyrus* himself yet lived: yet it was not ended & finished before the sixth year of the reign of *Darius Nothus*, Ezra 6, which was many years after, John 2, 20. But *Nehemiah* was then in Babylon, and not yet come to Jerusalem, forasmuch as he obtained leave of the king of Persia to go thither, in the 20. year of *Artaxerxes Mnemon* the successor of this *Darius*, Ezr. 4. & 7. Neh. 1, & 2: by which computation of time it will appear, that the Altar was built an hundred years and more, and the Temple finished at the least 30. years before the coming of *Nehemiah*: so that the author of this second book of *Maccabees* is not a little deceived in his Chronology, and discovereth that he wrote by a mere human spirit, according to his own

confession in the shutting up of the book, wherein *he craveth pardon for his slips and ouersights*, & we see there was great need he should do so. Now from the former premisses I reason thus:

This fire discovered to Nehemiah, was kindled of God when he had built the Temple and the Altar.

But he never built the Temple and the Altar:

Therefore this fire was never kindled of God.

Again, the author of that book testifieth, that after *Nehemiah* had received this fire from God, the king of Persia built a Temple unto it: but we may truly affirm he never built any such Temple, forasmuch as y^e Jews neither had, neither indeed might have, any other Temple then one, and that at Jerusalem, before the coming of the Messiah, which the Lord had chosen to put his name there. It might be that the kings of Persia & that king in particular might build a Temple to fire, w^c they worshipped as God, howbeit this is spoken by way of supposition, and hath no relation to the fire here spoken off. Neither can this be understood of the Tēple at Jerusalem, but must be referred to some other built elsewhere if haply any were built at all. For it is said that after the Temple and Altar were built, and *Nehemiah* had offered sacrifice, this came to the ears of the king of *Persia*, and then he commanded this supposed Temple to be erected. Again, *Nehemiah* expressing his journey up to Jerusalem, and coming *to the sepulchers of his fathers*, maketh no mention of the finding of any such fire, which no doubt he would have done, if any such had been offered unto them. For he reporteth many & sundry things done by him in that book, he mentioneth their offering of sacrifices with great joy and gladness, chap. 12. how is it then that he omitteth this miracle? Doubtless if he had received so great & miraculous a benefit, he would not have forgotten it, neither indeed could without note of unthankfulness, which was far from that devout and religious man. Furthermore, the setting up of this miracle of the new-found fire hid in the pit, and after discovered by the Priests, and kindled by the Lord, is the weakening and shaking of a great mystery and foundation of the Christian religion. For it is written, that the Jews were stirred up by the Prophets to proceed cheerfully in building of the Temple, because *the glory of that latter house should be greater then of the former*, Hag. 2, 9, which prophecy is agreed upon to be fulfilled, in that Christ was borne while the second house stood, w^c he made famous and renowned by his presence, by his doctrine, & by his miracles, Luke 2, 46, & 7, 8. There also did the Apostles begin the preaching of the Gospel, which taking his beginning from Zion and Jerusalem, was spread abroad from thence into all the earth. Many were the privileges and perogatives of the Tabernacle framed by *Moses*, and of the first house built by *Solomon*; they had the fire from heaven, the Ark of the Covenant, the pillar of the cloud, the *Vrim* and *Thummim*, and the succession of the Prophets: but the second house built after their return from captivity wanted all these; therefore while it stood, the *Messiah* must come (being greater then all these) that through his presence, who *was to be the ruler in Israel*, Mic. 5, 2, the glory of the latter house might be greater then the former, and so the prophecy should be fulfilled. But if this story were true, which is broached by the writer of that book, the latter Temple should be more glorious and famous

through this miraculous fire then the former, For in the former, the sacrifices were only consumed with fire, & that fire was sent from God, and nourished by the continual ministry and attendance of the Priests: but in the latter temple, they should have had not only the same fire with the other, but the fire preserved by a wonderful miracle, & that in a contrary element: yea, here are many miracles heaped together: for as that fire was preserved in water, so of y^t thick water (into which it was changed) was the fire kindled again, 2 Macab. 1, 22: and that which is more, when the sacrifice was consumed, *Nehemiah* is said to have commanded the water that was left to be poured on the great stones; *whereby was kindled a flame which was consumed by the light that shined from the altar*, verse 31, 32. And this is so apparent that the Jewish Rabbin's that have the veil before their eyes, or rather before their hearts, have acknowledged the truth hereof, that the 2 house had not that fire which the former had, contrary to the opinion of that writer. And yet notwithstanding the evidence of the former reasons and the confession of the Jews themselves, he sticketh not in the next chapter, to allege the Prophet *Jeremiah*, as if he had commanded them that were carried away to take with them the Tabernacle, the Ark and the fire, as hath been signified, 2 Maccab. 2, 1. But to leave all these assertions delivered with warrant, let us come to the doctrine offered to our considerations in the destruction of the 2. sons of *Aaron*, because *they offered strange fire*, to wit, that it is a sin & impiety, which the Lord leaveth not unpunished for any man in y^e outward worship of God, to decline from the Law of God. He appointed to burn every sacrifice with fire taken from the Altar, which was continually kept and nourished for that purpose. They altered God's ordinance, and are therefore stricken suddenly from heaven: so that it is a great sin for any Church or particular person to swerve from the Law of God in the worship of God, as appeareth by many examples & testimonies of holy Scripture, 1 Sam. 13, 12, 13, 14. 2 Chro. 26, 16, 17, 18. Math. 15, 9. Col. 2.20,21, 22.

The grounds are plain: first because the [Reason 1] word of God is the rule of all things that we are warranted to do, and more generally it is the rule of God's worship, so that to decline from this rule to the right hand or to the left, must needs be a great sin which GOD abhorreth, Deut. 12, 8, 13, 32. In an art to vary from the rules of the art is a great error; thr carpenter and mason are guided by their line and level; the Law of GOD is the square and rule of his worship: the more closely we keep our selves to this rule, the more warrantable are our works: if we decline and depart from it, we wander in error, and the farther we go from it, the more we are out of the way. Secondly, that starting and swaruing from the Law, reproveth and checketh the wisdom of God, who is *Wisdom* it self, Pro. 9, 1: as if we were able to direct him, and knew what belongeth to his worship better then himself. An artificer in his work cannot abide to be checked and controlled by those that know not so well what belongeth unto it as he doth: so the wise GOD, the supreme *Lawgiuer* cannot endure that men should decline from the order which he hath settled and established in his worship, and prescribed unto them in his Word, and therefore he accounteth it a great sin and impiety in any that attempt the same.

This reproveth the Church of Rome [Use 1] which is as a body infected with many diseases, and running sores. For their whole worship in a manner is an apostasy from God, full of dangerous wounds that cannot be cured, as we may see by their worshipping of images,

prayer in a strange tongue, communion under one kind, and an hundred such like horrible corruptions, which are so many profanations of the worship of God. These men set the Law of God at naught, and think themselves wiser then he, and *prefer their own traditions before his commandments, and so worship him by the precepts of men*, Math. 15.6, which is a vain worship, and maketh his Law of none effect.

Secondly, it serveth as a direction to the [Use 2] Church what they receive, & to godly Magistrates what they establish by their authority, that in the worship of God they always set y^e law of God before their eyes, & allow nothing but that w^c is grounded vpō the rules of y^e same, y^t they add nothing to it, & take nothing frō it. For this cause the King must write him a copy of the Law in a book that it may be ever with him, *that he may read in it all the days of his life, and learn to fear the Lord his God*, Deu. 17, 18, 19. This was taught to *Joshua*, chap, 1, 8: and practiced by *Josiah*, 2 Chron. 34, 16. If they cleave to this rule, they must continue: if they have declined, they must return & cause others to return, and reform what hath been amiss. This the Pharisees acknowledged, when they said to Christ, *By what authority dost thou these things, &c.* Mar. 11, 28: and John. 1, 19, they said to him, *Who art thou? what sayst thou for thyself?* If it be in the Gospel of Christ, or in the books of the Prophets and Apostles, we must willingly receive it, and be guided by it: if not, we must refuse it, otherwise we bring upon our selves manifest destruction.

[Use 3] Lastly, it behooveth all private persons that live in a Church, wherein true Religion and the pure worship of GOD is established, to submit themselves to those things that are agreeable to the word, howsoever they be not agreeable to their affections. For as we must give obedience to the Scriptures, whether they speak as we would have them, or whether they speak not as we would have them: so in a reformed Church where a private man doth dwell, if anything be commanded by authority, either agreeing or not agreeing to our affections, yet if the same be agreeable to the Word of God, we must yield obedience unto it. If the Church command anything declining from the Law of God, he must be peaceable in refusing, and patient in suffering, remembering that the only weapons of a Christian are supplication to God and to man. Besides we must know thus much, that whosoever refuseth to obey that which hath been vniformely established and advisedly and moderately concluded by the whole, what private persons soever refuse to obey, had need to do it upon a sure ground, that the same which they refuse, is against the Law of God, lest it fall out with them as with those y^t *Augustine* speaketh off, who gloried that they suffered persecution, but it was for their faults, not for their virtues; so they that withdraw obedience, ought to do it with a good conscience and upon a sure ground, otherwise they can have no comfort in suffering, nor look for reward after suffering. There have always been some things amiss in the Church; and no Church is, or ever was so perfect, but somewhat may be found in it worthy reformation, so that Christ may say to it, as he did to the Churches of *Asia*, *Habeo aduersus te pauca*, I have somewhat against thee. The best Churches will quickly decline, as we see it fell out to those which were founded by the happy hands of the Apostles themselves that were the chief workmen & master-builders.

63 These are they that were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the Priest, &c.

64 But among these there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the Priest first numbered, &c.

65 For the Lord had said of them, &c.

The conclusion of the whole chap. followeth in these words, wherein the former *numbering* is illustrated by place where it was, & by the persons y^t did number, & were numbered: all amplified by the contrary, that among all these there was not so much as any one man left alive, that came in the former account, but they were all of them dead & perished in the wilderness, except *Caleb & Joshua*. Here is a great blessing set down, & likewise a great judgment: a blessing in multiplying of them, a judgment in chastifying of them; thereby to teach us that God is faithful and true both in his promises and also in his threatenings. For he had promised to *Abraham*, that *he would multiply his seed exceedingly as the stars of heaven: & he made this hauock of them, & brought this desolation upon them for their often murmurings & mutinies; wherefore by his promises let us be stirred up to faith & obedience, & by his threatenings be feared & terrified from sin. Moreover mark from this fearful example of a general disobedience or rather conspiracy against God, that it is not a whole multitude that can shelter themselves from God's judgments when they come upon them, though they be never so many or mighty. Though thousands, & thousand thousands muster together & join hand in hand, yet they are not able to deliver themselves. The reasons follow.*

The Lord is just in all his ways, even in the works of his judgments. Now justice giveth [Reason 1] equal to them that are equal. If then all have sinned, as he is just in punishing one, so he will be just in punishing all. This we see in his *casting down all the angels* from y^e heavens that sinned, in drowning the whole world, in destroying Sodom & Gomorrhah, & infinite such like examples. Secondly, as he is just & righteous, so he is strong & powerful. Many men do well deserve to be called just, yet oftentimes they want power, as we see in *Daniel* toward *Joab* when he committed murder, complaining of himself that he was weak, & *the sons of Zeruah* (being martial men) *were too hard for him*. It is not so with God, he is as powerful as he is just, & therefore he will certainly proceed against whole multitudes, be they never so many or powerful, so that none shall be able to escape unpunished. Thirdly, the moe they are that offend, the greater is the offense, and the greater the dishonor done to God; no marvail therefore if he spare not to overthrow great companies in his wrath and sore displeasure. For as in a civil state, the greater the number of rebels is, the greater is the offense against y^e Prince: so it is in this case, the greater multitude of offenders, the greater the offence against God's, and consequently the greater judgment will fall upon them.

[Use 1] This serveth to reprove those that walk on boldly in their sins, & lift up their heads without fear, because they are many in number, & great in power, & thereupon think they

shall be excused because they are not singular, & sin not alone. Alas, this will prove a slender comfort, when God shall come to take an account of us: certainly no more then this, that as we sinned not alone, so we shall not be punished alone. What benefit hath the thief that is going to the place of execution, to see a train of many others bear him company? Is his judgment any whit the less? or is his comfort any whit the more? So when the Lord shall come against those that have broken the covenant with him, & made a league with hell & death, what shall it help them, or ease them to go to hell with company, whereas the yelling and crying of one, shall rather add to the torment & misery of another? If you think God will the sooner respect us because we are many, we deny his justice, and deceive our selves. True it is, he is mindful of a few y^t serve him, and ready to show mercy to one of a City, and two of a Tribe that fear his Name. Though they be contemned & derided of the unthankful world, yet they are dear to him, and they come up in remembrance before him. When all flesh had corrupted their ways, he remembered *Noah* and his family, & saved eight persons, when he destroyed all the rest, Gen. 7, 1. So he delivered *righteous Lot*, when he overthrew the cities of the plain, and would have spared Sodom, *if ten righteous persons had been found in it*, Ge. 18, 32. On the other side, if multitudes trespass against him, and rush on in evil *as the horse into the battle*, he will not spare them for their multitude sake. It is a great encouragement unto many to walk in the broad way, *because many there are that go in thereat*: & they are much discouraged and terrified *from entering into the strait gate & narrow way, because there be few that find it*, & they shall have little company to go with them: but if we would consider the end both of the one & of the other, it were sufficient to make us wise unto salvation. It is a very notable & remarkable judgment that is remembered unto us, that fell vpō this multitude; & the exceeding goodness & kindness of the Lord only toward two persons of those six hundred thousand that were brought out of the land of Egypt; forasmuch as albeit he saved them from the hands of *Pharaoh*, yet *afterward he destroyed them that believed not*, Jude 5. Who doth not desire rather like *Caleb & Joshua*, *to be had in everlasting remembrance*, Psa. 112, 6, & to have our names written in the book of life, then to perish with the multitude, and to be cast into destruction?

[Use 2] Secondly, it warneth and warranteth the Ministers of God to be bold to reprove sin in all, though they be never so great and gracious in the world, though they be many, yea a whole multitude, yet if they be a sinful company, they have a commandment and commission given unto them to reprove them, without respect of persons, without care of the multitude, and without fear of their faces. This is a certain rule, a multitude may not stop our mouths from reprovng sin, and it serveth as a shield and sure defense for the Ministers against those that upbraid them for their faithfulness in their callings, asking them what they need to trouble themselves and the people by reprovng these and these things, do you not see that all men practice them? It is no matter who or what they are that offend, whether they be many or few, all or some; he is not to be silent because of the multitude, but is rather to open his mouth the wider, and to lift up his voice the louder. For if God's hand will not be stayed when great cities are sinful, & when the whole world corrupted their ways, but his judgments will certainly come according to our sins, the Minister ought not to be dumb and tonguetied, though a whole land be corrupt and sinful.

In the days of *Noah* all flesh became obstinate and disobedient, stiff-necked and abominable, yet he is made a *Preacher of righteousness* to reprove the world of sin, 1 Pet. 3, 20. If a Prince send forth his Herald to proclaim war against a company of rebels, shall the Herald, because he findeth them to be a great multitude, return back, and not pronounce the sentence, and yet think himself discharged? No certainly, he may not do so, but rather he should do it the more speedily and earnestly and boldly because they are a multitude: how then should the Minister hold his peace, and have his mouth stopped, because generally the times are corrupt, and the days are evil? whereas he should consider, that the more do sin, the more God is offended, dishonored, and provoked.

In the time of a general plague or infectious sickness, will any, well in his wits, or in his right mind, say to the Physician, Take no care to cure or recover any, it is a vain labor to go about it, for the plague is general. Is it not rather the honor of a Physician, that will still stay and do his endeavor, even then when the disease is dispersed and scattered far and near?

And shall it be thought the dishonor of the Minister of God, when the plague of sin is spread as a leprosy over all, that from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness, but wounds and bruises, & putrifying sores, if he shall then lift up his voice as a Trumpet, and reprove sin with zeal and boldness? No doubtless, he ought to do it, & if he be faithful and painful in his place, he will do it, yea though he see little hope, when the evil is grown common and hath prevailed, & the hearts of the multitude through custom are hardened. For if the blood of one soul that perisheth, be a burden too heavy to be borne, how then shall he be able to bear the weight and the cry of the blood of many souls? If the blood of *Abel*, which was but the blood of the body, and that but of one only, did notwithstanding *cry for vengeance against him that shed it*: doubtless the blood of the soul, much more of many souls, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, shall cry unto God, and bring wrath upon their heads that shed it, as water upon the earth. Forasmuch as they must answer for them if they perish through their negligence and ydleness. What though no repentance or reformation follow our reproofs, yet we must not give over, but continue constant in our calling, knowing that our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord, but our reward is laid up with God in the life to come to remain forever.

[Use 3] Lastly, it must teach and admonish us to take heed that we do not follow a multitude to do evil, nor be carried with the time as with a stream to commit wickedness; as if we must needs be safe and out of gun-shot, because we follow the multitude, and do as the most do. For it is never a whit the less sin, neither are less judgments to be looked for. In the government of a private family, if all the servants and children should conspire together against the governor of the household, shall their multitude joining in one, ever a whit excuse or lessen their conspiracy? No certainly, rather it will make the master of the family to be far more angry and displeased with them: so is it in this point; though they be many that rebel & rise up against God, yet they shall thereby nothing at all protect themselves from his wrath and displeasure. There are many thousands in hell, *ordained of old to this condemnation*, yet none of them hath the less torment, or the more ease, but rather the less ease & the more torment, because of the multitudes and thousands of them: so on the earth

there are many desperate sinners, yet when once judgment cometh, they cannot by any means ease one another, who shall not be able to help themselves, and therefore it is one of the vainest things in the world for any man to deceive himself by following the corruption of the times, and by doing as the greatest part of people do. Be it that no extraordinary judgment come upon us generally or particularly, yet when we must die the common death of all men, and be visited after the common visitation of all flesh, & Satan shall come & charge us for our sins, what comfort can this minister unto us at y^t hour, to allege for our selves, that we have done as the multitude did, & have walked with them in the way that leadeth to destruction? And be it further granted, that we feel no check of conscience, or temptation of Satan, but end our days in peace, as one that quietly falleth asleep; yet when we come to stand before the seat of God, where every man shall bear his own burden, and *receive according to his own works*, Rom. 2, 6. 2. Cor. 5, 10: what comfort or confidence can this give us to plead for our selves, and say, O we have followed the multitude? Let no man therefore dally with himself, & so delude his own soul; for this must come to pass, we must all dy, and appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every man may receive the things done in his body, *when the heavens shall pass away as a scroule, and the elements melt with heat*. Be it some general plague donot come before in this life, or some particular judgment do not seize upon us, yet in the end we cannot escape, when everyone must answer for himself in his own person.

CHAP. XXVII.

1. THEN came the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, & these are names of his daughters, Mahlah, Noah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Tirzah.

2 And they stood before Moses, and before Eleazar the Priest, &c,

THE former Chapter hath opened unto us the order to be observed in the division of the land, that the greater tribe should have the greater share and portion in the land, & the lesser a lesser portion, thereby to give contentment & satisfaction to everyone: & this was to be done by lot to take away contention, which often ariseth in like cases & upon like occasions; as we see when some commons or wasteground cometh to be enclosed, one thinketh his fellow hath too much, & another thinketh himself hath too little; one will have his part lie in such a place; another thinketh that parcel the fittest morsel for himself. In this chapter observe two things; first touching the persons that should enjoy the inheritance, and of the right of succession: secondly, touching the designing and deputing of *Joshua* the servant of *Moses*, to be his successor, & to be set over the people, to conduct them unto the

land, to fight the battles of the Lord, and to give to every tribe his proper inheritance. Concerning the first point, to wit, what persons should have inheritance, consider two things, the occasion of a question and controversy here arising, and the deciding and determining hereof, without any farther doubt or contradiction by the sentence of God himself. The occasion fell out in this manner. When the families of y^e tribe of *Manasseh* came among the other tribes to be numbered, five sisters, all the daughters of *Zelophehad* came likewise in their order, hoping to receive as the rest did, and thinking themselves as capable as any: but because their father was already dead, and left no heirs males behind him, some of their Tribe would have put them by their inheritance, that themselves might obtain y^e more, not regarding what they gained by the loss of others. A common evil of the world, a common practice of worldly men. These women being left fatherless, comfortless, and friendless, exposed therefore to injuries, and like to be ouerborne, finding few or none to stand for them and to take their part, complained *to Moses, and to the rest of the Princes & heads of the people*, which is the lawful remedy left unto us in all wrongs whatsoever. They do plainly declare the truth of their cause, & the equity of their request, that they were Israelites, of the seed of *Abraham*, of the Tribe of *Manasseh*, whose father died in the wilderness, not in the rebellion and conspiracy of *Korah*, Numb. 16, whose companies were worthily destroyed and disinherited; neither yet perished he in any murmuring of the people, neither for any public and notorious offense committed against God, but died a natural death when his time was come, as all men must die, *inasmuch as all have sinned*, Rom. 5, and therefore they show, that their kindred, their flesh and their bones, had no just cause to exclude thē from such inheritance as their father should have had if he had been alive. But of this, more afterward, both of the issue of their request, & the deciding of this question.

[*The daughters of Zelophehad stood before Moses and Eleazar, and before the Princes, &c.*] These women after the decease of their father were left as we say, to the wide world, and were like to sustain great wrong, to the prejudice both of their father, and of themselves and their posterity, and of the whole Tribe, when one family was like to perish in Israel. Here we see, that above all other, such as are left destitute of protection, as the fatherless, the widow, the stranger, the poor, and such like, lie open to receive wrongs and injuries. Such whose forlorn & distressed estate ought to move special pity and commiseration, even they are least regarded and relieved, Zac. 7, 10. Job 31, 21. Hence it is, that God promiseth to take care of them, and to protect thē, and to punish their oppressors, Exod. 22, 22, 23, 24. A great comfort to all that are in distress, to consider that God is on their side, he will be a father to the fatherless, and an husband to the widow. These daughters of *Zelophehad* appeal to the Magistrate: they do not side themselves with others to make a commotion, as turbulent spirits use to do, but they go to *Moses* as supreme, and to the Princes under him. Whereby we learn, that in all wrongs and injuries we must go to the Magistrate, and seek help of him, we must make our causes known to him, and seek remedy and redress at his hands. This hath been the practice of God's servants from time to time. Hereunto cometh the Parable of the wise woman of *Tekoah*, when she pretendeth that one of her sons being slain by the other, the whole family rose up against her to deliver her son that was left her, that they might kill

him for the life of his brother: she appealed to the king to be delivered *from the avenger of blood*, 2 Sam. 14, 11. So 2 Kin. 6, 28, & 8, 3. The Shunamite having left her house and country thorough famine, and in her absence some encrochers seizing upon her land, at her return, to whom goeth she, but to the King to have the same restored? and he sent an Officer, as it were the high Sheriff to put her in possession again, and took order that they should make restitution unto her, both of her house and land, & all the fruits and revenues thereof, since the day she left the Country. See more, Ester 7, 3. Ier. 38, 8, 9. Act. 23, 20, 21.

The Reasons. First, because God hath instituted [Reason 1] & appointed Magistrates to this purpose. It is properly the office of God to be the revenger of wrongs, and to do justice to all, but he hath left Kings and Princes to be his Lieutenants, and set them to supply his place, not to enrich themselves, but for the good of the people, as Rom. 13.4. *He is the Minister of God for thy wealth, & not for his own.* Secondly, men are oftentimes constrained, especially the faithful, to receive many great wrongs & injuries, from them whose might is as great as their malice. If then Princes were not to be *nursing fathers and nursing mothers* to y^e church, they must many ways undergo much danger and displeasure, much hurt and oppression: & thus doth Ester reason, ch. 7, 3, making petition for her people, and her own life, *For we are sold, I and my people to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish.*

This reproveth all private men, that forsaking [Use 1] the means that God hath left, will be Magistrates to themselves, like *Peter*, who when his Master was wronged, *drew the sword and smote off the high Priests servants ear*, howbeit he is reprov'd of Christ, Mat. 26, 51. This is the disorder that *Solomon* complaineth of, Eccl. 10, 7. What then, will some say, [Object.] shall we suffer our selves willingly and willfully to be trodden under foot as blocks, and be exposed as spectacles and gazing stocks for everyone to insult over us? I answer, No: [Answer.] God hath not left us merely in the hands of evil men, but hath appointed us to resort to the Magistrate. But some will say, [Object.] we have complained to them oftentimes, and we find no remedy; they are deaf and will not hear; they are partial, and will not understand; they are careless, & will not help. Answ. [Answ.] Be it so: yet we must not be as malecontents to right our own cause, but rather continue from time to time to solicit the Magistrate, albeit he will not do it at the first, yet he may repent and do it at the last. We see this in the poor distressed widow mentioned in the Gospel, remember her example, *Luke 18, 3, 4, 5*: she came to an unjust Judge, and said, *Avenge me of mine adversary; and he would not for a while, but afterward he said, Though I fear not God, nor regard not man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her*, lest by her continual coming and importunity she weary me. Thus it ought likewise to be with us. [Object.] But it will be said, They are oftentimes wickedmen, they look for bribes, and therefore we have little hope to have help for them. So was the judge to whom the poor widow complained. [Answ.] So was *Ahasuerus* wicked, or else he would never have sealed and set forth so bloody and barbarous a decree for the utter subversion of the Jews; and besides he was an idolater and an infidel; yet *Esther* petitioned unto him, and obtained a gracious answer: and they found a great calm after a great flaw of wind and weather that threatened shipwreck. So had *Pharaoh* hardened his heart against GOD and his people, and was no better then the former, yet would not *Moses* and *Aaron* give him over. So was *Caesar* a profane Prince, yet *Paul* appealed unto him from his own countrey men the Jews,

Acts 25, 10. If any say, [Object.] we have waited long, and yet can find no redress; but matters rather grow worse and worse, and we are every day farther from succor then before. I answer, [Answer.] then we must know thus much; that God calleth us to suffer, thereby to try our patience and obedience; as we see in the example of the Israelites, oppressed by the hard dealing of the task-masters, when they find no release or redress, they sigh to God and groan in spirit, and waire his leisure. In this case it is our duty to submit our selves to his heavenly pleasure, remembering what the holy and constant martyrs suffered, and what the Apostle saith, Phil. 1.29. *Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake*, and 1. Pet. 2.19. And if supplication to men will not serve our turn, let us turn our selves to God, and make our supplication to him. And as *Paul* appealed from the Jews to *Caesar*, so let us appeal to an higher Court, from *Caesar* to God.

[Use 2] Secondly, it is the duty of all Magistrates to deal justly and truly, knowing that they carry the Name of God, so that their place is the place of God, and their judgment is the judgment of God. They must be so far from doing wrong, & taking away the goods of other men, as *Ahab* did the vineyard of *Naboth*, 1, King. 21, 16, that they ought to restore to everyone his right, as *Jehoram* did to the *Shunamite*, 2, King. 8, 6: and *Nehemiah* to the people, chap. 5, 11, 12. *Job* was a man endued with great power and authority, *Job* 29, 7, 8: as well as with much wealth and substance, chapt. 1, 1, 2: and yet he telleth us, chap. 31: that *he never withheld the poor from their desire, neither caused the eyes of the widow to fail, verse 16: he never saw any perish for lack of clothing, or any poor without covering, verse 19: he never lifted up his hand against the fatherless, when he saw he might help him in the gate, verse 21: and before, chap. 29: he testifieth that he delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless and him that had none to help him, verse 12: he became eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame; a father to the poor, and the cause which he knew not he searched out, verse 15, 16: he brake the jaws of the wicked and plucked the spoil out of his teeth, verse 17.* Here is a looking-glass for all magistrates to behold, and a picture to look upon, and a watchword to admonish them what to do; the oppressed should be relieved, and the oppressors should be restrained and bridled. Happy are such magistrates, that thus regard the people; and happy are the people that have such magistrates. The blessing of such as are ready to perish shall come upon the heads of such magistrates, and the loins of the distressed shall call for and bring down mercy upon them & theirs that thus do show mercy. Let all that have the calling of *Job*, and sit in the gate and in the place of justice and judgment, be like unto him; and let them not fear the faces of men, but be bold in the cause of the poor, or rather in the cause of God. And let me say to them, as God doth to *Joshua*; *Be strong and of a good courage, be not afraid neither be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you, whithersoever you go, Josh. 1, 9.* Hence it is that the Scripture teacheth, how such as are set over y^e people should be qualified, and with what virtues they ought to be adorned, *Exod. 18, 21: first, they must be such as fear God; this is the beginning and fountain of all other graces; where this is once rooted and grounded in the heart, it is as a bank that keepeth out all evil, and maketh them not to fear the faces of men: wheresoever and in whomsoever it is not yet planted, there is room for a legion of all impieties to enter, as Abraham showeth, Gen. 20, 11: The fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my wives sake.* Secondly, they must be *men of truth*, wherein they resemble the God of truth: the

contrary will transform them into the image of Satan, who was *a liar from the beginning, and the father thereof*, John. 8.44. This should be the end of all their hearing and determining; this is the mark they ought to shoot at, that truth may be brought to light, which is sought to be covered and smothered in darkness. Every false sentence in judgment is an open and public lie, and turneth the seat of justice into a sink of iniquity, and overturneth the ordinance of God. Thirdly, they must be *men hating covetousness*: for the desire of money is the root of all evil, and a bribe blindeth the eyes of the wise, and casteth dust or rather dung in their faces, that they cannot judge righteously between a man and his brother, nor pronounce sentence without partiality. But they ought to have *clean hands and a pure heart*, that they may do no unrighteousness in judgment, forasmuch as they must not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty, *Levite. 19, 15. Psal. 82, 3, 4. 2 Chron, 19, 6.7.* These things must be learned and practiced of them.

Thirdly, from this ground we may be assured, [Use 3] that it is not in it self unlawful to go to Law, and to sue even a brother if just cause require; if he may be accounted a brother that giveth just cause of prosecuting the Law against him. I say it is in it self lawful, because the best things may be abused and corrupted; and lawful things may be perverted, if they be used unlawfully. To try our right is a right thing; and to use the Law is nothing else but to appeal to the magistrate; and to appeal to the magistrate is to seek help of God. [Object.] It will be objected, that *Paul* reproveth the Corinthians, in that *a brother goeth to Law with a brother*, 1 Cor. 6, 6: and again, *I speak it to your shame, is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, no not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?* [Answ.] verse 5. I answer, he reproveth not the thing it self, but the corrupt affection and practice of those that used or rather abused the Laws, whose sin was hereby also aggravated, that they did it before the infidels, who thereby took occasion to mock at Christ, and to contemn the Christian Religion, to see the professors thereof to be given so eagerly to prosecute their profits, that for every toy and trifle, yea for the wagging of a straw would trouble the courts and seats of judgment. This doth discover a contentious spirit, and a mind altogether given to cavil and contend, a custom too common in many, howbeit nothing beseeming the Christian Faith and holy Religion which they seem to embrace. Again, it argueth an heart set upon revenge, which ought to be far from all the faithful, who ought rather to be ready to forgive, as they have received forgiveness. [Objection] Secondly, it may be objected, that Christ saith, *Math. 5, 40. If any man will sue thee at the Law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.* [Answ.] I answer as before, he only condemneth the usual dealing of men, where they go to Law and sue one another in spleen and desire of revenge for trifles and things of no value; and besides he speaketh comparatively, rather then we should seek a private revenge, we should be ready to suffer a new wrong, and be furnished with patience as with armor of proof, not only to be stripped of one garment, but to endure the loss of other temporal goods. To conclude therefore, we must be assured, that as it is lawful to seek help of the magistrate, so it is lawful to seek the benefit of the Law, provided that we use it lawfully. To this end we must know how the Law may be used lawfully. First, we must not use it of pleasure or wantonness, or of custom, as the manner of many is, who are never well but when they are in Law; but we must use it sparingly, as we use Physic, not as meat and drink.

No man will use Physic every day, but he keepeth a better diet. It is meat and drink to some to go to Law, and they are never quiet till they have quenched their thirst by undoing others and themselves. Secondly, it must be used upon necessity, when the case cannot otherwise be decided. They say commonly, a bad end is better then the Law. If then we may end our controversies without troubling the magistrate, we ought not to refuse that means. Thirdly, we must not propound to our selves as the end of our suites, to be revenged of our neighbor: for then we shall never carry upright hearts in that which we do. Fourthly, we must not go to Law for trifles, the matters must be of moment and importance, for which we contend. Fifthly, our end must not be to undo one another, but to obtain our own right. Lastly, we must not be given to strife and contention, and in an humor seek occasions to begin and breed quarrels, 1 Cor. 3, 3. *Phil.* 2.2. It must be our wisdom to cut off occasions from them that seek after them, and to stope the flood-gates where the waters seek their passage. For when contention is once raised, it is not easily stopped, and therefore ere it be begun, let us prevent it.

Lastly, from hence all persons have direction [Use 4] what to do, that live under the government of others, even in private houses and families. The Law of God and man allow not, nay they condemn the common practice of brawling, fighting, quarrelling, or challenging one of another into the field for private and personal wrongs, whereby the seeds of murder and shedding of blood are sown, which soon grow up to ripeness and perfection, and yield a doleful harvest of sorrow and repentance when it is too late, if they be not weeded out of the heart betimes. Whosoever shall think it a disgrace to refuse such challenges, let them also think it a disgrace to walk in the ways of God, and to obey the good Edicts of Princes, and the wholesome laws of the Commonwealth. It is the greatest grace that can be, to yield obedience to God; and contrariwise, it is no credit to sin against him, to save and salve up a supposed honor and reputation among men. It is the duty therefore of all that live in private societies, when they have hard or wrong measure offered unto them, to go to their fathers or masters; for they are Magistrates in the house, and are within their own doors as Kings to rule, and Officers to govern, and no man ought to revenge his own cause and quarrel: he is as a Marshal to right every man's cause that is under his roof, and to maintain their credit and reputation. The causes of these duels are evil, sometimes pride & vain-glory, sometimes covetousness and greediness of gain, and the cause of all these causes, the devil himself, who was a murderer from the beginning. The effects thereof are no better, for they cause deadly feudes, breed hatred never to be appeased, nourish contention and confusion, hinder prayer and holy exercises of Religion, shed man's blood made in the Image of God, and bring down the vengeance of God upon our own heads. For how often do such quarrels begin with brawling, and end in blood; which once being spilled, cannot be gathered up? Let all such therefore as either challenge, or accept of challenges consider this point, that he which killeth, maketh himself guilty of execrable murder before God, and the blood so shed crieth as it were with a loud voice against him to heaven, and never ceaseth till it hath called down vengeance: and touching him that is killed, let him know, that he is no better then one of the martyrs of the devil. For as God hath his Martyrs that die in his cause, so the devil also hath his martyrs that die in his cause: and such as shed their blood

are the devils executioners, and no better. We can hold no other opinion either of the one or of the other, neither of him that killeth, nor of him that is killed, whatsoever they think of themselves, and therefore let them look to it, that are so prodigal of their lives, or of the lives of others.

3 Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not in the company of them that gathered themselves together against the Lord in the company of Korah: but died in his own sin, and had no sons.

4 Why should the name of our father be done away from among his family, because he hath, &c.

5 And Moses brought their cause before the Lord.

In these words the daughters of *Zelophehad* plead their own cause to have their part in the division of the land, & not to be shut out from their inheritance. The plea is good and well grounded; and they use sundry reasons of no small importance. First, because their father died in the wilderness in his journey toward the land of Canaan, and therefore the same inheritance that was due unto him being alive should not be denied to his issue, being dead. For seeing he died in the way before any of the Israelites could take possession of the land of promise, he could leave to his daughters nothing but the promise of GOD and a lively faith apprehending the same, which no doubt was truly grafted in them, or else they would never have been so earnest in this matter, but have let it alone till the conquest of the land, and the displanting of the Canaanites. They plead that he was not partaker with *Korah* in his conspiracy, *but died in his own sin*, that is, as all other men do, and must do that are sinners, forasmuch as *the wages of sin is death*, Rom. 6, 27. Now under this conspiracy of *Korah* here expressed, we must understand all other mutinies of the same nature, that he joined not with any in their rebellions, neither was partaker with any seditious persons whereby he should deserve to be excluded from his possession of the land. If any ask, [Object.] why this conspiracy of *Korah* is named and singled out above any of the rest of the murmurings which were many, and of many: I answer, first because this was late and yet fresh in remembrance. Secondly, [Answer.] it was more eminent then any of the rest, and as it were swallowed up the memory of all the former. Thirdly, because it seemeth he died at the same time that *Korahs* treachery brake out, and therefore he might more easily be thought to be destroyed with them. But though he died at the same time, yet he died not of the same crime, as likewise it fell out that *Methushelah* died immediately before the flood, it might be after it began to rain upon the face of the earth, but was not swept away with the flood. And here it is not to be forgotten, that some of the Hebrews (as also we noted before, chap. 15, 21) are of opinion, that this *Zelophehad* was the man that *gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day*: others think, that he was one of them that died by the biting & stinging of the fiery serpents, chap. 21, 6. But the purpose of his daughters was to bring to their remembrance, that their father had committed no act, whereby his issue should be denied or debarred of their inheritance,

because he died a natural death, and went the way of all flesh, and *when he had served his time was gathered to his fathers*. An other reason is, because he left behind him no sons or heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, whereby it might and would come to pass that the name of a family in Israel should perish, if no portion of the inheritance were assigned to his daughters. In all this plea we may perceive in them a notable example of honoring parents, in that they are careful that the Name of their father should not be buried in perpetual forgetfulness, but be honourably remembered & preserved, which all ought to follow. Likewise an example of faith believing the promise of God: for except they had assured their hearts, that God would perform his promise, and make good the words of his own mouth spoken to *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, they would never have made such earnest suite, that they might be heirs also of that land by right of succession, in which as yet they had not the breadth of a foot; and therefore the Apostle teacheth, *that faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, Heb. 11.1*. Thirdly, we see that we may be made partakers of other men's sins, and therefore we heard before, that the people were commanded to depart *from the tents of Korah* and his partisans, lest they should be defiled by the evils of those evil men, *Tit. 3, 10, 11, 2 Cor. 6, 7. 1 Tim. 5.22*. This may be done many ways: sometimes by counsel and persuasion; and thus was *Achitophel* guilty of *the rebellion of Absalom* against his father, *2. Sam. 16*: and *Balaam* of the whoredom of the Israelites, because *they committed fornication with the daughters of Moab* by his counsel, *Numb. 31*: sometimes by commandment, as *Herod the great* sent forth *and slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem*, *Math. 2, 16*: and so did *Herod Antipas* *behead John the Baptist in prison*, *Math. 14, 22*: thus was *David* guilty of the death of *Uriah* his faithful servant, and is therefore himself charged to have *killed him with the sword of the Ammonites*, *2. Sam. 12*: sometimes by consent, and so was *Saul* guilty of y^e martyr *Stephens* death, *because he consented to his death*, *Act. 9, 1*: and they that sate in judgment to condemn Christ, to whō *Joseph of Arimathea* would not consent; and therefore cleared himself from his blood, which otherwise he could not have done, *Luke 23.51*: sometimes by flattery, as those that *call evil good, and good, evil*, *Isaiah 5*: such are the ministers that *sow soft cushens under every elbow*, *Ezek. 13*: and such people as would have *the Prophets to prophesy flattering words unto them*, *Isaiah 30*: sometimes by receiving, as they that take and lay up stolen goods, or buy them of those that have stolen them, these are as bad, if not worse then the thieves themselves, and to be punished as they are; likewise *they that receive false tales* to the hurt of their brethren, though they do not first devise them, *Levite. 19, 16*: sometimes by partaking with thieves, and sharing with them, as *Prov. 1*, they took part of that which was stolen: sometimes by defending those that have done evil, and justifying them in their ungodliness, *Rom. 1*: sometimes it may be done by holding our peace, and saying nothing at all, when we may speak and clear a matter; so is he a false witness that *will not speak in the cause of the dumb*, as well as he that uttereth an untruth: thus also is the *watchman* guilty that should give warning and blow the trumpet, but becometh as *the dumb dog that cannot bark*, *Isaiah 56, 10*. Lastly, by not resisting or withstanding, when we are able, *Psal. 82, 4*. If God give us power, & we make our selves weak, the evil that we suffer shall be required of us. Likewise in the example of *Moses*, we learn to have recourse to GOD in all matters of doubt; we must not run on upon an head, but go into the Sanctuary, and ask counsel of the Lord. Lastly, observe, that sin is the true cause of death

mortality, corruption, and all the misery that hath taken hold of all mankind; when sin entered, then entered all plagues and judgments in this life, and after this life, *Gen. 2, 17, & 3.19. 1. Cor. 15, 21, & 11, 30: Rom. 5, 12, 21. James 1, 16. Hebrews 9, 27, 28.*

[Reason 1] For sin is *the sting of death*, that is, the power and strength, and the very armor of death, it is as a sword which he holdeth in his hand to wound us withal. It is as a stinging serpent, *1. Cor. 15:* and if remedy be not sought against the biting of it, it woundeth soul and body to death. Secondly, it standeth with the justice and righteousness of God, which will not otherwise be satisfied. We see how Magistrates, whose breath is in their nostrils, do punish malefactors and offenders with bodily death, their eye doth not spare them: no marvel then if the Lord (who is a *consuming fire, Heb. 12.*) whose person is of infinite Majesty, take hold of soul and body, and punish them both spiritually and eternally; and therefore the Apostle justly calleth *death the wages of sin, Rom. 6.23.* Thirdly, sin hath pestered and poisoned our nature, corrupting all the powers and parts in us, our mind, our will, our memory, our affections, our conscience, *Eph. 4, 17, 18.19. Rom. 6, 12, 13.* It is as a worm that is always gnawing at the root of life, until tree and all fall down. Lastly, sin giveth strength to Satan *the prince of darkness*, without which he could not hurt us, it is he that hath *power over death, Heb. 2, 14. 1. Cor. 15, 56:* and therefore was the Son of man manifested, that *he might destroy the works of the devil, 1. John. 3, 8.* But it may be objected, if sin be the cause of death, [Objection] how cometh it to pass that Christ died, *who knew no sin*, in whose mouth was no guile found? [Answ.] Answ. *Though Christ were without sin in himself, yet he that knew no sin, was made sin for us, &c.* he took upon him the sins of all y^e faithful, as a surety taketh upon him the debt of another. And albeit he were not a sinner by transgression, yet he may be said to be a sinner by imputation, and therefore he must die, yet so, that dying (having no cause of death in himself) *he might destroy death, and him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, Heb. 2, 14, Hos. 13, 14.* Again, [Object] if death be a fruit & effect of sin, how cometh it to pass that the faithful, which have in Christ remission of sins, do notwithstanding dy? [Answ.] Answ. Albeit they have forgiveness of sins, yet they have in them always the relics of sin through the corruption of nature, though it be not imputed unto them through the mercy of God. The guilt of *Adams sin* followeth us, as the shadow doth the body, it cannot in this life be wholly purged; it shall be at the last clean put off by death. It is necessary therefore that we should die or be changed at the last day, that sin may be utterly extinguished, & that we may by death as by a door enter into everlasting glory. Sin is every day lessened and consumed in the faithful, howbeit still we bear about us the body of death, *Psal. 51, 5, 2 Cor. 12, 7, Eph. 2, 3.*

We learn from hence what a horrible and hideous thing sin is, that bringeth with it such bitter fruit; for sin & death are coupled together, *Rom. 8, 2.* Sin came not in by creation, *Eccl. 7, 31,* but by transgression; for from the beginning it was not so. Sin hath wrought this confusion, even the first sin of *Adam*, which also is our sin. Now there are four things that do continually and distinctly cleave to sin, the fault, the guilt, the blot, and the punishment. The fault is the offense committed against God in the action, which is the root of all the rest. The guilt is an obligation to punishment for the fault and offense which we have committed. The blot or spot thereof is as it were a mark or print set and branded in the soul of him that

sinned, when he groweth to an hight in wickedness, like the mark that was set upon *Cain* when he had killed his brother. For the multiplying of offensive actions is the continual increase of the blot or blemish of the soul, til in the end the light of nature be utterly extinguished, and men come to a reprobate sense, and grow to be past feeling, *through the blindness of their minds, and the hardness of their hearts*. Even as the dropsy man, the more he drinketh, the more he dryeth; so the more a man sinneth, the more he is given to sin. As the covetous person always desireth to get more, so the sinner always desireth to sin more, and to work all uncleanness with greediness. The punishment it self is the wages and just recompense of all the former, which is the first & second death. The first death is a separation of the soul and body: the second, a separation of the whole man from God: for as the soul is the life of the body, so is God the life of the soul. Know therefore and acknowledge from hence, that it is an irksome and bitter thing to provoke him by our sin, which driveth away his comfortable presence from us.

[Use 2] Secondly, this teacheth that none can escape death, by strength, or policy, by friends or fraud, or by any occasion, in as much as all are sinners, even from their mothers womb unto the day of their death, Psal. 58, 3. & 51, 5. Gen. 8, 21. Job 4, 17. & 15, 14. & 25, 4. It is a fearful and cruel tyrant, an outrageous and wasting enemy that maketh spoil and havoc wheresoever he cometh, sparing neither young nor old, rich nor poor, Prince nor people, good nor bad, Psal. 89, 48. It standeth us therefore in hand, to account of every day as our last day, and to know that every moment may cut off the thread of our life, so that we are suddenly gone, & are no more: & we must prepare for it continually, our whole life should be a meditation of it. Again, we must pull out of our hearts this false conceit and imagination, whereby every man naturally blesseth, and notably deceiveth himself, and thinketh, though he have one foot in a manner in the grave, yet he shall not die this year, but he may live one year longer, as the rich man was in a pleasant dream, & did forecast for many years, Luke 12, 19. And yet alas we know not *what shall be tomorrow*, I am. 4, 14, no nor what one day may bring forth, Pr. 27, 1

[Use 3] Lastly, let everyone labor to take away the power and strength of his own death. And to this end we must deal with it, as the Philistines dealt with *Sampson*, they never gave over till they had learned *where his strength lay*, Judge. 16, 5, 6, and then they quickly weakened him, and prevailed over him, who before had prevailed over them. So ought we to do, we must know wherein the strength of death consisteth, & that is in sin only. Take this away by repentance from dead works & faith in Christ, *and you shaue off the seven locks of it*, that is, you shall weaken it, that it shall never be able to hurt you. So many sins as live and reign in us, so many stings hath death, which serve to wound our souls to eternal death. If then we would die the death of the righteous, let us endeavor to the utmost of our strength to live the life of the righteous. Then we shall lay a good foundation that shall never be shaken, and build our house upon the rock; we shall begin our eternal life in this mortal life, and *have our conversation in heaven* while we walk upon the earth, Phil. 3, 20. Let us beware of putting off the time from day today, & whatsoever we would do at the last gasp & groan when we are dying, let us do the same every day while we are living. The most wicked when he seeth he is presently to leave y^e world, will seem desirous to pray, though he never prayed in his health,

and to require others to pray for him, and haply those whom before he contemned and derided, & their prayers also; then likewise he will promise and protest amendment of life, & make solemn vows & covenants with God. Let us therefore do this daily, which these men do at their last day, that when death cometh, we may be found ready and prepared *with oil in our lamps, like the wise virgins*, Math. 25. To conclude, he that would live when he is dead, must die when he is alive, and there is no way for us to come to life, but first to enter by the gate of death.

6 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

7 The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their fathers brethren, &c.

8 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die and have no son, &c.

9 And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren.

10 And if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his fathers brethren.

11 And if his father have no brethren, ye shall give his inheritance unto his kinsman, &c.

The deciding of the former question, being referred by *Moses* unto GOD, followeth in these words, wherein he returneth his answer consisting of two parts, the one special, the oath general: the one respecting the time present, the other the time to come. The special belongeth to the cause of these five sisters. God approveth their suite, & requireth that an inheritance should be given to them all, so much as their father should have inherited, if he had lived longer. The accomplishment of this designment is afterward related, Josh. 17, 3, 4, &c. where he performeth this Commandment of the Lord. The general ariseth upon the former particular case, and this belongeth to all the children of Israel, wherein God determineth in what order they shall inherit. Now these are the degrees. First, the nearest heirs are the heirs males, *a man's own sons*. Secondly, if he have no heirs males, *his daughters* shall be his heirs. Thirdly, for default of such issue, the inheritance shall go to his *own brethren*; for after his children, his brother is next in nature and blood unto him, therefore if his own children fail, his brother must be his heir. Fourthly, if he have no brother, then *his fathers brethren*, his vnkles. Lastly, if his father have no brethren, the inheritance must descend to *the next kinsman* whatsoever he be of his tribe and family. Here a question may be asked, whether this law bind in conscience all Nations and persons forever? And many things may be said of it and for it, as most equal and the voice of nature it self. Nevertheless all things considered, [Answ.] I rather take this law to be among the Iudicials that do not necessarily tie all places & persons to the performance of them. Hence it is, that it is said

afterward, verse 11, that it is *a statute of judgment*: and to whom? not to all Nations, but *to the children of Israel*: so that though some of their judicial and political laws do bind, yet all do not, as we see in Exodus, where they are handled in the 21, 22, & 23, chapters. Secondly, this law appointeth that the inheritance must of necessity pass from one to another, from the father unto the child, &c. without any interruption: if then this order must hold as a perpetual ordinance forever, it should be utterly unlawful to sell a man's inheritance for any cause, or upon any occasion, or to buy a man's inheritance, because the Jews were as well tied to that; and if they did, it must return to the owner again at the year of Jubilee, as we read in many places of the Law of Moses, Levite. 25, 23, 24, & Numb. 36, 8: and it appeareth farther in the practice of *Naboth*, 1 Kings 21, 3, when *Ahab* required of him his Vineyard, either by way of sale or exchange, he answered, *The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to thee*. Thus doth God ordain, that every man's Land should keep and continue within his own tribe, and not pass from tribe to tribe, which would bring much confusion, and an intermingling of one tribe with another; all which were peculiar to this people. Thirdly, God ordained it as a statute also in Israel, that the eldest should have a *double portion of all that a man hath*, because he is the beginning of his strength, therefore the right of the first borne is his: this is grounded upon the same reasons that this is, & yet who accounteth this precisely imposed upon all as a moral ordinance? Nay, some of good note and name in the Church, are of opinion, that they should receive the best portion that are best, and inherit most, that have most grace in their hearts; and therefore they take not this precept to be as a president to bind all posterity. And if this do not necessarily bind, why should the former? Fourthly, the words of the law in this place do not seem to me as a law of annexing the inheritance to these, that it should not be lawful to alter this course. It is said, if a man die and have no son, or if he die and have no daughter, then shall the inheritance descend thus and thus: but this hindereth not, but a man while he liveth, may by will or otherwise make conveyance of his estate, and this law is nothing against such conveyance. Lastly, we find that the Israelites themselves did sometimes give inheritance to their daughters, even while they had heirs males, as appeareth in *Caleb*, Judge. 1, 15. 1. Chron. 2, 18. *Solomon* was not the eldest son of *David*, yet he succeeded his father in his kingdom, and had more then all the rest. To conclude, if grace must have the first place, & virtue must make the heir, then nature must give place to grace. But to leave this doubt, let us come to the Doctrine, for hereby we learn, that the propriety of goods is the ordinance and blessing of God; he hath appointed that men should have their possessions peculiar to themselves in this life. So did *Abraham* buy a possession for burial, and paid for it currant money among *Merchants*, Gen. 23, 16: he laid no claim to it before he had purchased it, as if it had been no less his thē any other. The Patriarchs challenged as proper to themselves the Welles which by their own labor and industry they had digged, and complained of wrong and violence when they were taken from them, Gen. 26. To this end did God appoint, that every Tribe should have inheritance given them by lot. Hence it is also that we read that the faithful have had possessions, and retained their possessions, and are said many of them to be exceeding rich, to have possession of flocks, possession of herds, and great store of servants: and others are said to become great, to have silver, and gold, and jewels, Gen. 26, & 24; as *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Obadiah*, and infinite others. In the New Testament we read of

John the Evangelist, of *Joseph* of Arimathea, a Disciple of Christ, who honored the burial of his Master; of *Lazarus* raised up by Christ, & his two sisters; of *Simon* the leaper, of *Ioanna*, of *Susanna*, and these lived in the days of Christ, and had possessions. After his ascension, many believers sold their possessions, *Tabitha* was full of good works, *Cornelius* the Captain gave much alms to all the people, *Philemon* and *Philip*, and sundry others; all which professing and some of them preaching the Gospel, are nowhere commanded to abjure their possessions, and to renounce their houses and lands, neither did they betake themselves to a supposed community, knowing that private possession and Christian profession stand together, and do not one overthrow the other, as hath been plentifully declared elsewhere.

[Reason 1] The grounds of this doctrine are very apparent. First, God approveth of buying and selling, or else the first Christians might not have sold their possessions, and taken money for them; and they did alienate them from them, not because they could not lawfully be possessed, but *because the poor should be relieved*, Act. 4, 34. The Lord likewise giveth rules in the Law for the right ordering thereof, Levite. 25, 15. Secondly, God commandeth almesgiuing to the people as an holy and Christian duty, which he also promiseth to reward to a cup of cold water, Matth, 10. and everywhere he commendeth the relieving of the wants and necessities of their poor brethren, & threateneth the contrary, Deut. 15, 11. Thirdly, he forbiddeth stealing and wronging one of another in temporal things, and hurting one another in their goods, Exod. 20, 15. As also the *defrauding one of another*, Mark 10, 19. Lastly, every man hath his children proper to himself, every man knoweth his own children, and can say, These are mine, these are not mine. Now children are part of their fathers goods, as appeareth Job 1: As then they are proper unto every man, so also ought other goods, that every man may know his own.

[Use 1] This reproveth the Anabaptists, y^t would bring in a communion, or rather a confusion of all things, who while they go about to make all one, they set all out of order; & while they think to establish perfect charity, they bring in a perfect Anarchy. These sectaries are the disciples of *Plato*, not of Christ, whose opinion was rejected by the Philosophers themselves, and convinced by natural reason. This doctrine serveth to no other end, but to burden one, to ease another: and to set some at work to maintain others in idleness. The grounds whereupon these stand, I have propounded and answered in other places. As for the practice of the godly in the Apostles time (which is pretended to maintain this heresy) it cannot serve their purpose, forasmuch as this community was merely voluntary, imposed upon none but such as imposed it upon themselves, Acts 5, 4: and so far as the necessity of the poor Saints required it, which caused them to stretch themselves beyond their ability, least the poor being tempted with the extremity of poverty, should slide back from the Christian verity (which they had embraced) to the Jewish Ceremonies. This y^e church never practiced but in extreme necessity, and therefore they never took it up before, neither do we read that they continued it afterward.

[Use 2] Secondly, albeit God hath given unto everyone a propriety of possession, yet we must take heed that we do not make the things of this life more proper and private then he hath allowed. Many while they shun one rock, make shipwreck at another, and while they would

avoid the Anabaptistical fancy, they have quite forgotten and buried all Christian charity. For as they will not renounce a right in all things they possess, so they will give nothing of their own: and because they cannot abide to hear to have all things common, they will be sure to retain all as proper to themselves. These can abide well enough, nay they are much delighted to hear the Anabaptists confuted, while themselves wander as wide out of the way on the other hand. But we must know that God hath set up one to help another, and given to one, to give to another, Mar. 14.7: *Ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good, but me ye have not always.* To this end we are to consider, both who ought to give, and to whom we ought to give. Touching the first, who ought to give, it is much mistaken by many men: for we think for the most part, that they only are bound to give, that have some superfluity, which they know not otherwise what to do withal, except they should cast it away upon the poor; or at least such as are landed men, or well monied, or rich farmers, that have much to spare. Howbeit I must give you to understand, that this duty stretcheth farther then to such persons as are before described: and therefore we must know that liberality should extend even to the day laborer, yea to those that sometimes may be in want themselves, yet sometimes & in some cases they ought not to be handfast, but ready to communicate and to distribute, albeit not when themselves do want. Likewise the servant that taketh wages, and hath but little, should not be behind hand to give of that little. Christ our Savior lived of such relief as the faithful gave unto him, and received maintenance from those whom he instructed, Luke 8, 3: yet that which he received, he received first for himself and his disciples, and then for others also; and therefore of that allowance he gave allowance to those that were in great need, John. 13, 29. The poor widow in the Gospel is commended, who of her penury shown charity, and cast into the Lord's treasury for the Lord's sake *two mites*, Luke 21, 4. It was in it self a small thing, the seventh part of one piece of their brazen money (for then they used much brass money, Math. 10, 9) howbeit to her it was a great matter; yet she being poor gave to the poor, nay being very poor she gave thē that were very poor. Other rich men gave of their superfluity, but she of her penury: they of their abundance, but she cast in all the living that she had. The widow of Sarepta in the time of a great famine throughout the land, when *the heaven was shut for three years and six months*, Luk. 4, 25; having nothing left but *an handful of meal in a barrel, & a little oil in a Cruise* for her and her son, yet was ready to part from part of that little part and portion to the Prophet, 1 King. 17, 12. The Apostle doth direct such as labor for their living to be painful in their places, not only that they may maintain themselves, and not be burdensome to others, but *that they may have to give to them that needeth*, Eph. 4, 28. The church of the Macedonians (as it is evident by the Scriptures) was a poor Church, and in necessity themselves, yet they do not make themselves poorer, as the manner of many is, that they may cunningly get relief from others, but they send relief to other churches, *and prayed with entreaty that their gift might be received*, 2 Cor. 8, 4. & yet the Apostle speaketh not only of their poverty, but *of their deep poverty*, ver. 2. Al which examples are laid before us to teach, that everyone, even of mean ability, not only those y^t are rich, but others likewise, should show compassion, & be ready to distribute. And as we have seen who ought to give, so let us see to whom we should give, that our alms may be accepted and rewarded of our father which is in heaven. Some will not give anything at all: some give not where they should, and others bestow where they should

not; they are liberal where they may be sparing, and are sparing where they should be liberal. If then any ask to whom we ought to give? I answer briefly, to the poor and such as stand in need, whom God hath made as it wer his collectors and receivers: and thus we must understand y^e words of Christ, Luk. 6, 30. *Give to every man that asketh of thee.* We must not give alms to the rich, and to them that may give unto us again, for that is no charity: we must not give to our friends and kinsfolkes only, but even to our enemies, Ro. 12, 29. *If thine enemy hunger, give him meat: and if he thirst give him drink.* Not to the idle that will not labor, nor yet to maintain any in idleness, nor to those that live only by the sweat of other men's brows, 2 Thes. 3.10, 12: not to stout & sturdy beggars, that as rogues go vagrant up and down the country, such as are members of no society: such as have their limbs and strength to labor: these are indeed no better then thieves and robbers: and as they that give to the former sort maintain them in idleness; so they that give to these maintain them both in idleness & wickedness. As then we see unto whō we ought not to give, so we must know to whom we ought to give. These are poor widows and fatherless children, 1 Tim. 5, 16: such as are poor strangers; such day laborers as work hard for their living all y^e week, and yet cannot either thorough weakness of their body, or greatness of their charge, get things necessary and sufficient for them; and of these we shall always have with us to the end of the world. Mat. 62, 11, Such also as are fallen into decay by inevitable losses, Leu. 23, 35. Lastly, such as are weak and impotent, whether through age or other blemish, whether in their feet, or in their hands, or other parts, that thereby though they be willing, yet they are not able to take pains for their living, Acts 3.2, 6. but amongst all these, they are especially to be respected, *that are of the household of faith*, Gal. 6, 10. If we be careful and mindful of these, God will recompense us again, and pay us home seuenfolde into our bosoms whatsoever we have given, both in temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings.

Lastly, it is our duty to acknowledge God's [Use 3] great mercy toward us in the blessings of this life, that he hath given to us that which he hath denied to many others: and when he giveth unto us a comfortable use of these blessings, we must confess we have them not by our own labor and industry, but by his special goodness towards us, Psal. 127, 1, 3. and therefore we ought to sanctify our daily pains with daily prayer, and begin and end our labors with remembering him that remembereth us, and so praise his goodness that enableth us to get goods: and this shall make our labor sweet and pleasant, and the yoke that lieth in our necks to be light and easy. Again, as God giveth them, so he giveth a blessing with them, a blessing with a blessing, that is, bread and the nourishment of bread, *For a man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*, Deut. 8. Moreover as he giveth outward blessings, so he can take them away when it pleaseth him, even in a moment, Job 1, Luk, 12.

22 And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.

13 And when thou hast seen it, thou shalt be gathered unto thy people, &c.

14 For ye rebelled against my commandment, &c.

Here followeth the second part of the chapt. touching the successor of *Moses* in the government of this great people: wherein observe the occasion & the calling of *Joshua*. The occasion is double, the death of *Moses* at hand, & his request to God to appoint a man to be set in his place. Touching his death, he is willed to go up to mount *Abarim*, and to behold the land that God had given to the Israelites: for God had foreshowed that he should see y^e land with his eyes, though he did not tread on it with his feet: & when he had seen the land, he should dy as *Aaron* his brother before him chap. 20, 24, amplified by the cause, they had not sanctified the name of the Lord at the Waters of Meribah, of which we have spoken before.

Touching the prayer and request of *Moses*, he desireth of the Lord y^t he would appoint a fit Ruler over his people to succeed him in this government, that might be able to bear this great burden. For hearing the vnchāgeable determination of God, & humbling himself under his correcting hand chastising his transgression, he is not afraid of the sentence of death being at hand, and seeing it before him, neither doth he crave to have the stroke thereof prolonged and delayed, neither is he troubled with excessive cares for himself and his children and posterity, as the manner is of worldly minded men, that mind nothing but the earth and earthly things when they must go out of the world, & shall have their mouth full thereof: but all his care was for the future benefit of the people to leave them in good estate after his departure. This should teach us after his example to be ready to leave the world whensoever God calleth us, not to stand in fear of death, but to be willing to go to God, knowing y^e we shall go to *an inheritance immortal, that fadeth not*, 1 Pet. 1. and we must all likewise be careful to leave our houses & places in good state when we are gone, of w^c we have spoken before, chap. 20. *Moses* was the deer servant of God, yet sinning he is punished. The Lord himself received his soul, and buried his body, Deut, 34, 6, 13. He was in high favor with God living and dying, an excellent Prophet to whom God spake face to face, yet he was not suffered to enter into the land of Promise. Whereby we see that many want the Sacraments, that are partakers of the truth and substance of the Sacraments. He entered into the heavenly Canaan that was not permitted to enter into the earthly. Some are admitted unto the outward sign, that never receive the thing signified, so was *Judas* to the Passover, as well as *Peter* and the rest of the Apostles, yet he was never partaker of *the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world*, John 1, 29. On the other side, some take not the outward sign, that neuerhesse partake the inward grace.

The uses hereof are to teach us, that y^e outward [Use 1] and inward parts of the Sacraments, are not necessarily joined together, so that he which partaketh the one should also partake the other, and therefore the outward sign doth not simply confer grace.

Secondly, it condemneth the Church of Rome, that holdeth that children dying without baptism are not saved, whereas salvation is not always annexed to the sign: so that though infants want the outward washing, yet to them may belong the kingdom of heaven, Mark 10, 14.

Lastly, it serveth as a great comfort to such as desire to come to the Sacraments, & yet are hindered, sometimes by sickness, and sometimes by other inevitable occasions that procure their absence; forasmuch as we see in this example of *Moses*, that we may be partakers of the truth of the signs, and yet be barred or banished from the signs themselves. In such cases as these, God accepteth the will for the deed, 2 Cor. 8, 12.

Again, we learn by the examples of *Moses* and *Aaron*, that were not suffered to enter into Canaan, a figure of the heavenly Canaan, this truth, That many are temporally punished which are not eternally condemned. Many are chastised in this life, not only with diseases and sicknesses, but with death itself, who notwithstanding are saved in the day of the Lord. This appeareth in *Lots* wife, Gen. 19: she looked back contrary to the commandment of the Angel, and was turned into a pillar of salt. Her offense might seem little at the first, and the punishment to be ouergreat: howbeit we must not measure sin by the outward act, but by the commandment and will of God, which is the only rule of righteousness. This her disobedience seemeth to proceed from infidelity, unthankfulness, curiosity, and the immoderate love of the world, & of the substance which they had left behind; and therefore she is punished and made as a mirror and monument of God's justice, which *Josephus* testifieth to continue to his time: yet we doubt not but her soul was saved, and she received to mercy. The like we might say of *Job's* childred, they were all suddenly slain by the fall of the house wherein they were assembled, yet they gave good testimony of their godliness in their life; for as no evil is recorded of them in the Scripture, so it appeareth they were well taught and trained up in the fear of God by their careful father even in the days of their youth; God heard their father when he prayed for them, when he sent for them, they came dutifully and obediently unto him; & if they had despised that God whom their father worshipped, he would not have said, *It may be my sons have blasphemed God*, and it had been a vain thing for him to speak to them of sanctification. Moreover, if their banquettings & feastings had been like our Wakes and revels, which they commonly call Yeauals, or drunken feasts of such as call themselves good fellows, he ought to have forbidden their meetings, and not to have prayed to God to pardon their sins w^c they might commit in their meetings, and thereby suffer them to live in the continual practice of sin, forasmuch as that were to mock and dally with God, not desiring pardon for sin past, but to crave free liberty to sin for the time to come. And if the father had doubted of their saluatiō, no doubt he would have bewailed their destruction. Lastly, it is to be noted that they feasted in their own houses; they did not run to Ordinaries, or haunt Ale-houses, or frequent Taverns, neither did they feast every day like the rich glutton, whose daily dinners were daily feasts, for he did nothing else but feast every day; neither did they keep company with ruffians, swearers, drunkards, swaggerers and such like, but they invited one another to witness their good will, and to continue mutual love among themselves. The like we might say of *Uzzah* that stayed up the Ark, and was stricken with sudden death, because he laid his hand upon the Ark, 2 Sam. 6, 7. So was it with *Uriah* the faithful servant of *David*, yet he was slain by the sword of the Ammonites; 2 Sam. 11, 17. *Josiah* that good king served the Lord from his youth, yet died he a violent death, and was slain by *Pharaoh* *Nechoh* at Megiddo, and all the people of the land mourned for him, 2 Kings 23, 29.

[Reason 1] Thus doth God deal with his own children oftentimes: they are chastised in this world, *lest they should be condemned with the wicked in the world to come*, 1 Cor. 11, 32. Secondly, those *whom God loveth, he loveth unto the end*, John. 13: inasmuch as *all his gifts are without repentance*, Rom. 11. & therefore temporal chastisements cannot alter his love, or make frustrate the gifts that once he hath bestowed upon his children. Thirdly, even his own people sin against him, for *in many things we sin all*, James 3, ver. 1. and therefore when they sin against him he chastiseth thē with death as with a rod, howbeit his mercy he never taketh from them. Thus did *Josiah* offend, he would not hear the word of the Lord which was brought unto him, & therefore he was smitten by the hand of God.

[Use 1] This teacheth, that it is a false rule and a deceitful measure, to judge of the salvation of men by temporal things, whereas commonly *all things fall out alike to the godly & ungodly*, Eccl. 9, 12. Many there are that will take upon them to judge and censure: men to be out of the favor of God, because sometimes they die suddenly, and sometimes strangely: and contrariwise if they die in their beddes quietly and calmely, they conclude that they must necessarily be the children of God, for that cause only. But if we have no better testimony to discern a child of God then this note, we may soon be deceived: for this may often happen more by the nature of the disease, then through any grace in the soul of the diseased. The constant course of a man's life, is the best witness what is in man. A man may die raving, and haply blaspheming, and yet be the servant of God, by the violence and rage of some sickness disturbing the head and the brain. For as *Paul* saith, *It was not he, but sin that dwelled in him*, Rom. 7, 15: so I may say, it is not they that rave and blaspheme, it is the force of their sickness, to which they do not consent: and again, a man may go away like a Lamb, and yet die out of God's favor, and go to hell, as Job chap. 21. verses 13, 14.

[Use 2] Secondly, this reproveth the Popish sort, that commonly condemn *Zwingli* a sound defender of the true and Apostolic faith, because he died in the field, as a good Patriot against the enemies of his country. He did no more then every true Minister and faithful man ought to be ready to do. He was slain with the sword of wickedmen, but that death was an honorable death: He exhorted the people to constancy in the faith, as the Priest is commanded in the Law to do, Deut. 20, 23 It is no reproach to die in a good cause, and a just quarrel. If he had died as *Sanders* an arch enemy to the Queen and State, died in Ireland in the rebellion which himself had procured, who died distracted and in a frenzy, to behold the hand of God gone out against him and all his plots and projects crossed, O what outcries would these men then have made! he died as a Traitor against his lawful Prince in the Popes quarrel, and was in the field against his own Sovereign; whereas *Zwingli* died with his own Cittizens in a good cause, and was lamented of all good men.

Lastly, we must take heed we do not judge [Use 3] rashly and rigorously of the Churches sorrows and afflictions, albeit they seem oftentimes both strong and strange, when God *feedeth them with the bread of tears, & giveth them tears to drink in great measure*, Psal. 80, 5. *The dead bodies of his servants have the enemies given to be meat to the fowls of the heaven, and the flesh of his Saints to the beasts of the earth, their blood have they shed like water, and there was none to bury them*, Psal, 79, 2, 3, 4, 5. Nevertheless, they shall not be able to separate them from God,

Rom. 8, 35. If we be the children of God, nothing shall be able to hurt us: though death come upon us suddenly, as it hath done upon many, it shall bring us to God, not divide us from his presence. We do for the most part take upon us through a general corruption to judge those the most grievous sinners that suffer the greatest sorrows, as it appeareth by *Job's* friends, and Christ's followers, Luke 13. howbeit this is an opinion that must be rejected, as full of error, and empty of charity.

15 And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying:

16 Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation:

17 Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in, that the Congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd.

18 And the Lord said to Joshua, &c.

19 And set him before Eleazar, &c.

Here is offered unto us, the second occasion of the election and inauguration of *Joshua*, to wit, the prayer of *Moses*. We must not think that he used no more words then here are expressed: for this is only the substance and chief effect of his prayer. In it we are to note: first the preface or entrance into the same: for, no man ought rashly to enter upon this holy work, but well advised and thoroughly prepared. Secondly, the prayer it self.

The Preface containeth a description of God by his titles and effect, giving life and breath to all creatures, for *thorough him we live and move, and have our being*, Act 17.28. The prayer it self is, that he would appoint a mā over the congregation to succeed him in the administration and government of the Commonwealth, considered farther by the ends, y^t being endued with the Spirit of God, he may be able to perform the duties of his calling, and go before them by his example, expressed by *going in and out before them, and by leading thē out, and bringing them in*, as *Solomon* prayeth for wisdom and understanding for the same purpose, 2 Chron. 1, 10. & 1 Chro. 27, 1. Secondly, that the people may not be *as sheep without a shepherd*, scattered upon the mountains but may keep together, live in order and society one with another, to perform such mutual duties as are required for this life, & the life to come.

Thus much of the occasions: now we come to the calling of *Joshua*, and separating him to bear office among the people, wherein we must observe the commandment of God, & the obedience of *Moses*. The commādements of God are many, *Take him, &c: lay thine hands upon him, set him before Eleazar the Priest, &c. give him charge, &c.* and *Eleazar* must ask counsel of the Lord for him after the judgment of *Vrim* and *Thummim*, Exod. 28, 30, What this *Vrim* and *Thummim* were, is diversely understood: it were endless and fruitless to rehearse the several

opinions of all, neither is it easy to determine. Some of the Hebrew Doctors think they were not the work of any Artificer, but that they were a mystery delivered to Moses from the mouth of God, or they were the work of God himself, as the two Tables of the Law were, and that when the Priest asked counsel of God by *Vrim*, he made answer by lively voice, 1 Sam. 30, 8. The words are both plural, and the Septuagint do translate them, *The manifestation and the truth*, but properly they signify *the lights and the perfections*: and both of them were a figure of Christ, who communicateth unto us from his father the true light and perfection, being made *our wisdom and righteousness*, 1 Cor. 1.30: for in the heart of him being our great high Priest, the true *Aaron*, were the gifts of the holy Ghost without measure. John 3, 34. Col. 2.3. Again others think, that as those words, *holiness to the Lord*, were graven on a plate, and put on *Aaron's* forehead, so these words, *Vrim* and *Thummim* were likewise graven on a golden plate, and put in the breast lap which was double, for something to be put therein. Lastly, others think they were no other then the precious stones spoken of Exod. 28: and that they put the Priest in mind of his office, that he must instruct the people both by the light of his doctrine, and by the integrity of his life. But whatsoever they were, it is most certain, that the use of them was to enquire of GOD, and likewise to receive an answer of his will, as appeareth in this place and in sundry others, Judge. 1, 1, & 20, 18, 28. 1 Sam. 23, 9. & 10, 11, 12. These were lost at the captivity of Babylon, and wanted at the people's return, Ezr. 2, 63. Neh. 6, 65: neither do we read that ever God gave answer by them anymore: thus much of these. The obedience of *Moses* is set down generally & particularly, he did as the Lord commanded, he took *Joshua* and set him before *Eleazar*, and put his hands upon him, & gave him a straight charge to execute his office faithfully in the government of all the people committed unto him.

[*Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh*] This is the preface or preparative to the prayer. The faithful were always wont to make some entrance or introduction into this holy exercise, as it appeareth in the form of prayer left to the church by Christ our Savior. In these words *Moses* acknowledgeth the Lord to be the God of the spirits of all flesh, as before chap. 16, 22: whereby he meaneth, that he is the Creator of our souls, and hath given them unto us. The doctrine; God is the Creator and maker of the souls of men, and hath given unto them not only their bodies, but also their souls, Gen. 2, 7. Job 27, 3. Eccl. 12, 7, &c. And how can it be otherwise?

For first, he it is that hath formed all things, [Reason 1] he is the creator of things visible and invisible, Col. 1, 16, that are in heaven or in earth, and without him was nothing made that was made, John 1, 3. Secondly, he is *the father of our spirits*, so called of the Apostle, Heb, 12, 9: if then he be *the Father* of them, doubtless he is the former of them. It is confessed that God is the Creator of the soul, nevertheless it will not follow from hence necessarily, that it is created immediately, or given immediately by him, as it is certain it was at the first creation. And albeit many places be produced to prove an immediate creation, yet the opinion is rather weakened by those testimonies, from whence it is thought to be established, as for example, Eccl. 12, 7: *The soul returneth to God that gave it*. For the question still remaineth vndecided, whether God give it immediately or not: that God gave it (which is all y^e wise man saith:) every wisemā acknowledgeth: but how and in what manner, by means or without

means, remaineth yet in doubt as before. The opposition made in that place between the soul and the body, rather proveth the contrary: for as the body was of the dust, so is the soul of God & his gift. But how is the body of the dust? not immediately, but of the Parents: so that it is apparent that *Solomon* hath relation to the first creation of *Adam*, of whō it is true, that *God formed man of the dust, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul*, Gen. chap. 2, verse 7. I purpose not to enter into this controversy, much less take upon me to define, whether the soul come by traduction or by infusion, whether from the parents or from GOD, a question much debated both among ancient and moderne writers; wishing rather all men to be wise with sobriety, & to content themselves to know, that it is given of God, and to be his Title, to be *the God of the spirits of all flesh*, and to consider what uses we may make of it.

First, this serveth to overthrow diverse errors [Use 1] and heresies touching the soul, raised up in former times to trouble the Church, & to destroy the faith. Such were the Sadducees, who held that spirits were only certain qualities or accidents, but no substances at all, nor having any subsistence of themselves, Acts 23 8. We learn on the contrary side, to acknowledge that the soul is a creature of God, as the body is, and a thing essential (as also the heavenly Angels are) and liveth when the body dieth, as may be easily proved by infinite testimonies of holy Scriptures: for this is the more noble part of man, created, but yet immortal; invisible, but yet subsisting. *Solomon* saith, *It returneth to God that gave it*: Christ our Savior commendeth *his spirit into his Fathers hands*, Luke 23, 46. So *Stephen* prayeth, *Lord Jesus receive my spirit*, Acts 7, 59. Thus do they make GOD the keeper and preserver of the soul, when once it is delivered out of the prison of the body. They then that make the soul nothing but a blast or breath, or a certain power infused into men's bodies but such as hath no essence or substance, are grossly deceived and mistaken exceedingly.

[Use 2] Secondly, it is our duty to yield obedience to God both in body and soul, and to submit our selves to him in all things, especially under the Cross, even when the flesh is most prone to murmur and rebel, Hebr. 12, 9. If we must yield reverence to our fathers, of whom we have received our bodies, then should we be subject to God, of whom we have received our souls. The Apostle chargeth us to *glorify God in our body and in our spirit*, which are God's, 1 Cor. 6, 20. they are both his, and therefore both are to be given to him agine.

[Use 3] Thirdly, the soul being from God, it cometh nearest to his essence, whereby we bear his Image, and resemble him in knowledge & wisdom, and therefore it is a most precious substance, more worth thē all the bodily creatures of the world; for when the body returneth to the dust, the soul goeth to God that gave it. The Prophet saith, Psal. 49, 7, that no man can redeem his brothers soul, or pay a sufficient ransom to God for him, it goeth beyond his power and ability. All the gold & treasure in the world cannot equal one soul in value. The murdering of the soul is the highest and most horrible murder that can be, and it is the greatest sin to destroy a man's soul, Math. chapter 16, verse 26: on the other side, to save a soul, is one of the best works, and that which shall receive the best reward, Dan. 12, 3.

Lastly it belongeth to us to have the greatest [Use 4] care of the soul: for as it excelleth the body, so the care of it should exceed and surmount the care of the body. The Scripture

oftentimes calleth men from the excessive and immoderate care of the body, to which we are too much inclined, Math. 6, 25. 1 Cor. 7, 32. Rom. 13, 14, that we may have care of the soul, and set our affections upon heavenly things. [Object.] But are we to cast off all care of the body, and to mind nothing but heaven & the provision for the soul? Nay, not so: [Answer.] GOD hath made the body as well as the soul, therefore the body is to be regarded as well as the soul. I say as well, though not as much. As then Christ saith, *This must be done, but the other must not be left undone*, Matth. 23, so the soul is especially to be regarded, but the body is not to be neglected. Besides, the body is as the Tabernacle and instrument of the soul: the tabernacle of it, to dwell in it: and the instrument of it, to work by it, and therefore the soul cannot do the duties proper unto it, except the body prosper and be provided for. Howbeit our chiefest care ought to be for the soul, that it may live to God in this life, and live with God in the life to come. If our greatest care be to adorn and decke the body, it is most certain we are careless of the soul.

[Verses 17, 18, 20. *Which may go in and out before them, &c.*] In these words we have the sum and substance of the prayer of *Moses*, and of the commandment of God unto him touching *Joshua*, which I will join together, that we may end this Chapter; for of laying on of hands, mentioned verse 18, and 23, and of asking counsel of God, we have spoken oftentimes before. Moreover, we have here many particular points offered unto us touching Magistrates and Subjects: as that God appointeth none to serve in any calling, but he furnisheth him with sufficient gifts for that calling; as it is said, *Joshua* is a man *in whom is the Spirit*, that is, the gifts of the Spirit fit for government. As when *Saul* was appointed & anointed to be king of Israel, he was after a sort changed into another man: and *Moses* is here willed to put some of his honor upon *Joshua*, verse 20. When it is said, *he should go in and out before the people*, we learn, that Magistrates and men that be in authority ought to be examples in all good things to their people, & not give themselves liberty to do what they list, verse 17. And when the reason is rendered, *lest the people should be as sheep without a Sheepheard*, we learn, that that people is in a most wretched estate, where they have no Magistrates to go in and out before thē, Judge. 17, like a flock of sheep without a Shepherd. By this similitude also our Savior expresseth in what fearful condition the people are that have no Ministers or teachers to instruct them, Matth. 9, 36: for as the one sort are in danger of the destruction of the body, so are the other of the loss of the soul: whereby subjects should learn to be obedient to their Magistrates, & to be thankful to God where he hath set them, and under them to profit in the ways of godliness, lest for our unthankfulness and other sins they be taken away from us. But the point which is chiefly here intended, is this, That Magistrates have their calling, and hold their places immediately from God for the good of the people, 2 Chro. 9, 8. *Solomon* was set in his throne by God himself, not by the high Priest or the people, Dan. 2, 21, 37. It is said of *David*, that God chose him to be King, he delighted in him to make him King, 1 Chron. 28, 4. He chose him from the sheepfold to feed his people *Jacob*, and *Israel* his inheritance, Psal. 78, 71. It is said of *Saul*, *The Lord hath anointed thee to be Governor of his inheritance*, 1 Sam. 10, 1. God said to the Prophet touching *Hazael* & *Jehu*, *Annoint Hazael king of Syria, and Jehu shalt thou anoint king of Israel*, 1 Kings 19, 15. So then, they hold of God in chief, and not of men.

[Reason 1] The grounds hereof follow. First of all, the Scriptures call kings the Lieutenants and ministers of God, Rom. 13, 4. *There is no power but of God, the powers that be, are ordained of God, &c.* For he is the minister of God to thee for good; and not only so, but they are called gods on earth, Psa. 82, 6. Exod. 22, 28, because they sit in his place, and are to execute his judgments.

[Reason 2] Secondly, they are bound to give an account only to God, and not to man: for as they are next and immediate to God, and inferior to none but to him, so for all their actions they shall reckon with him. The officers sent out by him, the Judges that execute justice, the Ministers and all that preach the Gospel, and all that rule in the Church, in Commonwealth or in the house, must give an account to him, but he to none, saving to him that hath called him. *Tertullian* saith well, He maketh him Emperor, who made him a man before he was Emperor: from him he holdeth his Scepter, of whom he hath his soul. [Object.] But it may be objected, that *Peter* calleth it an ordinance of man, 1 Pet. 2, 13: *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.* If then it be an human ordinance, how may it be divine? I answer, [Answer.] the magistrate is so called, not because men are the authors of it, or may dissolve it: but first, because men do execute it, not God or the Angels. Secondly, because it is ordained for the use, benefit, and profit of men, it is ordained for men, as Heb. 5, 1. So we may say of the King, he is taken from among men, and he is ordained for men.

[Use 1] This reproveth the Church of Rome, together with the great bishop, & mighty advancers of that See, that give temporal power to the Pope, and make him the soueraign Monarch of the earth, as if all the world were one body, and he the soul that quickeneth, moveth, nourisheth, and upholdeth that body; or as if Kings and Princes held their temporal possessions, dominions, and iurisdctions of him, as it were their land *in Capite*: and as if that proud bishop had power to cite these as his subjects or vassals, judicially to appear before his Consistory. Howbeit y^e Pope himself hath no more then he can claim from *Peter* (if so much:) neither can *Peter* have anymore then he can derive from Christ. But Christ himself while he lived upon the earth took upon him no temporal jurisdiction, he refused to be made a king, John 6: he refused to be a Judge in civil causes, and in dividing inheritances, Luke 12, 13. He paid pol-money as others did, Matth. 17: he submitted himself to the judgment of *Pilate*, and commanded all *to give unto Caesar the things that are Caesars*; Mat. 22. This was the doctrine of *Peter*, & his example also. What then? shall the servant be above his master? or will he that calleth himself the *servant of servants* usurp that which neither *Peter* the supposed founder of that supremacy, nor yet Christ himself ever challenged or usurped? The answer of *Bellarmino* to this is to be marked, which is as the egg, whereof the treasons and rebellions were hatched that have abounded in these last days. For he and his fellows sound out the trumpet of sedition, and secretly instill damnable poison into the hearts and ears of their hearers and readers, that Christ refused to divide the inheritance, lest the office of the Prelacy should be stained with such base and abject Offices: and that *Peter* submitted himself to *Caesar*, because then he was weak and not able to recover his right: but if he had been strong enough he would never have yielded to him. I answer first, it is no base calling to be a judge of inheritances, it is an honorable place to sit in the courts of justice, and in the seat of judgment. Again, as Christ refused to be a Judge, so he refused to be a king also; & taught

them that *his kingdom is not of this world*. Is it a base office to be a king? or dishonorable to rule a kingdom? Besides, as he refused civil honor, so he performed civil subjection, and thereby acknowledged his obedience and homage unto *Caesar* by his doctrine & practice. Wherefore, it is certain he refused to deal in these causes, because they were not befitting his calling, who came to preach, not to rule: to divide the word aright, not the wealth of the world. Secondly, where they teach y^t *Peter* putteth the church in mind of obedience, because it was not then able to resist, this is to despise government, to arm the subject against y^e prince & to make way for treasons & insurrections; and is contrary to the doctrine of the Scriptures, and the practice of former times, as we have shown at large elsewhere.

Secondly, it reproveth such as teach, y^t Princes [Use 2] excommunicate by the Popes sentence, are not to be obeyed, and that their subjects are discharged of their oath of allegiance toward them so long as they lie under that censure. But the Apostle willeth that obedience should be yielded even to wicked and idolatrous Princes, such as are enemies to the Gospel of Christ, and that *for conscience sake*, Rom. 13, 5. The Christians in the primitive Church wanted not number nor strength to have resisted and deposed Pagan Emperors, as *Tertullian* teacheth; for they had filled every town and city, every campe and corner, yet they never stirred or offered to make insurrection, but offered themselves to be killed: for Princes hold their Crowns and Scepters by the gift of God, and therefore none but he that gave them can take them away from them. They were accountable to him, but to no mortal man whatsoever: and therefore *David* said, *To thee only I have sinned*, Psal, 51, 4. And this teacheth them a good lesson, to remember that they must one day appear before the judgment seat of God, and plead before his bar guilty or not guilty, as now their subjects do before them. This then is the Regal tenor to hold immediately from God, to whom they must do homage and fealty for their Crowns and Kingdoms. It is not unknown what exorbitant courses the Bishop of Rome hath taken, exalting himself from a Christian Pastor to be an Antichristian Pope, and from a Pope to a temporal Prince, and from a temporal Prince to be a supreme Monarch over all, and to have omnipotent power as a vice-god on earth. Such *Almain*-leapes in good time (there is good hope) will break his back, nay his neck: and free the Christian world from his yoke and bondage, worse a thousand times then the slavery of the Israelites in Egypt, when God shall open the eyes of all Christian Princes to see his usurped ambition & dominion; which God grant for the glory of his Name, and the salvation of the poor people that are held in more thē Turkish captivity.

Lastly, we must acknowledge, that Magistrates [Use 3] are of great necessity, forasmuch as the end of their Office, is the good and benefit of the people, over whom they are placed, Lam. 4, 20. They serve as a comfortable shadow, to preserve us from the scorching fires of raging persecutors, like the gourd of *Jonah*, which came over his head, to deliver him from the heat of the Sun, *Jonah* 4, 6, 8: which serveth to condemn the Anabaptists, which cannot abide any government or governors; whereas we must learn to pray for them, and to be subject unto them, which are *the Lord's Shepherds over his flock*, without whom nothing is to be seen but miserable disorder & confusion of all things, Judge. 18. For a Commonwealth without a Governor, is as a body without an head, as a ship without a Pilot, as an army

without a Leader, or as an house without a Ruler. The loss of a good and godly Prince, is a great loss, and greatly to be lamented, 2 Chron. 35, verse 24. Zach. 12, verse 11.

CHAP. XXVIII.

1. AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

2. Command the Children of Israel, and say unto them, My offering and my bread for my sacrifices, &c.

3. And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire, which ye shall offer unto the Lord: Two Lambes of the first year without spot, day by day for a continual burnt offering.

4. The one Lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other Lamb shalt thou offer at even.

5. And a tenth part of an Ephah, &c.
6. It is a continual burnt offering, &c.
7. And the drink roffering, &c.
8. And the &c.

MOSES having set down the numbering of the people, proceedeth to handle the laws under which they ought to be, whereof some belong to Church-matters, and some to the Commonwealth, some sacred and some civil. Such as are holy have the first place, and that worthily, which order showeth, that the Commonwealth can never be well established, until the Church be rightly ordered. The first and chief care is to be had of the Church, and afterward of the civil state & Commonwealth. They begin at a wrong ende that begin with matters of policy, as if a man should be very careful to look to the body, but be careless of looking to the soul, or should have regard to the foot, and utterly neglect the head. It was evermore the manner of the godly & religious Kings of Judah, to begin first with Church-matters, and looking to religion, and ordering the preaching of the Word and administration of the Sacraments, as we see in *David, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah*. So did *Zerubbabel* immediately after their return from captivity, as we see in the book of *Ezra*.

[Reason 1] And no marvel, for true religion is the soul and life of the Commonwealth, without this it cannot prosper and flourish, but is as a dead carcass without life, it may carry

a goodly show, and seem to promise peace & perpetuity, but it is not well grounded, and will deceive in the end; witness the Monarchies of the world, which all received their decaying and declining in their times & seasons, of which before, chap. 3.

Secondly, true religion is that only which instructeth all sorts in true obedience, & teacheth them to perform their duties, which is the means to establish a Commonwealth, & to order it aright, when everyone knoweth his standing, and no man encroacheth upon the calling of another, and the contrary bringeth confusion.

Thirdly, everyone is charged to seek the glory of God above his own good, and to set up him before our selves. For as he will not give his glory to any other, so we ought to take heed we do not rob him of it. But when we have the first care to establish matters of religion, then we show that we are zealous of his glory.

First then they are deceived, that think it [Use 1] enough to make laws for preservation of public peace and tranquility, that every man may keep and enjoy his own, & that wrongs and injuries may be suppressed and banished. The chiefest care ought to be of God's service and worship, otherwise our Commonwealths shall differ little or nothing from the states and governments of the heathen. Here then is a lesson for all Law-givers, if they desire to have Christian Commonwealths, to begin with Christian religion, and look to the Church, and there lay a good foundation. He that would build an house to stand against storms and tempests that will beat against it and seek to bear it down, will be sure to begin with the foundation, & make sure work there: so such as desire to have a flourishing Commonwealth, and all estates as a goodly building to grow up and prosper in it, must make religion the foundation, and then it shall be sure to stand, because that is as a rock that shall never fail nor fall.

[Use 2] Secondly, hereby also we may try our selves whether we belong to God or not; if in the first place we regard duties of piety and godliness, and be more careful to fear God thē to fear man, then we are truly religious, and may assure our selves we are true members of the church. We must make him our fear, *who is able to cast body and soul into hell*, Matth, 10, rather than man, who can but kill the body, if kill the body, John 19. Let everyone of us therefore be more careful to settle our consciences in the true fear of his Name, then to settle our estates in earthly and transitory things, remembering that *godliness is profitable to all things, and hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come*, 1 Tim. 4, 8, and that if first of all we seek the kingdom of God, all other things shall be ministered unto us, Matth. 6, verse 33.

Lastly, it serveth to reprove mere civil [Use 3] men, that regard nothing but to live civilly among men, but never regard to know God, & to glorify his Name. So far do the Turks & Infidels go; but except our righteousness exceed theirs, we cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Our first and chiefest care ought to be of Religion, but these have no care of it at all. They regard the praise of men more then the praise of God.

[Ye shall offer unto the Lord two Lambs of a year old, one in the morning & the other at even.]
Touching the Laws of an holy nature, some were appointed as necessary for them to observe, and some voluntary. Touching the necessary Laws, they are of four sorts, some were daily,

some weekly, some monthly, & some yearly: or rather to speak more properly, *Moses* speaketh here of four sorts of oblations or sacrifices: First, of such as were offered every day. Secondly, of such as were offered every week. Thirdly, of such as were offered every month. Lastly, of such as were offered every year. Touching the voluntary, we shall speak afterward, chap. 30. The holy time that concerneth every day, is the morning and evening sacrifice offered daily: the weekly holy time is touching the Sabbath: the monthly is touching the Calends or first day of every month: the yearly is touching the feasts of the Passover, of Pentecost, of Trumpets, of Humiliation, and of the Tabernacles. All these laws were in a manner before handled, while y^e people abode at Mount Sinai. If any ask the Question, why then they are again here repeated? I answer, first, [Answer.] because they were now come to enter into the Land, being in a manner upon the borders thereof, chap. 27, 12. God would therefore put them in mind of this, that when they should possess the Land, they must be mindful of his worship and their own duty. Secondly, because few at this time remained alive, which had heard, or if they had heard, could remember these laws that then were published & propounded, all being now dead (except *Caleb* and *Joshua*) which were numbered before, as we saw in the end of the 26, chapter. Thirdly, the ceremonial worship had been intermitted in the wilderness for many years, as circumcision, Josh. 5, and many other like ordinances by reason of their continual journeys, or at least continual expectation of them. Lastly, God doth hereby comfort and confirm his people after their manifold provocations and murmurings, testifying thereby that as a merciful Father, he is reconciled unto them, & the remembrance of their sins buried, and that he hath determined to do them good all the days of their life. Now the first thing to be considered, is *the daily sacrifice*, in which was to be offered morning and evening, a Lamb, fine Flower, Wine, & Oil: these were to be offered continually as a burnt offering upon the Altar, which law was not to take place until they came into the Land, as we heard before in the like case, chap. 15, 2. because in the Desert they wanted many things necessary, Deut. 12, 8, which was a sufficient dispensation for the omitting of them: for when God doth require anything, he giveth means to perform it; and did never impute it as a sin unto them, when an inevitable necessity did hinder them, and the desire to obey is no less accepted then obedience it self. Of this daily sacrifice with the rites thereof to be performed every morning and evening, we read at large, Exod. 29, 38. they must do it *day by day continually* So 1 Kings 18, when *Elijah* convinced *Baals* Priests, there is mention made of their choosing, dressing, and offering a Bullock in the morning, verse 26, and of his doing the like *at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice*, verse 36. Likewise *Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour*, Acts 3, 1: this was the time, being three of the clock in the afternoon, when the evening sacrifice was wont to be offered, unto which, prayer also was wont to be joined: we see their practice what it was daily; now let us come to the uses toward our selves.

First, see from hence by consideration of [Use 1] this daily offering, *a Lamb every morning and a Lamb every evening*, a great difference between the Old and New Testament. For this law (as also the rest) is not observed nor is to be observed of the people of God in the days of the Gospel, since the coming of Christ, which was observed and ought to be observed before Christ came in the flesh, by the people of the Jews: but instead of these oblations and

sacrifices we have the Supper of the Lord. They were laden & burdened with sundry ceremonies, and had an heavy *yoke put upon their necks*, Acts 15, 10. which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear, as *Peter testifieth*; and such as were joined with much cost and no less labor and trouble, every foot they were constrained to be unclean, and put from the Congregation, and with many sacrifices and solemnities were purified again. We have a few ceremonies (if we may call them ceremonies) only two, to wit, baptism, once only to be received, which came in place of circumcision & their often purifications, and the Supper of the Lord, which came in place of the Passover and the other Sacrifices, their meat-offerings and their drink-offerings. [Object.] If any ask, why God changed this form of his worship, or why he abrogated those sacrifices and the whole Levitical service. I answer, [Answ.] because they were instituted to be figures of Christ, and to shadow out his sacrifice, Heb. 10, 1, 2, &c. for the sacrifices were so many testimonies given of God, that Christ Jesus should come into the world, and offer up himself a sacrifice *without spot or blemish*, to cleanse the sins of the people, and to make satisfaction for them unto God. Wherefore he being come and his sacrifice being offered, those other sacrifices ought to cease, and if now they should continue, they should be no better then lying signs and false witnesses, and testify an untruth, to wit, that Christ should come hereafter and die for us, who is already come and *hath died for us once and can die no more*, Rom. 6, 9, and hath fulfilled all that was written of him. If any do ask farther, [Object] why God would over-lade the faithful in the Old Testament, with so many troublesome and combersome ceremonies, and not us in the time of the new. I answer, [Answ.] the Church was then as a child in his nonage, or as a servant in bondage: whereas the Church of Christ is as a man grown up and set free, Galat. 3, 24, and 4, 1, 2, &c. and needeth not any tutors or guardians.

Secondly, we must understand from hence, [Use 2] that as all sacrifices under the law, did as it were lead us by the hand to Christ, & point him out with the finger, *who is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth*, Rom. 10, 4; so did this daily sacrifice of *the two Lambes offered morning and evening*, most plainly. He is both the Altar and the Sacrifice, Heb. 13, 10. He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, John 1, 29. He is our food, our meat and drink to be received by faith, represented by the bread and wine that was offered, *for his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed*, John. 6, 55. We are hungry and thirsty, and want nourishment to refresh and sustain us to eternal life, if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, verse 51. As then these Lambes were offered *in the morning and at the evening*, so was Christ from the beginning of the world unto the end thereof, the Savior of all them that believe and trust in him; he is *the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world*, Revel. 13, ver. 8. And as this *daily offering* was twice performed, so we have daily need of reconciliation, that his blood should continually be applied unto us by faith; and as we daily sin against him, so we must daily have recourse unto him for remission of sins. Now albeit there were two Lambes offered, we must not dream of two Christ's: as there were sundry Altars, all figuring one Christ, so there were two Lambes, howbeit they were but a repetition of one and the same thing, & represented one and the same Christ. And that this continual sacrifice was a figure of Christ, it is evident, because it is prophesied to cease at the coming of the Messiah, Dan. 9, 27, that then the shadow should give place to the body. So then the

Levitical sacrifices were commanded only for a season, as *Justin Martyr* proveth out of this place, and *Cyril, lib, 10. in Levite*. For if God would have had them continue longer, and the Priesthood to abide forever, they could never have been abolished and destroyed; for no time, no violence, no enemy can take away that which God hath decreed to endure forever. Wherefore we must know, that the virtue and efficacy of the death of Christ extendeth it self from the very first fall of man, to the last fall of the world, that is, from the beginning of the world to the utter dissolution of the same. And withal this *daily sacrifice* signified the continual sanctification of the Church, through Christ the true Lamb of God, by whose mediation we and our actions are accepted of God, Acts 26 6, 7. Rom. 12, 3. 1 Pet. 1, 2, 19, 22. and 2, 5.

[Use 3] Thirdly, the Synagogue of Antichrist is here reprov'd, that would bear us in hand, that *this daily sacrifice* doth shadow out the daily sacrifice of the Mass, and they are not afraid or ashamed to build and set up that abominable Idol upon this foundation. But how can that be shadowed out in holy Scripture, whereof God is not the author, the instituter, or approver, and whereof no print or footsteps are to be found? True it is, the institution of the last Supper is of Christ, but this Supper is one thing, and the Mass is another: for the Mass hath quite abrogated and disannul'd the Supper, and is celebrated to another end, to wit, to merit remission of sins, and consequently salvation and eternal life. But the Supper was never instituted to be a propitiatory sacrifice to reconcile man unto God, but to be a Sacrament, whereby God as by a most certain seal doth strengthen our faith and assure us of eternal life, purchased by the only Sacrifice and Oblation of Christ once offered upon the Cross. Besides, if this daily sacrifice did point out the continual sacrifice of the Mass, then it will follow that it hath an end, and ought to be no longer in use in the Church, forasmuch as this and all other legal sacrifices had their consummation and consumption, when Christ was exhibited, as we shown before out of the prophesy of *Daniel: weeks*. Wherefore if they love the Mass, that loveth them so well and maintaineth them so wealthily, and be enamored of this creature, let them not build it any longer upon this groundwork, which is now out of date, lest they break the neck of it forever. But *Bellarmino* (who must help at a dead lift) hath labored much to put life into this dead Idol, and to raise again this carcass out of the dust, alledgeth two other places out of the same Prophet, (Dan. 12, 11. and 11, 31, and 8, 11,) to prove that they are Antichrists which take away their daily sacrifice of the Mass, for which they fight, as for the life of their religion. But these propheticall predictions of *the abolishing of the daily sacrifice*, which he applieth to the heretics (forsooth) of this time, and maketh them forerunners of Antichrist, because they desire nothing more then the overthrow of this sacrifice of the Mass: I say these propheticall predictions are best expounded by the event of them, which were truly fulfilled in *Antiochus Epiphanes*, by whom the Temple was horribly profaned, the Sanctuary wretchedly defiled, & the daily sacrifice abolished, so that he set up the abomination of desolation upon the Altar, as is evidently declared in 1. Mach. 1, 12, 30 So then, by the daily worship or sacrifice here oftentimes mentioned, we are to understand, not any sacrifice of the Christians to be taken away by the fury of Antichrist, but the daily sacrifice of the Jews which was interrupted and taken away by this *Antiochus*. Again, if the doctrine of the Romish Church be true, then Antichrist shall reign but three

years and six months; howbeit the Prophet speaketh of *six years and three months wherein the daily sacrifice shall be trodden under foot*, Dan. 8, 13, 14. Thus to establish one untruth, they bring in another. Lastly, if their Mass were to be abolished by Antichrist, wherein they teach the eternity of Christ's Priesthood consisteth, then should Christ's Priesthood also be at end, whereas of it shall be no end, & therefore the ceasing of *this daily sacrifice* is interpreted by *Chrysostom, Josephus*, and the author of the Maccabees, to be the Jewish Sacrifice, so that we may bid the popish daily sacrifice farewell, and send it packing unto Rome, the mother of whoredoms and abominations.

Lastly, *this daily sacrifice* importeth the daily sacrifice of prayer which we ought to offer [Use 4] to God, as our daily service due unto him, 1. Kings 18, 36. And thus do the Hebrew Doctors speak, *The continual sacrifice of the morning made atonement for the iniquities that were done in the night: and the evening sacrifice made atonement for the iniquities that were by day*. It is therefore required of us to pray unto God, not once in a month, or once a week, nor only upon the Sabbath day, or publicly in the assemblies of the faithful, but we must remember him daily that remembereth us every hour. The time of prayer is every day, and that in respect of our daily sins, our daily wants, dangers, temptations, and decays, so that we must observe the rule of the Apostle, *Pray continually*, 1 Thess. 5, 16. These are five strong motives to stir us up daily to perform this duty, so that we may say with the Prophet, *I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait: even in his word do I hope; my soul waiteth for the Lord, more then they that watch for the morning, &c.* Psal. 130, 5, 6.

First, (to speak of them in order) we have daily sins. We provoke God every day, and therefore are taught daily to pray for forgiveness, & to say, *If thou (Lord) should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?* Ps. 130, 3. For as he lades us daily with his benefits, so we lade him daily with our sins, so that they are a burden unto him, he is weary to bear them; & therefore we should make even reckoning with the Lord every day, and renew our repentance evermore.

Secondly, we have daily wants, and who feeleth them not? and therefore it is our duty daily to bewail them, and daily to crave the supply of them. If there be any feeling of grace or spark of God's Spirit in us, we cannot be ignorant that we want both temporal & spiritual blessings, for body and soul. A blind man may see them, they are so great and so many.

Thirdly, we have daily dangers; every creature, if God give us over, is able to work our destruction. We go not from home, but our return is uncertain, no man can assure himself of safety. If we get up on horseback, in the slipping of one foot, we slip into danger, & sometimes into death. If we be in the house the misstepping of one foot bringeth trouble. If a man enclose himself in his garden, a serpent may bite him. If he walk in the streets, a tyle from an house may strike him down, nay dead. Where can a man secure himself, or how long, or from whom? When we have escaped one danger, may we afterward promise unto our selves safety? nay we are presently in danger of another danger; as we see in the Syrians, who, when they had escaped the sword of the Israelites, fled to *Aphek* into the Citty for refuge, *But there a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of them that were left, and slew them*, 1 Kings 20, 30, so that it is with us as the Prophet *Amos* speaketh, *as if a man did fly from a Lyon*,

and a Bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him, Amos 5, 19. Therefore our only safety standeth in prayer, and in sanctifying the Name of God, and begging his assistance.

Fourthly, we have daily temptations bodily and ghostly, arising from the flesh, the world, and from the devil. Our adversary the devil never resteth, but *walketh up and down like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour,* Job 1, 7. 1 Pet. 5, 8. He is never idle nor weary, he is an importunate suter, he will never give over, nor take any denial, and therefore Christ saith, Math. 26, 41. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak:* and he instructeth his Disciples, Luke 32, 21, that Satan desired to have them, that he might sift them as wheat; howbeit he telleth *Peter,* he prayed for him, that his faith should not fail. Among all these temptations, pleasure and prosperity are none of the least, when we enjoy health & wealth, peace and liberty, ease and abundance. If ever we forget God, it is most commonly when we are full, Psalm. 30, 6. Deuter. 6, 6, 7.8, &c. Luke 21, 34, 35.

Lastly, we have daily decays in good things. It is with us in the matters of the soul, as it is in the state of our bodies. Our natural heat and moisture (wherein the life consisteth) is daily impayred and would quickly consume, were not nature daily supplied by meat and drink, whereby the decays of these, as it were the breaches made in nature, are made up: so would faith and repentance, and other graces of God be weakened and diminished daily in us, if they were not increased by the continual use of the Word, of the Sacraments, and of Prayer: and therefore we must not cease to stir up these gifts in us, lest they be as a spark of fire in green wood, which will soon go out if it be not kindled. So then this *morning & evening sacrifice,* should direct us how and when to worship God; we must remember him in the morning & in the evening, he must be in our thoughts first and last, we must begin the day and ende the day with him. Let him be in our first meditations, when we awake out of sleep. If the heart and thoughts be well settled in the morning, they are like to be better ordered and disposed all the day after. This made the Prophet say, Psalm. 5, 3. *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up;* and Psalm. 22, 2, and 53, 17, and 119, 55, 62, 164. Dan. 6, 10 Then are the faculties of the soul most fresh and cheerful, then are the senses comforted and refreshed, because of the nights rest, and therefore best able to perform any duty to God or man. Again, the morning is a time wherein the world and the business of this life, have not yet forestalled and possessed our hearts and affections, and therefore we are then y^e most fit to perform any special or spiritual duty required of us. Lastly, it is y^e first part of the day, and therefore the most worthy to be consecrated to God, after we have newly tasted his great mercy in the night past, which he might have made everlasting darkness unto us, & never raised us up again. Moreover, as the greatest part neglect this time, so do they also at evening; they forget what blessings they have received, what dangers they have escaped, what temptations they have resisted, what wants they have obtained, what decays they have supplied and repaired, for which they should give him thanks; and lastly, what sins they have committed in the day, for which God might justly destroy thē. They remember not to cast themselves upon his protection: they consider not, that he may make their bed their grave, and never bring them to see the light

and the Sun again. They never yet truly learned, that *in him we live, and move, and have our being*, Acts 17, 28. Howbeit we that should continually remember the kindness of the Lord, and pray to him, and praise him at all times, do for the most part forget him from morning to evening, & from evening to morning, and one day, and week, and month after another; and therefore it often falleth out, that God giveth us little rest and quiet, Deut. 28, 67. *But in the morning thou shalt say, would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.*

9 And on the Sabbath day, two Lambs of the first year, without spot, and two tenth deals of flower for a meat offering mingled with oil, and the drink offering thereof.

10 This is the burnt offering of every Sabbath, beside the continual burnt offering and his drink offering.

Here is the law set down touching the solemnity of the Sabbath: before we had the daily burnt offering, in these words we have the *weekly offering*, wherein all things are doubled. Every day we should set aside a part of it to God, and cut off somewhat from our own business to lift up our hearts to him: but the seventh day should wholly be spent to his glory. Before they offered one Lamb, now two Lambes: before one tenth deal of flower, now two tenth deals, &c. So then, we are to speak of the Jewish Sabbath, and the uses thereof to our selves. This was first prescribed and appointed to *Adam* in the time of his innocence, Gen. 2, 2; this was the seventh day from creation. It is repeated in sundry other places of the word of God, Exod. 16, 26, they might not gather Manna upon this day, Exod. 35, 2, 3. and 34.21. and 31, 13.

[Reason 1] Many reasons are rendered, Exod. 31, why they must observe this Sabbath; First, it is a sign between God and them, that it is he that doth sanctify them. Secondly, it is ordained for their benefit and commodity, and therefore should be holy to them, as Christ farther teacheth, Mark. 2, 27. *The Sabbath was made for man, & not man for the Sabbath.* Thirdly, the necessity of keeping it appeareth, because they that did not keep it, should surely die. Fourthly, it is consecrated to God, it is a Sabbath of rest unto him, verse 15. Fifthly, the Lord propounded his own example, for he created the world in six days, & then rested the seventh. See more to this purpose in the uses afterward.

First, this rest prescribed in the law, that [Use 1] they *must do no manner of work*, was mystical, pointing out our spiritual and internal rest and cessation from the works of sin, Isaiah 58, 14, and 66, 27. We must not do our own ways, nor seek our own will: we must cease from our own works to follow after the works of God. Thus we begin a spiritual Sabbath in this life, or else we shall never enjoy the eternal Sabbath in heaven. We must begin our Sabbath here, we shall finish it hereafter. Therefore the Apostle saith, Hebr. 4, 10, 11. *He that entered into his rest, he hath also ceased from his own works, as God did from his: let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.* All sins are

truly and properly our own works, because we naturally do them, and can do nothing else, and we are Satan's *house* wherein he inhabiteth, Math. 12, 44, we cannot please God, but bring upon our selves by them all miseries and calamities, yea death it self. So then we keep a true Sabbath, when we abstain from our evil ways, when we mortify the deeds of the flesh, when we are quickened by the Spirit to lead a new life, & when we do those things that are well-pleasing in his sight. For what shall it avail or advantage a man to abstain from the works of his hands, and the labor of his calling, and in the mean season to nourish sin and all evil in his heart? What comfort on the Sabbath can the day-laborer find in resting from his worldly labors, if he labor nothing at all to deny ungodliness and all worldly and sinful lusts? What fruit shall the tradesman find to cease from the works of his calling, when he maketh a trade and occupation of sin upon that day? to cease from making garments for others, and not himself to learn *to put on Christ*? What benefit hath the Physician to cease his prescriptions, and to abstain from giving his receipts for bodily health, if himself seek not after the health of his own soul? may it not be truly said to him, *Physician heal thyself*? Luke 4, 23. What shall it avail the traueiler to cease his travel, and yet never require & seek after the kingdom of Heaven? What good shall the Inn-keeper or Tauerner receive by ceasing from their ordinary victualling, if they provide not for themselves the meat that never perisheth, and the bread that came down from heaven, but famish and pine away their own souls? Or what profit shall arise to such as will neither buy nor sell upon the Sabbath day, when in the mean season they never go about *to buy the truth of God's word*? Pro. 23, 23: not to sell away of their own corruptions that hinder them from the best things? To what end and purpose do we abstain from mustering & training of soldiers, if we do not learn on y^e lords day to fight the lords battles against y^e world, y^e flesh, and the devil? which are the most capital and deadly enemies that we have, not to our bodies only, but to our souls. And why do we cease to put on our bodily armor, our shield, our head-piece, our sword: if we do not put on the whole armor of Go, *the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, and the sword of the spirit*; that we may stand fast in the day of trial? Eph. 6, 16, 17. Thus then we see who they be that keep a good Sabbath, even they that learn to rest from sin, and cease from all their evil ways.

Secondly, the Sabbath also is Symbolical, [Use 2] in that it is a pledge unto us of our everlasting rest in the kingdom of almighty God, as the Apostle showeth in the Epistle to the Colossians, chapter 2, verse 17. *The Sabbath days are a shadow of things to come*; and Heb. chap. 4, verse 9. *There remaineth a rest for the people of God*: and farther he proveth it out of the Prophet, in Psalm 95, where God promiseth not an outward, such as was the ceremonial rest of the Sabbath and of the Land of Canaan, but the eternal rest with Jesus Christ in heaven. This do none attain but only the faithful, and now we are in the way that leadeth unto it, we are not yet in possession of that rest, 2 Corinth. chapter 5. verse 7. As then the passenger doth not sit still, but always is going forward and further, until he come to his journeys end: so ought we to make continual steppes in the faith, until we come *to receive the ende of our faith, which is the salvation of our souls*, 1 Pet. chapter 1, verse 9.

Now we must understand that eternal life is called *a rest* for two causes; First, because thē and there we shall rest from all our works, that is, from our sins: for then we shall sin no

more, but shall know God even as we are known; no evil shall dwell there. When the Angels had sinned, they were immediately cast out, *and are reserved in chains to everlasting perdition*, Jude, verse 6. Secondly, we shall rest from all troubles and miseries of this life, Reuelat. chapter 14, verse 13: and hence it is, that this place *of rest* is called by the name of *Abraham's bosom*, Luke 16, 22, 23, because *Abraham* and all believers that are the sons of God, do there quietly rest and repose themselves, as the child in the bosom of his mother.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it teacheth us to avoid all profaneness upon this day of the Lord; the works of our callings, and the pleasures of our own hearts are mere profanations of this holy day. Everyone will be ready to confess that it is a great sin either for the husbandman to go to plough, or for the tradesman to follow his business, or for the day-laborer to work, or for the handy-craftsman to apply his vocation: howbeit for a man to give himself to his sports, pleasures, and delights, they think there is some greater liberty. Howbeit it seemeth a most ridiculous thing to me, that God forbiddeth to the poor man his labor, and alloweth to the rich man his pleasure: to permit that which is less necessary, and to restrain that which is more necessary. But let us see what we are to hold, as well of the one as of the other out of the Law of God.

First, *Adam* himself was commanded to *sanctify this day which God had blessed*, Genesis, chap. 2, 2; and the people in the wilderness are forbidden to *gather Manna*, Exod. chap. 16, verse 6. For this day is a market day for the soul, and a time to provide spiritual food far more excellent and precious than Manna, John, chap. 6, verse 58. 1 Pet. chapter 2, verse 3.

Secondly, our ordinary buying and selling, keeping of fairs or markets on this day, to whom we may join those that bring their wares and commodities into Church-yards, that after morning prayer they may vent them among the people. This is another abuse among us, which toucheth the buyers as well as the sellers. And if such commodities be brought unto us, we ought not to buy them, Nehem. 13, 15. For what maketh sellers among us, but because they easily find those that will take their commodities at their hands? It is certain, if there were no buyers, there would be no sellers,

Thirdly, there ought to be no carrying & carting upon this day, lest God lay some heavy burden upon us, too heavy for us to bear, Ierem. 17, 21, 22. Many carriers offend this way, and as they break the Sabbath themselves, so they are the cause of the breach of it to many others,

Fourthly, we must not follow our labors, no not in harvest time, when we might claim the greatest privilege, and the season seemeth to offer unto us liberty, and to give us a dispensation, yet even then we must rest; provided that our corn and provision for the year be not in danger to be lost, *for then God will have mercy and not sacrifice*, Math. 12, 7. If we may save the goods of others, much more our own: And if save the life of our beast, much more our corn whereby our lives are preserved.

Fifthly, they are reprov'd, that wander from their places, that run about after every pleasure, or profit, or feast; a common abuse & profanation of the day, almost in all places, Exod. 16, 29: these are like *profane Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage*, Hebr.

chapter 12, verse 16, so do they sell the word and sacraments for small trifles. These are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, 2 Tim. chapter 3, verses 4, 5. and many of them make their belly their god, Philippians, chapter 3, ver. 19. And touching their profits, they take great gain to be godliness, not godliness, to be great gain; the first Epistle to *Timothy*, chapter 6, verses 5, 6.

Sixthly, the Jews were forbidden to build the Tabernacle upon this day, which was a place consecrated to God for his service and worship, Exodus, chapter 31. verse. 15. It is not therefore lawful to build God's house with material stones upon that day, but we must labor to *be living stones, built up a spiritual house, and an holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*; the first Epistle of *Peter*, chapter the second, verse 5.

Seventhly, they are reprov'd that keep a carnal Sabbath unto the devil, not an holy Sabbath to God, who spend the time in carding, dicing, drinking, surfeiting, revelling, and such like. This is the devils Sabbath, and no better then to serve him. They are evil upon any day, but worse upon this day. *Saul* was offended when he saw *David's* place empty at his Table: but how often may our places be seen empty at the Lord's Table, and in his house? Lastly, not to regard the hearing of the word, whereby we may increase in good things, and learn our duties to God & man. The neglect of these duties bringeth many judgments and curses of God upon our heads, Amos 8, 4. Nehem. 13, 17, 18. Ier. 17. verse 27.

[Use 4] Thirdly, we must labor to perform obedience to God upon this day without weariness or distraction, both publicly and privately. It is our duty to hear the word preached in it, 2 Kings 4, 23. Luke 4, 16, Acts 13, 14, 15, & 15, 22. We must exercise our selves in the Word and Sacraments, pray with the Congregation, lay up in our hearts what we have heard, meditate upon it, confer about it, and seek to increase in knowledge, faith, and obedience: otherwise the Sabbath shall pass from us without profit. We must try our hearts and lives whether we go forward or backward, or stand at a stay. If we do these things, then shall we be wise observers of this day, and have the blessings of GOD come down upon us, Exod. 31, 13, 17. Ezek. 20, 12, 20. Isaiah 56, 2, 3, 4, &c. and 58, 13, 14. Ier. 17, 24, 25, 26.

[Use 5] Lastly, it is the duty of all Governors to look to their families, and therefore GOD beginneth with them, and directeth the commandment unto them, and that for these causes. First, because they must give an account of their government to God, of whō they have received it, who is the high Commander and general Master in Heaven and Earth, and of all their souls that are under their charge: forasmuch as he will search and enquire not only how civil and just among men, and toward men our government hath been, but how godly and religious.

Secondly, GOD setteth them in the first place, to teach them that God requireth at their hands to teach their families, to command their sons and households to fear God, & to bring them up in his faith & fear, and in true religion, Eph. 6, 4. Gen. 18, 19.

Thirdly, because they must go before them by good example and practice of all holy duties, as *Paul* would have *Timothy* to do, 1 Tim. 4, 12; as we look for any comfort at the Lord's hand in that great day of his dreadful judgment, when *he will bring every work to light, with every*

secret thing, whether good or evil, Eccl. 12, 12. If we have been examples in good things, we shall receive everlasting life: if examples in evil, everlasting death.

Fourthly, the Lord singleth out the father and master in the first place, because if they go before and lead the way, the rest of the house will quickly follow after, John, chap. 4, verse 53. Acts, chapter sixteen, verse 32: contrariwise if they yield not obedience for conscience sake to the duties of the Sabbath, they may by the abuse of their authority hinder & frustrate the holy endeavors of his children & servants. Hence it is, that many fathers urge their children, many masters command their servants to go about their own business, and send them from place to place at that time when they should attend to the holy commandment of the Lord, whereas both of thē might well and lawfully reply to their fathers and masters, and say with Christ our Savior, Luke 2, 49, *Wist ye not that I must be about my fathers business?* Lastly, the Lord layeth this weighty charge upon them, that such as are under their government, may yield willingly and cheerfully to God's will, considering how straight a charge God hath given to all governors. If they should do it of their own head, or lay an heavy burden upon thē, which themselves would not touch with their little finger, the charge could carry no authority. It is not therefore their fathers or masters that restrain them of their liberty, & tie up their wicked and wandering affections, but GOD himself, to whom all obedience is due. The father doth show love to his children whē he restrayneth them from wickedness, the master doth no wrong to his servants that brideleth them from following their own willes and pleasures. So then the point to be learned and practiced, is, that we must first keep the Sabbath in our own persons, and begin reformation within the doors or closets of our own hearts, or else we will be very remiss & negligent in reforming of others; or if we be forward we shall be charged and challenged to be hypocrites, while we teach others, but do not teach our selves, Rom. 2, 21. Secondly, we must cast our eyes upon others, and look to them that belong unto us, that they may sanctify the Sabbath as well as our selves. It is not enough for us to come to the house of of God alone, but we must come with the trayne of our families, as a Captain with his army, Psal. 110, 3, and 42.4. The father oftentimes is praying in the Church, when his children are playing in the streets. The master many times sitteth in the house of God, when his servant lieth at the alehouse. The wife sometimes goeth with her husband to the sermon, when the daughters and maid-servants either are sent or suffered to run to lascivious dancing and wanton company, whereby their minds and oftentimes their bodies also are defiled, as it fell out to *Dinah*, Gen. chapter 34, verses 1, 2; and so the saying of *Solomon* is verified, Proverbs, chap. 29, verse 15. *A child left to himself, bringeth his mother to shame.*

But haply some Masters will allege for themselves that their servants are unruly, [Object] as the untamed heyffer, and will not be ordered by them, that they are much grieved they can prevail no more with them, and that they break out and will not be holden in by them. I answer, [Answer.] this is not a good plea, but a vain excuse, and no better. For if thy authority serve to bridle them and keep them under in the six days, how cometh it to pass that thou wantest power to prevail over them on the seventh day? Can we rule them in our own cause, and can we not rule them in the cause of God? Have we means to enforce them to look to our business, and want we means to compel them to do God's business? It seemeth

therefore to me, to be rather want of will in us, [Object.] then of power. If we pretend farther, that they be incorrigible, and will have their own swinge, and be at their own liberty that day; [Answ.] we have no warrant to burden our houses with such persons, that will neither serve the Lord nor obey us, but rather infect others that live with them. The Prophet *David* professeth, that they should not serve him that were ungodly, his eyes should be upon *the faithful to dwell with him, but the wicked should not tarry in his house*, Psal. 101, 6, 7. Why then should we keep them in our house, that love not the house of God? We will quickly discharge that servant which hath no care of our business, why then will we trouble our selves & our house with him that is unfaithful toward God? Thus then we see the care that all ought to have of the Sabbath, both master and servant, father and son, husband and wife. But (alas) the profaneness of our times is so great, that the Sabbath is in a manner utterly contemned, & we give him least service on that day wherein we are bound to give him most duty. For we see here under the Law, how the Lord commandeth that *the daily sacrifice* which every morning and evening was offered, should be doubled upon the Sabbath. But our people for the most part perform single service, and double impiety upon that day. The greatest service is done to our selves, or that which is worse, to the devil. But of the Sabbath we have spoken before, chap. 15.

11 And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the Lord, two young Bullocks, and a Ram, and seven Lambes of a year old without spot.

12 And three tenth deals of flower for a meat offering, &c.

13 And a several tenth deal of fine flower mingled with oil for a meat offering, &c.

14 And their drink offerings shall be half an Hin of wine unto a Bullock, and the third part of an Hin unto a Ram, and the fourth part of an Hin unto a Lamb, &c.

15 And one Kid of the Goats for a sin offering unto the Lord shall be prepared, besides the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.

In these words we have the monthly solemnity commanded to the Jews, to wit, the Calends of the months, called the New Moons, or beginning of every month. The worship performed therein; was two young Bullocks, one Ram, seven Lambs of the first year, three tenth deals of flower for every Bullock, and two tenth deals of flower for every Ram for a meat offering, &c. it must also have a drink offering containing half an *Hin of wine*, &c. Here we have mention made (as also before) of the *Hin* and of the *Epha*. Touching the *Epha* & *Omer*, we have spoken already, chap. 5, 15, 16. Now we must speak somewhat of the *Hin*. Some are of opinion, that it cannot be certainly known, how much the Hebrew measures contained, as appeareth in *Lyra* and *Cajetan*, and so they leave it uncertain to determine. Others to enwrap the *Hin* in greater obscurity, make two kinds of measures of this one kind, the greater and the lesser: but this is

a bare conjecture without warrant. Mention is made hereof before, chap. 15, 4, 5, 7, 9. This we are to hold for a certain truth, that the *Hin* is of liquid things, and it is commonly accounted to contain six pintes, which we receive as most probable & least suspected, because it agreeth with the computation of the Hebrews, who generally hold, that it holdeth twelve of the measures called *Log*, and the *Log* contained six eggs, and there goeth to a pinte of our english measure as much as 14 eggshells contain. But of this see before, chap. 15.

Now to return to the matter which is here handled, we see that the Calends or beginnings of the months were consecrated & hallowed unto God, as before, chap. 10, 10, and in many other places, 1 Sam. chap. 20, 5. 1 Chron. chapter 25, verse 31. 2 Chron. chap. 8, verse 13, and chapter 31, verse 5. Nehem. chapt. 10, verse 33. Ezer. chap. 3, verse 5. Ezek. chapter 45, verse 17, and 46, verse 1. Amos, 8, verse 5.

This was the solemn feast of the Jews: [Use 1] let us see what it belongeth unto us. First, see hereby that God did set apart diverse times besides the Sabbath, to his people that serve him, to hear his word, and to resort to the Prophets to be taught and instructed in the ways of godliness, 2 Kings 4, 25. Ezek. 36, 1; at such times the people went to the Prophets, when the Priests were oftentimes negligent in their places. Christ our Savior complaineth in the Gospel, that they were *as sheep without a Sheeheard*, Math. 9, verse 36, when there were store of Priests and Levites in the Land, howbeit they were *dumb dogs*, and opened not their mouths to interpret the Law.

The Sabbath day is the chief time to seek after knowledge, and ever was from the beginning: nevertheless, God appointed other times also to his people. There are not many places in the land where the word is preached on other days thē the Sabbath, I would there were more of them; it is a good help to many other places where they want teaching, & if the people resort to them as they were wont to the Prophets, they are to be commended & encouraged. If there were a dearth of Corn among us, how far would we go to fetch Corn, rather then we would starve? I believe as far as the sons of *Jacob*, who went out of the Land of Canaan into Egypt: so ought it to be with us in regard of the soul, we should be ready to go from place to place yea from Land to Land, rather thē pine away and perish for want of instruction, Amos 8, 12. But if many that live among us had lived in those days, that cannot abide that preaching should be upon any other day, they would have enueyed against this as a great disorder, and upbraided the people that they gad after Sermons, and leave their business, and beggar themselves. In the days of Christ the people followed him out of their houses and Cities, and sought him out to be taught of him; yet he never reprov'd them or forbad them, but fed them both in soul and body. Doth the Lord command us so often to delight in the Law of the Lord, to meditate therein day and night, to seek first of all the kingdom of God, and ought a few miles to stop us or hinder us? How far will men ride, and run, and sail for a little earthly substance? It is accounted by worldly minded men that savor nothing but of the earth, no disorder at all, to run on heaps from town to town to drunken feasts, may games, dancings, plays, bear-baitings, and other like fooleries and vanities; they allow this running from place to place; but if any go half so far to seek after the word, and to edify themselves in their most holy faith, they cry out against it with open mouths, and think them worthy to

be punished. Thus they would also have done to God's own people the Jews, if they had seen them run & resort to the Prophets, in the ruinous times of the Church with so great zeal and forwardness as they did.

Secondly, we learn that all months and [Use 2] times are consecrated to us through Christ, so that worshipping God truly, they shall turn to our good and benefit, according to the saying of the Apostle, *Whether life, or death or things present, or things to come, all are ours*, 1 Cor. 3, 22, 23. The heathen and they that are heathenishly minded, are afraid of the influence of the stars, and of the constellation of the heavens, yea the *Star-gazers* would bear us in hand, that sometimes are dismal and fatal to some purposes. The Gentiles made it unlucky to enterprize some business in some of the months. Hence it is that the Poet saith,

Hac quo{que} de causa, fite Prouerbia tangunt,

Mense malum Maio nubere, vulgus ait.

That is,

The Proverbs teach, and common people say,

Its ill to marry in the month of May.

In like manner he teacheth before, that sometimes are unfit for the marriage of widows or of maids, forasmuch as such as marry in them are not long lived, but have died quickly,

Nec viduis tedis eadem, nec virginis opta

Tempora: quae nupsit, non diuturna fuit.

And one of the wisest Philosophers among the heathen, enquiring into the causes, why the Romans would not marry in the month of May, alledged this as one, because they offered oblations to the dead in this month, and therefore was holden to be ominous. And in another place he showeth, that they held the morrows after the Calends, Nones, and Ides, dismal and disastrous days, either to set forward upon any journey and voyage, or to march with an army into the field. It is not worth the labor to spend time to rehearse the folly of our sottish Prognosticators, that in every month tell us which are good days and which are evil days, and set down particular predictions what shall befall us, and how we shall prosper or not prosper: and yet themselves cannot tell what shall happen to themselves. I remember a pleasant story, reported by *Erasmus* in the reign of *Henry* the seventh, a wise and judicious Prince, of a certain wizard, who would needs be accounted as a Prophet, and able to foretell things to come; he prophesied at a time of the Kings death, that he should die that year. The king hearing of his Prophecy, & withal laughing at his folly, sent for him, as if he meant to take notice of his deep and profound skill, and to reward him highly; and when he was come into his presence, he asked him whether he had any knowledge of things to come, and could tell what should come to pass hereafter? he answered, he had great skill that way. The king demanded of him, whether he knew where he should be those holy days that were at hand, (for this fell out not long before the feast of the Nativity) he answered, No: Why then (quoth

the king) I perceive thou hast no skill at all, and knowest not so much as I do, for I know where thou shalt be, & how long, and withal willed his servants to carry him presently to the Tower, and after a while having made himself merry and derided the folly of y^t wise fool, he dismissed him, which was more favor then he deserved. This practice of propheticall diuinations and predictions is mere Gentilism, and great pity it is once suffered among us Christians, to make some days lucky and some unlucky, some fortunate and some vnfortunate; whereof we see the practice in the book of Ester, chapter the third, verse seventh: *They cast Pur, that is, the lot before Haman, from day today, & from Moneth to month, to the twelfth Moneth.* Howbeit we see how he was deceived, and the enchanter upon whom he built, and in whō he trusted, like to the Papists, who long looked for the year 88, of which they had many Astrological predictions, and trusted in it no less then in the Oracle of *Apollo*, howbeit they were maruailously & in a manner miraculously defeated and disappointed, and therefore one saith well,

Octogefimus octanus mirabilis annus,

Clade papistarum, faustus vbi{que} pijs.

But if we be the true servants of God, our ways shall prosper, Psal. 1, 3, and it shall go well with us, if we make the word our study and meditation, Josh. 1, 8; if not, let the times be what they will, and prognosticate what luck (as they call it) soever they can, yet nothing shall prosper or do us good, whatsoever we imagine to the contrary.

Thirdly, the consideration of the feast of [Use 3] the *New Moons* did put them and doth put us in mind, that we should be new creatures, and walk in newness of life by the holy Ghost regenerating us, as the Apostle saith, 2. Cor. 5, 17. *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are past away, behold, all things are made new.* Hence it is, that we are so oftentimes warned in the Scripture, that *we must be renewed in the spirit of our minds*, Rom. 12, 2. Eph. 4, 23. that *we must put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*, Eph. 4, 24, and *must put off concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceiveable lusts*, verse 22.

As then the Moon (which ruleth the month) changeth and reneweth y^e light, so should we be changed, not in substance of the body, but in quality, and that in every part, even in the whole man, forasmuch as we are altogether corrupt. Now this that must be changed, is called *the old man*; first, because it is in time before regeneration, first, we are carnal, then spiritual; first, the first *Adam*, then the second *Adam* hath place in us: first we are borne, then we are borne again, John 3. Secondly, because as age maketh loathsome and deformed, so this maketh us full of spots and wrinkles, before such time as we taste of the renewing power of God. Thirdly, because it draweth near to death, for as old age bringeth down to the grave, so doth the old man draw us to destruction of soul and body, which is the second death. This old man therefore must be clean cast off, or else it shall not profit us: for we must deny our selves, and crucify our sinful lusts, we must kill and mortify our vain desires, as *Abraham* would have killed his son; but we must go farther, for we must after a sort kill our selves, & cast off the things that are most dear unto us, though they should *be as our right hand, or as*

our right eye, Math. 5. And we must so cast off the old man, that no remnant of him cleave or stick unto us, & we should put it off, not as if we were loath or unwilling to leave it, but cast it away with a purpose never to take it up, or to put it on again; no nor once touch the same, but to account it as a *menstruous cloth*, lest we be like to the dog that returneth to his vomit, or to the sow that was washed and by and by walloweth in the mire, or to the Crocodile that layeth aside her poison but taketh it up again. On the other side, we must put on *the new man*, called new, because nothing availeth without this, Gal. 5, 6. Again, it is wrought in us in the second place, for we are first old before we are new, for this is the latter birth. Lastly, because it is strong to do the will of GOD, as young men are lusty and able to do the business of this life with great alacrity and activity.

Lastly, we must remember that it is not enough [Use 4] to serve God outwardly, and to keep the bare ceremony, except we join thereunto the service of the heart. And if the Jews had resorted diligently every first day of the month to the service of God in the Tabernacle or the Temple, yet what could it avail them, if their hearts were unclean, & their hands stained with cruelty? Therefore the Prophet saith, *The new Moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with, it is iniquity: your new Moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth, they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them*, Isaiah 1, 13, 14. The Jews regarded no more then to keep the days, they thought it enough to leave the works of their calling, though they did never forsake the works of the flesh, and therefore he chargeth them that *their hands were full of blood*, verse 15. So is it with us, we rest for the most part in the outward ceremony, in honoring God with our lips and bodily presence in his house, we bring no more but our outward ears to hear, and neglect the preparation of the heart, and yet flatter our selves as if we had done all that he requireth. Howbeit God rejecteth and refuseth such duty at our hands, he cannot abide the service and sacrifice that is offered in this manner. Hence it is that he saith, *I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies: though ye offer me burnt offerings, and your meat offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts*, Amos, chapter the fifth. the 21, and 22, verses. Not that almighty GOD hated or abhorred the things themselves; he did not reject their works, but the *evil of their works*, Isaiah, chapter 1, verse 16: so he cannot abide that we come before him in that corrupt manner; but we assemble for the worse, and not for the better, and by our corruption turn his saving ordinances into sin.

16 And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord.

17 And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast, seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.

18 In the first day shall be an holy convocation, &c.

19 But ye shall offer a sacrifice made by sire for a burnt offering unto the Lord, two young Bullocks, one Ram, and seven Lambes of a year old, &c.

20 And their meat offering shall be of, &c.

21 A several tenth deal, &c.

22 And one Goat for a sin offering, &c.

23 Ye shall offer these beside the burnt offering in the morning, &c.

After this manner, &c.

25 An on, &c.

We come now to the yearly feasts and sacrifices, whereof the Passover hath the first place, wherein beside the daily sacrifice, they were to offer two young Bullocks, and one Ram, and seven Lambes of the first year without blemish, for a burnt offering, and their meat offering must be of flower mingled with oil; and they must eat unleavened bread seven days, the first day & the seventh must be an holy convocation, wherein they must do no servile work. Of this feast we read at large, Exod. 12, 18. Levite. 23, 5, 7. Deut. 16, 1. Of this feast we have also spoken before at large, chap. 9, 2, 3. And it was of great importance, even the foundation of all the benefits which the Jews received at God's hands, without which they had been no people separated and dedicated unto almighty God,

This Paschal Lamb was not a bare ceremony [Use 1] without doctrine and instruction. The Jews departed in great haste out of Egypt. And how? not armed or with bannners displayed, as if their enemies had stood in fear of them, but they went out like a company of poor fugitiues or banished persons. The women carried their children upon their shoulders, the men took up their stuff upon their necks, and fled out of the Land, as *Lot* did out of Sodom, for their lives. They were a people that had no skill to handle the sword, or weapon of war defensive or offensive, they had been used like Oxen for labor, and like Asses for burden. And when they must depart, it was said, *Get you hence*, Exod. 12, 29, they must truss up the Corn they had ground, and bake cakes by the way to eat. This solemnity they observed yearly, wherein they did eat cakes without leaven, which served to put them in mind, that when their fathers departed out of Egypt, they were a poor distressed people, and ran away like silly Lambes pursued by devouring wolves. This should teach all of us, that God would have us remember such deliverances out of danger, as he hath sent us. We are apt to forget what he hath done for us, as the Jews were, and therefore we must consider to what end God commanded his people to celebrate this feast every year, & that not for one day, but for seven days together, and doth so often urge it upon them, as we see in the Scriptures. And

albeit this feast have no place in the New Testament, but is justly abrogated & abolished, because y^e shadow must give place to the body, and the ceremony to the truth: yet we must not think the commending of it everywhere to the Church to be in vain. For it serves to put us in mind both of God's mercy and goodness unto his Church, who though he bring them into sundry perils that are ready to oppress them, yet he is ready to deliver them out of all, yea when things seem to be most desperate: and also of our duty toward him to give him thanks for our deliverances, and to praise his Name.

Secondly, from hence it followeth, that it [Use 2] was a vain and frivolous controversy which troubled sundry Churches, and rent in sunder one of them from another touching the keeping of the Passover. Some would have it kept on the 14. day of the month, after the manner of the Jews, and others on the Lord's day after, lest the Church should follow the Synagogue. *Victor* Bishop of Rome did threaten all the East Churches with the censure of excommunication, because they celebrated the Passover another day then on the Lord's day. But *Irenaeus* and other holy Bishops reprov'd him of obstinacy, of pride and arrogancy, & wrote unto him that he did not well in that he cut from the unity of the body of the Church so many and so great Churches of Christ, which observed the order delivered unto them from ancient times, as appeareth in *Eusebius* For the Churches of the East pretended that they followed *John* and *Philip*; and the Churches of the West alleged the examples of *Paul* and *Peter* for their warrant and one claim was fully as good and haply as true as the other. This strife doth the Bishop of Rome at this day nourish and renew again, that had been long buried in the grave and covered with ashes, by his new Calendar, and thrusteth upon the Church his own ordinance concerning the obseruatiō of Easter as a divine precept, and consequently necessary to be kept and observed of the Church, usurping jurisdiction and authority over all Churches to rule over them and their faith at his pleasure. *Cardinal Bellarmine* going about to establish traditions against the all-sufficient doctrine of the Scriptures, avoucheth that we must necessarily believe that the Passover is to be kept in the New Testament on the Lord's day only, because they have been accounted heretics, who kept it otherwise; and yet this cannot be proved by the Scripture.

I answer, the former controversy was at the last thus defined and determined by *Polycarp* and *Victor*, that everyone should follow their own custom and judgment, and that it is a very foolish and absurd thing for such rites to separate one from another as enemies. *Euethes ethôn heneken allêlôn charizesthai*, *Sozom histor. lib. 7. cap. 19*. Now that which is left free & at liberty for either side to follow, cannot be holden necessary: but to keep the Passover on this day or that day is left free and at liberty for either side, therefore it is not necessary unto salvation. So then, nothing is more uncertain then Tradition: for both parts pretended the Apostles and Apostolic Traditions, but both of them could not be true: nay *Socrates* taxeth them both of errors, affirming that this sprang not of Tradition, but of Custom. And if either the one opinion or the other had any good foundation from the Apostles, it might be that in the beginning and first planting of the Gospel (to bear with the infirmity of others) they observed certain days and times, which afterward was observed and urged as a precept, liberty being abolished, and that which was retained of charity, was turned into a law of necessity. Again there is no cause or reason at all, why any churches or persons should

contend to have the Passover received, much less so bitingly & bitterly. For *Socrates* speaketh well and truly, that the Apostles ordained nothing of holy or festival days, and showeth at large the vanity of those that strive to no purpose about it: 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , *Socrat. lib. 5. cap. 22.* Forasmuch as the Passover was a type and ceremony, but types and ceremonies were abolished. So then it was superstitiously done of such as bear the names of Christian Churches, to bring in a feast of Passover, under pretence that the Jews had the same; for that were to compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews, which *Paul* reproveth in *Peter*, Gal. 2, 14, But these Traditions got authority in the church by little and little. I have spoken this, not that it is unlawful to have one day in the year, wherein to celebrate the remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, for that were to run into extremities: whereas our infirmity is allowed to have some helps to quicken our faith, that we might the better bethink us all our life what benefit the resurrection of our Lord hath brought unto us: nevertheless this is established only for order sake. But to urge this strictly of necessity, or to make a service of God thereof, or to think that we ought to fashion our selves after the example of the Jews, to wit, that as they had their Passover, so ought we to have ours in these days, were to turn all things upside down, and to put a veil before the face of Christ, that we might not see the light of the Gospel shining upon us.

[Use 3] Lastly, this Passover was celebrated with many circumstances, whereof some were observed only at the first Passover while they were in Egypt, as the preparing of the paschal Lamb, and keeping it apart from the rest of the flock, from the 10 day to y^e 14. the sprinkling of the blood upon the door posts, the eating of it in haste, and the killing of it within their own houses: but afterwards it was done in the public place of God's worship, Deut. 16, 5, 6, 7: for which purpose Jerusalem was afterward chosen, where it was killed by the Priests, and flayed in the Court of the Temple, and the blood sprinkled on the Altar, 2 Chron. 35, 1, 2, 6, 10, 11: then the owner of the Lamb took it at the Priests hands, & brought it to his own house, and roasted it. All these things aimed at the shedding of Christ's blood, and the sprinkling, that is, the applying of it to the hearts of all true believers, Ezek. 45, 19. 1 Pet. 1.2. Heb. 9, 13, 14. As when the Law was commanded to be written upon their door posts, it pointed out the writing of it into their hearts, as it is expounded by the Prophet, Ier. 31, 31. Hebr. 8, 10. And whereas they were to sprinkle the *upper door posts*, not the threshold or the floor under their feet, it did put them and us in mind what recourent account and estimation we ought to have of the blood of Christ, that *we should not tread under our feet the Son of God, neither account the blood of the covenant wherewith we have been sanctified, as an unholy thing*, Heb, 10, 29. Some points were to be observed at all times, whensoever and wheresoever they killed and kept the Passover, and consumed it with fire: they must eat it with unleavened cakes, for all leaven must be cast out of their houses; & to this they joined *bitter herbs*. The roasting of it with *fire* was a figure both of God's Spirit, Math. 3, 11. *Through which Christ offered himself to God*, Heb. 9, 14: & also of God's fiery wrath which he was to suffer, whilst *he was made a curse for us* by his death upon the cross, Gal. 3, 15, Ier. 4, 4. The unleavened loaves signify that none can be partakers of any benefit by Christ, but such as cast out *the leaven of maliciousness and wickedness* out of their hearts, 1 Cor. 5, 8. This belongeth to everyone to eat the unleavened cakes or loaves of sincerity & truth: of which

before chap. 9. The sour or bitter herbs, w^c are thought by the Hebrew Rabbin's to be wild Lettuce, Cichory, Hore-hound, and such like, and were eaten with the Lamb, brought to their remembrance the affliction in Egypt, where *their lives had been bitter*, Exod. 1, 14: yea, more bitter then gall or wormwood, where the Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; and hereunto the Church seemeth to allude, Lament. 3, 15: and all these were as types of the bitter sorrows of Christ, to whom they offered gall to drink: as also of our mortification and afflictions with him, *For we must be made like unto him*, 1 Cor. 5, 7. & 11.26. Phil. 3, 10.

Also in the day of the first fruits, when ye bring a new meat offering unto the Lord, after your weeks be out, ye shall have an holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work.

27 But ye shall offer the burnt offering for a sweet savor, &c.

28 And their meat Offering of fine Flower, &c.

29 A several tenth deal unto one Lamb, &c.

30 And one Kid, &c.

31 Ye shall offer them besides the continual burnt Offering, &c.

Here is handled the feast of Pentecost, or of Weekes, which was kept yearly amongst the Jews, to give God thanks after the gathering of their harvest. This was a mean to put them in mind to honor God for sending his benefits to the sustenance of man, Leu. 23, 17. Deut. 16, 9, 10. It is called the feast of harvest, Exo. 23, 16. & 22, 29. Their fruits when they were full ripe, and gathered, were brought & offered to God. The Hebrew Canons teach, y^t they were to bring first fruits of seven things only, of Wheat, of Barly, of Grapes, of Figs, of Pomegranates, of Olives, and of Dates; and that if a man brought any other besides these seven kinds, they were not sanctified. Moreover, that they bring no first fruits of liquors, save of oliues and of Grapes, and if they bring other, they are not received. There is no measure of first fruits set, in what measure or quāntity they ought to bring them, nevertheless they teach, that the least quantity which men might bring was one of sixty, as the greatest was the fortith part, so that they might bring what they would between forty and sixty for their first fruits. This feast is also called *Pentecost*, that is, fifty days, because there were seven weeks between Easter and this: so as there were 49. days between these two feasts, whereunto one being added for the festival day it self, it made fifty. This ceremony is now no longer in use, but instruction from it and by it remaineth. The Jews were as young children, and God ruled them according to their infirmities, Gal. 4, 1. Now let us see the Uses.

[Use 1] First, it teacheth us, not only that GOD hath set us in this world, but fostereth & feedeth us in it, he maketh the earth to yield fruit, so that we live by his bounty and

liberality. Therefore the will of God was, that the Jews should keep a yearly feast to him to give him thanks, that thereby they might be provoked to acknowledge all the year after, that they were sustained by his hand, and that they were as it were God's tenants in the land, Deut. 26, 9, 10, Levite. 25, 23. So then, they were to think thus with themselves, we have offered sacrifice to God after harvest: whereby we are put in mind that it is he that hath sent us our sustenance by giving us the early and the latter rain; sending us fruitful, seasons, and filling our hearts with joy and gladness. So then this yearly solemnity of one day, was not as a passport or discharge of farther duty, as if they might forget God all the rest of the year, but rather to be a means to school them all the year after, y^t if we have anything wherewith to succor our selves and sustain our lives, it is God's blessing, who hath pity and compassion upon us. By this we are taught to the worlds end, and are put in mind not to swallow God's benefits as swine without thinking upon him, but rather so often as we eat or drink, we should be ready to give him thanks: and as he openeth our mouths to receive his creatures, so should we open our mouths to pour out his praises. It is he that heareth the heavens, that the heavens may hear the earth, and the earth the corn, and the corn his people, Hos. 2.

Secondly, the first fruits figured out God's [Use 2] Church, which is a people separated and sanctified unto him from the rest of the world. This is a true description of the true Church, and by this we must try whether we be parts and members thereof, or not. It is not enough for us to be in the Church, to make us to be of the Church, *For many be among us, that are not of us*, saith the Apostle *John* in his first Epistle, and the second chapter. If we be of y^e Church, we must be a company called and culled out of the world, John 15, 19: for these two are opposed the one to the other, the world and the Church: *The whole world lieth in wickedness, but we know that we are of God*, 1 John 5, 19. The Apostle *John* speaking of them both, & comparing one with another saith, *Ye are of God, little children; they are of the world*, 1 John 4, 4, 5. As then the first fruits were separated from the rest of the heap, and sanctified unto God, so is the estate of the true Church, and of all the members of it, Ier. 2, 3. James 1, 18. Revel. 14, 1: they are sanctified to GOD and to his service, in whom he greatly delighteth. This is the privilege of the regenerate above the unregenerate, that they are created a new in Christ Jesus. They are his spouse, Hos. 2, 19, 23. Eph. 5, 25, his children, John. 1, 12, his servants, Rom. 6, 16, trees of righteousness planted by his right hand, Psal. 1, 3. Isaiah 61, 3, an holy Temple, Eph. 2, 20, 21, an holy Priesthood, and a royal generation, 1 Pet. 2, 5, 9, Revel. 1, 6, and 5, 9. It behooveth us therefore to walk worthy of our calling, Eph. 4, 1, toward God and men: toward God, giving him all glory, Revel. 1, 6: and doing whatsoever he commandeth, John. 15, 14, toward men, having our conversation honest, 1, Pet. 2, 12, and nothing at all regarding the hatred of the world, John 15, 18, 19, &c. Of this see more afterward.

Thirdly, hereby the Lord taught the Jews to deal liberally toward other their brethren, as he had dealt liberally toward them, according as he had blessed them. Where he bestoweth much, there he requires the more: and whatsoever they did, they must do it willingly and cheerfully, Deu. 16, 10, 11. A man may give all his goods, and yet do to God no good service, *yea and give his body to be burned*, 1 Cor. 13, 3. True it is, he did after a sort lay the bridle in their own necks, and left it to their own choice to offer what they thought best in their own eyes, yet he adds, *as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee*, Deut. 16: & therefore they must come to

an account for it. When he had given them a good and plentiful harvest, that the cart was pressed with the sheaves, & their cup did overflow, from whence came it? or to whom were they beholding for it? Was it not to him? to him only? It is he that openeth his hand wide unto us also, y^t our hearts should be opened in like manner toward him. God dealeth not alike toward all, and he requireth not alike of all. As every man hath received abundantly at his hands, so ought he to impart unto his brother; for that is the end that God aimeth at, and the service that he looketh for. They that devour God's blessings without pity, are no better thē thieves and as caterpillars that eat up the fruits of the earth, Heb, 13, 16, Hos. 6, 7. Our goods can no way profit him, Job 35, 6. True it is, he requireth sacrifices & oblations, howbeit such as think to discharge themselves by coming to the church & by offering their gifts there, do beguile themselves, but cannot beguile the Lord that seeth the heart, forasmuch as all their doings are no better then hypocrisy, if they be not merciful to their brethren that stand in need. There is none of us but would be glad of relief if we were in misery & necessity, and therefore we should show pity toward others. When the Lord would move the Israelites to compassion, he putteth them in mind that they had been strangers & bond slaves in the land of Egypt. Such as have felt the want of worldly things, would be glad that everyone should be willing to stretch out his hand to help them, and therefore we should do the like. Yea, though we never felt any want, let us remember that want may befall us hereafter. For what are we but frail creatures? and what are earthly things but mutable & flitting? No man may exempt him self from the stroke of God, we may fall from plenty to poverty, yea from superfluity to necessity, and be driven to beg our bread, as infinite examples testify. Let us therefore consider that we are mortal men, and that nothing hath befallen to others that may not happen to our selves, that thereby we may be moved *not to turn away our eyes from our own flesh*, Isaiah 58, 7.

[Use 4] Lastly, we must observe another point in this feast, that it was instituted in the remembrance of the deliverance of the Law, which was given at the same time. For it is said, that the people came to *Sinai the third month after their departure out of Egypt, the same day that they departed from Rephidim*, Exod. 19, 1, 2: now that was the first day of the month, and the fourteenth day was the day of the Passover. And as the months were then observed which went by the course of the Moon, there was one whole month added; so that in effect there were fifty days from the Passover to God's setting forth of his Law upon Mount Sinai: so as the feast of Pentecost or Whitsontide was referred to that time. Of this we find mention in the New Testament, Acts 2, 1. & 20.16: at this time the holy Ghost came down in *cloven tongues, and sate upon the disciples*, Acts 2, 3. We know the law of it self could do men no good through their infirmity. It is a dead letter and killeth, 2 Cor. 3, 6, 7. It is a glass to show that we are all sinners & transgressors of it, Rom. 7, 10: and therefore serveth to condemn & accurse us, Gal. 3, 13. Rom. 8, 15. Howbeit at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and after his ascension, God brought in another manner of Whitsontide then had been observed in time of the shadows and ceremonies, when he vouchsafed to pour down as a shower of rain, the plentiful graces of his Spirit upon his Church: so that the things that were figured under the Law, were fulfilled in Christ our Savior. Wherefore, besides the admonition that the Jews had, to wit, to do homage to God for their harvest, and to fill their mouths with his praise for

the fruits of the earth and the bodily sustenance which they received; likewise to impart of part of these blessings to their poor brethren, that there might be a common rejoicing and gladness among them, & so God be glorified with one accord: they had also a resemblance of the things that were fulfilled at the coming of Christ. And albeit it be not evil or unlawful to have one certain day wherein the history of the coming down of the holy Ghost should be declared and published, yet the figure is ceased and accomplished. We must not run trotting or traveling to Jerusalem to worship there, but *lift up pure hands everywhere* unto him that hath poured out the infinite riches of his holy Spirit, and sent us *the living waters*, Ezek. 47, 9: that we should have joy and gladness therein, Rom. 14. Let us therefore rejoice, seeing God hath shown himself so bountiful to us, to rejoice even according to the joy in harvest. Isaiah 9, 3. For as the Jews rejoiced in the harvest of corruptible fruits that nourished the body: so we having received the incorruptible graces of the holy Ghost shed abroad in our hearts, should be joyful and glad, by withdrawing our selves from the vanities of this world, and by holding our selves contented with the favor of God, Phil. 4, 7: and when this gladness is wrought in us, we must labor to make others partakers of the same. For, if the Jews were commanded to call the poor, the Widdowes, and the fatherless, to make merry with thē in the use of those outward blessings that God had given them: much more ought we to labor to make others partakers of the spiritual graces which we have received, that belong to the building of y^e church, Rom. chap. 12, 6. 1 Cor. chapt. 12, verse 7. Eph. 2, 14. Zach. 2, 4: as the woman of *Samaria* being taught by Christ, called out the rest of the City to hear the gracious words that came out of his mouth which she had heard, John 4: so that we ought to say with the Leapers, *We do not well: this is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace:* and as they said, *Come, that we may go and tell the Kings household*, 2 Kin. 7, 9: so should we say, *Come, let us go and tell our brethren what God hath done for our souls.*

CHAP. XXIX.

1 AND in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, ye shall have an holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work: it is a day of blowing the Trumpets unto you.

2 And ye shall offer a burnt offering for a sweet savor unto the Lord, one young Bullock, and one Ram, &c.

3 And their meat Offering shall be of flower mingled with oil, three tenth deals for a bullock, &c.

4 And one tenth deal for one Lamb throughout the seven Lambes.

5 And one kid of the goats for a sin offering, &c.

6 Besides the burnt offering of the month, and his meat Offering, and the daily burnt offering, and his meat offering, and their drink offerings according unto their manner, for a sweet savor, &c.

BEfore we saw how Moses began to handle the daily sacrifice, and the monthly and yearly feasts and solemnities of the Jews: this Chapter is of like argument with the former, describing three other solemn feasts, or rather three yearly sacrifices, one to be offered at the feast of Trumpets, another at the feast of humiliation, the third at the feast of Tabernacles: all these fell out in one and the same month, called of the Hebrews *Thisri*, which answereth in part to our September. Touching the first, it was to be celebrated on the first day of that month, which was holden sacred in two respects, both in regard of the feast of the *New Moon*, and then for the feast of *Trumpets*, so that three ordinary sacrifices were to be offered in it, the daily sacrifice, the monthly, & then that which is proper to this feast, to wit, *a young Bullock, a Ram, and seven Lambes of the first year for a burnt offering, &c,*

Let us first speak of this feast of Trumpets. Some of the Rabbin's fantastically suppose, that it was instituted in remembrance of the offering up of *Isaac*, or of deliverance from being offered, which conceit is idle and nothing at all to the purpose. Others imagine, that it was appointed upon occasion of the wars that the Israelites had with the Amalekites and other Nations under the conduct of God, to put them in remembrance that the whole life of man is nothing else but a continual warfare, Job 7, 1. 2 Timoth. 2, 1. Of this feast we read, Levite. 23, 24. This was accounted as a Sabbath, an holy convocation, wherein they must do no servile work. Therein the trumpets or cornets sounded allowed, and the sound thereof was heard far and near. Of this also in part we have spoken before, chap. 10.1.

Let us come to the Uses hereof in regard [Use 1] of our selves, which served of purpose to stir up the people to return unto God praise and thanksgiving with joyfulness of heart for all his benefits, according to that in the Psalms, *Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob, take a Psalm, and bring hither the Timbrel the pleasant Harp with the Psaltery; blow up the Trumpet in the new Moon, in the time appointed on our solemn feast day*, Psal. 81, 1, 2, 3. So David having experience of God's good hand toward him in many preservations, composed the 18 Psalm, as a testimony of his thankfulness *for his deliverance from the hands of all his enemies & from the hand of Saul*. So I should think that the cause of this feast was to be a feast of remembrance for his manifold mercies received in the wilderness, that thereby they might stir up themselves to be united in God. And the cause of the institution of this feast seemeth to be contrary to that which followeth, w^c is the feast of fasting. For as the Jews had a day to humble themselves by fasting, so they were also to have a day of rejoicing, y^t when they heard of those Trumpets, they should stir up themselves to return to GOD with joy of heart. And albeit we neither hear nor have these Trumpets sounding in our ears to call us to the Temple and place of his worship, yet ought we to praise his name cheerfully and readily, with spiritual joy and gladness continually, Isaiah 35, 2, 3, 10. with singing & thanksgiving, Isaiah 49, 20, 21: for it is

certain the faithful only have true cause to rejoice, Psal. 32, 11. & 33, 1: the ungodly have no cause at all, Isaiah 48, 20, 21, 22: but rather to weep and lament, Luke 6, 25.

Secondly, it reproveth the Popish sort, who [Use 2] endeavor to follow this commandment, as if it belonged to Christians as a precept in our days, and therefore have a resemblance of it once a year by ringing of bells; yea at every solemn feast they think God is well paid & pleased, when they have rung their bells loud and lustily, and thereby wakened the ghostes of such of their friends as are dead. Such practice is no better then sorcery and witchcraft, which is retained among them. And hence it is, that they ascribe more force to their hallowed and consecrated bells, then ever GOD gave to the sound of these Trumpets. For they ascribe unto them (being once hallowed) a spiritual power against thunder, lightning, and evil spirits: & for that cause they are not ashamed to baptize them, and to exact great sums of money of the people for that purpose, which was one of the grieuances whereof the Princes of Germany complained in the assembly at Noremberg. But this feast served only for the people of old time, and therefore they mingle the Law & the Gospel together, and bring in a Linsy-wolsy religion contrary to the will and commandment of God.

[Use 3] Thirdly, this warneth us of the preaching of the Gospel, concerning Christ the Savior of the world, the conqueror of all our enemies and of them that hate us, Isaiah 58, 1, Zach. 9. For this was a warlike instrument, Num. 6.31 Josh. 6. God hath caused the doctrine of salvation to be sounded out in the world, so that all have heard the sound of it, Psal. 19, 4. Rom. 10, 18, Such a Trumpet was *John* the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who was sent to *prepare the way of the Lord*, Mark 1, 1, 2: & to call upon them to repent, because the *kingdom of God was at hand*. And this commendeth to the Ministers in the execution of their office, diligence, carefulness, continuance, cheerfulness, and zeal, 1 Cor. 9, 17. 1 Pet. 5, 2.

[Use 4] Lastly, as the Ministers must be the Lord's Trumpets, so indeed ought every faithful soul to be a Trumpet. For when this feast was yearly observed, such as heard the trumpets were warned by it all the year after to stir up and awaken themselves, remembering that God doth call them as with a loud voice daily, that they should yield up themselves souls and bodies unto him to worship and serve him as he requireth. When this feast was celebrated & solemnized, all the males were not commanded to repair to Jerusalem, as they were *at the three more solemn feasts*, Exod 23, 17: to wit, if they were free-men and in health, able to go to the place of his worship Deut. 12, 6: & 16, 2. And hence it is, that the Jewish Doctors out of that Law, of all males appearing before rhe Lord three times in the year, do exempt and discharge eleven sorts; and therefore they say that women & servants are not bound, but all men are bound, except the deaf and the dumb, and the fool, & the little child, and the blind, and the lame, and the uncircumcised, and the old man, and the sick, and the tender or weak which are not able to go and travel upon their feet: nevertheless, though the people were far from Jerusalem when this feast was holden, and that they could not resort thither daily to do sacrifice in the Temple, yet they were to consider in their absence, that sacrifices were offered there even in their behalf, and God was worshipped there in the behalf and name of all the Tribes. True it is, this figure is passed away, and utterly abolished by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, howbeit this remaineth that we our selves should serve for trumpets.

For as the Temple being destroyed, we must be *spiritual Temples unto God*: so y^e Trumpets being taken away, everyone of us must be spiritual Trumpets, that is, we should rouse up our selves, because we are naturally so besotted and wedded to the world, and unto the vanities here below, that it seldom cometh into our minds to think of God, of the Gospel, of the kingdom of heaven. Our ears are so possessed with the sound of earthly things, and our eyes so dazzled with the pleasures of the flesh, that we are as deaf and blind men, that can neither hear nor see what God saith unto us. He calleth unto us daily, and maketh the Gospel sound aloud in the midst of us, that we might have the inward remorse of a good conscience, to repent us of all our evil ways, yet we notwithstanding this summoning of us do remain dull and deaf, & dumb and blind. Wherefore we must not look till there be a solemn holyday to call us unto the Church, there to keep a feast of Trumpets, but it must serve us all the days of our life as a spur to cause us to return to God.

7 And ye shall have on the tenth day of this seventh month, an holy convocation, and ye shall afflict your souls, ye shall not do any work therein.

8 But ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the Lord for a sweet savor, one young bullock, &c.

9 And their meat offering shall be, &c.

10 A several tenth deal for one Lamb, &c.

11 One kid of the Goats for a sin-offering, &c.

The next feast is the feast of affliction or humiliation, otherwise called the feast of fasting. The Jews themselves were so superstitious in the observation of this feast, that (as *Munster* testifieth) they thought it not lawful for them to read anything that might make themselves merry, or rejoice their hearts; as the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, their entrance into the land of Canaan, or their deliverance from the tyranny of *Haman*, and such like: but only mournful things, that may serve to make them heavy and sorrowful: as the threatenings of the Prophets, the Lamentations of *Jeremiah*, the destruction of Jerusalem, and other Scriptures of like argument. This feast was not ordained without cause. Many surmise that it had his original for the Lord's forgiving the Israelites their sin of idolatry, committed in making and worshipping the golden Calf, *Exod. 32*, Of this we read more at large, *Levite. 23, 26, 27, 28*. It was solemnized on the tenth day of the seventh month, to be a day of atonement, an holy convocation to afflict their souls, and to offer an holy offering by fire to the Lord, and *whatsoever soul shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people*. This yearly feast of expiation is also described. *Levite, 16, 29*: and it is made *an everlasting statute to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year*. This was not ordained without cause, forasmuch as we see how men do naturally cover their faults as much as they can. So the Prophet *Zacharias* testifieth, that while the people were in

captivity and banishment in Babylon, all that whole time they had kept their extraordinary fasts very strictly, chap, 7, 5.

[Use 1] But let us proceed to the Uses. Heereby the Jews and all men to the end of the world are put in mind; that we must seriously bethink us of our sins, both of the greatness and number of them which we commit, and humble our selves for them. It was the will of God to establish amongst his own people a year-mind of them, by teaching them to humble themselves by fasting, and acknowledging their sins, and making a solemn confession of them, and craving pardon and forgiveness of them. We cannot think of our sins aright without grief of heart, neither ought we to be grieved for this grief, 2. Cor. 7, 8. This sorrow is of God, and for our good, and therefore called *godly sorrow*, and is not to be shunned or shaken off by us. It pleaseth God greatly, and *maketh glad the Angels in heaven*, Luke 15, verse 17: and bringeth us unto infinite joy and peace of conscience in the latter end. Such then as can be glad and rejoice at it exceedingly when they have offended God, and wounded their own souls, their sin is deep, their heart is hard, and their condemnation shall be double in hell, of whom Christ saith, Luke 6, 25. *Woee be to you that laugh, for ye shall weep and wail*. So then, their public and solemn fasting was a protesting of themselves to be guilty in God's fight of horrible offenses, and they were put in mind when they were come home to their houses, to consider that it is not enough for them to hang down their heads like a bullrush for a day, and to crave forgiveness: for we provoke God every day, and as it were, enter into a new band with death. True it is we are washed, but we defile our selves again: God hath pardoned us, yet we return to our sin as to our vomit again, and we make no end of sinning. So long as we live in this world, we have some corruptions lurking in us, and it is impossible for us altogether to abstain from evil. Thus were the Jews taught to look upon themselves, and into themselves, and upon their sins by this feast, which haply otherwise they would never have thought upon: and thus it serveth for our instruction also.

Secondly, we see hereby what superstition [Use 2] remaynerh amongst the Romanists, who have turned this feast of *Affliction* and humiliation, into their *Lenton-fast*: then they hang down their heads, and acknowledge their sins, and punish themselves with fasting, & pretend for it the example of the Jews, and the practice of Christ. Thus they make us no better for the coming of our Lord Jesus in the flesh, Galath. chap. 5, verse 4. and 4, verse 2, who hath shown himself unto the world. They pretend themselves to be Christians, but make themselves Jews. Neither is it any whit better to maintain their Fast of forty days, by an apish imitation of Christ Jesus. For if they will be like unto him, let them abstain from all manner of meat and drink, let them during those days eat nothing at all, and then let them boast that they have fasted and fashioned themselves like unto him. But their manner is to feed themselves unto the full at dinner, that they are like to surfeit, and they cramme their bellies that they leave no room for anymore.

Again, the Fast of Christ was not an abstinence from flesh only, and a taking liberty to eat fish, to drink wine, and to feed upon all kind of the most delicate dishes, which is the Romish Fast; he did eat nothing at all in those days. Moreover, he did this but once in all his life, and that to show his divine power, and to magnify the majesty of the Gospel; whereas these

scorners will seem to go beyond him by many degrees, and not to resemble him. And wherefore do they take up the fashion of the Jews to afflict themselves, but to have freer scope to despise & despise God himself all the year after? They make sour faces, and disfigure themselves, & play the notable hypocrites when Passion-sunday cometh, I think to mock at the passion of Christ. Lastly, they make their Fasting to be meritorious, and to deserve remission and forgiveness at the hands of God, and so prefer their own traditions before the precepts and commandments of God.

Lastly, we must learn the true use and end of fasting, and the nature of it. To this [Use 3] purpose we must know what kinds there are of it, what it is, what are the parts of it, and the sundry corruptions wherewith it hath been stained.

First, there are diverse sorts of fasts: there is a fast prescribed by the learned Physician, to preserve or restore health, when the body is troubled with repletion.

Secondly, the fast of sobriety and temperance, Romans 13, 13, 1 Corinthians 9, 25. 1 Thessalonians 5.6. 1 Peter 5, 7. Of this *Bernard* speaking saith, Let the eyes, ears, tongue, hand, and soul it self fast: let the eyes fast from curious sights and all wantonness: let the ears fast from fables and evil reports: let the tongue fast from slander, and murmuring, and railing speeches: let the hands fast from evil works, and the soul from sin and doing our own will, Luke 21, 34. Ezekiel 16.49.

Thirdly, there is a forced and constrained fast, as in time of famine, when we can get nothing to feed upon: to this we may add the poor man's fast, who often fasteth because he hath nothing to put in his belly.

Fourthly, there is the miraculous fast, which cannot be brought into imitation; such was the fast of *Moses*, of *Elias*, and of Christ himself, Exodus 34, 28, 1 Kings 19, 8. Matthew 4, 2. But of these we have nothing to say at this present. There is another fast that is pointed out in this place, which is the religious fast.

The Lord commanded by *Moses*, that every soul once in the year should humble it self in fasting before the Lord in one of the great assemblies of his people, Levite. 16, 29, 30, 31, and 23, 27, 28, &c. And albeit the ceremony of the day be taken away, Galatians 4, by the coming of Christ, yet the thing it self remaineth and continueth in force, as well as a day of rest for God's service, albeit the Jewish Sabbath be abolished. The circumstances of moral duties may be changed, but the substance may not be abrogated.

For where the same causes continue, there the thing it self abideth. We have as great cause of humiliation as ever the Jews had, of making our prayers fervent, being as much subject to coldness as they were; and as great cause to be careful, that the wrath of God do not break out upon us, or being broken out to desire to have it returned back, and the sword of God put up again into his sheath.

And therefore this holy exercise is of as great and necessary use as ever it was, and it remaineth in as full force and strength as ever it did, Joel 2, 12. Luke 5, 33. 1 Cor. 7, 5. Acts 13, 2, 3.

Let us therefore in the next place see what it is. Fasting is an abstinence for one day, commanded of the Lord, from all meats & drinks and delights of this life, thereby to make solemn profession of our humiliation. It is an abstinence from all meats and drinks: *All the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, but David sware, saying, So do God to me and more also, if I taste bread, or ought else till the Sun be down*, 2 Sam. chapter 3, 35. Ion. chapter 3, verse 7. They were commanded to put away their best raiment: Exod. chapter 33, verses 5, 6. *The Lord said unto Moses, say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people, I will come suddenly upon thee, and consume thee: therefore now put thy costly raiment from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. So the childrē of Israel laid their goodly raiment from them, &c.* To abstain from mirth & music, from pleasures and all recreations, Joel 2, verse 16. 1 Chron. 7, verse 5. Dan. chapter 6, 18: and instead of these, to give themselves to weeping, mourning, and lamentation, Nehem. chapter 1, verse 4. For this cause they had their sackcloth and ashes, to signify that they were not worthy of any attire, and that they were no better then dust and ashes. This was to continue one whole day, 2 Sam. 3, 35. Judge. chapter 20, verse 26. 1 Sam. chapter 14, verse 24. 2 Sam. chapter 1, verse 12: and at even when they came to eat, they did not seek delicate meat, or fill themselves with wine or strong drink, or fare daintily to pamper the flesh, but were content with such as came to hand, and used that sparingly also: *they fed upon the bread of tears*, Psal. 80, 3: *and mingled their drink with weeping*, Psal. 102. Sometimes indeed they continued their fast longer, as occasion served, and upon extraordinary causes, Ester 4, 16, Acts 9, 9. Neh. 1, 1, 2. 2 Sam. 12. Dan. 10.1, 2.

Furthermore I add, it was commanded of God both in the Law, as we shown before, and in the Gospel, Luke 5, 33, 35. The end of this ordinance is for our further and better humiliation, Leviticus 23, 27, 16, 29, Psal. 35, 13. Deuteron. 10, 12, 1 Kings 21, 27, 28, 29, 2 Chron. 12, 6, 7. Ezra 8, 21.

Of this there are two sorts: for the religious fast is either private performed by one or moe in a family, that our prayers may be more effectual, Nehem. 1, 4. 2 Sam. 12, 16. Psal. 35.13. 2 Sam. 3.35. Psal. 69, 10. Dan. 9. and 10. Acts 10.2.30. Luke 2.36. Ester 4.16: or else public, performed by the whole congregation, Joel 2.12, Jonah 3, 7: It ought not to be used of a few; and therefore all sorts of people should come to the same as on the Sabbath day, and none absent themselves from the assemblies.

Now of both these fasts we must consider the parts, that some are outward, and some inward.

The outward parts pertain to the body, and are called *a bodily exercise*, 1, Timothy 4.8: as to abstain from meat and drink, watching in prayer, abridging of our sleep & such like commodities, delights and pleasures of this life, thereby to make us fitter for the inward grace of the mind; that the body being thereby humbled and the flesh pulled down, the soul may also be humbled before the Lord.

[Objection] But it will be objected, that God being a Spirit regardeth not these outward things, forasmuch as *he will be served in spirit and truth*, John. 4, 24. Rom. 14.17. 1 Cor. 8.8. Mat. 15, 11.

[Answ.] I answer, we must consider that fasting is the Lord's ordinance, and he commandeth this abstinence, and therefore it ought not to be left undone, because we are bound to all that which he commandeth.

And as GOD requireth it, so he will accept of it, and give a blessing unto it, and to all those that with care and conscience shall use it. Albeit it be of small value in it self, yet GOD hath ordained it to an excellent end, even to humble the soul; and it shall be available to that purpose, which is no small benefit.

As water in Baptism, and the bread and wine in the Supper of the Lord are little or nothing worth considered in themselves; and as the rest appointed on the Sabbath, can little further us, if we go no further: howbeit they bring a great blessing to such as use them with reverence, faith, and repentance. Nevertheless, we are not to trust in these outward things, but these outward ceremonies must lead us by the hand to higher matters, lest God send us away empty as we came, Ezra 6, 21; or else the fast of the beasts in Nineveh shall be as good as our fast, Jonah 3, 7: for they were covered with sackcloth, and did neither feed, nor drink water.

These virtues are the acknowledging of our own unworthiness: also watchfulness, humility, zeal, & hope of mercy at the hands of God, and assurance to obtain that which we ask of him in prayer. These are no small graces and benefits. For the servants of GOD by their abstinence from meat and drink confessed themselves unworthy so much as of a crumb of bread, or of a drop of water: by putting on sackcloth, unworthy of the worst rag to cover their shame and nakedness. They deprived themselves of the benefit of sleep, and cut themselves shorter of it then at other times, to stir up themselves to perseverance and watchfulness in prayer and other holy duties. They put dust and ashes upon their heads, to testify what they had deserved, even to be as far under the earth as they were above it, yea to be deprived of life, and to be stricken with death for their sins, and to be worthy of eternal condemnation.

And for the practice of all these, they quickened their prayers, and as it were added wings unto them, that they might more easily pierce the heavens, and present themselves in the presence of God, and therefore prayer and fasting were joined together, Ezra 9, 5. Nehem. 1, 4. Dan. 9, 3. Judge. 20, 26, Luke 2, 37, and 5, 33. 1 Cor. 7.7. True it is, prayer is available without fasting; but fasting is never available without prayer. For fasting is not the worship of God, but only an help to it.

But here observe, that notwithstanding this exercise of our faith be so often commanded, so often commended, so often practiced, so often blessed, yet Satan hath not ceased from time to time to mingle darnel, yea poison with it; so though it remain, yet it remaineth without profit. As he hath corrupted prayer it self, so he hath blended and infected the exercise of holy fasting. If he should have gone about utterly to take them away, his craft would soon have been espied, therefore he goeth about another way. And let us a little see what the Popish fasting is, according as it is delivered and practiced by themselves. For contraries set together do serve to illustrate one another. Their fasting is defined to be a subtraction or

diminishing of our meat or diet, according to the institution or doctrine of the Church, at times appointed, under pain of mortal sin, to make satisfaction for sins, and to merit the grace of God and life everlasting.

Thus by appointing fasts, they overturn the right ends of fasting: and by their intention of satisfaction for sin, and procuring of eternal life, and such like horrible, detestable, and intolerable blasphemies, they destroy the only sufficient satisfaction of Christ.

The Church of Rome charge us to be enemies to fasting, and that our doctrine is a doctrine of liberty: but we are enemies only to their abuses and corruptions, not to fasting it self, neither do we allow the breach of fasting days: We hold that it is a Christian exercise needful to be used for the humbling of our souls, and the enabling of our selves to the duties of prayer and repentance, as often as the time shall require: besides, our Church hath public fasts in the time of any general infection or affliction, and our people are instructed and called upon to fast privately also, when the cause is more private.

The difference between them and us is this; We reject their set days, and their name of fast upon those days by distinction of meats for conscience sake, wherein they place the worship of God, and in the ends which they propound to themselves, to wit, merit and satisfaction.

And as they bring in these inventions, so they neglect such exercises of Religion as of right ought to be joined with the outward abstinence.

Their fasting is only a forbearing of flesh and things that come of flesh on certain and set days, allowing to themselves instead thereof, not only fish which is as good and nourishable as flesh, but that which is daintier, as wines, march-panes, conserves, and such like sweet meats, in as great measure as can be; so that they eat as often and as good as we do (even when they profess to fast) if not better.

12 And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, ye shall have an holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work, and ye shall keep a feast to the Lord seven days.

13. 14. 15. 16. And ye shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire of a sweet savor unto the Lord, thirteen young bulloakes, two rams, and fourteen lambes of the first year: they shall be without blemish. And their meat offering, &c.

17, 18, 19. And on the second day ye shall offer twelve young bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambes, of the first year without spot. And their meat offering, &c.

20, 21, 22. And on the third day, eleven bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambes of the first year without blemish. And their meat offering, &c.

23, 24, 25. And on the fourth day, ten bullocks, two rams, and fourteen Lambes, &c. Their meat offering, &c.

26, 27, 28, And on the fifth day, nine bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambes, &c. And their meat offering, &c.

29, 30, 31. And on the sixth day, &c. 35, 36, On the eighth day, &c.

The last feast mentioned in this chapter is the feast of Tabernacles, and of *ingathering of the fruits of the land in the end of the year, when they had gathered in their labors out of the field*, Exod. 23, 16, and 34, 22. This also was kept in the seventh month for the space of eight days, and therefore how they should come before the Lord, and what they should offer every day, is particularly remembered to the end of the Chapter. And lest they should bring little unto GOD, and think to please him with a small pittance (as many hold it well saved which can be saved from the worship of God) he stinteth them what they shall bring, and setteth down the number of *bullocks, rams, and lambes* which they should offer every day. This feast began upon the fifteenth day. The Jews have mingled this day with many superstitions. The Lord set down particularly unto them what they should do, and left nothing to their own choice; howbeit they have found out many inventions and traditions, & would not content themselves with the simplicity of the Scripture. But the right use thereof is expressed in sundry places of the Law, Levite. 23, 34. Deut. 16, 13. It is called the feast of Tabernacles, because during the days of this feast they were to live in tents or Tabernacles, it being a memorial of God's preserving of them in the wilderness where was no house for them in which to rest and inhabit. This was a most holy feast to remember them when they had no dwellings, and therefore *Moses* doth so largely dwell upon the solemnities of it: then they were especially enjoined to read the Lew, at this feast, when *all Israel was to appear before the Lord*, Deut. 31, 10, 2. Chron. 8, 13, Ezz. 3, 4. Nehem. 8, 14, 15, John. 7, 2.

This feast is now abrogated, and belonged not to the Gentiles that were converted to the faith, after the passion and ascension of Christ, Coloss. 2, 17. Acts 15, 10. Heb. 10.1. Notwithstanding we must consider the inward signification of this ceremony, and see what uses remain thereof to our selves. And therefore the Prophet *Zacharias*, chapter 12, 16, describing the calling of the Gentiles to the true God, and their gathering into the true Church, setteth it forth according to the manner of God's service used in the Law, that *they should go up from year to year to worship the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of Tabernacles*: alluding to the ceremony of the Law, as our Savior doth, Matth. 5, 23, 24, meaning that they should worship GOD according to his commandments, and not after their own fancies.

First, we learn hereby, that it is a duty [Use 1] belonging to all to remember the days of their troubles and afflictions, from which GOD in great mercy hath delivered us.

Hence it is, that GOD doth put his people in remembrance so oftentimes of their deliverance out of Egypt, yea even when they were settled in safety, and planted in the land of Canaan:

they must call to mind, that *they were sometimes strangers in the land of Egypt*, Deuteron. 4, 20, and 6, 12, 20, 21, 22, and 10, 19: and therefore GOD wrote this with his own finger in the Law, Exod. 20, 2, that they should always have before them *the iron furnace*, how he brought them forth to be unto him a people of inheritance. We are ready to forget our former condition, when GOD hath given us rest: and *as the wise virgins themselves slumbered* Math. 25, 5: so we are very prove to security when once he hath removed our sorrows and sufferings from us. So then, the Lord GOD would have his own people year by year to depart out of their houses, and dwell in tents, that is, under the open firmament in arbors made of boughs and branches.

I will not stand to recount the foolish and apish toys, which the Jews at this day take upon them to observe; as that their Cabines be not too close, but made full of holes: they are careful & diligent to provide y^t the boughs be not too thickly plotted together: they must have loop-holes to see the stars, whereas in the mean season they little consider whereunto God meant to direct them, & what lesson he meant to teach them: so that we might say unto them, as *Paul* sometimes did to the men of Athens, *I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious*, Acts 17, 22. Thus doth the Evangelist tax them for the holiness that they put in their often washings, Mar. 7, 3, 4. *The Pharisees and the Jews except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the Elders; and when they come from the market, except they wash they eat not: and many other things there be, which they have taken upon them to observe, as the washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and of tables.* In all which it may be truly said of them, that they lay the commandment of God apart, and observe the traditions of men.

But in this feast, the purpose of God was, that they should call to mind, both where they were, and where they had been; that albeit they were at rest and ease in the land of Canaan, yet they had not always been so, for GOD had carried them as it were upon Eagles wings and led them in a strange and miraculous manner in the wilderness for forty years.

Thus ought we to consider what we have been in times past, as well as what we are at the present, and thereby be provoked to serve and glorify him in time to come. Thus doth the Lord deal with *Saul*, 1 Sam. 15, 17, *When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast not thou made Head of the tribes of Israel?* &c. Thus he dealeth with *David*, 2. Sam. 12, 7, 8. Thus he sendeth his Prophet to tell *Jeroboam* what he was, and to call him back to the consideration of his first beginning, 1 Kings 14, 7, *I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee Prince of my people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee; and thou hast not been as my servant David, which kept my commandment, and followed me with all his heart, and did only that which was right in mine eyes; but hast done evil above all that were before thee: (for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me, and hast cast me behind thy back)* &c. We ought also to consider what we have been in regard of temporal deliverances, and in regard of spiritual deliverances from the bondage of sin, Ephes. 2.1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 12, 13: for their deliverance from the slavery of Egypt did figure out our deliverance by Christ from the bondage of sin, Satan, and hell it self.

[Use 2] Secondly, observe from this feast that GOD evermore preserveth his Church, even when it is oppressed with greatest dangers and troubles, nay then his power and mercy is

made most manifest: his power shineth brightest in our weakness, and his mercy appeareth most of all in our misery. The people of Israel had notable experience hereof in the wilderness, when they removed from place to place, and had no leisure to build, neither had they stuff wherewith to build. They were a wonderful multitude of people, by reason whereof it may seem incredible, that God should preserve them and their children *in Boothes and Tents*, without houses to cover and keep them. We know that houses serve to defend from cold and heat, from wind and weather, and many other discommodities: yet did GOD nourish and maintain them without any houses, and therefore his goodness was to be acknowledged in that behalf. It had been no better then a plain mockery or may-game to have come to Jerusalem, and there to punish themselves and dwell a while in Cabines and to shift places, except it had been to some ende, and they had been taught to magnify the Name of God, and to put their trust in him. For all ceremonies did aim at some instruction, that the faithful might thereby be edified, and learn to live in the fear of God: otherwise they are not only unprofitable, but also abominable in the sight of God. So then, we must acknowledge where and whence we have our deliverances, and learn to give God praise, as also for the fruits of the earth that we have received.

Thirdly, though the feast of *Tabernacles* [Use 3] be not any longer in use, that we should be bound to the keeping of it, yet the doctrine arising from it concerneth us as much as ever it did the Jews. Our keeping of this feast must not be for a week or twain, but all our life, so long as we live upon the earth. We must acknowledge that *we are Pilgrims in this world*, Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 16, & if we be not strangers in this present world, we have no part in the kingdom of heaven. If then we will have God to accept and avouch us for his children, we must assure our selves, that this life is nothing to us but a way or rather indeed a race toward our heavenly Country. It is not enough for us to go fair and softly (as the most do) but we must always run apace, pressing forward with all our strength and force, holding on our way, and straining our selves to attain to the ende of our course. For this is certain, except we use might and force, we shall never get one step forward, but we shall retire four back for it. We are of slow pace, and creep as it were upon all four, and Satan useth many means to hinder us, and therefore *we must fight as good soldiers of Jesus Christ* against all such impediments.

Albeit therefore God do house us and harbor us in this world, yet it is as he did to his people in the wilderness: so that he would not have us to nestle here, nor to be entangled in the snares of it, neither to make it our everlasting resting place; but to be ready to fly upward: not to be as swine looking down to the ground, but rather as Larkes, mounting upward from the earth. Some have here no resting place at all, but are tossed and turmoiled up and down as waves of the sea, and so *Paul* speaketh of himself, 2, Cor, 7, 5: others never remove out of the place where they are borne, *but live peaceably among their own people*, and continue at home in their own house without any trouble to themselves or others: yet must all account their chief resting place to be in heaven, out of which we shall never be removed, and when once we are clothed with it as with a garment, we shall never be vnclodeth or dismantled to be found naked, 2 Cor. 5, 6. Heb. 11, 13. Thus it was with all the Patriarchs and holy fathers from the beginning of the world, and so it ought to be with us.

[Use 4] Lastly, we are hereby put in mind of the shortness of this life, we are here for a season, and by and by near gone. And albeit we make our houses never so strong, and build them up with brick and stone to continue, yet our bodies are all as Tabernacles always decaying. For *what is our life but a vapor?* and what are our bodies but dust and ashes? We may well frame our houses of square stone, and make us palaces of marble; but our bodies cease not to be of this clay; and *what is all flesh but grass, and what is all the glory of man but as the flower of the field,* which flourisheth today, and tomorrow withereth away? The rich men of this world build them towers and castles that top the skye, and *lay their lands about them, and call them oftentimes by their name,* as Absalom did his pillar: their building is sound and substantial, and able to endure many years, and standeth out against all weather for many generations, and at the end of them is as firm and fast as at the first day. But in the mean season what are the Tabernacles of their and our bodies, but a simple cottage or cabbine, ever defaying and declining; having his foundation in the dust? A man may easily erect such building as shall remain: but can we build our bodies, so as they may be of any long continuance? and make our houses of clay to be as pillars of marble? what shall it profit us to build fair houses and pleasant gardens, & fruitful fields, and to forget the frailty of our bodies which must shortly fall into the dust, and be consumed to ashes? Let us therefore learn the doctrine of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5, 1. *If our outward man decay, we have a building prepared for us in heaven.* And we must say with Peter, *I must shortly put off this my Tabernacle; as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shown me,* 2 Pet. 1, 14, when this lodging of ours shall decay, we shall dwell in an house incorruptible. Our bodies are but as arbours made of green leaves, which are of no continuance, one blast of wind is strong enough to blow them away, Isaiah 40, 6. Every man hath some disease or other about him, that will not suffer him to endure long: our humors are not so equally tempered, where the best constitution is, but one of them threateneth destruction to the other, and strive which of them shall prevail and overcome, howbeit all is one to man; for whether of them soever do gain, man receiveth the loss, even the loss of his life. And if he had no disease or distemper, yet wait but a while, and age it self will be a disease, and as the messenger of death unto him, that even without sickness he slideth away, as the fruit of a tree, when it is ripe, falleth down of it self, though there be no hand to pluck it, or wind to shake it, or thief to steal it, or tempest to drive it. When we diligently consider this, then we have indeed learned to keep this feast of the Tabernacles spiritually. To conclude therefore, let every man beware that he seek not his own ease overmuch.

This is one rule, that we do not pamper or cocker our own flesh in the lusts thereof, Rom, 13, 14. If we should give the bridle to our flesh, it is as a bottomless pit that will never be filled. Secondly, such as are planted commodiously in this world, must beware that they do not forget the world to come: and they that enjoy the earth at will, must remember the kingdom of heaven, wherein they must only place the top of their happiness. If we seek heaven upon earth, we shall never find it in the next life. Thirdly, let us use this world, as though we used it not; *rejoice as though we rejoice not, and weep as though we weped not, considering that the fashion of this world vanisheth away,* 1 Cor. 7, 30, 31.

Here can be no certainty, nor assurance of anything, but in health we have one foot in sickness, and in life we be at the brink of death. In joy and gladness we are near to the house of sorrow and affliction, Lastly we must account of every day as our last day; what is present we see before our eyes, but what is to come we see not, we know not. The rich man built, and planted, and plotted for many years, and promised to himself a long life upon the earth, but it was said unto him, *This night shall they take away thy soul from thee, &c.* Luke 12.

CHAP. XXX.

1 AND Moses shake unto the heads of the Tribes, concerning the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded;

2 If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

NOW Moses cometh to speeke of such Laws as are voluntary, that is, of vows, whereof he setteth down two sorts; one concerning men, the other concerning women, and showeth in what persons they are ratified, and in what persons they are frustrated. Touching the man which is the head of the woman, he is charged not to falsify his word or his oath, lest he profane the Name of GOD which he hath taken in his mouth, but to perform his promise that he hath made, as Psal. 15, 4, *he shall dwell in the holy hill of GOD, that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.* Touching the woman, she is ordinarily and by the Law of nature under the power and authority of another. Wherefore touching their vows we must give judgment according to the place which they hold, and the calling into which they are entered. For the woman that taketh an oth, or maketh a vow, either is in the power of her father, or in the power of her husband, or in her own power, or else in the power of one when she vowed, and in the power of another when she is to perform it. A woman in her fathers power is bound to perform that which she hath sworn or vowed, but conditionally, if the father allow of it, either by his word or by his silence; so that the vow standeth, if he approve of it either by speaking or by holding his peace. For here the common proverb is verified, He that wittingly & willingly holdeth his peace, doth closely & secretly give his consent. But on the other side if the father dislike and disallow the vow, she is freed because she is not free. And if the woman be married, and at the disposition of her husband, it followeth by proportion of the former Law, that if her husband approve her vow, either openly or secretly, directly or indirectly, by speaking or holding his peace so soon as he heareth it or heareth of it, she is bound to keep it: but if he consent not, but disallow and disavow it, her vow is void, and she is to ask pardon of her rashness. If she be a widow and set free, being at her own liberty, and not under the jurisdiction of father that bestowed her, or of the husband to whom she was

bestowed in marriage, she is bound to perform her vow. The Apostle teacheth, that *the woman which hath an husband is bound by the Law to her husband so long as he liveth, but if he be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband*, Rom. 7, 2. As she is free to vow, so he is bound to pay that which he hath vowed, because the promise was voluntary and free, and there is none can make it void. Lastly, the widow must not think her self discharged by her new or second marriage, but the time of making her vow, to wit, in her widowhood, must be considered and remembered. But such as are cut of the fathers power, or by death of the husband set free, must pay their vows to the most High, without denying, or delaying, or diminishing, what they have solemnly and advisedly vowed,

From hence we may learn how to answer sundry particular questions touching the vowing of men and women. [Object.] And first the question may be asked, what if it be the vow of a son or of a daughter under their father, or one any way under the power of another, as of a servant under his Master, shall that vow be good, or such person be bound to perform it? I answer, [Answ.] a vow must be of things in our own power: but he that is in the power of his father and of his master, is not at his own hand, his will dependeth upon the will & pleasure of another; and therefore *Jonathan* telleth his father, that *David had asked leave of him to go to Bethlehem*, 1 Sam. 20, 28, for their family had a sacrifice to offer in that city. If then, being the servant of *Saul*, he would not presume to go before he had obtained leave of the Kings son, doubtless such vows are to be held unlawful, unless his governor confirm it, or he that hath vowed ratify it when he cometh to be at his own hand. Again, it may be demanded, whether such do not sin, as vow being in the power of others, in not performing their vow? True it is, they ought not to have vowed, but having made the vow, do they not sin except they perform it? [Answer.] I answer, they sin in vowing, but they do not sin in their not performing of it; wherefore *Moses* saith afterward, *The Lord shall forgive her*: he meaneth not her forbearing to perform y^e vow, forasmuch as if she should perform it, she should set at naught her fathers power & authority, which God by no means will suffer; and consequently add sin unto sin: but God will pardon her rash and unadvised vow which she had uttered. The doctrine from the first words is this, that vows made to God lawfully, are to be performed, Deut. 23.21, Psal. 76, 11, and 66.13, and 50, 14, Deu. 12, 17. This is further confirmed unto us by sundry examples of the faithful, as *Jacob*, Gen. 28, 20, 21, and 31, 13. *Hannah* the mother of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 1, 11, *David*, Psal. 22, 25, & 61, 8, & 116, 14, and diverse others.

This truth is plain, because it is better [Reason 1] never to vow, (understand this of lawful vows) then to fail in not performing the vow. For this is to offer the sacrifice of fools, and it may be said to them, as *Peter* spake to *Ananias*. Acts 5, 4, *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God*. If we have a promise made unto us by men, who had not rather never to have had such a promise, then to be deceived? Eccl. 5, 3, 4. Secondly, such do take the Name of God in vain, which is a grievous sin, and *he will never hold them guiltless that take his Name in vain*, Exod. 20. Thirdly, salvation is of no other then of God; and therefore to him we should return the praise of our deliverance, *Jonah* 2, 10. Lastly, the Gentiles by the light of nature have used to vow, *Jonah* 1.16.

This reproveth all unlawful vows, & first [Use 1] of such as are touched in this place expressly, when they take upon them to vow, being under the subjection of others. And here is fitly taxed the doctrine of the Church of Rome, which teach that parents, have no authority to hinder their children from following rash & unadvised vows, and that children are not bound to have their parents consent to enter into cloysters, into which indeed they ought not to enter, no not with their consent. Hence it is, that they maintain and defend, that children may steal away lawfully from their parents, and became Monks and Nuns, not only without their consent, but against it; who indeed ought not to enter into those styes and stables with their consent, neither have parents any warrant or authority to give their consent. And how much do they better many times, then if they should thrust them into the stews to learn honesty? Secondly, such may not lawfully vow as are children in age, though they have no parents living to controlle them, and those that are children in knowledge, who know not what a vow is, or how it bindeth, for how should these bind themselves? Thirdly, such as are foolish or furious; forasmuch as albeit they may be out of the power of others, yet they are not in their own power: and albeit that no man may command them, yet they have not the command over themselves: and therefore may justly be accounted as children. Fourthly such as are rash and unadvised in their vows: such was the vow of *Saul*, 1 Sam. 14, 24: the vow of the Benjamites, Judge. 21, 1: and the vow of *Iephte*, Judge. 11, 30, 31. A vow and an oath are of the same nature, and both of them unadvisedly undertaken, do dishonor God. Fifthly, such as are wicked & ungodly vows, and these are of two sorts, either *de malo*, aut *de bono male*, that is, made for doing of some evil, or doing some good but not well: as for example, If one vow to kill a man, as they did that *bound themselves by a vow, neither to eat nor drink, till they had killed Paul*, Acts 23, 12. These bound themselves to do that which is simply in it self an evil thing. Such was *Herod's* vow or oath, Math. 14. And thus two evils meet together, the one whereof is to vow, the other to perform such a vow; and therefore such vows are not to be kept. This serveth to set before the eyes of many their folly, who never consider what the vow is which they have taken upon them to observe, but if they can say, I have a vow to do this or that, they grow obstinate and settled in evil, and will by no means be removed, yea and think they are bound by virtue of their vow to do it, and are discharged of all fault and offense when they have done it: whereas that which is evil to vow, is much worse to perform; and therefore they must repent of their rash vow, and not proceed to the accomplishment of it, for that were to add one transgression to another, as it were drunkenness unto thirst, and to plunge themselves into endless destruction both of soul & body. This is the case of many young men and women who have entangled themselves in such vows, by promising marriage either to other without the consent of parents; they often pretend great scruple of conscience, which cannot be tied by such evil vows, the vow was evil, and therefore the way is not to go forward, but to crave pardon of GOD for that evil, as here it is prescribed in this Chapter. They also are to be accounted evil vows which are made for the doing of some good, if they be not well and rightly made, and consequently they are not to be broken, as if a man in fasting or any other work should purpose to do that which is above his strength and ability. Sixthly, such are forbidden as are constrained vows and involuntary, when they are undertakē against a man's will, whereas they ought to be free as well as made by them that are free. There must

be a willing mind before there can be a lawful vow. Seventhly, they must be of good importance, not of any idle or trifling toys, or of vain and foolish matters, in which the name of God is not to be used. Eighthly, superstitious vows, as to vow abstinence from this or that kind of meat for religion sake; such also as bind themselves to go on pilgrimage, and to offer to this or that holy Saint, or rather image or idol; these and such like observed in the Church of Rome, are reprov'd in the Sermons *de Tempore*, ascribed to *Agustine*: *One voweth a cloak, another Oil, a third a wax candle, God careth not for these vows: but offer unto God that which at this day he hath redeemed, to wit, thy soul.* The vows of obedience and repentance are the true and the best vows, the offering up of our bodies & souls a living sacrifice is most acceptable to God, and most profitable to our selves. Lastly, such vows as are impossible & above the strength of the vndertakers, are also forbidden as unlawful, among which we may range the vow of single life, and abjuring of marriage, *which is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled,* Hebr. 13, 4: so that they sin not against GOD which do contrary to such vows. For continency or single life is not necessarily annexed to the Ministry, neither hath God laid such a yoke upon their necks that enter into that calling. God hath left marriage free unto all, and it is *the doctrine of devils to forbid marriage,* as the Bishop of Rome doth, who *speakech lies through hypocrisy,* 1 Tim. 4, 1, 2. For he will have none admitted into the holy Ministry, but such as are vnmarried, or being married promise to live from their wives: as also he excludeth such as have been twice married, and such as have married a widow. But the Apostle telleth the Corinthians, that *he had power to lead about a wife being a sister, as well as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas,* 1 Cor. 9 5. And he speaketh generally, *To avoid fornication let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband,* 1 Cor. 7, 2. Again, declaring and prescribing what persons should be chosen to that office, he saith, *A Bishop must be the husband of one wife,* 1 Tim. 3, 2, 4. Titus 1, 6; *one that can rule his own house, having children under obedience with all honesty.* Thomas Aquinas confesseth (*Secunda Secundae quaest. 88. artic. 11.*) that it is not essentially annexed to holy Orders, that men should contain & live a single life that enter into the Ministry, but by the Decree of the Church only. With him agreeth Cardinal Bellarmine, (*Bel. de cleri. lib. 1. cap. 8.*) who showeth that there is no prohibition of almighty God found either in the old or New Testament; he might have said infinite examples are found to the contrary, Adam was married in the time of his innocence, and lived in the Garden a married man. Noah a Preacher of righteousness was married: the Patriarchs were married: the Priests & the high Priest himself was married: the Prophets and the sons of the Prophets were married: and many Deacons, Ministers, and Bishops after Christ's time lived married. It were easy to produce infinite examples, but I will content myself with one very renowned & remarkable, touching *Synesius*, who when they of *Ptolemais* would needs have him to be their Bishop, which he little desired, he acquainted them with his present condition, and his future resolution, saying, *God, the Law, and the sacred hand of Theophilus hath given unto me a wife; I therefore tell all men afore hand and testify unto all, that I will not suffer myself to be altogether estranged from her, neither will I live with her secretly as an adulterer; for the one is no way godly, and the other no way lawful: but I will pray unto God that many good and happy children may be borne unto me. Neither will I have him that is to be chief in ordaining me, to be ignorant hereof.* Nay, it may be truly avouched and auerred, that generally there never prevailed any restraint of all Clergy men in all places from marrying and accompanying with their wives which they

married while they were lay-men, and the greatest part of the Christian world hath ever from the beginning to this day enjoyed that liberty. Howbeit almost 400, years after Christ, *Syricius* Bishop of Rome sought to impeach it, and commanded that no such thing should be permitted. *Innocentius* the first insisted in the steps of his Predecessour, so that in some places, the lawful society and accompanying of Cleargymen with their wives began to be restrained. Afterward whē *Hildebrand* climed up into the papal chair, he published a Decree to forbid them to marry, whereupon great confusions, tumults, and hurlyburlyes followed in the Church; for they were so enraged against him, that they cried out, he was an heretic, and a man damnable, erring in his judgment, who forgot the speech of our Lord, *All men receive not this saying, save they to whom it is given: & again, Let him that can receive it, receive it, Matth. 19, 11, 12.* Likewise the Apostle, *Let him that cannot contain, marry, for it is better to marry then to burn, 1 Cor. 7, 9.* and thereupon they openly protested against him, that if he proceeded to urge against them the execution of his Decree, they were resolved rather to forsake the Ministry, then their marriage. But to leave this, let us speak of such as have vowed single life, and see what hath been the judgment of the Church touching such vows. I propound this as a ruled case, & set it down as a certain truth, that the marriages even of such as have vowed the contrary are not void and of none effect, as the Jesuits teach. To this purpose *Cyprian* saith well, (lib. 1. epist. 11.) *Si perseuerare nolunt aut non possunt, melius est nubant, quàm in ignem delictis suis cadant*, that is, *If they will not or cannot persevere, it is better that they should marry, then by their sins they should fall into the fire.* Neither can this be understood of virgins that are yet to resolve and are free, as *Bellarmino* would decline the force of the testimony: (*De Monach. lib. 2. cap. 34.*) for *Cyprian* speaketh of such as have already dedicated themselves to God, & telleth them that they were better to marry then to burn. To him accordeth *Augustine* in his Epistle to *Bonifacius* who had vowed a monasticall and single life, and yet afterward did marry: for he telleth him, that being thus hindered and entangled, he could not freely exhort him to that former kind of retired life which he had vowed, because of his wife. His words are these, *Thy wife hindereth me that I cannot exhort thee to this kind of life, without whose consent it is not lawful for thee to contain: & therefore he thought not his marriage to be void, or no marriage at all, or that he might lawfully forsake his wife, much less that he ought.* The like we might easily show out of *Jerome*, and out of *Epiphanius, haeres. 61:* who maketh it 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, i. an evil thing, and such as God will judge and punish, not to perform the vow once made to God: but not 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉, that is, a thing which casteth men into condemnation of hell fire, and plungeth them into everlasting destruction, & therefore he defendeth that it is better to descend to that state of life which is lawful and honorable with one fault of breaking a vow passed to the contrary, and with tears of repentance to wash away that one fault of inconstancy, and so to be saved, rather than to live in sin continually, and so to perish everlastingly. And not only these fathers, but the schoolmen generally resolve, *Aquinas* excepted, that the Pope may dispense with a Presbyter, Deacon, or Subdeacon to marry, though he have solemnly vowed the contrary, by entering into holy orders, because the duty and bond of containing is not essentially annexed unto orders; and that it is only a canon and constitution of the Church. And the general opinion of them is, that though single life cannot be separated from the profession of a Monk, yet he that is a Monk may be freed from that profession the which he hath made, and so cease to be

a Monk. Neither is this the opinion of the schools only, but the practice of the Popes hath concurred with the same, who have oftentimes dispensed with such vows, and given them free liberty to marry, and to forsake their couents and cloysters, where they had been mued up, as were easy to be shown by diverse examples.

Secondly, from hence everyone should learn to know how to behave themselves in [Use 2] vowing, that they may use this doctrine lawfully. To this purpose we must be instructed in these particulars; what a vow is: what are the conditions of it: what is the right manner of vowing: and what should be the ends of our vowing. Touching the first, a vow is a solemn promise made to GOD, binding our selves to the doing or leaving undone of some special thing that is acceptable unto GOD. Vowes thus taken are not merely ceremonial or pertaining to the times of the Law, but are a constant and perpetual ordinance of God to be observed and practiced under the Gospel. Howbeit seeing the Jews were tied to sundry legal observations, whereby upon occasion they testified their thankfulness, we may not unfitly hold that vows were partly ceremonial, and partly moral; partly they were abrogated, and partly they continue and remain in full force to the end of the world, because the spiritual duties shadowed thereby bind all persons. Such vows I call a solemn promise made to God, as appeareth by the vow of *Jacob*, Gen. 28, 30, going from his fathers house to avoid the fury of his brother *Esau*: and of the Israelites, who having received an overthrow at the hands of their enemies, vowed to God that *if he would deliver them*, and overthrow those that stood against them, *they would utterly destroy their cities*, and reserve the spoil to be consecrated to him, Numb. 21, 2, of the which we have spoken before. *Hannah*, upon condition of having a son granted unto her, vowed him a perpetual Nazarite unto the Lord, 1 Sam. 1, 11. Psal. 66, 12. 2 Sam. 13, 8. From hence we gather two things: first, that in the breach of an holy and religious vow there is a double trespass, because to the observation of the vow a man is tied by a double band, both absolutely by duty, and respectively by covenant and promise, and thereby violateth his duty and fidelity unto GOD. When *David* saith to GOD, Psal. 119, *I have sworn, and will perform it*: who seeth not, y^t he tieth himself to the observation of the Law by a special band, besides the general that tieth all others? Hence it is, that God doth so oftentimes charge and challenge his people in special manner to have dealt unfaithfully & treacherously with him, *as false and lying children in whom is no faith*, upon promise made to keep his Laws, Deut. 5, 27, & 32, 20. Psal. 78, 8. Isaiah 30, 9, and 57, 4. Secondly, it reproveth the superstitious vows of the Romanists, who vow not to God only, but to the Saints, of which sort was no practice among the Jews, Psal. 76, 11, Isaiah 19, 21, no not when vows stood in greatest force, and were in largest sxtent. They teach that vows are a substantial part of the worship of God; and therefore by their own confession they commit manifest and abominable idolatry, because they communicate this honor to the Saints, and thereby make them to be gods, making vows to them of fastings, prayers, pilgrimages, Churches, Colleges, altars, tapers, and such like. Hence it is, that *Bellarmino* is content to say, that *when the holy Scriptures were written, the custom of vowing to saints was not yet begun*. To God we owe all that is in us, who is the searcher of the hearts, and hath power to punish the willful breach of a lawful vow; and therefore to him only we are to make our vows, *He will not give his glory to any other*. Again, in the description of a vow, *we bind our selves to the doing or leaving undone some*

special thing that is acceptable to God, because he alloweth not of our will-worship, Col. 2, 23, Math. 15: wherefore we are not left free to vow what we list, for then we can have no assurance that God will accept them: but it will be said to us, *Who required these things at your hands?* Isaiah 1, 12: and again, *In vain they worship me, teaching the precepts of men*, Math. 15, 9. The Church of Rome offendeth herein many ways, and is almost endless in their errors touching this part or point of vows. I will briefly touch them & run them over. First, they maintain that young men and women, to wit, such as are come to the years of discretion, may vow single life, and that because they must suffer little children to come to Christ, Mat. 19, 14. As if none could come to Christ, [Answer.] but such as can look through a Monks coule, or as if the kingdom of heaven belonged to none but to professed Monks and Friars, who haply have themselves the least part therein. Besides, the Text speaketh of *little children*, which can have no trial or experience of themselves, whereas the Apostle appointing widows to attend upon the sick and poor Saints, admitteth none under the age of *threescore years*, 1 Tim. 5, 9, & exhorteth the younger women *to marry, to bear children, to guide the house, and to give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully*, verse 14. Secondly, they permit children to enter into religious, or rather their irreligious houses, without consent of their parents and governors, and that parents have not any authority to take away their sons or daughters out of those dens & Cloisters. As this doctrine is most strange so their reasons are most weak. They pretend that *Abraham* was commanded of God *to go out of his Country*, [Object] & *from his fathers house*, Gen. 12, 1. and that Christ saith, *Whosoever loveth father or mother more then me, is not worthy of me*, [Answ.] Math. 10, 37. I answer, the commandment of God to *Abraham* was special, and a special trial of his faith and obedience: let these show the like particular commandment to them, and then let them follow that example. As for the words of Christ our Savior, they are understood of the times of persecution, when we must prefer the love of Christ before the love of our best and nearest friends: to omit, that a man may leave his parents and kinsfolkes in his affection that is set upon heavenly things, even while he dwelleth with them in the same house. But of this more afterward. Thirdly, they permit the husband and wife to separate themselves by mutual consent, to depart one from another and to vow continency so long as both of them shall live. For this they produce and urge the example of *Joseph* and *Mary*, who lived continently all their days. [Answ.] But it is plain, that *Joseph* purposed and intended that they should come together, Math. 1, 18. Again, he is expressly admonished by the Angel to take *Mary* his wife: neither is it necessary to believe it as an article of faith, that *Mary* the mother of Christ lived always a Virgin. Again, the Apostle wisheth that all men were even as he himself, 1 Cor. 7, 7, but he addeth in the next words, *Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that*. Besides, in those words he speaketh directly to the widows, and them that are unmarried, verse 8: and he hath an express commandment, verse 10, *I command, not I, but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her husband. And everyone must abide in the calling, to which he hath been called*, verse 24. To this purpose he saith, verse 27. *Art thou bound to a wife? seek not to be loosed*. And in the words going before, he exhorteth all married persons *not to defraud one another except it be with consent*, so that with consent he alloweth a separation: howbeit he addeth immediately, *for a time*, and after he willeth them *to come together again, lest Satan tempt you through your inconstancy*, verse 5. Moreover Christ himself teacheth, Math. 19, 6, *What God*

hath coupled together, let no man put asunder: but married persons God hath coupled together; therefore they may not be separated, nay they may not separate themselves, neither can they without breaking the ordinance of God and the institution of marriage. Hence it is, that it is called *The Covenant of God*, Prov. 2, 17: not only a covenant between themselves, but such as God is therein interested, and therefore it lieth not in their power to dissolve that covenant. Lastly, they maintain that if the marriage be only contracted, and not consummated or finished, one may lawfully leave another, without consent one of another, to vow single life: to color this, they pretend that it is lawful to pass from a state of life less perfect, to that which is more perfect: and so they define a *vow to be a promise to God of some better good*. But this is a false surmise. [Answ.] For how doth he vow a better good, who in the vow of continency burneth with carnal and fleshly lusts, and is scorched in the flames of his own concupiscence? as the Apostle teacheth directly, *It is better to marry than to burn*, 1 Cor. 7, 9. In the time of the Law, the vow oftentimes was sacrifice, & the common duty belonging to all believers was showing of mercy: how then was the special vow better then the common duty, forasmuch as God saith, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice?* Hos. 6, 6. And how can they be said to vow a better good, that vow voluntary poverty and beggary, when Christ himself saith, *It is a more blessed thing to give, then to receive?* Act. 20, 35. Or how can the blind vow of the Jesuits touching obedience to their superior, be a tying of themselves to a greater or better good, seeing the Scripture saith, *Bee ye not made the servants of men?* 1 Cor. 7, 23: forasmuch as they make themselves slaves to the rules and precepts of an Order altogether devised by mē. So then we must know that single life is not always, nor in all, a perfecter state of life then marriage: and it is to be presumed that such as are contracted to others have not that gift, for otherwise what needed such contracting?

The next point in a lawful vow, is to consider what are the conditions of it, which may better appear by the contrary prohibitions; wherein consider both how to make them, and how to pay them. First it must be made by him that is free, & in his or her own power, and not under the jurisdiction of another: so that the vow of the wife that is under her husband, of the son and daughter under their parents, of the servant under his Master, cannot be allowable, but is void and frustrate. [Object.] If any ask, Is it not lawful for the wife, or the son, or the daughter, or the servant to vow to serve the Lord, except the husband, the father, the mother, the master give their consent? Is the power of these greater then the power of God? or is the worship of God subordinate to the will and pleasure of superiors? or may they hinder their inferiors from serving the Lord? I answer, [Answ.] the worship of God is not bound and tied to vows: and inferiors may serve the Lord fully and faithfully, and walk before him in faith, obedience, prayer, and love without the band of vows. The obedience and subjection which he hath laid as a duty upon inferiors is more acceptable to him, then any vow whatsoever. Secondly, vows must be made only to God not to other creatures, as we shown before, and therefore they offend that vow to Saints departed, for they cannot make such to be vows to God. Thirdly, they must be of things possible, for it is foolish, if not impious to vow that which we are not able to perform. Fourthly, they must be godly and religious vows, not of such things as are forbidden of God. Fifthly, they must come from a free heart, performed willingly and cheerfully to GOD. Sixthly, we must place no opinion of

merit therein, as the Romanists do; but tender our duty and thankfulness to God. Lastly, they must be advised and of great importance. These considerations we must set before us in making a vow: in paying and performing thereof we must consider, first, it must be performed fully & wholly, not maimed or to halves. Therefore *Moses* in this place saith, *He shall do all that is gone out of his mouth*, verse 2. It is not enough for us to do a part, and to leave a part undone, but we must do it perfectly. These are like to *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, who vowed unto God the whole price of their possession, but when they came to perform their vow, *they kept back apart*, & thought to please GOD with another part, Acts 5, 3. The manner of many is to be large in promising, but to be sparing in performing. This is a token of lightness and inconstancy, and more displeases God then if they paid nothing at all, because it is joined with hypocrisy. Secondly, we must pay our vows without delay, we must not put off the time, Genesis 33, 1, Eccles. 5, 3, Deuteron, 23, 21. Delay in all duties is dangerous, and bewrayeth an unthankful heart. For as he that giveth quickly, giveth twice; so he that giveth leysurely, it is all one as if he gave not at all. Thirdly, we must perform our vows from our heart, willingly & cheerfully, not grudgingly or mutteringly, like the bad debtor, that payeth indeed the money he borroweth at the appointed day, but not with a willing mind, and therefore he had rather he were not bound to pay it, and knew how to avoid it. God requireth a cheerful giver, & therefore such payment of vows as otherwise, is is not allowed and approved of God,

Thirdly, we must learn what is the right manner of vowing, wherein also observe, how it was wont to be made, and then how performed. The making thereof was wont always to be joined with prayer, to note that y^e faithful always lifted up their hearts to GOD, craving his blessing, Psalm. 61, 5. Gen. 28, 20. Judge. 11, ver. 30, 31, so that such as were fit to vow, must be faithful & justified before God, and reconciled unto him, otherwise they can never call upon him aright. And as they must be made with prayer, so they must be performed with thanksgiving, Psal. 61, 5: otherwise it were better never to have vowed and promised unto God that cannot be deceived.

Fourthly, it behooveth us to know the right ends of vows, which are these; First, concerning God's glory and the advancement of his worship. Secondly, to testify our special thankfulness to God for blessings which we have received at his hands. Thirdly, to chastise our selves, that thereby we may prevent y^e wrath of God; for by judging of our selves, we escape his judgment, 1 Cor. 11, Fourthly, to make our selves more circumspect and watchful over our own ways; for when we have fallen into some sin, we do hereby make ourselves more wary and heedful for the time to come. Fifthly, to bind our selves more strongly, as by a twofold cord which is not easily broken, to yield obedience to God. Lastly, to strengthen the weakness of our faith, hope, and other spiritual graces, and to give us greater assurance of the mercy of GOD, which we shall receive at his hands.

Lastly, it is a duty belonging to everyone, [Use 3] to consider diligently what vows they have vowed to God. We are ready and not sparing to vow in times of our afflictions & troubles, O that we were as careful to perform them, Psal. 66. But if we have not vowed this way, there is a common vow which we have all undertaken, the vow of our baptism, that we will believe in

God and serve him, that we will forsake the devil and all his works; and this is *the answer of a good conscience toward God*, 1 Pet. 3, 21. The master of the Sentences calleth baptism, *The common vow*, because therein men protest, promise, and profess to consecrate themselves, their souls & bodies unto God, both which are his, by right of creation and redemption. *Jerome* maketh holiness in body and spirit, the matter of a Christian vow, *In Isaiah, lib. 7. cap. 19*. And *S. Augustine* to this purpose in many places teacheth, that *to believe in God, to hope for eternal life, and to live according to his commandments, are the things, which we are to vow to God*. And in another place, *What do we vow to God, but to be the Temple of God?* These Christian duties contain the truth of y^e Jewish vows. They vowed external sacrifices and oblations, & bound themselves to the outward service, in the exercise whereof it pleased GOD for a time to train that people: howbeit in all these he called them to the true practice of piety, & to the inward affections of praise & thanksgiving. Psal. 4, 5, & 50.14, 23, & 51, 17, & 107, 22, & 115, 17. Jonah 2, 9. Hos. 14, 13. Neither is the holy Scripture silent what their ceremonial vows imported to them and to us. The vow of humbling and afflicting themselves by fasting did teach them, to forbear their own desires, to renounce their own wills, to subdue their own corruptions, and to abstain from cruelty & oppression, Isaiah 58, 6. Mic. 6, as appeareth by the reproof of the Prophet, when he chargeth them that *in the day of their fast, they sought their own wills*, verse 3. This we see notably in the vow of the Nazarites, a principal one among the rest, of which we have spoken before, whereby *they were separated to the Lord*, Numb. 6, 2. And this was the chief intendment of that ceremony to signify the common condition of all that people, that the Lord their God had separated them from all other people, and therefore they must be holy unto him, *because the Lord himself is holy*; and hath separated them from other people, that they should be his, Levite. 20, 24, 26. And this is that which *Balaam* uttered concerning Israel, Numb, 23, 9, *Loe the people shall dwell alone, & shall not be reckoned among the nations*. This then was a special vow of ceremonial observations, wherein by abstaining from many outward things, as separating themselves *from wine & strong drink, & suffering no rafor to come on their head*, and other outward things expressed in that place, they were divided from the common and profane conversation both of themselves and others among that people; howbeit a special & spiritual respect was had of preserving inward piety & holiness toward him, so that such divided persons were so many spectacles and examples of the condition of all the faithful, of whom Christ our Savior hath told us, and taught us, that *they are not of this world, but he hath chosen thē out of the world*, John 15, 19, *they must fly the corruption that is in the world*, 2 Pet. 1, 4: and they must hear the voice of God calling and crying unto them, *Come out from among them, & separate yourselves from them, and touch no unclean thing, and then he will receive them*, 2 Cor. 6, 17. In all which he alludeth to the vow of the Nazarites, who were a separated and selected people, retiring themselves from others, of which see more before, chapter 6. So then the vows that temaine in the Gospel, and belong unto us, are the vows of prayer, of praise & thanksgiving, of obedience to God, of denying our selves, of subduing our sins, of mortifying the corruptions of the old man, of mercy and compassion toward our brethren, and briefly of keeping our selves holy unto God and unspotted of the world, Psal. 27, 8, & 58, 12. & 79, 13. & 80, 17. & 86, 11.119, 34, 35.106, Mat. 16, 24. Col. 3, 5. Rom. 6, 13, & 12, 1. 2 Cor. 6, 20. These are the holy and solemn vows that we promised to God in our Baptism, wherein we were dedicated, and consecrated unto God, and these we do continually

renew, when we come to the Table of the Lord. Let us diligently think of these vows, and be careful to practice and perform them, that God may be duly glorified in us.

3 If a woman also vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind her self by a bond, being in her fathers house in her youth,

4 And her father hear her vow & her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her, then all her vows shall stand, and every bond, &c.

5 But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth, not any of her vows &c. shall stand, and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her.

6 And if she had at all an husband when she vowed, or uttered ought out of her lips, wherewith she bound her soul,

7 And her husband heard it, and held his peace in the day when he heard it, then her vows shall stand, &c.

Now *Moses* entreateth of such vows as were made by those that are under the authority of others, as children under their parents: concerning which the father hath authority to disannul them. Hereby the power of all parents is so magnified and advanced, that a vow made immediately to God is frustrate, & there is a mere nullity of it, except they confirm it. They have power to make it good, and they have power to make it void. Heereby we learn, that great is the authority and jurisdiction of parents over their children by the Law of God and Nature. The very heathen have this truth shining in their hearts, that parents are to be honored, and that their authority should be inviolable, Exod. 20, 12. Eph. 6, 1, 2. Ierem. 35, 6, 7, 8, &c. Gen. 27, 8, 43. and 28. 2. When the father saith, Go, the child goeth: when he saith, Arise, he ariseth: when he saith, Come, he cometh. Christ our Savior giveth testimony of his perfect obedience, whom all both men and Angels stand bound to worship, and to whom *every knee must bow of things in heaven, of things in earth, and of things under the earth*, Philip. 2: yet he was subject to his parents and went with them, Luke 2.51. 1. King. 2.19. The reasons are evident.

[Reason 1] First, the precept of honoring parents hath the first place in the second Table, and is set before all other, so that next unto GOD we are bound to reverence them to whom we are most bound: and it is the foundation and band of obedience to all the rest of the commandments that follow. For if men do not stand in awe of the Magistrate the father of the Common-wealth, and *the Captain of the people*, all the other would soon be violated, 2 Kings 20, 5.

Again, the Apostle teacheth, that *this is the first Commandment with promise*, Eph. 6, 2: it hath a special promised annexed of long life. Thirdly, children receive great and manifold blessings

from the hands of their parents and governors, and likewise are freed from many evils and dangers, that otherwise they might fall into. Fourthly, patents give life, and breath, and being after a sort unto them; for children receive all these from thē. Fifthly, parents are honored by sundry titles and names, the which are given to God himself, Matth. 23.9: *One is your father which is in heaven*, therefore call no man your father upon earth.

[Object. 1] Touching this impregnable and invincible truth, sundry questions may be asked, and diverse doubts to be removed. As first, seeing their authority is so great, why doeth our Savior speak of hating father and mother, as Luke 14, 26, *If any man come to me, and do not hate his father and mother, he cannot be my disciple*. [Answ.] I answer, Christ speaketh in that place comparatively, that is, we must not regard them in respect of himself whom we ought to love above all, and so it is expounded, Matthew 10, 37: *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me*. To love our parents next after GOD is piety, but to love them more than God is impiety. We hate them therefore when we love them less than God, in comparison of whom we should hate our lives.

[Object. 2] Secondly, Christ forbiddeth us to call any man father, as we have heard before, Matth. 23. [Answ.] I answer, Christ condemneth not the name or appellation given to men simply, for then he should be contrary to himself, where he alloweth the title to earthly fathers, Math. 7, 9. Mark 7, 11: and the Apostle should be contrary to his master, 1 Cor. 4, 15. Therefore he meaneth, that no man is or can be our Father as God is, to wit, that we should trust in them, and make them the authors of our life, and the givers of all good things that come unto us.

[Object. 3] Thirdly, what if our parents be evil persons and ungodly, ought we then to obey them & yield unto their authority, who are by their wickedness unworthy thereof? [Answ.] I answer, It skilleth not whether they be good or evil touching our obedience. For evil parents are our parents, and evil Magistrates are Magistrates, and evil Ministers are Ministers. Servants are commanded to be subject to their masters, not *only unto them that are good and gentle, but to them y^t are froward*, 1 Peter 2, 18: so ought children to yield obedience unto their fathers, though they be evil. Hence it is that God saith generally in the Law, Honor thy father and mother, not honor them when they are good only.

But it will be farther objected, What if they [Object. 4] be excommunicate persons, may they then be obeyed, or should children then do any duty to their parents? and is not that to set light by that censure? I answer, [Answer.] Excommunication rightly used, is indeed the most grievous judgment that can be inflicted in this life both in respect of the soul and of the body, and is as it were the messenger of death. It is a great punishment to be banished from a well ordered City: much more to be thrust out of the Church, which is the Common-wealth of God, and of his Son Christ. *David* did greatly lament his estate and condition, when he wanted the holy assemblies of the faithful among the Infidels, and could not come into the presence of God with his people, and did think himself driven away *from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord*, 1 Sam. 26, 19. Who would not tremble and be afraid to be delivered up unto Satan, 1 Cor. 5, 6. the enemy of God? The children of Israel were delivered over to *Nebucadnezzar* and other wicked tyrants to be afflicted, and they bewailed exceedingly such

bodily captivity, Psalm 137, 1, 2 how much more fearful then ought the excommunicate person to esteem it to be delivered up, not to wicked and ungodly men, but to Satan himself, *The prince that ruleth in the heart of the children of disobedience?* Notwithstanding all fellowship and familiarity with them is not denied to us. It is lawful for the family to converse with the governors of the family, though they be excommunicate persons. The wife may not deny due benevolence, nor the child dutiful obedience: if he bid them go, they must go; or to come, they must come: neither are they by such behavior culpable, or guilty of their sin: of which we see more before, chap. 5.

Fourthly, if the son be a Magistrate, & [Object. 5] the father a private man, it may be demanded, whether he be to yield obedience to his father? I answer, [Answ.] though the father must obey the son as he is a Magistrate, yet in another respect the son must obey the father, as he is the father: so that neytner is the son to be deprived of the honor and dignity due unto his place, neither is the father to be denied that duty and respect which is due unto his person. The son may be honored as he is a Magistrate, and the father is likewise also to be obeyed as he is a father. And this the Heathen in former times have both known and practiced. For when *Q. Fabius Maximus*, in *Livy Decad. 3. lib. 4.* was on a time sent Ambassador unto his son then being Consull, he went out to meet his father who was coming to him on horseback: and albeit the Sergeants reuerencing the majesty of the father (who before had been Dictator, the highest office in the City) suffered him to pass, yet the son commanded him to alight from his horse if he meant to speak to him. And the old man was so far from being offended with his son, or from thinking it any disgrace to himself, that he leaped from his horse immediately, commending his son, and telling him he meant to try whether he knew himself to be Consull or not. I allege this out of the Roman history, to show that the Heathen themselves knew how to make this difference. *Solomon* is a notable example of this point, for he knew himself to be a son, yet he forgot not that he was also king of Israel; and therefore when *Bathsheba* came unto him, albeit *he rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her* as she was his mother, yet he sat down in his throne again as he was king, and she his subject, 1 [Objection 5] Kings 2, 19: yea he denied her request also.

It may be demanded farther, what if God command one thing, and the parents another, what are the children to do in this repugnancie, whether of them should they obey? I answer, [Answ.] we are charged to love and obey God before and above all things: and therefore to prefer the precept or pleasure of man before the will of God, is no better then to make an idol of our parents, and to honor them as God. True it is, we are bound to obey evil parents, but we are not bound to obey them in evil. If they command and compel in evil, they are rather tyrants then parents, and we must answer with the Apostles, *We ought to obey God rather then men*, Acts 5, 29. So then we see how far children are bound to obey their parents, to wit, while they keep themselves within their bounds, though they be froward and wayward, peevish and perverse, though they be not endued with virtue, or wisdom, or any other good qualities, yet they must be revered, honored, and relieved as parents and the instruments of our life and being: but if they forget their places and command against God, it is better to cleave unto GOD our heavenly father.

[Objection 6] Again, if the Magistrate command one thing, and the father another, here both are men, whether of these two are to be obeyed by the son? Nay in this case, not only both are men, but both of them are fathers, one the father of the country, [Answ.] the other of the family. I answer, if obedience to both cannot stand together, we must obey the Magistrate, because God hath given him a larger commission and greater authority then to the fathers of our bodies, so that he hath power and authority to command the fathers & their children. Again, the Magistrate commandeth for the good of the Commonwealth, the father for the private good of the private house. True it is, we may love our parents better then the Magistrate, howbeit we must obey the Magistrate before our parents. As we may love a good man which is but poor and needy before or better then an evil or wicked man which is in great power and authority; howbeit in respect of his authority, when he commandeth, we must obey him before the other.

Furthermore, suppose a man be a servant [Objection 7] or an apprentice, his master commandeth him one thing, & his father the contrary, whether of them shall he obey, in this repugnancie of commanders and commandments? which of them shall he please, and to which of them shall he cleave? I answer, [Answ.] he must obey his master. For to speak properly, the father hath no power nor authority in such a case: for it may be said, Who art thou that commandest another man's servant? *he standeth or falleth to his own master*, as Paul speaketh in another case. The father having bound his son an apprentice, and put him into the service of another, hath withal by that act put away his authority, and as it were resigned up his own right to his master. And such a son may wish the good of his father before the good of his master, and the life of his father before the life of his master, howbeit he must obey his master before his father, and endeavor by his diligence, labor, service, and faithfulness the profit of his master before the profit of his father, and not seek the hindrance or loss of his master in one penny to procure advantage to his father in twenty pound, farther then he hath the consent of his master.

Lastly, the question may be asked touching [Objection 8] the daughter of a man given in marriage, the husband commandeth one thing, and the father another, whether of these is to be obeyed, the husband, or the father? I answer, [Answer.] the husband. For, as she must obey her husband before the father, so she is to love the husband better also, and God commandeth *the man to leave father and mother, and to cleave to his wife*, which is also a commandment unto the woman to leave parents, and to cleave to her husband, for *they twain shall be one flesh*, Matth. 19, verse 5. Ephes. 5. verse 31. 1 Cor. 6. verse 16: therefore in this case the will of the husband is to be preferred before the will of the father. For as it is in the two great lights which God hath set in the firmament, the lesser evermore giveth place to the greater, and when the Sun shineth, the light of the Moon fadeth and vanisheth away: so when the greater authority of the husband cometh in place, the lesser power and authority of the father ceaseth. Besides, his giving of her in marriage to the husband is a giving away of his own right over her, as well as over that portion of goods which he bestoweth with her: so that now his authority is abridged, nay clean abolished. Lastly, it appeareth in this chapter, that if a married woman had vowed a vow to God, her husband only had power to abrogate and disannul her vow, but not her father. That which she doth

unto her parents, and for her parents, must be by the consent and allowance of her Husband. Whatsoever is hurtful or any way prejudicial to him, she ought not to do, though it were with a purpose to profit her parents.

[Use 1] Now we come to the Uses. This reproveth diverse and sundry sorts that fight directly against this ordinance of God. In the first place whereof I range the Church of Rome. For, as it abridgeth the authority of Magistrates, so it crosseth the authority of parents over their children. It is notoriously known to the whole world, how the Roman Antichrist that proud beast that sitteth upon the seven hills, hath stirred up the children against their parents, and provoked them partly by promises, and partly by threatenings, to deprive them of their dominions and lives by force of arms; by which means, bloody wars have been raised and waged between the father and the son. Thus they put asunder those whom God and nature hath joined together. In like manner, under the vizard & pretence of Religion, they not only allow, but exhort and entice, and receive into their Monkish Orders, young men at fourteen years, and young women at twelve, without consent of their parents. But in this place, God putteth: power and authority into the parents hands, to disannul the vow which the daughter maketh being in her fathers house; which ordinance is grounded upon the moral Law, which commandeth children to honor and obey their parents: and the Apostle *Paul* referreth the whole matter of keeping *y^e daughter a virgin, or the bestowing of her in marriage*, to the will and determination of the father, 1 Cor. 7, 36, 37.

Moreover, hath not the father as great power over his son, as the master hath over his servant? But it is not lawful for the servant to take upon him the profession of Monkery without the consent of his master, and therefore the child may not do the same. The answer of *Bellarmino* is nothing to the purpose, that children are not in like subjection to their parents, as servants are to their masters, but have more power over themselves then servants have: because howsoever Children are not in such servile condition as servants (which is not the question, it being out of question) yet parents have as great power over the persons of their children, being within age, as over servants: and the law of nature which bindeth sons, is stronger then *y^e law of men*, which maketh servants and parents have greater power over their own flesh then over strangers.

[Use 2] Secondly, this teacheth, that it belongeth as a special duty to children by all means, to honor their parents, to which they are bound with the strongest bands: and this yielding of honor unto them consisteth in many particulars. For we must be subject unto them, and give them reverence, obedience, and maintenance. First, we ought all the days of our lives to esteem reverently of them, as also of their wise devices, of their holy counsels, of their careful instructions. And this we ought to express in gesture, in speech, and in outward carriage: not so much for fear of correction, or looking for benefit from them, but *for conscience sake*, lest by the contrary we draw the curse of God upon us Prov. 30, 17. Woe therefore unto those ungodly and ungracious children, that do not esteem their parents according to the high place wherein God hath seated them over them, that do despise them because of some infirmities of age, of nature, or otherwise, and therefore mock and scoff at them, Prov. 30, 11. Gen. 9, 22. The second duty is obedience to their lawful commandments

in performing of their will, howsoever sometimes they may seem unpleasant and displeasing unto them, Mat. 21. Col. 3, 20. Jer. 35, Deuter. 21, 18, 19. Thus doth *Jacob* rest in the counsel of *Rebecca* his mother, and yieldeth to her wholesome admonition, Genes. 27, 14. And this is one of the chief virtues that can be found among them, and therefore *Paul* expoundeth *Honor* by *Obedience*, Colos. 3, 20. Eph. 6, 1. Thus they ought to submit and subject themselves to their godly government & religious discipline. And as this ought to be yielded to them in all things, so it should be observed in choosing their trade and order of life, and taking upon them a special calling, to be ready to be directed by them, what by their grave censure, wisdom, judgment, & foresight they think fittest for them, Prover. 29, 15: & 15, 5: especially in the greatest matter of all that doth most nearly concern them, I mean their marriage, when they shall begin to think of seeking a companion to live with them in that estate. Thus all faithful children were content to submit themselves to their parents, and to be ordered by them, and never attempt to bestow themselves in marriage without their parents knowledge, Genes. 24, 3. So did *Jacob* at the commandment of his father, and the advice of his mother, and by consent of them both, Genes, 27, 46. and 28, 1. This was observed of those that otherwise led no sanctified life, Genesis 21, 21 yea of the very heathen themselves. I will produce one testimony among many others, and that is of king *Cyrus* after he had conquered *Babylon*, and come home in triumph, his vnckle *Cyaraxis* offered him his daughter unto wife: he thanked his vnckle, and praised the maid, and liked the dowry, but for giving consent to marriage, he made him this answer, which I would it were observed and followed of all Christians, *O Cyaraxe, to te genos Epainô, kai ten paida, kai dôra; boulomai de, ephê sun tê tou patros gnômê, kai tes metros tanta sunainesai*, which is englished in this manner: Uncle *Cyaraxis*, I commend the stock, & the maid, and the portion; howbeit (saith he) by the counsel of my father and mother I will assent unto you: as if he had said, without their advice I can do nothing. All histories, Philosophers, and Poets in a manner, are full of the practice of this duty. And no marvel, for this is agreeable to the common principle in nature, *Whatsoever ye would that other men should do unto you, do ye even so to them*, Math. 7, 12. *Sampson* saw a maid in *Timnah* that liked him well, notwithstanding he spake not one word to her, but came back to his parents, & desired them to make the marriage for him. They were the first whom he acquainted with his purpose: not as in our days, wherein commonly the parents are the last. Judges 14, 2. *Get her to me, for she pleaseth me well*. For seeing parents have taken great pains, and bestowed great cost in bringing up their children, it is reason they should reap some fruits of their labor and travail in the bestowing of them in marriage, and thereby be acknowledged more wise and better able to provide and foresee for them, then themselves. This justly reproveth many children in our days, that never regard this duty, and condemneth the common practice of our corrupt age so much degenerated and grown out of course, that they never require nor regard the consent of their parents in their matches and marriages; but make their choice after the lust of their eyes, and the delight of their hearts, in despite of Father, Mother, Governor, Kinsfolkes, Friends, yea God himself, and all good order. These oftentimes run on in haste, and on an head, and learn to repent at leisure. For we live not longer after the holy examples of the Patriarchs in former time, then we come far behind them and live different from their manners and godly discipline. The next duty is thankfulness, requiring all the kindness that we have received from them, & recompensing

their goodness toward us to the uttermost of our power, whensoever and wherein soever they shall at any time stand in need of our help and relief, Genes. 45, 11. and 47, 12. *Joseph* was nourished a child of his father seenteene years, and he again nourished his aged father 17. years in Egypt, Gen, 47, 9, 28. This precept the Apostle setteth down, 1 Tim. 5, 4, *Children and Nephews must recompense the kindness of their parents*. The practice of this we see in *Ruth* the Moabitesse, she being young, took pains and traveled and labored for her mother in Law *Naomi* when she was old, Ruth. 2, 18, and did bring home to her what she had gleaned, and she gave to her that *which she had reserved after she was sufficed*. This we see also in the example of Christ our Savior, John 19: ver. 27: which condemneth all neglect of aiding them in time of need, and all fraudulent and injurious dealing in keeping back any part of maintenance due unto them, Rom. 1, 30. 2 Tim. 3, 2. Such likewise as run upon their own heads, and will not be advised either in the course of their life, or in the choice of their companion to live withal in married estate, like *Esau*, that profane *Esau*, who against the liking and good will of his parents, *took Canaanitish women to be his wives*, Genes. 26, 35: to the great grief of the hearts of his godly parents.

Lastly, it belongeth to all parents to perform [Use 3] their duties to their children the fruit of their bodies, forasmuch as God hath hedged in their authority with banks and bounds that may not be transgressed or removed. These duties do belong partly to the fowls of their children, & partly to their bodies: partly they concern their salvation, and partly their preservation: some belong to the life to come and some to this present life. Touching the former sort, they must go before them by a good example of life, and *walk in their houses in the uprightness of their hearts*, that they may see no evil examples to infect and corrupt them, Psal. 101. Our duty is to bring them to the house of God, and to the place of God's worship, and unto the exercises of Religion, where the word is preached, the Sacraments are administered, and where prayers and praises are offered up to God. And doubtless our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord. Remember the example of *Joseph* and *Marie* the parents of Christ, when they went to Jerusalem to worship God, they led their son with them to train him up in godliness and true Religion, Luke 2. They do not send him thither while themselves abide at home, but they accompany him, nay they go before him and teach him what he should do; contrary to the practice of many that draw them from God, from his word, from godliness, and make thē twofold more the children of hell then themselves. From them and their mouths they do learn to swear and blaspheme, to speak reproachfully of God, of his Word, of his Ministers, and of his children, 2 Kings 2, 23. A second duty is to instruct them in the ways of God, and to pour into their hearts the Doctrine of Christ from the childhood, 2 Tim. 3, 15. Deut. 6, 6, 20: & 7, 3. Prover. 22, 6. Psalm 78, 3, 5, 6, Job 1, 5. Thirdly, they ought to admonish, reprove, and correct them, and that betimes while there is hope, and when there is just cause, Prouerb. 13, verse 24: and 19, 18: and 23, 13. They must do it in love & compassion, not in fury, or with cruelty, or in choler and malice, Col. 3, 21. It is noted of *Eli*, that because he failed in this one duty, he brought ruin and destruction upon his whole house; he brake his neck from his chair, and his sons were slain in battle, 1 Sam. 2, 24: & 4, 18.

Fourthly, it belongeth to them to provide for those whom they have brought into the world things fit and necessary for this present life. They are flesh indeed of our flesh and bone of our bone, and no man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it all that he can. As then we provide for our selves, so ought we for them, and not only for the present, but for the time to come, thereby to defend them from dangers & troubles that may befall them. So the parents of Christ when they had gone a days journey, and perceived that the child was not in the company, returned back and *sought him with heavy hearts*, and never gave over till they had found him three days after, Luke 2, 45, 46. Woe then to all careless parents, that wast all their substance, and swallow it down their throat in all riot and excess, & never provide for their children, but suffer them in a manner to go naked without clothing, hungry without meat, thirsty without drink, harbourlesse without lodging, and destitute without comfort, 2 Cor. 12, 14, 1 Tim. 5, 8. Gen. 42, 2. *Jacob* sent his sons into Egypt to buy Corn, when they wanted food to nourish their families. Fifthly, all parents are bound, especially they of the poorer sort, to bring up their children to labor and taking of pains, and never suffer them to be idle. Howbeit commonly who more idly and lazily brought up then poor men's children, yea then theirs that are poorest of all? Hence it is that they are clothed in rags, because they lead their lives in idleness. No man should live by the sweat of other men's brows, but should labor the thing that is good, Mark 6, 3. Gen 4, 2. and 46, 33, 34. Idleness is the root of all evil, and the companion of beggary. Lastly, if children have not the gift of continency, they ought to dispose of them in marriage both seasonably and fitly: seasonably, lest by delaying y^e time ouerlong, they lay their children open unto danger, either of entangling themselves with other against their wills, or of defiling themselves with filthy uncleanness: fitly, that the sons and daughters of God may match together, not the sons of God with the daughters of men, or the sons of men with the daughters of men, or the sons of men with the daughters of God, Gen. 6, 1. and 24, 3. and 28, 2, 3, Ezra 9, 2. & 10, 10: an abuse that continueth in the world unto this day.

8 But if her Husband disallow her on the day that he heard it, then he shall make her vow which she vowed, and that which she uttered with hir lips wherewith she bound her soul, of none effect, & the Lord shall forgive her.

9 But every vow of a Widow and of her that is divorced, wherewith they have bound their souls, shall stand against her.

10 And if she vowed in her husbands house, &c.

11 And her husband heard it and held his peace, &c: then all her vows shall stand, &c.

12 But if her husband have utterly made them void, &c.

13 Every vow and every binding made to humble the soul, her husband may establish, or her husband may make void.

14 But if her husband altogether hold his peace, &c: then he establisheth her vows, &c.

15 But if he shall any way make them void. &c.

16 These are the statutes which the Lord commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, and between the father and his daughter, being young in her fathers house.

In these words *Moses* proceedeth in the matter of Vowes even to the end of the chapter, concerning the married woman, and concerning the widow. The married woman is bound by the Law so long as her husband liveth, and cannot vow: and if she vow, it is merely void, and such vowing is pronounced unlawful, she hath sinned against God & her husband; howbeit God is merciful, and *he will forgive her*. From whence we may learn, That the Lord is ready to forgive those that offend. But the Widow that is free and loosed from the law of her husband, is at liberty to vow. This teacheth, that the power and authority of the husband over the wife is very great; for albeit she be at liberty to vow in the Lord when her husband is dead, yet while he liveth he hath power to disannul all her vows, Rom. 7, 2. 1 Cor. 7, 36. The wife is tied by a strong band and obligation unto her husband, 1 Cor. 14, 34. Ester 1, 22. This is not (I confess) the proper place to handle these duties, and therefore I will briefly touch the reasons and the uses.

The husband *is the head of the wife*, 1 Cor. 11, [Reason 1] 3. Ephes. 5, 23: *as Christ is the head of the church* to rule it, to defend it, to provide for it: therefore, as the Church is in subjection to Christ, so ought the wife to be to her husband,

Again, mark the order and manner of the Creation, how it was at the beginning, *Adam was first formed, and then Eve*: and he was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression, and therefore she ought not to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence and subjection, 1 Tim. 2, 12, 13, 14.

Thirdly, in the Law of creation we must observe the preeminence of man, which will evidently appear if we mark the end of it: for man was made to rule, the woman to be ruled: for as the man was not of the woman: but the woman of the man; so *the man was not created for the womā, but the woman for the man*, 1 Corinth, chap. 11, verses 8, 9.

Lastly, *man is the image & glory of God, whereas the woman is the glory of the man*, 1 Cor. 11, 7. But was not the woman also made in y^e image of God? [Object] and hath not God set the print of his glory upon her face also? I answer, [Answer.] the Woman was made in the image of God, as well as the man, Genesis 1, verse 27. But man was made to this end and purpose, y^e God's glory should appear in his rule and authority: on the other side the woman was made, that by profession of her obedience she might the more honor her husband.

[Use 1] This serveth first for reproof both of the husband and the wife, when they know not their places of commanding or obeying: the husband losing his honor, and the wife usurping above her calling. As God in the creation, of one made two; so in the first institution of marriage he united those two again into one, that the woman joined in marriage with her husband, might not only reverence him as the rock from whence she was taken, but might honor him as her head under whom she liveth. This order is broken, when she will by no means be in subjection, but seeketh to shake off the yoke which God and her calling hath laid upon her. This subjection is made heavier by transgression, then it was by the law of creation. For that which God made very good, Satan quickly turned into evil, so that the woman instead of an helper became a tempter of the man to sin; and the man instead of a defender became an accuser of the woman to God for sin. Thus Satan labored to divide the house, that it might not stand. But Christ Jesus our Lord came into y^e world to destroy and dissolve the works of the devil, and hath reconciled man and woman with God, that now they should live together *as heirs of the grace of life*, 1 Pet. 3; 7. Therefore all women should be content with their places, whereof notwithstanding they oftentimes come short, and take upon them to control their husbands, to speak and do what they list. This we see in *Vashti* mentioned in the book of *Ester*, when she was commanded by the king to come unto the feast, she disdained and refused to obey, and would not come into his presence, Ester 1, 22: and lest other women should be emboldened by her perverse example, they passed a decree, and gave it the force of a law and a statute, and published the same in all the kings Provinces, y^t Every man should bear rule in his own house, to wit, under the same penalty inflicted on the Queen, which was, to be divorced from their husbands. Again, it reproveth all husbands that in simplicity are as willing to resign up their places, as their wives in impudency are bold, to usurp them, which is as great a shame and reproach to the husband to lose, as it is for the woman to challenge it. This argueth want of wisdom, courage, and discretion in the husband, and on the other side bewrayeth pride, self-love, contempt, and disdain in the wife; as also forgetfulness of her first creation, at what time *she was made of a bone taken out of his side*, Gen. 2, 21. I say out of his side to be his companion, and therefore as he is not to make her his footstool to tread upon her, so she should not make her self his head to ouertop him, and so tread upon him.

[Use 2] Secondly, it is the duty of all wives to acknowledge their duty, and to yield without striving the superior place to their husbands, and to be subject unto them without resisting in word and deed. This is commended unto them in the example of *Sarah*, who is set as a glass before all women's faces to look upon, 1 Pet, 3, 5, 6: to the end, that *if any obey not the word, they may without the word be won by the conversation of their wives*. Again, the Apostle *Paul* teacheth the wife *to fear her husband*, Ephes. 5, 33: and *Peter* teacheth the same, *She must have her conversation with fear*, 1 Pet. 3, 2. This duty is seated in the heart, and helpeth to set in order all other duties. This will show it self in meekness of Spirit, which is in the fight of God of great price, and in obedience in all lawful things, & that not by constraint, but willingly and readily, as serving Christ without murmuring or gainsaying. If they perform these things, they shall be Christian wives, and the daughters of *Abraham* and *Sarah*, to their great comfort. Such will do *their husbands good, and not evil all the days of their lives*, Prov. 31, 12.

Hence it is that *Solomon* saith, *A virtuous woman is a crown unto her husband*, Prov. 12, 4: but she that is stubborn and disobedient maketh him ashamed, and is as rottenness in his bones. A good wife is not only an honor, but an ornament unto her husband, and therefore is compared unto a crown of gold. If she had been compared unto the ring upon his finger, it had been a great Ornament: if to a Chaine of Gold about his neck, it had been a far greater: but behold while she keepeth her self in her place, and dischargeth her duty with love and subjection, she is said to be *a crown* unto him, then which what greater honor and glory can there be? And therefore in another place he saith, *Houses and riches are the inheritance of fathers, but a provident wife is from the LORD*, Prov. 19, 14. On the other side he showeth, that *it is better to dwell in a corner of the house top, thē with a brawling woman in a wide house*, Prov. 21, 9. And again, *A continual dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike*, Prov. 27, 15, and 19, 13.

Lastly, it is the duty of husbands seeing [Use 3] authority is committed unto them over their wives, and as it were the brydle put into their hands, to love them tenderly, to defend them from evils, and to cherish them *as their own flesh*, as Christ Jesus doth the Church, Eph. 5. The heathen king could tell *Sarah*, that her husband was *as a covering of the eyes*, Gen. 20, 16. It is his duty therefore *to dwell with his wife according to knowledge, giving honor to the wife as unto the weaker vessel*, 1 Pet. 3, 7, as being heirs together of the grace of life, that their prayers be not interrupted. And why are they commanded to dwell together, but y^t the husband should yield to her these 4. things? first good example: secondly, instruction: thirdly, maintenance: & lastly employment in her calling for his good, and the good of his family.

CHAP. XXXI.

1. AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,
2. Auenge the children of Israel on the Midianites; afterward thou shalt be gathered unto thy people.
3. And Moses spake to the people, saying; Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites, and avenge the Lord on Midian.
4. Of every Tribe a thousand throughout all the Tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war.

5. So there were delivered out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand of every Tribe, twelve thousand armed for war.

6. And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every Tribe, them and Phinchas the son of Eleazar the Priest, to the war with the holy Instruments, and the Trumpets to blow in his hand.

MOSES having taken order for the Church, now cometh to the civil plantation, and to the inheritance of the Land. This had been promised to their fathers, Gen. 15: now they begin to prevail, and to receive as it were the first fruits of it, to assure them of the full and final conquest of the rest. Observe in this Chapter the history of the battle fought against the Midianites, who combining themselves with the Moabites, as we see saw, chap. 25, drew the Israelites to whoredom by the counsel of *Balaam*, when they despayred to prevail against them by the sword. By this means they defiled themselves with Idolatry also, and provoked the wrath of God to the destruction of many thousands among them. The parts of this Chapter are three, First, of the procuring causes of this war. Secondly, the manner how it was followed & fought. Thirdly, the event and issue of the whole. The first part is in these words, wherein we see the Commandment of God, and the preparation used to accomplish this commandment. For *Moses* sendeth them forth, and with them *Phinehas* the Priest, & appointeth soldiers to execute that which GOD commandeth, out of every Tribe.

[Object.] From this arise diverse doubts that are to be discussed. First, why doth God command vengeance in this place, that forbiddeth it else where, Rom. chapter 12, verse 19. Deut. chap. 32, verse 35?

[Answer.] I answer, this may not seem strange unto us, neither should we think there is any change in GOD; but we must know the difference and distinction between the revenge of God and of private men. True it is, God will have his children bear injuries patiently; and to give place to wrath, and *to overcome evil with good*, Rom. 13, 4: yet he retayneth power to himself to execute vengeance against his enemies, and never disclaymeth that office, nay he challengeth it as proper to himself. For he will execute justice and judgment by himself and his ministers so often as it pleaseth him, Numb. 25, 16. So then albeit the faithful must bridle the desire of revenge, and not retaile like for like; yet when God calleth and appointeth them to be executioners of his will and wrath, he putteth a sword into their hand, and when the cause is just, their calling is lawful. Thus we see, how soldiers are warranted to shed blood, for they are called to be magistrates: only it is required of such, that they be carried & kindled with an holy zeal of God's glory, not with private hatred, grudge and revenge, which make a thing lawful, to them unlawful.

Secondly, [Object.] the question may be asked what is meant hereby, that *Moses shall be gathered to his people*. I answer, that he should die, [Answ.] the body returning to the earth, the spirit to God that gave it, Eccl. 12, 7: for with him are the spirits of just men made perfect, Heb. 12, 23. So it is said of *Abraham*, Gen. 25, 8, *he gave up the ghost, and died an old man*

full of days, and was gathered to his people, that is, to his fathers, Gen. 15, 15. So then hereby we must learn the immortality of the soul, for *Abraham's* body was gathered to the body of *Sarah* only, for he was buried in the sepulcher with her. So it is said of *Isaac*, Gen. 35, 29, he was gathered to his godly forefathers; and of *Moses* himself afterward, Deut. 30, 50, as also of *Aaron* before, chap. 20, 24. But it will be said, that it is said of *Ishmael* that was cast out of the house of *Abraham*, and was the son of the bond woman, that he also gave up the ghost, and died, *and was gathered to his people*, as well as of *Abraham*, of *Isaac*, of *Aaron*, of *Moses*, and of many others, 2 Kings 22, 20. Judge. 2, 10. Acts 13, 36. I answer, this phrase may employ with good probability the repentance of *Ishmael*, that he died in the faith of *Abraham*, and was carried into his bosom. For he joined with his brother in the burying of his father, and the Scripture taketh special notice of his whole age, and setteth down how long he lived, but no reprobate hath the age of his whole life recorded. And thus the prayer of *Abraham* may seem to be heard, Gen. 17, 18. *O that Ishmael might live before thee!* But if he lived and died a wicked man, then by his fathers to whom he was gathered, we must understand the souls of wicked men that lived before him, as *Cain* and his posterity that were carried away with the flood, which now *are spirits in prison*, 1 Pet, 3, 19. But howsoever it be, this necessarily must be concluded, that the souls of all men live when the body is turned into earth, and hath his subsisting afterward, Math. 22, 23. Hebr. 12, 21.

[Object.] It will be objected that the wise man saith, the condition of men & of beasts is all alike, Eccl. 3, 19. *As the one dieth, so dieth the other, so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast.* This is not spoken simply, but in respect. They are both alike and equal in the necessity of dying imposed upon both, and man hath no advantage to glory over the beast; which serveth to humble him and to proclaim his vanity. Again, *Solomon* speaketh according to the opinion of profane Atheists, such as the Sadducees afterward were; for they say, *Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beasts that goeth downward to the earth?* These are they that also say, *Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die*, 1 Corinth. 15, 32. But when he speaketh according to truth, he telleth us afterward, that *the spirit returneth to God that gave it*, chap. 12. Again, they produce sundry testimonies, that *the dead cannot praise him*, it must be *the living, the living* that must do it, Psal. 6.5, *In death there is no remembrance of thee*: so 30, 10, and 88, 11. Isaiah 38, 18. I answer, death and the grave have two significations according to the different manner or estate of those that are dead. [Answ.] For some are dead spiritually that are rejected of God, and in torments with the damned; these cannot praise God at all, neither doth God accept praise at their hands. Others are dead only corporally, not spiritually: these cannot praise GOD in the Church visible together with the faithful, yet in their souls they never cease to acknowledge and praise God together with innumerable company of Angels and Saints departed, yea it is their whole practice, delight and exercise, they do nothing else.

Lastly, the Apostle seemeth to make it peculiar to God, *to have immortality*, 1 Tim. 6, 16, *he only hath immortality.* I answer, God hath this of himself: the Angels & the souls of men by grace and communication, they receive this from him, whereas whatsoever God is, he is it of himself.

[Object.] Furthermore, another question may be moved, wherefore in mustering this army, and sending them to fight, *Phinehas* the Priest was to be among them? for what had he to do with this manner of warfare, who was to serve in the Tabernacle, and was not numbered among the other tribes that were to go out to war? I answer, [Answer.] *Moses* sendeth him, because he had given a notable proof of his zeal in slaying the Israelite and the Midianitish woman with his iavelin: & he is sent not to draw his sword, or to be captain of the host, but to exhort the people, to teach and keep them in the fear of God, and to put them in hope of victory. This was commanded of God, when they went to battle against their enemies, the Priest was to stir them up to courage, that they *should not faint nor fear*, but be assured that the Lord would go out with them and fight for them to save them, Deut. 20, 2, 3, 4: so the Priests were ready to go with *David*, when he fled out of Jerusalem, 2 Sam. 15, 24. And when it is said, *Phinehas went with the holy instruments*, some understand the Ark, others the *Vrim* and *Thummim* to ask of God touching the success of the battle. Howbeit, it is not likely that he doubted of y^e end that had his warrant from God to begin it. And if *Moses* had meant this of the Ark, no doubt he would have expressed it by his name, as he doth oftē before: besides, if he had pointed to this, he would rather have used the singular number, thē the plural: & have said y^e holy instrument, not instruments. It is rather to be thought y^t he meaneth the two Trumpets, of which see before, chap. 10, and these he addeth in the next words by way of exposition or interpretation, as if he had said, the holy instruments, that is, the Trumpets, as Judge. 8, 27.

Heereby then we see the absurd collection of *Bellarmino*, who making the unhappy ende of the enemies of the Church a note thereof, alledgeth the death of *Zwingli* who was slain in battle. But why might not *Zwingli* go with his people into the battle, as well as the Priests that were commanded to do it? He was as a good Shepherd that gave his life for his flock, and would not leave nor forsake them fighting for the defense of the Gospel. Neither may we account it a plague or punishment to die in battle, or a token of one forsaken of God, as we see in good *Josiah* and many others: and the experience of all times teacheth us the truth of that which *David* saith, *The sword devoureth one as well as another*, 2 Sam. 11, 25. Thus much of the questions.

[*Auenge the children of Israel, &c:* and *Moses* said, *Arm yourselves, &c.*] By *Moses* speaking of wars, we may see they have been ancient in the world; and being commanded of God in this place, we see also that they are lawful; of which see before, chap. 1, and 24, and 25. But here diverse other points directing wars and warriors are to be observed. First, observe that an army is here spoken off, as mustered and gathered together for the battle.

The Doctrine is this; Before men go to battle, an host of men must be appointed & gathered together, and sufficient forces must be levied, Exod. 17, 9. Josh. 8, 3. 2 Chron. 13, 3, and 32, 6. 1 Sam. 15, 4. Judge. 20, 17.

[Reason 1] The causes are evident: First, that a number may be sorted out sufficient in show, that thereby hope & assurance may arise to counteruayle the contrary part, Eccl. 4, 9, 10, 11, 12. Luke 14, 31. Judge. 20, 17. and 7, 2, 7, 2. Chron. 14, 8, 9, 10, 11. Secondly, for order, that by warlike policy every man may be fitted to stand in his place, 2 Sam. 10.9, 10, 11. and 18, 1, 2,

3. 1 Kings 22, 14, 15, in regard whereof it is fit & requisite that men be trained at home before they go to fight abroad, 1 Sam. 17, 33. 2 Sam. 10, 9. 2 Chron. 14, 10, that military discipline be not broken to the destruction of the whole army, 1 Sam. 11, 11, and 30, 16, 17: one such soldier is worth an hundred others that are untaught and vntrayned.

This serveth to reprove sundry abuses, [Use 1] First, of such as send not out a just host or sufficient forces, but sparingly, now some and then others, whereby the people are smitten down with the sword, and made a prey to the enemies, 2 Sam. 11, 15, 17. Secondly, against either raw or desperate soldiers, that couetously, or proudly and presumptuously go to battle against the enemy in a tumultuous and confused manner, as if they went rather to the spoil & victory, then to the battle. This is a willful tempting of God, and a making of themselves guilty of their own death and of many others. Thirdly, this reproveth the carelessness and negligence of such as are Governors in gathering & mustering men, and in providing armor and furniture, when the cause is instant and requireth haste, 2 Sam. 20, 4, 5. If in any other earthly thing, the Proverb taketh place in this, that delay is dangerous. Fourthly, it meeteth most justly with the murmuring of reckless people at the labors and charges of often mustering, and are unwilling to bestow one penny for the safety of the state, of the kingdom, of the Church, of our Cities and Towns, nay of their wives and children, and their own goods, Judge. 5, 16, 17. and 21, 9, 10. 1 Sam. 13, 8, and 11, 7. Lastly, this serveth for comfort unto us, when these means are used and afforded, when we see them taken in hand carefully and religiously, 2 Chron. 14, 8. Whē all things are ordered aright, and sufficient forces levied, who should not be ready and willing to go forth? For as the want of men and munition, and all kind of provision taketh away the heart and slaketh the courage of such as are to fight and adventure their lives: so on the other side, the having of all things fit and necessary giveth comfort, 2. Chron. 14, 8. Nevertheless, we must take heed that we do not rely upon them and put our trust in them: for no man is saved by the multitude of an host, how great and strong soever it be, 2 Chron. 13, 8, 13. Isaiah 2, 22, and 3, 1, 2, 3, and an horse, though prepared for the battle, is a vain thing to save a man: forasmuch as an army are men, and not God, and their horses are flesh, not spirit, Isaiah, chapter 31, verse 3.

Again, the army here spoken of, is not only gathered together, but it is sent out; First, it is furnished and prepared, and then employed. The Doctrine: An army assembled must go forth in a seasonable time, if the cause remain and continue for which it was gathered, Josh. 11, 7. 1 Sam. 18, 5, 27.

The Reasons; First, because it is not the [Reason 1] sight, but the use: not the having, but the employing of men of war that hurteth the enemy, 2 Kings 19, 32. It is not the having of a sword that sufficeth, but the drawing of it out against the enemy that profiteth. Secondly, otherwise it argueth want of wisdom, or courage, or constancy, or all these upon the distrust of the cause or force, Judge. 9, 36, 37, 38 Thirdly, it giveth edge to the enemy to provide means of preventing by a more speedy resolution, if they go not forth being prepared, 2 Sam. 20, 6. whereas it is the part of a wise and politic Captain, to take heed he do nothing to hearten the enemy, or discourage his soldiers.

This serveth to reprove those that in a brauado [Use 1] make much preparation, but are nothing at all for execution: such are they that go not out at all, or go out too late, having too credulous hearts to believe that the enemy will not come, or not come as yet, 2 Sam, 20, 6. Secondly, it reproveth such as refuse to go or to be sent out. Some had rather be hanged before their doors, then be employed in the Princes service. Others hide themselves, or hire others, or make friends, or excuses of insufficiency, because they would not perform this business, and would slip their heads out of the collar, Numb. 16, 12, 13, 14. Lastly, it serveth to warn such as are mustered and have given their names, to prepare themselves, and to think seriously of the matter, that they are to be employed in a weighty business, that so they may be ready to fight the Lord's battles, 2 Chron, 20, ver. 15. for their Prince, Country, wife and children, Neh. 4, 14.

In the next place mark, that *Moses spake unto some of the people, Arm yourselves unto the war.* At the commandment of *Moses* the people must arm: but before he command, they may not put on armor.

The Doctrine: A lawful army must be gathered and sent out by public authority, 2. Chron. 14, 9.

The grounds hereof: for first, public enemies must be resisted by authority & power of the public Magistrate, 1 Sam. 11, 7. Secondly, [Reason 1] the Magistrate beareth not the sword in vain. 1 Sam. 8, 20. Thirdly, they intrude into the seat of Justice, that take this upon them without authority, nay they sit down in the place of God, Numb. 16, 11. But it may be objected, [Object.] that the examples of *Abraham*, who armed 318, men and pursued the Kings, and of *Sampson* prove the contrary, for what warrant had they? I answer, they had both sufficient warrant and authority. [Answ.] *Sampson* was one of the Judges, chosen of God to save his people, and he was stirred up and guided by an extraordinary spirit to smite them hip and thigh with a great slaughter, Judge. 14, ver. 19. And touching *Abraham*, he was no private man, nor subject to any other Potentate, but a free Prince and at his own command. Again, he did no more then as if a man should defend him and his against a thief, and resist violence with violence by the sword. The uses remain.

[Use 1] It is the duty of the Magistrate, when intelligence is given of enemies, and of their approach or preparation, not to be secure or to suffer them to take the start, but he must take order against them, 2 Chron. 20, 1, 2, 3, that he suffer not the Lord's enemies to prevail, or to escape, 1 Sam. 15, 3, 9, 35. It is a great advantage that an enemy hath, to suffer him to be first in y^e field, or to come to our doors: whereas it is the wisest and safest way to take the field before, and rather assault then defend.

Secondly, no man should seek to shift himself from the Magistrate, but know that his authority is a sufficient warrant when the war is just. Against the Anabaptists that resist public authority.

Lastly, this condemneth the life of Pirates, and Rouers, and robbers, that live by spoiling, and killing, and stealing from all, without any respect of person, all is fish that cometh to their

net, Isaiah 33, 1. These prevail for a time, but in the ende, they that spoil shall be spoiled, and they that deal treacherously, shall have others to deal treacherously with them.

Furthermore, against whom are the Israelites sent out to war? against the Midianites their open and professed enemies. The Doctrine. He against whom we wage war, must be known to be an enemy, Deuter. 21, verse 1.

The Reasons: If it be otherwise, that we respect not against whom we fight, or whose [Reason 1] blood we shed, we are fighters against God, and he will fight against us, yea destroy us, 2. Chron. 13, 12, 16. Secondly, friends and brethren must not fight and strive one against another, but dwell together in love, peace, and unity, Gen. 13, 8. Thirdly, it addeth courage in that we do know we shall hurt and wound our enemies, 1 Sam. 4, 9, and 17, 48, 36. The name of a brother slaketh courage, and abateth the care to provide any furniture; so on the other side the name of an enemy kindleth the desire of fighting, and maketh more diligent to arm accordingly. The uses follow.

This reproveth those that make war secretly [Use 1] or openly with their good friends, 1. Chron. 35, 20, 21. therefore we should make difference between a brother and an enemy, and examine the true causes of breaking, before we make war with any, Judge. 11, 12, to 28. Secondly, against such as nourish civil mutinies, as *Manasseh* against *Ephraim*, and *Ephraim* against *Manasseh*. 2 Sam. 15, so did *Absalom*, and 20, 1. *Sheba*. Thirdly, against those that fly from their Countrymen to the enemy, 2 Sam. 15, 31. Many have been faulty this way, and guilty of treachery and rebellion: to these we may join such as treacherously intend to fight against their own Nation, when it is gathered together against the enemy, contrary to that which the Philistines conceived of *David*, though he were among them, 1 Sam. 29, 4, *Let not him go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? should it not be with the heads of these men?* But some that were among us have been guilty of that crime, which the Egyptians falsely surmised & suspected concerning the Israelites, Exo. 1, 10. *Let us deal wisely with them, lest it come to pass, that when there falleth out any war, they join unto our enemies and fight against us.* Lastly, it reproveth those that judge every man and every estate, every nation & people to be fit to be fought withal: likewise such as murmur against the going out of men out of their Country, though it be against enemies, Numb. 13, 31.

Besides, consider that the Priest is willed to go with them, verse 6, and afterward they that fought this battle, must abide out of the Campe seven days, and purify themselves & all their raiment, verse 19, 20. Whereby they are warned to take heed of all sin in going to war, and in the execution of it. The Doctrine. All that are employed in war must be careful to avoid all sin, Deut. 23, 9, 10. We ought to beware of sin at all times, but thē especially when we go into battle, and are to stand in the face of the enemy.

The Reasons; First, the consideration of [Reason 1] the state wherein we do stand: we are in jeopardy every hour, & are in the greatest, most manifest, and eminent danger, we may fall forever in a moment, & never rise again; which also our sin will hasten and bring suddenly upon us, Levite. 26, 14, 17. Secondly, God forsaketh them in battle, that by sin forsake him

before they come to the battle, Judge. 10, 13, 14. Thirdly, it is most probable & much to be feared, when many are gathered together out of diverse places, educations, and natures, that one will infect another, if they take not heed, Isaiah 2, 6. Fourthly, the prosperity & flourishing of the Church of one side, or the overthrow & desolation of it on y^e other side, & consequently the gayning of glory to God, or the hindrance thereof doth much depend upon that action, Exod. 14, 13, 14.

[Use 1] The uses. It standeth us upon to reconcile our selves to God before wars be enterprized, Judge. 20, 26. Then we may go to the battle with peace & comfort, then we may fight with boldness and courage. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints: they shall rest from their labors, and their works shall follow them.

Secondly, it reproveth such as then give themselves greatest liberty to sin, to steal, to lie, to swear, to whore, to kill: hence it is, that they say, to have a die in one hand and an whore in another, is soldier-like, as if the soldier and Captain had a dispensation to commit sin and to break all laws divine & human without restraint or controlement, 1 Sam. 30, 16. Iud. 5, 30. contrary to the examples of sundry good & godly Captains, mentioned in the Scriptures, who believed God, were devout and religious, taught their houses the fear of God, and prayed him continually, Mat. 8, 5, to 14. Acts 10, 1, 2, 7. 2 Sam. 20, 10. 1 Sam. 25, 15, 16. These are examples for men of that profession to follow.

Thirdly, it serveth directly against those that think thieves, drunkards, swearers, whore masters, Atheists, and Libertines to be the fittest soldiers to fight the Lord's battles, who indeed are fitter to fight for a tyrant or an usurper, Judge. 9, 4. 2 Chron. 13, 7, and to be used in extremity and necessity, rather then where there are plenty of others, 1 Sam. 22, 2. 2 Chron. 14, 8.

[Object.] But it will be said, They are a burden to the Land, thus the Country shall be well rid of them. I answer, that through them we rather are like to be rid of many good and profitable members that shall go with them and among them. [Answ.] Again, it is good indeed to be freed from them, but we must be rid of them by good means, Rom. 3, 8, howbeit *we may not do evil, that good may come thereof*. Thirdly, there is no confidence to be reposed in such, who being unfaithful to God, it may be presumed they will be unfaithful also to their Prince, whereby great hurt, loss, and damage may by them redound to the commonwealth in such sending of them. The way to be rid of them, is to execute judgment against them, and to cut them off by the sword of the Magistrate for their evil deeds.

Lastly, from hence we should learn much more to be watchful in the spiritual warfare, Eph. 6, 10. 2 Tim. 2, 4. We are all soldiers, and we are to fight against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, and therefore it behooveth us to put on the whole armor of God, and to be strong in the Lord, knowing that we shall stand in his might, and be able to put to flight these enemies.

7 And they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses, and they slew all the males.

8 And they slew the kings of Midian, besides the rest of them that were slain: namely, Eui, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.

9 And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods.

10 And they burnt all their Cities wherein they dwelt, &c.

11 And they took all the spoil, &c.

This is the second part of the Chapter, wherein we see the manner observed in managing this war, and in performing obedience to the Commandment of God and his servant *Moses*. Wherein we may see the slaughter that they made, first set down generally, *They slew all the males*: then particularly, *Five of their Kings, and also Balaam*. Secondly, the captives that they took, to wit, all the women and their little ones. Thirdly, their booty, they took the spoil of their cattle, flocks, and goods. Lastly, they set their Cities on fire, and consumed their goodly Castles to nothing. Here a question may be demanded concerning *Balaam*, [Object.] how he came to be among these Midianites, forasmuch as we read before, that *he went his way?* Numb. 24, 25. I answer, [Answer.] some understand the words, of his purpose & resolution to return home, but that he stayed in the way among the Midianites, through whose Country he must necessarily go, and so was slain among them. And indeed it is certain he was present in the battle, but it is more likely and credible that he went home, and afterward hearing of the destruction of so many thousands of the Israelites, procured through his devilish counsel, that he returned unto *Madian*, hoping to receive the wages which had been promised unto him, seeing the matter succeeded according to his & their desire: and thus indeed he received a just reward and recompense as the wages due unto him, for he was slain by the sword. And hence also it may not unfitly be concluded, that he was no true Prophet of God, (but a Prophet of Satan) for then doubtless the Israelites would never have put him unto the sword. Some there are that too highly magnify him and esteem better of him than is cause, and think that he was the same, who in the book of *Job* is called *Elihu*, howbeit this is a blind conceit. Some of the Hebrew Doctors observe that he could be no Prophet because it is said, *God opened his eyes, and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way, &c.* because this is noted of others, as of the servant of *Elisha*, 2 Kings 6, 17, and of the Syrians, verse 20, as also of *Hagar*, Gen. chapter 21, verse 19, but it is never spoken in the same manner of any of the Prophets. Other of them say, he was damned with *Doeg*, *Gehazi*, and *Achitophel*: but *the things that are secret belong not unto us*: the truth he knoweth, that knoweth all things; it is not for us to judge before the time.

But to leave this and to come to the doctrines: We saw before the sin of the Midianites, chap. 25, and how God threatened them; hitherto they escaped well enough, and might say as *Agag*

did that had been spared with the fatter Oxen, and the better sheep, 1 Sam. 15, 32. *Surely the bitterness of death is past*: notwithstanding we see God maketh good his word and suffereth no part of it to fall to the ground.

We learn hereby, that wicked men, howsoever they may be suffered long in their sins, and God prosper them in their ways, and bring no temporal judgment upon them, yet at last he meeteth with them, and bringeth his plagues and punishments upon them, Psalm. 73, verses 12, 17, 18, and 37, 35, 36. Job 21, 17, 18. Ierem. 12, 1, 2, 3. Hab. 2, 3, 5. Psal. 50, 21. The Scripture is full of these examples.

[Reason 1] And it must needs be thus, because God is a jealous God, *visiting iniquities and transgressions*, Exod. 34. he is angry with the wicked & hateth them, his soul abhorreth and detesteth them, and therefore must needs bring judgment upon them, Rom. 1, verse 18, and 2, 5, 8. Deut. 9, 8, 20. Mal. 1, 2, 3. Not that GOD hath any passion of anger, but because he is said to do that which men do when they are angry, that is, he will take vengeance and punish them for their sins and offenses.

Secondly, because the Lord hath set a stint to the wicked, he seemeth for a while to put the bridle in their necks, and to let them run at liberty, but they have their appointed time which they cannot pass; he hath set down how far they shall go, and how long they shall live, and the measure of their sin to what height they shall grow, so that though they desire to proceed never so much, they shall not be able, they cannot go any farther; he waiteth *till they have filled up the measure of their sins*, Gen. 15, verse 16. Math. 23, ver. 32, and then he will not spare to bring his judgments upon them.

[Use 1] The uses. First, this teacheth us to acknowledge the justice of God. He oftentimes holdeth his peace, and men think him to be like unto themselves, howbeit he will manifest to all the world, that he is a just and righteous God, and holy in all his ways. Hence it is, that the Apostle saith, *He will reward everyone according to his works*, Rom. 2, 6. Psalm. 62, 12. For as God never forgetteth to be merciful, neither shutteth up his kindness in displeasure, Psalm. 77, 9, so he cannot forget his justice, except he should forget himself. No man forgetteth his own name. Justice is God's essential attribute, *This is his Name forever, and this is his memorial to all generations*. True it is, the faithful themselves do many times conceive amiss both of the mercy and of the justice of God; but they confess, that *this is their infirmity*, Psal. 77, 10. For when they are themselves in trouble and their soul refuseth to be comforted, they begin to reason and dispute with themselves, and say, *Will the Lord cast off forever? Will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? and doth his promise fail for evermore?* Psalm. 77, 7, 8, 9. On the other side, when they see the ungodly prosper, that they are not in trouble as other men, *neither plagued like other men*, they are ready to think of themselves, that *they have cleansed their hearts in vain, and washed their hands in innocence*, Psal. 73, verses 3, 5, 13. Nevertheless, whatsoever we are sometimes ready to judge in the time of trouble & temptation, we must upon better advice say with the Apostle, *Let God be true, and every man a liar, as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged*, Rom. 3, verse 4. Albeit therefore GOD do not by and by strike with his hand and draw his sword, yet he is not unjust, neither is he slack concerning his promise, but he is

longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, 2 Pet. 3, 9.

Secondly, this serveth to teach us that we [Use 2] should not envy at the wickedness of men, albeit for a season they prosper in their sins: the measure is not yet heaped up, but when once they are grown to the height, the judgments of God will overtake them, and they shall pass away as the grass of the field. A good man *will never envy at their evil*, Psal. 37, 1, 2, because he knoweth well that they stand in a slippery place, and what is reserved for them, if they go on in their sins.

Thirdly, this serveth to instruct & inform [Use 3] every man that he should not grow obstinate and obdurate in his sins, because of God's patience and longsuffering toward him; because as he hath his time, so also God hath his. If we fill up the measure to the full of our transgression, he will also pour down the vialle of his indignation. Such as run on in sin, grow thereby stark blind that they cannot see, and stark deaf that they cannot hear, until their eyes and ears be opened by affliction, and his judgments take hold upon them. Let us lay before us the examples of others, and consider how it hath gone with them, that we may learn wisdom by their folly, and take warning by their misery. We know how it went with the old world after the days of God's patience were expired, *only eight souls were saved*, all the rest were destroyed, Gen. 7. 1 Pet. 3, verse 20. It is better for us to be admonished by the fall and ruin of others, and to take heed of abusing the patience of God, then that we should be taken in our sins, and be made examples unto others to our utter confusion and destruction forever.

And they slew the Kings of Midian, besides the rest of them that were slain, namely Eui, &c. five Kings of Midian, &c. Moses doth not content himself to tell the Church of God in general, that the multitude of the people of Midian were destroyed, but singleth out the number and the names of their Kings that were slain. Whereby we may gather that high and low, Prince and people lie open to judgment: God spareth none, but striketh & punisheth all that sin against him. We see this in those Kings that took away Abraham's wife, the Lord plagued them and their houses with great plagues, Gen. 12, 17, and 20, 3, 17: to verify that which the Prophet saith, He suffered no man to do them wrong, but reproveth Kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm, Psal. 105, 14, 15. We saw this in the sixteenth chapter of this Book concerning Korah and his complotters, they were famous and great men in the Congregation, yet the earth was not able to bear them, his judgments were so heavy upon them. This doth the Lord tell such as are mighty upon earth, that band themselves together, and take counsel against the Lord and against his anointed, He will break them with a rod of Iron, and dash them in pieces like a Potters vessel, Psal, 2, 2, 9. And Psalm. 82, 6, 7. I have said, ye are God's, and all of you are children of the most High: but ye shall idie like men, and fall like one of the Princes. The examples of this are infinite; when God sent out Saul to take vengeance upon the Amalekites, the sword fell upon Agag the King that sate upon the Throne, as well as the common sort that sate in the dust, 1 Sam. 15. Herod the king, although he were clad in royal apparel, could not keep his body from the worms, by the which he was eaten up alive, Acts 12. And it must be thus.

[Reason 1] For first, the Heads and Captains of the people have oftentimes the chief hand in the trespass, and when open impieties are set afoot and practiced, *they should not bear the sword in vain*. If then they draw not out the sword of justice, but suffer it to rust in y^e scabbard, while iniquity walks in the Land without controlment, they make themselves guilty of those sins & bring upon themselves many judgments. As then it was said to *Eli*, who winked at the wickedness of his sons, *I will judge his house forever, for the iniquity which he knoweth: because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not*, 1 Sam. 3, 13; so it may be said to Kings and Princes, that God will also enter into judgment with them, if they restrain not their people from their evil.

[Reason 2] Secondly, with God is no respect of persons at all, though they be supreme and souereigne, though they be wealthy and honorable, learned and mighty in the world, yet they shall escape never a whit the more for these privileges: as Job 34, 19, *He accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poor, they being all the work of his hands*.

This serveth justly to reprove those that [Use 1] make their places a privilege and as it were a Sanctuary to hold and harbor them from God's judgments. These do much deceive themselves, to bear themselves so bold, and to build upon so weak a foundation. It is as possible for a City to hold out against the enemy, that hath no wall but of Reedes, w^c are easily either pierced or fired, as it is for a man to stand against gods judgments by his noble birth, or his high place, or his great riches, or his deep learning, or his golden crown. And yet we see how common it is for such to exempt themselves from the common sort, as if they had more liberty to sin then others. Indeed here is for a time some difference between them and others, but when we must lay down this earthly tabernacle, little or no difference will appear. The condition of all men is alike in death, and *Solomon* saith, Eccl. chap. 9, verse 4. *A living dog is better then a dead Lyon*. We must therefore know that whatsoever we are, we are no better then dust: whether we consider the original cause or the final: we are of the dust, and we must return again to the dust, and can carry away nothing with us.

Secondly, this should instruct men of high [Use 2] places to turn unto God, to serve him with fear, and to rejoyce before him with trembling: yea to kiss the son lest he be angry, and they perish in the way, for when his wrath is kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him. For when all must appear before the judgment seat of God, no ensign of honor will do us any good.

Let not the rich man glory in his riches, or the strong man in his strength, nor the noble man in his honor; but he that glorieth, let him glory in this, *That he understandeth and knoweth God, that he is the Lord which exerciseth kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, for in these he delighteth*, Ierem. chap. 9, verse 14.

When a man cometh before an earthly Judge, he respecteth not the person of the poor, nor honoreth the person of the mighty, for that were to do unrighteousness in judgment; but he judgeth his neighbor rightly, Levite. 19, 15. How much more then must we assure our selves, that *the Judge of all the world will do right?*

The Prophet *David* chosen of God to be the Governor of his people, professeth that he *will sing mercy and judgment*, Psalm. 101, verse 1. Thus shall it be with God, here the ungodly often escape, because no man dare attack them or meddle with them, but in the end they shall not escape. Every man shall appear without his vizard; here some poor are respected for their rags, the rich for their bags, the noble for their Escutchions, the Captains for their arms, the mighty for their friends, the clyents for their bribes: thus are the eyes of men dazzled and blinded that they cannot consider every man's cause, but too much respect the person. It is not so with God. All the glory of man is no better then vanity, like the flower of the field that fadeth away. God looketh upon the heart, if we come before him with a soul washed in the blood of Christ, this will keep us from the wrath of God.

[Use 3] Lastly, from hence ariseth comfort to the oppressed and them of low degree that are in misery, to know that God will plead their cause, and enter into judgment with the mighty ones of the earth. He is higher then the highest, and stronger then the strongest. Here men stand in fear of them that do not stand in fear of God, but God feareth not their faces. He heareth the cry of the poor, and will deliver them. Mark the end that God will make, who is the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lord's: he will call those to judgment that here escape the hands of men, *When they shall receive for the wrong which they have done, because with him is no respect of persons*, Col. 3, 25.

12 And they brought the captives & the prey, and the spoil unto Moses & Eleazar the Priest, and unto the Congregation of the Children of Israel, unto the Campes at the plain of Moab, which are by Jordan near Jericho.

13 And Moses and Eleazar the Priest, and all the Congregation went forth to meet them without the Campe.

14 And Moses was wroth with the Officers of the host, with the Captains over thousands, and Captains over hundreds, which came from the battle:

15 And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive?

16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel through the counsel of Balaam to commit a trespass against the Lord, as concerning Peor, and there came a plague among the Congregation of the Lord.

17 Now therefore kill every male among the children, and kill every woman that hath known man, &c.

18 But all the women children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.

19 And do ye abide without the Campe seven days, all that have killed any person, and all that have touched any dead, and purify both yourselves and your prisoners the third day and the seventh,

20 And ye shall purify every garment, and all that is made of skins, and all work of Goats hair, and all things made of wood.

21 And Eleazar the Priest said unto the men of war which went to the battle, This is the ordinance of the Law which the Lord commanded Moses.

23 Every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean: yet it shall be purified with the water of purification: and all that suffereth not the fire, ye shall cause to pass by the water.

In the words before we heard the marvelous and memorable judgment of GOD against the Midianites, who were enemies to the Church of God, among whom also *Balaam* perished. He wished to *die the death of the righteous*, chap. 23, 10, but he lost his life among the unrighteous. Thus they that dignity a pit, oftentimes fall into it themselves, Psalm. 7. Now in these words we have the third and last part of the Chapter, touching the issue of things after the battle, when the Captains & Soldiers returned from the battle. These are of two sorts; First, the things that happened before they came into the Campe, to the 25, verse; and then what fell out when they were admitted into the Campe. Touching the things that befell the men of war before they were admitted into the host, they are these four. First, *Moses* chideth and checketh them because they had done the Commandment of God to halves, they had executed a part, and left another part undone, like *Saul that spared the fatter Sheep and Oxen for sacrifice*, 1. Sam. 15. verse 21. They had saved all the women under a pretence of foolish pity, accounting it no honor or valor to consist in killing them: but they ought to have been destroyed, because *they caused the children of Israel to commit a trespass against the Lord, and a great plague fell upon the congregatiō of the Lord*, chapter 25, 1. Secondly, *Moses* commandeth that such should all be destroyed, their eye must spare none of them; but the women children that had not known man by carnal copulation, should be reserved alive for their uses. Thirdly, he commandeth the men of war to purify themselves before they came into the host. Lastly, we see the commandment of *Eleazar* the Priest to purify the silver and gold, and garments that they had gotten; that such metals as would abide the fire and not be consumed, should pass through it: the rest was to be washed with water, that so they might be consecrated to God, and be applied to an holy use. The profane Midianites had polluted and defiled them with Idolatry, which God hateth, of which see more afterward, chap. 33, 52.

14 *Moses was wroth with the Officers of the host, with the Captains over thousands, and Captains over hundreds: and he said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? &c.* The Lord told *Moses* immediately before, verse 2, so soon as this business was ended, he should be gathered to his fathers, yet see how he hasteth forward the matter that it might be ended, that he also might come to the ende of his days. God had sworn that he should not enter into the Land, for he was displeased with him, and spared him not, because of the people, as he showeth, Deut. 1, verse 37, *The Lord was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou shalt not go in thither:* where he goeth not about to excuse himself, and to wash his hands, as if he had not done amiss, but his meaning is that he fell not into evil of his own accord, forasmuch as the mischief sprang from the people. Thus did *Moses* smart for the rashness and retchlesnesse of the people, as oftentimes Kings and Princes do. The old saying was wont to be,

Delirant reges, plectuntur Achiui:

that is,

The Princes err and reason lack,

But the poor Commons go to wrack.

Howbeit we may invert the rule, and turn it otherwise,

Delirat populus, rex plectitur ipse.

The people swerve and cannot be kept within any bounds, whē oftentimes Princes bear the punishment of their folly, as it fell out with *Moses*. But to come to the matter, mark how he reproveth the Captains and martial men for sparing the whorish women that had brought a great plague upon them. We learn from hence, that sins of omission and neglect of duties which men are bound to perform, are sins displeasing to God, as sins of commission are. It is a sin against God to omit a good duty, as well as to commit an evil, or else *Moses* would not have been wroth with this people: this is proved, Math. 25, 3, 41, 42. Hos. 4. ver. 1, 2. Deut. 27, ver. 26. Ierem. 10, verse 25. *They called not upon God.* Not to do good, is to do evil. The grounds are evident.

For first, this is a kind of contempt against [Reason 1] God; for not to obey, is to disobey & to contemn. The servant which will not do what his master commandeth, what doth he but show a contempt against him? If then this argue and convince of open contempt, no marvel if God be displeased with it. True it is, and it cannot be denied, that men often do not that which God requireth, out of frailty, ignorance, and infirmity; but a continual neglect and omission cannot but proclaim our contempt, and therefore it is a fearful and heinous sin.

[Reason 2] Secondly, the law of God is not only negative, but also affirmative: it commandeth good as well as forbiddeth evil. For albeit all the ten Commandments, the fourth and fifth only excepted, do run negatively, yet the negative carrieth with it the affirmative, according to the exposition of Christ himself, Math. 5, verses 25, 33, 37. The Commandment which saith expressly, *Thou shalt not kill*, saith also inclusively, *Thou shalt preserve life*.

Thirdly, it is against the rule of love and [Reason 3] charity. For where there is less love then ought to be, there is sin. Now where there is an omission of those things whereby God may be glorified and our brethren profited, there can be no true charity. [Object.] But against this Doctrine it will be said, that sins of omission cannot retain the nature of sin, because sin is an act. I answer, [Answer.] it is true of sins committed, they are acts: but of duties omitted, it will not hold: as for example, a man refuseth to hear the word, he will not come to the house of God; here is a sin, because *he that is of God, heareth God's word*, saith our Savior, John 8, 47. yet it is no act at all, but the omitting of an act; so if a man hear the word carelessly this is a sin, Luke 8. yet it is not any act: so that sins of omission are sins before God as well as other of commission. The uses follow.

First, it appeareth hereby, that many men [Use 1] in the world, if they would examine themselves and cast up their accounts and reckonings with God, as debtors ought to do, they should find themselves to stand endighted and convicted of a multitude of sins that haply they never once dreamed of. The greatest sort take notice of this, and take themselves bound to avoid evil, but they never charge themselves with doing that which is good. Every man confesseth it a sin to serve other gods, to worship false gods, and yet never consider that it is a sin, not to serve and worship the true God. *Moses* was shut out of the Land of promise, not because he did openly dishonor God before the Congregation, but *because he did not honor and glorify his Name*, Numb. 20. And wherefore was the rich man cast into the torments of hell? was it because he had taken anything from poor *Lazarus*, or pulled the meat from his mouth? No, it was because he did not put bread into his mouth, *He fared deliciously every day himself*, Luke 16, but he suffered him to starve for want. Now we must set down this as a certain rule, that they never had their hearts truly reformed from doing of evil, that have not also been careful to do that which is good. We have therefore a farther reckoning to make with God then we imagine, and stand deeper indebted to him then we believe. For if we do not make our accounts to account with him for duties let slip and omitted, we can never be saved.

Secondly, this Doctrine serveth as a good direction to help us to try our selves whether [Use 2] we be rightly reformed in our hearts or not. If we have learned to account duties omitted to be no better then sins against almighty GOD, and for which he will one day take vengeance, we have made a good step in our holy faith: and that if we have not learned to make conscience of sins of omission, we will never truly make conscience of sins of commission. A man may make some scruple of conscience of swearing and taking the Name of God in vain, and yet never use it with fear and reverence. This man is as guilty that hath left the good undone, as the other. Many men will refrayne from going to work on the Sabbath day, and from open profaning of it, but in the mean season they come not to hear the word, neither make any profit unto their souls by it. These men doubtless do it but for outward respects, and not for any care they have to keep it holy. For how shall it be known that they do it for conscience sake, except they make conscience of the holy exercises of the Sabbath? So then every man ought to examine himself, and see whether he be not guilty of some evil, even while he abstayneth from evil: and hereby we may find out the truth. If we make conscience of the contrary good commanded and required, then our hearts are right:

For this is a certain rule that never faileth, and we shall always find it true, that he never had any true fear of sin or of displeasing God, that had not withal a care to please God.

Thirdly, this Doctrine convinceth us as [Use 3] guilty of sin even from our mothers womb, we have all gone astray and are culpable in the sight of God. For all that men can boast off is nothing but the abstaining from evil, they can say nothing touching any good that they have done. They can allege for themselves, they have not been corrupt Idolaters, scoffing Ishmaelites, or profane *Esau*s; they cannot challenge unto themselves that they have been zealous worshippers, or faithful and careful professors of the truth. But what shall it profit us *not to be profane as Esau*, except we have labored to be like *David, a man after God's own heart*? What shall it profit us not to be scoffing Ishmaelites, except also we labor to preserve the good name of our brethren? Or what shall it avail us not to be oppressors and such as are full of cruelty, except we be also lovers of mercy and full of good works? Certainly except this be in us, we cannot free our selves from the just imputation of sin and wickedness. Would any man account that a good hand, which is not able to do any good to the body? and to be able only to say, it did never cut out the tongue out of the mouth, or pull the eyes out of the head, or draw the heart out of the body? The like we might say of other members. For would any praise and commend the mouth to be fit and profitable to the body, that could only say thus much for it self, that it did never tear the flesh from the body, or swallow poison to the end to destroy the body? If then it be evil, that the members should not do those good duties and functions about the body that is required of them; we may reason after the same manner for our purpose, why should not a man be justly condemned that can only boast that he hath not done evil, when in the mean season he cannot show any good that he hath done? doubtless such a one is no true member of Jesus Christ. For we make God our adversary when he findeth us a barren field without good Corn, as well as when we bring forth nothing but thorns and thistles: and our house is fit to lodge and entertayne *Satan and other unclean spirits*, Math. 12, verse 44, when they find it swept and empty of God's graces.

If we had never actually committed any sin, yet because we omit such duties as almighty God looketh for at our hands, it is sufficient to work our condemnation and destruction.

Wherefore is *Meroz* cursed in the song of *Deborah*? Is it because they fought against God's people, and joined with the enemy? No, it is because they did not assist them *and help them against the mighty*, Judge. 5, verse 23. And the unprofitable and unfaithful servant was cast into utter darkness not for misspending his masters talent, or for wasting it on harlots or riotous living, but because he did not use it well, nor employ it to his masters advantage, Math. 25, verses 27, 33. And wherefore shall many reprobates be condemned at the day of judgment? shall it be for taking food from the hungry, or drink from the thirsty, or garments from the needy, or lodging from the stranger, or comfort from the sick, or relief from the prisoner? No; because they did not feed them, nor clothe them, nor visit them, nor harbor them. He that is a true and loyal subject, it is not enough for him, not to serve his Princes enemies, but he must serve his Prince also: so if we will be the Lord's servants and subjects, we must not think it sufficient to live ydley and to serve nobody, but we must do faithful service to him that hath created, redeemed, called, justified, and sanctified us; otherwise there will always be sufficient matter for our endightment and just

condemnation, when we shall appear before the Throne of God. For *every Tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire*, Math. 3, verse 10. Will a man accept of such a servant, that contenteth himself to do him no hurt or no evil, when in the mean season he doth him no good? Shall the bryer or thistle only be cut down in the Wilderness? No, the fruitless Tree also shall go with it though it grow in the midst of Paradise. To conclude, the word of exhortation arising from hence, is thus much for everyone of us, that we should labor to join these two together, knowing that the one cannot be profitable without the other, and therefore we must labor to perform the good required, as well as to abstain from the evil forbidden; so shall we find almighty God to be gracious unto us, and we shall please him in our obedience.

[Verses 15, 16. *And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? now therefore kill every male and every woman, &c.*] A man would think at the first, that this sex should move commiseration and pity in the hearts of men, and stay the hand from execution.

The wrath of *Moses* may seem to be too severe, [Object.] and to savor of barbarousnes, in that he willeth the men of war to commit such carnage, not only upon the women, but upon the little ones that could not be guilty of the sin of their parents, neither were able to discern between good and evil, neither knew the right hand from the left. The women perished justly, *who had laid a stumbling block before Israel*, but the poor infants and sucklings, what had they done?

[Answ.] I answer, they were by nature sinners, and as a brood of serpents. And albeit the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, Ezek. 18, yet who can accuse God of injustice, seeing all are guilty of original sin, which deserveth death? but of this we have spoken before. Now to apply this, the women that had known man, are commanded to be destroyed, because they had worthily brought that general judgment by their horrible sin. They transgressed against GOD, and GOD brought this judgment upon them.

This teacheth, that the cause of a man's ruin, the procurer of his plagues and of destruction is none other but himself, let us never seek the cause out of our selves, but within us. The cause of the destruction of these Midianitish women, was not in the decree of God to have them destroyed, but because they had committed this evil, therefore came all this upon them. If we consider man before his fall, he was the most glorious creature under heaven: but after his fall which was his own act, he became the most cursed creature, even worse then the brute beasts. See farther for this point, Hos. 13, 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself*: and Isaiah 3, ver. 9. They have rewarded evil to themselves. And Ezek. 18. The wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

The grounds of this are evident. First, because [Reason 1] *it is not from God, but from our selves*, I am. 1, 14, and therefore when any man is plagued for sin, the cause must be searched and shall be found in our selves, not in the Lord. True it is, we are punished of God, and yet indeed we punish our selves, it is we that draw out the sword against our selves; and the reason is, because we give the cause why God doth punish us: for howsoever it be God that doth it, yet it is man that giveth the cause.

[Reason 2] Secondly, because as God evermore saveth in mercy, so he doth also destroy in justice. He never punisheth or taketh away any, but it is in his justice. For these two can never accord or stand together, to wit, his justice in punishing, and no merit in man to deserve it. If God punisheth, man deserveth it, these go hand in hand together, so that man must be the cause of his own destruction.

The uses follow. First, this teacheth us to [Use 1] accuse our selves whensoever we suffer anything. We are ready naturally to justify our selves and to accuse others, like *Adam*, like *Saul*, and sundry others: howbeit we learn from the Prophet, Lam. 3, verse 39, to search and try our ways, and to turn unto the Lord, confessing that *we have transgressed, and have rebelled, and therefore suffer for our sins*. So did the penitent thief upon the Cross, say, *We suffer the due reward for our deeds*. This should evermore humble us under the hand of God, and make us patient in suffering, forasmuch as the cause of all is in our selves. Let us therefore submit our selves unto him, and never murmur under the cross, seeing we cannot accuse God of wrong or injustice, that he layeth more upon us then we deserve, for we have the cause of all in our own bosoms.

Secondly, we may hereby judge who [Use 2] are the greatest enemies that a man hath. Men commonly think & are persuaded that they have many enemies, and often complain how they plot their destruction. They cry out sometimes of the world, sometimes of the devil, and sometimes against almighty God himself, as *Job* affirmeth, *That he had set him as a But for his enemies to shoot at*. Be it that a man hath many enemies that hate him and rise up against him; but wherefore hath he all these come upon him as an armed man? The reason is, because first he was his own enemy and thereupon they also do all become his enemies. For tell me, why is God angry, and hath set himself against thee, but because thou didst first of all set thyself against him by thy sins? And why hath the devil, the world, or thy other enemies any power against thee, but because thou hast weakened thyself by thy sins? otherwise none of all these could touch thee or torment thee. True it is, they might hate thee, but they should never be able to hurt thee.

When a malefactor cometh unto the place of execution, against whom will he complain, or whom will he accuse? Not the Judge, not the Iewry, not the Witnesses, but himself only, that hath brought punishment upon himself. For he suffereth death, not because the Witnesses accused him, not because the Iewry found him guilty, nor because the Judge pronounced the sentence of punishment against him, but because he deserved it. So if a man perish, against whom should he open his mouth, or upon whom should he exclaim? Against GOD he cannot. What then, may he against the instruments of GOD? neither are they the cause, it is in himself, it is nowhere else, he is the cause of all, and upon him it must rest.

[Use 3] Lastly, this serveth to reprove those that cast all upon God's decree. These make quick dispatch of the matter, and would lay all the blame upon the purpose of God, and so case their own shoulders.

[Object.] Hence it is, that they object, O the Preachers teach me that God hath foreappointed and foreordayned all things; he foreseeth all things that shall come to pass; they often tell of

God's decree, it is the will of God, I cannot resist it, and therefore I must perish. Thus do many blaspheme, [Answ.] and add impiety to impiety. First I ask with the Apostle, Rom. 11, 34. *Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counselor?* What hast thou to do therefore with the decree of GOD? Didst thou know the decree of God before? or tell me, whosoever thou art that thus blasphemest and blamest God, did the decree of God put any evil into thee, or move, or persuade thee to offend? No certainly, that is against his nature and against his law: it cometh from the corrupt heart of man himself, and therefore let them complain against themselves, and be consumed in the fire which they have made; they have kindled hell for themselves, or else it were not possible that they should perish, according to the saying of the Prophet, *Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass about yourselves with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled*, Isaiah 50, 11.

To conclude, would any man escape this destruction? he can never escape but by God: for we must know that as none perisheth without himself, so he saveth no man without himself. Without thee God will never save thee, with thee he will save thee. Now the first step to this salvation, is to labor for grace; and the second, to bring forth the fruits of grace. Let us delight in the word of God, and in the works of holiness and righteousness, so shall we be kept safe, that the judgments of God and his fearful hand shall not overtake us. Let us take away the cause of them by the speediness of our repentance, and then God will keep the waves of his wrath and indignation far enough from us. This is the only way to deliver our souls this is the only way to escape his heavy hand, and thus shall we receive comfort in this life, and eternal happiness and blessedness in the life to come.

[Kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him: but the women children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive, &c.] God would have all the males without exception destroyed, that the name of that unclean Nation should utterly be rooted out, and no remnant thereof be suffered to continue. The maids were spared, as it is thought, not for their virginity, but that they might serve the people of GOD to increase their own number, and to multiply unto many generations. But observe farther, that *Moses* speaking of the manner of the generation of man, useth a term and phrase of speaking, which is cleanly and comely, & no way foul or offensive to the ears of any. The Doctrine from hence, is, that things in themselves unseemly to be uttered, are to be delivered in such words as are honest and modest, and may no way offend, Genesis, chapter 4, verses 1, 2, 25. 2 Samuel, chapter 12, verse 21. Judge. chapter 3, verse 24. Psalm. 51, in the title. Isaiah, chapter 7, verse 30, 1 Cor. chap. 7, verse 3. Gen. chapter 19, verse 5. and chapter 16, verse 4. Judges, chapter 2, verse 24. 1. Sam. 24, 4. Rom. 1, verses 26, 27, 28. So then it is the part of God's children to carry chastity and modesty in all parts of shamefastnes, not to be seers, hearers, or acquainters of our selves with anything uncomely. There are many things evil in themselves, which are spoken of without any evil or offense, as to steal, to kill, which are wicked to be practiced, not wicked to be uttered. On the other side there are some things lawful to be done, but dishonest and unlawful to be spoken of. A modest heart ought to show it self in word and in deed, and in all the parts of the body, Gen. 9, 21, 23. It is remembered of *Noah*, that he planted a vineyard, and became drunk, and in his drunkenness disclosed himself in his Tent, his shame was discovered; *Cham* scoffed at it, but *Shem* and *Japheth* are exceedingly

commended in his Prophecy, *They went backward and saw not the nakedness of their father*. The Apostle showeth, that we have many parts *dishonorable* in themselves, and unseemly through our sin, herein the wisdom of a man showeth it self, that *he putteth more honor upon them*, 1 Cor. 12, verse 23. The hands, the head we show to all, other parts we cover, as nature it self teacheth, Hab. chapter 2, verse 15. The reasons are evident.

First, we should be silent and secret in matters [Reason 1] that are unclean, and express the same with reverent, choice, and modest words, because it is not seemly for those that profess holiness, to show themselves light in any condition. Now whatsoever is seemly, it is our parts to think upon, Ephes. chapter 5, verse 3. *Fornication and all uncleanness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh Saints*. Such broad or rather beastly speaking therefore is no way sightly or seemly for the people of God. Secondly, God would walk in the midst of us, and be evermore among us, so that it is not fit or seemly that we should be seen in any unseemly manner, Deuter. chapter 23, verse 14. Thirdly, evil words corrupt good manners, 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, verse 33. We are soon corrupted through our inbred corruption, but much more when we hear unchaste words & see unchaste works. Fourthly, there should be no filthy speech in our mouths, but that which is good to the use of edifying, *That it may minister grace to the hearers*, Ephes. 4, 29: otherwise we shall grieve the Spirit of God, and cause him, touching his comfortable and defensive presence, to depart from us, Eph. 4, 30. Deut. 23, 14.

[Reason 1] The Uses follow. This reproveth such as with delight please themselves in spewing out filthy speech out of their mouth; let such also take heed lest the most pure and holy God *do spew them out of his mouth*, Reu. 3, 16. How many are therein our days in all places, that do make it their sport and pastime to talk of unclean things, and that in a filthy and beastly manner? which no doubt proceedeth from the filthiness of the heart, Isaiah 3. verse 9. Matth. 12, 34. Isaiah 32, 6. Corrupt and rotten speech. is a token of a corrupt and rotten heart, for *from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*.

Secondly, it reproveth those that do take pleasure and delight to look on filthy things. For, if to speak filthily, and give our tongues to filthiness be wicked, how much more to delight to behold filthiness? *Cham and Canaan* beholding their fathers nakedness, are reprov'd, nay accursed, Gen. 9, 22. And if *David* pray unto God, to *turn away his eyes from beholding vanity*, Psa. 119, 37: what cause have we to desire him to keep us from beholding impurity?

Thirdly, it meeteth manifestly and justly with those which are not ashamed to commit that openly in the sight and light of the sun, which a true Christian heart blusheth once to speak of. These are not only not ashamed to commit evil secretly, of which the Apostle saith, *It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret*, Eph. 5, 12. 1 Cor 5, 1. but make show of them publicly, and glory in their own shame and confusion, 2. Sam. 16, ver. 22. whereas modesty should be maintained, touching the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the gesture, and the whole body.

Fourthly, it condemneth all love-songs, light interludes, amorous books, lascivious representations of love-matters in plays and Comedies, indecent and unseemly pictures,

lascivious dancing of men and women together, 1 Thess. 5, 22. Mark 6, 22. All these favor of wantonness and filthiness, which are not comely or convenient.

Lastly, acknowledge from hence, that it is grievous to God's children to have their abiding among a wanton, scurrilous, & prophan people, which in all speeches are lewd, broad, open, and offensive: I say to have our habitation among such is irksome to an honest and godly heart. It is noted of *Lot*, *That he grieved his righteous soul from day today even for the things which he saw and heard amongst the Sodomites*, 2 Peter 2, 8. As it was with him, so it is unto all the faithful a great torment and vexation of spirit, to be tied unto, and to be tired with the company of such as use ribaldry, and delight in filthy speeches, and unclean deeds.

25 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying;

26 Take the sum of the prey that was taken both of the man, and of the beast, thou and Eleazar the Priest, and the chief fathers of the Congregation:

27 And divide the prey into two parts, between them that took the War upon them, who went out unto battle, and between all the Congregation.

28 And leuy a Tribute unto the Lord, &c.

29 Take it of their half, &c.

30 And of the children of Israel's half, &c.

Here *Moses* beginneth to handle what was done after the men that went out to the battle came to the host, wherein we must consider two things: first, the distribution of the prey, and then the oblation of the Captains. The dividing of the prey taken in the war, reacheth to the 31. verse, and containeth the commandment of God in these verses, and the execution of it in those that follow. In the commandment it may seem very strange, [Objection.] why God would have the prey and booty divided between the soldiers that had taken it, and the rest of the Israelites that went not out to battle. For what reason is it (may some say) that such as sate still in their tents, should have as much as they that aduētured their lives? or should they that did nothing, be made equal unto them which have borne the burden and heat of the battle? I answer, [Answer.] such as went not forth did not hang back of purpose, or slip their neck out of the coller thorough fear or faintness, but because they were not appointed to the work. And no doubt while their brethren were fighting, *Moses* and *Eleazar*, and the rest of the people were earnest with God in prayer; as we see upon like occasion, *Exod.* 17. For God will have equity and justice observed among his people. Again, a reason is rendered of this, *1 Sam.* 30, 24: where the prey taken from the Amalekites is divided by *David* between those that went down to the battle, and others that abode by the stuff: and he teacheth it to be a

part of common charity & equity, to reward such as stayed by the stuff, who do no less intend the common good, then others that fought the battle. Now here we may consider the greatness of the battle and victory, by y^e rich booty which they obtained with no loss at all, as appeareth verse 49. God therefore for the sin of these Midianites dealt most severely with them, wherein they lost their goods and themselves. This teacheth us, That the Lord as he will destroy the wicked that provoke him, so when he doth it, he will do it fearfully and severely, Psalm 50, 22. To this purpose he oftentimes useth two merciless elements and enemies (which he armeth to execute his will) the fire and water, which are without pity and compassion, they spare neither young nor old; as he destroyed the old world with water, Gen. 7, Jude 4: so he destroyed Sodom by fire, and will destroy the world again by fire, 2 Pet. 3: thereby making it manifest that he can destroy sharply and fiercely, Psal. 21, 9. & 97, 3. And no marvel, if we consider the grounds thereof.

[Reason 1] For first, the Lord layeth even upon his own children very strange and fearful judgments, as we see how he visited his seruāt *David*, Psal. 32, 4: yea sometimes he bringeth such heavy things upon them, that y^e ungodly take occasion to triumph over them. If then he do it to his own, what will he do to the wicked and the reprobate? Proverbs 11, 31. Luke 23, 31. 1 Pet, 4, 17. A servant may well gather, that if the master of the family be so rough and rigorous to the children, then he will be more sharp and severe towards him.

[Reason 2] Secondly, the wicked grow obstinate & desperate, they harden their hearts, and deprive themselves of all means that might do them good. They leave the Lord, and therefore he leaveth them: is it then any marvel if GOD deal sharply with them? Christ our Savior putteth forth a Parable unto the Scribes and Pharisees, Mat. 21, 35: that *the owner of a vineyard sent forth his servants to his tenants, that they might receive the fruit of it; but they abused and killed them, and his son also:* and then demandeth of them what will the Lord do unto those servants? They answer, that it is just *that he should cruelly destroy them.* Thus they give sentence against themselves & show, that such as grow obstinate against the Lord and his people, abusing his Ministers, contemning his word, and resisting his ordinances, can expect nothing at his hands but this, that he should destroy them in his wrath, and sweep them away in his fury.

Thirdly, this is the nature of God, he is as [Reason 3] a mighty and consuming fire, Heb. 12, verse 29. Deut. 4, 29. Now we know that fire hath two qualities; to purge, and to consume. He is as a consuming fire to the good and bad, to the godly and ungodly. He is a fire unto the good, but a purging or purifying fire to consume their dross, as gold is purified in the fire, 1 Pet, 1. But when he cometh to deal with the wicked, he setteth aside his mercy, and always giveth them judgment without mercy: when he cometh to his own, he cometh with judgment and mercy. So then the point is very manifest, that when God entereth into judgment with the ungodly, he will destroy them utterly, fearfully, finally, and fully.

[Use 1] This reproveth those that walk on boldly and presumptuously in their sins, and yet never fear his judgments, but dream of a God altogether framed of mercy, and thereby flatter themselves in their sins, and then run on in evil till judgment take hold of them. And therefore *Moses* exhorting the people to obedience by the remembrance of the works which

they had seen, showeth, that *such as do bless themselves in their heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, &c. The Lord will not spare him, but his anger and jealousy shall smoke against that man, &c.* Deut. 29, 19. It behooveth us therefore to beware of abusing God's mercies, lest the curses written in the book of God fall upon us, and he blot out our name from under heaven. And let us take heed of impenitency & hardening our selves in our sins, because thereby we dishonor God, we deface his image, we make our selves like to Satan, whom by sin and disobedience we resemble. Our sins are as a thick cloud that separate between y^e Lord's mercy and us, and hide the comfortable light of his countenance: they provoke the anger of God against us, 1 Cor. 10, 22: they bring distrust of God's providence and fatherly protection, and weaken our faith in all his promises. They bring temporal scourges in our bodies, in our goods, in our name, in our labors, and grieve God's Spirit to cause him to depart: they bring a wounded conscience, and weaken our assurance of his favor, and therefore let us not be encouraged to proceed in evil, because God is merciful.

Secondly, let no man fret at the prosperity of the wicked and obstinate sinners: for albeit [Use 2] God do long bear them with patience, yet a fearful destruction shall be their end and reward. If they were to be destroyed after an easy and gentle manner, as the grass that fadeth away, yet even then there were no cause to envy at them, Ps. 37, 1: much less therefore those that shall cruelly & fearfully be destroyed. If a man should have sentence to die the most honorable death that a State can afford, as to have his head stricken off, yet for this no man is so foolish as to envy him, though he be not burned or hanged by the neck, yet none (I say) would repine at such a man: so what ground hath any man to fret, or fume, or envy at the flourishing estate of any wicked man? especially when it is known that GOD hath decreed that he shall perish, and that not by an honorable death, but perish like *Haman* shamefully in his own house, and after that shall have all shame and contempt poured upon him, and go to the place of the damned, there to suffer torments with the devil & his angels, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Lastly, this being well learned, will serve [Use 3] as an admonition for everyone to take heed of every evil way, & that he be not obstinate in sin. It is one thing to sin, and another to be obstinate in sin, to withstand y^e word and rod of God, and to abuse his patience. It is incident to all to sin, but obstinacy in sinning, hardness of heart, and casting off Repentance, are the forerunners of destruction. Let us think thus with our selves, what can a short or fading pleasure profit us, when God shall come with his fearful destruction? Nay, what can all the pleasures or profits in the world recompense for the loss of that comfort and peace that otherwise we may enjoy? What did *Esau's* red pottage so pleasing unto his eye profit him in the end, when he lost thereby not only his fathers blessing, but also the blessed life to come? What good got *Achan* by his wedge of Gold, when it proved to be the wrack and ruin both of himself & of his family? And therefore doth Christ our Savior teach us, Mat. 16, 26. *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, & then lose his own soul?*

Again, this fearfulness of judgment, should make a man think of the difficulty of repentance, and what fearful things he shall suffer if he practice it not. If it be a hard thing to break off

sin, we shall find it much harder to be broken with the judgments of God and the fierceness of his wrath. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an earthly Prince, Prov. 19, 10: but more fearful to fall into the hands of the living God, especially when he is enraged and incensed by the sins of men; and therefore we ought to meet him with repentance, lest we feel his vengeance to our condemnation. And let us labor to set the hardness of bearing the judgments of God against the breaking off of sin, & the one will easily countervail and overcome the other. If we find it an hard and harsh saying, to repent and break off our sins, we shall find it more hard when it shall be said, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his Angels*, Mat. 25. Let a man seriously and thoroughly consider what an hard and impossible thing it will be to undergo the wrath of God, which maketh the devils and damned spirits to tremble, James 2, 19: & he will think it an easy and light thing to forsake sin, although it were more deer then all things in the world whatsoever. What if it were as hard a thing to renounce thy sin, and to take up the practice of true repentance, as to pluck out a man's eye, or to cut off his arm? yet it must be done, he hath pronounced it with his own mouth that must be thy Judge: that is, if there be any one sin as deer unto thee as thy right eye, thou must pull it out, or else thou shalt never come to the kingdom of heaven: or if there be any sin as deer unto thee as thy right arm by which thou gettest thy living, if thou canst not be content to cut it off, and dost not constantly and confidently resolve to cast it from thee, thou canst have no entrance given thee into God's kingdom. We see by common experience daily, that men will endure very hard and bitter things from y^e hand of the Physician, that they may recover health and escape death: and yet it is not to put away death utterly, it is only to prolong life for a time; for they may defer death, they are not able to take it away. If then such sharp and bitter things seem easy to avoid a temporal death, then what ought a man to do and to suffer, to avoid the bitterness and sharpness of eternal destruction, and the fierce wrath of God? which indeed is nothing but this, To forsake sin, and to take up repentance, and the performance of religious and holy duties. But alas, alas, how many are there every wherein the world, that have been content to lose many ounces of blood out of the veins for the good of the body, that have never shed a few drops of tears out of their eyes for the recovery of their souls? To take bitter pilles and potions to purge the gross humors that distemper us, that have never purged or *cleansed themselves from the filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of GOD?* 2 Cor. chap. 7, verse 1. Nay we see men are willing to be seared, that cannot abide to have the wounds of their soul searched by God's holy Word: yea, to have one member cut off to save the whole body, who notwithstanding will not leave one pleasure of sin for a season, to save both body and soul. This is no better then folly and madness. Here is wisdom therefore to think of this betimes.

31 And Moses and Eleazar the Priest, did as the Lord commanded Moses.

32 And the booty being the rest of the prey, which the men of war had caught, was six hundred thousand, and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep.

33 And threescore, &c.

34 And threescore and one thousand Asses, &c

35 And thirty and two thousand persons in all of women that had not known man by lying with him, &c.

37 And the Lord's tribute of the Sheep was six hundred and threescore & fifteen, &c.

41 And Moses gave the tribute which was the Lord's heave-offering unto Eleazar the priest, &c.

47 Even of the children of Israel's half, &c.

We have heard before the commandment of God touching the dividing of the prey: Now followeth the execution of it by *Moses* and *Eleazar*. It is worth the observation to consider, that as before the death of *Aaron*, *Moses* and *Aaron* are always joined together, so after his death *Moses* and *Eleazar*, the Magistrate and the Minister, as the hand and the eye are in the body. Then doth the church and the commonwealth flourish when these two go together; and on the other side, they go to wrack when they are separated & draw several ways. The greatness of the victory and conquest that God gave to his people, appeareth further in these words by the distribution of the people, and by the reservation of the women y^t *had not known man*. which escaped the edge of the sword. Here then we may behold the misery that befell these Midianites for seducing God's people, and drawing them to whore dome and idolatry. Learn hereby, that the iniquity of a people, or a country and nation, maketh the Lord to destroy them, and to lay them waste, sometime by the sword of the enemy (as in this place) & sometimes by other judgments, as Deut. 7, 1. where the Lord telleth the people of Israel that they *should cast out and destroy many Nations*: and afterward, chap. 9, 4: he willeth them not to say, that it was for their own righteousness that the Lord had brought them to possess that land, but *it was for the wickedness of those Nations, that he did drive them out before them*. Again, in the eight chap. and the twentieth verse, he saith, *If thou forsake the Lord, and walk after other gods, and serve them, then I testify to thee this day that thou shalt surely perish, because ye would not be obedient to the voice of the Lord your God*. So 1 Sam. 12, 25: *If ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall perish both you and your king*, Mat. 23, 37, 38.

[Reason 1] The Reasons follow. First, they dishonor God in their lives, and therefore it is just that he should deprive them of those blessings that they enjoy, and make others to enjoy the labors of their hands, and instead of them lay judgments and plagues upon them. A son that dishonoreth his father, is unworthy to receive any duty from a servant. So certainly it is just

with God, that such as dishonor him, should be deprived of his protection, & be left naked unto all judgments.

[Reason 2] Secondly, God's justice doth so require, that where there is a general corruption and depravation, there should be a general desolation; and where the corruption is particular, the judgment should also be answerable. When God told Abraham that he would destroy Sodom and Gomorrhah, he reasoneth in this manner, *Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? No* (saith God:) *but if thou canst find ten righteous persons, I will spare the Cities for tens sake:* Gen. 18, verse 32. But he could find none but Lot, they had generally corrupted their ways. It is not enough though some repent and turn unto God, those few may defer a judgment, but they cannot keep away judgment forever, so long as the general state is corrupted. If one man or a few forsake their sins, it is enough that they escape the eternal punishment, though they do fall into the temporal, and do not save & deliver the whole: I say, they have enough if they save themselves, and have ample fruit of their conversion, though they save none of all the rest.

[Reason 3] Thirdly, this will make manifest the power of God. Exemplary justice may be shown on a few, but power is shown when there are many offenders. For, as *it is in his power to save with few as well as with many*, 1 Sam. 14, 6: so in this case, it is the power of his justice to destroy many. A small power of a Prince will serve to destroy and subdue a small company of rebels: but then is the power of a Prince manifested and openly shown, when Rebels are grown to an head, and have gotten unto themselves some strong hold: so it is with God, the more opposition is made against him, the more is the glory of his power set forth, when he draweth out the sword of justice against them.

The Uses remain. First of all, God's providence [Use 1] is hereby notably established, that his eyes are upon all men, and upon all their ways, because he destroyeth multitudes as well as particular persons. His judgments are evermore just, and that could not be, except that there were cause why to destroy. There must be a cause, and also a known cause: forasmuch, as though men were wicked, if God's all-seeing eye were not upon them, or if he knew no cause, he should be unjust if he should destroy. Nadab and Abihu that durst presume to rush into the presence of GOD with their *strange Fire*, Levite. chapt. 2. verses 1, 2. even in the very act of their sin, the special providence of God came upon them, so that before they had finished their sin, the plague began. So it was with Ananias and Sapphira, they were smitten down with sodain death, the lie was no sooner out of their mouth, but the judgment of God did lay hold on them, *For they fell down and gave up the ghost*, Acts 5, 5, 10. Thus God's almighty power over-reacheth the sin of man with punishment, before ever it be quite committed, of which we saw a notable and fearful example before in the Israelites, the 11. chapter, and the 33. ver. recorded also in the 78. Psalm, verses 29, 30. They did eat and were well filled, for he did give them their own desire: *but while their meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them, and slew and smote down the chosen men of Israel.* Herod the King likewise, while he was in his pomp and pride, was smitten of God in the very act of his sin, while he took to himself the glory due to God, Acts 12. These & such like punishments do plainly argue the

providence of God to be over the ways of men, and over all their actions, & doth continually wait upon them.

Secondly, it reproveth those that magnify [Use 2] themselves, & gather themselves together against God, thinking to prevail & escape for their multitude sake. This is no plea to protect our selves, neither giveth any hope of deliverance from judgment, but rather provoketh God the more against us. God bringeth in the people of Israel vinting thus, *Son of man, they y^e inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel, speak, saying, Abraham was one, & he inhabited the Land: but we are many, the land is given us for an inheritance*, Ezek. 33, 24. The Jews that remained after the destruction of the City had their eyes blinded with carnal security, and persuaded themselves, that albeit they hardened their hearts against the chastisements of God, and repented not at the preaching of the prophets yet they should possess the land and dwell in it, whatsoever *Jeremiah, Ezekiel*, and other Prophets pratled to the contrary. And thus they reasoned: If *Abraham* that was but one, had the land promised unto him, then much more shall we have it that are many. Howbeit the Lord reproveth them for this presumption, & telleth them that their multitude shall nothing help them, because they are not the sons and heirs of *Abraham*, forasmuch as they did not the works of *Abraham*, but did willfully transgress the law of God. Multitude therefore is not a note of the true Church, neither can they deliver or excuse offenders from the wrath of God: because when main sin, many also shall be punished. Let us not therefore look how many we be in number, but how our right our works be. For when God will punish, no multitude can privilege: and therefore the Wiseman saith: *Though hand go in hand they shall not be unpunished*, Prouerb. 16, verse 5: so that all *the loftiness and haughtiness of men*, how soever they think themselves backed, and shall be borne out by friends and mighty men of the world, *shall be brought down and made low*, Isaiah 2, 11, 12, &c.

[Use 3] Lastly, this admonisheth every Country, City, Nation, Language and People, if they would enjoy their lands and goods in peace, they must seek to be at peace with God; and if they would not have destruction come upon them from him, let them not draw it as it were with Cart-ropes upon themselves by their sins and casting from them the laws of God. For the providence of God is over all the ways of men, and therefore he will bring destruction upon them. This is the dignity and honor of a City, except the inhabitants of it do betray it, it cannot be betrayed. Many think, the only strength and safety of a City to consist in the iron gates, strong bars, high walls, deep ditches, great pieces of Ordnance, and much munition: and the honor and ornament thereof to stand only in goodly houses, stately towers, brave castles, and curious workmanship of cunning Artificers: nevertheless, such as put their confidence in these are greatly deceived, they make flesh their arm, & know nothing how to make Towns and Cities fortified. It is true piety and godliness that is the defense and glory of a City: and no man can destroy a City, except those that are the inhabitants do destroy it themselves. This is it that the Prophet telleth *Nineveh* that *great and bloody City*, Genesis 10, 12. Nahum 3, 1, *Art thou better then populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea? &c. Yet was she carried away she went into captivity, &c.* Nothing can deliver where sin reigneth. Defences •re no defences, all means are vain and unable to save. It is not the woe and misery of a City, or

Nation, or Town, or House, that they have lost a number of able men by the sword, or that many are smitten down with the plague and pestilence: but this is the wretchedness of a place, that it is full of drunkards, unclean persons, swearers, Atheists, and such like horrible impieties. These are the procurers of woe, these are the causes of destruction. And howsoever some may repent and save themselves & their own souls, yet it shall not long keep us from general judgments, so long as these things are found among us. It cannot be that the Lord should long forbear us, we have hardened our hearts through his patience. We have filled up the measure of our sins, and they are grown to so great an height, that every man nowadays maketh a scorn and scoff of the word of God, and there are among us not only committers of evil, but scorers of good things, these are perilous & dangerous times. What then can we expect but that God should come against us, and set all our sins in order before us nay before himself? Let us therefore repent and turn from our sins, and return to the Lord our God: and then though we should taste of a general desolation, yet when it cometh it shall go well us, and we shall have our reward in the life to come.

48 And the Officers which were over thousands of the host, the Captains of thousands, and the Captains of hundreds, came near unto Moses.

49 And they said unto Moses, Thy servants have taken the sum of the men of war, which are under our charge, and there lacketh not one man of us.

50 We have therefore brought an Oblation for the Lord, what every man hath gotten, of Jewels of Gold, Chaines and Bracelets, rings, earrings and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the Lord.

51 And Moses and Eleazar the Priest took the Golde of them, and all the wrought Jewels, &c.

52 And all the gold of the offering that they offered up to the Lord, &c.

53 For the men of war had taken spoil, every man for himself.

54 And Moses and Eleazar the Priest took the gold of the Captains, &c.

The offering of the Captains followeth in these words. That which they brought was matter of great price, thereby giving to God thanks for covering their heads in the day of battle, and desiring to make an atonement between the Lord and their own souls. This offering was accepted, and laid up in the Tabernacle for a memorial for the Children of Israel. Observe here sundry points of instruction. First from the persons that offer to God, and acknowledge God's mercy, to wit, the Captains themselves that were the chief in this business, that howsoever God be to be served of all without exception, and all must show themselves ready

to do it, yet above all, the chiefest and the heads over others ought to be leaders to the rest. So was it when the Israelites were brought over the red sea, and delivered from all their enemies, *Moses* and *Aaron* provoked them by their example to give praise and glory unto God, and encouraged them in that duty, *Exod. chapt. 15. Judges 5. verse 15.* How zealous was *Nehemiah*, that he even consumed himself with desire to do the Church good? So was it with *Zerubbabel*, and many others. But of this we have spoken before, *chapt. 7:* in the offering of the Princes. And whereas they offer to God, *Jewels of Gold, Chaines, Bracelets, Rings, Eare-rings and Tablets*, we learn to serve God with the best things we have, and to think nothing good enough for him. This also is handle before, *chap. 7.* Again, from these men we must acknowledge that it is our duty to return praise and thanks unto God for his benefits and blessings that we have received, *Psalm 50, 15. Ephes. 5, 20. Philip. 4, 6. Psal. 116.*

The grounds are plain. First, because praise and thanksgiving are due to God, as to the author and fountain from whence all mercies come, and therefore to whom should we give praise and glory but unto him? *Psal. 65, 6.7.* Secondly, it is a blessed thing to bless the Lord: and if we ascribe not glory to him, we take it to our selves, and are no better then thieves that steal away their neighbors goods, nay we are worse. We ought as well to return thanks unto him when we have received blessings, as to pray for them when we want them, and would have them, *Psalm 50.*

Thirdly, it is an high and honorable duty to glorify and praise God: it is the duty which all the Saints and Angels perform, and ever shall perform in heaven, to honor God. A good subject would be very willing to do that which should honor his Prince: this duty is that which delighteth God, and honoreth him, and therefore all of us should practice it.

Fourthly, as it is honorable, so likewise it is most profitable to our selves, both to make us keep the blessings which we have, and to obtain such as we have not. *If we be faithful in little, he will trust us with much: if we be faithful over a few things, he will made us ruler over many things,* *Luke chap. 19, 17. Matth. chap. 25, 23.* But if we be unthankful for mercies received, he will take from us even those which we have.

This should teach us to stir up our selves [Use 1] more and more to thankfulness by keeping in mind, and laying up in our hearts the special blessings and mercies of God. This we cannot do, except we take notice of them, and daily mark and observe what God doth for us. For a benefit not remembered, is all one as if it were never received. Let us not therefore suffer his mercies to pass away. If the least cross lie upon us, we are sure to be sensible enough of it. If the head ache we can by and by feel it, and complain of it. How then is it, that we receive grace after grace, and mercy upon mercy heaped up plentifully upon us, and yet we remain as senseless and blockish, as if we had received nothing at all? Let us take heed of this unthankfulness.

Secondly, it reproveth many amongst us, [Use 2] that have tongues to ask, and mouths to speak when we are in need, but know not how to return thanks to God when we have received. Have we been in trouble and affliction? and hath God been merciful unto us to restore us again? If we be not thankful unto him for this, it had been better for us that we

had been afflicted still, yea that we had perished in our affliction, then not to return to him the praise, & to lift up our hearts to the heavens.

Lastly, would we know whether we be [Use 3] thankful indeed, or not, then let us examine our selves how it goeth with us, after God hath delivered us from any dangers. Are we more zealous in good things, and more careful to perform good duties unto GOD then before? Then surely we may comfort our selves, and assure our own hearts, that we have been thankful in some measure. Thus doth Christ speak of the sinful woman, Luke chap. 7. verse 47: *her sins which are many are forgiven her, for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.* This is thankfulness, for love received to love again: and for much love, to return much love again.

True thanksgiving is of a working Nature, it will quickly show it self toward him of whom we have received mercy. If the love of God be shed in our hearts, we will love him again, because he loved us first. On the other side, if a man do not perform this duty, to wit, to be more zealous of God's glory, and more obedient unto his word and will, he shall be found unfaithful whatsoever he persuadeth himself of himself. So fell it out with *Hezekiah*, as we may see in the second book of the Chronicles, the 32. chapter, and the 25. verse, *Who rendered not again, according to the benefit done unto him.* His heart was lifted up, and wrath came upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. If then God spared not him, let us take heed he do not spare us, and be evermore careful to praise him here as we ought and then we shall be sure to praise him ever hereafter in the life to come.

We have therefore brought an oblation, &c. In the oblation of this people, we are to consider the circumstance of time, which serveth further to commend them; they were no sooner returned, and found the mercy of GOD toward them, but by and by they give him thanks.

This teacheth that as all men must return thanks unto God, so they must return it speedily and presently, while they have opportunity and ability to do it, Exodus 15.20. Judges 5, 1, Luke 17, 15, 16. The grounds follow.

[Reason 1] First, it is the will of God our Father, when he would have thankfulness performed, he would have it done speedily and cheerfully, it is the willingness of the mind that he respecteth and accepteth. For if he require of us in the matter of liberality, that we say not to our neighbor, *Go and come again, and tomorrow I will give, if we have it by us:* then certainly, it is his pleasure that we do not delay or defer to perform the duty of praise to him tomorrow, when we should do it today. Secondly, the performance of thanksgiving presently, maketh it the more accepted of God, whereas the putting of it off from time to time causeth it to be rejected. Thirdly, while the blessings of God are fresh in our remembrance, the mind feedeth the affection with much more plentiful matter, and it is stirred up the more fervently and effectually to perform that duty; whereas the opportunity in due season being neglected, maketh the blessings of God grow stale, and to be quite forgotten, and that quickly.

[Use 1] This teacheth that many men may hereby see their sins in this matter and manner of thanksgiving, because they are so slack and slow, drowsy and forgetful, and use such delays

in their returning of praise to God. By delay a man is made more unfit and unable to perform this duty. True it is, if a man repent of his dalying with God, and delaying to do his duty to him, he will forgive his evil: howbeit he that putteth off his thankfulness, it is not so acceptable to God, because he doth it not speedily, albeit he perform it in the end.

[Use 2] Secondly, this must teach every man to learn when he returneth thanks to God for any blessing, that he should labor to do it presently and speedily, seeing this is that which is so much accepted with him. And if any man have been faulty in this, let him labor to make amends with double diligence, and to be more mindful of this duty of thankfulness, that so the Lord be not enforced to put him in mind of his sin by taking away his blessings from him. It were far better for us to learn otherwise, then by taking forth this hard lesson, to wit, by our harm.

Thirdly, this serveth to put us in mind to [Use 3] stretch this manner of speedy thanksgiving to God, to all other duties of Religion and Christianity. The Apostle exhorteth all persons to do good *while they have time, or opportunity to do good to all men*, Gal. 6, 10: *for we know not what one day may bring forth*, Prov. 27, 1. Many delay their doing of good till the hour of death, these are like swine which are never good till they come to the shambles. Especially in the case of repentance and turning to God, we must not put off the matter from day today. The lepers that were cleansed, delayed this duty all of them, on only excepted, and in the end utterly did forget it. When we delay a duty, thinking to do it better afterward, it groweth quite out of mind. The Prophet saith, *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*, Psal. 95, 7, 8. Heb. 3, 13, Isaiah 55, 6. If we put off our repentance a while, who is sure to have the means offered him again, whereby God ordinarily worketh repentance? Who can tell whether he shall heart the word of God preached to him anymore?

The word is translated from place to place, & we are translated from life to death, frō our house to the grave, and we know not whether we shall carry our selves when we are gone from the Church, or be carried by others to the Church again. Besides, the longer we delay our repentance, the more hard and difficult it will be, because a thick skin will grow over the heart, that it will be past feeling, and sin will take deeper root through custom and continuance: and therefore we must set upon it betimes.

There lacketh not a man of us, therefore we have brought an oblation. This was an extraordinary mercy received. It is a great blessing of God, to overcome the enemy and to obtain the victory: but thus to overcome and to have such a victory, required an extraordinary thanksgiving.

We learn from hence, that as men ought to return thanks to God for all his blessings, so they ought for extraordinary blessings to return extraordinary thanks and praises. As in times of distress it is our duty to humble our selves and in extraordinary visitations to use extraordinary humiliation: so when God showeth any mercy, especially extraordinary, the Church hath great cause to be thankful accordingly, and upon that occasion to be stirred up to set forth his noble praise, Exodus 15.1, 2, &c. Isaiah 38, 9. *Hezekiah* returneth great thanks for his great deliverance, Luke 1, 46. Psalm 145, 7. The grounds follow.

[Reason 1] First, all acknowledge that they are tied to some duties for blessings received. Now this is the only recompense that we can make; we cannot requite him *to come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old: he will not be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil*, Mic. 6, 6, 7: he hath shown us what is good, and what he requireth of us; the only accepted sacrifice and service is an humble, contrite, and thankful heart, Psal. 116, 13, 14: this is more acceptable to him, then all sacrifices that have horns and hoofs; all the fowls of the mountains are his, the wild beasts of the field, and the cattle upon the hills: and therefore he willeth us to offer unto him thanksgiving, and to pay our vows to the most High, and to glorify him for our deliverances. Secondly, the least mercies of God, such as are most ordinary & continual, deserve thanks, yea the greatest thanks that we can possibly give, that the tongue and heart should join together in that action; for the least drop of his mercy is greater then our deserts: then how much more do his greatest mercies and blessings deserve the greatst thanks and praise at his hand, to perform the same with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength? Hence it is, that the servants of God, as we see in *David, Hezekiah*, and others, after wonderful and great and mighty deliverances did use to pen their songs, and often to repeat them to quicken the memorial of God's blessings and his kindness that they had received; and thereby to stir up their own hearts and the hearts of others, that they might be more closely knit and linked unto God. The like we see in *Jonah*, when he was delivered from the Whale that had swallowed him up, *where the waters compassed him even about to the soul, the depth closed him round about, and the weeds were wrapped about his head*, Jonah 2, 5, 9, that his deliverance might seem after a sort a resurrection from the dead, as indeed his lying in the belly of the fish three days and three nights, (Jonah 1, 17) did figure out the resurrection of Christ to be so long in the heart of the earth, Math. 12, 40. I say when he had received such a deliverance, what could he do but sacrifice unto God with the voice of thanksgiving, and pay that which he had vowed, considering that salvation is of the Lord? Thirdly, Nature it self doth teach that the greatest blessings should have the greatest thankfulness, inasmuch as great blessings fill the heart more full of joy: now where the heart of a man is extraordinarily joyful, there the mouth of a man also ought to be extraordinarily thankful. Fourthly, it standeth with equity, that in all things that we do toward God, we should do them in proportion, and in this matter of thankfulness, we ought to make out thanks to be in some sort and in some weak measure proportionable to his blessings. The uses remain.

First, how glorious ought God's Name to be in all places, who doth daily lode us with [Use 1] his benefits! He dealeth not sparingly with us, but liberally thereby to magnify his great Name, that all the world might acknowledge his greatness, and sing to his praise, saying, *O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy Name in all the earth, who hast set thy glory above the heavens*, Psal. 8, 1, 2, 3, &c.

Secondly, this reproveth many of unthankfulness, [Use 2] howsoever they seem to themselves to be very thankful, yet they are not proportionably thankful, and therefore they may be said not to be thankful at all, because they give not according to his works, and therefore he requireth of us that we should praise him according to his blessings. But alas, which of us do not for the most part receive much of him, and return little or nothing unto

him again? It is not enough for us to say, God be thanked, and then think we have performed all that can be required of us; but as we receive double mercy, so should we yield double obedience. Lastly, this teacheth [Use 3] every man that he should consider God's dealing toward him, and what blessings he hath received from him, y^t so he may see how much thankfulness he oweth unto him. For where the gifts of God are increased upon a man, there he hath much cause of thankfulness. If others that have received less blessings from God have been more thankful unto him for them: how shall we escape that have greater blessings, if we show our selves less thankful: Let everyone enter into the meditation of these things. We have received blessings of all sorts, general and particular: what Nation hath been honored and advanced like unto ours? what people have received such deliverances as we have received? from foreign enemies, and domestical? And what blessings we have all received in particular, what tongue can express, what heart can comprehend? Doth not GOD on the other side require much at our hands? O let us beware and take heed lest these blessings be turned into curses, and his mercies into judgments.

CHAP. XXXII.

1 NOW the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle, and when they saw the land of Iaazer, and the land of Gilead, that behold the place was a place for cattle,

2 The children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spake unto Moses and to Eleazar the Priest, and unto the Princes of the congregation, saying,

3 At aroth, and Dibon, &c.

4 Even the country which the Lord smote before the congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, & thy servants have cattle.

5 Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan.

Concerning the great victory given over the enemies of Israel we have already spoken: now we come to the dividing of the inheritance among the Conquerors, according to their estate and condition: wherein consider three things. First the occasion of distributing the land of the Midianites, the victory being obtained. Secondly, the conditions of this distribution. Thirdly, the agreement and sending of them into the possession. The occasion is in these verses; the two tribes, and the half had many cattle, upon which occasion they come to Moses, and request this land which they had lately seized into their hands, the chief towns whereof are reckoned up, that they might sit down there, & not be compelled to pass over

Jordan, they thought they might speed themselves nearer home, and never trouble themselves to go so far. The sons of Reuben are in the first verse set before the sons of Gad, because *Reuben* was the eldest and first borne: and yet oftentimes in this Chapter the sons of Gad are set before them the cause whereof seemeth to be this, because they were the authors of this counsel to shift and provide for themselves, and to ask of *Moses* the land of the Midianites. From hence sundry doctrines may be pointed out. Doubtless every tribe had store of cattle, for Gen. 46, 32, they are said to be *shepherds & men of cattle*; and Exod. 12, 38: *there went up with them out of Egypt flocks and heardes, even very much cattle*: yet the tribes here mentioned did especially and above the rest abound with cattle. We learn hereby that God doth distribute his blessings differently, he giveth things temporal to one more, and to another less, as in his own wisdom he seeth to be expedient and profitable for them. He would have us stand in need one of another, one nation of another, one land of another, one person of another, that we might hold a communion among our selves, & all depend upon him as upon our sovereign Lord. It is therefore the duty of one member to help another, and to do good one to another, even as it is in the members of the body, all have not one office, but everyone his special function, but for the good & comfort of the whole. And as it is in temporal blessings, so also it is in spiritual, God giveth & disperseth them variably. These tribes do come to *Moses* to obtain their suit. They attempt not by force or by fraud to get it; they use lawful means, they have recourse to the Magistrate. It is our duty therefore to go to the Magistrate to obtain our right, & to make petition of lawful things to him. Again, albeit the children of Israel smote this land of the Midianites, yet it is said *the Lord smote it*; because the labors & endeavors of men come to naught, & of every good action, God is the principal agent, & the creature only y^e instrument & is supported by his power. From hence this ariseth, that all good actions of the second cause are to be ascribed to y^e first cause as the chief worker thereof. See also the manner of their speech, *if we have found grace in thy sight*, thus they speak to the Magistrate; which teacheth y^t we ought to use & show all reverence & humility both in word & gesture to Magistrates and to our superiors. Al these things are good, & serve for imitation: but there is one thing more, & also must serve for our instruction, though it be evil. These tribes do seek their own profit, & altogether forget their brethren; their mind was more vpō their own cattle, then the procuring of the good estate of the rest. We learn hereby, that the immoderate love of this world is dangerous, drawing to sin against God and to break the bonds of nature. Where y^e love of the world & of our selves is thoroughly settled it worketh a careless neglect of all others. *Abraham & Lot* loved as natural brethren, nothing could separate them, they went out of their country, and from their kindred together, Gen. 11, 31, what severed these but matters of the world? when *Lot* looked on Sodom, & saw it fruitful as *Eden*, he left *Abraham* and dwelled there, which brought great trouble upon himself, Gen. 13. And afterward what caused *Lots wife* to look backward, &c. was it not the love of the things w^c he had left behind? Gen. 19. Luke 17. *Saul* looked upon the fattest of the sheep, & fell into disobedience, & lost his kingdom. *Achan* looked vpō the wedge of gold & the Babylonish garment, & set his heart upon thē, & provoked God against himself & the host of Israel, Ios. 7 The like we might manifest by sūdry other examples, of y^e young man y^t came to Christ, Ma. 19 of *Judas* that betrayed his Master, Math, 26: & of *Demas* that forsook Paul, and embraced this present world, 2. Tim. 4.

[Reason 1] And no marvel. For the love of God & the love of the world are contrary the one to the other, there is no affinity between them, they are enemies, and one cannot abide the other. These can never look each other in the face, but by and by they turn their backs, 1. John 2, 15, *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* These two are as two contrary Masters, *no man therefore can serve them both*, for both require the whole service of a man, & both command contrary things, Mat. 6, 24. Secondly, the desire of these worldly things is a rank *thorn*, Luke 8, and *is the root of all evil*, 1. Tim. 6. The hearts of men are hardened by it, when once they are ensnared and taken in love with it. The world is a very harlot, it speaketh fair, & promiseth much good; it hath a painted face, but within it is nothing but filthiness, like sepulchers that appear beautiful without, but are nothing within, but full of rottenness and dead men's bones.

[Use 1,] This teacheth us that worldly things profit not: we think, when once we have gotten them, that we are happy men, when we are by them never the nearer to God, never the more beloved of God, never the nearer to his kingdom. Why then should we be slaves and servants to them, or suffer our selves to be carried by them from duties belonging to God & men? Hence it is that *Solomon* showeth, that riches are reserved to the hurt of the owners thereof, Eccl. 4, and 5. And many while they seek wholly after these things, they do lose peace with God, and heap up wrath against themselves, I am. 5.

[Use 2] Secondly, we see hereby *how hardly they enter into the kingdom of Heaven that have them*, Math. 19. Christ teacheth this out of the example of the rich man that went away sorrowful, when he heard mention of forsaking his riches. His riches was his joy and chief treasure, he had set his heart upon them, and therefore to leave them was as irksome to him as to leave his life. This man's case is not singular, neither may other men think themselves by nature to be better. The same corruption hath taken hold upon all: whosoever have the worlds good, have need of a special grace of GOD to assist them, that they be not blinded and hardened by the love of them.

[Use 3] Thirdly, let us not be immoderately careful for them, and let us have our conversation without covetousness. We brought nothing with us into the world, and we shall carry as little with us, 1. Tim. 6. Heb. 13. It is no profit to win the whole world and to lose our own souls, Math. 16.26: and therefore let us be contented with our estates wherein GOD hath set us. It is our duty to labor against this immoderate love of the world; not that the things in the world are of themselves evil, but because we are ready to abuse them. Now if any desire to have some helps to keep him from the excessive love of the world, and from putting his trusts in his riches, let him meditate upon these things. First, such is the wickedness of a man's heart, and the corruption of his nature, that he maketh his outward estate, if he have riches and a plentiful and prosperous condition, to be his glory, and the thing wherein he rejoiceth and triumpheth, Psal. 62, 10. Ier, 9, 23. Dan. 4, 27. Luke 12, 19. Psal. 36, 6, 7, Isaiah 39, 6. Psal. 49, 16, For how do men judge of themselves? They imagine that others will prize them, as they have learned to value themselves, and that they shall be honored and esteemed for these things: they think that all men will admire them for their wealth, and that men will account them so much more excellent then others, as they are

more rich and wealthy. And such is the misery of our times, that for the most part it is so indeed, they hold an opinion of every man, not according to his properties, but according to his possessions; not according to his virtues, but according to his goods. Howbeit in this, both sorts are deceived. For by this means it cometh to pass, that it is not the man that is honored, but his riches; for if they were gone, the honor would fall away also. We see by experience, that where there is much riches, there is much pride; nothing is more common then to have the heart lifted up in prosperity. They think riches are given unto them, because they deserve them better then others. It is hard to keep pride out of the heart, when God sendeth wealth into the house.

Secondly, the desire of riches is like the grave that is not satisfied. It is like the sea that receiveth all waters, and yet it is not full. So long as the rich man seeth another before him or beyond him, he cannot be quiet. If he have attained to be equal with one, he will strive to be like another, and so proceedeth till he come to the highest degree & measure of all. The more a man drinketh of the water of the sea, the more he thirsteth and desireth; so it is with riches, such as have tasted the sweetness of them, & delight greatly in y^e taste, they greatly provoke the appetite to long after more, and therefore no marvel if they use all means lawful and unlawful to come unto them. Thirdly, abundance of riches are hardly gotten without sin; for whether we obtain them by excessive gaining, or by excessive sparing, neither are done without sin. And how many are there in the world among those that are grown great & wealthy in the world, who, so often as they behold their riches, may justly challenge themselves, & say, These sins have I committed in the getting of my goods, and these duties have I omitted in the keeping of them? How then should we dote upon these things, which are unto us the badges and signs of our sins? and which are as witnesses ready to open their mouths against us, when no other either can or dare accuse us? Fourthly, riches are common blessings, to be found as well among the ungodly, as among the godly: yea oftentimes the ungodly have the greatest portion of thē. They have their heaven in this life, and they want nothing. So then if it were possible for a man to have the treasures of a kingdom, yet he must know that he hath gotten no more then a most wicked man may have, and is by them no nearer to the kingdom of Heaven then a reprobate may be. Fifthly, riches are ordinarily, without God's especial restraining and reforming hand, the occasions of much evil and wickedness, of oppression, of fraud, of cruelty and profaneness. Riches can never make a man good, but oftentimes make those naught that otherwise might be good; why then should we rejoyce in them, and be possessed with the love of them? If we respect the virtue that is in riches, or the power that is in man, it is not possible for a man to be rich and good together: nevertheless, to him, to whom all things are possible, it is possible to make a man good in the middes of his riches, without whose grace it cannot be. Sixthly, the vanity of the world appeareth in the uncertainty and mutability of riches; should we set our hearts upon that which taketh her wings and flieth up to Heaven? They arise in a moment, and suddenly they are gone, and never appear again. They are gotten with much care, they are kept with much fear, they are lost with much grief. Therefore it is the precept of the Apostle, *Trust not in uncertain riches*, 1. Tim. 6: we are not soon possessed of them, but we may soon be deprived of them. Lastly, we must give an account to God how we have used them as

well as how we have gotten them. Many in the world might be accounted happy men, if there were no day of reckoning. But we must depart from hence, and leave them, and they us, *our pomp will not follow us*, Psal. 49, 17. Let us therefore labor against the immoderate love of the things of this life, neither suffer any such corruption to be nourished in us.

[Use 4] Lastly, we must learn to prefer the best things, such as the Apostle speaketh of, when he showeth what danger hangeth over their heads that love nothing else but the goods of this world, he breaketh out into this exhortation, 1. Tim. 6.11. *Thou, O man of God, fly these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.* And that we may see the excellency of heavenly & spiritual graces above earthly things, let us in the properties of them compare the one with the other, that so the love of the world to come may swallow up all love of this present world. All the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them are vanity, Eccl. 2, 11: but *Solomon* opposeth to this the fear of God and his commandments. The riches of this life are oftentimes gotten with doing wrong and with oppression, Ier. 5, 27. Luke 16, 9, 11: it is not so with piety and godliness which is the true riches and gain, 1. Tim. 4. Riches are kept with grief and anguish, he cannot rest & sleep that is vowed with them as with a frenzy, Eccl. 5, 12: but godliness is the mother of all peace and comfort, and maketh the sleep to be sweet, and bringeth no fear, or grief, or care with it, Prov. 3, 24. Riches are corruptible, the moth may corrupt them, and the thief may steal them, Math. 5, 19. I am. 5, 2, 3: but heavenly graces can never fade, they shall endure forever, they shall follow us after we are gone, they can never be lost when once they are gotten. Earthly riches make the owners as slaves, they nail the mind of man to the earth, that he cannot lift up his eyes to Heaven, Math. 6, 21: but piety beareth us up as it were with Eagles wings, that we learn by little and little to mount up to Heaven, and to have our conversation there, even while we sojourne upon the earth. Riches can deliver no soul from eternal death, nay sometimes they are means to thrust the same into hell, Prov. 10, 2, and 11, 4: but godliness freeth a man from everlasting death, and setteth him in the path that leadeth to life. We are forbidden to heap up transitory riches, Math. 6, 19. and 10.9, 10. Ptou. 23.4: and if we have them, it is only in this life, they serve no further, and afterward there is no need or use of them, 1. Tim. 6, 7. Job 1, 21. Psal. 49.11: but godliness serveth for the next life, and we are commanded to treasure it up, and the more we labor to increase it, the happier we are. Riches are often taken from the right owners, and come into the hands of our enemies, not only after we are departed this life, but even whiles we live, as we see by many examples of sundry cities and provinces, 1. King. 14, 25, 26 and 2. King. 24, 15. Ezek. 29, 19. 2. Kings 23, 35. Heb. 10, 34: but piety shall never be taken away, nor be bestowed upon our enemies, but layeth up for us an enduring substance in heaven, and it maketh the greatest enemies to be the greatest friends; *it maketh the wolf & the lamb dwell together, and the leopard to dwell with the kid, and the sucking child to play upon the hole of the asp*, Isaiah 11, 6.7, 8. Many of the godly have been without the earthly riches, Christ our Lord did not desire them, 2 Cor. 8, 9. Math. 8.20: nor his servants covet after them, Heb. 11, 26, 37, 2 Cor. 6, 4. Act. 3. But none of the godly have been without the heavenly riches, all have desired them, all have obtained them, some in one measure and some in another: and herein they have accounted their happiness and blessedness to consist,

6 And Moses said unto the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here?

7 And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land, which the Lord hath given them?

8 Thus did your fathers when I sent them from Kadesh-Barnea to see the land.

9 For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the the Lord had given them.

10 And the Lord's anger was kindled, &c.

11 Surely none of the men that came out of Egypt from twenty year old and upward shall see the land, &c.

14 Behold ye are risen up in your fathers stead an increase of sinful men, &c.

15 But if ye turn away, &c.

Here beginneth the second part of the Chapter, to wit, the conditions of agreement, how the matter was decided & ended: wherein observe the debating and pleading of the matter, then the determining of the controversy. Touching the demure or debating; first *Moses* sharply reproveth and rejecteth the request of these tribes, and showeth the unfitness and unlawfulness thereof, which he proveth both by the dangerous effect that would follow, the discouragement of the rest of the people, and by example of the like practice of the false-hearted spies, who, after they returned from searching of the land, spread abroad false news, whereby the hearts of the Israelites were weakened, & God was so greatly provoked, that he pronounced the sentence of death against all above twenty years old, *Caleb* and *Joshua* excepted; This history we saw before Chapter 13, 24. This doth *Moses* press and urge to the full, and showeth what heavy judgment came upon the host for discouraging of the people, whereby we see, that nothing is more forcible to repress and hold from sin, then urging the examples of God fearful judgments in former times against those that have committed the like sins, 1. Cor. 10.7, and Jude verse 6, 7. 2. Pet. 2.4, 5, 6. Nehem. 13.17, 18. Josh. 22, 17: for examples are oftentimes more powerful and piercing then precepts or threatenings are, and therefore *Moses* is so earnest in this kind. Again, whatsoever was written afore time was written for our instruction. This reproveth those that will take no warning by any examples, but are secure till the judgment begin to take hold upon them: like to those careless people, that when a city is on fire never look to their own house, till it take hold upon it, and be ready to burn it down to the ground. Everyone would condemn such reckless persons; but such are all those that see the judgments of GOD break out upon

others, and yet will not look to themselves. Furthermore, we must all take notice of such examples, & no man ought to be ignorant of them, 1. Cor. 10, 1, neither suffer them to pass away from them without observation. But to omit this, we see in the behavior of *Moses* what ought to be the practice of the Ministers of God. He was a great Prophet of God, and he reproveth the people (to prevent further evil) very sharply. Hence we see, that the Ministers of God, that have the office of teaching committed unto them, must not reprove faintly, coldly and carelessly; but sharply, earnestly, zealously, fervently, and powerfully, *Isaiah* 40, 3: they must be *as the voice of a crier*, not of a whisperer, *Hos.* 4, 1, 2. Thus did all the Prophets teach, and so did the Apostles, *Ier.* 2, 2. *John.* 7, 20, 37.

The grounds of this are very apparent. [Reason 1] First, because we often deal with those that are dull of hearing; men commonly are deaf, and so unfit to hear those things that belong to their peace, therefore doth the Lord require of his Ministers that they *cry aloud, and lift up their voice like a trumpet*, *Isaiah* 42, 18: & Christ our Savior, when he was preaching, oftentimes *crieth out, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*. Secondly, many are fast asleep, & had need to be awaked. He that will speak to a man that is fallen asleep, had need to cry aloud, as *Elijah* telleth the Priests of *Baal*, 1, *Kings* 18, 27. So the Ministers must deal with such as sleep in sin and security, nay, they are cast into a dead sleep, that they can never be raised but by the powerful voice of God speaking in his word, *Ephes.* 5, 14. *John.* 5, 25. Thirdly, the hearts of men are forestalled and possessed with the pleasures and delights of the world, and so they speak to men occupied about other matters, and such as have no leisure to attend to the word, nor anything but the world. If a man have a quick ear, and be broad awake, yet if he be talking or not attentive, or muse upon other matters, he cannot hear, he must be called and cried unto, and all little enough to stir him up. Such as were busy about the world, when they were called, *set light by the word*, *Math.* 22, 5: they regarded not the messengers sent unto them. Fourthly, the Minister is God's mouth and Messenger, as the Magistrate is God's hand: the mouth denounceth his anger, the hand executeth his judgment and vengeance. The Minister is his mouth to accuse, convince and threaten: the Magistrate is his hand to punish, for which end he hath committed a sword unto him, 2. Cor. 10.4.5.6. 1 Cor. 4.20.21. Fifthly, such as are in danger of their lives, or see other in danger, do not speak coldly, but earnestly call for help, with all the strength they have. So dealt the Angel with *Lot*, when he lingered in *Sodom*, *Gen.* 19, 15.16, he had a commandment given unto him to *arise and to take his wife and his daughters*, and a threatening annexed, *lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city*; and then he caught hold upon him, and took him and his wife & his daughters by their hands, *and brought them forth, and set them out of the city*. Now the people of God are in like danger through sin, how then should the Minister deliver his own soul, or save the people, if he perform his message coldly and not earnestly as if he would *pull them out of the fire lest they be burned?* *Jude* verse 22, 23: or out of the waters lest they be drowned.

[Use 1] We learn from hence, the great backwardness and untowardness of men to every good work. For what need this sharp reproof & zeal in the Minister, if they were ready to hear, and pliable to be taught? But we are so dull and deaf of hearing, so fast asleep in sin, and so forestalled with the world, that we hear no more then dead men. A man would think,

that when we are called to life and salvation, nay before we are called, we should run of our own accord; so soon as it is said to us, *Arise, the Master calleth*, who should sit still? ought not everyone to cast away all impediments, and to make haste unto him? and yet we see how backward the most part are in the best things. The things that we affect and desire and delight in, half a word will serve to persuade; whereas on the contrary, there must be no small ado to make us apprehend heavenly things, we are so dull and dead to conceive them. One observeth well, that most men are like unto hounds w^c have long ears, that hinder them from looking upward, and yet they are sharp sented for the earth: so is it with earthly-minded men, they are sharp sented touching earthly things, but they are slow to hear and understand heavenly things, Deuter. 29, 2. *Moses complaineth of the Israelites*, that albeit they had heard and seen, yet they knew and discerned nothing. This people (though dead long ago) seem to be revived and risen again: for this is true of this age, (if ever of any) that when we should be awakened by the preaching of the Gospel, we are made the more obstinate and have our ears stopped either with the pleasures or the profits of the world, that we cannot hear the voice of the charmer charm he never so wisely. These are spiritually possessed by Satan's policy, like him in the Gospel that was made *both deaf and dumb*, Mat 9. Man is said to stop his ears, so is Satan, and so is God also; all work and concur in this. Man stoppeth his ears first through his own corruption: the devil stoppeth man's ears by his allurements and temptations; God stoppeth them by his just judgment. Man stoppeth them as a sinner: the devil as a tempter: and God as a Judge. Whosoever would not have God give him over either to his own corruptions or to Satan's temptations, must take especial heed of the stopping of his own ears. For the true cause why the devil stoppeth, and the cause why God stoppeth, is nothing else but a man's own stopping of his ears which goeth before. Let every man therefore take notice of his own natural deadness, and seek to him unfeignedly that only can open the ear, who openeth & no man shutteth, who shutteth and no man openeth. Let us labor to hear God speaking unto us in his word, and so shall God hear us when we cry unto him, and we shall receive every good thing needful for us, and have them sanctified unto us for our benefit in this life, and for our comfort and salvation in the life to come.

Secondly, this teacheth the Ministers (for [Use 2] I must come to them, lest I may seem to pull on eyes when I go abroad, and to be blind at home) to put on zeal and fervency in delivering the word of God to the people, as the Prophets were commanded. There are many that regard not how it be delivered, so it be delivered; they care not how the hour be spent, so it be spent, and respect not what they say, so they have said somewhat: which is as fond a thing, as if he that buildeth an house should never regard with what stuff he buildeth, or he that soweth, whether he sow in the highway, among the rocks and thorns, or in his field. Many there are that go up into the pulpit that never spend themselves, nor waste their spirits, nor decay their strength, they are rather like those that are half asleep, or stand up to tell a tale, or to utter a dream. Whosoever is ignorant of the state of his people, that never considereth he speaketh to a deaf people that cannot hear, but is careless in his place, endangereth his own soul and the soul of the people committed to his charge. He then that would teach aright, must put on zeal and be earnest in the Lord's cause, that so he may work

upon their hearts, and leave stings in their consciences, as Acts 2.37, while *Peter* preached, *they were pricked in their hearts, and said, Men and brethren, what shall we do?* We say commonly, that cold coals heat nobody. It must therefore first come from his own heart, there must be heat there, or else there shall never come any heat to others. We see by experience, that cold iron and hot can never be mixed together: but before they can be tempered, they must both of them be well heated in the fire; so except the heart of the Minister and of the people be heated, he shall never fasten anything upon them, or work any good in them. It is true, it is the work of the Lord to heat the soul, as it is he that warmeth the body: this he doth by instruments the fire and the Sun, so he doth the soul and conscience by his Ministers and by his word. All parents are charged to *whet the Law upon their children*, Deut, 6, 7: if parents must do this to their children, then much more ought the Ministers of God to be earnest in this duty. If any ask wherein this earnestness and fervency consisteth, I answer, not barely in crying out with a loud voice, as many suppose. For many men have no voice to speak loud, and there are many that speak loud, who have little heat or zeal in them. Some will be as earnest in alleging a bare testimony of Scripture, as others can be in making application. These do it more out of use or custom, then from any feeling or touch of conscience in themselves. Seeing then the earnestness that we require may be without the loudness of voice, and the loudness of the voice may be without earnestness, we must find it elsewhere, to wit, in the power of the Spirit that speaketh in him. It is not the earnestness of the voice that is so much required, albeit it falleth out many times where the heart is truly affected, that there the voice will be extended to the uttermost: and yet even in a weak voice proceeding from a weak body, a Minister may truly show the zeal of his heart, as well, as if the word were delivered with a loud and powerful voice; and *God requireth no more then a man hath*, 2 Cor. 8, 12. The Apostle saith, that *his bodily presence was weak among the Corinthians, and his speech held as contemptible*, 2 Cor. 10, 10: whereby it seemeth he was not one of the sons of thunder that had a great voice; nevertheless we find that the power and efficacy of the Spirit did both appear and abound in him. So then the Ministers of God must be zealous and fervent in their places, that so they may the better discharge their consciences, and also bring the more profit to those that are committed unto them.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it condemneth those that censure the Ministers of God for their earnestness and zeal in delivering the word of God. Such persons as are ready to commend a servant that is earnest in doing his Masters will with a good affection, will condemn the Minister of God when he delivereth the word with such earnestness. These spare not to say to him as *Paul* did to *Festus*, Act. 26, 24, that they preach as if they were mad or beside themselves. But if the answer of *Paul* will not serve and suffice these men, who replied to that accusation, *I am not mad most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness*, Acts 26, 24.25: let them take the words of the Prophet *Hoseah*, chap. 9, 7: *the spiritual man is mad for the multitude of thine iniquity*. The abundance of iniquity, and the obstinacy of wicked men running on in their sin (as a violent flood that runneth over the banks) were able to make the Minister mad with crying to them to leave their sins, and to forsake their evil ways, when they are so set upon them, that say the Minister what he can, and let him cry out as loud as he list, they will not abate one hair or a pin of their pride, or remit one hour of their profaning the Sabbath,

or drink one draught, nay not one drop the less, or the covetous person give one penny or half penny the more to relieve the needy members of Christ, I say the consideration of this were able to make the Minister even mad in delivering of his message which God hath put into his mouth. If a father should be beside himself for the wickedness of his graceless children; would not every man pity the father, and spit in the faces of those children, and hold them worthy of all punishment? but what would they say to such children, as should go up and down, and boast themselves that they were the causes of their fathers madness? Are there not some graceles hearers (O that there were not too many) that when they have made their Minister as it were mad with reproving them, that will insult over them, and glory among their companions, that they have made their Minister preach as if he were mad: howbeit, if it be for the glory of God, and the benefit of his people, they need not care, nor esteem to be judged of men, or account it any disgrace from the mouths of graceless people to be accounted mad; we must walk through good report and evil report, it skilleth not therefore though we be reputed mad, so it be for a good cause, for the beating down of profaning the Sabbath, of contempt of the word, of oppression, pride, covetousness, and such like enormities. There was not a man more meek upon the earth then *Moses*; yet when he came from the mount, and saw that the people had sinned, he presently grew so angry, that having the two Tables of the Law in his hand written by the finger of God, he threw them down to the ground and brake them in pieces. The people of this generation account their Ministers for a lesser matter then this to be mad and out of their wits: but while they cry out aloud that their contempt of God & his holy word is damnable, that the open profanation of the Lord's day is damnable, that the horrible pride whereof our whole nation is sick, is damnable, that drunkenness that aboundeth & over-spreadeth everywhere is damnable; if this be madness, we confess we are mad, and God make us yet more and more mad to lay open these abominations. But indeed and in truth (if we will judge aright) it is quite contrary, for they are the maddemen, and the Minister is sober. *Paul* was charged to be mad; but who was mad, *Paul* or *Festus*? The mad man laugheth, and the Physician bewaileth him; even so it is between the Minister and the people, they scoff at him, while he mourneth for them & for the hardness of their harts, knowing them to be beside themselves, forasmuch as they will not refrain from those things which they reprove. Alas, what do these men herein, but like foolish patients, who pull off the plasters which the Surgeon hath laid upon their wounds, and in the mean time lie rotting and festering in their corruptions? If these men continue thus resolute & obstinate in their evil ways, the time shall one day come, (O that it be not at hand, O that it be not too late) when they shall confess that the Ministers of the Lord were sober, and that themselves were the mad men, when they shall feel themselves for their iniquities thrust down to the place of the damned, and see the Ministers that reprov'd them among y^e Saints of God in great glory.

[Use 4] Lastly, learn from hence the great desire that God hath of the good and salvation of his people, who thus carefully sendeth his Ministers to call so earnestly and effectually for the conversion and repentance of sinners. The Lord doth not appoint them for a form and fashion, but to deal with power & zeal, *if by all means they may save some*, 1, Cor. 9. Isaiah 55, 1: would the Lord make so much ado, if he were not desirous that *the sinner should repent him of*

his evil ways, that so he might blot all his wickedness out of his remembrance? Ezek. 18. A man would be accounted very desirous to sell his wares and utter his commodities, who not only hath a broker to vent them for him, but maketh open proclamation at the cross or in the market place, that he hath such and such wares to be bought: and yet all this while he respecteth his own private good and gain only. But when a man will proclaim and say, Ho, come and buy without money or without money worth, doubtless this argueth a man's great love and desire of the good of his brother. The Ministers, they stand upon their watch-tower, and cry from the house tops, *Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat, ye come buy wine and milk without money, and without price,* Isaiah 55, 1. He requireth no more but this, to lay down their vices, and to take up his graces. The Physician sometimes giveth strong purgations, but the end of them is the curing of the disease, and the recovering of the diseased. So is it with God, when he armeth his Ministers with the two edged sword of his word, & giveth them courage and boldness to open their mouths against all iniquity. It is therefore a token of a desperate heart, and a sign of one cast into a reprobate sense, when the threatenings of God's judgments drive not to repentance. Such as hate to be reformed, there is more hope of a fool then of them.

Wherefore discourage ye the hearts of the childron of Israel from going over into the land which the Lord hath given them? This is one reason of the reproof, and why he dealeth so sharply with them; they did weaken the hands, yea the hearts of their brethren, whom they ought to have strengthened and encouraged. This teacheth us, that it is a grievous sin to give offense to others, or to do anything whereby our brethren may be discouraged from walking in God's ways, or encouraged to y^e breach of any of his Commandments. Hereunto come sundry examples set down in the Scriptures. While the Israelites wandered in the wilderness, and were going toward the land of Canaan, they had many means offered to pull them back, as we have seen before, some of them would have made them an Electo or Captain, and so return back again into Egypt, Chapt. 14, 4: the spies that were sent to search the land *discouraged the hearts of their brethren, saying, The people is greater and taller then we, the cities are great, and walled up to heaven, and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there,* Deuter. 1, 28. Numb. 13, 28. Thus it was with the people of GOD when they were returned from captivity, and began to build the altar and the Temple to the Lord God of Israel: for *the adversaries of Judah and Biniamin sought to weaken their hands, and to trouble them in building,* Ezra 4, 4. Neither was it any better afterward, when *Nehemiah* came up to build the walls of Jerusalem, and to revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish: for *Sanballat, Tobiah,* and the rest of that rank scoff at them, and say, *Even that which they build, if a fox come up, he shall even break down their stone wall,* Nehem. 4, 3. The Lord likewise chargeth his people, that if there did arise among them a Prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, that should go about to seduce them and draw them away to serve other gods, *they should not believe the signs, nor hearken to the words of that Prophet,* but cleave fast unto God, obeying his voice, and keeping his Commandments, Deuter. 13, 1.3.4. The grounds hereof.

First, such as offend by giving offense to [Reason 1] others, and withdraw them from their holy obedience to God, are guilty of a grievous sin, yea are partakers of their sins whom they have terrified and discouraged from obeying the Lord. For whomsoever we have hindered

from good things, we are guilty of their sins, and their blood shall be required at our hands. The sin of the Israelites *committing fornication with the daughters of Moab*, was the sin of Balaam also, because *through his counsel they committed that trespass against the Lord*, Num 25, 1, and 31, 16, Secondly, such are the seed of that wicked one, the children of the devil; they are his instruments, and set on work by him that was *a murderer from the beginning*, John. 8, 44. He tempted our first parents in the garden, & discouraged them from hearkening to the voice of GOD; so are all those tempters that any way hinder y^e course of their brethren walking in the ways of God, and are stamped in the image of the first tempter, and are made like unto him. And therefore when *Peter* dissuaded Christ from the work of man's redemption; (for when Christ began to show to his disciples, that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the Elders and chief Priests and Scribes, & be killed and be raised again the third day; he took him aside, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee;) the Lord Jesus turned about and said unto him, *Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offense unto me; for thou sauest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men*, Mat. 16, 23: where by we are taught, that such as are an offense to others, are no better then the instruments of Satan, & therefore justly bear his name.

[Use 1] The uses follow. First, this setteth down the unlawful condition of such as hinder others in the profession, and labor to make them fall from God. Thus did the devils as we heard before, they threw down our first parents from the height of their happiness, & therefore are reserved in chains unto judgment, 2 Pet. 2, 4. In the Law he is accursed that layeth a stumbling block before the blind to cause him to wander out of the way, and all the people shall say, Amen, Deut. 27, 18: he therefore that seeketh to subvert and supplant the faith of men, and to destroy the soul, must needs be under a far greater curse of God and man. The souls of such as perish through their procuring shall cry out against them, and bring down an heavy judgment upon them. Hence it is that Christ our Savior saith, *Who so shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea; woe unto the world because of offenses, it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom offenses come*, Math. 18 6, 7: we see therefore the wretched estate and condition of all those that give offense to others. They are guilty of horrible sins against God and against their brethren; O that they had eyes to see them, and hearts to bewail them. Every man is prone through the corruption of his nature to fall from God, but much more when occasions are laid before them for two are stronger then one: and if we have always one foot ready to slip, we are in more danger of falling when we are pushed forward. Let all such consider as have caused others to fall, that the time will come when it will be required at their hands. These do hunt for the precious life of a man, they are soul-hunters and soul-killers and destroyers, and murder those for whom Christ died. These are the chief causes of the coldness and backwardness of Religion, and that so few profess it in sincerity. Our Savior pronounceth an heavy woe against them that neither entered into the kingdom themselves, neither suffered others to enter, *but hindered them*, Luke 11, 52. This woe lieth upon the shoulders of all those that stop the way of others, that they cannot enter into it.

[Use 2] Secondly, think it not strange when we have this measure offered unto us, and when men whisper us in the ear to take heed we be not too forward or precise, and that thereby we shall lay our selves open to the reproaches of the world; if sinners thus entice us, hearken not unto them. It hath been an old practice to discourage and discountenance others from obeying God. It is bitter to hear and bear the railings and revilings of carnal men, and many start aside from the truth by such taunts. And if these reproaches proceeded only from open enemies, they might be borne more easily: but it pleaseth God many times to try the faith and to prove the patience of his faithful servants farther, and they receive much discouragemēt from their acquaintance, & from their friends, with whom they took sweet counsel together, and walked with them into the house of God. *Job* received much disgrace by his own wife that lay in his bosom, as also by his three friends that were as his own soul, and came to visit and to comfort him; but *miserable comforters were they all*, as himself complaineth chapt. 16, 2, and chapt. 19, 2, 3, *How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words? these ten times have ye reproached me, &c.* Was not this, think you, a great temptation and assault to the faith of this righteous man to be thus taunted and tormented by his dear friends, and by his dearest wife? was he not flesh and blood as well as others, to have an inward feeling of these sorrows, & to drink up the very lees of this bitter cup? was he as brass and iron, or had he a body of steel that these afflictions could not pierce him or enter into him? No doubtless, for then his patience could not be commended unto us, and set before us for an example, I am. 5, 11. If then it go so with us, we have the Prophets and holy men of God for an example of suffering affliction that have gone before us. The Church complaineth in *Solomon's Song*, that *the watchmen, that went about the city, found her, they smote her, the keepers of the walls took away her veil from her*, Cant. 5.7. They that should be her guard, turned to be her grief: and they that watched for her, wounded her.

The people that profess the truth in sincerity look to have all encouragement from their Ministers in well-doing: yet oftentimes it falleth out (as with the Church before) that such work them all the disgrace they can, and seek to put them to shame that should be *their glory*, Phil. 4, 1, and vex them with the cross that ought o the their crown, and discomfort them that indeed might be their joy and their comfort. *Paul* complaineth oftentimes of the Jews and of false brethren, by whom he received greater hurt, then ever he did at the hands of the Gentiles, Tit. 1, 10, 11. 2 Cor. 11, 26. Sometimes children have hard measure offered unto them by their fathers and mothers, whose rejoicing it should be to see their children prosper in good things, yet oftentimes it falleth out, they are scoffed at by them: and this falleth out not only in the bloody days of persecution when parents have betrayed their own children the fruit of their bodies into the hands of cruel persecutors, but likewise in the times of peace and prosperity and the general and public profession of the Gospel, when we seem all to embrace one faith and one Religion; yet if their sons and daughters be zealous in the truth, they mock & taunt them for their precisenes, and grieve the bowels of those that are and should be their own bowels, not only by nature, but in love and affection. And therefore Christ teacheth such children, Math. 10, 34, 35, 36. *I came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword, and to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter. &c. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household: he that loveth father or mother more then me, is not worthy of*

me, and he that loveth son or daughter more thē me, is not worthy of me. If then it fall out with us at any time as it hath come to pass to the Saints of God before us, that we are sought to be drawn from our faith and obedience by friend or enemy, by wife or children, by father or mother; we must not think the trial strange, but rather rejoyce and be glad that we are made like unto the Prophets and holy men of God, nay like to our head JESUS CHRIST.

[Use 3] Thirdly, this should teach us to be bold to reprove such as stand in the way, and suffer not the people of God to go forward in good things. Every man will cry out against those varlets that stand with long Poles on their necks, or long Blades by their sides, and hinder passengers in their journey, and rob them of their money and treasure that they have about them. But these men y^t lie in wait to hinder the passage of God's people in their pilgrimage toward the holy Land, I mean the heavenly Canaan, are worse then the former, for they seek to take from them the treasure which they have laid up in heaven. When the Disciples of Christ saw those that brought young children •o him that he might touch them, they reprov'd and rebuked those that brought them; *But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeas'd and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God,* Mar. 10, 13, 14. The Disciples reprov'd the people, but he reprov'd the reprov'ers: he would not wink at them that discourag'd those that performed a good duty toward their childrē, but encourag'd the people in their well-doing. When the multitude rebuked the two blind men sitting by the high way and crying unto Jesus to have their sight restored, because they should hold their peace, they cried out the more earnestly, *Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David,* Math. 20, 31. The like we see in *Paul*, when the Disciples besought him not to go up to Jerusalem, he answer'd, *What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus,* Act. 21, 13. Whensoever therefore we meet with such impediments & hindrances that would stay us from glorifying the Name of God, and performing good duties to him, let us labor to remove them, let us leap over these stumbling blocks, and break through these hedges though they be fenced with thorns. *S. Jerome* hath an excellent saying to this purpose, he counseld *Heliodorus* to go on in the course of piety, & follow after Christ, whatso-soever discouragements he found, & frō whomsoever, though his father stood weeping before him, and his mother hanging on his neck behind him, and all his brethren, sisters, children and kinsfolkes howling on every side to retain him in a sinful trade of life with them, and to keep him from the kingdom of God; he should tread them under his feet, that he might run to Christ when he calleth him. His words are these, *Licet paruulus ex collo pendeat nepos, licet sparso crine, &c.* that is, *Though thy Nephew hang about thy neck, though thy mother with her hair hanging down and her garments rent, show thee her breasts that gave thee suck, and though thy father should cast himself down upon the threshold to stop thy passage, yet go thou forward, trample upon thy father, and with dry eyes follow after Christ. This is the only kind of piety to be cruel in this matter.* Christ Jesus in this case willeth us to hate father and mother, brethren and sisters; so that we should fling them to the ground, and run over them also, rather then they should hinder us from being the Disciples of Christ and from following him.

Fourthly, it is the duty of all men to take [Use 4] heed we walk without offense our selves, & then we shall be sure to give no offense to others. The Apostle chargeth us to *walk wisely*

toward them that are without, Col. 4, 5. For if they should see daily offenses before them, it would be a means to keep them to be without still, that are without. 1 Thess. 4, 12, he moveth the Thessalonians to behave themselves *honestly toward thē that are without*. And to the Corinthians he saith, *Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Grecians, nor to the Church of God*, 1 Cor. 10, 32. So then we ought to be so far from discouraging any, that we should encourage everyone to the faith, gain those that are without, strengthen those that are within, comfort thē that are feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men, and labor to turn many unto righteousness. The Apostle saith, Rom. 14, 1. *Him that is weak in the faith receive you, but not to doubtful disputations*; and verse 13. *Let no man judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall in his brothers way*. Let us all that call upon the Name of Christ, and are called by his Name, walk circumspectly, and give no just occasion of sinning to any either word or deed, either to drive them by our evil example from God wholly, or to cause them to go on less cheerfully. *Jeroboam* is often described by this note, *He made Israel to sin*; and God hath set this mark upon him to know him wheresoever we find him, as he set a mark upon *Cain*. The Apostle speaking of such as become stumbling blocks to thē that are weak, saith, that *they sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, and sin against Christ*, 1 Cor. 8, 12. Such as break one of these least commandments and teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven, Mat. 5, 19. This is the means to edify men in iniquity, & to open a gap to all licentiousness.

[Use 5] Lastly, to remove these discouragements & hindrances that we be not entrapped by thē, we must all labor after spiritual courage, & to tread upon all injuries and reproaches y^t sinners cast out against us. Let us, when we hear their railings, stop our ears, & gather our spirits about us, & take courage to our selves. He that hath attained to a Christian resolution to go forward in y^e duties of godliness hath gottē the victory. The difficulty of this lieth more in our faintnes & fearefulnes, then in the thing it self. Our own slothfulness & negligence make all things hard, that otherwise are easy; we must go to God, and pray to him to increase our faith, Luke 17: *This is our victory which overcometh the world, even our faith*, 1 John. 5, 4. This overcometh all temptations, and all offenses whatsoever in the world, & without it, it is not possible to be kept & preserved in the way of truth. What held *Nicodemus* among the Pharisees, but only the fear of men? he could not resolve to follow Christ, John. 3, 1: & 12, 42, 43 And the reproaches of the Pharisees cast out against him, whē he defended y^e cause of Christ, put him to silence, & made him give over, until at length he shake off all impediments, and betake himself to follow him. A good example for us to follow: If we faint for reproaches, our strength is little, our faith is weak. The words of enemies cannot hurt us, except we through weakness and faintness hurt our selves. For if we neglect and reject them, they return upon him that cast them.

Behold ye are risen up in your fathers stead, an increase of sinful men, &c. Moses putteth these two tribes & the half in mind of the former provocations of their fathers, which had caused many judgments to break in upon them, & these were risen up in their stead, walking in their steps, so y^t it fell out according to the Proverb: like father, like sons. We learn hereby, by this sharp charge, that it is an usual thing with God to punish the sins of the parents with y^e sins

of their children. The parents sin, & the children are oftentimes given over to follow them & to commit the same sins, or such like notorious sins, whereby he taketh vengeance of their sins, Gen. 21, 9, 10, & 9, 24 27, 1 King. 11, 11, Hos. 4, 13. This is evident in the Kings of Israel; of whom we may truly say, that y^e fathers sinned, & the children rose up, an increase of sinful men, they were a wicked seed, and augmented the fierce anger of the Lord, until he removed Israel utterly out of his sight. So he threateneth oftentimes to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third & 4. generatiō of them y^t hate him, Ex. 20

[Reason 1] And God doth deal thus for sundry causes. First, God respecteth the good of such parents as belong unto him; for he doth it to humble them, & to bring them upon their knees to repent for their sins w^c happily they had forgotten long ago. It is a far greater grief to Christian parents to see them lie under this spiritual judgment, then afflictiō whatsoever. Secondly, such parents as are wicked & belōg not unto him, are hereby hardened, & grieved and vexed. He doth it in part to pardon them, because when evil parents see their children commit any sins against the 1 table, w^c are committed immediately against God. as to delight in swearing and blaspheming, in contempt of the word, neglect of his worship, and in profaning of the Sabbath; they are not touched or troubled at it, because they think it no judgment, & their sons to have committed no sins at all, & so it cometh to pass y^t they are the more hardened: again, if they see their children commit any sin against the second Table, as murder, theft, or the like, whereby they undergo the punishment of the Magistrate, they are grieved and vexed for it, not because they have sinned against God, & provoked him to anger, but because their childrē & posterity are brought to shame and reproach before the world.

This serveth first of all to teach us that the [Use 1] ways of God are just & equal, against those that are ready to accuse him of injustice. God is a most just and righteous God, he dealeth with everyone according to his deserts. And he oftentimes punisheth sin with sin. For he doth not only punish sin with the sword of the enemy, with sicknesses & diseases, with famine and mortality, and such like which all do acknowledge and confess to be punishments, but he punisheth former sins with later sins. Thus he punished the Idolatrous Gentiles, when they knew God, and glorified him not as God, but worshipped & served y^e creature instead of the Creator, by giving them up to their own vile affections and to a reprobate sense, to work uncleanness even with greediness, Rom. 1. And in these last times of the world, because men will not love and embrace the truth, *He sendeth among them strong delusions that they should believe lies*, 2 Thess. 2, [Object.] 12. But how doth God punish sin with sin, may some say? Doth he tempt unto evil? or doth he infuse any evil into them? Doth he allure and provoke men to sin? I answer [Answer.] with the Apostle, *God tempteth no man to sin*, I am. 1, 13: but he punisheth this way secretly, by withdrawing his grace, and giving them over to be entangled in their own corruptions. Thus God punished *Pharaoh by hardness of heart*, not by making that to be hard which was soft and pliable before, but by denying the oil of his grace whereby it should have been mollified. Thus also he tempted *David to number the people, because his wrath was kindled against Israel for their sins*. This is the most grievous punishment that can be inflicted in this life, howsoever many men never regard it: for other punishments through y^e blessing of God, and a sanctified use of them, are usual means to

bring us to true repentance: but when we are smitten with this adding of sin to sin, and are stricken with this plague sore we do more and more fly from him. Other punishments are as sharp eye-salves to make us see our own misery, that we may be moved to sue and seek for his mercy: but this judgment doth us no good at all, nay it blindeth our minds, it hardeneth our hearts, it scareth our consciences, it increaseth our sins, and doubleth our condemnation. Thus doth God show himself a just Judge.

[Use 2] Secondly, it directeth parents what they ought to do in the sins of their Children; w^c may be reduced to these four heads. First, they must search to find out the cause of it: secondly, they must be humbled and sorrow for it: thirdly, they must labor to reclaim them: and lastly, they must abstain from sinning themselves, lest by their example they corrupt and infect them. Touching the first, it belongeth unto all parents in the sins of their children which they commit, to search & enquire diligently, whether this punishment fallen upon their children be not the punishment of some particular sin of their own formerly committed? and doubtless in searching, they shall not lose their labor, but oftentimes find that some fearful sin of theirs before committed, is the cause of those notorious sins that they see and behold in their children. For example: we see some Ministers and men of other callings, have their children fall to idolatry and superstition, and are gone after Antichrist, and fled into Babylon, the mother of whoredoms; this is no other then a just recompense of their fathers contempt, y^t were neuters and lukewarm professors, neither hot nor cold, that never had the power of religion & godliness planted in them, no more then for the time to serve their turns, or to perform their places for fashion sake to which they were called. Many men's children are given to extreme riot, wasting their own substance that they have, and afterward their fathers living also that they have given them, & that oftentimes justly, to let their parents see, how God bloweth upon goods gotten by unlawful courses, so that being wickedly gathered, they are wastfully consumed. Again many children are exceeding obstinate and stubborn against their parents, neither will they be ruled and ordered by any doctrine or discipline: & this is oftentimes a due recompense of their parents cockering & indulgence, whē they let them have the rains cast in their own neck: when it had not been amiss to have given them the rod 7. years after. So it was with *Eli*, 1 Sa. 2. so it was *David*: they did not keep their children in awe, and therefore it came to pass that they knew neither God nor their parents, nor themselves. Many men's sons and daughters make many unlawful vows and sinful promises of marriage against their Parents consent: this is often a just recompense of those parents that had no care to provide for their children, nor to restrain them, but gave them liberty to walk & talk with others at their own pleasures, and that at unseasonable times; and so entangle themselves in such manner. Many men's children are given over to drunkenness, to excess & riot, loving the cups and the wine bottles: a just recompense upon their parents that delighted in the same sin before them, and therefore God even in their own sight & before their eyes, taketh vengeance of their former sin, by suffering their children after them to fall into the same sin. Many men have not that respect & honor given to them of their childrē that they ought to have; a just recompense unto them for dishonoring and disobeying their, own parents. Manie children do not so tender & regard the good name and credit of their parents as they ought when they hear them evil

spoken of, nay they have been heard and known to curse their own parents, even to their death: a just recompense upon such parents that have heard the name of God rent & torn by horrible oaths, yea, by their own families, & yet would never reprove them, nor labor to reclaim them from it. So then, this is the first duty that is required of all parents, that they make speedy enquiry and search, whether God hath not justly taken vengeance of their former sins by this kind of punishment, that so they may be brought to repentance for them. The second duty required of parents, when they see the sins of their children in the vengeance of God against their own former sins, is to show their sorrow for their sins, and to be humbled for them, not so much because they are the sins of their children (and yet it becometh every father to mourn and lament for the sins of his children) but much more because they are their own, when they shall apprehend that God doth thereby take hold of some special sin of their own before committed. All parents are apt enough by nature to grieve and mourn for the temporal plagues that God layeth upon their children, and indeed if they should not do so we would account them unnatural parents, & very monsters: and yet how many of them do incur the everlasting displeasure of God, in that they cannot bewail the spiritual plagues of sin that are in their children, especially when they know them to be the just vengeance of God's judgments upon their own sins formerly committed? Let every man labor for this measure of humiliation, otherwise it is a certain sign that we did never truly mourn for our own sins. The third duty required of parents, is, that when they have made enquiry, & found that God punisheth their sins with the sins of their children in the first place, & when they have truly sorrowed and lamented for it in the second place, then in the third place, they must seek to recall and reclaim their children from such sins as God hath given them over to commit, as a just vengeance for their own proper sins formerly committed. If any parents should apprehend that any bodily sickness were on their children by their means, or through any occasion given by them, they would labor to remove it from them, & to have them cured of it, otherwise we would hold them to be unnatural parents. How much more then, when themselves have so far provoked God by their former iniquities that he hath therefore forsaken their children, and given them over to commit the same sins after them, ought they to labor by all means to remove that spiritual judgment that lieth upon them? & if they do not, may we not truly pronounce y^t these are cruel and bloody parents, nay indeed not parents at all, but rather spiritual murderers of their children? It is no small offense to be guilty of blood, especially of the blood of the soul, which cost the precious blood of Christ to redeem. Lastly, it belongeth to parents to be watchful & careful for the time to come. For, seeing the danger is so great to give themselves to wickedness, it is their duty to labor & strive against sin hereafter, and to give all diligence to work righteousness, and that not only in respect of themselves, but of their children & posterity. If then they love themselves or their posterity, and would not have y^e Lord to punish their sins with the sins of their children, let them take heed they do not provoke the Lord by their sins, and he in his just judgment *make the children rise up in the fathers stead an increase of sinful men*: for if they be sinful & wicked, we cannot but expect from God that he should punish their sins with the sins of their children to destruction, both of the one & of the other. We see how parents that put out their children to nurse, have a special care what manner person the nurse be, and prescribe that she neither eat nor drink those things that may hurt

the child, forasmuch as the effects thereof are likely to appear in time to come in the body of the child. All parents are very careful to look to the diet of their children, let them be careful to look to the diet of their own lives: for doubtless as the course of their lives hath been, so it will afterward appear in their children. O you parents, whom God hath blessed and stored with Children, if there be any true love in your hearts towards yourselves and your children, look unto this duty: sin not in your own sins against y^e fruit of your own bodies, but turn ro God betimes, that he may turn unto you. He is faithful in his word. Whatsoever he hath threatened it is surer then the heavens, it must certainly come to pass. If you provoke him by your sins, he will provoke you to your faces with his judgments, unto the utter confusion of yourselves, & of your posterity after you forever.

[Use 3] Lastly, this doctrine also belongeth to children, & putteth them in mind of sundry duties to be performed by them, which may be reduced to these branches. First, they must not imitate their fathers sins: secondly, they must pray to God not to remember their fathers iniquities: thirdly, they must be careful to look to their children, & that they lead an holy & sanctified life, that so they may call in God's judgments which otherwise he might justly bring on them. Touching the first, they must not follow their fathers in that which is evil. All inferiors are ready to walk in the steps of their superiors, and for the most part think themselves discharged from all crime or punishment if they be like to them, & no other then they have been before them. The prophet requireth this duty of the people, Psal. 78, 8. The Apostle willeth the church to follow him so far as he followed Christ, 1 Cor. 11, 1. So is it required of children to follow their fathers, but no farther then they follow the truth. This many among the Turks and Infidels may plead for themselves, and allege that they worship God as their forefathers did for many generations, & yet this shall not serve their turns. The 2. duty is, to pray to God not to remember the iniquities of their forefathers, as justly he might do to the confusion of their posterity. For why doth he not leave them to walk in their ways, but that he is merciful? Hence it is that the Lord saith, Isaiah 65, 6, 7. *Behold it is written before me, I will recompense, even recompense into their bosom, your iniquities, & the iniquities of your fathers together, &c.* God punisheth the sins of the fathers in their posterity, and therefore do punishments fall upon the posterity by reason of the sins of the ancestors. This doth Daniel in his prayer acknowledge, *Let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy City Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers, &c.* chap. 9, 16: and therefore in the confession of sins that he made before, verse 8. he saith, *O Lord to us belongeth confusion of face, to our Kings, to our Princes, and to our Princes, and to our Fathers, because we have sinned against thee.* So Ezra 9, 7. Neh. 9, 34. Ier. 32, 18. Lam. 5, 7. Exod. 20, 5. When diverse generations continue in one sin successively, the Lord useth ordinarily to punish the latter more severely then the former, that thereby the sons might be provoked to fear to do the like when they see the sins of their fathers, Ezek. 18, 14: and the longer his patience is abused, the greater sin is committed, & the greater vengeance is deserved. Thirdly, all children must be careful of their posterity, and lead an unblameable & sanctified life, that so God may give them the grace of his Spirit, & not leave them to themselves to walk in the evil ways of their fathers that have gone before them.

16 And they came near unto him, and said, We will build sheepfolds here for our Cattle, & Cities for our little ones.

17 But we our selves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, &c.

18 We will not return unto our houses, &c.

19 For we will not inherit with them on yonder side Jordan, or forward, because our inheritance is fallen to us on this side, &c.

The Tribes being reprov'd, do answer for themselves, expounding their meaning, or at least propounding equal conditions, that they will go up armed before their brethren, and that they will not return till all their brethren were possessed of their inheritance, & that they would claim no inheritance beyond Jordan, but rest in that already purchased. The Israelites would have been much weakened, if these had staid behind. Therefore they do here promise that they will go foremost of all. We saw before that it is God only that giveth the victory, yet we see the means are not neglected. Howsoever therefore we ought not to put our trust & confidence in the means, yet we must carefully use the same, that so we may be able to perform those things which the law of God and our calling require of us. Again, in their disclaiming inheritance beyond Jordan, we learn that everyone should be contented with that estate that God hath allotted unto him, whatsoever it be. Moreover, we see how these two Tribes offer themselves to be companions with their brethren, in passing over Jordan, and in conquering the land, & in taking such part as they did. This teacheth, That it is the duty of all God's Children, to have a fellow-feeling and compassion of the miseries & afflictions of their brethren, 2 Sam. 11, 11. Heb. 13, 3. 1 Cor. 12, 26. Rom. 12.15. When *Abraham* heard that *Lot* was taken prisoner, he armed his servants, & sought to recover him out of the hands of the enemies, Gen. 14, 14. *Moses* also chose to suffer adversity with the people of God, & to leave all his preferment in *Pharaohs* Court, Heb. 11: he would not enjoy the pleasures of sin, when the church endured the misery of adversity.

[Reason 1] The grounds follow. First, we ought to have brotherly love in us, not only love, but brotherly love: this will work in us a pitiful heart toward those that are afflicted. The Apostle *John* professeth himself a *companion with the Church in tribulation, in the kingdom and patience of Christ*: he was grieved for their grief, & the bowels of compassion were moved in him for their afflictions, Re. 1, 9. And the writer to the Hebrews saith, *Let brotherly love continue*, Heb. 13, 1. Secondly, this duty performed leaveth a blessing behind it, God hath rewarded it, for thereby *some have entertained Angels unawares*, Heb. 13, 2: and he will reward it always. Thirdly, Christ accounteth this as done to himself: when his children are refreshed, he is refreshed: when they are clothed, or fed, or visited, or comforted, he is clothed, & fed, and visited, & comforted, Math. 25, 35. Fourthly, we are members one of another, as we are joined unto Christ, as members to the head, & are mystically made one

with him; so all the faithful are fellow-members of the same body. In the members of the body, if a thorn run into the foot, the head stoopeth to it, the eyes look upon it, the fingers pull it out, the ear will hear what is good for it, the hand will apply salve to it, the tongue will ask counsel for it. So it should be with the members of Christ, if they be not dead or rotten. Lastly, we ought to show our selves to be careful one for another, and desirous to do good one to another, as 1 Cor. 12, 25. *There should be no schism in the body, but the members should have the same care one for another.*

This teacheth, that there is a communion among [Use 1] the Saints, consisting not only in rejoicing & in the use of gifts & blessings, but also in compassion and mourning one for the hurt of another; and therefore *Peter* exhorteth, *Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another: love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.* The heart of one must be the heart of all, & whosoever shunneth the communion of Saints in time of misery, shall never have their communion in the kingdom of glory. Everyone is ready to profess this communiō in prosperity, but are ready to deny it in adversity. But as they that will reign with Christ must first suffer with him, so they that will reign with his members in heaven, must first suffer with them also on the earth. This is an excellent privilege, to have our communion with the Saints. We are as freemen of God's City which is above, we must therefore enjoy the privileges thereof in common. And hereby we may assure our selves to belong to God, *if we be alike affectioned one to another.* Do we at any time hear of the tribulations of the Church? and do we inwardly lamēt for it? Let us comfort our selves in this, it is a notable sign y^t we are members of the church. Do we hear that our neighbor churches are troubled with dissensions & divisions, that heresies are broached among them that heretics and pestilent seedmen are entertained among them, that the ancient doctrine preached & professed, is repealed, and that the parts of that body are ready to be miserably torn in pieces? & doth the meditation of this affect us, that we can secretly mourn for it, and say with the Apostle, *I would they were even cut off which trouble you?* this showeth indeed that we are of the communion of Saints. Are any of our brethren in particular in heaviness? have they sorrow? and can we grieve for them as if the affliction were our own? then we may persuade our selves that we have a communion not only with our brethren, but with our head Christ Jesus himself, which is the foundation of all true comfort and consolation.

Secondly, we may conclude, that dead-heartedness, [Use 2] and the want of Christian compassion in the distress of the Saints, proveth us to be no true members at all of the body of Christ. If we have means put into our hands, and do not help them and relieve them; or if we want ability, if there be not a passion and commiseration in our hearts, how doth the love of God dwell in us? Nay, this is a fearful token and manifest sign of little or no grace as yet bestowed upon us. Here is no mutual affection, to rejoice together, and to mourn together. There is a generation that repine and grudge at the good and happy estate of their brethren, and have evil eyes toward them, because God hath been gracious unto them: this was in *Cain* towards *Abel*, in *Saul* toward *David*, in the Scribes and Pharisees toward Christ, in *Abimelech* toward *Isaac*, in *Laban* toward *Jacob*. There is a generation that feast and fill themselves, that laugh and rejoice, that are merry & sport themselves when the poor Saints groan and are grieved; whereas we should be ready to communicate with them, & somewhat

to assuage their grief and comfort their hearts in their affliction, we should help them to bear their burden in a common affection. The holy man *Job* protesteth that *he never rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated him, neither lift up himself when evil found him*, chap. 31, 29. The Prophet *Obadiah* telleth the proud & insolent Edomites that shame should cover them, & they should be cut off forever, because they rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction, and spake scornfully and despitefully in their distress, *Rase it, rase it even to the foundation thereof*, Psal. 137, 7. Thus doeth the Prophet *Amos* reprove the wantonness of Israel, chap. 6, 1, 4. *Woe to them that are at ease in Zion*, that put away far from them the evil day that lie upon beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, that eat y^e Lambes out of the flock, and the Calves out of the midst of the stall, that drink wine in bolles, and anoint themselves with the chief ointment, but *no man is grieved for the affliction of Joseph*. There is a generation that can mourn and rejoice in temporal things, when they see their brethren in affliction they are grieved, and when they behold them prosper they are glad, when both these may be mere natural affections, and may also proceed from natural men. But we must extend this fellow-feeling (if we will be assured, that it is right) more to spiritual than to temporal cases. For let us mourn never so much for their losses in temporal things, yet except we can more earnestly lament their spiritual decays thē their worldly distresses, and rejoice more heartily for the access of heavenly graces, than the increase of transitory riches, this our affection is no better than a corruption, it can minister no comfort unto us at all, Luk 1, 58. Phil. [Use 3] 1, 3. 2 John 1, 2. Thirdly, we ought to be so careful of the good one of another, that we should enquire of the state of the church & of God's people in other places, how they fare, what they want, in what condition they stand. Many think themselves excused from helping those that are in need, if they can say, I knew not how it went with them, I was ignorant of their condition: but they are ignorant, because they will be ignorant; they know it not because they will not learn. This is a willing, nay a willful ignorance. It is noted of *Nehemiah* that he asked his brethren *concerning the Jews that were delivered, which were of the residue of the captivity, &c.* Neh. 1, 2, So did *David* enquire after he was put in peaceable possession of the kingdom, who was left of the house of *Saul*, that he might show him kindness for *Jonathan's* sake, 2 Sam. 9, 1. So did *Paul* & *Barnabas* return back to the places where they had preached the Gospel, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, Acts 14, 21, 22. & 15, 36. And *Paul* often inquired of the brethren that came unto him, whether they stood firm and fast in the faith, and resisted the false Apostles that sought to corrupt the sincerity of the Gospel. We should make diligent search of the temporal estate of our brethren, but much more how they stand toward God, how they do increase in the best things, that we may rejoice in their standing, and mourn in their decaying, and thereby be provoked either to give God praise & glory for their continuance and perseverance; or to pray to him to open their eyes to see their weakness, their standing still, or going back, or leaving their first love, that so they may repent and do their first works.

Lastly, it is our duty even to adventure our [Use 4] persons and estate for our brethren, if by any means we may relieve the distressed. This we see in *Abraham* toward *Lot*, Gen. 14: *Moses* refused to be called the son of *Pharaoh's* daughter, but visited his brethren, and when he saw

an Egyptian offer one of them wrong, *He defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed*, Acts 7, 24. So it was with *Obadiah* that lived in *Ahab's Court*, when *Jezebel* raised hot persecution against the prophets of God, he took them, and hid them, and fed them in a Cave, not fearing the fierceness of their enemies, 1 Kin. 18. The like we see in *Ester*, a notable nursing mother of the Church, she went boldly to the King with this resolution, *If I perish, I perish*, Ester 4. verse 16: to have the lives of her people given at her request, chapt. 7. verse 3. Many in our days think they have gone far in Christianity, and take themselves to be notable and zealous Christians, if they wish well unto the state of the Church, or be not open enemies unto it. But it is not enough to wish the good of it, except by all means we labor to procure it, and learn to cast down all that we have, and be content to lick the dust of the Churches feet. Many will needs be accounted to be the friends of the Church, who will hazard neither goods, nor friends, nor honor, neither the favor of great men, nor the credit of the world, much less either limb or life: whereas the Apostle teacheth, y^t this is true love, *To give our lives for the brethren*, 1 John chapt. 3. verse 16.

20 And Moses said unto them, If ye will do this thing, if ye will go armed before the Lord to war:

21 And will go all of you armed, &c. until he have driven out his enemies, &c.

22 And the land be subdued, &c.

23 But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out.

24 Build you Cities, &c.

25 And the children of Gad, &c.

26 Our little ones, our wives, &c.

27 But thy servants, &c.

Here we have the conclusion of the whole controversy between these tribes and *Moses*, and under what conditions he assenteth unto them, that there might be no mistaking one of another. The sum whereof is this: If they would go up armed before their brethren, and go forward with them until their enemies were cast out, then they should return back again, *and be guiltless before the Lord*, and this land should be their lawful possession: if not, they should be guilty of sin before the Lord, and should not be able to escape the vengeance of

God. These conditions propounded by *Moses*, are approved by the Tribes, who promise that they will leave their wives, and children, and families behind thē, and pass over armed *for war before the Lord to battle*. From hence I might handle sundry instructions that arise: in *Moses* we see his patience in hearing and determining, and therefore it is the duty of Magistrates willingly & patiently to hear the people. Again, these two Tribes and half might not be discharged, till they had finished the Lord's work, and therefore in all good duties perseverance is necessary, and we must continue to the end, as we have shown, chapt. 7. Lastly, *Moses* threateneth, that if they sinned against the Lord, they might be well assured *their sin would find them out*, that is, the punishment of sin shall certainly fall upon you, therefore sin and the punishment of sin are inseperable companions, as we see in Kingdoms, Cities, Families, and particular persons that have offended against him. And hereby we may observe that the only cause of judgment and punishment is sin. God is never displeased with any people or person but for their sins, *Isaiah* 43, 24. & 63, 10. *Hos.* 4, 1, 2. This is farther confirmed in the examples of his judgments, that fell upon men and Angels, kingdoms and States, houses and persons, they have been destroyed & subverted for sin, *1 Cor.* 10.8, 9, 10.

[Reason 1] The grounds hereof follow. First, *sin is the transgression of the law*, so defined by the Apostle, he gave a law to all, which he would have to be kept: now then when this is broken and transgressed, it cannot be but he should be offended, and execute punishment against those that break it. Secondly, God is holy, yea most holy, and therefore cannot but punish sin w^c is directly opposite to the holiness of his nature. The more just and righteous a Judge is, the more he is grieved at the enormities of malefactors that he hath to deal withal: so in this case, God being most holy and righteous, nothing can be so offensive and displeasing unto him as the sins of men which are committed against him. Thirdly, sin is the destruction and condemnation of the creature, and bringeth the ruin of soul and body. The Apostle teacheth, that *the wages of sin is death*, *Rom.* 6, 23: it is the cause of natural death, of spiritual death, of eternal death.

If God do thus hate sin, that it draweth [Use 1] from him all plagues upon us, then it giveth wicked men to understand what they are in y^e sight of God; nothing but such as displease, grieve, and provoke him by their sins, and therefore he hateth them as his enemies, and setteth his face against them, as the Judge setteth himself against evil doers, and a Prince setteth himself against rebels that do resist against him. There cannot be a greater misery then for a man to commit sin, because it is that which is so highly displeasing to God, & the procurer of his displeasure and indignation against the committers of it, and therefore this pointeth and painteth out the most fearful estate of all wicked sinners that live & yet are dead in their sins, seeing God is such an enemy unto them, and they unto him. Some think the only miserable condition to be, to live in poverty and need and want of all things, in reproach and contempt, in famine & dearth of all things, in hunger and nakedness, in sickness and diseases: howbeit these are greatly deceived, who are themselves so much the more miserable that they know not what misery is, neither wherein it consisteth. Our sins are the true sores and sicknesses. To follow them with greediness, & desire them as the hungry man doth after meat, or he that is a thirst after drink, is the true misery. Such as live in sin are the only dead men. *Luke* 9, 60. *1 Tim.* 5, 6.

Secondly, it instructeth everyone of us how [Use 2] we ought to walk before God, namely, to be grieved for our greewing of God with our sins, & to be offended wit•our selves for offēding of him. A father will be very angry with those persons w^c draw on their children to destruction: it is not therefore much to be maruelled at, y^t sin is so hateful to God, seeing it is that which is the ruin & downfall of his chieftest creatures. And as sin is in the account of God, so it ought to be esteemed of us: he hateth and detesteth nothing more, nothing so much: if then we will approve our selves to be his children, we must abhor it as God's sworn enemy and ours. Nothing can provoke him against us but our transgressions. He will never hate us for our poverty, or penury, or necessity, or infirmity; it is only impiety that can make a separation between God and us, and therefore we must take heed we do not provoke him to anger by them, and let us rather be grieved for our sins, then grieve the Lord with them. If a son see his father grieved with him for his wicked ways, he will be grieved with himself for it. So ought it to be with us if we be the children of God, and belong unto him; we must labor to be out of love with our selves for our sins, and to hate them all whatsoever they be, least the Lord should be compelled to hate us, and make us grieve and weep for them when it shall be too late, and *when our shedding of tears shall be joined with gnashing of teeth*, and neither of them prove to be acceptable unto him, or profitable to our selves.

[Use 3] Thirdly, it leadeth and preacheth unto us repentance of our former sins, and never to return unto them again, because they are so displeasing unto God, and so effectual, to bring down all his judgments and punishments upon us. If God were indifferent when we have sinned, and neither pleased nor displeased with us, then the matter were not great, we also might be indifferent, & not regard whether we repent, or do not repent; but seeing sin bringeth all judgment, it is time for us to judge our selves, that so we may prevent his judgments. For seeing it is that which is so odious and loathsome unto him, we ought to avoid it, and to take heed of delighting in it. They that love, fear to offend him whom they love: that we may therefore show our selves to be the lovers of God, let us labor to the uttermost of our power, to take heed of greewing and offending him by our sins. But when a man committeth sin against God, doth he think God will punish him, or not? If he think he will, then what great folly is it for him to run on still in his sins, for which he must be punished? If he think he will not, then what wickedness & unthankfulness is it for him to offend so loving a God, that is not offended with him for all his sinning against him? All these things do serve as so many motives to stir us up to the practice of repentance, that so God may repent of his plagues toward us.

[Use 4] Lastly, this serveth for matter of imitation. For if God be thus displeased with sin, which never leaveth or ceaseth to hunt after the sinner till it find him out, then everyone of us that would show our selves to have any part in God, or to bear his image, must labor to be of the same mind, and to have the same affection against sin that God hath, to hate it as he hateth it, and so to be displeased as well at our own sins, as at the sins of others. For he can never be truly displeased with his own sins, that is not also grieved with the sins and offenses of others. As then we are touched and troubled for our own sins, so should we be for the sins of our friends, of our families, and of those that we have any way to deal withal, forasmuch as it is that which doth so much grieve the Spirit of God.

28 So concerning them, Moses commanded Eleazar the Priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel.

29 And Moses said unto them, If the children of Gad, and the children, &c: will pass with you over Jordan, &c: then ye shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession.

30 But if they will not pass, &c.

31 And the children of Gad, &c: answered, saying, As the Lord, &c.

32 We will pass over armed before the Lord into the land of Canaan, that the possession of our inheritance on this side Jordan, may be ours.

The third part of the chapter followeth, handling the full agreement of y^e whole matter, and the execution following after the agreement, whereby these tribes are put in possession. Moses committeth the matter to *Eleazar* the Priest, and to *Joshua* the son of *Nun*, & gave charge to them to see it performed. For inasmuch as he was not himself to enter into the land, he taketh order, that if the former conditions were observed by the Reubenites and Gadites, they should have the land of Gilead for a possession: if not, they should be compelled to have possession among the rest in the land of Canaan; teaching thereby, that it is our duty to further & promote the good of the Church and Commonwealth not only while we live, but also after our departure out of this world. And in the tribes we see that all lawful promises, even such as are made to our hindrance, are faithfully to be performed. But in the example of these tribes mark a further point, how willing they are to join together to procure the common safety, and set the rest of their brethren out of danger, w^c was like to be great & long: they would not forsake them til their enemies were subdued. This teacheth y^t it is the duty of God's children to put forth themselves in the common cause, to help the church, and to free it from danger. This point hath warrant both by precept & practice. It is the counsel of *Solomon's* mother, Prov. 31, 9. *Open thy mouth in the cause of the dumb, &c:* and to show the great importance of this precept, he repeateth it again, *Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy*, verse 10. The Apostle chargeth the Hebrews to *remember those that are in bonds*, and in affliction, as if themselves were afflicted, Heb. 13.3. And they are remembered not so much when they are thought upon, or are in our minds, as when they are relieved and helped out of their misery. For as we remember God when we serve him, so we remember the needy when we succor them. It is noted of *Saul* and all Israel, that they went to relieve *Iabesh Gilead* when it was beleaguered by *Nahash* the Ammonite, who would make a covenant with them upon no other condition, but that *he might thrust out all their right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel*, 1 Sam. 11, 1, 2. So did *David* and his men go to relieve *Keilah*, spoiled and oppressed by the Philistines, chap. 23, 5. The book of the Judges is full of this argument, they thought it their duty to relieve the

enthralled estate & poor condition of the Church, lying under the hard yoke and heavy servitude of the Moabites, the Canaanites, the Midianites, the Ammonites, the Philistines, and sundry others. So that all God's servants, although themselves were free from trouble, yet must they put too their hands, and set too their shoulders, and employ all their strength, as far as God enableth them, to deliver the Church from trouble, and to procure the present benefit and good estate thereof. We shown before in this chapter, that we must have some compassion and a fellow-feeling of the miseries and afflictions of God's people: this doctrine goeth farther and pierceth deeper, and teacheth that we must put forth our selves to maintain the public cause of the afflicted church, and procure the peace thereof.

[Reason 1] And so much the rather we ought to do this, because of the wicked minds and wretched ends that the ungodly set before their eyes. For what is it, I pray you, that the enemy, the common adversary and oppressor of the Church looketh after and layeth before him? Is it the persons of them that they seek to spoil? or is it to take away their goods and substance from them? or any other thing that might be dear unto them in earthly things? All these indeed are sought after, but are these the chief mark and scope that they aim after? or would these (taken away) content them? No, no, they shoot at a farther thing, to deface the service and worship of God, and to blaspheme his glorious Name, being themselves the children of darkness and not able to bear the light of the truth, they oppose themselves against the same. The Cities and Altars of our GOD ought to be of greatest account and in highest price, more dear to us then thousands of gold and silver, for w^c we must be content to leave father and mother, wife and children, that we may with freedom of conscience enjoy & profess the truth. This meditation was it that moved *Joab*, when he went out with a strong hand & saw the enemies gathered together to root out the Church out of the Land, and the truth out of the Church, to fight against them, 2. Sam. 10, 12. *Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the Cities of our God, and the Lord do that which seemeth him good:* whe^e he showeth, that the chief motive to wax strong and valiant in battle, was to maintain the Cities and service of God.

Seco^oy, this hath promise of a great blessing [Reason 2] and a good issue; it is no vain or fruitless thing whereunto we are moved. Many men are discomfited and quite out of heart, because they see no blessing annexed. But howsoever the persecutor and oppressor for a time preuayleth and entereth into the houses and habitations of God, yet their destruction sleepeth not: God hath reserved them as the chaff before the wind, and as the stubble before the fire. Resting therefore on the gracious promises of God, and knowing that *Heaven and earth shall perish, but no one jot shall pass or fail from his word*, being assured that the covenant that he hath made, is surer then the covenant of the day and the night, of the Sun and of the Moon; we must arm our selves with this assured persuasion, that the destruction of the enemy is determined: as *Isaiah 16, 3, 4.* speaking to *Moab*, he saith, *Take counsel, execute judgment, &c:* then he addeth the reason, *for the extortioner is at an ende, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the Land*, *Isaiah 16, 3, 4.* Wherefore, albeit the enemies of God and his people seem long to flourish, to glory in their wickedness, and to insult over the godly that are under the cross, yet they shall not escape the wrath and vengeance of God: so

that none should be ashamed to thrust themselves into danger to maintain the common cause of the Church.

The uses follow. First, this putteth us in [Use 1] mind of the estate of the faithful, which oftentimes endure more trouble in this world both inwardly & outwardly, then any other; as were easy to be shown and proved by the examples of *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Jeremiah, David*, and Christ himself the perfect pattern of suffering affliction. It was no otherwise with his Apostles also, and experience teacheth us, that the church in this world fareth no better, as it complaineth, *Lamen. 1, 12. Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of his anger.* Thus it pleaseth the Lord to wean them from the love of the world, because he loveth them, & would have them long after heaven and heavenly things. We are oftentimes so perverse and untoward, that we must be put into the fire that we may be refined and reformed, and must endure many grievous corrections that we may be framed to delight in spiritual things. Besides, Satan and his instruments do hate us and labor continually to seek our destruction; and therefore let us never promise to our selves worldly peace and prosperity, neither be offended at the great afflictions which we hear to come upon the godly, but rather prepare our selves to look for one trouble to come upon the neck of another, whiles we live upon the earth.

[Use 2] Secondly, conclude from hence the fearful, woeful, & miserable estate of the church, when all the friends and comforters of it are gone, when they that should be the shield and shelter of it do fly back and dare not show their faces, as often it falleth out, then only faith for the present, and hope for the time to come, must hold up our heads that we sink not into the bottom of despair. This is it which the Prophet saith, *I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation to me, &c. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, &c.* *Isaiah 63, 5, 6.* When *Haman* the adversary of the Jews, whose malice was hereditary unto him and derived from his fathers, had plotted the ruin of the Church, in what weak and desolate estate had it been, if *Mordecai* and *Ester* had not procured the safety of it? Was it not taken out of the jaws of the Lyon, and pulled out of the pit of death? In such times, we must cast anker in heaven, and make the Lord of hosts our only confidence.

[Use 3] Thirdly, conclude from hence, that it is a fearful thing when men become oppressors of the Church. For if everyone from the highest to the lowest should be a succourer & defender thereof, then none brought up in the bosom of the Church should be an oppressor of it. But how many have there been who have lifted up themselves against it, not only open enemies, but close vnderminers, who kindle the coals of their own confusion, and have been consumed in the flame that they have raised? The Prophet *Obadiah* concludeth this point, *ver, 10: For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever, &c. as thou hast done, it shall be done to thee, thy reward shall return upon thine own head,* *Obad. verse 10, 15.* And touching the persecuting Babylonians that carried the people away captives, and scoffed at them in the day of their calamity, the Prophet foretelleth their final overthrow, *Psalm. 137, 8, 9. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed: happy shall he be that*

rewardeth thee as thou hast served us: happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones. Woe therefore to all the enemies of the Church in general, or to any particular soul that serveth the Lord; they are also enemies to God himself.

[Use 4] Lastly, none living in the Church must be ignorant of the state of the Church; everyone must take notice how things go in it, whether it go forward or backward, increase or decrease, grow better or worse. We are come for the most part to this, to content our selves with looking to our private wealth & particular estate, as if we had nothing else to think upon, but to follow our profits and delights. So it was with the people after their return from captivity, they built their own houses, but they let the house of God alone: they were very busy in seeking their own commodities, but they were wholly unmindful of the service of God, and therefore they said, *The time is not come, y^e time y^t the Lord's house should be built: whom the Prophet reproveth, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your sieled houses, & this housely waste,* Hag. 1, 2, 3. Others there are that shrink back for fear, and dare not adventure, and being moved, they plead ignorance, they pretend they know nothing. But the Prophet denounceth a woe against them that are at ease in Zion, Amos 6, 1. If everyone ought to be helpful to the Church, and to put on the bowels of pity and compassion, how shall we excuse our selves & say, we knew not what was wanting, or what was amiss or out of course? For everyone at his own peril, must know the perils of the Church, and be touched with a feeling of thē, and ignorance shall excuse no man. It is an excellent saying of Solomon, Prov. 24, 11, 12, 13. *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small: if thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn forth to death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew not of it, doth not he that pondereth the heart, consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?* The Lord suffereth his people to fall into sundry temptations and into great dangers, not only to try their faith, and to prove their constancy, but likewise to manifest their love & affection that seem to be out of gunshot, as Ester 4, 14. 2 Tim. 1, 16, 17, 18. Ier. 39, 16, 17, 18.

33 And Moses gave unto them, even to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, & unto half the Tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon King of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og King of Bashan, &c.

34, 35, 36. And the children of Gad built Dibon, and &c.

37, 38, 39. And the children of Reuben, &c. 40. And Moses gave Gilead, &c.

The inheritance that was given unto these Tribes is here particularly described, to wit, what Cities befell unto them, which they diligently fortified, and courageously expelled the enemies that dwelt in them. Out of these words some questions are briefly to be decided. And first touching the changing of the names of the Cities which befell to the children of Reuben, verse 38, the question may be asked, *Wherefore their names were changed?* The answer is, that without question y^e cause of this change was, that the former names given of ancient

time were merely Idolatrous, for both of them had their names of the Idols, which ought not to be had in remembrance, neither to be heard out of their mouths, Exod. 23, 13. [Objection.] Psal. 16, 4. Secondly, from hence a doubt ariseth, how *Moses* can be said to give *Gilead* to *Machir* the son of *Manasseh*, and how he dwelt therein? for may we think that *Machir* was then alive? I answer, [Answ.] It is not likely that he lived unto this time; rather we must understand the sons and posterity that came of him. So the children of Israel are called *Israel*, and the sons of *Edom* by the name of *Edom*. He that knoweth not this, knoweth nothing. Thus it is said that *Judah* spake unto *Simeon* his brother, Judge. 1, 3, yet neither of them was alive in many ages before, & therefore it must be understood of their posterity. The like we see, Gen. 48, 22. *I give unto thee one portion above thy brethren, which I have taken out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.* Where *Jacob* bequeatheth unto *Joseph* by his last will and testament a double portion of the Land, 1 Chron. 5, 2. By *Joseph* we must understand his posterity, for in his own person he inherited nothing, but died long before: and by the sword and bow of *Jacob*, we must understand the Ephraimites which helped to conquer the Land, and were a mighty people in *Joshua's* time, Josh. 17, 14, 18. [Object.] But it is an harder question to determine how *Iaer* is said to be the son of *Manasseh* who doubtless did belong to another Tribe? For in the Genealogies mentioned in the book of Chronicles, it is evident that he was the son of *Segub*, the son of *Hetzron* of the Tribe of *Judah*, 1 Chron. 2, 22. I answer, [Answ.] he is reckoned of the Tribe of *Manasseh* by the mothers side, not by the fathers. For it is plain in the Chapter before named, that *Hetzron* the son of *Judah* married the daughter of *Machir* the son of *Manasseh*, 1 Chro. 7, 13. And *Drusius* observeth, that many such examples are found in the Priests which married wives of other Tribes. Now the cause that he had possession in another Tribe is, because his inheritance fell in the Land of the Amorites on this side of Jordan, not in the Land of Canaan on the other side. Out of this division, we might observe, in that the children of *Gad* build Cities, that the building of fortifications and strong holds is not unlawful, provided that we put not our trust & confidence in them, Obad. verse 3, 4. And that the children of *Machir* took the Cities of the enemies, we learn that the people of God are oftentimes victorious in battle. But to pass over these, observe a notable point of their sincerity in cleaving to God, and abolishing the monuments of Idolatry, that they would not retain y^e former Idolatrous names of the two Cities, *Nebo*, and *Baalmeon*, but changed them, that they might no more be had in remembrance, nor the people whom God had chosen to be holy unto himself, be acquainted with them. This teacheth that God will have the remnants and monuments of Idolatry to be utterly abolished, and all occasions that might draw unto it to be taken away: not only Idolatry it self to be destroyed, but the memorial of it, and the means that may bring it among his people again. Hence it is, that the Apostle *John* chargeth the Church, not only to beware of Idolatry, but of the Idols themselves, 1 John 5, 21, for he shutteth up the Epistle with this, *Little children, keep yourselves from Idols.* If we suffer Idols to have entrance into the Church, we shall not long be free from Idolatry it self. Therefore the Prophet declareth his hatred as well of the one as of the other, when he saith, *I will not make mention of their names with my lips*, Psalm. 1, 4. Zach. 13, 2. When God promiseth the overthrowing of Idolatry, he promiseth withal the utter destroying of the Idols themselves, and that the remembrance of them shall be cut off and perish out of the minds and mouths of men, Isaiah 1, 18, and 30, 22. Hos. 2, 17.

The reasons are plain; First, because God [Reason 1] would not have his people snared by such occasions: for they are as stumbling blocks laid before his people to cause them to fall, and therefore the Lord saith, Deut. 7, 25. *The graven Images of their gods shall ye burn with fire, thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein.*

Secondly, it is said to be an abomination [Reason 2] to the Lord, Deut. 7, 25: for whatsoever is impure is abominable unto him, and our nature is prone to this false worship, & is hardly kept from a corrupted religion.

This teacheth us first of all what to think [Use 1] of the religion of the Church of Rome; for as it is a false Church, so it is upholden by a false religion, wherein not only some relics and remnants of Idolatry are to be found, but most gross, open, and palpable Idolatry is maintained, like to that, practiced by the Gentiles themselves. To manifest this to be true in sundry particulars, first observe that they teach men to worship things that are without sense, images of silver and gold, of wood and stone, and yet they are uncertain what worship to give them. *Aquinas*, one of the chief schoolmen, and a principal pillar of the Roman faith, hath delivered, that the Image of Christ is to be worshipped with the same worship that is due to Christ himself, & that Christ himself remaineth in the Image. *Bellarmino* denieth this, and teacheth that they may not teach so: nevertheless he holdeth a middle course, that the image may be worshipped, so far as it doth represent Christ.

Again, they teach that we are to worship the Saints: and yet it is certain that some of them are false and feyned Saints, such as are so far from being holy men, that they were neither holy, nor men: as I have shown at large elsewhere, because they never had life nor being. Some they worship for Saints that are now by all probability in hell, and of whom themselves make question whether they were saved, or not. Moreover, they say we are to pray to the Saints, & that the Saints hear our prayers, and by that means they pray to the Image of the Saint: but whether they hear us by the swiftness of their hearing, or by the revelation of some Angel that standeth by us and reporteth it to the Saint, we shall know of them when they know themselves, but I believe they will take time and leisure to resolve us. The like we might say of their breaden god, whom they worship also, and look for help from it: and yet they are altogether uncertain, whether it be the body of Christ or not, because their consecration dependeth upon the Priests intention: so that we may truly say unto them as Christ did to the woman of Samaria, *Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship*, John 4, 22.

[Use 2] Secondly, this teacheth us to abhor and abandon all false worship whatsoever, as that which can never minister any peace or comfort of conscience; and labor to lay a good foundation that so we may be established in the present truth. For doubtless this is the cause why many fall away and embrace superstitiō, because they were never well grounded, neither *tasted the sincere milk of the word of God that they might grow thereby*, 1 Peter, 2, ver. 2, 3.

And howsoever the Gospel have been purely preached, and professed in this Land, yet the greatest sort remain as neuters, or as indifferent men, neither hot nor cold, and

consequently fit to be made a prey unto the wolves, I mean to the Priests and Jesuits that lie watching in corners for such proselytes, and when they have gained them, *they make them sometimes twofold more the children of hell then themselves*. We must therefore be careful to have the principles of true religion planted in us, that *there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ*; and that there is but one means to attain to salvation. But the greatest part of our people know nothing at all as they ought to know. And let the Minister in conscience of his duty to GOD and the Church, *preach in season and out of season*, 2 Tim. 4, 2, yet scarce one among ten is able to give an account of their faith. They are content to live in their ignorance, and despise knowledge, & are blindly led by *blind guides* that cannot inform them in the ways of the Lord, and so both of them fall into the ditch. Many shut their eyes because they will not see, and refuse to hear the word, which is a precious pearl of such price, that rather then they would want it, they should sell all that they have to purchase it. The Prophet teacheth, that the *people are destroyed for want of knowledge*, Hos. 4, 6, & thereby deprive themselves of the means of salvation.

[Use 3] Lastly, we should learn to eschew & avoid Idolatry in the very beginning, before by custom and continuance it be increased. If we once entertain it with the least liking and approbation, we shall never or hardly reclaim our selves, till we fill up the measure of it. The Apostle exhorteth us to *abstain from all appearance of evil*, 1 Thess. 5, 22. And Jude admonisheth us to *hate the garment spotted with the flesh*, verse 23. We must hate therefore as well the occasions and appurtenances of Idolatry, as Idolatry it self; as those things which bring much dishonor to God, and much hurt unto our own souls. [Objection.] But some peradventure will say, What need all these things? or what cause is there of so many words touching Idolatry & the remnants thereof? all this might well enough be spared and passed over, forasmuch as here are none of us that are Idolaters; and if any have been so, that is forgotten and forgiven long ago. I answer, [Answ.] it is not to be denied, but confessed, that we live in a reformed Church, wherein Idolatry is swept away; and yet many do in this point much deceive themselves, and are *like the Pharisees that justified themselves*. For if we would examine our selves by the strict rule of the word of God, what Idolatry is, and what it is not, then certainly it will manifestly appear, that in the Church of England there are Idolaters, yea notable Idolaters to be found. The Law is plain, and do we not read what God saith, Exodus 20, verse 4, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image, neither the similitude of anything: thou shalt not bow down to thē, nor serve them?* If these were asked of this Commandment, they would be ready to answer with the young man in the Gospel, *All these things have I kept from my youth*, Matth. 19, 20. For we think commonly, that unless we be popish Idolaters, to fall down before an Idol & worship it, we be no Idolaters at all. But hereby we show that we do not understand the Law of God, neither the rules of interpretation. For as murder consisteth not only in taking away life, but in hatred also and revenge, as the Apostle *John* testifieth, *Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him*, 1 John, chapter 3, verse 15. Matth. chapter 5, verse 22: and as adultery consisteth not only in the outward act, but also in the inward and secret lusts of the heart: so may there be Idolaters, that do not fall down and worship an Idol, and there is an Idolatry in the heart, as well as in the practice.

The Apostle *Paul* in the second Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 4, verse 4, calleth the devil, *The god of this world*; and yet there are none in the Church that worship the devil in any outward or visible shape, but they hate the thought of it no less then the deed. How then is it that many or that any make him their god, but that they believe in him, obey him, and trust more in him then they do in almighty God? Whereupon he concludeth that they are no better then worshippers of the devil, howsoever not in outward fashion, yet in the inward affection. So if we would examine our own hearts and spirits by this law *which is spiritual*, we shall find our selves to be gross Idolaters many ways. Many worship their wealth, and make their riches their god, and set it up as an Idol in their hearts, and this is one relique of Idolatry. These are they that think *gain to be godliness*, and are gross Idolaters in their hearts, howsoever they never worshipped any visible Image. Again, there are some that worship GOD with their bellies, Phil. 3, 19, such are the drunkards & gluttonous persons, howsoever otherwise they hate an Image, yet are they notable Idolaters in their hearts. There are also Idolaters of other sorts, and other relics of Idolatry, some have made their pleasure their god, this is the common sin of great men; and these worship and serve their own delights and pastimes, & love them more then the Lord. Now whatsoever a man loveth better then GOD, that same he maketh to be his God. Many such there are among us, who albeit they abhor the open worshipping of Images, yet in their hearts they retain the dregs of Idolatry and are indeed notable Idolaters. And if we would make diligent trial of our selves, and search into the secret corners of our harts by the clear light of the word as with a candle, we should find our places, persons, and times to be full of Idolatry; forasmuch as the most part have preferred their pride, their covetousness, their lusts, before God himself, and therefore these are Idolaters, & have joined themselves to Idols. And concerning those that have lived heretofore in Idolatry, and think that now they have forsaken it, & therefore shall do well enough: let them take heed they do not deceive themselves. For a man may leave sin, and yet not repent for it. A man may cease from the practice of it, and yet not hate it, neither turn unto God. And doubtless, if these men can yet laugh heartily at their former practices, and make a jest and sport in telling what they have done before an abominable Idol, they may justly suspect that they remain filthy Idolaters still, and if occasion were presented unto them again, they would fall afresh to their former Idolatry, as the dog to his vomit. I say therefore unto such, that without vnfeyned repentance there is no salvation, but as they lived in Idolatry, so they shall die Idolaters, and be condemned with Idolaters eternally, Revel. 21. verse 8.

CHAP. XXXIII.

1 These are the journeys of the Children of Israel which went forth out of the Land of Egypt, with their armies, under the hand of Moses and Aaron.

2 And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys, by the commandment of the Lord: and these are their journeys according to their goings out.

3 And they departed from Rameses in the first Moneth, on the 15 day of the first Moneth: on the morrow after the Passover, the Children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.

4 For the Egyptians buried all their first borne which the Lord had smitten among them: upon their gods also the Lord executed judgments.

5 And the children of Israel removed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth.

6 And from Succoth, &c.

AFTER the inheritance was given to the two Tribes & the half on this side Jordan, Moses describeth *by the commandment of the Lord* the places of their abode in the Wilderness, their several mansions where they pitched, & their Tents until they entered into the Land of promise. In this Chapter consider two points. First, the several mansions and stations where the Israelites rested and stayed. Secondly, a law and commandment how they should behave themselves toward the Canaanites, and how their land should be divided among thē. Touching the first, that is, their journeys in the Wilderness, it is set down generally, v. 1, and 2. and then particularly how God led them from place to place; first he noteth the place from whence they went till they came to the red sea; & afterward, notwithstanding their often infirmities and fallings from God, he brought them in despite of their enemies and all opposition of flesh and blood to the borders of the Land, which many of the faithful before them desired to see, but did not see it, only they believed the promise in their heart. The people of God had long been detained in slavery and bondage, now GOD brought them forth with a mighty hand and an out-stretched arm, killing all the first born of Egypt, and destroying their Idols in which they trusted; whereupon the Egyptians were stricken with such a sudden astonishment and amazement, that they were not able to resist and withstand the Israelites, but were compelled to open them a free passage to depart. Thus thē they went out early in the morning, having eaten the Paschal Lamb the evening before: they had lived many years in great heaviness, and endured many temptations in the Land of Egypt, but they go out thence with their young and with their old, with their sons and with their daughters, with their flocks and with their herds in great joy & much comfort of heart: so that they might say with the Prophet, Psal. 126, 1, 2. *When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream: then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing, then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them: the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.* Thus doth the Lord turn the joy of the wicked into heaviness, and contrariwise the heaviness of his children into joyfulness. This teacheth us,

that God preserveth his Church in the midst of dangers, when it wanteth human defense and protection, and delivereth it out of bondage and slavery wherein it is holden, Exod. 12, 22. Ezek. 9, 6. True it is, God doth many times give over his people to serve hard masters, and to suffer many calamities for a time, yet in the end he delivereth them when they call upon him, Ier. 25, 11, 12. Mic. 2, 10. This truth standeth upon good grounds.

[Reason 1] For first, when he delivereth them into the enemies hands, he doth it to correct them, and not to corrupt them; to bring them the nearer unto him, not to cast them farther off from him; whereby it appeareth that he hath a purpose and meaning to redeem them, and to bring them out of their hands. Secondly, God will never cast off his people, he loveth them with an unchangeable love, and therefore will accept them and receive them upon their repentance and humiliation. He hath a special feeling of their miseries, and therefore he will give them deliverance. Thirdly, God will magnify his own mercy and power toward his people, by giving them deliverance. It would have been a great dishonor to the great Name of God, if he had suffered the Egyptians to hold their rod evermore over the Israelites, and the loins of his people to be clasped and compassed therewith; therefore to show his mercy and power toward them, & to magnify his own honor, he sent them deliverance and brought them out of that horrible servitude and captivity.

[Use 1] This gracious dealing of God admonisheth the enemies of God, into whose hands he hath for a time delivered his people to be Lord's over them, not too much to tyrannize and triumph over them: because howsoever God suffer them to be under their power for a while, that they lift up their hands against them, and trample them under their feet, yet the Lord will not forget either to be just or merciful, he will take them out of the snare of the hunter: and the more they have insulted over them in the pride of their hearts, the greater shall be their deliverance: yea their deliverance shall be the cause of the destruction of these enemies. Thus did Moses speak to the Israelites, *These Egyptians which ye have seen, ye shall never see them again anymore forever.* Exod. 14, 13. So then we may conclude the woeful and wretched condition of all the Churches enemies, because albeit they seem for a time to be as it were Lord's of the earth, and to have power in themselves to do what pleaseth them, yet their turn shall be the next, and their destruction sleepeth not. For when the Israelites were delivered out of the hands of the Egyptians that were cruel masters over them, it was not only the cause of their shame, but of their destruction also, as appeareth in the death of all the first borne, and in that he drowned *Pharaoh* and his host in the red sea: so that these things being duly considered, the wicked have no cause at all to triumph and insult over the children of GOD when they have gotten them in subjection under them.

Secondly, this teacheth every soul that [Use 2] belongeth to God, if he fall into this captivity and estate to be ruled by cruel Lord's, that they should suffer it with all patience: this is but for a while, *Heaviness may abide at evening, but joy cometh in the morning,* Psal. 30, for God will surely deliver them. What though the bondage be sharp and bitter? yet this must be their comfort, they shall have deliverance out of all, and ought to nourish such hope in them, that although they see no means of deliverance, yet they must look up to God, and wait his leisure, and in the ende they are sure of an happy issue, Exod. 3, 9. God never afflicteth us

without just cause, and therefore we should look upon our selves, and search our own hearts: and labor to bear patiently our afflictions, whatsoever they be, whether they come before or after repentance. For doubtless whosoever shall search his own ways, shall not only find that God hath been just in punishing his sins, but that he hath also been merciful in not laying greater judgments upon him, as justly he might have done; and therefore he ought not to murmur against him, but patiently to bear his hand, knowing that the greatest punishments that almighty God inflicteth upon us are nothing so great as those which we have deserved at his hands.

Thirdly, we ought all to labor to be members [Use 3] of the true Church, that so these privileges may belong unto us. It is a very great honor to live under God's protection, and to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. If we be delivered at any time from dangers, acknowledge that it is God's preservation, and be thankful for it.

This should put us in mind of two things: first, that if we happen to live under such a judgment, we must stoop down our necks under this yoke, and humble our selves under the most mighty hand of God, that hath brought so fearful a judgment upon us. For if we think it to be a judgment, when the earth bringeth not forth her fruit unto us; then much more may we think it to be a judgment, when the earth is not able to bear a man, but casteth and vomiteth him out into captivity, as the stomach doth gross and evil humors out of the body. For this cause doeth the Lord charge the Israelites to keep his statutes and his judgments, *That the Land do not spew them out also when they defile it, as it spewed out the Nations that were before them*, Levite. chapter 18. verse 25, 28. & 20. verse 22. And afterward he showeth, that if they did not walk obediently before him, the land whither he bringeth them to dwell therein, should spew them out; as Reu. 3, 16. Of all judgments to be carried into captivity, is one of the greatest. The very mercies of the wicked are cruelty. *David made choice to be under the plague and pestilence, rather then to fly before the enemy, because he is unmerciful.*

We sit under our own Vines and Fig-trees, we have seen no invasion, nor heard any complainings in our streets: we know not what bondage meaneth, or to be carried captives into a strange Land: howbeit it is apparent that we have been very near unto it, as near to the pit as could be, and yet not fallen into the same. For, if the Gunne-powder Treason had taken place, which was very near unto the time appointed for the execution of it, we had long ere this been in slavery and bondage again unto the bloody Papists, who have long lain in wait for such a day: and albeit that be defeated, and all their imaginations be scattered as chaff before the wind; yet who knoweth how near we may be to as great captivity? We are secure, and put away the evil day far from us, but the greater our security is, the nearer our captivity may be. We have close and secret enemies amongst us, never more lusty, and never more courageous then they are at this day, which are left to remain amongst us *to be pricks in our eyes, and Thorns in our sides, and to vex us in the Land wherein we dwell*, verse 55.

These never leave plotting and conspiring our overthrow and destruction. We hear of rumors of War abroad, and spreadings of errors and heresies, which threaten ruin both to Church and Common-wealth; these are but the beginnings of sorrow. Again, if we look unto

our selves, our sins are very great, and call continually for vengeance unto heaven at God's hands, and no doubt he is coming down to see whether we have done altogether according to the cry which is come unto him. All these laid together and weighed as it were in a balance, what can we in reason and justice expect, but that GOD deliver us into the enemies hands, and suffer them to carry us captive, and so make slaves and bondmen of us?

Secondly, if any desire to enjoy the land wherein he dwelleth in peace and safety, let him labor not to pollute and defile it by his sins.

The Jews had a promise of God to be his people, yet because of their sins, he suffered them to be carried into captivity, where they remained long in a strange land. Have we any greater privilege then they? or may we expect to escape? No, if we follow them in contempt of the word and other open sins, we shall be sure to follow them also in the punishment which will be answerable to our iniquities.

Lastly, this assureth us that as GOD delivereth his people from temporal danger and bondage, so he will deliver them much more from spiritual bondage. For if he will deliver our bodies, he will much more deliver our souls; that *being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life*, Luke 1, 74, 75.

Wherefore we ought patiently to wait his leisure, knowing that if he have such a special care of our bodies that must lie in the dust, to set them free from temporal bondage, he will much rather deliver our souls from spiritual bondage, wherein Satan holdeth us. When Christ our Savior would show that he came to redeem the souls of men, he taught them by delivering their bodies from diseases.

For when he restored sight to the blind by opening their eyes, what did it signify but that he came to scatter the darkness of the mind, and to make them see that before saw not the light of the truth? as Math. 4, 16, *The people that sate in darkness saw great light: and to them that sate in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.*

The Prophets in the time of the Law smote the people with blindness, that they knew not what they did, neither whither they went, 2 Kings 6, 18: as the Angels did the Sodomites, so *that they wearied themselves to find the door*, Gen. 19, 11.

But Christ, to show that *he came to seek and to save that which is lost*, restored sight to the blind, and opened the eyes of their understandings: when he healed the bodies of such as were lame and halted, what was it but a teaching of them that he came to heal the broken-hearted? to preach deliverance to the captives? and to set at liberty them that were bruised?

When he raised some to life from the dead, what did it teach and show, but that he is able to raise out of the grave of sin and to give the life of the spirit? When he cleansed the lepers, what was it but a making known to the world, that he will cleanse from the foul and filthy leprosy of sin? And when he did cast out devils that possessed the bodies of men, what was it but to show that he casteth the devils out of the hearts and consciences, where they desire to dwell as in an house? If then it be no small comfort unto us to know that the Lord will

deliver his people from an earthly bondage: certainly it cannot but minister much more comfort unto us to consider that the Lord is more careful of our souls; and if he be mindful of us for things of this life, he cannot be forgetful of us for the life to come, seeing he hath sent his only begotten Son, to the end, that all which believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

7 And they removed from Etham, and turned again to Pihahiroth, &c.

8 And they departed from before Pihahiroth, and passed through the midst of the sea, &c.

9 And they removed from Marah, and came unto Elim, &c.

9 And they removed from the desert of Sinai, and pitched at Kibroth Hattaauah.

36 And they removed from Ezion-gaber, and pitched in the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh.

38 And Aaron the Priest went up into mount Hor, at the commandment of the Lord, and died there, &c.

40 And King Arad the Canaanite, &c.

48 And they departed from the mountains of Abarim, and pitched in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho.

49 And they pitched by Jordan from, &c.

Here we have a short abridgement of the forty two mansions and journeys of Israel during their abode in the wilderness, until they passed over Jordan, and entered into the land promised to their fathers. The twelve former journeys they dispatched the two first years: for they abode at Sinai where the Law was given, an whole year and more. From Sinai to Kadesh which is in the wilderness of Zin, they finished 31 mansions, in thirty and seven years with the beginning of the 38, year. And in the fortieth year which was the last of their wandering in the wilderness, they dispatched and finished the other nine mansions.

These journeys of the Israelites Moses setteth down in diverse places, as Exodus 13, 17: when Pharaoh had let the people go, *God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near: for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: but God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the red sea.* This is

further declared, Exod. 14, and 15: and in other Chapters following. Of these journeys also we have seen in part before in this book. And Moses in the book of Deuteronomy, chapt. 1, 31, putteth the people in remembrance, that *they had seen in the wilderness, how the Lord their God bare them (as a man doth bear his son) all the way: that they went.* And in the Chapter following he telleth them how they took their journey in that great and terrible wilderness, by the way of the red sea, and compassed mount Seir many days. In these several mansions and stations, many memorable accidents fell out, which Moses by naming the places would have them to consider, that none of all the works and miracles of God might be forgotten, neither their own stubbornness and rebellion, nor the greatness of the mercies of God toward them, as Psalm 102, 19. *This shall be written for the generation to come, and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord:* and Psalm 78, 6, *That the generation to come might know them, and the children which should be borne, who should arise, and declare them to their children.*

The land of Canaan promised to the fathers was fair and fruitful, flowing with milk & honey; but the way unto it was rough and ragged, like the way of *Jonathan* to the Philistines, 1, Sam. 14, 13: which was sharp and steepy, to which he and his armor-bearer crept with hand and foot. Hence it came to pass, that the people of God, being delivered out of the land of Egypt by a mighty hand and out-stretched arm, did enter into a sea of troubles, not only at the red sea, but while they trotted and traveled up & down the wilderness, sometimes they went forward, and sometimes *they went backward*, Numb. 14, 25: sometimes they marched, and sometimes they retired, and never stood at one certain and settled stay. Besides, they met with many enemies, open and secret, which they were to encounter withal, all which in the end they saw destroyed: albeit not all at one time, but by little and little, & at last after many dangers escaped, and infinite troubles over-passed, under the happy conduct of *Joshua*, they found rest and peace in the promised land.

Now let us come to the uses of all these [Use 1] things toward our selves: forasmuch as if we consider them aright, they were as figures to them, & as glasses to us, to behold in them spiritual things. And first we see hereby what the life of a true Christian is. The charges of a Christian building is great. If we will be the disciples of Christ, we must not imagine that we shall lead a soft, easy, and pleasant life, in hight of honor, in abundance of riches, in pride of life, in rivers of pleasure, as if we were in another Paradise: or to be clad in purple, and to fare deliciously and sweetly every day, Luke 16: but we must know *the gate is straight, and the way is narrow that leadeth to life*, Math. 7: we must sit down and cast our accounts what our profession will cost us, and resolve to forsake all that we have for the Name of Christ, and account nothing so precious or dear which we cannot or will not forgo. Such was the whole life of the Patriarchs and Prophets, such was the life of Christ and his Apostles, and such is the life of all the faithful servants of God. They endured afflictions, they suffered reproaches, they resisted unto blood. They had fears without, and terrors within. They had experience of many miseries, they felt sharp storms, and mighty tempests that went over their heads. This Christ our Savior showeth, *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you*, John. 15, 19. And in another place, *Whosoever will be my disciple, must take up his cross and follow me*, Math. 16, 24. And hereunto the Apostle accordeth, teaching that *through manifold afflictions we must enter into the kingdom*

of God, Acts 14, 22. Christ and the cross go always hand in hand, and accompany each other. If we will live with Christ, we must first die with him: if we will reign with Christ, we must suffer with him, 2 Tim. 2, 11, 12. So then they are greatly and grossly deceived, that suppose all such to be highly in God's favor that flourish and prosper in the world, and such to be the worst sort of people, whom God doth most commonly strike and correct with his hand: having forgotten that he doth not here keep an ordinary rate below, to punish everyone as he is worst; and to favor or cocker him as he is best: But he singleth out such as pleaseth him, and maketh them examples to others to serve for their instruction, and in them willeth and warneth us to look upon our selves.

[Use 2] Secondly, as the children of Israel traveled up and down in the wilderness, and went from place to place, from one station to another, whereas Moses reckoneth up 42 in this Chapter: so it is with all the faithful here upon the earth, they must testify and profess themselves to be pilgrims and strangers in the world, because we abide not in our own country.

This David confessed unto God, Psalm 39 12, that *he was a stranger and a foreigner as all his fathers were*. This also the Apostle witnesseth of the fathers, Heb. 11, 13, *They died in faith, and received not the promises, but saw them afar off, and believed them, and received them thankfully, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth*. Strangers be not inhabitants, and traualiers be not liegers and continuers in one place. This should teach us to use this world as though we used it not: to buy as though we possessed not: considering that the fashion of this world goeth away, and the glory of man fadeth as the flower.

We must cast off all lettes that may stay and hinder us in our journey, like unto travelers, who will carry nothing with them in the way, but that which may help and further them to their journeys end. If they find by experience anything to clog them, they will cast it from them, as *the blind man cast away his cloke*, Mark 10, 50, that he might run with speed to him that called him; and rather lose their present profit, then lack the place of blessedness to which we are going. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, causeth unto us a far more excellent, and an eternal weight of glory, while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Let us therefore learn contentation of heart in every estate of life which GOD will bring upon us.

Let us, while we converse upon the earth, have our conversation in Heaven, and live as citizens of that kingdom, accounting our selves here to be from home, esteeming this life a place of banishment, and sighing to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and restored to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. We all desire to inherit God's kingdom, as *Balaam* desired to die the death of the righteous, but we would not willingly be sojourners here. Sojourning importeth a temporary abode, not a settled life, but a passing forward in hope of translatiō to a better estate: we must all embrace and receive this as a ruled case, that every citizen of Heaven is a pilgrim on earth, Genes. 47, 9. 1 Chronic. 29, 15. 1 Peter 1, 17, and 2, 11, 12.

If then we desire to be citizens of God's kingdom, we must behave our selves as pilgrims on the earth. We are as it were exiles and banished men in a foreign land, ought we not then to desire earnestly and heartily to come into our own country, and among our own people? Whosoever hath a rich patrimony in his own country, great wealth, much honor, noble friends, and is forced for a season to sojourne in a strange land, among strangers, nay enemies, where he is evilly entreated, reproached, reviled, disturbed, and persecuted on every side; certainly he will set his heart and affections upon nothing there, but all his mInde is set upon his country, desiring above all things to return and come again thither.

Thus it ought to be with us: our country is in heaven, where we have an everlasting inheritance, and an incorruptible treasure, and are pilgrims upon the earth, where we are hated and assaulted by Satan, the world, and the flesh; and are daily subject to sundry troubles and infirmities. What folly therefore is it, to place our happiness and felicity upon the earth, and to set our hearts upon earthly things?

[Use 3] Thirdly, the people of God during their abode in the wilderness, (after they were called out of the bondage of Egypt) did not go forward toward the land of Canaan with a constant and a settled course, but made many stays and delays: sometimes they marched forward with a courageous resolution under the banner of God and his servant Moses; and sometimes they retired backward *by the way of the red sea toward Egypt*, and often wished themselves again in Egypt, *When they remembered the fish which they did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leekes, the onions, and the garlic*, Numb. 14, 25, and 11, 5. These do the Jews delight in to this day, which maketh them loathsome and unsavory, which diet their fathers learned in Egypt. So it is with us, being called with an holy calling to the knowledge of the Gospel.

True it is, we do here run for a prize, this life is the race, the runner in it is every true Christian, the Angels are the beholders, eternal life is the Crown for which we strive, the high Judge of all is God, the enemies that seek to subvert and supplant us are Satan, the world, and our corruptions, against which we are to wrestle with might and main as for life and death: yet we begin slowly, and set forward faintly, and being entered into the way, we make many starting-holes that stay us in our course, that we do not proceed with such a good courage and settled resolution as becometh us.

The truth hereof we may behold in all the faithful throughout all ages of the Church, who have found hard beginnings in their first calling, an unwillingness to yield, a difficulty to resolve, an untowardness to enter, a backwardness to proceed, and a dullness to persevere. The Lord appeared unto *Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and called him to speak to Pharaoh, and to bring his people the children of Israel out of Egypt*, Exodus 3, 2, and 4, 1: but he maketh many exceptions and replies to the call of God. And to the end to pull his neck out of the yoke, sometimes he alleged theit infidelity, that they will not believe that GOD appeared unto him: sometimes he objecteth his own infirmity, that he was not eloquent, but slow of speech, & slow of tongue: and sometimes he breaketh out into open obstinacy, denying to yield unto the voice of God, saying, *Send by the hand of him whom thou shouldest send*. So *Jeremiah* had many excuses and exceptions, when the word of the Lord came unto him, that

he had sanctified and ordained him to be a Prophet unto the Nations; for he replied by and by, *O Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child*, Ier, 1, 3,

The like we see in *Jonah, who fled from the presence of God*, because of the charge enjoined to him to go to Nineue, Jonah 1, 3. *Lot*, albeit a righteous man, whose heart was grieved for the unclean conversation of the Sodomites, yet being called to depart out of Sodom, did linger and loiter behind in his departure, his pleasures whispered him in one ear, and his profits rounded him in the other, so that he prolonged the time, and the Angels caught him, his wife, and two daughters by the hand (the Lord being merciful unto him) *they brought him forth, and set him without the city*, Gen. 19, 16.

The disciples that were called of Christ, made sundry delays, *one would first go and bury his father*, and afterward he would return and attend upon Christ, Luke 9, 39: another would first *go bid his friends farewell* which were at his house, and when he had more leisure Christ should be served. So it fared with them that were bidden to the marriage-feast, who all with one consent began to make excuses; the first said, *I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: and another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come*, Luke, 14, 18, 19, 20, Math, 22, 5.

Thus we see our nature is slow and untoward to follow the Lord, we shift off and shrink back as long as we can, and many goodly excuses our corrupt flesh findeth to linger and put from us all true obedience to Christ Jesus. Faine we would seem desirous to follow God to come unto Heaven, but we are loath to soil *and defile our feet*, Cant. 5, 3: so that we must be violently thrust forward, before we will yield, so sturdy and stubborn our necks are, John. 6, 44. We see y^e truth of this in *Nicodemus*, he bare a love to Christ, and a liking to his doctrine; but first he came to him by night for fear of the Jews, John. 3, 2: afterward he waxed more bold in the cause of Christ before the face of the Pharisees, and that in the open day (though he received a check) John. 7, 50: and lastly, he shown himself more constant and zealous in professing himself to be one of his disciples in the burial of Christ.

The like we see in *Joseph of Arimathea*, who at the first was a *disciple of Jesus secretly*, John. 19 38: but after declared himself manifestly in the costly and honorable burial of his Master.

Thus it appeareth that *the Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which is one of the least of all seeds*, Matthew 13, 31: and that the Elect themselves are brought on by small degrees; their hands hang down, their knees are weak, they go halting and limping, and quickly turn out of the right way: they hang off and on a great while, they meet with many lettes and incombrances, both at home in themselves, and abroad in others.

And albeit for further proof and certainty of this point it were sufficient to send every man (that knoweth what true vocation and conversion mean) home to his own doors, to examine his own heart; yet consider, I pray you, briefly the heavenly calling of *Saint Augustine*, as it is testified by himself in his books of confession. For when God began to speak to his conscience, he felt a world of temptations, he was tossed and troubled with infinite combats and conflicts between the flesh and the spirit, between God drawing on the one side, and the flesh, the world, and the devil holding back on the other part. His pleasures past presented

themselves before his eyes, and he thought he might prolong the time, at length he began to break through this army of enemies, and to speak unto God after this manner, O Lord, how long wilt thou suffer me thus? how long, how long shall I say, tomorrow, and tomorrow? why should I not do it now? why should there not be an end of my filthy life, even at this hour? Then he was bidden to take up and read in the Scripture, after which followed his wonderful and final conversion, joined with much weeping and lamentation. This difficulty the Apostle found in his practice, that when he would do good, he was so yoked, that evil was present with him: *he did delight in the Law of God concerning the inner man, yet he saw another law in his members, rebelling against the law of his mind, and leading him captive unto the law of sin, so that he did not those things which he would, but the euils which he would not he did,* Rom. 7.21, 22, 23, 29. This should teach us to call upon God by earnest prayer that we may receive of him the presence of his grace, & the assistance of his Spirit, that we may override all doubts and difficulties that would stay us, and so entangle us in the snares of sin. Let us use all holy and lawful means to strengthen our faith, that we may proceed from faith to faith, and grow in the graces of God, until we come to be perfect men in Jesus Christ. And let us not doubt of our calling, when we see, to y^e grief of our hearts, and the discomfort of our souls, such wants and weaknesses in us; it is not otherwise with us then with all the faithful: but let us strive and fight against these lettes which would withdraw our minds from God, and take heed *we quench not the Spirit, nor grieve him by whom we are sealed unto the day of redemption,* 1 Thessalon. 5, 19. Ephes. 1, 30.

And although Satan and the world make never so much suit unto us, to entertayne the pleasures of sin, *which are but for a season,* and sing never such sweet songs to enchant us and lull us asleep in carnal security, let us stop our ears, and strengthen our hearts against such lusts as fight against the soul. We see sundry persons after their calling by the preaching of the word, and after a long profession of the faith, to turn back again *as the dog to his vomit,* 2 Peter 2, 22, Prouerb. 26, 11. 2 Timoth. 4, 4: some to their vain company, others after the love of the world, the lusts of the flesh the cares of this life, and grow to be more filthy and profane then they were before. Let us take heed of such dangerous examples, their doings are evil, their fall is fearful, & their end will be more fearful without repentance and practicing of their first works.

Fourthly, we see the people of God, before [Use 4] they could enter into the land of Canaan, were constrained to buckle and encounter with sundry enemies, the Amalekites, the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Bashanites, the Midianites, and sundry others, Exodus 17, 8. Numbers 21, 1, and 31, 1, 2, &c. all which in the end they subdued, so that not one of them was able to look them in the face. Thus it fareth with all the faithful in this life. As soon as we enter into the race of Christianity, by and by we must expect many and sundry enemies, y^t cross us in the way, some secret y^t seek to undermine us, some open, that with all violence fly upon us, and drive against us, & both seek to overthrow us: yea, such as before our calling seemed our friends and familiars, now begin to reject and renounce us, now fall to nod the head at us, and to set themselves against us, because *it seemeth strange to them that we run not with them into the same excess of riot, and therefore they speak evil of us; which shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and dead,* 1 Peter 4, 5.

It is noted concerning Christ by the Evangelist, that before he entered upon the work of his high calling, to preach the Gospel, and shown himself a Redeemer to Israel, *he increased in wisdom and stature, and grew in favor with God and man*, Luke 2, 52: but when once he left his private life in the private house of *Joseph* where he was brought up, and set upon the office whereunto he was appointed, albeit he continued in the favor of God, as *his only begotten Son in whom he is well pleased*, Matthew 3, 17: yet he grew out of favor with men who were not contented with him.

Paul, before his conversion, was in great estimation with the Pharisees, and obtained letters of them, to put in prison all them that called upon the Name of Christ: but when he began to preach faith in Christ which before he persecuted and sought to destroy, he lost their favor and friendship, as appeareth in that they plotted his death, and sought his life to take it away, more vehemently and violently then he had practiced against the disciples.

Let us not therefore think it strange that we meet with many enemies, cunning, subtle, cruel, and malicious; but seek to be at peace with God, and reconciled unto him, and then *if God be with us, who shall be against us?* Rom. 8, 31.

[Use 5] Fifthly, the enemies of Israel, albeit they were overthrown and defeated, yet were not all discomfited and consumed at once, but by little and little, sometimes one, and then afterward another, as they did not arise and appear all together: so it is evermore with his Church to the end of the world. We shall never be without some enemies. God will ever try the faith and patience of his children. When *David* sate at home, and went not to war against his enemies, he was surprised by a subtle enemy whom he never suspected, and fell into two grievous sins, adultery and murder, 2 Sam. 11, 1, 4, 1 Chron. 20, 1. The water by standing still, gathereth filth, mud, and corruption. The iron by lying still, gathereth rust. The Church free from enemies oftentimes groweth secure: and the godly are ready *to say in their prosperity, they shall never be removed*, Psal. 30, 6. Let all the wicked therefore know, that their peace and prosperity cannot give them assurance (though they endure long) of the favor and love of God, but he will bring down his judgments upon them, when they have filled up the measure of their sins. And albeit for a time they escape, yet they are appointed to wrath and destruction, forasmuch as the Lord is jealous, and the Lord avengeth, *he will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies*, Nah. 1, 2. Yea, thus it shall be with the spiritual enemies of our souls and of our salvation, albeit they have received their death's wound, and are crushed in the head, that they can never fully recover their strength, but shall finally be subdued; yet they are always hissing and stinging, they are trying & tempting the members of Christ. So long as we are Christ's, we must look for the devil and his Angels to set themselves against us. They will take no denial or repulse, but being beaten and vanquished, will gather their forces, and unite their power together, to build up the kingdom of darkness. When he tempted Christ in the wilderness, and received a notable foil and glorious overthrow in all those several combats, and had ended his temptations that he had prepared, *he departed from him but a little season*, Luke 4, 13. As he dealt with the head in the wilderness, so he dealeth with the members in this world, we must never look to be wholly rid of this importunate enemy. Whensoever he leaveth us, it is not as a confession

that he is utterly convicted and confounded; for it fareth with him as with one that wrestled, who, how soever he spedde, would always persuade the standers by, that he gave him the fall and foil that buckled and clasped with him: and so it is when we wrestle with *these principalities and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places*, they will never yield the victory, but rather gather their broken and disbanded companies, leuy new forces, provide and procure stronger weapons, and make better provision and preparation against us. If then he depart from us, and break up his siege, it is not to free us from danger, and to take a truce with us, but to muster a fresh army, and to take us at an advantage, if he see us to grow secure: and therefore let us never promise rest unto our selves from his assaults, so long as we continue here, and carry about us this earthly Tabernacle; but always stand upon our gard and in our watch-tower, to be ready for his coming and returning, that so resisting him, (being strong in faith) he may fly from us, I am. 4, 7. 1 Pet. 5, 8, 9. Yea, let this serve as a great comfort and consolation to those that have experience of his manifold assaults and inuasions, that they never distrust or despair, though their troubles be many, though their temptations be great & continual, seeing this was the lot and portion of Jesus Christ the Son of GOD, *Who shall tread down Satan under their feet shortly*, Rom. 16, 20.

Lastly, the people of Israel, after the enduring [Use 6] of all their troubles and afflictions, after the experience of many sorrows and miseries that came upon them, had rest given unto them, and victory over all their enemies round about them, so that they were safely brought into the land of promise, where they inherited and possessed *cities that they built not, houses full of all manner goods which they filled not, welles which they digged not, vineyards, and oliues which they planted not*, and saw all the good things performed which the Lord had promised unto them. This serveth to comfort the children of God, though for a time they sustain many injuries, bear many disgraces, receive many losses, feel many pinches & instraightments, yea many fierce and fiery trials, it is but while they wander in the wilderness, they are not yet come into Canaan the place of rest; howbeit the blessedness of the issue and end of all, will fully recompense the hardness of the way, and make amends and satisfaction for all their sorrows, being fully assured that *the afflictions of this present world are not worthy of the glory which shall be shown unto us hereafter, for then God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes*, Rom. 8, 19. Revel. 7, 16, 17. Thus God giveth comfort to his servants, after they have been humbled in this vale of misery. They shall hunger no more, they shall thirst no more, they shall want no more. Then this corruptible shall put on incorruption, this mortal shall put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory, 1 Cor. 15, 53 54. This made the Apostle say, *Blessed are they that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them*, Revel. 14, 13. This must make us to make light & ittle account of this transitory life, and of the vain profits, pleasures, honors, and friendship thereof, all which are as dung in comparison of the profit, pleasure, and honor that shall be enjoyed in the next life. Let us lay a good foundation in this life, and begin our heaven while we are here upon the earth. Let us make the first entrance into it in this mortal body which we carry about us, that so this work may be finished and fully accomplished in the life to come.

50 And the Lord spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying,

51 Speak unto the thildren of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan.

52 Then shall ye drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places.

53 And ye shall dispossess, &c.

54 And ye shall divide the land by lot, &c.

55 But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come to pass, that these which ye let remain of them, shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.

56 Moreover it shall come to pass, that I shall do unto you, as I thought to do unto them.

The second part of the Chapter followeth in these words, which is the Commandment of GOD touching the Israelites when they should come into the Land. The Law hath two parts, the charge to cast out the Canaanites, and to destroy Idolatry. To their obedience he promiseth possession and dwelling in the Land; but if they suffer any to remain, they should be dangerous, troublesome, and hurtful unto them, and God will punish them for their coldness and carelessness in the execution of his will. In this place we see, that God is very patient and of much long-sufferance, he had suffered the Canaanites four hundred years, but when in the mean season they repented not, they are appointed to destruction. We see also the horrible judgment of God against the sin of Idolatry, for which kingdoms and cities are destroyed. [Object.] The question may be asked, whether Idolaters be now to be killed, and Idols to be pulled down and destroyed, as God in this place commandeth the Israelites? I answer, [Answer.] this commandment is not general, neither belongeth to all without limitation and exception: nay, as it was given to the Israelites, it did strictly pertain only to the Canaanites, whose land was given them to possess. And now it belongeth to Christian Magistrates to pull down all idols, and to abolish superstition, and the occasions of both, and to purge their dominions from all such abominations, 2 Kings 18, 4: and to cause the word of God to be truly preached to root the same out of their hearts, and to offer means of conference to turn the seduced from their blind devotion. As for private men, they have no warrant to pull down images, which is the next way to move sedition and rebellion: it is

sufficient for them to withhold worship from them, and they must tolerate those things which are not in their power to reform.

Again, it may be demanded, [Object.] whether all pictures are to be defaced and destroyed, and all molten images to be quite pulled down. I answer, pictures and images are not all of one sort, neither are set up for one end. [Answ.] Some have a civil use, and some a religious. Such as are for civil use only, may be retained: but such as are set up for Religions sake, are to be defaced, and this is the meaning of the commandment, *Thou shalt not make to thee any graven image*. Now in that the Lord forbiddeth his people to spare the idolatrous Canaanites, and commandeth them to root them out utterly, we learn, that no familiarity is to be used with Idolaters, but we are carefully to avoid their company, Hos. 4, 15. Deuteron, 7, 5. Psalm 16.4. and 106, 35.36. Judges 2, 2, 1 Corinth. 8, 9, and 10, 21, 2 Cor. 6, 17, Isaiah 52, 11.

The grounds follow. First, because whosoever [Reason 1] will avoid any sin, must also avoid the means whereby they may be induced and ensnared to fall into it. Now among all inducements to draw us to a communion of wickedness, the society and familiarity with wicked men is one of the greatest & most dangerous. This *David* acknowledgeth, and therefore being resolved to yield obedience to God, first he banisheth ungodly persons from his company, and then goeth cheerfully forward in his course, Psal. 119, 115, *Depart from me ye wicked doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God*. Secondly, our nature is prone and inclinable to idolatry, and therefore by their company, by their example, by their practice, by their persuasions, and by their doctrine we may easily be corrupted, as the Lord himself threateneth, that *their gods should be a snare unto them*, Judge. 2, 3. Hence it is that the Prophet persuadeth the people of Judah not to go to Gilgal and Beth-auen, lest joining with the superstitious Israelites, they should be infected with their idolatry, Hosea 4, 15.

This serveth to reprove such as delight in the company of idolatrous Papists to be their [Use 1] inward and nearest friends, which are guilty of most palpable idolatry, no less then the Jews that set up the golden calf and danced before it, Exod. 32. Secondly, such as travel for pleasure and delight into popish and idolatrous places, where they expose themselves oftentimes to inevitable dangers by cōsorting and conversing with such as are ready to allure them to commit idolatry, to go into their idolatrous temples to see and hear, and afterward to fall down before their images. These are led by curiosity or by commodity to do that which is not convenient. Thirdly, this meeteth with their corruption, who for wealth, or friends, or other worldly, I may say wicked respects, link themselves in the nearest society of marriage with Popish idolaters, taking and nourishing in their bosoms a serpent, which is ever at hand day and night to tempt and entice them to forsake their covenant with God, to renounce his pure worship, and to embrace idolatry and superstition, 2 Cor. 6, 14. This was the sin of the sons of God before the flood, *when they saw the daughters of men, and joined themselves with them*, Genes. 6, 1, 2: this matching with them brought a flood of wickedness, and the flood of wickedness brought upon the whole world a flood of waters, wherein all flesh perished. This was *Solomon's* sin, notwithstanding all his wisdom, whereby he was drawn into idolatry, 1 Kings 11, 4. Nehem. 13, 26: *There was no king like him over all Israel, nevertheless, even him did out-landish women cause to sin*. This was the cause of the great

wickedness of *Ahab* (who sold himself to work evil in the sight of God) because he took *Jezebel* to wife, 1, Kings 16, 31. And wherefore did *Jehoram* forsake the steppes of his godly father, and commit gross idolatry, but because he linked himself in an idolatrous stock, and married the daughter of *Ahab*? 2 Kings 8, 18. Mal. 2, 11. Ezra 10, 1, 2, 3. Lastly, they are to be reprov'd, who are present with their bodies before the abominable idol of the Mass, whether it be of a fancy, or for fashion, whether of curiosity, or for fear of punishment; and to bow down to an image, thinking to be excused if they reserve their hearts to God, whereby they rob God of his glory, they give scandal and offense to the weak brethren, they spoil the Lord of his right, they cast themselves willfully into desperate danger, they deprive themselves of a good testimony of their own salvation; and lastly, they deny the Lord JESUS and his truth before men, and therefore must take heed that *he deny not them before his Father in Heaven*, Math. 10, 33. [Object.] Neither let them think this any defense or comfort unto them, that they reserve their hearts to God, [Answ.] and for his pure worship: For if this were true, then were the holy Martyrs of God simple fools, that were content to endure all torments, yea to lay down their lives for a testimony to the truth, rather then give the least outward approbation to idolatry. Then were those three servants of God greatly deceived, who chose rather to be cast into the fiery furnace, then bow down to the idol that was set up, Dan. 3, 18: we are bought with a great price, and therefore *we must glorify God in our body and in our spirit, for they are God's*, 1 Cor. 6, 20. Rom. 12, 1. Mat. 4, 9, Exod. 20, 4. 1 John. 5, 21. What husband would endure, that his wife should prostitute her body to commit whoredom, albeit she should pretend and protest, that she reserved her heart chaste and pure for him only? Then how much less will the Lord admit such a bad and blind excuse, when they that profess themselves to be his spouse shall commit spiritual whoredom with idols in their bodies?

Secondly, we must learn from hence that [Use 2] it is impiety to worship images with any kind of worship whatsoever. For if we be commanded to abstain from familiarity with them that be idolaters, much more are we charged to abstain from idols, and from all worship of the idols. It is a grievous sin to give the honor of God (whereof he is jealous) to any but only to himself. To rob God, and thereby to enrich another, must needs be acknowledged to be a sinful and wicked practice: much more then is it a sin to give the same to such base stuff as stocks & blocks, and stones, and images. Not to honor the king is wickedness. To give the honor due to the King to his Peers and Nobles, must needs be a greater sin and offense: but to give it to a base and contemptible person, must needs be greater wrong and wickedness then any of the rest. So is it in this case, for men not to honor God is evil: to give his honor to any mortal man is more sinful: but for a man made after the image of God to give it to base and senseless idols, is most wicked of all, which are the works of men's hands. The basest image-maker that liveth, is far better then the image that liveth not: as the workman is better then the work. And what a gross and senseless thing is it, that the living image of the living should perform worship or service to the dead image of a dead Saint? It were much better therefore and less absurd, to worship him that made y^e image, who is the creature of God, then the image it self which is the creature of man. So then we oght carefully to take heed to our selves, that we worship not any image or idol with any worship whatsoever. It is not lawful for a subject to worship his Prince, or for a son to worship his father with any

religious worship; much less lawful is it then for a man to worship such things as these, that have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, feet and walk not, neither doth any sound pass from them. A man would be much ashamed to be found or seen worshipping a tree that groweth, a bird or beast that liveth: much more then ought we to be ashamed of this gross kind of worship, that we should bow down to such things as are beholding to us for their form and fashion: so that there is far more reason, that the image should worship his maker, then the maker worship the image that he made. Let us learn to fear GOD, and reverence his worship, and fly all kind of worshipping of images whatsoever, & to abhor the same as the imiattion of the Gentiles, and the very excrements of Antichrist himself. Whosoever they be that practice such impiety in these days of grace, are fallen from grace. It may be that in time of danger and persecution, a man may be forced to do that which goeth against his conscience to save life; but for a man to stand out in these times, and to approve such manner of worship, he is certainly fallen from Christ, and deserveth just condemnation and destruction; and therefore let no color, or pretence, or persuasion whatsoever draw us away to the committing of this sin, but let us labor to keep our selves pure, by cleaving to the worship and service of God, and by giving honor and glory unto him. [Object.] But they tell us, that they worship not the image of any false God. The Scripture indeed crieth out against the images of false gods, and such as are no true Saints, but we for our parts worship nothing, but the Images of the true God, and of true Saints. I answer, [Answer.] there is a great difference between the Images of true Saints and of false Saints: but there is no difference at all in the action itself: forasmuch as it is idolatry to worship the Image of the true God as well as of the false. And the reason is, because it is to give worship to that which by nature is no God at all. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were true Saints, yet if the men of *Lystra* had worshipped them, they had sinned against GOD as much as when they worshipped *Jupiter* and *Mercurius*, which were no other then feigned gods, Acts 14, 12. Therefore that distinction falleth to y^e ground Deut. 4, 15. [Object.] Isaiah 40, 18. Rom. 1.23, 1, Cor. 10, 20. Deut. 27, 15. Psal. 97, 7. But some of the Papists tell us, that images are Lay men's books to look upon. I answer, [Answ.] the Lord hath given them other books to read, when he saith, *Search the Scriptures*, John. 5, 39: hereby they shall be led into all truth, and be sure to be preserved from error and evil. But as cunning and crafty thieves, when they meet with a poor simple fool or a little child, do take their treasure or money from them, and give them babies and pictures to play withal, to keep them quiet from crying or complaining: so do the Popish sort deal with God's people, they take from them the rich treasure of the holy Scriptures, whereby all their juggling and deceit would be discerned, and give them puppets and images to be their play-fellows, which are *the doctrine of vanity*, Ierem. 10, 15. Zechariah 10, 2: and they are teachers of lies, Habakkuk 2, 18. Neither let them reply, that the Prophets condemn the images of false gods, and that they make the images of the true God. For we shown before that this cannot serve their turn, forasmuch as the commandment forbiddeth the images of the true GOD, Deuteron. 4, 12.15, Acts 17, 29.

Again, they object, [Object.] that they do not worship the images themselves, but so far as they have relation to the Saints whereof they are images.

I answer, [Answer.] the Israelites, so often reprov'd for worshipping of images, did withal profess that they worshipp'd not the idols themselves of wood or stone, but God in them, as in making the golden calf they had a respect to GOD who brought them out of Egypt, Exodus 32, 3, 4. And the mother of *Micah* witnesseth that she had dedicated *the silver unto the Lord, to make a graven and molten image*, Judges 17, 3. So *Jeroboam* having made the golden calves, saith, *Behold, O Israel, thy gods which brought thee out of the land of Egypt*, 1 Kings 12, 28: for he meaneth the image and similitude which representeth the true God, Hos. 2, 26. And not only the Israelites, who could not be so sottish as to believe that the calves which themselves had made, (and had lately made) had freed their forefathers out of captivity, but the Gentiles themselves excused their idolatry in this manner, as *Augustine* witnesseth, *I do not serve and adore that stone which I see, but I serve him whom I do not see. And who is that? a certain divine power which is invisible, which hath the charge over that image*, August. in Psalm. 9, 6. As for other objections drawn from the Cherubims, and the brazen serpent, we have spoken of them sufficiently before, chapt. 21.

Lastly, we have from hence occasion offer'd [Use 3] unto, us to laud and magnify the Name of God that hath freed us from the darkness of idolatry and the danger of Idolaters, except we will run into the same again. He hath placed us where we have the Gospel, like the Israelites in Goshen, and hath opened our eyes to see those follies. Let us not with unthankful hearts desire to return again into this servitude.

The Lord hath chosen to dwell among us, and hath planted his Church in our kingdom: let us labor to approve our obedience in his sight, lest he take the light of the truth from us, and bestow it upon a people that will bring forth the fruits thereof. So long as the true worship of God continueth among us, our country shall be famous and renowned. On the other side, all places lose their honor and dignity, when once they are defiled with sin, and consecrated to idolatry. *Gilgal* was famous many ways for many memorable things that happened there, yet through idolatry there practiced, it became so infamous, that the people of Judah are forbidden to resort thither.

The like might be said of Beth-el, which in former times was the house of God, but was afterward for the same cause turned into Beth-auen, an house of vanity, Hos. 4. Ierem. 7, 12. Psalm 78, 60. What shall we then say of the Popish pilgrimages to Rome, or to the holy land, but tax them of ignorance and superstition?

For, be it that these places retained their ancient dignity, and maintained the Religion of God in his purity; yet should there be no reason to go thither to worship, forasmuch as all difference of places is taken away, John. 4, 23. *Jerome* traueled himself to the holy land, and lived there; and yet he saith, *It is no commendation to have seen Jerusalem; but to have lived well at Jerusalem, this is praise worthy*. And *Bernard* after him, *We must not seek after the earthly, but the heavenly Jerusalem, not by pilgrimage on foot, but by bettering our affections*, Epist. 319. ad *Leibert*. Abbot.

And if God require not of us to resort to such places, though they ente•ayned the truth, then doubtless much less to travail so far unto them being now degenerate & wholly dedicated

and devoted to Antichristianity and idolatry, in which respect they are now become reproachful, hateful, and infamous to God & all goodmen. For we are not to esteem them as they were, but we must take them as they are, that is, full of superstition, and consequently dangerous to come at them.

But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, it shall come to pass, &c: shall be pricks in your eyes, &c. In these words, we see the threatening which God denounceth against the carelessness and negligence of this people in the execution of y^t commandment of God: *The Lord will do unto them*, as he had thought to do unto their enemies. From hence we learn, that coldness and carelesse in the service of God, is a great and grievous sin. Want of zeal in the cause of God, to be neuters or indifferent men, not caring or regarding which end go forward is a foul and fearful sin before him, Judges 1, 21, 27, 29, 31, 33, & 2, 2, 3. 1 Kings 18, 21, and 2 Kings 17, 33. Gal. 3, 1. Revel. 2, 4, & 3, 15, 16. Gal. 5, 7,

Such are the greatest number of our professors: Some would reconcile the Papists and us, that is, light and darkness, Christ and Belial, the Temple of God and idols. Some serve their turns by their profession, so long as they may gain and grow in credit under it. Some profess religion as they profess the Laws of the kingdom, to wit, as a civil thing, and matter of good policy to keep the people in subjection and obedience, being ready to change as the time and state changeth.

Some hate them that are faithful and forward so much, that they can abide no zeal in religion nor in obedience; that term them mad fools and giddy headed spirits which desire to fear God, and to walk according to his word.

O miserable persons! that which GOD hateth is commended, and that which he commandeth is reviled and evil spoken of.

The grounds. It is as natural to a man [Reason 1] to sin, as it is to draw the air, as experience teacheth in all subject to human infirmity; no marvel therefore if men decline, it is a part of the old leaven, for *what man is it that sinneth not?* 1 Kings 8, 46. The power of sin even in the regenerate, is as a Law; and therefore we do as we would not, Romans 7: yet not I, but that sin which dwelleth in me

Secondly, they lie under an heavy and fearful curse that do the work of the Lord negligently, which he will have executed diligently, carefully, cheerfully, and zealously: Ierem. 48, 10, *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully:* but all such as are lukewarm in the Lord's business are deceitful workmen, they are loiterers rather than laborers, and therefore they may not look to have the wages of laborers.

Thirdly, such are vexed with a spiritual consumption, losing the heat of the Spirit, and the life of grace, and fall to decay by little and little, as Revel. 2, 5, *thou hast lost thy first love.* For as they that have a consumption of the body, the natural heat decayeth and threateneth death: so such as have a consumption in the soul, the spiritual heat diminisheth and threateneth destruction. For such churches and persons become in time barren in good thing, but plentiful in evil things, Isaiah 5, 3, 4. The uses follow.

First, this reproveth the miserable times [Use 1] wherein we live, wherein men seem to be cast into a dead sleep. There is a general lethargy hath possessed us, that nothing can awake us. We have had not only the trumpet of God's word sounding in our ears; but many other judgments: but who stirreth or starteth up at the noise thereof? *Who repenteth him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? everyone turneth to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle*, Ierem. 8, 6: if we tarry till the last trumpet come, woe unto us, for that shall awaken us, and sweep away all the impenitent into hell, and none shall be able to escape.

Our Savior teacheth, that *from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*, Math. 11, 12, where he showeth that after the Gospel began to be published by the ministry of *John*, (who was sent to prepare the hearts of the people) they were very greedy and as it were covetous of the truth, and courageously brake into it with all their strength and force that they could make. Thus it was in the days of the Apostles. For as at the preaching of *John*, the soldiers, the Publican's, and people came unto him, saying, *Master, what shall we do?* so when they preached repentance in the Name of Jesus, they that heard them *were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Acts 2, 37.

But is it so in our days? alas we may say, the kingdom of darkness suffereth violence, the kingdom of this world is wholly sought after, and every man presseth into it, Luke 16, 16: but as for the kingdom of God, we are content to let it alone. Some are open enemies to the Gospel and the preaching of it, & serve Satan with all their power. Some are secure, and care for nothing, they let all alone, and sit still, like those that sate idle in the market place, and labored not in the vineyard. Some stop their ears, and harden their hearts, and when the Ministers of God will not apply themselves to their humors, they go back. Some desire to hear sweet and pleasant things, to be flattered in their sins, and to have cushions sowed under their elbows. If a son should no otherwise honor his father then we honor God, doubtless he would disinherite him and cast him off forever. Or if a servant should in such sort serve his Master, would he not put him out of his service, and turn him out of his doors? The devil hath a part of our service, & the world another, and shall we think that God will accept a third? This were to serve him to halves, or not so much. But half a man is no man, and half a Christian is no Christian. Every natural thing groweth till it be perfect, herbs, plants, trees.

Every tradesman and artificer seeketh to increase; only the Christian sitteth still, and doth nothing. God the Father left not off the work of creation, till the whole host of the creatures was ended, Genes. 2, 1. Christ Jesus ceased not the work of redemption, till it was finished, John. 17.4. A builder leaveth not off, when he hath almost built. *Paul* said, *I have finished my course*, 2 Tim. 4, 7: not almost finished; there is no comfort in this, no more then to be almost saved, which is not to be saved at all. If we be cold in God's service, we are almost his servants, that is, not at all.

Secondly, God will not be dailed withal in the matter of Religions: either we must serve him wholly, and acknowledge him thoroughly as we should, or not at all. If *Baal* be God, let us go

after him without wavering. So long as we are neither hot nor cold, we worship him in vain, and may be assured that he will spew us out of his mouth.

This is no better then to serve him with the halt, or blind, or lean, or lame, which he abhorreth. The Lord saith by the Prophet, *Cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my Name is dreadful among the Gentiles*, Mal. 1, 14. This is no better then to serve God with the off all of our affections, and to turn unto him half our face, and the other half to our own lusts and pleasures.

This is such an indignity and indecency, that a man of any place or reckoning will not take it at our hands; *Offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the Lord of hosts?* Malachi 1, 8. Take heed therefore we do not play with God. He that playeth with fire, may be scorched and consumed with the flames of it; *but our God is even a consuming fire*, Deuteronom. 4, 24, and 9, 3. Hebrews 12, 29. No man dare dally with a Prince, or with his Laws, whose wrath is as the roaring of a Lyon: *but there is one Law-giver who is able to save and to destroy*, James 4, 12. No man will be bold to jest with edge-tools, we say commonly that it is dangerous; but the Lord is a shield, *and the sword of excellency*, Deuter. 33, 29: and if his word be compared to a two edged sword going out of his mouth, Revel. 1, 16, nay if it be said to be quick and powerful, and sharper then any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart: much more must we acknowledge the author and giver thereof to be the searcher of the heart, so that there is not any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do, Hebrews 4, 12, 13. Will any that is brought before a Judge, and standeth in his presence, begin to mock and jest as with a child? But the Lord is *the Judge of the whole world*, and he will reward every man according to his works, Genes. 18, 25, and 21, 49. Deuteronom. 10, 17, Acts 17, 31. Romans 2, 5, 6, and 3, 6. So then, they are desperately evil, that dally with their own salvation, halting on both sides, swimming between two streams, and losing their first love whereby they glorified God, and adorned the profession of the Gospel.

Lastly, it is required of every good and [Use 3] faithful servant of God *to be zealous and amend*. This serveth to give a watch word and warning to the greatest number of our professors among us, such as are accounted the most peaceable of the kingdom, honest men, just dealers, and civil livers, who can say with the Pharisee in the Gospel, they are no thieves nor adulterers, nor drunkards, nor extortioners; they hurt no man, they wrong no man, they mean well to all; they follow their business quietly, they live among their neighbors peaceably, they are no medlers nor busy-bodies in other men's matters; these think themselves therefore to be in good case, to be assured of God's love and favor, to need no particular repentance: yet in the mean season they have no zeal nor care of religion in them.

But some will say, Are not the former points that you have named, good things? Do you <2 pages missing> *shalt pass, but no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed*, Job 38, 11.

[Use 1] This serveth to reprove the cursed sect of the Anabaptists, who bring in a confusion of all things, that set the heavens out of their course, and remove the earth out of his place, and break up the bars of the sea, and turn the order that God hath settled, upside down. For they can abide no private man's possessions, but would have all things common. Thus they think to make themselves like to the Apostles, but indeed they thereby resemble rather some of the Philosophers. If we should see a man come into his neighbors ground, & pull up the hedges, tear up the enclosures, rend up the fences; fill up the ditches, take away the pales, through down the walls, and remove the bounds, we would hold him an enemy to human society, and to the express ordinance of God. For wherefore hath God severed and divided people from people, with bro•d seas, deep rivers, and high mountains, but that they should not pass those bounds, nor invade the possessions of others? And this was the cause why in this place he bounded so exactly the Land of promise, and teacheth thē where it should begin, and where it should end, on the East-side, and on the West, on the North-side, and on the South. And in the book of *Joshua*, the several bounds & limits of every Tribe is severally and largely expressed and described. Hence it is, that *Solomon* saith, Prov. 22, 28. *Remove not the ancient landmarke which thy fathers have set.* This is the law of God and man, a law under the Law and the Gospel, to continue forever. True it is, the Romanists would conclude from hence, [Object.] that their errors, which have gotten foot for a few hundred years, & climbed up into the chair of *Moses*, ought to prevail and take place. But this is no better then to draw the words frō the literal meaning to an allegory, [Answer.] which by the doctrine of their own schools cannot be sound. Again, howsoever in worldly possessions, prescription of time may carry some credit, and be of some force, Judge. 11, 26, yet in the matters of God, no time (though the hayres be never so gray) can prescribe against *the ancient of days*. For if it be a prerogative royal in a temporal kingdom, as the lawyers teach, that *nullum tempus occurrit regi*, that is, no time shall bar the king, nor prejudice him of his right: then much more must we hold, that no time shall bar *the King of Kings and the Lord of Lord's* of his right, but his law must take place forever against all other laws, customs, immunities, privileges, and prescriptions whatsoever. Lastly, the doctrine of y^e Gospel which we profess, is more ancient then all the devices and inventions of men, which hath been received and believed from the infancy of the Church, and from the beginning of the world, and therefore the late and new start up religion of popery must rise up before the hoary head thereof, as the young man is commanded to honor the face of the old man.

Moreover, [Object.] whereas they allege this and urge it to procure credit and authority unto the works and writings of men, as if the sayings of the Fathers were to stand for a law; it is of no greater weight then the former. And albeit it were sufficient to say, *Let God be true, and every man a liar*, Rom. 3, 4, yet we answer [Answer.] farther, that the Fathers are for the most part against them, and refuse to be witnesses for them, as might easily appear in the main controversies between them and us. Again, as they dissent from them, so sometimes they dissent from themselves. Lastly, all the Prophets & Apostles as a cloud of witnesses stand on our side, and we teach nothing but what we have received of them, and they are our warrant.

To return then unto the former point, we see the Anabaptists are justly reprov'd, who cannot abide any bounds, or buttelles, or land-marks, neither that any should be master of his own possessions, but would have all go to spoil and havoc. And as God would have just weights and measures observed between man and man, that they might buy & sell one with another: so he would have bounds and marks also unchanged, that equity and uprightness in all our dealings might take place. For this cause *Moses saith, Cursed is he that remoueth his neighbors landmarke; and all the people shall say, Amen. Deut, 27, 17, and 19, 14.* The very heathen by the light of nature saw that such marks ought to be inviolable which of old time had been set in inheritances: and they all thought that God himself was wronged and injured in such false dealings. And because it should be accounted an holy matter, they made a god of it (according to their common manner) which they called *Terminus*, and dedicated a feast to him which they called *Terminalia*. True it is, this was a devilish invention to set up an Idol for the maintenance of equity: yet nature taught & engraued this principle in the heart of man, that if marks and bounds were not kept and maintained, an horrible confusion and disorder of all things would follow in human society, and no man could know what was his own, neither possess that which he hath in peace.

Secondly, this condemneth all encroching [Use 2] & usurpation one upon another, in kingdoms and Lordships, as well as in private possessions, when men cannot be content with their own, but would stretch the wings of their power and jurisdiction farther. *Moses saith notably in his song, Deut. 32, verse 8, that the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.* Howbeit the ambition and insatiable greediness of great men hath put all out of order, and nothing is so holy which can stay them creeping and encroching upon the bounds and borders of their neighbors. Thus they break the law of God and nature in seeking to enlarge and increase their own dominions. These justly incur the curse of the Prophet, *Woe unto them that join house to house, and lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth, Isaiah 5, 8. Hab. 2, 9, 12. Ier. 22.13. Mich. 2, 2.* For wherefore hath God separated nation from nation, and one kingdom from another people, but that all should live quietly, & communicate one with another, & that there might be no confusion or division? and therefore ought all to be contented with their own bounds. God hath made them great, but they always seek to make themselves greater: he hath set them bounds, but they will know no bounds. So then from hence we may gather that the wars which are taken in hand upon ambition and the enlarging of the bounds of their Empire only, are a despighting of God, a shedding of innocent blood, and a perverting of the order which he hath set in nature and nations. Every man therefore ought to abide in his own possession and inheritance, & not to trouble or molest one another. The ambition of *Nimrod* first began with setting up the kingdom of *Babylon*, and afterward many following his example, became desirous to win one from another. So it was with *Chedarlaomor*, who spread out his arms, and subdued the kings of *Sodom & Gomorrhah*, *Gen. 14, 4.* Thus men perverted the order that God had set in the world, like insatiable gulfs, and *mighty hunters before the Lord*, that hunted for the precious lives of men. And the cause of all is pride and ambition. We all know how in the beginning the earth was covered with water, and naturally the sea

would stand above the mountains, so that all would be overflown: It is the special goodness of God, and a testimony of his almighty power, that the dry Land appeareth whereon we set footing, and build, and plant, and dwell, & commerce one with another. Seeing then, we live here, and that the earth doth succor and sustain us, let us assure our selves that GOD showeth his pity toward us, let us serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind, and let all men content themselves with that which they have, without intermeddling within the bounds of other men: and as he hath restrained us by sundry closures, & as it were locked us up with bars not to be broken, so let us not seek to break them and so encroach upon that which he hath not given unto us.

[Use 3] Thirdly, this reproveth the greedy and covetous affections of private men, that covet to be rich, they care not by what means. But as soon as the desire of getting gain is settled in them, they are enflamed to rake to themselves by hook or by crook. All men do shun and abhor the names of thieves and robbers, they cannot abide them, they are ready to sue them that brand them with such odious titles; but if we detest them indeed, we must lay aside covetousness also. Hence it is, that *Solomon* saith, Prov. 15, 27. *He that is greedy of gain, troubleth his own house, but he that hateth gifts shall live.* Covetousness is a corrupt affection of the mind, greedily desiring and too much gaping after the riches of this life. They dream of long life, forgetting that no man's life consisteth in the abundance of his riches, Luke 12, 15. They think they shall exceedingly profit them, but by the just judgment of GOD they turn to their hurt. They think they will be as a shield or buckler to defend them from the injuries of this life, but they are turned into swords whereby they are wounded and destroyed. They have conceived a strong opinion that they will be as a wall on every side to vnderprop the house, but they prove as a double cannon to cast it down to the ground. As then he that eateth moderately, is nourished by the meat, and it abideth in the stomach, but when it is taken immoderately, the stomach is choked, and it is vomited up again: so he that greedily heapeth up riches, shall be constrained to vomit them up again, Job 20, 15. Covetousness therefore is a sin, when a man is discontented with the estate wherein God hath set him, and with those things that God hath given for the sustenance of this present life; when he murmureth against God, & the more he hath, the more he desireth; when he heapeth them up, and keepeth them, and bringeth them not forth to any godly or necessary uses; but he distrusteth the providence of God, and putteth his trust and confidence in his riches, as if he could not live without abundance of them, neither be sustained by the hand of God. The Scripture offereth sundry good meditations to move us to avoid covetousness. First, because it is forbidden of God, Matth. 6, 19. Luke 19, 13. Hebr. 13, 5. His word alone ought to be of great force to persuade us, if we had no farther reason. Secondly, because it is no less sin then a secret kind of idolatry, Col. 3, 5, as the covetous person is an Idolater, because he trusteth in his riches, not in the living God, Eph. 5, 5. Mark 10, 24. Thirdly, it cannot agree with the worship of God, but one of them expelleth another; as it is with contraries, with cold and heat, with light and darkness, Psal. 119, 36. Matth. 6, 24. Luke 16, 13. *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.* Fourthly, it is said to be *the root of all evil*, and that because it driveth and enforceth to many sins, to apostasy, to iniquity, to lying, to treachery, 1 Tim. 6, 10. 2 Kings 5, 22. Mat. 28, 13, 14, 15. Fifthly, no man's life consisteth in the multitude of his possessions, Lu.

12, 15. Sixthly, we are called to a better life, and we have a kingdom promised unto us that cannot be shaken, reserved for us in heaven, and therefore we should set our affections above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of his Father, Col. 3, 1, 2. Luke 12, 32. Seventhly, it is an insatiable evil, as a gulf that swalloweth whatsoever is cast into it, and as the poor, ill-favored, and lean fleshed kine that *Pharaoh* saw in his dream, which did eat up seven well-favored and fat kine, *And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them, but they were still ill-favored as at the beginning*, Gen. 41, 21. Hence it is, that *Solomon* saith, *He that loveth money shall not be satisfied with it*, Eccl. 5, ver. 10. Eighthly, it maketh such as are infected with it, companions with *Achan*, with *Gehazi*, with *Judas Iscariot*: nay the most covetous persons are worse then that traitor, and farther from the kingdom of heaven, because he was touched with some remorse, & restored the thirty pieces of silver, whereas they keep by them that which they have wrongfully taken from others, and yet have no sense or feeling either of the sin present or the punishment to come; whereas without restitution & confession they cannot be saved.

[Use 4] Lastly, from hence we ought all to learn contentation with our several estates, wherein God hath set us, which should be as bounds to hedge us in, as if it were said unto us, Behold, God will have us to rest and stay upon that which he hath given us, and to content our selves therewith; otherwise we trouble the whole order of the world, and defy the Lord himself to his face, as if we meant to proclaim open war against him. This obedience *S. Paul* had learned, when he profeseth that he knew *to be rich and to be poor, to be hungry and thirsty, and likewise to have abundance*, Phil. 4, 12. He had learned to be patient in poverty, and to be content with his estate. Both these are two notable virtues, and special graces of God's Spirit. This is it, to learn to be rich and to abound, when we do not desire to gather yet more and more, neither are proud to trust in our riches, neither take occasion by them to oppress the weaker sort that have no friends in the world to maintain and defend them, and finally, when we so use the world as if we used it not, & be ready to become poor for Christ's sake, and to leave all whensoever it shall please God to lay that cross upon us. This is a great blessing, when such as are rich in wealth, can be poor in heart, and indeed greater then the former, and more needful to be urged then the former. Many will be ready to laugh at this speech, *to know how to be rich*. But if we consider how insatiable for the most part such are, and how their ears and harts also are stopped with earth and clay, we shall find that it is not without great reason that Christ our Savior telleth us, that *It is an hard thing for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven*, Mat. 19. For they are for the most part more discontented then poor men, and so far in love with their own shadow, (for what is riches but a shadow?) that they cannot be satisfied. And if they had the whole earth in possession, they would think that too little, and begin to dream of two earths. Wherefore let us labor after the grace of Contentation, which is a virtue whereby we are content with our present estate, and such blessings as we have lawfully gotten, and rest in them with a quiet heart, and be ready to bear the burden of poverty patiently.

The holy Scripture setteth before us as in a glass, sundry motives to move us to seek after, and to practice this gift. First, because it is commanded of God to everyone, to be content with his estate, Heb. 13, 5. Secondly, such as are endued with it, need not fear want or

poverty, or to be forsaken in their poverty, for God hath promised to be their deliverer, and hath said, *He will never forsake them*, Heb. 13, 5. Thirdly, such as are endued with it, shall not be destitute of godliness, *which is great gain*, to supply all things, 1 Tim. 6, 6. Fourthly, it is a testimony of true faith resting in the will and pleasure of God, Matth. 19, 21: for it witnesseth for them that they have their treasure in heaven. Fifthly, it maketh this life sweet and comfortable, Prov. 13, 15. and without it there is nothing but trouble and vexation of spirit. Lastly, a little with the fear of God, is better then great heaps of riches & treasures, Prov. 15, 16, 17. & 16, 8.

13 And Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying, This is the Land which ye shall inherit by lot, which the Lord commanded to give unto the nine Tribes, and to the half Tribe.

14 For the Tribe of the children of Reuben, according to the house of their fathers, and the Tribe of the children of Gad according unto the house of their fathers, have received inheritance, and half the Tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance.

15 The two Tribes and the half Tribe have received their inheritance on this side Jordan nere Jericho, Eastward, toward the Sun rising.

In the former words we heard the Commandment of God to *Moses*, touching the bounds and division of the Land: here we see the execution of it, commending his obedience, wherein he encourageth the Israelites to prepare themselves to enter into the Land. We have all need to be comforted and encouraged to good duties, in regard of our present dullness.

Again, we see that the consideration of the nearness of God's mercies, should embolden and encourage everyone to be constant and courageous, that we faint not in the last act. This made *Moses* say, *This is the Land which ye shall inherit*: he doth as it were point it out with the finger, and biddeth them lift up their eyes, and behold the goodness which God had promised to their fathers. For as the consideration of judgment at hand & lying at the doors ought to move terror and astonishment, so when we behold the mercies of God before our eyes, which are not prolonged for many years, it ought to enflame us with an holy zeal and desire to see the accomplishment of the same: as Christ teacheth his Disciples touching the last day & the coming of the Son of man, Luke 21, 28; *When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, & lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh*. But to pass these over, let us stay our selves a while in the consideratiō of the estate of the Church of Israel as now it stood. Some were at rest, other were to pass farther. Some had their inheritance, and some had none. Some had Towns and Cities to dwell in, and some were yet left to the wide world, and were to wander farther. Some had much, and others little or nothing at all. Some wanted, and some wanted nothing. This teacheth us what is the estate of the people of GOD, some among God's own servants do always want and stand in need, Deut. 15, 7, 11. Matth. 26, 11. and 11, 5. Acts 2, 45. and 4, 34. and 6, 1. 1 Cor. 4, 11. 2 Cor. 8, 1. and 9, 1, 2. and 11, 27. Acts 3, 6.

[Reason 1] The grounds are apparent, that they should learn always to depend upon GOD and to call upon him, and not to put confidence in the flesh. This the Apostle expresseth touching his troubles and the rest of the Apostles, 2. Cor. 1, 8, 9. We were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despayred even of life, yea we had the sentence of death in our selves, *That we should not trust in our selves, but in God which raiseth the dead.* If the faithful did never stand in need of God's help, they would forget God, and themselves, and the next life. If the child did never want anything, he would not know his father from another, but would quickly forget him: and so likewise it would be with us toward almighty God.

[Reason 2] Secondly, God will never have those that have plenty & abundance to be without objects upon whom to show mercy, that his gifts may be tried which he hath given them. For why doth God suffer the poor to be in the Church, but only to offer occasion to us to do good? as Mark 14, 7. *Ye have the poor always with you, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good, but me ye have not always.* We never want persons, upon whom to exercise our pity and compassion whensoever we will. Therefore when we see one man poor, and another rich, let us not ascribe this to fortune, but consider the providence of God therein, which disposeth all things in that manner. God maketh trial what is in us, and would have the poor to be his collectors or receyuers, to take away all excuse from us, that we should not say, We knew not to whom to do good; and therefore the Lord saith, *The poor shall never cease out of the Land,* Deuteronomy 15, verse 11.

Thirdly, as he will have the gifts of such [Reason 3] as have received what to give, to be tried, so he will have their patience proved that be in need; which could not be, if they did not suffer. For where there is no pain, there can be no patience, and therefore the Apostle teacheth, that *Tribulation bringeth forth patience,* Romans 5, verse 3. And this serveth much for the glory of God, and the good of them that are in necessity.

Fourthly, that we should not settle and [Reason 4] nestle our selves here, nor make the earth to be our heaven, nor our treasure to be our god; but that we should seek for another life, where shall be no want, no misery, no necessity, but God shall be all in all.

This meeteth fitly and fully with the church [Use 1] of Rome, that make temporal felicity a note of the Church, to live in pomp and glory of the world. This we see handled at large by Cardinal *Bellarmino* among the notes of the church; but it is so far from being a note of the Church, that it is rather a note of the Church of Antichrist. And the Spirit of God foretelleth in the book of the Revelation, that this should be the voice of spiritual Babylon, chap. 18, 7, 8. *She saith in her heart, I sit a Queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.* Loe how we are warned before hand, in what sort the Roman Church shall advance it self in regard of temporal happiness and of good success. But when that shall come to pass which the Scripture prophesieth in the same place, that how much she hath glorified her self, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow she shall suffer, so that her plagues shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and when the kings of the earth (who have lived deliciously with her) shall hate and detest the whore, and make her desolate, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire: and when the people of God (that are called to come out of

her) shall reward her even as she rewarded them, and double unto her double according to her works, and in the cup which she hath filled, shall fill to her double: what shall become of this *temporal felicity*, whereof they glory so much? & where shall this note be found among them, which now they cry out to be wanting among us? Doubtless then, they will tell us of new notes, and disclaim the old which they now maintain at this present for their own advantage. For what hath the state of the Church been upon the earth from the beginning? The posterity of *Cain* lived in greatest felicity, Gen. 6, 1, *increasing* in strength, in glory, in might, and in multitudes, while *Abel* was killed by his brother, and *Adam* lived childless. And after the flood, God suffered his people, the posterity of *Abraham* to sojourn as strangers in a strange Land, and *to be evilly entreated four hundred years*, Gen. chap. 15, ver. 13, while the *Canaanites* lived in peace and pomp: and yet the Church was among that poor distressed company, and not among the *Canaanites*. Therefore the Lord saith by his Prophet, *I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage: I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies*, Ier. 12, 7. The kingdom of Christ is not of this world, neither doth he promise to the children of the kingdom the pleasures & delights of this world. The Saints of God find not the best entertainment upon the earth, and therefore Christ saith, John 16, 20. *Verily I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful; but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* And afterward, verse 33. *In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.* All the felicity and happiness of God's servants, is a promised and a reserved happiness, we hear of nothing here but crosses & afflictions. Hence it is, that *Espenceus* one of the popish Writers affirmeth, that *Crux est ecclesiae nota*, that is, *The Cross* (and therefore not temporal felicity) *is a note of the Church*. And again he telleth us, that Christ foretold of labor and sorrow (as he said to his Disciples, *They shall scourge you in their Synagogues*;) but the false christs prophesied of prosperity. If such be false christs, then by the verdict and sentence of this man, *Bellarmino* must needs be a false prophet, for he dreameth of nothing but of felicity & prosperity. True it is, the Church sometimes hath rest from enemies, and enjoyeth external peace, but besides, that this lasteth not long, they that are out of the Church have for the most part a greater portion of this blessing. And all these outward things, riches & poverty, peace and trouble, prosperity and adversity, fall out alike to the godly and the ungodly, and therefore *Augustine* saith well, in Epist. 120. that *Almighty God of his bountiful providence hath granted earthly felicity even to the wicked, that good men should not so greatly desire after it.*

[Use 2] Secondly, this reproveth the foolish and superfluous pomp used in Popery and blind times of superstition, as if God took pleasure in paintings, in Images, in Candles, and cost bestowed upon their own traditions: when in the mean season the poor are for the most part neglected and forgotten. True it is, the Lord could have made all rich, if it had pleased him, but he sendeth the poor to us, to give us occasion to exercise charity on them, who are made after his own Image. The popish sort account no worship like to this, to adorn and beautify the Church walls, to gild and garnish Images, senseless things, and dead stones, and pass by the living stones of the Temple, that are polished by the hammer of God's word. Neither doth this establish the art of begging, because we teach, that there shall always be poor among the people of God: For poverty is one thing, and beggary is another: all poor are not

beggars, and all beggars are not always poor. It is a great shame and reproach for a people that profess piety and Christianity, to suffer any beggars to swarm among them, which is the overthrow of order and honesty. For first, this argueth great want of charity, and much hardness of heart, that the rich devour all alone, and have no regard of succouring such as be in need and necessity, and are sore pinched with poverty and penury.

Secondly, when the bridle is once let loose in this kind, it groweth to be a common occupation: and when such go up and down from place to place, and from house to house, it cannot be rightly discerned who are poor indeed, neither can we say, who have need, & who have not need, neither discern the idle from the impotent; wherein they most commonly speed best, not who have most need, but such as are most impudent, clamorous, & importunate.

Thirdly, the rewarding of such as go about begging from door to door, and walk or rather wander from country to country, is no better then a maintaining of idle persons contrary to the law of God and man, and a filling of the Land full of ydlenesse: now such as are nuzled in roguing, in the end grow to be cunning in robbing: for from a rogue to turn to a thief is an easy passage.

Fourthly, such as are inured to this practice and find sweetness in it, and themselves encouraged by ease, can never inure themselves to endure hard labor or to take pains in any calling afterward, but live by the sweat of other men's brows all their days.

Lastly, such persons are dangerous to a state, no better then vermin or caterpillars that devour the fruits of the earh, & rob from thē that are poor indeed; such as live as no parts of anybody, no members of the Church, or of the commonwealth, or of any private family, but are as members cut off from the body. So then there ought to be no beggars in Israel, which bring nothing but confusion, & are the nursery of all evil, and overthrow the law of God and man, of nature and charity. Howbeit these locusts live so well with the scrip, y^t they would be loath to exchange their trade for a yearly rent, or a daily pension, provided that withal they should be compelled to labor with their hands. This also serveth to meet with y^e begging Friars, & such as vow voluntary poverty as cousingermans to rogues & beggars that wander up and dow• under color of relief, and yet boast of this occupation, as of a state of perfection. But of these vows, we have spoken sufficiently before.

Lastly, this teacheth those that have the [Use 3] goods of this world, to show pity and compassion on them that stand in need. The two Tribes and the half are commanded to go up armed before their brethren, and never to forsake them and give them over, until they had seen their hearts desire upon their enemies, and placed their brethren in saftety, and had given to them a peaceable possession of their portion of that promised land. And albeit we should give at all times, yet then especially ought our compassion to be exercised and extended, when the poor stand most in need of our help, as in time of dearth and famine. Then the common cause and cry of the poor should cause us to cut our morsels thinner, & the shorter, and to abridge our selves of all superfluity and excess, rather then to see them to miscarry, and to perish for hunger. And if over we mind to serve God, and to do him

homage with our goods, we should be forward and faithful to do it at such times. The first Christians carried such zeal toward God, and love toward the poor Saints, that *They sold their possessions and goods*, and laid down the money at the Apostles feet, that it might be distributed as every man had need. And as the poor must especially be provided for in times of want, so among the poor, y^e poor Saints ought chiefly to be regarded, as the Apostle showeth, *Let us do good unto all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith*, Gal. 6, 10. Thus ought we in doing good to respect the times & persons, & in both whatsoever we do, it must proceed from a willing mind and a cheerful heart, 2 Cor. 9, verse 7. otherwise it is a sacrifice not pleasing in the sight of God.

Now the Scripture affordeth unto us sundry motives, as so many encouragements unto liberality. First, because it is a service and sacrifice commanded of God, that while we have opportunity, we should do good to all, Gal. 6, 10. 1 Thess. 5, 15. Secondly, it is a grace of God bestowed upon the Churches. 2 Cor. 8, 1. Thirdly, it is fruitful and bringeth forth much increase. Gal. 6, 7, 8. 2 Cor. 8, verse 12: yea though it be cast upon the waters, Eccle. 11, 1. Fourthly, it is a certain argument of sincere love, 2 Cor. 8, 8, 24: as for that bounty and liberality which standeth in words only, it showeth the heart of that man to be destitute both of faith and love. Fifthly, the Spirit of God taketh notice of all charitable works, & commendeth rhem in the godly, whose example we ought to follow, as in the Macedonians, 2 Cor. 8. Sixthly, whatsoever is bestowed in the name of God, is lent to him, and he will repay us: Nay, the Lord Jesus accepteth it, and accounteth it as done unto himself, as we shown at large before in this book.

16 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying:

17 These are the names of the men which shall divide the land unto you: Eleazar the Priest, and Joshua the son of Nun.

18 And ye shall take one prince of every tribe, to divide the land by inheritance.

19 And the names of the men are these: Of the Tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Iephunneh.

20 Of the Tribe of Simeon, Shemuel, &c.

21 Of Benjamin, Elidad, &c.

22 Of Dan, Bukki, &c.

23 For the tribe of Manasseh, Hananiel, &c.

24 Of Ephraim, Kemuel, &c.

25 Of Zebulun, Elizaphan, &c.

26 Of Issachar, Paltiel, &c.

27 Of Ashur, Ahihud, &c.

28 Of Naphtali, Pedahel, &c.

29 These are they whom the Lord commanded to divide the inheritance unto the children of Israel in the land of Canaan.

This is the second part of the chapt. where the persons are appointed and named which ought to divide the land: these are of 2. sorts, the chief and principal were the priest of the Church, and the Captain of the host; the rest were ten Princes chosen out of the ten tribes, so that two tribes are left out, to wit, *Reuben* and *Gad*, because they had their inheritance befallen them already, at their own request, on this side Jordan. All these Princes are particularly expressed by their names, and by the names of their fathers, and all are joined in equal commission together, y^t nothing should be done with partiality, to whose arbitrement and determination all were bound to stand. From hence three questions may be raised. First, [Objection.] what need there was of any Princes to divide the land, and give the Tribes their possessions, seeing this was to be done by lot? I answer, [Answ.] the one of these doth not take away the other, there was use of them both. For, seeing the lot could not be used, except the land were divided into ten parts or Provinces, therefore it pleased God to use the help and ministry of men, to divide it into ten parts; after which division made, the lots wer cast, by judgment whereof every Tribe had his portion of the land. Thus we see, how both of them were very necessary, and that the one did not overthrow or disannul the other. Again, [Object.] why doth God join ten other Princes to *Eleazar* the Priest, and to *Joshua* the son of *Nun*, were not these two sufficient? [Answer.] I answer that which belongeth to all, ought to be done of all; and thereby God taketh away that envy which might he cast upon them, when the matter was indifferently decided by a several Prince, selected out of every several Tribe. Thus the mouths of all were stopped, and everyone persuaded to rest without complaint or contradiction, in the deciding which they should make.

Thirdly, the question may be asked, [Object.] Why the Priest was employed in this division? For, some haply will marvel, that matter of temporal inheritance (in which himself and the rest of that tribe had no other portion but the Lord) should be committed to him that had the charge of the Tabernacle, and this may seem altogether impertinent to his function. I answer, [Answ.] this was done for sundry weighty considerations. For this was not without a

mystery. And as every ceremony had his signification, so herein the Priest was a figure of Christ, to whom the spiritual inheritance belongeth, who is ascended to prepare a place for those y^t are his in heaven. Secondly, this was done in regard of the Priests & Levites, for albeit they had no inheritance in the land, yet some part and parcel fell unto their share out of every Tribe, as we shall see in the following chapter. Thirdly, if any controversy should arise in this great and weighty business of making a stable and unchangeable division that might remain among their posterity forever, they might have the Priest at hand for direction, and to ask counsel for them at the mouth of God. Lastly, that this whole action might be sanctified to them & their children, it was to be begun with prayer, and to be finished with thanksgiving (for which the Priest was the fittest) according to the saying of the Apostle, Coloss. 3. verse 17. *Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*

This division offereth diverse instructions. In that *Eleazar & Joshua* the chief of the rest, appointed to set out the land are named before other, it teacheth, that superiors (whose head God hath lifted up above their brethren) ought to give good example to others. Again, we see that God maketh choice of men to be his instruments, so that not only those things are to be holden divine, and of divine authority, which are done immediately by God himself, but such also as are done by men, assigned to their office by him. Thus God hath called men, and not Angels, to preach the Gospel, whereby he regenerateth us, and maketh us heirs of his kingdom, if we receive the same by faith. We are therefore to submit our selves unto it, and to be content to be informed and reformed by it no otherwise, then if an Angel from heaven, nay no less then if God himself should speak unto us, Luke 10, 16. 1 Thess. 2, 13. Acts 10, 33. This is the way to hear aright. Furthermore, observe the faith of this people. They were not yet come into the land, they had not passed over Jordan, nor obtained one foot there; the Canaanites yet dwelled in their Cities, and armed themselves to resist them, they had strong Cities walled up to heaven, and mighty men of strength and stature to oppose against them, they had a generation of Giants & mighty men, that were as so many *Goliath's* to bid defiance to Israel: yet we see they are occupied in dividing the land, and have Princes appointed to determine the same, and all of them are no less busy in the work, then if the land were already conquered & subdued unto them: which showeth to us the nature of faith, according to the description of the Apostle, Heb. 11.1. *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen: for by it the elders obtained a good report.* This we saw before in the daughters of *Zelophehad*, how zealous they were in the cause of their father, to have a part of the inheritance particularly to themselves. True it is, this is touching a temporal promise, or a promise of a temporal blessing, howbeit it had reference typically to the eternal inheritance in the heavenly Canaan. So then this teacheth us, that true faith apprehendeth, appropriateth, and applieth God's promises as if they were present. True faith is of an applying nature. It doth not only assent unto the promises of God, but maketh application of them to our selves, and both are necessary to salvation, Ier. 31, 33 Isaiah 25, 9. Cant. 2, 16, and 6, 3. John 1, 12. and 6, 51, 35, and 3, 14, 15. None had comfort by the brazen serpent that was lift up on the pole, but such as were able in particular to look upon it, and assented and believed the promise that they should be cured and restored by it. Christ calleth himself, *The*

living bread, of which we must eat: but what is eating save an application? because whatsoever a man eateth or drinketh that he applieth unto himself, and receiveth it to be his: so touching faith, whatsoever a man doth believe, the same he doth apply unto himself, or else it can be no truth faith, but a counterfeit faith.

Mark the grounds of this point. First, true [Reason 1] Faith standeth of two parts, whereof one is an act of the understanding, the other is an act of the will, according to the saying of the Apostle, Roman. chap. 10. verse 10, *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness*. The mind informeth us to see and know God and his son Christ, and the promises made in him: the heart seeketh, desireth, and loveth that which it knoweth, which cannot be without a particular application.

Secondly, every man is commanded to believe, Mark chap. 1. verse 15. 1 John chap 5. verse 15. Now it is not enough that we believe, except we also make application, or else we believe no otherwise then the devils believe, for even they believe God & Christ, James chap. 2, verse 19. But to make particular application of Christ, as to say, Christ is mine, and I am his, and have remission of sins by his death, is more then any or all the devils in hell can do.

The Angel that was sent to be the first preacher of the Gospel, said to the shepherds, Luke 2. *Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day a Savior: that is, to you that believe, for except they had believed it, and applied it to themselves, they could never have conceived any joy at all, nor received any benefit at all by it.*

Thirdly, the promises of GOD, howsoever they are delivered in general terms, yet they are particular also, and everyone is bound to gather a patticular to himself out of the general. As in a Proclamation, albeit it be conceived and published in general words, yet the matter is that which belongeth to everyone in particular, and must be so applied, as if his own name were set down in it. The Gospel is as a Princes proclamation, offering pardon and forgiveness: and though the promises of God be general, yet they do contain a particular, because that which is spoken to all believers, is spoken unto everyone that is a believer, and that which is spoken to all penitent persons, must be applied to every several penitent soul.

Fourthly, God hath ordained the Sacraments in the Church to be *the seals of the righteousness of faith*, Rom. 4, 11: and y^t they should be delivered particularly to every man, thereby to assure him of grace and mercy in particular. When men once come to know, that Christ offereth remission of sins by his death, by the receiving of the Sacraments particularly we come to apply Christ and his merits to our selves: so that the delivering of them unto us is thus much in effect, *Thou believest these general things, then draw near and take this unto thy farther comfort, that thou mayest be assured, that the promises of righteousness do belong unto thee, as if indeed thy name were particularly specified therein*. All these things being considered, it followeth necessarily, that the general knowledge is not sufficient, but a particular application is necessary to salvation.

[Use 1] This serveth for confutation of an error of the church of Rome, denying that a man may particularly believe, that God is his God, or that Christ is his Savior, or that remission of

sins belongeth unto him: and why so? Forsooth, because in the Gospel all runneth in general, and it is not there written, that such and such are God's, and shall have benefit by Christ. But where there is a general, as for example, *Whosoever believeth and repenteth shall be saved*, there is the particular also, *If thou believe thou shalt be saved*: and the faithful by virtue of this do believe, and are saved by this their application. The Apostles said to the Gaoler, Acts 16, 31: *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, & thou shalt be saved, and thy house*: If the Keeper of the prison had replied, Sirs, how do you know that I shall be saved by Christ? Is my name written in the book of God, that I may be assured it is written in the book of life? Would not they have told him, that his particular name was included in the general, albeit it were not expressed? The Papists do presume to give absolution upon confession, and yet they do not find any man in the Gospel particularly named. When Christ our Savior saith, *Whose sins soever ye remit, they are remitted*, John 20, 23: they are not afraid upon this general to give absolution to particular persons, and to tell them that their sins are forgiven. And will not these men be so favorable to us, as to suffer us from a general to infer and gather a particular, as well as themselves? to wit, that when Christ saith, *Whosoever believeth in me shall not perish, but have everlasting life*: the Minister may speak to the conscience of this or that man particularly, *Believe thou in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt have eternal life*?

But *Bellarmino* goeth farther, and objecteth, [Objection.] That this is not a simple promise, but conditional, if they repent and believe, then they may indeed apply these things to themselves and be assured of them: but a man cannot have any certainty of these things, that they do believe and repent, and therefore they cannot in particular apply them to themselves. [Answ.] I answer, this is to build one error upon another, and to daub them both with untempered mortar. For wherefore doth the Apostle command every man to try and examine him self *whether he be in the faith, and have Christ Jesus dwelling in him*, 2. Cor: 13: if after this proof he cannot know what his estate and condition is? This is a certain rule, whosoever truly believeth, knoweth that he believeth, though no man knoweth it but himself. He that is the Lord's, *hath a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it*. But he which hath received it, knoweth it as well as he knoweth he liveth. For no man doth know the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him: even so the things of God knoweth no man save the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2, 11. So then every man both may and ought to have assurance of his own salvation; and therefore this we believe, let them teach and write what they will. For, what if a frantic man should run up and down, & boast that all the wares which come to such a Port or haven are his, shall the Merchant be discouraged to think they are none of his? Or, if a false fellow come forth and lay claim to our inheritance, will that bar the true owner of his right? or make him to let go his hold? What if a mad man out of his wits should say, that the Crown and Kingdom is his, would we therefore think it is so indeed? Or if some should show false and counterfeit pearls, will the Goldsmith be discouraged, and think that his also are naught, and of the same stamp? In like sort we may reason, What though some do not believe, or will not apply Christ unto themselves? What if Satan have deluded them with the spirit of error, and blinded them with the mists of ignorance, shall we therefore suffer our selves to be beguiled, and to be brought to think that we have no true knowledge or faith? or that we ought not to apply

Christ Jesus in particular to our selves? To conclude, we may be bold to avouch, that the devils have as much faith as the papists teach and believe. For the devil can say, and that truly, I do believe: I believe that remission of sins is sealed up by Christ for salvation: so that he may believe as much as any Papist in the world, holding the principles of their own doctrine, forasmuch as the Romish faith is no other then historical, to believe y^e Scriptures and all things written in them to be true, but they never come to the principal & main matter, wherein the comfort of a Christian lieth, to make particular application of anything to themselves.

[Use 2] Secondly, it admonisheth every man to examine himself, and to try whether his faith be true, or not: this is the counsel and commandment of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 13, 5. as we heard before: and how shall we better do it, thē by making particular application of those things which ought to be believed? to believe that God is our God, that the Lord Jesus is our Savior, that we are righteous by his obedience, that we have the pardon of our sins, that we have received the grace of sanctification, and that we shall be partakers of eternal life. For as faith is the life of the soul, so this application is the life of faith. If we find this in us, then certainly we have a true, a lively, a justifying faith; otherwise we deceive our selves with a shadow and opinion of faith, when in truth we are utterly destitute of it. And if men were brought to their trial herein, it is greatly to be suspected and feared, that not only they in the Church of Rome, but many that live in the Church of God it self, will be found to want the true faith, and to please themselves with a naked show of it. For some have not a general knowledge, and therefore cannot have so much as a general faith. Many, albeit they have a general knowledge, yet they will not, nay they cannot in special apply Christ and his benefits unto themselves, because such is their simplicity or sottishness, that they condemn this doctrine of applying Christ to themselves, & say it is to some a doctrine of presumption, & to others the pathway leading to desperation. These are afraid to go so far, and dare not meddle with it. They will hope well, as the Papists do, and think well, but they cannot abide to hear of any particular application. These are as men that are afraid of their good friends, whose case must needs be lamentable, and they stand in a dangerous, nay I may say in a damnable condition: because without this application there can be no true faith, and without true faith no salvation. We have experience of some in our days, who out of a melancholy humor, persuade themselves that they may not eat, because they are unworthy to touch their meat, and by this means are the cause of their own death: and yet they think they may see it, and talk of it, but by no means may touch it. This is the faith of many Christians among us, they think they may hear of the things that belong to salvation, and reason of them, but by no means they may apply them; these men's case is very dangerous, for they must needs perish eternally. For as life is maintained, not by looking upon our meat, or by speaking of it, or by hearing of it, but by taking and applying of it: so the soul is sustained and life preserved in it, not by hearing of the promises of the Gospel, nor by assenting unto them, but by applying of them unto our selves. When the Israelites *were stung in the wilderness with the fiery serpents and scorpions*, Deut. 8, 15, insomuch that many died, if any should have said, I am not worthy to look up to the brazen serpent, and to fasten mine eyes upon it I know indeed that God hath appointed it as the only means and remedy to recover them that are stung, but I dare not

presume to behold it, because of mine unworthiness: would we not think that it were just that this man should perish? So is it in this case, many men know that God hath sent his Son into the world, and that he died for the sins of the world, yet many are so desperate, that they talk and dispute of nothing but of their own unworthiness, and say they would apply Christ, but they dare not, they are such grievous sinners. Howbeit he that was worthy to *take the book out of the right hand of the Father, and to open it*, Revel. 5, 2, 5, 11, 12, hath also made his children partakers of his worthiness, Revel. 3, 4. *They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy*. His merits are become our merits, and his righteousness is made ours, 2 Cor. 5, 21. Wherefore, whosoever they are, that either through the corruption of their own hearts, or through the temptation of Satan do not truly apply Christ unto themselves, and his death to their salvation, but make it a matter of presumption, their condition is miserable, and they are yet in the way to destruction, and may justly fear that the wrath and judgments of God will overtake them.

Lastly, this point is very sweet and comfortable [Use 3] to everyone that is able (though with much weakness and many infirmities) in particular to apply the general promises of God and the Gospel to himself because such shall be sure to find God gracious unto them; and if they be stung by the old serpent, they shall be healed, because they can look up to to y^e 2. ferpent that God hath set up, and appointed to be the healer and helper of them. If they be hungry, they shall be sure to be satisfied, *Christ is the true bread that came down from Heaven*, John 6, they eat him by faith, and so apply in particular the general promises to themselves. This is it indeed that ought to encourage every man to labor for this particular application, & not like hypocrites to content themselves with general things, as if they were afraid that Christ should come within their doors. They are in effect like the Gadarenes, that bid him depart out of their quarters. The particular faith is the only comfortable faith, and by this the just man liveth. The Ciuilians have a rule, that mine is better then ours, and in temporal things all men like of it. So we may say in the matters of faith, touching particular application, it is better for a man to say, Christ is mine, then Christ is ours. Nevertheless, we must understand and observe thus much, that men must not be discouraged to think they do not believe, when indeed they do believe. For the best of God's children do believe with much weakness, and encounter with many oppositions, with which they wrestle and buckle hand to hand. Sometimes the effects of God's grace are not so lively in them as formerly they have been: sometimes the heart of man being full of corruption will cast many doubts concerning his faith, which is as much as if it should cast mire and dirt in the face of it. The life of a Christian is like y^e days of the year, sometimes the days are very fair, sometimes again they are cloudy and full of showers: so a man that doeth believe shall find much peace, and have a long time of rest and refreshing together: sometimes again he shall be full of many doubts, and of much staggering, as when the Sun withdraweth it self within the clouds. Every true faithful soul knoweth this by continual experience. And he that findeth these things, let him not be discouraged, but rather be assured that these are signs of true faith, & that God dealeth thus with his own for these ends, to make them more certain of their faith, to teach thē to lay better hold of the promises of God, and to have more joy in them; and howsoever they may lose the sight of these things for a time, yet their faith in the end shall have

victory, and they shall be able to pierce and pass through these clouds, and have a certain application, by which they shall be sure to want no good thing.

CHAP. XXXV.

1 AND the Lord spake unto Moses, in the plains of Moab by Jordan, near Jericho, saying:

2 Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession, Cities to dwell in: and ye shall give also unto the Levites suburbs for the, &c.

3 And the Cities shall they have to dwell in, and the suburbes of them shall be for their Cattle, and for their goods, &c.

4 And the suburbes of the Cities which ye shall give unto the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the City and outward, a thousand cubits round about.

5 And ye shall measure from without the City on the East side, two thousand cubits, and on the Southside two thousand, &c.

6 And among the Cities which ye shall give unto the Levites, there shall be six Cities for refuge which ye shall give to the manslayer, &c.

7 So all the Cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be 48. Cities.

8 And the Cities which ye shall, &c.

IN the former chapter we spake of the inheritance in general. Now we come to the particular, and first touching the Priest, which is an exception from the former. Of this chapter there are two principal parts: first, a commandment to assign certain Cities for the use and dwelling of the Priests and Levites, who otherwise had no portion allotted, chap. 29. Secondly, Laws prescribed touching manslaughter. Touching the first, we see that albeit in the former distribution of the inheritance there be no mention made of the Priests and Levites, yet God will not forget them himself, neither have them forgotten by others, but provideth for them places of habitation, and assigneth to them 48. Cities, with their suburbs, wherein they are appointed to dwell. Touching their food and sustenance, they had the first

fruits and the tithes of the fruit of their land, and of the increase of their Cattle. And because he would have them want nothing that was needful for them (although men's devotion and charity is such, that they could be content to see them want all things) he taketh order in this place for their houses and dwellings, and that in a plentiful and bountiful manner, considering the compass of the land, as we described it in the former chapter. For besides the many Cities appointed, they had suburbes, with a thousand Cubites in compass about those cities for barns, outhouses, and stalls for cattle; besides fields, stures, and meadows, containing two thousand cubits more for feeding and breeding of their cattle. These were not assigned unto them out of one or two tribes, but selected out of them all, yet in such sort, that the tribes which had the larger inheritance must set apart the more, and they that had less were to give the fewer: and thus was a just and equal proportion observed, that one should not be eased, and another overburdened. Thus were the Levites *dispersed in Jacob, and scattered in Israel*, that so God might be served and his worship preserved throughout the land. Thus God would have all his people in all corners and quarters to be taught and instructed, the small as well as the great, plain villages as well as famous and populous Cities, as we have shown before, chap. 3. Thus was the punishment laid upon *Leut*, Gen. 49, 7: turned into a blessings, and their reproach changed into matter of honor and dignity. These were commonly called the Cities of the Levites, not that they only dwelt in them, but because they among others dwelled in them, the youth were instructed in the liberal sciences, the law of God was expounded in the Synagogues, there also public schools and colleges were built to be as holy Seminaries and Nurseries of piety and religion, as we do read in many places of the books of *Samuel* and the kings.

Moreover observe, that out of these Cities of the Levites God maketh choice of six Cities of refuge, whereof three are in the land of Canaan, and the other on this side Jordan: and these were not chosen to be together, but they were so fitted, that every part of y^e Land had one of them at hand, least such as were without fault and innocent should be pursued and slain by the avenger of blood before he could recover any of them. Now these Cities are assigned out of the Cities of the Levites, rather than out of any othet, y^t the places might be more respected, and be more inviolably observed: and it is presumed that the Priests would not protect willful & wretched offenders, and so defile the places which were granted only to be Sanctuaries for the innocent. Thus did God allow Sanctuaries & privileged places among his people, and many other nations in all times, and of ancient times have followed this example. But whether it be expedient in the days of the Gospel to entertain and give way unto them, may be a great question.

Peter Martyr disputing this point, whether they are to be retained or abolished, delivereth his opinion, that because the law of God allowed them, the customs of nations approved them, and for that there may be at sometimes just cause of them, therefore they may have place among Christians, so that certain conditions be observed. First, that neither public nor private wealth be any way hurt or damnified. Secondly, that vices be not nourished and fostered by hope of pardon, or escaping without punishment. Lastly, provision must be made, that they should not stand open to all sorts of offenders, but only be granted to certain persons: as when a man at unawares hath killed another and feareth the avenger, or

is oppressed and over-burdened with debt without his own fault & feareth the creditor. Nevertheless, it seemeth to me, that these reasons carry more show then substance, and persuade rather by the number, then by their weight. For to allow such Sanctuaries, and yet to limit them with these cautions; seemeth to me all one, as if one should deliver a knife into the hands of a child, and then appoint three or four keepers and overseers to attend upon him, to take care that he do no hurt to himself or to others; whereas the knife might more safely be taken away, and the labor of the men better employed. And as for the two particular instances that this learned man giveth, in case of man-slaughter and debt, there are Courts of justice and conscience to try every man's cause, and to mitigate the rigor of such as are merciless: and therefore howsoever we have had Sanctuaries and other privileged places among us, as appeareth in our Chronicles, in the late reign of *Edward* the fourth, & *Edward* the fifth, the memory whereof yet remaineth (which peradventure may yet be in force) yet through disuse and discontinuance of them it may appear that the evil was judged to be greater then the good that came by them. And if some inconvenience in someone case might fall out through want of them, it were better to bear that inconvenience by missing of them, then to admit a mischief or rather an heap of mischief, by retaining of them. But howsoever it may be judged in some certain cases a matter of charity to allow to some persons the Sanctuary, to save themselves from such cormorants as would never be satisfied but by the body and blood of the poor debtor; yet because under color and pretence of this protection, infinite enormities would arise unto the detriment of the Commonwealth, and that the former supposed causes may be better remedied by other means no way hurtful or prejudicial at all to any, it were much better quite to dissolve them, then to retain them. For grant once this privilege and immunity to such as are grown to decay by inevitable losses, you shall have others in time claim that benefit (yea, and perhaps sooner receive it) that are gone to decay by their own negligence and unthriftiness. And if it were needful or expedient in case of debt to allow the Sanctuary, no doubt the Lord himself setting up these Sanctuaries, would have extended the liberty to such persons to fly unto them: whereas among the people of God none were allowed to have refuge unto them, but such as were pursued by the avenger of blood. And if there were no other reason to abolish them, it were sufficient to see the horrible abuses of them in the Papacy, where murderers, and traitors, and varlets, and a rabble of all sorts of cut-throats (as we shall see afterward) are protected, and allowed to be protected, contrary to the express commandment of God, Exodus 21, 14. *If a man come presumptuously upon his neighbor, and slay him with guile, the thou shalt take him from the Altar, that he may dy.* And we see the practice of it in *Solomon*, 1 Kings 2, 31: for when *Joab* a willful murderer, that slew two men more righteous and better then him self, and shed innocent blood in the time of peace, *fled into the Tabernacle of the Lord, and caught hold upon the Altar*, he commanded him to be slain in that place. But to return to the former point, whether this be inconvenient or not, this is most certain, that no states do so much offend by denying of them, as the Romanists do by admitting of them, whereby it cometh to pass, that Churches and Monasteries are turned into dens of thieves. It is noted, that *Innocentius* the third wrote to the king of *Scottes* that then was, That no man should be taken by violence out of the church albeit he had committed very heinous offenses. Howbeit lest they should seem to let open a window, and to set loose the reins unto all sorts of wickedness,

they have excepted some certain cases. First, they will not defend common thieves and robbers which do stand by the high-way side to set upon such as pass by, whether it be by day or night: neither yet those that offend grievously in the Church or Churchyard, in hope there to be privileged, because such ought not to be protected by the Church which sin heinously against the Church. As for other wickedness and most lewd and loose villainies, as the murdering of men, the ravishing of Virgins, adulteries, and such like practices, they defend them, as appeareth in the Decrees. And they offer this immunity and impunity not only to Christians, but to the Jews and heathen people, yea to excommunicate persons, and to heretics, provided, that the heretics come into danger for other crimes; whereas if it be for heresy, they are denied the benefit of the Sanctuary. Neither is this liberty granted to the Church only, but to the Bishops palace, albeit it be not joined unto the Church. As great a privilege likewise they grant to their breaden-god (and great reason, why?) so often as it is carried about in pomp and procession, or unto the sick; for if in such case any man join himself to the Priest, he hath a safeguard and Sanctuary. Many such like enormities are committed, and pass as currant among them, and so much wickedness goeth unpunished, whereby God is offended, the Church is polluted, and the Land it self is utterly defiled; and yet such places of special privilege and protection, are retained and defended.

[Command unto the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites, &c.] Here we see, what great allowance God gave to those that ministered at the Altar, and did the service of the Tabernacle. And albeit the Levitical Priesthood and all that ministration be now abolished, yet because God to the end of the world gathereth unto himself a Church by the Ministry of the most holy Word and Sacraments, he will have his Ministers also under the Gospel sufficiently provided not only of sustenance and maintenance, but also of houses and habitations fit for them, that they might wait upon their office without disturbance or distraction.

This teacheth us, that the Ministers of the church must be provided of food & raiment, of houses and dwellings, and of all things necessary for thē. This is proved at large in this place; here it is commanded, & in the book of *Joshua* it is performed and executed, as we may read in Chap. 2.1, 2, 3, 4, &c. where we see particularly what Cities every tribe gave *as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses*. The like we see in the prophesies of *Ezekiel*, Chapter 45. verses 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. that when the Messiah is exhibited, and the Gospel preached throughout the world, the Land shall be otherwise divided, so that part of it shall be assigned to the house of the Lord, part shall belong unto the Priests and to the Levites, verse 4, and 5. showing thereby, that the Ministers of the Gospel must be maintained. By the law of nature, every man was bound to give something for the furtherance of God's service, of such temporal goods as GOD had given him, Gen. 14. verse 18. and 28. verses 20, 22. Levite. 27. verse 30, Numb, 18. ver. 28, Deut. 14. verses 28, 29. 2 Chron, 31. verses 4, 5. It is noted touching the zeal of good king *Hezekiah*, when he had appointed the courses of the Priests and Levites, every man according to his service, he commanded the people to give the portion to the Priests and Levites, and by and by *they brought in abundance the first fruits of Corn, and Wine, and oil, and Honey, and of all the increase of the field, and the Tythe of all things brought they in abundantly.*

Neither doth this belong only unto the [Reason 1] times of the Law, but likewise of the Gospel. For, the ministry of the Gospel is much more glorious then of the Law, and the calling of the Ministers of Jesus Christ, is greater then of those that served at the Altar: for, as *John* was far greater then any of the Prophets that went before him, so *he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater then he*, as *Matth.* chap. 11. verse 11. If then, the Levites were so bountifully and liberally dealt withal, whose service was to take end at the exhibiting of the *Messiah*, then much more ought they whose ministry and service must stand and continue for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, *Eph.* 4, 12, 13. Secondly, that they may attend to the holy things of God, & be no way disturbed. For seeing the Apostle giveth it in charge *that they must give attendāce to reading, to exhortation, & to doctrine*, 1. *Tim.* 4, 13. how can they watch over the flock, and give themselves to these duties, except they have provision made for them accordingly? or how can they prepare a Table well furnished for the people in the church, when they have nothing to set on their tables in their own houses? Or deal bread unto the hungry, when they are hungry themselves? or how can they fil the people with the food of the soul, when the people suffer them to be empty, and to want the food of the body?

Lastly, it is required of the Ministers, that *they should be given to hospitality*, as well as to teach, 1 *Tim.* 3, 2. the Apostle joineth both these together. But how shall they show work of charity, when they have not to supply their own necessity? Or how shall they entertain strangers, when they are not able to maintain their own families? Or how should they do this good unto the Church, when they themselves want it in their own private houses?

[Use 1] The Uses remain. First this reproveth the corrupt dealing of wretched and miserable people, who detain from the Ministers their liuelyhood, whereby they should help themselves, and relieve others. The Popish sort think nothing too good for their priests and shauelings, but we have those that think everything too good for God's faithful Ministers; their maintenance is too stately, their diet too dainty, their apparel too costly, their houses too lofty: they could be content they were put to earn their living with the spade and shouell. They will not willingly afford them anything, and they think it well saved which is purloyned from them. They are accounted the best husbands that can most cunningly and craftily go beyond them: and such as can thrust a new custom (though it were never heard of before) upon them, to defeat and defraud them of that which is due unto them, doth account himself to leave his land in the best state, & to provide exceeding well for his posterity, and to rid his demeanes of a very great bondage. In former times, tithes were counted as a debt to the Minister, now it is held a bondage or slavery to pay them. And yet these are they that cry out with open mouth against the cruelty and covetousness of the Clergy, like *Judah* that exclaimed against the incontincy of *Tamar*, when himself was guilty of no less crime, *Gen.* 38. Secondly, it reproveth such Patrons as enrich themselves with the livings of the Church: who present other to the place, but retain to themselves a share out of the same. These do bestow the benefice, but they keep the benefit, never considering that *it is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to enquire*, *Prov.* 20, 25. Now that is to be accounted holy w^c is dedicated to holy uses, whether it be to the worship of God, to the

maintenance of the Ministers, to the furtherance of schools and good learning, or to the relief of the poor, and therefore the abolishing or diminishing of these, is condemned as sacrilege against God, Deut. 23, 23. Their forefathers were liberal in furthering the worship of Images, nay of the devil himself, imagining it to be the service of the true God: they spared not to enrich those that were seducers and ringleaders to eternal damnation, though they were also unlearned and ungodly, & unfit for that calling, yet somewhat they gave them out of baptizings, and the other counterfeit sacraments, out of burials, trentals, masses, months minds, everything yielded some see and stipend, whereby they grew rich in the world: whereas the children of these grudge to give anything to their learned and godly pastors which God hath in mercy bestowed as a special gift upon the Church, but give thē cause to complain of their wants of mere things necessary. The Prophet *Malachi* is not afraid to pronounce that such unconscionable dealing is not so much an injury to mā, as to God himself, Mal. 3, 8, 9. *Ye have robbed me in tithes and offerings, saith the Lord.* And in the Law it is expressed, that the tribe of *Levi* had no inheritance, nor any part among their brethren, *But the Lord was their part and their inheritance*, because that which fell unto them was dedicated to God; and lest the people should think that the Ministers were beholding unto them for it, therefore God claimed *the tyths to be his*, Leu. 27, 30: & by his gift assigned them over to the Levites. No man can touch the Lord's right to take it away, and be guiltless; for it is as a snare wherewith the hook is covered, and the fish or fowl deceived and entrapped. The profit that cometh by seizing upon holy things, promiseth much gain and advantage, yet let it seem never so sweet and pleasant to the taste, it shall be as gravel, nay as poison in the stomach, & in the end shall sting thē more dangerously that swallow it, then if they were bitten with scorpions & venomous serpents.

Secondly, it is the duty of the people to [Use 2] have a care of their Ministers. For seeing God hath appointed them to serve him, & to teach his people, that his way may be known upon earth, & his saving health among all nations, it is great reason they should be maintaind for that purpose. The Levites were descended of the lineage of *Abraham* no less then any of the other tribes, & therefore a part of the inheritance belonged to them: nevertheless God put them from it, because they should not be trobled with tilling the ground & such like business, but give themselves wholly to the fulfilling of their office. And as the Ministers are often exhorted to do their duty, so must the people know, that God requireth a duty at their hands, y^t they provide for them, as Deut. 12, 19. And doubtless in that special charge given to the people, God more respected the benefit of the people themselves, thē the profit of such as were to be maintained. The Ministers are to be maintained in a temporal estate, but the people in the unity of faith, and in obedience toward God, that so the true religion might be preserved in purity.

Lastly, this serveth to put the Ministers in [Use 3] mind of their duty. For wherefore hath God all this care over them, but that they should care for the people? And wherefore are the people to provide for their bodies, but that they should watch for their souls? This serveth to drive from the Altar such as are ignorant Ministers, that are not able to teach the people. Ignorance is a grievous sin in all, but especially in the Minister, who must not only have light in himself, but give light to others; and must not only know the way to God's kingdom, but

show the way unto others. For God never meant that idol shepherds should have the places and provision ordained for such as will take pains. These thrust themselves into this great work and high calling of the Ministry, and yet are unfurnished of those gifts which should fit them for this function, 1 Tim. 3, 2. and 2 Tim. 2.2. They should be *Lights of the world*, and yet sit in darkness themselves: they are called to be *Salt*, but they are unsavory. The Minister in the Church is as the eye in the body or as the candle in the Lantern. If then the watchmen be blind and have no knowledge, *The blind must needs lead the blind, and then both fall into the ditch*, Matth. 15, 14. The Ministers should be the mouth and Messengers of God unto the people; but if they be dumb and cannot speak, they are not able to deliver their Ambassage. They should be Nurses of God's children to feed them with the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby, 1 Peter 2, 2: but these have dry breasts and starve God's people, and are guilty of murder in his fight. They take upon them to be Stewards of God's family, to give them their portion in due season, Luke 12, 41: but they have no skill to break the bread of Life, neither to divide the spiritual food of the word aright. And whereas the Shepherds should feed the flock, they feed only themselves with the milk of the flock, and clothe themselves with the wool. They do think themselves to be *Captains and overseers of the Lord's host*, to go before the people, but they are not able to handle the sword of the Spirit, nor to prepare the people for this spiritual warfare. These sin grievously by invading the Lord's inheritance, and presumptuously taking upon them this great office unto which they were never called of God. For this is a certain truth, whomsoever the Lord sendeth, him he furnisheth and enableth in some measure to discharge the duty which he requireth of him. His calling is not an idle, but an effectual calling, and is able to demonstrate it self so soon as it is given. When God had called *Aholiab* and *Bezaliel* to build his material Tabernacle, by and by they were filled with the Spirit of God, *in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge*, Exod. chap. 31. ver. 2. and chap. 35, verse 31. Will he then make choice of any to build the spiritual Tabernacle (which is his Church) in whom is no grace of the Spirit of God, no wisdom, no understanding, no knowledge at all? *Solomon* saith in the Proverbs, *He that sendeth a Message by the hand of a fool, cutteth off the feet, and drinketh damage*, chap. 26, 6. No man that is wise will send such a Messenger that hath any care or desire to have his message delivered: and therefore we may not think that the wise God will use such in his service. On the other side, *as the cold of snow in the time of harvest* (where the heat aboundeth) is most welcome *so is a faithful messenger to them that send him, for he refresheth the soul of his masters*, Prov. 25, 1. These are they that destroy not only their own souls, but bring destruction to the people that depend upon them, Prov. 29, 16. And as God provided not maintenance so carefully for the ignorant Minister, so we may see the same of the careless and idle Ministers, who having learning & knowledge do want conscience of their duty. For their knowledge must show it self in practice, Mal. 2, 7, and they must have not only the head, but *the tongue of the learned to minister a word in time to him that is weary*, Isaiah 50, 4. They must not only have the talent, as the unprofitable servant had; but they must use their talent, as the good and faithful servants did: and as they ought to have store of provision, so they must distribute it to the relieving of God's people: or else being able to teach and yet will not, they are worse then they that would and cannot. A rich man that hath his barns and granaries full of Corn, & yet suffereth the poor to famish for want of food, deserveth justly the curse of

God and man, Prov. 11, 26. *Whereas blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.* In like manner, the Ministers that are rich in grace, and well stored with knowledge, who seek nothing but to engross more into their hands, but will part from nothing at all, have cause to fear to be accursed of God & man; whereas they shall be blessed & praised in the gate, that make others partakers of their store. Wherefore let all such consider the commandment of God to preach the word, oftentimes repeated and urged to the Prophets, Es. 58, 1. and to the Apostles and other Ministers of the word, Math. 28, 19. If then we regard what the Lord saith unto us, we must hearken to his voice. Secondly, hereby we testify our love to Christ, who hath dearly loved us, John 21, 15. God hath so loved us, that he spared not his only begotten Son but gave him to the death for us, and therefore we are most unthankful wretches, if we do not love him again; but we cannot testify our love to him more, then by feeding his Sheep and his Lambes. Thirdly, we have committed to our charge the price of the blood of Christ, the souls of mē, which he bought at a dear rate, Acts 20, 28. Fourthly, the Ministry of the word is the ordinary means ordained for the building & planting, the enlarging & strengthening, the upholding and continuing of the Church of God, 1 Pet. 1, ver. 23, 25. Fifthly, there is a gracious promise of a very great reward made unto those men that are faithful and gain souls to their master, for *they shall shine as the Stars forever and ever*, Dan. chap. 12. verse 3: and when the great shepherd of the sheep appeareth, they shall appear with him in glory, 1 Peter, chap. 5. verse 4. and be made heirs of all their masters riches, Mat. chap. 24, verses 45, 46, 1 Tim. 4, 16. 2 Tim. 4, 7, 8.

Sixthly, all such as are negligent watchmen have a fearful woe denounced against them, because while they feed themselves unto the full, they suffer the flock to starve. Ezek. 34, 2. 1 Cor. 9.16.

Seventhly, such as have gifts and do not use them, have them (in God's just judgment) taken from them, Matth. 25, 28, Zach. 11, 17. For as such as use and employ the talent that God hath given them, have his gifts increased in a plentiful measure: so they that bury their knowledge and zeal, and never bring them forth, they are so weakened and wasted in them, that in the end they vanish away as smoke, and come to nothing, as is too too evident in many of our times.

Lastly, they bring destruction and damnation upon themselves and the people, Ezech. 34, 8, 10. Matth. 25, 10.

9 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying:

10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan:

11 Then ye shall appoint you Cities to be Cities of refuge for you, that the Man-slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares.

12 And they shall be unto you Cities for refuge from the avenger, that the man-slayer die not, &c.

13 And of these, &c.

14 Ye shall give three Cities on this side Jordan, and three Cities shall ye give in the land of Canaan, &c.

15 These six Cities shall be for refuge.

The commandment of God touching the setting apart of Cities for the Levites hath before been considered in general: now he speaketh in particular of the Cities of refuge taken out of the former Cities, wherein we see the number of them, the end wherefore they were appointed, and the places where they are to be taken. Of murder voluntarily and willfully committed, *Moses* speaketh in the words following, such persons must be pulled from the Altar, Deut. 19; and put to death: but when blood is shed at unawares, there is liberty to fly to one of these Cities of refuge. Whereby we see, that there is difference between sin and sin, between such as are committed ignorantly, and those that are done voluntarily. And therefore we may conclude from hence, that all sins are not equal. Touching the avenger of blood, we shall speak more afterward; howbeit here we see that he which had killed another at unawares was in danger to be pursued, over-taken, and slain by the next of kin, as well as he that had shed man's blood willfully. True it is, God alloweth not that the kinsman of him that is slain, should take away the life of him that was guilty, but such was the malice and corruption of men, that they would be ready to add murder to murder, that blood should touch blood, unless some place of safety had been provided.

This teacheth us, That howsoever God hath made us keepers of the lives one of another, yet by nature we thirst after revenge, and are never quiet until it be satisfied. Hereunto come the many precepts which God giveth to forbid revenge, which he would never so often repeat, were it not that he knoweth the inclination of our hearts, Deutero. chap. 32, 35. Rom. 12, 17, 19, and 1, 29, 31. 1 Thes. 2, 15, 16. Prou 12, 10. Such an one was *Cain, Judas, Saul, Herod, Pharaoh*, yea, such are all persecutors, and all heretics. And not only men unregenerate are of an hateful and malicious disposition, but such as otherwise have received the spirit of adoption, and the grace of sanctification, do yet carry about them the body of sin, and the corruptions of the old *Adam*, as we see in the brethren of *Joseph*, who for envy sold him into Egypt, Gen. 37, 28. Acts 7, ver. 9. And in *David*, otherwise a man after God's heart, for when he had received evil words for his good deeds, at the hands of *Nabal*, 1 Sam. 25, 22. he sware, God do so & more also to the enemies of *David*, *If I leave any alive of all that pertain to him by the morning light*, and so he prepared himself & his men for present and speedy revenge.

And no marvel, seeing the nature of man [Reason 1] is prone to all evil, and all the imaginations of his heart are only evil continually, Gen. 6, verse 5. and 8. verse 21. For malice

above other things is a natural fruit of the flesh, delighting and pleasing our corruption, Galat. 5, 21. James 4, 5. Hence it is, that we are said to *serve our lusts and diverse pleasures, living in maliciousness and envy, hateful, & hating one another*, Tit. 3, 3.

Secondly, by nature Satan getteth the possession of us, who hath been a fierce dragon, a merciless Lyon, a cruel *murderer from the beginning*, John 8, 44. Our Savior remembereth unto the Jews why they were a murderous generation, and telleth them, *They were of their father the devil*. And it is said of *Kaine* when he slew his brother, that *he was of that evil one*, 1 John 3, 12.

This serveth for reproof both of errors in [Use 1] doctrine, and of corruptions in life: and first, it convinceth the Popish Doctrine, which giveth way to man's corrupt nature more than the word will bear, For in the point of loving our enemies they come near unto the interpretation of the Pharisees, because they teach, that howsoever a man is always bound not to hate his enemy, yet to love him he is not always bound. No marvel if these men do hold it lawful to break promise with an heretic, such as they account us to be, but falsely. This is an easy kind of Religion, and well pleasing to flesh and blood: and it may not seem strange, though multitudes be joined unto their Church: for what carnal man is there almost that would not be a Papist, when he may be held to be religious, & yet be avenged upon his enemy also? Indeed they set down two cases (least they should be thought to be too profane, and their Religion a merciless Religion) wherein a man is bound to love his enemy: First, in extreme necessity, when he is in present danger of his life, then he is to be helped and relieved, as it was with him that fell among thieves, and *lay wounded and half dead*, as Luke 10. verse 30. Secondly, in case of scandal, when by not helping or succouring we shall give offense unto others. Out of these two cases they conclude, that it is a counsel and degree of perfection to *love our enemies*, Matth. 5. ver. 44. which some particular persons, as Monks & Friars, and such cloyster men take upon them to observe, who have (forsooth) obtained an extraordinary gift to deny themselves. But if this be a counsel, then the rest of Christ's sayings in that chapter, *I say unto you, Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the Judgment*, Verse 22. And *whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery*, as we may read In verse 28. and so likewise of the rest, in verses 32.34, 37, should be counsels also. Howbeit the saying of our Savior Jesus Christ is a commanding, Genesis chapt. 1. verse 3. also Psalm 33. verse 9. Wherefore the Popish devotion, is a Religion wherein a man may go to hell with ease, maintaining a most devilish and damnable Doctrine, clean contrary to the direction of our Savior Christ; limiting and restraining that which Christ hath extended generally unto us in the Gospel, *I say unto you, Love your enemies: and if ye love them only that love you, what singular thing do you?*

Again, this reproveth such as think it to be a note of an high and generous Nature, and of a noble and notable spirit, to put up no wrong, and to seek revenge even for every trifle and small matter: to do as little wrong as they can, but to resolve to put up none. These account it a great honor and glory for a man to pursue his enemy with hatred. Wicked *Lamech*, descending from y^e cursed race of *Cain*, thought it an argument of virtue and valor, and a point of much credit and reputation unto him, to be able to take revenge, yea, *even seventy*

times seven times of any that should offend and provoke him any way: whereas Christ telleth *Peter* a contrary Lesson, that is, that it should be a greater honor and dignity before God and all good men, *to forgive till seventy times seven times*, and that in one day, Luke 17, 4. Matth. 18, 22. It becometh all Christians therefore, rather to follow the precept of Christ, then the practice of *Lamech*, and to learn of *Solomon*: Prov. 19, 11, that *the discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression*: and chapter 14, 29, and 16, 32, *He that is slow to anger is better then the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit, then he that taketh a city*. If then we desire true honor, and to be accounted men in the world, let us imitate our heavenly Father, who is so far from being greedy of revenge and hasty to anger and to take punishment, that *he maketh the Sun to shine, and the rain to fall upon good and bad*, being slow to anger, and of great kindness. The more noble sort of creatures are not desirous of revenge, but only the basest and vilest, noisome flees, wasps, hornets, bees, and such like. Among men, none more testy and subject to anger, then sick persons, in their greatest fits, who break out into sundry passions, by reason of their weakness, which they would never do in their health when they have the use of reason. Let us account it to be a shame and reproach to be like the weakest things, and rather imitate the nobler creatures, which are slow to anger, and moderate their passions with discretion. *Joseph* in the court of *Pharaoh* (no doubt) was an honorable man, he was next in the state to the king, he had what he would at his commandment, and *at his word were all the people ruled*, Gen. 42, 40: yet consider that he placed not any part of his honor in taking revenge of his brethren that had sold him as a slave to an idolatrous nation, and sought after his life, but in forgiving of them, and rewarding them good for evil, Genesis 50. For when they saw that their father was dead, knowing what they had deserved, and fearing the face of *Joseph*, they said, *Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly quite us all the evil which we did unto him*, Gen. 50, 15, 17: and they desired him to forgive the trespass done against him, verse 17. *Joseph* wept when they spake unto him, and said, *Fear not, for am I in place of God? but as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, &c: now therefore fear not, I will nourish you and your little ones, and he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them*. *David* was an honorable man, yet we know how he dealt with *Shimei*; though he were king, and wanted not others to kindle the coals of wrath and revenge against him: yea though the wretch *had cast stones at him, and cursed him with an horrible curse*, yet afterward he pardoned and forgave him, and sealed his pardon with an oath, 2 Samuel, chapt. 19, verse 23.

The like example we may see in *Mephibosheth* the son of *Jonathan*, that did eat bread at *DAVIDS* own table, (showing him favor for his fathers sake) although he were maliciously & mischeeuously slandered by *Ziba* his servant, and that of no less crime then high treason against the king, as if he looked that *the house of Israel should restore him to the kingdom of his father*, 2 Sam. 16, 3. yet he never sought any revenge of him, but was content to part from his own right for joy that the king was returned in peace to his own house, 2 Sam. 19, 30. *Solomon* was not ignorant, but knew well enough what was true honor; yet he giveth this counsel, not to seek any honor by revenge, Prov. 24, 29. *Say not, I will do unto him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according unto his work*. It is the common sickness and disease of the world, to requite like for like, taunt for taunt, and rebuke for rebuke; and they

think they may do it lawfully, and measure to others that measure which they have measured unto them, whether it be in word or deed, stripe for stripe, blow for blow, wound for wound. But this is a part of our natural corruption, which did appear in the auengers of blood mentioned in this place.

[Use 2] Secondly, as it reproveth errors in opinion, so it doth likewise errors in conversation, & in the practice of life, which meeteth with many abuses. First, here is reproveth the common practice of fighting and quarrelling, w^c always beginneth with hatred, & oftentimes endeth with blood. These are they that make no conscience of doing hurt and injury unto others, 1 Thess. 4, 6. 1 Cor. 6, 7, 8. Many do hold it unlawful to strike the first stroke, and to offer the first blow, and minister occasion of strife; but if another strike them and begin the fray, they think they may lawfully strike again, and return as good as is brought, and that with an over-plus and advantage. This is to make Magistrates stand for ciphers, and Laws to be of none effect, or to wax rusty in books, as a sword in the scabbard. Christ reproveth this retayling of like for like, both by word, and by example. By word, Matth. 5, 39, 40, 41. *Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also, &c.* By example, for when he was smitten before the high Priest, he smote not again, John 18, 22, 23, but defended his own innocence. So did *Micaiah* the Prophet, 1 Kings 22, 24, 25: and *Paul* the Apostle, Acts 23, 3: they defended their cause by word, but smote not with the fist. These examples of the best we ought to have before us, to be guided by them, who were led by the good spirit of God. But in our days, when men are charged with contempt of Laws and Magistrates, & of God himself, in pursuing their private grudgings and quarrels, if they can say, Why did he give the occasion? Why did he begin with me? Why did he strike the first stroke? They think they have spoken wisely, and answered the matter very sufficiently. But thus might the Prophets and Apostles as well have pleaded for themselves, and given as good a reason of their dealing if they had stricken again; & yet they stayed their hands, and would not give blow for blow, and they are commended in the word of God. The Apostle would never have set forth the patience of Christ for our imitation, who *when he was reviled, reviled not again, and when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously*, 1 Pet. 2. verse. 13: if he might have done wrong for wrong: but he showeth that Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should tread in his steps.

Secondly, this condemneth the practice of many masters, who do after a sort nourish quarrels and contentions (as much as in them lieth) within their own doors. For if they have a servant, who being provoked & stricken by his fellow-servant, will not by and by fly in his face and strike again, or being challenged the field, will not take up the bucklers and answer the challenge, they account it the trick of a coward, and esteem such as unfit servants to dwell with them. For if having a defiance given him, he take not up the gantlet, they thus reason and conclude with themselves, If he will not draw his weapon in his own cause, he will never draw it in mine: & if he will not strike for himself being provoked, he will never strike stroke for his master if he be assaulted. This may be a rule from human policy, but it is no rule in Christian piety, neither is it after the doctrine which is according to godliness. It is the duty of servants being stricken to complain unto their masters, and it is no disgrace or

reproach to do so, except it be a shame and dishonor to submit themselves to God's word. Every master is a Magistrate within the walls of his own house, to order his servants & family aright. He must give no approbation to private revenge, but make peace among them, & teach them to suffer wrong rather than to offer, and prepare to bear a new injury rather than seek to revenge an old, as we heard before by the express commandment of Christ. Not that we should understand his words literally, to turn the other cheek to him that hath stricken one, or to give away our cloak unto him that hath taken away our coat, for Christ him self being smitten did not so: but he speaketh comparatively, do so, rather than revenge thine own cause. But as challenges into the field are unlawful, so none is bound in honor to answer such challenges. Neither let any man think it is a disgrace and discredit to refuse a challenge. For besides that true grace and glory standeth in obedience unto God, wherefore I pray you, serveth the master in the house, and the Magistrate in the commonwealth, but to take up quarrels that arise, the one among his servants, the other among his subjects? It is a principal part of their office, to decide and determine the differences between servant and servant, between subject and subject. And remember this rule, that there can be no credit gotten by sinning against God.

[Use 3] Lastly, we must take notice of this corruption, and show the duties of love one to another, even toward our enemies, Luke 6, 33. Isaiah 11, 6, 7, 9. Matth. 5, 44. 1 Pet. 2, 21, 23. Now the holy Scripture layeth before us sundry motives to move us to lay aside all maliciousness and desire of revenge, and to show our selves courteous and gentle, kind, and tender-hearted one toward another. First, except we forgive, we can have no hope or assurance to be forgiven, but *judgment shall be merciless to them that show no mercy*, Matth. 6, 14, 15. I am. 2, 13. Matth. 18, 35. We shall find such measure at the hands of God, as we our selves measure unto others. And Christ enforceth the truth of this, by doubling of the sentence both for greater certainty of the matter, and for deeper impression in the conscience.

Secondly, God hath forgiven all his children for Christ's sake. He might have many just quarrels and controversies against us for our trespasses and sins against him, but he pardoneth all and putteth them up, to give us an example, that *we should forgive and forbear one another, and if any have a quarrel against another, even as Christ forgiveth so must we do*, Eph. 4, 32. Col. 3, 13. 2 Cor. 2, 10.

Thirdly, vengeance belongeth unto God and to his assigns, not to private men. It is the proper office of God, forasmuch as hereby he showeth himself to be God, Psal. 94, 1, 2. He is the Judge of the whole earth, he leaveth it not to everyone to be his own judge, Rom. 12, 19. If we should see a man set himself in the Princes chair of estate, or to place himself in his throne, and begin to usurp his office and execute judgment upon any offender, all men could condemn the fact as usurpation, and the person as guilty of high treason. Or if any of the fellow servants should take his Masters place, and offer to punish such as have offended him, and that in his Masters presence, who would not censure the sawcinesse of such a proud companion? Howbeit, it is greater pride and presumption for him to draw the sword

that hath not the sword put into his hands, insomuch that thereby he deserveth to be smitten with the sword himself, Math. 26, 52.

Fourthly, God rejecteth all sacrifices & oblations offered without mercy, when they are accompanied with desire of revenge, Matth. 5, 23.24. The Prophet teacheth, that God required not at their hands to tread in his courts, and to bring oblations, and offer up prayers, so long as *their hands are full of blood*, Isaiah 1, 15. Though we come never so much, and so often before him, yet our greatest devotion is an abomination unto him, so long as we are not reconciled unto our brethren.

Fifthly, without this, no man shall see God to his comfort. At his right hand are pleasures for evermore, but they shall never taste of thē and be partakers of them that live without love, and do not live without revenge. The Apostle saith, Heb. 12, 14. *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*

Lastly, if we can be content to be forgiven, then we must also be ready to forgive. It is a general rule, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the Prophets*, Matth. 7, 12. This also holdeth proportion between God and us, for as we would have him to extend mercy to us, so ought we to be merciful toward others. If we would have God at peace with us, we must be reconciled to our brethren: and if we would have him to love us, we ought to love one another; or how shall we be assured that we love God whom we do not see, when we love not our brethren whom we see daily?

16 And if he smite him with an instrument of Iron (so that he die) he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

17 And if he smite him with throwing a stone, (wherewith he may die) and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

18 Or if he smite him with an hand weapon of wood, &c.

19 The avenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer, when he meeteth him, he shall slay him.

20 And if he thrust him of hatred, or hurle at him, by laying in wait that he die,

21 Or in enmity smite him with his hand, that he die: he that smote him shall surely be put to death, for he is a murderer: the revenger of blood shall slay the murderer, &c.

Hitherto of the first part of the chapter, the second part followeth, which is concerning laws belonging to murder and shedding of blood: and this consisteth of three several points. First,

touching willful murder. Secondly, touching murder at unawares, commonly called manslaughter, or chance medly, which is not done of malice prepensed. Thirdly, of the office of the Judges touching shedders of blood. The first point is of willful murder, which is declared by the instrumental causes whereby it is done, whether a man smite his neighbor *with instrument of iron, or throwing of a stone, or with an hand weapon of wood*, to wit, voluntarily, willingly, willfully, and of set purpose, all cometh to one ende, for such a one must die the death. This exposition is plain and evident, as appeareth by the 11. verse going before, where *Moses* mentioneth the killing of a man by *error* or at unawares. Now in this case, if a man hate his brother, and hurle at him *by laying of wait that he die*, or an enemy smite him with his hand, the avenger of blood shall slay the murderer whensoever or wheresoever he meeteth him.

From hence we learn, that murder and shedding of blood is an heinous and horrible sin in the sight of God. Howsoever many that are fleshed and hardened in it, make no reckoning of it, yet it hath a bloody face before the high God: to do anything maliciously and unjustly against the life of a man is a sin much displeasing unto God, and that which provoketh his judgments, Gen. 9, 6. Hos. 4, 2. Matth. 26, 52. Reuelat. 13, 10. Exod. 21, 12. Levite. 24, 17.

[Reason 1] The reasons are plain. First, we are all made in the Image of God, Gen. 1, 27, and 9, 6. What treason thē is it to deface this Image? for as it is treason to deface maliciously the image of a Prince, so is it no less then high treason against God, to deface the Image and similitude of God. Nay, to speak the truth, he is a double traitor, and committeth a double treason, both in regard of him whom he hath murdered, and then in regard of himself, in that he is the cause of his own destruction, & guilty of his own blood, forasmuch as he that killeth must be killed; and he that sheddeth man's blood, his blood likewise must be shed. Nay, there is no man that murdereth another, but he murdereth himself more; he taketh away the life of another, but he destroyeth his own soul, yea and causeth God to bring some judgment upon him that he liveth not out half his days. Hereunto (no doubt) *Rebecca* hath relation, hearing of the wicked and cruel purpose of *Esau* toward his brother, that when the days of mourning for his father should come, he would kill his brother *Iacoh*; for she said to him, *Behold, thy brother Esau doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee; now therefore my son, obey my voice, & fly to Laban my brother; for why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?* Gen. 27, 42, 45

Secondly, all such as are willful murderers are accursed of God, Gen. 4, 11. *Thou art cursed from the earth*: and also of men, Deut. 27, 24. *Cursed is he that smiteth his neighbor secretly: and all the people shall say, Amen*. Hence it is, that God never suffereth such to escape, but meeteth with them one way or other, either he striketh them with his own hand that did lift up their hands to strike others, or he delivereth them over to the Magistrate. Some times he maketh them to be witnesses against themselves, sometimes to discover themselves in their dreams, sometimes to feel the torments of hell in their own consciences, and sometimes the birds of the air to reveal them. We see this in *Cain*, that slew his brother, for *God set a mark upon him*, and branded him for his wretched parricide, Genesis 4, verse 15.

This the very heathen themselves knew by the light of nature, that howsoever the murderer may escape out of some danger, yet vengeance will pursue and overtake him, Acts 28, 4. This we see in *Herod that killed James with the sword, and put Peter in prison*, intending also the like against him, he escaped not the hand of God long, but his deep vengeance did so dog him at the heels, that he was smitten shortly after by the greater stroke of an Angel from heaven, *and was eaten up of worms*, Acts 12, 2.23. Thus did *Samuel* speak to king *Agag*, 1 Sam. 15, 33. *As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women, and he hewed him in pieces before the Lord*. The like we see in *Joab* who was smitten with the sword, as he had killed others, 1 Kings 2, 31, 32. And it is to be observed what *David* saith of him concerning y^e blood of *Abner* that he had spilled, 2 Sa. 3, 29. *Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his fathers house, and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword or that lacketh bread*.

Thirdly, God doth so detest murder, that if a beast kill a man it must be stoned to death, and his flesh not eaten, Exod. 21, 28. What? is God offended with the brute beasts? or do they sin against him, and break his Commandment? No: but thereby GOD would show how much he abhorreth the shedding of man's blood, and that man should lay it to his heart.

Fourthly, it is an offense against a man's own flesh, Eph. 5, 29: No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it; now every man is as our own flesh, Isaiah 58, 7. We see Bears, and Lions, and Tigres, and wild beasts do play together, because they are of one kind: mankind is of one kind; if we do not agree together, but prey one upon another, we are more fierce then Bears, more cruel then Lions, more merciless then Tygres, and more savage then wild beasts.

Fifthly, such as slew another violently, were taken out of the Cities of refuge by violence, God would give no protection to such beasts, neither City, nor Altar, nor Tabernacle, nor anything could yield them any safeguard, Deu. 19, 11, 12, 13. 1 Kings 2, 31, 32.

Sixthly, it is a crying sin: blood hath a very loud voice, and never ceaseth crying, until judgment fall upon the head of the murderer, Gen. 4, 10. *Behold the blood of thy brother crieth from the earth*. *Abel* was now dead, his mouth was stopped, and he could not speak; but his blood could speak, the which called and cried in the ears of the Lord GOD of hoastes from the earth for vengeance, Hebre. 11, 4.

Seventhly, no pardon was to be given to such, as appeareth in this chapter, and verse 32. *Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of him that is a murderer, which is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death*.

Lastly, the Land is defiled by it, ver. 33, 34. *Blood defileth the Land, and the Land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it: Defile not therefore the Land which ye shall inherit, wherein I dwell, for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel*.

Now let us come to the uses. First, we have just cause to fear the wrath of God; and if he come to make inquisition of blood, he shall find much blood spilled upon the earth like water that cannot be gathered up again throughout the whole Land. What abundance of

injustice and cruelty is there to be found in every place, and thought to be just and upright dealing? How many are there to be found, that having once conceived anger and malice in their hearts, will remain whole days, and months, and years, before they will be reconciled, nay speak one to another? thereby depriving themselves of the mutual comfort they might reap and receive, and *by suffering the Sun to go down upon their wrath, do give place to Satan* to enter into them & to possess them, Eph. 4, 26, 27. And what color soever men set upon their cruelty, it is but a false painting of a foul face, as *Adams fig-leaves*, that covered his shame, but could not hide his sin. If it be done under pretence of law, it is a most fearful sin; the pretence it self maketh it more fearful, because feigned justice is a double injustice. When the Law is so wrested, that it is made the occasion of murder, it must needs be offensive & displeasing unto God. And albeit this sin be committed by the Magistrate, in letting malefactors go unpunished, yet it must needs be offensive unto GOD, because it is that which bringeth the guilt of blood upon the Land, & nothing can cleanse the Land from blood, but the blood of him that shed blood. This made the Prophet say to *Ahab*, *Because thou hast let go out of thy hand, a man whom I appointed unto destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people*, 1 Kings 20, 42. Whē there was a famine in the Land in the days of *David*, three years, year after year and he inquired of the Lord the cause of that sore judgment; the Lord answered, *It is for Saul and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites*, 2 Sam. 21, 1: and the atonement could not be made, until seven men of his sons were delivered into their hands, and they were hanged up unto the Lord that his inheritance might be blessed. The sins of the sons of *Eli* became to be the sins of their father, not because he was their father, neither yet because he was the committer of them, but because he being a Magistrate did not punish & correct them: so likewise when judgment is not executed upon men for their sins, the blood of those which are slain must needs remain in the Land. If this be committed by way of revenge, it is also an heinous sin against almighty God, because he that doth it, preventeth God's work, and so provoketh God's wrath: for he taketh God's office out of his hand, and taketh up his place, who hath said, *Uengeance is mine*, Rom. 12. And if we ascend to the higher degree of men, shall we not find among them little conscience made of shedding blood? Do not our Gentry for the most part think it their glory to have their hands embrewed in the blood of innocents? What conscience is made of fighting & quarrelling for point of pretended honor, but in truth for assured dishonor and disgrace unto them, to their names, and to their posterity? for let thē set what varnish soever they please upon their combats, they shall carry y^e mark of an horrible sin to their grave, God grant it be not to hell and the place of perpetual torment; and if ever GOD open their eyes, they will weep day and night for it, and be humbled for it all the days of their lives.

Secondly, [Use 2] it is the duty of Magistrates especially, and of all men generally in their places, to make diligent search & enquiry when blood is shed, by whom the blood hath been shed: and if the murderer be not found, they should crave pardon at the hands of God. And touching the Magistrates and others, I would commend to them the consideration of two things; first, that they be careful that no man die innocently, that they put no man to death without cause, Jer. 25, 14. of which we shall speak afterward in the end of this chapter.

Secondly, when murder is committed, all men must do their endeavor, to the utmost of their power and means, to detect the authors of that bloody act.

Hence it is, that God requireth, that when a body is found slain upon the ground in the Land which he had given the Israelites to possess, and it is not known who killed him, then the Elders and Judges shall come forth to the dead body and wash their hands over a Bullock whose head was stricken off, and protest and say, *Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it: O Lord, be merciful to thy people Israel, whom thou hast purchased, and lay not the guiltless blood upon them; and the man-slaughter shall be forgiven them*, Deut. 21, 7, 8, 9. Where we see that the killing of one man is a defiling of the whole country, and what care the Lord hath of the life of every man. For murder is so hated of God, that albeit the doer thereof be unknown, yet he would have a solemn cleansing and clearing thereof to be made. And see what God requireth at the hands of the Magistrates and ministers of justice. It is not enough for them to protest that they have not committed, or supported, or favored any evil when causes and complaints have been brought before them, but they must search carefully, and enquire diligently of disorders; albeit no man solicit or seek unto them, yet themselves must be watchful in their places. Howbeit, this duty is oftentimes ill observed, and slenderly practiced. For how many are there that think themselves fully discharged, and flatter themselves with a fond imagination that they are greatly to be commended, when they patiently give men the hearing, and make countenance to help them. But God is not contented with this, he will take an account of them of a farther duty, and will not take it for a sufficient discharge to be able to say, though it be truly, *There was no information given, no man made any complaint*. If then Magistrates that have the sword of justice put into their hands to cut off evil doers from the City of God, shall suffer any wickedness to lurk in any City or corner, they themselves are guilty thereof, and it is as much in God's sight, as if they had given their consent to the practicing of it. These are they that must after a sort answer for the whole body of the people, if evil doers be suffered to nuzzle under them through their negligence.

[Use 3] Lastly, it is the duty of everyone to beware of all occasions and allurements that may draw us to this bloody sin. For as there is a murder of the hand, so there is a murder of the tongue, which is therefore in holy Scripture resembled unto a Razor, to a sword, to coals, to arrows, to poison, to fire: all which kill and are the instruments of death: and likewise there is a murder of the heart, of which the Apostle *John* saith, *Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him*.

So then, we are guilty of this sin, even by anger and malice in the heart only, and shall have our portion in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. If any man have not a feeling of this in his heart, he is more then dead: and if he labor not to repent of it, it argueth him to be past all grace, and so out of the number of those which shall see God to their comfort. For albeit such have the shape and form of men, yet they have the hearts of the very beasts. If they had the right use of reason in them, and the government of their corrupt appetites and affections, it could not be but that they would have a care of the life of their brethren, and which is more, of their own lives also.

So then, every man should examine himself and try his own heart, how far he hath been guilty of this sin of murder in every kind and branch thereof, that so we may humble our selves. Albeit it be but the anger of the heart, yet it is murder in the sight of God, & is therefore as well to be repented of, as the outward act of murder it self. To this we may join the sin of envy, when men so repine at the good of others, that they cannot be quiet or contented, because they want y^t which others have, and have not so great a portion as they; for this also we should humble our selves, and labor continually against it.

To conclude, we see also what cruelty and hard-dealing is oftentimes used against poor laboring men, that get their living by the sweat of their brows, and yet many think they may use them as they list, either with turning of them off with an half-penny, for a penny, or else in exchanging other things for their work, which haply are not worth half the money, or in keeping back their wages for weeks, months, or years, which Saint *James* speaketh of, Chapter 5, verse 4. *Behold the hire of the Laborers crieth, and the cries of them are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath.*

Let us labor by all means to keep our selves free from blood, and not only from the outward act it self, but from the inward thoughts of the heart, as envy, hatred, and malice; as also from the slaughter of y^e tongue by cruel and cursed speeches. Such a murderer was *Shimei* when he railed upon *David*; True it is, he charged him to be a murderer, but the murder might justly and fully be discharged upon himself, for he was *the man of blood, and a son of Belial*, 2 Sam. 16, 7, 8. Indeed if a man have an injury done unto him, it is lawful for him to seek revenge, but he must not do it with his own hands, but as the poor widow that came to the Judge, saying, *Auenge me of mine adversary*; so he must complain to the Magistrate, and so seek for remedy by just and lawful means. And that we may be free from the fact it self, and not fall into it; let us look well to the fountain and beginning of all our actions, and first labor to purge our hearts, because *out of the heart proceedeth all kind of wickedness*. Now if that be cleansed of evil thoughts, we shall thereby stop and hinder evil works that they break not out.

22 But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity, and have cast upon him anything without laying of wait:

23 Or with any stone wherewith a man dy, seeing him not, and cast it upon him that he die, and was not his enemy, neither did seek him any harm:

24 Then the Congregation shall judge between the slayer and the avenger of blood, according to these judgments.

25 And the Congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the Congregation shall restore him unto the City of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall abide in it unto the death of the high Priest, &c.

26 But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the City of his refuge, whither he was fled:

27 And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the City of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the manslayer, he shall not be guilty of blood.

28 Because he should have remained in the City of his refuge, till the death of the high priest: but after the death of the high priest, the slaier shall return into the land of his possession.

29 So these things shall be for a Statute of judgment unto you throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

The Law touching killing at unawares, is delivered in these words; the substance whereof is this, That if a man take away life from any suddenly without any enmity, or do cast a stone at adventure without laying of wait, or cast anything upon him and see him not, the Congregation shall deliver him out of y^e hand of the *avenger of blood*, because though he did kill him, yet he was not his enemy, neither sought his hurt, or plotted his death. So the Lord in his law propoundeth sundry like cases, Exod. 21, 13, 14. and Deut. 19, 4, 5. *Whosoever killeth his neighbor ignorantly, whom he hated not in times past, as when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbor to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head slippeth from the hell•e, and lighteth upon his neighbor that he die, he shall flee into one of those Cities and live, &c:* and he must abide therein unto the death of the high Priest which was anointed with the holy oil. But if such slayer shall go out of the border of the City of his refuge whither he was fled, and the avenger find him and slay him, he shall not be guilty of blood, because he had a place of safety and refuge given unto him, and he ought to have remained therein according unto the law.

Out of this division some questions will be moved, [Object.] which are needful to be handled & considered: as first of all, whether the *Auenger of blood*, while his heart is hot, might lawfully pursue him that killed another of ignorance, and when he found him out of his City and Sanctuary might slay him? [Answ.] I answer, God doth not approve or allow such dealing simply, but doth indeed utterly condemn it. For the judicial and political laws do not always serve to bring men to perfection, and to establish perfect holiness and righteousness amongst us, but in some sort to remedy the vices whereunto we are inclined: so that the Lord hath an eye to the inconveniences that might ensue: whereas if we will speak what the eternal law of right & wrong, which is the law of righteousness, alloweth, & what every man's duty is towards men made after the image of God; then doubtless, when a man hath given a blow with his hand unwittingly, so as it do sufficiently and evidently appear to be so, the next friend or kinsman ought not to step up to seek revenge, because in so doing he offendeth God, both in setting upon the party that hath done him no wrong by his will, Rom. 12, 29. Matth. 5, 44. and in fathering that thing upon a mortal mā, which God had ordained in

his secret providence, Exod. 21, 13. *God hath delivered him into his hand.* This is the perpetual law of equity and honesty, and therefore that which is delivered in this place is only a posit^{•••} Law established no[•] to instruct, but to restrain thē, and to remedy a greater mischief in case they had been altogether bridled and wholly $\langle \diamond \rangle$ reaved of all power.

This teacheth us a plain truth, which I only point a[•] with the finger, that God tolerateth many things among his people, which he never liketh and alloweth, as appeareth in the cause of divorce, De[•]. 24, 1, they were permitted upon dislike *to put away their w^{•••}*, provided that they delivered unto her *a bill of diuorcement*, to be a witness of her honesty, that through the willfulness and waywardness of her husband, she should not be defamed. Nevertheless, God never liked this simply no more then their marrying of many wives, because she was given to him to be the companion of his life, and the delight of his eyes, and the comfort of his heart all his days, and was as it were one part of his own person, and therefore to cast her off was after a sort a cutting off of himself in the middes, whereupon Christ saith, Math. 19, 8, 9, *that the Lord did it for the hardness of their hearts.* So in the case of usury, he permitteth them to take usury of the stranger, that they might not practice it toward their brother: and sundry such like, lest they should do worse.

Secondly, the question may be asked, [Object.] whether this killing at unawares or against ones will, whom God is said to have delivered into his hands, be a sin or not? This is so much the more necessary to be thought upon, because the Lord showeth, Deut. 19, 6, thar such a man is guiltless of the other man's death, forasmuch as he did not hate him before, neither did presumptuously rise up against him, to slay him with guile. Howbeit in this place such a person is commanded to remain as a banished man out of his own place & house, and from his own kindred, and is confined to the city of refuge until the death of the high Priest, which no doubt had relation to Christ. I answer, [Answ.] there is no repugnancy in all these things. For this fact must be considered two ways, judicially, or morally. If we do respect what such an one deserveth in the Court of man's judgment, it is true he is not guilty he deserveth not to dy, or to recompense life for life. But if we speak simply, what is sin by the law of God *which is spiritual*, who keepeth a court of conscience, an higher court and seat of Justice then all mortal men do or can do, we cannot pronounce such a one innocent or guiltles before the bench of this Lord chief Justice. Or to speak more plainly, there is a twofold Judgment, the one of God, and the other of man. In the judgment of mā he may be taken to be innocent, because Deu. 19. his blood is called innocent, to wit, in respect of man's judgment whom he hath not offended: howbeit in the judgment of God, which goeth further, and pierceth deeper, it is otherwise. The Papists because they would have some proof and testimony, or at least some show and appearance that all sin is voluntary, do allege the examples of such as have killed at unawares or against their will, and make this to be no sin, and that by the authority of their vulgar Interpreter, who saith, Numb. 35.25. *Liberabitur innocens*, that is, *The innocent shall be delivered out of the hand of the avenger.* But almighty God (who keepeth from all evil) keep us & all other good Christians from such kind of innocence. Besides, in the Hebrew Text, the word is *Harotzaach*, that is, *The killer shall be delivered*, and not the innocent person. Touching the point in general, whether all sin be a voluntary action, we have spoken before, and proved sufficiently the contrary. And albeit S. Augustine

be often alleged by our adversaries, affirming that sin is an evil so voluntary, that it can by no means be sin except it be voluntary: yet in his Retractations, he maketh his opinion plain, and restrayneth that particularly, which in other places he seemed to propound and leave at large; for he saith, *Sine voluntate nullum est peccatum, sieve in opere, sieve in origin:* that is, *There is no sin without the will, either in the work, or in the original, or the beginning.*

Whereby it plainly appeareth that in the special work there are sins even in his judgment which are not voluntary, as those that come of ignorance, or of compulsion, or as concupiscence and original infection: yet all these may truly be called voluntary, in regard of the first man's first offense, in whom was the freedom of will, all which are no other but fruits and effects of his sin. So then, he teacheth that the sin which is a punishment of sin is not always voluntary, but the sin, which hath no other consideration but of sin, is voluntary. The sins which we commit, are both sins and the punishments of sin: but *Adams* sin, in whom we all sinned being in his loins, which was only a sin and not the punishment of any sin going before, is voluntary. And in this respect the slaughter committed at unawares, may well be said to be voluntary, because it is a fruit of the first man's disobedience, so that we may truly say, *From the beginning it was not so.* For if *Adam* had never sinned, there should never any such manslaughter have been committed.

But now to return unto the particular point in question, that the Jesuits would prove all sin voluntary, because manslaughter done without consent of will is no sin: we hold all such shedding of blood done of ignorance to be a sin of ignorance: & that no man so killing and taking away life, can wash his hands in innocence. For such a one by the law must fly to the City of refuge, and be imprisoned there, until the death of the high Priest; which argueth that there was something in the facte, or in the error by which the fact was committed, that hath need of forgiveness by Christ, the true high Priest of our profession, of whom the high Priest in the law was a figure. And hence it is, that the punishment laid upon the man-slayer was so straight, that if he were taken out of the City of refuge before the death of the high Priest, he might be slain, verse 32, forasmuch as such a one seemed to make no account of the death of Christ, nor to seek deliverance from blood by his blood.

But some man may say, [Objection.] that the City of refuge was appointed only for the trial of the slaughter, whether it were committed willingly or unwillingly, of malice or of ignorance, and not for any regard of punishment at all.

This indeed is objected, [Answer.] but it is as easily answered. For if the City had been assigned only for examination and trial of the facte, then immediately after the knowledge of the manner of doing, and the party brought to his purgation, he should forthwith be discharged and delivered. But this was not so, he must remain and continue there peradventure all the days of his life, at least all y^e days of the high Priests life. Besides, the high Priest might have died the next day after the man-slayers flying thither before his cause came to be handled and tried, yet even then he was to be set at liberty. Therefore it appeareth, that this was also a kind of punishment, and was inflicted for farther detestation of manslaughter, so that if the slayer were found out of his City before the death of the high Priest, the avenger of blood might kill him, and yet not be charged with his blood. So then,

as the death of the high Priest did free the manslayer, so such persons were taught to fly to the death of the Messiah that must be slain, in whom was all their hope of deliverance, and comfort that this their sin should be done away. *Ambrose* is clear in this point, that the high Priest signifieth Christ Jesus. So is *Cyril*, *Maximus*, and others, who by the death of the high Priest in this place, do gather deliverance by the death of Christ. *S. Jerome* is plain in that whole case touching sins of ignorance, and that he which is fled to the City of refuge, must tarry until the high Priests death, that is, until he be redeemed by the precious blood of our Lord and Savior. *Theodoret* is more plain then all these; for he asketh this question, *Why until the death of the high Priest doth he prescribe return unto him, which hath slain a man unwillingly?* and he answereth, *Because the death of the high Priest which is after the order of Melchizedek, was the loosing of the sin of man:* whereby he declareth two things; both the mystery of the high Priests death, signifying the death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose blood cleanseth the shedding of blood, and washeth away the guilt of all sin, voluntary or involuntary, and withal he showeth that such unwilling man-slaughter is a sin. Yea, this is so clear a point, that *Cardinal Allen* forgetting the doctrine of his fellows; and the foundation whereupon they build, in his book of popish pardons, chapt. 5, telleth us out of *the Council of Ancyre, holden well near 1300. years since, in the purest time of Christian religion, when our adversaries dare not say that the faith was corrupted,* that the Apostles and Bishops have ever beside the preaching of the Gospel, exercised the power of the keys committed to the Church, and inflicted due punishment for every deadly sin, justly respecting the greuousnesse thereof: and among the rest he noteth, that *for murderers if it were not voluntary,* were appointed seven years penance; but if it were willful, till the ende of their life. Now would this Council so ancient and so pure, as the Jesuit pretendeth, have enjoined so long penance and punishment for innocent persons, and such as had committed no sin at all? So then to ende this matter, albeit the Lord acquit the party after a sort that hath slain a man unwittingly, so that there shall no judgment of death pass upon him, yet he was constrained to forsake his own house and inheritance, and to dwell in a strange place, and to suffer many inconveniences, to his decay and impouerishing, and peradventure his utter undoing, his wives and children. Wherefore God would have the party that offendeth unwittingly, nevertheless to abide some punishment, to the intent he may humble himself. And I suppose there is no good man, if such a thing should befall him, but would be humbled and grieved for it all the days of his life, and crave of God forgiveness of what is past, albeit there were no evil meant on his part; and likewise pray unto him earnestly for the time to come, that he would rule his hands and his feet better, & so order all his steppes that he never swerve frō his holy commandments.

Now to come to the ground of the Doctrine, three sorts are here directed touching blood; the people, the avenger, and the Judge. The people is restrained, the avenger is permitted, the Judge warranted and allowed. The people is restrained, not permitted: the avenger is permitted, not restrained: the Judge is permitted and allowed, nay commanded to draw the sword. The people sin if they shed blood; the Judge if he do not.

This teacheth, that it is a sin for men to do that which GOD hath appointed to be done, when they have no particular calling or commandment for them to do it. This is manifested unto

us in the facte of *Zipporah*, the wife of *Moses*, taking a knife, and circumcising her son. Circumcision was one of the sacraments that God had ordained, that every male of eight days should be circumcised, and have the foreskinne of his flesh cut off, Exo. 4, 25. howbeit she sinned grievously, because she would do it without a calling, which was for man, not for the woman to do: and therefore it appeareth she had no moe children, as we observed elsewhere, chap. 12, and beside she wanted the presence and company of her husband a long time after, and when she returned unto him, she was vexed and afflicte^d by the emulation of *Miriam* a••*Aaron*. So *Saul* sinned in offering up sacrifice, who ought to have stayed for the coming of *Samuel*: sacrifices were commanded of God, but he did it without a calling, & therefore *Samuel* telleth him *he had done foolishly*, 1. Sam. 13, 14. The like we might say of *Uzziah*, 2 Chron. 26, 16, otherwise a good king; he went into the Temple of the Lord, and presumed to offer incense, which was peculiar to the Priests: and therefore having no direction from God, though he did a good thing, yet he was presently smitten with leprosy, 2 Chr. 26, 14, 20. This we saw before in *Korah* and his company, chap. 16. *Amnon* abusing his sister *Tamar* by filthy incest, ought by the law of God to suffer death, *Absalom* killeth him with the sword, he did that which God commanded, Levite. 18, 9, 29, and *David* had to answer for it, because he put him not to death; nevertheless *Absalom* sinned grievously in the doing of it, because he was no Magistrate. So then the point is plain, that a man may sin, and that grievously, in doing the things that God commandeth, when he hath no warrant to do them.

The grounds are these. First, he doth it [Reason 1] without any commandment from GOD. Whensoever a commandment is limited to persons and places, to them it is a commandment, and to no others. The commandments and orders that are directed to such as are free of a city, or of a company, or incorporation, are no commandments to those thar are forrainers: so in this case, a commandment to some maketh it a sin to them, if they leave it undone: whereas on the other side, the not commanding maketh it a sin to others that do it, because it is the commandment that maketh things either lawful or unlawful. Where there is no sight, there can be no blindness, but it is blindness when it is found in y^e subject where sight ought to be. We cannot say there is blindness in a stone, because it is not capable of sight. Therefore we say, that in indifferent things there can be no sin, either to do, or not to do, & the ground is, because there is no commandment. Secondly, it is a rule, that all good being out of his proper subject is evil. Consider this in the natural body. Is it not evil in nature, for the eye to be in place of the hand, y^t should be in the head? Or for the finger to grow in the fore-head, that should be in the hand? this maketh a monster in the body, when a member is out of his proper subject. So we may say for moral good, whē it is out of his proper place, it is no more good, but is turned into evil.

If any ask, what is y^e proper subject of good? I answer, the proper subject of good is he to whom it is commanded; and the improper subject is, where there is no such commandment,

[Use 1] By this a man may look into himself, and see as it were in a glass the defects and deformities of his soul, and namely, that he doth many things good for the matter and substance, and good in those that have a calling and commandment for it; yet evil in him, because he wanteth a commandment, and consequently hath no warrant for the doing

thereof. All such have cause to humble themselves for the evil which they have brought upon themselves, by doing good things without any good calling. To preach the word, to administer the Sacraments, to make public prayer, are necessary parts of the holy worship of God that must be performed, they are the only instruments to save the precious souls of men; and yet these, even these are grievous sins to men to meddle with them that have no power or precept given unto them to perform them. There is nothing so much commanded of GOD as to do these things, yet nothing more sinful then these, when they are done without a commandment and a commission. If a man of a private trade and occupation shall presume to preach the word of God, having no calling thereunto, it is most ungodly, let his gifts be what they may be, let him be able to speak with the tongue of men and Angels, and let him divide the word of truth rightly, and interpret the same soundly, yet it is Anabaptistical, and a great sin and impiety. So likewise we may say for private Baptism to be performed by a woman under a pretence of necessity; as if there were any necessity in sinning, or to make the people of God go out of their calling: and yet so wretched and wicked is our age, that this sin is not only committed, but also defended.

One well observeth that it cannot be lawful for women to baptize, and he confirmeth it by this, because it was not given to the mother of Christ that she (who was blessed above all other women) should do it. If then it were lawful for any, then certainly much more for her to touch these holy things: what wicked women then, what bloody *Zipporahs* are those of our time that dare undertake this holy thing without any calling? It is evil in those midwives that usurp this office, but worse in those that commend and defend this sin.

Let all therefore both men and women examine themselves in those things; if they have broken the banks that God hath set them, & have yet carried it away, and no plague from God hath overtaken them that have undertaken such works impertinent unto them, then let them know that they are to acknowledge the great mercy of GOD toward them, that he did not strike thē dead in the very act, as *he did Uzzah that touched the Ark*, (otherwise a good man) because he did a good act without any calling thereunto. Neither let any dream that God doth approve of them, because he doth not presently punish them, Eccles. 8: but consider they have to do with a God of patience; and albeit they go away, & prosper for a time, yet in the end he will find them out and punish them. Likewise in this kind they offend, who take upon them to reprove, whom, and where, and when they please, without due observation of fit circumstances. It is indeed a duty commanded that some should reprove, and some be reprov'd for sin, Levite. 19, 14. Prov. 9, 8: yet every man is not to reprove all, at all times and in all places, only it lieth upon them that have a calling to reprove, and therefore it is a sin in others. So when private men take upon them to reform public abuses, as to pull down images, and to abolish the monuments of Idolatry, they sin in this case against God and the Magistrate: against the Magistrate, in taking his calling out of his hand that belongeth to him: & against God, in that they do it without his direction. True it is, the word teacheth that their altars should be destroyed, their images must be broken down, their idols burned; but it is a word to the Magistrate: he sinneth if he do it not, because he performeth not God's commandment: y^e private person sinneth if he do it, because he doth it without any commandment, nay against the commandment. The brazen serpent must *be*

stamped in pieces, if once the people offer incense unto it, and commit idolatry with it, howbeit it must be done by Hezekiah; 2 Kings 18, 4. If a private man buy an house, & find therein sundry images & many monuments of idolatry, he may abolish thē; & if any of his family have gotten such, he may take them away and deface them, as Jacob did cleanse his house, Gen. 35, 2: because he is a Master & Magistrate in his own family: but to do it in public, where he is no Magistrate, he may not without sin, as the Magistrate himself may not omit it without sin.

Secondly, everyone ought to labor to [Use 2] know his own calling, and to be assured how far it stretcheth, and will bear him out. This should persuade everyone of us, that in every good thing which we do, we should be sure that sin cleave not unto us, and that we attempt nothing, before we have our commission sealed and sent unto us. When we go about anything, it is not enough to weigh how good it is, but to look what warrant we have to do it. It is not the goodness of the thing that will free us from sin, but the warrant that we have to do it. We must have a general warrant that the work is good, and a particular also, that it is good for us, and in us.

But some will say, how shall a man know, [Object.]that he hath a commandment in particular to do this or that? [Answer.] I answer, if any man be such a one as he to whom the commandment is given: or if the commandment be given to him in general, then he may gather that the commandment doth belong unto him in particular, so that in doing the same, he shall not only do a good work, but the work shall be good in him. So then, every man must reason thus with himself, God hath commanded me to do it, and therefore out of conscience to his commandment I will do it, forasmuch as *to obey is better then sacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of rams*, 1 Sam. 15, 22. And if Saul himself had obeyed, it had been better for him then to have offered up his sacrifice, though it had been of the chiefest of y^e things, which should have been destroyed. It is a policy of Satan, and it were good that none were ignorant of it, and that all would take notice of it, that if he cannot make men abide and abound in evil, but that they will needs be doing of good, then he will labor to make them do good unlawfully and unseasonably, by bringing them to do some good, whereunto they have no calling. Thus he maketh again to himself, even by the works themselves of godliness: and therefore it should be the care and wisdom of every man to look to God's word, and to his own warrant in doing of anything, and not suffer our selves to be deluded by him. If the disciples of Christ had duly observed this, they would never have desired *to bring fire from heaven & consume the Samaritans* that would not receive him, as *Elias* had done to destroy the captains that scoffed at him, 2 Kings 1, 10. Luke 9, 54, but they would have considered, that they were not endued with the same spirit, neither fitted with that calling, nor armed with that power. *Peter* would not have drawn the sword *to strike the the high Priests servant*, if he had called to mind that the sword was not put into his hands, Math. 26, 51. Let every man labor to see what God hath called him unto, and look to the things commanded unto him: private men may not take upon them to reform everything that is amiss, having no authority thereunto: and if they should come to suffer for such things, they shall find but little comfort in their sufferings, because this is to suffer as evil doers, albeit not for doing of evil.

[Use 3] Lastly, if it be unlawful to do good sometimes, when it is done unlawfully, then how much more is it unlawful to do that which in it self and in it own nature is unlawful? And if God reject the actions of men when they are done in an evil manner, how much more doth he abhor the works of carnal men when they are wicked & ungodly in the very substance? And if he accept not those actions w^c might be don well, if they were done by another, how much less those y^t can be well done by none? Of which we may say with Solomon, *Behold the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner?* Prov. 11, 31. If the faithful offend in doing lawful things, much more do the ungodly, that never regard to do any good. And if they sin against God that hear his word amiss, how much more sinful are they that will not hear it at all? And if they provoke the wrath of God that do good in an evil manner, much more do they that sin in an evil matter, and most of all when the heart is evil also, as Prov. 21, 27, *The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination, how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?* The faithful have many times a good intent, when they think to do God good service, and yet are not accepted, because they fail in the manner: woe then to those whose very hearts are set upon evil, and have no delight in that which is good at any time.

30 Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death, by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person, to cause him to die.

31 Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death, but he shall be surely put to death.

33 And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the Priest,

33 So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood, it defileth the land, and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.

34 Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel.

The third and last part remaineth, laying forth the office of the Judges touching slaughter: wherein observe two things; first, the Law of putting the murderer to death, which must pass by the verdict of two or three witnesses, verse 30. Secondly, the Judges are forbidden to take any satisfaction for the life of a murderer, because innocent blood shed defileth the Land, yea in such an horrible manner and measure, that all the water in the sea cannot wash it away, for *the Land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed, but by the blood of him that shed it.* And no marvel, seeing they might take no satisfaction for him y^t bad killed a man at unawares, to deliver him from the city of his refuge before the death of the high Priest. From these words we learn, how heinous a sin murder is. Again, that willful murderers are not to be spared, the eye of the Magistrate must not pity thē, if they be desirous to revenge the

dishonor done unto God, or to cleanse their own Land, or to save their own lives. But mark farther how GOD will have such proceeded against; they shall not die by the mouth of one witness: he requireth in judicial courts, that every matter should be tried by two or three witnesses, that the guilty should not be acquitted, and that the innocent might not be condemned. So then the point from hence is this, that God will have no innocent person put to death, but that everyone should receive according to his own works. Deut. 13, 14, and 17, 4, Thou shalt enquire, and make search, and ask diligently, whether it be a truth, and the thing certain: he will have no man condemned upon accusations, suspicions, and presumptions, Isaiah 5, 13, Psal. 37, 6, Pro. 24, 23. This was the sin of *Saul*, who commanded to kill the Priests of the Lord, 1, Sam. 22, 16, as if they had conspired against him, Job 29, 16.

[Reason 1] The grounds are these; first from the nature of God, he is a just and righteous God, *the Judge of all the earth*, and he respecteth no man's person; therefore they that sit in his place and execute his judgment, and have his Name communicated unto them, ought to deal uprightly, Deuter. 1, 16, 17. Secondly, wrong judgment is abominable in the sight of God, Pro. 17, 15, whether it be to justify the wicked, or to condemn the innocent. Thirdly, it kindleth the Lord's wrath against the land, when innocent blood is shed, Ier. 26, 14, 15, *As for me, behold I am in your hand, do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you; but know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof, as 1 Kings 21, 19.*

[Use 1] The uses follow. First, this serveth for instruction to all that are in authority, to take heed to themselves, that they walk with a right foot, and turn neither to the right hand nor to the left, according as God requireth Levite. 19, 15, *Thou shalt do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty, but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor.* Against this they offend many ways: when they give false judgment, and cause the same to be executed: when they defer judgment, & put it off, as *Felix* did from day today, Acts 24, 25: for while judgment hangeth thus in suspense, the just is often taken for the unjust, and contrariwise the unjust fought the just: lastly, when the sentence rightly pronounced is delayed, and sometimes not at all executed. The Scripture expresseth *the fault and the punishment* by one and the same word, to teach that they should be joined together, and not severed, and that he should be holden for innocent and unblameable that hath no punishment inflicted, Exod. 20, 7: and therefore the error of the Romanists is blasphemous, who lay this injustice upon God, that he forgiveth the faithful their offenses, but retaineth the punishment. All men do very willingly confess, that it is a very heinous crime to condemn the just man; but they do not in like manner, and with like zeal abhor from justifying the ungodly: but the Spirit of God testifieth, that they are both abominable in his sight, he abhorreth the one no less then the other: and so it ought to be with those that sit in place of judgment, otherwise they transgress the Law of God, which commandeth, that his blood should be upon his own head. Again, such persons are for the most part made worse and worse, and are never brought to repentance, as experience commonly teacheth. Besides, by this sparing and winking at evil, the godly are often grieved, and sometimes are emboldened to evil. Lastly, other wicked men by their example are encouraged, and their hearts are hardened. Hence it is that *Solomon* saith, Prov. 24, 24, *He*

that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous, him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him. This equity doth Moses also propound in the Law, If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment that the Judges may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked, Deut. 25, 2.

But it will be said, [Object.] that the Scripture teacheth, that *God justifieth the ungodly*, Rom. 4, 5: and therefore he that executeth judgment may do the like also. I answer; first, [Answ.] that is lawful for God to do, which is not lawful for man.

Again, God in justifying the ungodly, of unrighteous maketh him righteous, and by paying a dear price for him, cleanseth and washeth away his impiety, and giveth unto him another mind then he had before, which no mortal man is able to do; and therefore it is unreasonable to pretend the example of God, or to allege it to justify themselves when they justify the ungodly. This corruption must needs be evil, because it proceedeth from evil fountains; for judgment is stayed, or perverted, either through fear, or covetousness, or hope, or hatred, or favor, or malice, or letters, or such like affections which blind the eyes, and stop the ears, and pervert the wise, 2 Chron. 19, 6, 7. But in the mean season they displease the Lord, and by winking at the wicked they make themselves abominable to the chief Judge of heaven and earth, before whom they must come to be judged: and in sparing of grievous transgressors (which ought to be punished) they make themselves accessories to their transgressiōs, & many times like *Saul & Ahab, & Pilate*, they bear a part of the punishment.

Secondly, this admonisheth all Iurers, that [Use 2] they take great heed whom they acquit, and whom they condemn. If they condemn the innocent, their blood will be required at their hands. And if they justify any that are guilty of blood (which is a crying sin) or other heinous enormities, & labor the rest of their fellows & companions to join with them, they are brethren in evil, and stayne the judgment seat with unrighteous proceeding, which is worse then if they should cast dust and dounge in the Judges face. These do often forget that they are sworn men, and give their verdict upon their oth: for if they did, they would not so lightly set their souls to sale. These for the most part think themselves excused by the Judge, and hang more upon his mouth, then hold themselves to the matter. Such persons ought not to be simple men, but such as should be able to judge, and to discern between right and wrong.

[Use 3] Lastly, let us come to witnesses, which are other parties in the matter of judgment, and are especially aimed at in this place; it directeth and informeth them to know what they do, and where they stand. Let them take heed what they depose, lest by forswearing themselves, they renounce the living God, and bring damnation upon their souls. A man would think that an oth were such a weight and burden upon the conscience, that no man would dare to step forth, and lay his hand upon the book, and afterward sell himself to the devil. There is nothing so vile & wretched, but some will be found as vile to set it on foot. If *Ahab* be sick for *Naboth's* vineyard, *Jezebel* can quickly by her letters procure two false varlets and vnthrifths in Samaria to bear false witness against him, 1 Kings 21, 10. So when the malice and envy of the Pharisees grew to be extreme against Christ, and that they feared the fall of

their kingdom, though he were innocence it self, yet there were found *false witnesses* to condemn the innocent, Math. 26, 60, 61. Hence it is, that the Ecclesiastical Laws have not hand over head admitted all without difference and discretion to be brought and allowed as witnesses, but have set down seven just considerations of exceptions against witnesses, in this manner,

Aetas, conditio, sexus, discretio, fama,

Fortuna, & fides.

The first point to be respected in witnesses is, that they be of age: for such as are infants, children, or yonglings know not the depth of the cause, nor the validity of an oth, nor the distinction of matters whereupon they are to be produced, and therefore they may stand by while the jury is impanelled. And to these we may join the old dotting age which decayeth in understanding, no less then it doth in strength of body. Secondly, the condition of the persons, whether they be bond or free. The tenant for his land-lord, the servant for his Master, the father and son one for another are worthily esteemed to be partial witnesses. Thirdly, the sex whether it be man or woman: for a woman's testimony wanteth much of the weight of the other, because many of them are partial and passionate, & light creatures, if it be opposed against the testimony of a wise and considerate man. They are soon led aside by affection, by pity or favor, and therefore never any of them were admitted to sit in place of judgment, where the Judge should know neither father nor mother. Fourthly, discretion; for idiots and lunatike persons, or mad men, would prove but mad witnesses to be admitted in trials of truth, who cannot discern aright of themselves and of their own estate. For how should they be able to dive into the causes of other men, that have not the use of reason or understanding? Fifthly, fame is not to be contemned in this case: for they should be men of good report and credit in the places of their abode: not common swearers, not liars, not drunkards, and ruffians: for such as swear commonly, make no more conscience of an oth taken before a Judge, then of an oth sitting upon their ale-bench: and such as are tainted and stained with the reproach of many evils, will easily be drawn to add one sin of perjury more to the heaps of their other wickedness. Sixthly their estate or ability, what their lands or livings be, what goods and substance they have, where their dwelling and abode is, whether they have anything to lose; and be able to make satisfaction, if happily they be found tainted. For beggars and bankrout, strangers and straglers, unknown and untried, may soon be brought to lift at an oth for a little money and for hope of gain: and the party grieved and abused by their falsehood and forgery, shall purchase their ears (when they are in the pillery) at a dear rate if he list to sue at the Law for them. Lastly, their faith or religion is of special consideration, because that is the bond of all good order. If they fear God and regard their conscience, there is no fear of them, we need make no scruple of conscience to allow of them. For infidels, Turks, heretics, or unbelievers make little account to renounce & sell Christ and the Christian faith (which they do not believe) fought a small gain and advantage. Nevertheless, the Gentiles themselves did put such religion in oaths, if they had sworn solemnly by their false gods, that they feared vengeance to fall upon them, if they did break them. Thus we have seen what witnesses ought to be: now let us see how they offend when

they are such as they ought not to be. For no man must think it a small offense to wrest judgment, and to be a false witness: inasmuch as they offend against God, against the truth, against the Judge, against the person accused, against the commonwealth, and against themselves.

First of all, they sin against GOD himself, who is the Author of truth and the President of judgment seats; for they fear not to lie shamelessly to his face, and to pollute and defile his Tribunal, they despise and contemn his Law, and call upon him to be a witness of falsehood. Secondly, they do offend against the truth, which is that only light wherein the knowledge of things consisteth: this they go about to darken with their lies, and to hide it from the sight of men, as they that cover a candle under a bushel, or like to thieves that cannot abide the light, but put it out, that neither they nor their doings may be espied. Thirdly, they transgress against the Judge, who pronounceth sentence according to the words of the witnesses, and maketh their depositions as a rule to guide and direct him. It is a common thing for the Judge to err and to go astray, being seduced and deceived by their falsehood, pronouncing with his mouth, sealing with his hand, and striking with his sword, otherwise then it ought to be: who ought to be the instrument, the oracle, and the interpreter of God. Fourthly, against such as are accused and brought to judgment whether they be guilty, or not guilty. If they be guilty, and be acquitted and discharged by them, they free them from punishment, which might be a good means to do them good, when they should receive according to their deserts: and besides, they encourage them in evil, because to escape without punishment, inflameth them with a desire to continue in evil. If they be not guilty, they are wronged and oppressed by their false testimony, either in their life, or in their goods, or in their name, or in such like earthly blessings. For whatsoever is taken from the condemned person by sentence of the Judge, is all done by the fault of the false witness. If life be taken from him, he is the murderer: if he lose any of his goods, he is the thief: if his good name be impaired, he is the slanderer. Fifthly, against the commonwealth, because the end of judgments and of the courts of justice is not attained, to wit, the peace and tranquility of the people. For wherefore serve so many places and seats of judgment, but that we should lead a peaceable and a quiet life? The end of war is said to be peace, so the end of suites is, that we should not sue. Now this great and precious jewel of peace is wronged and wrested, when the Judge, following the rule of the witnesses, and judging according to things alleged and proved, doth condemn the innocent, and absolve the guilty person. For as he is injurious against my body y^t cutteth off a sound arm or leg; so is he against y^e city, which casteth way a good and profitable citizen. Again, as he is hurtful to my body, that doth not cut off a rotten member, or persuade the Surgeon to cut it or to burn it, when need requireth, because the sound members that remain are endangered thereby: so likewise he that moveth or persuadeth the Judge to acquit a guilty person, who is no better to the commonwealth, then a rotten member is to the body, is an enemy to the state, and injurious to the body political. Lastly, against himself, because he depriveth himself of all blessings belonging to soul and body. The Lord professeth himself to be a sharp and speedy Judge against those that swear falsely, Zach. 5, 4. Mal. 3.5. Hence it is, that *Solomon saith, A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape*, Prov. 19, 5.9, and chapt.

25, 18, *A man that beareth false witness against his neighbor is a maule, and a sword, and a sharp arrow, to wit, not only toward his brother, but striking, piercing, wounding, and hurting himself. It is the part of an envious person to pull out both his own eyes to put out one of his neighbors: but such are all false witnesses, they annoy themselves in soul and body, that they may hurt the body only of their brother.*

So then, a false witness doth hurt himself more then he doth another, or can do. He may by his false testimony take away his goods or his life, or his name, and this is all: when in the mean season he destroyeth and damneth his own soul, and casteth it into hell fire, there to be tormented with the devil and his angels.

CHAP. XXXVI.

1 AND the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near and spake before Moses, and before the Princes the chief fathers of the children of Israel.

2 And they said, The Lord commanded my Lord to give the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel: and my Lord was commanded by the Lord, to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother, unto his daughters.

3 And if they be married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then shall their inheritance be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and shall be put to the inheritance of the tribe, whereunto they are received: so shall it be taken from the lot of our inheritance.

4 And when the Jubilee of the children of Israel shall be, then shall their inheritance be put unto the inheritance of the Tribe, whereunto they are received: so shall their inheritance be taken away from the inheritance of the tribes of our fathers.

WHereas Moses had spoken before of the dividing of the inheritance in general among the tribes: in this place a certain special case is propounded by the Manassites touching the right of inheritance before assigned to the daughters of *Zelophehad*, to wit, how provision might be made y^t the same portion might remain in that tribe, and not be conveyed or translated to some of the other tribes. For they propound these 2 as repugnant one to y^e other, the right of succession which these women had obtained, and the privilege of *the year of Jubilee*, which they thought was weakened by this means, if happily these maids should marry to any other

husbands then men of their own tribe; neither did they know how to clear this doubt. But *Moses*, instructed of God, setteth down a Law, that inheritance should not pass from tribe to tribe, and that such as were inheritrixes might not marry any of other tribes, but among their own only, which was carefully observed by these women. This is the sum of this chapter, wherewith the whole book is concluded. In this observe three points; first, the question of the *Manassites*; secondly, the resolution of *Moses*; thirdly, the marriage of the daughters of *Zelophehad*. Touching the first, it is handled in these four verses. The question was moved by the chief heads of the tribe of *Manasseh*, how the inheritance might rest: without a manifest detriment to their tribe? For if they should marry in another tribe, it was as much as to cut off an arm from the body. And by this means it might come to pass in process of time, that the chief portion assigned to one tribe might be possessed by men of other tribes, which would breed great confusion and disorder. This practice and proceeding of theirs teacheth, first, that the Magistrate is and ought to be the supreme Judge in causes of inheritance. Secondly, no man ought to be Judge in his own cause. Thirdly, we see how they come to *Moses*, not in contempt or with a commotion, as if they meant to gain that by force which they could not obtain by favor, but they bear themselves lowly and dutifully as became them to the Magistrate, when they say, *The Lord commanded my Lord*: and again, *My Lord was commanded*, &c. From hence we learn, that it is the duty of all inferiors to reverence the superiors in gesture, in word, & in deed. We might also show that Magistrates must acknowledge themselves to rule under God, and to be Lord's under that highest Lord. But we will only handle this point, that inferiors must use speeches of reverence, such as betoken subjection; this we saw before, chapt. 11, 28, and 32, 5, 25, 31. 2 Kings 5 13, 1 Peter 3, 6. Nehem. 2, 5. Esther 7, 3. 2 Sam. 24, 3. 1 Kings 1, 23, 24, 31. 2 Kings 2, 12, and 13, 14. Mal. 1, 6. 1 Sam. 25, 24, 25, 26 27, 28. Gen. 16, 9.

The grounds first, because superiors bear [Reason 1] the image of God, and are to their inferiors in God's place, as *Moses* was to *Aaron*, when the Lord saith, Exod. 4, 16. *Thou shalt be unto him instead of God*.

Secondly, it is the express law of God, *To honor father and mother*, that is, all superiors, Exod. 20, 12. Psal. 82, 6. 1 Tim. 5, 3. They are set over inferiors for their good, not for their own, 1 Tim. 2, •. where the Apostle teacheth, that Princes are appointed unto eminent place, not to lift up their hearts against their brethren, and to maintain themselves in all riot and excess, but that the people may lead a quiet & peaceable life under them. Fourthly such do adorn the Gospel.

This serveth to reprove such as are so far [Use 1] from giving of good words, and using soft & gentle speech savoring of Christian modesty and subjection, that they revile them, rail at them, and speak all manner of evil against them; which they ought not to do unto any, much less to their fathers, or masters, or Magistrates, to whom they are bound in a nearer band, and tied to a farther duty. Hence it is, that *Moses* saith, Exod. 22, 28. *Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people*. It is delivered as a general precept, binding all that will be the children of God, *Bless them that persecute you; bless I say, & curse not*, Rom. 12, 14. I am. 3, 9, 10. It is a thing acceptable to God, to speak evil of no man, Titus 3, 2. It is therefore a thing

detestable, to speak evil of our superiors, unto whom all dutiful language is due that savoreth of peace and love, nay of submission and subjection. The Apostle exhorteth servants *to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them in all things, not answering again* with stout and unseemly words. Such then must learn by the fear of God to bridle their tongues, that they offend not that way, I am. 3, 4.

Many there are, who in their service are reasonable, but they have no rule over their tongue: they will not only mutter and murmur, but give cursed and cutted answers. It is the fruit of an evil servant to be evil tongued, and to take liberty to taunt in unseemly manner against those that are set over them. This was the sin of *Agar*, that despised her mistress, not only in her heart, but likewise in speech, Ge. 16, 4. Let such consider y^e words of *Solomon*, Prov. 15, 1. *A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger*, James chap. 1.20. Judge. 8. verses 1, 2, 3. 1 Sam. 25, 32.

Secondly, we see the place of subjection is [Use 2] not an unlawful calling, neither must we think that Christianity hath abolished Magistracy and civil authority, but rather ratifyeth and establisheth it, Titus 3, 1. 1 Tim, 6, 1. And it is lawful for good men, and especially for Magistrates & Ministers to have servants, as *Abraham* had many, *Elijah* one & likewise *Elisha*. *Joseph* had a Steward of his house, *Jacob* had men-servants and maid-servants, Gen. 14, 14, and 15, 2, and 44, 1, and 32, 16. *Mephibosheth* had a servant, and that servant had twenty servants, 2 Sam. 9, 10. This overthroweth the damnable sect of the Anabaptists and Libertines, who teach that Christians may not be subject unto any. [Objection.] They object, that they are the Lord's free-men. I answer, [Answer.] it is true, but this freedom is inward and spiritual, from sin and Satan, and condemnation.

[Object.] Again, they allege, that we are forbidden to be the servants of men, [Answ.] 1 Cor. 7. I answer, the meaning is, we are not to be addicted unto them servilely, in things unlawful and dishonest, or in obeying their traditions as God's Commandments. [Objection.] But Christ saith, Call no man master upon earth, Math. 23, 10, *because one is our Master*, [Answ.] *even Christ*. I answer, this must be understood as the former, when Christ forbiddeth to call any *father*, to wit, to hold him in chief, and not subordinate to Christ and for Christ.

[Objection.] Again, it is objected that sin brought in servitude and slavish subjection of man to man. For albeit in the innocent estate, there should have been teacher and scholar (though not by office and calling, to preach the word, or to teach schools) and governors, and the governed, [Answer.] yet not master and servant. I answer, sin was the occasion of sundry things in their nature good, or at least through God's mercy and blessing bringing good out of evil. For it brought into the world upon man a necessity to marry, for the avoiding of fornication: yea sin may be said to have caused a necessity of Christ's coming, as also to cause a necessity of preaching, and of laboring in the sweat of our brows, and a necessity likewise in relieving the poor. Besides, every kind of subjection is not against the law of pure Nature, as might be shown by the subjection of the wife to the husband, and of the children to their parents. So then, servitude is no new invention of cruel men in these latter days, neither is a faithful servant to be accounted a perpetual asse, crouching under his burden. No man must be ashamed of that calling, neither reprove it as evil and unlawful,

but rather labor to adorn the Gospel in it, by serving, not with eye-service, but dealing faithfully as the servants of Christ.

[Use 3] Lastly, all superiors must so carry themselves, as that they may deserve reverence, and draw not contempt upon themselves, 1 Tim. 4, 12, Prov. 16, 31, and 21, 30. Leuitic. 19, 32. 1 Tim. 5, 1, 2. And those duties are of diverse sorts which are to be performed by them, whereof they are put in mind by the names whereby they are called.

The first degree of this superiority concerneth parents, to whom it belongeth to teach, to correct, to defend, and to provide for their children, as we have shown already, chap. 30. This reproveth such as are careless what become of them, such as pamper them to much, and suffer them to do what they list, till they shame their fathers & mothers, their friends, and the Church of God, and grow obstinate and incorrigible. Touching masters, it lieth upon them to order their servants and families aright, they must require of *their servants no more then is just and equal*, Col. 4, 1, remembering that they have a Master in Heaven, who requireth only things just and equal at their hands: they are to provide for them food and raiment, and such like necessaries, or else they are worse then infidels, and have denied the faith, Prov. 31, 21. 1 Tim. 5, 8. Likewise it behooveth them to teach and instruct them, as faithful and believing Masters have done, and found a great blessing upon their labors, Acts 10, 7. Gen. 24, 12.

And if Masters desire to have their houses dutiful & subject unto them, they must choose such as are religious, or be careful to make them religious, that so they may obey for conscience sake. If at any time they shall make conscience to serve the Lord, they will not be slothful to serve their Masters. But there are many Masters, that *are always threatening* their servants, Ephes. 6, 9, and never speak kindly unto them, to encourage them in well-doing; there proceedeth nothing but fire out of their mouth, and smoke goeth out of their nostrils. And not so only, but they command hard and cruel service at their hands, and after a sort suck out their heart blood, by over-burdening and over-bearing them beyond their strength, like the cruel task-masters of the Egyptians, who gave the Israelites no straw to *make them up the tale of their bricks*, but made them gather it themselves, *and yet would diminish nothing of the work*, Exodus 5, 7, 8.

Thus were the people scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt, to gather stubble instead of straw. And *Sampson* being a servant, or rather slave to the Philistines, was not only made a laughing-stock, but compelled to grind in the prison-house, Judge. 16, 21. Such masters are they also that are immoderate and excessive in correction, & know no measure, as if their servants were beasts, and not their brethren. Nay *Balaam* the false prophet is reprov'd of the Angel for his cruelty toward his asse, but these respect men no better then if they were asses or horses; for the whip is never from their backs, or the bridle from their mouths, or the fist from their ears, or the staff from their sides. Thus also did the task-masters *beat the officers* of the children of Israel without any cause or desert. Now touching Magistrates, they are the fathers of the country and common-wealth, they must be careful to plant sound religion among the people, and be careful that God be served in the first place, because they must rule for GOD and not for themselves. And thus did the godly Kings of

Judah. They must establish peace and tranquility, that men may sit under their vines and fig trees, that there be no invasion nor going out, nor crying and complaining in the streets. And they must publish and prescribe such wholesome Laws, as may serve to keep men in obedience; and when they are once enacted and established, they must not suffer them to rust for want of execution, but remember they are *the Ministers of God to take vengeance on him that doth evil*, Rom. 13, 4. If then they suffer men to do what they list, as if there were no king in Israel, if they be careless of God's service, if they do not defend the innocent like *Ahab*; nor punish the transgressors, or command unjust and unlawful things, or spare offenders that ought to dy, like *Saul*; they provoke the wrath of God against themselves, as we have shown already in the former chapter.

5 And Moses commanded the children of Israel, according to the word of the Lord, saying, The tribe of the sons of Joseph hath said well.

6 This is the thing which the Lord doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them marry to whom they think best, only to the family of the tribes of their father shall they marry.

7 So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe, for everyone of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.

8 And every daughter that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers.

9 Neither shall the inheritance remove from one tribe to another tribe, but everyone of the children of Israel shall enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers.

The second part of the Chapter followeth, which is the answer of *Moses* to the former question, where he commendeth those that made this demand, and then he setteth down first a particular Law touching the daughters of *Zelophehad*, that they should marry to whom they thought best, howbeit within their own tribe; and secondly a general Law binding perpetually all daughters among them that possessed any inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, that they shall be wives to one of the same tribe; thus everyone should quietly enjoy his own, and the inheritance should not remove from one tribe to another. Out of this division we might observe sundry instructions. First *Moses* commendeth that which these *chief fathers had well spoken* and well done, teaching that we ought not only not to dispraise that in which others have well deserved, but we should praise and commend it.

Thus he did to these daughters before, Chapter 27, 7, when they sued for an inheritance. Secondly, in that they are directed to *marry to whom they think best*, we see that none are to be denied marriage which is the ordinance of God. It entered into none of their hearts, to remedy the alienation of inheritance by restraining any from marriage when daughters fell to be inheritrixes, but it was left free to them, according to the precept of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7, 2. Again, it teacheth that marriage is not to be enforced upon any, either by the Magistrate, or by the parents, or by any governors, Gen. 24, 57. 1 Corinth. 7, 39. For this were to exercise tyranny over our children.

For as children ought to have the consent of their careful parents, and not to dare to bestow themselves without their advice, which practice we see in the very Gentiles, as appeareth in *Euripides*, where *Hermione* answereth *Orestes*, desiring of her a promise of marriage,

Sponsaliorum meorum pater meus curam

habebit, non est meum statuere hoc;

That is,

It lieth not in my hand at all

myself for to contract:

Unto my fathers care and power,

I must refer that act:

So likewise parents ought to have the consent of their children, & not bestow them upon others against their wills; for that were to lay an evil foundation, and to fill the house with jars and dissensions. Thirdly, observe that *Moses* saith, *Every daughter shall be a wife unto one of the family*; teaching us, that howsoever the marrying of many wives was practiced among the Patriarchs and people of God, yet this is the Law of Nature, that one man should have one wife, & not wives, Gen. 2, 24. Mat. 19, 5. But to come to the main point, we learn that the inheritance of the children of Israel must remain and continue in one and the same tribe, and never pass from tribe to tribe.

The reasons of this Law given unto them are, that the Israelites might enjoy, *every man the inheritance of his fathers*, verse 8: and for this cause are the borders of every tribe so carefully assigned afterward.

Secondly, that it might certainly be known that the *Messiah* came of no other tribe then of the tribe of *Judah*, according to the promise and prophecy of *Jacob*, Genes. 49, 10. *The tribe shall not depart from Judah, till Shiloh come*. Thirdly, that peace might be preserved, and confusion avoided among them, whereas if the inheretrix had not been restrained by this Law, but left at liberty, the bounds of every tribe in process of time would have been abolished. These Laws did only bind the Jews touching inheritances, & not impose a necessity upon others, as we have shown before, chapt. 27: as likewise that the eldest must have his double portion, and that no man might lawfully sell the fee simple of his

inheritance; which precepts, with sundry others, if they should be brought into all Christian commonwealthes, would turn upside down the very foundation of them, and alter all Laws and customs general and particular, and bring in an horrible confusion. For other nations do hold their lands by see simple, but God holdeth the Israelites as his farmers, Levite. 25, 23, *The land shall not be sold forever, for the land is mine, for ye were strangers and sojourners with me:* he would not have them as owners, neither to be as purchasers of that land. Now let us come to the uses.

[Use 1] First, it is the ordinance of God that every man keep his proper inheritance, to have and to hold the same as his own. Distinction of inheritance is agreeable to his word, whatsoever the mad spirits of the Anabaptists do teach. [Object.] It will be said, that this is a fruit of man's first sin and disobedience, and that if he had stood in his innocence, there should have been a community of all things. But man's transgression brought in this private possession. [Answ.] I answer, we will not reason what should have been, forasmuch as we see what man hath done, and how he is fallen. It is in vain for a man to think how rich he should have been, if his house had not been burned, when he seeth it is consumed stick and stake to the ground, and he become a poor beggar. So likewise, it is needless to debate and dispute what should have been if *Adam* had stood, *seeing God made man good, but he sought out many inventions*, Eccles. 7, 29. For inasmuch as man is wholly corrupted by sin, that communion (if any should be) cannot in this estate take place, but every man must know what is his own, and what is not his own.

[Use 2] Secondly, this should teach parents to provide for their daughters as well as for their sons, and not to leave them to the wide world, especially in these our days, wherein more enquiry is made what they have, then what they are: and what goods are without them, then good things are within them. But God showeth by this Law, that he hath no less care of them then of sons. Men are to consider that their daughters are their children, as well as their sons, and therefore even they must be provided for also. The Apostle teacheth, that parents should lay up *for their children*, 2 Cor. 12, 14, not for one child only, or for his sons only. Nature teacheth, that if any member be weak, it is chiefly to be strengthened. The woman is *the weaker vessel*, and needeth to be supported: and it encourageth them in obedience when they see themselves respected. And what a shame is it to parents to bring them into the world, and then to leave them as it were destitute to the wide world?

Thirdly, there are some that extend this [Use 3] Law to all the Jews in general, as if they were all forbidden to take a wife anywhere save in their own tribe. But if we mark the words of the Law, we shall find that they are not to be understood of men, but only of women; and not of all women neither, but of such as are heirs, and receive a possession for want of issue male. These might not marry out of their tribe; but others which had none inheritance, were left free to marry where they pleased, whether in their tribe or out of their tribe: because this is rendered as a reason of the Law, that *the inheritance might not remove from one tribe to another*, verse 9. It was lawful for them to take a wife of the nations round about them, that was not of the seed of *Abraham*, when there was no danger by a contrary religion, as

appeareth by many examples, Matthew 1, 3, 5: so was it permitted to them to make choice of a wife out of another tribe, that was not to inherit her fathers possession.

And this was neither forbidden in the Law, nor yet observed by the Jews. The Law did not restrain their marriage, because it meddleth only with those that were heirs, and forbiddeth the possessions of the tribes to be confounded and mingled together. If then the Law did not abridge them, we may well suppose and presume that they did not observe it. For, not to speak of former examples, *Moses* married not a wife of his own tribe, neither of any tribe, but a Cushite, that is, one of the Midianites, which inhabited Arabia, of which see before, chapt. 12. *Aaron* also his brother married *Elisabet*; she was the daughter of *Aminadab*, and the sister of *Naasson*, which was of the tribe of Judah, Numb. 1, 7, and 7, 12- Ruth 4, 20.

So *Iosabeah* the daughter of the king *Jehoram* of the tribe of *Judah* was married to *Jehoiada* the high Priest, 2 Chron 22, 11. *Elizabeth* the wife of *Zachariah* the Priest, the father of *John the Baptist*, was of the daughters of *Aaron*, Luke 1.5, and was the cousin of *Mary*, Luke 1, 36: but it is certain and without all controversy, that *Mary* was of the tribe of *Judah*, Luke 5.

But it will be objected, [Objection.] that the Levites being dispersed among the other Tribes had a dispensation from the former Law, and therefore they might marry wives of diverse tribes from themselves, but it was otherwise with the rest.

[Answ.] I answer, first it is vain to distinguish against the Law, where the law doth not distinguish: if then they had any privilege, let them bring forth the charter, and show their evidence, or else we cannot believe them.

Again, albeit the Levites were scattered here and there, yet many of them dwelt together, and there were *whole Cities* in a manner of *the Priests*, 1 Sam. 22, 19. and therefore if they had pleased, or had thought themselves charged in this case, they might have had choice of wives of their own tribe. Lastly, this was no better observed by other Tribes, then by the Levites. For *David* of the tribe of *Judah* married *Michal* the daughter of *Saul*, who was of the tribe of *Benjamin*, 1 Sam. 18, 20, 27. & 9, 1. Likewise the eleven tribes having in a manner destroyed the Benjamites in a battle, profess among themselves that they might not give them of their daughters, because they had sworn, *Cursed be he that giveth a wife to Benjamin*, Judges 21, 18. declaring thereby, that they were not restrained by any law, but by their oath: and to what end did they make such an oath, if they had been before forbidden by the law of God without their oath? Many such like examples might be brought forth, to show that this Law did not simply restrain the marrying in other Tribes.

[Use 4] Fourthly, from hence we may conclude an argument against the vulgar edition of the Scripture, which in this place doth manifestly corrupt the text, and bringeth into manifest error; for it readeth the text thus, *All men shall marry wives of their own tribe and kindred, & all women shall take them husbands of the same tribe*: both the which being generally taken, may well be taken for untruths. Whereas the original never speaketh of men marrying out of their tribes, neither of all men generally, but of those only that are their fathers heirs. *Bellarmino* that must help at a dead lift, answereth, That these two are all one, and do not differ; which argueth an hard forehead rather then a sound answer: for he blusheth not to

affirm anything when he is put to his shifts. We cannot therefore receive that interpretation for authentic and canonical, which is directly repugnant unto the doctrine of the Scripture, and the continual practice of the Jews. And as for those that would have the Hebrew text amended by the Latin translation, it is no better then to go about to be mad with reason. For where the truth is, there can be no error; and where no error is, what need any correction? To conclude this point, I will oppose the testimony and judgment of *Paul de Sancta Maria*, a great bishop and sometimes Chancellor unto the King of Castile, directly against *Bellarmino*, one Papist against another, whose words are these: *In this precept our translation swarueth very much from the Hebrew verity, &c: and the reason of the Law beareth witness to the truth of the Hebrew, for this was the end thereof, that the division of inheritances that was to be made might remain perpetually amongst the Tribes, so that nothing of the land which fell to be in the lot of the Tribe of Judah, might return at any time to the lot of Benjamin, and so of the rest. Therefore the Law was given of those only (which did succeed in their fathers inheritance) that the Tribes should not be shuffled or mingled together, because thereby the inheritance would pass from one tribe to another, which was against the ordinance of God: but other women which had brethren, and consequently did not succeed in the inheritance of their father, were not forbidden by this Law, but that they might marry with whom they would of any other tribe, because it appeareth evidently, that from hence would not follow the confusion of the lots. Neither do we read of any dispensation that the Tribes of Levi and Judah had to join in marriage one with another: for there needed no dispensation, where was no prohibition, &c.* This testimony is cited by *Drusius*.

Lastly, observe touching the Jewish inheritances, [Use 5] that at the year of Jubilee, the inheritance sold or morgaged, returned again to the owner, as we may read Levite. chapter 25, verses 8.9. This fell out every fiftieth year: then the Trumpet of Jubilee sounded, & they proclaimed liberty and freedom throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof: then servants were set free, then debts were forgiven, then every man returned unto his own possession and family, Verse 10.

This solemn and sacred time was instituted for these causes: First, to moderate and bridle the covetousness of such as hoped and gaped after other men's possessions, and to teach every man to be content with his own estate, and not enter upon the possessions of others, as *Ahab* did upon the vineyard of *Naboth*.

Secondly, to keep a true Chronology, & a certain computation of time, which is very necessary and profitable in the reading of histories, to know where and at what time everything was done.

Thirdly, to maintain a distinction of the Tribes, until the exhibiting of the *Messiah*, according to the prophecy of *Jacob*, Gen. 49, 9, *The Tribe shall not depart from Judah, till Shiloh come*. For howsoever many do understand the word (*Shebet*) in this place of the Scepter, yet I do not remember in all the books of *Moses*, wherein it is often used, that once it is used in that sense, albeit it be in other books afterward. Lastly, to figure out the redemption of Christ, who indeed brought a true *Jubilee* and freedom when the fullness of time came. He proclaimed liberty with his own voice from the tyranny of sin, of Satan, and of hell, *Isaiah* 61, 1, 2, 3, c. *Luke* 4, 18. He purchased a full discharge from all our spiritual debts, trespasses,

and transgressions, John. 8, 34, 36, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever* (1 page duplicate) (1 page duplicate) *committeth sin, is the servant of sin: but if the Son shall make you free, then are you free indeed.* Through him it is come to pass, that Satan hath no power to exact any debt at our hands, Christ hath cancelled the bill and hand-writing that stood in force against us, 1 Cor. 6, 20 Gal. 4.5, 1 Pet. 1, 18, 19. Col. 1, 13, 14. Rom. 8, 2. This Law pertaining to the ceremonies of *Moses*, the Papists have taken up, and horribly abused, and brought into use in the times of the Gospel, and under color thereof sell their pardons and indulgences, and abuse the people, and make sale of their souls. For as God had his Jubilee, so the Pope hath his; howbeit, it is in an apish kind of imitation, and can neither be accounted this Levitical Jubilee, neither yet received for Christian. It cannot be the Levitical, because in it no servants are freed, no debts are remitted, no possessions of land are restored, as it was in the Jubilee of the Jews. And if the Pope himself would allow this, why doth not he begin and give good example to others, & restore Rome to it self, and others lands of the Church to the Emperor, he being the right and lawful owner, and that proud Bishop only an usurper? Again, in the year of Jubilee the Jews did neither sow nor reap: but at Rome it is nothing so, for then the Popes are most busy & the best husbands, then they sow their indulgences thick & threefold, & reap a plentiful harvest by such merchandise. Hence it is, that whereas at the first this solemn feast, (which now keepeth the Popes kitchen hot for many years after) was rare, now it is grown more common, that it might be more gainful. The invention of it was altogether unknown for more then twelve hundred years after Christ, and never heard of in the purer times of the Church. The first father of it was *Boniface* the eighth, who promised full remission of sins to all those that would repair to Rome, and pay soundly for a pardon, and this was to be done every hundred years. This time was thought too long, & was afterward abridged by *Clement* the sixth (who got the papacy in the year 1342.) to 50 years, after the manner of the Jew. After him came *Sixtus* the fourth, in the year of our Lord, 1473, who thinking the times to come to slowly about, and finding the sweetness of the former device, cut it off again in the middes, appointed every 25 year for a Jubilee, and promised like pardons to all comers and goers: whereas before him *Urban* the sixth, had brought it to 33, years: and lastly, it is come to ten years, because they would be sure to lose no profit. See what the desire of money worketh in these holy fathers, who oftentimes sell pardons so fast to others, that it is to be feared they never obtain pardon themselves. Neither can this Jubilee be holden for Christian, in that poor pilgrims resort to Rome, and visit the Churches of *Peter* and *Paul*, but rather superstitious & blasphemous. For this is to tie grace to a certain time and place, w^c is not tied, *Isaiah* 2, 5. *John*. 4, 23. *Math*. 28, 19. Secondly, this is to worship God with our own works which he hath not commanded nor required, *Isaiah* 1, 12, *Math*. 15, 9, and to make sinful men to merit the grace and favor of God, whereas all such kind of service is abominable in his sight. Lastly, they make sale of the grace of God, w^c is much more precious then gold and silver, & take money for remission of sins, which that proud Prelat is not able to give. Thus are men pitifully deceived, and God is horribly dishonored. And howsoever the good of the people is pretended, yet this Jubilee is nothing else but the Popes market and harvest: his market day to sel his wares and commodities, and his harvest to gather in his pardon-money, whereby he emptieth the purses of others, but filleth his own coffers. True it is, he claymeth a power to dispense the treasure of the Church, that is,

the merits of the Saints, and the ouermeasure of their works and obedience, he hath in store for all such as lack; but this is most injurious and derogatory to Christ. It is proper to him to *redeem* others, and to satisfy for them, *who is made of the Father to be our redemption*, 1 Cor. 1, 30. Again, the Scripture expressly excludeth the sufferings of the Saints from the work of redemption and remission of sins, 1 Cor. 1, 13. Acts 4, 12. 2 Cor. 5, 21, Acts 10, 43. Thirdly, if the satisfactions of the Saints were of so great worth & value, that they can take away and blot out the sins of others, then they might be truly called the *Mediators* of the New Testament; howbeit this is proper to Christ, Heb. 9.13, 14 15. Lastly, the Saints themselves are not able to pay their own debt, much less the debt of others, and they that want the mercy and mediation of another, cannot be mediators for another. But the best Saints that ever were, or shall be, do say, *Forgive us our debts*, & therefore they are not able to pay them. How then can they have any works of supererogation, or the measure of their works running over, that have not enough for themselves?

10 Even as the Lord commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad.

11 For Mahlah, Tirzah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Noah the daughters of Zelophehad were married unto their fathers brothers sons.

12 And they were married into the families of the sons of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.

13 These are the commandments and judgments which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses, unto the children of Israel in the plains of Moab, by Jordan, near Jericho.

The third part of the chapter remaineth, to wit, the marriage of these five daughters: what God had appointed, and *Moses* had published, they approve and allow. For *Moses* setteth down, both where they married, and to whom. They matched in their own Tribe, to wit, into the families of the sons of *Manasseh*, and particularly it is said, *They were married to their fathers brothers sons*, that is, to their cozen germans. From hence we learn, that the marriage of cozen germans, that is, the children of brothers and sisters is lawful. In the proof of this point, no man must look for any express law or commandment to marry in this manner, because no man was ever commanded to do so: it is enough to show that it is left free and not prohibited; & that will appear by sundry examples of all sorts. The marriage of *Esau* the son of *Isaac*, is recorded to have been with *Mahalath* the daughter of *Ishmael*, *Isaac's* brother, Gen. 28, 9, so that he married his fathers brothers daughter. And albeit he were a wicked man and profane, yet he is not reprov'd for marrying so near of kin. And *Jacob* himself is charged by his parents to take a wife no farther off, and therefore he being the son of *Rebecca* matched himself with *Rahel* the daughter of *Laban* *Rebecca's* brother; thus he married his mothers brothers daughter, as *Esau* before him had married his fathers brothers daughter. In like manner we see the same in a sort between *Isaac* *Abraham's* son, the son of

promise, and *Rebecca* the daughter of *Bethael*, son to *Nahor*, *Abraham's* brother, Gen. 24, 15, whereof the one is cozen german, the other is cozen german but once removed.

To these examples it will be objected, that they were all before the law, and therefore they might be lawful: but the matter stood otherwise after the law. Let us see therefore how the case stood after the law. And first, observe the example of these daughters of *Zelophehad* mentioned in this place, of whom it is said, that *they married their fathers brothers sons*, verse 11. But it will be said, that by brethren we must understand, nor natural brethren, but others farther off. But if it were so, then it had been sufficient to have called them their fathers brethren without any addition of sons, or their own brethren, and then indeed the marriage had been left doubtful and uncertain: but the addition of sons to brethren doth rightly and readily distinguish the cozen germans from all the rest of their kindred. And to make the matter more clear and apparent, it is evident that *Zelophad* had brethren of his parents that had store of sons; for what man of any understanding will exclude those that most properly may be meant, and run to others that may improperly be termed his brothers sons? Now that *Zelophehad* had brethren, and they also sons, is no way doubtful, because out of the loins of his brother *Hepher* came a great family, called in respect of the multitude of them, *The family of the Hopherites*, Numb. 26, 32. as of *Gilead*, the *Gileadites*. Furthermore, we read in *Joshua*, of the marriage of *Othniel* the son of *Kenaz*, with *Achsah* the daughter of *Caleb*, *Kenaz brother*, so that they were brothers children, Josh. 15, verses 16, 17.

If any here also dally with the ambiguity of the word *Brother*, as suspecting and surmising that it is there taken for some kinsman farther off, and not properly for a brother of the same immediate parents: this may easily be disproved by the term after given to *Kenaz*, of *younger brother to Caleb*, Judge. 1, verse 13, which plainly noteth the age and order of brethren in one family and from one parent, and not any order of kindred among those that are of diverse families and parents, according as the eldest son noteth the order of children in one family, as may appear in the order of Genealogies, 1 Chron. chap. 2, verse 13, where the sons of *Jesse* are so distinguished and known by the eldest, the second, and so forward of the rest. And there also it appeareth, that *Caleb* had other brethren, as *Ierameel* in the ninth verse, and the two and fortith verse, yea even that *Caleb* which had *Achsah* to his daughter, as we may read verse 49: and therefore in respect of those elder, *Kenaz* might well be so called, *his younger brother*: nay having elder, we cannot without great confusion of speech, and very much uncertainty of meaning, refer the younger unto any other of his kindred whatsoever.

Thus we have seen diverse and sundry examples of the marriage of cousin germans recorded faithfully in the Scriptures, both of the godly and the ungodly, both before the Law and since the Law, and we never find that any of them were reprov'd or gain-said; which may induce us to hold them lawful, and not against the Law of GOD and godliness.

Let us pass from the Jews to the ancient Romans, and other Nations, and from the Romans to our selves. The Apostle *Paul* teacheth us in the second chapter of the Romans and the fourteenth verse, that *the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law*: and it were not hard to show out of diverse and sundry profane writers, such as were

Liuy, Plutarke, Cicero, Tacitus, Historiographers, Philosophers, and Poets, an infinite number of examples of such matches frequented among them: whereupon Calvin a most judicious Divine, and one of the foundest interpreters of these latter times saith plainly, Tam Lege Mosis, quam gentium iure id semper licuit, that is to say, As well by the Law of Moses, as by the common law of Nations, the marriage of cousin Germans, was always lawful.

True it is, sometimes for fear and sometimes for flattery; they have been induced to consent to incestuous marriages. *Claudius Caesar* the Emperor had concluded a marriage between himself and *Agrippina* his brothers daughter, yet they durst not celebrate the solemnities of their unlawful love openly, (for it was incest) neither was it practiced before, that the brothers daughter should be brought into the vnckles house as wife: whereupon he commanded the Senate to pass a decree, by virtue whereof, marriage between the Vnckles and Nieces, daughters to their brothers, should from thence-forward be accounted just and lawful. This they did readily & willingly to gratify his desire, and yet for all that there was one only Gentleman of Rome that followed that president, who also was thought to do it to win the favor of *Agrippina*. So likewise when *Cambyses* fell in fancy with his own sister, and was desirous to marry her, which was never used amongst the Persians before, *He called together his Judges, and asked of them, whether there were any law to permit a man to contract matrimony with his own sister: They knowing the kings disease as well as if they had felt his pulse, made answer, That they could find no such law that suffered the brother to marry the sister: yet they had met with another law, that the Persian King might do whatsoever he pleased.* Thus partly for fear & partly for flattery they resolved, respecting more their own security then they did the Kings honor and honesty. *Plutarch* in his Roman questions showeth, that a statute was enacted among them, by virtue whereof it was made lawful for all men from that time forward to marry as far as to their cozen Germans, (including them also) but in any higher or nearer degree of consanguinity they were utterly forbidden. This statute was no other but the very law of God and nature, which restrayneth and forbiddeth to marry nearer, but other degrees it leaveth free. Nevertheless I confess, that he saith, It was long before this statute was enacted, & that one was endighted and like to be condemned for marrying with his cozen German, if he had not been in special favor with the people, whereby it came to pass, that the bill of enditement was suppressed. But who this was, or when it was, he concealeth, and I must needs say, I much suspect the truth thereof: because the forbidding of this degree could not be ancient. For many brethren desired to match their children this way, & thought they could not be better bestowed. *Ligustinus*, as *Liuy* reporteth (*Decad. 5. lib. 2.*) showeth that his father gave him to wife the daughter of his uncle. *Tully* reporteth that *Cluentia* was married to *M. Aurius* her cozen German. (*Cicer. orat. pro Cluent.*) And before Rome was built, at the coming of *Aeneas* into Italy, a marriage was entreated off between *Turnus* and *Lavinia*, who were borne of two sisters. This confirmeth that which *S. Augustine* writeth, (*De ciuit. dei. lib. 15. cap. 16.*) that before his time such marriages were lawful among them.

But to leave these foreign examples, let us come home to our selves. In the 32. year of the reign of *Henry* the eight, chap. 38, all persons are adjudged lawful to marry, that are not prohibited by God's law: which statute being afterward repealed and made void by *Q. Mary*, was in the first year of the late Queens happy reign restored to his former strength and

virtue: and hereupon by the ecclesiastical authority in the Land, a Table was made and put in print; containing all the degrees unlawful in marriage by the law of God, and so holden unlawful in our Land; among which, cozen germans are not mentioned, and therefore are holden by the judgment of our Church to be lawful.

Thus we have the continual practice of the [Reason 1] marriage of cozen germans in all ages, among the Jews and Gentiles, and our selves, which showeth the lawful and laudable use thereof: let us now see a few reasons farther to manifest this point. And first, this is a sure foundation laid by the Apostle, Rom. 4, 15. *Where no law is, there is no transgression.* But there is no law that forbiddeth these to marry, either expressly, or by implication. For albeit we find in the book of Leviticus a perfect direction touching marriage, & all other titles of kindred noted by the persons to whom they appertain, to wit, father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister, grandfather and grandmother, and the grand-children, uncle and aunt, nephew and neece; yet not any cozen in any degree, third, second, or first degree: and therefore these are to be excluded from the former, and no way to be sorted and ranged among the unlawful marriages. Secondly, sundry of these degrees forbidden, are not only once expressed, but again reiterated in the very letter of the law, and that in a diverse manner to note out the greater efficacy: as for example, the fathers wife, first in the 7. ver. *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father:* and again in the 8. verse, *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy fathers wife.* Likewise her sister, in the 9. verse. *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father:* which is repeated again, verse 11. *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy fathers wives daughter, begotten of thy father, for she is thy sister.* Lastly, thy aunt, noted in the 12. verse. *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy fathers sister:* then he addeth in the next verse, *nor of thy mothers sister,* and again in the 14. verse, *nor of thy fathers brothers wife;* touching all which three (being everyone thy aunt) the prohibition of any one had debarred the rest.

The law then being so copious and plentiful to repeat much forbidden before, it is certain it would never have omitted the mention of one whole degree, and the same also the greatest of all the rest, to wit, cousin germans, if the matching of them together had been utterly unlawful, as all the rest are which are mentioned in the Law. This is the prerogative of the word, that it is a *perfect word:* & as the Law is in no point superfluous, so it is in no case defective.

Thirdly, among all the titles of kindred mentioned in Leviticus, there is not any whereunto cousin germans may in any sort be referred: and therefore as they are not expressed, so they are not included under any degree prohibited.

For if they might be comprised under any of those heads, it should be under the title of brethren and sisters, which indeed in a general sense do often in Scripture contain not only cousens in the first degree, but in the second, third, fourth, and farther also. But by this extent of the words, we should bring under the prohibition of marriage, as well the one as the other, which I suppose few will admit.

Wherefore the Lord to prevent this generality of brotherhood, and mistaking of the Law contrary to the true meaning thereof, the sister is limited by determinate notes of difference from the cousins, that she is termed *the daughter of thy father or mother*, Levite 18, 9, and *begotten of thy father*, verse 11: and therefore the titles of brother and sister, cannot be extended so far as to cousin germanes, and if not they, much less any other.

Fourthly, the bringing of cousin germans within the compass of the degrees prohibited is to leave the matter at uncertainty, and the Law of God to determine nothing. For how far shall we have such cousins restrained? once only removed, or twice, or how many degrees? And if any answer, only the first degree: I would know why the first more then the second; or the second more then the third? seeing that the one is no more to be proved out of the Law of God then the other.

As for those that allege the words of the Law, Levite. 18, 6, *None of you shall approach to any that is near to him, to uncover their nakedness*: if they be rightly weighed, they give no color to such interpretation, nor liberty of such extension, but rather serve as a bar to seclude them out of the prohibition. For if any other degrees then are after expressed should be meant, then all cousin•n any degree, though never so far off, even an hundred times removed, should be included within the former prohibition, which no wise man will affirm.

Neither may we imagine, that the Lord would give such a Law, *not to come near any of the kin*, and never express what kin he meaneth, but leave us at randon, every man to conjecture, and every man to hold what he pleaseth.

So then it is evident, that the words are not to be stretched so largely, but are to be gathered into a more narrow compass, and to a more strict senfe, such as may be inclusiue to all the degrees afterward in particular rehearsed and recited, and exclusiue to all others.

Fifthly, the Law of God setteth down sundry threatenings of most horrible judgments upon the heads of such as break the bounds of Nature, and are pursued with the censure of *abomination, of wickedness, of villainy, of filthiness*, committed, and with the sentence of *blood, of death, of cutting off, of fire, and of barrenness*, not only upon the one party, but upon the other, neither only upon the man, but upon the beast: nevertheless, among all these, the cousin germans are no more touched in the punishment, then they were before in the prohibition.

Lastly, as the threatening is noted, so also is the execution of the threatening, remembered. For there is no incest committed against the holy Law of God mentioned in the Scripture, but it always carrieth a note of reproof, and a brand of God's judgment with it: but in the examples of the marriages of cousin germans (which are many in Scripture) not the least touch of any reprehension or correction. *Reuben went up to his fathers bed and defiled his concubine*, Gen. 35, 22, & 49.4, 1 Chron. 5, 1, and he is punished with the loss of his birth-right.

Abshalon went in unto his fathers concubines which he had left to keep the house, 2 Sam. 16, 21, and he is punished not long after with a violent death, and lived not out half his days, 2 Sam. 18, 14. The incestuous Corinthian committed fornication with his fathers wife, and he is

censured by the Apostle with excommunication, and *delivering him ovr to Satan*, 1 Cor. 5, 1. Lot in his drunkenness committed incest with his own daughters, and is plagued with the birth of obstinate enemies of God's Church, the first fathers of the Moabites & Ammonites, Gen. 19, 33. *Judah* defiled his daughter in law *Tamar*, indeed in ignorance, yet duly reprov'd by himself, & effectually repented, so that he never lay with her Gen. 38, 16. *Amnon* fell in love with his sister *Tamar*, and lay with her, and immediately after his lust he is punished with lothsomnes in himself, & hatefulness in *Absalom* toward him, & plagued with a sudden and violent death in the end, 2 Sam. 13, 14, 15. & 28, 29. Lastly, *Herod* took his brothers wife, and he is reprov'd for it by *John the Baptist*, Mat. 14.4, 10. & *John the Baptist* is taken away from him and the unthankful world, who was as a *shining candle* in y^e darkness of the world, which was no small plague. And if we may give any credit unto ecclesiastical histories, touching this *Herod* who was called *Antipas*, he that defiled his body with most filthy Incest, and embred his hands with h^rmelesse and innocent blood, and abused his tongue to mock Christ our Savior with his cursed Courtiers, felt not long after the vengeance of God: For as he gaped after honor and sought ambitiously to be entituled with the name of a king, he and his proud minion with him were in the second year of the Emperor *Caligula* condemned to perpetual banishment, and at Lions in France they ended their days in shame, contempt, reproach, and misery. A fit death for such a life, *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 18. cap. 9. Euseb. lib. 2. cap. 4.* In all these examples we see that although the Magistrate leave these sins of incest unpunished, yet good men do not pass by them without reproof even in the greatest personages; and God doth not let thē alone without a judgment, and the Scripture doth not record them without a due note and censure of the abomination. And may we then in reason think, that God, and good mē, and the Scripture it self would be silent, and have let pass so many marriages of Cousen-germans without any one check or chastisement, if they had been against the law of God & godliness? Nay rather we may well think, that seeing they go away so clearly without any the least note of reproof, yea and some of them with no small approbation and commendation at the hands of GOD and good men, they are not at all incestuous & impious, but most lawful and allowable.

[Use 1] Now let us come to the uses. First, this serves to reprove the Church of Rome, w^c as it is corrupt in the chiefest parts of Christian religion, so is it in none more corrupt thē in the matter of marriage, because they restrain that which God hath left free, and they leave that free which God hath restrained: an evident proof among other things, that the Roman Church is an Antichristian Church. And first it is plain, that they maintain the lawfulness of marriages within the degrees expressly forbidden. For whereas by the law of God, Levite. 18, touching consanguinity, they which are placed in the transverse unequal line, cannot marry at all, because they are to be holden as parents and children: yet if they be distinct four degrees from the common stock, they may lawfully marry by the Popes laws and canons; which is filthy, incestuous, and abominable. And as they are loose when they should be strict, so they are strict when they should be loose: For whereas cozen germans are left free by the law of God (as we have already shown & proved) they do condemn the same for no other cause, but to make way for popish dispensations. Again, they teach that the Pope hath power to dispense with the degrees directly and expressly prohibited in Leviticus, and that

many of them are only judicial & positive constitutions, not grounded upon the law of nature, but serving peculiarly for that commonwealth of the Jews. Hence it is, that that Antichrist of Rome did dispense with King *Henry* the eight to marry *Katherine* his late brothers wife. So *Philip* the second, Duke of Burgundy, had a dispensation to marry his vncles wife, as *Ferdinand* King of Naples had the like to marry his own aunt.

Thus he that hath brought Kings and Princes under his feet, challengeth authority above the Scriptures, and taketh upon him to dispense with the word of God, and thereby usurpeth power above GOD and his word. For this is one of their own rules, *In praecepto superioris non debet dispensare inferior*, that is, The inferior may not dispense with the commandment of the superior (*Anton. part. 3. tit. 22. cap. 6.*)

If then the Pope dispense with the laws of God, doth he not make himself above God? and is not this the Antichrist? or shall we foolishly look for any other? Can anything be more filthy and vile then incest? and yet he hath not spared for filthy lucre to tolerate and allow that in the Church, which the Philosopher *Plato* an heathen man was ashamed off in his commonwealth, *lib. 8. de leg.* For he dispensed with *Philip* the second, late king of Spain, to marry his own Neece. Pope *Martin* the fifth dispensed with a certain brother that married his own sister. Nay *Clement* the seventh for a great sum of money licensed *Peter Aluaradus* a spaniard to marry two sisters at once. Thus also he dispensed with *Immanuel* king of Portugal against the law of God, to marry two sisters, as *Osorius* testifieth, (*Dereb. gest: Immanuel. lib. 2.*) thereby verifying the saying of the Apostle, 2 Thess. 2, 4, that *the man of sin shall oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God.* These marriages did GOD hate and punish in the Gentiles, and for the foulness and filthiness of them did *God spew out the Canaanites*, Deut. 18, 24.

Thus *John the Baptist* telleth *Herod*, that it was not lawful for him to have his brothers wife, Math. 14, 4: so that the former laws were in force in the time of Christ as well as in the days of *Moses*,

Again, the Apostle reproveth the incestuous person among the Corinthians that had taken *his fathers wife*, 1 Cor. 5, 1. & therefore the former laws remained firm under the Gospel, as well as under the law: and he showeth that such fornication is not so much as named, much less practiced among the Gentiles, and therefore he willeth him to be excommunicated from the Church: & where was this forbidden, but in the Law of *Moses*?

But to leave this point at the present, as impertinent, let us consider the degree we have in hand, how the Popish Canons and constitutions do restrain it. True it is, sundry Councils in former times, debarred the first degree of cousins, to the intent the divine prohibition might be kept with the more regard and reverence, and others afterward added thereunto cousens in the second degree. But when the Roman Antichrist sate in the Temple of God, and had brought both Kings and Councils under his check & commandment, then he began to domineer, and all cousens to the seventh degree were forbidden. But because this was thought too hard, and to savor of covetousness and cruelty joined with pride and presumption, it was brought at length in the time of *Innocentius* the third, to the fourth

degree, and sod take it the matter standeth unto this day, that the Canons forbid four degrees from coufen germans as unlawful. But the reason which they use is no less sophistical, then the law it self tyrannical, drawn (forsooth) from the proportion of the four physical humors in man's body. But what have we to do with the Canons of this ambitious man, sitting in men's consciences and ruling over their faith, who have turned out that beast to grass long ago? Or why should we make any reckoning or account of his supereminent and omnipotent power which he claymeth in his dispensations, allowing that which God disalloweth, and disallowing that which he alloweth? Thus he playeth fast and loose with the law of God, as luglers do to deceive. For if the laws of God cannot bind him, why should his papal laws bind us and our consciences? The Collegiats of Doway in their heretical Annotations upon Leviticus, set forth in their late translation of the Old Testament, are not ashamed to maintain this assertion, that all marriages in the right line, and in collateral the first degree, as between the brother and sister, are only forbidden by the law of nature, and that all other degrees depend upon positive laws, which have been and may be altered: which opinion, how gross & vile it is, we have before declared. So then I will conclude with the saying of *Beza* in his 8. Sermon upon the Cant. Touching the observation of holy marriage, I will not stay any longer in this horrible filthy stench, which neither the Sun can abide to see; nor the darkness of the night can cover, nor the earth bear and endure. Alas, O Lord, how long!

Secondly, this reproveth all such as not only [Use 2] discourage from this marriage, but dare condemn it, both as impious and incestuous. Others that dare not go so far, yet seem to dislike thereof as comprised in those degrees mentioned in Leviticus by an analogy or proportion: howbeit they hold also that such marriages are not to be dissolved, and that the issue of such marriages are not to be accounted illegitimate. And they make a comparison between these, and the marriage of those that neglect the consent of their parents, who may continue together, if they confess their error, & do not justify their fact: so such as are married in this degree of consanguinity either ignorantly or doubtfully, may upon repentance of their error find comfort. But from hence it will follow, y^t such as do not acknowledge any error, or go about to defend such marriages as being persuaded they are consonant to the word of God, cannot find comfort nor assure themselves they may lawfully have the company one of another, but stand endighted by y^e law, if not of incest, yet of a great sin against God. Again, I would gladly understand what breach can be committed within the degrees forbidden, w^c may not justly be accounted incest? Lastly, whereas it is objected, that the vnkles wife which is expressly forbidden, seemeth to be as near as the vnkles son, the one being of affinity, the other of consanguinity; it will follow from hence, that all the repentance in the world cannot help nor serve to give comfort to the marriage of cozen germans. For let a man live in incest, and marry any of the degrees expressed in the law, we must know that to live in the sin, and to repent of the sin are contrary one to the other.

As for example, if I marry my vnkles wife, and afterward understand I have done against the Law, though I seem to repent and keep her still, *Poenitentia non agitur, sed fingitur*, as *Augustine* speaketh in another case, the Repentance is not true but counterfeit: and it may

still be said unto me, as *John* in like case did to *Herod*, *It is not lawful for thee to have thy vnckles wife*, Mark 6, 18.

But it will be said, [Objection.] Suppose this marriage be lawful, yet it being in the first degree that is made so, it is good not to come near it, that we may not fall into any that were forbidden; as if we see a dangerous pit, it were no wisdom to play near it, but rather to keep our selves aloof, that so the danger may be the farther from us: as when God had set bounds for the people at the giving of the Law, the people fled even from them, that they might be assured not to transgress them.

But this similitude carrieth more color to move, then force to persuade. [Answer.] For this reason is only an allusion; and if we mark it well, we shall see it is a very unfit and unlike comparison. If *Moses* had of his own head set any other bounds in the Mountain, then those which the Lord himself had appointed to debar the people from nearer access, it might have been some ground to lead us to the like; as by prohibiting the degrees farther off, to debar from the degrees prohibited by the Lord. But *Moses* did not so, albeit being supreme Magistrate he had the same power, and being wise he could have seen the same reason so to do as well as we. Now in that the people departed from the bounds which were set them, they did it not to yield obedience unto God, or because they would not transgress, God's Commandment, neither did they it by any direction from *Moses*, neither is it recorded unto any commendation of them, but it is imputed to the confused multitude of the people; and to the fear that enforced them, not only to shun the bounds of the Mount, but to run back to their own Tents: whereas doubtless they might with more praise & less reproof have holden the bounds prefixed by the Lord, then *to have fled from them afar off*, Exod. 20, ver. 18.

Let not us therefore seek to be wiser then God, or go about to set other bounds then he hath done. For this is a sure rule, the which we may approve without fear of danger, that the Lord's bounds are sufficient for us, to keep us in every good way. This we see constantly practiced by the Priests and people of Israel: for the high Priest did keep y^e bounds of the holiest place appointed unto him: the ordinary Priests the Tabernacle of the Congregation: the people, the Courts of y^e Lord's house, none of them for a supposed modesty restraining himself from the uttermost of the liberty given unto him. For the people do not shun the door of the Tabernacle with their sacrifices, nor the Priests the veyle of the inner Tabernacle with their daily service, nor the high Priest the presence of the Mercyseat, albeit they were all once driven out of the Tabernacle and Temple also with fear of the glorious Majesty of God which there appeared, Exod. 20, 34. Numb. 16, 42. 1 Kings 9, 11. as the people of Israel were from the Mountain. And if the similitude pretended have any force, we may argue from it with better consequence after this manner; whereas the Israelites are commanded not to approach to the bounds of the Lord's Mountain to touch it under pain of death, and therefore they for fear did fly farther off, lest they should touch the Mountain, and die: even so whereas the people of God are by the Levitical law commanded *not to approach to any of the kindred of their flesh* therein specified *to uncover their nakedness*, (Levite. 18, 6,) under the pain & penalty of most grievous punishments; it shall be well and wisely done of us, so far to fly from them, that we do not so much as approach unto them in any inordinate lust of mind,

but fly all occasions that may draw us thereunto: which course, if *Amnon* had holden toward his sister *Tamar*, he had not perished for presuming so far within the bounds of the Levitical law. For the approaching near to her, in beholding her beauty, and in desiring and enjoying her company in place too private and inconvenient, did draw him on to fulfill his loathsome lust; whereof I see not how there could have been laid by the device of man any stronger bar, thē the express limits of the Lord's commandment, which might have sufficed unto him, & may likewise to us, if any fear of God or of his judgments be before our eyes: & if these cannot prevail with us, what may be hoped or surmised by any new prohibitions devised by men in the degrees otherwise lawful?

[Object.] Again, it will be objected, that such marriages prove vnfortunate, and never succeed well, but either parents, or children, or both repent of it when it is too late.

I answer, this is a very weak reason, [Answer.] to argue from the success and the event to prove the lawfulness or unlawfulness of any matter, of which the very heathen saw the incongruity. Thus do some profane persons argue also against the marriage of the Ministers of the word, because many of their children are loose and disobedient; whereas though some prove otherwise then they should, and their parents would, yet do many thousands of their children and children's children live in obedience to God and man. And by this reason might the marriage of any several estate and degree of men be taxed as unlawful. So if we cast our eyes upon the marriages of many cozen germans, we shall see thē live in great unity and amity, in great love and contentment between themselves, and bring forth a plentiful increase of an hopeful and godly issue.

As for those that do ascribe the ill success in families to such matches, it is a plain parologisme à non causa ad causam, to note that to be the cause of ill event, which is no cause at all. And in some particulars, where some of their children have not proved in body or mind, or in both as was expected, as we see the like also in others, so I could allege other causes more to the purpose, if I list to enter so far, or to handle this at large. Thus do some make a man's profession of true religion and a good conscience to walk humbly before God, the cause of his poverty, and decay in his temporal estate: the preaching of the Gospel to be the cause of dearth and famine: never observing how many persons have prospered by serving the Lord; and how great peace, and how long plenty, and what store of blessings the Land hath enjoyed for the plentiful and powerful preaching of y^e truth among us.

Lastly, it is objected, that such marriages are many ways offensive: and that we are commanded to *give no offense to Jew, or Gentile, or to the Church of God*, 1 Cor. 10, 32, neither to them that are within, nor to them that are without, But by such marriages, the papists are offended, the ignorant people that know not the law are offended, the weaker sort (that ought to be respected) are offended, and many of the godly brethren are offended, and generally not some few, but the whole multitude.

I answer, [Answer.] here is much a do about offense, and this is in effect as much as to say, that all men take offense at it: howbeit this conceyte is over lavish. I confess, if this were true in every part, there were just and necessary cause to forbear our Christian liberty for a

time, rather then to give an universal offense. But I neither see nor hear of any such scandals or exceptions taken by the multitude (which also are the ignorant sort) against such matches, which are daily in use and practice before their eyes; neither is there any reason or likelihood that they should take such offense because they were the parties to the law-making in the high Court and Council of Parliament for the lawful liberty of such matches, and they have the tables of degrees in many places hanging openly in their Churches to be seen and read of all, and carry often about them, or at least have in their houses the English Bibles expressing the same in commō use. Touching the offense of the particular weaklings, such as it may be are, or at least may be in any estate, when any such appear and are known, they are much to be respected, and a long time to be borne withal, but yet not always; for there is a time of ignorance to be allowed to such, or rather a time wherein they are to learn and to be instructed, til the Christian liberty be sufficiently made known unto them. This hath been already thoroughly performed, to any that have minds to learn, or hearts to enquire, or ears to hear; and therefore there is no reason that their willful ignorance and causeless offense, should still hold our Christian liberty in perpetual slavery and servitude. This therefore only remaineth further to be performd in regard of their offense, to proffer the means of satisfaction and resolution, by opening to them the truth: wherein, if they will still persist obstinate and stiff-necked against the clear shining thereof in their faces, as the Sun at noon day, then I may well say, the offense is taken by themselves, and willfully holden, rather then given by others: and then they have more need to learn a rule of charity of the Apostles mouth then to teach us one, which is, *not to judge their brother, nor to condemn another man's servant*, but themselves, *seeing he doth stand or fall to his own master*, Rom. 14, 4, 10: and every man at the last day shall give accounts for himself to God that judgeth the quick and dead, before whose judgment seat all must stand. And therefore they are not to judge their brother in that which he doth to the Lord with thankfulness, as did those that did *eat to the Lord with thankfulness*, verse 6. and were not to be judged by their brethren therein: where (if I do not mistake) I take the offense to be the more forcible, then in this of the marriage of cozen germans, because that offense was grounded upon the ceremonial Law of God then buried and abolished, whereas this offense in the marriage of cozen germanes is grounded either upon the rotten post of our own fancy, or upon the ragged pieces of the Popes Canons. Besides, the favoring of the weak brethren in those ceremonies of Moses Law, was only in y^e time of the infancy of the Gospel, but when once in farther growth and deeper root taken of the Gospel, they were vanished by the clear manifestation of the truth, then they were mightily oppugned by the Apostles, and the offense little favored. In this case do we stand at this day in this matter of marriage between cousin germans, after so long abolishing of those popish Constitutions to the contrary, and sufficient manifestation of the law of God against them, so that the offense of the Papists is little to be regarded, especially seeing it tendeth to the bringing of us back again to their Canonical servitude, that is, the Antichristian yoke, which God forbid. For seeing we are escaped from them, why should we suffer our selves to be entangled therewith again? and why do we not rather stand for the Christian liberty, whereunto the Lord hath called us? And if we will soberly and seriously consider of this matter, we shall find that offense is rather given to a Papist by refraining that Christian liberty of God's Law, then by professing

& using of it in such marriages as are against their Canon. And by making scruple of such marriages as are prohibited by the Popes Canon do we not confirm the Papists in the idol subjection to the Popish Canon, and make them still to judge amiss of the Christian liberty given unto us by God's Law, and professed also by our own Laws? To conclude, a Papist (no doubt) would be more offended in his conceyte to see any refuse their Canonical obedience by approouing or making such matches prohibited by them; whereas by refrayning or not approouing such marriages, great occasion is given to make the Papists think well of their Canon, and of him that made it.

Lastly, from hence ariseth comfort to those [Use 3] that are already entered into such marriage as now we justify to be lawful. Howbeit, as they that dissuade marriage in this kind, do notwithstanding profess ingenuously, that they seek not to entangle any man's Conscience that hath so matched: so in like manner, I write not to persuade or encorage any that are free to match this way, neither do I see why any should be discouraged from it, or left comfortless that are already entered into it. Again, albeit I teach the lawfulness of this marriage, yet I would have no man presume to enter and adventure upon the same, with doubt of mind, and perplexity of conscience, because then it becometh sin to him, forasmuch as he doeth it not in faith. Lastly, where the civil Magistrate doth restrain and prohibit this degree, it is meet & reason that the people should forbear the same, as in all other civil ordinances, which are not repugnant to the moral law of God.

True it is, in Geneva and other free Cities there is some restraint of this degree, as appeareth by the Confession of *axony*, sect. 18. touching marriage; nevertheless, touching the lawfulness of the marriage of cousin germans, *Beza* is plain in his observations upon that Confession, when he saith, *We admonish the people diligently, that they do not think that this degree is forbidden in it self, that is, by the Law of God, either expressed or understood, which is the Law of Nature.* And we are to approve the political laws of Princes touching these things, provided that the conscience be not snared and entangled.

Hereupon *Peter Martyr* adviseth Magistrates, that they should take heed that they burden not the people too much, and without weighty cause: & *Beza* to the same purpose wisheth, that all Christian Magistrates would decree this matter for the lawfulness of such matches as the first Council of Paris did, rather then *supra Deum ipsum & veteres Leges ciuiles sapere videri*, that is, *Then to seem to be wiser then God himself and the ancient civil laws*, in prohibiting these matches, which are not prohibited either in the law of God, or in the law of the Romans. So then, where there is a law of the Magistrate in force that forbiddeth them, the precept of the Apostle even in all indifferent things must take place, *Let every soul be subject to the higher power*, Rom. 13, 1. howbeit Christians must be subject thereunto as to a political constitution, not to a divine institution. But with us there is no such positive Law, but the matter is established according to the pure and simple word of God; neither is there any offense taken in our land against such matches, which is the only reason why in many places they are forbidden. As then we have shown before, that this degree hath ground and foundation in y^e word of God: so let us see what is the judgment and opinion of the learned, that if by the mouth of two or three witnesses every truth should stand, then by a clowde of witnesses,

speaking as it were with one voice, we may be moved to give our consent. And albeit no man is to build his faith upon men, which were to set our house upon the sand; yet after the resting and reposing of our selves upon the doctrine of the Law and the Prophets, it cannot but minister some comfort to see the general consent in a manner and approbation of such as have been great lights of the world, worthy instruments of God, excellent Preachers of the Gospel, firm pillars of the church and constant defenders of the faith. [Object.] But it will be objected, That many learned men do condemn this marriage, and that there is great variety, dissention, and division among them, whereupon ensueth much doubtfulness and distraction among the simple people that are not able to judge and discern between the one and the other.

[Answ.] I answer, first touching doubtfulness, there are not many (if there be any) that enter into marriage of this kind, but they ask the judgment of others, and have the opinion of moe besides themselves: and then touching the learned, there are not many that I know of, which simply condemn the same: & among these, some allege *Ambrose* an ancient Writer, and some produce *Tremellius* among the later. Touching *Ambrose*, it cannot be denied, but he holdeth this kind to be prohibited in the Law. For, having in hand to persuade *Paternus* not to marry his son to his daughters daughter, that is, the Vnckle to the Neece, he bringeth this as a reason, that because cousin germans, which are a degree farther off then Vnckle and Neece, are forbidden, therefore that of Vnckle & Neece must be holden as prohibited. But herein he committeth a double error: one, in that he taketh the one match to be prohibited, which indeed is not; the other, in that he conceiveth not that degree to be expressly prohibited, which indeed is prohibited. It were easy to trace out farther ignorance in this Father, otherwise of great desert: but to omit that, I will oppose against him the authority of Saint *Augustine*, no way inferior unto him, in well deserving of the Church of GOD, and withstanding Heresies and Heretics that pestered and poisoned with their leaven the purity of the Gospel. Both these were very great Doctors of the Latin Church, and both living at the self same time, about four hundred years after Christ. For he calleth this kind of marriage (*Aug. de Ciuit. Dei lib. 15. Cap. 16.*) *factum licitum*, A lawful act; and saith, *Quod fieri per Leges licebat, quia id nec diuina prohibuit, & nondum prohibuerat lex humana*, that is, Which was lawful to be done by the Laws, because the law of God had not prohibited it, neither as yet had the law of man.

And whereas it was one cause of the prohibition of this kind, for the multiplying of affinities, *Augustine* observeth, that the nephewes of the first men in the world might marry their cousin germanes, and that they had a religious care that the nearness of their kindred (being pulled asunder by the degrees of propagation) should not go out too far; & therefore by the band of marriage (among cousin germans) they endeavored to bind it up again.

But touching *Tremellius* the case is not so clear, neither so certain what his opinion is, because he giveth no note, but setteth down certain figures, whereby some gather that he maketh cousin germans a degree as far off as the vnckles wife, and therefore therein by Analogy prohibited. Howbeit there is great cause to doubt, whether his judgment swayed that way, forasmuch as we find the father and the son also noted with a like figure, as likewise the brother and sister, as if they were all in one degree, and that in the second

degree, which I think no man will affirm. For it is plain and certain, that the son from the father is in the first degree in the line direct, and the brother and sister in the same degree, in the line collateral: and therefore it is very doubtful what his meaning is, having left no full explication thereof.

Again, it is as clear to me as the Sun, and I dare boldly avouch, that the vncles wife and the cousin german are not both in one degree howsoever any man do cypher them with the same figure, or another discypher thereupon: because then the mother and hir son should be holden to be in one degree: for the cousin german may be the Aunts son, which Aunt as from her parent is the first degree, and her son being the cousin german the second: so that the Nephew marrying the Aunt, doeth marry her that is in the first degree, which is prohibited: but marrying her daughter who is his cousin german, he marrieth in the second degree, which is not prohibited expressly, and not be holden to be prohibited by analogy to the Aunt, seeing there is no like reason of proportion between the first & the second, or any diverse degrees in the collateral lines, but always between the same degrees. So then, I hold it for an ungrounded and an untrue assertion, that any degrees are forbidden farther off then cousin germans. But suppose these two were plain and direct against the same, as indeed one of them is, what are these to the stream and current of the learned writers which this age hath brought forth? who, as it were with one mouth (their pens and tongues not divided) do hold and maintain confidently and constantly the lawfulness of this marriage. And first I produce among this cloud of witnesses, *John Calvin*, whom we named before, who in the interpretation of the precept not to come near any of the kindred of our flesh, hath these words, *Non omnes consanguineas hoc nomen complectitur, &c:* That is, *These words do not comprize all kinsfolks, because it is permitted to the cousin germans either of the fathers, or of the mothers side, to marry his cousin german either of the fathers or mothers side.* This matter he maketh so clear, that in the 385. Epistle he saith of it thus, *Quod lege dei mandatum est, &c.* that is, *It is not lawful to call in question that which is commanded in the Law of God* (as he taketh the freedom of cousin germans to be: for seeing it is not forbidden, we are commanded and enjoined to account the same to be left free for all men) and thereupon he giveth this resolution, that in this matter *our consciences remain free before God:* so that in his harmony upon the books of *Moses*, he termeth it *diabolica Papae superbia qui nouos excogitando propinquitatis gradus, supra deum sapere voluit, A devilish pride of the Pope, who devising new degrees of kindred, would make himself wiser then God himself.*

Now that which he speaketh farther tending to any restraint of this match of cousin germanes is in respect of the positive Law of the Magistrate, which is the law of man not of God, and of the long use of the contrary: in both which respects offense is taken at the practice of it, and therefore with them to be forborne. Howbeit these things do no way touch us, neither can challenge any place in our kingdom, where we have no law of man to forbid us, no disuse or long discontinuance of it to discourage us, neither any offense of learned or unlearned to dissuade us: & therefore we are no way bound in conscience, equity, or charity, to renounces that kind of marriage. For, the question is not with us, what is at all times, and in all places, and toward all persons convenient, but simply of the lawfulness of it. The

judgment of *Beza* accordeth with the former testimony, and serveth as amply and fully to depose and witness this truth, of which we have spoken before.

Peter Martyr shall be the next, professor of divinity among us in the late days of *K. Edward*; for howsoever some deliver out that he is a man indifferent, or doubtful and uncertain in his opinion; it is certain & a matter out of doubt, that these men never read him with judgment, but with partiality. For being themselves enemies in this case, and having taught the unlawfulness thereof, they would draw all other also, either to be enemies thereunto, or have them to sit still as silent, and to stand by as neuters. But the truth is, he is as resolute as the former for the lawfulness of such marriages by the law of God: as appeareth by a large discourse in the first of the Judges, out of the law of God & the Romans, and showeth the same not to be unlawful, but to be exempted out of the prohibition. For speaking of the marriage of *Achsah* with *Othniel* (of which we have spoken before) he showeth, that if these two were brothers children, their marriage was lawful, *Non enim diuinis legibus coniugium inter •stos vsquam fuit prohibitum*, that is, *By God's law marriage between such was never forbidden*. And afterward, reproving the opinion of *Ambrose* who disliked the same, thee faith, *Quod vero Ambrosius, &c. And whereas Ambrose affirmeth, that such marriage is prohibited by the law of God no man can allow thereof, that advisedly considereth either the law of God, or the deeds of the Fathers*. Can anything be plainer then this? or can any man deliver his mind more expressly? So then to pass from him, I come to *Louis Lauater* of *Tigurine*, a judicious and painful man; he expounding the 15 of *Joshua*, saith, *Si Othniel Achsa consobrinus fuit, &c.* If *Othniel* were *Achsaes* cozen german, he might marry her to wife, but if he were her uncle, he could not by the law. Thus doth he also speak of the same man and the same marriage in his Commentaries upon the Judges, where he saith. *It appeareth by other places, that they were cozen germans, and therefore marriage might be consummated between them by the Law*. To him I will add *Zepperus* Minister of the Church at *Herborne*, he affirmeth, that the Law of God is so far from forbidding the marriage of cousin germans, that it propoundeth sundry examples thereof; and after he had produced the practice of it in those we named before, to wit, *Jacob* and *Othniel*, Gen. 29, 12, 13, 19. *Joshua* 15, 17. Judge. 1, 12. he alledgeth other also, that *Rehoboom* took to wife *Mahalath* the daughter of *Ierimoth* the son of *David*, and likewise *Abigail* y^e daughter of *Eliab* the son of *Jesse*, who was the father of *David*, 2 Chron. 11, ver. 18. So in the New Testament, *Joseph* and *Mary* the blessed virgin were cousin germans, Matth. 1. ver. 15. Luke 3, 23, 24: and so doth *Eusebius* testify the same in his ecclesiastical history, out of a certain Epistle of *Africanus* to *Aristides*. For *Matthan* begat two sons *Jacob* and *Heli*, as appeareth in the places before named out of the Evangelists, *Jacob* begat *Joseph*, and *Heli*•ega•*Mary*. And thus both *Matthew* and *Luke* are fully and fi•lie reconciled: for whereas o•e saith, *Joseph* was the son of *Jacob*, & the other saith he was the son of *Heli*, it is certain he could not be both, in one and the some respect, and therefore it must be taken in a diverse consideration; and that is in this manner, he was the natural son of *Jacob*, but legal son of *Heli*; he was the son of *Jacob* by consanguinity, but the son of *Heli* by light of affinity; that is, his son in Law, beca•se he married his daughter *Mary*: as also *Naomi* calleth her daughters in law her own daughters, and *David* calleth *Saul* his father, 1 Sam. 24, 11: and *Saul* him his son, ver. 16 Neither doth the ancient civil law condemn these marriages.

The Law of *Justinian* is extant touching marriages, which is this, *The children of two brethren, or two sisters, or of the brother and sister may lawfully be joined together in marriage.* The same Law was established by *Arcadius* and *Honorius* the Emperors, that the marriage of cousin Germans shall be allowed, and the children borne of them shall be holden legitimate, and succeed their fathers in their inheritance. And hereunto do the ancient Councils also accord, *Epann. Council.* about the year of Christ, four hundred ninety seven, & *Council. Turon. 2.* in the year five hundred and sixty.

Now the first that did forbid the marriage of cousin Germans was *Theodosius* the Elder, as many testify, and that by the counsel and advice of *Ambrose*, *Lib. 8. Epist. 66.* which he calleth the *Theodosian Law*, and in his time *Augustine* testifieth it was in force. This is wholly, or at least for the most part taken out of *Zepperus*.

The next witness to be produced, is, *Amand. Polanus*, professor in the university of *Basil*, in *Syntag. Theol, lib. 10. cap. 53.* who teacheth, that the sons and daughters of brethren and sisters may lawfully marry by the law of God, whatsoever the Popes canon law say to the contrary, as *Jacob* married *Rahel* his cousin German. Of the same judgment also is *Chemnitz* in his *Examin.* For he showeth that the prohibition of this degree is merely human, established for no other cause, but that the prohibitions of God might be kept with greater reverence; and where such prohibitions are, they ought to be observed; which is not denied of us; howbeit that is not our case, where no such prohibitions are. I will annex to these one foreign testimony more, & that is of *Zanchius*, a man of eminent note, who proving that the incestuous marriages between the brother and sister, whether they be borne of the same father and mother, or of one of them only, are utterly unlawful: as also between the Nephew and the Aunt, and the Niece and her uncle, he hath these words: *The marriage between the sons and daughters of natural brethren is lawful, as all the learned and godly agree without any controversy, for as much as we never read the same forbidden in holy Scripture in any place, but rather allowed by many examples which were never condemned by any man.* And albeit he wish that in all such places as is a restraint hereof, men should be subject to the Magistrate according to the Doctrine of Christ, yet he spareth not farther to deliver his opinion in this manner: *For my part I could wish for many causes, and those of no small moment and importance, that marriages might simply be made by warrant of the word of God, that whatsoever God himself hath left free and made lawful, the same might also be left unto men as lawful. I speak freely that which I conceive of this matter.* These are the foreign testimonies which I thought good to allege at this present, to w^c it were not hard to add infinite others, who because they speak the same things, and run the same course that the former do, I will not trouble the reader and myself any farther in rehearsing of them. I will conclude the whole with one more, & that is our own country-man *M. Perkins*, a very judicious & godly learned Divine as any that this age hath brought forth, who in a Treatise, proving that a reprobate may in truth be made partaker of all that is contained in the Religion of the Church of Rome, and that a right papist by his Religion cannot go beyond a reprobate, saith thus: *To go further, by God's word they which are distant 4. degrees in the transuers equal line, are not forbidden to marry together, as cousin Germans: thus the daughters of Zelophehad were married to their fathers brothers sons: This example as I take it, may be a warrant of the lawfulness of this Marriage, howsoever the church of*

Rome do ouerthwart the Lord in it. Let me add one thing more, and then I will end. Whereas we are advised by many in this question, to have due consideration of offenses that may arise in making such matches, I would wish also, and desire all those that are contrary minded, to have good consideration of such offenses as may be given by two earnest disprouing the unfitnes and inconueniency of such matches, and especially by leaving in doubt and suspense the lawfulness of them, forasmuch as between parties of very good account both in calling and Religion, there have been and are many matches in this Land, of that kind: & that between high and low, rich & poor, noble and vnnoble, which have been undertaken and finished by the judgment of the godly and learned, so that it were not hard to produce sundry examples of Emperors, Kings Princes, Dukes, Earls, Barons, Knights, Gentlemen, & other of all sorts: which now to bring in question for the offensive conceits of some, were more offensive to the truth, to the Church, to the learned, and to men of all conditions, yea, more dangerous to the state of those parties, and prejudicial to their issue, then any man of judgment or godliness would approve. Thus much of this point, of this chapter, and of this whole book.

The Lord almighty, the author of all number, *of whose understanding there is no number*, Psal. 147, 5: who hath ordered all things in measure, *number*, & weight; with whom our days are determined, and the *number of our months are set*, Job 14, 5: by whose only mercy we have received strength to finish this book of NVMBERS, containing the journeys of the Israelites through the desert, from Mount Sinai unto the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho; and admonishing us of the state of the Church in this life lying under the cross, and at length receiving deliverance from the *Ancient of days*: grant unto us, that being *numbered* among the children of GOD, we may have our lot among the Saints, and be in *the number* of them that are sealed out of all the Tribes of the children of Israel, Revel. 7, 4. and so rest forever in the heavenly Canaan among the souls of just men perfected, and the *innumerable* company of angels, Heb. 12, 22. Unto him be praise and glory in the Church, Amen.

